

## Episode 10: Peace out Big Boy!: His Accidency John Tyler

### Transcript:

**Hannah:** Hello and welcome to another episode of This is Problematic. I'm Hannah

**Easton:** and I'm Easton.

**Hannah:** And today we're going to be talking about the problematic history of John Tyler.

**Easton:** Brought to you by Conner Prairie Museum.

**Hannah:** He is obviously a lesser-known president, but for a variety of reasons, we have chosen him to feature on our first season's presidential episode. So, each season, we're going to tackle a president and our first one on the docket is John Tyler. We'll talk in a minute about why.

**Dylan:** \*Sings presidential song, Hail to the Chief\*

**Hannah:** Shall we give it a rating? I feel like this one's going to be an R.

**Easton:** This is trending towards the R territory.

**Hannah:** Our vibe today is R.

**Easton:** But later afterwards, we will also be giving a rating on what we actually feel this president deserves.

**Hannah:** And every season when we do a presidential episode, we're going to attempt to give them a rating out of White Houses on fire.

**Easton:** So one White House on fire is like, you know, you're not that bad. A hundred White Houses on fire means...

**Hannah:** You're god awful.

**Easton:** You'd be better off just setting the White House on fire again.

**Ryan:** Does James Madison automatically start off with one White House on fire?

**Easton:** Yes.

**Dylan:** I love the joke that there was a silence.

**Easton:** Well, I was like, is anyone going to actually respond to him? And I looked around and was like, oh, I'll respond.

**Hannah:** I'm not used to you being mic'd-up . It's weird.

**Easton:** Yes. Welcome to the microphone.

**Hannah:** This is our awesome podcast expert who handles all of our shenanigans and noise making. So we thank you for being here with us, Ryan. And we're also joined by our curatorial friend Dylan.

**Dylan:** Hello.

**Easton:** We missed you, Dylan. We missed you. The first question we need to tackle, of course. Why are we talking about John Tyler? I, up until very recently, didn't even know who this man was, but I knew of his exploits specifically the circumstance surrounding his burial.

**Hannah:** I do want to add as well, one of the other reasons we wanted to explore John Tyler, other than just rabbit holes and curiosity, is that we all feel that he is an under examined individual. There are a number of presidents that have been poorly examined, under examined. And so we're going to try to shine some light on pieces of our history that we don't talk about.

**Ryan:** I, I had a area of historical inquiry that I found interesting. And after doing bouts of more inquiry and research into said rabbit hole, we found that it didn't really hold a lot of water, so to say. So we had done all this research on John Tyler and he has done plenty of problematic things. And the interesting thing about John Tyler is not a lot of people talk about him. So we're just going to be taking sort of a top down look at this president and the impact he had on people and how he still has an impact on us in our election cycle.

**Hannah:** Attempting to air his dirty laundry. Also, fun facts. He has a connection to Indiana. Dylan, Do you want to speak to...

**Dylan:** It's a thin one.

**Hannah:** Okay. But it's one none the less.

**Dylan:** That he.

**Hannah:** More than most presidents.

**Dylan:** Yeah. So Harrison, William Henry Harrison, who was our first Indiana territorial governor back in 1800 when John Adams decided to make us our own thing. He when he was elected to president the presidency in 1840, John Tyler was his vice president, and that was to balance out the state's rights or with a more nationalistic president. But yeah, no one expected him to do anything because Vice presidents are pretty inconsequential. What did John Adams say about the vice presidency? He said.

**Ryan:** Well, it is interesting pairing John Tyler with William Henry Harrison. They are both men of Virginia. Both come from Virginia dynasty families who were involved in the revolution. They were actually born 20 miles apart from each other. Yeah, which is really weird. You would never see in modern context two presidents or a president, a vice president on the same ticket being from the same area.

**Dylan:** Well, they weren't. When they were elected, they weren't living in the same year because by that time Harrison had moved to Ohio. John Adams said about the vice presidency, My country has, in its wisdom, contrived for me the most insignificant office that ever the invention of man contrived or his imagination conceived.

**Hannah:** Vice President.

**Dylan:** Mm hmm.

**Hannah:** But the kind of fun fact here about that is John Tyler was the first one to actually assume the presidency from the vice presidency. Correct?

**Dylan:** Can I say that former Vice President John Nance Garner said that the vice presidency is not worth a bucket of warm piss.

**Easton:** Wow.

**Hannah:** Except for in John Tyler's case, when he got to be president.

**Easton:** Yeah.

**Dylan:** Well, yes. The first time a sitting U.S. president kicked the bucket in office and

**Hannah:** After what? 12 days?

**Dylan:** It was about 30.

**Ryan:** Yeah,

**Dylan:** It was about a month.

**Ryan:** It is interesting. We had vice presidents die, but no presidents and there was no concern to even replace the vice president because it was such an insignificant office. It wasn't even a part of the cabinet for a long time.

**Dylan:** Literally, at this point in history, your vice president, their only job is overseeing the Senate. Which...

**Ryan:** They could do to more or less degree.

**Dylan:** Right. Now, the Senate, the vice president doesn't normally sit in the Senate because they're doing vice president things, because that office has grown larger. They're still there for ceremonial reasons or also for tie votes like to break the votes.

**Hannah:** Which has happened a lot recently.

**Dylan:** Which has happened a lot when the Senate is 50/50.

**Ryan:** And so what's interesting, they didn't leave it completely up to chance when the president died. They did have a clause in the Constitution. It was specifically Article two, Clause six. But that clause was left very vague. And so now that we had a president who kicked the bucket, things happened very quickly to figure out what would happen next.

**Dylan:** How does the clause phrase it?

**Ryan:** In case of the removal of the president from office or of his death. I think that's interesting that it's gendered that way. Resignation or inability to discharge the powers and duties of the said office. The same shall devolve on the Vice President and the Congress may by law provide for the case of removal, death, resignation or inability, both by the President and Vice President, declaring what officer shall then act as President and such officer shall act accordingly until the disability be removed or president shall be elected.

**Hannah:** Oh, that is worded really interestingly.

**Ryan:** So the Vice president can take over duties, but it doesn't say the vice president will then become the president.

**Dylan:** Right. Is he still the vice president? Is the acting president or is he president?

**Ryan:** Yes. And none of that was decided until then.

**Dylan:** Yeah, John Taylor was the first one where we had to reckon with that.

**Hannah:** Do we... what do we think of the nature of how that decision was made? Do you think they should be full president? Do you think that's problematic?

**Easton:** I think they kept murky.

**Dylan:** Well, it doesn't really matter. And our Constitution says that's what happens.

**Ryan:** Well,

**Hannah:** Constitutions can change.

**Ryan:** Well, Yeah

**Hannah:** Isn't what other people think.

**Ryan:** It is interesting for the election of 1840, because you have people nominating this person as vice president, not realizing this is what would happen. You have an entire electorate electing this man, not realizing that it's going to end up being president because all up until then, the vice president didn't do much. So we now have that context that when we're voting for a vice president, we have a context that, oh, maybe this person will become president if something awful happens or and this course has been invoked several times. If a president is going under surgery or other things, the vice president will then perform the duties of president.

