THE WORKS OF THOMAS JEFFERSON

VOLUME 1

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INTRODUCTION

The political theories and usages originated or adopted by Thomas Jefferson have shown such persistence and permanence in their value to our people and government as to demonstrate a far deeper and broader principle underlying them than is always recognized. In popular estimation, Jefferson stands as the founder of the Democratic party, and the developer of the theory of State Rights; and on these foundations are based the so called "Jeffersonian principles," and the respect and acceptance, as well as the criticism and contravention, accorded to them. That this basis was deemed sufficient during his life, is natural, for judgment of a living man must always be partial and superficial. That this limited view should during that time acquire prestige and momentum enough to project it into history, is not strange, the more that the logical conclusions of certain theories advanced by him suited the policy of one of our political parties. The acceptance of this limited view has enabled his antagonists and critics to charge him with hypocrisy, opportunism, and even lack of any political principles; and the contradictions and instability they have cited in his opinions and conduct have embarrassed even his most devoted adherents. If this limited view is still to be accepted as sufficient and final, these criticisms must stand:—His advocacy of a weak national government; with his complaints that it was "a rope of sand," and his far-reaching augmentations to its power. His advocacy of a strict construing of our constitution; and yet his so exceeding the implied powers granted by it, as to make it, in his own words, "waste

paper.” His support of the State governments as “sovereign”; and his dislike and attempted changes in and over-riding of their constitutions. His arguments in favor of an absolutely independent jury and judiciary; and his attacks on both. His desire for a national navy; and his later opposition. His demands that the executive and legislative departments should be beyond reciprocal influence; yet, when president, his interference in the latter to an extent which led to a stinging rebuke on the floor of Congress in open debate. His dread of a partizan civil service as a means of influencing and defeating free elections, and his oft repeated claim that public officers should be selected only on their merit; while himself inaugurating the spoils system, sending his political friends commissions in blank, and retaining a federalist official “because of his connections.” His disapproval of the re-eligibility of the president, and advocacy of rotation in office to prevent the creation of a bureaucracy; with his subsequent willingness that the former should serve more than two terms, and his writing to a superannuated appointee, “would it be a relief to transfer the office to your son, for your use, with the understanding that it should be afterwards continued with him for the benefit of the family?” His opposition to the alien act; and his framing of a bill directed against foreigners of far greater injustice than that enactment. His support of the passage of the funding and assumption act; and his unending opposition to its execution. His condemnation of the national bank, not merely on constitutional grounds, but because he believed it to be unduly influencing the national government; yet when himself at the head of that government advocating “a judicious distribution” of favors to that and other banks “to engage the individuals who belong to them in support” of his administration. His early opposition to national internal improvements, his later recommendation of this policy to Congress, and his final resolutions declaring it

unconstitutional. His arguments and labors in opposition to slavery; while owning many negroes, and refusing to act as executor of a will because the testator freed his slaves—And many other actions apparently implying so little principle, or views so shifting, as superficially to reduce them to nothing else than a mass of inconsistencies, each one notable only for its immediate results. Judged by these standards, the marvel of the Federalists and his later critics, that he should have been the chosen instrument of American democracy, is proper. The scholarly and reclusive nature of his tastes and studies; the retiring and limited character of his intercourse with the world; the influence of his social equals; his dislike of party and personal antagonism; and his sensitiveness to abuse and criticism, make his acceptance of that leadership, as strange a problem, as that the people should have chosen for their representative a man lacking nearly all of the personal qualities which are presumed to win popularity with the masses. And only explicable from the narrow view of his critics as the success of an ambitious and unprincipled self-seeking man, attained by astuteness and chicane so great as to deceive the masses.

But if the people embody the total of human thought and experience, as our political theories maintain, there are better reasons than these for his elevation, and for the political influence his name has carried for over one hundred years—better reasons than the leadership of a party, or a fine-spun theory of the respective powers of the state and national governments. The explanation of these apparent anomalies lies deeper than any mere matter of individuality, party success, or rigid political platform. To understand why Jefferson became “a man of the people,” and for what reasons and purposes they made him their leader, we must study certain forces and tendencies then working in America.

