



The Commander-in-Chief: Our Military Presidents

The President of the United States, though a civilian, holds the military title of Commander-in-Chief of the U.S. Armed Forces. Of those who have held the office since 1789, many of them have military service in their backgrounds prior to entering to the Oval Office.



President George Washington
Portrait by Gilbert Stuart, circa 1795

George Washington

George Washington began his military career at age 20 in 1752 when he was appointed a district adjutant general in the Virginia colonial militia. In 1754, he commanded a militia regiment that fired some of the first shots of what would become a world war: the French & Indian War (Seven Years' War). From July of 1775 to December of 1783, he served as commander-in-chief of the Continental Army during the American Revolution. His greatest contribution as a commander was keeping the Army intact, avoiding the urge to fight simply for the sake of fighting, and establishing the precedent that civilians had the ultimate authority over the military. Washington was elected as our first president under the Constitution we now have today, serving in that post from 1789 to 1797.

Four U.S. Navy vessels have been named USS GEORGE WASHINGTON in his honor: a sailing vessel used in the undeclared war with France (1798-1802), a troop ship that served during World War I and World War II, a nuclear ballistic missile submarine that served during the Cold War, and a *Nimitz*-class nuclear-powered aircraft carrier. Four U.S. Army sites have been named Fort Washington after him: a series of earthworks in Boston (1775-76), an earthen fort in New York (1776), a temporary fortification in Pennsylvania (1777), and a frontier outpost in Cincinnati (1789-1803). The Purple Heart, a medal received by any U.S. service member who is wounded in the line of duty, bears the image of General Washington.

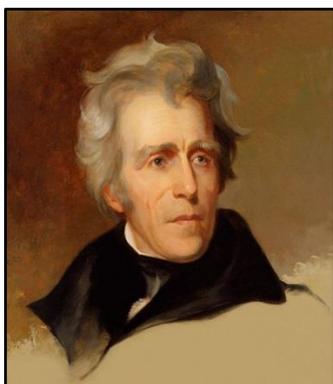


President James Monroe
Portrait by Samuel F.B. Morse

James Monroe

James Monroe entered the Continental Army during the Revolutionary War in 1776 and served with distinction for two years. In the iconic painting entitled *Washington Crossing the Delaware* by Emanuel Leutze, Monroe is shown standing just behind Washington, holding the American flag aloft. At the Battle of Trenton, he was struck in his left shoulder by a musket ball and carried from the field bleeding badly from a severed artery. He would carry the ball in his shoulder for the rest of his life.

Fort Monroe in Hampton Roads, Virginia, the attack transport USS PRESIDENT MONROE (AP-104) and the nuclear ballistic missile submarine USS JAMES MONROE (SSBN-622) were all named in his honor.



President Andrew Jackson
Portrait by Thomas Sully

Andrew Jackson

Andrew Jackson fought in the American Revolution at the age of 14 and was even a prisoner of war for a time during the conflict. In 1802, he was elected Commanding General of the Tennessee militia and still held the position when the War of 1812 began. Leading the militia, he defeated tribesmen of the Creek Nation of Native Americans (who were allies of the British) at the Battles of Talladega, Tuscaloosa, and Horseshoe Bend in 1813 and 1814. When the Creeks fled into Spanish-controlled Florida where British forces could reinforce them, Jackson invaded Florida and quickly captured Pensacola. As a Major General in the U.S. Army, he led American forces to victory against the British during the pivotal Battle of New Orleans. In 1818, he saw combat once more

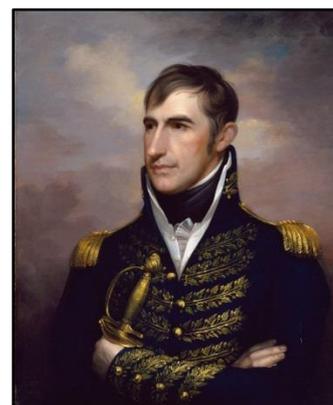
against hostile Native American tribes and outlaws whom he pursued into Florida, nearly sparking a war with Spain. He resigned from the Army in 1821.

The U.S. Army has named four sites in honor of President Jackson: Fort Jackson, a temporary wooden fort built in 1814 at present-day Wetumpka, Alabama; Fort Jackson in Louisiana, which guarded the mouth of the Mississippi River; Jackson Barracks in Louisiana, which is today used by the Louisiana National Guard; and Fort Jackson in Columbia, South Carolina. The U.S. Navy and U.S. Revenue Cutter Service have also named three vessels in his honor: the ANDREW JACKSON, a revenue cutter that served during the nullification crisis and the Civil War; the USS PRESIDENT JACKSON (AP-37/APA-18/T-AP-18), an attack transport that served during World War II and the Korean War; and the nuclear ballistic missile submarine USS ANDREW JACKSON (SSBN-619) which served throughout the Cold War.

