

The Papers of James Madison. Secretary of State Series. Volume 2: 1 August 1801–28 February 1802. Edited by MARY A. HACKETT, J. C. A. STAGG, JEANNE KERR CROSS, and SUSAN HOLBROOK PERDUE. (Charlottesville and London: University Press of Virginia, 1993. xli, 562p. Editorial method, chronology, index. \$60.00.)

The Papers of James Madison. Presidential Series. Volume 2: 1 October 1809–2 November 1810. Edited by J. C. A. STAGG, JEANNE KERR CROSS, and SUSAN HOLBROOK PERDUE. (Charlottesville and London: University Press of Virginia, 1992. xlv, 647p. Editorial method, chronology, significant federal officers, index. \$50.00.)

Many modern historians would find the volumes reviewed useless. They tell no fable with contemporary moral lessons. They include exclusively the correspondence of the white elite, with only occasional reference to the existence of other groups. And despite being the personal papers of James Madison, they include very little of a personal nature, save for Madison's frequent kvetch-ing about his health. Indeed, reading through the Madison correspondence and the illuminating editorial notes I found little support for the modern equation of the personal and the political.

Instead, these volumes are immeasurably useful to students of early national politics and foreign relations. In the second volume of the Secretary of State series, I learned much about the Jeffersonian use of the federal patronage system: the gradual replacement of Federalist office holders with loyal Republicans, the exclusion of Burr's followers from federal patronage, the humiliation of Tench Coxe. Ironically, the most celebrated internal affair of the early years of the Jefferson administration, *Marbury v. Madison*, hardly occupied the secretary of state. The Jeffersonian way of formulating foreign policy is illuminated by documents relating to the war against the Barbary states, the New Orleans/ Louisiana crisis, and the administration's efforts to back out of the Jay Treaty.

Most interesting are the documents pertaining to the American policy toward Toussaint L'Ouverture and his rebels. The administration invited Napoleon to launch the Leclerc expedition. For the sake of suppressing the slave rebellion in Saint Domingue, Jefferson and Madison willingly risked American security. The geopolitical viability of Napoleon's overseas empire depended upon his ability to regain control of the most prosperous European New World colony. Madison communicated to Napoleon that, unlike the Adams administration, he would not stand in the way of French reoccupation. He replaced the capable Edward Stevens with the mediocre Tobias Lear and reduced the status of the American representation in the island to that of a commercial agent. The secretary of state then instructed Robert Livingston in Paris to "relieve the French Government from any doubts or errors they may" have regarding the American position toward the rebellion (p. 146). A similar message was relayed to Pichon, the French chargé in the United States.

Madison's hands-off leadership style as president meant that his personal correspondence does not provide much information about the crucial issues of the period. The editors therefore include abstracts, annotations, and summaries of documents by many of the people who came into contact with the fourth president. Successful objective presentation of this sort hinges on editorial choices. Fortunately, the project is headed by J. C. A. Stagg, author of the best political study of the War of 1812, *Mr. Madison's War* (1983), and his selections are both balanced and informative.

The European war continued to generate crises and opportunities for the young republic. Failed negotiations with the new British minister, Francis James Jackson, were followed by the infamous Macon's Bill No. 2 that opened the door for Napoleon to force the United States into his camp. Why did Madison accept Cadore's letter even though he knew France would continue to seize and confiscate American vessels? His letters to his ministers in Paris and London reveal that he sincerely believed that Great Britain would repeal the Orders in Council and revoke its paper blockades in order not to be outmaneuvered by Napoleon. All the while his political base at home was eroding and the attacks on his policy, orchestrated by his own secretary of state, Robert Smith, intensified.

The most controversial issue in the period under consideration was the unilateral annexation of West Florida. A highly informative editorial note places the annexation in the context of the collapse of Spain's New World. The European war created favorable circumstances for the United States to assert its claim that West Florida was part of the Louisiana Purchase, and on October 27, 1810, Madison issued a proclamation unilaterally annexing the disputed territory. The Madison that emerges from these documents does not resemble the popular image of the fourth president as ineffectual and paralyzed by his constitutional orthodoxy. Rather, Madison acted decisively, ignoring both the

shaky legal and international foundations of the American claims and the sentiments of the region's residents.

Scholars will find these volumes not only rich in hitherto unpublished material but also user-friendly; documents are presented in a clear and easily accessible manner, and the annotations are thorough. The indexes are clear and comprehensive. They do not, however, have separate topical entries for intellectual themes such as commerce, manufactures, patronage, racism, etc. Because of budgetary considerations the editors summarized many of the documents and their enclosures, and excluded others altogether. Scholars interested in examining these documents are clearly directed to the whereabouts of the complete originals. Finally, while the annotations at the end of documents offer invaluable information in a wonderfully concise manner, some issues in the Secretary of State volume, like the Tobias Lear correspondence and the Rufus King negotiations, would have benefited from a short introductory editorial note similar to those in the Presidential series. These minor quibbles aside, early national scholarship is much enriched by these volumes.

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