Why I Am a Royal Arch Mason

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The candidate who has just received his third degree is confronted with the important problem of whether he shall advance in Freemasonry or whether he shall be content to remain a Master Mason. He is so bewildered with tile multitudinous organizations, which, while not a part of the Masonic fraternity, have become parasites on it that he hardly knows which way to turn. Without in any way reflecting on any of these other organizations, or speaking derogatory of them, let me express briefly my reasons for being a Royal Arch Mason.

1. Royal Arch Masonry is Ancient Craft Masonry. Our traditions show that for many years the Royal Arch degree was an integral part of the system of Blue Lodge Masonry. As early as 1717 the story of the Royal Arch was embodied in one of the Grand Lodge systems in England, but with the union of the two Grand Lodges into a united Grand Lodge, the section referring to the Royal Arch was delegated to bodies known as Chapters, and organization under the name of Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons. It is, as has been said, the summit of Ancient Craft Masonry; it is the unfolding into a second volume the story of that which was lost to its final recovery; it has been aptly said, that without the Royal Arch, Ancient Craft Masonry is like a story half told; a song partly sung; or a promise unfulfilled. So closely is the legend and traditions of Royal Arch Masonry interwoven with those of the lodge, that Royal Arch Masonry may be said to be a part and parcel of the Ancient Craft. Since I am an Ancient Craft Mason, I derive a peculiar pleasure in carrying on my connection with this Ancient organization.

2. Royal Arch Masonry completes the symbolism of the Ancient Craft. We are taught that Freemasonry is a beautiful system of morals, veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols. The Lodge is a great symbol of human life, especially referring to the building of character and the erection of our spiritual Temple. All the symbols of Ancient Craft Masonry bring out these features, and teach great moral lessons. In the Chapter we find this story of symbolism continued. Instead of taking up the symbolism of the present life, it deals with the symbolism of the life

eternal. The beautiful stones, so finely polished and beautifully wrought in the Lodge, which are symbolical of the beautiful and pure life, are used as the corner stones in building up the spiritual life so beautifully exemplified in the traditions of Capitular Masonry. In order to more fully appreciate the beautiful symbolism of Ancient Craft Masonry, and to carry on my studies in this direction, Royal Arch Masonry has for me a particular appeal.

3. I am an integral part of the Royal Arch system. Blue Lodge Masonry teaches that all are on a level; that all are entitled to share and partake in its deliberations. Royal Arch Masonry carries out this doctrine of equality and exemplifies it at every stage of its labour. The individual Royal Arch Mason is a member of a local Chapter, and as such engages in the business of the Chapter; votes for his officers, and is made to feel that he is a stockholder in the organization. The Officers whom he elects represent his Chapter in an organization known as the Grand Chapter, which has absolute authority over Capitular Masonry in his Province. These delegates elect the officers of the Grand Chapter and he is thereby given a direct voice in the selection of his superior officers. I am, therefore, interested in Royal Arch Masonry because I am a stockholder in all its activities. In connection with others, I can raise my voice in support of its policies and assist in directing its course.

4. The sun never sets on Royal Arch Masonry. The Capitular system is probably the most universal system of Freemasonry in the whole world. The Grand Chapters of Scotland and England have chartered bodies from one end of the world to the other, and even the General Grand Chapter of the United States has Chapters in all sections of North and South America, as well as many in their Island possessions. The United Grand Lodge of England, Mother Grand Lodge of the world, whom all jurisdictions respect, and for whose policies we have the highest regard, recognizes the necessity of Capitular Masonry, and the jewel of the Royal Arch Mason is the only jewel outside of the lodge jewels which are permitted to be worn at the Annual Communications of that Grand Lodge. My membership in Capitular Masonry is held in greater

