

# Camelot

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The origins of modern freemasonry are, of course, rooted in the distant past and shrouded by the mists of time, appearing as a mystery wrapped in an enigma. In Act 2 Scene 7 of Shakespeare's play *As You Like It*, Jaques says: "*All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players. They have their exits and their entrances, and one man in his time plays many parts.*" It would seem that there is as much vigorous debate about the origins of modern freemasonry as there is about who is to be credited for William Shakespeare's writings. When we peruse Shakespeare's writings and the rubric of freemasonry, we find several of the same players involved, having their exits and entrances, and one man, Sir Francis Bacon, in his time playing many parts.

Brother Sir Winston Churchill speaking on Russia in a radio broadcast once said: "*It is a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma; but perhaps there is a key.*"<sup>1</sup> His statement holds true for Masonry as well. What is a mason? It is a simple but important question. Perhaps a better question to ask is: How do we define "*mason*"? Upon review of several dictionaries "*mason*" is a noun referring to the occupation of a skilled builder who cuts, dresses, and lays stone. The word's origin is Middle English: from Old French *masson* (noun), *maçonner* (verb), and probably of Germanic origin from *machen* (verb), to make.

Middle English was the English language from about 1100 to about 1450: main dialects are Kentish, Southwestern (West Saxon), East Midland (which replaced West Saxon as the chief literary form and developed into Modern English), West Midland, and Northern (from which the Scots of Lowland Scotland and other modern dialects developed).<sup>2</sup> According to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, the first known use of the word "*mason*" was in the 13th century.<sup>3</sup>

The Online Etymology Dictionary traces the origin of "*mason*" thus: c.1200, "stoneworker" (as a surname, early 12c.), from Old French *masson*, *maçon* "stone mason" (Old North French *machun*), probably from Frankish *makjo* or some other Germanic source (cf. Old High German *steinmezzo* "stone mason", Modern German *Steinmetz*, second element related to *mahhon* "to make"; see *make*). But it also might be from, or influenced by, Medieval Latin *machio*, *matio* which is said by Isidore to be derived from *machina* (see *machine*). The medieval word also might be from the root of Latin *maceria* "wall".<sup>4</sup> In simpler terms, the word "*mason*" refers to a skilled builder, an

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<sup>1</sup> Brother Sir Winston Churchill. Speaking on Russia in a radio broadcast in London October 1<sup>st</sup>, 1939.

<sup>2</sup> Middle English. Dictionary.com. *Dictionary.com Unabridged*. Random House, Inc. <http://www.dictionary.com/browse/middle-english> (accessed: March 20, 2016).

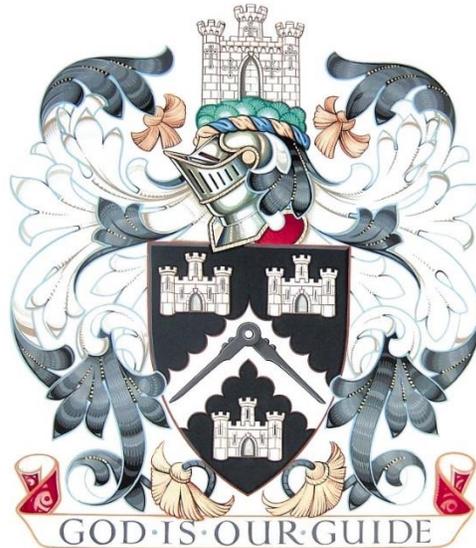
<sup>3</sup> "Mason". Merriam-Webster.com. Accessed March 20, 2016. <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/mason>.

<sup>4</sup> "Mason". Dictionary.com. *Online Etymology Dictionary*. Douglas Harper, Historian. <http://www.dictionary.com/browse/mason> (accessed: March 20, 2016).

operative, who cuts, dresses, and lays stone, synonymous with "stone mason". Another homophonic variation of mason is the Middle French noun *Maison* derived from the Latin word "mansio", meaning house, alluding to a business. The English term "Free Mason" is a corruption of the French expression *Frères Maison*, meaning "Brothers House" or "Brothers Business". "Brothers House" could refer to a fraternal guild hall or Lodge, but it also has a religious connotation as a monastery. What we have discovered is that the term "mason" has more than one etymology and meaning contingent upon its context. As such, it provides an example of the necessity for understanding the application of grammar, rhetoric, and logic.

