

The Discoverer

The Monthly Newsletter of The Lodge of Discovery

In this Issue	
Symbolism of White Gloves and Apron	2
The Art of Getting Along	4
Masonic Lexicon—Part 1	5
Disharmony in Lodge	6
Old Tiler Talk	8
South	10
Humour	11

Greetings Brethren,

To start off this month I've found an interesting account of the symbolism of the white gloves and aprons. Also a lexicon of some of the "strange" words in our ritual.

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The Symbolism of the White Gloves and Apron

*by Bro Jim Logan, DepM, to the Hawke's Bay Research Lodge No 305
An Address given on Monday, 5th November 2018*

There is in the wearing of Craft clothing, as in everything else pertaining to Freemasonry, a symbolism. Briefly, white gloves are symbolic of clean hands, and are complimentary to the lambskin apron, the symbol of a pure heart. These two are of equal importance and are really inseparable.

White Gloves:

The custom of wearing white gloves is of great antiquity. In the Christian Churches from the earliest times, white linen gloves were always worn by the Bishops and Priests when in performance of their ecclesiastical functions. The Bishops always wore a thin plate of gold called "a tassel" on the back of their gloves to denote their high rank. The gloves worn by the clergy indicted that their hands were clean and not open to bribery.

In the indenture of covenants, made in the reign of Henry IV, between the church wardens of a parish in Suffolk and a company of Freemasons, the latter stipulate that each man should be provided with a pair of white gloves and a white apron.

While we have no written proof, as far as I know, that our ancient operative brethren did moralise on the white gloves and apron after the manner of the working tools, there is nothing to show they did not. Dr Robert Plot, a non-mason, states in his Natural History of Staffordshire, dated 1686, that the "Society of Free-masons presented their candidates with white gloves for themselves and their wives".

In the general regulations of George Payne, GM, approved by the Grand Lodge in London in 1721, Article 7 reads: Every new brother at his making is decently to cloath the Lodge, that is, all brethren present. By "cloath" (clothing) it means that the Lodge is furnishing all the brethren present with white gloves and aprons.



In Count Tolstoy's well-known novel War and Peace it states that "the newly obligated brother was then invested with a white apron and received a trowel and three pairs of white gloves, two pair for him-self and one pair for the lady he most esteemed, after which the Master explained their symbolic meaning to him".

In the Netherlands ritual the presentation of white gloves is still retained. The candidate for initiation is taken on three journeys; after the second journey his hands are dipped in a basin of water, and a reference is made of the necessity of "clean hands" and the purity of heart and life as a prerequisite to initiation. On the completion of the third journey he takes his obligation after which he is led to the West, where he is invested with the white apron and is given a pair of white gloves to wear. He is presented with a pair of lady's gloves which he is directed to hand to her whom he considers most worthy to receive them from the hands of a Freemason.

I do not know when the presentation of white gloves ceased to be the general custom but the wearing of them as part of the proper clothing of a brother is still retained in New Zealand by ruling of the Board of General Purposes (Collected Rulings clause 37 - Aprons and Gloves).

Undoubtedly the use of white gloves in Freemasonry is a symbolic idea handed down to us through the ancient and universal language of symbolism and like the apron is intended to denote purity of life and actions.

The White Lambskin Apron:

In the Masonic apron two things are essential for the preservation of its symbolic character - its colour and the material. Its colour must be white, because that denotes purity, simplicity, candour, innocence, truth and hope. The ancient Druids and the Priests, generally of antiquity, used to wear white investments when they officiated in any sacred service.

The white lambskin apron is to us a constant reminder of that purity of life and rectitude of conduct, of higher thoughts and nobler deeds which are the distinguishing characteristics of a Free and Accepted Mason. The material must be lamb- skin as our ritual informs us the lamb has been from time immemorial an emblem of purity and innocence, but its purity was physical, ours must be spiritual. At investiture the brother is informed that the badge is older than the Golden Fleece, etc. These words are used simply to impress upon a newly made brother the value and importance of the lambskin as a universal and old age symbol. It does not claim that that the Masonic apron is more ancient than the other orders but that the symbolic apron is.



The Art of Getting Along

Sooner or later, a man, if he is wise, discovers that life is a mixture of good days and bad, victory and defeat, give and take.

He learns that it doesn't pay to be a sensitive soul; that he should let some things go over his head like water off a duck's back

He learns that he who loses his temper usually loses out.

He learns that all men have burnt toast for breakfast now and then, and that he shouldn't take the other fellow's grouch too seriously.

