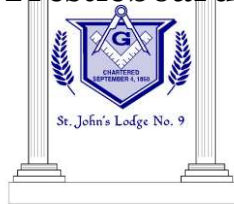


St. John's Lodge No. 9, F. & A. M.

Trestleboard

JANUARY 2022

Jim Russell, editor



Serving Seattle since 1860

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FROM THE EAST

[Blair Neumann](#), Master



Blair Neumann,
Master

Brothers, I feel tremendously honored and humbled to have been elected to serve as Master of our Lodge for a second year. I hope to prove worthy of the trust that you've given me to lead our Lodge with peace and harmony throughout 2022.

We're living through incredibly challenging times, and more challenges are surely to come, but we as Masons are well-equipped to overcome these challenges and demonstrate to ourselves and to our communities what it means to come together with Love and Fellowship for all Mankind. It starts with each of us, you and I included, and how we treat each other both inside and outside of the Lodge room every minute of every day.

The three principal tenets of Masonry should guide us, and we should reflect upon them as we redouble our efforts to consider and apply them at every opportunity.

The tenet of Brotherly Love reminds us that we are all one people regardless of our various stations and places, and each of us should aid, support, and protect each other across national, sectarian, and ideological bounds. While the length our cable tow may preclude us from exercising Brotherly Love in some instances, we should not withhold Brotherly Love in any case where it may be extended. This means that we extend ourselves to those who we might otherwise disagree or quarrel with, to find common ground and reconcile our differences.

Relief of the Distressed complements Brotherly Love in that we recognize each other's shared humanity and seek to restore peace despite our respective troubles. There is no competition for who is more distressed or more deserving of relief. While it may seem challenging at times, we should seek to relieve each other despite our own distresses, as I believe we'll find that compassionating each other may prove an excellent way to help salve our own miseries when needed most. We help each other and help ourselves through our generosity of spirit despite our otherwise human impulses to hold back and self-protect.

To be a good man and true is the first lesson taught in Masonry, and every virtue is based in Truth. Yet Truth can be elusive and idiosyncratic. Like the Holy Grail, to live in Truth is to live in its quest, always acting upon our best understanding of Truth in each moment while continuing to refine and embrace greater Truth throughout our journey. It's unlikely that any of us will know the ultimate Truth until we're face to face with our Creator, but only by sincerely striving toward Truth will we each live our best lives here on Earth, full of love, compassion, forbearance, and Harmony.

CALENDAR



- January 12 (7pm): Fellowcraft Degree read-through
- January 13 (6pm): Officers meeting *teleconference*
- January 13 (7:30pm): Queen Anne Lodge 242
- January 15 (10am): Daylight Lodge 232
- January 19 (6:15pm) 7:30pm: **St. John's 9 (dinner) Stated**
- January 20: Martin Luther King Day
- January 25: Esoterica Lodge 316
- January 26 (7pm): Fellowship Zoom *teleconference* The Morgan Affair
- February 2 (7:30pm): Greenwood Lodge 253
- February 7 (7:30pm): University Lodge 141
- February 7 (7:30pm): Eureka Lodge 20
- February 9 (6pm): Board of Trustees *teleconference*
- February 10 (6pm): Officers meeting *teleconference*
- February 11 (7pm): Fellowcraft Degree *rehearsal*
- February 16 (6:15pm) 7:30pm: **St. John's 9 (dinner) Stated**
- February 17 (7pm): Fellowcraft degree final *rehearsal*
- February 19 (10am): Daylight Lodge 232
- February 19 (6pm): Fellowcraft Degree *Dinner following*
- February 24 (7:30pm): Walter F. Meier Lodge 281
- February 26(10am): Quarterly Meeting Masonic Service Bureau
- March 3 (7:30pm): Lafayette Lodge 241
- March 10 (6pm): Officers Meeting *teleconference*
- March 16 (6:15pm) 7:30pm: **St. John's 9 (dinner) Stated**
- March 18 – 20: Lodge Leadership Retreat (Wenatchee)
- March 30 District 5 Reception with Grand Master *over Zoom*

CHAMBER OF REFLECTION ADDRESSED THIS MONTH

Junior Warden and Past Master WBro. Eric Koteles and Junior Deacon Bro. Kemal Alaeddinoğlu will lead discussion on Masonry's Chamber of Reflection for Entered Apprentice candidates as practiced in our Lodge and elsewhere at this month's stated communication. This kicks off our Education Committee's focus this year to bring Light to our Masonic Brethren.

