



Inaugural Ball

IN HONOR OF

THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

Harry S. Truman

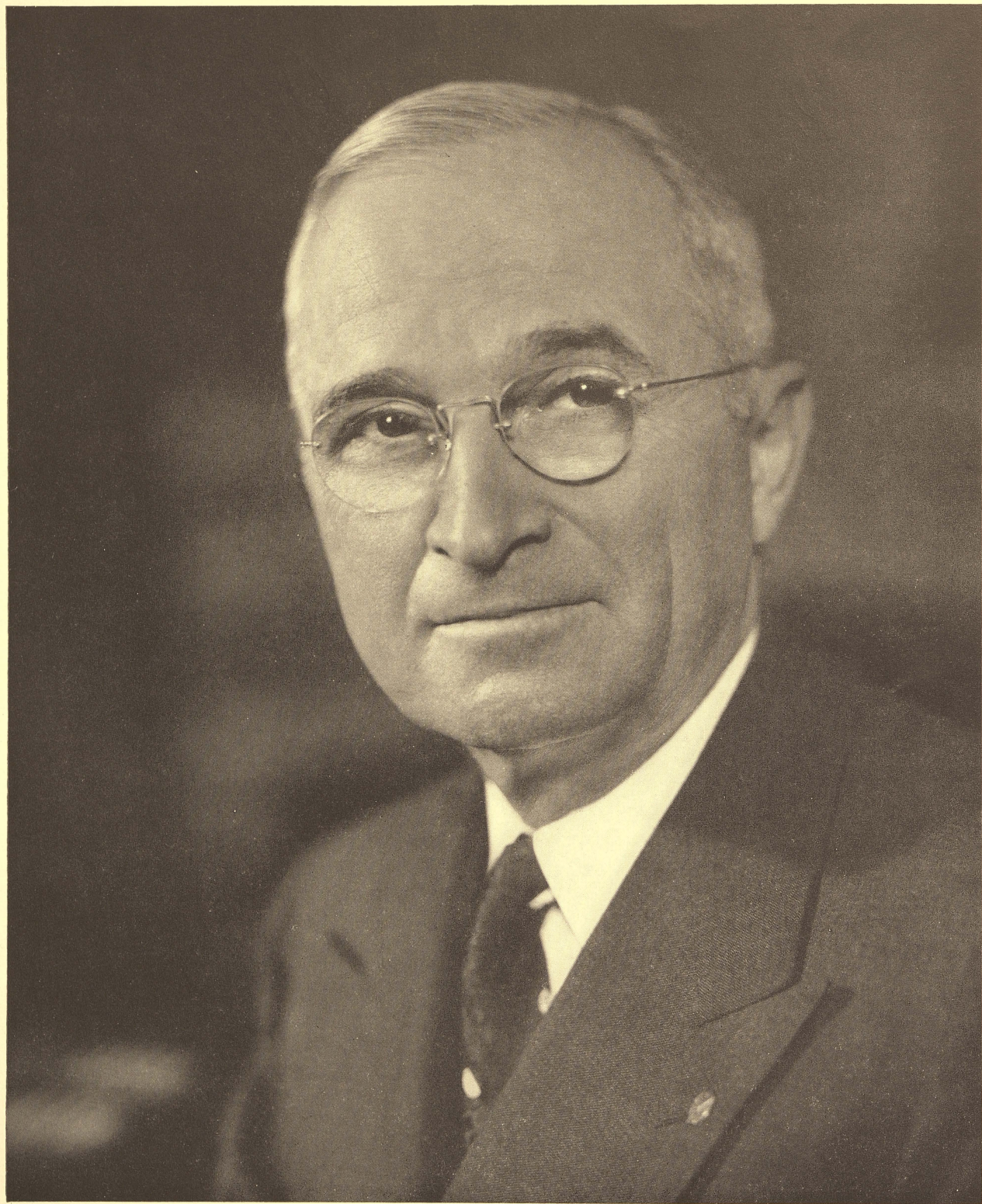
THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