He learns that carrying a chip on his shoulder is the easiest way to get into a fight.

He learns that the quickest way to become unpopular is to carry tales and gossip about others.

He learns that buck-passing always turns out to be a boomerang, and that it never pays.

He comes to realize that the business could run perfectly well without him.

He learns that it doesn't matter so much who gets the credit as long as the business shows a profit.

He learns that even the janitor is human and that it doesn't do any harm to smile and say "Good Morning" even if it is raining.

He learns that most of the other fellows are as ambitious as he is, that they have brains that are as good or better, and that hard work and not cleverness is the secret of success.

He learns to sympathize with the youngster coming into the business, because he remembers how bewildered he was when he first started out.

He learns not to worry when he loses an order, because experience has shown that if he always gives his best, his average will break very well

He learns that no man ever got to first base alone, and that it is only through cooperative effort that we move on to better things.

He learns that bosses are no monsters, trying to get the last ounce of work from him for the least amount of pay, but they are usually fine men who have succeeded through hard work and who want to do the right thing.

He learns that folks are not any harder to get along with in one place than another, and that "getting along" depends about 98% on his own behaviour.

He learns that if he is fortunate enough to serve as Worshipful Master of Victoria Columbia No 1 that the Brethren are terrific—willing and able to assist whenever called upon, reliable, considerate and cooperative.

He learns that it is just and proper to thank people for their efforts on his behalf and for the many acts of kindness performed in the name of Masonry.

MASONIC LEXICON—Part 1

The Masonic Ritual contains many words that require definition. There will be more in coming months.

With acknowledgement to Maters' and Past Masters' Lodge No. 130 , CHCH, NZ.

Accepted This term seems to have originated in the Masons' Company of London, which was effectively an operative masons' trade union and which is believed to have come into existence about 1356. From at least 1620 it began to `accept' as members persons who were not operative masons. These constituted a distinct subdivision of the Company and were called `The Acception', and hence were described as `Accepted' Masons. As to why they would have wanted to join the Masons' Company, or why the Masons' Company would want to have them as members, we can only speculate, but we know that a similar thing had been happening in Scotland since at least 1599, and it seems almost certain that what we now know as Freemasonry originated in these Accepted Masons.

Antient An old way of spelling `ancient', one which Freemasons have preserved as a harmless affectation.

Annals Note that there is no `u' in this word; it is not `annuals', but one could be forgiven for making that mistake since it is from the Latin *annales* [*libri*], meaning an account year by year of events, and since one meaning of 'annual' is `year-book', they are obviously close in meaning. In our ritual it is used as a fancy alternative to `history'.

Approbation (From Latin *approbare* `to approve') Formal and authoritative approval.

Artificer A person who makes something by art or skill; thus a highly skilled worker. It has the same origins as `ar-tif-iss-er.

Ashlar (Ultimately from Latin *axis*, `axle', `board', `plank') A stone, either rudely squared with a mason's stone-axe, more or less as it comes from the quarry (rough ashlar), or smooth-finished, die-square, and ready to be incorporated into the building (perfect ashlar). The former is said to represent the natural man, uneducated and unaware of his social duties; the latter represents the educated, socially-aware man.

Benevolence (From Latin *benevolentia* `good will') The disposition to do good, kindness, generosity; also, an act of kindness, a charitable donation. The Charge in the North-East in the First Degree is sometimes called the `Charity' Charge.

Blue lodge A lodge (also called a Craft, or an Ancient Craft lodge) which works the first three Degrees, as opposed to a body which works the other degrees of Antient Freemasonry (a Royal Arch Chapter), or the degrees of the appendant Masonic orders such as the Knights Templar and Ancient Accepted Rite. The `Blue' is said to refer to the traditional colour of the regalia in Craft Lodges of, or descended from, the English or Irish Constitutions. The expression `Red Lodge' is sometimes used to refer to a Royal Arch Chapter, but it is unjustifiable.

DISHARMONY IN LODGE; IT'S NOT A BUG, IT'S A FEATURE

"Harmony," a word which, outside of its musical context means "in agreement, or concord." Masonically, we frequently speak of harmony. The word is present in our degrees, used when opening and closing our business meetings, and considered the strength and support of our fraternity. We pledge the concept of Masonic harmony in all of our doings within, and hopefully without the lodge. This concept is so overarching that it pervades many of the operational aspects of our lodges including planning, voting, and organizing. It is emphasized so much so that it can govern our actions and our spoken opinions. With such an apparent correlation that harmony is equal to the concept of who can best work together and best agree, why is conflict and tension so prevalent in our organization?

