

## Did you know?

### Tidbits of Masonic Trivia - II

- \* At one time, Golden Rule Lodge #5, Stanstead, Canada (one of the oldest Masonic lodges in Quebec) occupied a lodge room, that straddled the international boundary between Canada and the United States. There were entrances to the Lodge room from both sides of the border.
- \* Washington Chapter #3 of Portsmouth, NH announced its meetings via the town crier, who received the equivalent of 8 cents each time he announced a Lodge meeting.
- \* Frederick A. Bartholdi, a Freemason, designed the statue of Liberty in NY harbor, and the Grand Lodge of NY laid the corner stone on August 5, 1885.
- \* Bernard Pierre Mangam, Marshall of France and a Senator, was appointed Grand Master of the Grand Orient of France and served from 1862 to 1865. This was rather unusual because he was not a Mason. He was appointed by Emperor Napoleon, III.
- \* The letters of the English word GOD are the first three letters of Hebrew words for beauty, strength, and wisdom. G in Gomez, O in Oz, D in Dabar.
- \* In 1860 in Limerick, Ireland, there was found a stone in a small chapel, dated 1517, with the following inscription: "I will serve to live with love & care, upon the level, and by the square."
- \* Francis Stephens, the Duke of Lorraine, received the first two Masonic degrees in 1731 in a special Lodge convened at The Hague, Netherlands, becoming the first known royal Freemason. Later he received the Master Mason degree in England.
- \* Dr. Joseph Guillotine was a member of Concorde Fraternal Lodge of Paris and a member of the French Assembly. He invented the device that bears his name and was later executed with one.
- \* The Rev. William Dodd, first Chaplain of the Grand Lodge of England, was hanged for forgery on June 2nd, 1777.
- \* In 1839 the Mormons left Missouri and settled in the area of Nauvoo, Illinois. October 15, 1841, the Illinois Grand Master issued a dispensation to form a Lodge at Nauvoo. On March 15th, 1842, Joseph Smith received his first degree and the others shortly after. Certain 'irregularities' were reported... in five months the Lodge initiated 256 candidates and 243 were raised. After due investigation, the Grand Master revoked the dispensation, but the Lodge continued to work. On April 5, 1844, the Mormon Masons dedicated a Masonic Temple and Illinois Masons got in trouble for taking part in the ceremony. Opposition to the group and internal dissension led to the assassination of Joseph Smith and the eventual removal of the Mormons from Illinois.

- \* Operative Lodge #150 in Aberdeen, Scotland is unusual in that its membership is only open to operative stonemasons.
- \* Dr. Edward Jenner, in 1789 discovered the vaccination process against smallpox. He was Worshipful Master of Faith and Friendship Lodge #270 in Berkeley, England at the time.
- \* In July 1863, Confederate raiders rode into Versailles, Indiana, capturing the local militia and stealing the county treasury. The next day, Confederate General John Morgan learned that his men had also made off with the jewels of the local Masonic Lodge. They were returned the following day, and 8 of his men were disciplined. Morgan was from Davies Lodge #22, Lexington, KY.
- \* Wheelock Commandery No. 5 in Texas had all 55 of its members killed while serving in the Confederate Army. The Commandery ceased to exist.
- \* Missouri's first Confederate Capitol was the Masonic Building in Neosho. From there the legislature passed the Act of Secession.
- \* July 2, 1751, Ferdinand VI of Spain issued an edict against Freemasonry. Father Jose Torrubia secured a special dispensation from the Pope, joined a lodge, secured the names of its members, and proceeded to have them arrested. Hundreds were arrested, persecuted, and imprisoned.
- \* When Mussolini gained control of Italy, Masonic lodges were declared illegal and the Grand Master was arrested, tried, and imprisoned, where he died. Mussolini also ordered all Masonic references removed, including the emblems on the base of Garibaldi's monument in Rome. After the restoration of the republic, fascist emblems were removed and the Masonic emblems were once again restored.
- \* In Fascist Spain under Franco, it was a crime to be a Freemason. Masons convicted had to serve prison terms equal in years to the number of Masonic degrees possessed. Master Mason degree equaled 3 years in prison.
- \* Winedumah Lodge #287 of Bishop, CA holds its meetings at 270 feet below sea level, the lowest Lodge in North America.
- \* In 1954 Martin's Station Lodge No. 188 of Virginia was opened 952 feet below the surface of Cumberland Mountain in Cudjo's Cave, which lies between Cumberland Gap, Tenn. and Middleburo, KY. 345 Masons were present and a master Mason degree was conferred.
- \* Chicago, IL has three American Legion Posts whose memberships are entirely Masonic.
- \* All four Presidents of the Republic of Texas, David Burnett, Sam Houston, Mirabeau Lamar, and Anson Jones, were members of the Craft.

