

Unit Theme Expansion

From 1820 to 1860, the United States grew in several ways. The most dramatic growth was in the size of the nation. It gained vast western territories, including California, Texas, Oregon, and New Mexico. For the first time, an Amer-

ican could travel by land from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific without leaving the country.

How did people of the time feel about westward expansion? They can tell you in their own words.



VIEWPOINTS ON WESTWARD EXPANSION

“Our population is rolling toward the shores of the Pacific. . . It will soon . . . reach the Rocky Mountains and be ready to pour into the Oregon territory.”

John C. Calhoun, South Carolina senator (1843)

“We traveled till 11 o’clock with the hope of finding water for the weary cattle. The sun was excessively oppressive.”

Susan Shelby Magoffin, New Mexico pioneer (1846)

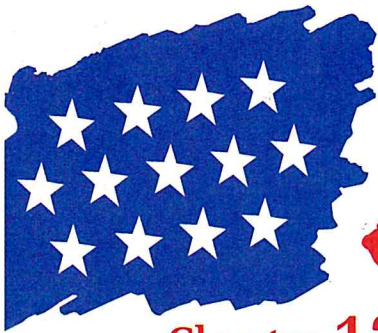
“The white man comes and cuts down the trees, building houses and fences and the buffaloes get frightened and leave and never come back, and the Indians are left to starve.”

Muguara, Chief of the Penateka Comanche Indians (1840s)



Activity Writing to Learn Thousands of families left their homes in the East to make the long journey westward. What if your family was thinking of moving to another part of the country? List what you might gain by moving. Then, make another list of what you might lose. Use your lists to decide whether you want to move.





Chapter 12

Democracy in the Age of Jackson 1824–1840

What's Ahead

Section 1

A New Era in Politics

Section 2

Jackson in the White House

Section 3

Struggles Over States' Rights

Section 4

The Presidency After Jackson

In this chapter, you will learn that the Age of Jackson was a time of expanding democracy and political conflict. As more and more white males gained the right to vote, two political parties, the Whigs and Democrats, competed for their support. Nominating conventions and heated election campaigns became part of American politics. Not all, however, shared in democracy's growth. Women, Native Americans, African Americans, and others had to wait for political and social equality.

Why Study History?

Soon, you will have a right and a responsibility of all American citizens—voting. Learning more about how politics worked in past elections may help you make wise voting decisions in the future. To learn more about politics and your right to vote, see this chapter's *Why Study History?* feature, "You Will Choose Our Nation's Leaders."

American Events

● **1820s**
Right to vote extended to most white men

● **1828**
Andrew Jackson is elected President

● **1830**
Indian Removal Act forces Native Americans to move west of the Mississippi

1824

1826

1828

1830

1832

World Events

▲ **1824 World Event**
Simón Bolívar becomes president of Peru

▲ **1829 World Event**
Swiss adopt universal male suffrage



Viewing HISTORY

Election Day

The Age of Jackson was a time of expanding democracy. During the 1820s and 1830s, more and more Americans gained the right to vote. In his painting County Election, George Caleb Bingham shows that Election Day was a time for voting, socializing, and celebrating. ★ How does this painting suggest that women were not allowed to participate fully in American democracy?

● **1832**
President Jackson vetoes charter of the Bank of the United States

● **1835**
Seminole War begins

● **1840**
William Henry Harrison is elected President

1832 1834 1836 1838 1840

▲ **1832 World Event**
Reform Act doubles number of eligible voters in Britain

▲ **1837 World Event**
Canadian colonists revolt, demanding democratic reform



A New Era in Politics



Explore These Questions

- Why was John Quincy Adams an unpopular President?
- How did voting rights change in the 1820s and 1830s?
- How did political parties become more democratic?

Define

- majority
- suffrage
- caucus
- nominating convention

Identify

- John Quincy Adams
- Whigs
- Democrats
- Alexis de Tocqueville

SETTING the Scene

Harry Ward, a New England teacher, made a visit to Cincinnati, Ohio, during the 1824 presidential election campaign. Writing to a friend, he described how Ohioans felt about Andrew Jackson, who was running for President. “Strange! Wild! Infatuated! All for Jackson!” he observed.

