Rules of Civility

& Decent Behaviour

in Company and Conversation

As copied by George Washington
before the age of sixteen

A corrected text, with notes

Including the introductions and notes of J. M. Toner (1888)
and the introduction of a modern printing

ABOUT THIS EDITION

SOMETIME before the age of sixteen, probably about 1744–1748, George Washington copied 110 maxims into his school copybook under the heading *Rules of Civility & Decent Behaviour in Company and Conversation*. The exercise trained his penmanship and his manners together. The maxims are not his own: most derive from a collection composed by French Jesuits in 1595, *Bienséance de la conversation entre les hommes*, which reached English readers through Francis Hawkins's translation, *Youths Behaviour*, in the 1640s. The copybook is preserved among the George Washington Papers at the Library of Congress. Mice have eaten away its lower edges, and with them parts of a dozen rules.

The text. This edition draws on two versions. The first is J. M. Toner's literal transcription of the manuscript (1888). The second is a modern printing with modernized spelling, whose wording this edition follows. Where the modern printing departs from what Washington wrote, it is corrected against Toner. Washington's historic grammar and word forms are kept: *put not*, *be not*, *'tis*, *a drinking*. Words lost to the mice are restored, chiefly after Moncure D. Conway (1890), and every restoration is recorded in the notes. The introductions to both versions are reprinted below.

Punctuation. The manuscript is almost unpunctuated. Commas, semicolons, periods and capitals have been supplied so that each rule can be read as Washington's grammar requires, without adding or changing a word. Rule 79 is the one exception: its sense depends on where the pause falls, so it is left as written and the choice is explained in the notes.

The notes. Notes are gathered at the end so the rules stand alone on their pages. Numbered notes are the editor's: they gloss words whose meaning has shifted since the eighteenth century and record restorations of the damaged text. Notes marked **T** are Toner's own, given word for word from his 1888 edition.

PREFACE TO TONER'S EDITION (1888)

The unceasing desire of the public to learn more and more of the life and character of General Washington induces me to publish entire, and for the first time with literal exactness, his "Rules of Civility & Decent Behaviour in Company and Conversation."

They were written by him at about the age of 13, and, with the exception of some school exercises, are the earliest of his productions, in the order of time, which have been preserved. It is proper, too, that their publication should precede that of his Diaries and Journals, taken by me from the original manuscript and arranged in chronological order with notes, which are now nearly ready for the press.

The first of the series Washington himself entitles, "A Journal of my Journey over the Mountains begun 11 March 1747-8." It will be seen from this date that he was then but 16 years and one month old.

J. M. T.

INTRODUCTION TO TONER'S EDITION

While the authorship of these rules or maxims of civility and decent behavior in company is not positively known, it may be inferred with reasonable certainty. They are found in the handwriting of George Washington when he was quite a youth. His age is inferred from the date 1745 on one of the pages of the copy book in which these maxims are written. The first impression on reading them is likely to be (considering their merit and his age at the period of their production) that they were copied by him from some work on etiquette as an exercise or study. While this may be the fact, my investigation of the matter does not sustain such a view.

Anxious to settle definitely the question of authorship, I made a very thorough search through all the treatises on these topics printed before 1745, contained in the Library of Congress, but without discovering anything either identical with, or at all similar to them, in form or arrangement. The method adopted by the early writers on these subjects was to treat them by chapters, as "on etiquette at Court," "in the parlor," "at a ball," "at a dinner," &c. But nowhere do I find the whole subject matter of civility and behavior in company reduced to a single series of comprehensive maxims as they are in this paper. These rules of good behavior in Washington's own handwriting were examined, and fifty-seven of them published by Sparks in his Life and Writings of Washington, Vol. II, p. 412, but with numerous verbal alterations and considerable omissions of the subject-matter. I have transcribed, and here give to the public, these maxims complete and with literal exactness, just as they were recorded by Washington, believing that the reader will prefer to have them as they were left by him with all their peculiarities, without any of the polishings of an editor.

