



## The Wardens

### Past, Present and Future

*"Brother Wardens, you are both too expert in the principles of Freemasonry to require much information as to the duties of your respective offices; suffice it to mention that what you have seen praiseworthy in others, it is expected you will carefully imitate; and what in them may have appeared defective, you will in yourselves amend. Good order and regularity you must endeavour to promote, and by a due regard to the laws in your own conduct, enforce obedience in the conduct of others."*

*Wardens Charge, Installation. Canadian Work, Grand Lodge of B.C, and Yukon*

### **Warden..**

.. from the Saxon "weardian," to guard, to watch. In France, the second and third officers are "Premier" and "Second Surveillant;" in Germany, "Erste" and "zweite Aufseher;" in Spain, "primer" and "segundo Vigilante;" in Italy, "primo" and "secondo Sorvegliante," all the words meaning to overlook, to see, to watch, to keep ward, to observe.

### **Introduction**

Today, our lodges are oriented 'east and west' with the entrance in the 'west.' Following the evolution from operative to speculative, large models representing the two pillars were situated in the west, and their symbolism incorporated into the ritual of the EA and FC degrees. In the early days, the Wardens were both seated in the West, the Junior Warden in the south-west and the Senior Warden in the north-west. Thus they became associated with the two pillars placed there on

either side of the entrance: Boaz in the south-west and Jachin in the north-west. This arrangement is replicated in the Table Lodge, where the Junior Warden is seated at the foot of the south column and the Senior Warden sits at the foot of the north column.

When the present configuration of the lodge was settled and the Wardens' stations relocated – the Junior Warden to the south and the Senior Warden to a central position in the west – miniature reproductions of the pillars were given to them as their badges of office. These are the 'columns' that rest on their pedestals.

In some older jurisdictions, whenever the Wardens move about the lodge, they carry their columns with them just as the Deacons carry their wands. For this reason, there is no such ornament on the Master's pedestal, as his badge of office is the gavel. The question arises about the position of the Wardens' columns – upright or supine – when the lodge is open and reversed when the lodge is closed. The Work gives specific directions regarding this. For this tradition we go to the duties of the two Wardens stated at the time of their investiture.

The Senior Warden closes the lodge by command of the Worshipful Master and may, under specified circumstances, rule the lodge in the absence of the Master. The Junior Warden supervises the Brethren during the hours of refreshment after the lodge is closed. It is yet another example of the rich symbolism found in our lodges.

## **Historical**

The office of Warden is very old; older, probably, than any reference we will ever find in documents relating to the Craft. All through our organization the influence of the Guilds of the Middle Ages can be found; occasionally with ease, sometimes it takes a bit more digging. The fact that Freemasonry derived its Wardens from the Guilds, however, illustrates the close relationship that was shared.

The Guilds of the Middle Ages acted under Royal Charters or Warrants, or similar instruments given by local authority. This legal protection enabled them to work with more freedom, for the good of all, and gave the chartering authority some semblance of control.

In the "libre Albus," or White Book of the City of London 1419, we find the "Oath of the Masters and Wardens of the Mysteries," which was applicable to any Guild - weavers, metal workers, Masons or others. It Reads:

*"You shall swear, that well and lawful you shall overlook the art or mystery of\_\_\_\_\_of which you are Masters and Wardens of the Mysteries, for the year elected. And the good rules and ordinances of the same mystery. approved here by the Court, you shall keep and cause to be kept. And all the defaults that you*

*shall find therein, done contrary there to, you shall present to the Chamberlain of the City, from time to time, sparing no one for favour, and aggrieving no one for hate. Extortion or wrong unto no one, by colour of your office, you shall do; nor unto anything that shall be against the estate and Peace of the King, or of the City, you shall consent. But for the time that you shall be in office, in all things pertaining unto the said mystery, according to the good laws and franchises of the said City, well and lawfully you shall behave yourself. So God you help, and the Saints."*

The Harleian manuscript, the probable date of which is 1660, states that:

*"For the future the Sayd Society, Company and Fraternity of Free Masons shall be regulated and governed by one Master and Assembly and Wardens as the said Company shall think to choose, at every yearly General Assembly."*

The Wardens of a lodge, prior to 1738 were always chosen from the Fellows of the Craft.

