



PAPER

Famous Freemasons - A Prologue

Summary: A prologue to an ever-expanding group of Famous Masons worldwide

There are many famous Freemasons¹ across time and across continents, including kings and statesmen, military men, scientists, composers, authors, musicians, entertainers, singers, and stars of stage and screen, not to mention sportsmen. Here are just a few of the many Famous Freemasons from around the world.

Monarchs & Statesmen: Three Kings, King Edward VII (1841–1910); King George VI (1895–1952); and King Edward VIII (1894–1972). Many other members of the Royal Family have made a significant contribution to Freemasonry for more than three centuries, including our current Grand Master, HRH The Duke of Kent. Let us also not forget, the man who is perhaps the most famous British Mason, Sir Winston Churchill.



*George Washington (1732–1799)
by Robert Gordon Hardie (1854–1904)
©Museum of Freemasonry*

Fourteen U.S. presidents, starting with George Washington and James Monroe, two of the Founding Fathers, assisted by other famous Freemasons, Benjamin Franklin, Marquis de Lafayette, Robert R. Livingstone, John Hancock, and Aaron Burr. They were followed by twelve other presidents: Andrew Jackson, James Polk, James Buchanan, Andrew Johnson, James Garfield, William McKinley, Theodore Roosevelt, William Howard Taft, Warren Harding, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Harry S. Truman, and Gerald Ford.

Military Men: From the Napoleonic War, Arthur Wellesley, The Duke of Wellington. From WWI, three Field Marshalls and an Admiral of the Fleet, Herbert Kitchener, Douglas Haig, John French and John Rushworth Jellicoe, all of whom were made Earls. From WWII, Field Marshall Earl Alexander of Tunis, Gen. Sir Reginald Wingate, US General Douglas McArthur and General George C Marshall, who formulated the Marshall Plan for post-war Europe, together with Squadron-Leader Melvin 'Dinghy' Young, shot down



*His Majesty King Edward VII
Grand Master 1874–1901, by Sir Luke Fildes, R.A.
©Museum of Freemasonry*

on the way home from the Dambuster raid, Lieutenant-Colonel Blair 'Paddy' Mayne, a founding members of the SAS (Special Air Service), and Audie Murphy soldier, actor, songwriter and one of the most decorated American soldiers of WWII.

Other military characters included three famous Masons associated with the Alamo; Davey Crockett, Jim Bowie, and Sam Houston and three associated with the Wild West: 'Buffalo' Bill Cody. Christopher 'Kit' Carson and Sam Colt.

Scientists, Inventors and Innovators: In medicine, Edward Jenner, the creator of the smallpox vaccine, the first of its kind in the world; Joseph Lister, the pioneer of antiseptic surgery; and Alexander Fleming, who won the Nobel Prize for his discovery of penicillin. James Watt the inventor of the steam engine, followed by modern innovators and captains of industry such as Andre Citroen, Henry Ford, Walter P. Chrysler, and Steve Wozniak, who co-founded *Apple*.

Explorers: In Africa, Sir Richard Burton; in America, Capt. Meriwether Lewis and Lieut. William Clark, who led the 1804–6 expedition from St Louis to the Pacific Ocean to open-up the West; in the Antarctic Roald Amundsen and Cap.t Robert Falcon Scott who raced for the South Pole, followed by Sir Ernest Shackleton's fateful journey; and in exploration by air and in space, Charles Lindbergh, the first aviator to fly solo across the Atlantic and following in his footsteps two famous astronauts Buzz Aldrin and John Glenn.

Music, the Arts and Entertainment: In music, celebrated composers, musicians and singer such as the composer Irving Berlin of White Christmas fame, or William Gilbert and Arthur Sullivan, famous for their operettas, or classical composers Franz Liszt, Jean Sibelius, and Josef Haydon, who was introduced to Freemasonry by that most famous of all Masonic composers, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart; or band leaders and singers such William James 'Count' Basie, Edward Kennedy 'Duke' Ellington, Edmundo Ros, Louis Armstrong, Al Jolson, Bob Hope and Burl Ives.



Brother Robert Burns (1759–1796), unknown artist
©Museum of Freemasonry

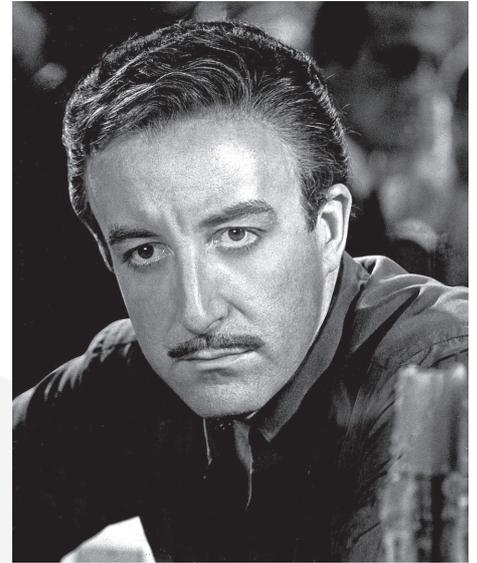
In the arts, a diverse group of writers ranging from Edward Gibbon, who wrote *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, through to the philosophical such as Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, and Francois-Marie Arouet de Voltaire, and novelists and poets such a Jonathon Swift, Alexander Pope, Sir Walter Scott, Anthony Trollope, Aleksandr Pushkin, Oscar Wilde, Arthur Conan Doyle and Mark Twain, together with those authors strongly identified with Freemasonry, such as Robert Burns and Rudyard Kipling. There are also famous architects such as Sir Christopher Wren, who designed St Paul's Cathedral, and James Hoban,



