

FELLOW CRAFT WORKING TOOLS AND OTHER OFFICER JEWELS

The working tools of the Fellow Craft Degree are the square, level and plumb. They have also been adopted as the jewels of the three top officers in each Masonic Lodge: the Master and the Senior and Junior Wardens.

The square is an emblem of morality. It constantly reminds us that we should teach and practice good morals, evidencing a character in accord with the principles or standards of right conduct. Because the square's lesson of morality, justice, of truthfulness and of honesty are the most important taught by Freemasonry, it is only natural that it should be the symbol of Masonry's highest office, the Master of the Lodge, who is the principal teacher in the Lodge.

The level demonstrates that we are all descended from the same creator. We are each human and share the same hope for eventual salvation. Because all people are not created with the same ability, distinctions among us exist. Yet, no eminence of station should let us forget that we are all brethren. He who may be placed on the lowest spoke of fortune's wheel may be entitled to our regard. And, most importantly, death, the mighty leveler of human greatness, will reduce us all to the same state when nothing except our good deeds will survive us. The level of equality is the jewel of the Senior Warden who is responsible for governing the craft when it is at labor. He thus reminds us that we should treat all of our fellow creatures on the level of equality in all our dealings of life.

The plumb admonishes us to walk uprightly in all our undertakings, to hold the scales of justice in equal poise, to observe the thin line between intemperance and pleasure and to make our emotions coincide with the line of our duty. Because the Junior Warden is assigned to superintend the craft during the hours of relaxation from their labors, the plumb is assigned to the Junior Warden to teach the practice of moderation and discretion in the indulgence of our inclinations and to see that the means of refreshment are not subverted to improper or excessive use.

The plumb, square and level evidence the mission of Masonry:

The Plumb: to curb intemperate passions and to reconcile our conflicting interests by observing the symbolic lesson of temperance and rectitude of life taught by the plumb.

The Level: to extend to others the same regard and benevolence which we would appreciate in return, by treating others upon the level of equality.

The Square: to deal voluntarily with others in a way better calculated to preserve peace and good order than any penal law or political regulation could achieve, by always governing our own actions by the square of morality.

As Masons, we meet upon the level of equality, act by the plumb of virtue and part upon the square of morality.

The jewels of the Senior and Junior Deacons are the square and compass combined. The Senior Deacon has the sun in the center of his jewel while the Junior Deacon has a half moon in the center of his. The Senior and Junior Deacons are charged with a general surveillance over the security of the Lodge and serve as messengers for the Master and Senior Warden, respectively. Hence, their jewels, a combination of the square and compass, are an allusion to the necessity of combining justice and circumspection in our actions.

In the center, the Senior Deacon bears a sun as he is the proxy of the Master whose station is in the east, the place of the rising sun. The sun is an emblem of the Master because it shines by its own light, as the Master governs his Lodge by virtue of his power. The jewel of the Junior Deacon is a half moon within the square and compass as he is the messenger of the Senior Warden whose station is in the west and whose duty is to assist the Master in governing the Lodge. As the moon derives its light from the sun, so the Senior Warden derives his authority from the Master. Therefore, as the Senior Warden's messenger or proxy, the proper emblem of the Junior Deacon is the half moon.

In England, the jewel of the Deacons is a dove, an allusion to the dove sent out of the Ark by Noah. The concept of a "deacon" traces itself to the early Christian Era when the Deacons were the proxy of the Bishop or his servant and were often set forth to bring the first lessons to the Neophytes.

Each Deacon always carries a blue rod in the discharge of his duty as a messenger in imitation of the rod of Mercury, the messenger of the Gods in Roman mythology. (The analogous God to Mercury in Greek mythology was Hermes.) The Bible contains many references to rods, typically signifying that the bearer comes as a messenger of God and therefore possesses the authority of his sender. For example, the Rod of Moses is called the "Rod of God" in Exodus as a token that he was the agent of God. By means of this Rod, Moses performed many great deeds and proved that God was with him.

The jewel of the Stewards is a cornucopia or horn of plenty. In Greek Mythology, Zeus was nourished during his infancy by the milk of a goat, one of whose horns was subsequently given to Zeus' nurses during infancy with the assurance that it should furnish them with a never-failing supply of whatever they might desire. The horn therefore became a symbol of abundance. In the Old Testament, we read a number of references to the horn as the proper vessel to hold oil, which Masons use as the symbol for joy. In olden times, it was the duty of the Stewards of a Lodge to supervise the festive occasions of the craft, to assist in the collection of dues and to provide for refreshments to the brethren during their breaks from physical labor. Thus did the horn of plenty or cornucopia become the symbol of the Stewards.

The Stewards also carry Rods but theirs' are white. Their use comes from the political customs of England, where the Steward of the King's household was appointed by the delivery of a staff, the breaking of which dissolved his office.

The jewel of the Tiler is the sword. It enables him to guard against the admission of improper persons to the deliberations of the Lodge. It admonishes us to set a guard over our thoughts, a watch at our lips and a sentry over our actions to prevent the approach of every unworthy thought and deed and preserve our consciences void of any offense toward God or Man. The Tiler's sword should be wavy in shape in allusion to the flaming sword which was placed at the east of the Garden of Eden in Genesis and which turned every direction to prevent access to the tree of life by all improper persons. The Tiler's sword is without a scabbard or holder because it should be ever-drawn and ready for the defense of the Lodge from Tiler's post. As each of us is symbolically a lodge, we should always thus guard our hearts, minds and actions against improper thoughts and deeds.