

# Annotation

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NATIONAL HISTORICAL PUBLICATIONS AND RECORDS  
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NEWSLETTER

June 2001

## NHPRC Struggles to Balance Increasing Demands Against Constrained Resources *Commission Recommends 48 Grants Totaling Up to \$2,898,008*

At its meeting on May 2-3, members of the National Historical Publications and Records Commission grappled with the challenge of responding to a surge in records preservation and access proposals while maintaining the NHPRC's ongoing commitment to documentary editions. Members noted that the \$18.5 million requested this year, a 33 percent jump over last year, was more than triple the \$6 million annual appropriation for competitive grants that the Commission has received since 1998. They noted that this was a clear demonstration of rising need in areas critical to the NHPRC's mandate to preserve and make widely accessible the nation's documentary heritage.

### Grants

At this second and final meeting of FY 2001, the Commission acted on 81 proposals requesting a total of \$8,293,928. The Commission recommended to the Archivist of the United States grants of up to \$2,898,008 for 48 projects, 47 of which were competitive projects. These recommendations included \$1,989,089 for documentary editing projects that focus upon the papers of significant Americans other than the Founding Fathers (none of which received requested increases) and \$31,993 for subventions. Noting that current appropriations made it impossible for the NHPRC also to fund records access projects at the levels and in the numbers justified by their importance and high quality, members voted to award \$718,823 for eight records projects, of which \$435,712 is to be made available now, with the remaining \$283,111 to be paid out either in FY 2001 from unspent funds returned from closed grants or from projects unable to raise the required level of matching

funds, or from FY 2002 appropriations. Two additional records projects were given contingent funding totaling \$79,107, to be awarded only if FY 2001 returns were to sufficiently exceed the \$283,111 needed to fund the projects mentioned above. Ten other records projects of superior quality that the Commission was unable to fund at this time were endorsed and encouraged to resubmit next year.

The Commission also reviewed two Congressionally earmarked projects, recommending an initial grant of \$78,996 for Heritage Harbor Museum's "Native Journeys" Documentation Project, Providence, RI, and approving the release of up to \$1,097,550 in second-year funding for the Center for Jewish History, New York, NY.

### Resolutions

Commission members passed the following resolutions:

*Resolved*, that given the inadequate level of FY 2001 appropriations in the face of requests before the Commission at this meeting, the Executive Committee recommends the following:

1. That no publications project is to be funded above the level received in FY 2000.
2. That records projects recommended by the staff for funding by the Commission receive the balance of funds available for this fiscal year. Further toward this end, the Commission consider the records projects based upon the list of staff priority recommendations, with those records projects on the staff priority list unfunded in this cycle considered for contingent funding in the event that additional funds become available this year.
3. That those records projects recommended by staff that are unfunded this year be endorsed by the *(continued on page 10)*

## EDITING THE PRESIDENTIAL PAPERS of GEORGE WASHINGTON

BY ROBERT F. HAGGARD



George Washington. Miniature by an unknown artist. Photograph courtesy of the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation.

Editing the Presidential papers of George Washington presents a number of challenges, particularly in the realm of selection. Such a statement might come as a surprise to those who know that *The Papers of George Washington* editorial project at the University of Virginia has as its primary mission the discovery and publication of every extant piece of our first President's correspondence, both those letters written by and

to him. This is still, of course, the case. The project's CD-ROM edition, a work-in-progress that will eventually be made available through the Packard Humanities Institute, will reproduce in full, but without annotation, every document collected since 1969. With regard to the project's letterpress edition of Washington's writings, however, there are several categories of documents that will not be included at all or will only be quoted or mentioned in the printed volumes. Several other groups of documents, which do not at first glance appear to belong to Washington's papers defined narrowly, **will** be published, either in whole or in part.

Documents are omitted from the letterpress edition for a number of reasons. Because Washington was besieged with applications for office during both of his Presidential terms and *(continued on page 7)*

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Material accepted for publication will be edited to conform to style and space limitations of *Annotation*, but authors will be consulted should substantive questions arise. The editor is final arbiter in matters regarding length and grammar. Published material does not necessarily represent the views of the Commission or of the National Archives and Records Administration; indeed, some material may challenge policies and practices of those institutions.

**NHPRC MEMBERS** — *John W. Carlin*, Archivist of the United States, Chairperson; *Roy D. Blunt*, representing the U.S. House of Representatives; *Nicholas C. Burckel* and *Marvin F. "Bud" Moss*, representing the President of the United States; *Charles T. Cullen*, representing the Association for Documentary Editing; *Mary Maples Dunn*, representing the American Historical Association; *Fynnette Eaton*, representing the Society of American Archivists; *Barbara J. Fields*, representing the Organization of American Historians; *Brent D. Glass*, representing the American Association for State and Local History; *Alfred Goldberg*, representing the Department of Defense; *Margaret P. Grafeld*, representing the Department of State; *David H. Souter*, representing the U.S. Supreme Court; *Winston Tabb*, representing the Librarian of Congress; and *Roy C. Turnbaugh*, representing the National Association of Government Archives and Records Administrators.

**NHPRC STAFF** — *Ann C. Newhall*, Executive Director; *Roger A. Bruns*, Deputy Executive Director; *Richard A. Cameron*, Director for State Programs; *Timothy D.W. Connelly*, Director for Publications; *Mark Conrad*, Director for Technology Initiatives; *Nancy Taylor Copp*, Management and Program Analyst; *Mary A. Giunta*, Director for Communications and Outreach; *J. Dane Hartgrove*, Historian and Editor, *Annotation*; *Michael T. Meier*, Program Officer; *Laurette O'Connor*, Grant Program Assistant; *Cassandra A. Scott*, Staff Assistant; *Daniel A. Stokes*, Program Officer.

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Welcome to the June 2001 issue of *Annotation*, which focuses on NHPRC's support for historical documentary editing projects on the papers of Presidents of the United States who have served under the Federal Constitution. Over the years, the NHPRC has supported or endorsed projects for the publication of the papers of 22 such Presidents. A listing of NHPRC's Presidential projects appears at the end of this column.

This issue begins with our report on the May 2001 Commission meeting, and includes a list of recent records products and documentary publications volumes. Our guest commentator for this issue is Deputy Executive Director Roger Bruns.

There is also an obituary for Debra E. Bernhardt, who headed the Tamiment Library and Robert F. Wagner Labor Archives at New York University. The Commission recommended funding for the third phase of NYU's Ordinary People, Extraordinary Lives labor records project, of which she served as director, at its May meeting. We are sure she would be pleased to know that the project will continue without her.

Our feature articles are:

"Editing the Presidential Papers of George Washington," by Robert F. Haggard, an assistant editor with *The Papers of George Washington*.

"Our First Father and Son Presidents," by Richard Alan Ryerson, the former editor, and Celeste Walker, an associate editor, of *The Adams Papers*.

"Thomas Jefferson and John Freeman," by Andrew McMichael, an assistant editor with *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*.

"One Small Note: Editing the Presidential Papers of James Madison," by J.C.A. Stagg, editor of *The Papers of James Madison*.

"The Misfortunes of the Andrew Jackson Archives," by Harold Moser, editor of *The Papers of Andrew Jackson*.

"Abraham Lincoln: Lawyer President," by John A. Lupton, assistant director and assistant editor of the Lincoln Legal Papers.

"President Ike: An Editor's View," by Daun van Ee, former editor of *The Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower*, now a historical specialist with the Manuscript Division, Library of Congress.

"The Miller Center of Public Affairs Presidential Recordings Project," by Timothy J. Naftali, project director.

### NHPRC'S PRESIDENTIAL PROJECTS

*The Papers of George Washington*

*The Adams Papers*

*The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*

*The Papers of James Madison*

*James Monroe Papers in Virginia Repositories* (microfilm edition)

*The Papers of Andrew Jackson*

*The Papers of Andrew Jackson, 1770-1845* (microfilm edition)

*The Papers of Martin Van Buren* (microfilm edition)

*The Correspondence of James K. Polk*

*Millard Fillmore Papers* (microfilm edition)

*James Buchanan Papers* (microfilm edition)

*The Lincoln Legal Papers*

*The Papers of Andrew Johnson*

*The Papers of Ulysses S. Grant*

*Ulysses S. Grant: Essays and Documents*

*Papers of Rutherford Birchard Hayes* (microfilm edition)

*The Papers of Woodrow Wilson*

*Warren G. Harding Papers* (microfilm edition)

*The Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower*

*The Miller Center Presidential Recordings Project*

Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Harry S. Truman, Dwight David Eisenhower, John Fitzgerald Kennedy, and Lyndon Baines Johnson

## EDITING THE PAPERS OF THE PRESIDENTS

by Roger Bruns, Deputy Executive Director

This issue of *Annotation* highlights an area of the work of the NHPRC that has, since the Commission's inception, remained central to its mission—the editing and publishing of papers of United States Presidents. The idea of collecting and editing significant documents of the U.S. Government can be traced back long before the advent of the NHPRC. Shortly after the American Revolution, Ebenezer Hazard, a New York bookseller who later became U.S. Postmaster General, painstakingly copied by hand documents relating to the early history of the country. Thomas Jefferson lauded Hazard's work, two volumes published between 1792 and 1794, calling it an undertaking of great utility that furnished to any historian "materials which he would otherwise acquire with great difficulty and perhaps not at all."

A number of major letterpress editions of American Presidential papers appeared in the 19th century: the papers of George Washington, edited by Jared Sparks; of John Adams and John Quincy Adams, edited by Charles Francis Adams; and of Abraham Lincoln, edited by John Nicolay and John Hay. But these editions, assembled with much devotion, were often unreliable because of faulty transcription and other editorial problems.

In 1896 the Federal Government launched a major effort to provide Presidential materials to the public. *Messages and Papers of the Presidents*, a series issued under the authority of Congress, published by the Government Printing Office, and edited by James D. Richardson, included 20 volumes. The project ended without reaching 20th-century Presidential administrations.

Although individual historians such as John Bassett Moore, Stanislaus Hamilton, and others edited Presidential volumes early in the century, it was not until the end of the Second World War that documentary editions of Presidential papers began to appear. For the first time, scholars, teachers, writers, and others interested in American history would have access to these important materials.

Julian Boyd, Princeton University librarian and historian, secured support from the *New York Times* during World War II to launch a definitive edition of *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*. Boyd's Jefferson series served as a model for additional editorial ventures and

impressed President Harry Truman, who encouraged editions of "other great national figures." Over the next decade, the National Historical Publications and Records Commission began soliciting private support for such editorial work.

