

CLAUSEN'S COMMENTARIES

Two commonly asked questions are what is the Scottish Rite and why should I become a member. As simple as these questions are the answers can be difficult to put into words. The late Henry C. Clausen 33°, Past Sovereign Grand Commander, has provided eloquent answers in his book *CLAUSEN'S COMMENTARIES ON MORALS AND DOGMA*. Clausen considered this to be his magnum opus. Over ten years 450,000 copies were printed in English and in foreign languages. It is now out of print. All of the illustrations are historically accurate. The book was written as a more modern means of telling candidates the story and lessons of the Scottish Rite and as a supplement to Pike's *MORALS AND DOGMA*. The book forces each reader to assess his life against the Rite's goal which is to help each member discover something of life, his life and the life beyond this life. The following is a summary of the preface and first chapter.

In keeping with our view that man has inner capacities that can supply answers to our problems, we use a self help approach founded upon an intuitive feeling that we can reach the inner self. We will find there is a refuge from external evils. Put your trust in your own inherent capacities. The answer is not more science and technology but an inspired application of Masonic principles.

What is needed is an increase of self understanding – a discovery of your inner selves and of your own essential natures. You learn there is no need to lean on others. The Scottish Rite degrees develop full trust in your own innate capacities. When man has faith in himself he learns to reject unreality. You can learn to be self-reliant. Then, in essence, you shall be free and possess initiative and confidence and live in the present. Carlyle said "our main business in life is not to see what lies dimly at a distance, but what lies clearly at hand."

Our degrees drive home with dramatic impact the teaching of great truths. There you will find your own direct approach and the satisfactions and

benefits and enrichments you will enjoy as a self-reliant human being. As such, your life will also show the world the behavioral solutions that can cure the ills of our day. Masonry cannot teach, it can only help us to learn.

Our ultimate goal is mankind's moral, spiritual and intellectual development. Our teachings and symbols preceded our formal organization by thousands of years. The signs, symbols and inscriptions come to us from across the centuries from many areas of the ancient world. The Scottish Rite is a treasure house in which there is stored the ageless essence of immutable law, the accumulation of thousands of years of Masonic experience.

We learn our mission in a system of progressive degrees of instruction. We teach our members the highest ethics, the wise expositions of philosophy and religion and the blessings of charity. Our code of personal conduct stems from the precepts of chivalry, the Ten Commandments and the Golden Rule.

Our degrees represent the study and reflection of many men during many years, the culling of hundreds of volumes for effective portrayals and illustrations, and more labor than the accumulated endeavors of a lifetime. Our members gain a comprehensive knowledge of our heritage of history, philosophy, religion, morality, freedom and toleration, and of their relationship to their creator, their family and themselves.

We carry out our mission in a series of spiritual values, charitable and moral programs. We make vital parts of our activities the recovery and maintenance of moral standards and spiritual values, the pride of patriotism and love of flag and country, the dispensing of charity without regard to race, color or creed.

We stand for positive programs but fight with moral courage and enthusiasm every force or power that would destroy freedom, including spiritual despotism and political tyranny. We teach that sovereignty of the state resides in control by the people and not in some self-appointed dictator or despotic totalitarian. We therefore advocate complete separation of church

and state, freedom and protection of religion, press and assembly, and the dignitary of every individual.

Now some thing about the author. Henry Christian Clausen was born in 1905 in San Francisco. The great earthquake of 1906 destroyed his house when he was one year old, but he was unhurt. His father died when he was in high school which required him to assume much of the responsibility for the support of his mother and sisters.

Clausen earned his law degree by attending night classes at the Univ. of San Francisco. Later he attended post graduate courses at the Univ. of California and then at the Univ. of Michigan's Army Judge Advocate Generals law and procedures course.

After passing the bar exam, he entered private practice in 1927 at the age of 22. From 1931 to 1933 he served as Assistant U. S. Attorney for the Northern District of California and then was the chief counsel for Joseph B. Strauss, chief engineer for the Golden Gate Bridge.

In 1935 he married Virginia Palmer. There were four children, one of whom was an artist, who painted his father's picture which was placed in the House of the Temple. That same year he joined Ingleside Lodge No. 630 in San Francisco and became its Master five years later. The following year he joined the Scottish Rite in San Francisco.

Clausen served in the Army Judge Advocate General's office from 1942 to 1945 where he prosecuted court martial cases and was a member of the Special Presidential Appeal Board for spy cases.

In 1944 Sec. of War Henry L. Stimson, knowing that high ranking members of the military had testified falsely before various investigating bodies about the root causes of Pearl Harbor appointed Clausen to investigate. He gave Clausen, then a major, extraordinary powers, including the power of subpoena. Over seven months during 1944 and 1945 he traveled 55,000 miles and interviewed over 100 people including Army, Navy, civilian and British personnel. Many had never testified before any other

inquiry board, including Congress. The report was 800 pages long and was not released to the public because, among other things it would have had to reveal the fact that the allies had the ability to crack the Japanese and German codes.

After fifty years the information was declassified and Clausen wrote *PEARL HARBOR FINAL JUDGEMENT*. He concluded that all of the conspiracy theories were untrue, so that the "proximate cause of the disaster was the unworkable system of military intelligence, including the fact that the Navy withheld vital intelligence from the Army that called for Army action." He recommended "that there be a complete integration of Army and Navy intelligence agencies in order to avoid the pitfalls of divided responsibilities."

This judgement about unified military intelligence made him one of the first advocates of what was to become the National Security Agency which Bro. Harry Truman later created.

After the war he became a partner in a San Francisco law firm that lasted twenty years. In 1947 he was made a Knight Commander of the Court of Honor. Before being elected Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of California in 1954 he also became Inspector General and Deputy of the Supreme Council. The next year he was appointed Sovereign Grand Inspector General of California. He held various offices in the Supreme Council, becoming Deputy Grand Commander in 1967. Sovereign Grand Commander Luther A. Smith installed Clausen as Sovereign Grand Commander on Oct 23, 1969.

Clausen was unafraid to confront the necessity of change, if it was rational. He assumed an aggressive style of leadership which modified staff, increased the volume of publications, streamlined the ritual and developed regional work shops to improve leadership and administrative techniques.

The Archives of the Supreme Council was established to organize, file and index over 400,000 documents and place them in a climate controlled,

acid free and fire proof environment. A full time librarian was hired and a Director of Education was appointed.

Clausen continued the program to revitalized the physical condition of the House of the Temple

He monitored administrative, management and fiscal affairs closely and guided the Supreme Council through several liability issues and put in place procedures to prevent conflicts of interest with the various Scottish Rite entities. He pursued an investigation of financial irregularities at the Valley of Dallas and the Texas Scottish Rite Hospital and Foundation that lead to criminal prosecutions of two individuals for embezzlement and theft.

Clausen was the author of nine books and thirty pamphlets. He also tried to improve the quality of the ritual and prepared the installation ceremony so that the public could attend.

The length of the reunions was an issue. The norm was three days. While multiple day reunions were desirable a new reality pointed to consolidating the work into a one day reunion.

A stormy relationship developed with George Washington University that threatened cessation of the Scottish Rite Fellowship program. This relationship has since been restored.

Clausen served as Sovereign Grand Commander for sixteen years ending in 1985. He died seven years later at the age of 87 in San Francisco.

SOURCES:

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2. Clausen, H. C., *PEARL HARBOR FINAL JUDGEMENT*, Crown Publishers, Inc., 1992
3. Fox, W. L., *LODGE OF THE DOUBLE HEADED EAGLE*, The University of Arkansas Press, 1997