Inauguration

of the

President and Vice President

of the

United States of America

at the National Capitol

January twentieth

Nineteen hundred ninety-three

Since the time of Thomas Jefferson, Presidents have come to this Capitol for formal inaugurations. As the President takes the oath of office and delivers the inaugural address, he sees thousands of Americans gathered to witness the ceremony, and beyond them, the majestic Mall with its monuments to previous Presidents.

The inaugural platform on the West Front of the Capitol is framed against a backdrop of red, white, and blue bunting and features five flags. The official flag of the United States is displayed in the center. On either side are earlier flags; the flag popularly known as the "Betsy Ross flag" with stars arranged in a circle, appeared in the early 1790s; the flag with twenty-five stars flew for a year from July 4, 1836 to July 4, 1837, in recognition of the entrance of Arkansas into the Union.

The Joint Congressional Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies cordially welcomes you to the fifty-second Presidential Inauguration. This historic event provides an occasion for all Americans to rededicate themselves to the principles which are the foundation of our democracy.

Wendell H. Ford, *Chairman,* U.S. Senate, Kentucky.
George J. Mitchell, U.S. Senate, Maine.
Ted Stevens, U.S. Senate, Alaska.
Thomas S. Foley, Speaker, U.S. House of Representatives, Washington.
Richard A. Gephardt, U.S. House of Representatives, Missouri.
Robert H. Michel, U.S. House of Representatives, Illinois.

Joint Congressional Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies

Program

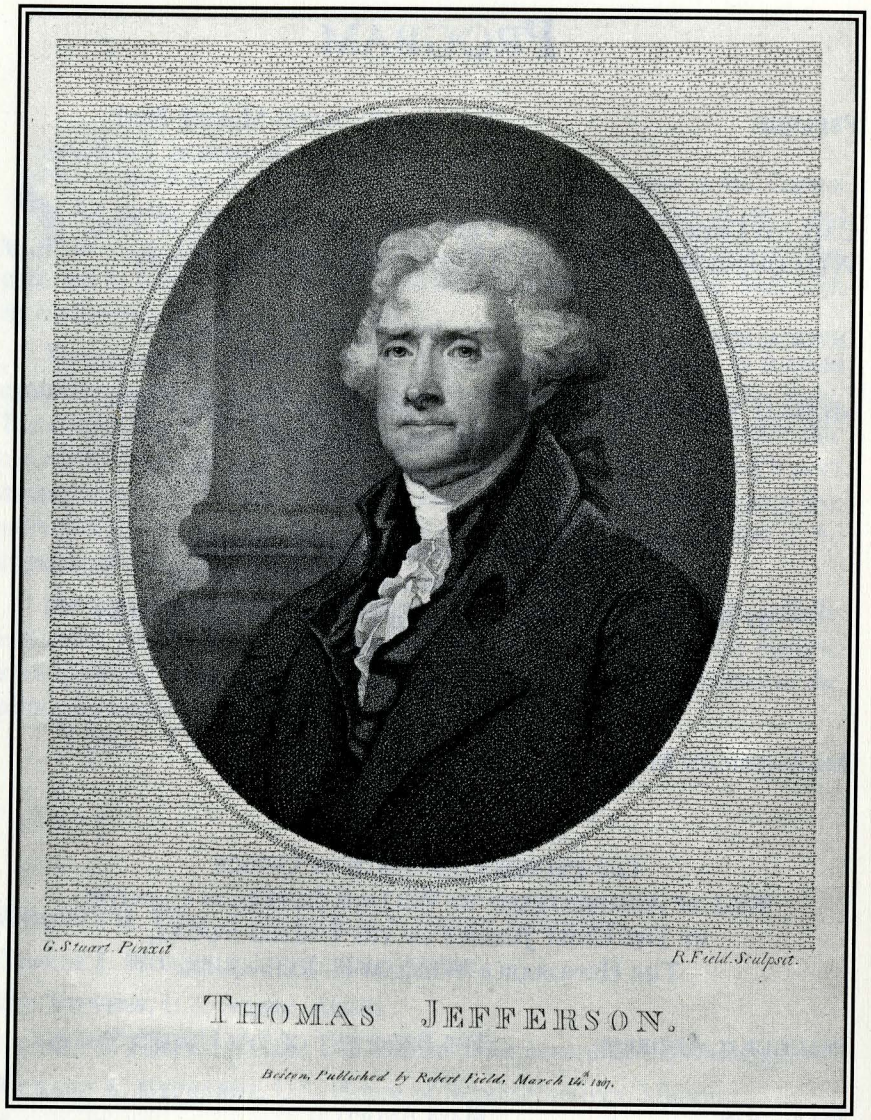
Prelude	The United States Marine Band Colonel John R. Bourgeois, *Conductor*
Call to Order and Welcoming Remarks	The Honorable Wendell H. Ford *United States Senator, Kentucky*
Invocation	The Reverend Billy Graham
Musical Selection	Philander Smith College Choir *Little Rock, Arkansas* Stephen L. Hayes, *Director*

