

**THE ESSENTIAL PRESIDENTIAL BOOK SHELF:
A SELECTIVE READERS' AND COLLECTORS' GUIDE**
BY TOM TRESCOTT AND DAN WEINBERG

We are proud to present the third edition (updated August 2001) of our check-list/guide to be used in assembling a basic collection of biographies of the Presidents of the United States. This newly updated bibliography represents just a sampling of the works available; we have not attempted to place before you all the essential titles on this vast subject, but instead have focused on the best full life studies.

With the exception of a few revised editions, we have only cited the first (in some cases there is only one) trade edition of each book. We will be happy to let you know about later printings and current availability, as well as the publication of new biographies worthy of inclusion in this list. You, the collector, can make your own rules: you may acquire these books for reading pleasure only, or you may wish to assemble a collection of first and limited editions, perhaps adding manuscript material as well.

Here, then, are the biographies of the men who have for over two hundred years dominated American history. We suggest that you download a copy of this guide, mark what you need, and return it to us as a "want list" for our files. We will then prepare a special quotation for you of the requested titles in stock, following up with future quotes as other desired books become available. Enjoy building your library!

1. GEORGE WASHINGTON (Federalist, 1789-1797)

Flexner, James Thomas. GEORGE WASHINGTON. Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1965-1972. 4 vols., fts., illus., illus. eps., maps, map eps. *Thoroughly researched and well written; essential for one studying the life of the first president.*

**THE FORGE OF EXPERIENCE (1732-1775). 1965.
IN THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION (1775-1783). 1968.
AND THE NEW NATION (1783-1793). 1970.
ANGUISH AND FAREWELL (1793-1799). 1972.**

Freeman, Douglas Southall. GEORGE WASHINGTON: A BIOGRAPHY. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1948-1957. 7 vols., fts., illus., maps, map eps. *A distinguished work by an eminent historian, and the definitive portrait of Washington. Mr. Freeman died in 1953, but his assistants completed the last volume in the series.*

**Volumes One & Two. YOUNG WASHINGTON. 1948
Volumes Three & Four. PLANTER AND PATRIOT; LEADER OF THE REVOLUTION. 1951.
Volume Five. VICTORY WITH THE HELP OF FRANCE. 1952.
Volume Six. PATRIOT AND PRESIDENT. 1954.
Volume Seven. FIRST IN PEACE. By John Alexander Carroll and Mary Wells Ashworth. 1957.**

Freeman, Douglas Southall. WASHINGTON: AN ABRIDGEMENT IN ONE VOLUME BY RICHARD HARWELL OF THE SEVEN VOLUME GEORGE WASHINGTON. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1968. 780p., ft., illus., illus. eps., maps. *Richard Harwell's fine abridgement of the seven volume set.*

Randall, Willard Sterne. GEORGE WASHINGTON: A LIFE. New York: Henry Holt, 1997. 548p., maps. *A recommended recent treatment.*

2. JOHN ADAMS (Federalist, 1797-1801)

Ferling, John. JOHN ADAMS: A LIFE. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1992. 535p., illus. *The best one-volume work.*

McCullough, David. JOHN ADAMS. New York: 2001. 751p., illus., illus. eps. *A sweeping popular biography by a Pulitzer Prize-winner.*

Smith, Page. JOHN ADAMS. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1962. 2 vols., 1170p., illus. *This first full study after the publication of the Adams papers is first rate.*

3. THOMAS JEFFERSON (Democratic-Republican, 1801-1809)

Cunningham, Noble E., Jr. IN PURSUIT OF REASON: THE LIFE OF THOMAS JEFFERSON. Baton Rouge and London: Louisiana State University Press, 1987. 414p., illus. *The most solid recent study focuses on Jefferson's public career.*

Malone, Dumas. JEFFERSON AND HIS TIME. Boston: Little, Brown & Company, 1948-1981. 6 vols., fts., illus., maps. *The essential work on Jefferson, and one of the greatest contributions to American historical literature in this century.*

Volume One. JEFFERSON THE VIRGINIAN. 1948.