"*Mistry*" is an archaic form of "*mystery*", meaning a trade or guild of craftsmen in Middle English (c.1150 to c.1470). It's derived from the Latin word *mysterium*, meaning secret rite or worship, borrowed from Ancient Greek *μυστήριον* (*mustérion*) meaning revealed secret. It displaced the Old English (c.500 to c.1150) word *geryne* that meant mystery. Geryne is an early homophone of journey. Journey comes from the Old French (8<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> century) word, *journee*, that evolved from the Medieval Latin *diurnāta* ("a day's work, a day's journey, a fixed day, a day"), from Latin *diurnus* ("daily"), from *diēs* ("day"). A Journeyman is therefore someone who has completed his term of service as an apprentice, learned the secrets of his craft as a qualified tradesman but was employed by another, such as a Master Craftsman. A Journeyman had the right to charge a fee for each day's work but could not hire other workers. For those aspiring to become a Master Craftsman during the late Medieval Period (c.1250 to 1500), an important part of a Journeyman's education and training was to travel from town to town to gain experience of different workshops and projects. In England, a Journeyman equated to a Fellow-of-the-Craft who held membership in a livery company.

The term *livery* originated in the specific form of dress worn by retainers of a nobleman and then by extension to special dress to denote status of belonging to a trade. Livery Companies comprise London's ancient and modern trade associations and guilds, almost all of which are styled the "*Worshipful Company of...*" their respective craft, trade or profession. Livery companies evolved from London's medieval guilds, becoming corporations under Royal Charter responsible for training in their respective trades, as well as for the regulation of aspects such as wage control, labour conditions and industry standards. Livery companies were formed in the 12<sup>th</sup> century and continued through the 17<sup>th</sup> century to guarantee that a member was trustworthy and fully qualified, and that the goods they produced were of reputable quality, the two-fold aim being to protect the public and to protect members from charlatans. Although a "mistry" of masons may have existed beforehand, the elections to the Common Council in 1376 provide the first secure evidence for the existence of an organised guild of masons in London. This is in line with the estimated date of the Halliwell Manuscript, better known as the Regius Poem, that is dated to c.1390 and guild principles outlined in the Constitutions of Masons of Strasburg signed in Regensburg, Germany in 1459. The Worshipful Company of Masons (not to be confused with the Freemasons), that emerged in the late Middle Ages, played an important role in medieval and early modern London. It regulated the craft of stonemasonry, for example by ensuring that standards and the training of apprentices were properly maintained, at first just in the City of London, but subsequently also in the City of Westminster and seven miles from each. It was also an important social organisation in the lives of its members. Like most Livery Companies, it maintains its social function, but the Company's economic and administrative role has changed over time and it no longer oversees the craft in this traditional way, although it remains actively involved in supporting those training in stonemasonry and in promoting the use of natural stone.



Arms of the Worshipful Company of Masons

According to Paul David Jagger in his blog of CityandLivery<sup>5</sup>:

*“The origins for Freemasonry are lost in the mists of time; never the less some learned historians have put forward the plausible theory that Freemasonry grew out of the Livery probably in the late 17th century in the City of London following a split between operative and speculative members of the Masons’ Company. Certainly the conditions for a split between operative and speculative Masons were ripe at the time.*

*To the casual observer it may appear that the City of London Livery Companies are a branch or offshoot of Freemasonry as they have a passion for dressing up in unusual outfits, for participating in arcane ceremonies and they use similar titles for many of their officers, to wit: Master, Past Master, Warden, Steward, Almoner, Chaplain, etc. However some of these titles are also used by many other organizations including the ancient universities. They are reflective of the social structures and officials who were commonplace at the time when early medieval Guilds formed.*

*Much of the allegory and scripted plays that form the basis of Masonic ritual may be drawn from the medieval mystery plays that were a feature of Guilds throughout England prior to the Reformation and the subsequent establishment of the Church of England. While the City of London Livery Companies no longer perform mystery plays they have been restored in the ancient Cities of York, Lincoln, and Chester. Masonic symbolism may find its origins in props that were commonly employed in those plays.*

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<sup>5</sup> Jagger, Paul David. Blog CityandLivery. *Livery Companies and Freemasonry*. September 12, 2017. <https://cityandlivery.blogspot.com/2017/09/the-livery-companies-and-freemasonry.html>. January 28, 2022.

