

Sketch of R. A. Degree, and exhibition of
some old decorations of a Chapter held in Worcester about
1808 under the Presidency - ~~Admitted~~ Nov. 13. 1867.
1876

M. E. 3 and companions before proceeding to the expla-
-nation of the emblematic representations upon the
walls, I may be permitted ^{perhaps} to take a retrospect of
the degree in Freemasonry which they were intended to illustrate. of R. A. of 7
the Royal Arch degree ~~of~~ the introduction into England
would seem to have taken place about 1772 ~~and 1770~~
since which the expression "Order" has become generally
used, instead of the former Customary ones of "Society"
or "Brotherhood" - I am not about to enter into ^a discussion
as to its merits as a degree, or the reasons ^{of} why ^{it} had
England had for ^{essential} ^{and in the degree} adopting it as a 4th ^{or 5th} degree, ^{it is}
said to be in its ^{essentials} ^{and in the degree} elements, decidedly French; ^{in its origin}
nearly, or somewhat different from in England, with
additions from the higher degrees, then flourishing in
the Continent, but first ^{and} adopted by the Schismatic
or "Ancient" Masons" adherents of ^{the} ^{ancient} ^{masons} ^{who} ^{himself} ^{testifies}
that this degree was first introduced into England
by the G. L. of the "Ancient" masons - Ramsay calls
the French Royal Arch the Non plus ultra of M. 7. -
and these "Ancient Masons" boasted of their being the
C. O. of it, as the summit and perfection of
ancient Masonry. But they are quite in the
wrong, for in truth this degree of the R. A. having
but little genuine in it, and still less good taste,
was fabricated from a confused medley of
passages from the Bible, drawn both from
the old and new Testament, from history, fab

from religious dogmas, and masonic traditions; & the unprejudiced observer cannot here discover the true principles of freemasonry, either in their primitive purity, or comprehensive fulness; nor is there any improvement in the outward form or ceremonial, but only a falling off from the substantial groundwork of freemasonry as it once stood.

"B. G. Bloss fixes the date of the introduction of the R. W. into England in the year 1744, though more probably it was not until 1752, and is of opinion that the English first became acquainted with it during the Austrian war of succession between 1741 to 1742. In the year 1766 the Grand Secy of G. L. of England in a letter addressed to the G. M. of Frankfurt. o. ch. dated June 7th calls the R. W. a society wh. we do not acknowledge, & wh. we regard as an innovation, designed for the purpose of introducing innovations amongst the Brethren, and diverting them from the fundamental rules laid down for us: however it appears to have made its way into the G. L. of England between 1772-74 partly in consequence of the election of a G. M. from the Nobility, the Duke of Athol first the so styled Ancient Masons in 1772: and this R. W. was to be regarded as a counterbalance against their power, a means of retaining their own Brethren, and of attracting others to join. partly in consequence of the influence exercised by the members who had left the G. L. of Ancient Masons.

When the union of the two of Lodges took place in 1813, the original fund Lodge made the concession to the other to recognise the R.A. degree. Since then it has belonged to the system of the United Grand Lodge, & in such a way, that all R.A. Chapters work under a Grand Chapter separate from the fund Lodge -

It is perfectly certain that the R.A. degree was not known and practised in England until the middle of the 18th century, as there does not exist any earlier warrant of a R.A. Chapter, bearing a reliable date -

in his history
Dr. Lawrie writing of the degree in his says "beyond a mere assertion, there is no evidence of any kind of it's existence in this Country previous to 1745. The minutes book of the ^{R.A.} Chapter commences at that date" - it would seem therefore that the degree was known in Scotland before it reached England -

Dr. Oliver in his last Masonic work, a work to which he set his dying seal, having written its preface in January of the present year, - ~~departing~~ ^{to} "being initiated" (to use his own words, anticipatory that event) into the greater mysteries, or in other words "death" in April - writing, of the degree, says "it is too incongruous to be of any great antiquity."

