

ORATIONS

Grand York Rite of California May 2013

Orations

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Golden State Research Chapter

Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of California

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**Dedicated to Excellent Companion
Sid Cerates**



Sid passed away on May 17th, just a few days before the Research Chapter meeting on May 20, 2013. He has been an important player in the Grand Chapter for the last 15+ years, serving as Grand Lecturer for three years from 2001 through 2004. He was instrumental in the work to revise the Chapter ritual, and then devoted much time and energy to do the same for the ritual of the Order of High Priesthood, which he served for several years as Most Excellent President. He was always at the conferrals of the Order, providing guidance and direction. He also served the Golden State Chapter of Research, providing the Installation ceremony and conducting it. Sid was the recipient of the General Grand Chapter RAM International Distinguished Service Medal in Bronze; the Grand High Priest Distinguished Service Medal; the Grand Master of Ish Sodi award; and the Knight Templar Meritorious Service Medal.

PREFACE

Even a cursory reading of the delightful papers presented in this booklet will benefit our brethren and our companions with further light in Masonry. This is fully consistent with my Theme for Capitular Year 2013-2014: Let There Be Light.

My theme for the year is directly from Chapter 1 of the book of Genesis. This is also an allegory to remind us that we need to do everything we can to continue to bring more Masonic light to our Blue Lodge brethren as well as our Chapter Companions. We are currently facing two significant issues: first, marketing the York Rite, and second, engaging our new companions in a meaningful Masonic experience. Membership in the Research Chapter and dissemination of its products, both published and on the internet, is one constructive way to market our ritual.

We must move to improve our market approach and try new ideas. Only through initiative can we attract new companions and grow our chapters. Let's set a standard of Masonic excellence and enthusiasm that will ensure the future of the York Rite tradition in California.

I commend to you this little booklet of York Rite papers presented in Capitular Year 2012 – 2013.

Gary Spriggs
Grand High Priest
Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of California

PROLOGUE

The study of the philosophy and symbolism of the Degrees of the Holy Royal Arch is a most worthwhile endeavor and will enlighten your mind and improve yourself in your daily advancement in acquiring Masonic Knowledge. By extension, your knowledge of our humble craft can enlighten others as you heed the teaching of the Most Excellent Master Degree, wherein you obligate yourself to dispense true Masonic light and knowledge to your less informed brethren.

The Golden State Research Chapter exists to assist Companions to accomplish these noble and glorious goals. The main publishing work of the Chapter is the yearly publishing of the Grand York Rite of California's Grand Orations. The Grand Orations book includes orations given during the sessions of the Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons, the Grand Council of Cryptic Masons and the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar. Other orations throughout these sessions and possible other seminars will be included if available, as well as papers presented during the yearly meeting at Grand Sessions of the Golden State Research Chapter.

It is with great pride that the Golden State Research Chapter (GSRC) publishes this fourth compilation of orations and talks given during the Capitular Year of 2012-13.

Casey Latham
High Priest, GSRC
August, 2013

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INTRODUCTION

GRAND ORATIONS, 2013

The papers in this compilation were delivered at the California York Rite Grand Sessions in May, 2013. In addition to the Grand Orations for the Grand Chapter and Grand Council, we have included the Grand Commandery Vesper remarks delivered by Rev. and SK David Kussman; the Easter Sermon presented at the Grand Commandery West Coast Easter Observance in April prior to Grand Sessions; a research paper presented at the Golden State Chapter of Research annual convocation and another at the mid-year meeting at the Annual Communication of Grand Lodge; and a paper prepared by the Grand Secretary, who is also Treasurer of this Research Chapter.

Casey Latham

Casey was raised in Victorville Lodge No. 634 in September of 2010 and is now a member of Fox-Coates Daylight Lodge No. 842, for which he serves as Junior Warden. For the 2013 year, he is King for HIGH DESERT CHAPTER No. 127, Principal Conductor of the Work for H. Edward Barr's Oasis Council No. 64 and Eminent Commander for High Desert Commandery No. 79. He is a Knight of York in Southern California College No. 127 YRSCNA and is a member of various Masonic Literary Societies.

Casey graduated from Dana Hills High School, Dana Point, CA and within a month

joined the United States Navy. After his enlistment was up he attended and graduated from the Computer Education Institute, Lake Forest, CA and is currently enrolled as a History Major at Regent University. In 2012 he was elected a member of the Royal Historical Society (United Kingdom).

Andrew B. Pippin

Originally from the East Bay Area, Andy is a Past Master of Santa Barbara Lodge No. 192 as well as being a member of Carpinteria Lodge No. 444. He was the High Priest of Corinthian Chapter No. 51 in 2010 and 2012, the Illustrious Master of Ventura Council No. 15 in 2009, and Commander of St. Omer Commandery No. 30 in 2012. He has been an Inspector for both the Blue Lodge and the Royal Arch, and was recently appointed to serve as the Deputy Grand Lecturer of Department 4A. In addition to the York Rite, he has almost completed the sweep of heading all four of the Scottish Rite Bodies, and was honored with the KCCH in 2007. He is the Senior Warden of the Channel Coast Council of the Allied Masonic Degrees, a member of the Pacifica Conclave Red Cross of Constantine, and a member of the Fresno Priory No. 71 Knights of the York Cross of Honor.

Andy recently shared his tenth anniversary with his wife Juli, who has been supporting him in his Masonic endeavors ever since he arrived in Santa Barbara in 1999. He graduated from Cal Poly San Luis Obispo back

in 1991 with degrees in Computer Science and Mathematics. He completed his formal education at UCSB in 2005 with a Masters Degree in Computer Science. He has one son, Craig, who lives down in Santa Monica with his wife Jetta.

Peter Eiserloh

Peter is a member of Indian Wells Valley Lodge No. 684, for which he is now Master, and was raised in February of 2005. He was High Priest in 2011 for NORRIS C. VILES CHAPTER No. 153.

John L. Cooper, III

When John L. Cooper III left his career in education to become Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge of California 20 years ago, Freemasonry became his new classroom. Advocating the idea that a Mason should learn throughout his entire life, Cooper became a champion of applied Freemasonry. During his tenure, Cooper made many significant contributions to Masonry in California, from developing the education components of Masonic Formation to launching the Annual Symposium to establishing a robust administrative infrastructure. He served as Grand Orator for the Grand Council in 2009-2010, and again in 2012-2013. While serving as Grand Orator in 2012, he also served as Deputy Grand Master of Grand Lodge.

David Kussman

Sir Knight David Joseph Kussman was born on Easter Sunday morning, April 5, 1953 in Houston, Texas. He was raised in Anaheim, California, where he attended public schools and graduated from Loara High School in 1971.

David began working for the Anaheim Police Department in November 1971 while also attending Fullerton College and August Vollemer University pursuing a degree in Criminal Justice. He retired from the City of Anaheim as a Police Sergeant in July 2004. He remained working as a Consultant for the Police Department, coordinating the Reserve Unit and Police Chaplains until July 2005.

David met the former Kimberly Ann Schmidt, while she worked at the Police Department and they were married on June 18, 1988. The Kussman's are blessed with three children, Jennifer, Stephanie and David Jr.

