



**55th ANNUAL ADDRESS OF  
HONORABLE VERNON SCOTT  
M.:W.: GRAND MASTER**

**GREETINGS:**

In the following the custom and practice of my predecessors in the Office of Grand Master, I come before you to report to you my activities as Grand Master for the second time. It is indeed a privilege and a pleasure to meet you today in our Fifty-fifth Annual Communication. This year, like last year has been eventful. The year just passed possibly has been the most strenuous but the most exciting since I have taken this office of Grand Master. We have toiled this year working with problems which have affected our Jurisdiction for years. I am happy to say we are in the process of elimination of many of those ills which have beset us. I wish to give my personal felicitations and good wishes to all who are in attendance this morning and to all who were present at our very splendid Thanksgiving service last evening. Your presence here adds inspiration and dignity to this very solemn occasion. I pray that again at this Annual Communication we shall work with clear prospective and cooperative endeavor, with faith in ourselves and in our leaders and in our future.

As last years report from my office was varied this year's report will also cover many phases of our work. I shall cover the section on the Conference of Grand Masters in a separate address, also phases of the business of clandestine activities within our Jurisdiction in the separate address.

**NECROLOGY**

Since our last Grand Communication, held in Bremerton, Washington, the Grand Architect of the Universe has seen fit to sojourn twelve brethern to answer the roll call to enter into that house not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens. They are:

Brother Stephen Noble	Enterprise No. 1
Brother Curtis Davis	Enterprise No. 1
Brother Benjamin E. Randolph	Enterprise No. 1
Brother N. J. Grafell	Hercules No. 17
Brother Andrewson Jackson	Inland Empire No. 3
Brother Winfred Breeding	Hercules No. 17
Brother N. J. McGale	Hercules No. 17

Brother Fred Samuel	Rocky Mt. No. 34
Brother Lawson Jones	Enterprise No. 1
Brother Charles Mahony	Apple Blosson No. 34
Brother Gregory Small	Perfect Ashler No. 40
Brother Alger Ball	Inland Empire No. 3

This is the largest loss we who live have seen of those we love passing away into that silent land from whose bourne no traveler returns. I did not know all personally but I share the sorrow their lodges and families have felt. I know all of you shall remember our departed Brothern in your prayers.

I wish to thank the several lodges and many of the brothern who have given their services assisting our sister jurisdictions that have lost members residing in our jurisdiction. You have given your service far above monetary values. We are thankful and proud of your interest and common concern for all brothers of our Masonic family. We have also thanked our sister jurisdictions who have assisted in burying our masonic dead.

Proper services will follow my address, by the Committee on Obituaries, for our beloved dead.

We shall pause here for a moment of solemn silence to their cherished memory. Unto God's gracious mercy and protection we commit you. The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious unto you. The Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace both now and evermore. Amen.

### **STATE OF THE CRAFT**

I am thankful to report that peace and harmony is evident throughout our jurisdiction. Progress has been made in all fields of endeavor. We thank the Grand Architect for the many blessings granted to us this masonic year. We are grateful, too, for the efforts and interest shown by these members who have cooperated so enthusiastically in the culmination of many of our dreams and aspirations. Without your willing heart our program would have surely been a dismal failure.

I did not visit all the lodges of our jurisdiction individually this year because we met many of the worshipful masters, wardens and brothers in our district meetings. However the combined visits of the Grand Lecturer, R. W. E. A. Douglas 330 and myself encompasses every lodge. When individual visits were requested by lodges we happily complied with the requests. In our visitations to the lodges this year we have found a healthy interest growing in the Grand Lodge activities and programming. This interest in programming has revitalized individual lodge activities. Again this year I cannot stress adequate programming too strongly. It is essential to a healthy lodge. The choice in masonry is between strength and weakness. The craft is not in danger of becoming extinct. It is in danger of becoming impotent. If enough elevated secondary things to the place of primary importance then masonry becomes a body without a soul. Organizations held together only by bonds of sociability tend to disintegrate under stress.

Those dedicated to devotion, to ideas, survive under the pounding of any and all circumstances. Since the United States Air Base at Gifu, Japan has moved it will be necessary to keep Cherry Blossom Lodge as a U. D. lodge. We are now in the process of placing the new location of the lodge now. Here in the states many new members have been added to our lodges this year by initiation, restoration and demit. This is very encouraging to us of the masonic fraternity. It is an indication that other men of high integrity have been attracted to masonry by the conduct of those who have previously assured its cause and used its power to create good in their daily actions.

