

*The Diaries of George Washington, Volume VI, January 1790-December 1799.* Edited by DONALD JACKSON and DOROTHY TWOHIG. (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1979. Pp. xvii, 554. Editorial procedures, bibliography, index. \$30.00.)

This final volume of the published diaries of George Washington sheds some light on the first president's attitudes towards the task of establishing the government under the Constitution. The entries do not span the entire last nine years of his life but give a sufficient account of that time to enable one to assay the texture of his mind set. The entries included are "The Capital at New York, January 1790-December 1799, Southern Tour, March-July 1791, Whiskey Insurrection, September-October 1794, Mostly Weather, April-December 1795, A Few Entries, 1796, Philadelphia and Mount Vernon, 1797, Mount Vernon and Guests, 1798, The Final Year, 1799, and Undated Diary Fragment."

The entries for the first year chronicle the president's conscientious efforts to get the new government successfully founded. The comments on the visit of the celebrated half-breed Alexander McGillivray to the capital convey much of the flavor of the times. The old account of Senator Maclay about Washington's boredom at state dinner parties (he reputedly liked to bang his fork on the table) fills in the gaps provided by the sparse entries in the diary.

Each section of the book contains an introduction by the editors that sketches the historical backdrop against which the entries occurred.

Of particular interest to Western Pennsylvania readers are the thoughts of Washington regarding the Whiskey Rebellion. Despite the stern warnings of opponents that the whiskey tax would arouse strong opposition to the government, Washington made the issue a test case of the soundness of his administration. The colorfully acrimonious debates of the Federalist period are, in part, reproduced here. Most notable was the comment of Josiah Parker that the tax would "let loose a swarm of revenue officers, who will range through the country, prying into every man's house and affairs, and like a Macedonian phalanx bear down all before them."

Washington saw the matter differently. The issue was simply a matter of the need of the citizenry to respect the laws. On October 17 and 18, 1794, he wrote, "it appears evident that the people in the Western Counties of this State have got very much alarmed at the approach of the Army; but though Submission is professed, their principles remain the same; and that nothing but coercion, & ex-

ample will reclaim & bring them to a due & unequivocal submission to the Law."

Those history scholars and buffs who feed on the meat of primary source material at the table of the Federalist Era will find this a welcome addition to their libraries. This volume rounds out the project of printing the complete diaries of Washington, an invaluable source for scholars of the Early Republic everywhere. No library should omit this valuable reference work from its collection.

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*The Journal of the Proceedings of the President, 1793-1797.* Edited by DOROTHY TWOHIG. (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1981. Pp. xvii, 393. Acknowledgments, bibliography, index. \$25.00.)

The historical reputation of George Washington has, in recent years, been undergoing revision. Previously, he was compared unfavorably with several of his well-known and admittedly brilliant compatriots — especially the erudite Thomas Jefferson and the equally sagacious Alexander Hamilton. However, recent scholarship has resurrected our first president not from obscurity (for he has always been well-known) but from a reputation that paid lip service to his greatness and then criticized him for his conservatism, his alleged lack of intellectual brilliance, and his aristocratic predilections. Among the recent favorable biographies, none reached a wider audience or did more to change the historical image of George Washington than James Thomas Flexner's historically-sound four-volume work and the same author's engagingly-written one-volume biography, *Washington: The Indispensable Man* (Boston, 1969). Not only has there been a renewed interest in Washington the man, but also in his presidency and the Federalist Period generally. This, coupled with the obvious need to revise the now outdated John C. Fitzpatrick, editor, *The Writings of George Washington*, 39 volumes (Washington, D.C., 1931-1944), has led to yet another historical editing project that will rival in scope and usefulness similar endeavors dealing with other Founding Fathers — most notably Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, Benjamin Franklin, Alexander Hamilton, and the Adams family. Sponsored jointly by the University of Virginia and the Mount Vernon Ladies'