Adams, Abigail (1744–1818): The wife of President John Adams. Abigail had her own opinions about the course of the American Revolution, and urged her husband to take the needs and rights of women into consideration in the construction of the new government.

Adams, Charles Francis (1807–1886): Whig politician and foreign minister to Great Britain during the Civil War. Adams intervened in 1863 to prevent a British firm from selling laird rams to the Confederacy.

Adams, John (1735–1826): American revolutionary, statesman, and second president of the United States. One of the more radical patriots on the eve of the Revolution, Massachusetts-born Adams helped guide the Continental Congress toward a declaration of independence from Britain. From 1778 to 1788, Adams involved himself with international diplomacy, serving as minister to France, Britain and the Netherlands. After serving as Washington's vice president, he was elected president in his own right in 1796. Adams' administration suffered from Federalist infighting, international turmoil, and domestic uproar over the Alien and Sedition Acts, all of which contributed to his defeat in the election of 1800.

Adams, John Quincy (1767–1848): Son of second president John Adams, John Quincy Adams served as secretary of State under James Monroe before becoming the sixth president of the United States. A strong advocate of national finance and improvement, Adams faced opposition from states' rights advocates in the South and West. His controversial election—the allegedly “corrupt bargain” of 1824—and his lack of political acumen further hampered his presidential agenda.

Adams, Samuel (1722–1803): Boston revolutionary who organized Massachusetts’ committees of correspondence to help sustain opposition to British policies. A delegate to the First and Second Continental Congresses, Adams continued to play a key role throughout the revolutionary and early national periods, later serving as governor of his home state.

Addams, Jane (1860–1935): Addams founded Hull House, America's first settlement house, to help immigrants assimilate through education, counseling, and municipal reform efforts. She also advocated pacifism throughout her life, including during World War I, and won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1931.

Admiral de Grasse (1722–1788): French admiral whose fleet blocked British reinforcements, allowing Washington and Rochambeau to trap Cornwallis at Yorktown.

Aguinaldo, Emilio (1869–1964): Well-educated Filipino leader who first fought against Spain and later led the Philippine insurgency against United States colonial rule.


Alger, Horatio (1832–1899): The writer of dozens of novels for children, Alger popularized the notion of “rags to riches,” that by hard work and a bit of luck, even a poor boy could pull himself up into the middle class.

Allen, Ethan (1738–1789): Revolutionary war officer who, along with Benedict Arnold, fought British and Indian forces in frontier New York and Vermont.

Andros, Sir Edmund (1637–1714): Much loathed administrator of the Dominion of New England, which was created in 1686 to strengthen imperial control over the New England colonies. Andros established strict control, doing away with town meetings and popular assemblies and taxing colonists without their consent. When word of the Glorious Revolution in England reached the colonists, they promptly dispatched Andros back to England.

Anna, Santa (1794–1876): Mexican general, president and dictator, who opposed Texas' independence and later led the Mexican army in the war against the United States.

Anthony, Susan B. (1820–1906): Reformer and woman suffragist, Anthony, with long-time friend Elizabeth Cady Stanton, advocated for temperance and women's rights in New York State, established the abolitionist Women's Loyal League during the Civil War, and founded the National Woman Suffrage Association in 1869 to lobby for a constitutional amendment giving women the vote.

Arminius, Jacobus (1560–1609): Dutch theologian who rejected predestination, preaching that salvation could be attained through the acceptance of God's grace and was open to all, not just the elect.

Arnold, Benedict (1741–1801): Revolutionary war general turned traitor, who valiantly held off a British invasion of upstate New York at Lake Champlain, but later switched sides, plotting to sell out the Continental stronghold at West Point to the redcoats. His scheme was discovered and the disgraced general fled to British lines.

Arthur, Chester (1829–1886): Elected as Vice President in 1880, Arthur became President after Garfield's...
assassination. He was primarily known for his efforts at civil service reform, culminating in the Pendleton Act.

**Astor, John Jacob (1763–1848):** German-born fur trader and New York real estate speculator, who amassed an estate of $30 million by the time of his death.

**Attucks, Crispus (1723–1770):** Runaway slave and leader of the Boston protests that resulted in the “Boston Massacre,” in which Attucks was first to die.

**Audubon, John J. (1785–1851):** French-born naturalist and author of the beautifully illustrated *Birds of America.*

**Austin, Stephen (1793–1836):** Established the first major Anglo settlements in Texas under an agreement with the Mexican government. Though loyal to Mexico, Austin advocated for local Texans’ rights, particularly the right to bring slaves into the region. Briefly imprisoned by Santa Anna for inciting rebellion, Austin returned to Texas in 1836 to serve as secretary of state of the newly-independent republic until his death later that year.

**Bacon, Nathaniel (1647–1676):** Young Virginia planter who led a rebellion against Governor William Berkeley in 1676 to protest Berkeley’s refusal to protect frontier settlers from Indian attacks.

**Baltimore, Lord (1605–1675):** Established Maryland as a haven for Catholics. Baltimore unsuccessfully tried to reconstitute the English manorial system in the colonies and gave vast tracts of land to Catholic relatives, a policy that soon created tensions between the seaboard Catholic establishment and backcountry Protestant planters.

**Barton, Clara (1821–1912):** Massachusetts-born teacher and philanthropist who served as a nurse with the Union Army during the Civil War. After the war she became involved with the newly-formed International Red Cross, serving as the first president of the American branch from 1882 to 1904.

**Baruch, Bernard (1870–1965):** A stock speculator who was appointed to head the War Industries Board under President Wilson, Baruch went on to participate in the “Brain Trust” under Franklin D. Roosevelt’s New Deal administration. During World War II, he repeated his service as an economic adviser, advocating price controls and rent ceilings.

**Beecher, Henry Ward (1813–1887):** Preacher, reformer and abolitionist, Beecher was the son of famed evangelist Lyman Beecher and brother of author Harriet Beecher Stowe. In the 1850s, he helped raise money to support Stowe. In the 1850s, he helped raise money to support

**Bell, Alexander Graham (1847–1922):** The inventor of the telephone, patented in 1876.

**Berkeley, William (1606–1677):** Royal governor of Virginia, with brief interruptions, from 1641 until his death. Berkeley, a member of Virginia’s seaboard elite, drew the ire of backwater settlers for refusing to protect them against Indian attacks, eventually leading to Bacon’s Rebellion.

**Bethune, Mary McLeod (1875–1955):** The highest-ranking African-American in the Roosevelt administration, Bethune headed up the Office of Minority Affairs and was a leader of the unofficial “Black Cabinet,” which sought to apply New Deal benefits to blacks as well as whites.

**Biddle, Nicholas (1786–1844):** Banker, financier, and President of the Second Bank of the United States from 1822 until the bank’s charter expired in 1836.


**Black Hawk (1767–1838):** Sauk war chief who led the Sauk and Fox resistance against eviction under the Indian Removal Act in Illinois and Wisconsin. Brutally crushed by American forces, he surrendered in 1832 and lived out his days on a reservation in Iowa.

**Blackwell, Elizabeth (1821–1910):** America’s first female physician, Blackwell helped organize the U.S. Sanitary Commission during the Civil War to aid the Union War effort by training nurses, collecting medical supplies and equipping hospitals.

**Blaine, James G. (1830–1893):** American statesman who served in the House thirteen years (1863–1876), followed by a little over four years in the Senate (1876–1881). He served as Speaker of the House from 1869 to 1875. As Secretary of State under James A. Garfield and Chester A. Arthur, Blaine advocated a “Big Sister” policy of United States domination in Latin America.

**Bloomer, Amelia (1818–1894):** Reformer and women’s rights activist, who championed dress reform for women, wearing short skirts with Turkish trousers or “bloomers,” as a healthier and more comfortable alternative to the tight corsets and voluminous skirts popular with women of her day.
Bonaparte, Napoleon (1769–1821): French Emperor who waged a series of wars against his neighbors on the European continent from 1800 until his final defeat at Waterloo in 1815. In 1803, having failed to put down the Haitian rebellion, Napoleon relinquished France's remaining North American possessions by selling Louisiana Territory to the United States.

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Bonus Army (1932): Officially known as the Bonus Expeditionary Force (BEF), this rag-tag group of 20,000 veterans marched on Washington to demand immediate payment of bonuses earned during World War I. General Douglas MacArthur dispersed them with tear gas and bayonets.

Booth, John Wilkes (1838–1865): Maryland-born actor and Confederate sympathizer who assassinated Abraham Lincoln at Ford's Theater on April 14, 1865. Booth died of a gunshot wound a week later after refusing to surrender to federal troops, though it is unclear if the fatal bullet came from one of the soldiers or his own revolver.

Bourne, Randolph: See Horace Kallen.

Braddock, Edward (1695–1755): Hardheaded and imperious British general, whose detachment of British and colonial soldiers was routed by French and Indian forces at Fort Duquesne.

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Bradford, William (1590–1657): Erudite leader of the separatist Pilgrims who left England for Holland, and eventually sailed on the Mayflower to establish the first English colony in Massachusetts. His account of the colony’s founding, Of Plymouth Plantation, remains a classic of American literature and in indispensable historical source.

Brandeis, Louis D. (1856–1941): A progressive-minded confidant of Woodrow Wilson, Brandeis was the litigator behind Muller v. Oregon. In 1916, Wilson made him the first Jewish American to be appointed to the United States Supreme Court.

Brant, Joseph (1743–1807): Mohawk chief and Anglican convert, who sided with the British during the Revolutionary war, believing that only a British victory could halt American westward expansion.

Breckinridge, John C. (1821–1875): Vice president under James Buchanan, Breckinridge ran as the candidate of the Southern wing of the Democratic party in 1860, losing the election to Abraham Lincoln. A Kentucky slave owner, Breckinridge acknowledged the South’s right to secede but worked tirelessly to hammer out a compromise in the weeks before Lincoln’s inauguration. Once the Civil War began, he served as a Confederate General, briefly serving as Jefferson Davis’s Secretary of War in 1865.


Brock, Isaac (1769–1812): British general who helped stave off an American invasion of Upper Canada during the War of 1812. Brock successfully captured Detroit from American forces in August of 1812, but was killed in battle later that year.

Brooks, Preston S. (1819–1857): Fiery South Carolina congressman who senselessly caned Charles Sumner on the Senate floor in 1856. His violent temper flared in response to Sumner’s “Crime Against Kansas” speech, in which the Massachusetts senator threw bitter insults at the Southern slaveocracy, singling out Brooks’ South Carolina colleague, Senator Andrew Butler.

Brown, John (1800–1859): Radical abolitionist who launched an attack on a federal armory at Harper’s Ferry, Virginia in an effort to lead slaves in a violent uprising against their owners. Brown, who first took up arms against slavery during the Kansas civil War, was captured shortly after he launched his ill-conceived raid on the armory and sentenced to hang.

Bryan, William Jennings (1860–1925): A Democratic congressman from Nebraska who was an outspoken “free silver” advocate. His “Cross of Gold” speech at the Democratic convention in 1896 won him the party’s nomination. The Populists also backed him in a “fusion” ticket with the Democrats. Bryan’s eloquent advocacy for free silver and farmers’ interests earned him millions of devoted followers, but never quite enough to win the presidency, for which he ran three times (1896, 1900, 1908). Later in life, as Secretary of State he led the resistance to American entry into World War I and in 1925, an ardent Fundamentalist, he gained fame from some quarters—and great disdain from others—for joining the prosecution of high-school biology teacher John T. Scopes for teaching evolution.

