



THE GUARDIAN



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Newsletter Date
February 1, 2010

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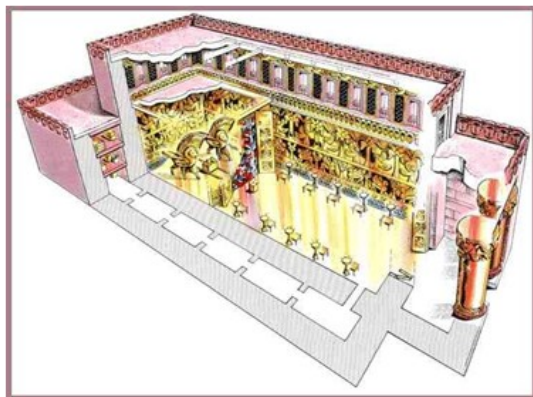
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Note from the Director

Here I am again letting each of you know that we are facing a new year and I wish each of you the very best and a Happy New Year to you and your family. I want to take this time to once again let you know that I am still seeking writers who are willing to write articles to place in the Guardian. To those who promise me that you would write these articles please comply and let me thank you in advance for your good work. To those of you who don't remember please look at the list to the left and if your name is listed please comply with your commitment and help me in this endeavor. With your help we can continue to make the publication of the Guardian a well rounded newsletter. Please be advise that all articles are welcome and any ideas you have about the Yorkrite Institute are welcome.

James "Rocky" Dallas



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Reflections on the Origin of the Royal Arch

By VWB Reverend Neville B. Cryer, M.A.

Prestonian & Batham Lecturer, Past Grand Chaplain of the United Grand Lodge of England, Past Master of Quatuor Coronati Lodge

What I shall examine here is some of the historical evidence about our Mason craft prior to 1750. I shall be concentrating on what can be called the foundation principles of the Order of the Holy Royal Arch and, in none of what I say is there intended or implied any comment, criticism or judgment on what has taken place in the Royal Arch in the 19th, 20th, or our own new century. If I have opinions on these later developments they are not for expression here. My purpose is to look back as far as we legitimately can—and no more. So, let me turn to my task.

I propose to examine five issues. Necessarily, in the limited time available, my reflections on each of these issues will be incomplete. Much else that could be said will have to await the book on Royal Arch developments to 1834 that I am currently preparing. The issues, however, are these:

1. Where does the story of what was eventually the Royal Arch begin?
2. What was really behind the story?
3. Why did it emerge as it did?
4. Why did it acquire its distinctive title?
5. What was its original relationship with the Craft?

That, I think, will be sufficient for the present occasion.

Where does the story of what eventually became the Holy Royal Arch begin? It starts with the clear distinction within the stonemason's trade between, on the one hand, the work of the several grades of Fellow, Master craftsmen or journeymen, and on the other hand the place of the Master Mason (Master of the Work) or Architect Mason. That this division is not my fanciful notion could be proven were there time to quote from the Regulations of 1360 in connection with the work on York Minster.

What we thus see in the Middle Ages is that there was a three level system. Apprentices were selected by the Master Mason but they were approved, admitted and trained by the Fellows in the site lodge. The Fellows saw the lodge as the place where major items of business were decided, especially in regard to wages and terms of service, whilst the Master Mason, and sometimes a Deputy, were located elsewhere. It was the Master Mason who, being better educated and knowing the whole plan, consulted directly with the Chapter of clergy or monks and who dealt with the Court of the monarch or nobility as well as dining at their table. He also often had a tracing room where the specific plans for the proposed building or its detailed parts could be shown to the foremen Fellows who were summoned for that purpose. Here was the threefold grade system of Ancient Freemasonry.

