

'Adopt a Portrait' - Presidents & First Ladies



This portrait adopted by Kevin and Kathleen Buchi

John Adams, 30 Oct 1735 - 4 Jul 1826

In 1789, after performing invaluable service to his country both during and after the Revolution, John Adams became George Washington's vice president and the first to discover how insignificant that office could be. The position, however, yielded one important compensation: it became the springboard for his election to the presidency in 1796.

Chief among Adams's presidential successes was the avoidance of hostilities over France's infringement on American neutrality in the war between France and Great Britain. Unfortunately, Adams pleased no one in doing so, and he left the White House in 1801 largely discredited on all sides. Recalling his administration years later, he noted, "No man who ever held the office of president would ever congratulate a friend on obtaining it."

This portrait was derived from sittings that occurred during Adams's vice presidency. By then, John Trumbull had painted two other likenesses of Adams, including one that was eventually incorporated into Trumbull's picture depicting the signing of the Declaration of Independence, which now resides in the U.S. Capitol rotunda.

John Trumbull, 6 Jun 1756 - 10 Nov 1843

Former attribution: Gilbert Stuart, 3 Dec 1755 - 9 Jul 1828

Oil on canvas, 1793

National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution

NPG.75.52

Sight: 63.5 x 53.3cm (25 x 21")



John Quincy Adams, 11 Jul 1767 - 23 Feb 1848

Son of the second president, to whom he owed his formidable intellectual training, John Quincy Adams was fated, like his father, to serve an undistinguished term as president (1828-32). Despite his long experience as an ambassador, senator, and secretary of state, Adams was unable to master the fractious sectional politics of the 1820s. The rigid and humorless New Englander was also out of step with the new popular political style pioneered by Andrew Jackson. Yet these so-called flaws contributed to Adams's success in his life's second act. Returning to Congress in 1831 (the only ex-president to take a lesser office after leaving the White House), Adams became known as "Old Man Eloquent" for his passionate opposition to slavery. In defending the African prisoners on the slave ship *Amistad*, he made the case in Congress that slavery was not just immoral but unconstitutional.

William Hudson, Jr., 1787 - after 1858

Oil on canvas, 1844

National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution

NPG.99.1

Stretcher: 92.7 x 74.3 x 2.5cm (36 1/2 x 29 1/4 x 1")



This portrait adopted by John Wilmerding.

John Quincy Adams, 11 Jul 1767 - 23 Feb 1848

John Quincy Adams's tenure as James Monroe's secretary of state ranks among the most productive in the history of that office. But Adams's often tactless ways were ill-suited for the presidency, and when his vision for such items as a comprehensive national transportation system met with hostility in Congress, he would not compromise. As a result, his administration's accomplishments were meager. But Adams was not through with political life. Elected to the House of Representatives in 1830, he served there until his death. In his prolonged and successful struggle defending the antislavery movement's right to petition Congress, "Old Man Eloquent" had gained a circle of admirers that extended well beyond his Massachusetts constituency.

When Adams sat for this portrait, he doubted that artist George Caleb Bingham could produce "a strong likeness." But Bingham did just that, and the portrait's vitality seems to echo Ralph Waldo Emerson's comment that the aging Adams was "like one of those old cardinals, who as quick as he is chosen Pope, throws away his crutches and his crookedness, and is as straight as a boy."

George Caleb Bingham, 20 Mar 1811 - 7 Jul 1879

Oil on canvas, c. 1850, from an 1844 original

National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution; Frame conserved with funds from the Smithsonian Women's Committee

NPG.69.20

Sight: 75.9 x 63.8cm (29 7/8 x 25 1/8")



Chester Alan Arthur, 5 Oct 1830 - 18 Nov 1886

When Vice President Chester Arthur succeeded to the presidency on the death of James Garfield, a newspaper noted that he was "not a man who would have entered anybody's mind" as a worthy candidate for the office. Indeed, as a major player in a spoils system that reduced the civil service to a vehicle for rewarding party faithful, he struck many as an emblem of all that was wrong in American politics.

As president, however, Arthur rose above his past to promote landmark legislation designed to curb the spoils system. He also proved to be a foe of other forms of corruption. When, for example, a "pork barrel" bill for public improvements reached his desk, he vetoed it.

This head-and-shoulders portrait can only hint at the fashionable figure that Arthur cut. With his muttonchop whiskers "trimmed to the perfection point" and his suits made of only the finest fabrics, he invariably looked like the very epitome of the well-bred Victorian gentleman.

Ole Peter Hansen Balling, 13 Apr 1823 - 1 May 1906

Oil on canvas, 1881

National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution; gift of Mrs. Harry Newton Blue; Frame conserved with funds from the Smithsonian Women's Committee

NPG.67.62

Sight: 62.2 x 50.8cm (24 1/2 x 20")



James Buchanan, 21 Apr 1791 - 1 Jun 1868

James Buchanan entered the White House in 1857 hoping to quell the mounting sectional rancor over slavery. But the events of his administration often had the opposite effect. The Supreme Court's Dred Scott decision, which denied Congress's power to ban slavery in the western territories, unleashed an unprecedented wave of anger in the North. When Buchanan supported pro-slavery forces in the Kansas Territory, that anger rose to a fever pitch. In response, the South's militance in defending slavery waxed ever stronger, and by the end of Buchanan's term, the long-feared specter of war was turning into a reality.

With the outbreak of hostilities in the spring of 1861, Buchanan became the object of vilification in many quarters. Among the milder expressions of anti-Buchanan feeling was the disposition of the version of this portrait that had been painted for the White House. When artist George Healy presented his bill for the picture, Congress refused to pay it, and many years passed before the White House acquired a portrait of Buchanan.

George Peter Alexander Healy, 15 Jul 1813 - 24 Jun 1894

Oil on canvas, 1859

National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution; transfer from the National Gallery of Art; gift of the A.W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, 1942

NPG.65.48

Sight: 155.9 x 119.7cm (61 3/8 x 47 1/8")



George Herbert Walker Bush, born 12 Jun 1924

In the early 1960s, George H. W. Bush presided over a thriving oil business in Houston, Texas, but then he turned to politics. By 1980, when he was elected Ronald Reagan's vice president, he had served as ambassador to the United Nations, envoy to China, and director of the Central Intelligence Agency. In 1988, he won the presidency.

Bush proved sure-footed in foreign policy, where, according to one observer, he proved a master of both "timing and substance." More widely traveled than any other president, he managed the policy transitions prompted by the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War. Perhaps his greatest success was the alliance he crafted to thwart Iraq's forceful takeover of Kuwait in 1990.

Bush sat for this portrait at his home in Kennebunkport, Maine. The picture's backdrop, however, is the East Room of the White House. Among artist Ron Sherr's aims was to balance the formality of the composition with a warmth capable of drawing the viewer into the picture.

Ronald Norman Sherr, born 1952

Oil on canvas, 1994-1995

National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution; gift of Mr. and Mrs. Robert E. Krueger

NPG.95.120

Stretcher: 125.1 x 86.7cm (49 1/4 x 34 1/8")



George Herbert Walker Bush, born 12 Jun 1924

Since the late nineteenth century, the editorial cartoon has played a provocative role in presidential politics, countering partisan advertising with irreverence. Australian-born Pulitzer-Prize winner Pat Oliphant (born 1935) hones a distinctive, repeatable caricature of each incoming president. When each fails to live up to expectations, those exaggerated figures begin to age, sag, shrink, weaken, or bloat. Oliphant has summarized his cartoon depictions of each president since Lyndon Johnson in a series of bronze sculptures. His images of Richard Nixon as a haunting and malevolent Napoleon, Gerald Ford as Band-Aided hollow mask, Jimmy Carter as an insignificant miniature, and George H. W. Bush as a wizened horseshoe player, remind us of the powerful impact of satiric portraiture.

