

Masonic Leaders in the United States and their Influence on this Century, 1900-1999

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Good Afternoon. My task today is to re-acquaint you with some of the leaders of the 20th century who were Masons. You would have a difficult time avoiding anything that has been influenced by men who were also **Masons**. Most of these men have changed some aspect of the way we live and work today as we sit on the threshold of a new millennium. Our very democracy, which we so often take for granted, was conceived and shaped by men of Masonry. The pledge of allegiance to the flag of our country was written by a Mason, Brother **Ralph Bellamy**. The very symbol of our liberty, which stands in a New York harbor to welcome immigrants from every part of the globe to our country and its freedoms, was designed by a Mason, **Frederick A. Bartholdi**. These symbols of our country include one conceived early in the 1920s, when it was decided that figures of national importance should be memorialized in stone. This stone sculpture, called Mt. Rushmore, was the work on one man named **Gutzon Borglum**. The artist, a Mason, picked the site because it got the most sun, selected the subjects he wanted to carve, which in many ways, was a tribute to Masonry. **Washington's** bust, dedicated in 1930, represents the founding of the country and the spirit of independence, Jefferson's represents the Declaration of Independence, faith in the common man, and the idea that all men are created equal. **Lincoln**, completed in 1937, represents the fight against slavery and the preservation of the Union, and finally, **Theodore Roosevelt**, was selected because he represents the progressive spirit and the reality of the joining of East and West by the building of the Panama Canal. **Gutzon Borglum**, a native of Idaho, had started this massive project in 1927 and finished the fourth face, Roosevelt's, twelve years later, in 1939. When he died in 1941, his son, **Lincoln Borglum**, also a Mason, put the final touches on the project. The immensity of the project is difficult to comprehend, but a few facts will help; each of the four faces is 60 feet in height, **Lincoln's** lower lip alone is 18 feet wide, and the mole on his face is 16 inches long. Being a craftsman myself, the concept of working 14 years, oftentimes hanging from the end of a rope over a high mountain outcrop of granite, to carve something in stone so beautiful and enduring, must have been divinely inspired.

Continuing with adventurers, let me

tell you about some men who have inspired us with their courage and fortitude in discovering the unknown. The fathers of flight, **Orville and Wilbur Wright**, in 1903, invented the first self-propelled airplane at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, and today we travel over the whole planet in planes evolved from their efforts. The "lone eagle", **Charles Lindbergh**, who in 1927 was the first person to fly alone across the Atlantic ocean in 33.5 hours aboard his specially built 'Spirit of St. Louis'. Exploring the depths of space, black voids with no air to breathe nor water to sustain, presents the most challenging exploration of our human species. Men with great courage such as **Virgil Grissom**, who flew one of the first sub-orbital flights, and whose capsule, the Liberty Bell, was recently raised from the bottom of the Atlantic, **John Glenn**, the current U.S. Senator from Ohio and the first American to orbit the earth, and **Edwin 'Buzz' Aldrin**, the second man to walk on the moon thirty years ago, July 20, 1969, have led the way into space and shown the possibilities of the human spirit; There's **Robert Peary**, who first reached the North Pole by dog sled in 1909, and **Admiral Richard E. Byrd**, who first flew over the North Pole in 1926; explorations of vast extremes and inhospitable climates.

To the inventors, we acknowledge the advancement of medical science that not only prolongs our lives but also helps stop the diseases with which we have been plagued. **Dr. Charles Mayo**, a Mason, co-founded the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota, that helps so many people throughout the world with cancer research. **Dr. Edward Jenner** developed the small pox vaccination which literally wiped out the disease by 1970. Bacteria: the organisms that cause many infectious diseases. A century ago, one out of four children born in the United States died before puberty of bacterial infections. **Sir Alexander Fleming** of Britain changed that. In 1928, he discovered penicillin, a mold that would stop the growth of bacteria. For a decade, Fleming and others worked to purify penicillin. It finally became available for widespread use in WWII, saving the lives of thousands of soldiers and civilians.

The manufacturers and industrialists had the insight to recognize a need and find a way to satisfy it. Within this group, all Masons, we find the inventor of Ball fruit jars, **Edmund Ball**, whose jars are the standard for canning fruits, vegetables, sauces, or just about anything you want to preserve; **Henry Ford**, auto manufacturer, industrialist, and philanthropist, changed the life of millions when he moved our mode of transportation from the horse and buggy to automobiles. With his inexpensive cars, Brother Ford gave a mighty upsurge to America's progress and mobility, and the "horseless