**Dylan:** I don't think it's problematic. I think it's needed because you still want a leader.

**Ryan:** I think it was an oversight, if anything, of the original constitution to not have a chain of command if something happens. And it is interesting in context of things that happened later in his administration talking about chain of command and what happens when suddenly, let's say, two cabinet members and almost the president die in a freak accident?

**Dylan:** I think it's also in part because like even in like. Correct me if I'm wrong, Hannah, because you're from that part of the world. But like Britain, when they call for a general election, it's still months ahead because they've got to plan it.

**Hannah:** It's usually about six weeks.

**Dylan:** So six weeks. But in the 1800s, I mean, you have such widespread areas, males taking six weeks to get places.

**Hannah:** Yeah.

**Dylan:** And so

**Hannah:** It wouldn't have been practical.

**Dylan:** It's not practical to call for an election again.

**Ryan:** Mm hmm.

**Dylan:** And if it does, it's going to take months to do it.

**Hannah:** Well, and I completely agree with what Ryan said that, like, if you're going into it with the mindset, like, I know when I vote in the last election, the candidates were both a little older. And so certainly it wasn't at the back of my mind that the people on the ticket, as the VP could potentially take over someday. And so if you do have that in your mind, then that's one thing. But yeah, with the election of Tyler and Harrison or Harrison and Tyler, then that is a little problematic that people maybe didn't.

**Ryan:** Right.

**Dylan:** Because they did think about what happens if people die because like if a congressman dies, like, oh gosh, what's his name? Hamilton Counties. Senator like George Kinnard, I think is his name. He blows up in a steamship explosion in December '36 and they have to call a special

election to fill the remainder of his time. Senators are are selected by general assemblies to fill out the remaining times the senators that croak.

**Ryan:** Mm hmm. But that's a much smaller population of people who have to vote. I do think it's also interesting and it sort of makes sense if you think about it, when the Constitution was written in this put in place, the vice president also was the one voted number two. He wasn't voted alongside the ticket. That wasn't until later. And then this was never relooked at until we had a president die.

**Hannah:** Okay. So we've now given you all a little bit of a teaser as to the importance of Tyler and our system and his place in the country's history. So I think what we should do is take a big old step back and go back to baby John Tyler and find out who was his family, where did he come from, What kind of background did he come from? And we'll take up through his election to vice president, through his appointment as president and then his later life. And we'll kind of explore some different points throughout, assess their problematic nature and attempt to come to some conclusions on what we think of this man.

**Ryan:** Sounds good.

**Ryan:** So John Tyler was originally a Democrat from Virginia. Like I said, he was interestingly born only 20 miles away from where William Henry Harrison was born. He was born on Greenway Plantation. He was from a very wealthy planter family, the Tyler family of Virginia. His father was involved in the American Revolution. He inherited a plantation when he was very young with a population of enslaved people. So he was around it from basically his entire life. This is just the world that he was living in at the time. And he also got married at a relatively young age. He got married to a Latisha Christian on his 23rd birthday, and she was 19 at the time.

**Hannah:** Okay. And that they have children, a family.

**Dylan:** They had eight and they had eight children. Prolific

**Easton:** The most of any president.

**Dylan:** Mm hmm.

**Ryan:** And so taking on.

**Dylan:** Plus the seven from the second one.

**Ryan:** Right. And any potential...

**Dylan:** Children with enslaved people.

**Easton:** Yes.

**Ryan:** He took a step out of his father's book and got involved heavily in local politics. He eventually became governor of Virginia. And he was actually governor when Thomas Jefferson

died. And so he held the the funeral for Jefferson and provided a eulogy. He definitely was. He grew up with people like Jefferson, Madison, also Bishop James Madison, as these people to look up to. So a lot of while they took a little different approach on the moral side to slavery. Tyler at first agreed with them but later on it would become a necessity to preserving the union.

**Dylan:** And I do want to say Tyler is he is in politics from a young age studies law, but he is in Congress. When the Missouri compromise is coming up for a vote, the Missouri crisis hits in the fall and winter of 1819. He opposes it. He opposes this compromise to keep the union together to allow Missouri to come in because he was a very strict states writer. So at this period, you have two major views of government. You have the nationalistic side and you have the states writers. So it's a lot of the kind of the same themes we have today. Is it a big government or is it a small government?

**Ryan:** And the interesting thing that I found is that doesn't necessarily translate to party all the time.

**Dylan:** No, no. A lot of it is more regional. Southerners are more likely to be states writers or to be less nationalistic than their northern counterparts just because they also have the institution of slavery to think about. And they perceive any any effort by the government to be an assault against their peculiar institution.

**Hannah:** And what party to Tyler? Even if you're saying policy wasn't as important, is it important to point to the party that Tyler was affiliated with?

**Ryan:** I think it is because of all of the shenanigans that happens later with parties. He, up until he resigned from the Senate, was a Democrat. But he is like...

**Dylan:** Democratic Republican.

**Ryan:** Yeah. But like Dylan saying, he is very states rights.

**Dylan:** Yeah. And most, you know, you have this, what, '20 to '24, I think is at least one of Monroe's terms. And it's this era of good feelings. So everyone is identifying as a Democratic Republican. And then the election of 1824 that features John Quincy Adams versus Andrew Jackson, you start getting a split. You get the Jackson and Democrats versus the Democratic Republicans. And then that party kind of goes away and you get the Whigs that come out as a coalition anti-Jacksonians.

**Ryan:** And that's where we find Tyler. Tyler was. So he was a Democrat until Jackson's term, specifically about his executive power over whether or not to re-charter the national Bank. And with that split is why he left the Democratic Party and eventually and actually resigned from his Senate seat. So with the Whig Party, you have all of these.

**Dylan:** Was it because Jackson was against the bank too.

**Ryan:** So this is why it doesn't make sense for Tyler to be a Whig in the first place is because the only reason he didn't agree with Jackson is that he didn't like he didn't want the executive to do anything. And since Jackson was overreaching.

**Dylan:** So you get a tariff in 1828, it's called the tariff of abominations. Southerners hate it. They feel it's really America's first tariff that's put in place purely for protection, that is protection, protecting American domestic manufacturers.

**Easton:** What is a tariff, by the way, for those who do not know?

**Dylan:** So tariffs, tax placed on imported goods. So, for example, if American American produced good, is \$4 good from Europe, let's say France is \$3, you're going to buy the French one because it's a dollar less. But if you put a dollar tariff on it or it's a percentage and raise it to where it costs \$4, it's going to cost the same as the American manufactured one. So you're protecting American interest. The tariff. The Southerners did not like it because they viewed it as protecting northern interests at the expense of the Southerners. The Southerners are not having to pay more and their industry because they have none. It's all agrarian is not being protected. But also they thought it gave the North an ascendancy over them. And then the North is going to use it to attack the institution of slavery.

