

# THE CABLETOW

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE GRAND LODGE OF FREE & ACCEPTED MASONS OF THE PHILIPPINES | VOL. 89, NO. 4 NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2012



# GLP TURNS 100





**OFFICE OF THE GRAND MASTER  
MOST WORSHIPFUL GRAND LODGE OF FREE &  
ACCEPTED MASONS OF THE PHILIPPINES**

1440 San Marcelino St., Ermita, Manila



# Centennial Message to All Filipino Masons

My warmest and most affectionate greetings to all Filipino Masons whithersoever dispersed!

Time has now come when we all join together in this truly momentous occasion to honor our beloved institution, the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Free & Accepted Masons of the Philippines, in its Centennial Anniversary. It is an occasion where we commemorate, not only its founding by our American Brethren in 1912 but moreover, the magnanimous spirit of the Filipino Masons whose immense fraternal generosity has allowed the roots of Brotherly Love to firmly take root and grow.

While we look a hundred years, nay even two hundred years back to our modest and challenging beginnings, yet we must also look up and give thanks to the Divine Providence who has steered the Fraternity through pleasant and troubled times, giving Philippine Freemasonry its current shape and form.

No better occasion presents than today to renew our tie: our cabletow

that runs through all Brethren past and present. No better opportunity presents than today to reaffirm our commitment to carry on with the labors which the early Craftsmen have bravely and steadfastly taken up; to conserve and enrich this all-Filipino institution wisely and always, with brotherly affection.

So, with great pride and honor, I congratulate and enjoy you all again, My Brethren, to celebrate this momentous occasion, the Centenary of our Grand Lodge. A hundred years of ideas and nobility. A hundred years of brotherhood founded on the timeless principles of Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth.

Fraternally yours,

MW SANTIAGO T. GABIONZA, JR.  
Centennial Grand Master of Philippine Masons



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### **About the Cover**

The cover features memorable shots from the Special Communications commemorating the Centennial Anniversary of the Grand Lodge of Free & Accepted Masons of the Philippines on December 19, 2012. The top picture shows Centennial Grand Master MW Santiago T. Gabionza, Jr. presiding over the Rededication Ceremonies of the Grand Lodge in the morning. Photo below shows MW Gabionza, the Past Grand Masters and Special Guest, Paquito Ochoa, Jr., Malacanan Executive Secretary, toasting the brethren at the Fiesta Pavilion in Manila Hotel after dinner.

## *The Cabletow*

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## *From the Grand East*

By MW Santiago T. Gabionza, Jr.  
Centennial Grand Master



# A Centennial of Magnanimous Spirit

***In the month of the Grand Lodge Centennial, MW Gabionza stresses  
the magnanimous spirit underlying the history of the GLP—  
something every Filipino Mason must be proud of.***

The Centenary has now come upon us. We have made it through. And we now come of age.

It greatly pleases us to know that we have arrived this far. Perhaps, we are just too glad that we have not been there to face and wrestled with what our predecessors have gone through. On December 19, 1912, three American lodges—Manila Lodge No. 342, Cavite Lodge No. 350 and Corregidor Lodge No. 386—were okayed and acknowledged by the Grand Lodge of California to become the “Grand Lodge of the Philippine Islands” (or GLPI). That, actually, was a brutal swipe at the 20 or so Filipino-Hispanico lodges grouped together under the Gran Consejo Regional (Regional Grand Lodge) paying obedience to the *Gran Oriente de España*. And to the other lodges of other grand jurisdictions which had settled down in the Philippine valley, too.

Were we to place ourselves in their shoes, what would we do? Would we snap back with a reflexive vengeance or punitive wrath? Or would we bear it all

with the patience of Job? The greatness of our Filipino predecessors was to tackle the situation with a big heart and a sharp mind without straying from the Masonic course—especially, when they were pitted against fellow Masons. For five years, the Gran Consejo, with then Batangas House Representative MW Teodoro Kalaw as Grand Master, had petitioned Madrid for a breakaway and recognition as a Grand Lodge in its own right. Not until Miguel Morayta, Past Grand Master and the kind-hearted patron of Filipino Freemasons, died on January 24, 1917. Only then did Kalaw sat down with the GLPI with then Commissioner Manuel Luis Quezon and businessman Tomas Earnshaw negotiating. An agreement for a union was sealed.

But on February 13, 1917, the day before the Annual Communication, the GLPI committee—composed of Past Grand Masters Eugene Stafford and Newton Comfort and incoming Grand Master William Taylor—all changed their minds. They demanded an affiliation—that was, outsiders (not equals) coming in. The Three Lights of the Gran Consejo lodges

had to take an oath before the Altar. Everybody had to fill up an affiliation form.

The Filipinos surrendered. But Quezon, the master politician, had all the Lights gathered and sworn at Hotel Francia at Escolta, and all affiliation forms filled up, all through the night. The following day, the Americans stepped into a route. Compliant, the former Gran Consejo Masons were admitted to the GLPI. They were already privileged to vote. But the problem was, there were 27 Filipino lodges; the GLPI, only 10. The Americans were doomed. The days of the American Grand Masters were over too soon. The Filipinos comprised a huge and powerful voting bloc.

The Americans were expecting a massacre at the balloting. But Incoming Grand Master William Taylor was elected unanimously. It meant that all the Filipinos went for him. Greatly surprised, he rushed to Quezon asking how it all happened. Explaining that the voting turnout was the will and pleasure of the Brethren, Quezon nailed Taylor to a deal that lasted for 62 years. "There shall be a rotation in the Office of Grand Master. You are Grand Master this year, I am to be the next, and thereafter each American holder of the office will be followed by a Filipino Grand Master," he said.

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**"A people who had lost so much—the war, their nation—could give so much fraternal generosity."**

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That is the beauty of our GLP Centenary. A lodge never rises in a day. That's why we count the days and mark the time. Where some things come bold or gaudy, yet the elements, which are nature's ubiquitous agents, apply the strokes and polishes that give objects their shape while

time administers the ageing which supplies next the beauty and grace.

The founding of the GLP in 1912 comes rough and heavy at the start; so much so that it rings heavily with undertones of racial supremacy. Some nationalist Brethren frowned at the event. But the greatness of our Filipino predecessors was to quickly evade the constriction of reason and passion. Just as the reverse, they went for the bigness of the heart, and the sharpness of the mind which perhaps, even for reasons unknown to them, had stoked the sparks of magnanimity deep in themselves.

Hence, regardless how vanquished in war they were, yet it had come oddly but very inspiringly that a people who had lost so much—the war, their nation—could give so much fraternal generosity. A fraternal generosity that earned the respect of people who looked down upon them. A magnanimity that proved that it wasn't by might or wealth; rather by the radiance of Masonic spirit from within which had dispelled the gloom and make beauty shine out.

Be proud, Brethren, of the magnanimous Masonic spirit which has not only saved, but also sustained the Grand Lodge of the Philippines over this past one hundred years.

SANTIAGO T. GABIONZA, JR.  
Centennial Grand Master



## *Pro Bono Fraternitatis*

By MW Danilo Angeles, PGM  
Centennial Grand Secretary



# A “Day” in the Life of a Lodge

*The Grand Sec deals here with vacancies in and lapses by the East which every lodge must know—before it’s too late.*

The Grand Lodge of Free & Accepted Masons, this body governing 18,000 Filipino Freemasons, is now 100 years old. It has come of age.

But what’s in an age, after all? Obviously, the Grand Lodge has now become a totally Filipino institution, a clear departure from the ways of its American founders in 1912. It’s not perfect. It has its flaws. Like any man-made institution, it has its high and low moments. But by all accounts—and trust me on this—it cares for the Filipino Brethren despite sporadic hiccups. I should know. This is your Grand Secretary speaking.

So, bring out the champagne and throw a couple of toasts here and there. A gigolo acquaintance once said that age has its payback. The “age of seniority,” he said, is the time when a man must keep two girls at his bedside. That’s fun, I said. But still, I wondered why.

He answered, “In case I fall asleep,

they will have someone to talk to.” Now, back to business.

### Vacancy in the East

In my previous column, I wrote that I would deal next with the businesses that often come across the Grand Secretary’s table. Since the month of December is given to Lodge Elections, I will pick out cases that present relevance, as much as valuable lessons, to the newly-elected officers; particularly, the Masters of the Lodge.

One communication deals with the vacancy of the Master’s station in a certain lodge. Lodge X has installed WB Doroteo (not his real name) in February. But over the next 6 months, WB Doroteo has never sat in the East, or even showed up in the lodge, to assume his duties and powers. All this time, it is the Senior Warden who has been convening, presiding and running the lodge.

**Question:** *must Lodge X call for a special election to unseat WB Doroteo and replace him with the working Senior Warden?*

**Answer:** *No.*

It is impractical and irrelevant to hold a special election anymore. From a Master's installation say, in February, nine (9) months are spread out before him to govern his lodge before the mandated elections come again in December.

Now, Lodge X has communicated the issue to the Grand Master ONLY in the sixth month. Should an election be held in the seventh month, then only 3 or 2 months remain for the newly-installed Master to do his job—that is, before December comes. That gives him only 1/3 of the 9-month period. Where he will serve only a fraction—not even half of—the regular term, then installing a new Master runs counter to the economy of function and effectiveness. Even if he can initiate a program, it is doubtful that he can finish it with intended or meaningful result. It will be unfair for the Worshipful Brother to install him in the East but fail to live up to the obligations he has sworn to fulfill in his Installation with so short a time. So, it is probable that the cure, which is expected of the special election, may just result in the contrary; even make a mockery of the Master's highly-respected office.

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**“So, a true and good Master will be slow and deliberative. Actually, he will hate convening the special elective body.”**

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With this situation obtaining, the balance of 3 months—being close to December—will be served out by the Senior Warden in his capacity as acting Master of the Lodge.

*Question: when should have Lodge X called for a special election?*

*Answer: a duly-installed Master who has not*

*presided over his lodge in three (3) consecutive months (or stated meetings) is liable for replacement. So, Lodge X should have informed the Grand Lodge right on the third month—that is, earlier.*

A formal communication to the Grand Master, backed by a Lodge Resolution, will present a credible complaint. A copy should be furnished (“cc”) to the District Deputy Grand Master and, of course, the Grand Secretary.

Once approved, the Grand Master will issue a Dispensation for the conduct of special election. Here, 1/3 of the term has already been squandered. The object of the law (when invoked) is to prevent further waste, to save and make the most out of the remaining balance of 6 months, and to put the lodge back on track.

### **Election of Trial Commissioners**

This is one of the common but sad-denying issues arriving at the Grand Secretary's table over the past seven years. A Mason or so wants to put another Mason up for trial. But for one reason or another, the procedure is infringed.

The Masonic trial procedure takes after the British jury system. Hence, the election of “Trial Commissioners,” who function as the jurors, is necessary. Now, here comes WB Pampilo (not his real name) who is presiding over a regular stated meeting of his lodge. Near the end, he announced the holding of an election for Trial Commissioners and caused the same to be accomplished.

**Question:** *is WB Pampilo correct to order the election of Trial Commissioners amid a stated meeting and cause the same to be accomplished?*

**Answer:** *No.*

Please refer to our Masonic Law Book, specifically in Ordinances, Article XVIII (Charges, Trials and Procedures), F. (Relative to Masons Individually), Sec. 25., b.—

*“b. The Master shall, in other cases, call a special meeting of his Lodge, as soon as practicable, and shall cause the Secretary to issue written notifications thereof ...”*

A written notice must be sent out to lodge members to come to the special meeting, specifically for the election of five (5) Trial Commissioners. As you read on, you will find out that first, priority is given to members who live or work in proximity to the lodge hall. A juror’s job requires regular attendance. Second, there is a confidentiality of information. This prevents defamation of any of the parties in dispute. Or any unwanted influence to come in and corrupt the trial. And third, everything is to be set in black-and-white for documentation, transparency and accountability.

Clearly, the election of Trial Commissioners must be held on a day apart from the monthly stated meeting and is therefore, a special meeting. Why? Because the election has a specific and delicate purpose of its own, with a distinct set of transactions, that comes with a distinct set of procedures requiring strict adherence.

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**“Actually, Freemasonry will be far better off without these anomalies and controversies. We are a fraternity, in the first place—a fraternity founded on Brotherly Love.”**

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In all, the election of Trial Commissioners is an intrinsic part of the Masonic due process of law. It is a ju-

risprudential measure to establish an impartial Masonic court; hence, affording a fair trial. Its secrecy not only prevents defamation but also, a publicity trial that can pressure, divert or even frustrate this body of non-professional jurors. Like the courts of the land, it works on the assumption that the accused is presumed innocent until proven guilty. For this, the Trial Commissioners must not only possess an objective disposition and a sharp mind. Moreover, they must also have heart to enforce and protect a Mason’s rights, whether he is the plaintiff or the defendant.

That WB Pampilo has infringed on this basic but important procedure tells us two things. He is not reading his Masonic Law Book (which he has sworn to in his Installation). Or he is prejudiced against the defendant (by demolishing the accused before the Lodge and the whole fraternity even before the trial begins). Both ways, it makes everybody wonder how he has become a Worshipful Master. It makes him less of a Master and worse, even a lesser Mason.

### **Day and Night**

A similar issue dropped at the Grand Secretary’s table. But it is more complicated than the first.

WB Torribio (not his real name) convened Lodge Y at its regular stated meeting. At the end, he closed it. After a break, he called the lodge back to the hall, announced the holding of the election for Trial Commissioners, and caused the same to be accomplished. Presumably, it was done just to comply with the rule of electing Trial Commissioners on Special Meeting.

**Question:** *is WB Torribio correct to hold the election of Trial Commissioners right*

*after and outside of the stated meeting when NOTHING in the Masonic Law Book explicitly prevents him so?*

**Answer: NO.**

Masonic jurisprudence follows the practice of justice of the land. But it remains Masonically distinct in larger part. It speaks in the symbols of our doctrines and rituals. It works after our ancient customs and time-honored practices.

Here, WB Torribio cut corners but ended up in some dark and blind alley. Take notice that the lodge has already been closed when he summoned the Brethren back to the hall. That's wrong. No business, whether regular or special, can be conducted anymore after the lodge's closure.

Article number 11 of "*The Old York Constitution of 926*," a compendium of ancient Masonic laws, reads—

*"And Masons shall not be obliged to work after the sun has set in the West."*

This is among the Masonic laws that have been practiced since "time immemorial." Once the sbst fr || anc msts w, acmpd b || dgs @ §s, have been passed down to the Senior Warden and locked away for the time being, all lodge labors virtually ceased. It all remains for the Senior Warden to confirm its safekeeping, to inform the Master of "the end of the day," and to pay the workers their wages.

In short, "*Sarado na ang tindahan*." The shop is closed.

So, whenever a lodge opens, it sets the craft at work and thus, comprises a "day" of labor; its termination, a "night." When the Master schedules another day of work, the Junior Warden—whose job is "to observe the time"—sends out the text messages t cl || crf fm lb t rf, @ fm rf t lb agn. So the cycle goes.

Hence, the election of Trial Commissioners can never be held during or right after a stated meeting. It must take place on another day with summonses sent out. Seemingly, the wisdom of the law wants the Brethren to "sleep on it" first and ponder the next "day." Since the Brethren will be called for a vote, then they must have time to exchange info, compare notes, deliberate and arrive at a well-founded decision. A Brother's name is at stake. So, a true and good Master will be slow and deliberative. Actually, he will hate convening the special elective body. On the contrary, unmasonic Masters rush where the sane are cautious.

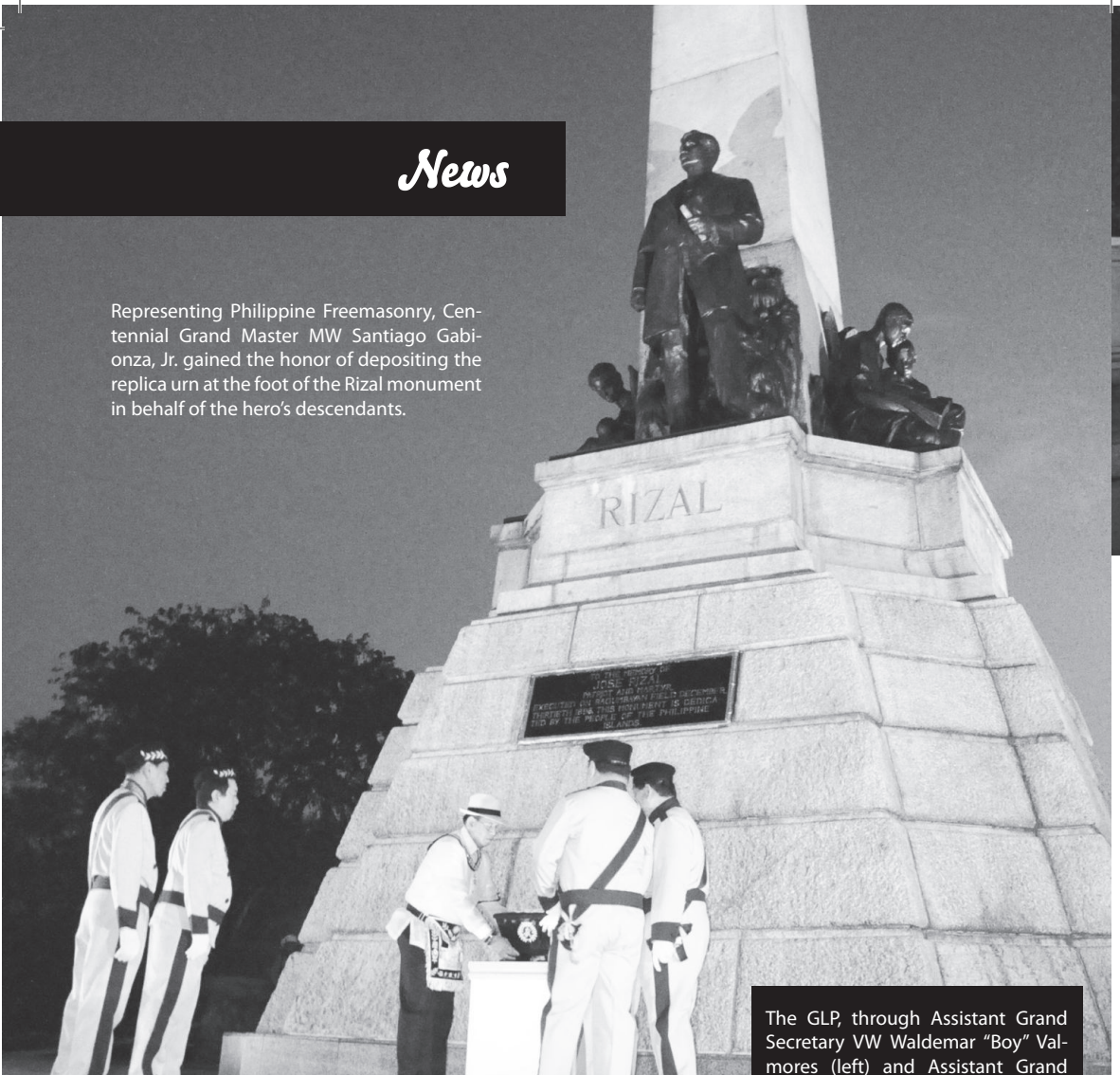
In most cases, Masters, who are goaded by unmasonic causes, tricked the lodge by disguising the election as one of the meeting's agenda. Sometimes, they bullied the lodge by banging the gavel fast once opposition rises. This supplants the mind of the Brethren, robs them of their decision—and makes the lodge an unwitting accomplice to injustice. In the end, these Masters often turn out to be advocates of the plaintiff, or stooges of lodge factions which have interests at stake.

