

THE BLUE CORD DON RAY

Introduction

In the UGL NSW&ACT the ritual does not mention the representation of a blue cord that is seen on some lodge floors.



Grand Lodge Room 3, Sydney Masonic Centre [SMC], refurbished March 2009.



Cooma Lodge, built 1923.

Some other lodge floors



Lodge De Eendragt No. 233, Grand Orient of the Netherlands.
Lux in Tenerife



Freemasons Hall, Edinburgh



Morwell Masonic Lodge, Victoria



Grand Temple in Freemason's Hall, London; 11 July 2006



Lexington Lodge No. 1 Floor



International Traditional Regular Freemasonry Grand Lodge, Medellin, Antioquia, Colombia

Possible Problems

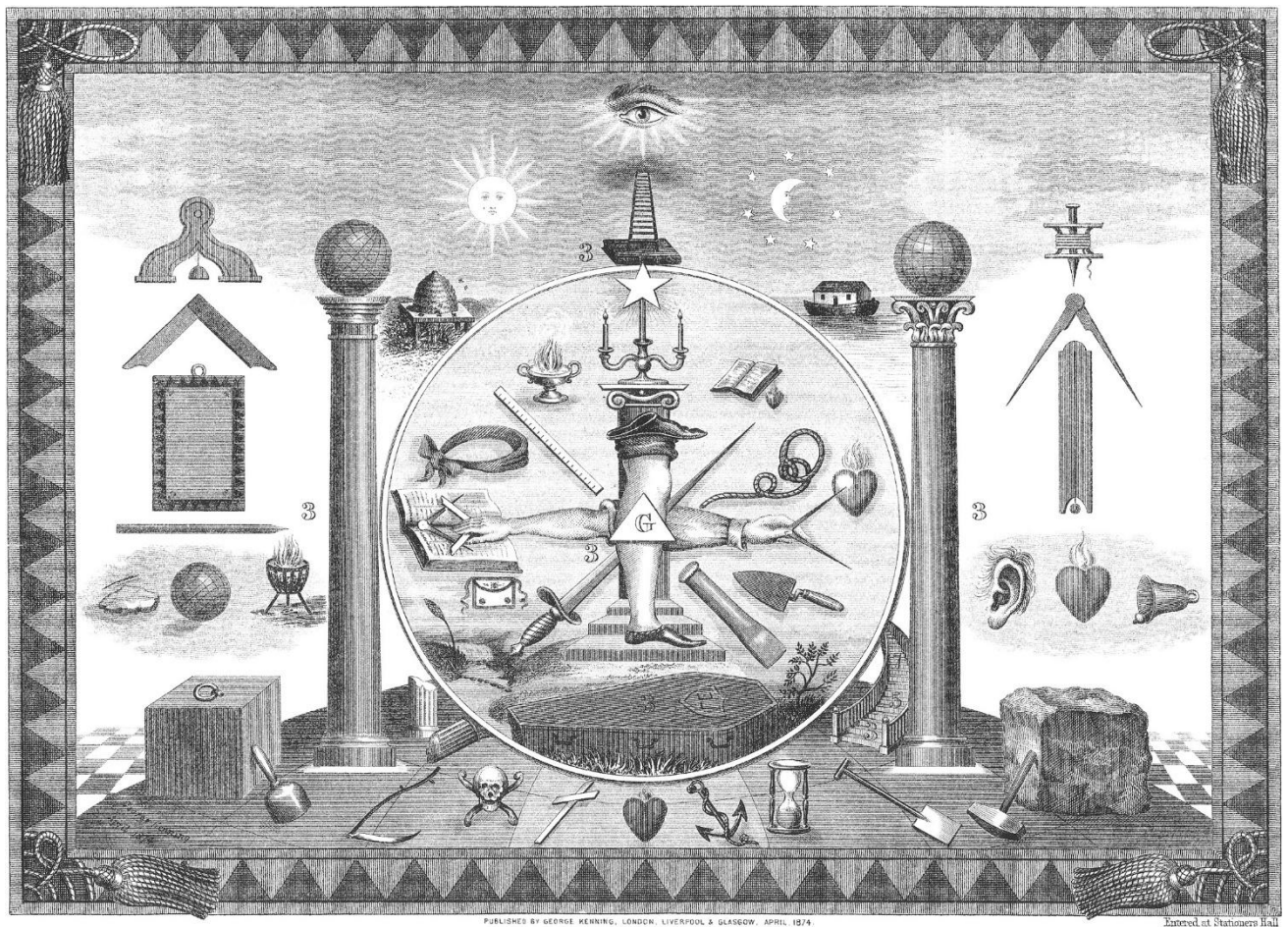
Masonic Secrecy

Evolving/Changing Ritual

Many of our lodges have a virtual attic of discarded ideas and practices that have been worn away by fear, lack of interest, or general laziness. In the same way that some Grand Lodges have done away with the penalties of the degrees, or allowed elements of Craft ritual to be removed²⁰.

Difference by Jurisdiction and Interpretation

In July 2012 I sent an email to the secretary of Scotland Grand Lodge enquiring if there was any guide as to the items in the '*Masonic Emblems*'.



MASONIC EMBLEMS

*Respectfully Dedicated (by permission) To F. Whyte Melville Esq. of Pennochy, The Most Worshipful Grand Master Mason of Scotland,
By His Humble Servant William Garey*

I received the following in reply:

Although there may be a consensus among some Scottish Freemasons as to what any particular word or symbol might mean there can be, and usually is, other alternative explanations. The letter 'G' will suffice to illustrate this point. A Freemason who is also a Christian by faith will usually interpret the letter 'G' mean G_D but a Freemason who is a

²⁰ *A Temple of Living Stones - Examining the Concept of a Chain of Union* by WBro. Andrew Hammer, PM, Alba Lodge No 222, Grand Lodge of Virginia, USA.

Muslim might well reject that idea because he cannot accept that G_D can be reduced to a mere letter of an alphabet created by humans. He will, quite often, argue that the letter 'G' stands for geometric and/or geometry. For similar reasons a Freemason who is Jewish might argue that 'G' stands for goodness – the innate goodness within every human being. There are others. For example: the GAOTU and GGOTU (not G_D) are particularly appropriate for [Scottish] Masonic usage.

From this brief example one can see that **it is considered impossible for Scottish Freemasons to provide a single, absolute, meaning for a symbol used within Scottish Freemasonry.**

NOTE: G_D means God. God is nearly always rendered as G_D by those of the Jewish faith. Similarly, Muslims would never use the term God (or even G_D) as the correct term is ALLAH (Blessed be His Name).

If this piece is used, in part or in full, I would appreciate the source (myself!) be acknowledged.

Robert L D Cooper.

Curator of the Grand Lodge of Scotland Museum and Library

July 2014²¹

Harry Carr stated:

We have the mysterious 'Indented Tarsel', mentioned by Prichard (in his exposure of 1730) as part of the 'Furniture' of the lodge. He describes it as 'the Border round about it', i.e., round the lodge and, if Prichard is to be trusted on this point, it was an 'Indented' Border!

From 1751 onwards we have (in *Le Maçon Démasqué* and later versions) illustrations showing indented borders and when, at a much later date, the chequered carpets were introduced, covering the whole of the working area, the ornamental border became a regular but more-or-less variable feature of the design, generally made up of triangular indentations. (See Q. 87, p. 197.)

Our Grand Lodge (UGLE) building, with some twenty Temples, have a chequered design in majority—if not all of them,—now entirely *without* ornamental or indented borders. The Indented Border has become a standard part of our Tracing Boards, but it is not deemed an essential part of the carpet.²²

Workings – The many versions of Masonic Ritual, 22 November 2017

NOTE: This only includes English and Scottish rituals.

There are many different versions of Masonic Ritual.

Scottish Craft Workings: 25

Standard Scottish / The Standard Ritual of Scottish Freemasonry

The Scottish Craft Ritual (by George Kenning)

DM Goudielock

The Complete Manual of Freemasonry (by William Harvey)

Scottish Masonic Ritual (by George Martin, Dundee)

Craft Freemasonry (by John Crombie and Alex McConnochie, Aberdeen)

The MacBride Ritual

The Modern Ritual

English Craft Workings: 33

The Perfect Ceremonies of Craft Masonry (Emulation Lodge of Improvement)

²¹ Symbolism a note for Brother Ray, Canberra, Australia from Robert L D Cooper Curator of the Grand Lodge of Scotland Museum and Library by email July 2014

²² *The Freemason At Work* by Harry Carr; p. 148

Nigerian Ritual (Emulation Lodge of Improvement)
 Revised Edition / Emulation Ritual (Emulation Lodge of Improvement)
 The Revised Ritual of Craft Freemasonry (by Franklin Thomas)
 Universal Ritual / The Universal Book of Craft Masonry
 West End / Authorised West End Ritual of Craft Freemasonry
 Ritus Oxoniensis / Ritual of Craft Freemasonry in the Province of Oxfordshire
 The Sussex Ritual of Craft Freemasonry
 Stability Ritual/The Standard Ceremonies of Craft Masonry (Stability Lodge of Instruction) *aka* Muggeridge Working
 MM Taylor's Handbook of Craft Freemasonry (North London)
 The Complete Workings of Craft Freemasonry
 Oxford Working / The Oxford Ritual of Craft Freemasonry
 The Logic Working of Craft Ceremonies (Logic Ritual Association)
 A Book of Masonic Ritual (by WBro. Arthur Calvert) (East London)
 The Castle Ritual (Northumbrian Past Masters)
 Craft Guide Merchant Navy Working
 The Veritas Working of Craft Freemasonry
 The Ceremonies of Craft Freemasonry (Welsh Masonic Lodges in London)
 Bristol Masonic Ritual
 Claret
 Unanimity
 York (Gilkes)
 Humber
 Plymouth Common-Sense
 Exeter Ritual
 Bury
 Britannia (Sheffield)
 Domatic
 Metropolitan
 East London
 West London
 South London
 English Ritual
 The Correct Ceremonies of Eastern Craft Masonry (privately printed), and practiced by
 "The Aldwych Club Lodge No.3794 and The Lodge of Sincerity No.174 (Thanks to
 David Mason, W.M., The Lodge of Sincerity No. 174).

