

THE DAWNING OF DEMOCRATIC AMERICA, 1816—1844

Another stumble through Scalia's America, designed to help you miss the trees that hurt and slam into those that help.

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Preface

(In other words, how did we get to where we will begin? **CONTEXT!!!**)

Throughout the years following the War of 1812 America experienced tremendous momentum in her development as a young nation. Even though the war resulted in *status quo ante bellum*, Americans claimed victory in that sordid little affair and, as a result, American nationalism ran somewhat like you guys at 2:50 (and most teachers by at 3:00): totally amok. Actually, it's not surprising if you look at the events which launched this so-called "**Era of Good Feelings**" and the resultant evolution of a little place I like to call America.

- America had survived the crucible of the "**Second American Revolution**;" although she did not necessarily win the War of 1812 she did withstand another British assault on American freedom. [1] In addition, those pesky **Indians** had at long last been put in their places ("places," as it turns out, was a temporary term when talking about these poor souls; these particular places won't be theirs much longer), and could no longer pose a serious threat . . . well, at least east of the Mississippi anyway.
- The excruciating political war of words and ideals waged between Hamilton's Federalists and Jefferson's Democratic Republicans had subsided due to the effects of the **Hartford Convention**, and the subsequent demise of the Federalists as a major party spared the young nation the further pain of factional political combat . . . for the time being anyway. [2]
- Americans weathered the crippling economic **Panic of 1819** and emerged somewhat intact (although the name "Bank of the United States" became a synonym for blasphemy and the epitome of evil to most southerners and westerners, and ALL farmers). It is important to remember that (a) farmers have major issues with the concept of some elitist eastern goober taking their money to invest in God knows what, and (b) banks hold farmer's mortgages; the specter of foreclosure was never far away (ask Mr. Shays). As such, as Americans moved west the Bank emerged as a political monster and consequently represented a divisive factor, especially along socio-economic class and sectional lines.
- Socially, Americans had hitched up the wagons and moved west in droves, and due to this migration began to expand and change the meaning of what being an American was.
 - America's economy took an economic turn for the better due to improvements in transportation, such as improved roads and canals; technology, such as the cotton gin; and the switch from subsistence to commercial farming.
 - Many well-meaning Americans, disgusted by the inherent corruption of politics and economics, began to examine their society and determined that there was indeed room for improvement, a determination which manifest itself through a plethora of reform movements, a search for Utopia, as well as a religious "Second Great Awakening."
- A **distinct American culture** began to stir, and cultural determinates such as literature and art began to define the American experience. Authors such as **Hawthorne, Melville, Cooper, and Poe** produced literary masterpieces which celebrated the individual's role in the American experience. Poet **Walt Whitman's epic *Leaves of Grass*** explored one American's self-examination of his (somewhat controversial) place in society, and artists from such genres as the Hudson River School celebrated the natural grandeur and majesty of the American landscape.



**Examples of the Hudson River School of Nationalist Art:
The New Jersey Palisades on the Hudson River**



Natural Bridge, Virginia

Stop this day and night with me and you shall possess the origin of all poems,
 You shall possess the good of the earth and sun, (there are millions of suns left,)
 You shall no longer take things at second or third hand,
 nor look through the eyes of the dead, nor feed on the spectres in books,
 You shall not look through my eyes either, nor take things from me,
 You shall listen to all sides and filter them from yourself.

**The American as Individual:
Walt Whitman, *Leaves of Grass***

However, not everything was hunky-dory in early 19th century America. As is true in most social upheavals, there are always some factions denied the new fresh air of freedom.

- The air of equality never fully reached American women, who were still overwhelmingly regulated to the “**cult of domesticity**” and held prisoner to the doctrine of “**separate spheres.**”^[3] And even though some women made their way out of the home and into industrial society, such as the **Lowell Textile Mills in Lowell, Massachusetts**, it would take years of struggle before women could even sniff the inherent freedom granted to men.
- Eastern Native Americans, as previously mentioned, were losing their fight for what once was theirs. After debilitating losses at Tippecanoe and Horseshoe Bend, they will still try to stem the white flood in the **Seminole (Florida) and Black Hawk (Illinois) Wars**; however, they were ultimately destined to spend their years in areas west of the Mississippi and, in the case of the Seminoles, the swamps of southern Florida. When you consider that eastern Native American culture was sedentary and primarily based upon their relationship with their environment, it is not surprising that, in areas so far removed from their cultural legacy,^[4] Native Americans would be forced to try and remake not only themselves, but their entire cultural identity. Wanna wager how successful THIS is going to be?
- Throughout the early years of the 19th century, America began to experience substantial immigration from Europe. At first, and as long as these people were primarily of British, German, and Scandinavian descent (remember: these folks were just like the rest of Americans; i.e. **Protestant**), no one really minded. But in the 1840s, the **Great Potato Famine in Ireland is going to precipitate a massive migration by the Irish . . . CATHOLIC Irish**, I might add, and this is going to cause problems . . . BIG problems.^[5]
- I only leave these folks last because of the weight of their plight. Slaves gained nothing from the War of 1812, or the Era of Good Feelings. In fact, their lot only grew worse. In 1830, a misguided Virginia slave “prophet” named **Nat Turner** started a slave rebellion, which was to date the bloodiest of them all. The result, in addition to the slave revolts in the Indies (Pierre Toussaint **Louverture’s 1791-1804 Haitian Revolution** was nothing more than a massive massacre of white French colonists), was the embodiment of the worse fear of a slave owner (remember: the worst nightmare for a slave owner is a slave with a gun, primarily because they have an inherent attitude and absolutely nothing to lose . . . in the plantation slave culture any slave with a gun was a potential martyr), which resulted in newer and stricter slave laws. Is it just me, or is there some sort of perverse irony in an attempt to make a slave’s life more miserable? Jeez, what more can you do to the hopeless? It’s sort of a reverse analogy to “Hey, Ma, let’s have a little molasses and honey on this sugar!” In any event, now that America has dealt with foreign issues like the British and French, political issues like the Federalists having fallen subject to a great flushing sound, these national issues no longer dominate. There is indeed a political gap to be filled, and the slavery issue will step up to the plate to hack away. Funny thing, irony: unlike the Federalists, this issue will not self-destruct, but like the situation with the British, it will ultimately result in war.

HORRID MASSACRE IN VIRGINIA.



The Scenes which the above Plate is designed to represent, are—Figure 1. a Mother intreating for the lives of her children. —2. Mr. Travis, cruelly murdered by his own Slaves.—3. Mr. Barrow, who bravely defended himself until his wife escaped. —4. A company of mounted Dragoons in pursuit of the Blacks.

Just Published, an Authentic and Interesting
NARRATIVE

OF THE

TRAGICAL SCENE

Which was witnessed in Southampton county (Virginia) on Monday the 22d of August last, when FIFTY FIVE of its inhabitants (mostly women and children) were inhumanly massacred by the Blacks!

Short and imperfect sketches of the horrid massacre above mentioned have appeared in the public Journals, but the public are now presented with every particular relative thereto, communicated by those who were eye witnesses of the bloody scene, and confirmed by the confessions of several of the Blacks while under sentence of death.

A more shocking instance of human butchery has seldom occurred in any country, and never before in this—the merciless wretches carried destruction to every white person they found in the houses, whether the hoary head, the lovely virgin, or the sleeping infant in the cradle! they spared none!—a widow (Mrs. Whitehead) and her 10 children were murdered in one house! among the slain on that fatal night, was an amiable young lady but 17 years of age, who the day following was to have been united in marriage to a young gentleman of North-Carolina, who had left home the evening preceding with the expectation of conveying there the succeeding day the object of his affections! but, alas! how sad was his disappointment! he was the third person who entered the house after the horrid massacre, to witness the mangled remains of her whom he was so shortly to espouse! The Blacks after having completed their work of death, attempted to evade the pursuit of those who had collected to oppose them, by secreting themselves in a neighboring swamp, to the borders of which they were pursued by a company of mounted dragoons. Of the fifty five slain nearly two thirds of the number were children, not exceeding twelve years of age! and it was truly a melancholly scene (as was observed to the writer by one who witnessed it) to behold on the day of their interment so great a number of coffins collected, surrounded by the weeping relatives!

While the friends of humanity however or wherever situated, cannot but sincerely and deeply lament the awful destruction of so many innocent lives, yet, the humane and philanthropic citizens of New-England, and of the middle States, cannot feel too thankful for the repose and peace of conscience which they enjoy, by wisely and humanely abolishing laws dooming a free born fellow being (without fault or crime) to perpetual bondage!—an example truly worthy of imitation by our brethren at the South.

The Narrative (which contains every important particular relating to the horrid massacre) is afforded for the trifling sum of 12 1-2 Cents. This paper left for perusal, and to be returned when called for.

Getty

Newspaper Account of the Nat Turner Rebellion

America Discovers Democracy: So THAT'S What it Means!

