America: Book One

Untold Or Lesser Known Tales About America And Its Heritage

by Mike Thomas

"Respectfully dedicated to all those that helped make and keep America what it is today - especially those who sacrificed yet still accomplished things for generations they would never see!"

Chapter listings below

All chapters are live bookmarks - click to go directly to the respective chapter

Chapter One - Forward & Introduction
Chapter Two - Paul Revere's Helper
Chapter Three - Never Give Up
Chapter Four - John Brown's Body
Chapter Five - Richard B.
Chapter Six - The Chirographer
Chapter Seven - Mrs. Lee's Garden
Chapter Eight - If You Can Dream It, You Can Do It
Chapter Nine - Helping Hands
Chapter Ten - The Fife And Drum Corps
Chapter Eleven - You Push The Button ... We Do The Rest
Chapter Twelve - He Just Wouldn't Quit
Chapter Thirteen - Sam
Chapter Fourteen - The Female Prisoner
Chapter Fifteen - Big Legacy
Chapter Sixteen - Never Forget
Chapter Seventeen - John & Bill
Chapter Eighteen - Clap Together
Chapter Nineteen - A Salute In The Rain
Chapter Twenty - The Yellow Paper Clip
Chapter Twenty One - Too Much Of A Flag Waver
Chapter Twenty Two - Frank
Chapter Twenty Three - America's Heart
Chapter Twenty Four - Lonzo Green
Chapter Twenty Five - For What It's Worth
Chapter Twenty Six - Gordon Arthur Kelly
Chapter Twenty Seven - Amos Muzyad Yakhoob
Chapter Twenty Eight - Auguste'
Chapter Twenty Nine - The Colonel's Best Student
Chapter Thirty - The Musical Minister
Chapter Thirty One - William And Louis
Chapter Thirty Two - Common Ground
Chapter Thirty Three - Mary Had A Little Lamb
Chapter Thirty Four - Arrangement In Grey And Black
Chapter Thirty Five - Sarah Colley
BONUS CHAPTER: Chapter Thirty Six - "Father Of Miami (aka Beyond Theme Parks)
BONUS CHAPTER: Chapter Thirty Seven - "Believe"

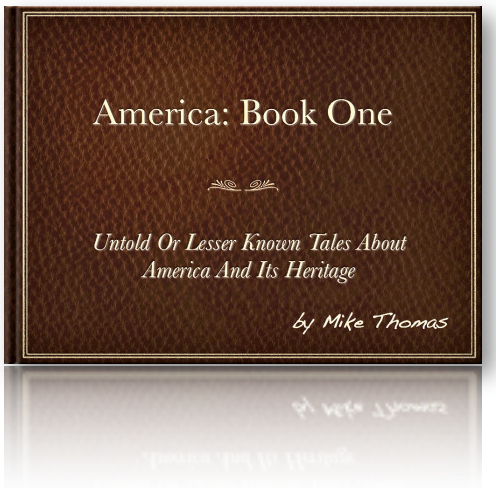
Back To Chapter Selection

Chapter One - "Forward and Introduction"

Hi everybody. My name is Mike Thomas. They call me "The Documentorian." Among a few other things I've done in my life and career, I've had a fascination with American Heritage. Not so much American history but more the heritage and traditions that have helped shape America. In particular, the untold or lesser known tales and stories are what intrigued me way more than anything I was ever taught in school. I've always been the kind of person who roots for the underdog or journeys on the path less travelled. In the late 70's I discovered this radio personality named Paul Harvey - you know:"The Rest Of The Story" guy. I made it a point to be near a radio whenever Mr. Harvey was scheduled to be on the air. I grew to love those stories and his positive radio news & highlights. There were several other great story tellers and authors that were also instrumental in my undertaking this ebook as well. I've always loved surprise endings to books, movies and stories.

All the aforementioned is what America: Book One is about. Let me give you an example or two. Did you know that when Paul Revere made his famous night ride a few hundred years ago he had help from at least one other rider? And did you know that Mrs. Robert E. Lee created a famous garden that in one form or another still exists today? How about the president that had eleven major personal and professional defeats and tragedies spanning over 20 years before finally being elected President of The United States? Have you ever heard of "America's Heart" and if so who was the man that created and painted it?

Well, I honestly don't expect you to know the answers to these questions. I didn't until I started digging and researching for these lesser known stories to record for America: Book One. Hopefully, you'll be pleasantly surprised, enlightened and educated after reading this ebook. Oh and by the way while I was creating and writing the scripts for this project I used a Chirographer. Do you know what a Chirographer is? Well, make sure you read Chapter 6 to find out. And I'll probably never use a YELLOW paperclip to fasten copies of the script together again. Why you ask? Read chapter 20 and you'll understand. Happy reading!



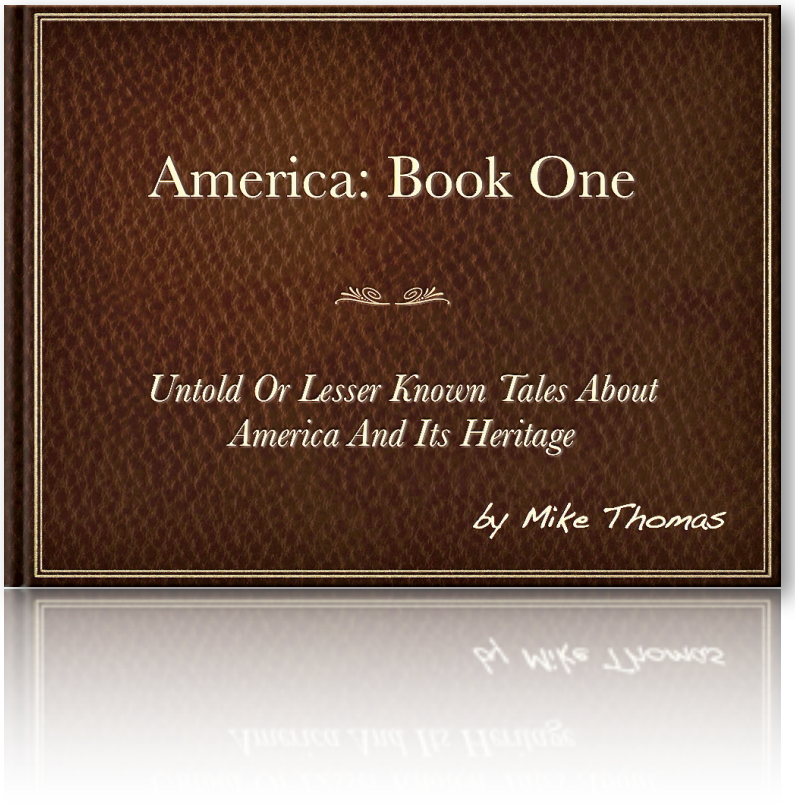
Chapter 2 - "Paul Revere's Helper"

During the famous night ride of Paul Revere, unbeknownst to most, there was another rider that helped convey the message to the Colonists that the British were coming. In south western Massachusetts, a man named Ludington owned a farm. Senior Ludington was also a member of the Militia. When he received word that the British had over taken a town near Danbury Connecticut, he was torn between riding his horse and warning the countryside of the impending danger coming or awaiting orders from his superiors in the Militia. Being a good military man, he chose to wait for his orders.

Senior Ludington had a teenage offspring who volunteered to ride out into the night to warn people the British were coming. Young Ludington leapt on a horse and sped off into the night.

Now Paul Revere was only able to ride about 4 miles before he was captured by the British near Lexington Concord. Young Ludington managed to ride an astonishing 40 miles that night. So you see my friends, there are really three ironic points to this story: One - Revere was out ridden by 36 miles that night; Two - the person outriding Paul Revere was a teenager:

The third ironic twist to the story? It has to do with that rider's first name. Proceed to the next page for the answer.



HER name was Sybil. That's right. Paul Revere was outridden 36 miles by a teenage GIRL named Sybil Ludington!

Back To Chapter Selection

Chapter 3 - "Never Give Up"

In ` 31, he failed in business.

He was defeated for the state legislature in `32.

He failed again in business in `32.

In ` 34, he won his first election - a seat in the state legislature.

But the death of his sweetheart was a severe blow in `35 and led to a nervous breakdown in `36.

By `38 he was fully recovered, but that was the year he was defeated for Speaker Of The House.

He attempted to become an elector in the presidential race in `40, but again was rejected by the voters.

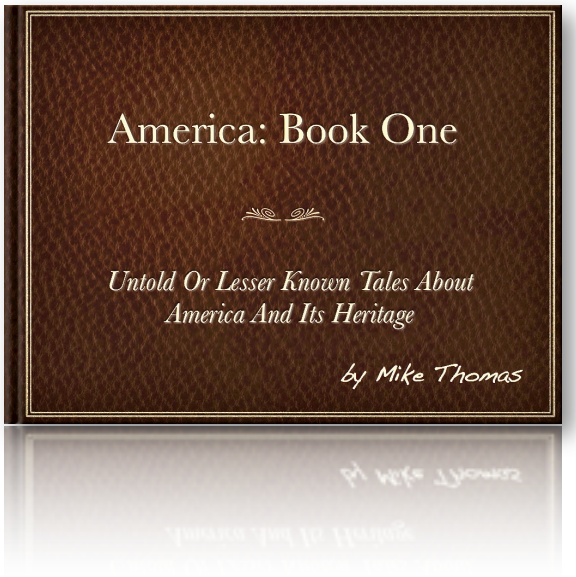
In `43, he ran for a seat in The U.S. Congress but was defeated.

This was reversed in `46 when he was elected United States Congressman.

He tried for the U.S. Senate in `58 and lost.

He experienced eleven personal and professional defeats in twenty seven years but never quit trying. And then in `60, he was elected President.

Do you know who it is yet? Go ahead. Proceed to the next page.



In ***1860***, ***Abraham Lincoln*** became the

16th President of the United States of America

NEVER GIVE UP!

Back To Chapter Selection

Chapter 4 - "John's Brown's Body"

"Say Brother, Will We Meet You Over On The Other Shore?" That was one of many Civil War era songs, though the soldiers had made up some of their own words to that particular song. The lyric told a story about 'John Brown's body lyin' a molderin' in the grave'.

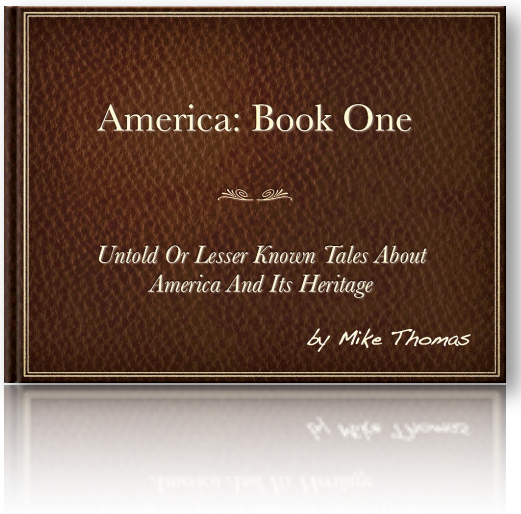
A lady named Julia Ward Howe once heard the song and decided to sit and write down yet another set of lyrics to it - more so in poetry fashion. When she'd completed her composition, she mailed in to a magazine called Atlantic Monthly who mailed her a check for $4.00 for the publication rights.

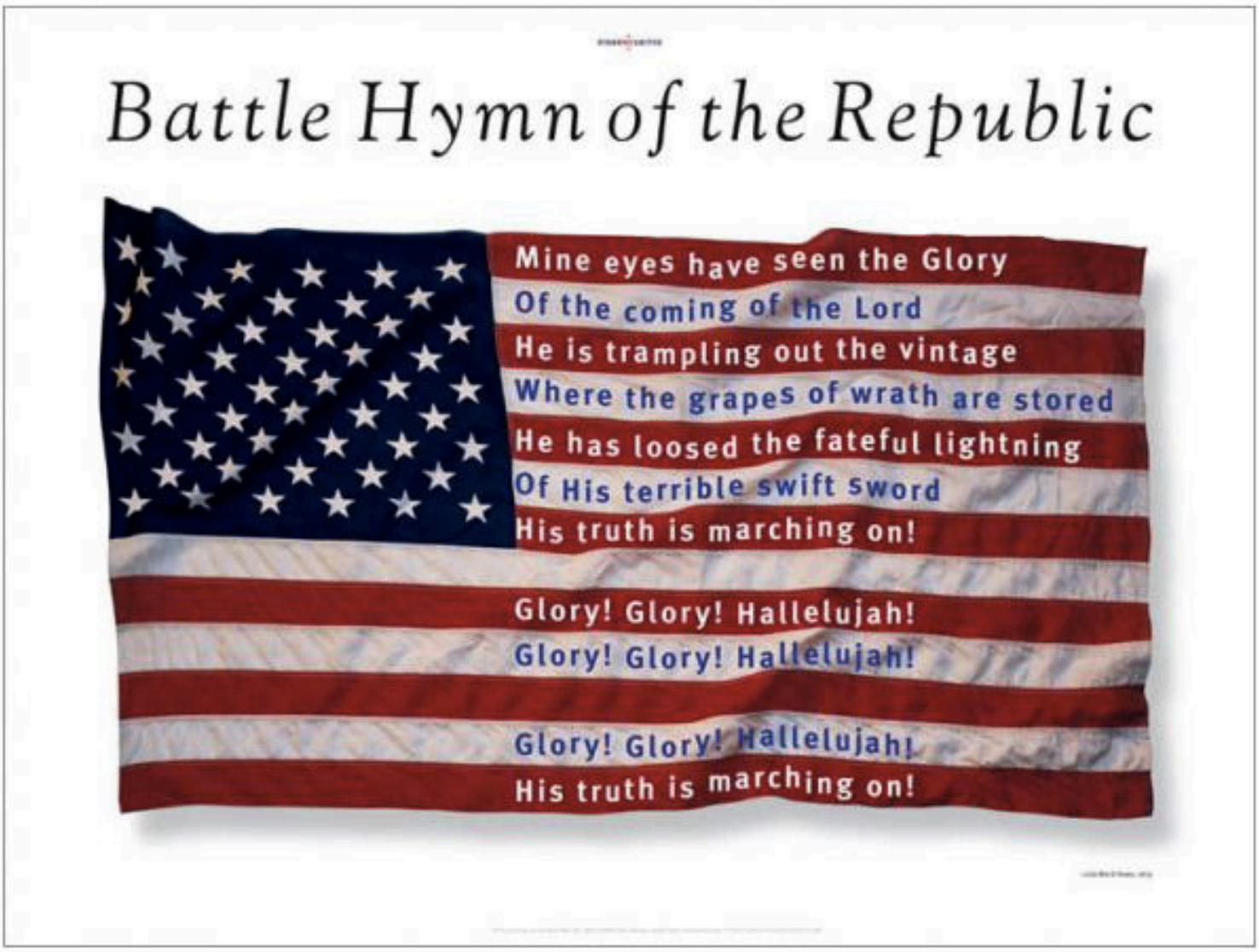
Slowly but surely, the song sung with Julia's poetic words became increasingly popular - especially at Military rallies with soldiers marching off to war.

