

The American Pageant

15th Edition

Chapter 13 notes

The Rise of a Mass Democracy

I. The “corrupt bargain” of 1824

1. The four candidates emerged for the next election after James Monroe’s second term 1) John Quincy Adams of Massachusetts 2) Henry Clay of Kentucky 3) William Henry Crawford of Georgia and 4) Andrew Jackson of Tennessee.
 - o All four were republicans there was a deadlock between the candidates, so the house of representatives was called to vote.
2. Adams was elected president and Henry Clay was secretary of state.
3. Jackson’s supporters accused Adams of bribing Clay with the position of secretary of state so Adams would get elected. Angry Jacksonians protested against this “corrupt bargain”.

II. A Yankee misfit in the White House

1. John Quincy was short, thickset and billiard-bald. He ranks as the most successful secretary of State but least successful president.
2. Less than a third of voters had voted for him, he was a “minority president”. He was a cold, austere man and didn’t win popular support.
3. He was a nationalist in a time where people wanted to more state’s rights.

III. Going “whole Hog” for Jackson in 1828

1. The republicans split into two – The national republicans with Adams as their standard. The other was the Democratic-republicans heady by Jackson.
2. Jackson’s followers denounced Adams as a corrupt aristocrat. They wanted Jackson to “reform” the wrong ways.
3. Mudslinging reached new lows in 1828.
4. On the next voting day General Jackson’s triumph couldn’t be denied and he won the election.

IV. “Old Hickory” as President

1. The new president was tall, lean and had blue eyes, born in the Carolinas and was early orphaned.
 - o Jackson moved to Tennessee and became a member of the congress.

- He was the first president from the west, didn't have a college education, owned many slaves and lived in a great mansion.
- 2. "Hickories" poured into Washington from all over, hoping to see the man they elected go into office.
Nobodies mingled with noticeables as the white house was opened to the first time to the public.

V. The Spoils System

1. The democrats rewarded their political supporters with public office. The question was not anymore "what can he do for the country?" but "is he loyal to Jackson?".
2. This was scandalous. Men who had bought their posts were given office, so were illiterates, incompetents and crooks.
Samuel Swaitwout stole 1 million dollars from the government and escaped to England.
3. Despite its abuse, the spoils system as important for loyalty in office.

VI. The Tricky "Tariff of Abominations"

1. Tariffs protected American industry against European competition.
The middle states and new England were supporters but the southerners weren't.
2. Branded as the black Tariff or the Tariff of abominations, several southern states adopted formal protest the south was falling in hard times and felt that that they got stuck with paying the bill.
3. The southerners were secretly anxious about federal interference with then institution of slavery

VII. "Nullies" in South Carolina

1. The nullies tried to muster the vote nullification in the S. Carolina legislature.
2. Congress passed a new tariff of 1832 that took away most of the abominations but was still protective.
3. The State legislature called for a special convention.
 - Declared the tariff to be null and void within South Carolina.
 - They threatened to take South Carolina out of the union if Washington attempted to collect customs by force.
4. Andrew Jackson wasn't intimidated and wouldn't permit defiance or disunion.
 - He privately threatened to invade the state and hang nullifiers.
5. Henry Clay made a compromise bill that would reduce the tariffs by 10 percent over 8 years – the compromise tariff of 1833. Northern states were upset
6. The force bill was passed- authorized president to use army and navy to if necessary to collect tariffs.
7. Neither side won a clear victory, but Clay was the true hero of the hour for saving the country.

VIII. The Trail of Tears

1. Jackson's democrats wanted western expansion but there were native people living on the lands. The tribes were seen as separate nations and the US agreed to acquire lands only through treaties, but Americans violated their own rules to the expense of the natives.
2. Many Americans thought that the natives could be "civilized" and had respect and admiration for them.
3. However many tribes resisted but some accommodated.
 - Cherokees of Georgia made remarkable efforts to learn the way of the whites. They gave up their semi-nomadic ways and turned to agriculture.
4. The Cherokees, Creeks, Choctaws, Chickasaws and Seminoles were among the "five civilized tribes".
5. This embrace of white customs was not enough; in 1828 the Georgia legislature declared the Cherokee tribal council illegal.
 - They appealed to the supreme court, but Jackson who wanted to expand further ignored their ruling
 - He proposed the removal of the western tribes beyond the Mississippi river.
6. In 1830 the Indian removal act was passed. It forced uprooting of the native tribes with a promise of a "permanently" white man free land.
 - Their "permanent" land didn't last more than 15 years.
7. Some were suspicious of White's intentions from the start, and they resisted eviction leading to the black hawk war in 1832. The Indians were crushed in this war.
8. The Seminoles fled to Florida with runaway slaves but were destroyed as well.

