

THE CALIFORNIA ENCOMPASSER IS THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE GRAND YORK RITE BODIES OF CALIFORNIA AND IS PUBLISHED QUARTERLY FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE MEMBERSHIP. THE ENCOMPASSER IS TO BE MADE AVAILABLE TO THE MEMBERSHIP AT ALL CONVOCATIONS, ASSEMBLES AND CONCLAVES OF THE YORK RITE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Vol. 20

DECEMBER 2005

No. 3

THE PRINCIPAL CHARACTERS OF THE ROYAL ARCH STORY

BY E. COMP. LESLIE J. BIDDLE, LL.B., P.G.St.B.

A Companion who was well acquainted with the story of the return from the captivity and the building of the second Temple, from the Royal Arch Ritual, and who had never checked it in the Volume of the Sacred Law, would have quite a vivid picture in his mind. He would believe that the incidents narrated occurred shortly after the accession of Cyrus the Great, as King of Persia; that Zeru-babel, (1) Haggai and Joshua had led the whole of the Children of Israel back across the desert to Jerusalem, that those three leaders ruled over a solemn Sanhedrin which governed the returned exiles and which immediately allocated the principal offices in connection with the rebuilding of the Temple; that Ezra and Nehemiah were attendants upon the Grand Sanhedrin, and that they assisted Zeru-babel, Haggai and Joshua in their task of rebuilding the Temple. The Bible is the best book there is on Royal Arch Masonry - as it is on so many other important subjects - but it tells the story somewhat differently.

If we break through the smooth surface of this compact piece of Masonry we make some rather remarkable discoveries. The first is that the return from the captivity and the rebuilding of the Temple are two quite separate and distinct stories. The return may have begun shortly after Cyrus the Great, King of Persia, defeated the Babylonians and overwhelmed their city and empire. That return may have been led by Zeru-babel and Jeshua (whom we call Joshua) but it was not until the arrival of the prophet Haggai some 15 years later that the returned exiles took any active steps to rebuild their Temple.

The second fact of interest is that the august Sanhedrin did not exist until some 500 years later (about 79 B.C.) under John Hyrcanus, nor was there any other body over

whom Zeru-babel, Haggai and Jeshua could be said to have presided.

Thirdly, neither Ezra nor Nehemiah had any connection either with Zeru-babel, Haggai and Jeshua, with the Grand Sanhedrin, or with the rebuilding of the Temple. Ezra did not even leave Babylon until nearly 60 years after the second Temple was completed and dedicated. Nehemiah followed him to Jerusalem some 12 years later. These are the bald facts, which can readily be confirmed by a study of the Bible. Too many people, however, in reading their Bible, do not read it as a book out of which to acquire a knowledge of history, geography and particularly psychology, to be read as a whole and studied in detail. They appear to approach the Bible with so much awe that it might be a dangerous drug, to be absorbed in very small doses. Like the Principal Sojourner in the Royal Arch story, they grope about in the gloom and lucky indeed are they if they really succeed in finding something valuable which they can bring to the surface.

I therefore propose to tell the stories of Zeru-babel, Haggai, Jeshua, Ezra and Nehemiah as they are recorded in the Bible. I cannot claim anything original for the stories - all I can claim is that they are pictures in mosaic, constructed from fragments taken from various books of the Bible and of the Apocrypha.

The whole story, of course, must be seen against the background of Israel's history as a nation, which began with their release from their Egyptian bondage under Pharaoh. Shortly after that release, the worship of Jehovah was established in a Tabernacle erected by Moses, Aholiab

Continued on Page 2

CHARACTERS OF THE ROYAL ARCH

(Continued from Page 1)

and Bezaleel. That Tabernacle was the central point of every encampment of the Jews during their nomadic period of wandering in the Desert of Sinai. It was a symbol of the fact that the formal worship of Jehovah occupied the central position of Jewish life and thought. During that nomadic period the rules for worship and the offering of sacrifices became the one settled feature of the life of the Jews.

When they had been formed into a nation with a sense of national unity and purpose during their wanderings, they settled in Canaan and became a state under their first king, Saul. His successor, David, made plans to demonstrate the settled character of the new state and the finality of the choice of Canaan as a permanent home of the Jews by erecting a Temple to Jehovah in stone. He chose the site for that Temple on the threshing-floor of Araunah the Jebusite and erected an altar there, which he appointed to be the altar of burnt offering for Israel, instead of the altar of burnt offering at the Tabernacle which, at that time, was kept at the "high place" at Gibeon. From that small beginning Jerusalem became the capital city of the Israelites.

