



## A Christmas Tree

VWBro The Reverend Richard L. Conrad, Grand Chaplain

As fall fades into the past, we welcome the long, yet beautiful, Alberta winter. I personally prefer the seasons as they come and go — we become inclined to enjoy each change.

I recently enjoyed a pleasant summer in my native Nova Scotia. While there, I had the honour of a flight over the south shore of the province. It was during this flight that I got an excellent view of the most beautiful scene, one I have never witnessed before or appreciated more. How many of us get to look down at a scene of green. No, I speak not of the sea. I speak rather of acres and acres of Christmas trees. I can only sum up this scene as “a garden so tenderly loved and cared for” in order to grace homes with the joy of the approaching season of Christmas. Soon they would be harvested, so they could be shipped all over Canada and the American eastern seaboard. Some will go as far as Panama. In conversation with my pilot, I referred to the scene as “beauty in waiting.” They were intended for many homes, regardless of religiosities.

I am by nature an analytic person. I began to ponder where the Christmas Tree tradition had begun. I found so many possibilities that I was overwhelmed by the different opinions.

It would seem Germany is credited with starting the “Christmas” tree tradition in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Martin Luther, a Christian reformer, while walking toward his home on a winter’s eve was struck by the stars twinkling among the evergreens, so he decided to cut a tree, which he placed in his house and decorated with candles. I also discovered the use of trees in a building was not always acceptable. Some people declared they were pagan symbols. Not so with Queen Victoria. In the year 1846 she had a portrait painted of herself standing and gazing at a lighted Christmas tree.

Today, for the most part, Christmas trees are accepted as symbols of a holiday not necessarily connected to any religious celebration. They are symbols of “light” to break the

bleakness of the long darkness of winter. In most Canadian homes, the greenery of wreaths and trees are readily available and widely used as a welcome symbol of the Christian concepts of the birth of the “Emmanuel” or “God with us.”

In conclusion, let me give you my impressions. The green tree cut off in early growth tends to give me a vision of Jesus the Christ who was cut down in his thirties. Christ is a man who paid the ultimate price for all who embrace Christianity. The green tree lives only a short time in a home, but I have been known to turn the tree into a cross and decorate it for the Easter season, therefore using the tree as a symbol of hope, love and joy, which was what I experienced on that summer day in my flight over the miles of God’s Creation.

My Masonic brothers and families, as well as all who may read this message, I wish for you the sublime presence of the Creator of the universe in the season of light and every season of the year.

May the God you embrace be in your home and heart always.



*This drawing of Queen Victoria, Prince Albert, five (at the time) children and Queen Victoria’s mother (Princess Victoria of Saxe-Coburg-Saalfeld, the Duchess of Kent) was published on the cover of the Illustrated London News on 27 December 1848.*

## 2014 Masonic Medal of Merit Presentations (Part 3)

**Bro Sandy Bruce Lyons** was initiated into Freemasonry in North Star Lodge No. 4 on 14 June 1999, passed to the degree of a Fellowcraft on 27 September 1999 and raised to the Sublime Degree of a Master Mason on 8 November 1999. In addition he is a member of several Concordant Bodies.

From his first night in Lodge, he has been among the first to volunteer and support any and all of the Lodge projects. He quietly works in the background, ensuring projects run smoothly and finish successfully. On many occasions he will arrive directly from work for the meeting and return to work after assisting to put the furniture away.

He married in 1993, and together



with his wife Bernadette his family is comprised of two step-children and a Grand-Puppy named Jackson. When able to find spare time, he enjoys spending time with his family, reading, volunteering and politics.

He is active in various non-Masonic community organizations. These include the Board and committees at the Lethbridge Family Centre (2 years as Chairman), which provides services to children, youth and families; the Junior Achievement Committee, which

supports students in high school and beyond and the Lethbridge Chamber of Commerce. The list of other non-board support, although incomplete, also includes Woods Home, YWCA, New West Theatre, Rotary Club, The Salvation Army and Big Brothers and Big Sisters.

Bro Lyons is a Chartered Accountant and is involved in many local and provincial professional associations. In his professional life, he is currently a partner and CFO of Bromwich and Smith Inc.

To quote his nominators, "Though quiet in demeanor, his absence is always noticed and he is missed when not in Lodge."