In the first edition of "Anderson's Constitution," published in 1723, under the "Manner of Constituting a New Lodge, as practiced by his Grace the Duke of Wharton, the present Right Worshipful Grand Master, according to the ancient usages of Masons," we read:

*"The new Master and Wardens being yet among the Fellow-Craft."*

After the newly elected Master is installed he calls forth "two Fellow-Craft, presents them to the Grand Master for his approbation," and when that is secured they are duly installed as Wardens.

In 1738, when the Book of Constitutions was published, the Wardens, Tiler, Assistant Treasurer and Secretary had to be Master Masons.

Perhaps no ancient usage and custom of the Fraternity is more universal than the government of lodges by a Master and two Wardens. Mackey lists this requirement as his Tenth Landmark, and whether they have adopted Mackey's twenty-five Landmarks or not, all Grand Lodges recognize the Wardens as essential in the formation, opening and governing of a lodge.

The three principal officers of a lodge are universally recognized in the ritual as the essential elements of which a lodge must consist. Only the uninstructed Mason regards the stations of the Senior and Junior Wardens as but stepping stones to the East; necessary waiting posts to which the ambitious must stand hitched for a year before proceeding on his triumphal journey to the Oriental Chair! Not only are the wardens essential to every Entered Apprentices', Fellow Crafts' or Master Masons' Lodge, but they have certain inherent powers, duties and responsibilities. Mackey sets these forth substantially as follows:

*"While the Master may use others than the Wardens in conferring of the degrees, he cannot deprive the Wardens of their offices, or absolve them of the responsibilities."*

The government of a Masonic lodge is essentially tripartite, although lodges may be legally opened, set to labor and closed by the Master in the absence of the installed Wardens, the chairs being filled by temporary appointees. The Senior Warden presides in the absence of the Master, and the Junior Warden in the absence of both the Master and Senior Warden.

No other brethren in the lodge have this power, privilege or responsibility. The Warden who presides in the absence of his superior officer may, if he desires, call a Past Master to the Chair to preside for him; but, no Past Master, in the absence of the Master, may legally congregate the lodge. That must be done by the Master, the Senior Warden in the Absence of the Master, or the Junior Warden in the absence of both.

Mackey further states that while the Senior Warden takes the East by right in the absence of the Master, the Junior Warden does not take the West by right in the absence of the Senior Warden. Each officer is installed with a ceremony which gives him certain duties; a Warden in the East is still a Warden, not a Master. It is the Master's privilege to appoint brethren to stations temporarily unfilled. The Master, whether elected and installed or Senior Warden acting as Master in the real Master's absence, may appoint the Junior Warden to fill an empty West. But the Junior Warden cannot assume the West without such appointment.

On the contrary, in the absence of the Master, the Senior Warden, when present, is the only brother who can assume the East and congregate the lodge. Thus runs the general law, usually adhered to. As has been noted in other Bulletins, Grand Lodges may, and not infrequently do, make local regulations contrary to the Old Constitutions, the Old Charges, even the Landmarks - the fundamental laws of Masonry. If a Grand Lodge rules that in the absence of the Master and both Wardens, the oldest Past Master present may congregate, open and close the lodge; then that law is correct for that Grand Lodge only; but it not in consonance with general Masonic practice, nor with the fundamental laws of the Fraternity.

The Wardens are found in all bodies of Masonry, in all Rites and in all countries.

The fourth of the Old Charges reads:

*"No brother can be a Warden until he has passed the part of a Fellowcraft; nor a Master, until he has acted as Warden; nor Grand Warden, until he been Master of a Lodge, nor Grand Master, unless he has been a Fellowcraft before his election." There is wisdom in the old law; there is wit in the modern practice of electing the Junior Warden to be Senior Warden. No man learns to be Master of a lodge by sitting upon the benches and observing. No brother's fitness to be Master can be observed by brethren unless he is tested. Brethren learn, and are tested as to how*

*they learn and perform, by serving as Wardens, before they aspire to the Oriental Chair.*

A privilege equally high is that of the Wardens in most Jurisdictions; representing the lodge with the Master at all communications of the Grand Lodge. Certain Grand Lodges disenfranchise the Wardens, the Grand Lodge consisting only of the Master of constituent lodges and the officers and past officers of Grand Lodge.

