



THE LODGE GATE

A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF BILTMORE MASONIC LODGE

Tabula Rasa

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A publication of news, history, opinion and thoughts.

Are we born with innate knowledge? Or do we acquire knowledge only through our sensory experiences? Does the world of our sensory experience align to 'reality'? Or is experience a poor guide to what's really there? These are key questions of epistemology, the branch of philosophy concerned with what knowledge is, how we acquire it, and whether it has secure foundations.

Several years ago I wrote an article for a local community paper entitled "The Road to Success is Paved with Corpses". In summary it was my own telling of the human pursuit of knowledge through trial and error. Most of my medications, if you choose to call them that, are from herbal supplements. I take supplements to boost my immune system, reduce inflammation, lower cholesterol and blood pressure. This I choose because prescribed medications have too many side effects. But how did we learn that cat's claw, a woody vine, native to South and Central America, has anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, and immune-boosting properties? Humans learned by observation.

John Locke an English philosopher and very possibly a Freemason, influenced the Enlightenment and the founding principles of liberal democracy. Perhaps his most famous notion is the idea that each human mind begins life as a blank

slate—a "tabula rasa." According to Locke, knowledge doesn't spring from innate ideas embedded at birth, but accrues through experience, whether from sensory impressions or reflection on those impressions. In his Essay Concerning Human Understanding, Locke dismantled the old belief that certain principles or truths are imprinted in our minds. Instead, he proposed that newborns come into the world without inborn content. Gradually, they acquire data from hearing, seeing, tasting, touching, and other forms of experience. Over time, the mind shapes these raw inputs into complex ideas through comparison, combination, and abstraction. Locke's stance was momentous in shaping modern educational approaches. If we accept that the mind is malleable from the start, it implies that the environment and learning resources can profoundly shape an individual's development. This notion underpinned many later theories of knowledge, from empiricist science to child psychology. Of course, others argued that certain instincts or predispositions must be innate. Yet Locke's bold claim forever changed the conversation about how knowledge is acquired and how society might best cultivate informed citizens.

The five human senses, hearing, seeing, feeling, smelling, and tasting are introduced to the candidate in the Fellowcraft degree as they relate to our acquisition of knowledge. It is through these senses that the mind receives its perception of things exterior to ourselves and thus becomes the storehouse of ideas. Of these five senses, Masonry reveres hearing, seeing, and feeling, as they are particularly important to our intellectual development. Hearing allows man to enjoy the pleasures of society and communicate our thoughts, knowledge and desires to others. Seeing allows us to explore the universe and perceive the dispositions of others. Feeling provides man the ability to distinguish different qualities and alludes to the fact that we learn through experience.

Within the Fellowcraft degree, education and pursuit of knowledge is stressed. These senses when coupled with our memory, imagination, reasoning, and moral perception allow the Mason to pursue his intellectual and spiritual development. Through them the Mason seeks education. With these senses, our mind and spirit, the Mason acquires knowledge and incorporates that knowledge within his plan for building his intellectual and spiritual self.



Richard Jordan Gatling



Gatling was born in Hertford County, North Carolina in 1818 and raised Methodist. At the age of 21, Gatling created a screw propeller for steamboats, without realizing that one had been patented just months beforehand by John Ericsson. While living in North Carolina, he worked in the county clerk's office, taught school briefly, and became a merchant. At the age of 36, Gatling moved to St. Louis, Missouri, where he worked in a dry goods store and invented a rice-sowing machine and a wheat drill (a machine to aid planting wheat). The introduction of these machines did much to revolutionize the agricultural system in the country. After an attack of smallpox, Gatling became interested in medicine. He graduated from the Ohio Medical College in 1850 with an MD. Although he had his MD, he never practiced; he was more interested in a career as an inventor.

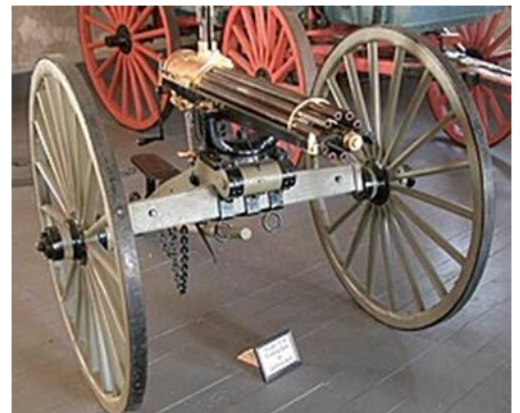
At the outbreak of the Civil War, Gatling was living in Indianapolis, Indiana. There he devoted himself to the perfection of firearms. In 1861, the same year the war started, he invented the Gatling gun. A year later, he founded the Gatling Gun Company.

Later in his life, Gatling patented inventions to improve toilets, bicycles, steam-cleaning of raw wool, pneumatic power, and many other fields. He was elected as the first president of the American Association of Inventors and Manufacturers in

1891, serving for six years. Although still quite wealthy at the time of his death, he made and lost several fortunes by his investments.

Gatling was an active member of Center Masonic Lodge No. 23 in Indianapolis, IN. In his final years, Gatling moved back to St. Louis, Missouri, to form a new company for manufacturing his steam plows, or tractors. While in New York City to visit his daughter and to talk with his patent agency, Gatling died at his daughter's home on February 26, 1903. He is interred at the Crown Hill Cemetery in Indianapolis.

Gatling invented the Gatling gun after he noticed that a majority of the soldiers fighting in the Civil War were lost to disease rather than gunshots. In 1877, he wrote, "It occurred to me that if I could invent a machine gun which could by its rapidity of fire, enable one man to do as much battle duty as a hundred, that it would, to a large extent supersede the necessity of large armies, and consequently, exposure to battle and disease would be greatly diminished."





The First Mass Media?

Back in the mid 1990's I set about to clean up the secretary's office. The previous two secretaries apparently didn't believe in throwing anything away. Piles of old bills from the electric and telephone companies and various generic correspondences had been kept and all with no value to our current needs. These were tossed in the trash but things kept were petitions for degrees and letters and post cards from brothers living far away.

