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Membership is open to all freemasons of regular Masonic Organizations.

You can be a correspondence member and not attend meetings if you wish. Members are encouraged to be active by correspondence; questions and comments are welcome.

These will be answered in the "Lectern".

Some comments on the symbol Tau. By Harvey Lovewell

At a recent installation, there was, as always, much ritual. Some were excellent, and some were not so good, especially mine. Before the meeting, I had my part word perfect. Then during my recitation, there were a couple of comments from brothers in the East regarding my pronunciation of the word Tau. I thought this was unkind. As most of us find ritual somewhat difficult and have trouble with it. Being interrupted kills the flow and is not warranted. Also, I was not the only bad ritualist.

However, this had the effect of completely throwing me off course, maybe it shouldn't have. In its wisdom, the Craft has told us that the Chaplain is the only person to comment/prompt. All others should hold their peace.

This then made me consider the word Tau. I pronounced the word, (phonetically) Tauw the comments from the East said Tor. So I went to the expert, Julian's pronouncement guide, and they said, like me, Tauw. There is no doubt other pronunciations of this word as many different languages and dialects exist especially English. However, does it matter? If the idea is there.

We are told in the ritual, that Tau was to the Antients a hieroglyphic representing eternal life. A Hieroglyph is a symbol that stands for a particular sound.

There are different ways to depict the symbol in written form. here is one.

But what is the import of the word? The ritual says it's a hieroglyph meaning eternal life.



But what is the import of the word? The ritual says it's a hieroglyph meaning eternal life.

Tau is the 19th letter of the Greek alphabet. The Tau Cross is linked to ancient landmarks and traditions in Masonic teachings. It is sometimes associated with the ancient Hebrew letter "Tav," which signifies a mark or a sign. This connection emphasises the continuity of ancient wisdom through the Masonic tradition.

The Franciscans held it as a sign of conversion, the ultimate symbol of God's love and healing. A Tau mark was placed on the forehead of the poor in Israel as a sign they would be saved. This symbol was also adopted by the first generation of Christians who were Jews.

In ancient Greece, Tau was used as a symbol for life or resurrection while the eight-letter of the Greek alphabet, theta, was the symbol of death,

Tau is prominently featured in Royal Arch Masonry. In this context, it is often associated with the Triple Tau symbol, a combination of three Tau crosses intersecting in the centre.



The Triple Tau symbol holds deep esoteric meaning. It is considered a symbol of great importance and is often interpreted in several ways. It is sometimes viewed as a key to hidden secrets or knowledge. It represents the search for deeper understanding and the unlocking of mysteries.

In mathematics, Tau is $=2\pi$ or the number 6.2831r. In engineering, it is Time Constant

The Tau symbol can have a more abstract and philosophical significance in metaphysics. While not as standardised as in mathematics or physics, Tau can be associated with concepts of unity, duality, and the cyclical nature of the universe. The concept of Tau as 2π (representing a full circle) in mathematics can be metaphorically extended to metaphysics to represent the cyclical nature of time and existence. Many metaphysical systems suggest that life and the universe are cyclical, with recurring patterns and cycles of birth, death, and rebirth.

Watching a TV program, "Bargain Hunt" the other day and a pre-war gold pin depicting a Forget-me-not was up for sale. I was reminded of the story of this pin, and its relationship to Freemasonry.

The *forget-me-not* flower (*Myosotis*) carries a rich and varied symbolism, which has evolved, particularly before and during World War II. Its significance is that it has represented much.

Historically, the forget-me-not has been a symbol of love, remembrance, and enduring connection. In medieval times, it was often associated with romantic devotion. The name comes from the German phrase "Vergissmeinnicht," meaning "forget me not," a plea sometimes uttered by lovers separated by circumstances.

Before World War II, in the 1920s, the forget-me-not was adopted as a symbol by the Freemasons in Germany. It was chosen as a sign of charity and remembrance, reflecting the values of brotherhood and solidarity. This association would become more significant as the political climate in Germany shifted.

