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## PREFIX TO QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

In the Masonic Year of 1976 1977 the Education Committee of Toronto Masonic District No. 3 Grand Lodge of Canada in the Province of Ontario, under the direction of R. W. Bro. Frank J. Bruce P.D.D.G.M. compiled 47 questions which were sent to the late W. Bro. Harry Carr P.J.G.D., Past Secretary and Editor of Quatuor Coronati Lodge No. 2076 United Grand Lodge of England. These are his answers. It is to be noted that the answers refer to the Ritual and customs of the Grand Lodge of England in 1976.

This transcript of the Questions and Answers edited by W. Bro. Nelson King FPS

Question 1. What is meant by the term "Symbolic Degrees" and "Symbolic Lodges?"

Answer 1. If we look at the whole panorama of Masonry as it has developed in the last 600 years, we find dozens of Rites and hundreds of Degrees with an infinite variety of headings under which they could be classified or grouped. Many of them have been rearranged; many have disappeared. If I try to answer the question as simply as possible, I would say that the term "Symbolic Degrees" is a synonym for the Craft Degrees, as distinct from the so called "Capitular Degrees," e.g., those associated with Rose Croix and Knights Templar. Personally I greatly prefer the title "Craft Degrees," because they are the only Degrees which owe their origins directly to operative Masonry and which developed entirely out of the Mason Trade itself. All the others are either offshoots or appendages.

Question 2. Is there any documented account of the date or year when Masonry, as we know it today, was first practiced?

Answer 2. The essence of this question lies in the words "Masonry, as we know it today." Our present system was virtually standardized in England around 1813 1816, from materials that had been in existence since the 16th century, materials which had been gradually amplified, and later overlaid with speculative interpretation, especially during the second half of the 1700's. I believe it would be impossible to prove the existence of more than one single ceremony of admission during the 1400's. A two degree system came into use during the early 1500's and in 1598 1599 we have actual Lodge minutes [in tow Scottish Lodges] of the existence of two degrees, the first for the "Entered Apprentice," and the second for the "Master of Fellow Craft" with evidence that they had been in use for some time. Outside the Lodge, the Master was an employer and the Fellow Craft was an employee; but inside the Lodge they shared the same ceremony, which was conferred only upon fully trained masons. This point is very important when we come to consider the inevitable appearance of a system of three degrees. The earliest minute recording of a third degree was in a London Musical Society in May 1725, and highly irregular. The earliest record of a regular third degree in a Masonic Lodge is dated March 25, 1726 at the second meeting of Lodge Dumbarton Kilwinning, [now No. 18 on the register of the Grand Lodge of Scotland].

Question 3. What is meant by the "Perfect Points of Entrance?"

Answer 3. They were first mentioned in ritual text dated 1696, when they clearly referred to secrets of the Entered Apprentice ceremony. In a series of questions asking how a mason could prove himself the first answer was; "by signes [sic] tokens and other points of my entrie [sic]."

In those days the first Point was "heill [sic] and conceall [sic]" and the second point was the penal sign of an Entered Apprentice. In effect, the "Points of Entrance" were a brief summary of essential elements in the initiation ceremony, but they developed eventually, into a series of "trap questions," with very cautious answers.

In the late 1700's, Preston in this "First Lecture of Freemasonry" defined the "Points" as comprising the ceremonies of "preparation, admission and obligation." In another version of the same Lecture, he gave the Points of Entrance as a set of code words,

"Of, At, and On," and the question ran:

Question: Of what?

Answer: In relation to apparel,

Question: At what?

Answer: The door of the Lodge.

Question: On what?

Answer: On the left knee bare.

The "Of, At and On" became firmly established in our English Lectures in the next 20 30 years, until they eventually settled into the form in use to this day.

Question 4. What are the Points of Entrance?

Answer 4. Of, At and On.

Of what? Of my own free will and accord.

At what? At the door of the Lodge.

On what? On the pint of a sharp instrument presented to my N. L. B.

Question 5. The "three lesser lights" are placed in the East, South and West. Why is there none in the North?

Answer 5. The answer to this question is in the First Lecture, Section III; "...because the Sun darts no ray of light from that quarter to our hemisphere." And the search for light is a major inspiration in our ceremonies.

