

Andrew Jackson, Border Captain



IN FORMAL DRESS

Painted by John Vanderlyn, it is believed in 1815, and hung in the council chamber of the Charleston City hall as a tribute to a native South Carolinian. Reproduced from a photograph of the original in the collection of Mrs. Samuel G. Heiskell of Knoxville.

(All pictures from Marquis James' "Andrew Jackson, the Border Captain," courtesy the Bobbs-Merrill company.)

By ELMO SCOTT WATSON

ON A December day in 1814 a British army, sent in a fleet of ships to capture New Orleans, made a surprise landing below that city, thereby accomplishing what the commander of the American forces defending the city had been working day and night to prevent. When the news of this disaster to his plans was brought to him, he exclaimed to his staff officers: "I will smash them, so help me God!"

Then followed his brilliant night attack of December 23 which held the invaders in check even though it did not "smash them." That happy result was destined to take place two weeks later—on January 8, 1815, when this emphatic military leader won one of the most astounding victories in all history, a victory which paved the way to the White House for him and put on the calendar of the American people a red letter day which calls for remembering the name of Andrew Jackson.

That emphatic declaration quoted above has a peculiar significance. Notice, if you please, that "Old Hickory" did not say "WE will smash them." He said "I will smash them." And that gives point to the title chosen by a recent biographer for his book—"Andrew Jackson, the Border Captain," by Marquis James, published by the Bobbs-Merrill company. For the essence of the border spirit was individualism, a supreme self-confidence on the part of the borderer (or the frontiersman, if you prefer that name) in his ability to do what he set out to do. And only the man who had that supreme self-confidence, that "will to win," could hope to be a "border captain," a leader of borderers.

The extent to which Jackson had it is indicated by James, in telling of his preparations for smashing the British before that historic January 8, as follows: "The inexorable Jacksonian will was unleashed—an instrument by which he believed he could accomplish anything. Had Charles Dickinson shot him through the brain Andrew Jackson counted on the power of sheer resolve to sustain him long enough to kill his adversary. This mood possessed him now. His determination was formed to fight below New Orleans; if beaten there, to fight in New Orleans; if beaten there, to fight above New Orleans—to fight until no living thing could withstand his ineradicable impulse to victory. This was fury, but of the cool, calculating sort."

Perhaps the most surprising thing about this "new portrait" of Jackson is that it paints him as an aristocrat. "Andrew Jackson an aristocrat? Impossible!" you exclaim, because you believe the school history tradition of him as the typical exponent of the frontier democracy. But the fact is that he was both a frontiersman and an aristocrat. He was born on the Carolina frontier in the home of his uncle, James Crawford, whence his mother had gone after the death of his father.

James Crawford was one of the wealthiest men of that part of the country. A large number of slaves tilled his fields and ran his gristmill and distillery. Even finer was the adjoining plantation of Robert Crawford, his brother, who was called Esquire because of his leadership in local affairs. The first 17 years of Jackson's life were spent in the home of James Crawford and that of Robert Crawford was a "second home" to him, he was there so much. So he was no mere backwoodsman, for he "belonged to all the aristocracy there was in the Back-Country."

Given the best education obtainable—and that was more than the majority of the typical frontiersmen had—his interests were pointed toward things classical and he might possibly have gone into the ministry, as his mother had planned for him, had not the Revolution intervened. Very early he showed aristocratic tendencies. He loved good company and he loved good horses. He engaged in horse racing and cock fighting, two typical interests of the Colonial gentleman. When he went down to Charleston to receive a modest inheritance, he proceeded to get rid of it in a gentlemanly way among the gentility of that old Southern town, who accepted him as one of them.

Then he studied law at Salisbury and became a leading social light in that frontier settlement which had decidedly aristocratic leanings.



"THE BRAVE BOY OF THE WAXHAW'S"

A print by Currier and Ives which appeared in 1876 and has, of course, no authority as a historical document other than that which time and the affections of the American people have bestowed upon the productions of these famous lithographers. From the gallery of the North Carolina Historical Commission, Raleigh.



A PRESENTATION PORTRAIT

A miniature on ivory done at New Orleans in 1815 by Jean Francois Vallee, a Frenchman under the spell of the Napoleonic tradition.



RACHEL JACKSON

A miniature on ivory which Jackson wore about his neck for thirty years. Painted by Anna C. Peale in Washington, December, 1815.