We frequently respond to "What came you here to do?" with "to learn to subdue my passions and improve myself in Masonry." This year our education committee effectively inserts a comma following "to learn," adding nuance to the response "*to learn*, to subdue my passions and improve myself in Masonry."

Long-time student of esotericism Mark Stavish has written "*The Chamber of Reflection is one of Freemasonry's most alluring, provoking, and truly esoteric of symbols. From simple to more complex variations on the theme, the Chamber of Reflection forces each candidate to recognize that they are mortal, and from this moment forward, a new life awaits them, if they so choose it.*"

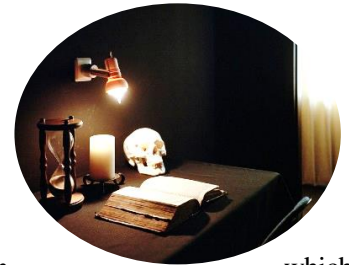
The Chamber of Reflection is most often a small room adjoining the Preparation Room, in which, preparatory to initiation, the candidate is enclosed for the purpose of indulging in those serious meditations which its somber appearance and gloomy emblems with which it is furnished are calculated to produce. "It is only in solitude that we can deeply reflect upon our present or future undertakings, and blackness, darkness, or solitariness, is ever a symbol of death. A man who has undertaken a thing after mature reflection seldom turns back." (Masonic Encyclopedia, p. 141)

All Brothers are encouraged to join us for our 6:15 dinner preceding our stated communication. Please make your dinner [reservations](#) with the secretary at 206 623-0261 by Friday, January 14. Do you know of a brother who has not attended Lodge in a while? Call him and ask if you can pick him up and bring him to Lodge.



We Want You to Arrive Home Safely!

Worried about a late-night bus trip? Call Uber or a Taxi. Brothers of the Lodge have authorized the Master of this Lodge, on a case-by-case basis, to approve the reimbursement of a brother's expense to return home following a St. John's event. Request and approval, not to exceed \$100, must be made prior to the event. A receipt of the expense must be submitted before reimbursement.



Washington Masonic Code Sec. 17.13 B.L. Non-Payment of Dues (N.P.D.).

"The annual dues of members of Lodges shall be payable in advance of the first day of January of each year. Any member who has not paid his dues for the current year on or before December 31st thereof, and who has not been granted a remission of his dues or an extension for a definite period in which to pay his dues, shall cease to be a member of the Lodge and his name must be dropped from the roll."



Table of Contents [linked](#)

From the East, Master's Message	page 1
St. John's Calendar	1
Chamber of Reflection Addressed This Month	2
We want You to Arrive Home Safely	2
Education Committee Adds Another Chapter	2
Non-Payment of Dues Has Consequences	2
Wardens' Messages	3
Arson Attack Damages Dublin's Freemasons' Hall	3
Morgan Affair Zoom Topic January 26	3
Scotland Tour Scheduled for Autumn 2022	4
Character of Freemasonry in Scotland	4
Master Masons Raised in January	4
Lodge Leadership Retreat	4
The Lodge That Died Over Pie	4
St. John's Boosts Students in Reading, Math	5
January Birthday Celebrants	5
From the Desk of MW Cameron Bailey	5
Let's Look At That a Little Closer (Rudyard Kipling)	6

Return to

AGE OF ENLIGHTENMENT

[St. John's Education Committee](#)
[Introduces another Chapter](#)

Beginning in January we'll be exchanging ideas and
Masonic Enlightenment
at our stated communications and on Zoom

Masonic education is the study of Masonic values, history, symbols and myths. It also encompasses lessons in leadership, self-improvement and community building. Our purpose is to help members learn more about Freemasonry and personal growth.