appreciation because I know that throughout the civilized world there are more than one million
Royal Arch Masons who are under the same ties to me, as I am to them, as a Companion of the
Royal Arch.
5. Royal Arch Masonry has no prizes to offer. When my petition was taken in and presented to a
Chapter of Royal Arch Masons it was secured by a brother who sought the application for the sole
reason that he desired to spread the light of Capitular knowledge, and because he himself was
appreciative of the beauties of the institution. For his service in this connection he received no
remuneration; no prizes were offered him, except the satisfaction of having done something for a
brother whom he believed to be worthy. The great lesson of Royal Arch Masonry is, that all work,
king and peasant are placed on the same level. The honours of Royal Arch Masonry are open to
all, and the only requirements are those of merit. Labour in the Capitular vineyard is not barred by
favouritism, but her honours are open to all.
6. Royal Arch Masonry completes the Temple. Strange to say, that in all the rites and degrees of
the various Masonic systems, the only degree that deals with the actual completion of King
Solomon's Temple is that of Most Excellent Master, conferred in Royal Arch Chapters. How
strange it is that so much effort is spent in the three Lodge degrees, dealing with the building of
this wonderful Temple, and yet, we leave the Third degree with the Temple unfinished and
unfurnished. One can readily see that the beauty of such symbolism cannot be fully carried out
unless the story is later elaborated in the degree above mentioned. The full symbolism and beauty
of the completion of the Temple is fully brought out and described in what is regarded as the most
spectacular degree in all Freemasonry.
7. The Fellowship of Royal Arch Masonry. Royal Arch Masonry has something to offer which no
other organization possesses. It is that of a fellowship which unites us into a select band of friends
and companions labouring for the best interests of true Freemasonry. The membership of Royal

Arch Masonic Chapters is taken from the various Lodges throughout the jurisdictions, and while every good Blue Lodge Freemason is not a Royal Arch Mason, nevertheless the organization draws so many good men and true, that I feel an extra kinship to those who are united to me by so many bonds and obligations; somehow I feel closer to one who has assumed the obligation of a Royal Arch Mason. My attendance at a Chapter meeting makes me feel as it I have found a fellowship not discernible in other bodies.

8. Royal Arch Masonry is inexpensive. The fees demanded for the Capitular degrees are more than reasonable. The dues are only sufficient to carry on the regular activities of the Chapter; no great sums are laid away, piled up in immense buildings, or used for carrying on of propaganda campaigns. The man of small means is able to pay his annual dues just the same as is the Companion who is blessed with more of the world's goods. You need not fear that you will be continually asked for subscriptions, contributions or collections from having membership in a Royal Arch Chapter.

9. Royal Arch Masonry is everywhere. The great good derived from membership in any Fraternity is that occasioned by visitation. The opportunity here laid before you of visiting these Masonic bodies is well worth your thought and attention. The men who are most active in Royal Arch Masonry will always be found to be the strongest supporters of the Lodge system. The majority of the officers of the Chapters are also officers in the various Lodges.

10. Royal Arch Masonry is understandable. The beauty of any system or Rite is in the ability of the recipient of such Rite to understand thoroughly the lessons which are being presented. There is nothing in Royal Arch Masonry which cannot be plainly understood by any man of ordinary education. It teaches no ancient or outworn philosophy. It exemplifies no pagan mysteries or cult. It brings to our minds and portrays by lessons, the necessity for the worship of the one and true God, in whom all Masons profess to put their trust and faith. Its entire philosophy may be summed up in a few short sentences the substance of which is "Reverence for God and Hope of

the Eternal Life". Capitular Masonry does not countenance political propaganda, it prefers to leave a man's political affiliations and policies to his own individual judgment, believing that if he has properly absorbed the lessons which he has received at our altars, he can only be influenced by the demands of honour, equity and justice. For the reasons above enumerated, and for many more which might be enumerated, I am a Royal Arch Mason. I know of no other organization from which I have derived greater pleasure. If I were compelled to live my life anew I should unhesitatingly follow the course, which I have followed in completing my Masonic education by a study of the Royal Arch. To my friends who have ventured no further along the Masonic way than the three degrees of the Ancient Craft, I unhesitatingly recommend the beautiful path of Capitular Masonry, and I know that when you have lived to the end of the span of life, your appreciation of the beauties and symbols contained within this system will afford you a gratification and contentment which nothing else can afford in the way of true Fraternity and Masonic symbolism.