Prior to the formation of the Mother Grand Lodge of England, in 1717, it was the prerogative of every Mason to be present at the General Assembly and to have his voice in its affairs. When the Grand Lodge was brought into being by the "four old lodges" of London, the interests of all were entrusted to the Masters and Wardens.

Preston states that:

*"The Masters and Wardens of all regular particular lodges upon record" form the Grand Lodge. Of the action of Grand Lodges which deprive the Wardens of membership in the Grand Lodge"*

Mackey states:

*"I cannot hesitate to say that this is not only a violation of the ancient regulations, but an infraction of the inherent rights of the Wardens and the lodges."*

The Warden's is a high and exalted office; his duties are many, his responsibilities great; his powers are only exceeded by those of the Master. He is a good Warden who so acts in his South or West as to command for himself the respect of the brethren, rather than demanding it because of law and custom.

## **Assignment #1**

**Discuss the importance of the relationship between the Worshipful Master, the Senior Warden and the Junior Warden and some of the historical links that set that relationship apart from all other officers of the lodge.**

# THE SENIOR WARDEN



## Senior Wardens Jewel

*“Brother ..... you have been elected Senior Warden of this Lodge, and I now invest you with the jewel of your office. The Level, being an emblem of equality, points out the equal measures you are bound to pursue in conjunction with the Worshipful Master, in the ruling and governing of the Lodge. Your regular attendance at our Communications is essentially necessary, as in the absence of the Worshipful Master you are to rule the Lodge, and in his presence assist him in the government of it. I firmly rely on your knowledge of the Art, and your attachment to the Lodge, for a faithful discharge of the duties of your office. Look well to the West.”*

*Senior Wardens Installation Canadian Work, Grand Lodge of B.C. and Yukon*

The importance of this office is second only to that of the Worshipful Master, and for this reason his regular attendance at all communications of the lodge is essential. It is expected, during his year as Senior Warden, to carefully understudy the duties entailed in the office of Worshipful Master, so that when he succeeds to that important office he will be well prepared to undertake the government of the lodge with complete confidence. In the absence of the Worshipful Master he shall succeed to and be charged with, all his powers and duties, but shall not assume his chair. In such an event it is his prerogative to ask a Past Master to occupy the Worshipful Master’s chair and conduct the lodges business. He is expected, during his year, to familiarize yourself with the Book of Constitutions, especially those sections concerning Constituent lodges. The Book of Ceremonies he will also find

helpful, and he should, of course, be thoroughly familiar with the by-laws of your lodge, which knowledge will stand him in good stead in the year ahead. It is recommended that he observe carefully the duties of Worshipful Master sufficient to carry out the duties now and in the future with a greater measure of self-confidence, which will mean so much in making for a happy and successful year of office. Use the year as Senior Warden to prepare a plan for your anticipated year as Master: plan an agenda, prepare committees, and initiate a meeting book with an agenda for each meeting. Most of all prepare yourself for the duties ahead for they will be here quicker than you think.

### **Senior Wardens Checklist (Things to consider on the road to becoming Worshipful Master)**

Planning for your year in the lodge and the planning of strategies that might follow along from the Master's year and with agreement of the membership.

The position of Chairman of the Committee of General Purposes

The selection of officers of the lodge in the year he becomes Master - committees, chairs of committees, and special committees to work on special projects he will plan

The installation program of his installation as Master.

Understanding and studying the bylaws of the Lodge and constitution of Grand Lodge. These are the rules and guides.

Visiting during the years as Warden - it is these years that Wardens may find good friends that will be present at the installation and may be able to offer assistance in the installation. It is important that the installation of the SW as Master is his choice of who helps. He wishes to select brethren that he feels have become strong friends for life, always considering the traditions of a lodge for some choices of brethren for specific work. A difficult task if the Installation is taken completely out of his hands and brethren who have 'done' this work for years, assume it will continue to be so. This is where diplomacy comes in!!

