Thomas Jefferson and His Younger Brother

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A Study in Cosmopolitanism and Parochialism

By

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Preface

Unsurprising it would be to find that many persons, decently familiar with Thomas Jefferson (and that includes Early American historians), were unaware that he had a brother. Biographers sometimes passingly mention Randolph early in a Jeffersonian biography inasmuch as Thomas, as the older brother, was saddled with the task of choosing between a tract of land on the Rivanna River or another on the James River, when father Peter Jefferson died. When Thomas chose the former, the latter went to brother, Randolph.[1] Merrill Peterson, in his biography of over 1000 pages, devotes one sentence to Randolph. "With his only brother, Randolph, so much younger, he was never close."[2] Norman Risjord says nothing about Randolph other than he "seems to have been mentally retarded."[3] Susan Kern, who writes of life for the Jeffersons at Shadwell, says merely what is all too, and unhelpfully, obvious: that "the tone of Thomas's letters to his brother reveals a paternal relationship."[4] Others—e.g., Gilbert Chinard, Joe Ellis, John Boles, Christopher Hitchens, Lawrence Kaplan, and Kevin Gutzman—completely neglect Jefferson's brother in their biographies.

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[1] E.g., Noble E. Cunningham, Jr., *In Pursuit of Reason: The Life of Thomas Jefferson* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University, 1987), 9.
[2] Merrill D. Peterson, *Thomas Jefferson & the New Nation: A Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970), 9.
[3] Norman Risjord, *Thomas Jefferson* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1994), 4.
[4] Susan Kern, *The Jeffersons at Shadwell* (New Haven, Yale University Pres, 2010), 220.

Bernard Mayo in 1942 edits 28 of the 32 letters between Thomas Jefferson and younger brother Randolph in *Thomas Jefferson and His Unknown Brother Randolph.* In the short book, Mayo offers a thin introduction, a mere four pages, to the thin correspondence. Mayo presumably thinks that all that needs to be said about the relationship between the brothers Jefferson can be said in four pages of prose. "The letters treat of family and agricultural matters, and in some degree enlarge one's knowledge of Jefferson's domestic life. But they are primarily interesting because they reveal Thomas Jefferson's affection, patient kindness, and desire to help a brother strikingly inferior." Mayo concludes that Randolph was merely a "earth-bound farmer."[5]

Most scholars, given the scant attention Randolph Jefferson receives in any biography of Thomas Jefferson—in many biographies, as we have seen, he is mentioned, if at all, merely as one of several siblings—certainly agree with Mayo's assessment.[6] It is also significant that the massive, three-volume biography of Thomas Jefferson by Henry S.

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[5] Bernard Mayo, "Jefferson's Unknown Brother," in Thomas Jefferson and Randolph Jefferson, *Thomas Jefferson and His Unknown Brother Randolph* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia, 1942), 7 and 10. In 1981, there is a second edition of Mayo's book that is co-edited by James Bear. This edition contains all 32 of the extant letters in the correspondence as well as a genealogical chart.

[6] Schacter, for illustration, writes that while Randolph matriculated, like Thomas, at William and Mary, he "gained little profit from his sojourn." Though he would marry, have children, and farm his land, "all the evidence points to the fact that his grade of intelligence was barely sufficient, with his brother's aid, to grapple with the ordinary difficulties of life." Nathan Schacter, *Thomas Jefferson: A Biography,* Vol. 1 (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1951), 88.

Randall—a biography that tells us so much about the domestic life of Jefferson—does not have an entry for Randolph Jefferson in its index. Even more astonishing is granddaughter Sarah N. Randolph's *The Domestic Life of Thomas Jefferson.* The book contains a slightly truncated version of the first letter between the brothers, but there is nothing said about the letter or about Randolph Jefferson.[7]

Dumas Malone, the first of the two great Jeffersonian scholars, in his six-volume biography of Jefferson over four decades devotes a couple of paragraphs to Randolph, but his assessment of the younger brother is unflattering. "The contrast between her [Randolph's sister Anne Scott] twin brother Randolph and their brother Thomas may be said to exemplify the natural inequality of men, since the opportunities of the two were not dissimilar." Like Thomas, Randolph was privately educated. Like Thomas, Randolph attended William and Mary College. Like Thomas, Randolph was generously endowed with over 2,000 acres of land on the death of father, Peter Jefferson. Nonetheless, unlike Thomas, he seemed to benefit little from his educative experiences and ever had difficulties with management of his plantation on the Fluvanna River (a tributary of the James River), to be called Snowden. By nature, injudicious and diffident, he was easily swayed, even buffaloed, by others. Randolph, says Malone, relied mightily on his older brother for assistance in everyday affairs.[8]

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[7] Sarah N. Randolph, *The Domestic Life of Thomas Jefferson* (Cambridge, MS: University Press, 1939), 105–6.

