

= William Henry Harrison =

William Henry Harrison ( February 9 , 1773 ? April 4 , 1841 ) was the ninth President of the United States ( 1841 ) , an American military officer and politician , and the last president born as a British subject . He was also the first president to die in office . He was 68 years , 23 days old when inaugurated , the oldest president to take office until Ronald Reagan in 1981 . Harrison died on his 32nd day in office of complications from pneumonia , serving the shortest tenure in United States presidential history . His death sparked a brief constitutional crisis , but its resolution left unsettled many questions following the presidential line of succession in regard to Constitution until the passage of the 25th Amendment in 1967 . He was the grandfather of Benjamin Harrison , who was the 23rd President from 1889 to 1893 .

Before election as president , Harrison served as the first territorial congressional delegate from the Northwest Territory , as governor of the Indiana Territory , and later as a U.S. representative and senator from Ohio . He originally gained national fame for leading U.S. forces against American Indians at the Battle of Tippecanoe in 1811 , where he earned the nickname " Tippecanoe " ( or " Old Tippecanoe " ) . As a general in the subsequent War of 1812 , his most notable action was in the Battle of the Thames in 1813 . This battle resulted in the death of Tecumseh and the dissolution of the Indian coalition which he led .

After the war , Harrison moved to Ohio , where he was elected to the United States House of Representatives . In 1824 , the state legislature elected him to the U.S. Senate . He served a truncated term after being appointed as Minister Plenipotentiary to Colombia in May 1828 . In Colombia , he spoke with Simón Bolívar , urging his nation to adopt American @-@ style democracy .

Returning to his farm in Ohio , Harrison lived in relative retirement until he was nominated for the presidency in 1836 . Defeated , he retired again to his farm . He was elected president in 1840 , and died of pneumonia in April 1841 , a month after taking office .

= = Early life = =

= = = Early life and education = = =

William Henry Harrison was born February 9 , 1773 , the youngest of Benjamin Harrison V and Elizabeth Bassett 's seven children . He was of entirely English descent and his ancestors had all been in Virginia since the 1630s . They were a prominent political family who lived on Berkeley Plantation in Charles City County , Virginia , where he was born . He was the last president born as a British subject before American Independence . His father was a planter and a delegate to the Continental Congress ( 1774 ? 1777 ) , who signed the Declaration of Independence . The senior Harrison was governor of Virginia between 1781 and 1784 , during and after the American Revolutionary War . William 's older brother , Carter Bassett Harrison , was elected to the United States House of Representatives from Virginia .

In 1787 , at the age of 14 , Harrison entered the Presbyterian Hampden ? Sydney College . He attended the school until 1790 , becoming well @-@ versed in Latin and basic French . He was removed by his Episcopalian father , possibly because of a religious revival occurring at the school . He briefly attended a boys ' academy in Southampton County . He allegedly was influenced by antislavery Quakers and Methodists at the school .

Angered , his proslavery father had him transfer to Philadelphia for medical training , where Harrison boarded with Robert Morris . The young Harrison entered the University of Pennsylvania in 1790 , where he studied medicine under Dr. Benjamin Rush . As Harrison later told his biographer , he did not enjoy the subject . Shortly after Harrison started these studies , his father died in 1791 , leaving him without funds for further schooling . Eighteen years old , Harrison was left in the guardianship of Morris .

### == Early military career ==

Governor Henry Lee of Virginia , a friend of Harrison 's father , learned of Harrison 's situation after his father 's death and persuaded him to join the army . Within 24 hours of meeting Lee , Harrison was commissioned as an ensign in the U.S. Army , 1st Infantry Regiment at the age of 18 . He was first assigned to Cincinnati in the Northwest Territory , where the army was engaged in the ongoing Northwest Indian War .

General " Mad Anthony " Wayne took command of the western army in 1792 following a disastrous defeat under its previous commander , Arthur St. Clair . Harrison was promoted to lieutenant that summer because of his strict attention to discipline , and the following year , he was promoted to serve as aide @-@ de @-@ camp . From Wayne , Harrison learned how to successfully command an army on the American frontier . Harrison participated in Wayne 's decisive victory at the Battle of Fallen Timbers in 1794 , which brought the Northwest Indian War to a successful close for the United States . After the war , Lieutenant Harrison was one of the signatories of the Treaty of Greenville in 1795 , which forced cession of lands by Native Americans and opened much of present @-@ day Ohio to settlement by European Americans .