Question 6. What is the meaning of the word "Cable tow?" What is meant by the reference to its length?

Answer 6. The Oxford English Dictionary contains a number of cable combinations, e.g., "cable rope, cable range, cable stock," etc., but does not give "cable tow."

The word tow has another significance, in addition to pulling or dragging, it also means the fibre of flax, or hemp, or jute. A cable might be made of plaited wire, or of metal links, or of manmade fibres, but the combination "cable tow" which seems to be of purely Masonic usage, implies almost certainly the natural fibre from which the rope is to be made.

The "cables length" is a unit of marine measurements, 1/10th of a sea mile, or 607.56 feet. We use the term "cables length" in two senses:

1. "A cables length from the shore," implying that anything buried at that distance out at sea, could never be recovered.
2. "If within the length of my cable tow." In operative times, attendance at Lodge or assembly was obligatory and there were penalties for non attendance. Early regulations on this point varied from 5 to 50 miles, except "in the peril of death." In effect, the length of the cable tow implies that masons were obliged to attend, so long as it was humanly possible to do so.

Question 7: Why does the Candidate wear the cable tow while taking his Obligation? He comes of his own free will, yet the cable tow is a symbol of restraint.

Answer 7: With us, the cable tow serves the practical purpose of restraint. As a symbol it has several different meanings. I suggest:

1. The implicit duty of regular attendance, 'if within the length of my cable tow, as noted in another question and in the Obligation of the 3rd degree.
2. Humility, it, the frame of mind in which one enters the order.
3. Submission, to the regulations, tenets and principles of the Craft.
4. The bondage of ignorance until one sees the light, later on.

Question 8: What is the meaning of the word "hele?"

Answer 8: To hide, conceal, keep secret. The Oxford English Dictionary quotes the earliest English use of the word in c. 975 over a thousand years ago.

Question 9: Why must the Brethren be convinced that the Candidate has no metal about him, "or else the ceremony, thus far, must have been repeated?"

Answer 9: The reasons given in the "Charity Lecture" are adequate and complete. The reason for this deprivation arises from an ancient superstition of "pollution by metals" as shown in the account of the building of King Solomon's Temple. [1 Kings, 6 & 7] "...there was neither hammer nor axe nor any tool of iron heard in the house while it was in building." The proof or test is required, because all other points in the "preparation" of the Candidate are readily visible during the perambulations, but the absence of metals would not be visible, hence the special test.

Question 10: Explain the significance of the Candidate's dress in the 1st Degree. Why does he bare his right arm, left breast and left knee and why is he slipshod? When did this first originate?

Answer 10: The sum total of these procedures were not standardized in England until 1813 1816. The individual items came into use at various times and the records are very scanty, e.g. The "left knee bare" appears in the Dumfries No. 4 M.S. dated 1710. The "Naked Left Breast" appears in Masonry Dissected 1730 and the Wilkinson MS, 1730. Slipshod, and other hints relating to clothing, appear in a curious question and answer in Masonry Dissected:

Question: How did he bring you?

Answer: Neither naked nor clothed, barefoot nor shod.

The French exposures, from 1737 onwards, say that "he is made to wear his left shoe as a slipper." The bare right arm, came in much later and I have found no explicit record of that until the 1780's, in Preston's First Lecture. The Graham MS, 1726 says "poor penniless and blind..." and also "half naked, half shod, half barefoot, half kneeling, half standing." As to the reasons for these preparations etc. The stands on Holy Ground [Exodus III, v. 5] and to confirm the bond in the Obligation [Ruth IV. v 7. 8.] The bare right arm. to show that the Candidate carries no weapons. The naked left breast to ensure he is male, and the left is nearest the heart. The left knee because Christian Brethren. take their Obligation on the left knee. These are the traditional reasons, but practices are not uniform in different countries.

Question 11: Why is Ruth IV used as a base for Obligation in the first Degree?

Answer 11: I am not no sure if I understand the Question. The Book of Ruth was designed to demonstrate the quality of David's ancestry. When the childless Ruth was widowed, the law required that her husband's nearest kinsmen should marry her, that she might bear children "to raise up the name of the dead". [Ruth IV, 5]. The nearest kinsmen was unable to accept the obligation, and, in witness that he had relinquished his rights, he slipped his shoe [Ruth IV, 8]. Boaz "a mighty man of wealth" and also a kinsmen, claimed the right, married Ruth and they became the great grandparents of David. [See "Slipshod" in Question 10.]

