The Kevan Manuscript

circa 1714-1720

Discovered 1954 among a collection of old legal documents by Bro. P. D. Kevan
and presented to the Grand Lodge of Scotland.

The Forme of Giving the Mason Worde

The Persone q denotes to geet y word is put upon his knees, & after a grate many Serimonys to frighten him they / make him take up the Bible & Laying his right hand upon it, they Conjure him by Several thretylgs y if he / shall brake his Oath; The Sun in y Firmament & all y Company there present will be witnesses ag' him q will be / ye occasione of his Damnatiyne & y Likewise they be sure to Murder him : Then after he has sworne secrsie they / willie give him the Oath as Follows /

By : God himselfe & as you shall answer to God q you shall Stand naked befiro him a y grate day of Judgment / you shall not reveal any poynt of what you shall see or hear at this time neither by word or writing at any time or / draw it w y poynt of a Sword or any other instrument upon y Snow, or Sand, Nor shall you Speake of it but w / an Entered Measone . . . So hele me God /

After he has taken the oath he is removed out of y Company w y youngast Masone, where after he is Suffiently frightn / ed w a thousand Grimasses & posturs He is to Learn from y Sa Mason y manner of Making [the due guard] which is the Signs and Posturs (Signs Postures and words) of / his [entry] q are a follow Here come I y youngast & Last Entered prentise, as I am sworne by God & St. John by y Square & Campass / & common Judge to attend my M : service at y Honourable Lodge from Munday Morning till Setturdays night to keep y /

Keys thereof under no Less paine then to have my Chinn & to be buryed w in y flood marke whe/ no man shall know /

Then he makes y Signe again q is by Drawing his hand under his Chin alonge his throte q denotes it is to / be Cut in case he broke his worde Then all y Masons present whisper the word amongst emselves beginning [at the youngest] till it / come to y M Mason, q gives y worde to the entered Prentise /

Now it is to be Marked y all y Signs & words as yet spoken off are only q belongs to Entered prentises but to [be] a Mr / Masone or fellow craft [there is more to be done as after follows] : First all y Prentices are to be removed out of the Company & none Suffered to stay by only / M* : Then [he] q is to be admitted a member of fellowship is put again to his knees & geets y oath administered to him anew / Afterward he most go out of the Company w y youngast M to Learne the word & Signs of fellowship y coming / inn again he makes y M Signs of fellowship & says the same words of entry [as the apprentice did] only keeping out y Coming [Common] Judge ( i.e. a gauge or template used as a guide in cutting stones; in Jamieson's Scottish Dictionary, a Jedge is a gauge or standard.) y y M / whisper the word among emselves beginning at y youngest as befor, Afterwards ye younge masone advances & puts him selfe in a posture wherein he is to receive y word & to says to them : The Honourable company y worthy Masons & / honourable company y I come from Greet you well, Greet you well, Greete you well / [Then the master (Mason) gives him the word and gripes his hand after the masons way {and afterwards, all the Masons - Chetwode Crawley MS.} which is all that is to be done to make him a perfect mason. - Edinburgh Register House MS.]

Some Questions that Masons use to put to those who profess to have y Mason word befor they wille / Acknowlagede them /

1. Are you a Masons, Answer Yes ended I am /
2. How shall I know that An* : In time and place convenient Not[e] : This answer is only to be made when there / are company present q are not masons, Bot if there be no such company by you you should answer, by Signs & / tokens & other poynts of Entry /
3. What is the first poynt of Entry ? an* : tell me the first & l I tell thee the seacond : The first is to hear & Conseal / The Second under no Hell [less] pain (Drawing the right Hand from the Left ear to the right) y Cutting y Throat, [for you must make that sign when you say that] /
5. What makes a true & perfect Lodge ? a* : 7 : M* : 5 Prences & a days Jurny from a Burrowghs tou / w/out barke of Dowe or crow of Cocke /
6. Doeth no less make a true & Perfelt lodge ? a* : 4 M* 3 entered Prentices & y rest as befiro [the Edinburg / text says ;": .. five masons and three entered apprentices &c.] /
7. Dose no Less ? A* : The Mo the Mirryer & y fewer the better Chear /
8. What is the name of your Lodge A* : The Lodge of Killewinning /
10. Where was the first Lodge ? A* : In the Porch of Solomons Temple /
11. Are there Lights in your Lodge ? An* : Three, ye North East, Southwest, & Easters [Eastern] / passages y first / denotes the M Mesone, the Second the word (Words - Chetwode) [warden - Edinburgh] the third the fellowcraft [fellow-Craft - Chetwode] [setter croft - Edinburgh] /
12. Are there any Jewells in you Lodge ? An* : Three, a Perpendester [Perpend-ashlar] a Square / Pavement & a covered Kinall [broad-mail - Chetwode - probably correct; i.e. a heavy maul for striking the chisel when the face of a stone in [broached]'i.e. indented or furrowed] [Broad oval - Edinburgh] /
13. Where Shall I find the Key of you Lodge? An* : Three foot & an Half from the Lodge door under a /
14. What do you mean by a Perpendester & green Divot? An': I mean not noly under a Perpendester I green Divot, but under the Lape of my Liver where all Secrets of my Hart Lie [Edinburgh makes one question of nos. 13 and 14.]

15. Which is the Key of you Lodge? An': A well Hunge tounge

16. Where Lys ye Key? an': In The Bone Box.

After The Masons have Examened You by all or Some of these Questions & y't / you Have answered em Exactly [and made the sign(s)] ; they will acknowledge you as a Prenticer / But not as a Mason or Fellow Craft /

17. So they will say We see you have been in the Kitchin but know not y't you have been in ye Hall
An': I have / been in the Hall as well as in the Kitchin /

18. Are you a Fellow Craft
An': Yes /

19. How many Poynts of Fellowship are there
An': 5 : Viz: Foot to Foot, Knee to Knee, Harte to / Harte, Hand to Hand, & Ear to Eare, q' make the Signs of Fellowship; & shake hands, & / You will be Acknowledged to be a true Masone / The Worde is in I : Kings 7 : 21 : & in 2nd : Chron 3rd : Last Varse the wholl / Varse but especially the words Jachin & Boaz.

Transcribed by R.: W.: Gary L. Heinmiller


See also the "Edinburgh Register House MS," 1696, discovered in 1930 by Bro. Charles T. McInnes in the Old Register House Historical Dept., Edinburgh, among a number of old documents transferred in 1808 from the Court of Session.

and the "Chetwode Crawley MS," ca. 1700, purchased ca. 1900 from a second-hand collector & found in one of the volumes of a lot purchase.