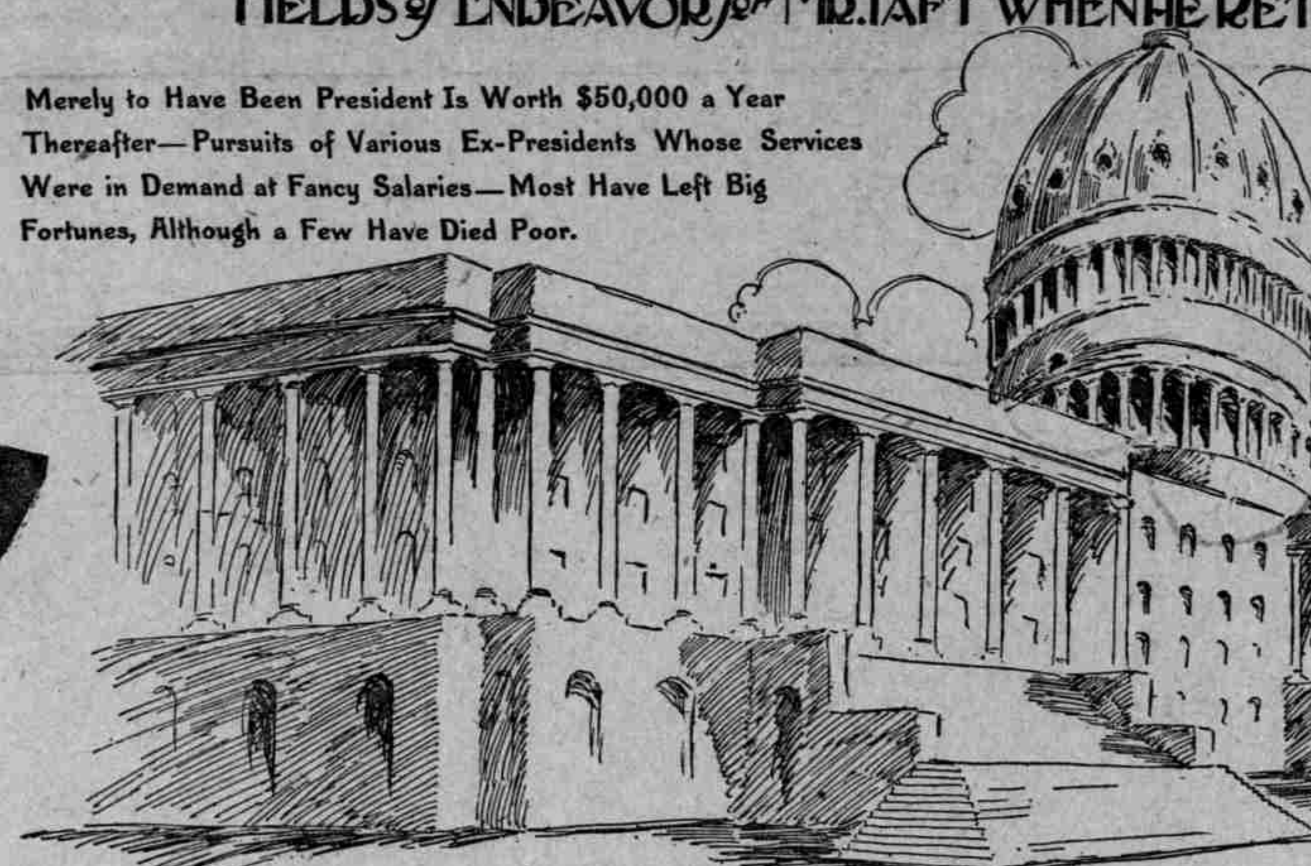
OCCUPATIONS of EX-PRESIDENTS

FIELDS of ENDEAVOR for MR. TAFT WHEN HE RETIRES

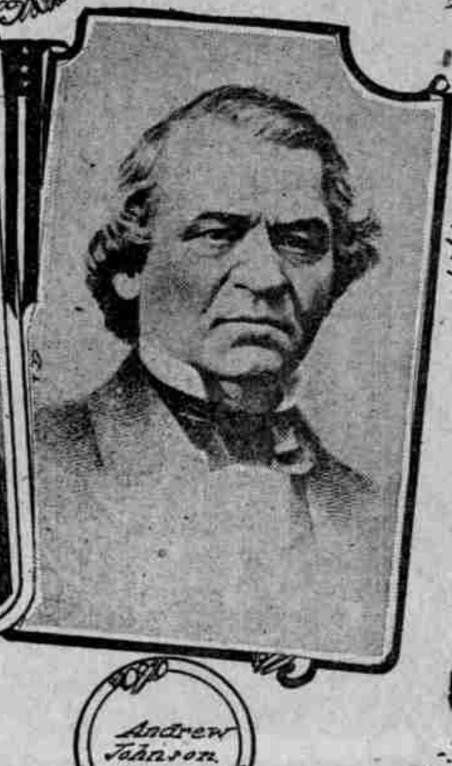
Merely to Have Been President Is Worth $50,000 a Year Thereafter—Pursuits of Various Ex-Presidents Whose Services Were in Demand at Fancy Salaries—Most Have Left Big Fortunes, Although a Few Have Died Poor.