After the death of David, in about 980 B.C., his son Solomon erected upon that site the Temple which was to his Jewish subjects the very symbol of the permanence of their state and their religion. That feeling of permanence, as it grew in the four centuries which followed, encouraged laxity in personal conduct and in religious observance, which aroused the fierce denunciations of the Prophet Jeremiah in the days of Jehoiakim and his son and successor Jehoiachin.

All Jeremiah's warnings were neglected and a sudden attack by the Babylonians, in about 598 B.C., overthrew the state. The King Jehoiachin, his harem, his nobles, the priests and some of the more skilled of his people were carried off from Jerusalem to Babylon. With them were carried away the golden ornaments and sacred vessels of the Temple, (It is this first exile to which belong the prophets Ezekiel and Daniel). The Jewish nation reeled under this shock, and felt that their God had deserted them. But severe as was this blow to all that the Jews held dear, there was worse to come. Jehoiachin's successor as King, Zedekiah, having sworn allegiance to Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, broke his oath and put himself at the head of a league of the neighbouring kings against the Chaldean power and formed an alliance with Egypt. Ezekiel in Babylon and Jeremiah in Jerusalem, protested in vain at this treachery and folly, which could only result in the severest punishment. The Chaldean forces poured into the country from the north and east and an Egyptian army from the south. Zedekiah was besieged in Jerusalem for 18 months and at length, after the Jews had been weakened by famine and pestilence, the Babylonians made a breach in the walls and over-ran the city. Those Jews who were not slain in the massacre that followed were carried off to

Babylon by the cruel conqueror. The whole of the remaining treasures of the Temple were swept away to adorn the temples or the tables of the Babylonian court. Even the two great pillars which stood at the porchway or entrance of the Temple and which had seemed the very embodiment of stability and durability, were broken to pieces and carried off as mere scrap metal to Babylon, never to return.

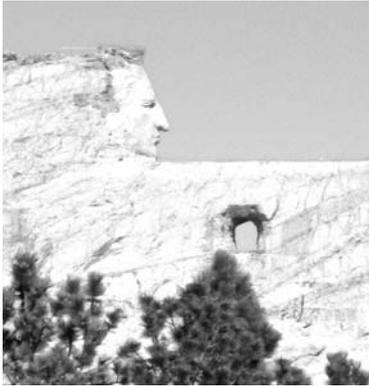
It is impossible to over-state the extent of this disaster in its effect upon the minds of the Jewish people. Having been a race of nomads, their settlement in Canaan had come to seem to them to be as permanent as that of the Egyptians in Egypt, whose type of civilization they had copied. Their capital, Jerusalem, had become to them Zion, the Holy City, the centre of their world. Now it had been sacked, burned and ruined and left a desolation. The Temple itself, the palace, and every conspicuous building, with many of the common houses, were burned, and what could not be burned was dismantled. Even the very walls of the city, so essential for its protection in those unsettled days that they constituted its title to be called a walled city instead of a village, were broken down.

These verses are repeated almost exactly in the Book of Ezra, but the facts stated are not supported by the contemporary records and the accounts by non-Jewish authors. From these it seems clear that Cyrus on entering Babylon was careful to do homage to the Babylonian Gods and had himself proclaimed as "the servant of BelMerodach" (or Marduk). He says nothing in his proclamation of freeing the Jews, or any of the other tribes held captive on Babylonian soil, but it would have been a wise and statesman-like course to have taken, since it would have helped to bind those subject peoples more closely to him. It would perhaps be convenient at this point to remark that the community which returned to Jerusalem was no longer a sovereign people, a nation in the full sense of the word, but only a Persian colony. For the next two hundred years, Cyrus, Darius, Xerxes and Artaxerxes were to exercise the influence which in earlier times had been exercised by the Kings of Israel, and the Persian Governor became their immediate local ruler. He was known as "the Tirshatha" (Ezra 11, 63) or "the Pasha," that old Assyrian word which has never since died out amongst the governments of the East. When Cyrus gave permission for the exiles to return to Jerusalem, only some 42,000 took advantage of the opportunity to take part in the organized trek across the desert. Those who had been transplanted from the north of Palestine in the Assyrian captivity never returned at all, or only in small numbers. Of those who had been transported to Babylon and become settled in those rich plains and in that splendid city, many were quite content to remain. Some of them held high places in the Persian court; others remained as members of that great Babylonian colony of Jews which caused Mesopotamia to become as it were a second Holy Land, and round which were planted the tombs, real or supposed, of the three great Jewish saints of

Continued on Page 4

Events that startle the Imagination

What a great October for our York Rite Bodies. It all began with the Triennial meeting of the General Grand Chapter and the General Grand Council in South Dakota. Two days of sight seeing and two days of sessions. It all started on Friday with a tour of Deadwood, Sturgis and the Black hills. You guessed it, my wife was really intrigued with the Black hills, Gold that is. It seems that no matter where we went there was a gold manufacturing company. Saturday took us to Mount Rushmore, Crazy Horse Monument, and Custer State park. Two days of absolute splendor.



