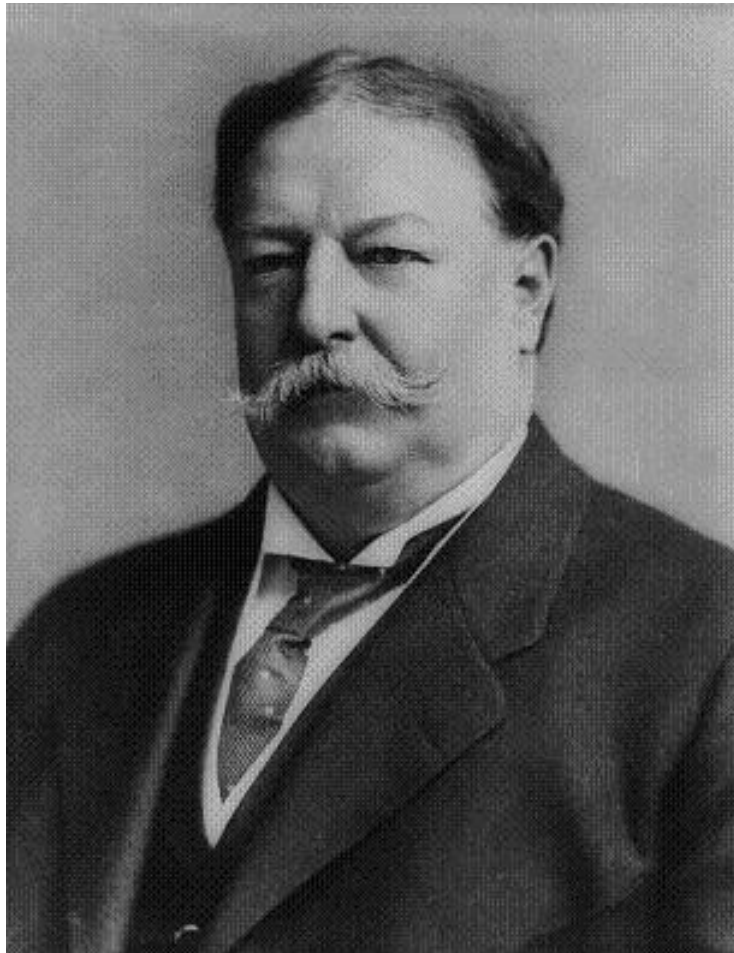


William Howard Taft

Too Big for the Bathtub
Twenty-Seventh, 1909-1913



Nicknames: "Willie", "Big Bill", "Big Lub", "Godknows Taft"

Birth: September 15th, 1857, Cincinnati, Ohio

Death: March 8th, 1930, Washington, D.C.

Significant Events During Taft's Term: Mark Twain Dies ... Triangle Shirtwaist Fire ... Titanic ... New Mexico (#47) and Arizona (#48) become States

Quotes: *"I do not want my son to be President. His is a judicial mind and he loves the law."*
-- William Howard Taft's mother

"Don't sit up nights thinking about making me President for that will never come and I have no ambition in that direction. Any party which would nominate me would make a great mistake."
-- William Howard Taft

"I have come to the conclusion that the major part of the President is to increase the gate receipts of expositions and fairs and bring tourists into the town." -- William Howard Taft

"You can't help but like Mr. Taft. The country likes him and respects him; and I want him to make the best people in the country continue to respect him and every now and then dislike him--sure proof, in a public servant, that he is doing his whole duty, as he sees it, regardless of personal consequences. He has the natural gifts, the culture, the experience, the training, the sanity, the right-mindedness, the honesty, the truthfulness, the modesty, and the dignity properly requisite in a President of the United States, the most responsible post on the planet. In a word, he possesses every qualification the other one [Theodore Roosevelt] was destitute of." -- Mark Twain, 1909

"The truth is that in my present life I don't remember that I ever was President." -- William Taft, after becoming Chief Justice of the Supreme Court (all he had really wanted all along)

"Ohio claims they are due a President as they haven't had one since Taft. Look at the United States, they have not had one since Lincoln." -- Will Rogers

How his term ended: Taft was defeated in his bid for reelection by Woodrow Wilson.

Other Professions: Lawyer, Tax Collector, Judge, Professor, Chief Justice, Law Reporter, Dean of Law School

Worst Mistake: Taft was behind the overthrow of leaders in Nicaragua and Honduras and the replacing of them with USA-friendly leaders (some would call them "puppets") who, in the end, made things worse for the citizens of those countries. For a time, at least, the benefactors of this meddling, these "foreign entanglements," were multinational corporations based in the USA.

Saving Grace: Taft was his own man; although he was Theodore Roosevelt's hand-picked successor, he did not "toe the Teddy line." This irritated Roosevelt to no end and led to him agitating for a change and running against him himself in 1912.

Notes: As a young man, Taft was outstanding both athletically and scholastically. He had reached his full height (6'2") on entering high school; academically, he ranked 2nd in his class out of one hundred ninety one at Yale.

Taft was the only former President to be appointed Chief Justice of the United States.

Taft's great-great-grandfather reportedly fought at Bunker Hill. Taft also claimed to be a

Mayflower descendant, though the Mayflower Society posthumously expelled him when flaws were subsequently discovered in his application.

Twice as many Anti-Trust suits were prosecuted during Taft's four-year administration than during "Trust-Buster" Roosevelt's eight years.

A new bathtub had to be installed in the White House when Taft was President, as he was too large for the existing one and got stuck in it.

He was given the nickname "Godknows Taft" because he would respond to questions about how a man was supposed to feed his family in hard times by saying: "God knows!"

Is it just me, or does Taft resemble a fuller-fleshed, handlebar-mustachioed Al Gore?

Taft was a distant relative of both Ralph Waldo Emerson and Richard Nixon. What an odd combination.