

**First Ladies: Louisa Catherine Adams**

**Lead: Mrs. John Quincy Adams hated the idea of living in the White House. She thought it would be a prison. It turned out to be a disaster.**

**Intro.: *A Moment in Time* with Dan Roberts.**

**Content: For most of their married life John Quincy and Louisa Adams did not get along. She was sensitive and impulsive, he was stern, dogmatic and demanding. It was an era in which New England wives were expected to be loyal, devoted homemakers living in the shadow of their husbands. He may**

**have been from New England, she was not. Born in London in 1775 the daughter of a prosperous American overseas merchant, Louisa Johnson grew into an elegant and sophisticated young lady able to move in the highest circles of continental society. There she met the young American envoy to the Netherlands, John Quincy Adams, son of the second President of the United States.**

**Their married life was plagued by conflict from almost the beginning. Each had a short temper and a stubborn streak. Everything from his long absences on diplomatic missions, to her desire to share in decisions about raising the children, to battles**

**over money were cause for dispute.**

**It was not until 1817 when Adams was appointed James Monroe's Secretary of State that Louisa and John began to draw together as a team. Their mutual ambition to see John succeed Monroe as President of the United States gave them a goal. She almost became his campaign manager, attending countless social affairs and hosting receptions in her own home in order to cultivate the politicians who could help her husband.**

**When they finally succeeded in 1824 the result was a disappointment. Adams was a minority President, beating the popular Andrew Jackson**

**in an election decided in the House of Representatives. This plus his abrasive personality soon isolated the couple and their years in the White House were frustrating and lonely.**

**After his defeat in 1828, Adams became the only former President to serve in the House of Representatives. John and Louisa at last became reconciled to each other and enjoyed seventeen productive years before his death in 1848.**

**At the University of Richmond, this is Dan Roberts.**

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Resources

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