On election day, more people voted for Andrew Jackson than for any of the other candidates. Oddly enough, Jackson did not become President that year.

The Disputed Election of 1824

There were four candidates for President in 1824. All four were members of the old Republican party. However, each had support in different parts of the country. **John Quincy Adams** was strong in New England. Henry Clay and Andrew Jackson had support in the West. William Crawford was favored in the South but became too ill to campaign.

The candidates

John Quincy Adams of Massachusetts was the son of Abigail and John Adams, the second President. The younger Adams was a graduate of Harvard University. He had served as Secretary of State and had helped end the War of 1812. People admired Adams for his intelligence and high morals. Adams, however, was uncomfortable campaigning among the common people.

Henry Clay, by contrast, was charming. A Kentuckian, Clay was a shrewd politician who had become Speaker of the House of Representatives. In Congress, Clay was a skillful negotiator. He worked out several important compromises. Despite his abilities, Clay was less popular than the other candidate from the West, Andrew Jackson.

Most Americans knew Andrew Jackson for his military victories in the War of 1812. He was the “Hero of New Orleans.” Though he was a landowner and a slave owner, many saw him as a man of the people. Jackson was born in a log cabin and his parents were poor farmers. He was admired by small farmers and others who felt left out of the growing economy in the United States.

The “corrupt bargain”

No clear winner emerged from the election of 1824. Jackson won the popular vote, but no candidate won a **majority**, or more than half, of the electoral votes. As a result, the House of Representatives had to choose the President from among the top three candidates. Because he finished fourth, Clay was out of the running. As Speaker of the House, though, he was able to influence the results.

Clay urged members of the House to vote for Adams. After Adams became President, he made Clay his Secretary of State. Jackson and his backers were furious. They accused Adams and Clay of making a “corrupt bar-

gain” and stealing the election from Jackson. As Jackson was riding home to Tennessee, he met an old friend. “Well, General,” said the friend, “we did all we could for you here, but the rascals at Washington cheated you out of it.”

“Indeed, my old friend,” replied Jackson, “there was *cheating* and *corruption*, and *bribery*, too.” In fact, such charges were not true. The election had been decided as the Constitution stated. Still, the anger of Jackson and his supporters seriously hampered President Adams’s efforts to unify the nation.

An Unpopular President

Adams knew that the election had angered many Americans. To “bring the whole people together,” he pushed for a program of economic growth through internal improvements. His plan backfired, however, and opposition to him grew.

Promoting economic growth

Similar to Alexander Hamilton and Henry Clay, Adams thought that the federal government should promote economic growth. He called for the government to pay for new roads and canals. These internal improvements would help farmers to transport goods to market.

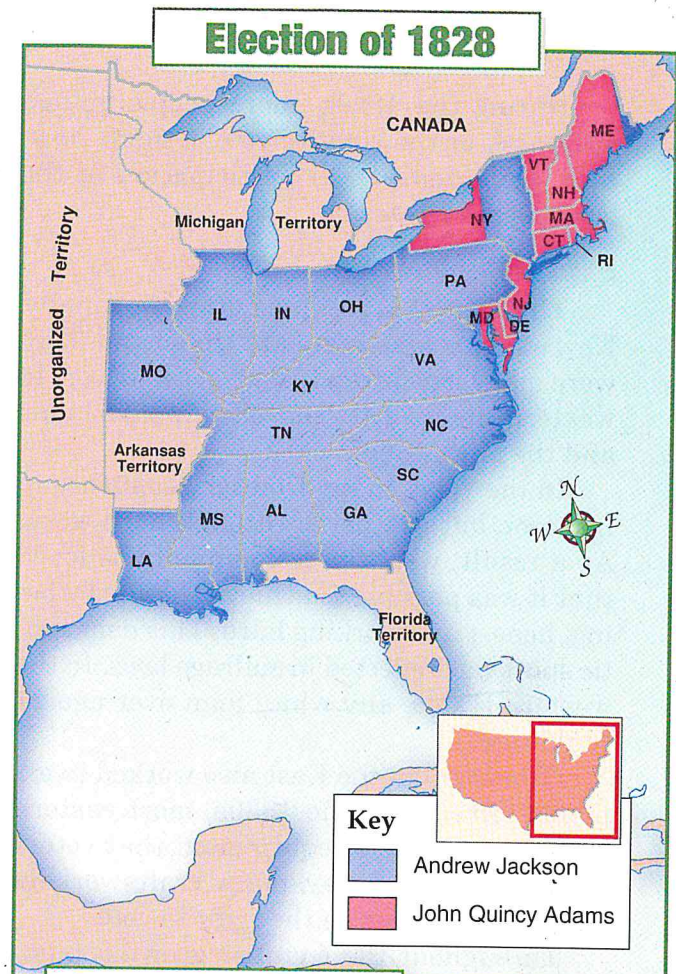
Adams also favored projects to promote the arts and the sciences, as governments in Europe did. He suggested building a national university and an observatory from which astronomers could study the stars.

