

My roots are deep in an ancient soil, drenched by the Mediterranean sun, and watered by pure streams from snow capped mountains.

I am enriched by thousands of years of culture.

My hands are those of the mason, the artist, the man of the soil.

My thoughts have been recounted in the annals of Rome , the poetry of Virgil, the creations of Dante, and the philosophy of Benedetto Croce.

I am an Italian-American, and from my ancient world, I first spanned the seas to the New World. I am Cristoforo Colombo.

I am Giovanni Caboto known in American History as John Cabot, discoverer of the mainland of North America.

I am Amerigo Vespucci, who gave my name to the New World , America

First to sail on the Great Lakes in 1679, founder of the territory that became the State of Illinois , colonizer of Louisiana and Arkansas, I am Enrico Tonti.

I am Filippo Mazzei friend of Thomas Jefferson, and my thesis on the equality of man was written into the Bill of Rights.

I am William Paca, signer of the Declaration of Independence.

I am an Italian-American; I financed the Northwest Expedition of George Rogers Clark and accompanied him through the lands that would become Ohio , Indiana , Wisconsin and Michigan . I am Colonel Francesco Vigo.

I mapped the Pacific from Mexico to Alaska and to the Philippines , I am Alessandro Malaspina.

I am Giacomo Belinimi, discoverer of the source of the Mississippi River in 1823.

I created the Dome of the United States Capitol. They call me the Michelangelo of America. I am Constantino Brumidi.

In 1904, I founded in San Francisco , the Bank of Italy now known as the Bank of America, the largest financial institution in the world, I am A.P. Giannini.

I am Enrico Fermi, father of nuclear science in America.

I am Steve Geppi, founder of Diamond Comics, the largest distributorship of comics on the planet.

**I am the first enlisted man to earn the Medal of Honor in World War II;
I am John Basilone of New Jersey .**

I am an Italian-American.

I am the million strong who served in America 's armies and the tens of thousands whose names are enshrined in military cemeteries from Guadalcanal to the Rhine.

I am the steel maker in Pittsburgh , the grower in the Imperial Valley of California, the textile designer in Manhattan , the movie maker in Hollywood , the homemaker and the breadwinner in over 10,000 communities.

I am an American without stint or reservation, loving this land as only one who understands history, its agonies and its triumphs can love and serve it.

I will not be told that my contribution is any less nor my role not as worthy as that of any other American.

I will stand in support of this nation's freedom and protect against all foes.

My heritage has dedicated me to this nation. I am proud of my heritage, and I shall remain worthy of it.

I am an Italian-American.

By Angelo R. Bianchi