Mr. Sparks says: "The source from which they were derived is not mentioned." In another place he states that they are "drawn from miscellaneous sources," and again he speaks of them as "these rules thus early selected and adopted as his guide." Irving, in his "Life of Washington," speaking of these rules of civility, says: "It was probably his intercourse with them [the Fairfaxes]

and his ambition to acquit himself well in their society, that set him upon compiling a code of morals and manners, which still exists in manuscript in his own handwriting." Having searched in vain to find these rules in print, I feel justified, considering all the circumstances, in assuming that they were compiled by George Washington himself when a school-boy.

But while making this claim it is proper to state that nearly all the principles incorporated and injunctions given in these 110 maxims had been enunciated over and over again in the various works on good behavior and manners prior to this compilation and for centuries observed in polite society. It will be noticed that, while the spirit of these maxims is drawn chiefly from the social life of Europe, yet, as formulated here, they are as broad as civilization itself, though a few of them are especially applicable to society as it then existed in America, and, also, that but few refer to women. The latter fact may possibly be accounted for by the youth of the author.

The cardinal principles essential to the foundation of good manners are here assembled in so orderly a manner as to constitute a complete code of regulations for the development of habits, morals, and manners in young persons, and they were thoroughly mastered by Washington, and doubtless had great influence in the formation of his own noble character. These particular rules of civility and good behavior, although quaint, must always possess peculiar historical interest, because of their origin as well as for their intrinsic merits. It is therefore hoped that the publication of a true and complete copy of them from the original manuscript may prove not only gratifying to American pride but be of benefit to the growing youth of our country.

J. M. T.

INTRODUCTION TO THE MODERN PRINTING

…and it may truly be said, that never did nature and fortune combine more perfectly to make a man great…

—George Washington to Thomas Jefferson, about 1814

By age sixteen, George Washington had copied out by hand, 110 rules of Civility & Decent Behavior in Company and Conversation. They are based on a set of rules composed by French Jesuits in 1595. Presumably they were copied out as part of an exercise in penmanship assigned by young Washington's schoolmaster. The first English translations of the French rules appeared in 1640, and are ascribed to Francis Hawkins, the twelve-year-old son of a doctor.

Richard Brookhiser, in his book on Washington wrote, "all modern manners in the western world were originally aristocratic. Courtesy meant behavior appropriate to a court; chivalry comes from chevalier—a knight. Yet Washington was to dedicate himself to freeing America from a court's control. Could manners survive the operation? Without realizing it, the Jesuits who wrote them, and the young man who copied them, were outlining and absorbing a system of courtesy appropriate to equals and near-equals. When the company for whom the decent behavior was to be performed expanded to the nation, Washington was ready. Parson Weems got this right, when he wrote that it was 'no wonder every body honored him who honored every body.'"

Editor's note: The epigraph is misattributed. Washington died in 1799. The words are Thomas Jefferson's, written about Washington in a letter to Walter Jones dated January 2, 1814.

RULES OF CIVILITY & DECENT BEHAVIOUR IN COMPANY AND CONVERSATION

1. Every action done in company ought to be with some sign of respect to those that are present.[T1]

2. When in company, put not your hands to any part of the body not usually discovered[1].

3. Show nothing to your friend that may affright[2] him.

4. In the presence of others, sing not to yourself with a humming noise, nor drum with your fingers or feet.

5. If you cough, sneeze, sigh, or yawn, do it not loud but privately; and speak not in your yawning, but put your handkerchief or hand before your face and turn aside.

6. Sleep not when others speak; sit not when others stand; speak not when you should hold your peace; walk not on when others stop.

7. Put not off your cloths[3] in the presence of others, nor go out your chamber[4] half dressed.

8. At play and at fire[5], it's good manners to give place to the last comer; and affect not[6] to speak louder than ordinary.

9. Spit not in the fire, nor stoop low before it; neither put your hands into the flames to warm them, nor set your feet upon the fire, especially if there be meat[7] before it.[T2]

10. When you sit down, keep your feet firm and even, without putting one on the other or crossing them.

11. Shift not yourself[8] in the sight of others, nor gnaw your nails.

12. Shake not the head, feet, or legs; roll not the eyes; lift not one eyebrow higher than the other; wry not the mouth[9]; and bedew[10] no man's face with your spittle by approaching too near him when[11] you speak.[T3]

13. Kill no vermin, as fleas, lice, ticks, &c.[12], in the sight of others. If you see any filth or thick spittle, put your foot dexterously[13] upon it. If it be upon the cloths of your companions, put it off privately[14]; and if it be upon your own cloths, return thanks to him who puts it off.[T4]

14. Turn not your back to others, especially in speaking; jog[15] not the table or desk on which another reads or writes; lean not upon any one.

