

## Vice Presidents of the United States Harry S. Truman (1945)

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Introduction by Mark O. Hatfield.

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I enjoyed my new position as Vice-President, but it took me a while to get used to the fact that I no longer had the voting privileges I had enjoyed for ten years as a senator.

—Harry S. Truman

When Democratic party leaders determined to dump Vice President Henry Wallace from the ticket in 1944, they looked for a suitable replacement. They considered Wallace too unpredictable to serve another term under Roosevelt, whose health had visibly declined during the Second World War. There was no shortage of candidates: Majority Leader Alben Barkley, presidential assistant James F. Byrnes, Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas, and others advertised their availability. But the nomination went to someone who did not want it. Missouri Senator Harry S. Truman had committed himself to nominating Byrnes. When a reporter asked why he did not become a candidate himself, considering that the next vice president might likely "succeed to the throne," Truman shook his head and replied, "Hell, I don't want to be President." Harry Truman felt content to stay in the Senate, where he had spent the happy years.<sup>1</sup>

### **A Farm Boy at Heart**

Despite a long record of public service, the always underestimated Truman made an unlikely candidate for national office. He was at heart a farm boy, born in the rural village of Lamar, Missouri, on May 8, 1884. His father, John Truman, was a farmer and livestock dealer. For much of their childhood, Harry and his brother and sister lived on their grandmother's six hundred-acre farm near Grandview, Missouri. Poor eyesight corrected by thick glasses kept him from playing sports but failed to hamper his love of books. When the children were old enough for schooling, the Truman family moved to Independence. Then, in 1903, after John Truman went bankrupt speculating in grain futures, the family moved to Kansas City, where John Truman took a job as night watchman at a grain elevator. Harry applied to West Point but was rejected because of his poor eyesight. Instead of attending college, he worked

as a timekeeper on a railroad construction crew, a newspaper wrapper, and a bank teller. In 1905 the parents returned to the Grandview farm, and Harry and his brother followed the next year. After John Truman died in 1914, Harry Truman assumed the supervision of the farm, plowing, sowing, harvesting, and repairing equipment himself. For the rest of his life, Truman always enjoyed returning to the family's farm (now subdivided into suburban housing, although the farmhouse stands as part of the Harry S. Truman National Historical Site). As president, he later asserted: "I always give my occupation as farmer. I spent the best years of my life trying to run a 600-acre farm successfully, and I know what the problems are."<sup>2</sup>

Farming meant hard work and isolation. Nor did it produce sufficient income for Harry to marry his childhood sweetheart Elizabeth (Bess) Wallace. Truman proposed in 1911, but Bess turned him down. Undaunted, he pursued the courtship for another eight years. After long days on the farm, Harry devoted his evenings to practicing the piano and reading history. He had other dreams as well: as a boy, he and his father had attended the Democratic National Convention in Kansas City in 1900 and watched William Jennings Bryan be nominated a second time for president. The "Great Commoner" always remained one of his heroes. Truman's father loved politics. "Politics is all he ever advises me to neglect the farm for," Harry wrote to Bess.<sup>3</sup>

The United States entered the First World War in 1917. At thirty-three, Truman was two years over the age limit for the draft and would also have been exempted as a farmer. But he turned the farm over to his mother and sister and enlisted, overcoming his poor eyesight by memorizing the eye chart. Having served in the National Guard, Truman helped organize a regiment from a National Guard company in Kansas City and was elected first lieutenant. When the 129th Field Artillery went overseas, he was promoted to captain and placed in command of Battery D. The "Dizzy D" had a wild and unruly reputation, but Captain Harry whipped them into line. They encountered heavy fighting in the Meuse-Argonne offensive, from which Truman emerged with the undying respect of his troops and increased confidence in his own abilities. His exploits also lifted him in the eyes of Bess Wallace, who at last married him after the war, in June 1919.<sup>4</sup>

