VICTORIA LODGE OF EDUCATION AND RESEARCH 650 Fisgard Street, Victoria B.C. V8W 1R6 1980 - 5

THE SYMBOLS ON THE CARPET ON THE FLOOR OF THE LODGE ROOM OF THE MASONIC TEMPLE, VICTORIA, B.C.

By R W. Bro J T Marshall and M.W. Bro. K. Reid, 1935 Revised by M.W. Bro. K. Reid, 1980

INTRODUCTION

The first presentation of a paper on the subject of the symbolism of the Carpet covering the floor of the lodge room of the Masonic Temple in Victoria, B.C. was made on the 18th of April, 1935 by the late R. W Bro. John T. Marshall jointly with the present writer, both members of the original Lodge of Instruction connected with Victoria Columbia Lodge No.1, A.F. & A.M., B.C.R. The preparation and

presentation of the original paper was made at the suggestion of the late M.W. Bro. William Bland, who was then the preceptor of the Lodge of Instruction. This original presentation created considerable interest as a subject of Masonic Education,. so much so that in 1938 it was completely revised and rewritten and again presented to the Lodge of Instruction by the same authors.

When the Victoria-Columbia Lodge of Instruction was succeeded by the Victoria District Lodge of Education and Research in the year 1938 under license from the Grand Lodge of British Columbia, interest was again revived in the subject of the symbols on the Lodge Room Carpet, and Bros. Marshall and Reid were again requested to present their paper, this time to the enlarged Lodge of Education and Research.

Bro. Marshall was installed as Worshipful Master of Victoria Columbia Lodge No.1 in January 1940, and the following year was transferred to Ottawa as an employee of the Federal Government.

Following that time, numerous requests have been made by various Lodges in the Victoria area and elsewhere for the representation in consequence of the very great interest it had produced as a subject of masonic education. In the absence of Wor. Bro. Marshall because of his transferal to Ottawa, all subsequent presentations have been made by the present writer, and in each instance it has been found expedient due to circumstances of the occasion to re-write and re-arrange the text, making certain enlargements and some additions where necessary.

The accompanying list shows a record of the presentations that have been made to date, as far as can be remembered, over the forty-five years since its first presentation to the Lodge of Instruction in 1933. Kenneth Reid, P. G.M.. 30 January, 1980 Victoria, B.C.

THE SYMBOLS ON THE LODGE ROOM CARPET MASONIC TEMPLE, VICTORIA, B.C.

THE HISTORY OF THE CARPET

The present carpet covering the floor of the Lodge Room of the Victoria Masonic Temple is the third carpet of its type and pattern to be laid in this Lodge Room. The third carpet was laid in May and June 1979, in the building at 650 Fisgard Street Victoria, B.C.

Forced to vacate its previous location on the east side of Government Street at the intersection of what is now View Street, when the building of T.H. Hibben & Co., Stationers and Book Sellers, the top floor of which was occupied by the early Masonic fraternity of the city, was demolished in 1878 to make way for the extension of View Street from Broad Street to Government Street, the present Masonic Temple building was built by the Masons and dedicated by the Grand Lodge of British Columbia on October 28th, 1878

Just how the Lodge Room was furnished in those early days we are not sure. We believe there was a carpet runner west of the Altar. The minutes of the first Hall Committee (Feb. 16th, 1885) have been searched from that date to the year 1915, and no reference to a lodge room carpet can be found, either in the old Lodge Room on Government Street or the new Temple on Fisgard Street, except that on 13th October, 1885, authority was given to purchase a patent carpet sweeper for \$6.00, and again on 9th May, 1889, that the offer of John Weiler (Weiler Bros. Ltd., furniture dealers) to furnish the Lodge Room including a carpet was satisfactory..

But we do know that the present carpet is the third one of its type to be laid on the Lodge Room floor of the present building. Although no reference is to be found in our minutes, we have been reliably informed many years ago by Brethren now deceased that the first or original carpet was laid in the year 1909. The late Brother Joseph Hilton, a carpet layer with Weiler Bros. for many years, and a member of Vancouver and Quadra Lodge No.2, informed the writer that he had laid the original carpet. He also 15 assisted in laying the second carpet in 1953. It has been said that the original carpet was made in England and was a replica of one used by the United Grand

Lodge of England. It is reputed to have cost about \$2,000.00 when laid in 1909.