Buchanan, James (1791–1868): Fifteenth president of the United States, Buchanan, a Pennsylvania-born Democrat, sympathized with the South and opposed any federal interference with its “peculiar institution.” As president, he supported Kansas’ Lecompton Constitution and opposed the Homestead Act, antagonizing Northern Democrats and hopelessly splitting the Democratic party.

Burger, Warren E. (1907–1995): Chief Justice of the Supreme Court from 1969 to 1986. Burger was responsible for bringing the Court somewhat back to the right after the Earl Warren years. He presided over major cases
involving abortion, affirmative action, the death penalty, and school desegregation.


Burnside, A. E. (1824–1881): Union general who replaced George B. McClellan as commander of the Army of the Potomac in 1862. He lost his command after a foolhardy attack on Lee’s forces at Fredericksburg, where more than ten thousand union soldiers were killed or wounded.

Burr, Aaron (1756–1836): Revolutionary War soldier and vice president under Thomas Jefferson, Burr is perhaps most famous for fatally wounding Alexander Hamilton in a duel in 1804. In 1806, Burr led a failed plot to separate the trans-Mississippi West from the United States. Narrowly acquitted of treason, Burr fled to France where he tried to convince Napoleon to ally with Britain against the U.S.

Bush, George H. W. (1924–): 41st president of the United States. A former congressman, diplomat, businessman, Republican party chairman, and director the CIA, Bush served for eight years as Reagan’s vice president before being elected President in 1988. As President, he oversaw the end of the Cold War and the revitalization of the American military in the Persian Gulf War. He faced a severe economic recession late in his term that damaged his popularity, and he lost his bid for reelection in 1992.

Bush, George W. (1946–): 43rd President of the United States. The son of former president George H. W. Bush and former governor of Texas, he emerged victorious from the contested election of 2000, where he lost the popular vote. As President, he pursued changes in social security, immigration, and education laws, and appointed two conservative justices to the Supreme Court. Launching and leading the “war on terror” in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, Bush was the architect of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Caboto, Giovanni (John Cabot) (c.1450–c.1498): Italian explorer sent by England’s King Henry VII to explore the northeastern coast of North America in 1497 and 1498.

Calhoun, John C. (1782–1850): Vice president under Andrew Jackson, Calhoun became a U.S. Senator from South Carolina after a public break with the administration. A fierce supporter of states’ rights, Calhoun advocated South Carolina’s position during the nullification crisis. In the 1840s and 1850s, he staunchly defended slavery, accusing free-state Northerners of conspiring to free the slaves.

Calvin, John (1509–1564): French Protestant reformer whose religious teachings formed the theological basis for New England Puritans, Scottish Presbyterians, French Huguenots and members of the Dutch Reformed Church. Calvin argued that humans were inherently weak and wicked, and believed in an all-knowing, all-powerful God, who predestined select individuals for salvation.

Canning, George (1770–1827): British foreign secretary who proposed what would later become the Monroe Doctrine—a declaration issued by James Monroe, warning European powers to refrain from acquiring new territories in the Americas.

Capone, Al (1899–1947): A notorious Chicago bootlegger and gangster during Prohibition, Capone evaded conviction for murder but served most of an eleven-year sentence for tax evasion.


Carter, James Earl (“Jimmy”), Jr. (1924–): 39th president of the United States. A peanut farmer and former governor of Georgia, he defeated Gerald Ford in 1976. As President, he arranged the Camp David Accords between Egypt and Israel in 1978 but saw his foreign policy legacy tarnished by the Iranian Revolution and hostage crisis in 1979. Domestically, he tried to rally the American spirit in the face of economic decline, but was unable to stop the rapid increase in inflation. After leaving the presidency, he achieved widespread respect as an elder statesman and won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2002.

Cartwright, Peter (1785–1872): Methodist revivalist who traversed the frontier from Tennessee to Illinois in the first decades of the nineteenth century, preaching against slavery and alcohol, and calling on sinners to repent.

Cass, Lewis (1782–1866): War veteran, diplomat and U.S. Senator, Cass ran as the Democratic candidate in the 1848 election, losing to Zachary Taylor. Cass is best known as the father of “popular sovereignty”, the notion that the sovereign people of a territory should themselves decide the issue of slavery.
Castro, Fidel (1926–): Cuban revolutionary who overthrew Batista dictatorship in 1958 and assumed control of the island country. Castro’s connections with the Soviet Union led to a cessation of diplomatic relations with the United States and such international affairs as the Bay of Pigs invasion and the Cuban Missile Crisis. A controversial figure, Castro oversaw his country through the end of the Cold War, when financial and military support from the Soviet Union dissipated, and through nearly a half-century of trade embargo with the United States. He remained the head of Cuba’s government until his retirement in February 2008.

Catt, Carrie Chapman (1859–1947): A leader of the revived women’s suffrage movement, Catt served as president of the National American Women’s Suffrage Association (NAWSA) from 1900–1904 and again from 1915–1920. She was also active internationally, helping women in other countries gain suffrage and advocating for international peace.

Champlain, Samuel de (c.1567–1635): French soldier and explorer, dubbed the “Father of New France” for establishing the city of Quebec and fighting alongside the Huron Indians to repel the Iroquois.

Charles II (1630–1685): Assumed the throne with the restoration of the monarchy in 1660. Charles sought to establish firm control over the colonies, ending the period of relative independence on the American mainland.

Chase, Salmon (1808–1873): New England-born abolitionist who, as Secretary of the Treasury, pushed Lincoln to take a tougher stance on slavery during the Civil War. In 1864, Radical Republicans unsuccessfully tried to replace Lincoln with Chase on the Republican ticket. Later that year, Lincoln appointed Chase as chief justice of the Supreme Court, where Chase served until his death.

Chase, Samuel (1741–1811): Federalist Supreme Court Justice who drew the ire of Jeffersonian Republicans for his biting criticism of Republican policies. In 1804, the House of Representatives brought charges of impeachment against him but failed to make the case that his unrestrained partisanship qualified as “high crimes and misdemeanors.” Acquitted by the Senate, he served on the court until his death.

Cheney, Richard (1941–): 46th Vice President of the United States. A former White House staffer, Congressman, and Secretary of Defense during the first Persian Gulf War, Cheney joined the Bush ticket in 2000 to add experience and a link to the first Bush presidency. As vice president, he was more active in policy and politics than his predecessors, playing decisive roles especially in matters of foreign policy.

Clark, George Rogers (1752–1818): American frontiersman who captured a series of British forts along the Ohio River during the Revolutionary war.

Clark, William (1770–1838): Joined Meriwether Lewis in leading the expedition of Louisiana territory from 1804–1806. After the Expedition, Clark played a key role in shaping America’s Indian policy, seeking to strengthen American relations with the Indians through trade.

Clay, Henry (1777–1852): Secretary of state and U.S. Senator from Kentucky, Clay was known as the “Great Compromiser”, helping to negotiate the Missouri Compromise in 1820, the Compromise Tariff of 1833 and the Compromise of 1850. As a National Republican, later Whig, Clay advocated a strong national agenda of internal improvements and protective tariffs, known as the American System.

Cleveland, Grover (1837–1908): President from 1885–1889 and again from 1893–1897, Cleveland’s first term was dominated by the issues of military pensions and tariff reforms. He lost the election of 1888, but he ran again and won in 1892. During his second term he faced one of the most serious economic depressions in the nation’s history but failed to enact policies to ease the crisis.

Clinton, DeWitt (1769–1828): Governor of New York state and promoter of the Erie Canal, which linked the Hudson River to the Great Lakes. “Clinton’s Big Ditch”, as the canal was called, transformed upstate New York into a center of industry and gave rise to the Midwestern cities of Cleveland, Detroit and Chicago.

Clinton, Hillary Rodham (1947–): Democratic Senator from New York who, in 2008, became the first highly competitive female candidate for president. A lawyer and political activist, Clinton was First Lady from 1993 to 2001, and then became the first former First Lady to serve in elected office when she was elected to the Senate. She tried unsuccessfully to win the Democratic nomination for President in 2008.

Clinton, William Jefferson (“Bill”) (1946–): 42nd President of the United States. A former Arkansas governor and founding member of the Democratic Leadership Council, Clinton promoted “third way” politics and distanced his policies from traditional Democratic programs. He signed the Welfare Reform Act in 1996 to fulfill a campaign promise to “end welfare as we know it.” Clinton was the first Democrat to be reelected since Franklin Roosevelt and first president to be impeached since Andrew Johnson.

Columbus, Christopher (1451–1506): Genoese explorer who stumbled upon the West Indies in 1492 while in search of a new water route to Asia. Columbus made three subsequent voyages across the Atlantic and briefly served
as a colonial administrator on the island of Hispaniola, present day Haiti.

Coolidge, Calvin (1872–1933): Vice President “Silent Cal” Coolidge became thirtieth President of the United States when Warren G. Harding died in office. A friend of business over labor, he served during the boom years from 1923 to 1929.

Cooper, James Fenimore (1789–1851): American novelist and a member of New York’s Knickerbocker Group, Cooper wrote adventure tales, including *The Last of the Mohicans*, which won acclaim on both sides of the Atlantic.

Copley, John Singleton (1738–1815): Massachusetts-born artist best known for his portraits of prominent colonial Americans, including Samuel Adams and Paul Revere. A loyalist during the Revolutionary war, Copley spent the rest of his life in London, painting portraits of British aristocrats and depicting scenes from English history.

Coronado, Francisco (1510–1554): Spanish explorer who ventured from Western Mexico through present-day Arizona and up to Kansas, in search of fabled golden cities.

Cortés, Hernán (1485–1547): Spanish conquistador who defeated the Aztec Empire and claimed Mexico for Spain.

Coughlin, Father Charles (1891–1979): A Catholic priest from Michigan who goaded 40 million radio listeners with his weekly anti-New Deal harangues. He was a well known opponent of Franklin D. Roosevelt’s New Deal policies.

Coxey, Jacob S. (1854–1951): A wealthy Ohio Populist who led a 500-strong “army” to Washington, D.C. in 1894 to demand a public works program to create jobs for the unemployed in the midst of a devastating four-year depression.

Creel, George (1876–1953): The young, outspoken, and tactless journalist who was tapped to head the Committee on Public Information, also known as the Creel Committee, during World War I.


Crittenden, John Jordan (1876–1863): U.S. Senator from Kentucky who introduced a compromise in 1860 in an effort to avoid a civil war. Crittenden proposed to amend the constitution, prohibiting slavery in territories north of 36° 30’ but expending federal protection to slavery in territories to the south.


Cromwell, Oliver (1599–1658): Puritan general who helped lead parliamentary forces during the English Civil War, and ruled England as Lord Protector from 1653 until his death in 1658.


Darwin, Charles (1809–1882): A British naturalist whose 1859 book *On the Origin of Species* outlined a theory of evolution based on natural selection, whereby the strongest individuals of a particular species survived and reproduced while weaker individuals died out. This theory had an enormous impact not just on science but on religion and society too, as people wrestled with the challenge evolutionary theory posed to Biblical notions of divine creation and applied the ideas of natural selection to human society.

