

ROBERT INGHAM CLEGG, IX^o
A Rosicrucian who offered tips for Success to Masonic Lodges

by Frater James A. Marples, VIII^o
Life Member, Nebraska College S.R.I.C.F.

In the area of History, especially Masonic History, very few men stand out like our Frater Robert Ingham Glegg, IX^o. Many Masons may recognize his name; yet they cannot quite put their finger on his accomplishments. Probably his most remarkable achievement was his later revisions and addendum to "Mackey's Encyclopedia of Freemasonry and its Kindred Sciences" in conjunction with other noted Masonic scholars such as Bro.: William James Hughan. In the 1800's (with original author --Bro. Mackey) and continuing into the early 1900s and even today, that work stands-out as the preeminent reference guide for "all things Masonic."

Frater Clegg was appointed the Chief Adept of the New Jersey College S.R.I.C.F., Under Dispensation, on April 29, 1931, even before that College received its Charter on May 10, 1932.

He was initiated as an Entered Apprentice Mason in Tyrian Masonic Lodge # 370 of Cleveland, Ohio, on October 25, 1905. He became a Master Mason in 1906 and remarkably served as Master of that Lodge from October 1909 to October 1910. He was the Grand Historian of the Grand Lodge of Ohio from 1920 to 1925. He belonged to Salem Commandery #42 of Knights Templar as well as the Red Cross of Constantine, and became a 33^o Scottish Rite Mason on September 21, 1920.

Recently, I came across an old document {the S.R.I.C.F. Fama} (combined issues 37 and 38 for January and July 1969 published by our High Council S.R.I.C.F. for the United States). On pages 3 and 4, it speaks of a list of Principles that Frater Clegg wrote before his passing, which was printed in a "Service Letter" to Colorado Lodges in March 1950, and re-printed by "The Square & Compass" in June 1969. I won't quote the entirety of Frater Clegg's list ---but I will paraphrase the key passages and quote when needed, for clarity.

Point I: Thou shalt not make Freemasonry a substitute for Religion, not shall you use the name or reputation of our honorable institution to inflate personal egos, nor for improper personal gain. Frater Clegg even says: "Freemasonry is more than the blazonry of big buttons or the ballast of weighty watch charms."

Point II: {direct quote} "Thou shalt not take the (good) name of Freemasonry in vain, nor fail to live up to live up to it." {Meaning: We are to adhere to our Fraternity's high virtuous standards of conduct.}

Point III. Remember your Lodge night and "show up thereon." {if you are able}

Point IV: Honor your {home} Lodge, so that the stranger {or visitor} from afar may see its worthy endeavors and worthy members.

Point V: Thou shall not kill cheery prospects for the future, by remaining in ruts of the Past. {I think Frater Clegg was excluding Ritual, which remains a constant, unalterable Landmark even in his eyes..... However, he was essentially encouraging Masons not to be stagnant in promoting ongoing good deeds such as community-improvement efforts or listening to the hopes, goals and projects of younger members.}

Point VI: "Thou shalt not commit buffoonery as Steward, nor lack dignity as Master {of a Masonic Lodge or other Organization}.



Point VII: "Thou shalt not steal your {Masonic} Brother's pleasure, neither dilute your { own } joys."

Point VIII: Thou shalt not bear a falsehood nor harbor an unjust grudge against any Brother, Companion, Sir Knight or Frater.

Point IX: "Thou shalt not covet another's Lodge. Get busy !!"

Point X: Lastly, to see a true-blue Brother Mason -- "you will make friends by being one."

The 10 points above, may sound like common-sense Principles. In many ways, they are basic, fundamental guidelines that the rank-and-file members of the Craft implicitly knew generations ago; but which subsequent generations may have inadequately communicated to our younger generations the great distinctions between what may be discretionary or optional duties VERSUS some duties which are vital on a yearly basis. Due to this lack of mentoring: some current Officer Lines of Lodges; and even Officer Lines of Grand Lodges (at the State level) may be 'coasting' or simply ignorant of why protocols and procedures exist---- or take their own improvised shortcuts in regard to leadership needs. Such impromptu or casual planning may sound good on the surface ---but it can perpetuate a perpetual laxness (that gets worse over time) causing some once-dedicated members to get bored and stay home; eventually prompting some Lodges to cease operating altogether, due to apathy.

Vitality of any Lodge hinges on the vitality of its members. "Stated-meetings" are set at certain calendar-dates, as a measure of "Uniformity" and "Regularity." This enables members to plan their schedules well in-advance. This meeting-of-the-minds at a Regular date, time, and known location also is crucial for ANY SUCCESSFUL ENDEAVOR: Regardless of whether it is a specific date and time for a Company's employee staff-meeting; or a family-reunion; or even two young lovestruck people dating, or anything..... It boils down to: Coordinating our lives so that the regular dispatch of Masonic business can occur at regularly set times. Stated Meetings are meant to be as regular as a Swiss watch. Degree Conferral's are usually announced as "Called Meetings" or for other special occasions ---even membership-service awards nights or "family nights."

