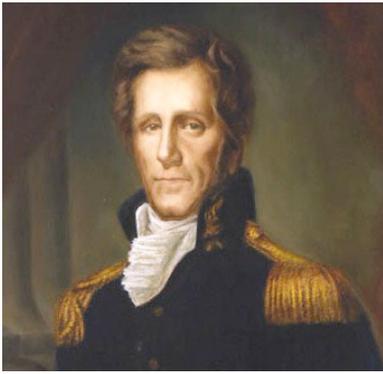


The Corrupt Bargain

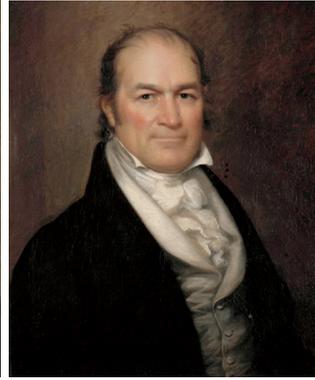
By the election of 1824, the Federalist Party had broken up and the US was operating under a one party system dominated by Democratic-Republicans. The four prominent candidates in the election were war hero Andrew Jackson, Speaker of the House Henry Clay, Secretary of the Treasury William Crawford, and Secretary of State John Quincy Adams who also happened to be the son of former President John Adams.



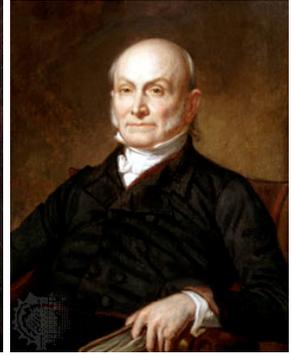
Andrew Jackson



Henry Clay



William Crawford



JQA

From Tuesday, October 26th to Thursday, December 2nd the American public cast their votes. Of the total 261 electoral votes Jackson came out on top with 99 votes. Adams came in second with 84 Crawford third with 41, and Clay last with 37. Jackson had received a *plurality*¹ of both of the recorded popular vote and the electoral college vote. However, he did not meet the constitutional requirement to become President because he failed to win an electoral **majority**. To do so he would have needed 131 votes. The Twelfth Amendment says that when a candidate is not elected by a majority of ... electors, the decision will go to the House of the Representatives with each state allotted one vote.

Clay was eliminated from the contest because the Twelfth Amendment also states that the House will choose the President from only the top three candidates. However, as Speaker of the House, Clay controlled the proceedings. He used his influential position to make it known that he would support Adams because he did not think that Jackson's military history qualified him to be President. Clay was persuasive and the House elected Adams as President on February 9, 1825. Several days later Adams nominated Clay to be his Secretary of State.

Jackson was furious at what he perceived to be a "corrupt bargain." Jackson claimed that the people's voice had been distorted because the popular vote had been ignored.

Now it's up to you to decide....

Was there a corrupt bargain in the Election of 1824?

¹ the number of votes cast for a candidate who receives more than any other but does not receive an absolute majority.