

# THE ENTERED APPRENTICE



Issued by  
**GRAND LODGE OF ILLINOIS**  
A. F. & A. M.  
**Committee on Masonic Education**



## THE ENTERED APPRENTICE

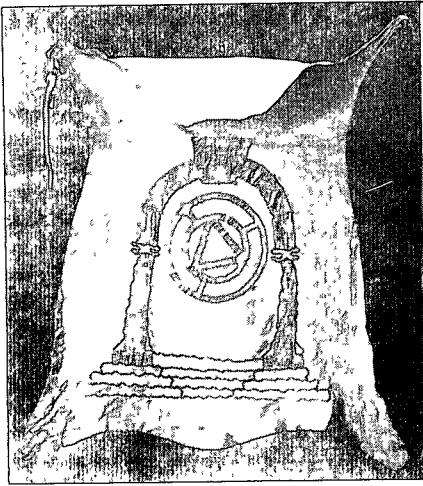
### MEANING OF THE TERM ENTERED APPRENTICE"

Prior to the establishment of the Apprenticeship System the operative masons recruited their workmen from three principal sources; (1) quarry workers, who had acquired some skill in working with stone; (2) masons' servants and laborers, who were readily available for instruction; (3) younger men, such as sons and nephews, of masons' families, who might naturally follow in the footsteps of their relatives

The Apprenticeship system was first developed in London about 1230 A D but was not widely employed in Britain until the 1500's Great impetus was given to cathedral building following the Renaissance, or transitional movement between medieval and modern periods in the 1500's The extent of stone fortifications and castles required by the Crown, called for larger building organizations, better trained workmen, and a plentiful supply of skilled labor.

Special care was used in the selection of young men who sought to become apprenticed to the mason trade No bondsmen were admitted, and only those of lawful blood, whole of limb, and of good moral character were accepted These bound themselves to serve faithfully for a term, generally seven years, under tutorship of a Fellow or a Master Upon his acceptance, the name of the new apprentice was recorded in a book where future records of his advancement might be inscribed.

Clothing generally consisted of a loose tunic tucked into leather breeches and secured with a



This is one of the oldest Masonic Aprons. It is made from the whole skin of an animal. The neck forms the flap. Tie strings are attached to the legs. The emblems are formed by pink ribbons sewed to the skin. It is preserved in the Grand Lodge Museum, London. Operative masons wore aprons similar to this. They were plain skins without emblems.

belt which also served to carry some tools. Over the front the workman wore an apron composed of the whole hide of an animal, probably a lamb or a calf. Gloves were worn when needed to protect the hands from splinters and these were generally gauntleted when working on scaffolding.

The tools used in the various operations within the lodge or workshop and about the building were sometimes the property of the employer, as was frequently the case in the construction and repair

of church properties. In some cases they were furnished by the Master Mason (contractor) or owned by the individual workman. At least one instance is recorded of a Master bequeathing his tools to a favored apprentice. Some of the tools used were the hammer-axe, brick-axe, pick-axe, trowel, square, level, and plumb-rule. It should be particularly noted that several of these tools were also used as moral emblems, a practice peculiar to masons.

The apprentice, in addition to instruction, generally received board, and keep, and occasionally an outfit of clothing. Masons' wages were fixed by statute after 1563. Article VI of the Regius manuscript (about 1390) provides that a Master shall not take as much pay for the work of an apprentice as for that of the skilled journeyman or Fellowcraft.

Starting as a rough hewer, the apprentice was taught to square, cut, finish, and lay ashlars. According to his ability he was also taught to cut straight and curved moulds, to build arches, and to execute carvings. He worked long hours, perhaps eight and three-quarters in the five winter months and twelve and one-quarter in the seven summer months with one hour for dinner and fifteen minutes for "drinking" in the afternoon.

At the completion of his seven years' servitude the apprentice was required to prepare a piece of work and submit it for approval by the Masters and Fellows of the lodge. This was termed a "masterpiece" and upon its approval his name was entered in the book in a ceremony known as "entering."

The ceremony included an oath of fealty to the Craft, the reading of the Old Charges, and the imparting of the Mason Word. The ceremony of entering originated in Scotland in the 1500's. The terms "Enterprentice" and "Interprntice" were both used. "Enter" and "inter" are Scottish forms of "entire," probably meaning graduate apprentice. The ex-apprentice chose two Entered Apprentices to act as his instructors. They instructed him in the signs, grips, and secrets of the grade or degree.

