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Jefferson Looks at England, 1774-1823: An Essay on the Relation between Jeffersonian Theory and Practice

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JEFFERSON LOOKS AT ENGLAND

1774 - 1823

AN ESSAY ON THE RELATION BETWEEN
JEFFERSONIAN THEORY AND PRACTICE

By

H. ^{REVISED}TREVOR COLBOURN

JEFFERSON LOOKS AT ENGLAND :

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**AN ESSAY ON THE RELATION BETWEEN JEFFERSONIAN
THEORY AND PRACTICE**

BY

H. TREVOR COLBURN

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT

OF THE REQUIREMENTS

OF

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MASTER OF ARTS

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H. Trevor Colbourn

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INTRODUCTION

Vast amounts have been spoken and written about Thomas Jefferson, the Virginian who presents such a paradox in American historiography. While he has now come to constitute one of the proudest of its figures, there have been very few attempts at assessing him in the light of his age, or at explaining his seeming inconsistencies by viewing the eighteenth century theories to which he subscribed. It is only in the past two decades that Jefferson achieved his present status as a national hero and as a symbol of Americanism, to enter into the hallowed company of Washington and Lincoln. His new position was officially registered by the domed Memorial that now stands in the United States' capital.

It is both instructive and interesting to survey the vicissitudes of Jefferson's place in American history, and to discover the remarkable fact that despite the wealth of literature in existence, very uneven attention has been given to the political thought that underlay his political life, and little attempt has been made to refer his thought to his policies. The reason for this is not far to seek.¹

When Jefferson died in 1826, he left two distinct groups of people: the one looked on his passing with deep regret; the other, having hated him steadily in his lifetime, continued to cast caustic criticisms of his political achievements. The partisan character of subsequent

biographers hardly made for fair or even adequate presentation of Jefferson in history. Indeed, one scholar sums up well: "During the nineteenth century and early years of the twentieth century Jefferson was sometimes revered as a party leader, or as a class leader, or as the spokesman of a particular section, but never as a figure above the strife of partisan politics."² Certainly this was to restrict the appeal of his name.

Early biographers did not feel it necessary to study the origins of Jefferson's thought; they were members of a new nation, one which prided itself upon uniqueness, and they considered the ideas which were the basis of that nation as different from those of other countries. Jefferson was hailed as the "Apostle of Americanism" by later writers who also subscribed to the belief that it was America's mission to be different. Too often has the Declaration of Independence been looked on as the spontaneous beginning of American thought and individuality. People who liked Jefferson considered him a pure American; those who disliked him, thought him as French in sympathies and ideas. This remarkable attitude has meant a totally inadequate study of the background to Jefferson's thought, confined to a narrow examination of his more famous documents. It explains the lack of attention given hitherto, to Jefferson's early years, and the ready acceptance of his pronouncements as peculiarly American.

The first biography worthy of note was that by George Tucker, published in 1837.³ The writer was a Virginian who sought the

"vindication of those liberal principles for which...he (Jefferson) so steadfastly, so ably, and so successfully contended." Tucker might deplore the new hatreds aroused when Jefferson's name was brought forward, but he also sought, with the aid of his book, to prove the purity of the Republican Party. This detracted from what merit the work possessed; furthermore, it was based primarily upon Jefferson's "Autobiography," and gave little thought to his intellectual background.

The official work on the life of Jefferson was that of Henry S. Randall, a biography not unlike Morley's Life of William Ewart Gladstone in its thoroughness. The similarity went further: Randall is indeed "turgid, copious, redundant."⁴ As in many such works, its subject is favoured, and Jefferson is shown as a great political leader; no attention is paid to the origins of Jefferson's thought. Altogether, the result was a laudatory biography, which, while a storehouse of information, dealt with Jefferson's early life in a brief 164 pages out of its total 2,000. Randall followed the lines indicated by Jefferson in his "Autobiography" with praiseworthy diligence, and so set a pattern which biographers have respected, even up to the past decade. Such regard for Jefferson must be suspect; in his "Autobiography" Jefferson carefully stressed his achievements as he desired historians to see them. In effect, Jefferson produced his interpretation for posterity; his success in this is clearly seen when it is noted that this basis which he provided for subsequent historians has been accepted for a hundred years.

The historians of the mid-eighteenth century were generally uninterested in Jefferson, ascribing but little importance to the great Virginian. Hildreth was essentially a Northerner in his outlook: Bancroft devoted more attention to Jefferson, but he clothed his entire narrative with a web of romance with the words 'liberty' and 'Glory' in abundant supply, culminating in an analysis of Jefferson's "sweet disposition" and ability "to read the soul of the nation." Schouler was more sympathetic to Jefferson, but was not interested in his ideas. ⁵

Of the many biographies which followed the example set by Randall, one of the better works was by James Parton. He was a Manchester liberal of the Grover Cleveland school, who worked the laissez faire theme into his Life of Thomas Jefferson; by showing Jefferson as subscribing to this doctrine, he expected to enhance its nineteenth century glory. ⁶ Parton did give some attention to the environment of Jefferson -- "The rustle of wheat-ears was familiar music...from infancy to hoary age." -- but he neither went on to discuss Jefferson's education, nor did he ascribe the importance that Turner did to the supposed wilderness background of the Virginians. The central theme is that the ideas of Jefferson can serve again; Parton affirmed: "A government simple, inexpensive, and strong, that shall protect all rights, including those of posterity, and let all interests protect themselves, assuming no functions except those which the Constitution distinctly assigns it, -- these are the principles which Jefferson restored in 1801, and to which the future of the country can be safely trusted." ⁷

A new interest was aroused in Jefferson, an interest prompted by a desire to make him the sanctifier of the various theses of his biographers. Parton's book marked Jefferson's devious resurrection before the people, but did not signify any trend towards the historical rehabilitation of a man who was remembered chiefly as the panman of the Declaration of Independence.

Henry Adams continued the work of Randall, and made a contribution to research on the history of the Jeffersonian age.⁸ However, even with good historians there occurs sectionalism, and Adams was inclined to give emphasis to the importance of New England and his forebears. Neither Jefferson nor Virginia took their proper place. There was no examination made by Adams of Jefferson's early formative years, as is clear when he writes of Jefferson: "His instincts were those of a liberal European nobleman." He characterises him as "superficial in his knowledge...a martyr to the disease of omniscience" and adds that "his humanitarian ideas passed beyond the bounds of rationality."⁹ Possibly the last quoted remark is Adams' personal explanation of Jefferson's failure to practice his theories; Adams treated Jefferson's ideas only to show how they were deserted in practice by the President.

In the popular vein was a remarkable book by Thomas Watson; the writer was only one of the many political radicals who revived Jefferson in support of their own theories. The book was written in journalese, with an acknowledged bias in favour of the South, and it embodied a trend which was becoming increasingly obvious at the turn of the century.

Nationalism in historical writing is not to be deprecated entirely; it has meant a new interest in the past, and largely accounts for the position that American history enjoys in the present.¹⁰

Edward Channing, one of the first of the modern professional historians, was far more objective in his treatment of Jefferson; however, he was more interested in the politics of the age than the ideas behind those politics. He called "The Jeffersonian System" a "study in imperial democracy," but did not credit Jefferson for the Louisiana Purchase, which is termed as accidental.¹¹

The most decisive break in the historiography of Jefferson comes with the paper of Frederick Jackson Turner, which was given in 1893.¹² Turner is in himself indicative of the new national consciousness of America, and his thesis showed that the character of the moving American frontier, and the nature of conditions in the West, produced what was a new and a unique nation. In effect, Turner gave a history and explanation for the new Americanism. The significance of the thesis was clear; the history of Jefferson was to be re-written, and his new role portrayed.

Turner showed how "The frontier is the line of most rapid and effective Americanisation. The wilderness masters the colonist." He related how the colonist "transforms the wilderness, but the outcome is not the old Europe...here is a new product that is America"; Turner applied his thesis to Jefferson, explaining Jefferson's democracy. He wrote: "About him were pioneer farmers...his country

was that of a democratic frontier people."¹³ In Turner's opinion, Jefferson was "The first prophet of American democracy" but "the Western influence was the dominating element"; he points out that Jefferson's father was a pioneer, and Jefferson himself was born in the frontier region of Virginia; he cites the Louisiana Purchase as an example of Jefferson's consciousness of the West.¹⁴

The influence of Turner's doctrine has been revealed in the histories and biographies which followed. William E. Dodd in his Statesmen of the Old South discusses the background to Jefferson's thought, and declares: "It is not difficult ... to see how the great principle of Jefferson's life -- absolute faith in democracy -- came to him. He was the product of the first West in American history; he grew up with men who ruled their country well, who fought Indians valiently... Jefferson loved his backwoods neighbours, and he in turn, was loved by them."¹⁵

Charles Beard carried the thesis further and made Jefferson accountable to economic and class interest entirely.¹⁶ Vernon L. Parrington interprets Jefferson in a similar manner, emphasizing the influence of the Physiocrats in France, and "the conscious influence of the American frontier."¹⁷ Albert Nock and Claude Bowers also follow "the lines laid down by Mr. Beard."¹⁸ The absence of French influence came as a shock to Gilbert Chinard, who initially studied Jefferson in order to assess this influence. He finally adopted but a modified version of Turner's tenet, labelling Jefferson as a peculiarly American product, even in his ideas; Jefferson's political philosophy is described as "distinctly an American doctrine."¹⁹

Other books which marked the rehabilitation of Jefferson were written by Francis Hirst, Bernard Mayo, Saul Padover, Adrienne Koch, Marie Kimball and Dumas Malone. Only in the past two decades has there been some study of the importance of ideas in America, and only Adrienne Koch, Marie Kimball, and Dumas Malone have made any examination of Jefferson's philosophy, which is adequate testament to the force of Turner and Beard with their allied theses. 20

Mrs. Kimball has made a study of Jefferson's intellectual background which is both thoughtful and thorough. She shows how the fresh material on Jefferson presents a picture of an eager, thoughtful youth, and gives some emphasis to his cultural background; however, this aspect of Jefferson is not pursued to its logical conclusion; Mrs. Kimball is more interested in providing an accurate historical narrative.