Volume Two. JEFFERSON AND THE RIGHTS OF MAN. 1951.

Volume Three. JEFFERSON AND THE ORDEAL OF LIBERTY. 1962.

Volume Four. JEFFERSON THE PRESIDENT: FIRST TERM, 1801-1805. 1970.

Volume Five. JEFFERSON THE PRESIDENT: SECOND TERM, 1805-1809. 1974.

Volume Six. THE SAGE OF MONTICELLO. 1981.

Peterson, Merrill D. THOMAS JEFFERSON AND THE NEW NATION: A BIOGRAPHY. New York: Oxford University Press, 1970. 1072p., ft., illus. *Based upon a rare command of the Jefferson literature, this is the best one-volume life of the third president.*

4. JAMES MADISON (Democratic-Republican, 1809-1809)

Brant, Irving. JAMES MADISON. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1941-1961. 6 vols., fts., illus. *Impeccable scholarship presented with verve. The definitive work on Madison.*

Volume One. THE VIRGINIA REVOLUTIONIST. 1941.

Volume Two. THE NATIONALIST, 1780-1787. 1948.

Volume Three. FATHER OF THE CONSTITUTION, 1787-1800. 1950.

Volume Four. SECRETARY OF STATE, 1800-1809. 1953.

Volume Five. PRESIDENT, 1809-1812. 1956.

Volume Six. COMMANDER IN CHIEF, 1812-1836. 1961.

Brant, Irving. THE FOURTH PRESIDENT: A LIFE OF JAMES MADISON. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1970. 681p. *A masterful condensation of the multi-volume original.*

Ketcham, Ralph Louis. JAMES MADISON: A BIOGRAPHY. New York: Macmillan, 1971. 753p., illus. *A well-written review of Madison's career.*

Ruland, Robert A. JAMES MADISON: THE FOUNDING FATHER. New York: Macmillan, 1987. 287p., illus. *A fresh, personal biography.*

5. JAMES MONROE (Democratic-Republican, 1817-1825)

Ammon, Harry. JAMES MONROE. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1971. 706p., ft. *A fine, thorough treatment.*

Cresson, William P. JAMES MONROE. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1946. 577p., ft., illus. *Excellent scholarly biography of the least known of the Virginia presidents.*

Styron, Arthur. THE LAST OF THE COCKED HATS: JAMES MONROE & THE VIRGINIA DYNASTY. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1945. 480p., ft., illus. *A good study of the man and his times.*

6. JOHN QUINCY ADAMS (Democratic-Republican, 1825-1829)

Bemis, Samuel F. JOHN QUINCY ADAMS AND THE FOUNDATIONS OF AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY; JOHN QUINCY ADAMS AND THE UNION. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1949-56. 2 vols. (588p.; 546p.), ft., plates, maps, fold. maps. *Scholarly and interesting. Bemis emphasizes the enduring influence Adams had on the growth of the Republic.*

Hecht, Marie B. JOHN QUINCY ADAMS: A PERSONAL HISTORY OF AN INDEPENDENT MAN. New York: Macmillan, 1972. 682p., illus. *A vigorous examination of the last president intimately tied to the values of the Revolutionary generation.*

Parsons, Lynn Hudson. JOHN QUINCY ADAMS. Madison: Madison House, 1998. 284p., illus., map. *A balanced, complete, and lively recent biography.*

7. ANDREW JACKSON (Democrat, 1829-1837)

James, Marquis. ANDREW JACKSON: BORDER CAPTAIN; PORTRAIT OF A PRESIDENT. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1933-1937. 2 vols. (461p.; 627p.), fts., plates, maps, map eps. *Epic, exciting, and regarded as the standard life of Jackson until Remini.*