[8] Dumas Malone, *The Sage of Monticello* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1981), 153–55.

And so, it seems, we have a received view. The brothers Jefferson were equally endowed with opportunities for personal success, but while Thomas not only flourished but also became one of the greatest luminaries of his day, Randolph, though a Virginian planter, wallowed in relative obscurity and leaned heavily on his older brother for plantational advice due to mental debility.

In 2012, independent researcher Joanne Yeck offers a challenge to the received view: Randolph's sluggishness and insignificance as symptoms of some degree of mental impairment. In her *The Jefferson Brothers,* Yeck especially challenges Mayo's thesis. Randolph, says she, was not "mentally retarded," and he was more than Mayo's "earthbound farmer." Her book promises critical reassessment of Randolph Jefferson and impresses by its bulk. She crafts nearly 450 pages and aims to show that Randolph Jefferson was in his own way a historically significant person at least inasmuch as any relatively successful Virginian planter might have been. His dimwittedness is apparent, not real. It appears to be on account of having the fate of being Thomas Jefferson's brother, for "with a yardstick like Thomas Jefferson for a brother, who wouldn't come in a very poor second?" Yeck's Randolph is in many ways crafted to be more similar, than dissimilar, to his older brother.[9] The question posed by Malone, however, goes unanswered by Yeck: With many of the same opportunities were shared—education and wealthy—just why did Randolph "come in a very poor second" and not turn out more like brother Thomas?

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[9] Joanne Yeck, *The Jefferson Brothers* (Kettering, OH: Slate River Press, 2012), chap. 14.

While Mayo says all that he needs to say about Thomas and Randolph in four pages—material, after all, on Randolph is skimp—Yeck is profuse. Why does Yeck attempt such a voluminous corrective when we know so little about Randolph?

Yeck does admit that information is wanting for a biography of Randolph Jefferson. We have no account books, no diary, and no letters of Randolph, other than his letters to brother, Thomas, and those are in our possession because of Thomas' meticulous keeping of records.

Yeck, thus, approaches indirectly the life of Randolph.

First, Yeck digs for information, wherever she can find it. She employs, for instance, courthouse records and tax records as well as the diaries of others familiar with Randolph or of a similar social status as Randolph. In doing so, she does unearth a wealth of data. The nodus, unfortunately, is that such data tell us much about events in and around Scott's Ferry, just north of Randolph's Snowden, but too little about Randolph and Snowden.

Second, Yeck works analogically. If we do not know the particulars of Randolph's life, we do have particulars of the lives of others who interacted with him or who were near to him and of similar socio-economic status: e.g., if Randolph behaved like his schoolmate, *P,* about whom we have records that show that *P* lived such-and-such life, we can infer that Randolph too lived such-and-such life. Nonetheless, arguments from analogical inferences are merely too tenuous to be very aidful, because they are wholly conjectural, for sound biography.

And so, because of her indirect approach, the book, *qua* biography, is of limited assistance, at least, when it comes to telling Randolph's story. I say more about Yeck's book

in the Appendix VI. This book is in part a corrective to her thesis.

If the material on Randolph's life is so scant and if what we know of Randolph can be succinctly expressed in four pages, what is the value another (i.e., this) collection of Thomas and Randolph's correspondence in addition to Mayo's? I add, more to the point, if Randolph's life was so ordinary, even inconsequential—a point too that Yeck makes[10]—why is there need of another commentary on the correspondence?

