

The Story Behind  
by  
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America is the country of second-chances, of re-invention. To be any less would be the height of hypocrisy, considering our history.

Last month we looked at the Revolutionary War and I teased you with the notion that George Washington wasn't the first president, but was in fact, the eighth.

Perhaps that isn't *quite* true, but it is *mostly* true! What I was hinting at was the period between the Revolutionary War and the creation of the Constitution; a period governed by the Articles of Confederation (and you thought the Confederate States of America was a *Southern* idea!), AND a period too often overlooked by our history classes.

That America survived those eight years of Confederacy is nothing less than a miracle.

The Internet is replete with stories that John Hanson was the first president of the United States of America. Would that it were so; it would have made his job much easier.

Those United States of America had no president, because it had no federal government. The thirteen "states" were independent governments very loosely related. The Articles maintained that independence while establishing a "Congress" with no separation of powers so severely weighted to strength of the States that the President *of Congress*, John Hanson, was little more than a... *consultant!* (Perhaps you need to be employed by a large corporation to understand the embittered nature of such a position...)

Having little domestic power, and because his fellow Congressmen ran for their lives in fear of a George Washington military coup (threatened by the military, not George, himself), Hanson set his sights on Foreign Affairs, running off foreign governments who actually had a justifiable stake in America. He created the Great Seal of the US that is still used today, the Treasury Department (though he couldn't levy taxes to fill it), the Secretary of War (though his military wouldn't listen to him)...

... and he created a holiday that the Articles did NOT give him the right to create. But so grateful for the outcome of the Revolutionary War, and so grateful for the US of A that handily ignored him at home, John Hanson set aside the fourth Thursday of November as a day of Thanks.

While the Pilgrims set precedence for *how* to celebrate it; it was John Hanson, the First President of Congress, of the First United States of America, who told us *when* to celebrate Thanksgiving.

I hope yours is wonderful!