



# THE LODGE GATE

## A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF BILTMORE MASONIC LODGE

### The Founding of a Nation

**INSIDE THIS ISSUE**

Page

2 -3  
3  
4-5  
5  
6  
7  
8  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
12  
13/14  
14

- Commentary on Psalms 133
- From the East
- Albany Plan & Anderson Constitutions
- National Anthem
- Travelling Gavel Returns
- Ben Franklin—Polymath
- Book Review
- Learn Something New
- 13 Necessary Virtues
- Oldest Geometry Example
- The Other Midnight Riders
- A Mason Helping Wildlife
- New Chairs
- Fork Mountain Site
- From 1857
- A publication of news, history, opinion and thoughts.

Here it is July and the time of year when we Americans celebrate the "Declaration of Independence". By issuing the Declaration of Independence, adopted by the Continental Congress on July 4, 1776, the 13 American colonies severed their political connections to Great Britain. Interspersed in this newsletter will be several articles which reflect upon the people and times of those heady days.

The following is an article found on the web site- <https://www.sarasota147.org>

Many Americans celebrate our founding fathers and all they did to help create our country. What few of them know is that many of the founding fathers were also Freemasons. Some of the more notable founding fathers to also be Masons are: George Washington, general and later first president, Ben Franklin lead the Pennsylvania chapter, Paul Revere lead a Massachusetts chapter, John Hancock, and Chief Justice John Marshall who greatly influenced the shaping of the Supreme Court. All together it is believed that about nine of the fifty-six men (16%) that signed the Declaration of Independence were Masons, and about thirteen of the thirty-nine (33%) that signed the US Constitutions were also Masons.

However what is not known about

the Freemasons and the Founding Fathers is what their political agenda was. Over the years many scholars have tried to dig up files and letters in order to better understand what the Mason were trying to accomplish when helping found the United States. Little have had any luck but most find nothing at all.

The Masons took great pride in ensuring that their order stayed private and was not known to the outside world. Masons who were in the Public eye like George Washington and Ben Franklin did not openly connect their political views to their Masonic association. A view that is shared by all is that Masons during the revolutionary period were the ones pushing for America to break away from Great Britain and become its own nation. James Brown wrote this about Ben Franklin "What influence Freemasonry may have had on the life and character of Benjamin Franklin can only be conjectured, but that it did influence him and his contemporaries in the great struggle for American independence seems beyond doubt".

It seems that even if Masonry did not have a set standard of political views and agenda all the men that chose to be a part of it

shared some common values and views. Like most of Founding Fathers the Freemasons from this time period were men way before their time; sharing views that many others during this time would not have shared or even understood. The bottom line of being a Mason is to create a better man and a better world. They did this in America by pushing to separate from Great Britain, which was the only way they thought they could truly create religious freedom for their country. Masons are thought to also have viewed things like slavery and women's right differently than most; often pushing for equality in both categories.

Many believe that George Washington knew that slavery was wrong and that it had no place in a free nation like America but that he knew the US was not ready to undergo such a change. We can clearly say that Freemasons were men that strived for equality, freedom of thought and religion, and making the America of tomorrow better than today.

Magazine Publisher and Editor  
Clay E. Sorrells, PM



*Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.*

### A Commentary on Psalm 133

This article begins a three part series on the biblical passages used in the Masonic Degrees.

***1 Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. 2 It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments; 3 As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore.***

This beautiful psalm is traditionally attributed to King David. However, its style and language leave little doubt that it was written some five centuries after David's time, when the faithful remnant returned to Jerusalem after their exile in Babylonia. It is one of the six "wisdom" psalms, 1, 49, 73, 113 127 and 133. These psalms were part of a body of Hebrew literature and poetry designed to teach moral principles to groups of pilgrims to the holy Temple at Jerusalem. It is a particularly appropriate way to introduce the initiation of those who are beginning their pilgrimage to light in Masonry.

"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!"

Pilgrims to the Temple in Jerusalem came from all walks of life. Ancient Israelite society was strictly stratified and class-conscious, and it was rare for one class to have social inter-



course with another. The one exception was in pilgrimages to the holy shrines and to the Temple. People of all walks of life went on these pilgrimages, and as they traveled together, class and background were ignored. They even referred to each other as brethren. Even in today's society people are all too aware of class and socio-economic levels. In Masonry, however, we value the principle that despite our individual backgrounds, we meet on the level and all are equal as brothers. "On this principle, Masonry unites men of every country, sect and opinion, and conciliates true friendship among those who might otherwise have remained at a perpetual distance."

"It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's

beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments."

In the ancient Middle East anointing was a common practice, consisting of pouring scented olive oil on the head. It was used not only to signify elevation to a high rank, such as the anointing of a king or priest, but also to symbolize a change in status, such as the official recognition of a boy's becoming a man. When an honored guest was received into one's home it was basic courtesy to greet him with a kiss on both

cheeks, then to wash his feet and anoint his head with oil (Ps. 23:5, Lk. 7:44ff). Anointing was usually with enough oil that a few drops would run onto the collar of the robe. It was a rare man whose robe collar was not oily, and one whose hair was not oily would have been suspect). When the anointing was for a special honor enough oil was used that it ran onto the beard, and when a king or high priest was anointed enough was used that it would run down the full length of the robe (Aaron was the first high priest). No honor was higher, so the unity of brethren is as wonderful as the anointing of a king or high priest.