Davis, Jefferson (1808–1889): U.S. Senator from Mississippi and president of the Confederate States of America. Jefferson Davis, a West Point graduate, staunchly defended slavery and Southern rights throughout his career, but initially opposed secession in 1860. As president of the Confederacy, Davis faced the formidable task of overcoming Southern localism in directing his war effort. After the war Davis was briefly imprisoned, but pardoned by Andrew Johnson in 1868.

Davis, John W. (1873–1955): The unsuccessful Democratic candidate for President in 1924. The wealthy, Wall-Street-connected Davis was no less conservative than his opponent, Calvin Coolidge.

Dean, John, III (1938–): White House counsel to Richard Nixon from 1970 to 1973 who became deeply involved in the Watergate break-in and cover-up. After pleading guilty to obstruction of justice charges, he became a key witness for the prosecution whose testimony was later corroborated by tape recordings.

Debs, Eugene V. (1855–1926): A tireless socialist leader who organized the American Railway Union in the Pullman Strike in 1894. Debs was later convicted under the First World War’s Espionage Act in 1918 and sentenced to ten years in a federal penitentiary. A frequent presidential
candidate on the Socialist Party ticket, in 1920 he won over 900,000 votes campaigning for president from his prison cell.

Deere, John (1804–1886): Inventor of the steel plow, which revolutionized farming in the Midwest, where fragile wooden plows had failed to break through the thick soil.

De La Warr, Lord (1577–1618): Colonial governor who imposed harsh military rule over Jamestown after taking over in 1610. A veteran of England’s brutal campaigns against the Irish, De La Warr applied harsh “Irish” tactics in his war against the Indians, sending troops to torch Indian villages and seize provisions. The colony of Delaware was named after him.

Delany, Martin (1812–1885): Black abolitionist and advocate of relocating freed blacks to Africa, even visiting West Africa’s Niger Valley in search of a suitable location in 1859.

de Lóme, Dupuy (1851–1904): The Spanish minister to the United States who found himself at the center of a scandal when his private letter maligning President McKinley was made public in 1898.

Dewey, George (1837–1917): Commander of the American Asiatic Squadron who boldly captured Manila Bay and the Philippines at the launch of the Spanish American War. His actions ultimately led to fierce debates about the propriety of American imperialism.

Dewey, John (1859–1952): A leader of the pragmatist movement of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Dewey applied the philosophy to education and social reform, advocating “learning by doing” as well as the application of knowledge to solving real life problems. He became an outspoken promoter of social and political reforms that broadened American democracy.

Dickinson, Emily (1830–1886): Massachusetts-born poet who, despite spending her life as a recluse, created a vivid inner world through her poetry, exploring themes of nature, love, death and immortality. Refusing to publish during her lifetime, she left behind nearly two thousand poems, which were published after her death.

Dix, Dorothea (1802–1887): New England teacher-author and champion of mental health reform, Dix assembled damning reports on insane asylums and petitioned the Massachusetts legislature to improve conditions.

Dole, Robert (1923–): Republican Senator from Kansas who ran unsuccessfully against Bill Clinton in 1996. Dole had previously been the Republican Vice Presidential nominee in 1976 and served as Senate Minority Leader during the 1980s and 1990s.

Douglas, Stephen A. (1813–1861): U.S. Senator and Democratic presidential candidate, Douglas played a key role in passing the Compromise of 1850, though he inadvertently reignited sectional tensions in 1854 by proposing the Kansas-Nebraska Act. In 1858, Douglas famously sparred with Abraham Lincoln in the Lincoln-Douglas debates, defeating Lincoln in the Senate race that year but losing to the Illinois republican in the presidential election of 1860.

Douglass, Frederick (1818–1895): Prominent back abolitionist, whose autobiography, Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, detailed his experience in bondage and his daring escape to the North. More practical than many of his fellow abolitionists, Douglass looked to politics to put an end to slavery. After the Civil War, he continued to write and speak on behalf of blacks, calling on the federal government to help ensure economic independence for newly freed slaves.

Dow, Neal S. (1804–1897): Nineteenth century temperance activist, dubbed the “Father of Prohibition” for his sponsorship of the Main Law of 1851, which prohibited the manufacture and sale of alcohol in the state.

Drake, Sir Francis (c.1542–1595): English sea captain who completed his circumnavigation of the globe in 1580, plundering Spanish ships and settlements along the way.

Du Bois, W. E. B. (1868–1963): A Harvard-educated leader in the fight for racial equality, Du Bois believed that liberal arts education would provide the “talented tenth” of African Americans with the ability to lift their race into full participation in society. From New York, where he was a founder of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), he relentlessly brought attention to racism in America and demanded legal and cultural change. During his long life he published many important books of history, sociology, and poetry and provided intellectual leadership to those advocating civil rights. One of his deepest convictions was the necessity of American blacks connecting their freedom struggle with African independence and he died as a resident of the new nation of Ghana.

Dulles, John Foster (1888–1959): American politician principally known for serving as Eisenhower’s Secretary of State. An ardent Cold Warrior, he drafted the “policy of boldness” designed to confront Soviet aggression with threat of “massive retaliation” via thermonuclear weapons, and supported American intervention in Vietnam.

Dunmore, Lord (c.1730–1809): Royal governor of Virginia who, in 1775, promised freedom to runaway slaves who joined the British army.

Edison, Thomas Alva (1847–1931): The inventor of, among other things, the electric light bulb, the
phonograph, the mimeograph, the moving picture, and a machine capable of taking X-rays. Ultimately he held more than 1,000 patents for his inventions.


Einstein, Albert (1879–1955): German-born scientist who immigrated to the United States in 1933 to escape the Nazis. He helped to persuade FDR to push ahead with preparations for developing the atomic bomb, but later ruefully declared that “annihilation of any life on earth has been brought within the range of technical possibilities.”

Eisenhower, Dwight D. (“Ike”) (1890–1969): Supreme Commander of U.S. Forces in Europe during World War II, Eisenhower the war hero later became the thirty-fourth president of the United States. During his two terms, from 1952 to 1960, Eisenhower presided over the economically prosperous 1950s. He was praised for his dignity and decency, though criticized for not being more assertive on civil rights.


Elizabeth I (1533–1603): Protestant Queen of England, whose forty-five year reign from 1558 to 1603 firmly secured the Anglican Church and inaugurated a period of maritime exploration and conquest. Never having married, she was dubbed the “Virgin Queen” by her contemporaries.


Fall, Albert B. (1861–1944): A scheming conservationist who served as Secretary of the Interior under Warren G. Harding. Fall was one of the key players in the notorious Teapot Dome scandal.

Falwell, Jerry (1933–2007): Christian evangelical reverend and radical right-wing traditionalist. In 1979, Falwell founded the Moral Majority, a political action committee dedicated to moral values and in opposition to feminism and gay rights.

Faulkner, William (1897–1962): Mississippi novelist who explored the South’s collective memory of racism and conservatism in his fictional chronicle of “Yoknapatawpha” County. His many modernist novels inspired a twentieth-century southern literary renaissance.

Field, Cyrus (1819–1892): Promoter of the first transatlantic cable which linked Ireland and Newfoundland in 1854. After the first cable went dead, Field lobbied for a heavier cable, which was finally laid in 1866.

Fillmore, Millard (1800–1874): New York Congressman and vice president under Taylor, Fillmore took over the presidency after Taylor’s death in 1850. Fillmore, a practical politician, threw his support behind the Compromise of 1850, ensuring its passage. He was passed over for the Whig nomination in 1852 when the party chose to select the legendary war hero, Winfield Scott.

Finney, Charles Grandison (1792–1875): One of the leading revival preachers during the Second Great Awakening. Finney presided over mass camp meetings throughout New York state, championing temperance and abolition, and urging women to play a greater role in religious life.

Fitzgerald, F. Scott (1896–1940): Minnesota-born and Princeton-educated novelist who captured the glamour and spiritual emptiness of the 1920s jazz age in novels such as This Side of Paradise and The Great Gatsby.

Ford, Gerald (“Jerry”) (1913–2006): 38th president of the United States. A long-serving Congressman from Michigan, Ford was appointed vice president when Spiro Agnew resigned in the fall of 1973. He succeeded to the presidency upon Nixon’s resignation in August 1974 and focused his brief administration on containing inflation and reviving public faith in the presidency. Ford was defeated narrowly by Jimmy Carter in 1976.


Franco, Francisco (1892–1975): Spanish general who became head of state after his fascistic troops prevailed over the republican Loyalists in the Spanish Civil War. He remained head of the Spanish state until his death in 1975.
Franklin, Benjamin (1706–1790): American printer, inventor, statesman, and revolutionary. Franklin first established himself in Philadelphia as a leading newspaper printer, inventor, and author of Poor Richard’s Almanac. Franklin later became a leading revolutionary and signatory of the Declaration of Independence. During the Revolutionary War, Franklin served as commissioner to France, securing the nation’s support for the American cause.

Frémont, John C. (1813–1890): Explorer who helped overthrow the Mexican government in California after the outbreak of war with Mexico. He later ran for president as the Republican nominee in 1856, losing the election to Democratic candidate James Buchanan.

Freud, Sigmund (1856–1939): An Austrian physician who led the way in developing the field of psychoanalysis. One of the most influential minds of the twentieth century, Freud was known for his argument that sexual repression was responsible for a variety of nervous and emotional ills.


Fulton, Robert (1765–1815): Pennsylvania-born painter-engineer, who constructed the first operating steam boat, the Clermont, in 1807.

Gallatin, Albert (1761–1849): Secretary of the Treasury from 1801–1813 under Thomas Jefferson and James Madison. Gallatin sought to balance the federal budget and reduce the national debt.

Garfield, James (1831–1881): Elected to the presidency in 1880, Garfield served as president for only a few months before being assassinated by Charles Guiteau, who claimed to have killed him because he was denied a job through patronage when Garfield was elected. The assassination fueled efforts to reform the spoils system.

Garrison, William Lloyd (1805–1879): Ardent abolitionist and publisher of The Liberator, an antislavery newspaper that advocated the immediate emancipation of slaves. In 1833, Garrison founded the American Anti-Slavery Society, the largest abolitionist organization in the North, counting more than 250,000 members by 1838.

Genêt, Edmond (1763–1834): Representative of the French Republic who in 1793 tried to recruit Americans to invade Spanish and British territories in blatant disregard of Washington’s Neutrality Proclamation.

George III (1738–1820): British monarch during the run-up to the American Revolution, George III contributed to the imperial crisis with his dogged insistence on asserting Britain’s power over her colonial possessions.

George, David Lloyd (1863–1945): Prime Minister of Great Britain during World War I. Along with Woodrow Wilson, Italy’s Vittorio Orlando, and France’s George Clemenceau, he formed part of the inner clique at the Paris Peace Conference known as the “Big Four.”


Gompers, Samuel (1850–1924): The president of the American Federation of Labor nearly every year from its founding in 1886 until his death in 1924. Gompers was no foe of capitalism but wanted employers to offer workers a fair deal by paying high wages and providing job security.

Gorbachev, Mikhail (1931–): Last leader of the Soviet Union. Gorbachev assumed control in 1985 and ushered in a period of reforms known as glasnost and perestroika. On four occasions, he met U.S. president Ronald Reagan to negotiate arms reduction treaties and other measures to thaw the Cold War. In 1991, after surviving a failed military coup against him, he dissolved the Soviet Union and disbanded the Communist Party.

