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Gannett Fulford

Robert Morris was a founding father of the United States, and one of the lesser known signers of the Declaration of Independence. Born in Liverpool, England, on January 20, 1734, he first came to America, with his family, at around 13 years old. His parents were Robert Morris, Sr. and Elizabeth Murphet Morris, and Morris had 10 siblings. He and his family first arrived in Maryland, but later moved to Philadelphia, where he would live much of his life. His role in early American History was pivotal in the creation of the nation, and his donations would be crucial in the independence effort. His donations allowed him to work closely with George Washington, and he was also good friends with Benjamin Franklin and John Adams. He was considered a founder of American Capitalism, even though the capitalistic system didn't officially exist in America at his time. His religious affiliations were unclear, but his philanthropy showed no boundaries between different religions, as he donated to several churches consistently. He had some involvement in the slave trade through his business escapades, but he eventually spoke out against slavery and sided with abolitionist causes.

His father died when Morris was at a young age, and this forced Morris to have to drop out of school and support his family. Thus, he received no official education. Despite this, he was a very intelligent and knowledge-hungry man. He read books voraciously and in doing so, he became well equipped in the business world, where he would eventually take up a career. Having a natural skill in math,

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accounting came easy to him, and he began his finances-based career as a clerk in a store in Philadelphia. Not possessing a formal education, he had to work extraordinarily hard in personal studies in order to be competitive. Similar to many of the other founding fathers, he had a tremendously strong work ethic, which allowed him to make up for the void of not having a legitimate education left. He became a very successful global capitalist and financier, and described trade as being "free as the air".

Despite being renowned for his patriotic involvement, Morris did not initially believe in the independence effort, but he eventually sided with common opinion and became a patriot. Using his substantial wealth, he financed the war effort by supplying the freedom fighters with gunpowder and other war resources. If not for his philanthropy, the Revolutionary war would have been completely different, potentially with an entirely different victor. He was elected into the Senate in 1788, and many of his positions were based on Alexander Hamilton and the Federalist Party's beliefs, such as a strong federal government and a national bank to create good national credit. He supported both the Coinage Act of 1792 and the Compromise of 1790, which would create a national mint and establish a national bank, respectively. His Congressional career ended in 1795, but his business ventures continued for some time, although risky investments in land scheming would lead to the slow decline of his wealth. Once one of the most

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wealthy men in early America, Morris had to declare bankruptcy in 1798. Not shortly after, he spent three years in debtor's prison. He died on May 8th, 1806, in relative obscurity.

Despite the decline in his financial success, the effects of his generosity would last for centuries, not only in his monumental role in funding the American Revolution, but also in his role in shaping the future of American economics and fiscal policy, not to mention Robert Morris University, a private, non-profit university named after him and located in Moon Township, Pennsylvania. His disciplined and hard-working character provided an example for early Americans, and his influence on the political and financial landscape continues to emerge today.

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Dear Family of Robert Morris,

I am a citizen living in the great city of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. I have recently heard of the tragic passing of Robert Morris, and I wanted to share my condolences. He was a wonderful man, and I, and so many others, are so immensely thankful for his continued donations he made to the war effort for the American Revolution; without him; I don't think the turnout would have been nearly the same. Looking back on what life used to be like immediately following the war, I can see the significant impact he made on how our economy operates on an everyday scale. Coming from a background of a less-than-wealthy family, seeing and reading about his efforts to overcome adversity and obstacles are truly inspiring, and it goes to show that despite not having a legitimate education, it is still very possible to overcome life's challenges and emerge victorious. He was and will continue to be an inspiration to me, and I will miss him dearly. I send my prayers and love to you all, and God bless.

Sincerely,

John Smith

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