

## Secret Masonic Handshakes

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# Secret Masonic Handshakes Words, and Signs Of Blue Lodge Masonry

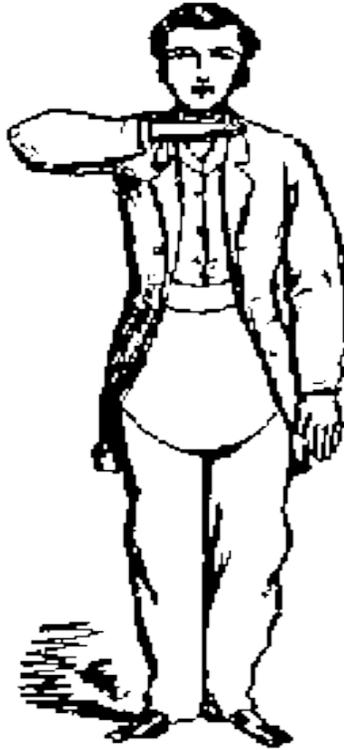
### **ENTERED APPRENTICE DEGREE (First Degree in the Blue Lodge)**

#### **SIGN OF AN ENTERED APPRENTICE**



The Sign of an Entered Apprentice represents the position of the hand when taking the oath of an Entered Apprentice, "*my left hand supporting the Bible and my right hand resting thereon.*"

**SIGN OF AN ENTERED APPRENTICE**



The sign of the Entered Apprentice alludes to the penalty of the Entered Apprentice's obligation. The sign is made by drawing the right hand rapidly across the neck as shown on the above. The penalty that the sign alludes to is, *"having my throat cut across, my tongue torn out by its roots, and my body buried in the rough sands of the sea at low water mare, where the tide ebbs and flows twice in twenty-four hours, should I ever knowingly violate this my Entered Apprentice obligation."*

Explanation of the Entered Apprentice sign. Draw the right hand rapidly across the neck as represented and drop the arm to the side. This action shows the penalty of having the throat cut and the tongue ripped out.

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### "BOAZ" GRIP OF AN ENTERED APPRENTICE (HANDSHAKE)



The Grip of the Entered Apprentice is made by pressing the thumb against the top of the first knuckle-joint of the fellow Mason, the fellow Mason also presses his thumb against the first Mason's knuckle.

The name of this grip is "Boaz". When a candidate is imparted with this grip and its usage it is done in this manner."

First the Worshipful Master says to the candidate:

"I now present my right hand in token of friendship and brotherly love, and will invest you with the grip and word. As you are uninstructed, he who has hitherto answered for you, will do so at this time."

The Worshipful Master of the lodge then has this exchange with the Senior Deacon, who is standing next to the candidate, who is still kneeling at the altar, after have assumed the obligation of this degree:

*Note: In the following discourse WM stands for Worshipful Master, and SD stands for Senior Deacon.*

WM: Brother Senior Deacon.

SD: Worshipful Master.

WM: I hear.

SD: I conceal.

WM: What do you conceal?

SD: All the secrets of a Mason in Masonry, to which this token alludes.

*(At this time, the candidate is shown the grip of an Entered Apprentice)*

WM: Which is that?

SD: A grip

WM: Of what?

SD: Of an Entered Apprentice.

WM: Has it a name?

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SD: It has.

WM: Will you give it to me?

SD: I did not so receive it, neither will I so impart it.

WM: How will you dispose of it?

SD: Letter it or halve it.

WM: Letter it and begin.

SD: You begin.

WM: Begin you.

SD: A

WM: B

SD: O

WM: Z

WM: (Directing his words to the candidate): "Boaz, my Brother, is the name of this grip, and should always be given in the customary manner, by lettering or halving. When lettering, always commence with the letter, "A".

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### **FELLOW CRAFT DEGREE (Second Degree in the Blue Lodge)**

#### **SIGN OF THE FELLOW CRAFT**



The sign of the Fellow Craft represents the positions of the hands when taking the oath of the Fellow Craft degree, *"my right hand on the Holy Bible, square, and compasses, my left arm forming an angle, supported by the square and my hand in a vertical position."*

#### **SIGN OF A FELLOW CRAFT**



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The sign of the Fellow Craft alludes to the penalty of the Fellow Craft obligation. The sign is made by cupping the right hand over the left breast, drawing it quickly across the body, then dropping the hand to the side. The penalty that the sign alludes to is *"having my left breast torn open, my heart plucked out, and given to the wild beasts of the field and the fowls of the air."*

Explanation of the Fellow Craft sign. The action of cupping one hand over the left breast and drawing it quickly across the body signifies the heart being ripped out if the candidate should violate his Fellow Craft obligation.