The Vice Presidential Oath of Office Will be Administered to Albert Gore, Jr. by Associate Justice (Retired) of the Supreme Court of the United States, The Honorable Thurgood Marshall.

An American Medley	Marilyn Horne *Mezzo Soprano*

The Presidential Oath of Office Will be Administered to William Jefferson Clinton by The Chief Justice of the United States, The Honorable William H. Rehnquist.

Inaugural Address	The President of the United States
Selection	Maya Angelou *Poet*
Benediction	The Reverend Billy Graham
The National Anthem	Marilyn Horne *Mezzo Soprano*



THOMAS JEFFERSON
1743–1826

In recognition of the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the birth of Thomas Jefferson, the first President to take the oath of office at the United States Capitol in Washington, DC.

THE PRESIDENTIAL INAUGURATION

A NATIONAL CELEBRATION
1789–1993

As we have done every four years for two hundred and four years, Americans join together today to witness our President take a simple oath of office consisting of thirty-five words. Although often inconvenienced by inclement weather, these inaugural ceremonies have never been suspended, regardless of war, depression, or any other national crisis. This event celebrates the triumph of representative democracy through the peaceful transfer of political power, according to the vote of the people.

Proceedings associated with Presidential elections and inaugurations, almost routine after two centuries, were entirely new and untried following the Constitutional Convention of 1787. The Constitution is both specific and vague when dealing with the process of electing and inaugurating our Nation's chief executive. It provides that the President be elected through an electoral college, equal to the number of Senators and Representatives from each State. It authorizes Congress to determine when elections would be held, when the electoral college would meet, and when the new President would take the oath of office. The Constitution requires that the President must be a natural-born citizen of the United States, have lived in this country for at least fourteen years, and have attained the age of thirty-five. It even specifies the oath of office that the new President should swear or affirm. Beyond that, the Constitution remains silent.

In September 1788, at a time when eleven of the thirteen States had ratified the Constitution, the outgoing Congress under the Articles of Confederation set the first Wednesday of the following January as the date for the selection of Presidential electors. These electors would meet on the first Wednesday in February 1789 to choose a President. The new government would commence its business on the first Wednesday in March. Four States selected Presidential electors by popular vote; three allowed their State legislatures to make the choice; two arranged for a combination of popular and legislative elections; and in one State the Governor and legislature named the electors. Three States did not participate in the selection of the first President: New York,

because of a disagreement between the two houses of its legislature; and North Carolina and Rhode Island, because neither had yet ratified the Constitution.

When the electors met, they voted unanimously for George Washington as President. John Adams was elected Vice President. Historians have called Washington perhaps the only indispensable person in American history. Commander in Chief of the Continental Army during the American Revolution, Washington had resigned his commission to return to civilian life after the war, thereby renouncing any ambition to become military dictator or king. Later, Washington helped call the Annapolis Convention, which set in motion the effort to create a stronger Federal Government. He served as president of the Constitutional Convention, and was the universal choice to become the first President of the United States. Washington made no speeches nor did he conduct any other form of campaign for the office.

On March 4, 1789, the new Congress was scheduled to convene in Federal Hall on Wall Street in New York City. However, because of poor weather, bad roads, and the slowness of some States to elect Members, only a third of the Senators and a quarter of the Representatives reached New York on the appointed day. Finally, by April 6, each house had established a quorum. Congress then counted the electoral ballots and dispatched a messenger to notify George Washington of his official election. Washington, in his own words, "bade adieu to Mount Vernon, to private life, and to domestic felicity," and set out for New York. He felt somewhat like "a culprit who is going to the place of his execution," a feeling dispelled by the enthusiastic, adoring crowds who cheered him along his route north from Virginia.