At such a rally in Washington D.C., Abraham Lincoln heard the soldiers singing the 'new' version of the song. At the completion of the tune, Lincoln - with tears streaming down his face exclaimed, "*SING IT AGAIN!"*.

The song may have gained it's popularity back in those days, but we've never forgotten or stopped singing it since. For four bucks, it was a pretty good deal.

Oh, the song? Proceed to the next page for the answer.





"The Battle Hymn Of The Republic" certainly was a steal of a deal for four bucks wouldn't you say?

Back To Chapter Selection

Chapter 5 - "Richard B."

Born on July 18th, 1913, Richard was destined for stardom of one kind or another. He began his career in Vaudeville, moved on to Radio and Film (at the same time no less) in the late 1930's. In 1930, he met his first wife, Edna Stillwood while working in Kansas City. That marriage lasted until 1944. In 1945, he met second wife Georgia Davis by which he had his only son, Richard Jr. in 1948. But Richard Jr. who was diagnosed with leukemia and died ten days prior to his 10th birthday in 1958. Richard Sr. was devastated by the loss of his only son that he idolized. There's never been a real connection, but Richard's life became more turmoil ridden with him becoming a heavy drinker. Fortunately, he was able to recognize and address this problem.

As radio slowly gave way to television, he ended up with his own TV show, which ran until 1971 between two networks. This essentially brought Richard B's long television career to an end. He still did guest appearances here and there. But mostly he enjoyed life painting clowns - something Richard B - or should I say at this point in our story, "Red" loved to do.

Richard Bernard Skelton ("Red," to most people) was once hailed by the late great Groucho Marx as 'the most un-acclaimed clown in show biz'. Red Skelton left us in 1997. But five years later in 202, his name and legacy resurfaced, not for comedic reasons. Ya' see Red had done a monologue back on his TV show in 1969 about the phrase, "Under God" being in The Pledge Of Allegiance. In 2002, there was similar controversy. The 1969 monologue resurfaced and made its way around the internet, social medias and radio stations. Below is both a link to an audio only clip of Red Skelton performing his famous Pledge Of Allegiance (Internet connection required) as well as a written version of Red's monologue:

Click HERE to be taken to the audio version of Red's Pledge

I: me. An individual. A committee of one.

Pledge: dedicate all of my worldly good to give without self pity

Allegiance: My love and my devotion

To The Flag: Our standard. Old Glory. A symbol of freedom. Where ever she waives, there's respect because your loyalty has given her a dignity that shouts freedom is everybody's job

United: That means that we have all come together.

States: Individual communities that have united into 48 great states. 48 individual communities with pride and dignity and purpose, all divided with imaginary boundaries, yet untied with a common purpose - and that's love for country.

And to the republic: Republic - A state in which sovereign power is invested in Representatives chosen by the people to govern. And government is the people. And it's from the people to the leaders, not from the leaders to the people.

For which it stands, one nation: One nation meaning so Blessed by God

Indivisible: Incapable of being divided

With Liberty; which is freedom - the right of power to live one's own life without threats, fear or some sort of retaliation

And justice: the principle or qualities of dealing fairly with others

For all: Which means boys and girls, it's as much your country as it is mine.

Red continued, "Since I was a small boy, two states and two words have been added to our country and two words have been added to the Pledge Of Allegiance: Under God! Wouldn't be a pity if someone said that is a prayer and that would someday be eliminated from schools, too?"

Red Skelton

Back To Chapter Selection

Chapter 6 - "The Chirographer"

Christopher Sholes invented a little machine he called a chirographer. As good a machine as it was, it was considered un-ladylike. He even tried to have the YWCA in New York offer free classes in the use of the chirographer. To no avail.

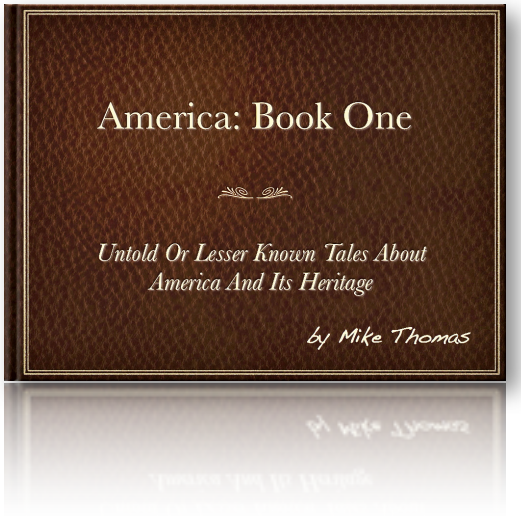
Sholes even teamed up with the famous gunsmith at the time. But even then he only ended up selling a total of 1200 of these little machines over a seven year period.

But in 1875, the gunsmith received a letter that would change everything. The mans's letter said that he "had one of these little jokers around the house but I don't want anyone to know I have one." The letter was signed Samuel Clemens - you know him as Mark Twain.

Something this good and secretive just begged to be let out of the bag - and it was. There have been millions of these rigs sold all over the world since then. Ladies have become expert at using them - probably a little more so than men. And they were no longer considered unladylike.

The chirographer that Mark Twain and the Remington gun company made famous became one of the earliest examples of the American Dream come true.

What was a chirographer you ask? I actually used a very modern day derivative of a Chirographer to compose this ebook. Proceed to the next page for the answer.



The Chirographer was the first form of what we today call the typewriter.

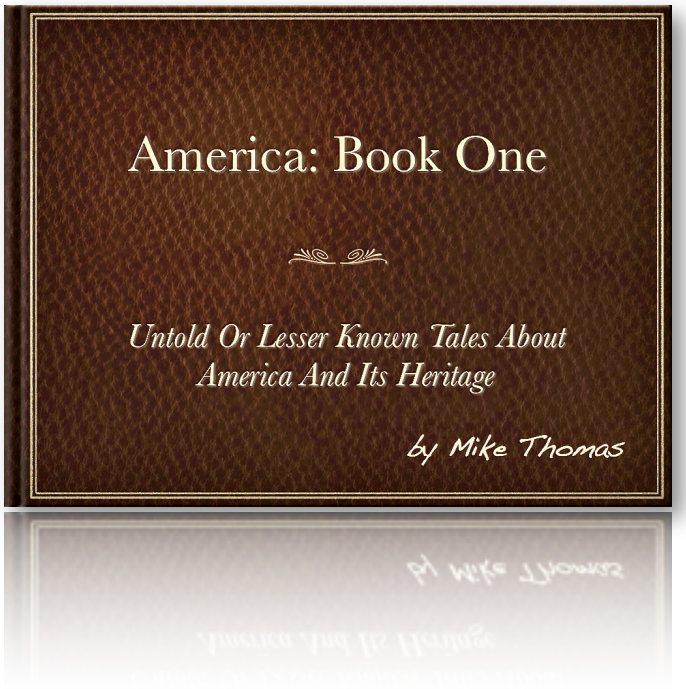
Back To Chapter Selection

Chapter 7 - Mrs. Lee's Garden

It was just prior to Civil War times. Robert E. Lee had a beautiful house and grounds that overlooked the Potomac River in Virginia, just outside of Washington, D.C. Mrs. Lee had a vast, beautiful rose garden on the grounds.

When the Civil War came, Robert E. Lee was given command of all the southern troops and therefore headed further inland leaving his cherished estate behind. Eventually, the government seized Lee's land due to non payment of taxes - a grand total of $98.16, by the way.

They began burying soldiers in what was once Mrs. Lee's rose garden. Originally, just a few large handfuls of soldiers were laid to rest there rather than transport their bodies home. Today there are thousands of military personnel buried in was Mrs. Lee's garden. Do you have a guess what we call Mrs/ Lee's rose garden today? Proceed to the next page for the answer.



Mrs. Lee's Garden is known today as ***Arlington National Cemetery***

Back To Chapter Selection

Chapter 8 - "If You Can Dream It, You Can Do It"

He was born in 1901. In the summers, his older brother and younger sister would play all day on the family farm. He would make up and tell stories to his younger sister while his older brother watched in amazement at the creativity coming out of his brain and heart.

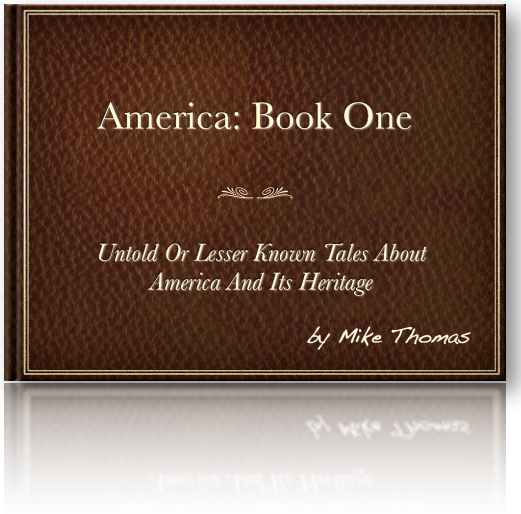
He loved art and drawing. He tried for years to make a living by drawing. His father wasn't exactly supportive of his pursuing an art career instead of going to college - though he hadn't even graduated from high school yet. And, as a side note, never did graduate high school.

His older brother enlisted in the military when WWI came along. He found himself quite lonely without his life long friend. Henceforth, he and another buddy found something they could enlist in the army for and not have to be eighteen (he was underage at this point). He joined an Ambulance Unit and was shipped off to France. Just after getting to France, the troops pulled out and once again he was all alone. He put in for a discharge and came back to the U.S.

When he returned, he dove heavily into his art and animation pursuit. He and his brother - re-united by now - were unemployed. They solved that problem by going into business for themselves. This was pretty much the beginning of what would later come to be as one of the great business partnerships of all times.

To skip ahead a few years, this man began to crack the market with his ideas. Eventually he was even recognized by his peers as one of the giants in the motion picture industry. One day while taking his daughters to the playground, he was sitting and waiting for his kids playing on the merry-go-round, an idea popped into his head: to build a place where kids & adults could play together.

Well, I think this one is pretty easy to figure out. But in just to validate your thoughts, flip to the next page and see.



Walter Elias DIsney went on to become a true pioneer in the fields of motion pictures, animation and theme parks.

His first animated major motion picture was Snow White - actually the first animated feature motion picture in history. Snow White was a huge success and with the profits, he built The Walt Disney Studios in California.

Walt's idea about the place where kids and adults could play together became his first major theme park, Disneyland. His second major theme park was to be called Disney World in Florida. But Walt passed away just after announcing the plans for the project in 1966. His life long friend, business partner and brother Roy took over the reins and completed the project, renaming it "Walt Disney World" so that everyone would be sure and remember the man with the dreams and visions.

Walt's legacy can still be felt today if you look and seek hard enough at the theme parks that bear his name. May the spirit of Walt Disney live forever!

Back To Chapter Selection

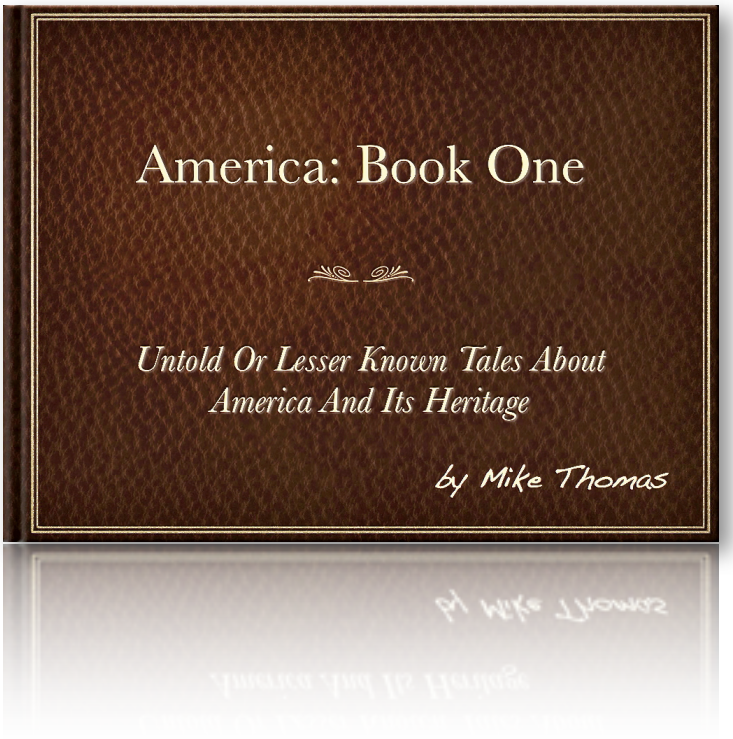
Chapter 9 - “Helping Hands”

Her father was taken POW by the Union Army with the invasion of Savannah, GA in 1854. The incident had a profound effect on young Juliette. She got to know all too well the feeling of doing without. Ya' see, even after her father finally returned home, there was a clothing shortage. So young Julie and some neighborhood girls began making articles of clothing for others in need. They called themselves, "The Helping Hands."