In the never-ending struggle between the so called “classes” and “masses,” not the least interesting phase is that which occurred in the revolutionary period in this country. Although the colonies were nominally royal appendages, legislated for by King and Parliament, the difficulties of governing at such distance and other conditions, had compelled the granting to them, or an acquiescence in their exercising, a large degree of local self-government. In conceding this, the attempt had been made, and in most cases successfully, to place power in the hands of the classes; so as to build up a colonial aristocracy, subservient to the wishes of the mother country. And as the colonies grew and became objects of greater interest to Great Britain, this tendency became more and more marked. But the conditions of the country were not suited for class or centralized government. The wilderness made every man a land-holder, and the vast extent of territory and its sparse settlement rendered civil authority unable to exercise its force, and therefore hardly a factor in its influence on the people. Yet the lawlessness of the new settlements, and the Indians on the frontier, compelled the maintenance of some kind of authority, and so each settler, and each community, became largely the law-maker and administrator of their own affairs. Thus it was that local self-government, based solely on manhood, was tested and became the cardinal principle of American government.

Such was the trending development of the people, when the policy of England between 1764 and 1775, towards her American colonies, united them in opposition to her rule. That opposition, and the great movement towards democratic government, were by events so blended, that they have since stood as one in the public mind. Yet they were entirely different, most of our great revolutionary leaders deprecating the latter; and while events converted some few to the democratic theory of power, the majority

never ceased to fear the people. Had it not been for the exigencies of the war, which compelled an appeal to the masses, to destroy the royal government, and to fight the mother country, it is probable that they would not have gained any political power from national independence. But in the interregnum between the destruction of the old and the creation of the new governments, much was gained, not merely in actual exercise of rights, but in experience; for the masses learned that self-organized bodies of men, acting under no legal authority, could rule a whole country by mere recommendations; that a dependent government is the strongest in the world, for it must accord with public opinion, and therefore meet with public support; that constitutions and laws are but ink and paper unless they approximate to that sole origin of force and authority; and that it is not the government which supports the people, but the people who support the government.

The masses are by their nature and condition, however, negative rather than positive, and when constructive, rather than destructive or obstructive force is required, they are compelled to delegate a portion of their powers. Thus, in the re-building of government, the classes secured an influence far out of proportion to their numbers. In the State constitutions, they succeeded in somewhat curtailing and limiting the popular control; and later, in the formation of our national constitution they sought still further to wrest powers from the people, both by grants, which interposed barriers to the direct delegation of power from the people to the executive, judiciary, and one of the legislative branches, and by clauses purposely worded so as to leave the question of the quantity of power granted to the decision of men who would almost certainly be drawn from the classes. And a resulting political party attempted to carry this policy still further. Had government been merely a matter of intellect and ability, the Federalists would have succeeded in controlling and fixing its

character in this country. That when they had done their work of construction, they were excluded from office, without ever comprehending the reason, proves how little they understood the tendency, intelligence, and power of the forces they were attempting to circumscribe. Unlike the Federalists, Jefferson was willing to discard the tradition of ages—that the people must be protected against themselves by the brains, money, and better “elements” of the country—and for this reason American democracy made him its chosen agent and mouth-piece.

To understand why Jefferson was one of the few men of intellect of his time able to appreciate, sympathize with, and aid this popular movement, a retrospect of certain factors in his life and times is necessary. Inheriting unsettling tendencies of mind, he was from an early age a thorough skeptic of tradition and precedent. In his own words, he never “feared to follow truth and reason to whatever results they led, and bearding every authority which stood in their way.” Almost alone of the revolutionary leaders, he was born on the frontier, which, as already stated, was the ultimate of local self-government. Among those conditions he passed the formative period of his life, and as representative of this district he made his first essay in politics, naturally as an advocate and defender of the democratic mountaineers. In the Virginia Assembly, in which his earliest battles were fought, the strongest line of party division was between the aristocratic “planter” interest—great landed and slave-holding proprietors, with the prestige and inertia of favorable laws and offices—and the “settler” interest—inhabiting the frontier, far from the law or protection of government, but strong in numbers, independence, and necessities;—and in these conflicts he learned how absolutely selfish and grasping all class legislation is. Then came the Revolution, and Jefferson saw governments, deriving their authority from laws innumerable, and their force from the strongest nation of