After the death of his mother in 1793 , Harrison inherited a portion of the family 's estate , including about 3 @,@ 000 acres ( 12 km2 ) of land and several slaves . Still in the army at the time , Harrison sold his land to his brother .

### == Marriage and family ==

In 1795 at the age of 22 , Harrison met Anna Tuthill Symmes , of North Bend , Ohio . She was a daughter of Anna Tuthill and Judge John Cleves Symmes , a prominent figure in the state and former representative to the Congress of the Confederation . When Harrison asked the judge for permission to marry Anna , he was refused . The pair waited until Symmes left on business , then they eloped and married on November 25 , 1795 . They married at the North Bend home of Dr. Stephen Wood , Treasurer of the Northwest Territory . The couple honeymooned at Fort Washington , as Harrison was still on duty . Two weeks later , at a farewell dinner for General Wayne , Symmes confronted his new son @-@ in @-@ law for the first time since the wedding , sternly demanding to know how Harrison intended to support a family . Harrison responded , " by my sword , and my own right arm , sir . " Afterward , still concerned about Harrison 's ability to provide for Anna , Symmes sold the young couple 160 acres ( 65 ha ) of land in North Bend . Symmes did not come to accept Harrison until he had achieved fame on the battlefield .

Together , the Harrisons had 10 children . Nine lived into adulthood and one died in infancy . Anna was frequently in poor health during the marriage , primarily due to her many pregnancies . She nonetheless outlived William by 23 years , dying at age 88 on February 25 , 1864 .

In a biography of Walter Francis White , the noted African American civil rights leader and president of the NAACP in the mid @-@ 20th century , historian Kenneth Robert Janken notes that White 's mother Madeline Harrison traced some of her mixed @-@ race white ancestry to Harrison in Virginia . Her family holds that Dilsia , a female slave belonging to William Henry Harrison , had six children by him , born into slavery . Four were said to be sold to a planter in La Grange , Georgia , including a daughter , Marie Harrison . Marie was Madeline 's mother .

### == Political career ==

Harrison resigned from the army in 1798 and began campaigning among his friends and family for a post in the Northwest Territorial government . With the aid of his close friend , Secretary of State Timothy Pickering , he was recommended to replace the outgoing Secretary of the Territory . Harrison was appointed to the position , and frequently acted as governor during the absences of Governor Arthur St. Clair .

### == As Member of Congress ==

Harrison had many friends in the elite eastern social circles , and quickly gained a reputation among them as a frontier leader . He ran a successful horse @-@ breeding enterprise that won him acclaim throughout the Northwest Territory . He championed for lower land prices , a primary concern of settlers in the Territory at the time . The U.S. Congress had legislated a territorial land policy that led to high land costs , a policy disliked by many of the territory 's residents . When Harrison ran for Congress , he campaigned to work to alter the situation to encourage migration to the territory .

In 1799 , at age 26 , Harrison defeated the son of Arthur St. Clair and was elected as the first delegate representing the Northwest Territory in the Sixth United States Congress . He served from March 4 , 1799 , to May 14 , 1800 . As a delegate from a territory , not a state , he had no authority to vote on bills , but was permitted to serve on a committee , submit legislation , and debate .

As delegate , Harrison successfully promoted the passage of the Harrison Land Act . This made it easier for the average settler to buy land in the Northwest Territory by allowing land to be sold in small tracts . The availability of inexpensive land was an important factor in the rapid population growth of the Northwest Territory . Harrison also served on the committee that decided how to divide the Northwest Territory . The committee recommended splitting the territory into two segments , creating the Ohio Territory and the Indiana Territory . The bill , 2 Stat . 58 , passed and the two new territories were established in 1800 .

Without informing Harrison , President John Adams nominated him to become governor of the new territory , based on his ties to " the west " and seemingly neutral political stances . Harrison was confirmed by the Senate the following day . Caught unaware , Harrison accepted the position only after receiving assurances from the Jeffersonians that he would not be removed from office after they gained power in the upcoming elections . He then resigned from Congress . The Indiana Territory consisted of the future states of Indiana , Illinois , Michigan , Wisconsin , and the eastern portion of Minnesota .

