



The Documentary History of the First Federal Elections, 1788-1790, Vol. 1

Merrill Jensen

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This is the first volume of an ambitious project which, when completed, will offer to the historian of early America the first readily accessible account of the nation's first elections. Volume I documents the first federal elections in South Carolina, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire. This book also covers the Constitution, the Confederation Congress, and federal elections, as well as the Confederation Congress and the First Federal Election Ordinance of September 13th, 1788.

Included in the three-volume set are hundreds of documents which together illuminate the critical political events of the time and the men who forged them. The documents are both official ones—legislative journals, debates, and laws relating to the elections—and unofficial ones, including material from letters, diaries, newspapers, broadsides, and other sources. The subjects treated include the providing for the elections by the Confederation Congress; public and private commentary prior to the elections; and summaries of official and unofficial actions for each of the thirteen original states. The editors have provided biographical sketches of the candidates for election and sketches of the political events of the time in introductions, headnotes, and editorial notes, in order to place the documents in their historical context.

These documents, most of which have been available to scholars only under the most difficult of circumstances, provided the basis for a more complete understanding of the fundamental political acts required to implement the Constitution after its ratification: the election of Representatives, Senators, Electors, and a President—the men who would give shape and meaning to the government created by the Constitution.

Scholars and students of early American history, politics, and law will refer to these volumes frequently, in order to gain a fuller comprehension of the men, the events, and the temper of the times that led to the establishment of our early federal government.

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