

# Friends of the American Revolution

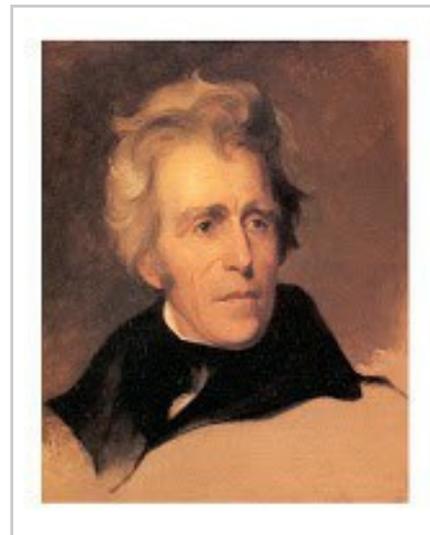
“Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty.”

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- [The Illuminati Scare](#)
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- [Documents](#)
- [Empire](#)
- [Events](#)
- [Faith](#)
- [Food](#)
- [Money](#)
- [Friends](#)
- [People](#)
- [Places](#)
- [Tyranny](#)
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## Andrew Jackson

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

**Andrew Jackson** (March 15, 1767 – June 8, 1845) was the seventh President of the United States (1829–1837). He was also military governor of Florida (1821), commander of the American forces at the Battle of New Orleans (1815), a founder of the modern Democratic Party, and the eponym of the era of Jacksonian democracy. He was a polarizing figure who dominated American politics in the 1820s and 1830s. Nicknamed “Old Hickory” because he was renowned for his toughness, Jackson was the first President primarily associated with the frontier (although born in South Carolina, he based his career in Tennessee).



### Early life and career

Andrew Jackson was born to Presbyterian Scots-Irish immigrants Andrew and Elizabeth Jackson in Lancaster County, South Carolina, on March 15, 1767.[1] He was the youngest of three brothers and was born just weeks after his father’s death. Both North Carolina and South Carolina have claimed Jackson as a “native son,” because the community straddled the state line, and there was conflicting lore in the neighborhood about his exact birth site. Jackson himself always stated definitively he was born in a cabin just inside South Carolina.

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Andrew and his brother Robert Jackson were taken as prisoners, and they nearly starved to death. When Andrew refused to clean the boots of a British officer, the irate redcoat slashed at him, giving him scars on his left hand and head, as well as an intense hatred for the British. Both boys contracted smallpox while imprisoned, and Robert died days after his mother secured their release. Jackson then became an orphan at age 15. Jackson's entire

immediate family died from war-time hardships that Jackson also blamed upon the British. Jackson was the last U.S. President to have been a veteran of the American Revolution, and the only President to have been a prisoner of war.

Jackson went to Tennessee in 1787. Though he could barely read law, he found he knew enough to become a young lawyer on the frontier. Since he was not from a distinguished family, he had to make his career by his own merits; and soon he began to prosper in the rough-and-tumble world of frontier law. Most of the actions grew out of disputed land-claims, or from assaults and battery. He was elected as Tennessee's first Congressman, upon its statehood in the late 1790s, and quickly became a U.S. Senator in 1797 but resigned within a year. In 1798, he was appointed judge on the Tennessee Supreme Court. [1]

## Military career

### War of 1812

Main articles: [Creek War](#) and [Battle of New Orleans](#)

Jackson became a colonel in the Tennessee militia, which he had led since the beginning of his military career in 1801. During the War of 1812, in 1813, Northern Creek Band chieftain Peter McQueen killed 400 men, women, and children in what became known as the Fort Mims Massacre (in what is now Alabama). Jackson commanded in the campaign against the Northern Creek Indians of Alabama and Georgia, also known as the "Red Sticks." Creek leaders such as William Weatherford (Red Eagle), Peter McQueen, and Menawa, who had been allies of the British during the War of 1812, violently clashed with other chiefs of the Creek Nation over white encroachment on Creek lands and the "civilizing" programs administered by U.S. Indian Agent Benjamin Hawkins.

In the Creek War, a theatre of the War of 1812, Jackson defeated the Red Stick Creeks at the Battle of Horseshoe Bend. Jackson was aided by members of the Southern Creek Indian Band, who had requested Jackson's aid in putting down what they considered to be the "rebellious" Red Sticks, and some Cherokee Indians, who also sided with the Americans. 800 Northern Creek Band "Red Sticks" Indians were massacred. Jackson spared Weatherford's life from any acts of vengeance. Sam Houston and David Crockett, later to become famous themselves in



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Texas, served under Jackson at this time. Following the victory, Jackson imposed the Treaty of Fort Jackson upon both his Northern Creek enemy and Southern Creek allies, wresting 20 million acres (81,000 km<sup>2</sup>) from all Creeks for white settlement.

