

Chapter 13 (14th)

The Rise of Mass Democracy

1. The "**Corrupt Bargain**" election of 1824
 1. The election of 1824 was the last of old-style politics. The big winner of this transformation was the common man. The political game would soon be changed. Specifically, the common white man as **universal white manhood suffrage** (all white men could vote) became the norm.
 2. The 1824 election was unique in many ways...
 1. There were *four* candidates, not two: Andrew Jackson of Tennessee, Henry Clay of Kentucky, William H. Crawford of Georgia, and John Q. Adams of Massachusetts.
 1. They all called themselves "Republicans."
 2. Three candidates were "**favorite sons**" for their section of the country. Henry Clay, as Speaker of the House and architect of the American System, considered himself not a sectional candidate but a national figure.
 2. Since the votes were spread out, no candidate got a majority of the electoral vote and won. Jackson got the most votes, but not a majority. Adams came in second, then Crawford, then Clay.
 3. The election went to the House to pick the president of the top three finishers, Clay was out. Crawford had health issues and was effectively out—it was Jackson or J. Q. Adams.
 3. Henry Clay, as House Speaker, was in a unique position to influence the vote. Jackson was Clay's main rival (they both were westerners) so Clay threw his support to Adams. Adams won.
 1. Adams later named Henry Clay to be Secretary of State. The ordeal *looked* sneaky and was thus called the "Corrupt Bargain."
 2. Jackson and his supporters claimed the politicians had made a deal to grab the White House from the people. This may be a stretch, and even if it did happen, it wasn't illegal but just the machine of politics at work.
 4. Corrupt or not, the 1824 election was a turning point. It energized the common man to get out and vote like he'd never done before.
2. A Yankee Misfit in the White House
 1. John Quincy Adams, like his father John Adams, was an puritanical Yankee. He was intelligent, respected, honorable, stern, tactless. As president, he was very able but somewhat wooden and lacked the "people's touch" (which Jackson notably had).
 2. Adams stubbornly refused to remove public officials to make room for new ones. He removed only 12 people during his presidency.
 1. Party workers who'd expected a job, questioned working to keep him in office?
 3. John Q. Adams pushed nationalist programs to build (a) roads and canals, (b) a national university, and (c) a national observatory.
 1. The public was not excited. The South was already turning against internal improvements (roads, canals) and a national university or observatory would mean keeping the tariff going. These things were seen as an elitist waste of money. Most Americans were simple farmers, not scholars.
 4. Pres. Adams tried to slow down the western land speculation. Although this was likely a wise move financially speaking, the West hated this. They'd grown accustomed to getting easy credit to easily buy land.
 1. Down South, land was also an issue. Georgia wanted to kick out the Cherokee Indians. Pres. Adams wanted to deal justly with the Indians but the Georgia governor succeeded in keeping the federal government out.
 2. Adams now had two sections lined against him: the South and the West.
3. Going "Whole Hog" for Jackson in 1828"
 1. Almost immediately after the corrupt bargain election of 1824, Andrew Jackson started campaigning for 1828. His theme was simple: the people had been swindled by the politicians, and he was the people's choice for 1828.
 2. The 1828 election was colorful, to say the least, and the mudslinging began.
 1. Jacksonians swayed people against John Q. Adams by painting him as dishonest huckster (in reality, he was an honest and honorable man). They also claimed Adams had procured the services of a servant girl for a Russian tsar's lust.
 2. Adams' supporters got ugly too. They said Jackson was crude, rude, prone to whiskey. They charged that **Rachel Jackson** was an adulteress. She'd been married prior to Jackson, then it was discovered that her divorce hadn't been finalized. The Jackson's

quickly fixed the situation, but the words stung. Rachel Jackson died only one month after the election. Jackson blamed the death on the harsh words spoken and never forgave the speakers.

