Jacksonian Era:
1824-1840

The Age of the Common Man
A Time of Great Change

- The age of Jackson was marked by an increase in political participation, an increase in the power of the president and a distrust of any person who still held elitist beliefs.

- In addition, the U.S. kept moving West, we mistreated thousands of Native Americans, and the debate over slavery became even more heated.

- In reaction to the changing nature of the American economy and its demographics, as it moved slowly towards industrialization and urbanization, reform movements sprung up to help many Americans deal with these changes.
Election of 1824: John Quincy Adams Wins

- Political turning point – people now choose electors directly
- People begin to challenge party caucus choice for president
- Four men run: Crawford, Clay, Adams, and Jackson
- Clay gives Adams his votes – Jackson yells “corrupt bargain” since he had the most electoral and popular votes
John Quincy Adams

- Had been excellent Secretary of State for Monroe (he wrote the Monroe Doctrine)
- Reserved and distant; obnoxious personality
- He tried to pass bills for internal improvements, establishing schools, and protective tariffs.
- Tariff of Abominations (Tariff of 1828) – opposed by Southerners; attempt to discredit Adams in election of 1828
- Worked: He loses to Jackson
Election of 1828

• Electorate increased; elimination of property qualifications = universal white manhood suffrage
• Movement from a republic to a democracy
• Many states also dropped property qualifications in order to run for political office
The Age of the Common Man

- Election of 1828 marked beginning of the modern political party system – Jackson forms the Democratic Party
- Few issues were discussed – mudslinging between Quincy Adams and Jackson
- Jackson represented the common man - the new voters

He was a self-made man – was poor and became very wealthy – owned over 200 slaves
Jackson in Office

- Jackson won by a large margin; used his large political support as a reason why he could challenge Congress and the Courts.
- He dismissed many government officials and replaced them with his political supporters – called the spoils system. Jackson stated, “To the victor belongs the spoils.”
- His first inauguration: he opened up the White House to 10,000 supporters! He had to spend his first night as president in a hotel.
Jackson’s Inauguration

www.whitehousehistory.org
Jackson and the Indians

• A Westerner, Jackson wanted open land for settlers – saw Indians as in the way of his goal

• Wanted Eastern Tribes to settle west of the Mississippi

• A few smaller tribes moved to reservations for money

• Others wanted to stay on their ancestral lands
Five Civilized Tribes

• Cherokees, Choctaws, Seminoles, Creeks, and the Chicksaws (approximately 75,000 total)

• Lived in large parts of Georgia, the Carolinas, Alabama, Mississippi, and Tennessee

• Many of these tribes had adopted white/European customs (especially the Cherokees), but were still viewed only as an impediment to white settlement of these rich cotton lands
• “I have long viewed treaties with the Indians an absurdity not to be reconciled to the principles of our government.”

-- Andrew Jackson, 1817
Indian Removal Act

- When persuasion did not work with all tribes, Jackson asked Congress for a bill.
- Indian Removal Act 1830 - provided for the removal of all Indian tribes east of the Mississippi, using force if needed, and the purchase of western lands for resettlement.
Georgia and the Cherokees

- Georgia annulled the Cherokee Constitution, modeled after the U.S. Constitution, in 1828 when gold was discovered on Cherokee lands.

- The state ordered all Cherokee lands seized.
• Many Northerners believed it was their mission to teach and convert Indians
• Georgia required that all teachers of the Indians obtain a state license
• Many refused and were arrested: most notable was a pastor from Vermont, Sam Worcester
Supreme Court and Georgia

- **Cherokee Nation v. Georgia** (1831)
  - Cherokees claimed that Georgia could not make laws because they were a sovereign nation; court refused to hear the case

- **Worcester v. Georgia** (1832)
  - Marshall ruled that Georgia had no right to rule in Cherokee territory
“John Marshall has made his decision, now let him enforce it!”