= = = As Governor = = =

Harrison moved to Vincennes , the capital of the newly established Indiana Territory , on January 10 , 1801 . While in Vincennes , Harrison built a plantation @-@ style home on his farm that he named Grouseland for its many birds . It was one of the first brick structures in the territory . The home , which has been restored and has become a popular modern tourist attraction , served as the center of social and political life in the territory . He also built a second home near Corydon , the second capital , at Harrison Valley .

As governor , Harrison had wide @-@ ranging powers in the new territory , including the authority to appoint all territorial officials , and the territorial legislature , and to control the division of the territory into political districts . A primary responsibility was to obtain title to Indian lands . This would allow European @-@ American settlement to expand and increase U.S. population to enable the region to gain statehood . Harrison was eager to expand the territory for personal reasons as well , as his political fortunes were tied to Indiana 's rise to statehood . In 1803 , President Thomas Jefferson granted Harrison authority to negotiate and conclude treaties with the Indians .

Harrison supervised the development of 13 treaties , through which the territory bought more than 60 @,@ 000 @,@ 000 acres ( 240 @,@ 000 km<sup>2</sup> ) of land from Indian leaders , including much of present @-@ day southern Indiana . The 1804 Treaty of St. Louis with Quashquame led to the surrender by the Sauk and Meskwaki of much of western Illinois and parts of Missouri . This treaty and loss of lands were greatly resented by many of the Sauk , especially Black Hawk . It was the primary reason the Sauk sided with the United Kingdom during the War of 1812 . Harrison thought the Treaty of Grouseland in 1805 appeased some of the issues for Indians , but tensions remained high on the frontier .

The 1809 Treaty of Fort Wayne raised new tensions . Harrison purchased from the Miami tribe , who claimed ownership of the land , more than 2 @,@ 500 @,@ 000 acres ( 10 @,@ 000 km<sup>2</sup> ) of land inhabited by Shawnee , Kickapoo , Wea , and Piankeshaw peoples . Harrison rushed the process by offering large subsidies to the tribes and their leaders so that he could have the treaty in

place before President Jefferson left office and the administration changed . The tribes living on the lands were furious and sought to have the treaty overturned , but were unsuccessful .

In 1803 , Harrison lobbied Congress to repeal Article 6 of the Northwest Ordinance , to permit slavery in the Indiana Territory . He claimed it was necessary to make the region more appealing to settlers and would make the territory economically viable . Congress suspended the article for 10 years , during which time the territories covered by the ordinance were granted the right to decide for themselves whether to permit slavery . That year , Harrison had the appointed territorial legislature authorize indenturing . He attempted to have slavery legalized outright , in both 1805 and 1807 . This caused a significant stir in the territory . When in 1809 the legislature was popularly elected for the first time , Harrison found himself at odds with them as the abolitionist party came to power . They immediately blocked his plans for slavery and repealed the indenturing laws he had passed in 1803 .

President Jefferson , the primary author of the Northwest Ordinance , had made a secret compact with James Lemen to defeat the proslavery movement led by Harrison . Although a slaveholder , he did not want slavery to expand into the Northwest Territory , as he believed the institution should end . Under the " Jefferson @-@ Lemen compact " , Jefferson donated money to Lemen to found churches in Illinois and Indiana to stop the proslavery movement . In Indiana , the founding of an antislavery church led to citizens ' signing a petition and organizing politically to defeat Harrison 's efforts to legalize slavery . Jefferson and Lemen were both instrumental in defeating Harrison 's attempts in 1805 and 1807 to secure approval of slavery in the territory .

= = Army general = =

= = = Tecumseh and Tippecanoe = = =

An Indian resistance movement against U.S. expansion had been growing through the leadership of the Shawnee brothers , Tecumseh and Tenskwatawa ( The Prophet ) . The conflict became known as Tecumseh 's War . Tenskwatawa convinced the native tribes that they would be protected by the Great Spirit and no harm could befall them if they would rise up against the white settlers . He encouraged resistance by telling the tribes to pay white traders only half of what they owed and to give up all the white man 's ways , including their clothing , muskets , and especially whiskey , which was becoming known as evil for American Indians .