Crazy Horse Monument

The sessions went well. California was well represented. Deputy General Grand High Priest Sam Pitassi, Regional Deputy General Grand Master Ed Barr, Grand High Priest Bill Wine, Grand King Russ Roberts, Grand Chapter Soloist Ed Blake III, Most Illustrious Grand Master Jose Fiss, Grand PCW Joe Ryland and, of course, me, the General Grand Captain of the Guard, along with our wonderful ladies. To me, the highlight of any of the sessions is the fraternal fellowship we have with our companions from around the world. One of the things that impressed me the most was the enthusiasm that was shown by our companions from other countries. I guess that we sometimes



Mount Rushmore National Monument

just take our Masonry for granted. At the event, two of our own, Illustrious Companion Donald Spencer and Most Illustrious Companion H. Edward Barr, were awarded the Columbian medal by Most Puissant Companion Perry Anderson.

If this event was not the most exciting, then the Grand Commandery making history on the 9 of October by forming the line for the reception of the Grand Master of Masons of California and the officers of Grand Lodge, along with the dignitaries presented at the informal opening

of Grand Lodge, must be. This action is hoped to establish a long tradition for the Grand Commandery. I wish I had been there. I wish that I had pictures. (I am working on that) I can picture it in my mind the Grand Commandery officers marching down the aisle to form the lines, with the assistance of California Commandery Number One presenting the colors. I can picture the Grand Master being led by the Grand Marshal followed by the officers of the Grand Lodge, the forming of the arch of steel. What an inspiring sight that must have been. I must be there next year.

The month was climaxed by the Colorado River Fall Festival. Ritual teams from Arizona, Nevada, Utah, New Mexico and California worked together to confer the degrees and orders of the York Rite to 31 new Companions and Sir Knights. Each year that I attend, it seems to get better and better. One day, we will have the best of the best at Laughlin. Even the Ladies have their own special Widows Degree. Next year, for those in the Council who want to receive the Super Excellent Master Degree, it will be conferred after the Council Degrees on Monday. The confer-



Lady Gwen pins her man.

rals were climaxed by a tasty banquet dinner and a show that all those who attended will not soon forget. (Right Don Sam and Ray?) The evening was culminated by the presentation of the Columbian award to our very own Illustrious Companion Don Spencer by this year's other California recipient, MIPGM Ed Barr.

One more event to attend before the year ends and that is the Southwest Regional Conference. It is being held in Mesquite, Nevada this year. This is a meeting of the States in the Southwest region. It started out as a training session for the Grand Officers (yes we do need training), but it has been opened to any York Rite Mason that desires to attend. Each year, I learn some new approach to enhancing our Rite.

Fraternally and Sincerely
Jim Baum, MIPGM

CHARACTERS OF THE ROYAL ARCH

(Continued from Page 2)

this epoch, Ezekiel, Daniel and Ezra.

Still there were 42,000 who listened to the call to return to Jerusalem, together with some 7,000 slaves. Amongst these was the acknowledged head of the community, the Tirshatha or Governor of Judah appointed by Cyrus, the grandson of the beloved and lamented King Jehoiachin, last direct heir of the house of David and Josiah. He was the son of Shealtiel or Salathiel, who bore the trace of his Babylonian birthplace in his two Chaldaean names, Zerubabel "the Babel-born" and Sheshbazzar or Sarabazzar. Next to him was Jeshua (or Joshua) the son of Josedek, the High Priest who had been carried into exile with Zedekiah and shared his imprisonment. Next to them in rank and their elder in years was Seriaiah the priest, the son of Hilkiyah.

We have no information as to whether the exiles had any adventures during their long journey across the desert, which took them four months. Considering that they had to take with them all their tents and their tools and personal goods and much of their food for the whole journey, and that they had no vehicles of any kind and only about 8,000 beasts of burden for 50,000 people, the prospect of crossing the desert may well have filled the minds of the exiles with terror. But they won through at last, and reached their goal, Jerusalem, which they called by the name of "the Holy City" or eir ha-kodesh in Hebrew. It is interesting to note that even today its name in Arabic is "el Kuds."

The one object which had filled the minds of the exiles—the one object for which they believed that their return had been permitted by the Persian king, was "the building of the house of the Lord, the God of Israel, which is in Jerusalem." It was the chief mission of Zeru-babel, and shortly after his arrival in Jerusalem the first step was taken towards the erection of the second Temple by the erection of an altar upon the place formerly occupied by the Temple of Solomon. As the altar which David erected on the threshing-floor of Araunah long preceded the erection of Solomon's Temple, so Zeru-babel's altar was erected before any attempt was made to erect the walls or even to lay the foundations of the new Temple.