3. The election itself was anti-climatic. Jackson won easily, 178 to 83 in the electoral vote. The votes split along sectional lines: the West and South for Jackson, the North for Adams.
4. "Old Hickory" as President
 1. Old Hickory personified the rising "New Democracy."
 1. He was a westerner, tough, battle-scarred, rough-around-the-edges, half-educated and half-self taught, tall and lean.
 2. He was America's first rags-to-riches story. He'd been born in a cabin in the Carolinas (we're unsure if it's North or South Carolina, as both states still claim to be his home). His family moved to Tennessee and through hard work and strength of character, Jackson rose to own a plantation, and became a judge, congressman, general and a war hero.
 3. Jackson was adored by his soldiers who gave him the nickname "**Old Hickory**" because of his toughness and loyalty.
 4. He was the first president who'd been nominated by a convention.
 2. Jackson was passionate in everything. He was prone to choke up while speaking in Congress, he had a temper and was in several duels (he had a bullet lodged in his chest for life from dueling), and always "went all out" in whatever he did.
 3. At his inauguration gala he flung open the White House doors (the People's House) for all to come in and party. The party quickly got rowdy until the punch was moved outside and the crowd followed. To the wealthy, this was the mobocracy for real.
5. The Spoils System
 1. President Jackson quickly started what was called the "**Spoils System.**" The spoils system rewarded political party workers with government jobs. This meant government workers already in office had to be fired to make room for the new.
 1. Many said this wasn't right and criticized the spoils system. They also claimed that the people he put into office had no qualifications.
 2. Jackson shot back saying, "To the victor belong the spoils." This meant that whoever wins the presidency can do as he pleases.
 3. Jackson also argued that federal jobs weren't offered on a for-life basis and that a little change is a good thing in a government.
 2. Being the old military man, loyalty was everything. Jackson was loyal to the people who helped get him elected, and he wanted people underneath him that were loyal to him.
 3. Despite the criticism, only one fifth of the federal employees were replaced. Later on, presidents would make clean sweeps of the executive branch.
 4. Corruption also slid into the government.
 1. Some men were less-than-honorable yet were given jobs due to their help in the election.
 2. One **Samuel Swartwout** was put in charge of the customs duties at the port of New York. Nine years later he "Swartwouted out" and ran off to England; his accounts were \$1 million short.
6. The Tricky "**Tariff of Abominations**"
 1. The tariff (tax on imports) became the hot issue in the 1820s and 30s. It nearly brought America to civil war before being worked out by compromise.
 2. Congress had raised the tariff significantly in 1824, but wool manufacturers called for an even higher tariff.
 3. Jackson and his followers hated the tariff. They felt it was a tool of the rich to get richer by jacking up prices that the poor would have to pay. Jacksonians planned to hike the tariff to the sky-high rate of 45%, thinking it would never pass. That backfired and sectional warfare began...
 1. New England liked the high tariff since it protected manufacturers. **Daniel Webster** (Mass.) became the North's main spokesperson.
 2. Southerners, and Westerners, hated it because it drove up the cost of things that they purchased. **John C. Calhoun** (SC) became the South's main spokesperson.
 4. At about the same time, the South also struggled with slave rebellions.
 1. **Denmark Vesey** was a free black who led a slave rebellion in Charleston, SC in 1822.
 2. It was unsuccessful, but scared the southern whites to what *might* happen, especially in areas with an almost 1:1 white-to-black ratio like South Carolina.
 3. Also, Britain was moving toward abolition of slaves. The South felt the pressure and began considering secession and using the tariff as the issue.
 5. John C. Calhoun secretly wrote the "**South Carolina Exposition**" that took the Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions to the next level. The Exposition said that the states, such as South Carolina, could nullify (or declare null and void) the tariff. This was a direct challenge to the

federal government. Would the federal government allow states to pick-and-choose the laws they followed? Or would all federal laws be binding?

7. "Nullies" in South Carolina

1. A showdown had developed between the federal government and the states.
2. Congress eased tensions with the **Tariff of 1832** that removed the worst parts of the Tariff of 1828 (AKA Tariff of Abominations). Still, the principle of nullification was under question. South Carolina again led the nullification charge...
 1. "Nullies" sought the 2/3 majority needed in the SC legislature to nullify the tariff. They got the votes and SC officially voted to nullify the federal tariff.
 2. SC even threatened secession if Washington tried to impose the tariff *over* the nullification vote.
3. Andrew Jackson was not a president with whom to bluff or pick a fight. Jackson was the old fighter, dueler, and warrior.
 1. Privately, Jackson threatened to go to SC and start hanging the leaders. With any other president this would just be tough-talk; Jackson, however, just might actually do it.
 2. Publicly, he got the military ready. Civil war hung as a real possibility.
4. **Henry Clay** proposed a compromise which settled the situation.
 1. Clay's personal motives were to prevent his foe Andrew Jackson from scoring a victory.
 2. Clay's compromise said that the tariff rate would be reduced by about 10% over 8 years. Despite debate, the compromise passed and violence was thwarted.
 3. Congress also passed the **Force Bill** (AKA "Bloody Bill" in the Carolinas) authorizing the president to use force if necessary to collect the tariff.
5. Like a true compromise, the "winner" of the nullification crisis was unclear.
 1. South Carolina and the states did *not* join behind the nullification cause like SC expected. But, South Carolina won in that, all by itself, it succeeded in driving the tariff down.
 2. The federal government won in the sense that it got SC to abide by the tariff (Ie. SC repealed its nullification law).

