

demands for that performance, etc., etc.; (b) the particular fact that a given individual has entered into the practice by voluntarily and intentionally giving the relevant signs; (c) the fact that if that individual, like others, goes along with the practice by trying to perform, even when performance is at the expense of some inconvenience, foreseen or even unforeseen, to himself, he will thereby not only contribute to the well-being of the person for whose benefit his promise was accepted (a contribution which might in the particular case be outweighed by the loss to his own well-being) but will also be playing his part in a pattern of life without which many of the benefits of community could not in fact be realized.

The hope at this point is that there are only 119 more pages left.

Reviewed by THOMAS MOLNAR

Andrew Jackson, First Reform President

Andrew Jackson and the Course of American Freedom, 1822–1832, Volume II, by Robert V. Remini, *New York: Harper and Row, 1981. xvi + 469 pp. \$20.00.*

ROBERT V. REMINI wrote in the Preface to his Twayne biography of Andrew Jackson, published in 1966, "Surely anyone who presumes to scoop up a life as rich and exciting as Andrew Jackson's and spill it over a few hundred pages is looking for trouble." Since that time Remini has continued his research and writing on Jackson which has resulted in a number of short monographs and two large volumes of what promises to be a definitive biography of our seventh President. Volume I of this biography, *Andrew Jackson and the Course of American Empire, 1767–1821*, was published in 1977, and Volume II, *Andrew Jackson and the Course of American*

Freedom, 1822–1832, was published in 1981 and is the subject of this review. A third and last volume of this biography is scheduled to appear early in 1984.

There have been numerous biographies of Andrew Jackson, beginning with Reid and Eaton, Amos Kendall, and James Parton, to name the best of those published in the nineteenth century, and continuing in the twentieth century with biographies by John Spencer Bassett, Marquis James, and others of lesser importance. Since Bassett and James published their biographies much new material has been discovered to which Remini has had access.

A good biographer places his subject, as accurately as he can, in the historical setting of the period in which his subject lived. Remini has done this superbly. Even conversations have been reproduced from primary sources, such as diaries, letters, and memoranda, as they were remembered and recorded by Jackson's contemporaries. The opinions and implications, expressed or implied in these conversations, are authentic and the style makes interesting reading.

In Volume I of Remini's biography of Andrew Jackson, the author concludes that Jackson, more than any other man of the nineteenth century, determined the course of American expansion. As early as 1803, Jackson congratulated Thomas Jefferson on his purchase of Louisiana, a purchase which, he told Jefferson, had the approval of the citizens of Mero. Jackson played the most important role in the accession of the Floridas and he left no doubt that he was highly in favor of annexing Texas, although this accession was not consummated until after Jackson's death.

Volume II begins with Jackson's return to Tennessee in 1821 after his tour of duty as Governor of Florida. Although a sick man, Jackson, somewhat reluctantly, allowed his name to be proposed for national office, first, as a candidate for the senate in 1823 and then for the presidency in 1824. He had written his friend John Overton while serving in the United States Senate in January 1798 that "the frowns of fortune may cause me to continue in a political life one more session—perhaps more—but not my wishes."

Widespread corruption and fraud in government caused Jackson to believe that perhaps he could make a contribution to the "Great Republic" by serving again in public office, and it was this belief, more than anything else, which was responsible for his decision to become a candidate for the presidency of the United States in 1824. Jackson won the popular vote but the electoral vote was not enough and he was defeated when the election was thrown into Congress. He believed that his defeat was the result of a conspiracy of aristocrats seeking power, led by Clay and Adams. More than ever, Jackson decided that concentration of power in Washington was a means for achieving the selfish ends of the wealthy.

On February 9, 1825, Adams was chosen President by the vote of the House of Representatives and friends of Jackson began their campaign for the 1828 election. Jackson's enemies lost no time in organizing their attack on his candidacy. It was a long and bitter campaign marred by the introduction of adultery charges against Rachel whose divorce from Robards was not legalized until several years after her marriage to Jackson. Not only was Jackson's marriage attacked but also his numerous duels, gambling, drinking, and cock-fighting. Even his military career was not immune to attack by his enemies. In spite of the nasty campaign, Jackson was elected President in 1828.