The morning and evening sacrifices were resumed, the Feast of Tabernacles observed and afterwards the other feasts. Next Zeru-babel laid the foundation stone of the Temple and began the building. Immediately, opposition arose from two directions. The people who had been left in the land from the very beginning claimed a right to it so that the exiles found difficulty in getting fertile land to till, which would ensure a supply of food. Next, we are told:

"They weakened the hands of the people of Judah (that is to say, the returned exiles) intimidated them from building, and hired counsellors against them all the days of Cyrus, even until the reign of Darius."

Thus from the very foundation of the new Temple we have faction against faction intriguing with their foreign

rulers, as they did right down to the destruction of the city under Titus.

The second source of hostility was also one which continued for centuries. The Samaritans, who claimed to have worshipped Jehovah since the days of Esar-haddon, King of Assyria, tried to claim the right to a share in the building of the Temple. It is, of course, a story which has been repeated again and again, in modern times. First the natural desire of an estranged population, heretical though they might be, to partake in a glorious national work; then the rude refusal to admit their co-operation; then the fierce recriminations of the excluded party and the determination to frustrate the good work in which they cannot share. Each alike, and all their successors, deserve the rebuke which had been anticipated by the Evangelical Prophet, Deutero-Isaiah, when in his ideal glorification of Jerusalem, he described that its walls should be built, not by its own children, but by the sons of strangers and that its gates should not be rigidly closed, but should be open continually, and be shut neither day nor night.

In these miserable accusations and counter-accusations, carried on before the Princes who successively mounted the throne of Persia, Cyrus, Cambyses and Smerdis, twelve precious years were wasted. At length Darius, the son of Hystaspes, came to the throne, and like a second Cyrus, gave a new wave of encouragement to the hard-pressed community at Jerusalem. At the same time there appeared two Prophets in Jerusalem who had made the long journey from Babylon, minor prophets, it may be, but fired by the true prophetic zeal, Haggai and Zechariah.

Haggai was an old man who appears to have belonged to that older generation which had wept over the contrast between the First Temple and the Second. He claimed a title which no prophet had ever assumed before, "The Lord's Messenger."

Deutero-Isaiah had depicted Jehovah manifesting His glory to Israel, gathering them from all quarters, making a road for them through the desert, leading them like a shepherd to their home, renewing His Covenant with them, pouring His Spirit upon them, beginning for them a light to lighten the Gentiles, the bearers of His Salvation to the ends of the earth. The opposition which the returned exiles had received from the local inhabitants and the Samaritans; their original poverty followed by failure of the crops on the poor soil: the sharp contrast between their grandparents' idyllic description of Canaan as a land flowing with milk and honey and the actual hard realities of the situation: even these were as nothing to their disappointment that Jehovah did not vouchsafe them a sign that they were his Chosen People.

Haggai came to these discouraged, frustrated people as the Great Encourager. He took up with enthusiasm the task of strengthening the weak hands, saying to those who were of a fearful heart, "Be strong, fear not." The recurring message which he brought was—*I am with you, saith the Lord*

Continued on Page 5

CHARACTERS OF THE ROYAL ARCH

(Continued from Page 4)

of Hosts” and by repeating it again and again he communicated to Israel his own indomitable faith and unquenchable hope. He was not prepared to accept any excuses about the obstructions caused by hostile tribes or captious Samaritans. He blamed his own countrymen for their apathy and poured fierce rebukes and scornful words upon them. There were some who insisted that only 68 years had elapsed since the Captivity and, because the old prophecy foretold a Captivity of 70 years, said that the time had not come yet to rebuild the Temple, “This people say, The time is not come for the Lord’s House to be built.” To which the prophet indignantly replied - “Is it time for you to dwell in your panelled houses while the Temple lies waste?”

Zechariah’s appearance and prophecies coincided with those of Haggai in point of time, but were of a very different form. He must have been quite a young man, being the grandson of one of the returning exiles. He belonged to the priestly tribe and was thus remarkable as an example of the union of the two functions of prophet and priest. Possibly by reason of this dual viewpoint his prophecy is in the form of a series of eight visions and ten oracles which foretell Jerusalem as restored with fullness of old folk and children in its streets.

