

Executive Powers: Revolutionary War; Fact and Fiction



By Sam Spiro

What is This?

This text is intended to serve as a companion piece for the book Executive Powers: Revolutionary War (EP:RW).

Specifically, throughout EP:RW I have attempted to write a compelling narrative while simultaneously preserving as much historical truth as possible. However, there exist many places in the text where historical accuracy is sacrificed for the sake of telling a more compelling story.

This text is intended to alleviate these issues by clarifying some of the key points where the writing in EP:RW differs from the historical reality.

Some minor notes for using this text:

- The writing in this document is way less polished than it is in that of EP:RW, so one should expect a fair number of typos (which you are welcome to point out to me for correction!)
- This book is divided primarily based on the 31 fights of EP:RW. As such, it's recommended you look forward one chapter in this book each time they finish a fight in EP:RW to avoid minor spoilers for the fight.
- In order to distinguish between the characters in EP:RW and their historical counterparts, I will often specify them by their first names (e.g. Henry Truman for the EP:RW character and Harry Truman for the real life person he is inspired from).
- Some of the historical inaccuracies introduced early on in the book are done intentionally in order to establish a scene much later on in the book. In these cases, I will omit discussing the historical inaccuracies when they are first introduced and instead wait until their payoffs are fully resolved.

Preamble

The Bracket

Epitaphs. In the majority of cases, the epitaphs given to the Presidents are either real nicknames they were given, or slight deviations due to changes in their first name (e.g. the epitaph [Handsome Hank] for Hank Pierce is based off of the real life nickname “Handsome Frank” for Franklin Pierce). Those epitaphs which are not a straightforward modification of a real life nickname will be discussed in further detail later on in the text.

Day I: The First Branch

Eisenhower vs Grant

The Organizers. To a large extent, the organizers for the tournament were chosen amongst Presidents who never really wanted to be President.

First we have Harry Truman, who only reluctantly agreed to be Vice President after FDR more or less angrily called insisting he better join. It's also worth noting that the scenes in EP:RW where Henry Truman jumps in before being properly introduced, as well as him being introduced with an incorrect middle name, are based off of this really happening to Harry Truman when he initially took office.

We next have William Taft, who genuinely was far more interested in being on the Supreme Court than being President (but his wife had other plans for him).

Finally, we have Rutherford Hayes whose claim to being "disinterested" in the Presidency is much weaker than the other two. Certainly he made the usual claims of the times of not being interested in becoming President, but it's not clear to me at least how truthful this really was. That being said, he did make and maintain a campaign pledge that he would only run for a single term, which perhaps gives some credence to the idea that his EP:RW counterpart Ruth Hayes would be open to stepping out of the limelight for the tournament.

In addition to this, it is worth noting that Rutherford Hayes had essentially nothing to do with the Secret Service, and in particular Ruth Hayes being placed in charge of them isn't intended to be a reference to anything related to this.

Eisenhower's Flashback. Many of these events are entirely true: Dwight Eisenhower really did command a tank unit without any tanks, he really did train F. Scott Fitzgerald (though not as Camp Meade specifically), he really did struggle to get into combat with the war ending just a week before his deployment, and Fox Conner really did step in and save Dwight from being court martialed over an essentially bogus fine of \$250.

The scene with Deede Eisenhower's car getting is intended as a reference to Dwight taking part in the army's Transcontinental Motor Convoy which demonstrated to Dwight how poorly maintained some of the nation's roads were, with this later serving as inspiration for him pushing for the establishment of the Interstate Highway System.

Grant's Flashback. The scene that happens at West Point, including Grant setting a 25 year horse jumping record, is almost word for word true. However, there is some slight fudging regarding Grant's involvement in the Mexican-American war.

While it is true that Ulysses Grant was reluctantly appointed to serve as a quartermaster, it is not true that he was personally recruited by Zachary Taylor himself. Also, while Ulysses Grant honestly did ride a horse sideways to grab ammo for his troops, I made a few changes to simplify the story: he didn't do this because he was quartermaster, this didn't happen on his very first day on the job, and Zachary Taylor was not present at the scene when it happened.

Another fun and true fact: Ulysses Grant really was planning to become a mathematics professor, but ended up finding his calling in the army after the Mexican-American war.

Madison vs Monroe

Monroe's Epitaph. Jane Monroe's epitaph, [The Heir of Good Feelings], is the first epitaph for a fighter we've seen which is not literally a nickname which their corresponding President had in real life.

Indeed, this epitaph is a slight mutation of James Monroe's most common nickname "The Era of Good Feelings President" due to him ruling over a time when there was (at least on the surface) little political disagreement due to a temporary one party system. It is also based off of this epitaph that Jane Monroe was given her hippie aesthetic (which is historically inaccurate to say the least!).

Monroe's Flashback. While James Monroe did volunteer to cross the Delaware, it's not true that he was the first, nor is it true that George Washington gave him any particular praise for this. It also isn't true that he rode in the same boat as George Washington, nor did he carry the flag. These last two points were done solely to reference the famous painting "Washington Crossing the Delaware" where James Monroe is depicted (ahistorically) doing both of these things.

Somewhat miraculously, Monroe's interaction with the doctor is almost entirely true! While he didn't have a gun pointed at him, James Monroe was indeed harassed at his station by a passing doctor who mistook him to be British, then denied the doctor's offer to go into his house. The doctor then joined Washington's march, and during that battle this doctor really did narrowly save James Monroe's life after receiving a near fatal wound!

The incident with Washington going down in the fight is half true: it is really the case that during this battle, James Monroe's commander took an injury and went down, after which James Monroe heroically stepped in to lead his troops before chaos erupted, only to go down shortly himself. However, this commander was not George Washington (as depicted in EP:RW), but rather William Washington (a distant cousin of George). Narratively it was far simpler (and cooler) to use George Washington's counterpart in the story rather than introduce some other character also named Washington.

Madison's Flashback. Few of the events in this flashback literally happened in real life (e.g. there were no physical fights, only political ones), though most of the events are based on James Madison's very real struggle to ratify the Constitution despite the constant roadblocks Patrick Henry put in front of him.

Notably, while it is not true that Patrick Henry literally added secret clauses to their agreements, he did genuinely do a lot of maneuvering to make it so that James Madison didn't appear at the national convention for ratifying the constitution. In particular, he forced James Madison to take part in a heavily gerrymandered district against James Monroe (with this gerrymandering represented in the novel through the abandoned city which is highly favorable to Jamie Madison). Nevertheless, James Madison narrowly defeated his old friend James Monroe and succeeded in ratifying the constitution ??Though Henry would continue to cause problems after this???