Though Julie's first attempt wasn't what you would call the most successful, she was not a quitter. She continued to develop skills that would ultimately help the greater good.

Forty six years later in 1912 - again in Savannah, GA, she gathered another group of girls to get together. Julie began sharing her skills such as sewing, cooking, weaving - even raising chickens. Julie also talked with great passion and excitement about cooking contests and camping trips. Some critics thought of her and her ideas as 'unladylike'. But this criticism was overcome by joy and heartfelt fun as hundreds of groups started to form and model themselves after Julie's group.

These groups were no longer called "The Helping Hands." Julie changed the name back then but the goodness and sisterhood of sharing still lives today. Who was this girl Julie and what organization did she give us? Proceed to the next page to find out.



Juliette Gordon Lowe gave us what we know today as ***The Girl Scouts.***

Back To Chapter Selection

Chapter 10 - "The Fife And Drum Corps"

Just when you think about all the negativity and criticizing of our government and it's leaders, and just when you think the kids today are too wrapped up in video games, Game Boys, computers, iPods, street gangs and violence - something appears out of nowhere when you least expect it.

There I was, eating a burger, fries and a Coke at a restaurant in a Central Florida Theme Park. I was keeping to myself and just 'people- watching'. Among other tables, I noticed this one that had two couples and about 6 kids - all between the ages of about 8 and 14. Outside, there was a street show being put on by a fife & drum corp. Personally, I've always loved this show as it brings back or highlights an America of yesteryear. Not necessarily yesteryear as in 200 years ago, but rather back in the 40's, 50's, and 60's when people had more of a real respect and interest in our nation's history. All the while the show was going on, these families were eating at their table and obviously not having a great day - more so the adults than the kids. The kids were pretty content and quiet, eating their burgers but I could see and hear the moms and dads were testy and in a bad or snappy mood. Plus it was about 96 degrees in the sun at Epcot this day. Even when one of the kids would ask an adult to pass the ketchup or salt, the adults responded with a jerky, angry type motion as if they had something better to do or better place to be.

The street show ended outside. As is tradition, the band upon exiting, marches through the restaurant and goes off stage with drums playing and fife whistling all the way with the leader calling out the marching steps as they retreat. Here's where the day changed for me, the kids and those moms & dads.

As I said before, these family members were eating and appeared to be self involved for one reason or another. Well, when the fife & drum corp was approaching their table, the adults kept eating as if it were no different than eating at their kitchen table at home. But THE KIDS all looked at each other and with haste - WITH HASTE mind you - quickly put that last bite of the burger in their mouths, put down the food and drink, stood up - no, I take that back. They SPRANG UP out of their chairs, put their hands over their hearts (one even saluted) while the band marched by. This was by no means done in a sarcastic way. I could see the genuine look of respect and sincerity on their young faces.

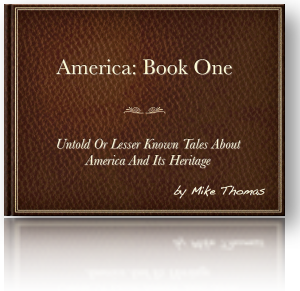
Now after the kids jumped up and I was able to grasp what was going on (and hold back a tear), I saw the adults at the table look at their kids and then at each other. Each one of those adults had this look on their face pretty much telling the rest of the story. It was a look of embarrassment, shame and sort of, “Oh, crap!” Those four adults rose to their feet (the only ones in the place doing this by the way), placed their hands over their hearts and stood just like their children did.

Just after the band made its way past the table, the 6 kids started to applaud, and of course the parents followed suit. I was waiting in anticipation to see what, if anything the parents of those kids were going to do at this point. They didn’t disappoint me - or their children. Both the moms and the dads hugged their kids. There were smiles all around, but I saw one dad wipe his eyes sheepishly, trying to hide it from his kids. One young girl (I assume his daughter) saw this and went over to his side of the table and wrapped her arms around him.

That was it. I had to grab a Kleenex (or in this case a recycled napkin). After all got quiet, I walked over to their table, not really knowing what I was going to say, but I HAD to say something. Moments like these don’t come along every day. I told them I’d been ‘hangin’ around here for years’ and this had to be one of the nicest, most moving 30 seconds I’d seen in my life. I told them they all must have old souls and that they epitomized what American family should still be, and that the parents must have done a great job raising these kids as they were so intent on standing with respect to our flag and the fife & drum corps as the procession passed them by.

I don’t know if I helped change their day by approaching and saying what I did. But they changed mine. And I don’t really know if the grasped the full magnitude of what transpired in those 30 seconds, but they changed their own day - and their outlook at that point. I just wanted to let them know someone noticed and appreciated it all. And to that fife & drum corps, thank you for doing what you do, and in this case, changing the days outlook for two families and one old, sentimental, flag waivin’ patriotic guy.

God Bless America! “Soar On Freedom’s Wings”



Back To Chapter Selection

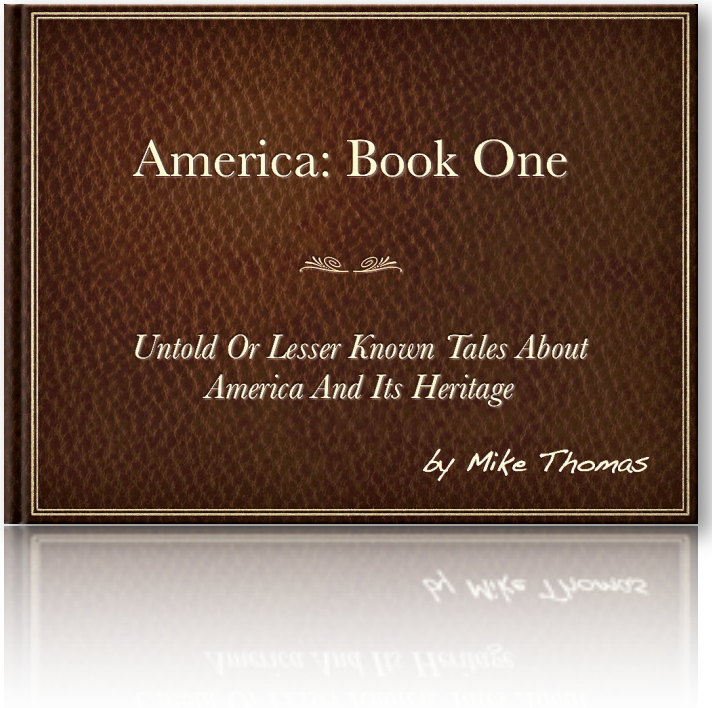
Chapter 11 - “You Press The Button, We Do The Rest”

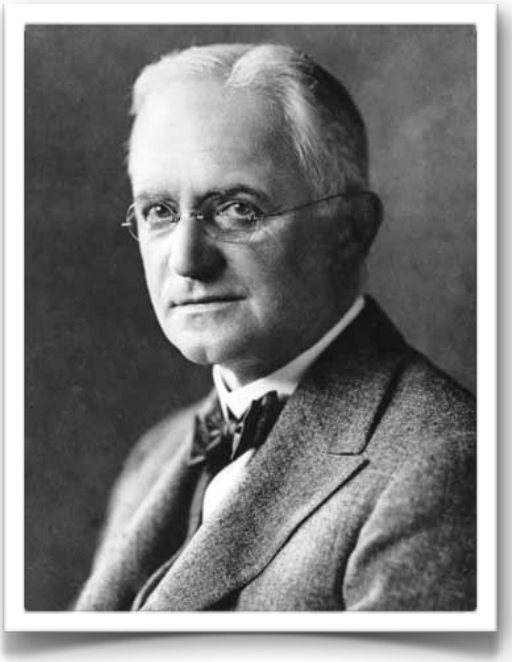
George became fatherless at age fourteen. To support his mother and two sisters, he worked as a bank clerk in his hometown bank. He never really made much money but he sure was rich with ideas and determination.

He began experimenting with a "hobby" that had to do with what he referred to as dry gelatin and emulsion. Eventually, he came up with this little box that held the dry emulsion paper and started making it available to the general public - good for 100 uses. He coined the phrase, "You press the button, we do the rest."

By the early 1900's, every national magazine carried color ads thanks to George's little box. The ads showed charming ladies, sophisticated men, as well as little kids carrying and operating the little box. That little box made George rich. But he never forgot where he came from. He donated 100 million dollars to scientific research, education, and art.

George died in 1932. The strange thing is that there are hardly any photographs of him. I guess - like myself - the guy who invented the little box known as a Kodak didn't like having his picture taken. He just liked taking pictures. Do you know the man's name yet? Proceed to the next page for the answer and more.





George Eastman made it possible to share visual memories in the form of photographs. And by the way, next time you're taking pictures with your Kodak camera (film or digital), or if you're loading in Kodak film to your camera, read the box and/or look for the brand name 'Kodak'. I guarantee you'll find somewhere the official company name of "Eastman Kodak."

Need I say more?

Back To Chapter Selection

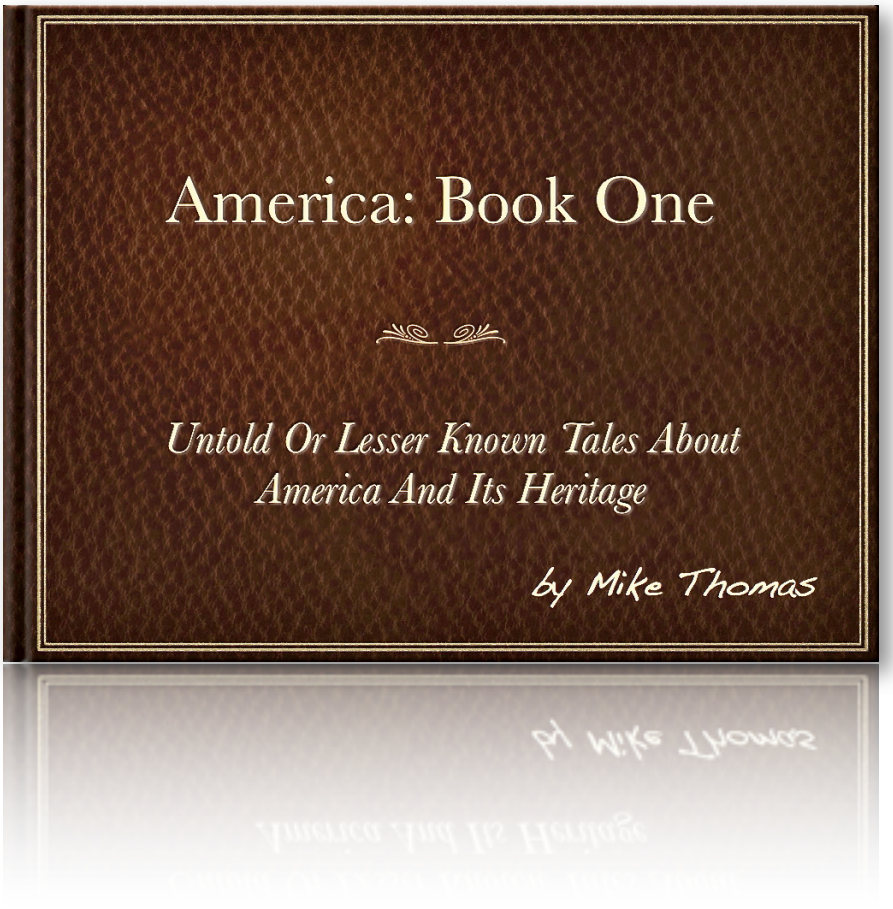
Chapter 12 - "He Just Wouldn't Quit"

Dad arranged for his son, Sam to attend West Point. But his performance there had tarnished records, with demerits for sloppy dress and tardiness. The Mexican War rescued Sam for a little while, with a bit of glory. But then during bleak barracks duty in Oregon, Sam drifted into discouragement and despair. His commanding officer found him drinking on duty and offered him a court martial or a resignation. Sam chose the latter.

With a growing family, he turned to business but failed. He tried farming but failed at that, too. In 1859, he sold firewood for a living and was reduced to a poverty level existence.

At age forty, life had passed him by. But he wouldn't give up. He knew his time would come and he'd be ready for it. He was! In two years, the war that had been a long time coming arrived. The country turned for leadership to a former failure who some how never learned how to quit. In four short years, the man who had sold firewood on the roadside became the commander of all the Union troops in the field. And in nine years, he became the President of the United States.

Can you guess who he was?. Proceed to the next page for the answer.



The man I refer to has his image on our fifty dollar bill:

Ulysses S Grant

Back To Chapter Selection

Chapter 13 - “Sam”

Sam was an artist - one of the finest America ever produced. But that's not what made him famous. And it's not why a statue of him was erected in Central Park.

Sam was doing a portrait of the Marquis de Lafayette when he received a letter. Upon opening and reading the letter, he turned his back on his assignment as well as his profession. Obviously the letter had quite the profound impact on his life. Let me explain further.

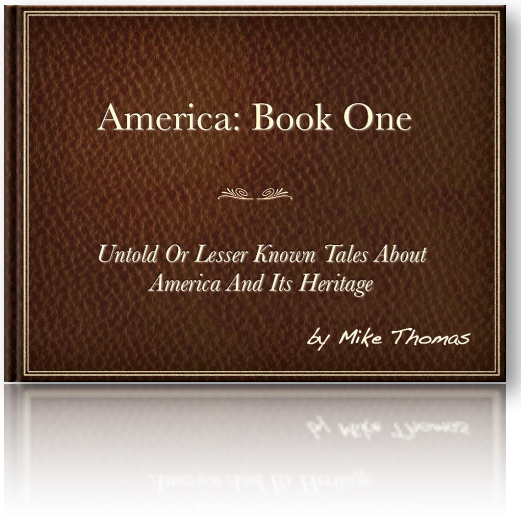
The letter Sam received that day back in 1832 had arrived via horseback seven days after it departed from it's originating point. The letter said bluntly that Sam's wife had died.

