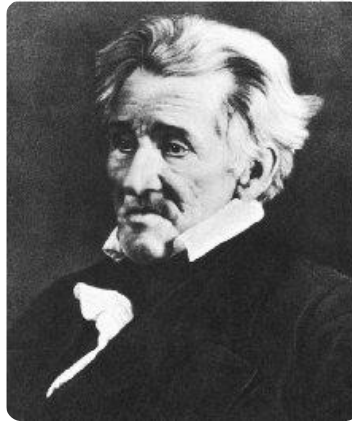


Richard B. Latner



Andrew Jackson
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THE familiar labels "The Age of Jackson" and "Jacksonian Democracy" identify Andrew Jackson with the era in which he lived and with the advancement of political democracy. This honor may exaggerate his importance, but it also acknowledges the important truth that Jackson significantly contributed to shaping the American nation and its politics. Just as contemporaneous artists so often depicted him astride his horse overseeing the battlefield, Jackson bestrode some of the key currents of nineteenth-century American political life.

Jackson's presidency began on a sunny, spring-like day, 4 March 1829. Dressed in a simple black suit and without a hat, partly out of respect for his recently deceased wife, Rachel, and partly in keeping with traditions of republican simplicity, Jackson made his way on foot along a thronged Pennsylvania Avenue. From the east portico of the Capitol, he delivered his inaugural address—in audible except to those close by—in which he promised to be "animated by a proper respect" for the rights of the separate states. He then took the oath of office, placed his Bible to his lips, and made a parting bow to the audience. With great difficulty, he made his way through the crowd, mounted his horse, and headed for the White House and what had been intended as a reception for "ladies and gentlemen."

What next took place has become a part of American political folklore. According to one observer, the White House was inundated "by the rabble mob," which, in its enthusiasm for the new president and the refreshments, almost crushed Jackson to death while making a shambles of the house. Finally, Jackson was extricated from the mob and taken to his temporary quarters at a nearby hotel. "The reign of King 'Mob' seemed triumphant," one cynic scoffed. There was little doubt that Jackson's presidency was going to be different from that of any of his predecessors. Daniel Webster put it best when he predicted that Jackson would bring a "breeze with him. Which way it will blow I cannot tell."

Webster's uncertainty is readily understandable because Jackson was a relative newcomer to national politics. Jackson was born on 15 March 1767, in the Waxhaw settlement, a frontier border area between North and South Carolina, where his early life was marked by misfortune and misadventure. His Scotch-Irish father had joined the tide of immigrants seeking improved economic and political conditions in the New World, only to die after two years, leaving his pregnant wife and two sons. The third son, whom she named Andrew after her late husband, was born just days later. As a young man during the Revolutionary War, Jackson also lost both his brothers and his mother.

Despite these inauspicious beginnings, Jackson received some formal education at local academies and schools, and following the Revolution, he left the Waxhaw community to study law with two prominent members of the North Carolina bar. In the 1780s, after finding little legal work in North Carolina, he migrated to Tennessee, where he showed the good sense to identify himself with the Blount-Overton faction, a group of prominent men bound together by politics, land speculation, and, increasingly, financial and banking interests.

The eager, hardworking, and talented young Jackson soon received a host of political rewards. He became a public prosecutor, attorney general for the Mero District, delegate to the Tennessee constitutional convention, a member of Congress, a United States senator, and a judge of the Superior Court of Tennessee. By the year 1800, he was the leader of the Western branch of the Blount-Overton faction.