During the Nazi regime, the forget-me-not took on a new and more profound symbolism.

The Nazis also used the Forget-me-not symbol but in a different context. It was part of a Nazi party badge and propaganda in the 1930s, intended to promote loyalty and memory among the German people. However, this use is less well-known than the Masonic Association. The flower was used as a secret symbol by Freemasons in Nazi Germany, where Masonic lodges were outlawed, and members were persecuted. Wearing a forget-me-not pin allowed Freemasons to recognise one another discreetly and signal their resistance to the oppressive regime. Strange that it had a multiple uses.

The forget-me-not also became a symbol of remembrance for the victims of the Holocaust. It represented the idea of not forgetting the atrocities committed during the war and served as a reminder to honour the memories of those who perished.

It became a symbol of Exile and Return: The forget-me-not was often used by those displaced or exiled during the war to symbolise hope for return and the persistence of memory across distances and hardships.

After the war, the forget-me-not was associated with memory, not just in the context of war but more broadly in memorials and ceremonies. It is still used in various contexts to signify remembrance, especially for those lost in conflicts.

In masonic tradition, the flower remains a significant symbol, particularly as a reminder of the fraternity's endurance during times of persecution.

The forget-me-not thus became a powerful symbol of resistance, remembrance, and the enduring nature of human connection, particularly during one of the darkest periods in modern history.

Carl Harry Claudy (1879 – 1957) was an American author, magazine writer, and journalist for the New York Herald.

His association with Freemasonry began in 1908, when, at 29, he was raised a master Mason in lodge Harmony No. 17 in Washington, DC. He served as its master in 1932 and eventually served as Grand Master of Masons in the District of Columbia in 1943.

His Masonic writing career began in earnest when he became associated with the Masonic Service Association in 1923, serving as associate editor of its magazine, The master mason, until 1931.

Under his leadership, the service Association was brought to a place of predominance through his authorship and distribution of the short talk bulletin which made his name familiar to virtually every lodge in the country.

He wrote The Old Tilers Talks which were first published in 1925, They are a series of short anecdotal stories told in the setting of a new member asking an old tiler for his opinion on various masonic topics. These short articles are still very relevant, 100 years on, and hopefully provide some insight to all members. The following could be relevant today.

The New Brother leaned against the wall near the Old Tiler and lighted a cigar. "We would do more good in the world if we advertised ourselves more," he said.

"Why?" asked the Old Tiler.

"So that those not members of the fraternity would know more about our work."

"Why should they?"

"The more people know about us, the more regard they have for us, the more men would want to be Masons, the larger we would grow, and so the more powerful we would be!" answered the New Brother.

"You would advertise us until all men became Masons?"

"Well- er- I don't know about all men; but certainly until most men applied."

"If all men were Masons at heart there would be no need for Masonry," answered the Old Tiler. "But not all who call themselves Master Masons are real Masons. What we need to do is advertise ourselves to our brethren."

"But we know all about Masonry," protested the New Brother, "the world at large does not."

"Oh, no, we don't know all about Masonry!" cried the Old Tiler.

"Even the best-informed don't know all about Masonry. The best-informed electricians do not know all about electricity; the best-informed astronomers do not know all about astronomy; the best-informed geologists do not know all about geology. We have much to learn."

“But electricity and astronomy and geology are sciences. Masonry is- is- well, Masonry was made by men, and so men must know all about it.”

“Can a man make something greater than himself?” countered the Old Tiler.

“Our ears hear sounds- translate vibrations of air or other material to our brains- as noise or music.

But the ear is limited; we do not hear all the sounds in nature; some animals and insects hear noises we cannot hear.

We have eyes, yet these imperfect instruments turn into colour and light but a tiny proportion of light waves.

Scientific instruments recognize vibrations which physical senses take no account of- radio and x-ray for instance.

Yet our whole conception of the universe is founded on what we see and hear.

Very likely the universe is entirely different from what we think.

