Andrew Jackson: His Life and Times Study Guide

Andrew Jackson: His Life and Times by H. W. Brands

(c)2015 BookRags, Inc. All rights reserved.

Contents

Andrew Jackson: His Life and Times Study Guide......1
Contents......2
Plot Summary......4
Chapter 1......6
Chapter 2......7
Chapter 3......8
Chapter 4......9
Chapter 5......10
Chapter 6......11
Chapter 7......13
Chapter 8......14
Chapter 9......15
Chapters 10-11......17
Chapters 12-13......18
Chapters 14-15......20
Chapters 16-17......22
Chapters 18-19......25
Chapter 20......27
Chapter 21......29
Chapter 22......31
Chapters 23-25......33
Chapters 26-27......36
Chapters 28-29......39
Chapter 30......42
Chapters 31-33......44

Chapters 34-35 46

Chapter 36 49

Chapter 37 52

Chapter 38 54

Chapter 39 55

Chapter 40 57

Chapters 41-43 60

Characters 64

Objects/Places 66

Themes 71

Style 74

Quotes 76

Topics for Discussion 78

Plot Summary

Andrew Jackson: His Life and Times vividly portrays the hero of the War of 1812 and the seventh president of the United States.

The man who becomes the mythic hero of the War of 1812 and the seventh president of the United States is born in the mountains of South Carolina on Mar. 15, 1767. Jackson is loved by his widowed mother, but materially and intellectually disadvantaged. The Revolutionary War falls during his formative years, imbuing him with a sense of patriotism and hatred of all things British that burns for a lifetime. Orphaned by age fourteen, Jackson apprentices as a lawyer, passes the bar, and in 1788 becomes an itinerant solicitor (prosecutor), working out of Nashville, the primitive capital of the Mero district of the Southwest Territory. Jackson has nothing to show for himself but intelligence and ambition, when he meets the married Rachel Robards. They become romantically involved, claim to marry in Natchez in 1791, before her divorce is finalized, and again, pro forma, in January 1794. They assume the controversy is ended. Jackson makes Rachel the "emotional center of his universe." Every physical separation is painful, but as Jackson's fame grows, these become more frequent and extended.

Jackson influences the constitutional convention in Knoxville in 1796 and is selected as Tennessee's first congressman and soon senator. In 1798, Jackson resigns his seat to which he is not suited temperamentally. He lives by practicing law, speculating, farming, and commerce until he is offered a superior court judgeship. Neither legal training nor his passionate personality qualifies him, but few westerners disapprove of his methods. In 1802, Jackson vies with the popular John Sevier for the coveted position of major general in the Tennessee militia - his true calling. Jackson builds national fame, first as an Indian fighter and preeminently as the defender of New Orleans during the last, crucial battle of the War of 1812. President Monroe, eager to keep him happy and out of politics, names him governor of Florida, where he has battled Spaniards, Britons, and Seminoles, when the territory is finally annexed. Jackson intends to retire to his farm thereafter, but supporters convince him that his duty lies in the White House.

Jackson wins a plurality of the popular and electoral vote in 1840, but loses in the House of Representatives to John Quincy Adams. Immediately, the two and their followers lock horns in a four-year, intensely personal struggle for the 1844 election. This time, Jackson wins by a landslide, but the nasty campaign, which dredges up his every youthful faux pas, takes a toll on Rachel's health, and on the eve of leaving for Washington, she dies suddenly. Jackson thus enters his White House years in delicate health and grieving. He cleans house in the bureaucracy, and raises eyebrows by surrounding himself with a "kitchen cabinet" to support him in Rachel's absence. Jackson believes in "rotation in office" rather than "permanent tenure" of officials as previously practiced, fearing that enjoying power for too long inevitably corrupts. His opponents' term - "spoil system" - is what sticks.

Jackson deals with two major crises during his presidency. First, he faces down the nullifiers in South Carolina, led by his own vice president, insisting that the Union must

be preserved even if the federal government must use force against a state; and secondly, opposes the re-chartering of the Bank of the United States, taking aggressive and unpopular actions on constitutional and moral grounds. Before leaving office, Jackson orders the tragic deportation of the Seminole Indians across the Mississippi and recognizes the independence of the Republic of Texas, which he had hoped to annex. Having anointed Martin Van Buren as his successor, Jackson enters an economically challenging retirement, and remains a potent political figure, offering advice to the end. His health declines rapidly, and he dies peacefully at the Hermitage on June 8, 1845.

Chapter 1

Chapter 1 Summary and Analysis

Andrew Jackson: His Life and Times vividly portrays the hero of the War of 1812 and the seventh president of the United States.

The man who becomes the mythic hero of the War of 1812 and the seventh president of the United States is born in the mountains of South Carolina on Mar. 15, 1767. Jackson is loved by his widowed mother, but materially and intellectually disadvantaged. The Revolutionary War falls during his formative years, imbuing him with a sense of patriotism and hatred of all things British that burns for a lifetime. Orphaned by age 14, Jackson apprentices as a lawyer, passes the bar, and in 1788 becomes an itinerant solicitor (prosecutor), working out of Nashville, the primitive capital of the Mero district of the Southwest Territory. Jackson has nothing to show for himself but intelligence and ambition, when he meets the married Rachel Robards. They become romantically involved, claim to marry in Natchez in 1791, before her divorce is finalized, and again, pro forma, in January 1794. They assume the controversy is ended. Jackson makes Rachel the "emotional center of his universe." Every physical separation is painful, but as Jackson's fame grows, these become more frequent and extended.

"The Prize" opens by showing that for millennia conflict characterizes North American history. Strong tribes displace or annihilate weaker ones; great warriors are revered as heroes; and diplomacy complements military force. By the 1670s, white farmers grow pushy and wars erupt. The Natives pit French and English against one another, and in turn serve as surrogates in wars, the largest being the "French and Indian War" (1754-63). The charismatic Ottawa chief Pontiac forms a tribal coalition in 1763, and among those fighting him are savage Ulstermen, Scottish lowlanders come to the New World via Ireland. Among the immigrants are sharecroppers Andrew and Elizabeth Jackson and young sons Hugh and Robert. They settle in the Carolina foothills at Twelve Mile Creek. How (or if) Jackson obtains a deed is unclear, but he proceeds to clear and work the land. During their second year, Elizabeth becomes pregnant, and Andrew, determined to add several acres before the baby arrives, works himself to death.

Elizabeth and the boys move in with James and Jane Crawford, and on Mar. 15, 1767, she gives birth to a son, named for her late husband. Elizabeth keeps house and mothers the eight Crawford children in exchange for room and board. Baby Andrew is baptized in the Presbyterian Church and his mother prepares him to be a minister. He is a wild child, however, unmanageable and defiant - a true Ulsterman, but also largely unmonitored. Andrew Jackson has a "bleak boyhood, better forgotten," a theme oft-repeated throughout the book.

Chapter 2

Chapter 2 Summary and Analysis

"I Could Have Shot Him" picks up Jackson's story during the Revolutionary War. Hard-pressed to defend settlers beyond the mountains, the British retrench and raise taxes. British troops commit a "massacre" in Boston (1770) and retaliate when Bostonians dump tea (1773); Americans summon a "Continental Congress," fighting erupts (1775), and the colonies declare independence (1776). Jacksonian mythology has young Andrew reading the Declaration of Independence publicly in Waxhaw. Americans are divided about separating from Britain. Both sides know that if the war grows too expensive, London could "cut its losses and withdraw," so British commanders seek a swift conclusion by turning it into a civil war. In the South, where Tory (loyalist) sentiments are strongest, Lord Cornwallis faces the rebels. Falling on a force at Monck's Corner, Lt. Col. Tarleton orders his "green jackets" to violate the rules of war by slaughtering those who try to surrender and massacres the residents of Waxhaw.

When Hugh is killed, Andrew signs up as a scout/courier. He and Robert are standing guard when Tories attack. They evade dragoons for 36 hours until hunger draws them out. Andrew refuses to clean an officer's muddy boots and is bloodied in retaliation - a central element in the later Jackson myth. The 14-year-old stands his ground, is assigned to scout out a particularly troubling rebel, and leads the dragoons the long way around, allowing the quarry to escape. Prisoners are taken to an abominable prison camp in Camden, where smallpox spreads, and hanging is threatened. Years later, Jackson recalls hiding in Waxhaw when Tarleton passes closes enough for him to shoot. It is a vexing memory, which leaves Jackson vehemently - almost irrationally - anti-British for life.

Chapter 3

Chapter 3 Summary and Analysis

"Alone" examines Jackson's years as a full orphan, after his mother dies of cholera en route home from a squalid prison camp in Charleston. Elizabeth has already arranged her sons' release from Camden, but exhausted and malnourished, Robert dies, and Andrew recovers slowly from smallpox. Orphans are common in the 18th century, but their economic and emotional plight is great. At fourteen, Andrew is nearly an adult. In later life, he fondly recalls his mother's (idealized) parting words about honesty, steadfastness, self-esteem, avoiding quarrels and offense, but always sustaining his "manhood." She remains his "guiding star" for life. Jackson leaves home when a paternal grandfather in Scotland leaves him ?300-400, which must be collected in Charleston. While he is there, Cornwallis' defeat convinces London to negotiate peace. Before heading home, young Jackson loses his small fortune gambling. He returns to the classroom briefly, studying and teaching, before deciding to become a lawyer.

Law in the 1780s is an avenue to advancement for talented, ambitious youth lacking money or connections (like the clergy and military in Europe). The best pre-revolutionary lawyers flee to Canada or England, leaving openings, and states write constitutions and laws. Legal training is haphazard, particularly on the frontier. It consists of apprenticing to a lawyer, doing whatever busy work he requires, and soaking things up by osmosis. Jackson joins two trainees in Spruce Macay's office in Salisbury, NC. Jackson is seen as "a wild thing going quickly wrong." In 1787, weeks before turning twenty, Jackson moves his apprenticeship to Col. John Stokes, a capable lawyer and disabled war veteran. Six months later, Jackson takes the bar, and is found fit morally and intellectually to practice law.

Attorney Jackson combines idealism and practicality, believing that what serves the public good serves him, and vice versa. He narrowly eludes disbarment when friends wreck a tavern, and begins traveling the foothills, seeking clients. Jackson impresses officials in Randolph County, handling several cases. He accepts indigent clients on contingency, and augments his income by helping to run a grocery store. Income always falls short of expenses, and Jackson once skips out on a bill at an inn. Although slow to make his mark as a lawyer, Jackson makes an impression, carrying himself with majesty, like a rich man's son. A gentle manner distracts from physical plainness, and steel-blue eyes penetrate interlocutors' eyes. When calm, he talks slowly and properly, but when angered he falls into a North-Irish brogue. While no Christian, he is also far from the worst in the neighborhood. He quarrels too readily. Chapter 3 begins showing situations that enemies recall and exaggerate when Jackson becomes famous.

Chapter 4

Chapter 4 Summary and Analysis

"Away West" opens with the "founding myths" of middle Tennessee, where Jackson begins his adult life. In the winter of 1779, John Donelson guides a flotilla of boats to the Cumberland Valley on a harrowing journey to the Big Salt Lick. This is a legal no-man's land, with North Carolina having ceded it to the U.S., but Congress doing nothing to govern. In August 1784, inhabitants form the State of Franklin in honor of the Founding Father with the greatest interest in the West. They set about writing a constitution, but statehood is slowed when speculators fight among themselves and Congress in 1790 folds the territory into the Southwest Territory.

Under the Articles of Confederation, the central government is too weak to stand up to the British when they break their promise to relinquish their Ohio Valley forts. James Madison and Alexander Hamilton organize a convention to draft a new Constitution. Like all works of committee, it is based on compromises, which include a bicameral congress, an Electoral College, and slavery. As will be seen, Jackson as president finds himself "tripping over the loose ends the drafters left." Westerners want only free access to the Mississippi and protection from *some* government. The enterprising James Wilkinson plots with the Spanish governor of New Orleans, Estevan Miru, to bring trans-Appalachia into Spanish control, and then, believing independence will prove less provocative, pushes the region as a buffer between Mexico and the U.S.

Talk of forming a State of Franklin makes North Carolina reassert its jurisdiction and set up institutions of civil justice. A judge and a solicitor (prosecutor) are needed. The judgeship goes to Jackson's politically connected former roommate, John McNairy, who gives him the other job and in the summer of 1788, they head to Nashville, the capital of the Mero district. When they stop in Jonesboro to await armed guards, Jackson argues a legal case against Waightstill Avery, dean of the North Carolina bar. Stung by the veteran's sarcasm, the 21-year-old demands a duel. They meet but deliberately miss one another. Jackson has nothing to show for himself except intelligence and ambition, and primitive Nashville seems made for him.

Chapter 5

Chapter 5 Summary and Analysis

"Shadowed Love" describes the tortured path to marriage of Andrew and Rachel Jackson. She is the beautiful, black-eyed, dark-haired, oval-faced, dimpled daughter of a late pioneer. She marries Lewis Robards in Kentucky at the age of seventeen and moves in with his widowed mother, who takes in a boarder. Robards grows jealous and sends Rachel home to Nashville, where she finds that her mother has taken in Jackson as a lodger. Rachel is unhappy alone and knows divorce requires a special act of the state legislature, so she takes Robards back. They live near the Donelson home, where Robards grows jealous of Jackson. They have words, Jackson challenges him to a duel, Robards declines and leaves for Kentucky, and Jackson moves elsewhere.

Anthony Fagot is a St. Louis-based merchant wishing to open profitable commerce with New Orleans. In between, Spaniards, Americans, and Indians compete for control of the Mississippi. Fagot tells Jackson that friendship between the U.S. and Spain will benefit both and asks for an introduction to Brig. Gen. Daniel Smith. Smith receives him, listens to his plans, but does not support the Mero District's secession. This reveals young Jackson's napvety about frontier diplomacy, the beginning of his gravitation "toward military command rather than civilian office," and his sharing of white settlers' siege mentality about the Indians. Every able-bodied male is expected to serve in the militia, whose officers are vetted for merit and ability rather than wealth or connections. Westerners tolerate no incompetence in the officers they elect, because this could cost lives and property.

By the time of Rachel's second abandonment, she and Jackson are romantically involved. Hearing Robards might be returning, Mrs. Donelson takes her to friends in Spanish-ruled Natchez. Robards initiates a divorce on the grounds of desertion and adultery. Partisans claim that Jackson returns to Natchez, marries Rachel, and brings her home in the autumn of 1791, but in legal documents, she calls herself "Rachel Jackson" in January and there is no record of a marriage. Jackson has no idea he will run for president and have to explain his actions, both are twenty-two, he has few prospects, and love seems worth any risk. Jackson makes Rachel the "emotional center of his universe." Learning late in 1793 that the divorce has just gone through, they wed quietly in January, and it becomes a non-issue until Jackson gains fame.

Chapter 6

Chapter 6 Summary and Analysis

"Republicans and Revolutionaries" examines the beginnings of Jackson's political career. When Congress creates the Southwest Territory, Jackson loses his job, but Gov. William Blount names him district attorney. Jackson's official duties are light, so he takes on clients, bartering for his fees in a cash-poor region. Jackson also sells diverse merchandise through Samuel Donelson's store, and speculates in land that he receives for legal services. In 1794/95, he partners with Overton, visits Philadelphia, and is swindled by savvy merchant David Allison. He avoids debtors' prison by selling the store and stock. Jackson also buys and sells slaves, the first in exchange for legal services, two others through his father-in-law's estate, and many are attached to lands that he purchases. He doubtless accepts that the Bible allows forced labor.

The summer of 1789 brings the overthrow of French King Louis XVI, and as fighting extends to the rest of Europe, Americans take sides. Washington remains neutral, Secretary of State Jefferson insists that the national honor demands support of France, while treasury Secretary Hamilton backs Britain. Jefferson's followers (Republicans) trust the common people to rule themselves and prefer minimal control, exercised at the state level. Hamilton's followers (Federalists) distrust human nature and rely of government to constrain it. They favor the Constitution over the libertarian Declaration of 1776, and trust the central government over the states. The debate positions the moneyed Northeast against the landed South and West. As ideological battles grow ugly, Jefferson resigns, freeing Washington to name Chief Justice John Jay to negotiate a "treaty of friendship and commerce" with Britain. The U.S. seeks an end to "impressing" American seamen and British evacuation of the Ohio Valley. Jay returns with a "half loaf," which Jefferson condemns as a sell-out.

Jackson observes this partisanship while in Philadelphia and worries about civil war. While not yet a party man, his prejudices lean him towards the Republicans. Jackson considers the Jay treaty unconstitutional, because the Senate is not previously consulted. The 1795 census puts the Southwest Territory over the minimum for statehood, and Jackson attends a constitutional convention in Knoxville in January 1796. He influences deliberations without making motions. While no orator, he is an effective speaker, never at a loss for words, and able to beat down opponents when necessary. Tennessee's constitution is sent east, where Federalists object to it and try to keep the heavily Republican region disenfranchised until after the 1796 election. They are foiled, but Tennessee enjoys only one representative until the 1800 census. Jackson is that congressman, too young to be its senator. He claims not to want a longer absence from home.

Jackson arrives in Philadelphia during the "short term," but too late to hear Washington's farewell address, which warns against partisanship and foreign entanglements. Jackson endorses the sentiments, but protests the monarchical style of

the address. Jackson speaks up in debate about compensating John Sevier and the Tennessee militia for expenses in fighting the Cherokees. Claiming they have "overstepped" their authority, the War Department declines, and Jackson speaks as an inhabitant of the region. The rank-in-file abandon their fields and risk their lives and cannot be expected to pay their own way. It sets a dangerous precedent to have them inquire whether orders are approved before obeying. Senior senators find this compelling and Congress appropriates $23,000. There is talk of elevating him to the Senate, from which Blount has been expelled. Blount returns to Tennessee a local hero and becomes speaker of the state senate. Jackson defends him and a grateful Blount engineers Jackson's election to the Senate.

BOOKRAGS

Chapter 7

Chapter 7 Summary and Analysis

Cherokee myths vary on tribal origins, but they are entrenched as the most aggressive people in the region, when half their numbers fall to smallpox in the 1730s. They ally with Britain against France, but help themselves to Fort Loudon, triggering a conflict that outlasts the French and Indian War. The Cherokees prefer the British to the Americans, who are nearer and more threatening. They and the Shawnees heal an age-old, bloody rift at Chota in May 1776, in order to stand together against the "common enemy of all red men."

John Sevier is the West's greatest Indian fighter prior to Jackson. Descended from Huguenots, he grows up trading with the Indians. In 1773, he settles in the Smokies, where a land deal splits the Cherokee nation. During the Revolution, Sevier discovers a talent for warfare, leading desperate comrades in defending their outposts. The settlers take the offensive in the "Chota Expedition," a legendary mountain campaign. In the meantime, Sevier joins rebels at their great victory at King's Mountain. Military fame translates into political power, as Sevier heads the movement for a State of Franklin and serves as its only governor. His arrest for treason by North Carolina only increases his popularity. Neighbors obtain his release and elect him to the state senate. He allies with Blount to get Tennessee admitted to the Union, and is elected governor.