### **Machine Politics**

Truman temporarily moved into his in-laws' house in Independence, Missouri, an arrangement that lasted for the rest of his life. Instead of returning to the farm, he started a haberdasher's shop in Kansas City with his Battery D sergeant, Eddie Jacobson. When Truman & Jacobson failed during the recession of 1922, bankruptcy turned Harry Truman from business to politics. Another army buddy, Jimmy Pendergast, introduced Truman to his uncle Thomas Pendergast, the Democratic political boss of Kansas City. In 1922 the Pendergast machine endorsed Truman for county judge in Jackson County, which was an administrative rather than a judicial function. After narrowly winning the primary, he sailed easily to election as the Democratic candidate that fall. In this and all future elections, Truman could count on the loyal support of the veterans of the 129th, most of whom lived in the Kansas City vicinity. In 1924, the year his only daughter, Margaret, was born, Truman lost his bid for reelection when the anti-Pendergast faction of the Democratic party split away and swung its support to the Republicans. He then sold memberships in the Kansas City Automobile Club until he won reelection in 1926. During the next twenty-six years of uninterrupted public service, he never lost another election—to the surprise of everyone except Harry Truman.<sup>5</sup> Like most political machines, the Pendergast organization depended upon patronage and government contracts. Pendergast owned the Ready-Mix Concrete Company and held interests in a variety of construction, paving, pipe, and oil companies that built roads, courthouses, and other public works in and around Kansas City. As an activist administrator, Truman sought to build roads and public buildings, but he held out against funneling county projects to corrupt contractors. Pendergast's interests got county contracts only when they were the lowest bidders. "Three things ruin a man," Truman later said. "Power, money, and women. I never wanted power. I never had any money, and the only woman in my life is up at the house right now." Once, when Truman discovered that an associate had taken money to cut a deal with a road builder, he kept silent to ensure that the construction went forward. In frustration, Truman poured out his feelings privately on paper:

I had to compromise in order to get the voted road system carried out . . . I had to let a former saloonkeeper and murderer, a friend of the Boss's, steal about \$10,000 from the general revenues of the county to satisfy my ideal associate and keep the crooks from getting a million or more out of the bond issue. Was I right or did I compound a felony? I don't know.<sup>6</sup>

Despite his machine connections, Truman developed a progressive reputation as county judge. In 1934 he wanted to run for the U.S. House of Representatives, but Pendergast had already picked another candidate. Instead, to Truman's astonishment, the boss wanted him to run for the Senate. In fact, Pendergast's first four choices had turned him down. Few gave Truman much of a chance. Missouri's anti-Pendergast Senator Bennett Champ Clark mocked Truman's assertion that if elected he would not attempt to boss or dictate to anyone. "Why, bless Harry's good kind heart—no one has ever accused him of being a boss or wanting to be a boss and nobody will ever suspect him of trying to dictate to anybody in his own right as long as a certain eminent citizen of Jackson County remains alive." But, in the Democratic primary, Truman waged a vigorous campaign over the entire state and won the three-way race by a wide margin. Since Missouri was a Democratic state, he coasted to victory in November. As Truman left for Washington, Tom Pendergast gave him some parting advice: "Work hard, keep your mouth shut, and answer your mail."<sup>7</sup>

### **A Workhorse in the Senate**

Reversing historical trends, the Democrats gained ten Senate seats during the congressional midterm elections of 1934. The new class of Democrats included James Murray of Montana, Joseph Guffey of Pennsylvania, Francis Maloney of Connecticut, Sherman Minton of Indiana, and Lewis Schwellenbach of Washington. In contrast to these liberal Democrats, Harry Truman was more conservative and less known. "I was as timid as a country boy arriving on the campus of a great university for his first year," he later admitted. Following Pendergast's advice, he kept his mouth shut and his eye on his new colleagues. Before long he had separated out the "workhorses" from the "showhorses" and concluded that the real business of the Senate was conducted by conscientious senators who usually attracted the least publicity. Having also discovered that "the real work" of the Senate took place in committee rooms rather than on the floor, he devoted himself to committee work, through research, correspondence, and hearings. He made it his business "to master all of the details" of the legislation that came before his committees. "My ten years in the Senate had now begun," he wrote two decades later, "—years which were to be filled with hard work but which were also to be the happiest ten years of my life." The only painful memories were of the scorn that some journalists continued to heap on him as Pendergast's errand boy.<sup>8</sup>