The ant’s tiny world is a hill; he has no knowledge of the size of the country in which is his home, let alone the size or shape of the world.

A dog’s world is the city where he lives; not for him is the ocean or the continent or the world.

The stars and the moon and the sun are to him but shining points.

Our world is bigger; we see a universe through a telescope, but we can but speculate as to its extent or what is beyond the narrow confines of our instruments.

“Masonry is like that. Our hearts understand a certain kind of love. Prate as we will about brotherhood of man and Fatherhood of God, we yet compare the one to the love of two blood-brothers and the second to our feelings for our children. We measure both by the measuring rods we have.

“Real brotherhood and real Fatherhood of God may be grander, broader, deeper, wider, than we know. Masonry contains the thought; our brains have a limited comprehension of it. If this be so then we know little about Masonry, and what even the most learned of us think is probably far short of reality.”

“All that may be so,” answered the New Brother, “and it is a most interesting idea; but what has it to do with advertising to the profane?”

“Does a scientist make any progress by advertising his science?” countered the Old Tiler.

“Will a geometrician discover a new principle by advertising for more students? Will the astronomer discover a new sun by running placards in the newspapers? Will a geologist discover the mystery of the earth’s interior by admitting more members to the geological society?”

“Masonry needs no advertising to the profane, but advertising to its own members. I use the word in your sense, but I do not mean publicity.

Masons need to be taught to extend Masonry’s influence over men’s hearts and minds. We do not need more material to work with, but better work on the half-worked material we already have.”

“Masonry is humble and secret; not for her the blare of trumpets and the scare head of publicity.

To make it other than what it is would rob it of its character.

To study, reflect, and labor in it is to be a scientist in Masonry, discovering constantly something new and better that it be more effective on those who embrace its gentle teachings and its mysterious power.”

“Oh, all right!” smiled the New Brother. “I won’t put it in the paper tomorrow. Old Tiler, where did you learn so much?”

“I didn’t,” smiled the Old Tiler. I know very little. But that little I learned by keeping an open mind and heart- which was taught me by-“

“By your teachers in school?”

“No, my son,” answered the Old Tiler, gravely, “by Masonry.”

Westminster Abbey– The History of a Masonic Cathedral.

The Westminster Abbey was built by operative Freemasons, being now part of UNESCO's World Heritage. According to a tradition first reported by Sulcard in about 1080, the Abbey

was first founded in the time of Mellitus (d. 624), Bishop of London, on the present site, then known as Thorn Ey (Thorn Island); based on a late tradition that a fisherman called

Aldrich on the River Thames saw a vision of Saint Peter near the site.

This seems to be quoted to justify the gifts of salmon from Thames fishermen that the Abbey received in later years. In the present era, the Fishmonger's Company still gives a salmon every year.

The proven origins are that in the 960s or early 970s, Saint Dunstan, assisted by King Edgar, installed a community of Benedictine monks here. A stone abbey was built around 1045–1050 by King Edward the Confessor as part of his palace there and was consecrated on 28 December 1065, only a week before the Confessor's death and subsequent funeral and burial. It was the site of the last coronation before the Norman conquest of England, that of his successor Harold II. From 1245 it was rebuilt by Henry III who had selected the site for his burial.

The only extant depiction of the original abbey, in the Romanesque style that is called Norman in England, together with the adjacent Palace of Westminster, is in the Bayeux Tapestry. Increased endowments supported a community increased from a dozen monks in

Dunstan's original foundation, to about eighty monks.

The abbot and learned monks, in close proximity to the royal Palace of Westminster, the seat of government from the later twelfth century, became a powerful force in the centuries after the Norman Conquest: the abbot often was employed on royal service and in due course took his place in the House of Lords as of right. Released from the burdens of spiritual leadership, which passed to the reformed Cluniac movement after the mid-tenth century, and occupied with the administration of great landed properties, some of which lay far from

Westminster, "the Benedictines achieved a remarkable degree of identification with the secular life of their times, and particularly with upper-class life", Barbara Harvey concludes, to the extent that

her depiction of daily life provides a wider view of the concerns of the English gentry in the High and Late Middle Ages.

