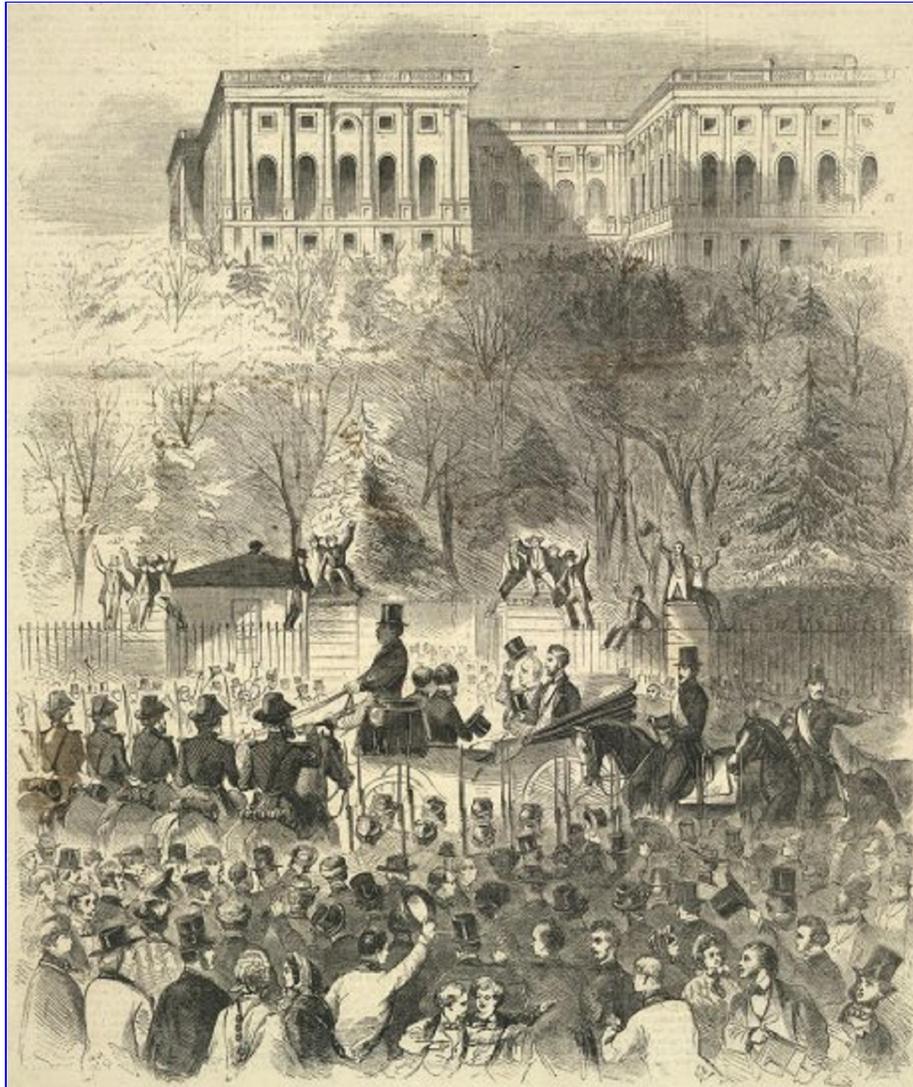


# Inaugural Parade



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The inaugural procession at Washington passing the gate of the Capitol grounds, 1861

After the conclusion of the Inaugural Ceremonies and the luncheon, the President and Vice President will make their way down Pennsylvania Avenue to the White House, leading a procession of ceremonial military regiments, citizens' groups, marching bands and

floats. The President, Vice President, their spouses and special guests will then review the parade as it passes in front of the Presidential Reviewing Stand. The Inaugural parade is a celebrated and much anticipated event for millions of Americans across the country.

The tradition of an Inaugural parade dates back to the very first Inauguration, when George Washington took the oath of office on April 30, 1789, in New York City. As he began his journey from Mount Vernon to New York City, local militias joined his procession as it passed through towns along the way. Once he arrived in New York City, members of the Continental Army, government officials, members of Congress and prominent citizens escorted Washington to Federal Hall for his swearing-in ceremony.

The early Inaugural parades primarily consisted of escorts for the President-elect to the Capitol. Thomas Jefferson's first Inauguration, in 1801, was the first to take place in the new capital city of Washington. Only the north wing of the Capitol was completed at that time, and as Jefferson walked from his nearby boardinghouse to the Capitol, he was accompanied by an Alexandria, Virginia company of riflemen, friends, and "fellow citizens." After his second Inauguration in 1805, a procession formed at the navy yard made up of members of Congress and citizens—including navy yard mechanics—which then escorted President Jefferson from the Capitol to the White House after the Inauguration, accompanied by military music performed by the Marine Band. The Marine Band has played at every Presidential Inauguration since.

The first organized parade occurred in 1809, at the Inauguration of James Madison. A troop of cavalry from Georgetown escorted him to the Capitol. After taking the oath of office, Madison sat in review of nine companies of militia. Future Inaugurations saw these military escorts grow more and more elaborate. William Henry Harrison's parade in 1841 featured floats, and for the first time, military companies from outside the Washington, D.C. area accompanied the President-elect to the Capitol. Citizens clubs, political clubs, several

military bands, and groups of college students also marched in the parade, setting future precedent.

In 1865, during Abraham Lincoln's second Inauguration, African Americans marched in the parade for the first time. Four companies of African American troops, a lodge of African American Odd Fellows and African American Masons joined the procession to the Capitol, and then back to the White House after the Inaugural.

In 1873, President Grant started the tradition of reviewing the parade at the White House after the Inaugural ceremony, shifting the focus of excitement to the post-Inaugural procession, rather than the escort to the Capitol. In 1881, President James Garfield reviewed the parade from a specially built stand in front of the White House. Reviewing stands were also erected along Pennsylvania Avenue for visitors. In 1897, President McKinley reviewed the parade in a glass-enclosed stand to protect him from cold, and possibly harsh, weather.

Despite a blizzard that forced the Inauguration ceremony indoors for William H. Taft in 1909, the parade proceeded as planned, as workers busily cleared snow from the parade route. For the first time, the First Lady accompanied her husband as they led the parade from the Capitol to the White House. The only parade known to have been canceled owing to bad weather was Ronald Regan's second in 1985, when frigid temperatures made the situation dangerous. The largest parade, with 73 bands, 59 floats, horses, elephants, and civilian and military vehicles, and lasting 4 hours and 32 minutes, occurred in 1953 at Dwight D. Eisenhower's first Inauguration. Today, the limit is set at 15,000 participants.

Women first participated in the Inaugural parade in 1917, at Wilson's second Inauguration. In 1921, President Warren G. Harding became the first President to ride in the procession in an automobile. The parade was first televised in 1949, at the Inauguration of Harry S. Truman. Jimmy Carter broke precedent in 1977 by walking in the parade, from the Capitol to the White House, with his wife Rosalynn

and their daughter Amy.

Today, the parade is organized by the Joint Task Force-National Capital Region, and participants are selected by the Presidential Inaugural Committee. Requests to participate in Inauguration Day events for marching bands, marching units, mounted units, and other performers are collected by the Joint Task Force-National Capital Region. Further information and an application to participate may be found at <http://2013inaugurationparade.army.mil/> or [parade@jfhqncr.northcom.mil](mailto:parade@jfhqncr.northcom.mil).