Learning of the opportunities there were for a young attorney beyond the mountains "he turned toward Tennessee with the comfortable assurance of the post of attorney general and goodly fees. . . . He early joined up with the Blount faction in politics, associated with gentlemen who acquired lands far and near, revealed a hair-trigger sense of honor which resulted in an appalling number of challenges and duels, and gathered to himself the good things of the region in the form of political offices and military leadership. He had a period in both the house and senate of the United States. He became a major general in the state militia. Without undue struggle or hardship he acquired both place and power." Thus one reviewer of Marquis James' biography.

If Jackson had aristocratic leanings in his youth, they became all the more apparent in his manhood. Within a few years after he had come to Tennessee he was a wealthy man with even greater riches in sight. At one time or another he owned outright or in partnership more than 100,000 acres of land. At different times he owned a distillery, a tavern and licensed ordinary, a boat yard, a race course, a large trading establishment with three stores in Tennessee and agents in New Orleans and Philadelphia and he was a stockholder in the Nashville bank, the first in Tennessee.

He lived in a fine house on a model plantation called Hunter's Hill and that, as well as his later homes, the two "Hermitages" were very much a "gentleman's country seat." But Jackson was not as good a business man as he was a fine gentleman. All of his enterprises except the race track and the bank lost money. Soon he became so involved in debt that he had to sell Hunter's Hill to pay out and he moved into a blockhouse which became the first "Hermitage."

Then it was discovered that he had sold settlers a large tract of land to which he did not possess a clear title, and that threatened to take the last dollar he owned. A crafty lawyer told him how he could find a legal loophole through which he could evade responsibility. Jackson's reply was typical of the man. He declared that he would protect the settlers' titles if it made him a pauper. Fortunately for him he was able to protect them without impoverishing himself.

It was such traits of character as these which helped make him a "border captain." Whatever faults he may have had, there was never any question of his personal integrity. Particularly was this true of him as a judge during his early career in Tennessee. Of this James writes: "His record is clean. Barring a little fessness in Indian matters, which was customary, no hint of irregularity renders the dim beginnings of his career of a color with those of a few of our other western immortals. On the bench Jackson was rectitude embodied. His law library was presentable and his acquaintance with it ample for the time and place. No written decision by him is known, that practice being inaugurated by Jackson's successor, John Overton. But tradition preserves the essence of his frequent charge to juries. 'Do what is RIGHT between these parties. That is what the law always MEANS.'"

Just as he was a leader in civil life, so he became an outstanding military leader, conscious of the fact that "the leader must sacrifice himself for his people." So when the War of 1812 broke out there was every good reason why Andrew Jackson should have remained at the Hermitage, enjoying the honors that already had come to him and the companionship of his

beloved Rachel. Certainly he had paid a high price for the right to enjoy the latter, risking his life time after time in challenges to duels and in duels themselves to shield her good name from slanderous whispers.

Even though he had been elected major-general of the Tennessee militia ten years before there was no compelling reason for him to leave Rachel and march away to the wars. But he instantly offered to President Madison a militia division of 2,500 trained men and promised to make a successful invasion of Canada within 90 days. But his offer was disregarded and had it not been for Governor Blount of Tennessee, who signed his commission as major-general of United States volunteers he might not have got into the war at all.

Through the machination of Gen. James Wilkinson, a scoundrel in high places if there ever was one, all of Jackson's efforts to serve his country were about to come to naught when the news came of the Creek uprising and the massacre at Fort Mims in Alabama. So Jackson started on the campaign which was to bring him his first military glory. But early in that campaign difficulties arose. Before he could win a decisive victory over the Creeks, the term of enlistment of the majority of the volunteers under his command expired and the men prepared to go home without waiting for the arrival of reinforcements to take their places.

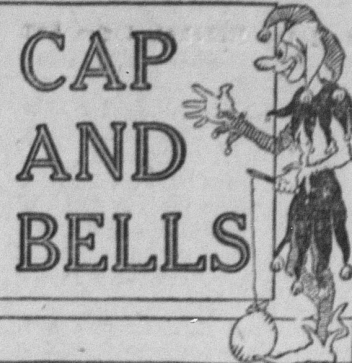
Then "Governor Blount threw up the sponge, advising the evacuation of Fort Strother and a retreat to Tennessee. It was a literal summons to join the dismal file of finking military chieftains whose crowded march into the limbo had distinguished our nation of the war. One ill-calculated step and Andrew Jackson should bear company with the dim shapes of Hull, Dearborn, Hampton, Izard, Chandler, Winder—the list could be lengthened."