William H. Taft

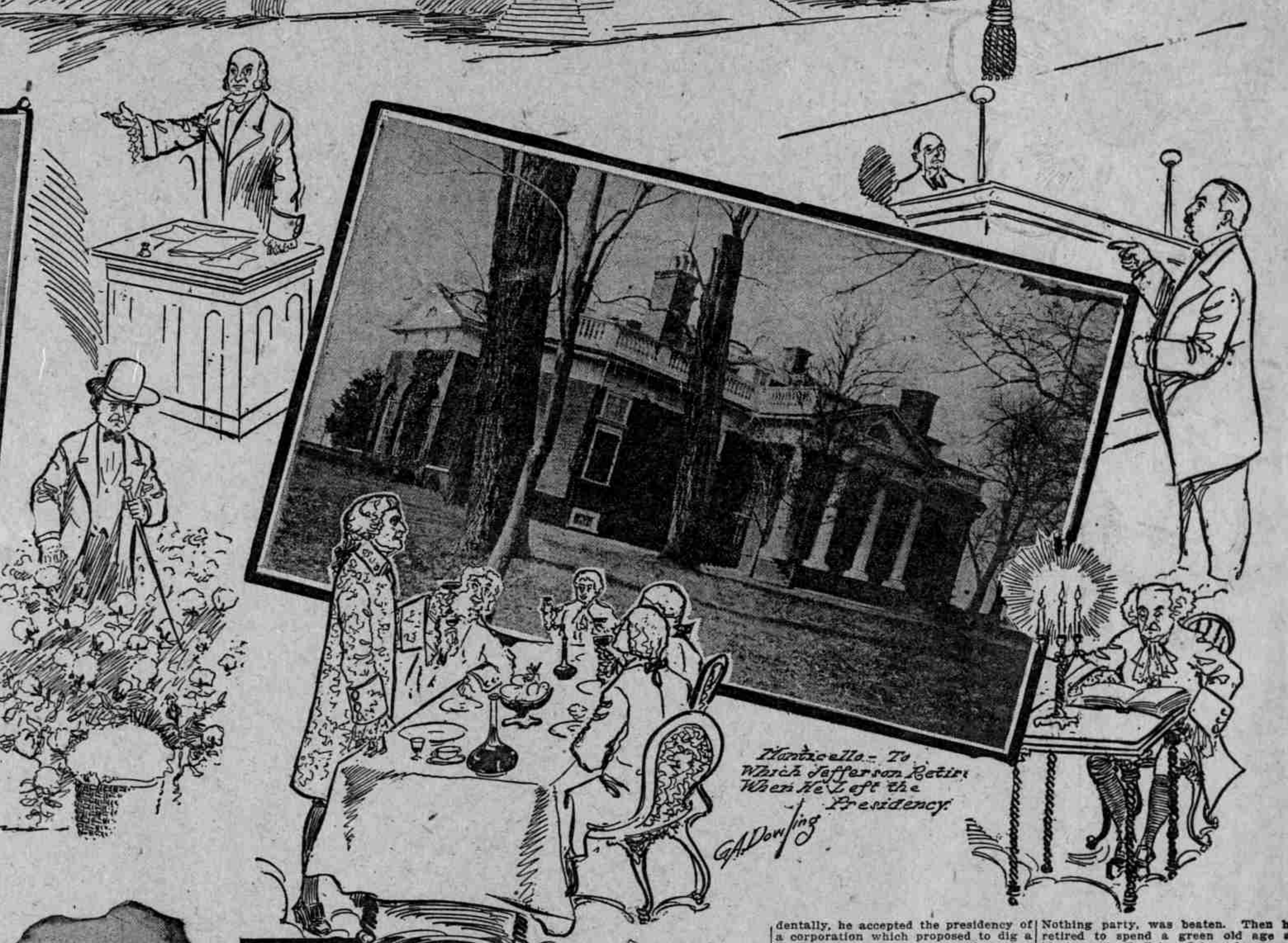


Thomas Jefferson Impoverished Himself by Over-Lavish Hospitality

John Quincy Adams



Andrew Johnson



Monticello—To Which Jefferson Retired When He Left the Presidency.

G.A. Dowling

WASHINGTON, D. C., Nov. 26.—(Special Correspondence.)—When Mr. Taft goes out, he will be sure for the rest of his life of an income not much less than that which he has enjoyed while occupying the White House. It pays to be President; there is money in the job. Which statement does in no wise refer to the salary the Government pays him, but to what awaits him in the way of lucrative emolument after he has again become a private citizen.

Merely to have held the office is thereafter worth $50,000 a year to any man. Take the case of Mr. Roosevelt, for example. Before leaving the White House he was beset with tempting offers from publishers and other business concerns. He was invited to name his own price for his services. The Outlook's proposition was most attractive, and he took it. Work? Nothing of that kind was really required of him. He was to be at liberty to write as much or as little as he wanted. If he never chose to produce a line, his employment as contributing editor (a brand-new species of job, by the way) was worth his pay as an advertisement of the magazine.

As a matter of fact, politics have occupied most of Mr. Roosevelt's attention since the Outlook engaged him, but his salary has gone on just the same. He is a skillful writer, but it was his name that counted. Mr. Cleveland, after he became an ex-President, did a good deal of writing at huge prices. Magazines paid him from $500 to $1000 an article. What he wrote was dull and uninteresting; offered by anybody else, it would have been "rejected with thanks." He had no knowledge of the literary art, but his signature was worth the money.

Cleveland Wins Clients.