So South Carolina comes up with this idea. John, John C. Calhoun, who at this time, what is he's the vice president. He he comes up this idea of nullification. And there was another tariff in 1824, the kind of got this ball rolling. It really comes to a head. In 1828, Calhoun comes up with this idea of nullification, and that is a state can declare a federal law null and void if they view it's unconstitutional. It's a very dangerous precedent. So that's South Carolina threatens to secede. They threaten to nullify the law and secede. And this comes to a head in.

**Hannah:** And this is in the 1830s.

**Dylan:** Yes.

**Hannah:** I didn't realize this was already...

**Dylan:** That starts getting talked about in 1824, between 1824 and 1828, it comes to a head. And by 1832, there's another tariff that's trying to get worked out, the compromise tariff. And South Carolina is threatening to secede, to nullify and secede. Andrew Jackson, for all his faults, is a nationalist. He says, if you leave, I will send troops. So he gets Congress to pass this what is called the force bill, and that gives him the right to use troops to go to South Carolina and enforce the tariff. This is where John Tyler splits, because that is a national overreach as an executive overreach. You're going to use troops against your own people. He finds that very problematic. And so he he resigns. No, he doesn't resign. He breaks. He breaks with with Jackson and joins the Whigs.

**Ryan:** Mm hmm. But he's still sitting as a Democrat at that point. Yeah. The National Bank is gives the the federal government more power. And when instead of spreading it out to the states. However, Jackson's approach is to dissolve it by executive order and Tyler does not agree with that and actually votes to censure him multiple times and again sides with the Whigs. So...

**Dylan:** Well it might not be so out of pocket, though, because Jackson, when he refuses to re-charter the bank because Henry Clay brings it up early because he's like, I'm going to nail this



guy in the 32 election. Clay decides he wants to make the bank the election issue. Jackson wins in a landslide, so that backfired. But Jackson, when he takes the deposits out of the national Bank, the bank, the United States, he's putting them in pet banks. He's choosing which banks he's putting his money in. And everyone views that as an executive, a federal overreach. Actually, that's where we get the famous cartoon of Jackson dressed as a king stomping on the deck on the Constitution because he's pulling money out of the bank and choosing where it goes. So I think that actually might be more in line with with Tyler's states rights, limited executive power philosophy.

**Ryan:** And the bank does come back up when John Tyler is president. And it's also interesting, his presidency happened right in between the two areas that we largely interpret here at Conner Prairie and so even here, we don't talk about him as often.

**Easton:** The bridge between Prairietown and Civil War journey. Who would have thought.

**Ryan:** Also, considering how much research we had to do into him too.

**Hannah:** I like the metaphor for the real bridge, its great.

**Dylan:** He definitely does not get as much written about him. What we found the latest book was what, 2016? Before that it was like 2006.

**Ryan:** Yeah, there are not a lot of modern interpretations of John Tyler. He's just... And interestingly before that, it's largely the 1950s and then contemporary stuff.

**Dylan:** And I think the 19 we were talking about this the other day in the hallway, the 1950s resurgence of interest in John Tyler comes at an interesting time. So there was the discovery of a large collection of Gardiner papers, right, which is the maiden name of his second wife, Julia. But also you get the beginning of the civil rights movement and you get the beginning of these arguments about states rights. So you have John Tyler, an ardent states rights. People are looking at him like, what can we learn from this guy? And being glorified in the South. So it comes at an interesting point in history. It's almost like history is used by everybody to make a point.

**Ryan:** Mm hmm.

**Dylan:** No matter your political affiliation.

**Hannah:** Mm hmm.

**Ryan:** John Tyler also comes up a lot in Lost Cause literature because of what happens after his presidency, but also because of his large states rights.

**Dylan:** Yeah. If you're trying to justify the lost cause, what better tool than an ex president joining your cause, regardless of how good or how bad or how useless he was? You have a president on your side that stands for something.

**Hannah:** Well, and I feel like almost by him being unknown, you can actually manipulate him to say whatever you want him to say. It's useful to have these figures that are not.

**Dylan:** You just need a title.

**Hannah:** Yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Ryan:** So, Dylan, can you explain a little bit about what the Whig Party is?

**Dylan:** No

**Ryan:** to sort of to explain the situation? Tyler is now facing himself as the supposed supposed the President supposed to be the leader of the party, but he just now became president for a party that he only really joined because he didn't like Jackson.

**Dylan:** And that right there is the Whig Party. They, the Whig Party comes around as a coalition of anti-Jeffersonians. They band together. It's a very broad party. There's been a lot of historiographical discussion over if they even had an agenda because there were so many moving parts. You had Northern abolitionists in your party. You had Southern slaveholders in your party. You had national nationalists in your party. You had states, writers. So you're trying to make everybody happy and you're trying not to piss anybody off. And that is very hard to do in politics. But if you have a figure that you're opposed to, that makes it easier because whatever he does, we don't like, once he's gone, it becomes much more, what's the word? I don't I don't know if it's fluid. It's much harder to be cohesive. And so they finally get their chance in 1840. After Martin Van Buren, his first term. You get the panic of 1837. There's an economic crisis. And we always we always see that as a good opportunity to change parties. And so Harrison wins, and the Whigs were finally going to get to do to pass their agenda. They were going to get their national bank back. They were going to get their infrastructure, they were going to do all these things and to assert to the South and to states, writers, writers, the Whigs are going to extend the federal government. They're going to have and you have the tariffs. So they're going to have money looking for projects. And that's just their worst literal or worst nightmare.

**Ryan:** And so, Tyler, as the states writers finds himself in charge of a party who wants to do all of these projects. And so he's suddenly at odds with Henry Clay, who's one of the leaders in the party, along with an entire cabinet of Whigs chosen by the former president.

**Dylan:** Yeah. And I want to you know, John Tyler is chosen because he's a states writers. I'm going to writer John Tyler is chosen because he is a state's right Southerner and that off balances the northern nationalistic Harrison. Even though Harrison comes from grew up on a plantation, he is a Southerner by birth. He was governor of Indiana and he lives in Ohio. He is a northerner. And that was a way for the Whig Party to get the states rights. That's how you get the states rights part of the party to go along with it by adding John Tyler because he's inconsequential. But you have the vice presidency.

**Hannah:** So for our listeners and presenters who don't know a ton about John Tyler as we're approaching his presidency and more of a discussion about his actual time in office, what year does he become president? What year does he leave office?

**Dylan:** He's elected in 1840, and back then presidents took office the March of the next year. So he is sworn in as vice president in March of 1841. By April, he is president.