There has never been a comprehensive critical analysis of the exchange of letters between the brothers Jefferson. There is a 1981 edition of Mayo's collection, co-edited by James Bear, that has all the known letters (32) between Thomas and Randolph, but that collection offers little in the way of critical inspection. In *Thomas Jefferson & His Younger Brother, A Study in Cosmopolitanism & Parochialism,* I offer a thorough critical analysis of the correspondence of the brothers Jefferson—the letters themselves upon critical analysis tell us much about Thomas and Randolph—and critical analysis of the letters has hitherto never fully been done.

With so little known about the life of Randolph Jefferson, the letters between the brothers tell us very much about Randolph: *viz.*, about the relevance of his education, about the scope of his interests, about his ability to process information, about his capacity to direct his affairs, about his health, and about the nature of his relationships with his sons, with his second wife Mitchie, and with his older brother, *inter alia*. The correspondence also tells us about the degree of Thomas' feelings for Randolph. Thomas

[10] Joanne Yeck, *The Jefferson Brothers*, 335.

watched over his younger brother throughout his life from a sense of filial duty, but he never felt filial love from his brother. They were merely too dissimilar. No one has taken the time to inspect fully the correspondence.

Thomas Jefferson & His Younger Brother has an introduction that covers the early history of the lives of the brothers Jefferson till the correspondence begins in 1789, and then three main parts, which may be considered as long chapters. In chapter 1, I cover the early letters of the correspondence: all written by Thomas to Randolph. There are only three letters. Chapter 2 begins with a letter, early in 1807, from Thomas to Randolph and penned after a lacuna of 15 years. It ends in 1812. There are 12 letters—six by each brother. The final chapter contains the remaining letters between the brothers. There are 17 letters, with nine written by Randolph and eight written by Thomas, and they range from 1813 to 1815, the year of Randolph's unexpected death. I end the book with a concluding section and add six aidful appendices: one, a critical analysis of the Thomas Jefferson Foundation's refusal to consider the possibility of Randolph Jefferson's paternity of any of slave Sally Hemings' children; two, Thomas Jefferson's deposition on the death of his brother, a very valuable document that sheds much light on their relationship; three, the children of Peter and Jane Jefferson (parents of the brothers); four, the children of Randolph Jefferson and Anne J. Lewis (Randolph's first wife); five, the child of Randolph Jefferson and Mitchie B. Pryor (Randolph's second wife); and six, a review of Joanne L. Yeck's *The Jefferson Brothers.* The rationale for the fifth appendix is that Yeck's is the only book that aims to tell the story of Randolph Jefferson. Hers is a valiant attempt of nearly 450 pages, but ultimately winds

up telling us little more about Randolph than we have learned in Mayo's four-page preface of the letters between the brothers.

There are several key disclosures in my critical examination of the correspondence between the brothers Jefferson. I sum those disclosures in my concluding section at chapter 3's end.

I end with three procedural points. First, I have done my best to partition the correspondence in a meaningful, relevant manner. There are certainly other ways of partitioning material. Second, I keep my historical and critical prose in the first person to enliven my discussion of the letters. Last, all letters between Thomas and Randolph and between Thomas and other correspondents are drawn from *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson* (Princeton University Press). I include the letters without the copyrighted editorial annotations, such as editorial comments and interpolations, from Princeton University Press.

Introduction

It is imperative to set the stage for my commentary on the letters by a brief introduction to the brothers. The focus in this introduction will be from the year 1743, the year of Thomas' birth, to 1789, the year of the first letter between the brothers.

Thomas Jefferson is born at their estate, Shadwell, on April 13, 1743; Randolph is born at Shadwell on October 1, 1755, along with twin sister Anna Scott. Their parents are Peter Jefferson (1708–1757), a hardy self-made man, who rises to prominence in Albemarle, and Jane Randolph Jefferson (1720–1776), a woman of fine blood. The plantation Shadwell is named after Jane's hometown village, near London.

