

The Papers of James Madison. Volume XIV: 6 April 1791-16 March 1793. Edited by ROBERT A. RUTLAND, THOMAS A. MASON, ROBERT J. BRUGGER, JEANNE K. SISSON, and FREDRIKA J. TEUTE. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1983. xxx, 495 pp. \$27.50.

The Papers of Thomas Jefferson. Volume XX: 1 April to 4 August 1791. Edited by JULIAN P. BOYD and RUTH W. LESTER. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982. xxxii, 759 pp. \$50.00.

WITH these complementary volumes, *The Papers of James Madison* and *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson* carry their subjects beyond the era of the American Revolution. The 1790s were to be a turbulent political decade, and both volumes provide ample documentation of the early stages of that turbulence, its relationship to the legislative achievement of the First Federal Congress, and the initial attempts of two of its major actors to provide an effective response to the dominant political persuasion which they saw as too supportive of centralized power and too closely allied with the commercial class. Because of the close association between Madison and Jefferson and the documents involved, these two volumes can be read for an understanding of how two politicians reacted to the issues in which they were both involved and how facts and interpretations traveled between them. Both volumes offer insight into a variety of events of social, intellectual, and political interest on a national and international stage. Despite the similarity of subject matter, the editors have chosen to present the documents in dramatically different manners.

In volume XIV of the *Papers of James Madison* the editorial team provides us with Madison's correspondence, speeches, notes, and essays for a two-year period. We see a congressman concerned with: the development of the national capital, the political theories and opinions of John Adams, the establishment of the *National Gazette*, the personal and legislative needs of constituents, and the presidential succession and apportionment bills of the Second Congress. Comparing the contents of this one volume covering the Second Congress with the two which preceded it on the First Congress, one is struck by a major change in Madison's role. He is no longer the Federalist legislative leader; his floor speeches decline in number by 75 percent; and his letters no longer attempt to keep a relatively large group of prominent Virginia leaders informed about congressional activities. Instead, Madison is concerned with the implications of the actions of the First Congress—particularly the response to the assumption of state debts, the excise, and the bank—the continued influence of Alexander Hamilton, and the necessity for political association across state lines.

The editors are too sparing in the use of headnotes: There are only four and each is a page in length. Madison's response to an anonymous pamphlet attack on Thomas Jefferson and himself deserves comment on its context if not on why the editors accept the pamphlet's author to be William Loughton Smith. In footnoting the documents the editors have continued their commendable policy of brevity in length and frequency in instance. The hours of pleasant, if sometimes fruitless, detective work which they must have undertaken in the genealogy and local history sections of the Alderman Library appropriately illuminate the context in which

Madison read a document. The editors identify events and individuals when the historical record allows for certainty and make known the likely options when it does not. Only rarely is the reader frustrated by the absence of annotation, for example, an "R M." is not identified for the uninitiated although he appears in the index as "Morris, Robert." One of the best features of that index is the policy of informing readers where in previous volumes of the series particular individuals are identified. All this the editors accomplish without inserting themselves or delaying the regular publication of their volumes.

Volume XX of the *Papers of Thomas Jefferson* represents the conclusion of a unique method of historical editing. To read the first twenty volumes of the series is to gain insight into the interests, talents, and biases of both its subject and its recently deceased editor, the eighteenth-century scholar Julian P. Boyd. As an editor Boyd revolutionized historical editing in the United States and left a legacy of immense influence to those who work with edited documents. He believed in a comprehensive search for all relevant and supporting documents prior to any publication, and contacts with descendants, collectors, benefactors, manuscript dealers, and amateur historians throughout the editing process. He instituted a system of controlling documents that allowed for their location from a variety of perspectives, the comparison of variant texts and the use of relevant information in them bearing on earlier or later events. Fundamental to his approach was the Jeffersonian-based recognition that publicly supported editorial projects have a readership which is wider than a small corps of specially trained academicians and that that necessitated a clear, as well as an accurate and complete, transcription which could be read and appreciated by any literate person, rather than only by an expert willing to wade patiently through a mass of bracketed clarifications, carefully reproduced random slips of the writer's pen, and archaic spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.

Except for the last of these principles, which remains a point of some debate, modern historical editors have followed Boyd's leadership. His method of annotation, however, has gained no followers. Nor did Boyd advocate it, believing his unique style was justified only by the continuing historical magnitude and wide-ranging interests of the man to whom he devoted most of his long professional career. Most dramatic of Boyd's approach was the grouping together of certain documents in non-chronological order, preceded by an essay. Fully one-third of volume XX is devoted to these essays and to another Boyd device, extensive narrative footnotes to individual documents. These essays and notes are often expansively informative, vividly written, closely argued, and always defensive of Jefferson's role and reputation. In this volume Boyd explores in depth Jefferson and Pierre L'Enfant's roles in the design of Washington, D.C., Indian affairs on the Canadian border, Tench Coxe's application for a different job in the Treasury Department, the French debt, Jefferson's connection with Thomas Paine's *Rights of Man*, the Madison and Jefferson trip to the eastern states, the American consul at London, and the founding of the *National Gazette*. In addition, there are great riches in the volume which the editor did not choose to expand upon, including the evolving French Revolution and Jefferson's personal affairs at Monticello. Another Boyd characteristic which other editors have

not imitated is the omission of an index. Instead, separately published paperback indexes covering several volumes were to serve until a cumulative index appeared. One of the first tasks of the new editors of the Jefferson Papers has been the publication of an index to the first twenty volumes. It will be available shortly and, because of Boyd's treatment of the documents, will provide a monumental research tool for those seeking to understand in depth the era of the American Revolution as well as those interested only in Jefferson.

Charles Cullen, the new editor of the project, who along with Ruth Lester, Boyd's longtime associate, saw volume XX through the publication process, concisely describes it as "vintage Boyd" and the first twenty volumes of the *Papers of Thomas Jefferson* as a "monument to his [Boyd's] achievement."

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First Federal Congress Project