



# The White House: The History and Legacy of America's Executive Mansion

*Charles River Editors*

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\*Includes pictures \*Profiles changes made by Presidents and First Ladies from Harry Truman to Jackie Kennedy \*Includes descriptions of the White House written over the last 200 years \*Includes a bibliography for further reading \*Includes a table of contents “Sometimes I wake at night in the White House and rub my eyes and wonder if it is not all a dream.” – Grover Cleveland For over two centuries, the capital of America has been located in Washington, D.C., and among all the iconic landmarks and monuments associated with the city, nothing provides symbolism quite like the White House, the primary residence and office of the president. The instantly recognizable exterior and its location have ensured that the White House is associated as the main seat of power in the world’s most powerful country. At the same time, the majesty of the White House and its tranquil setting belie its rather chaotic history, which includes being burned down by the British during the War of 1812, suffering damage during wild inaugural balls, and undergoing countless renovations. As Brian Kelly, author of *Best Little Stories from the White House: More Than 100 True Stories*, put it, “You could almost argue, in fact, that it wasn’t finished, truly, until yesterday. And...who knows what they may do to it tomorrow, as it has undergone so many changes, additions, improvements, and even subtractions in its two-hundred-year history. The fact is, the White House we see today is not the White House of yore.” Just as the interior has changed, the use of the White House has also changed considerably over time. While the White House was always intended to serve as the president’s home and a place to receive dignitaries, in the early 19th century, the White House was open to the public, to the extent that people could simply call on the president. Perhaps most notably, the White House has historically been open to public tours, albeit with exceptions made based on security issues, wars, and budget issues. The availability of the public to tour the White House is a strong reminder that while it may house the president during his term, the place ultimately belongs to the people. *The White House: The History and Legacy of America’s Executive Mansion* looks at the history of the White House and how it has changed over time. Along with pictures of important people, places, and events, you will learn about the White House like never before, in no time at all.

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