The Vice Presidential Bust Collection

UNITED
STATES
SENATE

The
Vice Presidential
Bust Collection

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History of the Collection

The United States Senate's Vice Presidential Bust Collection honors the presidents of the Senate and forms the institution's oldest continuing art collection. The Senate commissioned the first bust in 1885 as a tribute to Vice President Henry Wilson and placed it in the Vice President's Room, adjacent to the Senate chamber. In 1886, the Senate passed a resolution establishing a collection of marble vice presidential portraits. After the first busts filled the 20 niches that surround the Senate chamber gallery, new additions were placed throughout the Senate wing of the Capitol.

Traditionally, each vice president chooses an artist, and the necessary sittings occur after the vice president leaves office. Since 1947, the Senate Committee on Rules and Administration has monitored this progress, and has approved and accepted the final work on behalf of the Senate.

The collection chronicles the individuals who have served as vice president and pays tribute to their role in the history of the Senate. It also provides a unique survey of American sculpture from the 19th century to the present.

The Office of Vice President

"The Vice President of the United States shall be President of the Senate but shall have no Vote, unless they be equally divided."

Article I, Section 3, The Constitution

Besides breaking a tie vote in the Senate, the Constitution assigns few responsibilities to the vice president. John Adams summed up his role when he observed, "I am Vice President, in this I am nothing, but may be everything." Since then, the functions of the office have been shaped by each vice president's relationship to the president, and by the events of the era. Vice presidents have served as unofficial envoys to Congress, presidential emissaries to official ceremonies, and have acceded to the presidency upon the death of the president.

As president of the Senate, many early vice presidents took an active role in chamber proceedings—presiding over debates and interpreting parliamentary questions. In response, the Senate developed rules and practices to affirm its independence from this representative of the executive branch. Nevertheless, the vice president has continued over the years to serve as a bridge between the administration and the Senate, and still maintains an office in the Capitol for that reason.

The vice president's Capitol office, 1998

Thomas Jefferson (1743–1826) ②
Moses Ezekiel, 1889

Thomas Jefferson may be best known for his accomplishments as author of the Declaration of Independence, president of the United States, and founder of the University of Virginia, but during his years as vice president from 1797 to 1801 he made an important contribution to the Senate. As the Senate's presiding officer, Jefferson drafted a manual of parliamentary practice that members of Congress still consult today.

Virginian Moses Ezekiel completed the bust of Jefferson in the late 1880s. A Confederate soldier during the Civil War, Ezekiel later embarked on a prolific sculpture career. Among his other works are the Confederate Memorial in Arlington National Cemetery, and 11 sculptures that filled the niches in the facade of the original Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C.

John C. Calhoun (1782–1850) ⑦
Theodore Mills, 1896

John C. Calhoun of South Carolina was elected vice president in 1824 with John Quincy Adams, and was reelected with Andrew Jackson in 1828. While vice president, Calhoun developed his theory of nullification, which would have let a state disregard, or nullify, federal laws it deemed harmful. This the-

ory helped tie the ideas of slavery, states' rights, and secession together in the ante-bellum South. When Calhoun resigned from the vice presidency in 1833, South Carolina elected him to the Senate. There he became one of the Senate's "Great Triumvirate" (with Daniel Webster and Henry Clay), which led the Senate during the second quarter of the 19th century.

Theodore Mills actively sought the commission to sculpt the official bust of Calhoun, making a plaster model from a life mask that his father, noted sculptor Clark Mills, had made years earlier. The Senate Committee on the Library awarded the commission to Mills based on the plaster model.

John Tyler (1790–1862) ❿
William C. McCauslen, 1898

John Tyler served as a representative and senator from his native Virginia. Tyler was the first vice president to succeed to the presidency following the death of a president. Rejecting the notion that he was an "acting president," Tyler established himself as president in his own right by holding firm to his political convictions.

Washington, D.C. artist William C. McCauslen executed the bust of John Tyler for the Senate. Because the Senate commissioned the Tyler bust after the subject's death, McCauslen relied upon portraits painted during Tyler's lifetime as models. The artist also created the busts of Vice Presidents William R. King and Andrew Johnson in the Senate collection.