**Hannah:** And he has one term or two.

**Dylan:** He is a one termer. He does not get nominated for the next party.

**Ryan:** Yeah, and that's something we can get into. But yeah, once he realizes the Whigs aren't going to support him and he tries to make friends with Democrats, but at that point, it's either create a third party, which didn't happen or not run.

**Hannah:** So he wasn't even popular within the political machine. What were some of his I want to say accomplishments, but I've already heard some of them, and I don't feel like there are accomplishments. As John Taylor steps into the presidency, what does America look like? What is he inheriting?

**Ryan:** Well, Dylan already talked about the panic of 1837, but also obviously this post Jackson Post Indian Removal Act. So that's still ongoing well into the 1850s. So he's inheriting all of these Indian removal projects, including a war, the second war with the Seminoles that actually ends in his term. He also is sending treaties with Wyandots, He gets them to sign over all of their land in Ohio and in Michigan, which is significant to us here in the Midwest. And he's also inherited a couple of border disputes with Britain on the north. You have Maine and what to do with Oregon territory and Texas just declared independence in 1836. So there's a conversation of what do we do with all of these Americans living in Texas?

**Easton:** So expand organisms seems to be an issue. How does he balance that with the whole states rights or thing?

**Ryan:** His argument for the expansion of the United States, first off, he is he believes in American exceptionalism. He is in line with Manifest Destiny. I'm not sure if that became a term yet.

**Dylan:** I was going to say, when we think of manifest Destiny, we often think of Polk, who comes after him in Mexico. But I think I think we're beginning to manifest.

**Ryan:** Right. He he believes that the nation is glorious and it should be shared. And all of a lot of his expansionist rhetoric is also found tied to his defense of slavery. So he believes that if let's say he enacts this, let's say if he annexes Texas, that will obviously it will unionize the South together and make it more powerful. And that therefore will make the union more powerful because there's that that balance and he has really interesting rhetoric. He and his administration are expanding it further about how it is good for the North as well, because suddenly you have a border between the United States and Mexico. So not as many enslaved people will be fleeing to Mexico and also it will disperse. He's very fond of this disbursement theory dispersed the enslaved population. So there is not any uprisings because he grew up politically in a time of John Brown. This is John Brown's after his time. But it's significant, too, because he lived in Virginia. So but yes, to disperse the enslaved population throughout the southern states.

What I find interesting with the expansion, his expansion policies, he specifically leaves out Native Americans in this conversation and a lot of people who are looking at it afterwards and interpreting this part also leave out the impact that it will have on Native Americans. On one of his special messages to Congress. He even says, well, he's a fan of these preemption laws for squatters that are living to be able to buy the land and basically benefit, quote, actual settlers. And in the same thing, he says, the old states contain a territory sufficient in itself to maintain a population of additional millions. And the most populous of the new states may even yet be regarded as partially settled. While on the New lands this side of the Rocky Mountains, to say of the immense region which stretches from the base of the islands. Blah, blah, blah, ceded and unsettled still remain to be brought onto market. So his intention is to bring all of that under the United States power and to sell it to settlers. And by what he means is white settlers.

No motive exists for foreign conquest. We desire, but to reclaim our almost ill, limitable wilderness and to introduce into their depths the lights of civilization. So he doesn't even see Native American tribes at this time, having sov-sovereignty or a national identity that to be. He doesn't consider them to be foreign nations. So I think that is an important thing to bring up when we're talking about expansionism, because it is having this impact on all of these people that are in fact living in what he calls a wilderness. But for them, it's their home.

**Hannah:** I'm curious, given that if anybody has attempted to write these people back into the narrative of John Tyler's presidency and even given us an idea of how many people were affected by the decisions he was making, I don't know if that exists that they're anywhere, but it would certainly be interesting.

**Ryan:** Well, it's interesting. And this can sort of go into, quote unquote, his accomplishments. He while he is very strong on this rhetoric, he doesn't accomplish that much. He Webster which is the only reason Webster stays on his cabinet and oversees a treaty, the Webster Ashburn treaty, with a dispute with Great Britain and Maine. We're not really gaining much land there. There is the conversation about Oregon territory. Hawaii gains independence from Great Britain, and Tyler is eyeing that. He recognizes their sovereignty and recognizes that it's now under the sphere of United States influence. Despite we have not colonized them yet.

But what was the original question? Oh, yeah. He his lasting impact is the annexation of Texas. But that doesn't happen until, like his final days in office. So is expansion tendencies. Well, okay, that's not true. Along with the annexation of Texas, he also calls for these preemption laws that allow squatters, squatters rights to go out and squat on land and then be able to purchase it. And it does have some real impact in Florida. He basically is trying to push the Seminoles out. He ends the war, but he passes a bill to arm a bunch of just regular citizens to protect themselves and let them do their own bidding in Florida.

**Hannah:** I'm not liking John Tyler very much.

**Ryan:** Well, and the interesting thing are we did talk about how he was glorified in lost cause narratives. Pretty much no one's glorifying him during his presidency. He was a very unpopular president. There's a few. And he ends up putting them in his cabinet that are like hardened states rights pro Tyler. Upshur, Able Upshur ends up being his secretary of state, First Secretary of State. He was first secretary of Navy, but then he moved to Secretary of State once Webster

left. But he was a Virginian States rightist, but largely on a national scale. Tyler is not that popular.

**Hannah:** And they called him His Accedency, right?

**Ryan:** They called him a lot of things. He would get letters written to him called titling him acting president, which he would send back without reading them and then also be called His Accedency.

**Dylan:** As accident is related to him accidentally becoming president. But, you know, he did stuff with the bank.

**Ryan:** Oh, yeah. We'd even talk about why he got kicked out of the Whig Party.

**Dylan:** Going back to the politics side, the Whigs, they really get the shaft in history, I'm telling you, because they finally their candidate has won. The Whigs finally have a presidential candidate. Jackson is out of the limelight. It's their time to shine. And the son of a gun dies a month into office. And you're left with a fella who does not necessarily believe strongly in the majority of Whig principles, at least the ones the Whigs in power wanted. So they say, All right, the Whigs are in power. We are going to reintroduce the Bank of the United States. We're going to return to this bad boy, the third one. Tyler vetoes it, and that means the whole cabinet quits. Except Secretary of State Daniel Webster, because he's involved in very intense negotiations with Britain over the Maine border. And the Whigs take action and the only time in our history the president was kicked out of his political party. The Whigs said, Peace out, big boy, and kicked him Out.

**Ryan:** He is quite big, though. He's six foot. Yeah.

**Dylan:** He's very skinny. Not Lincoln Skinny, but he's skinny. So, yeah, he's kicked out of his party. And so he goes rogue from the Whig Party cause he's kicked out. That's actually why his plantation in Virginia is called Sherwood Forest. Because much like Robin Hood, he was kicked out of society and had to go hiding. But yeah, so the bank really. So that gives him the ability to to basically appoint his own cabinet because the rest were Harrison holdovers. And so, like Ryan says, he puts in a lot of states writers and all these things is his buddies.

