


President	Thomas Jefferson	
Chronological Order	3	
Life Span	1743-1826	
Home State	Virginia	
Elected	1800, 1804	
Political Party	Republican (Democratic-Republican)	
Vice President	Aaron Burr (First Term), George Clinton (Second Term)	
First Lady	None (Wife Deceased)	
Children	1 son, 5 daughters	
Physical Attributes	6'2.5" tall, lean, sandy red hair pulled back in a queue, freckles, hazel eyes, soft voice	
Undergraduate Education	College of William & Mary	
Military Service	None	
Profession	Attorney, Planter, Architect	
Other Political Offices	Delegate to Continental Congress, Minister to France, Governor, Secretary of State, Vice President	
Nickname	Sage of Monticello	
Family Lineage	Welch, Scottish, English	
Religious Affiliation	None	

Biographical Notes

1. Jefferson was an award-winning architect, a talented writer – the best amongst the Founding Fathers – and the most intellectually gifted president in American history. He was knowledgeable in politics, philosophy, law, science, architecture, and agriculture. After a long day as president, he liked to relax in the evenings by reading recently published scientific papers. John F. Kennedy once commented at a White House dinner for Nobel Prize winners that "I think that this is the most extraordinary collection of talent, of human knowledge, that has ever been gathered at the White House – with the possible exception of when Thomas Jefferson dined alone."

2. Jefferson was also a shrewd partisan politician. He co-founded, along with James Madison, the Republican Party, which occupied the White House for twenty-four consecutive years (two terms each by Jefferson, Madison, and Monroe). He and Madison co-founded the *National Gazette*, one of America's first political newspapers. As president, he handled Congress masterfully, using persuasion – not confrontation – to get his agenda passed. (N.B. Jefferson's Republican Party is not related to the modern GOP; in fact, it evolved into the modern Democratic Party.)

3. Jefferson grew up as the eldest son of a prosperous, cultured, and sophisticated family in Albemarle County, Virginia, 70 miles northwest of Richmond, near the Blue Ridge Mountains. His father, Peter Jefferson, was a planter, surveyor, and mapmaker. In the late 1740s, Peter and Joshua Fry surveyed the colony of Virginia. In 1751, they published a map based on their surveys that became the standard map of Virginia for almost fifty years. His mother, Jane Randolph Jefferson, came from one of the state's most prominent families.

Peter Jefferson died at age forty-nine leaving Jane with eight children aged seventeen and under, sixty-six slaves, and 2,750 acres of land. Jane was, according to family legend, "a woman of clear and strong understanding," and she took control of the plantation and ran it well. But for Thomas, there would be no more evenings with his father, looking at maps and hearing tales of expeditions. Jefferson later described the situation by saying: "At 14 years of age the whole care and direction of myself was thrown upon myself

entirely, without a relative or friend qualified to advise or guide me."

4. Jefferson was an undergraduate student at the College of William & Mary in Williamsburg, the capital of Virginia, from 1760 to 1762. Almost at once, Dr. William Small, a Scottish professor with an Enlightenment worldview, recognized Jefferson's abilities. According to Jefferson, Small "most happily for me, became soon attached to me, and made me his daily companion when not engaged in the school; and from his conversation, I got my views about the expansion of science, and of the system of things in which we are placed."

5. Dr. Small regularly attended three-man dinner parties with two close friends – George Wythe, one of Virginia's greatest lawyers, and Frances Fauquier, the British governor of Virginia – at which they discussed philosophy, science, law, politics, etc. Small began bringing Jefferson along, and soon he was, as a teenager, the fourth member of the group. Jefferson later wrote that "to the habitual conversations on these occasions I owed much instruction." As time went on, Jefferson became comfortable around these sophisticated men and acquired the polished manners for which he was so well-known later.

Later in life, no matter where he was – Monticello, Philadelphia, New York, Paris, or the White House – Jefferson sought to replicate these Williamsburg nights. He loved having wide-ranging discussions with interesting people.

6. When Jefferson was nineteen, George Wythe accepted him as a law student. He studied with Wythe for five full years, 1762-1767, at a time when almost no one studied law for more than two. These were years of virtually uninterrupted reading, not only in the law but also in the ancient classics (e.g., Aristotle, Plato, Epicurus, Cicero, Herodotus), political philosophy (e.g., Locke, Hume, Hobbes, and Rousseau), natural philosophy (e.g., Newton, Bacon, Descartes, and Pascal), and more (e.g., Aquinas, Augustine, Spinoza, and Voltaire). His years under Wythe involved much more than just learning how to be a lawyer. They helped prepare him to become: a legislator, the author of the Declaration of Independence, the author of the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom, a statesman, the leader of a political party, and a president.

7. As a law student in Williamsburg, Jefferson witnessed the beginnings of the American Revolution. In 1764, George Wythe drafted a petition from the House of Burgesses to the British House of Commons, a petition protesting British taxation of the colonies. However, some burgesses considered the language to be too strong, which implies that Wythe – Jefferson's mentor – already had strong opinions on the questions that would spark the revolution.

In 1765, Jefferson stood at the door of the House of Burgesses and heard Patrick Henry's famous speech in opposition to the Stamp Act. Henry said, "Caesar had his Brutus, Charles the First his Cromwell; and George the Third may profit by their example. If this be treason, make the most of it." Of Henry, Jefferson remarked, "He appeared to me to speak as Homer wrote."