In 1964 Congress began to appropriate funds for the NHPRC to undertake its own grant program for documentary work, a program that has included support to universities, historical societies, and other institutions around the country for 19 book and microfilm projects of American Presidents. The Commission is supporting projects involving most of the early American Presidents, including George Washington, John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, and Andrew Jackson. Most have involved extensive efforts to collect documents from public and private institutions around the world. The list includes the completed *Papers of Woodrow Wilson*, edited by Arthur Link at Princeton University, and published by Princeton University Press. Professor Alonzo L. Hamby of Ohio University has called the 69-volume Wilson edition "the greatest editing achievement in the history of the American historical profession."

The most recent project supported by the Commission involving Presidential materials is the path-breaking endeavor of The Miller Center of Public Affairs at the University of Virginia to decipher, explain, and make accessible to the public through books, CD-ROM, and website publication the White House audiotape recordings made during the administrations of Presidents Roosevelt, Truman, Eisenhower, Kennedy, and Johnson.

Through the efforts of public and private historians, agencies, and organizations, Americans now have, as never before, increasing available documentation on Presidential administrations. President Truman, whose own efforts played a large part in making these materials available, declared: "A President's written and spoken words can command national and international attention if he has within him the power to attract and hold that attention. It is partly through the use of this power that leadership arises, events are molded, and administrations take their shape. It is this power, quite as much as powers written into the Constitution, that gives to the papers of Presidents their peculiar and revealing importance."

☪ Debra E. Bernhardt ☪

Debra E. Bernhardt, a labor historian who headed the Tamiment Library and Robert F. Wagner Labor Archives at New York University, died of cancer on March 22, 2001. She was 47 years old. Born in 1953 in Nuremberg, West Germany, where her parents were civilian employees of the U.S. Army, Dr. Bernhardt grew up in Iron River, Michigan, where several members of her family worked in the iron mines. She received her bachelor's degree from the University of Michigan, her master's from Wayne State University, and one of the first doctorates in public history from New York University in 1988.

Intensely proud of her own working-class roots, Dr. Bernhardt devoted her career to "documenting the undocumented" (the unsung men and women who built New York), as she characterized her work. She persuaded people not in the habit of generating personal papers to part instead with leaflets, picket signs, lapel buttons, and photographs relating to labor history. As a colleague at NYU put it, paraphrasing Leon Trotsky, "the dustbin of history is lighter because of her." In 1995 Dr. Bernhardt received the John Commerford Award, the highest honor of the New York (continued on page 4)

## NHPRC Application Deadlines

THE COMMISSION'S MEETINGS FOLLOW THE FISCAL YEAR OF OCTOBER 1 TO SEPTEMBER 30. CONSEQUENTLY, THE FIRST MEETING OF THE FISCAL YEAR IS IN NOVEMBER AND THE SECOND IS IN MAY.

### June 1 (for the November meeting)

Proposals addressing the following top priorities:

- The NHPRC will provide the American public with wide-spread access to the papers of the founders of our democratic republic and its institutions by ensuring the timely completion of eight projects now in progress to publish the papers of George Washington, John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, and papers that document the Ratification of the Constitution, the First Federal Congress, and the early Supreme Court
- The NHPRC will promote broad public participation in historical documentation by collaborating with State Historical Records Advisory Boards to plan and carry out jointly funded programs to strengthen the nation's archival infrastructure and expand the range of records that are protected and accessible
- The NHPRC will enable the nation's archivists, records managers, and documentary editors to overcome the obstacles and take advantage of the opportunities posed by electronic technologies by continuing to provide leadership in funding research and development on appraising, preserving, disseminating, and providing access to important documentary sources in electronic form

### OCTOBER 1 (for the May meeting)

Proposals not addressing the above priorities, but focusing on an activity authorized in the NHPRC statute as follows:

- collecting, describing, preserving, compiling, and publishing (including microfilming and other forms of reproduction) of documentary sources significant to the history of the United States
- conducting institutes, training and educational courses, and fellowships related to the activities of the Commission
- disseminating information about documentary sources through guides, directories, and other technical publications
- or, more specifically, documentary editing and publishing; archival preservation and processing of records for access; developing or updating descriptive systems; creation and development of archival and records management programs; development of standards, tools, and techniques to advance the work of archivists, records managers, and documentary editors; and promotion of the use of records by teachers, students, and the public

APPLICATION GUIDELINES AND FORMS MAY BE REQUESTED FROM NHPRC, NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION, 700 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE NW, ROOM 111, WASHINGTON, DC 20408-0001, 202-501-5610 (VOICE), 202-501-5601 (FAX), [nhprc@nara.gov](mailto:nhprc@nara.gov) (E-MAIL), OR BY ACCESSING OUR WEB SITE AT [www.nara.gov/nara/nhprc/](http://www.nara.gov/nara/nhprc/)

DEBRA E. BERNHARDT (continued from page 3)

Labor History Association, and this year The New York City Central Labor Council presented her its Distinguished Service Award.

In addition, largely due to her efforts, Union Square Park was declared a national historic landmark by the National Park Service in September 1998. The Square is considered "the cradle of American labor history." It is the site of what was later recognized as the first Labor Day parade, held in 1882. 

## RECENT RECORDS PRODUCTS DOCUMENTARY EDITIONS

### Records Products

The following products from records projects funded by the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC) have been received since the November 2000 meeting.

Registers for the following three collections were created by the staff of the Rare Books and Manuscripts Library of the University of Pennsylvania under grant no. 98-067:

Wanda Gag (1893-1946) Papers, 1892-1968  
Margaret Naumburg (b. 1890) Papers, 1912-1974  
Pennell Family Papers, ca. 1882-1951

The following finding aid was created by the staff of The Dayton Art Institute under Grant No. 99-048:

Box and Folder Listing:  
Exhibitions  
Curatorial Department  
*Frank M. Payson v. The Dayton Art Institution*  
Renovation 1995-1997  
Development  
Renaissance Capital Campaign  
Education Department  
Experiencenter  
Dayton Art Institute Library  
Staff  
Miscellaneous Publications

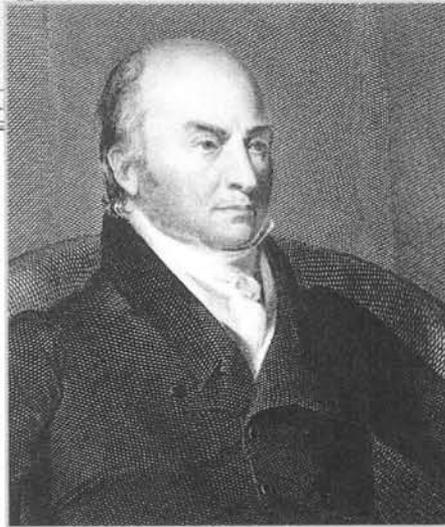
Finding aids to the following collections were prepared by the staff of the Special Collection and Archives Department of Southwest Missouri State University under grant no. 98-043:

Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers (BLE), Ozarks Branch, 1871-1940  
Essie DeCamp Collection, 1916-1960  
Greater Kansas City, Missouri Laborer's District Council, 1966-1978  
Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees and Bartenders International Union (H.E.R.E.), Local 336, 1951-1960s  
International Alliance of Theatrical and Stagehand Employees and Moving Picture Machine Operators (I.A.T.S.E.), Local 447, 1916-1989  
United Garment Workers of America (U.G.W.), Local 216, 1935-1983  
International Union of Bricklayers and Allied Craftworkers, Local 10, 1950s-1970s  
Sheet Metal Workers International Association (S.M.W.I.A.), Local 208, 1974-1983  
Springfield (Missouri) Central Labor Council Papers, 1891-1979

(continued on page 9)

# OUR FIRST *Father and Son* PRESIDENTS

BY RICHARD ALAN RYERSON AND CELESTE WALKER



FAR LEFT: *John Adams. Engraving by Amos Doolittle, 1799. Courtesy of the Massachusetts Historical Society.* LEFT: *John Quincy Adams. Engraving by Asber Brown Durand, 1826. Courtesy of the Massachusetts Historical Society.*

FOR OVER A YEAR before the recent election of George W. Bush as the 43rd President of the United States, the prospect of a son following his father to the White House prompted many historically minded Americans to think back to the nation's first and only other such succession, that of John Adams (1797-1801) and John Quincy Adams (1825-1829). And it was only natural that several such persons would ask the staff of the Adams Papers editorial project at the Massachusetts Historical Society to clarify the relationship between the two Adamases and answer questions about their administrations.

Any attempt to compare the successions, however, reveals the gulf that divides the political culture of the early republic from that of contemporary America. To the modern observer, the first great difference between the two eras is the general lack of strong party organization and party identity in the earlier period. John Adams was elected in 1796, before America's first party system had firmly established itself; John Quincy Adams, in 1825, secured the Presidency just as that first party system was collapsing.

The latter was the narrow choice of a divided Congress that was attempting to resolve the will of an even more divided nation, but the same lack of broad support would have burdened any of his major competitors—William Crawford, Henry Clay, and Andrew Jackson—had they been chosen. Moreover, even in an era when few political leaders openly endorsed party activity or felt comfortable with party labels, both Adamases were exceptionally hostile to partisan politics in any form.

A second contrast between the two successions and their eras lies in the political

experience that qualified Presidential candidates. In the decades in which America has become the world's sole superpower, the Presidency, for whatever reasons, has been thoroughly dominated by men whose prior public service has been exclusively domestic and even local. Four of the last five occupants of the oval office served as state governors, never holding Federal office before becoming President. The only exception was George H.W. Bush, whose national and even international experience was substantial by modern standards.

In the early republic, however, long periods of national and even international service were the norm, and no early Presidents followed this path over so long a period and so wide a geographical area as the Adamases, father and son. John's claim to the ultimate preferment of his fellow citizens rested on a dominant role in the nation's first Congress (1774-77); diplomatic assignments in France, the Netherlands, and Great Britain (1778-88); and 8 years as Vice President (1789-97).

His son put even this record in perspective. John Quincy Adams served as America's envoy to Holland and then Prussia (1794-1801), as U. S. Senator from Massachusetts

(1803-08), as American minister to Russia (1809-14), as head of the U. S. delegation that concluded the Treaty of Ghent (1814), and minister to Great Britain (1815-17), before becoming perhaps the greatest secretary of state (1817-25) in the nation's history. Following his frustrating Presidency, Adams concluded his career with long and brilliant service in Congress (1831-48). Neither Adams ever held office in Massachusetts for more than 2 successive years.