So Jackson wrote a letter to Blount: "Arouse from yr. lethargy—despise fawning smiles or snarling frowns—with energy exercise yr. functions—the campaign must rapidly progress or . . . yr. country ruined. Call out the full quota—execute the orders of the Secy. of War, arrest the officer who omits his duty. . . . and let popularity perish for the moment. Save Mobile—save the Territory—save yr. frontier from becoming drenched in blood. . . . What retrograde under these circumstances? I will perish first."

That was in December, 1813. A year later, faced with a similar situation of impending disaster (although redcoats, not Redskins were the enemy this time) Jackson was duplicating his "I will perish first," with the statement "I will smash them, so help me God!" Smash the Creeks he did at Tohopeka or the Great Horsehoe Bend and Jackson's return to Tennessee was a triumphal progress. A year later he also smashed the British and "to a country that had almost completely lost faith in itself, to a country that had almost learned to cringe, this news came like a reprieve to a man upon the gallows. It was literally crazed with joy, and in its delirium it flung the name of Andrew Jackson against the stars."

Later to a suggestion that he might become a candidate for President he replied: "Do you think I am such a d-d fool? No, sir; I know what I am fit for. I can command a body of men in a rough way, but I am not fit to be President." Thirteen years later American democracy thought differently. So it sent this border captain to the White House.

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THE REASON WHY

"Mother," remarked little Elsie, "I wish we had a real baby so I could wheel it around in my go-cart."
"How sweet, dear. What made you think of that?"
"Well, you see, the dolls are always getting broken when the buggy tips over."

Safe at Last

"What is there to console a man in prison?" asks a lecturer. The thought that he hasn't got to get up in the middle of the night to see if there are burglars in the place.—London Humorist.

Just Comfortable

Lodger (to fireman who has been pounding at his door)—All right, I'll come. But it's the first time I've been really warm in this bed.—London Humorist.

Dad Knows Everything

"Dad, what's a post-graduate?"
"A fellow who emerges from a correspondence school, I imagine."

OTHER NRA'S

For merchants: No Raunchy Accounts.
For showgoers: No Rank Actors.
For church clubs: No Itacy Anecdotes.
For snappish couples: No Remarks Acidulous.
For the wets: No Rotten Alcohol.
For girls next door: No Raunchy Arias.—Boston Transcript.

Only Explanation

The heavyweight boxer was describing his latest fight.
"Yes," he said, "my opponent had to be taken to the hospital with a broken nose, two black eyes, a twisted shoulder blade and a fractured jaw."
"O," exclaimed a friend interestedly, "did he have a row with the referee?"—Stray Stories.

Defined

Father—What is a debtor?
Son—A man who owes money.
Father—And what is a creditor?
Son—The man who thinks he is going to get it back.—Vancouver Province.