Parton, James. THE LIFE OF ANDREW JACKSON. New York: Mason Brothers, 1859-60. 3 vols. (636p.; 672p.; 734p.), fts., fold. facsim. *The first major biography, with pioneering research on Jackson's early life.*

Remini, Robert V. ANDREW JACKSON.... New York: Harper & Row, 1977-1984. 3 vols., illus., maps. *The definitive work on "Old Hickory". Jackson is revealed as a man of conflicting ambitions and emotions --- heroic, but filled with doubt and even self-destructiveness.*

...AND THE COURSE OF AMERICAN EMPIRE, 1767-1821. 1977.
...AND THE COURSE OF AMERICAN FREEDOM, 1822-1832. 1981.
...AND THE COURSE OF AMERICAN DEMOCRACY, 1833-1845. 1984.

Remini, Robert V. THE LIFE OF ANDREW JACKSON. New York: Harper & Row, 1988. 412p., illus., maps. *An excellent one-volume abridgement of the above.*

8. MARTIN VAN BUREN (Democrat, 1837-1841)

Alexander, Holmes. AMERICAN TALLEYRAND: THE CAREER OF MARTIN VAN BUREN. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1935. 430p., illus. *The classic life of the founder of "machine politics" in the United States.*

Lynch, Denis Tilden. AN EPOCH AND A MAN: MARTIN VAN BUREN AND HIS TIMES. New York: Horace Liveright, 1929. 566p., ft., plates. *A standard work on Van Buren.*

Niven, John. **MARTIN VAN BUREN AND THE ROMANTIC AGE OF AMERICAN POLITICS.** New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983. 736p., illus. *Thoughtful study of Van Buren and his time, and the first modern biography based extensively on the man's papers.*

9. WILLIAM HENRY HARRISON (Whig, 1841)

Cleaves, Freeman. **OLD TIPPECANOE: WILLIAM HENRY HARRISON AND HIS TIME.** New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1939. 422p., ft., illus., maps. *Sympathetic biography of the "forgotten president" who served the briefest term. Although Harrison held office for only a month, his distinguished career spanned several decades.*

Goebel, Dorothy B. **WILLIAM HENRY HARRISON: A POLITICAL BIOGRAPHY.** Indianapolis: Indiana Library & Historical Dept., 1926. 456p., ft., plates. *Despite its age, a work essential to the study of Harrison.*

10. JOHN TYLER (Whig, 1841-1845)

Chitwood, Oliver Perry. **JOHN TYLER: CHAMPION OF THE OLD SOUTH.** New York: Appleton-Century, 1939. 496p., ft. *A scholarly work on a complex character: the first of the accidental presidents.*

Seager, Robert, II. **AND TYLER TOO: A BIOGRAPHY OF JOHN & JULIA TYLER.** New York: McGraw Hill, 1963. 681p. *The essential book on Tyler.*

11. JAMES K. POLK (Democrat, 1845-1849)

McCormac, Eugene Irving. **JAMES K. POLK: A POLITICAL BIOGRAPHY.** Berkeley: University of California Press, 1922. 746p. *A fine account of the first "dark horse" in a presidential race.*

Sellers, Charles Grier, Jr. **JAMES K. POLK: JACKSONIAN; CONTINENTALIST.** Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957-1966. 2 vols. (526p.; 513p.), illus., maps. *A carefully researched study of the Mexican War president and expansionist, that has yet to be completed.*

12. ZACHARY TAYLOR (Whig, 1849-1850)

Bauer, K. Jack. **ZACHARY TAYLOR: SOLDIER, PLANTER, STATESMAN OF THE OLD SOUTHWEST.** Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1985. 348p., illus., maps. *A balanced and thoroughly researched biography of a man not so simple nor so nonpolitical as many historians have believed.*

Dyer, Brainerd. **ZACHARY TAYLOR.** Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1946. 455p., ft., illus., maps. *An excellent one-volume biography.*