carriage” has changed American life forever. In his book, *My Life and Work* (1922) Ford wrote in the introduction, “Power and machinery, money and goods, are useful only as they set us free to live.” **Ransom Olds**, also was a pioneer in automobiles and whom the Oldsmobile was named after, and **Walter P. Chrysler**, originally a machinist, in 1925, founded a company that became the second largest automobile producer in the United States, and still bears his name. We have **George Pullman**, he built the first modern sleeping car for trains, called the Pioneer, which had a folding upper berth and seat cushions that could be extended to create a lower berth. He went on to develop other types of railroad cars, including the dining car. **Samuel Colt**, inventor of the revolver type of firearm, manufactured a simple cocking mechanism that has since formed the basis of every modern revolver. Originally, he thought of a device that had six barrels which rotated to be fired, but found that to be too clumsy. **Richard J. Gatling** built the “Gatling Gun” in 1862, which did use rotating barrels, turned by a crank, and used in the civil war. **Sebastian S. Kresge**, a Mason, founded S.S. Kresge department stores (now the K-Mart Corporation). **J. C. Penney** founded a chain of department stores which grew to be the fifth largest merchandising firm in the country. Penney believed in the principle of the Golden Rule in establishing his relations with his employees and the general public, and the company still holds those ideals. The American organization, Boy Scouts of America, based on Sir Robert Baden Powell’s model, was started in 1910 by **Daniel Carter Beard**. Scouting is a worldwide movement of youth groups whose objective is to help both boys and girls develop character, citizenship, and physical and mental fitness. **Dave Thomas** believed in giving people value for their money and started a chain of Wendy’s restaurants which can be found in every state and around the world. Same for **Harland Sanders**, who started a popular chain of restaurants called Kentucky Fried Chicken.. The railroad magnate and man who founded Stanford University, **Leland Stanford**, drove the gold spike linking the intercontinental railroad. **King Camp Gillette** introduced a safety razor in which only the edge of a blade is exposed, to prevent deep accidental cuts. People have trimmed body hairs since prehistoric times using clam shells, stone, glass, sharks' teeth or animal bones, but King Gillette showed the way to a closer, safer shave. Once suitably shaved and dressed, many of us have traveled to foreign lands and stayed at well appointed hotels, perhaps Hilton hotels created by **Conrad Hilton**, a Mason, who has the largest chain of hotels in the world. Mr. Hilton probably uses the products of Dow Chemical

Co. to keep his grounds looking beautiful. **William H. Dow** started this company and it continues to lead the chemical field today. Perhaps Hilton used Maytag washing machines in the hotels, invented by **Fredrick Maytag**, along with a brand of vacuum cleaners named after **Frank Hoover**. You wouldn’t think that blacktop pavement was such a big deal unless you previously had only dirt roads with ruts and mud holes, and this marvelous concept was conceived by **John MacAdam**.

The area of athletic achievement has inspired and provided some of the most watched programs on television. Here we find a pioneer in the development of radio and television broadcasting, **David Sarnoff**, who was chief executive for many years at RCA and NBC. Among our sports heroes who were Masons was the great heavyweight boxing legend **Jack Dempsey**, who, in 77 recorded fights, won 49 by knockouts. **Sugar Ray Robinson** won his first world title in the welterweight class in 1946. He then went on to win the middleweight title five times, possessing balance, quickness, and devastating combination punches. Baseball has given us **Ty Cobb**, nicknamed the "Georgia Peach", considered by many experts the greatest baseball player of all time and held numerous baseball records. Three times he batted over .400 for the season, and 23 times he hit over .300 - feats no other player has accomplished. In 1936, **Ty Cobb** was chosen to be the first member of the Baseball Hall of Fame. Another Hall of Fame member, **Rogers Hornsby**, was considered one of the finest second basemen ever to play professional baseball. He had the second-highest career batting average (.358 in 23 seasons; second only to Ty Cobb's .367). "**Cy Young**", a major league pitcher, won more games (511) during his career than any other pitcher. He set numerous records during his 22 years in professional baseball: most games completed (753), most innings pitched (7,356), and most consecutive hitless innings pitched (23). Young accumulated his incredible victory record in the era before relief pitching reached its present-day importance; his record is therefore considered unattainable for modern pitchers. In recognition of his achievement, the award annually given to the best pitcher in baseball today, is named for him. **Dr. James A. Naismith** invented the sport of basketball while serving as a physical education instructor at the (YMCA) Young Men’s Christian Association in Springfield, Mass. There, he was asked to develop an indoor game as a winter alternative to gymnastics. Using peach baskets nailed to balconies at opposite ends of the gym, and a soccer ball, Naismith coached the first basketball games. He published a booklet containing the basic rules which is still in use today.