Things were adapted, however, when the wealthier stone masons formed, or joined, a municipal Guild of Freemasons. It was there that Master Masons and Fellows would freely intermingle, whilst still being aware of their separation when on a working site. In the Guild, however, the members were ruled by three—the Right Worshipful Master (R.W.M.) and two Wardens, and not by one Warden as was the practice in the working site lodge. Moreover, the R.W.M. and Wardens wore gowns, hats, gloves and carried wands, as in some Livery Compa-

Reflections on the Origin of the Royal Arch (continued)

anies they still do. The reason why Court members wear gowns is because such officers were once Past Masters. What is clear is that by the 1720s being a Master Mason in the old sense seems to be already affecting the way ceremonies were arranged so that old distinctions were reasserted and led to a division between the secrets of the Fellows and Master Masons. That this was so is confirmed by two facts.

The first fact is the hitherto unexplained event of 1717 when a decision had to be made as to who should be the next Grand Master over London and Westminster lodges. It was decided that the Brother to be chosen should be Mr. Anthony Sayer who is described as “the oldest Master Mason present”. If you think about that statement it becomes a very curious but revealing one. How could Bro. Sayer be a Master Mason when on the one hand he was a bookseller and not a stonemason, and when on the other hand the degree of a Master Mason was not apparently introduced until nine years later? The answer surely has to be that it was already possible to be a speculative Master Mason but the method for attaining this was concealed, or restricted, to a special circle. This would at least account for the recorded event in the 1730s when Dr. Desaguliers, the Deputy Grand Master, made three ‘noble’ candidates ‘chapters’ in the grade of Super Excellent, a name which was later associated with the preliminary ceremony of the Royal Arch. Clearly some were permitted to be ‘in the know’ about a step which was even beyond that of the newfangled Master Mason.

The second fact is that in the early years of the 1700s only those who pass through the Chair are considered as being informed enough to become what is starting to be called not the “Master Mason Part” but the *Holy Royal Arch*. This requirement lasted until at least 1834.

It is such facts as these, though there are also others, that provide the reasons for believing that there always was a further element in 17th and early 18th century Freemasonry which could be recognized as completing the Masonic journey and not requiring one to be invented. It is, however, only when we tackle the 2nd issue, “**What was really behind the Freemason’s journey?**” that we begin to discern more of the full truth.

The answer here begins to be given the moment we look at the heraldic design of the Masons Company. Underneath a shield bearing three towers, divided by a square chevron carrying a pair of compasses, we see their motto, “In God is all my trust”. What this emblem is saying is that whilst the stonemasons exist in order to wield their tools for the erection of buildings this is not the ultimate purpose of their existence. Their eventual goal is so to know their God that they may trust in him to make them good builders and better men.

This is why, at the very outset of membership, even today, a candidate is asked, “In all cases of difficulty and danger in whom do you put your trust?” His reply will determine whether he can



Reflections on the Origin of the Royal Arch (continued)

be accepted by the Brethren and the style of his progress. However expert and clever he may become as a craftsman his Masonic journey is only complete when he discovers the true nature of the God whom he claims to trust and to follow.

This is the real “discovery of the Lost Word”. It is a journey that takes him to the foot of Jacob’s ladder, up the winding staircase to the middle chamber and from the East to the West to discover what he admittedly does not find in what was once called the degree of a Casual Master Mason. How many of us, though, fully appreciate just what is meant by the words of the W.M. when he asks at the opening of this M.M. degree, “What inducement have you to leave the East and go to the West?” Whatever is he talking about? He, the W.M., surely knows what is afoot and, as “WE will assist you” implies, that he is not alone in that knowledge. So he knows where one has still to go to achieve that end. What he should know is that our direction is from the outer east end of the Temple’s Holy Place, between Boaz and Jachin, via the Holy of Holies in the West. Through these veils he then passes into that sacred shrine where God’s true presence is fully known, revealed on a golden plate placed on top of the Ark of the Covenant. That is where a Mason is called to meet and to discover the Mason’s covered word, the Alpha and Omega, the Adonai, and rejoice to be one of God’s beloved sons.