Gould, Jay (1836–1892): A railroad magnate who was involved in the Black Friday scandal in 1869 and later gained control of many of the nation’s largest railroads, including the Union Pacific. He became revered and hated for his ability to manipulate railroad stocks for his personal profit and for his ardent resistance to organized labor.

Grant, Ulysses S. (1822–1885): Ohio-born Union general and eighteenth president of the United States. During the war, Grant won Lincoln’s confidence for his boldness and his ability to stomach the steep casualties that victory required. First assigned to the West, Grant attained Union victories at Fort Donelson, Shiloh and Vicksburg, seizing control of the Mississippi River and splitting the South in two. After taking command of the Union Army, he fought Lee in a series of bloody battles in Virginia, culminating in Lee’s surrender at Appomattox. As President, he took a hard line against the South, but economic turmoil and waning support for Reconstruction undermined his efforts.
Greeley, Horace (1811–1872): A New York newspaper editor, Greeley ran for President in 1872 under the mantles of the Liberal Republican and Democratic Parties.

Greene, Nathanael (1742–1786): General in command of the Continental army in the Carolina campaign of 1781, the “Fighting Quaker” successfully cleared most of Georgia and South Carolina of British troops despite loosing a string of minor battles.

Grenville, George (1712–1770): Grenville, George was a British shopper and political figure who served as President of the Second Continental Congress. He was a staunch supporter of the British crown and helped to negotiate the Treaty of Paris in 1783, which ended the American Revolutionary War.

Hancock, John (1737–1793): Hancock was a prominent Boston smuggler and politician who served as the president of the Second Continental Congress. He was also a significant figure in the American Revolution, serving as the commander-in-chief of the Continental Army.

Hamilton, Alexander (1757–1804): Hamilton was a key figure in the American Revolutionary War and later played a significant role in the founding of the United States. As the nation’s first treasury secretary, he advocated for strong measures to establish a national bank and to control inflation.

Hannum, Marcus Alonzo (1837–1904): Hannum was a prominent journalist and publisher who founded the New York Herald and Hearst, a newspaper magnate who started by inheriting his father’s San Francisco Examiner and ultimately owned newspapers and magazines published in cities across the United States. He was largely responsible for the spread of sensationalist journalism. The Hearst Corporation still owns dozens of newspapers, magazines, and other media outlets in the United States and around the world.

Henry VIII (1491–1547): Henry VIII was the Tudor monarch who launched the Protestant Reformation in England when he broke away from the Catholic Church in order to divorce his first wife, Catherine of Aragon.

Hemingway, Ernest (1899–1961): Novelist and author of The Sun Also Rises and A Farewell to Arms. Hemingway was a well-known American writer who rose to fame during the 1920s and 1930s. His work often centered on themes of war, death, and the human condition.

Hewitson, Thomas (1848–1940): Hewitson was a British explorer and author who is best known for his explorations of the Arctic and Antarctic regions. He was also a significant figure in the field of meteorology.

Hiawatha (dates unknown): Along with Deganawidah, legendary founder of the Iroquois Confederacy, which united the Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga and Seneca tribes in the late sixteenth century.
Hitler, Adolf (1889–1945): Nazi dictator of Germany from 1933 to 1945, Hitler was the mastermind behind the Holocaust. His rapacious quest for power provoked World War II.

Ho Chi Minh (1890–1969): Vietnamese revolutionary nationalist leader. Beginning in 1941, Ho organized Vietnamese opposition to foreign occupation, first against the Japanese and then, after World War II, against the French. His Viet Minh forces were victorious against French colonialists in 1954, after which Ho became the leader of North Vietnam. He led the war to unify the country in the face of increased military opposition from the United States.


Hooker, Joseph (“Fighting Joe”) (1814–1879): Union army general, known as “Fighting Joe” for his bold attacks on Confederate lines during McClellan's peninsular campaign. He took command of the Army of the Potomac from A.E. Burnside in 1863, a post he lost just six months later after he led a failed attack on Lee's forces at Chancellorsville.

Hoover, Herbert C. (1874–1964): A Quaker-humanitarian tapped to head the Food Administration during World War I. During the 1920s, he became the Secretary of Commerce, promoting economic modernization and responsible leadership by business to hold off further expansion of government power. Elected to the presidency in 1928 as a Republican, he soon faced the crisis of the Great Depression, which he tried to combat with the same voluntary efforts and restrained government action that had been his hallmark over the previous decade. He lost the election of 1932 to Democrat Franklin Roosevelt, who advocated a more activist role for the federal government.

Hopkins, Harry L. (1890–1946): A former New York social worker, Hopkins came to be one of the major architects of the New Deal, heading up the Federal Emergency Relief Administration and Works Progress Administration, and serving as a personal confidant to President Roosevelt.

Houston, Sam (1793–1863): President of the Republic of Texas and U.S. Senator, Houston led Texas to independence in 1836 as commander in chief of the Texas army. As President of the Republic, Houston unsuccessfully sought annexation into the United States. Once Texas officially joined the Union in 1845, Houston was elected to the U.S. Senate, later returning to serve as Governor of Texas until 1861, when he was removed from office for refusing to take an oath of loyalty to the Confederacy.

Howard, Oliver O. (1830–1909): Union General put in charge of the Freedmen's Bureau during Reconstruction. Howard later founded and served as president of Howard University, an institution aimed at educating African American students.

Howe, Elias (1819–1867): Massachusetts-born inventor of the sewing machine. Unable to convince American manufacturers to adopt his invention, he briefly moved to England before returning to the United States to find his sewing machine popularized by Isaac Singer. Howe won a patent infringement suit against Singer in 1854 and continued to produce sewing machines until his death.

Howe, William (1729–1814): British general who, despite victories on the battle field, failed to deal a crushing blow to Washington's Continental army. By attacking Philadelphia instead of reinforcing General Burgoyne at Saratoga, Howe also inadvertently contributed to that crucial American victory.

Hudson, Henry (c.1565–1611): English explorer who ventured into New York Bay and up the Hudson River for the Dutch in 1609 in search of a Northwest Passage across the continent.


Hughes, Charles Evans (1862–1948): United States Supreme Court Justice and unsuccessful Republican candidate for president in 1916 against Woodrow Wilson. He almost won, carrying most of the populous Northeast and Midwest, but Wilson won enough working-class and pro-reform votes to squeak through.


Hull, Cordell (1871–1955): Secretary of State under President Roosevelt and chief architect of the low-tariff reciprocal trade policy of the New Dealers. Foreign trade increased appreciably under all the trade pacts that he negotiated. One of the chief architects behind the United Nations, he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1945 for “co-initiating the United Nations.”

Hussein, Saddam (1937–2006): Iraqi dictator who led the Ba'ath party in a coup in 1968 and ruled Iraq until the U.S. invasion. He inaugurated hostilities with neighboring Iran in 1980, leading to the protracted and bloody Iran-Iraq War. Hussein invaded Kuwait in 1990, prompting a broad-based military operation led by the United
States to liberate the country. After that war, Hussein retained power under strict sanctions and no-fly demilitarized zones throughout the 1990s, but he stymied international atomic weapons inspectors. After his fall in 2003, he went into hiding but was ultimately captured, tried, and executed by the Iraqi government.

Hutchinson, Anne (c.1591–1643): Antinomian religious dissenter brought to trial for heresy in Massachusetts Bay after arguing that she need not follow God's laws or man's, and claiming direct revelation from God. Banished from the Puritan colony, Hutchinson moved to Rhode Island and later New York, where she and her family were killed by Indians.

Hutchinson, Thomas (1711–1780): Royal governor of Massachusetts during the run-up to the Revolution, Hutchinson misjudged colonial zeal during the Tea Act controversy and insisted that East India Company ships unload in Boston Harbor, thereby prompting the Boston Tea Party.

Isabella of Castile (1451–1504): Spanish monarch, along with her husband Ferdinand of Aragon, funded Christopher Columbus’ voyage across the Atlantic in 1492, leading to his discovery of the West Indies.

Jackson, Andrew (1767–1845): War hero, congressman and sixth president of the United States. A Democrat, Jackson ushered in a new era in American politics, advocating white manhood suffrage and cementing party loyalties through the spoils system. As president, he dismantled the Bank of the United States, asserted federal supremacy in the nullification crisis, and oversaw the harsh policy of Indian removal in the South.

Jackson, Thomas J. ("Stonewall") (1824–1863): Daring Confederate general and brilliant tactician, who routinely took men on long marches to outflank Union lines. He led his troops to victory at the First Battle of Bull Run (Manassas) and protected Virginia’s Shenandoah Valley from Northern invasion in the first year of the Civil War. Joining Lee at Richmond, he helped halt the Union’s Peninsula Campaign in 1862. Jackson was killed by friendly fire at the battle of the Chancellorville in May of 1863.

James I (1566–1625): Formerly James VI of Scotland, he became James I of England at the death of Elizabeth I. James I supported overseas colonization, granting a charter to the Virginia Company in 1606 for a settlement in the New World. He also cracked down on both Catholics and Puritan Separatists, prompting the latter to flee to Holland and, later, to North America.


Jay, John (1745–1829): Leading American revolutionary and diplomat, who negotiated the Treaty of Paris and later, the much-criticized Jay Treaty of 1794, which averted war with Britain but failed to address key American grievances. Jay also served as the first chief justice of the Supreme Court from 1789–1795, a post he left to become governor of New York.

Jefferson, Thomas (1743–1826): Author of the Declaration of Independence, ambassador to France, and second president of the United States. As one of the leaders of the Democratic-Republican party, Jefferson advocated a limited role for the national government, particularly in the area of finance. As President, however, Jefferson oversaw significant expansion of the federal state through the purchase of Louisiana Territory and the enactment of the Embargo of 1807.

Jiang Jieshi (1887–1975): Leader of Chinese Nationalists, also known as Chang Kai-shek. He was defeated by Mao Zedong’s communist revolutionaries in 1949 and was forced to flee to the island of Taiwan, where, with the support of the United States, he became president of the Republic of China.

Johnson, Andrew (1808–1875): Seventeenth president of the United States, North Carolina-born Johnson assumed the presidency after Lincoln’s assassination in 1865. Much to the disgust of Radical Republicans in Congress, Johnson, a Democrat, took a conciliatory approach to the South during Reconstruction, granting sweeping pardons to former Confederates and supporting Southern Black Codes against freedmen. In 1868, Johnson was impeached by the House of Representatives for breaching the Tenure of Office Act. Acquitted by the Senate, he remained in office to serve out his term.

Johnson, Anthony (?–1670): African slave who purchased his freedom and himself became a slave holder in Virginia, serving a testament to the relative fluidity of early colonial society.

Johnson, Hiram W. (1866–1945): Elected Republican Governor of California in 1910, Johnson oversaw numerous progressive reforms, including the passage of woman suffrage at the state level. In 1917 he entered the Senate, where he proved an isolationist in foreign affairs. He is famous for declaring that “the first casualty when war comes, is truth.”

Johnson, Lyndon B. (1908–1973): 36th President of the United States, 1963 to 1969. A Texas Democrat who rose to tremendous power in the Senate during the New Deal, Johnson was tapped to be John F. Kennedy’s running mate in 1960. Chosen largely to help solidify support for the Democratic ticket in the anti-Catholic South, he assumed the presidency after Kennedy’s assassination in 1963. As president, he was responsible for liberal programs such as the Great Society, War on Poverty, and civil
rights legislation, as well as the escalation of the Vietnam War. After a series challenges from within his party, he chose not to run for reelection in 1968.


