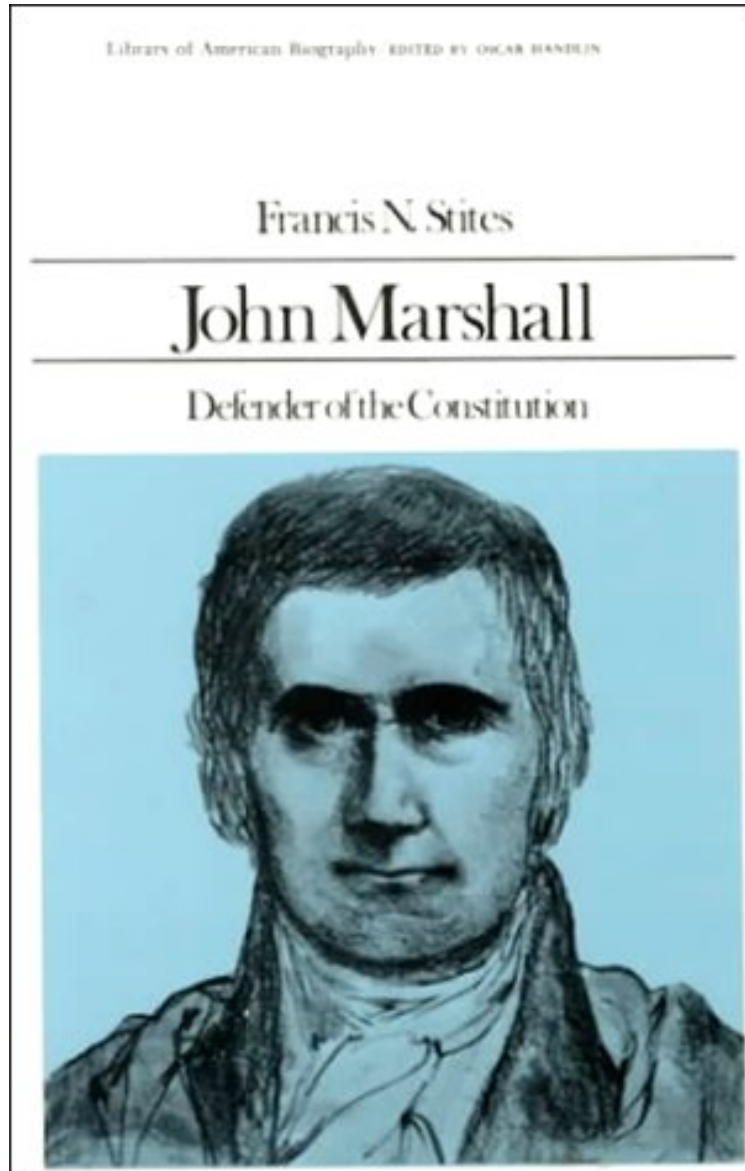


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John Marshall: Defender of the Constitution

Francis N. Stites

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Francis N. Stites : John Marshall: Defender of the Constitution before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised John Marshall: Defender of the Constitution:

0 of 3 people found the following review helpful. AcedemicBy XenomaIt arrived in great shape and met all my expectations.I was the worth the amount even though it was a used book.2 of 10 people found the following review helpful. It's good it's shortBy Benjamin L. ClarkJohn Marshall was born to a lower class of aristocracy on 24th of

September 1755. His parents, Thomas Marshall and Mary Randolph Keith were uncommon people. Mary Keith Randolph connected her family to other upper echelon families of Virginia, families like the Jeffersons, the Lees and, of course, the Randolphs. Thomas Marshall however, did not come from the best families, or even one of them. He did however manage to work his way through the layers of society by being appointed to government positions. Stites unfortunately does not show the reader why his Thomas Marshall was appointed or thought qualified. The important fact however, is that the Marshalls became an important family in an important colony. John Marshall followed in his father's footsteps, climbing even higher in Virginia society. After fighting in the American Revolution, becoming a local war-hero he was elected to the House of Delegates, representing his native Fauquier County. Establishing himself as an up and coming young gentleman he married, and married well. Polly Ambler was one of Jaquelin Ambler and Rebecca Burwell's daughters. The Amblers were of the most prominent families in Virginia. Now with his new bride and plans coming together, Marshall moved to Richmond to practice law. He had not been an outstanding law student, however, he had shown general aptitude in understanding government and law. He was young and had very little, but with hard work and calculation he excelled. Within three years Marshall became "a leading member of the Richmond bar". This was no mean task as there were many well established and men already practicing at Richmond. His law career took off, leading to judicial appointments and even cabinet positions. He eventually became the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, where he stabilized the unpredictable court. The private life of John Marshall, as Stites portrays it, impresses on the reader that Marshall had black piercing eyes and had a wonderful, passionate marriage. At the end of the book Stites apologizes for the several passages on Marshall's gaze by admitting, "John Marshall was a careless record keeper who simply did not believe the records of his life worth preserving." His record of Marshall's public life is different. This difference is because "Without the public records of his career as a lawyer, legislator, and chief justice, we would have only fragments, many gleaned from the more carefully preserved records of his correspondents". Stites admits that most information about Marshall comes from Public records. Marshall was a Federalist. He became established in politics through his ties with Federalists. The party enjoyed his support, especially because of his sway in Jefferson's home territory of Virginia. He became involved in the Adams's administration as a delegate to France during the difficult times with that country. Also while serving in the Adams administration he was appointed to the chief justice seat on the Supreme Court. Once in office he revolutionized the judicial branch of the United States government. He fought for judicial review, providing the Supreme Court to the interpreters of the Constitution. He also worked to bring the National government into a place of authority over states. Marshall's influence also brought unanimous decisions to the court, making it an impartial branch of government. Among his lasting impressions of the court itself was that before Marshall was appointed to the court, it was very difficult to keep judges on the bench. They would constantly resign after a short period. Marshall attributed this hardship to the difficult routine of judges under the system of courts that were in place then. Instead of resigning, Marshall retired the system, putting a more efficient one in its place. After Marshall was appointed no one found higher callings, except when their Maker called them. The significance of Marshall's relationship with Jefferson was not very well explored by Stites. Stites being the sole source of information on this relationship, the reader is left not knowing. I did not like Stites. Marshall, I felt was able to come through a little, in spite of Stites and his apologies. Coming to know a smidgen of Marshall, I also have a better appreciation for Federalists and what they were about as a whole.

Brief, paperback biography that discusses John Marshall, American statesman and jurist.

From the Back Cover Brief, paperback biography that discusses John Marshall, American statesman and jurist.