### **"SHIBBOLETH" PASS GRIP OF A FELLOW CRAFT (HANDSHAKE)**



The hand is taken as in an ordinary hand shake, and the Mason presses the top of his thumb against the space between the first and second knuckle joints of the first two fingers of his fellow Mason; the fellow Mason also presses his thumb on the corresponding part of the first Mason's hand.

The name of this grip is "Shibboleth". When a candidate is imparted with this grip and its usage it is done in this manner:

First, the Worshipful Master says to the candidate:

"I now present my right hand in token of the continuance of friendship and brotherly love, and will invest you with the pass-grip, pass-word, real grip and word of a Fellow Craft. As you are uninstructed, he who has hitherto answered for you, will do so at this time. Give me the grip of an Entered Apprentice."

As previously explained from the Entered Apprentice degree, he then has this exchange with the Senior Deacon, who is standing next to the candidate, who is still kneeling at the altar, after having assume the obligation of this degree:

WM: Brother Senior Deacon.

SD: Worshipful Master.

WM: Will you be off or from?

SD: From.

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WM: From what and to what?

SD: From the grip of an Entered Apprentice to the pass-grip of a Fellow Craft.

*(At this time, the candidate is shown the Pass Grip)*

WM: Pass. What is that?

SD: The pass-grip of a Fellow Craft.

WM: Has it a name?

SD: It has.

WM: Will you give it to me?

SD: I did not so receive it; neither will I so impart it.

WM: How will you dispose of it?

SD: Letter or syllable it.

WM: Syllable it and begin.

SD: You begin.

WM: Begin you.

SD: Shib

WM: bo

SD: leth

WM: Shibboleth, my Brother, is the name of this grip. You should always remember it, for should you be present at the opening or a Fellow Crafts Lodge, this pass-word will be demanded of you by one of the Deacons, and should you be unable to give it, it would cause confusion in the Craft.

### **"JACHIN" REAL GRIP OF A FELLOW CRAFT (HANDSHAKE)**



The Mason takes the fellow Mason by the right hand as in an ordinary hand shake, and presses the top of his thumb hard on the second knuckle, the fellow Mason presses his thumb against the same knuckle of the first Mason's hand.

At this point in the ritual, the instruction goes directly from the pass grip to the real grip.

WM: Will you be off or from?

SD: From.

WM: From what and to what?

SD: From the pass-grip of a Fellow Craft, to the real grip of the same.

WM: Pass. What is that?

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SD: The real grip of a Fellow Craft.

WM: Has it a name?

SD: It has.

WM: Will you give it to me?

SD: I did not so receive it; neither will I so impart it.

WM: How will you dispose of it?

SD: Letter or halve it.

WM: Letter it and begin.

SD: You begin.

WM: Begin you.

SD: A

WM: J

SD: C

WM: H

SD: I

WM: N

WM: Jachin, my Brother, is the name of this grip, and should always be given in this manner, by lettering or halving it. When lettering, always commence with the letter "A".

**MASTER MASON DEGREE  
(Third Degree in the Blue Lodge)**

**SIGN OF A MASTER MASON**



The Sign of the Master Mason alludes to the position of the hands when taking the oath of the Master Mason, "*both hands resting on the Holy Bible, square, and compasses.*"

**SIGN OF A MASTER MASON**



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The sign of the Master Mason alludes to the penalty of the Master Mason's obligation, *"to have my body cut in two, my bowels removed and burned to ashes which are then to be scattered to the four winds of heaven."*

Explanation of the Master Mason sign. The sign is made by drawing the thumb quickly across the waist to the right hip, then dropping the hand to the side. This action shows the stomach being ripped open.

### **"TUBALCAIN" PASS GRIP OF A MASTER MASON (HANDSHAKE)**



The Mason places his thumb on the space between the second and third knuckles of the fellow Mason's right hand, while the fellow Mason moves his thumb to the corresponding space on the first Mason's hand. The thumb is pressed hard between the second and third knuckles of the hands.

The name of this grip is "Tubalcain". When a candidate is imparted with this grip and its usage it is done in this manner:

First, the Worshipful Master says to the candidate:

"I now present my right hand in token of the continuance of friendship and brotherly love, and will invest you with the pass-grip and pass-word of a Master Mason. As you are uninstructed, he who has hitherto answered for you, will do so at this time. Give me the real grip of a Fellow Craft."

(As explained from the preceding degrees, he then has this exchange with the Senior Deacon, who is standing next to the candidate, who is still kneeling at the altar, after having assume the obligation of this degree):

WM: Brother Senior Deacon.

SD: Worshipful Master.

WM: Will you be off or from?

SD: From.

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WM: From what and to what?

SD: From the real grip of a Fellow Craft to the pass-grip of a Master Mason.