William Henry Harrison

William Henry Harrison joined the Army in 1791. He saw duty in the campaigns against Native American tribes in the Northwest Territory before leaving the service in 1798 to pursue a career in government.

As Governor of the Indiana Territory in 1811, Harrison and his militia clashed with tribesmen led by Tecumseh and The Prophet at the Battle of Tippecanoe. During the War of 1812, Tecumseh allied with the British while Harrison was made commander of the Army in the Northwest as a Major General. Initially on the defensive, he rallied his troops, recaptured Detroit, and went on to invade Canada. He defeated the British at the Battle of the Thames in 1813. He resigned his commission in 1814.

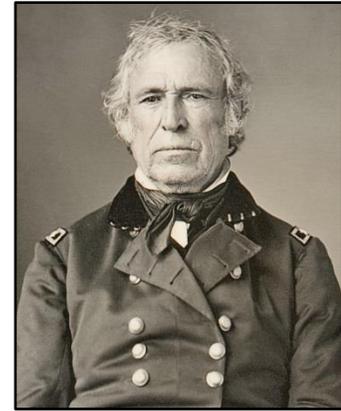


President William Henry Harrison
Portrait by Rembrandt Peale

President Harrison was the first U.S. president not to have a military vessel named in his honor. The U.S. Army, however, named a Civil War era training post Camp Harrison in his honor near Cincinnati, Ohio. Fort Harrison in Montana also bore his name.

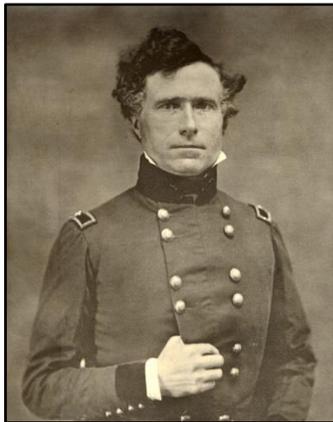
Zachary Taylor

Zachary Taylor joined the Army in 1808 and served in the Indiana Territory of the Old Northwest. For a time, he commanded Fort Knox until 1814. During the War of 1812, while under the overall command of General William Henry Harrison, Taylor successfully defended Fort Harrison against a Native American attack. He commanded Fort Johnson in 1814 until that post was abandoned. He resigned from the Army in 1814 but reenlisted again in 1815. Between 1820 and 1829, he commanded and/or resided at Fort Selden, Fort Jesup, and the Baton Rouge Barracks in Louisiana. He served in the Black Hawk War of 1832 and against the Seminole tribe in Florida in 1837. In 1845, he and his troops were deployed in territory claimed by Texas and Mexico. They were attacked and the Mexican War began. Taylor's forces saw victories at Palo Alto, Monterrey, and Buena Vista. He left the Army in 1848 with 40 years of service.



President Zachary Taylor
Daguerreotype Author Unknown

The U.S. Army named two sites in honor of President Taylor: Camp Zachary Taylor, a World War I training camp in Kentucky; and Fort Zachary Taylor (1850-1947), a Civil War era masonry fort in Florida. The U.S. Navy has named two vessels in his honor: SS ZACHARY TAYLOR, a Liberty ship, and USS PRESIDENT TAYLOR, a troopship that served during World War II.



President Franklin Pierce
Daguerreotype by Mathew Brady

Franklin Pierce

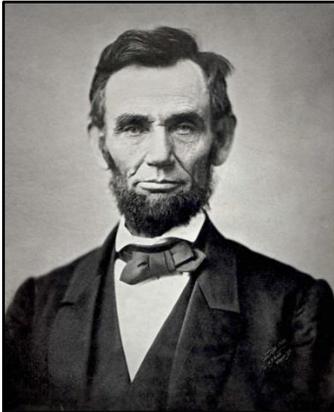
Franklin Pierce volunteered for duty in the Mexican War in 1846 and led a volunteer brigade which served as reinforcements for General Winfield Scott's forces marching on Mexico City. Pierce's brigade acquitted itself well in several battles. During the Battle of Contreras, he received a serious knee injury when his horse stumbled and fell on him. Though he returned to his command the following day, the pain from the injury was so severe that he experienced episodes of fainting and had to be carried from the field. He returned to duty and led his brigade throughout the rest of the campaign. Political opponents later used this to hint at cowardice. His contemporaries and his commanding officer never questioned his courage or his leadership in battle.



