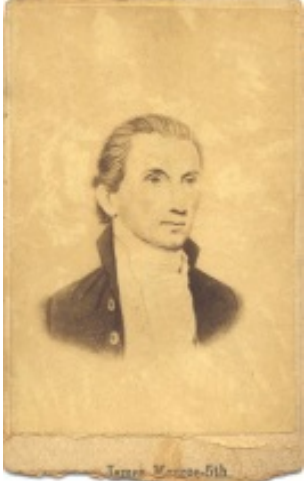


## Chapter 60 -- James Monroe Becomes America's Fifth President

 A portrait of James Monroe, the fifth President of the United States. He is shown from the chest up, wearing a dark coat and a white cravat. The portrait is on a light-colored background.	<b>Dates:</b> 1816	<b>Sections:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Run-up To The Election Of 1816</li><li>• Monroe Wins In A Landslide</li><li>• The Democratic-Republicans Strengthen Their Control Over The House</li><li>• James Monroe: Personal Profile</li></ul>
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Time: 1815-1816

### Run-up To The Election Of 1816

By 1816 both the threat from Britain and the Napoleonic Wars are over – and whatever popular momentum the Federalists were able to generate in 1812, amidst the Embargo and the early set-backs in Canada, is lost to them.

Their desperate ploy of selecting DeWitt Clinton, a Democratic-Republican, as “their” nominee in 1812, leaves them without a vibrant candidate for 1816. Largely by default, they put forward Senator Rufus King of New York, who has already been defeated twice, in 1804 and 1808, for the Vice Presidency.

King’s credentials are actually quite credible. Graduate of Harvard College, a brief militia stint during the first war with Britain, member in 1787 of the Committee On Style that drafted the Constitution, first-rate orator and outspoken opponent of slavery, close ally of that essential Federalist, Alexander Hamilton.

In 1796 Washington offers him the Secretary of State post, which he turns down in favor of the Ambassadorship to Britain. Remarkably when Jefferson becomes President in 1800, he retains King in that critical assignment until 1803.

Along with the 61 year old King, some Federalists put forward 64 year old John Howard of Maryland as a Vice-Presidential candidate. Howard is an ex-Revolutionary War hero, who owns a large slave-holding plantation, has previously served back in 1803 as a U.S. Senator, and appears to have little in common with King.

By contrast, a genuine race for the presidential nomination develops among the Democratic-Republicans.

The hand-picked candidate of both Jefferson and Madison is their fellow Virginian, James Monroe, currently serving as Secretary of State and Secretary of War.

However, the long-term anti-Jefferson faction of the Party decides to contest the top slot. This wing is led by John Randolph of Roanoke, who argues that Madison’s policies have become no more than:

*Old Federalism, vamped up into something bearing the superficial appearance of Republicanism.*

Their option to Monroe is the formidable Georgian, William Crawford, who has served under Madison as Minister to France and Secretary of War.

Crawford is the first of several politicians from his state who will emerge on the national stage with a reputation for arriving at independent positions and promoting them aggressively.

He is another self-made man, growing up in Appling, Georgia, along the eastern border with South Carolina. As a young man he is a farmer and teacher, before receiving a classical education at Carmel Academy under tutelage of the well-known Presbyterian minister, Moses Waddel. He is an excellent student and briefly joins the Academy staff before leaving to teach at Richland Academy, where he also studies law and passes the bar in 1799, at 27 years old. His scholarship on Georgia law and his outgoing personal style carry him readily into politics.

Crawford is physically and verbally a brawny man, and he engages in two bloody duels early in his career, both times involving political rivals backing future Governor John Clark. In 1802 he kills a Clark supporter named Peter Van Allen, and in 1806 is wounded in another duel, by Clark himself.

Later that year he is off to Washington, where he serves as U.S. Senator for six years, and is a popular choice as President pro tem in 1812. Madison appoints him Minister to France in 1813 and then Secretary of War in 1815.