It has been left to Mr. Malone to make the fine contribution to American history that is his Jefferson the Virginian. He presents a balanced, scholarly account of Jefferson and his age. He shows Jefferson as an "enlightened liberal"; he demonstrates that Jefferson was not unique in so far as he was one of many such thinkers of his age; he describes the "broad social sympathy" that was the basis of Jefferson's entire life. 21

The biographies of Jefferson would seem to support the dictum that the writings of men may be easily taken out of their context and used to support various doctrines. Certainly Jefferson has been a

difficult figure to understand because his reputation has been so susceptible to the influence of American politics, while the strength of Turner's theory of the frontier and Beard's neo-Marxian concept of ideas as chiefly the result of an economic class struggle for power, has delayed a clearer comprehension of the roots of Jefferson's thought.

The trend has been one of assuming ideas in history to be relatively unimportant, and under such interpretations there has been held little need for an examination of the relationship of Jefferson's political ideas to the theories of the eighteenth century. Jefferson, who was the least parochial of America's statesmen, has been treated as an indigenous product, when, in fact, he shares with Benjamin Franklin the distinction of being America's leading philosophe during the age of enlightenment, and one whose theories were enormously influential in Europe as well as in America. Jefferson's main distinction, moreover, is that he, with Joseph II, had the privilege of being the only child of the enlightenment to have the opportunity to translate his theories into practice -- with somewhat more success than Joseph, who was unskilled in politics. Indeed, the programme of Jeffersonian democracy institutionalised in governmental procedures of the United States from 1800 until the beginning of the War of 1812, provides the best example of the "Heavenly City" of the eighteenth century philosophers which has been brought down to earth in a functioning stable government.

This is not to suggest that environment as an important factor should be discounted, but that there are other factors to be considered. Jefferson's philosophy, his ideas, and his theories, present a unique synthesis of the eighteenth century's thought and outlook. In many respects Jefferson was representative of the views held generally in both England and her colonies prior to the Revolution. As an indication of the link between the radicals of the mother country and those of the colonies, it is interesting to note the cover page pictures of Bickerstaff's Boston Almanack, which contain a cut of John Wilkes placed above open volumes of Locke and Sydney, "in whom the spirit of the antient republics revived."²² There was a conscious parallel with the radical movement in eighteenth century England, as embodied by John Wilkes in 1769, and the radical movement that triumphed in England in 1688.

Jefferson is an American representative of the enlightenment of the eighteenth century, with the belief in natural law and natural rights that was inherited from the seventeenth century. He possessed a background of historical knowledge which many times intruded into his clashes with England. His education was probably the most important factor in his early years (he first attended school at the age of five); certainly, the study given to this aspect of his life shows that his first eighteen years were not lived in a wilderness or in the backwoods. Whatever place economic factors played in making Jefferson

an agrarian democrat, his synthesized theories had an important position. As a leader of a political group, he was moved by different motives from his followers. As a subscriber to the natural rights philosophy, he did not look at the dilemma which confronted the eighteenth century thinkers; he did not seek the answer to which came first, man's institutions or man; he was concerned primarily with the study of ideas and their translation into practice.

Jefferson's ideas regarding England are particularly interesting for they show the outcome of his reading, his education, and his enlightened liberalism, while, throughout his life, the problem of what America's position should be to England was continually to the fore.

When this study of Jefferson was begun, it was with the intention of examining more closely Jefferson's diplomatic encounters with Great Britain. This necessitated a preliminary investigation of the background of his ideas about that nation of which he wrote: "I fancy it must be the quantity of animal food eaten by the English which renders their character insusceptible of civilisation." 23

The investigation served to show that Jefferson subscribed to an interpretation of modern English history that had been previously presented in the 1730's and 1740's by Bolingbroke, an interpretation that was dogmatically presented and repeated as gospel by a group of English radical publicists, historians, and pamphleteers, in the 1760's and 1770's. This group of English radicals, busy evolving a left wing

Whig interpretation of history, argued that, although England had in the past possessed the world's best constitution, the balance of the system had been upset by the 1770's and England was ripe for revolution. Their theory went further, for it offered an explanation for the cause of England's degeneration, and a series of reforms to guarantee a cure.

This aspect of the topic is of such importance in any approach to American policy towards Great Britain in Jefferson's time, that the plan of study has been molded accordingly.

I have an attempt here to show the correlation between these English radicals and their ideas, which were accepted by Jefferson, and his consequent attitude and policy towards England. I have examined his fundamental scorn for that country, his constant watch for the disintegration which he was sure would come, the many ideas contained in such documents as the Summary View and the Declaration of Independence, and his constant dislike of an industrial economy. The importance of Jefferson's education and its character is shown, and the link with his later policies revealed.

I have traced but lightly the events of the time; the reader's acquaintance with such events is presumed. Emphasis is given to the background of Jefferson's attitude towards Great Britain; the effect of that background upon his policy is traced through the vital years 1774-76, his Secretaryship of State, and the Presidency of the United States.

The paradox existing in Jefferson's policy is demonstrably more apparent than real. Jefferson gained many of his ideas from England, and used these same ideas in securing American independence of that country; he applied the theories of the English radicals and the philosophy of the earlier English thinkers to the situation as he saw it in America. The key to Jefferson's thought and his policy is England's failure to enter into her heritage of freedom. The irony of the situation lies in the fact that so many of Jefferson's anti-British ideas derive from British writings.

JEFFERSON LOOKS AT ENGLAND: 1774-1823

I

THE FORMATIVE YEARS

A knowledge of British history becomes useful to the American Politician.

Thomas Jefferson was born in 1743; this simple fact has great significance, for Jefferson was born only fifty years after the publication of Isaac Newton's Principia, that book which became the symbol of the enlightenment, since it led to the "deification of nature" and the "denaturation of God" (as Carl Becker describes it). This significance is amplified by a slower development of thought in the American colonies, accounting for the greater emphasis given to the enlightenment in the America of Jefferson's age, an emphasis that was not to be minimised by the growing friction between Great Britain and the Colonies.

Jefferson's parentage is no less important. His father he describes as of Welsh descent, and he remarks concerning the Randolph family -- into which his father Peter Jefferson married in 1739 -- that "They trace their pedigree far back in England and Scotland, to which let everyone ascribe the faith and merit he chooses."¹ This is an instance of prevarication by Jefferson on the issue of the importance of his lineage: it also reveals that he had respect for tradition and age, a respect not unknown among present-day Americans. He is known to have penned this remark

in 1821. In 1771, there was a letter to Thomas Adams, in which he wrote: "One further favor and I am done; to search the Herald's office for the arms of my family. I have what I have been told were the family arms, but on what authority I know not. It is possible there may be none. If so, I would, with your assistance become a purchaser, having Sterne's word for it that a coat of arms may be purchased as cheap as any other coat."² Jefferson was no snob; indeed this earlier letter shows his first youthful cynicism. There was no real clash in Jefferson's theories and his desire for a coat of arms, or his pride in family; the somewhat diffident sentence here quoted would support the thesis that he possessed many English characteristics. Pride in lineage was common in the eighteenth century; later, Jefferson disguised it, having regard for the political implications in revolutionary America.

Marie Kimball was probably the first scholar to point out the many inaccuracies in the biographies on the background to Jefferson's early years: "Jefferson's biographers have hitherto quite overlooked the fact that the family was one of substance and position in the seventeenth century...."³ It has been left to Dumas Malone to present a comprehensive study of Jefferson's forefathers. Too often has Peter Jefferson been described as an ignorant, if bluff, frontiersman and pioneer, when in actuality he was an intelligent literate man who was county lieutenant in Albemarle and a member of the Virginia House of Burgesses.⁴ He possessed a small collection of books which

formed the nucleus of the library his son built up, but which was destroyed in the fire at Shadwell in 1770. The chief legacy of Peter Jefferson to his son was the established position he had in society together with the means to maintain it; what was to render this of greater value was his insistence that Thomas have a good education; he appreciated his own educational limitations and determined that his son should be better equipped. There can be little doubt that Thomas inherited his father's "sound judgement" and eagerness for information. Little is known of his first school; at the age of five years, he was placed in "the English school" and in the Latin at nine.⁵ Clergymen were the usual teachers of the day, and Mr. Douglas, "a clergyman from Scotland," taught the young Jefferson his French, and after the death of his father in 1756, he was sent to the Reverend Mr. Maury, "a correct classical scholar," with whom he remained for two years. In the spring of 1760, Jefferson entered the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, the capital of the Old Dominion.

By the time that Jefferson entered College he had proceeded to the fulfillment of his father's wish that he receive a sound classical education. Most certainly it was not a frontier education, and Jefferson was never personally engaged in the frontier tasks of forest clearing or ploughing. From the age of five, until he was seventeen, Jefferson was receiving the best possible education outside the colonial capital, and achieved the closest approach to the cultural environment that was offered outside Williamsburg.

