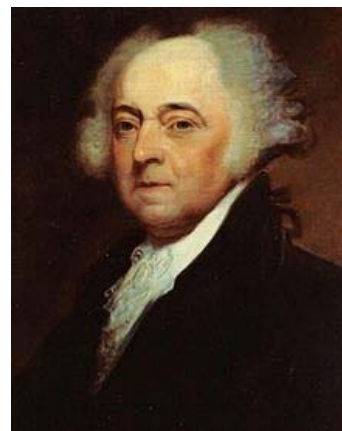


President	John Adams
Chronological Order	2
Life Span	1735-1826
Home State	Massachusetts
Elected	1796



Political Party	Federalist
Vice President	Thomas Jefferson
First Lady	Abigail Smith Adams
Children	3 sons, 2 daughters
Physical Attributes	5' 7" tall, stout, light brown hair, blue eyes
Undergraduate Education	Harvard College (now Harvard University)
Military Service	None
Profession	Attorney, Farmer
Other Political Offices	Delegate to Continental Congress, Signer of the Declaration of Independence, Diplomat to France, Minister to Holland, Minister to Great Britain, Vice President
Nickname	The Atlas of Independence
Family Lineage	English
Religious Affiliation	Unitarian

Biographical Notes	<p>1. Before becoming President in 1797, John Adams earned a reputation as a blunt-speaking man of independent mind. A fervent patriot and an expert on governments, Adams served as a delegate from Massachusetts to the Continental Congress from 1774 to 1777, as a diplomat in Europe from 1778 to 1788, and as vice president during both terms of the Washington administration.</p> <p>He was intelligent, argumentative, irascible, and exceptionally honest. Benjamin Franklin described him: "I am persuaded that he means well for his Country, is always an honest Man, often a wise one, but sometimes and in some things, absolutely out of his senses."</p> <p>2. The Founding Fathers all had different strengths. George Washington was the best leader; Thomas Jefferson, the best writer; James Madison, the best legislator; Alexander Hamilton, the financial genius. John Adams was the best lawyer, especially when it came to verbal arguments. Before the American Revolution, he was an outstanding trial lawyer in Massachusetts. As a result of his brilliant courtroom presentation and closing argument, the British soldiers involved in the Boston Massacre were acquitted of murder. When the Second Continental Congress was debating whether or not to declare independence from Great Britain, Adams led the floor fight and gave the closing argument for the pro-independence side. He negotiated crucial loans for the United States from Holland during and after the Revolutionary War. While negotiating the Treaty of Paris, which ended the Revolutionary War, he won good terms for the United States.</p> <p>3. Born into a comfortable, but not wealthy, Massachusetts farming family on October 30, 1735, John Adams grew up in the tidy little world of New England village life. His father, a deacon in the Congregational Church, earned a living as a farmer and shoemaker in Braintree, roughly fifteen miles south of Boston. Adams said later that he would have preferred a life as a farmer, but his father insisted that he receive a formal education, hoping that he might become a clergyman. John attended a local school that was designed to teach the rudimentary skills of reading and writing, followed by a Latin school, which prepared students for college. He excelled at his studies, entered Harvard College at age fifteen, and graduated in 1755. Young John, who had no interest in a ministerial career, taught in a Latin school in Worcester, Massachusetts, to earn the tuition fees to study law, and from 1756 to 1758, he studied law with a prominent local lawyer in Worcester. When his father died in 1761, he inherited a house and a farm, and he set up his first law office</p>
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in the house.

4. The best decision John Adams ever made was to marry Abigail Smith in 1764. Abigail was intelligent, articulate, well-read, and an excellent judge of people. She was John's most trusted advisor and an equal partner in all their endeavors. For example, the night before his famous closing argument in the Boston Massacre case, Abigail read his draft and explained to him why it would not work. John then stayed up late, revising it to address her concerns. As president, he valued and trusted her political judgment more than the members of his cabinet.