On 27 October 2014, Bro Lyons received the Masonic Medal of Merit jewel and certificate at the regular meeting of North Star Lodge in Lethbridge. The jewel was presented by RWBro Barry Carney, DDGM for Chinookarch District and MWBro Gerald Waldern, PGM.

## Carl H. Claudy

Christopher J. Stokes, *The Short Talk Bulletin*, Vol. 92, January 2014, No. 1

(The author served as Master in 2013 of Temple Noyes Cathedral Lodge No. 32 in the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia, where he has been a member since 2007. A native of Bethesda, MD, and lifelong resident of the DC Metro area, he serves on the Work and Lecture Committee of the Grand Lodge.)

There was a time — an age before television, streaming media, social networking and pro sports — when Freemasons read, an age when sitting before a fire with a book of Masonic lore or history was regarded as an evening well spent. Emerging from that time is the name of an author unparalleled in



President William Howard Taft (left) with Senator John Bourne Jr. of Oregon, and Captain Archibald Butt (standing) at Fort Myer, Virginia, watching the Wright brothers prepare for a trial flight of their Military Flyer. — Photo by Carl H. Claudy Sr., National Air and Space Museum Archives.

his contributions to Masonic literature. Anyone who has read even a few of Carl H. Claudy's works cannot help but be charmed by the story told and the manner of expression.

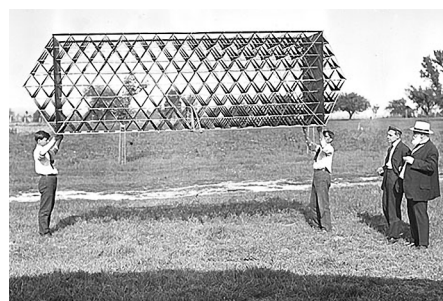
Carl Harry Claudy was born on 13 January 1879, in Washington, DC, and died on 27 May 1957. At age 19, he headed to the Alaskan gold fields. Finding no gold after six months, he returned to the States and took up employment with an emery wheel manufacturer. After several years, he left that job to move back to Washington, DC, where he became the editor of a popular science paper. This was his springboard.

Despite the lack of a formal education, Claudy began to read and to write. The first story he ever wrote appeared in *The Washington Post*. He freelanced for *The New York Herald*, eventually joining its staff in 1908 with a special assignment covering the aeronautical industry, then in its infancy. During this time he wrote a number of articles on the subject and published a book titled *Beginner's Book of Model Airplanes*.

But he was also a photographer. During the early 1900s, Claudy photographed several important aeronautical events: Alexander Graham Bell's tetrahedral kite experiments, flights of the airship Signal Corps No. 1 and the U.S. Army's first powered aircraft.



MWBro Carl Harry Claudy (1879–1957)



Alexander Graham Bell (r) inspects one of his tetrahedral kites. This series of experiments was his least successful. Photo by Carl H. Claudy.

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He was also the photographer at the Wright Military Flyer trials at Fort Meyer, Virginia, on 26 July 1909, which proved to be an exciting event. President William Howard Taft arrived in his superb White Motor Company Model M Steamer at Fort Myer, just across the Potomac from Washington, to watch the Wright brothers' preparations for the trial flight. On the following day, Orville Wright would make a record flight of over an hour, covering approximately 40 miles.

Attending such events, which Claudy covered and photographed, were well-known figures of the day: Orville and Wilbur Wright, Glenn Curtiss, Alexander Graham Bell, President Taft, Thomas Baldwin and Alice Roosevelt. Claudy's photographs are a valuable record of the early days of aeronautics and of the people who played a part in them. His photos of these early flights were given to Alexander Graham Bell, who subsequently placed them in the Smithsonian, where they remain today.

An avid athlete and outdoorsman, his hobbies included camping, mountaineering, boxing, rowing crew, tennis and football. His love of the outdoors took him frequently to Montana and inspired many short stories written for various Boy Scout publications.