8. In 1767, Jefferson was admitted to the bar, returned home to Albemarle County, and began practicing law. His practice was eclectic, and his cases took him to various courthouses in the region. In 1768, at the age of twenty-five, he was elected to the House of Burgesses.

Shortly after Jefferson took his seat in the House of Burgesses, the chamber passed a resolution that supported Massachusetts' protest of the Townshend Acts. The Virginia royal governor (Fauquier's successor) responded by dissolving the House of Burgesses. The burgesses then walked over to the Raleigh Tavern, reconvened, and discussed what to do. The next day they drew up the "Nonimportation Resolution," an agreement to boycott either by nonpurchase or nonconsumption practically all British goods. Sixteen men signed the agreement, including Jefferson, George Washington, and George Mason. They were now deeply involved in the politics of protest.

9. In 1770, the Jefferson family home, Shadwell, burned to the ground. Jefferson had already begun construction on a new home of his design on a small, nearby mountain, and now that construction took on new urgency. He called the new home Monticello, which is Italian for "little mountain." Monticello, which is near Charlottesville, was and still is, one of the most beautiful houses in America. It is open to the public, and more than 400,000 people visit it each year. Monticello and the "Academical Village" at the University of Virginia, which was also designed by Jefferson, have been designated a UNESCO World Heritage site.

10. In 1772, Jefferson married a young widow, Martha Wayles Skelton, known as Patty to her friends. She was beautiful, musical, well-read, and he adored her. They had six children, but only two lived to adulthood

(Patsy and Polly). Jefferson and Patty were married for only ten years when she died after a difficult childbirth. Jefferson was devastated. On her deathbed, Patty made Jefferson promise never to remarry because she did not want her children governed, as she had been, by a difficult stepmother.

11. The First Continental Congress met in Philadelphia in 1774. Virginia did not choose Jefferson as a delegate, but he did write a pamphlet, entitled *A Summary View of the Rights of British America*, which helped inform the Virginia delegation. The pamphlet was printed in Williamsburg and became popular throughout the colonies; George Washington referred to it as "Mr. Jefferson's Bill of Rights." There were rumors that when it reached London, the British government secretly declared Jefferson guilty of treason. The pamphlet helped establish Jefferson's reputation for graceful, fluent, and persuasive prose.

12. In 1776, the Second Continental Congress appointed a five-man committee to write the Declaration of Independence: Jefferson, John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, Robert R. Livingston, and Roger Sherman. Jefferson suggested Adams should write the draft, but Adams refused and insisted that Jefferson should do it. When Jefferson asked why, Adams stated his reasons: "Reason first, you are a Virginian, and a Virginian ought to appear at the head of this business. Reason second, I am obnoxious, suspected, and unpopular. You are very much otherwise. Reason third, you can write ten times better than I can." Jefferson replied, "Well, if you are decided, I will do as well as I can."

Years later, Jefferson explained the purpose of the Declaration and some of the thinking behind it. He said the Declaration was "an appeal to the tribunal of the world" to justify taking up arms against the British. The main goal was "to place before mankind the common sense of the subject, in terms so plain and firm as to command their assent, and to justify ourselves in the independent stand we are compelled to take."

The heart of the document is one extraordinary sentence that states the fundamental principle upon which the new country is to be founded and justifies the right of a people to separate from their current government:

We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness; that to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that whenever any form of government becomes destructive of those ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness.

13. When most people think about the Declaration of Independence, they recall the soaring rhetoric and lofty sentiments of the first two paragraphs: "When, in the course of human events,..." followed by "We hold these truths to be self-evident." But the document also contains something else: a long list – eighteen paragraphs worth – of "repeated injuries and usurpations" inflicted upon the colonies by "the present King of Great Britain." This is Jefferson, the lawyer, presenting a legal brief in the court of public opinion.

These two separate parts of the document elucidate Jefferson's two core beliefs about government, from which he never strayed. First, a government should empower people and be responsive to their needs; it should not be a set of rules handed down by an aristocracy that supposedly knows what is best for everyone. Second, a monarchy is an inherently bad form of government; the best type is a republic, i.e., a country governed by the elected representatives of the people.

The last paragraph of the document declares the independence of the new "United States of America" in no uncertain terms, and the last sentence of this paragraph recognizes the commitments the individual signees have made to each other:

And for the support of this declaration, with firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor.

After the signing of the document, Benjamin Franklin quipped, "We must all hang together, or we assuredly shall hang separately."

14. Eighteenth-century Virginia was a hothouse of religious tension because the Church of England (a.k.a. the Anglican Church) was the state's official religion. Members of any other religion – Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists, Catholics, Jews, etc. – were discriminated against and forced to pay taxes to support the Anglican

Church. It was a crime in Virginia not to baptize infants in the Anglican Church; children could be taken from their parents if the parents failed to profess the prescribed creeds; dissenters were denied political offices and military appointments.

Traditionalists filled Virginia's legislature and viewed an official religion (Anglicanism) as an absolute necessity for maintaining a virtuous citizenry. Independent thinkers like Jefferson, James Madison, George Mason, and George Wythe disagreed and considered various remedies. They were not anti-religion; they were anti-state-sponsored religion.