Question 12: What is the significance of the tracing Board?

Answer 12: The earliest reference I have been able to find, is in the minutes of the Old King's Arms Lodge, No. 28, London. On Dec. 1st, 1735, the Lodge resolved...that the Foot Cloth made use of at the initiation of new members should be defaced. The Lodge was ten years old in 1735, and the Foot Cloth must have been worn out. The Tracing Board, or "Floor Cloth" evolved from the early custom of drawing on the floor of the Lodge, a collection of symbols relevant to particular degrees. Originally, it was the Tyler's duty to draw the designs in Chalk and Charcoal, and the Candidates duty at the end of the ceremony to wash out the design with "mop and pail." Later the designs were drawn or painted on "Floor Cloths" for more permanent use, and the collected symbols became the basis for the speculative interpretation of the ceremonies, which were eventually standardized as the Lectures on the Tracing Boards. As to the significance of the Tracing Board's; in the course of time the "Lodge Board" became "the Lodge" and acquired a quality of sanctity. "The Lodge stands on Holy Ground" and none were allowed to stand or walk on it. Finally, when the Consecration ceremony came into use, the essential elements of consecration, Corn, Wine, Oil and Salt were poured on "the Lodge", i.e. on the Tracing Board.

Question 13: Where does the Penal Sign of the First degree originate?

Answer 13: It appears in several of our oldest ritual documents from 1696 onwards. In England this [and several other familiar penalties] appear to have been in use as Naval punishments, authorized by the Admiralty from C. 1451 onwards.

Question 14: What is the symbolism of the Rough Ashlar and the Perfect Ashlar?

Answer 14: The more or less official symbolism of the Ashlars [as given in the first, Lecture Section 5] says that the Rough Ashlar is for the Entered Apprentice to work on, and the Perfect Ashlar is for the use of experienced Craftsmen when they test or adjust their tools. But symbolism in Freemasonry is a very personal matter, and I believe that we enter the Craft to build spiritual Temples within ourselves. For me

the Ashlars are our symbolic foundation stones. In English practice, the Candidate is placed in the North East part of the Lodge [where the Rough Ashlar rested in former times] and he stands at his own spiritual foundation stone, to hear the Charity Lecture, one of the great lessons of Freemasonry. In the Second Degree, he stands in the South East corner, for a similar exhortation. Broadly, I equate the two stones with the Candidate, upon his entry and progress in the Craft. He comes, in rough, unpolished condition, unaware of what the Craft holds for him, and ignorant of its teachings. Later, the polished stone marks his progress in the Craft and his greater understanding of its objects, duties and responsibilities. I should add that the Ashlars belong to an era when there were only two Degrees [Entered Apprentice and Master or Fellow Craft], and this may explain why the Perfect Ashlar, representing the peak of Masonic experience, comes in the second Degree. Finally, there are my own personal views and I do not speak with the voice of authority. A few moments of speculation may lead you to other ideas, so much the better!

Question 15: What is the origin of the Tyler and what were his duties?

Answer 15: Originally "tiler", one who lay Tile. The spelling "Tyler" is said to be obsolete, except in Masonic usage. The duties of the Tyler have been many and various, but some of them have disappeared since that Office first came into practice in the early 1700's. They are listed here, roughly in the order in which they appeared:

- [1] To guard the door of the Lodge, or Grand Lodge.
- [2] To deliver the Lodge Summonses.
- [3] To "draw the Lodge" i.e. the Tracing Board.
- [4] To prepare the Candidates for each Degree, and announce them.
- [5] To take care of the Clothing, Jewels, and equipment.
- [6] To take charge of the Signature Book to ensure that all signed it.
- [7] To give the Tyler's Toast at the end of the after proceedings.

Question 16: The year on an Application Form is shown as A.L. Why?