As a new senator, Truman relied on the veteran Democratic secretary, Leslie Biffle, to counsel him on how to act, when to speak, what committees to request, and other practical advice. Truman's down-home, poker-playing style soon won him friendships with many senators as well as with Vice President John Nance Garner—who invited Truman to join those who met at the "doghouse," his hideaway office, to "strike a blow for liberty" with shots of bourbon. Accepted as an insider, Truman had nothing but contempt for the Senate's most famous outsider, Huey Long. The Louisiana senator's flamboyant style and long-winded filibusters represented the entirely opposite route from the one Truman took in the Senate.<sup>9</sup>

Appointed to the Interstate Commerce Committee, Truman and its chairman, Montana Senator Burton K. Wheeler, began a long, detailed investigation of the nation's transportation system. Their efforts resulted in the Wheeler-Truman Transportation Act of 1940, which established new standards of federal regulation for the nation's railroad, trucking and shipping industries. It was the signal accomplishment of his first term. Most Washington observers doubted that Truman would have a second term. The U.S. district attorney in Kansas City, Maurice Milligan, was prosecuting Tom Pendergast for vote fraud and income tax evasion. Loyally standing by the boss, Truman delivered a blistering attack in the Senate chamber accusing the president, Milligan, and the federal courts of playing politics with Pendergast. But Pendergast was convicted and sent to the federal penitentiary in 1939. Seeing Truman as just an extension of the machine, Milligan then ran for the Democratic nomination for the Senate in 1940, as did Missouri Governor Lloyd Stark, who previously had sought Pendergast's endorsement but now presented himself as a reformer. President Roosevelt leaned toward Stark, and Truman seemed doomed to defeat, but Milligan and Stark split the anti-Pendergast vote, enabling Truman to squeak through to a victory in the Democratic primary, which "virtually guaranteed" his reelection in November.<sup>10</sup>

## The Truman Committee

Returning to Washington his own man, Truman moved for the creation of a special committee to investigate the national defense preparations on the eve of World War II. He had heard of waste and extravagance and contractors overcharging the government at Missouri military bases, and he believed that a watchdog committee would be essential as the government pumped massive amounts of money into its defense industries. With the help of party secretary Les Biffle, Truman was appointed chair of the Special Committee to Investigate the National Defense Program, which became nationally known as the Truman Committee. As an avid student of history, Truman knew what havoc the Joint Committee on the Conduct of the War had created for President Abraham Lincoln, and he was determined to assist rather than to combat President Roosevelt. The Truman Committee investigated business, labor, and government agencies, seeking ways to make all three cooperate. Whenever the Truman Committee concluded that reforms were needed in war agencies, Truman took care to inform the president first, before he talked to the press, giving Roosevelt the chance to institute the necessary changes before being pressured by negative publicity.<sup>11</sup> Harry Truman was fifty-seven when he assumed the chairmanship of the special committee and rose to national prominence. Of average height and appearance, speaking with a midwestern twang, and earthy in his expressions, he was known in Washington as diligent and unprepossessing. Over time, his voting record had increasingly conformed to Roosevelt administration policies, and he remained a loyal Democrat, more likely to complain in private than in public about any differences with the New Deal. The Truman Committee won its chairman favorable press notices for saving the taxpayers millions of dollars and the Roosevelt administration much potential embarrassment. "I have had considerable experience in letting public contracts," Truman said, recalling his Jackson County days, "and I have never yet found a contractor who, if not watched, would not leave the Government holding the bag." The public agreed. As *Harper's Magazine* concluded in June 1945, before the war Truman had been "just another obscure junior Senator," but three years later "he had made himself known, and respected, as the chairman of a special committee investigating war production and, in consequence, the almost inevitable choice of his party as a compromise candidate for the Vice Presidency."<sup>12</sup>