An unmasonic Master like this can really pull a fast one. But regardless how they congratulate themselves in the aftermath, yet the whole thing looks inane. It is no different from a tin-pot dictator who launches a coup against his own *etat* (state). And dictators, of course, are deposed.

Masonic law frowns wryly at this violation. Actually, Freemasonry will be far better off without these anomalies and controversies. We are a fraternity, in the first place—a fraternity founded on Brotherly Love. But Freemasonry recognizes the fallibility of men so that it has worked in certain safety valves to let off the occasional steam. Unmasonic Masters jam or break these safety systems. Where a squabble is workable, they blew it into World War III proportions—passing the trouble of their machination to the Grand Lodge and the injury to the Fraternity's good name. ❖

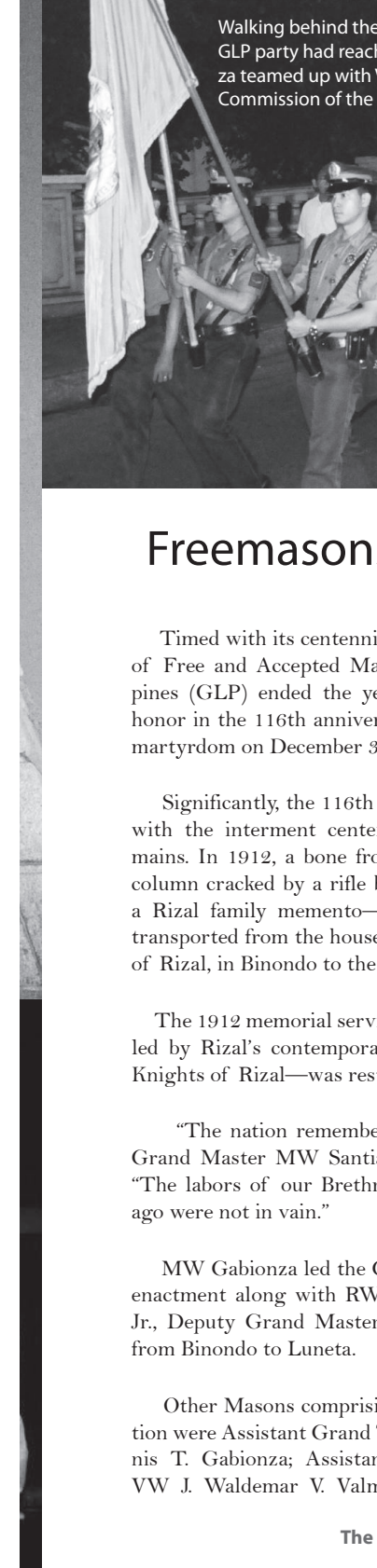
# News

Representing Philippine Freemasonry, Centennial Grand Master MW Santiago Gabionza, Jr. gained the honor of depositing the replica urn at the foot of the Rizal monument in behalf of the hero's descendants.



The GLP, through Assistant Grand Secretary VW Waldemar "Boy" Valmores (left) and Assistant Grand Treasurer VW Dennis Gabionza (right), was among the early birds to lay a wreath at the Rizal monument.





Walking behind the Philippine and GLP colors carried by PNP personnel, the GLP party had reached the southern foot of Jones Bridge when MW Gabionza teamed up with VW Vic Badoy, executive director of the National Historical Commission of the Philippines (NHCP), for the interment ceremony.

## Freemasons figured in the 116th Rizal Day

Timed with its centennial, the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of the Philippines (GLP) ended the year with a place of honor in the 116th anniversary of Jose Rizal's martyrdom on December 30, 2012.

Significantly, the 116th Rizal Day coincided with the interment centenary of Rizal's remains. In 1912, a bone from the hero's spinal column cracked by a rifle bullet—long kept as a Rizal family memento—was ceremoniously transported from the house of Narcisa, a sister of Rizal, in Binondo to the Luneta Park.

The 1912 memorial service—which had been led by Rizal's contemporary Masons and the Knights of Rizal—was restaged in December.

"The nation remembers," said Centennial Grand Master MW Santiago T. Gabionza Jr. "The labors of our Brethren a hundred years ago were not in vain."

MW Gabionza led the GLP party in the reenactment along with RW Juanito G. Espino, Jr., Deputy Grand Master in a 4 a.m. march from Binondo to Luneta.

Other Masons comprising the GLP delegation were Assistant Grand Treasurer VW Dennis T. Gabionza; Assistant Grand Secretary VW J. Waldemar V. Valmores; Potentate III.

Avelino I. Razon, Jr., PGM, Mabuhay Shriners; Eminent Grand Commander SK Romeo S. Musngi and Grand High Priest M. E. Rafael J. Roxas, both of the Philippine Grand York Rite.

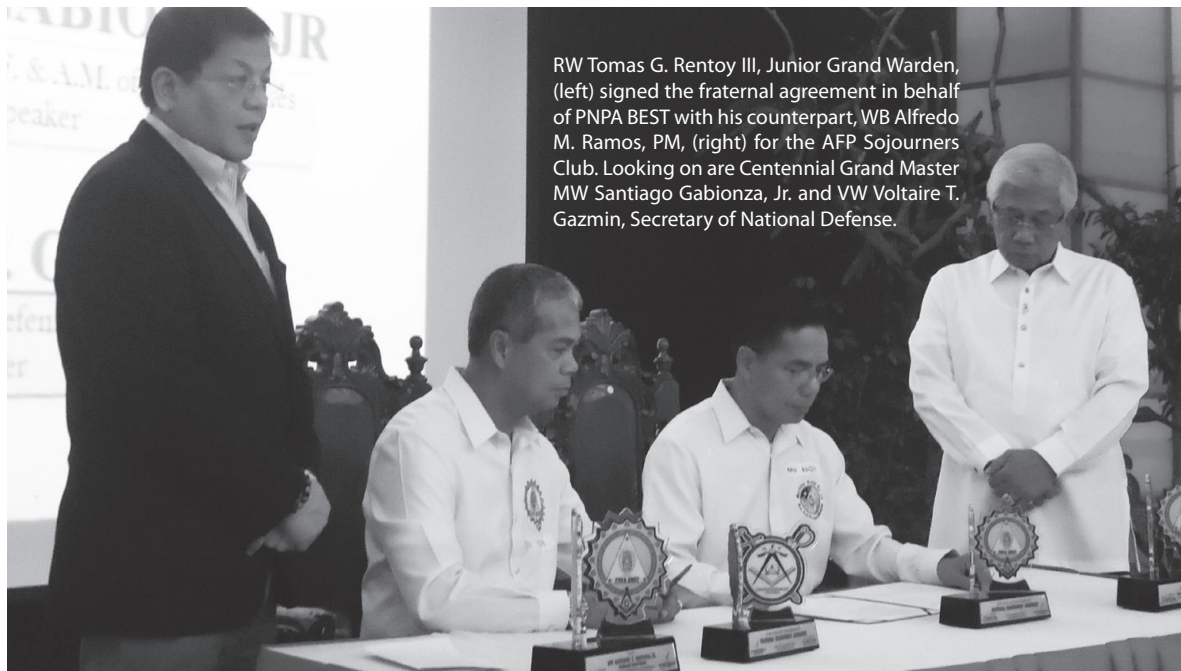
From Binondo, the Order of the Knights of Rizal in their caballeros ceremonial garb, trailed a horseless caisson pulled by a 4X4 military truck bearing a 1912 replica urn.

MW Gabionza met them at the Luneta, alongside Reghis Romero II, Supreme Commander of the Knights of Rizal, and VW Vic Badoy, executive director of the National Historical Commission of the Philippines (NHCP). Trailing the urn behind were Gemma Cruz-Araneta and Victor Reyes who represented the Rizal descendants.

MW Gabionza walked next with the Knights of Rizal to the monument and deposited the urn himself at the base.

"It was like a gift from Bro. Rizal from the grave," said MW Gabionza smiling. "No event so momentous had capped our GLP Centennial Anniversary on December 19 than the centenary of his remains' interment on the 30th. For whatever significance this uncanny coincidence presents us, it looks like Bro. Rizal never wanted his ideas and spirit to be left out of our fellowships and labors. For all its worth, thank you very much, our Illustrious Brother."

# AFP & PNP Masonic clubs inked fraternal agreement



RW Tomas G. Rentoy III, Junior Grand Warden, (left) signed the fraternal agreement in behalf of PNPA BEST with his counterpart, WB Alfredo M. Ramos, PM, (right) for the AFP Sojourners Club. Looking on are Centennial Grand Master MW Santiago Gabionza, Jr. and VW Voltaire T. Gazmin, Secretary of National Defense.

Masons in uniforms belonging to two major service clubs signed a “fraternal relationship” agreement at Camp Aguinaldo in Quezon City on November 23.

It was the first time the AFP (Armed Forces of the Philippines) Sojourners’ Club and the PNPA (Philippine National Police Academy) Brotherhood of Excellent Sojourners and Travelers (BEST) had teamed up together. The former is made up of Masons from the different services of the military; the latter, from the police service.

Presidents of each service club signed a “Memorandum of Understanding” (MOU). WB Alfredo M. Ramos, PM, headed the AFP Sojourners Club just as RW Tomas G. Rentoy III, Junior Grand Warden, represented the PNPA BEST.

The MOU bound them, first, to come together and cooperate in future projects; second, to share information and materials; third, to iron out ways to effectively carry out charity and education projects; and fourth, to hold periodic joint fellowships.

VW Voltaire T. Gazmin, Secretary of National Defense, came to deliver the Inspirational Message and stood as witness to the signing.

Also, Centennial Grand Master MW Santiago Gabionza, Jr. witnessed the signing and delivered the closing message.

## **BEST**

The current set of PNPA BEST officers are the following: Bro. Lakan Tomas G. Rentoy III, president; Bro. Lakan Jose A.

Logo of AFP Sojourners' Club(left) and PNPA BEST (right).



Roncesvalles, vice-president; Bro. Lakan Ramon C. Clavecillas, vice-president; Bro. Lakan Mario N. Rariza, Jr., treasurer; Bro. Lakan Edgar B. Paatan, secretary; Bro. Lakan Florendo C. Quibuyen, auditor; Bro. Lakan Fidel G. Posadas, chaplain; Bro. Lakan Nicanor S. Salvador, historian; Bro. Lakan Jose A. I. Magbanua, secretariat.

Twenty-two members of the PNPA Magiting Class (1983) begun the club in 2008. They agreed to round up the Masons among the PNPA alumni and draw them into establishing a Square and Compass Club.

The effort didn't take off until a directory of Masons, even Petitioners for Masonic Degrees, in the PNP service had been completed. Organizers at this time were Tom Rentoy, Nick Salvador, Egay Paatan and Ante Leano. VW Joby Magbanua, honorary member of PNPA Magiting Class of 1983, ran the secretariat.

The directory wasn't completed until 2009 when the group had put up a booth at the PNPA Alumni Homecoming. Soon, a total of 243 members and 20 honorary members were listed. PNPA BEST hats

were handed out as mementos.

The PNPA BEST was finally up and running in 2010, marked by a Fellowship Dinner at the Tagaytay Country Hostel. The club's directory numbered to 365 regular Masons and 35 honorary members.

A set of officers was also elected with RW Rentoy as the first president. RW Rentoy, in turn, appointed 17 regional presidents comprising the 17 BEST regional offices, including class representatives.

On December 13, 2010, then Grand Master Avelino Razon, Jr. inducted the first set of officers.

Presently, PNPA BEST is into holding regularly the PNPA Alumni Homecoming Fellowship Dinner, Christmas Party, and Golf Tournament between the PNPA classes.

### Sojourners' Club

Officers of the AFP Sojourners' Club are as follows: WB B/Gen. Alfredo M. Andres, AFP, president; Bro. B/Gen. Ramon C. Cabal, AFP, vice-president; Bro. Maj. Richie

Jay A. Bisco (FS), PA, secretary; Bro. Ltc. Ferdinand C. Compay (FS), PA, treasurer; WB MSg. Rely Salvador (SC), PA, auditor; Bro. Col. Dinoh A. Dolina (GSC), PA, business manager; and VW Ltc. Jeffrey M. Belagan (GSC), DS, PRO.

The group picked up where the former AFP Square and Compass Club had founded in 2000. In 2010, then AFP Chief of Staff, Gen. Ricardo David, Jr. summoned all the Masons in Camp Aguinaldo and instructed them to revive the GHQ (General Headquarters) Square and Compass Club. Hence, then M/Gen. Jose Tony Villarete sat down with Gen. Remigio M. De Vera, Col. Samuel L. Narbuada, Col. Alfredo M. Andres, Col. Ramon C. Cabal, Capt. Rufino Arias and Col. Dinoh A. Dolina. They voted to rename the former AFP Square and Compass Club the “AFP Sojourners’ Club” after the transitory nature of military postings to different assignments.

The club was registered at the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) on April 4, 2011. Bro. Gen. Villarete was elected as the first president.

The Soujourners’ Club actively extended help to fellow soldiers wounded in action. On September 21, 2012, it donated 7 wheelchairs to permanently disabled soldiers in Fort Bonifacio General Hospital.

Based in Camp Aguinaldo, the club has registered some 305 travellers so far who attended the monthly meetings—a quarter made up of the camp’s Mason officers, enlisted personnel and civilian employees.

## PMAAI installs 2013 officers in Manila

The Philippine Masonic Association of America Inc. (PMAAI) held its 28th

Installation of Officers on December 16, 2012 at the Heritage Hotel in Manila.

Bing Barro, of FMN Florida Chapter, was officially installed as President.

The PMAAI has nine chapters spread across the U.S., as follows: in Chicago, Illinois (AFFI); Great Lakes, Illinois (FTGL); Hampton Beads, Virginia (THRV); Los Angeles, California (Acacia Craftsmen Inc.); Memphis, Tennessee (PMATI); New Jersey (PMANJ); New York, New York (PMAAI-NY); Northern Florida (FMNF); and in Seattle, Washington (PASS).

Other newly-installed officers were : Manoloto Gatbonton, THRV Virginia Chapter, Executive Vice President; Jim Klinefelter, PASS Chapter Seattle WA, 2nd VP West; Vince Cabrera, AFFI Chicago Illinois Chapter, 2nd VP Central; Elias Voces, Jr., THRV Virginia Chapter, 2nd VP East; Tristan Satin, New York Chapter, Secretary; Rene Alfonso, New York Chapter, Treasurer; Eddie Limon, FMN Florida Chapter, Auditor; Ray Legazpi, (TBA), Chaplain; and Mel Barcena, (TBA), Marshall.

The 2013 set of officers were installed by RW Juanito G. Espino, Jr. Deputy Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Free & Accepted Masons of the Philippines. Master of Ceremonies was Ray Ibañez, PMAAI Past President.


Installing Marshall was MW Godofredo Santy Lascano, PGM Grand Lodge of Washington.

The PMAAI Appointed Officers for the year were: Val Basiga, Jr., Ambassador to the GLP; Richard “Dick” Talusan, Historian; Manny Eco, Executive Secretary; Ver Quijano, Finance; Ross Rosales, Constitution & By-laws; Greg Dy, Scholarship

Foundation; Ross Rosales and Manolo Gabonton, Webmaster & List Moderators; Mac “Jun” Ramos, National Convention Director & Rural Outreach; and G. Santy Lascano, Protocol Officer & Advisor.

Centennial Grand Master MW Santiago T. Gabionza delivered the inspirational speech. Recalling the merger of the 27 Gran Oriente lodges and the 10 Grand Lodge of the Philippine Islands (GLPI) lodges in 1917, he urged all to keep up with the magnanimity extended by the latter. Outnumbering the GLPI lodges, yet Filipino Masons generously shared power

and privileges with the Americans. Consequently, a deep brotherly relation had run between them, extending even to the attainment of Philippine independence in 1946.

“They passed on a fraternal generosity that had earned the profound respect of Masons all over,” said Gabionza. “It was a magnanimity that had stood as evidence that it wasn’t might and wealth that mattered; rather the radiance of Masonic spirit from within which had dispelled the gloom, and made the nobility of Filipino Masons shone out.” 



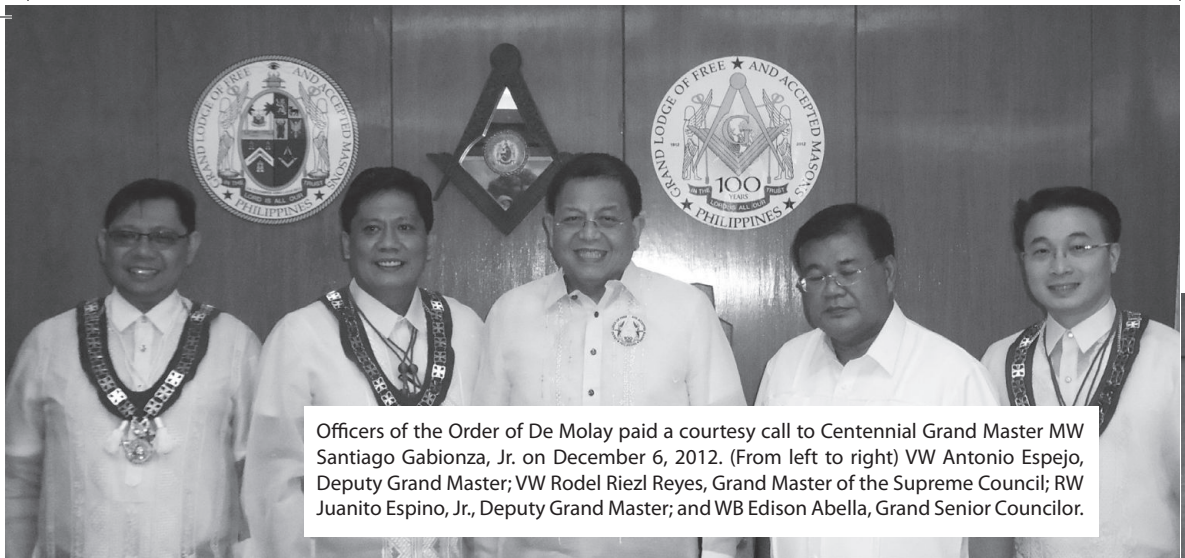
## Two UD Lodges instituted

***Central Luzon U.D. lodges were instituted at the GLP over the past months—San Miguel de Mayumo Lodge in Bulacan and Porac Lodge in Pampanga.***

(Right) November 22, 2012. The Lights of the newly-instituted Porac Lodge. (Front row from left) VW Rodolfo Ocampo, Worshipful Master; VW Eladio Dela Cruz, Senior Warden; and VW Lorenzo Detran, Jr., Junior Warden.

(Above) December 10, 2012. The officers of the newly-instituted San Miguel de Mayumo Lodge: (Front row from left) VW Felix Flor Cruz, Secretary; VW Pete de Rueda, Treasurer; Bro. Raymund Flor Cruz, Junior Warden; Bro. Dennis Vergara, Senior Warden; and VW Ramon Mañalac, Worshipful Master.





Officers of the Order of De Molay paid a courtesy call to Centennial Grand Master MW Santiago Gabionza, Jr. on December 6, 2012. (From left to right) VW Antonio Espejo, Deputy Grand Master; VW Rodel Riezl Reyes, Grand Master of the Supreme Council; RW Juanito Espino, Jr., Deputy Grand Master; and WB Edison Abella, Grand Senior Councilor.

## Bros in the news

### RW Purisima in as new PNP chief

RW Alan C. Purisima, Senior Grand Warden, was appointed Police Director General of the Philippine National Police (PNP) on December 18, 2012.

He replaced former PNP chief Nicenor Bartolome.