I cannot praise my district deputy grand masters highly enough. For the harmony and progress which we have been able to maintain this year. Their earnest efforts in coordinating the activities of the grand lodge and the subordinate lodges, arranging and organizing district meetings and practicing the tenets of Freemasonry so that all the pride and pleasure in the accomplishments of this year would be known by all the community.

Had each of you personally been in communication with the several lodges and read reports of their activities your reactions would have taxed the superlatives found in Webster's Dictionary, as mine did. You would have found it as difficult as I to single out a special event and say this one is more worthy of congratulations than these others are. However I am sure you will agree with me that even in the midst of so many glorious achievements some by their very nature impel us to give connotation.

**District No. 1** - For the wellplanned St. John's Day service this year and the very fine attendance and splendid contributions made by the lodges of that district.

**District No. 2** - For its fine district meeting. We hope that the innovation which resulted in the presence of the lovely and gracious wives of these brothers at their first district banquet will prove that such a social gathering is worthy of becoming a customary feature in the district meetings.

**District No. 3** - The elimination of a clandestine lodge in Pasco and the assimilation of many of the men of this group into the Prince Hall Fraternity is an indication of new masonic life in the Tri-City area .

**District No. 4** - In assisting in elimination the organization of a clandestine lodge in the city of Spokane. The impressive banquet held each year in this district at the Desert Hotel in Spokane was again the focal point of the entire meeting. The new lodge hall obtained by Perfect Ashler Lodge No. 40 is a source of civic as well as fraternal pride. For this was not obtained without blood, sweat and tears but as a result of cooperative action and effort.

**District No. 5** - Coordination with Excelsior Lodge of the Grand Jurisdiction of California in laying the corner stone of the Vancouver Avenue First Baptist Church, Portland, Oregon. Articles carried in the daily newspapers were very complimentary.

**District No. 6** - One of the smallest lodges, numerically, of this district and of the jurisdiction has centered its activity for the year in the entertainment of the Annual Grand Communication of the Grand Lodge for this year.

This is something that you will all agree is no small feat and the hospitality and warmth which we have thus far received is indicative of the success of their endeavor.

### YOUTH AND EDUCATION

We have completed the second year of our Scholarship Program. Miss Mona Gaye Lake has completed her first year at Washington State College. Mr. Isaac Logart Payne has completed his first year at Portland State College and has been appointed to the United States Naval Academy at Annapolis. We are proud of these, the first two recipients of our scholarship program. The recipients this second year are Miss Carolyn Purnell, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. James C. Purnell of Seattle, Washington. Both Ill. Purnell, 33° and his wife, Sister Purnell have contributed much to our masonic life and endeavor. The second recipient is Mr. Allison Blakely of Portland, Oregon. We offer both our hearty congratulations. We are looking forward to a greater participation in the coming years for our scholarships. This scholarship program can fulfil its aims only if each brother makes it his personal responsibility to see that word of it is publicized to the greatest extent and number of applicants. We know our faith in our scholarship program shall be boundless and our energies in its behalf shall be without limit. District No. 5 again this year leads the jurisdiction with the number of applicants for our scholarship.

Brother Gideon, 33°, Deputy, was replaced as one of the judges in the scholarship department this year and Worshipful Brother Tyree, 32° took his place. This change was made due to Brother Gideon's having recommended one of the candidates for scholarship this year whereby disqualifying himself as one of the judges. Theodore Spearman, 32°, P. G. M, and I, your Grand Master, completed the Committee on Judging.

**GUIDANCE CLINICS:** This, our initial venture in this field, was a decided success. Too much credit cannot be given R. W. Brother George Jorden, who was chairman of this department this year for the Grand Lodge and he also was Finance Chairman of the Vocational Guidance Institute, which was principally held by the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Washington and the Seattle Urban League. I shall let his report give you the full account. We plan to program these clinics this coming year in Portland and possibly the Tri-City area. We shall strive for greater recognition in this field of endeavor this year.

Now that the scholarship program and the Guidance Clinic have been successfully launched we shall begin a detailed study of the Pythagorians and endeavor to set up the initial chapter this coming year. We found last year we were spreading our personnel too thin in the many new programs we were beginning. Now that qualified and experienced personnel will be available for this program this year we shall be able to make this phase of our youth work as successful and as attractive as the other two departments.

The Prince Hall day contributions were a decided improvement over last years. However, I am not quite satisfied with the effort we are putting into this phase of our youth work. I should not make that statement on a jurisdictional basis as Eureka Lodge in Japan contributed an average of one dollar per member this year. We within the States and the Province of B. C. can take a lesson from the standards which our brothers across the ocean have set. We must take care of our own. We must ever be aware of our charities for we of the Prince Hall Fraternity have our own community chest.