Military positions also came Jackson's way, and he gradually advanced from his appointment as judge advocate for the Davidson County

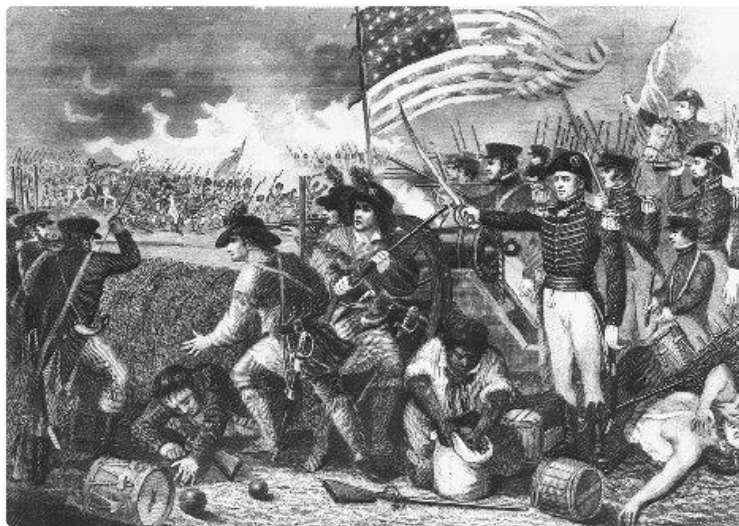
militia in 1792 to be elected major general of the Tennessee militia a decade later. At the same time, he accumulated significant amounts of property, establishing himself as a member of the Tennessee elite by purchasing a plantation, first at Hunter's Hill and then, in 1804, at the Hermitage, near Nashville.

Jackson's enormous military success during the War of 1812, culminating in the Battle of New Orleans, made him a national hero, and during the winter of 1821–1822, political friends placed his name before the country as a presidential candidate in the election of 1824. His first presidential bid fell short, for in a four-way contest, Jackson won a plurality of the popular vote but failed to receive an electoral majority. The decision rested with the House of Representatives, and John Quincy Adams emerged victorious after receiving the support of Henry Clay. When Adams appointed Clay as his secretary of state and heir apparent, Jacksonians alleged a "corrupt bargain." Jackson himself always believed that the will of the people had been corruptly overturned, and he denounced Clay as "the *Judas* of the West." Although it is unlikely that Adams and Clay actually made a secret deal, Jackson had a telling point in that Clay's action deprived the most popular candidate of the presidency. The incident strengthened Jackson's conviction that a republic should be based on the democratic principle of majority, not elite, rule.

Four years later, Old Hickory was vindicated. In the election of 1828, he received about 56 percent of the popular vote and carried virtually every electoral vote south of the Potomac River and west of New Jersey. Yet Jackson's victory was the product of a diverse coalition of groups rather than of a coherent political party. In addition to the original Jackson men from the campaign of 1824, there were the followers of New York's Martin Van Buren and Jackson's vice president, South Carolina's John C. Calhoun; former Federalists; and groups of "relief men," who during the Panic of 1819 had bucked the established political interests by advocating reforms to help indebted farmers and artisans.

Further, there were few clear-cut issues dividing the candidates. Instead, popular attention was captured by a host of scurrilous charges that dragged the contest down to the level of mud-slinging. Rachel, for example, was accused of bigamy in marrying Jackson while she was legally attached to another man. Jackson men, in addition to harping on the corrupt-bargain charge, accused Adams of pimping for the czar while he was minister to Russia.

Nevertheless, there were signs even in that campaign of Jackson's future course. The Jackson men



General Andrew Jackson's victory over the British at the Battle of New Orleans in 1815 catapulted him to national fame and a future in politics.

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of 1828 already displayed elements of the political organization that would emerge during his presidency. Significantly, his followers showed themselves more adept than the opposition at appealing to the people and organizing grassroots sentiment. The center of the Jackson campaign was the Nashville Central Committee, whose key members were Jackson's earliest and closest associates in Tennessee politics, such as John Eaton, John Overton, and William B. Lewis. This committee linked together the numerous state and local Jackson organizations and worked closely with political leaders in Washington.