Europe, utterly destroyed, with hardly a blow, merely through their non-recognition by the masses. With the Committees of Safety and the Congresses which succeeded, he saw the experiment of “a government of the people, by the people, for the people,” established and tested. Had he been in America between 1784 and 1788, he too might have become doubtful as to how far the masses could control themselves, for the reaction of the revolutionary struggle was severe, and strained democratic institutions almost to anarchy. But at this time he was in France, witnessing another great struggle between the privileged and unprivileged. So he returned to America, true to the influences and lessons of his life, to find his theories in disfavor with the conservative, and government slipping more and more from the control of the governed. And because he believed that only the people truly knew what the people needed; that those who could take care of themselves were wise and practical enough to help care for the nation; and that the only way of enforcing laws was that they should be made by those who are to obey them, he undertook, with reluctance and self-sacrifice, to be the instrument of popular action. That he was the founder of the Democratic party is a claim little less than absurd, for there always has been, and always will be, such a party. But he united the democratic elements on certain principles and objects, and proved himself such a leader as the party has seldom been able to obtain.

Recognition of what he endeavored to accomplish explains many of his apparent inconsistencies. The dominant principle of his creed was that all powers belonged to the people, and that governments, constitutions, laws, precedent, and all other artificial clogs and “protections,” are entitled to respect and obedience only as they fulfilled their limited function of aiding—not curtailing—the greatest freedom to the individual. For this reason, he held that no power existed to bind the people or

posterity, except by their own acts. For this reason, he was the strict construer of the national constitution, where he believed it destructive of personal freedom; and construed it liberally where it threatened to limit the development of the people. He was the defender of the State governments; for he regarded them as a necessary division for local self-government and as natural checks on the national power, and so a safeguard to the people. That he appealed to them in his resolutions of 1798, was because he believed the people for once unable to act for their own interest, and the theories of that paper are a radical and short-lived contradiction of his true beliefs. Because he believed the national judiciary and the national bank to be opposed to the will of the people, he attacked them. Because he believed he was furthering the popular will, he interfered in the legislative department and changed office-holders. Because he wished them free to think and act, he favored separation from England, abolition of slavery, free lands, free education, freedom of religion, and the largest degree of local self-government. His methods and results were not always good. His character and conduct had many serious flaws. Yet in some subtle way the people understood him, and forgave in him weaknesses and defects they have seldom condoned. And eventually this judgment will universally obtain, as the fact becomes clearer and clearer, that neither national independence, nor state sovereignty, with the national and party rancors that attach to them, were the controlling aim and attempt of his life; that no party or temporary advantage was the object of his endeavors, but that he fought for the ever enduring privilege of personal freedom.

The proof for this view of Jefferson must be sought in such of his writings as are still preserved:

In the *Journal* of the House of Burgesses of Virginia for May 9, 1769, are a series of resolutions intended to serve as a basis for the reply of that body to the speech of their

newly arrived governor. Remarkable here only for their intense obsequiousness and adulation, these resolutions merit notice as the first public paper drawn by Thomas Jefferson. As a lawyer, however, Jefferson was already known. Few of his arguments have been preserved, but these few give evidence that he was already out of spirit with his surroundings. The man who could argue that human servitude was “a violation of the law of nature”; that under those laws, “all men are born free, every one comes into the world with a right to his own person, which includes the liberty of moving and using it at his own will”; and that “Christianity neither is nor ever was a part of the common law,” was clearly not in sympathy with a slave-holding community, living under an established church, and ruled by a royal governor.

His next public paper was of much the same form, though differing greatly in nature from his first. It was a series of resolutions intended for the guidance and adoption of the self-constituted convention which met in August, 1774, and the difference in tone almost tells the history of those intervening years. Then, the interests of England and America were “inseparably the same.” Now, only by accepting the advice of these resolutions could the “reciprocal advantages of their connection” be preserved. The power of Parliament over the colonies was denied; the King instructed that he was “no more than the chief officer of the people, appointed by the laws, and circumscribed with definite powers, to assist in working the great machine of government erected for their use, and consequently subject to their superintendence”; and the assertion made that the American people possessed the sole power of self-government and could “exercise it to an unlimited extent.” These opinions were too extreme for even a revolutionary convention, but they nevertheless formed one more stepping-stone in the direction of independence for the colonies.

