

Cryptic Masonry in Michigan

Monroe Council No. 1 was first organized in 1847, fostered "within the bosom" of Monroe Chapter No. 1 of Detroit. The proceedings of the Grand Chapter of Michigan for 1853 substantiate this fact, as evidenced by the reports of the Grand High Priest and Grand Recorder. In his address, G.H.P. Jeremiah Moors made the following comment:

"There was a Council of Royal and Select Masters in Detroit prior to the organization of the Grand Chapter (1848) and still continues to be, but they do not derive authority from us, neither have we any evidence that they ever acknowledged our right to control them."

Companion Nathaniel Jacobs, Grand Recorder, in making his report, added the following: "For years, Monroe Council No. 1 of Detroit was the only organized body of Royal and Select Masters, her jurisdiction being co-extensive with the boundaries of the State itself."

When the Grand Chapter of Michigan was organized in 1848, its By-Laws provided for the conferring of the Council degrees by any Chapter within its jurisdiction. Specific regulations governed the granting of such authority. This article of the By-Laws was completely annulled at the Annual Convocation in 1854, in conformity with legislation passed by the General Grand Chapter in 1853, which prohibited such action.

Monroe Council No. 1 was apparently aggressive and progressive in disseminating the Cryptic Rite, and numerous Royal Arch Masons from the more populated areas of the State received the Royal and Select degrees from this Council during the decade from 1847 and 1857. These Companions were among the leaders who were instrumental in organizing Grand Chapter in 1848 and Grand Commandery in 1857. After steps were taken by Monroe Council to ensure legal organization and to sponsor two other Councils, these Companions were ready to unite in forming a Grand Council.

Fearful that its members would not be recognized as bona fide Royal and Select Masters, and that the future of the Cryptic Rite in this State would be jeopardized, Monroe Council No. 1 set about early in 1856, to establish legal organization. Edward A. Elliott, a member having roots in Connecticut, visited that jurisdiction and applied for a dispensation to Charter a Council in Detroit. The proceedings of the Grand Council of Connecticut, covering its annual assembly of May 13, 1856, disclose granting of a dispensation for Monroe Council No. 23, with authority to heal those Companions who had received the Cryptic degrees in Royal Arch Chapters. At the annual assembly of Connecticut held May 12, 1857, the proceedings report approval of a charter to be issued to Monroe Council No. 23 of Detroit, as well as St. Clair No. 24 also of Michigan.

What is Cryptic Masonry?

THE CRYPTIC DEGREES OF FREEMASONRY

Here we take another step in our Masonic education and progress to the Council of Royal and Select Masons known as Cryptic Masonry or the Purple Lodge. The Council degrees are largely an elaboration and explanation of the Royal Arch degree and, to a lesser extent, the Master Mason degree. The degrees of the Council of Royal and Select Masons are necessary to fully complete your education in Ancient Craft Masonry. The degrees of our Masonic system are not chronologically arranged and in the degrees of Royal and Select Master, which many believe, are the most beautiful and impressive of all, you learn of additional incidents in the building of the first temple. During these degrees you represent the Master Builder, Hiram Abif, and learn why the word was lost and the secret of its preservation and recovery. The first Council degree, the Royal Master, develops more fully the story of recovery of the "lost" word and the Holy of Holies of the Temple of King Solomon.

The Royal Master degree further explains the Master Mason degree by telling of a Fellowcraft, a workman in the quarries, who in true humility asked, "Grand Master, Hiram Abif, when shall I receive the Master's Word?" And after patiently listening to the explanation why he may never receive it, returns to his place in the quarries. The next degree, Select Master, concerns itself with the construction and adornment of the subterranean vault introduced in the Royal Arch degree of the Chapter.

The Select Master degree explains where and how the sacred treasures and the secret word were buried. Here we are taught fidelity to vows, the wisdom of worshipping GOD, and the punishment for perjury. Here we are welded into a circle of friendship, in an unending chain of fraternal union, as symbolized in the Blue Lodge by the point within the circle, which is displayed on our altars.