## Choosing Truman for Vice President

While it later seemed inevitable, there was nothing predictable about Truman's selection for vice president in 1944. Vice President Henry Wallace's unpopularity among party leaders had set off a monumental contest for the second spot at the Chicago convention. Senator Alben Barkley wanted the job, but his hot-tempered resignation and swift reelection as majority leader in protest over President Roosevelt's veto of a revenue bill in February 1944 eliminated him as an acceptable choice to the president. Barkley and "Assistant President" James Byrnes—a former senator and former Supreme Court Justice—each asked Truman to nominate him at the convention. Byrnes asked first, and Truman readily agreed. Senator Truman consistently told everyone—even his daughter Margaret—that he was not a candidate himself. The only race in his mind was for his reelection to the Senate in 1946.<sup>13</sup>

The pivotal person at the convention was Bob Hannegan, a St. Louis political leader serving as commissioner of internal revenue and tapped as the next Democratic National Committee chairman. During the heated Senate campaign of 1940, Hannegan had switched his support from Governor Stark to Truman as the better man, and he delivered enough St. Louis votes to help Truman win. Hannegan, Bronx boss Ed Flynn, Chicago mayor Ed Kelly, key labor leaders, and other party movers and shakers viewed Wallace as a liability for his leftist leanings. Byrnes was equally vulnerable for his segregationist record and his conversion from Catholicism. When these party leaders expressed their opposition to Wallace and Byrnes, Roosevelt suggested Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas. The group then countered with Harry Truman, whom Roosevelt agreed had been loyal and "wise to the ways of politics." After much discussion, Roosevelt turned to Hannegan and conceded, "Bob, I think you and everyone else here want Truman."<sup>14</sup>

Hating to disappoint and alienate any of the potential candidates, Roosevelt kept them all guessing. At lunch with Vice President Wallace, Roosevelt informed him that the professional politicians preferred Truman as "the only one who had no enemies and might add a little independent strength to the ticket." Roosevelt promised Wallace that he would not endorse another candidate, but would notify the convention that if he were a delegate he would vote for Wallace. At the same time, the president held out hope to Byrnes that he was "the best qualified man in the whole outfit," and urged him to stay in the race. "After all, Jimmy," you're close to me personally," Roosevelt said. "I

hardly know Truman." (Roosevelt, whose own health was growing precarious, did not even know Truman's age—which was sixty.) Despite encouraging Wallace and Byrnes, the president had written a letter for Hannegan to carry to the convention: Dear Bob: You have written me about Harry Truman and Bill Douglas. I should, of course, be very glad to run with either of them and believe that either one of them would bring real strength to the ticket.<sup>15</sup>

Meanwhile, Senator Truman continued to deny any interest in the vice-presidency. In an off-the-record interview, he explained to a reporter that if he ran for vice president the Republicans would raise charges of bossism against him. He did not want to subject his family to the attacks and negative publicity of a national campaign. Bess Truman was against it, and so was Truman's ninety-one-year-old mother, who told him to stay in the Senate. "The Vice President simply presides over the Senate and sits around hoping for a funeral," Truman protested. "It is a very high office which consists entirely of honor and I don't have any ambition to hold an office like that." His secret ambition, admitted on a visit to the Senate chamber twenty years later, was to occupy the front row seat of the majority leader.<sup>16</sup>

In an overheated hotel room, the politicians leaned heavily on Truman to run. They placed a call to Roosevelt, and as Truman sat nearby, Hannegan held the phone so that he could hear. "Bob, have you got that fellow lined up yet?" Roosevelt asked. "No. He is the contrariest Missouri mule I've ever dealt with," Hannegan replied. "Well, you tell him that if he wants to break up the Democratic party in the middle of the war, that's his responsibility," Roosevelt declared and hung up the phone. Stunned, Truman agreed to run, but added: "why the hell didn't he tell me in the first place?"<sup>17</sup>

