

# THE AMERICAN

November 8th

Issue No. 1

scienceleadership.org

THE FOUNDING FATHERS  
of the United States Of America

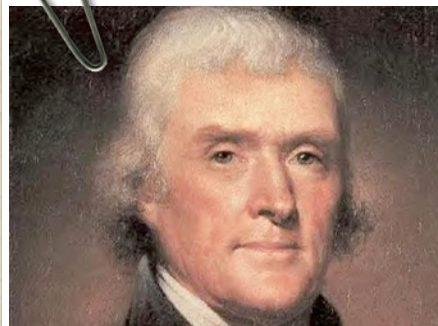
## The Founding Fathers

### A BRIEF OVERVIEW

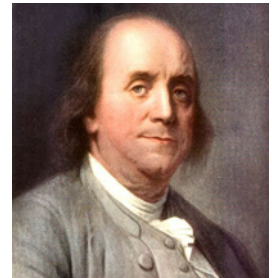
The Founding Fathers refer to the political leaders who participated in the establishment of The U.S.A.

#### THOMAS JEFFERSON

Thomas Jefferson -- author of the Declaration of Independence and the Statute of Virginia for Religious Freedom, third president of the United States, and founder of the University of Virginia -- voiced the aspirations of a new America as no other individual of his era. As public official, historian, philosopher, and plantation owner, he served his country for over five decades.



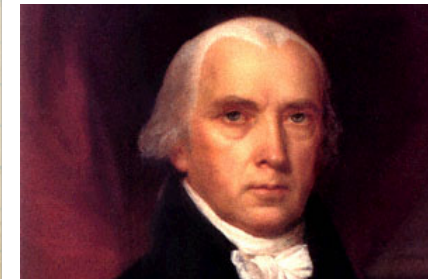
Thomas Jefferson



Benjamin Franklin

#### JAMES MADISON

James Madison came from a prosperous family of Virginia planters, received an excellent education, and quickly found himself drawn into the debates over independence. In 1776, he became a delegate to the revolutionary Virginia Convention, where he worked closely with Thomas Jefferson to push through religious freedom statutes, among other liberal measures.



James Madison



George Washington

#### BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

A noted polymath, Franklin was a leading author, printer, political theorist, politician, postmaster, scientist, musician, inventor, satirist, civic activist, statesman, and diplomat. As a scientist, he was a major figure in the American Enlightenment and the history of physics for his discoveries and theories regarding electricity. He invented the lightning rod, bifocals, the Franklin stove, a carriage odometer, and the glass 'armonica'.

#### GEORGE WASHINGTON

The first president of the United States, George Washington, is often referred to as the Father of Our Country. He was known for his love of the land and farming, and his dislike of war. He was a distinguished general and commander in chief of the colonial armies in the American Revolution. He married a widow, Martha Dandridge Custis, and they lived at Mount Vernon, Washington's plantation in Virginia on the Potomac River.



The Declaration Of Independence



**PHILOSOPHIES**

*There are many arguments over the real political philosophies of the Founding Fathers. Most sources build around the idea that the delegates of the first general congress all fought for the same idea of freedom and liberty for all, as a mutual plan for America. However, most documents suggest that the founding fathers had a mixture of many different views regarding freedom and democracy, some even showed ambivalence to the idea of a free world. The ultimate compromise was to establish a government that would have the checks in balances necessary to establish equality amongst states and protect the nation from foreign threats.*

**JAMES MADISON**

Born in 1751, Madison was brought up in Orange County, Virginia, and attended Princeton. After taking a break to recuperate from the strain, he began being mentored by Thomas Jefferson. Working alongside Jefferson, Madison became a prominent political figure at the state level, as well as by helping Jefferson draft several papers including their declaration of religious freedom. Madison's notes are one

of the few glimpses historians have into the thinking and processes going on behind the scenes during the convention. Later, Madison put aside his doubts about the representation proposal in the Senate to work on the Federalist Papers with John Jay and Alexander Hamilton. The Federalist Papers, in addition to Madison's own notes are perhaps the most definitive commentary on the creation of the Constitution of the United States of America.