**Ryan:** And they're not necessarily tied to party. There's Democrats and Whigs that he appoints next, although he does have trouble, because at this point the Whigs control Congress of getting them actually confirmed. So there are several ones that he appoints that are not confirmed.

**Dylan:** The annexation of Texas is very divisive in the early 1840s because A. the memories of the Missouri crisis are very real. And so if you annex Texas, Texas no wants to be a slave state. That's going to ripple the waves. So even Jackson is against the annexation of Texas because he knows that A. it's going to bring back up the slavery question. B. it's going to rip the Democratic Party apart because the Democratic Party is just as big party as the Whigs. There are Northern and Southern Democrats, and not all Democrats are for slavery or the expansion of. And so they're kicking the can. And so when we get to the election of 1844, Tyler's not nominated. Texas is the big question, because as Tyler is leaving like March the first of 1845 and he's done March 4th at noon, March the first, he signs this treaty because he had tried to

annex Texas the year before and it was a treaty. You need a two thirds majority to get that passed. He did not have that. So he reintroduces it as a joint resolution, which only needs a simple majority. And he signs it. He sends it over to Congress. He signs it on March the first. So then Texas needs to make a constitution and it needs to be approved by Congress and needs to move forward and that all is done under Polk, who wins that 44 election.

**Hannah:** Fun fact, he also won his whole presidency without a vice president.

**Ryan:** That's the only time the entire presidency was no vice president.

**Dylan:** Although you could say he did not have a whole presidency because he missed a month.

**Hannah:** So I mean, not that we're really in the business of speculating and we can take this out of it's useless.

**Dylan:** I am.

**Hannah:** But if Harrison had been president the whole time, but Texas not have become part of the union, that could have had a huge impact on.

**Dylan:** Yeah. Harrison, I believe, was against annexing Texas.

**Ryan:** At least all of Harrison's cabinet, or at least Webster.

**Dylan:** But I have seen an article that's not about Harrison, but it's what if Henry Clay had won in 1844? Really, If anybody about Polk had won in 1844, Texas probably would not have been annexed.

**Hannah:** Huh.

**Dylan:** And

**Ryan:** In general, like forever?

**Dylan:** Well, at least for a while, I forget exactly what the article talks about because it's been a hot minute. I had to find it again. But he does this like, theoretical.

**Hannah:** Yeah,

**Dylan:** You know, And he argues that it would affect the Civil War.

**Hannah:** That's what I was thinking.

**Dylan:** You don't have Texas flaring up. And then all that stuff. So yeah.

**Ryan:** With this conversation Texas and I never thought about it this way with Missouri compromise you have the Texas annexation as a problem. Each one of these is sort of flaring up the question of what are we actually doing? And then you have Kansas, which so it's almost like

every time it's interesting, John Tyler's argument for expansion is good. It will save the union because every time we expand, we're causing ourselves a new crisis for us to try and solve.

**Easton:** Correct.

**Ryan:** And that obviously boils over into what happens because Kansas, there's active fighting well into the Civil War.

**Dylan:** Yeah, because you get the annexation of Texas, you then like the next year you're at war with Mexico. You get all the land from the Treaty of Hidalgo, Guadalupe.

**Ryan:** That's California, Arizona, New Mexico and Texas. Also. I'm pretty sure Nevada's in Utah on that list.

**Hannah:** Texas, California, Nevada, Utah and Colorado, some of New Mexico and two thirds of Arizona.

**Dylan:** So you have all of them coming in and you're having to decide every time, slave or free. And so then you get to the Kansas and Nebraska and then things go boom.

**Easton:** So, Ryan, earlier you referenced a mysterious accident. What was this thing that got us really excited about John Tyler?

**Ryan:** There was an incident and it actually had grave implications for Tyler's plan to annex Texas. But I'll run through it. You have John Tyler. He is trying He's now in the process of thinking about creating his own party. We're in an election year. This is 1844. He's finally getting headway with the Texas annexation through secret negotiations with both his secretary of state, Abel Upshur, and also his newly appointed secretary of Navy Thomas Gilmer. Upshur was actually Secretary of Navy before he was appointed to Secretary of State. John Tyler is on an up stroke. He has success with these secret negotiations. Yeah. His first wife had a long illness. She sadly died while he was in office. And so he's been courting a younger woman and we'll get into her story a little bit later. But things seem on the up for Tyler. He has this new ship, the USS Princeton, with this very large gun on it, called the peacemaker. He has invited many members of his cabinet, Dolley Madison, is there some important other citizens, around 300 members, in total 300, 350 end up on this boat in the Potomac, leaving from Alexandria February 28th. It's shortly after George Washington's birthday. So as they go down the Potomac, they pass Mount Vernon and they decide to fire some rounds to celebrate George Washington and everything is going fine. Then when they come back up the Potomac, everyone is down underneath this boat and having a good time drinking, celebrating this this boat. Obviously, there's a lot of political elite just schmoozing each other

**Hannah:** Who doesn't love a boat?

**Ryan:** And they think of it great. They're passing Mt. Vernon again. They might as well go back up and fire the gun again. And so a lot of the cabinet and John Tyler are persuaded to go up the stairs and see this happen. The captain, Stockton, is who actually personally oversaw the creation of this vessel also goes up on deck. But John Tyler is momentarily distracted by his son in law and he stays below deck. And so once they're on deck, they fire the gun and suddenly

everything goes awry, leaving a number dead. And what's significant about it, a number of high ranking US officials.

**Dylan:** And I want to point out the origins of this podcast was Ryan coming to our office and saying, You guys want to hear conspiracy theory? And the John Tyler killed all these had all these people killed just so he could bang this younger woman.

**Hannah:** And we said, What?

**Easton:** So the gun explodes.

**Ryan:** So the gun explodes. Leaving multiple people dead. I do want to start with one person who is often overlooked. And it is Tyler's personal valet. He was an enslaved person. While we're not entirely sure what his name is, different sources call him Henry or Armistead. We do know there was an Armistead family that lived on Sherwood Plantation. So the modern consensus is that his name was Henry Armistead. He would have been Tyler's body man. So he would have been with Tyler at all times. The sad thing about him, while all of the other people had ceremonious funerals, they even were laid in state in the East Room of the White House. He was not. And he thankfully, there was a large free black community in Washington, DC that took upon themselves to give this man a funeral.

