



Grand Lodge Bulletin

VCL. 52, NO. 8

EDITOR, R.W. BRO. NORMAN J. SENN

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EASTER AND FREEMASONRY

The encyclopaedia Britannica lists EASTER as "the most joyous of Christian festivals, observed annually throughout Christendom in commemoration of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, on the first Sunday after the full moon following the vernal equinox." But whence the name? Bede derives the word easter, or eastre in Old English, from Eostre, better known as Ostara, the Teutonic goddess of the spring whose festival was celebrated at the vernal equinox. When Christianity had reached the Teutons, it took advantage of their rites and customs associated with observance of the arrival of spring and the rebirth of nature after a long winter, and so the death of winter and the return of the sun were aptly used to celebrate and explain the doctrine of the resurrection as taught by the church.

M.W.Bro. W.J. Collett, in his paper "The Mists of Antiquity" (VOX LUCIS, Vol.1, No. 2, 1981) reminds us of the death and resurrection of the Goddess of Fertility in primitive religion. In Babylonian mythology, the great Mother Goddess Ishtar (Astarte) "embodied all the reproductive possibilities and energies of nature. If Adonis died, Ishtar was without a lover, and she would not be fertilized and consequently would fail to reproduce." Ishtar would search for him in the Underworld where the Queen of the dead "would refuse to release Adonis until the messengers of the gods arrived, to sprinkle the Water of Life on both Adonis and Ishtar. When this was done they were raised from the tomb of death to the upper world. When the raising was complete the wonderful world of nature was revived and hope reborn for the fertility of the world. This legend is significant because it embodies several facets of the Christian Religion. The sprinkling of water, the descent of the hope of the world into the realms of darkness, the revival of life and hope for the world. It also has within it elements of the legend of Hiram Abif."

M.W.Bro. E.J. Thompson (GLB, Vol.33, No. 8, 1968) said, "Easter is the celebration of belief in the existence of life beyond the experience we call 'death'. Easter is the symbol of hope, hope not only for this earthly life but hope for life in a new dimension beyond the grave." Another of our Past Grand Masters, M.W. Bro. F.G. Fox, has addressed this topic (GLB, Vol.36, No. 8, 1971), stating, "...remember that the Masonic Order is not an exclusively Christian order, and that we have many thousands of brethren devoted to other faiths. Masons, then, would do well to think of the qualities of the man, Jesus, in a secular as well as religious sense, and to consider some of the special qualities displayed by him that can be revered and sought after by every man of every faith, and especially by every man who seeks to become better than he is."

The Hiramic legend of our Master Mason's Degree, though symbolic, is a legend of the victory of man over all that is base in himself, and over death. Masonry symbolically initiates us into the eternal life here and now. The catch is, that we have to live and act according to the precepts taught to us, to earn such immortality. The faith in a resurrection to future life is inherent in the philosophy of Masonry, as it has been among almost all nations of antiquity, the Egyptians, the Zoroastrians, the Brahmans, the Buddhists, the Skals of Scandinavia and the Druids. Eventually, the doctrine was taught by Christianity. Christ exemplified it, by his own resurrection, to his disciples and the Christian church echoes it, to this day, to reach men that they can experience a new life and rebirth through faith in God. Every Mason has passed through the conscious experience of being raised from a dead level to a living perpendicular, the knowledge of immortality while being mortal. The Master Mason knows of Easter!

Robert E. Juthner
Deputy Grand Master.

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QUESTION OF THE MONTH

In Masonry we hear of the indented tassel, the indented tarsal, the tessellated pavement and the indented border. In addition, we see pictures of Masonic carpets with tasseled cords around the edge. Do all these references refer to the same thing?

ANSWER TO QUESTION OF THE MONTH

The answer to the question of the month for February relates to the origin of the four items the Golden Fleece, the Roman Eagle and the Star or Garter.

The Golden Fleece is an Order from Spain and Austria. It was founded by Philip, Duke of Burgundy in 1429 (the year that Jeanne d'Arc became leader of the French Army).

The Roman Eagle is out of place because it is not an Order but rather the symbol of Rome's might and power, and was carried as an ensign into battle from approximately 100 B.C. onwards.

The Order of the Star was established by John II of France (the Good Fellow) in 1351 and was replaced by the Order of St. Michael in 1469.

The Order of the Garter was established by Edward III of England in 1349.

* * * * *

An article entitled "The Badge of a Mason" has just been published in "Royal Arch Mason" Winter Edition 1986, p238. We thank W.Bro. Erick-Mulder of Corinthian Lodge No. 22 for noting this reference for those who would like more information.

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

When it is not necessary to change, it is necessary not to change.

Lucius Cary, Viscount Falkland (1610-1643)

ATTENTION ALL PHOTOGRAPHERS

The OCO '88 Committee requires photographers. If you are interested in helping in this endeavour please phone V.W.Bro. Bill Brown at 252-7193. You must submit your name no later than June 15 1987.