We all experience conflict every day. In some ways, life is a constant state of conflict that we attempt to resolve, and bring order to; moment to moment, year to year. If you have been a Mason for any significant amount of time, it is likely that you have been party to or witness to conflict within the walls of your own Lodge. Indeed, to some it might even seem that there is constant conflict in Lodge as members propose ideas, disagree on dues, or argue over what we should be eating for dinner.

A Masonic lodge is many things, a group of brethren, a building, a business, a temple, or a non profit organization. For the moment, let us view the lodge through the lens of a non profit business organization.

Avoiding conflict seems natural, and when conflict does occur in a group workplace, conflict resolution is often ushered in as swiftly as possible to quiet the perceived disruption. While at times this can lead to a beneficial outcome, or at least on the surface, a peaceful outcome; it can also lead to more disharmony than the actual conflict itself. Meaningful workplace conflict is a cornerstone of many healthy, successful organizations. Conflict is necessary for effective problem solving, and for effective interpersonal relationships.

Appropriately managed conflict in a communal workplace can lead to a place where people feel free to disagree with each other and lobby for different ideas, often resulting in a more thorough study of courses of action and concepts. According to Peter Block, business author and speaker:

"If you are unwilling to participate in organizational politics or conflict, you will never accomplish things that are important to you at work. -Peter Bloc -

Clarity can be a positive outcome of managed conflict. Disagreements and contention build in the darkness of ambiguity. When team members stay silent in hopes of reducing conflict, contention and resentment often builds. This concept is important for upper management as well. When team leaders gate information or difficult decisions to try and avoid conflict, team members can quickly come to suppositions with regards to the intent or goals of upper management. This ambiguity leads to deepening resentment within the group. Where effective leaders excel, is by managing conversations through steering debate towards resolving ambiguity and bringing about clarity.

Another lens to view a Masonic lodge is as a school. It is a school for all manner of good men to improve themselves, and experience things they may not experience elsewhere in their lives. Apart and aside from the education in morality and mortality, a Mason is exposed to public speaking, event planning, financial management, organization, and group leadership. Our membership being as diverse as it is, nearly guarantees a mixed level of experience and proficiency in each of these skill sets.

Conflict is inevitable in this construct, but perhaps the brilliant architects of our craft engineered our traditions in such a way as to both introduce meaningful conflict, while also giving us the tools to resolve it in a way that pushes our organization further. Conflict, or disagreement is not necessarily the same thing as contention. Conflict can promote mutual understanding of different values and aspirations. It can promote social change and progress in the culture of an organization. The process of resolution of conflict is in and of itself a mechanic for growth of each person involved, provided the conflict is managed correctly towards clarity and ultimately resolution.

Perhaps the phrase best work and best agree might not mean "you should always agree with your brothers," it may allude to the idea that the process of coming to an agreement is the actual work, and that as masons, we need not avoid conflict per se, but that we should use our tools to come to a harmonious conclusion or resolution of the conflict at hand.

Consider as well the use of the phrase "contention, or rather emulation." Why do we suggest that emulation of working together can take the place of contention, or that there is even a "noble" idea of contention that is in contrast to the common definition? Emulation can be defined as "an effort to match or surpass a person or achievement." This phrasing suggests that we can in fact have productive conflict in lodge that contention can be noble when the conflict is resolved by doing our best to emulate, match or surpass a goal or potential achievement. Taken in this manner, it expressly how we can work well together, despite being free to have varying points of view.

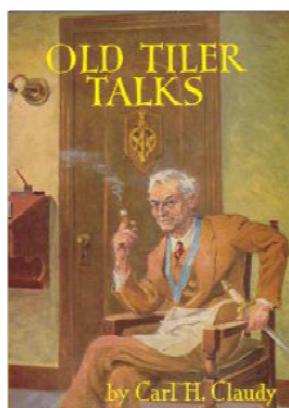
Whether we manage conflict in lodge effectively or not, everyone comes out of the other side of a disagreement stronger than before, more so if the tools at our disposal as Masons are used effectively. Even if conflict leads to the proverbial destruction of the temple, another will be rebuilt stronger than ever.