There have been many descriptions both of the Virginia capital and of Jefferson's prolonged sojourn there. Despite the fact that he found affairs at William and Mary to be in the greatest confusion, and despite his leisurely first year, his education proceeded apace.⁶ It was not left only to books and professors, for Jefferson's social acquaintanceship extended to the flower of the colony; the students at William and Mary were by birth and station the potential leaders of Virginia. He paid particular tribute to Dr. William Small: "...a man profound in most of the useful branches of science, with a happy talent of communication, correct and gentlemanly manners, and an enlarged and liberal mind," and he adds that "from his conversation I got my first view of the expansion of science and of the system of things in which we are placed."⁷

Probably one of the greatest services that Dr. Small did Jefferson was "by procuring for me from his most intimate friend, George Wythe, a reception as a student of law under his direction, and introduced me to the acquaintance and familiar table of Governor Fauquier."⁸ The dinner parties of Small, Wythe, and Fauquier impressed Jefferson particularly: "At these dinners I have heard more good sense, more rational and philosophical conversations, than in all my life besides."⁹ That Jefferson was so accepted by this select circle says much for his native intelligence and intellectual maturity; it is indicative of the stage of his education, of the extent of his reading; mere intelligence would not have coped with the

requirements, even conversationally, of Wythe or Small. It is significant to note that Wythe was devoted to "liberty and the natural and equal rights of men."¹⁰

The five years that Jefferson spent in studying law under the guidance of George Wythe were important and productive years; they were years passed in an atmosphere which was far from the wilderness conceived of by Frederick Jackson Turner, and was as cultured as any in British America. Jefferson was able to enjoy an intellectual companionship which would be respected today; the wide selections of books offered in the bookstores were available to satisfy his other great need. He took easily to books, and to the end of his life they were his great passion. He later commented: "I was a hard student until I entered on the business of life."¹¹ To John Adams, he made the frank admission: "I cannot live without books."¹²

At times, in studying law, he might have agreed with John Adams that it was a dreary ramble, and he would complain with bitterness "I do wish the Devil had old Coke," but he was later to find in Sir Edward Coke a kindred spirit; Coke was one of the first to challenge the royal prerogative in England. There is no doubt that his reading of law prepared him for the full acceptance that he was to give to the philosophy of Algernon Sydney and John Locke; Lord Kames was indeed an avowed disciple of Locke, holding that "all men are born free and independent one of another" and that the great law of nature

was 'Salus populi suprema lex'; Sir William Blackstone also put forward a legalistic form of the philosophy of "the immutable laws of nature."

The Commonplace Book shows that Jefferson gave much attention to legal writers in the period up to 1769. In May of that year he took his seat in the House of Burgesses in Williamsburg, and began to take greater interest in the political events of the time. Jefferson was never content with a mere superficial knowledge of world affairs; the thoroughness with which he had addressed himself to his law studies show him as a man who required as full an understanding as was possible; therefore he sought information not only about the events of the time, but the background to them. The thoroughness with which he addressed himself to his studies is shown in his outlined education for a lawyer.¹³ The groundwork that he recommends is extensive, while the law books to be read embrace the principle authorities of the day; indeed he plans a reading schedule lasting from eight in the morning until bedtime. He directed his own reading along wider channels, turning from law to conduct a thorough analysis of books upon history and government.

His innate fondness for books, the collection of which became his principal hobby, is demonstrated in his grief at the loss sustained when the house at Shadwell was destroyed by fire: "On a reasonable estimate I calculated the cost of the books burned to have been 200 sterling. Would to God it had been the money, then it had never cost

me a sign.^{13,14} When he came to list the library he had built up by 1773, however, he counted no less than twelve hundred and fifty four, which total did not include his books in Williamsburg.

It is a tragedy for history that there is such a scarcity of material, of a personal nature, relevant to Jefferson's intellectual development; he manifested a strong though unfortunate disinclination to analyse himself in writing. This lack of material makes Jefferson's reading of vital importance, particularly in that formative period prior to 1776. When the books that are known to have been studied by Jefferson are surveyed, new light is thrown upon his later policies and actions regarding Great Britain: a new understanding of the peculiar views manifest by Jefferson is achieved, and it becomes possible to realise and comprehend the complete and utter contempt in which he held that nation. Only by an examination of Jefferson's reading can one fully understand the reasons for his bias (and even hatred) and the vigour with which he pursued the doctrines enunciated in the Summary View and the Declaration of Independence.

In 1769, Jefferson was an intelligent young man with an enquiring turn of mind. It was impossible for him as a Virginian in the 1760's to be unaware of the unhappy relations existing with the mother country.¹⁵ Clearly the means of understanding what the position of the American colonies should be, lay in the reading of books; there is every reason to believe that Jefferson took his reading with all seriousness, for it constituted his authority on politics and political ideas, as well

as on history. The importance of the latter was evident to Jefferson; not only was history "necessary to form a lawyer" but it was "The most effectual means of preventing the perversion of power into tyranny."¹⁶ History had a vital place in education, since by apprising... of the past, it will enable...to judge of the future."¹⁷

Jefferson's research was varied; for the purposes of this study, it may be classified briefly under two headings: the one was historical in its main aspect; the other primarily concerned with political thought and ideas.¹⁸ The importance of the first group is revealed in the Summary View, which takes on a new significance, and indeed a new complexion, in the light of the concept of history with which Jefferson was so well acquainted and which he accepted. The Declaration of Independence shows the application of his reading of political philosophy. The influence of this reading does not end in 1776, however, but continues throughout the life of the great Virginian; it is constantly shown in his comments and letters, as well as in his policies. Jefferson adapted English doctrines to the exigencies of the current history he helped to make. His fame and importance rest on the happy expression and application that he gave to ideas prevalent in his age and that before it, ideas which were found by Jefferson in the books that he read.

Early in his life, Jefferson committed himself to a particular interpretation of English History, an interpretation which had become the commonplace of English Whig thought. An excellent, if limited,

study, has been made by H. Butterfield, on English history and the development of the Whig interpretation.¹⁹ Here the significance of the new history is shown, a history which met with strong opposition in its early days from such men as Robert Brady, a Restoration historian, who complained of "Turbulent men, who hold forth to the People, Ancient Rights and Privileges, which they have found out in Records and Histories, in Charters, and other Monuments of Antiquity; by these Men the people are taught to prescribe against the Government for many Things they miscall Fundamental Rights; by those Men 'tis averred, that under the phrase of Baronagium Angliae, both Lords and Commons were comprehended....That Ordinary Freeholders often come to General Councils of the Kingdom without Special Election or Representation; That upon a Change in the Succession to the Crown, there might be Extraordinary Conventions of the People to declare their Universal Consent...and That this was an Elective Kingdom which... they cunningly insinuate, though they do not plainly assert it in terms."²⁰ To men such as Brady, this conception was novel and even fantastic; to Jefferson, a century later, well acquainted with Bolingbroke, Dalrymple and Ramsay, it was an acceptable view of history. The importance of this bias, unknown in its real character by Jefferson, is manifest only under closer examination.

Although it is not possible to list all of Jefferson's reading in his early years, the core of such reading is known. There are several sources, the principal ones being his letters, the booklists he made for the use of his friends, and his Commonplace Books.

Of the booklists, the most important is that written for Robert Shipwith, dated August 3rd, 1771, replying to the latter's request for advice on a suitable catalogue "of books to the amount of about 50 lb. sterl."²¹ This list serves well to reveal a breadth and maturity of outlook unusual in a man as young as Jefferson then was. It is a qualified list, in that Jefferson wrote: "I have framed such a general collection as I think you would wish and might in time find it convenient to procure;"²² but it includes Locke On Government and Conduct of the Mind in Search of Truth, Bolingbroke's Political Works and Philosophical Works, Hume's History of England (with no comment as yet), Lord Kame's Principles of Equity, Blackstone's Commentaries, as well as Livy, Caesar, Plutarch, Tacitus, and Abraham Stanyan's Grecian History.

The only other book list extant worth mention, is that referred to by Jefferson in his letter to John Minor in August 1814; it is a list written for one Bernard Moore, circa 1767, and comprises many of the more important volumes which have a bearing on his feelings to Great Britain. Here are found Kames, Locke, Stewart, Cicero, Seneca, Hutchinson, Priestley, Sterne, Vattel, Coke, Blackstone, Sydney, Burgh, Macaulay, Baxter, and Ramsay. This is a qualified list, and it holds very little intrinsic value, save as an indication that many of the early books remained in Jefferson's esteem throughout his life. He describes the list as one which "by no means constitutes the whole of what might be usefully read," but this list is less important because

it was considerably added to by Jefferson after 1787 -- as evidenced by the inclusion of Baxter. The main source of information on the important issue of what books Jefferson read is the Skipwith list and the Commonplace Books.²³

The two Commonplace Books, edited by Gilbert Chinard, constitute Jefferson's notes on many of the books he read, and thought important.²⁴

They consist in the main of transcriptions from seventeenth century authors, and provide further instances of Jefferson's interest in history; this interest was not unlike that of David Hume, who had concluded: "Mankind are so much the same, in all times and places, that history informs us of nothing new or strange in this particular. Its chief use is to discover the constant and universal principles of human nature." Certainly, history, together with his law books, served to incline Jefferson towards his belief in the progressive nature of man; he felt that laws and institutions must go hand in hand with the progress of the human mind; as that becomes more developed, more enlightened, as new discoveries are made, new truths disclosed, and manners and opinions change with the change of circumstances, institutions must change also, and keep pace with the times.²⁵

The Commonplace Book deals with the period which, for the purposes of this study, is particularly important: it shows clearly the impact of the thought and the history of the age upon Jefferson. It is possible to realize the application Jefferson was later to make of the reading that he carried out. Transcriptions, such as: "The laws of England

do not extend to Virginia, which being a conquered country, their law is what the king pleases,"²⁶ serve to bear out the interpretation that Jefferson took from his legal reading, an interpretation that was molded by events, and by his background in English history. The book includes notes on Lord Kames, Sir John Dairymple, Simon Pelloutier, and Stanyan, but does not represent Jefferson's complete range of reading; it does prove, however, that Jefferson did not rush into hasty generalisations, but sought to render himself well informed before giving his judgment on any issue. Thanks are therefore due to him for this apparent acceptance of Locke's advice (found in the Appendix II of Some Thoughts on Education) and his practice of commonplacing his readings: he believed it to be doubly useful "in as much as a condensation of thought" was useful, and as it "leads to an acquisition of the most valuable of all talents, that of never using two words where one will do...."²⁷

The books that Jefferson read in this period present an explanation of his attitude towards England which has been overlooked by those biographers who have been so intent upon overemphasising Jefferson's environment and neglecting to give adequate weight to the importance of ideas in history. Only recently has attention been given to the significance of the enlightenment in the history of the eighteenth century, and only now is proper regard being given to the thesis that "Ideas are Weapons."²⁸ While environmental factors, including class and economic affiliations, are not to be disregarded, they often prompt ideas which become the masters of the situation.