Jackson's service in the War of 1812 against the United Kingdom was conspicuous for its bravery and success. He was a strict officer, but was popular with his troops. It was said he was "tough as old hickory" wood on the battlefield, which gave him his nickname. The war, and particularly his command at the Battle of New Orleans on January 8, 1815, made his national reputation. He advanced in rank to Major General. In the battle, Jackson's 4,000 militiamen and 16 heavy cannons behind barricades of cotton bales opposed 10,000 British regulars marching across an open field, led by General Edward Pakenham. The battle was a total American victory. The British had over 2,000 casualties to Jackson's 13 killed and 58 wounded or missing.

### **First Seminole War**

Main article: [Seminole Wars](#)

Jackson served in the military again during the First Seminole War when he was ordered by President James Monroe in December 1817[2] to lead a campaign in Georgia against the Seminole and Creek Indians. Jackson was also charged with preventing Spanish Florida from becoming a refuge for runaway slaves. Critics later alleged that Jackson exceeded orders in his Florida actions. His directions were to "terminate the conflict." [3] Jackson believed the best way to do this would be to seize Florida. Before going, Jackson wrote to Monroe, "Let it be signified to me through any channel... that the possession of the Floridas would be desirable to the United States, and in sixty days it will be accomplished." [4] Monroe gave Jackson orders that were purposely ambiguous, sufficient for international denials.

Jackson's Tennessee volunteers were attacked by Seminoles, but this left their villages vulnerable, and Jackson burned them and their crops. He found letters that indicated that the Spanish and British were secretly assisting the Indians. Jackson believed that the United States would not be secure as long as Spain and Great Britain encouraged American Indians to fight and argued that his actions were undertaken in self-defense. Jackson captured Pensacola, Florida with little more than some warning shots and deposed the Spanish governor. He illegally tried, and then captured and executed two British subjects, Robert Ambrister and Alexander Arbuthnot who had been supplying and advising the Indians. Jackson's action also struck fear into the Seminole tribes as word of his ruthlessness in battle spread.

The executions combined with Jackson's attack and seizure over a country they were not at war with created an international incident, and many in the Monroe administration called for Jackson to be censured. However, Jackson's actions were defended by Secretary of State John Quincy Adams, an early believer in the Manifest Destiny. When the Spanish minister demanded a "suitable punishment" for Jackson, Adams wrote back "Spain must immediately [decide] either to place a force in Florida adequate at once to the protection of her territory,

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... or cede to the United States a province, of which she retains nothing but the nominal possession, but which is, in fact, ... a post of annoyance to them.”[5] Adams used Jackson’s conquest, and Spain’s own weaknesses, to convince the Spanish (in the Adams-Onís Treaty) to cede Florida to the United States. Jackson was subsequently named its territorial governor.

## Election of 1824

Main article: [United States presidential election, 1824](#)

The Tennessee legislature nominated Jackson for president in 1822. It also made him a Senator again in the United States Senate. In 1824, most of the Democratic-Republican Party in Congress had boycotted the nominating caucus; those that adhered to it backed William H. Crawford for president and Albert Gallatin for vice president. A convention in Pennsylvania nominated Jackson for president almost a month later, on March 4. Gallatin critiqued Jackson as “an honest man and the idol of the worshippers of military glory, but from incapacity, military habits, and habitual disregard of laws and constitutional provisions, altogether unfit for the office.”[6] Thomas Jefferson, who would later write to William Crawford in dismay at the outcome of the election,[7] wrote to Jackson in December of 1823:

“I recall with pleasure the remembrance of our joint labors while in the Senate together in times of great trial and of hard battling, battles indeed of words, not of blood, as those you have since fought so much for your own glory & that of your country; with the assurance that my attamts continue undiminished, accept that of my great respect & consideration.”[8]

Biographer Robert V. Remini said that Jefferson “had no great love for Jackson.” Daniel Webster wrote that Jefferson told him in December of 1824 that Jackson was a dangerous man unfit for the presidency. [9] Historian Sean Wilentz described Webster’s account of the meeting as “not wholly reliable.”[10]

During his first run for the presidency in 1824, Jackson received a plurality of both the popular and electoral votes. Since no candidate received a majority, the election decision was given to the House of Representatives, which chose John Quincy Adams as president in 1825. Jackson denounced it as a “corrupt bargain” because House Speaker Henry Clay gave his votes to Adams, who then appointed Clay Secretary of State. Jackson later called for the abolition of the Electoral College. Jackson’s defeat burnished his political credentials, however, since many voters believed the “man of the people” had been robbed by the “corrupt aristocrats of the East.”

