
The Ball and the Cross

The Ball and the Cross (Annotated)

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G. K. Chesterton Biography

Gilbert Keith Chesterton (29 May 1874 – The Ball and the Cross (Annotated) 14 June 1936) better known as **G. K. Chesterton** was an English writer, lay theologian, poet, philosopher, dramatist, journalist, orator, literary and art critic, biographer, and Christian apologist. Chesterton is often referred to as the "prince of paradox." *Time* magazine, in a review of a biography of Chesterton, observed of his writing style: "Whenever possible Chesterton made his points with popular sayings, proverbs, allegories—first carefully turning them inside out."

Chesterton The Ball and the Cross (Annotated) is well known for his fictional priest-detective Father Brown, and for his reasoned apologetics. Even some of those who disagree with him have recognized the wide appeal of such works as *Orthodoxy* and *The Everlasting Man*. Chesterton, as a political thinker, cast aspersions on both Progressivism and Conservatism, saying, "The whole modern world has divided itself into Conservatives and Progressives. The Ball and the Cross (Annotated) The business of

Progressives is to go on making mistakes. The business of the Conservatives is to prevent the mistakes from being corrected." Chesterton routinely referred to himself as an "orthodox" Christian, and came to identify this position more and more with Catholicism, eventually converting to Roman Catholicism from High Church Anglicanism. George Bernard Shaw, Chesterton's "friendly enemy" according to *Time*, said of him, "He was a man of colossal genius." Biographers have identified him as a successor to such Victorian authors as Matthew Arnold, Thomas Carlyle, Cardinal John Henry Newman, and John Ruskin.

Early Life

Chesterton was born in Campden Hill in Kensington, London, the son of Marie Louise (Grosjean) and Edward Chesterton. He was baptized at the age of one month into the Church of England, though his family themselves were irregularly practising Unitarians. According to his autobiography, as a young man Chesterton became fascinated with the occult and, along with his brother Cecil, experimented with Ouija boards.

Chesterton was educated at St Paul's School, then attended the Slade School of Art in order to become an illustrator. The Slade is a department of University College London, where Chesterton also took classes in literature, but did not complete a degree in either subject.

Family Life

Chesterton married Frances Blogg in 1901; the marriage *The Ball and the Cross (Annotated)* lasted the rest *The Ball and the Cross (Annotated)* of his life. Chesterton credited Frances with leading him back to Anglicanism, though he later considered Anglicanism to be a "pale imitation". He entered full communion with the Roman Catholic Church in 1922.

Career

In 1896 Chesterton began working for the London publisher Redway, and T. Fisher Unwin, where he remained until 1902. During this period he also undertook his first journalistic work, as a freelance art and literary critic. In 1902 the *Daily News* gave him a weekly opinion column, followed in 1905 by a weekly column in *The Illustrated London News*, for which he continued to write for the next thirty years.

Early on Chesterton showed a great interest in and talent for art. He had planned to become an artist, and his writing shows a vision that clothed abstract ideas in concrete and memorable images. Even his fiction contained carefully concealed parables. Father Brown is perpetually correcting the incorrect vision of the bewildered folks at the scene of the crime and wandering off at the end with the criminal to exercise his priestly role of recognition and repentance. For example, in the story "The Flying Stars", Father Brown entreats the character Flambeau to give up his life of crime: "There is still youth and honour and humour in you; don't fancy they will last in that trade. Men may keep a sort of level of The Ball and the Cross (Annotated) good, but no man has ever been able to keep on one level of evil. The Ball and the Cross (Annotated) That road goes down and down. The kind man drinks and turns cruel; the frank man kills and lies about it. Many a man I've known started like you to be an honest outlaw, a merry robber of the rich, and ended stamped into slime."

Chesterton loved to debate, often engaging in friendly public disputes with such men as George The Ball and the Cross (Annotated) Bernard Shaw, H. G. Wells, Bertrand Russell and Clarence Darrow. According to his autobiography, he and Shaw played cowboys in a silent film that was never released.

Visual Wit

Chesterton was a large man, standing 6 feet 4 inches (1.93 m) and weighing around 20 stone

6 pounds (130 kg). The Ball and the Cross (Annotated) His girth gave rise to a famous anecdote. During the First World War a lady in London asked why he was not "out at the Front"; he replied, "If you go round to the The Ball and the Cross (Annotated) side, you will see that I am." On another occasion he remarked to his friend George Bernard Shaw, "To look at you, anyone would think a famine had struck England." Shaw retorted, "To look at you, anyone would think you have caused it." P. G. Wodehouse once described a very loud crash as "a sound like G. K. Chesterton falling onto a sheet The Ball and the Cross (Annotated) of tin".

Chesterton usually wore a cape and a crumpled hat, with a swordstick in The Ball and the Cross (Annotated) hand, and a cigar hanging out of his mouth. He had a tendency to forget where he was supposed to be going and miss the train that was supposed to take him there. It is reported that on several occasions he sent a telegram to his wife Frances from some distant The Ball and the Cross (Annotated) (and incorrect) location, writing such things as "Am in Market Harborough. Where ought I to be?" The Ball and the Cross (Annotated) to which she would The Ball and the Cross (Annotated) reply, "Home". Because of these instances of absent-mindedness and of Chesterton being extremely clumsy as a child, there has been speculation that Chesterton had undiagnosed developmental coordination disorder or attention deficit disorder.

Radio

In 1931, the BBC invited Chesterton to give a series of radio talks. He accepted, tentatively at first. However, from 1932 until his death, Chesterton delivered over 40 talks per year. He was allowed (and encouraged) to improvise on the scripts. This allowed his talks to maintain an intimate character, as did the decision to The Ball and the Cross (Annotated) allow The Ball and the Cross (Annotated) his wife and secretary to sit with him during his broadcasts.

The talks were very popular. A BBC official remarked, after Chesterton's death, that "in another year or so, he would have become the dominating voice from Broadcasting House."

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