The original carpet covered the complete main floor wall to wall from under the front row of seats on each side, and included a 27" border all around with a pattern showing groups of three and five stars alternating, the whole interwoven with the leaf pattern of the Lotus plant similar to that of the main carpet When the 1909 carpet was replaced in the summer of 1953 the pattern for this border was not available and the original border from the old carpet was used to carpet the three dias in the East, West and south, until sometime after 1953 when these area were covered with the Royal blue carpet presently existing.

In 1979, after 26 years of hard wear it was decided by the Directors of the Masonic Temple Association that the second carpet should be replaced. It was learned that the patern for the design was no longer available in Toronto, and an order was placed with carpet manufacturers in Scotland for a new carpet to cover the main floon This carpet arrived from Scofland in April of 1979, and was laid in June of that year. It is of much superior quality to either of the previous carpets and was laid with a quality undercarpet for longer life and greater resiliency. The cost of this new carpet was just over \$18,000.00, not including the cost of laying.

The better portions of the 1953 carpet were used to carpet the floor of the Library Room, since the former carpet in this room was in need of replacement also, having been donated by Wor. Bro. Fred Bartholomew of Victoria Columbia Lodge and laid in 1953. Many small fairly respectable pieces of this old Masonic carpet containing the ftill design were cut up and sold to members desiring pieces of the same.

The Lodge Room Carpet laid in 1953 was manufactured by:-TORONTO CARPET MANUFACTURING COMPANY TORONTO, ONTARIO

Panern #286 Colour 27 Specification Brussels Cost 1953 per lin. yard 27" wide \$10.00 Supplied by: Home Furrriture Company, Victoria, B.C. F.W. Bartholomew Manager. 30 January, 1980. K. Reid, P.G.M.

THE SYMBOLS ON THE LODGE ROOM CARPET Masonic Temple, Victoria, B. C.

Their Identification and a Brief Explanation of their Symbolism SYMBOL - "A visible sign with which a spiritual feeling, emotion, or idea is connected." - by Muller

THE SYMBOL THE SYMBOLISM 1 SQUARE The builder's square, being a right angle of 90° and one quarter part (Morality) of a perfect circle or the Jewel of the Worshipful Master, and is the emblem of Morality signifying our duty to our Brother and to our neighbour. It is also one of the working tools of the Fellow Craft Freemason in the English type of Ritual

2. COMPASSES The Compasses is the Jewel of a Past Master and the most pre-(Virtue) eminent emblem of Virtue and the true measure of a Mason's life and 16.

conduct depicting our duty to ourselves, and to circumscrihe our actions and to control our passions. It is one of the Working Tools of a Master, English Ritual.

3. SQUARE & This is the universal badge of a Master Mason and a symbol of COMPASSES Universal Brother. The Square and Compasses when combined (Universal is emblematic of our duty to ourselves and the whole Craft, to Brotherhood) regulate our lives and actions by figuratively applying the principles of the Square and Compasses to keep ourselves within the bounds of Truth, Honour and Virtue.

4 47th PROPOSITION This is also an emblem or Jewel of a Past Master. It represents the (Wisdom) Theorem of Pythagoras which he is said to have discovered while in Egypt and is the 47th Proposition of Euclid's Elements of Geometry, the proof of which was discovered by the early Greeks and honours Pythagoras as its founder. It is a symbol of perfection attained in the flindamental principles of our Order and is a symbol of the production of the world by the generative and prolific powers of the Greeks and represents Wisdom and the Universal Nature of Life.