In 1777, Jefferson drafted the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom, which was introduced as a bill in the Virginia General Assembly in 1779 and enacted into law in 1786. The heart of the bill states:

Be it enacted by General Assembly that no man shall be compelled to frequent or support any religious worship, place, or ministry whatsoever, nor shall be enforced, restrained, molested, or burthened in his body or goods, nor shall otherwise suffer on account of his religious opinions or belief, but that all men shall be free to profess, and by argument to maintain, their opinions in matters of Religion, and that the same shall in no wise diminish, enlarge or affect their civil capacities.

At the time the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom was enacted, no other state in the U.S. and no other country in the world had passed a law granting religious liberty to all their citizens.

The Statute was a notable precursor of the two freedom of religion clauses in the First Amendment to the United States Constitution. The First Amendment, which was written by James Madison, was enacted into law in 1791.

15. Jefferson was the governor of Virginia during the Revolutionary War from 1779 to 1781. When Benedict Arnold invaded Virginia in 1780, Jefferson hesitated to call out the Virginia militia because he was unsure that an attack was taking place and did not want to sound a false alarm. By the time he called the militia out, it was too late for a proper defense of the new state capital, Richmond. Jefferson was forced to flee. (The invaders brought handcuffs in anticipation of arresting the author of the Declaration of Independence.) He learned a hard lesson from this: as president, he made decisions quickly and decisively.

16. Jefferson was a member of the Congress of the Confederation during its 1783-1784 session and was the driving force behind the Land Ordinance of 1784, which evolved into the Northwest Ordinance of 1787. The Northwest Ordinance dealt with the future governance of the territory east of the Mississippi River and north of the Ohio River. At the time, some of the original thirteen states claimed different parts of the territory. The ordinance established that the territory belonged to the United States as a whole and would be divided into several sections that would each be admitted as a state – fully equal to any of the original thirteen – when it had enough population. The states created this way were Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota.

17. During the 1780s, the United States did not have its own currency; Americans used a wide variety of European coins of differing values, and there was a great deal of confusion about their comparative values. In 1776, Jefferson made elaborate calculations and notes on the relative values of more than a dozen coins in common usage. He then prepared a report relating these values to a popular Spanish coin called the dollar. In April 1784, he wrote a report for the Congress of the Confederation advocating a monetary system based on the dollar as the basic unit (pegged to both gold and silver). The various coins had values based on decimal ratios to the dollar, which represented one hundred cents. This scheme was the first monetary system based on the decimal system. Jefferson left Congress before it acted his proposal, but he passed on copies of his report to several colleagues. The following year Congress adopted Jefferson's system with very few changes.

18. In 1780, Jefferson received a letter of inquiry from French diplomat Francois Barbe-Marbois into Virginia's geography, history, and government as part of his study of the United States. Jefferson answered Barbe-Marbois and then expanded his responses into a book, *Notes on the State of Virginia* (1785). He compiled the book over five years; it included reviews of Virginia's history, politics, laws, culture, and geography. The book explores what constitutes a good society, using Virginia as an exemplar. He expressed his beliefs in the separation of church and state, constitutional government, checks and balances, and individual liberty. He also wrote extensively about slavery. In his opinion, if slavery were abolished, African Americans should be resettled in a colony in Africa. His explanation of this position was:

It will probably be asked, why not retain and incorporate the blacks into the state and thus save the expense of supplying, by the importation of white settlers, the vacancies they will leave? Deep-rooted prejudices entertained by the whites; ten thousand recollections by the blacks of the injuries they have sustained; new provocations; the real distinctions which nature has made; and many other circumstances will divide us into parties and produce convulsions which will probably never end but in the extermination of the one or the other race.

19. In 1784, Washington asked Jefferson to join Franklin and Adams as a diplomat in Paris. From 1785 to 1789, he was the U.S. minister to France. Jefferson thoroughly enjoyed France and became immersed in French culture. He loved French sculpture and painting, had one of his slaves trained as a French chef, and sent French furniture and household items back to Monticello. His architectural style was influenced by French Neoclassic buildings, in particular, the Hotel de Salm in Paris, the building that inspired him to renovate Monticello and put a dome on it.

While in Paris, Jefferson also became involved in the efforts of Lafayette and his other French friends to reform the French monarchy. He helped Lafayette draft the "Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen," which is the core statement of the values of the French Revolution. The document significantly impacted the development of popular conceptions of individual liberty and democracy in Europe and worldwide. When the French Revolution occurred in 1789, Jefferson viewed it as a natural consequence of the American Revolution and hoped France would become America's sister republic.

20. George Washington named Jefferson, an experienced diplomat and fellow Virginian, secretary of state in 1789. This appointment led, almost immediately, to cabinet clashes between Jefferson and Secretary of the Treasury Alexander Hamilton. Hamilton favored a powerful federal government and a financial system similar to Great Britain's; Jefferson did not. In foreign policy, Hamilton favored Great Britain; Jefferson favored France. In Jefferson's words, he and Hamilton were "daily pitted in the Cabinet like two cocks."

As time passed, Jefferson started to fear that Hamilton's strong influence on Washington was steering the ship of state toward an aristocracy or perhaps even a monarchy. In hindsight, this sounds far-fetched, but the following description of an evening with some of the Founding Fathers proves otherwise.