**Hannah:** What does that say about John Tyler? That he didn't even pay for this man to have a funeral?

**Easton:** From my understanding, they didn't even get him off the deck.

**Ryan:** They do leave the bodies on the deck for a while and are left and to be taken the other people that die. His secretary of state, Abel Upshur, also from Virginia. He was a fervent supporter of the institution of slavery. In 1839, he actually wrote that slavery was a great positive good to be carefully protected and preserved. And then also Secretary Navy, which was a cabinet position at the time, no longer is. But interestingly, this guy, Thomas Gilmer, had just been confirmed very shortly after. I think he was only there for a little over a week. And what's interesting about Thomas Gilmer story is actually the people who were left out of that story he had bought Israel Gilbert letter Israel Jefferson from the Monticello estate after the death of Thomas Jefferson and Israel was Thomas Gilman's body man and right before Thomas Gilmer because he was just appointed went to Washington. Israel paid for his freedom and so didn't go to Washington with him. And Israel later in interviews says, If I hadn't done that, I probably would have died because I would have been right next to him. And the other significant thing about Israel, Jefferson, since he lived on Monticello, he was one of the only contemporary sources that were corroborating the Hemings children's story of Sally Hemings and Thomas Jefferson. So I think that is really interesting that he just narrowly missed this. There was also Captain Beverly Cannon, who was the chief of the Navy's Bureau of Construction and Repairs, and Virgil Maxey, who also held a couple of offices, state and local offices in Maryland. He was also up to be nominated for secretary of the Navy at one point, but like we said, Whigs were regularly not confirming Tyler's appointments. And Maxey is interesting because he has a lot of financial commitments in Texas, so he has reason to support Texas annexation. So really, it's a bunch of it's everyone that's on Tyler side really is on this boat. And a of those uppers end up dying during the election year. Right as Tyler is actually seemingly accomplishing things and Maxey is also



interesting. I do want to point out he comes up a lot contemporarily when you're looking at male sexuality during this time because of some of the letters that you would write to of his bedfellows. For context, only three Cabinet members had actually died prior to this. So we're talking about 1844 and they all died in duels. So it's largely their own fault for getting into duels. Well, interestingly enough, they were all attorney generals and.

**Dylan:** Don't be a lawyer, boys and girls. Don't be a lawyer.

**Ryan:** One of them was Tyler's attorney general. So he already had one cabinet member die while in office.

**Hannah:** He was bad freaking luck!

**Ryan:** And in more context, only two vice presidents at this point had died. In office is George Clinton and Elbridge Gary, which where we get gerrymandering.

**Dylan:** There's pictures of it in my desk. The the salamander.

**Hannah:** I haven't seen that.

**Dylan:** That's why it's the Salamander and Eldridge. Gary. So it's Garymainder?

**Ryan:** Mm hmm. And so this was really, really big deal. This is the largest amount of executive positions are just dying in one specific incident. And it sets back Tyler's annexation plans because all of these people were basically involved.

**Hannah:** So that's all important. And we appreciate you, but we know that everyone is listening to hear about sex.

**Dylan:** So let's talk about you and me. Let's talk about...

**Ryan:** So the thing that's interesting about this event is this young lady that Tyler is courting was also on the boat along with her father. And her father is among the people who have died and her father, his name is David Gardner. He was a state senator in New York, but he was in Washington politics a lot. He would come in the winter seasons for the social season because that's when Congress wasn't in session. And you got to come in and sort of go to all the fancy parties. Yes. And he really wanted his children to be involved in those circles. So he brought two of his sons and two of his daughters, Margaret and Julia. And so they got into Tyler's circle in 1842. This was before Leticia died. John Tyler and Julia had met, but courting didn't happen seriously until after Leticia his death.

**Hannah:** I found the explanation that we found really interesting. It almost makes her sound like something out of Titanic. Like her father gets blown up and John Tyler, like, carries her down the steps of the boat with her hair blowing in the wind, and she just falls head over heels in love with him.

**Ryan:** Right.

**Hannah:** It's quite the tail.

**Ryan:** So, yeah. Contemporary accounts say that she fainted once hearing her father's demise. And Tyler to, you know, whisk her to safety because they didn't know something else was going to happen, picked her up and took her to, there is a boat that came by to rescue people and she woke up in his arms. And there's a really interesting quote by her later, after well, after they were married about this. And she said, "After I lost my father, I felt differently toward the president. He seemed to fill the place and to be more agreeable in every way than any younger man ever was or could be." And...

**Hannah:** I mean...

**Ryan:** We're saying they were they were courting. What was suspicious to me was just a year before in 1843, basically almost to the day it was Washington's birthday. Tyler decided to ask her hand in marriage and she said no. And they were in the White House and this big Washington party. And she said no. And so I was like, what could have changed her mind from literally being asked to marry the president in the White House to a year later deciding to. And so I looked at this incident because she even talks about after the death of her father, it sort of changed her mind. And so I became really suspicious of that.

**Hannah:** And will make it clear that we don't we don't all believe in this conspiracy theory.

**Ryan:** I... and... okay...

**Dylan:** Just Ryan, really.

**Hannah:** Yeah, we do recognize the problem.

**Ryan:** No, no, no, I.

**Dylan:** If you want to bang a woman there is more easier ways to kill off the dad of the woman you want to bang than sticking them on a ship with all your cabinet and some senators.

**Easton:** And some homies of yours.

**Hannah:** And risk your own self.

**Dylan:** Risk your own self. Boat, go down, you know.

**Ryan:** And so

**Hannah:** It is a big risk to take for small.

**Dylan:** Listen, there's not enough tinfoil made in America for me to believe this bullshit.

**Ryan:** I...

**Easton:** I'm 5050 at this point. I mean, I'm. I'm juggling back and forth.

**Dylan:** And now welcome to the roast of Ryan.

**Ryan:** After continued historical inquiry and research, I have found that there did seem to be flirtation back and forth between Julia and Tyler prior to said disaster, and that would tell me that.

**Dylan:** Do you think she had Stockholm syndrome?

**Ryan:** I don't think so.

**Easton:** Wasn't that when you kidnap someone.

**Ryan:** No.

**Easton:** My thing, my thinking is John Tyler thought he was a great Gatsby before A great Gatsby was a great Gatsby.

**Hannah:** Or she had some major daddy issues.

**Ryan:** Well, it's.

**Dylan:** We don't kink shame but she could have some daddy issues.

**Ryan:** There are some interesting things. So she had been courting multiple people while in Washington. She had been in D.C. for this would have been her third winter season. And she had some serious relationships with Waldron and some other DC like political folk. And she even wrote down that Millard Fillmore had flirted with her. And what I also find interesting, there is a large a very large age gap, we should say. When they first met, she was 21 and he was 51. So there's a 30 year age gap there.

**Hannah:** He's not an attractive fella. I'm just going to point that out there like.

**Ryan:** Well, and he's also falling under hard financial times. He's not a popular president. And Julia Garner in the Garner family is very wealthy. They own an island off of Long Island. Right. And it's still privately owned by the family. It's the largest privately owned island in the country currently.

**Hannah:** So what we're saying is, Julia, you could earn a hell of a lot of our.

**Ryan:** Well, and it's interesting. Right after the mom or John Tyler tells the mom about the proposal, that's the first thing she's wondering is like, oh, are you you can like take care of her financially, even though he's a sitting president. And by this point, you're getting later into 1844, it's becoming more clear John Tyler probably will not become the next president. So I I'm very curious what her motivations were, if not for love, because there isn't much.