In the Symbolic Blue Lodge, Sir Knight Kussman was Initiated, Passed and Raised in Mother Colony Lodge No. 750, Free and Accepted Masons. His Lodge consolidated in 1991 where he served as Worshipful Master. He now holds membership in Anaheim Lodge No 207. In York Rite, Capitular Masonry, David was Exalted in Fullerton Chapter No. 90, Royal Arch Masons and served as High Priest and Treasurer. He was Consecrated into the Order of High Priesthood. His service to the Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of California includes Ritual Instructor and Inspector. He was honored by the Grand Chapter of California

with the Meritorious Service Award and the Distinguished Service Award.

In York Rite, Cryptic Masonry, David was Greeted in Santa Ana Council No. 14, Cryptic Masons and served as Illustrious Master and Treasurer. He was received as a Thrice Illustrious Master, and served as the Thrice Illustrious Master in the Order of the Silver Trowel. His service to the Grand Council of Cryptic Masons of California includes Ritual Instructor, Inspector and Assistant Director of Ritual. He was honored by the Grand Council of California with the Ish Sodi Award and was decorated with the Order of the Secret Vault by the Grand Council Cryptic Masons International.

In York Rite, Chivalric Masonry, David was Knighted in Fullerton Commandery No. 55 Knights Templar and served as Commander and Treasurer. He was Captain of the Drill Teams of Fullerton Commandery, now Orange County Commandery No. 36, for seventeen years and was honored with the distinction of Drill Captain Emeritus. He is also a member of Los Angeles' Commandery No. 9 award winning Triennial Drill Team. David was received into the California Past Commanders Association, and served as Virtual Past Commander and Recorder. His service to the Grand Commandery of California includes Ritual Instructor, Inspector, Assistant Director of Ritual, Committee on Competitive Drill, Committee on Uniforms and Jewels, Committee on Finance and Committee on Time and Place. David was honored by the Grand Commandery with the Meritorious Service Medal and by The

Grand Encampment with the Knight Templar Cross of Honor and Knight Commander of the Temple.

David received the degrees of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry in the Orient of California, Valley of Santa Ana. He served as Master of Kadosh in 2008, and was selected as a Fellow by the Supreme Council of the Southern Jurisdiction for the term 2008-2010. He was invested with the Rank and Decoration of Knight Commander of the Court of Honour.

His membership in appendant and invitational orders includes:

He has been ordained a Knight Priest in Saint John the Baptist Tabernacle LXVI, Holy Royal Arch Knight Templar Priests (HRAKTP). He served as Preceptor and was Ordained a Knight Commander; he served as Grand Prelate of the Grand College of America, HRAKTP, in 2011 and 2012. Initiated into Southern California York Rite College No. 110 he has served as Governor. He was elevated to the rank of Associate Regent (Order of the Purple Cross), and is currently serving as Deputy Grand Governor for California. David is a life member of Los Angeles Priory No. 26 and Fresno Priory No 71, Knights of the York Cross of Honor. He is Past Prior of Fresno Priory. Invited and initiated into Saint Croix Conclave, Red Cross of Constantine, he is a Past Pusissant Sovereign and was appointed Intendant General for the Division of Southern California.

David was Received and Admitted a IV Grade in California College, Societas Rosicruciana in Civitatibus Foederatis. He is a member of Brian Boru Council No. 38 Knight Masons, where he has served as Excellent Chief. He was honored with the Order of Brian's Harp.

David is also a member of AMD and has served as Sovereign Master; the Royal Order of Scotland; and the Order of the Eastern Star, Ami-Tai Chapter.

Sir Knight Kussman was elected and installed Grand Commander for California on April 28, 2010, and served as Grand Prelate for 2011-2012. He is presently the SW Department Commander for Grand Encampment.

The Rev. John B. Connell, Right Eminent Grand Commander of Hawaii

The Rev. John B. Connell was born in Waukegan Illinois, where he was active in DeMolay and was raised in Anchor & Ark Lodge in 1953. He moved to Hawaii in the Army and graduated from the University of Hawaii in 1959. He worked in radio and TV and was a professional lobbyist for 28 years.

He received his Master of Divinity Degree from the Church Divinity School of the Pacific and was ordained an Episcopal Priest in 1985.

He was Master of Koolau Lodge in Kailua, Hawaii in 1981, and served many years as Grand Orator and Grand Chaplain of the Grand Lodge of Hawaii.

He a member of the Order of Eastern Star, the Scottish Rite, and the Shrine, but has been most active in the York Rite of Masonry. He has headed the Red Cross of Constantine, the York Rite Sovereign College, the Knights of the York Cross of Honor, was Grand Lecturer, and Grand High Priest, Grand Illustrious Master and is currently Grand Commander of the Knights Templar in Hawaii.

He has been married to his wife Carol for 53 years, and they have three sons John, Kelly , and Seth (who is presently Master of Koolau Lodge.)

Kenneth G. Hope

Ken is a member of Bellflower No. 320. He was Master in 1998 of Gardena Moneta Lodge No. 372, and was raised in July of 1974. He is presently Grand Secretary/Recorder for the Grand York Rite Bodies of California, in which position he has served for 21 years.

He is a Knight of the York Cross of Honor; Past Governor York Rite College; Past Sovereign Master AMD; Past Sovereign Red Cross of Constantine; Past Prior HRAKTP; Honorary PGHP, MIPGM, PGC.

He has been married to Sonny Hope for 51 years and has a daughter, son and 6 grandchildren

I

THE HOLY ROYAL ARCH AND THE INITIATE EXPERIENCE By Caey Latham

The aspirant for the degree of the Holy Royal Arch aspires to reach the apex of Ancient Craft Masonry wherein the discovery of that which had been lost in the tragedy of the Master Mason degree, the Lost Masters Word, completes the knowledge appertaining to the completion of the Temple. Mackey states that, “The great object of pursuit in masonry ... is truth.”¹ This pursuit of truth, symbolized by the Lost Masters Word, which was lost in the tragedy of the Master Mason Degree, continues when the aspirant is received into a Lodge of Royal Arch Masons in due form “... under a living arch ...” This manner of reception is immediately explained thereafter to the aspirant, to indicate the state of mind necessary to receive proper instruction and behold the beauty and form of the ritual and symbolism of the Holy Royal Arch. It is the author’s goal to share discoveries concerning the Holy Royal Arch of Freemasonry with the reader, attained over a short period of time since being exalted to that “august” degree.

The Holy Royal Arch continues the Masonic theme of progression as discussed in previous

¹ Mackey, Albert. *Book of the Chapter of Monitorial Instructions in the Degrees of Mark, Past and Most Excellent Master of the Royal Arch*. 4th Ed. Kessinger Publishing Reprint. (Clark & Maynard, New York: 1858). Page, 94.