"As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion:"

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### A Commentary on Psalm 133, continued

During the summer months rain was extremely rare in most parts of Palestine, and the landscape was arid, dusty and brown. Mount Hermon, on the other hand, because of its high altitude and the abundance of rain and snow from October to April, was bathed in dew every morning even during the summer. The mountainside of Hermon was therefore green and lush all year round. There were two main pilgrimages to the Temple in Jerusalem each year: the Feast of the Firstfruits (Bikkurim) in early June, and the Feast of Tabernacles (Sukkoth) in September. Although the crops flourished in

the fertile lands, the city of Jerusalem was hot and dry at these times. Despite the harsh and dry conditions, however, the beauty of brotherhood was as refreshing as the dew of Hermon, and brought refreshment to the mountains of Zion (Jerusalem).

“For there the LORD commanded the blessing, even life forevermore.”  
God blessed Jerusalem as the heart of faith. It was there that Abraham offered to sacrifice Isaac and that God established David’s kingdom; it was there that Jesus died and rose again; and Muslims believe that it was

from there that Mohammed ascended to heaven. And as the prophets promised countless times, God blesses His people when they live in unity. The Jews revere life as one of the greatest of all God’s gifts to man — a standard Jewish toast and blessing is l’chaim, “to life.” To them, as it is to all Masons, life is not an end in itself. It is the great unifying gift and blessing, the one thing that we all have in common with each other and that unites us with God.

The Rev. Richard R. Losch, 33°  
<https://www.rlosch.net/freemasonry>

### From The East

Useful But Hardly Interchangeable —

“Spark plugs and rectal thermometers, both useful items, but hardly interchangeable.” Perhaps the funniest line from television (I think) spoken by the character, Colonel Sherman T. Potter on the CBS series M.A.S.H. Colonel Potter was lamenting over another SNAFU from an Army Supply Depot. The MASH unit had ordered rectal thermometers, not spark plugs. Agreed, both are useful items, but hardly interchangeable.

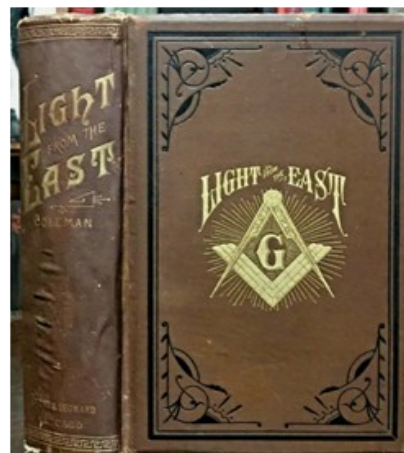
So, this got me to thinking about the folks we encounter in our everyday lives. I know where to go to get my favorite hamburger, who I trust to fix my HVAC

unit, where I like to get my car worked on, where I like to get my haircut and I like my physician. All of these folks are useful in our communities, but hardly interchangeable. I say all that to simply say we each perform a useful purpose here on earth and in our communities. While I like a good hamburger, the burger cook would not be my first choice to fix my HVAC or remove my appendix. Likewise, my barber or physician would not be my first choice to fix my hamburger.

Do the very best you can with the talents God gave each of you. You make a difference everyday. Additionally, you may never know how or when you help or positively touch another person by your thoughts, words

or deeds. “May the blessings of Heaven rest upon us and All Regular Masons. May Brotherly Love prevail and every moral and social virtue cement us.”- North Carolina Lodge Manual, C.F. Bahnson, PM.

Worshipful Master, Norman Goering





### The Albany Plan and the Anderson Constitution

The Albany Plan of Union was a plan to create a unified government for the Thirteen Colonies at the Albany Congress on July 10, 1754 in Albany, New York. The plan was suggested by Benjamin Franklin, then a senior leader and a delegate from Pennsylvania. The plan was eventually rejected but it was a forerunner for the Articles of Confederation and the United States Constitution.



Benjamin Franklin served as the Grand Master of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Philadelphia when he published his version of Anderson's Constitution. There is no doubt that Franklin had well immersed himself into Masonic teachings, especially since he was a key leader of Colonial era Freemasonry. During that time, Franklin's involvement with politics had been mainly through his ownership and editorship of the Pennsylvania Gazette, where he published his series "Poor Richard's Almanacs." It is widely accepted that these publications molded and formed what we would see as American character during the Revolutionary War.

These publishing would continue over 25 years, but there was a particular publishing that really caught the eye of Colonials. On May 9, 1754, Franklin published a cartoon titled "Join, or Die," in the Pennsylvania Gazette, which served as a cry for unification in order to fight as one faction against the French, Spanish, Indians, and the British. Follow-

ing that publishing was the proposal for unification, which was formally known as The Albany Plan of Union of 1754. Shortly after, on July 10, Franklin proposed a plan for the union of the colonies of Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Connecticut, Rhode Island, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, North and South Carolina for the purpose of "Mutual Defense and Security, and for Extending the British Settlements in North America." The plan has astonishing resemblances to Franklin's edition of Anderson's Constitution and to the organization of American Provincial Grand Lodges of the era. Franklin referred to the council that would represent the several colonies as the "Grand Council," while the council that represents all Masonic Lodges of a jurisdiction is referred to as a Grand Lodge. The similarities of the functions of these councils will be analyzed in a further section, showing that the two systems of government may have a strong link in structure.