In August 1810 , Tecumseh led 400 armed warriors down the Wabash River to meet with Harrison in Vincennes . As the warriors were dressed in war paint , their sudden appearance at first frightened the soldiers at Vincennes . The leaders of the group were escorted to Grouseland , where they met Harrison . Tecumseh insisted that the Fort Wayne Treaty was illegitimate . He argued that no one tribe could sell land without the approval of the other tribes ; he asked Harrison to nullify it and warned that Americans should not attempt to settle the lands sold in the treaty . Tecumseh informed Harrison that he had threatened to kill the chiefs who signed the treaty if they carried out its terms , and that his confederation of tribes was growing rapidly . Harrison said the Miami were the owners of the land and could sell it if they so chose . He rejected Tecumseh 's claim that all the Indians formed one nation . He said each tribe could have separate relations with the United States if they chose to . Harrison argued that the Great Spirit would have made all the tribes speak one language if they were to be one nation .

Tecumseh launched an " impassioned rebuttal " , but Harrison was unable to understand his language . A Shawnee friendly to Harrison cocked his pistol from the sidelines to alert Harrison that Tecumseh 's speech was leading to trouble . Some witnesses reported that Tecumseh was encouraging the warriors to kill Harrison . Many of the warriors began to pull their weapons , representing a substantial threat to Harrison and the town , which held a population of only 1 @,@ 000 . Harrison pulled his sword . Tecumseh 's warriors backed down after the officers had pulled their firearms in defense of Harrison . Chief Winnemac , who was friendly to Harrison , countered Tecumseh 's arguments and told the warriors that since they had come in peace , they should return

home in peace . Before leaving , Tecumseh informed Harrison that unless the treaty were nullified , he would seek an alliance with the British . After the meeting , Tecumseh journeyed to meet with many of the tribes in the region , hoping to create a confederation to battle the United States .

In 1811 , while Tecumseh was traveling , Harrison was authorized by Secretary of War William Eustis to march against the nascent confederation as a show of force . Harrison led an army of more than 1 @, @ 000 men north to try to intimidate the Shawnee into making peace . Instead , the tribes launched a surprise attack on Harrison 's army early on the morning of November 7 , in what became known as the Battle of Tippecanoe . Harrison defeated the tribal forces at Prophetstown , next to the Wabash and Tippecanoe Rivers . Harrison was hailed as a national hero and the battle became famous . However , his troops had greatly outnumbered the attackers , and suffered many more casualties during the battle .

When reporting to Secretary Eustis , Harrison informed him the battle occurred near the Tippecanoe River ( which led to its naming ) , and he feared an imminent reprisal attack . The first dispatch did not make clear which side had won the conflict , and the secretary at first interpreted it as a defeat . The follow @-@ up dispatch made the US victory clear . When no second attack came , the defeat of the Shawnee was more certain . Eustis demanded to know why Harrison had not taken adequate precautions in fortifying his camp against attacks . Harrison countered by saying he had considered the position strong enough . The dispute was the catalyst of a disagreement between Harrison and the Department of War that continued into the War of 1812 .

The press did not cover the battle at first , and one Ohio paper misinterpreted Harrison 's dispatch to Eustis to mean he was defeated . By December , as most major American papers carried stories on the battle , public outrage over the Shawnee attack grew . At a time of high tensions with the United Kingdom , many Americans blamed the British for inciting the tribes to violence and supplying them with firearms . In response , Congress passed resolutions condemning the British for interfering in American domestic affairs . A few months later , the U.S. declared war against UK .

= = = War of 1812 = = =

The outbreak of war with the British in 1812 led to continued conflict with Indians in the Old Northwest , and Harrison was kept in command of the army in Indiana . After the American defeat in the Siege of Detroit , General James Winchester became the commander of the Army of the Northwest . He offered Harrison the rank of brigadier general , which he refused , as he wanted sole command of the army . President James Madison removed Winchester and made Harrison the commander on September 17 , 1812 . Harrison inherited an army of fresh recruits , which he endeavored to drill . Initially , he was greatly outnumbered by the British with their Indian allies . In the winter of 1812 ? 13 , Harrison constructed a defensive position at the rapids on the Maumee River in northwest Ohio . He named it Fort Meigs in honor of the Ohio governor , Return J. Meigs , Jr .