Peter Jefferson is without formal education, but he is highly ambitious and reads much to improve his situation. A planter, he also becomes a sheriff, justice of the peace, surveyor, and cartographer. He, along with Joshua Fry, creates the first comprehensive map of Virginia (1753): *A Map of the Inhabited Part of Virginia containing the Whole Province of Maryland, with Part of Pensilvania, New Jersey and North Carolina.*

On his death (1757), Peter leaves behind some 7,500 acres of land, 21 horses; a large number of pigs, cows, and sheep; and 53 slaves. Most livestock are sold "for the support and maintenance of my Family and for the benefit of my two sons equally," while Thomas receives the slave Tawny, Peter's books, mathematical instruments, a bookcase, and a cherrywood desk. "Within one year after he reached twenty-one," Thomas, as eldest, is also given

choice of two lands, one on the Rivanna River, the other on the Fluvanna tributary of James River. Randolph will inherit what Thomas does not cull. The Rivanna tract is around 2500 acres, appraised at £2,130, but in all he comes to inherit additional lands and comes to own some 5000 acres.[11] Figure 1-1 shows the relative locations of Thomas' plantation "Monticello," Randolph's plantation "Snowden," and Shadwell. The distance between Monticello and Snowden, beneath a horseshoe of the James River, is some 20 miles (Figure 1-1).

Peter Jefferson's death (17 Aug. 1757) is devastating to Thomas, who is a mere 14 years of age at the time. He writes to grandson Thomas Jefferson Randolph (1792–1875) on November 24, 1808, "When I recollect that at fourteen years of age the whole care and direction of myself was thrown on myself entirely, without a relation or friend qualified to advise or guide me, and recollect the various sorts of bad company with which I associated from time to time, I am astonished I did not turn off with some of them and become as worthless to society as they were." With some concession for exaggeration—he is crafting a hortatory letter to his beloved grandson, Thomas Jefferson Randolph, who is soon to turn 16—the sentence is parturient with meaning. It suggests two things: first, that his mother, Jane, was of little assistance in directing Thomas' early affairs; and second, that Thomas was almost completely dependent on his father, Peter, for guidance in his youthful affairs. Such things noted, there is no hint in the sentence of familial affection for his father. The quote instead intimates that his relationship with his father was

[11] Nathan Schacter, *Thomas Jefferson: A Biography,* Vol. 1 (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1951), 20–21.