President James Buchanan
Portrait by George Healy

James Buchanan

From the beginning, James Buchanan opposed going to war with Great Britain in what came to be known as the War of 1812. He felt that it was unnecessary for the young nation to be drawn into the larger world war then going on against France (the Napoleonic Wars). However, when British forces invaded Chesapeake Bay and Maryland in August of 1814, he joined a volunteer light dragoon (light cavalry) unit. His unit served in the defense of Baltimore the following month. With war's end, he returned to civilian life. Buchanan is the only president with military experience who did not, at some point, serve as an officer.



President Abraham Lincoln
Photograph by Alexander Gardner

Abraham Lincoln

Abraham Lincoln saw military service in 1832 during a Native American uprising in Wisconsin and Illinois called the Black Hawk War. He served in a company of Illinois militia drawn from the New Salem region. Though he never saw actual combat, he was elected by his peers in the company as their captain. He wrote shortly thereafter that he had not had *"any such success in life which gave me so much satisfaction."*

Three U.S. Navy ships have borne his name: USS PRESIDENT LINCOLN, a troop transport from World War I; USS ABRAHAM LINCOLN (SSBN-602), a nuclear ballistic missile submarine from the Cold War era; and USS ABRAHAM LINCOLN (CVN-72), a *Nimitz*-class nuclear-powered aircraft carrier. The U.S. Army has named one installation in his honor: Fort Abraham Lincoln, a frontier infantry/cavalry outpost located near Mandan, North Dakota (1872-1907). The Abraham Lincoln Brigade, a group of American volunteers who served in the International Brigades that fought in the Spanish Civil War from 1936 to 1939, was also named in his honor.



President Ulysses S. Grant
Photographer Unknown

Ulysses Simpson Grant

Ulysses S. Grant was the first West Point graduate to be elected President (Class of 1843). He served on the frontier and in the occupation of Texas before seeing combat in the Mexican War. He resigned from the Army in 1854 but volunteered for duty again in 1861 when the Civil War began. He rose through the ranks in the Western Theater until becoming commanding general of the U.S. Army in 1864. He faced great opposition while fighting a war of attrition against the Confederacy. When Union troops began to cheer upon General Robert E. Lee's surrender in 1865, he admonished his men that *"The war is over; the rebels are our countrymen again."* As General of the Army, Grant oversaw the Army's participation in the occupation of the South during the early years of Reconstruction. He served as interim Secretary of War from August of 1867 to January of 1868 before resigning from the Army in March of 1869 following his election as President.

The U.S. Army has named three installations in honor of President Grant: Fort Grant, a frontier outpost originally located at Aravaipa Canyon and later relocated to Graham Mountain in Arizona (1860-1905); Camp Grant, a World War I and World War II training camp located near Rockford, Illinois (1917-1946); and Fort Grant located at the Pacific terminus of the Panama Canal Zone (1912-1999). The U.S. Navy has named three vessels in honor of President Grant: USS GENERAL GRANT, a Civil War era steamship; USS PRESIDENT GRANT (SP-3014/AP-29), a troop transport used by the Army and the Navy in World War I and World War II; and USS ULYSSES S. GRANT (SSBN-631), a nuclear ballistic missile submarine that served during the Cold War.

Rutherford Birchard Hayes

Rutherford B. Hayes volunteered in the Union Army during the Civil War and was appointed to the rank of Major in the 23rd Ohio Regiment. He originally served as the Regimental Judge-Advocate, having been a lawyer as a civilian. He was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel and given a field command. He commanded the 23rd Ohio Regiment as well as the First Brigade of the Kanawha Division of the Army of West Virginia. His division defended West Virginia against several Confederate attempts to retake the area. He also saw combat in the Shenandoah Valley Campaign and would eventually receive the permanent rank of Brigadier General and the temporary brevetted rank of Major General. While still in the Army, he was nominated as a candidate for the House of Representatives but would not return home to campaign, stating that *"an officer fit for duty who at this crisis would abandon his post to electioneer ... ought to be scalped."* Of the five men later elected to the Presidency, only Hayes was wounded in action. In total, he was wounded five times, with four horses shot out from under him.