RW Purisima graduated from the Philippine Military Academy (PMA) Dimalupig Class of 1981. He also earned a Masters Degree in Public Administration from Manuel L. Quezon University in 1995.

### WI Ramos out as DND Usec

WI Benito T. Ramos, GLI of Masonic District RII-B (Isabela & Quirino provinces), quit his post as Undersecretary of the Department National Defense (DND) on January 11, 2012.

In his resignation letter to VW Voltaire Gazmin, DND Secretary, he expressed his desire to look after his ailing wife full-time.

During his watch, he made the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC), among his functions, a reliable agency. But still, he had traveled to Isabela regularly to fulfill his Grand Lodge Inspector duties.



RW Purisima



WI Ramos

# Kakarong Lodge 327 handed Del Pilar apron replica over to GLP



Kakarong Lodge Master, WB Roger Encarnacion, hands the exhibit plate of the Del Pilar apron replica over to MW Santiago Gabionza Jr.. Others in the photo from left: Tem Cortes, Marlon Mansilla, Rommel Enriquez, VW Gabriel Crisostomo, VW Lovie Gaboy, & VW Pete de Rueda. Photo By Bro. Tem Cortes / SJCL No.3 & KL 327.

Kakarong Lodge No. 327, of Sta. Maria town in Bulacan province, formally handed over to MW Santiago Gabionza Jr., Centennial Grand Master, a replica of the apron of Illus. Bro. Marcelo Del Pilar y Hilario on October 25, 2012.

The replica is a close remake of the original Del Pilar apron which used to adorn the lobby of the old Grand Lodge building before it had been gutted by fire in 1992.

Despite heavy rains, WM Roger Encarnacion led the Kakarong brethren to present to WM Gabionza the exhibit plates for signature. Next, the replica, encased in a wood-and-glass stand, was turned over.

VW Luvenario Gaboy, PDGL and a Kakarong Past Master, took charge of the replica's production. He went into its remake when he had come into contact with the late Bro. Eddy Coronel of Jose Rizal No. 22, also from Bulacan.

## History

Bro. Coronel recovered the original Del Pilar apron in 1983.

On December 3, 1920, the government had Del Pilar's remains shipped from Barcelona to Madrid. The Grand Lodge of the Philippine Islands then led the week-long rites. It was put on public display at Funeraria Nacional, then onto the Grand Opera House and finally the Ayuntamiento in Intramuros. Prominent Freemasons like Grand Master Teodoro Kalaw, Trinidad Pardo H. de Tavera and Rafael Palma took turns in delivering speeches and eulogies.

Grand Master Manuel Quezon had conducted a Masonic funeral rite over it before it was finally interred at the mausoleum for national heroes at the Cementerio del Norte in La Loma, Quezon City on December 12.



WM Gabionza views the replica under the glass as the Kakarong brethren look on.

### Transfer

A law had authorized the transfer of Del Pilar's remains from the North Cemetery to the hero's hometown in Cupang, Bulacan, Bulacan. In 1983, a local cultural group, the Samahang Kalinangan ng Bulakan, had Del Pilar's tomb cracked opened and pulled the urn out. Bro. Coronel was with the group.

The cemetery workers swept the dried acacia leaves strewn over the urn. Then, they picked up the dusty apron laid over the leaves and threw it at a trash heap. Amid cowans, Bro. Coronel discreetly asked, "*Pwede bang mahingi ko na lang 'yan para souvenir?*" (Can I have it for souvenir?)

The cemetery caretakers quickly agreed saying, "*Opo. Marami naman kaming nakukuhanang ganyang basahan dito sa sementeryo.*" (Yes, sir. We get many such kind of rag here in the cemetery.)

Bro. Coronel picked up the apron and carefully collected the acacia leaves in a plastic bag. He delivered these historic Masonic funerary items to then WM Pacifico Aniag of Malolos Lodge No. 46. In turn, then WM Aniag surrendered the objects to WM Reynato S. Puno who was occupying the Grand Orient at that time.

The replica is now on display at the ground floor of the GLP lobby. ❖

## Cover Story



# Goodwill marked the GLP Centennial

Help were given out freely and unexpectedly. Foreign Mason guests—many not in the list—came to Manila on their own just to wish well and witness the event.

Modest, yet the Centennial Anniversary celebrations of the Grand Lodge of Free & Accepted Masons of the Philippines (GLP) were marked with goodwill and good cheers on December 19, 2012.

A simple festivity actually had been lined up. But more than 1,000 Brethren from various corners of the Philippine grand jurisdiction came to attend this Special Communication.

*Production of THE CABLE-TOW Special Centennial Issue is in progress. Read and see it all in this commemorative issue.*

MW Reynato S. Puno, PGM, chairman of the Centennial Celebrations Committee, explained, "All this has been arranged after Most Worshipful Gabionza's theme. That is how it should be remembered for its contributions and legacy to Freemasonry and the country. This builds up expectations of a brighter future for Masonry in years to come."

MW Santiago T. Gabionza Jr., Centennial Grand Master, had set for this year the theme "Building on our Past, Excelling in the Present, Providing for our Future: More Masonry for All!"

It clearly surfaced again in his message at the Rededication of the Grand Lodge Ceremony on the morning of December 19.

Commonly administered to new-found lodges, yet the Rededication Ceremony fit the occasion well.

"We commemorate the old by conducting a ceremony for the new," MW Gabionza told the dignitaries and the Brethren right after the rite. "For the Grand Lodge of the Philippines, which has attained its centenary, renews its vows with the Supreme Being that every Mason adores. We reaffirm our commitment by ministering the Corn which represents 'Freemasonry,' the Wine, the 'Masonic Virtues,' and the Oil, 'Universal Benevolence.'"

## **Abad Santos Hall**

The Rededication rite, central to the GLP Centennial commemoration, was held at the newly-renovated Jose Abad Santos Hall at the third floor of the GLP building. The job hadn't been completed until December 17, two days before the centenary date.

Repairs were worked into the clouded canopy, the Grand Lodge officers' chairs, the "G" up in the East, and the Mosaic pavements. Other improvements covered the upholstery of furnitures, repainting of the lobbies and the grand hall signage.

The grand hall, with a seating capacity of 1,000 persons, hosts official GLP ceremonies, appendant bodies' meetings and other like functions.

MW Gabionza financed the renovation expenses himself which amounted to Php 1.5 million. "It is the first time, after all, that the Jose Abad Santos hall has gone under renovation since its construction," he said.

## **Guests and Bros**

Dressed up for the occasion, Abad Santos Hall ably held the Brethren, foreign dignitaries, ladies and Lewisas who were also properly attired and disposed to the commemoration.

Some of the foreign dignitaries who came to the ceremony were as follows: RWB Martin H. Thomas, District Grand Master of the District Grand Lodge of the Far East Grand Representative; MW G. Santy Lascano, Grand Master, Grand Lodge of Washington; MW Frank Hayes, GM, Grand Lodge of Western Australia; MW Samuel C. Lo, GM, Grand Lodge of China; MW Kazufumi Mabuchi, GM,

*Newly-renovated Abad Santos Hall was all dressed up for the occasion.*



Grand Lodge of Japan; and MW Antonio M. Ligaya, GM, Grand Lodge of Hawaii. They represented the grand lodges to which the GLP communicated regularly. Heads and representatives of the Appendant Bodies also came.

All were escorted before the Altar and presented to the Grand East before the ceremony began.

### **Rededication**

Explaining the why-and-wherefore of the Rededication ceremony, MW Puno explained, “As the word implies, we are rededicating ourselves to the preservation and promotion of the foundational virtues of Freemasonry. It shows that Masons haven’t grown weary of the ancient virtues which comprised the essence of Masonry. It goes to say that Freemasonry is both timely and timeless.”

The same thought ran in MW Gabionza’s message that capped the ceremony. “Yes, we publicly extolled the noble deeds, and basked in the lofty achievements, of our Masonic heroes who have given honor to the apron we wear today. But the continuity of Masonic noble deeds and lofty achievements require us to return the favor. And by returning the favor, we provide for the future,” he said.

From the Centennial Committee to the Rededication Ceremony, a consistency in thought and works bound all the elements of the commemoration together—a product of deliberate planning and study.

MW Gabionza concluded, “Indeed, there is no better way to provide for future Masonry but to excel in present Masonry. And once the GLP has set on this task, then we can expect that every annual anniversary is truly celebrating,



*MW Gabionza presides from the Grand East with the foreign dignitaries behind.*

or worth celebrating, Brotherhood—and Brotherhood is Freemasonry, Virtues and Universal Benevolence; short-handed by the emblematic Corn, Wine and Oil.”

### **Future**

The Centennial fest peaked in the evening. About 1,000 Brethren had come for dinner at the plush Manila Hotel. The spacious Fiesta Pavilion Hall was packed. There was hardly any walking space left between the tables.

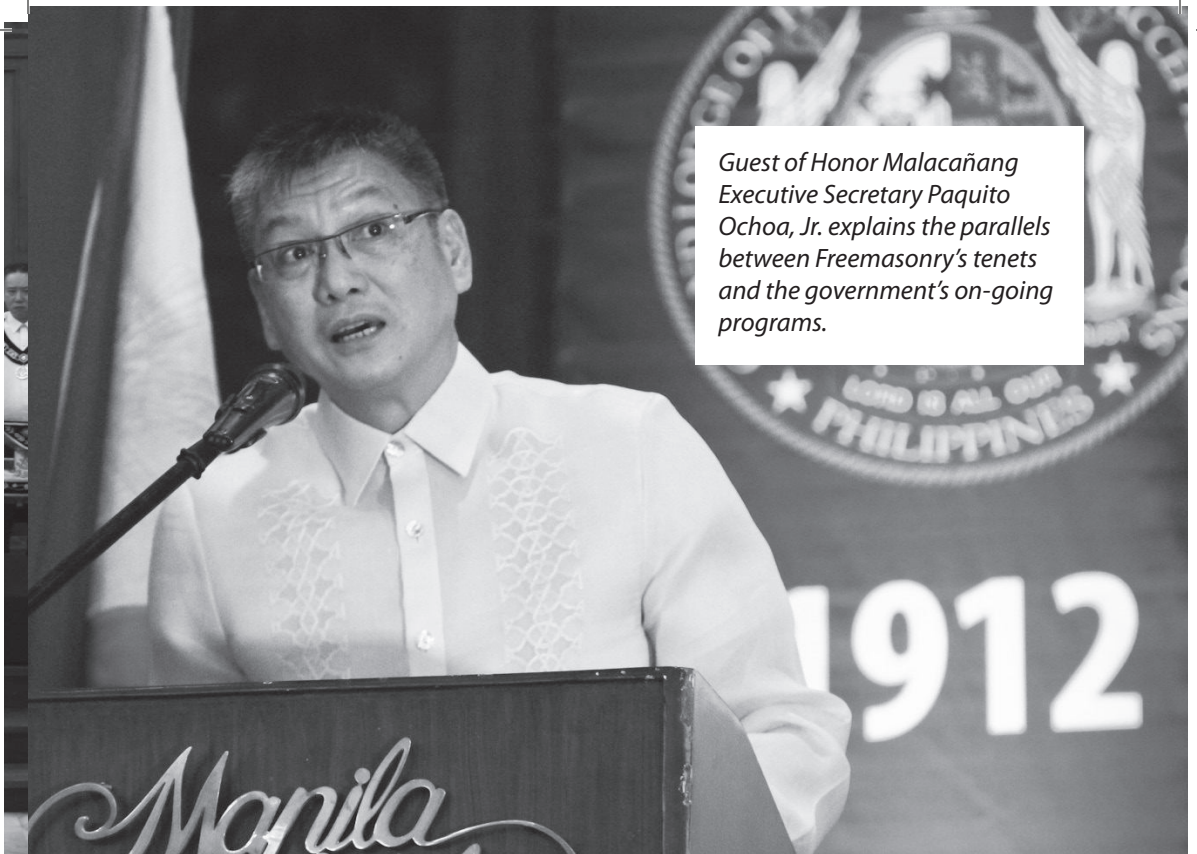
MW Gabionza welcomed and thanked all who had come—but not without defining the night’s significance.

“A hundred years behind us; another

hundred years before us,” he said. While the past century comprised the “glory days” of Philippine Freemasonry, the oncoming century is “still a mysterious landscape with neither sign nor shape of things to come.”

While the future remains unknown, yet he pointed out the current “challenges that increasingly grow complex, multi-cultural and international.”

For this, he left the challenge to the Brethren to grasp “the important role you are about to play in the coming years. Today is a fateful day for Philippine Freemasonry. For it sets you onto a new playing field with choices of actions that only you, and you alone, can pick and execute. And regardless what your choice is, your action will bring consequences to our beloved Fraternity.”



*Guest of Honor Malacañang Executive Secretary Paquito Ochoa, Jr. explains the parallels between Freemasonry's tenets and the government's on-going programs.*

### **Brotherly Love**

Originally slated as the Guest of Honor, yet President Benigno Simeon Aquino III was unavailable at the last minute. Malacañang Executive Secretary Paquito Ochoa, Jr. took his place.

In his speech, Ochoa acknowledged the important role of Freemasonry in the founding of constitutional governments around the world which the American and French Revolutions had started. In the same vein, he said, the government currently pursues the same line in the promotion of rights and justice.

Also, he paid particular notice to the Masonic tenet of Brotherly Love which had been translated into the fraternal camaraderie of the Katipuneros

in 1896. The same Brotherly Love undergirds the government's cash-incentive "pantawid kabuhayan" projects and relief programs, he said.

After Ochoa's speech, all the Past Grand Masters present were summoned up at the stage. Together, they offered a toast to the centenary of the GLP. All Brethren and guests in the hall warmly responded.

After a minute, MW Gabionza proclaimed with his right raised in the air, "By the authority vested in me, I declare this Special Communication duly closed."

The GLP Centennial fest formally ended.—EC 

## Malinao Lodge No. 50 Centennial



**GM Santiago T. Gabionza, Jr.** stands amid members of the **Pitong Lawa Rainbow for Girls** and **Werner Paul Schetelig Chapter of Order of De Molay** during their assembly simultaneous with Malinao Lodge's centennial celebration.

**GM Santiago T. Gabionza, Jr.** hands to **Bro. Pedro Evangelista** a certificate of fifty (50) years in Masonic service as **WM Leonel Mario F. Barle**, Master of Malinao Lodge No. 50 of San Pablo City looks on.

Malinao Lodge No. 50 of San Pablo City, Laguna held its centennial anniversary celebration on October 23, 2012. GM Santiago T. Gabionza, Jr. came to witness and join the festivity. Lewisas from the Pitong Lawa Rainbow for Girls, and Lewisas from the Werner Paul Schetelig Chapter of the Order of De Molay, presented dance numbers to color the centenary celebrations.



*Special Feature*

## PHILIPPINE FREEMASONRY BEFORE 1896

***Take a close look into Philippine Freemasonry in the Spanish colonial era in this sometimes funny, sometimes outrageous, Special Feature as your introduction to the Grand Lodge Centenary.***

*Calle Rosario in Binondo, Late 1890s*

By WB Edmund Coronel, Associate Editor

**T**he Philippines was a different country back in the 18th century. *Intramuros* was all the Manila that was, the capital city. It was the most painted and most photographed part of the colony—regardless that it was just a 4-km-long heap of bell towers and roof tiles. Here, all the most important and slickest businesses happened.

It was like the *Philippine Architectural Journal* had come to feature a house and all it shot was grandpa's liniment-scented bedroom.

Famous, yet the city was hard to find. Only the most determined invader, like the British and the Dutch, knew it. Maybe, Manila was defensively disguised by many names. Anyone inside Manila called it *Intramuros* ("Within the walls"). When outside, it was *Ciudad murada* ("Walled City"). Walk in any direction 10 to 30 kilometers about the *Extramuros* ("Outside the walls") and it was called *Provincia de Manila* (Province of Manila). That wide arch, sweeping from Caloocan to Novaliches, to Pasig and to Baclaran, was all under Manila Province, really.

If the jumble of names hasn't swirled your head, Brother, wait till you get a picture of a day in Manila's late 18th century life.

There was none yet of the usual 21st century hassles. There were no *calesas* blaring *wang-wangs*. No horses honking and screeching tires on the cobblestones. There was no rush hour. (Why call it "rush" hour when nothing actually moves?)

Old Manila grudgingly rose up everyday—5 a.m. for the house helps, 10 for the Spaniards. But Spanish or not, the city closed firmly at noon. People went home, took lunch, doze off to sleep, got up at siesta, took nap again because it was siesta, and returned to work at 2. Or 3 p.m. They closed shop at 4. When the 6 p.m. bells tolled, the city firmly stopped. Carabao carts sidled to the corners. Every man and woman in the street froze and said the Angelus. After prayer, people unfroze their statue-dance-poses. Cart drivers waved one another by. Indeed, life was dull—but easy and calm. Nobody wore giant orange bee costumes to make a living.



**Filipinos on bull cart with Binondo Church at the background, 1890s.** Rush hour was unknown in Old Manila. But jam-packing commuters were already in practice. But here, the problem was, the cart wouldn't move. For reasons unknown, the driver joined with his passengers standing up.



MW Reynold Fajardo, PGM (left)  
Illus. Bro. Antonio Ma. Regidor (inner left)

**References.** This Special Feature is supposed to be a “scholarly” work. Scholarly, it must be serious. So, every serious scholarly work must have references. My major reference is the outstanding book, “The Brethren: Masons in the Struggle for Philippine Independence” (1998) by the late Reynold S. Fajardo, PGM. Second is the indispensable 1896 essay “Masonry in the Philippines” which its author, patriot Antonio Ma. Regidor, had originally written in Spanish and was published in series from 1916 to 1917 in the Far Eastern Freemason. It was reprinted in English in the July-August 1982 issue of THE CABLETOW.

Old Manila was an idyllic place alright—but not for the right reasons. Behind the calm were overlays of ironies that had blocked the course of progress and thwarted all that was sound and good for the Philippines for 300 years. That clog, like the airball in the toilet drainpipe, was the Spanish clergies who had been the real power behind the Spanish governors. Sorting out the historical twaddles and baggages we got in school, we finally narrow down to the fact that it was the religious who were the actual nemesis of the Filipino heroes.

It is a wonder how the Spaniards have lasted in power for too long a time. But then, German Moreno lasted a long time, too. Philippine history is complex but unique. Other countries’ histories are plain and simple. A tyrant duels with his rebellious people *mano-a-mano* out in the battlefield. But here, there was a Cosa Nostra of men in frocks who had hidden behind and manipulated the government and the army like marionettes. There had been a good number of sane and sympathetic Spanish governors-general. But the clergies had them jailed (Sebastian Hurtado de Corcuera, 1644), kidnapped (Diego de Salcedo, 1668), killed (Fernando Bustamante, 1717), robbed of office (Simon de Anda, 1762) or kicked out of office (Ramon Blanco, 1896).

Calling one another *hermano*, they were a family—Augustinians, Dominicans, Franciscans, Jesuits, Recoletos. But they were not a family with mom and dad and kids who loved malling or dining out. They were rich, serious—some horny—men who relished counting the ribs cracking under the blow of the cane or rack. Or were just too glad to watch how *indios*, the common native Filipinos, could stay long under the Pasig before they start gurgling.

So, that was how things were in late 18th century Philippines. We were a colony. When Spain sneezes, the Philippines catches cold—and the Freemasons go down with the flu. Freemasons often got the worst deal. They were at the end of a long and vicious food chain.

But how and why did Filipinos endure the fraile freeloaders for 3 centuries, 3 decades and 3 years? Why did the clergies love picking on Filipino Freemasons for their game hunt? How did Filipino Freemasons come about, set on a propaganda campaign, and turn the tide against the clergies?