The proximity of the Palace of Westminster did not extend to providing monks or abbots with high royal connections; in social origin the Benedictines of Westminster were as modest as most of the order. The abbot remained Lord of the Manor of Westminster as a town of two to three thousand persons grew around it: as a consumer and employer on a grand scale the monastery helped fuel the town economy, and relations with the town remained unusually cordial, but no enfranchising charter was issued during the Middle Ages. The Abbey built shops and dwellings on the west side, encroaching upon the sanctuary.

The Abbey became the coronation site of Norman kings, but none were buried there until Henry III, intensely devoted to the cult of the Confessor, rebuilt the Abbey in Anglo French Gothic style as a shrine to honour Saint Edward the Confessor and as a suitably regal setting for Henry's own tomb, under the highest Gothic nave in England. The Confessor's shrine subsequently played a great part in his canonisation.

The work continued between 1245 and 1517 and was largely finished by the architect Henry Yevele in the reign of Richard II. Henry VII added a Perpendicular style chapel dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary in 1503 (known as the Henry VII Chapel).

Much of the stone came from Caen, in France (Caen stone), the Isle of Portland (Portland stone) and the Loire Valley region of France (tuffeau limestone).

In 1535, the Abbey's annual income of £2400–2800 (£980,000 to £1,140,000 as of 2011),

during the assessment attendant on the Dissolution of the Monasteries rendered it second in wealth only to Glastonbury Abbey. Henry VIII had assumed direct royal control in 1539 and granted the Abbey cathedral status by charter in 1540, simultaneously issuing letters patent establishing the Diocese of Westminster. By granting the Abbey cathedral status Henry VIII gained an excuse to spare it from the destruction or dissolution

which he inflicted on most English abbeys during this period. Westminster was a cathedral only until 1550.

The expression "robbing Peter to pay Paul" may arise from this period when money meant for the Abbey, which is dedicated to Saint Peter, was diverted to the treasury of St Paul's Cathedral.

The Abbey was restored to the Benedictines under the Roman Catholic Mary I of England, but they were again ejected under Elizabeth I in 1559. In 1579, Elizabeth re-established Westminster as a "Royal Peculiar"—a church responsible directly to the Sovereign, rather than to a diocesan bishop—and made it the Collegiate Church of St Peter (that is, a church with an attached chapter of canons, headed by a dean). The last Abbot was made the first Dean.

It suffered damage during the turbulent 1640s, when it was attacked by Puritan iconoclasts, but was again protected by its close ties to the state during the Commonwealth period. Oliver Cromwell was given an elaborate funeral there in 1658, only to be disinterred in January 1661 and posthumously hanged from a nearby gibbet.

The Abbey's two western towers were built between 1722 and 1745 by Nicholas Hawksmoor, constructed from Portland stone to an early example of a Gothic Revival design. Purbeck marble was used for the walls and the floors of Westminster Abbey, even though the various tombstones are made of different types of marble. Further rebuilding and restoration occurred

in the 19th century under Sir George Gilbert Scott. A narthex (a portico or entrance hall) for the

west front was designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens in the mid 20th century but was not executed. Images of the Abbey prior to the construction of the towers are scarce, though the Abbey's official website states that the building was without towers following Yevele's renovation, with just the lower segments beneath the roof level of the Nave completed.

Until the 19th century, Westminster was the third seat of learning in England, after Oxford and Cambridge. It was here that the first third

of the King James Bible Old Testament and the last half of the New Testament were translated.

The New English Bible was also put together here in the 20th century. Westminster suffered minor damage during the Blitz on November 15th, 1940.

In the 1990s two icons by Russian icon painter Sergei Fyodorov were hung in the Abbey. On September 17th, 2010, Pope Benedict XVI became the first pope to set foot in Westminster Abbey.