The Papers of James Madison, Vol. 17: ***31 March 1797-3 March 1801 with a Supplement 22 January 1778-9 August 1795.*** Edited by David B. Mattern, *et al.* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1991. Pp. xxviii, 610. $47.50.)

The publication of this volume is an exciting occasion for historians of the early republic who find their work made easier each time another volume in this series appears in print. Volume 17 covers the four-year period from Madison's retirement from the House of Representatives until his appointment as secretary of state in the administration of Thomas Jefferson. Although Madison had announced his decision to retire permanently from public life in December 1796, he nonetheless remained extremely interested in issues surrounding the Federalist administration of John Adams. According to the editors, the "conventional portrayal of Madison's retirement as a retreat to the sylvan peace of Montpelier and a complete break from political life is surely overdrawn. The documents published here show that both his mind and his pen were deeply engaged in the controversies of the Adams administration" (xix).

Although letters from Madison "during the first year of his retirement reveal him as a cool and somewhat detached observer," by the "second session of the Fifth Congress, which by July 1798 had passed laws to create a standing army, a navy, and coastal defenses, as well as direct taxes to pay for them, and then proceeded to restrict severely the movements of aliens and the freedom of the press, Madison's mood changed markedly. He became angry and indignant, both at the measures passed by the Congress and, more particularly, at the conduct of President Adams in support of them" (xx).

The documents reproduced in this volume clearly reveal Madison's intellectual depth, republican commitment, and the extent to which Thomas Jefferson depended upon his fellow Virginian. Madison's interest in national affairs, as well as his disgust for Federalist policies, are revealed in the Virginia Resolutions, which he

wrote anonymously. As a representative from Orange County, Madison authored for the Virginia General Assembly session of 1799-1800, The Report of 1800, "a lengthy defense of his resolutions of the previous year [that] has subsequently become a critically important document for the expounding of the First Amendment" (xx-xxi).

In the election of 1800, Madison served as a presidential elector, and worked hard for a Jefferson victory. Numerous letters to Madison from such correspondents as Charles Pinckney, John Francis Mercer, Aaron Burr, David Gelston, and John Dawson, in addition to letters to and from Jefferson, confirm the special role played by Madison as confidant to Jefferson. Not unnaturally, Jefferson's election as president led to the naming of Madison as secretary of state in the new administration. Jefferson's inauguration on March 4, 1801, "thus reunited the two friends in the service of the federal government and paved the way for their common effort to redirect the course of the United States in the early years of the nineteenth century" (xxi).

Although this volume was originally scheduled to be published in January 1991, it was delayed so that thirty-seven previously unpublished letters of Virginian Edmund Pendleton, whose thoughts influenced Madison, might be included. These letters were written between March 25, 1782 and January 30, 1795, and were—almost miraculously—discovered in a private documentary sale. They are thus contained in the supplement at the back of the book.

As with previous volumes, the notes in this one are detailed and useful, as is the index. This is an important addition to the series, and will greatly assist scholars of Madison and of these years of the early national period. As one reviewer whose own work has focused to date on the years since 1801, I am awaiting anxiously the publication of volume 18, which will, no doubt, reflect the same high editorial standards that are evident in the preceding volumes.

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