

United Masters Lodge, No. 167



Of Antient Free
and Accepted Masons

Lodge of Masonic Research

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The REGULAR MEETING, will be held in the
Masonic Hall, St. Benedict's Street, Auckland.

**THURSDAY, 26th OCTOBER, 1972,
at 6.30 p.m.**

The Master will be pleased if you will extend a
cordial invitation to any M.M.s who are
interested in our Masonic discussions.

PLEASE NOTE CHANGE OF TIME

AGENDA

Confirmation of Minutes.

Correspondence.

Treasurer's Balance.

Accounts.

Installation of Master Elect, W. Bro. A. E. Rogers.

Associate Members elected September 28th, 1972:

The Ara Lodge, No. 1:

Bro. H. A. McCormick, M.M.

Lodge Otaki, No.72:

Bro. H. Taepa, M.M.

Lodge St. James, No. 244:

Bro. S. J. Wallace, M.M.

Lodge Hamilton, No. 291:

Bro. J. Muis, M.M.

Lodge Tokoroa, No. 344:

Bro. B. W. Millward, M.M.

Bro. A. A. Wilks, M.M.

Onehunga Lodge, No. 424:

Bro. J. A. Fletcher, M.M.

Bro. A. E. Craven, M.M.

Lodge Star of the North, No. 1647 EC.:

Bro. E. F. Edwards, M.M.

Duke of Albany Lodge, No.2073 E.C.:

Bro. C. A. Holst, M.M.

The Rabaul Lodge. No. 4468 E.C.:

Bro. M. J. Mayberry, M.M.

Lodge of Light, No. 454 I.C.:

W. Bro. C. W. Cooper, P.M.

Lodge Rosslyn, No. 596 S.C.:

Bro. R. O. Walrond, M.M.

Lodge Gavel, No. 546 Vict. Const.:

W. Era, A. H. Wilson, P.M.

Los Gatos Lodge, No. 292 California:

W. Bro. A. E. K. VonDamm, P.M.

Lodge Semper Paratus, No.49 D. of C.:

W. Bro. P. Cory, PM.

North Star Lodge, No. 227 Nebraska:

M.W. Bro. E. E. Magee, P.G.M.

Akron Lodge, No. 83 Ohio:

W. Bro. M. R. Jeffries, P.M.

Black Diamond Lodge, No, 538 Ohio:

Bro. H. S. Taylor, S.D.

Grand Lodge, New York:

R.W. Bro. A. H. Curran, P.Dist., D.G.M., New York.

Associate Lodge for Election:

Lodge Rosslyn, No. 596 S.C., Trinidad.

OFFICERS FOR 1972

Master--W Bro. B. C. Major

I.P.M.-- V. W. Bro., H. A. Marks, P.G.Lec

Deputy Master-- V.W. Bro. K. Smith, P.G.Lec.

Senior Warden-- W. Bro. I. F. E. Wilson

Junior Warden-- W. Bro. B. H. Siddle, P.G.S.

Chaplain-- W Bro. O. W. Drever

Treasurer-- W Bro. A. A. Ashforth

Secretary-- W Bro. A. J. Crisp

D.C.-- W Bro. H. Purdy, P.G. Swd. B.

S.D.-- W Bro. A. C. Coultts

J.D.-- W Bro. K H. Terry

Asst Sec.-- Bro. J. S. Hester

Asst. Sec. (Waikato)-- W. Bro. J. C. Prescott

Asst. D.C.--W. Bro. D. Chalmers

Organist--

Inner Guard--W. Bro. J. Bourke

Senior Steward--W. Bro. H. W. R. Black

Junior-Steward--W. Bro. V. F. Percival

A.S.--Bro. K. G. Hyde

Tyler--W. Bro. H. G. Ford

Librarian--W. Bro. A E.Rogers

Asst Librarian--V.W. Bro. F. Howarth, P.G.Lec., P.M.

Editor--W. Bro. B. C. Major, Master

NORMAN B. SPENCER

CITIZEN, HUMANITARIAN, FREEMASON

By V.W. Bro. J. P. Glenie, P.Asst.Prov.G.M., P.M.

Author's Note: *The task of recording the life of Norman Berridge Spencer has not been easy. He was a man of wide and varied interests, many of which are unrecorded. In the search for material, I acknowledge the help of many people and in particular of his son, Bro. Martin Spencer, of his brother, W. Bro. H. N. Spencer, of The Grand Secretary, United Grand Lodge of England, R.W. Bro. J. W. Stubbs and of The Secretary of Quatuor Coronati Lodge, No. 2076 E.C., W. Bro. Harry Carr. I have drawn too on the very full Obituary published in our Transactions Vol. XVII, No. 9 and prepared by our Senior Past Master, R.W. Bro. Arch. Burns and on the Toast to the new Master, presented by Bro. Harry Carr when Bro. Norman Spencer was installed into the Chair of No. 2076, as reported in the 1960 Vol. of A.Q.C.*

These and many others have helped me in my search for material for this paper and I gratefully acknowledge their assistance.

The Early Years

Norman Berridge Spencer was born in Auckland on 13th February, 1891, and the family residence at Victoria Avenue, Remuera, was his home during his early years. His forbears showed much of the individuality which was to become apparent in Norman, and was to earn him an honoured place in many aspects of the life of this country.