It exhibits too many evidences of modern construction to be received with implicit evidence as a Ceremony practised by the ancient Dionysiacs, or even the more modern College of Freemasons, or ^{initiated}

of the middle ages, to whom we are indebted for the
sublime specimens of science and genius exhibited
in the ecclesiastical buildings wh: still dignify and
adorn every European nation. It is not mentioned
in any record of acknowledged authenticity; nor does
Dr. Anderson give the slightest hint, in his elaborate
history of the order, that it was known at the period
when he wrote — from the same source Dr. Oliver
further states "The introduction of the R. A. S. into the
modern system could not therefore be earlier than the
dedication of St. James's Hall in 1776. Six years after
this date the regulations of the degree were first published
He says I have before me a list of the Officers in
1788 wh: shows the state of the R. A. at that period,
and from the number of Past G. M. 2 wh: was then
an annual office being only eight, the presumption
is that the 4th Chapter had been formed only eight
or nine years previously — viz in 1779. but it was not
until the year 1785 that newly exalted Companions
were required to pay a registration fee — subsequently
communications having been received from the G. Lodges
of Ireland and Scotland of their desire to be held the
Constitution of G. of England the Duke of Athol resigned
and the Prince of Wales became G. Master of Scotland
these public expressions appear to have made a strong
impression on the so called "ancient masons" who
now entertain serious apprehensions that their
authority wd: be altogether superseded by such a
Coalition now became anxious to complete the
desired union of the two bodies, & their overtures
were received in a Masonic spirit by the authorities of the

Constitutional section of the Craft. in the year 1809 it was resolved "That it was not necessary to continue in force any longer those measures wh. were resorted to in or about the year 1739 respecting irregular Masons; and we therefore enjoin the Lodges to revert to the Ancient Landmarks of the Society. An occasional Lodge was then appointed called the Lodge of promulgation, as a preparatory step to carrying out the union of the Ancient and Modern Masons. This ~~was~~ suspension was suspended by on the part of the Ancients by the resignation of the D. of Athol and the appointment of the D. of Kent who declared on his appointment that he only consented to accept it with the view of effecting an Union between the An. & Modern. His R. H. the Duke of Sussex being at the period Grand Master of the Constitutional Masons, the two royal Brothers, with the advice and assistance of three learned members from amongst the members of each division, framed a series of articles for the future government of the United Grand Lodge; ~~these~~ articles were signed & sealed on the 1st Decr 1813, and it was further agreed that nine expert Masons from each of the Fraternities shd. hold a Lodge of Reconciliation to settle the Ceremonies, Lectures & discipline on such a basis that there shd. be perfect unity of obligation &c so that but one pure unadulterated system according to the genuine Landmarks, laws & conditions of the Craft

shall be maintained upheld & practised & throughout the masonic world. When all was settled the event was commemorated by a grand Grand Festival — thus much for the union in 1813 at wh: time it was thought that the Union of A. A. C. M. & the Craft G. L. wd: be extremely desirable & A. R. H. the D. of Sussex was invested with unlimited powers to effect this object. On this resolution the Editor of D. C. M. quarterly reviewed remark; "Well had it been for English D. C. M. if this object had been carried to its fullest extent wh: at some future time may even yet be effected." In another place he remarks, "The R. A. in England is not essentially a dog, but the perfection of the 3rd the entire system requires careful examination — There certainly does appear some anomalies in the English system after all the pains taken to make it perfect. I refer to the names of the Scribes; the foundation of the 2nd temple was laid in the year B. C. 535: after wh: the building was hindered till before Christ 520 when it went on by order of Darius and was dedicated B. C. 515. But It did not come up from Babylon till the reign of Artaxerxes, B. C. 457 being 58 years after the dedⁿ of the 2nd T, & 78 after the foundations were laid: and Hezekiah was not made governor till 12 years after that date — They cd: not then have been purifiers with 2 at the rebuilding of that second edifice — But this ^{error} may have arisen from the fact that Ezra recorded in his first six chapters what occurred from 60 to 80 years before his time, another particular about wh: there wd seem some doubt, in the arrangement of the 3 Principals

whether it should be 2. J. & H. instead of 2. H. & J. (7
was much as the priority was considered superior
to the prophetic office, the foundation being prophet
must thing - from the foregoing remarks I am afraid
that those Brs. Comp who have been in the habit of
valuing the R. A. on account of its antiquity, will be
sadly disappointed to find it shorn of one of its
brightest attributes. But there is more cause for con-
-gratulation than regret, for what can be fained
is more desirable than truth? The degree loses
none of its excellencies by being shown to be of
modern origin. If its claims of antiquity were
not well founded its advocates were maintaining
a fallacy; and often found themselves in a dilemma
when proofs were demanded - "magnum est veritas et
invaluit" -