English Royal Arch Workings: 14

The Metropolitan Working of Royal Arch Masonry
 The Perfect Ceremonies of the Supreme Order of the Holy Royal Arch
 The Ritual of the Holy Royal Arch (Domatic Chapter of Instruction)
 The Complete Workings of the Royal Arch Ritual (Hale Chapter of Improvement)
 The Aldersgate Royal Arch Ritual (Aldersgate Chapter of Improvement) *aka* Nigerian
 Royal Arch Ritual
 The Supreme Order of the Holy Royal Arch Ritual (Standard Chapter of Instruction)
 The Midlands Working of the Royal Arch Ritual (Warwicks, Worcesters, Staffs &
 Shrops)
 The Warwickshire Working of the Royal Arch Ritual
 The Ritual of the Holy Royal Arch (Province of Sussex)
 Worcester Working of the Royal Arch Ritual
 The Oxford Ritual of Royal Arch Masonry

The Staffordshire Royal Arch Ritual
Grenadiers
Taylors²³

That there are divergencies in ritual, every masonic traveller soon becomes aware. Before he gets into the lodge in a foreign jurisdiction the look upon the faces of the examining committee, the awkward attempt to fit two divergent systems of work one to the other while neither party can go into explanations, shows at once that, while each is confident of himself, something is wrong. This comes out particularly in a matter as fundamental as the modes of recognition. Some jurisdictions letter and divide or syllable the word and divide or syllable the pass. In other jurisdictions the pass is given at once but the word is divided or syllabled. And if our masonic traveller were to go upon the continent of Europe and to find a lodge which his home authorities recognized, he might, as is well known, come upon an unfamiliar substitute word.²⁴

It is not uncommon for some brethren to think and speak of freemasonry as if it were a specific unified entity, but that was not the case then and is not so now, other than in the highest principles that are encouraged by its practice. It is a development from numerous forms, and variations continue in many jurisdictions. From the varieties of ritual and procedures that were in existence, the eventual agreed form adopted in England was still beset with quirks and idiosyncrasies that local custom had no intention of releasing; but even those practices at times suffered from the hands of “improvers” which sometimes resulted in items becoming isolated from the original context creating illogical problems for brethren who were to follow. In order to analyse modern items and to find basic reasons for their adoption it is necessary to look into the background, to return to whatever evidence may be found in manuscript material or the later published masonic exposures.²⁵

Every day it becomes more evident that our American Craft is still being subjected to the gradual extirpation of the Initiatic and Esoteric Dimension of its symbols and rituals. And what is more lamentable and alarming, is, that such actions have been taken and/or sanctioned by the very Hierarchies or Grand Bodies of our American Craft – They are either too ignorant, too indifferent, or, simply, too recalcitrant to understand and accept that thanks to these symbols (terminology included) and rituals, revealed to us through the ages.²⁶

Spelling or mistranslation mistakes.

We know by tradition, and by engravings that have been preserved, that during the ceremonies of initiation in the early part of the last century the symbols of the Order were marked out in chalk on the floor, and that this picture was encircled by a waving cord. This cord was ornamented with tassels, and formerly a border to the tracing on the floor was called the indented tassel, the cord and the tufts attached to it being the tassel, which, being by its wavy direction partly in and partly outside of the picture, was said to be indented. This *indented tassel* was subsequently corrupted by illiterate Masons into *indented tarsal*, the appellation met with in some of the early catechisms.

I think that I can readily trace the gradual steps of corruption and change from the original name *indented tassel*, which the early French Masons had literally translated by *houpe dentelée*,

23 Workings – The many versions of Masonic Ritual <https://freemasonrymatters.co.uk/index.php/workings-the-many-versions-of-masonic-ritual/>

24 *The Causes Of Divergence In Ritual*. by RWBro. Roscoe Pound, Deputy Grand Master 1915

25 Victorian Masonic Education Course Developed by WBro. Kent Henderson. *Understanding Freemasonry* by R.A. Wells - chapter 4.

to *indented tassel*, and sometimes, according to Oliver, to *indented trassel*; then to *tassellated border*, and, finally, to *tessellated border*, the name which it now bears.

The form and the meaning of the symbol are now apparent. The *tessellated border*, as it is called, is a cord, decorated with tassels, which surrounds the tracing-board of an Entered Apprentice, the said tracing-board being a representation of the Lodge, and it symbolizes the bond of love—the mystic tie—which binds the Craft wheresoever dispersed into one band of brotherhood.²⁷

Henry Wilson Coil²⁸ says it was a misspelling that really brought the chain of union into Masonic lodges: “The Tessellated Border or Indented Tessel, sometimes miscalled Tarsal and even worse as Tassel, was a border surrounding the Mosaic Pavement, evidently having tooth-like indentations like a black and white fringe. So far, all is well; but at this point the gremlins went to work. The French mistook tessel for tassel and tessellated for tassellated and, accordingly, got a picture of a cord with tassels at both ends and, further, they imagined the cord draped around the edge of a tracing board. The Germans followed the French lead treating the object as a cord tied in lovers’ knots with two tassels at the ends”.²⁹

Houpe (Houpe) dentelée. This was apparently Perau’s attempted translation of the words ‘Indented Tarsel’ which Prichard had used in a somewhat similar context in his *Masonry Dissected*, of 1730. Prichard explained that the ‘Indented Tarsel’ was the ‘Border round about it’ (i.e., the lodge), & he probably meant an indented border. Dring, (*A.Q.C.*, 29, pp. 258-261) was at pains to show, unsuccessfully I believe, that Prichard meant a ‘perpend ashlar’. Whether Prichard should have said ‘perpend ashlar’ or not, is immaterial here, because he gave a clue to his meaning in the word ‘Border’.

Perau seemed to find difficulty in dealing with technical details in English, but it is not certain whether his mis-translations were deliberate or accidental. Thus, Prichard’s ‘Mosaic Pavement’ became Perau’s ‘Mosaic Palace’.”

‘Blazing Star’ ‘star-spangled canopy’

‘Indented Tarsel’ ‘*Houpe dentelée*’

and Perau gave no explanation of the latter term. Note, the word *dentelée*, with one *l*, means toothed, or indented. *Houpe* means ‘tuft’ or tassel.

From 1744 onwards the term ‘*Houpe dentelée*’ appears regularly in numerous texts.³⁰

It was Travenol who published the earliest printed designs of the Floor-Drawings in his first exposure, *Le Catéchisme*, in 1744. He was also the first to depict the *Houpe Dentellée* as a Tasselled Cord, serving as a kind of ornamental frame to the upper part of the Apprentice-Fellow’s Drawing. When, in 1745, the author-compiler of *L’Ordre . . . Trahi* described Travenol’s designs as *Inexact* and supplied two new designs to replace them, his amendments to the Apprentice-Fellow’s Drawing were comparatively slight and he retained the Tasselled Cord without amendment, thereby giving it his tacit approval, though there was still no explanation of the meaning, symbolism, or purpose of the Cord or its Tassels.

²⁷ *Encyclopaedia Of Freemasonry*, Tessell by Mackey.

²⁸ Henry Wilson Coil – *Masonic Encyclopedia*, Macoy Publishing & Masonic Supply Co., Inc., Richmond, Virginia, 1995, p.253

²⁹ Chain of Union - Radu Comănescu & Vladimir <https://www.isel-europe.org/chain-of-union-romania>

³⁰ *The Early French Exposures* By Harry Carr. Footnote 2 on p. 72

Here, in *La Desolation*, Travenol brought the *Houpe Dentellée* back again and described it as *Une espece de Cordon de Veuve qui entoure le haul du Dessein*, “A kind of Widow’s Cord which surrounds the upper part of the Design . . .” The term, “Widow’s Cord”, seemed to add only more confusion to the difficulty of explaining its meaning; but on closer inspection it proves to be a piece of Masonic whimsy which does credit to Travenol’s subtlety.

The whole idea takes its rise from an expression which was firmly established in European ritual in 1745, in which the Masons were described as “Sons of the Widow”. By an easy extension of symbolism the Craft itself became the Widow and the Floor-Drawing became her coat of arms. The solution lies in French Blazonry, i.e., that branch of Heraldry which prescribes how an achievement of arms is correctly drawn. I quote from *Larousse du XX^e siècle* the relevant words under the heading ‘Veuve’, sub-heading ‘Blas[on]’, in simple, non-technical translation:—

‘Widows bear the arms of their husband . . . surrounded by an intertwined cord . . .’³¹

The corruption of ashler into tarsel or tassley is still simpler. In both forms we get the accented syllable in ashlar, viz., the first; the ‘t’ sound is a case of prothesis and has been assimilated from the final ‘t’ sound in the preceding word perpend, perpent, indented or dented.

In old French we find a germane word *aisselle* derived from the same source as the English word ashler, and in Ducange, we find the Latin equivalent *aisella*.

So far as ‘indented tarsel’ or danty tassley’ may be considered as the equivalent of lacy tassel I can find absolutely no confirmation. I am aware that tarsel or tassley may easily be a synonym of tassel, but I cannot trace a single instance in English literature in which indented or dented is used in the sense of dentellé or lacy.³²

A Short Glossary

ashler tarsel or tassley

Houpe (Houpe) dentellée. - ‘Indented Tarsel’

‘Indented Tarsel’ – ‘Houpe dentellée’

indented tarsel ‘or danty tassley

‘perpend ashlar’ Serrated puff - frayed ends of the rope that surrounds the temple. But by extension, the term serrated puff also applies to the entire rope, so that we also speak of knotted rope or cord.³³

Tessellated. From the Latin tessella, a little square stone. Checkered, formed in little squares of Mosaic work.

Knot symbolism

³¹ *The Early French Exposures* by Harry Carr p. 320

³² *The Evolution And Development Of The Tracing Or Lodge Board* by Bro. E.H. Dring, P.M. *AQC* 29 [1916].

³³ La houpe dentellée et la chaîne d’union (The serrated puff and the chain of union)

<https://www.ecossaisdesaintjean.org/article-la-houpe-dentellee-et-la-chaine-d-union-101549332.html>



The lace tuft - cord, decoration or symbol
 La houpe « dentelée »: cordelière, decor ou symbole ? 2³⁴

Knotted ropes and cords have been used for centuries for counting, measurement, as memory aids for prayer recitation, and for simple binding and tying. It could easily be said that knot tying may have been one of the major developments in the advancement of mankind, perhaps even overshadowing the invention of the wheel in terms of its impact. Anthropologists theorize that during the period in which man was learning to domesticate animals the rope became the very symbol of his mastery of brute nature. Consequently, the rope, or cord, came to acquire very early symbolic and mystical meaning.³⁵

Gordian knot, knot that gave its name to a proverbial term for a problem solvable only by bold action. In 333 BC, Alexander the Great, on his march through Anatolia, reached Gordium, the capital of Phrygia. There he was shown the chariot of the ancient founder of the city, Gordius, with its yoke lashed to the pole by means of an intricate knot with its end hidden. According to tradition, this knot was to be untied only by the future conqueror of Asia. In the popular account, probably invented as appropriate to an impetuous warrior, Alexander sliced through the knot with his sword, but, in earlier versions, he found the ends either by cutting into the knot or by drawing out the pole. The phrase “cutting the Gordian knot” has thus come to denote a bold solution to a complicated problem.³⁶

34 <https://www.hiram.be/la-houpee-dentelée-cordelière-decor-ou-symbole-2/>

35 The Knotted Rope In Masonic Esoteric Tradition by Bro. William Steve Burkle KT, 32°, KCRBE Alpha Lodge No. 116, Grand Lodge of New Jersey.

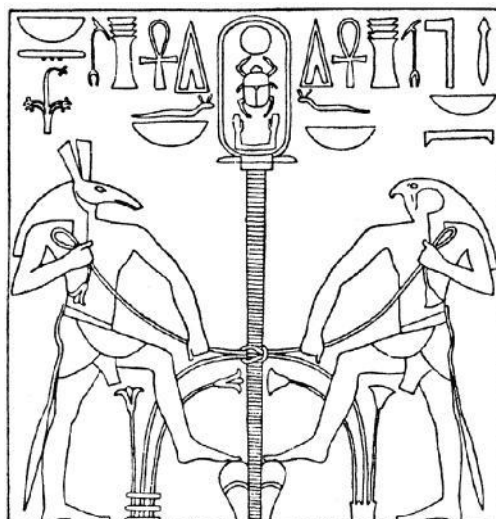
36 Gordian knot.docx <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Gordian-knot>

The Pharaoh employed a land surveyor, so called harpedonaptai or harpedonapts (rope stretchers or rope-knotters). After the annual flooding of the Nile river the property boundaries had to be reestablished. The harpedonaptai used measuring cords with 11 equally spaced knots (or marked with paint) dividing it into 12 parts. With these ropes they could form a right triangle with the sides of 3:4:5.³⁷

Knotting had a range of functions in the sphere of Egyptian religion/magic/mythology/medicine, four terms which in European thinking are quite disparate, but should be considered as a closely knitted complex in the context of ancient Egypt.