Sam was filled with guilt and sorrow. He couldn't help but think that had he been there while she was ill, perhaps his wife wouldn't have died. Or at the very least, he could've been there with her when she passed away. So he committed the rest of his life to the task of finding a better means of communications so that no person would ever have to suffer the sadness and anguish he did - all because he got a letter seven days late.

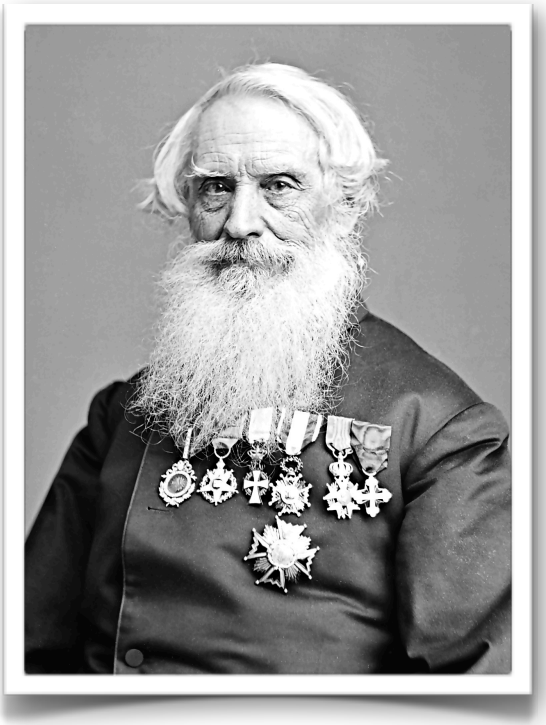
Have you figured out who Sam is yet? Well, let me give you one more hint before you turn the page.

One of the most profound messages ever sent contained this phrase: "What hath God wrought." It was sent on May 24th, 1844 from within the chamber of the Supreme Court in Washington, D.C.

Figured it out yet? Proceed to the next page for the answer.



The man I speak of was was Samuel Morse.



His invention: A series of electrical dashes and dots known as Morse Code that was sent instantly over miles of wire. The impulses were triggered on one end of the wire and received on the other end by something Sam called the Telegraph.

Back To Chapter Selection

Chapter 14 - "The Female Prisoner"

The prisoner was a woman - unusual in 19th century America. And the fine that day was equally unusual: $100.00 plus court costs, which back in that day was very high.

After being held for quite some time in a New York jail, she was finally going to have her day in court. Though everyone including her defense attorney pretty much knew what the verdict was going to be. And they turned out to be right: *GUILTY!*

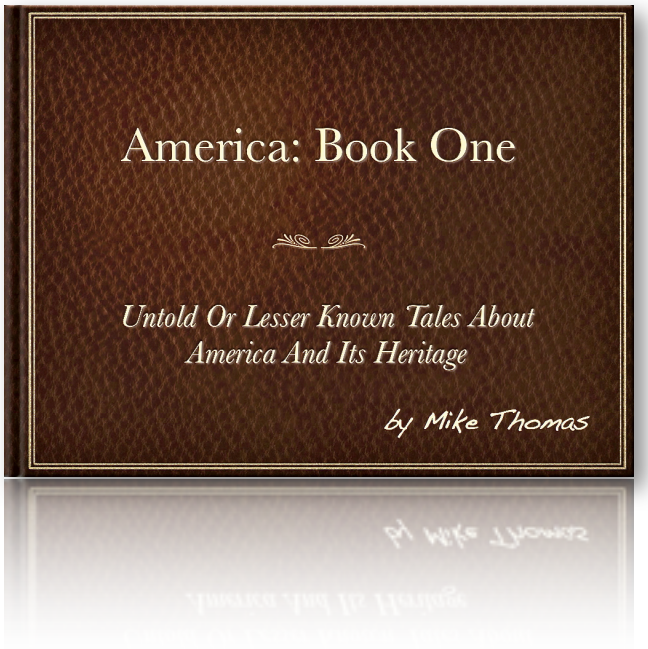
Sentencing followed the reading of the verdict. The judge decided he would allow the woman prisoner the option to speak if she so desired - and that she did!

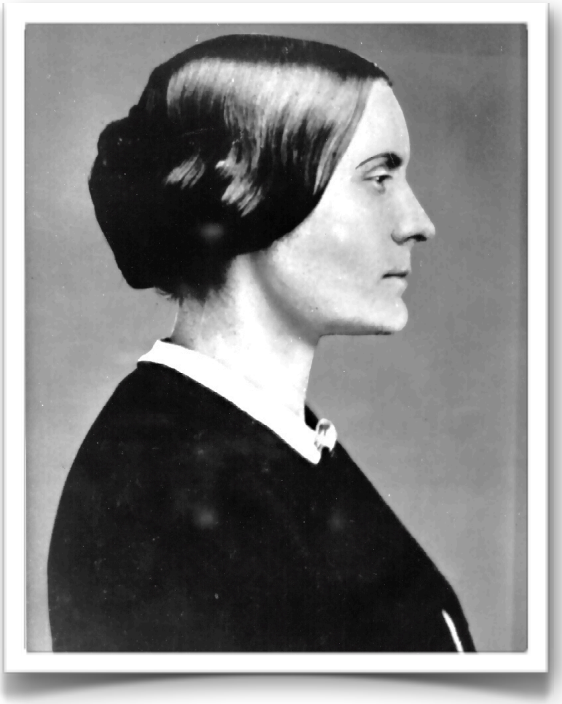
"Your honor," she began, "In your judgement of guilty, you have trampled underfoot every principle of government and ignored my right as a citizen. I am degraded as is all my sex, by Your Honor's verdict of guilty today."

After her bold but poignant short speech, everything was somehow different in that room, and for that matter would be different for every American woman from that day forward. She never did end up paying that fine and her release from custody came that same day.

Her crime? She had presented herself at the Rochester, New York polls on election day. She cast her vote as a citizen in a presidential election. Things were never the same after that one, courageous lady stood up and was counted.

Any ideas who we're talking about here? Proceed to the next page for the answer.





The “Criminal” I speak of was none other than the lady who has her embossed image on the newer U.S. Silver dollar - ***Susan B Anthony***.

Back To Chapter Selection

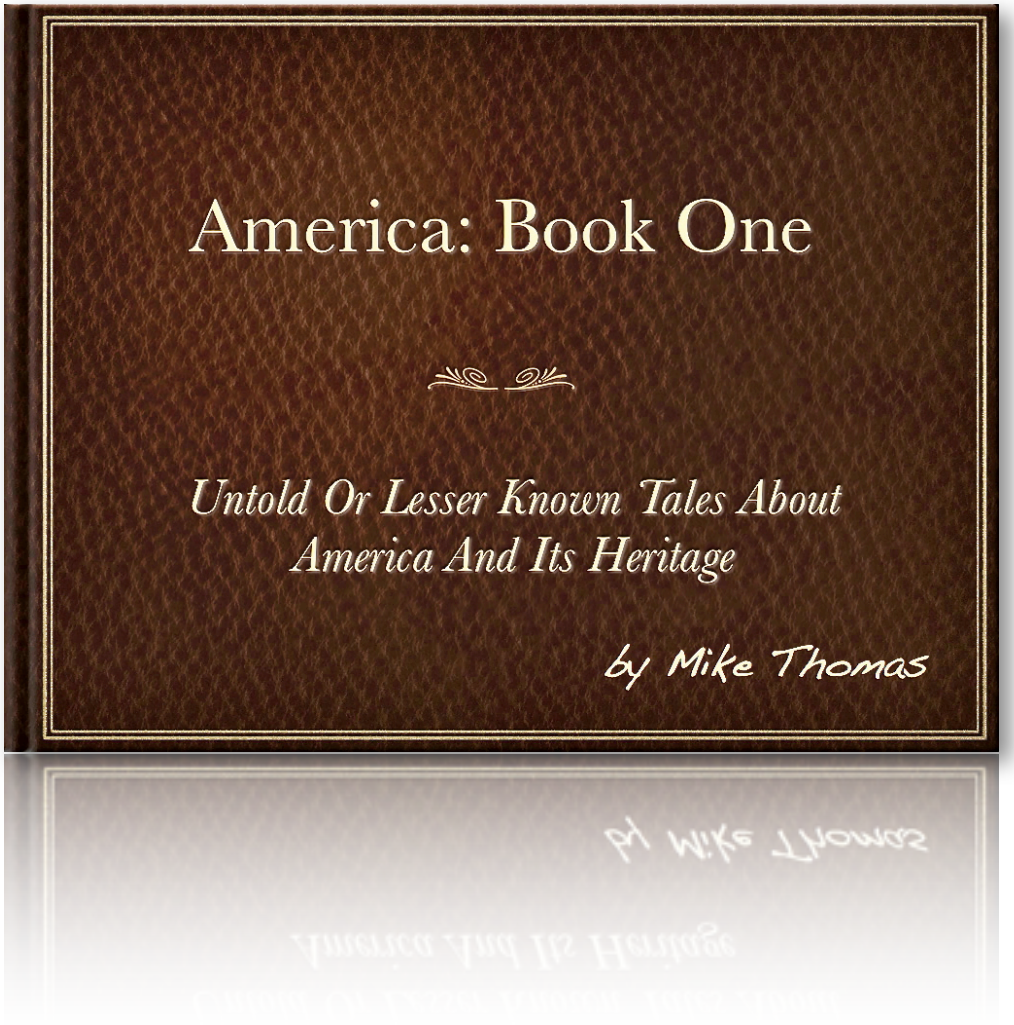
Chapter 15 - "Big Legacy"

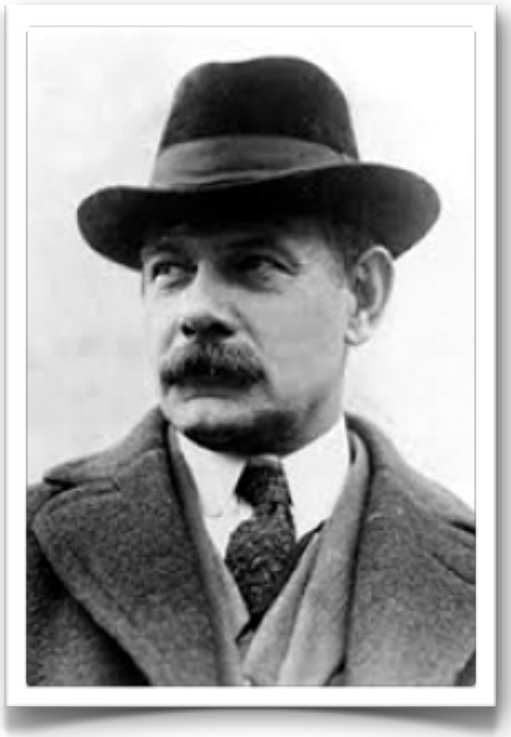
"There is not one monument big enough to honor America." These words were often spoken by a man named Gutzon Borglum.

Gutzon, a sculpture by trade, had an undying, passionate patriotic love for America, the country he was born in. He had this idea in the back of his head that he wanted to do something that would be his legacy and express the feeling he had for America.

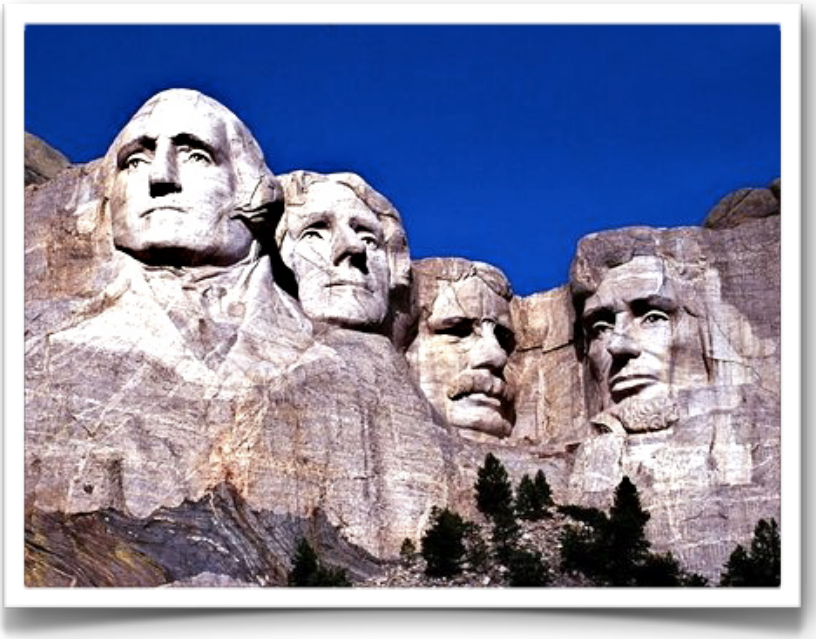
Calvin Coolidge put a drill in his hands and told him to go sculpt something that honors America. Gutzon found his challenge in the Black Hills of South Dakota - the southeast face of a 5,770 foot granite mountain.

Gutzon built and rebuilt the model for his project nine times. The idea would eventually take 14 years to complete. It would honor four individuals who had contributed great acts to America and the world: Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln and Teddy Roosevelt. Gutzon died just seven months short of the completion of the fourteen year project. His son carried out his father's dream to honor America in a BIG way. My guess is you've probably figured this one out. But to verify your answer, proceed to the next page.





Gutzon Borglum was the mastermind behind Mt. Rushmore.