Abigail tended the family farm and raised the children while John was at the Continental Congress in Philadelphia or off doing diplomacy in Europe or serving as vice president. When John was in Philadelphia in June 1775, Abigail and their seven-year-old son John Quincy saw the Battle of Bunker Hill in the distance from a hill near their home; the next day, they melted down Abigail's prized set of pewter spoons to make musket balls for the Americans. At one point, John and Abigail were separated for four years while he was overseas, which was extremely hard on her. But they always stayed in contact by mail, a total of 1,160 letters over forty years. Their letters to each other began: "My Dearest Friend." They were happily married for fifty-four years.

According to traditional family accounts, Abigail's mother initially opposed the match. Abigail was the daughter of a well-respected clergyman and the granddaughter of Colonel John Quincy, the longtime Speaker of the Massachusetts colonial legislature, and her mother felt that Abigail was marrying beneath her station. But Abigail and John's attraction to each other – like steel to a magnet, according to John – was more than enough to carry the day.

5. Before the American Revolution, Adams had a law office in Boston, and he eventually got involved in politics. The first news of the Stamp Act reached the American colonies in May of 1765 and produced an uproar, especially in Massachusetts. Starting in November, nearly everything written or printed on paper other than private correspondence and books was required to carry revenue stamps, some costing as much as ten pounds (equivalent to several hundred of today's dollars). The new law, the first British attempt to tax Americans directly, had been passed by Parliament to help pay the cost of the French and Indian War and to meet the expense of maintaining a colonial military force to prevent Indian wars.

In response, Adams wrote what became known as the Braintree Instructions – instructions from the citizens of his hometown to their delegates in the Massachusetts legislature – which, when printed in the *Boston Gazette*, "rang" throughout the colony. Adams wrote, "We have always understood it to be a grand and fundamental principle of the [English] constitution that no freeman should be the subject of any tax to which he has not given his own consent." In other words, there must be no "taxation without representation." Very quickly, the document was adopted by forty-two towns, something that had never happened before. Great Britain eventually repealed the Stamp Act.

6. In 1770, Boston was full of British troops – sent in 1768 to keep order, as Parliament imposed another round of taxes – and the atmosphere in the city turned incendiary. Incidents of violence broke out between townsmen and soldiers, the hated "Lobsterbacks."

On March 5, 1770, several hundred Bostonians converged on the Customs House, which was being guarded by eight British soldiers with loaded muskets and fixed bayonets, their captain with drawn sword. Shouting and cursing, the crowd pelted the soldiers with snowballs, chunks of ice, oyster shells, and stones. In the melee, the soldiers suddenly opened fire, killing five men. (Allegedly, the first shot was an accidental discharge.) The incident became known as The Boston Massacre, and the soldiers were arrested and charged with murder.

The next day, John Adams was asked to defend the soldiers because no one else would. He agreed, and, eventually, there were two trials. At the first trial, the captain was acquitted because there was no evidence that he told the soldiers to fire their weapons. At the second trial, as a result of Adams's skillful recreation of the event, six of the soldiers were acquitted, and two were found guilty of the lesser charge of manslaughter, for which they were branded on their thumbs. The effect of Adams's closing arguments on the packed courtroom during the second trial was said to be "electrical." In particular, he told the jury: "Facts are stubborn things, and whatever may be our wishes, our inclinations, or the dictum of our passions, they cannot alter the state of facts and evidence."

Many Bostonians criticized Adams for defending the captain and his men, and he lost some clients as a result. However, he felt strongly that everyone deserves competent legal representation and a fair trial. Reflecting on the incident as an old man, Adams said the defense was "one of the most gallant, generous, manly, and disinterested actions of my whole life, and one of the best pieces of service I ever rendered for my country."

7. In 1774, Adams went to Philadelphia as one of the four delegates from Massachusetts to the First Continental Congress. He was re-elected to the Second Continental Congress, which convened in May 1775, just a few days after war with the mother country had erupted at Lexington and Concord. He successfully lobbied for support of the Massachusetts militias, who were fighting the British in Boston. He also nominated George Washington to be the commander of these troops – the new Continental Army – and the Virginian was elected unanimously.