* January 19 Stated: Chamber of Reflection

* January 26 Zoom: The Morgan Affair

Senior Warden's Message

WBro. John Murray Louderback



Have you ever wondered what your purpose is in life? Have you ever thought of what it is you are to accomplish while you are alive? You may have many things that you may set out to accomplish in life, but do they serve a purpose other than fame and fortune? Are you contributing to mankind? Are you making the World a better place by your actions? Yes, actions! To get anything accomplished requires action, labor. Just talking about it will not get it done.

I found value and purpose in my life, yet I was searching for something more meaningful.

I found purpose and meaning in Freemasonry and at St. John's.

I believe that this search for purpose in a man's life is why we all come to Freemasonry.

Here is your opportunity to be engaged in Lodge labor - to find more meaningful purpose in your life.

Make the most of your opportunity while you can. Understand that leadership originates from the bottom up. You must be the one that is self-engaged. Bring your ideas and actions forward by not waiting to be directed. Take part where and when you can.

This is a call to action, Brother. Be busy as a bee in support of your Lodge and your life will be enriched in return. This is the promise of Freemasonry – you will become a better man in the process.

Full extent of arson attack damage to Freemasons' Hall 'will take weeks to assess'



Firefighters at scene of fire at the Dublin Freemasons' Hall

It will be weeks before the full cost of damage to the Freemasons' Hall in Dublin can be determined after it was targeted in a suspected arson attack on New Year's Eve.

It's reported the incident may be linked to anti-vaccination graffiti discovered on the footpath outside the landmark building on Molesworth Street, the headquarters of Freemasonry in Ireland since 1869.

Prior to the fire starting, eyewitnesses reported an intruder entering the library and café area of the historic hall after breaking a window at 5:17pm on Friday, December 31.

Dublin Fire Brigade received a call at 5:40pm and extinguished the blaze shortly after arriving at the scene.

Junior Warden's Message

WBro. Eric Koteles



It is an honor to continue serving St. John's Lodge No. 9, now at this new capacity as a Junior Warden. I'm truly humbled by your trust. I always thought that serving as an officer should be only with the interest to help the Lodge to be effective instead of looking for another feather in the cap just to get to the East. I'm happy that this is the same thought shared among the officers. We will serve our position with that purpose, for St. John's to be the premiere Lodge that we and our community deserves. I feel confident of the approach and direction we are taking in our education programs as well as every other area.

Finally, my brothers, remember that we are living in troubling times and now more than ever we need to make sure that we do not convert the means of refreshment into intemperance and excess and most importantly let's be an example for everyone around us that it's possible to meet on the level, act by the plum and part by the square. Let's help to keep the harmony around us. Let's be an example for people to see that it is possible and better than being divided.

Fraternally,
Eric Koteles JW.

MORGAN AFFAIR ZOOM TOPIC JANUARY 26

VWBro. Jeremy Yielding will be leading discussion on "The Morgan Affair, Wednesday, January 26, at 7pm

Museum Director Patrick Weissend shares the story of the disappearance of William Morgan: "Morgan was a bricklayer who wanted to become a member of the Masonic Fraternity. When a Masonic Lodge opened in Batavia, Morgan applied for membership, saying he was a member in the Le Roy Lodge. It was discovered that Morgan lied about his membership and his application was denied.

"In order to get revenge for his denial, Morgan began to write a book disclosing the secrets of the society. Members of the fraternity threatened Morgan and even set fire to David Miller's print shop where the book was being published.

"Morgan was walking down Main Street when he was arrested on a debt warrant and taken to Canandaigua. The charge was dismissed and he was re-arrested for failing to return a shirt and tie he had borrowed. Morgan was in the Canandaigua jail when three men came to post his bail. The jailer was away, the men paid his \$2.69 fine and convinced the jailer's wife to release Morgan. When Morgan walked out of the jail, the two men grabbed him, threw him into a carriage, the carriage took off, and Morgan disappeared forever.

"Historians agree that the men took Morgan to Fort Niagara. Near Fort Niagara there was a convention of Masons from New York State and Canada. At the time, the Masons claimed that they paid William Morgan \$500 in gold and instead of settling on a farm in Hamilton, Ontario, with his family, he took off and disappeared so that he wouldn't have to pay off his investors. Citizens throughout Western New York believed the Masons murdered Morgan by throwing him into the Niagara River or Lake Ontario."

