

Chp. 10

U.S. History Pre-Columbian to the New Millennium Search:

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ON THE WEB

A Trip through the Nation's Legal Justice System

This student generated site has a great introduction to understanding the federal court system. It is accompanied by a compilation of landmark Supreme Court rulings, a tour of a murder trial, links to learning about the law, and a provocative summary of controversial issues including the death penalty.

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Supreme Court Collection

Cornell Law hosts this database of decisions and schedules for the Supreme Court's current term. All decisions since 1990, as well as the collection of 300 historical decisions, are searchable by topic.

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John Marshall

The Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities presents a brief summary of John Marshall's many roles, from Congressman and Secretary of State to Supreme Court Justice.

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The Ovez Project

This work in progress from Northwestern University is a Supreme Court multimedia database. Take a panoramic tour (requires QuickTime plug-in) of the Supreme Court, learn about current and past justices, and search cases by subject or date. This promises to be a superior site when completed.

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There is so much in the political world to wound honest men who have honorable feelings that I am

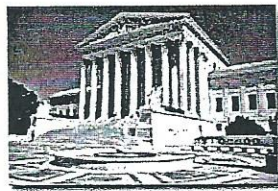
e. A Federalist Stronghold: John Marshall's Supreme Court



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20e. A Federalist Stronghold: John Marshall's Supreme Court

The Democratic-Republican victory in the 1800 election began a long run of Republican political success. In spite of Federalists' departure from most elective offices, they remained a powerful force in American life especially through their leading position among federal judges. In the final months of Adams' administration he enlarged the federal judiciary and appointed many new judges.



Marbury v. Madison was one of the most important decisions in U.S. judicial history, because it legitimized the ability of the Supreme Court to judge the constitutionality of acts of the president or Congress.

In the view of **GOVERNEUR MORRIS**, a Federalist senator from New York, this created an independent judiciary necessary "to save the people from their most dangerous enemy, themselves."

In sharp contrast, Democratic-Republicans were appalled by the "**MIDNIGHT APPOINTMENTS**" that tried to continue Federalist influence despite their election loss. In Jefferson's view, the Federalists "retired into the judiciary as a stronghold . . . and from that battery all the works of Republicanism are to be beaten down and destroyed." As in so many areas, the two political parties fundamentally disagreed.



William Marbury: the plaintiff in the landmark *Marbury v. Madison* case.

The most influential of Adams' final judicial appointments in 1801 was naming John Marshall as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. He held that position until his death in 1835 and shaped the court's decisions and dramatically raised its stature. He also defined the basic relationship of the judiciary to the rest of the federal government. His forceful actions as Chief Justice set the Supreme Court on a course it has continued to follow for the next two centuries. Marshall was guided by a strong commitment to judicial power and by a belief in the supremacy of national over state legislatures. His judicial vision was very much in keeping with the Federalist political

program.

John Marshall's earliest landmark decision as Chief Justice came in **MARBURY V. MADISON** (1803) and demonstrates his sophisticated leadership of the Court. The issue at stake was the validity of the Federalists' last-minute **EXPANSION OF THE JUDICIARY IN 1801**, but Marshall used the case to make a much broader statement about the relationship between the distinct branches of the federal government.