

The Papers of James Madison: Secretary of State Series. Volume 5: 16 May–31 October 1803. Edited by David B. Mattern, J. C. A. Stagg, Ellen J. Barber, Anne Mandeville Colony, and Bradley J. Daigle. (Charlottesville and London: University Press of Virginia, c. 2000. Pp. xxxviii, 643. \$70.00, ISBN 0-8139-1941-X.)

The Papers of James Madison: Secretary of State Series. Volume 6: 1 November 1803–31 March 1804. Edited by Mary A. Hackett, J. C. A. Stagg, Ellen J. Barber, Anne Mandeville Colony, and Angela Kreider. (Charlottesville and London: University of Virginia Press, c. 2002. Pp. xlii, 724. \$70.00, ISBN 0-8139-2120-1.)

The Papers of James Madison: Presidential Series. Volume 5: 10 July 1812–7 February 1813. Edited by J. C. A. Stagg, Martha J. King, Ellen J. Barber, Anne Mandeville Colony, Angela Kreider, and Jewel L. Spangler. (Charlottesville and London: University of Virginia Press, c. 2004. Pp. xxxviii, 718. \$70.00, ISBN 0-8139-2258-5.)

The publication of three volumes by the skilled and experienced editors at the University of Virginia is a sure sign of the flourishing state of Madison scholarship. These books and the eight earlier ones in these series, together with the seventeen volumes in the series covering to 1801, amount to twenty-eight volumes. The project began forty-three years ago at the University of Chicago. At the present rate of publication, the Secretary of State Series will likely be about fifteen volumes in all. The Presidential Series, now about one-half completed, will likely run about twelve volumes total. The completion of these series in the now-foreseeable future, together with the retirement series now being planned—and likely to run to double-digit volumes—will make about fifty volumes in all. The Madison papers project has already transformed the quality of study about Madison and his times. For example, the series on Madison's sixteen years in executive office (together with the to-be-completed Thomas Jefferson papers for the same years) pretty well completes the need, as Irving Brant noted in my presence half-a-century ago, of rescuing Madison and the Jefferson-Madison administrations from the "two million disparaging words dumped on them by Henry Adams."

Volume 5 of the Secretary of State Series carefully documents the conduct of that office during the difficult and even harrowing completion of the Louisiana Purchase and the establishment of a new republican government there. The documents and the superb editorial notes show how tenuous the whole business was: Great Britain and France had resumed their world war. Napoleon's sudden sale of all of Louisiana to the surprised American negotiators had given him money to aid his intended conquest of Europe. Spain delayed turning New Orleans over to France or to the United States, while everyone supposed Britain would occupy the vital port early in the renewed fighting. Napoleon perhaps supposed he could reclaim the city and the vast territory from Britain in a peace he would be able to dictate. In any case, the prospect of either powerful France or powerful Britain, instead of weak Spain, controlling the Mississippi Valley was most unwelcome to Madison.

Complicated, sometimes almost frantic negotiations were managed across Madison's desk as letters came from and went to New Orleans, Paris, London, and Madrid, and Madison dealt as well with British, French, and Spanish diplomats in Washington. He also had to mediate the self-serving quarrels between James Monroe and Robert R. Livingston over receiving credit for the Louisiana Purchase.

At the same time long, complex letters came from American consuls about the fighting along the Barbary Coast and about claims and depredations concerning American seaborne commerce, past and present. And in another kind of diplomacy, Madison wrote Livingston of a beguiling opportunity: Napoleon's younger brother Jerome had "been smitten, it seems, with a young lady in Baltimore, and the result is to be a marriage . . . But considering the relation of one of the parties to a man who has so much influence on the course of human affairs . . . the event is not without importance" (p. 586). Since the bride-to-be was of a rich and influential Maryland family and was stunningly beautiful, Madison hoped for a useful connection. The plot failed. Napoleon had the marriage annulled and required his brother to desert his (now richly pensioned) wife and newborn child. Jerome returned to Europe to become king of Westphalia.

The introduction to Volume 6 is a brilliant and somewhat revisionist view of post-Louisiana Purchase diplomacy. The editors show that Madison was both aggressive and implausible in his insistence that the purchase included the Gulf of Mexico coast from New Orleans all the way to the Perdido River. Generally the volume details the complicated and momentous business that crossed Madison's desk in five very busy months. Quarreling American representatives in Europe, tense exchanges with Washington diplomats reacting to impressment and reparation problems with Great Britain, coping with refugees from Saint Domingue flooding into New Orleans, and reading long, dramatic dispatches about the capture and burning of an American frigate on the Barbary Coast occupied Madison's attention. The social question that now complicated Madison's diplomacy was the snit caused by the wife of the British minister, who felt insulted when she was not given proper precedence in Washington dining salons, public and private. Defending Jefferson's informal, republican-style, pell-mell etiquette at dinners, Madison wrote a long, convoluted letter to Monroe explaining things with the hope that the social uproar would not damage the better relations with Great Britain he sought to cultivate. "I blush at having put so much trash on paper," he wrote (p. 366).

Volume 5 of the Presidential Series is largely occupied with outpourings to the president first about the beginning of the war with Great Britain and then about the disgraceful surrender of the fort at Detroit and the capture of the American forces there. The petitions and remonstrances, mostly from New England, complained bitterly about the injustice and sectional bias of the war. They beseeched the president to seek peace and the resumption of commerce with the former mother country. Messages from most of the rest of the country, however, supported the war as both just and necessary to defend American rights on the high seas and in the unstable northwest territories—where British authorities aroused and armed Indians resisting American encroachments. The

nature and extent of public reaction to the war and the president's response to them are better revealed in these documents than in any other printed source.

A similar insight is possible from the startled, angry, and frightened letters that followed the defeat and surrender of Brigadier General William Hull's forces at Detroit. As we saw after Pearl Harbor and the attacks on September 11, 2001, petitions and letters from the most immediately endangered regions pleaded for protection from a dangerously empowered enemy. Others sought to discover blame and to punish those responsible for such a staggering and unexpected defeat. Still others disputed over who should replace unfaithful and incompetent officials on the western frontier, in New York State, and in Washington.

Madison learned of Hull's defeat just after he had left for an annual summer visit to Montpelier, which he made for his health's sake. After two days he was called back to Washington to deal with the crisis, where he stayed for four days. After spending a week at Montpelier, he returned to Washington to prepare for an early session of Congress. Thus, between August 27 and September 14 Madison spent probably eight days on the road, considering that trips from Montpelier to Washington usually took at least two days. Luckily, in regard to his health, he reported to Jefferson he had "less of bilious sensations than I could have expected" (p. 166). Altogether the picture is one of a terribly anxious but determined president who coped with near treason, sectional division, battlefield defeat, and incompetence—all the while sustaining republican institutions. Like Abraham Lincoln and Franklin D. Roosevelt, Madison largely succeeded in surviving and finally mastering the crisis while preserving the vital ideals and processes of self-government he had played such a large part in establishing. In fact, all of these volumes rest mainly on that theme, which is so clearly, carefully, and skillfully presented here. Scholars and others interested in the use and good health of American practices of democratic government will be grateful to the editors, publishers, and supporters of this splendid project.

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