

Model of the
TEMPLE OF KING SOLOMON
in
California Masonic Memorial Temple
1111 California Street
San Francisco 8, Calif.

This model of the Temple of Solomon was constructed by Ed. A. Hudson, Past Master of Paso Robles Lodge No. 286, and presented by him to the Grand Lodge Free and Accepted Masons of California.

It is based upon the descriptions of the Temple given in Kings I and Chronicles II, as interpreted by John Wesley Kelchner, archeologist, after extensive research in Palestine and neighboring regions. Kelchner took his findings to the architect Harvey Wiley Corbett, under whose direction the archeologist's findings were translated into plans and drawings. Worshipful Brother Hudson supplemented these findings with investigations of his own in Palestine and Egypt.

There have been other interpretations of the Biblical descriptions and other model reconstructions of the Temple but it is believed Kelchner's are the most extensive and that Corbett's drawings are as accurate as can be drafted at this time.

The scale of the model is 1/4 inch to one cubit (20.64 inches). It is comprised of more than 10,000 separate pieces and required about 5,000 hours for construction. In the model are 150 pillars, 25 individual statues and literally hundreds of figures.

The basic forms of the Temple are birch plywood, fastened with screws or brads and glue. The Ark of the Covenant was shaped from brass, with wire carrying staves soldered to it. The two cherubim in front of the Ark were also shaped from brass castings of saints found in Ireland, to which copper wings were added. This entire assembly was then gold-plated.

The entire interior was covered with gold-leaf, just as Solomon covered the interior of the temple with gold.

Double doors between the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place were made of thin veneer. The veils which were in the original Temple were omitted to permit visibility throughout the model. So were the interior walls. The candelabra in the Holy Place were turned from brass rod, with copper wire used for the branches. There are eleven of these. Tables holding the shewbread and the Holy Incensor are of wood, and the shewbread is represented by the heads of small brads.

One side of the Middle Chamber and the Most Holy Place is of glass so the interior may be seen. Just below this is a mirror in which the highly ornamented ceiling is visible. When looking diagonally between the two pillars at the right the Ark of the Covenant may be seen.

The roof of the Great Porch is supported by four pillars. These are ornamented with Egyptian facial designs shaped to fit and suitably colored. At either side of the entrance to the middle chamber are angels. These were originally statues of two of the Three Wise Men, purchased in Jerusalem, to which copper wings were attached and the whole suitably colored. The inscription above the doorway is in Hebrew and means "Jehovah".

The brazen pillars at the entrance to the Great Porch are made of brass pipe. Their bases are of wood, ornamented with upholstery tacks. The capitals or pommels were carved from wood, ornamented with brass leaves. The network of these capitals is wire cloth and the pomegranates are key chain links. The complete pillars were plated first with copper and then with brass and then burnished.

The figures in the model are all carved from balsa wood. The human-headed, five-footed winged oxen on the staircase were specially cast in brass from a pattern made by Brother Hudson.

The entire model was painted with flat white, then with three coats of enamel, then the decorative colors were added. Overlay figures and ornamentation were made from 1/16 inch balsa. Some of these pieces were put through as many as 12 processes before being placed on the model.

The sphinxes on one of the levels above the Great Porch were obtained in Luxor, Egypt, and the lion between them in Beirut. The human-headed winged-oxen on top of the towers are balsa wood carvings.

The sacrificial altar in the forecourt is also covered with shim brass. Its ornamental molding is made from metal picture frames. The grill over the sacrificial fire is wire cloth. The sheep on the grill and elsewhere in the forecourt are of metal and were obtained from a model manufacturer. The four griffins at the corners of the altar were carved from balsa wood and gilded.

The floor of the forecourt is linoleum, scored with a glass cutter to indicate the individual slabs of marble. The maroon border of the floor of the court represents a type of marble found only in the upper basin of the Nile.

The Molten Sea was made from copper pipe, with a wire soldered around the top to form a lip, then finished in a lathe.

For the entrance to the forecourt and the surrounding court, more than 100 Egyptian closed lotus pillars were turned by hand and many feet of simulated railing made to surround the entablature. The four statues on top of the entrance to the forecourt were made in France to represent various saints. Parts of these were ground off and wings were added to represent angels.

THE ORIGINAL TEMPLE

Solonon's Temple was completed in 966 B.C. It was seven years in building and displayed, according to Kelchner, Phoenician, Egyptian and Persian influences. Some of the stones in the foundation of the temple, and the surrounding buildings which made up the citadel, were 6x8x30 feet in size and weighed 50 tons. These stones were cut to shape in an underground quarry and then raised to position.

The Temple stood in an inner court, approximately 200 by 400 feet in size, surrounded by a cloistered colonnade. The Great Porch rose approximately 210 feet above the floor of this court.