Hamilton, Holman. **ZACHARY TAYLOR: SOLDIER OF THE REPUBLIC; SOLDIER IN THE WHITE HOUSE.** Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1941-1951. 2 vols. (335p.; 496p.), fts., illus. *The definitive life of "Old Rough and Ready".*

13. MILLARD FILLMORE (Whig, 1850-1853)

Rayback, Robert J. **MILLARD FILLMORE: BIOGRAPHY OF A PRESIDENT.** Buffalo: Buffalo Historical Society Publications, 1959. 470p., illus. *A good examination of a man whose name did not become a household word.*

14. FRANKLIN PIERCE (Democrat, 1853-1857)

Nichols, Roy Franklin. **FRANKLIN PIERCE: YOUNG HICKORY OF THE GRANITE HILLS.** Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1931. 615p., ft., plates. (Revised edition -- - 1958, 625p.) *A discerning portrait of Pierce, and the only scholarly biography of the man.*

15. JAMES BUCHANAN (Democrat, 1857-1861)

Klein, Philip S. **PRESIDENT JAMES BUCHANAN: A BIOGRAPHY.** University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 506p., illus. *Scholarly biography of one of the most misunderstood chief executives.*

16. ABRAHAM LINCOLN (Republican, 1861-1865)

Donald, David Herbert. **LINCOLN.** New York: Simon & Schuster, 1995. 714p., illus. *The Pulitzer Prize-winner.*

Neely, Mark E., Jr. **THE LAST BEST HOPE OF EARTH: ABRAHAM LINCOLN AND THE PROMISE OF AMERICA.** Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 1993. 214p., illus. *An excellent, compact political analysis.*

Oates, Stephen B. **WITH MALICE TOWARD NONE: THE LIFE OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN.** New York: Harper & Row, 1977. 492p., illus. *A fine modern biography.*

Sandburg, Carl. **ABRAHAM LINCOLN: THE PRARIE YEARS; THE WAR YEARS.** New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company, 1926-1939. 6 vols. (PRARIE 2 vols.; WAR 4 vols.), fts., illus., maps. *Essential for any serious Lincoln library. Sandburg captured the essence of the Lincoln myth.*

Thomas, Benjamin P. **ABRAHAM LINCOLN: A BIOGRAPHY.** New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1952. 548p., ft., illus., maps. *The classic one-volume life of Lincoln for almost fifty years.*

JEFFERSON DAVIS (President of the Confederate States of America, 1861-1865)

Cooper, William J., Jr. **JEFFERSON DAVIS, AMERICAN.** New York: Knopf, 2000. 757p., illus., maps. *A full biography that evenly treats both the public and the private Davis, and balances his contributions before the Civil War with his Confederate presidency.*

Davis, William C. **JEFFERSON DAVIS: THE MAN AND HIS HOUR.** New York: HarperCollins, 1991. 784p., ft., illus. *A sympathetic, elegantly written treatment.*

Strode, Hudson. **JEFFERSON DAVIS.** New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1955-1966. 4 vols., fts., map eps. *The most thorough study of this tragic figure. The final volume is a collection of private letters.*

AMERICAN PATRIOT, 1808-1861. 1955.
CONFEDERATE PRESIDENT. 1959.
TRAGIC HERO, THE LAST TWENTY-FIVE YEARS, 1864-1889. 1964.
PRIVATE LETTERS, 1823-1889. 1966.