A list of some of his writings:

#### Science fiction

- *The Mystery Men of Mars*
- *A Thousand Years a Minute*
- *The Land of No Shadow*
- *The Blue Grotto Terror*

#### Freemasonry

- *Pocket Masonic Dictionary*
- *Foreign Countries*
- *Old Tiler Talks*
- *The Old Past Master*
- *A Master's Wages*
- *These Were Brethren*
- *Where Your Treasure Is*
- *The Lion's Paw*
- *Masonic Harvest*
- *Introduction to Freemasonry Vol. I — Entered Apprentice*
- *Introduction to Freemasonry Vol. II — Fellowcraft*
- *Introduction to Freemasonry Vol. III — Master Mason*
- *The Master's Book*

Carl H Claudy represents one of the two authors writing before Robert Heinlein (the other is Roy Rockwood) whose imagination and storytelling ability still stand out. Robert Heinlein

was often called the "dean of science fiction writers." Norman Rockwell at age 18 had his first major breakthrough, illustrating the "*Tell Me Why: Stories about Mother Nature*" series written by Carl H Claudy in 1912. Late in his career, Claudy also wrote for Comics, mainly DC Comics' Super-Hero titles, All-American Comics between 1939 and 1941.

Claudys' association with Freemasonry began in 1908 when, at the age of 29, he was raised a Master Mason in Harmony Lodge No. 17 in Washington, DC. He served as its Master in 1932 and eventually served as Grand Master of Masons in the District of Columbia in 1943.

His Masonic writing career began in earnest when he became associated with the Masonic Service Association in 1923, serving as Associate Editor of its magazine, *The Master Mason*, until 1931. He became Executive Secretary of the Masonic Service Association in 1929, a position held until his death in 1957. Under his single-handed leadership, the Masonic Service Association was brought to a place of preeminence through his authorship and distribution of the *Short Talk Bulletin*, which made his name familiar to virtually every Lodge in the country.

Claudys can personally lay claim to authorship of approximately 350



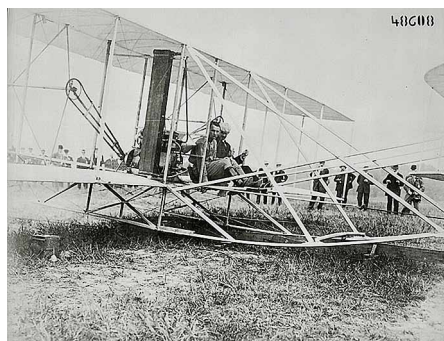
*The Wright Military Flyer Type A being towed to the parade grounds at Fort Myer for the test flight. — Photo by Carl H. Claudy, National Air and Space Museum Archives.*

*Short Talk Bulletins*. In addition to the bulletins themselves, he wrote and distributed innumerable digests, special bulletins, and portfolios of historical and factual nature, all designed to promote the Craft. One of his finest works of this nature is the *Little Masonic Library*, a collection of 20 pocket size volumes by noted authors. In 1930, he published serially in *The Master Mason* his delightful novel, *The Lion's Paw*, shortly followed by several others, including the timeless *Master's Book*, in which are set out the principles and practices of a successful Lodge Master. Another classic written during this time enjoyed international popularity: his primer for new Masons entitled, *Introduction to Freemasonry*.

In 1934, he penned the first of his series of 12 Masonic plays while in his Washington office. The succeeding plays were all drafted on the road, so to speak. Nine of them were written in a log cabin in Montana in the sight of Emigrant Peak. The plays have had a powerful impact on the Fraternity and were performed countless times in nearly every Grand Lodge jurisdiction.

In 1932, as Master of Harmony Lodge No. 17, Claudy took photographs of 152 of the members of the Lodge and superimposed the negatives over top of each other to create the photo called "The Unknown Mason."

In consequence of his long service, Masonic recognition was mighty. He was an honorary member of many Grand Lodges and Lodges. Today, he lives on in the memories of numerous Lodges in the District of Columbia, with which he had close personal connections. Also, the Carl H. Claudy Memorial Library at the headquarters of the Masonic Service Association maintains copies of most of his writings for use by Masonic researchers.



