

By ANNE DONNELL

*What's the origin of "whole hog"? If it's too much like a story the butcher at the grocery might tell, please spare me the gruesome details. Thank you. - Not a Hog Myself, but Like That Barbeque*

I have earlier indicated my deep love for barbeque. Especially, but not always, pork. I also have an affection bordering on addiction for bacon. A monthly highlight is my visit to a local breakfast buffet with a few other ex-teachers. We tell wild, almost gossipy, stories and eat piles of bacon.

A good friend, knowing of my bacon leanings and that I like to read cookbooks, drool over the pictures, but balk at fixing the food, handed me an amazing gift: Bacon Cookbook. I have spent happy hours with full color, full page photographs of a variety of bacon studded dishes. One of the most beautiful photos is of several bacon slices that have been brushed with brown sugar and red pepper before broiling.

The photographer's name is noted after the title page, but the author or compiler is anonymous. So I believe him or her to be one happy person who is sitting quietly at a kitchen table somewhere, claiming to be on the Adkins diet, and scarfing down the bacon. (Scarf is listed as teen slang, 1960, meaning to eat hastily – Online Etymology Dictionary).

Whole hog or go the whole hog was born without a butcher in sight; it's from a British poet, William Cowper. [1731-1800. He also wrote hymns. His long poem The Task is probably best known. It's 6,000 lines of blank verse about many subjects, almost conversational in tone. Cowper said, "My raptures are not conjured up/To serve occasions of poetic pomp,/But genuine." FYI, the name's pronounced "Cooper." Cowper, who wrestled with bouts of mental illness, was a close friend of John Newton, of "Amazing Grace" fame (and much more), and it is said that Newton saved his friend from suicide more than once.]

Cowper in a poem called "The Love of the World Reproved; or Hypocrisy Detected" (1779) shows himself rather uninformed about the Muslim faith (and ignorance about another's faith has rarely stopped any of us) as he tells a story about followers of Muhammad told by their

leader not to eat a certain part of the pig. They didn't know exactly which part, but kept experimenting (eating) until the pig was gone – the whole hog.

Hog was then an antiquated word in Britain, but not in America. The use of the phrase whole hog became particularly widespread during the United States presidential election of 1828, in which the enthusiastic supporters of Andrew Jackson were called “whole hog” Jacksonites.

Well, barbeque certainly goes with politics.

ONLINE DEPARTMENT – “Jokes - Sort of Religious” (Thanks, C.P. & J.W.)• *One day, when a seamstress was sewing while sitting close to a river, her thimble fell into the river. When she cried out, the Lord appeared and asked, “My dear child, why are you crying?” The seamstress replied that her thimble had fallen into the water, and that she needed it to help her husband in making a living for their family. The Lord dipped His hand into the water and pulled up a golden thimble set with sapphires. “Is this your thimble?” the Lord asked. The seamstress replied, “No.” The Lord again dipped into the river. He held out a golden thimble studded with rubies. “Is this your thimble?” the Lord asked. Again, the seamstress replied, “No.” The Lord reached down again and came up with a leather thimble. “Is this your thimble?” the Lord asked. The seamstress replied, “Yes.” The Lord was pleased with the woman's honesty and gave her all three thimbles to keep, and the seamstress went home happy. Some years later, the seamstress was walking with her husband along the riverbank, and her husband fell into the river and disappeared under the water. When she cried out, the Lord again appeared and asked her, “Why are you crying?” “Oh Lord, my husband has fallen into the river!” The Lord went down into the water and came up with George Clooney. “Is this your husband?” the Lord asked. “Yes,” cried the seamstress. The Lord was furious. “You lied! That is an untruth!” The seamstress replied, “Oh, forgive me, my Lord. It is a misunderstanding. You see, if I had said ‘no’ to George Clooney, you would have come up with Brad Pitt. Then if I said ‘no’ to him, you would have come up with my husband. Had I then said ‘yes,’ you would have given me all three. Lord, I'm not in the best of health and would not be able to take care of all three husbands, so THAT'S why I said ‘yes’ to George Clooney. And so the Lord let her keep him. The moral of this story is whenever a woman lies, it's for a good and honorable reason, and in the best interest of others. That's our story, and we're sticking to it. Signed, All We Women• This is the story of the poor dizzy blonde flying in a two-seater airplane with just the pilot. He has a heart attack and dies. She, frantic, calls out, “May Day! May Day! Help me! Help me! My pilot had a heart attack and is dead. And I don't know how to fly. Help me! Please help me!” She hears a voice over the radio saying, “This is Air Traffic Control, and I have you loud and clear. I will talk you through this and get you back on the ground. I've had a lot of experience with this kind of problem. Now, just take a deep breath. Everything will be fine. Now give me your height and position” She says, “I'm 5 feet 4inches and I'm in the front seat.” “O.K.,” says the voice on the radio. “Repeat after me, ‘Our Father, Who art in Heaven...”*

