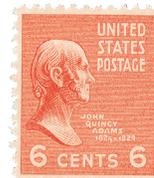


This Day in History... July 11, 1767

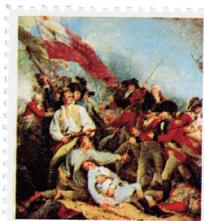
Birth of John Quincy Adams

John Quincy Adams was born on July 11, 1767, in the town of Braintree (present-day Quincy), Massachusetts. The son of America's second president, John Adams, and his politically active wife, Abigail, John Quincy Adams had a privileged childhood of top-notch education and travel.

When he was just six years old, Adams watched the Battle of Bunker Hill and the burning of Charleston with his mother. He learned about the Declaration of Independence from his father's letters to his mother while the document was still being written in Philadelphia. Between 1778 and 1782, Adams traveled with his father, who was serving as an American envoy to France and the Netherlands. During this time, he studied at the Netherlands' oldest university, the University of Leiden.



From the 1938 Prexies



Bunker Hill 1775 by Trumbull
US Bicentennial IOc

Stamp depicts American Major General Joseph Warren's mortal wounding at Bunker Hill.

At the age of 14, Adams began a three-year journey to Europe, where he served as secretary to lawyer and statesman Francis Dana. The trip included visits to Russia, Finland, Sweden, Denmark, and Germany, about which Adams published a travel report in 1804. During this time, Adams became fluent in French and Dutch, and learned some German and other European languages, all of which would eventually help him in his post as foreign ambassador.

In 1788, Adams enrolled in Harvard College, while apprenticing as a lawyer in Newburyport, Massachusetts. Admitted to the bar in 1791, Adams began a brief career as a lawyer in Boston.

In 1794, George Washington appointed Adams to the position of US minister to the Netherlands. His service lasted until 1796, when he was sent to Portugal. During his father's presidency, at Washington's request, Adams was made minister to Prussia from 1797 to 1801, where he negotiated a treaty of friendship and business with the Prussians.

Adams began his political career in 1802, while running unsuccessfully as a Federalist candidate for the US House of Representatives. The following year, he was elected as a Federalist representative of Massachusetts in the US Senate. He soon realized that his views differed from those of his party, and quickly found himself disliked by the majority for frequently voting on the Republican side. Adams held this position until 1808, when he left the Federalist Party and joined the Republicans.

After three years of teaching at Harvard, John Quincy Adams was once again called upon to serve as US minister, this time to Russia. He arrived in Russia in 1809 to meet Tsar Alexander I who was eager to help the US. With the outbreak of the War of 1812, the tsar offered to serve as a mediator between the US and England, which President Madison accepted.

In 1814, Adams met with British diplomats for negotiations, along with James A. Bayard, Sr., Henry Clay, Albert Gallatin, and Jonathan Russell. The treaty took months to complete because the British diplomats could not make direct negotiations and had to wait for orders from London.

Adams began his service as US secretary of State in 1817. Two years later, after lengthy negotiations with the Spanish minister, Adams successfully completed the Transcontinental Treaty, in which the Spanish retracted their claim on territory east of the Mississippi. This is considered one of Adams's greatest accomplishments, as numerous administrations before him had failed to gain the Florida territory.

Although instituted by President James Monroe, Adams primarily wrote the Monroe Doctrine while he served as secretary of State. The Doctrine called for an immediate end to European colonization in America. Completed in 1823, the Monroe Doctrine is the foundation on which

This Day in History... July 11, 1767 continued

current American foreign policy is based.

In the election of 1824, none of the candidates received a majority of votes, leaving the decision to the House of Representatives. The choice was between the top three candidates who had received the most votes (Jackson, who had received the most electoral votes, Adams, and William H. Crawford). As speaker of the House, Henry Clay, who did not like Jackson, voted for Adams, who won on the first ballot. Shortly after, Adams appointed Clay as secretary of State, which Jackson alleged was part of a corrupt bargain between the pair to keep him out of office. Jackson's hostility over this incident would prove troublesome for Adams's entire term of office.



Issued in 1939 as a rotary coil stamp.

Adams began his presidency on March 4, 1825, taking his Oath of Office not on the Bible, but rather on a book of laws. His ambitious plans for his term focused on modernization, including new roads, canals, a national university, and an astronomical observatory. Despite his high hopes for modernizing America, he was met with great opposition. Many critics believed he was arrogant because of his close defeat over Jackson in the 1824 election. Jackson's supporters in Congress, still outraged over the previous election, opposed the majority of Adams's proposals.

Despite the tremendous opposition he faced, some of Adams's proposals were adopted. A number of roads and canals were constructed, including the canal connecting the Great Lakes with the Ohio River System in Ohio and Indiana.

Another significant issue of Adams's presidency was protective tariffs. The Tariff of 1828 (also known as the Tariff of Abominations) increased the prices on European goods, resulting in fewer sales to America. In turn, the British drastically decreased purchases of American goods, especially cotton, which hurt the South. The consequences of this bill continued to mount until the passage of another tariff bill in 1832.

While still plagued by Jackson's supporters in Congress, Adams's foreign policy was one of his greatest strengths as President. During his term, a number of treaties were established with countries such as Denmark, Mexico, the Hanseatic League, multiple Scandinavian countries, Prussia, and Austria.

The election of 1828 was a scandalous one, filled with mudslinging and accusations from both Adams and Jackson. Jackson was still outraged over the election of 1824. In the end, Jackson won by a landslide. Adams's last

day in office was March 4, 1829.

After a brief retirement, Adams was voted as a National Republican and Whig to the House of Representatives. Some critics suggested that accepting this position would degrade the former President, but Adams replied that no person could be degraded in serving the people as a representative of Congress.

Adams's time in Congress, revered by some as the most significant part of his career, centered largely on the abolition of slavery and the repeal of "Gag Laws." Adams argued that the Gag Rules, which aimed to keep all petitions relating to slavery from being referred to a committee or printed, were in violation of the First Amendment. Finally, in 1844, his motion to repeal such gags was passed by a vote of 108 to 80.

On February 21, 1848, while waiting to address the House of Representatives, Adams suffered a cerebral hemorrhage. He died two days later, at the age of 80, in the company of his family while in the Speaker's Room at the Capitol Building in Washington, DC.



Adams stamp from the 1986 Presidential mini sheets

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