8. The Trail of Tears

1. Westward expansion meant whites and Indians continued to bump into one another.
2. Since the 1790s, the U.S. policy was to gain Indian land only through treaty. These treaties were (a) sometimes questionably made and (b) often overlooked or broken.
3. Indian-White relationships varied...
 1. There were attempts to assimilate Indians into white society, notably the **Society for Progating the Gospel Among the Indians** (est. 1787).
 2. Some tribes readily adopted white ways they felt beneficial. The **Cherokee** of Georgia settled down to become farmers; largely accepted Christianity; **Sequoyah** devised a Cherokee alphabet so they could write; and the tribe soon set up a government with a legislative, executive, and judicial branch.
 1. Georgia challenged and revoked the Cherokee's right to rule themselves. The Cherokee appealed to the Supreme Court which supported the Indians, 3 times.
 3. The Cherokee, along with the Creek, Choctaw, Chickasaw, and Seminole were called the "**Five Civilized Tribes**."
4. Pres. Jackson's policy on Indians was clear and simple-Indians and whites couldn't live together peacefully so the Indians were to be removed to the West. Notably, this was the general consensus of white America at the time. Ironically, Jackson also had a sort of "soft-spot" for the Indians. He felt they needed to be rescued (he'd even adopted an Indian) and reassured himself that their way-of-life might be preserved out West.
 1. Oklahoma was the appointed "**Indian Territory**."
 2. **Indian Removal Act** was passed by Congress making the relocation law and the **Bureau of Indian Affairs** was started to oversee matters.
 1. The military rounded up eastern tribes and drove them westward. Most infamous was the **Trail of Tears** where the Cherokee were forced to walk from their Georgia home to Oklahoma. The walk was miserable and fatal (4,000 out of the 15,000 died).
 2. Many Indians pushed back, such as (a) the **Black Hawk War** which saw the Sauk and Fox tribes of IL and WI crushed, and (b) Osceola leading the Seminoles until he was tricked and captured, although many Seminoles (and runaway slaves) fled to the Everglades of FL.

9. The Bank War

1. Andrew Jackson held the common western view of a distrust in banks. Mainly, he distrusted the B.U.S., the Bank of the United States.

1. Jackson's view was that the B.U.S. was a tool of the rich to get richer at the poor's expense. Jacksonians felt the rich used "hard money" to keep the common man down.
2. The B.U.S. minted "**hard money**" (actual metal money) which the wealthy preferred since it gave the economy stability. The farmers preferred "soft money" (paper money) that would lead to inflation, devalue the dollar, and make loans easier to pay off.
2. B.U.S. president **Nicholas Biddle** carried out bank policies of (a) coining hard money and (b) cracking down on western "wildcat banks" by calling in loans. He, and the B.U.S., was compared to a serpent that could grow multiple heads when one was cut off.
3. The B.U.S. was used as a political football...
 1. Although the B.U.S. charter didn't expire until 1836, Henry Clay and Daniel Webster started a re-charter bill in 1832. The goal was to have Andrew Jackson veto it (as expected) and therefore give himself a political black eye.
 2. The thought was that Jackson would be in a lose-lose situation...
 1. If he vetoed it...the North would be angry and would not vote for his re-election.
 2. If he signed it...the South and West would be angry because he'd gone to Washington and "sold them out" to big business. Either way, he'd be in trouble come election time in 1836.
 3. Congress passed it and Jackson vetoed the B.U.S. re-charter bill saying, "The Bank...is trying to kill me, but I will kill it."

10. "Old Hickory" Wallops Clay in 1832

1. In the 1832 election, it was Andrew Jackson for reelection being challenged by Henry Clay.
 1. Jackson again appealed to the common man and urged them to "Go the whole hog."
 2. Clay's slogan was "Freedom and Clay" but was criticized for his gambling, dueling, cockfighting, etc.
2. The 1832 election also brought some political firsts. All helped move America in a more democratic direction. The new things were...
 1. The emergence of a third party, the **Anti-Masonic Party**.
 1. The Masons or Freemasons were (and still are) a secret society. Due to its secret nature, questions, mystery, and a skeptical air swirled around them.
 2. The Anti-Masonic Party was made up of a mix of various groups that were joined by (a) dislike of the Masons and/or (b) dislike of Jackson (who was a Mason).
 2. The use of national nominating conventions. This meant that the *people* of each party nominated their candidate, *not* the "big whigs" in a backroom choosing a candidate for the people.
 3. The use of a printed party platform. This was done by the Anti-Masonic Party when they printed their positions on the issues. This would become the norm for all parties.
3. The voting was anti-climatic. Jackson was loved by the people and easily won, 219 to 49 in the electoral vote.