In Jefferson's day, the eighteenth century was recovering from the shock of the previous century, which had heralded an age of scientific method of study, an age of new possibilities. The books of the new age commenced the charting of the map of reason, and began to subject social institutions to the test of rationality. The ideas the constantly confronted the young Jefferson he saw to be "life-affirming." The Whig interpretation of history was a progressive one; it sought and found, a historical justification for its claims on behalf of the rights of Englishmen. These claims had another basis, one of belief in mankind, "in the possibilities of human society, with a sense of the dignity of ordinary people."²⁹ All the historians of this age might not have written to illustrate the "universal principles" of the eighteenth century philosophers, as Carl Becker believes, but the influence of those philosophers appears to permeate historical writing to such a degree that, on that basis alone, one would suggest that the many historians had well absorbed the new philosophy.³⁰

Of the authors which played such an important part in the formation of Jefferson's ideas regarding England, Lord Bolingbroke stands foremost among the English historians. Butterfield is inclined to look on him as the founder of the Whig interpretation, despite his reputation as one of "the wildest and wickedest of Tories."³¹ An explanation of Bolingbroke's attitude has its place here, for it serves to show why Jefferson later wrote with such disgust of Sir Robert Walpole's England: Bolingbroke was in political opposition to Walpole,

and his opposition became a personal one also. He sought in his Remarks on the History of England to show how the rights of Englishmen were being subverted by the corrupt practices of Walpole, and his faction, and he later emphasized the evils incurred by Walpole's inauguration of a policy of debt; he viewed the Whigs as having run to faction after the Civil War, and no longer constituted a national party.

There are records of Jefferson's deep respect for Bolingbroke: no less than fifty eight pages of the Literary Bible are devoted to the notes on his Philosophical Works, which were among the earliest books Jefferson possessed.³² He admired them extravagantly, as is witnessed by the length of time over which the transcriptions extend (which has been revealed by an examination of his handwriting).³³ In 1821, he wrote to Francis Eppes, reviewing Bolingbroke, and comparing him with Thomas Paine. He commented: "Both were honest men; both advocates for human liberty..." and he noted that Bolingbroke's "writings prove him to be a stronger advocate for liberty than any of his countrymen, the Whigs of the present day."³⁴ Jefferson never hesitated to pay tribute to the real enlightenment of Bolingbroke, who was a firm believer in both man's ability to govern himself, and man's right to do so.

Hitherto, biographers have emphasized unduly that Bolingbroke's major contribution to Jefferson's education lay in method, noting his test: "No hypothesis ought to be maintained if a single phenomenon stands in direct opposition to it."³⁵ It is reasonable to suppose that

Jefferson based his militant defiance of Britain on the application of this to the situation as he saw it, and also drew the lesson that "the problem of destiny must be examined in a systematical way, with all the resource made available by human reason." This embodied the fundamental concept of the enlightenment. However, a survey of Bolingbroke reveals an influence on Jefferson far more significant than one of method only: he forms the keystone of Jefferson's early reading regarding England.

Bolingbroke wrote of the history of England in a manner that was followed widely, concluding his remarks by a description of the corruption existing in England under the maladministration of his arch-enemy, Walpole. He paid respect to "our British ancestors," declaring that however savage they may be represented by the Romans, "...they certainly were a people of spirit and of sense; who knew the ends of government, and obliged their governors to pursue those ends." He quotes from Caesar and Tacitus (much as Jefferson was to do later) to point out that "Their [British] long resistance against the Saxons shows their love of civil liberty," and he elaborates his concept of the Saxons: "The Saxons...public generals, were chosen only to conduct them in war, not to rule over them in war and peace;" they eventually "became kings...but the supreme power centred in the ...wittagenmote, composed of the king, the lords, and the Saxon freemen, that original sketch of a British parliament. Here all important affairs were treated. The conduct of their kings was examined in it, and

controlled by it. The rights of the people in those days, must have been carried to a very great height; since they went hand in hand with those of the church; and since a positive law declared, that if the king did not defend both, he shall lose even the name of king. The principles of the Saxon commonwealth were therefore very democratical; and these principles prevailed through all subsequent changes." This constituted the nearest approach made by Bolingbroke to an elaboration of the 'Saxon Myth,' or the theory that in Saxon days there was the maximum of personal liberty, with an elected, democratic, form of government, a form which was set aside when England was conquered by the Normans; Bolingbroke makes the point, however, that the "principles of the Saxon commonwealth...prevailed through all subsequent changes." He notes of William the Conqueror that "he made very great alterations in the whole model of government; and... he, as well as his two sons, ruled upon many occasions, like absolute, not limited monarchs." "Yet neither he nor they could destroy the old constitution; because neither he nor they could extinguish the old spirit of liberty." 30

The theme is clear; democracy and freedom existed in the days of the Saxons; all English history since was a series of usurpations and attempted insurrections. Norman absolutism was followed by a struggle for the rights which had never been surrendered. Before pursuing this theme, this basis of the Whig view of history that was so widely accepted in the eighteenth century, it is relevant that attention

be given to a letter written by Jefferson to the English Radical, John Cartwright, in 1824.³⁷ The lateness of this letter in Jefferson's life makes the content the more significant, revealing that the view of history, as first elaborated by Bolingbroke remained with Jefferson throughout his life. He is writing on the subject of Cartwright's volume on the English Constitution, and declares I "think it has abduced the Constitution of the English nation from its rightful root, the Anglo Saxon." That he gained this belief from his reading is made clear: "Paine, who thought more than he read... credited the great authorities who have declared, that the will of Parliament is the Constitution of England... Your derivation of it from the Anglo Saxons seems to be made on legitimate principles."

For Jefferson, the constitution of England was that ideal attained by the Anglo Saxons, an ideal to which Englishmen still have every right to render a reality once more. It was indeed a vague constitution; Jefferson suggested "Whatever their history and laws show to have been practiced with approbation, we may presume was permitted by their constitution; whatever was not so practiced, was not permitted." He concurs with Bolingbroke, and many of the other authors whom he consulted in his earlier years, when he asserts: "And although this constitution was violated and set at naught by human force, yet force cannot change right." The last phrase, "force cannot change right" is found in Sydney, Locke, Burgh, Bolingbroke, and, in Jefferson's

Summary View. ³⁸

Bolingbroke believed that many of the Normans became inspired also with the "spirit of liberty" -- for were not they also "originally of Celtic or Gothic extraction?" -- "They came out of the same northern hive; and therefore they naturally resumed the spirit of their ancestors, when they came into a country where it prevailed." Nevertheless, the break in English history in 1066 is a positive one, to be mended only by vallant effort; it is noted, that "Stephen, the fourth king of this race, [Normans] owed his crown to the goodwill of the nation; and he owed this goodwill to the concessions he made in favor of liberty." A glorious romance is built up about the reign of John -- where "the spirit of liberty prevailed, and that of faction vanished before it." However, the theme recurs when Bolingbroke touches upon British liberties -- "British liberties are not the grants of princes. They are original rights, conditions of original contracts, co-equal with prerogative, and co-equal with our government." For Bolingbroke, the spirit of liberty is as vital as it became for Jefferson: "As losing the spirit of liberty lost the liberties of Rome, even while the laws, and constitutions, made for the preservation of them, remained entire, so we see that our ancestors, by keeping this spirit alive and warm, regained all the advantages of a free government, though a foreign invasion had destroyed them, in great measure, and had imposed a very tyrannical yoke on the nation." ³⁹

Bolingbroke's analysis of the troubles afflicting England was largely accepted and applied by Jefferson in his fundamental attitude to Great

Britain. The root of the evil is declared to lay in the upsetting of the divisions of power in the Constitution; he attacks those who "endeavor to demolish the very cornerstones on which the whole fabric of liberty rests." ⁴⁰ -- namely Walpole and his pensionaries, who are accused of working to make Parliament a dependency of the court, and are seeking justification of corruption and dependency, as Bolingbroke describes it. He points out the causes of revolution as the "Weak management and obstinacy of the court, and...the unhappy choice which those princes made of governing by factions, in opposition to the sense and interest of the nation." ⁴¹