One night, when Washington was out of town, Jefferson hosted a dinner party for the Cabinet and Vice President Adams. After dinner, the subject of the British system of government arose. Adams said that, in his opinion, "if some of its defects and abuses were corrected, it would be the most perfect constitution of government ever devised by man."

Jefferson was horrified. Adams had given the highest praise possible to a hereditary monarchy!

Hamilton then went further than Adams, saying that "it was the most perfect model of government that could be formed; and that a correction of its vices would render it an impracticable government." To Jefferson's ear, Hamilton was saying that the British system was better than the American one.

As time passed, President Washington agreed with Hamilton rather than Jefferson on a variety of issues, which frustrated Jefferson. Jefferson submitted his resignation on December 31, 1793, and Washington accepted it, even though he did not want Jefferson to leave. Jefferson returned home to Monticello and became the leader of the opposition.

21. In 1790, the one-year-old United States government had two pressing problems. First, Alexander Hamilton's proposed financial program for the country had just been defeated in Congress by a group led by James Madison. Hamilton's program was based on the idea that the federal government would assume the war debts of the individual states. Hamilton believed this policy would standardize the nation's accounts, help establish America's credit abroad, and make the federal government of necessity the nation's chief taxing authority. Madison and other Southerners opposed Hamilton's plan because their states had already paid their debts. They were also wary of giving the federal government too much power. Second, Congress was conflicted over where to locate the nation's permanent capital. Southerners, including Washington, Jefferson, and Madison, wanted the capital on the Potomac River at the Virginia-Maryland border. Northerners preferred the permanent capital to be in Pennsylvania.

Secretary of State Jefferson invited Madison and Hamilton to have dinner with him at his home to discuss the two impasses. Over an exquisite meal prepared by Jefferson's French-trained cook, the three men struck the famous "Dinner Table Bargain": Madison would see that enough votes would change for the assumption to pass, and Hamilton would ensure that his legislative allies supported the Potomac location for the capital. Madison and Hamilton fulfilled their parts of the bargain. Assumption passed, and the capital ended up right where the three Virginians wanted it: present-day Washington, D.C., fifteen miles from Mount Vernon.

In the opinion of historian Joseph Ellis, the Dinner Table Bargain should “rank alongside the Missouri Compromise and the Compromise of 1850 as one of the landmark accommodations in American politics.”

22. Jefferson and James Madison co-founded the Republican Party in 1792 to oppose Hamilton’s economic plans and Anglocentric foreign policy views. The central tenets of the party were limited government, a strict interpretation of the Constitution, states rights, support for agrarian interests, and a preference for France over Great Britain. Shortly after, Hamilton and his allies formed the Federalist Party. These party alliances caused, for the first time, bloc voting in Congress, with Madison being the Republican leader in the House and James Monroe the Republican leader in the Senate.

Jefferson worried about the divisive effects of parties. However, he believed that the Federalists were corrupting the ideals of the Revolution and that opposition politics was essential for the restoration of those ideals. Jefferson and Madison also co-founded the first Republican newspaper, the *National Gazette*.

23. In the 1796 presidential election, Federalist John Adams defeated Jefferson, 71 to 68 electoral votes. Under the rules of that time, the second-place finisher became vice president; so, for the only time in American history, the offices of president and vice president were held by men of different political parties.

Jefferson drafted a friendly letter to congratulate Adams, which might have led to cooperation between the two old friends, but Madison convinced him not to send it. He reminded Jefferson that they were going to have to oppose Adams’s policies and that if a letter supportive of Adams was exposed, it would hurt their cause. As a result, Jefferson did not send the message and did not take part in the Adams administration; instead, he was the leader of the opposition.

Adams and Jefferson clashed when Adams signed the Alien and Sedition Acts. The Alien Acts allowed the president to deport any noncitizen foreigner he thought was "dangerous to the peace and safety" of the country without a hearing or a trial. The Sedition Act made it a federal crime to excite “the hatred of the good people of the United States” against the federal government, Congress, or the president.

These laws were partisan. The aliens the Federalists feared were the French and the Irish, who both hated the British and usually joined the Republican Party. The Sedition Act was used to imprison and fine Republican activists and newspaper editors. Jefferson and Madison felt that the Alien Acts were unconstitutional because they gave the president judicial powers. They felt that the Sedition Act was unconstitutional because it violated freedom of speech and freedom of the press.

24. The 1800 presidential election again pitted Jefferson against John Adams. It was a hard-fought, nasty campaign. Adams' campaign was weakened by unpopular taxes and vicious Federalist infighting over his actions in the Quasi-War with the French. The Republicans pointed out that the Alien and Sedition Acts had been primarily used against Republicans (and not Federalists) and accused the Federalists of being secret pro-Britain monarchists. Federalists charged that Jefferson was a godless libertine beholden to the French.

Jefferson won more votes in the Electoral College than Adams, 73 to 65, but this did not make him president because Republican vice-presidential candidate Aaron Burr also got 73 electoral votes. Because of the tie, the House of Representatives, where the Federalists had the majority, decided the election. Alexander Hamilton lobbied Federalist congressmen on Jefferson's behalf, believing him to be the lesser of two evils. On February 17, 1801, after thirty-six ballots, the House elected Jefferson president and Burr vice president.

