



SCOTTISH RITE OF FREEMASONRY

BULLETIN

VALLEY OF WASHINGTON • ORIENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

FALL 2016

Warren G. Harding 29th President of the United States 1921-1923

ANCESTRY AND YOUTH

ROMANCE AND MARRIAGE

BUSINESS AND POLITICAL
PHILOSOPHY

POLITICAL LIFE

WORLD WAR I

THE PRESIDENCY

FROM ADULATION
TO CONDEMNATION

MASTER MASONS



Warren G. Harding

SPECIAL COMMEMORATIVE EDITION
SCOTTISH RITE DAY - NOV. 12, 2016 (page 21)

SCOTTISH RITE CALENDAR • FALL 2016 through WINTER 2016

The meeting time for these events is 7:30 PM, unless stated otherwise, in the 2nd Floor Lodge Room. The meetings are limited to Scottish Rite Masons unless stated otherwise. All meetings are preceded by dinner at 6:00 PM in the Temple Refectory.

NOVEMBER 2016

- 1 Mithras Lodge of Perfection
 - 8 Evangelist Chapter of Rose Croix
 - 11 **FALL REUNION**
 - 4:00-5:15 PM – Registration
 - 9:15 PM – Recess to Saturday
 - 12 **FALL REUNION**
 - 8:00 AM – Class reports;
Light breakfast
 - 2:45 PM – Reunion concluded
 - 14 **VETERANS DAY (Observed) – OFFICE CLOSED**
 - 15 Robert de Bruce Council of Kadosh
 - 22 **EDUCATION & COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARDS PROGRAM – 7:00 PM**
 - 24 **THANKSGIVING DAY HOLIDAY – OFFICE CLOSED**
-

DECEMBER 2016

- 6 Mithras Lodge of Perfection
 - 13 Evangelist Chapter of Rose Croix
 - 14 **BEGIN WINTER RECESS**
(Winter Recess – No meetings from December 14, 2016 until January 17, 2017)
 - 26 **CHRISTMAS (Observed) – OFFICE CLOSED**
 - 27-30 **OFFICE CLOSED**
-

JANUARY 2017

- 2 **NEW YEAR'S DAY (Observed) – OFFICE CLOSED**
 - 16 **MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DAY – OFFICE CLOSED**
 - 17 Joint Meeting:
 - Mithras Lodge of Perfection & Evangelist Chapter of Rose Croix
 - 2017 Officer Elections
 - 24 Joint Meeting:
 - Robert de Bruce Council of Kadosh & Albert Pike Consistory
 - 2017 Officer Elections
-

FEBRUARY 2017

- 4 **INSTALLATION OF 2017 SCOTTISH RITE OFFICERS**
- 7 Mithras Lodge of Perfection
- 14 Evangelist Chapter of Rose Croix
- 20 **WASHINGTON'S BIRTHDAY – OFFICE CLOSED**
- 21 Robert de Bruce Council of Kadosh
- 28 Albert Pike Consistory



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SCOTTISH RITE OF FREEMASONRY

BULLETIN

FALL | 2016

WARREN G. HARDING: 29TH PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

- PROLOGUE
- INTRODUCTION
- ANCESTRY AND YOUTH
- YOUTH AND ANCESTRY
- ROMANCE AND MARRIAGE
- BUSINESS AND POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY
- POLITICAL LIFE
- WORLD WAR I
- THE PRESIDENCY
- FROM ADULATION TO CONDEMNATION
- REFERENCES
- MEN MENTIONED WHO WERE MASTER MASONS



PUBLISHER

Ill. Leonard Proden, 33°

EDITOR

Ill. Charles S. Iversen, 33°

This Bulletin is published twice a year for members of the Valley of Washington, Orient of the District of Columbia, Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry, Southern Jurisdiction of the United States of America.

2800 Sixteenth Street, NW, Washington, DC 20009

SCOTTISH RITE OF FREEMASONRY
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA



2800



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Celebrating Scottish Rite Day in DC Style

By **ILLUSTRIOUS LEONARD PRODEN, 33°**

SOVEREIGN GRAND INSPECTOR GENERAL OF THE SUPREME COUNCIL IN WASHINGTON, DC

On behalf of Most Worshipful Kenneth D. Fuller, 32° KCCH, Grand Master of Masons of the District of Columbia, and me, we would like to welcome all the candidates to the Valley of Washington for the conferral of the Scottish Rite Degrees. This special Reunion is named for our Grand Master and coincides with the 2016 Scottish Rite Day that honors and celebrates Scottish Rite Freemasonry in all Orients and States in the United States. The Valley of Washington continues to maintain a strong supportive relationship with the Grand Lodge here in our Nation's Capital and we will conclude our Reunion at the Washington National Cathedral in support of the Grand Lodge's Masonic Day of Thanksgiving. As a candidate for the Degrees the Grand Master and I are certain that the association which you will enjoy during your progress through the various degrees (4°, 14°, 18°, 30°, 32° presented and all others communicated) will be beneficial and upon your departure from our portals—it is our hope that you will think, reason and reflect on the allegorical presentations you have witnessed and will in some way be provided an enhanced framework for clarity in your Masonic life.



Ill. Leonard Proden, 33°



*M.W. Kenneth D. Fuller,
Grand Master of Masons of
the District of Columbia*

To our members - yes, it's Reunion time. Have you ever asked yourself why you became a Scottish Rite Mason? Was it for more Brotherhood, fellowship, friendship or was it a requirement to qualify for the Shrine or other appendant bodies? Have you been to a Reunion recently? The opportunity awaits you this November 11th and 12th. Whatever your level of involvement, stop by 2800 16th Street, NW as your Brothers and I are waiting to welcome you at the Reunion.