15. Keep your nails clean and short, also your hands and teeth clean, yet without showing any great concern for them.

16. Do not puff up the cheeks, loll not out the tongue[16], rub the hands or beard, thrust out the lips or bite them, or keep the lips too open or too close.

17. Be no flatterer; neither play with any that delights not to be played withal[17].

18. Read no letters, books, or papers in company; but when there is a necessity for the doing of it, you must ask leave. Come not near the books or writings of another so as to read them unless desired, or give your opinion of them unasked; also, look not nigh[18] when another is writing a letter.

19. Let your countenance[19] be pleasant, but in serious matters somewhat grave.

20. The gestures of the body must be suited to the discourse you are upon[20].

21. Reproach none for the infirmities of nature[21], nor delight to put them that have in mind thereof[22].

22. Show not yourself glad at the misfortune of another, though he were your enemy[23].

23. When you see a crime punished, you may be inwardly pleased; but always show pity to the suffering offender.

24. Do not laugh too loud or[24] too much at any public spectacle.[T5]

25. Superfluous complements[25] and all affectation of ceremony are to be avoided; yet where due, they are not to be neglected.

26. In pulling off your hat[26] to persons of distinction, as noblemen, justices, churchmen, &c., make a reverence[27], bowing more or less according to the custom of the better bred[28] and quality of the persons[29]. Amongst your equals, expect not always that they should begin with you first; but to pull off the hat when there is no need is affectation. In the manner of saluting and re-saluting[30] in words, keep to the most usual custom.

27. 'Tis[31] ill manners to bid one more eminent than yourself be covered[32], as well as not to do it to whom it's due. Likewise, he that makes too much haste to put on his hat does not well; yet he ought to put it on at the first, or at most the second, time of being asked. Now, what is herein spoken of qualification[33] in behavior in saluting ought also to be observed in taking of place and sitting down, for ceremonies without bounds is troublesome[34].

28. If any one come to speak to you while you are sitting, stand up, though he be your inferior; and when you present seats, let it be to every one according to his degree[35].

29. When you meet with one of greater quality than yourself, stop and retire[36], especially if it be at a door or any straight place[37], to give way for him to pass.

30. In walking, the highest place in most countries seems to be on the right hand; therefore, place yourself on the left of him whom you desire to honor. But if three walk together, the middle place is the most honorable. The wall[38] is usually given to the most worthy, if two walk together.

31. If any one far surpasses others, either in age, estate[39], or merit, yet would give place to a meaner[40] than himself in his own lodging or elsewhere, the one ought not to except it[41]; so he, on the other part, should not use much earnestness, nor offer it above once or twice[42].T6

32. To one that is your equal, or not much inferior, you are to give the chief place in your lodging; and he to who 'tis offered[43] ought at the first to refuse it, but at the second to accept, though not without acknowledging his own unworthiness.

33. They that are in dignity or in office have in all places precedence[44]; but whilst they are young, they ought to respect those that are their equals in birth or other qualities, though they have no public charge[45].

34. It is good manners to prefer them to whom we speak before ourselves, especially if they be above us, with whom in no sort we ought to begin[46].

35. Let your discourse with men of business be short and comprehensive.

36. Artificers[47] & persons of low degree ought not to use many ceremonies to lords or others of high degree, but respect and highly honor them; and those of high degree ought to treat them with affability & courtesy, without arrogance.

37. In speaking to men of quality, do not lean, nor look them full in the face, nor approach too near them; at lest[48], keep a full pace[49] from them.

38. In visiting the sick, do not presently[50] play the physician if you be not knowing therein[51].

39. In writing or speaking, give to every person his due title according to his degree & the custom of the place.

40. Strive not with your superiors in argument, but always submit your judgment to others with modesty.

41. Undertake not to teach your equal in the art himself professes[52]; it savors of[53] arrogance.

42. Let thy ceremonies in courtesy be proper to the dignity of his place with whom thou converses[54], for it is absurd to act the same with a clown[55] and a prince.[56]T7

43. Do not express joy before one sick or in pain, for that contrary passion[57] will aggravate his misery.

44. When a man does all he can, though it succeeds not well, blame not him that did it.

45. Being to advise[58] or reprehend[59] any one, consider whether it ought to be in public or in private, presently or at some other time, in what terms to do it; and in reproving, show no sign of choler[60], but do it with all sweetness and mildness.