In funerary texts there are some clear references to circular knotting. Especially spells in the *Book of the Dead*.

Circular knotting with two strands occurs as *Tz tAwy*, an expression that is found rarely as an alternative to the common *smA tAwy*. The knot used for the unification of Upper and Lower Egypt is, again, the reef knot, tied with two separate strands around the respiratory tract (*Fig. 12*).³⁸



smA tAwy from the throne of Senusret I in Lisht.

I am the Knot of the god in the Aser tree, the twice beautiful one, who is more splendid to-day than yesterday (*Repeat four times*). I am Rai, who stablisheth those who praise him. **5. I** am the Knot of the god within the Aser tree, and my appearance is the appearance [of Ra] on this day.³⁹

Unas is the lord of offerings, the untier of the knot, and he himself maketh abundant the offerings of meat and drink.

I am Ra who establish those who praise him. I am the knot within the tamarisk tree, more beautiful in brightness than the disk of yesterday.⁴⁰

O my Creator, I am he who hath no power to walk, the great knot within yesterday.⁴¹

37 The Great Pyramid of Khufu (Cheops) <https://www.cheops-pyramide.ch/khufu-pyramid/pyramid-alignment.html>

38 *Entangled, Connected Or Protected?* By Willeke Wendrich
https://docs.google.com/file/d/0B0eawh9UmLRfQVduZ0J6SW9MTDA/edit?resourcekey=0-6vdA1_VNfLeRRE1BxhiDLw

39 *The Book Of The Dead: The Papyrus Of Ani, Scribe And Treasurer Of The Temples Of Egypt, About B.C. 1450* In Two Volumes Volume II.

40 *The Book Of The Dead The Papyrus Of Ani* by E. A. Wallis Budge [1895] p. 356

In Ancient Egyptian hieroglyphics a knotted rope denotes a person's name or a separate and individual being. It is the symbol of a stream of life reflected upon itself and, as such, constituting a person. African witch-doctors use ropes as instruments for their magic and they are believed to become serpents, staves, fountains of milk and so on.

Central American civilizations regarded the rope as a divine symbol and, in Mayan and Mexican art, ropes hanging from the sky symbolize divine semen falling from Heaven to fecundate the Earth. This symbolism is echoed in the name of the month which ushers in the rainy season. In the Ancient Mexican calendar it was called Toxcatl, meaning 'rope' or 'lasso'.

The Chorti (one of the indigenous Maya peoples) bury their dead with a rope to be used to fight off the wild animals to be encountered on the way to the Underworld.

Northern wizards used to tie the winds which they controlled into a rope. A woodcut in Olaus Magnus' *Historia de gentibus septentrionalibus* (Rome, 1555) shows two sailors bargaining with a wizard standing upon a lonely rock in the sea, over his price for 'the rope with three knots which he holds in his hand and which contains the winds which he has tied up. By unpicking the first knot they would release a gentle west-southwesterly; by unpicking the second, a stiff northerly; but if they were to unpick the third then a most dreadful storm would follow'.

In the Koran, too, ropes are symbols of ascent, reminiscent of the rope the shaman or the oriental juggler throws into the air and uses to climb skywards.⁴²

The Inka empire (1400-1532 CE) used *kipus* – knotted string devices – to communicate complex mathematical and narrative information. More than 1,000 *kipus* are known but have not been deciphered.⁴³



Khipu in the Museo Machu Picchu, Casa Concha, Cusco. Image: *Wikipedia*

41 *The Book Of The Dead The Papyrus Of Ani* by E. A. Wallis Budge [1895] p. 357

42 The meaning of the dream symbol: Rope <http://dreamicus.com/rope.html>

43 The khipu code: the knotty mystery of the Inkas' 3D records <https://aeon.co/ideas/the-khipu-code-the-knotty-mystery-of-the-inkas-3d-records>

Numerical khipus

Each row on a numerical khipu has a value of up to 9, 90, 900, and so forth.

Narrative khipus

Khipus that diverge from the decimal and numerical organization of knots are referred to as “narrative” khipu.⁴⁴

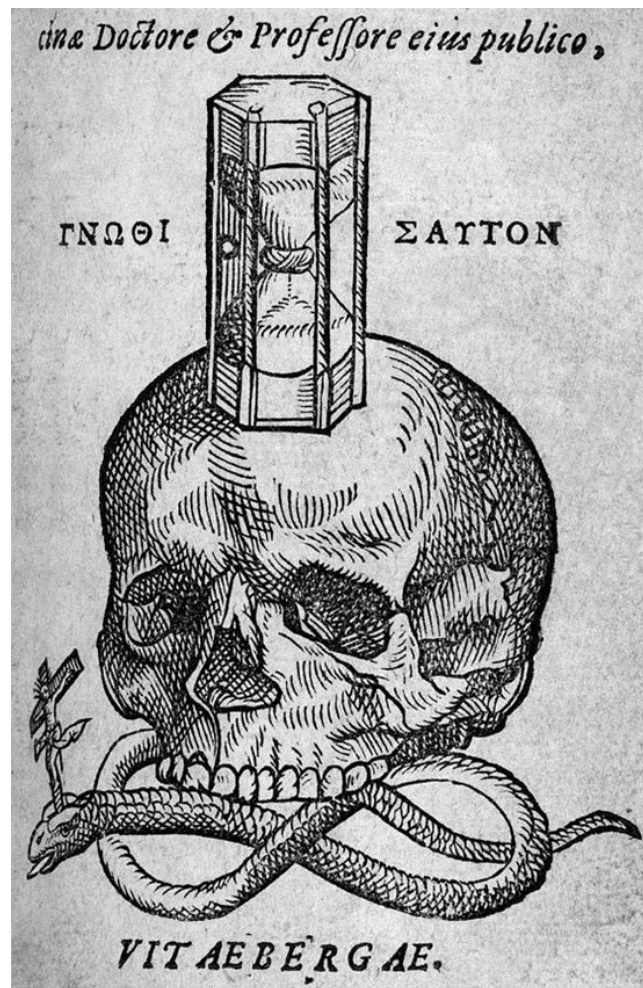
The **Order of the Ladies of the Cord** (French: L’Ordre des Dames chevalières de la Cordelière” or “Ordre de la Cordelière”), was a ladies order founded by the French queen Anne of Brittany in 1498. This rope with knots had been added by her step-grandfather Francis I, Duke of Brittany to his arms in honor of St. Francis its patron saint and her father Francis II, Duke of Brittany had continued the emblem.⁴⁵



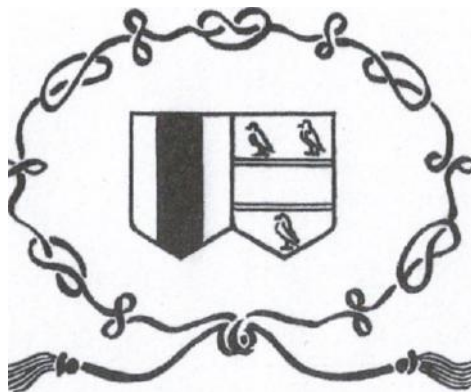
Château de Blois, gable of the chapel's entrance showing crowned initials of Louis XII and Anne with their arms surrounded by the Orders of Saint Michael and the Cord.

⁴⁴ *The Inka khipu* by Dr. Kylie E. Quave

⁴⁵ Order Of The Ladies Of The Cord https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Order_of_the_Ladies_of_the_Cord



16th century woodcut illustration depicting a skull, a snake and an hourglass.
The snake has a crucifix in its head.⁴⁶



Arms Of A Widow

A rough sketch to show the origin of the Cordon de Veuve.
With acknowledgements to *Larousse du XX^e Siecle*

Wind knots were normally tied in groups of three, and were used to bind winds which could later be called upon when needed. Release of the first knot was believed to activate a moderate breeze, release of the second, a strong breeze, and release of the third knot caused a heavy

⁴⁶ This illustration was first published in *De methodo medendi liber unus* by Andreas Planer, printed at Basle in 1583.

wind. Other variously cited and beneficial uses of Knot Magic include the curing of fever, alleviation of diseases of the groin, prevention of scarlet fever, and keeping a person out of harm's way.

Because of their association with binding, knots were often viewed to restrict, impede, or constrain certain events such as childbirth, marriage, and death. It is recorded that in 1705, two persons were condemned to death in Scotland for stealing charmed knots which were subsequently used to interfere with the marriage of Spalding of Ashintilly. In 1718 the parliament of Bordeaux sentenced a person to death by burning for having spread desolation through an entire family by the use of knotted cords. Knot magic was also used for other malevolent purposes; such as causing impotence in men, or to surreptitiously prevent a desired pregnancy.⁴⁷

The Knotted Cord

At the time of the construction of cathedrals, the construction workers, skilled builders, moved from one day to the next with a cane that served as a measuring stick. Five marks were engraved on the wood to their own measure. Not knowing how to read or write, they traced their work with great precision thanks to this measuring system. In the construction of large buildings, the master builder established a rule, and each worker thus possessed the universal measure and the thirteen-knot rope.⁴⁸

The beginnings of the artistic styling of the Entered Apprentice tracing board did not feature the four tassels, but a wavy cord, which was contained four knots and finished with two tasselled edges hanging down.

This arrangement of is known as the scalloped tassel, Bro. John Browne in his text of the *Master Key* explains the possible reason that this design was used:

"the kind care of providence which so cheerfully surrounds and keeps us within its protection whilst we justly and uprightly govern our lives and actions by the four cardinal virtues in divinity".⁴⁹

The immediate source of the tessells was probably a misinterpretation of the English text. But the cord with tessells (re: Prichard's exposure 1730 'Indented Tarsel') has a curious French derivation, based on the Biblical statement that H.A. was a widow's son. In Masonic ritual, all Brothers to H.A., and are therefore called 'sons of the widow'. In French heraldry, the Arms of the widow are surrounded or framed by a wavy (indented) tasselled cord, a *cordon de veuve*, i.e., a widow's cord, and from 1747 onwards the cord with tassels is described as the *Cordon de veuve*.

Other students, more symbolically inclined, carry the simile further back - to first tracing board history - to the portion of the lecture which tells why all mason's lodges lie due E. and W., as did the Tabernacle in the wilderness, so designed by God's own decree. The cover of the Tabernacle was a vast cloth of skins held down by means of weights in loops, hung at intervals round its sides. Under this interpretation our four tessells become representative, symbolically, of the host of thongs that held the roof of the temple firm against the desert winds. Ritualist have given them names - those of four cardinal virtues - Prudence, Fortitude, justice and

47 Victorian Masonic Education Course Developed by WBro. Kent Henderson. *Understanding Freemasonry* by R.A. Wells - Chapter 4.