*Despite the superficial similarities the subject of Freemasonry is something of a 'marmite' topic among Liverymen; there are those who love it, and those who would rather not partake. By and large knowledge of Freemasonry's links to the Livery are not widely known and remain poorly understood by Freemasons and Liverymen alike.*

*In particular Freemasonry has many stories of its origins that are built on foundations of historical quicksand, providing no firm facts and every opportunity for the unwary to get trapped in myths and legends. The Worshipful Company of Masons emphasize the importance of untangling Freemasonry from the various Guilds of Masons that existed throughout the UK.*

*Records exist of operative and speculative Masons meeting at Masons' Hall in Masons' Lane in the City of London during the 17th century. Masons' Lane (now Masons' Avenue) still exists and is directly opposite the eastern entrance to Guildhall.*

*As with many Livery Companies whose power to regulate their trade was passing from their grasp at the time, the Masons were probably keen to invite wealthy gentlemen to join their ranks and swell coffers; this was particularly so after the Great Fire of London when there were insufficient stone masons in London to rebuild the City and the Company could not enforce that all stone masons be Freemen of the Company. The process of admitting persons to the Livery who had not come through the apprenticeship route was already well established in the City by this time.*

*The gentlemen admitted to the Masons' Company were not craftsmen and certainly not skilled in the mysteries of the stonemason and therein lies the root of potential conflict with those members of the Livery Company who had done their time as an apprentice, journeyman and become master craftsman.*

*When, how, and if this split between operative and speculative Masons occurred is open to conjecture, but there remain a bewildering array of similarities between the Livery and Freemasonry despite being entirely separate and organizationally unconnected groupings.”*

Both Dee and Bacon were, among many things, genius polymaths. They didn't see the world or think as others did or do. They were both smarter than everyone else and enjoyed mental gymnastics, mathematics, codes, and cyphers. They were magicians who used mental slight of mind and played head games to distract people and get them looking and thinking in one direction while they were actually thinking and doing something unexpected and apparently unconnected; something seemingly invisible but in plain sight. Bacon in particular loved to play allegorical word games with language as evidenced in his writings as Shakespeare.

John Dee, alchemist and magician, claimed descent from Rhodri ap Merfyn son of Merfyn Frych. Merfyn could easily be misread or misspelled as “Merlyn”, having an alternate spelling of “Merlin”. Indeed, Merfyn is mentioned in the prophesies of the magician, Myddryn! So, Dee

perceived he was the reincarnation of Merlin. As Merlin, Dee set about recreating the magical utopia of Camelot, often alluded to as Arcadia. Going forward, keep this in mind: 1. Dee was born in "The Tower". 2. According to legend, Merfyn hailed from "Manaw" which may either refer to the Isle of Man or Mana Gododdin on the south shore of the Firth of Forth near Edinburgh, Scotland, the ancestral homeland of all Gwynedd's kings since Cunedda. In the Arthurian legend, Avalon is sometimes described as Manannan Island, named after the Celtic sea god Manannan who is said to have lived there. An island off the coast of Maine bears the very similar name Manana Island. This was the original Native American name for the island, meaning "island in the sea". The first writer to mention Avalon is Geoffrey of Monmouth. In his "Vita Merlini" he calls it "Insula Pomorum" (Island of Apples) and states that it lies somewhere in the western sea. Celtic legend has a magical isles known as "ablach" which was "rich in apples", a variant of which may have been the root of the Avalon theme. *The Voyage of Maelduin's Boat* tells the story of Merlin's passage to the land to the west, perhaps to Manana Island off the coast of Maine, where he supposedly died or was imprisoned. The exact form of Merlin's either prison or grave can be also variably a cave, a hole under a large rock (as in *Le Morte d'Arthur*), a magic tower, or a tree.