8. During the summer of 1776, the delegates to the Second Continental Congress were entertaining the idea of declaring independence from Great Britain, with Adams firmly on the affirmative side of the question, but with others strongly opposed. When independence was proposed on June 7, the delegates debated until June 10, at which point they: (a) agreed upon a twenty-day hiatus on the question so that representatives could consult with their states, and (b) appointed a five-man committee (John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, Robert R. Livingston, and Roger Sherman) to draft the Declaration of Independence.

Jefferson suggested Adams should write the draft, but Adams refused and insisted that Jefferson should do it. When Jefferson asked why, Adams stated his reasons: "Reason first, you are a Virginian, and a Virginian ought to appear at the head of this business. Reason second, I am obnoxious, suspected, and unpopular. You are very much otherwise. Reason third, you can write ten times better than I can." Jefferson replied, "Well, if you are decided, I will do as well as I can." Adams's ability to recognize talent was extraordinary. He chose George Washington to be commander in chief of the Continental Army, Thomas Jefferson to be the author of the Declaration of Independence and, later, John Marshall to be Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court.

The delegates returned to the question of independence on July 1. Presumably, everything that could or needed to be said on the matter had been exhausted. Presumably, the question could be put to the vote and decided. But it was not to be. John Dickinson of Pennsylvania, the fiercest opponent of independence, had resolved to make one last appeal, and someone would have to respond. After Dickinson finished, no one spoke; no one rose to answer him; then Adams got to his feet. No transcription was made, no notes were kept. There would only be Adams's recollections, plus those of several others who would recall that Adams gave the most powerful and important speech heard in the Congress since it first convened. It was the greatest speech of his life.

Jefferson said that Adams's address was neither "graceful nor eloquent" but that he spoke "with a power of thought and expression that moved us from our seats." Recalling the moment long afterward, Adams would say that he had been " 'carried out in spirit' as enthusiastic preachers sometimes express themselves." To Richard Stockton of New Jersey, Adams was "the man to whom the country is most indebted for the great measure of independency. ... He it was who sustained the debate, and by the force of his reasoning demonstrated not only the justice, but the expediency of the measure." On July 2, twelve colonies voted for independence; New York abstained. On July 4, the Declaration of Independence was approved.

9. From 1778 to 1788, Adams was a diplomat in Europe. At first, he was part of a three-man commission, along with Benjamin Franklin and Arthur Lee, assigned to convince France to support the American war for independence. Eventually, Franklin was appointed Minister to France, and Adams was no longer needed in Paris. Consequently, he went to Holland to attempt to obtain loans for America from the Dutch. Initially, he had no success because the Dutch feared America would lose the war and be unable to repay the loans. However, Adams persisted, and the Dutch agreed to a \$2 million loan after the American victory at Yorktown in 1781. Adams became America's first Minister to Holland in 1782. He also secured other loans from the Dutch that were crucial to the economic survival of the United States.

10. Adams was the primary author of the Massachusetts state constitution. During a brief trip home in 1779, he was chosen as a delegate to the state constitutional convention. He was then selected to be on a three-man subcommittee to draft it, and then the other two members – Samuel Adams and James Bowdoin – asked Adams to write the draft. The Constitution of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts was founded on the dual principle of the separation and balance of powers. It declared that in Massachusetts, "the legislative, executive and judicial power shall be placed in different departments, to the end that it might be a government of laws, and not of men."

The Constitution of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts had many of the features found later in the U.S. Constitution. There would be two branches of the legislature, a Senate and a House of Representatives; an executive, the governor, who would have veto power over the acts of the legislature; an independent judiciary with the judges of the Supreme Court appointed for life. There was also a Declaration of Rights that included free elections, "freedom of speaking," "liberty of the press," freedom from unreasonable search and seizure, and trial by jury.