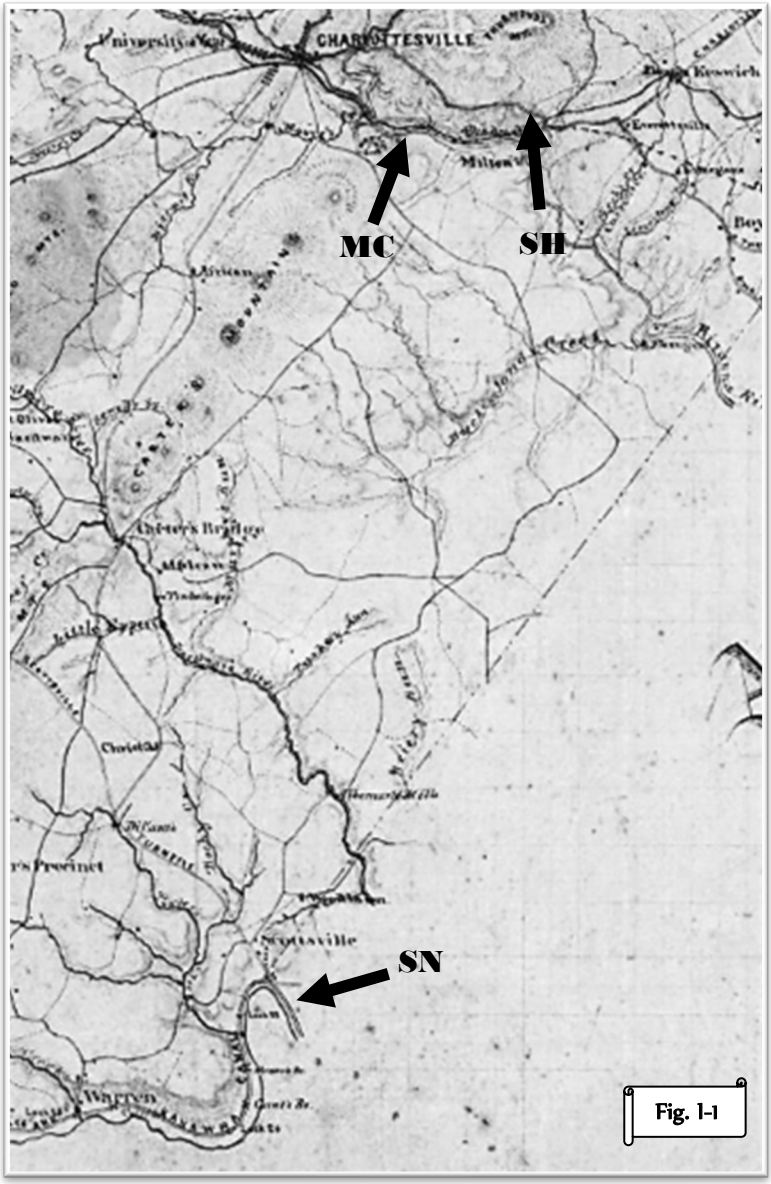

Fig. 1-1

one of a boy to a mentor. With his various duties as justice of the peace and as sheriff, and especially as surveyor, it is obvious that Peter Jefferson often has spent much time away from Shadwell, and it is difficult to have a deeply affectionate relationship with someone who is seldom home.

Thomas' education is begun at the residence of and under Rev. William Douglas (1708–1798)—"a superficial Latinist [and] less instructed in Greek"—and then continued by Rev. James Maury (1717–1769)—"a correct classical scholar"—at his school at Fredericksville for two years.[12] It is due to Maury—it was at Maury's school that Thomas was educated for two years after the death of Peter Jefferson—that Thomas develops his profound love of Latin and Ancient Greek. "I think the Greeks and Romans have left us the present models which exist of fine composition, whether we examine them as works of reason, or of style and fancy," Jefferson writes to Joseph Priestley (27 Jan. 1800); "and to them we probably owe these characteristics of modern composition. I know of no composition of any other ancient people, which merits the least regard as a model for its matter or style. To all this I add, that to read the Latin and Greek authors in their original, is a sublime luxury; and I deem luxury in science to be at least as justifiable as in architecture, painting, gardening, or the other arts." He adds, "I thank on my knees, Him who directed my early education, for having put into my possession this rich source of delight; and I would not exchange it for anything which I could then have acquired, and have not

[12] Thomas Jefferson, *Autobiography, Thomas Jefferson: Writings,* ed. Merrill D. Peterson (New York: Library of America, 1984), 4.

since acquired." The sentiment is certainly directed to Maury.

At 15, Thomas agonizes about his future. As an inordinately precocious youth, he is not wholly comfortable at Shadwell. Life there is somewhat bedlamic—an unhappy climate for a budding intellectual. He will be surrounded by six sisters, two older and four younger, and only one brother, whom we have seen is 12-and-one-half years his junior and far from an intellectual match for Thomas. Two siblings die in early infancy. The only sibling who seems to be somewhat of an equal in intelligence and imagination, or roughly so, is the oldest sibling, Jane, whom Thomas loves dearly. Jane, unwed, will die on October 1, 1765, at the age of 25—that is a few months after the death of his best friend Dabney Carr—and her death overwhelms Thomas. He crafts an epitaph for her stone:

> Ah, Joanna, puellarum optima,
> Ah, aevi virentis flore, praerepta,
> Sit tibi terra laevis;
> Longe, longeque valeto.[13]

Younger sister Elizabeth (1744–1774) very probably is significantly mentally disabled and dies mysteriously at 29 years of age. I return later to that unfortunate episode. Anna Scott Jefferson, Randolph's twin sister, is known to be mentally challenged, though she, like her twin brother, will marry.

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[13] Roughly: "O Jane, best of young women, / Oh, taken prematurely in the prime of youthful vigor, / May the earth sit lightly on you; / Farewell forever and forever."

And so, after the death of father Peter Jefferson and with the relative chaos of life at Monticello, Thomas finds himself at a crossroads in his life. On January 14, 1860, he writes to John Harvie, one of his guardians since the death of his father:

> I was at Colo. Peter Randolph's[14] about a Fortnight ago, and my Schooling falling into Discourse, he said he thought it would be to my Advantage to go to the College [William and Mary], and was desirous I should go, as indeed I am myself for several Reasons. In the first place as long as I stay at the Mountain the Loss of one fourth of my Time is inevitable, by Company's coming here and detaining me from School. And likewise my Absence will in a great Measure put a Stop to so much Company, and by that Means lessen the Expences of the Estate in House-Keeping. And on the other Hand by going to the College I shall get a more universal Acquaintance, which may hereafter be serviceable to me; and I suppose I can pursue my Studies in the Greek and Latin as well there as here, and likewise learn something of the Mathematics.