In this proposed plan, Franklin's key motive is to unify the colonies for a common goal. The purpose of Anderson's Constitution was to unify the several lodges of England under a United Grand Lodge of England. First, there is a clear mention of where the meetings will be held and how the President General can call for an assembly whenever required. Moreover, in the Albany Plan, Franklin writes in detail his plans for the election

of the President General. "There shall be a New Election of Members for the Grand Council every three years; And on the Death or Resignation of any Member his Place shall be Supplied by a New Choice at the next Sitting of the Assembly of the Colony he represented."

The proposed Albany plan seemingly copies Anderson's Constitution word for word. Throughout articles XX to XXXIX the same rules and principles are displayed as in the Albany plan. For the election of new members, the Albany plan proposed a new election every three years, while Anderson's Constitution states that a new election of a Grand Master and the Grand Wardens take place every year under Article XXXII. Although the number of years served was different, the concept stays the same: no representative or leader should serve under absolute terms and should be democratically elected.

Article XXVIII states that all lodges must have proportionate representation when it comes to votes in Grand Lodge. Similarly, Franklin required that delegates from each colony were to be regulated so that representation was proportionate to the colony's population. Both under Article XXII and Section Four of the Albany Plan, the Grand

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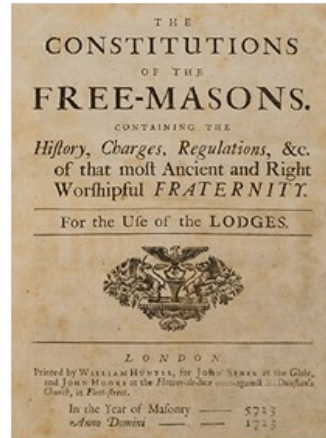


### The Albany Plan, continued

Lodge and the Grand Council shall meet once a year, or as often as it requires, to either vote new laws into place or to amend existing ones. Under that same article, the Grand Lodge, similar to the Grand Council, has the power to choose the Grand Master, or the Speaker, when required.

Moreover, the Albany Plan includes a clause stating that the President General be required to execute his duties with the advice of the Grand Council. A Grand Master is similarly, under Article XIX, a new President General must be elected to take the place of the current one. In the case that a President General or a Grand Master dies in office,

the procedure is identical: the Speaker of the Grand Council shall be vested with all the powers and authority of the President General the same way that the Grand Lodge must replace the Grand Master with the sitting Deputy Grand Master under article XXI. One general function of Grand Lodges is to impose general duties through a membership fee, or tax, which operates the same way in Franklin's plan. The Grand Council had the power to raise taxes in order to pay for soldiers' salaries, to build forts, and to fund vessels in order to guard the coast.



### The National Anthem

Most nation states have an anthem, defined as "a song, as of praise, devotion, or patriotism"; most anthems are either marches or hymns in style. A song or hymn can become a national anthem under the state's constitution, by a law enacted by its legislature, or simply by tradition. A royal anthem is a patriotic song similar to a national anthem, but it specifically praises or prays for a monarch or royal dynasty. Such anthems are usually performed at public appearances by the monarch or during other events of royal importance. "God Save the King" (alternatively "God Save the Queen" when the British

monarch is female) is the national anthem of the United Kingdom and the royal anthem of each of the British Crown Dependencies.

There are multiple claimants to the position of oldest national anthem. Among the national anthems, the first to be composed was the Dutch national anthem, the "Wilhelmus", which was written between 1568 and 1572. The Star-Spangled Banner is the national anthem of the United States. To celebrate their victory over British forces during the War of 1812, U.S. soldiers raised a large American flag at Fort McHenry in

Baltimore, Maryland, on September 14, 1814.

Freemason Francis Scott Key was inspired by seeing the flag after witnessing the fort's bombardment. He wrote a poem called "Defence of Fort M'Henry." The poem was set to the tune of a popular British song written by John Stafford Smith for the Anacreontic Society but later becoming "The Star-Spangled Banner". Although the poem has four stanzas, only the first is commonly sung today.





## The Lodge Gate

# The Travelling Gavel Returns to Biltmore

Several years ago the Lodges of the 39th Masonic District started a program called the Travelling Gavel. The idea was to encourage members of lodges to visit other lodges. With a crowd of five or more the visiting lodge members could take the gavel back to their lodge and keep it until a visiting lodge turned out five or more to take it with them.

On May 14, 2024 a group from Biltmore Lodge went to Hominy Lodge #491 and retrieved the Traveling Gavel. The group was led by Brother Eric Willis. He was joined by brothers Jim Beggs, Gabe Mixon, Howard Hazelrigg, Andrew Clark, and Billy Krause. In a special ceremony, the traveling team presented the gavel to Worshipful

Master Norman Goering at the May 21 Stated Communication. Well done, brothers!

Left to right— Jim Beggs, Gabe Mixon, Howard Hazelrigg, Eric Willis, Andrew Clark, Billy Krause

Hominy Lodge came to Biltmore On June 18 to retrieve the gavel.