FROM AFAR

The constitution of the Grand Lodge of Mississippi states:

"Whisky: the making, selling or habitually buying is unlawful, and illicit drugs are prohibited. Subordinate Lodge shall not initiate, pass or raise any candidate, nor admit to or retain in membership any Mason, engaged, as principal or employee, as a saloonkeeper, nor one who makes, sells, or habitually buys whisky..."

Printed in The Victorian Mason, Summer 1986.

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**A Time For Plain Speaking
State of The Craft**

On September 17, 1981 Past Grand Master, Brother Larry R. Turner of Idaho, stated the following in his State of the Craft message:

"While I do not espouse the idea proclaimed by some that Freemasonry will die with this generation I am convinced that unless we meet the issues head on many of our Lodge will become casualties in the next few years and our losses will become even greater."

That was exactly five years and one day ago.

So how well have we done since then? How have we dealt with issues set forth in that message? Some issues mentioned were: apathy, lack of pride and leadership of officers, and disregard for our own laws and principles. It was noted then that eighty percent of our lodges were meeting the challenges and were progressing, but also that "The final ten percent of the lodges are near death but refuse to admit it."

Today I am going to be more direct, more specific, and more pessimistic because there has been no improvement over five years ago. In fact, the State of the Craft is worse."

Proceedings Grand Lodge of Idaho, 1986.

MASONIC SPRING WORKSHOP

It has been stated that an individual's knowledge of history spans his accumulated reading. One who has not read, only has a grasp of history as far as his own individual experiences.

The Masonic Spring Workshop Bookstore is set up to allow you to find many books which can add to your knowledge of history, the craft, the symbols and the duties of officers. There is much more besides to interest Masons, from those recently raised to the most experienced.

Many new books have been ordered for your reading enjoyment and to help in the search for knowledge. Spend time in the Bookstore and broaden your knowledge of the Craft.

Bro. Gordon Coburn, Bookstore Coordinator.

Will this Minnesota idea work?

ARE YOU "DUSTY" ON YOUR MASONRY?

Coming soon, in Minnesota, is something called "The Dusty Square and Compass" degree.

Like Masons in most parts of the country, including Alberta, the Minnesotans believe there are a lot of brothers out there who haven't attended lodge for years... and don't even think about attending because they're afraid of being embarrassed at the door.

It happens here too. "I think I've forgotten all the words," a dues-paying Albertan admitted the other day. "I don't think I could get in."

The "Dusty" degree, being developed in Minnesota, with Grand Lodge support, apparently eases that kind of problem.

No specifics have been released so far, but the Minnesota program obviously is aimed at reawakening, in a man "dusty" about his Masonry, the proper ways to identify himself.

Will "The Dusty Square and Compass" degree bring some Masons back to lodge in Minnesota?

Would a similar idea work in Alberta?

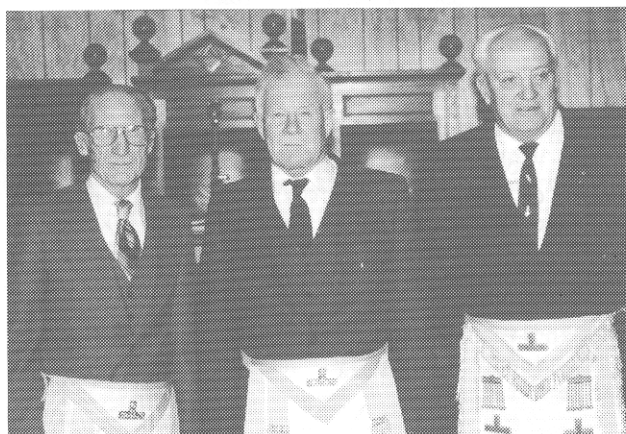
Tell us what you think...for publication. Write maybe 150 words and send them to the Editor.

Adapted from the Oregon Masonic News. Dec 1986.

A RECORD ATTENDANCE PATTERN

District No. 5 has investigated the attendance pattern of its Past Masters and R.W.Bro. Brandigan DDGM gave honorable mention to the following Past Masters for exceptional attendance.

W.Bro. C. Johnson has attended 468 meetings (left), W.Bro. J. Hare has attended 453 meetings (centre) and W.Bro. T. Young has attended 442 meetings (right). This is exceptional recorded attendance and we congratulate these and all Brethren who faithfully support their lodges.



MAILBAG

The brethren who live in the rural communities will appreciate the following. Those who visit from the cities will share the sentiments expressed in the last line.