11. In late 1782, Great Britain agreed to negotiate the end of the Revolutionary War with the United States of America. The American delegation of John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, and John Jay met with British representatives in Paris. After recognizing American independence, the four fundamental questions to be dealt with, were: the boundaries of the United States, debts owed by Americans to British merchants, possible compensation for American Loyalists, and American fishing rights on the Grand Banks off Newfoundland.

The Americans insisted that Great Britain cede all territory between the Appalachian Mountains and the Mississippi River, and the British agreed, thus doubling the size of the United States. The all-important right of the United States to navigation on the Mississippi was also granted.

On the question of private debts incurred by Americans before the war, Franklin and Jay felt that these had been counterbalanced by the property destroyed by the British Army, but Adams disagreed. Debts contracted in good faith should be paid, he insisted, and such a clause was added, though it would ultimately prove ineffective. The Americans had no sympathy for Loyalists, so no compensation was granted. Adams lobbied hard for American fishing rights and won. The final agreement – the Treaty of Paris – was signed in September 1783.

12. After the Treaty of Paris was signed, Adams and Jefferson were both stationed in Paris, tasked with promoting American commercial interests. They were not very successful, but during that time, they became the best of friends. Jefferson also became good friends with Abigail, who had joined John in Paris. It was rare for the irascible Adams to have such an intimate and close friend, and Abigail Adams commented to Jefferson that he was “the only person with whom my Companion could associate with perfect freedom and unreserve.” Jefferson also became a mentor to seventeen-year-old John Quincy Adams, with the young man noting in his diary: “Spent the evening with Mr. Jefferson, whom I love to be with.” Later, Adams himself said to Jefferson that, when they were in Paris together, his son John Quincy “appeared to be almost as much your boy as mine.”

13. Adams was appointed America’s first Minister to Great Britain in April 1785. His tenure in Britain was complicated by both countries failing to follow their treaty obligations. The American states had been delinquent in paying debts owed to British merchants, and, in response, the British refused to vacate forts in the Northwest Territory (present-day Ohio) as promised. Adams's attempts to resolve this dispute failed, and, frustrated, he asked to be replaced. He returned home in 1788.

14. As specified by the Constitution, the president is chosen by the Electoral College. In 1788, the method for selecting electors was decided by each state legislature—by public vote in some states and by legislative selection in others. Each state had as many electors as senators and representatives, and each of the sixty-nine electors was instructed to vote for two different candidates for president. George Washington received the support of all sixty-nine electors and was elected president. John Adams, who received thirty-four votes, was the runner-up and was thus elected vice president. Thirty-five votes went to minor candidates.

Adams was disappointed that he had received votes from less than half the electors. Later, he was furious when he found out that Alexander Hamilton had contacted two electors from Connecticut, two from New Jersey, and three or four from Pennsylvania to convince them not to vote for Adams.

15. The Constitution was vague when it came to the makeup of the executive branch of government. In particular, there was no reference to a cabinet. It merely stated that the president “may require the opinion, in writing, of the principal officer in each of the executive departments, upon any subject relating to the duties of their respective offices.”

As the commanding general in the Revolutionary War, when an important decision was to be made, Washington would call a council of war, listen to his staff's opinions, and then make his decision. As president, he decided to do the same thing by establishing what is now referred to as a “cabinet” composed of the heads of the three major departments (State, Treasury, and War), plus the attorney general. On almost every significant issue during his first term, Washington met with these four men and discussed what needed to be done.

It is interesting to note who Washington *did not* include in his cabinet: Vice President John Adams. Adams and Washington did not have a good relationship. The Massachusetts native had always been fearful of tyranny, and he fought in the Continental Congress against Washington’s desire to build a long-term, professional army. Adams’s selection as vice president was predicated on geographically balancing the two leadership positions. Washington had agreed to it, but he had no intention of working closely with his old opponent. Adams played no significant role during Washington’s eight years in office, other than to preside over the Senate and break ties when necessary. In this regard, Washington set a precedent – as he did in so many other things – for how presidents utilized vice presidents.