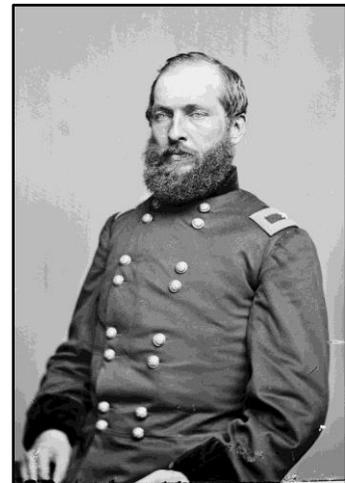


President Rutherford B. Hayes
Photographer Unknown

The U.S. Navy has named one vessel in his honor: the USS PRESIDENT HAYES (AP-39), an attack transport that served during World War II. The U.S. Army has named one installation after him as well: Fort Hayes in Columbus, Ohio (1877-2009).

James Abram Garfield

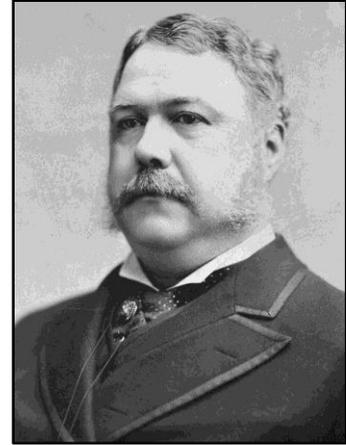
James A. Garfield left his seat in the Ohio state senate and enlisted in the United States Army at the start of the Civil War. He was assigned to the command of the 42nd Ohio Volunteer Infantry with the rank of Colonel. Early in the war, in November of 1861, he was assigned the task of driving a considerable Confederate force out of the Big Sandy River region of eastern Kentucky. He accomplished this against a numerical superior force over the next two months. His unit also retook a gap in the Allegheny Mountains controlling one of the roads through the mountain passes between Kentucky and Virginia. He saw combat at the Battle of Shiloh in southern Tennessee and in the Battle of Corinth in Mississippi in 1862. He also participated in the Battle of Chickamauga in Tennessee in 1863. Meanwhile, back home in Ohio, his fellow citizens had nominated him for and elected him to a seat in Congress. Upon election, he resigned his commission in the Army to accept his seat in the U.S. House of Representatives at the urging of President Abraham Lincoln who reportedly told him that it was easier to find major generals than to obtain effective Republicans for Congress.



President James A. Garfield
Photograph by Mathew Brady

Chester Alan Arthur

Chester A. Arthur was appointed to the military staff of the Governor of New York in 1860. He was assigned to the Quartermaster Department and was responsible for housing and outfitting of troops volunteering for service in the Civil War. He was so efficient at this that he became Quartermaster General, running the entire department. He turned down the command of five volunteer regiments at the Governor's request so as to remain at his post. In 1862, he helped to coordinate the enlistment of 120,000 additional men for service. Arthur never actually saw combat, serving instead behind the front lines. When a new governor was elected in 1863, he was relieved of his militia duties.



President Chester A. Arthur
Photograph by Charles Milton Bell

The U.S. Army has named one vessel in his honor: the USAT CHESTER A. ARTHUR, a Civil War era steamer that was purchased in 1876.



President Benjamin Harrison
Photographer Unknown

Benjamin Harrison

Benjamin Harrison was commissioned with the rank of 2nd Lieutenant in the 70th Indiana Infantry Regiment in 1862. The regiment performed reconnaissance and guarded railroad lines in Kentucky and Tennessee. It joined Sherman's campaign to take Atlanta in 1864 and Harrison was placed in command of the 1st Brigade, 1st Division of the 20th Army Corps. After the fall of Atlanta, the brigade was transferred to a new area of operation and participated in the Battle of Nashville. Harrison was promoted to the brevetted rank of Brigadier General in March of 1865.

The U.S. Army has named one installation after him: Fort Benjamin Harrison at Indianapolis, Indiana (1903-1991), which also served as Benjamin Harrison Air Force Base (1948-1950). Liberty ship SS BENJAMIN HARRISON bore his name in World War II.



President William McKinley, Jr.
Photograph by Mathew Brady

William McKinley, Jr.

William McKinley, Jr., enlisted in the Union Army in the 23rd Regiment of the Ohio Volunteer Infantry in 1861 along with another future president: Rutherford B. Hayes. McKinley initially served at the rank of Private before being promoted to Commissary Sergeant by his commanding officer (Hayes). During the Battle of Antietam in September of 1862, he drove a mule team to deliver rations to his men while under enemy fire. For this act of bravery, he was promoted to the rank of 2nd Lieutenant. By the end of the war in 1865, McKinley had risen to the brevetted rank of Major.