John Adams did not take the defeat well. During the lame-duck session of Congress, the Federalists passed the Judiciary Act of 1801, which created twenty-three new federal judgeships. About two weeks before Jefferson’s inauguration, Adams filled almost all these slots with Federalists. (N.B. They became known as “midnight judges” because they were appointed so late in Adams’ term.) Also, he named John Marshall, a Virginia Federalist and long-time Jefferson antagonist, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. Adams chose not to attend Jefferson’s inauguration, even though George Washington came to his. On Inauguration Day, he took the 4 a.m. public stage to Massachusetts.

Jefferson was acutely aware that the presidential campaign had polarized the country, and in his inaugural address, he made a concerted effort to bring people together. He said,

Every difference of opinion is not a difference of principle. We have called by different names brethren of the same principle. We are all Republicans; we are all Federalists.

In his inaugural address, he also stated clearly the central principle of his political philosophy:

Still one thing more, fellow citizens, a wise and frugal government, which shall restrain men from injuring one another, shall leave them otherwise free to regulate their own pursuits of industry and improvement, and shall not take from the mouth of labor the bread it has earned. That is the sum of good government, and this is necessary to close the circle of our felicities.

25. Jefferson was America's first modern president: he implemented his programs by mobilizing public opinion, led his political party, and steered his legislation through Congress. He was a detail-oriented president – he wanted to know *everything*. He often orchestrated things anonymously through a third party, e.g., having someone else write a response to a critical newspaper story or having someone else submit a bill to Congress that he had written. Jefferson liked being in control and enjoyed being president, except for his last year in office, when the embargo damaged the American economy.

He also governed in a very personal way by having congressmen and diplomats over to the White House for small, informal dinner parties. In December 1801, the 150 members of the 7th Congress arrived in Washington for their first session. Most of the men were single; there were no theaters and few taverns; and most congressmen resided in primitive boarding houses. Jefferson began hosting three congressional dinners per week. The guests, typically fewer than a dozen, sat around a single round table. Every legislator was invited at least once, with Republicans and Federalists invited on alternate days. Jefferson would mix in diplomats, scholars, and upper-class Georgetown residents for variety. From his time spent in the Continental Congress and the Confederation Congress, and then presiding over the Senate for four years as vice president, Jefferson appreciated how to interact with lawmakers because he had been one himself. He understood that access to the president could make all the difference in legislative politics.

During these dinners, Jefferson had a way of putting everyone at ease. His breadth of knowledge allowed him to talk intelligently with almost all his guests. He had a particular knack for reaching out to newcomers or those who were shy, easing them into the general conversation. He never dominated the talk but instead shaped the discussion. The guests sat at a round table, rather than a rectangular one, to avoid implying a hierarchy. Unlike a traditional British dinner, there was no assigned seating – guests could sit next to whomever they wanted. The food was exquisite – Jefferson had become quite the gourmet while serving as minister to France – and often featured his favorite dessert: ice cream. Once, when asked about the purposes of these dinners, Jefferson explained:

I cultivate personal intercourse with the members of the legislature that we may know one another and have opportunities of the little explanations of circumstances, which [if] not understood might produce jealousies and suspicions injurious to the public interest, which is best promoted by harmony and mutual confidence among its functionaries.

26. Jefferson believed that the Federalists had given too much power to the federal government, and he took steps to reverse that. He refused to renew the Alien and Sedition Acts. He encouraged Congress to repeal much of the Judicial Act of 1801. The repeal eliminated almost all the “midnight judges” appointed by Adams.

Jefferson reduced the size of the army and navy, lowered taxes, closed “unnecessary offices,” and cut “useless establishments and expenses.” During his two terms, the federal debt was reduced from \$83 million to \$57 million. However, Jefferson did leave in place many of the core economic policies of the Federalists, including the Bank of the United States, which he had opposed as secretary of state during the Washington administration.

27. During the 18th and 19th centuries, pirates from the Barbary States (Morocco, Algiers, Tunis, and Tripoli) attacked merchant ships unless they were protected by a formidable navy or by payment of tribute to each state. American merchant ships had been protected by the Royal Navy when the future United States were British colonies. After independence, however, Barbary pirates often captured American merchant ships, pillaged cargoes, and enslaved crew members or held them for ransom. Eventually, the United States made treaties in which they paid expensive tribute to each Barbary State.

In 1801, the Pasha of Tripoli declared war on the U.S. because the American tribute payment was delinquent. Jefferson, who had opposed paying tribute since 1785, responded by sending a U.S. Navy squadron of four ships to the Mediterranean as a show of force. Following the squadron's first engagement with a Tripolitan ship, Jefferson successfully asked Congress for a declaration of war.

The “First Barbary War” (1801-1805) was the first foreign war fought by the United States. The war is also known as the Tripolitan War because the other three Barbary States did not join Tripoli in warring against the U.S. Jefferson ordered five separate naval bombardments of Tripoli and an invasion by U.S. Marines and

mercenaries. (The line "to the shores of Tripoli" in the Marine Corps Hymn refers to this invasion.) The bombardments and invasion led the Pasha to sign a treaty with the U.S. in 1805 that restored peace in the Mediterranean. The peace lasted until 1815 when the Second Barbary War (a.k.a. the Algerine War) broke out between Algiers and the U.S. Many Americans celebrated the result of the First Barbary War as a vindication of the U.S. policy of spreading free trade around the world and as a great victory for liberty over tyranny.