In 1551 Gerardus Mercator gifted John Dee with two globes, terrestrial and celestial. When overlaid, the constellation of Cassiopeia, the Virgin Queen of Heaven, resided over England. The constellation Cygnus, the swan, containing the asterism the Northern Cross, representing Apollo and his rising spirit, is situated on the east coast of North America. It's important to keep in mind that Elizabeth wouldn't be crowned as queen until 1559, assuming the moniker as the "Virgin Queen" that same year. Depending on how we look at Cassiopeia, the constellation can be perceived as either a "W" or as an "M". Dee likely saw Cassiopeia as an "M" for Merlin. That Cygnus represented the rising spirit of Apollo was over the east coast of North America was also personally significant to Dee. It was in North America, in Arcadia, that Dee wanted to remake and re-establish Camelot as a utopic egalitarian society. It's the reason he invested so heavily in the exploration and colonization of the New World. Why? Because of his descent from Rhodri ap Merfyn! Once Elizabeth assumed the throne as the "Virgin Queen", it was a relatively easy astrological matter to sell her on the idea that as Cassiopeia was the "Virgin Queen of Heaven" she was the "Virgin Queen on Earth", reflecting the axiom "as above, so below", and that Cygnus, as Apollo, over North America, in concert with the Arthurian legend connection and voyages of St. Brendan and Prince Madoc, gave England, or as Dee coined it, "the British Empire", the right to colonize and expand its realm. Thus, Dee was able to gain the support of the crown and financial backing for his endeavor. A simple "slight of mind". How do we know this? Rhode Island!

In a letter to King Francis I of France in 1524, Giovanni Verrazano called the harbor at the mouth of Narragansett Bay "Refugio". Verrazano's cartographer on the 1524 voyage, Viscount Maggiolo, included Refugio on his map of 1527. John Dee renamed the bay and river flowing into it described by Verrazano the John Dee Bay and Dee River in 1583. It wasn't until 1634 that the bay was renamed Narragansett. If you recall, one form of Merlin's either prison or grave could have been a magic tower. According to Jim Egan in *The John Dee Tower of 1583: A Renaissance Building in Newport, Rhode Island*, Dee also had the Newport Tower, that functions as a Horologium, constructed in 1583. Newport is a town Camelot in southeastern Wales adjacent to Caerleon where Dee's ancestors were from.

In 1637, a year after the founding of Providence, Roger Williams in a letter to John Winthrop, a Puritan lawyer and Governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, refers to

“...*Aquidnetick called by us Rode Island ...*”. In 1644 the name of Aquidneck was officially changed to “Rhod Iland” (Rhode Island or the Isle of Rhodes). The name of the island comes from the ancient Greek *Rhódon* (rose), and is sometimes called the island of roses. Rhodes is famous for the Colossus of Rhodes, a statue of the Greek sun god Helios, later known as Apollo, one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. According to myth, Helios was a Titan, a primordial god, who drove a chariot daily from east to west across the sky and sailed around the northerly stream of Ocean each night in a huge cup, a route similar to that taken by European explorers to the New World. In Pindar's ode, the island was said to be born of the union of Helios and the nymph Rhodos, the goddess and personification of the island and Helios' wife. According to Diodorus Siculus, one their three sons, Actis, travelled to Egypt where he built the city of Heliopolis and taught the Egyptians astrology. The statue of Colossus collapsed during an earthquake in 226 BC. The Colossus of Rhodes inspired French sculptor Frédéric Auguste Bartholdi designer of Statue of Liberty, who made his first sketches of the statue while visiting the artist John LaFarge at his studio in Newport, Rhode Island. The Isle of Rhodes is also home to the Acropolis of Rhodes with the Temple of Pythian Apollo and an ancient theatre and stadium. Furthermore, Dee conceived the idea of the Rhode Island symbol as the a fouled anchor with the word “hope”, known as the “anchor of hope”, based on his *Monas Hieroglyphica* of 1564. (see John Dee, Governor Benedict Arnold, and the Anchor of Hope by Jim Egan). Naming the colony “Rhode Island” may well have been Dee's idea. It would have played into his “slight of mind” deception whereby he has people thinking it's named after the Isle of Rhodes when in actuality it's named for his ancestors, Rhodri ap Merfyn and Merlin. A further idea is that the double “A”, or “AA”, may be another of Dee's “slights of mind” and in a different interpretation may represent the letter “M” for “Merlin”.