Sevier and Jackson "cross swords" over the 1796 election of militia commanders. The governor commissions several junior officers to bolster the chances of his friend, and Jackson tries to block the unconstitutional and dangerous action. Jackson claims to be shocked that Sevier would slander him and demands redress, but the most popular man in Tennessee refuses to be called out by every upstart hoping to build a reputation. He mollifies Jackson, but tensions remain. They maintain civil relations during the Senate term in 1797, where Tennessee has a stake in debates over public lands. The U.S. wants to use them to further peace with the Indians, while Tennesseans want first priority. Favoring the Indians, Sevier holds, will only perpetuate atrocities and immigrants may look to Spain for help. The federal government exists to help states, not to harm them. Jackson presents the argument to Congress and the president, but Adams agrees only to new negotiations with the Cherokees.

Across the Atlantic, Napoleon rescues the French Republic. Jackson cheers him, particularly when he appears poised to invade England and eliminate tyranny. This puts him at odds with Adams and the arch-Federalists. When Adams purges dissenters from office, Jackson lashes out that "virtue, talent, and expediency" no longer count - just "loyalty to the administration." Jackson sees this as more dangerous even than the establishment of religion. This is odd and napve, considering his own early actions as president.

Chapter 8

Chapter 8 Summary and Analysis

In the spring of 1798, Jackson resigns his Senate seat without explanation and heads home. He later admits the body's meager achievements are not worth the tedium and his time is too valuable. He has the temperament of an executive, a leader, not a follower. Jefferson, who presides in the Senate later recalls Jackson as a "prisoner of overpowering emotions." Jackson also misses his wife and knows she misses him, which brings on physical ailments. The ride to Philadelphia is too long to consider taking Rachel along.

In Nashville, Jackson resumes speculation, farming, and commerce, and accepts Sevier's offer of a superior court judgeship. Neither legal training nor his passionate personality qualifies Jackson, but few westerners disapprove of his preference for justice over law wherever they diverge. Riding a circuit he inspires stories that make Tennesseans believe he is a man to watch and respect. State legislators en masse beg Jackson to reconsider when rumors spread that he may step down. His talents are too valuable to lose, they plead, and Jackson accedes to the "popular will" - a major theme of his public life. The only provision is that his health permits. Life expectancies after surviving infancy are reasonably long, barring accidents and epidemics, but his family history gives Jackson, aged thirty-five, reason to worry.

In 1802, the "true prize of Tennessee politics" - the position of major general in the militia - comes open. It brings esteem and better pay, and does not conflict constitutionally with his judgeship. Having completed three terms as governor, Sevier must sit out a term before running again and he seeks to parlay his Indian-fighter reputation into the command. This shatters the Jackson-Sevier truce. Both campaigns and the vote end in a tie. Jackson refuses a second ballot and insists that Gov. Archibald Roane (a long-time friend), decide. On Apr. 1, 1802, Jackson becomes the "first warrior of the state," answerable only to his conscience and the state's defense needs. He deals often with the federal War Department.

The Sevier rift deepens when Jackson, supporting Roane's reelection, resurrects old charges of land fraud. Sevier is elected and the officials cannot avoid one another in Knoxville. During one confrontation, Sevier challenges Jackson to draw arms when Jackson holds only a cane, points out Jackson's lack of military experience, and, talks about his running off "with another man's wife." The next day, Jackson issues a written challenge, which the governor evades for as long as possible. Each calls the other a "poltroon." Finally, they agree to meet out-of-state. Near Kingston, TN, Jackson demands satisfaction on the spot. Sevier refuses. Accounts of what follows differ and are amplified by partisans. Sevier considers Jackson's challenge politically motivated and refuses to risk his life over politics. Jackson sees politics being based in honor, reputation, and principle, which mean more to him than life.

BOOKRAGS

Chapter 9

Chapter 9 Summary and Analysis

"Conspiracy" shows how Jackson's dealings with Aaron Burr nearly derail his political career before it starts. Like others in the South and West, Jackson is upset by the undeclared naval war with France and with the Alien and Sedition Acts. Jefferson bests Adams in the bitter 1800 elections and his administration, while more sympathetic to the masses, hardly ushers in popular rule. The census shows a "healthy rate of growth," which will lead to a shortage of land for the 95% of the population that are farmers and lead to the same social problems as in overcrowded Europe. Thus, when Napoleon offers to sell the strategic port of New Orleans and the Louisiana hinterlands - the whole western half of the Mississippi Valley - Jefferson cannot resist. The Constitution says noting about acquiring territories and there is no time to pass an amendment, so Jefferson accepts and gets Congress to ratify his treaty and fund the $15 million price.

Vice President Burr has parlayed marriage to a moneyed widow into a lucrative law practice in New York, where he and Hamilton are bitter rivals. As Jefferson's running mate in 1800, Burr ties him in the Electoral College and refuses to yield until Hamilton declares Jefferson the lesser of two evils. When Hamilton's campaigning denies Burr the New York governorship in 1804, he demands a duel. They face one another in Weehawken, NJ; Hamilton is hit and dies next day. Burr is indicted for murder but flees westward in 1805. In Nashville, Jackson fktes him and they agree that Jefferson's failure to purchase Florida gives hope of taking all of Spanish America by force. Burr advises Jackson to prepare the Tennessee militia, which Jackson puts on "short notice." Bypassing Sevier and the War Department, Jackson writes Jefferson about Tennessee's eagerness to defend American honor.

Days later, Jackson is shocked to learn of "adventurers" plotting to separate the Southwest from the Union, led by Gen. James Wilkinson and a Col. Swartout - Burr's acquaintance. Jackson realizes that if Burr is a traitor, he is an unwitting accomplice. He alerts William Claiborne, governor of Orleans Territory to "enemies within," and conjectures on the conspirators' plans to Sen. Daniel Smith, whom he asks to alert Jefferson personally (others in the administration perhaps being conspirators). Only late in 1806 has Jefferson has heard enough to authorize a federal indictment against Burr in Kentucky. Exonerated, Burr heads to Tennessee, where he and Jackson have a strained meeting. Jackson believes Burr's claim to want only to "smite Spain and expand the realm of American liberty," and they part wary friends.

The conspiracy falls apart as Wilkinson writes a self-serving letter to Jackson, betraying Burr and denying any part in a plot, and another to Jefferson about raising substantial forces in New Orleans to attack Vera Cruz. He then forwards a "ciphered" letter from Burr claiming British naval support for "our project." Another warrant leads to a manhunt that lasts until February 1807, and a treason trial that is a summer sensation. Jefferson brings pressure and money to bear, but Chief Justice John Marshall presides. His life's

goal is to set the judiciary on an equal footing with the other branches and he rules that mere intent to commit treason is not treason. Convinced that Wilkinson is the real villain and Jefferson's vendetta has "nothing to do with national defense," Jackson is disenchanted.

Chapters 10-11

Chapters 10-11 Summary and Analysis

"Affair of Honor" examines another instance of Jackson and dueling. At forty, he finds himself in Sevier's position years earlier - a mark for younger men out to win a reputation. It also pulls in how Burr's victory over Hamilton is political suicide. "All Must Feel the Injuries" continues the story as Jackson kills an opponent and begins recovering from his own wound.

Since his disadvantaged youth, Jackson loves racehorses. At sixteen, he is authorized to appraise horseflesh and by 1804, with the acquisition of the famous Truxton, he is a leading force in Nashville's racing community. In 1805, Joseph Erwin wagers $2,000 against Truxton, and reneges. Thomas Swann intervenes, tangles verbally with Jackson and calls him out, but is brushed aside. Charles Dickinson, Erwin's son-in-law and partner, disparages Rachel, Swann confronts Jackson in a tavern, is thrashed, and runs to the papers. Nashville finds the "triangular feud" entertaining, but city elders seek to diffuse it. Nathaniel McNairy takes offense, calls Jackson out, but settles without firing. When Dickinson returns from New Orleans, still angry and talking to the papers, Jackson cannot stand it. Jackson receives a non-lethal wound, but the more skilled Dickinson bleeds out hours later. Jackson resents the city's two papers draping their pages in mourning, and armed with the list of petitioners, goes after the instigator. It appears another duel is in the offing, but friends convince him this will damage his reputation permanently. He must not mortify his friends or deny the nation of his talents.

The conflict for the mastery of Europe catches American shipping in the middle, as many sailors desert the Royal Navy in America's neutral ports and U.S. shipmasters hire them to alleviate manpower problems. Early in 1807 off Hampton Roads, HMS *Leopard* opens fire on the U.S. frigate *Chesapeake,* boards her, and carries off four prisoners, including three U.S. citizens. "Patriotic indignation" erupts, convincing Jefferson to settle matters with Britain. He moves slowly, shutting territorial waters to British warships and demanding both an apology and reparations. London agrees but refuses to alter its official policy - and intensifies the frequency of seizures, the sooner to strangle Europe. Jackson shudders at the national humiliation.

Jefferson next gets Congress to embargo American trade with Europe, but New Englanders see it as an impingement on their commercial freedom. They take up smuggling, elect Federalist candidates, and talk of seceding. Farmers in the West and South are angry that their crops are piling up and prices are falling in the glut. Economic depression triggers foreclosures and lawsuits over debt. Jackson buys his brother-in-law John Caffery's farm so he can repay McNairy, and McNairy sues Jackson over the first purchase option. Westerners demand protection from creditors, but the government can do little because most creditors are also debtors. Jackson urges his fellow citizens to concentrate on the true cause of their distress - Britain - and frames this crisis as a second defense of American liberty and independence.

Chapters 12-13

Chapters 12-13 Summary and Analysis

These chapters fill in details on Jackson's life as he waits to go to war with Britain. The short "Master and Slaves" examines Jackson's record as a slaveholder in an era when attitudes are in flux, and then turns to the beginnings of the Jackson family. An 1808 congressional ban on importing additional slaves assuages consciences but, with the current stock reproducing fast enough to keep up with demand, prices increase. Owners use euphemisms and pretend it is a labor system like others, and assign to agents such non-idyllic aspects as tearing families apart. In 1804, Jackson buys the Hermitage. The new log house is rustic by comparison with what the Jacksons leave, but improvements soon begin, with slaves doing the heavy work. Their numbers grow as the operation expands. By 1820, Jackson holds four dozen, increasing to a hundred in 1829 - far short of the largest U.S. slaveholders, but significant in Tennessee. Jackson treats slavery as a business matter but tries, humanely, to avoid separating children from their mothers. He demands obedience, is brutally severe with offenders, but houses and feeds his slaves well by the standards of the day. As he comes to spend more time away from home, he depends on overseers who often fail to balance authority and kindness, affecting his reputation.

At the end of 1808, the Jacksons become parents. They have been married at least fifteen years and have always wanted children. There are indications that either may be sterile. In December, Elizabeth Donelson, Rachel's sister-in-law, gives birth to twins, and they arrange for the Jacksons to adopt one, Andrew Jackson, Jr. The new parents are 41, already old by contemporary standards, and spoil him as grandparents are wont to do. The son's childhood is as different from the father's as imaginable - on purpose.

"Nor Infamy upon Us" are words excerpted from Jackson's announcement to the Tennessee militia that war is near. When baby Andrew arrives, Jackson is experiencing business troubles. The closest large market is Natchez, 500 miles away, and partners are frequently unreliable. Chronically short of money to meet his debts and unable to pay them fast enough, he complains about "blue devils" and contemplates starting over. He yearns for war with Britain, which will draw in Spain. In 1808, Republicans are divided between Jefferson's handpicked successor, James Madison, and James Monroe who, as Minister to Britain, battles impressment. Jackson stumps for Monroe, but Madison is nominated and elected. Jackson blames Congress for the failure to act against Britain, knowing the president cannot declare war.

In 1810, Congress is infused with new blood, including Henry Clay, immediately made speaker and eager to vindicate the national honor, safeguard the frontiers, and secure America's future. Annexing Canada can pay for the war. A year later, John C. Calhoun enters the House, makes friends with Clay, joins the influential Foreign Affairs Committee, and uses it as a pulpit for denouncing Britain and advocating a second war of independence. While the "war hawks" push, Jackson prepares the reorganized

Tennessee militia, whose western district he commands. Gov. At a murder trial he attends, Jackson is asked by a junior member of the defense team, Thomas Hart Benton, for a position as his military aide. Benton is eager to fight Britain. Jackson gives Benton the job. Madison continues resisting a declaration but authorizes raising a 50,000-man force. Jackson summons Western Tennessee to arms as a "vindication of American identity."

Chapters 14-15

Chapters 14-15 Summary and Analysis

"Native Genius" provides background on the Shawnee leader Tecumseh, who is exciting Southern Indians to war against the whites. Emerging from the shadow of his charismatic brother, "The Prophet," who preaches Indian self-sufficiency, Tecumseh travels village-to-village forming military alliances among tribes long cheated and corrupted by whites. Only a few are reticent to join, but these inform Gov. William Henry Harrison that Tecumseh is being armed in Canada. Harrison warns Tecumseh that the redcoats cannot protect themselves, let alone the Indians. In August 1810, Tecumseh leads a delegation representing various tribes to Vincennes, the capital of Indiana Territory, where speaks for all "red men," vowing to kill any chiefs who sell land to whites. As Harrison defends U.S. treatment of Indians, Tecumseh declares him a liar and departs. They meet more coolly the next day and Tecumseh agrees to wait while the Great Chief - the U.S. president - considers Harrison's report, hoping that the Great Spirit will induce the president to relinquish Indian lands. Jackson knows Tecumseh and the Prophet only by reputation, but realizes persuasive leaders with British arms are dangerous. In 1808, Jackson is duped by stories of whites taking part in Creek war parties and writes Jefferson for additional arms. Jackson is unwilling to let his guard down and pays militia expenses from his own pocket. The poor, he believes, make the best soldiers, for the rich are unreliable.

Gov. Blunt has his own reasons for fanning fear of the Indians. His idea of peace requires that the Cherokees and Chickasaws be exiled west of the Mississippi. There they will live among people of similar "manners and customs" and not lose their "national character," as they must among whites - if they survive at all. Tennessee would benefit by increased land and elimination of friction. The two tribes, relatively "civilized," will exercise a "calming influence on their new neighbors," benefiting the whole U.S. Jackson eventually agrees with this position, but currently needs incidents that demand "swift retribution." When Blount is slow to respond, Jackson sets a deadline and rallies support for an attack on "the heart of the Creek nation."

"Old Hickory" continues the saga of Jackson's Indian fighting as the War of 1812 begins. Madison's bill of particulars to Congress speaks of British violations on the seas and, almost as an afterthought, consorting with Indians, which for Jackson and most Westerners is the true reason for going to war. Tecumseh is happy to see British and Americans fight one another, as his race war is going badly. He forces William Hull to break off his invasion of Canada. Trapped in Ohio, his obsessive fear of Indians makes him surrender Detroit and Fort Dearborn. Escorts evacuating the garrison turn on the whites and reportedly eat one officer's heart. News of this "northern debacle" stuns Nashville, and Jackson uses it to inspire enlistments. Tennessee adopts the nickname "Volunteer State" as nearly 3,000 step forward, accepting various lengths of service from two months to a year. The War Department orders them to defend New Orleans, but Jackson worries about Tecumseh during their absence. Most of his recruits have

never been away from home. They must supply their own blankets, uniforms, foul-weather gear, and weapons. As many lack weapons, Jackson requests swords and pistols but receives government scrip that cannot be converted locally to cash. Jackson shames a banker into advancing enough so the troops need not march unarmed. Leaving Rachel is hard because she is ambivalent about the conflict. Knowing she is very religious while he is not, Jackson speaks piously to allay her fears. Providence will reunite them and smile on America's cause. Rachel must bear all with "Christian cheerfulness."

Early in 1813, the Tennesseans depart in 30 boats down the Cumberland. Extreme frost tests the troops but mishaps are few. Ice on the Ohio delays them and it is Jan. 25 before they "thrill at the Mississippi. Jackson sees why it must be defended and kept American. They are greeted politely in Natchez, where they "hurry up and wait" under orders from Wilkinson, whom Jackson still distrusts. Wilkinson is in command because in wartime the national government claims command of all forces, which traditionally march to battle separately in two columns: regulars and militia, with the former considering themselves superior. Jackson acquiesces, pointing out that this contradicts Washington's orders and fears "indolence creates disquiet." They drill, clean weapons, practice shooting, and stay ready to march on a moment's notice.

Jackson receives a bizarre, postdated letter from the new secretary of war, John Armstrong. Without explanation, it dismisses the militia and orders all property acquired at public expense to be surrendered to Wilkinson. They have the president's thanks. For most of the next decade Jackson will fume at this "economizing run amok," wondering if Armstrong and Wilkinson are contriving to weaken Western defenses, sell out New Orleans, discredit the militia, or compel the Tennesseans to enlist in Wilkinson's regulars. He protests vigorously to Armstrong and asks if anyone realizes the hardship that the men have faced and will face returning home -at their personal expense. Jackson expects reimbursement and supplies en route. He writes Felix Grundy, Tennessee's war-hawk congressman about this plot to destroy the militia. Setting out through "savage country," they suffer short supplies and the Army sends no more. Jackson has credit in Nashville but no cash on him. The men see him, bucking orders and willing to risk career and property for them and someone likens him to a hickory branch, which is thin but impossible to break. It catches on and Jackson becomes "Old Hickory." He signs a $1,000 note to procure provisions and the journey home is easier than feared. Nashville turns out to greet them.

Chapters 16-17

Chapters 16-17 Summary and Analysis

"Sharp Knife" follows the Indian battles during the War of 1812, which yield Old Hickory a second nickname, this one bestowed by his enemies. In the spring of 1813, Jackson's protygy and aide-de-camp, Thomas Hart Benton, breaks with him and convinces Nashville that he is a rogue. By September, Jackson is of a mind to thrash Benton and his brother Jesse, and is shot in his left shoulder and arm trying to whip Jesse. A melee ensues. Carried away, Jackson forbids amputation and the bullets are left inside. For weeks, he cannot move. A decade later, Thomas and Jackson meet as senators united by the danger of John Quincy Adams. Jesse goes to his grave damning Jackson as a "poltroon." Duels have "lost their cachet" and Tennesseans wonder why a man of Jackson's age and reputation is "brawling with youngsters." Luckily for Jackson, gossip shifts to Fort Mims, AL, where William Weatherford, chief of the Red Stick faction, massacres settler families and green troops An Army burial detail gags at the sight of the brutality. Westerners are used to occasional raids, but this marks a change in scope and shows premeditation. It is proof that Tecumseh's preaching is working. Madison recalls the Tennessee volunteers to duty and Jackson orders his troops to Fayetteville. He disingenuously assures them that he is ready to return to the field; his left arm, in fact, is useless (and never fully heals).

The Red Sticks are a minority among Creeks and shunned by the neighboring Cherokees. Urging his lieutenants to "cultivate the friendly Indians," Jackson leads a force "at a blistering pace" after the Red Sticks to prevent further massacres and to execute swift justice. They overtake the elusive enemy near the Ten Islands of the Coosa River. Jackson orders Coffee's cavalry to reduce the Creek town of Tallushatchee, and they do so "in elegant style" - code for a massacre. Jackson takes charge of an infant survivor, Lyncoya, whom he and Rachel adopt, as they have another boy, Theodore. Southern tribes call Jackson "Sharp Knife." When surviving Red Sticks menace a smaller band of friendly Creeks, Jackson rushes 2,000 troops by night to Talladega, hoping to show that friendship with whites has tangible value. They close on the Red Sticks at sunrise, form up in battle order, and attack, hoping the friendlies will attack from the rear. The Red Sticks recover from the initial shock and break the center of the Tennessee line, but Jackson fills the gap with seasoned cavalry and the militia rallies. The Tennesseans kill three hundred and sustain seventeen losses. Jackson expresses pride in *all* of his men. They return to Ten Islands, where hoped-for supplies have not arrived. The half-starved men are near mutiny.

