

Rudyard Kipling

C. Winston Douglas

Ocean View Lodge No. 335

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Rudyard Kipling was an English journalist, short-story writer, poet, and novelist. His works include *The Jungle Book*, *Kim*, *Gunga Din*, *Captains Courageous*, *The White Man's Burden*, and *The Man Who Would Be King*. He was born in Bombay, India on December 30th, 1865. His parents returned to England when he was five, and he spent several unhappy years with a foster family, which inspired his earlier writings. Returning to India after his school years were complete, he joined the editorial staff of the *Civil and Military Gazette* in Lahore. Most nights he wandered the streets of the old walled city, drinking in the culture and mixing among the natives of all different sects, faiths, and castes.

In 1885, Hope and Perseverance Lodge No. 782 in Lahore was seeking a Secretary. Rudyard's father, a member of the Lodge and Curator of the Lahore Museum, believed his son was eminently qualified for the position. Thus, Rudyard Kipling was elected to become a Mason at twenty years and six months. In "Something of Myself", Kipling wrote, "Here I met Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs, members of the Araya and Brahmo Samaj, and a Jewish Tyler, who was a priest and butcher to his little community in the city. So yet another world was opened to me which I needed." Masonry had quite an influence on Kipling's writings, where Masonic symbolism can often be found, and indeed entire works were about the craft. He served as Secretary for four years before returning to England in 1889. He was made an honorary member of The Motherland Lodge No. 3861 in London, affiliated with The Authors Lodge No. 3456 and a founding member of The Lodge Builders of the Silent Cities No. 4948.

Here is one of Brother Kipling's best known Masonic poems, "The Mother-Lodge".

Rudyard Kipling - C. Winston Douglas

There was Rundle, Station Master,
An' Beazeley of the Rail,
An' 'Ackman, Commissariat,
An' Donkin' o' the Jail;
An' Blake, Conductor-Sargent,
Our Master twice was 'e,
With 'im that kept the Europe-shop,
Old Framjee Eduljee.

Outside -- "Sergeant! Sir! Salute! Salaam!"

Inside -- "Brother", an' it doesn't do no 'arm.

We met upon the Level an' we parted on the Square,

An' I was Junior Deacon in my Mother-Lodge out there!

We'd Bola Nath, Accountant,

An' Saul the Aden Jew,

An' Din Mohammed, draughtsman

Of the Survey Office too;

There was Babu Chuckerbutty,

An' Amir Singh the Sikh,

An' Castro from the fittin'-sheds,

The Roman Catholick!

We 'adn't good regalia,
An' our Lodge was old an' bare,
But we knew the Ancient Landmarks,
An' we kep' 'em to a hair;
An' lookin' on it backwards
It often strikes me thus,
There ain't such things as infidels,
Excep', per'aps, it's us.

For monthly, after Labour,
We'd all sit down and smoke
(We dursn't give no banquits,
Lest a Brother's caste were broke),
An' man on man got talkin'
Religion an' the rest,
An' every man comparin'
Of the God 'e knew the best.

So man on man got talkin',
An' not a Brother stirred
Till mornin' waked the parrots
An' that dam' brain-fever-bird;
We'd say 'twas 'ighly curious,

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An' we'd all ride 'ome to bed,
With Mo'ammed, God, an' Shiva
Changin' pickets in our 'ead.

Full oft on Guv'ment service
This rovin' foot 'ath pressed,
An' bore fraternal greetin's
To the Lodges east an' west,
Accordin' as commanded
From Kohat to Singapore,
But I wish that I might see them
In my Mother-Lodge once more!

I wish that I might see them,
My Brethren black an' brown,
With the trichies smellin' pleasant
An' the hog-darn passin' down; [Cigar-lighter.]
An' the old khansamah snorin' [Butler.]
On the bottle-khana floor, [Pantry.]
Like a Master in good standing
With my Mother-Lodge once more!

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Outside -- "Sergeant! Sir! Salute! Salaam!"

Inside -- "Brother", an' it doesn't do no 'arm.

We met upon the Level an' we parted on the Square,

An' I was Junior Deacon in my Mother-Lodge out there!