Dr. Naismith probably could have used the talents of **Robert Wadlow**, a Mason who is the tallest human on record, being almost nine feet tall. Imagine conferring the third degree for him! **Arnold Palmer** almost singlehandedly brought the sport of golf to its current state of popularity in the United States with his exciting brand of play. Friendly and personable, Palmer attracted a great many fans who became known as "Arnie's army," and provided many thrills for them as he came charging from behind to win important tournaments. Palmer's 61 U.S. tournament career victories rank him fourth all time. Worldwide, he won more than 80 tournaments. Palmer won the Masters four times (1958, 1960, 1962, 1964), the British Open twice (1961-62), and the U.S. Open once (1960), and he is still playing.

The creative spirit is notably inspired by writers and authors. Heading the list of writers who were Masons, is **William Shakespeare**, that bard of volumes of verse upon which we find so much enjoyment. But in this century, which is where we are focusing, we find the likes of **Sir Arthur Conan Doyle**, an English novelist and medical doctor, who is widely known as the creator of the detective, Sherlock Holmes. Doyle wrote four novels and 56 stories involving Holmes. **Edward Gibbon** wrote *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. **Alex Haley**, author of the popular T.V. show, "Roots". The English novelist, short-story writer, and poet **Rudyard Kipling** was a literary giant in his time. He is most widely known for his works for children, especially the two *Jungle Books*. **Booker T. Washington** was an American educator and a black leader who wrote the acclaimed book, *Up From Slavery*. He was appointed the first president of Tuskegee Institute, an Alabama trade school for blacks. Although Washington lived during a time when his race was widely discriminated against, he advocated training black people for trades to build up their economic position before fighting for integration and equality. He believed that black people would advance only if they were educated. The popular humorist and writer of *Huckleberry Finn*, **Samuel Clemens** used the pen name Mark Twain and became well known the world over. Writers of Masonic literature are perhaps the most well known to us as researchers. Men such as **Joseph Fort Newton**, a Christian minister who so eloquently wrote of religion and Masonry. **Norman Vincent Peale**, also a Christian minister, taught people the value of positive thinking, that I use constantly in my life. **Allen E. Roberts** who educated us with many books about Masonic leadership and how to develop it. Roberts wrote with a style that communicated his great love of the fraternity and his books alone form a complete Masonic library.

John J. Robinson, who wrote *Born in Blood*, was an expert on the history of the Knights Templar and the book, *A Pilgrims Path*, is a "must read" for any Mason who struggles with criticism of the craft from the uninformed. I greatly enjoy the style of Brother **Carl Claudy** and his "Old Past Master" series in the Little Masonic Library. **Dr. Raymond Miller**, a California Mason who, for many years, wrote articles in the *Scottish Rite Bulletin* straight from his heart and into mine. These are some of my favorites that you can find in many Lodge book collections and from the Grand Lodge for loan. The Southern California Research Lodge also offers a large number of books for sale at the lowest price anywhere.

Many of our popular entertainers of this century were Masons. Among them are **Louis Armstrong**, the great jazz musician who performed songs such as "What a Wonderful World" that makes you happy just to hear them. "**Count**" **Bassie**, orchestra leader and composer, and "**Duke**" **Ellington**, a pianist, orchestra leader, and the most prolific composer in jazz history. His orchestra featured many of the greatest jazz artists of the time and Ellington's over 1000 compositions were tailored to their special talents. They created a unique sound, a precision and clarity that won them the reputation as the finest jazz orchestra in the world. **Nat "King" Cole** was a Mason and one of the smoothest ballad singers of all time. Country great, **Mel Tillis**, overcame a speech impediment to perform to millions on stage, and **Roy Clark**, starred in the popular western music show on T.V., *HeeHaw*; **Gene Autry**, the singing cowboy, and **Roy Rogers**, well known as the king of the cowboys, starred in 87 musical westerns. Several of the men who started the big movie-making companies were Masons, such as **Darryl F. Zanuck**, co-founder of Twentieth Century Productions; **Jack Warner**, of Warner Brothers studio, and **Louis B. Mayer**, who merged to form Metro-Goldwyn Mayer (MGM). Movie moguls **George M. Cohan** who started as a Broadway actor; **Irving Berlin**, the brilliant composer of over 1,500 songs and many Broadway shows; **Cecil B. DeMille**, an actor and producer of spectacular shows; **Florenz Ziegfeld**, who brought us the *Ziegfeld Follies* in 1907, and all seven brothers and the father who formed the famous **Ringling Brothers Circus** were Masons. Many fine actors have graced the silver screen to the honor of the fraternity including **Al Jolson**, the famous 'black face' entertainer and **Will Rogers**, humorist and writer; **Lowell Thomas**, a news broadcaster for almost half a century, just mention his name and you can hear his reporter's voice in your mind, also wrote more than 50 books. His nightly radio news broadcasts on CBS covered

46 years, starting from 1930. **Danny Thomas**, who has hosted many telethons to help find a cure for muscular dystrophy; popular comedian and entertainer, **Red Skelton**, and **John Wayne**, the ultimate Hollywood hero and one of mine also; **Peter Sellers**, the English actor and star of many shows as Inspector Clouseau; Bob **Hope**, comedian and humanitarian for his many USO shows overseas during the war; **Harry Houdini** the master magician; **Ernest Borgnine** continues to work in television and is an ardent spokesman for the fraternity. **W.C. Fields**, who frankly spoke what was on his mind; and the swashbuckling **Douglas Fairbanks**; **Arthur Godfrey**, and the dashing **Clark Gable** were all Masons and we're proud of them.