The U.S. Army named one installation in his honor: Fort William McKinley, located near Manila in the Philippines (1901-1946).

Theodore Roosevelt

Theodore Roosevelt served as a Captain in the New York National Guard from 1882 to 1886. He was Assistant Secretary of the Navy in 1898 when the Spanish-American War began. He resigned his post and volunteers to form the core of the First U.S. Volunteer Cavalry Regiment, dubbed the "Rough Riders." He initially held the rank of Lieutenant Colonel, but was later elevated to command of the Regiment at the rank of Colonel. The Rough Riders are mostly known for their charge up San Juan Hill in Cuba on July 01, 1898. Though a cavalry unit, they made the charge dismounted as most of their horses were left in Florida during the confusion surrounding shipping the Army to Cuba. Roosevelt was awarded the Medal of Honor posthumously in 2001 for his actions here. He was initially nominated for the award during the war but the nomination reportedly met resistance from some who were annoyed with his ability to grab headlines and the spotlight.



President Theodore Roosevelt
Photograph by B.J. Falk (1898)

The U.S. Navy has named two vessels in his honor: USS THEODORE ROOSEVELT (SSBN-600), a nuclear ballistic missile submarine that served during the Cold War, and USS THEODORE ROOSEVELT (CVN-71), a *Nimitz*-class aircraft carrier that is currently serving in the active fleet.



President Harry S. Truman
Photographer Unknown

Harry S. Truman

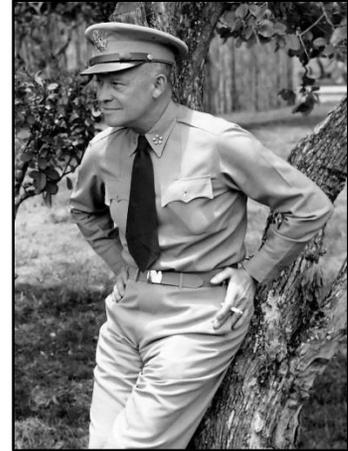
Harry S. Truman served with an artillery battery in the Missouri Army National Guard from 1905 until 1911. When the U.S. entered World War I, he rejoined the Guard even though he was exempted from conscription (he was the only male in the family). As commander of Battery D of the 129th Field Artillery, he saw combat in the Meuse-Argonne Offensive in eastern France from September to November of 1918. During this offensive, he disobeyed direct orders that allowed him to fire only upon targets facing the 35th Division. Upon sighting a German artillery battery positioning to fire on the neighboring 28th Division, he ordered his men to take it under fire, likely saving American lives. Though he was dressed down for disobeying orders, he was not court-martialed. In spite of being initially unpopular as a commander,

under his leadership, Battery D did not lose a single man. He left the Army at the rank of Captain at war's end.

The U.S. Navy has named one vessel in his honor: USS HARRY S. TRUMAN (CVN-75), a *Nimitz*-class aircraft carrier currently in service in the fleet. The U.S. Army's 129th Field Artillery Regiment is officially designated as "Truman's Own."

Dwight David Eisenhower

Dwight D. Eisenhower was a graduate of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point (Class of 1915). Early on, he served with the infantry in logistics at various camps in Texas and Georgia. During World War I, he was assigned to an engineering unit and finally a unit training new tank corps at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. He served the entire war without seeing overseas or combat duty. In 1919, he saw duty on a transcontinental Army convoy that highlighted the need for better roads in the United States. Throughout the 1920s and 1930s, he served on the staffs of several talented generals in the peacetime Army, learning wartime planning, logistics, and strategy. As war loomed, he participated in war game exercises like the 1941 Louisiana Maneuvers. Following the attack on Pearl Harbor, Eisenhower served under Army Chief of Staff George Marshall, developing war plans to defeat Germany and Japan. In 1942, he was sent to London as Commanding General of the European Theater of Operations. Later that year, he was made Supreme Allied Commander for the Allied invasion of North Africa. This was followed by command of the invasions of Sicily and then Italy. President Roosevelt decided that Eisenhower would command the invasion of Normandy in 1944, making him Supreme Allied Commander of the Allied Expeditionary Force and working with the likes of Winston Churchill and Charles de Gaulle. He was appointed General of the Army (U.S.) in 1944 having never personally seen combat but being well-respected by front line commanders. With the German surrender in May of 1945, Eisenhower became military governor of the U.S. Zone of Occupation in Germany. In late 1945, following Japan's surrender, he returned to the United States as U.S. Army Chief of Staff, demobilizing millions of soldiers. From 1951 to 1953, he served as Supreme Allied Commander—Europe in NATO.