28. Jefferson helped draft the Military Peace Establishment Act, which Congress passed and Jefferson signed in 1802. The Act outlined in twenty-nine sections the rules, the number of officers and military personnel, and the management of provisions that would be granted to the military. The Act also established the United States Military Academy to be located "at West Point in the state of New York." The primary function of the academy was to teach American soldiers engineering skills and thus alleviate the need to employ engineers from foreign countries.

29. When Spain ceded the Louisiana Territory to France in 1802, Jefferson immediately identified this as a threat to the United States. He felt that if France retained possession of the Louisiana Territory (and New Orleans in particular), the United States would inevitably be drawn into a conflict with the French.

To avoid this, Jefferson sent James Monroe to Paris with instructions to buy New Orleans and a small amount of surrounding land for a maximum of \$10 million. In the meantime, Napoleon had decided to sell the whole Louisiana Territory. Robert R. Livingston and Monroe negotiated a treaty with France in 1803 for the United States to purchase the entire Louisiana Territory at the bargain price of \$15 million, a purchase that would double the size of the United States.

Jefferson, a lifelong proponent of westward expansion, was elated. However Jefferson, the lawyer, saw a problem: in his opinion, the Constitution did not give him the power to purchase and govern the new land. Instead, a constitutional amendment would be required. Wisely, he shared this view with only a few close friends until he could work things out.

In the meantime, Napoleon was having second thoughts about the sale. So, in practice, there was no time to pursue a constitutional amendment. Jefferson saw this clearly and acted boldly. He put his constitutional scruples aside and asked Congress to support the treaty. The Senate ratified the treaty, and the House authorized the required funding. The transaction is referred to as the Louisiana Purchase.

30. Jefferson commissioned the Lewis and Clark Expedition (1804-1806), the first transcontinental expedition to the Pacific Coast by the United States. According to Jefferson, one goal was to find "the most direct and practicable water communications across this continent for the purposes of commerce." He also sought information about the geography and resources of the recently acquired Louisiana Territory, as well as a report on the Native American tribes of the region.

Jefferson was intimately involved with the planning of the trip. Meriwether Lewis, Jefferson's private secretary, and William Clark, brother of the legendary frontiersman George Rogers Clark, led the expedition. The president gave Lewis detailed instructions, taught him how to measure latitude and longitude, gave him access to the latest maps of the region, sent him to experts in astronomy, botany, anatomy, and medicine for training, offered him advice on how to deal with Indians, and fretted with him over last-minute logistics.

The trip was a huge success. The route was not one hundred percent navigable, but it was almost so. Starting from St. Louis, they followed the Missouri River to its headwaters, traveled a relatively short distance by land across the Rocky Mountains, and then traveled on the Clearwater, Snake, and Columbia rivers to the Pacific Ocean. They returned using approximately the same route. The expedition brought back notebooks containing approximately 140 maps, as well as information about the Native Americans, flora, fauna, and terrain they encountered. Most importantly, the journey's success helped establish the idea that the United States' expansion to the Pacific Ocean was inevitable.

31. Three other expeditions explored the Louisiana Purchase territory during the Jefferson administration: the Dunbar and Hunt Expedition (1804-1805), the Freeman-Custis Expedition (1806), and the Pike Expedition (1806-1807). The Dunbar and Hunt Expedition provided one of the earliest descriptions of the present-day states of Louisiana and Arkansas, including information about the Ouachita River and the Arkansas hot springs.

Jefferson instructed the Freeman-Custis Expedition (a.k.a. the Red River Expedition) to travel on the Red River from its mouth on the Mississippi River (near Natchez, Mississippi) to its headwaters. He hoped it would find a trade route to Santa Fe, New Mexico, which was under Spanish colonial control. To lead the

expedition, Jefferson chose astronomer/surveyor Thomas Freeman, who had recently surveyed the southern boundary of the United States, and Peter Custis, the first academically trained naturalist to accompany an American expedition. The expedition was instructed to contact Native American peoples for trading purposes, collect flora, fauna, and topography data, map the country and river, and assess the land for settlement. The Red River was either the southern boundary between the Louisiana Purchase and Spanish territory or very close to it. Jefferson did not want to cause an international incident, so he told Freeman that if Spanish officials denied him passage at any point along the river, he should stop and return home. A Spanish force of over two hundred soldiers confronted the expedition near the southeastern corner of present-day Oklahoma and forced the expedition to turn back.

The Pike Expedition was a military excursion led by U.S. Army Lieutenant Zebulon Pike that traveled west from St. Louis to Colorado. Pike contacted several Native American tribes and informed them that the U.S. now claimed this territory. The expedition discovered Tava, a Colorado mountain later renamed Pike's Peak. Pike and his men were captured by the Spanish and taken into Mexico. Their travels through present-day New Mexico, Mexico, and Texas provided Pike with important data about Spanish military strength and civilian populations. While in Spanish territory, Pike purchased two grizzly bear cubs and shipped them to Jefferson in D.C. Although Pike and most of his men were released because Mexico and the U.S. were not at war, some of his soldiers were held in Mexican prisons for years despite U.S. objections. In 1810, Pike published an account of his expedition; the book was so popular that it was translated into French, German, and Dutch for publication in Europe.