The Jackson committees encouraged a more popular and democratic style of politics by organizing rallies, parades, and militia musters; helping to sustain Jackson newspapers; and encouraging voters to cast their ballots for Jackson on election day. This was the first election in which gimmicks such as campaign songs, jokes, and cartoons were extensively used to arouse popular enthusiasm. Years before, Jackson's soldiers had given him the nickname Old Hickory to signify both his toughness and their affection for him. During the 1828 campaign, his followers ceremoniously planted hickory trees in village and town squares, and sported hickory canes and hats with hickory leaves. Hickory poles, symbolically connecting Jackson to the liberty poles of the revolutionary era, were erected "in every village, as well as upon the corners of many city streets." Jackson himself, while avoiding overt electioneering displays, carefully supervised this political activity.

The election of 1828 also hinted at Jackson's future program. Until recently, Jackson was rarely considered a man with any coherent political views. Most accounts treated him as a confused, opportunistic, and inconsistent politician. Jackson, to be sure, had no formal political philosophy, but he adhered to certain underlying values and ideas with a degree of consistency throughout his long political career.

Jackson's philosophy owed much to the teachings of Thomas Jefferson and to the tradition of republican liberty of the revolutionary

generation. One of the unique products of the American Revolution was the new and distinctive definition it gave to classical and Renaissance traditions of republicanism. Revolutionary thinkers taught that liberty was always jeopardized by excessive power and that a proper balance and limitation of governmental powers was essential to assure freedom. In addition, this ideology of republicanism also emphasized that the character and spirit of the people—what was called public virtue—were fundamental to maintaining a free society. A virtuous citizenry was necessary to liberty, and whatever corrupted the people thereby corrupted their institutions. Rooted in an agrarian, premodern society, traditional republican thought warned of the competing dangers inherent in an expansive market economy, such as stockjobbing, paper credit, funded debts, powerful moneyed interests, a swollen bureaucracy, and extreme inequality of condition.

During the nineteenth century, Americans accommodated republicanism's precapitalistic bias to the dramatic changes in transportation, communication, and economic activity that have been called the Market Revolution. Especially after the War of 1812, Americans acknowledged that it was no longer possible or even desirable to maintain a rigid agrarian social order. They increasingly accepted as beneficial certain material and moral aspects of a developing economy. Economic ambition, for example, need not breed only luxury and corruption; it could also promote industriousness, frugality, and other republican virtues. Nevertheless, many Americans continued to harbor anxieties that the emerging world of commerce, banking, and manufacturing endangered the conditions essential to maintain liberty. In short, the language of republicanism remained potent throughout the Jacksonian era, but its diagnosis of the condition of the American republic was subject to different interpretations.

These ideas left their mark on Jackson. It was evident in his highly moralistic tone; his agrarian sympathies; his devotion to the principles of states' rights and limited government; and his fear that speculation, moneyed interests, and human greed would corrupt his country's republican character and institutions. At the same time, he was not a rigid traditionalist. He accepted economic progress, a permanent and expanding Union with sovereign authority, and democratic politics. His philosophy, therefore, brought together the not entirely compatible ideals of economic progress, political democracy, and traditional republicanism.

In the campaign of 1828, Jackson's sentiments distinguished him from Adams. While Adams viewed an active and positive government as promoting liberty, Jackson preferred to limit governmental power and return to the path of Jeffersonian purity. The comparison was by no means perfect. Jackson intended no states' rights crusade, and he dissatisfied some idealists, particularly in the South, by endorsing some tariff protection and the distribution of any surplus revenue back to the states. Yet it was evident that, compared to his opponent, Jackson would qualify federal activity. He considered his victory a moral mandate to restore "the real principles of the constitution as understood when it was first adopted, and practiced upon in 1798 and 1800." His specific program was to become clear only as his presidency unfolded.

Administration and appointments

The eaton affair

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Removal of deposits

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Foreign affairs

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- sara** Nov 27, 2006 @ 6:18

dude, im doing a debate for an ap history class (on the whig side) and your section on internal improvements helped me so much! it was the longest and most detailed section on any website or in my history book that i could find that was only about jackson's contribution. thank you!!!!
- sasha** May 14, 2007 @ 6:18

thank you so much! I have to do a history magazine and this helped me sooooo much!
:)

3 kim Feb 27, 2008 @ 8:08

WOW... This is great it really helped me thank you so much:DD

4 boobatron Mar 8, 2008 @ 5:17

wow! if only this thing was a little more visually appealing so that i could find things faster, but STILL! this helped a lot on my homework :)

5 abraham abuhashem Feb 18, 2009 @ 9:09

Wow1 this is so helpful for me and my class thank you for this website:) Now I got lots of info for my report.

