THE RISE OF THE WHIG PARTY
MARTIN VAN BUREN

- Democrat
- Blamed for the Panic of 1837
- Felt the economy would improve on its own
  + “the less government interferes with private pursuits the better for the general prosperity”
- The continuing depression ruined his hopes for reelection in 1840
Henry Clay, Daniel Webster, and other Jackson opponents form the Whig Party.

Named after a British party that opposed royal power

Opposed the concentration of power in the chief executive – “King Andrew” Jackson

Chose William Henry Harrison to run for President, and John Tyler as vice-president.
WILLIAM HENRY HARRISON

- Strong Military Record
  - Battle of Tippecanoe – “Old Tippecanoe”
  - War of 1812 – Battle of Thames
- Lacked strong political views
- Whig Election Slogan
  - “Tippecanoe and Tyler too”
THE ELECTION OF 1840

- Whigs emphasized personalities rather than issues
  - Tried to appeal to the common people
  - Harrison – a “true Westerner”
    - Represented the frontier, symbolized as a log cabin
  - Van Buren depicted as the “wealthy” one
- Harrison wins in a close election
HARRISON AS PRESIDENT

- 68 year old President
- Inauguration
  + Spoke for two hours in cold March weather with no hat or coat
  + Later caught in the rain, which lead him to get a cold and eventually pneumonia
- April 4, 1841
  + One month in office, Harrison dies
  + 1st President to die in office
  + Vice-President John Tyler becomes president
- The Curse of Tippecanoe