**Dominican friars in Piat, Cagayan (1875-1880).** Story had it that, after counting "Uno ... " and "Dos ...," the photographer shouted "Pia Alba!" The friars quickly looked away or pretended busy. One even crooked a finger to his buddy. Who really was the father of Maria Clara? (Pia Alba, by the way, was Maria Clara's mom.)



# The Spanish Clergies

**S**panish clergies delighted in spreading the word that, were it not for the frailes (friars), King Felipe II would have dropped the Philippines in 1566. Old Fray Fernando Moraga sailed from Manila to Madrid, threw himself before the king, and begged Felipe II to keep the islands no matter how costly to maintain. But the monarch had a ready answer: “Depart with God, Padre Moraga, and be assured that I will not give up what my father had conquered and left me.”

Obviously, Felipe II had already made up his mind to keep and develop the family real estate even before Fray Moraga pestered him. The clergies just puffed up the story to instill a deep sense of Church-indebtedness among the *indios* for three centuries. It’s very much like a newly-Raised Mason nagged by the Old Boys for 300 years with “Were it not for me, you won’t be made into a Mason.”

Short of seminary-schooled priests, the Spanish Crown shook up the conventos and shooed the monks away to the corners of the vast Spanish empire. They were called frailes or friars because they belonged to the 10 mendicant—that is, “poor,” “beggarly,” or “propertyless”—orders which included the Dominicans,

Franciscans, Augustinians and Hospitallers of St. John of God.

But let’s be fair. Once out of the convents, the orders raced one another in capturing rich diocesan territories. Only the Jesuits had busied themselves with establishing theocratic utopias.

In 1611, they herded the Guarani tribesmen in Paraguay into a couple of farming communes equipped with barnyards and workshops. The natives were drilled in the sacraments, the hourly church bells, the use of the machete and the plow, and the Pavlovian reflex. Soon, the project made a splash around the world. Even the Jesuit-hater Voltaire praised it as the “triumph of humanity” which absolved the sins of the early brutal conquistadores. Hollywood made it into a Robert De Niro movie titled *The Mission*.

The Philippine Jesuits actually preceded their Paraguayan brothers in theocratic utopias. But sadly, they didn’t make a name. In his 1604 account, *Relacion de las Islas Filipinas*, Jesuit Padre Pedro Chirino (pronounced *ki-ri-no*) was too glad to report that phenomenal kids in his mission in Taytay (Rizal) were teaching the sluggish grown-ups’ catechism classes. When the bells tolled, chil-



**View of Intramuros from Parian Gate.** The view, expectedly, was all churches and roof tiles. This gate was reserved only for the use of indios and Chinese. Seemingly, “maintenance” wasn’t in the Spanish program. See the dense growth rising from the moat.

dren went out to the streets behind a wooden cross, and rounded up all the adults back to the Church. He wrote—

*To each old man is assigned a boy, who instructs him and is careful to report how much the old man is learning; then, if the old man gives a good account of himself, he is privileged to cease his attendance.*

Hand it to the Jesuits. They were pioneers. If the Paraguay missions were the pleasant version of the Stalin kulak farms, Chirino’s mis-

sion were Mao’s re-education camps during the Cultural Revolution. The Taytay commune was actually a prototype of the modern political utopias to come so that it had appeared in movies in many forms. My favorite is the film *The Killing Fields*: 10-year-old kids in black pajamas, rattling and pointing the lumpenproletariats out to the Khmer Rouge extermination squads.

The Godstruck monks were helpful in the *conquista* (conquest). But keeping the frailes in the colonies for good was a very bad idea. They were

not the jolly type of friars like Robin Hood's Friar John. Not the helpful friar that fought beside Zorro. They had little or no education at all. If they had, they wouldn't enter the convents in the first place which, actually, were the refuge of the Spanish social dregs. Besides, the habit was coarse and itchy; the tonsure, funny. That was why they hid in as-

cetic convents. They had reason to spite the world which they handily called *contemptus mundi*.

Contempt also for the Filipinos was all over the writings of the Spanish friars. Sample this portion from the Augustinian Fray Juan Francisco de San Antonio's *Cronicas* (Chronicles) 1738-1744, under the chapter "The



**Manila Cathedral after the June 3, 1883 earthquake.** The cathedral's stand-alone bell tower was toppled down by the powerful tremors just as parts of the city and the suburbs had been leveled to the ground.

native peoples and their customs”—

*“Among so many barbaric customs, the universality of their vices prevailed; and they were infidel, tyrannical, and unchaste. They regarded virginity as an opprobrium, and there were men who received a salary for this office of deflowering [the girls] of their virginity.”*

Ridiculous! If it were true, then the Spaniards would have found a booming industry—and the most interesting signboards—all over the country.

That was the problem with the friars. Sending the monks out to the world was like sending a Boy Scout troop to a nudist camp for the weekend. The experience would, of course, induce lycanthropy in every schoolboy—and they would howl the wildest and most skewed vision of the world to the moon.

But the Spanish misreading of Filipino life and culture wasn't always funny. One of the classical pieces on Filipino slur is the 1720 “Letter on the Filipinos” by the Augustinian Fray Gaspar de San Agustin. It was San Agustin's private letter to a friend—which his Augustinian brothers made public. The long rant began with “First, they are remarkable for their ingratitude...” So went on the revilement like “They are naturally rude” or “They are so distrustful.”

Sample a couple of San Agustin's diatribes—“21. *They care more for their disheveled hair than they do for their souls.*”

That was easy for Fray San Agustin to say when friars had their tops shaven.

*“16. They are curious, rude and impertinent, and accordingly, when they meet the father they generally ask him where he is going and whence he is coming; and innumerable questions, all impertinent and troublesome.”*

That, actually, was being polite of Filipinos. What the *indios* really wanted to ask the fraile was “Who, Padre, is the Maria Clara you are going to ravish tonight? Will it be my neighbor, my daughter or poor Tagpî this time?”

*“(36). So great is the ease and tenacity with which they believe the greatest nonsense.”*

Like the Spanish religion?

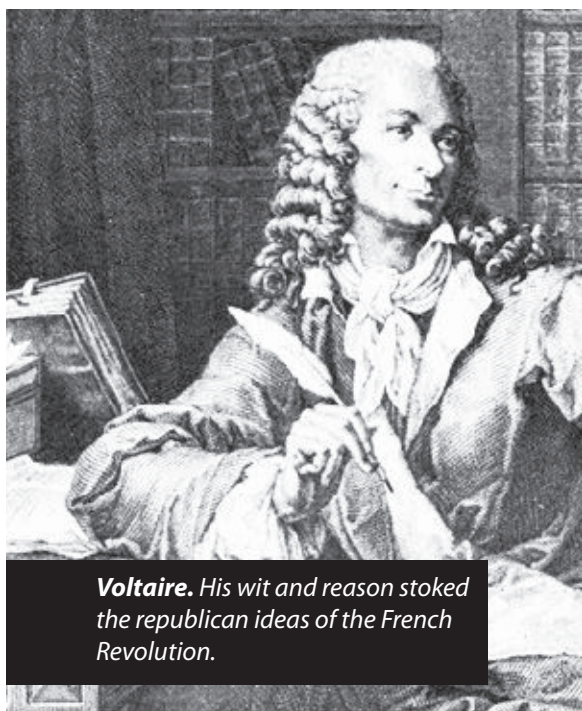
*“70. It is a thing to be wondered at that even the dogs have another disposition, and have a particular aversion to Spaniards. When they see Spaniards, they choke themselves with barking.”*

Come on, Padre! They actually “choke themselves with” ... laughter. They are calling you funny names! Filipino *askals* are smart.

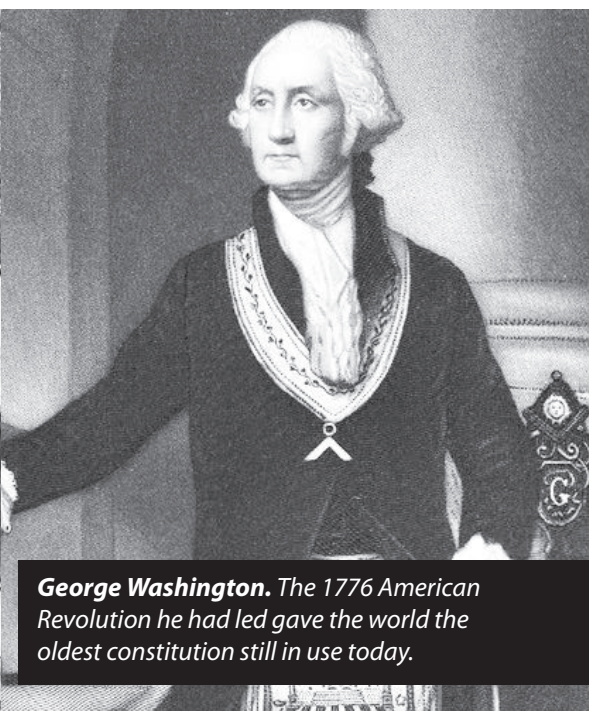
The frailes were a rude, boorish and uncultured lot. They were not the crème of the Spanish crop. But what gall they had to look down so lowly on the Filipinos! Had Filipinos only read these racial slurs, Filipinos would no doubt declare war against Spain. But there was something in international law saying that a peo-

ple must be free before it could declare war against a state. So, the people rose up in a bloody revolution against the Spaniards and when they got to be free, they would declare war against Spain. Something like that.

The point is, a revolution broke out in 1896.



**Voltaire.** His wit and reason stoked the republican ideas of the French Revolution.



**George Washington.** The 1776 American Revolution he had led gave the world the oldest constitution still in use today.

## Freemasons figured in the rise of constitutional governments

For a quarter of century, the American and French revolutions shook the West and eventually changed the world. Crowns were deposed; the Church, defied. The revolutionaries, comprised largely of Freemasons, installed constitutional governments called “republics” in place.

Freemasons were behind the revolutions; hence, old-liners frowned at the Brethren. Revolutions advocated republics, dethroned monarchs, equalized people, and tolerated all established religions.



***Liberty Leading the People (1830) by Eugene Delacroix. The painting was a close depiction of the bloody and turbulent French Revolution. Vive le France! With a buxomy commander in the lead, what man wouldn't march and fight anywhere?***

Freemasons were all over the 1776 American Revolution. George Washington, commander in chief of the colonial armies—and later became the first president of the United States—came from Fredericksburg Lodge No. 4 in Virginia. Nine signers of the U.S. Declaration of Independence, and 9 signers of the U.S. Constitution, were Freemasons.

Marquis de Lafayette, the French noble who had pushed and trapped British commander Lord Cornwallis in Yorktown in 1780, was a Freemason. Worse, even Lord Cornwallis was a Mason.

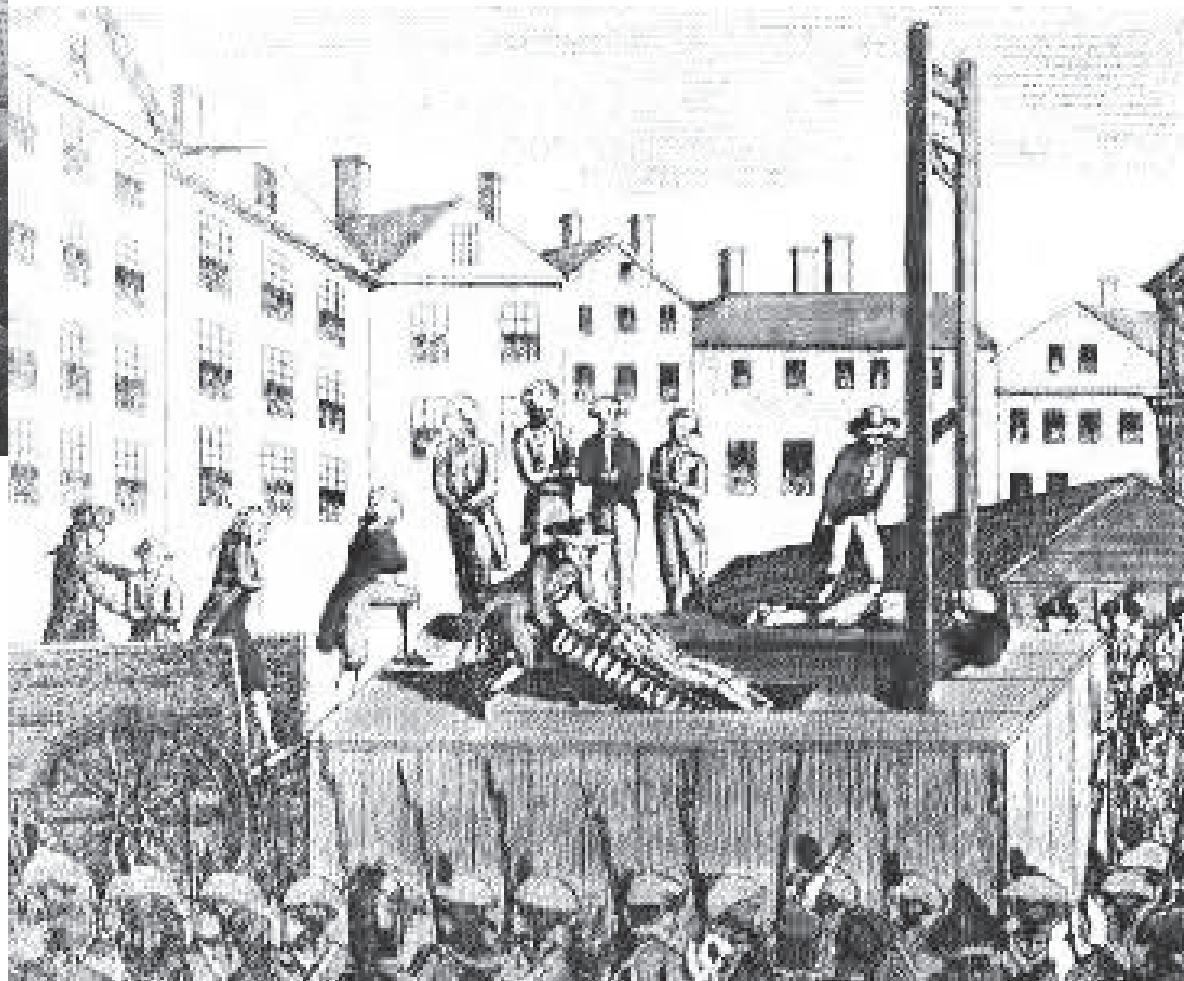
The French Freemasons followed 16 years later with the Revolution of 1789.

The witty Voltaire, member of The Nine Sisters Lodge in Paris, wrote books and pamphlets that stoked the republican ideas. Another Nine Sisters member, Joseph-Ignace Guillotin invented the device that would enforce Voltaire's ideas, the guillotine. The Duke of Orléans, Louis-Philippe-Joseph, backed the bourgeoisie in capturing the National Assembly in 1789. The Comte de Mirabeau, Honoré-Gabriel Riqueti, opened the floodgates by debasing the absolutist monarchy into constitutional monarchy. The philosopher Comte de Condorcet, Marie-Jean-Antoine-Nicolas de Caritat, advocated secular education for all. Some Masonic lodges had switched into revolutionary units that came to be called the "Jacobin Club," the most radical

and violent of the revolutionary factions. And the Marquis de Lafayette, hero of the American Revolution, drafted the era-defining Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen.

That was the problem with the French. They were Cartesians. They were philosophical.

They thought too much. And that was precisely what the Spanish frailes in Manila had opposed. Start thinking and soon, people get ideas, learn idealism and suddenly, everybody has ideology—with a Reign of Terror, thousands dead, colonies freed, and the friars strung up the lampposts.



**Guillotine.** French physician Joseph-Ignace Guillotin, member of the National Assembly and of the Nine Sisters Lodge, proposed decapitation as the newfound republic's capital punishment. Beheading, once reserved for kings, was applied to everybody. Besides, it was swift and painless. Probably, he had wanted it first for wayward Entered Apprentices. But later, he denounced it for the many deaths it had brought. First called as Louissette, or Louison, it was later dubbed as la guillotine. The French underworld called it "the widow."

# Freemasons shook up hidebound Spanish monarchy

Nothing perhaps had gotten so deep into the Spanish friars' nerves than the Freemasons' messing up with the Spanish hidebound order in 1810.

French emperor Napoleon Bonaparte wanted to grab Spain. French soldiers marched into Madrid in 1809. The Madrileños rioted. Napoleon invited Fernando VII to come and visit France. And for all the inane reasons in the world, he accepted it—and was imprisoned in France.

Napoleon sat next his older brother Joseph on the Spanish throne styled as King “Jose I.” Joseph, however, was the Grand Master of the Grand Orient of France in 1805.

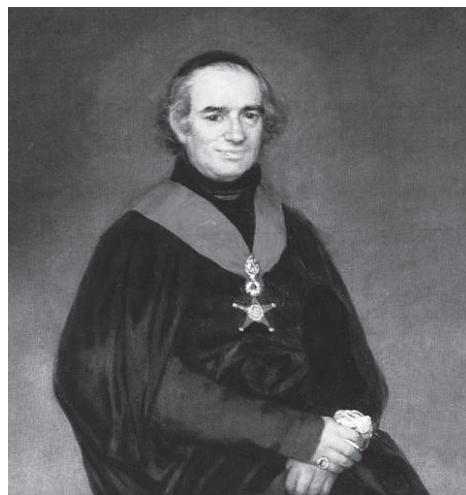
## French liberalization

A corps of Masonic officials came with Joseph to Madrid and ran a liberalization program—abolishing the Inquisition, suppressing two-thirds of the convents and monastic orders, and confiscating Church properties. The Spanish liberals hated the French conquerors so they did, ironically, what the French ought to be doing—put up a parliament (Cortes) and issue a liberal Constitution in 1812. Soon, it was hard to tell Spanish liberalization from French liberalization. It was harder even to tell the Spaniard from the French.

Spain was a merry mess until the French troops slipped here and there. They massacred the monks and theology students in Murviendo, Castellon and Valencia en masse, of course. They burned the cathedral of Solsona. And they raped the nuns of Uclés. (Understand that they were French.)

Spain plunged into chaos. Even Napoleon couldn't fix it. Maybe, Napoleon loved the Spaniards. Maybe, he loathed the Spaniards. Regardless, he freed and sent Fernando VII back to Spain in December 1813. Quickly, the restored monarch rallied the old-liners around him, revived the severest despotic powers—and discovered too late that they had been screwed.

## Padre Llorente



**Padre Juan Antonio Llorente.** *An impishly smiling Llorente looks like a child who has wrecked something but is not telling it.*

Padre Juan Antonio Llorente, secretary-general of the Spanish Inquisition in Madrid, joined the *afrancesados* (“frenchified”), the French collaborators and supporters. During the French occupation, he was the inside man behind the suppression of the monastic orders and the subordination of the Spanish Church to the state. Worse, he ransacked the Inquisition archives and ran away with explosive documents to France.

In 1817, Llorente came out with his book *Histoire critique de l'Inquisition espagnole* ("Critical History of the Spanish Inquisition"), which bared to the world for the first time the never-heard-yet stories behind this powerful but dreadful institution.

His explosive exposé was followed next by an equally explosive book, *Portraits politiques des papes* ("Political Portrait of the Popes"), in 1822.

Llorente's enemies said he was a Freemason.

The Spanish ultra-conservative order was crumbling fast inside and out. The French conquest had shattered the Spanish prestige abroad. It rudely shook the colonies awake. Trouble broke out fast in Mexico and South America.