The last degree is that of Super Excellent Master, and tells the story of the Babylonian Captivity, and of Zedekiah and his perfidy. Council Masonry is also referred to as "Cryptic Masonry," in allusion to the continuance of the vault, or crypt.

The Super Excellent Master degree, though having no connection with Ancient Craft Masonry, is a vivid dramatization of truth and fidelity and never fails to impress those who witness it, either for the first time or after many times. The degrees of the Council will enable you to more fully understand your third degree of Symbolic Masonry and the degree of Royal Arch.

OUR PRINCIPLES

Cryptic Masonry will promote the highest standards of honesty and integrity of its members.

Cryptic Masonry will be open to all men of good moral character, and are members of a regular lodge and chapter.

Cryptic Masonry will provide leadership opportunities and learning for its members.

Cryptic Masonry will enhance the fellowship and social inter-course within its scope.

Cryptic Masonry will encourage the Freedom of Tolerance and Understanding within its jurisdiction.

Cryptic Masonry will promote and provide educational materials to its members.

Cryptic Masonry will encourage its members to be active participants in their local Councils, Grand Council, and York Rite Masonry in particular.

Cryptic Masonry will strongly support the Grand Lodge, F. & A. M. of Michigan in its programs to achieve harmony and strength for all Master Masons.

Cryptic Masonry will support and advance the York Rite of Freemasonry.

Cryptic Masonry will be viewed by the Masonic Family as an outstanding organization, which will provide programs to encourage citizens and

Petition for Council Degrees

FEES FOR DEGREES

R.M. Degree \$ _____
S.M. Degree \$ _____
S.E.M. Degree \$ _____
Total \$ _____



Date _____

To the Thrice Illustrious Master, Officers and Companions

Of _____ Council No. _____

The undersigned, a Royal Arch Mason, and now a member in good standing of _____
_____ Lodge No. _____ F&AM located at _____
under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of _____, and of
_____ Chapter No. _____ RAM located at _____
under the jurisdiction of the Grand Chapter of _____. residing within
the jurisdiction of your Council, and having the good of the Craft at heart, being desirous of obtaining
further light in Masonry, fraternally offers himself as a candidate for the degrees conferred in your
council. Should this petition be granted he promises a cheerful compliance with all the laws,
regulations, forms and usages of the Craft.

He has/has not heretofore applied to any/or _____ Council No. _____ in the
State of _____ and has/has not been rejected.

His residence is _____ County of _____

and the State of Michigan, and his occupation is _____

He was born in _____ County of _____, State of _____
_____ on the _____ day of _____ A.D. _____

He received the Master Mason's degree in _____ Lodge, No. _____
State of _____ on the _____ day of _____ A.D. _____

He received the Royal Arch degree in _____ Chapter, No. _____
RAM State of _____ on the _____ day of _____ A.D. _____

All of the statements I have made in this petition are true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Signature _____

Print Signature _____

Address _____ City, State, Zip _____

Phone Numbers _____ E-Mail _____

We the undersigned, are personally acquainted with the above named petitioner and from our confidence
in his integrity do cheerfully recommend him as a proper candidate for the Council Degrees.

Signature _____ Council _____ No. _____

Print Signature _____ Date _____

Signature _____ Council _____ No. _____

Print Signature _____ Date _____

Fees for the Degrees \$ _____ Annual Dues \$ _____

The regular fee of \$ _____ accompanies the petition. Collected by _____

Recommendation of Committee

The undersigned Committee, to whom was referred the petition, after due consideration, report the same back to the Council, and recommend that the prayer of the petitioner be _____

Date _____

Committee

Petition

Of _____

Received and Referred _____

Committee

Companion _____

Companion _____

Companion _____

Elected on _____

Rejected on _____

Objection Filed on _____

Degrees Conferred

R.M. _____

S.M. _____

S.E.M. _____