Patrick Oliphant, born 1935
Bronze on wood base, 1989
National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution
NPG.91.25
With Base: 70.5 x 121.9 x 32.7cm (27 3/4 x 48 x 12 7/8")



James Earl Carter, Jr., born 1 Oct 1924

Since the late nineteenth century, the editorial cartoon has played a provocative role in presidential politics, countering partisan advertising with irreverence. Australian-born Pulitzer-Prize winner Pat Oliphant (born 1935) hones a distinctive, repeatable caricature of each incoming president. When each fails to live up to expectations, those exaggerated figures begin to age, sag, shrink, weaken, or bloat. Oliphant has summarized his cartoon depictions of each president since Lyndon Johnson in a series of bronze sculptures. His images of Richard Nixon as a haunting and malevolent Napoleon, Gerald Ford as Band-Aided hollow mask, Jimmy Carter as an insignificant miniature, and George H. W. Bush as a wizened horseshoe player, remind us of the powerful impact of satiric portraiture.

Patrick Oliphant, born 1935
Bronze on wood base, 1989
National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution
NPG.91.26
With Base: 31.4 x 15.6 x 15.6cm (12 3/8 x 6 1/8 x 6 1/8")



James Earl Carter, Jr., born 1 Oct 1924

In the early stages of the 1976 presidential campaign, the experts hardly gave a second thought to Jimmy Carter's chances of winning the Democratic nomination, much less the White House. But the former Georgia governor's "can-do," Washington outsider's image, along with his traditional populism, had great voter appeal, and in the final poll he emerged triumphant. Unfortunately, Carter did not prove as popular in the presidency as he had on the stump, being blamed for problems such as runaway inflation. Nevertheless, his administration had some unalloyed successes, including a landmark peace agreement between Egypt and Israel, which would probably never have been reached without Carter's own dogged determination to make it happen.

Artist Robert Templeton made the first sketches for this portrait at the White House in 1978. In the picture, Carter stands in the Oval Office, which is furnished as it had been during his administration. The donkey statuette on his desk was a gift from the Democratic National Committee.

Robert Clark Templeton, 11 May 1929 - 17 Jul 1991

Oil on canvas, 1980

National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution; gift of the 1977 Inaugural Committee and Gallery purchase

NPG.84.154

Sight: 232.4 x 142.2cm (91 1/2 x 56")



Stephen Grover Cleveland, 18 Mar 1837 - 24 Jun 1908

After his defeat in 1888, Grover Cleveland's presidential career was by no means over. Four years later, the electorate returned him to the White House. But Cleveland might have been better off remaining in retirement. By early 1893 the country was entering a deep economic depression, and whatever he did to meet various phases of that crisis seemed only to alienate his supporters. During the final year of his presidency, Cleveland suffered the ultimate humiliation of being an outcast within the party he had once led.

The painter of this portrait, Swedish artist Anders Zorn, drew his loose brushwork and preference for natural lighting from French impressionism. Cleveland was quite pleased with Zorn's likeness, declaring to a correspondent, "As for my ugly mug, I think the artist has 'struck it off' in great shape."

Anders Leonard Zorn, 18 Feb 1860 - 1920

Oil on canvas, 1899

National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution; gift of the Reverend Thomas G. Cleveland

NPG.77.229

Sight: 119.7 x 89.5cm (47 1/8 x 35 1/4")



Calvin Coolidge, 4 Jul 1872 - 5 Jan 1933

Thirtieth president, 1923-29

Americans expect their presidents to be active, which explains why Calvin Coolidge has been labeled by historians as the "quiet president" and an "American enigma." Coolidge was propelled to national prominence, and the vice presidency, by his decision, while governor of Massachusetts, to fire striking officers in Boston's police strike of 1919, proclaiming, "there is no right to strike against the public safety by anybody, anywhere, any time." Assuming the presidency after Warren Harding's death in 1923, Coolidge determined not to do anything to upset American prosperity. Upon election to the presidency, Coolidge, in his 1925 inaugural address-the first on radio-expressed his belief that "the people of America [should] . . . work less for the government and more for themselves. . . . That is the chief meaning of freedom." When Coolidge left office, political commentator Walter Lippmann wrote, "Surely no one will write of those years . . . that an aggressive president altered the destiny of the Republic. Yet . . . no one will write . . . that the Republic wished its destiny to be altered."

Joseph E. Burgess, 1890 - Jan 1961

Copy after: Ercole Cartotto, 26 Jan 1889 - 3 Oct 1946

Oil on canvas, 1956

National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution; gift of the Fraternity of Phi Gamma Delta

NPG.65.13

Frame: 160.7 x 112.7 x 6.4cm (63 1/4 x 44 3/8 x 2 1/2")



Dwight David Eisenhower, 14 Oct 1890 - 28 Mar 1969

As the general who directed the Allied victory in Europe during World War II, Dwight Eisenhower enjoyed a popularity that made him a natural choice as a presidential candidate. In 1952 he finally succumbed to Republicans' urgings to seek the nation's highest office.

After Eisenhower left the White House in 1961, many experts thought he had been slow to use his influence in gaining compliance with court-ordered racial integration of public schools, and claimed that his confrontational strategies in blocking the spread of Communism sometimes added unnecessarily to Cold War tensions. Such criticism became more muted, however, in the face of a growing appreciation for his administration's sound fiscal policies and its efforts to promote peaceful coexistence with the Soviet Union while maintaining a strong posture against its aggressive promotion of Communism in the world.

While posing for this portrait by Thomas Stephens, Eisenhower expressed an interest in trying his own hand at painting. At a rest break, Stephens handed him a brush. Within a month, painting had become one of Eisenhower's hobbies.

Thomas Edgar Stephens, 18 Jan 1886 - 4 Jan 1966

Oil on canvas, 1947

National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution; transfer from the National Gallery of Art; gift of Ailsa Mellon Bruce, 1947

NPG.65.63

Stretcher: 115.6 x 88.3cm (45 1/2 x 34 3/4")

'Adopt a Portrait' - Presidents & First Ladies



Millard Fillmore, 7 Jan 1800 - 8 Mar 1874

At the beginning of his administration, Millard Fillmore bestowed his presidential blessing on the Compromise of 1850-Senator Henry Clay's proposal to unite the North and the slaveholding South. The ensuing harmony, however, was short-lived. Among the compromise's concessions to the South was the new Fugitive Slave Law, which facilitated the capture of runaway slaves, and Fillmore was determined to enforce it. As northern abolitionists sought to undermine enforcement, tempers on both sides of the issue flared again. The sectional bitterness made a future rupture over slavery all but certain.

Fillmore's portrait by an unidentified artist dates to about the time he retired from the House of Representatives in the early 1840s. In the years following, he devoted himself to reconciling the growing differences among fellow Whigs in his native New York State.

Oil on canvas, c. 1843

National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution

NPG.78.50

Sight: 76.8 x 63.5cm (30 1/4 x 25")



Gerald Rudolph Ford, Jr., 14 Jul 1913 - 26 Dec 2006

Since the late nineteenth century, the editorial cartoon has played a provocative role in presidential politics, countering partisan advertising with irreverence.

Australian-born Pulitzer-Prize winner Pat Oliphant (born 1935) hones a distinctive, repeatable caricature of each incoming president. When each fails to live up to expectations, those exaggerated figures begin to age, sag, shrink, weaken, or bloat. Oliphant has summarized his cartoon depictions of each president since Lyndon Johnson in a series of bronze sculptures. His images of Richard Nixon as a haunting and malevolent Napoleon, Gerald Ford as Band-Aided hollow mask, Jimmy Carter as an insignificant miniature, and George H. W. Bush as a wizened horseshoe player, remind us of the powerful impact of satiric portraiture.