Most Americans objected to spending money on such programs. They feared that the federal government would become too powerful. Congress approved money for a national road and some canals, but turned down most of Adams’s other programs.

A bitter campaign

In 1828, Adams faced an uphill battle for reelection. This time, Andrew Jackson was Adams’s only opponent.

The campaign was a bitter contest. Jackson supporters renewed charges that Adams had made a “corrupt bargain” after the 1824 election. They attacked Adams as an aristocrat, or member of the upper class. Adams



Geography Skills

In the election of 1828, Andrew Jackson defeated President John Quincy Adams.

- 1. Location** On the map, locate: (a) Massachusetts, (b) Kentucky, (c) Tennessee.
- 2. Place** In which section of the country did Adams have the most support?
- 3. Critical Thinking** Which of the two candidates would probably have won Florida and Arkansas if they had been states in 1828? Explain.

supporters replied with similar attacks. They called Jackson a dangerous “military chief-tain.” If Jackson became President, they warned, he could become a dictator like Napoleon Bonaparte of France.

Jackson won the election easily. His supporters cheered the outcome as a victory for common people. By common people, they meant farmers in the West and South and city workers in the East.

More Voters

During the 1820s, more people gained **suffrage**, or the right to vote. Others, however, were denied full participation in the growing democracy.

Expanding suffrage

The United States was growing rapidly. New states were joining the Union and there were many new voters. Many of them lived in western states between the Appalachians and the Mississippi.

In the West, many frontier people began life poor, but prospered through hard work. As a result, westerners commonly believed that it was possible to achieve success by being honest and working hard. This democratic spirit was reflected in suffrage laws. In the western states, any white man over age 21 could vote.

Reformers in the East also worked to expand suffrage. By the 1830s, most eastern states dropped the requirement that voters own land. In this way, many craftsmen and shopkeepers won the right to vote.

Throughout the country, growing numbers of Americans exercised their right to vote. Before 1828, the turnout of eligible voters was never more than 27 percent. That low percentage rose to nearly 58 percent in the election of 1828. By 1840, voter turnout was nearly 80 percent.

Limits on suffrage

Despite the growing democratic spirit, many Americans did not have the right to vote. They included women, Native Americans, and most African Americans. Slaves had no political rights.

In fact, as more white men were winning suffrage, free African Americans were losing it. In the early years of the nation, most northern states had allowed free African American men to vote. In the 1820s, many of these states took away that right. By 1830, only a few New England states permitted African American men to vote on equal terms with white men. In New York, African American men had to own property in order to vote. White men did not.

New Political Practices

By 1820, the disappearance of the Federalist party temporarily ended party differences. In the 1830s, new political parties took shape. They grew out of the conflict between John Quincy Adams and Andrew Jackson.

Two new parties

People who supported Adams and his programs for national growth called themselves **National Republicans**. In 1834, they became known as **Whigs**. Whigs wanted the federal government to spur the economy. Whigs included eastern business people, some south-

Viewing HISTORY

Limits on Suffrage

The watercolor painting *Two Women* by Eunice Pinney shows two women engaged in conversation. During the Age of Jackson, women could not vote in a single state. Most men of the time thought that women should take care of household responsibilities.

★ How do you think women were able to influence the outcome of elections?



