Today in History - June 9

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Today's Stories: Jacques Cartier Sails Upriver | President of Princeton University

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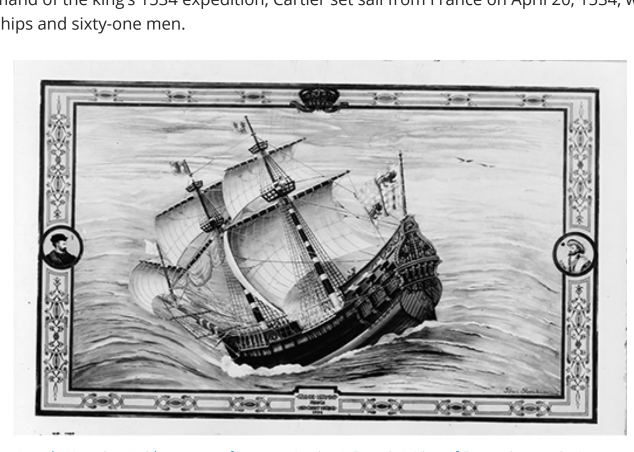
Jacques Cartier Sails Upriver

French navigator Jacques Cartier sailed into the St. Lawrence River for the first time on **June 9**, 1534. Commissioned by King Francis I of France to explore the northern lands in search of gold, spices, and a northern passage to Asia, Cartier's voyages underlay France's claims to Canada.

Born in 1491 in the coastal village of Saint-Malo, France, Jacques Cartier was an experienced navigator familiar with the routes that Breton fishermen followed to the New World. In command of the king's 1534 expedition, Cartier set sail from France on April 20, 1534, with two ships and sixty-one men.

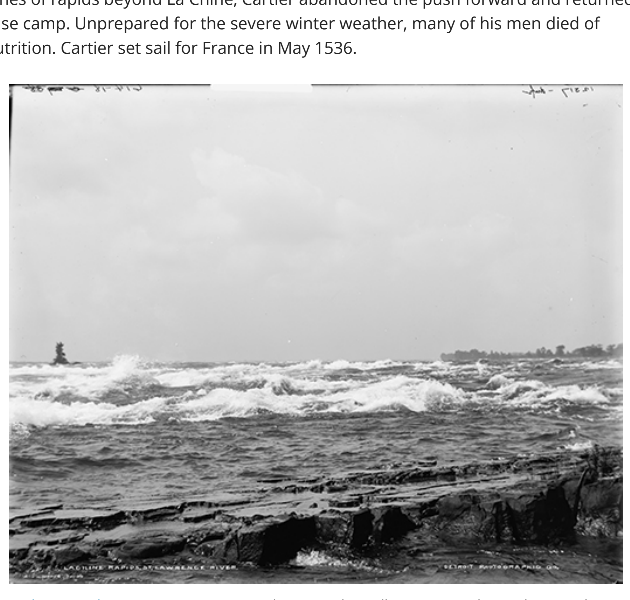


Grande Hermine, (with cameos of Jacques Cartier & Francis I, King of France in margins). c1923. Prints & Photographs Division

Cartier and his men ventured north through the Belle Isle Straits and across the Bay of St. Lawrence to Prince Edward Island where they made contact with the Native Americans of that region, members of the Iroquois nation.

Cartier forced Native-American guides to accompany him and headed northwest to Anticosti Island. After several days of sailing in that area, Cartier believed that he had discovered a new seaway to Asia's riches, but he returned to France without confirmation.

On his second voyage in 1536, Cartier returned to the St. Lawrence River with additional ships and men and made his way upriver to an Indian village at present-day Quebec. In September, after a brief foray to the area around present-day Montreal, Cartier's expedition arrived at the La Chine Rapids. When his Indian guides informed him of three additional stretches of rapids beyond La Chine, Cartier abandoned the push forward and returned to his base camp. Unprepared for the severe winter weather, many of his men died of malnutrition. Cartier set sail for France in May 1536.



Lachine Rapids, St. Lawrence River. [Quebec, Canada]. William Henry Jackson, photographer, [between 1890-1901]. Detroit Publishing Company. Prints & Photographs Division.

Cartier made his third and final voyage to the New World in 1541. The king named Jean-François de La Rocque de Roberval commander of the colonizing expedition but Cartier, commander of his own ship, arrived in the Quebec region before Roberval. Poor relations with Native-American tribes jeopardized attempts at settlement. Cartier again returned to France without venturing beyond the rapids, this time flouting Roberval's orders to return to Quebec. Cartier never ventured to Canada again, but his detailed observations recorded in notes and maps aided subsequent French explorers and settlers who ventured to "New France."

