

## Winter History & Heritage -- #8 (Feb. 25)

This marks our final post for the winter months. It will be followed, for our students, by a test on posts 5-8 and, lastly, our Winter 2013 History & Heritage Test.

### **Cyril & Methodius --- (*Christian Almanac*; Grant/Wilbur; Feb. 14)**

**These learned brothers** earned the title “Apostles to the Slavs” for their fruitful Christian evangelism in Old Moravia (Czech Republic & Slovakia) in the 800s AD? Noblemen from ancient Thessaly, one taught philosophy in Constantinople, while the other mastered linguistics and could speak artfully more than twelve tongues. Together, they captured the sounds of the Slavs in an alphabet, the root of modern Cyrillic and the ground for their translations of the Gospels & liturgies into Old Church Slavonic.

### **John Wycliffe --- (*Christian Almanac*; Grant/Wilbur; Feb. 19)**

The so-called “Morning Star of the Reformation,” **this Oxford theologian (c. 1329--1384)** spearheaded the first translation of the Bible from Latin into English? The professor’s linguistic labor challenged the ruling of the Council of Toulouse (1229) which denied the unlearned laity direct access to the Bible in their native tongue. Although his views were condemned by the Archbishop of Canterbury and his followers (nicknamed Lollards) persecuted, his bold focus on Scripture inspired the Reformers to come.

### **Cotton Mather --- (*Christian Almanac*; Grant/Wilbur; Feb. 12)**

Scion of a distinguished spiritual dynasty in Boston, **this Puritan pastor (1663--1728)** made his mark as the most prolific author in American history? More than 450 of his works on a breadth of topics (science & medicine in addition to theology & philosophy) were published in his lifetime, including his account of church history in colonial America, *Magnalia Christi Americana* (1702). A prodigy of the mind who entered Harvard at age 12, he dominated church-state affairs in his day.

### **30,000 to 1 --- (*Founding Fathers’ Guide*; McClanahan; pp. 16-22)**

The U.S. Constitution’s ratio of citizens to representatives, in the House of Representatives, was originally set **at this rate?** In the Philadelphia Convention (1787), the proposed rate was even less representative until George Washington (who rarely spoke his mind in the assembly) and Nathaniel Gorham (MA) appealed for modification. There is little doubt what the Founders would say about the state of republicanism in the U.S. today, now that the House ratio of citizens to representatives is about 700,000 to 1.

### **Wilson Defends Representation Ratio of the House - (*McClanahan*; pp, 20-21)**

James Wilson (PA) was one of the Constitution’s many proponents (Federalists) who had to defend what seemed like inadequate representation of the people in the House. Interestingly, Wilson argued that the U.S. Government did not require nearly as many representatives as the State governments did. As McClanahan observed, “James Wilson of Pennsylvania explained that the Framers ‘endeavored to steer a middle course’ in setting the ratio at 30,000 to 1. ‘Permit me to add a further observation,’ he

said during the State Ratifying Convention, “that a large number is not so necessary in this case as in the cases of state legislatures. In them there ought to be a representation sufficient to declare the situation of every county, town, and district. . . .But in the general government, *its objects are enumerated*, and are not confined, in their causes or operations, to a county, or even to a single state’ (emphasis added). Wilson suggested that the powers of the federal government were ‘confined’ to general issues and thus a smaller body of representatives were adequate for ‘general’ purposes.”

### **Election by State Legislatures --- (McClanahan; pp. 22-23)**

The original design of the U.S. Senate called for two senators per State, each with one vote, **chosen by this method?** The design—implying the independent, self-governing powers of each and every State—was essential to the success of the Constitution, both its passage in the Philadelphia Convention and subsequent ratification in State conventions. “All the Founders,” writes Brion McClanahan, “understood the Senate to be the chamber where the States could check the authority of the general government.”

### **Why the Senate? (its *raison d’être*) --- (McClanahan; pp. 22-23)**

As McClanahan observes below, the U.S. Senate, by “original construction,” was primarily about preserving the powers of the States and secondarily about an aristocratic check on the excesses to which democracy was prone (anarchy, envy, class warfare, turning equality into an all-consuming ideology, individualism, etc.):

“Without the original construction of the Senate—with the legislatures of each State electing two senators, each with one vote—the Constitution would not have been ratified or even made it out of the Philadelphia Convention. The Framers designed the Senate to preserve the equality of the States; to maintain a measure of State control over the general government; and to be the ‘aristocratic’ chamber to restrain the potential excesses of the ‘mob’ in the House. Senators have to be older, thirty as opposed to twenty-five, and have a longer residence in the United States, nine as opposed to seven years. James Madison explained that the more stringent qualifications for the Upper House were necessitated by the weight of the office. ‘The propriety of these distinctions is explained by the nature of the senatorial trust,’ he argued, ‘which requiring greater extent of information and stability of character, requires at the same time that the senator should have reached a period of life most likely to supply these advantages.... The term of nine years appears to be a prudent mediocrity between a total exclusion of adopted citizens, whose merit and talents may claim a share in the public confidence; and an indiscriminate and hasty admission of them, which might create a channel for foreign influence on the national councils.’”