*On 17 September 1908, Lt Thomas Selfridge became the first fatality in a powered airplane crash during military flight trials at Fort Myer, VA. In this photo, taken moments before the fatal flight, Selfridge is seated (in near seat) of the Wright airplane next to Orville Wright (far seat) who was also severely injured in the crash. Selfridge's last words to photographer Carl Claudy: "Step back, Claudy, we're going..." Claudy also took several photographs of the aftermath of the crash. (Selfridge also piloted a version of Bell's tetrahedral kite.) — Photo by Carl H. Claudy, National Air and Space Museum Archives.*

# When the Masonic Lodge was a University

## *Lodge Rooms reflect our Masonic quest for knowledge*

MWBro John L. Cooper III, Grand Master, Grand Lodge of California, *California Freemason*, August/September 2014

Have you ever wondered why there are two globes atop the pillars near the door to the preparation room in a Masonic Lodge? On one pillar is a globe of the earth and on the other is a celestial globe, showing the constellations of the night sky. Masons sometimes refer to them as terrestrial [and celestial] globes. Why are they there? Why would Masons put globes on top of these two pillars, which imitate those that stood before the door of King Solomon's Temple?

When Freemasonry emerged into the modern world in the form that we know it today, there was a thirst for knowledge. Most men had to be self-taught because only the wealthy could afford what we would today call a college education. The ancient traditions and symbols of Freemasonry that Lodges had inherited were used to teach their members lessons of morality and ethics.

But enterprising Masons soon saw that they could do much more than that. The symbolism of King Solomon's Temple offered them a splendid opportunity to take Masonic symbolism in a new direction, and to offer members a digest of contemporary education in the arts and sciences, as then understood. In doing so, they modified the original symbols and equipment in a Masonic Lodge forever, an example of which are the globes atop the pillars at the entrance to the preparation room.

King Solomon's Temple had long been a source of Masonic legend and symbolism, and stories about it were featured in the old manuscript constitutions, copies of which were considered essential to the true functioning of a Masonic Lodge. These manuscript constitutions contained stories that early Masons believed were handed down from antiquity.

The pillars before King Solomon's Temple were said to be related to other pillars built by Masons. One of their functions was to preserve the secrets of Masonry, should they be endangered by fire or flood. So, the use of imitation pillars was a natural feature to incorporate into the symbolism of Masonic Lodges. Today, these pillars are one of the signature items with which a

Masonic Lodge is furnished.

The original pillars in front of King Solomon's Temple are described as being topped with lotus blossoms. A lotus blossom is bowl-shaped, so the tops of the pillars had what might be described as pommels or globes, being spherical in design. At some point in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, an enterprising Lodge decided that these pommels could serve a more useful purpose, and they were replaced by the terrestrial and celestial globes that we see today. But why do that? Why take the original symbolism of King Solomon's Temple and combine it with a contemporary symbol, such as a terrestrial and celestial globe?

Masonic scholars are still looking for a definitive answer to this question, but I would like to suggest one for your consideration: I believe that they were intended to be symbols of the progressive nature of knowledge. The Fellowcraft degree in Masonry is about knowledge — knowledge of the arts and sciences, and ultimately knowledge of the Great Architect of the Universe and the relation of this knowledge to our daily lives. The charge given to the candidate at the end of the Fellowcraft degree describes Freemasonry as a "progressive moral science." Here is what the [California] ritual says:

*Masonry is a progressive moral science divided into different degrees; and, as its principles and mystic ceremonies are regularly developed and illustrated, it is intended and hoped that they will make a deep and lasting impression upon your mind.*

The people of the time of King Solomon's Temple still believed that the world was flat, and would not have understood either the terrestrial or the celestial globes, but the Masonic symbolism to the new Fellowcraft is clear. He is progressing from an "old" understanding of reality to a "new" understanding. The "old" is represented by the ancient pillars and the "new" by the globes. In the rest of the degree, he will be introduced to the function of knowledge itself, represented by the winding staircase. Taken together, the meaning is that in order to progress in Masonry, he must accept that he will leave behind old understandings

and embark on a journey into new and fresh understandings. Freemasonry will become his "university of knowledge," not because it has all the answers for him, but because it has all the questions for him. The questing mind is a salient characteristic of a Freemason, and the globes atop the ancient pillars from King Solomon's Temple are a symbol of that quest.

It is in this way that a Masonic Lodge is thought of as a "university." Properly understood, a university does not provide a completed education. Its true function is to open the doors to knowledge so that a lifelong commitment to learning results. In a similar way, the Fellowcraft degree is intended to open the doors of learning about Masonry. The degree is not intended to teach everything that there is to know about Freemasonry. It is, instead, to create in the Mason a thirst for knowledge, and to teach him that he should have a lifelong commitment to learning — and not just about Freemasonry. In this way, Freemasonry itself becomes the "university of life" for every Mason.

