



Nugget

Arch formed by the wands of the deacons

Index

An explanation of the symbolism of the Arch created by the Deacons.

Summary

An explanatory theory of the symbolism of the Arch created by the crossed staffs of the Deacons.

Keywords

First-Degree, Deacons, Wands, Staffs, Arch

An arch formed by the wands of the Deacons

We cannot be sure of the symbolism intended when the Deacons cross their wands over a Candidate. Symbolism in Freemasonry is intended to be open to personal interpretation, so it is quite proper to put forward an option that may prove satisfactory for many of us.

In the 17th and early 18th centuries, the Wardens stood at the West of the Lodge, to either side of the entrance door, with the Junior in the North West and the Senior in the South West. They would be standing by a depiction of the columns known as Boaz and Jachin. In those early days of Freemasonry, they carried out the work now done by the Deacons. Their badge of office became the pillars, which they would carry with them as they went about their business. In due course, mostly in the latter part of the 18th century, Deacons were introduced, as assistants to the Master and Wardens, and they carried the columns to represent their delegated authority.

At some point the Wardens were moved to their current positions, at least for the ceremonies. You will note that their positions at the festive board remain unchanged in many lodges. The columns were then returned to them and displayed on their pedestals. The Deacons were provided with staffs, subsequently becoming the wands we know today.

It might be said that when they form an arch, it is emblematical of the porchway of King Solomon's Temple, as the Candidate is kneeling between the pillars. We should remember that the pillars were considered complete when the network or canopy was thrown over them. One might therefore reasonably suppose that the joining together of the wands above the Candidate's head represents the Candidate at the entrance of King Solomon's Temple.

##END##

Recommended use of Nuggets

Nuggets offer a short, simple and readily absorbed means of progressing Masonic knowledge and an easy way to introduce learning to Lodges and Chapters. It is hoped that they will become a regular feature of Lodge and Chapter meetings as well as a source for private-study.

Nuggets can be included as an item in the summons and read at most Lodge/Chapter meetings. They can be:

- Read by either a new or an experienced Mason with the minimum of preparation and practice; *though ideally, they need to be read a few times beforehand.*
- Themed with the meeting or activity.
- Used to initiate a discussion within a Lodge/Chapter, LOI/COI, or group.
- Read at home and shared as a topic for a future discussion.
- Used as a focus for an unplanned, informal discussion.

For further nuggets and other learning materials visit 'Solomon' at <http://solomon.ugle.org.uk>

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