Meanwhile, in Federal Hall, Congress worked to complete the details for this first inauguration. In the Upper Chamber, John Adams, who had taken the oath as Vice President nine days earlier, presided over the Senate. Among the first questions to arise was what to call the new chief executive. A Senate committee suggested this august title: "His Highness, the President of the United States of America and Protector of the Rights of the Same." Anti-aristocratic Members of the Senate and House hooted down this proposal and settled for a more straightforward, democratic-sounding address: "George Washington, President of the United States."

Before the inauguration began on April 30, 1789, at Federal Hall, the Senate debated how to receive Members of the House into its Chamber for the ceremony. Discussion focused particularly on who should stand and who should sit. In the midst of this inconclusive debate, Members of the House of Representatives arrived and took their places across the room from the Senators. The sound of drums and bagpipes and the cheering of the gathering crowd heralded the arrival of the Presidential party. The President-elect entered the hall carrying a sword. He was dressed in deep brown, with metal buttons ordered specially for the occasion, and white stockings. He moved between the groups of assembled Members and bowed to each. He was then escorted out onto a balcony overlooking Wall Street. Secretary of the Senate Samuel Otis held the Bible on which Washington took the oath of office. At the ceremony's completion the crowd below gave three cheers.

Washington went back inside the Senate Chamber, where he read his brief inaugural address. Senator William Maclay of Pennsylvania noted that "this great Man was agitated and embarrassed more than ever he was by the levelled Cannon or pointed Musket. He trembled, and several times could scarce make out to read." In his address, Washington called upon "that Almighty Being who rules over the universe" to assist the American people in finding "liberties and happiness" under "a government instituted by themselves."

Two hundred years ago, on March 4, 1793, the scene of Washington's second inauguration shifted to Philadelphia, where the Government had taken up temporary residence pending its relocation to the District of Columbia. The President took his oath in the small, elegantly appointed Senate Chamber on the second floor of Congress Hall, a Georgian-style structure just west of Independence Hall. In contrast to his elaborate first inauguration, this ceremony was a simple affair. Amidst a room crammed with dignitaries, Washington gave the shortest inaugural address on record—just one hundred and thirty-five words—and repeated the oath of office, administered by Supreme Court Justice William Cushing.

Four years later, on March 4, 1797, John Adams took his Presidential oath in Congress Hall's larger House Chamber. He described the event to his wife Abigail as "the sublimest thing ever exhibited in America." The inauguration of Thomas Jefferson, on March 4, 1801, was the first to be held in Washington. Jefferson took the oath of office in the

old Senate Chamber on the ground floor of the Capitol (today the restored old Supreme Court Chamber).

Andrew Jackson's inauguration on March 4, 1829, was the first of thirty-five held on the East Front of the Capitol. Though Jackson's second inauguration in 1833 was moved indoors to the House Chamber because of his ill health, the next-elected Presidents, from Martin Van Buren in 1837 to Theodore Roosevelt in 1905, were sworn into office on the East Front. One hundred years ago, on March 4, 1893, Grover Cleveland earned the distinction of being the first and only former President to take the oath of office for a nonconsecutive second term. East Front inaugurations continued until 1909 when a raging blizzard forced William Howard Taft's ceremony indoors to the Senate Chamber.

Woodrow Wilson resumed use of the East Front for inaugural ceremonies on March 4, 1913. They continued on that site until Franklin D. Roosevelt's unprecedented fourth inauguration on January 20, 1945. With the Nation and the President weary after four years of war, Roosevelt chose to have an austere, low-key ceremony on the South Portico of the White House.

In 1949, Harry Truman's inauguration saw the return of the ceremonies to the Capitol's East Front, where they were held through the inauguration of Jimmy Carter in 1977.

The 1981 inauguration of Ronald Reagan was the first held on the West Front of the Capitol. President Reagan's second inauguration, on January 21, 1985, also was scheduled for the West Front but was forced indoors to the Capitol Rotunda because of bitterly cold weather. In 1989, the ceremonies returned to the Capitol's West Front for the swearing-in of George Bush and the Bicentennial Inauguration.

The United States has held fifty-one quadrennial inaugurations, and nine additional oath-takings as Vice Presidents succeeded Presidents who died or resigned. After the 1933 ratification of the Constitution's Twentieth Amendment, the date of the inauguration changed from March 4 to January 20, ending the long interregnum that had existed between the Presidential election and inauguration. Although inaugural traditions have changed through the years, the fundamental premise of and promise to the American people implicit in the ceremonies remain unchanged and unwavering. Thus, the American Presidential Inaugurations, with their speeches and attendant festivities, represent both national renewal and continuity through the past two hundred and four years and into the future.