The Papers of James Madison, Presidential Series, Volume Five: July 10, 1812–February 7, 1813. Edited by J. C. A. Stagg, Martha J. King, Ellen J. Barber, Anne Mandeville Colony, Angela Kreider, and Jewel L. Spangler. (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2004. Pp. xxv, 718; $70, cloth.)

In this volume of *The Papers of James Madison*, editor J. C. A. Stagg and his able staff edited the documents that passed between President Madison and his various audiences from July 10, 1812, to February 7, 1813. For anyone wishing to see Madison at his best, this is not a particularly edifying

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collection. Madison found himself mired in the opening battles of the War of 1812, groping in an unprecedented situation to systematize his role as commander in chief under the Constitution, realizing that the war effort was seriously underfinanced—and not doing a very good job as president. In addition, he was conducting sensitive negotiations with the governments of Great Britain, France, and Spain and attempting to win reelection to a second term in office. Madison had just suffered a rebuff from the British after having outlined the conditions to end the war that had only just begun: cessation of impressments and acceptance of America's definition of neutral rights on the high seas.

To coerce the enemy into negotiations, Madison appointed two army commanders with the intention of invading and conquering Canada during the upcoming summer. In the Northwest, Brigadier General William Hull, under orders from Secretary of War William Eustis, would penetrate Upper Canada from Detroit, while Major General Henry Dearborn would attack Montreal and the Niagara Peninsula from the east. The two operations, totally uncoordinated and poorly led, went badly from the outset. Hull invaded Canada on July 12 with the intention of capturing Fort Malden. Beset by doubts and quarreling with his officers, he withdrew on August 8. The enemy immediately besieged Detroit, which Hull surrendered on August 16. For this ignominy, Hull later was court-martialed and sentenced to be shot, but Madison saved him from the ultimate penalty. With the Northwest in a panic, Madison urged Dearborn to relieve pressure on this region by initiating military operations against Niagara and Montreal.

Dearborn, however, was worried about going on the offensive while unsure about support from the New England states. A flurry of antiwar sentiment had been let loose in that region, supported by the Federalist party. Town meetings throughout the Northeast were passing resolutions against the war, and Madison's reasons for it, that were duly forwarded to the president (and appear in this volume). Madison, understandably distressed by the fury and quantity of these messages, wrote Thomas Jefferson on August 17, "The seditious opposition in Mass. & Cont. with the intrigues elsewhere insidiously co-operating with it, have so clogged the wheels of the war, that I fear the campaign will not accomplish the object of it" (p. 165). His fears were warranted, for some Federalists muttered about forcibly opposing the administration's war efforts or even seceding from the Union, and Dearborn was denied the use of several states' militias. Ordered nevertheless by Madison to march against the enemy, Dearborn attempted a halfhearted assault at Queenston Heights near Niagara in late fall, but was forced finally to withdraw and encamp for the winter. In the West, meantime, Madison struggled to recapture Detroit. Compelled to adopt the military policies of Kentucky governor Charles Scott, he was humiliated when these efforts come to naught on January 22, 1813, as Brigadier General

James Winchester was defeated at Frenchtown near the River Raisin by a British-Indian army under the leadership of Colonel Henry Procter.

Despite these military setbacks, Madison refused any attempt at draconian measures to suppress antiwar sentiments among his Federalist critics. He won reelection in November 1812 and in his annual message to Congress on November 4 valiantly tried to present his military reverses in the most favorable light. Admitting that recent events were "adverse" to the American cause, he yet declared that they had "inspired every where, new ardor and determination" to defeat the malignant British enemy and his vicious Indian allies. In a gesture to recent successes by the United States Navy, he proposed that more ships be built, and he optimistically declared that the financing of the war, which until then had been chaotic, would soon improve. He reiterated the requirements that Britain must meet for peace, and he pointed out that the administration still was negotiating with France about the repeal of the Berlin and Milan Decrees (pp. 427-35). Although Madison did not mention America's relations with Spain, his administration was deeply involved in disputes with that country over boundaries and American claims to Spanish East Florida. But he refused to countenance proposals from various advisers to foster unrest and rebellion in East Florida. Nor would he officially sanction a filibuster into Spanish Texas led by Augustus W. Magee and José Bernardo Maximiliano Gutiérrez de Lara in August 1812. The volume closes with the outcome of both the war and diplomacy very much in doubt.

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