

Fall History & Heritage -- #6 (October 29)

The summaries below are based on assigned readings as indicated. Aside from occasional quotations, the teacher is responsible for the descriptions & analyses.

Isaac Watts --- (*The Christian Almanac*; Grant & Wilbur; Oct. 9)

One of the great hymn writers in church history, **this English pastor and poet (1674--1748)** also authored theoretical works including a college-level logic text? He wrote over 500 hymns, the best known of which are “When I Survey the Wondrous Cross,” “O God, Our Help in Ages Past,” and “There is a Land of Pure Delight.” Educated by religious dissenters at odds with the Anglican Church, he pastored for a decade Mark Lane Independent Chapel in London (1702--1712).

Sir Walter Scott -- (*The Christian Almanac*; Grant & Wilbur; Oct. 4)

Far and away the most popular writer of the 19th-century, **this novelist (1771--1832)** crafted masterful historical fiction that revived the sagging patriotism of his fellow Scots? His prolific works also included epic poems, histories, biographies, and compilations of myths, tales, and legends. Late in his career he related the whole history of Scotland, not so much to the world as to his own grandson, in his warm, personal, and dramatic *Tales of a Scottish Grandfather* (1828).

Benjamin Harrison --- (*The Christian Almanac*; Grant & Wilbur; Oct. 9)

Grandson of a president and great-grandson of a Founding Father, **this Indiana politician & U.S. president (1833--1901)** was succeeded by his predecessor (Grover Cleveland) after one undistinguished term of office (1889--1893)? A Republican, he tried to advance the interests of big business as evidenced by passage of one of the largest protective tariffs in American history. The nation’s economy, however, took a turn for the worse, moving the people to look elsewhere for political leadership.

John C. Calhoun --- (*America, Vol. 1*; W. Bennett; pp. 234-235)

Vice President at the time in 1828, **this South Carolinian (1782--1850)** authored his “Exposition and Protest” in support of his native state’s opposition to U.S. tariff laws? The “Exposition” set forth the doctrine of nullification, the notion that states may invalidate within their jurisdictions a federal law, if they deem that law unconstitutional. Whether the South Carolinian’s doctrine deviated from Jefferson’s & Madison’s similar 1798 viewpoint, or respectfully concurred with it, is debatable.

Compact Theory of the Union --- (*America, Vol. 1*; W. Bennett; pp. 234-235)

In a memorable 1830 Senate debate, South Carolina’s Robert Hayne ably defended **this position on the nature of the Union and how it came to be?** Hayne observed that the Union, by means of the Constitution, had been ratified by the states (through which the people acted), thereby making states the true authors of the federal republic. The celebrated reply to Hayne came from Mass. Sen. Daniel Webster, who made the states an afterthought with his impassioned appeal to “the people’s Union.”

Force Bill --- (America, Vol. 1; W. Bennett; p. 239)

Pres. Andrew Jackson, in a resolute response to South Carolina's 1832 Ordinance of Nullification, pushed Congress to pass **this coercive legislative measure?** The measure, signed by the president together with a milder, conciliatory, compromise tariff bill, gave Jackson the authority to use arms to ensure compliance with U.S. laws. During the nullification crisis (1828--1833), Jackson had threatened to lead personally a militia of 10,000 to SC, if the nullifiers there persisted in their defiance.

Worcester v. Georgia --- (America, Vol. 1; W. Bennett; pp. 240-241)

"The Cherokee nation, then, is a distinct community occupying its own territory in which the laws of Georgia can have no force. The whole intercourse between the United States and this nation is, by our constitution and laws, vested in the government of the United States."

Thus wrote legendary Chief Justice John Marshall for the Supreme Court majority in **Worcester v. Georgia (1832)**. The justices had ruled in favor of Vermonter Samuel Worcester, a missionary to the Cherokees who refused to submit his ministry to Georgia regulations and filed suit against the Southern state in federal court.

President Jackson, in sympathy generally with the South and the West on the sticky question of the status of the Indians, demurred: "John Marshall has made his decision. Now let him enforce it."

Jackson believed that, as a practical matter, the states within which the tribes resided had to have jurisdiction over them, at least until the congressional "Indian Removal Policy" had relocated them west of the Mississippi—a policy supported overwhelmingly by Americans.

Perhaps the whole episode, in the final analysis, pointed to problems inherent in our partly-national, partly-federal constitutional system. Marshall's verdict in **Worcester** had commendable clarity and, from a legal point of view, cogency: it's the U.S. and the U.S. alone that has power (constitutional authority) to deal with foreign nations & peoples. Case closed, or so it seemed. And yet, in the 19th-century context in which the parties trucked, it was really Georgia & the Georgians that had the most to gain or lose by the conduct of the Cherokees; the impact on that state and its people being far more direct, concrete, personal, and close-at-hand than on the United States.

Thus, we shouldn't be surprised, nor should we take offense, to learn that 19th-century Georgia, or any American state similarly situated, insisted on having oversight by law over Indians in their midst. Like Old Hickory, perhaps we should sympathize with their dilemma.