It is the N.A.A.C.P. Legal Redress Department, the Urban League and our Scholarship Program. We must build this program until we are contributing one dollar per member each year toward its welfare on Prince Hall Day.

National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Legal Research Department.

Last year I recommended that the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Washington and its Jurisdiction make a one hundred dollar contribution to this particular department of the N.A.A.C.P. I was more than happy to see your interest in the N.A.A.C.P. which resulted in a life membership. However, my recommendation was changed in the Finance Committee last year and instead of fulfilling my request for monies for the Legal Redress fund or department the Finance Committee recommended the life membership, payable at fifty dollars a year for the next ten years. This was adopted. We must acquaint ourselves to the call to new responsibilities. We of the Prince Hall family have a responsibility to all departments of the N.A.A.C.P. but more especially the Legal Redress Department. The Legal Redress Department is our baby. It is completely financed by the Prince Hall Grand Lodges and only by them. It is the department that is initiating a change in the American way of life for all minority groups. We must take our place and make partial participation in this charity that is for the useful service of humanity. M.W. Amos T. Hall, President of the Conference of Grand Masters, sent out an urgent call the first quarter of this year stating that the legal research department fund did not have sufficient monies in it to operate another month and assistance must be forth-coming from the Prince Hall Grand Lodges to save this department and carry on the many cases on the courts agenda that this department had initiated. The Prince Hall Grand Lodges rose to this crisis and the department of Thursgood Marshall is continuing to carry on its very necessary and splendid work. Our Grand Lodge made a contribution of fifty dollars during this emergency to assist in the work. I shall make recommendation that fifty dollars be contributed to this N.A.A.C.P. legal redress fund this year. I know you will support me in this worthwhile request for this charity of ours. I urge all subordinate lodges to support this most worthy cause, truly the greatest man conceived force on earth, dedicated to the proposition, to obtain by legal resources, first class citizenship for all.

### **URBAN LEAGUE**

You will note a recommendation from my office this year to remove from our by-laws a restriction to make contributions to the Urban League. We find the Conference of Grand Masters working and coordinating their activities and giving financial assistance to the Urban League.

The N.A.A.C.P. is working for first class citizenship for all groups. They go hand in hand. The Urban League also is assisting all Prince Hall Grand Lodges in coordinating their youth activities, in particular guidance clinics on a Junior High and High School level. They have the paid personnel and qualified personnel in all major cities to assist in this work. It is our duty to participate in their activities more. They are participating in our activities on a national level.

Every Prince Hall Grand Master throughout these United States now receive reports from the Urban League acquainting them with the program at hand and how to participate and assist in the programs, new opportunities and industries will be expanding in certain districts and types of jobs which will be available to urge our groups to participate in. The Urban League is working to meet the growing, urgent housing needs of the Negro population. The center of Urban League attention throughout the year, both locally and nationally, was on problems arising out of the strong and still continuing migration of colored families from rural and southern into urban and northern communities. Let us ally our energies with this forceful machine in American life. Our first step is to remove the legal chains we have placed upon ourselves in our Code and then we shall continue with the fine first year implementation they and we shall continue to work together in many fields of endeavor.

#### **GRAND LODGE BURIAL FUND**

There was a recommendation placed before the Grand Lodge at its 53rd Annual Communication relative to exploring the possibility of increasing our Grand Lodge Burial Benefit. Especially to ascertain if through an insurance plan we could increase the benefits to the brethren. All lodges received a communication from the office of the Grand Secretary in September, 1957, to forward names, addresses and ages of all members. This data was placed in the hands of P.G.M. Joseph I. Staton. In P.G.M. Staton's report, after investigation of several insurance companies, the age bracket average found was so high in our jurisdiction it would be prohibitive to adopt an insurance plan due to the increased premiums that would have to be paid by the membership.

Last year I then went to Robert E. Hall, Deputy Insurance Commissioner of the Eastern Washington District, representing William A. Sullivan, State Insurance Commissioner, to obtain information concerning our possibilities and limitations operating as a fraternal organization. I was informed we were permitted to pay up to three hundred dollars upon the death of a member without placing ourselves in the classification of operating an insurance.

The reason for the interest in this field is that we have initiated and practiced poor business practice in the manner in which we have operated this department for some number of years. In 1939 we were paying \$3.00 per year per member into this fund as we are doing today. In 1939 we were paying \$100.00 per death. In 1946 we were paying \$125.00 and now we are paying \$200.00 death benefit. Under this system we would have to be a member 33 and 1/3 years to pay in \$100.00 and 66 and 2/3 years to fulfil the claim of \$200.00 benefit we are now paying.

