

*"American freedom is not  
an abstract concept or a  
theological doctrine.*

*It is a magnificent reality."*

HERBERT HOOVER

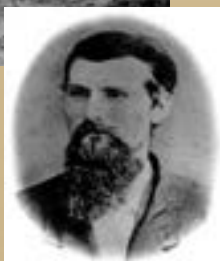


Dear <salutation>,

Life's journey can provide many paths, and the best we can do is strive to make wise choices at each fork in the road. I've always tried to follow the wisdom handed down through my family beginning with that of my great grandparents, Herbert and Lou Henry Hoover.

It is a great honor for me to share information about such prominent figures in history who played a significant role in shaping the political, economic, and educational landscape of the United State during a critical time. President Hoover's leadership during the Great Depression and his efforts to address the country's economic challenges have left a lasting impact on the nation. His wife, Lou Henry Hoover was a champion of the Girl Scouts and active in many social endeavors.

I hope to provide you with valuable insights and information about their life and legacy, and help you gain a deeper understanding of their contributions to American history.



While many historians disagree on how to remember my great grandfather's presidency and the way he responded to some of our nations most difficult challenges, there's one area in which they're in complete agreement- that he embodied the very best of what it means to be an American.

Herbert Hoover exemplified being an American in many ways. He was born in the small town of West Branch, where his father, Jessie Clark Hoover, an early entrepreneur, made a living as the town blacksmith and implement dealer. Young



Herbert loved the outdoors and fishing in local streams. He truly lived an idyllic life in West Branch until one day, at age six, tragedy when his father died of a heart attack. Just three years later, Herbert's mother, Huldah Minthorn Hoover died from pneumonia. Herbert, his older brother Theodore, and younger sister Mary were orphaned.

Herbert would be sent across country by train with two dimes sewn into his pocket for expenses. He would be raised by his uncle in Oregon, where he developed a strong work ethic and a deep sense of community service. He put himself through school to become an engineer and worked hard to show his employers that he had what it took to succeed in the mining industry. Hoover's career spanned several decades and included numerous achievements that showcased his commitment to American values and ideals.

As an engineer and businessman, Hoover was known for his ingenuity, innovation, and entrepreneurial spirit. He played a key role in transforming the mining industry, and his efforts to modernize the sector helped to boost the American economy. My great-grandfather also led the effort for humanitarian work during World War I, organizing food relief for civilians in Belgium, which earned him international recognition for saving millions from starvation.

As President, Hoover's leadership during the Great Depression was marked by a commitment to fiscal responsibility, individualism, and self-reliance. Despite criticism and opposition, he refused to compromise on his principles and instead sought to restore confidence in the American people and the economy. Hoover's efforts to create jobs, stimulate industry, and provide aid to struggling farmers and workers helped to mitigate the effects of the Depression and laid the groundwork for the economic recovery that followed.

Throughout his life, Herbert Hoover embodied the values of hard work, determination, and service to others that are central to the American experience. He demonstrated a deep commitment to the principles of democracy, liberty, and opportunity that continue to define the American spirit.

My great-grandmother, Lou Henry Hoover, was a champion of the Girl Scouts movement in the United States. As an accomplished outdoorswoman and skilled camper, Lou was passionate about teaching young girls the skills they needed to thrive in the great outdoors.

In 1922, she became the national president of the Girl Scouts of America, a position she held for six years. During her tenure, she worked tirelessly to promote the organization's values of leadership, self-reliance, and





community service. She encouraged girls to learn skills such as camping, cooking, and first aid, and emphasized the importance of physical fitness and outdoor activities.

Under Lou's leadership, the Girl Scouts of America expanded its membership and established new programs to support girls from all backgrounds. She also helped to develop the organization's international presence, traveling to Europe to meet with scouting leaders from around the world.

Throughout her life, Lou Henry Hoover remained a dedicated advocate for the Girl Scouts and a passionate believer in the power of outdoor education. Her commitment to the organization and its values has had a lasting impact on generations of American girls, and her legacy continues to inspire young women to this day.

Herbert and Lou are two extraordinary examples of the American Spirit and I'll always treasure the ideals they've instilled in my life, even though I've never had the pleasure of meeting them.

To honor the ideals of Herbert and Lou, we start by learning about their lives and the values that shaped their worldview. In this instance, their remarkable story is presented for the world to explore by reading accounts of their experiences and seeking out opportunities to connect with their American cultural heritage.

The Herbert Hoover Presidential Library and Museum, and the Herbert Hoover National Historic Site in West Branch, Iowa, are where you can walk in the footsteps of American history, absorbing what life must have been like for a young orphan boy. His entire life is detailed in the museum and grounds of the Hoover campus. And there's something new to learn with every visit. I often hear visitors exclaim, "I never knew that about Hoover" each year when our family returns to his birthplace.