Scotland Tour Scheduled for Autumn 2022



Did you enjoy our trip to DC in 2016? To Boston last year (2021)? Or wish you joined your brothers if you missed these opportunities? Well, here's another chance to gain some knowledge and enjoy the experience. We're hoping to visit Scotland in 2022, with the guidance of a professional tour agency and assisted by one of our own members of the Lodge who was born and raised in Scotland – WBro. Thomas Lamb!

As usual the Lodge will subsidize the cost of the trip for St John's Masons. However, this year the subsidy will be designed to give more weight to those who would like to go but can't afford it. Actual details will be available once we know how many St. John's Masons are interested in the tour.

Members of the Lodge have recently been sent three documents (check your email) which we would like you to complete and return to help us plan this event.

Six brothers have already committed to the tour. Will we have eight – 18 – more? It depends a lot on YOU! Please return these forms to our brother WBro. Tom Lamb at nalamb@umich.edu

Character of Freemasonry in Scotland

Source Wikipedia

Freemasonry in Scotland has a character distinct from that practiced in other parts of the British Isles. When the Grand Lodge of Scotland was founded in 1736, the majority of Masonic Lodges then in existence in Scotland did not engage with the new body. By their absence from the initial discussions to which these Lodges had been invited, 79% did not support the creation of a new, centralized Masonic system as already existed in England and Wales and in Ireland. In addition, because all of the Lodges in Scotland pre-existed the new Grand Lodge at the time of its proposed formation, these had developed traditions and practices that they were reluctant to give up.

As a result, the new Grand Lodge of Scotland had to trade off any attempt at standardization of ritual for the prospect of attracting the independent Lodges to join the centralized system. In essence, Grand Lodge agreed not to interfere with local custom and practice as long as the Lodges were willing to join the new Scottish Masonic Constitution.

Having guaranteed the principle of independence to those Lodges founded before 1736, it was considered impossible to deny Lodges founded after 1736 the same privilege. These were permitted to devise their own procedures, regalia, and distinctive rituals. This and subsequent developments ensured that Freemasonry in Scotland is far less standardized than in any other Masonic jurisdiction.

MASTER MASONS RAISED IN JANUARY

Date Raised:

1/17/1984 Aaron D. Holt
1/25/1984 Ian S. Webb
1/11/1989 James R. Maher
1/27/1996 Mark W. Shropshire
1/25/1997 Terry A. Grove
1/29/2000 Bernard G. Yperman
1/11/2007 James J. Swift
1/11/2007 David G. Long
1/8/2009 Carl P. G. Tokarek
1/8/2009 Jonathan D. Munday
1/8/2009 Aren Hakobyan



Lodge Leadership Retreat-March 18th - 20th

Throughout our Jurisdiction, Lodges have been or are selecting members into leadership roles. These Brethren, elected and appointed, are being looked upon for their leadership and guidance in setting the direction of their Lodge and its members. Our Grand Lodge is committed to providing quality education to Lodge leaders to assist them in their success. At St. John's we encourage and support the program by electing to pay or assisting in the payment of the registration expenses for selected members to attend. We think of this as an investment in our Lodge.

While the primary focus of the Lodge Leadership Retreat is for Lodge Wardens and Deacons, any Master Mason, including Current Masters or Past Masters, may attend based on first come and space available basis. The Lodge Leadership Retreat Committee has been hard at work reviewing classes in order to meet the current needs of our Grand Jurisdiction. A variety of courses will be offered, including; Six Steps to Initiation, Long Range Planning for Lodges, Lodge and Temple Board finances, and others. Ladies are invited and encouraged to attend, with Ladies programs and co-ed courses being provided.

This year's retreat will take place in beautiful Wenatchee, Washington a location that is known to be equally inconvenient for all of us to drive to. The price structure allows for choice of single (\$525), double shared (\$425 per Mason), double with spouse (\$850), or single with spouse (\$775). All options include the cost of the room, meals and retreat materials.

