



Lodge Bulletin

March 2024

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Master's Message

Dear Brethren,

I extend my gratitude to the dedicated brothers who contributed to the success of our February activities. On February 19th, our lodge proudly participated in the George Washington Birthday Parade in Alexandria. Witnessing the reactions of people recognizing our float—a scale model of the George Washington Masonic National Memorial—was truly exciting.

I am delighted that our Washington Birthday Stated Communication garnered success with a strong attendance. AW22 left a lasting impression on the Grand Master and our guests, creating a warm and welcoming atmosphere.

I encourage each of you to carefully review the schedule for this month. In addition to the stated meeting, we have a lodge meetup at Daniel O'Connell's in Old Town Alexandria. This gathering is open to all, with a special invitation extended to our candidates and prospects. Knowing that several are in search of signers, this presents a valuable opportunity for us to connect and get to know them better. No RSVP is required.

Looking ahead, our lodge is set to host the DIW Ritual School on March 26th at 6:15 PM. Let's shoot for a strong turnout and come together to learn ritual alongside our brethren from across the district.

Lastly, on March 28th, we will be conferring the Sublime Degree of Master Mason upon two deserving brothers. It is worth noting that we have several brothers participating in the cast for the first time. I encourage each one of you to join us and show your support.

Thank you once again for your unwavering dedication to our Craft.

Sincerely and Fraternaly,

Nelo Allen Hamilton, Jr
Worshipful Master
Master@AW22.org
202-856-4686





March 2024

March 14

6:30 PM | Fellowship Dinner
7:30 PM | Stated Communication
Closed Program by Bro. Ron Craft
The Numberless Worlds

March 15

6:00 PM | Lodge Meet Up
Daniel O'Connell's Irish Restaurant & Bar
Old Town Alexandria

March 18

7:00 PM | Esoteric Corner
Adam and the Apron / Moses and the Fiery Bush

March 21

6:30 PM | Fraternal Visit
Cherrydale-Columbia Lodge No. 42

March 24

3:00 PM | Board of Trustees Q1 Meeting
Alexandria - Washington Lodge No. 22 | Virtual Option Provided

March 26

6:15 PM | DIW Ritual School
Alexandria - Washington Lodge No. 22

March 28

7:00 PM | Master Masons Degree

- Catechism Schools are every Thursday night at 6:30 PM and Saturday morning at 10:00 AM unless otherwise noted. Ritual Schools are every Thursday night at 7:30 PM unless otherwise noted. All masons are welcome.
- To follow the Master's personal Masonic schedule. Please view the Master@AW22.org shared Google Calendar.

The Multiple Meanings of the Cable-Tow

By Bro. Ron Craft, Senior Deacon

The candidate is introduced to the cable-tow while being prepared to receive the degrees in Freemasonry, but to some noteworthy brethren, the symbol was never clearly explained. The cable-tow has an outward meaning, which stems from the degrees of Masonry but is also part of our daily Masonic vernacular. The first meaning seems obvious to Masons, as all of us have seen the cable-tow in use and heard its purpose explained in a degree lecture, but we also tell each other not to go further than the length of it, meaning only to do what we can according to our ability. Is there a deeper or esoteric meaning to the cable-tow? A check of the many sources will yield a variety of answers, however, there are some common themes. One concise definition of the cable-tow is given by A.E. Waite, who says: *Most generally, the binding covenant of Masonry, and the length of the cable tow is the reasonable limit of obligation. In a particular sense the length signifies the extent of a Mason's ability to attend meetings. The Cable Tow has another meaning in the first degree. (Waite, 1970, p. xiv)*

The definition appears very simple, and could easily be accepted with little afterthought. I contend, however, that the cable-tow, like most Masonic symbols, has multiple meanings and our common use of the word merely conceals the inward meanings.

First, it is necessary to clear up one common misconception; is “cable-tow” an English word at all? A contemporary Masonic scholar, Henry Coil in his Masonic Encyclopedia defines cable-tow as “A heavy rope or hawser by which a mass, especially a ship, may be hauled, pulled, or towed” (Coil, 1996, p. 115). Albert Mackey, on the other hand says that a “cable tow is a rope or line for drawing or leading” and then writes that “The word is purely Masonic” (Mackey, 1929, pp. 168-169). If one is to search for the word “cable-tow” in either the Oxford or Webster's dictionary he will find that there are zero results. Because cable-tow is not defined in the English language, it is unclear where Coil found his particular definition, but it appears that Mackey is correct, when he stated that the word is “purely Masonic.” Mackey also wrote that “cable-tow” may have derived from a similarly pronounced German word, however that is beyond the scope of this discussion. For now, we will stipulate that “cable-tow” appears to be strictly a Masonic word, created for a Masonic purpose.