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## Grand Master's Itinerary December

- 2 Kenilworth Lodge No. 29, Annual Moose Supper; Red Deer Freemasons' Hall; Social 19 30 h, Dinner 18 00 h, Meeting 21 30 h
- 3 Avonglen Lodge No. 170, Installation; Acacia Masonic Hall, Edm
- 5-8 Aurora Borealis Lodge No. 201; Fort McMurray No. 195; Millennium No. 2000; Senior's Activity Centre, Fort McMurray
- 12 Strathcona Lodge No. 77, Installation of Officers; Acacia Masonic Hall
- 18 Ivanhoe Lodge No. 142, Medal of Merit Presentation; Edm Freemasons' Hall

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## Season's Greetings

*Once again it's the time of year when all people of good will bring compliments to those about them. We here at The Alberta Freemason do so to all our readers, no matter where they are — May the season bring you and yours great joy!*

# Your DDGMs 2014–2015

*We are pleased to introduce to our readers the District Deputy Grand Masters serving the Craft in Alberta during the 2014–2015 term. This will be concluded in the next issue of The Alberta Freemason.*

## Athabasca District

**RWBro Kyle Scott** was born in Winnipeg in 1964. He had applied for initiation into Freemasonry in Calgary in late 2004, and was slated to be initiated in the spring of 2005 before taking a position in Fort McMurray in February of that year. After getting to know Brothers in Fort McMurray and being “re-sponsored,” he was raised in Millennium Lodge No. 2000 on 25 May 2006 A lawyer by training and vocation, and with the Secretary’s chair about to be vacant, he took over as Lodge Secretary in September 2006, serving in that role through 2009.



In 2008, with efforts underway to begin a new York Rite Lodge in Fort McMurray, Kyle became one of the 20 Charter Members of Aurora Borealis Lodge No. 201, serving as its first Secretary-Treasurer. Upon the consecration of the new Lodge, Kyle moved up to Junior Warden and ultimately served as Master of that Lodge in 2011–2012.

Kyle has been a piper since he was a young lad, and is currently serving as an Instructor with the Fraser Highlanders Youth Band in Calgary, where he was transferred in mid-2012. He just completed a year’s service as Band Officer of the Frasers. As a piper, he has served two terms as Grand Piper (North 2008–2009 and South 2013/2014).

Brother Scott has been active in other Concordant Bodies, including Royal Arch Masons (Hangingstone Chapter No. 40, Fort McMurray); Knights Templar (Edmonton Preceptory No.46), the Shrine with Al Azhar Temple, Calgary (serving as a member of the Mounted Patrol, the Provost Corps and the Vintage Car Club) and the Scottish Rite, Valley of Calgary (32<sup>nd</sup> Degree).

Kyle has four children, ages 10 to 21: two boys (Iain and Liam) and two girls (Kristie and Jessie). He still finds time to help coach his son’s hockey team, ski, play the occasional (not so good) game of golf, go bird hunting (in season) and drive his classic ’73 Mercury.

## Alpha District

**RWBro Joe Bratton** was born in 1956 in Port Glasgow, Renfrewshire, Scotland, the son of Joseph and Isabel Bratton. Educated in the Scottish school system, he became an apprentice plumber at the age of fourteen and quickly concluded that life as a plumber was not the answer. He felt he needed a challenge. Therefore, he decided to join the British Army — much to the dismay of his family, from whom he needed permission as he was still only sixteen years old. After a few persuasive conversations, his Dad gave permission, figuring Joe would only last a few weeks anyway. Those “few weeks” lasted twenty-three years. Within that time, Joe experienced many things: he saw service in most parts of the world, learned



a great many skills, and even became a Sergeant Instructor himself. As any military person will tell you, those experiences and skills stay with a person for the rest of his life.