Unlike the Warhawks, Clay and Calhoun, Crawford is initially opposed to fighting another battle with Britain, but his considerable influence in the Senate fails to carry the day. In 1813 he declines Madison’s offer to become the new Secretary of War, and instead takes a posting as Minister to France. After the conflict ends, he accepts the War slot, and serves there from 1815 to 1816, after which he becomes Madison’s Secretary of the Treasury, a position he will continue to hold over a nine year stretch, until 1825.

Crawford has just begun his new duties when various supporters put him forward as an option to Monroe for the 1816 nomination.

They tend to see in him a commanding presence, inclined to favor “old school” domestic virtues: power to the states over the national government; concerns about a centralized bank; free trade rather than debilitating embargos; limited taxation and Bill of Rights guarantees on freedom; a laissez-faire attitude toward slavery.

Others simply see him as an end to the monopoly that Virginians seem to have on the presidency.

Over time, Crawford’s flexibility on many issues will fail to conform to the “assumed preferences” of his backers – but in the 1816 caucus they put up a good fight. In the final balloting for the nomination, he comes up just short, garnering 54 votes against 65 for Monroe.

#### **1816 Presidential Nomination**

<b>Candidates</b>	<b>Votes</b>
James Monroe	65
William Crawford	54

As has become the norm by 1816, selection of a running mate for Monroe is more about geographically balancing the party ticket than about lining up a successor for the presidency. If anything, that path for the Democratic-Republicans now runs through tenure as Secretary of State.

**The Political Fate Of Early Vice-Presidents Vs. Secretaries Of State**

Year	President	Vice-President	Secretary of State	Presidential Nominee
1788	Washington	Adams	Jay, Jefferson	
1792	Washington	Adams	Jefferson, Randolph, Pickering	Adams in 1796
1796	Adams	Jefferson	Pickering, Lee, Marshall	Jefferson in 1800
1800	Jefferson	Burr	Lincoln, Madison	Jefferson in 1804
1804	Jefferson	Clinton	Madison	Madison in 1808
1808	Madison	Clinton/Vacant	Smith/Monroe	Madison in 1812
1812	Madison	Gerry/Vacant	Monroe	Monroe in 1816

In the end, the party settles on Daniel Tompkins, the sitting Governor of NY, as its nominee. Tompkin’s fame rests on his personal efforts to strengthen the state militia during the War of 1812. Unfortunately this has involved sizable loans to purchase equipment, which he backs against his personal wealth. In the end these bankrupt him and turn him to drink and an early death only three months after his term as Vice-President is over.

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Time: November-December 1816

**Monroe Wins In A Landslide**

Actual voting in the election of 1816 is completed between November 1 and December 4. Popular turnout is down dramatically from the 1812 race which featured intense controversy over both the trade embargos and the war with Britain.

**Popular Voting For President & Number Of States Where Electors Chosen By Their Votes**

1788	1792	1796	1800	1804	1808	1812	1816
43,782	28,579	66,841	67,282	143,110	192,691	278,786	112,370
7 of 12	6 of 15	9 of 16	6 of 16	11 of 17	10 of 17	9 of 18	10 of 19

As expected, Monroe wins in a landslide, carrying 16 states, losing only in traditionally Federalist strongholds, Connecticut, Rhode Island, and Massachusetts.

**Results Of The 1816 Presidential Election**

Candidates	State	Party	Pop Vote	Tot EV	South	Border	North	West
James Monroe	Va	Dem-Rep	76,592	183	70	20	82	11
Rufus King + locals	NY	Federalist	34,740	34	0	3	31	0
Unpledged			1,038					
Total			112,370	217	70	23	113	11
Needed To Win				109				

**Note:** South (Virginia, NC, SC, Georgia, TN, La), Border (Delaware, Maryland, Ky), North (NH, Mass, NY, NJ, Penn, RI, Conn, Vt), West (Ohio, Indiana) Total # electors voting = 217; must get more than half to win = 109.