Ancient Craft degrees. From the aspirants first experience in Masonry, that of being initiated an Entered Apprentice Mason, he learns that Masonry is a progressive science, where Masonic light is only revealed in the form of Degrees that provide the knowledge and symbolic working tools necessary to prepare his mind and by extension his life for the further light that he is to be imparted and enlightenment that he is to experience. This aforementioned progress comes to an unexpected halt however, when the initiate does not receive the Lost Masters Word, but learns the substitute therefore. It is only in the recovery of the Lost Masters Word where the aspirant receives the truth in which he aspires after. In speaking of the recovery in the Holy Royal Arch of the Lost Masters Word, Mackey gives a beautiful interpretation of these events as “... when we figuratively speak of its discovery in the Royal Arch degree, we mean to intimate that that sublime representation of the state after death.”² Mackey continues, and it is beneficial to quote in full,

“ ... the first temple which we had erected with such consummate labor and apparent skill, for the reception of the Deity, has proved an imperfect and a transitory edifice; decay and desolation have fallen upon it, and from its ruins, deep beneath its foundations, and in the profound abyss of the grave, we find that mighty truth, in the search for which, life was spent in vain, and the mystic key to which death only could supply, when, having passed the portals of

² Ibid.

the grave, we shall begin to occupy that second temple, that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.”³

The implication of only being able to attain the object of the Holy Royal Arch, the Lost Masters Word, through the “...portals of the grave...”⁴ is not however to be taken literally. This state of being is not literal in the profane definition, that of the end of one’s own precious life here on earth, but in the esoteric sense of dying to one’s self, attaining that noble goal of circumscribing ones desires, keeping ones passions within due bounds and improving one’s self in Masonry. Esoteric interpretation of the Royal Arch is, in this author’s opinion, the only way that the aspirant can understand the rich symbolism and profound lessons the Holy Royal Arch contains. Far from being an adept of the Esoteric Mysteries contained within the Holy Royal Arch, this author can only allude to such Esoteric Mysteries and their definition. The complete analysis of esoteric symbolism is beyond the scope of this paper.

To continue the analysis of Mackey’s interpretations, the thought of the First Temple being a transitory edifice and therefore a precursor to one’s occupation of the Second Temple through initiation into the Holy Royal Arch, lends itself to a higher state of knowledge of man’s relationship with himself, the nature around him and most importantly his relationship with Deity. This relationship

³ Ibid., page 94-95.

⁴ Ibid., page 95.

between Deities creation (animal nature) and relationship with Deity (spiritual nature) can be interpreted through that great Hermetic axiom, "... As above, so below... ". As knowledge of the history and earthly events of the Holy Royal Arch constitute the first section of the Degree, when the Principal Sojourner conducts the initiates from Babylon after being freed by King Cyrus. So the last section of the degree deals with the spiritual level when the initiate learns the Lost Masters Word and how it was communicated. These polar sections of the degree define the spiritual nature (that which is above) and the animal nature (that which is below). Between these two events comprising the beginning and ending of the ritual, the initiate "passes the veils" into the Tabernacle. The realization of the transitory state of the initiation comes to fruition upon the arrival to the veils, of which in the American working of the Holy Royal Arch is four.

The symbols, colors and passwords of each of the veils of the Holy Royal Arch constitutes a state of transition whereby the initiate can only pass to the next through first being of a correct genealogical lineage, having the correct passwords and signs. Interrupting the flow of entrance and passage through the veils comes at the final veil when the candidate is entrusted with a peculiar signet, further allowing him entrance to the Tabernacle.

Perhaps, in this author's opinion, one of the most esoteric forms of knowledge in all the degrees of Masonry is taught through the "passing of the

veils". With this writer's elementary knowledge of the ancient art of Alchemy, the outlines of Alchemical transmutation of the initiate's spiritual nature are vaguely discerned through the veils of the Tabernacle. Esoteric traditions such as Alchemy, Hermeticism and Rosicrucianism have been used to interpret the esoteric aspects of the whole Holy Royal Arch experience. This requires the student of the Holy Royal Arch to search out these mystery traditions in order to grasp the higher knowledge necessary to properly apply the lessons inculcated in the degree to their mind and conscience. Without a strong foundation in esoteric knowledge, valuable teachings can be lost, thereby impeding a full understanding of the Holy Royal Arch as its architects intended.

Through the veils, the aspirant arrives at the Tabernacle, invested with the necessary knowledge to be imparted the mystery of the Lost Masters Word. The GRAW and the Lost Masters Word are taught in form and function, and the candidate is exalted to the Holy Royal Arch. With this new attainment of knowledge the initiate is invested with the object and truth of the goal of Ancient Craft Masonry. This can be viewed as a completion or final attainment, but this author argues that this is only the beginning of a lifetime of discovery and study. The study of the history, philosophy and symbolism of the Holy Royal Arch is the discovery of oneself, their relationship with their fellow man, nature and with Deity.

19 September 2012

II

BEHIND THE DOORS

by Excellent Companion Andrew B. Pippin

One of my favorite posters is a picture composed of many different doors. Some doors are made of wood, others of steel, and some are even made of cloth. Some doors are bright and colorful, while others are chipped and faded. I gaze at the different doors, looking for similarities and differences, the subtle and the obvious. Contemplating the difference in each door I find my thoughts turn to what might be revealed if those doors were opened. What do they keep out and, just as importantly, what do they let in? Is it a rowdy family sitting down to a Thanksgiving dinner or a quiet couple celebrating their first anniversary? Is it a crowded ice cream parlor on a hot summer day, or a chamber of reflection used for serious and melancholy thought?

Although doors typically represent barriers, they can symbolize a transition from one place or condition to another. Most doors are mundane, little noticed since their impact on our lives is incidental. A closet door, garage door, or any of the dozens of other doors we encounter on our daily journey through life. Some, like the doors of Freemasonry, are indeed transformational. The mental, spiritual and fraternal growth to which we are exposed as we progress in our search for truth can be profound. We pass

through many different doorways in our Masonic journey whether it is the South, West, and East Gates of King Solomon's temple or the veils of the Royal Arch. Each passage represents a lesson along our sacred journey, a journey that makes a good man better.

For me, the First Veil represents the first three degrees of Masonry. Drawn from the darkness necessary to prepare our minds for the light of Freemasonry, we were confronted by the great light of Masonry by which our transformation is to be accomplished. As Masons, we regulate our lives by the Holy Bible, living a virtuous life, and keeping our conduct within the bounds of propriety. We are taught that the Master of the Lodge is entrusted with responsibilities that require him to govern and the Brethren to obey. With each succeeding degree we know our brothers are there to support us and offer their help and guidance. Being raised to the Degree of Master Mason will forever be the highlight of our journey, symbolized in the blue of the First Veil.

The Second Veil represents our understanding of what it means to be a Mason. Here we learned the importance of friendship and brotherly love. We also learned that in order to trust our brothers, we ourselves must be trustworthy. And while many of us are content to stay at this stage of their Masonic careers, others look around to see what other paths they can follow, and what doors may be preventing them from getting where they want to be. And just like the door we used to gain access into a Lodge of

Entered Apprentice Masons, it is what is behind the door that is far more important than the door itself. It is this love of Masonic study, and the search for Truth, which leads us to the door of the Royal Arch. Passing through that doorway, the blue of the First Veil is blended with the red of Third Veil to form the purple of the Second Veil.