As you see on the cover of this publication, our nonagenarian editor, Ill. Charles S. Iverson, 33° SGIG Emeritus and *Bulletin* editor, has finally completed his literary quest of chronicling our Masonic presidents with a feature article about Warren G. Harding. Brother Harding served as President 882 days and was a popular chief executive with an approval rating of 60%. He led America into a new era before he was shockingly cut down in the prime of life. Americans were distraught and transfixed at his death. During his fleeting tenure in office he effected action on disarmament, cut taxes, and took a courageous stand at the time on civil rights. A vigorous and outgoing man, he was also sociable, handsome, affable, and a skilled orator. However, the post mortem scandals plummeted his reputation replacing adulation with excoriation as he now is ranked as one of our worst presidents. As President, Brother Harding was somewhat involved in DC Masonry as he held honorary memberships in Albert Pike Lodge, Washington Centennial Lodge, the Columbia Commandery and Almas Shrine. It is of particular interest that Boumi Temple of Baltimore, Maryland, donated the casket upon Harding's death. A Google search for Masonic information on Brother Harding reveals John Tester's article for the Vermont Lodge of Research and Short Talk Bulletin, Vol. I, Sept. 1923 No.9. Currently the Brethren of Washington-Daylight Lodge No. 14, F.A.A.M of D.C. makes an annual pilgrimage each May to Marion, Ohio where they lay a wreath at Brother Harding's tomb and pay an official visitation to his home Lodge, Marion Lodge No. 70.

How are you celebrating November 12th Scottish Rite Day? Thank you for choosing to be a Scottish Rite Mason.

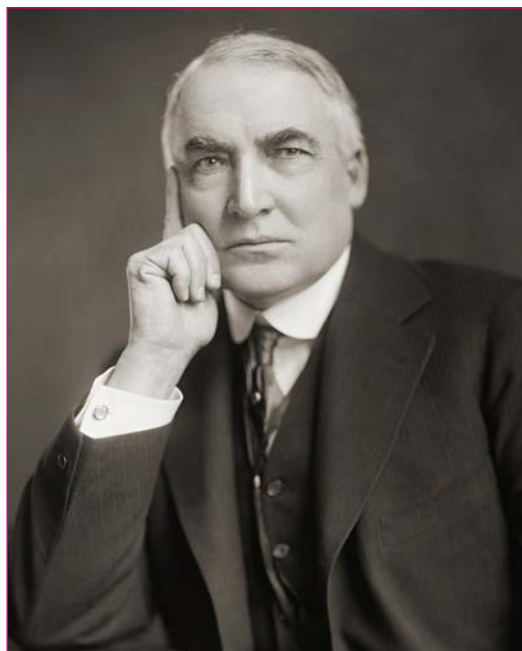


WARREN G. HARDING

29TH PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

1921-1923

BY ILL. CHARLES S. IVERSEN, 33°,
SOVEREIGN GRAND INSPECTOR GENERAL EMERITUS



PROLOGUE

The ensuing article covers briefly the life of Warren Gamaliel Harding, the 29th president of the United States. One-third of the presidents were Master Masons, namely, George Washington, James Monroe, Andrew Jackson, James K. Polk, James Buchanan, Andrew Johnson, James A. Garfield, William McKinley, Theodore Roosevelt, William Howard Taft, Warren G. Harding, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Harry S. Truman and Gerald R. Ford. They constitute 14 of the 44 men who served as president through 2016, or 33%. Many believe that Thomas Jefferson also was a Master Mason, but since no written documentation has surfaced indicating this to be a fact, the belief is not considered to be substantiated. Also, Lyndon B. Johnson was elected by a Masonic Lodge to receive the three degrees of Masonry (Entered Apprentice, Fellowcraft, and Master Mason), but he received only the first degree, so he is not considered to have been a Master Mason.

Brief biographies of 13 of the aforementioned Masons have appeared in earlier editions of the Scottish Rite Journal: this, the 14th, completes the group.

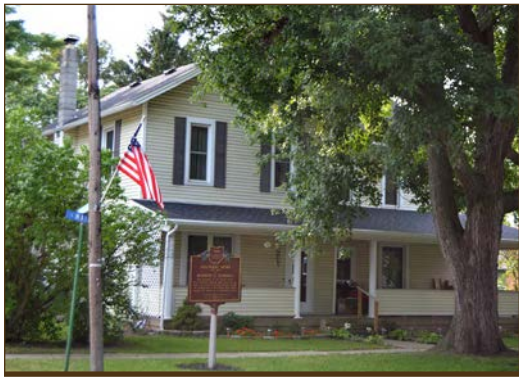
INTRODUCTION

Warren G. Harding, as will be seen, could well serve as the subject of a tragic opera. He rose from rags to riches (so to speak) and then plummeted to a fateful end. He overcame a life of meager beginnings to ownership of a successful newspaper and resulting prosperity. This led him to an interest in politics, first in local offices in Ohio, then to a seat in the United Senate and, ultimately, to the office of president.

He was assisted by his good looks, charming personality and love of people, also the good offices of his wife, a few friends who promoted him in his success. He had many friends whom he trusted explicitly, but some of them led him to his downfall and tragic end.

