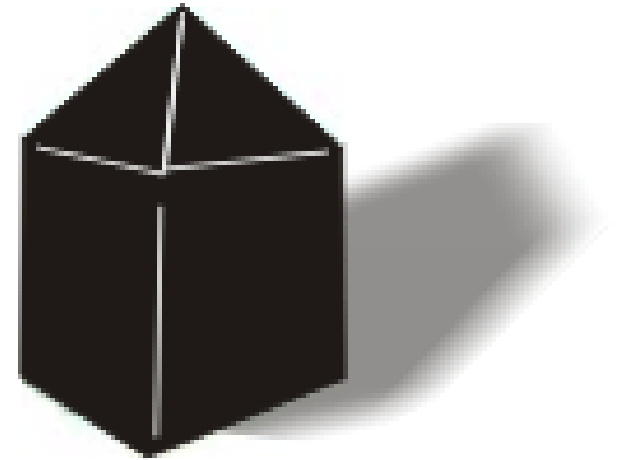


# Masonic Booklet

By Bro. Alec Hall



**The Broached Thurnel**  
and other  
Lost Symbols.

**Anchor, Beehive and Key.**

## **Foreword.**

The target audience for this series of little booklets is the new Freemason in the first year or two of his Masonic career. It is in these early years that they will be most curious about the organisation they have just joined.

These booklets will provide the 'flavour' of Craft history and enable the curious to ascend the first rung in making their daily advance in Masonic knowledge. The booklets may be of some use to Lodge Mentors as a teaching aid as they guide the new Mason through the degrees. You may be able to use the content of these pages to prepare a talk to for your Lodge. You don't have to ask my permission. You are free to use the booklets in any way you wish.

Everything in these booklets is freely available either in books or on the World Wide Web. You may not have the time to carry out an extensive search so these booklets have done the hard, time consuming work for you. You can do your own research when you have the time.

If any senior member of the Lodge disagrees with these notes, he is most probably right and I am wrong.

You don't have to know much about the history and symbolism of Freemasonry to be a good Freemason. However, if you are interested and take the time to learn a little, you may become a better Freemason.

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In the Royal Arch Degree and in the Secret Master, or Fourth Degree of the Scottish Rite, the key is the symbol of secrecy. It is a reminder that the secrets of Freemasonry are to be locked up or concealed in the heart. Isa. 22:22 - Matt. 16:19

You might be interested in some of the more startling differences between 'then' and 'now'. The paragraphs below are taken from Dr. Oliver's Lectures on Freemasonry delivered to the Witham Lodge, Lincoln in 1863.

This short excerpt illustrates the point.

*This will be sufficient to show you in what manner the Brethren worked 180 years ago. The Craft at that time had a series of signs to make themselves known to each other as Masons, which are now obsolete; and I introduce them here as a matter of curiosity. When meeting in the street, they saluted each other by raising their hat with the thumb and two fingers only.*

*Sometimes they would strike the inside of the little finger of the left hand three times with the forefinger of the right; or rub their right eye three times with two fingers; or they would take up a stone and ask, What it smells of? The correct answer to which was, Neither of brass, iron, or any other metal, but of a Mason..*

Have we lost something with the passage of time? More important, are we going to lose still more if (or when) the ritual is modernised?

Alec Hall.

**Ref:**

Dr Oliver's Lectures on Freemasonry.

Bill Thomas, Past Master Shakespeare Lodge No.750 (GLNY)

[http://www.halpaus.net/2005\\_02\\_01\\_archive.html](http://www.halpaus.net/2005_02_01_archive.html)

## The Broached Thurnel

Pritchard wrote and published one of the first in depth exposures of Freemasonry in 1730 named 'Masonry Dissected.'

It was a big seller and was very popular with Freemasons because at that time, the ritual was passed on by word of mouth only. There was no written ritual so Masonry Dissected gave Freemasons, for the first time, a ritual that they could read and which therefore 'standardised' the Ritual nationwide.

It was largely in the form of a Catechism with a lengthy set of Questions to be answered by the Entered Apprentice.

As an example :-

Q. *What are the Immoveable Jewels?*

A. *Trasel Board, Rough Ashler, and **Broach'd Thurnel.***

Q. *What are their Uses?*

A. *Trasel Board for the Master to draw his Designs upon, Rough Ashler for the Fellow-Craft to try their Jewels upon, and the Broach'd Thurnel for the Enter'd 'Prentice to learn to work upon.*

Q. *Have you any Lights in your Lodge? .*

A. *Yes, Three.*

Q. *What do they represent?*

A. *Sun, Moon and Master-Mason.*

*N.B. These Lights are three large Candles placed on high Candlesticks.*



The broach'd Thurnel is one of the Jewels that have been, unfortunately, lost from our modern ritual as it has developed over the centuries but you may come across it and maybe, like me, you would like to know what it was..

The explanation given in Masonry Dissected for these "immovable jewels" was that "The Rough Ashlar was for the Fellow Crafts to try their Jewels on, and the Broached Thurnel for the Entered Apprentice to learn to work upon." Modern Taylor's working shows a slight shift from the 1730 ritual in that "... the

Rough Ashlar for the E.A. to mark, carve and indent on, and the Perfect Ashlar for the more experienced workman to try and adjust his jewels on." Note that, with a shift in meaning, the Perfect Ashlar has replaced the broached Thurnel!

