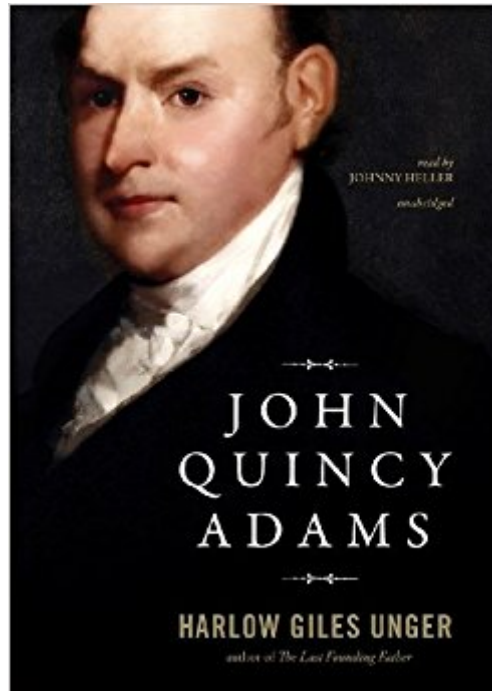




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# John Quincy Adams



## Synopsis

From a leading historian and Founding Fathers biographer comes a masterful treatment of a towering figure of America's formative years. He fought for Washington, served with Lincoln, lived with Franklin, studied with Jefferson, dined with Lafayette and Wellington, walked with Russia's czar, and talked with Britain's king; he shook hands with Dickens, taught at Harvard, and was American minister to six countries; he ended the War of 1812, freed the prisoners on the *Amistad*, served sixteen years in the House of Representatives, restored free speech in Congress, and led the antislavery movement -- and he was the sixth president of the United States. A towering figure in the formative years of the American nation, John Quincy Adams was the only son of a Founding Father president to become president himself, and the first one to serve in Congress after his term. Pushed by his parents, John and Abigail Adams, to climb to the heights of their ambitions for him, John Quincy Adams surpassed their expectations -- not only as president of the United States but also as an ambassador, a powerful voice before the Supreme Court, a fearless secretary of state, a fighting congressman, and America's first champion of human rights. A witness to sixty-five years of critical American history, John Quincy Adams bequeathed to the nation one of its greatest yet least known treasures -- his diary. Started when he was only ten, his eyewitness testament remains the most complete day-to-day historic record of events and life in the young nation, from the Battle of Bunker Hill to the eve of the Civil War. A sweeping panorama of American history from the Washington to Lincoln eras, Harlow Giles Unger's *John Quincy Adams* follows one of the key figures in American history.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"A neglected president receives his due as a statesman and practical politician . . . A fine examination of a life, well deserving a place alongside David McCullough's study of Adams pÃfÂre." --Kirkus "Unger's skills as both a storyteller and political analyst enable him to convey the importance of the personalities and events of early-nineteenth-century America in a detailed and enjoyable manner that will appeal to general readers." --Boston Globe on *The Last Founding Father* "[Unger's] descriptions . . . are among the most lucid I've read." --San Francisco Book Review "Unger has cornered the market on muses to emerge as America's most readable historian." --National Review praise for the author

HARLOW GILES UNGER, a former distinguished visiting fellow in American history at George Washington's Mount Vernon, is a veteran journalist, broadcaster, educator, and historian. He is the author of twenty books, including several biographies of America's Founding Fathers. He has also authored histories of the early Republic as well as numerous books on American education. He lives in New York.

