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# Grand Lodge Bulletin

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## THE CROWNING GLORY OF FREEMASONRY

*From the Masonic Record.*

The philosophy of Freemasonry is to prepare, educate and train its members for the higher relationships of life. In so doing it demonstrates its faith in mankind and, in return, invites confidence, trust and loyalty. It believes that the humblest life launched on the sea of humanity has within it the slumbering forces of noble manhood waiting only for the sympathetic touch to rouse and stimulate the innate qualities of the soul.

Masonry invites no one to join its ranks, but it embraces men of all creeds, colour and conditions. By the practice of the spirit of charity, the toleration of varied and oftentimes opposite creeds, and by a universal brotherhood it brings and holds together men of every country and nationality, who otherwise would have remained apart, but who, by means of Masonry meet on the level and separate on the square.

Masonry is not a religion in the ecclesiastical or theological sense. It creates no church, administers no ordinances and has no ministerial or sacerdotal class. It is an ally of religion, indeed the most powerful auxiliary to religion we know, but it is in no sense a substitute for it. Religion is at the foundation of Masonry and fundamentally it is spiritual. It teaches the essential spiritual truths on which all religion is based—faith in God, love to man and hope of immortality. Religion builds civilization and Masonry works on the civilization built. The one supplements the other.

Masonry does not seek to usurp the place of the Church. It aims, rather, to aid and support all the ethical teachings of the Church. A man should not be less, but more religious, through his association with Freemasonry, for it instils and enforces the sacred duties of brotherly love, relief and truth, and inculcates all mutual duties and obligations of man to man in the relationships of life.

The vitality of Masonry is not due to exalted patronage or to social influence. It is due to the moral effect of its teaching, to the sense of duty by which its members are animated and sustained

in ungrudging and unwearying devotion to every good work. Masonry may be likened to a mighty stream penetrating every hill and mountain, gliding over plain and valley, bearing on its beneficent bosom the abundant waters of love and charity for the needy, and for the widows and orphans of Brethren in all lands. This ever-flowing stream vitalizes every man who seriously participates in it, and the result is seen in men living more deeply, more bravely and consistently, and in their being drawn closer together in mutual goodwill and service. It cannot be otherwise so long as Masonry instructs its members in the active principle of universal beneficence and charity, and bids them solace their own distress by extending relief and consolation to their fellow creatures in the hour of affliction.

In the shaping and moulding of character Freemasonry makes a valuable contribution to the life of the modern world. It really exists for this and when it has succeeded in implanting in its members the great cardinal virtues of friendship, morality and brotherly love, supported by an unswerving faith in T.G.A.O.T.U., before whom all Masons must humbly bow, and sends them forth to live after this manner before their fellowmen, then it has accomplished a great task and made a supreme contribution to the lift of the world. He who learns these lessons will not only walk humbly before his God, but will express his Masonic character in an unflexible fidelity to his country's ideals and laws, for Freemasonry is rooted deeply in the sterling virtue of patriotism; and will give himself in a ready and helpful service to his fellowmen insofar as he can do without detriment to himself and those dependent upon him.

Freemasonry also makes for friendship. Friendship-fraternity is indispensable in human life. Friendship should be simple, sincere and reliable. As "iron sharpeneth iron, so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend", are words credited to Solomon in the far distant past but they are still true and pregnant with meaning. Cicero said, "They seem to take away the sun

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## GUARDING THE OUTER DOOR

*Robt. W. Tarbell in the Wisconsin Freemason*

The history of the human race has been a story of struggle, a drama of combat between opposing forces, a battle between ideas and ideals. In fraternal circles, in government, amongst peoples everywhere, there has been the constant pushing upward of ideals, a desire to rise to higher standards, and to exclude the false.

Masons are engaged in this same activity. Every member of the Craft is charged with the responsibility of guarding the outer door. Simple the job may be and poorly it may be done, unless we, individually, do our part. It is an every-member responsibility, not only resting upon the shoulders of those who recommend and investigate, but also on those who cast the ballot.

There is no hue and cry of battle as the brethren guard the gate. In silence and without show we carry on our investigations and pass judgement. We may not always do it well. No doubt errors creep in to nullify some of our best endeavors, but over the spread of many generations we have earned the reputation of being circumspect and judicious in the selection of members.