The simple practical approach of Haggai and the florid and visionary approach of Zechariah combined to inspire the inhabitants of Jerusalem under Zeru-babel and Jeshua, to work with a will until within five years the second Temple was completed and dedicated (B.C. 515). There is a Jewish legend that Zeru-babel returned to Babylon in order to appeal to Darius for help and that he died there; certainly there is no further mention of him in the story of the second Temple. But it is recorded that Darius the King made a decree that not only should all the sacred gold and silver vessels of the first Temple be restored, but that the expenses of building the second Temple should be borne by the Persian treasury, together with the expenses of the burnt offerings day by day. And there the story of the building of the second Temple really ends.

Some sixty years later (about B.C. 458) in the reign of Artaxerxes, King of Persia, Ezra the Scribe, a descendant of Saraiah, the priest who had accompanied Zeru-babel and Jeshua on the first return from exile eighty years before, went up from Babylon to Jerusalem with another band of returned exiles. On arriving at Jerusalem he found the inhabitants had become so lax in their worship and so selfish in their lives that there was almost anarchy both in religion and in civic affairs. The priests neglected the more spiritual of their duties: the laity cheapened their sacrifices and withheld their tithes: the Sabbath was abused: the pilgrimages to Zion fell off. Jews divorced their wives in order to marry the heathen. Sorcery, perjury, oppression of the poor, shedding of innocent blood, with a general covetousness and envy of the rich, are the sins charged against the community.

Ezra was struck with horror and astonishment when he discovered the true state of affairs, and he immediately entered on a great work of reform which gave a new and lasting spirit to the Jewish people for generations to come.

A blank of thirteen years now intervenes in the history of Ezra and the people of Jerusalem. When we hear of them again, it is in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes (B.C. 446) when Nehemiah, a Babylonian Jew and the favoured cupbearer of Artaxerxes, asked the king’s permission to revisit his native city and to repair its ruined walls. He seems to have been appointed Tirshatha or Governor of Judah and to have been given power, in the King’s name, to requisition such timber as might be required for the gates. With great organizing skill he completed the building of the walls in 52 days. It is proudly recorded of Nehemiah himself, his slaves and his Persian bodyguard, that during the whole of that time not one of them put off their clothes. Where our ritual refers to “with trowel in hand and sword by their side” it is this incident of the building of the walls that we commemorate, and NOT the building of the second Temple.

Ezra and Nehemiah, therefore, are the two great restorers of Jerusalem. Ezra, the aged scribe reformed the religious life by teaching and enforcing the Mosaic Law. Nehemiah, the young layman, half warrior, half statesman, fortified the city and gave it a good system of municipal government. It is not the only time that the architect or the engineer has been the best colleague of the reformer or the theologian. Ezra and Nehemiah are the very embodiments of that quality by which the Jewish race has maintained its place before the judgment Seat of God and of history - impenetrable toughness and persistency.

These then, are the essential elements of our Royal Arch story, as it unfolds against the whole background of Jewish history which preceded it.

(1) The name Zerubbabel is a combination of two words, Zeru, (as in Peru), and Babel. The first part may mean “scattered or dispersed;” it is also a form of the word meaning “seed(ing), plant(ing), sowing,” etc. The name may therefore be translated “scattered to Babylon,” or “born at Babylon,” There is positively no justification for the “double B” in the middle of the name, and those letters have led to the hideous English pronunciation of the name, as we give it in our R.A. Chapters, Ze-rub-abl. In the original Hebrew, the name is pronounced Zeru-bavel, and in the hope of eliminating the “rub.” the Editor (with the Author’s permission) has deliberately adopted the unusual spelling Zeru-babel.

50 Years Ago**TV — Ritual**

Tee-Vee-Itis may not have acquired dictionary status but the malady is epidemic.

The symptoms are visible. Along railroad approaches to crowded industrial areas, one notices a forest of TV masts on tenements and jerry-built houses.

A recent news item reports that, in Boston, there are more television sets than bathtubs! Does that matter? There is always Massachusetts Bay!

Who among us would deny these families the emotional release and entertainment which TV and radio offer - even if most of these luxuries have been purchased on what is now called "easy budget terms?"

At the moment many sponsors are obviously appealing to the mass mind. We do not complain. If products do not sell, programs are discontinued.

Many appreciative listeners, however, are bored to tears by the procession of athletes, actors and husky-voiced actresses who happen, quite accidentally of course, to "like" a certain brand of cigarettes or beer or anything which needs a wider market.

It may be said also that a nation which endures "singing commercials" will not quail before an atom bomb! It is a sacrilege to call it "music" unless one accepts the definition suggested by an eminent British critic - "music invented by demons for the entertainment of imbeciles."

All this will pass if and when the entertainment industry is more mature. What makes TV-itis a welcomed epidemic is that there is so much that is really worthwhile - good music, excellent drama, relaxing comedy, artistic extravaganzas, news commentaries, foreign events, and addresses by men and women in public life.

