

THE KEYSTONE



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Grand First Principal's Message

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August 2009

Companions,

We have all heard the expressions, "Time flies" and "Where has the time gone?" so many times in our lives. Now at the end of my year as your Grand First Principal, I find myself thinking the same. It does not seem possible that after a very hectic but enjoyable year as Grand Director of Ceremonies in 2004-2005, I found myself elected and sitting in the West of Grand Chapter as Grand Senior Sojourner in September of 2005. I had the usual feelings one would expect of what lay ahead for me, and that I had four years to go before the journey through the Grand Line was over. Now, those four years and about 220 meetings or so later, I have come to that point in time.

Companions, it has been a wonderful journey made possible by the friendship and support I have received from my Sponsors, Past Grand First Principals, fellow Grand Chapter Officers, and Officers and Companions of the Chapters. Out of all my Masonic bodies that I enjoy belonging to, Royal Arch has always been the special one for me. I loved taking an active part in its beautiful rituals, the ceremonies of installation, and the special feelings it holds for me when going to Chapter or Grand Chapter. All the visiting I did over many years came back to me in spades: I never visited any chapter where I was not known or did not know many of their own members. Their hospitality was superb.

At my installation last year, I promised you a continuance of honesty and dedication. I did my best to do so, and hope I lived up to that promise. My cardiac incident at the end of January wiped out my two scheduled

visits for February; and, on medical advice, I had to cancel a few of other visitations planned after then. There were just a few I can assure you, and I thank any chapter I missed for their understanding. I had my faith in God, my church was a source of spiritual peace, and my faith was well founded.

We must not forget that his All-seeing eye is ever with us. On the plus side, my wife and I were very touched by the many phone calls, get-well-cards, E-mails and personal messages of concern and good wishes received afterwards, not only from all over this Province, but other Provinces and U.S.A also. Thanks to every one of you, you showed that Masons do care. I care, and there is no value one can place on such love and respect.

I will now return time to my wife for all her love and support over the years, she de-



serves it; but you have not seen the last of me, and I will enjoy visiting as ever and giving full support to your new Grand First Principal and his officers, as they have done for me. Please give them, and your own chapters, all your support also. Thank you all once again, and may the Great Architect of the Universe always be with you.

Sincerely,

MEC Alastair Ross, GZ

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The Four Main Royal Arch Banners

We are all familiar with the fact that there are four main Royal Arch Banners that are in place in the East in a Chapter, apart from the presence of the Banners of the 12 Tribes of Israel. In fact, the four principal banners are those of the four divisions of the army of Israel, each of which divisions is united under the banner of one tribe. The banner with the man on a field of red represents the tribe of Ruben, the banner with the lion on a field of red represents the tribe of Judah, the banner with an ox on a field of red represents the tribe of Ephraim, and the banner with the eagle on a field of green represents the tribe of Dan.

Biblical history suggests that the colours of the banners bear a rough correspondence to the colours of the stones representing the four principal tribes on the breastplate of the High Priest. Yet, in sorting through dozens of papers on the subject by



both Jewish and Gentile authors, I can find no consistent agreement on which stone is to be ascribed to which tribe. Moreover, the original names of the stones are their ancient Hebrew names, which correspondence with modern English names is not always certain. Nor are the colours of all of the stones definitive. Some Grand Jurisdictions ascribe the colour green (instead of red) to the field of the banner on which the ox of the tribe of Ephraim is inscribed. In the

USA, the four principal banners are in the colours of the Veils and are carried by the masters of those Veils.

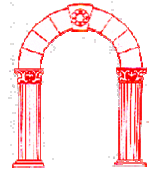
The biblical Book of Ezekiel (1: 5-10) identifies the four creatures represented on the four banners of the army of Israel as belonging to the Cherubim, celestial angelic beings associated with the holiness of God who execute his holy judgment. In his vision, Ezekiel saw the Cherubim as four living creatures with the likeness of a man with four faces, four sets of wings, straight legs and hooved feet. The four faces of each of Ezekiel's Cherubim, on the four sides of their heads were those of a man, a lion, an ox and an eagle.

Sources:

Breastplate of the High Priest AT www.jewishencyclopedia.com

Raynor, M. 2003. The Banners of the Royal Arch Chapter AT www.grandchapter-bc-yukon.ca

The Cherubim AT www.bible-history.com



90th Annual Grand Convocation September 17, 18, 19, 2009 - Penticton, B.C.

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Sir Walter Scott, Freemason



Born on August 15, 1771 in Edinburgh, the ninth child of Walter Scott, a solicitor and Anne, a daughter of a professor of medicine, he survived a bout of polio at age 2 which left him lame in the right leg, though he grew to be a man of over six feet. Sent to live at his grandparents' home in Sandyknowe, (where it was thought that country life would cure his lameness,) he learned a fondness for the border tales and ballads from his aunt Jennie.

He began his studies of classics at the University of Edinburgh at the age of 12. Apprenticed to his father in

1786, he went on to study law, graduating with a First Class in Moral Philosophy and Universal History in 1790. His call to the bar came in 1792, and he practiced with considerable success.

