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Madison Debates May 14, May 25

[Madison Debates Contents](#)

May 14, 1787, May 25, 1787

[FN1] Monday May 14th 1787 was the day fixed for the meeting of the deputies in Convention for revising the federal system of Government. On that day a small number only had assembled. Seven States were not convened till,

Friday 25 of May, when the following members [FN2] appeared to wit: see Note A. [FN3] viz, [FN3] From Massachusetts Rufus King. N. York Robert Yates, [FN4] Alexr. Hamilton. N. Jersey, David Brearly, William Churchill Houston, [FN4] William Patterson. Pennsylvania, Robert Morris, Thomas Fitzsimmons, James Wilson, [FN4] Gouverneur Morris. Delaware, George Read, Richard Basset, [FN4] Jacob Broome. Virginia, George Washington, Edmund Randolph, John Blair, James Madison, George Mason, George Wythe, [FN4] James Mc.Clurg. N. Carolina, Alexander Martin, William Richardson Davie, Richard Dobbs Spaight, [FN4] Hugh Williamson. S. Carolina, John Rutledge, Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, Charles Pinckney, [FN4] Pierce Butler. Georgia, William Few.

Mr. ROBERT MORRIS informed the members assembled that by the instruction & in behalf, of the deputation of Pena. he proposed George Washington Esqr. late Commander in chief for president of the Convention. [FN5] Mr. JNo. RUTLIDGE seconded the motion; expressing his confidence that the choice would be unanimous, and observing that the presence of Genl. Washington forbade any observations on the occasion which might otherwise be proper. General WASHINGTON was accordingly unanimously elected by ballot, and conducted to the Chair by Mr. R. Morris and Mr. Rutledge; from which in a very emphatic manner he thanked the Convention for the honor they had conferred on him, reminded them of the novelty of the scene of business in which he was to act, lamented his want of better qualifications, and claimed the indulgence of the House towards the involuntary errors which his inexperience might occasion. [FN6] [The nomination came with particular grace from Penna. as Doctr. Franklin alone could have been thought of as a competitor. The Doctr. was himself to have made the nomination of General Washington, but the state of the weather and of his health confined him to his house.]

Mr. WILSON moved that a Secretary be appointed, and nominated Mr. Temple Franklin.

Col HAMILTON nominated Major Jackson.

On the ballot Majr. Jackson had 5 votes & Mr. Franklin 2 votes. On reading the credentials of the deputies it was noticed that those from Delaware were prohibited from changing the [article in the Confederation](#) establishing an equality of votes among the States.

The appointment of a Committee, consisting of Messrs. Wythe, Hamilton & C. Pinckney, on the motion of Mr. C. PINCKNEY, [FN7] to prepare standing rules & orders was the only remaining step taken on this day.

FN1 Text and footnotes reprinted from *The Debates in the Federal Convention of 1787*, edited by Gailard Hunt and James Brown Scott (Wash., 1920). The text of the present edition of Madison's Debates has been read against the manuscript of the transcript in the Library of Congress, and every difference between Madison's original manuscript and the transcript has been noted except typographical differences, such as capitalization, spelling (including abbreviation of words and figures), punctuation and paragraphing. The word "Debates" is used as a heading in the transcript. [Click on Back Button](#)

FN2 Madison is not uniform in the spelling of proper names, but the correct form in each instance is to be found in the credentials of the delegates. [Click on Back Button](#)

FN3 The words "to wit: see Note A. viz," are omitted in the transcript. [Click on Back Button](#)

FN4 The word "and" is here inserted in the transcript. [Click on Back Button](#)

FN5 The paragraph in brackets beginning with the words "The nomination" and ending with the word "house" is printed as a footnote in the transcript with reference mark after the word "Convention." [Click on Back Button](#)

FN6 See footnote. [Click on Back Button](#)

FN7 The phrase "on the motion of Mr. C. Pinckney, consisting," etc. [Click on Back Button](#)

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