

Guess who? from American History

_____ was a calculating politician who waged the bloodiest war in American History. He was accused by many of trampling the Constitution. Even today, he is accused of being the president who ruined the Founding Fathers' dream for our country. Not only that, but his wife was considered by many to be a spy working against the government.

_____ 's look at that moment—the classic image of gloom—was familiar to everyone who knew him well. Such spells were just one thread in a curious fabric of behavior and thought that his friends called his "melancholy." He often wept in public and recited maudlin poetry. He told jokes and stories at odd times—he needed the laughs, he said, for his survival. As a young man he talked more than once of suicide, and as he grew older he said he saw the world as hard and grim, full of misery, made that way by fate and the forces of God. "No element of Mr. _____'s character," declared his colleague Henry Whitney, "was so marked, obvious and ingrained as his mysterious and profound melancholy." His law partner William Herndon said, "His melancholy dripped from him as he walked."

His absolute conviction that he was taking the proper course of action enabled him to persevere while others recoiled at the immense cost and suffering caused by the war, leading them to entertain thoughts of peace without victory. . . . _____ was not a highly experienced national politician in _____, but his humor and willingness not to address every criticism earned him the trust of many political leaders. In an age of overblown oratory, _____ made his points with simple eloquence.

_____ embodies the 'American Dream,' rising from humble roots to the highest office in the land. He envisioned America united in peace. . . His place at the forefront of the _____ War eventually put _____ himself in the line of fire.