Patrick Oliphant, born 1935

Bronze, 1989

National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution

NPG.91.27

Without Base: 20.3 x 13.7 x 13.3 cm (8 x 5 3/8 x 5 1/4")



Gerald Rudolph Ford, Jr., 14 Jul 1913 - 26 Dec 2006

Gerald Ford was perfectly happy being a Michigan congressman and House minority leader. But Ford's congressional career abruptly ended in 1973, when President Richard Nixon appointed him to succeed Vice President Spiro Agnew, who had resigned amid revelations of misconduct. Within a year, Ford's political fortunes took yet another sharp turn. On August 9, 1974, with Nixon himself forced to resign from office, Ford became the only unelected vice president to succeed to the White House. Ford's pardoning of Nixon shortly thereafter drew angry criticism. Nevertheless, his conciliatory leadership succeeded in restoring a much-eroded confidence in the presidency. Summarizing the orderly way he came to office despite the unsettling events that put him there, he said at his swearing-in, "Our Constitution works." In large measure, it was Ford who insured that it did.

Everett Raymond Kinstler's likeness was painted at Ford's request specifically for the National Portrait Gallery. Kinstler based the portrait on sketches that he had made in the late 1970s, when he was working on Ford's official White House likeness.

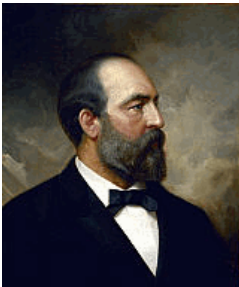
Everett Raymond Kinstler, born 5 Aug 1926

Oil on canvas, 1987

National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution; gift of the Gerald R. Ford Foundation

NPG.87.245

Stretcher: 111.1 x 85.4cm (43 3/4 x 33 5/8")



James Abram Garfield, 19 Nov 1831 - 19 Sep 1881

Twentieth president, March-September 1881

Through repeated balloting at the Republican convention of 1880, delegates remained deadlocked in naming a presidential candidate. Finally, after thirty-five ballots, they were ready for a compromise. Rejecting both front-runners-James Blaine and Ulysses S. Grant-the delegates endorsed Ohio congressman James A. Garfield, whose aspirations had been limited to becoming a senator.

The patronage-driven factionalism that led to Garfield's nomination continued to fester following his assumption of the presidency. On July 2, 1881, angered that Garfield had not awarded him a public office, a member of a GOP faction shot the president as he went to board a train. Eleven weeks later, Garfield was dead from his wound.

This staid portrait by Norwegian artist Ole Peter Hansen Balling may have captured Garfield's physical traits accurately, but it did not convey his spellbinding impact on people. Having once been a lay preacher, Garfield was at his most impressive when speaking. According to one observer, his thoughts sometimes seemed to issue forth at the podium "like solid shot from a cannon."

Ole Peter Hansen Balling, 13 Apr 1823 - 1 May 1906

Oil on canvas, 1881

National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution; transfer from the Smithsonian American Art Museum; gift of the International Business Machines Corporation to the Smithsonian Institution, 1962

NPG.65.25

Sight: 61.6 x 51.8cm (24 1/4 x 20 3/8")



Ulysses Simpson Grant, 27 Apr 1822 - 23 Jul 1885

It was one of General Ulysses S. Grant's small good fortunes after the Civil War, as he began settling into the White House as the eighteenth president, to count one of the nation's leading political cartoonists, Thomas Nast, as a friend. In part, Grant attributed his election to the presidency in 1868 "to the pencil of Nast"; the cartoonist was a staunch supporter of both Grant and the Republican Party. NastHe developed a camaraderie with the president and the first family, as this watercolor drawing of Grant might suggest. On the other hand, Nast had unleashed all of his satiric talents in criticizing the former administration of President Andrew Johnson for being too lenient toward the unreconstructed former Confederate states. Yet Nast's drawing of Grant has, in hindsight, become a caricature of his "armchair" presidency, one in which he relegated too much authority to untrustworthy subordinates, an interpretation that the artist never intended to suggest.

Publication: Vanity Fair, active 1914 - 1936

Thomas Nast, 27 Sep 1840 - 7 Dec 1902

Watercolor on paper, 1872

National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution

NPG.86.227

Image: 29.8 x 18.5cm (11 3/4 x 7 5/16")



Ulysses Simpson Grant, 27 Apr 1822 - 23 Jul 1885

In the spring of 1861, Ulysses Grant hardly seemed destined for greatness. Having resigned his army captain's commission in 1854, this West Point graduate was eking out a living as a clerk. But the Civil War marked a dramatic shift in his fortunes.

Reenlisting in the army, he was soon made a general. By war's end, he was commander of all Union land forces and, as the chief architect of the South's defeat, had become one of the country's heroes.

Grant's popularity led to his election to the presidency in 1868, but his weak control over his administration spawned an outbreak of federal corruption that made "Grantism" synonymous with public graft. Nevertheless, his charisma persisted through his two terms.

Grant posed for this portrait shortly after he returned from a triumphant world tour following his presidency. The largely self-taught artist Thomas LeClear painted two versions. This one was originally owned by Grant himself, while the second one became part of the White House collection.

Thomas Le Clear, 11 Mar 1818 - 26 Nov 1882

Oil on canvas, c. 1880

National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution; transfer from the Smithsonian American Art Museum; gift of Mrs. Ulysses S. Grant, Jr., 1921

NPG.70.16

Sight: 138.1 x 82.6cm (54 3/8 x 32 1/2")

'Adopt a Portrait' - Presidents & First Ladies



Ulysses Simpson Grant, 27 Apr 1822 - 23 Jul 1885

As a young man, Ulysses Grant was not interested in military life, but entered West Point in order to secure an education. In 1854 he resigned his army commission and tried several business ventures, all unsuccessful. Fortunately for the Union, Grant reenlisted at the start of the Civil War. Nothing much was expected of him, now a brigadier general, until he began winning victories in 1862, the first at Fort Donelson, Tennessee, where his terms were "unconditional surrender." Although some said he was not fit for high command because he was known to drink, President Lincoln promoted him to lieutenant general in 1864 and gave him command of all the Union armies.

After the war, Grant recommended a lenient policy of reconstruction, and in 1868 he was elected to the first of his two terms as president of the United States.

Ole Peter Hansen Balling, 13 Apr 1823 - 1 May 1906

Oil on canvas, 1865

National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution

NPG.67.34

Sight: 120.3 x 94.6cm (47 3/8 x 37 1/4")



Warren Gamaliel Harding, 2 Nov 1865 - 2 Aug 1923

The first two decades of the twentieth century had been marked by American involvement in a world war and a host of progressive reforms in the country's economic and social institutions. By 1920, voters wanted a rest from all this change and ferment and were ready for a brand of White House leadership that did not threaten the status quo. In Warren G. Harding, that year's Republican presidential candidate, they found what they wanted. A convivial onetime newspaper editor, Harding made "normalcy" the keynote of his campaign. Although the meaning of the newly coined term was uncertain, it at least promised no unsettling changes. Harding's administration was marked by scandals. A trusting individual, he appointed cronies to his administration who proved all too ready to use their offices for private gain. Harding, however, escaped having to face the corrupt behavior of his appointees. Just as stories of their wrongdoing were coming to light, he collapsed and died.

