

Collector's Journal

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2008 James Monroe Presidential Dollar

Fifth in the Presidential Dollars Collection

The U.S. Mint's Presidential Dollars collection entered its second year with the release of the James Monroe Dollar in February 2008. The coin is the fifth in the overall collection and was the first of four different coins to be issued in 2008.

The Presidential Dollars collection was authorized by the Presidential \$1 Coin Act of 2005. Each non-living U.S. President will be featured on a unique Dollar coin, provided he or she has been dead for at least two years prior to the release of the coin. The coins are issued in the order in which the Presidents served, and at the rate of four per year starting in 2007. The first four coins from 2007 featured George Washington, John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, and James Madison – the first through fourth Presidents, respectively.

James Monroe was the fifth President, so the Monroe coin is the fifth in the series. The three additional coins in 2008 will be John Quincy Adams in May, Andrew Jackson in August, and Martin Van Buren in November. Each coin is a strictly limited edition of only about three months.

The Monroe Dollar depicts a portrait of President James Monroe that is based on the official White House portrait by Samuel F.B. Morse. Morse painted the portrait in 1819, about two years into Monroe's first term as President. Monroe was about 61 years old when the painting was completed. Like all Presidential Dollars, the reverse depicts the Statue of Liberty.

Edge inscriptions are "E Pluribus Unum," "In God We Trust," the year of issue, and the mint mark. Due to errors at the U.S. Mint that resulted in some 2007 Presidential Dollars being issued without the edge inscriptions, the U.S. Congress in late 2007 ordered the inscription "In God We Trust" moved to either the obverse or reverse on future coins.



James Monroe

James Monroe was born on April 28, 1758, in Westmoreland county, Virginia – only a few miles from George Washington's birthplace. He was the fourth President born in Virginia, and like all four of his predecessors he was born as a British subject.

Monroe left the College of William and Mary to fight in the American Revolution. He took part in many famous battles and was wounded at Trenton, New Jersey, on December 26, 1776, after crossing the Delaware River with George Washington in a daring attack on the British. After the Revolution, he studied law with Thomas Jefferson and was elected to the Virginia legislature.

Between 1790 and 1817, Monroe enjoyed a storied political career. He was elected to the U.S. Senate, served as a U.S. minister in Europe and helped negotiate the Louisiana Purchase in 1803, was Governor of Virginia, and was Secretary of War and Secretary of State under President James Madison. Monroe was inaugurated as America's fifth President in 1817. His eight years in office was known as the "Era of Good Feelings" because the nation enjoyed peace and a booming economy. In 1823, he announced the Monroe Doctrine that limited the influence of European powers in the Western Hemisphere.

James Monroe retired to his farm in Virginia, and he died in New York City on July 4, 1831.

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