

12 incredible coincidences in American history

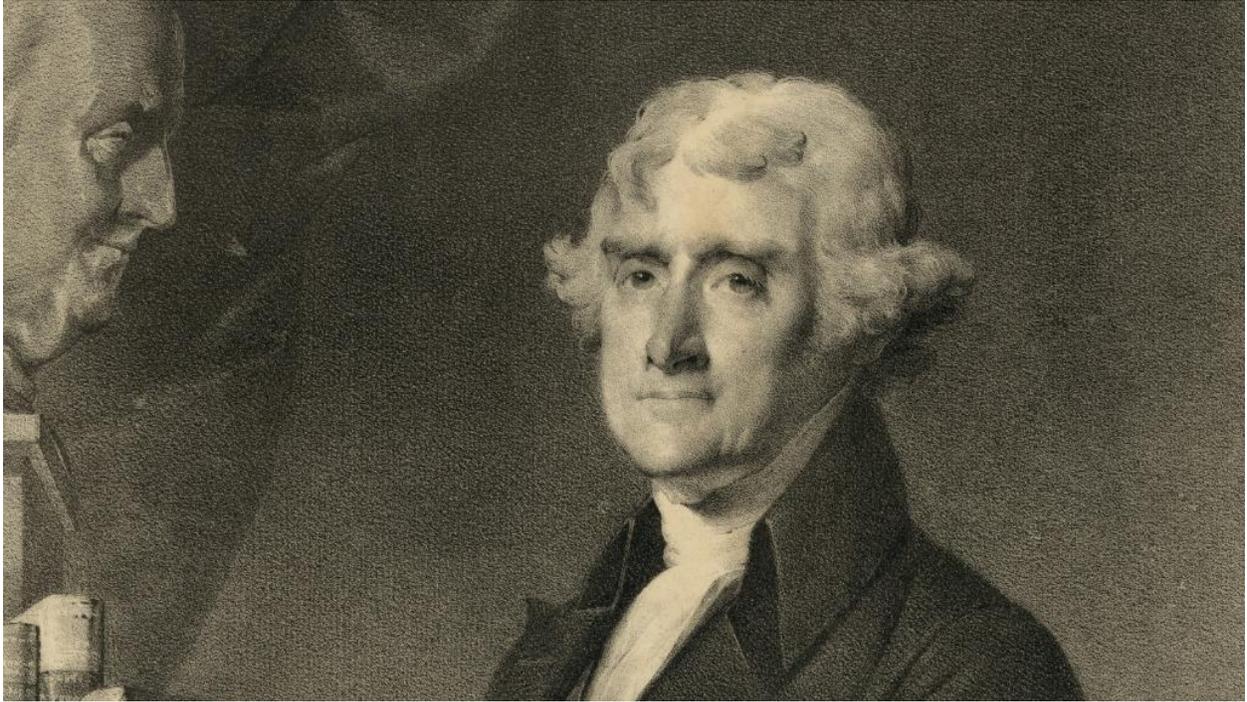


Image: Library of Congress

A coincidence is a remarkable concurrence of events or circumstances without an apparent causal connection. Most of us experience coincidences regularly, but they tend to be more ordinary—like discovering you're wearing the same sweater as someone else in the room. The following 12 examples are much more extreme, and some even seem unbelievable, even though they are true. Read on and prepare to be amazed!

1 A Presidential curse



Image: David Everett Strickler

For almost 140 years, U.S. presidents elected in years ending in zero died while in office. It happened to **William Henry Harrison (1840)**, Abraham Lincoln (1860), James A. Garfield (1880), William McKinley (1900), Warren G. Harding (1920), Franklin D. Roosevelt (1940), and **John F. Kennedy in 1960**. **Ronald Reagan, elected in 1980**, broke the curse by surviving an assassination attempt.

2 Mark Twain and Halley's Comet



Image: Justin Wolff

In the year Mark Twain was born, 1835, Halley's Comet passed by Earth. The great writer **famously predicted he'd "go out with it" as well**. Indeed, he passed away in 1910, the next time the comet appeared.

3 Jefferson and Adams



Image: iStrfry , Marcus

A patriotic yet somber coincidence, indeed. John Adams and Thomas Jefferson, the second and third U.S. presidents, **both died on July 4, 1826**—exactly 50 years after the signing of the Declaration of Independence.

4 Hoover Dam's first and last casualties



Image: Ryan Thorpe

The construction of the Hoover Dam was a long and difficult process, claiming over 100 lives. The **first person to die was J.G. Tierney**, and the **last recorded death was his son, Patrick Tierney**.

5 Lincoln and Kennedy



Image: Kelli Dougal

Abraham Lincoln and John F. Kennedy were **elected 100 years apart** (1860 and 1960). Both were shot in the head and **succeeded by men named Johnson**. Their assassins each had three names: John Wilkes Booth and Lee Harvey Oswald. Both were assassinated on a Friday while sitting next to their wives at the time that it happened.

6 Charles Francis Coghlan's last journey



Image: Rhodi Lopez

Actor Charles Francis Coghlan died in Texas in 1899. But **his casket was lost at sea** during a hurricane. Eight years later, his coffin **washed ashore near his birthplace** in Prince Edward Island, Canada, more than 3,000 miles away.

7 The Titanic coincidence



Image: K. Mitch Hodge

A few years before the Titanic sank, Morgan Robertson wrote a **short book called *Futility***, about a massive "**unsinkable**" **ship called the Titan** that hit an iceberg and sank. The tale describes a ship with a similar size and a similar lack of lifeboats to the famous vessel.

8 Dennis the Menace



Image: Mitch Rosen

Two comic strips featuring a character named Dennis the Menace debuted in British and American outlets, respectively, on March 12, 1961—only a few hours apart. However, the two creators did not know each other and had no idea of the other's work.

9 Jim Lewis and Jim Springer



Image: Vidar Nordli-Mathisen

Identical **twin brothers separated at birth**, Jim Lewis and Jim Springer, were reunited at age 39 and discovered many coincidences: **both married women named Linda**, divorced, and then remarried women named Betty. Both had dogs named Toy and drove the same model of car. Both **grew up with an adopted brother named Larry** and had sons whom they named James Allan.

10 Disney magic



Image: PAN XIAOZHEN

A soon-to-be-married couple, **Alex and Donna**, were looking through old photos to include in their wedding video. They found one photo of Donna **posing on a childhood trip to Disney World** in 1980. And in the background, they spotted **Alex being pushed in a stroller** by his father.

11 Moped meets taxi, twice



Image: Ruslan Bardash

In 1975, 17-year-old **Erskine Lawrence Ebbin** was struck by a taxi in Bermuda while riding his moped. A year later, his **brother Neville**, also 17 at the time, was **riding the same moped when he was struck by the same taxi**—with the same passenger—on the same street.

12 Lightning strike survivor



Image: Felix Mittermeier

Being hit by lightning is an extremely rare occurrence. Park ranger **Roy Sullivan was struck not once, but seven times between 1942 and 1977**—and survived them all. The strikes hit him in a fire tower, in his truck, in his yard, while patrolling, and more. His unusual record earned him the nickname "Human Lightning Rod."