A year later he wrote the reply of the Virginia House of Burgesses to the plan of reconciliation known as Lord North's "Motion," and was the bearer of it to the Continental Congress, of which he had been elected a member. For this body, he likewise wrote a second reply to the "Motion," as well as a "Declaration" on the United Colonies taking up arms. But this latter did not meet with their approval, and one prepared by Dickinson was taken in its stead; and a comparison of the two certainly justifies the Congress. He also drafted a number of minor papers for that body, and prepared a plan for an executive government by a committee of Congress—an attempt not then realized, but which was later in an elaborated form to be again proposed by Jefferson, to be tried, and to result in failure.

In the Congress of 1776 he drafted, for the committee of which he was a member, three reports dealing with Canadian affairs, which are now of interest only from the light they throw on the attempt to conquer that country. While so occupied, he drafted a proposed constitution for his native state and forwarded it to the convention in hopes of their accepting it, which they failed to do. But it is for us a most interesting paper, as illustrating the development of his political theories, the most notable being his acquiescence in the limiting of the franchise to freeholders, well knowing as he did, the impossibility of gaining from the aristocratic party any extension of the ballot, but neutralizing this acquiescence by distributing the public lands so as to make a manhood suffrage; his far-seeing method for dealing with western colonization, his proposed ending of primogeniture, test oaths, and the slave trade; and his guarantees of freedom of religion and press. He prepared a number of other reports and resolutions for Congress, the most worthy of notice being his rules for the government of that body, which was probably the first step towards his parliamentary manual. His greatest work, however, was the writing of a vindication of the resolution

of independence, since popularly known as the “Declaration of Independence.” Jefferson never forgave the alterations which the sectional interests, as also the better sense of the Congress, made in his draft, even though they were for the most part omissions of what lacked either truth or dignity. The fame of the paper, which is probably the best known that ever came from the pen of an individual, has led to much discussion as to its origin, and numerous charges of plagiarism have been made against the author. That the catalogue of wrongs and grievances which constitute the body of the declaration was hackneyed is beyond dispute, for these had formed the basis of nearly every address and petition put forth by the Continental Congress, or Provincial Assemblies, and had been as well the prevailing subject of written and verbal discussion. The preamble and exordium are however the important parts. A comparison of the former with the Virginia Declaration of Rights would seem to indicate the source from which Jefferson derived a most important and popular part. The latter was practically rewritten by Congress. But the unity and phrasing of such a paper constitute no small portion of its composition, and to embody the feelings and hopes of a new nation in a single paper, as Jefferson did with such marvellous success, makes it unique among the greatest writings of the world, and gives to him an honor that can never end. With the Declaration of Independence the Congress completed a change which had been slowly maturing. From being a scribe of petitions and declarations, it tended more and more to become a war executive, and Jefferson, who achieved reputation by his philosophic mind and pen, and who himself realized his lack of ability in administration, found himself of little use in such a body. Pleading family and other reasons, therefore, he retired from Congress and took his seat in the Virginia House of Delegates.

The great problem here was a rebuilding of civil government destroyed by the Revolution. A constitution had been adopted, and under this a legislature and executive had been elected, but courts and laws had fallen with the royal government, and to re-establish them in modified form was the task to which Jefferson set himself. With the permission of the legislature, and in conjunction with two collaborators, he worked for nearly three years upon a complete code, and reported it to that body; which from time to time adopted certain features from it, but neglected the larger part. In addition to this great work, he drafted, during his service in this body, many bills of immediate or temporary moment. This was done in a period almost without precedent, when it was necessary not merely to carry on the ordinary forms of government, but to conduct a war in distant states and territories, and repress disloyalty and lawlessness within the limits of the state. And he was thwarted by parties and cliques formed on geographical lines, religious beliefs, and class feeling, and rent by personal hatred and cabal. It is therefore small wonder that he aided in some unjust and even unconstitutional legislation, or that much of his that was good should fail. But his proposed bills for religious freedom, for the creation of public schools, and for the establishment of free libraries more than redeem his errors. His legislation contributed more than the work of any other man to free the aristocratic colony of Virginia from the “planter” interest and start it towards democratic statehood; and the Assembly proved that he had labored to their satisfaction by electing him Governor.

In an executive position, Jefferson was out of his element. Nothing was called for or came from his pen but official letters and proclamations. His administration produced open murmurs, and at the end of two years he sought relief in resignation, with the stigma of incompetence, if not of cowardice, the prevailing opinion concerning him.