Mr. Cleveland had not been a very successful lawyer up to the time when he entered the White House. But, when he went out at the end of four years, one of the biggest law firms in New York City was eager to employ him at an enormous salary as "advisory counsel," for the sake of the business he was expected to attract. It is doubtful whether he really did attract much, but he drew his pay just the same. He argued one case before the United States Supreme Court, and lost it — though several members of that august body had been appointed by himself. Later on his legal work was mainly in the line of lucrative refereeships.

Benjamin Harrison was a lawyer, and had never managed to earn much money in the business. But after he left the White House his services were sought by corporations which paid him huge fees—often as much as $10,000 in a single case. The Government gave him $100,000 in a lump for one piece of work which he would have been glad to do ten years earlier for one-twentieth of the amount.

Leland Stanford University, in California, put him on its roll as non-resident professor, at $10,000 a year, to deliver a dozen lectures annually. He wrote also. A well-known women's magazine paid him $1000 a page for a series of exceptionally dry and unentertaining articles.

It was Grover Cleveland who said that the "most wretched situation in the world was that of an ex-President." What he had in mind was that a man occupying this position is supposed to be laid away on a shelf, and condemned to hopeless retirement. But he was surely unregardful of its manifest advantages. He forgot that there had been ex-Presidents who, as in the case of John Quincy Adams, made useful and active careers for themselves after their departure from the White House. And for himself was reserved the good fortune, unique in American history, of leaving the "shelf" aforesaid to become President again.