His margin of victory in the electoral college is well ahead of what Madison accomplished before him, and almost comparable to Jefferson’s victory in 1804.

**Winning Margin In Electoral Votes Actually Cast**

Year	Candidates	Party	Electoral Votes
1804	Thomas Jefferson	Democratic-Republican	162 of 176/92%
1808	James Madison	Democratic-Republican	122 of 175/70%
1812	James Madison	Democratic-Republican	128 of 217/59%
1816	James Monroe	Democratic-Republican	183 of 217/84%

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Time: November-December 1816

**The Democratic-Republicans Strengthen Their Control Over The House**

Two new states – Indiana and Mississippi – participate in the election of the 15<sup>th</sup> Congress. Both end up in the Democratic-Republican column, sending one House representative and two Senators to Washington.

**First Time Voting Among New States**

Year	South	Border	North	West
1791			Vermont	
1792		Kentucky		
1796	Tennessee			
1803				Ohio
1812	Louisiana			
1816				Indiana
1817	Mississippi			

Overall the election represents the beginning of the death spiral for the Federalist Party in the House. They give back all of the gains they recorded in 1812 and 1814, and end up with only 40 of the 185 total seats.

### Election Trends – House Of Representatives

Party	1801	1803	1805	1807	1809	1811	1813	1815	1817
Democratic-Republicans	68	102	114	116	93	107	114	119	145
Federalist	38	40	28	26	49	36	68	64	40
Congress #	7 <sup>th</sup>	8 <sup>th</sup>	9 <sup>th</sup>	10 <sup>th</sup>	11 <sup>th</sup>	12 <sup>th</sup>	13 <sup>th</sup>	14 <sup>th</sup>	15 <sup>th</sup>
President	TJ	TJ	TJ	TJ	JM	JM	JM	JM	JM

Democratic-Republican dominance extends across all geographic regions. They continue to “own” the South, losing only a few seats in Virginia and North Carolina. In the North, they win the big states of Pennsylvania (23 seats) and New York (27) by wide margins, and even take 9 of 20 races in Massachusetts.

### House Trends By Region

Democratic-Republican	Total	South	Border	North	West
1801	68	30	7	31	
1803	102	42	13	46	1
1805	114	48	13	52	1
1807	116	47	12	56	1
1809	93	41	12	39	1
1811	107	43	12	51	1
1813	114	49	16	43	6
1815	119	51	14	47	7
1817	145	54	16	68	7
Federalists					
1801	38	8	4	26	
1803	40	7	3	30	
1805	28	1	3	24	
1807	26	2	4	20	
1809	49	8	4	37	
1811	36	7	4	25	
1813	75	9	9	57	
1815	64	7	7	50	
1817	40	5	5	29	1

The Federalists do better in the Senate. Three states – Connecticut, Delaware and Maryland – remain in their control, and they strengthen their hand near term in Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island.

### Election Trends – Senate

Party	1801	1803	1805	1807	1809	1811	1813	1815	1817
Democratic-Republicans	17	25	27	28	27	30	28	26	29
Federalist	15	9	7	6	7	6	8	12	13
Congress #	7 <sup>th</sup>	8 <sup>th</sup>	9 <sup>th</sup>	10 <sup>th</sup>	11 <sup>th</sup>	12 <sup>th</sup>	13 <sup>th</sup>	14 <sup>th</sup>	15 <sup>th</sup>
President	TJ	TJ	TJ	TJ	JM	JM	JM	JM	JM

The Democratic-Republicans continue to shut them out across the South and the West.