Impeachment was attempted without success; and later, when the evils begun in his term had been overcome, whitewashing resolutions were adopted by the legislature in his behalf; but they brought no relief to his own supersensitiveness, and he hid himself in an almost hermit-like seclusion from the world, determined never more to hold public office.

Here he prepared for the information of the French government his famous *Notes on Virginia.* Intended for confidential use only, and written during a period of personal bitterness, it is most interesting from its outspoken tone on many subjects. But even more notable is the remarkable mass of information he gives concerning the State; which after a lapse of more than one hundred years still makes it a valuable work of reference. During the same period he wrote an essay on the *Art of Poesy,* and prepared a second proposed constitution for Virginia, which illustrated the tendency of his mind since he had drafted his first in 1776, the most marked departure being his direct attempt to extend the franchise.

Drawn from his retirement by the hope of a foreign mission, the importunities of his friends induced him to accept an election to the Continental Congress. In his less than six months' service in this body, the amount and importance of his work can hardly be overestimated. He was a member of almost every important committee appointed, and no less than thirty-one papers were drafted by him. He proposed and carried a plan for a committee of Congress which should sit during adjournments. He drew the report and instructions for negotiating commercial treaties with European states, in which he embodied his humane desires that fishermen, farmers, and artisans engaged in their vocations should not be subject to capture; that undefended towns should not be injured; that privateering should cease; and commerce, even between belligerents, should be free. His reports on the finances

were most elaborate and careful, and in connection with these he prepared his *Notes on a Money Unit,* which led to the adoption of the dollar as our standard of value, and in which he was far-seeing enough to argue that “the true proportion of value between gold and silver was a mercantile problem altogether,” and that it was policy “to give a little more than the market price for gold because of its superior convenience in transportation.” But his greatest work was in reference to the western territories. His pen drafted the cession which Virginia made to the national government, and, conscious that this “was the time when our Confederation with the territory included within its limits should assume its ultimate form,” he framed a plan of government for all the territory outside the boundaries of the original states. The effect of the clauses making this territory forever part of the United States and ending slavery in it after the year 1800, would have solved our greatest political contest, but these are of small moment when compared with the system here for the first time established, that the inhabitants of the public domain were not to be held as subject colonies, but were to be given equal rights with the parent state. No one enactment has had so vital an influence on the American Union; and this principle was extended by another ordinance, proposing a land system, which must be considered as the first of the national acts towards distributing the public lands among the people.

Sent to Europe in 1784 to aid in negotiating treaties, and a year later made Minister to France, he wrote little in the few following years, other than official letters. He contributed a few anonymous articles to the Paris papers to counteract the published criticisms of America, and at the request of the authors carefully corrected certain historical works on the same subject which were then appearing. In his diplomatic function he proposed to the several European nations an agreement to restrain, by united

action, the piratical states of North Africa; drafted a proposed Consular convention with France; and prepared a careful and minute *mémoire* on the American whale fisheries, with the purpose of obtaining from France special exemptions in favor of the oil sent from America. In addition, his deep interest in the French Revolution led him to overstep the proper limits of his office, and prepare a "Charter of Rights" which he desired should be adopted by the States-General.

Returning to America, he became Secretary of State in Washington's administration. His position resulted in a diplomatic correspondence and a series of reports to Congress on subjects referred to him. But of more interest are his cabinet opinions and the messages he drafted for the President. Gradually growing out of sympathy with the acts of the Executive, he likewise recorded passing events and opinions in notes, which have since become famous under the name of "Anas." Later in his life, he himself judged it expedient to revise and suppress portions of these notes, and his editors took further liberties with them. Yet even after this double revision, they were not printed without apologies and regrets that they had ever been written.

Retiring from the cabinet in 1794, he resumed a planter's life, and during this period, his pen produced nothing, unless we except some curious "Notes for a Constitution" for Virginia. Having reference only to the legislative branch, they are too imperfect to be of value, except as a contrast to the methods suggested in his proposed constitutions of 1776 and 1783.

