

# Book Review

By Bro. Robert Blackburn, P.M.



Richard Jaffa, Man and Mason – Rudyard Kipling (Arthur House 2011, \$18.65 USD)

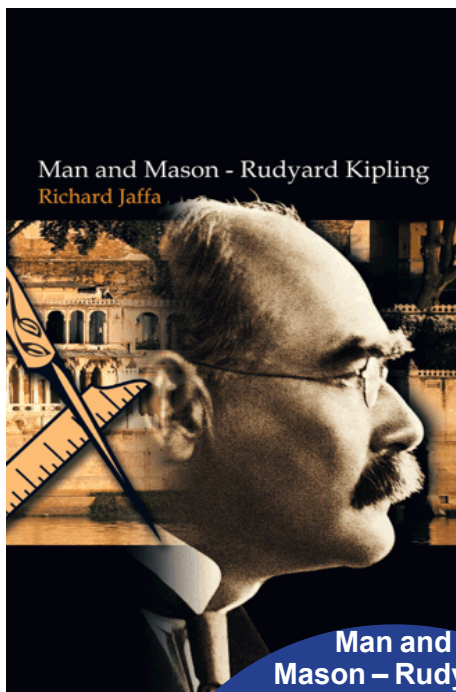
Fall 2011

## MAN AND MASON - RUDYARD KIPLING

In our post-modern world, a man like Rudyard Kipling can't help but be viewed as a deeply ambiguous character. Unapologetically conservative and an avid booster of British imperialism, he nevertheless penned a broad volume of work that, in verse and prose, influenced millions during his lifetime and continues to entertain to this day. Lesser known or appreciated by many readers, however, is Kipling's deep and heartfelt connection to Freemasonry - a tie which directly and indirectly played a part in some of his most famous writings.

Richard Jaffa is a past grand officer of the Grand Lodge of England and a popular lecturer on both Freemasonry and Rudyard Kipling. He notes about Kipling:

When you survey the whole of Kipling's writings, both fictional and factual, the number of Masonic references is extensive. With his retentive memory, just as he found Biblical language came easily, he frequently used a word, phrase or expression that he had absorbed from Masonic ritual. Many referenced have not generally been recognized, as most non-Masonic



writers have not always spotted when Kipling slips into the language of Masonic ritual. These words are found scattered in his stories, poems, and speeches, as well as the use of Freemasonry as a benchmark for the conduct or behavior of characters.

Rudyard Kipling was born in Bombay (now Mumbai), India on December 30, 1865. His parents, like many British Colonials, sent young Rudyard and his sister back to England for their education.

This separation proved especially lonely and difficult for Kipling. A mediocre student and medically unfit for the military, he returned to India in 1882 and began a career as a journalist in Lahore (now Pakistan). He was made a Mason in 1885 in Hope and Perseverance Lodge No. 782,

E.C. and immediately became its secretary. In 1887, Kipling also joined Fidelity Mark Lodge No. 83 and Mount Ararat Mark Mariner's Lodge No. 98. This period would be his most Masonically

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active; later, Kipling only infrequently visited lodges. But his time with Hope and Perseverance – a mixed lodge of British and Native Indians – left an indelible impression on the emerging author and, as Jaffa argues, helped shape Kipling’s personal vision of the world.

