

THE
33rd MASONIC
DEGREE

Compiled by
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Introduction

The following material purports to describe the 33rd Masonic Degree. However, there is great doubt as to the source, authenticity, and accuracy of the material. Nevertheless, it is presented here as it was received by this editor.

33rd Degree

The initiation was held in the theatre-like meeting room of the lodge. Those who were receiving the degree were seated, and the ceremony was "exemplified" (acted out in full costume) before them, in the same way that the lesser degrees of the Scottish Rite had been performed. The parts in the exemplification were all played by men of the 33rd Degree.

The representative candidate was dressed in black trousers, barefooted, bareheaded and draped in a long, black robe that looked like a very long, black raincoat. The representative candidate had a black cable tow around his neck; however, he was not hoodwinked. During the initiation he was led around the stage, conducted by two men with swords, as the degree was performed for the candidates.

Instructions and signs were given.

Upon the altar were four "holy books" (the Bible, the Koran, the Book of the Law and the Hindu Scriptures). At one point the "candidate" was told to kiss the book "of their religion" and, represented the other candidates - he leaned forward and did so. (During a Mason's First degree, he is instructed to kiss the Bible - now, at the 33rd degree, he has come full circle).

Human Skull Containing Wine

When it was time for the final obligation, all the candidates stood and repeated the oath, with the representative candidate, administered by the Sovereign Grand Inspector General. The candidates then swore "true allegiance" to the Supreme Council of the 33rd Degree, above all other allegiances, and swore never to recognize any other brother as being a member of the Scottish Rite of Freemasonry unless he also recognizes the Supreme authority of "this Supreme Council".

One of the Conductors then handed the "candidate" a human skull, upside down, with wine in it. "May this wine I now drink become a deadly poison to me, as the Hemlock juice drunk by Socrates, should I ever knowingly or wilfully violate the same" (the oath).

He then drank the wine. A skeleton (one of the brothers dressed like one) then stepped out of the shadows and threw his arms around the "candidate." Then he (and the other candidates) continued

the sealing of the obligation by saying, "And may these cold arms forever encircle me should I ever knowingly or wilfully violate the same."

The Sovereign Grand Commander closed the meeting of the Supreme Council "with the Mystic Number," striking with his sword five, three, one and then two times.

After the closing prayer, all said "amen, amen, amen," and this concluded the ceremony.

End

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