Margaret Lindsay Williams, 1887 - 4 Jun 1960

Oil on canvas, 1923

National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution

NPG.66.21

Sight: 135.9 x 99.7 x 2.5cm (53 1/2 x 39 1/4 x 1")

'Adopt a Portrait' - Presidents & First Ladies



Benjamin Harrison, 20 Aug 1833 - 13 Mar 1901

This crudely carved portrayal of Benjamin Harrison is a memento from his 1888 presidential campaign. One noteworthy aspect of the contest was the quantity of funds raised to promote Harrison's candidacy. Built up largely through donations from eastern businessmen who supported Harrison's call for a high protective tariff, his presidential war chest contained in excess of three million dollars. By modern standards, that figure seems almost paltry, but in the late nineteenth century it was an extraordinary sum of money.

Wood, 1888
National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution
NPG.77.249
Without Base: 24.1 x 24.1cm (9 1/2 x 9 1/2")



William Henry Harrison, 9 Feb 1773 - 4 Apr 1841

As a two-term congressman and former territorial governor, William Henry Harrison could lay no claim to proven abilities in political leadership. But his reputation as a frontier Indian fighter and hero of the War of 1812 amply made up for this, and in 1840 the Whigs eagerly made him their presidential standard-bearer. In the so-called "hard cider" campaign that followed, Harrison's supporters celebrated his military prowess and combined it with homespun frontier imagery that was unprecedented for its carnival-like brouhaha. While discussion of real issues was avoided, that brouhaha proved sufficient in itself to win Harrison the presidency.

Jubilance over his victory, however, proved short-lived. Soon after delivering the longest inaugural address ever made, Harrison contracted pneumonia and, on April 4, 1841, became the first president to die in office.

Albert Gallatin Hoit, 13 Dec 1809 - Dec 1856
Oil on canvas, 1840
National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution
NPG.67.5
Sight: 76.8 x 63.8cm (30 1/4 x 25 1/8")

'Adopt a Portrait' - Presidents & First Ladies



William Henry Harrison, 9 Feb 1773 - 4 Apr 1841

William Henry Harrison, who came from a family of Virginia aristocrats, made his career in the West, at first as a soldier and later as governor of the Indiana Territory, charged with keeping settlers safe from angry Indians, who had many grievances against the white interlopers. Alarmed by the growing power of the Shawnee brothers Tenskwatawa and Tecumseh, and suspicious of British influence, Harrison marched an army to Prophet's Town on the Tippecanoe River and in October 1812 won a battle that would provide the rallying cry ("Tippecanoe and Tyler, too!") for his campaign for the presidency in 1840.

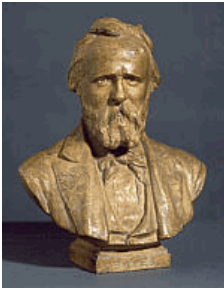
After the outbreak of the War of 1812, Harrison was appointed a brigadier general. At the fight along the Thames River in Canada, on October 5, 1813, he routed the British and the Indians, whose chief, Tecumseh, was killed in battle.

Rembrandt Peale, 22 Feb 1778 - 3 Oct 1860

Oil on canvas, c. 1813

National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution; gift of Mrs. Herbert Lee Pratt, Jr. NPG.75.27

Stretcher: 72.4 x 60.3 x 2.5cm (28 1/2 x 23 3/4 x 1")



Rutherford Birchard Hayes, 4 Oct 1822 - 17 Jan 1893

In the summer of 1876, sculptor Olin Warner tried to interest the two major political parties in commissioning busts of their presidential candidates to be replicated for campaigning. The Republican camp, which was having a hard time drumming up interest in the rather colorless Rutherford B. Hayes, took advantage of the proposal. At least one Hayes supporter pinned great hopes on the resulting likeness's ability to persuade a so-far doubting public that Hayes was "a man of power." The venture for replicating the bust on a large scale, however, never went very far, and only a few copies were ever made.

Olin Levi Warner, 1844 - 1896

Plaster, 1876

National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution; transfer from the Smithsonian American Art Museum; gift of Mrs. Carlyle Jones, 1974

NPG.76.27

With Socle: 27.3 x 24.8 x 12.7cm (10 3/4 x 9 3/4 x 5")



Herbert Clark Hoover, 10 Aug 1874 - 20 Oct 1964

Herbert Hoover seemed to be the ultimate problem-solver. As a mining engineer, he had turned marginal operations into thriving enterprises. During World War I, his administration of European food relief was nothing short of brilliant. As secretary of commerce in the 1920s, he transformed a once-sleepy department into a purposeful information clearinghouse.

But as the Great Depression took hold during the second year of his presidency, Hoover was hard pressed for a solution. Believing in the power of private initiative, he hesitated to involve the federal government in reviving business. When lengthening bread lines and escalating joblessness finally convinced him of the necessity of such steps, the measures proved inadequate. As a result, Hoover was defeated by a crushing margin in his 1932 reelection bid.

This portrait was intended for Time magazine's cover. But Hoover delayed his sittings, and by the time it was finished, the magazine was no longer interested. Hoover is thus the only president in Time's history never to appear on a cover while in office.

Douglas Granville Chandor, 20 Aug 1897 - 13 Jan 1953

Oil on canvas, 1931

National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution; Frame conserved with funds from the Smithsonian Women's Committee

NPG.68.24

Sight: 110.8 x 92.1cm (43 5/8 x 36 1/4")



Andrew Jackson, 15 Mar 1767 - 8 Jun 1845

Andrew Jackson won national acclaim for his successful military campaigns against the Creek Indians in the Mississippi Territory in 1814 and against the Seminole nation in Florida in 1818. Yet Jackson's spectacular victory over the British in New Orleans on January 8, 1815, was the event for which he would be most feted in his lifetime. In 1840, the city hosted a Silver Jubilee for Jackson and his victory. This portrait of the aging hero, white-haired and in poor health, depicts him at that time.

James Tooley, Jr., 1816 - 1844

Copy after: Edward Dalton Marchant, 1806 - 1887

Watercolor on ivory, 1840

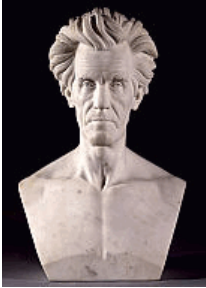
National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution; gift of Mr. William H. Lively, Mrs. Mary Lively Hoffman, and Dr. Charles J. Lively

Conserved with funds from the Smithsonian Women's Committee

NPG.66.43

10.8cm x 8.6cm (4 1/4" x 3 3/8"), Accurate

'Adopt a Portrait' - Presidents & First Ladies



This portrait adopted by Jack and Beth Watson.

Andrew Jackson, 15 Mar 1767 - 8 Jun 1845

Andrew Jackson of Tennessee, Indian fighter and hero of the Battle of New Orleans-the first president of truly humble background and the first from the West-ushered in a new political era. His supporters hailed him as "The People's President"; conservatives saw his election as the ascent of "King Mob." Before his two terms in office were out, Jackson vetoed more legislation than his predecessors combined, and his opponents coalesced into a new political party called the Whigs.

Ferdinand Pettrich, 1798 - 1872

Marble, Replica of 1836 original

National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution

NPG.91.45

Without Base: 64.8 x 40.6 x 21.6cm (25 1/2 x 16 x 8 1/2")



Thomas Jefferson, 13 Apr 1743 - 4 Jul 1826

As the new American republic emerged from its war with the mother country, Thomas Jefferson and John Adams, collaborators in the formulation of the Declaration of Independence (although Jefferson wrote the final document), were brought together as trade negotiators in France, where their mutual respect turned into friendship. In the spring of 1786-when Jefferson was the American minister to France and Adams the American minister to England-Jefferson visited Adams, who suggested that he pose for the young Boston-born artist Mather Brown. An exchange of portraits between the two colleagues ensued. This painting, the earliest known likeness of Jefferson, remained in Adams's family until given to the nation in 1999.