It seems that dissent, rather than conflict is the problem that needs to be addressed in our organization. There is a stark difference between dissent and disagreement. To quote Daniel Boorstin;

"Disagreement produces debate, but dissent produces dissension. People who disagree have an argument, but people who dissent have a quarrel. A free society thrives on disagreement but is killed by dissension. Disagreement is the lifeblood of democracy; dissension is its cancer. ... Disagreements seek solutions to common problems; dissenters seek power for themselves.
— Daniel Boorstin

Perhaps we should further embrace productive disagreement in our lodges and make use of the gavel to chip off the rough edges of a proposed idea, while still embracing the harmonic bond that can be fostered with the trowel. A Masonic Lodge is an incredibly unique incubator that often creates a decades-old and ever changing experiment—one that forces men to come together and unite in a common goal. The complexities of this experiment lead its members over a rough and rugged road beset with many problems to solve, both internal and external. The rules of this experimental system are not accidental, including the furnace of conflict that it can create. When focused, this furnace can indeed calcify dissent and create the purity that is Masonic harmony and brotherly love.

As seen on New Freemasons SANT Facebook site, courtesy of W. Bro. B. Terry



Old Tiler Talks— THE DIRTY TRICK

"Old Tiler, what would you do about Jones?"

"Give him what he needs, of course."

The New Brother sat down beside the Old Tiler in the anteroom. "Of course, he's a Mason, and all that, but -- but I don't like him. He did me a dirty, trick once. I don't mean I want to get even with him, but I don't think he's a good enough Mason to get relief from this lodge."

"Is he under charges? Suspended? Expelled?" asked the Old Tiler.

"No-o-o-o, but . . . "

"But nothing!" The Old Tiler was emphatic. "A man is innocent until proved guilty. If he is good enough for the lodge to accept his dues when he is prosperous, he is good enough for us to relieve when he is in hard luck."

"But it was a filthy trick he played on me . . . "

"When I was a very little boy," interrupted the Old Tiler, "some fifteen years after the war between the States, my parents moved to a small town in the north. They brought with them a lot of Confederate money. Confederate notes were of no value after the war. My parents gave me some to play with. I thought it was real money, and no Midas had anything on me when I looked at my ten dollar bill!

"I trotted down to the country store and bought the biggest, most red and whitish stick of peppermint candy which ever delighted any small child's heart. The storekeeper wrapped it up for me, unsmiling. I handed him my ten dollar bill. He looked at it a moment, and then took from my hand the candy. He told me the money was no good and I couldn't have the candy.

"In later years I met him, a much older man. He was glad to see me. We chatted a while, and then he recalled my youth. So I told him I hadn't liked him for many years, and why. 'You tell me what you think of a chap who would take a stick of candy from a child for the sake of a penny.'

"He flushed. 'I was just mean,' he said. 'Will you forgive me?' Of course I did, and thought no more about it. But I still didn't like him.

"Several years later his wife appealed to me for aid. He was down and out. He had been so sharp a business man that people didn't like him, any more than I did. And he had failed. They were destitute."

"What did you do?" inquired the New Brother, as the Old Tiler paused.

"All I could, of course," answered the Old Tiler. "He was a brother of the Mystic Tie."

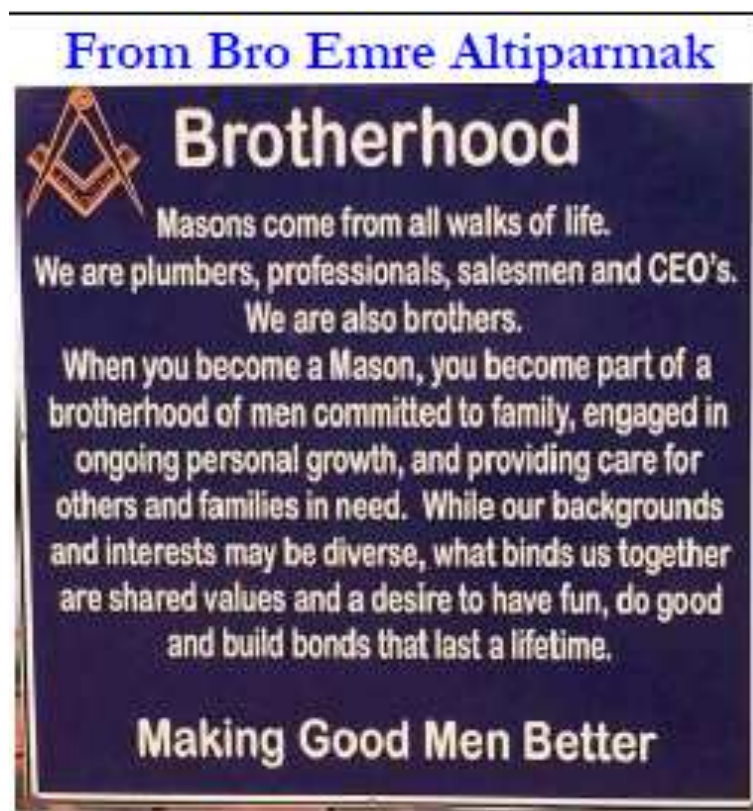
The New Brother sat silent for a minute.