Moreover, while George W. Bush's Presidency is in many respects an interrupted succession of his father's administration, this was not the case with the Adamases. Separating the two terms were 24 years dominated by Presidents who were at least cool to John Adams, and this full generation brought in an entirely new cast of characters and saw the rise and fall of America's first party system. John Quincy Adams learned to survive and eventually prosper in the new Republican-Democratic oligarchy by cultivating the one crucial area in which he had no equal, diplomacy. By the time he became chief executive, however, the old party was in shambles. A new political culture, more oriented to domestic credentials and democratic values, but also highly partisan, would soon undercut his Presidency.

Despite these great differences of context, however, the two Adamases were probably at least as similar as the two Bushes. Both men were thoroughly professional public servants, without being politicians in either a modern or a mid-19th-century way. Both were thoroughly independent, too independent to thrive in executive office, even in the early republic. And both men had tremendous ambitions, *(continued on page 15)*



# THOMAS JEFFERSON AND JOHN FREEMAN

BY ANDREW MCMICHAEL

and ironic name for a slave, the rental arrangement was not unusual, either for Jefferson or for thousands of other slaves and their masters in the early republic. However a simple rental note does not tell much about either the slave, or, more importantly for scholars of Jefferson and slavery, the relationship of the slave to Jefferson's White House. Luckily, Freeman did not completely disappear in the chain of documents. The story told by the records details the somewhat unusual circumstances of the slave's "employment" in the Jefferson White House, and the search for records themselves shows the unusual ways in which documents can be uncovered in the National Archives.

The trail that leads to the Freeman-Jefferson White House connection begins with Jefferson's memorandum books. From the vegetables planted, to groceries and whiskey, to loans, to the purchase of boot hooks, to the 5-dollar bill Jefferson lost in 1812, this daily record of what, in many ways, is the minutiae of his life nonetheless gives historians some of the most personal glimpses into the larger issues of how Jefferson ran his plantation, his White House, and his life.<sup>2</sup>

Because of Jefferson's meticulous accounting, we know more about Freeman's activities during the rental period than during the later years when Jefferson owned him. From 1801 through 1804, Jefferson rented Freeman on a month-by-month basis. The slave received anywhere from 4 to 10 dollars, as well as additional money to cover travel and household expenses. Unfortunately we have no record of what portion of the money, if any, Freeman was able to keep, and what went to the master, Baker. It would not have been unusual for the slave to receive some portion of the rental money, but he also might not have received any. Jefferson did give the slave traveling expenses when Freeman accompanied others on trips to and from Monticello, and Freeman returned the leftover funds to Jefferson.<sup>3</sup> As with many of the details of slavery in Jefferson's time period, what we know of Freeman we know from the records left behind by slaveowners.

Apparently literate, Freeman signed his name to a document in 1804 stating that he had received 8 dollars for his wages for the month of June.<sup>4</sup> That same document also conveyed the offer from Jefferson's friend and longtime correspondent Baker that should Jefferson want "to purchase [Freeman] . . . He must be free at the end of Eleven years."<sup>5</sup> Although Jefferson took the deal, neither Jefferson's letters, nor his memorandum books, nor his personal papers contained any record of the actual purchase.

While rented and owned by the President, Freeman worked in the White House dining room, though the records also list him as a more general "footman."<sup>6</sup> At the same time, he accompanied the President on trips to Monticello, showing that the slave may have been among Jefferson's more favorite and trusted servants in a White House staff that included 10-12 servants and a steward.<sup>7</sup> A memorandum entry showing that on one trip to Monticello Jefferson borrowed the cost of a horseshoe from Freeman, repaying his slave some time later, highlights the close relationship between the two men.<sup>8</sup>

A short entry in the memorandum books, as well as letters in the Madison and Jefferson Papers, shows that on April 19, 1809, the newly inaugurated President James Madison purchased Freeman's "remaining term of . . . service."<sup>9</sup> Several unresolved questions remain for Jefferson scholars. When did the transfer of ownership to Jefferson take place? How was it accomplished? What were the exact terms of the transfer? The answers emerged during the course of a routine search of the National Archives for Presidential material. Filed away in Record Group 351, Records of the Government of the District of Columbia, is an unusual bill of sale recorded March 8, 1809.

Broken into several sections, the document tells us that William Baker formally sold a slave, John, to Jefferson for \$400 on the condition that John be freed at the end of 11 years. The transaction also contained

IN SEPTEMBER 2000, the Thomas Jefferson Papers project at Princeton University began, for the first time ever, a concerted effort to search, catalog, and make copies of all the Jefferson materials in the National Archives from his two terms as President. The result of this search has been the discovery, in sometimes out-of-the-way places, of materials that shed light on Jefferson's management of his administration, his interaction with diplomats and foreign dignitaries, and his handling of domestic issues. However, researchers are also discovering materials that help "fill the holes" in his personal life. Among the most interesting of these is a document relating to a slave named John Freeman.

On June 1, 1801, Thomas Jefferson recorded in his memorandum book the £10 he had paid for the services of John Freeman, a slave the new President rented from Dr. William Baker on a monthly basis.<sup>1</sup> While Freeman might have been an uncommon

*Thomas Jefferson. Engraving after a painting by Rembrandt Peale. Photograph courtesy of the Library of Congress.*

standard language to prevent John from being reenslaved after his term of service. Further, we know from the language of the document that John was a slave and not a servant, because Baker sold Jefferson "the Negro John" rather than John's labor, and then noted that John would "belong to, and be the property of" Jefferson. In October, Jefferson signed the bill of sale.<sup>10</sup>

Yet a small mystery remains. Why was the transaction recorded 5 years after it took place? How did the records end up in the archives of the Government of the District of Columbia? And why did Jefferson sell a man who was obviously a trusted house slave? Several possibilities exist. Jefferson's original copies of the papers may have been lost, and the need to reaffirm Freeman's eventual emancipation, despite the subsequent sale to Madison, could have required that Jefferson and Baker write out another contract.

If this was the case, then all parties displayed a remarkable prescience. On October 22, 1827, a year after Jefferson's death, Freeman appeared before a county clerk in the

District of Columbia to prove his freedom. Shown a copy of the earlier bill of sale that Freeman had apparently retained through the years, the clerk attested to the physical description of the former slave and that the man standing in front of him, now approximately 46 years old, was the same man who had served as Jefferson's dining room servant, traveling companion, and sometime moneylender.<sup>11</sup>

The discovery of this document will probably not lead to any serious revision of our understanding of either Thomas Jefferson or his Presidency. However, this comprehensive search of the National Archives holdings will certainly unearth a treasure trove of material that will contribute to a more textured understanding not only of Thomas Jefferson and the world close to him, but also of the larger world of the early republic. ❖

ANDREW McMICALHAE IS AN ASSISTANT EDITOR OF *THE PAPERS OF THOMAS JEFFERSON*.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> James A. Bear, Jr. and Lucia C. Stanton, eds. *Jefferson's Memorandum Books: Accounts With Legal Records and Miscellany, 1767-1826*, Vol. II, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), *Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, Second Series, 1043.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 1153.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 1090.

<sup>4</sup> William Baker to John Barnes, June 28, 1804. Massachusetts Historical Society.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> *Memorandum Books*, 1035, n. 69.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 1043.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 1074.

<sup>9</sup> "Enclosure No. 2" TJ to JM, April 19, 1809. Robert A. Rutland, et al., eds. *The Papers of James Madison. Presidential Series*, Vol. I. (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1984), 124; *Memorandum Books*, 1245.

<sup>10</sup> William Baker to Thomas Jefferson, March 8, 1809. Deed Books, 1792-1869. Records of the Government of the District of Columbia, Record Group 351, National Archives Building, Washington, DC.

<sup>11</sup> Certificate of Freedom, William Brent, Clerk, October 22, 1827. DLC Negro Papers.

## GEORGE WASHINGTON (continued from page 1)

as many of the applicants continued to seek appointments or promotions in later years, the editors usually print in full only the first letter from each applicant and cite the other letters, both from the applicant and in support of his candidacy, in the notes to the initial letter. When Washington responded to these requests at all, his replies were generally pro forma reiterations of his government's policy of non-commitment until the appointment to a post was made. In such cases, his responses are included in the notes to the original application.

In addition, during the early years of the new government, Washington's administration sent out a large number of circular letters, either under the President's signature or that of one of his Cabinet secretaries. These circular letters often transmitted copies of laws passed by Congress to the governors of the various states or commissions and announcements of public appointments to individuals after their nominations had been approved by the Senate. In both instances, the circulars usually asked their recipients to acknowledge the receipt of these documents. The circulars and their resulting acknowledgments, which were most often addressed to Washington but sometimes to other members of his government, have been omitted unless they contain material of other interest or significance. The same rule applies to letters of credence announcing the appointment of diplomatic officials and other routine correspondence between Washington and foreign heads of state. The often lengthy reports on public issues presented to the President by members of his Cabinet that have already been published in the modern editions of the writings of Alexander Hamilton and Thomas Jefferson are sometimes omitted from our printed volumes as well. The highly detailed weekly farm reports of Washington's manager at Mount Vernon, which were printed in full in the first four volumes of the Presidential series, will henceforth

only appear in the CD-ROM edition. Finally, invoices, receipts, deeds, invitations to dinner, and court and other like documents are routinely omitted from the printed volumes. They will be included, along with the other above-mentioned omitted documents, in the project's CD-ROM edition.

When it comes to selecting the copy of the document that is to be printed in the letterpress edition, the editors attempt to get as close as possible to the document that was actually sent. In consequence, receiver's copies are preferred to receiver's letter-book copies, receiver's letter-book copies to drafts, drafts to sender's letter-book copies, and sender's letter-book copies to other contemporary copies. There is one major exception. Because Washington read no language other than English, incoming letters written to him in a foreign language generally were translated for his information. Where this contemporary translation has survived, it is used as the text of the document in the letterpress edition. The original foreign-language version of the letter will be published in the project's CD-ROM edition of Washington's writings. If no contemporary translation of the document was made or has survived, the document in its original language is used as the text in the letterpress edition.