Alben W. Barkley

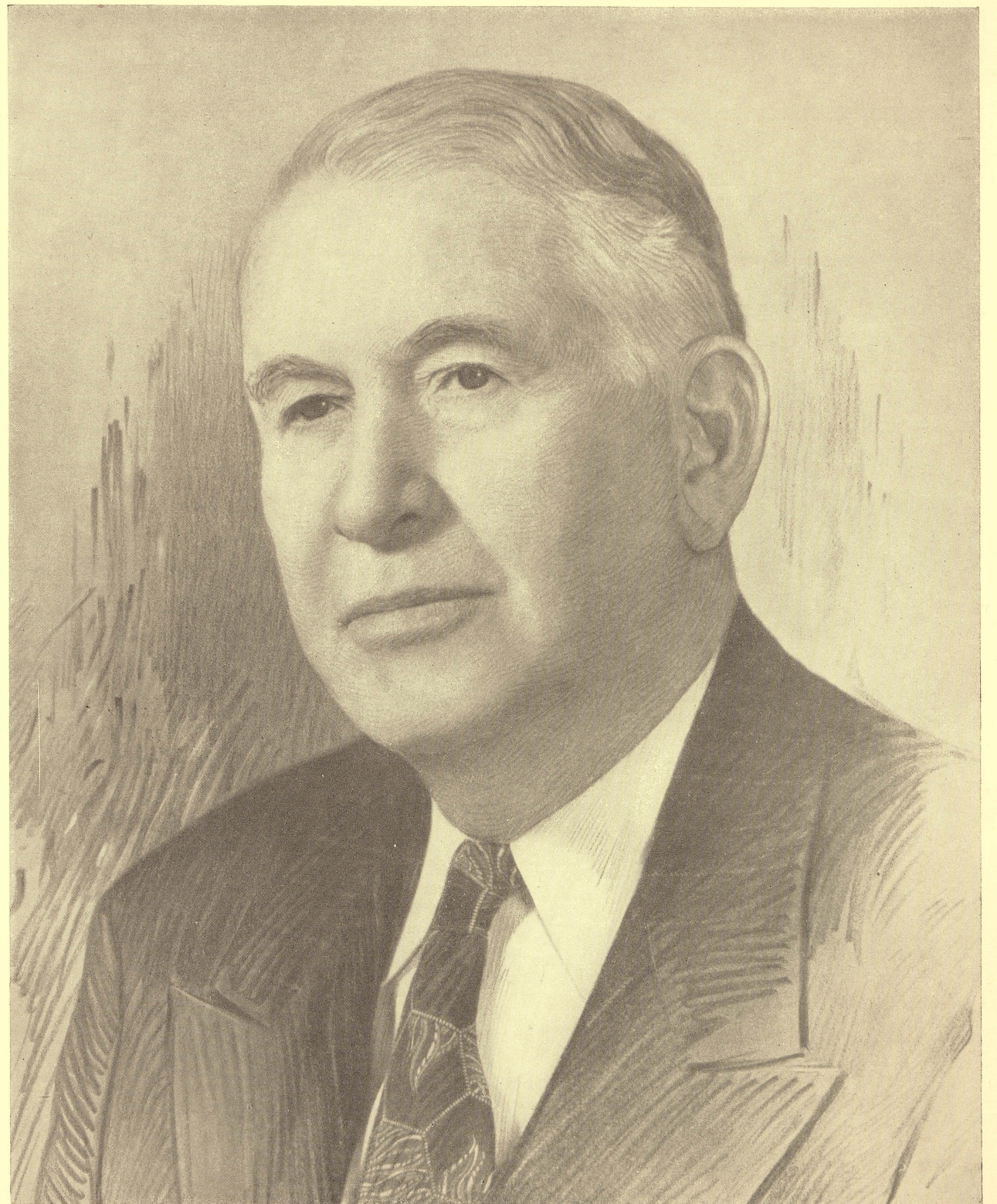
THE NATIONAL GUARD ARMORY

WASHINGTON, D. C.

January 20, 1949



Best wishes, THE PRESIDENT
Harry Truman



Sincerely, THE VICE PRESIDENT
Albert W. Barkley



MRS. TRUMAN

*Bess Truman
July 29 -*



MISS MARGARET TRUMAN

Margaret Truman



MRS. TRUITT

Music

THE UNITED STATES MARINE BAND

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MR. XAVIER CUGAT AND HIS BAND

MR. GUY LOMBARDO AND HIS BAND

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 His Excellency the Ambassador of Bolivia and Señora de Martinez Vargas
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 His Excellency the Ambassador of Chile and Señora de Nieto del Rio
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The Honorable the Minister of the Union of South Africa and Mrs. Andrews
The Honorable the Minister of Finland and Madame Jutila
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Inaugural Balls of Former Days

THE INAUGURAL BALL marks the end of the festivities surrounding the Inauguration of a President of the United States. This ball has great appeal to the imagination of everyone. The Inaugural Ball dates from the day of George Washington. The first one, in May 1789, was held in the City Assembly Rooms of New York, on the east side of Broadway above Wall Street.

