



IDAHO SUPPLEMENT

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Freemasonry & the Founding of the United States

This month we celebrate the founding of this great nation and it seems only appropriate to briefly discuss those Founding Fathers who were members of the Masonic fraternity.

Freemasonry came to the American colonies from England, Ireland, and Scotland via the British military around the 1730s, but there are discrepancies of where it first occurred as there doesn't exist many records from that time. Freemasonry became very popular and spread throughout the 13 colonies. I will only cover a few facts with this one issue of the supplement.

General George Washington, the father of our country, was a well-known Mason out of Virginia. During the war, 33 of his generals were Masons. When he was inaugurated in NY as our first President, he used a Bible from a Lodge to take his oath of office. Including Washington, there have been 14 Presidents and 18 Vice Presidents who have been Freemasons; note there are some crossovers between the two offices and those who have been Masons.

The creation of the Declaration of Independence was an important landmark of American history as it formalized the assertion of the American colonies to choose their own government. Of the signers, 9 were Masons to include John Hancock who was the first signer of the Declaration. His famous large and stylish signature is remembered so much that the term "John Hancock" has become, in the US, a synonym for signature.

Although short-lived, the Articles of Confederation served as the first written document that established the functions of a national government in the United States. 48 signatures adorned this document and 11 of them were Masons from what I can find.

Once it was clear that the Articles of Confederation were inadequate for the government of the newly formed nation, a convention was called where the US Constitution was drafted. 13 Masons signed that historic document to include George Washington and Benjamin Franklin.

There were a number of other prominent Masons who were involved with the Revolution such as Paul Revere who made his famous ride warning "The British are coming!"; John Paul Jones who was Scottish born sailor and is considered the "Father of the US Navy"; Samuel Nicholas was a successful businessman from Philadelphia and is considered the first Commandant of the Marine Corps; and John Marshall who joined the Minute Men after listening to Patrick Henry's memorable speech and would later become the longest-serving Chief Justice of the US Supreme Court.

God bless the Knights Templar, God bless Freemasonry and God bless these United States of America! Happy Fourth of July!

