The Papers of James Madison. Volume 11: *7 March 1788–1 March 1789.* Volume 12: *2 March 1789–20 January 1790 with a Supplement 24 October 1775–24 January 1789.* Volume 13: *20 January 1790–31 March 1791.* Edited by ROBERT A. RUTLAND and CHARLES F. HOBSON. WILLIAM M. E. RACHAL, Consulting Editor. JEANNE K. SISSON, Editorial Assistant. Volume 14: *6 April 1791–16 March 1793.* Edited by ROBERT A. RUTLAND and THOMAS A. MASON. ROBERT J. BRUGGER, JEANNE K. SISSON, FREDRIKA J. TEUTE, Assistant Editors. (Charlottes-ville: University Press of Virginia, 1977, 1979, 1981, 1983. Pp. xxviii, 471; xxvi, 498; xxx, 423; xxxii, 495. $15.00; $17.50; $20.00; $27.50.)

The Papers of James Madison. Presidential Series. Volume 1: *1 March–30 September 1809.* Edited by ROBERT A. RUTLAND and THOMAS A. MASON. ROBERT J. BRUGGER, SUSANNAH H. JONES, JEANNE K. SISSON, FREDRIKA J. TEUTE, Assistant Editors. (Charlottesville: Uni-versity Press of Virginia, 1984. Pp. xxx, 414. $37.50.)

James Madison's pivotal role in the creation, promotion, and organization of the new federal government would no doubt be securely established without the appearance of this definitive edition of his papers. But these five volumes, covering the period from March 1788 to March 1793 and the first seven months of his presidency, March to September 1809, offer to scholars a full and extraordinarily convenient view of Madison's activities at two critical moments in his public career. Throughout all of these volumes, Madison's overriding concern is with public life, for as Linda K. Kerber noted in a review of Volumes 3-10 in this journal in 1978, the purpose of Madison's correspondence "was rarely to share friendship or purvey gossip; his letters are seldom self-indulgent. Their

primary purpose was professional: to transmit information, to link a network of friendly politicians, to provide access to legislative decisions in advance of the newspapers" (*William and Mary Quarterly,* 3d Ser., XXXV, 147-155). This is most obviously apparent in the *Presidential Series,* where Madison's position may have compelled him to put some distance between himself and his correspondents. But he was equally circumspect in the 1780s and 1790s, even when writing to close friends and associates such as Edward Carrington, Henry Lee, or Thomas Jefferson.

The correspondence between Madison and Jefferson is particularly revealing of Madison's relentlessly public and political bent of mind. While these volumes convey clearly the way in which the friendship and political partnership between the two men expanded and deepened over the course of the years, one is also struck by the extent to which Madison, with consistent seriousness (one might say, joylessness) of purpose, concentrated on the practical, public-policy implications of almost every subject. Whether responding to Jefferson's wide-ranging and provocative "The Earth Belongs to the Living" letter in February 1790 (12: 382-387; 13: 18-25) or, in that same year, answering a series of letters from Edmund Randolph describing the precarious state of Mrs. Randolph's health, Madison appears to have had his thinking attuned almost solely to the legislative politics of the First Congress. And even in 1809, answering Jefferson's frequent letters to him, his mind seems to have been on nothing but politics. Jefferson's letters, which are themselves preoccupied with public affairs, nevertheless frequently concluded with bits of information about mutual acquaintances or about the state of his experiments at Monticello, but Madison's end of that correspondence was relentlessly businesslike.

The business with which Madison was most immediately engaged was, of course, that of launching the new government. The documents in Volume 11 encompass the twelve-month period in which Madison, seeking to expand his activities on the continental level, was forced into a more active role in all arenas: in private maneuverings in the Continental Congress; in helping to marshal support for the Constitution in Virginia and the upper South; and, most striking, in rallying his own constituents in and around Orange County behind him. Madison, who continued to have an aversion to electioneering well into the 1790s, complained to Eliza House Trist in March 1788 that on the day of election of delegates to the Virginia Ratifying Convention he was "obliged . . . to mount for the first time in my life, the rostrum before a large body of people, and to launch into a harangue of some length in open air and on a very windy day" (11: 5). He triumphed, of course, in that election, but his activities during this period were hardly confined to the promotion of his own political position. Between March and June 3, 1788, the date of the opening of the Virginia Ratifying Convention, his correspondence was nearly totally devoted to promoting the Federalist cause in the upcoming convention.

One of Madison's most impressive personal political triumphs came in

the convention itself where, even if he failed to match the pyrotechnics of Patrick Henry's oratorical displays, he unquestionably bested his Antifederalist rival in parliamentary tactics. Drawing Henry into a long-winded debate on the merits of each individual article of the proposed Constitution, Madison was able to make many of Henry's specific concerns about the document seem excessive and trivial. The editors have prefaced this section of Volume 11 with what seems an unfairly partisan headnote that praises Madison's speeches for their logic and accuracy, while describing Henry's as "rambling" diatribes (11: 72-76). Nonetheless, by and large the editors have let Madison speak for himself, relying on the excellent transcript of debates compiled by David Robertson at the time of the convention.