- "You know you are in a small town when:
The runway of the airport is terraced.
The polka is more popular than disco on Saturday night.
Third street is on the edge of town.
Every sport is played on dirt.
The editor and publisher of the newspaper carries a camera at all times.
You don't use your turn signal because everyone knows which direction you are going.
You are born on June 13 and your family received gifts from the local merchants because you are the first baby of the year.
You speak to each dog you pass by name, and he wags at you by name.
You dial a wrong number and talk for 15 minutes anyway.
You are run off Main Street by a combine.
You can't walk for exercise because every car that passes offers you a ride.
You get married and the local paper devotes a quarter page to the story.
You drive into the ditch five miles out of town and the word get back before you do.
The biggest business in town sells farm machinery.
You write a cheque on the wrong bank and it covers for you.
Pickup trucks on Main Street outnumber cars three to one.
You miss a Sunday at church and receive get-well cards.
Someone asks how you feel, then listens to what you have to say.
THANK GOD for small towns and the people who live in them.

Author unknown.

Submitted by W. Bro. Bob Sharp Concord Lodge No. 124

FACT OR FICTION

The alchemists who were active from early Christian times until about 1700 were possessed of a constant desire to convert base metals into gold. Alchemy was associated with many religious beliefs and it was believed that the techniques used to make gold were symbolically related to death, corruption, regeneration and resurrection. Alchemy and astrology became closely linked because it was thought that each heavenly body represented and controlled a certain metal. The sun was thought to represent gold and the symbol in alchemy for the sun was a point within a circle. The Latin word for "sun" is sol, part of a name well known in Masonry.

The origins of the craft may be obscured by time but most interesting links with the ancients pervade all we do today.

RECOGNITION

Brother Joseph Chase was honored on the occasion of his 100th birthday by a party held on Sunday, February 8th, 1987, at the Bethany Care Centre, and attended by a large gathering of his friends. Brother Chase was born February 10th, 1887 at W. Bromwich, Staff., England. He continues to enjoy good health, as shown by his recent trip to Hawaii.

Perfection Lodge No. 9 granted life membership to Brother Chase in 1972. His life-long interest has been music, and he has generously contributed his time and talent as organist for Perfection Lodge No. 9 for many years, as well as holding this office in a number of other lodges in the Calgary area. He was a member of Central United Church Choir, Calgary, for 44 years, having the reputation of being an excellent sight-reader, a great asset to any choir.

The Lodges were pleased to make a presentation to Brother Chase to mark this auspicious occasion, for which he expressed his thanks, exhibiting a most vigorous demeanor for a man of 100 years.

Congratulations are extended to you, Brother Chase on having attained the grand age of 100 years! Thanks are also extended to you for so many of those years spent in faithful service to your lodge and community.



FROM THE NOTICES

There is a French proverb which says--

"He who makes no mistakes makes nothing else,"

You will notice that those who are most criticised are nearly always those who are doing the most. And of course they make mistakes. As the Proverb says, the only ones who make no errors of judgement are those who sit at home or watch out of the windows to criticise.

R.W.Bro. H.J. Miller, WM, Carstairs Lodge No. 20.

FROM THE NOTICES

Dxar Brothxr,

Vxvn though my typxwritxr is an old modxl, it works quitx wxll xxcxpt for onx kxy. I havx wishxd many timxs that it workxd pxrxfctly. It is trux that thxrx arx forty-onx kxys that func-tion wxll xnough, but just onx kxy makxs a rxal diffxrxncx.

Thxrx arx timxs whxn our organization is somxwhat likx my typxwritxr - not all thx pxoplx arx work-ing propxrlly. You may say to yoursxlf "Wxll, onx pxrson won't makx or brxak thx organization", but it doxs makx a diffxrxncx. Thx rxason is that any group, to bx xffxctivx, nxxds thx activx participation of vxvry mxmbrx.

So thx nxxt timx that you think you xfforts arx not nxxdxd, just rxmxmbr my typxwritxr and say to yoursxlf, I am a kxy pxrson in my organization, and I'm nxxdxd vxry much.

Yours fratxrnally,

W.N. Love, P.G.M., Worshipful Master, FIAT LUX Lodge of Research, No. 1980.

QUOTATION OF THE MONTH

It is with our passions as it is with fire and water, they are good servants, but bad masters.

Aesop's Fables, No. 38, Reflection
Sir Roger L'Estrange 1616-1704.

HOLY DAYS

This issue contains a Christian message. This greeting has been written by our present Senior Grand Warden. There are Brethren of other faiths who have significant holy days and we would welcome articles explaining these days and their importance. Such articles should be sent to the Editor at least three months before the actual date of the special date.

BURSARY APPLICATIONS

April 30, 1987 is the last day for the Masonic Higher Education Bursary applications, for the 1988 school year.

If you would like an application for a family member or some other worthy student please phone the Grand Lodge Office at 262-1140 or pick one up at 330 - 12th Avenue S.W., Calgary. The dead line is strictly held.

The applicant need not have any Masonic affiliation to apply. Need is the main requirement.