Royal Arch Masonry is the Third Veil itself. As we continue our pursuit of truth, we are taught the importance of working together for the common good and are also encouraged to distinguish ourselves from each other. Such contradiction is what makes Masonry so much fun, and yet so challenging, to learn. Here we are reminded again that truth is not easy, but it requires both wisdom and knowledge, both patience and speed. While we will never fully complete our pursuit of truth, we will eventually reach the end of our journey.

The Fourth Veil is very special. Here you are evaluated not only on your actions taken while in the pursuit of truth, but also judged on the quality of your intent behind those actions. Here at the entrance to the Tabernacle, it will be necessary for you to present the truth you have learned. Here I am not talking about a full understanding of a great, universal truth – that is not possible in our fleeting lifetimes. I am talking about a more discrete, a more personal truth. We seek to attain that purity of life, which is emblematically represented by the white of the Fourth Veil.

I believe that the Veils are both an appropriate symbol as well as a useful allegory in our pursuit of truth. As humans, we tend to depend on our vision to interpret the world around us. Veils obscure our sight and motivate us to employ our other four senses. And since most veils aren't strong enough to prevent a determined person from breaking through them, they teach us to respect our boundaries. If you are invited to pass through a veil, I suggest treating it like a door you've never gone through before. Grasp the handle with determination, and open it deliberately. Do not let your fears prevent your curiosity, but let the light in the doorway guide you on your way - eagerly anticipating the wonders that await you. Hopefully it will take you closer to your own personal truth.

Life is truly full of doors, may you open many.

20 May 2013

III

WHAT'S IN A NAME

By Peter Eiserloh

When we open in Royal Arch, we hear that the search for truth is the great object of masonic study. Masonic ritual, as you most likely have heard contains many “hidden” things in it. This is true. There are many cases where we mention something in passing in one degree, only to be brought forth in a later degree. But that which is to be taught in a specific degree, will be repeated again and again.

In the second degree we hear in passing about some guy, the son of a widow, who made some fixtures in the temple. In good esoteric practice, no further mention is made. Not until the third degree, and it is there that we hear about him in depth.

In another example, we are introduced to the lesser lights, no real explanation is made. It is not until we receive the Royal Master degree, that we hear about the perfect piece of work.

Now for the main topic. In the third degree we start learning about the Hiramic Legend, and how the Masters Word was lost. Three ruffians took the life from Hiram the Master, and thus was lost the master's word. In the Royal Arch Degree we learn that the Master's Word was really the name of Deity, and we even learn how

to speak it. This name, the ineffable name, was never spoken by the ancients, except by the high priest, and then only once a year. When officiating at the temple, the High Priest's life could be taken, and his body would be pulled out of the sanctum sanatorium by the rope tied to his body prior to him walking into the sanctum sanatorium.

Immediately following the Master Mason's Obligation, we learn the pass by which we may gain admission into a Lodge of Master Masons, but curiously we also learn about a brother, but in good esoteric tradition, once mentioned we hear nothing further about him. But being brothers they ritualistically have the same importance. Oddly enough, later we hear the same sound of this brother, but with some vowels appended. These are the names of three ruffians. It is by the action of these three ruffians that the Masters Word is lost. These we hear again and again, as if they were important. Did you hear me? These are important! Do I have to repeat that? These are the names of three brothers from the island of Tyre, the same place as Hiram Abiff. These names differ significantly only by these vowel sounds. The constant part is the name of the brother of the password. Now that is curious.

Names are important. Names, as the ancients thought, give power over that which is named. This is a form of magic. The ancients saw magic everywhere. Even King Solomon is said in the Apocryphal text "The Wisdom of Solomon", to have kept a book containing the names of

demons, giving him power over them. The ancients desired to control their world, and the only tool they could think of was magic. Legend speaks of a Golem. Adam, in the Talmud (Tractate Sanhedrin 38b), was first created from the dust into mud, and formed into the shape of a man, and then as golem was brought to life. In the early 16-th century, Rabbi Judah Loew ben Bezalel of Prague was reputed to have created a golem, to defend his people. A golem is made from mud in the form of a man, and on which are written passages from the “Sefer Yetzirah” (The book of Creation), perhaps the oldest Rabbinical treatise of Kabalistic philosophy still extant. As the final act to bring the golem to life, on the forehead was written the Tetragrammaton (the name of God). Being that Loew was just a man, the creature he made was but a shadow of what God could create, and like all such golems, could not speak.

No more power could be had than with the real name of God, the creator of the entire world. This would be important for one to keep secret from possible enemies. One would need to keep this sub-Rosa.

The written Hebrew language is curious, due to a lack of letters for vowels. The spoken language has these vowels, but no letters for them. Modern text uses vowel points to indicate the sounds of the vowels in Hebrew text. The name of God was anciently written without vowels, and consists of the four letters: Yod, Heh, Vav, and Heh, known as the Tetragrammaton. In English this would be transcribed as “YHVH” or

“HVHY” as Hebrew is written from right to left. In German, it would be “JHVH” (the German J sounds like an English Y, or a Hebrew Yod). Of course, much of our ritual came from Germany, via the Rosicrucians. The name of God, as written in Hebrew, is missing the vowels. The Hebrew people when reading the Tetragrammaton during prayer, were taught to say ADONAI meaning MASTER or LORD. In Masoretic Text, the Tetragrammaton is vowel pointed to be pronounced as Ye-Ho-Vah. This has similar vowel points to Adonai, and some think the Masoretic text is the more correct way to pronounce it. NOTE: this does not have the English "J" sound. In common conversation, one simply uses “The Name” which in Hebrew is HaShem. Modern science recognizes that knowing the name of something, only confers the ability to refer to that object by a symbolic label. For, it is humans that assign names to things, people, and places. There is a saying, “The Map is not the Territory”, invented by Alfred Korzybski (of General Semantics fame along with his book "Science and Sanity".) This also applies to names, for a name is not the thing itself, but rather a label we have assigned. The word is not the thing itself. One must be careful not to conate the name with the thing itself, for to do so invites neuroses.

As Royal Arch Masons, we keep the name of deity hidden. We keep it sub-Rosa. As in “The Name of the Rose”, by Umberto Eco, the beauty of the past is forever hidden, and only the name is passed down.

20 May 2013

IV

THE SECRET VAULT

By Illustrious Companion John L. Cooper, III

Companion Captain of the Guard, Are You a Select Master?

I am Acknowledged as Such, and Have Wrought My Regular Hours.

What Are the Regular Hours?

From Nine at Night 'til Twelve, The Time When Prying Eyes are Closed in Sleep.

How many times as a Select Master have you heard those words? Have you ever thought about how strange they are? Have you thought about what it means to work deep underground, in the dark, with only feeble torches for illumination? The symbolism of the Select Master Degree is, at best, mysterious, and at worst, bizarre. Here are a group of devoted Craftsmen who are building a tunnel through bedrock to a secret location, and to preserve secrecy, they only work at night – “the time when prying eyes are closed in sleep.” Is there a symbolism in this task which we have imperfectly understood? Is there a deeper meaning for us as Freemasons in such arduous and unusual labor? Are we, the builders of the Temple of Humanity, expected to labor in darkness rather than in the full light of day? And if so, what does that darkness mean to us.