The grandfather, Thomas Spencer, arrived in New Zealand from the Old Country in 1862. He was in every respect a fine type of immigrant and with his wife (born Elizabeth Berridge), his five children and a sizeable fortune, was a welcome addition to the early life of Auckland. He prospered well in this country but unfortunately was drowned when returning from Sydney. His ship, the Wairarapa, hit Miners Head on Great Barrier Island and as it well known, sank with a great loss of life. Thomas Spencer would be worthy of a biography of his own but I relate only one incident. The tenant of a house he owned in Thames was not paying his rent, so Thomas Spencer, following the custom of the day, simply went to Thames and took off the roof! Colourful days indeed!

A son, Percy Spencer, was two years of age when his father brought him to New Zealand in 1862. In due time he set himself up in Auckland as a stationer, studied law, and in 1909 commenced practice in the city. In 1890 he had married Lucy Charlotte, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. F. Nutter of Invercargill and granddaughter of Dr. Alexander Macdonald, well known as a Medical Practitioner in Auckland in the early days.

Through his legal practice, Percy Spencer too became well known in the city. He was quiet and unassuming and just such a gentleman as his father had been. He and his wife brought up six children, one girl Heath, and five sons, in order: Norman (N. B. the eldest), Harold (H. P.), "Bob" (H. N.), Hugh (H. M.) and Arthur (A. M.).

Norman was educated at Kings College, then a Primary School, in Remuera Road, and afterwards at Auckland Grammar School where he obtained his Certificate of Proficiency from the Auckland Education Board in December, 1905, with 2711 marks out of a maximum possible of 5150, i.e. 52½%. This result is very interesting in the light of his subsequent achievements and his later interest in higher education. He left the Grammar School in 1907. Later at the Auckland University College, he passed the B.A. degree in 1911, and LL.B. in 1914. He began his legal career in 1908 as a clerk with F. G. B. Moss of Auckland and later jointed W. M. Neumegeen and N. P. Wyatt.

War service then interrupted his civil life and he enlisted in the 2nd Reinforcements of the N.Z. Rifle Brigade, commonly known as "The Dinks" (the Dinkum Soldiers!). He finally sailed from New Zealand as an infantryman in the Brigade after 192 days service in this country.

As the Brigade passed through Egypt en route to Europe, there was an interesting reunion with two brothers, H. N. and H. P., both of whom were in the Mounteds then operating in Egypt. In fact it is on record that the two brothers, travelling along a road towards the area where they hoped to meet brother Norman after his arrival in Egypt, found a shaving outfit in the dust of the road and on it were amazed to find the initials N.B.S. When after the reunion, Norman discovered he had lost his shaving kit, the long arm of coincidence was amazingly apparent.

"The Dinks" moved on to France and Norman served there for a considerable time as Q.M.S. He was awarded the Meritorious Service Medal (though reported to have been recommended for the D.C.M.) and finally was sent to England to join an O.T.C. at Cambridge where he was commissioned. He did not return to France but was demobilised in England in 1919. The love of travel was already apparent and he spent a considerable time sight-seeing before returning to New Zealand late in 1919. His total war service was almost four years of which all but the first 192 days was spent overseas.

After the War

Work-a-day life began again in Auckland when Percy Spencer took him into partnership on his return, and the firm then became known as Spencer and Spencer. His health at this stage was reasonably good, though he was always susceptible to abdominal troubles. After a few years it deteriorated. He underwent a number of surgical operations and as a result, the brother H. M., was persuaded to abandon his life as a Civil Engineer, study law, and join the firm of Spencer and Spencer. A close association between the two brothers was thus formed and persisted in the years ahead. It was not very long before transport entered the life of the young lawyer Norman. An operator in those days could run his bus where he wished and a small company, known as the Passenger Transport Company, was operating in a very limited way at Otahuhu. With its three buses, it came on the market and was bought by a group of three interests, Norman holding one. He acquired his original one third interest for a few hundred pounds, but before too long was sole owner.

Transport fascinated him. He would spend his weekends at Otahuhu, as he put it, "nutting it out". He kept records of mileages, running costs, costs per passenger mile and so on, in a way that no other operator did in those early days. As a result, the company prospered. Naturally as it grew bigger, it took up more and more of his time until he finally gave up law altogether and concentrated solely on P.T.C. He finally withdrew from the firm of Spencer and Spencer in 1952.

In 1939 he went to England and was there when war was declared. While on the ship en route to England, he met Miss Isabella Robinson, an English girl who had been teaching in Australia. They were married in 1940 and the apparently confirmed bachelor of 49, entered on a very happy married partnership which continued for 27 years until his wife died after a short illness. There were two children of the marriage, Martin, well known to us in this Lodge as Bro. Dr. Martin Spencer, a brilliant mathematician, and Eleanor, a highly qualified library administrator. Both are now married, the former to Miss Ann Fray of Auckland, and the latter to Dr. Brian Foster, a lecturer in Marine Biology at the University of Auckland.

Almost exactly a year after his wife's death, Norman died also, having finally succumbed to the ill health that had dogged him for most of his life. Indeed at times it had seemed that only determination and a dauntless spirit had kept him going and prevented his becoming a chronic invalid. Cardiac troubles, abdominal operations, circulatory difficulties; these were a few of the problems he faced and overcame until the final call came during the night, on 18th February, 1968. It was an amazing effort of will that kept him active and mentally alert until the age of 77 years.

His Transport Interests

An assessment of the life of Norman Spencer takes us into many fields and shows him to be a man of many parts. His great love in the business world was

undoubtedly transport and from the time he became involved as owner of the Passenger Transport Company, he gradually built himself up to be one of the great transport specialists in the country. He continued to make bus transport pay when passenger operators everywhere were in difficulty.

