



CHURCHILL AND FLEMING: CONNECTIONS IMAGINARY AND REAL

Dr. E. Otha Wingo, DDGL 38, FMLR — otha.wingo@gmail.com

We won't wait for the thirty-volume official biography of Winston S. Churchill, being published by Hillsdale College Press (\$1130) to verify the notorious legend connecting him with Sir Alexander Fleming. (Only four of eight biographical volumes and ten of twenty-two document volumes have been published so far.) I'm sure you know the story, which has been around for nearly 60 years. It always starts: "His name was Fleming..." and tells how Fleming's father pulled young Churchill out of a bog on his remote farm in Scotland, in gratitude for which Churchill's father paid for young Fleming's education, which led to his discovery of penicillin; and in later life Churchill's life was saved when he was treated with penicillin by Fleming.

It's a great story! I have known about this specific version for about 10 years, but I have known the story for over 50 years. It is typical of what currently is called GLURGE. However, that is such an unpleasant word, I prefer another term, Urban Legend, or even the

more appropriate word, Myth. In teaching mythology for forty years in university classes I suggested this approach: "Myth should be taken seriously, but not literally. Myths are a way of conveying truth."

The myth of the nobleman's and the poor farmer's sons goes even farther back. You can add any names that fit the tenor of the story. In 1950 the story was included in a religious text for Sunday school kids, with the names Fleming and Churchill added. A friend recently sent it to me by email. In the words of the Churchill Centre, "Charming as it is, the story is certainly fiction."

Knowing the history of a legend does not take away from the story, when you consider it from the idea of myth as history changed into fable. It is typical of famous persons that mythic stories become attached to and actually enhance their reputations (e.g. George Washington, John Kennedy). To paraphrase the late Martin A. Larson: "As with other great personalities, tradition recorded certain historical facts concerning

these heroes, but around them there soon grew up a periphery of myth, the purpose of which was to establish their authority and divinity."

Sir Winston Leonard Spencer-Churchill (11/30/1874-1/24/1965) was Prime Minister of Great Britain (1940-1945 and 1951-1955) and Honorary Citizen of the U.S. (1963). Official records rarely mention Masonic connections or activities. The history of WWII inevitably ties Churchill with Franklin D. Roosevelt (1882-1945), 31st President of the U.S. (1933-1945), who received his Masonic degrees in Holland Lodge No. 8, NYC in 1911 and was present when his three sons became Master Masons. He was a member of Scottish Rite, the Shrine, and other Masonic organizations. Churchill was initiated in Studholme Lodge No. 1591, London and raised March 25, 1902 in Rosemary Lodge No. 2851. His father, Lord Randolph Henry Churchill (1849-1895), is recorded as having visited Harmony Lodge No. 17, Washington, D.C. on Oct. 15, 1873.

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POSTMASTER: Please send Address Forms 3579 to Grand Secretary,
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1821: A Grand Lodge Comes To Missouri



THOMAS F. RIDDICK.

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Grand Master's Message

Grand Lodge of Missouri, Ancient Free and Accepted Masons

Brethren:

I left you in my last article with my wish to discuss issues of concern about our beloved Craft, so I won't beat around the bush with a lot of rhetoric.

Membership. My first concern is with our loss of membership because of suspensions. I have done some demographics on this issue and found that last year we suspended over 800 members because of NPD's (Non-payment of Dues). Unfortunately, suspensions in any organization are a part of doing business. Every fraternal organization will have those that decide they don't want to participate any more. My concern is that we are letting people go when they most need us. I have found that of those 800 suspended members over 300 are age 60 or older. I know that there will be a few of those that just joined us and decided that we didn't have what they were looking for, but 70 of that 300 are over the age of 70, and 30 are over 80 years of age. The biggest majority of these brethren have several years of membership and my concern is that they are either financially strapped or dependent on others to take care of their every day affairs. Either way it is our duty to seek them out and assist them in every way we can. That is what we are supposed to be about and supposed to do. We have heard it many times in our obligations and lectures but it is up to us to live it.

Life is a struggle. It is supposed to be that way. What doesn't kill us makes us stronger. We learn--we grow--we move on with our lives. We also need to stand together because it makes us even stronger. We can't afford to leave even one member behind when it is in our power to be the difference in their lives. Most of



us don't need that kind of assistance now but we may in the future. What assurances do we have of assistance if we don't live up to our obligations to our brethren now?