As indicated above, there are several categories of documents that will be printed in the letterpress edition, in whole or in part, that were neither letters written by or to President Washington. Enclosed letters, petitions, and other documents are often printed in full because it is important to show the information that helped to shape Washington's opinions about the various important public issues of his day. Memoranda of conversations with the President, kept either by Washington or others, such as Thomas Jefferson, are printed for the insights they can give into Washington's views and the process by which he reached and (continued on page 17)

# One small note EDITING THE PRESIDENTIAL PAPERS OF JAMES MADISON

BY J.C.A. STAGG

On September 1, 1812, President James Madison forwarded to Secretary of State James Monroe a letter he had received from Gilbert Taylor, a distant cousin residing in Tennessee. Madison was passing on the letter, he told Monroe, "as a memento to the letter you are to write to the Govr. of Tennessee, on the subject of the illegal enterprize on foot in that State." Madison's note to Monroe contained little else in the way of information beyond the fact that he and Dolley Payne Madison were "well on [their] way" to Montpelier, where they hoped to enjoy a respite from the ordeal of politics in Washington.

On the face of it, this document required no more than routine treatment as we prepared it for inclusion in the fifth volume of *The Papers of James Madison: Presidential Series*. The letter would be transcribed, a search would be made for the enclosure, and a brief note appended to deal with the letter to the governor of Tennessee about "the illegal enterprize." Little did the editors know what research efforts lay before them. Exhaustive searches of the files of the Madison Papers, the papers of James Monroe, and all the potentially relevant files of State Department correspondence in the National Archives failed to turn up the letter from Gilbert Taylor. We concluded that Monroe probably returned the letter to Madison, who then may have mislaid or destroyed it at some later date.

Monroe's letter to the governor of Tennessee was easier. The Secretary of State sent that communication on September 3, 1812. Its contents revealed that "the illegal enterprise on foot" in Tennessee was the recruitment of volunteers for a filibuster into Spanish Texas, an undertaking subsequently known to historians as the celebrated and colorful Gutiérrez-Magee raid. Monroe pointed out that since the United States was at peace with Spain, the recruiting of volunteers was illegal, and he conveyed the President's wish that the governor "give it all discountenance in [his] power," including, if necessary, prosecutions at law. A month later, the governor responded that his investigations had failed to turn up any evidence of illegal activities in Tennessee in relation to Texas.

So far so good. As a final step, the editors decided to direct future readers of *The Papers of James Madison* to a secondary source for additional information about the filibuster into Texas. At that point, problems emerged. Almost everything that had been written over the past 75 years on the subject of American filibusters into the Spanish borderlands concluded that these illegal expeditions, the Gutiérrez-Magee raid included, were sanctioned or condoned by the United States Government as a way of expanding the borders of the republic during the collapse of the Spanish-American empire. The annotation for Madison's September 1 note thus became a tricky matter. Should the editors simply ignore the apparent discrepancy

between Monroe's directive to the governor of Tennessee and the conclusions of the scholarly community as expressed in the secondary literature? Or should they attempt to explain it? And if so, how?

Further reading in the secondary literature revealed that many scholars believed that American administrations in the early 19th century routinely denied that they either had knowledge of, or



*James Madison. Portrait by Gilbert Stuart, 1828. Photograph courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration.*

were involved in, filibustering. Such denials were necessary, it was argued, to acquit the United States of charges that it was in violation of its obligations to Spain as a neutral nation. Madison, it would seem, was no exception here. Yet the editors remained troubled. Was it really true that James Madison, the “Father of the Constitution,” was so cynical about his obligations as chief executive? The editors recalled that Madison had been a member of the Third Congress, which had passed the 1794 Neutrality Act outlawing such activities as filibustering, and that the future President had voted for the law in question. Surely Madison had not forgotten that matter? But if the fourth President had violated the 1794 legislation by sanctioning a filibuster into Texas in 1812, might this mean that Madison, by knowingly subverting the law, had committed a potentially impeachable offense? The thought seemed too dreadful to contemplate.

Perhaps unwisely, the editors sought further enlightenment. A closer examination of the relevant secondary literature disclosed that none of the authors in question could actually produce hard documentary evidence for the claim that the Madison administration had either assisted or condoned the filibuster into Texas. The editors also knew that if there were to be any such evidence, it would have to center on the activities of William Shaler of Connecticut. Shaler was a merchant whom Madison had dispatched to Cuba and Mexico in the summer of 1810 on a mission to obtain information about these two Spanish colonies, which seemed to be on the point of breaking away from Madrid. The agent had first gone to Havana, from which he was expelled in November 1811, and then had traveled to Natchitoches, Louisiana. He subsequently attempted to enter Mexico in the spring of 1813, after the filibuster had captured the Texas town of San Antonio de Béxar.

The problem that emerged was whether the editors could discover anything more about the elusive William Shaler. Unfortunately, the National Archives proved to be less useful here than the editors might have wished. The General Records of the Department of State (Record Group 59) certainly contained a great many letters sent by Shaler from Havana and Natchitoches between 1810 and 1813. These documents provided the administration with a considerable body of information about the filibuster, and at times it was hard for the editors not to wonder whether some of the circumstances narrated by Shaler did not, indeed, implicate the United States in what were unquestionably some very dubious activities on the Louisiana-Texas border. Even so, there was almost nothing in the collections of the National Archives that cast much light on either what the Madison administration had wanted of its agent to Mexico or on how Shaler himself understood his own role in relation to the activities he described.

The editors pressed on. Fortunately, they had some lucky breaks, and were able to uncover, with due diligence and the help of some friends, three collections of William Shaler manuscripts. One of them was hitherto unknown and the other two, though long available, were inexplicably neglected by scholars. These collections contained not only the instructions and letters that the Madison administration had sent to Shaler from 1810 onwards, but also the agent’s own letterbooks and personal diaries. The editors at last had uncovered enough material to answer the questions that had emerged while they were preparing an explanatory footnote to Madison’s September 1, 1812, letter to Monroe. This new material revealed that the Madison administration had never authorized Shaler to engage in, or to condone, a filibuster into Texas. It also

disclosed that Shaler himself disapproved of the filibuster. In other words, almost everything that historians had written about the Madison administration and the Gutiérrez-Magee raid over the past three-quarters of a century turned out to be dead wrong.

That, of course, posed further problems for the editors. How were they to deal with this new information within the limits of the editorial policy of *The Papers of James Madison*? The situation might justify an editorial note that laid out some of the new information about Madison’s policy toward Mexico and that would help explain why the President wished the governor of Tennessee to prevent recruiting for a filibuster on American soil. But the note that emerged was so long that it promised to incur the displeasure of reviewers, who would condemn it for its “Boyidian” excesses. The note was therefore brutally shortened, and the editor began to think about how information excluded from the note might be turned into a scholarly article.

But even an article is subject to constraints of space, with the result that not even that format proved adequate to do justice to the potential of the material turned up by the editors. Clearly, a book will have to be written. So many documents, so little time. ❖

J.C.A. STAGG IS THE EDITOR OF *THE PAPERS OF JAMES MADISON*.

RECENT RECORDS PRODUCTS & DOCUMENTARY EDITIONS  
(continued from page 4)

United Rubber, Cork, Linoleum, and Plastic Workers (URW), Local 662, 1963–1983  
United Transportation Workers Union District Collection, 1921–1985

**Publications Volumes**

The following products from NHPRC-supported documentary editing projects have been received in the Commission office since September 2000:

*The Papers of John C. Calhoun*. Vol. 25 [December 6, 1847–January 31, 1848]. University of South Carolina Press, 1999.

*The Documentary History of the Ratification of the Constitution*. Vol. 6, *Ratification of the Constitution by the States: Massachusetts* (3). State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 2000.

*The Papers of Jefferson Davis*. Vol. 10 [October 1863–August 1864]. Louisiana State University Press, 1999.

The Electronic Edition of the *Thomas A. Edison Papers*. Parts I–III [1850–1898]. Digital facsimiles from the microfilm edition. Mounted on the Internet [2000+].

*The Samuel Gompers Papers*. Vol. 8, *Progress and Reaction in the Age of Reform, 1909–13*. University of Illinois Press, 2001.

*The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*. Vol. 28 [January 1, 1794–February 29, 1796]. Princeton University Press, 2000.

*The Papers of Andrew Johnson*. Vol. 16 [May 1869–July 1875]. University of Tennessee Press, 2000.

*The Papers of James Madison, Secretary of State Series*. Vol. 5 [May 16–October 31 1803]. University Press of Virginia, 2000.

The Model Editions Partnership published five new editions (Thursday, November 16, 2000). They include materials from *The Papers of Frederick Douglass*, *The Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower*, *The Papers of Marcus Garvey* and the UNIA, *The Papers of Joseph Henry*, and *The Papers of George Catlett Marshall*. <http://adh.sc.edu>

*The Journals of don Diego de Vargas*. Vol. 5, *That Disturbances Cease* [1697–1700]. University of New Mexico Press, 2000.

Commission and their resubmission encouraged.

4. That the Commission direct the Commission staff, working with a committee of Commission members and others as appropriate, to develop a set of criteria to be used for the evaluation of the second-tier documentary editions for review and approval at the next meeting of the Commission.

*Resolved*, that the NHPRC encourages the staff to work with the leaders of The First Archivists Circle (i.e., a group of Native American archivists and record keepers which the NHPRC has worked to help establish) and other institutions in seeking additional funding sources in organizing a meeting in 2002 to assess the current status of Native American archives and recordkeeping, to help The First Archivists Circle to foster increased networking and training opportunities, and to explore collaborative work in preserving vital records; and considering the fact that such an organization would help to fill a vacuum previously encountered in NHPRC efforts to work to develop a national archival infrastructure, a proposal would be welcomed from, or on behalf of, The First Archivists Circle for consideration as part of the first tier project review at the November meeting.

*Resolved*, that, with reference to the Commission's action at its May 2000 meeting requiring actions to address the apparent conflict between publishing contract language for the Lincoln Legal Papers and NHPRC and OMB guidance, the Commission reasserts its position that NHPRC grants are governed by OMB regulations which reserve to the granting agency the "royalty free, nonexclusive, and irrevocable right to reproduce, publish or otherwise use the work for Federal purposes and to authorize others to do so." The NHPRC welcomes the proposal of the Lincoln Legals project for consideration at this meeting.

*Resolved*, that the Commission recognizes the need to assess the current state of electronic records research and practice and encourages the preparation of a proposal for the June 1 deadline.

*Be it resolved*, that the Commission take this opportunity to give due recognition and appreciation to the NHPRC Staff and Executive Director for their extraordinary and highly professional efforts in outreach to constituent individuals and groups, for their quality products, and for their steadfast support. The substantial growth in both the quantity and quality of the proposals submitted to the NHPRC, coupled with the Commission's ability to meet the challenge of balancing increasing project demands against constrained resources, is testimony to their success.