**King Fernando VII (left).** Look at him. No wonder why the good-looking Fernando fell for the slightest cons. **Teenage Queen Isabella II (right).** Good for her to inherit her father's genes.

## Latin America

In 1810, Padre Miguel Hidalgo, *cura parroco* of the town of Dolores—and member of the Masonic *Logia Arquitectura Moral*—led the *Grito de Dolores* (Cry of Dolores) and began the Mexican War of Independence. Padre Jose Maria Morelos, Hidalgo's deputy and another Freemason, continued it backed by revolutionary commander Vicente Guerrero, also a Freemason. In 1821, Guerrero and Gen. Agustín de Iturbide, a Mason, received independent Mexico from Fernando VII's representative, Juan O'Donojú, also a Mason.

In 1825, Spain lost South America to the Freemason Simon Bolivar, called *El Libertador* (The Liberator). He freed one region after another—Colombia (1820), his homeland Venezuela (1821), Ecuador (1822), the vast colony of Peru (1824), and Upper Peru which was later named "Bolivia" (1825) in his honor.

Enraged by Masons who were breaking up his empire, Fernando assembled a large



**Padre Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla, father of Mexican Independence.** Interestingly, Padre Hidalgo went to the battlefield with the banner of *Nsra. De Guadalupe* (picture behind Hidalgo) waving over his ragtag army. Would Padre Burgos do the same had he lived more years?



**Simon Bolivar (left) & Joseph Bonaparte, King Jose I of Spain. (right).** Bolivar was admirably called “El Libertador” while Joseph was jeered by critics as “El Bote” for his drinking habit.

army and a fleet to recover the American colonies. But the punitive expedition was frustrated by one of the commanding officers. Major Rafael de Riego, a Freemason, who led the troops in a *pronunciamiento* (military coup or mutiny) against Fernando VII in 1820. The mutiny was said to have been plotted in the lodges—very likely during fellowships when wine made everybody smart.

## Carlist Wars

Fernando VII actually ordered the closure of all Masonic lodges throughout the Spanish empire—or what was left of it—on May 24, 1814. A series of crackdowns followed where even Spanish nobles had been nabbed.

But no matter how Fernando VII loved to restore the old order, yet Spain was already a changed country. But the biggest joke was

that Fernando VII himself was to crush, indirectly, the Spanish Church that held up his throne.

Hard as he tried to get his three wives pregnant, yet he always failed. But after wedding the fresh 23-year old Maria Cristina in 1829, the 45-year old Fernando suddenly got an heir but a girl. Nobody was happier than the lieutenant of Maria Cristina’s bodyguards.

Fernando revoked the old law banning girls from succeeding to the throne. His younger brother, Don Carlos María Isidro de Borbón, was furious. His macho followers were also mad. So, when Fernando VII died in 1833, Maria Cristina ruled in place of the infanta (child) Isabella II leaning on the Spanish liberals for support. Don Carlos, the throne claimant, rounded up the old-liners and waged a long, savage, dynastic war called the “Carlista Wars.”



# The Philippines from 1810 to 1850

At the start, we set the theory that when Spain sneezes, the Philippines catches the cold. Tremors of Spain's capture by Napoleon in 1810, and the ensuing chaos, also reached the Philippines. But Filipinos had taken a long time to react—if they had caught the contagion at all. They responded only after all the shockwaves and aftereffects had distantly died down.

Gov.-Gen. Manuel Gonzales de Aguilar dispatched a Philippine military unit to Cadiz to help the resistance. Next, he sent Ventura de los Reyes, a Binondo marine merchant, as *deputado* (deputy) to the new-found Cortes. With the Cadiz constitution in effect, a copy was sent to Manila and the

**Galleon.** Big and bulky, the galleon was the stuff of legends. It had kept the Pacific a Spanish Lake for 250 years.

city's patriotic citizens swore allegiance before it in public on April 17, 1813.

Similarly, Gov.-Gen. De Aguilar proposed to Madrid the termination of the Manila-Acapulco trade. But Manila's galleon trade players didn't mind it at all. In 1811, the year's galleon lifted anchor at Cavite and sailed its usual course to Mexico.

But the ship didn't return in the year following, even in the next. Manila concluded that the vessel had sunk. Four years later, it appeared over Manila Bay laden with the bad news: the 250-year old galleon trade was over.

Crewmembers said that, when they arrived in Acapulco, the city was in rebels' hands. All the cargoes were seized. Even the silver meant to pay for the Manila commodities were confiscated. Soon, the Spanish royalist forces recovered Acapulco but not its wealth anymore.

Stranded and uncertain, the crew received a delayed order from King Fernando VII in 1813. The galleon trade had been abolished.

Interestingly, the ship was named *Magalanes*. Just as the navigator had sailed to circle the world, the similarly named galleon had already completed its circuit in 1815, never to ply the route again.

Manila's citizens were sobered up by the news. Without the galleon trade, what would happen to Manila touted for its gold, silver and Oriental wonder products? How would the Spaniards, the clergies and other loafers in the city make their easy riches?

The pages flipped. A new chapter began. It was time to face reality. And reality struck the mestizo officers in the Spanish

army hard in 1823. An order came from Madrid. All military officers who had been commissioned in Spain must be raised one rank higher than the officers in the Philippines. A lieutenant from Spain would automatically jump to major just to precede a mestizo captain.

Rather than comply, a mestizo officer, Captain Andres Novales, led mutinous soldiers into Intramuros on June 1, 1823. But the revolt was crushed the next day.

Manila had its first modern *pronunciamiento* (military coup). But the Novales revolt, if anything, was just Manila drawing the first blood. Since then, sporadic uprisings began popping up in greater numbers than before.

A Recoleta *cura* was beheaded in Talibong, Cebu. The Spanish governor of Negros island was assassinated in 1833. An alcalde-mayor from Panay was shipped to Manila in an iron cage. In 1835, Feliciano Paran rebelled against the Spaniards in Cavite. He had to be double-crossed to take him out of his mountain hideout. In 1840, a troupe of stage actors was arrested during the town fiesta of Sta. Cruz in Laguna for spoofing the alcalde-mayor and his government. A former seminarian called "*Hermano Pule*" led his 4,000 amulet-wearing army in a revolt in 1844 that ended in the blood-bath of the rebels, of course.

If this read like entertainment to you, understand that the Philippines was a dull place then.

By mid-1850s, it was clear that the Philippines was sliding downhill and nobody was stopping it.

But the early 1850s wasn't all bad news. There was also progress.

1822

## US Consul Hubbell, pioneer investor and Freemason

With the galleon trade over, Manila opened its doors to investors. Besides the Spanish, the first Westerner to come was the American shipping firm Peele, Hubbell & Company. The British Wise & Company followed in 1826; the Scottish Ker & Company came in 1827.

George William Hubble, of Peele, Hubbell & Company, was the U.S. consul to Manila. At that time, consuls were okayed to trade. Moreover, he was a Freemason.

But what was it with these Freemasons? Say “revolution” and Masons popped up. Say “progress” and still, Masons were all over the scene.

So, when Hubbell died in 1834, his friends had ordered a statue made for him. But the frailes stepped in and took it away for the simple fact that Hubble was a Freemason. It had gathered dust in a government warehouse until U.S. occupation forces found it in 1898.

After 64 years, Hubble’s statue was put up at Plaza Cervantes in Manila. After World War II, it was transferred to the US Embassy grounds overlooking Manila Bay.

1843

## Archbishop Segui cancelled 1843 New Year’s Eve

Manila archbishop Augustinian Jose Segui cancelled the Philippine celebration of the New Year’s Eve in 1843—and showed the world that the frailes also knew science.

Segui was bugged by a mystery. Why did Juan Sebastian de Elcano, who had taken over Ferdinand Magellan’s fleet in 1521, arrive at Cadiz in Spain a day behind the calendar? Consulting with sailors, Segui was granted revelation by the Lord that one degree in the map equals to four minutes in a day. Thus, when Magellan arrived in the Philippines, the explorer was 16 hours behind.

So, when it is 12 midnight in Madrid, it is already 8 o’ clock of the new day in Manila.

Eureka! It was, well, an original friar discovery. *Roll out the barrel! Let’s party!* Segui wouldn’t meet Phileas Fogg until Jules Verne had published *Around the World in Eighty Days* in 1873. The archbishop corrected a 321-year old error. But he wouldn’t admit that the Philippines is “advance” than Spain.

The Lord blessed Segui’s scientific achievement with the arrival of the first steamship in Manila in 1845. Moreover, the 4-year ban on non-Spanish Westerners to live outside of Intramuros was lifted on November 14, 1844.

Seemingly, Segui’s scientific feat was meant to make up for the friars’ fiasco in 1840. They organized a mob that lynched and hacked a dozen of Western businessmen to death around Manila. The culprits were the bacteria that had escaped from the bottles of a scientific French vessel which docked at Pasig. The fugitives ran, jumped into the wells, and poisoned the city’s drinking water.

That was, certainly ... ridiculous! Bacteria were too small to wear handcuffs! Besides, how would you picture a bacteria in the “Wanted” posters? A dot?

Jesus! Why had the 1896 Revolution taken so long?



**Spanish warship.** A 19th century Spanish warship named *Cristobal Colon*. Like other Spanish iron warships of the period, it was mostly iron—and hardly any gun.

## Mid-1850s

### **Businessman Reynolds, a Freemason, came to town**

Thomas Reynolds, a Freemason, was a former Brit but naturalized as an American citizen. He had come to the Philippines around the mid-1850s and established the port of Dagupan in Pangasinan with a large warehouse for storing rice.

Reynolds was basically a single player who entered the Philippine field largely controlled by three companies. The American firms Peele & Hubbell, and Russell & Sturgis, dominated the country's foreign trade on hemp and sugar products. An Englishman, Nicholas Loney, was exporting big quantities of Visayan sugar to Australia which beneficially redounded to Iloilo's economy.

With borrowed funds from the Bank of Hong Kong, he would later corner the local abaca market resulting in a supply crisis from 1885 to 1888.

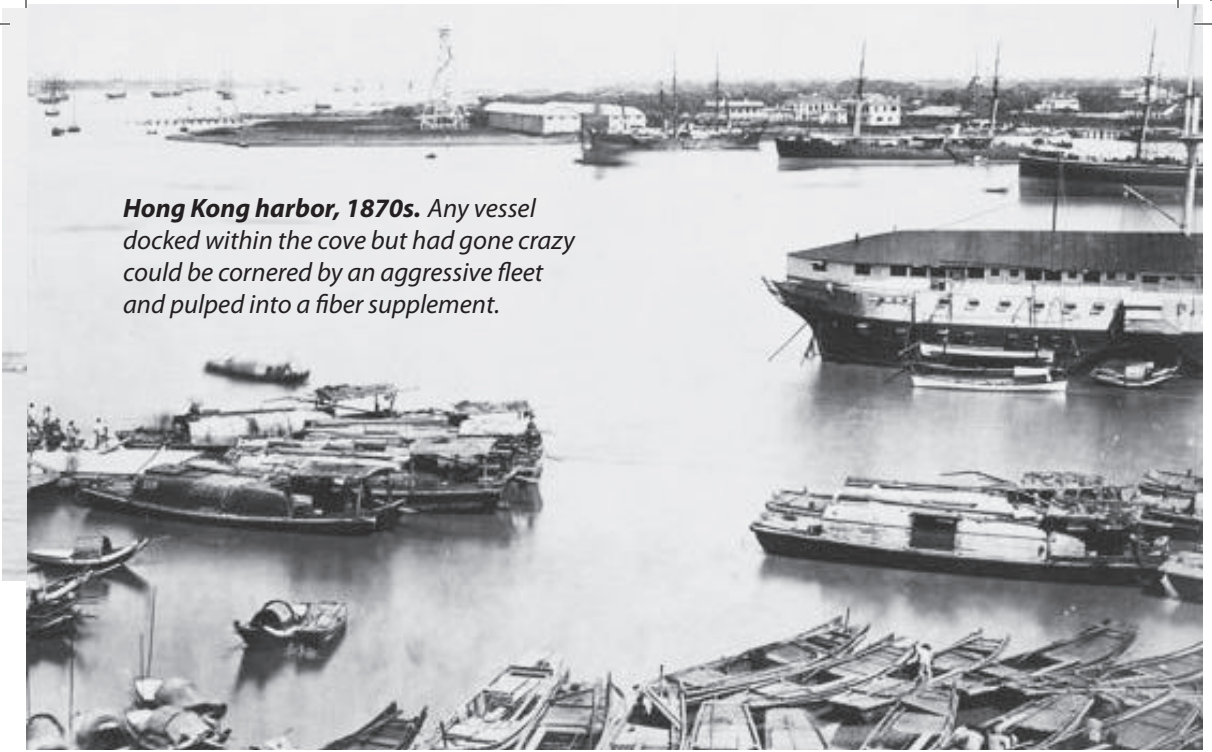
A businessman, yet Reynolds would indirectly influence the growth of Freemasonry in the Philippines. At Manila, he put his to-

bacco cargoes aboard a Spanish navy ship and paid for its lading as it was the custom then. The vessel arrived at Hong Kong but with the cargoes diminished and damaged. He filed a complaint at the Hong Kong court against the ship captain, Lt. Carlos Rocca. The court, in turn, issued an arrest warrant for Rocca.

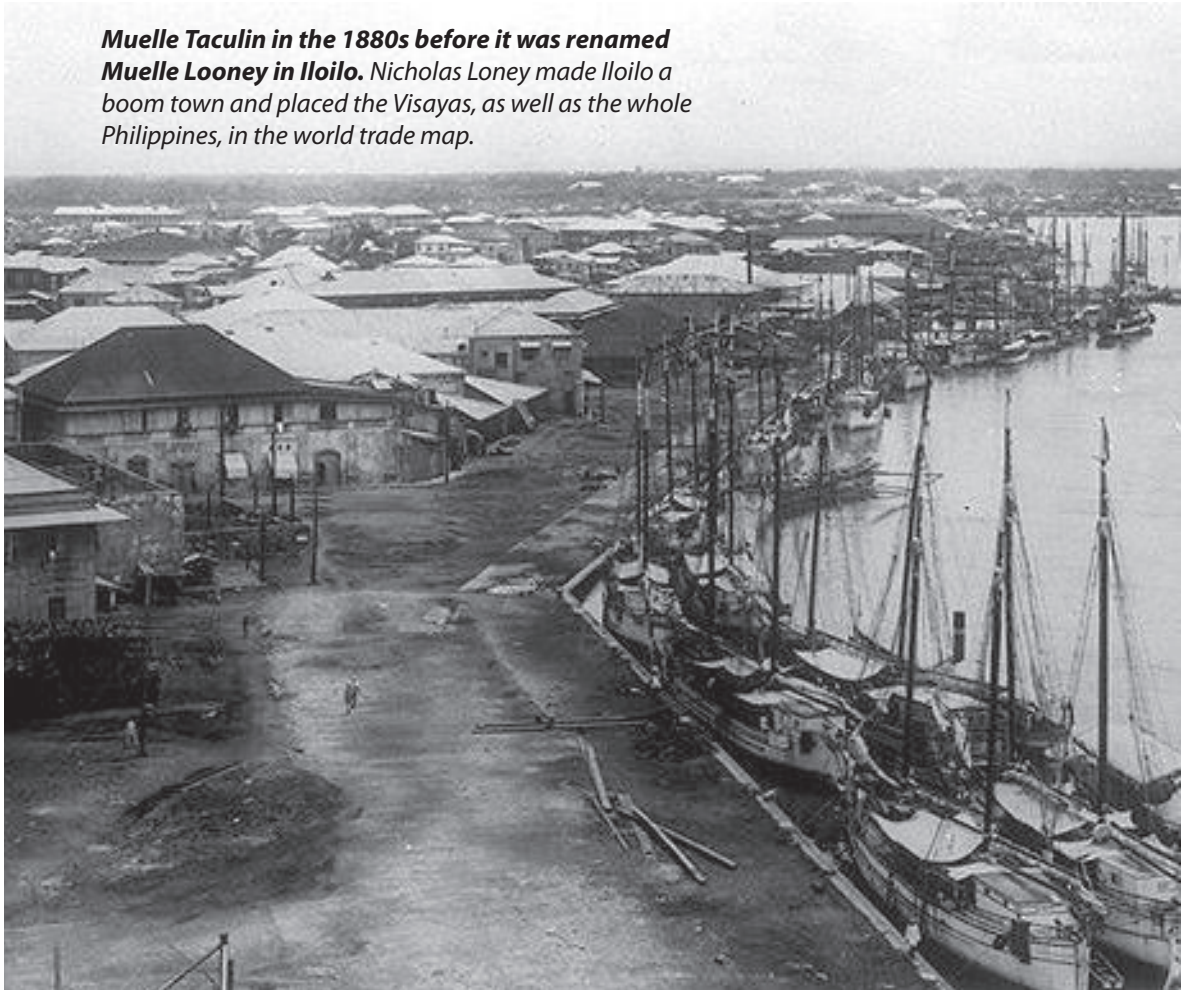
Rocca, however, defied the court's order. He threatened to fire at any arresting officer who would board his ship. Another Spanish navy warship docked in Hong Kong at that time sided with Rocca. Quickly, the other foreign but modernized navies moored in Hong Kong—British, German, Dutch, etc.—bonded together. They steered close and readied to pounce on Rocca's creaky little warship and ally—had the colony's governor not stepped in and averted a carnage.

The officers of the Western navies were Freemasons spread throughout Southeast Asia—Java, Singapore, Macao and other Chinese ports.

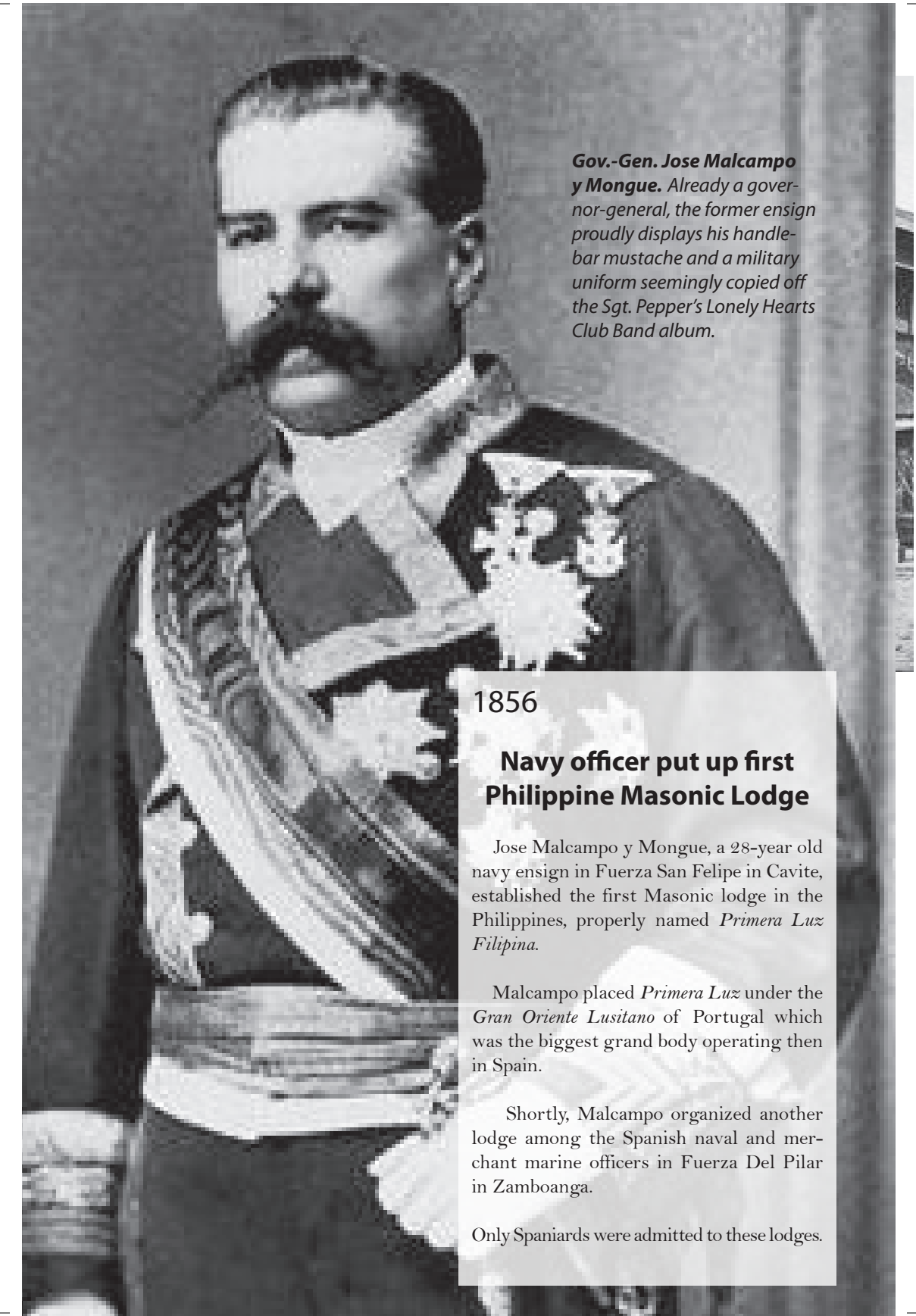
This near-bloodbath would drive 28-year old Spanish navy ensign, Jose Malcampo y Mongue, to establish a Masonic lodge in the Philippines. In absence of foreign policy, the Masonic ties would serve as foreign relations tool for the isolated Spanish navy and maritime officers with the Western navies in the region.