The remainder of Volume 11 and almost all of Volumes 12-14 chronicle Madison's emergence as the new nation's most active and energetic legislative strategist. Still more interesting, they also show the beginnings of his transition from an avowedly elitist politician to one who, though still uncomfortable with popular styles of campaigning, was nevertheless increasingly aggressive in seeking to rally popular constituencies behind the policies and programs he championed. Whereas in November 1788 Madison wrote to Edmund Randolph that he was loath to put on "an electioneering appearance" (11: 383) in his campaign for a seat in the First Congress, within a few months, under great pressure from his Antifederalist opponent, James Monroe, he had begun soliciting votes actively.

More important, as his frustration over Hamilton's ascendancy in the Washington administration mounted, Madison's interest in and involvement with electoral politics outside of Congress rose markedly. The story of his growing involvement in the organization of the "republican interest" unfolds nicely in these volumes. In addition to the constant dialogue between Madison and his friends and confidants back in Virginia—Joseph Jones, Henry Lee, Edward Carrington, and Jefferson, to name a few—Madison began an intense correspondence with John Beckley, who was principally responsible for keeping him informed of the balance of power between the republican and federalist "interests" throughout the nation at large (14: 345-347, 354-357, 361-362, 383-385).

One of the great benefits of having both Madison's incoming and outgoing correspondence assembled together and presented chronologically is that one can get a good sense of the reciprocal nature of his relationship with his constituents and, therefore, a good sense of the complexity of the forces leading to the formation of the Republican party. Madison's own letters and congressional speeches, read by themselves, suggest a man who thoroughly knew his own mind on issues such as constitutional amendments, funding and assumption, banking, and the site of the national capital, and who was, from his vantage point in Congress, aggressively organizing his forces at the local level. These impressions are not wholly inaccurate, for Madison was unquestionably becoming the principal theoretician and tactician of the Republican interest. Yet when

one reads his writings alongside the incoming correspondence from friends and political allies in Virginia, one gets a clear sense that the process of party organization was a dialectical one, with Madison's actions frequently being influenced by the advice, intelligence, and political pressure that he was receiving from home. It is clear, for example, that his alternative to Hamilton's plan to fund the continental debt—an alternative that would have made a distinction between original holders of the debt and those who had subsequently purchased continental notes at depreciated prices—was nearly universally rejected, in town and countryside alike, by his friends in Virginia. At the very best, his correspondents told him that it was a laudable, but wholly impractical, plan; at the worst, they let him know that they thought it was fundamentally pernicious in its assault on traditional notions of legal contract. While Madison's reaction to this hostile response is difficult to gauge, there is no question that his constituents' vehement aversion to the assumption proposal, expressed in numerous letters from both Federalist and Antifederalist colleagues, strengthened his resolve to oppose that part of Hamilton's financial plan.

The editorial methods in Volumes 11-14 of the *Madison Papers* are largely continuations of practices begun with Volume 8, when the number and size of explanatory notes at the end of each document were reduced and substantive headnotes at the beginning of major sections of the *Papers* were introduced in their stead. Although there are probably as many opinions about what constitutes the ideal editorial method as there are reviewers, it does seems to me that the current practice of the editors of the *Papers* provides a laudable combination of efficiency of production and clarity of presentation.

A few specific editorial decisions are worth noting. In Volumes 12-14 the editors, rather than relying on the notoriously unreliable reports of congressional debates in the *Annals of Congress* (1834-1856), have based their texts of Madison's congressional speeches on Thomas Lloyd's *The Congressional Register* (1789-1790), with supplementary materials from Francis Child's New York *Daily Advertiser* and John Fenno's *Gazette of the United States*. While it is clear that neither the *Annals* nor the newspaper accounts can be counted on to provide a wholly accurate transcript of Madison's speeches (for which there are only occasional notes and no written texts), this comparative method is undoubtedly the best that the editors could have selected.

Volume 1 of the *Presidential Series* uses most of the same principles as the volumes of Madison's regular correspondence, with one important exception. Since the quantity of purely routine correspondence—solicitations for government patronage, unsolicited advice from private citizens, and ceremonial proclamations, for example—increased dramatically during Madison's presidency, the editors have by necessity resorted to a more selective approach in deciding which documents to print. The problems inherent in the selection process are dramatically illustrated in the case of the "George Joy Correspondence" (see editorial note in *Presidential Series*, 1: 30-31). Joy, a self-styled expert in foreign policy living in London,

favored Madison, as president, with no fewer than 127 letters—most of them copious in both the information and advice they offered. The letters, though interesting, would have occupied a space disproportionate to their importance, so the editors have chosen to abstract them, referring readers to the Library of Congress microfilm edition of the Madison Papers for the full text of the correspondence. While no doubt some might wish that the editors had opted for a more inclusive policy, it again seems to me that the inclination toward restraint in matters of both annotation and selection offers the greatest likelihood (though by no means the certainty) that this papers project will reach a conclusion sometime within the twenty-first century.

Finally, it should be noted that William M. E. Rachal concluded his contributions to the *Papers* with Volume 13. Will Rachal had been associated with the *Papers* since the inception of the project in 1956, and his death in 1980 was a loss both to the project and to the historical profession generally. He was a wise, patient, and kind man, and he is missed by those who profited from his counsel.

University of Pennsylvania RICHARD R. BEEMAN