I was informed by the Commissioner of Insurance, after his study of our organization, that although we had been averaging under ten deaths per year, with the increased age bracket of our jurisdiction, we could expect that number to be doubled or more than doubled in the near future. Even I did not expect to see the Commissioners predictions begin to show such an accurate estimate so soon as in one year. Last year, under the system we are using, we placed approximately \$2,400.00 in this fund. With the number of deaths we have already had, just one more would place this fund decidedly in the red.

Our financial structure cannot stand this deficit spending or incompetent planning. Last year I stated there was only one thing to do and that was to begin preparing for an immediate change in policy and place this department upon a sound financial basis. The Grand Lodge at its sitting in Bremerton last year recommended we leave it as it was for another year.

I proposed two plans to the Deputy Insurance Commissioner which he took to Seattle to confer with the State Insurance Commissioner. Both were acceptable.

I submitted both to this Grand Lodge last year. The Grand Lodge passed a recommendation the system now in use be retained another year for further study. The recommendations from the Insurance Commissioner are adequate study. I also received the naval employees benefit association plan from Ill. Brother James Purnell, 330 and Brother Albert Colvin. I wish to thank these brothers for their interest in our insurance program and forwarding said plans to my office for study. The plan submitted is an excellent one but would be very difficult to handle under our Masonic procedure and usages, due to the assessment at each death and the problem of non-affiliation if said assessment was not paid. I am submitting again a plan for your consideration, which has passed the Commissioner of Insurance, as a temporary plan for two years. By that time we shall be able to see how acceptable it is and how we wish to implement it. It will in the meantime place us on a sound financial basis.

### **PROPOSED PLAN FOR GRAND BURIAL FUND**

Each brother (member) of the Jurisdiction pays into the Grand Burial and Charity Fund, through their subordinate lodge, five dollars per year. Said payment shall take the place of the three dollars Grand Charity Fund.

Upon the death of a brother (member) the Grand Lodge will pay to his subordinate lodge one hundred and twenty five dollars, (\$125.00), to assist the lodge in the charity to his family.

At the end of the masonic year all monies left in this fund shall be divided by the number of deaths up to the total amount or maximum amount of three hundred dollars, (300.00), for each death and be forwarded to the respective subordinate lodges for distribution of charity to the respective families of the deceased.

All above this amount of a total of \$300.00 per death to the deceased shall be held in the Grand Charity Fund as a reserve.

A reserve from the General Fund of the Grand Lodge of one thousand dollars shall be established the first year, if needed in subsequent years, to complete obligations to this fund until the first quarter returns of the lodges composing this Grand Lodge of Washington and its Jurisdiction have deposited monies in this Fund. The one thousand dollars shall then be returned to the General Fund.

### **MASONIC CODE**

At the beginning of our masonic year I appointed a committee of R.D. Bird, 32°; P.G.M. , Theodore Spearman, 32°, P.G.M. and Phil Reynolds, 32° P.G. Secretary, to bring our masonic code up to date. I received a communication from the committee including their work which was forwarded directly to the Grand Secretary. In the copy forwarded to the Grand Secretary the heading was mislabeled and read proposed changes to the Code instead of changes made in the Code and the year or annual communication said changes were made. These shall be acted upon by the Jurisprudence Committee at this Grand Lodge.

### **FOREIGN RELATIONS**

I am happy to say that the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Washington and its Jurisdiction has a cordial and friendly relationship will all other Prince Hall Grand Jurisdictions. I met and renewed friendships with thirty-four of the thirty-seven grand masters at the Conference of Grand Masters this Spring in Cleveland, Ohio. All are working cooperatively together to fine unanimity of strength and action to Prince Hall Masonry everywhere. R. W. S, J. Lake, Junior Grand Warden and C.C.F.C. will give you a complete picture in his report.

### **OUR ADOPTIVE RITE**

Many years ago our predecessors saw the need for the Order of Eastern Star's being given official status with Prince Hall Masons. They therefore accomplished what is know as our adoptive rite.