One of the first lessons we learn in Ancient Craft Masonry is that it is a search for light. That image appears again and again in the ritual. “Being in a condition of darkness, what do you most desire?” “The first objects presented to your view on being brought from darkness.....” “Of what are you in search? Of further light in Masonry.” I sincerely promise and solemnly swear that I will dispense true Masonic light and knowledge to my less informed brethren to the best of my ability.” We have each one of us heard these words, and they have deep meaning for us as Masons. They all speak of Masonic light, which we equate with knowledge – greater knowledge of ourselves, of our purpose on “this fragile earth, our island home,” and of the greater purpose of the Great Architect of the Universe working out his plan through the “great book of nature and revelation.” And yet, as Select Masters, we are working in darkness.

The poet Matthew Arnold wrote a beautiful poem in 1867, “Dover Beach.” The symbolism in the poem is pertinent to our present discussion. Listen to “Dover Beach” by Matthew Arnold:

**The sea is calm to-night.
The tide is full, the moon lies fair
Upon the straits; on the French coast the light
Gleams and is gone; the cliffs of England stand;
Glimmering and vast, out in the tranquil bay.
Come to the window, sweet is the night-air!
Only, from the long line of spray
Where the sea meets the moon-blanch'd land,**

Listen! you hear the grating roar
Of pebbles which the waves draw back, and
fling,
At their return, up the high strand,
Begin, and cease, and then again begin,
With tremulous cadence slow, and bring
The eternal note of sadness in.

Sophocles long ago
Heard it on the Aegean, and it brought
Into his mind the turbid ebb and flow
Of human misery; we
Find also in the sound a thought,
Hearing it by this distant northern sea.

The Sea of Faith
Was once, too, at the full, and round earth's
shore
Lay like the folds of a bright girdle furled.
But now I only hear
Its melancholy, long, withdrawing roar,
Retreating, to the breath
Of the night-wind, down the vast edges drear
And naked shingles of the world.

Ah, love, let us be true
To one another! for the world, which seems
To lie before us like a land of dreams,
So various, so beautiful, so new,
Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,
Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain;
And we are here as on a darkling plain
Swept with confused alarms of struggle and
flight,
Where ignorant armies clash by night.

I have been to Dover in England, and have seen the famous White Cliffs of Dover which overlook the beach. The site is not far from where Julius Caesar landed in his abortive attempt to conquer Britain in 55 B.C. Dover is also famous for its nearby castle, and for the fortress and its tunnels from which Britain defended itself in World War II. It has been a place of great clashes between competing cultures and civilizations, and perhaps for that reason, Matthew Arnold chose Dover as the subject of his epic poem about the clash of civilizations. We live in a time much like that of Matthew Arnold. He was born in England in 1822, and died in 1888. Although we often think of the Victorian Era as one of great calmness compared with our own, it was actually an age of turmoil, a time when the modern world was being born. At the beginning of the 19th century the ordered world governed monarchs and aristocrats was already under siege, swept away by the French Revolution and then by the Napoleonic wars which followed. It reached a high point in 1859 with the publication of Charles Darwin's *On the Origin of Species*, which threatened to undermine the Bible and established religion. By the time that Arnold died in 1888 England had become a great industrial nation, and the era rural English villages had disappeared forever into the maw of the great industrial cities, such as Liverpool and Manchester. People were struggling to understand this new world where money and power seem to go hand in hand, and where the old values of society were swept into the dustbin of history. Arnold's poetry reflected the unease

of this new age as he grappled with a world which seemed to have gone off its hinges.

“Dover Beach” reflects the dilemma of the old which has been swept away by the new, and disturbing, clash of cultures. He contrasts the image of the eternal sea with the great destructive power that it has when its waves break upon the shore. He paints a picture of the old life being washed away with the tide, while “ignorant armies clash by night” on the bleak shore of Dover Beach. Note the words of the last stanza:

Ah, love, let us be true
To one another! for the world, which seems
To lie before us like a land of dreams,
So various, so beautiful, so new,
Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,
Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain;

He calls upon us to be true to one another even when the world around us is falling apart. He tells us that this “brave new world” “which seems to lie before us like a land of dreams,” “hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light, nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain.” In other words, we will have to “get over it,” to use a contemporary expression. The old world, with all its stability – its “certitude”, or “certainty” in the words of the poet, will not come back. There will be no help for the pain that we are experiencing in our transition from the old to the new. The new world is being born, and its birth pangs must of necessity accompany this birth.

He then concludes the poem by speaking of the cultural warfare which symptom of the old being replaced by the new. He leaves us with the image that *both* the old and the new, those who would preserve the past, and those who would rush into the future, are like ignorant armies clashing by night – clashing in the darkness, because it is night. Neither the preservationists nor the revolutionaries can see anything of value in the other – because they battle in the darkness, alongside the endless sea, and in the endless night.

We live today in a time much like that experienced by Matthew Arnold. We look about us at the seemingly endless clash of cultures, the seemingly endless clash of extremists of every stripe, who roar out into the darkness with an almost mindless fury. Our country, and indeed the world, seems caught up in the maelstrom of irreconcilable beliefs and cultures. We live in a time in which men and women will kill for their beliefs, taking down innocent victims in their rage to “be right” and to force others to share their beliefs – or die. We live in a time when there seems to be almost no middle ground between competing parties and interests, where there is little or no respect for anyone of a differing opinion, and where one side in an argument must win at all costs. Those whose views differ are demonized, and no quarter is given to an enemy who must be entirely obliterated.

It is into this sad situation, we as Freemasons are expected to bring our message of hope. We are

taught that although we may differ with one another in significant ways, yet we are to strive be a people who “best can work and best agree.” We learn early in our Masonic career that “By the exercise of Brotherly Love we are taught to regard the whole human species as one family – the high and the low, the rich and the poor – who, as created by one almighty parent, and inhabitants of the same planet, are to aid, support, and protect each other.” But where do we deliver this message? It would be nice to think that others would listen respectfully to what we have to say as Masons, that they would sit down peacefully and allow us to explain why fratricidal warfare and murderous behavior toward one another is not what human beings should be doing. That, however, is not a luxury that we as Freemasons have. We will not be given a place of harmony and tranquility to quell the tide of battle and raise the standard of reason above the fray. We are in the midst of those “ignorant armies who clash by night.” We are ourselves on the “darkling plain swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight.” We may understand that the principles of Freemasonry could bring about a better world, but we, too, are on the “darkling plain” with all the others.

It is into this situation that the symbolism of the Select Master Degree comes with full force. As our symbolic ancestors labored “from nine at night until twelve,” so too, must we labor and build the Temple of Humanity during the hours when we cannot see clearly through the darkness that surrounds us. As our ancient brethren labored in the bowels of the earth to build a way

to the Secret Vault, so we labor to build a way for humanity to find the place where reason will unite us as a “sacred band of friends and brothers.” We cannot build the way forward in the full light of day, because we are a part of that humanity which is still trapped today in the sound and fury of “clashing armies by night.” We must labor “from nine at night ‘til twelve” because that is where the work is. That is where we can do our most good. That is the time when we must work to bring the Light of Freemasonry into this dark world. As Select Masters we should know it and understand it, and share it with other Freemasons who have not the teachings of this degree.