#### **Meeting Participants**

NHPRC Chairman John W. Carlin welcomed to the Commission Barbara J. Fields, representing the Organization of American Historians, and Fynnette Eaton, representing the Society of American Archivists. Other Commission members present at the May meeting included: Representative Roy D. Blunt (R-MO), representing the U.S. House of Representatives; Nicholas C. Burckel, Presidential appointee; Charles T. Cullen, representing the Association for Documentary Editing; Mary Maples Dunn, representing the American Historical Association; Brent Glass, representing the American Association for State and Local History; Alfred Goldberg, representing the Department of Defense; Margaret P. Grafeld, representing the Department of State; Marvin F. "Bud" Moss, Presidential appointee; Justice David H. Souter, representing the United States Supreme Court; and Roy C. Turnbaugh, representing the National Association of Government

Archives and Records Administrators. Absent was Winston Tabb, who represents the Librarian of Congress. The position of U.S. Senate representative on the Commission is currently vacant.

#### **Funded Documentary Editing Projects**

Duke University, Durham, NC: A grant of up to \$60,170 for The Jane Addams Papers.

Howard University, Washington, DC: A grant of up to \$61,255 for its project entitled African-American Historical Linkages with South Africa, ca. 1890-1965.

University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC: A grant of up to \$49,149 for The Papers of John C. Calhoun.

The College of William and Mary, Williamsburg, VA: A grant of \$15,000 for The Papers of Charles Carroll of Carrollton.

Richard and Shirley Flint, Villanueva, NM: A conditional grant of up to \$22,974 for a dual-language edition of documents relating to the Coronado Expedition.

William Marsh Rice University, Houston, TX: A grant of up to \$80,405 for The Papers of Jefferson Davis.

Indiana University-Purdue University at Indianapolis, Indianapolis, IN: A grant of up to \$18,141 for The Papers of Frederick Douglass.

Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, New Brunswick, NJ: A grant of up to \$51,490 for The Papers of Thomas Edison.

The Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, MD: A conditional grant of up to \$12,557 for The Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower.

University of Maryland, College Park, MD: A grant of up to \$94,917 for Freedom: A Documentary History of Emancipation, 1861-1867.

Regents of the University of California, Los Angeles, CA: A grant of up to \$58,272 for The Marcus Garvey and the Universal Negro Improvement Association Papers.

Regents of the University of California, Berkeley, CA: A grant of \$100,000 for The Emma Goldman Papers.

University of Maryland, College Park, MD: A grant of up to \$80,000 for The Samuel Gompers Papers.

Ulysses S. Grant Association, Carbondale, IL: A conditional grant of up to \$77,432 for The Papers of Ulysses S. Grant.

Rhode Island Historical Society, Providence, RI: A grant of up to \$84,190 for The Papers of General Nathanael Greene.

University of Arizona, Arizona State Museum, Tucson, AZ: A grant of up to \$50,383 for Documentary Relations of the Southwest.

University of Tennessee, Knoxville, TN: A grant of up to \$75,605 for The Papers of Andrew Jackson.

Stanford University, Stanford, CA: A grant of up to \$64,146 for The Papers of Martin Luther King, Jr.

University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC: A grant of \$84,511 for The Papers of Henry Laurens.

Illinois Historic Preservation Agency, Springfield, IL: A conditional grant of up to \$72,719 for The Lincoln Legal Papers: A Documentary History of the Law Practice of Abraham Lincoln, 1836-1861.

George C. Marshall Foundation, Lexington, VA: A grant of \$57,000 for The Papers of George Catlett Marshall.

Institute of Early American History and Culture, Williamsburg, VA: A grant of up to \$22,909 for The Papers of John Marshall.

State University of New York, College at Old Westbury, Nassau, NY: A conditional grant of up to \$55,000 for a documentary edition of the papers of Clarence Mitchell, Jr.

The American University, Washington, DC: A grant of up to \$45,819 for The Papers of Frederick Law Olmsted.

University of Tennessee, Knoxville, TN: A grant of up to \$47,834 for The Correspondence of James K. Polk.

University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA: A grant of up to \$100,000 for its Presidential Recordings Project.

University of North Carolina at Greensboro, Greensboro, NC: A

grant of up to \$25,464 for Race, Slavery and Free Blacks: Petitions to Southern Legislatures and County Courts, 1776-1867.

The George Washington University, Washington, DC: A grant of up to \$150,000 for its Eleanor Roosevelt and Human Rights project.

New York University, New York, NY: A grant of up to \$66,817 for The Selected Papers of Margaret Sanger.

Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey, New Brunswick, NJ: A grant of \$55,000 for The Papers of Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony.

Kent State University, Kent, OH: A grant of \$21,993 for The Robert A. Taft Papers.

Morehouse College, Atlanta, GA: A grant of up to \$62,937 for The Howard Thurman Papers.

East Stroudsburg University, East Stroudsburg, PA: A grant of \$65,000 for The Papers of the War Department, 1784-1800.

#### ***Funded Documentary Editing Subventions***

Yale University Press, New Haven, CT: A subvention grant of \$10,000 for The Frederick Douglass Papers: Autobiographical Writings Series, Vol. 2: My Bondage and My Freedom.

University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, NC: A subvention grant of \$10,000 for The Papers of General Nathanael Greene, Vol. 12 [October 1782-May 1783].

University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, NC: A subvention grant of \$1,993 for The Papers of John Marshall, Vol. 8 [March 1814-December 1819] (reprint).

University Press of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA: A subvention grant of \$10,000 for The Papers of George Washington, Revolutionary War Series, Vol. 12.

#### ***Endorsed Documentary Editions***

Brooklyn College, City University of New York, New York, NY: A comprehensive electronic edition and selective book edition of The Journal of Alexander Coventry, M.D.

University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA: The Selected Letters of Dolley Payne Madison.

John J. McDonough, Potomac, MD, and John A. Wolter, Tucson, AZ: The Journal of William Speiden, Jr., 1852-1855.

#### ***Funded Records Preservation and Access Projects***

Association of Moving Image Archivists, Beverly Hills, CA: A 2-year grant of \$139,775, with \$66,500 available in the first year, for its Preserving Local Television Project to develop a new strategy for preserving and providing access to America's local television heritage.

Bessemer Historical Society, Pueblo, CO: A 1-year grant of \$35,700 for its Colorado Fuel and Iron Archives Project, to copy 1,000 reels of 16mm microfilm of Colorado Fuel and Iron Company records onto archival-quality 35mm microfilm, contingent upon the availability of additional FY 2001 funds.

Connecticut State Library, Hartford, CT: A conditional one-year grant of \$68,197 for its Judicial Records Preservation and Access Project to process the records of four county courts and formulate a plan for preserving and providing access to all of the state's early county court records.

Japanese American Service Committee, Chicago, IL: A 1-year grant of \$22,018 for its Legacy Center Project to develop an archives and records management program, inventory records, arrange and describe 60 cubic feet of institutional records and five manuscript collections, conduct archival research regionally and nationally to promote awareness and use of these resources, and identify new manuscript collections for acquisition.

American Textile History Museum, Lowell, MA: A conditional 30-month

grant of \$92,025, with \$43,576 available in the first year, for its Manuscript Collections Access Project to support the cataloging and electronic dissemination of information about the museum's 740 manuscript collections and the processing of 25 of these collections that remain unarranged and undescribed.

Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston, MA: A 3-year grant of \$142,239, with \$55,000 available in the first year, for its Archival Research Fellowships Program, to be instituted on behalf of itself, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Northeastern University, Radcliffe Institute at Harvard University, and the WGBH Educational Foundation.

Nebraska State Historical Society, Lincoln, NE: A 16-month grant of \$43,407 for its Collections Guide and Survey Project to conduct a survey of some 25 percent of the Society's manuscript and audiovisual collections and produce collection-level guides, contingent upon the availability of additional FY 2001 funds.

Trustees of Dartmouth College, Hanover, NH: A conditional 21-month grant of \$117,573, with \$66,000 available in the first year, for its New Hampshire Local Records Project to conduct training in preservation techniques, access issues, collection development, and community documentation for municipal clerks, public librarians, historical society members, and court clerks throughout the state.

Hunter College of the City University of New York, New York, NY: An 18-month grant of \$72,621, with \$50,046 available in the first year, for Puerto Ricans in New York: A Records Processing Project, to arrange and describe 15 collections documenting the history and culture of Puerto Ricans in New York.

New York University, New York, NY: A conditional 1-year grant of \$64,375 for Its Ordinary People, Extraordinary Lives Labor Records Project (Phase III) to continue its efforts to document the history of labor in New York.

#### ***Congressionally Directed Grants***

The Center for Jewish History, New York, NY: Release of second-year funding of up to \$1,097,550 for its Integrated Collection Management and Access System Project.

Heritage Harbor Museum, Providence, RI: A 1-year grant of \$78,996 for its "Native Journeys" Documentation Project to tell the story of Native Americans in southeastern New England.

#### ***Records Projects Endorsed, with Resubmission Encouraged***

San Francisco State University, San Francisco, CA: Sam Kagel Collection Processing Project

Louis Wolfson II Media History Center, Miami, FL: South Florida Television Preservation and Access Project

New England Conservatory of Music, Boston, MA: Archival Development Project

City of Lewiston, ME: Bates Manufacturing Company Records Processing Project

National History Day, College Park, MD: Summer Teacher Institute

Southwest Missouri State University, Springfield, MO: Archives and Records Survey Project

The New-York Historical Society, New York, NY: Cass Gilbert Archival Project

Pennsylvania Hospital, Philadelphia, PA: Photograph Processing Project

South Carolina Historical Society, Charleston, SC: Photographs of the Palmetto State Project

Diocese of Amarillo, Amarillo, TX: Diocese Records Preservation Project

Virginia Museum of Transportation, Roanoke, VA: Historic Photograph Preservation and Access Project. ❖

# THE MISFORTUNES *of the*

BY HAROLD MOSER

*In April 1909*, some 2 years after he bought a collection of Andrew Jackson papers from a woman in Washington, DC, Tennessee Congressman John Wesley Gaines turned over the several boxes of materials to descendants at the Hermitage. Gaines' purchase, including many document fragments, represented only a small portion of several wagonloads of papers that had left the Hermitage in the 1840s, which the family had tried for several decades to reclaim. In referring to the damaged condition of many of the returned documents, the *Nashville Tennessean* reported that "many [of the papers] were lost to the world."