Few Relish Retirement.

True, there has been a tradition that a President, on retirement, having enjoyed the highest honors in the gift of the Nation, should spend the rest of his life in dignified leisure, and, while surrounded by hosts of friends and cheered by the mellow companionship of books, await, like one whose career is ended, the final summons. But the idea does not seem to make a very strong appeal to the average man who has held the office—though there have been instances, four in number, where ex-Presidents have done this very thing.

John Adams, for example, was so chagrined by his failure to obtain another term that, refusing even to shake hands with his successor, the hated Jefferson, he jumped aboard the "cannonball stage" for Quincy, Mass., and secluded himself for the next 25 years—he lived to be 91 years old—in his library. He was bitterly jealous of Franklin; he disliked nearly everybody else, and his friendship for Washington was more than doubtful. But he survived long enough to see his son in the White House, and, through a wide correspondence, he retained a great deal of influence.

James Buchanan was saddened and unhappy. After leaving the Presidency he became almost a hermit, living for eight years (he died in 1868) at Wheatlands, near Lancaster, Pa. The same thing might be said of Franklin Pierce, whose last 16 years were spent at his home in Concord, N. H. He saw a good deal of his friends, however, and liked to talk politics, making no secret of the fact that he was a Southern sympathizer. Rutherford B. Hayes, tired of taking part in National affairs, went back to Fremont, O., where he dwelt in what he called "delightful retirement."

Six ex-Presidents became farmers. Hayes was one of them—though his pursuit of agriculture at Spiegel Grove was rather ornamental than otherwise. Andrew Johnson went back to his farm near Knoxville. He also owned a mill and a country store. The estate of Andrew Johnson, called the "Hermitage," near Nashville, gave him farming occupation during the last eight years of his life. He was visited there by many prominent men, and retained much influence in the councils of his party.

Madison's Lavish Hospitality.

James Madison's estate, in Orange County, Va., on which he lived for the last 19 years of his life, was of baronial size. His predecessor in the White House, Thomas Jefferson, was likewise a farmer, though not a very successful one. He entertained at "Monticello" on a most profuse scale, his hospitable roof often sheltering as many as 50 guests at one time. Maintaining a constant correspondence with political leaders, he continued to take an active interest in public affairs, and one of the important achievements of this later part of his career was the founding of the University of Virginia.

On the 9th day of March, 1797, George Washington, having surrendered the cares of state, left Philadelphia (then the Federal capital) for Mount Vernon, accompanied by his wife and Nellie Curtis. Nellie wrote a few days later to her friend, Mrs.

John Adams Became a Hermit and a Bookworm.

Mr. Cleveland's Status as an Ex-President Gave Him a Lucrative Law Practice.

Statue of Andrew Jackson in Front of the White House. He Devoted His Last Years to Farming.

Oliver Wolcott: "Grandpapa is very well and much pleased with being once more Farmer Washington." There is no question of the fact that his refusal of a third term was due largely to the fact that he was weary of public life. He had then (as the event proved) less than three years to live, and he spent them in superintending the management of his farms, which produced blooded stock, grain, and tobacco of such superior quality as to command a fancy price in the market.

Four ex-Presidents have taken to the law. Of these Cleveland and Benjamin Harrison were two. James Monroe, on leaving the White House, was in debt, and, being anxious to recruit his finances, went to New York instead of going back to his home in Loudoun County, Va. But at that epoch the commercial value of a former Chief Magistrate had not come to be appreciated, and the author of the famous "doctrine" made rather a failure of it. Chester A. Arthur (who was greatly disappointed by his failure to obtain a second term) had likewise a legal career in mind when he returned to the metropolis, and even arranged for a law partnership. Incidentally, he accepted the presidency of a corporation which proposed to dig a tunnel under Broadway—at that time considered a visionary scheme. But his health failed, and one morning he was found dead in bed.

Letters Offer Field.