48 *The corde à treize nœuds and the quine des bâtisseurs* by Nicolas Gasseau

49 Arts & Humanities/Religious Studies Tracing Boards - Irish Freemasonry
<https://studylib.net/doc/8767798/tracing-boards---irish-freemasonry>

Temperance, - which hold the human temple staunch against the winds of temptation. (NSW FM 8/48 p. 289)⁵⁰

The “cord tied in lovers’ knots” is not a Masonic invention; it was a well-known heraldic element, present in the armories of bishops, abbots, ecclesiasts living in celibacy and widows.⁵¹

The rope knots or Houppe (tuft) lace fabric. In the operative masons or the art, include the use of the surveyor’s chain or rope tied when it comes to drawing up plans for a sacred building. In the surveying operation, the measurement is taken by means of a knotted rope provides measurements simultaneously reports proportion.⁵²

We know that many Freemason symbols come from the world of construction; however, nowhere is a connection between this knotted rope and an actual tool found before the 20th century, and for good reason, its origin is heraldic. It was only in 1933 that it was assimilated to a measuring instrument. In his article *The unknown tool*, the symbolist Freemason Wladimir Nagrodski goes against the opinion of his peers by comparing the jagged tassel to a certain Egyptian rope:

The “harpedonaptes” (string stretchers) used the rope not only to orient the building according to the cardinal points of the horizon, but also to draw its right angles according to the very old method and based on the fact that the triangle with sides 3, 4 and 5 is necessarily a right triangle (later Pythagorean theorem).⁵³

References to the rope with thirteen knots multiplied during the second half of the 20th century. It is thus found in 1966 in *The Mysteries of Chartres Cathedral* of Louis Charpentier, a remarkable example of pseudoscience totally devoid of historical rigor, in which the author tells us in all seriousness that the builders of cathedrals did not need mathematics, because they used “the rope with twelve knots (twelve nodes, i.e. thirteen segments/*sic*) of the Druids”. Poor druids, you have to believe that the Egyptians were not enough.⁵⁴

The knotted cord around the tracing board and the Chain of Union are generally considered similar symbols; that is, “unity in multiplicity.” This isn’t explained in the ritual (Lodge France AASR), but is discussed in the oral tradition. Esoterically, we may consider the unity of the divine spark in all beings, connecting us to the source of Light, the G∴A∴O∴T∴U∴, in the Chain of Union; “all is one, one is all.”

Oswald Wirth states:

“A serrated lambrequin borders and features a rope ending in tassels that meet near the J∴ and B∴ columns. This ornament has been mistakenly called a “serrated tassel.” The rope is tied in interlacing knots, known as “knots of love,” and thus represents the Chain of Union linking all Masons. There may be twelve knots to correspond to the signs of the Zodiac.”⁵⁵

The tessellated border consists of 60 threads in Ancient Masonic jurisdictions as some lodges were not allowed to have more than 60 members in those old days.

50 “Tessera Sapientiae” by WBro G. Love I.P.M. of the Victorian Lodge of Research 218, 23 May 1986.

51 Chain of Union by Radu Comănescu <https://www.isel-europe.org/chain-of-union-romania>

52 History of the Chain of Union <http://thedebyr.com/3005AA.html>

53 The corde à treize nœuds and the quine des bâtisseurs by Nicolas Gasseau p. 66

54 The corde à treize nœuds and the quine des bâtisseurs by Nicolas Gasseau p. 68

55 “La Franc Maçonnerie rendue intelligible à ses adeptes,” (1894). Translated by Aiden Rosa.

In America, the tessellated border is not seen as a cord. Instead, the tessellated border is a decorated part of the Mosaic pavement, and it is made of small square stones.⁵⁶

The fact that after 1725 Freemasonry adopted Hiram as its Archetypal Master, and Hiram was the son of a widow, might have contributed to the success of the cord with tassels.⁵⁷

The tassel design is not a pun. Tessellated means ‘Of or resembling mosaic, having finely chequered surface’. (O.E.D.) The word is from the Greek tessares = four. It has nothing to do with tassels, which seem to have arisen from a misunderstanding of the ‘Indented Tarsel’ in Prichard’s exposure of 1730. That work became the basis of the catechisms in all the early French exposures, which translated the ‘Indented Tarsel’ as Houppes dentelées. Houppes means tuft or tassel; dentelée, with one l, means ‘indented’; dentellée, with two lls, means ‘lacy’ or ‘laced’. The exposure *Le Catéchisme des Francs-Maçons*, 1744, in its combined Tracing Board for the 1st and 2nd Degrees, was the first text to illustrate the Houppes dentelées as a long cord with two tasselled ends forming a kind of ornamental headpiece across the top of the design. This was the first appearance of tassels in a Masonic context. They may have been in use on English Tracing Boards of that period, but there is no evidence to support this.⁵⁸

Rope is used by builders to trace out angles and straight lines, while the spaces between the knots represent units of measurement. It is important to distinguish the knotted rope from the indented tassel, a frieze of black and white triangles which runs around the lodge’s tracing board. The knots in the rope are not pulled tight, and form a sideways number 8, like the mathematical symbol for infinity. This sideways 8 is a geometric figure, called the lemniscate [from the Greek lemniscatas, (λημνίσκος) adorned with ribbons] and formed by two joined slightly elliptical rings. One of its symbolical properties, termed “squarability”, raises a number of questions. Squarability means that the area of one of the rings of the lemniscate is equal to the area of a square whose sides are the length of the diameter of the circle inscribed within a ring.⁵⁹

This construction represents the squaring of the circle. The properties of the lemniscate were studied by Bemouilli (1654-1705) after the work of Cassini (1625-1712), the first director of the Paris Observatory who discovered two of Saturn’s satellites. The lemniscate matches the apparent orbit of the planets around the sun, as observed from the Earth. The real orbit is elliptical, and the apparent orbit of a planet whose orbit is elliptical traces a lemniscate.⁶⁰

Bro Don Falconer wrote in *The Square and Compasses* [p 209 of the 2006 CD edition]: The wavy cord and the tassels. Some early tracing boards of the first degree were enclosed within a continuous wavy cord that was knotted at the four corners and terminated with its two tasselled ends hanging down. In French lodges this arrangement of the cord is called la houppes dentelées, which means “the scalloped tassel” and is described as “a cord forming true-lovers’ knots”. The old French ritual explains that the cord should remind all freemasons that the bonds uniting them should draw them closer together, irrespective of the distances that may separate them. In German lodges the knotted wavy cord is called die Schnur von starken Faden, which signifies “a cord of strong threads”. The old German ritual also explains that the cord symbolises the fraternal bond by which all freemasons are united.

56 The Masonic Mosaic Pavement <https://bricksmasons.com/blogs/masonic-education/the-masonic-mosaic-pavement>

57 *Chain of Union* by Radu Comănescu <https://www.isel-europe.org/chain-of-union-romania>

58 *The Freemason At Work* by Harry Carr, p. 149

59 Daniel Beresniak; *Symbols of Freemasonry*, Editions Assouline, Paris 1997, p. 30.

60 *Symbols Of Freemasonry* – Beresniak.

Also relevant to this discussion are the comments of John Browne in his *Master Key*, which sets out the elements of the Prestonian lectures. He says that the wavy cord and tassels allude to “the kind care of Providence which so cheerfully surrounds and keeps us within its protection whilst we justly and uprightly govern our lives and actions by the four cardinal virtues in divinity”. Alternative English translations of *dentelée* are “serrated” and “indented”, whence the “indented border” has been derived.

Later, on page 318 he wrote: As the early speculative craft lodges were usually held in rented rooms, it was customary to sketch appropriate emblems on the floor in chalk or charcoal, so that they could easily be erased at the end of the meeting. A temple and other symbols were usually drawn, often encircled by a wavy cord having open looped knots and tassels at the ends. This was the *indented tassel* or *indented tarsel* referred to in the old catechisms, but it is not, as is sometimes suggested, the *indented* or *tessellated border* that is referred to in modern rituals. The knotted and tasselled cord symbolises the universal bond of friendship that should unite every freemason with his brethren.

A Martinist version.

The traditional Cord of Union is then placed in the hands of those forming the circle and each member wraps it once around his left thumb, leaving the right hand free. The cord should be soft and may be of silk or nylon, about 5/16th of an inch thick and green, blue or dark red.⁶¹

The properties of the lemniscate were studied by Bemouilli (1654-1705) after the work of Cassini (1625-1712), the first director of the Paris Observatory who discovered two of Saturn’s satellites. The lemniscate matches the apparent orbit of the planets around the sun, as observed from the Earth. The real orbit is elliptical, and the apparent orbit of a planet whose orbit is elliptical traces a lemniscate.⁶²

In French lodges there is a further representation of the indented border, in the form of a cord of union. This is a knotted rope passing right round the lodge at approximately shoulder or waist height and also depicted on some French tracing boards, giving us a more concrete example of the concept of that which binds us together. The cord frequently ends in tassels, reminiscent of the four tassels on the corners of the indented or tessellated border.

So we have two principal ways of allegorically representing those sentiments which bind both the elements of Freemasonry and the Masonic brethren together: the Indented or Tessellated Border and the Cord of Union, the latter cord being both physical and figurative. But there is a third form of this allegory in Freemasonry, which is known as the Knotwork Pillar.⁶³

“The Union Cord with Love Knots, which runs around the Lodge upon the Architrave, is indicative of the mystic tie which unites us as brethren in the bonds of a happy Fraternity, telling of full generous love to fellow-men.”⁶⁴

The cable tow, or cord or rope is also interesting. When preparing this paper I came across an explanation of it running —

‘The knots are loose or open figure—eight knots, in French called ‘Lacs d ‘Amour’ (love knots). In north and Western Europe this type of knot is an ancient symbol of love, friendship or brotherhood. With this connotation were the knots first used in heraldry and, later, also in Continental Freemasonry, and the cord itself became a uniting element.

61 Houppe *Dentelée aka The Cord of Union* by NW Morse ‘A Daily Advancement’ . . . Linford Lodge Of Research, December 2020

62 *Symbols Of Freemasonry* by Daniel Beresniak

63 *Ornaments Furniture and Jewels* by Julian Rees page 38

64 2° of the AASR in Louisiana

‘In a speculative sense, it is said they are always depicted loose to illustrate that when we meet as brothers, there should be space within our relationship and, as we move further away from each other, the cord becomes straight and the knots will close and the further we move away, the tighter the knots (of brotherhood) become, this creating an ‘absence makes the heart grow fonder ‘concept.’⁶⁵

The Chain of Union

The Chain of Union is ancient, going back to the Compagnonnage, the 12th century French stonemason corporation — where it is known as “alliance’s chain.” Francisco Ariza thinks this ritual acted as support for a sacred invocation, it being a collective practice of “enchantment.” Enchantment is a sacred invocation, and is just a means to activate a memory of what is already inside the agent, awakening his inner faculties.⁶⁶

The first Masonic description of the chain of union seems to appear in 1696 in these lines of the *Edinburgh Regiuster House MS*:

“But to (be) a master mason or journeyman of the trade, there is more to do, and this is the following. First of all the apprentices must be led out of the company, and only masters must remain... So the masons whisper the word to each other, starting with the youngest... after which the new mason must take the posture in which he must receive the word... Then the master gives him the word and shakes his hand in the manner of masons, and that’s all there is to do to make him a perfect mason.”