11. Burying Biddle's Bank

1. Jackson could've waited until 1836 and the B.U.S. charter would've expired, but he was in a fighting mood and wanted to kill it right then. So...
 1. Jackson started withdrawing money from the B.U.S. and depositing it into local, "**pet banks**" or "wildcat banks."
 2. Nicholas Biddle fought back by calling in loans from the wildcat banks to the B.U.S.
2. The overall result was bank chaos, and often, bank foreclosure. Ironically, the common man, whom Jackson set out to defend, often lost his farm in the bank confusion.
3. Even though Jackson was largely at fault for the turmoil, from the common man's perspective, the B.U.S. and eastern big-whigs were to blame.

12. The Birth of the Whigs

1. Jacksonians, officially the "Democratic-Republicans," began calling themselves simply the "Democrats." (This is the Democratic party we think of today.)
2. A second party also formed, the **Whig Party**. The Whigs were a very diverse group, but they generally...
 1. Disliked Jackson (this was the main tie that bound them).
 2. Liked Henry Clay's American System, especially its internal improvements (building roads, canals, etc.).
3. By this time, the "Era of Good Feelings" was over (with its one political party) and America had a two-party system of politics.

13. The Election of 1836

1. "King Andrew" was still very popular and he, in effect, chose his successor and the next president—**Martin Van Buren** as the Democratic candidate.
2. The Whig Party was disorganized (due to its infancy and hodge-podge make-up).

3. They nominated a favorite son candidate from each section in hopes of splitting the electoral vote, preventing anyone from getting a majority and winning, and thus throwing the election into the House of Representatives (like in 1824).
 4. Their plan failed as Van Buren, the "Little Magician" won 170 to 124 (all Whig votes combined).
14. Big Woes for the "Little Magician"
1. Van Buren followed Jackson's coattails right into the White House, but Van Buren was no Jackson.
 2. Jackson was the people's president, a common guy himself. Van Buren was very smart, crafty, experienced, and effective, but he lacked the "people's touch" and personality of a Jackson.
 3. Problems were brewing for Van Buren...
 1. In 1837, in Canada, a rebellion caused turmoil along the border. Van Buren played the neutral game between Canada and Britain which gained no friends.
 2. Anti-slavery folks in the North were upset because the idea of annexing Texas, a slave land, was being tossed around.
 3. And worse yet for Van Buren, the economic situation was beginning to crumble.
15. Depression Doldrums and the Independent Treasury
1. There's an irony with Martin Van Buren: he benefited from his close tie with Jackson by being elected president, but he was hurt by Jackson as well as he (a) inherited Jackson's enemies and (b) was brought down by the economic chaos Jackson had begun.
 2. In 1837, an economic downturn struck called the **Panic of 1837**. This was the second such downturn of the 1800s. Its causes were:
 1. Over-speculation, especially in land, but also in other get-rich-quick schemes like canals, roads, railroads, and slaves. Over-speculation was the main cause of the recession.
 2. Andrew Jackson's bank policies and resultant chaos also aided the Panic of 1837.
 3. Jackson's "specie circular" hurt as well. This was a decree by Jackson that all debts were to be paid only in specie (gold or silver) but not worthless bank notes (paper money). The debtors didn't have specie and therefore went bankrupt; banks then went bankrupt as well.
 4. The failure of crops helped the Panic. All of these things "set up the dominoes" so to speak, and then...
 5. ...the first domino was the failure of two major banks in England and the reverberations across the ocean.
 3. Many banks went under. Many farmers lost their farms.
 4. The Whigs formed a plan...
 1. They proposed expanding bank credit, higher tariffs, & money for internal improvements.
 2. President Van Buren disliked wasteful government spending and halted such plans.
 5. Van Buren's response was through the "**Divorce Bill**" which said the government should "divorce" itself from banking altogether.
 1. This bill set up an "independent treasury" where extra government money would be kept in vaults (*not* in the banks. This would give the government stability independent of the whims of the banking world.
 2. The Divorce Bill went on a roller-coaster ride: it was controversial, passed, was repealed by the Whigs, then reenacted 6 years later. It did serve as a first step toward the modern Federal Reserve System.
16. Gone to Texas
1. Americans, especially southerners hungry for more cotton land, were eyeing Texas. But, Texas was foreign land and therefore had to be approached with caution.
 2. Americans asked Spain if they could enter Texas and were told they could not. Then, Mexico had a revolution, broke from Spain, and said that the Americans *could* enter Texas.
 3. In 1823, **Stephen Austin** led the "Old 300" families into Texas with the conditions that (1) they must become Mexican citizens, (2) they must become Catholic, and (3) no slavery was allowed.
 1. The first two conditions were ignored without concern, the third condition was outright broken since their main reason for going to Texas was to grow cotton.
 2. In 1830, Mexico freed its slaves. To the Texans, those were fighting words.
 3. Conflict emerged and Texans were jailed while protesting (including Stephen Austin in Mexico City). Mexican president **Santa Anna** had had enough by 1835 and got together an army to teach the Texans a lesson.
17. The Lone Star Rebellion
1. Texas declared independence early in 1836 and called itself the "**Lone Star Republic**". Santa Anna wouldn't take the declaration without a fight, however.

