

## the Watermark

### May Day – A Tale of Two Celebrations

May the 1<sup>st</sup> is a day of celebration throughout most of the world and depending on your perspective it is a day of celebrating life or organized labour. The origins of May Day celebrations are pre-Christian and originate in northern European pagan cultures such as the Celtic festival of Beltane. This fertility based spring-time festival of optimism was known

for its tradition of dancing the maypole dance and crowning of the May Queen, lighting of fires through which livestock were driven, and around which the people danced in a sunwise direction" (perambulation). With the Christianization of Europe the church absorbed and changed the religious character of the pagan festivals and morphed them into popular secular celebrations or Christian observances. A good example is the Germanic celebration of Walpurgis Night, which is named after the English missionary Saint Walburga (710–779) who was canonized on May 1<sup>st</sup>.

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*Is published 10 times per year and is distributed via the Internet free of charge. Submissions can be sent to the Editor at: [larryburden8@gmail.com](mailto:larryburden8@gmail.com)*

## The Titanic – Freemasons Remembered: Part 1

The RMS (Royal Mail Ship) Titanic is arguably the most famous ship in the history of the world and definitely the most famous maritime disaster of all times. The

doomed ship built by the Harland & Wolfe shipyard in the Irish city of Belfast lives on past its maiden voyage and its encounter with an iceberg. This April marked the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the disaster that has spawned numerous books, movies and conspiracy theories. Nearly every aspect of this disaster has been examined reviewed and documented since that fateful night of April 15<sup>th</sup> 1912; except for identifying the members of this fraternity who were aboard.

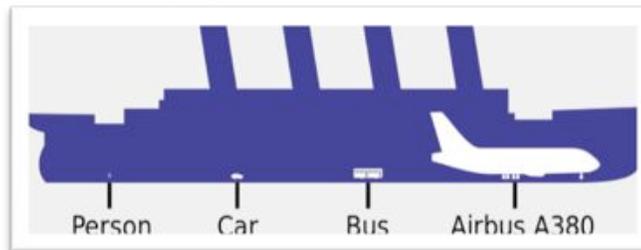
Prior to gliding in two pieces down to the bottom at 12,500 feet the floating palace that financier J.P. Morgan built, offered numerous luxuries for the super rich. These included a swimming pool, Turkish bath, squash courts, and three enclosed dining rooms, one for each class.

Though the majority of passengers aboard could barely scrape together 3<sup>rd</sup> class fare £7 5s (equivalent to £532 today), the Titanic's first voyage was a spectacle for wealthy, many of who were millionaires and the elite business leaders of the new 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Tickets for the most expensive first-class parlor suite would cost you £870 over \$100,000 in today's currency and the dress code for dinner included the finest of clothing complete diamonds for both men and women. Even though it was her maiden voyage she was considerably under her capacity of 2,586 with only 1317 passengers plus her crew of 885.



The reason for being half full was due to a long coal strike that had severely hampered the transportation industry. Although the strike had recently

ended, there was not enough time to market the ships passage before she sailed. The 46,328 registered gross ton Titanic had 11 decks eight of which were used for passengers. She was 882 feet 9 inches long her maximum breadth was 92 feet 6 inches and her total height, from the base of the keel to the top of the bridge, was 104'. With a draught of 34 feet 7 inches, she displaced 52,310 tons.



Nobody knows for sure how many of the 2,224 people aboard were Freemasons but there had to many more than the 35 men

that have been identified five of whom survived. One would assume that this Fraternity would have researched this historical event, but surprisingly very little research on this topic has been done until recently. In the course of my research I have discovered many interesting details about these men and what I found was really interesting.

Contrary to what one would assume, most of the Freemasons identified on the Titanic were not the super rich or upper crust of society, but instead 26 came from the crew and second class! Freemasons aboard came from Ireland, Italy, England, South Africa, Wales, America and Canada and included engineers, stewards, waiters, musicians, deck officers, bankers, soldier's, artists, salesmen, hotel owners and clergy and they ranged in age from 32 to 62. Several of them were travelling with their wives and most perished with them.

# Notable Freemason: General Claire L. Chennault

*By Dick Logan; Ottawa Philatelic Society*

General Claire L Chennault is best known as the leader of the American Volunteer Group, a group of airmen from the United States who flew against the Japanese in China during World War II. They were known as the *Flying Tigers* because of the patches on their uniforms and the *teeth* on their planes. They were sent to train in



China in 1940, before the United States was at war, to assist General Chiang Kai-shek. Therefore they were not considered actual U.S. military personnel but volunteers assisting the Chinese

government. They engaged the Japanese in combat, only 13 days after the attack on Pearl



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Harbor in 1941. The Flying Tigers originally was comprised of 100 Curtiss P-40 Warhawk aircraft, the first mass produced fighter which were built by Curtiss Aviation in Buffalo. Chennault was a member of League City Texas Lodge Number 1053, and the Orient of China ASSR and Islam Shrine Temple.