Henry Wilson (1812–1875) ⑱
Daniel Chester French, 1885

Henry Wilson epitomized the American Dream. Born to a destitute family, at age 21 he walked to a nearby town and began a business as a cobbler. Wilson soon embarked on a career in politics, and worked his way from the Massachusetts legislature to the United States Senate. In a politically turbulent era, he shifted political parties several times, but maintained a consistent stand against slavery throughout his career. Wilson was elected to the vice presidency on the 1872 Republican ticket with Ulysses S. Grant. He died in the Vice President's Room in the Capitol in 1875. Ten years later, the Senate placed a bust of Wilson in that room as a memorial to him.

Daniel Chester French, long considered the "dean of American sculptors," modeled the bust of Henry Wilson. One of the country's most popular and prolific artists, French is known for his public monuments, private memorials, and portrait busts. French's most celebrated work is the monumental statue of Abraham Lincoln in the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C.

Chester Alan Arthur (1830–1886) ⑳
Augustus Saint-Gaudens, 1892

In 1881, just months after assuming the vice presidency, Chester Alan Arthur became president following the assassination of James

Garfield. Although his early political success had been through the machine politics of New York, Arthur surprised critics by fighting political corruption. He supported the first civil service reform, and his administration was marked by honesty and efficiency. Because he refused to engage in partisan politics, party regulars did not nominate him in 1884.

Sculptor Augustus Saint-Gaudens originally declined to create Arthur's official vice presidential bust, citing his own schedule and the low commission the Senate offered. Eventually he reconsidered, and delivered the finished work in 1892. One of America's best known sculptors, Saint-Gaudens also created the statue of Abraham Lincoln in Chicago's Lincoln Park and the design for the 1907 $20 gold piece, considered by many collectors to be America's most beautiful coin.

Theodore Roosevelt (1858–1919) ㉕
James Earle Fraser, 1910

Theodore Roosevelt served as governor of New York prior to his term as vice president. He succeeded to the presidency following the assassination of

William McKinley in 1901. Roosevelt strongly supported railroad regulation, construction of the Panama Canal, and conservation of natural resources, especially through national parks. In 1906, Roosevelt won the Nobel Peace Prize for his work in ending the Russo-Japanese war.

Roosevelt's interests in nature and the American West made the choice of James Earle Fraser as sculptor of his bust particularly appropriate. Fraser is perhaps best known for his mounted

Native American figure, *End of the Trail,* and the design for the American buffalo nickel. More than 25 years after sculpting the Roosevelt bust, Fraser created the marble bust of Vice President John Nance Garner for the Senate collection.

Charles G. Dawes (1865–1951) ㉚
Jo Davidson, 1930

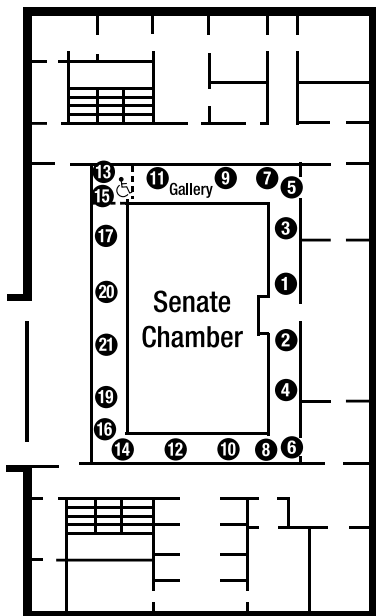Prior to World War I, Charles Dawes was a lawyer, banker, and politician in his native Ohio. During the war, he became a brigadier general and afterwards headed the Allied reparations commission. He was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1925 for the "Dawes Plan" to stabilize Germany's finances after World War I. Following his term as vice president under Calvin Coolidge from 1925 to 1929, Dawes served as ambassador to Great Britain for Herbert Hoover.