ANCESTRY AND YOUTH

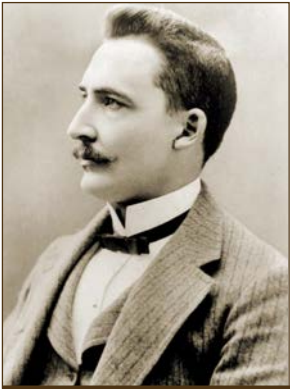
Warren G. Harding was born November 2, 1865, in Corsica (later named New Bern) Ohio, 25 miles east of Marion. He was the oldest of 18 children and was born in a modest house on the edge of town. His ancestors had migrated from Pennsylvania's Wyoming



Harding's childhood home in Caledonia

Valley years before. His father was George Tyson Harding, a self-employed veterinarian who in 1873 attended the Homeopathic hospital in Cleveland. His mother, Phoebe Dickinson Harding converted from Methodism to the Seventh-Day Adventist Church, and was very religious. As a boy he spent most of his time in Caledonia, Ohio, was given the nickname of "Winny" by the family, attended the local public schools, swam in the local creek, played scrub baseball and loved animals. During his adolescent years he served as a printer's helper and learned how to set type, make up forms and wash rollers. In 1882, he graduated from the small Ohio Cultural College in Iberia, Ohio. The school's main curriculum was to train teachers, and while in the college he edited the school paper, the *Iberian Spectator*.

Upon graduation, he taught school for one year, and then quit. Afterwards he tried selling insurance for a year, but this was abandoned, and he took over the Marion Sun, a small newspaper. The contents of the paper were primarily local news of interest to its subscribers. Then his father purchased the *Marion Star*, a larger paper with a wider circulation. Two friends and he acquired full interest in the newspaper and as it grew he became the sole owner.



A young Warren G. Harding

This newspaper carried political and international articles and ran stories about the local residents, a very popular theme among his fellow Ohioans. It became successful, and boosted the town of Marion and its residents. This was the time, the 1880's and 1890's, when Ohio was growing rapidly, villages becoming towns and towns becoming cities. The economy was thriving and the Star enjoyed prosperity. In his editorials he pushed hard for local improvements in Marion, such as paving the streets to eliminate the muddy roads, improving the schools, and other civic benefits. All of this displayed a pride for Marion and the state, boosted his likeability among the townsfolk and improved his financial wellbeing.

ROMANCE AND MARRIAGE

Handsome and jovial, he could have married any available woman in Marion. He chose Florence Kling, a not very pretty woman, five years older than himself, who had been married previously and divorced. She adored Harding and saw a great future for him. But her parents tried to prevent the marriage and stirred up rumors about Harding's past and the suspected inclusion of African blood in his veins. After considerable patience and effort, Florence overpowered her father's unsavory exertions, and married Harding on July 8, 1891. Her parents did not attend the wedding, and ignored their daughter for the next seven years. Shortly following the marriage, Harding started suffering from stomach pains and sought relief in a sanitarium in Battle Creek, Michigan. This occurred four times over a period of ten years until the pain disappeared.



Florence Harding

BUSINESS AND POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

It was Harding's philosophy that the most successful businessmen were poor men who had worked hard to achieve success. This applied to him and his newspaper, and had boosted him into becoming one of Marion's leading citizens. In those days, workers struggled to make a living and the trade unions were pushing for higher wages, shorter hours, and more safety at work. Harding did not favor the unions and was of the opinion that each person had to control his own existence.

His interest in politics and his ability to speak fluently before the public induced him to seek the office of state senator in 1899. He was a friend of Joe Foraker and Mark Hanna, the two leading Republican politicians in Ohio, and became a friend of Harry Daugherty, a successful promoter. With their help he was elected that year and reelected in 1901 and then elected the lieutenant governor of Ohio in 1903 on the ticket with Myron Herrick as the governor. Their slogan was "Herrick, Harding and Harmony", and they were successful on election day. But in 1905, when they sought re-election, they were defeated.

As his financial position improved, Harding started taking extended vacations with Florence, such as a long winter stay in Florida and a summer in New England and Nova Scotia.

He admired Alexander Hamilton, a young immigrant in the colonial, revolutionary and early years of the Republic, with whom he agreed on economic and business philosophy. At times he would lecture about Hamilton, and used him as an example to bolster his own belief that the United States should become a great industrial nation, and he urged government to promote private business.

In 1905, Florence suffered a grave illness that induced her physician to remove a kidney, then a dangerous procedure, but she survived. While she was recuperating from this disability, however, Harding started meeting with Carrie Phillips, the wife of a good friend, a friend who was also recuperating from a serious illness. Yet Harding stayed at the bedside of his wife and contributed to her care and eventual recovery. For the next few months and into the future he and Carrie carried on their affair, but Florence never became aware of the illicit activity. In 1909, both families traveled together to Europe for ten weeks. Warren and Florence continued their happy marriage.



Carrie Phillips

Phillips was apparently not the only “other woman” in Harding’s life. Five years after Harding’s death, Nanna Popham “Nan” Britton published a kiss-and-tell book, in which she claimed that she had been his mistress both prior to, and during his presidency, and that he was the father of her daughter, Elizabeth Ann, who had been born in 1919. At the time, and for many years thereafter, this claim was met with skepticism. However, in 2015, DNA testing of descendants of Harding’s brother and Britton’s grandchildren concluded that Harding had, indeed, been the father of Elizabeth Ann.



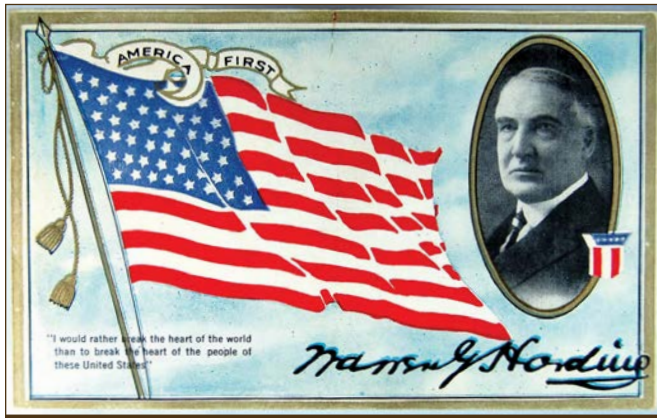
Nan Britton

POLITICAL LIFE

Ohio Republicans were split between “progressives” and “conservatives”, not an unusual division. In 1904, Harding ran as a compromise candidate for governor of Ohio. He was defeated. Then in 1912 he became a delegate to the Republican National Convention in Chicago. Taft was re-nominated for president, having outvoted Theodore Roosevelt who had become bored with life and wanted to be president again. So when Roosevelt lost the nomination he formed the Progressive Party (Bull Moose Party) and ran as its candidate. The result was that they split the Republican vote and so Woodrow Wilson received a plurality of the votes and the necessary electoral votes to become president. Taft and Roosevelt together had over one million more votes than Wilson.