People have always traveled and have always purchased something to commemorate their journey. Ancient pilgrimage tokens, known as pilgrim badges, were mass-produced souvenirs collected by pilgrims from religious sites, such as the Jerusalem and the Santiago de Compostela. They were made from tin-lead alloy, terracotta, or cloth and depicted saints, holy sites, or biblical scenes. These tokens served as portable shrines, souvenirs, offerings, amulets, bookmarks, and symbols of the pilgrim's identity and completed journey.

Recently I ran across an article talking about post cards or what we used to call penny post cards because that was the cost of postage for such things. Postcards are inextricably linked to travel, and on the reverse of the photo the words "wish you were here," showing how people used

postcards to authenticate their experiences.

Postcards proved immediately popular when they emerged in the middle of the 19th-century. And between 1900 and 1920 — that golden age — a mind-boggling 200 billion cards were in global circulation. In 1909 the United States Post Office was \$17 million in the red (almost \$500 million in today's dollars). But only two years later the Post Office reported a healthy surplus and all because of the penny post card.



Between 1909 and 1911, as new printing technologies improved mass production, rural mail delivery was streamlined, and the post office introduced a postcard rate stamp, the number of postcards Americans sent doubled. Postcards were political propaganda, too, and in the early 20th century movements such as women's suffrage effectively mobilized them for their cause.

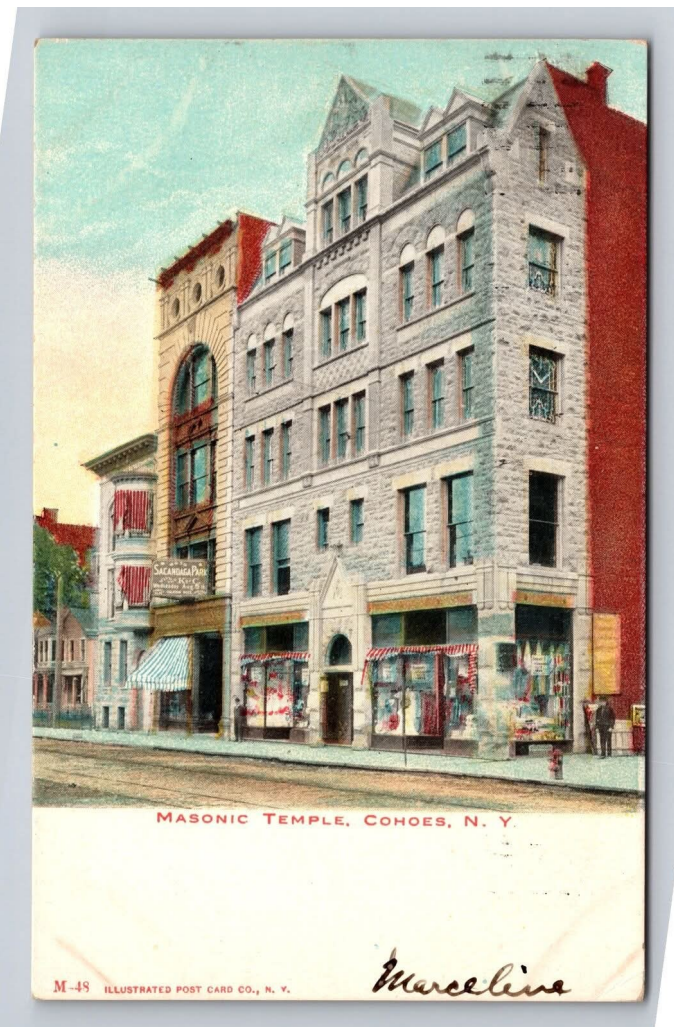
Post cards were the first mass media example of vacation postings. Today we use Facebook and Instagram as our modern equivalent of post cards. This is just the latest iteration of how

people let others know of their travels and a wish that their friends or family were with them. In the afore mentioned archives found in the lodge were several post cards from brothers elsewhere wishing their fellow lodge members well.



Jerusalem pilgrimage token

Masonic Temple, Cohoes, NY





Carl Hogue

Carl John Hogue, 90 passed away at the Charles George VA Medical Center on February 12th 2013.

He graduated from Waynesville High School and the Navy Hospital Corps School, Bainbridge, MD. He graduated with a Certificate in Medical Mycology from the Center for Disease Control, Atlanta, GA. Carl was a US Navy Veteran serving in World War II as a Pharmacist Mate aboard the USS Wyoming. He retired from the VA Hospital in Asheville in 1977 as a Laboratory Technician.

He was very active in Masonry, including Scottish Rite and York Rite in Asheville, but most well known through the Swannanoa Lodge. Carl served as Master in 1970 and 1972, and was Secretary of the Lodge for 24 years. He was a Certified Lecturer and

served as District Deputy Grand Master and, also, District Deputy Grand Lecturer for this District. He was fondly known as "Mr. Mason" to many. He served extensively throughout this District, was honored with many Honorary Memberships due to his willing service in several Lodges. He was a Life Member of the Swannanoa Masonic Lodge.

His hobbies included bird hunting, farming, bee keeping, fishing, and he was well respected for building custom fishing rods, especially fly rods, for many years following retirement from the VA Hospital.

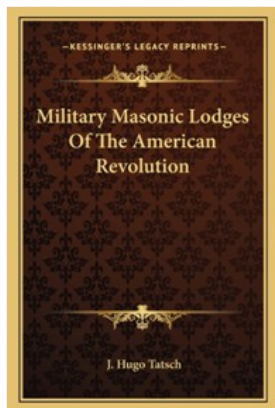
Carl received a Special Honor for his admirable and dedicated service to Masonry in NC and its subsequent positive effect for the State of North Carolina. June 13th of 2004 was proclaimed

Carl J. Hogue day by both the Grand Lodge of A.F.&A.M. (Masons) and by the Governor of NC, Mike Easley. Carl is fondly remembered by the older Masons in our district.