This affair was attended by "some 300 persons of distinction." It is recorded that General and Mrs. Washington were seated on a sofa placed on a dais, several steps high, and that the dancers bowed to the President and his Lady before and after each dance. The ladies were presented with little fans bearing a profile portrait of the General. These fans were a gift from the French Government.

General Washington danced two cotillions and a minute and, although he was not young at the time, spectators remarked his "ease and grace of manner."

On the occasion of Washington's Second Inauguration, a ball was given in Philadelphia by the Dancing Assemblies of that city. Members of Congress shared honors with the President and this is the only time Congress has been so honored.

The first ball of major proportions in Washington, and considered by some historians to have been actually the first official Inaugural Ball, took place on March the 4th, 1809, and was given in honor of President Madison. The President had been sworn in that same afternoon, succeeding Thomas Jefferson. The Capital was just nine years old, and though still a sprawling ugly duckling of a town, showed signs of the city to come. Great Britain, France, and Denmark had already established diplomatic missions here and other countries were soon to follow suit.

The scene of this ball, arranged by the Washington Dancing Assembly, was Long's Hotel on Capitol Hill. Mr. Jefferson, the retiring President, arrived shortly after seven o'clock and was greeted by the playing of "Jefferson's March". Then President Madison was honored with 'Madison's March.' He was accompanied by his charming wife, Dolly Madison, in a gown of buff-colored velvet made simply with a very long train. She wore a beautiful pearl necklace, earrings, and splendid bracelets.

Her headdress was a turban of velvet and white satin trimmed with birds of paradise. The guests arrived in their own private coaches or public hacks. The Presidential coach, according to historians, was drawn by four stout horses. In spite of bad roads leading to the Capital and the very real difficulties of travel, guests did come from many cities to attend this Official Ball.

Elaborate suppers were the custom of the time—champagne and brandy punch, terrapin, wild game, oysters from the nearby bays, Virginia hams, Charlotte Chantilly, Meringue Parisian and American and European cheeses. The President's party left soon after supper but the dancing lasted until the fiddles stopped at midnight.

Upon the Inauguration of President Monroe, the management of the ball changed from the Dancing Assemblies to a group of citizens, thus making the ball a civic affair as well as a social event. It was an honor to be invited and people from all of the States in the Union were eager to pay their respects to the incoming President.

The two balls given for President Monroe were outstandingly lavish affairs of that period. President Van Buren's Inaugural Ball in 1837 was enthusiastically received.

In 1849, President Taylor, who was a Whig, did not invite the Democrats. In protest, the Democrats and the citizens of Washington gave a rival ball called "The National Inauguration Ball Without Distinction of Parties."

There were two Inaugural Balls given for President Lincoln—in 1861 and 1865. At the first, Mrs. Lincoln danced with Senator Douglas, an old beau, who reminded her he had once jokingly foretold that Lincoln would become President. Five thousand people attended the second Ball which was held during the Civil War at the Patent Office. Contemporary accounts tell us Lincoln enjoyed watching the dancers but withdrew with Mrs. Lincoln when the crowd became "unruly over the refreshments."

In 1873, the ball in honor of President Grant was held in an unheated wooden building, with a blizzard raging outside. Most of the guests kept their coats on for the short time they were there.

From 1885 to 1909, the Pension Office was the scene of the Inaugural Balls. The distinguished

guests viewed the Grand March from a balcony. The crowds were immense and the rich and elaborate costumes were topics of conversation for weeks before and after the event.

For President McKinley, in 1897, the Pension Office was lavishly festooned with garlands of flowers and greens and the hall brilliantly lighted. An old dance card shows that waltzes were the favorite dances.

Meticulous planners specified that "no hats, bonnets, overcoats, or cloaks should be worn on the dance

floor and no canes or umbrellas should be carried." Guests were requested not to stand in the center of the hall during the dancing.

The Inaugural Ceremonies have become an established tradition and the ball an integral part of the celebration. Ambassadors and diplomats from foreign countries are among the Nation's most prominent and welcome guests who join thousands of Americans in honoring their newly elected President.

JANE TUNSTALL LINGO