Having attained a recognized degree of skill, the Entered Apprentice was now in a position to work and receive wages. Through a further period of learning he was expected to increase his skill and to acquire the knowledge necessary to admit him as a highly skilled worker or Fellow of the Craft.

In today's lodges the distinction between Apprentice and Entered Apprentice has disappeared and the Entered Apprentice is recognized as a valuable acquisition by the Lodge, for it is he who will be prepared to take up the working tools of the Fellowcrafts and ultimately those laid down by the Master Masons.

### DUTIES OF AN ENTERED APPRENTICE

An apprentice is, as the word implies, a learner, or beginner. In operative Masonry, he was first chosen because of his high standard of morals and character, and after passing the approval of the Masons already members of the Craft, he was privileged to learn from a Fellow or Master, and after he had proven himself and had given assurance of his fitness his name was then entered on the

books of the lodge. He then received the title of Entered Apprentice.

The intender or Master to whom the apprentice was indentured was obligated to teach him theory as well as practice, both by precept and example, until these customs and rules crystallized in a well-established set of rules for the operative Entered Apprentice grade.

There were many operative Entered Apprentices who never advanced. They probably labored as journeymen all their lives.

As Masonry ceased to be operative in character the Entered Apprentice retained the same rights and privileges under the English Constitutions which conducted all work and business in the Entered Apprentice degree. The Entered Apprentice enjoyed, and still enjoys, many rights and privileges under English or Scottish Masonry which under our American practices in Illinois do not now belong to Entered Apprentices.

An Entered Apprentice has the right to instruction in the Entered Apprentice degree and to ask to be advanced. He may attend his own lodge on first degree work only. He does not have the right to recommend a friend for the degrees of Masonry.

It is the duty of an Entered Apprentice to learn the required portion of the degree, but further and more important, he should learn the Masonic teachings which are of fundamental importance and remain forever binding on every Mason. The teachings of Masonry should be permanently incorporated as a part of his active life.

Many Masons erroneously feel that their progress is measured by the number of "degrees" they receive rather than the "degree" to which they exert their energy in applying their Masonic teachings.

The greatest privilege of an Entered Apprentice is his right to participate in the instruction from those more advanced in the teachings of Masonry. It is his duty to conduct himself according to the instructions and charges he has received, at no time casting aspersions or reflections on the Fraternity.

### THE FIRST STEP IN MASONRY

The beautiful ceremonies of this degree, as well as those which follow, portray in allegory, to those who come with receptive minds and hearts, a most complete plan for a full and satisfying human experience. The language is beautiful and carefully chosen and arranged many years ago by men of learning to express in allegory the fundamental truths and cardinal virtues so necessary to accomplish a full life. However, if we glance only at the surface of our ritual we are apt to place a literal translation on its language and forms, and this usually leads to unsatisfactory results. Instead, we must seek below the surface to gain the practical and true interpretations intended.

The ceremonies, including the lectures, explain many of the truths for which we should seek and it is not intended here to duplicate these explanations. Instead it is hoped to supplement them with additional information and suggestions. Perhaps it might be well, at this point, to call attention to the

fact that practical symbolical interpretations of our ceremonies are as numerous and varied as individuals themselves. What may satisfy one person may seem entirely foreign to another. The basic idea, in all forms of development is to be able to think things out individually, with the assistance of others, and draw personal satisfying conclusions.

Freemasonry, as a whole, is an allegory of human life. The Entered Apprentice Degree, as a part of the whole, represents the first step in this experience, namely birth and youthful development. As an individual comes into this life from total darkness, physical and mental, and gradually gains the sense of sight and intellect through the loving care of parents, so a candidate comes from total darkness, so far as the teachings of Masonry are concerned, and gradually develops sight and understanding through the philosophy of Masonry and the brotherly interest of good men.

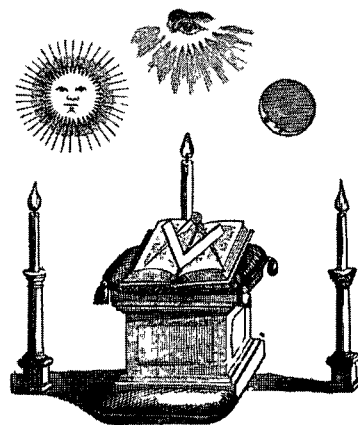
The transition from darkness to light is portrayed in the first degree by passage around the lodge from the North, representing total darkness, through the East, representing the rising sun and dawn of intellectual day, through the South representing midday and the midpoint of individual development, to the West, representing the day's end and the completion of fundamental youthful development. Finally at the Altar, placed in the center of the Lodge to indicate the center of the Universe and the point from which all truth and knowledge emanate, he is brought to light by the assistance of the brethren, and through the aid of the Lesser Lights, representing the sources of physical light, the sun, moon, and Master of the

Lodge, beholds the Great Lights in Masonry from which to learn the spiritual and intellectual truths of Masonry and exemplary living.