The team of WM, SW, JW, is a critical part to the work of the lodge and one the SW is in position as Master, he must look to bringing on board the new JW with all the regular meetings of the three that would cement a strong binding of the lodge.

Ruling the Lodge in the absence the Master (from the West).

It is recommended that in his year as SW observe how the lodge actually functions; e.g. how long items take to perform in his lodge: the opening; the closing; calling off and on; balloting; conferring degrees and the timing of lectures; receiving visitors; receiving the DDGM (GM) if they attend; business of the lodge [secretary reading of minutes, accounts, correspondence, etc.]; That way the SW knows when he is Master what time he has for other 'things'...Education, discussions,

## Assignment #2

**Within the context of your own lodge list another 5 items which directly impact the Senior Warden in his preparation to become Worshipful Master**

## THE JUNIOR WARDEN



### The plumb rule, symbol of the Junior Warden

*“Brother ....., you have been elected Junior Warden of this Lodge, and I now invest you with the jewel of your office. The Plumb-rule, being an emblem of uprightness, points out the integrity of the measures you are bound to pursue in conjunction with the Worshipful Master and Senior Warden in the ruling and governing of the Lodge. To you is entrusted, with such assistance as may be necessary, the examination of visitors and the introduction of candidates. To you also is committed the superintendence of the Craft during the hours of refreshment. Your regular and punctual attendance is particularly requested, and I have no doubt you will faithfully execute every duty which you owe to your present station. Look well to the South.”*

*Junior Wardens Installation Canadian Work, Grand Lodge of B.C. and Yukon*



Next to the Worshipful Master and the Senior Warden your office is the most important in the lodge, for in the absence of those officers, you are to govern the lodge. Being one of the three senior officers, your regular attendance at all communications is essential. As with the other senior officers; a study of the Book of Constitutions, and the Book of Ceremonies, together with the by-laws of your lodge is recommended, particularly those sections dealing with your duties as Junior Warden. The superintendence of the Craft during the hours of refreshment is one of the important duties assigned to your office. You would do well to study carefully the other sections of this booklet, which contain much valuable information which you will find very helpful in the performance of your duties in your present and future offices. As you are now a member of Grand Lodge, entitled to all its rights and privileges, you should endeavor to attend the Annual Communication held in June each year.

## **Symbols and Symbolism of the Wardens Position**

Freemasonry is said to be a system of morality, veiled in allegory and illustrated by Symbols. This holds true for the Junior Warden (J.W.) and the Senior Warden (S.W.)

Both positions are introduced to their respective Symbols and Symbolisms at the time of their 'Initiation'. *To quote from the Book of Ceremonies:*

*"... you have been elected Junior Warden of this Lodge, and I now invest you with the jewel of your office. The Plumb-rule, being the emblem of uprightness, points out the integrity of the measures you are bound to pursue in conjunction with the Worshipful Master and Senior Warden in the ruling and governing of the Lodge." "To you is entrusted, with such assistance as may be necessary, to examination of visitors and the introduction of candidates. To you also is committed to the superintendence of the Craft during the hours of refreshment."*

*"I also present to you this column. It is a representation of Corinthian architecture and is emblematic of the column of beauty which is situated in the South, and is represented by you, Brother Junior Warden. During the hours refreshment you will erect this column in a perpendicular position and during the hours of labour you will place it horizontally."*

Brother Norman McEvoy suggests and I quote:

*"Personally, I am of the opinion that these directions deal with matters of the BODY and, together with the Stewards & Stewards helpers, he is responsible for*

*the bodily comfort of the Brethren when not at labour. This can extend to such functions as; (a) the welcoming of brethren & visitors & ensuring their seating comfort. (b) the organization and suitability of refreshment periods involving food & beverages. (c) other (non-ritual) situations as assigned by the Master of the Lodge”*

*.“ .... you have been elected Senior Warden of this Lodge, and I now invest you with the jewel of your office. The Level, being an emblem of equality, points out the equal measures you are bound to pursue in conjunction with the Worshipful Master, in the ruling and governing of the Lodge.” “.... in the absence of the Worshipful Master you are to rule the Lodge, and in his presence assist him in the government of it.” “I also present to you this column. It is a representation of Doric architecture and is emblematic of the column of strength which is situated in the West, and is represented by you, Brother Senior Warden. During the hours of labour you will erect this column in a perpendicular position and during the hours of refreshment you will place it horizontally.”*