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

Brother Mark Twain



Book Review

Military Masonic Lodges of the American Revolution is a comprehensive and detailed account of the role played by Freemasonry in the American Revolution. Written by J. Hugo Tatsch, a prominent Masonic historian, the book explores the history of military lodges established by Freemasons during the Revolutionary War. The book begins by providing a brief history of Freemasonry and its role in the American Revolution. It then delves into the establishment of military lodges by Freemasons, which were created to

provide support and camaraderie to soldiers fighting in the war. These lodges played a crucial role in the success of the American Revolution, providing a sense of community and brotherhood to soldiers who were far from home and often facing difficult conditions. The book also explores the rituals and ceremonies of these military lodges, as well as the contributions made by prominent Freemasons during the war, including George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, and Paul Revere. In addition, the book provides

detailed information about the structure and organization of these lodges, including their officers, bylaws, and activities. Overall, **Military Masonic Lodges of the American Revolution** is an informative and engaging read for anyone interested in the history of Freemasonry or the American Revolution. It provides a unique perspective on the role played by Freemasons in the war and sheds new light on an often-overlooked aspect of American history.



2 1/2 Degree

Societies and clubs celebrating the victory of King William III date back to 1690. The Orange Order itself arose out of disturbances in County Armagh, Ireland in the late eighteenth century, when Protestant 'Peep O'Day Boys' conflicted with Roman Catholic 'Defenders'. Following the Battle of the Diamond in 1795 near Loughgall, the new Protestant organization was founded. Like Freemasons a Grand Lodge was soon formed. (The founding members of the Orange Institution were Freemasons as was King William III, Prince of Orange.) Very quickly after the foundation of the Order, there emerged a second 'Purple Marksman' or 'Plain Purple' degree. Grand Lodge tried to stop local lodges from forming yet more degrees, but without much success. Soon were found degrees with names such as 'Royal Arch Purple', 'Scarlet', 'Black', 'Green' and 'Apron'. By the 1830's, these different so-called 'Black' degrees were being coordinated by bodies such as the 'Royal Black Association of Ireland', the 'Grand Black Order of Orangemen' and the 'Magnanimous and Invincible Order of Blackmen'. There was also a Scottish order variously called the 'Loyal Black Association of Scotland', the 'Imperial Grand Lodge of Knights of Malta and Parent Black Lodge of the Universe', and the 'Imperial Grand Encampment of the Universe and Grand Black Lodge of Scotland and the most Ancient Illustrious and Military Order of the Knights Hospitallers of St. John of Jerusalem'. This group began to issue Irish warrants in

1834 and in 1844 it formed a Grand Priory of Ireland. As their names suggest these 'Black' organizations were modeled upon the older chivalric orders-and more directly upon the chivalric orders found within the Freemasons. In 1847, a body breaking away from the Grand Priory met with representatives of the Grand Black Order and the Grand Black Orange Lodge of Ireland, Thus was formed the Grand Black Chapter which exists to this day. When someone joins the Orange Order today, he usually passes through both the Orange and Plain Purple degrees. Thence he may be invited to join a Royal Arch Purple Chapter. He may then become a member of a Black Preceptory and pass through its eleven degrees, Royal Black, Royal Scarlet, Royal Mark, Apron & Royal Blue, Royal White, Royal Green, Royal Gold, Star & Garter, Scarlet Arrow, Link & Chain and Red Cross.

The Royal Arch Purple Degree (3rd degree) is based on the original theme of the Exodus of the Children of Israel from Egypt to the Promised Land. The 2 1/2 reminds us of the tribe of Reuben, the tribe of Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh who, although their inheritance was assured on the other side of Jordan advanced in the vanguard of the army when crossing the river to assist their brethren to secure the Promised Land.

The degree is built on Christian principles, emphasizing faith, hope, and charity. To become a Royal Arch Purpleman, individuals must be a professing reformed Christian, sober, and a

faithful church attender, as described in an article on the Orange Order by Evangelical Truth.

While there are shared ritualistic elements, the Orange Order is distinct from Freemasonry in its Protestant religious focus and membership requirements. Freemasonry, for example, welcomes men of all faiths as long as they believe in a Supreme Being. The Orange Order emphasizes adherence to the principles of the Reformation, Protestantism, and loyalty to the British Monarchy.





Secret Societies of the 1400's

In this article I am going to explore an area of Freemasonry that has been largely neglected by most Masonic historians, that is the possible link between early, formative Freemasonry and another "secret" society which developed during the 14th century in England, the Lollard movement. So first, who were the Lollards and why should we be interested in them? To answer this question we need to look at the societal developments that took place in England during the 14th century. During the 1340's England was, as much of Europe, devastated by an outbreak of Bubonic Plague, the Black Death, which claimed roughly one out of every three persons across the population. This caused a major change in the structure of society in that it was a major factor in the change which led to the diminution of the peasant class; it didn't end it outright but was a major factor in the changes which led to the end of the old medieval feudal system. This change opened the way for a new class of merchants and tradesmen who were not tied to a land owning lord who could compel them to work his land and literally be bound to the land they lived on and worked. The ramifications of the societal change caused by the Black Death went further in that these changes allowed a new social mobility which had not been seen during the feudal period. This mobility expressed itself in several ways. Not only did new trades and forms of mercantilism rise but also the spread of different attitudes and ways of looking at life, in all its aspects, one of