This is an "escape" which most of us covet.

*McIllyar H. Lichliter, 33,
Supreme Council News-Letter, April 1954*

26 Years Ago...**Masonry - Custodian of Basic Social Landmarks**

As we insert the year 1979 in the time-clock of life, let us give the event more than fleeting attention. The timesheet records our attendance among the still living inhabitants of earth in one of the waning years of the 20th century.

Ours is a period of explosion of knowledge, endeavor and accomplishment as never before in recorded history. Ours is a period when the starry universe is subject to the test of human technical examination, constant surveillance and diagnosis.

Ours is the time when mankind is shrugging off the drudgery of living by great leaps and bounds. Centuries ago, the wheel and the domestication of animals for providing energy were revolutionary in effect, but were slowly developed from island and continent to another landfall.

Ours is a period when communication of news and events and ideas is well-nigh instantaneous rather than by the slow process of earlier times.

Ours is an age when the hidden secrets of medicine and health care are being brought to the light of human scrutiny and consideration.

Ours is also, unfortunately, the age of war encircling the globe. Ours is the time of threat of annihilation by manmade devices.

Ours is the point in time when few things are done as our grandparents did them. The rate of adjustment to accelerated challenges in all fields of thought and experience is unprecedented in recorded life on Planet Earth.

Masonry, as a venerable custodian of ancient basic social values, is in a strategic position to keep the eternal flame burning as each new year presents itself.

*Dr. Raymond W Miller, 33°,
The New Age, Washington, DC, January 1979*



2006 Grand York Rite Sessions April 22nd to 26th, 2006 – Bakersfield, CA

Name: _____ Lady: _____

Title(s): _____
(Please print your name and title as you would like it printed on your badge)

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Phone: (____) _____

RAM # _____ CM # _____ KT # _____ e-mail: _____

Arriving Via: Driving Bus Train
 Flight Airline _____ No. _____
 Departure Via: Driving Bus Train
 Flight Airline _____ No. _____
 Shuttle Requested Yes No
 Arrival Date / Time: _____ Departure Date / Time: _____

PLEASE MAKE SURE TO MARK THE AMOUNT IN THE ENTRÉE CHOICES

Day	Date	Time	Event	Quan.	Cost	Total
Sat	April 22 nd	8:30 AM	Golf Tournament <input type="checkbox"/> Please fill out the foursome for me Others in your foursome: _____			
			Open to all attendees		\$45.00	
		6:30 PM	Welcoming BBQ "Santa Fe" __ Vegetarian __		\$30.00	
Sun	April 23 rd	11:30 AM	Battalion & Belles Luncheon San Joaquin Buffet __ Vegetarian __		\$23.00	
		1:00 PM	Drill Team Participant		N/C	
		6:30 PM	Grand York Rite Banquet Entree Choice: Pork Loin __ Salmon __ Vegetarian __		\$35.00	
Mon	April 24 th	7:00 AM	Grand Council Breakfast: "The Select Breakfast" Open to the Companions and the Ladies		\$14.50	
		12:00 PM	Ladies Luncheon Teriyaki Chicken __ Vegetarian __		\$17.00	
		12:15 PM	Grand Council Luncheon Traditional Lasagna __ Vegetarian __		\$17.50	
Tue	April 25 th	7:00 AM	Grand Commandery Breakfast "Metropolitan Breakfast" Open to the Sir Knights and the Ladies		\$14.50	
		12:00 PM	Ladies Luncheon Roasted Pork Loin __ Vegetarian __		\$17.50	
		12:15 PM	Grand Commandery Luncheon Grilled Flank Steak __ Vegetarian __		\$17.50	
Wed	April 26 th	7:00 AM	Grand Chapter Breakfast "Traditional Breakfast" Open to the Companions and the Ladies		\$14.50	
		12:00 PM	Ladies Luncheon Penne Pasta __ Vegetarian __		\$17.00	
		12:15 PM	Grand Chapter Luncheon Swiss Steak __ Vegetarian __		\$17.50	
Check# _____ payable to Grand York Rite of CA				TOTALS:		

The Golf Tournament and the Breakfasts are open to the Companions / Sir Knights and their Ladies.
 More forms are available from www.ca-gyrs.org along with menus and further details.

