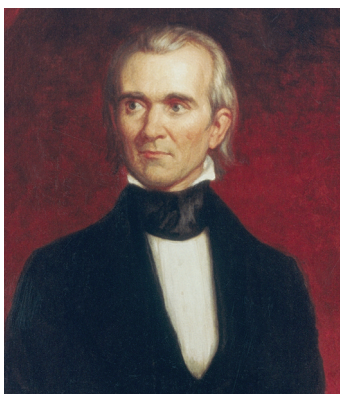


FEDERAL RESERVE BANK OF RICHMOND
BOOKMARK SERIES



WHITE HOUSE HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION (WHITE HOUSE COLLECTION)

James Knox Polk

Biography

Full Name:

James Knox Polk

Birth Date & Place:

November 2, 1795
 Mecklenburg County,
 North Carolina

Schooling:

Home schooled until age of 18
 Attended a Presbyterian school
 near Columbia, Tennessee
 Graduated at the head of his
 class from the University of
 North Carolina in 1818.

Studied law under prominent
 Tennessee lawyer, Felix Grundy.

Lived:

North Carolina
 Tennessee frontier
 Family plantation in Tennessee
 Washington, D.C. (White House)

Death:

June 15, 1849
 Nashville, Tennessee

Achievements

1832: He was the Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee and chief administration leader in the House under Andrew Jackson; beat back efforts of supporters fighting to reverse Jackson's policy and secure recharter of the Second Bank of the United States.

1844: He was elected 11th president of the United States of America by the thinnest margin in history at that time and he:

- Restored an independent Treasury system
- Sharply checked federal appropriations for internal improvements
- Reduced tariffs substantially
- Oversaw the largest expansion of U.S. boundaries.

Fun Facts

Nickname: "Young Hickory" because of his support of Andrew Jackson's initiatives.

Campaign slogan: "Fifty-Four Forty or Fight" to balance the idea of a new slave state (Texas) with a new free state (Oregon).

Quotes

"Although... the chief magistrate must almost of necessity be chosen by a party and stand pledged to its principles and measures, yet in his official action he should not be the president of a party only, but of the whole people of the United States."

"There is more selfishness and less principle among members of Congress ... than I had any conception of, before I became President of the U.S."

"We must ever mandate the principle that the people of this continent alone have the right to decide their own destiny."

"No President who performs his duties faithfully and conscientiously can have any leisure."

"I cannot, whilst President of the United States, descend to enter into a newspaper controversy."

Trivia

After Thomas Jefferson, James K. Polk increased the size of the United States more than any other president through the acquisition of California and New Mexico as a result of the Mexican-American War. He also claimed Oregon territory after a treaty with England. He was a key figure in Manifest Destiny.

Web Resources

<http://www.americanpresident.org/presbios/presbios.htm>

<http://ap.grolier.com>

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/history/presidents/jp11.html>



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