6 shaun bolan Apr 14, 2009 @ 11:11

he is my grand father this is a good website i hope that you ad more interesting facts about him

7 Matthew May 9, 2009 @ 11:11

This site was amazing, i had to right a 10 page report on the life of Andrew Jackson and this helped me so much!!!!!!

8 project Dec 6, 2009 @ 2:14

this is yousufs social studies project this following information describes andrew jacksons presidency era

9 ellie Apr 7, 2010 @ 8:20

this. site. is. amazing. its such a thorough site and really helped with my paper that's due.
thank you so much!

10 Tinkerbelle May 26, 2010 @ 9:21

awesome information! this helped so much on my history project.
I wish it was a little better organized, but all the information's here so I guess I can't complain hahaha

11 cheddarcheese May 14, 2011 @ 7:07

If any one has a straigth answer to what is andrew jacksons political views are? Please put it out there.

12 Batman Mar 2, 2015 @ 3:15

COOL INFORMATION! THE INFO IS SO THOROUGH, IT'S AMAZING. THANKS FOR THE HELP!

13 Gloria Hernandez Oct 25, 2015 @ 1:13

I'm doing an assignment for my History class. According to author Harold Zinn in this book "A people's History of The United States. He claims that if you look through High school history textbooks you will find Jackson frontiersman, soldier, democrat, man of the people - not Jackson the slaveholder, land speculator, executioner of dissident soldiers, exterminator of Indians. I personally don't know if this is true about the text books in High schools today. DO you?

14 TheHappyEnderfriend Nov 17, 2016 @ 10:10

Yay thank u so much for teaching me this. I am so excited and im new to this. thxs for making this website so i can learn

15 Nya-Chan Oct 2, 2017 @ 10:10

Wow, this was really helpful for my classwork, thank you!

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Andrew Jackson, American general and seventh president of the United States (1829–37). He was the first U.S. president to come from the area west of the Appalachians and the first to gain office by a direct appeal to the mass of voters. His political movement became known as Jacksonian Democracy. JACKSON, Andrew, seventh president of the United States, born in the Waxhaw settlement on the border between North and South Carolina, 15 March, 1767; died at the Hermitage, near Nashville, Tennessee, 8 June, 1845. His father, Andrew Jackson, came over from Carrickfergus, on the north coast of Ireland, in 1765. His grandfather, Hugh Jackson, had been a linen-draper. His mother's name was Elizabeth Hutchinson, and her family were linen-weavers. President Andrew Jackson joined the military to fight in the Revolutionary War at age 13. Did You Know? President Andrew Jackson was the first president to ride on a train in 1833. Did You Know? Because his hometown of Waxhaws was on the border between North Carolina and South Carolina, President Andrew Jackson is the only commander-in-chief whose exact state of birth is unknown. Place of Death. Davidson County, Tennessee. Andrew Jackson (1767-1845) was the nation's seventh president (1829-1837) and became America's most influential—and polarizing—political figure during the 1820s and 1830s. For some, his legacy is tarnished by his role in the Trail of Tears—the forced relocation of Native American tribes living east of the Mississippi. Andrew Jackson (March 15, 1767 – June 8, 1845) was the seventh president of the United States of America, elected as a hero after his military triumphs over the Creek Indians of the Southeast and the British at New Orleans in 1815. As president (1829–1837), he destroyed the Bank of the United States, ethnically cleansed the remaining southeastern Natives, and built a new political coalition, the Democratic Party. A self-made man, Indian slaughter, war hero and a fighter (and duelist) who believed in