5. RIGHT ANGLED This is a triangle with one angle of 900 called a right angle. It is seen TRIANGLE within the illustration of the Square and Compasses on our carpet

(Universal Nature) which illustrates their close relationship. It is the basis of Pythagoras' Theorem and a symbol of Universal Nature and its regenerative powers 6 PERFECT SQUARE This is a rectangle with four right angles and four sides of equal (Morality) length It is an extension of the builder's square, the emblem of morality, and is a product of Pythagoras' Theorem in which three perfect squares are in mathematical relation to each other. Like the builder's square it is a symbol of Morality. 7. BLAZING STAR When Lines of Radiation are external to a Masonic Symbol such as (Divine Providence) surround the Square and Compasses in the design on our carpet, they form what is known as a Glory, sometimes referred to as the Blazing Star. The central figure in the design of the carpet is in the form of a Blazing Star, often called the Glory in the Center, or just The Glory. Instead of the Square and Compasses the central figure could be a Star or any other suitable symbol. In our case there is contained within the Glory, the Square and Compasses, also Pythagoras' Theorem, and the whole is surrounded by a group of seven stars. The Glory refers to the sun which enlightens the earth dispensing its blessings to mankind in general, and is emblematic of Divine Providence. It is also said to be one of the ornaments of the Lodge. 8. PORCH Prominent in the design surrounding the central Square Compasses (Birth) are illustrations of a porchway representing the entrance to King Solomon's Temple. This porch measured twenty cubits or about 30 feet square. It is symbolic of the birth or beginning of our mortal existence and our re-birth into the world of Masonic Light. At the front of the porch above the doorway is to be seen a dormer 9. DORMER ([)ivine Light) and window designed to give light to the porchway or entrance, 17. considered to be another of the ornaments of the Lodge. It is emblematic of the Divine Light which comes from above to enlighten the Master Mason. 10. MORNING STAR Seen through the window of the Dormer, above the Porch(9), is a five (Peace and pointed Star. in our ritual this star is referred to as "--that bright Salvation) Morning Star whose rising brings peace and salvation to the faithful and obedient of the human race." As seen through the Dormer the Morning Star is the symbol of Peace and Salvation. 11.SQUARE PAVEMENT The floor supporting the Porchway is of squared pavement (Virtue and Vice) and was for the high priest to walk upon. This is a very ancient and legendary symbol and consists of alternate black and white mosaic pavement representing the diversity of objects which decorate and

adorn the Creation, hence another of the ornaments of our

Masonic

Lodge. The alternate white and black pavement is symbolic of

the

opposites in human life; right and wrong; good and evil; truth and

falsehood; happiness and misery; virtue and vice.

12. COLUMN In architecture the column is intended to both support and adorn (Power) the building. In Freemasonry columns have a symbolic significance as the supports of a Lodge, such as the columns of Wisdom, Strength and Beauty, and are emblematic of the power of the Diety.

TILE ROYAL We now come to a group of symbols which are obviously foreign ARCH SYMBOLS to Craft Masonry. Some of you may have noticed them. They include

the following: The Arch Sanctum Sanctorum The Keystone Equilateral Triangle The Veils Interlaced Triangles The Ark of the Covenant Tau Cross

What are these Royal Arch Symbols doing on a Craft Lodge Carpet? There presence here is prime evidence of the antiquity of the design of this carpet which must date prior to the year 1813, the date of the formation of the United Grand Lodge of England by the Ancients and the Moderns. Prior to that date the Royal Arch Degree was part and parcel of or the conclusion of the Master Mason Degree as practiced at that time. Following the amalgamation of the two Grand Lodges, the Ancients and the Moderns in 1813, the Royal Arch Degree was separated from the Craft Lodges and placed under separate Chapters as they are today. And so we find these Royal Arch symbols have a legitimate place in the design of our carpet by right of antiquity, and their prior close association with the early Craft Lodges. Let us

examine the symbolism of these few Royal Arch emblems.

13. THE ARCH The most prominent Royal Arch symbol shown on our carpet is the

(The Arch of Heaven) illustration of the Arch. The Arch is an architectural structure of great

antiquity, said to have first been used in the building of King Solomon's Temple. However antiquarians have traced its use to at least 460 years earlier than that event. The arch shown here is the Arch of Solomon, or Catenarian, or natural arch as formed by gravity on a freely suspended flexible member. Symbolically it represents the dome of the sky, or the Arch of Heaven.

18.

14 KEYSTONE The arch and its keystone were together one of the great (Stability) secrets of the Operative masons and the Master Builders of

early

times, the keystone being the final element which locked the whole structure together into one stable mass. Hence the keystone is a symbol of Stability and plays an important part in the Royal Arch Ceremonies.