The Select Master Degree is not studied as often as it should be, and its teachings are often passed over in favor of some of the more dramatic symbols and stories of the other degrees in the York Rite. That is a shame, for it has powerful and beautiful symbolism in its own right. And one of the greatest symbols is that of darkness – the darkness where we labor to build for the future. I encourage each of you to think about this symbolism the next time you are dismayed by the daunting task which we as Freemasons face in building a better world. We build under the most stressful of circumstances because that is where our labors are most needed. We do, indeed, labor “from nine at night ‘til twelve, the time when prying eyes are closed in sleep.”

21 May 2013

V

VESPER SERVICES LOOKING THE ENEMY IN THE FACE

By Rev. & SK David J. Kussman,
KTCH,KCT,KYGCH,REDC,PGC

I Corinthians 15: 50-58

⁵⁰ Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. ⁵¹ Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, ⁵² In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. ⁵³ For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. ⁵⁴ So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. ⁵⁵ O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? ⁵⁶ The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. ⁵⁷ But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁵⁸ Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

Stonewall Jackson was one of the most renowned and revered generals of the Civil War. He was known as Robert E. Lee's "right arm." Shortly after leading his army to a memorable victory, he was accidentally wounded by "friendly fire" one fateful night. The initial wounds were not fatal, but infection and pneumonia set in and the death watch began. Shortly before he died, Jackson, a devout Christian, raised himself to ask the attending physician, "How do I look in the face?"

Facing death, as all of us do, we may also ask, "How do I look in the face?" The early Christians, just as with every generation, had many questions about death. *What happens to our bodies?* The apostle Paul wrote one of the greatest chapters of hope in the Bible about facing death. Paul's words encouraged Christians in that day and they speak to us today. Most people will get there new bodies after they die. Their old bodies are planted in the ground, and new bodies spring forth.

What does God have to say to us in the face of the ancient enemy called death?

I. Death Is Inevitable, but Not Natural

God says, "Death is inevitable, but not natural."

According to one of the tales of the old West, there was a character named Wild Bill Longley. He supposedly had killed thirty-two people. He became a legend because on one occasion he was

strung up to be hung by vigilantes. They began to shoot at him as he swung by the rope. They missed him, hit the rope, and he escaped. On another occasion, a sheriff tried to hang him, but made the rope too long and Wild Bill dropped to his feet on the ground. Some people felt that since he had cheated death so often, his casket would be filled with rocks, and he had escaped. They dug up his grave to see if he was really there. The DNA matched that of his descendants. Wild Bill didn't cheat death. No one does. We cannot cheat it, but we can defeat it! Through Christ we can move from death to a larger life.

Scripture reminds us of the reality of death. Hebrews 9:27 says "Man is destined to die once." Death is the most common event in human history. More common than marriage, because not everyone marries. More common than child-bearing because not all men or women have children.

The tragedy of death is that it was not a part of God's original plan. He created man to live, not to die. God is the life-giver. Everything he touches brings life. Sin entered the arena of life through the first man. And death has been on the scene ever since.

As human beings, we try to give meaning to death. Some do it by seeking to be master of it by trying to control the destiny through suicide or euthanasia. Others seek immortality through the false hope of reincarnation. There are others who do it by trying to leave a legacy, a memorial

of their lives, through the family, manuscripts, works of art, or other achievements. But there is no cure for death.

Faced with this reality, the question arises, “Where is God in the face of death?” Uncertainty about the future can lead to many things.

*For the psalmist, it led to distress: “The cords of death entangled me, the anguish of the grave came upon me; I was overcome by trouble and sorrow”
(Psalm 116:3).*

*For some it led to a sense of despair: “Are the dead a live audience for your miracles? Do ghosts ever join the choirs that praise you? Does your love make any difference in a graveyard?”
(Psalm 88:10-12).*

*For others, it leads to paralyzing fear. The writer of Hebrews writes of those who “all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death”
(Hebrews 2:15).*

II. God Is Involved, Not Passive

God is involved, not passive in the face of the cries of our humanity. He becomes involved with us as we face the king of terrors; that which we call death. Psalm 116:15 assures us, “Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints”.

When we face the chilling waters of death, God begins to work in our lives. Several things happen. First, God has our full attention. Then he reminds us that he has walked with us through other dark valleys and he is prepared to help us in this one. As he guides us through, he can unwrap some of the things he has in store for us. In John 14:2 he promises, “I am going there to prepare a place for you.”

What kind of a place is heaven? The apostle Paul tells us: “No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for us who love him” (1 Corinthians 2:9). Have you ever had the experience of moving into a new house or having someone show you through theirs? Just imagine the Lord showing us through the place he has prepared for us!

Because we go to heaven, it gives the opportunity for others, touched by our influences and testimony, to come to Jesus. In God's economy, it seems that the only way for some people to go to heaven is for others whom they know, love, and respect to go before them. The desire of their hearts is to see them again. And because of this desire, the door of salvation is opened. We can be sure that God is not passive. He works in life through death.

III. Death Is Intimidating, Not Triumphant

As we look the enemy in the face, there is one other thing of which we can be assured: Death is intimidating, not triumphant. It is not the

ultimate visitor. Paul's words shout at us in these victory words in 1 Corinthians 15:50-58.

There is life beyond this world. Life extends beyond the physical. There is more to come. Because of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, all who belong to him will live forever. Jesus put death to death. Because he did, we go from termination to emigration.

The following words were found on the ancient tombstone of a Christian: "The inn of a traveler on his road to Jerusalem." Winston Churchill, the famous prime minister and war leader of England during World War II, was buried at the Blandon churchyard. These words are written on the gate as you leave the cemetery: "I know that my Redeemer liveth."

How do I look in the face? When we look into the face of Jesus Christ as our Savior and Lord, we can say as Paul did: "Where O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting? Therefore, Sir Knights, Companions and Ladies, stand firm! Let nothing move you...Always give yourself fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.

VI

WITHOUT DEATH THERE COULD BE NO “NEW LIFE”

By The Rev. John B. Connell, Right Eminent
Grand Commander of Hawaii

A Father was approached by his small son who told him proudly, **"I know what the Bible means!"** His father smiled and replied, "What do you mean, you **"know"** what the Bible means?

"That's easy Daddy... "the young boy replied excitedly, **"B.I.B.L.E. It stands for "Basic Information Before Leaving Earth."**

That youngster was wise beyond his years.

A large part of that **"Basic Information"** comes from such Biblical books as the Prophecies of Isaiah, the Gospels of Matthew, Mark Luke and John, the Epistles of Paul etc. and it has a lot to do with what we are here celebrating this morning.

Easter....a celebration of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who was both fully God and fully human; who laughed and cried and suffered just like any one of us. Jesus actually died an agonizing death to pay for our sins. But he arose again from the dead, gaining victory over sin and death, and promising new and unending life to all who believe in Him. Alleluia!