### Benjamin Franklin - Polymath

Polymathy is known as the ability to achieve excellence in several areas of knowledge. The term comes from the Greek ('polymathós'), which means "one who knows many things" and is often likened to what has come to be called the 'Renaissance woman or man' of whom Leonardo Da Vinci is considered to be the greatest exponent. But are there fewer polymaths nowadays, is it more difficult to be one, and what are the advantages and disadvantages?

Polymaths are characterized by a great curiosity that leads them to continuous learning and involvement in different areas, especially in some with different expressions as it is not only about accumulating knowledge but also about applying and expressing it.

Benjamin Franklin (January 17, 1706 to April 17, 1790) was a Founding Father and a polymath, inventor, scientist, printer, politician, Freemason and diplomat. Franklin helped to draft the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution, and he negotiated the 1783 Treaty of Paris ending the Revolutionary War.

Though he didn't invent the printing press he made judicious use of it. Franklin published *The Constitutions of the Freemasons*, the first Masonic book printed in America. It was a reprint of Anderson's *Constitutions*, first

published in England and containing Masonic history, charges, regulations, and more. Franklin became a successful newspaper editor and printer in Philadelphia, the leading city in the colonies, publishing the *Pennsylvania Gazette* at age of twenty-three. He became wealthy publishing this and *Poor Richard's Almanack*, which he wrote under the pseudonym "Richard Saunders". After 1767, he was associated with the *Pennsylvania Chronicle*, a newspaper that was known for its revolutionary sentiments and criticisms of the policies of the British Parliament and the Crown

His scientific pursuits included investigations into electricity, mathematics and map making. He invented bifocal glasses and organized the first successful American lending library. Other Franklin Inventions: Franklin stove, Armonica, Rocking chair, Flexible catheter, American penny, charted the Gulf Stream.

In 1752, Benjamin Franklin conducted the famous kite-and-key experiment to demonstrate that lightning was electricity and soon after invented the lightning rod. His investigations into electrical phenomena were compiled into "Experiments and Observations on Electricity," published in England in 1751. He coined new electricity-related terms that are still part of the lexicon, such as battery, charge, conductor and electrify.

Benjamin Franklin was born in a middle class family, he was the 15th of 17 children and the youngest son. With only 2 years of formal education he rose to the highest level of society. He never forgot where he started and always referred to himself as "B.F. of Philadelphia, Printer" as in the opening of his will and testament. He had the talent of being at ease with any company, from tradesmen to scholars, merchants and the European elite. Unlike the other Founding Fathers, Franklin began as an artisan, with minimal formal education, and was the architect of his own fortune. He was a self-made man representing American social mobility through frugality and industriousness.

Benjamin Franklin died at age 84, on April 17, 1790.

Many other Freemasons were considered to be polymaths: Isaac Newton, René Descartes, Johann Wolfgang Goethe, Thomas Jefferson, David Hume, José Rizal and Albert Schweitzer.







## Book Review

*The man who does not read good books has no advantage over the man who cannot read them.*

*Brother Mark Twain*

Benjamin Franklin was a Founding Father of America and had an enormous impact on America as it is today. In addition to that, there are many little-known facts about the man that is Benjamin Franklin. Unlike many of the other Founding Fathers, he started out in humble circumstances. Franklin never finished college because his parents couldn't afford it. He hated his first job, and when he did get another one, he left without notice.

From a young age, Benjamin Franklin fought for the rights of America at home and abroad. Yet, he bore the burdens of leadership and never shirked nor faltered in his mission. His greatest asset was his charm and

friendliness, but he had his detractors as well, and felt the emotional impact of that.

In Benjamin Franklin: A Captivating Guide to an American Polymath and a Founding Father of the United States of America, you will discover topics such as

Young, Earnest, and Foolhardy

Naivet Collides with Reality

"B. Franklin, Printer"

Philosopher, Inventor, and Public Servant

Benjamin Franklin: England 1757-1762

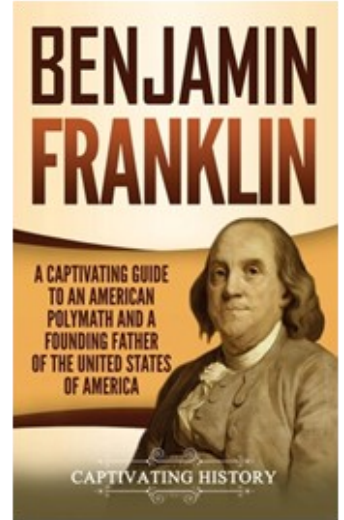
Benjamin Franklin in London: 1764-1769

Benjamin Franklin in London: 1769-1775

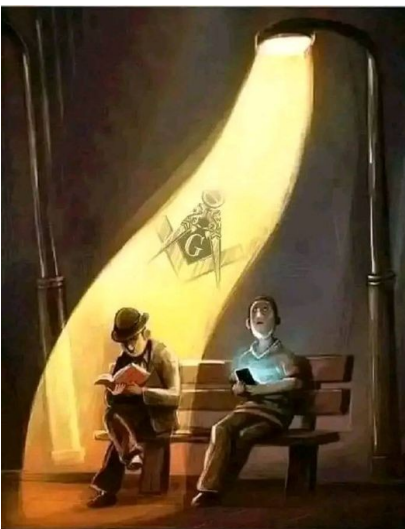
Home and on to France

Benjamin Franklin's Last Years

And much, much more



## Learn Something New Every Day



"The best thing for being sad," replied Merlin, beginning to puff and blow, "is to learn something. That's the only thing that never fails. You may grow old and trembling in your anatomies, you may lie awake at night listening to the disorder of your veins, you may miss your only love, you may see the world about you devastated by evil lunatics, or know your honour trampled in the sewers of baser minds. There is only one thing for it then — to learn.