Answer 16: The A.L. Anno Lucis [the year of light] appears on many Craft Documents. Our system of Masonic chronology is based on a pre Christian tradition that the Messiah [Christ] would be born 4000 years after the Creation of the Universe, so that the calendar, in early Christian times, counted the Creation [Anno Lucis] as 4000 B.C.

Question 17: Where did the word Cowan come from?

Answer 17: The Oxford English Dictionary says "Derivation unknown," and defines it as "One who builds dry stone walls [i.e. without mortar] ... applied derogatorily to one who does the work of a mason, but who has not been regularly apprenticed or bred to the trade." The word is probably of Scottish origin, and it appears, in that sense, in a large number of Scottish Masonic documents from 1598 onwards [For further details see Carr's, "The Freemason at Work," pages 86 89].

Question 18: What is the meaning of symbolism in Masonry?

Answer 18: Symbolism in Freemasonry is the means by which we explain or interpret the tenets, principles and philosophy of the Craft. The answer to Question: 14 may perhaps serve as an example.

Question 19: What is the peculiar characteristic of the colour Blue in Craft Lodges?

Answer 19: The question seems to imply a quest for the symbolism of the two shades of Blue used in our [English] Craft Regalia, and I answer in that vein. The M.M. Apron in use today, was first prescribed

in the Book of Constitution, 1815, by the newly United Grand Lodge. It was then "plain white lambskin ... with sky blue lining and an edging 1 1/2 inches deep, "virtually identical with today's Apron which is officially described as with "light blue lining and an edging not more than 2 inches in width ..."

Before that time there seems to have been total freedom of choice, both as to the colour of lining or edging, and of the various decorations, printed, painted, or embroidered with which they were frequently adorned. On 24 June 1727, the Grand Lodge prescribed that Masters and Wardens of private Lodges should "wear the Jewels of Masonry hanging to a White Ribbon"; there was no mention of Aprons, which were Presumably of white skin. On 17 March 1731, Grand Officers were ordered to wear "blue Silk Ribbons" [ie Collars] and "Aprons lined with blue Silk". A note in the Rawlinson MS. c. 136, dated 1734, makes the earliest mention of "Garter Blue Silk" for the Grand Masters' Aprons and from this time onwards Grand Officers' Collars and Aprons are always linked with Garter Blue just as they are today. It is important to observe, however, that until 1745 at least, the blue Robes of the Garter Knights were of "a light sky blue" and there is useful confirmatory evidence that this was the original shade of Grand Officers' regalia, sky blue! In 1745, the light sky blue was altered by King George II to the present rich Garter blue, to distinguish his Garter Knights from those who received that honour from the Pretender. Our present use of the "garter blue" so prescribed in the modern Constitution dates back to c. 1745. Finally, it must be emphasized, that in all the scanty evidence on the choice of colours of English regalia, there is never any hint "that the colours of Freemasonry were selected with a view of symbolism". [For the details in this, I am mainly indebted to a valuable paper, Masonic Blue: in A.Q.C. 23, pages 309 320, by the late Bro. Dr. W. J. Chetwode Crawley].

Question 20: What is the basis of Masonic Chronology?

Answer 20: See Question: 16.

Question 21: What are the Landmarks of Masonry? How many are there?

Answer 21: The best definitions of the term as applying to the Craft are:

[a] A landmark must have existed from "the time whereof the memory of man runneth not to the contrary."

[b] A Landmark is an element in the form or essence of the Society of such importance that Freemasonry would no longer be Freemasonry if it were removed. With such strict definitions it would be difficult to compile a list that genuinely conforms to those standards. The U.G.L. of England does not have a list, though many lists have been compiled [ranging from five to fifty items] and adopted by various Grand Lodges. The best known list in the Western Hemisphere was prepared by Albert Mackey who actually used the two definitions quoted above. His list of 25 items was adopted by several USA jurisdictions, even though the majority of them could not possibly pass the strict test which he had himself prescribed. To illustrate the difficulty, I quote two of Mackey's Landmarks which cannot be Landmarks because we can actually date the period of their first appearance in Masonry. From the "Freemason at Work" p. 264, Mackey's No. 1 ... and Mackey's No. 2 ...]. To avoid a lengthy discussion of the kind of rules, customs and privileges that could never qualify as Landmarks, the following is a Code of Landmarks adopted by the newly formed Grand Lodge of Iran in 1970, Which I compiled for them at their request:

a) Belief in God, the G.A.O.T.U.

b) Belief in the immortality of the soul.

c) The V.S.L. which is an indispensable part of the Lodge, No Lodge may be opened without it and it must remain open and in full view while the Lodge is at labour.

d) Every Mason must be male, free born and of mature age.

e) Every Mason, by his tenure, expresses his allegiance to the Sovereign or Ruler of his native land.

f) The Landmarks of the Order can never be changed or repealed. [For further details see Carr, "The Freemason at Work" pages 263 267].