Henry Wallace appeared personally at the convention to seek renomination, stimulating an enthusiastic reception from the galleries. On the first ballot, Wallace led Truman 429 to 319. But the party's leaders swung their delegations and put Truman over the top on the second ballot. In a speech that lasted less than a minute, Truman accepted the nomination. Democratic liberals bemoaned the choice, while Republicans mocked the "little man from Missouri." Newspapers charged him with being a member of the Ku Klux Klan, when in fact he had vigorously fought the Klan in Jackson County. Critics also noted that Truman had placed his wife on his Senate payroll, but Truman rejoined that hiring her had been legal and that she had earned every penny. (Truman's sister Mary Jane had also been on his Senate payroll since 1943.) None of these controversies mattered much. On election day, a majority of voters did not want to change leaders in wartime and cast their ballots for Roosevelt regardless of who ran with him. Eleanor Roosevelt, who had preferred Wallace and distrusted Byrnes, reflected the prevailing sentiment that the vice-presidential candidate had been a safe choice. She wrote that while she did not know Truman, "from all I hear, he is a good man."<sup>18</sup>

### **Roosevelt and Truman**

After his nomination, Truman had gone to the White House for lunch with Roosevelt and had been shocked at the president's gaunt appearance and trembling hands. Only to his most intimate friends did Truman confide his fears that Roosevelt would never survive his fourth term. On a cold January 20, 1945, Truman stood with Roosevelt on the South Portico of the White House to take the oath as vice president. The ceremonies had been moved from their traditional location at the Capitol as a concession to the war and Roosevelt's health. After the post-inaugural luncheon, the new vice president slipped away and telephoned his mother who had heard the inauguration over the radio at Grandview. "Now you behave yourself," she instructed.<sup>19</sup>

Truman's vice-presidency was practically a continuation of his years in the Senate. The Trumans kept their same apartment at 4701 Connecticut Avenue, and he retained the same office in Room 240 of the Senate office building. He spent most of his time presiding over the Senate, whose rules and procedures he had already mastered, and whose members he already knew. "I enjoyed my new position as Vice-President," he later wrote, "but it took me a while to get used to the fact that I no longer had the voting privileges I had enjoyed for ten years as a senator." During his eighty-two days as vice president, Truman had only one opportunity to vote, on an amendment to limit the extension of Lend-Lease. The vice president voted against the amendment. As the United Press reporter Allen Drury observed: "Harry Truman, with all the brisk eagerness of someone who is bored to death, seized his first chance to vote in the Senate today and made the most of it. The vote wasn't necessary, for under the rules a tie kills a proposal, but he cast it anyway, with obvious satisfaction."<sup>20</sup>

During Truman's vice-presidency, critical decisions were being made regarding ending the war and planning for the future peace, but the president neither advised nor consulted him. Roosevelt left Washington for his long journey to Yalta two days after the inauguration and did not return for almost a month. Even then, he saw the vice president only twice more, on March 8 and March 19, before he left for a rest at the "Little White House" in Warm Springs, Georgia. Roosevelt assumed there would be time to educate his vice president later.<sup>21</sup>

Truman's major assignment was to help his predecessor, Henry Wallace, win confirmation as secretary of commerce. Roosevelt had appointed Wallace as a gesture of consolation to his former vice president, and enlisted Truman to win support from recalcitrant senators. To pacify Wallace's critics, the Democratic leadership cut a deal to remove the Federal Loan Agency from the Commerce Department. The House passed the measure first, and when it reached the Senate, Majority Leader Barkley planned to call it up for immediate consideration, to clear the way for Wallace's confirmation. Barkley, however, was not paying attention when Ohio Republican Senator Robert Taft sought recognition to move Wallace's confirmation vote first. Truman looked to the majority leader. "Finally, Barkley woke up and I recognized him," Truman commented, believing that his action saved Wallace from defeat. Ironically, as president, Truman would fire Henry Wallace from his own cabinet a year later.<sup>22</sup>