Back To Chapter Selection

Chapter 16 - “Never Forget”

It was built with 24 tons of scrap steel.

It is the fifth in a new class of warship - designed for missions that include special operations against terrorists. It will carry a crew of 360 sailors and 700 combat-ready Marines to be delivered ashore by helicopters and assault craft.

Metal and steel were melted down in a foundry in LA to cast the ship's bow section. When it was poured into the molds in September 2003, "those big rough steelworkers treated it with total reverence," recalled Navy Capt. Kevin Wensing, who was there. "It was a spiritual moment for everybody there."

Junior Chavers, foundry operations manager, said that when the scrap metal & steel first arrived, he touched it with his hand and the hair on his neck stood up. It had a big meaning for everyone. He said. "They knocked us down. They can't keep us down. We're going to be back."

The ship I speak of is The USS New York. It was constructed from 24 tons of scrap steel taken from the World Trade Center that fell on September 11th, 2001. It’s motto: “Never Forget.”

May we never forget the immeasurable cost and the innocence lost in the quest to soar on Freedom’s Wings. May God still be with the survivors and families of lost loved ones from one of the darkest and saddest days in United States History.

Back To Chapter Selection

Chapter 17 - “John & Bill”

Back in the 50's there was a well known radio host/comedian/song writer in Hollywood named Stuart Hamblen who was noted for his drinking, womanizing, partying, etc. One of his bigger hits at the time was "I Won't Go Hunting With You Jake, but I'll Go Chasing Women."

One day, along came a young preacher holding a tent revival. Hamblen had him on his radio show presumably to poke fun at him. In order to gather more material for his radio show, Hamblen showed up at one of the revival meetings. Early in the service the preacher announced, “There is one man in this audience who is a big fake." There were probably others who thought the same thing, but Hamblen was convinced that he was the one the preacher was talking about (some would call that conviction) but he was having none of that. Still the words continued to haunt him until a couple of nights later he showed up drunk at the preacher's hotel room around 2:00 AM demanding that the preacher pray for him! But the preacher refused, saying, "This is between you and God and I'm not going to get in the middle of it." But he did invite Stuart in and they talked until about 5:00 AM at which point Stuart dropped to his knees and with tears, cried out to God. But that is not the end of the story.

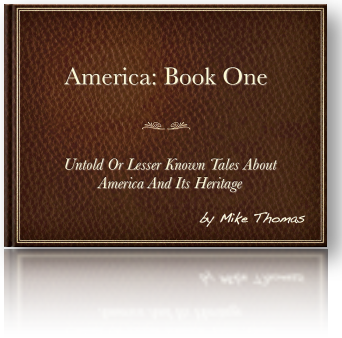
Stuart quit drinking, quit chasing women, quit everything that was 'fun.' Soon he began to lose favor with the Hollywood crowd. He was ultimately fired by the radio station when he refused to accept a beer company as a sponsor. Hard times were upon him. He tried writing a couple of Christian songs but the only one that had much success was, "This Old House,” written for his friend Rosemary Clooney.

As he continued to struggle, a long time friend named John took him aside and said to him, "All your troubles started when you got religion ... was it worth it all?" Stuart answered simply, "Yes." Then his friend asked, "You liked your booze so much, don't you ever miss it?" And his answer was, "No." John then said, "I don't understand how you could give it up so easily." And Stuart's response was, "It's no big secret. All things are possible with God." To this John said, "That's a catchy phrase. You should write a song about it." And as they say, the rest is history.

The song Carl Stuart Hamblen wrote was "It Is No Secret."

"It is no secret what God can do. What He's done for others, He'll do for you. With arms wide open, He'll welcome you. It is no secret, what God can do...."

Figure out who Bill & John are yet? Proceed to the next page for the answer.



The friend was John Wayne. And the young preacher who refused to pray for Stuart Hamblen was Reverend Billy Graham.

Back To Chapter Selection

Chapter 18 - “Clap Together”

He was asked to be a part of a show for WWII veterans. He told them his schedule was very busy and he could afford only a few minutes, but if they wouldn't mind his doing one short monologue and immediately leaving for his next appointment, he would come. Of course, the show's director agreed happily.

But when Jim got on stage, something interesting happened. He went through the short monologue and then stayed. The applause grew louder and louder and he kept staying. Pretty soon, he had been on fifteen, twenty then thirty minutes. Finally, he took a last bow and left the stage. Backstage someone stopped him and said, "I thought you had to go after a few minutes. What happened?"

Jim answered, "I did have to go, but I can show you the reason I stayed. You can see for yourself if you'll look on the front row." In the front row were two men, each of whom had lost an arm in the war. One had lost his right arm and the other had lost his left. Together, they were able to clap, and that's exactly what they were doing, loudly and cheerfully.

That entertainer? The late great Jimmy Durante. Goodnight Mrs. Calabash where ever you are!

Back To Chapter Selection

Chapter 19 - “A Salute In The Rain”

This is a story I came across online as written by an unnamed Army Captain.

It was raining cats and dogs and I was late for physical training. Traffic was backed up at Fort Campbell, Ky., and was moving way too slowly. I was probably going to be late and I was growing more and more impatient.

The pace slowed almost to a standstill as I passed Memorial Grove, the site built to honor the soldiers who died in the Gander airplane crash, the worst redeployment accident in the history of the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault).

Because it was close to Memorial Day, a small American flag had been placed in the ground next to each soldier's memorial plaque. My concern at the time, however, was getting past the bottleneck, getting out of the rain and getting to PT on time. All of a sudden, infuriatingly, just as the traffic was getting started again, the car in front of me stopped. A soldier, a private of course, jumped out in the pouring rain and ran over toward the grove.

I couldn't believe it! This knucklehead was holding up everyone for who knows what kind of prank. Horns were honking. I waited to see the butt-chewing that I wanted him to get for making me late. He was getting soaked to the skin. His BDUs were plastered to his frame.

I watched-as he ran up to one of the memorial plaques, picked up the small American flag that had fallen to the ground in the wind and the rain, and set it upright again. Then, slowly, he came to attention, saluted, ran back to his car, and drove off. I'll never forget that incident.

That soldier, whose name I will never know, taught me more about duty, honor, and respect than a hundred books or a thousand lectures. That simple salute—that single act of honoring his fallen brother and his flag—encapsulated all the Army values in one gesture for me. It said, "I will never forget. I will keep the faith. I will finish the mission. I am an American soldier."

Back To Chapter Selection

Chapter 20 - “The Yellow Paperclip”

Georgia, was trying to raise her two sons when the Gulf War broke out. She heard about soldiers in the service who had no family and needed pen pals.

Letters addressed to "Any Soldier" were distributed by commanding officers who noticed any soldiers getting little or no mail. Georgia wrote to 25 such soldiers almost daily, most of them men. Keeping up with 25 pen pals on a daily basis almost consumed Georgia's time and talents. She sent poems, little stories, and words of hope and encouragement. When there were time constraints, she would write one letter and copy it for everyone. Greetings were sent whenever she knew about a special event, like a birthday.

One day, Georgia received a letter from a soldier who was depressed and discouraged. She pondered as to how she could help lift his spirits. It was then that she noticed that at work there were paper clips of various colors. Georgia took one of the yellow paper clips and photo copied it in the palm of her hand. She sent this picture with the paper clip with the following message:

"This yellow paper clip that you see in my hand represents a hug that I am sending to you. You can carry this paper clip in a pocket or anywhere, and whenever you feel down, you can just touch and hold it and know that somebody cares about you, and would give you a hug if she were there." Georgia sent a copy of this picture along with a paper clip and the message to each of her other correspondents. After the war ended, Georgia received one of the pictures of her hand holding the yellow paper clip, and on the back were over 150 signatures of people that had been given her "hug". During the years, Georgia named other paper clips. Pink came to mean a kiss, green was for good luck, and so on.

Years later, Georgia was giving a class as part of a seminar for positive thinking. She shared with the members of the class her paper clip symbolism, and made a bracelet of multicolored paper clips for each of them. One of the women exclaimed "So you're the one!" The class member told Georgia that she was visiting her brother and needed something to hold papers together. She had noticed a yellow paper clip on the refrigerator held there with a magnet. She borrowed the paper clip for her papers. When the brother saw it, he grabbed it and scolded her, and told her never to touch the yellow paper clip again. Now she knew why.

No one will ever know how far her message has spread, nor how many lives have been touched by a simple yellow paper clip.

Back To Chapter Selection

Chapter 21 - “Too Much Of A Flag Waver”

She was "The Songbird of the South" -- the on-air host of three popular programs in Radio's Golden Age and one of the nation's three most admired women. She would eventually sell more than $7 million in Defense and War Bonds and be honored by every American President from Franklin D. Roosevelt to Ronald Reagan.

He was America's favorite composer - a Russian immigrant destined to create a personal empire by writing both the words and music for some of America's best-loved musical stage plays and movies. Their historic collaboration turned a rejected song from a World War I soldier show into a continuing charity fund-raiser, a professional hockey team's good luck charm, major league baseball's "stretch music", a new president's emotional sign-off statement and America's second national anthem.

In November of 1938, America's favorite radio personality, wanted to sing a special song to recognize the twentieth anniversary of the armistice that ended World War I. Her manager, Ted Collins, asked America's favorite composer to create a new song to honor the occasion. He, America’s favorite composer, agreed and began writing. But nothing satisfied him. He then remembered a song he wrote when he was in the Army - a tune the show's producers rejected for being "too much of a flag-waver".

The songstress loved the song and she sang it as her closing number on her November 10, 1938's to close out her radio show The new anthem was an immediate hit and the singer sang it on almost every broadcast through December 1940, when public performances of ASCAP songs were banned from the airwaves.

The lyrics of this new song were inserted into the Congressional Record in a failed attempt to make the song our nation's new national anthem. The song was sung at both the Democratic and Republican conventions of 1940 and again at the Republican Convention (which nominated George W. Bush) in 2000. President Bush ended most of his speeches speaking the title of the song.

Two decades later, National Hockey League officials noted that, while Philadelphia Flyers' fans were not duly respectful when "The Star Spangled Banner" was played, they were more attentive when the public address system played the songstresses version of this other Americana song. Flyers' fans also noted that their team won most games when her record was played.

On the opening day of the 1973 season, she strode across a red carpet in Philadelphia and sang the song in person. The Flyers beat the Toronto Maple Leafs 2-0. At critical games throughout the season, she was driven down from New York to perform the song. She performed the it the night the Flyers beat the Boston Bruins to win the Stanley Cup. Following the championship game, both teams lined up to shake her hand.

The next season she sang it again when the Flyers retained the Stanley Cup, beating the New York Islanders. In 1987, the year after her death, she was honored with a bronze statue, recognizing her as the Flyers' "good luck charm".

This song has been constantly performed since the Twin Towers disaster on September 11, 2001. On our nation's "Second Day of Infamy", U.S. Senators sang it on the steps of the U.S. Capitol. Canadian singer Celine Dion performed America's "Second National Anthem" on a nationwide telethon, "America: A Tribute To Heroes" on September 21, 2001. And major league baseball officials ordered the song to be played during the seventh inning stretches of all their baseball games.

Probably every American has heard if not sung Irving Berlin's, "God Bless America" just like Kate Smith did on her radio show and at Philadelphia Flyers games. Not a shabby resume for a song originally rejected as "too much of a flag-waver".

Kate Smith

Irving Berlin

Back To Chapter Selection

Chapter 22 - “Frank”

Frank was a respected young lawyer living in Georgetown just west of where the modern day Key Bridge crosses the Potomac River. He made his home there from 1804 to around 1833 with his wife, Mary, and their six sons and five daughters. At the time, Georgetown was a thriving town of 5,000 people just a few miles from the Capitol, the White House, and the Federal buildings of Washington.

But, after war broke out in 1812 over Britain's attempts to regulate American shipping and other activities while Britain was at war with France, all was not tranquil in Georgetown. The British had entered Chesapeake Bay on August 19th, 1814, and by the evening of the 24th of August, the British had invaded and captured Washington. They set fire to the Capitol and the White House, the flames visible 40 miles away in Baltimore. In the days following the attack on Washington, the American forces prepared for the assault on Baltimore (population 40,000) that they knew would come by both land and sea.

Now just for a moment, let me make mention that back during the summer of 1813 at the star-shaped Fort McHenry, the commander, Maj. George Armistead, asked for a flag so big that "the British would have no trouble seeing it from a distance". Two officers, a Commodore and a General, were sent to the Baltimore home of Mary Young Pickersgill, a "maker of colours," and commissioned the flag. Mary and her thirteen year old daughter Caroline, working in an upstairs front bedroom, used 400 yards of best quality wool bunting. They cut 15 stars that measured two feet from point to point. Eight red and seven white stripes, each two feet wide, were cut. Laying out the material on the malthouse floor of Claggett's Brewery, a neighborhood establishment, the flag was sewn together. By August it was finished. It measured 30 by 42 feet and cost $405.90.