This is from the book "the Once and Future King" by T. H. White. A story of King Arthur.

Learn why the world wags and what wags it. That is the only

thing which the mind can never exhaust, never alienate, never be tortured by, never fear or distrust, and never dream of regretting. Learning is the only thing for you. Look what a lot of things there are to learn." — T.H. White, The Once and Future King

Some time ago I made mention that this newsletter was more than just a report on lodge happenings or future events. It does include those things but it goes beyond. I hope the articles included featuring biographies of Freemasons, historical events, esoteric thoughts, book reviews and things not related to Freemasonry provide you with information and thoughts that you might

not find elsewhere. I further hope that it fills that objective to learn.

For me, as editor of this publication, I am provided the opportunity to research many things, some interesting and others not so much. The digital world is full of thoughts and ideas which help me grow in my quest 'for more light' and I hope it does the same for you. Make it a point in your life to learn something new every day.





### The Thirteen Necessary Virtues

“A bold and arduous project of arriving at moral perfection” is how America’s least controversial and most industrious statesman described his method of personal betterment in his autobiography.

Benjamin Franklin started by taking a critical look at his behavior, and he found that too often he traveled down unvirtuous roads that “natural inclination, custom or company might lead me into,” as he put it.

He fell short of his ideal in more than a dozen areas of his life, he concluded. He ate and drank too much. He talked too much, especially about himself. He spent more money than he should. He didn’t finish all his goals. And so on. In other words, he wrestled with the very same human urges, flaws and proclivities that now fuel our New Year’s resolutions and the ever-booming market of self-help books.

Then he considered various virtues that, if mastered, would counteract his unwanted behavior. His list of 13: Temperance, Silence, Order, Resolution, Frugality, Industry, Sincerity, Justice, Moderation, Cleanliness, Tranquility, Chastity and Humility.

Thirteen wasn’t a nod to the original colonies, nor was it random. He chose 13 because that number fits neatly into a calendar. Multiply it by four, and you get 52, the number of weeks in a year.

These names of virtues, with their precepts, were:

1. TEMPERANCE. Eat not to dullness; drink not to elevation.
2. SILENCE. Speak not but what may benefit others or yourself; avoid trifling conversation.
3. ORDER. Let all your things have their places; let each part of your business have its time.
4. RESOLUTION. Resolve to perform what you ought; perform without fail what you resolve.
5. FRUGALITY. Make no expense but to do good to others or yourself; i.e., waste nothing.
6. INDUSTRY. Lose no time; be always employ’d in something useful; cut off all unnecessary actions.
7. SINCERITY. Use no hurtful deceit; think innocently and justly, and, if you speak, speak accordingly.
8. JUSTICE. Wrong none by doing injuries, or omitting the benefits that are your duty.
9. MODERATION. Avoid extremes; forbear resenting injuries so much as you think they deserve.
10. CLEANLINESS. Tolerate no uncleanness in body, cloaths, or habitation.
11. TRANQUILLITY. Be not disturbed at trifles, or at accidents common or unavoidable.

12. CHASTITY. Rarely use venery but for health or offspring, never to dullness, weakness, or the injury of your own or another’s peace or reputation.

13. HUMILITY. Imitate Jesus and Socrates.

Franklin never met his goal of perfection but he at least acknowledged his imperfections and strove to overcome them.



# Oldest Geometry Example Found

Known as Si.427, the ancient clay tablet was discovered and cataloged along with many other tablets by the 1894 French archaeological expedition at Sippar in central Iraq. “Si.427 dates from the Old Babylonian period (1900-1600 BCE),” said Dr. Daniel Mansfield, a mathematician in the School of Mathematics and Statistics at the University of New South Wales.

“It’s the only known example of a cadastral document from this period, which is a plan used by surveyors define land boundaries. In this case, it tells us legal and geometric details about a field that’s split after some of it was sold off. This is a significant object because the surveyor uses what are now known as Pythagorean triples to make accurate right angles.”

In 2017, Dr. Mansfield conjectured that Plimpton 322, another fascinating tablet from the same period, was a unique kind of trigonometric table. Si.427 is thought to have existed even before Plimpton 322 — in fact, surveying problems likely inspired Plimpton 322.

“There is a whole zoo of right triangles with different shapes. But only a very small handful can be used by Babylonian surveyors. Plimpton 322 is a systematic study of this zoo to discover the useful shapes,” Dr. Mansfield said.

“With Si.427, we can actually see for the first time why they

were interested in geometry: to lay down precise land boundaries,” he said.

There are even clues hidden on other tablets from that time period about the stories behind these boundaries. The way these boundaries are made reveals real geometric understanding.