The background contains the classical figure of Freedom holding a staff topped by a cap, which had its origins in the conical cloth cap adopted by freed Roman slaves as the symbol of their liberty.

Mather Brown, 7 Oct 1761 - 25 May 1831

Oil on canvas, 1786

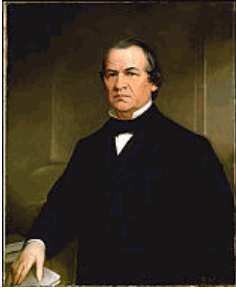
National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution; bequest of Charles Francis

Adams; Frame conserved with funds from the Smithsonian Women's Committee

NPG.99.66

Sight: 91.4 x 71.1cm (36 x 28")

'Adopt a Portrait' - Presidents & First Ladies



This portrait adopted by Julia and Frank Daniels, Jr. in recognition of Marc Pachter.

Andrew Johnson, 29 Dec 1808 - 31 Jul 1875

A onetime tailor whose wife had taught him to read, Andrew Johnson thought he had reached his political summit with his election to the Senate in 1856. But Johnson's ardent opposition to his native Tennessee's membership in the Confederacy led to his becoming Abraham Lincoln's vice president, and then successor to the presidency upon Lincoln's assassination in April 1865.

Johnson shared Lincoln's determination to readmit the South to the Union with a minimum of punitive demands on the defeated region. That, however, put him at odds with a Congress out to punish the South's white leadership and ensure the rights of the region's newly freed blacks. The tactless and combative Johnson survived impeachment by one vote, but was without any real influence for the remainder of his presidency.

Washington B. Cooper was a leading Tennessee portraitist, and Johnson sat for him on several occasions. Although this likeness is undated, Johnson's apparent age in the picture suggests that it was painted during his presidency.

Washington Bogart Cooper, 1802 - 1889

Oil on canvas, after 1866

National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution

NPG.86.213

Sight: 91.8 x 74.3cm (36 1/8 x 29 1/4")



This portrait adopted by Esther and Jack Coopersmith.

Lyndon Baines Johnson, 27 Aug 1908 - 22 Jan 1973

Few individuals have managed to harness the forces of American politics better than Lyndon Johnson. Thus, when he surrendered his position as Senate majority leader to become John Kennedy's vice president in 1961, it was inevitable that he should bridle at the political limbo of his new office.

But when Johnson became president upon Kennedy's assassination, his ability to get what he wanted was soon yielding a string of landmark legislation that included a far-reaching civil rights act and a federally funded "war on poverty." Unfortunately, escalation of the war against Communist aggression in Vietnam overshadowed those successes. By the end of his presidency, Johnson had gone from being one of the most successful presidents in history to one of the most maligned.

This portrait by Peter Hurd was meant to be Johnson's official White House likeness. But that plan was quickly scrapped after Johnson declared it "the ugliest thing I ever saw." Soon the pun was making the rounds in Washington that "artists should be seen around the White House-but not Hurd."

Peter Hurd, 22 Feb 1904 - Jul 1984

Tempera on wood, 1967

National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution; gift of the artist; Frame conserved with funds from the Smithsonian Women's Committee

NPG.68.14

Panel: 120.7 x 94.6cm (47 1/2 x 37 1/4")



This portrait adopted by Walter F. and Joan A. Mondale

John Fitzgerald Kennedy, 29 May 1917 - 22 Nov 1963

When an assassin's bullet cut short John F. Kennedy's presidency in November 1963, the country experienced a collective sense of loss that it had not known since the death of Abraham Lincoln. But the grief was not so much inspired by Kennedy's presidential accomplishments as it was an expression of what he had come to represent: his eloquence and idealism had made him, in the eyes of many, the embodiment of this country's finest aspirations. Still, his administration could claim triumphs in foreign policy, including a successful face-off with the Soviets over the presence of missiles in Cuba. Its support for the civil rights movement, moreover, would soon give birth to landmark legislation promoting racial equality.

Elaine de Kooning arranged for sittings with Kennedy in late 1962, intending to complete a single portrait. Fascinated with the changeability of Kennedy's features, she instead painted an entire series of likenesses, including this one. In its loose, almost chaotic brushwork, the portrait illustrates de Kooning's close identification with the Abstract Expressionist movement of the 1950s.

Elaine de Kooning, 20 Mar 1918 - 1 Feb 1989

Oil on canvas, 1963

National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution

NPG.99.75

Frame: 262.9 x 115.6 x 6.4cm (103 1/2 x 45 1/2 x 2 1/2")



Abraham Lincoln, 12 Feb 1809 - 15 Apr 1865

Abraham Lincoln a month before his second inauguration

Lincoln's faint, tired smile in this likeness makes it one of the most compelling photographic images ever taken of him. For many years, it was commonly thought that this photograph dated from early April 1865 and that it was the last one ever made of Lincoln. But in fact, it was part of a series of photographs taken at Alexander Gardner's Washington, D.C., studio two months earlier, on February 5. In shooting the image, Gardner used a large glass negative, which broke before it could be processed. Nevertheless, he managed to make one print. Some have interpreted the crack running through the image as a portent of Lincoln's impending assassination.

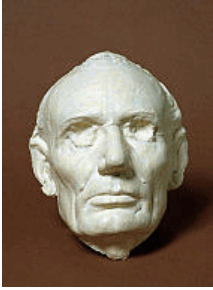
Alexander Gardner, 1821 - 1882

Internal dye diffusion transfer print on paper, 1865 (printed 1981)

National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution

NPG.81.M1.D3

Unspecified element: 45 x 38.6cm (17 11/16 x 15 3/16")



Abraham Lincoln, 12 Feb 1809 - 15 Apr 1865

"Yes. This is he."

The noted midcentury sculptor Leonard Volk took this life mask of Lincoln before he started his run for the presidency. Volk wanted to make a bust of Lincoln to add to his collection of American statesmen, but he realized that Lincoln did not have time to sit. Hence he created this life mask, which shows the future president without a beard, and a face whose smoothness contrasts decidedly with the Clark Mills's lined and furrowed mask of 1865. Poet Richard Watson Gilder wrote after Lincoln's assassination, "The mask doeth keep the very form and mold/Of our great martyr's face. Yes. This is he."

Leonard Wells Volk, 1828 - 1895

Plaster, 1917 cast after 1860 original

National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution; transfer from the National Museum of American History

NPG.71.24

14.6 x 21.6 x 23.5cm (5 3/4 x 8 1/2 x 9 1/4")



Abraham Lincoln, 12 Feb 1809 - 15 Apr 1865

Today Abraham Lincoln is universally regarded as one of our greatest presidents. But from the start of his administration, Lincoln, guiding the nation in a time of civil war, was beset with criticism from all sides. Some charged him with moral cowardice for initially insisting that an end to slavery was not one of his wartime goals; others accused him of overstepping his constitutional powers; still others blamed him for military reverses in the field. But as Union forces moved toward victory, Lincoln's eloquent articulation of the nation's ideals and his eventual call for an end to slavery gradually invested him with grandeur. Following his assassination in 1865, that grandeur became virtually unassailable.

The original version of this portrait was a template for artist George P. A. Healy's large painting *The Peacemakers*, depicting Lincoln in consultation with three of his main military advisers at the end of the Civil War. But Healy recognized that this made a fine portrait in its own right and eventually made three replicas, including this one.