17. ANDREW JOHNSON (Democrat-Union, 1865-1869)

Stryker, Lloyd Paul. **ANDREW JOHNSON: A STUDY IN COURAGE.** New York: Macmillan, 1929. 881p., ft., plates. *A provocative study of the first president to face impeachment.*

Trefousse, Hans L. **ANDREW JOHNSON: A BIOGRAPHY.** New York and London: W.W. Norton, 1989. 463p., illus. *The most recent full biography, by the foremost authority on the Reconstruction era, is the best one.*

18. ULYSSES S. GRANT (Republican, 1869-1877)

Lewis, Lloyd. **CAPTAIN SAM GRANT.** Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1950. 512p., ft. Catton, Bruce. **GRANT MOVES SOUTH; GRANT TAKES COMMAND.** Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1960-1969. 564p; 556p., fts., maps. *After Lewis died, Catton continued the multi-volume biography. Still a masterful study, by two superb writers and historians, though it only takes Grant through the end of the Civil War.*

McFeely, William S. **GRANT: A BIOGRAPHY.** New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1981. 592p., ft., illus. *A complete biography in one volume, which won the Pulitzer Prize. McFeely analyzes Grant's personality to explain his meteoric rise.*

Perret, Geoffrey. **ULYSSES S. GRANT: SOLDIER AND PRESIDENT.** New York: Random House, 1997. 542p., illus., maps. *A compelling read, especially strong on Grant's military career.*

Simpson, Brooks D. **ULYSSES S. GRANT: TRIUMPH OVER ADVERSITY, 1822-1865.** Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2000. 533p., ft., illus., maps. *The first of two projected volumes takes Grant through the end of the Civil War.*

Smith, Jean Edward. **GRANT.** New York: Simon & Schuster, 2001. 781p., illus., maps. *A new work, with a revisionist, positive slant on Grant's presidency. Exhaustively researched and wonderfully written.*

19. RUTHERFORD B. HAYES (Republican, 1877-1881)

Barnard, Harry. **RUTHERFORD B. HAYES AND HIS AMERICA.** Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merill, 1954. 606p., ft., illus. *An excellent book on a man and an era.*

Hoogenboom, Ari. **RUTHERFORD B. HAYES: WARRIOR AND PRESIDENT.** Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1995. 626p., illus. *A comprehensive political biography.*

20. JAMES A. GARFIELD (Republican, 1881)

Peskin, Allan. **JAMES ABRAM GARFIELD.** Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 1978. 716p., ft. *The best account of Garfield and the "gilded age".*

Taylor, John M. **GARFIELD OF OHIO: THE AVAILABLE MAN.** New York: W. W. Norton, 1970. 336p., ft., illus. *Another fine modern study of the president who served only six months before he was assassinated.*

21. CHESTER A. ARTHUR (Republican, 1881-1885)

Reeves, Thomas C. **GENTLEMAN BOSS: THE LIFE OF CHESTER ALAN ARTHUR.** New York: Knopf, 1975. 500p., ft., illus. *The only full-length biography of Arthur, and an excellent book.*

22. GROVER CLEVELAND (Democrat, 1885-1889)

Brodsky, Alyn. GROVER CLEVELAND: A STUDY IN CHARACTER. New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000. 436p., illus. *A solid full study of the only Democrat elected to the presidency between the Civil War and World War One.*

Nevins, Allan. GROVER CLEVELAND: A STUDY IN COURAGE. New York: Dodd, Mead & Co., 1932. 832p., ft., plates. *The best biography of Cleveland, by one of the great American historians. Cleveland was the only president who served non-consecutive terms.*

23. BENJAMIN HARRISON (Republican, 1889-1893)

Sievers, Harry J. BENJAMIN HARRISON. 1952-1968. 3 vols., ft., illus., maps. *The only comprehensive biography available.*

HOOSIER WARRIOR, 1833-1865. Chicago: Henry Regnery Co., 1952.

HOOSIER STATESMAN, FROM THE CIVIL WAR TO THE WHITE HOUSE, 1865-1888. New York: University Publishers, 1959.

HOOSIER PRESIDENT, THE WHITE HOUSE AND AFTER. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1968.

24. GROVER CLEVELAND (Democrat, 1893-1897)

See list for twenty-second president.