Hopefully younger men will follow us into the future. We need to live the generational lessons given to us through our obligations as a continuing example for those who follow us in the future. To make that happen we must work together to find those of our brethren that need us. That is my charge to each of us. Get with your Lodge secretary and find out who is missing. Then make every effort to find them and assist them in whatever way we can.

Grand Lodge Finances. By now most of you have heard that the Grand Lodge is close to the vest in its financial future. We need to do something to assure that financial future and the only way I know to do that is to come to you and ask for your assistance. I have proposed a \$3.50 increase in per capita. That amount will not fix the problem but it will slow it down sufficiently to give us time to pursue some other avenues of income.

I have never known a Mason to

turn his back when there was a need if he knew that need was real. I wouldn't come to you if I, and your Grand Lodge line, didn't believe that this need is real. This increase will not help me in any way. I will be long gone before any of these funds would be realized. I come to you because you need to know.

Your Grand Lodge Officers are making every effort to be good stewards of every penny that you, the Craft, have given us to work with just as you do in your own homes. I come to you personally as a member of that Craft who has a concern for the financial future of the Grand Lodge. Without the glue that makes it all work, the structure of Masonry in Missouri would collapse. I ask you to stand with me and support this proposal in September.

At this writing, I have been in office just over three months and your response to the "Brothers Helping Others" program has already outnumbered the reports that were turned in for all of last year. I am presently setting dates to make pin presentations in Lodges all across the State and I look forward to getting a report and setting a date for your Lodge.

I can't say it enough. Thank you for the opportunity and the privilege you have given me to serve you, the Craft, and as always be safe and be well. God Bless each and every one of you.

Most Worshipful Brother

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rocky Weaver". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Rocky E. Weaver
Grand Master of the Grand
Lodge AF&AM of Missouri



On Thursday, July 3, 2008, Brookfield Lodge #86, held an open meeting to present 50-year jewels to Lloyd Mossbarger and Emmett Kirtley and presented one for Swope Park Lodge to Alan Stephens. Pictured left to right: Alan Stephens, Lloyd Mossbarger, Emmett Kirtley, and RWB Bob O'Dell (presented the jewels). There was a large number of Family members, Friends, and Brothers present for the ceremony. The three distinguished Brothers were each given an opportunity to reminisce on their earlier Masonic years, which all present enjoyed. After the ceremony all retired to dining room for an ice cream social.



On December 4, 2008, WB George Mainprize (left) received his 50-year jewel and certificate during a banquet in his honor at Clifton Lodge #463 in Thayer, Missouri. Making the presentation is WM Jimmy Denton, Worshipful Master of the Lodge. Rosey, the wife of WB Mainprize, was present for the occasion. The son of WB Mainprize, Brother Danny Mainprize, performed the honors of "the pinning."



WB Donald P. Schmitt received his 25-year pin and certificate from WM Bruce E. McGlasson at the stated meeting December 12, 2008. Shown (l to r) WB Donald J. Hall, WB Gary Tourville, WB Raymond Vonderbruegge, WB F. Donald Puls, WB Dennis B. Trimble. A reception with cake and refreshments followed the ceremony.



On Saturday, October 4, 2008, MWB Rocky E. Weaver and Grand Lodge Officers opened Grand Lodge in Brookfield Lodge #86, at 9:00 am and then moved the procession to Pershing Memorial Hospital, Brookfield, Missouri, to dedicate a plaque for the cornerstone laying for the hospital's new addition.



On October 21, 2008 Adair Lodge #366 installed officers for the coming year. Front row left to right: Bill King, Miran McAauley, Charles Cooper, Robert Barrett, Richard Mansfield. Back row left to right: Barry Cundiff, Kenny Rongey, Raymond Buchanan, Brian Hudnall, Kelley Snipes. Installing Master MWB Dale C. Motter, Installing Chaplain RWB Marion Rehm, and Installing Marshal RWB Dale C. West.



In November, members of Hermann Masonic Lodge #123 made a donation of over \$1000.00 to the Gasconade County R-1 School to purchase coats for the students in Hermann School District, Hermann Missouri. Pictured left to right: Clinton Coulter, Masonic Home Representative; Dawn Grosse, School Based Social Worker; Charles W. Kelsey II.