2. Santa Anna led 6,000 soldiers to the **Battle of the Alamo**. There he destroyed about 200 stubborn Texans, including William Travis, Davy Crockett, and Jim Bowie. The battle cry "Remember the Alamo!" was heard across Texas.
3. Santa Anna scored a similar win at **Goliad**. This also fueled Texans' passions.
4. Texas president **Sam Houston** led troops to the **Battle of San Jacinto** - The turning point...
 1. Santa Anna was caught (a) in a bend in the river, (b) without lookouts, and (c) taking a siesta. He was beaten in 20 minutes.
 2. Santa Anna was forced to sign a document saying Texas was independent, then he was released. He promptly said the document was null and void. Still, Texas was independent.
5. Then president Andrew Jackson formally recognized Texas as a nation.
6. Texas wanted to join America so the question then was: would Texas become the next U.S. state?
 1. Slavery would delay Texas' statehood. The northern states would not allow another slave state. They accused the south of trying to establish a "**slavocracy**" where the whole Texas situation was a supposed conspiracy to gain a slave state.
 2. Texas would have to wait.

18. Log Cabins and Hard Cider of 1840

1. In the 1840 election, the Democrats nominated **Martin Van Buren** for reelection. The Whigs nominated Indian-fighting hero **William Henry Harrison**.
2. From the beginning, Van Buren was in trouble due to the economic fallout of the Panic of 1837.
3. The election dealt more with personalities and hoopla than with issues.
 1. Van Buren, who came from humble beginnings, was painted as a rich snob out-of-touch with the people.
 2. Harrison, who came from wealthy beginnings, was painted as the born-in-a-log-cabin type. He adopted a log cabin as the symbol of the campaign.
 3. The 1840 campaign is noteworthy in being considered the first "modern" election...
 1. Voter turnout was a whopping 75% (as opposed to roughly only 25% for the 1824 "corrupt bargain" election or 50% in 1828).
 2. Hard cider was given out, campaign slogans were created ("Tippecanoe and Tyler Too"), songs were sung, issues or problems were hidden behind slogans and cheers—essentially, everything superficial about modern campaigns was born.
4. Harrison won easily, 234 to 60 in the electoral vote. Votes protested against the poor economy.

19. Politics for the People

1. During the Federalist era, an elite record with impeccable experience was respected. By the 1830's, being born in a log cabin and rising up from poverty was *more* respected. A politician born rich was a politician doomed.
2. Any politician from the west was especially liked: such as Andrew Jackson, Davy Crockett, and William Henry Harrison. These men made their names by their shooting skills and/or Indian fighting out west.
3. This change became known as the "**New Democracy**" where the "common man" voted for a common sense politician who was more like the "average Joe" than the college grad.
 1. The top characteristic of the New Democracy was "universal white manhood suffrage" (all white men could vote).
 2. These new politicians were known as "coonskin congressman".

20. The Two-Party System

1. By 1840, the two political party system had reached its maturity. It would dominate American politics until today.
2. Two parties in 1840 were...
 1. The Democrats were the common man's party.
 1. True to Thomas Jefferson's beliefs, they championed liberty of the individual.
 2. Loved states' rights (therefore disliked the federal government doing too much).
 3. It was made up of the lower classes, mostly of farmers.
 4. It was made up mostly of people in the South, West, and in the rural or small-town areas.
 2. The Whigs were the upper class's party.
 1. They were like the Federalists of older days.
 2. Favored a stronger federal government that could take action for the nation's benefit.
 3. Favored issues such as internal improvements, tariffs, a strong national bank, and public schools.
 4. It was made up mostly of the educated and wealthier classes.
 5. It was made up largely from the cities and the East.