

## WHAT'S IN A NAME?

By The Editor of Indiana Freemason

What's in a name? That which we call a rose

By any other name would smell as sweet. — Shakespeare

The Bard of Avon was right — up to a point. What's in a name? Well now, that could depend on what it stands for — and who names it.

For instance: By what generic name should a Masonic Lodge be known? In the United States we commonly hear it called a "Blue Lodge" — or "Symbolic Lodge." In Canada and England the Brethren refer to a "Craft Lodge." Who and which is right? That question will get you a quick argument almost anywhere, any time.

In Indiana there is no specific regulation which stipulates the preferred title; and we know of none in other Grand Jurisdictions, although some may have a precedent or even a law covering proper usage.

In the absence of an official edict such matters customarily yield to popular usage and, in time, one name will prevail — although there may be considerably more logic in support of another. Few will deny that "Blue Lodge" is the title most frequently heard in this country. Yet, a Lodge confers the three Symbolic Degrees — and what could be more fitting than to call it a "Symbolic Lodge?"

Similarly, in 1813 when the Mother Grand Lodge merged with the "Antients" to form the United Grand Lodge of England it was declared "that Ancient Craft Masonry consists of three degrees, and no more..." Thus "Craft Lodge" would seem to be as appropriate as "Symbolic Lodge."

What is there, then, to support the title "Blue Lodge"? The answer seems to lie either in symbolism or in theory. In either case, is the logic or evidence as sound as that which support the other two titles? Suppose you be the judge, after reading the paragraphs quoted below — bearing in mind, of course, that the Masons of this nation undoubtedly will go right on referring to their Lodges as "Blue Lodges," irrespective of your conclusions or mine. And if that is their preference, who shall say them nay? They may be right!

In the M.S.S. Short Talk Bulletin for January, 1956, Brother Carl H. Claudy asks the question, "Why are Lodges called 'Blue Lodges'?" His answer follows:

"Schools of thought give different answers. Some authorities think that as blue has from ancient Biblical times been associated with

Truth, with Deity, with wisdom and hope; that, as Mackey taught, the blue of the Old Testament is a translation of the Hebrew tekelet, which is derived from a root meaning perfection, blue came into Masonry as its color by a natural association.

"Others believe that as our ancient Brethren met on hills and in vales, over which the blue vault of heaven is a ceiling; that as Jacob in his vision saw the ladder ascending from earth to heaven; that the covering of a Lodge is the clouded canopy or starry decked heaven, these allusions seem to connote that blue, the color of the sky, is that of all celestial attributes for which Masons strive.

"Man's earliest god was the sun. The sun rose, traveled, and set in a realm of blue; to associate the color with Deity was inevitable. Blue also is the color of the ocean, of mountain streams, of lakes, of good drinking water — that blue should also become emblematic of purity is equally natural.

"The Grand Lodge in England in 1731 changed from a previous determination that white was the Masonic color and denominated blue as that hue. A noted English Masonic student, Fred J. W. Crowe wrote: (1) that the Order of the Garter was the most famous Order of Knighthood in existence; (2) that Freemasons, in adopting the color Garter blue, attempted to add to their dignity and the growing prestige of Grand Lodge officers; (3) that two Grand Masters, prior to the adoption of Garter blue, were John, Duke of Montague (Grand Master in 1721) and Charles, Duke of Richmond (Grand Master in 1724), both Knights of the Garter; (4) the Duke of St. Albans and the Earl of Chesterfield were both Craftsmen and Knights of the Garter and (5) Bro. John 'Antis' (Anstis), member of University Lodge, to which Dr. Desaguliers and other Masonic notables belonged, was Register of the Order of the Garter.

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"The two theories which find the most believers are (1) the adoption of the color by early operative Freemasons because of an age-old association of blue with those virtues which are peculiarly Masonic, (2) the adoption of the color by the early Grand Lodge in imitation of the nobility and the fame of the color of the most famous Order of Knighthood in the world."

Symbolic Lodge, Craft Lodge or Blue Lodge — which?

With no intent to be facetious, we can think of no better answer than the familiar old refrain: "You pays your money and you takes your choice."