In 1955 the Auckland Transport Board was facing troubles which seemed almost insurmountable. Norman Spencer was persuaded to stand for election to the Board in May of that year and was easily top of the poll. It was apparent that voters realised that not only was he making substantial sacrifices in offering his services, but also that he, above all others available, could stop the heavy losses and rising costs looming up in the Board's operations. His declared vote on the night of the poll was 6538 while the next highest was 5132, surely a vote of great confidence. He was immediately elected Chairman and in that position grappled with the Board's problems for nine years. His approach was, of course, based on his experiences as a private operator, but he soon found the situation very different. What he was able to do with the good Trade Union relationships he enjoyed in P.T.C., became difficult indeed with the complicated Union situation within the Board's operations. Indeed he almost began to appear an unsuccessful Messiah when costs continued to escalate and credit balances became a beautiful dream.

Yet, there is no doubt that he served the people of Auckland with great distinction during those years. He did not accomplish all he set out to do, and never really solved the tremendous problems of peak hour traffic in association with strict Union rules. Yet, it is clear that his efficient management and unselfish service to the Board, saved the people of Auckland many millions of dollars. His nine years as Chairman ended only when the Board was absorbed into the administrative field of the Auckland Regional Authority and passenger transport became the responsibility of its Transport Committee. Fitting tributes were paid to his leadership at the final meeting of the Board on 30th September, 1964. In a unanimous resolution the Board recorded its appreciation of his chairmanship during his term of nine years and expressed regret that the setting up of the Regional Authority had resulted in his retirement from the scene of public transport. During this time, he was also Chairman of the Metropolitan Licensing Authority as the Board had acted as the Authority since 1931. When it was replaced by a one-man authority in 1963, Mr. Spencer was able to say that he was the sole surviving operator (P.T.C.) who had held a license ever since the Board was formed in 1928.

A long and distinguished life in transport naturally gave him the opportunity of filling many offices and public positions. He was for two years Chairman of the N.Z. Passenger Transport Association, was a member of the Council of the Institute of Transport (England) and Chairman of its New Zealand Division. He was also a director of a Wanganui transport company, Greyhound Buses Ltd.

Some recognition of his work for the Passenger Transport Association came on the final day of the 1964 Conference in Auckland when the incoming President made eulogistic references to Norman Spencer's distinction in the field of transport and of his outstanding services to the Association during two years as President. A presentation was made to him of a minute model of a Leyland Royal Tiger bus painted in the colours of the Auckland Transport Board, and of a beautiful silver tea set, suitably engraved. Perhaps the greatest recognition of his services to transport came with his appointment by the Government in 1954, to the Board of Tasman Empire Airways Ltd., later known as Air New Zealand. A change of Government resulted in his not being re-appointed in 1959 and the Board was deprived of his valuable services.

Other Service to Commerce

Norman Spencer was a man of great and persistent enthusiasms and when he once became attached to a cause, he stayed with it. An outstanding example of this was his service, over 35 years, to the Auckland Co-operative Terminating Building Society. He first joined the Board on 31st May, 1922, and became its Chairman in 1926. For ten years he occupied that position, stepping down in

1936 though still remaining a director. It was ill health which finally caused him to tender his resignation in 1957. There can be few in the history of the Society who have rendered it greater service. He also served as a director of the Northern Investment Trust and as Chairman of the Second Northern Investment Trust, both of which had been set up to further the work of the Society. All matters of commerce were of great interest to him and he gave long service to the Chamber of Commerce, both in Auckland and nationally- He was an Executive member of the Auckland Chamber for many years, was President in 1941 and became President of the Associated Chambers of Commerce of New Zealand in 1943. Thereafter he remained active on the Executive and Council of the Auckland Chamber for two or three years. His service to organised commerce in this country was strong and fearless, and his experience with industrial matters with P.T.C. enabled him to speak with authority. I believe he was well respected by the labour unions with which he was directly concerned. As a new member of the Executive of the Auckland Chamber in the mid-1940's, I was impressed, not only with his authority in these matters, but with his deep concern for the welfare of the men. Norman Spencer appeared hard and firm, but he was a true humanitarian at heart.

The University and Students

This innate kindness was displayed over a large part of his life, in his work and concern for students at the University in Auckland. In 1967, the Auckland columnist, Michael Brett, asked him what he most enjoyed doing in life, and his answer was "helping university students". There can be no doubt that his interest in the University and its fast growing student roll, was very deep and very real. Not only had he been a student there (B.A. 1911, LL.B. 1914) but his two children both graduated there, and his wife, inevitably perhaps, was a graduate also, though in her case from Durham University, England. His interest in the practical running of the University seems never to have lessened. He was a member of the Council of the University of Auckland from 1952 to 1959, and of the Senate of the University of New Zealand from 1957 to 1959. An intensely practical example of his interest in both University and City came when he endowed a Chair of Town Planning, and brought out the first Professor of Town Planning from England. The extent of his endowment was reputedly \$14,000, a wonderful gesture of confidence in the future of Auckland and its University. This was the union of Town and Gown at its generous best.

But overshadowing all else in the University picture, was his unwavering concern for the welfare of the students.. This received practical demonstration when, in 1957, he began his benefactions to Spencer House, in O'Rorke Hall, Symonds Street, where a University Students' Hostel had been set up. Later, he became interested in the provision of further hostels for students in St. Stephens Avenue and Brighton Road, Parnell, where he gave a very large sum (many thousands of dollars) to convert to students' hostels, three very large old homes owned by the Anglican Church. In view of his great interest, he was appointed Chairman of the Management Committee of the complex, and remained so for a considerable period. The hostels were finally closed as such in 1971 when the trend in student life towards private flatting had rendered them unnecessary. It was a little sad that his substantial and practical assistance to the hostels disappeared without any real permanent memorial.