Kennedy, John F. (1917–1963): 35th President of the United States, 1961 to 1963. A Navy hero from World War II and son of a prominent Boston businessman, Kennedy won election to the House of Representatives in 1946 and to the Senate in 1952. In 1960, he narrowly defeated incumbent vice-president Richard Nixon in 1960 to become the youngest person ever elected president. As President, he launched New Frontier programs and urged legislation to improve civil rights. He assumed blame for the Bay of Pigs invasion and was credited for impressively handling Cuban Missile Crisis. Kennedy was assassinated in Dallas, Texas, on November 22, 1963, by Lee Harvey Oswald.

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Khrushchev, Nikita (1894–1971): Premier of the Soviet Union from 1958 to 1964. Khrushchev was a Communist Party official who emerged from the power struggle after Stalin’s death in 1953 to lead the USSR. As Soviet premier, he notably renounced Stalin’s brutality in 1956, the same year that he crushed a pro-Western uprising in Hungary. In 1958, he issued an ultimatum for Western evacuation of Berlin, from which he backed down a year later. Khrushchev defended Soviet-style economic planning in the Kitchen Debate with American Vice President Richard Nixon in 1959, and attempted to send missiles to Cuba in 1962 but backed down when confronted by John F. Kennedy during the Cuban Missile Crisis.

King, Martin Luther, Jr. (1929–1968): Civil rights leader and Baptist preacher who rose to prominence with the Montgomery Bus Boycott in 1955 and founded the Southern Christian Leadership Conference in 1957. King was an outspoken advocate for black rights throughout the 1960s, most famously during the 1963 March on Washington where he delivered the “I Have a Dream” speech. He was assassinated in Memphis in 1968 while supporting a sanitation workers’ strike.

Kissinger, Henry A. (1923–): National Security Advisor and Secretary of State during the Nixon Administration. He was responsible for negotiating an end to the Yom Kippur War as well as the Treaty of Paris that led to a cease-fire in Vietnam in 1973.

La Follette, Robert M. (“Fighting Bob”) (1855–1925): Hailing from Wisconsin, “Fighting Bob” La Follette was one of the most militant of the progressive Republican leaders. He served in the Senate and in the Wisconsin governor’s seat, and was a perennial contender for the presidency, keeping the spirit of progressivism alive into the 1920s.

Lafayette, Marquis de (1757–1834): French nobleman who served as major general in the colonial army during the American Revolution and aided the newly-independent colonies in securing French support.
La Salle, Robert de (1643–1687): French explorer who led an expedition down the Mississippi River in the 1680s.

Las Casas, Bartolomé de (1474–1566): Reform-minded Spanish missionary who worked to abolish the *encomienda* system and documented the mistreatment of Indians in the Spanish colonies.

Lee, Richard Henry (1733–1794): Virginia planter and revolutionary, who served as a member of the Continental Congress. He first introduced the motion asserting America's independence from Britain, later supplanted by Thomas Jefferson's more formal and rhetorically-moving declaration. Lee went on to become the first U.S. Senator from Virginia under the new constitution.

Lee, Robert E. (1807–1870): Confederate general in command of first, the Army of the Potomac, and later, the entire Confederate army during the Civil War. A bold tactician, Lee kept his army on the offensive throughout most of the war, skillfully outmaneuvering Union armies in key battles. Lee's fortunes reversed after his defeat at Gettysburg, though he continued to battle Union forces throughout Virginia until his surrender at Appomattox. After the war Lee was indicted for treason but never charged, and he actively worked to bring about a peaceful reunion of North and South.

Lewinsky, Monica (1973–): White House intern with whom President Bill Clinton had an extra-marital affair in the late 1990s. Lewinsky was the center of a protracted scandal during the second Clinton term.

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Louis XIV (1638–1715): Long reigning French monarch who took a keen interest in colonization, sending French explorers throughout North America, establishing outposts in present day Canada and Louisiana, and launching France to global preeminence. Louis XIV oversaw the construction of the magnificent palace at Versailles, from where he ruled until his death.

Louis XVI (1754–1793): King of France from 1774 to 1792, he, along with Queen Marie Antoinette, was beheaded during the French Revolution.

L'ouverture, Toussaint (1743–1803): Haitian revolutionary who led a successful slave uprising and helped establish an independent Haiti in 1797. In 1802, L'ouverture was captured by a French force sent to reestablish control over the island. Shipped back to France and imprisoned for treason, he succumbed to pneumonia in 1803.

Lloyd, Henry Cabot (1850–1924): A prominent republican senator from Massachusetts, Lodge was chair of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and a persistent thorn in President Wilson's internationalist side when he crusaded against the League of Nations.

Lloyd, Henry Demarest (1847–1903): A muckraking journalist and reform leader whose book, *Wealth Against Commonwealth* (1894), excoriated the sins of the Standard Oil Company. Lloyd became one of the leading intellectuals behind the progressive movement, influencing such figures as Clarence Darrow, Florence Kelley, and John Dewey.

Long, Huey P. (“Kingfish”) (1893–1935): Louisiana Governor, later Senator, whose anti-New Deal “Share Our Wealth” program promised to make “Every Man a King”—that is, until he was gunned down in 1935.


Luther, Martin (1483–1546): German friar who touched off the Protestant Reformation when he nailed a list of grievances against the Catholic Church to the door of Wittenberg's cathedral in 1517.
MacArthur, Douglas (1880–1964): The flamboyant, vain, and brilliant American commander in the Philippines and mastermind of the “leapfrogging” strategy for bypassing strongly defended Japanese islands during World War II. MacArthur would go on to command American troops in the Korean War until he was relieved of his duties by President Harry S. Truman for insubordination in 1951.

Macdonough, Thomas (1783–1825): American naval officer who secured a decisive victory over a British fleet at the Battle of Plattsburg, halting the British invasion of New York.

Madison, James (1751–1836): Principal author of the Constitution, co-author of *The Federalist*, and fourth president of the United States. A leading advocate of a strong national government in the 1780s, Madison later joined Thomas Jefferson and the Democratic-Republicans in advocating a more limited role for the federal state. As president, Madison inherited the conflict over trade with Britain and France, which eventually pushed him to declare war on Britain in 1812.

Mahan, Alfred Thayer (1840–1914): American naval officer and author whose book of 1890, *The Influence of Sea Power upon History, 1660–1783*, impressed a generation of imperialists around the world with its argument that control of the sea was the key to world dominance.


Malinche (Doña Marina) (c1501–1550): Indian slave who served as an interpreter for Hernán Cortés on his conquest of the Aztecs. Malinche later married one of Cortés's soldiers, who took her with him back to Spain.

Mandela, Nelson (1918–): Anti-apartheid activist and leader of the African National Congress. After spending 27 years in prison in South Africa, Mandela became the first black president of South Africa in 1994, dramatically signaling the end of racial apartheid in the country.

Mann, Horace (1796–1859): Secretary of the Massachusetts Board of Education and a champion of public education, advocating more and better school houses, longer terms, better pay for teachers, and an expanded curriculum.

Marshall, George C. (1880–1959): Former World War II general who became secretary of state under President Harry Truman. He was the originator of the concept of the Marshall Plan to provide aid to reconstruct Western Europe in 1947.

Marshall, John (1755–1835): Chief Justice of the Supreme Court from 1801 until his death in 1835, Marshall strengthened the role of the courts by establishing the principle of judicial review. During his tenure, the court also expanded the powers of the federal government through a series of decisions that established federal supremacy over the states.

Mary II: See William III.

Massasoit (c.1590–1661): Wampanoag chieftain who signed a peace treaty with Plymouth Bay settlers in 1621 and helped them celebrate the first Thanksgiving.

Maximilian (1832–1867): Archduke of Austria, he became emperor of Mexico in 1864, installed by French Emperor Napoleon III. The well-intentioned but hapless Maximilian saw his government collapse in 1867 when the French withdrew their support under pressure from the United States.

McCain, John (1936–): Republican Senator from Arizona who lost the 2008 Presidential election to Democrat Barack Obama. A former Navy fighter pilot who spent five years as a prisoner of war in North Vietnam, McCain was known as a maverick senator, frequently departing from his own party to cosponsor moderate legislation with Democratic allies. Among his most notable legislative achievements were changes in campaign finance and efforts to reform immigration laws.

McCarthy, Eugene (1916–2005): Liberal anti-war senator from Minnesota who rallied a large youth movement behind his presidential campaign in 1968. Challenging sitting president Johnson in the New Hampshire primary, McCarthy captured 41 percent of the vote and helped ensure that Johnson would quit the race.

McCarthy, Joseph (1908–1957): Senator from Wisconsin who rose to infamy by accusing the State Department of employing communists. McCarthy conducted high-profile red-baiting hearings that damaged countless careers before he finally over-reached in 1954 when he went after the U.S. Army. Following the Army-McCarthy hearings, he was censured by Senate and died of alcoholism shortly thereafter.

McClellan, George B. (1826–1885): Union general in command of the Army of the Potomac from 1861 to 1862, McClellan led the failed Peninsular Campaign in 1861 and later fought Lee to a virtual stalemate at Antietam.
He boosted the morale and confidence of his troops, but tested Lincoln's patience by routinely hesitating to send men into battle. In 1864, McClellan ran against Lincoln as the Democratic nominee, campaigning against emancipation and the harsh treatment of the South while repudiating the antiewar stance of the Copperheads.

McCormick, Cyrus (1809–1885): Inventor of the McCormick mower-reaper, a horse-drawn contraption that fueled the development of large-scale agriculture in the trans-Allegheny West.

McGovern, George (1922–): Liberal senator from North Dakota who lost a landslide election to Richard Nixon in 1972. He eventually lost his senate seat in the conservative revolution that swept Ronald Reagan into the White House in 1980.

McKinley, William (1843–1901): A former Republican Congressman from Ohio who won the presidency in 1896 and again in 1900. He was pro-business, conservative, and unwilling to trouble the waters by voicing unpopular opinions.

McNamara, Robert S. (1916–): Businessman turned Secretary of Defense from 1961 to 1968. McNamara was the author of the “flexible response” doctrine, which created a variety of military options and avoided a stark choice between nuclear warfare and none at all. As Defense Secretary, he was the chief architect of the Vietnam War.

Meade, George G. (1815–1872): Union general who led the Army of the Potomac to victory against Lee’s forces at Gettysburg. Meade, unable to stomach the immense human costs of his victory, refused to pursue Lee back across the Potomac, and thus lost his post to Ulysses S. Grant shortly thereafter.

Melville, Herman (1819–1891): New York author who spent his youth as a whaler on the high seas, an experience which no doubt inspired his epic novel, Moby Dick.

Menczen, H. L. (1880-1956): The “Sage of Baltimore,” he established himself as the nation’s leading critic and literary stylist in the early twentieth century. Championing liberal, modernist causes, he led the assault on William Jennings Bryan’s fundamentalist crusade at the Scopes “Monkey Trial.”

Meredith, James (1933–): In 1962 became the first black American to attend the University of Mississippi after being blocked several times by segregationist politicians. An icon of the Civil Rights Movement, Meredith receded from public view following his brave steps toward educational integration.

