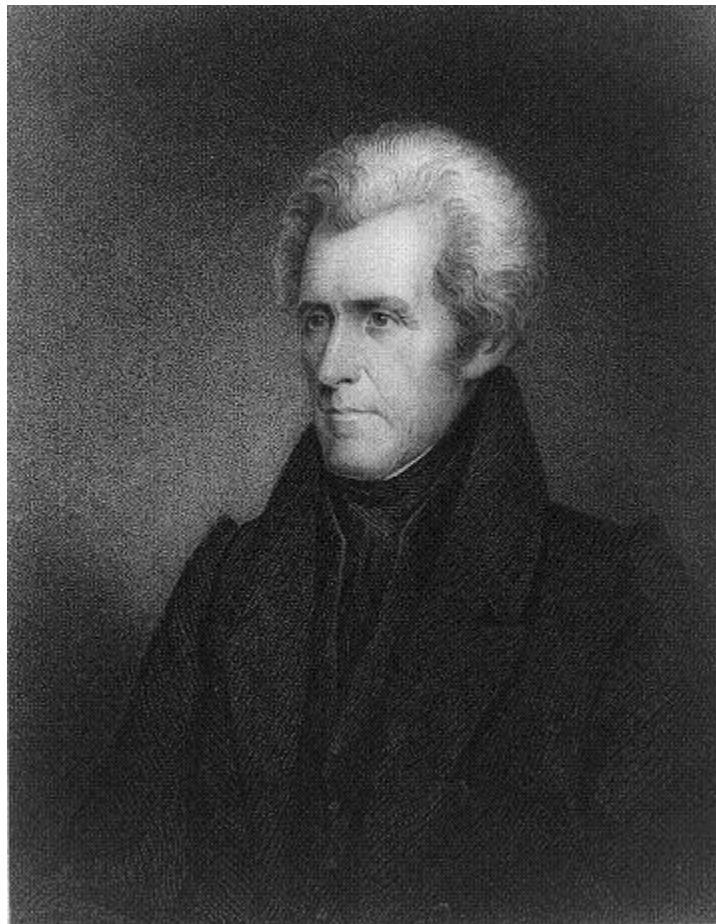


Andrew Jackson

Action Jackson

Seventh, 1829-1837



Nicknames: "Hickory", "Old Hickory", "The Devil", "Mischievous Andy"

Birth: March 15th, 1767, Waxhaw, South Carolina

Death: June 8th, 1845, The Hermitage, near Nashville, Tennessee

Significant Events During Jackson's Terms: Indian Removal Act ... Nat Turner's Rebellion ... Black Hawk War ... Mark Twain born Missouri ... The Alamo ... Arkansas (#25) and Michigan (#26) become States

Quotes: *"I know what I am fit for. I can command a body of men in a rough way; but I am not fit to be President."* -- Andrew Jackson

"Distinctions in society will always exist under every just government. Equality of talents, of education, or of wealth can not be produced by human institutions. In the full enjoyment of the gifts of Heaven and the fruits of superior industry, economy, and virtue, every man is equally entitled to protection by law; but when the laws undertake to add to these natural and just advantages artificial distinctions...to make the rich richer and the potent more powerful, the humble members of society--the farmers, mechanics, and laborers--who have neither the time nor the means for securing like favors to themselves, have a right to complain of the injustice of their Government."
-- Andrew Jackson, 1832

"It was settled by the Constitution, the laws, and the whole practice of the government that the entire executive power is vested in the President of the United States." -- Andrew Jackson

"His passions are terrible. When I was President of the Senate, he was Senator, and he could never speak on account of the rashness of his feelings. I have seen him attempt it repeatedly, and as often choke with rage. His passions are, no doubt, cooler now; he has been much tried since I knew him, but he is a dangerous man." -- Thomas Jefferson (#3), speaking of Jackson

"[Jackson] spent the prime of his life in gambling, in cock-fighting, in horse racing...and to cap all tore from a husband the wife of his bosom." -- Thomas D. Arnold

"A barbarian who could not write a sentence of grammar and hardly could spell his own name."
-- John Quincy Adams (#6), speaking of Jackson

"Say to the chiefs and warriors that I am their friend, that I wish to act as their friend but they must, by removing from the limits of the States of Mississippi and Alabama and by being settled on the lands I offer them, put it in my power to be such -- There, beyond the limits of any State, in possession of land of their own, which they shall possess as long as Grass grows or water runs. I am and will protect them and be their friend and father." -- Andrew Jackson, to "my red Choctaw children"

"John Marshall has made his decision; now let him enforce it!" -- Andrew Jackson, after Supreme Court Chief Justice John Marshall declared Georgia's intent to dispossess the Cherokees from their land to be unconstitutional

"We have crowded the tribes upon a few miserable acres on our southern frontier; it is all that is left to them of their once boundless forest; and still, like the horse-leech, our insatiated cupidity cries, give! Give! ... Sir ... Do the obligations of justice change with the color of the skin?"
-- Senator Theodore Frelinghuysen

How his term ended: Jackson retired after his two terms.