That all this was known when the so-called Third Degree was established is proved by the fact that to this day two very unexpected items appear on some Third degree tracing boards. One of these items is a feature that was once present in all 18th century Moderns lodges and which was thus taken over and preserved on all Dutch Third Degree tracing boards to this day. On the coffin lid is a plate in the shape of an equilateral triangle within which are set the letters of the Tetragrammaton, YHWH, which is pronounced by some as JEHOVAH and by others as ADONAI. In every Dutch Third Degree ceremony is it there for all to see, and the Orator says: “Solomon had the old Master’s Word engraved in a triangle of pure gold, placed in the Holy of Holies.” The ordinary M.M. is apparently not ready to receive its full message.

The other feature on many English Third Degree tracing boards is a scene that shows the veils at the entrance to the Sanctum Sanctorum drawn back, thus revealing the Ark of the Covenant with the overarching Cherubim. The goal spoken of earlier is now clear but this scene again is never explained nor attained and yet that further goal was clearly known to exist as part of what a full Third Degree was all about.

These facts lead us to the 3rd issue, “**Why did this missing element emerge as it did?**” Let me underline the point already mentioned. In some parts of pre-1717 British Freemasonry this knowledge was already available, was properly valued, was communicated to selected “Masters”, and recognized as the “summum bonum” of the Craft. The sources of this knowledge were twofold. One was the content of the Old Charges that embraced a “history” of the Masonic past. The other were the biblical and legendary traditions of the operative stonemasons. Some of these beliefs were expressed in the Mystery & Saints plays in the performance of which the masons shared.

Soon after the appearance of the three degree system that was approved by the premier Grand Lodge, there was an outcry from some Masons in London that Ancient Freemasonry had been altered so that old ways and teachings were being omitted. It is in the 1730s that there appear forms of Craft Masonry that are, we are told, purposely revived so as “to correct the errors

Reflections on the Origin of the Royal Arch (continued)

and reform the abuses which had crept in among the three degrees of St. John's Masonry". Lack of time prevents me from spelling out what those errors and abuses were, or the detail of these alternative ceremonies. However, in one of those ceremonies in what was called the Chapter of the Royal Order circa. 1735, the discovery of the true name of God and proper goal of a Freemason was declared to be in the stable at Bethlehem. Such, it was declared, was what was being lost by the activities of those Brethren who adhered to the Constitutions newly devised by Dr. Anderson.

What is striking is that as soon as another Grand Lodge, that of the *Antients*, comes on the scene in 1751 these other forms of English Freemasonry disappear. It would seem that this was due to the fact that as the older, pre-existing Master Mason material could be once more accepted and practiced, albeit under a new name, there was no longer any need for these alternative forms to continue.

And that takes us to our 4th issue, **"Why did it acquire its distinctive title?"**

It is to be hoped that by now it is clearly appreciated that though we are about to consider a new name, the Holy Royal Arch of Jerusalem, we are not talking about a totally new Masonic phenomenon. The truth is that those who now nailed their colours to the mast and claimed that the Royal Arch was the very heart and marrow of Freemasonry simply had to face facts. Whilst they might rightly believe that what they were re-introducing was the hitherto largely concealed objective of the Craft, they had to accept that the degree of a Casual Master Mason was gaining acceptance and it would be difficult, if not impossible, to drop that usage and substitute for it the Geometric Master Mason degree that did see the Mason Word recovered and the Second Temple story acknowledged.

Moreover, there was the difficulty of introducing an apparently new degree practice that could only be enjoyed by those who had passed through the Lodge Chair. There was therefore only one thing to be done. The story of events before the Temple of Solomon was completed could stand but the true secrets of the Craft journey were still available to those who persevered in the Craft adventure. To emphasize this connection they drew attention to an ancient clause in the Constitutions. This stated that the end objective of Freemasonry was so "to preserve the cement of the Lodge and spread it that the whole Body may remain as a well built Arch". Hence the name with which we are now familiar. And we may thus turn to the 5th issue that we ought to address, **"What was its original relationship with the Craft?"**

For those who belonged to the lodges under the *Antients* Grand Lodge there was no doubt whatever. The degree now being promulgated as the "Royal Arch" was an essential, integral and traditional component of what had been the complete three degrees of the Old Craft: Apprentice, Fellow and Master Mason. This last stage, however, was now divided into three parts: that of Casual Master Mason; Past Master; and the Holy Royal Arch. Further, all these three steps were to be taken within the setting of a Craft lodge. It was not a separate Order. To be a complete Freemason one needed to have undertaken all these grades.