25. WILLIAM McKINLEY (Republican, 1897-1901)

Leech, Margaret. IN THE DAYS OF McKINLEY. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1959. 686p., illus. *Valuable analysis of a neglected and little understood man.*

Morgan, H. Wayne. WILLIAM McKINLEY AND HIS AMERICA. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1963. 595p., ft., illus. *A masterfully done full life.*

26. THEODORE ROOSEVELT (Republican, 1901-1909)

Brands, H.W. TR: THE LAST ROMANTIC. New York: BasicBooks, 1997. 897p., illus. *Insightful and vibrant.*

Harbaugh, William H. POWER AND RESPONSIBILITY: THE LIFE AND TIMES OF THEODORE ROOSEVELT. New York: Farrar, Straus & Cudahy, 1961. 568p. *An excellent read.*

Miller, Nathan. THEODORE ROOSEVELT: A LIFE. New York: William Morrow and Company, 1992. 624p., illus. *A full biography of one of the most compelling personalities in the history of the nation.*

Morris, Edmund. THE RISE OF THEODORE ROOSEVELT. New York: Coward, McCann & Geoghegan, 1979. 886p., illus., maps. **THEODORE REX.** New York: Random House, 2001. 772p., illus., map. *An engaging portrait that promises to become the definitive biography --- if Morris ever finishes it, that is. The first volume covers Roosevelt's life to the assassination of McKinley; the second (which took long enough!) is TR in the Bully Pulpit.*

Pringle, Henry F. THEODORE ROOSEVELT: A BIOGRAPHY. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1931. 627p., ft., illus. *For many years, the only scholarly biography available. Good insights into a colorful, often blustering personality.*

27. WILLIAM HOWARD TAFT (Republican, 1909-1913)

Duffy, Herbert S. **WILLIAM HOWARD TAFT: A BIOGRAPHY.** New York: Minton, Balch & Co., 1930. 345p., ft., plates. *An acceptable one-volume study.*

Pringle, Henry F. **THE LIFE AND TIMES OF WILLIAM HOWARD TAFT.** New York: Farrar and Rinehart, 1939. 2 vols., 1106p., fts., illus. *Though older, still the best biography of the only president who also became Chief Justice.*

28. WOODROW WILSON (Democrat, 1913-1921)

Baker, Ray Stannard. **WOODROW WILSON: LIFE & LETTERS.** New York: Doubleday, 1927-1939. 8 vols., fts., plates, facsimis. *Still a major work on the scholar-president.*

Volume One. **YOUTH, 1856-1890.** 1927.

Volume Two. **PRINCETON, 1890-1910.** 1927.

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Volume Five. **NEUTRALITY, 1914-1915.** 1935.

Volume Six. **FACING WAR, 1915-1917.** 1937.

Volume Seven. **WAR LEADER, APRIL 6, 1917 - FEBRUARY 28, 1918.** 1939.

Volume Eight. **ARMISTICE, MARCH - NOVEMBER 11, 1918.** 1939.

Heckscher, August. **WOODROW WILSON.** New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1991. 743p., illus. *The best one-volume treatment.*

Link, Arthur S. **WILSON.** Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1947-1965. 5 vols., illus., plates. *An outstanding work, in need of a scholar to complete the task.*

THE ROAD TO THE WHITE HOUSE. 1947.

THE NEW FREEDOM. 1956.

THE STRUGGLE FOR NEUTRALITY, 1914-1915. 1960.

CONFUSIONS AND CRISES, 1915-1916. 1964.

CAMPAIGNS FOR PROGRESSIVISM AND PEACE, 1916-1917. 1965.