16. Heated conflict broke out early among Washington's cabinet members over the shape the new nation would take, as well as over divisive foreign policy issues. By late 1792, formal political parties had come into being. The Federalists, led by Alexander Hamilton, supported a strong central government and favored industry, banking interests, merchants, and close ties with Great Britain. The Federalist Party was strong in the Northeast. Opposed to them were the Republicans, led by Thomas Jefferson and James Madison. Supported by landowners and much of the South, the Republicans advocated limited powers for the federal government, personal liberty, and support for France. Adams was a Federalist, but he was not vehemently pro-British and anti-French like some members of his party.

17. During the Washington administration, John Quincy Adams wrote, under a pen name, newspaper articles in favor of the president's policies, and this caught Washington's attention; he knew who the real author was. On May 19, 1794, Washington appointed John Quincy Minister to Holland, just as his father had been before him. The next day, John Adams had the rare pleasure of presiding over his son's confirmation in the Senate. Here was the splendid start, "in the cabinet or the field," that John and Abigail Adams had hoped for their firstborn. The assignment would not require critical decisions but would serve as a listening post for European affairs. Since John Quincy spoke Dutch, French, and German, he was uniquely suited for this post.

John Adams immediately began preparing John Quincy for his new job. He directed his son to learn more about international law and diplomacy; observe the views and actions of belligerent powers; attend to his dress and person. In a letter to his son, he wrote a kind of primer for late-eighteenth-century American diplomacy:

You must make yourself master of all our disputes with England, Spain, France, etc. You must study the lines and boundaries of the United States. You will have to watch the English ambassador and all the Anglomani[ac]s. ... It is a serious trust that is about to be committed to you. I hope you will reflect upon it with due attention, collect yourself, let no little weakness escape you, and devote yourself to the service of your Country.

John Quincy would go on to be the most accomplished American diplomat of his generation, and one of America's greatest secretaries of state. He was also President of the United States for one term, just as his father had been before him.

18. In the presidential election of 1796, Federalist John Adams defeated Republican Thomas Jefferson, 71 to 68 electoral votes. Under the rules of that time, the second-place finisher became vice president; so, for the only time in American history, the offices of president and vice president were held by men of different political parties. George Washington was glad to be stepping down. At Adams's inauguration, he whispered to the new president, "I am fairly out, and you are fairly in. See which of us will be the happiest."

Jefferson drafted a friendly letter to congratulate Adams, which might have led to cooperation between the two old friends, but Madison convinced him not to send it. He reminded Jefferson that they were going to have to oppose Adams's policies and that if a letter supportive of Adams was exposed, it would hurt their cause. As a result, Jefferson did not send the message and did not take part in the Adams administration; instead, he was the leader of the opposition.

Alexander Hamilton was up to his usual tricks during this election, trying to influence electors to swing the presidency to Thomas Pinckney, a Federalist he could control. When Abigail found out about this, she passed her judgment of Hamilton on to John in a letter:

Beware of that spare Cassius, has always occurred to me when I have seen that cock sparrow. Oh, I have read his Heart in his wicked Eyes many a time. The very devil is in them.

19. For the sake of continuity, Adams retained the members of Washington's cabinet: Attorney General Charles Lee of Virginia, Secretary of State Timothy Pickering of Massachusetts, Secretary of the Treasury Oliver Wolcott of Connecticut, and Secretary of War James McHenry of Maryland. Retaining Washington's cabinet was a significant mistake. The last three men were extreme Federalists (a.k.a. High Federalists). They belonged to the ardently pro-British, anti-French wing of the party and considered Alexander Hamilton to be their leader, not John Adams. Also, they looked down on Adams because they had been part of Washington's cabinet, and he had not. For his part, Hamilton hoped to run the government from his New York City law office through Pickering, Wolcott, and McHenry.

20. Adams appointed John Quincy Minister to Prussia in 1797. From this post, John Quincy provided his

father with a great deal of political intelligence, especially about France. For example, he uncovered the identities of the three unknown emissaries in the XYZ affair. Also, John Quincy later informed his father when he found out that France was ready to negotiate seriously for peace. When John Adams lost the election of 1800, he recalled his son from Berlin.