President Dwight D. Eisenhower
Official U.S. Army photograph

The U.S. Army has named a hall on the campus of West Point and also erected a monument in his honor. The Dwight D. Eisenhower Army Medical Center also bears his name at Fort Gordon, Georgia. The U.S. Navy has named one vessel in his honor: USS DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER (CVN-69), a *Nimitz*-class aircraft carrier currently in service in the fleet.

John Fitzgerald Kennedy

Initially, John F. Kennedy volunteered for the U.S. Army in early 1941 but was rejected due to back problems. He was later accepted into the Navy through the political connections of his father. He saw an administrative posting prior to attending Naval Reserve Officers Training School and the Motor Torpedo Boat Squadron Training Center. He saw duty in Panama and various assignments throughout the Pacific in 1942-43 before receiving command of a patrol torpedo boat (PT boat).

While on a nighttime patrol near New Georgia Island on August 02, 1943, Kennedy's boat, PT-109, was rammed by the Japanese destroyer AMAGIRI. In spite of his own injury, he swam to a nearby island while towing a badly burned shipmate. Gathering his surviving crew ashore, he swam to another nearby island. Contacting native islanders, he scrawled a message into a coconut shell to be delivered to Allied coastal watchers. Following



President John F. Kennedy
Official U.S. Navy photograph

the rescue of his crew, Kennedy received the Navy & Marine Corps Medal for his actions as well as the Purple Heart. He was honorably discharged in early 1945. To friends and family, he confided that he didn't feel deserving of the medals, calling the incident a botched military operation that cost the lives of two of his men. The coconut shell with its message was preserved and sat on his desk in the Oval Office during his time as President.

The U.S. Navy named the aircraft carrier USS JOHN F. KENNEDY (CV-67) in his honor. Due to his role as President in the Space Race and the landing of a manned mission on the moon, Kennedy Space Center at Cape Canaveral, Florida, was also named for him.

Lyndon Baines Johnson

Lyndon B. Johnson was appointed a Lieutenant Commander in the Naval Reserve in 1940. When the U.S. entered World War II, he was serving in the House of Representatives. He reported for active duty in December of 1941, requesting combat duty. Instead, he was sent for training before inspecting shipyards in Texas and on the West Coast. He was next assigned to a three-man team surveying operations in the Southwest Pacific to report back directly to President Franklin Roosevelt. While observing the 22nd Bomb Group during an attack on a Japanese base, there was some controversy when Johnson was later awarded the Silver Star for this mission. Some claimed the bomber on which he flew came under enemy fire while reports show that it turned back due to mechanical difficulties. Upon Johnson's return to Washington, he reported on deplorable and unacceptable conditions to the President, Congress, and Navy leaders. He was placed in charge of a subcommittee on Naval Affairs and helped to improve conditions for American servicemen.



President Lyndon B. Johnson
Photographer Unknown

Richard Milhous Nixon

Richard Milhous Nixon was actually eligible for an exemption from military service during World War II due to his Quaker heritage and beliefs. However, he chose to serve in spite of this and was commissioned as an officer in the U.S. Navy in 1942. After training, he was assigned to a Naval Air Station in Iowa and later as the Naval Passenger Control Officer for the South Pacific Combat Air Transport Command. He requested more challenging duties and was given command of cargo handling units. Though he saw no actual combat, Nixon received two service stars and a citation of commendation for his service in the Pacific. When he returned to the United States, he became the administrative officer at Alameda NAS, California, before transferring to Philadelphia and the Bureau of Aeronautics Office in 1945 to help negotiate the termination of war contracts. He received a second letter of commendation, this time from the Secretary of the Navy. He resigned from the Navy in 1946 at the rank of Lieutenant Commander.



President Richard M. Nixon
Official U.S. Navy photograph



President Gerald R. Ford, Jr.
Official U.S. Navy photograph

Gerald Rudolph Ford, Jr.

Gerald R. Ford enlisted in the Navy as an Ensign in 1942 and was assigned as an instructor at a preflight school in North Carolina teaching navigation, ordnance, gunnery, first aid, and military drill. In 1943, he was assigned to the aircraft carrier USS MONTEREY (CVL-26) where he served as assistant navigator and anti-aircraft battery officer. He saw combat in campaigns throughout the Gilbert Islands, the Bismark Archipelago, the Marshall Islands, the Marianas Islands, the Western Carolines, the Philippines, and more. During Typhoon Cobra in 1944, the MONTEREY caught fire and while investigating the fire, Ford was nearly washed overboard. He saw shore duty near war's end and was released from duty with the rank of Lieutenant Commander.