I find the first book of Constitutions of the R. A. was
issued by the Sup. ^{Wm. Chalmers} in 1788 the laws having
been agreed to in May 1782 the first of them by
whom the above Code was signed was John Allen
who was also the Grand Supervisor over the Counties
of Chester & Lancashire, he was associated with
many men of mark, all under the patronage of
J. R. H. Duke of Cumberland and other eminent
Companions

Having thus far presented what I have been 12
 enabled to collect of the history of the R. A. degree
 in general; I come to the consideration of the Chapter
 held in Worcester, previous to the ~~one~~ ^{existence of this} in which we
 are now met, and for which the warrant under
 wh: we now act was granted 1842 in the
 history of ^{which} I need not detain you as your
 books of record will furnish all information -
 The early chapter appears to have been established
 mainly through the zeal and perseverance of a
 Mr. John Allen ^{of Sidbury in this town} a Solicitor at ~~his~~ ^{his} town whom
 I find joined the Worcester Lodge on the 17th March
 1802, and became its W. M. in 1807 was re-elected
 1808 and again in 1812. it was in the second year
 of his Magistracy, ^{that} he appears of the Master's Chair
 namely in 1808 he appears to have found time
 and opportunity to devote to the formation of a
 chapter, and in conjunction with ^{some of} his brethren
 to raise a sum of little short of £50 for the
 purchase of the necessary regalia; a list of which
 for your information I ^{am able to} will give

12 Banners - 6/.	3-12-0	forward	24. 10. 6
Standards & Designs	12-12-0	3 Gowns 50/.	7. 10. 0
Covering or Veil	1-10-0	1 a. Stoy:	1. 5. 0
Circle & Likers -	1-1-0	Pidestal -	6. 6. 0
Breast-plate belts	1-11-6	8 fill staves } including mahogany	3- 9- 0
5 Caps ~ ~ ~ 12/.	3-0-0	Equilateral Trough	6. 0
Sash ~ ~ ~	12-0	Box	8-0
Box	6-0	balance of a/c	18-0
Continued	24. 10. 6		
			£42 = 12. 6

"As a regular Lodge held the 7th Feb^y 1828 wh: opened
in the first degree and the minutes of the last Lodge
were read and confirmed - It was proposed by
Bro Burton and seconded by Bro Pallard that Bro
Dent be paid the sum of 23 balance of account
due to him, wh: he paid to the Widow Allen in 1819
for a Regalia for Royal Arch Chapter which is now
deposited at the Ben Sec Sur and is to become
the property of the Lodge wh: ^{sum} was promised to be
paid to the late Bro John Allen, and among of
the members of the Lodge having been exalted
by him"

a good evidence that the brethren were in earnest
in the desire to carry out well what they wished
to undertake; whilst however upon this financial
point of my subject, I must bring in the only
records existing in the books of your Lodge by
wh: you could have been made aware of the
existence of a chapter at all, it occurs in the
books of the Worcester Lodge in the
regular minutes of the Lodge to this effect (see above)
and by a simple line at the end of the Treasurer's
book, in which the then property of the Lodge is enumerated,
"Royal Arch Furniture &c Bro Dent 1828 23:0:0"
how long this valuable property remained in that
possession I am unable to state, but in later years
I have reason to know it was sent by direction
of our late Bro Dent ^{affirming of sundry} from his ^{possession} hands to that of
our late Bro P. Bennett, at the sale of whose
effects, it came into my hands by one of those