High standards may be injurious to some. We might render a great service to the world by letting down the bars and saying, "Come one, come all", but our distinctiveness would disappear, and our standards would trail in the dust.

There is much involved in this matter of guarding the outer door. It calls for the most careful judgement. Friendships are tested and may be distorted. Because I know a man, it does not follow that I should act favorably on his petition. Scrutiny there must be, not to discover the little weaknesses upon which to hang an excuse for rejection, but to discern, if possible, the great moral issues which are paramount in the mind of the applicant. No man should presume to pass judgement upon one who stands without, unless he has the ring of sincerity in his own soul. Unbiased must be the brother who would cast his vote and broadminded enough to accept the outcome with equanimity.

Guarding the entrance is not entirely a matter of peering through the lattice work at those who sound an alarm at the outer door. There is training for the brethren themselves. All the virtues that mortals possess may be tried and strengthened in the act. Just as the warriors who stand upon the embattled ramparts to fight off the intruder grow strong in defense, so do we, in the judicious exercise of our functions at the outer door, develop in Masonic strength and virtues. "Be particularly careful not to recommend him unless you are convinced he will conform to our rules.

There is strength in the meeting of many minds, and broadmindedness grows out of diversity of opinion. That, too, may seem difficult to comprehend, for too much diversity can lead to perpetual disagreement. But we are taught to look carefully and with charity on the points of

view of our brethren, and out of it all there is a strong desire to work together constructively and in harmony.

This matter of looking charitably upon the viewpoints of a brother and kindly upon the peculiarities of a petitioner works both ways. We should be sure that our judgement is not activated by bias. The old story of not attempting to pluck the mote out of a brother's eye until after we have removed the beam from our own vision is as true today as when first spoken. It is possible to do a great injustice because the frailties of human nature have overpowered us.

## ACADIA LODGE No. 82—YOUNGSTOWN

On January 15th, 1964, Acadia Lodge celebrated its Fiftieth Anniversary and in spite of the fact that changes in population have left them with only some fifteen resident members, there were ninety brethren present. The ladies served a delightful banquet at 6:30 p.m., W. Bro. W. E. Ward was Toastmaster. In addition to the usual Toasts W. Bro. W. D. Duncan, Master of Coronation No. 72 proposed the toast to Acadia and this was responded to by W. Bro. J. W. Beamish, a Charter member. Two other Charter members were present in the persons of Bro. W. C. Auld and R. W. Bro. D. H. Campbell. It is interesting to note that two officers who Instituted the Lodge on January 14th, 1914, are still active. R. W. Bro. O. C. Smith was unable to be present and sent greetings, R. W. Bro. J. G. O'Dell was present. There can have been few Anniversaries with two of the Instituting officers and three Charter members still active. R. W. Bro. G. M. Hewson was Guest Speaker. The Lodge meeting was presided over by the W. Master, W. Bro. J. Jamieson; the Thanksgiving Service was conducted by the Deputy Grand Master R. W. Bro. W. J. Collett and R. W. Bro. W. S. Cummings gave a masterly review of the History of the Lodge. Early members were paid a justly deserved tribute by the D.D.-G.M., R. W. Bro. J. A. Lukey and The M.W. The Grand Master, M. W. Bro. S. H. Hardin brought the meeting to a close with a timely message of encouragement for the future.

## W. M. ACACIA No. 11, 1914

On St. John's Day, December 27th, 1963, the brethren and visitors at Nechako Lodge No. 86, in Prince George, B.C. were witness to an unusual event. The evening marked the 50th anniversary of the Installation of W. Bro. Martin S. Caine as Worshipful Master of Acacia Lodge No. 11 in Edmonton, Alberta on December 27th, 1913. W. Bro. Caine is the senior living Past Master of Acacia Lodge, where he was Initiated on April 23rd, 1908 and he has been associated with Nechako Lodge since its Constitution in 1920.

