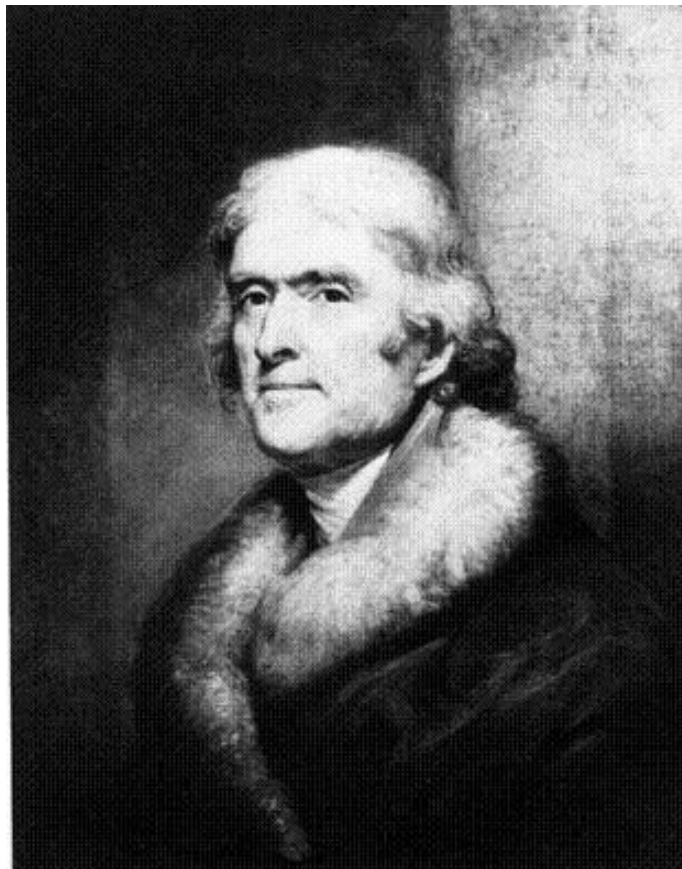


Thomas Jefferson

Frenchified Dweeb

Third, 1801-1809



Nicknames: "The Father of the Declaration of Independence", "The Apostle of Democracy", "The Pen of the Revolution", "Long Tom", "Mad Tom", "The Red Fox", "The Moonshine Philosopher of Monticello"

Birth: April 13th, 1743, Albemarle County, Virginia

Death: July 4th, 1826, Monticello, Albemarle County, Virginia

Significant Events During Jefferson's Terms: Louisiana Purchase ... Lewis & Clark Expedition ... Ohio (#17) becomes a State

Quotes: *"Never did a prisoner, released from his chains, feel such relief as I shall on shaking off the shackles of power."* -- Thomas Jefferson

"When the government fears the people, there is liberty; when the people fear the government, there is tyranny." -- Thomas Jefferson

"I hold it that a little rebellion now and then is a good thing...It is a medicine necessary for the sound health of government....God forbid that we should ever be twenty years without such a rebellion...The tree of liberty must be refreshed from time to time with the blood of patriots and tyrants. It is its natural manure." -- Thomas Jefferson

How his term ended: Eager to retire from politics, and in keeping with Washington's precedent, Jefferson chose not to run for a third term.

Other Professions: Lawyer, Farmer, Writer, Architect, Inventor

Worst Mistakes: Jefferson stole the liberty from all of those whom he enslaved. He was even worse than the other Presidential slaveholders, because he was a greater hypocrite about it, being the one who had written that "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness" are the inalienable rights of all men.

It is commonly believed that Jefferson carried on a thirty-eight year sexual relationship with one of his slaves, Sally Hemings, and fathered many children by her. Sally was half white, and the half sister of Jefferson's wife. DNA and circumstantial evidence suggests (but does not conclusively prove) that Jefferson was the father of Hemings' children.

Saving Grace: Jefferson endeavored to abolish slavery (but see "Worst Mistakes" above). He did succeed in outlawing further importation of slaves into the country as of 1808.

Notes: Jefferson's father died when he was fourteen.

Jefferson wrote the Declaration of Independence. Similar to when Washington was later selected as Commander in the Revolutionary War, Jefferson was perhaps chosen because of being a southerner (the other likely candidates for the job were Massachusetts men), and thus being able to get the southerners "on board" with the idea.

The Louisiana Purchase, which Jefferson concluded with France, doubled the size of the country overnight.

Although reportedly fascinating to listen to when addressing small groups, Jefferson was said to be a clumsy orator when speaking before a large audience.

As to appearance, Jefferson was somewhat "nerdy" -- he was tall (6'2 ½") and thin, walked with a loping gait, sat in an awkward heap (he was a "slouchy sitter," resting his body weight on one hip, whereby one shoulder arched high above the other), and dressed in an ill-

matched and outdated combination of worn-out clothes of various styles.

Jefferson was a proponent of a nation of yeoman – his vision was that America would remain an agricultural country consisting of small farms. Therein lies the path to personal independence, though, and most political leaders prefer the paternalism of industrialization.

Benjamin Banneker, an unusually gifted son of slaves who became a self-taught scientist and musician, “called” Jefferson on his duplicitous claim that he considered it obvious (“self-evident”) that all men are created equal, seeing that Jefferson was himself a slaveholder. Banneker wrote to Jefferson: “[How] pitiable it is to reflect that...you should at the same time be found guilty of that most criminal act, which you professedly detest in others.” Yet, Jefferson hypocritically still refused to free his slaves. Even men with professedly lofty ideals often times find it hard to put what's right ahead of their own immediate material (and sexual?) advantage. At the time Jefferson wrote the Declaration of Independence (containing the words about the equality of men, as well as the assertion that all have the right to life, *liberty*, and the pursuit of happiness), he had 175 slaves doing his bidding. Later, the number increased to almost 300.

In addition to his vocations, Jefferson also pursued the avocations of science, music (he played the violin), and philosophy; he also founded a University.

Jefferson considered the time he spent as President one of his less important accomplishments. He wrote the text to be chiseled into his own headstone himself, and it does not even hint at the fact that he had been President. As to his true calling, Jefferson wrote, “Nature intended me for the tranquil pursuits of science, by rendering them my supreme delight. But the enormities of the times in which I have lived have forced me to take a part in resisting them, and to commit myself on the boisterous ocean of political passions.”

Jefferson wasn't just whistling Dixie when he said that; he was quite prolific as an inventor. We have him to thank for the following:

- 1) Swivel chair
- 2) Pedometer
- 3) Dumbwaiter
- 4) Lazy Susan
- 5) A device he called a “polygraph” (not the polygraph we are familiar with today, used for determining the veracity of a person's statements, but one which, via a set of attached wires and tubing, simultaneously made a duplicate of what the penman was writing). In this way, in the day before copying machines and even typewriters with multi-stacked, carbon paper “sandwiches,” Jefferson was able to produce exact replicas of his writings. The movie “Jefferson in Paris” shows this contraption in use.

Jefferson also introduced both Brussels Sprouts and French fries (actually *pommes frites*, which originated in Belgium) to America, having been introduced to these things while an ambassador in Europe.

Like a few other Presidents, Jefferson died indebted. In fact, he was in the process of raffling off his mansion, Monticello, in order to pay off his debts when he died.