

These volumes follow James Madison from his arrival at Montpelier for the interlude before his fourth and final term in Congress, through his brief retirement from the public scene, to Thomas Jefferson's inauguration and the advent of another sixteen years of steady national service. Edited and annotated with the diligence and skill that we have come to take for granted with this series, the volumes offer much besides a handy and authoritative compilation of the sources. As always, notes identifying individuals and clarifying passing references to current legislation, publications, and events will save the expert months of work and make the papers readily accessible to users less familiar with these years. Several of the notes are major contributions of original research, and both the notes and the papers are of high significance for a variety of users.

For Madison, the six years covered by these volumes seemed almost as critical for liberty and the perpetuation of the Union as were the five years surrounding the adoption of the Constitution. As he said to James Monroe, the latter's years as minister to France had witnessed a "progressive apostasy from the principles of our Revolution & Governments." This apostasy, as Madison conceived it, culminated in the later 1790s in a conscious scheme by government leaders to subvert the Constitution and reverse the republican Revolution. The principal preoccupation of his final term in Congress was an agonizing, bitterly discouraging attempt to block Jay's Treaty with the British, which Madison considered radically unequal, likely to provoke retaliation from the French, and a disastrous sacrifice of any prospect of improving the commercial situation of the country by retaliating for the Europeans' regulations. Insisting that the House of Representatives possessed an independent power to refuse appropriations when a treaty trench on legislative subjects, he hurled himself into a losing battle to maintain Republican cohesion in the face of George Washington's prestige and Washington's (conventionally underrated) legislative skills. Failure in this struggle sealed his earlier decision to retire. It also set the stage for the hostilities with France and for the efforts of the "British party" to destroy domestic opposition, which would dominate the next two years, wrench

The Papers of James Madison. Vol. 16: 27 April 1795–27 March 1797. Ed. by J. C. A. Stagg, Thomas A. Mason, and Jeanne K. Sisson. (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1989. xxx, 527 pp. \$45.00, ISBN 0-8139-1212-1.)

The Papers of James Madison. Vol. 17: 31 March 1797–3 March 1801, with a Supplement, 22 January 1778–9 August 1795. Ed. by David B. Mattern, J. C. A. Stagg, Jeanne K. Cross, and Susan Holbrook Perdue. (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1991. xxx, 610 pp. \$47.50, ISBN 0-8139-1288-1.)

him from retirement, and put him at the center of the controversial attempt to use the legislatures of Kentucky and Virginia to defeat the Federalist design. Extending through the climax of the first party struggle and the great Report of 1800 on the states' responses to the Virginia Resolutions, these volumes are an indispensable resource for understanding Madison as a political tactician and as a constructor of the meaning and intent of the Constitution.

Most of Madison's letters, speeches, and writings from these years have been available in less authoritative publications. There are, however, several large exceptions, together with a trove of hitherto unpublished incoming correspondence, which constitutes the greater portion of volume 17. The editors have identified a manuscript previously believed to have been a draft of a letter to an unidentified correspondent (August 23, 1795) as in fact a draft of a widely published petition to the Virginia General Assembly on the constitutionality and merits of the British treaty. (The editorial notes on Madison's response to Jay's Treaty and on "Madison in the Fourth Congress" are impressive feats of organizing scattered information.) Two important essays for the *Philadelphia Aurora*, "Foreign Influence" (January 23, 1799) and "Political Reflections" (February 23, 1799), are identified as his. Not less important, the January 1799 "Address of the General Assembly to the People of the Commonwealth of Virginia," which defended the resolutions of December 1798, was included in previous editions of Madison's works and has been identified as his in influential studies of the evolution of American ideas of freedom of the press; it is here shown conclusively to be the product of a different pen. The implications of this finding are important, since the "Address" did not defend the same "broad" understanding of this freedom as did Madison's Report of 1800.

Volume 17 concludes the main or "congressional" series of *The Papers of James Madison* and includes a supplement of recently discovered documents from the years through 1800 (the most significant of which are thirty-seven previously unpublished or extracted letters from Edmund Pendleton, the Virginia jurist). From here, the project will proceed with concurrent series from Madison's years as secretary

of state and as president, the first volumes of which have already appeared. This decision, which will speed the presidential documents to print, is yet another indication that one of the most important of all the modern projects on the papers of the Founders is in highly expert hands.

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