Jefferson believed that England had made considerable progress towards the restoration of the rights known before the advent of the Normans. He noted the "perpetual demand of a restoration of their Saxon laws," which "were never relinquished by the will of the nation," and that "In the pullings and haulings for these ancient rights, between the nation, and its kings...there was sometimes gain, and sometimes loss, until the final reconquest of their rights by the Stuarts." The revolution of 1688 had enormous significance for Jefferson: he declared that "The destruction and expulsion of this race [Stuarts] broke the thread of protected inheritance, extinguished all royal usurpations, and the nation re-entered into all its rights; and although in their bill of rights they specifically reclaimed some only, yet the omission of others was no renunciation of the right to assume their exercise also, whenever occasion should occur. The new king received

no rights or powers, but those expressly granted to him." ⁴² Nevertheless, Jefferson was in full accord with Bolingbroke in his view that the ends of the revolution had not been obtained. Bolingbroke accused Walpole of disguising his faction under the name of a national party, and remarks maliciously that a consciousness of incapacity often begets a jealousy of power; his warning is later echoed by James Burgh: "If then a spirit of rapine and venality, of fraud and corruption, continue to diffuse themselves, not only luxury and avarice, but every kind of immorality will follow...." ⁴³

From such passages which are found recurring in many of the books Jefferson read, a new light is thrown upon his later disgust for the English government. "The English have been a wise, a virtuous and truly estimable people. But commerce and a corrupt government have rotted them to the core." ⁴⁴

The scene described by Bolingbroke had altered by the 1770's, but only in so far as it developed as Bolingbroke suggested it would. The picture painted by his disciple, James Burgh, who wrote as the American Revolution came to a head, showed that the nation had entered into a corrupt heritage from Walpole's age. The England of George III and Lord North was everything that Jefferson hated: it was as corrupt, as it was inefficient; the maxim of 'muddling through' was never so apt. Sinecures and places were the acknowledged means of maintaining political power, and Walpole's emulators were eminently successful. The small and susceptible electorate that Jefferson often

castigated in his pamphlets served to give the system of government only the slightest semblance of legality, and no resemblance to democracy. The revolution of 1688 had increased the power of parliament, but with that body in the pocket of the Ministry -- and the King, through the Civil List, -- there was little tangible benefit accruing to either the liberty of the people or the character of the constitution. The rights which had been acknowledged in 1255 were forgotten, and apparently lost. The cause to Jefferson became twofold: he was ready to follow Bolingbroke in condemning Walpole for re-inaugurating the system of bribery, corruption, and places, which had distinguished certain of the Stuart reigns; he condemned the rise of industrialisation for the growth of a luxury which fed the growing appetites of the rich, and the resulting poverty of the masses, with their congregation into easily directed groups.

It is appropriate at this juncture to examine further that which has hitherto been referred to as the "Saxon Myth," and assess its significance. It is clear from the first that it played an important part in Jefferson's attitude to England, as instanced in the Summary View, where he based his claims for the rights of America upon his concept of the fundamental rights of Englishmen, and pays tribute to "that system of laws which has so long been the glory and protection of that country."⁹⁵ The historical application made by Jefferson extended to the issue of feudal tenure: since "America was not

conquered by William the Norman, or its lands surrendered to him or to his successors," the lands did not belong to the King in any sense. ⁴⁶ While the "Saxon Myth" can not be ascribed to any one particular book read by Jefferson, the interpretation that he takes is very similar to that contained in many of the books that he possessed. It is interesting to survey these books and to note the close relationship between their theme, and that proclaimed by Jefferson. Jefferson was, in effect, adapting for revolution one of the historical theories of this age. It is the closeness of the relationship, when the source books are understood, which illuminates the policies and views of Jefferson towards Great Britain.

Firstly, it should be observed that the common source to both the English writers and to Jefferson, was Tacitus; Livy, Cicero, and Caesar had a place; Tacitus was the chief authority for the concept of Germanic democracy. Jefferson's close acquaintance with the Roman historians is noted in his letter to Peter Carr: "Read the Bible, as you would read Livy or Tacitus. The facts which are within the ordinary course of nature, you will believe on the authority of the writer, as you do those of the same kind in Livy and Tacitus. The testimony of the writer weighs in their favor, in one scale, and their not being against the laws of nature, does not weigh against them." ⁴⁷ Jefferson was the more inclined to believe a fact on the authority of a writer if it was in accordance with his view of "the laws of nature." Certainly the "Saxon Myth" was such. However, its strength was

stronger than Jefferson's willingness to believe. While its foundation lay in Tacitus, in Bede, and Verstigan, it was nevertheless a recent addition to history. Robert Brady was protesting against its birth in the reign of Charles II, and Rapin and Bolingbroke were its willing nurses. Others gave support, preparing it for a sound and lasting life; Allan Ramsay, Henry Care were historians who aided the concept towards maturity; Lord Kames, and Sir John Dalrymple gave it legal cognisance.

Foremost among the Whig historians was Paul de Rapin whose Histoire d'Angleterre had been one of the collection of over forty volumes that Peter Jefferson possessed. It may be assumed that Jefferson's acquaintanceship with this history was as thorough as it was early. He called it the "best history of England."⁴⁸ The reasons for Jefferson's approval are clear, for Rapin paid considerable attention to the 'charter of Liberties,' -- the Magna Charta of 1255, so highly regarded by the whigs of the seventeenth century.

Rapin agreed with Tacitus on the importance ascribed to the liberties existing in ancient north European nations and tribes. In his preface, Rapin described the governmental system of England as a "mixt and limited monarchy, as it is certain, all the governments in Europe established by the northern nations were formerly. They wer monarchies, invested, not with absolute and arbitrary, but with a power bounded by the national laws." He declared: "the King has great prerogatives which were the effect or consequence of the mutual

agreement of the first Anglo-Saxon Kings with their People." Rapin concluded, as did Bolingbroke, and Jefferson after him, that "after the Norman Conquest these Assemblies were called Parliaments. If William the Conqueror continued them, which perhaps is not very easy to prove, it was not with the same rights and Privileges they enjoyed under the Saxon kings." This is the character of the work, of which Jefferson declared: "Of England there is as yet no general history so faithful as Rapin's." ⁴⁹ As a history, it is a cautious framing of the Saxon myth, which gathered strength, as did the political claims, and successes of the Whigs in England. Rapin's was the general history that Jefferson preferred throughout his life; it was a scholarly work with huge footnotes which aided his own research; as such it had far-reaching results. Rapin prepared him for the confident assertions of Bolingbroke, and the many other histories which affirmed that England had enjoyed her golden age during the Saxon times, and that it came to an abrupt termination on the advent of the Normans.

The strength of this interpretation of English history is borne out in a brief survey of a selection of the histories possessed by Jefferson in his early years of preparation for the role he was later to play in American political life.

In Nathaniel Bacon's An Historical Discourse of the Uniformity of Government Jefferson found a vindication of "the antient way of Parliaments in England," and a demonstration how "A King amongst

the Saxons in probability was anciently a Commander in the field, an officer pro tempore, and no necessary Member in the constitution of their state; for in time of peace, when the Common-Wealth was its self, the executive power of the Law rested much in the Nobility: but in times of war, and in publick distractions they chose a General, and all swore Obedience unto him during the war; it being finished, the General laid down his command, and every one lived aequo jure propria contentes potestate.⁵¹ In Bacon's view, kingship was a bad, accidental, development out of what was, in origin, a laudable system; but even when Kingship arrived he emphasises that "Saxon fealty to their King was subservient to the publick safety, and the publick safety is necessarily dependent upon the liberty of the Laws."⁵² Here does the connection between English historians and Jefferson become more evident: the later doctrine of Jefferson, that the "publick safety" -- the rights of America -- should be defended, being of a higher order than allegiance to the King, would appear to have some foundation in Bacon's Historical Discourse.

How carefully Jefferson read Henry Care, a historian in the whig school, is not known; but his book on English Liberties, published in 1680, took the theme that law was the chief safeguard to "Freemen," and that men's rights were to be protected above all else.⁵³ Certainly Care was inordinately proud of the English constitution, naming as the "two Grand Pillars of English Liberty" the "Parliaments and Juries."⁵⁴ Jefferson's respect for the English constitution, prior to

its corruption, is borne out in the Cartwright Letter quoted earlier. Like Rapin, Care also looked on the Magna Charta as no mere "Emanations of Royal Favor or new bounties granted, which the people could not justly challenge, or had not a right unto before...."⁵⁵ He calls on the authority of Coke to affirm that the liberties are "for the most part only Declamatory of the principal grounds of the Fundamental Laws and Liberties of England; indeed, no new Freedom is hereby granted, but a Restitution of such as lawfully they had before...."⁵⁵ Care reiterates the Saxon myth too: "our ancestors the Saxons had with most equal pose and temperaments, very wisely contrived their Government, and made excellent provisions for their Liberties, and to preserve the people from oppression." Here, again, William the Norman is the evil genius; it was hard for Care to believe that a free people such as the Saxons, could be conquered, and his explanation of William's success must have had as much interest for Jefferson as did the criticism of the Norman: "though he be commonly called the Conqueror, yet in truth he was not so... he pretended a right to the Kingdom, and was admitted by Compact, and did take the Oath to observe the Laws and Customs. But the truth is he did not perform that oath so as he ought to have done... his successors made frequent Encroachments upon the Liberties of of their People."⁵⁶ Jefferson would dispute Care's statement that the "Laws of England do in all cases Preserve Liberty," for, in Jefferson's eyes, the lack of religious toleration made for a narrow interpretation of the word "liberty." The main importance of Henry

Care, however, lay in his narration of the former glories of England, his sustenance of the Saxon myth, and his explanation of the decline of English liberties.