Elected Vice-President in 1796, and so made presiding officer of the Senate, he prepared his *Manual of Parliamentary Practice,* chiefly drawn from the rules of Parliament, as well "to have them at hand for my own government, as to deposit with the Senate the standard by which I judge and am willing to be judged." In this same

period, he wrote an essay on Anglo-Saxon; a memoir on the discovery of certain bones of an animal in the western parts of Virginia; and a description of a mould-board of the least resistance for ploughs. He also drew a protest for his district against the act of a grand jury, employing in it a train of argument, which, put in practice, would have ended the independence of juries; and prepared a series of resolutions for the Kentucky legislature, which mark the culminating point of certain political tendencies that had been developed by the administrations of Washington and Adams. The platform of a party for many years, they have become famous not merely for the theory, but for the logical results of the theory, which history has given us. The Kentucky Resolutions of ’98 were, however, prepared by Jefferson as a piece of party manœuvring, he himself acknowledging that the direct action of the people rather than the interference by the states, was “the constitutional method”; and he so thoroughly understood the destructive quality of his argument that he worded it “so as to hold that ground in future, and leave the matter in such train as that we may not be committed to push matters to extremities, and yet be free to push as far as events will render prudent.” In fact, nullification of Federal, not national acts, was his object in those resolutions.

Raised to the Presidency in 1801, he wrote many messages and other public papers; drew a number of bills and resolutions for Congress to pass; compiled an elaborate treatise on the boundaries of Louisiana; contributed a series of articles to a newspaper vindicating certain of his actions which had met with criticism; and partly drafted a curious monograph on the question: “Will the human race become more perfect?” The latter typical of his optimism, for when all Europe was in arms, and his own country suffering many evils, he could yet argue strongly in favor of a steady progress towards perfection.

After his retirement from office in 1809, he wrote a “plan of an agricultural society,” which is of little importance; sketched a paper on “objects of finance, intended for the guidance of the national government in the difficulties already felt, in which he argued strongly against all forms of fiat money; drew a brief for the government relative to certain riparian rights; prepared at various times biographical notes and sketches of Franklin, Wythe, Peyton Randolph, and Meriwether Lewis; planned and partially outlined a work to be entitled *The Morals and Life of Jesus of Nazareth;* prepared an Autobiography to the year 1790; framed another series of resolutions opposed to the action of the national government; and finally, owing to press of financial difficulties, and in behalf of a private scheme for his own advantage, wrote vigorously in favor of lotteries.

In addition to these, and a number of minor papers, Jefferson carried on between the years of 1760 and 1826 an enormous correspondence, both private and official, which practically constitutes the greater mass of his writings. A careful estimate of the letters still in existence gives not less than twenty-five thousand, yet portions only of certain years are still extant. Interesting not merely for the opinions expressed, but for the personal element they present, they are of equal, if not superior, importance to his other writings.

The first of these writings to appear in print was the resolutions prepared for the Virginia House of Burgesses in 1769, which was printed in their *Journal* for that year. In 1774, without his knowledge, his friends caused the printing in pamphlet form of his proposed instructions to the Virginia delegates to the first Congress. His reply to Lord North’s “Motion” was printed in the *Journal of Congress* for 1775, and very generally in the newspaper press of that year. His *Declaration of Independence* ran through the colonies like wildfire, in many printed forms. Such bills as he drafted, which became laws, were printed

in the session acts of Virginia during the years 1776 to 1779. Several of his reports in the Congress of 1783–4 were printed as broadsides, and he himself printed in the same form his *Notes on a Money Unit.* In 1784, the State of Virginia printed, in the *Report of the Revisors,* the laws he had prepared for the proposed code. And, in the same year, he himself privately printed his *Notes on Virginia* and his *Draft of a Fundamental Constitution for Virginia.* In 1788, his *Observations on the Whale Fisheries,* and the *Consular Convention* he had agreed upon with France, were printed. Most of his reports to Congress as Secretary of State, and a part of his correspondence with the foreign governments, were printed at various times between 1790 and 1794, by order of Congress. His *Kentucky Resolutions* of 1798 were, in their amended form, given print and general currency by that state. His *Manual of Parliamentary Practice* was originally printed by request in 1800, and has been many times reprinted. In 1800, he published his *Appendix to the Notes on Virginia,* which was later issued as a part of that work. His inaugural speeches and messages as President were published in various forms as they became public. The argument he prepared on the Batture case was issued in pamphlet form in 1812. His biographical sketch of Lewis was printed in 1814 in the *History of the Expedition of Lewis and Clark.* A volume of legal reports, containing three of his early law arguments, edited by him before his death, was issued in 1829. In the same year, his grandson, Thomas Jefferson Randolph, as his literary executor, edited a four-volume edition of his writings and correspondence, including his autobiography, a small portion of his private correspondence, a part of his *Anas,* and a few miscellaneous papers; which was several times reprinted. In 1851, his *Essay on Anglo-Saxon* was printed by the University of Virginia, and five years later, his correspondence relating to that institution was included in

the *History of the University of Virginia.* In 1848, Congress purchased the larger part of his papers, and by their direction, H. A. Washington selected from them, with a few additions from other sources, enough to make a nine-volume edition of his writings, which naturally became the standard collection.