Online registration opened January 1st, and the deadline for online registering will be February 25th. Online registration is located on the Grand Lodge website: www.freemason-wa.org/leadership-retreat/

If you have any questions, please reach out to RW Edward C. Woods at rw_edwardew00ds@comcast.net

Seattle Scottish Rite Guest Speaker

On 15 February, the Seattle Scottish Rite will host Bro. Glen Cook for his presentation ***"The Lodge That Died Over Pie."*** Reservations are required and the evening will cost \$15, including dinner. 206 324-3300

St. John's Gives Elementary Students Reading and Math Boost Since 1998

For several years, members of St. John's Lodge No. 9 have found ways to make a difference in the lives of young people. Annual scholarships have been issued to students of the Seattle Youth Symphony and the Cornish



WB John Louderback presents check to Principal Brent Ostbye of John Rogers

worked with John Rogers Elementary school in northeast



Students at Cedar Way Elementary (Mountlake Terrace) show their appreciation at school assembly

Seattle since 1998 to provide books for the accelerated reader program. At John Rogers, significant improvement in the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL) test scores for math and reading are being attributed in part to the reader

program. Cedar Way Elementary in Mountlake Terrace was added in 2002, and Sacajawea Elementary (Seattle) began the program in 2005. At the beginning of the 2007 - 2008 school year the Edmonds School District directed Cedar Way Elementary school to opt out of the Accelerated Reader program. This left an opportunity for another public school to take advantage of the opening. St. John's Lodge then added Bailey Gatzert Elementary in Yesler Terrace area until the Accelerated Reader program was dropped by the Seattle School system.

Our Lodge continues to contribute to John Rogers and Sacajawea elementaries, with WBro. John Louderback keeping us connected with the Principals and teachers of these Northeast Seattle schools.

College of the Arts. Scholastic awards are given each year to high school seniors in the Seattle area to attend the college of their choice.

Elementary students have also enjoyed the benefits extended by the members of St. John's. They are improving their reading and math skills in large part because the Lodge has given a major financial shot in the arm over the years at four schools. St. John's has

worked with John Rogers Elementary school in northeast Seattle since 1998 to provide books for the accelerated reader program. At John Rogers, significant improvement in the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL) test scores for math and reading are being attributed in part to the reader



Sacajawea Principal Rachel Friesen accepts gift from St. John's

JANUARY BIRTHDAY CELEBRANTS

Day

- 1 Mark A. Lentz
- 2 Scott A. Pence
- 4 Egil J. Pedersen
- 5 Stephen F. Weiss
- 8 Charles R. Brockway
- 11 James F. Russell
- 11 Richard 'Ric' Delarose
- 14 Storrs L. "Skip" Albertson
- 18 Alex A. Skistimas
- 25 Vaibhav Vijay (Vince) Kodikal
- 28 Craig R. Messett
- 29 Bernard B. Gordon



Freemasonry is a Sacred Institution

From the Desk of MW Cameron Bailey, Grand Master

Freemasonry is a sacred institution. It is sacred because Freemasonry endeavors to bring men together from every nation, every race, every religion, every background, and every political persuasion. No matter what else may serve to divide man from man, Freemasonry seeks to erase that division, to form mankind into a band of brothers. Through this, Freemasonry seeks to bring peace to our world. No other institution in the world seeks to do that, and as such, Freemasonry is, and always has been, The Great Peace Society.

Peace is the work of the Grand Architect, and because it seeks to do His work, our Craft is set apart as sacred. Freemasonry calls upon us to labor. It asks that we work to improve ourselves and work to improve the Fraternity. By doing these things, we are making a small difference, a small improvement in the world around us. When millions of Freemasons are making a small difference, all around the world, well then our impact is tremendous indeed.

We must always remember, though, that Freemasonry is sacred, so by definition the work we do to improve ourselves, and improve our Lodges is sacred work. Work is pleasing to the Grand Architect. It also holds that anything we do which serves to weaken our Lodge and our Fraternity is an evil. We must not let our passions override our morality, must not allow our own desire for personal gain prey upon our Craft. Our personal philosophy as Masons must serve to exalt Freemasonry, and not harm it.