Perhaps inspired by Paracelsus' tract on the comet of 1531, Danish astronomer Tycho Brahe (1546-1601) perceived that the supernova (SN-1572) appearing in Cassiopeia in 1572 was an omen to prepare the way for a new secular and religious order. This was followed by Brahe's sighting of the Great Comet of 1577 (C/1577 V1) and his prediction of “*a great alteration and reformation, both in the spiritual and secular regimes*”. Then in 1583 there was a Great Conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn in the “fiery trigon” of Aries, Leo, and Sagittarius. Dee, as with Brahe, Digges, and other notable astronomers/astrologers, perceived these events as omens of apocalyptic change. Change, and opportunity, were blowing on the celestial winds for John Dee. It was in the midst of these celestial events that Dee first met Francis Bacon who had recently attained his majority and learned that his biological parents were Queen Elizabeth I and Sir Robert Dudley. This first meeting occurred at Dee's estate at Mortlake to discuss gematria. Bacon, like Thomas Digges, soon became a Dee protégé.

The “skeleton” key unlocking the idea that Dee and Bacon designed and developed modern freemasonry based on their mutual desire to revitalize Camelot, is that Bacon was Baron Verulam and Viscount St. Albans, the Bacon estate at Gorhambury, and that Bacon's memorial is at St. Albans.

I'm going to shift gears for a moment to briefly address freemasonry. A perplexing question causing consternation is that of the union and apparent divergence of operative and speculative Masons. To understand this the root question for consideration is not so much how Masonry is defined, but how it came to incorporate these two very different forms. Generally speaking, Operative Masonry is a blue-collar function performed by laborers that involves quarrying, cutting, finishing, and setting stone to construct a structure. Such a labor force is physically oriented

and relatively formally uneducated. The men involved are the doers, the followers, the apprentices, who use the strength of their bodies more than their minds. These workers must first acquire a specific knowledge of language, craft or trade jargon; the grammar, rhetoric, and logic communicated in performance of their duties. They must become familiar with the tools of their craft, their function, and how best to use them. Acquisition of such knowledge become trade secrets. These secrets of the craft are not to be shared with those outside the craft, not so much because they may misuse or not understand them, but because such knowledge provides an inherent psychological sense of value, importance, and belonging to an exclusive group of like-minded friends and brothers who share common experiences and rites of passage. As such, they learn to recognize one another with whispered words, signs, and handgrips.

As they become proficient in trade jargon, these laborers acquire additional knowledge: how to apply mathematics and geometry to their craft. They learn how to apply the cadence of music to work together in peace, unity, and harmony to get things done in a timely fashion. They learn to use the stars and constellations, astronomy, to not only properly align their structures, but to know the progress of the seasons and the weather; knowing when they can work and when they can't, how long they may have to accomplish their work. Such men, these senior companions, these fellows-of-the-craft, are responsible for the on-the-job training of the neophytes, the apprentices, teaching them the craft. As a fellow-of-the-craft gains experience and applies his ever expanding knowledge of the quadrivium from working on a variety of projects, he acquires the wisdom of knowing what needs to be done, how it needs to be done, when it needs to be done, resources needed, and how to address and resolve project problems as they arise. He becomes an architect, a master builder, who can design and oversee the construction of structures. Even so, regardless of a master builder's knowledge, skill, and ability, he is still a blue-collar worker, an operative mason.

As an operative mason, a master builder cannot build without the desire for a structure, the support of a landowner having access to necessary natural resources, or the financial wherewithal to pay for requisite labor and materials. Since time immemorial two institutions have employed Masons in building projects – the Church and the State. It is here that we diverge from operative masonry to speculative masonry.