The practical interest of Norman Spencer in these hostels, meant a very great deal. Not only did he make the original gift (subsidised four to one by the University Grants Committee) but as they occurred, he continued to make good, losses on the day to day working of the hostels. With subsidies attracted, his benefactions to student welfare must have been worth \$150,000; perhaps very much more. It is something of a tragedy that the changing social habits of University students has meant the dismantling of this Norman Spencer Hall, but perhaps the University will find it possible to perpetuate his name somewhere in its future student plans.

This tremendous interest in, and service to the University, were recognised in October 1963, when the University of Auckland conferred on him the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws. I can do no better than quote in full the laudation

which accompanied the conferment. This was published at the First Convocation of the Conferment of Honorary Degrees, conducted by the University of Auckland on 23rd October, 1963, the Chancellor, Sir Douglas Robb, presiding.

The Laudation was as follows:-

"Mr. Chancellor, it is always a matter for satisfaction when a University retains the live interest and loyalty of those who were once its students. It has been the good fortune of this University to retain the regard of one of tonight's honorary graduands for over half a century. It has been a regard mingled with understanding and expressed with most notable generosity. Seeking to equip the University for the needs of a rapidly expanding city, Mr. Norman Spencer made possible the establishment of a Chair of Town Planning four years before the official date. The Department will increasingly influence the shape and pattern of the city, and beauty, convenience, and comfort in our urban environment will be a memorial to a generous patron.

"In another sphere, Mr. Spencer's concern for the well-being of the University has found imaginative and useful expression. Education has its more elusive values and its less formal processes. Just as man lives by something more than bread, so, too, does higher education involve more than the instruction of the lecture-room and seminar, the text-book, and quiet hours in a well-stocked library. Man sharpens his countenance on that of his friend, and in the formative years of youth it is salutary to bring mind into contact with mind, and to allow convictions and ideas to meet the trial and testing of discussion and argument. There is importance in fellowship and a valuable function for an academic community. Hence a part for house and hostel, chosen centres of social activity which provide more than bed and board.

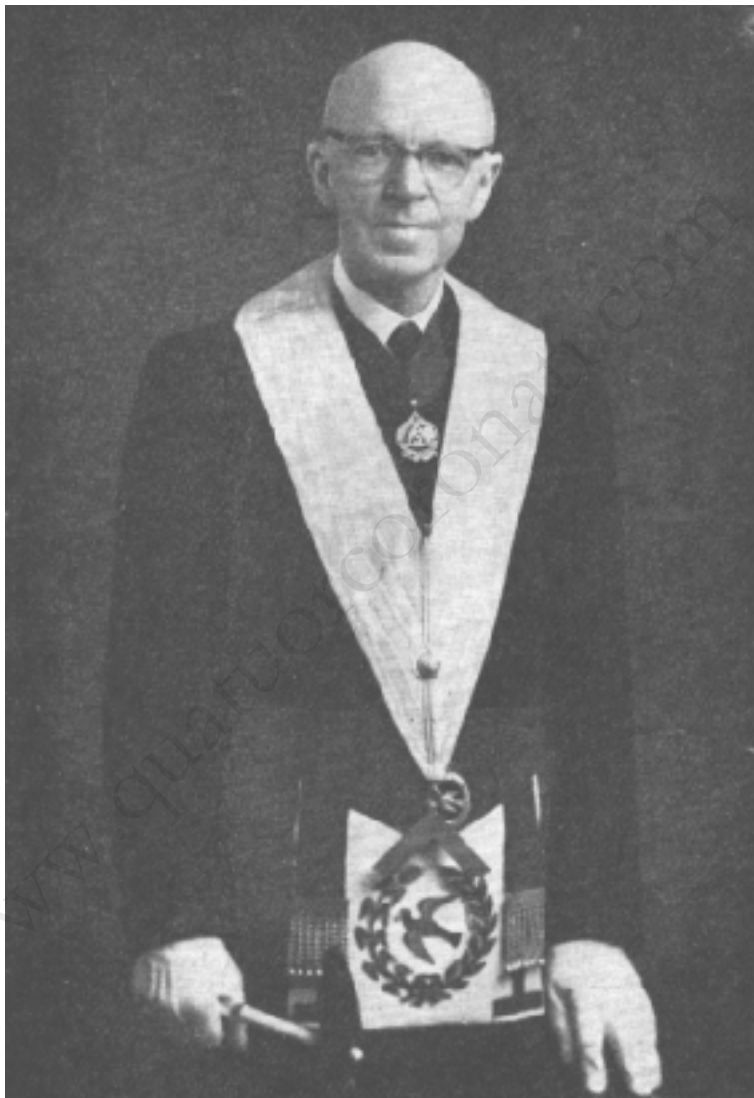
"Mr. Spencer has done much to provide the University with such facilities. Spencer House, part of O'Rourke Hall, has commemorated his generosity since 1957. The Norman Spencer Hall of Residence in St. Stephen's Avenue is a recent memorial to the same concern. A man of law by learning and experience, Mr. Spencer demonstrates that culture and those qualities which such study and training evoke in a character by nature disciplined and unselfish, a sense of community and social service, and a responsible stewardship of material things. The University has had the advantage of Mr. Spencer's counsel. He served conspicuously on the Senate of the University of New Zealand and on the Council of our own University. We have watched with sympathy his battle with ill-health, and rejoice that he is here tonight to receive an honour which we are privileged to bestow."

