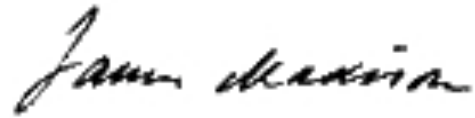
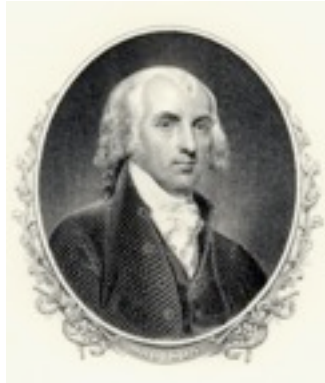


*James Madison*  
4th President

Terms: 1809-1817

Political Party: Democratic-Republican

First Lady: Dolley Payne Todd Madison

Vice President: George Clinton, Elbridge Gerry

Overview

Born: March 16, 1751, in Port Conway, Virginia... James Madison, the "Father of the Constitution," co-authored The Federalist Papers <<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/duel/sfeature/hamiltonusconstituion.html>>, helped to establish a system of checks and balances for the federal government, and, as a congressman, sponsored the Bill of Rights. As president, Madison helped establish the Democratic-Republican Party of Jeffersonian ideals. He asked Congress to declare war on Britain in 1812, and the war began so badly that by fighting to a draw, Americans of 1815 felt they had earned a victory and were swept up in a self-congratulating nationalism. A slight man of less than 100 pounds, Madison's marriage to the buxom and vivacious Dolley Payne Todd surprised many and provided the nation with one of its great First Ladies... Died: June 28, 1836.

The Era

- Beethoven writes five symphonies (his fifth in 1808, his ninth in 1812)
- Francis Scott Key writes the lyrics of the *Star Spangled Banner* (1814)
- Presidential residence painted white following its burning (1814)
- Wellington defeats Napoleon at Waterloo (1815)

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**Domestic Policy**

Madison feared the nation's politicians could be swayed by large financial interests, especially the late Alexander Hamilton's <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/hamilton/> allies in New York and New England who controlled the Bank of the United States. For that reason, he made no moves to interfere as Congress allowed the bank's charter to terminate without renewal. War came at an inauspicious time for a nation without an institution to sell bonds to finance itself. Toward the end of his term, a bill to charter a second Bank of the United States passed with Madison's support.

**Foreign Affairs**

The United States had little stature in the world at the beginning of the 19th century, especially to the imperial forces of warring France and England. France was the first to agree to trade with the young nation, and the English were shut out. Madison brought a list of grievances against the English (including impressments) to Congress and the legislators voted to go to war against Great Britain on June 18, 1812. Planning to annex Canada, the Americans found themselves repelled at every turn, at Detroit, the Niagara River and Montreal. In 1814 the British went so far as to burn the White House and Capitol Building as a fleeing Madison watched from across the Potomac. By 1815 the American forces were holding their own and a decisive victory at New Orleans led by Andrew Jackson

*“Democracies have ever been spectacles of turbulence and contention; have ever been found incompatible with personal security, or the rights of property; have in general been as short in their lives as they are violent in their deaths.”*

*— James Madison, 1787*

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/biography/presidents-jackson/> (technically after an end to the war had been negotiated -- unbeknownst to field commanders on both sides) left America feeling victorious. No new territory had been gained, but the United States had asserted itself as a nation to be reckoned with.

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## Presidential Politics

Madison helped establish the Democratic-Republican Party with Jefferson. Madison won an easy victory to succeed Jefferson

<<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/biography/presidents-jefferson>> in 1808. The war against Britain was declared in 1812 and the state of war surely contributed to his re-election. The public viewed the results of the War of 1812 so favorably that the Federalist Party

<<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/duel/peoplevents/pande05.html>> faithful who had opposed the war witnessed their party's implosion.

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