

# Thomas Riley Marshall

(1854-1925)

Thomas Riley Marshall, U.S. vice president and oft-quoted wit, served two terms in office under President Woodrow Wilson. Born in North Manchester, Indiana, Marshall practiced law in Columbia City, became active in the Indiana Democratic Party, and in 1908 was elected governor. During the next several years, Marshall's extensive program for social and labor reform attracted national attention. In 1912 he was elected 28th vice president. Marshall's irreverent and self-deprecating humor made him one of America's most popular vice presidents, and he was the first holder of that office in 80 years to be elected to a second term. Although his most famous quote was not original to him, it remains the one for which he has been immortalized: "What this country needs is a really good five-cent cigar."<sup>1</sup>

In October 1919, President Wilson suffered a paralytic stroke that left him virtually incapacitated. Because the Constitution did not yet specify exactly how the vice president was to assume the duties of the president in such cases, Marshall feared that any actions he took would appear overly ambitious or disloyal, so he passively allowed others to provide leadership for the nation in Wilson's stead. At the end of his term, Marshall returned to Indiana and served on the Federal Coal Commission. He died while visiting Washington, D.C., in 1925.



Born in Lithuania in 1884, Moses Dykaar studied at the Académie Julian in Paris before arriving in the United States in 1916. He moved almost immediately to Washington, D.C., where he began a long and successful career. Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives James "Champ" Clark secured Dykaar's services in carving his bust, and through this connection Dykaar was selected to create a marble bust of Thomas R. Marshall for the Senate's Vice Presidential Bust Collection. Several sculptors had sought the commission, but the vice president ultimately preferred Dykaar, and the Joint Committee on the Library awarded him the project in 1918. The Senate paid \$1,000 for the work, \$200 more than was customary because of increased transportation costs for statuary marble during wartime. In 1920 the Marshall bust served as the centerpiece for an exhibition of Dykaar's work at the Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., and it was accepted by the Joint Committee on the Library later that year.

Marshall lacked the rugged or unconventional facial features that many sculptors favor, and Dykaar joked that perhaps the vice president had not yet found a "good five-cent cigar." In a 1932 *Washington Post* article, Dykaar recalled that Marshall was a "nervous" model. The artist quoted the vice president as complaining good-naturedly, "You asked me for a sitting and you make me stand." Dykaar then explained, "We call them 'sittings,' when really they are 'standings.'"<sup>1</sup>

The Smithsonian Institution's Inventory of American Painting and Sculpture lists more than 40 works by Moses Dykaar throughout the United States. His busts of Calvin Coolidge (p. 84) and Charles Curtis (p. 90) also are in the Senate's Vice Presidential Bust Collection, and his marble portraits of House Speakers James Clark and Nicholas Longworth are located in the House wing of the Capitol. The Smithsonian Institution's National Portrait Gallery in Washington, D.C., holds Dykaar's likenesses of General John J. Pershing, inventor Alexander Graham Bell, and labor leader Samuel Gompers.

**Artist Moses Dykaar poses with his bust of Vice President Marshall when it was exhibited at the Corcoran Gallery of Art, 1920.**

(Courtesy of the D.C. Public Library)

*Thomas R. Marshall*

**Moses A. Wainer Dykaar (1884-1933)**

Marble, 1918

33¾ x 26½ x 14¾ inches (85.7 x 67.3 x 37.5 cm)

Signed and dated (on subject's truncated left side): M. A. DYKAAR / CAPITOL 1918

Commissioned by the Joint Committee on the Library, 1918

Accepted by the Joint Committee on the Library, 1920

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