To meet the need of a new edition of the writings of Thomas Jefferson, this work has been undertaken. Not content with relying upon the Jefferson MSS. in the Department of State, from which, substantially, the former editions were compiled, the present editor, while making full use of the records of the Department, has obtained many interesting documents from the papers of Jefferson still in the hands of his descendants; the papers of the Continental Congress; the archives of the State of Virginia; the files of the French Foreign Office; the private papers of Washington, Adams, Madison, Monroe, Steuben, and Gates; as well as from many state archives, historical societies, and private collections throughout the country. Aid has generously been given him by many, which it will be his pleasure to gratefully acknowledge in the final volume, but he wishes here to express his especial thanks and obligations to his brother, Worthington Chauncey Ford, and to Mr. S. M. Hamilton, of the Department of State, for the constant assistance and favors rendered in the preparation of this edition.

The dedication of this work was prepared before the death of my father, Gordon Lester Ford, and I have preferred to leave it unchanged. His interest in and love for American history first directed my studies to that subject; to his devoted and unwearying gathering of books and manuscripts is due my ability to make this edition what it is; and the lack of his critical but kindly aid, will account for many of its shortcomings and errors.

Paul Leicester Ford.

October 15, 1892

,
97 Clark Street, Brooklyn, N. Y.

ITINERARY AND CHRONOLOGY OF THOMAS JEFFERSON

1743–1770.[Ref. 002]

1743.—Apr. 2 [or 13]	Born at Shadwell, Albemarle Co., Va.
1745.	Removed to Tuckahoe.
1748.	Attends English school at Tuckahoe.
1752.	Attends Douglas' Latin school.
	Returns to Shadwell.
1757.—Aug. 17.	His father, Peter Jefferson, dies.
	At Frederickville, attending Maury's school.
1759.?	At Watauga.
Dec. 25.	"At Col. Danridge's in Hanover."
1760.—Jan. 1.	At Col. Peter Randolph's.
14.	At Shadwell.
Mar. 25.	At Williamsburg.
	Enters College of William and Mary.
1762.—April 25.	Graduates.
	Enters law office of

	George Wythe.
	Forms attachment for Rebecca Burwell.
Dec. 25.	At Fairfield.
29?	At Shadwell.
1763.—Jan. 30.	At Shadwell.
July 15.	At Shadwell.
Sept. 25?	At Richmond.
Oct. 7.	At Williamsburg.
Dec. 25.	At Fairfield.
1764.—Jan. 19–24.	At Williamsburg.
Mar. 20.	At Williamsburg.
Apr. 9.	At Williamsburg.
1765.—May 23–29.	At Williamsburg.
1766.—Mar. 30.	At Shadwell.
May 11.	At Shadwell.
	Journeys to Annapolis, Philadelphia, and New York.
1767.—Jan.-Nov.	At Shadwell.
	Admitted to the Bar.
1768.—Feb.-Mar.	At Shadwell.
Aug. 18.	At Staunton.
1769.—Mar. 14.	At Shadwell.
	Elected a Burgess.

May 8.	At Williamsburg.
	Attends House of Burgesses.
9.	Drafts resolutions in reply to Botetourt.
17.	House of Burgesses dissolved.
	Signs non-importation Association.
July 27.	At Shadwell.
Nov. 16.	At Williamsburg.
	Attends House of Burgesses.
Dec. 21.	House of Burgesses adjourns.
1770.—Feb. 1.	House and library at Shadwell burned.
21.	At Charlottesville.
Apr.	At Williamsburg.
	Argues case of Howell *v.* Netherland.
May 11.	Attends House of Burgesses.
June 28.	House of Burgesses adjourns.
July 11.	At Charlottesville.
23.	At Albermarle.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY

1743–1790

1821. Jan. 6
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At the age of 77, I begin to make some memoranda and state some recollections of dates & facts concerning myself, for my own more ready reference & for the information of my family.