Linking Past and Present

Past



Present



The People and the Presidency

In 1829, President Jackson held a party at the White House to celebrate his inauguration. Cheerful guests helped themselves to slices of a huge cheese. Today, Presidents invite Americans into their home for tours or special events. One example is the Easter egg roll, held each year on the White House lawn. ★ Why did some people criticize Jackson for opening the White House to the common people?

ern planters, and former Federalists. Jackson and his supporters called themselves **Democrats**. Today's Democratic party traces its roots to Andrew Jackson's time. Democrats included frontier farmers, as well as factory workers in the East.

New ways to choose candidates

The two new political parties developed more democratic ways to choose candidates for President. In the past, powerful members of each party held a **caucus**, or private meeting. There, they chose their candidate. Critics called the caucus system undemocratic because only a few powerful people were able to take part in it.

(In the 1830s, each party began to hold a **nominating convention**, where delegates from all the states chose the party's candidate for President. Nominating conventions gave people a more direct voice in choosing future leaders. Party leaders might still dom-

inate a particular convention, but the nominating process was becoming subject to the will of the people. Today, the major political parties still hold conventions.

Growing Spirit of Equality

The spirit of democracy affected American ideas about social classes. Most Americans did not feel that the rich deserved special respect. "Does a man become wiser, stronger or more virtuous and patriotic because he has a fine house?" asked a Democrat.

Wealthy European visitors to the United States were surprised that American servants expected to be treated as equals. Others were amazed that butlers and maids refused to be summoned with bells, as in Europe. **Alexis de Tocqueville** (tohk VEEL), a visitor from France, became especially well known for his observations on American democracy.

Alexis de Tocqueville

In 1831, Alexis de Tocqueville arrived in the United States. The French government had sent him to study the American prison system. Over a period of several months, Tocqueville toured much of the United States. He observed much more than prisons. He observed a society that was becoming more and more democratic.

After his return to France, Tocqueville recorded his experiences and observations in a book titled *Democracy in America*. In it, he admired the American democratic spirit and its goals of equality and freedom.

“Although the revolution that is taking place in the social condition, laws, ideas, and feelings of men is still far from coming to an end, yet its results are already incomparably greater than anything which has taken place in the world before.”

Jacksonian democracy

Andrew Jackson’s inauguration in 1829 reflected the spirit of Jacksonian democracy. As Jackson traveled to Washington, large

crowds cheered him along the way. For the first time, thousands of ordinary people flooded the capital to watch the President take the oath of office.

After Jackson was sworn in, the crowd followed the new President to a reception at the White House. The appearance and behavior of the “common people” shocked an onlooker:

“A rabble, a mob, of boys, negros, women, children, scrambling, fighting, romping. What a pity, what a pity! No arrangements had been made, no police officers on duty, and the whole house had been [filled] by the rabble mob.”

The President, he continued, was “almost suffocated and torn to pieces by the people in their eagerness to shake hands.”

Jackson’s critics said the scene showed that “King Mob” was ruling the nation. Amos Kendall, a loyal Jackson supporter, viewed the inauguration celebration in a more positive way: “It was a proud day for the people. General Jackson is *their own* President.”

★ Section 1 Review ★

Recall

1. **Locate** (a) Massachusetts, (b) Kentucky, (c) Tennessee.
2. **Identify** (a) John Quincy Adams, (b) Whigs, (c) Democrats, (d) Alexis de Tocqueville.
3. **Define** (a) majority, (b) suffrage, (c) caucus, (d) nominating convention.

Comprehension

4. Why did voters not reelect John Quincy Adams to the Presidency in 1828?
5. (a) How did suffrage expand in the 1820s and 1830s? (b) What Americans were denied suffrage?

6. How were nominating conventions more democratic than the caucus system?

Critical Thinking and Writing

7. **Applying Information** Based on what you learned about the election of 1824, if no candidate won a majority of electoral votes in the next presidential election, how would the President be chosen?
8. **Defending a Position** Do you agree or disagree with John Quincy Adams’s position that the government should spend money to support the arts and sciences? Explain the reasons for your position.



Activity Writing an Advertisement Suffrage has expanded greatly since the Age of Jackson. Still, many Americans do not exercise their right to vote. Write a radio or television advertisement urging people to get out and vote next Election Day.