Masons of California

# EDINBURGH REGISTER HOUSE MANUSCRIPT 1696

*This manuscript was discovered in 1930 by Bro. Charles T. McInnes in the Old Register House, Edinburgh. It is believed to be the oldest known excerpt of Masonic ritual. More about this manuscript, its use and its form as a catechism may be found in John Cooper's History and Development of the Masonic Ritual which is part of this course.*

## SOME QUESTIONES THAT MASONS USE TO PUT THOSE WHO HAVE YE WORD BEFORE THEY WILL ACKNOWLEDGE THEM

Quest. 1 Are you a mason.
Answer yes

Q: 2 How shall I know it?
Ans: you shall know it in time and place convenient. Remark the forsaid answer is only to be made when there is company present who are not masons But if there be no such company by, you should answer by signes tokens and other points of entrie

Q: 3 What is your first point?
Ans: Tell me the first point ile tell you the second, The first is to heill and conceall, second, under no less pain, which is then cutting of your throat, For you most make that sign, when you say that

Q: 4 Where wes you entered?
Ans: At the honourable lodge.

Q:5 What makes a true and perfect lodge?
Ans: Seven masters, five entered apprentices, A dayes journey from a burroughs town without bark of dog or crow of cock

Q: 6 Does no less make a true and perfect lodge,
Ans: yes five masons and three entered apprentices &c.

Q: 7 Does no less.

Ans: The more the merrier the fewer the better chear

Q: 8 What is the name of your lodge
Ans: Kilwinning

Q: 9 How stands your lodge
Ans: east and west as the temple of jerusalem

Q: 10 Where wes the first lodge.
Ans: In the porch of Solomons Temple

Q: 11 Are there any lights in your lodge
Ans: yes three the north east. s w, and eastern passage The one denotes the master mason, the other the warden The third the setter croft.

Q: 12 Are there any jewells in your lodge
Ans: Yes three, Perpend Esler a Square pavement and a broad ovall

Q: 13 where shall I find the key of your lodge,
yes [? = Ans] Three foot and an half from the lodge door under a perpend esler, and a green divot. But under the lap of my liver where all my secrets of my heart lie

Q: 14 Which is the key of your lodge
Ans: a weel hung tongue

Q: 15 where lies the key
Ans: In the bone box

After the masons have examined you by all or some of these Questions and that you have answered them exactly and mad the signes, they will acknowledge you, but not a master mason or fellow croft but only as [? = an] apprentice, soe they will say I see you have been in the Kitchine but I know not if you have been in the hall, Ans I have been in the hall as weel as in the kitchine

Quest 1 Are you a fellow craft
Ans: yes

Quest 2 How many points of the fellowship are ther

Ans: fyve viz foot to foot Knee to Kn[ee] Heart to Heart, Hand to Hand and ear to ear. Then make the sign of fellowship and shake hand and you will be acknowledged a true mason. The words are in the I of the Kings Ch 7, 21, and in 2 chr: ch 3 verse last.

## THE FORME OF GIVEING THE MASON WORD

Imprimis you are to take the person to take the word upon his knees and after a great many ceremonies to frighten him you make him take up the bible and laying his right hand on it you are to conjure him, to sec[r]ecie, By threatning that if [he] shall break his oath the sun in the firmament will be a witness agst him and all the company then present, which will be an occasion of his damnation and that likewise the masons will be sure to murder him, Then after he has promised secrecie They give him the oath a[s] follows

By god himself and you shall answer to god when you shall stand nakd before him, at the great day, you shall not reveal any pairt of what you shall hear or see at this time whither by word nor write nor put it in wryte at any time nor draw it with the point of a sword, or any other instrument upon the snow or sand, nor shall you speak of it but with an entered mason, so help you god.

After he hes taken the oath he is removed out of the company, with the youngest mason, where after he is sufficiently frighted with 1000 ridicolous postures and grimmaces, He is to learn from the sd mason the manner of makeing his due guard whis [? = which] is the signe and the postures and words of his entrie which are as follows

ffirst when he enters again into the company he must make a ridiculous bow, then the signe and say God bless the honourable company. Then putting off his hat after a very foolish manner only to be demonstrated then (as the rest of the signes are likewise) he sayes the words of his entrie which are as follows

Here come I the youngest and last entered apprentice As I am sworn by God and St John by the Square and compass, and common judge to attend my masters service at the honourable lodge, from munday in the morning till saturday at night and to keep the Keyes thereof, under no less pain then haveing my tongue cut out under my chin and of being buried, within the flood mark where no man shall know, then he makes the sign again and with drawing his hand under his chin

alongst his throat which denotes that it be cut out in caise he break his word.

Then all the mason present whisper amongst themselves the word beginning at the youngest till it comes to the master mason who gives the word to the entered apprentice.

Now it is to be remarked that all the signes and words as yet spoken of are only what belong to the entered apprentice, But to be a master mason or fellow craft there is more to be done which after follows.

ffirst all the prentices are to be removed out of the company and none suffered to stay but matters.

Then he who is to be admitted a member of fellowship is putt again to his knees, and gets the oat[h] administrated to him of new afterwards he must go out of the company with the youngest mason to learn the postures and signes of fellowship, then comeing in again, He makes the masters sign, and sayes the same words of entrie as the app[rent]ice did only leaving out the com[m]on Judge then the masons whisper the word among themselves beginning at the youngest as formerly afterwards the youngest mason must advance and put himself into the posture he is to receive the word and sayes to the eldest mason in whispering

The worthy masters and honourable company greet you weel, greet you weel, greet you weel.

Then the master gives him the word and gripes his hand after the masons way, which is all that is to be done to make him a perfect mason

[Endorsement]

Some Questiones Anent the mason word 1696