As you can see from the illustration, the Broached Thurnel takes the form of a cube or tower surmounted by a pyramid shaped tower. The word Broach or Broche is an old English word for tower or spire.

The Broached Thurnel has the form of a little square turret with a spire springing from it. Thurnel is from the old French *tournelle*, meaning a turret or little tower. So the Broached Thurnel is a Pointed Cubical Stone and was a model on which the Operative Mason could learn his craft because it had on it the forms of the Square, Triangle, Cube, and the Pyramid.

It is interesting to speculate on the reason why the Broached Thurnel was replaced in the ritual and which Jewel it was replaced by. Did 'Masonry Dissected' inaccurately report the ritual of the 1730's perhaps? Another one of those Masonic mysteries.

*"Once the Rough Ashlar has been worked on and has been made ready, or in other words made perfect, for its final resting place in the structure it is then known as the Perfect Ashlar. The form of a Perfect Ashlar is said to be a cube because the Holy of Holies of the Tabernacle and of Solomon's Temple were cubical in shape, and the Perfect Ashlar is a symbol of the summum bonum [The greatest or supreme good.] of Freemasonry, because everything else in Freemasonry leads up to it."*

By the time the exposure 'Three Distinct Knocks' was published in 1760, the Broached Thurnel seems to have regrettably disappeared from the Ritual..

Other 'lost' symbols are the Anchor, Key and Beehive.

Duncan's Ritual (an exposure but one of the better ones) says this of the Beehive and the Anchor. (The following is taken direct from the actual ritual.):

## The Beehive

Is an emblem of industry, and recommends the practice of that virtue to all created beings, from the highest seraph in heaven to the lowest reptile of the dust.

It teaches us that, as we come into the world rational and intelligent beings, so we should ever be industrious ones; never sitting down contented while our fellow-creatures around us are in want, when it is in our power to relieve them without inconvenience to ourselves. When we take a survey of nature, we view man, in his infancy, more helpless and indigent than the brute creation; he lies languishing for days, months, and years, totally incapable of providing sustenance for himself, of guarding against the attack of the wild beasts of the forest, or sheltering himself from the in-clemencies of the weather. It might have pleased the great Creator of heaven and earth to have made man independent of all other beings; but, as dependence is one of the strongest bonds of society, mankind were made dependent on each other for protection and security, as they

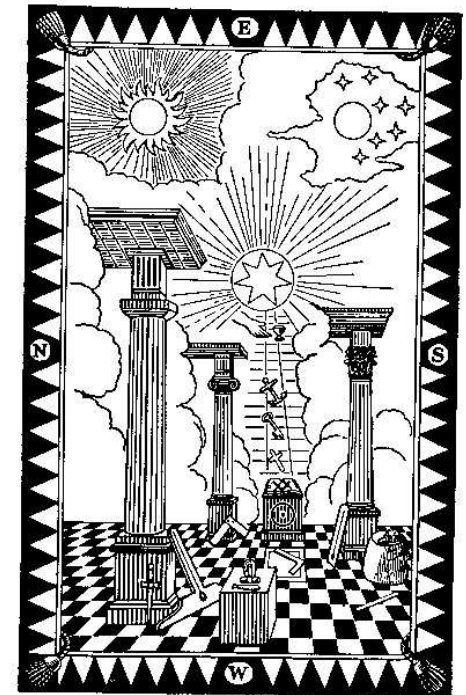


thereby enjoy better opportunities of fulfilling the duties of reciprocal love and friendship. Thus was man formed for social and active life, the noblest part of the work of God; and he that will so demean himself as not to be endeavouring to add to the common stock of knowledge and understanding, may be deemed a drone In the hive of nature, a useless member of society, and unworthy of our protection as Masons.

## The Anchor and the Ark.

The description of the Anchor, taken from the same ritual, is explained in conjunction with the Ark:

The Anchor and the Ark are emblems of a well-grounded hope and a well-spent life. They are emblematical of that divine ark which safely bears us over this tempestuous sea of troubles, and that anchor which shall safely moor us in a peaceful harbour, where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary shall find rest. The Anchor and Ark are a small part of the ritual Master's Carpet Lecture: "The Anchor and Ark stand for that sense of security and stability of a life grounded in truth and faith, without which sense there can be no happiness. " The Key is as seldom expounded upon, but this much is in the ritual - Key Among the ancients the key was a symbol of authority and power; this was true among the Hebrews. Following this ancient symbolism the crossed keys are the Jewel of the Treasurer of a Lodge, because he is responsible for the purse and for receiving and paying out the funds for the Fraternity. In the Royal Arch Degree and in the Secret Master, or Fourth Degree of the Scottish Rite, the key is the symbol of secrecy. It is a reminder that the secrets of Freemasonry are to be locked up or concealed in the heart. Isa. 22:22 - Matt. 16:19



TRACING BOARD—FIRST DEGREE.

The illustration shows the Anchor and the Key on Jacobs ladder.

### Key

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