

## The Allied Masonic Degrees

The Allied Masonic Degrees are a group of five Degrees which at one time, were conferred under Craft Warrants.

Nowadays these are known as “Progressive Degrees”, but at one time they were called “Side Degrees” and it was common practice for a group of Brethren to take a Brother to one side after a Craft meeting and confer the Degree on him in a short ceremony, complete with passwords, pass grips etc.

The “Antients” allowed any Craft Lodge to work any Masonic Degree, but since the formation of the United Grand Lodge of England in 1813, only the three Craft degrees and the Royal Arch can be performed in Craft Lodges.

Many other Degrees continued to be worked though and several formed their own Supreme Grand Lodges (eg. Mark Masonry). In 1879, The Grand Council of the Allied Masonic Degrees was formed to bring together and govern some of the remaining Degrees. The Degrees currently under its jurisdiction are:-



**ST LAWRENCE THE MARTYR.** This is the Degree in which candidates are admitted and in which administrative work is carried out. It is based on an old operative ceremony which tells the story of the Martyrdom of St Lawrence and teaches the lesson of fortitude.

**KNIGHT OF CONSTANTINOPLE.** Tells the story of how Emperor Constantine the Great related with Freemasons. It teaches us the lesson of humility.

**GRAND TYLERS OF SOLOMON.** This shares similarities with another Masonic Degree, it was originally called “Select Masters of 27” and tells the story of how a well-known craftsman accidentally intrudes into a secret vault under King Solomon’s Temple and how the three Grand Masters decided his fate.

**RED CROSS OF BABYLON.** A very old Degree, with similar versions being worked with different names by other Orders around the world. It is set at the time of the rebuilding of the second Temple and includes references to Cyrus, Darius and Zerubbabel. There is an important symbolic feature of passing over a river.

**GRAND HIGH PRIEST.** A beautiful ceremony full of symbolism. It is closely associated with the early Holy Royal Arch and a number of other Masonic Degrees. Amongst others, the characters involved are Aaron and Melchizedek. We are taught that we are set apart for high duties and responsibilities both as a man and a Mason and to dedicate ourselves to service to the Most High God and our fellow men.

In the Order of the Allied Masonic Degrees, each unit is called a Council and there are now more than 200 Councils worldwide.

Candidates are required to be a Mark Master Mason and a Holy Royal Arch Companion in addition to being a Craft Mason. Regalia worn includes the impressive group of 5 miniature jewels shown below.

In the **District of Devon and Cornwall**, there are Councils in:- **Barnstaple, Hayle, Seaton, South Brent, Tywardreath** and 3 Councils in **Plymouth**.



St Lawrence  
The Martyr



Grand  
High Priest



Red Cross  
of Babylon



Grand Tilers  
of Solomon



Knight of  
Constantinople

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