15 THE VEILS Beyond the Arch, and particularly obscuring the entrance to (Universe) whatever lies beyond, we see what appears to be a curtain or veils

obscuring our vision, and representing the veils of blue, purple, scarlet and fine-twined white linen, which divided the Tabernacle of Moses in Biblical times. They are the symbols of the Universe, or

creation.

16. THE ARK The representation seen here within the Arch could be an Altar,

(Intercession) but more likely it is the Ark of the Covenant, and intended to be the

later. The Ark of the Covenant was the chest made of shittim wood by Moses at God's command as the repository of the two tablets of stone on which were written the Ten Commandrnents. It also contained a golden pot of manna, and Aaron's rod. King Solomon's Temple was designed as a permanent resting place for the Ark of the Covenant, where it was placed in the Sanctum Sanctorum or Holy of Holies The Ark is symbolic of intercession for sin.

17 SANCTUM Beyond the Veils we see the Ark, and beyond the Ark, in the SANCTORUM blackness of the unknown, is the Sanctum Sanctornm, or Holy (Master's Lodge) of Holies of King Solomon's Temple. It was situated at the western

> end of the building, without windows, and was separated from the rest of the Temple by heavy veils or curtains, and wherein was contained the sacred Ark of the Covenant for which the Temple was built. This Sanctorurn was entered only by the High Priest on solemn occasions It is symbolic of the Master's Lodge for the performance of the most sacred rites of Ancient Craft Initiation.

18.EQUILATERAL Centrally located in the border surrounding the design we see

TRIANGLE number of other symbols, one of which is the equilateral triangle, in

(Diety) fact two equilateral triangles contained within a circle. The equilateral

triangle is a Royal Arch symbol and does not belong to Craft Masonry. It is considered to be a perfect figure, having perfectly

equal

sides and equal angles, and is therefore a symbol of the Diety, or

the

Great Architect of the Universe.

19. INTERLACED Two equilateral triangles interlaced as shown in our illustration, TRIANGLES represent the union or interdependence of God and man, the

(Universal upper triangle representing God in Heaven, and the lower triangle dependence) man on earth. It is the foundation of the six-pointed star, called Hexapha, symboh'c of the Universe. It is also known as the Star of David, and was adopted as the Seal of Solomon, and is symbolic of the Universal Dependence on God by man.

20. TAU CROSS Within the interlaced triangles will be seen a representation (Salvation) of the Greek letter T, the 19th letter of the Greek alphabet, commonly known to Royal Arch Masons as a Tau Cross. This symbol 19.

all

was used by the early Egyptians as a mark to record the height of the floodwaters of the River Nile in the event of the destruction of crops or danger to people, and later became a good luck charm, or Amulet. It has been adopted by Royal Arch Masons as a symbol of Eternal Life or Salvation from Death.

Returning now to Craft Masonry symbols, but before leaving the Porch-Sanctoruin-Ark of the Covenant Group, we find our next symbol, the three steps.

21 THREE STEPS Looking into the Sanctum Sanctorum through the Arch and (Human Life) beyond the veils we see illustrated on our carpet, the Ark of the Covenant and note that it is elevated upon a dais of three steps above the level of the entrance. These Three Steps are also an important Craft symbol. We remember that the Master's stations in our Lodges are also elevated three steps above the Lodge Room floor. Besides being symbolic of the three degrees in Craft Masonry, the Three Steps are symbolic of the three ages of man; youth, manhood and old age. They are also symbolic of the three who rule a Lodge, the Worshipful Master and his two Wardens, who in turn rule as representatives of the three Grand Masters who bore sway at the building of the first Temple at Jerusalem, Solomon, King of Israel; Hiram, King of Tyre and Hiram Abiff The Three Steps then, may be considered symbolic of these three stages of human life, youth, manhood and old age.

22 THE CIRCLE In every age the Circle has been credited with magical properties

(Eternity) protecting from evil everything enclosed within it. The Circle, having

neither beginning nor end is considered a symbol of eternity.