Other Professions: Saddler's Apprentice, Soldier, Land Speculator, Slave Trader, Lawyer, Judge

Worst Mistakes: Andrew Jackson stole the liberty from all of those he enslaved. And Jackson went “below and beyond” just being a slave holder, as many Southerners were; he was also a slave trader, a profession that even many slaveholders looked down on as being heartless.

In a similar vein, Jackson attacked a Seminole fort in Florida in 1816 because it harbored hundreds of runaway slaves. In procuring Florida, Jackson invaded Spanish territory and burned villages.

Jackson failed to honor treaties that had been made with Indians, even those he composed himself. He engineered and oversaw the Indian Removal Act of 1830.

Jackson trampled on Freedom of the Press when he conspired to keep abolitionist literature out of the mails in the Southern States.

Additionally, Jackson was guilty of the following serious crimes:

- 1) He defied Congress. Federal treaties and laws had given Congress, not the individual states, authority over the Indian tribes. Specifically, the Indian Trade and Intercourse Act, which Congress passed in 1802, declared that no land could be ceded by a tribe except by treaty with said tribe. Still, Jackson ignored this, exhibiting contempt for Congress.
- 2) Jackson defied the Supreme Court, too, when it came to rulings he disagreed with regarding the Indians. Cherokee leader John Ross took his tribe's case to the Supreme Court, and was victorious there; nevertheless, because of Jackson's campaign to rid the east of Indians, the Indian diaspora (the Cherokee's “Trail of Tears” being the most well-known part of this) took place. In these instances, too, Jackson simply ignored the Court's ruling, refusing to enforce it. On the Trail of Tears, one-fourth of the Cherokees on the forced march died – from exposure, starvation, exhaustion, and sickness. One soldier, tasked with escorting the Indians on their way, later said of the experience: “I fought the Civil War, and have seen men shot to pieces and slaughtered by thousands, but the Cherokee removal was the cruelest work I ever knew.”
- 3) Jackson hypocritically disallowed nullification by South Carolina of a federal tariff, but when it came to the Indian “question,” he allowed Georgia to make its own laws contrary to federal laws, citing their right to decide for themselves – in other words, to invoke “nullification” of federal laws they found inconvenient.

Besides making decisions that resulted in the death of many people, Jackson also personally killed people on occasion, such as in duels he fought. Yes, there were mitigating circumstances, I'll give him that. In his duel with Dickinson (discussed below), it could be argued, I suppose, that it was a matter of self-defense.

Saving Graces: In spite of my indignation over Jackson's treatments of blacks and Indians, I should admit that I admire Jackson his toughness. Besides standing his ground against Dickinson, even after being shot in the breast, and his tenacious survival after being waylaid by the Bentons (shot from behind and before), his indomitable spirit never abandoned him.

Even as an old man, he served as his own bodyguard and wrestled a would-be assassin (who was much younger than he) to the ground, after *both* of the man's pistols misfired at point-blank range.

The Federal Government paid off the National Debt for the first time in its history during Jackson's tenure in office.

Notes: Jackson was born in a log cabin. Most claim Jackson was born in South Carolina, on the border with North Carolina, but some (mostly North Carolinians) assert that he was actually born in North Carolina, on the border with South Carolina, as the family was on its way to South Carolina.

Jackson's father died shortly before his birth. His mother died during the Revolutionary War, when Jackson was fourteen, from cholera contracted while nursing captured American soldiers aboard British ships in Charleston Harbor. Jackson's two older brothers also died in the Revolutionary War. Enemies of Jackson claimed that his mother had been a "common prostitute," and had been brought over to the U.S. by British soldiers.

As one of the few literate people in his town (his mother had wanted him to become a Presbyterian Minister and made sure that he got a better education than most in their area at that time, even better than his older brothers had received), Jackson read the Declaration of Independence to the townspeople in his little South Carolina hometown as a young boy.

Jackson served in the Revolutionary War while yet a lad. Along with a brother, Jackson was captured by a British officer, who ordered Andrew to shine his boots. When Jackson refused, he was beaten by the officer. He carried the scars of that whipping for life. Jackson is the only President to have been a POW.