Few realized the extent of the loss until the Papers of Andrew Jackson project completed its comprehensive search for documents in 1984. John Spencer Bassett's seven-volume edition of the correspondence of Jackson had been completed in 1935, shortly after Marquis James finished his two-volume biography of the seventh President. Neither Bassett nor James noted any major loss of papers, although James, in describing his research, noted the discovery of a mass of previously unknown papers, many of which were subsequently included in Bassett's sixth volume.

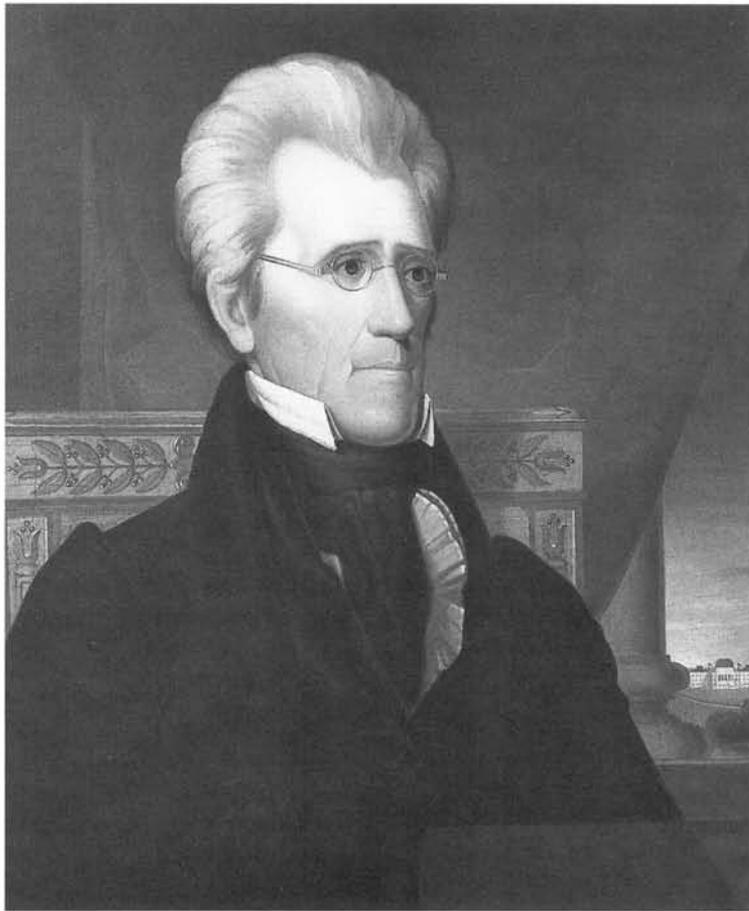
In 1943, the Library of Congress accessioned a collection of Jackson papers that included some 600 fragments. John McDonough, in his introduction to the Library of Congress index of the papers, briefly discussed these "deliberately

mutilated" items, concluding, however, that insufficient evidence had been found to explain their origin. In 1975, some 4 years after the current Jackson editing project started, Harriet Owsley, former editor, discussed this "enigma" of the fragments and pointed out that some of them matched.

The significance of the loss of Jackson's literary remains became clearer as the Jackson papers staff organized documents for its microfilm edition. When this collecting was completed in 1984, the staff found that, in addition to those fragments obtained by the Library of Congress in 1943, there were also roughly 600 to 800 additional fragments in a dozen or more repositories elsewhere around the country, again bearing incontrovertible evidence that they had been intentionally damaged.

As the staff began to work with the fragments, they discovered that many of the fragments from different repositories could be matched. Some of the fragments were merely routine documents, but others

were important documents from Jackson's long and controversial career, dealing with the War of 1812, nullification, and the bank war. Because they were crucial in understanding Jackson and his contribution to American institutions, the staff immediately set to work to reconstruct as many of the fragments as possible. At the same time, the editor began to investigate more extensively the history of the Jackson



*Andrew Jackson. Portrait by Ralph E.W. Earl. Photograph courtesy of The Hermitage.*

# ANDREW JACKSON ARCHIVES

archives to determine who might have been the culprit in the papers' destruction.

From 1796, when he helped draft a constitution for the new State of Tennessee, Jackson carefully preserved his papers and kept copies of most of his outgoing correspondence. He continued the practice through his military career, his congressional career, his service as governor of Florida and as Indian treaty commissioner, and as President, if for no other reason than to provide a defense for his sometimes controversial decisions and actions. He had a strong sense of history and of his role in the young republic, and he wanted the record preserved so that his contribution could be treated objectively.

During his lifetime, Jackson granted access to his papers only to John Reid, John Henry Eaton, and Amos Kendall, all contemporary biographers. Reid and Eaton had access at the Hermitage. Jackson forwarded documents to Kendall in Washington in the early 1840s, with instructions to turn the papers later over to Francis P. Blair, a friend and "kitchen cabinet" adviser. Before his death in 1869, Kendall apparently deposited the major portion of his Jackson documents in Blair's old *Globe* office on Pennsylvania Avenue, retaining only those documents addressed to himself.

Meanwhile, in accordance with Jackson's will, Andrew Jackson, Jr., forwarded the remaining archives at the Hermitage to Blair in Washington; and during the Civil War, the Blairs stored them at their Silver Spring, Maryland, residence. The Blairs, unaware or forgetful of the *Globe* deposit, claimed, rightly, that they never received Kendall's Jackson papers. When the Blairs donated their Jackson collection to the Library of Congress in 1903, the presumption was that the Kendall-Jackson collection burned in the Knox Warehouse fire in 1894, which consumed the Kendall papers.

That conclusion was wrong, however. The Kendall collection of Jackson papers had been found in the *Globe* office in the late 1870s by a Kentucky newspaper correspondent, William Goodson Terrell (1829–1900), who had commenced a history of Kentucky and had contacted the Kendall descendants about Amos Kendall's role in Kentucky politics in the 1820s. The Kendall family loaned Terrell the papers they had reserved from the Jackson archives (i.e., the letters addressed to Kendall) and told him about documents held also by the Blairs.

Knowing Blair's role with the *Washington Globe*, Terrell went to the old *Globe* office to search for additional documents. With permission, he searched the building, found trunks of papers in the attic, and took possession of them. He then contacted the Blair descendants, who brought their collection to Washington and loaned them to him briefly. When asked to return them, according to Terrell's account, he did so, including those from the *Globe* office as well. In February 1879, Terrell commenced publishing Kendall-Jackson letters, other Jackson letters and documents, and papers of many of Jackson's associates in the *Cincinnati Commercial*, and he continued to do so for some time.

Research at the Jackson project reveals that Terrell's declaration is untrue. Most of the Jackson fragments the project has examined—whether from the Library of Congress, the Chicago Historical Society, the Tennessee State Library and Archives, or elsewhere—have direct provenance through Terrell. Many of them bear his notations as well as Kendall's, and many that are now fragments Terrell published as complete documents. The evidence is conclusive that he never returned the Kendall collection he found in the *Globe* office, and that he pilfered documents from the Blair collection as well.

The collection that Congressman Gaines returned to the Jackson descendants in 1909 is Terrell's collection, which Gaines purchased from Terrell's landlady. Those documents, which were subsequently sold by the Jackson descendants, included most of the fragments that have since found their way into various repositories. All told, the number of surviving fragments suggests that from 3,000 to 5,000 documents were intentionally mutilated while Terrell had them. Insofar as possible, in light of the wanton destruction of many of the papers, the Jackson project's central effort remains focused on providing that clear documentary record that Jackson intended to leave. ❖

HAROLD MOSER IS THE EDITOR OF *THE PAPERS OF ANDREW JACKSON*.

# Abraham Lincoln

## ≡ LAWYER PRESIDENT ≡

BY JOHN A. LUPTON

**On February 11, 1861**, Abraham Lincoln left Springfield, Illinois, bound for Washington, DC, to become the nation's 16th President. In his farewell speech, Lincoln expressed his sadness at leaving Springfield, "[t]o this place, and the kindness of these people, I owe every thing." He also left behind a lucrative law practice. Before leaving for Washington, Lincoln met with his law partner, William H. Herndon, to tie up loose ends of the partnership. Lincoln wanted the partnership sign to hang undisturbed and "give our clients to understand that the election of a President makes no change in the firm of Lincoln and Herndon." During the 25 years that Lincoln practiced law in the courtrooms in Illinois, he honed skills that would help him in his Presidency. As President, Lincoln continued to think, act, speak, and write like an attorney.

Various biographies have covered the important aspects of Lincoln's Presidency in depth. Therefore, this article will simply summarize a few popular notions of Lincoln the President and reveal some ways in which his legal career prepared him for the office. A practicing lawyer from 1836 to 1860, Abraham Lincoln handled at least 5,100 cases. He was widely respected as an attorney, and his legal reputation carried beyond the borders of Illinois. The practice of law allowed him to think critically about the political events around him.

Abraham Lincoln's first priority as President was the restoration of the Union. Lincoln viewed the South's secession as a breach of the state's indivisible contract with the Union. His perspective and experience with handling contractual disputes in his law practice informed his reaction. Nearly 60 percent of his caseload as an attorney involved debtor-creditor relationships with broken contracts, such as failure to pay a promissory note. Lincoln represented creditors in the majority of these cases and often procured pecuniary damages for his clients. While a simple breach

of contract case over a \$5 promissory note may be different than the complexities of a disintegrating nation, Lincoln was able to view them similarly and fight the South with words and guns to repair this broken contract.

Abraham Lincoln was arguably the most eloquent speaker of all of the Presidents. His summaries of the Civil War in the Gettysburg Address and the Second Inaugural Address still resonate in our political consciousness. Lincoln honed his oratorical skills during his years of practicing law. Isaac Arnold, a Chicago attorney, reported that Lincoln could disentangle complicated cases and present the facts of a case in a simple, understandable manner. Leonard Swett, a fellow circuit-riding attorney, agreed with Arnold on Lincoln's skill in the courtroom, and added that Lincoln knew which points to concede and which to fight. He had an uncanny ability to focus on the most important point of the case and to state his argument so concisely that lay juries could easily understand complicated concepts.