The really neat thing about American History is that it does NOT lie somewhere within the pathetic traditional paradigm of memorizing names, places, etcetera. Trust me, this philosophy is as boring to teach as it is to learn, and besides, it really doesn't tell you anything. What is really important is why these people, places, dates matter at all, and you can only determine this by knowing how they are interrelated. After all, nothing happens by mere chance or circumstance. OK, with that in mind, let's look at a couple of questions. At the end of the War of 1812, you pretty well know the socio-political state of the American demographic

(the pyramid) and who rules. So . . . first, how did America's version of *popular* democracy get its footing? And second, which portion of the socio-economic pyramid will most benefit from the expansion of popular democracy . . . and how?

Without a doubt, the primary factor in the expansion of American popular democracy was westward migration. Think about it: before Americans began to cross the Appalachians and move into the vastness of the Old Northwest, the Deep South, or across the Mississippi to the Louisiana Purchase, the only identity Americans had was the residue of the colonial experience. In other words, American society resembled not much more than a watered-down Britain; herein lies the **importance of the surge of nationalism** brought about by the War of 1812. After the termination of the war, Americans did not want to become just another generation of stuffy British relations, they wanted to become Americans. Now, this could not be accomplished by hanging around tired old places like New York, Boston, Philadelphia, and Virginia. The future lay in the dynamic west, not the stagnant east. Therefore, we will look to the forests and woods, swamps and rivers, mountains and valleys to see just what the heck is going on out there. Might want to bring a gun and mosquito repellent.

The Evolution of Popular Democracy Common sense time: As Americans moved west and new states sought admission to the Union, the **nature of state constituency changed**. In other words, people who lived in the state of Tennessee or Kentucky were of a different sort than those who lived in, say, Virginia or Pennsylvania. Therefore, why would the same political customs apply? In fact, they did not, and this fact would determine the greatest changes in the American political demographic to date. Doggone it, these new Americans wanted to take their government away from those snotty eastern politicians, and take it back they did, in **two distinct ways**.

- First, as new states entered the nation, they passed **state constitutions that employed different qualifications for voting than their eastern counterparts based on just who their constituents were**. Because there were few major land barons herein, the predominate qualification was actually a lack of qualification; in that I mean **universal male suffrage**. This meant that **all white males of legal age could vote, regardless of how much property one did or did not own**. This was, of course, a direct kick in the head for the Jeffersonian ideal of a "natural aristocracy," and resulted in Hamilton's greatest fear, that of the horror of mob (aka yeoman) rule. Increased suffrage resulted in a tremendous increase in the number of people voting (look at the pyramid to see why this freaked out that old Federalists faction), and it should not offend your sense of logic to realize that if a large number of western-type people were voting, they were apt to elect candidates from their neck of the woods over those from Ol' Virginia or the North. To counter this threat to the old established social and political order, eastern states (much to their displeasure) also began to relax qualifications for voting, for no other reason than to try and keep pace with the west (**numbers mean a lot here**). **The overall result of this was the nationwide increase in the number of people who were able to vote, a fact that would manifest itself at the ballot box**. And, of course, when the people participate in government, it is known as democracy; the more people that participate, the more democracy you have. Logic: what a concept!
- Second, why would increased suffrage even matter if people still had to vote for some old hack that they neither knew nor liked? I mean, what good is democracy if you have no choice? Heck, even at Burger King you can have your angioplasty your way. Well, before the mass movement west, political candidates were chosen by a "**caucus**." **A caucus is merely a closed-door political meeting, usually by a party's political leaders in Congress, in this case to choose a candidate suitable to the party hierarchy**). As you can see, this does not lend itself to popular democracy very well, and indeed provides fertile ground for corruption and abuse. However, and in what could be described as a natural occurrence, as more people were allowed to participate in government, the caucus system began to die, and was ultimately replaced by the **nominating convention**. **Here, a party's political leaders, as well**

as voters, would meet in a state-wide convention to choose their candidate. This had the ultimate effect of loosening a political party's leadership's hold on the people's right to choose, and therefore fostered the growth of popular democracy in America. We still hold these things today; they are an absolute hoot, must-see TV.

All in all, **these political reforms changed the landscape in America by giving the people more input and influence in their elected officials.** When you consider that the demographic of the American electorate was changing due to westward expansion, it should come as no surprise that these changes would eventually lead to a new breed of cat running the country. It won't be long, and OMG, what a cat! We STILL haven't recovered.

The Election of 1824 True to the Washingtonian tradition, Madison's successor James Monroe served only two terms and left office in 1824. The resultant presidential election brought the end of the political Era of Good Feelings in a big way. Although the Federalist Party had died, the Federalist conservative faction lived on snugly within the ranks of the dominate Democratic Republican Party. Add this factional division to the dissolution of the old caucus system and you come up with four candidates (as opposed to one in 1820) running for president in 1824: Monroe's Secretary of State **John Quincy Adams**; Senator and self-proclaimed Great Compromiser **Henry Clay**; Tennessee senator and Jackson-hater **William Crawford**; and the Hero of Horseshoe Bend, New Orleans, the Seminole Wars, and various atrocities and duels General **Andrew Jackson**. The election's popular outcome **emphatically reflected the move to popular democracy as Jackson; the self-proclaimed Candidate for the Common Man won a decisive popular vote over Adams by margin of 154,000 to 109,000.** Clay and Crawford ended up in a virtual tie for third with 47,000 each. No-brainer, right? Not so fast . . . the Constitution requires a majority of *electoral* votes for victory, and because the majority of Jackson's support came from thinly-populated southern and western states, he did not garner enough electoral votes to win outright. The Constitution dictates that in case of a tie the decision rests in the House of Representatives. Hold on.

OK, a little political theory here. There is one primary (if not juvenile) factor when dealing with a powerful personality, especially in politics: you typically find that people either love them or hate them (hmm, I suspect that could also apply to high school history teachers). In any event, Clay and Crawford knew two things: First, they could not win. Period. End of story, *finis*. Second, they also knew that, while they regarded Adams as an old Federalist in Democratic-Republican clothing (they were right), he was a darned sight better than Jackson, whom they regarded as uncouth, unsophisticated, and a servant to . . . GASP!!!!. . . **the mob**. Therefore, in the truest sense of patriotism and national interest . . . they sought to grab the best deal for themselves.

Crawford was the weakest here, so he simply sought to harm Jackson by releasing his electors to Clay.^[6] Clay, however, was a pretty sharp cookie who realized the value of compromise. Clay thought that his best road to the White House lie NOT in 1824 (pretty prescient once you've already lost, huh?), but in either 1828 or 1832, when the new president would leave office. He knew that hell would freeze over before Jackson cut him any slack (he was right), so he met with Mr. Adams. We are fortunate to have Adams' diary of this meeting, which recounts Clay offering his support to Adams (in the form of his electors) in return for a political "consideration." Don't you love these guys? Jeez, man, if you want a cushy government job, come out and ask for it! Adams knew that Clay cherished the position of Secretary of State^[7], a price John Quincy was willing to pay for the White House. So, in the end, Clay released his electors to Adams, which gave John Quincy the election of 1824. Mysteriously, and perhaps by coincidence (yeah, right! You're going to by this?) Clay was named Adams' Secretary of State. Everyone comes out a winner, and everyone is happy!

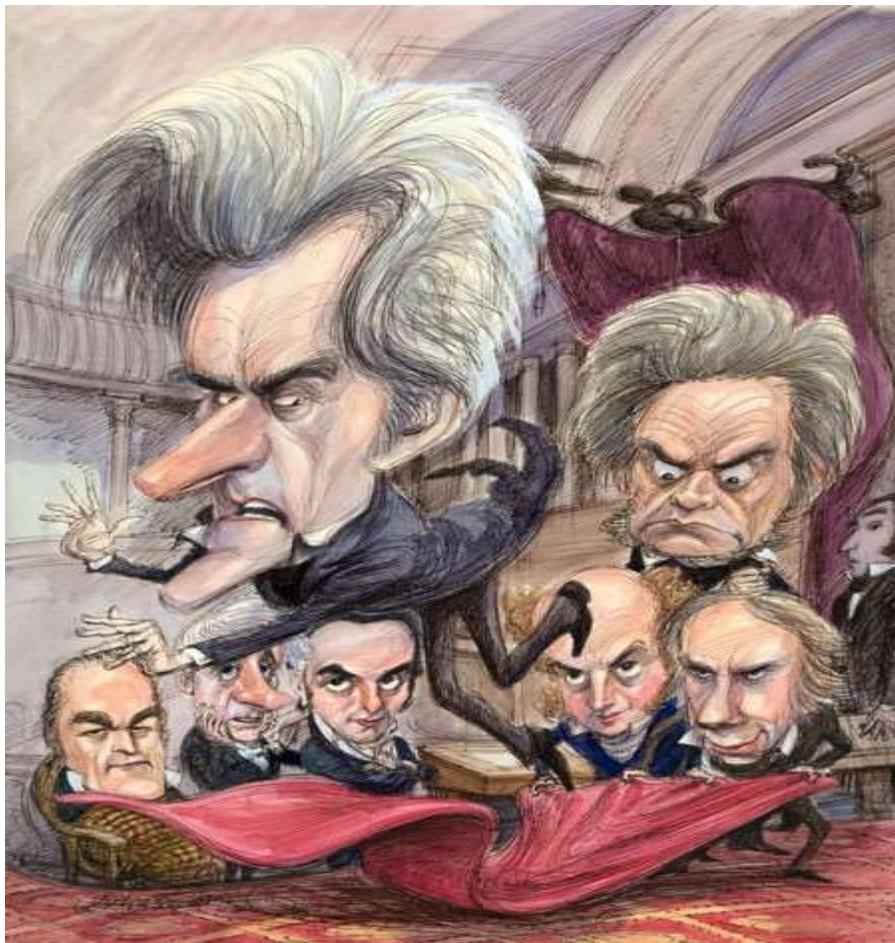
**WARNING:
PREPARE YOURSELF FOR HORROR!!!!**