The Chain of Union has a different meaning nowadays because by its formal resemblance to the lakes of love adorning the serrated puff, the Chain of Union, which is also evoked in 1723 in a Masonic song printed at the end of Anderson’s *Constitutions*, is identical to the serrated puff and its lakes of love representing the solidarity and love that unites each of the Brothers of the Chain.

This powerful Chain of Fraternity that united the Companion Builders of the Middle Ages explains how the monuments erected in Europe are of great resemblance. Many of the builders of that time had acquired their knowledge at the same school, that of the University of Cordoba. Thanks to their Fraternal Union Chain, Masons scattered throughout Europe were always in contact with each other. They transmitted their art and these known improvements.

A complex and rich symbolism is attached to this Chain of Union which also includes: “Serrated border”, “Knotted rope or serrated puff”.⁶⁷

The chain is an ancient symbol of Masonry, but the chain of union is a rather modern development, first operated in French lodges and due, as pointed out by contemporary Anglo-Saxon authors, to a misspelling.

But the chain of union extended its presence and, since the XIX century, became a ritual performed as part of the Masonic ritual. It is performed in practically all non-Andersonian Rites.⁶⁸

The Chain of Union found its way into the “contemporary” AASR Symbolic Degrees in 1923⁶⁹, where it appears in two places:

at the closing of the Lodge in the First Degree;

⁶⁵ Linford’s letter to Eddie.

⁶⁶ *The Chain of Union* by Bro. Giovanni Lombardo P.M. - QSA Members Forum Lemmi Lodge No. 400 Grande Oriente d’Italia. <https://www.freemasonryresearchforumqsa.com/chain-of-union.php>

⁶⁷ Histoire Et Symbolique <https://www.gadlu.info/histoire-et-symbolique-de-la-chaine-dunion/>

⁶⁸ Chain of Union - Radu Comănescu & Vladimir <https://www.isel-europe.org/chain-of-union-romania>

⁶⁹ Ritual of the Grand Lodge of France (1923)

at a certain point during the initiation ceremony.

During the 1800s, the references to the Chain are obscure. It appears in several rituals for the 14° (it was part of the traditional history, but some rituals also include the chain as part of the closing ceremony)⁷⁰.

It seems to have found its way into the English 18° sometime in the early 1900s (the earliest English Rose-Croix ritual I have that mentions the interlinking of hands is 1938⁷¹; the others imply that the Princes simply stand in a circle). Of course, it may have been customary in some chapters before then, and then the 1938 ritual consolidated it as part of the rubric. The earliest Scottish Constitution ritual I have is from the 1960s, but it may have also been the case that the English were “window-shopping” from the Scots.

In the 1700s, the Scottish Rite was a little less regulated by ritual, and so significant variations exist from Lodge to Lodge. One of the earliest rituals in the “direct” AASR lineage is the Ritual of the Scottish Mother Lodge of Avignon, 1774⁷². This includes a Chain of Union at two points:

immediately after the Lodge is closed;
at the end of the banquet; on both occasions, the Brethren sang an ode, “le bonheur des maçons” (*the happiness of masons*) (to the tune of “Est-il de plus douces odeurs,” (*Is there sweeter smells*) which I haven’t been able to track down).

The Rectified Scottish Rite, which was forming at around the same time, also included a chain of union during the closing, and a prayer rather than an ode (the ethos of the RER values monastic silence rather than musical accompaniment).⁷³

The knot rope is originally a very ancient measuring tool of which traces can be found in Egypt.

At that time, professional rope tensioners used a thirteen-knot rope also called surveyor’s rope to draw right angles to establish a temple or to delimit the rectangular fields that the floods of the Nile had covered.

It is therefore quite natural that this tool took its place alongside the square and the compass in symbolic Masonry.

Upon entering the temple, the surveyor’s rope was embellished with knots in eight (instead of single knots) called Lakes of Love.

Some authors have seen it as a heraldic reference. Thus Jules Boucher in *La Symbolique maçonnique* p.173 recalls that “The cord of black and white silk whose widows surround their shield is made of lakes of love; Similarly, the coats of arms of cardinals, bishops and abbots include, under a hat, a cord formed of lakes of love and terminated by puffs.

Others evoke the desire of the first mason to represent through the lakes of love, the rite of the “chain of union”.

⁷⁰ *Ordo ab Chao* (1833, transcribed from earlier rituals) Kloss MS (1804–1815 date disputed)

⁷¹ Rose-Croix (1891, English ritual) Rose-Croix (1938, English ritual)

⁷² Ritual of the Scottish Mother Lodge of Avignon (1774) as transcribed in “The Genesis of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite,” Philippe Michel, 2017.

⁷³ Rectified Scottish Rite from the General Convent of the Order held at Wilhelmsbad in 5782 (1782) courtesy Aidan Rosa by email 30 June 2023

Companion builders of the Middle Ages who practiced it under the name of “Alliance Chain”. These chains made it possible to exchange techniques and knowledge within the same trade (mason, stonemason, carpenter, etc.).

This explains why the monuments erected in Europe have a certain unity.

The knot rope also evokes the unfolding of existence, the two ends representing the two key moments: birth and death.

This rope is not linear, the knots arranged at regular intervals complicate the drawing and remind us that our life is marked by many obstacles.

The serrated puff is located in height slightly below the starry vault.

It runs on almost all the walls of the temple: from the north to the east and the south. It also adorns the West, but it remains interspersed, open. This can be seen as a sign of a deep openness to the secular world.

The two ends of the cord, where the puffs are formed, are behind the Jakin and Boaz columns. So when we pass between the columns of the temple we make the connection between the two ends of this rope. We are then an integral part of it and all that it symbolizes.

It seems, therefore, that this rope acts as a link between the material and the spiritual.

There are twelve love lakes (although some authors mention different numbers). This number is of great symbolic force:

Note also that these knots are represented loose. We can again see it as a sign of a deep open-mindedness, openness to others.

On the other hand, they tighten when we pull on them, which reminds us of the symbol of fraternity and solidarity between Masons, in adversity the bonds that unite us are strengthened.

*It is a real circulation of energy that is then created.*⁷⁴

At a certain moment in ceremony of Initiation, the Mason Brethren form the long Chain of Union, in which they include the Candidate, and the Worshipful Master addresses to the Candidate:

“My dear Brother, around you there is the Chain of Union, which is merely a link in the Universal Freemasonry Chain and shows you that the Freemasons shall not leave you as long as the Truth, Justice, Fidelity and fraternal Love remain sacred to you...”. This is in fact the moment when the Candidate must be aware that he becomes an element in the Masonic Universal Chain, an indestructible and perennial unitary whole.

The moment when the new Initiated is included in the Chain of Union, he is no longer a Profane isolated from a crowd.⁷⁵

The Chain is broken normally without any pressure or shaking, except when an Initiate is included for the first time. It is then broken with a triple pressure of the hands and a triple shaking of the arms.⁷⁶

When a new brother has just been initiated, the Chain of Union takes on an even greater significance than usual and must be performed slightly differently. After the WM has called on

⁷⁴ La houppe dentellée et la chaîne d’union (The serrated puff and the chain of union)

<https://www.ecossaisdesaintjean.org/article-la-houppe-dentellee-et-la-chaine-d-union-101549332.html>

⁷⁵ The Masonic Chain by Gabriel Vasile Oltean Expert Inspector of NGLR for Western Region Past Worshipful Master, Zamolxis Lodge, no. 182, Deva

⁷⁶ Lodge France 1° Chain Of Union Ritual

the brethren to join him around the altar, the SD and the new E.A. come forward, but remain several feet back from the circle.

The brothers should gather around and stand in a circle with their gloves on and not yet joining hands. An opening should be left near the northeast part of the circle where the SD and the new E.A. should be.

SW: WM, the Chain will not close.

WM: Bro. SW, what is amiss?

SW: WM, our new Brother cannot join the Chain of Union without our assistance. As it is every Brother's care and duty to aid our E.A., may we help him now to enter this solemn symbol of the unity of our Craft?

WM: You may, but before you do, I wish to ask him one last question. (SD walks new EA to the Chain and holds him in place without joining the Chain. WM turns to EA). You have met many men in your life and perhaps you have enemies. If you should find any in this Lodge, or amongst other Freemasons, would you be willing to extend the hand of friendship and forget the past?

EA: I would.

WM: We note your promise and will remind you of it if necessary. But remember that it is not always before you that your worst enemies are to be found. Turn and look behind you!

The EA is turned around by the SD, and sees himself in a mirror being held up by another brother.⁷⁷

It is with OPEN ARMS that the Brethren greet each other and, in a moment will greet you Brother Initiate.

You will observe that the arms of each Brother extends across the breast of his neighbour, this is symbolic of the protection Brother gives to Brother against the attacks of the Insidious should there be need.

Note also that each Brother clasps the hand - not of his immediate neighbour but of a Brother further down the Chain - symbolising the far reaching nature of Masonic Charity and help.

This Chain, when properly formed is symbolic of our Order. It is a double chain, has double strength, and a double meaning.

It shows the manner in which you are received into Freemasonry, into this Lodge, and into the hearts of every Brother in this Masonic Circle.

Being a double Chain with double strength, if a Brother is called away by the Great Architect of the Universe so that a link is broken (*Brother on right of the W.M. leaves the chain*) - the Chain remains strong and unbroken - but a weakness remains until a new link is forged - YOU Brother Initiate are that link. (*Initiate enters the chain where the gap exists*) (*The Brother who previously left the chain joins in another position.*)

May you remain strong and firm until YOU in turn receive your Summons to the Grand Lodge Above ... A Summons Brethren which will come to us all - and a Summons which we must all obey.

Bro Initiate - with your left hand you grasp the hand of the I.P.M., across the breast of the W.M.

⁷⁷ Templum Fidelis Lodge 746. Canada's First Observant Masonic Lodge - Templum Fidelis Chain of Union

The I.P.M. represents the past, the W.M. represents the present, and you Brother Initiate represent the future. Thus, the past looks through the present to the future for the continuance of our order and it's work.

From time to time all chains are tested. They are tested beyond the strain which they may be required to endure, so is our Masonic Chain tested.

This is shown by a gentle swaying of the Brethren, showing the strength of our Brotherhood.

EA's SONG - FULL VERSION except last verse then (Break to form Chain)

Then join hand in hand - by each brother fair stand

Let's be merry and put a bright face on;

What mortal can boast so noble a toast,
as **"A Free and an Accepted Mason"**⁷⁸

Upon entering the chain of union, the new brother intuitively discovers a message of universal fraternity.

When all the brothers shake hands, around the symbols of the drawing box; ideally forming a circle symbol of unity, something special happens.

When the hands are shaken, the beings melt. The contact of the tip of the fingers (energy seeds) of the left hand, on the palm of the hand (energy receiver) right, and vice versa, allows to transmit energy and generate a kind of fluid that spills into the chain achieving harmonization among the participants.