We need to include "Masonic Time" in the "Daily Planners" of each of our pocket calendars. Not just the Trestleboard of Masonic Work to be done, but also finding time to visit the sick or home-bound members of the Lodge, as well as finding Time to visit any distressed worthy Brother who could use a helping-hand or just the simple voice of encouragement from a Brother Mason. Lastly, we should, as individuals, find Time to worship our Creator according to our own Faith upbringing on an individual basis. If we become 'slackers' in any of the major duties befitting a Master Mason --- it sometimes induces a looseness of slacking-off in other areas.

The leadership-style of any Master of a Lodge (or even a Grand Master at the State-level) can be 'flexible' in many areas; yet it requires some "bookends" or perimeters of what is expected {or what might be expected} ranging from the Top Officers down to the ordinary member . In essence, the regular Master Mason is justifiably expected to honor his solemn promises, vows, and Obligations. For an Officer, he is held to a somewhat higher standard of faithfully PERFORMING THE DUTY TO THE OFFICE OF WHICH, HE VOLUNTARILY ASSUMES.

I have heard throughout my life, many wise men and wise women who have stated a very thoughtful and insightful maxim: "Common-sense is not so common." Performing one's duties and responsibilities requires diligence, practice, and a happy, cooperative heart. We can be thankful to Frater Robert Ingham Clegg, IX^o for his tips for a Successful Lodge.



Sources / References / Exhibits /Recommended Readings:

- "The Rosicrucian Fama." Combined issue of Numbers 37 & 38 for January and July 1969. Issued by The Supreme Magus and published by The High Council S.R.I.C.F. for The United States of America. {Author's note: On the front cover of this issue was the announcement that Frater Stanley W. Wakefield, of New Jersey, has been elevated to the Grade of VIII^o on May 5, 1969. This has special meaning since Frater Stanley W. Wakefield, VIII^o and Frater James A. Marples, VIII^o had a long friendship which lasted many years. Frater Wakefield was a "Past Grand _ (everything) in nearly all branches of Masonry, including a Past Grand Commander of Knights Templar of New York State. He later resided in New Jersey. He even held the coveted position of being a Past Potentate of Mecca Shrine Center #1 in New York City. Plus, he became a member of The Red Cross of Constantine even BEFORE the "United Grand Imperial Council" was established. When he became a member The Red Cross of Constantine had an Eastern Jurisdiction and a Western Jurisdiction within the U.S.A. Frater Wakefield was, in many respects, quite similar to Frater Clegg: kind, courteous, and a walking encyclopedia "on all things Masonic."}

- Mackey's Encyclopedia of Freemasonry by Dr. Albert G. Mackey, M.D., 33^o and a Knight Templar.

- Archives of The Masonic Grand Lodge of British Columbia and Yukon, Canada.

- Macoy's Masonic Manual by Robert Macoy, 33^o and a Knight Templar. Fifteenth Edition. New York. Published in New York, Year 1861 by Clark, Austin, Maynard & Company located at 3 Park Row & 3 Ann Street, New York, New York. "A Pocket Companion for the Initiated".

About the Author:

Frater James A. Marples, VIII^o is a Perpetual Life Member of Mulvane Masonic Lodge #201 A.F. & A.M. in Mulvane, Kansas. He is a Life Member of The International Peace Gardens Lodge of Freemasons (Canada-USA) and also an Honorary Member of Golden Rule Masonic Lodge #562 in Willard, Ohio; as well as an Honorary Member of Nelson Masonic Lodge #77, in Nelson, Nebraska, which has recently consolidated with the Superior Masonic Lodge at Superior, Nebraska.

Companion and Sir Knight Jim is a Life Member of the Wichita York Rite Bodies (Wichita Chapter #33 R.A.M.; Wichita Council #12 R.& S.M.; and Mt. Olivet Commandery #12 K.T.). He is also a Life Member of the Lincoln Nebraska Scottish Rite Bodies; The Robert-the-Bruce Association (California); The George Washington Masonic Stamp Club; Masonic Order of the Gordian Knot (Indiana); Masonic Order of the Sword of Bunker Hill; Kentucky Chapter #134 of National Sojourners and Heroes of '76; South Dakota Lodge of Masonic Research; North Texas York Rite College #118 of Sherman, Texas; and Nebraska College S.R.I.C.F.

He is a Regular Member of The Allied Masonic Degrees; Grand College of Rites; St. David Conclave of The Red Cross of Constantine; Shawnee County Kansas Square and Compass Club; and Holyrood Council #61 of Knight Masons (Nebraska).