This was indeed a worthy tribute to one who was perhaps the greatest benefactor of the University in modern times.

Other Public Service

Allied to his work for the University was his interest in the Y.W.C.A. at Auckland, where his wife, well known to all her friends as "Ella", was President of the Board in 1968. For fifteen years, Norman was Chairman of an Advisory Board of Auckland businessmen and there he did a great deal in counselling and assisting the administrators. Indeed, his support was as usual very practical and he encouraged Mrs. Spencer to give a considerable sum of money to help with the furnishings of a University students' hostel that had been established by the Y.W.C.A. On his wife's death, he arranged for her books to be given to the Y.W.C.A. as the nucleus of a library, and set it up with book shelves specially built. On his death, he left a substantial sum to the Y.W.C.A. as an endowment.

His record of public service goes far beyond the avenues which have been mentioned. Comment should perhaps be made on his membership of the Leper Trust Board (Inc.), and of the Auckland Provincial Patriotic Council. Long service on these Councils was further evidence of his concern for the welfare of his fellow men. Throughout Auckland there are evidences of his generous public giving. The clock at the Remuera Post Office was officially handed over by him in April, 1962. At Muriwai he handed over the most valuable part of his seaside property as a public park and also presented a metal quarry to the Local Authority who would be administering it, to assist their finances. Later, he did a great deal to help the Muriwai Golf Club when its course was being developed.



Norman B. Spencer in his regalia as Past Grand Deacon (E.C.)

Much of his benevolent work was done quietly and without public recognition. No one will ever know the extent of the many benefactions he made in this way. I personally have been the recipient of his kindness and know how quietly and unostentatiously these gifts were made.

A letter found among his papers after his death, will illustrate this. The author must remain anonymous, but the sentiments speak volumes. The letter, now yellowed with age, reads

"Mr. Spencer

Dear Sir,

Having just heard of your marriage, would you please accept this small gift from one who is sincerely grateful to you.

It is one of my few treasured possessions from my late father, and I trust you will accept it, in the spirit in which it is given.

I would like to wish you every happiness, and I only hope the day will come when I can repay a portion of the huge debt I owe to you.

Yours sincerely . . . "

The gift concerned was a snuff box, of no great intrinsic value, but obviously of untold sentimental value to the person concerned. I have no doubt that Norman Spencer's kindness to this man, whatever it was, would be paralleled by countless others during his lifetime, to those less fortunate than he.

The Arts

Closely allied to Norman Spencer's great interest in education and in those who sought it was his love of fine paintings. He had an excellent collection of his own, mostly water colours, which included works by artists such as J. C. Hoyte, John Gully and Alfred Sharpe. After the death of Mrs. Spencer in 1967, he found it necessary to move from his beautiful home in Remuera Road to a flat in Brighton Road, Parnell, opposite the University hostels which bore his name. In these more restricted surroundings, he had much less room for hanging his collection and so invited the Director of the City Art Gallery to select those he would like for the Gallery. Mr. G. Docking chose nearly a score of valuable works, most of them water colours of New Zealand scenes but including also a large contemporary oil copy of Rubens' "The Holy Family" which had been one of Norman Spencer's favourites.

This was, however, not the first of his benefactions to our Art Gallery, for over the years he had already presented three valuable paintings to the City. In 1960 he presented the 16th century "Madonna and Child with St. Sebastian" by Paris Bordone (1500-1571) a gift which the London Times reported on 7th October, 1960, with a double column spread, reproducing the picture itself. Next came a 17th century work by Paolini entitled "The Fortune Teller" and on 23rd January, 1962, a famous painting by Francesco Furini (1604-1649) entitled "Antiochus, Prince of Syria and Stratonice, his step-mother". This was also a 17th century work, one which he had specially imported from Italy at a cost of \$4,400. These Old Masters gave the Gallery the largest collection of Italian paintings in New Zealand, and the city was not slow to express its gratitude for the imaginative gifts.

All in all, Norman Spencer was one of the great benefactors in the history of our Art Gallery. It is of interest to note that the "Madonna and Child" was made into a Christmas stamp in 1966.

His interest in paintings and in Italian art in particular was probably sparked off by his great love of travel. He was indeed an inveterate traveller. Perhaps a dozen times he crossed the world to England and Europe, and above all to spend time in his beloved London. In 1953, he took his family on a launch trip through the water-ways of Europe from the Channel to the Mediterranean, and in doing so, may well have pioneered what is now a popular tourist activity. The trip through the rivers and canals yielded a wealth of experience and fascination, the more enjoyable, of course, because he was able to share it with his wife and family.

This interest in travel was one of the great passions of his life, and as a result he had a breadth of outlook and a world-wide circle of friends which we might all envy.

Public Recognition

In June, 1964, the Queen honoured him with the award of C.B.E., an honour that few would doubt had been well earned. In fact, for services to the community so great as his, many of his friends believed he should have received a knighthood. Perhaps he should have, and then the pleasure of a knighthood could have been shared by his wife who had been his unflinching help and support in the many public activities with which Norman Spencer had been concerned.

Whatever the truth of that, I believe he gained some modest pleasure from the public recognition of his work, though receiving thanks was for him an embarrassment. The true pleasure was in the giving! Michael Brett's headline in the Auckland Star of 30th August, 1967, read "A Man of Integrity who Gives for Joy".

Masonic Interests

We turn now to his Masonic life, a distinguished one in every sense of the word. Throughout the world of Masonic Research, his name was a household word. He achieved distinction in two Constitutions and was blessed with Masonic friends all over the world.

