

## 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 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?*

*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 spire. The word Broach or Broche is an old English word for tower.

Broach or Broche is an old English term for a spire." 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 upon which the Operative Mason had to learn because it had 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? Just another 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.

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?

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)

# Southchurch Masonic Study Circle



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You are cordially invited to the **Regular** meeting of the Southchurch Masonic Study Circle to be held at the:-

**Saxon Hall, Aviation Way, Southend on Sea, Essex, on Thursday 17th May 2007 at 8pm.**

We look forward to seeing you and don't forget, guests are welcome.

Secretary : **W.Bro. Pierre Waddoups**

## AGENDA

- 1 To welcome visitors and prospective new members.
- 2 To receive apologies for absence
- 3 To read and if approved, confirm the minutes of the last meeting held on the 15th March 2007.
- 4 Matters arising from the minutes
- 5 Objects of Masonic interest.
- 6 Speaker. Bro. Pierre Waddoups will present a paper entitled:- *Carey Street*.
- 7 Questions and answers.
- 8 Any other Business

### YOUR WEB SITE.

It would be great to get some feedback on your web site which I have lovingly constructed. The address is:- <http://www.southchurch-masonic.org.uk> Feedback and your constructive criticism are essential if I am to make improvements to your site. A Forum has been added and has attracted several visitors from the Circle and from Overseas.. Please visit and post your news and views, on any subject. You can contact me either through the site 'contact' page or directly by e-mail. My address is:- [alec@tisl.demon.co.uk](mailto:alec@tisl.demon.co.uk) Encourage me please and visit your site and Forum!

## A SECRETARIES PLEA

Sadly, the 30th Anniversary Lunch had to be cancelled through lack of support from members of the Study Circle.

The original dates clashed with either a Lodge Meeting or an LOI being a weekday or a Saturday so that a Sunday was chosen to avoid these regular commitments.

But this caused problems with it being either Easter or a family day and it had to be outside the holiday period. So April on the balance of probabilities seemed the best time of the year.

It would be good to know your reasons for not being able to support the event so that we can avoid such pitfalls should we ever try to organise a similar event.

There is a fable by that famous Greek Aesop, entitled "*The Miller, the Son and the Donkey*." It is well worth a read and the moral of the fable is "*he who tries to please everybody, pleases nobody*."

Pierre.

### THE AUTHOR OF THE PAPER.

Most of you know our Secretary Pierre Waddoup. He is a retired Paramedic Supervisor but would assure you that he took retirement early! Currently, he is employed as a Deputy Manager within Social Community Services.

Masonically, he is the Preceptor and DC of his Lodge and, sadly, is coming to the end of his term of office as Provincial Assistant Grand Director of Ceremonies.

He is in RA and is secretary of the C o I and where, at present, he is the PS but soon to be in the 'J' Chair.

Pierre is SD in Mark and is waiting to join the Cryptic Degree. He is also a member of Essex Masters.

He belongs to the Jewel of the Craft which is an organisation for collectors and Masonic research and is the assistant editor of the Diadem: the magazine of the J of the C.

Pierre is on a list of Masonic Speakers and gives talks on the Craft, RA and Mark, is a member of the Quatour Corronati Correspondence Circle but above all, considers himself a ritualist.

This evenings talk is a thought provoking one which challenges the view; why does being a good ritualist make you a good Mason?

And it poses other questions. If by ignoring the history and purpose of the Craft we are in danger of being Masonically impoverished?

The title of the paper is taken from the euphemism of being in Carey Street. 'being in financial straights or bankrupt' ... but this time it concerns Masonic poverty.

## From your Secretary

The Regulations which came into being are known as the Old Charges, written by those who were literate for the benefit of those who were illiterate, but constantly re-read for everyone's benefit.

The most important occasion when this happened was at the Annual Assembly which usually lasted over several days at a Moot Fair when it was the custom for the Trade Fraternities to perform a religious or 'miracle' play; it would have been an occasion for everybody to have a good time.

Gatherings of operative masons were not only a known and a well established custom; but they were also a means of communications.

The architect, often the employer of the craftsmen and therefore the master of the work, would meet the skilled workers in their huts, or 'lodges', to discuss the plans and any problems, and afterwards they would eat together and continue with their discussion, and often friendships would form outside of the normal business practise.

The educated classes the, 'Men of letters', would have had a great input in such gatherings and an introduction to the liberal arts and sciences may well have been among their deliberations.

Pierre.

## For your Diary.

**May 17th,  
September 20th and  
December 13th.  
(Cheese and Wine evening)**