



Grand Lodge Bulletin

Editor: A. M. Mitchell, P.G.M.

Huletide Greetings

High Prairie, Alberta.

My Dear Brethren:

Another year has rolled away and once more we are celebrating the anniversary of the birth of Christ in the Manger at Bethlehem, twenty centuries ago. Would that the peace that reigned when the shepherds watched their flocks by night was ours today, when the nations of the world are at war, one with another. We think with heavy hearts of those who have paid the supreme sacrifice and of those who are crippled and maimed perhaps for life, both in the war torn countries of Europe and in the Isles from which many of us hail and which we still call Home.

Naturally at this season we think of peace and happiness and our eyes turn to the "Glimmering Star in the East". Our thanks should go up in gratitude to the Most High that we live in an Empire where liberty and freedom are not dead. The hope and aim of all is to maintain that freedom which our fathers won for us by resisting to the utmost the rule of tyrants by terrorism and destruction, so that again peace and contentment may reign for us, our children and our children's children.

As we look back over the events of our lives during the past year we should be thankful for the many blessings we have enjoyed in this Grand Jurisdiction. I often thought, when travelling through the country this fall, of the words, "And the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose", for it was indeed a land of plenty. We in Alberta are certainly blessed in that we are far removed from the struggle that is threatening the world. Our homes have not been bombed, our shores have not been invaded and for these mercies we should give grateful thanks. Here I might suggest that you make the Grand Master's War Defence Fund a part of your Christmas offertory, for we should not forget that it takes more than Christmas trees, gifts and songs to make Christmas, the spirit of which should be Joy, Hope and Peace.

As Freemasons we have both responsibilities and opportunities, which today are perhaps greater than ever before. Do not let us be neglectful, but make the most of these responsibilities and opportunities and prove to all that we are meeting them as Masons should. Let us pray that the present terrible conflict may be brought to a successful and early conclusion, so that the old, old song may ring out in all truth and sincerity—"Joy to the World, the Lord has come". Let us resolve to brighten the pathway of others by giving of our substance with the joy and goodwill of our hearts.

To the brethren in every part of Alberta, I wish you and yours a Merry Christmas and a Happy and Prosperous New Year. And to those of you who have suffered from sickness and distress, I extend my sincere sympathy and best wishes. In this spirit I greet you in this joyous Christmas season. May you all be blessed by a new Hope and may "Peace on Earth and Goodwill among Men" soon again become a reality. In the words of Tiny Tim, "May God Bless All of Us".

Sincerely and fraternally yours,

Sam Harris.

Grand Master.

"PEACE ON EARTH"

It is, admittedly, something of a paradox to cry peace when there is no peace and, alas, the lack of that peace will make the feast of Christmas something of a mockery to many.

But the greatest gale will blow itself out, the worst storm subside into calm, and, in the eternal rhythm, war will end and peace will take its place. Without, then, losing one iota of the effort of each of us to bring the end and victory we so desire, this may be the appropriate season when we can begin to think of the peace to come and what lies beyond it.

With the defeat of barbarism, outraged peoples will demand retribution. That is human nature as we know it. But unless the leaders can exercise the far-sighted wisdom thinking men have a right to expect of them, retribution will set the stage for the future slaughter of yet another generation, and progressively for the destruction of civilization and the race itself.

To the parents of the children of today that is an appalling prospect. Hence it is no idle occupation to begin to think, to plan, to prepare for the peace that is to be.

Students of social condition know the tremendous advances in peace time contacts inherited from the First Great War. The Second will, in turn, bring equally great advances in the fields of organization, of social economics, of mechanics and of communication. Is this poor prize from the blood and tears of the moment to be sole reward for holocaust? Are we so lame-minded that ingenuity, ability and high speed performance are to be products of strife alone and allowed to relapse into desuetude when peace comes again? Are we to rebuild our world in terms of worn-out patterns and carry on where we left off? A thousand times, No! Such a course is unthinkable.

Barbarism, defeated, must vanish from the earth. A peace which courts disaster for another generation cannot be tolerated. We must plan for rebuilding a world in which no seed of future conflict may take root. To do this we must begin to think now.

Freemasons, as part of their profession, are taught the arts of the builder in fashioning a house not made with hands. Can there be any more appropriate Temple of the Ideal than that of giving of their minds and hearts to the tremendous but venturesome task of speeding the day when

*"Man to man, the world over
Shall brithers be an' a' that?"*

Much of our theory, much of our government, much of our wish-thinking will be discarded, but,

in the words of the Preamble to the American Declaration of Independence, a document which might well be preamble to a Declaration of the Inter-Dependence of Mankind:

"... whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, (life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness), it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it, and to substitute a new government, laying its foundations on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to affect their safety and happiness."