IX. The Bank War

1. Jackson distrusted monopolistic banking and overbig businesses. The US bank was a monster in his eyes.
 - It was the most powerful bank in the US, it controlled most of the nation's gold and silver.
 - It was a source of credit and stability- an important part of the expanding nation's economy.
2. Others saw the bank as unconstitutional and didn't like the power the president of the bank- Nicholas Biddle or "Czar Nicholas I" had.
They weren't fond of the bank's foreclosing powers. Profit not public service was the bank's first priority.
3. The bank war erupted in 1832 when Daniel Webster and Henry Clay proposed a bill to renew the bank's charter.
 - Clay's scheme was to send the Bill to congress. If Jackson signed it he would lose his western followers. If he vetoed it he'd probably lose the election. Jackson ended up vetoing it and Clay's assumptions were wrong.

X. "Old Hickory" Wallops Clay in 1832

1. For the first time there was a new third party- the anti- Masonic party whom apposed the Masonic order, they appealed to the secret societies.
 - Also for the first time they called national nominating convention to name candidates.

2. Clay had lots of money coming into his campaign but still lost the presidency.

XI. Burying Biddle's Bank

1. Jackson took the government's funds out of The US bank to ensure that the bank would close. His cabinet didn't agree with this.
2. The death of the US bank left a financial vacuum in the American economy- paper currency became unreliable.
 - A Specie circular was passed; it required all public lands to be purchased with hard "metal" money. This contributed to the financial crash of 1837.
3. Jackson never had to deal with the damage.

XII. The Birth of the Whigs

1. The Whigs appeared because of opposition to Jackson and his exercise of power.
 - They attracted groups alienated by Jackson they thought of themselves as conservatives but they were progressive in their support of active government reforms.
 - They aimed to be the defenders of the common man and declared the democrats corrupted.

XIII. The election of 1836

1. Martin Van Buren was Jackson's choice for his successor
2. The Whigs appointed various "favorite sons".
 - The leading one was William Henry Harrison
3. Van Buren the "little magician" won anyways

XIV. Big Woes for the "Little Magician"

1. Van Buren the 8th president, was the first to be born under the American flag
2. He wasn't exactly liked by the democrats who felt that he'd been smuggled into the office under Jackson's tailcoats
 - People felt left down, he wasn't as brash as Jackson.
3. His 4 years were filled with trouble and he had to battle a panic of depression and a wave of discontent people.

XV. Depression Doldrums & the Independent Treasury

1. The main Cause if the Panic of 1837 was because speculators were promoting western lands and doing business on shaky currency.
 - Failure of wheat crops deepened distress
 - Europe's economic distress made things worse for the U.S.
2. Hundreds of Banks and factories closed, the unemployed were in the street.
3. Van Buren passed the "Divorce Bill"- This bill divorced the government from banking. Government funds would be safe when they locked their surplus money into vaults.

XVI. Gone to Texas

1. Americans continued to settle more lands- now in Texas.
2. Mexicans won their independence from Spain in 1821, they wanted American families to populate the area and be “mexicanized”.
 - Most of the settlers were law abiding people but some came to evade the police
 - Americans ignored the decrees set by the Mexicans, Stephen Austin went to talk to Santa Anna- the Mexican leader- but was put in jail
3. Santa Anna started to raise an army to suppress the Texans

XVII. The Lone Star Rebellion

1. In 1836 Texans declared independence
 - Santa Anna fought back- wiped out Texans at the battle of the Alamo
 - Slain Heroes like Davy Crocket became legendary. Vengeful Americans came to their compatriot’s aid.
2. At San Jacinto Americans overcame Mexicans and made Santa Anna sign treaties. 1) He agreed to withdraw Mexican troops and 2) recognize Rio Grande as the extreme southwest border of Texas.
3. Texas wanted to join the Union but northerners were upset and didn’t want another slave state being added.
4. Mexicans complained that the US had not stayed neutral.
 - The American public didn’t care

XVIII. Log Cabins and Hard Cider

1. The next election was between Democrat Martin Van Buren and The Whig’s William Henry Harrison.
 - Harrison was issueless, enemy less and best remembered for his success against Indians and Brits at the battle of Tippecanoe.
 - His Vice president was John Tyler
2. Whigs hoped that the people would embrace Harrison as a hero that had been called from his Cabin to drive corrupt Jackson spoils men from the presidential palace.
 - Harrison did win the election

XIX. Politics for People

1. Election of 1840 showed two changes in politics since the era of good feelings
 - 1) Triumph of a populist democratic style instead of aristocracy.
 - No one liked snobs and prominent men had to be more relatable to “common men” to win support.

XX. The Two Party System

1. The second change in politics was a formation of a durable two-party system.

- Differences: Jackson democrats glorified individual liberties, states rights and federal restraint. They were more humble people. The Whigs were more prosperous and liked natural harmony in society, they also favored internal improvements.
- In common: They were mass-based, so they tried to mobilize as many voters for their cause. They were pretty intermixed within their own parties which prevented extremes.

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