During this year, as last, the Prince Hall Grand Chapter, Order of Eastern Star and the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Washington and its Jurisdiction have exchanged fraternal greetings. The Worthy Grand Matron, Mytle Pitts, and I, your Grand Master, have worked together in a sincere and friendly basis, exchanging ideas and working for a better understanding and coordination of activities. We understand they will begin their first scholarship program this year. We offer them our wholehearted congratulations. Again this year we urge all Prince Hall Masons to give assistance wherever, whenever and for whatever it is needed to our sisters. I further recommend that we send a personal Greetings to the Grand Officers of the Grand Order of Eastern Star, who are convening at the same time here in this beautiful City of Vancouver, B.C.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

I recommend that Section 284, Page 129 of our code be further amended by adding the following phrase, "Provided, however, that the language in this section shall not apply to the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People or the League."

I recommend the Grand Lodge adopt the Grand Lodge Burial and Charity Fund as outlined in my address for a basis of two years. In that time we shall be able to see how acceptable it is and how we wish to implement it.

In the meantime we shall be on a sound financial basis and one that is acceptable to the Washington State Insurance Commission.

I recommend the M.W. Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Washington and its Jurisdiction deposit monies in the Conference of Grand Masters Prince Hall Commission on Clandestine Lodge subscribe the amount of seventy-five dollars, or approximately eight cents per member, to the Department of Finance of this Commission.

I recommend the Grand Lodge contribute forty dollars to assist in defraying the expenses of the Conference of Grand Masters.

I recommend the Grand Lodge make a contribution of fifty dollars to the N.A. A. C. P. Legal Redress Department at this setting of the Grand Lodge and said monies be forwarded to this department by August 15th of this year.

I recommend that all addresses of principal officers of this M.W. Grand Lodge be mimeographed in the office of the Grand Secretary and the grand lodge shall defray said expense, for future annual communications. The Grand Master shall designate deadline of receiving said addresses each year.

I recommend the Grand Lodge begin making tangible plans to bring the Conference of Grand Masters to the State of Washington in 1962 and send official invitation to the conference this coming year to acquaint its planning committee of our contemplated plans.

### **CONCLUSION**

As you can see, my brethren, much time and energy has been consumed by this office again this year. The official acts have been many and varied. During the year the office of Grand Master has mailed out four hundred and eighty parcels of mail. Acting as my own secretary that consumes a tremendous amount of time.

As I stated last year the work for the year is ended and yet our work, we realize more than ever, for all of us is just beginning. The progress we are accomplishing on our programming is very heartening. We have grown in stature. Our scholarship program is shaping up to the point we are receiving recognition from the colleges and greater universities of the state, from civic groups throughout the state and jurisdiction and Negroes, in general, are pointing to our scholarship with pride. Our initial venture in the field of guidance was a decided success and commanded respect of all allied groups and, in addition, our youth are beginning to feel assured that we are establishing ourselves in community life and human values. I feel assured that we are establishing ourselves in community life.

Your administration, this year, through militant action, caused a city council, for the first time in ten years and the first time in an issue of race, to unanimously reverse a decision made by its planning board, thereby saving a building purchased by one of our Prince Hall lodges. Your administration, this year, prevented the clandestine lodge from organizing in one of the larger communities of the state. Again in this field of endeavor it has eliminated clandestine masonry from a district where clandestine masons were in a ratio of ten to one with our Prince Hall family.

It has saved one Prince Hall lodge, both numerically and financially and shall place it on the rolls as a sound, active body of our fraternity. We have increased interest in all progressive fields of endeavor throughout the jurisdiction and have added material aid to the programming of subordinate bodies. I am heartened to know I have not stood alone during the year in carrying these many responsibilities and duties of being your Grand Master. I wish to thank the Grand Secretary for the splendid cooperation I have received from his office. I shall list out other brothers in my special report. I have been aware of all of your willing aid and best wishes wherever I traveled. For this sincerity and friendliness I am humbly grateful. Each one of you has been of the utmost importance for without you the wheels of our Grand Lodge would have been motionless. Let not any mistakes of the past year in any way hinder our progress but serve as stepping stones over which we shall climb toward our masonic goal.

I am returning to you the gavel of authority entrusted to my care. I can sincerely say, and feel that every grand master before me felt the same way, that no man can fill the high office of grand master, carry the weight and duties successfully without an ever present awareness of his own inadequacies. Your problems were my problems; your mistakes were my mistakes. It was said, "it is human to err". The errors I have made were not made intentionally but were made while endeavoring to serve you again this year, for it is and has been the one desire of my heart, the one purpose of my life, to promote and preserve the progress and principles of our noble institution. In using the gavel of authority you again entrusted to my care this year I trust you will find it has not been used to further selfish motives and promote personal interest but every act was motivated with the single desire to serve you, my craft.

Fraternally submitted,

**W. Vernon Scott**  
**Grand Master of Masons**