American artist Jo Davidson carved the Senate's bust of Charles Dawes. A renowned sculptor, Davidson created likenesses of Gertrude Stein, Charlie Chaplin, Albert Einstein, and other prominent American figures of the 20th century. The Senate collection also contains the artist's bust of Vice President Henry Wallace. Davidson's statues of Senator Robert M. La Follette, Sr. of Wisconsin and humorist Will Rogers are part of the Capitol's National Statuary Hall collection.
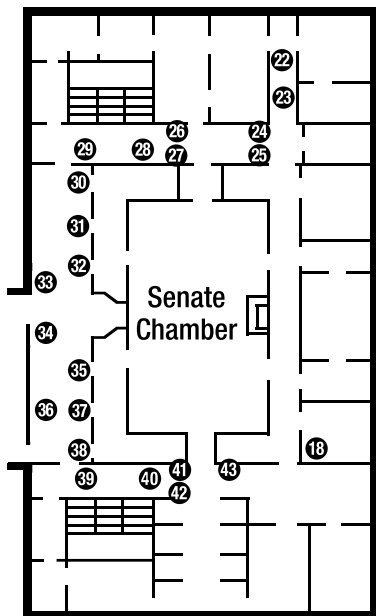
Vice President	Service	Party	President
1. John Adams	1789–1797	F	George Washington
2. Thomas Jefferson	1797–1801	DR	John Adams
3. Aaron Burr	1801–1805	DR	Thomas Jefferson
4. George Clinton	1805–1809	DR	Thomas Jefferson
	1809–1812*	DR	James Madison
5. Elbridge Gerry	1813–1814*	DR	James Madison
6. Daniel D. Tompkins	1817–1825*	DR	James Monroe
7. John C. Calhoun	1825–1829	DR	John Quincy Adams
	1829–1832	DR	Andrew Jackson
8. Martin Van Buren	1833–1837	D	Andrew Jackson
9. Richard M. Johnson	1837–1841	D	Martin Van Buren
10. John Tyler	1841**	D	William Henry Harrison
11. George M. Dallas	1845–1849	D	James Knox Polk
12. Millard Fillmore	1849–1850**	W	Zachary Taylor
13. William R. King	1853*	D	Franklin Pierce
14. John C. Breckinridge	1857–1861	D	James Buchanan
15. Hannibal Hamlin	1861–1865	R	Abraham Lincoln
16. Andrew Johnson	1865**	U	Abraham Lincoln
17. Schuyler Colfax	1869–1873	R	Ulysses S. Grant
18. Henry Wilson	1873–1875*	R	Ulysses S. Grant
19. William A. Wheeler	1877–1881	R	Rutherford B. Hayes
20. Chester A. Arthur	1881**	R	James A. Garfield
21. Thomas A. Hendricks	1885*	R	Grover Cleveland
22. Levi P. Morton	1889–1893	D	Benjamin Harrison
23. Adlai E. Stevenson	1893–1897	R	Grover Cleveland
24. Garret A. Hobart	1897–1899*	R	William McKinley
25. Theodore Roosevelt	1901**	R	William McKinley
26. Charles W. Fairbanks	1905–1909	R	Theodore Roosevelt
27. James S. Sherman	1909–1912*	R	William H. Taft
28. Thomas R. Marshall	1913–1921	D	Woodrow Wilson
29. Calvin Coolidge	1921–1923**	R	Warren G. Harding
30. Charles G. Dawes	1925–1929	R	Calvin Coolidge
31. Charles Curtis	1929–1933	R	Herbert Hoover
32. John N. Garner	1933–1941	D	Franklin D. Roosevelt
33. Henry A. Wallace	1941–1945	D	Franklin D. Roosevelt
34. Harry S. Truman	1945**	D	Franklin D. Roosevelt
35. Alben Barkley	1949–1953	D	Harry S. Truman
36. Richard M. Nixon	1953–1961	R	Dwight D. Eisenhower
37. Lyndon B. Johnson	1961–1963**	D	John F. Kennedy
38. Hubert H. Humphrey	1965–1969	D	Lyndon B. Johnson
39. Spiro T. Agnew	1969–1973	R	Richard M. Nixon
40. Gerald R. Ford	1973–1974**	R	Richard M. Nixon
41. Nelson A. Rockefeller	1974–1977	R	Gerald R. Ford
42. Walter F. Mondale	1977–1981	D	Jimmy Carter
43. George Bush	1981–1989	R	Ronald Reagan
† Dan Quayle	1989–1993	R	George Bush
† Al Gore	1993–	D	Bill Clinton

* Died in office ** Succeeded to the presidency † Bust not completed

Senate Wing, Third Floor

Gallery

Senate
Chamber

Senate Wing, Second Floor

Senate
Chamber