Since the defeat at Prophetstown, Tecumseh tries to restrain the Indians until the red and blue coats begin fighting one another. In December, earthquakes strike Tecumseh, who happens to be at the epicenter, is clever enough not to deny he predicts them. Early Anglo-Indian victories further improve his standing, and the Red Sticks rising suggests that the South is with him. In 1813, however, the British fail to exploit their victories and decline to provide leaving Tecumseh arms and ammunition to fight the

Americans on his own. Shielding women and children from American wrath becomes a priority, and Tecumseh follows the British in retreat. The British commander stands down before Harrison's inferior forces. Casualties are light - except among the Indians, including Tecumseh, who falls fighting gallantly. His death demoralizes the Indians.

"The River of Blood" watches Indian operations after Tecumseh's death, which Jackson applauds. Col. William Martin informs Jackson that the men expect to be released by Dec. 10, but Jackson reminds him that they have not completed their twelve-month hitch. Officers try to avert a showdown by asking leave for the men to go home, provision themselves, and return. Jackson harangues his superiors about food and clothing, and claims, disingenuously, that discharging the militia is the governor's purview. On Dec. 9, Jackson orders Coffee to prevent or subdue any mutiny and orders one brigade that is preparing to leave at dawn to assemble in formation. He surrounds it with loyal units and aims artillery at it. Admonishing the men not to dishonor themselves, families, and country, he serves notice that they will leave over his dead body. Jackson's determination to die in the artillery barrage convinces them to retire to quarters. No one present ever forgets Jackson's performance.

One volunteer is David Crockett, a 27-year-old failed fortune-seeker with a knack for storytelling. He leaves an account of the "elegant" Battle of Tallushatchee, which tells of burning households full of Indians alive, and then ravenously eating potatoes baked in the fires and coated with human fat. He says that conditions at Ten Island become so bad that Jackson quietly discharges the worst malcontents and allows others to refresh, restock, and prepare for the final battle. As Crockett rides home, 21-year-old Lt. Sam Houston, leading the 39th Regiment, rides in. Houston is a romantic soul unable to live a farmer's life. He has spent five years living among the Cherokees, whose "wild liberty" suits him. Nearly everyone who serves under Jackson views him as a father figure, but Houston, an early orphan, needs someone to replace Chief Oolooteka. Fearless, principled, and devoted, Jackson is all Houston hopes to be.

In February 1814, 18-year-old John Wood retires early from picket duty with an officer's permission, is challenged by another officer, responds insolently, is arrested, court-martialed, and condemned to death. Jackson, who generally forgives first offenders, needs an example and allows Wood's execution to proceed. An aide records that the decision pains Jackson, but it produces "the happiest effects" when the militia attacks Weatherford and the main body of the Red Sticks at Horseshoe Bend. The Indians have built an "astonishing" breastwork that exposes attackers to double fire while protecting themselves fully. Jackson exhorts his men not to retreat without orders - for that will bring a death sentence. His men have never stormed a stronghold. Two small cannons open fire at 10:30 AM on Mar. 26, distracting the defenders, and the frontal attack follows with drum roll and animating war whoop. The Tennesseans take heavy fire at the wall, fire through the portholes, and scramble over. Houston leads the assault, ignoring several wounds. Dark falls before the last defenders fall. No one escapes. Jackson describes the carnage as "terrible" to Rachel, and another officer writes, "The river ran red with blood." Horseshoe Bend remains the bloodiest single white victory in the Indian wars and proves decisive in the struggle for the Southwest. Weatherford, however, escapes again, but, unable to bear endangering women and children, he rides into Fort

Jackson and asks Jackson not to exact terms too onerous for a conquered people to accept. What the two warlords discuss is unrecorded, but Jackson releases Weatherford, with a promise to persuade the remaining Red Sticks to quit.

Chapters 18-19

Chapters 18-19 Summary and Analysis

"Peace Giver" looks at Jackson's transferring to the U.S. Army and concluding the Treaty of Fort Jackson, while "The Spanish Front" shows Jackson dealing with the remaining threat in Florida before he can turn attention to New Orleans, the war's "prize." War normally unites rivals in common cause, but increases the political void in the War of 1812. Federalists blame Republicans for disrupting commerce and refuse to cooperate in Congress, while Republicans lump Federalists together with Tories as traitors. Clay declares that Madison is "unfit for the storms of war" - too benevolent, hesitant, and tardy. Napoleon's faltering at Moscow and retreat frees British forces to concentrate on America. In the summer of 1814, troops land in Maryland, march on Washington, and, lacking sufficient numbers to occupy the capitol, burn select landmarks in retaliation for an American raid on York. This fires Americans' patriotism, boosted by Francis Scott Key's verses about Fort McHenry, set to a British drinking song. Federalists meet in Hartford, CT, to discuss secession and constitutional amendments to limit Southern control of the government. Hearing this, Jackson swears that he would hang the ringleaders, for the Union is "the best guarantee of popular rule, and vice versa."

As he leads them home, Jackson congratulates his men on eliminating in mere weeks a threat that has loomed for twenty years. In Nashville, word comes of Jackson's appointment to command of the U.S. Seventh Military District as a brevetted Major General. The War Department wants a share of his Horseshoe Bend glory and offers an honor too great to refuse. The job, which covers Tennessee, Mississippi Territory, and Louisiana, entails negotiating peace with the Creeks. Hardhearted and practical, Jackson has concluded that Indians and Americans cannot live in "peaceful proximity," because the former cling to warring tribal ways and the latter are "endlessly pushy." He proposes to the friendly Creeks trading ancestral lands for farmlands elsewhere. Big Warrior reminds Jackson that the friendly Creeks have restrained the Red Sticks as much as possible, and a "punitive peace" will make British machinations easier. Jackson claims that separating Creek lands from Spanish Florida will keep the Creeks out of harm's way when war comes. If the Creeks sign Jackson's treaty, they will be fed, clothed, and protected; if they refuse, they are one with the enemy. When the chiefs reluctantly sign, Jackson writes to the War Department for supplies to keep them from turning to the British.

A small band of Creek intransigents heads for Mobile, and Jackson seeks but is refused *carte blanche* to deal with them. Since 1810, the U.S. has occupied Mobile under its interpretation of the Louisiana Purchase and the Spanish, too weak to challenge this, garrison Pensacola, 60 miles to the east. Without explicitly violating his orders, Jackson visits and intentionally offends the commandant, Mateo Gonzblez Manrique, hoping that Spain will declare war, but doubting it would risk opening its extensive territories to conquest. The new Secretary of War, James Monroe, writes to restrain Jackson, but in

the month it takes for orders to reach Florida, Jackson warns Gonzblez to expect no mercy, frightens Blount into sending reinforcements, and mobilizes everyone possible against a threat to "subjugate America." Because it controls the Mississippi, New Orleans is the ultimate prize, but Florida must be secured to thwart an assault on Louisiana. The anticipated invasion occurs in September, but is driven back.

A "committee of safety" in New Orleans writes, explaining fears of a slave insurrection and the loyalty of the French and Spanish elements. Jackson dislikes the tone and sternly orders them to recruit blacks with inducements equal to those given to white soldiers. White planters oppose arming blacks and Gov. William Claiborne urges him to rescind the order. The prospects of a difficult New Orleans defense inspire Jackson to finish matters in Florida. With Coffee's reinforcements, Jackson marches on Pensacola, willing to risk his commission to save the U.S., but doubting a hero will be sacked after a *fait accompli*. On Nov. 6, Jackson demands Gonzblez's surrender before capturing the town. The Spanish and British "blow up the works," sparing Jackson the trouble, and, freed to move to New Orleans, he reports: mission accomplished.

John Quincy Adams inherits his parents' "intolerance of human imperfection" and generally keeps to himself. When his father loses the 1800 presidential race, he blames Jefferson's "pimping to the popular passions." In 1814, Madison calls on his vast diplomatic experience to negotiate peace with England in 1814. Henry Clay and Albert Gallatin accompany Adams to Ghent to keep an eye on him, and enmity between Adams and Clay parallels that of John Adams and Benjamin Franklin 1779-82. The Americans agree that the British opening position is "intolerable" and hold out for reversion to prewar borders, an end to impressment, indemnity for damages, and a mutual foreswearing of using Indians in any future conflicts. Negotiations stall as both sides wait to see what will happen when "Wellington's invincibles" attack New Orleans.

Chapter 20

Chapter 20 Summary and Analysis

"Pirates and Patriots" sets the scene for the Battle of New Orleans. When Louisiana joins the Union in 1812, most citizens care only that the price of cotton remain high. Statehood raises taxes and creates "anarchic politics," among the Americans who vaunt their power over French Creoles who cling to Old World ways and the Spanish, who hate U.S. laws and customs. Both groups hope Napoleon will end their "American exile." The war is unpopular and the governor is certain that the British will prevail. Indolence is a way of life in New Orleans. The one group with a positive attitude are the 500 pirates operating in the bayous, swamps, and islands around New Orleans. The best situated, Jean Laffite, has a $500 bounty on his head, which he doubles for Gov. Claiborne's head. Lafitte buys African slaves cheaply in the West Indies and smuggles them into Louisiana, where a federal ban keeps prices high. With his brothers he raids Spanish commerce and ignores U.S. prohibitions against landing and selling the spoils.

British Col. Edward Nichols' squadron of warships invades the Laffites' "entrepreneurial idyll" at Barataria Bay in the late summer of 1814, and Nichols asks the pirates to spread the word among Louisianans that he and a large contingent of friendly Indians are about to expel the American usurpers. All who cooperate will avoid harm. Lafitte is offered the rank of captain, land for his men, and amnesty on booty already collected. Otherwise, his camp will be leveled. Using the two weeks he is given to think over the offer, Laffite offers his services to Claiborne. The governor is in favor but legislators in Louisiana and Washington are opposed. Naval commander Daniel Patterson is ordered to attack Barataria. Fearing both fleets, Laffite flees.

Britain will sign no peace treaty until New Orleans' fate is determined on the battlefield. It has never accepted an American presence west of the Mississippi. Direct access to the city, 100 miles upstream from the entrance to the Gulf, is too dangerous for warships subject to tides and winds and subject to bombardment at known bottlenecks. Indirect routes lead from lakes Borgne or Pontchartrain, from Barataria Bay, or from Florida via Baton Rouge. Jackson knows that this longest route may have been knocked out only temporarily as he hurries to New Orleans in late November to deal with the other approaches. The British Navy owns the seas and carries forces that substantially outnumber Jackson's. The city's natives are likely to be useless as defenders.

Jackson arrives on Dec. 1, 1814, and confronts the negativism. After assuring people that he will prevail against admittedly stronger forces and denying Britain will restore Louisiana to Spain, he lays out what actions warrant the death penalty under the articles of war. On the day this is published, word comes that British warships are operating on Lake Borgne, a day's march from New Orleans. Jackson issues a second proclamation, putting New Orleans and environs under "strict martial law," requiring passports to enter or leave the area and setting a nine p.m. curfew. He also takes command of the motley

Louisiana militia, which is reluctant to take on "the best battlefield soldiers in the world." All fear Old Hickory, but he seeks to inspire more than that. He calls on native-born Americans to defend the liberty their fathers have won; Frenchmen he rallies against their nation's eternal enemies; Spaniards are called to vengeance for St. Sebastian and Pensacola; black enlistees he praises for answering his Mobile appeal better than he could have hoped. Jackson's authority to take these measures is debatable, but he leaves it to lawyers to argue while he prepares the city's defense.

Chapter 21

Chapter 21 Summary and Analysis

"Day of Deliverance" details the Battle of New Orleans. The British defeat American gunboats on Lake Borgne, land thousands of troops on a swampy island, and shift to shallow-draft boats for the risky 60-mile descent on New Orleans. Driving rain by day and frost by night keep the soldiers miserable, but confidence pervades the ranks. American defectors assure them of Jackson's weakness and the rich booty that awaits them. The 1,600-man vanguard lands with two small cannons in marshlands and slowly follows a canal to plantation country, imprisoning farmers to keep word from spreading. One escapes, however. Mortified at being taken while monitoring this approach, Gabriel Villery brings Jackson word on Dec. 23. This clarifies where at least some of the enemy is, but there is no way of knowing if this is a diversion. Unable to risk a wrong guess, Jackson prepares to attack that night. It could throw the British into panic and if retreat becomes necessary, his 1,500 men know the terrain. They are drawn from his three army regiments and Tennessee and New Orleans militias, including 200 Haitians. The men are raring to kill "redcoats" instead of "redskins." When citizens learn the British are six miles away, they spread stories of British rape, send women upstream, bury cash and jewels, and prepare to fight. Jackson's "implacable will" prevents a panic.

The British see Jackson arrive but expect no action before dawn. Hungry and cold, the British light fires on which an American-manned sailing vessel opens fire. Jackson then assaults the lines at several points, knocking out discipline. Hand-to-hand combat continues all night with both sides convinced they are winning. Jackson claims only a dense fog prevents a total rout. Morale rises in the city, which has no idea that negotiators in Ghent have dropped impossible demands, signed a treaty, and toasted one another at Christmas dinner. In New Orleans, rumors fly that Jackson will set fire to the city before abandoning it if the British prevail and legislators demand an answer. Jackson is too busy to jail them for treason. The committee of safety presses him to assign Laffite and his experienced gunners to two undermanned warships, but Jackson doubts their loyalty and discipline. When the committee obtains a writ from Judge Dominick Hall suspending federal prosecution against the pirates Jackson is mollified.

After the first meeting on Villery's plantation, both sides pull back a bit but still face one another across a level, open plain that runs to the city. The British send out spies to gather intelligence. Jackson posts 500-600 forward observers who report the full forces being put in place and gun batteries built Dec. 28-31. Wellington's brother-in-law who has bested Napoleon's best troops, Sir Edward Pakenham, arrives to lead the attack and British morale soars. If he wins, Pakenham becomes governor of Louisiana and an earl. Jackson's preparations parallel the British. He constructs earthworks for his cannons, digs ditches, and throws up parapets across the plain. An artillery duel commences on New Year's Day. The British are far better marksmen but fail to dislodge the Americans. When sharpshooters confront one another in the woods at ten in the morning, the Americans prevail and by noon, the British guns fall silent.

Pakenham must attack before Jackson can be reinforced. He is receiving intelligences from fleeing refugees. Jackson's objective is to keep the enemy off-balance through harassing bombardment, which Europeans deem unsporting. Americans, who have lost all chivalry on the frontier, also send assassins into camp. Noticing the psychological strain on his men, Pakenham plans to attack the weak point in the American lines on the far side of the river. He intends to seize the guns and turn them on the American batteries to begin a frontal assault. Crossing the river, however, is a massive, backbreaking task, requiring transport of boats from Lake Borgne. It is completed only on Jan. 6. The 1,400-man gets stuck in the mud and only a quarter is ready to fight at dawn on Jan. 7. Jackson discovers the strategy but has insufficient data to decide on a countermove. He dares not commit more than the minimum forces to repel this attack. He assigns his Louisiana and Kentucky militia to the right bank and hopes for the best. He inspects and upgrades his own fortifications daily, knowing the redcoats will mark straight at them, trusting the enemy to scatter under heavy fire. On Jan. 7, the American watchmen see increased activity in the British camp, Jackson orders the ramparts manned continuously.

The British form up for an attack on Jan. 8, listening for the attack across the river to begin. No sound comes and it is discovered that there are not enough scaling ladders to cross American defenses. Believing in boldness and courage, Pakenham nevertheless orders the assault to begin. Soldiers can innovate. They move out in daunting lines 60-70 men deep across a broad front; few Americans have seen anything like it. Jackson orders murderous fire and his troops are amazed to see new troops to move up to replace the fallen. The British swiftly reach a redoubt and engage the Americans in hand-to-hand combat, and drive them back. Before the British can take encouragement, Jackson orders the redoubt retaken by fresh troops who outnumber the enemy. The British yield after "immense slaughter." Lacking ladders, the British climb one another's shoulders and are cut down by the company. As murderous fire comes from the flank on the stalled ranks, the British break in confusion, are several times rallied by their officers, but when Pakenham and generals Gibbs and Keane are shot dead, they can no longer be rallied. Retreat turns to flight. Jackson is tempted to pursue and annihilate the enemy with untested troops but thinks it better to stay behind the defenses. Around eight in the morning, he and John Lambert, the ranking British officer, agree to a ceasefire to allow hospital and burial patrols to collect thousands of fallen - mostly British. Only eight Americans are killed and 14 wounded.

Chapter 22

Chapter 22 Summary and Analysis

"The Second Washington" closes out Jackson's service during the War of 1812. It dwells lightly with the issue of martial law, which some historians find a blot on his memory. When the retreating British fleet promptly retakes Fort Bowyer, Jackson feels justified in keeping martial law in effect word comes of a *ratified* peace treaty. The "stiff-necked" general is rather tactless in treating as speculators people like Vincent Nolte, with just claims for compensation for merchandise commandeered early in the city's defense. Jackson arrests a Louisiana legislator, Louis Louaillier, for publishing an article about his "abuse of power," and when Judge Hall issues a writ of habeas corpus, Jackson exiles him "from the limits of my encampment" for abetting mutiny. On Mar. 13, word comes by special courier from Washington, DC, that the war is ended. Jackson gives thanks to heaven, revokes and annuls his general order of Dec. 15, and pardons all military offenders. Less forgiving, Hall cites Jackson for contempt for ignoring his writ. Jackson responds not to the judge, but to his "fellow soldiers," explaining that the circumstances make his unpopular actions the lesser of two evils. Jackson is willing to sacrifice everything in the interests of his country. He appears before Hall, receives his $1,000 fine, and is carried aloft as a hero to his quarters by his jubilant troops.

The war is hard on Rachel. During the Red Sticks phase, she guesses her husband is telling her less than the whole story. She is disappointed he will not grant himself a furlough. Worries about his safety aggravate her many maladies. They are briefly reunited before Jackson heads south to command the 7th Division, and when word of victory arrives on Jan. 8, Rachel joins other officers' wives heading for New Orleans. There, those who idolize Jackson fkte Rachel, while the Europeans who despise him poke fun at her dumpy, "homespun appearance." Jackson is being hailed as "the greatest hero since Washington." Philadelphians ask for "raw materials" (plans and sketches) to incorporate into a painting and engraving of the Battle of New Orleans that they are commissioning. Jackson sits for several portraits and cooperates with artists and authors intent on publicizing the victory, particularly one by his aide, John Reid.