WM: Pass. What is that?

SD: The pass-grip of a Master Mason.

WM: Has it a name?

SD: It has.

WM: Will you give it to me?

SD: I did not so receive it; neither will I so impart it.

WM: How will you dispose of it?

SD: Letter or syllable it.

WM: Syllable it and begin.

SD: You begin.

WM: Begin you.

SD: Tu

WM: bal

SD: cain

WM: Tubalcain, my Brother, is the name of this grip.

### "MA-HA-BONE" REAL GRIP OF A MASTER MASON

#### (HANDSHAKE)



The Mason firmly grasps the right hand of a fellow Mason. The thumbs of both hands are interlaced. The first Mason presses the tops of his fingers against the wrist of the fellow Mason where it unites with the hand. The fellow Mason at the same time presses his fingers against the corresponding part of the the first Mason's hand and the fingers of each are somewhat apart. *This grip is also called the Strong Grip of the Master Mason or the Lion's Paw.*

Instruction for this grip is given at the "graveside", after the candidate has been "raised".

Speaking to the candidate, the Worshipful Master says, "My Brother, I will now instruct you as to the manner of arriving at the real grip and word of a Master Mason. As you are uninstructed, he who has hitherto answered for you will do so at this time. Give me the pass-grip of a Master Mason."

WM: Brother Senior Deacon.

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SD: Worshipful Master.

WM: Will be you be off or from?

SD: From.

WM: From what and to what?

SD: From the pass-grip of a Master Mason to the real grip of the same.

WM: Pass. What is that?

SD: The real grip of a Master Mason, or lion's paw.

WM: Has it a name?

SD: It has.

WM: Will you give it to me?

SD: Place yourself in the proper position to receive it and I will.

WM: Mark the difference, my Brother, Heretofore your answer has been; I did not so receive it, neither will I so impart it. Now it is: Place yourself in the proper position to receive it and I will.

WM: What is the proper position to receive it?

SD: On the Five Points of Fellowship.

WM: What are the Five Points of Fellowship?

SD: Foot to foot, knee to knee, breast to breast, hand to back, and cheek to cheek or mouth to ear. (Cand and WM are placing themselves on the Five Points of Fellowship as the SD names them.)

WM: Ma

Cand: Ha

WM: Bone.

(Worshipful Master may have the candidate begin, while still in position, ie., Candidate: Ma. Worshipful Master: Ha. Candidate: Bone, being sure the candidate fully understands the word.)

## THE FIVE POINTS OF FELLOWSHIP



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During initiation into the Master Mason Degree, the candidate first receives the Real Grip of a Master Mason, along with instructions in how it is properly communicated, as he is "raised", or resurrected, at the conclusion of the Hiramic Legend. The Worshipful Master, or a lawful designee, reaches down and grasps the hand of the candidate by this grip and "raises" him from the dead to the position known as the Five Points of Fellowship.

The Five Points of Fellowship is demonstrated as the Worshipful Master and candidate embrace one another thusly: foot to foot; knee to knee; breast to breast; hand to back; and cheek to cheek, or mouth to ear. While in this position, and at low breath, the Worshipful Master then whispers "Mah-Ha-Bone" into the ear of the candidate. "Mah-Ha-Bone" is the substitute for the Master's Word. It means, "What, the Builder!". This proper means for an exchange of the substitute for the Master's Word is alluded to in the Obligation of a Master Mason: "Furthermore, I do promise and swear that I will not give the substitute for the Master's Word in any other way or manner than that in which I receive it, which will be on the Five Points of Fellowship, and at low breath."

### GRAND HAILING SIGN OF DISTRESS



After receiving instruction in the proper communication of the substitute for the Master's Word, the candidate is then instructed in regards to the Grand Haling Sign of Distress. It is given by raising both hands toward heaven, with each arm forming the angle of a square, or a 90 degree angle. The arms are then lowered in three distinct motions to the sides. In other words, ending with both arms in the natural downward position, such as when one is standing at attention. This is alluded to in the Obligation of a Master Mason: "Furthermore, I do promise and swear that I will not give the Grand Hailing Sign of Distress of a Master

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Mason, except for the benefit of the Craft while at work or for the instruction of a Brother, unless I am in real distress; and should I see the sign given, or hear the word spoken, I will hasten to the relief of the person so giving it."

The candidate is additionally instructed, however, that if he is in a place where the sign could not be seen, he is to utter a substitute for the song: "*O Lord, my God, is there no help for the Widow's Son?*" He is additionally advised that the sign and these words are never to be given together.

### **Bibliography**

Duncan, Malcom C. *Duncan's Masonic Ritual and Monitor*. 3rd ed. New York: Dick and Fitzgerald Publishers, undated.