## Election of 1828

Main article: [United States presidential election, 1828](#)

The Tennessee legislature again nominated Jackson for the presidency. He resigned from



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United States Senate in 1825. Jackson allied himself with Vice President John C. Calhoun, Martin Van Buren, and former supporters of William H. Crawford; together they built a coalition that handily defeated the reelection of John Quincy Adams in 1828. His supporters called themselves “Jackson Men,” or Jacksonians.

## Presidency 1829-1837

### Spoils system

Main article: [Spoils system](#)

When Jackson became President, he implemented the theory of rotation in office, declaring it “a leading principle in the republican creed.”[11] He believed that rotation in office would prevent the development of a corrupt bureaucracy. In addition, Jackson’s supporters wanted to give the posts to fellow party members, as an incentive to continue and support the party, and as a reward to strengthen party loyalty. In practice, this meant replacing federal employees with friends or party loyalists.[12] By the end of his term, Jackson had dismissed less than twenty percent of the original federal employees.[13] While Jackson did not start the “spoils system”, he did indirectly encourage its growth for many years to come.

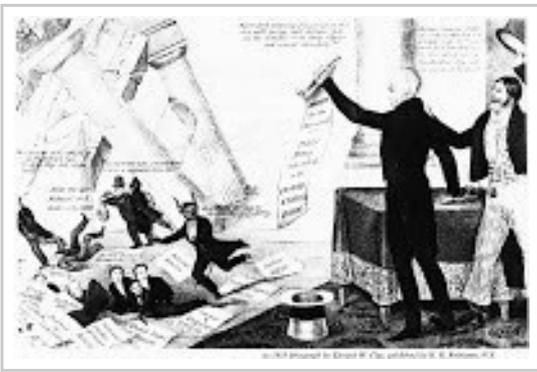
### Opposition to the National Bank

Main article: [Second Bank of the United States](#)

As president, Jackson worked to take away the federal charter of the Second Bank of the United States (it would continue to exist as a state bank). The Second Bank had been authorized, during James Madison’s tenure in 1816, for a 20 year period. Jackson opposed the national bank concept on ideological grounds. In Jackson’s veto message (written by George Bancroft), the bank needed to be abolished because:



- It concentrated an excessive amount of the nation’s financial strength into a single institution
- It exposed the government to control by “foreign interests”
- It served mainly to make the rich richer
- It exercised too much control over members of the Congress
- It favored Northeastern states over Southern and Western states



Jackson followed Jefferson as a supporter of the ideal of an “agricultural republic” and felt the bank improved the fortunes of an “elite circle” of commercial and industrial entrepreneurs at the expense of farmers and laborers. After a titanic struggle, Jackson succeeded in destroying the bank by vetoing its 1832 re-charter by Congress and by withdrawing U.S. funds in 1833.

The bank’s money-lending functions were taken over by the legions of local and state banks that sprang up. This fed an expansion of credit and speculation. At first, as Jackson withdrew money from the Bank to invest it in other banks, land sales, canal construction, cotton production, and manufacturing boomed.[14] However, due to the practice of issuing notes that were not backed by gold or silver reserves, there was soon rapid inflation and mounting debts by the states.[15] Then, in 1836, Jackson issued the specie circular, which required that government lands be bought in hard specie. Because banks lacked hard specie to issue in return for notes, many of them collapsed.[16] This was a direct cause for the Panic of 1837, which threw the national economy into a deep depression. The commercial progress of the nation’s economy was noticeably dented by the resulting failures, and it took years to recover from the damage.

The U.S. Senate censured Jackson on March 27, 1834 for his actions in defunding the Bank of the United States; the censure was later expunged when the Jacksonians had a majority in the Senate.