In 1914, Harding was elected a United States senator from Ohio, having defeated Timothy Hogan, the Democratic candidate and a Roman Catholic. Religion played a large part in the election and gave Harding an unusually large majority, but Harding did not mention

the religious differences during the campaign. Prior to moving to Washington, D.C. to take his seat, he and Florence enjoyed a jaunt around the country and then settled in a rented house on Wyoming Avenue, N.W. in Washington that they occupied for the ensuing six years while in office.



One of Harding's Campaign Ads

Although Harding was conservative, he held an open mind for liberal causes. He disliked controversy. During his six-year term he introduced 134 bills in the Senate, all of them intended to improve the condition of Ohioans. He made no enemies, and he and Florence were very popular in Washington, D.C. society, giving and attending parties and other social events. Among their closest friends were Evelyn Walsh McLean, also Nicholas Longworth, speaker of the House of Representatives, and his wife, Alice Roosevelt Longworth. In 1916 he was chosen chairman of the upcoming Republican Convention and gave the keynote address before the convention. President Wilson ran for re-election as the war was heating up in Europe and held himself out as the one who could keep the United States out of the fighting. Wilson won again.

WORLD WAR I

About a month after Wilson's inauguration to a second term starting in 1917, the United States was at war with Germany. The issue of a declaration of war came before the senate. Carrie Phillips, Harding's former paramour, who had moved to Germany, threatened that if he voted in favor of the war, she would disclose his letters to her and the extent of their trysts. Despite this, he voted in favor of the war, but she did not carry out her threat.

In 1918, the war turned in favor of the allies, so much so that Germany sued for peace. The warring allies sent delegates to France where an armistice was signed on November 11, 1918, ending the war in Europe. Millions had been slain or wounded. A written document had been drawn up later in Paris by representatives of the four principal nations that created a League of Nations. The heads of the four nations presented the document to their respective governments for approval. Opponents appeared in the all of the nations, but the, primary opposition was in the United States and was led by Henry Cabot Lodge, Sr., chairman of the Senate committee on Foreign Relations. Some senators were

concerned particularly about the degree of foreign entanglement that the United States would encounter and questioned the constitutionality of the document; did it supersede our constitution under certain circumstances? Unfortunately, having worked so hard in European conferences to produce the document, Wilson refused to discuss it or to consider making any amendments to it. He demanded *carte blanche* approval by the Senate and when it was not forthcoming, he traveled extensively around the country trying to interest the citizenry to pressure their senators to vote their approval of it. Wilson's efforts were so strenuous that he suffered a stroke and was returned to the White House where he remained as an invalid for his remaining 17 months in office. As we know, the creation of the League of Nations was not approved by the Senate.

THE PRESIDENCY

ELECTION

In 1920, the Republican leaders looked hopefully for a winner in the forthcoming presidential election that year. The two foremost leaders then were General Leonard Wood, a noted military officer and foreign affairs expert who participated in the Spanish-American War of 1898, and Governor Frank Lowden of Illinois. Theodore Roosevelt had died in 1919, and William Howard Taft, also a past president, was not available. Harding was approached as a possible contender, but he wanted to remain in the Senate where he was popular, and was hoping for reelection that year so he could build up seniority. He anticipated that his prospects for reelection were good since, although he was generally conservative politically, he was normally acceptable to middle-of-the-roads and some liberals. Also, he had devoted his first term to the interests of Ohioans and they knew it. But Harry Daugherty had other ideas. He asked Harding if he had any skeletons in his closet that might detract from his candidacy. Harding believed that Daugherty was referring to the Senate race where his trysts would not matter much since they were already rumored and proved no obstacle. So Harding answered in the negative. Without Harding's permis-



Cox vs. Harding Campaign Ad

sion, Daugherty started to finagle Harding into the number three spot behind Wood and Lowden in case of a stalemate.

The convention opened in Chicago and soon became deadlocked, just as Daugherty had feared, between the two leaders. Two ballots were taken and neither had the needed majority. After the second ballot late at night, a recess was taken until the next morning. The politicians got together after the recess in a dark, smoke-filled room, as predicted by Daugherty, where they mulled over their alternatives for the next day. Then Daugherty introduced Harding as a possible alternative candidate. At nine o'clock the next morning the convention was gavelled back to order by the chairman and during the day four more votes were taken, but the deadlock persisted. It was then that Daugherty introduced Harding's name to be introduced on the floor as a potential candidate. A seventh ballot was held and, when no leader appeared, the delegates started changing their votes. When the results were announced by the chairman, Harding had been nominated. Thereafter, Calvin Coolidge, governor of Massachusetts, was nominated for vice president. Coolidge had won national acclamation for having broken a strike in Boston by the police.

Harding had to prepare his campaign. Since it appeared that the Republican would enjoy probable success at the polls, he decided to borrow from the campaign strategy of William McKinley who in his 1896 and 1900 campaigns confined his efforts to greeting voters at his home in Ohio. So, Harding stayed in his house in Marion where thousands of prospective voters visited him and he discussed his plans with them. Harding, however, did take one short venture around a part of the country where he met many thousands more. On November 2, 1920 (his 55th birthday) he was elected president by an overwhelming majority: 16,181,289 popular votes to 9,141,750 for James Cox and Franklin D. Roosevelt on the Democratic ticket.