Sir John Dalrymple largely confirmed the views of Care, but wrote formally to support the position taken by Kames, to whom he dedicated the first edition of his essay on feudal property in Great Britain.⁵⁷ He looked back to the Greek and Carthaginian colonies, and commented that "They went out in small bodies and as such they formed themselves into republics. Equality among the citizens had been a rooted and political principle with them at home, it became now, from their situation, still more the natural and consistent principle of their union."⁵⁸ The pattern of American history, in which Jefferson was such a force, followed so closely to Dalrymple's brief narration, that it is not too much to suggest that Dalrymple's writing had a far wider influence than Dr. Chinard has hitherto contemplated, an influence more to be considered if his works had served only to widen Jefferson's mind to events which were significant in the world he lived.

The Saxon myth enjoyed its central position with Dalrymple: he gave emphasis to the advent of William the Conqueror and the change in England that resulted: to the Norman he ascribes full responsibility for the Feudal system, which abolished the distinction between allodial and charter land.⁵⁹ He traces "the dignity of peerage from being feudal, territorial and official, became allodial, personal, and honarary," and explains the rise to power of "the commons" in

much the way that James Harrington did.⁶⁰ There was never any doubt in Jefferson's mind as to the injustice and undesirability of feudalism: for he frequently expressed his dislike of it and his approval of the freedom and democratic government he believed existed in Saxon England -- "Are we not the better for what we have hitherto abolished of the feudal system? Has not every restitution of the ancient Saxon laws had happy effects? Is it not better now that we return at once into that happy system of our ancestors, the wisest & most perfect ever yet devised by the wit of man, as it stood before the 8th century."⁶¹

Allan Ramsay was also among the authors Jefferson recommended, and did much to add to Jefferson's conviction regarding the "happy system of our ancestors."⁶² Ramsay paid tribute to the Saxon myth with his reference to "...our Saxon ancestors who founded their government upon the common rights of mankind. They made the elective power of the people the first principle of our constitution ...the annual exercise of elective power, under the Saxon government, was the quintessence, the life and soul of the constitution.... They handed down to posterity, the principles of their government, by the actual exercise of their rights, which became the ancient usage and custom of the people and the law of the land."⁶³

Ramsay also believed that there was a break in English history with the Norman Conquest; it is possible to understand better Jefferson's approval of "whatever is of Saxon establishment, is

truly constitutional; but whatever is Norman, is heterogenous to it, and partakes of a tyrannical spirit." ⁶⁴ In the same vein as Bolingbroke, Ramsay declares that English liberty was destroyed by William I, but arose again under Henry III; he regards the Saxon period in England as a golden age when liberties were at their zenith. "It is very evident from history, and I believe it is generally agreed, that our Saxon kings after their establishment in England, enjoyed the crown during their natural lives; and that, at their death, their successor was elected to his office by the parliament. However, they generally gave preference, to some one of the same family....For our Saxon forefathers had no principle, in their mode of government, by which power, or office, could be obtained peaceably, by any other means, than by receiving it from some body of men, who had a right to give it." ⁶⁵

Jefferson himself provided confirmation of his belief in the Saxon myth; in a passage in the Commonplace Book describing the break in English history occasioned by William I, he wrote: "In the following reign the parliament made a law for a landed qualification of the members of the house of commons, enacting that every member for a county, should have an estate in land of 600 pounds a year, and for a borough, of 300 pounds a year. Thus has been our free constitution and mode of government converted into a downright rank aristocracy of the rich in land. Our ancient parliaments were composed of 'the wise men of England' which has made a vast difference

in the spirit of the laws that proceed from there." ⁸⁶ Both Ramsay and Jefferson were convinced of the ancient glory that had been England, and the unhappy state into which that country entered in the eleventh century. Ramsay believed the Normans to be the cause of the evils which he saw about him; he believed that in the past there had been a free and democratic England; his own solution to the present troubles lay in the institution of annual Parliaments. Jefferson failed to see any intrinsic merit in the English constitutional monarchy where the crown was able to corrupt that body which ought to be the safeguard of liberty, namely, Parliament. The portrait of corruption as presented by Bolingbroke, made a lasting impression on Jefferson.

It was impossible, however, for Jefferson to agree with Ramsay that "all lands, in our distant provinces that are acquired at the expense of the people of England, either by conquest, treaty, purchase, or by any other title, from that moment become their property, and consequently are, at all times subject to that order, and direction of the legislative authority." ⁸⁷ Ramsay saw it as a threat to the Empire to allow the American colonies to be released from Parliamentary taxes, so setting up a state within a state: his plea was for unity. Jefferson, on the other hand, did not see why liberty should be the prerogative of one nation only, and became incensed at the thought that England was claiming that which she did not herself possess. In view of the unhealthy state of England, he would never agree that

"it is a peculiar blessing of heaven, upon our distant provinces, that they are connected with Great Britain,"⁶⁸ While Ramsay was unable to separate his liberalism from his nationalism, there was a common basis of agreement for Ramsay and Jefferson -- the fact of the subversion of the original foundation of England. Both possessed a healthy regard for the Germanic liberties and democratic government which constituted the Saxon myth.

The influence of David Hume's History of England upon Jefferson is not yet clear, although Jefferson wrote in detail about Hume's heresies and subtleties. At first Jefferson was impressed -- or deceived, as he would later have it -- but he soon settled into a steady dislike of the entire history. He described Hume's history thus: "the elegant one of Hume seems intended to disgrace & discredit the good principles of the government, and is so plausible and pleasing in its style and manner, as to instil its errors and heresies into the minds of unwary readers...."⁶⁹ And: "everyone knows that judicious matter & charms of style have rendered Hume's history the Manual of every student. I remember well the enthusiasm with which I devoured it when young, and the length of time, the research & reflection which were necessary to eradicate the poison it had instill'd into my mind."⁷⁰

What then, is the view of history found in Hume? It is in brief, one which did not allow for a wide conception of the democratic nature of the Saxons. He felt "Of all the barbarous nations, known either in ancient or modern times, the Germans seem to have been

been the most distinguished both by their manners and political institutions, and to have carried to the highest pitch the virtues of valour, and love of liberty, the only virtues which can have place among an uncivilized people, where justice and humanity are commonly neglected." ⁷¹ He admitted that there was very little authority possessed by kingly government, but considered the advent of the Normans as beneficial: the Saxons he criticised for "Their want of fidelity to the prince, or to any trust reposed in them" and alleges that "their want of humanity" was manifest in all their history: the Norman historians, Hume notes, speak of the Saxons as barbarians. Indeed, the Norman conquest "put the people in a situation of receiving slowly from abroad the rudiments of service and cultivation...." ⁷² Hume did not regard the Great Charter as anything but a concession: for him, it was not the confirmation of ancient rights and liberties that it was for Jefferson and the whig historians. Indeed Hume affirmed that feudal law was good, since it accustomed the people to give favour to the eldest son, and thereby prevent a partition or disputed succession in the monarchy." ⁷³ Jefferson suggested an explanation of this view of history: "it was unfortunate that he Hume first took up the history of the Stuarts, became their apologist and advocated all their amenities to support this work, when done, he went back to the Tudors, and so selected and arranged the materials of their history as to present their arbitrary

acts only, as the genuine sample of constitutional power of the crown, and, still writing backwards, he then reverted to the early history, and wrote the Saxon & Norman periods with the same perverted view." 74

It is clear that the majority of the English histories read by Jefferson, in his earlier years, subscribed to the Whig interpretation of history: they described "that happy system of our ancestors" with which Jefferson was so impressed; they showed the break occasioned by the Norman invasion with its submersion of the ancient liberties, with their elective monarchy, and the innovation that was the feudal system. Jefferson was in full accord with this belief, and defined his political allegiance thereby: "the Whig deduces his rights from the Anglo-Saxon source, and the Tory from the Norman." 75

The fundamental attraction that this interpretation held for Jefferson is to be understood only when his political philosophy, drawn from Sydney and Locke, is examined. But it is clear that a historical proof of man's right to liberty and freedom must have had peculiar charms for Jefferson, especially in showing him a quasi-republican system of government in successful operation. The influence of his belief, of his acceptance of this aspect of "whig" history, is borne out in his Summary View, particularly: Jefferson claimed the ancient rights of Englishmen to apply to the settlers in America: he emphasized that the Normans did not conquer America, and so feudal law did not have a place in the New World. The use of English history to forge a creed, a doctrine, for the independence and freedom of the American colonies might appear ironical, but it was no paradox.

Jefferson's study of English history was not, of course, confined to the Saxon myth, which was only one element, however important. Bolingbroke was one of the first to inform Jefferson that all was not well in England. James Burgh and Allan Ramsay continued in this. Other historians showed the struggle that had taken place in England for liberty, for the ancient rights which the Whigs asserted they had every claim to. The Whig historians wrote to prove the historical justification of the claims of the Whig politicians: it was obvious to Jefferson that the historical proof and justification for Whiggism was no less proof and justification for the claims of the American colonists in the 1770's

There can be little doubt of the importance of Catharine Macaulay in this respect: her history bore directly on contemporary politics and is an index of why Stuart history so attracted radicals in the 1760's and 1770's.

Publication of her History of England began in 1763, and Jefferson had easy access to it in the Williamsburg of the late 1760's; the College of William and Mary had one of the best libraries in America totaling some three thousand volumes immediately prior to the Revolution.⁶⁷ Mrs. Macaulay followed in the steps of Lord Bolingbroke, and presented a thoroughly Whig history of England. She wrote specifically to combat the "heresies" of Hume, and gained honorable mention from James Burgh in the Preface to his Political Disquisitions: "Our incomparable female historian has given the

public a new history of the Stuarts, for the purpose of inculcating on the people of Britain the love of liberty and their country." ⁷⁶ The Whig bias of Mrs. Macaulay's history was apparently noticed even by her contemporaries, but, with general approbation: it would seem that this is true of Jefferson also. To the end of his life he recommended her.