**AAAAARRRRRGGGGHHHHH!!!
MAKE IT GO AWAY!!!!!!**

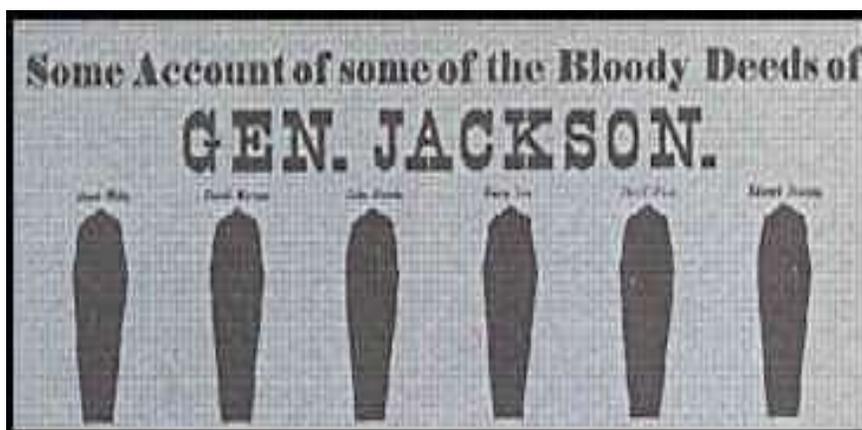
**1850 Lithograph of Henry Clay: America's Zombie
(I know; I'm one to talk about looks, right?)**

WHEW! OK, man THAT face will wake you up. Now, take a breath . . . back to the Election of 1824. Yep, everyone was happy . . . everyone except the loser: Jackson. To say that Old Hickory was peeved is an understatement, so much so that he and his supporters began the campaign for the 1828 election *the day after the 1824 results were published!* Jackson and his supporters screamed that there had been a **corrupt bargain** between Clay and Adams, and that the will of the people, who had overwhelmingly elected Jackson in the popular vote, had been thrown onto a garbage pile at the expense of politics. This is powerful political medicine, especially since John Quincy the apple had not fallen far from the old Federalist tree of his father, John Sr.



I LOVE this cartoon . . . JQ Adams, Clay, and Crawford pulling the rug (ie Election 1824) out from Under Jackson, hence the charge of a Corrupt Bargain.

The Election of 1828: Let That Mud Fly!! It is almost laughable to imagine the very rotund, very aristocratic, very PURITAN aristocratic Yankee Adams try to gain re-election in 1828 against the champion of the yeoman common man, Andrew Jackson. As one might expect, this campaign was a departure from the norm; Jackson, who traveled throughout his constituency base of the south and west, held great barbecues and gatherings in which **he avoided controversy by avoiding direct questions in the issues**. His ace in the hole had little to do with issues, he primarily **ran on the twin towers of his reputation as a war hero and yeoman of the frontier as well as the indignation of being cheated in 1824**. However, he had other motives; payback for one. You see, an Andrew Jackson furious is an Andrew Jackson ruthless, and this campaign was if nothing else vicious.



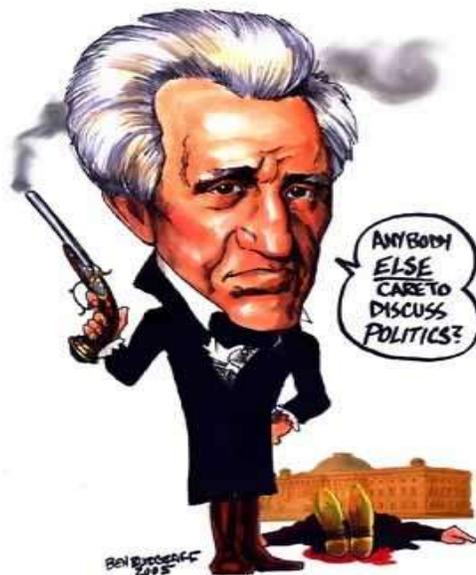
1828 Anti-Jackson Campaign Poster

Both sides slung tons of mud at each other; Adams accused Jackson's wife Rachel of being an adulteress (in any other arena Jackson would have dueled over this affront to Rachel's dignity and honor), the Jacksonians in turn claimed that Adams' wife had been born out of wedlock. In addition, the Jackson people claimed that, when serving as the American minister to Russia, John Quincy had not only squired a Russian "social coquette" (that's 19th century vernacular for "skank" . . . wonder what that is in Russian? Skanski? Skankova?) to various social events (hey, lighten up: it gets cold in Moscow!), he also brought her back with him to DC (erase that last remark: it doesn't get THAT cold in DC). Adams countered by pointing out that Jackson was a murderer (a duel by any other name, huh?) and had flagrantly violated his orders both in the War of 1812 and the Seminole War (he was right on both counts). However, the most damaging accusation came from the Jacksonians when they accused Adams of . . . GASP!!! . . . *wearing silk underwear*. Can you see the genius in this? To most Americans, it didn't matter for poop who was born when and whom was squiring whom; however it mattered greatly that a candidate revealed his true character when he disregarded the rough-hewn course yeoman undergarments of the common man for the silk Joe Boxers of aristocracy! One can only hope they weren't low riders.

Americans had not forgotten the Federalists (how could they with John Adams' son in the mix?) and the Hartford Convention (and if they did, Jackson was there to remind them). In any event, John Quincy might as well have stayed at home; Jackson trounced him; **more than three times the number of people voted in 1828 than in 1824 (see the effects of popular democracy as listed above?)**, and they all seemingly wanted Jackson to chase that New England dandy out of the White House, Russian hussy, silk drawers, and all.

The J. Q. Legacy John Quincy was a great admirer of Henry Clay's [American Plan](#),^[8] and sought to implement it at every turn. He completely supported the Bank of the United States, allocated large sums of federal money to internal improvements to enhance business, gave government subsidies to manufacturing, (big surprise, huh, since New England was fast becoming an industrial base), and supported protective tariffs. The Jacksonians, of course, screamed that these were all wastes of government money, as well as violations of the Constitution (the old strict versus loose deal comes into play once again; I guess it's important, huh?) However, Adams' greatest legacy, while not necessarily the wisest, was the passage of a new, higher **protective tariff in 1828**, a tariff which greatly injured the South while greatly helping the north.^[9] Ol' JQ was trying a little political sleight of hand like his pops, John Sr, did with his Midnight Judges farce . . . just gotta get that last shot in, huh? Anyway, this tariff would roll over into Jackson's administration; the fact that southerners referred to it as the **Tariff of Abominations** tells you how popular it was down South. Within four years, this tariff will bring the country to the verge of anarchy and civil war.

Jackson: He Ain't On the Twenty For Nothin'!



Dude was pure Americana. He was born into poverty in South Carolina, and participated in the Revolution. When he was nine, a British officer ordered the youth to shine his boots; when Jackson refused the officer severely beat and slashed him to within an inch his life with his sword. Upon recovery, Jackson disappeared into the swamp and served with Francis Marion in the brutal southern campaign of the war, an experience which embedded within a deep hatred of all things British. After the war, he migrated to the Tennessee Territory and tried to make a living as a storekeeper. That didn't work, as he had no head for business on a mercantile scale, so he acquired a piece of land and took to farming. Jackson was one of the beneficiaries of Whitney's cotton gin, and became a prosperous cotton farmer, owning tens of thousands of acres of cotton at The Hermitage, his home near present-day Nashville. Due to his success and reputation as a fighter, he was called upon numerous times to defend the Tennessee frontier from Indians raids, a task at which he was so successful that president James Madison made him a full general in the US Army to lead his ragtag bunch of Tennessee volunteers (this is why the University of Tennessee mascot is the Volunteer) against the British and their Indian allies in the War of 1812. As you know, he did his job well; his victories over the Red Stick Indians at Horseshoe Bend and especially the British at New Orleans made him both a household name and national hero. He further embellished his reputation (not always good, mind you) by waging a brutal war against the Seminole Indians in Florida, a war in which he burned villages and hung two British traders (Jackson always claimed that they were British agents; he may have been right. Whatever their true identity, they are still just as dead). In any event, Jackson was often a brutal realist and man of powerful conviction; a loyal devoted friend and a monstrous enemy. Best to stay on his good side.