After receiving reinforcements in 1813 , Harrison took the offensive . He led the army north to battle the Shawnee and their new British allies . He won victories in Indiana and Ohio , and recaptured Detroit , before invading Canada . He defeated the British at the Battle of the Thames , in which Tecumseh was killed . The Battle of the Thames was considered one of the great American victories in the war , second only to the Battle of New Orleans .

Secretary of War John Armstrong divided the command of the army , assigning Harrison to a " backwater " post and giving control of the front to one of Harrison 's subordinates . Armstrong and Harrison had disagreed over the lack of coordination and effectiveness in the invasion of Canada . When Harrison was reassigned , he promptly resigned from the army . His resignation was accepted in the summer of 1814 .

After the war ended , Congress investigated Harrison 's resignation . It determined that he had been mistreated by the Secretary of War during his campaign and that his resignation was justified . They awarded Harrison a gold medal for his services during the War of 1812 .

= = Postwar life = =

= = = Public office = = =

Harrison returned to North Bend after he was replaced as Governor of Indiana Territory , and he returned his farm to cultivation and enlarged the log cabin farmhouse . In 1814 , he was appointed by President Madison to serve as a commissioner to negotiate two treaties with the Indian tribes in the Northwest . Both treaties were advantageous to the United States , as the tribes ceded a large tract of land in the west . It provided more land for American purchase and settlement .

Harrison was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives to finish the term of John McLean of Ohio , serving from October 8 , 1816 , to March 4 , 1819 . He was elected to and served in the Ohio State Senate from 1819 to 1821 , having lost the election for Ohio governor in 1820 . In 1822 , he ran for the U.S. House , but lost by only 500 votes to James W. Gazlay . In 1824 , he was elected to the U.S. Senate , where he served until May 20 , 1828 . Fellow westerners in Congress called Harrison a " Buckeye " , a term of affection related to the native Ohio buckeye tree . He was an Ohio presidential elector in 1820 for James Monroe. and an Ohio presidential elector in 1824 for Henry Clay . In 1817 , Harrison declined to serve as Secretary of War under President Monroe .

Appointed as minister plenipotentiary to Gran Colombia , Harrison resigned from Congress and served in his new post until March 8 , 1829 . He arrived in Bogotá on December 22 , 1828 . He found the condition of Colombia saddening . Harrison reported to the Secretary of State that the country was on the edge of anarchy and he thought Simón Bolívar was about to become a military dictator . While minister in Colombia , Harrison wrote a rebuke to Bolívar , stating " ... the strongest of all governments is that which is most free " . He called on Bolívar to encourage the development of a democracy . In response , Bolívar wrote , " The United States ... seem destined by Providence to plague America with torments in the name of freedom " , a sentiment that achieved fame in Latin America . When the new administration of President Andrew Jackson took office in March 1829 , Harrison was recalled so the new president could make his own appointment to the position . He returned to the United States in June .

= = = Private citizen = = =

After Harrison returned to the United States in 1829 , he settled on his farm in North Bend , Ohio , his adopted home state . There , he lived in relative retirement after nearly 40 years of continuous government service . Having accumulated no substantial wealth during his lifetime , he subsisted on his savings , a small pension , and the income produced by his farm . Harrison cultivated corn and established a distillery to produce whiskey . After a brief time in the liquor business , he became disturbed by the effects of alcohol on its consumers , and closed the distillery . In a later address to the Hamilton County Agricultural Board in 1831 , Harrison said he had sinned in making whiskey , and hoped that others would learn from his mistake and stop the production of liquors .

In these early years , Harrison also earned money from his contributions to a biography written by James Hall , entitled A Memoir of the Public Services of William Henry Harrison , published in 1836 . That year , he made an unsuccessful run for the presidency as a Whig candidate . Between 1836 and 1840 , Harrison served as Clerk of Courts for Hamilton County . This was his job when he was elected president in 1840 . By 1840 , when Harrison campaigned for president a second time , more than 12 books had been published on his life . He was hailed by many as a national hero .