Walworth, Arthur. **WOODROW WILSON: I AMERICAN PROPHET; II WORLD PROPHET.** New York: Longmans, Green and Company, 1958. Revised edition, New York: W. W. Norton, 1978. 2 vols. (454p.; 438p.), fts. *A Pulitzer Prize-winning full biography.*

29. WARREN G. HARDING (Republican, 1921-1923)

Russell, Francis. **THE SHADOW OF BLOOMING GROVE: WARREN G. HARDING IN HIS TIMES.** New York: McGraw-Hill, 1968. 691p. *Though flawed, still the best biography of a president who was too human.*

30. CALVIN COOLIDGE (Republican, 1923-1929)

McCoy, Donald R. **CALVIN COOLIDGE: THE QUIET PRESIDENT.** New York: Macmillan, 1967. 472p., illus. *The most recent biography gives this business president fair treatment.*

White, William Allen. **PURITAN IN BABYLON: THE STORY OF CALVIN COOLIDGE.** New York: Macmillan, 1938. 460p., ft., illus. *The much maligned "Silent Cal" is placed in better perspective by a famous editor.*

31. HERBERT HOOVER (Republican, 1929-1933)

Burner, David. **HERBERT HOOVER: A PUBLIC LIFE.** New York: Knopf, 1979. 433p., illus. *A balanced political biography.*

Lyons, Eugene. **HERBERT HOOVER: A BIOGRAPHY.** Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1964. 444p., illus. eps. *The best of the Hoover biographies reveals the human side of a seemingly austere figure.*

Nash, George H. **THE LIFE OF HERBERT HOOVER.** New York and London: W.W. Norton, 1983-96. 3 vols., illus. *This will be the definitive study of an able, but unlucky president; authorized and subsidized by the Hoover Presidential Library Association.*

THE ENGINEER, 1874-1914. 1983.
THE HUMANITARIAN, 1914-1917. 1988.
MASTER OF EMERGENCIES, 1917-1918. 1996.

32. FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT (Democrat, 1933-1945)

Burns, James MacGregor. **ROOSEVELT: THE LION AND THE FOX; THE SOLDIER OF FREEDOM.** New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1956-1970. 2 vols. (553p.; 722p.), illus. *The first complete biography of FDR.*

Davis, Kenneth S. **FDR: A HISTORY.** New York: Random House, 1972-2000. 5 vols. *A sweeping chronicle that, due to the death of the author, ends before the end of Roosevelt.*

THE BECKONING OF DESTINY, 1882-1928. 1972.
THE NEW YORK YEARS, 1928-1933. 1985.
THE NEW DEAL YEARS, 1933-1937. 1986.
INTO THE STORM, 1937-1940. 1993.
THE WAR PRESIDENT, 1940-1943. 2000.

Freidel, Frank. **FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT.** Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1952-1973. 4 vols., illus. *Projected to be six volumes and the most comprehensive biography of FDR, the work was abandoned after getting Roosevelt through the "Hundred Days".*

THE APPRENTICESHIP. 1952.
THE ORDEAL. 1954.
THE TRIUMPH. 1956.
LAUNCHING THE NEW DEAL. 1973.

Freidel, Frank. **FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT: A RENDEZVOUS WITH DESTINY.** Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1990. 710p., illus. *Since Freidel never completed his multi-volume biography, he wrote the standard one-volume work instead.*

33. HARRY S. TRUMAN (Democrat, 1945-1953)

Ferrell, Robert H. **HARRY S. TRUMAN: A LIFE.** Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1994. 501p., illus. *A fine study by an authority on the American presidency.*

Hamby, Alonzo L. **A MAN OF THE PEOPLE: A LIFE OF HARRY S. TRUMAN.** New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995. 760p., illus. *Deeply researched, balanced, and superbly written.*

McCullough, David. **TRUMAN.** New York: Simon & Schuster, 1992. 1117p., illus. *A best-seller and Pulitzer Prize-winner.*

34. DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER (Republican, 1953-1961)

Ambrose, Stephen E. EISENHOWER: SOLDIER, GENERAL OF THE ARMY, PRESIDENT-ELECT; THE PRESIDENT & ELDER STATESMAN. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1983-84. 2 vols. (640p.; 752p.), illus., map eps. *The most complete and objective work yet on the general who became President.*