All in all, Jackson was several men: he was **an unabashed champion of the common people** because he considered himself one of them; [10] he was an unashamed, **fervent patriot who believed in the United States of American above anything else**; and was a loving father and husband. The great tragedy of his life occurred in 1828 when, upon preparing to leave the Hermitage for DC, his wife Rachel, whom he loved dearly, died of heart failure. The frail Rachel was forced to endure vicious attacks upon her character by the Adams faction during the campaign, and when it was all said and done, the stress killed her. [11] Jackson blamed himself for putting her through the torment of the campaign, but he also never forgave his opponents. And as we will see, few people have ever done payback as well as Jackson.

On the other hand, and as with all people, Jackson had a dark side that, while somewhat understandable considering that **he was a politician and a product of the times in which he lived**, counteracted the positive influences over American politics. He could be horribly **vindictive**, taking insults and political attacks personally, rather than being able to slough them off as the requisite residue of party politics. He was old school in his sense of frontier justice, and was never reluctant to grab his dueling pistols at the drop of a slight, real or imagined, against him. Probably **the greatest blight on Andrew Jackson's reputation is his relationship with Native American tribes of the American Southeast, which suffered the brunt of (a) his personal distaste for Native Americans based on years of his having waged war against them, and (b) his devotion to yeoman migration that eventually laid claim to traditional tribal lands**. Faced with the decision to attempt a compromise that would facilitate white migration and tribal claims, Jackson, as was his tendency, ruled on the side of his constituents, and consequently sponsored the removal of Indian tribes east of the Mississippi River to federal Indian territory in the Louisiana Purchase, in present-day Oklahoma. This forced movement, of course, resulted in the Trail of Tears; the government's promise of permanent Indian territory became laughable at best with the surge of westward migration resulting from passage of Lincoln's Homestead Act. From the US Government's perspective, the only means by which the "Indian Problem" could effectively be solved was removal; the further west they go, the more out of the way they are. Out of sight, out of mind. **This attitude and subsequent policy of Indian Wars and reservations was born of Andrew Jackson's Indian Removal Act**; its overall results were shameful in the annals of American History.



**The People Have Their Man:
Jackson's Inaugural Party (it was more like an inaugural brawl)**

Jackson the President Andrew Jackson did not simply stroll into the White House, he arrived with a crash of thunder and dominant sense of purpose. Jackson **sought to make the president the representative of the people and protector of their rights through acquiring as much presidential power as he could**; he consequently vetoed more congressional laws (twelve) than all of the previous presidents before him. For example, Jackson took on political enemy **Henry Clay and his American System** when the Kentucky senator proposed a federally-funded highway through his home state of Kentucky that would connect Louisville with the small town of Maysville. Jackson set the precedent for opposition to the American System, and hence stopped its momentum that had been increasing since Hamilton's time, by emphatically vetoing this bill, known as the **Maysville Road Bill Veto**, flatly stating that federally-funded internal improvements, by using federal money, inherently improved one section of the country at the other sections' expense. In short, it wasn't fair for the American people to pay for a road that would only benefit Kentucky, and besides, there was nothing in the Constitution that allowed for federal funds to be spent this way (voices within your thick skulls should be screaming STRICT! STRICT! STRICT!). The fact that it was a pet project of Henry Clay (remember the election of 1824?), an Adams supporter and Jackson hater, shouldn't surprise you any. KARMA!

Jackson placed great faith in loyalty and friendship, and didn't trust politicians. As a result, while he did have a presidential cabinet, it was pretty much a political dog and pony show; he rarely conferred with them. Instead, he formed an informal group of advisors known as his **kitchen cabinet**, named because they often discussed matters in the White House kitchen while eating and drinking to all hours of the night. [12] These were men who could advise Jackson outside the formality of politics, men who Jackson trusted. A prime example of both his loyalty and sense of justice was the **Peggy Eaton Affair**.

Peggy Eaton was the wife of Jackson's Secretary of War John Eaton. Eaton had known Jackson since Jackson's Indian battles in Tennessee, and had fought with the General, along with his BFF Sam Houston (who was Eaton's best man at his wedding), at Horseshoe Bend, New Orleans, and in Florida. As a consequence, Jackson deeply trusted Eaton. When Eaton married Peggy, a woman of somewhat questionable repute around Washington (another coquette), Jackson was thrilled for his friend. However, there were problems. Jackson's

cabinet, led by **Vice President and states' right poster boy John C Calhoun**, were openly hostile towards Peggy, and their wives simply refused to associate with her; they even started vicious rumors and perpetuated gossip about the new Mrs. Eaton (hmm, ya think some of these people's ghosts lurk the hallways of KHS? It was vicious stuff, and they didn't have Twitter, Instagram, or any of that other social media crap). Practically the only member of Jackson's administration outside the Kitchen Cabinet who supported Peggy Eaton was Jackson's political ally **Martin Van Buren**; this support will cement Jackson's loyalty to Van Buren and ultimately lead Van Buren into the White House in 1836. Seeing his wife miserable tormented Eaton; seeing Eaton miserable tormented Jackson. When Jackson found out the source of Eaton's misery, he went hunting: cabinet and cabinet-wife hunting. This crusade on the behalf of Peggy was prompted by three factors: first of all, Jackson's sense of loyalty to John Eaton, and secondly, the memory of Rachel's having to endure such slander, and third, the knowledge that some of the major gossips and their husbands (particularly Calhoun) were the same ones that had done the same to Rachel in the election of 1828. Subsequently, Jackson ordered his cabinet to demand that their wives accept Peggy into their social circle; when they refused, Jackson fired them all . . . except Calhoun, who was vice president. His turn will come later.

The Jackson Administration: Never a Dull Moment There were several defining issues which Jackson had to fight (and fight is the appropriate term here); all of these represented **major changes and precedents** in American history. As such, we'll look at them on an issue by issue basis.

- **Indian Removal:** We have previously spoken of how Jackson felt about Indians, so it no surprise that he fought diligently to have them removed from white-populated areas and relocated to the Indian Territory west of the Mississippi River. He did have to fight Chief Justice John Marshall over the legality of his **Indian Removal Act** (in the 1832 Supreme Court ruling in ***Worcester v Georgia*** chief justice John Marshall ruled that the state of Georgia could not remove Cherokee Indians from the state due to their status as a sovereign nation within the state borders. Jackson, obviously, disagreed, allegedly daring Marshall to act by stating "John Marshall has made his ruling. Now let him enforce it." Marshall didn't respond. Smart move, probably a bad shot), consequently Indian removal proceeded with somewhat tragic results. Most of the tribes relocated were southern in nature, primarily because they occupied land that whites either currently wanted or would eventually want (smell cotton in the mix?). Credit Jackson this: having experience with fighting Indians he knew that if he did not move them, the frontier would reignite and explode into more Indian-white clashes. The blood of both red people and white people, men, women, and children, would flow; the Indians would lose, move further west waiting to fight again . . . and the problem still would not have been solved. Hence, from his perspective, you can see why he thought that part of the intent of the Removal Act was somewhat "humane" (context is important here). The exception to this was the attempted removal of the Sauk and Fox tribes of Illinois, who were *forcibly* removed simply because they would rather fight to the death than give up any more land. Some of these Indians were remnants of Tecumseh's Confederacy and survivors of Tippecanoe; their resistance represented the last violent opposition to white encroachment east of the Mississippi River in what became known as the **Black Hawk War 1832**. You guessed it: they lost this one also. BTW, a young lieutenant in the Illinois militia fought in Black Hawk War; didn't impress a lot of people. His name was Abraham Lincoln.

“It gives me pleasure to announce to Congress that the benevolent policy of the Government, steadily pursued for nearly thirty years, in relation to the removal of the Indians beyond the white settlements is approaching to a happy consummation. Two important tribes have accepted the provision made for their removal at the last session of Congress, and it is believed that their example will induce the remaining tribes also to seek the same obvious advantages.

The consequences of a speedy removal will be important to the United States, to individual States, and to the Indians themselves. It will separate the Indians from immediate contact with settlements of whites; free them from the power of the States; enable them to pursue happiness in their own way and under their own rude institutions; will retard the progress of decay, which is lessening their numbers, and perhaps cause them gradually, under the protection of the Government and through the influence of good counsels, to cast off their savage habits and become an interesting, civilized, and Christian community . . . The tribes which occupied the colonies now constituting the Eastern States were annihilated or have melted away to make room for the whites. The waves of population and civilization are rolling to the westward, and we now propose to acquire the areas occupied by the red men of the South and West by a fair exchange, and, at the expense of the United States, to send them to land where their existence may be prolonged and perhaps made perpetual. Doubtless it will be painful to leave the graves of their fathers; but what do they more than our ancestors did or than our children are now doing?”