Question 22: What is the essential use of Tokens in Freemasonry?

Answer 22: To provide a virtually invisible means of proving oneself a Mason and of testing a stranger. The ritual says that they can be used "by night as well as by day".

Question 23: What does the word Free signify when connected with Free Masonry?

Answer 23: The origin of the term has given rise to much debate. In the earliest attempt to regulate building wages in 1212, the "freemason"s [sculptores lapidum liberorum] were distinguished from "masons" [caementorie] as separate classes of workmen, notably in their wages. Masons were paid 1.5 to 3 pence per day; freemasons received 2.5 to 4 pence, and in numerous later building accounts, the "freemason" [in a variety of spellings] are regularly distinguished from "rough masons", layers, rough hewers, hard hewers, etc. Originally, the term "freemason" is undoubtedly connected with "freestone" [franche pere in Old French, where the "franche" means of excellent quality]. Freestone was a fine grained stone that could be worked in any direction and could be undercut, lending itself particularly to the carving of foliage, images and mouldings, vaulting, window frames and door ways. The skilled worker in freestone was an artist and a precision worker, so that the designation "freemason" denoted "superior qualifications in the mason trade" Confusion arises however, when the titles are occasionally interchanged doubtless through carelessness. It is not surprising, perhaps, that when the character of the Craft began to change by the admission of "Accepted "or non operative Masons, the title Freemasons was adopted, quite unofficially, for men who had never worked in stone. When Elias Ashmole recorded his admission on 16 October 1646, he wrote in his diary: "4:30 p.m. I was made a Freemason at Warrington, in Lancashire, with Colonel Henry Mainwaring, of Karincharn in Cheshire". Two other uses of the word Free arise in the records of the mason trade:

[1] Free, ie not a bondman, who would not be eligible for admission even as an apprentice.

[2] Free of the trade: it was customary in the London Masons Company as in many other crafts, for an apprentice at the end of his indentures to buy his "freedom by the payment of certain fees. He then became "free of the trade" and was entitled to set up as a master. I am satisfied that neither of these connected with the title "Freemason".

Question 24: What is cubit measure?

Answer 24: Originally, the distance from the elbow to the finger tips [Oxford English Dictionary] varying at different is and places, but usually about 18 22 inches.

Question 25: What is veiled allegory?

Answer 25: There is an error in this question. It is not the allegory that is veiled. We use the allegory to veil our teachings. The best simple definition will explain my meaning: Allegory: to describe one subject in the guise of another,

Question 26: What do the references to the Golden Fleece and Roman Eagle mean in our Apron Charge?

Answer 26: The Order of the Golden Fleece was one of the most illustrious Orders of Knighthood in Austria, Spain and Flanders, founded by Philip the Good, Duke of Burgundy and the Netherlands in 1429. The insignia, or Jewel of the Order is a golden sheepskin with head and feet, resembling a whole sheep hanging the middle from a gold and blue flintstone emitting flames. The Eagle was to the Romans the ensign of Imperial power. In battle it was borne on right wing of each Roman legion. It was held in veneration by the soldiers and regarded as affording sanctuary. We cite the Golden Fleece and Roman Eagle to illustrate the respect and veneration that we owe to the simple white lambskin Apron.

Question 27: What is the significance of the Wardens Columns being raised and lowered?