The Lodge represents the world into which we are born. Physically it is confined to the four walls but symbolically it extends in all directions from the Altar and the Three Great Lights, from the East to the West, between North and South, from the earth to the heavens, and from the surface to the center. We are told that the Lodge is thus extensive to denote the universality of Masonry and that a Mason's charity toward the faults and imperfections of others should be equally extensive.

As an infant comes into the world without the worldly influences of opinion and prejudices, so a candidate first enters the lodge. Every part of the ritual, spoken and acted, every emblem employed, is significant of the relationship of the candidate to his brethren, his lodge, and society in general. From then on his thoughts and actions should be guided by a better understanding of the will of the Supreme Architect of the Universe.

As in all development, physical, intellectual, and spiritual, the foundation must be well grounded. The very first question asked of a candidate for the degrees is if he believes in the existence of God, because without this belief he has not the foundation on which to build a lasting Masonic life. Our main concern in Masonry is with the intellectual and spiritual development. This is why it is so important that the teachings of the First Degree be so well considered and understood before progressing on to the second step.



Entered Apprentice  
From an 1860 Webb's Monitor

## OBLIGATIONS AND PENALTIES

The word "obligation" in Masonry means a solemn pledge, made on a man's honor, by which he ties himself to the society and at the same time ties himself to the duties and responsibilities imposed by it. The obligation is morally binding, and a man cannot disregard it except at the cost of traducing his own honor. The Masonic obligations are taken by the candidate as binding without limit of time; that is, he accepts them for the remainder of his natural life; he may possibly in the future withdraw from the Fraternity or by it be suspended or expelled, but that will not release him from his pledge.

No man assumes a Masonic obligation, unless he is of understanding age and unless he is of sound mind. This means that the candidate taking it accepts, and is competent to accept, full responsibility for it. If afterwards he is charged with having violated any of the points, he cannot evade the consequences by pleading ignorance at the time he gave his pledge.

In making a covenant, in ancient times, various rites were used, and the contracting parties professed to subject themselves to such a death as that of a victim sacrificed in case of violating their engagements. It was a customary thing to take a heifer and cut it in two and then the contracting parties passed between the pieces. This is particularly illustrated in "The Book of Jeremiah (XXXIV 18-20) where it is said of those who broke a covenant so made that "their dead bodies should be for meat unto the fowls of the air, and to the beasts of the earth."

The barbarity of the mediæval penalties is shocking and their existence in so many local codes of that day bears witness to their great antiquity. Masonry has never inflicted these literal penalties, they are retained in the ceremony as a matter of custom.

Speculative Freemasonry began in England before the organization of the Grand Lodge in 1717. At that time all crimes were understood to belong to either of two classes, heresy or treason. By heresy was meant some violation of the religious principles, morals, and ideals of the church or state; by treason was meant some crime against the political and legal authority of the state. The conventional form of punishment for

heresy was burning at the stake; for treason it was hanging. These sets of punishments, familiar to everybody for many centuries, became so identified with the two types of crime that they became synonymous with them. Our own penalties mean that any crime against Masonry is either heresy, that is, a violation of its teachings; or treason, that is, action against the authority of lodge, Grand Lodge, or against our laws. The penalties stated in the ceremonies are a symbolical presentation of historic principle.

The only penalties ever actually inflicted by Freemasonry are:

1. Reprimand.
2. Definite suspension.
3. Indefinite suspension.
4. Expulsion.

At no point does our Fraternity transgress the province of the civil authorities but, in administering the laws governing the Craft, it is a system of law and order.

## CONCLUSION

Now that you have started your work in Freemasonry, you will want to learn well the duties, privileges and limitations of an Entered Apprentice. We also urge you to conceive of apprenticeship in a larger sense. We would hope that your own ambition would extend far beyond that perfunctory stage and become a Mason in reality and not just in name only. If this be true, you are urgently advised not to be content with the letter and outward form in this your beginning period, but to apply yourself with Freedom, Fervency and Zeal to the sincere and thorough mastering of our Royal Art



Additional copies of this set of Booklets  
may be obtained, at cost, from

**COMMITTEE ON MASONIC EDUCATION**

Post Office Box 110

Rushville, Illinois 62681