While operative masonry pertains to the doers and performers who primarily use their bodies to build a structure, speculative masonry refers to those who form philosophical opinions about how something is done, guessing in an educated manner. Speculative Masons use their minds. They employ hyperopia abstract thinking to look beyond what's immediately in front of them, to visualize end results and, as such, aren't necessarily focused on the myopic operative mechanics of how projects get done. As a result, speculative masonry evolved from visionaries within the Church and State; visionaries who were educated in the trivium and quadrivium who, lacking hands-on application knowledge and skill, used operative working tools as moral metaphors. Thus we find that building projects, whether it be a cathedral or a castle, were led, overseen, and paid for by speculative masons who were members of the Church or State. As such, we find from antiquity that the Grand Masters of Masonry are speculative Masons: kings, dukes, counts, earls, cardinals, archbishops, bishops, etc. This is evidenced in the Old Charges of Masonry, the Bible, Josephus, etc. and detailed in a Biographical Tableau found in The Freemasons Quarterly Magazine from 1851 that contains a five-page list of prominent early Masons dating from 10AD through 1716. Of interest is the first English Mason in the list, Albanus (St. Alban), identified as a priest and architect who was the first Grand Inspector of Freemasonry in 299AD. The Cooke Manuscript, one of the oldest of the

Ancient Charges that is dated to c.1450, suggests that Masonry was brought to England by St. Alban sometime c.200 AD.

Albanus was born in Hertfordshire near the Roman town of Verulamium sometime during the 3<sup>rd</sup> century. Tasciovanus was a Celtic king of the Catuvellauni tribe who established a settlement at what was then known as Verlamion in about 20 BC. The Romans occupied the town c.44 AD and it was granted the self-governing rank of *municipium* in AD 50 that granted *Latin Rights* to its citizens. In a revolt against Roman rule, the town was destroyed by Boudicca, Queen of the Iceni tribe, in c.60 AD. Vespasian rebuilt the town fifteen years later. Devastated by a fire during the rule of Hadrian's successor, Antonius Pius, in about 155 AD, the town was rebuilt again before the end of the 2nd century. After another fire in c.250, the primarily timber town was rebuilt yet again, this time in stone.

During Albanus' time, Verulamium was a wealthy market center, with comfortable houses, fine mosaics, Italian marble, and a piped water supply. It was well fortified; surrounded by a 20-foot deep ditch, a flint and brick wall backed by a 16-foot high earthen bank and entered by four twin-arched gates. The town was about 125 acres in size, having a forum, basilica, and theater. The theater, built upon the Greek model, was unique in that it had a stage rather than an amphitheater. The theater is on the grounds of and run by the Gorhambury estate owned by the Bacon family. Today, Verulamium is located about a mile from what grew-up to become the town of St. Albans.

Without delving into Albanus' background and connection with freemasonry, we're going to take another tact and look at his martyrdom. One story has it that a few days after Albanus was beheaded or stabbed outside the city walls of Verulamium, his Christian friend, Amphibalus, was found four miles northwest at Redbourne, where, with some companions, he was stoned to death. Another story suggests that Amphibalus was a citizen of Caerleon and that, after Albanus martyrdom, he returned there where he converted many others to Christianity, including saints Julius and Aaron. Subsequent to Albanus, Julius and Aaron were martyred in Caerleon. Thus we have an Arthurian connection and martyr connection for Dee and Bacon. In another little twist, the Regius Poem (c. 1390) refers to "the four crowned martyrs", aka Four Holy Crowned Ones (*Sancti Quatour Coronati* in Latin). The few Masons who have actually read the Regius Poem and are familiar with these martyrs, generally assume that it refers to St. Claudius, St. Castorius, St. Nicostratus, and St. Symphorian who were martyred Christian stonemasons at Sirmium (Mitrovica, Yugoslavia). However, in light of St. Alban's martyrdom associations, it appears that the four crowned martyrs referred to are St. Alban, St. Amphibalus, St. Julius, and St. Aaron who were the first Christian martyrs in England.

The Romans withdrew from Verulamium in about 410AD. Subsequently the town was conquered by the Saxons and the Norse, and Uther Pendragon, father of legendary King Arthur, is rumored to have fought numerous battles in the vicinity. In about 494 the Angles captured and burned the town, reducing it to an eyesore of crumbling ruins. King Offa of Mercia, who searched for and found the bones of St. Alban, built the Benedictine monastery of St. Alban's in 793 with stone from Verulamium's rubble used as a quarry.