Answer 27: In Three Distinct Knocks, 1760 we find "Calling Off" and "Calling On". It begins with a series of whispered questions, carried by the Deacons, from the Worshipful Master to the Senior Warden and Junior Warden, after which the Junior Warden declares with a loud voice that "this lodge is called from Work to Refreshment; then he sets up his Column, and the Senior Warden lays his down; for the care of the Lodge is in the Hands of the Junior Warden while they are at refreshment." Here we have the earliest details relating to the raising and lowering, of the Columns and the reasons for those procedures, showing that they were designed to draw a readily noticeable distinction between the Lodge when open and when "Called Off ", This would have been an important matter in those days, when "Work and Refreshment" [ie, ceremony, drink and dinning] all took place in the same Lodge room. The raising and lowering of the Columns is standard usage today but the whispered instructions have been replaced by a brief catechism spoken aloud.

Question 28: Why is the Sun over the Junior Warden's chair and the Moon over the Senior Warden's if the Senior Warden is in charge during the work of the Lodge and the Junior Warden is in charge during Refreshment or not at work?

Answer 28: Two unrelated problems are linked here, which were not designed to fit logically with each other, though they are not really incompatible. Perhaps the best explanation will appear if we trace how the Sun and Moon, Junior Warden and Senior Warden got into those positions. In our earliest ritual documents, we read frequently of "three lights," candles, standing in various indeterminate positions An exposure of 1724 said that they stood "Right, East, South and West", [clearly implying the course of the sun at sunrise, at meridian and at sunset, though this was not mentioned in the text.] In Masonry Dissected, 1730, the "Three Lights" are still situated "East South and West" and they represent Sun, Moon, and Mason, and the same text says that both Wardens stand in the West, In operative times, when the masons worked with hammer and chisel, there was only one Warden in charge of the craftsmen; he was "progress chaser" and it was his duty to ensure that nothing disturbed the progress of the work. In non operative Lodges certainly before 1730 there were two Wardens and sometime between 1730 and 1760, when for ritual purposes it was deemed advisable to allocate specific duties to each, the Senior Warden remained in charge of the Lodge at labour, and the Junior Warden was placed in charge of the Lodge at Refreshment. The earliest ritual text that describes this is Three Distinct Knocks, 1760, where the Worshipful Master is in the East, and for the first time the Junior Warden is in the South and the Senior Warden in the West. In the Opening ceremony the Junior Warden's duty is:  
The better to observe the Sun, at high Meridian to call the Men off from Work to Refreshment and to see that they come on in due time. Notice the Junior Warden, only called the Lodge to Refreshment at the midday break and it seems to me that the points raised by the question are not incompatible.

In the course of this lengthy answer I have tried to show:

- [1] How the three lights, East, South and West con to represent the daily course of the Sun.
- [2] How the Junior Warden and Senior Warden arrived at the South and West, and acquired the Sun and Moon emblems on their Chairs.
- [3] How the Junior Warden's duties came to be allocated.

The real problem is how to reconcile the East, South and West with the "Sun, Moon and Master," the traditional reply which still appears in our modern ritual. After much study, I am convinced that if we said "South, West and East," that the problem would disappear as well.

Question 29: Do the Tassels have to have lights in them, and why?

Answer 29: Sorry, I have never heard of lights in Tassels.

Question 30: [a] Are there any Lodges that use the Tracing Boards?  
[b] Did they have one in the olden days of Masonry, say 1700 1800?

Answer 30: [a] Yes. About 7,500 in England alone and in most Lodges in overseas jurisdictions that follow English usage.  
[b] Yes, with ample evidence from 1735 onwards. [See Question 12] But we only use them in the speculative sense, to explain the symbols of Masonry.

Question 31: What shape is a parallelepipedon and how does it relate to Masonry?

Answer 31: The Oxford English Dictionary. defines it as: A solid figure contained by six parallelograms, of which every two opposite ones are parallel. This is my pet abomination in Masonry. There ought

to be a law against words of more than 3 or 4 syllables! It appears in the First Lecture, Section III in answer to the Question asking "The form of the Lodge". The same question in 1730, had the answer "A long square", and I feel that the man who decided to use the Parallelepipedon ought to be shot!

Question 32: Why does the Junior Deacon conduct the Candidate? Could any other Officer do this job?

Answer 32: In 1730, it was the Warden's job [and Deacons were rather rare]. Since 1813 it has been the Junior Deacon.'s duty, but any other Officer could be deputize for him in his absence [or by arrangement].