When he was fifteen, the orphan Jackson inherited \$3,000 from a grandfather in Ireland. Instead of using the windfall to attend college, invest in a business, or purchase a farm, he spent it on "wine, women, and song." Jackson was an avid horse racing and cockfighting enthusiast.

Once fully grown, Jackson was a "string bean" -- 6'1" tall, he weighed only 140 lbs.

Similar to Daniel Boone when he left Kentucky for Missouri, Andrew Jackson signed a statement of allegiance to Spain when he was engaged in trade in Spanish-owned territory which later became part of the Louisiana Purchase (Spain transferred the land to France shortly before France sold it to the United States during Jefferson's presidency).

Jackson was the "hero" of the War of 1812, where two thousand British soldiers fell, compared to only eight Americans (the renowned French pirate Jean Lafitte also fought alongside the Americans).

Cherokees helped Jackson defeat Creeks in the Battle of Horseshoe Bend in 1814, but Jackson

later turned on his old allies, driving them out of Georgia when it was realized that their land had gold on it (always bad news for the natives, as the Sioux in South Dakota and the Wiyot in Northern California would later, to their chagrin, discover).

In 1828, Jackson became the first President to be popularly elected (voted into office by the population at large). This can be said because it was then for the first time that electors (who cast the actual votes) were voted into their positions by the masses instead of by State Legislators.

Jackson was the first non-aristocrat elected President, and the last President to have been a Revolutionary War veteran. James Monroe ("The Last of the Cocked Hats") had been the last Revolutionary War *officer*. Jackson was also the first President to ride on a railroad train, the Baltimore & Ohio.

Jackson's wife Rachel did not want to be First Lady or live in the White House. As they were preparing to leave for Washington, she died, but not before stating, "I had rather be a door-keeper in the House of God than to live in that palace," a sentiment which apparently alluded to the thought expressed in Psalms 84:10.

When South Carolina (Jackson's birth state) talked about seceding in 1833 (almost 30 years before they actually did, when Lincoln was elected President), Jackson prepared for Civil War and threatened to hang his former Vice President and then-Senator from that state, John C. Calhoun, if South Carolina did secede. There was already bad blood between the two: When Jackson attacked Spanish Florida, Calhoun had urged that Jackson be arrested (while John Quincy Adams, normally not an Old Hickory fan, defended Jackson's actions). Jackson later had this to say, "I have only two regrets: that I have not shot Henry Clay or hanged John C. Calhoun."

As mentioned above in the "Worst Mistakes" section, Jackson was a hot-headed duelist. On one occasion, he challenged the Governor of Tennessee to a duel. Another time he killed his opponent Charles Dickinson after taking a bullet to the chest. Dickinson had managed to fire first and was astounded to see the wiry Jackson take the bullet in the chest and remain standing. Dickinson staggered backwards in dismay, but was ordered back to his original spot by Jackson's second; once Dickinson had resumed his post, rules required that he wait for Jackson to fire. Jackson took careful aim, fired once (a misfire), and then a second time, shooting Dickinson in the abdomen. The bullet went all the way through Dickinson, killing him. The bullet implanted in Jackson was too close to his heart to remove, and so he carried it with him the rest of his life.

Dickinson was considered the best shot in Tennessee; some surmise the reason he missed Jackson's heart was because Jackson was so slim that his coat fit him differently than it would a person of normal girth – the spot Dickinson aimed at *was* the spot he hit, but it wasn't *precisely* where Jackson's heart was.

Jackson also assaulted Missouri politician Thomas Hart Benton once. Similar to what the

Governor of Tennessee had done, Benton had insulted Jackson's wife Rachel Donelson Robards, a woman Jackson had spirited away from her jealous husband and then married before she was divorced – and later married a second time when they found out her first husband had not gotten a divorce when they thought, hoped, or assumed he had. Jackson accosted Benton in a hotel with a whip in one hand and a pistol in the other. Benton's brother Jesse shot Jackson in the shoulder from behind; as Jackson fell, Thomas Hart Benton pumped him full of lead and left him for dead. Benton and Jackson later became allies, at least politically.

Jackson had no children of his own, although he and Rachel adopted a relative and named him Andrew Jackson, Jr.

As mentioned above in the “Saving Graces” section, there was an assassination attempt on Jackson by a certain Richard Lawrence in early 1835, but *both* of Lawrence's pistols misfired. Jackson, who was then in his late 60s, wrestled the would-be assassin to the ground.