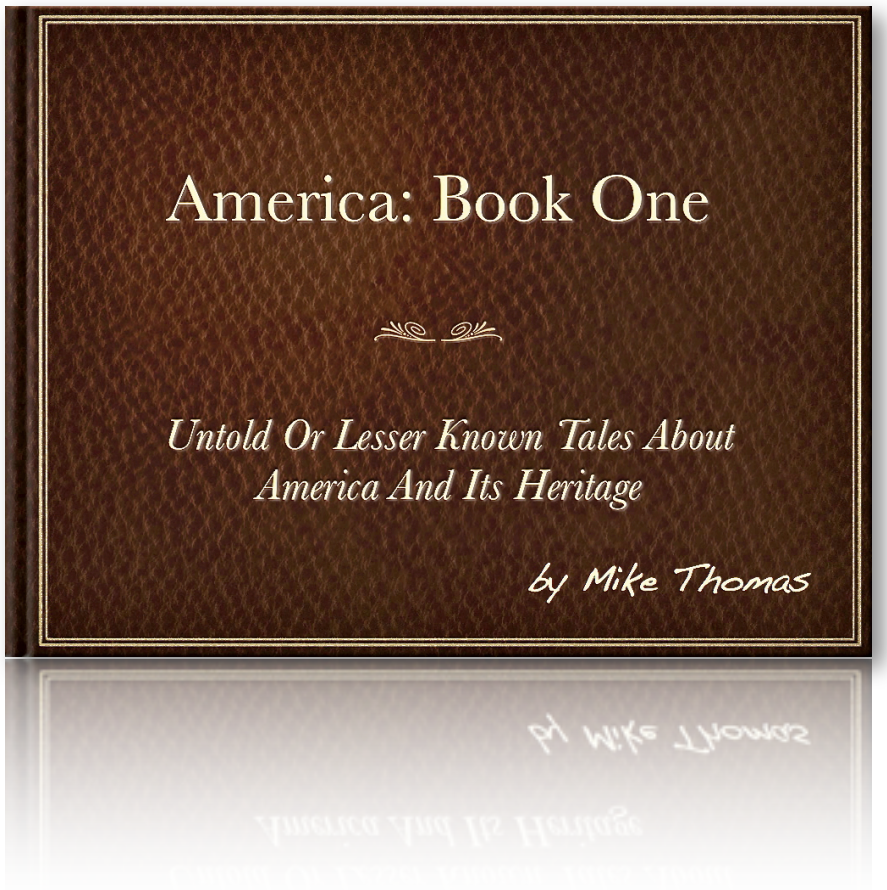
At 7 a.m. on the morning of September 13, 1814, the British bombardment began, and the flag was ready to meet the enemy. The bombardment continued for 25 hours,the British firing 1,500 bombshells that weighed as much as 220 pounds and carried lighted fuses that would supposedly cause it to explode when it reached its target. But they weren't very dependable and often blew up in mid air. From special small boats the British fired the new Congreve rockets that traced wobbly arcs of red flame across the sky. The Americans had sunk 22 vessels so a close approach by the British was not possible.

That evening the cannonading stopped, but at about 1 a.m. on the 14th, the British fleet roared to life, lighting the rainy night sky with grotesque fireworks. Frank and Col. Skinner watched the battle with apprehension. They knew that as long as the shelling continued, Fort McHenry had not surrendered. But, long before daylight there came a sudden and mysterious silence. What the three Americans did not know was that the British land assault on Baltimore as well as the naval attack, had been abandoned. Judging Baltimore as being too costly a prize, the British officers ordered a retreat.

Waiting in the predawn darkness, Frank waited for the sight that would end his anxiety; the joyous sight of Gen. Armistead's great flag blowing in the breeze. When at last daylight came, the flag was still there!

Being an amateur poet and having been so uniquely inspired, Frank began to write on the back of a letter he had in his pocket. Sailing back to Baltimore he composed more lines and in his lodgings at the Indian Queen Hotel he finished the poem. Judge J. H. Nicholson, his brother-in-law, took it to a printer and copies were circulated around Baltimore under the title "Defense of Fort McHenry". It was printed in a newspaper for the first time in the Baltimore Patriot on September 20th,1814, then in papers as far away as Georgia and New Hampshire. To the verses was added a note "Tune: Anacreon in Heaven." In October a Baltimore actor sang Frank's new song in a public performance and the rest, as the saying goes, is History.

So have you figured out who Frank is and what his poem was? Proceed to the next page for the answers.



We all know Frank by a more formal name:
Francis Scott Key.

His song, our National Anthem -
The Star Spangled Banner.

Back To Chapter Selection

Chapter 23 - "America's Heart"

When Jacob and his parents first came to America - speaking no English and pretty much broke with nothing in their pockets, the Twin Towers were relatively new at that time. Jacob watched in horror at the TV screen on September 11th, 2001. To him, it seemed like all the world was watching the fall of all that was represented by the Twin Towers through the eyes of Lady Liberty in the harbor. Almost an artist's rendering. Jacob had the ability to see things in art form as he was, in fact, an artists back in his homeland of Russia. He knew the power and impact art could have on humanity if created and presented right.

The sight and the happenings of 9-11 so affected and inspired the inner artist in Jacob to act or contribute SOMETHING - anything he could. America meant more to Jacob than most people. As I said, he came here penniless to the United States and after years of persevering, became successful at what he did. He had the people of America to thank for this and so he felt the undying need to give back. So Jacob began to paint.

His vision transformed on canvas was lower Manhattan with the towers crumbling and the Statue Of Liberty looking on from the harbor. And out of the dust, devastation and rubble in the background of the picture was red, white and blue. Not a flag in its traditional sense. But rather a heart. In the upper left portion was printed a blue field with white stars and the rest was of course red & white stripes. The painting was symbolic to Jacob and all Americans of the indestructible ideals, hopes, dreams as well as the caring and compassion Americans possess for one another. Jacob signed the painting with these words: "The human spirit is not measured by the size of the act but by the size of the heart."

On September 11th, 2002 at was was Ground Zero, the creation Jacob ended up titling, "America's Heart" was displayed. Not in its original form. But in a GIANT size mural 135 feet wide and 200 feet tall - the size of a building. This enormous display was financed out of Jacob's own pocket at a cost of about $100,000 - part of his way of giving back and saying thank you to The United States of America and the people that helped make him what he'd become.
Part of Jacob's giving of himself and his talents to the people of America was that he, the artist and creator remain 100% anonymous. So you're probably thinking, "Who is this famous artist from Russia?" Well, yes - Jacob is an artist. Yes he was from Russia. But he's also something else. Something he's much better known for - a comedian. And because of this, Jacob was afraid someone might not take him seriously or laugh at his endeavor for his now home country of America which is why he requested anonymity. One of this comedian's most famous lines has always been, "What A Country!". Figure it out yet? Proceed to the net page for the answer.

Well as it turns out, that was never really just a comedic line. That is how artist and comedian Jacob Yakov Smirnoff has always felt about The United States Of America and it's people.

Thank YOU Jacob.

Back To Chapter Selection

Chapter 24 - "Lonzo Green"

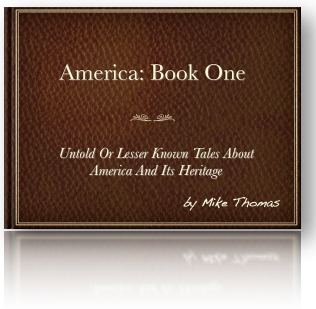
Lonzo Green was a great country singer fairly well known in his day. This one particular summer, he brought his wife and kids from Arkansas to Tennessee for a visit to see some family. This made Lonzo a sort of stranger in this town in Tennessee. Therefore, he was not totally familiar and aware of some of the local customs and taboos. When Lonzo arrived at the home of his young nephew, Jimmy, Lonzo learned that one of Jimmy's young friends was not allowed to come in the house because he was from the wrong side of the tracks. This was almost strange and foreign to Lonzo. Jimmy had been proudly announcing all around school that his uncle Lonzo - the musician and country singer was coming to stay with them at their apartment. This really impressed one of Jimmy's friends in particular - that boy that wasn't allowed in Jimmy's house. You see, that young boy from the wrong side of the tracks loved music!

Lonzo had come from poverty himself and was now seeing the prejudice of how some people are treated simply because they don't have what more affluent folks do. Since Jimmy's friend was not allowed IN the house, Lonzo told Jimmy to go get his friend and he would meet him outside to say hello and perhaps chat a bit.

Jimmy ran and got his friend. When that boy showed up, he had with him an old guitar that someone gave him years earlier. The guitar was battered and had a thin rope for a guitar strap. It was also way out of tune. Lonzo greeted Jimmy and his friend. When Lonzo asked the boy to play something on his guitar, the boy said in his soft, polite southern drawl that his guitar was out of tune and no one had ever taken the time to show him how to tune it. Lonzo sat on the sidewalk on the street corner with Jimmy and his friend and showed the boy how to tune a guitar. Afterwards, Lonzo played and sang and showed both boys how to sing along with him. He also showed the boy how to play certain chords on the guitar he'd never been taught.

As the long afternoon shadows started to turn into dusk, Lonzo bid his nephew's friend farewell. He thanked the boy for his company that afternoon and wished him good luck with his music. That boy - the one who was never allowed in the house was awe struck and humbled. No one had ever thanked HIM for his company or time. The boy walked away that day with so much inspiration combined with the greatest lesson in humanity he'd known to that point in his young life.

Lonzo never did have the good fortune of ever meeting that boy again. But he certainly HEARD him sing and play, earn gold records, star in 33 motion pictures and lots more. Lonzo may not have ever met with that boy from the wrong side of the tracks again. But the boy never forgot Lonzo. And Lonzo never forgot the encounter with that young boy - that young boy by the name of . . . (proceed to the next page for the answer)



Elvis Aaron Presley

Back To Chapter Selection

Chapter 25 - "For What It's Worth"

He was the son of Harry Harrison Aurandt, a Tulsa, Oklahoma policeman. When he was only three years old, his father was murdered during a hunting trip when four armed men approached and attempted to rob Harry and a buddy - a fellow police detective. He used to build crystal radios as a boy. He gained interest in radio broadcasting and went to work after school cleaning at a local radio station in Tulsa when he was 14. Eventually, they would let him fill in when needed reading commercials and similar easy on air spots. In time he started working regularly on the air and they made him a program director at this small local radio station.

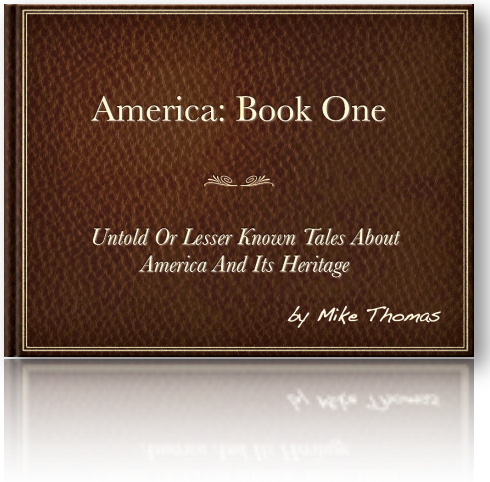
In 1940, he married his sweetheart, Lynne, a former school teacher. He always referred to Lynne as "Angel." Angel contracted leukemia in 2007 and passed away about a year later. Lynne was his producer, friend, right hand person. Lynne was the first radio producer ever to be inducted to the Radio Hall Of Fame.

He enlisted in the military in 1943 to serve his country during WW II. But he was discharged in 1944. Rumors flew that he was given a psychiatric discharge for intentionally injuring himself during a training maneuver - a charge he vehemently denied all his life. He moved to Chicago and began doing post war radio show called, "Jobs For G.I. Joe's."

He had many different jobs throughout his life. He was also an avid pilot. He's been credited with coining the phrases, "Reaganomics" and "Guesstimate".

He and his wife Angel had only one son who took over the reigns of his by then famous radio program when he became ill with vocal trouble beginning in and around 2000.

He also managed to write and publish a half dozen books or so: "Autumn Of Liberty," "Our Lives, Our Fortunes, Our Sacred Honor," 'For What It's Worth." But probably the most recognizable title - and in this case the give-a-way as to who I'm talking about here was the book entitled, "The Rest Of The Story." Please proceed to the next page for "The Rest Of The Story"



Mr. ***Paul Harvey*** Aurandt. And now YOU know, “The Rest Of The Story.”

Paul Harvey was especially instrumental and inspirational to me all my life. But in particular with the concept and courage to finally produce this ebook. I loved his style. I loved what he stood for. I loved the fact that he focused in on what was, is and can still be GOOD in this life - something modern day media should think seriously about.

I don’t believe in good bye. I was raised with strong spiritual beliefs. One of my favorite biblical passages has always been, “Those who believe in Christ, Jesus and His eternal Kingdom shall never say good bye to one another for the last time here on His earth”. So Mr. Harvey, rest well sir. You certainly deserve it. This is not good bye. I’ll just say, “Good Day”

Back To Chapter Selection

Chapter 26 - "Gordon Arthur Kelly"

Gordon Arthur Kelly - Canadian radio broadcaster married Lois Foerster in 1935. Arthur had one of the longest celebrity marriages ever: 74 years to the same woman. But Gordon's personal life wasn't always so happy and blissful. The couple had five children. Gordon outlived two of them. One daughter jumped out of a six story building in 1969 taking her own life. Another son was killed in a car accident 1980. Yet another son passed away from lymphoma in 2007.

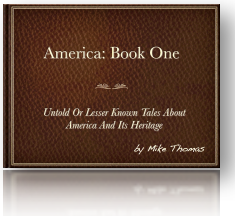
Gordon himself had no contact with his natural parents, sister or two brothers since he'd been abandoned after only a few weeks on this earth. Two loving and caring folks, Mary and John Fulton adopted Gordon. The family moved to San Diego, CA when Gordon was five. He eventually graduated from high school at age 16. During the early years of The Great Depression, Gordon rode the rails around the country doing odd jobs. In 1934, he earned a Bachelor's Degree from San Diego Teacher College (now known as San Diego State University) where he was a member of the Alpha Tau Omega fraternity.

In his junior year, Gordon took a job as a radio announcer at KGB in San Diego. Radio paid better than teaching at the time so he got into directing radio programs for fairs and expositions in the mid 1930's. In the 1940's, Gordon met and began working with John Guedel on a pioneering radio show that employed audience participation, contests and gags. The radio show actually served as a prototype for future TV game shows.

Gordon Arthur Kelly became a shrewd businessman. But he was not a stingy person, to say the least. Much of his money went to philanthropic causes. He also received honorary degrees for his work from numerous colleges and universities such as Pepperdine University and The University Of Prince Edward Island. He served as a trustee for many years for Springfield College and donated funds to build a swim center there named in his honor. But if you go there, you won't see Gordon's name anywhere.

