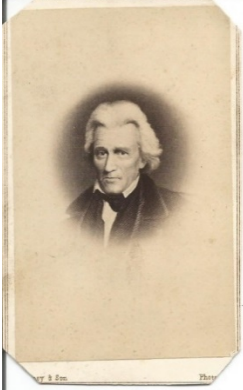


Chapter 88 -- Jackson Begins Ongoing Clash With Vice-President Calhoun



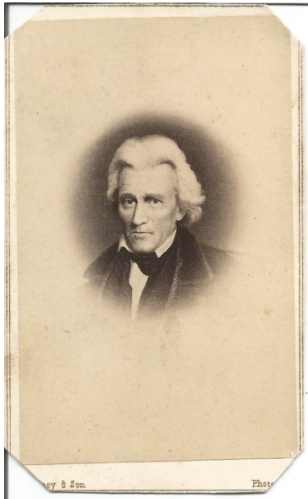
Dates:
April 1830

Sections:

- Jackson And Calhoun Offer Conflicting Dinner Toasts

April 13, 1830

Jackson And Calhoun Offer Conflicting Dinner Toasts



Andrew Jackson (1767-1845)

Little by little it dawns on Andrew Jackson that his Vice-President, John C. Calhoun, is not to be trusted.

The President has yet to learn about the attacks on his conduct during the Seminole War made back in 1818 by then Secretary of War, Calhoun. At that time, Monroe asks his cabinet if Jackson should be arrested for his actions – with Calhoun saying yes, and, ironically, only Secretary of State, JQ Adams, disagreeing.

But Jackson is well aware that Calhoun worked from within against Adams throughout his term, and senses this same pattern developing – this time around the call from South Carolina surrogates like Hayne to “nullify” the 1828 Tariff.

The old General is not one to brook insubordination within his ranks for long.

His anger at Calhoun surfaces on April 13, 1829, at the Indian Queen Hotel in Washington during the annual celebration dinner honoring the memory of Thomas Jefferson.

When the time for after dinner toasts rolls around, all eyes turn to Jackson, whose words echo like a battlefield command:

Our Union – it must be preserved!

The Vice-President recognizes that these words are meant for him and his fellow nullifiers. But instead of the usual “here, here” support, Calhoun reacts defensively by asserting Liberty as the higher calling.

Our Union, next to our liberty, most dear! May we always remember that it can only be preserved by distributing equally the benefits and the burdens of the Union.”

The toast is widely regarded as a form of defiance by Calhoun – his attempt to correct the President’s misguided commitment to the Union at any price.

The ever wily Martin Van Buren, now offers a third toast, apparently playing the peacemaker, but also registering for posterity the growing rivalry between Jackson and his Vice-President.

Mutual forbearance and reciprocal concessions. Through their agency our Union was founded. The patriotic spirit from which they emanated will forever sustain it.

Both the Hayne-Webster debates and the Jackson-Calhoun toasts set the stage for what lies ahead for America – an ever more crucial search for “mutual forbearance and reciprocal concessions” between the North and the South over the future of slavery.