## Another Mistaken Claim



I have written about products being sold as Masonic on the internet and I recently found this cover that at first glance appears to be Masonic because it has a Square and Compasses but the “arm & hammer” clearly makes it non Masonic. That symbol has been used by a number of different groups including a popular brand of baking soda. This cover shows that was issued by the “Red, White & Blue Council No. 7, of the Jr. O.U.A.M”. The **Order of the United American Mechanics**.

## Titanic continued...

The following list provides the name, age, occupation and Lodge for the known Freemasons aboard the Titanic and are listed by Crew, 2<sup>nd</sup> class and 1<sup>st</sup> Class. Those who do not have a lodge listed were identified as Freemasons by other means.

Ashe	Henry Wellesley	41	Glory Hole Steward	UGLE Lodge u/k
Bochet	Pierre Giuseppe	43	Waiter	Loggia Italia, # 2687
Deeble	Alfred Arnold	29	Saloon Steward	Neptune Lodge No 1264
Dodd	Edward Charles	38	Jr. 3rd Engineer	4 Cardinal Virtues Lodge #979
Gill	Joseph Stanley	34	Bedroom Steward	Walton Lodge No 1086
Hamilton	A. Ernest	25	Asst. Smoke room Steward	Neptune Lodge No 1264
Hardy	John T.	36	Chief 2nd Class Steward	UGLE Lodge u/k
Harvey	Herbert Gifford	34	Jr. Asst. 2nd Engineer.	UGLE Lodge u/k
Hayter	Arthur	44	Bedroom Steward	Neptune Lodge No 1264
Hesketh	John Henry	33	Engineer	Prince Of Wales Lodge #1035
Lawrence	Arthur	35	Saloon Steward	Neptune Lodge, # 1264
Parsons	Edward	35	Chief Storekeeper	Kirkdale Lodge No 1756
Pitman	Herbert John	34	Third Officer	Abbey Lodge, # 3341,
Proctor	Charles	40	Chef	Liverpool Dramatic Lodge #1609
Roberts	Hugh R.	40	Bedroom Steward	Derby Lodge No 724
Taylor	Percy Cornelius	32	Ship's orchestra	Musgrave Lodge, # 1597
Thompson	Herbert Henry	25	Storekeeper	Stanley Lodge No 1325
Wareham	Robert Arthur	36	Bedroom Steward	Toxteth Lodge, # 1356
Williams	Arthur John	38	Storekeeper	Walton Lodge No 1086
Woody	Oscar Scott	44	Postal Clerk	Acacia Lodge # 16, Clifton VA.
Bateman	Rev Robert James	51	Clergy	Solomon Blue Lodge #20
Brown	Thomas W. S.	45	Hotel Owner	Cape Town SA
Hodges	Henry Price	50	Salesman	Caulsentum Lodge, # 1461
Turpin	William John Robert	29	Carpenter	Lodge of St. George, No 2025
Butt	Archibald William	46	Military	Knights of Kadosh, No. 1 AASR
Dodge	Washington	52	Doctor	Oriental Lodge #144, San Francisco
Graham	George Edward	38		
Harris	Henry Birkhardt	45	Theatre manager	Munn Lodge, # 100
Holverson	Alexander Oskar	42		Transportation Lodge, # 842.
Millet	Francis Davis	34	Artist & Journalist	Kane Lodge, # 454
Molson	Harry Markland	55	Industrialist	
Spencer	William Augustus	57	Collector of Rare Books	
Taylor	Elmer Zelby	48	Paper Cup Manufacturers	
Walker	William Anderson	48		Hope Lodge # 124,

## The Titanic continued...

Some historians claim that surviving crewmember Harold Godfrey Lowe was a Freemason. He was not a Freemason at the time but later became one in 1922.

The only survivors were crewmembers John Hardy, Herbert Pitman and passenger Elmer Taylor.

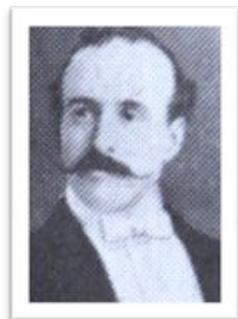
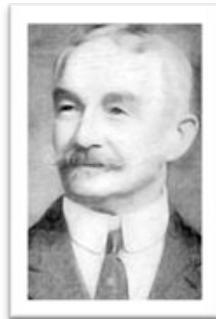
The only Canadian Freemason identified so far was none other than the great grandson of the Molson Breweries Empire **Harry Markland Molson** and was the Past Master of the oldest lodge in Montreal.