which was religion. This is where the Lollard movement comes in as it was not only a religious movement but it was also closely tied to the wool trade which England participated in with various European countries. The exchange of novel religious ideas at this time was greatly enhanced by the travels of the wool merchants and became such a major conduit for Lollard thought that the phrase "he has gone among the weavers" literally meant that if you worked in the wool trade you were quite likely a member of the Lollard movement. So then, let's ask the question again, who were the Lollards? In simplest terms they were adherents of the religious ideas of John Wycliffe, an Oxford scholar, professor and priest in the Catholic Church. To clarify, Wycliffe did not formally found the Lollards, rather they were most likely those who were influenced by the preaching of lesser clergy who were more directly influenced by Wycliffe's thought, priests such as John Ball, who played a major role in the beginning days of the Peasants' Revolt. Wycliffe himself was highly critical of the state of the Roman Catholic Church of his time and he felt that the Church had lost its way, falling into the trap of worldliness and all the resultant consequences thereof. Wycliffe's ideas came to the fore essentially in the 1360's, some 15 to 20 years after the Black Death and about the same time span roughly before the outbreak of the Peasants' Revolt of 1381. Wycliffe produced the first complete translation of the Bible in English, that is the English of its time; for

those who have had college level English literature courses which included the Canterbury Tales of Geoffrey Chaucer this was the English language of Wycliffe's Bible. Wycliffe's Bible was the first vernacular version of the Bible and was immediately outlawed by the Roman Church, for which the Vulgate was the only official and legal version. This probably seems strange to us today since we have a plethora of Bible translations available to us, however in pre-Reformation England the Roman Church suppressed any and every form of dissent which could possibly challenge its authority and especially a vernacular Bible. A Bible in the common language of the people could, and eventually did, become a form of religious authority in itself, rivaling the magisterial authority of the Pope and his Church, which is precisely what happened during the Reformation.

Now, let us turn to another aspect of our discussion. What, if any, are the similarities between the Lollards and Freemasons? Before we get into that I want to point out that the oldest of the "Old Charges", the Regius manuscript, dates from, we think, around 1391, or thereabout, which puts this early formative period of Freemasonry pretty much in the same time period as the Lollard movement. So then, with this background material in mind, let me point out that as we have seen anything that challenged the authority of the Pope and the Roman

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Secret Societies, continued



Church was outside the law, in that the Pope could literally force Kings and their entire domains to bend to his will or face excommunication, which at that time was totally devastating to society as a whole.... everything came to a halt in that country where the ban of excommunication was in force. What this means is that groups such as the Lollards had to operate in secret. They had to meet in safe places with lookouts and sentries to guard their activities, i.e. a tyler, of sorts. They were known to have passwords and signs to identify each other because they could not risk being discovered by the authorities....their discovery could very likely bring about their being tortured and ultimately burned at the stake. Does this sound familiar? That's exactly what happened to the Cathars of Southern France in the previous century and to the Templars in the early years of the 14th century. There is no direct evidence that Lollards and early

Freemasons collaborated in any way, but there is no direct evidence that they did not share some of these practices, especially if there is any truth to some link between Freemasonry and some vestigial aspect of the Templars. Let us remember, that the Templars had been excommunicated by the one authority which they obeyed, the Pope. Did they and their descendants hold a long festering grudge against the Roman Church and its leader? Again, let us be reminded that when the Templar Order was dissolved the surviving members were no longer bound by the monastic vows of poverty, obedience, and chastity... they could now, and many did, move quietly into society, marry and have children who would in turn have children, which in terms of generations, at the time of the beginnings of the Lollard movement was two, at most possibly three generations removed from the dissolution of the Templar Order. Templars on the run from the Pope and the Inquisition would have very probably used some of the same techniques which were later used by Lollards who were subject to those same penalties only a few decades later. Again, is there any proof? Not written, since the Lollards have left us no written records that we know of, nor did the Templars leave any records of how they managed to survive post Friday October 13, 1307. Many, if not most, of the earliest records of Freemasonry likewise have not survived, so this thesis I lay before you is all speculation, but it still begs the question:

Why are there so many similarities between the Templars, the Lollards, and Freemasons. Did the circumstances at different times, but with the same sense of necessity, dictate the need for secrecy and the appropriate means for keeping that secrecy, all of which seems on the face of it very much alike! One last note, modern Freemasonry, at least in England, has never faced the threat from state or religious authorities as did the Templars and Lollards in their time since Freemasonry is a post-Reformation product, but it has certainly had its share of detractors. So finally, is there any connection between these three groups, the Lollards, Freemasons, and Templars? We will probably never be able to say so with certainty but it sure looks like there is a good case to be made....a definite maybe!

Brother Bucky



Hamilton and the Masonic Myth

The award-winning musical 'Hamilton' tells the story of the people long ago using the music and people of today. The success of the musical has renewed interest in the lives and stories of George Washington, Alexander Hamilton, Aaron Burr, and the men and women who helped form our great nation. Their stories are interesting and complicated, made even more so by the myths and legends that have developed around them. In 'Some Masonic Misconceptions,' a May 1990 Short Talk Bulletin from the Masonic Service Association, Brother Allen E. Roberts sought to dispel some of the more pervasive Masonic myths. A search of our own history reveals that MWB Lewis Cass (1810-1812) was instrumental in revealing the Aaron Burr conspiracy, a story that they won't be writing a musical about anytime soon.

Alexander Hamilton was never a Mason. The myth seems to stem from a painting entitled "The Petition," by John Ward Dunsmore which depicts a meeting of American Union Lodge. The Lodge met to consider a petition to create a General Grand Lodge for the United States with George Washington as the General Grand Master. The artist decided to take some artistic license and included Hamilton, a non-Mason, in the painting.

Brother George Washington was elected as Master of a Lodge, but there is no evidence that he ever presided as such. Alexandria Lodge #39 of Pennsylvania asked the Grand Lodge of Virginia for a new charter. Washington was an Honorary Member of this Lodge. When the Grand Master signed the Virginia charter, Washington's name appeared in the place where the Master's normally would. The

following December, while serving as President, Washington was elected but never installed as Master of Alexandria Lodge #22. Even though his civic duty kept him from attending Lodge, he held Freemasonry in the utmost regard and was buried with full Masonic Honors.