None of the renderings capture Jackson during the two years of warfare. During the Creek campaign, his left arm and shoulder are unusable while mending from the Benton affair, and he lives with chronic intestinal troubles. He suffers dysentery in New Orleans and can tolerate little more than gin and water. The troops understand "fractious bowels" and admire the general's courage. His official correspondence rarely mentions his health, but letters to Rachel and friends show "a succession of fevers, stomach and intestinal ailments, and joint pains" - all consistent with lead poisoning from the bullets remaining in his body. Taking the popular medications of his era do little to "bolster his constitution." Only his will keeps him from being incapacitated. The physical problems help explain Jackson's volcanic temper. Like many great men, Jackson employs his anger to get what he wants rather than letting anger use him. He does not waste energy on "hurling imprecations" at the English throne, but is happy to take revenge on it.

Jackson bids farewell to the troops on Mar. 21 with less solemnity than Washington but the same "patriotic poignancy." He and Rachel leave New Orleans early in April and make slow progress north. Everyone on the Mississippi wants to see the "saviour." The celebration increases as they near Nashville. Deposited at the Hermitage, Jackson declares that this generation of Americans has proved itself worthy of their fathers' inheritance. All nations now respect the U.S., which is destined to become "the most powerful nation in the universe."

Chapters 23-25

Chapters 23-25 Summary and Analysis

"East by Southwest" begins examining Jackson's emergence into politics. Madison summons the hero to Washington to prevent his challenging Monroe, his anointed successor. Jackson obeys after receiving a letter that leaves ambiguous the administration's support for the suspension of civil liberties in New Orleans. The month-long eastward trip is "another triumphal progress," including a reception by the aged Jefferson at Monticello. Jackson is confounded by the peculiar protocols observed in the capital, and the high cost of living dictates a short visit, which includes a visit to Mount Vernon and a consultation about dividing the nation into two military divisions. Jackson accepts command of the southern district. In return, Madison and Monroe make clear that they will not support reopening the dispute with Judge Hall.

The Spanish fail to clear Florida of unreconciled Indians, chiefly the Seminoles, an outlaw amalgam of southern refugees, including Indians and African slaves. Jackson perceives them a threatening "magnet for further runaways" and British adventurers. In 1816, some 300 Seminoles hold a makeshift fort on the Apalachicola River, defying both the U.S. and Spain. Washington orders Jackson to get the Spanish to clean out the "Negro fort" or do it himself, but then diverts him by adopting in Tennessee and Mississippi a pro-Indian policy aimed at averting another costly war. Ordered to remove illegal squatters from Indian lands, Jackson sees an ironical repetition of British policy in 1763, which overlooks the fundamental difference between patriotic white U.S. citizens and non-citizens who are willing to side with the enemy. Jackson calls aggrandizing the Cherokees stupid and detrimental to the Indians. He is reluctant to lead troops against citizens, and if forced to comply, foresees bloody destruction and civil war.

"Party and Politics" examines Jackson's emergence as a political figure and advising the president on Indian matters. Brands notes the beginnings of approaches that Jackson will take as president and emphasizes how Jackson is aware both his own "moral compass" and the popularity that leaves him free to "chart his own course." By appointing a commission to examine Cherokee claims and report after the election, Madison dodges the political question. With the Federalist Party self-destructed, whoever the Republicans' congressional caucus nominates is assured of election. It appears that a seventh presidential term (out of eight) will go to a Virginian, which bothers some like Aaron Burr, who describes it as "hostile to all freedom and independence of suffrage." Burr urges his son-in-law, South Carolina's Governor Joseph Alston, to put forth Jackson instead of Monroe, and while Alston agrees, he is incapacitated by the recent loss of his wife. Monroe becomes president.

In September, Jackson is mediating among the Cherokees, the Tennesseans, and federal officials. He dismisses on a technicality the Chickasaws' claim to land under a treaty with George Washington and offers money to end the confusion. When Jackson learns of an opening in the War Department, he recommends a "true American" (albeit a

Federalist), William Drayton of South Carolina. Monroe agrees that offices should be distributed without partisanship, but holds that Federalists are a danger to free government. Jackson sees as "napve and unworkable" Monroe's belief that Republicans are so virtuous that party divisions can be exterminated without harming the system. The "rascals" who have opposed him have been Republicans. Jackson warns that "placing party above personal character" can lead the country astray. Despite their philosophical differences, Monroe confides in Jackson and would name him secretary of war if this would not cost the country an irreplaceable general. The president explains how he uses the cabinet to balance sectional interests without need for an opposition party.

Jackson lectures Monroe on Indian policy, advocating populating Creek lands rapidly to shore up power in the Southland. The same should be done in Ohio and Mississippi to consolidate the frontier, to cut off Northern Indians from the Chickasaws and Choctaws, and to defend river commerce. Jackson suggests the radical solution of having Congress exclusively legislate about Indian matters, including the application of eminent domain. The farcical treaty system has seen the Indians' world vanish and only forcing them to practice husbandry rather than hunting will bring them to civilization. During Jackson's lifetime, the U.S. has known no true peace, and he believes Americans must demand respect in Europe by showing military preparedness at home.

"Judge and Executioner" returns to the Seminole war, as Jackson in 1818 receives a copy of orders to Gaines to chase Seminole raiders into Florida but avoid conflict with Spaniards. Jackson sees the second part as potentially catastrophic. Allowing the Spaniards to harbor renegades has already harmed American honor. Jackson even believes that a "bold stroke" might move forward diplomacy with Spain and save the U.S. from war with any Continental power. Jackson offers Monroe "executive deniability" by signifying "through any channel" that he may move within 60 days. Years later, Monroe claims to have been sick when the letter arrives and to have shared it with Calhoun and William H. Crawford. Jackson recalls that a Congressman John Rhea forwards to him Monroe's approval. By then, the letter has been burnt.

The Seminole War begins when Gaines and friendly Seminoles attack the Negro Fort in retaliation for hitting a supply convoy. An American gunboat hits a powder stockpile, leveling the fort. An "uneasy peace" reigns for months until Seminoles resume raids on U.S. territory and revolutionaries hit Spanish targets. Determined to clean things up, Jackson sends Gaines to King Hatchy to demand escaped slaves be returned and British agents expelled. Hatchy resents the arrogance and denies responsibility, but when the Americans find evidence of complicity with the British, they burn a village. Hatchy retaliates by ambushing a boatload of American troops and civilians, and by the end of 1817, the Florida borderlands are in chaos. At this point, Jackson moves from Nashville with Tennessee volunteers and regular troops. Swollen by some 2,000 friendly Creeks, lead by William McIntosh, Jackson's force strains Southern resources. The friendly Creeks invade the East Florida swamps and resume fighting with Red Stick refugees. The chief and most warriors escape. A prophet named Francis and a British national, Alexander Arbuthnot, lead the Seminoles. Jackson determines they are headed for St. Marks above the Apalachee Bay, and determines to make an example of

them. En route, he burns a village bearing grisly signs of Red Stick habitation. The nominally Spanish fort cannot withstand Jackson, who poses as a friend of Spain, helping keep order. He captures Francis and Arbuthnot, and sets off 100 miles to the Suwanee River, seeking escaped hostiles led by Chief Bowlegs. Bowlegs escapes several pitched battles, but his village is burned and Jackson calls the war a success. On his own authority, Jackson convenes trials of two captured Britons, Ambrister and Arbuthnot, and overrides the court's recommendation that the former be spared death.

Chapters 26-27

Chapters 26-27 Summary and Analysis

"The Eye of the Storm" looks at the political repercussions of the Seminole War. Jackson is a gentle family man and solicitous of junior officers, but frequently hostile to the rest of the world. He does not seek confrontation, but does not back down when it finds him. In 1817, he insists that his officers ignore directives from Washington that bypasses him. Some, including Winfield Scott, head of the Northern forces, see this as mutiny and the precursor to military dictatorship. Jackson confronts Scott, who resents being quoted anonymously and being called to task by a colleague, but who points out the impossible position in which this order places officers. Jackson follows up with the "most intemperate and abusive" letter of his career, and only the Seminole War prevents a duel between ranking officers. Monroe gets Jackson not to resign by appealing to his sense of duty to country. The rift continues as Jackson goes off to "thrash" Spaniards.

The Florida campaign raises a diplomatic furor as the British protest the execution of Arbuthnot and Ambrister. Jackson justifies recapturing Pensacola on "the immutable principles of self-defence," since Spanish power in Florida is a sham. He warns the Spaniards not to fire on American troops, threatening otherwise to kill everyone under arms. The battle is brief and casualties light. When Jackson garrisons the town, the Spanish minister protests and Monroe orders its return. Some Americans fear Jackson's potential to become a military dictator, while others see his popularity spoiling their chances to succeed Monroe. These include Crawford, Adams, and Calhoun. Crawford insists a costly war, economic crash, and loss of the next election loom unless Pensacola is returned and Jackson reprimanded. Reading the political signs, Jackson's erstwhile supporter, Speaker Clay, condemns executions of the two Britons as "illegal and reprehensible" and says the Florida campaign usurps Congress' exclusive prerogative to declare war. Disregarding the Constitution is a moral issue for all mankind, since the whole world looks to America. The destruction of republics by Alexander, Caesar, Cromwell, and Napoleon should be recalled as warnings. Adams' animosity towards his colleagues is so great that he champions Jackson. Had Jackson acted repentant, it would have helped Monroe deal with the Spanish, but he boasts about destroying the "Babylon of the South" in the public interest. Monroe returns the forts but does not censure Jackson. The president claims any conscientious field commander would have done as Jackson did, finding a dangerous state of revolution.

"Conquistador" continues the diplomatic story of Florida. In discussions with the Spanish minister, Onns, Adams emphasizes that rapid growth of the American population in Georgia and Mississippi and stagnation in the Spanish population, Spain's days of sovereignty are limited. One cannot claim what one cannot defend. Adams offers Texas in exchange for Florida, resolving a ten-year debate over whether the Rio Grande or Sabine River forms the border. Immediately, however, the price of cotton tumbles, bringing on an economic "free fall" that is worsened by efforts of the Bank United States to restrict paper money. The panic sets in motion a "human wave" of

desperate migrants to the Gulf Coast and Western lands. Some accept the offer of land in Texas from the Mexican government. Their presence blurs - and later erases - the Adams-Onns border. State legislatures, meanwhile, oppose the policies of the Bank of the United States. When John McCulloch, cashier of the Baltimore branch, refuses to pay a new Maryland tax, he is convicted, and the U.S. Supreme Court agrees to hear his appeal. Daniel Webster, retired from politics, represents him. Chief Justice Marshall presides, still loyal to his Federalist principles. The case begs two questions: 1) has Congress authority to charter a bank; and 2) have the states authority to tax the bank? The court affirms the former and denies the latter; the central government cannot be made dependent on the states.

In Nashville, Jackson in 1819 complains about economic conditions, but his standard of living has not suffered and he begins major construction at the Hermitage, creating a home modest by genteel Southern standards, but outstanding in the neighborhood. As they often do when he quits campaigning, Jackson's physical ailments flare. He watches events in Florida, hoping a third conquest will be necessary. The prospects of war help him recover and he bridles over why Congress does not declare war on Spain. He intends to take Cuba also, if Congress funds a naval force. Monroe, who does not want to loose Jackson again, is relieved when Spain ratifies the Adams-Onns Treaty. Jackson gets his "therapeutic violence" by advising his nephew through conflicts at West Point and John Eaton in his conflicts with Andrew Erwin, a Crawford ally. Jackson writes Eaton a "primer" on dueling: weapons, distance, positioning, and timing. Jackson is disappointed when the seconds find a way to avoid bloodshed. He suspects it is a Crawford move to keep him from replacing Monroe as early as 1820. Jackson defends himself by defending Monroe, suggesting that Crawford for political reasons "deliberately scrambled communications" with Florida.

In January 1819, Jackson travels to Washington, DC, to confront his enemies. He finds the insidious Clay damning himself politically by seeking to ruin Monroe through him. When the House refuses to sanction Jackson, Clay pushes the Senate to act. There a committee condemns the invasion of Florida and the executions in particular. The report intimates that Jackson is more motivated by "speculative interests" in Pensacola than by the national good. Jackson's friends rally and find information linking Crawford associates to a slave-smuggling scheme. Jackson is delighted to paint Crawford as a depraved hypocrite, and rejoices, prematurely, when Monroe appears to have re-nomination assured.

Clay, however, takes advantage of Missouri reaching the 36,000-person threshold for statehood, to preserve the South's interest in slavery. The Ordinance of 1787 bars slavery from the Northwest. The North has acquiesced to admitting as slave states those territories that seem western extensions of the South. The lands of the Louisiana Purchase defy classification. Congressman James Tallmadge of New York proposes to admit Missouri with slaves, who are to be gradually freed. With cotton's resurgence, Southern speculators like Jackson rally against the Tallmadge amendment as (eventually) a threat to their way of life. When Thomas Cobb of Georgia insists that this is enough to dissolve the Union and flood the land with blood, Tallmadge hardens his line and accepts the challenge. The slaveholding Speaker, Clay, puts off his retirement

to help hold the Union together. The measure passes the House, but Southern senators put it in limbo. The deadlock is broken when moderates link the admission of Missouri to that of Maine and the Missouri Compromise, a "triumph of the legislative art," bans slavery north of latitude 36 degrees 30 minutes within the Louisiana Purchase.

Rachel describes exhilarating, pure, and wholesome Pensacola to friends at home. She comes south when Monroe appoints her conqueror-husband to supervise the transfer of Florida to American jurisdiction. It is a short-term, face-saving move to mollify Jackson after he is forced to retire from the army, which Congress shrinks between wars. The Jacksons treat it as a "victory tour," riding from Nashville to New Orleans by steamboat and thence sail to Pensacola. The multi-ethic town is dilapidated. Jackson stubbornly remains outside of town, refusing to enter until the transfer is complete and the American flag is poised to be hoisted. He plans to lay the foundations for prosperity and happiness and then retire from public life, but finds that much haggling with ex-Gov. Col. Josy Maria Callava remains, and neither is suited to diplomacy. Jackson backs his appointed mayor, Henry Brackenridge, in demanding access to the papers of a Callava subordinate, Domingo Sousa, for use in a lawsuit. An angry Jackson orders Sousa arrested, only to find the papers entrusted to another Callava assistant. Callava asks for proper paperwork, but suffering a bowel ailment, Jackson sends soldiers to fetch the Spanish officials. After a shouting match, Jackson orders Callava imprisoned. Callava protests this violation of justice, to which Jackson replies he alone is responsible for American Florida. When U.S. judge Eligius Fromentin issues a writ of habeas corpus, Jackson treats it with contempt and Fromentin spreads stories of this grand inquisitor's "uncontrollable ambition." Jackson is happy to make personal enemies to secure America's southern border.

Chapters 28-29

Chapters 28-29 Summary and Analysis

"The People's President, 1821-1837" opens with "Cincinnatus," an obscure and somewhat off-target reference to the Roman dictator who lays down power to return to his farm. George Washington is considered an American Cincinnatus, because he yields power after two terms. Why Washington is not an apt political precedent for Jackson is pointed out in this chapter.

Returning to the Hermitage at age 54, Jackson writes Monroe of his weariness and need to restore his fortunes. He declines a tour of the North and East to keep his name before the public. Jackson's modest cotton operation is costly to run and price fluctuations are troublesome. He owns 80 slaves, most of whom accept their lot "without complaint," for escape is nearly impossible. When one slave, Gilbert, runs away from Jackson's Alabama plantation he owns (the "Big Spring" farm) in April 1822, Jackson orders notices published in the papers. His philosophy is: "Subordination must be obtained first, and then good treatment." (Gilbert is caught and flees three more times; in 1827 he is whipped to death in punishment, and his death causes Jackson political grief in the election of 1828). For all his difficulties, Jackson puts the Hermitage in excellent order and enjoys the reputation of a polite gentleman and "friend of man everywhere."

Jackson's political supporters do not let him farm in peace. In November 1821, James Gadsden incites Jackson's fear of a William Crawford presidency, doubting that anyone else can forestall such misfortune. Gadsden is certain Jackson agrees that the good of the country requires a honest, independent leader. He admires Jackson's "integrity and devotion to the public good." Few take a Jackson candidacy seriously. Worried opponents like Crawford and Clay are setting backfires against him, and no one like him has ever been nominated. Washington is the new nation's most eminent citizen and an active politician before the Revolution, and all of his successors have been political insiders, mostly groomed for office by serving as secretary of state. National reputations take years to build in an era of slow communication, and the state legislatures that choose electors listen to representatives in Washington. Political parties filter candidates, and since only the Republican Party has survived, the nominee of its congressional caucus is assured election. Popular support means little. Westerners are beginning to challenge this "clubbiness," and are growing sufficiently numerous to demand attention.

If Jackson is dreaming of the presidency, he keeps it from Rachel, who would object, and from correspondents, who would have spread the word quickly. Jackson's brief experience in politics has soured him and peaceful times denigrate the role of commander-in-chief. The presidency is no prize, and leaving the Hermitage for four or eight years would undo all of his work. Neither his personal medical nor his family history suggests he will live much longer. Only if the office can be cast as a duty can he

be made to accept it. Jackson's supporters spend 1821-24 working on him to thwart Crawford and Clay, but Jackson believes Adams or Calhoun can do this. When it becomes clear that the Northerner Adams cannot win and Clay's backing erodes, Tennesseans broach the question of a Jackson candidacy. Jackson is careful to make clear that he is being drafted, not volunteering: the people have a right to "call for any man's service," and he who is called must "yield his services to that call."

Tennessee Republicans caucus endorses Jackson for the presidency. Sam Houston, who considers Jackson a second father and model for what he wants to be, champions Jackson's cause, saying there is no time to waste in eliminating the "canker worms" gnawing at the federal government; he who has served as the country's "Great Sentinel" must become the "People's choice." Houston has a charisma that contrasts with Jackson's austerity, and his ambition for higher office can only be helped by association with the hero of New Orleans and "popular insurgency" against Washington insiders. Jackson watches from Nashville, silently, certain that the American people will do the right thing in preventing a Crawford presidency. He sticks to this position as the "groundswell in his favor" grows in 1823. When ordinary Pennsylvania voters nominate him, he responds that his policy is neither to seek nor decline office. When the letter is published, it is taken as an announcement of his candidacy: if summoned, he will serve.

"The Death Rattle of the Old Regime" opens with a reluctant Jackson being drafted to serving in the U.S. Senate. He begs not to be pressed, but supporters can find no one to stand against the incumbent, John Williams. Jackson is certain that Washington has not improved; raveling is more difficult than before; he is not at heart a politician; and he would be required to take positions on the issues - a potential political liability, should he run for president. The trip to Washington is "cold and wearing" and Jackson is mobbed at every stop. He regrets leaving Rachel alone and vows it will be the last time. He arrives too late to hear the proclamation of the Monroe Doctrine (ghostwritten by Adams), warning Europeans against interventions in the Americas. He finds life as a senator tedious and disgusting, avoids the social circuit whenever possible, and enjoys quiet evenings with the O'Neal family, with whom he boards. He realizes he is on display and stays on his best behavior in public. He reestablishes rapport with Thomas Hart Benton, who is now anxious to bask in his political glow, and makes up with Gen. Winfield Scott. Jackson's reputation for temper and rashness diminishes. On the floor of the Senate, Jackson avoids confrontation, but is forced to take sides on the matter of the tariff, which he supports as vital to the national defense and the economy. The only social event Jackson enjoys is a commemoration of his victory at New Orleans on Jan. 8, a "second Independence Day in many circles." The Adamses host a reception for a thousand. The guest of honor is happy when the evening ends. Winter casts a gloom over Jackson's spirits, and by May he can stand it no more. Declaring he is not intended by nature to talk and argue and exercise Job-like patience, he requests a leave-of-absence and heads home to tend the crops.