The U.S. Navy has named one vessel in his honor: USS GERALD R. FORD (CVN-78), a *Ford*-class aircraft carrier soon to enter into service in the fleet.

James Earl Carter, Jr.

James Earl "Jimmy" Carter, Jr., is a graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy (Class of 1946). To date, he is the only Annapolis graduate to ever be elected President. He served on diesel-electric submarines during the early years of the Cold War. While serving aboard the submarine USS POMFRET (SS-391), he was almost washed overboard. He completed qualifications to command a diesel-electric submarine before being chosen for the nuclear submarine program. When his father died in 1953, he resigned his commission to return to his family and was honorably discharged. He was placed on inactive duty in the U.S. Naval Reserve, from which he transferred to retired reserve in December of 1961. USS JIMMY CARTER (SSN-23), a *Seawolf*-class nuclear attack submarine, was named in his honor by the U.S. Navy.



President Jimmy Carter
Official U.S. Navy photograph



President Ronald Reagan
Photographer Unknown

Ronald Wilson Reagan

Ronald Reagan joined the Army Reserve in 1937 and was called to active duty in 1942 following the United States' entry into World War II. Due to poor eyesight, he never served overseas. Instead, due to his film career prior to the war, he was transferred from a cavalry unit to the Army Air Corps' First Motion Picture Unit. In this role, working with other movie industry professionals, he helped the unit produce over 400 training and propaganda films during the course of the war. His duties also saw him join other celebrities in uniform at events involving the sale of war bonds to help fund the war effort. He was honorably discharged from service in December of 1945. USS RONALD REAGAN (CVN-76), a *Nimitz*-class aircraft carrier currently serving in the active fleet, is named in his honor.



President George H.W. Bush
Official U.S. Navy photograph

George Herbert Walker Bush

George Herbert Walker Bush joined the Navy in 1943, attending flight school and becoming a naval aviator. He was assigned to Torpedo Squadron 51 (VT-51) as a photographic officer and flew off of the aircraft carrier USS SAN JACINTO (CVL-30). He participated in the Battle of the Philippine Sea. In 1944, during an attack on Chichijima, his aircraft was struck and set ablaze. He completed his mission, dropping his payload, and maneuvered his aircraft out to sea where his crew could bail out. He was rescued by the submarine USS FINBACK (SS-230). He returned to SAN JACINTO, flying a total of 58 combat missions and receiving the Distinguished Flying Cross among other awards. He was reassigned to train new pilots at Norfolk Naval Air Base before joining Torpedo Squadron 153 (VT-153). At war's end, he was discharged with the rank of Lieutenant (junior grade).

The U.S. Navy has named one vessel in his honor: USS GEORGE H. W. BUSH (CVN-77), a *Nimitz*-class aircraft carrier currently in service in the fleet.

George Walker Bush

In 1968, George W. Bush was commissioned as an officer in the Texas Air National Guard and served with the 111th Fighter Squadron, flying the F-102 *Delta Dart* interceptor aircraft. He later transferred to the Alabama Air National Guard. Bush was honorably discharged in 1973, moving to inactive duty in the Air Force Reserve. He ended his six-year service obligation in 1974.

During the 2000 and 2004 Presidential campaigns, political critics and opponents made allegations of preferential treatment in his selection for National Guard duty during the Vietnam War due to his father's political connections as a way to avoid the military draft. Questions also arose regarding his attendance at drills and whether or not he had fulfilled his service obligation.



President George W. Bush
Official USAF photograph

1. Which president was the first not to have a U.S. Navy vessel named in his honor?

2. Which president is the only one to have graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy at Annapolis, Maryland?

3. Which two presidents were graduates of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point?

4. Which three presidents served in the Army or Air National Guard?

5. Two presidents served in the same unit together in wartime. Can you name them?

6. Which president was held as a Prisoner of War for a short time?

7. Which president is the only one to have served only in the enlisted ranks and not as an officer throughout his military career?

8. Who is the only president to have received the nation's highest military award, the Medal of Honor?

9. Which military medal bears the likeness of a president? Which president is depicted? Which president later received this medal for injuries received in combat?

10. Which president was exempt from military service due to religious beliefs but chose to serve in a non-combatant support role anyway?