The tradition in my father's family was that their ancestor came to this country from Wales, and from near the mountain of Snowdon, the highest in Gr. Br. I noted once a case from Wales in the law reports where a person of our name was either pl. or def. and one of the same name was Secretary to the Virginia company.[Ref. 003] These are the only instances in which I have met with the name in that country. I have found it in our early records, but the first particular information I have of any ancestor was my grandfather who lived at the place in Chesterfield called Ozborne's and ownd. the lands afterwards the glebe of the parish.[Ref. 004] He had three sons, Thomas who died young, Field who settled on the waters of Roanoke and left numerous descendants, and Peter my father, who settled on the lands I still own called Shadwell[Ref. 005] adjoining my present residence. He was born Feb. 29, 1707/8, and intermarried 1739, with Jane Randolph, of the age of 19. daur of Isham Randolph one of the seven sons of that name & family settled at Dungeoness in Goochld. They trace their pedigree far back in England & Scotland, to which let every one ascribe the faith & merit he chooses.

My father's education had been quite neglected; but being of a strong mind, sound judgment and eager after information, he read much and improved himself insomuch that he was chosen with Joshua Fry, professor of Mathem. in W. & M. college to continue the boundary line between Virginia & N. Caroline which had been begun by Colo Byrd, and was afterwards employed with the same Mr. Fry to make the 1st map of Virginia[Ref. 006] which had ever been made, that of Capt Smith being merely a conjectural sketch. They possessed excellent materials for so much of the country as is below the blue ridge; little being then known beyond that ridge. He was the 3d or 4th settler of the part of the country in which I live, which was about 1737. He died Aug. 17. 1757, leaving my mother a widow who lived till 1776, with 6 daurs & 2. sons, myself the elder.[Ref. 007] To my younger brother he left his estate on James river called Snowden after the supposed birth-place of the family. To myself the lands on which I was born & live. He placed me at the English school at 5. years of age and at the Latin at 9. where I continued until his death. My teacher Mr. Douglas[Ref. 008] a clergyman from Scotland was but a superficial Latinist, less instructed in Greek, but with the rudiments of these languages he taught me French, and on the death of my father I went to the revd. Mr. Maury[Ref. 009] a correct classical scholar, with whom I continued two years, and then went to Wm. and Mary college, to wit in the spring of 1760, where I continued 2. years. It was my great good fortune, and what probably fixed the destinies of my life that Dr. Wm. Small of Scotland was then professor of Mathematics, a man profound in most of the useful branches of science, with a happy talent of communication correct and gentlemanly manners, & an enlarged & liberal mind. He, most happily for me, became soon attached to me & made me his daily companion when not engaged in the school; and from his conversation I got my first views of

the expansion of science & of the system of things in which we are placed. Fortunately the Philosophical chair became vacant soon after my arrival at college, and he was appointed to fill it per interim: and he was the first who ever gave in that college regular lectures in Ethics, Rhetoric & Belles lettres. He returned to Europe in 1762, having previously filled up the measure of his goodness to me, by procuring for me, from his most intimate friend G. Wythe, a reception as a student of law, under his direction, and introduced me to the acquaintance and familiar table of Governor Fauquier, the ablest man who had ever filled that office. With him, and at his table, Dr. Small & Mr. Wythe, his amici omnium horarum, & myself, formed a partie quarree, & to the habitual conversations on these occasions I owed much instruction. Mr. Wythe continued to be my faithful and beloved Mentor in youth, and my most affectionate friend through life. In 1767, he led me into the practice of the law at the bar of the General court, at which I continued until the revolution shut up the courts of justice. [For a sketch of the life & character of Mr. Wythe see my letter of Aug. 31. 20. to Mr. John Saunderson]

In 1769, I became a member of the legislature by the choice of the county in which I live, & continued in that until it was closed by the revolution. I made one effort in that body for the permission of the emancipation of slaves,[Ref. 010] which was rejected: and indeed, during the regal government, nothing liberal could expect success. Our minds were circumscribed within narrow limits by an habitual belief that it was our duty to be subordinate to the mother country in all matters of government, to direct all our labors in subservience to her interests, and even to observe a bigoted intolerance for all religions but hers. The difficulties with our representatives were of habit and despair, not of reflection & conviction. Experience soon proved that they could bring their minds to rights on the