Five Presidents dabbled more or less in literature after their departure from the White House. John Adams, in retirement at Quincy, compiled historical data. Grant wrote, almost on his deathbed, a book about the Civil War which earned a fortune and provided for his family. Cleveland, Benjamin Harrison and Roosevelt did magazine work. Five traveled extensively abroad—Van Buren, Fillmore, Pierce, Grant and Roosevelt. Grant's tour around the world was a historical episode.

Two ex-Presidents occupied seats in Congress—Andrew Johnson and John Quincy Adams. The former led the simple life at Knoxville for half a dozen years and was then sent back to Washington as a Senator. He died less than a year later. Adams was nearly sixty years old when his term was up, and he would have liked to go back to Quincy and his books, as his father did, but the folks of his home district wanted wanted him to be their Representative, and he consented to serve. For 19 years he led his party in the House and in the chamber of that legislative body, at the Capitol, he died. The place occupied by his desk is shown to this day by guides, marked by a brass star set in the marble floor.

Ten ex-Presidents died rich men. Mr. Cleveland was probably worth $500,000. He had nothing when he entered the White House, but his investments in real estate proved very profitable, and he bought some mighty good stocks, such as Chicago Gas, when they were cheap, under the advice of his millionaire friend, E. C. Benedict. Benjamin Harrison saved money hard while he was President, and went out of office with not less than $125,000. When he died, eight years later, he left $375,000, the bulk of it made out of the law.

Polk and Van Buren were both wealthy. The latter did not take the trouble to draw his salary until the end of his term, paying all expenses out of his private purse. Then he took the $100,000 due him in one lump. He was the richest of the Presidents except Washington. Surviving until 1862, he saw the Civil War begin. Meanwhile, making his home at Kinderhook, on the Hudson, he continued to take a keen interest in politics, and, accepting a nomination from the Free Soil party, caused the defeat of the Democratic nominee, Lewis Cass—a performance which finally eliminated himself from National affairs.

Washington Won Wealth.

Pierce and Fillmore were well off. The latter kept on with politics, and, becoming the nominee of the Know Nothing party, was beaten. Then he retired to spend a green old age at his home in Buffalo. John Adams was rich, but by no means so wealthy as his son, John Quincy, who owned much real estate in Washington (as well as in Boston), including houses and stores in Pennsylvania avenue and F street, in the shopping section. Madison left a considerable fortune, but it was dissipated by a worthless son. Congress paid his widow $20,000 for her husband's papers (which today are among the greatest treasures preserved in the Library of Congress), and this was nearly all she had to live on during the last few years of her life.

George Washington was the richest man in the United States at the time of his death, being worth about three-quarters of a million dollars. Hayes was comfortably off. So likewise was Arthur, who left $200,000 to be divided between his son Allan and his daughter Nellie. None of this, however, was saved in the White House, where he entertained his friends lavishly and lived up to his salary. His dinners, given usually to a coterie of intimates, are remembered to this day for their magnificence.

Four ex-Presidents died poor. Jefferson's profuse entertaining at "Monticello" greatly augmented his financial troubles, and he was at length obliged to ask Congress to buy his library and historical papers. This was done, $23,000 being paid for the books and documents. Monroe left the White House in debt. Andrew Jackson was nearly ruined by assuming and paying the debts of his son. Nevertheless, he managed to leave one slave to each member of his family, including his infant grandchildren.

Grant Poor Financier.

Grant, up to the time of the Civil War, had always been a failure in everything he undertook. He had shown himself so incompetent in business matters that nobody cared to enter into any business relations with him. Nevertheless (as often happens in such cases), business had strong attractions for him, and, leaving the White House with about $100,000 saved from his salary, he was drawn into partnership by an unscrupulous person named Ward, in New York. The firm of Grant & Ward soon "busted," and the hero of Appomattox was glad to accept from his friend, William H. Vanderbilt, a loan of $100,000 on his collection of medals and other trophies, largely consisting of gifts received from royalties and municipalities while making his tour of the world. All he had to leave his family when he died at Mount McGregor was his scarcely-completed book.

Five Presidents died in office—William Henry Harrison, Taylor, Lincoln, Garfield and McKinley. The

(Concluded on Page 7.)