Jackson watches the 1824 campaign from Nashville. Crawford suffers a minor stroke but carries the congressional caucus. Jackson is portrayed as above the fray, seeking America's good in advocating an end to the unconstitutional caucuses. As Crawford attacks his three opponents, Jackson refuses to campaign or respond to attacks, but

feeds ideas for editorialists, claiming simply to be the people's candidate. He wins 154,000 votes, compared with Adams' 109,000, and Clay and Crawford's 47,000 apiece. In the Electoral College in December, confusion reigns over whether electors are to be split proportionally to reflect the popular vote, go to the majority winner, or vote their consciences. Voting takes two weeks, during which Jackson returns to Washington, accompanied by his wife. By mid-month, Jackson leads, but since no one has a majority, the House of Representatives must make the choice among the top three candidates. All assume that Clay will prevail among his colleagues, should he make the cut, otherwise, Jackson has the edge. Jackson is calmly willing to accept any verdict, although he has come to want the presidency. His "combative energies" are engaged and the people have spoken decisively. The final tally in the Electoral College is Jackson 99, Adams 84, Crawford 41, and Clay 37.

On Jan. 1, 1825, the Jacksons attend a dinner honoring the Revolutionary War hero, Gen. Lafayette. During it, Clay suggests a "confidential conversation" to Adams. He prefers Adams to Crawford as a "choice of evils," after previously suggesting a preference for Crawford over Jackson, who would give a pernicious "military spirit" to government. Clay claims to want no reward for his support, but offers his services in any capacity. Rumors to this effect fill the capital with Jackson's supporters intimidating that Clay will be offered secretary of state. Adams wins in the House by a 13-7-4 margin. Jackson is applauded for being "placid and courteous" at a reception for the president-elect, but inwardly is livid at "the *Judas* of the West."

Chapter 30

Chapter 30 Summary and Analysis

"Democracy Triumphant" describes the four-year interval between Jackson's defeat in the 1824 election and his victory in 1828. Brands characterizes it as the "longest, bitterest, ugliest campaign in American political history." Adams is not yet inaugurated when newspapers declare Jackson a candidate in 1828. Jackson takes exception to Clay's comment about him being a dangerous "military chieftain," but admits to having done is duty towards his country. Jackson retires from the Senate, popular and famous, and Rachel is overjoyed to leave a life that makes her "shudder." She has the best of all worlds: wife to the man Americans most want to lead them and yet free of the burden of being the president's wife.

Because of the circumstances of his appointment, Clay finds his new job an agonizing one. Sen. John Randolph goes overboard savaging the administration, and Clay challenges him to a duel; they fire two rounds each before quitting and Randolph resumes his windy speeches, which include praise for Jackson. As the 50th anniversary of American independence nears, Jefferson and John Adams both cling to life, and Henry Lee, a strong Jacksonian, visits Monticello on Jul. 1, 1826, where he hears Jefferson's contempt for the present administration and opinion that change must come. The two leaders die on Jul. 4, and Jackson sees it as an "omen that Divinity approbated the whole course of Mr. Jefferson," but is silent on either Adams' legacy.

Jackson's enemies circulate rumors that Jefferson is concerned by Jackson's showing in 1824, a sign that the "Republic would not last long." A "broad-front campaign of slander, slight, and innuendo" begins. Jackson's biography reveals that he has engaged in "Negro *speculation*," dueled, taken liberties with the code of honor, cannot spell, consorted with Burr, and has mistreated subordinates. The "coffin handbill" is a broadside showing the coffins of six mutineers Jackson orders executed at the end of the War of 1812. The executions go little noticed at the time, but in 1828 it is useful to portray Jackson as a "vindictive monster."

The contest between Jackson and Adams is personal because little of substance separates them in foreign affairs and what does separate them on domestic policy can gain little "traction." The tariff issue is too complex for voters to decide, and neither has a consistent record. Only Southerners care passionately and their spokesman, Vice President John Calhoun, favors Jackson. Jacksonians run on "symbols" - calling for the "ring of corruption" to be shattered forever. Jackson stands on his military and populist record. His opposition to corruption is hammered home in rally speeches around the country and reproduced in newspapers, amplifying the praise and rebutting attacks by Adams' allies. An inner circle forms a "whitewashing committee" to gather data to neutralize libels against their candidate.

Jackson, meanwhile, remains above the fray, except when rumors arise about his early relationship with Rachel. The Adams camp hopes these will provoke him to act unpresidentially. Political retribution comes when Jackson wins the election in a runaway (647,000 to 508,000 in the popular vote and 178 to 83 in the Electoral College). Jacksonians, beginning to call themselves Democrats, take over both houses of Congress. Jackson feels justified but depressed by the stress of the campaign. A visitor describes the couple as physically mismatched but doting on one another. The campaign has made Rachel dread Washington all the more, but she does not complain. On Dec. 18, however, she suffers a heart attack and dies four days later. At the time he least expects and can least spare her, Rachel is snatched away, stripping Jackson of hope for earthly happiness. He buries her in the Hermitage garden.

Chapters 31-33

Chapters 31-33 Summary and Analysis

"Democracy Rampant" describes Jackson's inauguration. He carries on through his grief only by summoning his sense of duty. He cannot sleep, feeling that Rachel would not have died, had he stayed out of politics. He lingers at Rachel's grave and answers no letters from Washington, leaving an eerie political calm. The capital is still a shabby "work in progress," the avenues are hardly grand, and the President's House is "an immense pile." Still, the gentry put on airs and follow a "fastidious etiquette." They liken the army of unsophisticates who come to see Jackson installed to the barbarian hordes invading Rome and other dismaying events in antiquity. Still, Mar. 4 dawns warm as Revolutionary War veterans escort the president-elect to his inauguration. By noon, the crowd stands at 15,000 as Chief Justice John Marshall administers the oath. Jackson's voice is nearly inaudible as he repeats the words, kisses the Bible, and bows to the people, as to his sovereign. The crowd strains to hear the brief inaugural address, which thanks them for victory, vows to defer to the states, preserve peace and international friendship, and strengthen the army - although the bulwark of national defense is the voluntary militia. Margaret Bayard Smith, a Jeffersonian Republican who spends 40 years observing politics, attends the inauguration out of curiosity, and declares it sublime - until the speech ends, and the "silent, orderly and tranquil" masses rush the steps to shake Jackson's hand. Afterwards, at the public reception, usually confined to the ruling class, a "surging sea of democrats" sack the house. Having shaken 10,000 hands, Jackson escapes to his hotel before Smith can approach. The mob scene is what people most remember and even some Jacksonians are appalled. Others speak of "the reign of King 'Mob.'" All agree something remarkable has happened.

"Spoils of Victory" examines how Jackson sets about repairing the damage done to American liberty by his predecessors. His is the first "hostile takeover" of the presidency since 1801, and no one expects him to hold out a Jeffersonian olive branch to the "minions of the old regime." He names New York's Martin Van Buren secretary of state, Samuel Ingham secretary of the treasury (hoping a Pennsylvanian will smooth anticipated problems with the Bank of the United States), protygy John Eaton of Tennessee secretary of war (intending to run the department personally in the event of war), South Carolina's John Branch secretary of the navy, Georgia's John Berrien Attorney General, and Kentucky's William Barry postmaster general. These appointments draw little criticism, but the "kitchen cabinet" does. This informal body serves as a sounding board for policy and offers emotional support in Rachel's absence. It consists of William Lewis, Amos Kendall, Duff Green, and Isaac Hill. Andrew Donelson, Jackson's surrogate son and personal secretary, is an ex-officio member. Even Jackson's friends admit that it does not look good having so many partisan editorialists enjoying patronage. Thomas Ritchie writes Van Buren about the need to show that "reform" means turning out the inept, rather than punishing those who "decently preferred Mr. Adams." Jackson understands, but responds defensively, as he

often does to criticism, informing Ritchie through Van Buren that all of his appointments - including those of friends - are principled and strictly in the public interest.

Jackson's principle is "rotation in office" rather than "permanent tenure" as previously practiced. He fears that enjoying power for too long inevitably corrupts. If public offices are made so simple that any intelligent person can perform them, rotation in office can only improve the situation. In practice, however, ousting officials causes hardships, and Jackson hears from protests from their wives. He hopes fear of being fired will have a positive effect on workers, but fear turns to paranoia and informing. This only inspires Jackson more to "cleans the Augean stables" (an obscure reference to the fifth of Hercules' Twelve Labors). When word gets out that all federal jobs are subject to review, applicants for openings are legion. Both critics and supporters exaggerate the effects of the cleaning, but between 10% and 20% of the jobs turn over, higher than any administration since Jefferson's. The term "spoil system" sticks.

"Tools of Wickedness" examines three situations that cause Jackson grief early in his presidency.

Nineteenth-century presidents are inaugurated at the end of a brief winter session of Congress and then face a full year before the longer session begins. Thus, "matters of little substance" can distract them. Jackson becomes obsessed with the scandal surrounding Eaton's marriage to Margaret ("Peg") O'Neal Timberlake, a beautiful, flirtatious old friend, recently widowed. Rumors have it that they drive the dead man to suicide. Remembering Rachel, Jackson advises them to ignore their enemies. Vice President Calhoun's wife leads a social boycott of the Eatons, which is joined by cabinet members' wives. Jealousy inspires much of the campaign, but there are also political considerations. Calhoun wants to be president, but is not close to Jackson, so his best bet is to undermine those who are, and he attacks the supposed favoritism shown to Eaton. Van Buren, recently widowed, sees correctly that befriending Peg can earn the president's trust. Jackson spends months collecting evidence on Peg's virtue and her enemies' vice. The obsession is unhealthy for his administration and causes a rupture with his nephew, Andrew Donelson, whose wife Emily shuns Peg and is banned from the White House.

While caught up in the Eaton affair, Jackson learns that Sam Houston, his political heir apparent, has at age thirty-five married Eliza Allen, been abandoned weeks later, resigned the Tennessee governorship citing "sudden calamities," and disappeared into the West. Rumors come from Texas about drunken raves and leading Cherokee bands to conquer Mexican territory, which Jackson hopes to purchase land through negotiations. In June 1829, Jackson receives a letter in which Houston wallows in self-pity but insists he will yet make good. Jackson has also to worry about Andrew Hutchings, son of his late friend and partner, who refuses to take responsibility for himself. He must also advise his 20-year-old son Andrew, Jr., about managing the Hermitage and not marrying too young He is now his father's "only solace."

Chapters 34-35

Chapters 34-35 Summary and Analysis

"Jacksonian Theory" describes Jackson first State of the Union message, Dec. 8, 1829. The "landmark document" and "manifesto of democracy" begins with foreign affairs, where he is surprisingly conciliatory towards Great Britain, showing Van Buren's influence and his realization that being a general is different from being president. The first item on his domestic agenda is abolishing the Electoral College; the election of 1824 is proof it has failed. He also favors limiting presidents to one six-year term. On the politically-motivated tariff of 1828, which angers Southerners, Jackson declares that agriculture, commerce, and manufacturing must be equally regulated and promoted, with some preference given to agriculture. The tariff should put U.S. commerce and manufacturing on an equal footing with foreign competitors and patriotism should transcend regional concerns. Once the $49 million federal debt (chiefly from the War of 1812) is paid down, Americans will have to decide whether to cut the tariff or spend surpluses on public improvements. If so, the money should be apportioned to the states.

Owing to his direct experience in Indian relations, congressmen listen closely to Jackson's views on tribal autonomy and exemption from state laws. No peace is possible for Indians east of the Mississippi, unfair though this might be. Only legally transferring to the tribes Western lands and relocating them thither can avert the "calamity" of tribal extinctions and decay. This approach averts the problem of unconstitutional states within states and can promote peace between tribes. It would be cruel to force them to abandon the graves of their ancestors, but they must know that to remain where they are means to obey local laws.

The long message ends with a discussion about the charter of the Bank of the United States, due to expire in 1836 and likely to be brought up for renewal. He does not like the bank as currently existing, constitutionally or practically. He offers no details on how a substitute agency could prove advantageous, but end by commending Congress to God's guidance. The message appeals to the people who had not expected such depth. The anti-Jacksonian minority in Congress is less receptive, and his new Democratic majority is not yet coherent. The Senate, eager to show its independence, rejects Isaac Hill for a job at Treasury, but New Hampshire promptly names him a senator. Only Jackson's popularity prevents half his nominees from being blocked.

"False Colors" depicts the Nullification Crisis occasioned by the "Tariff of Abominations"). During the confirmation battles, Vice President Calhoun drafts but carefully cloaks his authorship of the "South Carolina Exposition." Claiming that Congress may pass tariffs only for revenue, not for protection, the document shows how the effects are unequal North and South. It then denies the "naked principle that the majority" ought to govern, for history shows this produces injustice, violence, and anarchy. As a check, the Constitution posits in the states and the people all power not

specifically delegated to Congress. States can veto the federal government, which is what South Carolina intends to do: nullify federal laws that pertain to it.

Sen. Robert Hayne of South Carolina delivers the states rights defense that his constituents expect. Finding no opportunity early in the session, he jumps on remarks by Daniel Webster about revenues from the sale of federal lands to denounce the idea that money holds the states together. Instead, it creates sympathies and interests opposed to all principles of free government. He rejects the idea that nullification is an innovation, holding that his party has always resisted letting the states being drawn into the "vortex" of "one consolidated Government." The North by this tariff is pushing the South to the brink of destruction. Hayne fears that "the seeds of dissolution are already sown, and our children will reap the bitter fruit." Webster responds with a three-hour denunciation of Hayne's person, arguments, and willingness to jeopardize the Union, hard-won and a "benediction to Americans of every section." Webster's words have little impact, but set the stage for Jackson's most eloquent utterances as president.

Jackson and Calhoun both attend the annual celebration of Jefferson's birthday, Apr. 13, 1830. During the congressional recess, Calhoun has stayed in South Carolina, and in his absence, the Van Burenites cast doubts on his loyalty to the president and his partisans raise innuendo against Van Buren, Eaton, and Jackson. When he returns, the strain between Calhoun and Jackson is palpable. Calhoun is a master of the difficult art of toasting, and it is rumored he will make Jefferson the father of nullification doctrine. Gathering that it is to be a "nullification affair altogether," Jackson prepares three rejoinders and selects the shortest and most expressive: "Our Federal Union. It *must* be preserved." All wonder if Calhoun he will dare break publicly with the president. He rambles by comparison, putting liberty and states' rights before the Union. The event runs on for hours. All recall how Jackson deals with mutineers in the War of 1812, but wonder if "the volcano still smoldered" after Rachel's death.

Calhoun, the proven political survivor, cannot explain away his failure to put the Union above all else. Weeks later, after receiving a letter from William Crawford criticizing Calhoun's behavior during the Seminole War, Jackson invites the vice president to explain himself. Calhoun is curt and snide, denying the charges, and saying he will answer at length at his own leisure. Two weeks later, Calhoun writes Jackson, denying he has any right to challenge his conduct and then justifying himself at length and impugning his critics. It is a waste of time. Jackson does not want the truth about the past; he wants to cast into outer darkness a current danger to the Union. Ingham, Berrien, and Branch, considered "wobbly" on issues Jackson considers vital, also must go. Bristling at stories in the press that say he dares not offend them and their backers, Jackson becomes the first president to overthrow his entire cabinet by asking them to resign. He times this with the close of the legislative session, so tempers can cool before new nominations are considered. He feels the administration is strengthened and enjoys the contrast.

During the coup, Jackson breaks his usual silence to discuss his religious views. Raised a Presbyterian, he believes in providence, the value of public and personal morals, and thanks God for his victories while never blaming him for his defeats. He had built a

chapel for Rachel at the Hermitage and now pays pew rent at First Presbyterian Church and St. John's Episcopal in Washington, alternating Sundays. He wants to Christianize both the Indians and the wild frontier whites. This last topic inspires the organizers of a society promoting Sunday schools in the West to seek his endorsement. He gives it casually and is attacked by a constituent who claims this amounts to siding with a specific sect. Jackson says that if the project is not nonsectarian, as he believes, he opposes it, for "freedom and an established religion are incompatible." In the summer of 1832, with cholera epidemic in the Eastern U.S., Henry Clay sponsors a Senate resolution calling for a day of prayer and fasting. Many churches call on Jackson to support it, but he refuses on constitutional grounds; citizens are free to organize locally to beseech God to protect them in such times of "great public distress."

People pray, but the disease ends only when cold weather arrives. Jackson escapes the disease, perhaps because he prefers alcoholic beverages and coffee to water. After a bad first year, his health improves. It is a vital question, because Calhoun stands to succeed him should he die in office (no president yet has). He takes "the cure" for his ailments at Rip Raps, a Virginia spa. In subsequent summers, he travels home to Nashville to rest and inspect the Hermitage. This is a financial necessity, as his expenses as president outrun his $50,000 salary. He is obliged to entertain respectably as befits his office. He also insists on dressing well. The price of cotton in 1830 is low and he is loath to disrupt slave families by selling them off. Cotton and hogs pay the rent, but horses are Jackson's passion. His favorite is Bolivar, whom he wants trained as a runner. Jackson hates when the horses are mismanaged.

Chapter 36

Chapter 36 Summary and Analysis

"Attack and Counterattack" opens with a brief description of Alexis de Tocqueville's travels in America, before concentrating on the fight to renew the Bank of the United States. Tocqueville studies whether the same influences that subvert popular government in France will act here or be offset by other factors. He hears that the essence of democracy is that "The majority is always right" and that while democratic politics can be rough, the losing party is always assured that there is hope next year. The worst feature of the system is that ignorant paupers with no interest in stability can determine elections. In Philadelphia, Tocqueville meets Nicholas Biddle, president of the Bank of the United States. Biddle tells him that Americans are as confused as Europeans by the blurring of distinctions between the parties; voters define themselves by being for or against the president. Jackson has wrought a revolution, showing that all Americans share common principles of government and differ only in details of administration. Tocqueville's *Democracy in America* follows Biddle's line, although the author continues to struggle with the tension between the few and the many.

The Biddle family is long active in public life in Philadelphia, but young Nicholas is put off by "violence of party." After two sessions as a state legislator, he retreats into literature. In 1819, Monroe offers him a position on the board of directors of the second Bank of the United States. Biddle hesitates because the bank has been "perverted to selfish purposes," but accepts the job of reform. In 1822, the directors convince him that his diligence, devotion, non-partisanship, and talent for business make him best suited to be bank president. He accepts at age thirty-six, and sets about putting bank affairs in order while "shunning the limelight for himself and the institution." He cultivates Calhoun and Clay (whose chronic debt he helps relieve). He prefers Adams in 1828 but does not divulge this, perhaps because he realizes Jackson will win and does not want to make a powerful enemy. He asserts that the bank is above politic and government control.