### **Nullification crisis**

Main article: [Nullification crisis](#)

Another notable crisis during Jackson’s period of office was the “nullification crisis,” or “secession crisis,” of 1828 – 1832, which merged issues of sectional strife with disagreements over tariffs. Critics alleged that high tariffs (the “Tariff of Abominations”) on imports of common manufactured goods made in Europe made those goods more expensive than ones from the northern U.S., thus raising the prices paid by planters in the South. Southern politicians thus argued that tariffs benefited northern industrialists at the expense of southern farmers. The issue came to a head when Vice President John C. Calhoun, in the South Carolina Exposition and Protest of 1828, supported the claim of his home state, South Carolina, that it had the right to “nullify”—declare illegal—the tariff legislation of 1828, and more generally the right of a state to nullify any Federal laws which went against its interests. Although Jackson sympathized with the South in the tariff debate, he was also a strong supporter of a strong union, with considerable powers for the central government. Jackson attempted to face down Calhoun over the issue, which developed into a bitter rivalry between the two men. Particularly infamous was an incident at the April 13, 1830 Jefferson Day dinner, involving

after-dinner toasts. Jackson rose first and voice booming, and glaring at Calhoun, yelled out “Our federal Union: IT MUST BE PRESERVED!”, a clear challenge to Calhoun. Calhoun glared at Jackson and yelled out, his voice trembling, but booming as well, “The Union: NEXT TO OUR LIBERTY, MOST DEAR!” [17] The next year, Calhoun and Jackson broke apart from one another, the first time a US President and US Vice-President had ever done so, and Calhoun resigned in 1832 to serve as a US Senator in South Carolina as well.

In response to South Carolina’s threat, Congress passed a “Force Bill” in 1833, and Jackson vowed to send troops to South Carolina in order to enforce the laws. In December 1832, he issued a resounding proclamation against the “nullifiers,” stating that he considered “the power to annul a law of the United States, assumed by one State, incompatible with the existence of the Union, contradicted expressly by the letter of the Constitution, unauthorized by its spirit, inconsistent with every principle on which it was founded, and destructive of the great object for which it was formed.” South Carolina, the President declared, stood on “the brink of insurrection and treason,” and he appealed to the people of the state to reassert their allegiance to that Union for which their ancestors had fought. Jackson also denied the right of secession: “The Constitution...forms a government not a league.... To say that any State may at pleasure secede from the Union is to say that the United States is not a nation.” [18]

The crisis was resolved when Jackson sent warships to Charleston, South Carolina, and enforced Congress acts through the Force Bill.

Passage of the Force Bill depended on the vote of Henry Clay. Clay would finally yield to those urging him to save the day. He introduced a plan to reduce the tariff gradually until 1842, by which time no rate would be more than 20%. The Compromise Tariff of 1833 was to be a resolution to the Nullification Crisis. On March 1, 1833, Congress passed the Force Bill and the compromise tariff and Jackson signed both. The South Carolina Convention then met and rescinded its nullification ordinance. The Force Bill was then nullified because Jackson no longer had a need for it. Henry Clay had saved the day.

### “Indian Removal”

Perhaps the most controversial aspect of Andrew Jackson’s presidency was his policy regarding American Indians.[19] Jackson was a leading advocate of a policy known as “Indian Removal,” signing the Indian Removal Act into law in 1830. The Act authorized the President to negotiate treaties to purchase tribal lands in the east in exchange for lands further west, outside of existing U.S. state borders.

Jackson never publicly advocated removing American Indians by force, but he devoted considerable energies to the negotiation of removal treaties. Nearly seventy Indian treaties—many of them land sales—were ratified during his presidency, the most of any administration.

While frequently frowned upon in the North, the Removal Act was popular in the South, where population growth and the discovery of gold on Cherokee land had increased pressure

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on tribal lands. The state of Georgia became involved in a contentious jurisdictional dispute with the Cherokees, culminating in the 1832 U.S. Supreme Court decision (*Worcester v. Georgia*) which ruled that Georgia could not impose its laws upon Cherokee tribal lands. Jackson is often quoted (regarding the decision) as having said, “John Marshall has made his decision, now let him enforce it!” Whether or not he actually said it is disputed.[20]

In any case, Jackson used the Georgia crisis to pressure Cherokee leaders to sign a removal treaty. A small faction of Cherokees led by John Ridge negotiated the Treaty of New Echota with Jackson’s administration. Ross was not a recognized leader of the Cherokee Nation, and this document was rejected by most Cherokees as illegitimate.[21] Over 15,000 Cherokee signed a petition in protest; it was ignored by the Supreme Court.[22] In 1838, 1,600 Cherokee remained on their lands. The terms of the treaty were then enforced by Jackson’s successor, Martin Van Buren, who ordered 7,000 armed troops to remove them.[23] This resulted in the deaths of over 4,000 Cherokee on the “Trail of Tears.”