Unless even the form of Democracy we know is to perish altogether, we must prepare to perpetuate and solidify it, and the time to begin the preparation is now. Mankind is greater than nations and nations are but individuals writ large. The burden is ours, how shall we bear it?

There is small point in waging world conflict to defend entrenched privilege, no cleansing power in a bath of blood when we must step again into the gloom of uncertainty and the grime of prospective misery.

There is no peace for this Christmas, but peace will come again, and the kind of peace will be the planned release which we begin drafting now.

Christmas, 1940, cannot be merry, but it can be a time of sober reflection. The task is yours and mine and we can exchange good wishes for success and hope in the common enterprise.

A.M.M.



AN EDITORIAL COMMENT

On two occasions recently it has been suggested that we publish local news of the Lodges and their members. Were this a large sheet, no doubt we would be asking the Lodges for such information, but it must be quite apparent that space limitations prevent publication of detailed items of local interest.

We are, however, very much interested in the unusual and a perusal of the columns of the *Bulletin* will show that, as far as is possible, we have given unusual news to our Brethren. Such items are always welcome, and secretaries or others interested should not hesitate to forward items they consider of more than local interest. They can be sure of sympathetic editorial treatment always.

A.M.M.

THE ANCIENT LANDMARKS OF MASONRY

By V. W. Bro. WM. R. DAVIS, Calgary.

THE SECOND OF FOUR SECTIONS

Editor's Note: Opinions expressed and speculations advanced in articles of this kind are the writer's own. Official approval of Grand Lodge is neither expressed nor implied.

AS he ascended in the scale of civilization the necessity for fixed and unchanging rules became apparent to man's intelligence and induced him to establish codes of law and to enforce them. In the 27th chapter of the Book of Deuteronomy we find an early example of a criminal code. There we find enumerated several offences, the commission of which would be visited with a curse or penalty. Among these we read of such a curse being visited upon "he who removed his neighbor's landmark." As each offence is denounced we read the words "And all the people shall say Amen," thus implying that the people gave their consent to the enactment of these laws, recognizing the necessity for them, and that in giving consent they committed the whole power of society to their enforcement.

Coming down to our own time and to our own country where the Torrens system of land surveying is practised, we find that the continued advancement of knowledge, especially of the science of astronomy, has enabled us to find natural and immutable landmarks without resorting to the use of tangible objects, artificial or natural. The surveyor, using instruments and applying knowledge gained by man's intelligence in the course of the centuries, finds the true line running North and South. Then by the same means he finds the true line running East and West. These lines intersect at a *point* which is fixed and which is immovable by any effort of man. Setting these points exactly one mile apart and connecting them with lines, enables the surveyor to state with mathematical precision where one section of land ends and another begins. To avoid a repetition of his work he marks the position of the point with a wooden or metal peg. This peg might be moved, but the point cannot, and if any dispute arises as to the position of the boundary, the surveyor or another surveyor, can again obtain the position of the points and draw the boundary lines in their original position.

There is a difference between a "landmark" and a "boundary". A landmark is a POINT on the surface of the earth. A boundary is a LINE drawn between any two of such points. There is one exception. A line starting at a point on the earth's surface and continued around the circumference of the earth will be a line starting and ending at the same point, thus forming a circle, which we use as the symbol of infinity, this conception being the one thing that distinguishes the human mind from that of the Creator, in that it is an absolute impossibility for the human mind to embrace the idea.

Let us understand too that there are landmarks which are not "ancient." The difference is that those entitled to that prefix are fixed by God and irremovable, while the others are those fixed by man, like the march stones hitherto mentioned. The first is unchangeable by any human endeavor, the other can and is changed in position as circumstances require.

In the Ancient charges, and in many places in Masonic literature, this distinction appears. We say—"The Ancient Landmarks of MASONRY," and "The Ancient usages and established customs of THE FRATERNITY."

Mark the double distinction; between "landmarks" and "usages," and between "Masonry" and the "Fraternity." These clearly indicate that our ancient brethren recognized a distinction between what could and what could not be changed or altered, and it is equally necessary for this generation at all times to be on its guard against classifying as an "Ancient Landmark" that which is an "Ancient Custom" and vice versa.

Now let us look at the matter from a speculative point of view. First it is clear that the use of landmarks is to establish boundaries, and that boundaries are established to define the line where proprietary rights diverge. On one side of a boundary one person or society has exclusive rights and it is when such line is crossed that there is trespass causing disorder, conflict and chaos, unless, of course, the crossing is made with friendly intent. It is thus apparent that landmarks are essential where peace and harmony are desired as ends in themselves. If the physical welfare of the community is a primary objective—that there may be a maximum yield of wheat, for instance—the farmer concentrating his efforts within his own undisputed boundaries will acquire an intimate knowledge of the capacity of his land, and being protected from molestation by public opinion expressed in law, will obtain the desired result.