Lincoln's Presidential cabinet was full of disparate personalities, some of whom believed that they should be running the country and not Lincoln. During the first few months of Lincoln's Presidency, Secretary of State William Henry Seward often attempted to direct the administration. Treasury Secretary Salmon P. Chase believed Lincoln was unfit to command the nation and often was a thorn in Lincoln's side. In addition to his cabinet, Lincoln also had to deal with office seekers and generals with bruised egos. His many years of dealing with dissatisfied people in the legal system helped prepare him for his administration. As a lawyer, Lincoln was a peacemaker, who recommended that disputants settle problems before going to court. He often advised clients to reach agreements and dismiss cases.



*Abraham Lincoln. Photograph courtesy of the Illinois State Historical Library.*

Nearly 40 percent of Lincoln's cases were either dismissed or settled judgments.

While President, Lincoln continued to think and write in legal terms. As commander in chief, he heard pardon requests from soldiers and their families. Executive clemency was a court of last resort for many people, and Lincoln served as its judge. He generally followed the advice of his judge advocate general and of Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton in deciding cases, but in a few examples, he used lawyerly language to direct specific actions. In 1861, the U. S. district attorney indicted Josiah Grindall for treason for attacking Union soldiers in Baltimore. By 1864, Grindall had taken the loyalty oath, but the case was still on the court docket. Grindall's attorney forwarded the records to Lincoln and asked for clemency. Lincoln recommended to the district attorney that he enter a "nolle prosequi" in the case, which, in effect, meant a dismissal of the case.

During his Presidency, Lincoln declared that his own sense of humor and his anecdotal stories kept him from losing his sanity during the darkest moments of the war. As a lawyer, Lincoln also used humor in the courtroom to make a point. Judge David Davis noted Lincoln's ever-present sense of humor. During a legal case in 1860 over disputed land, the plaintiff's attorney began questioning his own witness, who was a surveyor and the author of a plat map of the city of Chicago. Lincoln, the defendant's attorney and a former surveyor himself, blurted out without objecting, "It looks very much like it represents a fancy bed quilt." On the surface, this was simply a humorous remark. However, Lincoln's pointed humor discredited an opposing witness without a formal objection before the court. Lincoln continued to use humor to make important points in the White House, and visitors sometimes became annoyed with Lincoln's humorous stories while missing the point.

Abraham Lincoln served as President for slightly more than 4 years; he served clients in the legal system for nearly 25 years. Other than part-time service in the Illinois legislature and periodic political campaigns, the law was his career. Most of Lincoln's legal peers viewed him as an intelligent attorney who studied the facts and the law surrounding a case until he completely understood it. Lincoln tackled problems during the Civil War in the same manner. Abraham Lincoln's 25-year legal career prepared him to manage different personalities in his chain of command, to speak for the country during a turbulent time, and to handle the crisis that nearly split the country. ❖

JOHN A. LUPTON IS ASSISTANT DIRECTOR AND ASSISTANT EDITOR OF THE LINCOLN LEGAL PAPERS.

for themselves and for their country, ambitions that both realized in large measure during their careers, but perhaps never less comfortably than during their unhappy one-term Presidencies.

The Adamses, father and son, share another important bond. The characters, personalities, and careers of both men are thoroughly documented in America's greatest family archive, The Adams Papers collection at the Massachusetts Historical Society. It has been our privilege to edit and publish material from this rich legacy over the past four decades. For John and John Quincy Adams alone, these include to date 7 volumes of diaries (with 2 more forthcoming shortly); 6 volumes of family letters; 13 volumes of legal, political, and diplomatic letters (with another 2 in preparation); and 2 volumes of portraits. There is much more to come. Whatever may be the legacy of our recent father-son Presidents or of other recent occupants of the White House, the legacy of the Adams Presidents continues to thrive. ❖

RICHARD ALAN RYERSON IS THE FORMER EDITOR, AND CELESTE WALKER IS AN ASSOCIATE EDITOR, OF THE ADAMS PAPERS.

# PRESIDENT IKE

## *An Editor's View*

BY DAUN VAN EE

DWIGHT DAVID EISENHOWER may have been the last President of the United States to write letters as a primary method of communication. Born in 1890, he retained a 19th-century view of letter writing as a utilitarian art. The telephone, upon which American Presidents of the last third of the late century have relied, was, for him, a "fairly devilish" instrument. To be sure, the pace of modern life forced him to use the telephone for rapid contact, and he also knew that the ever-present possibility of leaks meant that it was safer to have face-to-face discussions whenever especially sensitive matters were involved. Whenever he wanted to communicate his thoughts to a small group, sample his advisors' opinions, or obtain a consensus on a particular matter, he called and skillfully led meetings. For precision and elegance of conveyed ideas, however, he preferred to send letters.

He was good at it. His letters, unlike the awkwardly spoken responses he gave at press conferences, were models of clear and concise expression. Political economist John Kenneth Galbraith, certainly no admirer of Eisenhower's domestic policies, once declared that his missives were "irresistible" in part because they were "firmly and unpretentiously literate." His letters, whether formal or informal, personal or official, all bore the mark of careful, focused craftsmanship. As an editor, I was grateful for this talent, which made it easy for me to work on Ike's papers for over 25 years. His letters were not only well written, but good-natured—a reflection of my subject's real-life good nature.

The last volumes of those letters (both private and official), together with Eisenhower's cables, memoranda, and occasional diary entries, are now being published by the Johns Hopkins University Press. This publication takes the form of a four-book set covering the



years 1957–61 and titled *The Presidency: Keeping the Peace*; it follows the four volumes covering Eisenhower's first administration, which appeared in 1996 as *The Presidency: The Middle Way*. The release of these volumes marks the end of the Eisenhower papers editorial project, an undertaking begun at Johns Hopkins in 1963 with the blessing, support, and (in the very beginning of the effort) supervision of Eisenhower himself.

These published letters depict both the man and the remarkable era over which he—literally, in one sense—presided. Contrary to the popular impression of the 1950s as untroubled "Happy Days," replete with malt shops, poodle skirts, and automobile tail fins, the decade was actually one of great changes and even greater dangers.

America was then in the grip of the Cold War, an ideological struggle between the planet's greatest powers, ostensibly for the control of mankind's future. The United States was the leader of what was known as the Free World, which Eisenhower described as "a whole group of free nations, loosely attached to each other by a common desire for

*President Eisenhower and Secretary of State John Foster Dulles sign the agreements allowing rearmament of the Federal Republic of Germany, 1955. Photograph courtesy of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Library.*

independence and a religious basis, opposed to a monolithic and atheistic dictatorship." Virtually every action he took, domestic or foreign, had "to be gauged and measured against this background and the problems created by this basic antagonism and struggle."

The primary enemy was the Soviet Union and its driving force of "Communist imperialism," which had as its goal "world revolution and the Kremlin's control of the entire earth." The Cold War deepened in intensity as both the United States and the Soviet Union developed and stockpiled horrifying nuclear weapons in ever-increasing numbers. In public, President Eisenhower tried to avoid alarming the public by maintaining a relatively sanguine attitude toward the bomb.

In classified correspondence and private letters, however, he recognized that "atomic war could mean the end of all civilization, including our own." He

acknowledged that it was the duty of his country, "along with those others who possess nuclear weapons to put an end to the fear and horror which the possibility of their use imposes." The major effort of his two Presidential administrations was an attempt to control and, if possible, reduce the threat of atomic weapons. Even his hard-line Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles, was actively working toward this end by 1957.

When Eisenhower left office, however, he confessed with great regret that he had been unable to accomplish his goals. The menace of atomic weapons, in fact, was far greater when he left office than when he came in. Adding to his sense of discomfort was the realization that he himself had deliberately built up the nuclear arsenal and had even encouraged military planners to assume that they would be used in any future serious conflict.

Was his tenure, therefore, a failure? Leaving aside the fact that it has taken many years for all his successors in office to bring about only limited disarmament, it seems that his self-evaluation was rather harsh and somewhat inaccurate. To be sure, the world's disarmament hopes were dashed when the ill-fated Paris Summit of 1960 collapsed (after the Soviets shot down an American U-2 spy plane), but Eisenhower did succeed in laying the groundwork for his successor's nuclear test ban treaty and the elimination of atmospheric testing.

He also succeeded in avoiding an atomic war, and he sold the American people on the concept that nuclear disarmament should be a major aim of their foreign policy. Implicit in this understanding was acceptance of the idea that reducing or eliminating the atomic threat was linked to national survival and, as such, was even more important than achieving victory over America's ideological opponents. In short, Ike helped keep us safe until the Soviet Union disintegrated.

In other areas, the Eisenhower record was mixed. His economic policies were at least partially responsible for the prosperity of the 1950s. He succeeded in slowing the growth of the Federal Government and bringing the Federal budget into structural balance, efforts that he modestly referred to as "a flattening of the curve." Eisenhower's reform of America's defense establishment, which

of course he was uniquely suited to undertake, was skillfully handled.

On the other hand, his commitment to the concept of the middle way—the belief that a centrist course between extremes was always safest and best—hindered his understanding of the demand for greater social and legal equality by African Americans. Eisenhower's method, as he once explained it, was "to provide a moderate approach to a difficult problem and to make haste slowly in seeking to meet it." Combined with his instinctive aversion to using Federal power to coerce his fellow citizens, his notion that the correct path lay midway between civil rights advocates and ardent segregationists prevented forehanded action and might have made the confrontations of the 1960s more traumatic.

In the realm of politics, he showed more skill than might have been expected before he moved into the White House, but he never succeeded in his dream of making over the GOP into his own moderate image by "reorganizing and revitalizing the Party." The legacy of this disappointment was the Republican loss of the Presidency in 1960 and the nomination of Barry Goldwater in 1964. Disgusted with the process, he wrote: "Knowledge, logic and courage seem unable to hold their own with ignorance, demagoguery and panic."