32. Jefferson enjoyed broad public support after his first term because the economy was strong, taxes were lower, and the Louisiana Purchase had doubled the nation's size for a pittance. Jefferson won the election of 1804 in a landslide over the Federalist Charles Cotesworth Pinckney of South Carolina, 162 to 14 electoral college votes. Jefferson had coattails; the Republican Party swept four-fifths of the seats in both the House and the Senate.

33. Starting in 1805, Jefferson was informed by several reliable sources that Aaron Burr was attempting to sponsor an insurrection, hoping to separate part of the Louisiana Territory from the United States. In 1807, Burr was charged with treason, and a grand jury was seated in Richmond, Virginia, to consider the charges. Chief Justice John Marshall presided.

Since many of the relevant documents had come to Jefferson, the grand jury subpoenaed him and the documents. Jefferson sent the documents but refused to attend the proceedings, arguing it was unreasonable to expect the president to travel to testify before the grand jury, given the range and importance of his duties. Marshall accepted this reasoning, and the principle of "executive privilege" – that a president cannot be subpoenaed to attend court proceedings – has stood ever since.

At the trial, Marshall – Jefferson's longtime political enemy – did two things that helped Burr get acquitted. First, he redefined treason to be a specific *act*, not just the *intention*, to betray your country. Second, he appointed his brother-in-law and close friend, Edward Carrington, foreman of the jury. Being foreman allowed Carrington to explain the arcane details of Marshall's redefinition of treason. When Burr was acquitted, Jefferson was livid.

34. The U.S. Constitution stated that the federal government could impose no limitation on the importation of slaves until twenty years after its ratification. It did not require that the slave trade end then (i.e., in 1808). In his 1806 annual message to Congress, Jefferson asked it to pass a law forbidding the importation of slaves after January 1, 1808. Congress passed the Act Prohibiting Importation of Slaves in 1807.

35. Jefferson had a complicated history with the institution of slavery. In theory, he was against it. As a young man, he tried unsuccessfully to legislate against it in both the House of Burgesses and the Virginia General Assembly. In the latter case, he and his allies wrote an amendment stipulating "the freedom of all [slaves] born after a certain day." In an early draft of the Declaration of Independence, he referred to slavery as a "cruel war against human nature itself," but others edited out the sentence containing this phrase.

Although he opposed slavery in theory, he practiced it on a large scale. His plantation at Monticello typically had more than one hundred slaves who did the work that made his lavish lifestyle possible. He treated his slaves well by the standards of his time; for example, he did not allow his slaves to be whipped. However, he had an overseer and ensured that runaway slaves were recaptured.

Jefferson had six children with Sally Hemings after his wife Martha died. Sally, an enslaved person, was Martha's half-sister – her father was Jefferson's father-in-law, John Wayles. Sally was light-skinned and beautiful; her duties at Monticello were to look after Jefferson's belongings, study, and bedroom.

Four of Jefferson's children with Sally lived to adulthood. They lived at Monticello as slaves and were trained as artisans. They were freed at age twenty-one. Sally was three-quarters European, so these children were seven-eighths European in ancestry. Three of the four chose to enter white society as adults. Sally was freed when Jefferson died, and she lived her last nine years in a house in Charlottesville with her two youngest sons.

36. As Britain's war with France ramped up, British and French interference with American maritime trade increased, as did British impressment of American sailors. In 1806, Jefferson called for a boycott of British goods; on April 18, Congress passed the Non-Importation Acts, but they were never enforced. Later that year, Jefferson asked James Monroe and William Pinkney to negotiate an end to British interference. However, the treaty they signed with Great Britain lacked any provisions regarding the issue of impressment, and Jefferson refused to submit it to the Senate for ratification.

In June 1807, the USS *Chesapeake*, a frigate, left its harbor in Norfolk, Virginia, and found the HMS *Leopard* waiting for it just outside the three-mile limit of the Virginia coast. When the captain of the *Leopard* demanded to be allowed to board and search the *Chesapeake* for British deserters, Captain James Barron refused because he believed no former British sailors were aboard. After further communication failed to resolve the issue, the *Leopard* opened fire without warning, subjecting the American ship to a furious bombardment for ten minutes. The *Chesapeake* then lowered its flag in surrender, whereupon fifty British seamen boarded and took four men. The crippled American vessel, having suffered three dead and eighteen injured and taking on water, limped back into port. After the incident, Barron was court-martialed and relieved of his command.

American public opinion was highly aroused because the *Chesapeake* was a warship, and the attack occurred close to the Virginia coast. Consequently, Jefferson felt he had three choices: "War, embargo, or nothing." War was not an option because Jefferson had significantly reduced the size of the American army and the navy. Doing nothing was unacceptable because the *Leopard's* violation of American sovereignty had been so egregious. Therefore, Jefferson asked Congress to approve a trade embargo with Great Britain and France, stipulating that the embargo would be lifted if these countries agreed to respect America's neutrality and stop harassing our shipping.

Congress passed the Embargo Act of 1807, and the embargo remained in place for the rest of Jefferson's second term. The embargo did not achieve the desired results because neither Great Britain nor France could afford to give in – they were locked in a battle for survival and needed to minimize American trade with their opponent. The embargo was unpopular with Americans and was repealed by Congress just before Jefferson left office.

Jefferson retired to Monticello after his presidency.

