

High Twelve International Speech

Purpose: The intent of this speech is for a stand-alone presentation or to be used in conjunction with the Power Presentation or the Info Board.

1 Who Are We?

High Twelve is an association of Master Masons who desire to gather in fellowship independent of formal ritual. We meet as Clubs which are more than a civic luncheon group and provide a place where Masons can feel completely comfortable among Masonic friends who share the important and lasting Masonic values. We are dedicated to the service of the fraternity, our country, and Masonic Youth and Youth in general. In other words, High Twelve is a Masonic Service Club. Simply stated High Twelve is Masonry in Action.

All Master Masons in “good standing” may join High Twelve by submitting an application to their local club. The Lodge to which the prospective member belongs must have been chartered or warranted by the Grand Lodge of the state. In addition, the Grand Lodge must have been judged to meet the standards of recognition of the Commission on Information for Recognition of the Conference of Grand Masters of Masons in North America (CGMMNA).

High Twelve was founded by E. C. Wolcott in Sioux City, Iowa on May 17, 1921. Shortly after the initial club was founded, clubs began to open throughout the United States. The second club was initiated in Oakland, California on February 21, 1922. Over time High Twelve International has grown to over 170 active clubs in the United States and has clubs in foreign countries that have in excess of five thousand (5,000) members. The Clubs in the United States are formed into State Associates where the Grand Lodges permits such concordant bodies and organizations.

2 Service

High Twelve Clubs have several very important service areas that they support.

2.1 *Support Good Government*

First and foremost, is to encourage and support good government. This is accomplished through the Wolcott Foundation which is the major service activity of High Twelve. The Foundation provides Fellowships to outstanding candidates who endeavor to pursue a Master’s Degree in Federal Government or Foreign Service at George Washington University in Washington DC. These Fellowships are significant in value and are very important in promoting good government by graduating outstanding students who go on to have jobs in Federal Government that have significant and real impact. High Twelve has a very positive relationship with the George Washington University.

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2.2 Assistance / Service to Blue Lodges

Second, High Twelve can provide valuable assistance in Blue Lodges in whatever manner is needed. High Twelve Clubs partner with Blue Lodges to achieve the Lodges community objectives. Further, High Twelve encourages Masons to follow Masonic ideals in their everyday activities in their communities.

2.3 Service to Youth

Finally, High Twelve emphasizes support and provides personal attention to our Masonic Youth by fostering their activities. Each Club has a member assigned to interfacing with the Masonic Youth Groups.

High Twelve also emphasizes supporting and helping outstanding youth in their local communities through the distribution of scholarships, recognition of outstanding students, encouraging and supporting adequate educational facilities and assisting local schools in major recognition events. Many clubs throughout the United States send needy children to summer camps.

3 Appendix of Facts and Interesting Information

3.1 High Twelve Club Meetings

Meeting typically begin with a breakfast, lunch or dinner among Masonic friends and their guests. Since there is no ritual, members can bring their wives, their families and friends to the meetings. In addition to a pleasant meal a Club meeting typically includes a speaker on a subject of interest to the Club.

3.2 High Twelve Emblem

The emblem of High Twelve tells a story about High Twelve. Every Club needs an emblem. The emblem was created in 1921 by Brother L.W. Howe of the Sioux City Club in Iowa.

The emblem features three ascending triangular steps, which symbolize the three degrees of a Master Mason. The hands on the clock in the center of the emblem proclaims the hour of High Twelve, a repeated theme in Masonry. The motto on the risers, “To Talk Little,” “To Hear Much,” and “To Reflect Upon Truth” can be traced back to the Masonic Lodges of London during the early 1700s.

3.3 Detailed History of High Twelve

High Twelve began with a meeting of a group of nine (9) Masonic friends who met on August 17, 1920 in the YMCA in Sioux City, Iowa to brainstorm ideas regarding starting a Masonic club. E.C. “Wallie” Wolcott who was the General Secretary of the YMCA initiated the meeting and discussion on the potential of starting such a club.

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What exactly happened at this first brainstorming meeting is uncertain and has been lost to the memories of history. Many years later, Wallie remembered a number of versions. One account suggests that he asked his Masonic friends “What do you fellows want?” They answered “we want to be with our business associates who are our Masonic friends. Others were looking for some form of a luncheon club they could join similar to Lions and Rotary which did not meet their needs. Wallie is said to have suggested that they form a Club of Third Degree Master Masons.

Clubs began to expand around the United States when Avery Whitney of Oakland visited a High Twelve meeting in Iowa with his son. Liking what he saw he asked Wallie to tell him how to set up a club in Oakland when he returned from his trip. There are no records of the early activities of the Oakland Club. But its success witnessed a period of rapid growth of clubs in California. During the next eight years Clubs were started in Berkeley, Santa Rosa, Fresno, Sacramento, Salinas, San Jose, Santa Barbara, Santa Cruz and Stockton.

3.4 *State Associations (15)*

State Association include:

- Arizona
- California
- Colorado
- Florida
- Illinois
- Indiana
- Louisiana
- North Central (South Dakota, Iowa)
- Kansas
- Michigan
- Missouri
- New Jersey
- Ohio
- Pennsylvania
- Texas

3.5 *Independent Clubs (4)*

Clubs that are not in a State Association can be found in:

- District of Columbia
- Hawaii
- Kentucky
- Maine

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3.6 *Foreign Clubs (4)*

Foreign Counties include:

- United Kingdom
- Japan