Jackson's first message causes Biddle to worry about his erroneous if well-intentioned notions. He offers advice on paying down the federal debt and they meet. Jackson believes that Congress may charter banks only within the Federal District, and is personally is afraid of all banks. Biddle finds this quaint and, erroneously, assumes it is personal opinion rather than official policy. In the autumn of 1830, Clay suggests an early renewal of the bank's charter, believing it has a good chance of passing during the current legislative session and, if vetoed as is likely, can be a good issue to use against Jackson in 1832. Knowing that the apolitical Biddle requires convincing, Clay stresses that a re-elected Jackson will be less likely to approve a renewal than now. Biddle's initial reply is that the time is "inexpedient," but he reconsiders and, hearing Jackson's opposition to renewing the charter without provision for the states' greater participation, grows bellicose and vows that the people will see through his (and Van Buren's) "machinations."

"Preemptive propaganda" begins as Biddle distributes articles on the bank's "benevolence and usefulness" to newspapers, offering editors $1,000 to publish them, asking for his letters' return, lest they be "misconstrued." He believes that because Jackson wants a big margin, he might veto the renewal if dared - and wants *not* to dare him - but Clay, running against Jackson on a platform that supports the bank, wants to cause a "political explosion." Webster also throws his support behind renewal, telling everyone in Washington that if Jackson is re-elected, the chances of renewal are poor. Biddle agrees, refusing to believe that Jackson would veto a worthy bill for politics' sake. He learns that congressmen, including John Quincy Adams, intend to put forward the renewal even if he does not. Biddle understands the stakes and believes that with the country behind him, Jackson must fold or be destroyed by issuing an unpopular veto.

Senate debate quickly shows that more than the fate of the bank is at stake. The charter is "a proxy for popular rule," since many believe that ordinary people are too ignorant to manage something so complex. A proponent of the 1816 charter better known as an attorney representing the rich (including the bank), Webster leads off by making a *democratic* case for renewal. Webster warns colleagues about the danger of "a disordered currency." "Flimsy" paper money is the most effective means of cheating the laboring classes. The Bank of the United States is a bulwark against state banks issuing inflationary notes without coordination. Jacksonians argue that in that case all banks should be abolished or made to issue only "honest," hard money. The strongest and loudest opponent is Thomas Benton, who condemns this "unconstitutional offspring of selfish private interest." It is wrong law, policy, politics, and morals. Gold and silver are being abducted to Philadelphia to benefit the North and East, while farmers in of the West and South soon will be bankrupt. There will be "lords and commons" once again in America - and then a King. Such passionate demagoguery reveals little about the workings of the bank, and the facts are well known. Eager to reclaim customers and increase profits, state banks reward their congressional spokesmen anonymously. Because "no one warms to bankers," emotion is on the opponents' side. Nevertheless, the renewal bill passes both houses, accompanied by the usual "back scratching and palm greasing" normal in Congress.

While Jackson has not expected to fight the 1832 election over the bank issue, he cannot resist once it is brought up. Receiving the bill on Jul. 4, he vetoes it a week later. While acknowledging the bank's convenience and usefulness in expediting transactions, he cannot continue its deficiencies. Despite supporters' citing of legal precedents, it is unconstitutional. Congress has waffled on the bank in 1791, 1811, and 1816. State bodies oppose it by four-to-one. The Supreme Court has not spoken definitively, but even if it does, the other two branches are not bound by its decisions. Each branch and each official must be guided by its own opinion of the Constitution. Congress has overstepped the bounds of "necessary and proper" in the "elastic" clause of the Constitution. It may legislate a bank for the District of Columbia but not in the states. Not only is Jackson a strict constructionist, but also he fears a monopoly in money. Only twenty percent of the bank's directors are chosen by the government, while the rest are chosen by stockholders, not all of whom are saints. Much evil can be conceived coming from such concentrated power. Institutions should not "magnify" the "natural inequalities" that exist in every society, allowing the rich to become richer and more

powerful. The humble cannot secure legislative favors but have a right to complain about injustice. Heaven must grant blessings to all.

Chapter 37

Chapter 37 Summary and Analysis

"Or Die with the Union" returns to the nullification crisis after briefly describing the election of 1832. Jackson vetoes more bills than his predecessors combined. Clay denounces the president's tyranny and Webster decries his setting up the poor against the rich. Papers speak of business grinding to a halt and "national calamity." Jackson lets them rage, knowing the veto has strengthened his reputation as a champion of the common man. A French visitor so marvels at a political parade that he proclaims democracy is America's "civil religion." Running as a National Republican, Clay has the support of business, most newspapers, the well educated, and others whom Jackson has somehow offended. Jackson and the Democrats claims support from ordinary people who dream of controlling their own destiny. Jackson chooses Van Buren as his running mate, to secure New York and because he admires his cleverness and loyalty. Jackson receives 688,000 votes vs. 530,000 for Clay, 219 electoral votes vs. Clay's 49, and carries sixteen of twenty-four states.

The papers that report the victory also report that South Carolina is proceeding to call a nullification convention. It forbids the collection of duties within the state borders, effective Feb. 1, 1833. Always implicit, secession is formally threatened, should Congress authorize force against South Carolina. Jackson has no choice but to act. He hears from Charleston that the nullifiers are certain no measures will be taken. Jackson orders his new secretary of war, Lewis Cass, to prepare for trouble and defend the forts in Charleston "to the last extremity." He sends an under cover spy to ferret out disloyalty and evaluate the harbor. For weeks, he hears of "radical nullifiers" who want to secede, and "tactical nullifiers" who want political gain. Both hope Washington will commit an act of violence to create sympathy in surrounding states. Jackson orders 5,000 musket and two warships into position, intending to escalate until the "wickedness, madness, and folly" ends. He concedes that under the Articles of Confederation, the states *had* been sovereign and independent, but the experiment fails and a "more perfect union" is established, one that grants powers to the federal government and reserves others to the states. Neither nullification nor secession is retained by the states.

While preparing for war, Jackson takes his case to the people, warning South Carolinians not to be deceived by traitorous oppressors posing as patriots. It is his sworn duty to execute U.S. laws. Jackson next sends a special message to Congress claiming that the Constitution will lose its meaning if South Carolina's "extraordinary defiance" is not overcome, and asking it to reaffirm his authority to use force if necessary. Calhoun answers on behalf of the nullifiers. Now a senator from South Carolina, he speaks with a vigor he has had to suppress while vice president. The federal government, he declares, not his non-belligerent state, is the "provocateur" of this crisis. Jackson has not told Congress about the military measures he has taken, which have forced South Carolina to resist. The Union has lasted forty-four years

unchanged but cannot last much longer without deciding between confederacy and consolidation, which leads to "military despotism."

Virginia revives its resolution of 1798 and Georgia speaks vaguely of states' rights, but the rest of the South is silent, knowing what Jackson could do. He boasts he can have 200,000 troops in place in forty days, and arrest the governor of Virginia if he tries to block the militia. Through a South Carolina congressman heading home, Jackson warns that if one drop of blood is shed, he will hang the first traitor he catches from the first tree. He is perfectly sincere, but also rattles his saber for effect. He wants the nullifiers to back down and potential imitators to learn a lesson. To allow South Carolinians to save face, Jackson specifies that he will employ force only if the rebels do first. When South Carolina defers the effective date, he backs quietly modifying the tariff. Everyone claims victory. Jackson is inaugurated for the second time two days after Congress passes the tariff and force bills, and speaks of the "twin pillars of American liberty" - the preservation of states rights and the integrity of the Union.

Chapter 38

Chapter 38 Summary and Analysis

"Justice Marshall for the Defense" describes a Jackson trip to New England and his reaction to two lawsuits brought by the Cherokees against the state of Georgia. Jackson accepts an invitation from Democrats seeking support against the Whigs in formerly-secessionist New England. During the trip, he becomes the first president to ride a "steam car," and is mobbed in Baltimore, Philadelphia, and New York. The famous quack, Dr. Physick, tells him to avoid coffee and tobacco to prevent his frequent, intense headaches. Enthusiasm drops as Jackson enters New England. Connecticut appreciates his stand against the nullifiers, but Harvard University only with great reluctance grants him the honorary degree it has routinely granted previous visiting presidents, ostensibly because he is poorly educated. John Quincy Adams grumbles about his successor's craving notoriety and sympathy by feigning sickness, and refuses to attend the convocation. Jackson proves himself hardly a barbarian. On another summer trip, to Virginia, a young man recently discharged from the navy assaults Jackson.

In 1832, Marshall marks his 31st year as Chief Justice, months after being widowed. The joy of life leaves him but, like Jackson, he carries on. Big cases fortunately have grown fewer, because the great battles have been fought. The nullifiers do not appeal for redress, knowing how the "father of judicial nationalism" would rule. One significant case in 1831 pits the Cherokees of Georgia against the state. Rather than fight or flee, these Indians adopt the trappings of white civilization, and hire William Wirt, a famous trial lawyer, to sue the state for passing laws intended to make their life miserable. The Supreme Court rules in favor of Georgia, holding that the Cherokees as a "domestic dependent nation" may not sue a state. Next year, Wirt argues successfully that under the 1789 Judiciary Act, Georgia laws are invalid because they conflict with federal treaties. Jackson remains unconvinced that Supreme Court decisions bind the executive branch, or that the Indian questions can be solved without removing the tribes beyond the reach of whites. While relocation is wrenching, the Indians face no more than white settlers every year. No law or court ruling can change the frontier dynamics that have obtained since the arrival of the first whites. The status quo is "untenable" and risks the Indians' annihilation. Jackson has never cared for Marshall, despite the Chief Justice's nationalism. The 1832 Cherokee decision is but an unrealistic delaying measure that would require the unacceptable stationing of federal troops in Georgia indefinitely with orders to shoot whites.

Chapter 39

Chapter 39 Summary and Analysis

Biddle has the wherewithal to bring the American economy to its knees, but hopes not to have to do so. The president could order the Treasury to withdraw its deposits and cripple the bank, but at the risk of disrupting business and inconveniencing the government and the people. Biddle smugly believes that Jackson would not dare such a "declaration of war," but learning about the bank's "designs against democracy," planning over the next two years to fortify itself by calling in its responsibilities and withholding bills to cause a run on all banks, thereby making people demand the bank's re-chartering, Jackson is adamant. He knows little about currency questions, but this is what he expects from bankers and the Eastern elite.

To test the validity of his ideas and his cabinet members' loyalty, Jackson presents options: charter a new bank within the District of Columbia and/or rely on state banks to handle the federal government's affairs. Attorney General Roger Taney shows that Biddle is "consciously manipulating the money supply" and has bought favorable press coverage. He advises "the severest censure," even though Biddle will wage a "fierce and desperate struggle." Treasury Secretary William Duane balks, fearing retaliation and financial panic. A former director of the bank, Duane sends an envoy to gauge state bankers' support of Jackson and gets mixed results. Jackson announces to his cabinet that political and moral ones arguments augment the constitutional one he has already raised. Americans fear a moneyed aristocracy gaining a stranglehold on the country. The Founding Fathers fought such power being wielded by England, so the administration can do no less. Federal deposits will be transferred by Oct. 1, 1833.

Spies inform Biddle of these matters and he considers buying off members of the administration and Congress. He holds off until Jackson makes the transfer, and then counterattacks, calling in loans, tightening credit, otherwise reducing the bank's exposure, and offering lucrative positions to Jackson loyalists willing to defect. Samuel Swartout, customs collector at New York, declines the offer and begs Biddle to have mercy on the nation's finances, which are "beginning to scream." He assures Biddle that he will receive credit for doing so. Biddle refuses and financial panic spreads across the country. As banks collapse, he keeps his chokehold on the money supply, for a frightened bank will "inevitably be prostrated." The louder the cries, the more adamant Biddle becomes; Jackson may have "scalped Indians and imprisoned judges," but he will not have his way with the Bank. It becomes a battle of wills.

Jackson exhorts government workers not be tempted by better paying jobs with Biddle. He fires Duane and moves Taney to Treasury. Biddle encourages the cash-starved to protest before Congress and the White House and petitions flow in. Clay introduces resolutions condemning Jackson's overstepping of his constitutional authority. Stopping the monster becomes Jackson's duty before God and country. He denies any real economic distress, overlooking how he had once lived by borrowing. He dismisses Clay

as reckless, and when the censure passes, mocks that Biddle now rules the Senate. As federal deposits flow through the state banks into the economy, the crisis passes. Biddle's power is broken, the Democrats trounce the Whigs in congressional elections, and Whig leaders abandon Biddle. When federal accounts are tallied on Jan. 1, 1835, the U.S. is no longer in debt. State banks, however, issue notes that fuel speculation, and Jackson can restrain only land speculation by requiring purchasers of federal lands to pay in gold or silver. This chills the economy for the rest of Jackson's term in office.

During a memorial service for a departed congressman, Jackson escapes assassination when two loaded pistols miraculously fail to fire. The assailant is an unemployed housepainter, Richard Lawrence, who hears while attending congressional debates and reading newspapers that Jackson a tyrant. Lawrence's claim to be the rightful heir to the throne of England cements an insanity defense, and he is not brought to trial. Some hope that politicians will temper their rhetoric, but they do not. Jackson's supporters conclude that providence protects democrats.

Chapter 40

Chapter 40 Summary and Analysis

"An Old Friend and a New Frontier" examines Jackson's dealings with Mexico. It opens with Sam Houston reappearing, drinking no more than normal 19th-century norms and with his imposing figure restored. Business brings him to New York and Washington, where he tangles with an anti-Jacksonian congressman, William Stanberry. Denying that congressmen have immunity from retaliation for words spoken on the floor, Houston canes him and is charged in the House of Representatives. Jackson dislikes the pro-bank Stanberry, believes he deserves the beating, and invites Houston to the White House. Houston defends himself "floridly," pleading extenuating circumstances. He wins the galleries but loses the case. In a criminal suit, Stanberry is awarded $500, which Jackson remits. Houston feels vindicated in Jackson's eyes.

Jackson has been thinking about Texas since Burr's plot, but for decades has been too busy to do anything about it. Like Jefferson, he considers Texas part of the Louisiana Purchase and objects to Spain taking control in 1819. Mexican independence in 1821 complicates the situation for democrats, for they model their constitution on the U.S. and invite American immigration. As earlier in Florida, political power abhors a vacuum. Spain and France might try to control it; the Indians raid across the border and Mexico is slave-free, attractive to runaways. During his first term, Jackson tries to buy Texas, but his frank and impulsive negotiator, Col. Anthony Butler, causes political turmoil in Mexico City. Jackson speaks of adjusting the border rather than purchasing, as less likely to raise Mexican nationalism. Word that ten thousand new colonists are heading for Texas arrives and Jackson worries about new pressures and pretexts to throw off Mexican authority. Preoccupied with South Carolina, Jackson sees greater danger in an independent Texas than in one attached to Mexico, more so to Mexico than it the U.S.

Mexico's "revolving-door governments" cannot afford to bargain away a part of the "national patrimony," so Jackson's logic the Mexico is at risk of losing Texas gratis does not sink in. Butler suggests a large monetary inducement and Jackson begins collecting funds. Butler feels he is close to a deal when his interlocutor, Lucas Alambn, flees with the rest of the regime, before the forces of Santa Anna, posing as the national savior. Initially, Jackson assumes his fellow general will be good for Mexico, but Butler, on the scene, sees unending corruption. A shrewd official close to Santa Ana assures Butler that the question can be reopened for $500,000, plus nearly the same amount in personal bribes. Jackson is astonished to learn this through an unciphered letter and denies, in a deliberately unciphered reply, that the U.S. president intends to bribe the Mexican government. Butler calls him napve. Jackson has set $5 million as his "ceiling price" and does not care how the Mexicans use it - provided there is no hint of corruption on the U.S. part. The administration cannot afford to be compromised while trying honorably to settle debts with France, or left without recourse should a bribe be accepted but Texas not relinquished.

Because the 1819 treaty between the U.S. and Spain defines Texas' eastern border as the Sabine River, Jackson makes the flimsy claim that the Neches River is the western branch of the Sabine and forms the true international boundary. Butler sees how this might work and calls for an unopposed occupation of Nacogdoches, between the rivers. Jackson also reconsiders Sam Houston's drunken boast of conquering Texas militarily. After Houston's trial, Jackson sends him off with $500 and the cover of an appointment as an Indian agent. Houston reports nearly unanimous disaffection among Americans in Texas. Texas is already halfway to independence and can stand up against the "powerless and penniless" Mexicans. Knowing Jackson's prejudice, Houston declares that if the U.S. does not control Texas, Britain surely will. Houston omits the fact that Stephen Austin and most early colonists want a separate state government within the Mexican federation rather than transfer to the U.S. Santa Ana's gathering of power to himself sets off a rebellion, which he crushes brutally as a warning to Texas. By the autumn of 1835, Texans are forming militias and talking openly about independence. A committee of six plus Houston warns Jackson that Nacogdoches - American soil - is about to be occupied by Indians; they entreat him to send protection, for the Mexicans certainly cannot help.

Butler corroborates this fictional letter, reporting skirmishes. By the time Jackson reads this, the rebels have seized San Antonio and driven Mexican forces across the Rio Grande. Santa Ana accuses the U.S. of fomenting trouble and seeking to steal land, vows not to yield an inch, and threatens to lay Washington in ashes. The U.S. government avoids taking sides but does not restrict individual citizens' freedom to travel to Texas. Behind the scenes, it prepares to intervene. The massacres at the Alamo and Goliad in March 1836 mark the start of Santa Ana's campaign to drive all Americans out of Texas. Badly outnumbered, Gen. Houston's army retreats along with the refugees. Gen. Edmund Gaines, commanding the Southwestern Military District, proposes to recruit an army of 8,000-12,000 men in neighboring states to stop Santa Ana on the far side of the Sabine. Jackson, through Secretary of War Lewis Cass, authorizes whatever defense the general sees fit, but not the occupation of Mexican territory. Nacogdoches is explicitly claimed as U.S. territory. Gaines implies to the Texans a willingness to fight, but Houston wants to draw Santa Ana into a trap that would lead to Texas' transfer to U.S. hands. Houston's troops, however, insist on avenging their fallen comrades and achieve victory at San Jacinto. Santa Ana is captured, grants Texans freedom, and Houston is hailed as a hero.

John Quincy Adams comes close to accusing Jackson of fomenting revolution in Texas, on top of destroying republicanism, ravaging the economy, and acting as the agent of a slave conspiracy that is subverting the government. The North is largely free of slaves, and abolitionism, once reserved to cranks and Quakers, is commonplace. The South grows defensive, describing slavery not as a necessary evil but as a positive good. Calhoun declares it "mysterious Providence" in the Senate and in the House, antislavery petitions fall under a "gag rule." Adams resents this and fights it. He charges that Jackson is an arch-conspirator in the illegal introduction of slave-holding colonists into Mexico in defiance of Mexican laws. Texas is not in a war of independence, but in a "war for the re-establishment of slavery." War with Mexico will inevitably bring civil war in the U.S., "between slavery and emancipation."

San Jacinto spares Jackson having to invade Texas and he asks Houston not to execute the valuable Santa Ana. Houston and Austin, president and secretary of state of the Texas republic, transmit to Jackson a letter ostensibly written by Santa Ana calling for friendly mutual relations. Knowing Santa Ana is a pariah to the current Mexican regime, a skeptical Jackson demurs. His real interest lies farther, and forcing the Texas issue will make acquiring California more difficult. Houston sends Santa Ana to Washington, and Jackson receives him in his bedroom. Jackson suggests that should Santa Ana find himself back in power, the U.S. might pay $3.5 million for Texas and California as a package. Santa Ana seems receptive, and Jackson arranges him transport home to Veracruz.