Learn More

- Search loc.gov on *explorer* for information about European exploration of the Americas.
- Search the collection Detroit Publishing Company on the terms *St. Lawrence River, Montreal, Quebec,* or *Canada* for scenic views of the region that Cartier explored.
- France in America, a collaborative bilingual digital project between the Library of Congress and the Bibliothèque nationale de France, explores the history of the French presence in North America from the first decades of the 16th century to the end of the 19th century. View the section on Cartier's attempts at colonization. Search on *Cartier* for other materials on exploration in this collection.
- Compare early maps of the Americas featured in the Memory section of the American Treasures exhibition. The map, *Early Image of the Americas*, was produced in Rome in 1507. The American continent is visible on the left, but its coastline is only vaguely recognizable. In *Mapping the New Discoveries* (1562), by Spanish cartographer Diego Gutiérrez, the shape of the newly discovered continent appears in greater and more accurate detail.
- The Discovery and Exploration map collection includes the 1562 Diego Gutiérrez map of the Americas. Take a close look at sections of the map and read the Spanish captions using the "Zoom" feature. See also, the 1775 map Vue de Quebec, capitale du Canada.
- Visit the exhibition 1492, An Ongoing Voyage to view more treasures related to the exploration of America and the earliest contacts between European and Native American cultures.
- Explore documents related to Canadian history. VisitCanadiana, a digital repository managed under the auspices of the Canadian Research Knowledge Network, a partnership of Canadian universities dedicated to expanding digital content for the academic research enterprise in Canada.

President of Princeton University

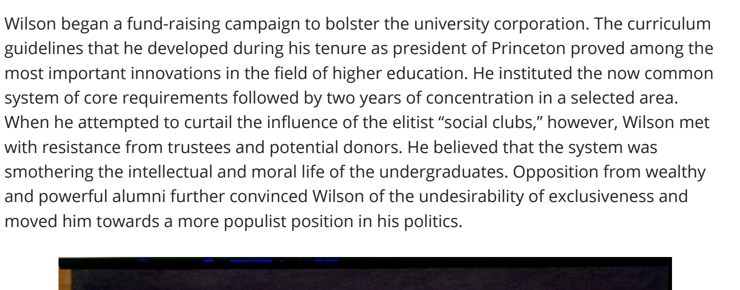
On **June 9**, 1902, Woodrow Wilson was unanimously elected president of Princeton University, a position he held until he resigned in 1910 to run for governor of New Jersey. As university president, Wilson exhibited both the idealistic integrity and the occasional lack of political acumen that marked his tenure as the twenty-eighth president of the United States (1913-21).

Wilson graduated from Princeton in 1879 and next studied law at the University of Virginia for one year. He then attended Johns Hopkins University where he received his Ph.D. in political science in 1886. His dissertation, "Congressional Government," was published. Wilson remains the only U.S. president to have earned a doctoral degree.

Wilson served on the faculties of Bryn Mawr College and Wesleyan University before joining the Princeton faculty as professor of jurisprudence and political economy in 1890. A popular teacher and respected scholar, Wilson delivered an oration at Princeton's sesquicentennial celebration (1896) entitled "Princeton in the Nation's Service." In this famous speech, he outlined his vision of the university in a democratic nation, calling on institutions of higher learning "to illuminate duty by every lesson that can be drawn out of the past."

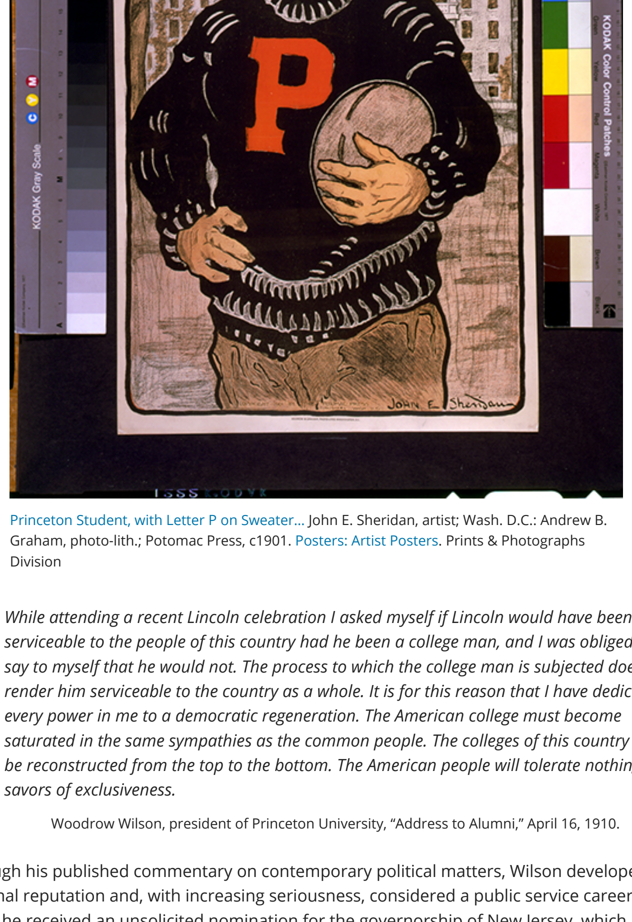
In his inaugural address as Princeton's president, Wilson further developed these themes, attempting to strike a balance that would please both populists and aristocrats in the audience.

