John Marshall’s Experience

Listed below are nine important events in the life of John Marshall. Explain the significance of each factor in shaping his political philosophy, the power of government, and the role of government.

1. John Marshall served in the Revolutionary Army for four years and suffered through Valley Forge with George Washington, whom he adored.

2. John Marshall served in the Virginia legislature (1783-89) when Virginia planters refused to pay their debts to English merchants.

3. Daniel Shays led his rebellion, and this country experienced a depression as well as European disrespect during the period Marshall served in the Virginia legislature.

4. The bloody tales of the French Revolution filtered across the Atlantic to America. Many Americans believed that the situation in France had become chaotic.

5. President Washington had been attacked because of the Proclamation of Neutrality in 1793, his actions to suppress the Whiskey Rebellion, and his acceptance of the unpopular Jay Treaty.
6. John Marshall was sent to France in the late 1790s to try to stop French raids on American shipping. Talleyrand tried to bribe Marshall and the other American representatives. Marshall also saw Napoleon emerging from the chaos of the French Revolution. He feared this new autocratic leader.

7. Thomas Jefferson and James Madison wrote the Kentucky and Virginia Resolutions, which were debated during the period 1799-1800. (One state declared a law of Congress unconstitutional, another state declared the same law void, a third state said the law was invalid, a fourth state said it was valid, and some states denied the right of Congress to pass the law and asserted the states’ right to disregard the law.)
