



From The Frontier in American History by Frederick Jackson Turner

...there came into the Union a sisterhood of frontier States—Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri—with provisions for the franchise that brought in complete democracy.

Even the newly created States of the Southwest showed the tendency. The wind of democracy blew so strongly from the West, that even in the older States of New York, Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Virginia, conventions were called, which liberalized their constitutions by strengthening the democratic basis of the State. In the same time the labor population of the cities began to assert its power and its determination to share in government. Of this frontier democracy which now took possession of the nation, Andrew Jackson was the very personification.

...At last the frontier in the person of its typical man had found a place in the Government... Every community had its hero. In the War of 1812 and the subsequent Indian fighting Jackson made good his claim, not only to the loyalty of the people of Tennessee, but of the whole West, and even of the nation. He had the essential traits of the Kentucky and Tennessee frontier. It was a frontier free from the influence of European ideas and institutions.

...The Westerner defended himself and resented governmental restrictions.... That method was best which was most direct and effective. The backwoodsman was intolerant of men who split hairs, or scrupled over the method of reaching the right. In a word, the unchecked development of the individual was the significant product of this frontier democracy. It sought rather to express itself by choosing a man of the people, than by the formation of elaborate governmental institutions.

It was because Andrew Jackson personified these essential Western traits that in his presidency he became the idol and the mouthpiece of the popular will.

The triumph of Andrew Jackson marked the end of the old era of trained statesmen for the Presidency. With him began the era of the popular hero.

Source: [The Frontier in American History](http://xroads.virginia.edu/~HYPER/TURNER/) [http://xroads.virginia.edu/~HYPER/TURNER/] on the EDSITEment resource **American Studies at the University of Virginia**.