accidents, we sometimes hear of - Curious and
Comparatively valuable as are the remains of
this property (for many of ^{the} those items referred
to ~~did not~~ ^{are} ~~are~~ ^{missing} and cannot
~~therefore~~ ^{now} be accounted for; having been Custodians
of ~~them~~ ^{now produced}, thus long, I shall be happy to place them
whole at the disposal of the Chapter, to devise
some means for their further ^{preservation} ~~care~~ ^{or} ~~custody~~.
^{otherwise.}
And now having accounted to you of their existence,
preservation so far, and production now, I
proceed to give you, as far as I am able, an
Explanation of their use, and symbolic representation
much of wh. ~~is but fair to inform you~~ I have
derived from books & MSS. in my possession. - In
my short sketch of the history of R. A. M. you have
learned, that previous to the Union in 1813 so much
defection existed, and so much resistance to the
Constituted authority, that you will not be unprepared
to hear that this R. A. Chapter of 1808 in Worcester
was self-instituted, working without any warrant
~~at all~~, and deriving its ritual, and mode of
working, from what I must characterize, as a
very questionable source; that there did exist a
Grand Chapter at this time is most certain but
they were ^{by the same questionable authority} informed, that "our book of Constitutions
is sufficiently explicit ~~on that head~~, wh. empowers
any Craft Lodge (legally warranted) to hold a Chapter,
when and where they please: yet the G. L. takes no
cognizance of any thing beyond the Craft degrees.
There is a G. Chap. but you can please yourselves as

to joining it. It has but lately been revived being
for some years in a declining state & there are but
three chapters ^{in London} under its Banner - but if you wish
to establish a chapter yourselves you can do so
without the consent of any man or body of men
upon the strength of wh: advice the Chapter appears to
have been started sometimes in April of 1808, and
the altar, emblems &c, before ^{you} constituted a large proportion
of the means by which the degree was introduced - the use of

The Altar before you is well known, though not at all
answering the ^{description} of one you are accustomed to
see - it had upon its surface certain ~~and~~ and
wh: were ~~and~~ by that wh: (you now see), it had
nevermore for further illustration, from transparencies
two of wh: I am able to produce, ^{the missing copies} of the ~~other~~ I am
able to state, they illustrated the descent of the ~~other~~ 3rd S^g:
one of these before you ^{the most important} ~~has been preserved~~, it
is said to represent the 3rd G. M. S. K. of S. H. K. of S. and M. A. B.
obligating themselves in the 2nd A: of K. S. directly under the
H. of H. (and the same and in wh: the Ped: was found by
the 3rd S^g:) and in which they bound themselves not to ~~cross~~
unless all were present; the other the descent of the P. S^g:

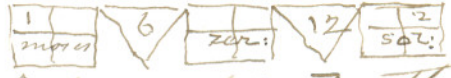
The Triple Triangle (an emblem of admission) not only
alluded to the 3rd G. M. S. L. with the 3rd G. M. in each, but also
to the 3rd A. points ^{as above} - This to be placed on the H. B. open
on wh: the Can: places his h^o at the and is also worn round
the neck of ~~2~~ 2: ~~and~~ on the nine sides, the names of the 9
Or: G. M. of the 3rd G. L. are sometimes placed.

The 12 Colours on the Breast-plate represent the names to be
of the Testament & we have no remains save that wh:
appertained to the occupant of the Chair of ~~H~~ ^{2 know 3} for the 3 ^{paraphrases} ~~for his head~~
~~gear~~, and a black velvet Cap or m. h^o for ~~I~~ ^{the} ~~which~~

mitments ~~are~~ placed in character on the front -
 over the chairs of the 3 Prins. was a canopy so called,
 formed by three sets of devices, divided in the manner
 before you, by black velvet equilateral triangles, upon
 wh. are displayed on one Δ equi^{lateral} triangles, ^{forming 6 points,} on the other 12
 this was the Eastern Canopy - of the subjects illustrated
~~is~~ ^{right over} said to be Moses the meeke, Ahohiab the quick, and
 Bezaleel the Architect - Moses writing the law, Ahohiab &
 Bezaleel engaged in their pious labours as Architects - The
 serpent refers to the broken serpent in the wilderness, and
 the wand of Moses changed into a serpent.