George Peter Alexander Healy, 15 Jul 1813 - 24 Jun 1894

Oil on canvas, 1887

National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution; transfer from the National Gallery of Art; gift of the A.W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, 1942

NPG.65.50

Sight: 188.6 x 137.2cm (74 1/4 x 54")

'Adopt a Portrait' - Presidents & First Ladies



Abraham Lincoln, 12 Feb 1809 - 15 Apr 1865

Abraham Lincoln is regarded as one of the greatest men to occupy the presidency. Yet in his day, there were those who accused him of moral cowardice when he initially insisted that the purpose of engaging in a war with the South was to preserve the Union and not to eliminate slavery. His wartime suspension of basic civil rights gave rise to charges of despotism, and when the conflict went badly for the North, the blame inevitably fell on him. But as Union forces advanced toward victory in the field, Lincoln's eloquent articulation of the nation's ideals and ultimate call for an end to slavery gradually invested him with a saintly grandeur. Following his assassination in 1865, his reputation became virtually unassailable.

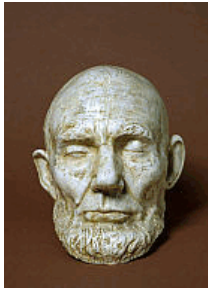
Charles Wesley Jarvis, 1812 - 1868

Oil on canvas, 1861

National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution; gift of Mr. and Mrs. Michael Arpad

NPG.78.272

Stretcher: 76.2 x 63.8 x 3.8cm (30 x 25 1/8 x 1 1/2")



Abraham Lincoln, 12 Feb 1809 - 15 Apr 1865

"The tired spot"

It is impossible to look at this cast of Lincoln's face-gaunt and careworn-and not think that it is a death mask. In fact, it was taken from life on February 11, 1865, by sculptor Clark Mills. Life masks were very popular in the nineteenth century because they created a near-duplicate of the sitter's features. The plaster image complements the photographs taken of Lincoln by Alexander Gardner the same month. A friend of Lincoln's commented on the mask-and thus on the original-that it has "a look as of one on whom sorrow and care had done their worst."

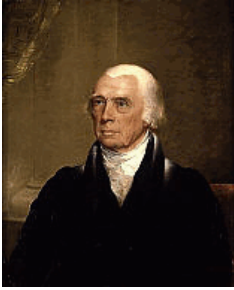
Clark Mills, 1810 - 12 Jan 1883

Plaster, c. 1917 cast after 1865 original

National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution; transfer from the National Museum of American History

NPG.71.26

17.1 x 20.3 x 29.8cm (6 3/4 x 8 x 11 3/4")



This portrait adopted by Philip and Joan Currie.

James Madison, 16 May 1751 - 28 Jun 1836

As a central figure in framing the Constitution, James Madison had a good deal of influence over shaping the American presidency. But helping to conceive that office did not guarantee success in occupying it, and much of Madison's own presidency was marred by his inept handling of the War of 1812 and the bitter criticism that it engendered. Derisively labeled "Mr. Madison's War," the conflict, one commentator railed, had been "commenced in folly . . . carried on with madness, and . . . will end in ruin."

The advent of peace in late 1814, however, mellowed feelings toward Madison. Although many of the issues that had spawned hostilities remained unresolved, the war had produced enough military glory to satisfy national pride. In the process, Madison emerged as the American David who had dared to take on the British Goliath.

In 1829, Madison came out of retirement to attend a convention for revising Virginia's constitution. While there, he posed for this portrait by the Massachusetts painter Chester Harding.

Chester Harding, 1 Sep 1792 - 1 Apr 1866

Oil on canvas, 1829-1830

National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution

NPG.68.50

Sight: 78.4 x 65.1cm (30 7/8 x 25 5/8")



William McKinley, 29 Jan 1843 - 14 Sep 1901

William McKinley's "front porch" campaign for the White House in 1896 consisted mainly of speeches delivered to well-wishers flocking by train to his Canton, Ohio, home. As president, the main focus of his administration lay in responding to calls for aid in Cuba's struggle against Spanish rule. Although reluctant to meddle, McKinley felt obliged to act when the American battleship Maine blew up in Havana harbor, and interventionists blamed it on the Spanish. The result was the Spanish-American War, which led to Cuba's independence and Spain's surrender of the Philippines, Puerto Rico, and Guam to the United States. Despite his own doubts about this turn of events, McKinley made the traditionally isolationist United States more visible in international politics.

One of several portraits derived from 1897-98 sittings at the White House, August Benziger's likeness testifies to McKinley's blandly funereal appearance. But housed in that uninteresting exterior was an unusual supply of warmth and charm that, as one observer put it, made McKinley "a marvelous manager of men."

August Benziger, 1867 - 1955

Oil on canvas, 1897

National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution; gift of Miss Marieli Benziger

NPG.69.34

Other: 149 x 99cm (58 11/16 x 39")

'Adopt a Portrait' - Presidents & First Ladies



This portrait adopted by Jack and Beth Watson.

James Monroe, 28 Apr 1758 - 4 Jul 1831

In 1820, White House incumbent James Monroe stood virtually unopposed in his bid for a second term, an expression of the so-called "Era of Good Feelings" that set in after the War of 1812 and was marked by a temporary halt in two-party factionalism. Monroe brought to his presidency a style that meshed well with this rancorless climate. When, for example, he vetoed public improvements legislation, he offered Congress suggestions for accomplishing the same end through means that circumvented his Constitution-based objections. The most enduring legacy of his administration, however, was the Monroe Doctrine, which registered opposition to European meddling in the Western Hemisphere. It ultimately became a keystone of American foreign policy.

The restrained coloring and brushwork in Monroe's portrait by John Vanderlyn testifies to the strong influence of French neoclassicism during the artist's years of study in Paris. It may also reflect Monroe's own tastes, which ran decidedly to the French as a result of his several diplomatic missions to Paris.

John Vanderlyn, 15 Oct 1775 - 23 Sep 1852

Oil on canvas, 1816

National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution

NPG.70.59

Sight: 67.3 x 57.2cm (26 1/2 x 22 1/2")



James Monroe, 28 Apr 1758 - 4 Jul 1831

Born Westmoreland County, Virginia

Thomas Gimbrede's engraving served as the principal presidential image of James Monroe, becoming the most widely disseminated image during Monroe's years in office. Artist John Vanderlyn commissioned the print, based on his own painted portrait, in the spring of 1816, when he learned of Monroe's presidential aspirations. The engraving began circulating just after the president's inauguration in March of 1817. Vanderlyn, a houseguest and close friend of the then-secretary of state, had recently finished painting two almost identical portraits of Monroe. James Madison had commissioned the original, which pleased Monroe enough to request another for himself. From Monroe's version, now owned by the National Portrait Gallery, Vanderlyn made a quick sketch to function as the engraver's model. Guided by this drawing, Gimbrede offered the first engraved image of the fifth president in this print.

Thomas Gimbrede, 1781 - 1832

Copy after: John Vanderlyn, 15 Oct 1775 - 23 Sep 1852

Engraving on paper, 1817

National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution

NPG.2008.118

Sheet: 36.3 x 25.7 cm (14 5/16 x 10 1/8")

'Adopt a Portrait' - Presidents & First Ladies



Richard Milhous Nixon, 9 Jan 1913 - 22 Apr 1994

Since the late nineteenth century, the editorial cartoon has played a provocative role in presidential politics, countering partisan advertising with irreverence. Australian-born Pulitzer-Prize winner Pat Oliphant (born 1935) hones a distinctive, repeatable caricature of each incoming president. When each fails to live up to expectations, those exaggerated figures begin to age, sag, shrink, weaken, or bloat. Oliphant has summarized his cartoon depictions of each president since Lyndon Johnson in a series of bronze sculptures. His images of Richard Nixon as a haunting and malevolent Napoleon, Gerald Ford as Band-Aided hollow mask, Jimmy Carter as an insignificant miniature, and George H. W. Bush as a wizened horseshoe player, remind us of the powerful impact of satiric portraiture.