He married Charlotte Charpentier on Christmas eve, 1797 in Carlisle Cathedral and took up residence in Edinburgh, though he also had a summer cottage in Lasswade on the River Esk. The Scotts had five children.

Scott was Initiated, passed and raised March 2, 1801 in Lodge St. David, No. 36 in Edinburgh

A poet, novelist and historian by avocation, Scott's work enjoyed considerable acclaim. His poem, *The Lady of the Lake*, was published in 1810 by Ballantynes, in which Scott had become half owner. Three years later, the collapse of Ballantynes nearly ruined Scott, but he was saved by the Duke of Buccleuch, and

in 1816 inherited the fortune of his brother. Things were looking up in 1818 when he accepted a baronetcy, and in 1820 when he was made President of the Royal Society of Edinburgh. Unfortunately, he became insolvent once more in 1826 with the failure of both his publisher and his printer, and his health began to decline in 1829 when he was at work on his ambitious two-volume work on the *History of Scotland*. The year 1831 saw him going to Italy to recuperate, only to be called back to Scotland at the end of that year upon the death of his grandson. Sir Walter Scott died on 21 September, 1832.

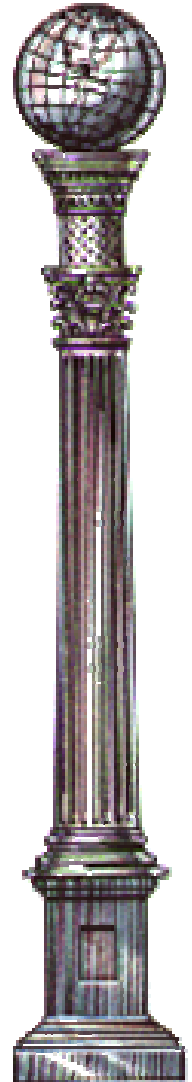
Sources:

Sir Walter Scott AT www.freemasonry.bcy.ca

Sir Walter Scott AT www.online-literature.com

Walter Scott AT www.walterscott.lib.d.ac.uk

Walter Scott AT <http://en.wikipedia.org>

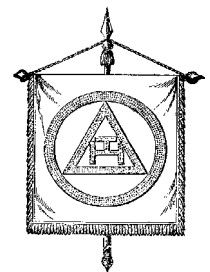


Our Lady of the Lake

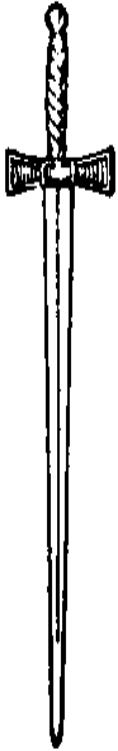
One of Scott's most famous and well-loved poems, *Our Lady of the Lake* sold an astounding 25,000 copies. The poem further popularized Arthurian legend by setting it on Loch Katrine in the Trossachs of Scotland. So popular was the work

that it furnished the subject matter for a Rossini opera, *La Donna del Lago*, as well as other operas with a Scottish setting. Franz Schubert set the three, "Ellen's Songs" to music, the third of which was later to become adapted as *Ave Maria*.

"Companions may purchase from Grand Scribe Ezra a business card ad (see page 4), running for 3 issues of the Keystone at a cost of \$20. Please include an actual copy or electronic file of your card.. Cheques are payable to the Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of BC & Yukon."



Royal Antediluvian Order of Buffaloes



This article is the eighth in a series describing fraternal bodies and other groups that are often mistaken by the public for concordant bodies within the Masonic Fraternity.

The Royal Antediluvian Order of Buffaloes (RAOB) is a social and charitable fraternal body open to any adult male who is a loyal citizen and whose interest in joining the Order is genuine. The earliest known formation of a Lodge of the RAOB is 1822 in London, England, at the Harp Tavern, near Drury Lane Theatre whose stage-hands and theatre technicians made up the Lodge membership. The appellation, "Antediluvian" may have been a bit of theatrical license taken. The order certainly does not pre-date Moses. Likewise, the descriptor, "Royal" is thought to have been mistakenly applied, perhaps to further impress prospective members.

Within the RAOB, a Provincial Grand Lodge administers a group of Minor Lodges. The Order supports the community through charitable works and provides for its members and their families through benevolent funds. One historically notable charitable effort of the RAOB was the provision of ambulances in WW I.

Meetings of the RAOB are in the public domain. There are four degrees of membership: Brother, Certified Primo, Knight Order of Merit and Roll of Honour. Members are addressed as Brother. While Canadian members tend to be rather casual (more like members of a service club), except in the case of senior officers, the British Order wears regalia not unlike that of the Royal Arch, with an apron, sash, cuffs (for officers) and sometimes a chain. And the apron bears



two ribbons, to each of which are appended seven tassels

The order has spread internationally, and is active in Canada in the Provinces of Ontario and British Columbia and Alberta. Under the Provincial Grand Lodge of Victoria and Islands, there are Lodges in Victoria and Nanaimo. Under the Provincial Grand Lodge of Vancouver and Mainland, there are two lodges in Surrey, one in Prince George and one in Medicine Hat, Alberta.

Sources:

www.raob.org
www.raob-glbcc.org

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