A record of Bro. Spencer's Masonic life was prepared by R. W. Bro. Arch. Burns and published in the March, 1968, Transactions of this Lodge. I quote appropriate portions of that record:

"He was initiated in Remuera Lodge, No. 1710, E.C., on 12th December, 1921, becoming Master in 1932. He joined the famous Lodge of Research, Quatuor Coronati, No. 2076, in 1951 after contributing a paper on New Zealand Masonry, and was installed as Master of that Lodge in 1959, a very rare honour for anyone outside Britain. He travelled to London several times to attend meetings of Q.C. and other Masonic bodies. He was District Grand Registrar of Auckland in 1934, District S.G. Warden in 1939, and in the Grand Lodge of England was appointed a P.Asst.G. Director of Ceremonies in 1938, and Past Grand Deacon in 1953. In 1959 he was the 17th recipient of the Order of Service to Masonry, a rare distinction. "He joined this Lodge in September, 1932, and was installed as Master in October, 1933. He was Treasurer of the Lodge for 21 years, retiring only in October, 1967. He was a member of the Standing Committee from the time of its formation until his death, and most of its meetings for some years past were held in his home. The numbers of papers he contributed over the years was very large, and he answered hundreds of questions. He joined The Ara Lodge, No. 1, in 1934 and was a Founder of Lodges Howick, No. 314, Peace, No. 322, The Oliver Nicholson, No. 326, Mangere, No. 330, and Panmure., No.393. He was appointed a Grand Lecturer of the Grand Lodge of New Zealand in 1934 and 1935, was President of the Board of General Purposes in 1940 and 1941, Senior Grand Warden in 1956, and was honoured with the rank of Past Pro Grand Master in 1960. He was the Grand Representative of New Jersey near the Grand Lodge of New Zealand.

"Most Ex. Comp. Spencer was exalted in Auckland R.A. Chapter, No. 1338, E.C. on 19th February, 1925, and was installed as First Principal in 1935. He was a Founder of St. George Chapter, No. 1301, and the Chapter of Harmony, No. 2180. He served the Offices of District Grand Registrar in 1937 and Treasurer in 1938. He was appointed a P.G. Std.B. of England in 1938, and promoted to P.Asst.G.Sojourner in 1953. He joined the Ara Chapter, No. 53, in 1954 and 1955, and was a Founder of the Chapter of Research, No.93, in 1954 and 1955, and was a Founder of the Chapter of Peace, No.98. He attended a small gathering to celebrate its 11th year a few hours before his death. He was elected a Past Grand Sc.N. of N.Z. in 1939, appointed Grand Lecturer in 1948 and 49, elected Third Grand Principal in 1951 and First Grand Principal in 1956. He was the Grand Representative of Canada near the Grand Chapter of New Zealand. R.W. Bro. Spencer was advanced in Union Mark Lodge, No. 154, E.C., in 1926, and was installed as

Master in 1933. He filled various District Grand Officers up to Warden, and was appointed a P.Asst. G.D. of C. of England in 1943, P.G.D. in 1956, and Grand Warden in 1963.

"Bro. Spencer took a very active interest in degrees not recognised as part of Ancient Craft Masonry, but which Craft Masons are not forbidden to join. He held the 33rd degree under the Supreme Council of England, was a Past Provincial Prior of New Zealand and a Knight Commander of the Temple under the Great Priory of England, a Past Deputy Provincial Grand Master of N.Z. of the Royal Order of Scotland, a Past Grand III Pillar of English Knight Templar Priests, and took the Allied Degrees in England. He was one of the first ten Companions who received the Cryptic Degrees under the Grand Chapter of N.Z. in the Ara Council, No. 53 on 6th August, 1936, and was the Thrice Illustrious Master in 1939-40."

To this record I may add a few minor facts. He served a second term as First Principal of Auckland Chapter, No. 1338, E.C., in 1937. in addition to the Lodges listed, he was a Founder of Lodge Anglia, No. 342, and of Lodge Waikomiti, No. 396. He was perfected in Southern Cross Chapter, No. 88, in 1927, and attained the Chair in 1935. He became Inspector General of the Northern District of New Zealand, Ancient and Accepted Rite of England in 1958. He was a founder of six Rose Croix Chapters.

In Knight Templary, he first joined the Order under the Scottish Constitution in the De Molay Preceptory, becoming Preceptor in 1934. He had joined the English Constitution in 1928 in the Royal Canterbury Preceptory, became a Founder in 1928 and Preceptor in 1936 of Waitemata Preceptory, and Provincial Prior in 1958.

This tremendous record contains only the bare bones of his long list of Masonic activity. It would seem that, not being robust enough to engage in active sport, he turned to Freemasonry for relaxation, and as an outlet for his remarkable energy. He had a tremendous love for his Mother Constitution, United Grand Lodge of England, and the detailed history of its development and its formative years was with him a consuming passion. Indeed, he was one of the great world authorities on 18th century English and French Freemasonry. For him the world began in 1717!

Yet, in New Zealand Freemasonry too, he attained great distinction. He was accorded the rank of Pro Grand Master (Honoris Causa) in Grand Lodge, and served as First Grand Principal of the Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter of New Zealand, a record which has been surpassed by few. In the many offices he held both in Craft and in Royal Arch, he brought to bear the same ability, calm judgment and clear insight us characterised his activity in civilian life.

