

The Papers of James Madison. Secretary of State Series. Volume 1: 4 March–31 July 1801. Edited by Robert J. Brugger and others. (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1986. Pp. xxxiv, 526. \$37.50.)

This volume marks the completion of the courageous and probably wise plan of the Madison editors to publish three series of papers simultaneously. The original, chronological series goes on, the Presidential Series has begun, and now this volume inaugurates the Secretary of State Series. The chronological series has prospects of reaching 1801 in a few years, and then, with the Secretary of State and Presidential Series going ahead together, we can even foresee the publication of all of Madison's papers through his retirement from the presidency in 1817 within perhaps the next ten or twenty years. This will be an enormously important contribution to historical scholarship, due largely to the perseverance and good judgment of retiring editor-in-chief Robert Rutland.

Even more than the Presidential Series, though, this one presents serious problems of sheer mass of documents. Volume 1 of the Presidential Series printed or abstracted about four hundred documents covering seven months in about four hundred pages. This volume prints or abstracts more than six hundred documents covering only five months in about five hundred pages. As in the Presidential Series, in this volume the editors show skill and judgment in shortening space devoted to routine documents, but still the prospect is for perhaps twenty volumes to cover Madison's eight years as secretary of state. In this volume there are only a few important letters by Madison himself, so the publication of his "papers" becomes largely the papers of his office—worthwhile in its own right, but the focus slips away from Madison's own thought. The context is so much enriched, though, that the completion of this series will permit an understanding of Madison and of the early conduct of American foreign policy previously impossible.

We see, for example, how the Jefferson administration formulated its policy toward the Barbary pirates, how it began reaction to the retrocession of Louisiana and the slave triumph in Santo Domingo, and how it handled the vexatious problem of appointments. Many letters come from consuls abroad, European ministers in the United States, indigent friends and relatives seeking jobs, and sailors and merchants caught in war turmoil. The editors continue to solve puzzles such as finding the date and recipient of an interesting fragment of a Madison letter to Tench Coxe previously known only from a sale catalogue extract (p. 265), and providing a condensed translation of a Madison letter to the French minister to the United States previously available only in the French version the minister sent to Paris. Though the material in this volume is qualitatively different from that in the chronological series and largely loses sight of Madison's own thought, this is still a treasure trove for historians of the early national period. As the editors point out, we will soon have the raw material available for the large work on the Jefferson and Madison administrations that can put Henry Adams's remarkable volumes in proper perspective.

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