Brother Norman McEvoy suggests and I quote:

*“Personally, I am of the opinion that these directions deal with matters of the MIND and, together with any assistance that he may require from other officers, he is responsible for the administrative needs of the Lodge. This can be seen in functions such as; (a) the chairing of General Purpose Meetings (b) the delivering of the Charges to the Candidates in the various Degrees. (c) being ready & able to stand-in for the Worshipful Master in case of need.” Both Wardens are given the following lecture during their ‘Initiation’ which clearly points out their responsibilities. To quote from the Book of Ceremonies: “.... you are both too expert in the principles of Freemasonry to require much information as to the duties of your respective offices; suffice it to mention that what you have been praiseworthy in others, it is expected you will carefully imitate; and what in them may have appeared defective, you will in yourselves amend. Good order and regularity you must endeavour to promote, and by a due regard to the laws in your own conduct, enforce obedience in the conduct of others.”*

To further describe the Symbolism of the Level and Plumb Rule I refer to ‘A Journey to the Spirit’ by Bro Norman McEvoy:

*“Levels and Plumb Rules are closely related. In each of the time honoured patterns a line is caused to hang dead vertically by means of a weight, or bob. The bottom face, or edge, of the level is at right angles to the line, and indicates horizontals, while the sides of the plumb-rule are parallel with the line, and indicate verticals. The Freemason is taught that the purpose of the level is to lay*

*levels and prove horizontals, and that the plumb-rule to try and adjust uprights, while fixing them on their proper bases.”*

Bro Norman McEvoy sums up the level and plumb rule this way and I quote:

*“The Balance is an old Masonic emblem, but the close relationship between it and the level is seldom recognized, although to the Romans the craftsman’s level was libella or libra, both words meaning ‘balance’, and the word for ‘levelling’ also meant ‘weighing’. The balance is the symbol of justice and impartiality, and the figure, too, of man’s merits and demerits, one weighed against the other, and also of the things of the soul in one pan outweighing all the things of the earth loaded into the other pan.”*

*“The Plumb Rule of uprightness being applied to all parts of our living and the Level of equality to bring those parts back into balance and harmony.”*

## **Raising and Lowering the Wardens’ Columns**

The following explanation of this lodge process is to be found in ‘The Freemason at Work’ by Harry Carr

**Q.** Why do the Wardens in a Craft Lodge raise and lower their Columns? The usual explanations in the Lectures, etc., seem trivial, in view of the importance many Brethren seem to place on the Columns being moved at the right time and placed in the right position.

**A.** To find an acceptable answer to this question, we have to go back to early ritual. There was a time in 18th century English practice when both Wardens stood (or sat) in the West; this is confirmed by a passage in *Masonry Dissected*, 1730:

Q. Where stands your Wardens?

A. In the West.

Incidentally there are several Masonic jurisdictions in Europe which retain this ancient practice; but sometime between 1730 and 1760 there is evidence that the J.W. had moved to the South, as shown in *Three Distinct Knocks*, 1760, and *J. & B.*, 1762, both using identical words:

*Mas. Who doth the Pillar of Beauty represent?*

*Ans. The Junior Warden in the South.*

The business of raising and lowering the Wardens' Columns made its first appearance in England in *Three Distinct Knocks*, in which we have the earliest description of the procedure for 'Calling Off' from labour to refreshment and 'Calling On'. The 'Call-Off' procedure was as follows: The Master whispers to the Senior Deacon at his Right hand, and says, 'tis my Will and Pleasure that this Lodge is called off from Work to Refreshment during Pleasure: then the Senior Deacon carries it to the senior Warden, and whispers the same words in his ear, and he whispers it in the ear of Junior Deacon at his right hand, and he carries it to the Junior Warden and whispers the same to him, who declares it with a loud Voice, and says it is our Master's Will and Pleasure, that this Lodge is called from Work to Refreshment, during Pleasure; At this point we find the earliest description of the raising and lowering of the columns and the reason for this procedure. then he sets up his Column, and the senior lays his down; for the Care of the Lodge is in the Hands of the Junior Warden while they are at Refreshment. N.B. The senior and junior Warden have each of them a Column in their Hand, about Twenty inches long, which represents the Two Columns of the Porch at Solomon's Temple, BOAZ and JACHIN. J. & B. gives almost identical details throughout.