Question 33: Is there any significance in the Right Arm laid bare etc.? If not, why bother?

Answer 33: Certainly there is; [See Question 10] It would be fair to say that there is "significance in every item of clothing, equipment and procedure, sometimes very important, sometimes almost trifling. But what is trifling to you, may be important to me. In matters of symbolism and interpretation, the significance that you work out for yourself is what really matters. Try it sometime; you will find it an interesting exercise. As for the Right Arm, it is bare to show that the candidate carries no weapons.

Question 34: Did they have mosaic pavement in the Temple? Where?

Answer 34 No. See 1 Kings V 15, which says that Solomon "...covered the floor of the house [ie. the Temple] with planks of fir."

Question 35: Was Boaz really the great grandfather of David, a Prince and Ruler in Israel?

Answer 35: Boaz was "a mighty man of wealth" and he was neither Prince nor Ruler. The ritual would be less confusing if we said: "...great grandfather of David, who became a Ruler in Israel."

Question 36: When does a man become a Mason, after his First or Third Degree?

Answer 36: Under the United Grand Lodge of England, and in many jurisdictions that follow our usages, the Candidate becomes a Mason at the end of his Initiation, and I believe that this is probably true in most of the recognized Grand Lodges. In several Grand Lodges in the USA a Mason does not become a Member of his Lodge until he has passed his Proficiency Test in the Third Degree and in most of those cases he cannot enjoy the privileges of the Craft [eg, Masonic Funeral, etc., etc.] until he has signed the Lodge Register following the Proficiency Test.

Question 37: Is there any record of a Candidate's death in the First Degree by impaling himself on the sword presented at the door of the Lodge?

Answer 37: Positively no!

Question 38: What is to be done if the Candidate declares himself unwilling to take his Obligation?

Answer 38: You must not try to persuade him. That would be a Masonic "crime", because he comes of his own free will. If this ever happened in my presence, I would see the Candidate courteously returned to the Preparation Room and as soon as he was ready [without a word of criticism] see him out and call a taxi for him.

Question 39: If the penalties are not intended to be carried out, what is their purpose?

Answer 39: They are traditional, based on 15th century Admiralty penalties for treason. Nobody has ever suffered those penalties and their contents have been a source of worry to Masons and Grand Lodges in many parts of the world. In 1964, The English Grand Lodge resolved to approve "permissive changes" in the Obligations [plural] and in the relevant passages in the ritual relating to the Obligations by which the Candidate undertakes now to "bear in mind" the "traditional penalty, that of having the..." Note, the Candidate does not undertake to suffer the penalty, or to inflict it, he only promises to bear it in mind. The permissive changes were "permissive" in so far that no Lodges were ordered to adopt them; they could only adopt them by a majority vote in the Lodge. A large number of Lodges adopted the changes; many still adhere to the earlier forms. [see Carr's, "The Freemason at Work", pages 38 45]

Question 40: Why does the Entered Apprentice Apron not contain one rosette?

Answer 40: It is not necessary. The Entered Apprentice Apron is always described as "a plain white lambskin" and every English Mason would know that it designates Entered Apprentice status. In the USA especially [but probably elsewhere too], only the Lodge Officers wear ornamented Aprons and all visitors and members wear a plain white as emblems of equality and in many jurisdictions, the grade of the wearer, Entered Apprentice Fellow Craft, or Master Mason is indicated by turning up the corners of the Apron or some similarly recognizable practice.

Question 41: What does the "Broken Column" signify?

Answer 41: It is an emblem of mortality and it has no place in our English ritual. In many of our Lodges, it is used as a collecting box for Alms, but it has no status as a Masonic symbol. In the USA it appears with other symbols in many of the monitorial workings, associated, I believe, with the Master Mason Degree.

Question 42: What does the "Hoodwink" symbolize?

Answer 42: The purpose of this term is to ensure that in case a Candidate refuses to undergo the ceremony, he may be led out of the Lodge without discovering its form. [First Lecture, Section II]. The symbolism of the Hoodwink is the darkness of ignorance until the light of Masonry is made known to the Candidate.

Question 43: What effect did the "Papal Bulls" have on Masonry?