A World Authority

In this Lodge of Research he became a dominant figure over a period of well nigh forty years. His many papers were leaders in their field and represented a great part of the limited true research this Lodge has produced. They were always factually correct, and of considerable scholarship. He was an editor's dream, never wordy, always clear and concise. It was his job for many years to prepare the answers to questions which appeared in our Transactions, and in this his wide knowledge and his vast library enabled him to answer even the most difficult questions with authority.

All who knew his work, will acknowledge the debt this Lodge owes to him, a debt which can only be paid by our firm resolve to continue his work of research and education in the year ahead. This Lodge and the work it does, must always be his monument.

Bro. Spencer was in large measure responsible for the formation of the Chapter of Research, No. 93, in 1954, and was First Principal during the first two years. At this time, a Chapter of Research was beyond the thinking of most Companions in this part of the world, and doubts of its success were freely expressed. There appeared to be few books of reference on Royal Arch and an apparent scarcity of material on which papers could be based. Bro. Spencer would have none of this. His confidence was high and never wavered. He interested many leading

Freemasons throughout New Zealand in the project, and saw fulfilment when the Chapter was finally constituted in November, 1954.

For a period he supplied a good deal of the material himself, but gradually more and more of the members felt able to deliver papers. From its first home in the "Remuera" Lodge room in Remuera Road, it later shifted to the St. Benedict's Street Temple and now is well established under its title, "The Research Chapter of New Zealand", another monument to the initiative and the scholarship of Norman Spencer.

There is no doubt that Bro. Spencer's association with the world's leading Lodge of Research, Quatuor Coronati, No.2076, London, was one of his greatest Masonic joys. His first contact with it came in 1927 when he joined the Correspondence Circle; he first contributed to its papers in 1951. Thereafter he was elected to full membership, a signal honour indeed in a Lodge which has always limited its membership. It is comparatively seldom that a member resides outside the United Kingdom or Ireland.

Yet despite the distance, and his residence far from the source material for true Masonic research, Bro. Spencer served the Lodge with distinction, and lived to see the Lodge adopt some of his own ideas on basic Masonic education. He made firm friends in London in the ranks of No.2076, none greater than its distinguished Secretary, Bro. Harry Carr, surely one of the outstanding Masonic scholars of the world today. Bro. Carr has written me of his association with, and close friendship for Bro. Spencer, and I quote extracts from his letter. He says:-

"Living in N.Z. his attendances were comparatively rare in the early years after his election. In 1958, at my own installation, I had the great pleasure of appointing and investing him as S.W. He was unable to visit England again until October 1959 when he occupied his Chair as S.W. and delivered an excellent Paper on "The Installation Ceremony" His brother, H. N. Spencer, also a New Zealander, was there to hear him. I was unfortunately absent that night because it was on of the Jewish Religious Festivals, but the wide interest of the Paper was well reflected in the broad range of valuable comment which it elicited. That night he was elected W.M. for the ensuing year, and at the Installation meeting on 12th November, 1959, I had the mixed pleasure of standing down so that V.W. Bro. J. W. Stubbs, the Grand Secretary, might instal him in the Chair of Q.C. He had been awarded the rare Masonic distinction - the O.S.M. - Grand Master's Order of Service to Masonry in 1959.

"His Inaugural Address was a specialists' Paper on Royal Arch Clothing (exceedingly well illustrated with ten lovely pierced R.A. jewels, three old aprons and a sash.)

"His last Paper in the Transactions was 'Some of the Rare Books in Freemasonry' in the Misc. Lat. Supplement of A.Q.C. Vol.78, a Paper which reflected his own deep interest in the subject both as a collector and a scholar. He was one of the few specialists on the subject of the French Exposures who could discuss their importance from both angles."

Bro. Carr then proceeds on a personal note. He says:-

"He was the quietest, most gentle character I've ever met and the most generous. He never spoke above a whisper and he was truly ardent about his Masonry and all his services and munificent gifts to the Craft were without the remotest idea of self-advancement or reward of any kind."

Bro. Carr then goes on to speak of Norman Spencer's great kindness to him in giving him rare Masonic books which Norman knew he would greatly prize; books, Bro. Carr says, which must have been worth a small fortune and which had taken a lifetime to collect. "That," he said, "was Norman's way. I am sure he got as much joy out of giving, as he had in collecting."

The same sort of thing happened later in respect of a copy of Prichard's "Masonry Dissected" which Bro. Spencer sent to him without thought of money, despite the rarity of the book. It was apparently with great difficulty that Bro. Carr persuaded him to accept at least a token amount. Thus we see how Bro. Spencer endeared himself to people far from his homeland.

His Library and Museum

During his lifetime, he was an avid collector of things Masonic - books, aprons, jewels, table-ware, pictures and so on. He accumulated one of the finest private Masonic libraries anywhere in the world, and his collection of old aprons was fine indeed. In his latter years, he disposed of almost all his collection in places where he believed it would be most valued. To Grand Lodge, he presented jewels, aprons and many rare Masonic books. To this Lodge he gave the bulk of his tremendous Masonic library, and this today forms the major part of the fine library we now own. He also presented to us, old aprons, jewels and table-wear, and these we are proud to display in our steadily growing museum.

When Norman Spencer died, he left a bequest of \$2,000 to this Lodge, And a similar amount to Quatuor Coronati. We have endeavoured to put our bequest to work by setting up a "Norman Spencer Memorial Library, and Museum" and already under an energetic Chairman, V.W. Bro. J. F. Y. Schischka, a great deal of progress has been made. Brethren in many parts have contributed to the project gladly, encouraged by a desire to house our collection adequately, and in doing so, to honour the memory of one who, during his lifetime, did so much for Freemasonry here and elsewhere.