\* Between 1737 and 1779 two sailing ships of interest operated off the U.S. eastern seaboard, The Freemason and The Master Mason. The Freemason caught fire and sank in Marblehead Harbor, Massachusetts in 1779.

\* On November 10, 1928, the Grand Lodge of California held a special communication at Culver City to lay the corner stone of the Masonic Temple. The lodge room was so crowded that the grand line officers were unable to enter the room. They retired to a nearby Ladies' powder room to open the Grand Lodge for the ceremony.

\* In May, 1843, a group of representatives from fourteen grand lodges met in Baltimore, with the idea of adopting uniform ritual. The meeting was presided over by John Dove of Virginia, while Charles W. Moore of Massachusetts prepared the proposed ritual. The convention's work was not generally accepted.

\* In 1799, Barton Lodge in Upper Canada accepted "good merchantable wheat" in payment of Lodge dues.

\* St. George Lodge in Bermuda has rented the Old State House since 1816 from the Governor of the island for the sum of "one peppercorn per year."

\* Dr. Carlos Rodriguez-Jimenez was Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Venezuela in 1947. In 1957 he became the Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Japan.

\* In 1892, the tallest building in the world was the Masonic Temple at Randolph and State Streets in Chicago.

\* Brother William Brockmeier (1866-1947) of St. Louis conducted 5,586 Masonic funeral ceremonies during his Masonic career.

\* Thomas Jacob Shryock served as grand master of Maryland for 32 years. He died after being elected to serve his 33<sup>rd</sup> term.

\* The largest Master's chair is in Ophir Lodge #33 Murphys, California. It is 15 feet long and can seat the Master, living Past Masters, and visiting dignitaries.

\* On June 7, 1921, Mystic Lodge #21 of Red Bank, NJ conferred half of the Master Mason degree on brother Lyman C. Van before the power went out. He didn't receive the rest of the degree until several weeks later, making him for a time, a "two and half degree" Mason.

\* When the great Obelisk of Alexandria (Cleopatra's Needle) was moved to New York in 1880, there were discovered certain emblems on the original foundation and pedestal. One is clearly a square, leading some to conclude that Masonry existed in ancient Egypt. Obviously, this issue is still open to debate.

\* On August 23, 1879, Lodge #239 of France held a meeting in the basket of a giant hot air balloon flying over Paris, at which time a brother was initiated into the Lodge.

- \* On his famous solo flight across the Atlantic, Charles Lindbergh wore a square and compasses pin on his jacket as a good luck piece. He was a Mason.
- \* Richard E. Byrd and his pilot Brent Balchen, both Masonic brothers, dropped Masonic flags over both the North and South Poles. Brother Balchen also tossed his Shrine fez on the South Pole.
- \* Gordon Cooper, in his Mercury capsule, carried a Masonic coin and a blue Masonic flag during his 22 orbit flight, which he later presented to his mother Lodge.
- \* Montana's first livestock brand was a square and compasses and is still in use today. It was registered to a Mr. Pointdexter Orr of Beaverhead County, Montana in 1872.
- \* Andrew McNair, a Philadelphia Mason, rang the Liberty bell in Independence Hall on July 8th, 1776 to call the people together to hear the reading of the Declaration of Independence. The bell developed a crack when it was rung to announce the death of Chief Justice Marshall, Past Grand Master of Masons in Virginia.
- \* Grand Masters generally have the power to make "Masons at sight," which means the Grand Master can do away with formalities such as filing of petitions, waiting periods, learning of certain ritual, etc. Some famous Masons who were made at sight include: William H. Taft, General George Marshall, and General Douglas MacArthur.
- \* In the 1800's several Grand Lodges established Masonic colleges. The most successful of which was in Hannibal, Missouri in 1847. Kentucky, Tennessee, Arkansas, North Carolina, and Georgia all tried it, but all were eventually closed due to lack of support.
- \* In the spring of 1966, brother Dallas Coleman of Denison Lodge #373 of Kansas was digging a pond when he came across an overturned gravestone marked with a square and compasses. Research lead to a determination that it belonged to Brother Herry Craig (1832-62) of Valley Falls Lodge #21. The brethren of the lodge reset and cleaned the monument and erected a fence around it to keep livestock away. The Lodge members continue to maintain the site today.
- \* Lyndon Johnson took the first degree on October 30, 1937, but never progressed any further.
- \* Sam Rayburn, Speaker of the House took his first degree on August 7, 1922. He died in 1961, without receiving the second.
- \* Warren G. Harding was initiated on June 28, 1901. It took him 19 years to complete the other two degrees.
- \* Lodges in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts have no numbers. In Pennsylvania there are 11 lodges that have numbers but no names, and in Georgia there are two lodges with the number 1. In Maryland, Tennessee and Pennsylvania there is no lodge with the number 1.