46. Take all admonitions[61] thankfully, in what time or place so ever given; but afterwards, not being culpable[62], take a time or place convenient to let him know it that gave them[63].

47. Mock not, nor jest at any thing of importance; break no jest that are sharp, biting[64]; and if you deliver any thing witty and pleasant, abstain from laughing thereat[65] yourself.

48. Wherein[66] you reprove another, be unblameable yourself, for example is more prevalent than precepts[67].

49. Use no reproachful language against any one; neither curse nor revile.

50. Be not hasty to believe flying reports[68] to the disparagement of any.

51. Wear not your cloths foul, unript[69], or dusty; but see they be brushed once every day at least, and take heed that you approach not to any uncleanness[70].

52. In your apparel, be modest, and endeavor to accommodate nature[71] rather than to procure admiration[72]. Keep to the fashion of your equals, such as are civil and orderly with respect to times and places.

53. Run not in the streets; neither go too slowly, nor with mouth open; go not shaking your arms; kick not the earth with your feet[73]; go not upon the toes, nor in a dancing fashion.[T8]

54. Play not the peacock[74], looking everywhere about you to see if you be well decked[75], if your shoes fit well, if your stockings sit neatly, and cloths handsomely.

55. Eat not in the streets, nor in the house, out of season[76].

56. Associate yourself with men of good quality if you esteem your own reputation, for 'tis better to be alone than in bad company.

57. In walking up and down in a house, only with one in company, if he be greater than yourself, at the first give him the right hand[77], and stop not till he does, and be not the first that turns; and when you do turn, let it be with your face towards him. If he be a man of great quality, walk not with him cheek by jowl[78], but somewhat behind him, but yet in such a manner that he may easily speak to you.

58. Let your conversation be without malice or envy, for 'tis a sign of a tractable[79] and commendable nature; and in all causes of passion, admit reason to govern.

59. Never express anything unbecoming, nor act against the rules moral[80], before your inferiors.

60. Be not immodest in urging your friends to discover[81] a secret.

61. Utter not base and frivolous things amongst grave and learned men, nor very difficult questions or subjects among the ignorant, or things hard to be believed. Stuff not your discourse with sentences[82] amongst your betters nor equals.

62. Speak not of doleful[83] things in a time of mirth or at the table; speak not of melancholy things, as death and wounds; and if others mention them, change, if you can, the discourse. Tell not your dreams but to your intimate friend[84].

63. A man ought not to value himself of[85] his achievements or rare qualities of wit, much less of his riches, virtue, or kindred[86].[T9]

64. Break not a jest where none take pleasure in mirth. Laugh not aloud, nor at all without occasion. Deride[87] no man's misfortune, though there seem to be some cause.

65. Speak not injurious[88] words, neither in jest nor earnest; scoff at none, although they give occasion.

66. Be not forward[89], but friendly and courteous: the first to salute, hear, and answer; & be not pensive[90] when it's a time to converse.

67. Detract not from others[91], neither be excessive in commanding.

68. Go not thither[92] where you know not whether you shall be welcome or not. Give not advice without being asked, & when desired, do it briefly.

69. If two contend together, take not the part of either unconstrained[93]; and be not obstinate in your opinion. In things indifferent[94], be of the major side[95].

70. Reprehend not the imperfections of others, for that belongs to parents, masters, and superiors.

71. Gaze not on the marks or blemishes of others, and ask not how they came. What you may speak in secret to your friend, deliver not before others.

72. Speak not in an unknown tongue in company, but in your own language, and that as those of quality do, and not as the vulgar[96]. Sublime matters[97] treat seriously.

73. Think before you speak; pronounce not imperfectly, nor bring out your words too hastily, but orderly & distinctly.

74. When another speaks, be attentive your self, and disturb not the audience. If any hesitate in his words, help him not, nor prompt him without desired[98]; interrupt him not, nor answer him till his speech be ended.