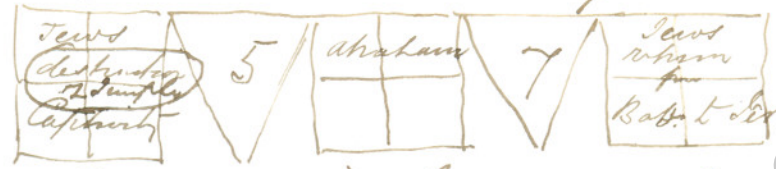
over J. represents S. K. of J. H. K. T. H. H. B. displays the
 wisdom of Sol. in his judgement between the two harlots
 respecting the dead child - Δ H. K. of J. sitting by the shores
 of Tyre holding ^{in his hand} the H. writings presented to him by K. Sol,
 at the grand festival at Jer. on the day appointed for celebrating
 the Cape Stone at Jer. - the other represents H. A. B. on the morning
 of the day of his d. in the act of finishing his last design for
 the public edifices of the King of Israel - the last quarter
 represents 3 bibl. the upper one Gen, and the divine emblem
 of K. Sol. - the middle one Gen, representing that wh. K. Sol. gave
 to H. ^{in preparation} it is shut as representing the false religions of that
 monarch; though he afterwards embraced the Jewish faith.

The under one Gen, and is the divine emblem of our G. of all
 and Superintendent H. A. B.



over I represents 2. H. & J. 2 is
 represented as the Chief of the Captive Jews in Babylon, ^{with}
 the Liberty Cap of liberty on his head, ~~and~~ his chains falling
 off, and just presented with Travel and sword to work with
 and defend his brethren in their pious labours in rebuilding
 the T. at Jer. - and is also emblematic of the Command of
 Cyrus K. of Per. to release the Jews, for that pious and
 glorious work - H. Contemplating the H. law - J. the
 H. P. is represented in his holy vestments on the grand
 day of Expiation - Δ is the Census an emblem of the prayers
 of the High Priest -

of the Western canopy we have but one illustration (17) ~~but~~ it was composed as in the Eastern, of three degrees divided as the others with equilateral triangles; but these with one of 5 points, the other of 7



it was ordered to be placed in the rear of the ~~the~~ journey to the Pth represented the destruction of the ~~the~~ Temple at Jer. by fire and the Jews carried into Captivity to Babylon the books adjacent the famous book ~~of~~ Jeremias on the left the design representing the rejoicing of the Jews when returning from their Captivity to Jerusalem to rebuild their City and Temple

The 4 Triangular degrees are thus explained 1st = 12 pts represents 12 tribes employed in building the 1st Temple at Jer.

2nd of 6 pts is emblematical of the R.A. deg in general and \triangle representing that found in the 6 Chambers and the other ∇ representing the 3 principals Z. H. T. united thereto

3rd of 7 pts alludes to the seven great Ornaments in the first Temple at Jer that were not in the 2nd Jerusalem Temple.

4th = 5 pts. is emblematic of the 5 pts wh. compose the whole of R.A. 1st R.A. generally or called wh. is the foundation point under Z. H. I. or rather Z alone.

2nd the suspended point also under Z as 1st Master

3rd dedicated point likewise under Z.

4th the advanced point under Ezw, Daniel & Zechariah or rather Ezw alone as G. ell. ~~the~~

5th the Circumscribed point under Nehemiah, Eliab & ~~another~~ 1st but now properly under IV or G. Master

reference is made to ~~the~~ Staves. 3 for principals (18
3 for sojourners and 2 for scribes - the sojourners
bearing emblems) P. 5 + from -

12 Banners 6 North + 6 South to be placed in digg-
-onal sockets, but at an exaltation to be held in the hands
of Comp.: these 12 form a \bigcirc round the ped. at the time
when light is restored to the land.

4 Standards

- | | |
|------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 Man represents | Reuben, Simeon, + Gad |
| 2 Lion | Judah, Issachar + Zebulun |
| 3 ∞ | Dan, Asher + Naphtali |
| 4 Eagle | Ephraim, Manasse, Benjamin |

On the front of the 2nd Temple was the inscription "I am
what I am" & past present and to come."
On the 1st of Sol - "I am."

Arminianus Marcellinus —

Micethorus Callistus —

Having thus far received your time in the Consideration
and explanation of these rude productions of the
past, I am for what I have done perhaps more with
the desire to amuse than instruct, since I believe
the degree as at present practiced possesses much
more than our predecessors had to edify and impress:
I ask your serious Consideration of the degree, and
urge you to ~~occupy~~ press on to the occupancy of the
highest positions, that so you may be enabled to
complete your masonic Course, and receive the
secrets reserved for those only who persevere unto
the end.