Metacom (King Philip) (c.1638–1676): Wampanoag chief who led a brutal campaign against Puritan settlements in New England between 1675 and 1676. Though he himself was eventually captured and killed, his wife and son sold into slavery, his assault halted New England’s westward expansion for several decades.


Moctezuma (1466–1520): Last of the Aztec rulers, who saw his powerful empire crumble under the force of the Spanish invasion, led by Hernán Cortés.

Monroe, James (1758–1831): Revolutionary war soldier, statesman, and fifth president of the United States. As president, he supported protective tariffs and a national bank, but maintained a Jeffersonian opposition to federally-funded internal improvements. Though Monroe sought to transcend partisanship, even undertaking a goodwill tour of the states in 1817, his presidency was rocked by bitter partisan and sectional conflicts.


Morgan, J. P. (1837–1913): A banker who became a national symbol of the power of the banks during the Gilded Age, he helped all the big businesses of the era consolidate their holdings and ultimately bought Carnegie’s steel empire for more than $400 million in 1900. He also helped to bail the U.S. government out of a currency crunch in 1895 when he organized a loan to the government of $65 million in gold. In 1902 his Northern Securities Company became one of the first targets of Teddy Roosevelt’s trustbusting crusades, but Roosevelt’s 1907 decision to allow a steel merger under Morgan’s watch showed the limits of Roosevelt’s efforts.

Morse, Samuel F. B. (1791–1872): Inventor of the telegraph and the telegraphic code that bears his name. He led the effort to connect Washington and Baltimore by telegraph and transmitted the first long-distance message—“What hath God wrought”—in May of 1844.

Mott, Lucretia (1793–1880): Prominent Quaker and abolitionist, Mott became a champion for women’s rights after she and her fellow female delegates were not seated at the London antislavery convention of 1840. She, along with Elizabeth Cady Stanton, held the first Woman’s Rights Convention at Seneca Falls in 1848.

Muir, John (1838–1914): This noted naturalist split with conservationists like Gifford Pinchot by trying to protect natural “temples” like the Hetch Hetchy Valley from development. In 1892 he founded the Sierra Club, which is now one of the most influential conservation organizations in the United States. His writings and philosophy...
shaped the formation of the modern environmental movement.

Mussolini, Benito (1883–1945): Fascist leader of Italy from 1922 to 1943. Mussolini launched Italy into World War II on the side of Axis Powers and became a close ally of Adolf Hitler.

Napoleon III (1808–1873): Nephew of Napoleon I and president of the Second Republic of France, Napoleon III declared himself emperor of the French in 1852. Hoping to capitalize on America's preoccupation with the Civil War, he sent a French army to occupy Mexico in 1863, installing Austrian archduke Maximilian as emperor of Mexico. Under threat from a newly-unified United States, he withdrew his support for his puppet in 1867.

Nasser, Gamal Abdel (1918–1970): President of Egypt from 1956 to 1970. Nasser was known for his pan-Arab nationalism and opposition to colonialism, specifically in his decision to nationalize the Suez Canal in 1956. Although his reputation was tarnished somewhat by his country's military failure against Israel in the 6 Days War of 1967, he remained a popular leader in Egypt and throughout the Arab world.

Ngo Dinh Diem (1901–1963): First president of South Vietnam, where he took power following the Geneva Accords in 1954. Diem was propped up by the United States until he was overthrown and assassinated by a coup in 1963.

Niebuhr, Reinhold (1892–1971): A liberal Protestant theologian whose teachings and writings aimed to relate Christian faith to the realities of modern politics. A socialist and pacifist as a young man, he came out of World War II committed to the doctrine of the "just war" and the necessity of resisting dark forces of evil like Hitler and Stalin, while remaining outspoken in defense of progressive social causes.

Nimitz, Chester (1885–1966): U.S. Navy admiral who was Commander-in-chief of the Pacific Naval Forces for the United States and its allies during World War II. He strategized the important victories in the Battles of Midway and the Coral Sea.


North, Lord (1732–1792): Tory prime minister and pliant aide to George III from 1770 to 1782. North’s ineffective leadership and dogged insistence on colonial subordination contributed to the American Revolution.

O’Connor, Sandra Day (1930–): The first female justice on the Supreme Court. A graduate of Stanford Law School, she served as an attorney, jurist, and politician in Arizona before being appointed to the Supreme Court by President Ronald Reagan in 1981. On the bench, she was known as a moderate, frequently casting crucial swing votes in important cases. She retired in 2005.

Obama, Barack (1962–): 44th President of the United States, and first African American elected to that office. A lawyer and community organizer in Chicago, Obama served in the Illinois State Senate before being elected to the U.S. Senate in 2004. After a protracted primary election campaign against Senator Hillary Clinton, Obama sealed the Democratic party’s nomination and defeated Senator John McCain on November 4, 2008.

Oglethorpe, James (1696–1785): Soldier-statesman and leading founder of Georgia. A champion of prison reform, Oglethorpe established Georgia as a haven for debtors seeking to avoid imprisonment. During the War of Jenkins’s Ear, Oglethorpe successfully led his colonists in battle, repelling a Spanish attack on British territory.

Olmsted, Frederick Law (1822–1903): Journalist and leading American landscape architect. His landmark designs include New York’s Central Park, Boston’s “Emerald Necklace,” and the campuses of Stanford University and the University of California at Berkeley.

Olney, Richard (1835–1917): The pugnacious successor to James G. Blaine as Secretary of State, serving from 1895 to 1897, Olney stirred up conflict with Great Britain during the Venezuelan Crisis of 1895–1896. He also insisted on the protection of American lives and property and on reparations for losses incurred during violent disturbances in Cuba, China, and Turkey.

Oswald, Lee Harvey (1939–1963): Ex-Marine and communist sympathizer who assassinated John F. Kennedy in Dallas, Texas, on November 22, 1963. Oswald was murdered two days later as he was being transferred from one jail to another.

Paine, Thomas (1737–1809): British-born pamphleteer and author of *Common Sense*, a fiery tract that laid out the case for American independence. Later an ardent supporter of the French Revolution, Paine became increasingly radical in his views, publishing the anti-clerical *The Age of Reason* in 1794, which cost him the support of his American allies.

Palin, Sarah (1964–): Republican Vice-Presidential candidate with John McCain in the 2008 election, the second woman to run for Vice President of a major party and the first Republican. Palin served on the city council and as mayor of her hometown of Wasilla, Alaska from 1996–2002 and then in 2006 was elected governor of the state. Relatively unknown nationally, Palin’s social conservatism made her popular among the evangelical wing of the Republican Party who had been distrustful of McCain.

Palmer, A. Mitchell (1872–1936): A zealous prosecutor and anti-red, Palmer served as Attorney General during the post-World War I “red scare,” when thousands of foreign nationals were deported because of suspected subversive activities.

Parkman, Francis (1823–1893): Early American historian who wrote a series of volumes on the imperial struggle between Britain and North America.

Parks, Rosa (1913–2005): NAACP leader in Montgomery, Alabama, who inaugurated that city’s famous bus boycott in 1955 by refusing to give up her seat on a public bus to a white passenger. Parks became a living symbol of the spirit of the Civil Rights Movement and the cause of racial equality throughout her long life.

Pelosi, Nancy (1940–): Democratic Congresswoman from California who became, in 2007, the first female Speaker of the House of Representatives. Representing a liberal district, Pelosi as Speaker sought to strike a more moderate, yet still Democratic, tone.

Penn, William (1644–1718): Prominent Quaker activist who founded Pennsylvania as a haven for fellow Quakers in 1681. He established friendly relations with neighboring Indian tribes and attracted a wide array of settlers to his colony with promises of economic opportunity, and ethnic and religious toleration.

Perkins, Frances (1882–1965): The first woman cabinet member and Secretary of Labor under Roosevelt, Frances Perkins helped draw labor into the New Deal coalition.

Perot, H. Ross (1930–): Texas billionaire businessman who ran populist campaigns for the presidency in 1992 and 1996. In 1992, he garnered 19 percent of the popular vote, probably throwing the election to Bill Clinton. Perot’s campaigns represented anti-establishment sentiment and desires for “common sense” governance.

Perry, Matthew C. (1794–1858): American Naval Officer sent by Millard Fillmore to negotiate a trade deal with Japan. Backed by an impressive naval fleet, Perry showered Japanese negotiators with lavish gifts. Combining military bravado with diplomatic finesse, he negotiated the landmark Treaty of Kanagawa in 1854, ending Japan’s two centuries of isolation.

Perry, Oliver Hazard (1785–1819): American naval officer whose decisive victory over a British fleet on Lake Erie during the War of 1812 reinvigorated American morale and paved the way for General William Henry Harrison’s victory at the Battle of the Thames in 1813.


Pickett, George (1825–1875): Confederate general who led the bold but ill-fated charge against union forces at Gettysburg.

Pierce, Franklin (1804–1869): Pro-Southern Democrat from New Hampshire who became the fourteenth president of the United States on a platform of territorial expansion. As president, he tried to provoke war with Spain and seize Cuba, a plan he quickly abandoned once it was made public. Pierce emphatically supported the Compromise of 1850, vigorously enforced the Fugitive Slave Law, and threw his support behind the Kansas-Nebraska Bill.

Pinchot, Gifford (1865–1946): A friend of Theodore Roosevelt, Pinchot was the head of the federal Division of Forestry and a noted conservationist who wanted to protect, but also use, the nation’s natural resources, like forests and rivers. In 1922 he won election to the Pennsylvania governor’s mansion, on the Republican ticket.

Pitt, William (1708–1778): British parliamentarian who rose to prominence during the French and Indian War as the brilliant tactician behind Britain’s victory over France.

Pizarro, Francisco (c.1475–1541): Spanish conquistador who crushed the Incas in 1532 and founded the city of Lima, Peru.

Pocahontas (c.1595–1617): Daughter of Chief Powhatan, Pocahontas “saved” Captain John Smith in a dramatic mock execution and served as a mediator between Indians and the colonists. In 1614, she married John Rolfe and sailed with him to England, where she was greeted as a princess, and where she passed away shortly before her planned return to the colonies.

Polk, James K. (1795–1849): Eleventh president of the United States. A North Carolina Democrat, largely unknown on the national stage, Polk campaigned on a platform of American expansion, advocating the annexation of Texas and the “reoccupation” of Oregon. As President, Polk provoked war with Mexico, adding vast tracts of land to the United States but provoking a bitter sectional conflict over the expansion of slavery into newly acquired territories.

Pollock, Jackson (1912–1956): New York-based painter who became the father of abstract expressionism with his spontaneous “action paintings.”

Pontiac (c.1720–1769): Ottawa chief who led an uprising against the British in the wake of the French and Indian war. Initially routing British forces at Detroit, Pontiac and his men succumbed after British troops distributed smallpox infected blankets among the Indians.

Pope, John (1822–1892): Union general whose army suffered a crushing defeat at the hands of Robert E. Lee in the Second Battle of Bull Run (Manassas).

Powhatan (c.1540s–1618): Chief of the Powhatan Indians and father of Pocahontas. As a show of force, Powhatan staged the kidnapping and mock execution of Captain John Smith in 1607. He later led the Powhatan Indians in the first Anglo-Powhatan War, negotiating a tenuous peace in 1614.

