

**THE LIFE OF WILLIAM
HENRY HARRISON:
THE PEOPLE'S CANDIDATE
FOR THE PRESIDENCY**

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The Life of William Henry Harrison: The People's Candidate for the Presidency by Isaac Rand Jackson

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ISAAC RAND JACKSON

**THE LIFE OF WILLIAM
HENRY HARRISON:
THE PEOPLE'S CANDIDATE
FOR THE PRESIDENCY**

Jackson, Isaac Rand.
THE LIFE

I. Name.

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OF

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WILLIAM HENRY HARRISON,

THE PEOPLE'S CANDIDATE

FOR

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THE PRESIDENCY.

PHILADELPHIA.

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Wm. H. Harrison

AN

TO THE
PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES.

THE recent nomination of William Henry Harrison for the Presidency, by one of the most numerous, dignified, patriotic, and influential conventions ever assembled on such an occasion, has united the various elements of opposition to the present unprincipled and corrupt administration, as promptly and unanimously as the best friends of their country could wish. Even those who were warmly predisposed in favour of some other individual, have, since this nomination, given up their personal predilections, with a magnanimity which true patriotism only could have roused, and have joined frankly and cordially in support of a candidate, through whose well-earned popularity, they hope and confidently expect to defeat and shake off this administration, which has so long been weighing, like an oppressive incubus, on the best interests of the people—an administration which came into power when our country was in a state of unexampled prosperity, and in a few years of mismanagement and flagitious misrule, has shorn it of its welfare, and plunged it into distress and difficulties, deeply and grievously felt by every class in the community, and daily becoming more burdensome and intolerable to the active and industrious part of our population—to the farmer, the mechanic, the merchant, and the tradesman.

But the people of this country will no longer consent to be held in such bondage. Born freemen, they are wearied of being ruled with a rod of iron. The selfish, narrow-minded, and ruinous policy, the notorious corruption, and the glaring misdeeds of the

present administration, have, at length, roused their just indignation, and they are rising, in their majesty, to rebuke their unprincipled rulers—to teach them, that, though elected to high office, they are, in truth, but the servants of the people, chosen to administer to the great interests of their country, and not to their own private interests, and that they shall not, with impunity, abuse the great trust confided to them. As faithless and dishonest servants, they are destined to be discharged from the high stations they have so unworthily occupied, and the history of their defeat and disgrace will prove a timely and salutary warning to all iniquitous politicians, who may hereafter be elected to office, and who may likewise dare to abuse the confidence reposed in them, with the futile hope to escape detection and just punishment by falsehood, chicanery, and low cunning. After a long night of misrule, a bright and glorious day is once more dawning, and the success of the people's cause, to which, with William Henry Harrison as our candidate for the Presidency, we may look forward with the fairest promise of certainty, will again restore our government to its republican purity, and our country to its happiest days of prosperity. Our farmers and merchants shall no longer brood over their fallen fortunes, nor our honest mechanics and hardy labourers starve or be driven to desperation, by the want of employment—but with the restoration of public confidence in our rulers, the tide of success will again flow in upon our active population, and the busy hum of smiling and prospering industry will again be heard where now all is silent, save the heart-rending cry of poverty and distress.

To those who know General Harrison and are familiar with his past life, nothing need be said of the many and important services he has rendered to his country, nor of his eminent qualifications for the office to which he has been nominated. But the retired life he has led since his return from his mission to Colombia, has, in a measure, withdrawn him from public observation; and has more especially prevented his being properly known and appreciated by the younger portion of our community, who have but recently arrived at manhood and taken their station in the republican ranks of their fellow-citizens. It is true, that, in addition to the highly honourable mention made of General Har-

ri-son in the history of our country for nearly forty years of our national existence, publications, have, at different periods, issued from the press, giving a detailed narrative of the private life as well as of the public services of this patriotic veteran and eminent statesman—but these, owing to their volume or the form in which they appeared, have necessarily had but a limited circulation. We therefore believe it an acceptable service to those who are not familiar with the life of William Henry Harrison, to place before them the following brief sketch of his biography and public services. We think that, when a man has been selected by his fellow-citizens as a suitable candidate for any important office in their gift, it is no more than common justice to all parties, that they should be supplied with some authentic information respecting his past life. It is right and proper that they should know what services he has rendered to his country, what public stations he has occupied, and with what skill, fidelity, and uprightness he has discharged the duties of those offices with which he has been entrusted—in order that furnished with this information, they may be enabled to form a fair estimate of his abilities, and of his usefulness and integrity in his future career. We therefore offer our readers this honest outline of plain facts gathered from the most authentic sources. Should any desire more particular information, or wish for detailed evidence of the historic truth of this outline, we refer them to our public documents and state papers connected with the events here recorded, and to every impartial history of the wars and negotiations on our north-western frontier, from the adoption of the federal constitution till the close of the last war.

LIFE OF

WILLIAM HENRY HARRISON.