Next, I would like to call attention to Waite's definition where he noted that the cable-tow has another meaning in the Entered Apprentices degree. Here, Mackey expands on this point and says that: *In its first inception, the cable tow seems to have been used only as a physical means of controlling the candidate, and such an interpretation is still given in the Entered Apprentice's Degree. But in the Second and*

The Multiple Meanings of the Cable-Tow

(Continued)

Third Degrees a more modern symbolism has been introduced, and the cable tow is in these grades supposed to symbolize the covenant by which all Freemasons are tied, thus reminding us of the passage in Hosea (xi, 4), "I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love." (Mackey, 1929, pp. 168-69)

The Old Charges, exposures, and written rituals indicate that in England, Scotland and France, the cable-tow was used in the Apprentice or Entered Apprentice degree only, and it is likely that, for a time, ritual in the United States followed this same pattern. The appearance of the cable-tow in the second and third degrees possibly came about in the 1840's with the meeting of the Baltimore Convention where it was defined as "the scope of a man's reasonable ability" (Coil, 1996, p. 115). Therefore, if the cable-tow was traditionally used in the first degree only, it is here we can uncover some of its more esoteric meanings.

On the inward meaning of the cable-tow, Masonic writers have come to varied conclusions. Joseph Fort Newton believed that a rope or cable anciently represented a pledge, or a vow in which a man pledged his life. This pledge was used in earlier initiation societies as well as in the Bible. Newton cites 1 Kings 20:31,32 when the Syrian King was defeated in battle, his servants approached the victorious Israeli King "with ropes upon their heads," in order to remind him about a pledge (Newton, 1969, p. 77). Newton further elaborates on the bond: *If a Lodge is a symbol of the world, and initiation is our birth into Masonry, the cable tow is not unlike the umbilical cord, uniting a child with his mother. When the umbilical cord is cut, it is replaced by a stronger, invisible bond between mother and child. The candidate is released from his cable tow at the altar following his obligation, and is bound to a stronger, invisible bond (Newton, 1969, p. 77).*

Newton has beautifully laid out a symbolic meaning for the cable-tow, which rings true as being released from the cable-tow coincides with the moment that the initiate becomes a brother, instantly forming a bond with the men of his Lodge.

Albert Pike's thoughts on the cable-tow do not fundamentally disagree with those of Newton. However, he expands on the definition by offering a view of the state of the man who is wearing the cable-tow. Pike writes: *The Cable-Tow, therefore, is the Hieroglyphic of a Pledge or Obligation, and it not only means the Candidate's pledge and obligation, which, to become a Neophyte, he must take to the Order and to every individual Brother; but that, wearing it, he represents men and nations, all whose rights of property, liberty, conscience and life, and they themselves, chattels in the form of human creatures and peoples, are pledged to their masters, as an article of clothing or of furniture is to the pawnbroker (Pike, 2008, p. 280).*

The Multiple Meanings of the Cable-Tow

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Pike's definition is puzzling, so in order to understand his meaning, we must look to other writings. Pike was dissatisfied with the standard explanation concerning the length of the cable-tow, because in his opinion, it was supposed to bring a feeling of degradation to the candidate. According to Pike, the candidate represents a man deprived of light, knowledge of reason, of God, nature, or even himself and the cable-tow is a symbol of a man in bondage (Pike, 2008, pp. 98-99). When the cable-tow is lifted, the candidate receives light, both physically and symbolically, and he becomes bound to his brethren by a stronger obligation. As many veterans can attest, basic training works much the same way. You begin as a "pathetic recruit" but you leave with esoteric knowledge of the service, as well as a bond with the men and women of the uniform.

Like many Masonic symbols, the cable-tow has multiple meanings. However, they can be boiled down to length, obligation and reasonable limitations. The outward symbol is used in our degrees and our everyday communications. The inward and original meaning may be lost to time, as we will never know exactly why the cable-tow was selected. Masons like Newton and Pike, however, believed that the cable-tow was purposely and symbolically used in the initiation of an Entered Apprentice. Regardless, the symbol is worthy of your contemplation, particularly as students and mentors in the Craft.

