Charles Robert Leslie (1794–1859)
Louisa Catherine Johnson Adams, 1816
Oil on canvas

Louisa Catherine Adams traveled extensively throughout war-torn Europe with her children during the Napoleonic Wars, joining John Quincy Adams as he served as minister to England, Russia, and Prussia. In 1817, Mrs. Adams returned to the states, where John Quincy Adams would serve as the eighth Secretary of State (1817–1825).

Gilbert Stuart (1755–1828)
George Washington, circa 1801–1805
Oil on canvas

Both admired and revered by early Americans, George Washington sat for many painters during his lifetime. The most famous depiction was done by Gilbert Stuart in 1796 and retained by the artist to use as a model for numerous replicas, including this fine example completed after Washington’s death in 1799.

Edward Dalton Marchant (1806–1887)
Henry Clay, 1838
Oil on canvas

Henry Clay, a leading statesman and senator, represented Kentucky in the House of Representatives and Senate before becoming the ninth Secretary of State (1825–1829). An admirer of Clay, Marchant visited his Lexington residence in 1838, where he captured this striking likeness.

The Diplomatic Reception Rooms are contributor supported. These beautiful rooms exist today thanks in large part to the generosity of public-spirited citizens—no tax revenue is used. Contributions continue to be needed to maintain and preserve these rooms, which reflect the best of America’s early cultural accomplishments. If you wish to receive information on making a tax-deductible gift to the Diplomatic Reception Rooms, please contact us.

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The Diplomatic Reception Rooms
U.S. Department of State
Where History’s Treasures Welcome the World

The Diplomatic Reception Rooms
U.S. Department of State
The Diplomatic Reception Rooms began in 1961 under the visionary leadership of Clement E. Conger (1911–2004). The first impression visitors have of the rooms is the Edward Vason Jones State Dining Room, dedicated to the talented architect who transformed the reception rooms into the rare, classically balanced, and dignified rooms seen today. The Gallery, with its gracious Palladian windows, serves as a gallery for portraits, landscapes, and American Queen Anne and Chippendale furniture. The Thomas Jefferson State Reception Room reflects architectural elements inspired from Jefferson’s residence at Monticello. American Chippendale furniture appears with paintings of early views of America to create an intimately elegant room for official lunches and dinners. The largest room is the father of the American Foreign Service, Benjamin Franklin. Designed by architect John Blatteau, the room celebrates the long-standing role of the Secretary of State as custodian of The Great Seal.

In 1961, the Diplomatic Reception Rooms began. Benjamin Franklin is considered the father of the American Foreign Service. In 1764, during the French and Indian War (1754–1763), he prepared the Albany Plan for international cooperation against military threats. Appointed diplomat in 1776, he portrayed Benjamin Franklin highlights Franklin’s scientific achievements.


John Quincy Adams State Drawing Room

Benjamin Franklin purchased this architectural table, now the Dolley Madison Writing Table, circa 1800. In this year, President Adams, a Federalist, sought re-election and lost to Thomas Jefferson, a Republican. The powerful transition of executive power is commemorated in the “Resolution of 1800.”

"The Star-Spangled Banner" was a gift from the artist Francis Scott Key to Dolley Madison. The song was written by the family of Francis Scott Key while he was a prisoner of war during the Battle of Baltimore.

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