Unfortunately, apart from the exposures, there are very few Masonic writings that deal with the subject of the Wardens' Columns during the 18th and early 19th centuries. Preston, in several editions of his *Illustrations*, 1792- 1804, in the section dealing with Installation, allocates the Columns to the Deacons [sic]. It is not until the 1804 edition that he speaks of the raising of the Columns, and then only in a footnote, as follows: When the work of Masonry in the lodge is carrying on, the Column of the Senior Deacon is raised; when the lodge is at refreshment the Column of the Junior Deacon is raised. [There is no mention of 'lowering'.] Earlier, in the Investiture of the Deacons, Preston had said: Those columns, the badges of your office, I entrust to your care . . . Knowing, as we do, that the Columns had belonged to the Wardens since 1760, at least, and that many of the Craft lodges did not appoint Deacons at all, Preston's remarks in the extracts above, seem to suggest that he was attempting an innovation (in which he was certainly unsuccessful). The next evidence on the subject comes from the Minutes of the Lodge of Promulgation, which show that in their work on the Craft ritual in readiness for the union of the two rival Grand Lodges, they considered 'the arrangements of the Wardens' Columns' on 26 January 1810, but they did not record their decision. We know, however, that most of our present-day practices date back to the procedures which that Lodge recommended and which were subsequently adopted—with occasional amendments—and prescribed by its successor, the Lodge of Reconciliation. It is thus virtually certain that our modern working in relation to the raising and lowering of the Columns was then adopted,

following the 1760 pattern, not only for 'Calling Off and On' but also for Opening and Closing generally. Up to this point we have been dealing with facts; but on the specific questions as to why the Columns are raised and lowered, or why the care of the Lodge is the responsibility of the J.W. while the Brethren refresh themselves, we must resort to speculation. In the operative system, c. 1400, when the Lodge was a workshop and before Lodge furniture was standardized, there was only one Warden. His duty was to keep the work going smoothly, to serve as a mediator in disputes and to see that 'every brother had his due'.

We have documentary evidence of this in the Regius and Cooke MSS of c. 1390 and c. 1410, and this idea apparently persisted into the Speculative system where the S.W.'s duty in 1730 now included closing the Lodge and 'paying the men their wages'. But in the Speculative system there were two Wardens, with the Senior, by ancient tradition, in charge of the Lodge (or the Brn.) while at work. It seems likely that in order to find a corresponding job for the J.W., he was put in charge of the Lodge (or the Brn.) while at refreshment. There was no mention of Wardens' Columns, or procedures relating to them, in the exposures of 1730 or earlier.

We may assume therefore that they were a more or less recent introduction in the period between 1730 and 1760 that the 'raising and lowering' procedures came into practice at about the same time and were subsequently authorized at the Union in 1813. The 1760 explanation is still in use today and for the reverse of that procedure, which is virtually impossible.

The only satisfying explanation in this case is the simplest of all, i.e., the procedure was laid down to mark a distinction between the Lodge when open, and when it is closed or 'Called Off'. During the 18th century, there is ample evidence that much of the Lodge work was conducted at table, punctuated by 'Toasts' and drinking, while the Lodge was still Open. If the Lodge was 'Called Off', while a meal (as distinct from liquid refreshment) was to be taken, and the Brethren remained in their seats at table, then some signal—recognizable at a glance—would have to be shown, to indicate whether the Lodge was at work, or at refreshment. (I am indebted to Bro. Colin Dyer for this final paragraph, which emphasizes the practical reasons for Columns up, and down.)

I further found this article on the Warden's Columns in 'The Educator' by Norman McEvoy and I quote: One of the most frequently corrected errors experienced in Lodge is the failure of a Warden to raise or lower his column appropriately. Let an absent-minded Junior Warden forget to lower his column when the lodge is called from refreshment to labour, and many a frantic gesture from the side lines will remind him of his dereliction! Almost every Brother

sitting in the lodge room knows the proper position of the Wardens' columns during labour or at refreshment, and will hasten to signal a Warden if the emblem of his office is awry.