Gordon suffered a mild stroke in 2008. But even through this and other adversity, he never lost his lust for life and goodness. He managed to always maintain that youthful childlike spirit he possessed - just like that first time he ever visited Disneyland on opening day 1955. In fact, he was even asked to be a part of the 50th anniversary celebration of Disneyland back in 2005. He was right up there on stage with then Walt Disney Company CEO and President Michael Eisner making one of his wonderful speeches. He was 92 years young at the time cracking a few jokes in his wistful happy demeanor. That same belief and attitude that was pretty much a large part of the basis of Gordon's success all through his life. He believed that people are funny. In fact that philosophy led to that 1930's radio show and eventually a TV show of the same theme.

Gordon's adoptive parents did a good job in raising and instilling these humanitarian qualities in their son. Gordon was proud of his parents with their slightly odd last name. Any idea whom this story is all about yet? Proceed to the next page for the answer.



Ya' see, Mary and John Fulton Linkletter prepared their son Gordon - better known as ***Art Linkletter*** to help make this world a better, happier place for us. And Art did just that until he left us on May 26th, 2010.

Back To Chapter Selection

Chapter 27 - "Amos Muzyad Yakhoob"

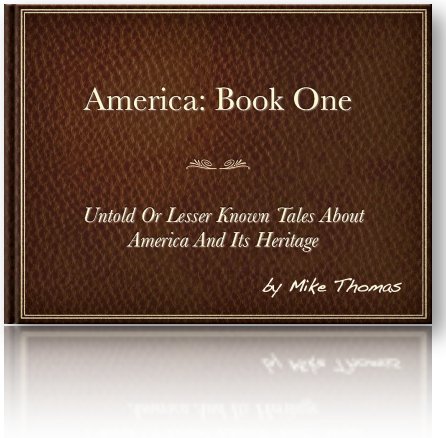
Amos Alphonsus Muzyad Yakhoob was born January 6th, 1912 in Deerfield Michigan. His parents, Charles Yakhoob and Margaret Christen were Mennonite Catholics. He attended St. Francis de Sales Church in Toledo, Ohio where he was ultimately raised. He was confirmed in that church by Bishop Samuel Stritch, who would later become his Spiritual Advisor. Throughout Amos' life. Bishop Stritch would also later become instrumental in the creation and founding of an organization that lives on today long after Amos' passing.

Amos married Rose Marie Cassaniti in 1936, a week before his 24th birthday. Rose Marie would be his only wife wife. Amos appeared on radio shows in the 1940's such as, "The Bickersons," "The Baby Snooks Show," and NBC's, "The Big Show." He also appeared in television in shows like, "The Ford Show Starring Tennessee Ernie Ford." He had an integral production involvement with shows like, "The Andy Griffith Show," and "The Dick Van Dyke Show," and the 60's hit, "The Mod Squad."

Once Amos became more of a celebrity figure, he developed other interests. Golf was one of them. At one point he and the famous golf pro Sam Snead played together. Amos even had two tournaments named after him in conjunction with The PGA. He was also part owner of The Miami Dolphins for a short time.

Amos was a devout Roman Catholic and at one point even received a Papal Knighthood from Pope Paul VI. He was named a 'Knight Commander Of The Holy Sepulchre' for his work and involvement with the Church and the Community. He even received a Gold Congressional Medal from President Ronald Reagan for work with individuals within his founded organization.

Amos swore as a young, starving actor that if he ever made it big, he would tithe and do something for the greater good and humanity. Amos left this world on February 6th, 1991 but not before keeping his vow and starting one of the most famous - and more importantly - helpful organizations in this world for kids. Do you know who we're talking about yet? Proceed to the net page for the answer.



Danny Thomas
aka - Amos Alphonsus Muzyad Yakhoob

Ya' see, Amos Alphonsus Muzyad Yakhoob, better known to all of us as Danny Thomas - the legendary TV, film and radio star - along with Bishop Stritch and Dr. Lemual Diggs, founded The St. Jude's Children's Research Hospital in Memphis, TN, which today is run by by his daughter, "That Girl," Marlo Thomas Donahue - wife of former TV talk show personality Phil Donahue. Thank you Danny for your endless giving and never forgetting what a vow really means.

Marlo Thomas Donhue

Back To Chapter Selection

Chapter 28 - "Auguste' "

Born in Lynbrook, NY on June 27th, 1927, Auguste' became quite famous and loved by all ages in a career that spanned many decades. Auguste went by other names as well as Auguste'. Prior to all that, he enlisted in The United States Marine Corps Reserve in 1945 during WW II. After his servitude to America, he became known for some of those other aforementioned roles like - Corny The Clown on a syndicated TV show in 1953 that aired on WABC out of New York called, "Time For Fun." He also was the main character in a little show that ran for a short time called, "Tinker's Workshop."

Then he and his best friend Jack Miller came up with a novel idea about an innovative children's TV show. They submitted it to CBS. CBS bought it and in 1955, Auguste' began a show that would run just shy of thirty years. Auguste' had various regular guests such as Hugh Brannum and others. As if this didn't keep Auguste' busy enough, he also concurrently hosted a show in the 1964-1965 season called, "Mr. Mayor" on Saturday mornings. Both shows, incidentally, were sponsored by the Schwinn Bicycle Company.

Jump ahead several years to 1981. Auguste' suffered a severe heart attack and had to undergo triple by-pass surgery. While he recovered from this major occurrence, he received over 5,000 get well cards from his fans everywhere.

During his lengthy career, he received three Emmy Awards. But after CBS TV continually reduced the frequency and length of time of the show, Auguste' chose not to renew his contract and left the airwaves and the show just months before the thirty year anniversary of the show.

Auguste' moved from his Melbury Road home in New York to Windsor, Vermont where he spent the last 14 years of his life as an author and occasionally appearing on a TV special. He also became very involved in Children's Advocacy with everyday parents. He died on January 23rd, 2004 at age 76. His wife of 40 years, Anne-Jean Laurie had passed away in 1991. He was survived by three children. Auguste's grandson, Britton, became the youngest person to climb "The Seven Summits" by finally scaling Mount Everest in 2004. Britton carried with him a photo of himself and his grandfather to the summit of Mount Everest where he buried the photo as lasting memory to his grandfather Auguste'. Do you know who Britton's grandfather is? Proceed to the next page for the answer.

Auguste' - also known as Auguste' The Clown - also known as Bob Keeshan - and best known to kids of all ages for almost 30 years as ***Captain Kangaroo***.

Oh by the way, Hugh Brannum - one of the regular guests on his TV show I mentioned earlier - was also better known to everyone as "***Mr. Green Jeans***."

Back To Chapter Selection

Chapter 29 - "The Colonel's Best Student"

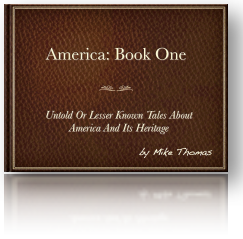
He was born to an unwed mother he'd never know on July 2nd, 1932. He was adopted by Rex and Auleva at 6 weeks. Because of this chapter in his life, he would much later become a well known advocate for adoption. After his adoptive mother's death when he was 5, his dad began traveling the country seeking out work. When he was 12, they landed in Knoxville, Tennessee and the boy went to work at a restaurant called "The Regas." But he lost his job there after a dispute with his boss. He and his dad eventually ended up in Fort Wayne, Indiana where this now 15 year old boy went to work at another restaurant called, "The Hobby House." When dad found the need to move on again, the boy decided to stay working at The Hobby House. He subsequently dropped out of school to work full time for the owner of The Hobby House. The decision to drop out of school plagued and haunted him most of his life and he considered it his biggest mistake ever. Nonetheless, he stayed on and continued to work at The Hobby House.

In 1950 at the outbreak of The Korean War, he chose to enlist rather than wait to be drafted. His hope was that he would have a better chance of requesting deployment by voluntarily enlisting. He was sent overseas to Germany as a Mess Sergeant in charge of feeding some 2000 troops. After his discharge in 1953, he returned to Fort Wayne and went back to work at The Hobby House.

A little while after his return to The Hobby House, Colonel Harlan Sanders, founder of Kentucky Fried Chicken, made a visit to Fort Wayne and other midwest locations in an attempt to convince restauranteurs to franchise out KFC restaurants. He spoke to our boy who was by this time the head cook at The Hobby House. The Colonel's offer was initially declined but later accepted by the owners of The Hobby House.

The young man worked closely with the Colonel for several years helping Sanders put KFC on the map with innovative marketing ideas like having the revolving red & white striped bucket of chicken as KFC's logo. He also talked Sanders into simplifying the menu and creating a signature item ("Finger Lickin' Good").

Learning from the experiences working with and for Harland Sanders, he sold back his shares to the Colonel and opened up his own restaurant in Columbus, Ohio in 1969. The business was quite successful to say the least. In 1982, he resigned from the day to day operations but in 1985 was talked back into taking a more active role in the business as some bad business decisions had been made that needed attention. He began appearing in TV commercials about the restaurant as a real down to earth, almost simple kinda guy. The strategy worked like gang busters! He eventually appeared in hundreds of commercials for the business thus escalating his little restaurant from Columbus, Ohio to the third ranked / popular hamburg chain in the country. He gives much credit to his daughter which the restaurants are named after. Have it figured it out yet? Proceed to the next page for the answer.



Not only has Wendy's Old Fashioned Hamburgers become a household name, so has it's founder and philanthropist, ***Dave Thomas***, adopted son of Rex Auleva Thomas!

Back To Chapter Selection

Chapter 30 - "The Musical Minister"

Born to James and Nancy on March 20th, 1928 in Pennsylvania, he took a real liking to music as a toddler singing along as mom played the piano. He started playing piano at the age of 5. He graduated high school and attended Dartmouth College in Hanover, New Hampshire then transferred to Rollins College in Winter Park, FL where he received his Bachelor Of Arts Degree in Music Composition. While attending Rollins College, he met Sara Joanne Byrd, a Florida native. They married on June 9th, 1952 and had two children - James and John.

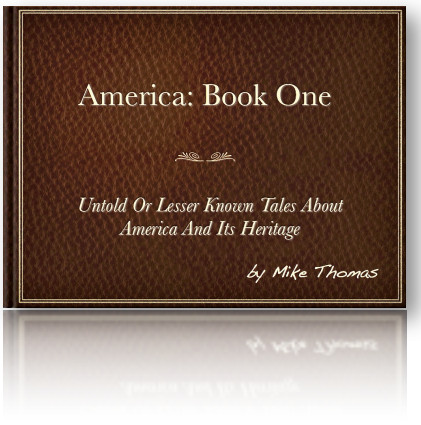
After moving back to Pennsylvania, he attended and graduated Pittsburgh Theological Seminary and became an Ordained Presbyterian Minister. During the course of his career, he would end up earning FORTY honorary degrees!

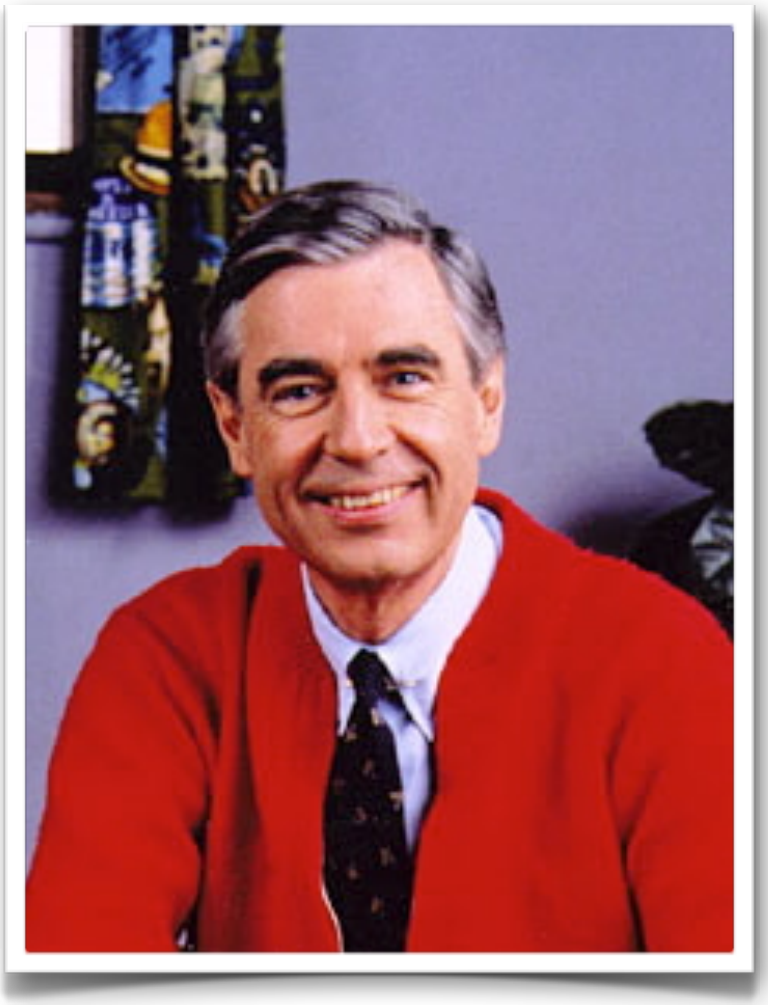
Even though his training and direction were towards Religion and Spirituality, he was always displeased the way that television addressed children. Thinking there had to be a better way to talk to, address and educate children by way of this marvelous thing called television, he began working in various TV roles.

In 1954 he became a puppeteer at WQED, a Pittsburgh Public Television station. In 1963, he moved to Toronto, Canada where he got himself contracted to develop a fifteen minute program for kids. After the completion of this task, he moved back to Pennsylvania where he began similar assignments developing shows for The Eastern Educational Network. But in 1968, he began a project that continued for 25 years.