21. During Washington's second term, the United States signed Jay's Treaty with Great Britain. France, interpreting the treaty as a newly formed alliance between the United States and an old enemy, retaliated by ordering the seizure of American ships carrying British goods. The retaliation plunged President Adams into a foreign crisis that lasted for the duration of his administration. At first, he tried diplomacy by sending three commissioners to Paris to negotiate a settlement. However, French Prime Minister Talleyrand insulted the American diplomats by first refusing to receive them officially. He then demanded a \$250,000 personal bribe and a \$10 million loan for his financially strapped country before he would begin peace negotiations. This episode, known as the XYZ affair, sparked a white-hot reaction within the United States.

Adams responded by asking Congress to appropriate funds for defensive measures. These included the augmentation of the Navy, improvement of coastal defenses, the creation of a provisional army, and authority for the President to summon up to 80,000 militiamen to active duty. Congress passed the Alien and Sedition Acts to curb dissent, created the Navy Department, organized the Marine Corps, and canceled the treaties of alliance and commerce with France negotiated during the Revolutionary War. Incidents, some bloody, soon took place on the high seas. Historians call this undeclared war the Quasi-War.

22. The Alien and Sedition Acts were four laws passed by the Federalist-dominated 5th Congress and signed into law by Adams. The purpose of these acts was, presumably, to curb dissent during the Quasi-War. The Alien Friends Act of 1798 allowed the president to imprison and deport non-citizens who were deemed dangerous without a hearing or a trial. The Alien Enemy Act of 1798 allowed the president to imprison and deport non-citizens from hostile countries. The Naturalization Act of 1798 made it much harder for an immigrant to become a citizen; the waiting period was extended from five to fourteen years. The Sedition Act of 1798 made it a federal crime to excite "the hatred of the good people of the United States" against the federal government, Congress, or the President.

These laws were partisan. The aliens the Federalists feared were the French and the Irish, who both hated the British and usually joined the Republican Party. The Naturalization Act suppressed the Republican vote. The Sedition Act was used to imprison and fine Republican, not Federalist, newspaper editors. Jefferson and Madison felt very strongly that the Sedition Act was unconstitutional because it violated freedom of speech. The Alien Friends Act expired two years after its passage, and the Sedition Act expired after three. The Naturalization Act was repealed in 1802. The Alien Enemy Act is still the law.

Passage of the Alien and Sedition Acts was one of the worst mistakes of the Adams administration. Resentment of the acts energized the Republican voter base and helped Jefferson defeat Adams in the Election of 1800.

23. The High Federalists wanted war with France, and Adams asked George Washington to command the new army (in case it was needed). Washington demanded that he be allowed to choose his officers and told Adams that he wanted Alexander Hamilton to be his second in command. Adams was very reluctant to agree to this because, in practice, Washington was too old to take the field, and, hence, it would be Hamilton's army. This would neuter Adams as commander in chief. Behind the scenes, Hamilton was lobbying for precisely this result. In a letter to Washington, he wrote, "The President has no relative ideas, and his prepossessions on military subjects in reference to such a point are of the wrong sort," meaning, presumably, that Adams cared more for the navy than the army. Behind the scenes, Secretary of War McHenry and Secretary of State Pickering were secretly campaigning for Hamilton and supplying him with copies of secret government documents. In the end, Washington left Adams no way out. The ex-President's prestige was essential to raise the new army, and Hamilton, McHenry, Pickering, and Wolcott all understood this. On September 30, 1798, Adams relinquished the final say on officers to Washington.

From the outset, however, Adams sought a peaceful solution, if it could be obtained on honorable terms. During the fall of 1798 and the winter of 1799, he received intelligence from John Quincy, indicating a French willingness to talk. When Talleyrand sent unofficial word that the French government would receive American diplomats, Adams announced his intention to send another diplomatic commission to France. And – much to Hamilton's dismay – the army was eventually no longer needed. Adams fired McHenry and Pickering in May 1800.