For the more "Modern" brand of Freemasons represented by the Premier Grand Lodge the viewpoint was different. The rule about "three degrees" was an essential landmark. If this was so and the Masons of England were to be held together in a recognizable bond of Union, then resisted. There could be no degree of Installation or Past Master, nor was there any need to

Reflections on the Origin of the Royal Arch (continued)

resurrect any genuine secrets of a true Master Mason. Some Masons were now claiming that such things were essential and to the Premier Grand Lodge it seemed dangerous that those who were doing so were the brethren of York, Irish, French or Jacobite persuasion. The only safe way forward was to batten down the hatches, demand allegiance to the published Constitutions of 1723 and 1738, and declare, as one Grand Secretary plainly did, that “We are neither Arch, Royal Arch nor Antient”.

That’s how they wanted it to be even if it was not fundamentally true. Masons in the 1750s had to make a choice: their true past or the pragmatic present. Is it surprising that they could not agree?

Why The Royal Arch?

By WB William Nelson

Past Master, Walter F. Meier Lodge of Research, Number 281

THERE ARE DEGREES nearly as old as those of the Blue Lodge degrees and some might even predate them, such as the Mark Master. Speculative Freemasonry was already well advance in course of development when the Grand Lodge of England was organized in June of 1717. We have been led to believe that in 1723 when the three degrees first appeared, the Master Mason degree had been added to the two already in use to complete the Triad with which we are familiar. Such was not the case. We know at this time there was confusion about the degrees of Masonry.

Were there one or two degrees of Freemasonry? Was the third degree created by injecting a second degree, taken largely from the first degree, between the first and third degree? Were there one or two degrees, and when did the Master Mason degree start? The third degree, which was already very old, contained the “Master’s Part” with which only those who were elevated to the Mastership of a lodge were invested.

During the formative years of the Grand Lodge of England, there were hovering in the background imitations of something beyond the third degree. It was known as the Heredom, a Hebrew word meaning, Overseers or Provosts. It contained working imitations of the 15th, 17th, and 18th Degrees of the present Scottish Rite and the order of the Red Cross of our Commanderies in the York Rite. The name still exists and is preserved in some of our present degrees. Those of you who are familiar with the history of Masonry in England know of all the problems encountered with all the degrees available during the middle of the 18th century. During this period of degree proliferation, if one had the inclination, time and money, one could obtain hundreds of degrees. Realizing the popularity of Freemasonry, many innkeepers of France concocted degrees to attract wealthy customers. Many Masons in England considered these numerous degrees undesirable.

In England, some of the degrees seemed to have definitive historical background. Within the Fabric Rolls of York Minister, one of England’s greatest Cathedrals, are found some of the

Why The Royal Arch (continued)

Earliest records of Operative Masonry in England. It contains one of the first reference to the Royal Arch Degree (not the first such mention of the Degrees). There are several Masonic authors of old who speculate that the Royal Arch Degree may have originally been part of the Master Mason degree. Let us examine this though.

As a Master we learn we travel from East to West and then from West to East again in search of that which is lost. There are volumes written concerning the philosophy of this search. And, if something is lost, can it be found? There must have been quite a disappointment to the average man, on being raised to the sublime degree of Master Mason, to be told that he had not completed his work and that the secrets pertaining to the ceremony would not be given him. He would instead be given a substitute word. This is unfortunate, but the true Word and Secrets are given in the Royal Arch and in that degree only. Hence, no man can actually become a Master Mason until he receives that supreme and Holy Order.