**Hong Kong harbor, 1870s.** Any vessel docked within the cove but had gone crazy could be cornered by an aggressive fleet and pulped into a fiber supplement.



**Muelle Taculin in the 1880s before it was renamed Muelle Looney in Iloilo.** Nicholas Loney made Iloilo a boom town and placed the Visayas, as well as the whole Philippines, in the world trade map.



**Gov.-Gen. Jose Malcampo y Mongue.** Already a governor-general, the former ensign proudly displays his handlebar mustache and a military uniform seemingly copied off the Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band album.

1856

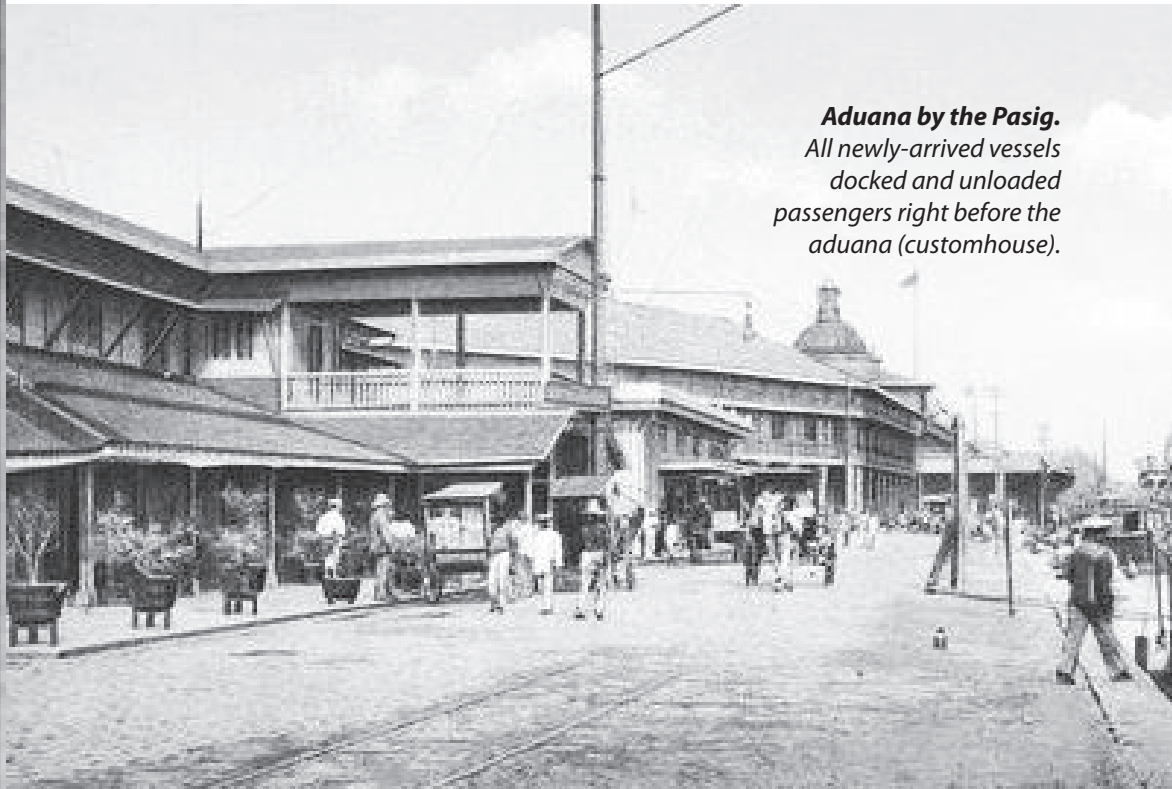
### **Navy officer put up first Philippine Masonic Lodge**

Jose Malcampo y Mongue, a 28-year old navy ensign in Fuerza San Felipe in Cavite, established the first Masonic lodge in the Philippines, properly named *Primera Luz Filipina*.

Malcampo placed *Primera Luz* under the *Gran Oriente Lusitano* of Portugal which was the biggest grand body operating then in Spain.

Shortly, Malcampo organized another lodge among the Spanish naval and merchant marine officers in Fuerza Del Pilar in Zamboanga.

Only Spaniards were admitted to these lodges.



***Aduana by the Pasig.***  
*All newly-arrived vessels docked and unloaded passengers right before the aduana (customhouse).*

1868

## **Royalist exiles arrived in Manila**

Shortly after the Spanish “Glorious Revolution,” a shipload of royalist exiles from Spain arrived in Manila led by a Spanish priest. No sooner had Manila’s clergies banged the alarm bells and all of Manila’s hidebound elements came out to aid the deportees.

In Spain, the 38-year old Queen Isabel II was deposed by the army that forced her into exile in France.

Where the Manila Carlista clergies had despised the liberal-backed queen a

decade ago, they turned around and embraced her in 1868. The Spanish clergies were for monarchist or royalist cause—even Nero—just to see the liberals crashed and burned.

Hence, Col. Francisco Moscoso, then Manila Governor and a Mason, saw to it that the royalist exiles were housed in the city’s finest homes and conventos free of charge. The old-liners openly toured as they flaunted the exiles in and around the city. The deportees walked as they spent money freely—supplied regularly by Manila’s ultra-conservatives. Recoleta Fray Aniceto Ybañez, also head of the foreign vicariate, saw to it that the exiles bound for Guam would get a tender loving care in the Spanish Pacific outpost.

1868

## Spanish Masons raced with Europeans in founding lodges

With a political climate prevailing, European Masons kicked off a race in founding Masonic lodges around Manila.

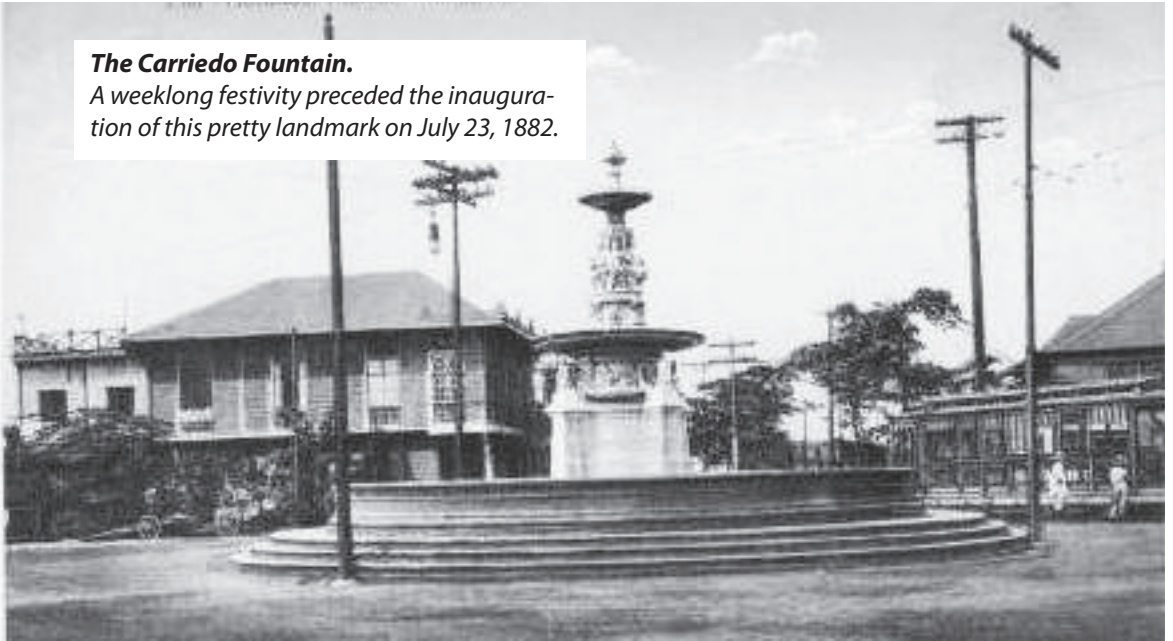
Lt. Col. Eugenio Garcia Ruiz, Manila's chief of police and son of the Spanish

ized, composed largely of expats and a handful of Filipinos. Jacobo Zobel y Zangronis, a wealthy German-Spanish mestiza parentage, was the Lodge Secretary. A famous actor then, Jose Carvajal, was counted among its member.

Not to be left behind, the British Consul also put up an English lodge in the Nagtahan suburb just across Pasig River opposite to Pandacan. Here, Jose Alberto Alonzo, who was the uncle of soon-to-rise Jose Ri-

### **The Carriedo Fountain.**

*A weeklong festivity preceded the inauguration of this pretty landmark on July 23, 1882.*



Justice Minister in Madrid, established a Spanish lodge in the suburb of Pandacan with authority issued by the Gran Oriente de España.

Señor Camacho, a Freemason and an accountant in the *Aduana* (customhouse), helped Ruiz. Hence, the fist initiate was Enrique Paraiso, of Tayabas province, a subordinate of Paraiso in the *Aduana*.

The German Consul-General himself had a Masonic lodge in Pandacan organ-

ized, was a member. Both German and British lodges were under the Scottish Rites body in Hong Kong.

Significantly, these European lodges began admitting Filipinos, mestizos and *indios* alike, to membership. But each lodge was carrying its country's foreign policy. The British wanted "to make the world British." The Germans were looking out for new territories to conquer. Spain wanted to keep them all out of the Philippines.

1871

## Filipino Freemasons aided exiled & jobless Spanish Republicans

With the monarchists back in power, Filipino Freemasons took to the task of helping the exiled and jobless liberal Spaniards.

In 1870, King Amadeo—ironically a Mason—was elected by the Cortes to become constitutional monarch. Liberals were kicked out of power in Madrid.

*Aduana* (customhouse) accountant Señor Camacho, member of the Spanish Pandacan lodge, discreetly collected clothes and money from Freemasons around Manila backed by his subordinate and Freemason, Enrique Paraiso. Counted among Camacho's supporters were Freemasons like the government official Felix Pardo de Tavera; native priest Agustin Mendoza, *cura paroco* of Sta. Cruz suburb; and lawyers Antonio Ma. Regidor, Jose Basa and Ambrocio Rianzares Bautista.

In two days, Camacho and Paraiso quickly gathered a heap of usable clothes and money worth 800 duros. All relief were paddled to Corregidor and handed over to the deportees.

The Pandacan lodge members handed out Masonic charity again when a second batch of republican exiles stopped over at Manila on their way to the Marianas islands in the Pacific.

Just when they had thought it was over, the new government fired the liberals from the government en masse.

Soon, homeless and jobless Spaniards wandered the streets. Again, the Pandacan lodge members pulled these Spaniards out of the sidewalks and distributed them to indio houses that, in turn, fed and sheltered them.

Antonio Ma. Regidor, in his essay "*Masonry in the Philippines*," wrote, "The principal support of the first lodge in the Philippines which was genuinely national came from the donations of the natives. This should be proclaimed from the rooftops."

1872

## Friars whacked Padre Burgos & liberals hard with mutiny plot

Preferring Faustian drama and the silliness of soap operas, the friars lashed back hard at Padre Jose Burgos and the Filipino liberals backing him up.

Padre Burgos was an outspoken advocate of the Filipinization of the churches—the handover of the parishes to the native priests. That would end the frailes in the Philippines.

Moreover, he was working with Filipino liberals who turned out to be Freemasons. Hence, this was the first time Filipino clergies and Freemasons worked together.

Recoleta friar, Fray Agapito Echegoyen, disclosed that the heads of the orders had sat together and decided to get rid of Burgos once and for all. Burgos was even writing to Madrid—and could possible get attention there.

The frailes showed how deep their contacts were. They bribed Governor-General Rafael de Izquierdo with "*una fuerte suma de dinero*" (a strong sum of money), about

**Calle Arsenal, Cavite.** This led to Fuerza San Felipe in the background where navy yard workers had been tricked to mutiny in 1872.



**Smiling Filipinos show how to operate the garrote.** Story had it that the demonstration turned out to be fun so that they decided to make it real.



**GOMBURZA Triumvirate.** Padre Burgos' Filipinization of the parishes campaign was the first time Filipino clergies and Freemasons had teamed up.

40,000 pesos, to get in line with the plot and serve the frailes.

Hence, Izquierdo issued an edict removing the tax-exemption privileges once enjoyed by the retired indio navy yard workers in Fuerza San Felipe in Cavite. Like the rest, they were to pay yearly tributes and give free labor services.

Expectedly, the retirees were angered. Until a certain Franciscan, Fray Claudio del Arceo, came to Cavite and introduced himself as “Padre Burgos, *cura* of San Pedro in Manila.” He hyped the disgruntled workers up to mutiny with promises of reinforcements from Manila’s military units while handing money out.

Manila Cathedral was also known as the “Parish of San Pedro.”

On the night of January 20, 1872, some 200 indio soldiers and workers rose up in revolt under a Sergeant Lamadrid. They killed the officers in Fuerza San Felipe and took over the fort. Then, they fired their cannons to signal their victory to the imagined Manila comrades.

At dawn, loyalist forces poured around the fort. An assault was attempted but failed. So, they put up a blockade and starve the enemy.

The rebels were fully aware that the fort wasn’t stocked with food. So, they hoisted up a white flag. Fifteen mutineers came out to negotiate a surrender. After taking 15 steps, the rebels fell down dead under a heavy barrage of rifle fire. The loyalists crashed into the fort and rounded up the rebels.

The aftermath of the mutiny was a mass purging of people who had been suspected of having led or supported it.

Once news of the mutiny reached Manila, Governor-General Izquierdo had Padre Burgos and a number of liberals quickly arrested such as—P. Jacinto Zamora, (co-*cura* of the Manila Cathedral), P. Mariano Gomez (*cura* of Bacoor, Cavite), Don Agustin Mendoza (*cura* of Sta. Cruz in Manila), Don Feliciano Gomez, Don Antonio Regidor (eminent lawyer and municipal councilor), Joaquin Pardo de Tavera (counsellor of the administration), Don Enrique Paraiso, D. Pio Basa (old employees), Don Jose Basa, Maximo Paterno, Crisanto Reyes, Ramon Maurente and many others.

Padre Burgos was charged of rebellion to establish a republican government for the Americans. Francisco Saldua, a friar parrot, claimed that a U.S. fleet would come to help the rebellion.

## 1872

### **Gov-Gen Izquierdo flim-flammed Masonic crackdown**

Often portrayed as a bloodthirsty butcher for executing the GOMBURZA priests, yet Governor-General Rafael de Izquierdo wasn’t the monster he was. He was just a dog. He was just corrupt. The problem was, Governor-General Rafael de Izquierdo was a Mason.

Possibly troubled by his conscience, or what awaited him in the lodges abroad, he went cautiously but smartly in meting out punishments to Freemasons implicated in the Cavite mutiny. He even saved as much accused as he could.

Three days after crashing the revolt, 41 mutineers were quickly tried by a military court and sentenced to die on January 26. On the next day, Izquierdo pardoned 26 of the convicts.

On February 6, 11 accused were condemned to death. Izquierdo commuted their sentence to life imprisonment which was appealable.

On February 15, the sensational decision was issued. Padre Gomez, Burgos and Zamora were to die by strangulation in Bagumbayan field. But their co-accused, Freemasons Enrique Paraiso, Maximo Inocencio and Crisanto De Los Reyes were sentenced to 10 years deportation in Cartagena in Spain. Again, exile was appealable.

On February 29, 8 more were ordered to be executed. But on March 8, Izquierdo pulled 20 convicts out of the death list in one stroke and commuted their sentence to deportation in San Ignacio de Agana in Guam. Many were Freemasons.

If anything, Izquierdo flip-flopped the military court's decisions. Of the 63 mutineers accused, 50 were saved from certain death.

An 1872 contemporary, one Rafael Ma. Labra, wrote about the unexpected turn of the event, "The persons accused of having contributed to the same and even having taken some part in the bloody insurrection of 1872 were taken *in comfortable vessels* to the very gates of Spain, to Cadiz, Ceuta where they could plead with the central government for justice or mercy. Note the contrast." [Emphases added.]

To say that Izquierdo had hunted Masons down was totally false. In Cebu, a Masonic lodge, Logia Española, was raided and shut down by the local police. But why hit a remote provincial lodge when they teemed around Manila?

If Izquierdo had ordered a crackdown, then Mariano Marti, a 33° Spanish Mason and a popular medical doctor in Manila, would be the first to go. But he didn't. Again,

he was untouched in the entire length of the ruckus.

Marti was a lecturer and later, appointed dean of the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Santo Tomas. He was married to the sister of Padre Jose Burgos. He was too prominent to be missed out.

Izquierdo did try to save Masons. After all, he had already sold them out. Executing them would be embarrassing to the canine class. Dogs are loyal. Izquierdo was not.



***Magallanes Monument & Drive.***  
*A monument to Ferdinand Magellan (below) used to stand at the foot of Puente Espana (now Jones Bridge) where the National Press Club building now rises. It was at the head of the breezy Paseo Magallanes where people used to stroll and even dine out (right).*



**Guam village in the 19th century.** Windswept, desolate, and typhoon-beaten—the backwardness of Guam had made the Filipino exiles felt like they never left home.



## HK Freemasons rescued Filipino bros in Guam

Right after the Cavite Mutiny convicts landed at Guam, Freemasons in Hong Kong jumped into action to snatch their Filipino bros from this remote Spanish Pacific outpost.

Where Izquierdo had disgraced Freemasonry, the Hong Kong Masons redeemed it. Antonio Ma. Regidor, who was among the exiles, wrote in his essay *Masonry in the Philippines*, “The Masonic lodges of Hongkong (German and English) agreed to bring to their camp the persecuted Filipinos.”

Guam was a strange territory. So, they dispatched M. Doiron, a captain of the French schooner *Anne*, to Guam’s capital, Agana. Here, he put up residence and a lodge under the Hong Kong Scottish Rite. Soon, he established contacts with the banished Filipino Masons and counted heads.