“Si.427 dates from the Old Babylonian (OB) period – 1900 to 1600 BCE,” explained Dr Mansfield. “It’s the only known example of a cadastral document from the OB period, which is a plan used by surveyors to define land boundaries. In this case, it tells us legal and geometric details about a field that’s split after some of it was sold off.”

“With this new tablet, we can actually see for the first time why they were interested in geometry: to lay down precise land boundaries,” Dr Mansfield added. “This is from a period where land is starting to become private – people started thinking about land in terms of ‘my land and your land’, wanting to establish a proper boundary to have positive neighbourly relationships. And this is what this tablet immediately says. It’s a field being split, and new boundaries are made.”

“Nobody expected that the Babylonians were using Pythagorean triples in this way. It is more akin to pure mathematics, inspired by the practical problems of the time,” Dr. Mansfield said.

According to the scientist, one simple way to make an accurate right angle is to make a rectangle with sides 3 and 4, and diagonal 5. These special numbers form the 3-4-5 Pythagorean triple and a rectangle with these measurements has mathematically perfect right angles. This is important to ancient surveyors and still used today.

“The ancient surveyors who made Si.427 did something even better: they used a variety of different Pythagorean triples, both as rectangles and right triangles, to construct accurate right angles,” Dr. Mansfield said.

“This deep and highly numerical understanding of the practical use of rectangles earns the name ‘proto-trigonometry’ but it is completely different to our modern trigonometry involving sin, cos, and tan.”

<https://www.sci.news>





### The Other Midnight Riders

William Dawes was a Freemason, who, like Revere, deserves to be recognized by all Masons for spreading the alarm on April 18, 1775. But, it would be an injustice of history if we only recognized these two Masonic Brothers, for the story is not complete without mentioning a third principle player, Samuel Prescott.

For William Dawes and Samuel Prescott, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's poem "The Midnight Ride of Paul Revere" was like putting them into the witness protection program of history. If Revere ever sought a marketing executive to push his brand and squash the competition, Longfellow was the right guy for the job. What started out as a motivational piece for Northerners as the nation slipped into civil war, became a miscarriage of history for these two American patriots.

First published in *The Atlantic* in January 1861, this patriotic poem spread quickly throughout the North. It inspired action during a tumultuous time and demonstrating what one man could do to make a difference during a time of national peril. However, it was filled with historical inaccuracies, not through ignorance, but as a result of Longfellow's personal interpretation of events. In today's jargon one might refer to it as 19th century fake news. So, what about the other two players during this famous night in Ameri-

can History? Let's take a quick look at them as individuals. William Dawes - Brother William Dawes was born April 6, 1745 and resided in Boston with his 11 siblings. Twice married and a Boston tanner, he was a member of the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company, which still exists today. In addition to being a Freemason, Dawes was a member of the Sons of Liberty, originally formed to protest the Stamp Act of 1765.

Dawes also was instrumental in riding across the colony recruiting for the cause against Britain, a skill that may have served him well on that April night in 1775. David Hackett Fischer, in his book, *Paul Revere's Ride*, states "... because his business often took him through the British checkpoint on Boston Neck, as a consequence, the guard knew him". It was across this sliver of Boston that Dawes rode that fateful night to warn Bay Colony citizens of the marching Regulars. On February 25, 1799, William Dawes died. Although his exact burial location is not known, it is believed he is interred in his wife's family plot at Forest Hills Cemetery in Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts. If so, he is literally steps away from fellow patriot and Brother, M.W. Joseph Warren.

Samuel Prescott - Samuel Prescott was born on August 19, 1751 in Concord, Massachusetts and into the locally famous Prescott family. Like his brother,

Benjamin, Samuel apprenticed seven years under his physician father, Abel, but then lived a relatively quiet life as a doctor. He was a surgeon in the Continental Army. Then, as a privateer, Prescott was captured by the Royal Navy, held prisoner in Halifax and died there in 1777. Had it not been for his happenstance involvement on the night of April 18, 1775, we may not be as aware of his life in colonial Concord.

Both Revere and Dawes were dispatched by Joseph Warren to spread the alarm that "The regulars are coming". According to Hackett, Revere's specific mission was to warn Samuel Adams and John Hancock of the British Army's movement and only secondarily that the real goal of the troop movement was to secure the local military stores in Concord. Revere traveled by boat to Charlestown, while Dawes traveled over Boston Neck. Their destination was Clarke's Tavern in Lexington, where Adams and Hancock were staying the night. Revere arrived at midnight; Dawes arrived a half hour later. During a conversation with others it was determined that Adams and Hancock were not the true mission of the Regular's movement, but rather the military supplies in Concord. So, still tired from their ride, off they went to warn the citizens of Concord.

About 1:00 am on April 19 while on route to Concord, they were overtaken by a young doctor, Samuel Prescott. He had just left the company of Miss Lydia Muliken, whom he was then courting. Being extremely familiar with the countryside and not as fatigued as Revere and Dawes, Prescott agreed to help spread the alarm. Two miles out in Lincoln, Dawes and Prescott rode away from Revere, at which time Revere was confronted by four British Regulars. Coming back to Revere's aid Dawes and Prescott were embroiled in the confrontation. Prescott, less tired and with a fresh horse, easily eluded capture and rode into the familiar countryside and, as an accidental participant, proceeded to spread the alarm through Lincoln, Concord, and Acton. Dawes also escaped, but was soon thrown from his horse, limping back to Lexington and most likely satisfied that he completed his mission. Revere was escorted toward Lexington, but was eventually released after the gun fire there made the captors concerned for their safety.