75. In the midst of discourse, ask not of what one treateth[99]; but if you perceive any stop because of your coming, you may well entreat him gently to proceed[100]. If a person of quality comes in while your conversing[101], it's handsome to repeat what was said before.[T10]

76. While you are talking, point not with your finger at him of whom you discourse, nor approach too near him to whom you talk, especially to his face.

77. Treat with men[102] at fit times about business, & whisper not in the company of others.

78. Make no comparisons; and if any of the company be commended for any brave[103] act of virtue, commend not another for the same.

79. Be not apt to relate news if you know not the truth thereof. In discoursing of things you have heard name not your author always[104] a secret discover not.

80. Be not tedious in discourse or in reading, unless you find the company pleased therewith[105].

81. Be not curious[106] to know the affairs of others, neither approach to those that speak in private.

82. Undertake not what you cannot perform, but be careful to keep your promise.

83. When you deliver a matter, do it without passion & with discretion, however mean the person be you do it too[107].

84. When your superiors talk to any body, hearken not[108], neither speak nor laugh.

85. In company of these of higher quality[109] than yourself, speak not 'til you are asked a question; then stand upright, put of your hat[110], & answer in few words.

86. In disputes, be not so desirous to overcome as not to give liberty to each one to deliver his opinion; and submit to the judgment of the major part[111], especially if they are judges of the dispute.

87. Let thy carriage[112] be such as becomes a man grave, settled, and attentive to that which is spoken. Contradict not at every turn what others say.[T11]

88. Be not tedious in discourse; make not many digressions, nor repeat often the same manner of discourse.

89. Speak not evil of the absent, for it is unjust.

90. Being set at meat[113], scratch not, neither spit, cough, or blow your nose, except there's a necessity for it.

91. Make no show of taking great delight in your victuals[114]; feed not with greediness; cut your bread with a knife; lean not on the table; neither find fault with what you eat.

92. Take no salt or cut bread with your knife greasy[115].

93. Entertaining any one at the table, it is decent to present him with meat[116]. Undertake not to help others undesired by the master[117].

94. If you soak bread in the sauce, let it be no more than what you put in your mouth at a time; and blow not your broth at table, but stay till cools of it self[118].

95. Put not your meat to your mouth with your knife in your hand; neither spit forth the stones[119] of any fruit pie upon a dish, nor cast anything under the table.

96. It's unbecoming to stoop much to one's meat[120]. Keep your fingers clean, & when foul, wipe them on a corner of your table napkin.

97. Put not another bit into your mouth till the former be swallowed. Let not your morsels be too big for the jowls[121].

98. Drink not, nor talk with your mouth full; neither gaze about you while you are a drinking[122].

99. Drink not too leisurely, nor yet too hastily. Before and after drinking, wipe your lips; breathe not then, or ever, with too great a noise, for it's uncivil.

100. Cleanse not your teeth with the table cloth, napkin, fork, or knife; but if others do it, let it be done with a pick tooth[123].

101. Rinse not your mouth in the presence of others.

102. It is out of use[124] to call upon the company often to eat; nor need you drink to others[125] every time you drink.

103. In the company of your betters, be not longer in eating than they are; lay not your arm, but only your hand, upon the table[126].[T12]

104. It belongs to the chiefest[127] in company to unfold his napkin and fall to meat[128] first; but he ought then to begin in time, & to dispatch with dexterity[129], that the slowest may have time allowed him.

105. Be not angry at the table, whatever happens; & if you have reason to be so, show it not; put on a cheerful countenance, especially if there be strangers, for good humor[130] makes one dish of meat a feast.

106. Set not yourself at the upper end of the table[131]; but if it be your due, or that the master of the house will have it so, contend not, least[132] you should trouble the company.[T13]

107. If others talk at the table, be attentive, but talk not with meat in your mouth.

108. When you speak of God or His attributes[133], let it be seriously & with reverence. Honor & obey your natural parents[134], although they be poor.

109. Let your recreations be manful[135], not sinful.

110. Labor to keep alive in your breast that little spark of celestial fire[136] called conscience.[T14]

FINIS

NOTES

RULE 1

T1. TONER: The thoughtful reader will recognize in this rule the germ and spirit of all rules of civility and the universal key to good behavior.