### Senate Trends By Region

<b>Democratic-Republican</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>South</b>	<b>Border</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>West</b>
1801	17	10	3	4	
1803	25	10	4	9	2
1805	27	10	4	11	2
1807	28	10	4	12	2
1809	27	10	4	11	2
1811	30	12	4	12	2
1813	28	12	3	11	2
1815	26	12	2	8	4
1817	29	14	2	7	6
<b>Federalists</b>					
1801	15	0	3	12	
1803	9	0	2	7	
1805	7	0	2	5	
1807	6	0	2	4	
1809	7	0	2	5	
1811	6	0	2	4	
1813	8	0	3	5	
1815	12	0	4	8	
1817	13	0	4	9	

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Time: 1758-1831

#### **James Monroe: Personal Profile**



James Monroe (1758-1831)

James Monroe is born on April 28, 1758, in Westmoreland County, Virginia, also the birthplace of George Washington and Robert E. Lee. His roots are considerably more humble than the three other presidents who precede him in the so-called “Virginia dynasty.”

His father, Spence Monroe, inherits some 500 acres of land, and builds a four room wooden cabin on it, which measures a mere 58x20 feet. He and his wife have five children and apparently own “several slaves,” who help him raise tobacco, corn, barley and livestock. The family is considered well off, but by no means aristocratic.

James Monroe works the farm, while also attending Campbelltown Academy, where he is tutored, along with his friend John Marshall, by the Scottish Reverend, Archibald Campbell, of the Church of England. In 1774, his father dies, and, as the oldest son, he inherits the plantation. At this point he also comes under the ongoing influence of an uncle on his mother’s side, Judge Joseph Jones. Jones has served on the Virginia

Courts, as a member of House of Burgesses, and later as representative to the Continental Congress. His friendships include Washington, Jefferson and Madison. Jones steers Monroe to enroll at the College of William & Mary.

But his education is interrupted after one year by the war with Britain. His father, Spence, had been outspoken in his criticism of abuses in colonial taxation, and now his son is eager to pick up arms as open conflict begins. He joins the 3<sup>rd</sup> Virginia Militia and, within two weeks of the Concord battle, he participates in a raid on the arsenal at the Governor's palace in Williamsburg. He is seventeen years old at this time.

Monroe's military career will extend over five years. His regiment is with Washington in August, 1776, when British Generals Clinton and Howe almost trap it in Manhattan. He then joins in the long retreat north, and from there across the Hudson and back south to New Jersey. On Christmas Day, 1776, he crosses the Delaware along with Washington and attacks the Hessians at the Battle of Trenton, where he almost loses his life. A musket ball severs an artery in his shoulder during a heroic assault, and he nearly bleeds out before a doctor saves him. Monroe's combat role ends with Trenton, although he does continue to serve in the militia almost until the end of the war.

Monroe's early experiences in life will mirror Washington more so than Jefferson or Madison. His perspectives on America are formed on the battlefield rather than in the library, and they endow him with a bias toward independent thought, leadership and action.

After the war he returns to Virginia, and the need to attend to his personal finances, something that will plague him through-out his life. He picks up the study of law, not out of particular interest, but as a proven path to required income. His connections result in two distinguished tutors, Jefferson and his former teacher, George Wythe, who has also apprenticed John Marshall, Edmund Randolph and Henry Clay in the law.

In 1783 he sells his inherited farm, passes the bar, and opens a practice in Fredericksburg. But his interest in politics continues. He serves in the state assembly and then as a delegate to the fourth session of the Congress of the Confederation. He is now on the national stage, and focused already on issues of national security and westward expansion that will mark his political future.

*There are before us some questions of the utmost consequence...whether we are to have standing troops to protect our frontiers or leave them unguarded...whether we will expose ourselves to the...loss of the country westward...and the intrusion on settlers by European powers who border us.*

While in New York at the Congress, he falls in love with Elizabeth Kortright, whose family is prominent in local society. Their marriage in 1786 will span 44 years and produce a son, who dies in infancy, and two daughters.

When time comes for the 1787 Constitutional Convention, Monroe is still "ranked" by other Virginians, and, to his annoyance, is left out of the delegation. His stated views exhibit a streak of political independence. Like the Federalists, he favors a strong central government, and supports its authority to nationalize the militia in times of crisis. But he stands with the Anti-Federalists in demanding the inclusion of a personal Bill of Rights.