Article by Richard H. Ryder







### A Mason Helping Wildlife

Over the years, from the acquisition of our current Lodge location in 1952 until present day, our footprint has grown. Through the wise efforts of our predecessors the lodge as an entity purchased the properties to the south side of the temple. The buildings that were there were removed and what we were left with was a large vacant lot. But vacant is a bit of a misnomer.

The grassy expanse has become the home or foraging area of birds and animals. Our cameras have viewed deer, bear, raccoons, possums, coyotes, rabbits and of course domestic pets. We have seen our neighbors walking their dogs there, parents and

children playing ball along with other human activity. But the birds seem to really enjoy the area. A large hawk, we have amusingly named Chester, hunts the expanse. But our most notable residents are the bluebirds.

Some years ago a bluebird nesting box was erected which has seen several generations of those birds fledged. Recently the box was damaged but was soon replaced by a box built and installed by our Brother Gary Clark. He loves those little guys.

Gary's other interest is the history of the Riverside Cemetery in Asheville of which he is a tour guide. As his tour progresses he

points out the many resting places of famous or otherwise interesting people. The observant guest will also note the many bluebird boxes placed all through the cemetery. That's Gary's work as well.

Much talent is required if a Lodge is to function smoothly; not only ritual work, secretary duties, meal preparation, planning for future meetings, cleaning but also exterior jobs such as mowing and other landscape jobs. Gary's work adds to the overall success of Biltmore Lodge and the enjoyment of the neighborhood.



### New Chairs

Beginning in 2017 Biltmore Lodge embarked upon a multi-year project to repair, repaint and replace in order to bring our temple up to a very presentable appearance. The latest of those projects has just been accomplished. We purchased four chairs (see photo) to replace the old ones used by the Master, Senior and Junior Wardens and Chaplain. The old chairs were at least 70 years old and were in need of extensive repair. The next project is to repair the chairs used by the Deacons and Stewards.

Thanks to WB Paul Gentry and Brother Michael Ogus for the sweat equity of putting them

together and hauling the old chairs to a charity.



Above: The Master's chair was in use from 1953 until June 2024



### Fork Mountain Site

In this month's article for our newsletter I want to explore a topic that has mystified me, and others, for some time. I will actually ask more questions than I will provide answers simply because as of now there aren't sufficient answers for the questions I will explore. Let me begin by laying out the topic as best I can and then proceed to ask questions accordingly.

All across the southeastern states of America there are relics of what once were stone fortifications and to some extent these relics are found also in parts of Kentucky, Ohio, and Indiana. These fortifications are of the "stacked stone" type, some may have had a crude type of mortar, but for the most part they are simply stacked stone, much like the rows of stacked stone which enclose pastures throughout parts of the British Isles. I will describe two of these and I will encourage you to research them on your own as information regarding them is readily available on the internet. First, there is a site near Chatsworth, Georgia known as Fort Mountain. This site has the remains of what was once a massive wall which ran for several hundred yards. It was several feet thick and possibly six to eight feet high, obviously a defensive wall. This area of north central Georgia is much like our area here in Western North Carolina, rugged mountainous area with springs for water sources but not the most conducive to farming or agriculture, instead the remains

of the great wall are such that it afforded those who built it a vantage point from which they could see any approaching enemy long before they came close. We couldn't call this a "castle" type fortification in the European sense but it is most definitely not the usual type of defensive situation employed by most known Native American groups, but neither does it have the hallmarks of the Central American "pyramid" builders. The Fort Mountain site is within a Georgia state park and, thankfully, is protected from vandalism, as such, but the effects of time have already taken their toll on the wall. What is left of the wall is still clearly defined although it is obviously only a shadow of its original magnitude. Oral traditions of the Cherokee attribute the wall to having been built by a strange group of people who were already present in the area when they, the Cherokee, arrived some time after AD 1000 or so; they called these people the "mooneyed people". No one of the academic community seems to know who these "mooneyed people" were...however, most anthropologists agree that whoever these builders of the Fort Mountain great wall were they were not the Cherokee, nor were they any of the other Native American groups known to have inhabited the area. So much for this site in north central Georgia, now let's move on roughly 135 miles to the northwest into Tennessee near present day Sewan-

nee, home of the University of the South.

In this area to the northwest of Chattanooga there is another "stacked stone" relic which actually has aspects of a defensive fortification that may have had features which could be called "castle" like, with a defined entrance and walls as such. We don't really have a true idea of what this structure was like in its original form since much of it is no longer extant but what does remain gives us a clear picture that, again, it was a defensive fortification built near a river, a valuable water source, and it was not the usual type of building that most native Americans were in the habit of building. The remains of this site are known as "the Old Stone Fort" and it too is in a preservation site administered by the State of Tennessee just as Fort Mountain is preserved by the State of Georgia. What are we to make of these "stacked stone" relics? There are several theories as to who built them and in each case I would suggest that we proceed with caution but proceed nevertheless. There are several other sites found from present day Alabama and the surrounding southern states into Kentucky and Indiana that fit into this general type of fortification but these two will suffice to establish the basic question....who built them and for what purpose? For what purpose is fairly obvious...they were for protection and were defensive.



