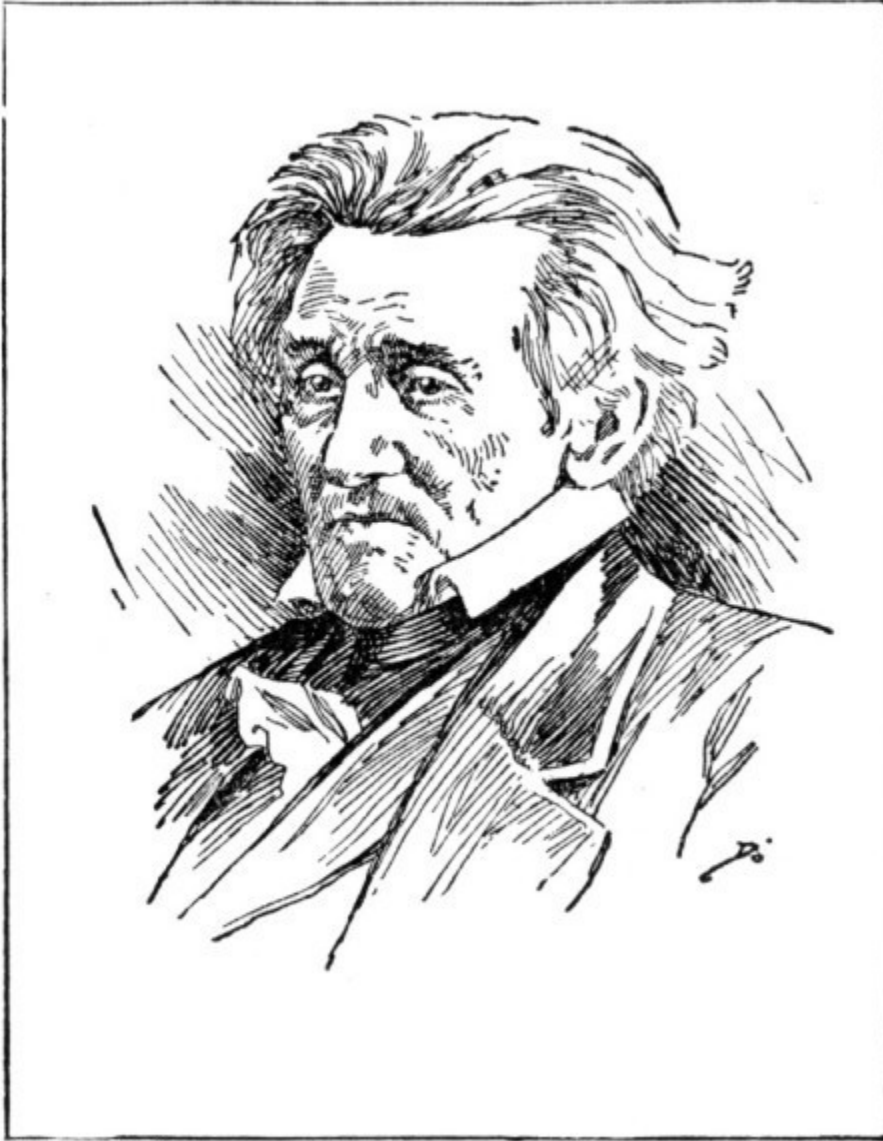


Andrew Jackson



Andrew Jackson

Andrew Jackson was born in Union County, North Carolina in 1767, of poor parents, who about two years before had come from Ireland. In a little clearing in the woods, they had built a rude log hut and settled down to

hard work.

But the father of Andrew soon died and his mother went with her children to live in the home of her brother where she spun flax to earn money. She was very fond of little Andrew and hoped some day to make a minister of him. He was sent to school where he learned reading, writing, and a little ciphering, but made little advancement and never learned to spell well nor write the English language with any correctness. Instead, he found great pleasure in hunting.

"One day his companions, wishing to play a practical joke upon him, secretly overloaded a gun, and dared Andy to shoot it. The fearless little fellow, seizing the gun, shot it off, and was kicked violently upon his back. But quickly jumping up, his eyes blazing with anger, he shouted, "If any of you boys laugh, I'll kill him." The boys did not laugh.

While he was yet a lad the Revolution broke out, and there was severe fighting between the Americans and the British near his home. His love of action, which up to that time had expressed itself in out-of-door sports, now took a more serious turn. War became a passion with him, and from this time he could not visit the local blacksmith's shop without hammering into shape some form of weapon. Once while fiercely cutting weeds with a scythe he was heard repeating these words: "Oh, if I were a man, how I would sweep down the British with my grass blade!" When he was only thirteen years of age he went to fight the British and was made a prisoner of war. Soon after his capture a British officer ordered him to clean his muddy boots but the fiery youth flashed back:

"Sir, I am not your slave. I am your prisoner, and as such I refuse to do the work of a slave."

Incensed at this reply, the brutal officer struck the boy a cruel blow with his sword. and the scars and the bitter memory lingered. He was transferred to the prison pen inside of Camden jail, some forty miles away, where without

shelter and almost without food, he suffered from heartless exposure. In a weak and half-starved condition, his wounds yet unhealed, he fell a victim to small-pox. But his mother secured his release and took him home where he lay ill for months. However, these hardships passed, and some years later Andrew decided to become a lawyer. After studying law for a while, at twenty-one he crossed the mountains with an emigrant party into the backwoods region of Tennessee.

Now grown to manhood, he was six feet and one inch tall, slender, straight, and graceful, with a long slim face and thick hair falling over a forehead beneath which looked out piercing blue eyes. When he reached Nashville, the destination of his party, his experience was, in a large measure, the same[Pg 257] as that of Daniel Boone in the wilds of Kentucky. When the women of the settlement went out to pick berries, and when the men hoed corn in the clearings, some of the settlers, gun in hand, with watchful eyes stood guard against attack from stealthy Indians. To the dangers belonging to backwoods life, Jackson was exposed to Indians and dared not to light a fire or even shoot a deer.

But in the midst of all these dangers he escaped harm, and by his energy and business ability achieved success as a lawyer. In time he acquired the means to become a large land-owner. After his marriage he built a house which he called The Hermitage, on a plantation of 1,100 acres, about eleven miles from Nashville. Here Jackson lived with his wife, whom he loved with a deep and abiding affection.

They kept open house for visitors, and entertained large numbers of guests at a time, treating rich and poor with like hospitality. His warm heart and generous nature were especially shown in his own household, where he was kind to all, including his slaves. Having no children he adopted two, one of whom was an Indian baby-boy who had lost his mother. Of these children, Jackson was very fond." Source: American Leaders and Heroies, a Preliminary Text-Book in United States History by Wilbur F. Gordy.

Campaigns of Andrew Jackson

