Evidence of R.A.M. 3°

On The Tracing Board

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Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of Alberta
The First & Second Degree Tracing Boards

are fully explained by the Junior & Senior Wardens by their lectures, but the Third Degree Tracing Board is only touched on very lightly.
The Sprig of Acacia

is mentioned & that is about all.
The Porch, the Dormer & the Square Pavement.

are referred to but with little explanation
The Sprig of Acacia

is, perhaps, the oldest symbol of Immortality that we have.
Mythology of Egypt

Typhon, determined to destroy his brother Osiris,

He prepared a beautiful gold coffin, or casket, & offered it to the one that it would fit.

 Presenting it before his brother, he invited him to step inside & try it for size..
When his brother Osiris stepped into the coffin,

- Typhon closed & sealed the cover & had the coffin cast into the sea.
- The coffin floated on the sea, finally coming to rest at Byblos at the foot of a Tamarind tree.
The Tamarind tree

- is of the same botanical family as the Acacia & so its antiquity as an emblem of immortality is well established.

- You will note the four branches on the Sprig of Acacia, three of them together & one separate, but all on the same branch.
This refers to the three divisions of Craft Masonry,

- the E. A.,
- the F. C.,
- the M. M.

The other branch referring to the Holy Royal Arch as laid down by the Articles of Union of 1813
Next we see the Working Tools of a Master Mason.

There is no point in going over them as you are all quite familiar with them.
Now we come to the oblong Square or a Double Square

which is a symbol of the earth.
You will probably recall Mercator’s Projection

- how the earth was spread out showing all the surface on a flat plane.
- This Double Square is also a Symbol of the Lodge Room.
At the ends of the Double Square are two semicircles

- when joined together form a circle which is a symbol of the Universe.
- These semi-circles being situated on the North & South indicate that we are ever in contact with the Spiritual realms of Darkness & of light.
The characters which appear in the Oblong Square

- reading from right to left,
  (HAB., A.F. 3000.)
  (Hiram Abiff, the year of light, 3000)
- or in other words, the date of the building of King Solomon’s Temple, BC, 1000.
In the semi-circles, reading from right to left,

- we have the initials T.C. which are the initials of the pass word of the Third Degree.
- The Emblems of Mortality are an emblem of death & refer to the slain Master Hiram.

T.C.
These emblems date back to the time of Jacob,

- when, on his death bed, Joseph brought his two sons, Ephraim & Manasseh to his father to receive a blessing.
- Manasseh, being the older, was taken on the left side so as to, receive the right hand or major blessing, & Ephraim was on the right side of his father.
- “And Israel stretched out his right hand & laid it upon Ephraim’s head & his left hand on Manasseh’s head.” Gen. 48, 14.
The next two figures, when translated,

answer to the letters M. B., or Master Builder.
They are also the initials of

- the two syllables of the second word given on the five points of Fellowship.

- First Chron., Ch 2 v.49, the name of Macbenah is given.

- He was of the family of Judah, being five or six generations removed.
The name Macbenah, in Hebrew,

- means covered with or clad with a cloak.
- Our Master Hiram, at this point in the story was covered with the cloak of death,
- the word “Macbenah” fits into the work very nicely.
The three fives (5s) appearing on the tracing board

- refer to the five points of fellowship,
- the five syllables of the words given on the five points of fellowship &
- the five signs of a M. M.
Five being the number of men

& that there are three of them,

it is not hard to imagine that they might refer to our three original Grand Masters,

S. K. I., H. K. T., & H, A. B.
You will note that these three 5s are placed in the form of a triangle with its apex pointing downward to signify that the possessor of this knowledge of the meaning of this symbol will receive added blessings when the practical application of the Five Points of Fellowship is practised by him.
We have now had reference to three geometrical figures on this Tracing Board,

- namely the Square, the Circle & the Triangle;
- all of which have an important part in Masonic Symbolism.
The Square represents

- the material realm,
- the earth &
- the body of man.
The Circle represents

- the Universe,
- the Heavens or the ethereal state,
- the Soul.
The triangle represents

- the spiritual or
- divine manifestations.
The Square represents

the Craft Lodge
The Circle & Triangle

represents the Royal Arch.
The Porch, the Dormer & the Square pavement.

At first glance, one calls to mind the Most Excellent Master Degree, with the pillars, the Arch & the Holy of Holies, containing the Ark of the Covenant.
The inscription is the same as in the M.E.M. Degree, “Holiness to the Lord”

is in Aramaic a Hebrew dialect.

Exodus, Chapter 39, tells us that this was to be placed on the Mitre of the High Priest, Aaron.
The Aleph, the Beth & the Lamed also appear on the Arch.
There are six sets of pillars to the Most Holy place

which recalls to our mind the words of the Principal Sojourner’s lecture, after the first discovery;
“We discovered a pair of pillars of exquisite workmanship; proceeding onward, we discovered five other pairs of equal beauty ... etc.”
On the DORMER or window of the chart or Tracing Board

- in some countries such as France & Ireland,
- there is evidence of some characters having been defaced on the cut from which the chart was printed,
- but the Beth has not been completely obliterated.
These words could have referred

- to the three words on the Triangle of the Pedestal of the Royal Arch,
- one prominent Masonic scholar has seen Third Degree Tracing Boards with the words on it.
Next the Working Tools used in the conspiracy,

- the Square below the bottom figure 5, placed on an angle,
- is the symbol of the letter S
- refers to the Five Signs of the Master Mason.
The “three squares” on the foot of the coffin,

- are the key to the interpretation of the symbolism of this Tracing Board & come from Royal Arch Masonry.
- Not the Royal Arch that most of us are familiar with, but from the Royal Arch as practised in the United States & Nova Scotia.
My impressions are, that the three squares were adopted to the Royal Arch from the Operative Masons of England.

In an Operative Lodge, three Masters sit together in the West that they might observe the rising sun.
During the opening ceremonies of an Operative Lodge,

- the three Masters approach the ALTAR, each carrying a Square,
- & place their Squares, with the one of the Volume of the Sacred Law to form a Swastika.
The Swastika is one form of the Tetragrammaton

or four letter word referring to the IHUH of the Hebrews,

ימיה

of which our word JEHOVAH is an approximation.
In closing, I would remind you

- that the First & Second TRACING Boards are not without some markings to connect them with the Royal Arch.
The First Degree Tracing Board

- has its border of Royal Arch design & colour,
- the second Degree Board has the intersecting Triangles.