There are some who profess that there is no real Lost Word, or that other degrees have the Lost Word. It is my observation that this "Mason's Word" was too important to lose. It represents one of the greatest philosophical treatises of Freemasonry. For do we not seek more knowledge, more light in our travels? Every Mason need not know this Lost Word itself, but it is important that every Mason should feel the power that comes with the knowledge of which this Lost Word is a symbol.

Just what is the Royal Arch about? Originally, the Royal Arch degree was only conferred on Past Masters, but since there were so few Past Masters, the Royal Arch was opened to others. In order to do this, a Past Master's degree was arranged to qualify candidates to receive the Royal Arch degree. Recipients of this degree are referred to as virtual Past Masters as opposed to actual Past Masters. The two major Grand Lodges of England—the Moderns and the Ancients, had differing views on how the degrees should work. However, in 1813 when the two Grand Lodges merged, the new United Grand Lodge of England defined Ancient Masonry as consisting of "three degrees and no more, viz. those of the Entered Apprentice, the Fellowcraft and the Master Mason, including the Supreme Order of the Holy Royal Arch." In England, the Grand Master of the Grand Lodge is also the Grand First Principal (Grand High Priest) of the Royal Arch Grand Chapter. Our Grand Lodge Banner has the Royal Arch Emblem on its backside.

The Royal Arch, often referred to as the Chapter, consist of four degrees. For the purpose of this paper the first three will be summarized. The first of the Chapter Degrees is the Mark Master. It is one of the oldest degrees and concerns the "marks" that operative Masons placed upon their work. It also supports and expands the lessons taught in the Fellowcraft degree. In this degree we learn to do justice to all mankind and to love mercy, which equally blesses the giver. It was Albert Pike who said of those who present their Mark in claiming wages (which is a ceremony in the degree), "Be careful, my brother, that thou receive no wages, here or elsewhere, that are not thy due. For if thou dost, thou wrongest someone, by taking which in God's Chancery belongs to Him, and whether that which thou takest thus be wealth, or rank, or influence or reputation."

As stated previously, the Past Master Degree qualifies a candidate to receive the Royal Arch and it is considered a landmark. It teaches that he who rules must first learn the lesson of obedience and the observance of every obligation heretofore taken. The Most Excellent Master

Why The Royal Arch (continued)

Degree is one to the most beautiful in all of Masonry with its multitude of cast and pageantry. It depicts the completion of the Temple and its dedication to the Supreme Being. The lessons are propounded therein are symbolic completion of the Temple of our lives. The Royal Arch Degree is the ultimate, or as many writers suggest, the capstone of the craft symbolic degrees. Let us consider it more fully. No other degree of any rite so fully compliments our Master Mason Degree of which it once was a part.

The Temple of Solomon has been used by our ritualists as a symbol of human character and its construction symbolic of the building and development of that character. The Royal Arch Degree has to do with the destruction of that Temple and its repair or rebuilding. The ritual of England and its chartered Chapters as well our own relies on the REBUILDING of the Temple under Jeshua, the High Priest; Zerubbabel, the King; and Haggai, the Prophet. (Ezra, Chapters 3-6).

In the Royal Arch Degree we recount the fall of the Hebrew people from affluence and prestige to captivity and shame, and their struggle to regain that which they had lost. What was lost was not merely worldly goods and esteem to which they had been accustomed, but also the high idealism inculcated by their priesthood over centuries of wandering in darkness and ignorance to a state of culture and attainment. They had lost the "WORD"...or "INEFFABLE NAME" which was known only to the High Priest and uttered (in a low breath) only once a year in his oblations in the temple. If that which was lost was a single word, then it is recovered in the Royal Arch. However, it is more probable than possible that the "WORD" is use symbolically or even allegorically. How the "WORD" is symbolically regained is developed in the progression of the Degree, which we use as an allegory of life.

