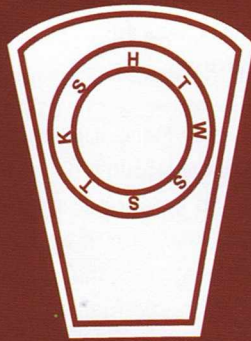




ROYAL ARCH MASONRY



THE COPESTONE
OF THE CRAFT



Royal Arch Masonry



Mark Master Mason

Evidence indicates that there was a form of the Mark Degree in existence as early as 1599. Its present form has evolved over the years from 1769, through the union in 1813, and the Concordant in 1860 to the present day.

The Mark Degree chronologically follows the Fellowcraft Degree and is one of the oldest degrees of Freemasonry. The Degree appears to have grown out of an ancient ceremony in which each Craftsman elected a private mark with which to designate his work and this mark was fully registered with the constituted authority.

The legend of the Mark Degree is singularly instructive and is well founded on statements of Holy Writ relating to a period in the building of the Temple before the death of Hiram Abif. It teaches the lesson that education is the reward for labour and it contains a dramatic message that fraud can never succeed.

The symbol of the degree is the Penny.

Most Excellent Master

This degree deals with the completion of the first Temple, it celebrates the completion and dedication of the whole structure and the placing of the Ark of the Covenant in the Most Holy Place.

The title of Most Excellent Master was bestowed upon those workmen who had proven themselves to be proficient and outstanding masters of their profession.

The degree is based upon Biblical and historical facts and is presented in a manner designed to carry nearer to completion that character building, the foundation of which was laid in the preceding degrees.

The symbol of the degree is the Keystone.

The Supreme Degree of the Holy Royal Arch

Dating from 1752 the Royal Arch was for a long time an appendage to the Third Degree, being regarded by the Ancients as a Fourth Degree conferred in their Lodges.

Over its long history from the earliest days of Masonry it has become the most talked of, and written about Degree in Freemasonry. For many Masons, it is still regarded as the ultimate of the Craft system, having on numerous occasions, been described as "the most sacred part of Masonry" and "the root, heart and marrow of Masonry".

The Royal Arch Degree deals with a lengthy period following the ending of Solomon's reign. The Temple at Jerusalem has been destroyed, the Kingdom of Judea divided, and the tribes taken into captivity. Babylon eventually fell to Cyrus the Great and became part of the Persian Empire. Cyrus set free the Jewish captives and invited them to return to Jerusalem to commence rebuilding the temple.

The legend sets out to restore the genuine secrets of a Master Mason and this is accomplished by workmen who make a momentous discovery during their labours and an interesting and illuminating explanation of the nature of God is conveyed.

It is much more than just the completion of the Third Degree. The Supreme Degree of the Holy Royal Arch is the natural progression in Freemasonry that provides "Genuine Secrets" instead of substituted ones granted in the Third Degree.

When you were ultimately Raised to the Sublime Degree of a Master Mason you were told the Genuine Secrets were lost and that it was necessary to wait until time and circumstance should restore the genuine secrets.

In the supreme degree of the Holy Royal Arch, the lessons about life and death taught in the three Craft Degrees will be complete.

Because it completes the Masonic search and imparts greater knowledge and wisdom, the Holy Royal Arch has quite rightly been called the keystone of the whole Masonic structure.

An integral part of Pure and Ancient Masonry, the Royal Arch Degree is referred to in the Articles of Union at the formation of the United Grand Lodge of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons of England in 1813. Article II proclaims, it is declared and pronounced that pure Ancient Masonry consists of three degrees, and no more, viz, those of the Entered Apprentice, the Fellow Craft, and the Master Mason, including the Supreme Order of the Holy Royal Arch.

The Mark Master, Most Excellent Master and Royal Arch Degrees are very colourful and the candidate takes an active part. The furnishings of the Mark Master Masons Lodge, Most Excellent Masters Lodge, the Royal Arch Chapter and the regalia of the members are rich in symbols which will be explained to you.



WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS TO JOIN THE ROYAL ARCH?

- You should be serious and enthusiastic about Freemasonry and wish to improve your Masonic knowledge.
- You should be interested in completing your Degrees in Pure and Ancient Freemasonry and wish to find that which was lost.
- You should realize that there is no short cut to Masonic knowledge.
- You must be a Master Mason

THE NEXT STEP

If you would like to know more about the Mark Master, Most Excellent Master and the Royal Arch Degrees, just ask the Brother who handed you this brochure or write, phone or fax:

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Royal Arch Masons of Canada**
361 King Street West
Hamilton, Ontario L8P 1B4

Phone: (905) 522-5775

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