11. President Zachary Taylor was elected President while still serving in the U.S. Army in 1848. Which other two presidents were elected into political office while serving in the military?

12. Which president served in the armed forces while simultaneously serving in office in the House of Representatives?

13. Which president had an Air Force Base named in his honor?

14. Match the appropriate president with the conflict in which they served.

James Monroe	Spanish-American War
Franklin Pierce	Black Hawk War
James Buchanan	World War I
Abraham Lincoln	Civil War
Harry S. Truman	World War II
Theodore Roosevelt	American Revolution
Ronald Wilson Reagan	War of 1812
Chester A. Arthur	Mexican War

15. Which president was stationed at and/or commanded Fort Jesup, Fort Selden, and the Baton Rouge Barracks in Louisiana?

16. How many presidents served in each of the following branches of service?

Army/Reserve _____ Marine Corps/Reserve _____
Navy/Reserve _____ Air Force/Reserve _____ Coast Guard/Reserve _____

Teacher's Answer Key

1. Which president was the first not to have a U.S. Navy vessel named in his honor?

William Henry Harrison

2. Which president is the only one to have graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy at Annapolis, Maryland?

James Earl Carter, Jr.

3. Which two presidents were graduates of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point?

Ulysses S. Grant and Dwight D. Eisenhower

4. Which three presidents served in the Army or Air National Guard?

Theodore Roosevelt and Harry S. Truman – Army National Guard
George W. Bush – Air National Guard

5. Two presidents served in the same unit together in wartime. Can you name them?

Rutherford B. Hayes and William McKinley, Jr.

6. Which president was held as a Prisoner of War for a short time?

Andrew Jackson

7. Which president is the only one to have served only in the enlisted ranks and not as an officer throughout his military career?

James Buchanan

8. Who is the only president to have received the nation's highest military award, the Medal of Honor?

Theodore Roosevelt

9. Which military medal bears the likeness of a president? Which president is depicted? Which president later received this medal for injuries received in combat?

The Purple Heart bears the likeness of **President George Washington** and was awarded to **President John F. Kennedy** during World War II.

10. Which president was exempt from military service due to religious beliefs but chose to serve in a non-combatant support role anyway?

Richard M. Nixon

11. President Zachary Taylor was elected President while still serving in the U.S. Army in 1848. Which other two presidents were elected into political office while serving in the military?

Rutherford B. Hayes and James A. Garfield

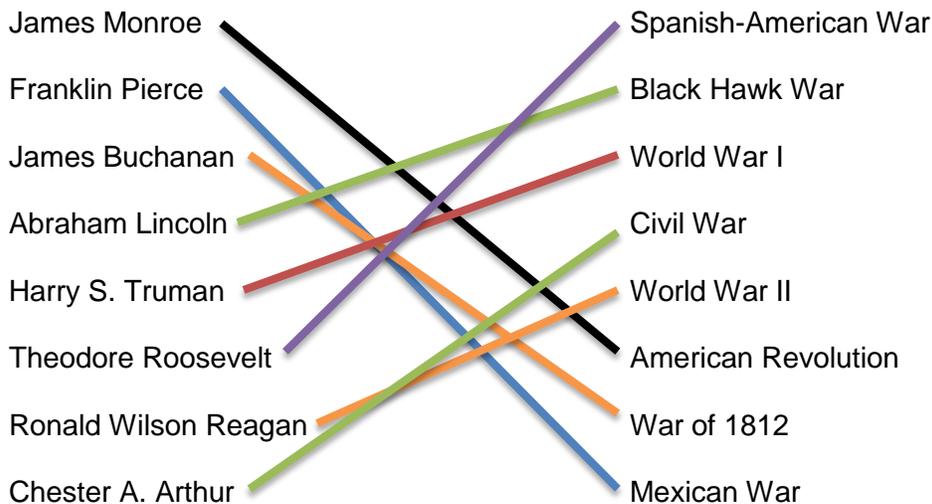
12. Which president served in the armed forces while simultaneously serving in office in the House of Representatives?

Lyndon B. Johnson

13. Which president had an Air Force Base named in his honor?

Benjamin Harrison

14. Match the appropriate president with the conflict in which they served.



15. Which president was stationed at and/or commanded Fort Jesup, Fort Selden, and the Baton Rouge Barracks in Louisiana?

Zachary Taylor

16. How many presidents served in each of the following branches of service?

Army/Reserve	18	Marine Corps/Reserve	0
Navy/Reserve	6	Air Force/Reserve	1
		Coast Guard/Reserve	0