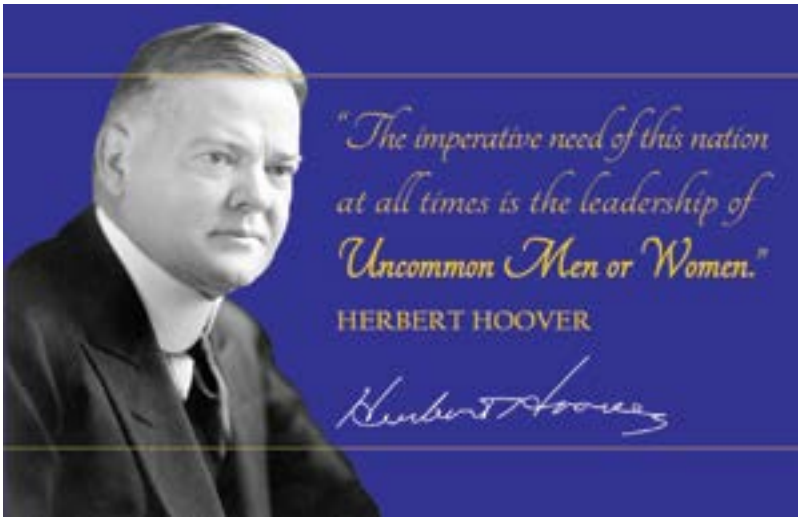
A prolific writer, Herbert would suggest we strive to embody the qualities that our ancestors held dear. Whether it is a commitment to hard work, a dedication to community service, or a reverence for nature, we can look for ways to integrate these values into our own lives and make them a part of our daily practice.

By embracing the values and principles that guided those who came before us, we can build a stronger sense of identity, purpose, and connection to the past.

The Uncommon Man speech is one of Herbert







Hoover's most famous and enduring addresses. He delivered it on May 22, 1944, at a dinner in honor of the University of Oxford's 400th anniversary. In the speech, Hoover reflected on the qualities that define an uncommon man - someone who embodies the highest ideals of humanity and serves as a beacon of hope and inspiration for others.

Great-grandfather argued that the uncommon man is defined not by his

wealth, power, or status, but by his character and his commitment to service. He emphasized the importance of humility, integrity, and selflessness in achieving greatness, and called on his audience to strive for excellence in their own lives and work.

The speech was widely praised for its eloquence and its message of hope and optimism. It has since become one of Hoover's most famous speeches, and is often cited as a testament to his wisdom and insight into the human condition.

Throughout his life, Herbert Hoover was a staunch advocate for the values of hard work, individualism, and service to others. The Uncommon Man speech is a powerful testament to these ideals, and a reminder of the transformative power of a life dedicated to selflessness and service.

It saddens me that the only thing many people know about great-grandfather is that the Great Depression happened on his watch. There is so much more to that story that history seemingly forgot! Luckily, the story is told amid a lifetime of accomplishments in the Herbert Hoover Presidential Library and Museum.

In spite of the tidal wave of criticism and political opposition that was arrayed against him, Hoover still managed to push through legislation and public works projects for the people through his sheer force of will.

Thanks to his influence, thousands of local communities rallied to provide direct relief to suffering people. And thanks to Herbert Hoover, several states received loans to initiate programs that employed hundreds of thousands of men who were out of work, including the famous dam in Nevada that would later bear his name.





It has been over 30 years since the Herbert Hoover Presidential Library and Museum has been renovated. The time has come to revitalize the exhibits and incorporate new stories, perspectives, and experiences that are more representative of the community and that reflect a wider range of voices and experiences.

A museum renovation that enhances the storytelling experience with new technologies and innovative displays can breathe new life into a museum and make it more engaging for visitors. New technologies have emerged that can improve the visitor experience and help to tell the museum's stories in more compelling ways.

For example, we'd like to add more interactive exhibits to provide visitors with a more immersive and hands-on experience. The possibilities are endless and could include touchscreens, augmented reality displays, or even virtual reality experiences that allow visitors to step back in time and experience historical events firsthand. These types of exhibits can help to bring history to life in new and exciting ways, making it more accessible and engaging for visitors of all ages.

In addition to new technologies, a museum renovation can also provide an opportunity to update and modernize the museum's displays and interpretation. This includes updating the language used to describe exhibits, incorporating new research and scholarship, or highlighting previously overlooked stories or perspectives. By doing so, we can become more inclusive and representative of a diverse range of experiences and perspectives, making them more relevant to a wider range of visitors.



*Artistic rendering of exhibit space.*