



Famous Names

Rudyard Kipling



Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936)

NAME
Rudyard Kipling

OCCUPATION
Author, Journalist, Poet, Writer

BIRTH DATE
December 30, 1865

DEATH DATE
January 18, 1936

PLACE OF BIRTH
Bombay, India

PLACE OF DEATH
Middlesex Hospital, London, England

FULL NAME
Joseph Rudyard Kipling

KIPLING AND MASONRY

Rudyard Kipling was a Mason. More significantly, he was an active and devoted Mason all his life. His writings contain many allusions and references to Masonic ideas and practices; some of them are completely Masonic in thought and motivation.

He was made a Mason in Hope and Perseverance Lodge No. 782 (English Constitution) at Lahore, Punjab, India in 1886. It required a special dispensation, because Kipling was only twenty years and six months of age at the time. The same evening that he was raised he was elected secretary of the lodge, so that he recorded his own initiation in the minutes of his mother lodge!

Only six months later he stood before his brethren, to give them good and wholesome instruction, by reading a paper "On the Origins of Masonry, and the First Degree in Particular." That was merely the beginning of a lifelong service of his heart, and mind, and pen in the interests of the Craft.

Rudyard Kipling became a Mark Master in Mark Lodge "Fidelity" on April 12, 1887, and received the Mark Mariners degree in Lodge "Mt. Ararat" at Lahore, April 17, 1888. In that year he also affiliated with Independence with Philanthropy Lodge No. 391 at Allahabad, Bengal. English Freemasonry has never prohibited dual or plural membership.

After settling in England, he also affiliated with Motherland Lodge No. 3861 in London, and helped to found two other lodges there, Author's Lodge No. 3456 and Lodge Builders of the Silent Cities No. 4948. In 1905 he was chosen poet laureate of Scotland's famous Canongate-Kilwinning Lodge No. 2, Edinburgh, and thereby became one of the successors to the immortal "Robbie" Burns, the first to hold that distinguished Masonic office.

That he was truly devoted to his mother lodge is shown not only by his well-known poem, "Mother Lodge", (which was written as early as 1886) but also by the fact that a few months before his death, realizing that he would never return to Lahore, he sent the lodge a gavel which bore the inscription, "Hope and Perseverance". Our English brethren have long practiced the affectionate custom of giving gifts to their mother lodges. The ancient officers' jewels of the Lodge of Antiquity No. 2, London, are such a gift of filial love.

What seems to have attracted and held Rudyard Kipling to Freemasonry are the same ideals and tenets which have fascinated men of brotherhood since time immemorial, the possibility of all good men "meeting on the level" and building a better society "by the square".

In 1925 he wrote in the London Freemason, "I was Secretary for some years of Hope and Perseverance Lodge No. 782, E.C., Lahore, which included Brethren of at least four creeds. I was entered by a member of Bramo Somaj, 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 anyone would notice was that at our banquets, some of the Brethren, who were debarred by caste rules from eating food not ceremonially prepared, sat over empty plates." (Kipling's memory slipped. Englishmen gave him all three degrees)

source - *The Masonic Trowel*

RUDYARD KIPLING —FREEMASON

In Kipling's hands, it shows us that the essential fraternal communion takes place after Lodge, at what is now termed the Banquet. That is where, if we do our job properly, we seniors can see that our Brethren make a daily advancement in Masonic knowledge; and that is why the verses below are called "Banquet Night."

Once in so often, King Solomon said,
Watching his quarrymen drill the stone,
We will club our garlic and wine and bread
And banquet together beneath my Throne.
And all the Brethren shall come to that mess
As Fellow Craftsmen—no more and no less.

Send a swift shallop to Hiram of Tyre
Floating and felling our beautiful trees
Say that the Brethren and I desire
Talk with our Brethren who use the seas.
And we shall be happy to meet them at mess
As Fellow Craftsmen —no more and no less.

Carry this message to Hiram Abif
Excellent Master of forge and mine
I and the Brethren would like it, if
He and the Brethren will come to dine.
Garments of Bozrah or morning dress
As Fellow Craftsmen —no more and no less.

God gave the Hyssop and Cedar their place
Also the Bramble, the Fig, and the Thorn.
But that is no reason to black a man's face,
Because he is not what he hasn't been born.
And, as touching the Temple, I hold and profess
We are Fellow Craftsmen, no more and no less.

The Quarries are hotter than Hiram's forge
No one is safe from the dog whip's reach
Its mostly snowing up Lebanon gorge
And its always blowing on Joppa beach.
But, once in so often, the messenger brings
Solomon's mandate: "Forget these things.
Brother to Beggars and Fellow to Kings
Companion of Princes —forget these things,
Fellow Craftsman, forget these things."