



Lewis Cass

Given by Michigan to the National Statuary Hall Collection

BORN OCTOBER 9, 1782, LEWIS CASS was the eldest child of Jonathan Cass, a craftsman who had fought in the Revolution. The family lived in Exeter, New Hampshire, and young Lewis attended Exeter Academy, where he became close friends with Daniel Webster. He taught school in 1799 in Wilmington, Delaware, and moved to Ohio later that year. By 1808 Cass had opened a law practice in Marietta, Ohio. He was a member of the Ohio Legislature in 1806 and served as the United States marshal in Ohio from 1807 to 1812. He enthusiastically fought in the War of 1812 and was appointed a colonel in the Third Ohio Regiment. He became a brigadier general in the United States Army a year later.

He was appointed governor of the Territory of Michigan in 1813 and served until 1831. His tenure was marked by good relations with the numerous Indian tribes under his jurisdiction. Cass served as the secretary of war from 1831 to 1836 and as minister to France in 1836. Elected to the United States Senate in 1845, he served until 1857.

In 1848 the noted senator was the unsuccessful Democratic nominee for president. He then served as Buchanan's secretary of state from 1857 to 1860 but resigned in protest against the president's decision not to reinforce the Charleston forts. He was a strong supporter of the Union and lived long enough to see the outcome of the Civil War. He died on June 17, 1866.

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Marble by Daniel Chester French
Given in 1889; located in National Statuary Hall.