

**James Madison to Thomas Jefferson, June 17, 1793.
Transcription: The Writings of James Madison,
ed. Gaillard Hunt. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons,
1900-1910.**

TO THOMAS JEFFERSON. MAD. MSS.

Orange June 17, 1793

I fell in two days ago with French Strother, who was returning circuitously from Richmond. He had seen W. C. Nicholas on his way, & spoke of him as among the decided friends of the French cause. In general I discovered that his testimony and conviction corroborated the fact that the people of this country, where you cannot trace the causes of particular exceptions, are unanimous & explicit in their sympathy with the Revolution. He was in Richmond during the session of the Court of the U. S., and heard the opinions of the Judges on the subject of the British debts. Jay's he says was that the depreciated paymts into the Treasury discharged the debtor, but leaves the State liable to the creditor. It would be a hard tax on those who have suffered themselves by the depreciation to bear such a burden. It would be severely felt by those who put money into the Treasury on loan & have received certificates by

the scale, & those again further reduced by the modifications of the assumption. I asked S. who told me he was under the same roof with Jay & a good deal in his society, what language he held on French topics. He never opened his lips, was the answer. In Fredg. on his way to Richmond, he was less reserved. I understood that in a conversation there with Mr. Page who was full of zeal on the side of France, his enmity broke out in a very decided tone. . . .

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My imagination has hunted thro' this whole state without being able to find a single character fitted for the mission to N. O.¹ Young Marshal seems to possess some of the qualifications, but there would be objections of several sorts to him. In general the men of understanding in this country are either preoccupied or too little acquainted with the world in the sense necessary for such functions. As a mercantile man would be politic, the difficulty of providing a man here is the greater. . . .

¹ Projected in connection with the negotiations with Spain then pending. John Marshall was thirty-eight years old.