Remini concludes with good evidence that the period 1816-1828, covered by the administrations of Monroe and Adams, was an Era of Corruption, instead of an Era of Good Feelings, as some historians have called it. Jackson began his administration with a determination to wipe out this corruption in federal government. State sovereignty was the principle upon which Jackson based most of his reforms, believing, as he did, that the concentration of power in Washington invited fraud. He had not changed his ideas on this subject since he wrote Governor John Sevier in 1798 that "the moment the sovereignty of the Individual States is overwhelmed by the General Government, we may bid adieu to our freedom." As President, Jackson decided that his prime objective would be the reduction of government partic-

ipation in the affairs of the American people. He saw his role as the champion of the people, praising them as good and wise and capable of self-rule. He was determined to restore the country to virtue, religion, and morality, even as he was dedicated to honesty in government. Jackson's veto of the Maysville Road bill was, as he viewed it, "a blow for liberty since it allowed people, through their states, to conduct their own affairs." He believed that a national debt was a national curse. To eliminate the debt meant reduced government spending. By reform, retrenchment, and economy, Jackson was able to wipe out the national debt before the end of his administration.

Even Jackson's Indian Removal policy, for which he has been so severely criticized, is based on his state sovereignty principles. The Indian tribes, insisting on their own government and laws, had become a state within a state and Jackson believed that the only way the Indians could have their own government and customs was by establishing an Indian state beyond the Mississippi River. Jackson told the Indians that they would have to obey the state laws if they remained within the bounds of any of the states which were already established. This requirement proved to be the threat which coerced the Indians into giving up their homes and moving west. The Indian policy was the product of a merging of Jackson's state rights' philosophy and his concern for individual liberty.

Of all the reform battles Andrew Jackson fought during his administration, his war on the Bank of the United States was his greatest and most unrelenting. He considered the "hydra-headed monster," as he called the Bank, so dangerous that it threatened the liberty of the American people and undermined "republican institutions." Jackson never wavered in his determination to destroy it. Nicholas Biddle and other friends of the Bank maneuvered to trick Jackson into signing the recharter bill by putting it through Congress immediately preceding the 1832 election, thinking this would intimidate Jackson and assure its passage. But they underestimated Jackson. He not only vetoed the bill but also made it a campaign issue. The American people were given the choice

of Clay and the Bank or Jackson and no Bank. His veto message was a masterpiece. According to Remini, after stating that the Bank favored the rich, the message almost sounded like the President was promoting class warfare. His veto message ended with a strong statement about state rights:

Nor is our Government to be maintained or our Union preserved by invasion of the rights and powers of the several States. In thus attempting to make our General Government strong we make it weak. Its true strength consists in leaving individuals and States as much as possible to themselves—in making itself felt, not in its power, but in its beneficence; not in its control, but in its protection; not in binding the States more closely to the center, but leaving each to move unobstructed in its proper orbit.

Jackson closed the message with a prayer for the preservation of the Union. At this very time South Carolina was threatening to secede from the Union because of the tariff of 1832, known as the Tariff of Abominations. To secede, it was claimed, was their right as a state.

Despite the seeming inconsistency between Jackson's adherence to the principle of state rights and his stand against South Carolina's right to nullify a federal law and secede from the Union, let there be no doubt of Jackson's position. He categorically believed that the Union must be preserved. According to Jackson's belief, a state rights' advocate would preserve the Union but a nullifier would dissolve the Union. When South Carolina seemed near secession because of the tariff, Jackson quietly built up the military forces in that area and would have used them to prevent South Carolina from seceding if it had been necessary.

In this second volume of the biography Remini successfully establishes Jackson as the first reform President of the United States. Strong-willed and unyielding, Jackson stood firm for his reforms once he had decided on the need for them. Clay and others underestimated his ability to gain the support of the American people for his policies. Calmly, and with great strength of character, Jackson withstood the onslaught

of his enemies and others who opposed his reforms, never once doubting that he would win the final battle.

Jackson's first administration was stormy from beginning to end. The volume closes with the sick old man vigorously planning his attack on nullification, which, he believed, if allowed to succeed, would destroy the Union. In his second inaugural address Jackson proclaimed that it was his obligation "*to preserve the Union of these states although it may cost me my life.*" There were many people who believed that he was the only man "who could preserve the Union and with it the freedom of the American people." Such willpower and devotion to cause has seldom been witnessed in our history, and Remini has told the story interestingly and well. We look forward to his account of Jackson's second administration and the tragic years of the Old Hero's later life.

Reviewed by HARRIET C. OWSLEY

Another Life of Salem's Genius

Nathaniel Hawthorne in His Times, by James R. Mellow, *Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1980. xiii + 684 pp. \$19.95.*

PHENOMENAL IS THE tired but true word for it: no other American fictionist has been the subject of so many book-length biographies as Hawthorne. For the past hundred years the average has been two per decade. Why such fascination? It is not that his personality and career were melodramatic like poor Poe's. Rather, Hawthorne was and is our most elusive romancer. We still raise the same query about his enigma as Emerson did at his funeral that sunny day in May of 1864. Toward an answer, the year 1980 offers us two stout and scholarly biographies. One is by the late Professor Arlin Turner. The other (of course the subject of this review) is by an art critic.