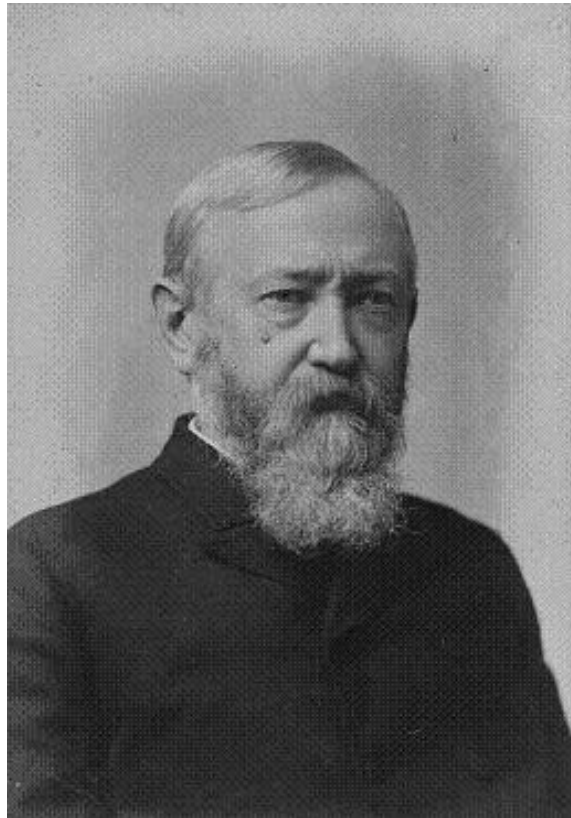


# Benjamin Harrison

Ben Har

Twenty-Third, 1889-1893



**Nicknames:** "Little Ben", "Kid Gloves Harrison", "The White House Iceberg", "The Human Iceberg" "The Pious Moonlight Dude", "Young Tippecanoe", "Grandfather's Hat", "The Front Porch Campaigner"

**Birth:** August 20<sup>th</sup>, 1833, North Bend, Ohio

**Death:** March 13<sup>th</sup>, 1901, Indianapolis, Indiana

**Significant Events During Harrison's Term:** Oklahoma Land Rush ... Johnstown Flood ... "How the Other Half Lives" by Jacob Riis ... Wounded Knee Massacre ... Basketball Invented ... Ellis Island Opens ... North and South Dakota (#39/40), Montana (#41), Washington (#42), Idaho (#43) and Wyoming (#44) become States

**Quotes:** *"Damn the President! He is a cold-blooded, narrow-minded, prejudiced, obstinate, timid old psalm-singing Indianapolis politician."*

-- Theodore Roosevelt, 1890, speaking of Benjamin Harrison

*"Mr. Harrison was an excellent President, a man of ability and force; perhaps the best President the Republican party had put forward since Lincoln's death."* -- Henry Adams, 1918

**How his term ended:** Harrison was defeated for reelection by the man he had defeated four years previously, Grover Cleveland

**Other Professions:** Court Crier, Lawyer, Soldier, Journalist, Lecturer

**Worst Mistakes:** Harrison tried to steal Hawaii from the Hawaiians; He was behind the deposing of Queen Liliuokalani there.

Also, as Commander-in-Chief at the time it took place, Harrison bears a measure of guilt for Wounded Knee, the wanton slaughter of defenseless Indians, apparently carried out as revenge for Custer's Last Stand/The Battle of Greasy Grass that had taken place fourteen years earlier. In both cases, the U.S. Army were the aggressors. In the first instance, the Indians, to Custer's surprise and dismay, were willing and able to defend themselves. In the second case, at Wounded Knee, the unarmed Indians of both genders and all ages were "sitting ducks" or "fish in a barrel."

**Saving Graces:** Harrison spoke out against the lynching of blacks, which was an especially common occurrence during his Presidency. Harrison also voted against the Chinese Exclusion Act.

**Notes:** Harrison's mother died when he was sixteen.

Harrison was among the Union forces during the Civil War that marched into and through Atlanta with General Sherman in 1864.

Harrison's wife Carrie had electric lights installed at the White House in 1891, but she was too fearful of the "newfangled contraptions" to shut them off, and so the lights remained on all night, until workmen would shut them off on arriving the next morning. Mrs. Harrison died in 1892, two weeks before election day, and so did not live long enough to find out whether her husband had been re-elected or not (he wasn't – Cleveland, whom he had succeeded, got his old job back).

More new states (six) were added during Harrison's presidency than any other, namely: Washington, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, and the Dakotas (with the vast Dakota Territory being split into two States and simultaneously entering statehood). Also, Hawaii was forcibly annexed, in the first case of "Regime Change" wrought by the United States. Of course, it would not become a State until many decades later.