As Christians, we are grateful for God's forgiveness, for his uncompromising love, and for Christ's total giving of himself for us. We are so relieved and joyful that we sing and dance, play trumpets, and shout "Alleluia!"

We celebrate by having big parties, sending fancy greeting cards, buying new clothes for the "Easter Parade" (*this weekend has already cost me two new dresses*). We eat entirely too much, color eggs, and pay homage to the "Blessed Bunny".

UGH! (For years I have waged a crusade against those pagan fertility symbols of eggs and bunnies! I believe that the true symbol of Easter should be a Lamb, NOT a bunny! It is only through the blood of Christ, the "Paschal Lamb," that we have reason to celebrate at all. But unfortunately, I get outvoted by my Grandchildren.

The joy of Easter and Christ's glorious resurrection from the dead is such a "high", that we wish that it could last all year long. Many try so hard to keep that "high", that they "gloss over" all of the unpleasant things in life and deny such things as sin, death, pain, anger, despair, etc. Some go so far as to say that "true Christians" should *always* be "happy," and wear a silly grin on their faces 24 hours a day.

I once had a woman come to me sobbing, with tears streaming down her cheeks, exclaiming "Father John, I try so hard to be happy and hide my pain with a smile, but it hurts so much! I must be a "terrible" Christian or I wouldn't be

crying like this." I told her that she had so much "garbage" going on in her life at that time, that she would probably be a "phony" Christian if she did NOT cry. Even Jesus, himself, was not always happy. He cried when his friend Lazarus died. He was angry with the "money changers" and overturned their tables and drove them out of the Temple. He was in agony in the Garden of Gethsemane when he pleaded with God NOT to make him go through the torture of the cross.

If our faith is made up of bland platitudes, frozen smiles and warm fuzziness, it lacks depth, and will desert us in times of our greatest need. If our faith is made up of a diffused glow of saccharine sweetness, it will lack the intensity to pierce the fog of our darkest hours with the searching light of truth.

As Paul points out so often in his Epistles, life is a constant warfare between good and bad. (The Taoists call it the Yin and the Yang). Jesus never promised us a "rose garden". He never said that we would have no problems. But he DID say that when we DO have problems..... NOT to despair or give up. We can always call upon him, and "his strength will be sufficient unto us." Jesus did not promise to remove all obstacles or pain, but to give us the strength to get beyond the pain to the glory on the other side. God did not remove the cup from Jesus, but gave him the courage to drink it. God did not eliminate the cross from the Easter equation, but after Jesus experienced a most agonizing execution, he then gained the ultimate victory over Death with the most glorious resurrection

**Without the tomb there could be no resurrection.
Without death there could be no new life.**

☐ It is only the sick who can really experience miraculous healing.

☐ It is the hungry who fully appreciate the smallest morsel of food.

☐ It is the lonely and alienated who are most cheered by a smile, a kind word, or a hug of reconciliation.

☐ It is the one in chains who truly knows the value of freedom.

☐ It is the one struggling under a tremendous burden of guilt who fully knows the liberation of forgiveness.

☐ It is the person grieving the death of a loved one, or facing immanent death themselves, who finds the most comfort in Christ's promise of eternal life.

But the Joy of Christ's resurrection does not blind us to the evil that is going on in the world around us: The of civil war in Syria; the gang rapes in India; the international "Cyber-warfare" with China; the bitter divisiveness and name-calling in Congress; the physical and emotional pain in domestic violence; the senseless slaughter of Kindergarten children in Sandy Hook by a crazed gunman; the loss of a loved one caused by a car accident, a heart

attack, cancer, or other causes; and the bigotry and corruption throughout the world which makes us less than God created us to be.!

Easter is a call to not only CELEBRATE THE "GOOD NEWS", but ALSO TO BE THE "GOOD NEWS" FOR OTHERS!

□ How can we receive mercy, but not give mercy to others?

□ How can we accept forgiveness, but not forgive others for slights real or imagined?

□ How can we be loved, but not reach out with love for the unlovable?

□ How can we be reconciled, but not reconcile with others who are estranged?

□ How can we be accepted, but not accept others, in spite of our differences?

Christ's resurrection, and the healing power of God's unconditional love, gives us the strength and courage to face these daily "deaths,"and still live on.

And, Sir Knights, remember that in the "Order of the Temple", after we spent time in prayer and reflection, and learned the lessons of patience, perseverance, courage, constancy and penance, the Prelate reminded us of that hallowed sacrifice offered by the Redeemer of the world, who provided the way of salvation to all of fallen humankind. For we have Christ's own promise, that on the other side of the tomb

is the glorious gift of hope and joy and life eternal!

This is why Easter gives us all cause to celebrate and exclaim with Joy.....

**ALLELUIA! CHRIST IS RISEN!
(Response) THE LORD IS RISEN INDEED!
ALLELUIA!**

VII

ONE MAN CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

By Kenneth G. Hope, Grand Secretary



How many times have you heard the phrase “one man can make a difference?” I’m sure you have heard it many times, and here I am today saying it again . . . “One man can make a difference,” but this time I am going to give you an example of such a man who changed the course of history in America, and especially, California. Naturally he was a Mason, and as you all know so well,

that is not unusual, because Masons have been changing the course of history all over the world since the time they were founded. The year was 1880 and Bro. George Perkins was a Past Grand Master of Masons in California and now serving as the Grand Commander of the Grand Commandery. In his spare time, he was the Governor of California.

As the governor of California, he realized that the centers of power in America were on the East coast, and California was considered by them to be part of the Wild West . . . full of Indians and desperados . . . a place you read about but wouldn't want to visit. . . and certainly not a safe place for women and children. Furthermore, the only way to get to the west coast was by ship, train or horseback . . . a long trip by any means. Plus it was expensive . . . so who would want to go to California anyway. Without this movement of people to California, the state would not grow and prosper, business, real estate, commerce etc would not grow and everything would remain stagnant. Remember, California had just become a state in 1850.

Bro. George had a great idea. If he could only get those stuffy Easterners to come to California and see for themselves that San Francisco was a great city, as modern as any on the east coast, and that bullets and arrows weren't flying around, that it was safe for women and children, that it had all the modern conveniences of any city in the East, that it was a law abiding state, had some of the finest restaurants and hotels, modern paved streets, and above all, that the people were

friendly if only he could get those Easterners to see for themselves. Governor George decided that it was high time that California be put on the map, that for the first time in history, Americans were going to find out what a wonderful state this was, and what a grand city San Francisco was. Sir Knight George decided that the Knights Templar would lead the way as only they could. First he had to convince the Templars of California that they could achieve this formidable task remember, that in 1880 there were only 1000 knights in California! Convincing the knights was no easy matter how could they afford this endeavor . . . how could only a few knights do so much in such a short period of time, this had never been done before and so on. All of you have heard these arguments many times. Leadership came naturally to this man, and he managed to convince his brothers that all was possible, and if anyone could do it, it was the Templars of California.