23 A CIRCLE In the design of this carpet are to be seen many examples of SURROUNDING masonic symbols surrounded by a circle as though to protect A SYMBOL them from evil and adversity by its mystical powers. Examples (Protection) can be noted on our carpet such as the square, level,

plumb

rule, compasses, star, interlaced triangles, crossed keys, etc. This combined emblem is a symbol of Divine Protection.

24. THE LEVEL The Level is the distinctive Jewel of the Senior Warden and (Equality) is another of the working Tools or the Fellow Craft Freemason.

It is a symbol of equality of station of all men before Ged. In the sight of Ged all men are equal, subject to the same

infirmities, hastening to the same goal, and preparing to be judged by the same law. In this sense only do Masons speak of the equality which should reign in the Lodge. The Level admonishes the Fellow Craft by its peculiar use of that vast level of time on which all men are travelling to its limit of eternity.

seen surrounding the Equilateral Triangles (17), and the Level

(22), 20.

is not

illustration

on our carpet, they indicate the Divine origin of that symbol, and symbolically are referred to as a Divine Light.

26. THE PLUMB The plumb is the distinctive jewel of the Junior Warden and the third

(Uprightness) Working Tool of the Fellow Craft Freemason. Masonically the Plumb

is a symbol of the moral uprightness, integrity and rectitude of human

conduct. He whose life is not supported by an upright course of conduct , but whose principles are swayed by the uncertain dictates of interst or passion, cannot long sustain a worthy reputation, and must soon sink beneath the estimation of every good and virtuous citizen..

27. CROSSED KEYS Included in the common border of the design is shown the Crossed (Authority & Keys surrounded by a Circle. The Crossed Keys is the Jewel of circumspection) the Treasurer of the Lodge. The key was ancienfly an emblem of power, and as such has been adopted as the Jewel of the Treasurer of the Lodge because it is he who has the purse strings under his command. Therefore the Key, or the Crossed Keys is a symbol of Power and Authority, or Silence and Circumspection..

28. COLLAR Surrounding the central figure of the Blazing Star and the group of (Brotherhood) seven stars is seen as a chain or collar consisting of

various emblems or symbols linked together in the form of a chain or collar

similar to

the collar worn by the Grand Master of our Order, showing a rectangle or parallelopipedon containing the letters G L; a Star within

a Circleand a Comacine Knot alternately. This collar or chain

necessarily a masonic symbol in itself; but rather an

a symbol serving to identity the origin of the whole, and if considered would represent Brotherhood.

29. RECTANGLE The rectangle, or oblong square as it is called in our lectures is a

(The Lodge) is a parallelopipedon, the length of which is twice its breadth. It is symbolic of the rectangular form of the Lodge, the shape of King Solomon's Temple, and the Ark of the Covenant. It represents the shape of the Lodge and

contains the letters G L presumably pertaining to Grand Lodge.

30. COMACINE KNOT This is an interesting end clever figure consisting of two figures 8 and (Eternity) and a circle all interwoven with each other. Its origin dates from the Comacine Masters of Lake Como in Northern Italy, a learned and clever group of monks and builders who maintained the operative secrets of the builders art during the dark ages of history. (from 476 A.D. to the Renaissance about 1,000 A.D.) It was a mysterious symbol of the Comacine Guild, and is symbolic of Eternity, having like the circle, neither beginning or end.

31. THE STAR Depicted on the Master's Collar is seen a 5-pointed Star within (Peace and within a Circle, also 7 of them are seen in a group about the Salvation central Blazing Star. This star is similar to the Pentalpha of or Health) Pythagoras which was a symbol of health. It is of comparatively recent origin and is not counted among the ancient symbols of masonry. In this form it is typical of the Bond of Brotherly Love which unites the whole Fraternity. It is also said to be a aymbol of the Five Points of 21.

Fellowship.