= = = 1836 presidential campaign = = =

Harrison was the Northern Whig candidate for president in 1836 , one of only two times in American history when a major political party intentionally ran more than one presidential candidate ( the Democrats ran two candidates in 1860 ) . Vice President Martin Van Buren , the Democratic candidate , was popular and deemed likely to win the election against an individual Whig candidate . The Whig plan was to elect popular Whigs regionally , deny Van Buren the 148 electoral votes

needed for election , and force the House of Representatives to decide the election . They hoped the Whigs would control the House after the general elections . ( This strategy would have failed , as the Democrats retained a majority in the House following the election . )

Harrison ran in all the free states except Massachusetts , and the slave states of Delaware , Maryland , and Kentucky . Hugh L. White ran in the remaining slave states except for South Carolina . Daniel Webster ran in Massachusetts , and Willie P. Mangum in South Carolina . The plan narrowly failed , as Van Buren won the election with 170 electoral votes . A swing of just over 4 @, @ 000 votes in Pennsylvania would have given that state 's 30 electoral votes to Harrison , and the election would have been decided in the House of Representatives .

= = = 1840 presidential campaign = = =

Harrison was the Whig candidate ( and again faced Van Buren , now the incumbent president ) in the 1840 election . The Whig party unified behind a single candidate , and Harrison was chosen over more controversial members of the party , such as Clay and Webster . Harrison based his campaign on his military record and on the weak U.S. economy , caused by the Panic of 1837 . In a ploy to blame Van Buren for the depressed economy , the Whigs nicknamed him " Van Ruin " .

The Democrats ridiculed Harrison by calling him " Granny Harrison , the petticoat general " , because he resigned from the army before the War of 1812 ended . When asking voters whether Harrison should be elected , they asked them what his name backwards was , which happens to be " No Sirrah " . Democrats cast Harrison as a provincial , out @-@ of @-@ touch old man who would rather " sit in his log cabin drinking hard cider " than attend to the administration of the country . This strategy backfired when Harrison and his vice presidential running mate , John Tyler , adopted the log cabin and hard cider as campaign symbols . They used the images in banners and posters , and created bottles of hard cider that were shaped like log cabins , all to connect to the " common man " .

Although Harrison had come from a wealthy , slaveholding Virginia family , in this campaign he was promoted as a humble frontiersman in the style of the popular Andrew Jackson . A memorable example was the Gold Spoon Oration , delivered by a Whig representative . Van Buren , by contrast , was presented as a wealthy elitist .

A Whig chant from the time of the election exhibited the difference between candidates :

Old Tip he wore a homespun coat , he had no ruffled shirt : wirt @-@ wirt ,

But Matt he has the golden plate , and he 's a little squirt : wirt @-@ wirt !

People singing the chant would spit tobacco juice while singing " wirt @-@ wirt " .

The Whigs boasted of Harrison 's military record and reputation as the hero of the Battle of Tippecanoe . Their campaign slogan , " Tippecanoe and Tyler , too " , became among the most famous in American politics . On election day , Harrison won a landslide electoral college victory , though the popular vote was much closer , at 53 % to 47 % .

= = Presidency ( 1841 ) = =

= = = Shortest presidency = = =

When Harrison came to Washington , he wanted to show both that he was still the steadfast hero of Tippecanoe , and that he was a better educated and thoughtful man than the backwoods caricature ascribed to him in the campaign . He took the oath of office on March 4 , 1841 , a cold and wet day . He wore neither an overcoat nor hat , rode on horseback to the ceremony rather than in the closed carriage that had been offered him , and delivered the longest inaugural address in American history . At 8 @, @ 445 words , it took him nearly two hours to read , although his friend and fellow Whig Daniel Webster had edited it for length . Harrison then rode through the streets in the inaugural parade , and that evening attended three inaugural balls , including one at Carusi 's Saloon entitled the " Tippecanoe " ball , which at a price of US \$ 10 per person ( equal to \$ 229 today ) attracted

1000 guests .

The inaugural address was a detailed statement of the Whig agenda , essentially a repudiation of Jackson and Van Buren 's policies . Harrison promised to reestablish the Bank of the United States and extend its capacity for credit by issuing paper currency ( Henry Clay 's American system ) ; to defer to the judgment of Congress on legislative matters , with sparing use of his veto power ; and to reverse Jackson 's spoils system of executive patronage . He promised to use patronage to create a qualified staff , not to enhance his own standing in government .