In this day of tremendous division within our society, a day of ever increasing political fanaticism, Freemasonry is needed more than ever. Not long ago friends everywhere could disagree about the issues of the day yet remain close. Now these divisions have become personalized. People who think differently are thought of as enemies. No free society can exist long when people consider their neighbors enemies. Freemasonry can heal those divisions within our society. It can again, as it has done since time immemorial, bring men of all persuasions together into a brotherhood under the fatherhood of God. It can quietly do the sacred work it has always done. This can be done – if our Lodges are strong and if Freemasonry is strong. - Cameron M. Bailey, Grand Master

LET'S LOOK AT THAT A LITTLE CLOSER

January (1936) marks the passing of Rudyard Kipling. Without a doubt Kipling had Masonic philosophy in mind when he wrote "If" and we can use the lines of this poem as a guide to what we should expect of a Mason, and it serves as a useful criterion as to the character of the men we should encourage to join with us.



Rudyard Kipling's "If" with special Masonic application



Kipling was a Freemason, and many of his works make reference to Masons and Masonic philosophy, and every line, bar one of his poem, "If," summarizes one of the qualities we wish to develop in the hearts and minds of every Freemason – ourselves included!

If you can keep your head when all about you are losing theirs

A Mason should be a calm, thoughtful, strong person whose personality is able to cope with adversity and panic and hold together those who are succumbing to the pressure.

and blaming it on you,

But he will be "big" enough to understand that others will place blame where it best assuages their consciences and feelings – to cover themselves from that blame, recognizing that it is human nature to try to protect one's self, and be prepared to assist them through their travails. He will know exactly what the Five Points of Fellowship mean by "...remind me of his wants."

If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you

He will have confidence to continue on the path he knows is correct. But he will understand that others do not necessarily have that same confidence and is prepared to accept that his path may well be questioned by others.

But make allowance for their doubting too,

He will not be judgmental about how others are acting and reacting, giving them the benefit of doubt and lack of understanding, or even, misunderstanding. He will be prepared to "turn the other cheek" while not surrendering his moral values.

If you can wait and not be tired by waiting,

He will be patient and prepared for however long it may take for understanding and acceptance to emerge in others, and he will use his patience and time wisely to assist others.

Or being lied about, don't deal in lies,

Or being hated, don't give way to hating,

He will remain true to his values and will never use the tactics that others may adopt: ensuring that he remains truthful at all times and striving to preserve his integrity – no matter how much others may impugn him. And above all, he will not reduce himself to their level. He is a Mason and he will not be ashamed of feeling elite but he will remain humble:

And yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise:

He will retain a sense of humility and not yield to the temptation of thinking that he is "better" than his Brethren or anyone else: to be humble can also be considered a virtue, but not to the extent that his values are prejudiced in any way. He will recognize the difference between humility and submission.

If you can dream – and not make dreams your master,

He will dream. Of course he will, but he will ever be pragmatic about those dreams and will not allow them to dominate him or supplant the reality of his life. He will have a firm grip on reality and will be comfortable with his life and surroundings. He will not be jealous or envious of others in his life.

If you can think – and not make thoughts your aim;

He will think clearly and rationally and "outside the square" should it prove necessary. But he will not allow his thoughts to deflect him away from the reality he finds himself in. That is to say, he will not allow his thoughts to become dreams which have no real chance of coming true.

If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster

And treat those two impostors just the same;

He will understand that life will always present him with a mixture of good and bad – a dichotomy of opposite conditions – and yet he will be able to balance his life and treat both success and failure with equanimity: “... turning neither to the right nor to the left from the paths of virtue; ...”

If you can bear to hear the truth you’ve spoken

Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools,

He will know and understand that sometimes others will take what he has said, and which he truly believes to be true, and twist it often through ignorance but sometimes through deliberate malice. But he will be able to bear it with fortitude and will have the courage to endeavor to correct the misapprehensions and damage.

Or watch the things you gave your life to, broken,

He will be able to view with equanimity and acceptance his treasured values torn apart. He will be keenly aware of that corollary to “Murphy’s Law” – “If it ain’t broke, someone will fix it until it is.”