Many of North America's early patriots were Freemasons. **Thirteen signers of the Constitution**, **fourteen Presidents of the United States** and **eight Vice Presidents**, as well as **42 Justices of the Supreme Court** were Masons. In this century we have **Theodore Roosevelt**, affectionately known as a rough rider, and his successors, **William Howard Taft**, **Warren Harding**, and the great **Franklin Delano Roosevelt**, who gave us the wide-ranging economic and social reforms called the New Deal. Following him was my personal idol, **Harry S. Truman**, from Missouri, whose policies, called the Fair Deal, were summarized in the words "The buck stops here", and who demonstrated true courage under fire; and finally, the most recent, **Gerald Ford**. Politicians, all Masons, whose name might ring a bell are **Fiorella LaGuardia**, Mayor of New York in the '30s and '40s; **J. Edgar Hoover**, the famous Director of the FBI; **Barry Goldwater**, former Senator from Arizona; **Samuel Ervin, Jr.**, who headed the Watergate commission; **Medger Evers**, the famous civil rights leader; and the Reverend **Jesse Jackson**; **Andrew Young**, former Mayor of Atlanta, and **Thomas Bradley**, the former Mayor of Los Angeles; **Jack Kemp**, former Congressman and quarterback for the Buffalo Bills; **Sam Nunn**, the Senator from Georgia; and the former Senator from Kansas, **Bob Dole**, whose wife has a good chance to become the first female President of the United States; **Sir Winston Churchill**, the great British Prime Minister who personified resistance to tyranny; the first black man selected to the U.S. Supreme Court, **Thurgood Marshall**, and the former Grand Master of Masons of the State of California and Supreme Court Justice, the Most Worshipful **Earl Warren**. All Masons who have influenced the government and the world in this century.

Finally this afternoon, I'd like to pay tribute to a few of the great men of the armed forces who have distinguished themselves, the country, and the

fraternity. First, is a pilot named **Henry "Hap" Arnold**, who, in WWI, supported air units bombing raids instead of committing ground forces, a policy recently used in Yugoslavia; Captain **Eddie Rickenbacker**, the top American flying ace in WWI and later President and Chairman of the Board of Eastern Airlines; **John J. Pershing's** tasks in France during World War I were to organize, train, and supply an inexperienced force that eventually numbered more than two million, and he emerged from the war as its most celebrated American hero; **General James H. Doolittle**, from Alameda, a pilot who led raids over Tokyo in WWII. He was the first man to fly across North America within 24 hours, in 1922, and was subsequently known as a racing pilot; **George C. Marshall** was an American army officer, diplomat, and statesman. He was Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army during WWII and the only person ever to be both Secretary of State (1947-49) and Secretary of Defense (1950-51). He was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1953 for the Marshall plan for the economic reconstruction of Western Europe and was one of the most widely admired military personalities in U.S. history. **Omar N. Bradley** was one of the ablest U.S. Generals of WWII. He participated in North Africa and played a pivotal role in the victory in Tunisia, as well as the capture of Sicily, and his forces liberated Paris after the Normandy invasion. **Audie Murphy** was the most decorated U.S. soldier in WWII and won the Medal of Honor for killing 50 German soldiers single-handedly. He went on to become a successful movie actor. Gifted with superb command ability, five-star **General Douglas MacArthur** was Commander of all U.S. Army forces in the Pacific during the final days of WWII, and in Korea. He accepted the surrender of Japan aboard the USS Missouri in Tokyo Bay on Sept. 2, 1945, that ended the last great war. Men of great courage and character, all were Freemasons.

This listing of one hundred and twenty-five notorious **Masons** is not complete by any means. Each of you could probably name a few of your own, even from your own Lodges, that have meant so much to you and the community. I encourage you to make a list of your own and discover what a rich heritage we inherit as Freemasons. Certainly the bar has been set high and we are grateful for the many contributions made to our world by these men. The future demands more accomplishment and the human species continues to evolve in ways unknown to us at present. As one of my favorite entertainers used to say every time as he closed his show, "Good night, and may God bless."