As he was leaving office in January 1961, Eisenhower wrote, "The verdict on my efforts will of course be left to history, and I don't have to worry about it now." My close and extended contact with Ike and his papers makes it difficult for me to provide a simple judgment of the man whose life I have in some sense shared for so long. Too many trees, not enough forest. I must say, though, that the Eisenhower whose actions and personality come through in *The Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower* was a leader who could inspire trust and could produce a significant layer of comfort. The mistakes he made were often understandable, usually forgivable, and sometimes inevitable. And there weren't too many of them. ❖

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GEORGE WASHINGTON (continued from page 7)

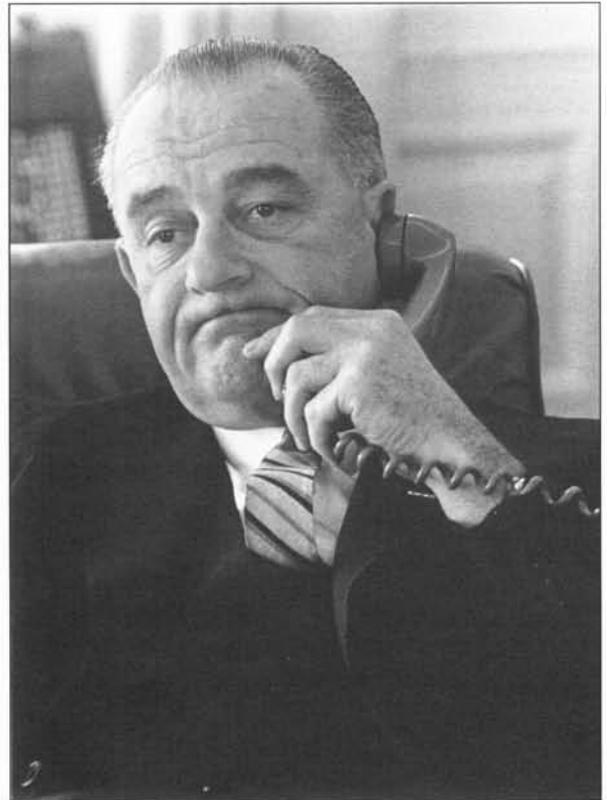
implemented his decisions as President. Cabinet minutes and reports and other related documents, such as Tobias Lear's notes of ca. April 4, 1792, on the opinions of the Cabinet about the first Presidential veto, whether prepared at Washington's request or not, are printed for the same reasons. Finally, because Washington employed a number of private secretaries to take care of his routine correspondence with other members of his administration, letters written to and from these individuals are also often considered to be a part of Washington's Presidential papers. Most of the time these letters merely transmit documents, request information, or answer the President's queries or those of other members of his administration. In such cases, they generally are extracted or only mentioned in the notes to other more significant documents. In those relatively rare cases where they contain substantive material, these documents are printed in full or abstracted in the letterpress edition.

By selecting wisely—omitting, extracting, or merely mentioning the existence of certain classes of documents and publishing, in whole or in part, others that might not at first glance appear to belong to Washington's Presidential papers—the editors are able to present an intimate, yet balanced, view of our first President and his administration. The Washington that emerges is a disciplined, engaged, decisive, and fair-minded leader, and, for all of these reasons, he is eminently worthy of his high office. ❖

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# Presidential Recordings Project

BY TIMOTHY J. NAFTALI



Lyndon B. Johnson using the telephone. Photograph courtesy of the Lyndon B. Johnson Library and Museum.

Just over 2 years ago, the Miller Center of Public Affairs at the University of Virginia initiated the Presidential Recordings Project. In this short period, the Project has made great strides in providing reference-quality transcripts and annotations for the recordings of Presidents Eisenhower, Kennedy, and Johnson. Thanks to the assistance of the NHPRC, the Presidential Recordings Project put the finishing touches this year on the first three volumes of the John F. Kennedy recordings series, covering the period July 30 through October 28, 1962, and on the first four volumes of the Johnson series. The Kennedy volumes will be published in the fall by W.W. Norton & Company, with an accompanying CD-ROM that captures the sights and sounds of Kennedy's Oval Office before and during the Cuban Missile Crisis.

At the heart of the Presidential Recordings Project is a new generation of American presidential historians, recruited from across the nation and, indeed, around the world. Each team member has a Ph.D. in history or its equivalent. In addition to these young historians, the project benefits from the guidance of two senior editors, Ernest May and Philip Zelikow, and from the input of a distinguished editorial board, which includes Michael Beschloss, Taylor Branch, Robert Dallek, Walter Isaacson, Allen Matusow, Richard Neustadt, Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., Robert Schulzinger, and Evan Thomas.

The project is guided by three editorial principles. First, the books will be comprehensive. Second, the books will include detailed explanations and

annotations that enhance the accessibility of the recordings by placing them in their historical context. Finally, the Presidential recordings volumes will be authoritative, reflecting a maximum effort to assure high-quality transcription and fair presentation.

## *The Audiotapes*

Over the course of 33 years, six American Presidents, from both political parties, created an archive of just under 5,000 hours of secretly recorded conversations. Each had his own reasons for taping, but the results for historians are the same: an unparalleled bird's eye view of decision-making at the highest level of the U.S. Government. Designed and installed by RCA upon the request of Franklin Roosevelt, the first secret tape recorder was a bulky machine that took up an entire closet. Roosevelt and his successor Harry S. Truman, who also used this taping device, wanted a private record of press conferences, which until the 1950s were not ordinarily recorded. These were modest beginnings. Neither Roosevelt nor Truman considered secret taping a useful activity, and their RCA machine collected more dust than dictations. In all, these two Presidents left less than 20 hours of audiotapes.

Presidents Eisenhower, Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon, however, viewed secret recording as an essential element of

executive management. Eisenhower began using dictaphones during World War II and installed a system at Columbia University, where he was president, and in Paris, where he served as Chief NATO commander, to record conversations without the knowledge of his visitors. Eisenhower continued this practice in the Oval Office.

John Kennedy, who like Eisenhower had grown accustomed to using dictation technology in the 1950s, began his Presidency, however, without a secret office taping system. In the summer of 1962, Kennedy changed his mind. Concerned about the record of his young administration, and worried about the approach of twin crises in foreign affairs and the domestic economy, Kennedy instructed the Secret Service to install microphones in the Oval Office and the Cabinet Room. A month later, in August 1962, he arranged for his telephone calls to be taped on demand.

Johnson continued the practice of secret Presidential taping. Although the Kennedy office taping system was dismantled in the wake of the assassination, Johnson launched the most extensive program of recording telephone calls of any American chief executive. Between November 23, 1963, and January 8, 1969, Johnson taped over 3,600 telephone conversations. Ultimately, Johnson would decide that he was not building enough of a secret record of his decision-making. In late 1967, he ordered the installation of a taping system in the Cabinet Room, which eventually recorded approximately 80 meetings until late in 1968.

The Presidential Recordings Project has set for itself the goal of transcribing all of the recordings of Presidents Roosevelt through Johnson. And institutions like the NHPRC are helping make this ambitious goal a reality. Some of these audiotapes being worked on by the project team were only recently declassified. But many have been publicly available for some time. The fact that these taped conversations remain outside the mainstream of historical scholarship reflects above all their inaccessibility without accompanying transcripts.

With the exception of Johnson's telephone tapes and Kennedy's comparatively small collection of telephone tapes, the Presidential recordings are largely unintelligible without the expenditure of enormous effort by the listener. The Presidents used hidden microphones in rooms with poor acoustics. Moreover, the participants in these meetings, who were largely unaware of the taping, often mumbled or spoke over each other.

Kennedy and Johnson both ordered the production of some transcripts while in office. In 1963 Kennedy instructed staffers to transcribe selected conversations on civil rights. Later in the year, perhaps in the expectation of writing a campaign memoir on the missile crisis, Kennedy launched a more ambitious effort to transcribe 18 meetings from the fall of 1962. The civil rights transcripts turned out well; the Cuban transcripts did not. In fact, these transcripts, done by Secret Service officers who lacked any sense of the nature of the proceedings or

even the voices of the main participants, were so poor that the John F. Kennedy Library refuses to release them, for fear that in the absence of authoritative transcripts scholars will refer to these incomplete and garbled documents as faithful records.

At the end of his term, Johnson instructed his staff to begin transcribing his tapes. The Johnson Library estimates that about 60 percent of the telephone tapes and some portion of the meeting conversations were transcribed. These transcripts, however, were often done hastily and lack any scholarly annotations to assist the reader.

None of the Presidential libraries is currently in the business of producing transcripts themselves. In the early 1980s, the Kennedy Library launched an ambitious effort to transcribe all tapes covering domestic policy matters. Over the course of the next 5 years, a team produced transcripts for the 1962 Mississippi desegregation crisis and for Kennedy's meetings on tax reform. Ultimately abandoned as too costly, the project stopped before work could begin on the bulk of 1963 civil rights conversations, leaving those covering the Birmingham crisis untranscribed.

The Kennedy Library also produced transcripts for 75 percent of the 30 hours of telephone conversations. As a result, the bulk of the Kennedy tapes collection—approximately 220 of 260 hours—remains untranscribed. The Johnson Library has not attempted to supplement the transcripts prepared by President Johnson's staff. Similarly, the Eisenhower Library has released partial transcripts, where available, made by Eisenhower's staff in 1955. Otherwise, both the Eisenhower and Johnson Libraries issue the tapes in raw form for scholars to make out on their own.

For the most part, scholars have found Presidential tapes too difficult to use. In the 15 years since the first release of Kennedy recordings, only about 1 percent of the contents of Presidential tapes have appeared in a published form. Besides *The Kennedy Tapes*, a pioneering study of the Cuban Missile Crisis by Ernest May and Philip Zelikow, which is

structured around extensive transcripts, three books comprise almost the entire spectrum of available Presidential transcripts. And these books—Stanley Kutler's *Abuse of Power*; Michael Beschloss' *Taking Charge*, and William Doyle's *White House Tapes*—are selective in their presentation of the material. Beschloss' fine book, for example, covers 10 months of Johnson's taping in under 400 pages. The Miller Center series for that period alone will comprise 11 volumes of between 350 and 450 pages.

Without these transcripts, the Presidential recordings are likely to disappear as useful primary sources. Not only are most of the audiotapes likely to continue being ignored, but due to the poor audio quality of many, those that are used may become a grab bag for quotations to prove one theory or another about the Presidents. At the heart of the Presidential Recordings Project is the belief that as documents these audiotapes are likely to alter dramatically the study of the American Presidency and, it is even fair to say, the basic narrative of American politics in the postwar period. These audiotapes are the most remarkable window that Americans have ever had into how their country is governed.

The Presidential Recordings Project is currently working on Volume 4 of the Kennedy series, which will cover recordings from October 29, 1962, through November 21, 1962, and on the Johnson volumes for April–July 1964. It is anticipated that the Project will send five finished manuscripts to W.W. Norton for publication every year. The Miller Center hopes to complete the estimated 48 volumes needed to cover the Eisenhower, Kennedy, and Johnson Presidencies by 2012. ❖

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*John F. Kennedy in the Oval Office. Photograph courtesy of the John F. Kennedy Library and Museum.*