Andrew Jackson, 1832
Jackson Wins

- The last tribe to leave was the Cherokee
- Trail of Tears, 1838 – the forced march of Cherokees that led to thousands of deaths by sickness and starvation.
- Were relocated to Oklahoma

www.ngorgia.com Painting by Robert Lindneux – hangs in Woolaroc Museum, Bartlesville, Oklahoma
Trail of Tears
Jackson and the Bank

• The bank served the interests of “the few at the expense of the many and injured humbler members of society – the farmers, the mechanics, and the laborers – who have neither the time nor the means of securing like favors to themselves.”

• In other words, to Jackson, the bank was a tool of the wealthy that did not benefit the common man
Bank, cont.

- Bank charter was up in 1836, but Henry Clay and Daniel Webster suggested renewing it in 1832 (to discredit Jackson)
- The country was prosperous and the Bank and Nicholas Biddle, the president of the Bank, were popular
- Jackson vetoed the recharter bill and removed all federal funds from the bank and placed them in his “pet banks” – state banks mostly located in the West
• Result of Bank War:

There was a lot of speculation in Western lands and inflation in both land and goods because the Western banks had all the federal money!
Nullification Crisis

• South Carolina especially hated the tariff of 1828
• They were experiencing soil exhaustion and declining agricultural prices
• John C. Calhoun, Senator from South Carolina, led his state’s protest against the tariff
• He argued that tariffs benefited only one part of the country rather than the nation as a whole and therefore they should be declared unconstitutional
• The states should be the ultimate judge of the national government’s legitimate power
John C. Calhoun

- Calhoun argued for the right of nullification: a law could not be imposed on a state that believed it to be unjust.
- He argued that states had not given up any of their sovereignty when they signed the Constitution.
- It was up to the states, not the Supreme Court, to judge the constitutionality of a law.

www.constitution.org
Liberty and union, now and forever, one and inseparable!
-Daniel Webster

"Our federal Union-it must be preserved."
-Andrew Jackson

"The Union- next to our liberty most dear. May we always remember that it can only be preserved by distributing evenly the benefits and burdens of the Union."
-John C. Calhoun
Rift is Complete

• Calhoun was Jackson’s Vice President! Now, the rift between these two men was complete.
• Convention met in South Carolina in 1832 in response to the new LOWER tariff of 1832. The convention votes overwhelmingly to nullify.
• Jackson reinforced federal forts in South Carolina and sent warships to enforce the collection of the tariff.
• Force Bill – this gave Jackson the power to invade South Carolina if need be.
• South Carolina repealed its nullification of the tariff but then nullified the Force Bill.
• The issue of state v federal rights was not resolved.
Nat Turner’s Rebellion

- As the Northern Abolitionist movement grew, so did the number of slave revolts.
- Nat Turner - a well-read preacher who had a vision that a black liberation movement would succeed
- He organized a gang who killed and mutilated the corpses of 60 whites.
Black Codes Introduced

- Whites retaliated and had 200 slaves, many with no connection to the rebellion, executed.
- Southern states passed black codes; these were restrictive laws that prohibited blacks from congregating and learning how to read.
Rise of the Whig Party

• Jackson was popular, but not everyone agreed with his policies – two biggest opponents were Daniel Webster and Henry Clay

• Whigs - a loose organization, that was nationalist (Democrats were more for states’ rights) and opposed to one or more of Jackson’s policies

• Many Whigs believed in government activism relating to social issues – social reformers

• Election of 1836- Jackson backs his Vice President Martin Van Buren – he wins but inherits an economic crisis, the Panic of 1837.
Election of 1840: Campaign of Log Cabins and Hard Cider

- First modern election; campaigning and slogans
- Smear campaign - did not focus on the issues
- William Henry Harrison (Whig) vs. Van Buren (Democrat)
- “Tippecanoe and Tyler Too!”
- Harrison wins, dies in a month and Tyler takes over
- Tyler vetoed Whig policies; president without a party