



John Quincy Adams (American Profiles)

Lynn Hudson Parsons

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He was born in 1767, a subject of the British Empire, and died in 1848, a citizen of the United States and a member of Congress in company with Abraham Lincoln. In his dramatic career he had known George Washington and Benjamin Franklin, La Fayette of France, Alexander I of Russia, and Castlereagh of Great Britain. He had both collaborated and quarrelled with Thomas Jefferson, Andrew Jackson, Henry Clay, John C. Calhoun, and Daniel Webster. In his lifetime Americans had fought for and established their independence, adopted a Constitution, fought two wars with Great Britain and one with Mexico. They had expanded south to the Rio Grande and west to the Pacific. At the time of his death, Adams was seen as a living connection between the present and past of the young republic and his passing severed one of the nation's last ties with its founding generation.

As son of the second president of the United States, father of the minister to the Court of St. James, and grandfather to author Henry Adams, John Quincy Adams was part of an American dynasty. In his own career as secretary of state, President, senator, and congressman, Adams was as an actor in some of the most dramatic events of the nineteenth century.

In this concise biography, Lynn Hudson Parsons masterfully chronicles the life of one of America's most absorbing figures. From the day in 1778 when, as a boy, he accompanied his father on a diplomatic mission to France, to his last years as an eloquent, cantankerous opponent of this country's foreign and domestic policies, Adams was rarely detached from public affairs. And yet, this biography reveals Adams as a man never truly at home anywhere?in Washington he was stubborn and reclusive, in Europe he was a phlegmatic ideologue, a bulldog among spaniels. His story parallels America's own.

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