Please send this form and the accompanying payment by **March 25th, 2006** to:
Dave Glass 6431 Valley Hi Drive Sacramento, CA 95823-4838

No refunds after April 1st, 2006 unless approved by the 2006 Grand York Rite Sessions General Chairman
If there are any questions, please contact Russell Roberts at rjrob@earthlink.net or (559) 686-6379

Contact the **Holiday Inn Select** for your hotel reservation **before March 25th, 2006**
 801 Truxtun Ave. Bakersfield, CA 93301 phone (661) 323-1900 or 1-800-HOLIDAY
 Room rate: \$86.00 + tax per night

Do you prefer your Sessions reservation confirmation via email or phone call (latest time to call _____)

California Grand York Rite Sessions Souvenir Program

The California 2006 Grand York Rite Sessions Committee is now soliciting advertisements or congratulatory comments for its 2006 Grand Sessions Souvenir Program.

This Souvenir Program will cover pertinent information and scheduled activities of its 2006 California Grand York Rite Sessions that are to take place at the Holiday Inn Select, Bakersfield, California, commencing on April 22, and concluding on April 26, 2006. All Companions, Sir Knights and their Ladies are cordially invited to attend these sessions. For information send a self addressed stamped envelope to: Daniel C. Kaffka, Jr., CoChairman, 754 N. Brently Ave; Camarillo 93010. California York Rite Masons will receive Grand Sessions information and reservation forms by mail.

The Grand Lodge of California has granted permission to allow advertisements in its Masonic publications as long as they are in good taste and do not include advertisements for: gambling, liquor, politics or religion. Publishing of Souvenir Programs by Masonic organizations in other states has been very successful way to keep down the cost of their grand sessions and, at the same time, very beneficial to the Souvenir Program Advertisers. With the same goal in mind, we respectfully solicit your advertisements for our Souvenir Program. Why not get your Masonic organizations, local merchants and members who own or operate a business to participate. Complete the Advertisement Request form (make extra copies if needed) and return prior to March 15, 2006. The form is self explanatory and contains the cost for each Ad size.

Please Note: No Ad can be accepted for inclusion in the Souvenir Program after March 15, 2006.

Each Advertiser will receive a courtesy copy of the Souvenir Program. All Grand Sessions attendees will receive a copy of the Souvenir Program as part of their registration packet. Any other individual desiring to purchase a copy can do so by sending \$7.00, payable to "2006 Grand Sessions Committee," to Souvenir Program, Caper Card, 220 Baseline, San Bernardino, CA 92410, Attn: Dennis Ward. **Please Note: The Souvenir Program will be available after April 22, 2006.**

Please direct any question you make have regarding the Souvenir Program to the: Grand Sessions 2006 Souvenir Program Committee

Thanks for your kind consideration and timely response to this matter.

Marshall F. Parker Chairman (951) 656-3017

2006 Grand York Rite Sessions

Please Type or Print

Company and/or Organization

Address : Mailing City State Zip

Contact Name	Phone Number	Ad Size
--------------	--------------	---------

What Do You Want Your Ad to Say?

Camera ready ad Material is preferred. We can assist you in creating your ad, however. List below or on a separate page, the exact wording of your ad. Submit logos, pictures (original only— no “scanned pics”) or business cards that are to be used in the ad.

Payment must accompany Ad request, payable to :

"2006 Grand York Rite Sessions"

March 15, 2006 - DEADLINE FOR ACCEPTING AD REQUESTS

Send ad and Payment to :

Marshall F. Parker

13655 McDonnel St., Moreno Valley 92553-8470— Phone 951-656-3017

Ad Costs

Full Page	\$160.00
Half Page	\$85.00
Quarter Page	\$45.00
Eighth Page	\$25.00
Business Card	\$25.00
Name on Name Page.	\$5.00

Work Sheet

QUARTER PAGE . . . \$45.00

FULL PAGE . . . \$160.00

Signature Page . . . \$5.00

1/8 PAGE...\$25.00

HALF PAGE . . . \$85.00

William N. Wine Grand High Priest Itinerary

- 1/10 Oakland Chapter Installation, Installing Officer - GHP
- 1/18 Commandery Installation Bill Wine GHP being installed
Commander Antioch Contra Costa Commandery
- 2/03-05 Grand YR Officer's Conference Bakersfield
York Rite of California
- 2/09 Official Visit Bellflower Triple Tau Chapter
- 2/09 Official Visit Ridgecrest Norris C. Viles Chapter
** Russ Roberts Representing GHP
- 4/24 Grand Council of California Bakersfield
- 4/25 Grand Commandery of California Bakersfield
- 4/26 Grand Chapter of California Bakersfield

Jose A. Fiss MIGM Itinerary 2005-06

- 12/8 Shasta Council #6 , Red Bluff, Official Visit
- 2/9 Official Visit Imperial Valley Council #60
- 3/9 Arkansas Grand York Rite- Little Rock
- 4/23 York Rite Sessions Holiday Inn Select Bakersfield