Andrew Jackson, Indian Removal Act, 1832

- **South Carolina, Calhoun, and the Nullification Crisis** This one’s a biggy; hope you remember all of your nullification material (Otis, Kentucky and Virginia Resolutions). In the final days of the Adams Administration, Congress passed the increased **Tariff of 1828**, or what the south labeled as the **Tariff of Abomination** (see “The J.Q. Legacy”). Due to the stir surrounding the election of 1828, this issue was, at the time, while tremendously disturbing to southerners, a relatively quiet *national* issue. However, soon after Jackson entered office, Congress attempted an additional rate increase adjustment to this tariff. NOW the fur begins to fly.
- **The Webster-Hayne Debate 1830** The South, and South Carolina in particular, erupted in indignation. This was no controversy over some silly tariff; this action represented both an insult and threat to the South. In other words, it was becoming personal—at least that’s how Southerners saw it, and as a predictable result, emotions took over. In the Senate in 1830, Senator **Robert Hayne** of South Carolina offered a passionate defense of states’ rights, a speech that was challenged by Senator **Daniel Webster** of Massachusetts (that shouldn’t surprise you any). The result of their debate, known as the **Webster- Hayne Debate**, was a **clash over sectional perceptions of just what America was: a compact of sovereign states or a single country governed by a single national government**. Hayne reiterated what Southerners (and a few Federalist at the Hartford Convention) had claimed since the days of the Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions: **the United States was a nothing more than a compact of sovereign states who had the right to decide which federal laws were good or bad for their populations; those rights not reserved to the federal government by the Constitution included the right to nullify and secede if necessary**. Webster claimed this was rubbish, and that the legal definition of America lies in the Constitution and in the Supreme Court’s interpretation of the Constitution. The two ended their debate in words both stirring and prescient:
 - Hayne:** “If we are willing to value of the union so low as to make no efforts to allow that which is rightful, then let me tell you gentlemen that the seed of disunion are already sown, and our children will reap the bitter fruit.” (A little scary, this is.)
 - Webster:** “It is to our Union that we owe our safety at home . . . and why we are proud of our

country. For now: Liberty and Union, now and forever, one and inseparable!”

Thus the debate began, and the tariff controversy was thrust as the opening salvo in the growing rift between the sections. There would be many more.

- ***The South Carolina Exposition and Protest*** In further protest to the tariff, and in support of states’ rights, John C. Calhoun authored a statement that outlined South Carolina’s opposition to the tariff and a reaffirmation of the doctrine of nullification. This document, from which Calhoun held his name (everyone knew he wrote it anyway), was known as the ***South Carolina Exposition and Protest***, and was the next in a long line of pro-nullification (and by implication, secession) documents. This did NOT go over well with Jackson. During the 1831 annual Jefferson’s Birthday Celebration at the White House, Jackson proposed a toast to send a clear message to Calhoun, who was sitting at the table. A grim-faced Jackson slowly stood, then shattered the nervous silence by thundering “**Our Union: It Must Be Preserved!**” Calhoun, clearly nervous and intimidated, answered with a toast of his own: “**The Union, next to our liberties, most dear!**” No other rhetoric does as good a job at outlining the factional differences between those who supported the Union (Jackson) and those who supported states’ rights (Calhoun). The battle lines were drawn.
- Jackson had by this time had just about enough of vice president John C Calhoun. Jackson regarded Calhoun’s actions as insubordinate, and sought to rid himself of this wart. Egged on by a rumor, Jackson began looking into Calhoun’s record when the South Carolina senator was Secretary of War under James Monroe—at the precise time Jackson was chasing Indians around Florida. Jackson learned that Calhoun, in an obvious attempt to gain favor with Monroe, had urged the president to rid himself of the embarrassment of Jackson (and Jackson was an embarrassment to a Monroe administration trying to maintain an Era of Good Feelings) running amok in Florida by removing Jackson from command. Calhoun’s report was full of inaccuracies (OK, lies) and outright slander, all of which constituted a matter of honor to Jackson. You know what comes next in THIS case, don’t you? You know, the old “Take ten steps, turn, and fire” syndrome. However, before Jackson could challenge Calhoun to a duel, the vice president abruptly resigned . . . with his life intact I might add. Jackson, glad to be rid of someone he considered as a traitor, named his ally **Martin Van Buren** to succeed Calhoun. Calhoun, for his part, returned to South Carolina to resume his attack on the tariff from a distance somewhat removed from dueling pistol range.
- In response to Calhoun’s Exposition and in an outright challenge to Jackson’s authority, the South Carolina legislature held a nullification convention, and in 1832 notified the federal government that South Carolina would not allow tariffs to be collected within her borders. Jackson, as you might suspect, reacted swiftly and decisively. The result was Newtonian:
 - He immediately called for mobilization of the military and had Congress pass the **Force Bill**, which authorized the president to take military action against a state engaged in treason, which, according to Jackson, South Carolina was doing.
 - South Carolina **responded** by threatening that, should such action be taken by the president, **she would secede** from the union. Jeez, sounds like a couple of freshmen arguing.
 - You know, when Caesar crossed the Rubicon, he allegedly stated that ‘The die is cast.’ Jackson felt no need to cast any die; he wanted to defiantly lay the law down by seriously kick some treasonous butt. He told a visiting congressman from South Carolina:

“Please give my regards to my friends in your state and tell them that if any drop of blood be shed there in opposition to the laws of the United States, I will hang the first man there I can lay my hands on who is engaged in treasonable activity, from the first tree that I can find . . . In forty days I will have within the limits of South Carolina 50,000 soldiers of the army, all of whom I will personally lead . . . The Union must be preserved, and I will die with the Union.”

There were few doubts that the General meant what he said.

Now, understand that Jackson, a southerner and westerner, was a strong supporter of states' right, but **by no means at the expense of the Union**. However, he was also no dummy. Jackson knew that a standoff between the federal government and South Carolina would open up a horrible can of sectional worms, and, regardless of who might emerge victorious, would seriously wound the country. Therefore, he began to call in a few congressional favors which ultimately led to what amounted to a compromise, known as the **Compromise of 1832**. In this deal, South Carolina would repeal her nullification and secession threat, and Jackson would call off the dogs of war. Jackson did reward South Carolina for her willingness to compromise by offering a lower tariff, one with which South Carolina could tolerate, if not necessarily approve. All parties gratefully accepted this deal (after all, it gave everyone an "honorable" way out of this mess), but in a final show of one-upmanship and as a parting shot, South Carolina nullified the Force Bill. Children please!

Say, Have You Heard The Rumor That JACKSON HATED THE BANK!?!?

Hey, the next time you see Ms. Davidson ask her how Jackson felt about the bank. She knows.

Jackson hated the Bank. I know that this is hard to fathom, but it's true. Andrew Jackson accomplished something for which neither trademark American icons Jefferson and Madison had the requisite guts: he utterly destroyed the Bank of the United States. PUT THIS GUY ON RUSHMORE!!!!

OK, here we go. You recall that in 1816, the Bank was re-chartered by Congress because, while Democratic-Republicans did not like the Bank, they nevertheless saw a need for it, regardless of the Bank's complicity in the Panic of 1816. Well, that was 1816, this is 1832; that was Monroe, this is Jackson. Jackson, more than any other political figure, regarded the Bank as an unconstitutional (STRICT! STRICT! STRICT!)rat hole of the rich and privileged, none of whom had any regard for the common man or his problems. In addition, the Bank was ripe with corruption. It did not help that the Bank's director, **Nicholas Biddle**, was a pompous little twerp from Philadelphia (with a name like Biddle what else could he be?) who hated all things common and non-aristocratic; in other words, he hated Jackson and what he stood for, and therefore had no respect for the president.^[13] Jackson had made it painfully clear to all that he intended to veto the Bank's recharter when it came before him, should he be re-elected in 1832 (the Bank's charter was due to expire in 1836). Jackson's enemies, led by Henry Clay (who, you may recall, supported the Bank as part of his American Plan), decided that the controversial bank issue presented a perfect opportunity to put Jackson on the spot by making the bank's recharter a campaign issue. Therefore, Clay persuaded Biddle to petition Congress for an early 1832 recharter rather than wait until 1836; if Jackson were indeed re-elected in 1832 he would surely kill the bank in 1836. The 1832 recharter effort was, therefore, the Bank's only means of survival; they hoped that political pressure to keep the Bank during the campaign of 1832 would save it from a sure Jackson veto in 1836. Poor fools; they knew not the President.