The brethren marked the occasion by presenting a Masonic Bible to W. Bro. Caine and this presentation was followed by the presentation of a Fifty Year Jewel on behalf of Acacia Lodge and the Grand Lodge of Alberta, which was done by W. Bro. George E. Baldwin, P.M. of St. John's  
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from the world who withdraw friendship from life, for we have received nothing better, nothing more delightful." One of our great English poets says:-

"The friends thou hast and their adoption  
tried,  
Grapple them to thy soul with hoops of  
steel."

Freemasonry promotes friendship and the kind of friendship the world is craving for, a friendship that means a better spirit of concord and harmony between nations, a deeper fellowship between communities, and a more warm hearted sympathy between individuals. If there must be another war, let it be a war against ignorance, selfishness, sinful indulgence and greed, and led by the spirit and teaching of Masonry, victory will be assured.

Freemasonry is a life to be lived, not a formality to be perfunctorily observed or a set of empty creeds to which lip service is given. It is a life grounded on religion, organized in morality, mellowed by good fellowship, humanized in charity, dedicated to service, and must ever stand for the love of God, the dignity and worth of man and for the realization of true brotherhood.

The glory of our ancient landmarks can never be preserved better or be more enhanced than when we as individuals are giving ourselves in obedience to our God, in patriotic devotion to our country, and in deeds of service to our fellowmen. Let us not forget that the crowning glory of Freemasonry is not in its forms and ceremonies, but in the sterling character it seeks to implant in the lives of its members. Masonry does not measure men by the standards of knowledge, eloquence or wealth but by their character and service. It delights in the development of a fraternity of great hearts, of Brethren who are never knowingly rude, selfish, resentful, never glad when others go wrong, but always courteous, generous, eager to believe the best, ever ready with outstretched hand to lift the fallen, cheer the disheartened, and to give relief and comfort to those in distress. This is the surest way to secure "Peace on earth" and "goodwill among men".

"We are building every day  
In a good or evil way;  
And the structure as it grows  
Must our inward self disclose,  
Till in every arch and line  
All our hidden faults outshine.  
Do you ask what building this,  
That can show both pain and bliss—  
That can be both dark and fair?  
Lo! Its name is Character.  
Build it well, whate'er you do!  
Build it straight and strong and true!  
Build it clean and high and broad—  
Build it for the eye of God!"

### FEAR . . . A FALSE DOCTRINE

We seem to be living in a world dominated by fear. From the family budget, business, and social matters, political and racial problems, to the international situation — all are approached with a numbing fear of what will happen if . . .? One wonders what heritage of ours this present era of trepidation is based on. While the pages of history are repeated with other periods of crisis, each containing its burdens of fears, these same pages also reveal the antidote — Truth and Integrity — and the moral courage, fearless, to put these qualities to work. In this age of atoms, and space exploration, when speed, and power govern man's every thought, there are few who want to go back to the good old horse and buggy days.

Today, far too many of our energies, both physical and spiritual, are going down the drain of worry and anxiety, instead of being channelled into the positive stream of progress. The pressures of our times are now compelling us to seek better answers, and seriously to re-evaluate the purpose of life and our part in it. The world is filled with different ideas, and ideals, and the minds of men are being tossed about, as they become the battle-ground of our age. The problem is difficult, but surely there is yet somewhere, a solution to it. Keen minds will seek to find light in seeming darkness. The profession of a Mason is a search for Light. The Craft is gravely concerned with the way out of our present difficulties.

Were every member a Mason in all the name signifies, were the education that Masonry gives thoroughly comprehended by man, and established as the universal system of ethical instruction for human guidance and conduct, and its form of government adopted and put into effect by nations and states everywhere, there would be such a forward step in all the uplifting and altruistic things of life that the horror, fear and savage cruelty of war, with the selfishness, bitterness and hatred that have so long nourished them, would disappear, never to return, and the first gleaming rays of the millennium would ere long be flashed to every part of the earth, and "Peace on earth, goodwill toward men", would be made a reality.

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Lodge No. 25 at Vegreville, acting on behalf of M. W. Bro. Dr. S. H. Hardin, Grand Master of Alberta and also a member of St. John's Lodge.