Milton M. Abbott, Jr. Grand Commander's Itinerary

- 12/1 Humboldt Lodge Eureka
- 12/4 Eureka Commandery #35
Christmas Observation Eureka
- 12/10 HRAKTP Vacaville
- 12/14 Eureka Commandery #35 Eureka
- 12/18 Stockton Commandery #8 Stockton
- 12/25 Merry Christmas
- 1/1 Happy New Year
- 1/11 San Jose #10 Installation Officers San Jose
- 1/13 Valley of the Flowers Commandery Lompoc
- 1/21 Imperial Valley #54 Installation Officers Imperial
- 1/28 Red Cross of Constantine San Francisco
- 2/3-4 Grand Officer's Conference Bakersfield
- 2/19 York Rite College Paradise

4 feet 8.5 inches

Does the statement, "We've always done it that way" ring any bells?

The US standard railroad gauge (distance between the rails) is 4 feet, 8.5 inches. That's an exceedingly odd number. Why was that gauge used?

Because that's the way they built them in England, and English expatriates built the US Railroads. Why did the English build them like that?

Because the first rail lines were built by the same people who built the pre-railroad tramways, and that's the gauge they used. Why did "they" use that gauge then?

Because the people who built the tramways used the same jigs and tools that they used for building wagons, which used that wheel spacing. Okay! Why did the wagons have that particular odd wheel spacing?

Well, if they tried to use any other spacing, the wagon wheels would break on some of the old, long distance roads in England, because that's the spacing of the wheel ruts. So who built those old rutted roads?

Imperial Rome built the first long distance roads in Europe (and England) for their legions. The roads have been used ever since. And the ruts in the roads?

Roman war chariots formed the initial ruts, which everyone else had to match for fear of destroying their wagon wheels. Since the chariots were made for Imperial Rome, they were all alike in the matter of wheel spacing.

The United States standard railroad gauge of 4 feet, 8.5 inches is derived from the original specifications for an Imperial Roman war chariot. And bureaucracies live forever. So the next time you are handed a specification and wonder what horse's behind came up with it, you may be exactly right, because the Imperial Roman army chariots were made just wide enough to accommodate the back ends of two war horses.

Now the twist to the story When you see a Space Shuttle sitting on its launch pad, there are two big booster rockets attached to the sides of the main fuel tank. These are solid rocket boosters, or SRBs. The SRBs are made by Thiokol at their factory at Utah. The engineers who designed the SRBs would have preferred to make them a bit fatter, but the SRBs had to be shipped by train from the factory to the launch site. The railroad line from the factory happens to run through a tunnel in the mountains. The SRBs had to fit through that tunnel. The tunnel is slightly wider than the railroad track, and the railroad track, as you now know, is about as wide as two horses' behinds.

So, a major Space Shuttle design feature of what is arguably the world's most advanced transportation system was determined over two thousand years ago, by the width of a horse's read.... and you thought being a horses a** wasn't important!

Contributions are solicited for this Calendar Page and for the entire publication. Please forward all contributions to the Grand Secretary or Donald J. Spencer, 8350 Rathburn Ave., Northridge 91325. Phone 818-885-0289. Fax 818-885-5913. E-mail Dspen39087@aol.com. Copy deadlines are February 1, May 1, August 1 and November 1. Publication schedule: March 1, June 1, September 1 and December 1.

**The California
Encompasser
Subscription Form**

YES! I would appreciate receiving the *California Encompasser*. You will find my check for \$10.00 enclosed for a two-year subscription or \$30.00 for a lifetime subscription.

NAME: _____
ADDRESS _____
CITY/ZIP _____

Please Mail to: The California Encompasser
801 Elm Avenue
Long Beach, Ca. 90813

GRAND YORK
RITE OFFICE
562-436-8271

FAX NUMBER
562-437-5411

E-MAIL
ca.yorkrite@verizon.net



Grand York Rite of California
Web Site
<http://yorkriteofcalifornia.org>

**GRAND CHAPTER
ROYAL ARCH MASONS
OF CALIFORNIA**
The California Encompasser
801 Elm Avenue
Long Beach, Ca. 90813

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

California Freemasons
The Family of Freemasonry
"Masonry on the Rise"

WE NEED SUBSCRIBERS

The *California Encompasser* is requesting subscribers. Eight issues (two years) is only \$10.00 or you can purchase a lifetime subscription for only \$30.00. This amount will assist with the ever increasing costs of paper, printing and postage.

We hope you enjoy the *Encompasser*. We are continually making improvements and will continue to do so. We are also in constant need of new items, fillers, pictures, jokes, educational papers (short) and anything else you might be able to think of.

Please help us keep you informed!

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
LONG BEACH, CA. 90813
PERMIT NO. 799