Presley, Elvis (1935–1977): Memphis-born singer whose youth, voice, and sex appeal helped popularize rock ‘n’ roll in the mid-1950s. Commonly known using only his first name, Elvis was an icon of popular culture, in both music and film.

Pulitzer, Joseph (1847–1911): A publisher whose newspapers, including the New York World, became a symbol of the sensationalist journalism of the late nineteenth century.

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Raleigh, Sir Walter (c.1552–1618): English courtier and adventurer who sponsored the failed settlements of North Carolina’s Roanoke Island in 1585 and 1587. Once a favorite of Elizabeth I, Raleigh fell out of favor with the Virgin Queen after secretly marrying one of her maids of honour. He continued his colonial pursuits until 1618, when he was executed for treason.

Reagan, Ronald (1911–2004): 40th president of the United States. A former actor and California governor, he was elected in 1980 with a pronounced conservative mandate to fix the American economy by scaling back taxes and the role of government in business. Reagan was a staunch Cold Warrior whose massive defense spending added stress to the Soviet Union’s military budget and may ultimately have contributed to the end of the Cold War.

Reed, Thomas B. (1839–1902): The Republican Congressman from Maine who became Speaker of the House of Representatives in 1889, then led the Billion-dollar Congress like a “Czar,” making sure that his agenda dictated the business of the legislature.

Reels, Hiram (c.1827–1901): First African-American Senator, elected in 1870 to the Mississippi seat previously occupied by Jefferson Davis. Born to free black parents in North Carolina, Revels worked as a minister throughout the South before entering politics. After serving for just one year, he returned to Mississippi to head a college for African American males.


Rochambeau, Comte de (1725–1807): General in command of French forces during the American Revolution, he fought alongside George Washington at Yorktown.

Rockefeller, John D. (1839–1937): The founder of the Standard Oil Company, he developed the technique of horizontal integration and compelled other oil companies to join the Standard Oil “trust.” He became the richest person in the world and the U.S.’s first billionaire. He later became known for his philanthropic support of universities and medical research.

Rolle, John (1585–1622): English colonist whose marriage to Pocahontas in 1614 sealed the peace of the First Anglo-Powhatan War.

Roosevelt, Eleanor (1884–1962): The wife of Franklin Roosevelt, Eleanor Roosevelt was the most active First Lady the United States had ever seen, and was known for her devotion to the impoverished and oppressed.

Roosevelt, Franklin Delano (1882–1945): The third president of the United States, Franklin Roosevelt was the only American president to be elected to four terms of office. He first won the presidency against Republican incumbent Herbert Hoover in 1932 in the depths of the Great Depression and was credited with having developed a program, called the New Deal, that shepherded the nation out of crisis. When World War II broke out in Europe, he steered the United States into the war, which in the end proved more effective than the New Deal in helping the nation recover from difficult economic times. His gallant struggle against polio and his enormous...
talents as a politician helped make him a beloved leader for a dozen difficult years in the nation’s history.

Roosevelt, Theodore (“Teddy”) (1858–1919): Rough Rider “Teddy” Roosevelt was a cowboy-hero of the Cuban campaign who rode his popularity into the governorship of New York state and then into the Vice President’s office. He became president when McKinley was assassinated in 1901. He won reelection as a Republican in 1904 and then lost to Democrat Woodrow Wilson in 1912, when he tried for another term as the Progressive Party candidate.

Saarinen, Eero (1910-1961): Finnish-American architect and industrial designer who perfected his sleek, machine-like building style in such modernist landmarks as New York’s TWA Flight Center and St. Louis’s Gateway Arch.


Sacco, Nicola (1891–1927) and Vanzetti, Bartolomeo (1888–1927): Italian anarchists convicted in 1921 of the murder of a laborer and put down, the rebellion raised the specter of mob rule, precipitating calls for a stronger national government.

Sheffield, Lord (1725–1831): Parliamentarian who persuaded Britain to take a hard line in negotiations with the newly independent United States, closing off American trade with the West Indies, and continuing to enforce navigation laws. His approach prompted many Americans to call for a stronger central government, culminating in the 1787 Philadelphia convention.

Sherman, William Tecumseh (1820–1891): Union general who led the destructive march through Georgia in 1864. A pioneer practitioner of “total war”, he advocated bringing war to the civilian population to undercut morale and destroy supplies destined for Confederate troops.


Smith, Albert E. (1873–1944): Colorful New York governor who was the unsuccessful Democratic candidate for president in 1928. His Catholicism and “wet” stance on Prohibition made him a controversial figure, even in the traditionally loyal Democratic South. Although Smith lost the electoral vote to a Hoover landslide, his appeal to urban voters foreshadowed the Northern urban and Southern coalition that would gain Franklin Roosevelt the White House in 1932.

Smith, Captain John (1580–1631): English adventurer who took control of Jamestown in 1608 and ensured the
survival of the colony by directing gold-hungry colonists toward more productive tasks. Smith also established ties with the Powhatan Indians through the Chief’s daughter, Pocahontas, who had “saved” Smith from a mock execution the previous year.

**Smith, Joseph (1805–1844):** Founder of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (Mormons), the young Smith gained a following after an angel directed him to a set of golden plates which, when deciphered, became the Book of Mormon. Smith’s communal, authoritarian church and his advocacy of plural marriage antagonized his neighbors in Ohio, Missouri, and finally Illinois, where he was murdered by a mob in 1844.

**Spock, Benjamin (1903–1998):** Pediatrician and author of *The Common Sense Book of Baby and Child Care*, which instructed parents on modern child-rearing, replacing traditional means of passing along such knowledge. “Spock” is often said to have been the bible of the baby boomer generation.

**Stalin, Joseph (1878–1953):** Soviet dictator from Lenin’s death in 1922 until his own death in 1953. He led the Soviet Union through World War II and shaped Soviet policies in the early years of the Cold War. Stalin secured protective “satellite states” in Eastern Europe at Yalta Conference and pushed Soviet scientists to develop atomic weapons, escalating an arms race with the United States.

**Stanton, Edwin M. (1814–1869):** Secretary of War under Presidents Lincoln and Johnson, Stanton advocated for stronger measures against the South during Reconstruction, particularly after widespread violence against African Americans erupted in the region. In 1868, Johnson removed Stanton in violation of the 1867 Tenure of Office Act, giving pretense for Radical Republicans in the House to impeach him.

**Stanton, Elizabeth Cady (1815–1902):** Abolitionist and woman suffragist, Stanton organized the first Woman’s Rights Convention near her home in Seneca Falls, New York in 1848. After the Civil War, Stanton urged Congress to include women in the fourteenth and fifteenth amendments, despite urgings from Frederick Douglass to let freedmen have their hour. In 1869, she, along with Susan B. Anthony, founded the National Woman Suffrage Association to lobby for a constitutional amendment granting women the vote.

**Steuben, Baron von (1730–1794):** German-born inspector general of the Continental army, who helped train the novice colonial militia in the art of warfare.

**Stevens, Thaddeus (1792–1868):** Pennsylvania congressman who led the Radical Republican faction in the House of Representatives during and after the Civil War, advocating for abolition and later, the extension of civil rights to freed blacks. He also called for land redistribution as a means to break the power of the planter elite and provide African Americans with the economic means to sustain their newfound independence.

**Stone, Lucy (1818–1893):** Abolitionist and women’s rights activist, who kept her maiden name after marriage inspiring other women—“Lucy Stoners”—to follow her example. Though she campaigned to include women in the fourteenth and fifteenth amendments, she did not join Stanton and Anthony in denouncing the amendments when it became clear the changes would not be made. In 1869 she founded the American Woman Suffrage Association, which lobbied for suffrage primarily at the state level.

**Stowe, Harriet Beecher (1811–1896):** Connecticut-born abolitionist and author of best-selling *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, a novel that awakened millions of Northerners to the cruelty of slavery.

**Strong, Josiah (1847–1916):** Protestant clergyman and author of *Our Country: Its Possible Future and Its Present Crisis* (1885). He touted the superiority of Anglo-Saxon civilization and helped summon Americans to spread their religion abroad.

**Stuyvesant, Peter (c.1610–1672):** Director general of Dutch New Netherland from 1645 until the colony fell to the British in 1664.

**Sumner, Charles (1811–1874):** Massachusetts senator and abolitionist, Sumner opposed the extension of slavery, speaking out passionately on the civil war in Kansas. Sumner is best known for the caning he received at the hands of Preston Brooks on the Senate floor in 1856. After his recovery he returned to the Senate, leading the Radical Republican coalition in the Senate against Andrew Johnson during Reconstruction.


**Talleyrand, Charles Maurice de (1754–1838):** French foreign minister whose attempts to solicit bribes from American envoys in the infamous XYZ Affair prompted widespread calls for war with France.

**Taney, Roger B. (1777–1864):** Chief Justice of the Supreme Court from 1836–1864, Taney overturned Marshall’s strict emphasis on contract rights, ruling in favor of community interest in the famous Charles River Bridge case in 1837. Maryland-born Taney also presided over the landmark Dred Scott decision, which ruled that Congress had no power to restrict slavery in the territories.

**Taylor, Frederick W. (1856–1915):** A prominent inventor and engineer who developed “scientific management,” a
system of shop-floor organization that stressed efficient, highly supervised labor management and production methods. His methods revolutionized manufacturing across the industrialized world.

Taylor, Zachary (1784–1850): Military general and twelfth U.S. president, Taylor emerged as a popular war hero after defeating Santa Anna’s forces at Buena Vista in the war with Mexico. As president, Taylor, a Louisiana slave owner, sought to avoid a sectional confrontation over slavery, though he opposed the Compromise of 1850.

Tecumseh (c.1768–1813): Accomplished Shawnee war leader, Tecumseh sought to establish a confederacy of Indian tribes east of the Mississippi. He opposed individual tribes’ selling of land to the United States, arguing the land belonged to all the Native peoples. After 1811, Tecumseh allied with the British, fighting fiercely against the United States until his death in 1813.

Tenskwatawa (“the Prophet”) (1775–1836): Shawnee religious leader, also known as “the Prophet,” who led a spiritual revival, emphasizing Indian unity and cultural renewal and urging Indians to limit contact with Americans. The Prophet lost his following in 1811, after he and a small army of followers were defeated by William Henry Harrison at the Battle of Tippecanoe.

Thatcher, Margaret (1925–): Conservative Prime Minister of Britain from 1979 to 1990. As an ideological partner to President Ronald Reagan, Thatcher enacted economic liberalization reforms and attempted to check the power of labor unions in Britain. She led a successful British military operation in the Falkland Islands war in 1982.

Thomas, Clarence (1948–): The second black American to serve on the supreme court, conservative justice who adheres to constitutional interpretation based on doctrine of originalism. Appointed by George H. W. Bush in 1991 to replace Thurgood Marshall, Thomas was the subject of controversial nomination proceedings when he was accused of sexual harassment by a former colleague.

Thoreau, Henry David (1817–1862): American transcendentalist and author of Walden: Or Life in the Woods. A committed idealist and abolitionist, he advocated civil disobedience, spending a night in jail for refusing to pay a poll tax to a government that supported slavery.

Tompkins, Sally (1833–1916): Established an infirmary for wounded Confederate soldiers in Richmond, Virginia. When Confederate hospitals were brought under military control, Jefferson Davis commissioned Tompkins as an officer with the rank of captain, making her the first female military officer in American history.