The symbolism of the veils is one of the most beautiful of all Royal Arch teachings. The candidate passes through four division of the Tabernacle, each presenting obstacles to overcome. He is attempting to gain admittance to that Holy place where the Grand Council, the High Priest, King and Prophet or Scribe sits. It is an arduous journey through wilderness, desert and river to the banners of Blue, Purple, Red, and finally White, and admitted into the presence into the Grand Council of Heaven where the Supreme High Priest forever presides and reigns.

In the Grand Council, the lost Key is found and opens the way to the discovery of the "LOST WORD." The manner in which it is imparted, over a triangle which alludes to the Deity and in numbers of three (the most sacred of numbers), adds the most impressive scene one can envision. The "LSOT WORD" is recovered through endless search that has engaged the attention of mankind for countless ages. It is the yearning hope of man to obtain through it a knowledge of God and the realization of the blessing of Eternal Life. We are seeking through the shadows and mists for that LOST WORD which is God. Only in the Royal Arch or later only in Death will we know for sure.

The ultimate of Masonic symbolism, it has been said, is found in the Royal Arch degree. To quote Mackey, *"The Royal Arch is the root, heart and marrow of Masonry, without a knowledge of which the Masonic character cannot be complete."* In this degree we travel a rocky road, are tested in our way, until we are at last rewarded with that Grand Masonic Word—The Lost Word! And this is the Holy Royal Arch, the fourth degree that helps us to understand the completeness of Ancient Craft Masonry. It teaches us the ultimate triumph of Truth over all forms of superstition and error, proper respect for the Deity and His works, and worship of one true God under what

Why The Royal Arch (continued)

name he may be worshipped.

Past Master's Degree Explanation

The Past Master's degree, unlike all the other degrees of Freemasonry, sheds no light upon itself. It was formerly conferred only on Masters of Lodges, to instruct them in the duties they owed the Lodges over which they were called to preside, and likewise the duties of the brethren to the Chair. We, as Royal Arch Masons, confer this degree, not only as a preliminary step, but also for the more important purpose of guarding us against a breach of our Masonic obligations. The conferring at this time of a degree which has no historical connection with the other Capitular degrees is an apparent anomaly, which, however, is indebted for its existence to the following circumstances.

Originally, when Royal Arch masonry was under the government of Symbolic Lodges, in which the Royal Arch degree was then always conferred, it was a regulation that no one could receive it unless he had previously presided as a Master of that or some other lodge. This restriction was made because the Royal Arch was deemed too important a degree to be conferred on those who were Master Mason only. But, by confining the Royal Arch to those only who had been actually elected as the presiding officers of their Lodges, it was found that the extension of the degree was materially circumscribed, and its usefulness greatly impaired. So the Grand Master often granted, upon due petition, his dispensation to permit certain Master Masons (although not elected to preside over their Lodges) "to pass the Chair" This was a technical term, intended to designate a brief ceremony, by which the candidate was invested with the mysteries of a Past Master, and, like him, entitled to advance in Masonry as far as the Royal Arch, or the perfection and consummation the third degree.

When, however, the control of the Royal Arch was taken from the Symbolic Lodges and entrusted to a distinct organization namely, Chapters—the regulation continued to be observed, for it was doubtful to many if it could legally be abolished, for the law still required that the august degree of Royal Arch be restricted to Past Masters so our candidates are made to pass the Chair simply as a preparation and qualification toward being invested with the solemn instructions of the Royal Arch.

Your receiving this degree confers upon you no official rank outside of the Chapter. The honors and peculiar privileges belonging to the Chair of Symbolic Lodges are confined exclusively to those who have been "duly elected to preside over and govern such Lodges, and who are called "Actual Past Masters," whereas those who receive the degree in the Chapter are termed "Virtual Past Masters," for, although they are invested with the secrets of the degree, yet they are not entitled to the rights and prerogative of "Actual Past Masters."

