

**THE LIFE AND
STUDIES OF
BENJAMIN WEST**

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The life and studies of Benjamin West by John Galt

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JOHN GALT

**THE LIFE AND
STUDIES OF
BENJAMIN WEST**

THE
LIFE AND STUDIES
OF
BENJAMIN WEST, Esq.

PRESIDENT OF THE ROYAL ACADEMY OF
LONDON.

Prior to his Arrival in England;

COMPILED FROM MATERIALS FURNISHED BY HIMSELF,

BY JOHN GALT.

PHILADELPHIA:
PUBLISHED BY MOSES THOMAS.

J. Maxwell, Printer.

1816.

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PREFACE.

THE professional life of Mr. West constitutes an important part of an historical work, in which the matter of this volume could only have been introduced as an episode, and, perhaps, not with much propriety even in that form. It was my intention, at one time, to have prepared the whole of his memoirs, separately, for publication; but a careful review of the manuscript convinced me, that the transactions in which he has been engaged, subsequently to his arrival in England, are so much of a public nature, and belong so immediately to the history of the arts, that such a separation could not be effected without essentially impairing the interest and unity of the main design; and that the particular nature of this portion of his memoirs admitted of being easily detached and arranged into a whole, complete within itself.

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I do not think that there can be two opinions with respect to the utility of a work of this kind. Mr. West, in relating the circumstances by which he was led to approximate, without the aid of an instructor, to those principles and rules of art, which it is the object of schools and academies to disseminate, has conferred a greater benefit on young artists than he could possibly have done by the most ingenious and eloquent lectures on the theories of his profession; and it was necessary that the narrative should appear in his own time, in order that the authenticity of the incidents might not rest on the authority of any biographer.

JOHN GALT.

April 25, 1816.

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