And stoop and build ‘em up with worn-out tools:

He will have the fortitude and courage to rebuild or to start again, even if the “tools” at his disposal are not in the best condition or necessarily suited to the task. “... The Almighty Architect never intended that our temples should remain damaged or composed of imperfect material, but has given us the faith to repair and, if necessary, to rebuild upon the ruins of our former temple, profiting by our mistakes of the past ...”

If you can make one heap of all your winnings

And risk it all on one turn of pitch-and-toss,

He will be brave enough and prepared to risk much for the things he believes in. We often talk about the bravery of some men in battle – that they are prepared to risk their lives so that they may save others. We do not look to lose our lives in support of Freemasonry but we also know that we risk much in standing up for our principles when we know the odds are stacked against us. Courage, surely, is continuing when fear would have us turn away.

And lose, and start again at your beginnings

And never breath a word about your loss;

But, even though he may lose the “skirmish,” he will not complain about it, but quietly start to rebuild – to start again at the beginning. He will ever “... have eternity in view ...” knowing that if his heart is right and his principles sound, eventually his moral convictions will win through.

If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew

To serve your turn long after they are gone,

And so hold on when there is nothing in you

Except the Will which says to them: “Hold on!”

He will be able to apply his courage to situations which require moral strength and fortitude to the very end, even though his external support has long left him, and possibly his life is at risk. And his convictions and principles will enable him to stay at the helm of the “bark of life” and strive to steer it over the “seas of passion.” For him, “will power” will never be confused with “won’t power”.

If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue,

The emphasis we place on the various virtues in the philosophy of Freemasonry should be so strong that he will be able discuss, or even debate, with others without getting upset about the attitudes, values and thoughts they express and be able to maintain his values and aspirations without losing his equanimity. He will, indeed, “... hold the scales of justice with equal poise, ...”

Or walk with kings – nor lose the common touch,

Despite any “greatness thrust upon him,” or being invited to mix with those in power and authority he will be able to preserve his humility and will not lose sight of his origins and the source of his support and friendships.

If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you;

Without abandoning his humanity he will be able to “... suffer the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune ...” and will not allow himself to be offended by slander nor endeavor to seek retribution for real or imagined slights.

If all men count with you, but none too much,

He will view all men as equals never forgetting that “... we are all Brethren, for he who is placed on the lowest spoke of fortune’s wheel may be equally entitled to our regard with one on the highest: ...” and that “... he who faithfully performs his duty, even in a subordinate or private station, is as justly entitled to esteem and respect as he who is invested with supreme authority.”

If you can fill the unforgiving minute

With sixty seconds’ worth of distance run,

He will be keenly aware that life is running out – not only for himself, but for all he considers precious – and he will endeavor to make the best use of every minute available to him. He knows that when he gets up in the morning it is the first day of the rest of his life and that he has an obligation to himself, to his family, to his work colleagues, and to his Brethren to ensure that none of it is wasted. Without being fanatical he will pursue the projects he holds dear with enthusiasm. He will ensure that his advice is sound and wise. He will support his friends with whatever assistance he is able to provide, within his ability and means. He will know only too clearly the obligations he has taken on himself and will endeavor to live up to them to the best of his ability. Without exhausting himself he will strive with every sinew to make his life worthwhile.

Yours is the Earth and everything that’s in it,

And he will succeed because he has given of his best not just for himself and those dear to him, but to those who depend on him in some way. He does not seek a “kingdom.” He is comfortable with his life, even though his means and resources may not be great.

Kipling’s words are advice from a father to his son. They are a recipe for a life lived well and written some 14 years after he was initiated, he could well have written the last line as:

And – which is more – you’ll make a Mason, my son!

I have no doubt that Kipling had Masonic philosophy in mind when he wrote “If” and I believe that we can use the lines of this poem as a guide to what we should expect of a Mason, and, to my mind, it serves as a useful criterion as to the character of the men we should encourage to join with us.

