

excerpt from a stone mason's journal

“Sixty stories up, in a world few others ever see, masons are cutting stone.

Far below lies the hustle and bustle of the city; yet up here it is so very quiet. There are actually falcons that make their aeries up here; and drift lazily on updrafts between the mountains of stone.

Hanging at sixty stories up in the canyons of Manhattan is like climbing in Monument Valley and Brice canyon. It can be quiet all day with just the sounds of hammer and chisel and then, as the 11 o'clock sun passes the stainless eagles of Chrysler Building you hear distinct H A L L O s resonating in the distance.

You search the roof tops below...nothing...then, more H A L L O s, only closer by. Then, peering, you see just off to your right about 5 buildings distant. another group of masons on the Hemsley building riding a scaffold not unlike yours. You wave hammers and they respond likewise...and then you are startled by yet another set of H A L L O s just off to the left and slightly downward where you see another group of masons „riding rig" with raised hammers on the Linclon building.

Like climbers we share a small private world; our environment resonates with the rhythm of hammer and chisel on stone We know each other by certain signs. To outsiders it seems we talk in tongues; we share the dust and blood of an ancient craft.”

Michael Davidson 2001

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