Patrick Oliphant, born 1935
Bronze, 1985
National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution
NPG.91.30
Without Base: 44.1 x 48.3 x 14cm (17 3/8 x 19 x 5 1/2")



Richard Milhous Nixon, 9 Jan 1913 - 22 Apr 1994

Richard Nixon owed his election as Dwight Eisenhower's vice president to his early reputation as an anti-Communist. By the time he became president in 1968, however, his thinking had shifted considerably. As a result, under his leadership, the confrontational strategies that had long dominated this country's response to Communism gave way to a historic détente, marked by American recognition of Communist China and better relations with the Soviet Union. These achievements, however, were eventually overshadowed by disclosure of the Watergate scandals—a web of illegal activity involving scores of Nixon's advisers. Although never implicated in the original crimes, Nixon did become party to attempts to cover them up. Following irrefutable disclosure of that fact, he became the only president ever to resign from office. Artist Norman Rockwell admitted that he had intentionally flattered Nixon in this portrait. Nixon's appearance was troublesomely elusive, Rockwell noted, and if he was going to err in his portrayal, he wanted it to be in a direction that would please the subject.

Norman Percevel Rockwell, 3 Feb 1894 - 8 Nov 1978
Oil on canvas, 1968
National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution; donated to the people of the United States of America by the Richard Nixon Foundation
NPG.72.2
Frame: 52.4 x 72.4 x 5.7cm (20 5/8 x 28 1/2 x 2 1/4")



Ronald Wilson Reagan, 6 Feb 1911 - 5 Jun 2004

When ex-California governor Ronald Reagan began his presidency in 1981, his warmth and skill in handling the media had already planted the seeds of his reputation as the "great communicator." More significant, however, was how those traits were made to work on behalf of his conservative agenda. By the end of his second term, despite widespread concern over budget deficits and several administration scandals, Reagan's presidency had wrought many significant changes. Under his leadership, the nation had undergone major tax reforms, witnessed a significant easing of relations with the Communist world, and experienced a sharp upturn in prosperity. Reagan left office enjoying a popularity that only a few of his outgoing predecessors had ever experienced.

This portrait is based on some thirty studies that artist Henry Casselli made of Reagan over four days at the White House in late 1988. Commissioned with the National Portrait Gallery in mind, the finished picture arrived at the White House the following January for presidential inspection. When Reagan saw it, he exclaimed, "Yep! That's the old buckaroo."

Henry C. Casselli, Jr., born 1946

Oil on canvas, 1989

National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution; gift of Herman Chanen, Tom Chauncey and other Friends of President and Mrs. Reagan

NPG.90.79

Stretcher: 125.7 x 80.6cm (49 1/2 x 31 3/4")



Franklin Delano Roosevelt, 30 Jan 1882 - 12 Apr 1945

Davidson sculpted Franklin D. Roosevelt at the White House. Davidson noted, "He was rolled in, seated in a wheelchair and he greeted us with a broad, cheerful smile." He wrote later that Roosevelt "won me completely with his charm, his beautiful voice and his freedom from constraint. He had unshakeable faith in man. . . . Nobody before had worried about the artist, but in Roosevelt's tremendous relief program, the artist too was included, and the influence of the WPA projects was tremendous." Davidson, a strong supporter of Roosevelt, offered casts similar to this one as a fundraiser for the Young Democrats during the 1936 election.

Jo Davidson, 30 Mar 1883 - 2 Jan 1952

White metal, 1934

National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution; gift of Louis E. Shecter

S/NPG.69.38

Without Base: 15.2 x 10.2 x 13.3cm (6 x 4 x 5 1/4")

'Adopt a Portrait' - Presidents & First Ladies



This portrait adopted by Mr. and Mrs. George Dillon.

Franklin Delano Roosevelt, 30 Jan 1882 - 12 Apr 1945

When Franklin Roosevelt began serving in New York's state legislature in 1911, some observers declared him ill-suited to the rough realities of politics. But Roosevelt thrived on those realities; some two decades later, he was advancing from the New York governorship to the presidency.

Taking office against the bleak backdrop of the Great Depression, Roosevelt responded quickly to this economic disaster with a host of regulatory and welfare measures that redefined the government's role in American life. Among conservatives, the new federal involvement in matters traditionally left to the private sector was a betrayal of America's ideals. But in other quarters, Roosevelt's activism inspired an unwavering popularity that led to his election to an unprecedented four terms.

When Roosevelt sat for this portrait in 1945, his presidential concerns had long since shifted to guiding the nation through World War II. This likeness is a study for a larger painting—a sketch of which appears at the lower left—commemorating Roosevelt's meeting with wartime Allied leaders Winston Churchill and Joseph Stalin at Yalta.

Douglas Granville Chandor, 20 Aug 1897 - 13 Jan 1953

Oil on canvas, 1945

National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution

NPG.68.49

Sight: 110.5 x 90.2cm (43 1/2 x 35 1/2")



Theodore Roosevelt, 27 Oct 1858 - 6 Jan 1919

Jacob Riis, the noted journalist and advocate for New York City's underprivileged tenement population at the turn of the twentieth century, commissioned this bas-relief of his friend Theodore Roosevelt. When Roosevelt was a city police commissioner (1895-97), Riis was a valuable source of information because he understood the reforms needed in the police department, as well as the evils of the slums. In 1906, Riis opened the Henry Street Settlement House and had this bas-relief, sculpted by Sally James Farnham, placed in the gymnasium. Farnham got the chance to sketch Roosevelt, by then president, at an informal cabinet meeting. The settlement house was sold in 1952, and the bas-relief was later acquired by the National Portrait Gallery.

Sally James Farnham, 1869 - 1943

Bronze relief, 1906

National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution

NPG.74.16

Without Mount: 52.7 x 53 x 6.4cm (20 3/4 x 20 7/8 x 2 1/2")



Theodore Roosevelt, 27 Oct 1858 - 6 Jan 1919

No one ever craved the presidency more than Theodore Roosevelt or used its powers more joyously. In early 1901, however, his rise toward that office was suddenly checked. Having gained national prominence as a civil service reformer, Spanish-American War hero, and reform-minded governor of New York, he was now relegated to being William McKinley's vice president. But McKinley's assassination several months later changed everything, and Roosevelt was soon rushing headlong into one of American history's most productive presidencies. By the time he left office in 1909, his accomplishments ranged from implementing landmark efforts to conserve the nation's disappearing natural heritage, to instituting some of the first significant curbs on the excesses of big business, to building the Panama Canal. When Hungarian-born English artist Philip de László painted the original version of this portrait, he encouraged Roosevelt to have visitors chat with him during the sittings, apparently thinking that it made for a more animated likeness.

Adrian Lamb, 1901 - 1988

Copy after: Philip Alexius de László, 1869 - 1937

Oil on canvas, 1967 copy after 1908 original

National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution; gift of the Theodore Roosevelt Association

NPG.68.28

132.7 x 101.6 x 3.8cm (52 1/4 x 40 x 1 1/2")



William Howard Taft, 15 Sep 1857 - 8 Mar 1930

William Howard Taft would have much preferred it if his White House predecessor, Theodore Roosevelt, had appointed him to the Supreme Court. But Roosevelt had other plans for this man who had been one of his most trusted advisers. In November 1908, the good-natured Taft found himself elected to the presidency as Roosevelt's hand-picked successor.

In many respects, Taft's administration continued Roosevelt's progressive reforms that sought to monitor the nation's economic life. But many of Taft's old allies questioned the sincerity of his commitment and ultimately regarded him as a betrayer of the Roosevelt legacy. As a result, in Taft's bid for reelection in 1912, he faced a challenge not only from Democratic hopeful Woodrow Wilson but also from the third-party presidential candidacy of the very man who had put him in the White House, Theodore Roosevelt. In the three-way contest, Taft came in a distant third.