As leader of the Whigs and a powerful legislator ( as well as a frustrated presidential candidate in his own right ) , Clay expected to have substantial influence in the Harrison administration . He ignored his own platform plank of overturning the " spoils " system . Clay attempted to influence Harrison 's actions before and during his brief presidency , especially in putting forth his own preferences for Cabinet offices and other presidential appointments . Harrison rebuffed his aggression , saying " Mr. Clay , you forget that I am the President . " The dispute intensified when Harrison named Daniel Webster , Clay 's arch @-@ rival , for control of the Whig Party , as his Secretary of State , and appeared to give Webster 's supporters some highly coveted patronage positions . Harrison 's sole concession to Clay was to name his protégé John J. Crittenden to the post of Attorney General . Despite this , the dispute continued until the President 's death .

Clay was not the only one who hoped to benefit from Harrison 's election . Hordes of office applicants came to the White House , which was then open to all who wanted a meeting with the President . Most of Harrison 's business during his month @-@ long presidency involved extensive social obligations ? an inevitable part of his high position and arrival in Washington ? and receiving visitors at the White House . They awaited him at all hours and filled the Executive Mansion . Harrison wrote in a letter dated March 10 , " I am so much harassed by the multitude that call upon me that I can give no proper attention to any business of my own . " Nevertheless , Harrison sent a number of nominations for office to the Senate for confirmation during his month in office . The new 27th Congress had convened an extraordinary session for the purpose of confirming Harrison 's cabinet and other important nominees ; since a number of them arrived after Congress ' March 15 adjournment , however , John Tyler would ultimately be forced to renominate many of Harrison 's selections .

Harrison took his pledge to reform executive appointments very seriously , visiting each of the six executive departments to observe its operations and issuing through Webster an order to all departments that electioneering by employees would henceforth be considered grounds for dismissal . As he had with Clay , Harrison resisted pressure from other Whigs over partisan patronage . When a group arrived in his office on March 16 to demand the removal of all Democrats from any appointed office , Harrison proclaimed , " So help me God , I will resign my office before I can be guilty of such an iniquity ! " Harrison 's own cabinet attempted to countermand the president 's appointment of John Chambers as Governor of Iowa in favor of Webster 's friend , General James Wilson ; when Webster attempted to press this decision at a March 25 cabinet meeting , however , Harrison asked him to read aloud a handwritten note ( which said simply " William Henry Harrison , President of the United States " ) , then announced that " William Henry Harrison , President of the United States , tells you , gentlemen , that , by God , John Chambers shall be governor of Iowa ! " .

Harrison 's only official act of consequence was to call Congress into a special session . Henry Clay and he had disagreed over the necessity of such a session , and when on March 11 Harrison 's cabinet proved evenly divided , the president vetoed the idea . When Clay pressed Harrison on the special session on March 13 , the president rebuffed his counsel and told him not to visit the White House again , but to address him only in writing . A few days later , however , Treasury Secretary Thomas Ewing reported to Harrison that federal funds were in such trouble that the government could not continue to operate until Congress ' regularly scheduled session in December ; Harrison thus relented , and on March 17 proclaimed the special session in the interests of " the condition of the revenue and finance of the country " . The session was scheduled to begin on May 31 .

= = = Administration and cabinet = = =



= = Death and funeral = =

On March 26 , Harrison became ill with a cold . According to the prevailing medical misconception of that time , his illness was believed to be directly caused by the bad weather at his inauguration ; however , Harrison 's illness did not arise until more than three weeks after the event .

The cold worsened , rapidly turning to pneumonia and pleurisy . He sought to rest in the White House , but could not find a quiet room because of the steady crowd of office seekers . His extremely busy social schedule made any rest time scarce .

Harrison 's doctors tried cures , applying opium , castor oil , leeches , and Virginia snakeweed , but the treatments only made Harrison worse , and he became delirious . He died nine days after becoming ill , at 12 : 30 am on April 4 , 1841 . Harrison 's doctor , Thomas Miller , diagnosed Harrison 's cause of death as " pneumonia of the lower lobe of the right lung " , but a 2014 medical analysis concluded that he instead died of enteric fever . The authors base their findings on the president 's symptoms and the close proximity of the White House to a dumping ground for sewage and human waste .

He was the first United States president to die in office . His last words were to his doctor , but assumed to be directed at John Tyler , " Sir , I wish you to understand the true principles of the government . I wish them carried out . I ask nothing more . " Harrison served the shortest term of any American president : March 4 ? April 4 , 1841 , 30 days , 12 hours , and 30 minutes .