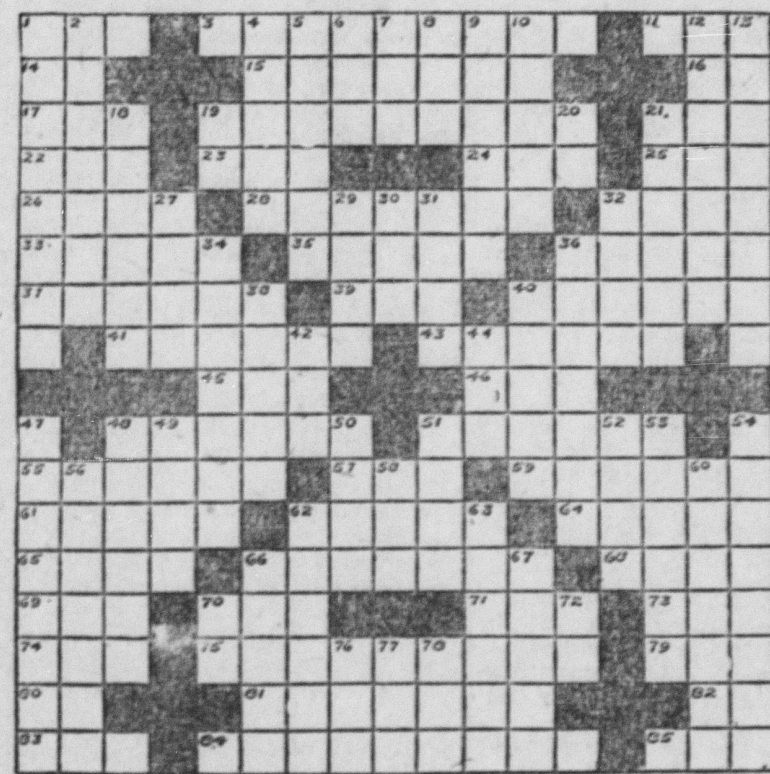
No Wonder

"Yes, my father always gets a warm reception wherever he goes."
"Really? He must be popular."
"It isn't that. He's a fireman."—Philadelphia Bulletin.

No Pride

He—I know where I can buy a good second-hand car for three-fifty.
She—Oh, Tom! Would you like to get hurt in that kind of a car?

CROSSWORD PUZZLE



"Covrsh!"

- | | | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|--|----------------------------|
| 1—Reserve | 14—Pronoun | 27—A volcano | 33—Open space |
| 2—According to value | 15—Comfortable | 28—Vehicle | 34—Interested |
| 3—Fulfil | 16—The substantive verb | 29—Lord | 35—Australasian catfish |
| 4—Comfortable | 17—A land measure | 36—Elements of plants | 36—Oriental weight (pl.) |
| 5—Traveler's bag | 18—The tongue | 37—Ditch | 42—Turn to the right |
| 6—A room in a harem | 19—A high hill | 38—Fate | 43—Phonology |
| 7—A high hill | 20—That Japanese statement | 39—Emits fumes | 40—Small amount |
| 8—That Japanese statement | 21—A sounding instrument | 40—Ditch | 51—Biblical character |
| 9—A sounding instrument | 22—A branch | 41—An arrival | 52—Weird |
| 10—A branch | 23—Growing out | 42—Made tender | 53—Disease of grape leaves |
| 11—East Indian chamber | 24—The fortify | 43—What Eve was made of | 54—Stretching (old) |
| 12—Animal conglutant | 25—The tongue | 44—An arcaical | 55—A son of Shem |
| 13—Conscious being | 26—A wool fabric | 45—Act of stealing | 56—A worker in wool |
| 14—Wool fabric | 27—The tongue | 46—Forward | 57—Forward |
| 15—The tongue | 28—A maiden | 47—Cup with four handles | 58—The entire man |
| 16—A maiden | 29—Gratuity | 48—One who has extreme political views (slang) | |
| 17—Gratuity | 30—Expressing pleasure | | |
| 18—Expressing pleasure | 31—Cornmeal mush | | |
| 19—Cornmeal mush | 32—To fortify | | |
| 20—To fortify | 33—Colored glasses | | |
| 21—Colored glasses | 34—Fidelity | | |
| 22—Fidelity | 35—Melodies | | |
| 23—Melodies | 36—Invest with a fee | | |
| 24—Invest with a fee | 37—Tramp | | |
| 25—Tramp | 38—A tapering mandrel | | |
| 26—A tapering mandrel | 39—Force | | |
| 27—Force | 40—Single | | |
| 28—Single | 41—Electrical unit | | |
| 29—Electrical unit | 42—An extinct bird | | |
| 30—An extinct bird | 43—Point of the compass | | |
| 31—Point of the compass | 44—Goddess of dawn | | |
| 32—Goddess of dawn | 45—That which is recent | | |
| 33—That which is recent | 46—Of the Tartar race | | |
| 34—Of the Tartar race | 47—What every woman adds | | |
| 35—What every woman adds | 48—A vessel | | |
| 36—A vessel | 49—In regard to | | |
| 37—In regard to | 50—An American lizard | | |
| 38—An American lizard | 51—Still | | |
| 39—Still | 52—A color | | |
| 40—A color | | | |

Solution

SHY ADVALOREM LAY
NE EASEFUL BE
ARE CARPETBAG ODA
TOR ALL ITO PER
TIRE SEAGAGE LIMB
ENATE TRIGO MALOO
RENETT GO MERINO
S DALAGA GLOSSA R
E FE E OAT
S SMED AITOLE S
REMISS ARM SMALFO
TROT ARAS ENFEP
NIKE TRETLET DINT
ONE OKM MOA SSE
GOS NEOTERISM HUN
PS FRIGATE RE
YET PTTISODERE RED

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