Clay and Biddle pushed the bank recharter through Congress, and with Jackson running for re-election assumed that the president, who had avoided controversial issues when running in 1828, would avoid the Bank for the sake of getting re-elected. WRONG. Jackson hated the Bank. Did you hear me? JACKSON HATED THE BANK. Dude would have rather died than allow the Bank to exist. Jackson considered the bank a private monopoly for the rich and powerful, a "hydra of corruption." He saw everything he despised in the Bank and what it represented. In response to Clay's and Biddle's efforts on the behalf of recharter, Jackson thundered "They are trying to kill me with the Bank, but I will kill the Bank!" This guy had no room for theoretical rhetoric; he meant what he said. Therefore, when the recharter bill crossed his desk for his approval, the thundering roar of his emphatic veto made the entire country shudder. In his veto message, Jackson stated:

"It is to be regretted that the rich and powerful too often bend the acts of government to their selfish purposes. When laws undertake to make the rich richer and the potent more powerful, the humble members of society— farmers, mechanics, and laborers—who have neither the time nor means to of securing like favors for themselves, have a right to complain of the injustices of their government. . . There are no necessary evils in government. Its evils exist

only in its abuses. If it were to confine itself to equal protection, and as Heaven does with its rain, shower its favors alike on the high and low, the rich and the poor, it would be an unqualified blessing.”



Democratic Cartoon Showing Jackson Battling the Many-Headed Hydra, the Bank of the United States. The snake head with the top hat is Nicholas Biddle.

And kill it, he did. Match point, Jackson.



An 1837 lithograph published by H. R. Robinson, N.Y.

This 1837 cartoon features the first appearance of a donkey as the symbol of the Democratic Party. Jackson rides the donkey while his flunkey, Martin Van Buren, faithfully follows.

Jackson or Anti-Jackson? You Can't Be Both! Surely you have the idea that, by now, there are no fence riders when it comes to Jackson. You are correct; Andrew Jackson, or rather the *hatred* directed at Andrew Jackson, prompted the **rebirth of the two party system in America**. The remnants of the Jeffersonian Democratic-Republicans who supported Jackson would take on a name that exemplified their commitment to equality: they became known as the **Democratic Party**; this era would forever become known as the **Jacksonian Period, or the Era of Jacksonian Democracy** (get used to these, you'll see them again). Those opposed to the Jacksonian method, the old Federalist faction consisting primarily of Henry Clay, Daniel Webster, and John Quincy Adams, took the name of the old British opposition to the Crown party and called themselves **Whigs (they knew that "Federalist" had a bad connotation)**. Never again would American have the luxury of a one party system.



A Whig comment on Jackson's liberal use of the veto, his alleged disregard for the Constitution, and aversion to Clay's American System.

The Whigs strangely resembled the old Hamiltonian Federalists and favored Clay's American System. They were primarily composed of people from New England (big surprise, huh?), the mid-Atlantic and upper Mid-West states, and urban dwellers. They were, first and foremost, more anti-Jackson than they were anything else, and for this reason, they will not survive for very long. However, they will carry their anti-Jackson message to the American people long after Old Hickory has left office.

Fallout From The Bank Veto Think about this for a moment: When Jackson vetoed the bank, what happened to the money? I mean, the Bank of the US held practically all of the nation's revenue, and **because it was partially a private investor bank, Jackson could only veto federal participation in the bank . . . not the bank entirely.** Biddle took advantage of this by tightening the bank's credit to the point of threatening another panic, all to force Jackson to repeal his veto. Jeez, you would think that this dweeb would learn. To stave off a national panic at the hands of Nicholas Biddle, **Jackson removed ALL federal money from the Bank of the US and placed it into several state banks**, or, as his critics called them, **pet banks**; in this fashion he truly killed the Bank by simply gutting it of revenue. Without the power and security of federal money, Biddle's bank was only a weak shell, and subsequently soon folded. Now, this was obviously a victory for Jackson, but remember that he's fooling with the money supply, and we know how dynamic the economy is when someone messes with the money supply. Of course, the economy responded to this removal of federal funds, primarily by causing a rash of western land speculation that resulted in the inflation of paper money (remember: despite what happens to currency, land always retains value). To help curb this runaway inflation Jackson issued the **Specie Circular**. Simply put, this was **an executive order that all federal land must be paid for with either gold or silver specie, which would serve to back up the existing paper money, and not paper notes which would only serve to increase inflation.** While this temporarily slowed the rate of inflation, it will calm the shaky economy.^[14] After Jackson leaves office in 1836, his successor will have to deal with further fallout from his withdrawal of funds and the Specie Circular.

Trouble On The Horizon: Texas Jackson was a fervent expansionist, as he proved through his Florida escapades.^[15] In addition, Jackson was a southern sympathizer, slave owner, and feared the growing northern opposition to the spread of slavery into the western territories so much so that he banned the United States Post Office from the delivery of anti-slavery material. Consequently, any attempted movement into the west provoked a special interest from Jackson; indeed, after the **Missouri Compromise in 1820**, any foray into the western territories was accompanied by accusations of "slave conspiracies," or expansion for the expressed purpose of spreading slavery. Throughout Jackson's second term, the focus of this issue centered on the Mexican province of Texas.

In 1824, Mexico gained its independence from Spain through the efforts of a dynamic young revolutionary named Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna. After the revolution, Santa Anna did not gain governing power (much to his dismay and anger), and a republican constitutional government, outlined by the Mexican Constitution of 1824, came to power in Mexico City that encouraged American migration into Texas for the expressed purpose of the economic windfall such settlement would bring. The migration began when Stephen Austin, by virtue of a sizable land grant in Texas left to him by his father, led large groups of Americans into Texas; by 1830 the American population of Texas approached 70,000, including slaves.

However, this couldn't last. The Mexican government, reacting to pressure from the Vatican, outlawed slavery in 1829, and demanded that existing American settlers convert to the Catholic faith. Well, you KNOW how this is going to go over. The settlers refused, forcing the government to close Mexico to further settlement. However, this was a case of too little too late, as word spread that Texas possessed thousands of acres of good cotton farming land, prompting thousands of southern migrants came pouring over the Sabine River, settlement prohibition or not. The uneasy proximity of Mexican authorities and angry American settlers (who had begun calling themselves "Texans") prompted the formation of militias reminiscent of the American Revolution. By 1835, under the guidance and leadership of an old Jackson war buddy, Sam Houston, Texans began to openly defy Mexican law.

In 1836, Santa Anna overthrew the weakening republican Mexican government, and set as his first priority to take care of the rebellious Texas question. Texans, for their part, merely wanted a return to the constitutional government of 1824, which was not going to happen. In March 1836, in response to Santa Anna's initial attempts to re-establish Mexican control over Texas, Houston led a revolt and proclaimed Texas an independent republic, subject to neither Mexican nor American law. Santa Anna himself led a Mexican army

into Texas, meeting token resistance at the small village of Goliad. However, in a show of his contempt for Texans, Santa Anna ordered no quarter, meaning leave no survivors; his troops lined up the survivors and had them all shot.

