

**THE LIFE OF THOMAS JEFFERSON,  
AUTHOR OF THE DECLARATION  
OF INDEPENDENCE, AND THIRD  
PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES**

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The Life of Thomas Jefferson, Author of the Declaration of Independence, and Third President of the United States by William Linn

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**WILLIAM LINN**

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*See page 10.*

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THOMAS HEYWARD, JR.

THE LIFE  
OF  
THOMAS JEFFERSON,  
AUTHOR OF THE  
DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE,  
AND  
THIRD PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

"Let laurels, drench'd in pure Parnassian dew,  
Reward his memory, dear to every muse,  
Who, with a courage of unshaken root,  
In honor's field advancing his firm foot,  
Plants it upon the line that Justice draws,  
And will prevail, or perish in her cause."

BY WILLIAM LINN.

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TO

SIMEON DE WITT, ESQ.

SURVEYOR GENERAL OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK,

His Volume is inscribed,

AS A TESTIMONIAL OF THE GRATITUDE AND RESPECT OF THE COMMISSIONERS;

ACCOMPANIED BY THE WISH,

THAT HIS AGE MAY BE AS COMFORTED AND HAPPY

AS HIS EARLY LIFE HAS BEEN

ANIMOUS, HONORABLE, AND USEFUL.

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This work is a compilation exclusively; and the only merit it can possibly claim, is in the collection and arrangement of the materials, and in the authenticity and correctness of its authorities. And, where facts and truths alone are sought, this acknowledgment cannot diminish the value of the production, or detract from its usefulness. Farther than what the writers quoted afford, neither the splendor of fancy, nor the fascination of language, is to be expected from it; its aim has been a plain, unvarnished statement of the prominent incidents in the life of its illustrious subject; and if that is attained, the intention of the publishers is answered. The selections for this purpose have been made from various authors; and the memoir of Mr. Jefferson, composed by himself, and prefixed to the volumes of his correspondence, has been the text-book by which difficulties and discrepancies have been obviated or reconciled. These memoirs, however, comprise but little of his lengthened and eventful life, and his letters have enabled me, in some measure, to supply the deficiency. Neither have I hesitated, in many instances, to employ the very words of my authorities; conscious that any attempted amendment on my part, would not only be futile, but, by misapplication of a phrase, might perplex the meaning. On this account, a variety of style will be perceptible, but not having a tendency, it is imagined, to throw confusion in the facts related, or shroud expression in obscurity. To the "American Biography," more than any other, I have been indebted for date and incident.

To present to the public a candid and impartial history of the life of THOMAS JEFFERSON, has been the anxious desire of the compiler, though, in other respects, his ability may have failed in the performance. This he hopes he has done; and he has given in a portable and unornamented form, what was before contained in, or appended to, books voluminous in bulk and extravagant in price.

W. L.

L I F E  
OF  
T H O M A S J E F F E R S O N .

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C H A P T E R I .

THE LIFE of THOMAS JEFFERSON, author of the Declaration of Independence, President of the United States, and one of the most prominent actors in the stirring scenes of the revolution, cannot, we presume, be unacceptable to any American reader. The incidents of his distinguished life, his talents, the exalted stations which he filled, his intimate connexion with those illustrious men whom we delight to honor, and his association with the most important events in the revolutionary struggle, must always afford him a conspicuous place in the history of our country. Shaken as he has been by the storms of the time, and so furiously assailed by political opponents, there was danger, while they contemplated nothing beyond the downfall of the executive, that their weapons might pass through his shield, and strike into the bosom of their country; yet now, when the fury of the day has passed over, candor will do justice to his talents, appreciate his merits, and render gratitude for his services. The

clouds are rolling off from the darkened landscape, and the excellencies of his character can now be distinguished on the horizon in all their native brightness.

It has been remarked, that certain stated times and periods have been prolific of great men. Nature seems then to have exerted herself with a more than ordinary effort, and to have poured them forth with unusual fertility. But at no time or period did any country produce greater men, or those better qualified to conduct affairs to a successful issue, than at the commencement and during the progress of our combat for independence. The commanders were ardent and enterprising, and possessing an almost intuitive knowledge of their profession; our counsellors were firm, prudent and sagacious; and the continental Congress possessed a collective body of wisdom which the world has seldom witnessed. The people themselves, enthusiastic in the cause of liberty, deeply imbued with a detestation of tyranny, and with all their wrongs and remembrances about them, were brave and determined, unrepining in the midst of hardships, and free from cruelty and licentiousness. With such instruments, under the direction of a benignant Providence, the result was glorious, and its effects and consequences have been beneficially felt over a great part of the globe. "History," said Professor Silliman in 1820, "presents no struggle for liberty which has in it more of the moral sublime than that of the American revolution. It has of late years been too much forgotten in the sharp contentions of party, and he who endeavors to withdraw the public mind from these debasing conflicts, and to fix it on the grandeur of that epoch, which,