Author Harlow Giles Unger's relatively brief, fast paced biography of the 6th President of the US is a very worthwhile read both for its content and brisk style. The book moves through 8-decades of American history spanning the beginning of the Revolutionary War to the beginning-of-the-end of American slavery. The chapter containing the War of 1812 flows especially well and is highlighted by the author's shrewd summary remark that it was, "The war that the United States could have won without firing the first shot and ended before they had fired the last." The author shows great respect for his subject without crossing the line that causes a reader to suspect the author of the bias of having "fallen in love" with his subject. Mr. Unger takes the reader to the brink of resolution of the "Corrupt Bargain", but never decides for us whether or not John Q. offered the State Dept. as a reward for electoral delegates. The take-away from this book (at least for those with heretofore only passing familiarity with the 2nd Mr. Adams) is one of an enlightened new perspective; exchanging the image of a dour failed President for one of the most enlightened, urbane and intellectual presidents to occupy the White House. A failed president still... but there is far more to the man than his presidency, and far more to the failure of the presidency than the man. Even with the newfound perspective, the author doesn't dispute the more familiar historic clichÃfÂ© when he adds that, "John Quincy, on the other hand, was a bit of a grouch." (loc. 3034) John Q. Adams ended his career and life in the House of Representatives of the the U.S. distinguishing himself with fiery,

eloquent oratory. His displays often cast him in the role of the gadfly in the pursuit of abolition. His Supreme Court defense of the Amistad fugitives became the crowning achievement (by his own assessment) of his life and Mr. Unger's narrative seems to reach crescendo in John Q's life after his presidency. I highly recommend the book and certainly so if it is a first on the subject - it will be a perfect starting point, following nicely from the author's earlier biography of the 5th president - *The Last Founding Father: James Monroe and a Nation's Call to Greatness*. The author has thoughtfully illustrated his book with portraits of many of the most important characters, some rarely seen outside the galleries: many of the younger (less dour) John Q--one at 16 years old, his wife, British born Louisa Catherine Johnson, Abigail Adams II (sister "Nabby") a middle aged Benjamin Franklin, Francis Dana, Edmund "Citizen" Genet (the rogue French Ambassador) a stately - 67 year old Marquis de Lafayette, Congolese chief Cincque (Amistad mastermind), Henry Clay, Daguerreotypes of John Q and another of Abraham Lincoln... and many other portraits and paintings.-----kindle edition-----Almost an e-book - but what in the world the publisher thought would be the use of an index that contains NO page references and no hyperlinks can only be guessed. Not surprisingly, Da Capo Press did NOT forget to extract full hardcopy price \$12.99 for their flawed digital performance. (Just when things appeared to be improving in e-book publishing!) e-Book publication quality

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I did not know very much about John Quincy Adams before listening to this audible book. But now having heard of his life I am most impressed with his accomplishments. At a time when political parties were just beginning to dominate the American scene, he maintained his independence regardless of its consequences. He became president by wresting the office from Andrew Jackson which led to a very inconsequential one term presidential career. However he reached the height of his career when he was elected following his presidency to the house of representatives as a progress person from his hometown of Quincy Massachusetts. He began immediately to be A most consequential figure in promoting science and education and anti-slavery. He was notorious in asserting his rights of free speech in the House of Representatives fighting the imposition of the Gag Rule in the house for years. Evidently his presidency was a failure because he failed to connect with the people when the populism of Andrew Jackson was preeminent but his success as a congressperson was a result of his becoming a voice of the people. My giving five stars do this book is as much because of my appreciation for the protagonist as for the quality of the writing.

A wonderfully entertaining and inspiring book on the life of John Quincy Adams, John Adam's son. He loved his country, served diplomatically in Europe, became President, fought against the sin of slavery, defended the Armistad "slaves", promoted scientific research, and ended his political career In the House of Representatives until his death as an octogenarian. Highly recommended.

I purchased this book to learn specifics about the famous John Quincy Adams, son of the famous John Adams. I enjoyed this biography while learning so much. Many men have difficulties "living up" to there Dad's reputation/talent, and though John Adams was the ultimate standard, John Quincy did quite well for himself! A scholar and forward-thinker, He was ahead of his time in championing freedom for the slaves and thus all Americans. The timeline presented in the front of the book is an excellent idea and would be a nice addition to other biographies of famous Americans. To have known Franklin as a youth, served under Washington as a young man and later serving with Lincoln as an elder statesman is fascinating. Also, to think that he took daily swims in the Potomac is just difficult to imagine. A totally different world we live in today, but one that is much better because this man of excellent character existed. Good job by this author. Dr. Stanley E. Toompas, Optometrist & Author of, "I'm the One the Other Isn't"

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