Along this 25 year journey, this man received several Emmy Awards for his works, acquired millions of dollars for PBS funding, received The Presidential Medal Of Freedom Medal, The George Foster Peabody Award. In 2003, the U.S. Senate formally passed a bill to commemorate his life. That same year, The U.S. House Of Representatives passed Resolution 111 honoring him for his 'legendary service to the improvement to the lives of children'. The list goes on and on and on!

You can even see some of his famous clothing at The Smithsonian Museum. And last but not least, a life size statue of this man - this great human being - who, although he accomplished such great things through his life and reached out to kids everywhere, lived a simple, down to earth 'neighborly' existence in his own little neighborhood. Proceed to the next page for the answer as to who this person is.





A neighborhood we all knew as, "***Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood***."

Thank You ***Reverend Fred M. Rogers***!

Back To Chapter Selection

Chapter 31 - William And Louis

William was born in 1897, Louis in 1906. Both had a Burlesque entertainment history. After failed attempts at getting into movie acting, Louis ended up working with William at The Etlinge Burlesque Theater on 42nd Street in New York City. Eventually, William and Louis did some guest spots on this new medium called 'radio' back in the late 1930's. Then throughout the 1940's and 1950's, they ended up with their own radio program, did some movie and TV work and hosted their own TV show for a brief period. They were two of the hottest and highest paid celebs of their time.

Eventually, their popularity began to wane as other comedic acts emerged on the scene. Then in the late 1950's, the IRS charged them for back taxes, forcing them to sell their homes and pretty much everything they owned including the rights to their movies an films. In 1957 they formally dissolved the partnership. And each made some solo appearances on various TV shows and films.

Louis left this world in 1959, William in 1974, but not before leaving a comedic legacy that lives on today. Almost everyone has heard, or heard of, William and Louis. In particular, one of their most famous skits - some say their signature skit - ends up popping up somewhere for reason or other. The skit I refer to is something that William and Louis used to just call 'baseball'. But the real title of the piece is, "Who's On First," made famous by William "Bud" Abbot and Louis "Lou" Costello.

To listen to an audio recording of Abbot & Costello's famous, "Who's On First" skit, click HERE (Internet connection required)

Back To Chapter Selection

Chapter 32 - "Common Ground"

Rita Coolidge - Singer
Johnny Depp - Actor
Robert Michum - Actor
Randolph Mantooth - Actor (79's TV show, "Emergency" and various soap operas)
Wayne Newton - Entertainer
Anthony Quinn - Actor
Burt Reynolds - Actor
Robbie Robertson - Musician (60's rock band, "The Band")

What do all these people have in common? What common ground do they share? They may be of celebrity status of one genre or another, but that's not it. All of these folks are descended from a people that was here in America before anyone else. They all have Native American roots or bloodline. When I was still in school, I was taught very little about the people we used to call "Indians." Over time, I've come to know and have enormous respect for the Native American people. I won't profess to be extremely knowledgeable about Native American history or heritage. But I DO know enough to realize that there should have been and should still be more awareness and perhaps enlightenment about the people that first inhabited this place we named America.

This chapter is an interactive chapter that requires an Internet connection in order to view the following video. The piece is called, "Spirits In The Wind." It's both a video and a song I composed, produced and released in 2010. Take look & listen. But specifically check out the Native American sayings, quotes and beliefs of these people.

Click HERE to be taken to the video.

Back To Chapter Selection

Chapter 33 - "Mary Had A Little Lamb"

Sara Josepha Hale was born October 24th, 1788 in Newport, New Hampshire. While working as a school teacher she met her husband to be, David Hale. Sara and David Hale subsequently had five children. Unfortunately David Hale died in 1822. Sara went into perpetual mourning, wearing black for the rest of her life.

In 1823 with the monetary backing of her late husband's Freemason Lodge, Sara published a collection of her poems she'd written called, "The Genius Of Oblivion." But it was her second publication, "Poems For Our Children" that contained the ever famous poem, "Mary Had A Little Lamb." All this was to make a name for Sara Hale. But all the aforementioned being said and conveyed, there's another reason she achieved notoriety and fame.

Along the paths of her work and career, she began working for Reverend John Blake who at the time published a magazine called, "Ladies Magazine." It has been said through influences working with Reverend John Blake that she was inspired to try have a recognized National Day Of Prayer. She began her advocacy in 1846 following it through for the next 17 years. She ended up writing to seven U.S. Presidents in that time span and encouraged thousands of others to do the same. But it wasn't until America was fighting in the great Civil War under President Abraham Lincoln that she caught Lincoln in good spirits after a successful and strategic win in a battle in Gettysburg that he finally gave in. All the Presidents before him that Hale wrote to had stood firm in that the government had no right to tell people what to do when it came to religious or spiritual beliefs and practices. But Abraham Lincoln was bold enough to recognize and enact the National Day Of Prayer for The United States of America - and we've all been celebrating and taking part in it ever since. Perhaps you don't think so or you might say, "I have not!". Well ... proceed to the next page for the answer and conclusion of this story.

You see, when the Pilgrims landed in Massachusetts several centuries ago, they celebrated one year later with a great feast and thanking God for what they'd be given and granted (religious freedom, escape from religious persecution, a relatively successful journey across the Atlantic Ocean and a year of progress in the new world). The New England states had celebrated and observed this Day Of Prayer for many years. But it was Sara Hales pursuit and perseverance that literally created a National Day Of Prayer - a National Holiday that today we now call ***Thanksgiving Day***.

Back To Chapter Selection

Chapter 34 - "Arrangement In Grey And Black"

This story is about an American born, but British based artist named James. James was a artist. Not a rich successful artist, but not a bad one either. He was struggling with lack of inspiration at one point. One night in particular while in his studio with half finished canvas oil paintings everywhere, he'd just had it. He'd just lay back in his rock hard cot he used for a bed and attempted sleep. This wasn't about to happen easily either. While racing thoughts invaded his brain, one image kept appearing in front of him. It was an image of a woman he'd loved for so many years in what seemed like a past life. Every time he was almost asleep or thinking of something or someone else, "she" kept popping up in his mind. Finally, he succumbed to it. He got back up out of bed, stumbled around for a blank canvas and began painting this vision of inspiration. But this time, he spent several days behind locked studio doors so as not to be disturbed and finished the painting!

Well, it all sounded and looked great to James. But then the problem arose that - - - no on wanted or cared about his new creation. It sat for years in a dark corner of his studio. Finally, he was able to sell it to The Royal Academy. But the same fate befell the work - no one was interested. The painting was eventually returned to the artist to reside in his studio for TEN years in the corner. James decided he'd try and unload this thing one more time. He sent it to The Pennsylvania Academy Of Finer Arts. They were so impressed with the work - - - that it sat in their dark corner with a modest price tag attached to it of only $350.00. Back to the artist's studio it went and sat for three more years.

James then shipped the painting off to Paris figuring he'd had no luck locally. This time, the painting received notoriety and received a medal - 3rd place - enough to attract a buyer who purchased the piece for $600.00.

Though virtually nobody can name another piece this artist has created, this one piece that came out of the inspiration from a woman - a woman who some have implied came back from the dead that night in James' studio to help him. Any idea who or what we're talking here yet? Proceed to the next page for the answer and conclusion to this story.

The woman that James McNeil Whistle had loved in years past was not a lover. It was his mother, Anna McNeil Whistler. His painting that no one wanted or cared about for a few decades has actually been renamed by the world. We all know it as, "***Whistler's Mother***."

Back To Chapter Selection

Chapter 35 - "Sarah Colley"

Sarah was born October 25th, 1912. Her childhood dream was to be the most dramatic actress of her time. She was on her way to Broadway. But to get there, she would gain experience, stature and make a living directing plays in local communities.

The year is 1932. Sarah's train arrives in the middle of a blinding blizzard in Coleman, Alabama. Coleman is just one more stop on Sarah's touring around directing local plays. The principal of the local high school was supposed to meet Sarah at the train station but he figured the weather was so bad, Sarah wouldn't even bother coming. It was beyond nightfall before Sarah was finally able to locate the principal. His embarrassment was compounded by the fact there was no where for Sarah to stay. Then the principal remembered this old log cabin way outside town inhabited by a wonderful country family. He figured surely they'll have a place for Sarah.

Upon arrival at the cabin at the end of a long, windy, snow covered, unplowed dirt road, they walk up the steps of the log cabin. An older woman in a faded but clean print dress answers the door. She informs them she has no real place for Sarah but says one of her sons won't mind sleeping on the kitchen floor while Sarah takes his room - - for TEN days!

Sarah begins thinking in her mind that she shouldn't have to go through this. "I'm an actress and a play director." Nonetheless, she realizes there's no choices here for accommodations here. But a strange and wonderful thing begins to happen. The older country woman I spoke of starts to make a real impression on Sarah. She (Sarah) thinks and later remembers how funny this woman was without even trying. Just the down home epitome of country hospitality.

That woman made more of an impression on Sarah than even Sarah knew or realized at first. To skip ahead some years, Sarah gave up her first dream of becoming the serious dramatic actress after meeting this simple country woman. Sarah came up with a created character that basically WAS that country woman. Any ideas here yet? Proceed to the next page for the answer and conclusion of this story.

Sarah Colley was left with an impression by that nice older country woman that she not only would never forget, she'd make it so the rest of the world would get to know and never forget that woman - or at least the character she created based on the woman. Sarah would portray her in some TV and film work. But Sarah Colley and her character are best known for the joy and laughter she made people feel between the years of 1940 and 1991 while at The Grand Ole Opry. Sarah would come on stage every performance and being by greeting the audience with a rousing, loud, country, "HOW-DEE"!

You must have guessed it by now. Sarah Colley - better known to the rest of the world as, "Minnie Pearl" will forever be a reminder to us all of that good ole' fashioned country woman in the log cabin and her generous country hospitality!

Minnie Pearl
(aka Sarah Colley)

Back To Chapter Selection

BONUS CHAPTER: Chapter 36 - "Father Of Miami" (aka "Beyond Theme Parks")

He was born on January 30th, 1830 in Hopedale New York to Elizabeth and Isaac. He only graduated with an eighth grade education. Throughout the Civil War era, he founded and ran a salt business with a partner. But by the end of the Civil War, demand for salt dropped so low his business failed. He returned to the grain business where he started his working life and became acquainted with a young John D. Rockefeller. By the mid 1860's, Cleveland, OH had become the oil refinery capitol of the U.S. Rockefeller left his job at the salt company working for his friend and moved to Cleveland to begin work with a chemist and inventor named Samuel Andrews.

By the mid 1860's, Rockefeller was in need of venture capital. He asked his old boss and friend at the salt company if he had any money to spare. His old boss raised about $100,000 with the agreement that he (the old boss) would be a full partner in the venture. This venture evolved into The Standard Oil Corporation.

Jump ahead a few years. This man from Hopedale, NY was now dabbling in such projects as hotels, building bridges and construction projects. In 1876, under the suggestion of his doctors, he began spending winters in Jacksonville, FL and 'hanging around' St. Augustine. He eventually went on to build the Ponce de Leon Hotel plus a railroad system that serviced pretty much the entire east coast of Florida.

In later years, the man was respected as such that the citizens of a south Florida municipality wanted to name the city after him. But he politely refused stating that in honor and respect of the original Native American inhabitants of the state, the little town should be named, "Mayimi". Later spelled, "Miami" of course. But in 1917, an entire county was named for this man.

Any idea who we're talking about yet? Please proceed to the next page for the answer.

Because of his contributions and efforts in the development and growth of the state of Florida, ***Henry M. Flagler*** became affectionately known as, ***"The Father Of Miami."***

Though Walt DIsney & Company also helped with the growth and popularity of Florida, it was Henry Flagler that was probably the first person to help grow "The Sunshine State" to such great proportions. That being and with all due respect to Walt Disney, The Disney Company and the other major theme parks throughout the state, Florida has so much more to offer both its inhabitants and visitors. Please feel free to view the video, ***"Beyond Theme Parks"*** (created by yours truly Mike Thomas) by clicking the link below.

(Internet connection required)

Beyond Theme Parks Video Link

Back To Chapter Selection

BONUS CHAPTER: Chapter 37 - "Believe"

In the late 1950's, Michael MacGillivray was born to Canadian parents Margret and Charles in a small New England town in Massachusetts where he grew up. He graduated high school and began college and a law enforcement career he thought he would do the rest of his life. However, he'd also started playing piano at age four. His older brother taught him how to play guitar at age fourteen. then he started singing at about age sixteen. Throughout his law enforcement days, he performed out in clubs and such. By about age 32-33, he said good bye to law enforcement and dove into his music, which by this time included writing, recording and producing. Skip ahead a few years and he started dabbling in multimedia production of stand alone shows. Then somewhere around 2005 developed a passionate interest in writing and storytelling coupled with his music & multimedia skill sets.

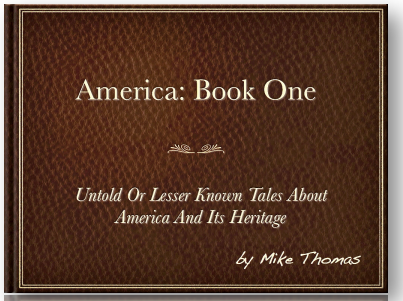
For those that know the author of this ebook, you already know who it is. It's me - Mike Thomas (MacGillivray), the writer and creator of "***America: Book One***". I thought I'd leave you with two things: a little bio about yours truly. But probably more importantly, a message of peace.

I believe in life. I believe in love.
I believe in great God above
Though I believe freedom does not come free,
I DO believe we can all still live in Peace!

Please click ***HERE*** to view and listen to, "*Believe: A Quest For Peace*" by yours truly (Internet connection required). It's my gift & wish to and for humanity. It's a piece I wrote and produced and later created an accompanying video.

Thank you for purchasing and reading "America: Book One"!

To Be Continued . . . . Peace, Mike Thomas



Back To Chapter Selection