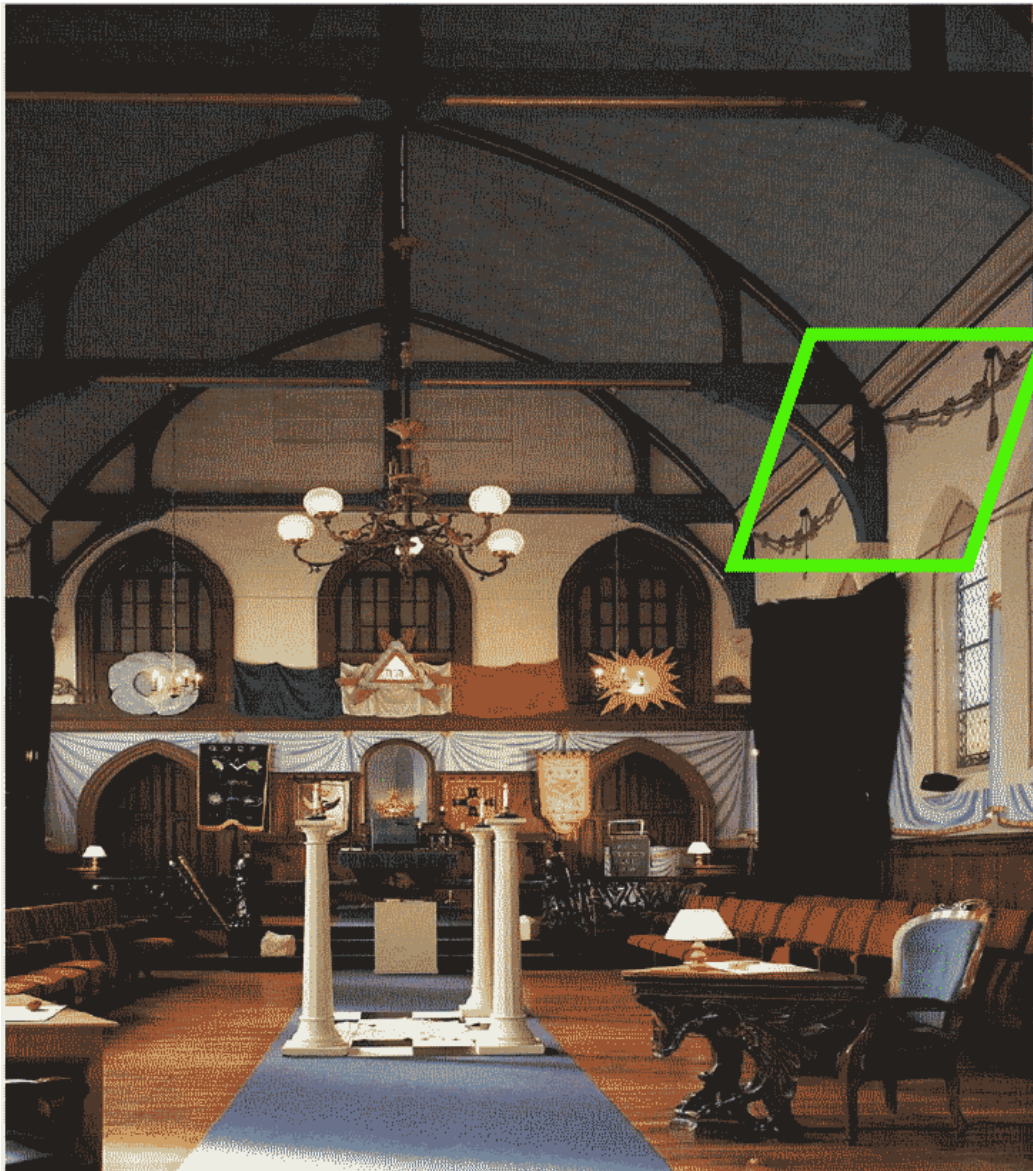
The union chain is also symbolizing the initiatory chain of Masonic tradition (and by analogy of all traditions) whose origin is immemorial as is also the message that she has been conveying over time.⁷⁹

The Chain of Union is actually a rope, which, circumvests the inner walls of the Masonic Temple in its upper part. Its "elevated location" gives it a celestial connotation, confirmed by the twelve knots that appear at intervals all along said rope, and, which, symbolize the twelve signs of the zodiac. These knots also correspond to the twelve columns that, except in the East side, surround the Inner Sanctum of our Temples in its entirety. Five of these columns are situated in the North, the other five in the South, and the remaining two, "Jachin" and "Boaz", in the West.⁸⁰

⁷⁸ *The Masonic Chain* by Gabriel Vasile Oltean Expert Inspector of NGLR for Western Region, Past Worshipful Master, Zamolxis Lodge, no. 182, Deva.

⁷⁹ *The Cadena De Union* (Chain Of Union) by José María Villa, Publicaciones Masicas Friday, 13 January, 2017

⁸⁰ The Chain of Union - Another Omitted Essential Part Of Our Ritual by: Carlos Antonio Martinez, Jr.



Demophiles Lodge in Tours, France

Religious garments.

This rite of investiture, or the placing upon the aspirant some garment, as an indication of his appropriate preparation for the ceremonies in which he was about to engage, prevailed in all the ancient initiations. A few of them only it will be requisite to consider.

Thus in the Levitical economy of the Israelites the priests always wore the abnet, or linen apron, or girdle, as a part of the investiture of the priesthood. This, with the other garments, was to be worn, as the text expresses it, “for glory and for beauty,” or, as it has been explained by a learned commentator, “as emblematical of that holiness and purity which ever characterize the divine nature, and the worship which is worthy of him.”

In the Persian Mysteries of Mithras, the candidate, having first received light, was invested with a girdle, a crown or mitre, a purple tunic, and, lastly, a white apron.

In the initiations practised in Hindostan, in the ceremony of investiture was substituted the sash, or sacred zennaar, consisting of a cord, composed of nine threads twisted into a knot at

the end, and hanging from the left shoulder to the right hip. This was, perhaps, the type of the masonic scarf, which is, or ought to be, always worn in the same position.⁸¹

Biblical References

Num 15:38 Speak unto the children of Israel, and bid them that they make them *fringes in the borders of their garments* throughout their generations, and that they put upon the *fringe of the borders a ribband of blue*:

Num 15:39 And it shall be unto you for *a fringe*, that ye may look upon it, and remember all the commandments of the LORD, and do them; and that ye seek not after your own heart and your own eyes, after which ye use to go a whoring.

The Bible does not command wearing of a unique prayer shawl or tallit. Instead, it presumes that people wore a garment of some type to cover themselves and instructs the Children of Israel to attach fringes (*tzitzit*) to the corners of these (Numbers 15:38), repeating the commandment in terms that they should “make thee twisted cords upon the four corners of thy covering, wherewith thou coverest thyself” (Deuteronomy 22:12). These passages do not specify tying particular types or numbers of knots in the fringes. The exact customs regarding the tying of the *tzitzit* and the format of the tallit are of post-biblical, rabbinic origin and, though the Talmud discusses these matters. However the Bible is specific as to the purpose of these *tzitzit*, stating that “it shall be unto you for a fringe, that ye may look upon it, and remember all the commandments of the LORD, and do them; and that ye go not about after your own heart and your own eyes, after which ye use to go astray; that ye may remember and do all My commandments, and be holy unto your God”.⁸²

Jewish



A white *tallit* according to some Sephardic traditions.

⁸¹ Chain of Union - Radu Comănescu & Vladimir <https://www.isel-europe.org/chain-of-union-romania>

⁸² Christianity And Fringed Garments https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christianity_and_fringed_garments
Christianity and fringed garments



A *tallit* with black stripes according to the orthodox Ashkenazic tradition.

A **tallit** is a fringed garment worn as a prayer shawl by religious Jews. The tallit has special twined and knotted fringes known as *tzitzit* attached to its four corners.

The literal commandment in the Bible was not to wear a tallit but to attach tzitzit to the corners of one's four-cornered garments every day to serve as a reminder of G-d commandments.⁸³

Tallit katan



An Orthodox Jewish man wearing a wool tallit katan under his vest/waistcoat

83 Tallit <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tallit#searchInput>

While all four cornered garments are required to have *tzitzit*, the custom of specially wearing a *tallit katan* is based on a verse in Numbers 15:38-39 which tells Moses to exhort the Children of Israel to “make them throughout their generations fringes in the corners of their garments.”^[29] Wearing a *tallit kattan* is not mandated in Biblical law, but in Rabbinic law the practice is strongly encouraged for men, and often considered obligatory or a binding custom.^{[26][30][31]}



Tzitzis

Tzitzit (Hebrew: *תצית* [tsi'tsit]; plural *תציתים* Ashkenazi: *tzitzis*; and Samaritan: *şēšet*) are specially knotted ritual fringes, or tassels, worn in antiquity by Israelites and today by observant Jews and Samaritans. *Tzitzit* are usually attached to the four corners of the *tallit gadol* (prayer shawl), usually referred to simply as a *tallit* or *tallis*; and *tallit katan* (everyday undergarment).

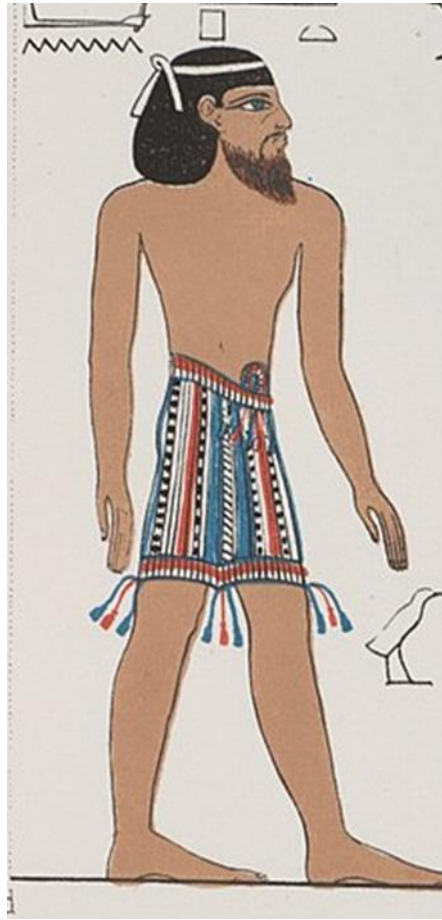
The further analyses of the antique iconography suggest that apart from this pragmatic purpose the tassels could also decorate the cloth and as such be a marker of the social status: the more elaborate and elegant the fringes, the higher the position of the owner. In addition to this and given the unique nature of each of the tassels it could also be used as a personal “signet” for sealing documents.^[4] This data has led the scholars to assume that the practice itself is of very ancient origins and evolved into Jewish ritual clothing where it was invested with religious meaning.^[5]

The *tallit* and *tallit katan* are four-cornered garments worn by practicing Jews which incorporate *tzitzit*. The *tallit katan* garment itself is commonly referred to as *tzitzit*. The blue thread mentioned in the Torah, *tekhelet*, is omitted by most Rabbinic Jews due to controversy over the dye-making process.

Threads and knots



The all-white *tzitzit* is Ashkenazi. The blue and white *tzitzit* is knotted in the Sephardi style.⁸⁴



Asiatic (Levantine) man with fringed garment similar to tzitzit (from tomb of Seti I, 13th century BCE)

Christian

The habits of Catholic religious orders are full of deep and rich symbolism, with each detail manifesting their particular charism. The same is true for the habits worn by the Franciscans. Our habit consists of a simple brown hooded robe, similar to the one worn by Saint Francis himself, and a corded rope cincture, or corded rope belt, worn around the waist.