Chapters 41-43

Chapters 41-43 Summary and Analysis

The final section of the book, "Patriarch of Democracy, 1837-1845," opens with "The Home Front," a look at Jackson's first four years in retirement. An old man when he enters the White House, Jackson is a very old man as he leaves. He is relieved to relinquish power to Van Buren, essentially his appointed successor. The charming politician vows to carry on Old Hickory's tradition and perfect the work he has begun. The Whigs nominated William Henry Harrison, the other hero of the War of 1812, but Van Buren holds off him and two lesser candidates. Jackson is gratified. He wishes he could tie up loose ends in Texas, but believes that Van Buren will carry on. Jackson calls upon the new Chief Justice, Roger Taney, to help craft his farewell address, but the heart of the message is pure Jackson. It talks of a flourishing Union threatened by regional discord. Jackson's last winter as president sees him confined to bed with severe and mysterious hemorrhaging of the lungs. Fortunately, his workload has diminished as he nears being once again a free man. His journey home is a "triumphal progress," as even enemies turn out to see him. He takes it as a "patriot's reward" and "solace to the grave."

The Hermitage needs attention, particularly the horses and the overseers of Jackson's 150 slaves. Jackson spends $1,000 defending four of his slaves indicted for murder in the course of a slave rebellion. Money problems persist, and for lack of funds, he declines an invitation to the 25th anniversary of the Battle of New Orleans. In the end, he relents and borrows and is gifted enough money to attend. An initiative is begun to overturn his contempt conviction in New Orleans. Because Andrew, Jr., is well intentioned but inept at business, Jackson feels obliged to rescue him, to the tune of $15,000. Jackson preaches frugality in the future to the adopted son who has married and begun a family.

The struggle of politics keeps Jackson alive. People continue to blame him for the financial contraction, but Jackson is certain Biddle is manipulating the new crisis. When the bank's federal charter expires, it is reincorporated in Pennsylvania. Jackson worries that Van Buren will begin compromising with the bankers, and urges him to stay the course. He writes his successor at least twice a month about matters held over from his own administration. The financial crisis erodes Van Buren's political base before easing, and in 1837, the Whigs trounce the Democrats in New York. Jackson tries to rally editors to reveal the machinations of "enemies of democracy" before the next general election. Jackson also advises Gen. Zachary Taylor on how to deal with the Seminoles in Florida, after the Cherokees' march westward turns into a "Trail of Tears." No longer president, he declines to comment on this proof of the failure of his supposedly humane Indian policy. He tells Taylor to find the Seminole women to force a surrender. Fighting continues into the early 1840s before most Seminoles join their surviving relatives.

Sensing that Van Buren wins in 1836 by connection to Jackson, the Whigs again nominate war hero and supposed common man Harrison (actually a college-educated member of the Virginia gentry). Jackson is aghast at this hypocrisy and paints Harrison as a damnable Federalist. He overstates the Whig Party's Federalist ancestry and discounts how businessmen have been alienated by his campaign against the bank. The economy is growing ever more tightly woven, thanks to the railroads, and even farmers are finding themselves tied up in the market. The Whigs present themselves as offering people more economic opportunity than Jackson's Democrats do. Abolitionism also fits more easily into the Whig platform than the Democrats'. Calhoun reconciles with the Democrats, strengthening them in the South but alienating many Northerners. Harrison is no abolitionist, but the Democrats condemn him by association. Jackson opposes abolition because of his personal stake in the slave system, but also because it would force cotton growers to learn a radically new way of operating. He considers slavery to be, constitutionally, up to each state to decide. He doubts blacks and whites could live together equally, and if blacks were not given full political rights, what would become of democracy? If either major political party were to embrace abolitionism, there would be a constitutional crisis far harder than the tariff matter to resolve. Jackson is most provoked by the Whigs' efforts to apply the "common touch" that he pioneers. He has never demeaned himself or the people as he believes Harrison and the Whigs do. He hopes the strategy will backfire. When Van Buren loses the election, Jackson believes that the people have been cheated - again - more than deceived, through corruption and bribery. He predicts that democracy will yet revive and trusts in the virtue of the working class.

"To the Ramparts Once More" examines the aftermath the election of 1840, "the first test of Jacksonianism separate from Jackson." With a non-Democrat in the White House, no one looks to the Hermitage for advice. Jackson turns seventy-three and feels better than he has in years. He is taking a patent medicine, "Matchless Sanative," which may have contained opium or cocaine (both legal in those days). He becomes the potion's ardent advocate. He tends to the farm, liquidating holdings to pay Andrew Jr.'s debts. Hardest to sell off are the horses. Friends and supporters grow alarmed and offer to underwrite his retirement. Jackson declines, saying he is short of cash but not broke. He owns 980 acres of the Hermitage free and clear, and 1,180 acres in Mississippi, which can be logged at a profit and then planted to cotton. He does not want charity but could use a $6,000 loan.

Jackson learns from Blaire the stunning news that Harrison dies a month after his inauguration. This occasions America's first presidential funeral and the first test of succession. There is some doubt about whether John Tyler becomes president or acting president, as Constitution speaks of the devolving of "powers and duties" to the vice president. It is more a political question than a technical one (and remains so until the 25th Amendment goes into effect in 1967). Rather than being controlled by the Whig leadership in Congress, Tyler acts like a real president - and even like a real Democrat. He vetoes Clay's new bank bill. Jackson is pleased by this, but does not change his view on the Whigs. He looks again to Van Buren to deliver the country in 1844 from this clique of slanderers. Calhoun is making a quiet comeback, but Jackson does not trust him. As the 1844 election nears, the question of Texas gains importance.

The best that Jackson had been able to do for Texans before leaving office was to recognize their republic diplomatically. Houston remains in touch with his retired mentor while playing a delicate double game. He must court the votes of Texans who are learning to enjoy independence and envision a Western empire of their own; he also realizes that his republic is a financial wreck, crime is widespread, and the borders are indefensible. Houston hopes help will come from the U.S., but will accept it from anywhere. By intimating this might be Britain, Houston knows he will move Jackson to action. Jackson declares that he will not again be thwarted by his "arch enemy" (Adams), but will regain Texas, peaceably or by force. Otherwise, the U.S. will have to re-fight the Battle of New Orleans. Jackson mobilizes the Democratic Party behind annexation, linking it to ending America's controversial joint occupancy of Oregon with Britain. He writes to Lewis about a "golden moment," albeit a risky one. The next president may not be free to act, if the British pressure him.

Jackson's health begins declining broadly after the first years in retirement. He suffers painful shortness of breath, problems with his vision, attacks of chills and fevers, and other afflictions. Writing becomes difficult. He still has some good days and likens himself to a candle that blazes up for a while before extinguishing. More than ever he thinks about seeing Rachel again. He is certain she is in heaven and believes, with his conscience clear, that God will credit him for trying and allow him in too. He drafts a will, giving Andrew Jr. the Hermitage and most of the slaves. Andrew's wife Sarah and their sons receive separate property. Donelson receive his ceremonial sword.

John Quincy Adams, of the same age as Jackson, is healthier than Jackson but in a worse state of mind. He worries about the path taken by the U.S. since the end of his presidency. He is disappointed that slavery has not died out as expected, but is enjoying a rebirth in the Southwest, and is growing bolder. Enemies libel and ridicule Adams for his stands. When Jackson's supporters demand that Congress rescind the fine imposed on him in New Orleans, Adams is vehemently opposed. When Jackson pushes the Texas question as a *re*-annexation, Adams knows he is being blamed for giving it away in 1819. he recalls that Jackson had supported the treaty and insists that annexation is part of a sinister conspiracy of slaveholders. Opponents must gird for battle, remembering their forefathers and thinking of their children. As the 1844 election nears, Clay receives the Whig nomination after declaring himself against annexation, and Jackson is sure Van Buren will regain the presidency. The New Yorker is less certain, knowing that Northern voters are not highly motivated to issues of border security. As a conciliator, it makes sense to him to avoid the Texas question. Jackson restrains himself from condemning this "waffling," but sees it as folly. Having spoken in public rarely since leaving office, Jackson breaks his silence, writing the *Nashville Union* that Texas is vital to the future of democracy, as vital today as New Orleans was thirty years ago. An ardent annexationist, James K. Polk, wrests the nomination from Van Buren at the convention, and makes Texas and Oregon the focus of his campaign. Jackson is pleased. Clay carries the Northwest, but Polk dominates in the South and West and wins the election easily. Jackson is relieved: the republic is safe. Having done little during his term, Polk seeks a joint resolution of the House and Senate to annex Texas. Adams supports annexing Oregon, but not Texas, which could trigger a war with Mexico

that would spread to a civil war in the U.S. Congress and the people ignore Adams, who sees the Union "sinking into a military monarchy."

"The Soul of the Republic" follows Jackson to the grave. Adams and Jackson remain as far apart on the meaning of democracy as at the start of their rivalry. The former sees George Washington weeping over the state of the union, while the latter is sure that great strides have been taken towards its perfection. Adams sees slavery as the "acid test" of American politics. If sectionalism prevails, civil war is nearly certain. Jackson also fears sectionalism, but cannot conceive how the Southern economy could run without slavery. Abolitionism will shatter the country. A noisy minority cannot dictate morality. When a majority of Southerners finds that slavery no longer serves its interests, it will end the institution, as has happened in the North. Forcing the issue denies that people can be trusted with political power - a proposition Jackson cannot accept. When he hears that Congress votes to annex Texas, Jackson knows he is dying. His body is failing, but his mind and will remain strong. Gradually, his bodily systems shut down and he fills with fluid. Hearing in May that Texans have approved annexation, he rejoices that British gold has not been able to buy Houston. The former protygy is en route to Nashville to introduce a new wife and son to the greatest man he had ever known. He pushes the steamboat captain to hurry, but they arrive too late. Jackson dies at 6 PM, slipping quietly away after bidding farewell to family and household.

Marshall and Biddle precede Jackson in death, but Adams stubbornly holds out. He watches grimly as his predictions about war with Mexico and rising tensions North and South follow the Texas annexation. In February 1848, he suffers a stroke in the well of the House and dies two days later. Clay holds on a few years more, to arrange a compromise on admitting California as a free state but leave open the remaining Mexican cession to slavery. Calhoun dies during the debate over the Compromise of 1850, but Clay and Webster survive until 1852. By then, North and South are fixating on the parts of the compromise they do not like, the Whigs have disintegrated, and the Democrats are more deeply divided sectionally than ever. Houston lives the longest, representing Texas in the U.S. Senate and waving Jackson's banner of Unionism. He decries extremism on both sides of the slavery debate. People talk about his becoming president, a charismatic southern Unionist in the Jacksonian tradition. Foes in Texas, however, prevent his returning to Washington, and as governor he cannot keep Texas from seceding in 1860. Houston refuses to join the Confederacy and his political life ends. Abraham Lincoln emerges as an "unlikely Jacksonian," keeping the Union intact through its severest trial.

Characters

Andrew Jackson

John Quincy Adams

Thomas Hart Benton

Nicholas Biddle

William Blount

Willie Blount

Aaron Burr

John C. Calhoun

Henry Clay

William H. Crawford

Andrew Jackson, Jr.

Elizabeth Jackson

Rachel (nye Donelson) Robards Jackson

Thomas Jefferson

James Madison

James Monroe

John Sevier

Tecumseh

Martin Van Buren

Objects/Places

Bank of the United States

The brainchild of Alexander Hamilton, the Bank of the United States is chartered in 1791 by a Federalist-dominated congress over the objections of James Madison and the Republicans. The original charter expires in 1811 and Republicans gleefully watch it die, but excessive printing of Treasury notes to finance the War of 1812 force Madison to seeking its reinstitution in 1816. Its early efforts to restore solidity to U.S. currency by favoring "specie" (gold and silver) over paper money shake the commodities markets, and when the price of cotton drops in 1818, American finances go into "free fall." In 1819, Pres. Monroe names Nicholas Biddle to the board of directors and in 1822, fellow directors elect him bank president. Biddle sets about putting bank affairs in order while "shunning the limelight for himself and the institution." This changes under the influence of Sen. Henry Clay, a major Jackson rival. Jackson believes that Congress may charter banks only within the District of Columbia and personally fears all banks. When he orders the transfer of federal deposits to state banks by Oct. 1, 1833, Biddle fights back, paying editors to publish articles about the bank's "benevolence and usefulness," calling in loans, tightening credit, otherwise reducing the bank's exposure, and offering lucrative positions to Jackson loyalists willing to defect. As banks collapse, Biddle keeps his chokehold on the money supply. As federal deposits flow through the state banks into the economy, however, the crisis passes, but the economy remains chilled for the balance of Jackson's term. Even after Jackson is out of office, people blame him for the financial contraction. The Whig Party portrays itself as offering people more economic opportunity than Jackson's Democrats and, as a result, Van Buren loses the presidency in 1840. Whig John Tyler, however, vetoes Clay's next bank bill, and when the bank's federal charter finally expires, it is reincorporated in Pennsylvania.

Cherokees

The Cherokee Indian Nation is depicted, based on tribal myths and actions, as the most aggressive people in the Appalachian Mountain region, well established by the 1730s. They ally with Britain against France in the French and Indian War, and prefer the British to Americans, who are nearer and thus more threatening. In 1776, the Cherokees make peace with their rivals, the Shawnees, agreeing to stand together against the "common enemy of all red men." In 1797, the U.S. wants to use public land to further peace with the Indians, while Tennesseans want first priority. Gov. Blunt proposes exiling the Cherokees and Chickasaws west of the Mississippi, to live among people of similar "manners and customs" and not lose their "national character." The two tribes, relatively "civilized," will exercise a "calming influence on their new neighbors," benefiting the whole U.S. Jackson eventually agrees with this position, but at the time is busy fighting the militant Red Sticks, a minority among Creeks, shunned by the Cherokees. Jackson's lieutenant, Sam Houston, has spent five years living among the Cherokees, whose "wild liberty" suits him. Years later, a drunken Houston leads Cherokee bands conquering

Mexican territory in Texas. During Jackson's presidency, in 1831, the Cherokees of Georgia sue the state for passing laws intended to make their fully "civilized" life miserable. The Supreme Court rules against them on a technicality, but for them a year later on substance. Jackson remains unconvinced that Supreme Court decisions bind the executive branch, or that the Indian questions can be solved without removing the tribes beyond the reach of whites. Jackson will not station federal troops in Georgia indefinitely with orders to shoot whites. After the Cherokees' forced march westward turns into a "Trail of Tears," no longer president, declines to comment on this proof of the failure of his supposedly humane Indian policy.

Florida

Jackson sees that one of Jefferson's greatest failings is not purchasing Florida, but he also views it as an opportunity for seizing even more of Spanish America by force. From 1810, the U.S. occupies Mobile, AL, while the Spanish garrison Pensacola. Jackson visits Pensacola and offends the commandant, hoping that Spain will declare war. The Secretary of War tries to restrain him, but in the month it takes for orders to reach Florida, Jackson mobilizes everyone possible against a threat to "subjugate America. The Spanish fail to clear Florida of unreconciled Indians, and by 1818, the borderlands are in chaos. Friendly Creeks invade the East Florida swamps and resume fighting with Red Stick refugees. A prophet named Francis and a British national, Alexander Arbuthnot, lead the Seminoles. Jackson captures and executes them, raising a diplomatic furor with Britain and giving Henry Clay a pretext for calling the Florida campaign unconstitutional, since it usurps Congress' exclusive prerogative to declare war. Monroe returns the forts but does not censure Jackson. Secretary of State John Quincy Adams offers Texas in exchange for Florida, and Monroe appoints Jackson to oversee the transfer of power. Jackson plans to lay the foundations for prosperity and happiness and then retire from public life. For a second time he tangles with a federal judge over a writ of habeas corpus and is termed a grand inquisitor with "uncontrollable ambition." After retiring from the presidency, Jackson advises Gen. Zachary Taylor on how to deal with the Seminoles in Florida: find the Seminole women to force the warriors to surrender. Fighting continues into the early 1840s before most Seminoles join their surviving relatives.

Great Britain

From his youth, when he fights them in the Revolutionary War, the British are Andrew Jackson's unforgivable enemies. He comes of age in the era of polemics between Federalists and Republicans, the former favoring England in the great continental war that follows the French Revolution, and the latter France, the nation that came to Americans' rescue. A profound Anglophobe, Jackson is drawn to Jefferson and the Republicans and hates all that the Federalists advocate, including a central bank. Jackson sees Britain behind every act of frontier treachery perpetuated by the beleaguered Indians, and most tribes do ally with the red coats in the War of 1812, until they are abandoned. Jackson's greatest victory comes in the defense of New Orleans in

1814, having first wiped out British contingents in Florida, lest they launch back-door attacks from there. After the Treaty of Ghent, Jackson sees Britain continuing to hover around Florida, waiting to claim this Spanish territory that he covets for America, and use it as a base for arming Indians to harass the American South. Decades later, Jackson wants to annex Texas, lest Britain move into the power vacuum that exists due to the instability of the Mexican government. Remarkably, Secretary of State Martin Van Buren, influences Jackson to be conciliatory towards Britain in his first State of the Union message, Dec. 8, 1829. Jackson calls only for adjusting the border between Maine and Canada and opening markets in the British West Indies. Jackson perhaps realizes that being president is different from being a general.

The Hermitage

Andrew Jackson's home in Nashville, TN, the Hermitage is bought in 1804 from his neighbor, Nathaniel Hays, who sees the grass greener in Bedford County. Jackson sells his original home, Hunter's Hill, for $10,000, pays his debts, and gives Hays $3,400 for his farm. The new log house is rustic by comparison with what the Jacksons leave, but improvements soon begin, with slaves doing the heavy work. After the War of 1812, Jackson proposes to replace the wooden house, but gets no further than initial plans before the economic downturn. By 1819, he feels confident enough economically to begin major construction, providing four rooms downstairs and four upstairs, papered walls, carved balustrades, and white columns on the fazade. It is modest by Southern genteel standards, but stands out in the neighborhood. During Jackson's presidency, his adopted son, Andrew Jr., supervises the Hermitage, but is not a natural businessman. Thus, Jackson retires finding his home needs attention, particularly the horses and

the overseers of the 150 slaves. Money problems persist.

Mero District

The area of North Carolina that Anthony Fagot connives to separate from the U.S. and either unite with Spain or preserve as an independent entity, Mero is named in honor of the Spanish governor of New Orleans, Estevan Miru. Jackson moves there in the summer of 1788 to take up the job of solicitor (prosecutor), accompanying his former roommate, the newly named Judge John McNairy. Nashville is the capital of the Mero District, still a backward little town half of Jackson's age.