As vice president, Truman aspired to mend fences between Congress and the Roosevelt administration. During the depression, Roosevelt had ridden Congress like a rodeo cowboy, but he had been badly bucked during the "Court packing" fight in 1937. Despite large Democratic majorities, Congress not only rejected Roosevelt's efforts to add several new liberal justices to the Supreme Court, but also turned down his requests to reorganize the executive branch and to expand New Deal economic programs. The legislative and executive branches finally reconciled on the eve of the Second World War, when the president and Congress joined together to suspend American neutrality and aid the Allies. The war relegated Congress to a back seat behind the president as commander in chief, causing resentment, suspicion, and hostility toward the administration to simmer on Capitol Hill. During the war, a coalition of Republicans and conservative southern Democrats pruned many New Deal programs. Truman thought that he could help reestablish some common ground. Although recognizing that a vice president could never exert open influence in the Senate, Truman believed that "if he is respected personally and if he maintains good relations with the members of the Senate, he can have considerable power behind the scenes."<sup>23</sup>

A week after the January 1945 inauguration, Truman's political mentor, Tom Pendergast, died in Kansas City. Released from prison, Pendergast had spent his last years estranged from his family and old friends. Truman had not seen the boss in years, but he determined to go to Pendergast's funeral. He owed his rise in politics to Pendergast, who, he insisted, "never asked me to do a dishonest deed. He knew I wouldn't do it if he asked me. He was always honest with me, and when he made a promise he kept it." Although Truman meant this as an act of friendship and loyalty, many considered it disgraceful for a vice president to pay homage to a convicted criminal and interpreted the incident as evidence that Truman remained a parochial machine politician. The vice president earned more bad publicity a few weeks later when he played the piano at the Washington Press Club's canteen for servicemen. As Truman played, the movie actress Lauren Bacall posed seductively atop the piano, allowing photographers to snap some decidedly undignified pictures.<sup>24</sup>

The vice president spent most of his time around the Senate chamber, talking with senators and listening to tedious speeches as he presided. Watching him from the press gallery on April 12, 1945, Associated Press reporter Tony Vaccaro commented, "You know, Roosevelt has an awfully good man in that Truman when it comes to dealing with the Senate if he'll only make use of him." Then he added, "He doesn't make use of him though. Truman doesn't know what's going on. Roosevelt won't tell him anything." That day, Truman used his time while presiding to keep in contact with his mother and sister in Missouri. "I am trying to write you a letter today from the desk of the President of the Senate," he wrote, "while a windy Senator from Wisconsin [Alexander Wiley] is making a speech on a subject with which he is in no way familiar." He reminded them to turn on their radios the next evening to hear him make a Jefferson Day speech to the nation and to introduce the president. While Truman was presiding that afternoon, Roosevelt collapsed and died of a cerebral hemorrhage in Warm Springs.<sup>25</sup>

Unaware of his impending fate, Truman recessed the Senate at five that afternoon and strolled through the Capitol, without his Secret Service agent. He was the first vice president to be assigned a regular Secret Service agent, after

his military aide, Harry Vaughn, pointed out to Treasury Secretary Henry Morgenthau how odd it was to have scores of agents guarding the president and no one protecting the vice president. But the protection was somewhat erratic, enabling Truman to saunter unaccompanied through the Capitol to House Speaker Sam Rayburn's hideaway office, the "Board of Education." There he planned to mix a drink and spend some time talking politics with the Speaker and a handful of congressional cronies. When Truman arrived, Rayburn relayed a message that the president's press secretary wanted him to call right away. Truman called and was told to come to the White House as "quickly and quietly" as possible. "Holy General Jackson!" he exclaimed, the color drained from his face. Still not knowing exactly what had happened, Truman hurried back the length of the Capitol, still alone. At his office he grabbed his hat and his driver. They headed straight to the North Portico of the White House, where Truman was ushered up to the family quarters. There Eleanor Roosevelt told him that the president was dead.<sup>26</sup>

