

OPENING OF THE FIRST DEGREE

Ritual Form For Ordinary Lodge Use

(Officers enter in procession and circle with sun to their places. All officers with staves carry them throughout the Opening.)

Chief: ! (one knock)

Herald: (Rises) Procul, procul esti profani!

Chief: Companions of Emerald Lodge #3 of the Companions of the Stone, assist me to open this lodge in the First Degree. Companion Herald, see that the lodge is properly guarded.

Herald: (goes to door) Chief of the Rite, the lodge is properly guarded.

Chief: Companion Warden, confirm that all who are present have sought and seen the Light of the Stone. !!! (knocks; all rise)

Warden: Companions, give the signs of the First Degree. (All do so; Warden gives them toward Chief.) Chief of the Rite, all have sought and seen it.

Chief: (gives Sign of Enterer) Let the officers and stations of this Degree be proclaimed, that the Powers whose images they are may be awakened in the Spheres of those present and in the Sphere of our Order --- for by Names and Images all powers are awakened and reawakened. (Gives Sign of Silence.) Companion Warden, how many officers preside in this Degree?

Warden: Three officers preside in this Degree: the Chief, the Guide, and the Warden.

Chief: Companion Guide, what stations constitute the Lodge?

Guide: Seven stations constitute the Lodge:

The place of the Chief in the East, the place of the Guide East of the Altar, the place of the Warden in the West: these are the visible thrones.

The place of Water in the North, the place of Fire in the South, the place of the Gateway to the Outer World: these are the visible bounds.

The place of the Altar in the midst of the Lodge: this is the visible center.

Chief: Whose charge is the Gateway?

Warden: I govern the Gateway, admit the Companions, and appoint Sentinels to keep out intruders and prepare the candidates.

Chief: Whose charge is the Lodge?

Guide: I govern the Lodge, prepare the furnishings and regalia, and appoint Assistants to work within the Lodge and guide the candidate.

Chief: And the number of Assistants in the Lodge?

Guide: There are three: the Keeper of Water, the Keeper of Fire, and the Herald.

Chief: Companion Keeper of Water, your station and work?

K of W: My station is in the North, by the place of Water, and my work is to purify the Lodge and the candidate with water.

Chief: Companion Keeper of Fire, your station and work?

K of F: My station is in the South, by the place of Fire, and my work is to consecrate the Lodge and the candidate with fire.

Chief: Companion Herald, your station and work?

Herald: My station is in the East, beside and below the Throne of the East. My work is to lead and report, to make all announcements within the lodge, and to watch over the reception of the candidates. My lamp is the symbol of the Ancient Wisdom, and my Staff is the symbol of its directing power.

Chief: Companion Guide, your station and work?

Guide: My station is to the East of the Altar, facing toward the Altar and the West. My work is to watch over the sanctuary of the Ancient Wisdom, for I am the reconciler between Light and Darkness. I guide the candidates and assist in their reception among us. My emblems are the emblems of the higher aspirations of the soul which should govern its actions.

Chief: Companion Warden, your station and work?

Warden: My station is the Throne of the West. My work is to govern the increase of Darkness and decrease of Light, for I am the Master of Darkness. I keep the Gateway to the Outer World and watch over the Companions in their work. My emblems are the emblems of darkness and Judgement. I bear the Banner of the West, which is the Banner of the Evening Twilight, and I am called Fortitude by the unhappy.

Chief: My station is the Throne of the East, in the place where

the Sun rises, and I am the Master of Light. My work is to govern the Companions of this Lodge in accordance with the rites and laws of our Order, as That Which I represent governs all who seek the Ancient Wisdom. My emblems are the emblems of uncreated fire and of created fire. I bear the Banner of the East, which is the Banner of the Morning Light. I am called Power and Mercy and Light and Abundance, and I am the Revealer of the Mysteries. ! (knocks) Let the lodge be purified with water and consecrated with fire.

K of W/Warden: (purifies) I purify with Water.

K of F/Guide: (consecrates) I consecrate with Fire.

Chief: Let the Circumambulation take place in the Path of Light.