Thomas decides on education at the college. He subsequently matriculates at William and Mary College, where he will study from 1760 to 1762. In Query XV of his *Notes*

[14] Col. Peter Randolph (1708–1767), of Chatsworth on the James River, is the cousin of Jefferson's mother. He is, along with Harvie, Thomas Turpin, and Dr. Thomas Walker, one of the executors of Peter Jefferson's will. Henry S. Randall, *The Life of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 1 (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott & Co., 1865), 19.

on the State of Virginia, Thomas writes of the founding of the institution:

> The college of William and Mary is the only public seminary of learning in this State. It was founded in the time of king William and queen Mary, who granted to it 20,000 acres of land, and a penny a pound duty on certain tobaccoes [*sic*] exported from Virginia and Maryland, which had been levied by the statute of 25 Car. II. The assembly also gave it, by temporary laws, a duty on liquors imported, and skins and furs exported. From these resources it received upwards of 3000 communibus annis. The buildings are of brick, sufficient for an indifferent accommodation of perhaps an hundred students. By its charter it was to be under the government of twenty visitors, who were to be its legislators, and to have a president and six professors, who were incorporated. It was allowed a representative in the general assembly. Under this charter, a professorship of the Greek and Latin languages, a professorship of mathematics, one of moral philosophy, and two of divinity were established. To these were annexed, for a sixth professorship, a considerable donation by Mr. Boyle, of England, for the instruction of the Indians, and their conversion to Christianity.[15]

The school for Christianizing the Native Americans, founded in 1700), he adds, is called Brafferton, after Brafferton Manor in England, whose owner, the celebrated scientist Robert Boyle, has donated a sum of money for the

[15] Thomas Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia,* ed. William Peden (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1954), 150–1.

last professorship and a building, separate from the Wrenn Building (Figure 1-2), which was entirety of the school at the time.[16] Of the design and construction of that building, Thomas writes in Query XV of *Notes on the State of Virginia* of the Wrenn Building and the hospital of Williamsburg, "The College and Hospital are rude, mis-shapen piles, which, but that they have roofs, would be taken for brick-kilns."[17]

Nevertheless, there is, in Thomas' estimation, a serious problem that has blighted the institution. Instruction of Greek and Latin has "filled the college with children," which proves to be a serious distraction to students who are suitably instructed in those languages and wish to study seriously the sciences. There are two unhappy consequences for Thomas. First, the schools of mathematics and moral philosophy "became of very little." Second, the revenue of William and Mary is funneled mostly to accommodate "those who came only to acquire the rudiments of science."[18]

During the American Revolution, young students of the institution principally join the British Army, and money from Boyle to sustain the Brafferton is interrupted. The Brafferton will for all intents and purposes close in 1779.[19]

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[16] "What Was the Brafferton School?", *Virginia Vignettes*, http://www.virginiavignettes.org/, accessed 2 Aug. 2023.

[17] Thomas Jefferson, Notes on the State of Virginia, 153.

[18] Thomas Jefferson, Notes on the State of Virginia, 151.

[19] "The Brafferton Building," https://www.wm.edu/about/history/historiccampus/brafferton/index.php, accessed 2 Aug. 2023. For more, see Danielle Moretti-Langholtz and Buck Woodward, *Building the Brafferton: The Founding, Funding, and Legacy of America's Indian School* (Williamsburg: Buscarelle Museum of Art, 2019).

