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Wor. Bro. Sir Kelso King, Kt., O St. J. Businessman.

George Eccles Kelso King was born in Sydney on 30th December 1853, the son of the Rev'd. George King LLD. He received his education at Calder House School and, after a time as a jackeroo, he became a junior clerk in the Bank of New South Wales in 1870.

It was the beginning of a long and distinguished commercial career. In those early years he travelled on horseback from Petersham to the city making calls en route and stabling his horse at Tattersall's stables where the Sydney Hilton now stands.

He left the Bank of New South Wales and after serving for six years with the Commercial Banking Company of Sydney, he joined the Mercantile Mutual Insurance Company Ltd., as manager when it was formed in 1877.

He was still serving as Managing Director at his death aged 89.

He was also Managing Director of the Australian General Insurance Company since its formation in 1912.

Sir Kelso King was also Chairman of the Board of Directors of Mort's Dock and Engineering Co. Ltd., a Director of the Bank of New South Wales; the Australian Fertilisers Ltd., The Mount Morgan Gold Mining Co; the Electrolytic Refining and Smelting Co; Colonial Mutual Life Association Society Ltd., and Chairman of the Walter and Eliza Hall Trust.

He was also active in community affairs.

Sir Kelso was Chairman of the Boy Scout's Association, the Boy's Brigade, President of the N.S.W. centre of the St. John's Ambulance Association and the Ambulance Brigades, and Vice-President of the Royal Life-saving Society. One of the oldest Boy Scout troops in New South Wales, the 1st Woollahra-Paddington, bears the designation "Sir Kelso Kings Own".

His interest in the youth of the State was also demonstrated by his close and sympathetic association with, and Honorary Treasurer of the Navy League, and he was a trustee of the Royal Naval House, Sydney. He was a member of the Council of The King's School, Trinity Grammar, and the Canberra Grammar School. He was also President of the Australasian Pioneers' Club, having been appointed in 1928, and a member of the Australian Jockey Club.

He was a trustee of the Church of England Property Trust and a Lay Canon of St. Andrew's Cathedral.

Sir Kelso King was knighted for his services to business and the community in 1929.

Sir Kelso was also an active Freemason.

He was initiated at Sydney, N.S.W. in the Prince of Wales Lodge No. 1653, English Constitution on 1st June 1878. The Lodge became No. 49 on the Register of the United Grand Lodge of New South Wales in 1888.

He served as Master of the Lodge in 1885. He was appointed a District Grand Steward, English Constitution for N.S.W. in 1886 and District Junior Grand Deacon in 1887.

In 1888, he affiliated with Lodge Burwood No. 153 where he remained a member until his death.

He was a member of the Board of General Purposes in 1891-2 and, at the jubilee festival of Grand Lodge in 1938, the rank of Past Junior Grand Warden was conferred upon him.

He was advanced in the Sydney Mark Lodge No. 25, English Constitution on 30th July 1879 and became Master of the Lodge in 1887. He was a foundation member of Cumberland County Mark Lodge No. 397, English Constitution in 1888 and he was Provincial Senior Grand Warden of the Provincial Grand Mark Lodges for N.S.W. of the English Constitution.

He was a founder of the Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons of N.S.W. in 1889 and Deputy Grand Master in 1891.

In 1889, he affiliated with Burwood Mark Lodge No. 6, N.S.W. Constitution.

Bro. Sir Kelso King was Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons of New South Wales from 1892 to 1894 and again in 1897.

He was appointed the Representative of the Grand Mark Lodge of England in N.S.W. in 1895 and a Past Grand Senior Warden of the English Constitution.

Sir Kelso was exalted in Zetland Royal Arch Chapter No. 548 English Constitution on 25th July 1881. He was a foundation member of Prince of Wales Chapter No. 1653, English Constitution in 1885 where he served as First Principal in 1888.

He was a foundation member of the Chapter of Central Australia No. 1898, English Constitution in 1887 and a founder of the Supreme Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of New South Wales in 1889.

The rank of Past First Grand Principal was conferred on him in 1939.

In 1926, Sir Kelso, a Vice-Patron of the Freemasons' Benevolent Institution, donated a silver cup for the Lodge which made the greatest annual contribution to the Institution in excess of £250. To become the property of the Lodge, it needed to be won twice in succession by the same lodge or three times in all.

Lodge Kelso-Campsie was not named after Sir Kelso but after the foundation master, Wor. Bro. James Kelso Dewar, who had been born in the N.S.W. town of Kelso.

The Lodge met in the Sydney suburb of Campsie.

Sir Kelso King passed to the Grand Lodge Above on 7th February 1943. A service was conducted at St. Andrew's Cathedral by the Archbishop of Sydney which was attended by the Pro. Grand Master, Most Wor. Bro. Major-General Dr. Frederick A. Maguire, after which the final ceremonies took place at Rookwood Crematorium.

He was survived by Lady Alicia Kelso and their three daughters and one son.

Sir Kelso was a member of the Union, Australian and Australasian Pioneer's Clubs and he resided at 112 Wolseley Road Point Piper.

REFERENCES

1. Proceedings of the United Grand Lodge of New South Wales for the year ended June 1943.
 2. The New South Wales Freemason. March 1943.
 3. Who's Who in Australia, XIth Edition 1941, Compiled and edited by Joseph A. Alexander; The Herald and Weekly Times Ltd., Melbourne.
 4. Saga of Sydney, Frank Clune, Sydney, 1961.
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