## President Truman

That evening, Harry Truman took the oath as president in a somber ceremony in the Cabinet Room. He placed his first call from the Oval Office to Secretary of the Senate Leslie Biffle, asking him to arrange for the congressional leadership to attend the ceremony and to set up a luncheon at the Senate the next day. As Republican Senator Arthur Vandenberg noted in his diary:

Truman came back to the Senate this noon for lunch with a few of us. It shattered all tradition. But it was both wise and smart. It means that the days of executive contempt for Congress are ended; that we are returning to a government in which Congress will take its rightful place.

After Roosevelt's funeral, Truman returned to address a joint session of Congress. "Now Harry—Mr. President—we are going to stand by you," Speaker Rayburn assured him. "I think you will," Truman replied. Majority Leader Alben Barkley further urged Truman to have confidence in himself. "If you do not, the people will lose confidence in you."<sup>27</sup>

Three months in the vice-presidency had given Truman no preparation for the nation's highest post. He was thrust into the role of commander in chief while war was still underway in Europe and the Pacific. He knew little about the development of the atomic bomb, yet within months he would be called upon to decide whether to use this weapon against Japan. Nor did he know much about the agreements Roosevelt had reached with the Russians and British at Yalta. Truman talked with everyone who had accompanied Roosevelt to learn as much as possible about what Roosevelt had agreed to and what he intended to do in foreign policy. Truman's inexperience in international matters contrasted sharply with his abundant knowledge of domestic affairs, gained from ten years in local government and another ten in the Senate.<sup>28</sup>

Truman's assets were his firm personal principles, his honesty, humility, and homespun character, and his ability to speak plain truths. Regardless of his lack of preparation, these qualities enabled him to face the challenges of the cold war, make portentous decisions, and retain the respect of the electorate, who accepted him as one of them. He could be magnanimous, as in his gesture of consulting with former President Herbert Hoover, long barred from the Roosevelt White House. He could be intrepid, as in his determination to remove General Douglas MacArthur from command in Korea, in order to preserve the superiority of the civilian government over the military. In 1948 Truman won the most unexpected election upset of the century. Although he left the presidency in 1953 at a low ebb in his popularity, his standing rose again over the years. After his death on December 26, 1972, he achieved the status of folk hero. Songs proclaimed: "America Needs You Harry Truman." A Broadway play, "Give 'Em Hell, Harry" was based on his life story, and biographies of him became best sellers. Presidential candidates from both parties claimed Truman rather than Roosevelt as their model. In retrospect, his selection for vice president had been a wise move by the party leaders.<sup>29</sup>

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### Notes:

1. Edward A. Harris, "Harry S. Truman: 'I Don't Want to be President,'" in J.T. Salter, ed., *Public Men: In and Out of Office* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1946), pp. 4-5; Robert H. Ferrell, *Choosing Truman: The Democratic Convention of 1944* (Columbia, MO, 1994), pp. 1-34.
2. Robert H. Ferrell, ed., *The Autobiography of Harry S. Truman* (Boulder, CO, 1980), pp. 17-20; Margaret Truman, *Harry S. Truman* (New York, 1973), p. 47; U.S., Congress, House, *Congressional Record*, 103d Cong., 1st sess., pp.