32. THREE STARS The original carpet in the Lodge Room, laid in 1909, had an 18" (3 Masters who border around it depicting alternate groups of 3 and 5 Stars form a Lodge) intersperced with Lotus flowers. Unfortunately this border was unavailable for succeeding replacements. Three, one of the sacred numbers of Freemasonry, was considered among the pagan nations as the chief of the mystical numbers because it contains within itself a beginning, a middle and an end. In Freemasonry the number 3 is the most important and universal in its application of all the mystical numbers. It pervades our whole ritual - three degrees of ancient Cralt masonry; three principal officers of a Lodge; three supports; three ornaments; three Greater and Lesser Lights; three Moveable and three Immovable Jewels; three principal tenets; three rounds of Jacob's ladder; three working tools for each degree; three principal Orders of Architecture; three important human senses; three recreant Fellowcrafts; etc. It is said that the number 3 occurs at least 35 times in our Entered Apprentice Degree ritual The Three Stars are syrribolic of the three Masters who form a Lodge 33. FIVE STARS Five, another or the sacred numbers of Freemasonry is formed (3 Masters plus by a combination of the first even number or digit with the 2 Fellowcrafts first odd digit, 2 A 3. A group of 5 Stars is symbolic of the five who hold a lodge) who hold a Lodge, two Followcrafts added to the former three. 34. SEVEN STARS Among all the ancient nations the number 7 has ever been (Perfection) considered a sacred number, and in every system of antiquity we find frequent reference to it. Reference is made here to that part of our Tracing Board lecture which says, ".....an etherial mansion,

veiled from mortal eyes by the starry firmament, emblematically depicted here by seven stars, which have an allusion to as many regularly made Masons, without which number no Lodge is perfect, " This group of seven stars is symbolic of two Apprentices being added to the former five, making 3 Entered masters, 2 fellowcrafts, and 2 entered apprentices, all of whom form a perfect or symbolic lodge. 35 THE LOTUS Interwoven throughout the whole design of the carpet enhancing FLOWER its interest and beauty, appears the lily-work of the Lotus plant (Purity & Peace) representing the water lily, the most beautiful of all the field flowers of ancient Judea. 36. BLUE Even the colours of our carpet have their masonic significance. (Friendship & The dark blue of the background is the Royal Grand Lodge, as used or Oxford blue of benevolence) on our Grand Lodge regalia and like the light or Cambridge blue of the Craft Lodge is symbolic of Friendship and benevolence. 37. RED Red is the adopted colour of Capitular or Royal Arch Freemasonry (Forvency as seen depicted in the colour of the leaves of the Lotus plant in our design and some of the background. The colour red is & Zeal) symbolic of fervency and zeal, faith, fortitude, divine love, magnaminity and in the suggestion of blood --martyrdom.. 22. 38. BLACK Light is required to produce colour, and the absence of light (Secrecy & results in black or complete darkness. Hence black is the symbol of ignorance, secrecy, silence, grief, sorrow, the Sorrow) darkness of desth and fear of the unknown. Seeking into the Sanctum Sanctorum, past the Veils, the curtain obscuring our vision we observe nothing but darkness, blackness, the great secret of the unknown, Eternity. At the beginiiig of this address we defined symbolism as: "A visible sign with which a spiritual feeling, emotion or idea is connected. Another definition could be expressed as follows: - "A symbol is a concrete figure or object

used to represent something abstract; as a dove is a symbol of peace, the cross a symbol of salvation, the square a symbol of morality and the level of equality.

Freemasonry is confessedly an allegorical system, and all its teachings and secrets must partake in common of its emblematical construction. The symbols on our carpet have been woven into the design purposely to teach and remind us of the allegorical lessons of our ancient Craft. Yictoria, R. C. Kenneth Reid, P.G.M.. 25 February, 1980 Victoria Columbia Lodge No. 1 A.F. & A. M., B.C.R. ****

THE 1979 Masonic Carpet

Tho new Lodge Room Carpet laid in 1979 was inanufactured by:

TEMPLETON CARPETS LTD., GLASGOW, SCOTLAND.

Canadian representatives: -Templeton Carpets (Canada) Limited, 160 Disco Road, Rexdale, Ontario. M9W 1M4 Tel. (416)675-1002

1608 West 5th Ave., Vanoouver, B. C. V6J 1N8 Tel. (604) 734-2254

Specification:- Luxury Wilton, 80% worsted wool yarn, 20% nylon worsted Quantity:- 240 square yards Quotations:- \$19,915.16 F.O.B. Victoria, B.C. including sewing Federal and Provincial taxes \$79.03 / sq. yd.