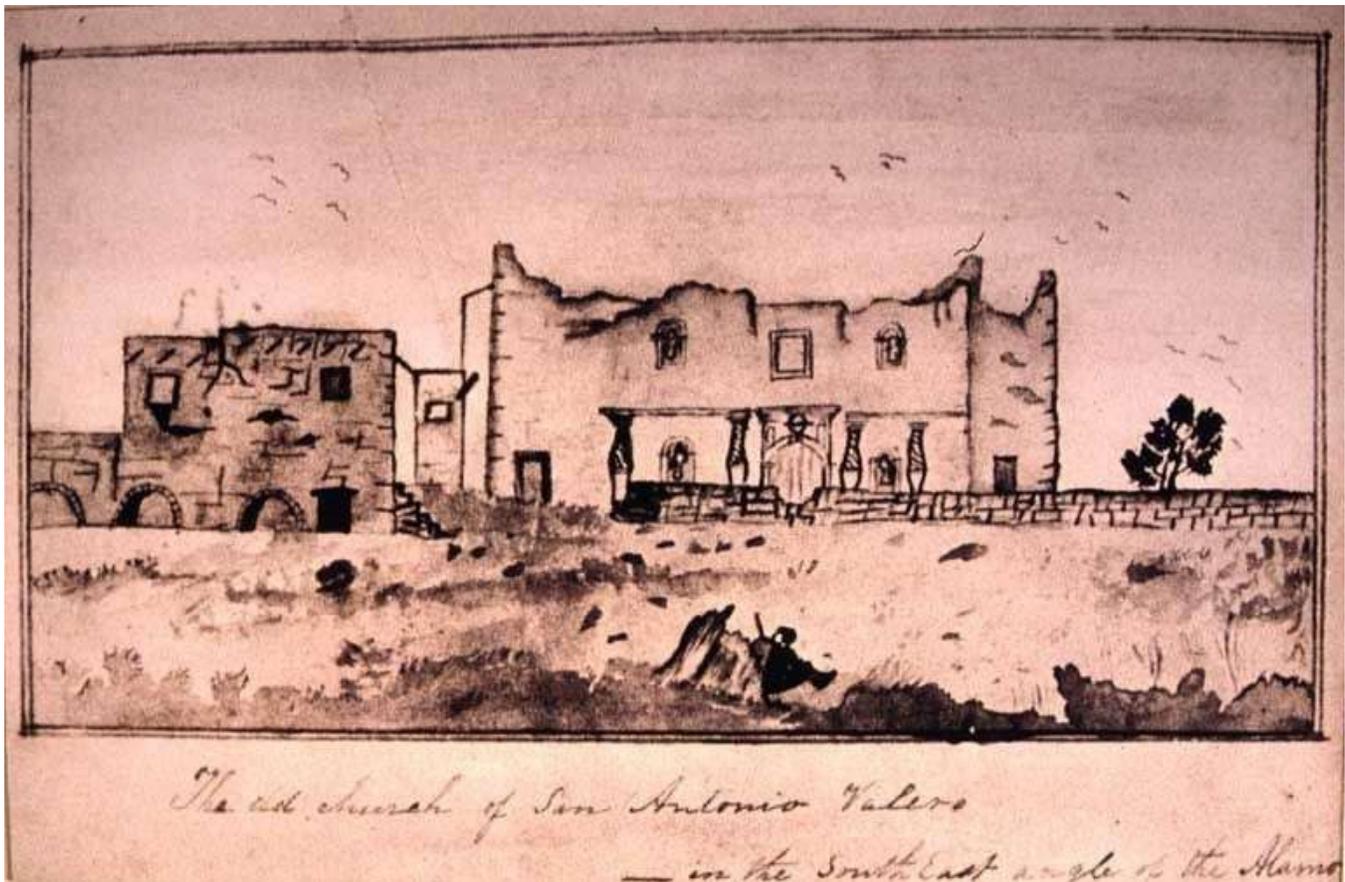


The Original Flag of the Texan Garrison at Gonzales, 1837.

Two weeks later, at the provincial capital of San Antonio de Bexar, the Mexican general surrounded a small force of Texans in an old abandoned Spanish mission, San Antonio de Valero (the Alamo) and once again ordered no quarter. These actions sent cold chills of reality up the spines of all those fighting for Texas independence, and prompted the realization that, in order to win their freedom from Mexico, Texan forces would have to have help from Washington.



The Earliest Known Photograph of the Alamo, circa 1839



Earliest Known Drawing of the Alamo Ruins, circa 1838

Jackson was keeping a keen eye on the events in Texas, but was wary of becoming involved in an attempt to wrest Texas away from Mexico by virtue of force. He had previously attempted to purchase Texas, [\[16\]](#) but those once-promising efforts died once Santa Anna came to power, and he realized that a violent takeover of Texas would rouse the indignation of northern congressmen who claimed that the only reason Texas was being sought was to expand slavery. Both of these options were politically dangerous, especially with Jackson leaving office in 1836. In his mind, Texas, while extremely desirable, was neither worth tearing the nation apart over the sleeping giant of slavery nor instigating a war with Mexico. Therefore, he sat back and watched, holding pat on just what action he would take in those nervous days of spring 1836.

As it turned out, Jackson's buddy Sam Houston solved his problem for him. As the Texans were being pursued eastward across Texas to the Louisiana border in what amounted to a Mexican route (Texans cynically referred to Houston's retreat as the "Runaway Scrape"), Houston fought off a mutiny by suddenly turning into the pursuing army and attacking as the Mexicans were fording the San Jacinto River. Houston's forces hit the Mexicans with a frontal attack, as well as two flanking maneuvers, scattering the confused Mexicans. In the confusion, Texas forces captured a fleeing Santa Anna, who, in exchange for his life, signed a treaty granting Texas its independence. [\[17\]](#)



1837 Cartoon Depicting Santa Ana and General Cos Surrendering to Sam Houston After the Texan Victory at San Jacinto. The cartoonist took a few liberties here; in actuality Santa Ana was captured trying to escape masquerading in a private's uniform.

Problems, problems, problems. You know, at any other period in American history, this would be great news. Upon gaining independence, Sam Houston, the first president of the Republic of Texas applied to the United States that his new country be added as a new state. However, because northern congressmen suspected that slavery was behind the entire Texas episode, annexation bills introduced that would allow Texas into the Union were defeated in the Senate. This would touch off a storm of controversy that would not be resolved until 1844, and even then without severe consequences. As Andrew Jackson feared, the Texas question would provide the spark that would set the wheels in motion for the runaway concept of Manifest Destiny, and ultimately provide a major reason for the destruction of the Union in 1861.

Andrew Jackson Goes Home For the bulk of his presidency, throughout all of the bombast, thunder, and passion of his administration, Andrew Jackson was quite ill. Elderly when he was first elected, during the last two years of his presidency his advisors constantly wondered whether he would complete his second term.

Consequently, in 1836, following Washingtonian precedent, Jackson packed his tobacco, whiskey, dueling pistols, and other assorted goodies, and went home to Tennessee. He chose as his successor, his faithful vice president **Martin Van Buren**; he knew van Buren would carry out Jacksonian policy as the standard-bearer of the Democratic Party. Running against Van Buren was a virtual who's who of American Whiggery. The Whigs ran four candidates against van Buren in an attempt to divide the election along sectional lines; obviously they weren't familiar with the concept of splitting the vote. Primary among this bunch of goobers were Daniel Webster, who was supposed to garner the New England vote, and William Henry Harrison, who was going to

wrest the West from the Democrats. Guess what? It didn't work. Van Buren won in a rout.



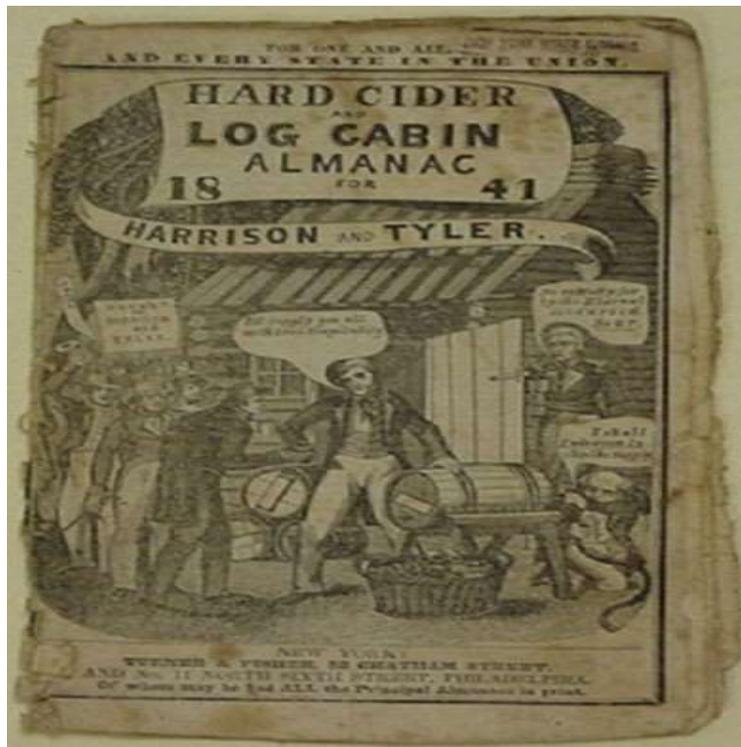
Cartoon Showing Van Buren Riding into Washington on Jackson's Back

The Van Buren Presidency Martin Van Buren, the first person of Dutch ancestry to be elected president, may have ridden into office on Jackson's coattails, but he also inherited the residue of Jackson's financial mess. In 1837, the **Panic of 1837** hit America hard, largely due to Jackson's removal of federal funds from the Bank of the US and the Specie Circular. It is important to realize that major panics, like the ones in 1819 and 1837, are usually accompanied by disruptions in the global economy. This was no exception, as a fluctuation in the European textile industry caused the price of America's most stable commodity—cotton—to drop about .04 per pound. Because economic panics follow a domino pattern, the entire American economy was hit; by the fall of 1837, one-third of the American workforce was out of work. [18] Van Buren tried to diffuse the crisis by calling a special session of Congress, in which the lawmakers voted to distribute to the states a revenue surplus which was used to bolster the federal money supply. This, however, was not enough to stem the increasing panic. As much as Van Buren hated to admit it, the nation and its foreign investors missed the security of the Bank of the United States.

The Independent Treasury You know, for a nobody president Van Buren had some smarts. He asked himself: What was it about the Bank that Jackson hated so much? The answer was simple: The Bank was partially owned and operated by private investors who sought to use government revenue to produce profit. The economy depended on the stability of *federal* revenue that was in the bank, but didn't really care about the

investment and speculative actions of the private operators. Therefore, why not create a federal depository for federal money that would just hold the money without the speculative functions? Not bad, Marty. On this assumption, Van Buren asked Congress to pass the **Independent Treasury Act**, which functioned to remove those federal deposits from Jackson's "pet banks" and placed in a safe federal holding facility. This, of course, caused much controversy and gnashing of teeth . . . but it worked. Little by little, the panic subsided and American got back to the business of doing whatever it was that America did in 1840. (You'll get some insight into this in the next reading "The Private Side of a Developing People.")