Princeton University. Haines Photo Co., c1909. Panoramic Photographs. Prints & Photographs Division



Class Day, Princeton Univ. R.H. Rose & Son, c1904. Panoramic Photographs. Prints & Photographs Division.

Wilson began a fund-raising campaign to bolster the university corporation. The curriculum guidelines that he developed during his tenure as president of Princeton proved among the most important innovations in the field of higher education. He instituted the now common system of core requirements followed by two years of concentration in a selected area. When he attempted to curtail the influence of the elitist "social clubs," however, Wilson met with resistance from trustees and potential donors. He believed that the system was smothering the intellectual and moral life of the undergraduates. Opposition from wealthy and powerful alumni further convinced Wilson of the undesirability of exclusiveness and moved him towards a more populist position in his politics.

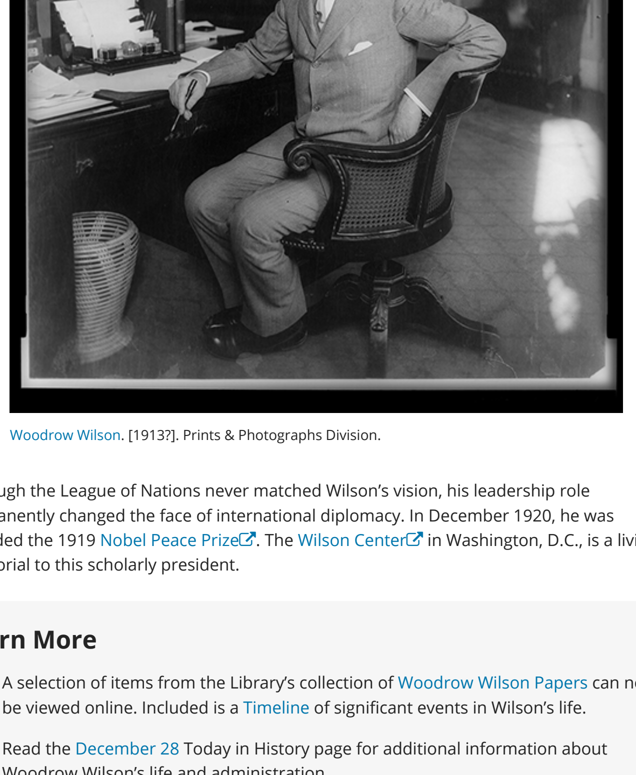


Princeton Student, with Letter P on Sweater... John E. Sheridan, artist; Wash. D.C.: Andrew B. Graham, photo-lith.; Potomac Press, c1901. Posters: Artist Posters. Prints & Photographs Division

> *While attending a recent Lincoln celebration I asked myself if Lincoln would have been as serviceable to the people of this country had he been a college man, and I was obliged to say to myself that he would not. The process to which the college man is subjected does not render him serviceable to the country as a whole. It is for this reason that I have dedicated every power in me to a democratic regeneration. The American college must become saturated in the same sympathies as the common people. The colleges of this country must be reconstructed from the top to the bottom. The American people will tolerate nothing that savors of exclusiveness.*
>
> Woodrow Wilson, president of Princeton University, "Address to Alumni," April 16, 1910.

Through his published commentary on contemporary political matters, Wilson developed a national reputation and, with increasing seriousness, considered a public service career. In 1910, he received an unsolicited nomination for the governorship of New Jersey, which he eagerly accepted. As governor, he developed a platform of progressive liberalism in matters of domestic political economy. In 1912, the Democratic Party nominated him as their presidential candidate.

During Wilson's presidency, first the civil war in Mexico and then World War I, drew his attention away from domestic issues. His health suffered during his campaign to promote the Fourteen Points—an outline for peace that proposed an international League of Nations.



Woodrow Wilson. [1913?]. Prints & Photographs Division.

Although the League of Nations never matched Wilson's vision, his leadership role permanently changed the face of international diplomacy. In December 1920, he was awarded the 1919 Nobel Peace Prize. The Wilson Center in Washington, D.C., is a living memorial to this scholarly president.

Learn More

- A selection of items from the Library's collection of Woodrow Wilson Papers can now be viewed online. Included is a Timeline of significant events in Wilson's life.
- Read the December 28 Today in History page for additional information about Woodrow Wilson's life and administration.
- Search on *Woodrow Wilson* in the Photos, Prints & Drawings Collections for various images of Wilson.
- Revisit Princeton's past through photographs. Search on *Princeton University* in:
  - American Landscape and Architectural Design, 1850-1920: A Study Collection from the Harvard Graduate School of Design
  - Detroit Publishing Company
  - Panoramic Photographs
  - Photos, Prints & Drawings Collections
- Learn the "Princeton University March and Two Step." Search the Duke University Libraries' collection Historic American Sheet Music on *Princeton*.

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