"Up in the West during labor; down in the West at refreshment. Down in the South during labor; up in the South at refreshment."

Every Brother knows that simple rule for positioning the Wardens' columns. It is generally believed, as stated in Mackey's Encyclopedia, that the Senior Warden's column represents the pillar Jachin, while the Junior Warden's column represents the pillar Boaz, those having been impressive adornments on the Porch of King Solomon's Temple. Their names signify Establishment and Strength. If asked for a symbolic explanation of these pieces of furniture, the average Craftsman will reply that the Junior Warden's column represents the pillar of beauty & the Senior Warden's, the pillar of strength. But what has become of the



Examples of Senior and Junior Wardens Columns

Curiously, William Preston in various editions of his Illustrations of Freemasonry (1792 – 1804), in the section dealing with Installation, assigns the columns to the Deacons.

Since the columns had belonged to the Wardens for at least thirty years earlier, and since many of the Craft lodges in England did not appoint Deacons at all, Preston must have been in error, or was introducing an innovation, which the passage of time has shown to have failed. Preston also taught that the Senior Deacon's column was to be raised during labour, and the Junior Deacon's at refreshment.

To those who like Masonic traditions neat and historically logical, it may be disconcerting to learn that in some lodges the Wardens did not have columns on their pedestals. They had truncheons, whose modern function is to serve as billy clubs for policemen. An Irish lodge in the 18th century had a by-law reading:

*”there is to be silence at the first chap of the Master’s hammer, and likewise at the first stroke of each Trenchen struck by the Senr and Junr Wardens.”*

The Rev. George Oliver (1782-1867), a prolific writer about Freemasonry, quotes an inventory of a lodge at Chester, England, in 1761, which includes *”two truncheons for the Wardens.”*

There are still lodges today which denominate the Wardens’ emblems of authority as truncheons, not columns. There can be no doubt that the Wardens’ columns are the result of Freemasonry’s interest in the art of building & of architecture and its allied skills and sciences.

The Grand Mystery of Freemasons Discovered, 1724, mentions the pillars of Solomon’s Temple, but gives them this significance: they represent the “Strength and Stability of the Church in all ages.” Samuel Prichard’s Masonry Dissected, 1730, the first expose to reveal a third degree in Masonic ritual, refers to “Three Pillars” that “support the Lodge .Wisdom, Strength, and Beauty.” This seems to be the earliest mention of those three virtues symbolized by pillars, which of course had no reference to those in the “Old Charges” or to those on the Porch of Solomon’s Temple. They were purely symbolic; they had not yet become a part of the lodge furniture.

In those early days of Speculative Masonry, the Wardens’ duties were probably different from those they have now. Some writers believe they had duties similar to those of the Deacons today. They had no pedestals or pillars, because the latter were usually drawn on the floor, or “floor cloth”, to be referred to during ritualistic instruction, but were certainly not then a part of the Wardens’ equipment.

As symbols of the pillars on the Porch of King Solomon’s Temple, or as representations of the three principal orders of architecture which the three principal officers of a lodge symbolize, they are to be found in the earliest catechisms and lectures of Speculative Freemasonry.

Undoubtedly, as suggested by contemporary references and illustrations, the pillars soon became artistically designed pieces of furniture to stand in the lodge room as objects for study. There was probably no uniformity of practice in this development. Some lodges had large columns, some small; some drew them on the

floor cloth. Some had no pillars at all. From the creation of such pillars and from their association with the three principal officers of the lodge undoubtedly came the columns of the Wardens.

The Wardens of a lodge had acquired miniature columns representing the pillars, Jachin and Boaz, which they carried in processions and raised or lowered on their pedestals to indicate whether the lodge was at labour or refreshment. That procedure was apparently confirmed by the Lodge of Promulgation which paved the way for the union in 1813 of the “Modern” and ”Ancient” Grand Lodges in England. Thus the raising and lowering of the Wardens’ columns became sanctioned by custom and Grand Lodge approval.

