

Chandler Lodge #138 F &AM  
Lodge Education Program

Subject: The York Rite: Council

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

The second concordant body of the York Rite is the Council of Royal & Select Masters. The organization is known as “Cryptic” masonry with the name being derived from the fact the degrees involved deal with the legend of a crypt beneath King Solomon’s Temple. It expands the story of the master mason degree with the loss of the master’s word, and also the royal arch mason story with the discovery of the word. The degrees in council tell the story of how the word was kept hidden and preserved inside nine arches located below King Solomon’s temple.

The degrees of Council consist of the select master, royal master, and super excellent master. The degree of select master originated as a “side degree” of the early French rite of Perfection, which evolved into the Scottish rite. The side degree was not governed by anyone, and just an additional story with no regulations, much like our district known, yellow dog degree. This degree is known to have been performed as early as 1783 in Charleston S.C. The second degree of royal master first came on the scene in New York around 1805. With the first grand council created in 1818 in New Haven Connecticut, thus combining the two degrees into a new Masonic body of the York rite. There is a third degree of cryptic masonry known as the Super Excellent Master degree, which is not required, and falls more under the heading of an optional degree, and locally is performed usually only once per year.

London Council #41 is the local council based in the London Masonic Temple. It was chartered October 13, 1866, and falls under the Ohio Grand Council of Royal & Select Masters. The degrees of council are not a prerequisite to Commandery of the York Rite, however the degrees of the blue lodge, and of the Royal Arch chapter, are prerequisites to council.

Source: Chandler 138 website  
Everything freemasons book  
Idiots guide to Freemasonry