THE INVESTIGATOR

(Based on the premise that life is a continuous search for knowledge)

Presented by REC. Norman McEvoy Volume 3 No 3 March 2011

Fraternal Greetings Companions:

In the February 2010 edition of "The Investigator" I shared with you information regarding Royal Arch Masonry being the "Perfection of the Master's Degree" For the purpose of this paper it is again shown below. While this information is exceptionally important from a structural perspective, there is another very important aspect to all of this which I wish to bring to your attention.

This relates to the *"process"* required by a Master Mason in his desire to attain the Degree of a "Holy Royal Arch Mason"

This process includes the completion of an **"APPLICATION FOR EXALTATION"** in which he states his Masonic progress to date and offers himself as a candidate.

The word "**EXALTATION**" is not one used in everyday language, so it is now my intention to share with you various interpretations of this particular word;

Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary defines it as:

"1. an act of exalting ; the state of being exalted
2. an excessively intensified sense of well being, power or importance
3. an increase in degree of intensity."

Mackey's Lexicon of Freemasonry defines Exalted as follows:

:"A candidate is said to be exalted, when he receives the Degree of the Holy Royal Arch.
Exalted means, *elevated or lifted up,* and is applicable both to a particular ceremony of the Degree, and to the fact this degree, in the rite in which it is practiced, constitutes the summit of ancient masonry"

Albert Mackey Encyclopedia of Freemasonry (1917 Edition) defines Exalted as follow:-

"A candidate is said to be exalted, when he receives the degree of the Holy Royal Arch.
Exalted means *elevated or lifted up* and is applicable both to a peculiar ceremony of the degree, and the fact that this degree, in the rite in which it is practiced, constitutes the summit of ancient masonry.
The rising of the sun of spring from its wintry sleep in to the glory of the vernal equinox was called by the old sun-worshippers his "exaltation" and the Fathers of the Church afterwards applied the same term to the resurrection of Christ.
St Anthanasius says that by the expression *"God hath exalted him"* St Paul meant the resurrection.
Exaltation, therefore, technically means a rising from a lower to a higher sphere, and in Royal Arch Masonry may be supposed to refer to the being lifted up out of the first Temple of this life into the second Temple of the future life.
The candidate *raised* in the Master's Degree, is *exalted* in the Holy Royal Arch. In both the symbolic idea is exactly the same.
My purpose in sharing this information with you is to dispel any thoughts that the "Holy Royal Arch" is simply just another degree.

As the papers shared below will attest, there was a time in Masonic history when it was absolutely mandatory that a Mason be a **Past Master** to even be considered for exaltation to the degree of a Royal Arch Mason and there is much debate, that, were it not for the drive to achieve greater numbers of Companions, that this requirement would be in place till this very day.

Much has happened over the years to minimize the importance of Royal Arch Masonry, including the holding of "Field Days" to smooth the way for Masons to proceed to other bodies. (In1975, I myself, was a candidate with that purpose in mind).

Those days are now behind us and today **"Royal Arch Masonry"** is being identified for it's rightful place, within the Masonic family, and with the growing **"Education & Pride"** of every companion it will undoubtedly continue to grow and flourish.

The Royal Arch as the **Perfection of the Master's Degree**

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We are all familiar with the words addressed to the newly exalted companion:

"You may perhaps imagine you have this day taken a fourth degree in Freemasonry, such, however, is not the case, it is the Master Mason's completed."

But how do we reconcile that statement with this extract from the 1807 Laws and Regulations of the Antients Grand Lodge?

"ANCIENT MASONRY consists of four Degrees - the three first of which are, that of Apprentice, the Fellow Craft, and the sublime degree of Master; and a brother being well versed in these degrees, and otherwise qualified, as hereafter will be expressed, is eligible to be admitted to the fourth degree, the Holy Royal Arch. This degree is certainly more august, sublime, and important than those which precede it, and is the summit and perfection of Ancient Masonry."

The answer is compromise, for at a special convocation of the Grand Chapter of the Moderns on November 30, 1813 the following report was given:

". . . The Grand Lodge of England under H.R.H. The Duke of Sussex had entered into preliminary Articles with the Grand Lodge now under H.R.H. The Duke of Kent for an Union of the two Grand Lodges under one Grand Master. That by those Articles the Royal Arch was acknowledged as the perfection of the Masters Degree . . . ."

The Oxford English Dictionary equates perfection with completion, the words are synonymous, and, as the Articles of Union declared:

". . . that pure Antient Masonry consists of three degrees and no more, viz., those of Entered Apprentice, the Fellow Craft, and the Master Mason, including the Supreme Order of the Holy Royal Arch."

The expression *"Master Mason's completed,"* to the newly exalted companion can be well justified even though the administration and exercise of the Royal Arch is under a separate organization.

The Union of the two Grand Lodges was effected in December 1813, but it was nearly four years before the situation of the Royal Arch was cleared. In 1817, after the Union of the Grand Chapters, the new Laws and Regulations included the following statement:

"That to this Order none ought to be admitted but men who have passed through the probationary degrees of Masonry, **have presided as Masters***, been duly proposed, recommended by two or more companions of the Order, balloted for and approved. No Mason shall be exalted to this sublime degree unless he has been a Master Mason for 12 calendar months"*

Conclusion

Companions, remember that, in the Royal Arch, there are no prohibitions against the solicitation of Master Masons whom you know to be valid candidates for our Degrees.
Using the information & explanations given in this paper, it is clear that no Master Mason can complete his "Spiritual Journey" without being exalted to the Degree of the Holy Royal Arch.

Why nor compliment them with such an invitation.

Have a wonderful day & God Bless You and Yours.

Norm

PS. This information may be shared freely within the Craft.

NOTICE

For those Companions who are members of the Grand Chapter of B.C. & Yukon may I use this space to remind you all of the upcoming (April 2nd) General Purposes Meeting which will be held in Kelowna BC.
Details are on the Grand Chapter Website.

You are also reminded that the 93rd Grand Convocation of the Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of British Columbia & Yukon will be held in the Masonic Temple, VICTORIA BC. on September 16th and 17th, 2011.

Full details will be posted on the Grand Chapter Website immediately following the April 2nd General Purpose Meeting.

PLEASE MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO BE IN ATTENDANCE AND REMEMBER ALL COMPANIONS, WHO ARE MEMBERS IN THIS JURISDICTION, HAVE FULL VOTING POWERS.

Many thanks Norm