Sir Nicholas Bacon, foster father of Sir Francis Bacon, built a large Elizabethan mansion called Old Gorhambury House at what had once been Verulamium in the 1560s. It was at this house that Queen Elizabeth I met Sir Francis on occasion. When Sir Nicholas died in 1579, Sir Francis, at

age 18, inherited the estate but, as he hadn't attained his majority, was assigned by Elizabeth as a ward of William Cecil, 1<sup>st</sup> Baron Burghley, KG. Subsequently, in about 1617, Sir Francis built a home of his own about a mile distant from Gorhambury. He called Verulam House because of his interest in the Roman city of Verulamium which had once bordered on the same land. In 1618 Sir Francis was created Baron Verulam by King James VI/I and as Viscount St. Albans in 1621. When Sir Francis died in 1626 a memorial was erected to him at St. Michael's Church in St. Albans by his distant cousin and personal secretary, Sir Thomas Meutys, who inherited the Bacon estates.

Point being, Bacon grew-up at Gorhambury and was familiar with Verulamium's history and Arthurian connection via Uther Pendragon. At age 18 Bacon's foster father, Nicholas, dies and he's assigned by the Queen as a ward of William Cecil who was a Knight of the Order of the Garter. The Order of the Garter is predicated on Arthurian legend and young Bacon received direct exposure to it. King Arthur was seen as the ideal king who would return and right all the wrongs imposed on the people. His knights of the round table would see to it! They were the most chivalrous and valiant knights in all the land. They served the Grail. They served God! They could heal the land of its disharmony and sufferings, and restore peace and well-being in Camelot. In T.H. White's *The Once and Future King*, Arthur, known as "the Wart", is a secret prince and heir to the throne, assigned as a king's ward who has Merlin the magician as a teacher. Bacon too was a queen's ward and a secret Prince of Wales, heir to the throne.

It was about this time that Bacon first met Dee, his magician teacher who descended from Merlin, that he learned who his biological parents were and that his mother, who symbolized the "Virgin Queen" on Earth reflecting Cassiopeia the "Virgin Queen of Heaven", and for political reasons, couldn't publicly acknowledge him as her son and rightful heir to the throne of England. Regardless, in the minds of Bacon and Dee, Bacon was King Arthur, or at least Perceval. He became a knight errant who had to prove his virtues to God and Queen/King. As such, with Dee as Merlin, Bacon clandestinely championed freedom of religion in the midst of religious turmoil and reformation, science, the arts, speech, and expression.

Bacon created his own Knights of the Round Table, the bravest most erudite explorers, adventurers, scientists, philosophers, writers, poets, and actors in the land. Theirs's would be an egalitarian society of friends and brothers. It was a fraternity of invisible free-thinkers, who would change the world with their minds. They would transmute society from base animalism to one of a collective, universal mind, of unity, peace, and harmony through brotherly love. Camelot would rise again and the Fisher King would be healed! As Edward Bulwer-Lytton would later write: "*The pen is mightier than the sword*". With Bacon lighting the way as Apollo the sun god, this band of brothers would sail the northern ocean to Avalon, the land of apples, shake their spears, their pens, and create a utopia in Arcadia, paradise in the New World. It is here that they would use their collective minds to build a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. In Arcadia they would create the Philosopher's Stone! Interestingly, Bacon actually wrote about it in *New Atlantis*. As with King Arthur's knights of the round table, members of Bacon's round table had their disagreements, came and went. He captured this in Act 2 Scene 7 of *As You Like It*, when Jaques says: "*All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players. They have their exits and their entrances, and one man in his time plays many parts...*"

Dee tilled the ground and planted the seeds of freemasonry, fertilizing them with his mind until they germinated. Bacon continued to cultivate and nurture freemasonry's seedlings, further

developing its structure, contributing to its degree rituals and lectures, and by blending Arthurian, St. George, and Templar legends, the history of Verulamium, and stories of King Solomon that inspired his creation of the Hiram legend. He looked to ancient societies and philosophers for knowledge and ideas that worked, weeding out those that didn't. In the care of Dee and Bacon the twin saplings of freemasonry became established and deeply rooted in the strength of myths and dreams of the past. When Dee and Bacon died, the young trees of freemasonry were cultivated by other like-minded gardeners, and in their care grew strong. By the early 18<sup>th</sup> century these trees blossomed with the emergence of Lodges in Britain and the New World.