Anti-Masons in the early 1800s put forth the story that Aaron Burr was expelled from Masonry after his duel with Alexander Hamilton despite no evidence that Burr was ever a Mason. An interesting note in Ohio history is the Burr Conspiracy, a treasonous plot launched from Blennerhasset Island on the Ohio River. Burr's activities raised the suspicions of the Ohio Legislature, including Representative Lewis Cass. Most Worshipful Brother Cass was one of the founders of the Grand Lodge of Ohio, representing Lodge of Amity; served as Grand Master of Ohio from 1810-1812, and served as the Grand Master of Michigan in 1826 and 1844. He also served as Secretary of War, Secretary of State, and ran for President twice. His life of service to Freemasonry and his country is worthy of study and a story that should be shared with all Masons.

Creative license is often taken with the lives of important and influential people. Once you sift through the myths and legends, you often find that the stories of the people who forged our country are interesting enough without the embellishments.





Smokin' in the Boy's Room



Tobacco use behaviors have changed significantly over the past century. After a steep increase in cigarette use rates over the first half of the 20th century, adult smoking prevalence rates started declining from their peak reached in 1964. Improved understanding of the health risks of smoking has been aided by the United States Surgeon General's Reports, issued on a nearly annual basis starting in 1964.

Among the many forces driving down smoking prevalence were the recognition of tobacco use as an addiction and cause of cancer, along with concerns about the ill-effects of breathing secondhand smoke. These factors contributed to the declining social acceptance of smoking, especially with the advent of legal restrictions on smoking in public spaces, mass media counter-marketing campaigns, and higher taxes on cigarettes.

In the early 1950s evidence implicating smoking as a cause of lung cancer began to appear more frequently in medical journals and the popular press. Cigarette sales declined in 1953 and the first part of 1954, but quickly

rebounded as manufacturers rushed to introduce and market "filtered" cigarettes to allay health concerns. The emergence of the filter tip cigarette was a direct response to the publicity given to evidence linking smoking and cancer, and consumers reacted by shifting over to the new designs. In 1952 filtered cigarettes accounted for less than 2% of sales; by 1957 this had grown to 40% and would surpass 60 % by 1966. The advertised benefits of filters were illusory, however, given that smokers of filtered brands often inhaled as much or more tar, nicotine, and noxious gases as smokers of unfiltered cigarettes. Filters were not really even filters in any meaningful sense, since there was no such thing as "clean smoke." The industry had recognized this as early as the 1930s, but smokers were led to believe they were safer.

Biltmore Lodge occupied its current building in 1953. As part of the furniture of the lodge a dozen or so standing ash trays were acquired allowing Masons smoked during meetings. The first attempt to stop the smoking came our late brother Dr. Arthur

Beck. To assuage him smoking on the north side of the lodge hall was banned. Smoking lasted until WB Jim Westall developed lung cancer back in the early 1990s and as a show of respect for him the membership decided to end smoking in the lodge hall. Strangely, even today, the Grand Lodge only prohibits smoking during degrees.

In 2019 we had the interior of the lodge repainted and this time it was not boring beige. The paint covered over the years of smoke and tar stains but there were other items that had absorbed or got coated in the stuff. Little by little furniture was cleaned or replaced. Even George Washington's portrait got a cleaning. The last thing that had been overlooked was the lamp on the secretary's desk.

The plug on the lamp cord was in dangerous shape so on a February afternoon it was replaced and while it was off the desk it was cleaned. The rags used turned a sickening brown from the years of smoke and tar. What once was a bronze colored lamp miraculously turned out to be grey.

Masonic Cigars

As far back as the mid-1800s, records exist describing the pre-meeting tradition of Brethren smoking cigars during and after gatherings. To this day, the practice of smoking cigars remains very much alive in many lodges. This custom is considered a time for Brethren to relax, exchange ideas, and enjoy the simplicity

and fellowship that is the very essence of Brotherhood.

While researching for the above article I came across an add for a cigar company in New Jersey. Hiram and Solomon Cigars produce a full line of cigars with names such as Entered Apprentice, Fellowcraft and Master

Mason.

Another company called the 3 Ruffians have a cigar called the Winding Stairs. The Masonic Cigar Club of New Jersey is for those who enjoy such things.

I'm not advertising, just reporting.



Papal Ban on Freemasonry

The Catholic Church first prohibited Catholics from membership in Masonic organizations and other secret societies in 1738. Since then, at least eleven popes have made pronouncements about the incompatibility of Catholic doctrines and Freemasonry.

From 1738 until 1983, Catholics who publicly associated with, or publicly supported, Masonic organizations were censured with automatic excommunica-

tion. Since 1983, the prohibition on membership exists in a different form. Although there was some confusion about membership following the 1962–1965 Second Vatican Council (Vatican II), the Church continues to prohibit membership in Freemasonry because it believes that Masonic principles and rituals are irreconcilable with Catholic doctrines. The current norm, the 1983 Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith's (CDF) Declaration on Masonic associa-

tions, states that "faithful who enroll in Masonic associations are in a state of grave sin and may not receive Holy Communion" and membership in Masonic associations is prohibited.

The most recent official Holy See documents about the "incompatibility of Freemasonry with the Catholic faith" were issued in 1985, and in November 2023 by the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith.

Dying to Believe

This short article has nothing to do with the political left or right, Republican or Democrat. This article has everything to do with what we believe as individuals.

Charlie Kirk was assassinated on September 10, 2025 because of his beliefs. Martin Luther King was assassinated on April 4, 1968 following his beliefs. They did not die willingly but I believe they were ready to die as both had the Christian belief in an afterlife. They certainly would not have chosen to die so early in life as they both had missions they wished to carry on and families to raise.

Beliefs. It's surprisingly difficult to find a consistent and coherent definition of "belief." Merriam-Webster's dictionary defines it as "something that is accepted, considered to be true, or held as an opinion" and a "conviction of the truth of some statement or the reality of some being or phenomenon especially

when based on examination of evidence."

But is a belief really the same as an opinion? They certainly aren't always expressed as mere opinions; all too often we hold them with certainty. And how often are beliefs really based on evidence? That depends on what we mean by "evidence."