In all, more than 45,000 American Indians were relocated to the West during Jackson’s administration. During this time, the administration purchased about 100 million acres (400,000 km<sup>2</sup>) of Indian land for about \$68 million and 32 million acres (130,000 km<sup>2</sup>) of western land. Jackson was criticized at the time for his role in these events, and the criticism has grown over the years. Remini characterizes the Indian Removal era as “one of the unhappiest chapters in American history.” [24]

### Assassination attempt



On January 30, 1835 an unsuccessful attack occurred in the United States Capitol Building; it was the first assassination attempt made against an American President. Jackson was crossing the Capitol Rotunda following the funeral of South Carolina Congressman Warren R. Davis when Richard Lawrence approached Jackson and attempted to fire two pistols, which both miraculously misfired.

Jackson proceeded to attack Lawrence with his cane, prompting his aides to restrain him. Davy Crockett was also there to help restrain Lawrence. As a result, Jackson’s statue in the Capitol Rotunda is placed in front of the doorway in which the attempt occurred. Lawrence was later found to be mentally ill, having accused Jackson of preventing him from becoming King of England.

### Administration and Cabinet

The Jackson Cabinet		
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<b>President</b>	<b>Andrew Jackson</b>	1829 – 1837
<b>Vice President</b>	<b>John C. Calhoun</b>	1829 – 1832
	<i>None</i>	1832 – 1833
	<b>Martin Van Buren</b>	1833 – 1837
<b>Secretary of State</b>	<b>Martin Van Buren</b>	1829 – 1831
	<b>Edward Livingston</b>	1831 – 1833
	<b>Louis McLane</b>	1833 – 1834
	<b>John Forsyth</b>	1834 – 1837
<b>Secretary of Treasury</b>	<b>Samuel D. Ingham</b>	1829 – 1831
	<b>Louis McLane</b>	1831 – 1833
	<b>William J. Duane</b>	1833
	<b>Roger B. Taney</b>	1833 – 1834
	<b>Levi Woodbury</b>	1834 – 1837
<b>Secretary of War</b>	<b>John H. Eaton</b>	1829 – 1831
	<b>Lewis Cass</b>	1831 – 1836
<b>Attorney General</b>	<b>John M. Berrien</b>	1829 – 1831
	<b>Roger B. Taney</b>	1831 – 1833
	<b>Benjamin F. Butler</b>	1833 – 1837
<b>Postmaster General</b>	<b>William T. Barry</b>	1829 – 1835
	<b>Amos Kendall</b>	1835 – 1837
<b>Secretary of the Navy</b>	<b>John Branch</b>	1829 – 1831
	<b>Levi Woodbury</b>	1831 – 1834
	<b>Mahlon Dickerson</b>	1834 – 1837

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## Supreme Court appointments

John McLean – 1830

Henry Baldwin – 1830

James Moore Wayne – 1835

Roger Brooke Taney (Chief Justice) – 1836

Philip Pendleton Barbour – 1836

John Catron – 1837

## Major Supreme Court cases

Cherokee Nation vs. Georgia, 1831

Worcester v. Georgia, 1832

Charles River Bridge v. Warren Bridge, 1837

## States admitted to the Union

Arkansas – June 15, 1836

Michigan – January 26, 1837

# Family and personal life

Jackson met Rachel Donelson Robards after her divorce from her first husband, Colonel Lewis Robards; Jackson and Mrs. Robards quickly married. Mr. Robards returned two years later without ever having finalized the divorce. Rachel quickly divorced her first husband and then legally married Jackson. This remained a sore point for Jackson, who deeply resented attacks on his wife's honor. Jackson fought 103 duels, many nominally over his wife's honor. Charles Dickinson, the only man Jackson ever killed in a duel, had been goaded into angering Jackson by Jackson's political opponents. In the duel, fought over a horse-racing debt and an insult to his wife on May 30, 1806, Dickinson shot Jackson in the ribs before Jackson returned the fatal shot. The bullet that struck Jackson was so close to his heart that it could never be safely removed. Jackson had been wounded so frequently in duels that it was said he "rattled like a bag of marbles".[25] At times he would cough up blood, and he experienced considerable pain from his wounds for the rest of his life.