DEVELOPMENT OF HARDING'S ADMINISTRATION

One of president-elect's first steps in developing his new administration is to announce his proposed Cabinet. Harding's choices were as follows, all of whom were approved by the Senate:

Charles Evans Hughes	Secretary of State
Andrew Mellon	Secretary of the Treasury
John Weeks	Secretary of War
Harry Daugherty	Attorney General
Henry Wallace	Secretary of Agriculture
Herbert Hoover	Secretary of Commerce
Edwin Denby	Secretary of the Navy
Albert Fall	Secretary of the Interior
James G. Davis	Secretary of Labor
William H. Hays	Postmaster General



Harding with his first Cabinet

Harding opened the White House to the public for the first time in a year and a half since it had virtually closed due to President Wilson's incapacitating illness. Also, Harding held a daily open house for an hour before his lunch when he would shake hands with everyone who visited him, public and press. His habit was to work hard, speak frequently to groups, hold press conferences and spend considerable time writing. As may be imagined, he was very popular with the public and press, but he suffered from high blood pressure due to his constant activities. To relax, he enjoyed games of golf twice a week, games of poker with his friends evenings, chewed tobacco, smoked cigars, and by way of a peculiar habit, insisted on the availability of tooth picks at all banquets (an item he used frequently).

HARDING'S POLITICAL UNDERTAKINGS

As the new chief executive, Harding called a special session of Congress to start April 1921 and it remained in session until September 1922. As stated, there had been virtually no communication between Congress and President Wilson for about 17 months and there were many things that were pending that needed attention. At the opening of the session,



President Harding hard at work

Harding addressed the Congress in a joint meeting. In the course of his remarks, he revealed his hopes for legislation in many categories covering the following:

- (1) federal highway construction; (2) regulation of the radio, a new development; (3) regulation of airline traffic, also a new development; (4) creation of a department of welfare for education, health, sanitation, working conditions and child welfare; (5) diversion of part of the naval fleet to the merchant marines for civilian use; (6) abolition of lynching because between 1890

and 1920 there had been over 3,000 lynchings by mobs, 90% of its victims having been African-Americans; (7) reduction of taxes; and (8) increase in tariffs. The roaring 20's had started and he wanted to be a part of it. He did not push Congress for action, only

recommended, since he believed that Congress made the laws of the land, at least it is so provided in the constitution.

A favorite motto of Harding was: "Let's put less government in business, and more business in government". Business was to operate with a minimum of restrictions. When the Railroad and Coal Mining strike developed in 1921, Harding took an anti-union position.

He released Eugene Debs from prison who had been convicted in 1921 for giving anti-war speeches after Congress had declared war against Germany in 1918: his sentence was ten years. In 1920, the Socialist Party had nominated Debs to run for president and he got over one million votes. Harding commuted Debs' sentence and freed him.

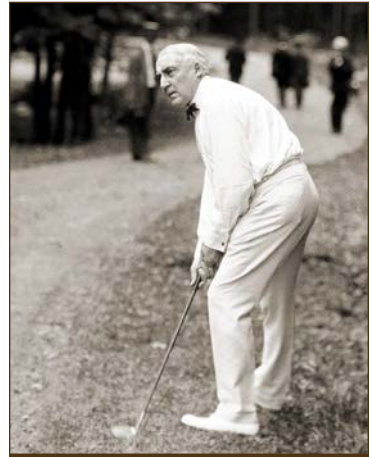
Andrew Mellon, Secretary of the Treasury, establish the Budget and Accounting Act in June 1921. This was done to make certain that government funds were used as directed by Congress and within limits. Charles G. Dawes, to serve later as vice president under Herbert Hoover, was named the first director of the budget and was able to reduce spending by millions of dollars, also was able to reduce a surtax from 65% to 50% and to arrange for needed loans to farmers.

Charles Evans Hughes, Secretary of State, master-minded the successful Washington Naval Disarmament Conference of 1921-1922, strengthened an Open Door Policy in the Pacific Ocean area and a mutual reduction of naval forces with Great Britain, France, Japan and Italy. He also resolved the reduction of disputes with Mexico, also disagreements over disputes in Latin America and the Caribbean Islands.

Herbert Hoover, Secretary of Commerce, convened a conference in 1921 that avoided a possible business recession, rejuvenated overseas trade and scientific research for the benefit of business. He also paved the way for creation of aviation and radio regulations, and he established an 8-hour day for workers in the steel industry. Previously, Hoover had become famous for his outstanding work with poor countries by helping them feed their hungry citizens, bringing some wealth to their countries and preventing revolutions from forming in other countries, such as the communist revolution in Russia in 1917.

Harding seemed to have difficulty in deciding major issues when he received conflicting advice. So, he often delayed some decisions. He spearheaded the World War I memorial to the Unknown Soldier in Arlington National Cemetery and dedicated the tomb on November 11, 1921.

In 1922, Harding found that the presidency was an increasing burden: labor strife, some wrangling with Congress, squabbling over patronage, enforcement of prohibition prob-



Due to his many activities, President Harding played golf twice a week to relax

lems, concern for the Congressional losses in 1922 when the Republican majorities were reduced from 24 to 10 in the Senate and from 70 to 10 in the House of Representatives. Although Congressional losses following a president's first two years in office are not unusual, they bothered Harding so much that he became more somber and less ebullient. From 1922 until his death in 1923 he frequently talked of the day when he could return to Ohio.

CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES IN THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH

In 1923, a Congressional committee commenced an investigation of the Justice Department, which at first came to naught. Then, eventually, it was discovered that some dealings by Charles Forbes, director of the Veterans Bureau, were suspect. The committee resumed its investigations and discovered that Forbes was suspected of selling medical supplies from the Perryville, Maryland installation to private contractors, assisted by Charles Cramer, the general counsel of the bureau. It was determined that Forbes had declared large quantities of the bureau's supplies as damaged, then sold them to Boston contractors at low prices, and bought replacements from other companies at ten times their original cost. He also mishandled alcohol in the hospitals that was intended for medical use for disabled veterans and sold the alcohol to bootleggers for their beverages. He also let contracts to build hospitals without requiring bids. He and other government employees enjoyed lavish parties thrown by contractors as a reward for their assistance. It was estimated by the

committee that Forbes had wasted over 200 million dollars' worth of government property in his dealings.



*Charles Forbes, Director of the
Veterans Bureau*

When Harding heard of the foregoing activities, he called Forbes into his office at the White House, manhandled him, threw him against the wall and choked him. Then he fired him and told him to get out of the country and not return. Forbes went to Europe. Later Forbes was prosecuted, convicted and sentenced to two years in prison, plus given a \$100,000 fine. Cramer committed suicide.

As the committee delved deeper, it discovered that one Jess W. Smith, Daugherty's private secretary who lived in Daugherty's Wardman Park apartment, was selling "fixes" for paroles, liquor licenses (during the age of prohibition) and engaging in other shenanigans within the Department of Justice. Before he could be prosecuted he died.

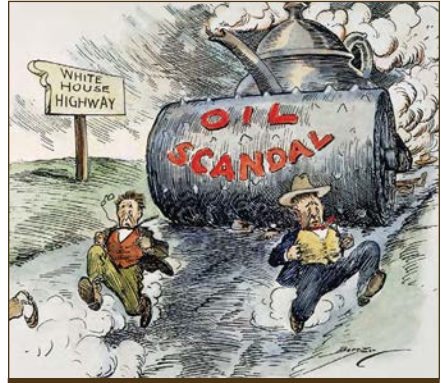
Then there was Harry Daugherty, the Attorney General, who was suspected of having participated in the dealings within his department, but the committee could not discover anything concrete enough to obtain a conviction. At this point the committee ceased its activities. Some of Daugherty's records were destroyed in a fortuitous fire in the vault of his brother's bank. One indictment had been returned against Daugherty, but he was acquitted by the jury.

It was discovered that the Secretary of the Navy, Denby, had transferred deposits from oil reserve lands in the west to Albert Fall's Department of the Interior and they were leased to two men, Harry Sinclair and Edward Doheny, the largest being the Teapot Dome in Wyoming, all without competitive bids. They had been given oil drilling rights with kickbacks to Fall. Fall was convicted of bribery and conspiracy to defraud the government and sentenced to one year in prison and fined \$100,000. Denby, though not prosecuted, was fired as Secretary of the Navy. This was the result of the investigations of a special committee of Congress.

Colonel Thomas W. Miller, the Alien Property Custodian, was charged with accepting bribes arranged by Jess Smith to transfer a German-owned subsidiary to an American firm. For this he was sentenced to 18 months in prison and fined \$5000.

None of the shenanigans listed above became public information during Harding's lifetime, excepting the Forbes matter, and that was only a rumor at the time it first came out.

Harding arranged for a trip to Alaska just before his session with Forbes and the public was not aware of the extent of the criminal activities until Harding died in September 1923 in San Francisco, as set forth below. He remained a very popular president until three weeks after his death. From that time forth, he fell from hero to villain, and an embarrassment to the Republican Party throughout the 1920's.



A 1924 cartoon depicting the "Teapot Dome" scandal during Harding's presidency.

No evidence was uncovered that implicated Harding in any of the criminal activities and it was believed that he was entirely innocent personally. But the committees, press and others wondered what he knew about the events and when, also why he chose not to disclose what he knew but rather chose to ignore it. His failure to act caused the public to question his honesty and his presidential qualifications. He is quoted to have said to a journalist: "I have no trouble with my enemies. I can take care of them, all right. But my friends, my goddam friends, they're the ones that keep me walking the floor nights."

Harding was not happy with the office of president. As early as 1922, he was quoted as saying: "Frankly, being president is rather an unattractive business, unless one relishes the exercise of power. This is a thing which has never appealed to me."

TRAIN TRIP TO THE WEST

Before the aforementioned events were discovered by the Congressional investigation or were fully known to Harding, although developments had been leaning toward a potential scandal, the president planned his train trip to the west in order to become the first president to visit Alaska. That territory had been purchased from Russia during Lincoln's administration. The special train of twenty cars left Union Station in the summer of 1923,

the last car called “Superb” being reserved for Florence and the president. Dr. Sawyer, his physician, accompanied him.

This two-month excursion was called the “Voyage of Understanding”. Crowds were enthusiastic along the route as he spoke to them at various locations. Harding was also promoting a new international organization to be named the “Permanent Court of International Justice”. He shook hands with as many people as he could. In Tacoma, Washington, he embarked on a boat and headed for Alaska. Herbert Hoover, Secretary of Commerce, joined him at that juncture, and when they were alone, he asked Hoover: “If you knew of a great scandal in our administration, would you for the good of the country and the party expose it publicly or would you bury it?” Hoover replied: “Publish it, and at least get credit for integrity on your side”. End of conversation. The president was obviously troubled, but he chose to bury it.