37. The Library of Congress was established by an act of Congress in 1800. As president, Jefferson played a crucial role in its development. In 1802, he signed the bill that established the Joint Committee on the Library to oversee it, and during his two terms, he selected many of the library's volumes himself.

After his presidency, Jefferson was appalled when British soldiers burned almost all the books (approximately 3,000) in the Library of Congress during their invasion of Washington in 1814. In 1815, Jefferson sold his entire priceless personal library (6,487 volumes) to the federal government to form the core of the new Library of Congress. The agreed-upon price, \$23,950, was an incredible bargain for the government. Jefferson organized his books based on Francis Bacon's organization of knowledge, grouping them into Memory (civil and natural history), Reason (philosophy and mathematics), and Imagination (fine arts, architecture, agriculture, oratory, and criticism) with 44 subdivisions. The library used this scheme until the late 19th century when librarian Herbert Putnam introduced the Library of Congress Classification, which is still used today.

Two-thirds of the books Jefferson sold were destroyed in a fire in the Capitol in 1851, but some remain to this day. They can be identified by the "TJ" mark Jefferson inscribed on the spine, or, in some cases, the title page.

38. Jefferson founded the University of Virginia in 1819 in Charlottesville. He wanted the university, which is often referred to as UVA, to be funded by the state of Virginia and have a national character and stature. Fellow Virginians James Madison, James Monroe, and John Marshall endorsed the project. Jefferson wanted UVA to be a new kind of university – one dedicated to educating leaders in practical affairs and public service rather than preparing them to be teachers and ministers exclusively.

At the time of UVA's founding, most universities were founded by specific religious groups to educate their

clergy and future parishioners: Harvard was founded by Puritans, William & Mary by Anglicans, and the College of New Jersey (Princeton) by Presbyterians. Jefferson refused to allow UVA to be affiliated with any church. He was not anti-religion or an atheist; he believed that the moral teachings derived from faith were important. But he objected to the idea that any denomination had exclusive access to the truth. At UVA, faculty and students of different religions worshipped as they saw fit, just as the Virginia Statute of Religious Freedom intended.

Jefferson considered the founding of the university one of his greatest achievements, and he was involved in almost every aspect of its creation. He planned the curriculum, recruited the first faculty, helped choose the books for the library, and served as the architect for the campus. Jefferson also served as the first rector of UVA. When he died, Madison replaced him as rector.

Jefferson's design for UVA served later as a model for many other American universities. His "Academical Village" consisted of a long rectangular lawn, surrounded by ten interconnected pavilions, with a large rotunda ("The Rotunda") at one end of the lawn. A professor from a different discipline lived in each pavilion and taught his classes in that building. The Rotunda, a scaled-down version of the Pantheon in Rome, housed the library. Student housing was nearby. Upon his death, Jefferson donated his contemporary library (almost 2,000 volumes) to UVA. (He had already sold his original library to the federal government to restock the Library of Congress in 1815.)

UVA is currently one of the most prestigious public universities in America, and The Rotunda and pavilions are still in use. In 1976, the American Institute of Architects called UVA "the proudest achievement of American architecture in the past 200 years."

39. Jefferson and John Adams became very close friends while serving as diplomats in France in the 1780s. It was rare for the irascible Adams to have such an intimate and close friend; Abigail Adams commented to Jefferson that he was "the only person with whom my Companion could associate with perfect freedom and unreserve." Adams himself commented to Jefferson that, when they were in Paris together, his son John Quincy "appeared to be almost as much your boy as mine." However, the two men became estranged due to political differences in the 1790s, when (a) Adams became a Federalist and Jefferson a Republican, and (b) they ran against each other twice for the presidency.

By 1812, Jefferson had retired to Monticello, and Adams to his farm in Massachusetts. The two former friends had not corresponded for eleven years. But, at that time, a mutual friend, Dr. Benjamin Rush, gently coerced them into resuming their correspondence.

The result was the most remarkable correspondence between two politicians in American history. Over the next fourteen years, Adams sent Jefferson 109 letters, and Jefferson sent Adams 49. The letters covered a wide range of topics, with the motivation being, according to Adams: "You and I ought not to die before We have explained ourselves to each other." Jefferson kept a bust of Adams in his study near his writing table.

Adams and Jefferson died on July 4, 1826, precisely fifty years after the signing of the Declaration of Independence. Adams' last words were, "Thomas Jefferson still survives." But he was wrong. Jefferson had died approximately five hours earlier.

40. Of all the wonderful letters Jefferson and Adams exchanged, one stands out for its grace and kindness – Jefferson's condolence letter to Adams upon the death of his wife, Abigail, in 1818. Jefferson knew the couple for fifty years and knew how much they loved each other. He also knew what it was like to lose a wife you adored. Jefferson wrote:

I know well, and feel what you have lost, what you have suffered, are suffering, and have yet to endure. The same trials have taught me that, for ills so immeasurable, time and silence are the only medicines. I will not therefore, by useless condolences, open afresh the sluices of your grief nor, altho' mingling sincerely my tears with yours, will I say a word more, where words are vain, but that it is of some comfort to us both that the term is not very distant at which we are to deposit, in the same cerement, our sorrows and suffering bodies, and to ascend in essence to an ecstatic meeting with the friends we have loved & lost and whom we shall still love and never lose again. God bless you and support you under your heavy affliction.

See the next page for a list of references.

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