The rope worn as a belt around the waist symbolises being girded with Christ and is tied in the three characteristic Franciscan knots that signify the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience taken upon becoming a member of the community. Each knot has five coils to remind us of the five wounds of Christ.⁸⁵

⁸⁴ Note the difference between the 7-8-11-13 scheme and uninterrupted windings (between the knots) on the Ashkenazi, vs. the 10-5-6-5 scheme and ridged winding on the Sephardi tzitzit
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tzitzit>

⁸⁵ Franciscans Knots <https://franciscanmissionaries.com/meaning-corded-belts/>



While much of traditional Christianity has not considered Torah commands such as tzitzit applicable to Christians, there are Torah-submissive Christians who wear tzitzit.

However, because of practicality and convenience, traditionally Jewish tzitziot and tallits are often used.

Liturgical use

In Christian liturgy, the stole and other vestments worn by priests and bishops traditionally have fringes on the edge, in remembrance of the Old Testament prescriptions.

In the Eastern Orthodox Church, when the priest or bishop puts on his stole he reads a prayer taken from the Psalms of Degrees: “Blessed is God Who poureth out His grace upon His priests, like unto the precious ointment on the head, which runneth down upon the beard, even the beard of Aaron, which runneth down upon the fringe of his raiment.” (Cf. Psalm 133)⁸⁶

Tassels

Some examples showing diversity

⁸⁶ Christianity And Fringed Garments https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christianity_and_fringed_garments
Christianity and fringed garments



Tassel in Lodge room corner, Dunedin, New Zealand



Tassel on floor, Dunedin, New Zealand.



Tassel on floor Queanbeyan, New South Wales, Australia



Like many other old and interesting customs, these tassels seem to have disappeared, and we are left with a symbolic representation of the four ends of the rope in the corners of our lodge carpet.

There is, however, in these old tracing-boards another border, which surrounds the entire picture with lines, as in the following figure:



This indented border, which was made to represent a cord of black and white threads, was, I think, in time mistaken for *tessellæ*, or little stones; an error probably originating in

confounding it with the tessellated pavement, which was another one of the ornaments of the Lodge.⁸⁷

Further Possible Esoteric interpretations

Circle – Chains

In order to better understand the importance of the “cosmic plane”, mentioned by J.E. Cirlot, in the economy of chain symbolism, we must add some explanations about the Golden Chain, as presented by Algis Uždavinys: “In the Athenian school of Syrianus and Proclus, the Homeric image of the Golden Chain (*seire chruseie*, Iliad VIII.18), stretching from Heaven to Earth, was used to describe both the unbroken vertical connection with the first principles (noetic sources of the demiurgic descent, as well as paradigms of the revealed wisdom), and the horizontal, or historical, succession of the qualified masters and interpreters – a succession which was not always based exclusively on direct physical relations. In fact, the Golden Chain is the same as the Hermaic Chain [*Hermaiike seira*, meaning irradiations from the divine Intellect, a chain of great initiates and philosophers and of the great truths revealed through them.] This chain was both the chain of theophany, manifestation, or descent (demiourgike seira), and the ladder of ascent. This imagery of the Golden Chain was inseparable from the metaphysics of light and solar symbolism. Socrates also regarded the Homeric Golden Rope as referring to the Sun”.⁸⁸

It is only by accepting the chain of a discipline that someone may become an adept and may obtain the spiritual liberation.

Initially, Homer recorded in his *Iliad* the image of a golden chain that suspends the Earth from Heaven. That was a very sacred image, because it was both an axis mundi, uniting the upper and lower realms of Creation; and a divine commitment, bonding the Earth to the Heaven, thus allowing the communication between these two, keeping the Earth in direct relation with the celestial worlds. As we have already seen, Socrates, in a very plastic manner, pointed to the Sun as a golden chain, because its light and energy, emanated from the sky, envelop the Earth. But later on, Neo-Platonic philosophers saw the golden chain not only as an *axis mundi* (line or stem through the earth’s center connecting its surface to the underworld and the heavens and around which the universe revolves) or an umbilical cord, but as a succession of mails arranged as a chain, each mail being another emanation descending from the Supreme Principle to the lowest reality. On the other hand, in Pythagorean environments the idea of a golden chain of initiates emerged: a line of highly evolved beings reincarnated through space and time.

These hermeneutical extensions of the old *catena aurea* (Latin for “golden chain”) were reinterpreted by great Christian medieval thinkers, such as Thomas D’Aquino, who have elaborated the actual symbolism of the chain of union: a powerful link uniting brothers beyond any boundaries of space or time, certifying the correct and complete communication of a tradition and assuring the unity through multiplicity. Thomas D’Aquino has edited a book named *Catena Aurea*, a very interesting kind of Christian Talmud, the philosophy of which covers the complete actual symbolism of the chain of union.⁸⁹

Thanks to The Union Chain that decorates the lodge the Masonic order acquires its full meaning, as it constitutes a sign of identity. Symbolically we could consider the chain as separating and protecting the “world of light” from the “world of darkness, the sacredness from the profane.

⁸⁷ *The Chain of Union* by Carlos Antonio Martinez

⁸⁸ Algis Uždavinys – *The Golden Chain: An Anthology of Pythagorean and Platonic Philosophy*, World Wisdom Inc., Bloomington, Indiana, 2004, p. xxi (from Introduction).

⁸⁹ Chain of Union - Radu Comănescu & Vladimir <https://www.isel-europe.org/chain-of-union-romania>

It represents the alliance that must exist among all its members to work within the framework of unity, despite differences of opinion. Everyone gives what he brought and withdraws what he needs, in communion with others.⁹⁰

“The Laced Fringe” sends us directly to “The Laced Frame” in zigzag, formed by equilateral triangles alternating black and white on the floor of the temple. “If the triangles in the exterior rows should be white to show how all unknown that surrounds us is able to enlighten us the black triangles express the effort of the initiated to understand the unknown. The orientation towards outside of the white triangles, pointing outwards suggests offensive of the human intellect against (to penetrate) the mystery.”

The fringe has nodes, the frame has triangles. The Chain is made of all of us! This chain symbolizes the universality of Masonry.

Of all the rituals, “The Chain of Union” is perhaps the most important from the perspective of the occult and symbolic, its secret being that, as Guaita Stanislaw says, “it creates a fixed point on which to lean, it concentrates the mental energy and from this point chosen as the center it makes the astral light to shine upon the world enhanced strengthened by a will clearly defined and formulated for the Masons it becomes a shield and means to capture beneficial influences”.⁹¹

From a metaphysical point of view, the Masonic Chain of Union comes to signify exactly the same as “the chain of the worlds”: conforming to the Universal Manifestation, and coexists joined by the “Thread of Atma” (Sutratma), or, in simpler terms, through their “Breath” or “Vivifier Spirit”.

Hence the use of the expression “Bonds of Brotherly Love and Affection” when referring ourselves to the knots along the rope of the Chain of Union.⁹²

Another aspect of the Chain itself to the interaction between the ‘thick’ and the ‘subtle’. From physics we know that each geometric solid figure causes waves which vary according to the form of the figure. These waves are known as form-waves, or shape-waves, which can be measured according to their vibratory frequency.

The Egyptians knew of this phenomenon, and used it to protect the Kings’ chambers by emitting waves which are vibrating in the electrical phase, harmful for living entities for example the “curse of Tutankhamen”. To the contrary, churches and pyramids emit waves, which vibrate in the magnetic phase, so they are favourable for men. In ancient times, Freemasons were aware of this and therefore they protected their constructions through the cornerstone, which has a trapezoidal shape.⁹³

The symbolic Board teaches that God is the warp and woof of existence, enclosing and impinging upon us at all points of our being.

A rope or cable runs round the indented border breaking into diffused tassels at the four corners.

90 The Cadena De Union by José María Villa, Publicaciones Masicas Friday, January 13, 2017

91 *The chain of union* (the union chain) by Bro. Mircea C. S. Grand National Lodge of Romania
<https://sirijus.rs/26-6-the-chain-of-union-the-union-chain/>.

92 *Another Omitted Essential Part Of Our Ritual “The Chain Of Union”* by Carlos Antonio Martinez, Jr

93 *The Chain of Union* by Bro. Giovanni Lombardo, P.M.

QSA Members Forum Lemmi Lodge No. 400. Grande Oriente d’Italia
<https://www.freemasonryresearchforumqsa.com/chain-of-union.php>

Signifies the current of divine Energy circulating hidden through the Universe and becoming differentiated into four subsidiary modes”:

“And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads.” (Genesis, 2-10).⁹⁴

The level of the energy field that is created by the crossing arms of the Masons is more powerful as each link is active.⁹⁵

The Chain testifies in a tangible way to the invisible tie that joins all the members of a lodge, and truly, in a more general way, to all Freemasons withersoever dispersed.⁹⁶

The chain of union is, in fact, the light. The light links everything in our cosmos and links our cosmos to God. In that manner, what started with the cable tow of bondage ends into the glory of light.⁹⁷

According to several rabbinic sages, blue is the color of God’s Glory.⁹⁸

Tassels

The four tassels that surround the tracing board refer to the four major points which are Pedal, Pectoral, Guttural and Manual. These points signify the four cardinal values of Justice, Fortitude, Prudence and Temperance.⁹⁹

The tassel in the corner on the Master’s right hand side should represent justice and that on his left hand side should represent temperance. The reason for this is that, when ruling in his lodge and managing his work force, the Master should rule with justice that nevertheless must be tempered with mercy, so as to ensure that not only will the client obtain the service he is paying for, but also that his workmen will receive their just dues. The tassel in the corner on the Superintendent of Work’s right hand side should represent prudence and that on his left hand side should represent justice. Like his Master, whom he represents, the Superintendent of Work must be prudent in the use of his work force and the materials, so that the Master is properly served; but he must also ensure the men are treated with justice so that they receive the dues to which they are entitled.

The two Wardens are the officers who exercise direct control over the workmen, under the immediate supervision of the Superintendent of Work. The tassel in the corner on the right hand side of the Senior Warden should represent fortitude and that on his left hand side should represent prudence. The reason for this is that, as the officer who exercises direct control over the workmen while they are at labour, he is responsible for overcoming the many difficulties that inevitably will beset the work, which will require the utmost fortitude on his part. At the same time he must exercise his control over the men’s employment and the use of materials with the utmost prudence, to protect the men’s welfare whilst at the same time ensuring that the workmanship cannot be faulted. The Junior Warden, whose duty it is to assist the Senior Warden, is the officer primarily responsible for the men’s welfare especially when they are at rest and refreshment. The tassel in the corner on right hand side of the Junior Warden should

⁹⁴ *The Tassels* by Bharat from Sapere Aude 329

⁹⁵ *The chain of union* (the union chain) by Bro. Mircea C. S. Grand National Lodge of Romania
<https://sirijus.rs/26-6-the-chain-of-union-the-union-chain/>.