The Election of 1840 Unfortunately, Van Buren was unable to convert the success of his Independent Treasury into a second term. The Whigs had their crosshairs set on Van Buren, [19] and they went after him in a big way (or should I say a "Whig" way? Oh be quiet, you KNOW that was funny!). Henry Clay expected to be the Whig nominee, but party officials had a better idea: since the Democrats had been highly successful with their political strategy, why not use their strategy and turn the tables on them? After all, in 1828 the Democrats had run a military hero, and now the Whigs had one. Jackson had pounded the American people with visions of Adams and his aristocratic airs (remember the silk underwear?) and now they were running against a New York Yankee (not of the Jeter variety) who hailed from wealthy Dutch aristocracy. Consequently, in 1840 the Whigs ran their military hero, the victor of Tippecanoe, **William Henry Harrison**, and attacked Van Buren as an aristocrat who lived in a "patroon palace." When a Democratic newspaper attacked Harrison as old and decrepit by writing that the general would be happy to take a cask of hard cider and while away the remainder of his days in a log cabin by the Wabash River, the Whigs turned this to their favor. Now, William Henry Harrison was a man of the people [20] who came from humble beginnings (the log cabin) and liked to frolic with the best of them (the hard cider). This became known as the **Log Cabin and Hard Cider Campaign**, and was the **first modern-style political campaign**, complete with buttons, banners, official newspapers, and parades which featured log cabin floats and free miniature barrels of hard cider (the lying, slander, and character assassination had been around since Adams, Jefferson, and the Election of 1800). To cap it all off, the Whigs were able to employ one of the great slogans in American political history when they chose **Virginian John Tyler** as Harrison's running mate: "**Tippecanoe and Tyler, too!**" It was easy to remember and rolled nicely off of the tongue, which is really handy when they person doing the tongue rolling is falling down drunk from too much free hard cider. Harrison won the election by 100,000 popular votes, and 185 electoral votes. [21] Free booze works everytime.



Harrison's Log Cabin and Hard Cider Campaign

The Jacksonian Legacy With Van Buren's defeat also came the end of the Jacksonian Period. It was indeed a heckuva ride, and America would never again be the same. However, the confusion and craziness which exemplified the Jackson years was not over. In 1841, when Harrison took office, Whig politicians like Webster and Clay expected the inexperienced Harrison to be a tool in their hands. The trick was on them. On 4 March 1841, during a steady rain and in freezing temperatures, Harrison delivered the longest inaugural address in American history. As a result, he served the shortest term of any American president, dying one month later of the pneumonia he caught while delivering that insane address. Tippecanoe and stupidity, too!

John Tyler would assume the presidency in 1841 and well, to tell you a little bit about him: Tyler was originally a Democrat whom the Whigs convinced to switch parties in an effort to balance the Harrison ticket. See, he was a slaveholder from Virginia, and this would help draw southern votes (traditionally Jacksonian) away from Van Buren. The fact that he was a former Democrat didn't set well with the Whig hierarchy, who (naturally) didn't trust him. When Tyler assumed the presidency, all of Clay's and Webster's dreams of running the White House went up in smoke; they didn't trust him. Because Tyler had switched parties, the Democrats didn't trust him, either. Want to guess how much success this guys is going to have? Stay tuned

[1] How did the British respond? Something along the lines of "Well, perhaps we should try to get along with these people, as it does appear that most of them despise us and our lovely Federalists allies are for all purposes resting with the fishes." This realization indirectly led, of course, to the **Monroe Doctrine**, which no one would have taken seriously if not for the potential backing of the Royal Navy. Politics makes strange bedfellows, indeed.

[2] Do not make the mistake of assuming that all political infighting had vanished. There were substantial factions within the Republican Party (**John Randolph** and the Quids only being one such faction), and once the opportunity arose, they began to expose their opposition. This escalated until, in **the 1828 election**, due to the confusion over which Republican Party is the REAL Republican Party, the original Jeffersonian faction changed its name to avoid confusion. They became known as the **Democratic Party**; the same one we have today.

[3] Both of these proved demeaning to women. The "cult of domesticity" referred to the socially-accepted women's role as home maker and baby machine; "separate spheres" refers to the belief that men had their world, and women had theirs, and never the twain shall meet. My guess is that the women's world smelled nicer.

[4] The Great American Prairie of Nebraska and the Dakotas is a polar opposite to the lush wooded areas of the Old Northwest or the American South; you can only imagine what it must be like to live there if you weren't raised there . . . think of yourself being plopped down in the middle of Siberia, no I Phone, no X Box, no central air or heat, no Starbucks or Chic-fil-a . . .

[5] The prejudice and violent opposition to immigrants in general (again primarily Catholic) is going to manifest itself into a political party, known as the All-American Party. This forerunner to Klan was so secret in nature that when a member was asked if he belonged to this party, he was instructed to answer "I know nothing." Hence, they gained their infamy throughout history as the **Know Nothing Party**. (See the movie "Gangs of New York.")

[6] When a candidate releases his electors, he can do two things: first, he can grant them their freedom to vote for anyone else, or he can designate that they vote for a particular person. Crawford knew that, since he and Jackson were both from Tennessee, his electors would most certainly (if painfully) go over to Jackson. Therefore, he designated them to Clay.

[7] Throughout the latter 18th and early 19th centuries, the surest road to the presidency ran through the Secretary of State's Office. Want proof? Jefferson, Madison, Monroe, J.Q. Adams all held this position. Clay had every reason to suspect that this trend would continue; that is under normal political circumstances. In 1828, however, normal will go out the window.

[8] The American Plan included provisions for internal improvements, a Bank of the United States, and a protective tariffs . . . things all hated by common people.

[9] This was one of the highest tariffs to date. When faced with a higher American tariff, European exporters had to charge more for their goods to offset the price of the duty. Southerners, who imported much of what they used, also felt this increase when European countries countered with a retaliatory tariff. Cotton exporting depends greatly on free trade, in other words, tariff-free exporting, and when Adams passed the 1828 tariff, cotton farmers took a major hit at a time when the economy wasn't anything to write home about. Once again, sectional issues drive that wedge even deeper.

[10] Jackson was the first president since Washington that did not have a college education. In addition, he drank corn whiskey and black coffee, chewed tobacco, won numerous duels, carried several bullets in his body, cussed like a sailor, and harbored a terrible temper. We could use him now.

[11] The attacks against Rachel were necessarily to discredit her, they were primarily designed to get Jackson to lose his temper and challenge someone to a duel. At this point, the Adams people could point to Jackson being unfit for the job. Sound strategy, but it cost an innocent woman her life; it didn't help that none of the Adams people sent condolences.

[12] Other presidents would follow this precedent, most notably John F. Kennedy in 1962.

[13] Personally, I would think that it would be a compliment to not have the respect of a dweeb like Biddle. I know the feeling, works

fine for me.

[14] Jackson's enemies, and there were many, never accused him of employing a loose interpretation of the Constitution. They accused him of totally ignoring the Constitution, so much so that they began to call Jackson "King Andrew I." This would follow him throughout his presidency, but coming from the remnants of the Federalists, it carried little weight. Still, it wasn't totally unfounded.

[15] While ostensibly searching for Seminole Indians in Florida during the Seminole Wars, Jackson also laid siege to the Spanish authorities at Pensacola and tried his best to instigate a war. The ultimate result of this mischief was the Adams-Onís Treaty, which allowed the US to buy Florida while surrendering claims to Texas. You didn't think Andy could rest knowing Texas was still out there did you?

[16] Jackson's attempted buyout of Texas included all of the land south of 36°30' extended to the Pacific Ocean. In exchange for \$10 million, Jackson would guarantee the security of Cuba. After the so-called "guarantee" of Texas in the Adams-Onís Treaty, Santa Anna must have laughed himself silly.

[17] Back in Mexico City, Santa Anna will claim that the treaty was signed under duress and therefore was invalid. This will open the door for his attempt to regain Texas in 1846.

[18] Always remember that the NUMBER ONE DETERMINANT OF A FINANCIAL CRISIS IS UNEMPLOYMENT. ALWAYS.

[19] It is established political wisdom to go after a president who has suffered a economic disaster while in office because the residual effects do not go away soon, and Americans have long, bitter, revenge-filled memories.

[20] Funny how these things become distorted. Harrison was actually born into wealth from a prosperous Virginia cavalier family, as was Tyler. But if it's poor the people want, then doggone it poor the people will get!

[21] After the election results were announced, the Richmond *Democratic Review*, a Democratic Party newspaper, cried that "We have taught them how to conquer us!" They had no idea how correct they were.