Continuing our speculations, it is noticeable that all the efforts of man in pursuit of spiritual and physical welfare throughout the ages have induced him to look for landmarks or starting points in natural objects or phenomena whose position and operation is unchangeable except by act of God. In observing the phenomena of the unerring recurrence of the Seasons, for instance, we are all prone to ask "Why?" The search leads us to the finding of what we call natural laws behind all of which there are immovable and unalterable elements or landmarks. Beyond that point we are baffled unless we admit the existence of a Creator.

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THE GRAND MASTER REQUESTS

The attention of all Secretaries to the following, with the further suggestion that they be drawn to the attention of all concerned:

1. That no Brother may hold more than one office at one time in a Lodge.

2. That the Constitutional regulations regarding suspension for non-payment of dues are automatic and compulsory.

3. That a copy of the Summons of every meeting of every Lodge should be sent to the Grand Master, the District Deputy Grand Master and the Grand Secretary.

4. That the name, age, occupation and residence of every candidate MUST appear on the Lodge Summons BEFORE balloting.

Please take due notice and govern yourselves accordingly.



BRITISH MASONS GIVE JEWELS

The United Grand Lodge turned over a check for more than 10,000 pounds to the British treasury early in September to go toward the prosecution of the war against Hitler. The money came from voluntarily contributed Masonic jewels which were melted down to their base metals and sold.

Since the value of such jewels lies in the workmanship rather than the actual metal, this sum represents but a fraction of the original cost of these Masonic emblems. Each Mason who contributed a jewel received a special acknowledgment from the Grand Secretary of the United Grand Lodge of England.

Masons have contributed heavily in other ways toward the British cause, but the immediate response in the voluntary surrender of their jewels, many of which were invaluable for sentimental as well as intrinsic reasons, best typifies the English spirit.



DEATH OF J. RUSSELL McLAREN, EMINENT MASON OF ENGLAND

Mr. J. Russell McLaren, Past Grand Warden of the United Grand Lodge of England and Past President of the Board of General Purposes of that Grand Lodge, passed away at his residence in Brighton on August 29, 1940.

Serving as President of the Board during the past nine years, the official acts of Mr. McLaren embrace some of the most important events in the history of the Masonic Fraternity in England. Many of the duties of his office were most arduous, especially so following the death of Sir Coville Smith, to whose lot fell the consecration of many of the London Lodges.

His travels in the Far East and other Eastern points of the British Empire in his younger days added much to his knowledge of conditions prevailing in Overseas Lodges in those areas. This was manifest in his work throughout his Presidency of the Board of General Purposes.

CO-MASONRY

Co-Masonry had its origin in France and is a system of Masonry in which both men and women may belong. It has scattered lodges in several states including California, Colorado, New York, and Pennsylvania.

The Order strictly upholds the landmarks of Freemasonry except as relates to the inability of women to become members. Its ritual is similar to our own, it maintains the open Bible in every lodge, pledges its members to obedience to the laws of the country in which it operates, silence in regard to Masonic secrets and the constant practice of charity.

The first English Co-Masonic Lodge was established in London in 1902, there are (or were) Lodges located in Belgium, Scotland, India, South Africa, Holland, Norway, Australia, France, and America. It is not known if these lodges in Europe exist at this time due to suppression of Freemasonry in the several countries mentioned.

Co-Masonry came into existence in America in 1903.



CHIPS FROM A ROUGH ASHLAR

Gathered by "THE TYLER"

Did you ever consider that the fellow in the gold braid probably has all of your admirable characteristics?

Some day, as an exercise in charity, should the sad opportunity come, attend the funeral of a brother with whom you considered yourself at outs. It is astonishing how misunderstandings and petty animosities vanish at the final curtain.

Security can be found in a jail or a lunatic asylum, but most men prefer to be free and accepted as sane.

It's not quite so easy to read a man when he's all dressed up.

Consider that Nature puts her finest touches on the most obscure places.

When without the salve of excuse, self-analysis may be bitter but good for the soul.

As we approach the borderland we sift the ashes of ambition.

A golden tulip, regal against the wet black clod, is evidence enough of the message of the acacia.

For true content the measured step, the nimble mind.

A Mason knows that the true measure of affection is the measure of sharing it with his brother.

Lack of understanding is the highest wall, the densest fog, the widest sea, against true fraternity.

A compensation of life in a country Lodge is that it forces the brethren to be independent. The city Lodge comes to rely on externals and loses the capacity to enjoy its own society.