"Something tells me I have been properly spanked!" he said at last. "Of course I have no right to consider a personal matter in connection with a brotherly appeal to the lodge for relief. I shall vote for it. And I'll see if I can't do something personally. I still don't like him and I never will, but -- "

"But you have come to a Masonic viewpoint! -- interrupted the Old Tiler. "That's one of the hardest lessons to learn -- that there are two viewpoints. A man is a man, a neighbor, a friend or an enemy. But he is also a brother. When he appeals to us for that brotherly aid and assistance we have all sworn to render, we have to remember only the brotherhood and not the man. I have never liked the man who took my stick of candy. The incident gave me in opinion of his character which I found unpleasant. But I couldn't vote against him in my, lodge because of it, and I couldn't deny him the relief the lodge should have given him, because of it. Jones may have done you an unbrotherly trick -- but that's no reason for you not to act like a brother to him."

"It is not, and I am going to, but I wish Masons wouldn't do dirty tricks!"

"So do I. But if all men were perfect, there would be no need of Masonry!" grinned the Old Tiler.



SOUTH

The Junior Warden of each lodge has his station in the south and he is placed in that position symbolically to 'mark the sun at meridian', i.e. the middle of the day. This is appropriate as the Junior Warden is appointed as the officer who calls the brethren to and from refreshment, and high noon or high twelve was the hour at which our ancient brethren were regularly called from labour to refreshment.

The location of the south side of the lodge in its laid down position between east and west with the perambulation in lodges. This is in a clockwise direction from east west to west and back to the east on a sunwise basis, i.e. following the apparent motion of the sun across the sky in the northern hemisphere, such an arrangement bring related to the fact that speculative Masonry had its beginnings in the northern half of the world.

It has been suggested in the past that the Corinthian pillar representing beauty is entrusted to the care of the Junior Warden as he is located in the south to observe the sun at noontide which is the beauty of the day.

The naming of the place where brethren partakes of refreshments as the 'South' probably is associated with the fact that the Junior Warden who is in nominal charge of this part of Masonic proceedings is positioned in the south. It has also been put forwarded that such naming may have a connection with the apparent practice of workmen in earlier days having their midday meal on the south (and sunny) side of buildings, again in the northern hemisphere.

Lodge Birthdays

Tony Owen	31
David Blackwell	18
John Warmington	14
Mark Raffles	10
Garry Jordan	8
Brenton Terry	7(J)
John Patterson (Rejoiner)	(7)
	years
Shaun Hibgame	2

News from the South

All quiet in the south although work will shortly start on a storage area for the upcoming Royal Arch ceremonies.

Humour

An American decided to write a book about famous churches around the world. So he bought a plane ticket and took a trip to Orlando, thinking that he would start by working his way across the USA from South to North, then into Canada and on to the rest of the world.

On his first day he was inside a church taking photographs when he noticed a golden telephone mounted on the wall with a sign that read '\$10,000 per call'.

The American, being intrigued, asked a priest who was strolling by what the telephone was used for.

The priest replied that it was a direct line to heaven and that for \$10,000 you could talk to God.

The American thanked the priest and went along his way.

Next stop was in Atlanta. There, at a very large cathedral, he saw the same golden telephone with the same sign under it.

He wondered if this was the same kind of telephone he saw in Orlando and he asked a nearby nun what its purpose was.

She told him that it was a direct line to heaven and that for \$10,000 he could talk to God.

'O.K., thank you,' said the American.

He then travelled all across America, Europe, England, Japan, New Zealand. In every church he saw the same golden telephone with the same '\$US10,000 per call' sign under it.

The American, decided to travel to Australia to see if Australians had the same phone. He arrived at the Gold Coast, in Australia and again, in the first church he entered, there was the same golden telephone, but this time the sign under it read '40 cents per call.'

The American was surprised so he asked the priest about the sign. 'Father, I've travelled all over the world and I've seen this same golden telephone in many churches. I'm told that it is a direct line to Heaven, but in all of them price was \$10,000 per call.

Why is it so cheap here?'

The priest smiled and answered, 'You're in Australia now, son - it's a local call'.