RULE 2

1. Uncovered, exposed. *Discover* still had its literal sense of removing a cover.

RULE 3

2. Frighten, startle.

RULE 7

3. Clothes. *Cloths* was a common spelling for garments in the period.

4. Go out of your bedroom. *Out* without *of* was normal, as in "go out the door."

RULE 8

5. At games and at the fireside, the two places where company gathered.

6. Do not put on or strive.

RULE 9

7. Food of any kind, not only flesh, as in the phrase "meat and drink." This sense holds throughout the rules.

T2. TONER: From early colonial times the kitchen of American houses had always a fire in it to which the stranger when fatigued, cold, or hungry, was admitted to hospitality without ceremony. In new settlements the kitchen was the first room built, and it was generally of considerable dimension, with a large open fire-place, in which in cold weather was kept a blazing wood-fire for both use and comfort. Down the wide-throated chimney from a cross pole hung chains and crooks on which at times were suspended the heavier pots and kettles. And from the wide chimney jamb swung the freighted crane over an ample stone hearth, above which, and in front of the fire, revolved the loaded spit and sat at certain times of the day many implements of cookery. Yet this room, even when there were others, was nevertheless almost exclusively used, by the frontier farmers, as the family and guest assembly and dining hall. In the South, where planting was more extensively followed and colored servants did the work, there was usually an "Out Kitchen," often detached entirely from the mansion house, where the cooking was done. In these cases the family sitting apartment was often the dining room. The cooking stove and cooking range had not then been invented. To a people living in a sparsely settled country engaged in subduing the forest and defending themselves against the savage Indian, such as ours were in early colonial times, the 9th rule had an aptness not now apparent.

RULE 11

8. Do not fidget or squirm. It may also mean do not change your clothes, since a *shift* was an undergarment.

RULE 12

9. Do not twist or contort the mouth.

10. Moisten, as with dew. Do not spray anyone with spittle.

11. The words *approaching too near him when* are restored. Only "appr . . . r him . . . you speak" survives in the manuscript.

T3. TONER: The book in which Washington wrote the rules of civility has been damaged by mice, which ate away a portion of the back and some of the lower end of all the leaves, which in places has involved one or more lines or parts of lines in the text. Rule 12 and all other rules written at the

bottom of any of the pages have been nearly destroyed. Every word and letter, however, that remains has been copied, and are here given.

RULE 13

12. *Et cetera*, "and so on."

13. Deftly, without drawing attention.

14. Brush it away quietly.

T4. TONER: The matters treated of in this rule are not agreeable subjects to discuss, yet, as society existed when they were formulated, such questions forced themselves upon the attention of the people. The flea was, in early times, and indeed still is, a great pest. In certain localities, and particularly in warm, sandy countries, or wherever domestic animals are harbored in or about dwellings, small as the flea is he makes himself felt. There is a township, in North Carolina, named Flea-hill. The California Sand-hills, too, are noted for being infested with these troublesome insects. The existence of lice is usually ascribed to neglect of personal cleanliness, and to a great extent this is true; yet gentlemen who have served in the Army—officers as well as common soldiers—know how difficult it is where men are crowded together, to prevent their becoming troublesome. Spitting on the floor, which was deemed an offence 150 years ago, is a vice which still exists even at the present day. The method suggested for hiding the nuisance was in its spirit considerate and praiseworthy. Bare floors were then the universal custom; the floor-mat came slowly into use, and carpets are of still later date. It is probable that when these rules were compiled there were but very few carpeted rooms in the American colonies, and the modern bath-room and tub were almost unknown.

RULE 14

15. Jostle, nudge.

RULE 16

16. Do not let the tongue hang out.

RULE 17

17. With. *Withal* is the form of *with* used at the end of a clause.

RULE 18

18. Near.

RULE 19

19. Facial expression, demeanor.

RULE 20

20. The subject you are talking about.

RULE 21

21. Physical defects or disabilities a person is born with.

22. Remind those who have such infirmities of them.

RULE 22

23. Even if he were your enemy. *Were* is the subjunctive, used for a supposed case.

RULE 24

24. Restored. Only "too much at any Publick" survives in the manuscript.

T5. TONER: Rule 24 was written at the bottom of the book where it has been damaged, as stated in Note 3.