Indeed, "evidence" can have a variety of meanings. There may be four factors that can be described as evidence.

Intuition. Much of what we believe is based on an instinct, a hunch, or "gut feeling" about something

Faith. The Bible calls faith "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." In other words, faith involves belief in the absence of evidence.

Personal experience. Consistent

with the dictum "seeing is believing," there's no question that our own personal experience often determines what we believe. Author and theologian C.S. Lewis has been quoted as saying that experience is the "most brutal of teachers."

Trust. There are plenty of things for which we lack both intuition and experience, like how to fix a home appliance or how hot it is in Calcutta right now. For such subjects, we must rely on the experience, knowledge, and testimony of other people, especially those we judge to be experts on a given subject.

Beliefs change over time. My Masonic experience has caused a change in some things I once believed and has strengthened others. Would I die for such beliefs? I hope I never have to find out.

What do you believe?



Freemasonry and the Inquisition

Some of you who will read the following article from selected from the web site <https://masonicsshop.com/encyclopedia> may be familiar with the tortures inflicted upon the Knights Templar by the Roman Catholic Church. You may not be as familiar with the same punishments imposed upon the Cathars, Waldensians and others who found themselves looked upon as heretics by the church. The following speaks of the same treatment of the church upon Freemasons.

Speculative Freemasonry appeared in Madrid Spain in 1726, at Gibraltar in 1727, and at about the same time in Paris. The first Italian Lodges were constituted in Tuscany about 1735, and a Lodge was working in Rome at about the same time. These dates are mere indicia, and in themselves mean little, because almost every page of written records was lost, and it is probable that there were many more Lodges, and Masons not in Lodges, than the few surviving records would indicate. On April 28, 1738, Pope Clement XII issued a Bull of Excommunication; it was a feeble, ill-drawn document, in a Medieval Latin which only experts could read, but it consigned a Mason to hell in the future and ostracized him from the church, his family, and his property here and now; also it was drawn in such a way as to be most useful to the Inquisition, which assisted the Pope to draft it. The modus operandi of ar-

rests, tortures, penalties, etc., was left to local tribunals; but the Cardinal Secretary of State gave assistance by publishing on Jan. 14, 1739, a model for these tribunals to use; it pronounced "irresistible pain of death, not only on all members but on all who should tempt others to join the Order, or should rent a house to it or favor it in any other way." But while local tribunals were adjured to be as harsh as possible, the crusade as a whole was turned over to the Holy Inquisition. It is difficult for modern men, and especially in England, America, and Canada, to understand the organization of the Inquisition because they have never had it in their midst.

For centuries each country had two governments side by side; the state, or civil, or "temporal" government headed by a King, Prince, or Parliament; and an ecclesiastical government headed by the Pope, and under him by Cardinals, Bishops, and special offices appointed for the purpose. Present day churches have their own rules and regulations governing their internal affairs but these do not at any point encroach upon civil government, nor can they apply civil penalties. The Roman Church government was of a different kind, before the Reformation, and rested on a different principle; it was not a church government, but a general government, of an authority and a jurisdiction equal to that of the civil government; it differed from the latter in that only such categories of

laws and cases belonged to it as had to do with religion, and with the properties belonging to the church; there were, therefore, two complete governments standing side by side, of equal sovereignty, and duplicating offices and penalties. The church enacted laws (canonical law); it had courts, lawyers, judicial processes, hearings, verdicts, and penitentiaries and execution yards or chambers. It arrested men, tried them, sentenced them, and punished them. Among its punishments was the defrocking of priests, removal from office, excommunications, interdicts, alienation of property, torture, selling into slavery, hanging, burning at the stake, beheading, sentence to galleys, banishment, fines, etc. If a crime, or an alleged crime, was a mixture of both civil and ecclesiastical offenses, the accused would be tried and sentenced in the civil courts and then tried and sentenced a second time in the church courts. He was in "double jeopardy" each day of his life. (It was one of the first concerns of the framers of our Constitution to make double jeopardy impossible.)

The so-called Holy Inquisition was set up as a special arm of this ecclesiastical government, and yet while only an arm was itself empowered to act as a separate government, and could impose and execute sentence in its own name; it differed from ecclesiastical government in general only in that it was designed to stamp out heresy, and

by heresy usually was meant any form of Protestantism. It is this fact which in the long run filled men of normal, sane minds with horror and led to uprisings and to driving the Holy Inquisition out of the country, as happened even in Spain which once was its home and center, as it also was the home and center of the Jesuits; where the public and ceremonious burning of "heretics," was a holiday, and celebrated like a Fourth of July. The secret police of the czars and the Gestapo of the Fascists, Phalangists, and Nazis were patterned on it. Heinrich Himmler and his staff made a detailed study over a period of years of the methods used by the Inquisition. The Inquisition was not directed against criminals but against men accused of heresy--an exceptionally flexible term, because the Inquisition could decide for itself, and on the spot, what it meant by heresy; thousands of the men and women destroyed by it were of irreproachable reputation and character, many of a saintly life, and whom not even the Inquisition could accuse of crime. The theory on which the Inquisition worked was that it should act as a detective to search out the heretic, the heretic should confess, and the penalty would then be sanctioned by his confession; but where a marked-down man refused to confess or had nothing to confess, torture was used to reduce him to a state where out

— Continued Next Page —



Inquisition, continued

of agony or when out of his mind he became willing to confess anything-- again, precisely according to the methods used by the Gestapo. Such an engine could be employed for many purposes: to terrorize a community, to browbeat a civil ruler, to defy civil laws, to destroy churches and associations, to seize wealth and property, to commit plain murder, etc.