TRAGEDY

Upon returning from Alaska and arriving in Seattle, Washington, Harding suffered stomach cramps, and in San Francisco was moved to a suite at the Palace Hotel. Dr. Boone who was consulted there diagnosed the cause of the cramps to be a sign of heart disease. Dr. Sawyer diagnosed it as food poisoning and exhaustion. Florence disclosed that the president had started showing signs of ill health a short time prior to the trip. Perhaps he was reacting to the pressure on him caused by his friends’ criminal activities.

While his wife was reading to him August 2, 1923, he died. The nation went into deep mourning and the train carrying his body back to Washington passed among and through cities and villages where residents stood along the tracks in silence. The body was placed in a casket under the rotunda ceiling of the Capitol where it might be viewed. There were so many people in line that some were unable to reach it prior to its removal and its transportation to Marion, Ohio, for burial in the family cemetery. An appropriate memorial was ordered for his grave.



Funeral procession of President Harding

FROM ADULATION TO CONDEMNATION

About three weeks after his death, the report of the Congressional committees was released to the press and thence to the public. Although there was no alleged involvement by the president in the aforementioned criminality of his friends in the administration, Harding was condemned by the public for his failure to disclose what he knew. Had he done so he might have fared better in their opinion. Today he rates at the bottom or near the bottom of the 44 men who have served as president. Not until 1931, when Herbert Hoover was serving as president, had there been a dedication of the monument in Marion, Ohio. In that year, Hoover dedicated it and spoke the following words: "He was a man whose soul was scarred by a great disillusionment.

Harding had a dim realization that he had been betrayed by a few of the men whom he had trusted, by men who he believed were his devoted friends. It was later proved by the courts of the land that those men had betrayed not only the friendship and trust of their staunch and loyal friend, but they had betrayed their country. This was the tragedy of the life of Warren Harding".

Harding's wife, Florence, stuck with her husband throughout the ordeal and died of kidney ailment in 1924, but she had written a poem displaying the deep love and affection for her beloved husband, two stanzas of which read as follows:

"In the graveyard softly sleeping
Where the flowers gently waw,
Lies the one I loved so dearly,
And tried so hard to save.

"In my heart your memory lingers
Tenderly, fond and true,
There is not a day, dear husband,
That I do not think of you."

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10,000 FAMOUS FREEMASONS, by William Denslow.

MEN MENTIONED WHO WERE MASTER MASONS

JAMES M. COX (1870-1957)

Governor of Ohio; U.S. Congress; newspaper reporter; 1920 Democratic candidate for President who lost to Harding; Mason in Jefferson Lodge No. 90 in Ohio.



James M. Cox

HARRY A. DAUGHERTY (1860-1941)

14th Vice President of U.S. Attorney General under Harding; lawyer; instrumental in nomination of Harding as President; tried for conspiracy to defraud the U.S. government, but was acquitted; Mason in Lafayette Lodge No. 107 in Ohio and in Lafayette Lodge No. 19 in Washington, D.C.



Harry A. Daugherty

JAMES J. DAVIS (1873-1947)

Secretary of Labor under three presidents; U.S. Senator from Indiana; Mason in Quincy Lodge No. 23 in Indiana, also Scottish Rite in Indiana and Washington, D.C.; and in Syria Shrine Temple in Pittsburgh, PA.



James J. Davis

EDWIN DENBY (1870-1929)

Secretary of the Navy under Harding, and resigned during criminal activities in administration; Mason in Oriental Lodge No. 240 and 33° Scottish Rite Mason, both in Michigan.



Edwin Denby

JOSEPH B. FORAKER (1848-1917)

U.S. Senator; Governor of Ohio; served in U.S. Civil War; lawyer; judge; nominated Harding at convention to presidency in 1920; Mason in Walnut Hill Lodge No. 483 and Al Koran Shrine Temple, both in Ohio.



Joseph B. Foraker

WARREN G. HARDING (1865-1923)

29th President of the U.S.; U.S. Senator; newspaper publisher and editor; Mason in Marion Lodge No. 70 in Ohio; honorary member of Albert Pike Lodge No. 36 and Washington Centennial Lodge No. 14, both in Washington, D.C.; honorary member of lodge in London; Royal Arch Mason in Ohio;



Warren G. Harding

Knight Templar in Ohio Commandery and honorary member of Columbia Commandery No. 2 in Washington, D.C.; 32° Scottish Rite member in Ohio (elected for 33° but died before degree was conferred; member of Aladdin Temple in Ohio and Almas Shrine Temple in Washington, D.C.; (see Vol. 2 of 10,000 Famous Freemasons for list of many other affiliated Masonic bodies to which he belonged and places where he laid cornerstones or gave Masonic addresses, also several quotations from his addresses); his body was conducted by uniformed Knights Templar from the White House to the Capitol for a place of prior to burial in Marion, Ohio.

**FRANK O. LOWDEN
(1861-1943)**

Governor of Illinois / U.S. Congress; lawyer; Knight Templar in Dixon Commandery and 33° in Scottish Rite, both in Illinois.



Frank O. Lowden

**WILLIAM MCKINLEY
(1843-1901)**

Union officer during U.S. Civil War; 25th President of the United States; lawyer; U.S. Congressman; Member of Canton Lodge No. 90 in Ohio, also Eagle Lodge (name later changed to William McKinley Lodge); Canton Commandery No. 38, K.T., in Ohio and life member of Washington Commandery No. 1, K.T. in Washington, D. C.; active mason

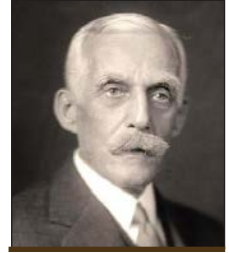


William McKinley

in several jurisdictions laying cornerstones and making speeches.