Monroe steps up to challenge James Madison, who is eight years his senior, for a House seat in America's first election, in 1788. He loses, but is soon selected as a U.S. Senator in 1790. In Philadelphia, he boards with Madison and Jefferson, and aligns with the Democratic-Republican Party. After four years, he is

entrusted by his old war commander, George Washington, with his first ministerial assignment, to a Paris dominated by Napoleon.

His task there, a thankless one, involves coddling France while his counterpart in London, John Jay, negotiates his Amity Treaty of 1794 with the British. Jay keeps him in the dark from start to finish, and Monroe ends up being humiliated when the French learn of the treaty in the press. The fiercely pro-French Monroe lashes out publicly against Jay, and Alexander Hamilton convinces Washington to recall him. This wound is not forgotten, and Monroe is involved in exposing the “Reynold’s adultery affair” which forces Hamilton to resign in 1795.

He returns home to resume his law career and set up his new plantation called Highland, situated on 1,000 acres immediately adjacent to Jefferson’s Monticello. His true calling, however, is politics, and in 1799 he is elected Governor of Virginia. Then Jefferson becomes president in 1801 and grooms both Madison and Monroe as likely successors. As special envoy to France, Monroe helps negotiate the Louisiana Purchase. He serves as Minister to Britain from 1803-1808, and rejects attempts by an anti-Jefferson wing of the Democratic-Republican Party to have him run against Madison in the 1808 election. Madison rewards his loyalty by naming him Secretary of State, an office he holds from 1811-1817. After the British burn Washington on August 24, 1814, he also assumes the post of Secretary of War until the fighting is over.

In 1816 he is a natural candidate to succeed Madison, and he goes on to complete two terms (1817-25) during a period that becomes known as the “Era of Good Feelings” – despite the nation’s first tremor around the issue of slavery, leading to the 1820 Missouri Compromise. His own recorded thoughts about slavery mirror Jefferson, and he is an early sponsor of the American Colonization Society. The capital city of Liberia, Monrovia, is named after him.



Time: 1809

**Sidebar: For Sale – Monroe’s Plantation, Including A Stock of Cattle And Slaves**

*LOUDOUN LAND  
FOR SALE*

*For sale on Thursday, the 21st of December next on the premises, the tract of LAND on which the late Judge Jones resided in Loudoun County with about 25 slaves, and the stock of Horses, Cattle, and Hogs, on the estate. The tract contains nearly 2000 acres [8 km<sup>2</sup>], and possesses many advantages which entitle it to the attention of those who may wish to reside, in that highly improved part of our country. Two merchant mills are in the neighbourhood, one on the adjoining estate, and the other within two miles [3 km]. It is 10 miles [16 km] from Leesburg, 35 [56 km] from Alexandria and 40 [64 km] from Georgetown. The new, Turn-pike from Alexandria crosses a corner of the land, and terminates at the nearest merchant mill. The whole tract is remarkably well watered, Little river passing through the middle of it, and many small streams on each side emptying into that river. About 50 or 60 acres [200,000 or 240,000 m<sup>2</sup>] are already well set with timothy, and at least 300 acres (1.2 km<sup>2</sup>) are capable of being made excellent meadow. It will be divided into tracts of different dimensions to suit the convenience of purchasers. A credit of one, two and three years will be allowed. Bonds with approved security, and a trust on the land will be required. The negroes are supposed to be very valuable, some of them being good house servants, and the others, principally, young men and women. For them the same terms of credit will be allowed, and that of a year for every other article.*

*N.B. The above lands, being yet unsold, notice is given that they will be disposed of, by private sale, upon terms which will be made known on application to Israel Lacy Esq. of Goshen, Col. Armstead T. Mason, near Leesburg, Maj. Charles Fenton Mercer of Leesburg, or to the subscriber, near Milton in Albemarle county.*

*JAMES MONROE.  
December, 23d 1809.*