

The Papers of George Washington

Documents

Draft of the Federal Constitution: Report of Committee of Detail and Report of Committee of Style

Washington's Handwritten Annotations to the Constitution, as Dictated by the Committees

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Report of Committee of Detail

On 23 July the Convention voted that "the proceedings of the Convention for the establishing of a Natl. Govt. (except the part relating to the Executive), be referred to a Committee to prepare & report a Constitution conformable thereto" (Madison's Notes in Farrand, *Records of the Federal Convention*, 2:95). Not only did the part of the Constitution "relating to the Executive" not appear in the committee draft of the Constitution of 6 Aug., it and most of the provisions regarding the Senate as well as several other important sections of the Constitution did not receive final approval of the Convention until after GW and Jackson had discontinued entering the changes that were being made in the draft. See the note in Draft of the Federal Constitution: Report of the Committee of Style, 12 Sept., printed below.

6 August 1787. On 6 Aug. John Rutledge delivered the report of the "Committee of detail" in the form of a printed draft of the proposed federal constitution and provided copies for the members. GW and the secretary of the Convention, William Jackson, entered on one printed copy those deletions and additions that were adopted by the Convention between 6 Aug. and 3 Sept. and were included in the draft referred to the committee of five elected on 8 Sept. "to revise the stile of and arrange the articles which had been agreed to by the House" (Madison's Notes in Farrand, *Records of the Federal Convention*, 2:177, 553).

From W.W. Abbot, ed., *The Papers of George Washington, Confederation Series*, vol. 5 (Charlottesville and London: The University of Virginia Press, 1997), 282.

Report of Committee of Style

On 8 Sept. the Convention chose William Samuel Johnson, Alexander Hamilton, Gouverneur Morris, James Madison, and Rufus King "to revise the stile of and arrange the articles which had been agreed to by the House" (Madison's Notes in Farrand, *Records of the Federal Convention*, 2:553). On 12 Sept. Johnson, "from the Committee of revision," reported "the Constitution as revised and arranged"; it was "ordered that the Members be furnished with printed copies thereof" (Madison's Notes, *ibid.*, 582). For the next three days the Convention went through the document, and GW entered each of the deletions, additions, or other changes that the Convention adopted between 5 and 12 Sept., all of which appear in the Constitution.

[12 September 1787]. GW (or, in a few instances, the secretary of the convention William Jackson) entered on his printed copy of the draft of the Constitution presented to the Convention on 12 Sept. by the committee of style, all of the various changes in form and content adopted by the Convention between 12 and 15 Sept. when the Constitution took its final form. [\[1\]](#)

From W.W. Abbot, ed., *The Papers of George Washington, Confederation Series*, vol. 5 (Charlottesville and London: The University of Virginia Press, 1997), 324.

Notes

1. On 8 Sept. the Convention chose William Samuel Johnson, Alexander Hamilton, Gouverneur Morris, James Madison, and Rufus King "to revise the stile of and arrange the articles which had been agreed to by the House" (Madison's Notes in Farrand, *Records of the Federal Convention*, 2:553). On 12 Sept. Johnson, "from the Committee of revision," reported "the Constitution as revised and arranged"; it was "ordered that the Members be furnished with printed copies thereof" (Madison's Notes, *ibid.*, 582). For the next three days the Convention went through the document, and GW entered each of the deletions, additions, or other changes that the Convention adopted between 5 and 12 Sept., all of which appear in the Constitution.

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