By the time the commissioners reached Paris, Napoleon Bonaparte had become the head of the French government. After several weeks of negotiation, the American envoys and Napoleon signed the Convention of Mortefontaine on September 30, 1800, which released the United States from its Revolutionary War alliance with France and brought an end to the Quasi-War. Adams subsequently said that the honorable

peace he had arranged was the great jewel in his crown after nearly twenty-five years of public service. News of the peace treaty arrived in America too late to help Adams in the election of 1800.

24. On November 1, 1800, John Adams became the first president to take up residence in the White House. The next day he wrote to Abigail: "I pray Heaven to bestow the best of blessings on this House, and all that shall hereafter inhabit it. May none but honest and wise men ever rule under this roof." Franklin D. Roosevelt had Adams's blessing carved into the mantel in the State Dining Room.

25. The presidential election of 1800 was one of the dirtiest in American history. Both Jefferson and Adams were greatly abused in the press, and the vitriol further damaged their friendship, which had already been strained. In Federalist newspapers and pamphlets, Jefferson was decried as a hopeless visionary, a weakling, more Frenchman than American, and therefore a bad man. He was charged with infidelity to the Constitution and being a spendthrift and a libertine. Adams was excoriated in the Republican press as a monarchist, more British than American, and therefore a bad man. He was ridiculed as old, addled, and toothless.

One significant difference in the attacks on Adams was that they came from both Republicans and High Federalists. In particular, the High Federalists attacked him for not being partisan enough and for not going to war with France. The High Federalist coup de grace was a fifty-four-page pamphlet published in late October by Alexander Hamilton entitled *A Letter from Alexander Hamilton, Concerning the Public Conduct and Character of John Adams, Esq., President of the United States*. In it, Hamilton berated Adams in every possible way, especially his character, his "bitter animosity" towards his cabinet, and his handling of relations with France.

The election was still close. Adams would have won if he carried New York. The final tally was: Jefferson 73, Burr 73, Adams, 65, and Pinckney 63. Jefferson won the runoff in the House.

26. After the election, during the lame-duck session of Congress, the Federalists passed the Judiciary Act of 1801, which doubled the number of circuit courts to six and increased the number of federal judges by twenty-six. Adams filled almost all these positions with Federalists about a week before Jefferson's inauguration. Jefferson objected to these appointments since they had come after his election and, therefore, did not reflect the will of the people. The appointees became colloquially known as "midnight judges," and there were other "midnight appointments" as well.

Adams chose not to attend Jefferson's inauguration, even though Washington came to his. On Inauguration Day, he took the 4 a.m. public stage to Massachusetts.

27. In January 1801, Adams named John Marshall, a Virginia Federalist and long-time Jefferson antagonist, Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court. Marshall went on to serve for thirty-four years under the administrations of Jeffersonian Republicans (Jefferson, Madison, and Monroe) and their successors (John Quincy Adams and Andrew Jackson). He kept on handing down Federalist decisions long after the Federalist Party ceased to exist. Marshall did more than anyone else, except Hamilton, to engraft the Hamiltonian concept of a powerful central government upon the American political system.

28. By 1812, Jefferson was in retirement at Monticello, Adams had retired to his farm in Massachusetts, and the two former friends had not written to each other in eleven years. But then a mutual friend, Benjamin Rush, gently coerced them into resuming their correspondence.

Rush's efforts initiated the most remarkable correspondence between two politicians in American history. Over the next fourteen years, Adams sent Jefferson 109 letters, and Jefferson sent Adams 49. The letters covered a wide range of topics, with the motivation being, according to Adams: "You and I ought not to die before We have explained ourselves to each other." Jefferson kept a bust of Adams in his study near his writing table.

Adams and Jefferson both died on July 4, 1826, exactly fifty years after the Declaration of Independence was approved by the Second Continental Congress. Adams's last words were, "Thomas Jefferson still survives." But he was wrong. Jefferson had died approximately five hours earlier.

See the next page for a list of references.

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