W. Bro. Caine is 84 years young and he accepted these gifts with suitable remarks, clearly showing his youthful spirit. He spoke of the necessity of looking forward to seek the pathway through life which Masonry provides for us, rather than merely looking backward over past accomplishments. He spoke warmly and with emotion of the wonderful fraternity and fellowship he had experienced over 55 years of active life in the Craft.

Submitted by

George W. Baldwin, J. D. Nechako Lodge No. 86

# Between the Pillars

## DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF AN INVESTIGATING COMMITTEE

By Bro. William Simpson, Hanna No. 78

The Investigating Committee can be considered the most important committee in a Masonic Lodge. It is the duty of the members to realize that the quality of the accepted candidate is paramount to the establishment of a sound membership in the Lodge.

The outside world judges Freemasonry and Freemasons not always by the good and true, not always by the men who are ready to assist others, but by those who have failed to realize the true value of Freemasonry, its great teachings and high ideals.

It is admitted that it takes all sorts of men to make a world. It is also undeniable that good, bad and indifferent are found in every circle of life. Human nature is a peculiar quality, but as Freemasons it is our duty not only to speak the word, but to practice in our daily lives those attributes which have so often been heard and expressed by our Brethren.

The responsibility of the Investigating Committee is indeed important. Therefore, members selected by the Worshipful Master to serve on this committee should be chosen with care and should preferably be Brethren who are not well acquainted with the petitioner, so that no personal bias would be likely to enter into their eventual report. All members of the Lodge should consider that they have a responsibility in connection with the selection of candidates and should forthwith report to the Master of the Lodge if they are in doubt regarding the character of the petitioner.

The first steps that should be taken by the committee on being notified of their responsibility should be to visit the petitioner at his home. Other inquiries will develop his reputation. Skillful interviews with the petitioner will go far to reveal what he actually is and will give some information as to his general approach. Careful observation may do much to confirm or to dispel first impressions.

If the petitioner is married the interview should be conducted in the presence of his wife; in this way it may be ascertained whether or not she approves his seeking admission into Freemasonry; if a wife disapproves of the application for membership there is every possibility of difficulty at some stage of membership. It should be made clear that the family of the petitioner is entirely clear that Freemasonry is not a benefit society, insurance avenue or burial organization and that members are not generally entitled to assistance other than that extended gratuitously to those who, through no fault of their own, have met with misfortune.

If the wife and family have a basic understanding of Freemasonry at the outset it is likely

to assist the petitioner if admitted, and to clarify their understanding of our organization.

Members of the Investigating Committee should not hesitate to ask personal questions and should be rigidly strict as if the petitioner were seeking admission to their own homes. An applicant is seeking something of Freemasonry and it is the absolute right of the committee to be fully informed regarding him before the privileges of Freemasonry are granted him.

In addition to the interview information should be sought from the employer or from fellow employees who may be in a position to give valuable information. Obtaining the names of members of the petitioner's family who are members of the Order would also be of value. The reason for inquiries should generally not be divulged and, as a period of sixty days is usually granted for securing information undue hurry is not at all necessary.

When the committee has completed the investigation and are prepared to compile their report, the following questions should be seriously considered.

What is the conception of the petitioner with respect to Masonry.

What he thinks Masons seek to accomplish by their association, one with another. Whether he is of a charitable disposition and contributes to charitable causes as far as his means will permit.

Whether he is charitable in thought and action toward his fellowman, or bigoted and prejudiced, considering all men in error who do not view life along his own particular vision.

What Church affiliation, if any, he may have and the religious connections of his family.

What his financial position is and whether he is considered altogether reliable and whether he is in a position to maintain the responsibility of Masonry without detriment to his family.

Whether the members of the family concur in his desire to affiliate himself with Masonry.

No set of questions can be compiled on a hard and fast basis; the character of the petitioner will doubtless suggest avenues of investigation and the committee should be fully sure of their ground before making the necessary report to the Lodge, this being a vital part of the duty of the committee.

While we do not expect perfection in an applicant it is essential that there must be a foundation upon which we can build; there must be intellect and character to grasp what Freemasonry has to offer, always bearing in mind that a Masonic Lodge is not a reformatory, but is, rather, an institution which has for its chief objective the making of good men into better men. Unless there is basic strength of character in the petitioner the likelihood of the objective being accomplished has little chance of success.