This Lodge was set up to service all Constitutions, and it is therefore a very great joy to know that the English District Grand Lodge at Auckland has indicated its desire to contribute in quite a substantial manner. I have no doubt that there are many who would wish to join with us in this memorial, friends in London and other parts of the world who valued his friendship and his Masonic scholarship so highly.

I have no doubt that, when finished, our Memorial Library and Museum will be a fitting tribute. By his lectures, papers, personal encouragement and wise guidance, Norman Spencer did more than any other to forward the work of the Lodge and thereby to assist in the vital task of Masonic education in this country. Nor can the standing he had in the Masonry of England be in doubt. His rank of Past Grand Deacon was ample evidence of that, as this rank is probably the highest which the average Mason outside the Peerage and the Diplomatic Service can hope to obtain under the United Grand Lodge of England. But this was not all, for in 1959 the Grand Master of England conferred on Bro. Spencer, the Grand Master's Order of Service to Masonry (O.S.M.). This very rare distinction was referred to by the District Grand Master at Auckland in his report to the District on 2nd June, 1959. Of this honour he said:-

"It was instituted in 1946 as a particular distinction to brethren, owing allegiance to the United Grand Lodge of England, who had rendered conspicuous service to the Craft. It is analogous in some ways to the civil Order of Merit - reserved for distinguished statesmen, soldiers and the like. At no time can a larger number than twelve be holders of the Order of Service to Masonry; and when you remember that the United Grand Lodge numbers something in excess of 600,000 members, you will appreciate that the conferring of this Order by the Grand Master is an event of outstanding significance. "I think I am right in saying that Bro. Spencer's appointment is the second conferred on a brother overseas - that is outside the United Kingdom. Certainly he is the first New Zealander to receive the Order of Service to Masonry. At the present time, including Bro. Spencer, only eight holders of the coveted Order are living. Bro. Spencer is certainly numbered amongst the illustrious few."

Conclusion

Such then was the story of Norman Berridge Spencer, a man whose friendship I look back on with pleasure and gratitude. It was said of him by one who knew him well that he was in the best sense a "gentle"-man. I never saw him ruffled, whatever the provocation. He was generous, perhaps to a fault, and delighted in doing little acts of kindness without fuss or public acclaim. Innumerable people, in any places will vouch for his quiet generosity - I myself have experienced it in more ways than one.

It may be said that he was intolerant, that he did not "suffer fools gladly", that he could not brook base motives and improper practices. Because of an abrupt manner, people often were unkind to and about him, and this probably militated against his receiving greater public recognition. He was handicapped throughout much of his life by bad health, heart attacks, abdominal surgery and so on, yet he never let it conquer him. More often than not, after an attack during the day, he would be out at a meeting during the evening. His spirit was indomitable, his courage great. Yet his judgment of men was often astray, and at times this caused him much unhappiness and embarrassment. He was not good at delegation, but he was a tireless worker, and so made up for lack of real capacity to delegate.

He was an exceedingly shy man, and much of the social activity of his contemporaries was of little interest to him. He did not greatly respect opposing views, but was never unkind in his denunciation of them. In many ways, he was naive, and people took advantage of him.

All in all, he was an outstanding citizen, a kindly gentleman, a true friend and a loving husband and father. In his last weeks, I was privileged to have many long quiet talks with him, and I came to know for certain that he was a man of great personal faith. I have no doubt that in a busy and successful life, the fundamental tenets of our Craft were real and true to him.

After his death, a Lodge of Sorrow was held by Remuera Lodge, No. 1710, his Mother Lodge. The District Grand Master R.W. Bro. C. L. Shroff in his panegyric, spoke at length of the life and worth of Pro. Spencer. Among his tributes, he said:-

"He was a kind man, albeit gently outspoken if the occasion seemed to demand it. He was of a truly benevolent disposition, seeming never to let his left hand know what his right hand was doing. He was always available to help his brother Masons. Many of us have reason to acknowledge to our advantage, his happy readiness to share his profound knowledge and to instruct, guide and advise those who sought his help. He could he relied upon to set such an enquiring brother upon the right path."

Bro. Shroff went on to speak of the distinction conferred on him when he became a Commander of the British Empire, and continued:-

"Let us now praise famous men. He was by every standard a famous man, and a great Mason. His loss will not easily find a replacement. But we can, with satisfaction and happiness, look to his achievements as an inspiration and an example to every member of the Craft he loved so well."

I have no doubt that the words of the District Grand Master will find an echo in the hearts of us all.

Exhibits: By courtesy of Bro. Martin Spencer, we were able to exhibit at this meeting several items previously presented to his father, including the following:

- A covered dish in silver with the Lodge badge engraved on the corner, presented by this Lodge on the occasion of Bro. N. B. Spencer's wedding.
- A number of jewels presented at the conclusion of a year in the chair of various Lodges, Chapters, etc., including a particularly fine one from Quatuor Coronati Lodge, London, and a Past Master's jewel from this Lodge which was the last of the old design before our present one was adopted.
- A jubilee jewel of this Lodge, one of the only two in existence. (The other was presented to R.W. Bro. Arch Burns who was then and still is, the senior Past Master). These jewels were hand pierced, in gold.
- A certificate of Honorary Membership of York Lodge, No. 236, attractively illuminated, dated 17/8/59.
- A certificate, in colour, from Quatuor Coronati Lodge, No. 2076, expressing appreciation of services rendered as Master.
- Several other jewels, including collarette jewels as Inspector General, Provincial Prior, etc., founders jewels, certificates and patents of office.