Sir Knight George and 145 Sir Knights and 88 of their ladies departed for Chicago for the 21st Triennial of the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar of the United States of America. They hired a military band, the 2nd Regimental band to go with them to Chicago. A Grand Standard for California was purchased specially to be taken with them and a special train exclusively for the Knights Templar and their families was arranged. If they were going to Chicago, they would go in style. They had to convince the world that Californians were not a bunch of uncivilized cowboys. Cowboy boots, hats and

Bermuda shorts were not packed on this trip. The correct Templar uniform was worn, swords were polished, and plumes were fluffed up . . . they were going to change the Easterners concept of the Wild West.

At the 21st Triennial Conclave of the Grand Encampment, Sir Knight George offered to host the 22nd Triennial in San Francisco! His leadership qualities and persuasive personality overcame the fears and tribulations of the Eastern Templars . . . promising them Templar hospitality and knightly courtesies for one and all. Safety for women and children was guaranteed, special trains and escorts would be provided, horses for the Sir Knights, carriages for their ladies, the finest food and lodgings and the best whiskey for the banquets would be theirs for the asking. After much deliberation and soul searching, a motion was made, seconded and carried to hold the 22nd Triennial in San Francisco in 1883. Sir Knight George and his fellow knights had accomplished the first phase of their plan to open the West. They came back to San Francisco feeling pretty proud of themselves, and rightly so. They also came back \$2,304 in debt. This sum was made up by subscriptions from the 1000 Sir Knights. To help finance the 1883 Triennial, each Sir Knight was assessed 50 cents. The Grand Commander also admonished the membership to be vigilant and not lower their standards for admission in the Order that “stands pre-eminent above any other human organization.” At this time, it was Templar law that it would be unknighthly conduct if a Sir Knight solicited members for the

Orders!!! It should be noted here that before one could become a Knight Templar, that is to say, before he received the Order of the Temple, he had to purchase his own uniform and equipment. After receiving the Order of the Red Cross, if the candidate did not purchase his uniform, he would not be knighted. There was no Order of Malta in those days. Initiation fees in 1880 were \$100 . . . a very considerable sum of money, equivalent to \$15,000 in today's dollars!!! The uniform and equipment would cost another \$100 and a horse would be extra. One had to be serious about becoming a Knight Templar in those days. The Orders were conferred on one candidate at a time. Commanderies conferring the Orders on more than one candidate were severely reprimanded!

Now that Grand Encampment had agreed to come to San Francisco in 1883, Perkins and the Grand Commandery had to convince the people of San Francisco of what a wonderful thing the Knights Templar had done for them. They need the total commitment of the public; they needed their homes, their horses and carriages, their donations and their resolve to decorate the city and make the Easterners and their families feel welcome. The people of San Francisco responded, with their hearts and pocketbooks with great enthusiasm. This was going to be the first time in the history of California that any convention or any large group of people would come to the West Coast, and they were determined to give them the best of everything they could offer. If it worked, more would follow, business would pickup, people would come from

the East and buy houses, and shops would open, and schools would be built, and money would start flowing into the State, and more roads would be built, and more hospitals, more hotels, more stables, more carriages would be needed, new trains would be needed to accommodate the increased passenger load, and all this translated into more jobs and more money and so on. The average citizen soon realized what Sir Knight George and his Templars had done in Chicago. They had a golden opportunity to show off the Golden State and the beautiful city of San Francisco, and they were going to do everything in their power, in their own little way to show the Easterners that the West had grown up and was a match for anything the East had to offer, maybe more.

George and his committee left no stone unturned. They convinced the railroads to offer a 25% discount for any Templar and his family from the East. The railroad magnates also had an eye on the future and they could see what profits lay in the not too distant future for them. The citizens responded by providing carriages and horses for the visitors from the East, and decorated every building in the city with bunting and banners, the likes of which had never been seen before. After all, Governor and Sir Knight George had told them that this was the most important event in Templar history in California and also for the State. They were not going to let him down. George did one other thing to ensure success. It was not enough for the visitors to have a good time, he wanted everyone in America to know what a wonderful place and how safe it

was, and how modern and what a good place it was to raise a family. So he invited all the Eastern newspaper editors and writers to be the guests of the city, and they also responded and they came West with the Knights.

George covered all the bases, as he early on realized that it was not enough to just get the Templars involved, he had to have every man and woman in California involved too. Hence the whole community insisted on claiming a share of the honor, and spontaneously resolved to make the occasion a season of unrestricted hospitality, civic display, happiness and social cheer. Trainload after trainload of Templars, their families and newspapermen arrived in San Francisco, and were met at the railroad station by the various mounted patrols from the Commanderies and escorted to their hotels. Bands played and Sir Knights in full uniform presented swords for the visiting dignitaries. Finally, the Grand Parade took place, ten divisions strong with swords glistening in the sun, marching past the review stand, a pageant never before seen in California, and witnessed by the public from the sidewalks, balconies and windows all along the parade route.

The 22nd Triennial was everything Sir Knight George had promised, and the Grand Commander was justly proud in claiming that it was the most notable event in Templar Masonry in California. This feeling was shared by all who attended and California Templary won the esteem and affection of their brothers, as the newspapers on the East Coast attested. The West

had won the hearts and minds of the Easterners, and nothing would ever be the same again. Not one visitor had been shot by an arrow, no train was held up and robbed, and all went home safe and sound.



Grand Encampment
1883 Triennial Conclave Medal
San Francisco, California

The Grand Commandery did rather well financially, not one cent of its funds was used. Donations paid for everything and left a balance of \$7,000 a considerable sum of money in 1883. This money left over from the Triennial was invested as a permanent fund called "The California Grand Commandery Knight Templar Drill Fund." Tuesday, August 21, 1883 the Grand Encampment opened for business meetings and lasted until Friday. The Divine Service was a new feature at the Triennial and was "The greatest feature of the Conclave." Seventy banners of different Commanderies hung in the Grand Asylum. There was entertainment every evening in the pavilion, with a different program each night. The ladies provided a "Garden of Welcome" for the visitors, which was one of the most pleasing features of the Conclave. There were excursions around the bay by boat, and by rail to the vineyards and wineries of Napa Valley, to Santa Rosa, Santa Cruz, Monterey and other areas. The Grand Master was greeted by the Mayor of San Francisco and other officials. The Grand Lodge laid a cornerstone to the Garfield monument in Golden Gate Park, and the military took part in that too, including veterans and government officials. The Grand Banquet was held at the Palace Hotel and was "everything the heart could wish." 3000 rooms were taken up by the Sir Knights. The San Francisco police cooperated fully with every wish and the grand parade had no interruptions, and the knights marched down the broadest and finest avenues in the city, which were cleaned the night before!

San Francisco, California and the West Coast have never been the same since the 22nd Triennial of the Grand Encampment. One man made a difference, and he was a Master Mason and Knight Templar.

The above narrative shows what a person with vision, determination and a positive attitude can do. Sure the odds were high, and sure the opposition was great. There was little or no money and very little time. The entire concept in the East was anti-West. But they can be and were overcome. We Masons today need to have a vision of tomorrow, a determination and positive attitude to make our fraternity significant to the next generation in a world that does not know how desperately our principles of brotherly love are needed if there is ever going to be peace in the world.