



Staffordshire Provincial Vault



The Third Degree Working Tools

I now present to you the working tools of a Master mason. They are the Skirret, Pencil and Compasses.

Indicates tools as they are named.

The Skirret is an implement which acts on a centre pin, whence a line is drawn to mark out ground for the foundation of the intended structure. With the Pencil the skilful artist delineates the building in a draft or plan for the instruction and guidance of the workmen. The Compasses enable him with accuracy and precision to ascertain and determine the limits and proportions of its several parts. But as we are not all operative Masons but free and accepted, or speculative, we apply these tools to our morals. In this sense, the Skirret points out that straight and undeviating line of conduct laid down for our pursuit in the Volume of Sacred Law; the Pencil teaches us that our words and actions are observed and recorded by the Almighty Architect, to Whom we must give an account of our conduct through life; the Compasses remind us of His unerring and impartial justice, Who, having defined for our instruction the limits of good and evil, will reward or punish as we have obeyed or disregarded His Divine commands. Thus the working tools of a Master Mason teach us to bear in mind, and act according to, the laws of our Divine Creator, that, when we shall be summoned from this sublunary abode, we may ascend to the Grand Lodge above, where the world's Great Architect lives and reigns for ever.