



**Province of Yorkshire,
West Riding.**

AN EXPLANATION OF YOUR INITIATION.

Brother this evening you have experienced a very old and, to a certain extent, confusing ceremony.

It is unlikely to compare with anything you have experienced before and may be quite different from what you expected. You may have experienced a range of emotions and might now be wondering what it was all about. These responses and reflections are quite normal.

When you return home, I am sure that you will be asked whether you have had a good evening and what the ceremony was all about. This has happened to all of us and so I would like to give you a short explanation of the ceremony to help you.

But first, the words “secret” and “secrecy” have been used a lot this evening. As I have said this is a very old ceremony and over the years the common usage of some words has changed. These days it would be more appropriate to use “private”. The only things that we keep secret are the sign, token and word. These are the forms of recognition that you will be asked for when you take your second and third degrees. They should only be used during our ceremonies, or when visiting a Lodge where you are not known and should be guarded much as you would guard a pin number or user id and password.

The main theme of the ceremony is to teach us about our relationship with, and reliance on, each other in this world. This evening you placed your trust in all of us and especially in the Junior Deacon, that nothing unpleasant would happen to you, and you found that your trust was not misplaced. It could be said that you were as reliant on others as a new born child. The way you were dressed and blind-folded was to emphasise that reliance. We would hope that you would always be able to trust and rely on your fellow Masons because they have all had the same experience.

The ceremony then went on to describe how we need to act for the benefit of society in general and that our principles are not confined just to Freemasons but for the whole of mankind. It also explained your duties to this Lodge and to the Craft of Freemasonry in general. At the heart of the ceremony is the Golden Rule: always to treat others as you would wish them to treat you.