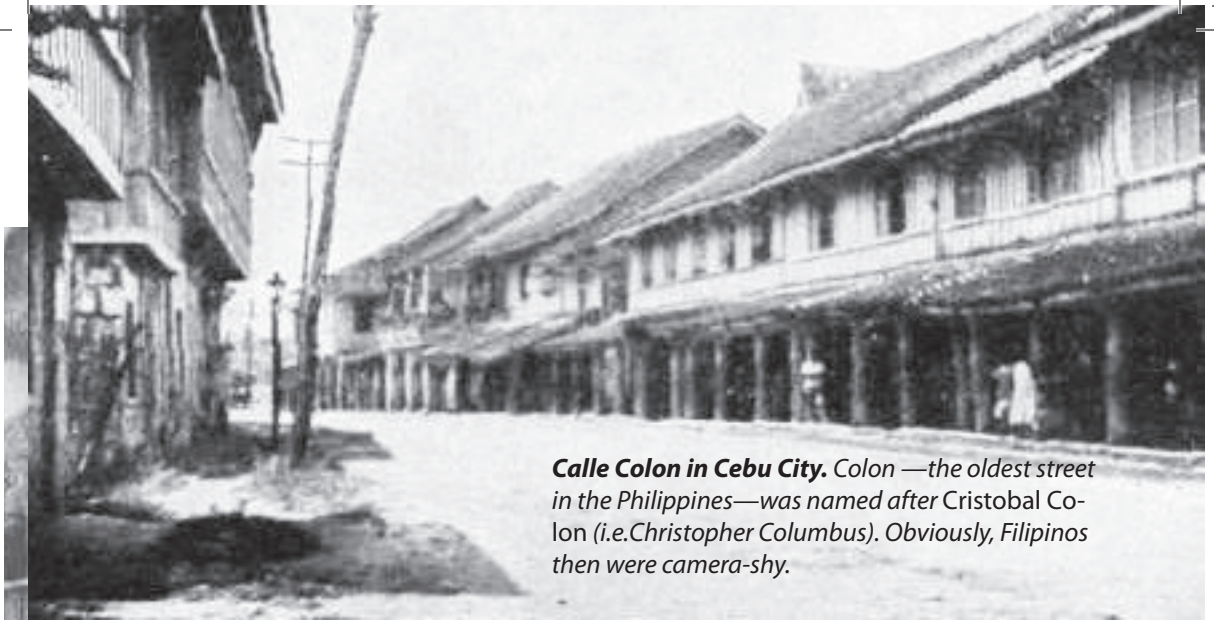
Passing the intelligence to the British colony, J.J. Reynolds, a master of a prominent Hong Kong lodge, assembled next the team that would spring up the exiles. He

was a principal associate in the Anthony Brothers trading firm.

With Doiron set up and waiting in Guam, Reynolds sent the schooner *Americana Ruxax*, captained by a certain M. Holcan, to Agana. On signal, Regidor discreetly boarded the two-masted ship disguised as a priest. Quickly, it sailed down to Yap in the adjacent Caroline islands where he transferred to the boat *Islander*.

Next, the *Islander* sailed farther down to Solomon islands to throw possible pursuers off track until it turned back and dropped anchor at Palau. Then it steered west to Maluku (Moluccas) where Regidor hopped next into the German schooner *Coheren* bound for Hong Kong.

Regidor was unclear on who were the other escapees that had ran away with him. They were many. He wrote, “*The escapees were eventually transferred to the German schooner, Coheran and were brought to Hongkong.*” [Emphasis added.]



**Calle Colon in Cebu City.** Colon—the oldest street in the Philippines—was named after Cristobal Colon (i.e. Christopher Columbus). Obviously, Filipinos then were camera-shy.

1874

### **Burgos' brod in law led organization of lodges across the country**

Mariano Marti, brother-in-law of the executed Padre Jose Burgos, spearheaded the organization of Masonic lodges across the country.

On March 1, 1874, he established the *Logia Luz de Oriente No. 6* in Manila.

Next, he revived *Logia La Española* in Cebu which had been raided by the veterana in 1872. *Aduana* accountant Señor Camacho, who had been transferred to this Visayan city after the Cavite mutiny, helped Marti significantly.

In Iloilo, Marti established *Logia La Libertad* with the help of Juan Ortadeno, an engineer.

Rufino Pascual Torrejon, a *sub-inspector general de Sanidad Militar* and 33° Mason, was behind Marti in the spread of Freemasonry. He was empowered by the Gran Oriente de España to constitute lodges.

### **Bro. Marti laid out principles for propaganda campaign**

Initiates to the newfound Spanish Gran Oriente lodges were instructed on the how-tos of racial relations between members. Antonio Ma. Regidor, in his essay *Masonry in the Philippines*, wrote that Marti used to tell Filipino Masons the following—

*No. Spain is not the friars. Hate the latter; but love Spain and the Spanish Liberals and Masons, who likewise detest the monastic institutions as was proven in 1836, when they slaughtered the friars in the Peninsula. We will make your complaints heard and acted upon by the Spanish Government; if you will unite with the Spanish Masons and will use only legal means to regain your rights, you will find newspapers in Spain, educate your children there, petition for representation in Parliament, and agitate for the acceptance of these sentiments.*

From the lodges, the instruction leapt to become the operative principle behind the Propaganda Movement. And this was what the propagandistas had exactly done.



**Jose Basa, patriot.** *The 1872 exiles unwittingly readied the way-stations for the propagandistas to come as they spread out to the West.*

---

## 1876

### 1872 exiles settled down abroad

Four years after the vile Cavite mutiny plot, the star-crossed victims who had been deported abroad finally got their pardon. But many hardly set foot on their homes again.

On November 23, 1874, a general amnesty was issued to all convicts of the 1872 Cavite mutiny. Many got to avail of it only after a couple of years later.

### Guam deportees

From the British colony, Antonio Ma. Regidor traveled to Marseilles in France and appeared before the Spanish consul in Paris in April 1876 where he obtained pardon.

Picking up the pieces of his shattered life, Regidor went and lived in London where he resumed his lawyering profession. Also, he took correspondent jobs for a couple of publications.

Joaquin H. Pardo de Tavera had shaken off his sentence in 1875. But too vexed and humbled by the 1872 event, he left Manila and settled down in Paris with his wife Juliana for good.

Jose Basa resumed his law practice in Cavite but returned to Hong Kong.

### Cartagena deportees

Exiles in Cartagena, a navy port city in southeastern Spain, was luckier. An uprising that broke out had afforded them the chance to escape to France.

Maximo Inocencio obtained his pardon in Marseilles. On his return to the Philippines, he resumed his former construction business. He joined *Logia España en Filipinas No. 211* and was active in Freemasonry. Crisanto de los Reyes also returned home in 1876. He made it big as a ship chandler and donor to many charities.

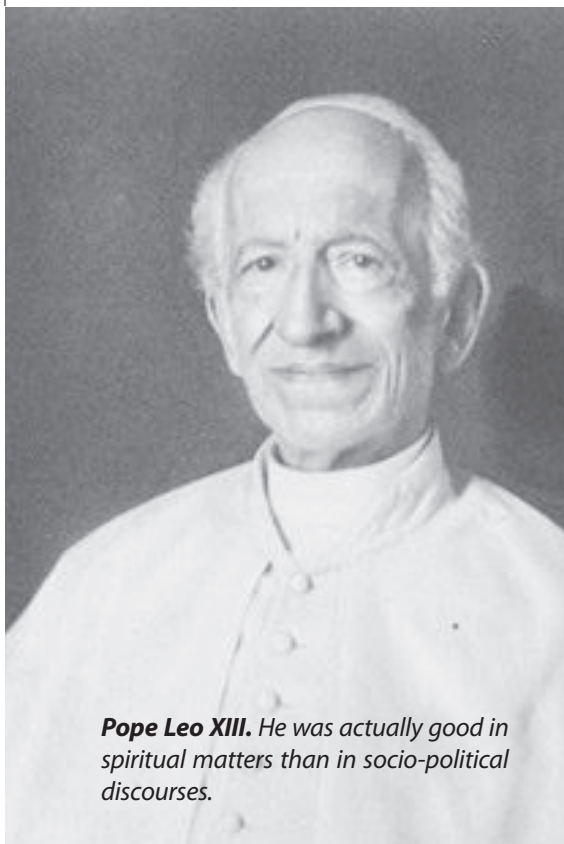
Finally, Enrique Paraiso stayed in France where he actively took part in French and Algerian Freemasonry and helped persecuted Filipinos. He never returned to the Philippines.

## 1884

### Gran Oriente Nacional set foot in Manila

The *Gran Oriente Nacional de España* arrived in the Philippines through its Grand Delegate, Jose Centeno. Mariano Martí's *Logia Luz de Oriente No. 6*, founded in 1874, switched to this Orient and was re-chartered accordingly.

Centeno was chief of the Mining Bureau in the Philippines from 1876 to 1886. He was appointed Civil Governor of Manila by Gov.-Gen. Emilio Terrero on April 30, 1887 to complete the "*Triangulo de los 33°*."



**Pope Leo XIII.** *He was actually good in spiritual matters than in socio-political discourses.*

1884

### **Pope Leo XIII branded constitutional governments “Satanic”**

Of the previous papal bulls and encyclicals issued against Freemasonry, Pope Leo XIII’s was the most dramatic.

The encyclical, titled *Humanum Genus*, came out on April 20, 1884. It denounced Freemasonry for hyping people up to write their own laws, elect their own rulers, allow laymen (not churchmen) to educate children, wed by civil ceremony, take all religions equally, separate the Church from the State—all under a loathsome principle called “liberty.”

All this, to Pope Leo XIII’s mind, was “Satanic.”

1887

### **Triangulo de los 33° faced the friars *mano-a-mano***

A troika of liberal Spanish administrators—and 33° Masons—governed the country briefly but with striking results. Liberal Spanish Prime Minister Práxedes Mateo Sagasta appointed Emilio Terrero as governor-general of the Philippines, backed by Benito Quiroga, Director General for Civil Administrations.

Sagasta was the Grand Master of the Gran Oriente de España, the Spanish grand lodge.

Jose Centeno, Civil Governor of the Province of Manila, was appointed by Terrero later in 1887.

Called as the “*Triangulo de los 33°*,” the triad dealt with the friars straightly. Terrero sacked the Binondo *cura paroco*, Padre Jose Havia Campomanes, for favoring the Chinese to chair the town fiesta committee over the *indios* who had the right of place. Similarly, Quiroga, citing a forgotten 1856 health law, banned the costly but unsanitary church service of displaying corpses openly during church wake.

Moreover, Terrero okayed the establishment of an orphanage and a vocational school in the town of Malolos in Bulacan—even giving it a start-up fund—on the petition of lawyer Marcelo Del Pilar. He swept aside the friars’ protest on the grounds of Pope Leo XIII’s bull.

1887

### **Gov. Terrero protected Rizal**

While controversial author Jose Rizal

**Calle Centeno, Sta. Cruz, Manila.** Wide damages caused by the 1886 earthquake prompted the city administration to order residents to switch to iron roof sheets in place of the traditional tiles. Falling brick tiles could break skulls but iron sheets could ... cut heads off? (Was the street named after Civil Governor Jose Centeno?)



appeared under close surveillance short of an arrest, yet he was actually coming well secured by special favor from Gov.-Gen. Emilio Terrero y Perinat.

Rizal's novel, *Noli Me Tangere*, came off the press on March 21, 1887 and had stirred the frailes in Manila restless since then. The author came home on August 5, 1887. But since Rizal's arrival, Gov.-Gen. Terrero had been pestered by the clergies to brand Rizal "dangerous" and arrest him. Two weeks in the Philippines, Rizal was summoned by Gov.-Gen. Terrero. After a second conference, the author left Terrero's office with a bodyguard, a cultured

Spanish officer, Lt. Jose Taviel de Andrade. Old-liners were appeased by the 24/7 tail on Rizal. So were the Masons who had seen a Solomonic decision on Terrero's fulfillment of his obligation to a brother in distress.

Jose Rizal was initiated in Acacia Lodge No. 9 in Madrid in 1885.

Terrero next passed Rizal's novel to the Permanent Commission on Censorship for judgment. The body issued its prejudiced findings on December 29.

Seemingly, Terrero vied time for Rizal who left the country on February 3, 1888.



**Spanish-era Escolta at end of 1890s.** Escolta was Manila's Wall Street. Foreign companies held offices here. Signboard "Ingles" on the left said it was an English hotel. Next to it was "Oto" which—according to my Spanish—was a car sales company.

**Original cover of Jose Rizal's novel *Noli Me Tangere* (1887).** The illustrations, Rizalistas say, are actually symbols loaded with coded meanings. How many can you crack?



# What had bugged the frailes about the Noli

The novel *Noli Me Tangere* infuriated the friars. The cover alone said it all. There was an illustration of a woman at the upper part which continued onto a friar's habit—with legs with stubby hair—showing below. What Rizal probably meant was, the friars were ... women. Understand that it was a very macho society then. Call a man a *mujer* or a *maricon* and there goes your front teeth. Seemingly, Rizal not only knew how to provoke a fight. He knew well how to jeer at his enemies.

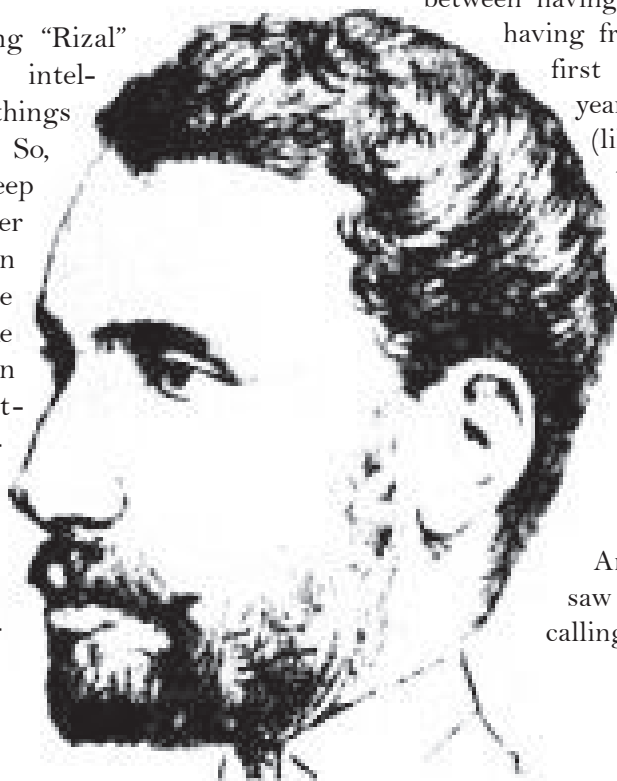
But being “Rizal” meant being intelligent at all things at all times. So, what was deep about the cover drawing? In his novel, the friars were like women when scorned—bitter while hiding behind the government pitted against Ibarra or Isagani. But nor-

mally, they are nosy and meticulous, specific to the last detail. Remember Fray San Agustin's long racial slurs against the Filipinos?

Being specific is the essence of childcare. So, you hear mom yell “Don't touch that!” Or “Don't put the cat in the microwave open!” If she yells, you probably did something ... fun?

But there is a whole lot of difference between having a mom and having friars. For the first 100 hundred years, the friars (like moms) taught *indios* to talk and walk. But in the next 200 years, the friars told *indios* to sit down and shut up.

And they never saw the irony in calling their sons



**Jose T. de Andrade.** Rizal's bodyguard

1888

## Manifest rally revived reform movement

With the 1872 Filipino reformadores gone, yet the country's failed reform campaign was renewed almost single-handedly by lawyer and writer Marcelo Del Pilar by way of the *Marcha de Manifestacion* of 1888.

While still in college, Del Pilar was a regular attendee of Padre Jose Burgos' nightly lectures at an *almacen* (warehouse) in Malabon besides his contemporaries Numeriano Adriano and Paciano Rizal.

Winning little reform battles in Bulacan, he went national. He organized some 300 *gobernadorcillos* (village chieftains) and *principalias* (prominent citizens) of Manila province's *arabales* (suburbs) into a rally like Doroteo Cortez, Jose Anacleto Ramos, and Timoteo Paez—all Freemasons.

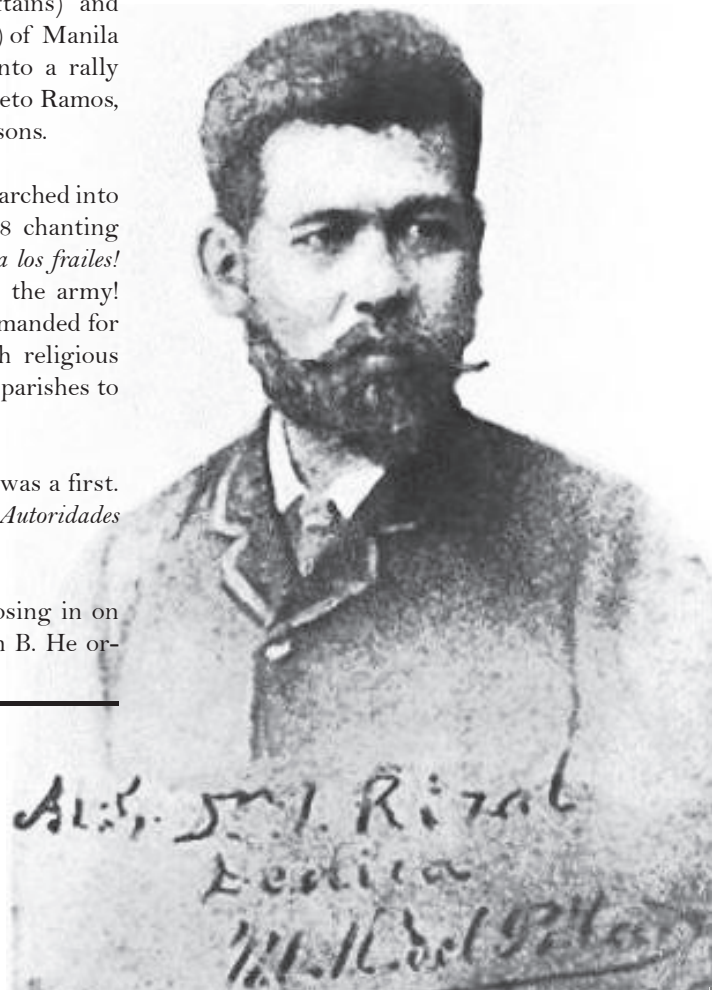
From Sta. Cuz suburb, they marched into Intramuros on October 1, 1888 chanting *Viva el rey! Viva el ejercito! Fuera los frailes!* (Long live the king! Long live the army! Down with the friars!) They demanded for the suppression of the Spanish religious orders and the handover of the parishes to Filipino clergies, among others.

It was bold. It was frank. It was a first. And it whipped up the *Junta de Autoridades* to nab the organizers.

Sensing the *autoridades* closing in on him, Del Pilar switched to Plan B. He or-

ganized the *Comite de Propaganda* which would fund the reform campaign in Spain. Then, he slipped out of Manila on October 30, 1888 and into Barcelona.