**ANDREW MELLON
(1855-1937)**

Secretary of the Treasury under Harding; president of Mellon National Bank; helped develop coal, coke and iron enterprises; ambassador to Great Britain; built Mellon Gallery of Art and gave it to the Smithsonian Institution (name changed to National Gallery of Art); also donated his collection of 126 paintings and 36 sculptures; made a Mason at Sight by Grand Master of PA in 1928 and was a member of Fellowship Lodge No. 679 and was a Royal Arch Mason, both in PA.



Andrew Mellon

**FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT
(1882-1945)**

32nd President of the U.S.; Governor of NY; Secretary of the Navy; lawyer; ran as Vice Presidential candidate in 1920 with James M. Cox as presidential candidate, but lost to Harding; member of Holland Lodge No. 8, NYC; Scottish Rite in NY; member of Cypress Shrine Temple in Albany, NY; was a member of many affiliated the following Masonic bodies in Washington, D.C.: Washington Centennial Lodge No. 14, Stansbury Lodge No. 24, Almas Shrine Temple, and Capital Forest No. 104, Tall Cedars of Lebanon.



Franklin D. Roosevelt

THEODORE ROOSEVELT (1858-1919)

26th President of the U.S.; Governor of NY; U.S. Civil Service Commissioner; president of NY Police Board; assistant Secretary of the Navy; Colonel of Rough Riders in Cuba; extensive writer of books; Mason in Matinecock Lodge No. 806, Oyster Bay, NY; honorary member of Pentalfa Lodge No. 23 in Washington, D.C.; did cornerstone laying's all over the country from coast to coast, including Masonic Temple at 13th and New York Avenue, N.W., in Washington, D.C. (see 10,000 Famous Freemasons for the extensive list of places where he laid cornerstones and/or gave addresses).



Theodore Roosevelt

WILLIAM HOWARD TAFT (1857-1930)

27th President of the U.S.; Solicitor General of the U.S.; Judge of U.S. Court of Appeals for Ohio, Kentucky, Tennessee and Michigan; on commission that established civil government in Philippines; Governor of Philippines; Secretary of War; Governor of Cuba; Chief Justice of the Supreme Court (after he had served as President and until one week prior to his death); Taft was made a Mason at Sight by the Grand Master of Ohio in 1909 and became, member of Kilwinning Lodge in Ohio, his father's lodge; (see 10,000 Famous Masons for



William Howard Taft

the extensive number of lodges he visited, where he laid cornerstones and where he gave Masonic addresses.

HENRY A. WALLACE (1888-1965)

Vice President of U.S. under Franklin D. Roosevelt; Secretary of Agriculture under President Harding; political writer; Mason in Capital Lodge No. 110 in Iowa; Scottish Rite in Iowa; affiliated with bodies in Washington, late in life he demitted.



Henry A. Wallace

LEONARD C. WOOD (1860-1927)

Maj. Gen. in U.S. Army; commander of Rough Riders but reassigned prior to attack on Cuba; Governor of Cuba, then of Philippines Islands; physician and lawyer; Fort Leonard



Leonard C. Wood

C. Wood of Army named after him; Chief of Staff of U.S. Army; received Congressional Medal of Honor for bravery during combat with Apache Indians; Mason in Anglo-Saxon Lodge No. 137 in Brooklyn, NY; Royal Arch Mason and Knight Templar in Illinois; member of Medina Shrine Temple in Chicago; Scottish Rite in New Jersey (died after elected for 33° but before it was conferred).

SCOTTISH RITE DAY 2016

One Day, One Celebration: Scottish Rite Freemasonry!

On Nov. 12, 2016, Valleys, Orients and Councils of Deliberations from both the Northern Masonic and Southern Jurisdictions will come together to celebrate Scottish Rite Freemasonry. This is the first time the fraternity has held such a nationwide day of honor. It is expected to be a chance to enjoy a fun, memorable occasion where you can reach out to and connect with your Brothers.

To commemorate this special occasion and highlight the significant role the Scottish Rite has played in maintaining a strong Masonic community for our nation's capital, the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia, F.A.A.M., has partnered with the DC Scottish Rite for a special weekend celebrating the universality of our Noble Craft in general and the Scottish Rite in particular. On November 11th & 12th, the DC Scottish Rite is conducting its semi-annual degree conferral ceremony (Fall Reunion), when all area Master Masons have been invited to further their Masonic education by receiving the Scottish Rite degrees.

The Reunion shall be named the **Kenneth D. Fuller Grand Master Reunion Class** in honor of the 2016 Grand Master of Masons of the District of Columbia. To highlight their enthusiasm in promoting this Reunion class, Brother Kenneth D. Fuller, 32° KCCH, the Most Worshipful Grand Master of Masons of DC, has offered to be the First Line Signer on all petitions. Ill. Leonard Proden, SGIG in DC, has offered to be the Second Line Signer on all petitions. Additionally, Brothers who receive the degrees at this Reunion will be eligible to take advantage of a one-time significant reduction in fees. In further recognition of national Scottish Rite Day, a handsome commemorative jewel has been commissioned and will be presented exclusively to all Brethren who receive the 32° in 2016, and any current Scottish Rite members who recruit at least two new members for this Fall Reunion.

On the afternoon of Saturday, November 12th area Masons will celebrate the first ever national Scottish Rite Day when we will join together at Washington National Cathedral as one Brotherhood in observance of the Grand Jurisdiction's annual Masonic Day of Thanksgiving and Remembrance.



*Scottish Rite Day
Commemorative Jewel*



THE SCOTTISH RITE OF FREEMASONRY

2800 16TH STREET, NW
WASHINGTON, DC 20009
TEL: 202-232-8155
WEB: DCSR.ORG



“Ambition is a commendable attribute, without which no man succeeds. Only inconsiderate ambition imperils.”

Warren G. Harding
U.S. President, 1921-1923