Rachel died of an unknown cause two months prior to Jackson taking office as President. Jackson blamed John Quincy Adams for Rachel's death because the marital scandal was brought up in the election of 1828. He felt that this had hastened her death and never forgave Adams.

Jackson had two adopted sons, Andrew Jackson Jr., the son of Rachel's brother Severn Donelson, and Lyncoya, a Creek Indian orphan adopted by Jackson after the Creek War. Lyncoya died in 1828 at age 16, probably from pneumonia or tuberculosis.

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The Jacksons also acted as guardians for eight other children. John Samuel Donelson, Daniel Smith Donelson and Andrew Jackson Donelson were the sons of Rachel's brother Samuel Donelson who died in 1804. Andrew Jackson Hutchings was Rachel's orphaned grand nephew. Caroline Butler, Eliza Butler, Edward Butler, and Anthony Butler were the orphaned children of Edward Butler, a family friend. They came to live with the Jacksons after the death of their father.

The widower Jackson invited Rachel's niece Emily Donelson to serve as hostess at the White House. Emily was married to Andrew Jackson Donelson, who acted as Jackson's private secretary and in 1856 would run for Vice President of the United States on the American Party ticket. The relationship between the President and Emily became strained during the Petticoat Affair, and the two became estranged for over a year. They eventually reconciled and she resumed her duties as White House hostess. Sarah Yorke Jackson, the wife of Andrew Jackson Jr., became co-hostess of the White House in 1834. It was the only time in history when two women simultaneously acted as unofficial First Lady. Sarah took over all hostess duties after Emily died from tuberculosis in 1836.

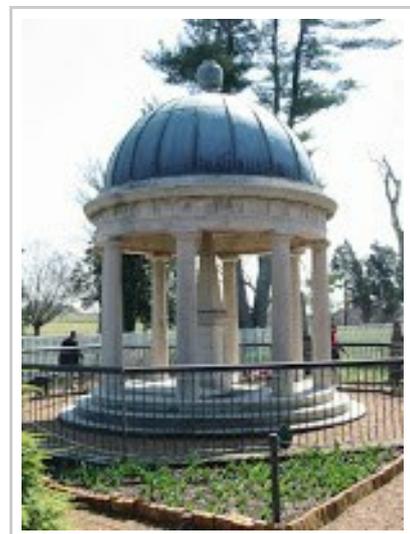
Jackson remained influential in both national and state politics after retiring to "The Hermitage," his Nashville home, in 1837. Though a slave-holder, Jackson was a firm advocate of the federal union of the states, and declined to give any support to talk of secession.

Jackson was a lean figure standing at 6 feet, 1 inch (1.85 m) tall, and weighing between 130 and 140 pounds (64 kg) on average. Jackson also had an unruly shock of red hair, which had completely grayed by the time he became president at age 61. He had penetrating deep blue eyes. Jackson was one of the more sickly presidents, suffering from chronic headaches, abdominal pains, and a hacking cough, caused by a musket ball in his lung which was never removed, that often brought up blood and sometimes even made his whole body shake. After retiring to Nashville, he enjoyed eight years of retirement and died at the Hermitage on June 8, 1845 at the age of 78, of chronic tuberculosis, "dropsy" and heart failure.

In his will, Jackson left his entire estate to his adopted son, Andrew Jackson Jr., except for specifically enumerated items that were left to various other friends and family members. Jackson left several slaves to his daughter-in-law and grandchildren. Andrew Jackson was a member of First Presbyterian Church in Nashville.

## References

1. <sup>^</sup> [Andrew Jackson](#). *Information Services Branch, State Library of North Carolina*.
2. <sup>^</sup> [Andrew Jackson](#). Library of Congress. Retrieved on 2007-06-03.



3. ^ Remini, 118.
4. ^ Ogg, 66.
5. ^ Johnson, Allen (1920). [Jefferson and His Colleagues](#). Retrieved on 2006-10-11.
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12. ^ [The Spoils System](#), as the rotation in office system was called, did not originate with Jackson. It originated with New York Governors in the late 18th and early 19th centuries (most notably [George Clinton](#) and [DeWitt Clinton](#)). While [Thomas Jefferson](#) brought it to the [Executive Branch](#) when he removed Federalist office-holders after becoming president. [The Spoils System versus the Merit System](#). Retrieved on 2006-11-21.
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14. ^ [http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/database/article\\_display.cfm?HHID=640](http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/database/article_display.cfm?HHID=640) Digital History
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