Let's hand it to Del Pilar. He was the maestro politico among the 1896 heroes. He was sharp. He was fast. He was outspoken. He was great. But strategy? He knew nothing about strategy! He just didn't get it. Distracting the clergies from church business was like, well ... like distracting a crocodile from eating your baby. When he did, the crocodile leapt and chased him. So off to Spain he fled. ❖



**Marcelo H. Del Pilar.**

*The master politician among the propagandistas.*

## *District Conventions*

By VW Jovy Magbanua, HEAAGM



# The Masonic Heartlands

***Always on the road, our traveling Brother, VW Jovy Magbanua, takes shots and writes down notes on the district conventions he has gone to over the past months across our grand jurisdiction.***

Going to District Conventions is an experience Masons must never miss. The business is the same all over. The District Deputy Grand Masters (DDGMs) present reports. The body discusses and passes a resolution. The Senior Grand Lecturer steps in to give Masonic Education. The Grand Master checks on the bros and caps the event with a speech on the issue of the day or a topic of his choice.

The plenary session is labor. But before and after are the stuff Brotherhood is made of—with amazing discoveries to tell.

So, going to conventions give a picture, or a collage, of the Masonic heartlands—places where the Brethren assembled most and Masonry thrives. But a word play gives “heartland” another meaning—a place where Masonic affection rules.

Thus, at another and finer level, this is what a District Convention is. This is also what I have tried to capture in text and photos here. Warm affections have I earned in my many trips. Brethren are met. Some names are remembered. Some names—for my failure to take Memoplus—are forgotten. But just the same, their faces and memories live in me.

**Nov. 9-10, 2012.  
57th Mindanao Regional Convention.  
Camiguin Convention Center,  
Mambajao, Camiguin.**

From Cagayan de Oro City port, the Centennial Grand Master’s party had to board a boat and attack the Bohol Sea to get to our brethren in Camiguin island. But it was worth the effort. Warm hospitality awaited us at the island-province. Besides, cruising a calm sea with a breathtaking view of the sunset was refreshing.

Our host, VW Salic B. Dumarpa, DDGM of Masonic District RX-B (Camiguin and Misamis Oriental), unwittingly had lots of warm friendship in store. The ladies gave a musical number at the Grand Master’s Night. Even the province’s governor,

**Grand Master's Nite at Camiguin.** MW Gabionza chatted with Camiguin governor Jurdin Jesus Romualdo who thumbed up before the camera. RW Tom Rentoy was busy with his sms. Lanzones, the province's top product, was the centerpiece of every table.



Jurdin Jesus Romualdo, comfortably sat down with the brethren and belted out tunes. The host, Camiguin Island Lodge No. 296 F. & A. M., knew how to have fun.

**November 16-17, 2012.  
7th Mindanao Scottish Rite Convention  
Socskargen Masonic Center, Gen. Santos City**



Centennial Grand Master Santiago T. Gabionza and Sovereign Grand Commander MW Juanito P. Abargas, PGM led the Orient of Socskargen in a wreath-laying ceremony at the Rizal Monument in Gen. Santos City plaza. On the fourth row is GLP Assistant Grand Treasurer VW Dennis T. Gabionza. On the seventh row is MW Peter Lim Lo Suy, PGM.

**November 24, 2012.**  
**NCR Multi-District Convention 2012**  
**New Plaridel Masonic 1440 San Marcelino, Ermita, Manila**

Barely had we recovered from our Camiguin trip when rushed to the GLP and attend the NCR Multi-District Convention. VW Gregorio G. Arcangel, DDGM of Masonic District NCR-A was the host.



**Quezon City Lodge No. 122 brethren who came to the NCR convention.** (from left to right) Jason Albelda, Romulo Marcelo, Godo Velarde, Jr., Centennial Grand Master MW Santiago Gabionza, Jr, VW Benito Se, Jr. and Eugene Tolentino.

**November 30, 2012.**  
**80th Annual District Convention of Region IV A-1**  
**Atheneum School, Noveleta, Cavite**

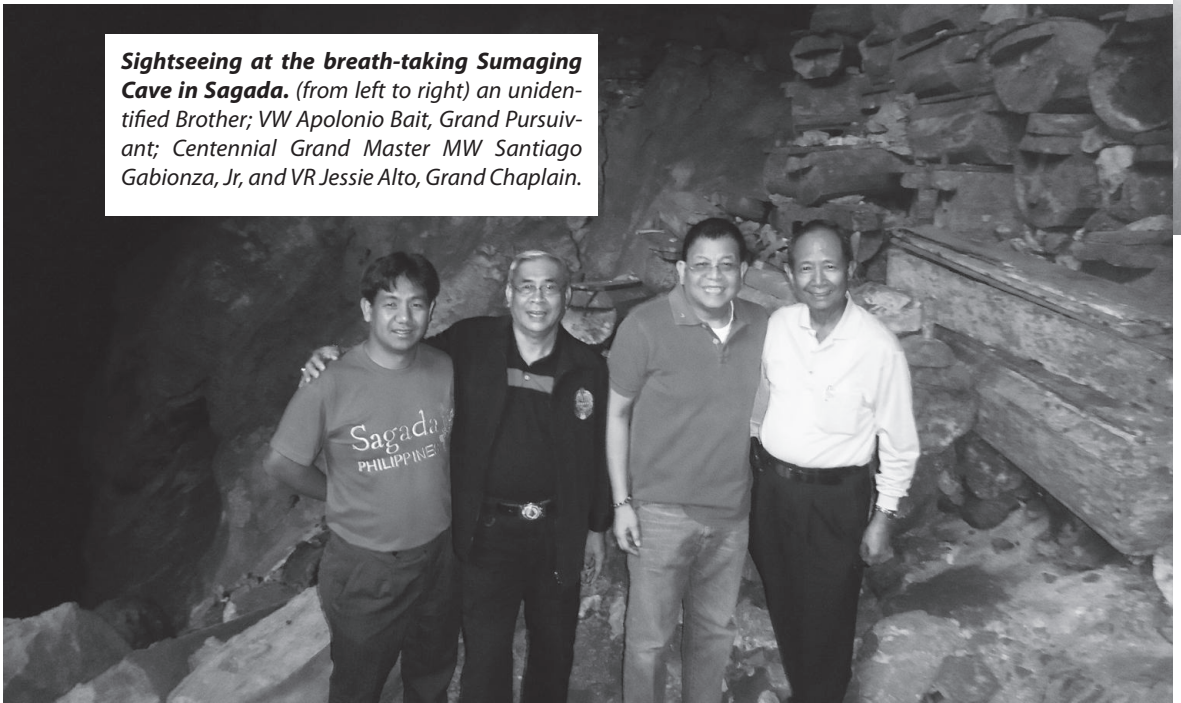


**GLP's big guns.** (From left to right) Convention's special guest VW Voltaire Gazmin; GLP Grand Treasurer MW Rudyardo Bunda, PGM; Centennial Grand Master MW Santiago Gabionza, Jr.; and Junior Grand Warden RW Tomas Rentoy III.

**Nov. 30, 2012.**  
**1st Region IV A-2 Cavite District Convention.**  
**Gen. Trias Convention Center, Gen. Trias, Cavite**



**Token apron.** VW Emmanuel Velasco, DDGM RIV A-2 handed Centennial Grand Master MW Santiago Gabionza, Jr. a souvenir apron. Senior Grand Warden RW Alan Purisima is on the left. Located in an all-Aguinaldo territory, yet the brethren here paid tribute to Illus. Bro. Andres Bonifacio.



**Sightseeing at the breath-taking Sumaging Cave in Sagada.** (from left to right) an unidentified Brother; VW Apolonio Bait, Grand Pursuivant; Centennial Grand Master MW Santiago Gabionza, Jr, and VR Jessie Alto, Grand Chaplain.

**December 1, 2012.**  
**20th Northeastern Luzon Multi-District Convention**  
**Multi-Purpose Building, Bontoc, Mt. Province**


Right after the Cavite District Convention, we rushed back to Quezon City and jumped into a waiting bus generously provided by the brethren of Mountain Province. VW Norberto M. Cue, Sr., Grand Sword Bearer and a native of Bontoc, was at hand to see us get to his hometown safely.

**Opening of the Northeast Luzon Multi-District Convention.** (From left to right) VR Jesse Alto, Grand Chaplain; VW Norberto M. Cue, Sr., Grand Sword Bearer; Centennial Grand Master MW Santiago Gabionza, Jr.; VW Benjamin Mangacheo, DDGM of Masonic District CAR-A; VW Felixberto Viernes, DDGM RII-E; VW Ramon Lugo, DDGM RII-B; VW Benjamin Lasam, DDGM RII-C; VW Romy Cua, RII-D; and VW Oscar Damil, DDGM RII-A.



The party was a merry caboodle of brethren, ladies and lewisas. On board were: Sister Aileen T. Gabionza; VW Jose Gabionza, PDGL; VW Jesse Alto, Grand Chaplain; Sister Michelle Alto; VW Romalino Valdez, Senior Grand Deacon; VW Apolonio Bait, Grand Pursuivant; VW Hector Emberga, DDGM MD R XII-A; VW Walter Lagadan (now deceased); Sister Lalaine Magbanua; Sister Alma Rafaella Tayo, Past Grand Guardian; Sister Nancy Jalipa, Past Miss Philippines Job's Daughters; and Sister Mikey Rualo, the incumbent Miss Philippines Job's Daughters.

The 11-hour trip paid off. VW Benjamin C. Mangacheo, DDGM of Masonic District CAR-A and convention organizer, mustered all the DDGMs—and some 300 brethren delegates. Peaks and ravines were no match to the determination of our Cordillera brethren.

Moreover, Bontoc Lodge No. 140 F. & A.M., the host lodge, very well knew what “caring for the brethren” is all about. 

By Bro. Ariston B. Samilin

## The Widow's Son in You

*How must we imitate Hiram Abiff in this age of i-pods, GPS and telemarketing?*

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Master Masons are called Widow's Son after the celebrated but tragic artist Hiram Abiff. According to both Masonic lore and Biblical accounts, he was a widow's son from the tribe of Naphtali.

Today, we have been charged to emulate the exemplary character of Grand Master Hiram Abiff. But how must we imitate this Masonic idol in an era of i-pods, GPS, and telemarketing?

First, a modern widow's son is, and should be, desirous of knowledge which he will use for the service of his fellow Masons in particular and mankind in general. Hiram Abiff, despite his humble beginnings, was somebody in his time. Without our Illustrious Brethren with brains, talents and spirit, how would Freemasonry survive through the millennia? How would the world establish constitutional governments, enjoy more civil rights and start on 20th century arts and sciences?

Second, no matter how talented Hiram Abiff was, yet his talent never got into his head. His daily devotions to the Ever-Living God for inspiration meant that he was only borrowing ideas from the Almighty, making himself into a humble channel of the divine.


Third, a modern widow's son obeys his superiors just as he urges obedience to his inferiors. Highly-skilled that he was, yet

Hiram Abiff humbly listened to the towering figures who had worked with him, King Solomon and Hiram of Tyre.

Fourth, with humility and talent, a modern widow's son knows his place in the lodge, especially when it turns into a beehive of labor. He is a team player.

Fifth, as a team player, a modern widow's son is proficient in all areas of lodge labors so that he can zealously take whatever the Worshipful Master throws at him. Where some masons ran away from their obligations, Hiram Abiff fulfilled the contract to the letter.

Sixth, a modern widow's son travels as a worthy and zealous individual. With humility, talent and proficiency, he is secured in himself and among his brethren. That is enough for wages. But the ruffians were not. They were parasites. They bullied their way and stole what they had not earned. They were the predecessors of the unmasonic Masons.

A widow's son, in spirit and in character, should reside in you—in all the days of your life. 

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Bro. Ariston B. Samilin is a member of San Jose Del Monte Lodge No. 357 F. & A. M. in San Jose Del Monte, Bulacan.

## *Community Service*

### NCR-B gives free medical mission

Masonic District NCR-B, under the leadership of VW Reynato M. Paynaganan, held a free medical mission at Baranggay Sipac-Almacen, Navotas City on Dec. 23, 2012.

Stationed at the Baranggay Hall, the Brethren extended services to some 140 indigent residents. The project was conducted jointly with Biak-na-Bato Lodge No. 7 F. & A. M. under WM Wilfredo Cayabyab.

Other participating lodges were Nilad Lodge No. 12, Island Luz Minerva Lodge No. 5, Labong Lodge No. 59, and Bagumbayan Lodge No. 4. PNP SOCO (Scene of the Crime Operatives) also lent services. ☒



## *In Due Form*

By Bro. Jonathan R. Amoroso

# The End



An unusual tremor rocks California. Then roads begin to crack. A black limousine is chased by a collapsing highway. Grounds caved in hundreds of meters below. Oceans swelled by the seconds. Tsunami waves carpeted the cities.

If the prediction of the Mayans turns out to be true, the above scenes from the movie *2012* have very well portrayed what could happen on that infamous day of December 21, 2012. According to internet posts, the 2012 phenomenon is a range of eschatological beliefs. Cataclysmic and transformative events would occur. This date is regarded as the end-date of a 5,125-year-long cycle in the Mesoamerican Long Count calendar. As such, Mayan festivities commemorate the date in countries that used to be part of the Mayan empire (Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador).

Others suggested that the date marks the end of the world. Scenarios are likely the arrival of the next solar maximum, an interaction between the Earth and the black hole at the center of the galaxy. Or the Earth's collision with a planet called "Nibiru."

A moment as eventful as this would have driven one to think what one is likely to do if it were really his last day on Earth. Surprisingly, Mang Joel, my favorite barber, replied that he was inclined to touch

Jelo's butt on the day of the reckoning.

Many folks missed the point. This is a sharp contrast to what have happened many years ago when a sort of a doomsday one-day-of-darkness was also foretold. Children stayed at home with their parents in the event that the omen actually arrives. They held hands, prayed, thanked and praised the Lord.

From another perspective though, the end of the physical world is of no moment to Masons. It is said that the "lesson of the final step is that every man must die. But if he reached the light, he overcomes death and achieves immortality... the death which faces the candidate in the Third Degree will cause him to recognize that he is no more a psychological being who has both a soul and a body."

In essence, man needs not wait for the Mayan soothsaying to fall out. Life will end with or without it. The human heart will have its final beat in time. The air that gives life will grow thinner and will elude the human lungs even during the windiest day of the year. His eyes will eventually close and darkness shall be his entire landscape even if the sun still majestically sits in her afternoon thrones. And everything will be nothing.

If by our acts we have made this world a better world –this is all that matters in the end. ❖

### Calling for IMES Enrollees

Registration is now on for the Institute of Masonic Education and Studies (IMES) class to be held at the Grand Lodge of the Philippines in Manila.

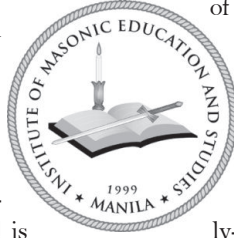
The venue aims to conveniently serve Masons who are based in and around the National Capital Region (NCR).

Once registration reaches to thirty (30) enrollees, a class is set and is good to go.

Five subjects are up for study, as follows: Masonic History; Liturgy. Rituals and Ceremonies; Philosophy and Symbolism, Juris-

prudence, Laws and Regulations; and Lodge Management.

Each subject costs Php 600; hence, a total of Php 3,000 per course.



On January 19, the institute concluded its first Extension Class in 2013 in Camp Crame, Quezon City. Since May 2011, the IMES has conducted specially-arranged “out-of-town” classes in Tuguegarao, Vigan, Isabela, Olongapo, Cabanatuan, Balanga, Los Baños and Naga. For more information, please call VW Renato Briz, Director of Operations, at 09212600202 and 09153152373. ❖

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### GLP Hostel now open to the Brethren

The Grand Lodge of the Philippines (GLP) Hostel, located right within the GLP compound, is now accepting guests and reservations.

The 20-room hostel, in various sizes, is run by the Order of the Amaranth under Sis. Araceli Dela Cruz, Grand Royal Matron. The ground floor is given to the Masonic Supply Center and Appendant Bodies’ offices.

The second floor is divided into 5 rooms for single and double occupancies; 2 for triple and quadruple occupancies. Amenities include air-conditioning units, hot & cold showers, and LCD televisions.

The third floor is split into 8 single and double occupancy rooms; 3 for triple and quadruple occupancies—with the same amenities mentioned.

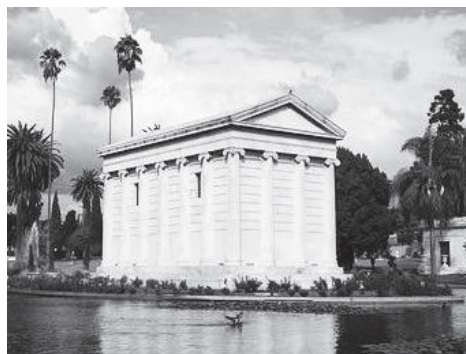
Room rate for a single-occupancy room is Php 900 a day; for double, Php 1,000.

Dormitory-type rooms can also be had—with 2 double-deck beds and single bed. Room rate is Php 300 per head a day.

Masons can book or inquire by calling Sis. Lalaine Magbanua, Operations Manager, through landline number (02)5227407 or mobile number 09178490963. ❖

## Out of the Humdrum

By VW Robert Asuncion



# A Lodge of Magicians—Really

1. The Invisible Lodge founded in 1953 in New York by Bro. Brewerton H. Clarke also known as Sir Felix Korim. The membership of the lodge is exclusively for performing magicians who were Masons.

2. One of the most exclusive masonic group is The Society of Blue Friars. Membership is by invitation only and is limited to masonic authors. Founded in 1932, the society admitted its one hundredth member in 2011. Membership growth is slow because its bylaws allows that only one new friar shall be appointed each year.

3. The Detroit Masonic Temple is the world's largest Masonic Temple. The building houses a wide-variety of public spaces including three auditoriums and two ballrooms, a 160' x 100' clear-span Drill Hall. Recreational facilities also includes a swimming pool, racquet ball court, gymnasium, bowling alley, and a pool hall. There are also numerous lodge rooms, offices, and dining spaces as well as an 'hotel' tower designed for visiting members. Its Theatre is considered as one of the finest in the United States and has a seating capacity of 4,404.

4. In the old days before the advent of electricity, lodges would meet just before every full moon so that the brethren would have light to travel. They are called "Moon Lodges". This is a tradition that can be dated back to the 1400's. There are still a number of Lodges practicing the said tradition.

5. While most Freemasons Lodges in

New Zealand meet in the evening, Daylight Lodges meet at lunchtime or during the day.

6. Said to be the first daylight Lodges in the world are Thespian Lodge No. 232 and Orpheus Lodge No. 394. They were established to cater for brethren who because of their employment in the entertainment and media could not attend Masonic meetings at nighttime.

7. Early Operative Masons are accustomed to making their 'mark' upon stones. In Speculative Freemasonry our most distinctive personal 'mark' used nearly on a daily basis is our signature. The two words: Ne Varietur literally mean: "It shall not be varied (or altered)" alluding to a Mason's signature.

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

9. In 1920, Gate City Lodge #522 in Kansas City MO met every day of the week except Sunday to confer a record 1,107 degrees, averaging 21 degrees a week.

10. The Hollywood Forever Cemetery is a famous landmark in Los Angeles. It is the final resting place to some of Hollywood's famous names, Rudolf Valentino, Tyrone Power, Jane Mansfield and Bros. Mel Blanc and Cecile DeMille. One of the most interesting facts about the cemetery is that it is once the home of a Masonic Lodge, Southland Lodge No. 617 which was chartered in 1925 by the Grand Lodge of California. ☒

# Great Men Wear Aprons.



They are Heroes and Leaders. They are bold, brave, brilliant and big-hearted men.

But there are thousands of greater but nameless Masons out there—helpful citizens, successful professionals, responsible family providers and caring fathers. All worthy brethren. They strive everyday to make themselves deserving of this apron.

Make yourself count. Make your apron proud—of you. It's what a hundred years of having a GLP meant. A hundred years of making good men better.

**THE CABLETOW**