Royal Arch Degree Explanation

My brothers, to enable you to understand clearly the true relationship of the Holy Royal Arch to the Master Mason Degree, I shall present to you a brief summary of what is known concerning its origin an development.

Why The Royal Arch (continued)

Royal Arch Degree Explanation (continued)

Masonic scholars are agreed that our present Craft of Free and Accepted Masonry has resulted from the union of two distinct currents, which, flowing down through the Middle Ages quite independently, came together during the seventeenth century. One of these was the symbolic teaching of the guilds of operative masons; the other philosophic speculation of some of the scholars of that time.

It was the gradual introduction of these scholars into the remnant of the old operative lodges that led to the union, and brought about in 1717 the formation of a Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons at London; and from this body we may trace directly or indirectly almost all of our present day Freemasonry. The work inherited by this Grand Body from its forbears consisted probably of a single ceremony, of initiation into the Craft, together with another and most secret ceremony, the Master's Part, which was restricted to installed Masters of Lodges.

By 1723 a system of two degrees was well established, and a year later there had come into use a third ceremony which embodied the symbolism of the Master's Part. This ceremony, amplified by the legend of Hiram Abif, was later expanded into the Master Mason Degree. Admission to this degree was opened to Fellows of the Craft, free from the earlier restriction that had confined the Master's Part to installed Masters; and thereby was created a new class of brethren, namely, that of nominal Master Mason, whose members, however, had never actually served the Craft as installed Masters of Lodges.

Soon after this epoch of transition there came a period of dissension, followed by a division in the Craft, the precise causes which are unknown. It is reasonably certain, however, that one of the major differences had to do with the significance of the Masters Part, then embodied in the Third Degree. Those who withdrew professed to resist innovation, and styled their new Grand Lodge the Ancient Grand Lodge. The original Grand Lodge they called the Modern. These names have persisted in all Masonic historical writings.

It was the Ancients who first introduced into their ritual the degree of Royal Arch Mason, and there is ample reason to believe that this degree embodied the essentials of the Master's Part, which had been removed from the Third Degree for this purpose. And in our own lodge rituals, as well as in those countries unaffected by the division, there are many indications that this Master's Part contained the essence of Craft teaching and was of supreme Masonic significance. Because of this, the Royal Arch Degree has been accorded from the beginning all the respect and reverence to which it was entitled as the supreme order of Ancient Masonry.

In due course the ritual of the Moderns was also modified to provide for a Royal Arch Degree, similar in character, although different in detail from that of the Ancients. And in 1813 all the differences between the two Grand Lodges were buried forever in the formation of the United Grand Lodge of England to embody the authority of both factions.

It was at that time and under the auspices that the half century of controversy as to the true essence and teaching of Ancient Masonry was settled for all time by the second of Articles of Union, which reads as follow: "**Pure Ancient Masonry consists of three degrees and no more, namely: Those of Entered Apprentice, Fellow Craft and Master Mason, including the supreme order of the Holy Royal Arch.**" This statement was then written into, and in now part of, the

The York Rite Research Institute (PHA) is an appendant body of the Phylaxis Society, having determined it to be in its best interest to, dedicate itself to the research and study of York Rite Freemasonry, and thereby creating a safe repository of valuable information for the brotherhood, that does hereby establish itself as a champion of Yorkrite Freemasonry. Membership shall be Regular and special. Regular membership in the institute shall consist of those who are Master Masons, Royal Arch Masons, Royal and Select Masters, Knights Templar, and Knight York Cross of Honour in the United States and abroad. Special Members are those who wish to subscribe to our publication such as library's or other interested parties.

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Royal Arch Degree Explanation (continued)

the Constitution of the United Grand Lodge of England. And this recognition of the Holy Royal Arch as the Supreme Order of Ancient Masonry restored to the symbolism of the Craft the completeness it had lost with mutilation of the Master Mason Degree.



In the picture above the phrase "Kodes La Adonia" adorns the coat of arms of the "Ancients." This translates from the Hebrews as "Holiness to the Lord"