**Dylan:** To be married to the president.

**Ryan:** An unpopular president.

**Dylan:** But a president. So she's still the belle of the ball. She is playing first lady who at this time they're responsible for all the social functions, the callings, all those things. So, I mean, if you want to be the belle of the ball, you want to be the first lady.

**Hannah:** Well, and Dylan you said to me at one point as well, we were talking about this, it was not uncommon at all to say no. The first time you were asked. Back then, right?

**Dylan:** Yeah

**Hannah:** It was quite common to play hard, to get a little bit and so maybe she liked him all along and she just hasn't asked again.

**Ryan:** Yeah, I just think it's weird because it was his last year in presidency and he wasn't very popular, so it getting a second term wasn't a fair sure thing. **But...**

**Dylan:** But those eight months, she loved it.

**Ryan:** So another thing that is suspicious about the boat thing and knowing that he did not do the boat thing, he he made a public statement the next day after the incident. He doesn't blame anyone, which is interesting, "In some relief of the public sorrow which must accompany this most painful event affords me much satisfaction to say that it was produced by no carelessness or inattention on the part of the officers and crew of the Princeton, but must be set down as one of those casualties, which, to a greater or lesser degree, attend upon every service and which are invariably incident to the temporal affairs of mankind." So it very much sounds like, oh, it's an accident. Let's not look into it.

**Easton:** See, the first time I heard that, I was like that kind of as the suspicion. And then Dylan said.

**Ryan:** Sometimes guns blow up

**Dylan:** Ships go boom. Boilers are exploding. You overload a cannon, it goes boom. They had fired the cannon multiple times that day, and it was fine. You overload once. It's going to go boom. I'm just saying ships explode.

**Hannah:** Well, when they had an inquiry, right in Congress, surely if it had been a whole bunch of people making cannon go boom, boom, somebody would have spilled the beans.

**Dylan:** Look, if you were going to blow up a ship, you can blow up a ship. You don't need to hope that the gun explodes and kills the right people.

**Ryan:** Okay.

**Hannah:** Our next podcast, how to explode a ship with Dylan.

**Ryan:** John Taylor isn't nominated for either party. He does not win, obviously, and Polk becomes president.

**Hannah:** What happens to Taylor after his presidency?

**Ryan:** Well, he returns home to Virginia.

**Dylan:** Yeah. Tyler, After he leaves the presidency, he leaves public eye. He doesn't come back into the public eye until he is the presiding officer at the Washington peace conference, which is held at the onset of the Civil War. And nothing happens there. The war still happens.

**Ryan:** And so there's this discussion whether or not Tyler thought secession was inevitable. Historians disagree But on the onset, he becomes very for secession.

**Dylan:** Yes. After the peace conference dies and the proposals are gone, he becomes an ardent secessionist and he's actually elected to the Confederate Congress. But he dies on before he takes his seat.

**Hannah:** And he is the only president to have not had a U.S. flag on his coffin. Right?

**Dylan:** So he is. He kicks the bucket and is buried draped in the Confederate flag.

**Ryan:** And it's interesting, this goes into how what was a very unpopular president becomes popular because of the circumstances of the Civil War. He originally wanted a relatively small funeral and to be buried at his plantation home in Sherwood Forest. But since this is the civil War and they need heroes to celebrate.

**Easton:** Blew it all out of proportion.

**Dylan:** Especially at the beginning, because he dies in '62.

**Ryan:** Yeah.

**Dylan:** So we are still.

**Hannah:** And by that time, him and Julia had had seven children together. So he died with at least 15 known children, one of whom did serve for the Confederacy that we know of. They had a lot of daughters, but one of the sons served in the Confederacy, and we have reason to believe there is historical dispute that he may have had more children.

**Ryan:** Yes, he may have had. There's a couple of them that were claimed to have been conceived through enslaved people that lived on his plantation. And some of the sources come from abolitionist newspapers. But there are also accounts of enslaved people claiming to be children of John Tyler.

**Hannah:** And these have been passed down oral histories through community members. So that is certainly a possibility. I think it's also important to talk about what happened to Julia.

**Ryan:** Yeah.

**Dylan:** It becomes the Julia's story. So, Julia, she remains at Sherwood Forest. John Tyler dies in January of 1862. George McClellan is leading the Union Army. The Peninsula campaign gets launched in July of 1862. And this is it starts in southeastern Virginia. And it is really the first big offensive move by the union. And Julia sees that her home is probably in the impact her homes going to be impacted. You know, they had a villa that was taken and so she's like, crap, I got to get out of here. You know, I got 6000 children. And so her mother lives in New York, and so she is writing back and forth like you need to get out of there. And so Julia takes some of her children up to Staten Island. They get a pass because at this time, you can't just freely go between north and south because these are two places at war. So she gets a pass. She goes to Staten Island. She's there for a little while. She comes back to Sherwood Forest and she decides she's trying to get her affairs in order. Who's going to run this plantation while I'm gone? Yadda, yada, yada. She puts one boy in school, and then she goes back to Staten Island and remains. And so Julia's Story is really useful to provide us a lens to look at something that not a lot of people, especially in the north, something that a lot of people don't think about, and that is the North was not united in support of Lincoln or the war effort. There were groups of people that thought that we should let the South peacefully leave the country. We should not wage war against our own citizens, even though the Southerners do not consider themselves citizens anymore. And so Julia's family is one of those families where they are torn. The mother, she supports the Confederates. Julia, At this time, she's been married to Tyler for, what is it, 54 for a number of years. Almost 20 years? What, 1862? They get together in 44. 18 years. She's married, so she's become an adopted Southerner. And so, especially in New York, New York is rife with Southern sympathizers. You know, you have Horatio.

**Hannah:** That's something I didn't know.

**Easton:** Yeah, me neither.

**Dylan:** The governor, Horatio Seymour, is is very much a peace Democrat. You have Fernando Wood, who at one time was the mayor of New York City, wants New York City to secede and become like a its own nation state in '61. So New York is a hot. And then in 1863, you get July, you get the New York City draft riots, which was a huge race. It turned into a race riot. Irish and Catholic workers laborers took out their aggression about having to be drafted to go to this war. They took it out on the African-American community in New York. They were burning. They burned a black orphanage. So it was not a unified union place.

**Easton:** And she calls herself, by her own admission, a refugee. there still supporting the.

**Dylan:** Yes, She still considers herself a refugee.

**Easton:** Confederacy, I like pictured her like handing out pamphlets on the side of the street, she thought she probably didn't do that. But that was just the first image that came to my mind. But she was vocal.

**Dylan:** Mm hmm.

**Easton:** And maybe to some degree supported. Not condemned.

**Hannah:** Through the end of her life as well. I mean, I saw this article about her fundraising for Confederate veterans, so, like, she never gave up.