Scott of the Antarctic
by Henry Maull (1829–1914) and John Fox (1832–1907)
[Public domain]

who designed and oversaw the building of The White House and Sculptures such as Frederic-Auguste Bartholdi, who sculpted the Statue of Liberty, or John Gutzon de la Mothe Borglum, the creator of the 'Presidents' - Mount Rushmore National Memorial, in South Dakota.

In the performing arts, a set of British stage and screen actors, impresarios and entertainers, ranging from Edmund Kean, Henry Irvine, Donald Wolfit, Peter Sellers, Richard Todd, to Harry Lauder, Tommy Trinder, Harry Corbett and 'friends'. From the US, all seven of the Ringling brothers of circus-fame, to their more famous Hollywood successors, luminaries like Darryl F Zanuck (Twentieth Century Fox) and Jack L Warner (Warner Bros) and director Cecil B De Mille. Together with actors from the 'silents', Harold Lloyd and Douglas Fairbanks Snr, the 'talkies', W.C. Fields and Harpo Marx, who famously never spoke. From the world of comedy, Oliver Hardy, Bud Abbott, and Richard Pryor; and stars like Clark Gable, Glenn Ford, and John Wayne; to Mel Blanc, 'the man of a thousand voices' used in many, many cartoons. Though perhaps another famous entertainer, the magician, illusionist and escape artist Harry Houdini will always be most associated with Freemasonry.



Peter Sellers
Chicago Sun Times / United Artists studios
[Public domain]

The Sportsmen:² There hundreds if not thousands of famous sporting Masons from those like James Naismith who invented a sport (Basketball), to those who performed great feats such as Matthew Webb, the first person recorded as swimming the English Channel, or Sir Malcolm Campbell and his son Donald who both held worlds speed records on land and water, or Sir Alec Rose who circumnavigated the globe in Lively Lady. Famous Sporting Freemasons are found in just about every other sport. Here are just a few of the many: Athletics - Harold Abrahams; Billiards - Walter Lindrum; Boxing - Jack Dempsey; Cricket - Clive Lloyd; Football - Jackie Milburn; Golf - Arnold Palmer; Snooker - Peter Ebdon, to name but a few.

In the words of V.W. Bro. Robert Taylor, whose list I pillaged to creating this prologue,

'There are no doubt, many more that you may discover, and add to the list. Are you not proud to be in such company?'

References

1. Famous Freemasons, <https://www.ugle.org.uk/about-freemasonry/famous-masons>
2. Rex Hazeldine, *Freemasonry and Sport*. A paper in Solomon, Seek and Learn, Masonic History. <https://solomon.ugle.org.uk/mod/resource/view.php?id=836>

Recommended use of Papers

Papers offer a simple, direct means of advancement in a particular aspect of Masonic knowledge. They can be used in a variety of ways:

- Read at home for private study
- Shared for pre-reading by members of a discussion group
- Read aloud in Lodge or Chapter, or in an LOI/COI/new members forum
 - Followed by 'any questions'
 - As a precursor to a discussion (in which case much more time is needed, possibly more than double that allocated to the paper itself)
 - Supported by audio-visual aids, if necessary

They can be delivered by a single person or split into bite-sized pieces and read by multiple presenters (in which case, the speaker(s) should have read and practiced the delivery of the paper beforehand).

*Note: All biblical passages are taken from the Authorized King James version unless otherwise specified.

If the paper is to be used to introduce a discussion, the presenter will need to have thought about the material, done a little research, and prepared some open questions to engage with the audience. Kipling's dictum can be of help in preparing open questions, which should begin with one of his 'serving men', as follows: *'I keep six honest serving men (they taught me all I knew). Their names are, What and Why and When and How and Where and Who'*. Rudyard Kipling

If used as part of an event, the paper should be advertised and promoted by way of trailers, flyers and announcements, in summonses, letters, emails, notice boards, and on social media.

For further papers and other learning materials visit *Solomon* at <http://solomon.ugle.org.uk>

Acknowledgement:

UGLE gratefully acknowledges Paul Harper as the author of this document and for his permission to publish it in this form.

Disclaimer:

The views or interpretations contained in this document are those of the author. UGLE recognises there are many different interpretations of ritual, symbolism and history. It does not endorse the contents of this document or of any external websites linked to within the document.

Copyright:

All rights reserved. No part of this document may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording or by any information storage and retrieval system, without permission from The United Grand Lodge of England in writing.