Answer 43: The whole story would require a very long answer and I must be brief. In the 240 years or so since the first Bull against the Masons was promulgated in 1738 by Pope Clement XII and reissued by many of his successors, in various forms during the next 150 years, they have prevented millions of good and respectable Roman Catholics from joining the Craft. Throughout the centuries no real attempt was made to bridge the gulf that separated the Freemasons from the Church of Rome, until after the Second Ecumenical Council. Some of the more liberal ideas that emerged from the Council, began to spill over into other fields and within a few years, spontaneous efforts were being started among sympathizers in France, Germany and the U.S.A., all working in their own fashion in the hope of reaching an accord between the Craft and the Roman Catholic Church. I myself was deeply concerned in the work, writing and lecturing on the subject and I had several important interviews with the Late Cardinal Heenan, who helped the cause very considerably in his approaches to the Papal authorities. The full story covering the public efforts and private negotiations has not yet been published. Suffice to say that in July 1974 Cardinal Heenan received a communication from the Holy See announcing that the Papal ban had been lifted. Roman Catholics everywhere [but not Officers of the Church of Rome] are now able to join the Craft without the penalty of excommunication and already a number of excellent Roman Catholic Candidates have joined the Craft in England. [See Carr's, "The Freemason at Work" pages 277 281].

Question 44: What is the limit of a Mason's charity?

Answer 44: In its pure original sense, e.g. man's love of his neighbour, kindness, affection, with some notion of generous or spontaneous goodness [Oxford English Dictionary] there is no limit to a Mason's charity. In its more common sense of alms, or more substantial gifts to the poor or to institutions, the English ritual specifies the limit, ie, "without detriment to yourself or connections." [dependants] .

Question 45: What is the exact meaning of the word Cowan?

Answer 45: The Oxford English Dictionary says "Derivation unknown", and defines it as "One who builds dry stone walls [ie, without mortar] applied derogatorily to one who does the work of a mason, but who has not yet been regularly apprenticed or bred to the trade". The word is probably of Scottish origin, and it appears, in that sense, in a large number of Scottish Masonic documents from 1598 onwards. [For further details see Carr's "The Freemason at Work" pages 86 89].

Question 46: During the Master Mason Degree the Chaplain recited "Or ever the silver cord be loosed..." What is meant by the "silver cord"?

Answer 46: The words are from Ecclesiastes XII which describes, in great detail, the decline of man in old age, and the failure of his senses, limbs and faculties. I would quote from my annotated Geneva Bible, which says that the "silver cord" is "the marrow of the backbone and sinews". It may be pure coincidence, but I am forcibly reminded of a passage in the Graham MS. , 1 726, which, after describing the earliest raising within a Masonic context, contains the word "Here is yet marrow in this bone".

Question 47: Distinguished between Hiram. King of Tyre and Hiram Abif? The Bible refers to only one.

Answer 47: The question is wrong. Both are mentioned several times in the course of the two Old Testament versions of the building of King Solomon's Temple. Hiram King Tyre appears in I Kings V, 1, as Hiram, King of Tyre and several times in the same chapter as Hiram. Hiram Abif, the "widow's son" appears first in I Kings VII, 13, and again in the same chapter in verse 40, where the name appears with two slightly different Hebrew spellings. This has given rise to a theory that there were two craftsmen named Hiram [Quite apart from Hiram, King of Tyre]

Hiram, King of Tyre appears in the Chronicles version [in II Chronicles 11, 3] and he appears again as Hiram, King of Tyre in the same chapter, verse 11. In verse 13 he writes to Solomon saying that he has sent him a skilled craftsman, "a cunning man, endued with understanding, of Hiram my Father's."\* these last four words in English are the translation of the Hebrew words "Le Haram Aviv" and this sentence is the source of our words "Hiram Abif. It was Luther who first used this name [Hiram Abif] because he could not make sense of the Hebrew "of Haram my father's."

Note: In II Chronicles, IV, 11, we find the name of Hiram, the craftsman, again with two different Hebrew spellings, suggesting that there were two craftsmen of the same name, a father and a son. It is impossible to solve this problem more especially because, unlike our Hiramic legend which is pure legend there is no Biblical record of the death of Hiram, the marvellous craftsman.

\*Footnote: More correctly "of Hiram his father".