Madison's notes suggest that he was one that stood strongly for the separation of Church from state. He along with Jefferson believed that instead of outlawing religions or factions of people, the freedom for people to form groups would balance the nation, ensuring that no one part of society would overtake the other.

**THOMAS JEFFERSON**

Having attended the College of William and Mary, Jefferson practiced law and served in local government as a magistrate, county lieutenant, and member of the House of Burgesses in his early professional life. As a member of the Continental Congress, he was chosen in 1776 to draft the Declaration of Independence, which has been regarded ever since as a charter of American and universal liberties. The document proclaims that all men are equal

Some refer to the **“Founding Fathers”** as all of the political leaders that took part in establishing the constitution. In this article the focus is on 4 of who are believed to be the most influential: **James Madison, Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, and George Washington**

in rights, regardless of birth, wealth, or status, and that the government is the servant, not the master, of the people.

After Jefferson left Congress in 1776, he returned to Virginia and served in the legislature. Elected governor from 1779 to 1781, he suffered an inquiry into his conduct during his last year in office that, although finally fully repudiated, left him with a life-long prickliness in the face of criticism.

### GEORGE WASHINGTON

Many people view George Washington as being famous for being the first president of the United States, or leading the calvary in the revolutionary war. However George Washington's influence on America is better expressed through his philosophies regarding free thinking and the expectations of man. Sources suggest that Washington was a freemason, promoting the views and morals that he believed America should stand by.

While he was commander in chief of the American armies during the Revolutionary War, Washington frequently attended the meetings of military lodges. He presided over Masonic ceremonies initiating his officers and frequently attended the Communications of the Brethren (lodge meetings). Washington was nominated for Grand Mastership of the Independent Grand Lodge, an office he declined.

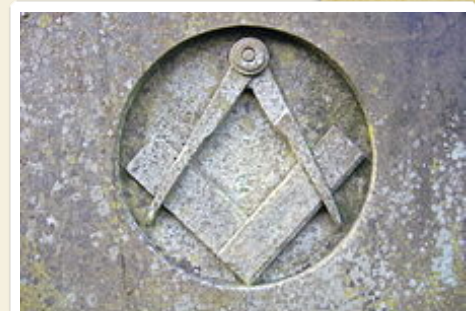
The underlying philosophy of Freemasonry ("The brotherhood of man and the Fatherhood of God") was the foundation of political, religious, social, and educational reform, which was opposed by the monarchies of Europe and ecclesiastical authorities as well. Washington's leadership

and involvement with the craft gave him the confidence that America's military secrets were safe. His involvement in Freemasonry, as Master of the Lodge, provided him with more than confidence, because the lodge ritual's function was to elevate the participant's consciousness.

### BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

Benjamin Franklin was not only one of the Founding Fathers of the United States. He was a leading writer, publisher, inventor, diplomat, scientist, and philosopher. He is well-known for his experiments with electricity and lightning, and for publishing "Poor Richard's Almanac" and the Pennsylvania Gazette. He served as Postmaster General under the Continental Congress, and later became a prominent abolitionist. He is credited with inventing the lightning rod, the Franklin Stove, and bifocals.

In addition to promoting his Quaker morals and science throughout the growing American society, Franklin traveled to France to try and gain the support from the French in the American Revolution. Many historians support the theory that like Washington, Franklin was a freemason, that was able to use his connections in France to gain allies in the war. In 1789, at the age of 81, Franklin signed as a delegate to the first Constitution of The United States and the Bill Of Rights.



*Symbol of Freemasonry*

Although the Evidence of Freemason connections amongst the original congress is convincing, there are no documents written or signed by the fathers that prove these theories.

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Flag of The United States of America



The Seven Founding Fathers