New Orleans

New Orleans is the strategic port that controls the western half of the Mississippi Valley, sold by Napoleon to Jefferson for $15 million. When Louisiana joins the Union in 1812, citizens care only about the price of cotton. When it breaks out, the War of 1812 is unpopular. A "committee of safety" informs Jackson that a slave insurrection might be imminent and that French and Spanish elements may be disloyal. The prospects of a difficult New Orleans defense inspire Jackson to finish matters first in Florida. He

returns on Dec. 1, 1814, to confront the negativism, laying out penalties under the articles of war and putting New Orleans and environs under "strict martial law." Jackson's command consists of 1,500 men. When citizens learn the British are six miles away, they spread stories of rape, send women upstream, bury cash and jewels, and prepare to fight. Only Jackson's "implacable will" prevents a panic. Rumors fly that Jackson will set fire to the city before abandoning it if the British prevail; Jackson is too busy to jail anyone for treason. The British attack on Jan. 8, but are routed. Jackson arrests a Louisiana legislator for publishing an article about his "abuse of power," and when Judge Hall issues a writ of habeas corpus, Jackson exiles him for abetting mutiny. On Mar. 13, word comes by special courier from Washington, DC, that the war is ended. Jackson gives thanks to heaven, revokes and annuls his general order, and pardons all military offenders. Less forgiving, Hall cites Jackson for contempt for ignoring his writ. Jackson appears before Hall, receives his $1,000 fine, and is carried aloft as a hero to his quarters by his jubilant troops. After he retires from the presidency, Jackson's friends work to have this conviction expunged.

Red Sticks

A militant faction of the Creek Indian Nation, the Red Sticks refuses to assimilate to white society and heed Tecumseh's call to race war, led by William Weatherford. They precipitate the dreadful Fort Mims massacre, which inspires the president to put the Tennessee militia on active duty, and Jackson leads his men "at a blistering pace" after the Red Sticks. They overtake the elusive enemy near the Ten Islands of the Coosa River. Jackson orders the cavalry to reduce the Tallushatchee, and they do so "in elegant style," code for a massacre. Jackson takes charge of an infant survivor, Lyncoya, whom he and Rachel adopt. Southern tribes begin calling Jackson "Sharp Knife" and consider him a "fearsome war chief."

Spain

After Great Britain, Spain is Jackson's favorite bugaboo. It loosely controls Florida and Mexico early in the 19th century. In 1810, the U.S. occupies Mobile, AL, according to its understanding of the Louisiana Purchase, and Spain, too weak to oppose this, garrisons Pensacola. Pres. James Madison is anxious to avoid war with the weakening world power, having his hands full with Britain, and has War Secretary James Monroe order the bellicose Jackson to restrain himself. Without explicitly violating his orders, Jackson visits the commandant, Mateo Gonzblez Manrique, and demands cooperation in keeping British arms from the Creek Indians. As Jackson hopes, Gonzblez takes offense. Jackson hopes rumors about Spain soon declaring war are true, but doubts it because this would thus open all Spanish territory to the Isthmus of Darien (Panama) to conquest. Like Jefferson, Jackson considers Texas part of the Louisiana Purchase and objects when John Quincy Adams negotiates with Spain a treaty trading Florida for Texas. Spain taking control in 1819, but in 1821 loses Mexico in a war of independence. As earlier in Florida, political power abhors a vacuum, and during Jackson's term as president, Spain is seen as perhaps waiting to restore control. Mexico struggles for

stability but survives and Jackson must content himself with recognizing Texas as an independent Republic, rather than annexing it as he had hoped.

Tennessee

A portion of the territory west of the original thirteen states and east of the Mississippi River, Tennessee residents want to name it after Benjamin Franklin, the Founding Father most interested in the West. North Carolina cedes to the federal government and then reclaims the territory, and eventually it is lumped in the Southwest Territory. In the constitutional convention called when the population reaches the minimum for statehood, Jackson influences important matters (including the official name) and is named Tennessee's first congressman. He is a year shy of qualifying for the senate. Tennessee earns its nickname "Volunteer State" when nearly 3,000 Tennesseans step forward to accept Jackson's call to arms after Congress declares war on Britain in 1812.

Themes

Duty

Andrew Jackson has an exaggerated sense of duty that frequently leads him into conflicts with foes and can be used by friends to manipulate him into going against his own self-interest and inclinations. When, in 1817, Jackson clashes with Gen. Winfield Scott, head of the Northern forces, they avoid fighting a duel only because the Seminole War demands attention, and Jackson does not resign his commission only because Pres. James Monroe appeals to his sense of duty towards his country. By the early 1820s, Jackson's brief experiences in politics have soured him and peaceful times suggest that the role of commander-in-chief will play a minor part in the presidency; leaving the Hermitage for four or eight years would undo the considerable work he has put in to undo the neglect occasioned by his military campaigns, and neither his personal nor his medical family history suggests he will live much longer. Supporters realize that only if the office can be cast as a duty can he be made to accept it. They make him believe that either Crawford or Clay would be disastrous for the country, but Jackson sees alternatives to himself. Only when it becomes clear that neither can prevail are Tennesseans able to broach the question of a Jackson candidacy. Jackson is careful to make clear that he is being drafted, not volunteering: the people have a right to "call for any man's service," and he who is called must "yield his services to that call." During the bitter four-year battle leading up to the election of 1828, Jackson boasts in his military service to the nation, saying it is better to be considered a dangerous "military chieftain" than to have shirked duty in wartime. Jackson knows that his beloved wife wants him to retire and not burden her with being the president's wife, but he campaigns on for the nation's good, and enters the White House a broken widower. He carries on through his grief only by summoning his sense of duty. When South Carolinians vote to nullify a federal law, Jackson stands ready to send in troops, for it is his sworn duty to execute U.S. laws.

Union

Having fought in his youth for American independence, Andrew Jackson remains throughout his life, dedicated above all to the preservation of the hard-won Union. Early in his career, he is tempted to agree with Aaron Burr's plans for westward expansion until he discovers it is a treasonous plot against the Union and he an unwitting accomplice. When British troops burn Washington, DC, in 1814, Federalists meeting in Hartford, CT, discuss secession and Jackson swears that he would hang the ringleaders, for the Union is "the best guarantee of popular rule, and vice versa." As Western lands reach the population threshold for statehood, North and South argue whether slavery should be permitted in them. Thomas Cobb of Georgia insists that the question could dissolve the Union and flood the land with blood, but the deadlock is broken when moderates link the admission of Missouri to that of Maine and the Missouri Compromise, Cobb's prediction is postponed by a few decades. Jackson first State of

the Union message urges everyone impassioned by the Tariff of 1828 to let patriotism transcend regional concerns. Sen. Robert Hayne insists that nullification by states of unpopular federal laws is not an innovation, and fears that "the seeds of dissolution are already sown, and our children will reap the bitter fruit." At the annual celebration of Jefferson's birthday, Jackson and Vice President Calhoun offer toasts. Jackson's is an "Our Federal Union. It must be preserved." Calhoun rambles, putting liberty and states' rights before the Union. When South Carolina holds a nullification convention, Jackson must act, intending to escalate until the "wickedness, madness, and folly" ends. He concedes that under the Articles of Confederation, the states had been sovereign and independent, but the experiment fails and a "more perfect union" is established, one that grants powers to the federal government and reserves others to the states - but neither nullification nor secession is among them. Calhoun responds that the Union has lasted forty-four years unchanged but cannot last much longer as it slips towards "military despotism." After Jackson leaves office, debates over annexing Texas and Oregon reinvigorate the debate about slavery, suggesting that the storm over states' rights has merely calmed, not blown past. Abraham Lincoln eventually emerges as an "unlikely Jacksonian," keeping the Union intact through its severest trial.

Slavery

Andrew Jackson: His Life and Times traces the changing attitudes towards the "peculiar institution" during the subject's long life. The U.S. Constitution, like all works of committee, is based on compromises. The question of slavery is left for a later generation to decide. The Ordinance of 1787 bars slavery from the Northwest, and an 1808 congressional ban on importing new slaves assuages consciences but the current stock reproduces fast enough to keep up with demand. Owners use euphemisms, pretend it is a labor system like others, and assign to agents such non-idyllic aspects as tearing families apart. As a young man, Jackson buys and sells slaves and doubtless accepts that the Bible allows forced labor. In 1804, Jackson buys the Hermitage and slaves do the heavy work of remodeling. Their numbers grow as the operation expands. By 1820, Jackson holds four dozen, increasing to a hundred in 1829 - far short of the largest U.S. slaveholders, but significant in Tennessee. Jackson treats slavery as a business matter but tries, humanely, to avoid separating children from their mothers. He demands obedience, is brutally severe with offenders, but houses and feeds his slaves well by the standards of the day.

The question of annexing Texas sharpens the debate over slavery. The North is largely free of slaves, and abolitionism, once reserved to cranks and Quakers, is commonplace. The South grows defensive, describing slavery not as a necessary evil but as a positive good. John Quincy Adams charges that Jackson is an arch-conspirator in the illegal introduction of slave-holding colonists into Mexico in defiance of Mexican laws. Texas is not in a war of independence, but in a "war for the re-establishment of slavery." War with Mexico will inevitably bring civil war in the U.S., "between slavery and emancipation." Jackson considers slavery to be, constitutionally, up to each state to decide. He doubts blacks and whites could live together equally, and if blacks were not given full political rights, what would become of democracy? If either major political

party were to embrace abolitionism, there would be a constitutional crisis far harder than the tariff matter to resolve. Adams sees slavery as the "acid test" of American politics. If sectionalism prevails, civil war is certain. Jackson also fears sectionalism, but cannot conceive how the Southern economy could run without slavery. Abolitionism will shatter the country. A noisy minority cannot dictate morality. When the majority of Southerners find that slavery no longer serves its interests, it will end the institution, as has happened in the North. Forcing the issue denies that people can be trusted with political power - a proposition Jackson cannot accept.

Style

Perspective

Andrew Jackson: His Life and Times offers no information about author H. W. Brands, and his website offers only bare bones data. Brands holds a bachelor's degree in history and mathematics from Stanford University and taught both subjects at the high school and community college level before concentrating on history. After earning a Ph.D. from the University of Texas at Austin, he worked as an oral historian and visiting professor at Vanderbilt University, seventeen years at Texas A&M University, and since 2005 has served as the Dickson Allen Anderson Centennial Professor of History at the University of Texas. He is the author of twenty books of history and biography, spanning most of the American experience. He has also coauthored or edited five other volumes, and published "dozens of articles and scores of reviews."

The book also offers no motivation for writing about Jackson, but the text suggests a profound admiration for the colorful general and president. It is written in a non-academic style, which appeals to armchair historians and lovers of biography. The impact is profound, because Jackson is a truly original, bigger-than-life character who occupies a pivotal position in American history between the Revolutionary War and the Civil War. The era is well portrayed and Jackson, despite his many "warts" - and perhaps because of some of them - emerges as a very human figure, flawed like everyone else, but extraordinarily devoted to his country.

Tone

Andrew Jackson: His Life and Times offers a clear, vivid, and objective appreciation of the life and time of the extraordinary seventh president of the United States. Author H. W. Brands avoids sounding hagiographic about the orphan boy born to poverty, war, and an inferior education, and yet becomes a lawyer, judge, legislator, general, and ultimately president He does not descend to mawkishness describing Jackson's widowhood. He eschews "political correctness" to deliver plenty of "blood and guts," but maintains insists on evaluating Jackson by the norms of his time. When discussing his subject's many "warts" - dueling, holding grudges, elevating cruelty over mercy when expediency seems to require it - he contextualizes them in such a way that it is clear what Brands and Jackson's contemporaries both feel about them, and he does so without being preachy. The approach allows readers who might not care for where some Jacksonian precedents have led in the later history of the U.S. still to enjoy and profit from the book.

Brands provides an abundance of detail about Jackson's times, portraying the country as it is brought together by improved transportation and begins dividing regionally over slavery. Brands is careful to develop how the future president's character and thinking form, and towards the end of the book acknowledges the enigmas that lie within

Jackson, and struggles to explain them. Brands devotes the lion's share of the book to Jackson's life before the White House, but still packs enough of the drama of his eight years in Washington to appreciate his abiding importance in history. Discussion of his actions during the Nullification Crisis and re-chartering of the Bank of the United States make clear that Jackson works more from his heart than his head, and this helps prevent the reader from being overwhelmed with technical data.

Structure

Andrew Jackson: His Life and Times consists of a prologue, forty-three numbered and titled chapters grouped in five sections, sources, annotated bibliography, acknowledgments, and an index. The prologue sets the mood on Jackson's inauguration day, Mar. 4, 1829, from the points of view of the bitter incumbent and the victor. Their ideological struggle fills the book and is again depicted in the closing pages, as the antagonists lie on their deathbeds. The prologue succinctly summarizes Jackson's life and career. The opening page of each chapter is double-spaced and centered, and summarizes the broader context for the materials that follow.

"Child of the Revolution (1767-1805)" includes eight chapters, covering Jackson from his birth as a half-orphan through a deprived childhood that he always seeks to transcend, his early forays into business, politics, and law, and finally his commissioning as major general of the Tennessee state militia, his truest calling. "Son of the West (1805-1814)" includes nine chapters, covering his battles against the Indians and culminating Battle of Horseshoe Bend. "American Hero (1814-1821)" includes ten chapters continues the story of Jackson's military exploits during the War of 1812, culminating in the Battle of New Orleans and his claiming of Florida for the United States. His fame sets him up to be "The People's President (1821-1837)". This section includes thirteen chapters covering his election as president and the ups and downs of his two terms in office. Finally, "Patriarch of Democracy (1837-1845)" in a brief three chapters examines Jackson in retirement and the legacy he leaves to the Union. The biography is, naturally, organized chronologically, with the author remarking on how some elements of Jackson's pre-presidential years compare or contrast with his behavior as president. Coverage of the presidential years also provides occasional and useful references back.

Quotes

"To be chosen commander of the militia was a great honor. The militia general was the beau ideal of the men, the protector in chief of the women and children. Most important, his position owed to merit and ability, not to wealth or connections. Westerners could tolerate incompetence in judges, prosecutors, and other officials, without jeopardizing their very existence, but incompetence in militia officers meant that lives - perhaps many lives, and farms and even whole communities - would be lost. For this reason, the westerners chose their officers very carefully" (62).

"Virtue, talent, and experience no longer counted, only loyalty to the administration. Jackson was deeply alarmed. 'If a man cannot be led to believe as the President believes in politics (and God forbid that a majority should), he is not to fill an office in the United States. This, sir, I view as more dangerous than the establishment of religion, for it is truly an attempt to establish politics and to take away the right of thinking'" (95).

"Not surprisingly, what to Jackson were the advantages of the office were to Sevier cause for bitterness at having lost it so narrowly. By battlefield experience Sevier should have won the election easily. He had beaten the British at King's Mountain and the Indians in dozens of engagements before and since. What had Jackson done besides being captured after a skirmish and wounded resisting a shoe shine?" (105).

"To duel Swann would permanently damage Jackson's reputation. 'It would be said that you delighted in human blood.' Enough was enough. 'No man, not even your worst enemies, doubts your personal courage. ... You would gain much more by not noticing anything these people may say than otherwise. Be assured that their slander can do you no harm among your friends.' Moreover, in dueling, Jackson jeopardized greater things. 'Besides the mortification to your friends, you might in this way deprive yourself of that life which ought to be preserved for better purposes'" (141).

"Carroll, in camp with Jackson and nursing a wound suffered in the battle, couldn't know that Horseshoe Bend not only was the most complete - that is, bloodiest - single victory of whites over Indians in American history to that date but would forever retain that dubious distinction. It was also the decisive victory in the climactic struggle for what was then the American southwest. The Creek War represented the last, best hope of the counteroffensive preached by Tecumseh and the final phase of the contest for the dark and bloody ground of the old Southwest. In the bend of the Tallapoosa River, in the spring of 1814, Andrew Jackson seized the prize for which six generations of Euro-Americans and Native Americans had been fighting" (219).

"Honest joy and relief informed the hosannas, but so did a desire to have done with martial law. The residents of New Orleans had never liked it, but with the British at the door they couldn't object inordinately. Now that the British had been beaten back, the residents called for a return to civil law, including normal business and access to the courts. "Jackson refused" (287).

"Perhaps paradoxically, but in a way his men could appreciate, his chronic ill health made hm seem the more heroic - even if it didn't sell lithographs of battle scenes. *They* knew what it took to stay in the saddle when one's intestines were about to explode, and how chronic pain can make cowards of the most courageous" (296).

"At a much later date, the concept of executive deniability would become a standard feature of American foreign policy. Jackson didn't invent the idea, which certainly originated with some Stone Age Machiavelli. But Jackson's offer to Monroe is one of the earliest surviving instances of the strategy in American policy. And it threw American politics into a tizzy from which it hadn't emerged even a decade later when, like so much else involving Jackson's history, it became an issue in a campaign for president" (324-325).

"Les predictably, certain Americans agreed with the Spanish minister. Though the American people, by and large, loved Jackson, many American politicians distrusted him deeply. Some honestly worried that he had the makings of a military dictator. Others feared for the Constitution if the executive branch - whether in the person of a general or of a president - could wage war without asking Congress. Still others saw in Jackson an impediment to their own political ambitions" (338).

"Callava was taken to Jackson's office. The American general's temper had burned to the nub. The Spanish colonel's wasn't much longer. The two shouted at each other, Jackson in English, Callava in Spanish, with the interpreters vainly trying to keep up and pondering, on the fly, how literally to render the insults. A Spanish officer present described Jackson as beside himself. 'The Governor, Don Andrew Jackson, with turbulent and violent actions, with disjointed reasonings, blows on the table, his mouth foaming, and possessed of the furies, told the Spanish commissary to deliver the papers.' Callava refused, according to Jackson out of 'pompous arrogance and ignorance.' Jackson ordered Callava imprisoned" (359-360).

"But he could never explain away - not to Jackson's satisfaction - a failure to place the Union above all. Liberty was vital, to be sure. Yet Jackson's half-century of struggle against the British, the Spanish, the Indians, and everyone else who threatened the safety and integrity of the United States had taught him one overriding lesson: that the Union was the only guarantor of American liberty. It was a clichy, but no less true for its triteness, that in union lay strength. Had the Union not held together, it would have fallen victim to Europeans or aboriginal marauders. If it did not hold together now, it still might. The nullifiers dreamed of a world at peace. Jackson lived in a world of struggle. And the struggle never ended" (447).

"On the road they discovered they were too late. Jackson's doctor, coming from the deathbed, informed them that the old general had died at six o'clock. He had retained his faculties to the end and, after bidding good-bye to his family and the members of his household, had slipped quietly away. "The Houstons proceeded, sadly and now slowly, to the house, where Jackson's body lay in the peace of death. Taking Sam Jr. in his arms, Houston raised the child to the edge of Jackson's high bed. 'My son,' he said, 'try to remember that you have looked on the face of Andrew Jackson'" (558).

Topics for Discussion

What does Jackson's history of dueling - long after it is fashionable or proper to his age and station - say about the man?

What does Jackson's imposition of martial law in New Orleans say about the man? How do friends and foes interpret it?

How do Jackson's views on, and practice of, slave ownership compare with the norms of his day? Can he be categorized as a racist?

How do Jackson's actions vis-a-vis the Indian nations contrast with his stated humanitarian goals? Can he be categorized as a racist?

How do friends and foes manipulate Jackson by playing on his sense of duty?

Are Jackson's views towards John Marshall and the Supreme Court idiosyncratic or do they reverberate down to today?

Is Jackson's legacy, as John Quincy Adams charges, a build-up to "military despotism"?