

WHITE RIVER LODGE No. 153



Brotherhood & Friendship

The Exhortation

Having entered upon the Solemn Obligation of a Master Mason, you are now entitled to demand that last and greatest trial by which alone you Candidate be admitted to a participation of the secrets of this Degree; but it is first my duty to call your attention to a retrospect of those degrees in Freemasonry through which you have already passed, that you may the better be enabled to distinguish and appreciate the connection of our whole system, and the relative dependency of its several parts.

Your admission among Masons in a state of helpless indigence was an emblematical representation of the entrance of all men on this, their mortal existence. It inculcated the useful lessons of natural equality and mutual dependence; it instructed you in the active principles of universal beneficence and charity, to seek the solace of your own distress by extending relief and consolation to your fellow-creatures in the hour of their affliction. Above all, it taught you to bend with humility and resignation to the will of the Great Architect of the Universe; to dedicate your heart, thus purified from every baneful and malignant passion, fitted only for the reception of truth and wisdom, to His glory and the welfare of your fellow-mortals.

Proceeding onwards, still guiding your progress by the principles of moral truth, you were led in the Second Degree to contemplate the intellectual faculty and to trace it from its development, through the paths of heavenly science, even to the throne of God Himself. The secrets of Nature and the principles of intellectual truth were then

unveiled to your view. To your mind, thus modeled by virtue and science, Nature, however, presents one great and useful lesson more. She prepares you, by contemplation, for the closing hour of existence; and when by means of that contemplation she has conducted you through the intricate windings of this mortal life, she finally instructs you how to die.

Such, my Brother, are the peculiar objects of the Third Degree in Freemasonry: They invite you to reflect on this awful subject; and teach you to feel that, to the just and virtuous man, death has no terrors equal to the stain of falsehood and dishonour. Of this great truth the annals of Masonry afford a glorious example in the unshaken fidelity and noble death of our Master Hiram Abiff, who was slain just before the completion of King Solomon's Temple, at the construction of which he was, as no doubt you are well aware, the principal Architect. The manner of his death was as follows. Brother Wardens.

Wardens leave their seats; SW by North side taking Level with him, JW by West side taking Plumb Rule with him. SW proceeds eastwards straight up the Lodge; JW waits until SW is level with him and then both advance abreast until they arrive behind the Deacons. SW touches JD's right shoulder and JW, simultaneously, touches SD's left shoulder.

Deacons step one pace outwards.

Wardens come up in line between Deacons and the Candidate, SW on left and JW on right of Candidate. This line of five is held momentarily from North to South, facing East.

Deacons then turn outwards and return to their seats.

JW directs Candidate to cross right foot over left.

Wardens hold Candidate securely by his hands so that they have full control over him and he does not at any time lose his balance.

WM: Fifteen Fellow Crafts, of that superior class appointed to preside over the rest, finding that the work was nearly completed and that they were not in possession of the secrets of the Third Degree, conspired to obtain them by any means, even to have recourse to violence. At the moment, however, of carrying their conspiracy into execution, twelve of the fifteen recanted; but three, of a more determined and atrocious character than the rest, persisted in their impious design, in the prosecution of which they planted themselves respectively at the East, North, and South entrances of the Temple, whither our Master had retired to pay his

adoration to the Most High, as was his wonted custom at the hour of high twelve.

Having finished his devotions, he attempted to return by the South entrance, where he was opposed by the first of those ruffians, who, for want of other weapon, had armed himself with a heavy Plumb Rule, and in a threatening manner demanded the secrets of a Master Mason, warning him that death would be the consequence of a refusal. Our Master, true to his Obligation, answered that those secrets were known to but three in the world and that without the consent and co-operation of the other two he neither could nor would divulge them, but intimated that he had no doubt patience and industry would, in due time, entitle the worthy Mason to a participation of them, but that, for his own part, he would rather suffer death than betray the sacred trust reposed in him.

This answer not proving satisfactory, the ruffian aimed a violent blow at the head of our Master; but being startled at the firmness of his demeanour, it missed his forehead and only glanced on his right temple *JW touches Candidate's right temple with Plumb Rule* but with such force as to cause him to reel and sink on his left knee.

SW in whisper instructs Candidate to kneel on left knee and then to regain upright position; Wardens assist and ensure Candidate recrosses feet.

WM: Recovering from the shock he made for the North entrance where he was accosted by the second of those ruffians, to whom he gave a similar answer with undiminished firmness, when the ruffian, who was armed with a Level struck him a violent blow on the left temple *SW touches Candidate on left temple with Level* which brought him to the ground on his right knee.

SW in whisper instructs Candidate to kneel on right knee and then to regain upright position. Wardens assist and ensure Candidate recrosses feet.

WM: Finding his retreat cut off at both those points, he staggered, faint and bleeding, to the East entrance where the third ruffian was posted, who received a similar answer to his insolent demand, for even at this trying moment our Master remained firm and unshaken, when the villain, who was armed with a heavy Maul, struck him a violent blow on the forehead *WM, seated, lifts heavy Maul and goes through movement of striking without touching Candidate* which laid him lifeless at his feet.

Wardens lower Candidate backwards to supine position, with arms at sides and right foot still crossed over left foot.

Wardens stand on each side of Candidate at head of grave facing east.

WM: The Brethren will take notice that in the recent ceremony, as well as in his present situation, our Brother has been made to represent one of the brightest characters recorded in the annals of Masonry, namely Hiram Abiff, who lost his life in consequence of his unshaken fidelity to the sacred trust reposed in him, and I hope this will make a lasting impression on his and your minds should you ever be placed in a similar state of trial.

Brother Junior Warden, you will endeavour to raise the representative of our Master by the Entered Apprentice's Grip.

JW proceeds on right side of Candidate to level of Candidate's knees, steps across him with his right foot, lifts Candidate's right hand with his left hand, gives EA-grip with his right hand, slips it, and with left hand gently replaces Candidate's right hand to his side. He returns to his former position at head of grave.

JW takes Step and gives MM Penal Sign: Worshipful Master, it proves a slip.

WM: Brother Senior Warden, you will try the Fellow Craft's.

SW proceeds on left side of Candidate to level of Candidate's knees, steps across him with his left foot, lifts Candidate's right hand with his left hand, gives FC-grip with his right hand, slips it and with left hand gently replaces Candidate's right hand to his side. He returns to his former position at head of grave.

SW takes Step and gives MM Penal Sign: Worshipful Master, it proves a slip likewise.

WM: Brother Wardens, having both failed in your attempts, there remains a third method, by taking a more firm hold of the sinews of the hand and raising by the Five Points of Fellowship, which with your assistance, I will make trial of. *Leaves chair by South, advances to feet of Candidate which he uncrosses, so that heels are about 6 inches apart. WM puts right foot to right foot, takes Candidate's right hand by MM-grip, and with the aid of the Wardens raises Candidate on the Five Points of Fellowship.*

WM: It is thus all Master Masons are raised from a figurative grave to a reunion with the former companions of their toils. Brother Wardens, resume your seats.

Wardens return direct to seats and replace Level and Plumb Rule.

WM takes Candidate by both hands and gently moves him round clockwise so that he stands in the North facing South. WM places Candidate's hands at his sides, steps backwards beyond the line of grave and halts there. WM and Candidate are now directly facing each other.