*A statue that appears to depict moon-eyed people on display at the Cherokee County Historical Museum.*



## Fork Mountain Site, continued

We don't have a clue as to who the builders may have been, few, if any, artifacts exist at these sites, although some of the Kentucky sites have produced tantalizing tidbits of iron implements that may, or may not, have been left by the original builders....we just don't know, but if they were left by the original builders then this throws a new wrinkle into the mix since none of the native American groups were known to produce their own iron implements; any iron they had they got from trading with the Spanish, French or English. What this does is raise the question of pre-Columbian settlement by Europeans, but in the interior southeast? It is well known and established that the Vikings had a permanent settlement at L'Anse aux Meadows on the

northeastern coast of America by around the year AD 1050, settlements at both Iceland and Greenland having been established probably 100 to 150 years earlier. There are some legends and oral traditions that have to do with seafarers and explorers from this pre-Columbian period but nothing that can be substantiated....it is all a matter of conjecture and speculation at this point but I will delve into this further in subsequent articles. One last little tidbit to pique your interest, which is if you think that all this is fantastic and unbelievable let's toss this into the mix. If asked what was the first European attempt at settlement in our State of NC most would answer the Roanoke "Lost" Colony but, and few are aware of this, there was a Spanish Fort near present day

Morganton which was built circa 1540 or so and lasted about 10 years before it was abandoned....this was 40 years or so before the Roanoke Colony! This site is now an archaeological dig which is being worked by UNC-Chapel Hill and is off limits to the public, as I understand. So, I hope I have piqued your interest in these mysterious stone fortifications here in the southeast and we will continue our investigation of them in future articles....perhaps we will find tracks of some ancient stone masons where we never expected to find them! For now brethren, that's part of my story and I'm sticking to what I have until I have further information.....STAY TUNED!

Brother Bucky

## From 1857

The following was taken from the Macoy Masonic Monitor 1857.

*FREE-MASONRY in every degree, as before remarked, is progressive. A knowledge of it can only be attained by time, patience and application. In the first degree, we are taught the duties we owe to God, our neighbor and ourselves. In the second, we are more thoroughly inducted into the mysteries of moral science, and learn to trace the goodness and majesty of the Creator, by minutely analyzing his works. But the third*

*degree is the cement of the whole. It is calculated to bind men together by mystic points of fellowship, as in a bond of fraternal affection and Brotherly Love. It is among brethren of this degree, that the ancient landmarks of the order are preserved, and it is from them that we derive that fund of information which none but ingenious and expert masons can supply. It is also from brethren of this degree, that the rulers of the Craft are selected; because it is only from those who are capable of giving instruction, that we*

*can reasonably expect to receive it.*

The complete monitor as well as many other Masonic books and publications can be found free of charge at the following web site:

[Digital Library – Cedar City Masonic Lodge #35 \(cedarcitylodge.org\)](http://cedarcitylodge.org)

Click on it.



# 2024 BILTMORE LODGE OFFICERS

Officer

Officer



Master	Norman Gozring
Sr. Warden	Howard Hazlrigg
Jr. Warden	Michael Ogas
Treasurer	Doug Robertson
Secretary	Curtis Higgs, PM
Sr. Deacon	Frank Bryson
Jr. Deacon	Anthony Riez
Sr. Steward	Sean Donati
Jr. Steward	Eric Willis
Tyler	Chris Redden, PM
Chaplain	Alex Hanks

## Brother of Pirates and Corsairs

In his book 'Born in Blood' John J. Robinson purports to prove that Freemasonry is directly descended from the medieval monastic Knights Templar. The Masonic historian will recall the arrest of the Templars on October 13, 1307 and the dissolution of the order in 1314. Most of the riches and other objects held by the Templars were spirited away by the Templar fleet before the French king could confiscate it all. Robinson then states that the sea going Templars then turned to piracy. This might explain why a man undergoing the rite of a Master Mason (in some jurisdictions) is told that this degree will make him a "brother of pirates and corsairs."

From the Glasgow Chronicle newspaper date August 30, 1854. A British sloop, the Sea Flower commanded by Captain Thomas was sailing from Haiti. About twenty five miles west of the island the sloop was stopped and overhauled by a fast sailing schooner of about 125 tons, armed with long



brass guns (18 pounders on a pivot, and two small guns, on each side), and manned by about sixty or seventy white men of all nations, at least speaking all languages; showed no colors; had on deck a blue signal flag with a red square on it; no small arms were seen, but there was a large chest on deck that may have contained them. Captain Thomas, who was taken on board the schooner the moment she came alongside, was kept the whole time. He believes that his being a Freemason saved him from being robbed, as his trunk was taken on board the schooner, and upon it being opened, his Masonic aprons, sash, etc, presented themselves. He then saw signs pass from on to the other, who were on board.

They treated him well at the time and sent back his trunk without touching the contents, even leaving his gold coins in place. A similar instance of the seamen being Freemasons occurred some years ago to a ship's crew belonging to Ayr. Mystic signs being exchanged between the piratical captain and the master of the boarded vessel, the 'brethren' with their property were spared.

Ahoy matey!!