**Dylan:** It's kind of interesting because she never gave up the the idea of the Confederacy, but she also never gave up being that having the title of Mrs. ex-President Tyler. So after her husband dies, she becomes pretty destitute and she seeks a pension from being an ex-first to being a first widow of a president. Mary Lincoln. I think this is in 1870. Mary Lincoln actually says, no, Julia Tyler does not deserve a pension because her husband and her were traitors.

**Hannah:** Let's go Mary.

**Ryan:** I was going to say does Mary Todd, have any power over that?

**Dylan:** No

**Ryan:** Or is this just she was just writing

**Dylan:** She was Pushing.

**Ryan:** Mary Todd said no. So no.

**Dylan:** She was arguing that she should not get a pension. But conversely, when Mary Lincoln ends up in some financial difficulties after Lincoln dies, after Abraham dies, Julia does argue that Mary Todd should be helped out by Congress. So that's kind of an interesting number. But she does get a pension. The government finally does give her a pension. And so, yeah, she kind of never held on to that dual. I don't know. It's kind of a weird balancing act between between the two worlds that she lived in. Still a trader. So...

**Ryan:** Yeah, and so now John Tyler it's interesting in the north he was New York Times outwardly called him a traitor but his death was not met with any fanfare that we can find. Even in Lincoln's day to day, it didn't seem like he made any.

**Dylan:** When Martin Van Buren dies, he recognized he puts out a little statement, you know, like, you know, mourning the death of Van Buren. But nothing comes for Tyler. Richmond, though, does. So, you know, he gets, like Ryan mentioned earlier, this pompous pomp and circumstance filled funeral, even though he wanted something simple. And the Richmond papers are eulogizing him, saying what a great man he was, a statesman, a diplomat, blah, blah, blah. So, yeah, he was celebrated in the South and either ridiculed or ignored in the North.

**Ryan:** Yup. And he ends up getting buried in Hollywood cemetery right next to James Monroe. So they wanted him to be symbolically part of that Virginia dynasty. And then they also ended up burying Jefferson Davis in the same cemetery.

**Hannah:** Hmm. I guess it's our turn to make up our minds.

**Easton:** As we referenced, we're going to be doing our scale of zero or one.

**Hannah:** Let's pick. Let's pick a scale.

**Easton:** White Houses so.

**Hannah:** One.

**Easton:** One White House on fire means.

**Hannah:** You're awesome. Top president.

**Easton:** 100 White Houses on fire.

**Hannah:** You suck.

**Easton:** The worst possible. So I think it's also important to bring up C-SPAN. Did a president's poll.

**Dylan:** Yeah. Back in 2021.

**Easton:** And where did?

**Dylan:** He. He came in at 39<sup>th</sup>.

**Easton:** 39<sup>th</sup>.

**Hannah:** I think I'd rank him a little bit lower. I'm really feeling like a good 97, 98. Well, maybe even 100 White Houses on fire. Like, I can't think of a single positive thing to say about him.

**Easton:** No, not really. I mean, the more we did research, the more we we just figured things out. I was going to say 99 White House is on fire. But then I was like, What am I holding back for? So a hundred White Houses on fire for me.

**Hannah:** 100 White House on fire. I have nothing good to say.

**Easton:** See ya John.

**Hannah:** Dylan?

**Dylan:** I mean, his really only lasting him. I mean, as a person, he's trash. But as a as a president, I mean, he really is only last in contribution has been...

**Ryan:** Becoming president.

**Dylan:** Becoming president and asserting that the vice president does become president upon the president's death. I guess annexation would fall to him even though it.

**Ryan:** Happens under Polk.

**Dylan:** Yeah it happens under Polk.



**Ryan:** I think, a lasting impact that with and we've gone back and forth on this. The role of the president was greatly diminished under Tyler. Despite all of these the foreign policy of Tyler with his expansion, which doesn't really the president doesn't fully get that power back until Lincoln. And so you have a series of presidents that people notably don't remember.

**Dylan:** Yeah. And yeah, we've been debating whether or not that's presidential power or just exerting you know because Jackson he passes he gets the force bill. He says, all right, the president will send troops down, which is their prerogative. But also you have the Supreme Court decision in the case in Georgia about Indian removal. And he says, you know, Judge Marshall has made his decision. I'll let him enforce it. And then he does it anyway. So he, you know, almost like that Theodore Roosevelt bully pulpit, using the presidency to their own ends. And yeah, you don't see it again until until Lincoln in the war.

**Hannah:** They don't like our scale.

**Dylan:** What's the scale again is.

**Ryan:** One is good?

**Hannah:** One is good. One is the best. If you get one White house on fire...

**Ryan:** We've only had two White Houses. Well, if you want to talk about the presidential mansion in Philadelphia.

**Hannah:** Do you want to change the scale? Do y'all have a recommendation of a better scale. One top hat, one wig.

**Ryan:** I, I'd give a...

**Dylan:** 90.

**Ryan:** I was going to say high 88 to 90. He...

**Dylan:** He's not our worst.

**Ryan:** While he was president the union was preserved.

**Dylan:** hard to get worse than James Buchanan or Andrew Johnson.

**Easton:** True. Although I will say we're not necessarily saying who's the worst. Like, we're not doing a scale of worse. We're just saying, what are we ranking.

**Hannah:** Im willing to put him right down there with them.

**Ryan:** I think things could have been worse under his.

**Dylan:** Yeah, they could have been worse. That could have been better. Could've been worse, though. I think I'll stick by my 90.

**Ryan:** I like 88.

**Easton:** All right.

**Hannah:** Do you feel like you want to revise at all?

**Easton:** Not really, all I'm going to say is we did not make this episode to particularly roast presidents. And if we're going to continue doing this doing and then, you know, another one next season, we just wanted to analyze the history, come to our own conclusions, and share the knowledge of the real John Tyler.

**Dylan:** Can we tell people to write which president we should do next?

**Hannah:** Yeah, tweet us or comment on our Instagram at Problematic Pod one, What you think our next presidential exploration?

**Easton:** Are y'all sure we want to do that?

**Hannah:** Yes, yes, yes, yes.

**Easton:** I'm kinda getting a feeling.

**Hannah:** Listen, we still get to have our own discretion.

**Ryan:** I have one that I would want to do.

**Dylan:** Who?

**Ryan:** Garfield.

**Dylan:** Why are you so obsessed with these inconsequential Bastards?

**Hannah:** It's kind of more fun, though, if they're, like, not really very well known. Pick someone a bit weird.

**Dylan:** And then after that, it'll be Millard Fillmore.

**Easton:** Thank you all so much for joining us as we took another dive through some problematic history.

**Hannah:** Please give us a like and rating wherever you find this podcast today. And remember, you can find future episodes of the This is Problematic podcast on Spotify, Apple Podcasts and anywhere else you find your podcasts.

**Easton:** All right, Thanks again. Until next time.