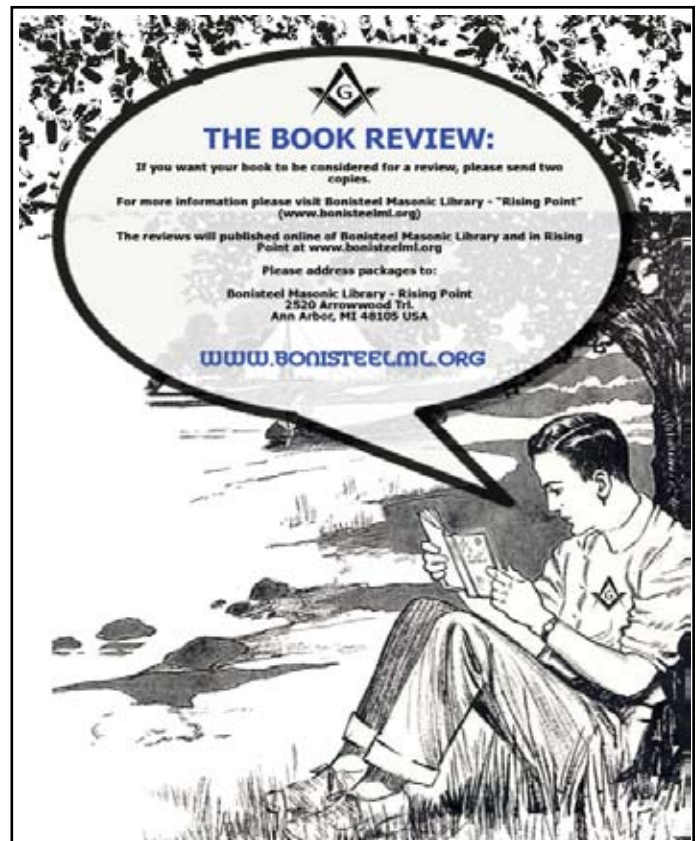
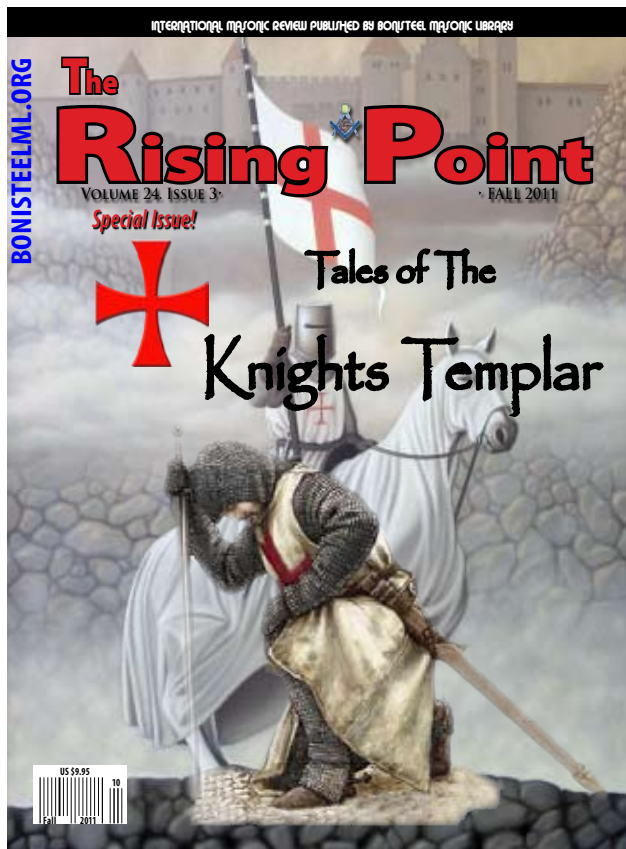
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**About Author:**

Bro. Richard Jaffa has lived most of his life in Birmingham, attending King Edward’s Grammar School, Five Ways and Birmingham University where he read law. He worked for four years as a journalist, becoming a reporter on the Daily Mail. He left journalism, qualified as a lawyer and has practised in Birmingham since 1967. In 1970 he became a Freemason, later Master of four Lodges and eventually Assistant Provincial Grand Master of Warwickshire and a Junior Grand Deacon of the United Grand Lodge of England. His Mother Lodge, St. Paul’s No. 43, was established in 1733. He has lectured on Masonic history and Rudyard Kipling. Richard has been married to Jane for over 40 years and they have two children and six grandchildren.

Bro. Richard Jaffa’s website: [www.RichardJaffa.com](http://www.RichardJaffa.com)



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