Mrs. Macaulay finished James I off in a mere quarto, but devotes three volumes to his son, describing Charles' "passion for power, his predominant vice, and idolatry of his prerogatives, his governing principle." In her view, and of the radical Whigs, Charles forfeited his trust and right to government; on the ground of truth and reason and in the cause of liberty, his death was an eminent act of justice. Significantly, Hampden was Mrs. Macaulay's model of human glory. Jefferson had a huge appreciation for the seventeenth century in English history: an appreciation to which Catharine Macaulay surely contributed: like her, he disliked standing armies; like her he thought Cromwell was overcome by the fumes of ambition." The concept was that in the seventeenth century there breathed "The spirit of freedom," as in "the purest times of Greece and Rome;" in 1812, there is testimony of Jefferson's regret at the passing of "the days of Hampden and Sidney," and those days formed a sad contrast, in his mind, with the England he believed existed in his time, the England described by Burgh.

77

James Burgh's Political Disquisitions had a considerable influence upon Jefferson: a neglected and little known writer, he had several

works published, including Britain's Remembrancer in 1746, "Being some thoughts on the proper improvement of the present juncture...A brief view, from history, of the effects of the vices which now prevail in Britain...." This small volume was published in Philadelphia by Benjamin Franklin, and enjoyed a considerable popularity among sections of the colonists; it was in the nature of a protracted sermon, deploring the heresy, irreligion and love of luxury and attendant corruption that he saw so widespread in England. This aspect would appear to have had some influence upon Jefferson, who frequently fulminated against the development of luxury in America, demonstrating the evils it brought in England. It is likely that Burgh was one of many to fortify Jefferson's belief in an agrarian democracy, a way of life which would alleviate corruption in the body politic.

The work which aroused the most attention in America was the Political Disquisitions. First printed in England, it was republished in Philadelphia -- an opportune time for a would-be handbook of revolution -- and claimed an illustrious list of subscribers, including George Washington and John Adams, as well as Thomas Jefferson.

Burgh produced what was virtually a handbook for anti-crown radicals, and dealt with politics, customs, and thought. In England the work was regarded as "the bible of the Whigs,"⁷⁰ and its radical whiggism became the political credo of the American revolutionaries; for a time the book was a minor classic in America.

Certainly Burgh dealt with a wide variety of subjects, and had gone to a great number of sources for his material. He also described the former liberties which had existed in Saxon days: "For the general government of the country, the antient Saxons [our ancestors] ordained 12 noblemen, chosen from among others for their worthiness and sufficiency...in time of war, one of these twelve was chosen to be king, and to remain so only as long as the war lasted."⁸⁰ Particularly interesting are Burgh's views of the recent political developments in England, developments which impressed Jefferson very strongly at this council time: there is a wistful quotation from Algernon Sydney, that members of Parliament "do not act by a power derived from kings, but from those who chose them. And those, who give power do not give unreserved power. Members of parliament are therefore accountable to their constituents."⁸¹ Burgh assumes what Jefferson has long taken for granted.

The corruption that had taken place in English politics of recent years offended Burgh deeply, and gave Jefferson confirmation of that situation described him in Bollingbroke. Burgh declared: "See a British house of commons plundering the people of above half a million to pay court debts, A.D. 1773...."⁸² He wrote how "In England our members do not hold themselves responsible to their constituents, but to the House, and the House to the prime minister. Thus the people who ought to be all, are nothing."⁸³ He shows how the ends of the revolution of 1688 had not been obtained, just as

Bolingbroke did before him, but with more cause, since the corruption has extended and grown more powerful in influence: "The Stuarts meant a tyranny by one; the Walpollians, an aristocracy, which is worst...."⁸⁴ Even in ancient times, "when parliaments in England were unpensioned, we find them, even in spite of Popish darkness, and of the extravagant notions of prerogatives which were the disgrace of those ages, ever faithfully labouring for the public good, and especially seizing all opportunities for obtaining an enlargement of liberty."⁸⁵

But, in recent years, he notes: "We have seen in one parliament the power of election of members taken from the people...the colonies irritated by taxing them without representation; the mother country so dissatisfied, that 800,000 l of the people's money, given sorely against their will, to pay debts, which none but the ministry knew to be real, or if real how contracted...religious liberty refused... to different sects of petitioners humbly requesting what all mankind have unalienable right to enjoy...."⁸⁶ Corruption would seem to pervade the very atmosphere for Burgh, but the "arch-corruption" derives from Bolingbroke's "arch--corrupter" -- Sir Robert Walpole. Walpole is held mainly responsible for the failure of the Glorious Revolution, and is the first of the "succession of wicked ministers" who brought "this great empire" into "the fearful and alarming conditions" which he describes in such detail: it is Walpole who "got places or pensions for all, who could claim the most distant relation or connexion with him."⁸⁷

Such a narration must have had its place in bringing Jefferson to his final assessment of the history of England: it must have played a part in his statement that "History, in general, only informs us what bad government is."⁸⁸ In one letter particularly, Jefferson elaborated this assessment: "It is not in the history of modern England or among the advocates of the principles or practices of her government, that the friend of freedom, or of political morality, is to seek instruction. There has indeed been a period, during which both were to be found, not in her government, but in the hand of worthies who so boldly and so ably reclaimed the rights of the people, and invested from the government theoretic acknowledgements of them. This period began with the Stuarts, and continued but one reign after them. Since that, the vital principle of the English constitution is corruption, its practices the natural results of that principle, and their consequences a pauperised aristocracy, annihilation of the substantial middle class a degraded populace, oppressive taxes, general pauperism, and national bankruptcy."⁸⁹

While this is an expression of Jefferson's most extreme thought -- it was written during the War of 1812 -- it demonstrates the importance of the English historians in relation to his view of England. Jefferson concluded from his reading, (his principle source for any such conclusion) that there was justification for the claim to the fundamental rights of Englishmen, and that these rights had been briefly reestablished in the seventeenth century, only to be subverted

by the canker of corruption which had eaten into the political heart of Great Britain. Jefferson had a real admiration and respect for the British constitution in its brief realisation, as he was led to view it; he admitted that "we have employed some of the best materials of the British constitution in the construction of our government," and he stressed the great importance of his own reading of history when he adds "a knowledge of British history becomes useful to the American politician, our laws, language, religion, politics & manners are so deeply laid in English foundation, that we shall never cease to consider their history as a part of ours and to study ours in that as its origin." 90

That English writers contributed much to Jefferson must be admitted: the extent of that constitution is better realised when a few of the references related to the "late broil with our colonies" are studied. It is understandable that Jefferson sought for precedents for the step to Independence in which he took so great a part in 1776. He found such in Dalrymple's commentary on the Greek and Carthaginian colonies; he found further interesting information in Abraham Stanyan's Greelan History. Its importance to Jefferson can be gauged by the note found in the Commonplace Book: "Stanyan says that the first kings of Greece were elected by the free consent of the people," and there follows further comment on the drift of the colonies of Syracuse and Corcyra from their subjection to Corinth -- "as they increased in power, they renounced their obedience." 91 The juxtaposition of a quotation from Pelloutier's Histoire des Celtes:

"Le peuple, jaloux de la souverainete les elevait et les deposait selon son bon plaisir..." shows a linking by Jefferson, of one historical precedent, with another, which combined, form an argument for American independence of Great Britain that cannot have escaped him. ⁹²

Burgh certainly gave Jefferson further reason for the attitude he took towards Great Britain in the crucial years of 1774-6. The Political Disquisitions described the "broil with our colonies" as "the greatest evil that has arisen in ^{the state these many centuries} consequence of parliamentary past," and calls the situation "the consequence of parliamentary corruption" and "ministers who are conscious that they hold their places by the tenure of interest, and not of merit." ⁹³ Burgh was to prove shrewd in his comment that the breach that had been made might remain open -- "all to get a few more places for...wretched dependents." ⁹⁴ He made another point, which was taken up by Jefferson -- "Our colonies are of great advantage, and therefore deserve better treatment." Much of the injustice done to the colonies Burgh described in a detail which Jefferson did not miss, and which he reiterated with telling force in the Summary View.

Burgh was of the opinion that the Magna Charta and the Bill of Rights prohibited the taxing of the mother country by prerogative, and without the consent of those who are to be taxed, and he saw the fact that we "leave to the Irish the power of taxing themselves" as an added point to the case that such cavalier treatment as was given

the colonies was unjust; he ventured to suggest that retrenchment "would have brought into the treasury ten times more than Grenville could ever expect from taxing, by force and authority, the unrepresented colonies."⁸⁵ The correlation of the listing of the crimes and injustice committed by England and the list phrased by Jefferson in June 1776 is remarkable. It would doubtless be an exaggeration in this case to suggest any real connection in this instance, but the influence of these writings of an English author upon Jefferson must have been considerable. Injustice was apparent to Jefferson before he read the Political Disquisitions, but the righteousness of his cause was confirmed by that work. Burgh, who showed the utter chaos in Great Britain, convinced Jefferson that the situation was critical; he saw it as a contrast to virtuous America. In general effect, Burgh would appear to have acted as a catalyst upon Jefferson.

It is significant also to record that James Burgh, like many Whigs, was a pacifist: he denounced standing armies, pointing out that they had been Cromwell's means to power; he declared it wiser to keep clear of the quarrels of other states and to avoid "entangling" alliances. War is "The peculiar disgrace of human nature."⁸⁶ Jefferson's dislike of war was also strong, although he was ready for it if the interest of his country could not otherwise be served.

The Political disquisitions was one of the most important of the books that Jefferson read in its relevance to the problem of Anglo-American relations; its role, in analysis, was a three-fold one.