Fig. 1-2

After the success of the American Revolution, there is the push to "de-Anglicanize" the college and give it a more serious, non-religious turn. Thomas does his part concerning secular and scientific reforms. He puts forth his "Bill for the Amending of the Constitution of the College of William and Mary" in 1779. He proposes eight professorships: Moral Philosophy, Law of Nature and Nations, and Fine Arts; Law and Police; History, Civil and Ecclesiastical; Mathematics; Anatomy and Medicine; Natural Philosophy and Natural History; Ancient Languages, Oriental and Northern; and Modern Languages. The bill, however, will not pass.[20] Yet Thomas, as governor (1779–1781), is instrumental in pushing forth changes to the curriculum. The two professorships in Divinity are removed. So, too, is the

[20] M. Andrew Holowchak, Thomas Jefferson's Philosophy of Education: A Utopian Dream (London: Routledge, 2014), 37–39.

professorship in Greek and Latin. The professorships thereafter are six: Law and Police; Anatomy and Medicine (the first full-time professorship of its kind in the country); Natural Philosophy and Mathematics; Moral Philosophy, Law of Nature and Nations, and Fine Arts; and Modern Languages.[21] Removal of the professorship in Greek and Latin is not on account of the irrelevance of Classicalism in a person's education—Thomas will ever stress the significancy of Greek and Latin in a suitable American education—but because every student ought to have mastered those languages prior to matriculation at William and Mary, otherwise the college will be flooded with persons aiming merely "to acquire the rudiments of science."

At William and Mary, Thomas befriends Professor William Small (1734–1775, Figure 1-3), professor of mathematics and a professor "with a happy talent of communication, correct and gentlemanly manners, & an enlarged & liberal mind." Small, who is only nine years older than Thomas, becomes the young man's daily companion, and the professor introduces the lad to "his amici omnium horarum"[22]: lawyer George Wythe (1726–1806, Figure 1-4) and Governor William Fauquier. The four will become a "partie quarree." Thomas will after William and Mary College be mentored by Wythe in the practice of law for two years and then begin his own practice in 1767 till "the revolution shut up the courts of justice." He turns to politics, which he begins in 1769, while still practicing law.[23]

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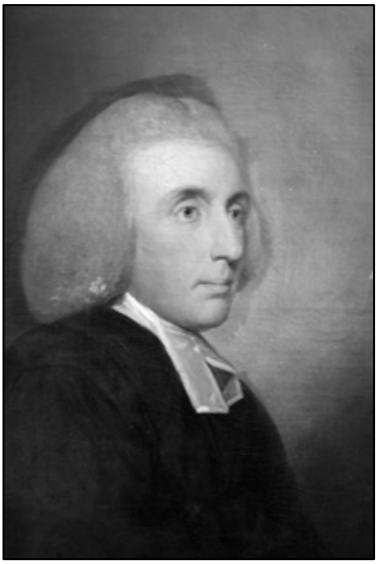
[21] Thomas Jefferson, Notes on the State of Virginia, 150–1.

[22] Roughly "these constant companions," and more precisely, "these friends of all hours."

[23] Thomas Jefferson, *Autobiography,* 3–5.

Fig. 1-3



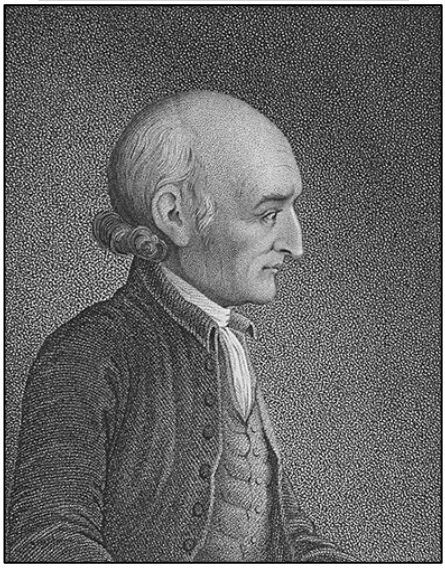


Fig. 1-4

A significant part of Thomas' early education is music—one of the fine arts, which cannot be excluded from the education of a Virginian gentleman of the day. By the

time he is a teenager, Thomas can play both Classical music and fiddling tunes. By the time of matriculation at William and Mary College, Thomas is so adept at the violin that he regularly plays as a member of a quartet at the governor's weekly gatherings.[24]

We know much about Thomas Jefferson's life just prior to, during, and after the American Revolution, and so a brief summary will suffice.[25]