Harrison 's funeral took place in the Wesley Chapel in Cincinnati , Ohio , on April 7 , 1841 . His original interment was in the public vault of the Congressional Cemetery in Washington , D.C. He was later buried in North Bend , Ohio . The William Henry Harrison Tomb State Memorial was erected in his honor .

= = Impact of death = =

Harrison 's death was a disappointment to Whigs , who hoped to pass a revenue tariff and enact measures to support Henry Clay 's American system . John Tyler , Harrison 's successor and a former Democrat , abandoned the Whig agenda , effectively cutting himself off from the party .

Due to the death of Harrison , three Presidents served within a single calendar year ( Martin Van Buren , Harrison , Tyler ) . This has happened on only one other occasion , 40 years later in 1881 , when Rutherford B. Hayes was succeeded by James A. Garfield , who was assassinated later in that year . With the death of Garfield , Chester A. Arthur stepped into the presidency .

Harrison 's death revealed the flaws in the constitution 's clauses on presidential succession . Article II of the Constitution states , " In case of the removal of the President from office , or of his death , resignation , or inability to discharge the powers and duties of the said office , the same shall devolve on the Vice President ... and [ the Vice President ] shall act accordingly , until the disability be removed , or a President shall be elected " . Scholars at the time disagreed whether the vice president would become president or merely acting President . The Constitution did not stipulate whether the Vice President could serve the remainder of the President 's term , until the next election , or if emergency elections should be held .

Harrison 's cabinet insisted that Tyler was " Vice President acting as President " . After the cabinet consulted with the Chief Justice Roger Taney , they decided that if Tyler took the presidential Oath of Office , he would assume the office of President . Tyler obliged and was sworn in on April 6 . In May , Congress convened . After a short period of debate in both houses , it passed a resolution that confirmed Tyler in the presidency for the remainder of Harrison 's term . Once established , this precedent of presidential succession remained in effect until the Twenty @-@ fifth Amendment was ratified in 1967 . Following the assassination of John F. Kennedy and the succession of Lyndon B. Johnson to the presidency in 1963 , the Twenty @-@ fifth Amendment dealt with the finer points of succession . It defined in what situations the Vice President was acting President , and in what situation the Vice President could become President .

= = = Legacy = = =

Harrison was the first sitting President to have his photograph taken , on Inauguration Day in 1841 . Photographs exist of John Quincy Adams , Andrew Jackson , and Martin van Buren , but those images were all taken after these men had ceased to be President . The Harrison image was also the first of these photographs to be taken . The original daguerreotype , made in Washington on his Inauguration Day , has been lost ? although at least one early photographic copy exists in the archives of the Metropolitan Museum of Art .

Harrison 's chief presidential legacy lies in his campaigning methods , which laid the foundation for the modern presidential campaign tactics . Harrison died nearly penniless . Congress voted to give his wife a Presidential widow 's pension , a payment of \$ 25 @, @ 000 , one year of Harrison 's salary . This is equivalent to \$ 573 @, @ 468 today . She also received the right to mail letters free of charge .

Harrison 's son John Scott Harrison served in the U.S. House of Representatives from Ohio between 1853 and 1857 . Harrison 's grandson , Benjamin Harrison of Indiana , was the 23rd president , from 1889 to 1893 , making them the only grandparent ? grandchild pair of Presidents .

Numerous places were named after Harrison :

Harrison , Michigan

Harrison , New Jersey

Harrison , Ohio

Harrison , Tennessee

Harrison County , Indiana

Harrison County , Mississippi

Harrison County , Iowa

Harrison County , Ohio

Three schools were named William Henry Harrison High School ( in Evansville and West Lafayette , Indiana and Harrison , Ohio ) in his honor .

During the American Civil War , the Union Army named a post near Cincinnati Camp Harrison . , and a military fort in Montana was named for him . Because of his short service , no military vessel was named after him as President .

A statue of Harrison was erected on Monument Circle in Indianapolis . Additionally , Harrison is shown ( on the left , facing the building ) in a pediment on the Tippecanoe County Courthouse , Lafayette , Indiana , 1882 .

= = = Explanatory notes = = =