When he retired from the army in 1996, Joe moved to Calgary to start the next chapter of his life. Since he had many family members in Freemasonry and had not had the time to commit to the Craft while in the Army, Joe decided this would be an ideal time to pursue the Craft. As a member of the Committee for the Calgary Highland Games, Joe got to know VWBro Ben Niven and RWBro Bill Campbell. The two well-known and respected Brothers decided that they would sponsor him; Joe soon became a member of St Mark’s Lodge No. 18. He was initiated on 26 September 2005, passed on 24 October, and raised on 28 November.

Joe progressed through the chairs and became Master of St Mark’s for the year 2011. During this time, he also became a Royal Arch Mason and the Chairman for the Masters, Wardens and Deacons Association of Calgary and Area for 2010. In 2013, Joe affiliated with Strathmore Lodge No. 53, since he now resides in Strathmore.

Joe also keeps busy as the Secretary of The Southern Alberta Tartan Degree Team, and the Chairman for St Mark’s Building Society. The Building Society operates and manages St Mark’s Manor, a 21-suite housing facility, which provides senior citizens with affordable and pleasant accommodations. Joe also enjoys golf and is an award-winning photographer whose photos have been published in magazines and newspapers.

## Central District

**RWBro Robert R. (Bob) Cantwell**, was born in Edmonton in 1954, but lived his formative years in Calgary. Bob attended SAIT in Calgary, in the Welding Engineering Technology Program, worked as a welding technologist with Nova and TransCanada Pipelines in the material quality management group and finally as the manager of technical services for TransCanada Hottaps.



Bob and his wife, Sandra, have been married for thirty-five years and live in Red Deer. Bob is currently the quality assurance manager for Arnett & Burgess Oilfield Construction Limited, where he manages both the CSA Z662 and ASME B31.3 quality management systems in four provinces. Bob is a CWB welding inspector, NACE coating inspector and an ISO auditor.

Being the last of three generations of known Masons, Bob was initiated, passed and raised in Beacon Lodge No. 190 in 2003 and served two terms as Worshipful Master, from 2007 to 2009. Bob served on the Masonic Foundation for three terms and is presently a member of the Royal Arch Masons (Stettler), the Cryptic Rite and Edmonton Preceptory. Bob looks forward to working with other Grand Lodge committees, updating their processes and forms.



## Battle River District

**RWBro Kevin P. Cripps** was born in Calgary in 1970, the youngest of five boys, and has a younger sister. He was raised in Camrose from the age of seven and spent 13 years as a member of Scouts Canada (Cubs, Scouts, and Venturers), receiving the Chief Scout Award. He attended Camrose Composite High School, graduating in 1989, and attended Red Deer Collage, receiving a degree in Business in 1995. In 2006 he attended NAIT for 5<sup>th</sup> Class Power Engineering. His daughter Kailee Elizabeth was born in 1998.



RWBro Cripps has worked in several industries, ranging from sales to labourer in mills or on road construction. He is now working for RONA in specialized sales as the Installation Services Coordinator. He volunteers at St. Andrews Anglican Church in various capacities.

He was initiated in November 2003 in Camrose Lodge No. 37, passed June 2004 and raised October 2004, serving that Lodge as its Worshipful Master from June 2009 to June 2013. He is also a member of Mount Olivet Chapter No. 17, Royal Arch Masons.

## Chinook Arch District

**RWBro Barry Carney** was born in Pincher Creek, Alberta, in 1945 and raised and educated there. He has two sons, one living in Lethbridge and the other in Taber. He started his working career as an owner/operator long haul truck driver for 15 years. Currently he is working for the MD of Pincher Creek and the Village of Cowley at their new Regional Water Treatment Facility as an operator. He and his wife of 40 years, Sophie, have co-owned and operated Simply Catering for the past 30 years. They currently reside in Cowley, and in their spare time they enjoy travelling, especially south, whenever they can arrange it.



RWBro Carney was initiated in Chinook Lodge No. 47 on 15 November 1999, passed 20 December 1999, and raised 17 January 2000. He served as Worshipful Master of Chinook-Spitze Lodge No. 6 in 2008–2009 and again in 2009–2010.

***Note:** I was reading about identity theft the other day, and the article pointed out that “date of birth” is often used by credit card companies and banks, etc. to confirm your identity when you call them. We have been including full birth dates in the biographies of our District Deputy Grand Masters published in The Alberta Freemason, but this has now been shortened to just the year of birth. [Ed.]*

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