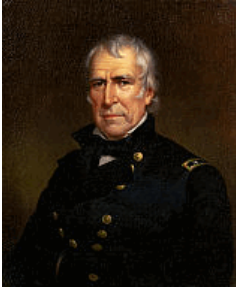
William Valentine Schevill, 1864 - 1951

Oil on artist board, c. 1910

National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution; gift of William E. Schevill

NPG.72.25

Sight: 82.9 x 72.4cm (32 5/8 x 28 1/2")



Zachary Taylor, 24 Nov 1784 - 9 Jul 1850

Throughout his career as a professional soldier, Zachary Taylor took no more than a passing interest in politics. But his victories at the battles of Palo Alto, Monterrey, and Buena Vista during the Mexican War changed all of that. In their wake, this "rough and ready" general became eminently ripe for elective office. Even if Taylor had wanted to, he perhaps could not have stopped the groundswell of determination within the Whig Party to elect him president in 1848.

Upon entering the White House, Taylor declared his intention to bring harmony to the Union. Yet his refusal to placate the South by allowing slavery in some of the new territories acquired during the Mexican War did quite the opposite. Within a year of Taylor's coming to office, the country seemed to be moving toward civil war. Only after his unexpected death in July 1850 did compromise on this divisive issue become possible.

James Reid Lambdin, 10 May 1807 - 31 Jan 1889

Oil on canvas, 1848

National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution; gift of Barry Bingham, Sr.

NPG.76.7

Sight: 77.2 x 64.8cm (30 3/8 x 25 1/2")



John Tyler, 29 Mar 1790 - 18 Jan 1862

In rallying to the cry of "Tippecanoe and Tyler, too" in 1840, voters had their eyes fixed on the Whig Party's White House contender referred to in the first half of that catchy slogan-William Henry Harrison, hero of the Battle of Tippecanoe. For most, his vice-presidential running mate, John Tyler, represented merely an afterthought. Within a month of his inauguration, however, Harrison was dead, and Tyler became the first vice president to be made president upon the death of his predecessor.

Tyler claimed the full powers of the presidency on taking office and thereby set a valuable precedent for future vice presidents who faced his situation. But Tyler's White House tenure was tempestuous. When his belief in the limited powers of federal government led him to veto his fellow Whigs' measure for reestablishing a national bank, he found himself deserted by his cabinet, formally read out of his party, and branded "His Accidency" by former allies.

George Peter Alexander Healy, 15 Jul 1813 - 24 Jun 1894

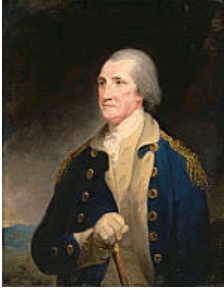
Oil on canvas, 1859

National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution; transfer from the Smithsonian American Art Museum; gift of Friends of the National Institute, 1859

NPG.70.23

Sight: 92.7 x 74.6cm (36 1/2 x 29 3/8")

'Adopt a Portrait' - Presidents & First Ladies



George Washington, 22 Feb 1732 - 14 Dec 1799

George Washington, appointed commander-in-chief of the Continental army, took command of a ragtag force of some 17,000 men in July 1775. He kept an army together for the next eight-and-a-half years-losing more battles than he won-but effectively ended the war with his victory at Yorktown in October 1781. Mission accomplished, Washington-a hero who could have been king-resigned his military commission before Congress on December 23, 1783, and retired to Mount Vernon. Here, the man all artists yearned to portray posed in his Continental army uniform for English artist Robert Edge Pine and wryly observed, "I am so hackneyed to the touches of the Painter's pencil, that I am now altogether at their beck, and sit like patience on a Monument."

Robert Edge Pine, c. 1720 - 1788
Oil on canvas, 1785
National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution
NPG.80.16
Sight: 90.2 x 69.9cm (35 1/2 x 27 1/2")



George Washington, 22 Feb 1732 - 14 Dec 1799

In 1784, the much-admired French sculptor Jean-Antoine Houdon agreed to execute a full-length marble statue of George Washington for the Virginia State Capitol in Richmond, and he traveled to America the following year to make a life mask of his subject. In addition to serving as an aid in completing the final marble statue, the mask became the basis for many plaster and terra-cotta busts of Washington, including this one. Houdon fashioned the first of these smaller likenesses while still in the United States, and before returning to France he presented it to Washington. The marble statue took some ten years to complete and still resides in the Virginia Capitol.

Jean-Antoine Houdon, 1741 - 1828
Plaster, c. 1786
National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution; gift of Joe L. & Barbara B. Albritton and Robert H. & Clarice Smith, and Gallery purchase
NPG.78.1
With Socle (Socle part of object): 55.9 x 33.7 x 24.8cm (22 x 13 1/4 x 9 3/4")

'Adopt a Portrait' - Presidents & First Ladies



George Washington, 22 Feb 1732 - 14 Dec 1799

This heroic sculpture depicts George Washington as a Roman emperor, a popular European tradition for representing political and military leaders. The portrait is based on a likeness modeled in Philadelphia in 1791 or 1792 by Italian sculptor Giuseppe Ceracchi, who came to the United States seeking the commission for a congressional monument to Washington (which was never made). A plaster cast of his life portrait of Washington was acquired in 1809 by Thomas Appleton, American consul in Livorno (Leghorn), Italy. A decade later, Italian sculptor Massimiliano Ravenna made several marble copies of the portrait for sale in the United States.

Copy after: Giuseppe Ceracchi, 4 July 1751 - 31 January 1801

Marble, c. 1819 copy after 1792 original

National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution

NPG.70.4

69.5cm (27 3/8"), Accurate



Woodrow Wilson, 28 Dec 1856 - 3 Feb 1924

Jo Davidson was a gifted sculptor and a charming raconteur. But when President Woodrow Wilson allowed Davidson a series of sittings in June 1916, the artist, declaring "it takes two to make a bust," had to prompt the president's interest in the portrait by having Wilson sit on the back of an armchair, feet on the seat, to force him to chat with the artist rather than read. One reviewer noted that this bust "is a perfect likeness. Davidson has got all the firmness of the face, without any of that sourness by which some artists unconsciously and mistakenly make people think they would not care to know President Wilson personally."

Jo Davidson, 30 Mar 1883 - 2 Jan 1952

Bronze, 1919

National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution; gift of Dr. Maury Leibovitz

NPG.77.323

39.8 x 19.3 x 23.3 cm (15 11/16 x 7 5/8 x 9 3/16"), without base

'Adopt a Portrait' - Presidents & First Ladies



Woodrow Wilson, 28 Dec 1856 - 3 Feb 1924

Elected to the White House after winning wide acclaim as the reforming governor of New Jersey, Woodrow Wilson left an impressive legacy of change that sought to curb abusive business practices and improve conditions for workers. But Wilson was not as successful in winning approval for his international idealism during World War I. Determined to make this conflict "the war to end all wars," he sought at its end to create a world order that put peace ahead of national self-interest. America's European allies, however, undermined these hopes, insisting on a postwar peace settlement that contained the seeds of another war. A far worse disappointment for Wilson himself was his failure to persuade his own country to join the League of Nations, an organization he had conceived as the best hope for avoiding future wars. Having suffered a stroke while campaigning for American entry into the league, he left office in 1921, broken in both health and spirit.

John Christen Johansen, 1876 - 1964

Oil on canvas, c. 1919

National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution; transfer from the Smithsonian American Art Museum; gift of an anonymous donor, 1926

NPG.65.84

76.5cm x 63cm (30 1/8" x 24 13/16"), Accurate