(Circumambulation is performed:

(Chief rises, staff in one hand. Guide goes around hall to NE with sun. Warden, Keeper of Water, and Keeper of Fire fall in with her and line up behind her in that order. Meanwhile Herald rises, and takes his place at the head of the procession when Guide reaches him. The procession then circles clockwise around the hall. The Warden falls out as soon as he reaches his throne; the Guide falls out after passing the Chief twice; all others pass the Chief thrice, and then fall out as they reach their stations. When passing the East, each officer makes the Sign of Entering.)

Chief: The Circumambulation, symbolizing the rise of Light, is accomplished. Let us invoke the Lord of the Universe.

All: Holy art Thou, Lord of the Universe. (Sign of Entering)
Holy art Thou, Whom nature hath not formed. (Sign of E.)
Holy art Thou, the vast and the mighty One, (Sign of E.)
Lord of the Light and of the Darkness. (Sign of Silence)

Chief: Companion Herald, proclaim this Lodge open.

Herald: In the Name of the Lord of the Universe, Who works in silence and Whom nothing but silence can express, and in the presence of the Guardian Companions of our Order, I proclaim that the Sun now rises and the Shadows flee away.

Chief: ! (knocks)

Warden: ! (knocks)

Guide: ! (knocks)

Guide: ! (knocks) Yehi Aur.

Warden: ! (knocks) Fiat Lux.

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Chief: ! (knocks) Let there be Light.

All three together: And there is Light.

(Chief knocks once, and all officers sit.)

(At this point any appropriate work can be done.)

CLOSING OF THE FIRST DEGREE

Chief: ! (One knock) Companions of Emerald Lodge #3 of the Companions of the Stone, assist me to close this lodge in the First Degree. Companion Herald, see that the lodge is properly guarded.

Herald: (goes to door) Chief of the Rite, the lodge is properly guarded.

Chief: Companion Warden, confirm that all who are present have sought and seen the Light of the Stone. !!! (Three knocks; all rise)

Warden: Companions, give the Signs of the First Degree. (All do so. Warden gives them toward Chief.) Chief of the Rite, all have sought and seen it.

Chief: ! (Knocks) Let the lodge be purified with water and consecrated with fire.

K of W/Warden: (purifies) I purify with water.

K of F/Guide: (consecrates) I consecrate with fire.

Chief: Let the reverse circumambulation take place in the Path of Light.

(Circumambulation is performed:

(Chief rises, staff in one hand. Guide goes around hall against sun to SE, Herald falling in ahead of her. Warden, K of W and K of F fall in line behind her, in that order. The procession then circles counterclockwise around the hall. The Warden falls out as soon as he reaches his throne; the Guide passes the Chief twice, and then falls out; the others pass the Chief thrice, and then fall out as they reach their stations. When passing the East, each officer makes the Sign of Silence.)

Chief: The reverse circumambulation, symbolizing the fading of Light, is accomplished. Let us invoke the Lord of the Universe.

All: Holy art Thou, Lord of the Universe. (Sign of Entering)
Holy art Thou, whom Nature hath not formed. (Sign of E.)
Holy art Thou, the Vast and the Mighty One, (Sign of E.)
Lord of the Light and of the Darkness. (Sign of Silence)

Chief: Nothing now remains to us but to recall together in silence the Communion of the Four Elements, and to remember the mysteries we have witnessed and the obligations we keep.

All: So be it.

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Chief: Companion Herald, proclaim this lodge closed.

Herald: (Goes to NE and faces W) In the Name of the Lord of the Universe Who works in silence and Whom nothing but silence can express, and in the presence of the Guardian Companions of our Order, I proclaim that the Sun now sets but its Light remains.

Chief: ! (Knocks)

Warden: ! (Knocks)

Guide: ! (Knocks)

Guide: ! (Knocks) Yehi Aur.

Warden: ! (Knocks) Fiat Lux.

Chief: ! (Knocks) Let there be Light. (All three together) And there is Light.

Chief: May that which we have received maintain and strengthen us in our quest for the Stone. Companion Warden, you will permit the Companions to depart. ! (One knock)