Townsend, Francis E. (1867–1960): A retired physician who had lost his savings in the Great Depression and promoted a plan, popular with senior citizens, to pay every person over sixty $200 a month, provided that the money was spent within the month. One estimate had the scheme costing one-half of the national income.

Townshend, Charles (“Champagne Charley”) (1725–1767): British prime minister whose ill-conceived duties on the colonies, the Townshend Acts, sparked fierce protests in the colonies and escalated the imperial conflict.


Truman, Harry S. (1884–1972): Vice President under Franklin Roosevelt in 1945, Truman assumed the office of the presidency in April of that year, when Roosevelt died from a brain hemorrhage while vacationing in Warm Springs, Georgia. Truman won another term in his own right in an historically close election in 1948 against Republican Thomas Dewey. As president, he chose to use nuclear weapons against Japan at Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Trumbull, John (1756–1843): Connecticut-born painter who, like many of his contemporaries, traveled to England to pursue his artistic ambitions. Trumbull was best known for his depictions of key events in the American Revolution, including the signing of the Declaration of Independence.

Truth, Sojourner (1799–1883): Black abolitionist, preacher, and women’s rights activist, who worked tirelessly on behalf of slaves and freed blacks.

Tubman, Harriet (c.1820–1913): Famed conductor on the Underground Railroad, Harriet Tubman helped rescue more than three hundred slaves from bondage. Born into slavery, Tubman fled to the North in 1849 but returned to the South nineteen times to guide fellow bondsman to freedom. After the Civil War, she worked to give freedmen access to education in North Carolina.

Turner, Frederick Jackson (1861–1932): Author of the famous “frontier thesis,” in which Turner argued that the taming of the West had shaped the nation’s character. The experience of molding wilderness into civilization, he argued, encouraged Americans’ characteristic embrace of individualism and democracy. Although Turner is now criticized for, among other things, entirely ignoring the role of Native Americans in the West, his argument remains a keystone of thought about the West in American history.

Turner, Nat (1800–1831): Black slave who led an ill-fated rebellion in Virginia in 1831. The deeply-religious Turner sought a violent overthrow to the sinful institution of slavery. Before they were apprehended, Turner and his
followers murdered more than sixty whites, sending a shockwave throughout the South.

Twain, Mark (1835–1910): A satirist and writer, Twain is best known for his books *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876) and *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1884). His work critiqued American politics and society, especially the racial and economic injustice that he saw in the South and West. Twain traveled abroad extensively and his work was read and loved around the world.

Tyler, John (1790–1862): Tenth president of the United States. A Whig in name only, Tyler opposed central tenets of the Whig platform, including tariffs, internal improvements, and a national bank.

Vallandigham, Clement L. (1820–1871): Democratic congressman from Ohio who led the Copperhead faction of the party in opposition to the Civil War. Convicted by a military tribunal for his treasonous outbursts, Vallandigham was banished to the South though he later made his way to Canada and made an unsuccessful bid for the Ohio governorship.

Van Buren, Martin (1782–1862): Jacksonian Democrat who became the eighth president of the United States after serving as vice president during Andrew Jackson’s second term. As president, Van Buren presided over the “hard times” wrought by the Panic of 1837, clinging to Jackson’s monetary policies and rejecting federal intervention in the economy.

Vanderbilt, Cornelius (1794–1877): A railroad magnate who made millions in steam-boating before beginning a business consolidating railroads and eliminating competition in the industry.

Vanzetti, Bartolomeo: See Nicola Sacco.


Vesey, Denmark (c.1767–1822): Free black who orchestrated an aborted slave uprising in Charleston, South Carolina in 1822. Vesey’s plan was uncovered before he could put it in motion, and he and thirty-four accomplices were put to death.

Villa, Francisco (“Pancho”) (1877–1923): A combination of bandit and Robin Hood, Villa emerged as a chief rival to Mexican President Carranza and tried to provoke the United States into war by going on a killing spree north of the border in New Mexico. President Wilson dispatched General John J. “Black Jack” Pershing in an attempt to capture Villa, but the expedition ended in defeat for American forces.

Wade, Benjamin (1800–1878): A founder of the Republican Party and Senator from Ohio from 1851 to 1869. A passionate abolitionist, he pressured President Lincoln throughout the Civil War to pursue harsher policies toward the South. He co-sponsored the Wade-Davis Bill in 1864, which required 50 percent of the registered voters of a southern state to take a loyalty oath as a precondition for restoration to the Union, rather than the 10 percent proposed by Lincoln. As President Pro Tem of the Senate in 1868, he was next in line for the presidency should Andrew Johnson be impeached, and the prospect that someone of such radical views might become president may have contributed to the failure of the effort to impeach Johnson.

Wagner, Robert F. (1877–1953): A Democratic Senator from New York State from 1927–1949, Wagner was responsible for the passage of some of the most important legislation enacted through the New Deal. The National Labor Relations Act of 1935 was popularly known as the Wagner Act in honor of the Senator. He also played a major role in the National Industrial Recovery Act of 1933 and the Wagner-Steagall Housing Act of 1937.

Wallace, George C. (1919–1998): Southern populist and segregationist. As governor of Alabama, he famously defended his state’s policies of racial segregation. He ran for president several times as a Democrat, but achieved his greatest influence when he ran as a third-party candidate in 1968, winning five states.

Warhol, Andy (1928–1987): Pioneering “Pop” artist known for his iconic portraits of Cold War America’s material objects, including soup cans and soda bottles.

Washington, Booker T. (1856–1915): As head of the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama, Washington advocated for vocational education for African-Americans so that they could gain economic security. Believing that southern whites were not yet ready for social equality, he instead concentrated on gaining economic power for blacks without directly challenging the southern racial order.

Washington, George (1732–1799): Revolutionary war general and first president of the United States. A Virginia-born planter, Washington established himself as a military hero during the French and Indian War. He served as commander in chief of the Continental Army during the War of Independence, securing key victories at Saratoga and Yorktown. Unanimously elected president under the new national Constitution in 1788, Washington served two terms, focusing primarily on strengthening the national government, establishing a sound financial system, and maintaining American neutrality amidst the escalating European conflict.

Watson, Tom (1856–1922): A Populist leader who initially advocated interracial political mobilization but later became a symbol of the party’s shift to white supremacy.

Wayne, “Mad Anthony” (1745–1796): Revolutionary war soldier and commander in chief of the U.S. Army from 1792–1796, he secured the Treaty of Greenville after soundly defeating the Miami Confederacy at the Battle of Fallen Timbers.

Webster, Daniel (1782–1852): Lawyer, congressman and secretary of state, Webster teamed up with Henry Clay in the Bank War against Andrew Jackson in 1832. Hoping to avoid sectional conflict, Webster opposed the annexation of Texas but later urged the North to support the Compromise of 1850.

Weld, Theodore Dwight (1803–1895): Fervent abolitionist and author of American Slavery as It Is, an antislavery tract that dramatized the horrors of slave life.

Weyler, “Butcher” (1838–1930): Valeriano “Butcher” Weyler was a Spanish general who arrived in Cuba in 1896 to put down the insurrection. He became notorious for herding many civilians into barbed-wire reconcentration camps.

Wheatley, Phillis (c.1753–1840): African-American poet who overcame the barriers of slavery to publish two collections of her poems. As a young girl, Wheatley lived in Boston, and was later taken to England where she found a publisher willing to distribute her work.

Whitefield, George (1714–1770): Iterant English preacher whose rousing sermons throughout the American colonies drew vast audiences and sparked a wave of religious conversion, the First Great Awakening. Whitefield’s emotionalism distinguished him from traditional, “Old Light,” ministers who embraced a more reasoned, stoic approach to religious practice.

Whitman, Walt (1819–1892): Brooklyn-born poet and author of Leaves of Grass, a collection of poems, written largely in free verse, which exuberantly celebrated America’s democratic spirit.

Whitney, Eli (1765–1825): Great American inventor, best known for his Cotton Gin, which revolutionized the Southern economy. Whitney also pioneered the use of interchangeable parts in the production of muskets.

Wilberforce, William (1759–1833): British politician who championed the abolition of the slave trade, and later slavery itself. An evangelical Christian, Wilberforce delivered rousing speeches on the floor of the Commons, galvanizing public support for the abolitionist cause.

Wilkie, Wendell L. (1892–1944): Known as the “rich man’s Roosevelt,” Willkie was a novice politician and Republican businessman who lost to Franklin Roosevelt in the 1940 presidential campaign. Although Willkie won more votes than any previous GOP candidate, Roosevelt still beat him by a landslide.

Wilkinson, James (1757–1825): Military governor of the Louisiana Territory who conspired with Aaron Burr to separate from the United States and ally with Spanish-controlled areas of the Americas.

Willard, Frances E. (1839–1898): This pious leader of the Woman’s Christian Temperance Union wished to eliminate the sale of alcohol and thereby “make the world more homelike.” Her ecumenical “do everything” reform sensibility encouraged some women to take the leap toward more radical causes like woman suffrage, while allowing more conservative women to stick comfortably with temperance work.

William III (1650–1702) and Mary II (1662–1694): Dutch-born monarch and his English-born wife, daughter of King James II, installed to the British throne during the Glorious Revolution of 1689. William and Mary relaxed control over the American colonies, inaugurating a period of “salutary neglect” that lasted until the French and Indian War.

Williams, Roger (c.1603–1683): Salem minister who advocated a complete break from the Church of England and criticized the Massachusetts Bay colony for unlawfully taking land from the Indians. Banished for his heresies, he established a small community in present-day Rhode Island, later acquiring a charter for the colony from England.

Wilmot, David (1814–1865): Pennsylvania congressman best known for his “Wilmot Proviso”—a failed amendment that would have prohibited slavery from any of the
territories acquired from Mexico. He later went on to help organize the Free Soil and Republican parties, supporting Abraham Lincoln in 1860.

**Winthrop, John (1588–1649):** First governor of Massachusetts Bay Colony. An able administrator and devout Puritan, Winthrop helped ensure the prosperity of the newly-established colony and enforce Puritan orthodoxy, taking a hard line against religious dissenters like Anne Hutchinson.

**Wolfe, James (1727–1759):** Young British commander who skilfully outmanoeuvred French forces in the Battle of Quebec during the French and Indian War.

**Yeltsin, Boris (1931–2007):** First president of Russia, taking over as the former Soviet republic became independent in 1991. Yeltsin led the country through the breakdown of the communist economy and introduced important market reforms.

**York, Duke of (1633–1701):** Catholic English monarch who reigned as James II from 1685 until he was deposed during the Glorious Revolution in 1689. When the English seized New Amsterdam from the Dutch in 1664, they renamed it the Duke's honor to commemorate his support for the colonial venture.

**Young, Brigham (1801–1877):** Second president of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, Young led his Mormon followers to Salt Lake City, Utah after Joseph Smith's death. Under Young's discipline and guidance, the Utah settlement prospered, and the church expanded to include over 100,000 members by Young's death in 1877.

**Zenger, John Peter (1697–1746):** New York printer tried for seditious libel against the state's corrupt royal governor. His acquittal set an important precedent for freedom of the press.

**Zimmermann, Arthur (1864–1940):** German foreign secretary during World War I and author of the infamous "Zimmerman note," which proposed a German-Mexican alliance against the United States.