RULE 25

25. Compliments. *Complement* also meant a formal courtesy or ceremony, the sense intended here.

RULE 26

26. Removing the hat was the standard gesture of respect. Rules 26 and 27 deal with this etiquette.

27. Bow.

28. Those of better upbringing, the well-mannered.

29. Their social rank. Throughout the rules *quality* means high standing; "a person of quality" is a gentleman or noble.

30. Returning a greeting.

RULE 27

31. It is.

32. Put his hat back on. To *be covered* is to wear one's hat in company, and a superior would invite others to cover.

33. Proper adjustment or moderation.

34. Endless formality is tiresome. The singular *is* treats "ceremonies without bounds" as one idea.

RULE 28

35. His rank or station in society.

RULE 29

36. Draw back, step aside.

37. A narrow place. *Straight* here is the old spelling of *strait*, "narrow."

RULE 30

38. The side of the street nearest the buildings, cleaner and safer than the edge by the gutter and traffic. To "give the wall" was to yield the better path.

RULE 31

39. Wealth and property, or social condition.

40. One of lower rank. *Mean* meant lowly, not unkind.

41. Accept it. The manuscript has *except*, usually taken as Washington's spelling of *accept*.

42. The words *yet*, *in his own lodging or elsewhere*, and *he on the other part should not use much earnestness nor offer* are restored after Conway (1890). The manuscript is damaged at these points.

T6. TONER: Rule 31 occurs at the bottom of the manuscript where it has been injured; the words remaining are given.

RULE 32

43. To whom it is offered. *Who* for *whom* was common, as it is in speech today.

RULE 33

44. The right to go first or take the higher place.

45. Public office.

RULE 34

46. With whom we ought by no means to speak first.

RULE 36

47. Craftsmen, skilled tradesmen.

RULE 37

48. At least. *Lest* is the manuscript's spelling.

49. A full step's distance.

RULE 38

50. Immediately. *Presently* meant "at once" before it came to mean "soon."

51. Are not skilled in it.

RULE 41

52. He himself practices as his profession.

53. Smacks of, suggests. Toner prints *flavours*, almost certainly a misreading of *savours* written with the old long s, which looks like an f.

RULE 42

54. You converse. *Thou* is the old familiar singular of *you*.

55. A rustic or peasant, not a jester.

56. Most of this rule was eaten away. Only "curtesie be proper to the . . . Dignity of his place . . . the same with a . . . Clown and a Prince" survives. The rest is restored after Conway (1890).

T7. TONER: Rule 42 was written on that part of the original manuscript destroyed by mice.

RULE 43

57. That opposite emotion: your joy, set against his pain.

RULE 45

58. When you are about to advise.

59. Rebuke, reprove.

60. Anger. In the old theory of the four humors, choler, or yellow bile, produced an irritable temper.

RULE 46

61. Warnings or reproofs.

62. If you were not at fault.

63. Let the one who gave them know it.

RULE 47

64. Make no cutting jokes. To *break a jest* is to make a joke. *Jest that are* mixes singular and plural, as speech often does.

65. At it.

RULE 48

66. In whatever matter.

67. Rules, instruction.

RULE 50

68. Rumors.

RULE 51

69. Torn, ripped open. The *un-* does not reverse the meaning; it intensifies it, as in *unloose*.

70. Filth.

RULE 52

71. Suit your natural form and station.

72. Win admiration.

RULE 53

73. Restored, together with *fashion* at the end of the rule. The manuscript is damaged at both points.

T8. TONER: Rule 53 in part destroyed by mice.

RULE 54

74. Do not strut or show off.

75. Dressed, adorned.

RULE 55

76. At improper times, such as between meals.

RULE 57

77. Let him walk on your right, the place of honor (see rule 30).

78. Side by side. *Jowl* is the jaw or cheek.

RULE 58

79. Teachable, easily led.

RULE 59

80. The moral rules. The adjective follows the noun, as it often does in French.

RULE 60

81. Reveal (compare rule 2).

RULE 61

82. Maxims, wise sayings (Latin *sententiae*). Do not stuff your talk with quotations to impress your betters.

RULE 62

83. Sorrowful.

84. Except to your intimate friend.

RULE 63

85. Pride himself on.

86. Family connections. The words *qualities of wit, much less of his riches* are partly restored; the manuscript reads only "rare Qua . . . les Virtue or Kindred."