Works Cited

- Coil, H. W. (1996). *Coil's Masonic Encyclopedia*. Richmond: Macoy Publishing & Masonic Supply CO., INC.
- Mackey, A. G. (1929). *Encyclopedia of Freemasonry and Kindred Sciences* (Vol. I). Chicago: The Masonic History Company.
- Newton, J. F. (1969). *Short Talks on Masonry*. Richmond: Macoy Publishing & Masonic Supply Company, INC.
- Pike, A. (2008). *Esoterika: The Symbolism of the Blue Degrees of Freemasonry*. Washington D.C.: The Scottish Rite Research Society.
- Waite, A. E. (1970). *A New Encyclopaedia of Freemasonry*. New York: Weathervane Books.

Happy Masonic Birthday



Jeffrey Loren Adelman March 29, 31 years

Rami Khail Chehade March 22, 19 years

Brian Patrick Fleming March 5, 15 years

David Rhine Gehr March 15, 51 years

Lowell Gene Gilliland March 30, 32 years

Charles Richard Hix March 24, 49 years

Edgar Bruce Holley March 23, 69 years

Jerry Dean Owen March 1, 23 years

Robert Darrell Pollock March 28, 9 years

Paul Mckinley Rhodes March 1, 51 years

Pablo Alejandro Rocha March 23, 32 years

Kenneth Ian Scroggie March 17, 27 years

George Douglas Seghers March 19, 34 years

Daniel Hufford Surface Jr. March 27, 28 years

David Shepard Webber March 22, 51 years

Brian Mark Williams March 17, 13 years

Todd Mitchell Zelnick March 8, 40 years



2024 Lodge Officers

Wor. Nelo Allen Hamilton, Jr - Worshipful Master

Mobile : 202-856-4686 Email: Master@AW22.org

Bro. Phillip Adam Smartt - Senior Warden

Bro. Jonathan Joseph Siudmak - Junior Warden

Wor. Michael Lee Bailey, PM - Treasurer

Wor. Daniel Elias Froggett, PM - Secretary

Phone: 757-656-1838 Email: Secretary@AW22.org 101 Callahan Dr., Alexandria, VA 22301

Rt. Wor. Granville Clayton "Jack" Canard, Jr, PDDGM - Secretary Emeritus

Bro. Ronald Earl Craft, Jr - Senior Deacon

Bro. Jakob Aonghus Zilinski - Junior Deacon

Wor. Denislav Valeriev Dantev, PM - Chaplain

Bro. Daniel Ryan Gordon - Senior Steward

Bro. Thomas Harrison Lynch - Junior Steward

Bro. James Henry Ferguson - Marshal

Bro. Naaren Juloori - Musician

Wor. Pablo Alejandro Rocha, PM - Tiler

Board of Trustees

Bro. Jeffery W. C. Conn (Chair) - 2024

Wor. James Berkley Stone, PM - 2025

Wor. Jesse T. McMahan, V, PM - 2026

Wor. Nikola N. Nikolov, PM - 2027

Wor. David G. Bella, PM - 2028

Living Past Masters on the Rolls

1975 - Donald M. Robey, PGM

1976 - James B. Stone

1991 - Earl C. Million

1992 - Granville C. Canard, Jr. PDDGM

1995 - George D. Seghers, PDDGM

1996,18 - Mark W. Underwood, PDDGM

1997 - Walter L. Margeson, II

1998 - Philip J. Hays

1999,17 - Michael P. Bible, PDDGM

2000 - Terry L. Gigure

2001 - Brent N. Campbell

2002 - Daniel M. Clark, PDDGM

2003 - James M. Stevenson

2004 - Frank Skwirut

2005 - Jesse T. McMahan, V

2006 - Thomas G. Little

2007 - Robert G. Watkins, PDDGM

2009 - Heber C. Willis, III

2011 - John P. Olson

2012 - Michael L. Bailey

2013 - Joshua D. Adler

2014 - Robert T. Weston

2016 - Stephen J. Pezzetti

2019 - Nikola N. Nikolov

2020 - Daniel E. Froggett

2021 - Michael T. Huff

2022 - Denislav V. Dantev

2023 - David G. Bella