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3. David McCullough, *Truman* (New York, 1992), pp. 63, 88-90.
4. *Ibid.*, pp. 102-44; Richard Lawrence Miller, *Truman: The Rise to Power* (New York, 1986), pp. 103-48; Jhan Robbins, *Bess & Harry: An American Love Story* (New York, 1980), pp. 23-37.
5. Margaret Truman, pp. 59-82; Ferrell, ed., *The Autobiography of Harry S. Truman*, pp. 81-84.
6. Robert H. Ferrell, *Harry S. Truman: A Life* (Columbia, MO, 1994), pp. 91-116; McCullough, pp. 181-86.
7. Margaret Truman, pp. 83-89; Ferrell, *Truman: A Life*, pp. 124-32; McCullough, pp. 202-13.
8. Harry S. Truman, *Memoirs by Harry S. Truman*, vol. 1, *Year of Decisions* (Garden City, NY, 1955), pp. 142-43, 149; Alonzo L. Hamby, *Man of the People: A Life of Harry S. Truman* (New York, 1995) pp. 200-212; Harris, p. 9; Margaret Truman, p. 91.
9. Ernest Barcella, "They Call Him Mr. Baffle," *Colliers* (January 29, 1949), pp. 27, 61-62; Margaret Truman, pp. 100-102.
10. Truman, *Memoirs*, 1:159-63; McCullough, pp. 234-52; Hamby, pp. 213-47.
11. Ferrell, *Truman, A Life*, pp. 153-61.
12. Theodore Wilson, "The Truman Committee, 1941," in Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., and Roger Bruns, eds., *Congress Investigates: A Documented History, 1792-1974* (New York, 1975), 4:3115-3262; Hamby, pp. 248-60.
13. Margaret Truman, p. 167; Miller, pp. 381-85.
14. McCullough, pp. 292-301; Ferrell, *Choosing Truman*, pp. 35-50.
15. McCullough, pp. 299-306; David Robertson, *Sly and Able: A Political Biography of James F. Byrnes* (New York, 1994), pp. 8-9; Robert H. Ferrell, *Ill-Advised: Presidential Health and Public Trust* (Columbia, MO, 1992), p. 44.
16. McCullough, pp. 298-99, 317-318; Harris, pp. 4-5; *Remarks by Former President Harry S. Truman and Responses by Members of the Senate Thereto in the United States Senate on May 8, 1964* (Washington, 1964), p. 3.
17. Truman, *Memoirs*, 1:192-93; Hamby, pp. 274-84.
18. Miller, pp. 381-87; McCullough, pp. 324-33; Ferrell, *Choosing Truman*, pp. 57-61; Harris, pp. 5-6; Doris Kearns Goodwin, *No Ordinary Time: Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt: The Home Front in World War II* (New York, 1994), p. 530.
19. Jonathan Daniels, *The Man of Independence* (Port Washington, NY, 1971; reprint of 1950 edition), p. 255; Truman, *Memoirs*, 1:1-4, 194-95.
20. Truman, *Memoirs*, 1:195-96; Allen Drury, *A Senate Journal, 1943-1945* (New York, 1963), p. 409.
21. Margaret Truman, pp. 203-5.
22. Truman, *Memoirs*, 1:195; Daniels, p. 257.
23. Truman, *Memoirs*, 1:196-97; McCullough, pp. 335-36; see also James T. Patterson, *Congressional Conservatism and the New Deal: The Growth of the Conservative Coalition in Congress, 1933-1939* (Lexington, KY, 1967).
24. Harris, p. 18; McCullough, pp. 336-37.
25. Drury, p. 410; McCullough, p. 340.
26. Margaret Truman, pp. 201-3; McCullough, pp. 335-42; Ferrell, *Truman: A Life*, pp. 174-76. Others have reported Truman's April 12, 1945, exclamation as "Jesus Christ and General Jackson!" (McCullough, p. 341; Robert J. Donovan, *Conflict and Crisis: The Presidency of Harry S. Truman, 1945-1948* (New York, 1977), p. 4.
27. Arthur H. Vandenberg, Jr., ed., *The Private Papers of Senate Vandenberg* (Boston, 1952), p. 167; H.G. Dulaney, Edward Hake Phillips, and MacPhelan Reese, eds., *Speak Mr. Speaker* (Bonham, TX, 1978), p. 120; McCullough, p. 356.
28. Marie D. Natoli, "Harry S. Truman and the Contemporary Vice Presidency," *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 14 (Winter 1988): 81-84.
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