It is not a complicated or mysterious symbolic act; it is a simple means to indicate silently to entering Brethren the status of the lodge. Since the Junior Warden’s column is erect during refreshment, logic suggests that it be similarly arranged when the lodge is closed, i.e., not at labour. Generally, however, the Wardens’ columns are left just as they happen to be placed at the time of closing, except in those Jurisdictions whose official ritual has decreed a proper positioning of the Wardens’ columns at closing.

### **Assignments 3**

**What are the rights/ responsibilities and symbolism of the Junior and Senior Warden in the opening and closing of the lodge.**

### **Assignment 4**

**Describe in details the duties and responsibilities of your Senior and Junior Warden**

## **Tracing Board Lectures of the Senior Warden and the Junior Warden**

Tracing boards are painted or printed illustrations show the various emblems and symbols of Freemasonry. They can be used as teaching aids during the lectures that follow each of the three Masonic Degrees, when an experienced member explains the various concepts of Freemasonry to new members.

The Masonic tracing board took several decades to develop into its current pictorial form. It may be generally described as a framework of board or canvas,



on which the emblems of any particular Degree are inscribed, for the assistance of the Master in giving a lecture.

It is so called because formerly it was the custom to inscribe these designs on the floor of the Lodge-room in chalk, which was wiped out when the Lodge was closed.

It is the same as the Carpet, or Tracing-Board. The washing out of the designs chalked upon the floor is seen in the early caricatures of the Craft where a mop and pail are illustrated.

These would soon be put aside when Lodges met in carpeted rooms. Then marking out the Lodge with tape and nails or shaping the symbols in wood or metal to be laid upon the floor or table or pedestal as the case might be in the Lodge showed the symbols.

Such use of separate symbols we have seen in English Lodges, as at Bristol, where the ancient ceremonies are jealously and successfully preserved.

An easy development would be to picture the designs on a cloth to be spread out on the floor when in use or folded up for storage.

Then there would be the further movement to the stereopticon slides of a similar character, and which find frequent use in the United States.

The last years of the 18th century saw lodges no longer satisfied with the crude and makeshift drawings made previously. Many of them adopted some form of ready-made representation painted on a board or cloth.

The very need, which gave rise to the Tracing Board, and from the way they were developed, early designs were naturally diverse and individual. It is not possible to say when sets of three came into use.



**Junior Warden Lecture  
Entered Apprentice**



**Senior Warden Lecture  
Fellowcraft**

The oldest known set of tracing boards in Great Britain belongs to Lodge Faithful, which was founded at Norwich in 1753 and now meets at Harleston in Norfolk. These boards are dated 1800 and depict the modern form of rough and perfect ashlar on the First Degree board.

The modern ashlar is also depicted on a set of tracing boards painted by William Dight in 1808 for the Lodge of Unanimity and Sincerity, which meets at Taunton.

A set of tracing boards painted for the Chichester Lodge in 1811 by Josiah Bowring, a portrait painter of London, also depicts the modern ashlar. These boards appear to be the prototypes of the famous set painted by John Harris in 1821, from which most modern tracing boards are derived. The rough ashlar on tracing boards is usually placed at the foot of the Corinthian column representing the Junior Warden, who traditionally is in charge of the apprentices.

The perfect ashlar is usually placed at the foot of the Doric column representing the Senior Warden, who is traditionally in charge of the craftsmen.

It was at the turn of the 18th Century that the first tracing board designs as we enjoy them today came into fashion. In 1801 John Cole published the designs for a set of tracing boards in his *Illustrations of Masonry*. These designs we would classify as charts rather than artistic designs.

The basic features in all these wide range of tracing boards, however, remained essentially consistent. With the establishment of the United Grand Lodge of England in December 1813, when all ritual working was standardized, Tracing Boards also began to gain a certain amount of regularity, although there are no records of any specific attempt at such standardization.

## **Assignment 5**

**Consider 5 paragraphs of each lecture and in your own words explain what they are and what they mean as if to a candidate.**

## References

Materials consulted in the preparation of this course;

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5. Museum of Freemasonryry <https://www.mof.org.au/>
6. Masonicshop.com/Masonic-articles/article?a=493, The Wardens Short Talk Bulletin-Vol IX April, 1931 No.4