\* Some Masonic places in the US:

Anchor, IL  
Beehive, MT  
Boaz, AL  
Charity, MS  
Circle, MT  
Cowan, TN  
Emblem, WY  
Eureka, WV  
Faith, SD  
Fidelity, IL  
Five Points, AL  
Freeborn, MN  
Hiram, MA  
Hope, AK  
Jachin, AL  
Justice, IL  
Lodge, SC  
Mason, KY  
Masonic Home, KY  
Masontown, WV  
Mason City, IA  
Square, MT  
Steward, IL  
Symbol, KY  
Temperance, MI  
Tyler, TX

\* Hiram Abiff Boaz, born Dec. 18 1866 in Murray, KY, received his degrees in 1922, and went on to serve as Grand Chaplin (TX) in 1953.

\* Joseph A. Gilmore (1811-1867), former governor of N.H. was made a Mason at sight on April 28, 1863. He received Scottish Rite degrees and was awarded his 33<sup>rd</sup> degree IGH on May 7, 1863 - just 9 days later.

\* Between 1890 (when it became a state) and 1951, every governor of Wyoming, except one, was a Mason. The lone exception was Mrs. William A. Ross, the wife of a Mason and a member of the Order of the Eastern Star.

\* Every President from Tennessee was a Mason (Jackson, Johnson, Polk)

\* In 1951, while President of the United States, Harry Truman served as Master of his lodge.

\* Sacramento Chapter #3, Royal Arch Masons has supplied 4 governors of California (Neeley Johnson, Lantham, Pacheo, and Hiram Johnson)

\* William Hesketh Lever Lodge #2916 in Great Britain was the only lodge named for a non-Mason, the first Viscount of Leverhulm (the soap manufacturer “Lever”).

\* Paul Revere was a Mason, as was his cohort, Robert Newman, who hung the lantern in the tower of Old North Church.

\* Angelo Soliman, was born in Africa in 1721 and brought to Europe as a slave at the age of ten. He was educated, married, and became a favorite in the royal court in Vienna. Sometime before 1771 he became a mason. When he died in 1776, the Emperor had his body stuffed and mounted, and placed in the natural history museum, becoming not only the first black of African birth to become a mason, but the also the first Mason to be stuffed, mounted, and displayed.

\* John Aasen of Highland Park Lodge No. 382 in Los Angeles, CA was the largest known Master Mason ever raised. At the time he was 8 ½ feet tall and weighed 536 pounds.

\* Charles Stratton, a.k.a. Tom Thumb, was 24 inches high and weighed just 16 pounds when raised in 1862.

\* Theodore Parvin was Grand Secretary of Masons in Iowa from 1844 to 1901, except for 1852- 53 when he was Grand Master.

Masonic Trivia II: tidbits gathered from numerous sources including the Masonic Service Association, the publications of Brother Alfonse Cerza (IL), as well as the writings of Brother Ray McKinley (CA), and Wor. Charles Wilkinson (NZ)

Doug Messimer, PM, LEO  
Tuckahoe Lodge 6-08