In 1716 four Masonic Lodges named after the taverns they met at: the Crown, the Apple-Tree, Covent Garden, and the Rummer and Grapes (a speculative lodge), met at the Apple-Tree Tavern in Charles Street and constituted themselves a Grand Lodge pro Tempore. That the Apple-Tree Tavern was chosen as their meeting place to do this wasn't happenstance. The Apple Tree symbolized Avalon, the re-emergence of Camelot, and homage to Merlin and John Dee. Furthermore, it was the centennial of Shakespeare's death. On June 24<sup>th</sup>, 1717, St. John the Baptist's feast day, midsummers day when the Sun, Apollo, at meridian is the beauty and glory of the day, the day the Templars entered the sealed chamber beneath Solomon's Temple in Jerusalem, members of the four lodges met again to celebrate their first annual assembly, this time at the Goose and Gridiron Ale-house in St. Paul's Churchyard. The day and place of this meeting was a symbolic reference to Bacon, both as Shakespeare and as the founding father of modern masonry. That they met on midsummers day alludes to Shakespeare's comedy "A Midsummer Night's Dream" where characters have an opportunity to thrive in the wilderness and discover their true nature when the city or court environment becomes disorganized and corrupt, alluding Bacon's *New Atlantis*, and perhaps giving a nod to both the state of Rhode Island and the recent establishment of Philadelphia as "the City of Brotherly Love" where brothers came ashore at the Blue Anchor Tavern. This is reinforced with the choice of the Goose and Gridiron as a meeting place. The name was a corruption, or parody, on the arms of the "Swan and Lyre," a musical society which also met at the ale-house that was part of the Worshipful company of Musicians chartered in 1500, and the only Livery Company in London dedicated to the Performing Arts. The swan and the lyre refer, of course, to the Greek god Apollo and, as the titular head of the Honorable Knights of the Helmet, Bacon who was referred to as Apollo. As a further evidence, Anderson's Constitutions of Freemasonry were ordered published by the Grand Master in 1723, seven years after the Grand Lodge was founded and 100 years after the publication of Shakespeare's First Folio.

Fifty years later, on December 16<sup>th</sup>, 1773, members of a Masonic Lodge, who met at the Green Dragon Tavern, led a revolt against the British Crown known as the Boston Tea Party. It was the opening bid for independence and establishment of a New Republic in Arcadia, in Camelot. This act was reenforced in Philadelphia, the "City of Brotherly Love", in July 1776 with freemasons again leading the way. Nine of the fifty-six signers of the Declaration of Independence were known Masons. The preamble of the Declaration of Independence clearly espouses ideals advocated by Dee and Bacon:

*"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed. That whenever any Form of*

*Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shown that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security.*

After the War for Independence, the Constitution of the United States was signed in the City of Brotherly Love. Led again by the Brethren, about thirteen of the thirty-three signers of the Constitution were Masons. Its preamble reads:

*"We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America."*

The Constitution includes as its first ten amendments a Bill of Rights that protects the rights of the people from the government.

1. Freedom of religion, speech, press, assembly, and petition
2. Right to keep and bear arms in order to maintain a well regulated militia
3. No quartering of soldiers
4. Freedom from unreasonable searches and seizures
5. Right to due process of law, freedom from self-incrimination, double jeopardy
6. Rights of accused persons, e.g. right to a speedy and public trial
7. Right of a trial by a jury in civil cases
8. Freedom from excessive bail, cruel and unusual punishments
9. Other rights of the people
10. Powers reserved to the States

Philadelphia, the "City of Brotherly Love" served as the temporary capital of the United States from 1790 until 1800 while Washington, the District of Columbia, was being built. The goddess Columbia, based on the Roman goddess Libertas, personifies the spirit of the new republic, liberty, and manifest destiny, stands high atop the Capital dome, looking to the east. Through their tireless efforts and self-sacrifice, Dee's and Bacon's vision, their mutual dream of creating the Philosopher's Stone and using it to revive Camelot, heal the wounded Fisher King, the land, and people, had become a reality. In London they established a Tree of Knowledge. In the United States they established a Tree of Life and Liberty. We all owe them a debt of gratitude beyond measure! However, as God warned Eve not to eat the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge, founding father Thomas Jefferson admonishes us that "*the tree of liberty must be refreshed from time to time with the blood of patriots and tyrants.*"