WILLIAM HENRY HARRISON was born in Virginia, on the ninth day of February, 1773, at Berkley, on the James River, about twenty-five miles below Richmond. His father, Benjamin Harrison, was one of the earliest and most conspicuous patriots of the Revolution. He was a very distinguished member of the Continental Congress, during the years 1774, 1775, and 1776, and was Chairman of the Committee of the whole House when the Declaration of Independence was finally agreed to, and his signature is annexed to that celebrated document. He afterwards rendered important services to his country, by his energetic and judicious measures as governor of his native state, Virginia. This eminent patriot died in the year 1791, leaving his son, William Henry, under the guardianship of his friend, the distinguished financier of our Revolution, Robert Morris.

Young Harrison was educated at Hampden Sydney College; and, by the advice of his friends, turned his attention to the study of medicine. But about the period when he had completed his education, soon after the death of his father, the increased and barbarous hostilities of the Indians on our north-western borders, began to excite a feeling of indignation throughout the whole country. In this general excitement our young student participated so warmly, that he resolved to relinquish his professional pursuits, and join the army destined to the defence of the Ohio frontier. The service was then neither popular nor inviting, but on the contrary was exceedingly toilsome and fraught with great danger and hardships; and nothing but high courage and elevated motives, could have induced him to form this resolve at so gloomy a period. His determination was warmly opposed, too, by his prudent guardian; but it was cordially approved by one

whom he thought entitled to even more influence—by *General Washington*, who had been his father's intimate friend, and who was, at that time, President of the United States.

The war in our western country was then assuming a very alarming aspect. The Indian tribes, who had been in the service of Great Britain, during our Revolutionary struggle, had not yet laid down the tomahawk; but still persisted in their ruthless aggressions, and in the almost daily commission of their savage atrocities. From the year 1783, when Great Britain acknowledged our independence, and war with the mother country ceased, up to the year 1791, it was estimated that more than fifteen hundred of our hardy borderers had fallen victims to the rifle and scalping knife of their savage foes. Our northwestern frontier presented an appalling scene of rapine, conflagration, and wanton destruction of life and property. Many of our border settlements had been crushed in their infancy, and all had been retarded in their growth. Expedition after expedition, fitted out to oppose them, had met with the most disheartening losses; and finally a gallant army under Brigadier General Harmer, which had been sent expressly to chastise these savages, after destroying some of their towns, had been signally defeated by them, and almost annihilated. Of the few experienced officers who escaped from Harmer's defeat, nearly all, worn out with the fatigues of a service so harassing, and shrinking from a warfare of so dangerous and barbarous a nature, had resigned their commissions; and a general feeling of dismay began to pervade the whole of our exposed frontier.

Such was the gloomy aspect of affairs, when the ardent and generous patriotism of young Harrison prompted him to give up the comforts and luxuries that surrounded him at home, and enter his country's service in defence of his fellow-citizens.

In the autumn of the year 1791, he received the commission of an ensign in the United States artillery, from the hands of General Washington, whose warm approval had greatly cheered him in his design. He hastened immediately to join his regiment, which was then stationed at Fort Washington, and arrived at that post a few days after the unfortunate defeat of General St. Clair, near the Miami villages, by the confederated Indians under

the command of Mesheconnaqua, the Little Turtle, a celebrated Miami warrior, and Buckongelas, head chief of the Delawares. This disastrous defeat, in which St. Clair's army was destroyed, with the loss of nearly a thousand men, killed or taken prisoners, left the whole of our northwestern frontier exposed to the ravages of a merciless enemy, and added greatly to the general consternation before existing.

In this state of things, our government saw the necessity of adopting immediate and efficient means to put an end to this savage conflict. Another army was promptly raised, and the command given to General Anthony Wayne of Pennsylvania, a gallant and skilful officer, who had earned a brilliant reputation in the Revolutionary War. The United States Legion, as Wayne's army was called in the new organization, assembled at Pittsburg, in the summer of 1792; and in the ensuing month of November, they left that place, and went into winter quarters, at Legionville, on the Ohio, 22 miles below Pittsburg.

About this time, Harrison was promoted to a lieutenantcy, and shortly after, he joined Wayne's Legion. His fearlessness and energy, with his strict attention to discipline, soon attracted the notice of his commander-in-chief, himself a bold and daring soldier and a rigid disciplinarian, and General Wayne, not long after his arrival, selected him as one of his aides-de-camp.

We have entered thus minutely into this detail, because we wish to point out at how early an age, and in what trying times, young Harrison was thought worthy of honourable distinction, and how soon, too, he attracted the attention and especial notice of a man and a soldier like Wayne, whose well-known independence of character was such, that no influence save that of intrinsic merit was ever with him of any avail, and whose daring and almost reckless intrepidity had won him, in our Revolutionary War, the singular appellation of "Mad Anthony."

Lieutenant Harrison acted as aid to General Wayne during the whole of the ensuing campaigns; and his bravery and gallant conduct throughout were such, that he was repeatedly officially noticed in terms of the highest encomium. The war was conducted by General Wayne with all the cool daring of a veteran