On the death of father, Peter, Thomas is too young to manage Shadwell and his father's other lands, so they are managed by mostly by John Harvie, Sr. (1706–1767), planter and businessman, who is the executor of Peter's estate till Thomas Jefferson in 1765 comes of age. Along with Peter Jefferson and Dr. Thomas Walker, Harvie is one of the earliest settlers of Albemarle County. After membership in Virginia's House of Delegates and admission to the bar in 1767, Thomas marries Martha Wayles Skelton on January 1, 1772. In 1773, he gives up his practice of law and hands it to Edmund Randolph the following year. Thomas becomes a member of the Continental Congress in 1775 and, as a member of the Congress, he is a crucial member of several important committees and pens the Summary View of the Rights of British America (1774), which earns him the reputation of being a persuasive and fiery writer, and the Declaration of Independence (1776), which cements his reputation, among other significant documents, as a revolutionist and liberty-lover.

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[24] M. Andrew Holowchak, "Music," *Thomas Jefferson, Taste, and the Fine Arts* (Wilmington, DE: Vernon Press, 2022), chap. 7.

[25] Derived mostly from my account in *Thomas Jefferson: Psychobiography of an American Lion* (Hauppauge, NY: Nova, 2020).

On June 1, 1779, Thomas assumes the role of governor of Virginia and will hold the post for a two-year stint. He will be responsible for the safety of Virginians when the British, early in 1781, decide to invade Virginia. Col. Banastre Tarleton (1754–1833) will ride to Charlottesville, which is then the provisional capital because of its centrality in Virginia, of its proximity to Jefferson's Monticello, and of its distance from the Atlantic coast. The aim is to capture Governor Jefferson, as many members of the Virginian Assembly as possible, and any key papers of state. Having gathered most key papers of state, Thomas and most members of the Assembly escape Tarleton after advance warning from Jack Jouett.

In 1784, Thomas is sent to Paris as an ambassador and assumes the role as America's minister plenipotentiary, upon Benjamin Franklin's retirement, till 1789, when his correspondence with Randolph begins. He returns to Virginia in September 1789 and accepts a post as secretary of state under General George Washington, who becomes the United States' first presidency. Thomas will become vice president in 1797 and have a two-term presidency in 1801. Upon retirement, he begins work on, and founds, University of Virginia.

Randolph's education is begun at nine at the residence of Mr. Benjamin Snead (1721–1819), while Thomas is studying law. Snead has a school in 1764 and 1765 at Charles Lewis' plantation on Buck Island, to the south and east of Shadwell. Lewis is an uncle of the Jeffersons. There he will meet his future wife, Anne Lewis. Records indicate that Snead is awarded six pounds/year for instructing

Randolph.[26] Thereafter, Randolph will be home-schooled by Mr. Patrick Morton at Shadwell. Shadwell will be razed by fire in February 1770. At 16, Thomas sends Randolph to William and Mary College in Williamsburg. Thomas writes in his memorandum book of 1771, "Gave Rand. Jeff. to bear expces. to Wmsburgh. 15/9."[27] The date is October 1—Randoph's birthday.[28] Biographer Joanne Yeck adds, "He and Will Beck arrived in Williamsburg by October 13th, when Thomas paid Beck 5 shillings for 'transporting' Randolph."[29] Jefferson's account book mentions merely payment to Beck on October 13 and nothing about Randolph's arrival, which from another source, we know was prior to October 14.

What did Randolph do while at the college?

Yeck speculates abundantly about Randolph's activities while at William and Mary. For instance, she writes plentifully about what experiences Randolph might have had while at the school. For instance, Yeck talks of "these young gentlemen [that] might have been among Randolph Jefferson's friends or even roomed with him:" among them, Peyton Randolph, Beverly Randolph, Robert Randolph, St. George Tucker, Robert Burton, Walker Maury, and three

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[26] Susan Kern, *The Jeffersons at Shadwell* (New Haven, Yale University Pres, 2010), 63.

[27] Thomas Jefferson, "Memorandum Books, 1771," *Founders Online,* National Archives, https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/02-01-02-0005, accessed 1 Aug. 2023.

[28] Joanne Yeck, The Jefferson Brothers, 58.

[29] Bernard Mayo, "Jefferson's Unknown Brother," in *Thomas Jefferson and His Unknown Brother Randolph* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia, 1942), 7–8, and Joanne Yeck, *The Jefferson Brothers* (Dayton, OH: Slate River Press, 2012), 41–44.