⁹⁶ *The Masonic Mosaic Pavement*. <https://bricksmasons.com/blogs/masonic-education/the-masonic-mosaic-pavement>

⁹⁷ *Chain of Union* - Radu Comănescu & Vladimir <https://www.isel-europe.org/chain-of-union-romania>

⁹⁸ Tzitzit <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tzitzit>

⁹⁹ *The Masonic Mosaic Pavement* <https://bricksmasons.com/blogs/masonic-education/the-masonic-mosaic-pavement>

represent temperance, in allusion to the manner in which refreshment should always be conducted. The tassel on the Junior Warden's left hand side should represent fortitude, because he is supposed to personify Hiram Abif whose fortitude should always be emulated by every freemason.¹⁰⁰

Arm positions

Arms by sides

The Order of the Eastern Star have a ceremony called The Golden Chain. A circle is formed each holding the left hand of the member on their right with the right hand and the right hand of the member on their left with their left. When the candidate has been admitted the statement is "The golden chain is thus lengthened". At the closing of this ceremony all move their hands forward and the words "each link shall fall away in death, may the parting be temporary and the meeting eternal", are said and the hands are slowly released and [lace in the Sign of Salutation].¹⁰¹

Arms Crossed

Called by many "Short Chain"



La Chaîne d'Union - Grande Loge Nationale Roumaine 1880.

Each Brother crosses his right arm on the left to form a symbolic Saint Andrew's cross, joining hands to those of his neighbour from both sides, his right-hand grips the another's left: the former 'covers' and the latter 'supports'. In the Far-East tradition the right side matches to the *yang*, or the masculine element, it being 'the way of Heaven', while the left one is that of *yin*, feminine, representing the Earth: 'Heaven covers and Earth holds'.

Each Brother unites his own heels so to form a square and opens his toes, in order to let them contact the ones of his neighbours. The chin rests on the chest, eyes closed and everybody concentrates on "the Worshipful Master's intent", even if it remains unspoken. The Brethren are silent and meditative. After some time the Worshipful Master shakes his arms three times and so do all the Brethren and thereafter release their hands and "break" the Chain.¹⁰²

Composed of arms crossed the chain acquires a certain solidity and brings the brothers closer to each other. The physical link becomes more important, it is established not only by the hands but also by the shoulders and arms, the right arm is positioned above the left arm. The right hand is naturally placed near the heart. It is oriented palm down and evokes giving. The left hand palm towards the sky forms with the fingers a cup, ready to receive. In the chain

¹⁰⁰ *The Operative Origins of the Four Tassels* by Falconer (<http://www.freemasons-freemasonry.com/don13.html>)

¹⁰¹ Australian Order of the Eastern Star ritual.

¹⁰² *The Chain of Union* by Bro. Giovanni Lombardo, P.M. Lemmi Lodge No. 400. Grande Oriente d'Italia.
<https://www.freemasonryresearchforumqsa.com/chain-of-union.php>

of union each Mason, in the same movement, gives and receives, he takes what his brother on the right offers him and transmits it in turn to his brother on the left. It is a real circulation of energy that is then created.¹⁰³

Arms Extended; called by many the “Long or Open Chain”

Brethren form the chain by spreading their arms “**Right over Left**” and grasp hands.

The arms of the Brethren reach beyond their immediate neighbour symbolising the far reaching nature of Masonic help. Each Brother’s arms cross the breasts of the brother on either side of him, symbolically protecting his brother from attacks whenever the needed. This Chain is symbolic of our Order. It is a double chain, therefore it is doubly strong and has a double meaning.

A short verse summarises very aptly the whole meaning of this Masonic chain:

“On the strength of one link in the cable
Dependeth the might of the chain -
Who knowest when thou may be tested
So live that thou bearest the strain”¹⁰⁴

NOTE: This method is used at the closing of an 18° meeting of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite for Australia.

Waist and Shoulder

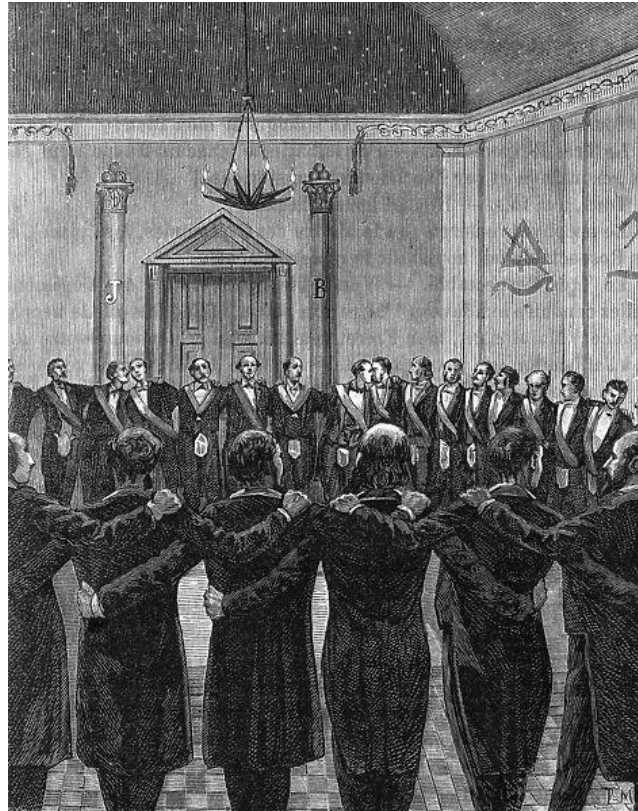
Members of a lodge link together to form a chain of union. One arm is placed on a neighbour’s waist whilst the hand is left free to tap the other neighbour three times on the shoulder. At the same time a triple brotherly kiss and the word of the week is given to a neighbour which is then passed on to the next neighbour along starting from the chairman the tap kiss and word is passed both ways around the group reaching the master of ceremonies at the same time whereupon the word is shouted aloud to the group. - 1890s.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰³ *La houppe dentellée et la chaîne d’union* (The serrated puff and the chain of union)

<https://www.ecossaisdesaintjean.org/article-la-houppe-dentellee-et-la-chaine-d-union-101549332.html>

¹⁰⁴ *The Masonic Chain* <http://46.32.240.45/broomwood6060.co.uk/>

¹⁰⁵ *The Chain Of Union* <https://www.mediastorehouse.com/p/164/chain-union-7193355.jpg>



A Chain of Union c 1890s: Note the cord and tassels at architrave.

Grips

The left hand is held open with the palm up (toward heaven) and the right hand is held open with the palm down (toward the earth) thus symbolising that “the right gives and the left receives”. It is also important that every Brother has their feet formed in a square and their eyes turned towards the centre of the Lodge.¹⁰⁶

In the case of forming the short Chain of Union, the masons cross their arms to distinguish themselves from the profane world, from its “horas” where participants circle round with their arms side by side. The superiority of the right hand over the left hand, of the active hand over the passive one, of the Hammer-holding hand over the Chisel-holding hand is demonstrated. The short Chain of Union is usually formed at the closing of Masonic works in the Temple, and in both cases, before releasing their hands, the Brethren raise and drop their arms in unison three times.¹⁰⁷

The left hand is held open with the palm up (toward heaven (receiving)) and the right hand is held open with the palm down (toward the earth (giving)).¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁶ Zetland 1°

¹⁰⁷ The Masonic Chain by Gabriel Vasile Oltean Expert Inspector of NGLR for Western Region
Past Worshipful Master, Zamolxis Lodge, no. 182, Deva

¹⁰⁸ Lodge France 1° 1012 ritual rubric for Chain of Union.



Image from *The Union Chain* by Oswald Wirth¹⁰⁹

Number of Knots

12

According to many authors, including Oswald Wirth, the number of knots finds a correspondence in the twelve signs of the Zodiac (The Book of the Apprentice p 178). It can also refer to the twelve symbolic hours of our work (from noon to midnight), to the twelve months of the year, to the twelve edges of a cubic stone.¹¹⁰

Possible Origin

Striking the centre

In medieval times the Master Mason, or architect, commenced his work by “striking the centre” having then determined the required orientation of the building and set it out on the ground, the four corners, the accuracy of the rectangle was checked by comparing the measurements of the two ends and the measurements of the two sides. With the four corner marks established, distinctively marked perpendicular stakes were set up near them, drawing attention to their location and protecting them from inadvertent damage. Suspended coloured cords or streamers distinguished the marker stakes. As the walls rose a piece of wood was extended from the corner inwards, and a plumb line dropped down to make sure that the walls were perpendicular and the angle was true on its upper parts as at the base.

These corner plumb lines persisted on the wall into the middle of the 19th century in Speculative Masonry not merely woven tassels on the carpet, but as actual tassels hanging in the four corners of the lodge room.

M.W. Bro. Raymond S.J. Daniels writings are similar to Ward’s with a similar conclusion:

“The tassels suspended from the four corners of the lodge represent the corner plumb-lines used by our Operative brethren to try and adjust all verticals.”¹¹¹¹¹¹²¹¹³

The Four Tassels

¹⁰⁹ Article published in the magazine “Le Symbolisme”(October 1912).

¹¹⁰ La houppe dentellée et la chaîne d’union (The serrated puff and the chain of union)

<https://www.ecossaisdesaintjean.org/article-la-houppe-dentellee-et-la-chaine-d-union-101549332.html>

¹¹¹ *The Operative Origins of the Four Tassels* by Falconer (<http://www.freemasons-freemasonry.com/don13.html>)

¹¹² *Origin Of The Four Tassels* article researched by Martin P.S. Haywood. *The Queensland Freemason*, February 2008

¹¹³ *The Four Tassels In The Canadian Ritual* by V.W. Bro. Marshall Kern Grand Historian Grand Lodge of A.F. & A.M. of Canada in the Province of Ontario

We are told the four tassels represent the four cardinal virtues, but was probably attributed in the late 18th century. There seems no particular reason why they should represent the four cardinal virtues any more than the four elements or any other particular four.

In modern speculative lodges those *four tassels*, respectively representing temperance, fortitude, prudence and justice in that sequence, should commence in the southeast corner, which is on the Worshipful Master's left hand side, then proceed clockwise around the lodge room.

In modern times the four cardinal virtues:

- temperance suggests moderation or even abstinence
- fortitude implies courage in endurance
- prudence conveys an impression of cautious self-interest
- justice implies the awarding of what is due

Mackey further describes the four tassels as being part of the English and French Tracing Boards of the first degree – not the lodge room – and that the four tassels refer to “the four principal points, the Guttural, Pectoral, Manual, and Pedal, and through them to the four cardinal virtues”.

The classical Greek philosophers emphasized that the four cardinal virtues are those on which all other virtues rest. One cannot be ethical or moral until one practices all four cardinal virtues. All four cardinal virtues are of equal importance; just as the four tassels in the lodge room are to be the same.¹¹⁴¹¹⁵¹¹⁶

Finally



Seven masons from the Nazi concentration camp Hut Emslandlager VII
Sculpture by Jean de Salle.

¹¹⁴ *The Operative Origins of the Four Tassels* by Falconer (<http://www.freemasons-freemasonry.com/don13.html>)

¹¹⁵ *Origin Of The Four Tassels*, article researched by Martin. P.S. Haywood in *The Queensland Freemason*, February 2008 issue.

¹¹⁶ *The Four Tassels In The Canadian Ritual* by V.W. Bro. Marshall Kern, Grand Historian, Grand Lodge of A.F. & A.M. of Canada in the Province of Ontario.



MAÇON SPÉCULATIF S'EFFORÇANT DE RECONSTITUER UN
LAC D'AMOUR INTEROBÉDIENTIEL SUIVANT UN ANCIEN TEXTE .

A speculative Mason striving to reconstruct a Lake of Love according to an ancient text.