Lee, R. Alton. DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER: SOLDIER AND STATESMAN. Chicago: Nelson-Hall, 1981. 379p., illus. *A favorable assessment.*

Lyon, Peter. EISENHOWER: PORTRAIT OF THE HERO. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1974. 991p., illus. *Compassionate biography of the man who was the nation's "father figure".*

35. JOHN F. KENNEDY (Democrat, 1961-1963)

Hamilton, Nigel. JFK: RECKLESS YOUTH. New York: Random House, 1992. 898p., illus. *The first of a projected multi-volume life gets JFK through his first election to Congress.*

Parment, Herbert S. JACK: THE STRUGGLES OF JOHN F. KENNEDY; JFK: THE PRESIDENCY OF JOHN F. KENNEDY. New York: Dial Press, 1980-1983. 2 vols. (586p.; 407p.), illus. *A balanced portrait, and the best work to date on Kennedy.*

Reeves, Thomas C. A QUESTION OF CHARACTER: A LIFE OF JOHN F. KENNEDY. New York: The Free Press, 1991. 510p., illus. *A very critical study.*

36. LYNDON B. JOHNSON (Democrat, 1963-1969)

Caro, Robert A. THE YEARS OF LYNDON JOHNSON: THE PATH TO POWER; MEANS OF ASCENT. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1982-1990. 2 vols. (882p.; 506p.), illus. *These first two volumes of a yet to be completed biography are the most detailed life of LBJ, with considerable new material. Still, the use of certain questionable sources may prevent Caro's work from becoming the definitive biography.*

Dallek, Robert. LONE STAR RISING: LYNDON JOHNSON AND HIS TIMES, 1908-1960; FLAWED GIANT: LYNDON JOHNSON AND HIS TIMES, 1861-1973. New York: Oxford University Press, 1991-98. 2 vols. (721p.; 754p.), illus. *Comprehensive and well-written, by a leading presidential scholar.*

Kearns, Doris. LYNDON JOHNSON AND THE AMERICAN DREAM. New York: Harper & Row, 1976. 432p. *A revealing life of the formidable, but troubled, president.*

37. RICHARD M. NIXON (Republican, 1969-1974)

Ambrose, Stephen E. NIXON. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1987-91. 3 volumes, illus. *A balanced, thorough, and compelling chronicle of defeat, resurrection and disaster.*

THE EDUCATION OF A POLITICAN, 1913-1962. 1987.
THE TRIUMPH OF A POLITICAN, 1962-1972. 1989.
RUIN AND RECOVERY, 1973-1990. 1991.

Morris, Roger. RICHARD MILHOUS NIXON: THE RISE OF AN AMERICAN POLITICIAN. New York: Henry Holt, 1990. 1005p., illus. *The first of two projected volumes takes Nixon to becoming Vice-President; highly critical.*

38. GERALD R. FORD (Republican, 1974-1977)

We are still in waiting for the definitive biography, or even a recommendable one.

39. JIMMY CARTER (Democrat, 1977-1981)

We are still in waiting for the definitive biography, or even a recommendable one.

40. RONALD REAGAN (Republican, 1981-1989)

Morris, Edmund. DUTCH: A MEMOIR OF RONALD REAGAN. New York: Random House, 1999. 874p., illus. *The only authorized life was very controversial because of the author's unorthodox biographical style. Informative and insightful, but it could have (and should have) been more.*

Pemberton, William E. EXIT WITH HONOR: THE LIFE AND PRESIDENCY OF RONALD REAGAN. Armonk, NY: 1998. 295p., illus. *The first biography to make use of the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library is a splendid one.*

41. GEORGE BUSH (Republican, 1989-1993)

We are still in waiting for the definitive biography, or even a recommendable one.

42. BILL CLINTON (Democrat, 1993-2001)

We are still in waiting for the definitive biography, or even a recommendable one.

43. GEORGE W. BUSH (Republican, 2001-?)

We need to get more removed from his presidency before we have a title to put on this list.