

The Papers of James Madison. Volume I (16 March 1751—16 December 1779) and Volume II (20 March 1780—23 February 1781). Edited by William T. Hutchinson and William M. E. Rachel. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962. Pp. xlii, 344; xix, 344. \$10.00 per volume.)

Sponsored jointly by the University of Virginia and the University of Chicago, and dedicated to Leonard D. White—who did not live to become the general editor, but may have given the project its necessary impetus—the Madison Papers have now begun to appear and to join company with the new editions of the papers of Jefferson, Franklin, Adams, and Hamilton. In point of time the need for a modern and complete version of Madison's correspondence was recognized, before any of those other enterprises had commenced, when librarians at the University of Virginia began, in the 1930's, a card file on the location of scattered items so as to produce at some time a full inventory of the writings of James Madison. Of all the extensive bodies of private correspondence which are important to the history of the United States, his was probably the collection most abused after he died in 1836, one that represents the other extreme from the most carefully husbanded papers of the Adams family in Massachusetts. While Dolley Madison tried for years to sell her late husband's correspondence to the United States, portions of the large collection (which Madison himself had sorted and, perhaps, pruned of some too personal specimens) were published by private enterprise, but from the bulk of unpublished material many items were lost, sold, or pledged to satisfy creditors. When Congress finally, in 1848, authorized the purchase, Mrs. Madison delivered four trunks full of documents which were supposed to have been the complete correspondence. In fact they were much less than that, and they were further diminished because they were committed to James Cabell Rives who kept them in Virginia all during the Civil War. Rives did edit, and the United States published, four volumes of papers which issued at

the end of the Civil War and became known as the Congressional Edition. Only about half of the Madison originals which had been in Rives' possession came back, although when the Library of Congress acquired the Rives Papers in the twentieth century there was more Madison material among them which was repossessed. Meanwhile Gaillard Hunt edited, between 1900 and 1910, nine volumes of the *Writings of James Madison*. He combined all that had been in the Congressional Edition with earlier printed materials, and he used such original manuscripts as Rives had been persuaded to give up. Even so, the present editors assert that Hunt's nine volumes contain but one-sixth of all the letters written by Madison, and "an insignificant fraction of the fifteen thousand or so extant letters addressed to him." Presumably everything is scheduled for appearance in this new edition, some of it to be borrowed for transcription from various collectors—in some cases no doubt the heirs or assigns from the days when Dolley's son, John Payne Todd, sold things in order to pay his gambling and liquor debts.

The contents of these two meticulously edited volumes reflect the early life and education of Madison in Orange County, Virginia, the two years at the College of New Jersey—during which a good preparation enabled him to do the work of four years—under the direction of John Witherspoon, the ideas of the rather sickly young man who was not sure of what he was going to make of his life, the ready and enthusiastic acceptance of an American stand in opposition to British imperial legislation, and the career in Virginia's and the nation's politics during most of the War of Independence. Those who have read the first volume of Irving Brant's modern biography will get few surprises but will have opportunity to form some independent opinions.

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