Gary Kerkin, Past Grand Lecturer, Grand Lodge of New Zealand



For those who are interested the following is a brief synopsis of the entry in Wikipedia:

Joseph Rudyard Kipling (December 30, 1865 – January 18, 1936) was an English author and poet, born in Bombay, India, and best known for his works *The Jungle Book* (1894), *The Second Jungle Book* (1895), *Just So Stories* (1902), and *Puck of Pook’s Hill* (1906); his novel, *Kim* (1901); his poems, including *Mandalay* (1890), *Gunga Din* (1890), “If—” (1910) and “Ulster 1912” (1912); and his many short stories, including “The Man Who Would Be King” (1888) and the collections *Life’s Handicap* (1891), *The Day’s Work* (1898), and *Plain Tales from the Hills* (1888). He is regarded as a major “innovator in the art of the short story”; his children’s books are enduring classics of children’s literature; and his best work speaks to a versatile and luminous narrative gift.

Kipling was one of the most popular writers in English, in both prose and verse, in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The author Henry James famously said of him: “Kipling strikes me personally as the most complete man of genius (as distinct from fine intelligence) that I have ever known.” In 1907, he was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature, making him the first English language writer to receive the prize, and he remains its youngest-ever recipient. Among other honors, he was sounded out for the British Poet Laureateship and on several occasions for a knighthood, all of which he rejected.

However, later in life Kipling also came to be seen (in George Orwell’s words) as a “prophet of British imperialism.” Many saw prejudice and militarism in his works, and the resulting controversy about him continued for much of the 20th century. According to critic Douglas Kerr: “He is still an author who can inspire passionate disagreement and his place in literary and cultural history is far from settled. But as the age of the European empires recedes, he is recognized as an incomparable, if controversial, interpreter of how empire was experienced.

That, and an increasing recognition of his extraordinary narrative gifts, make him a force to be reckoned with.”

It may be of interest that this entry does mention Kipling’s Masonic Associations.

Eric G. Edgar, PM, Virgin Lodge No 3, Grand Lodge of Nova Scotia wrote:

In “Something of Myself” Kipling writes: “In 1885, I was made a Freemason by dispensation (being under age) in The Lodge of Hope and Perseverance 782 E.C. [Lahore] because the Lodge hoped for a good Secretary. They did not get him, but I helped and got Father to advise me in decorating the bare walls of the Masonic Hall with hangings after the prescription of King Solomon’s Temple. Here I met Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs, members of the Araya and Brahmo Samaj and a Jewish Tyler who was a priest and butcher to his little community in the city. So yet another world was opened to me which I needed.” We get a little more detail in a letter Kipling wrote in the *London Times*, date March 28, 1935: “In reply to your letter I was Secretary for some years of the Lodge Hope and Perseverance No 782, English Constitution which included Brethren of at least four different creeds. I was entered by a member of the Brahmo Samaj (a Hindu), passed by a Mohammedan, and raised by an Englishman. Our Tyler was an Indian Jew. We met, of course, on the level and the only difference that anyone would notice was that at our banquet some of the Brethren, who were debarred by caste rules from eating food not ceremoniously prepared, sat over empty plates. I had the good fortune to be able to arrange a series of informal lectures by Brethren of various faiths, on baptismal ceremonies of their religions.”

Kipling also received the Mark Master degree in a Lahore Mark Lodge and affiliated with a Craft Lodge in Allahabad, Bengal. Later in England he affiliated as an honorary member of the Motherland Lodge, No. 3861 in London. He was also a member of the Author’s Lodge, No. 3456, and a founder-member of the Lodge Builders of the Silent Cities, No. 4848, which was connected with the War Graves Commission and which was so named at Kipling’s suggestion. Another Masonic Association was formed when he became Poet Laureate of the famous Canongate Kilwinning, No. 2 in Edinburgh, the Lodge of which Robert Burns is said to have served in the same office. ... Years later ... he accepted a fellowship in the Philalethes Society, an organization of Masonic writers formed in the United States in 1928. The February 1963 issue of “The Philalethes”, a publication of this Society, recalls that, before the original list of forty Fellows was closed in 1932, Kipling was proposed as the fortieth Fellow. When the Secretary wrote to advise him that they wished to honor the author of “My Mother Lodge,” “The Man Who Would Be King,” “Kim” and other Masonic stories, Kipling accepted.

There seems to have been some quality deep within his nature to which Freemasonry appealed. The idea of a secret bond, of a sense of community, and of high principles among men sworn to a common purpose, fitted his concept of a social order.