Ironically he survived two previous sinking's.



**Major Archibald William Butt** served as chief military aid to Presidents, Roosevelt and Taft. A Scottish Rite Mason, he was travelling with his close personal friend, Kane Lodge, No. 454,

NY member **Francis Millett** a painter, sculptor and writer who could speak and write in a half dozen languages. The pair was returning to America after a vacation in Europe.



**Percy Cornelius Taylor** was one of the musicians in the ships orchestra who kept on playing until they were swept into the sea. He was a Past Master of Musgrave Lodge, No. 1597, at Hampton Court.



**Herbert John Pitman** was the ships 3<sup>rd</sup> officer and he survived the ordeal after being assigned to Lifeboat #5 and escaping with 40 passengers. After testifying at both official inquires he remained at sea for 35 more years until his death in 1961. He was a member of Abbey Lodge, No. 3341, in Hatfield he retired to Pitcombe, England.

**Oscar Scott Woody** was a member of the onboard post office staff and belonged to Acacia Lodge No. 16, Clifton VA. His lodge has created a website about him at <http://oscarscottwoody.com>. There you can read about how his dues card was returned 94 years after his death!



**Rev. Robert James Bateman** was the Chaplain of the Solomon Blue Lodge #20 Jacksonville FL. and he was no ordinary man. He gave up a career as a physician to pursue a life of ministering to the poor and downtrodden. His impact on society was huge and I encourage to read about him at this link: <http://www.rlhssec.org/pdfs/47Jun98.pdf> On board the Titanic he placed his sister-in-law in a lifeboat and returned to minister the doomed. When his frozen body was recovered he was wearing a Masonic pin.

At least three of our brother's are buried in the Fairview Lawn Cemetery, in Halifax, N.S (Ashe, Deeble and Wareham) and until now it is unlikely that any of our Brethren in Halifax were even aware they are. Who knows maybe now we can acknowledge them each year with a visit to their graves?

In part II we will learn more about some of these Freemasons and their roll in "the night to remember".

## Canadian Mason: John Bracken

Known as “Honest John Bracken”, the man who did not want to be Premier, John Bracken (1883-1969) was the 11<sup>th</sup> Premier of the Province of Manitoba. In 1922 the United Farmers of Manitoba party was unexpectedly swept to power without either a platform or a leader. After considering several agricultural leaders the committee approached Bracken then head of Manitoba’s Agriculture College to become their leader. He had no interest in politics and turned them down. They did not give up and approached him two more times and after pleading with him in front of his wife Alice. Bracken was convinced by her to “help the men out”. He was elected and ran the Province for 22 years throughout the difficult times of the depression and labour unrest. After Provincial politics he was asked to become the leader of the federal Progressive Conservative Party, which he did for two years before being forced out by members from the east who could not tolerate his western focused policies. He is listed in Denslows 10,000 Freemasons but no lodge is cited.



1998 Scott # 1709j

**May Day continued...** A good example of how part of the pagan celebration was changed by the church is exemplified in the burning of fires on the eve of May Day. The original symbolism of the bonfires was to banish the long nights of winter and mark the coming of summer whereas the Christianized purpose was to symbolize the burning of the witches.

In more than 80 countries the 1<sup>st</sup> of May is known for many left wing movements and international labour as **International Workers' Day**. It is celebrated by organized marches and demonstrations by workers and their unions. International Workers' Day compared to the traditional May Day celebration is relatively new as its origins are based on commemorating the 1886 Haymarket Massacre in Chicago. During a general strike for the eight-hour workday the police fired on the marchers, resulting in the death of many workers and police officers. In 1891, May Day was formally recognized at the International's (Socialist) Congress in Brussels as an annual event to remember the anniversary of the Chicago protests. Another interesting fact about May Day is its use as the international call of distress. “Mayday, Mayday, Mayday”! Since it was created in 1923 by Frederick S. Mockford (1897–1962), the term has been used primarily by mariners and aviators to signal a life-threatening emergency. Mockford was a British radio



officer in London who was tasked with finding an easily understood word that would indicate distress and would be understood by everyone in an emergency. In the 1920's most of the air traffic at the time was between London and Paris and English wasn't the standard language of aviation yet. As a result he needed a word that could be understood in French as well. He chose the word "Mayday" from the French word *m'aider*. Translated into English the phrase "Venez m'aider" means, "come help me." His proposal was ratified and has been in use ever since.