The Inquisition was not given exclusive jurisdiction over men accused of Masonry, for the regular church and civil courts continued to have jurisdiction also, but the Inquisition was especially held responsible for what in later years Adolf Hitler, a spiritual descendant of the Inquisition, was to describe as "the liquidation of Freemasons." There were never many Masons in countries where the Inquisition was free to act in the Eighteenth Century, and only a few records escaped being destroyed, but in proportion to their numbers the Masons probably suffered more excommunications, tortures, and martyrdoms than any other one group. Books were written about the cases of Couston and Da Costa. Cagliostro was a charlatan and a thief, and was repudiated by Lodges when his character was exposed, but the wide publicity given to his imprisonment brought the methods of the Inquisition into the light, and in the long run helped to drive it back into the unadvertised offices in the Vatican where it continues to carry on

such work as it is able. In Spain alone, and as late as 1816, twenty five Masons suffered under the Inquisition; in 1819 there were seven cases; if it were free to act again, without a civil government to check it, it would resume its old practices, because neither it itself nor the Vatican has ever admitted the Inquisition to have been a crime against Christianity and civilization, nor altered its principles.

Americans are far from Europe and farther still from the period when the Church was the second government in a land; because of this lack of information and first-hand knowledge they often confuse the Inquisition with the Jesuits. The two are and ever have been independent of each other. The Society of Jesuits is in theory an army, a church "militant," its members are enlisted; they receive training, "each is under an oath of allegiance to a general"; they go as troops, singly or in companies, wherever they may be sent, to carry out whatever orders are given to them. In some times and places they have been ordered to make war on Freemasonry; in others they have been ordered to join in with it, to weaken or divide it from within by "infiltration," etc.; the whole story of Jesuit dealings with Freemasonry reads like a page out of a detective novel of a rather trashy sort, and causes adult men still unbereft of their senses to wonder how other grown-up men can have indulged in practices so

childish. The Jesuit author of the article on Freemasonry in the Catholic Encyclopedia even charged Masons with "phallic worship" and Pope Leo XIII solemnly assured the whole of France that Masons worship the devil!

The records of the Holy Inquisition are voluminous, in a dozen languages, full of ecclesiastical terminology, tortuous and tortured to the extreme. Severe condemnations of the Inquisition have been written by Roman Catholics themselves. Lord Acton, a Roman Catholic, he declared the Inquisition to have been organized on the principle of crime, and that its executions were murders and nothing more. Men rebelled against the Inquisition because it was criminal, sadistic, unjust, and in violent contradiction of Christianity; American Roman Catholic apologists, of whom the number is now rapidly increasing, seek to becloud that known fact and at the same time to win Protestants over to their side by reiteration of the sophistry that men were killed by the Inquisition "because they were the foes of the Christian religion."

Certainly the Freemasons who were instrumental in the development of the United States clearly had in mind the abuses of the Roman Catholic Church and their use of the Inquisition when writing the laws and constitution that governed this land.





Lodge Dinners

Philosophy is a subject I enjoy reading and thinking about. There were and are many great philosophers who had much to say, that if applied, would increase our happiness and contentment in this life froth with anxiety and despair. My favorite philosopher and former Roman emperor is Marcus Aurelius. Along with him are the likes of Socrates, Lao Tzu, John Locke, René Descartes, Immanuel Kant, and Friedrich Nietzsche and the list goes on. Also among these wise people is Epicurus.

I am reading a book entitled Daily Philosophy produced by Gerry Portela. The book is described as a guide to daily mental resilience, helping readers find serenity through philosophical practices like Stoicism and Taoism, and encouraging self-reflection and a renewed daily perspective. I read the daily

offering and reflect upon the meaning and the description offered by the author. The August 31 reading hit home as to why our Masonic meal gatherings are so important.

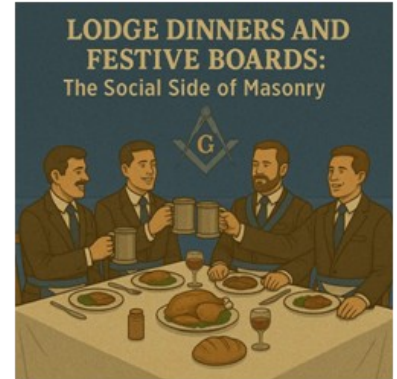
"We should look for someone to eat and drink with before looking for something to eat and drink." – Epicurus

"Epicurus reminds us that true happiness and contentment are found not only in satisfying our basic necessities but also in the quality of our relationships and social interactions. While the pursuit of material possessions or personal gratification may offer temporary satisfaction, it is the shared experiences and connections with others that bring lasting joy and a sense of belonging. By prioritizing the company of friends, loved ones, and kindred spirits, we create a sense of community and deepen our bonds with others. Engaging in

shared meals and conversations provides an opportunity for meaningful connections, fostering a sense of togetherness, understanding, and support. It allows us to nourish not only our bodies but also our souls.

Prioritize nurturing meaningful relationships. Seek opportunities to share meals, engage in heartfelt conversations, and create spaces of warmth and hospitality. By seeking companionship and shared experiences, we enhance the richness of our lives and create a sense of belonging that transcends mere material possessions."

The next time you receive notice of an upcoming meal at the lodge consider these words and govern yourself accordingly.



Masonic Restaurant

The Scottish Rite Temple at 80 Broadway in downtown Asheville in the early to mid 1990s once hosted a restaurant. The facility boasted a well equipped kitchen along with a large dining hall, perfect for hosting large capacity meals.

Lunch was served a couple of days during the work week to whoever walked in off the street. Illustrious Brother Bob Bryson, secretary of the Valley of Ashe-

ville Scottish Rite along with Masonic Brothers from West Asheville and Mt Hermon Lodges, were the driving force behind the effort. The monies of course went to Masonic charities. The project ended when the Grand Lodge got wind of the enterprise and shut it down due to fear of IRS complications.

Biltmore Lodge for a number of years used the kitchen and dining hall to serve breakfast for the Shriners for their Fall Ceremo-

nial usually held in early November. This ended when the Asheville City Council made it impossible for the Shriners to conduct their event. The profits from these breakfast went to the Masonic Charities.

Mt. Hermon Lodge No. 118 now rents out their building for a variety of events such as weddings and concerts. The kitchen and dining hall are used by caterers for these events.



