

# Andrew jackson: conqueror of florida assignment

[History](#)



Andrew Jackson: Conqueror of Florida In the early 1800's, Spain had little control of their territory south of the border of the American border, Florida. Indian tribes often raided towns in Southern American, then back to Florida to safety. America's new mission was to seize Florida from Spain in order to protect itself from further attack. It seems that the tough and volatile Andrew Jackson was the only one to do it. Jackson's nickname, Old Hickory, was fitting. Hickory was long held as the toughest wood in the forest, completely indestructible.

Jackson lived up to his moniker. He previously earned recognition as an Indian fighter, and defeated the Creek tribes to carve out 23 million acres of land for the US, in what is now Georgia and Alabama. Some tribes even coalesced to fight this American madman. The Seminoles were aggressive and brutal, and they frequently crossed the border to attack American settlers, because they believed their land had been improperly seized. They did not recognize the legitimacy of these American claims, but in Florida, they could be protected.

To Jackson, this called for the immediate invasion of Florida. In Negro Fort, located in northwest Florida, slaves could escape from Georgia and take refuge. British soldiers armed them and clothed them. Indians eventually found weapons there too. In the eyes of Americans, the British would do anything to cause civil unrest. Jackson made a feeble attempt at diplomacy, but soon after began a march on Negro Fort. Jackson and his men killed 300 there. Any Seminole living in Fowl Town, adjacent from Negro Fort, would be driven out.

The Seminoles carried out their revenge, causing Madison to order Jackson to drive them out. Though most in Congress and in government at the time wanted Florida, seizing it might mean war with either Spain or England. Fresh off the near disaster of the War of 1812, war was not an option with much weight. Instead, Madison gave Jackson rather vague instructions: “ Go down there, when you are there, you may find there are other objectives there for your country. ” Upon this message, Jackson left the Hermitage on January 22, 1818.

Jackson headed to Florida with an army of 3000 and fought many skirmishes with Indian warriors once he got there. He and his men marched to Fort Scott, GA on March 9, learning that slaves and Indians were planning an uprising. He also learned of Alexander Arbuthnot, an Englishman coming from the Bahamas to trade with Indians. Arbuthnot advised the Indians to maintain peace, however Jackson thought he was another English inciter. Leaving Fort Scott, Jackson and his men marched on to old Negro Fort, captured it, and renamed it Fort Gadsden.

From Fort Gadsden the makeshift militia marched to Fort St. Marks, where Spanish commanders were supposed to cooperate with Americans, but secretly did not. On the way to Bowleg’s Town, Jackson’s army fought 2 brief skirmishes with the Seminoles. In his wake, Jackson left a string of burned Seminole villages and corpses. Robert Ambruster, a British soldier-of-fortune, came to the frontier. Jackson thought he was a foreign agent, and held him for trial. In Bowleg’s Town, a letter was found that Arbuthnot wrote warning of Jackson’s approach.

Jackson held that the British were the true instigators, and thusly torched Bowleg's Town. He returned to St. Marks, convened by a court to try Arbuthnot and Ambruster. What was to follow started an international incident. He had no international legal precedence to try them, but in the minds of Americans, he was justified. Jackson had a longstanding hatred of the British since his boyhood in the American Revolution. He lost his brother in the war, his mother died, and his father was already gone.

He added this personal hatred to the already present hostility. On April 26, court convened and found both men guilty and they were sentenced to death. Arbuthnot was hanged and Ambruster was supposed to be shot, but instead got fifty lashes and the ball and chain for a year. After all was said and done, Jackson had used nine-pound cannons on Fort Barracas, opened fire on the Spaniards, and effectively conquered Florida. His fiery temper and bad disposition led to at least one success for America.

If he was healthy at the time of the conquest, he surely would've made an attempt to conquer Cuba. His exploits had caused an international incident for which there was no precedent. He gave Spain and England a cause for war. The crisis put Monroe in a difficult position. Jackson overstepped his bounds, and congressmen wanted Jackson censured for usurping their powers. Next he conquered Washington, with his immense popularity amongst agrarian and patriotic Americans. But once Spain ceded Florida for \$5 million, Jackson's "bad taste" soon became irrelevant.