Joseph Story Biography

Joseph Story

The following sections of this BookRags Literature Study Guide is offprint from Gale's For Students Series: Presenting Analysis, Context, and Criticism on Commonly Studied Works: Introduction, Author Biography, Plot Summary, Characters, Themes, Style, Historical Context, Critical Overview, Criticism and Critical Essays, Media Adaptations, Topics for Further Study, Compare & Contrast, What Do I Read Next?, For Further Study, and Sources.

(c)1998-2002; (c)2002 by Gale. Gale is an imprint of The Gale Group, Inc., a division of Thomson Learning, Inc. Gale and Design and Thomson Learning are trademarks used herein under license.

The following sections, if they exist, are offprint from Beacham's Encyclopedia of Popular Fiction: "Social Concerns", "Thematic Overview", "Techniques", "Literary Precedents", "Key Questions", "Related Titles", "Adaptations", "Related Web Sites". (c)1994-2005, by Walton Beacham.

The following sections, if they exist, are offprint from Beacham's Guide to Literature for Young Adults: "About the Author", "Overview", "Setting", "Literary Qualities", "Social Sensitivity", "Topics for Discussion", "Ideas for Reports and Papers". (c)1994-2005, by Walton Beacham.

All other sections in this Literature Study Guide are owned and copyrighted by BookRags, Inc.

Contents

Joseph Story Biography.....1

Contents.....2

Biography.....3

Biography

Joseph Story (1779-1845), American jurist and statesman, was an associate justice of the Supreme Court and a prolific and influential legal publicist.

Joseph Story was born in Marblehead, Mass., on Sept. 18, 1779. He graduated with honors from Harvard in 1798. After studying in the offices of Samuel Putnam and Samuel Sewall, he was admitted to the bar in 1801. He practiced in the local, state, and lower Federal courts, specializing in commercial and maritime law, and rose rapidly to the top of the profession. At the same time he began his career in legal scholarship, editing works on pleading (1805), shipping (1810), and assumpsit (1811).

Story entered politics as a Jeffersonian Republican. From 1805 to 1811 he was a leading member of the Massachusetts House of Representatives and during 1811 was Speaker. He championed judicial reform, including a successful attempt to raise judicial salaries and an unsuccessful effort to establish a chancery court. In the winter of 1808/1809 he served in the U.S. House of Representatives. President James Madison appointed him to the Supreme Court in November 1811.

Story quickly won respect among his fellow justices. During the War of 1812 he steadfastly backed national authority. His exposition of admiralty law during this period and thereafter helped lay the foundations for that branch of American jurisprudence. His opinion in *Martin v. Hunter's Lessee* (1816) was a major decisional link in the chain of nationalism forged by the Court under Chief Justice John Marshall. Like Marshall, Story was dedicated to the sanctity of property rights, and his opinions consistently favored national expansion of business and commerce. His opinion in *Terrett v. Taylor* (1815) and concurrence in *Dartmouth College v. Woodward* (1819) were instrumental in shielding corporations from state interference. In commercial law he was during his tenure the most influential justice on the Court.

After 1837 Story was progressively alienated by the states'-rights tendency of the Court under Chief Justice Roger B. Taney, and he continued to defend the "old law" in biting dissents. While performing his judicial duties, he also taught at the Harvard Law School, which, through his efforts, pioneered in formal legal education. From his teaching came a series of commentaries on the main branches of American law.

Story was a leader in the Massachusetts constitutional convention of 1820 and drafted legislation on bankruptcy, crimes, and admiralty jurisdiction. He died on Sept. 10, 1845.