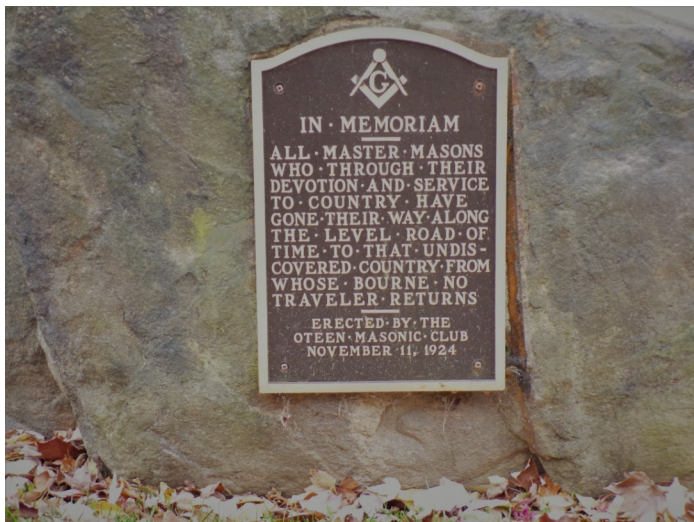
Veteran's Day 2025

Veterans Day (originally known as Armistice Day) is a federal holiday in the United States observed annually on November 11, for honoring military veterans of the United States Armed Forces. It coincides with holidays in several countries, including Armistice Day and Remembrance Day, which also occur on the anniversary of the end of World War I. Major hostilities of World War I were formally ended at the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month of 1918 when the Armistice with Germany went into effect. At the urging of major U.S. veteran organizations, Armistice Day was renamed Veterans Day in 1954.

This year Veteran's Day falls on a Tuesday. As such, and in keeping with his reverence for the military and the veterans thereof, the Master wishes to honor the veterans associated with Freemasonry. The evening will begin at 6:15 PM with a meal. After the recognition of our veterans, Brother Robert Greaves, a US Navy veteran, will present a talk. If you are a military veteran please join us.

The following is an excerpt from the Biltmore Lodge History.

In 1918, US Army General Hospital No. 19 opened near Asheville in the community of Oteen to serve the soldiers in the area who were training for duty for the First World War. Biltmore Masonic Lodge's membership benefited from both the hospital and an entity known as the Oteen



Masonic Club. Because North Carolina Masonic Law at that time required a petitioner to petition the lodge closest to his residence Biltmore Lodge received many petitions from men who were either patients or staff of the VA facility. The following is an article found in the Asheville Citizen paper, date unknown.

In the mountains of Western North Carolina, six miles from Asheville, lies the little village of Oteen. Oteen is the home of the U. S. Veterans Hospital, a hospital built by the US Government for the care of disabled ex-service men who contracted tuberculosis while in service.

Realizing the great possibilities in such an institution for the spreading of Masonic principles, a meeting was called of Masonic Brethren for the purpose of organizing a Masonic Club. The club was started with membership of fourteen and has grown to where it includes all Master Masons on the post, numbering around eighty.

Article Two of the By-Laws reads: 'The object of this club shall be to promote the brotherly and friendly feelings between all Master Masons at this post and to advance the principles of Freemasonry.' It is a known fact that between ex-service men there exists a certain brotherly spirit. Coupled with Freemasonry and in an institution of this kind, nowhere does there exist more good fellowship and brotherly love than in the Oteen Masonic Club'.

At a back entrance to the hospital, nestled among memorials provided by veteran's groups, is a stone with a bronze plaque attached. On it is written: IN MEMORIAM All Master Masons Who Through Their Devotion and Service to Country Have Gone Their Way Along The Level Road of Time To That Undiscovered Country From Whose Bourne No Traveler Returns. -- Erected By The Oteen Masonic Club November 11, 1924.



A Parting Word

"The good man is the man who, no matter how morally unworthy he has been, is moving to become better." - John Dewey

John Dewey inspires us to recognize that our past actions or moral lapses do not define us permanently. Instead, what truly matters is our commitment to continuous improvement and the pursuit of moral excellence. He reminds us that being a good person is not about achieving perfection but about the sincere effort to become better with each passing day. The concept of moral progress is at the heart of Dewey's message. It encourages us to embrace self-reflection, acknowledge our shortcomings, and take proactive steps to grow and evolve as individuals. It underscores the idea that our moral worth is not static but dynamic, shaped by our willingness to learn from our mistakes and strive for greater ethical integrity.

2025 BILTMORE LODGE OFFICERS



Office	Officer
Master	Howard Hazelrigg
Sr. Warden	Michael Ogus
Jr. Warden	Frank Bryson
Treasurer	Doug Robertson
Secretary	Larry Dotson, PM
Sr. Deacon	Tony Rice
Jr. Deacon	Eric Willis
Sr. Steward	Jamie Bradley
Jr. Steward	Xavier Robinson
Tyler	Norman Goering, PM
Chaplain	Alex Hanks

Forensic Science and a Freemason

Fingerprint classification was an essential development in forensic science. The ability to match fingerprints to an individual made police tasks and litigation procedures ten times easier. Sir Francis Galton invented this concept.

At the time, manual filing systems were used since the computers were yet to be developed.

Thanks to Galton's work, fingerprints can easily be used in identification processes. In 1892, he published the book 'FingerPrints' to explain his discovery. His concept was, however, modified by other scientists over the years.

Francis was very knowledgeable in different fields. In psychology, he developed the concept of psychometrics, also referred to as 'the science of measuring mental faculties.'

His work made it easier to test actual theoretical techniques in psychological

measurements. Galton also initiated some meteorological concepts, among other things.

Galton joined Freemason via the Scientific Lodge No. 88 held at the Red Lion Inn in Cambridgeshire UK.

His Masonic career can be primarily attributed to his family since his half-grandfather Erasmus Darwin was a Lunar Member and a known Freemason.