T9. TONER: Rule 63 destroyed from causes stated.

RULE 64

87. Mock.

RULE 65

88. Insulting, wounding.

RULE 66

89. Presumptuous, too bold.

90. Lost in thought, withdrawn.

RULE 67

91. Do not belittle others.

RULE 68

92. There, to that place.

RULE 69

93. Unless compelled to.

94. Matters of no real importance.

95. The majority.

RULE 72

96. The common people.

97. Lofty subjects, especially religion.

RULE 74

98. Unless asked to. The phrase is shortened from "without [being] desired."

RULE 75

99. Treats of, discusses. The *-eth* ending is the older third-person form.

100. The words *not of what one treateth* and *your coming you may well entreat him gently* are restored. The manuscript is damaged at both points.

101. You are conversing. The manuscript reads *your*, either a slip or a spelling of *you're*.

T10. TONER: Rule 75 in part destroyed.

RULE 77

102. Negotiate or do business with men.

RULE 78

103. Admirable, fine.

RULE 79

104. The manuscript has no punctuation here, and the sense depends on where the pause falls, so it is left unpunctuated. "Name not your author always; a secret discover not" advises discretion: do not always say who told you, and never reveal a secret. "Name not your author; always a secret discover not" forbids naming your source at all and insists that secrets are always kept. Conway (1890) preferred the second reading. *Discover* means reveal (compare rule 60).

RULE 80

105. With it.

RULE 81

106. Inquisitive, prying.

RULE 83

107. However lowly the person you speak to. The last clause is obscure; it seems to mean "however humble the person to whom you do it."

RULE 84

108. Do not listen in.

RULE 85

109. Those of higher rank. *These* for *those* is the manuscript's usage.

110. Take off your hat. *Of* is the older spelling of *off*.

RULE 86

111. The majority.

RULE 87

112. Bearing, deportment. *Let thy carriage be such*, *to that which is spoken*, and *Contra-* are restored; the manuscript is badly damaged here.

T11. TONER: Rule 87 is partly destroyed.

RULE 90

113. Being seated at a meal.

RULE 91

114. Food, pronounced "vittles."

RULE 92

115. Do not take salt or cut bread with a greasy knife. Salt was served in an open dish and taken with the tip of a clean knife.

RULE 93

116. Serve him food.

117. Unless the host wishes it.

RULE 94

118. Wait until it cools by itself. The subject *it* is left unstated.

RULE 95

119. Pits.

RULE 96

120. Bend low over your plate.

RULE 97

121. Jaws.

RULE 98

122. In the act of drinking. The *a-* is a worn-down form of the preposition *on*, as in "a-hunting" and the King James "when he was a dying" (Hebrews 11:21).

RULE 100

123. Toothpick. Many modern printings read "without a peep to them," a misreading. The manuscript has "w^{t} a Pick Tooth."

RULE 102

124. Out of fashion, no longer customary.

125. Toast them, drink to their health.

RULE 103

126. The words *longer in eating* and *only your hand upon the table* are restored. The manuscript is damaged at both points.

T12. TONER: Rule 103 in part destroyed by the causes stated.

RULE 104

127. Highest-ranking person present.

128. Begin eating.

129. Eat briskly and skillfully, so that he finishes in good time while still leaving the slowest room to eat.

RULE 105

130. Good temper, cheerfulness.

RULE 106

131. The head of the table, the seat of honor. The manuscript leaves a blank after *upper*; *end* is supplied, as Toner suggests.

132. Lest, for fear that.

T13. TONER: Rule 106. A blank .... space exists after the word upper where it is presumed the word end was intended.

RULE 108

133. God's qualities, such as holiness, justice and mercy.

134. Your own father and mother.

RULE 109

135. Manly, befitting a man.

RULE 110

136. Heavenly fire. Conscience is pictured as a spark from God.

T14. TONER: This closing maxim or injunction, the observance of which is so important in the make up of a man's character, is thus most appropriately placed at the end, and its choice for that place is peculiarly characteristic of Washington's style. Throughout all his writings he is especially noted for his good taste and apt allusions to his subject in the opening and closing of his letters and communications, and the example here given is a proof that this talent was not wanting even in his earliest youth.

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