Jefferson learnt of the views of an Englishman on the late acts of Great Britain regarding the colonies, views which served to confirm his own. He learnt more concerning the decay which destroyed the England of 1688; Burgh went further than Bolingbroke, and asserted that "there will soon be very little left of the British constitution, beside the name and outward form," for the corruption of the House of Commons had become so complete, that there was no longer any check upon regal and ministerial tyranny."⁹⁷ The result is clearly shown in a letter of Jefferson's in which he remarks that "...freedom of opinion, freedom of the press, trial by jury, Habeas Corpus, and a representative branch of the legislative are the substantial bulwarks against oppression and misrule, which corruption can only undermine, as it has done in England."⁹⁸ The books of Burgh and Bolingbroke had a part in convincing Jefferson of the inevitability of revolution in England, a conviction which was added to by the Gordon Riots, and the unrest following the Napoleonic Wars: then, he is found confidently awaiting "the civil war, massacre."⁹⁹

The other issue of importance for Burgh was in the sphere of political thought: he was concise: "All lawful authority, legislative, and executive, originates from the people. Power in the people is the light in the sun, native, original, inherent, and unlimited by anything human."¹⁰⁰ He went on to query, in his own simile, whether men form a club for the benefit of its chairman, and he showed to all their release from allegiance to George III. James Burgh expounded his

own synthesis of the natural rights doctrine as culled from Algernon Sydney and John Locke. Both these political theorists influenced Jefferson: he gained from them his fundamental political philosophy, the philosophy which he employed with such effectiveness against the philosophy which he employed with such effectiveness against British authority. The influence of the natural rights philosophy was evident in many histories, as has been seen, and was the theory on which the Whig interpretation came to rest.

Algernon Sydney wrote initially to refute the much maligned Robert Filmer's Patriarcha, but the outcome was the famed Discourses Concerning Government, which were listed by Jefferson as early as 1771.¹⁰¹ Sydney did not need martyrdom to achieve fame; his Discourses were a synthesis of ideas that were current in his day, but which were not given adequate expression hitherto. There is a parallel with Jefferson in this instance.

Sydney had a twofold message: that "parliament and the people have the power of making kings," and that Parliament's power is delegated, and may be therefore revoked in some unspecified way. He idealised the Commonwealth as the occasion when English liberty reached a height equal to the great days of Greece and Rome, an idealisation which Jefferson came to share. However, Sydney was fundamentally an enthusiastic idealist, lacking in the rugged force of the Levellers; the doctrine he expounded was virtually an aristocratic one in that he made no general proclamation of the rights of man, merely visualising a community led by the natural elite.

Jefferson's respect for Sydney was as great as the latter's influence upon the Virginian: in 1804 he wrote to the Reverend Mason Locke Weems asking for "one beam of your approbation" on "Sydney's Liberty pleading Vol." which would "render it the dazzling desideration of thousands. This would be cutting out good work for an honest Ambition that has learned its right aim, The increased happiness of Man...."¹⁰² Later that same year, there is: "I...my opinion on the subject of publishing the works of Algernon Sydney the world has so long and so generally sounded the praises of his Discourses on government, that it seems superfluous, and even presumptuous, for an individual to add his feeble breath to the gale. They are in truth a rich treasure of republican principles, supported by copious & cogent arguments, and adorned with the finest flowers of science, it is probably the best elementary book of the principles of government, as founded in natural rights which has ever been published in any language."¹⁰³ Even with due allowance for Jefferson's tendency towards exaggeration in such matters, the respect that he held for Sydney cannot be questioned.

A modern scholar, in an excellent study of Sydney,¹⁰⁴ has pointed out how his ideals became the valued commonplace of English political thought, and were cited whenever revolution was in question. It is the relevance of Sydney's thought to such political occasions which explains his importance to Jefferson. It is interesting to note how the evaluation of Sydney's doctrines declined in England after 1688, but

during the eighteenth century gained in popularity in America; they enjoyed a brief revival during the crisis years of 1850-52 in England, but then dropped from view. The increasing acceptance of such doctrines in America meant that Jefferson was not only well acquainted with the philosophy, but their significance as applied to the strained relationship of Great Britain and the Colonies. The enormous importance of Sydney's doctrine calls for a brief survey, so that their importance to Jefferson may be better understood.

Primarily, Sydney is concerned with the theory of popular government as opposed to the divine right of anyone, and he adorns this theme with a wealth of illustration from history. Like Jefferson did later, he called for a check on sovereignty, insisting that Parliament should be constantly referring important decisions back to the electors.¹⁰⁵ He denied divine right, asserting that God had not revealed his wishes in the matter, "God has given to all the benefit of liberty, with some measure of understanding how to employ it," and, "having given to all even in some degree a capacity of judging what is good for themselves, he both granted to all likewise a liberty of inventing such forms as please them best, with out favouring one more than another."¹⁰⁶ Like Jefferson, Sydney looked to the past and found that "The antients chose those to be kings, who excelled in the virtues that are most beneficial to civil liberties;" he declared that God gave the government of the world to no one man, nor declared how it should be divided, but left it to the will of mankind, so that there could be no such thing

"according to the law of nature, as an hereditary right to the dominion
 of the world, or any part of it." ¹⁰⁷ "Free men join together and form
 greater or lesser societies, and give such forms to them as best
 pleases themselves;" thus, "Government is not instituted for the good
 of the governor, but of the governed;" "Laws were made to direct and
 instruct magistrates, and if they will not be directed, to restrain them." ¹⁰⁸
 He saw no reason why man should gravitate towards monarchy,
 pointing out that "corruption and venality which is natural to courts,
 is seldom found in popular governments?"; in this connection he thought
 it significant that popular governments are "less subject to civil
 disorders than monarchies, and manage more ably and more easily to
 recover out of them." Certainly Jefferson found, in his reading of
 Bolingbroke that "corruption and venality" was natural to the courts
 of the Hanoverians.

More important however, was Sydney's doctrine of revolution.
 Revolution was justified if the grounds were just; as an example, he
 declared "Unjust commands are not to be obeyed?"; indeed, "it is
 the fundamental right of every nation to be governed by such laws, in
 such manner, and by such persons, as they think most conducting to
 their own good, they cannot be accountable to any but themselves for
 what they do in that most important affair." ¹¹⁰ Sydney could hardly
 legalise revolt, but he did assert that "the general revolt of a nation
 cannot be called a rebellion...." ¹¹⁰

The application by Jefferson of the doctrine of revolution enumerated in the Discourses to the situation of the British colonies in America is obvious as one reads the first part of the Declaration of Independence. There, many of Jefferson's statements could, but for the happier expression, have been Sydney's. It is no exaggeration to say that Sydney is the key to the tone of Jefferson's thought; so many of the ideas found in the Discourses were used by Jefferson on behalf of the right ("Inherent and unalienable") of the Americans in opposing the authority of Great Britain. Especially should it be noted how Sydney urged that "Civil tumults and wars are not the greatest evils that befall nations."¹¹² This sentiment was echoed by Jefferson in 1787: "The tree of liberty must be refreshed from time to time with the blood of patriots & tyrants." for civil disorders, weighed "against the oppressions of monarchy...becomes nothing."¹¹³ Indeed, to Jefferson, rebellion "was a medicine necessary for the sound health of government."¹¹⁴

Since John Locke subscribed to much of Sydney's philosophy and was a firm believer in Natural Law, it is not remarkable that he occupies an important position in the formulation of Jefferson's political thought (and so his fundamental attitude to Great Britain). Dr. Chinard has pointed out that the absence of quotation in the Commonplace Book does not mean that Locke had but a small place in the synthesis of ideas which constituted Jefferson's thought; it is probable that Jefferson was too well acquainted with Locke to need much annotation "Locke's little book on government is perfect as far as it goes" -- wrote Jefferson in 1790.¹¹⁵

The Second Essay on Civil Government certainly reiterated much of Sydney: ("The liberty of man in society is to be under no other legislative power but that established by consent in the commonwealth") but it was a far more conservative philosophy than that of Sydney.¹¹⁷ Locke was not fond of revolution; he elaborated the doctrine of Natural Law, and the concept of the original contract, but revolution was thought of more as a threat than as a weapon: Locke would never sanction Jefferson's desire for the watering of the tree of liberty with the blood of tyrants. He notes that "...revolutions happen not upon every little mismanagement in public affairs; but if a long train of abuses, prevarications and artifices, all tending the same way, make the design visible to the people...it is not to be wondered at that they should then rouse themselves...."¹¹⁷ A close parallel is found in Jefferson's words of 1774: "Single acts of tyranny may be ascribed to the accidental opinion of a day; but a series of oppressions begun at a distinguished period, and pursued, unalterably through every change of ministers, too plainly prove a deliberate and systematical plan of reducing us to slavery."¹¹⁸ Locke might have presented an apology for revolution, as opposed to Sydney's doctrine of revolution, but he had his place in Jefferson's opposition to England. There is the famous enunciation of Locke's concept of the fundamental human rights, namely to security, liberty, and the right to property, translated by Jefferson into "the Preservation of Life, and Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness." There is noted in the Commonplace Book that "the

Commonwealth is a society of men constituted for the preservation of their civil interests," and "civil interests" are defined as "life, health, indolency of body, liberty, and property..." so that "...the magistrates' jurisdiction extends only to civil rights from these considerations...."¹¹⁹

The wider realm of philosophy has become Locke's main title to fame in that he made it possible for the eighteenth century to believe with a clear conscience what it wanted to believe: that since man, and the mind of man were shaped by that nature which God had created, it was possible for men, "barely by the use of their natural faculties" to bring their ideas and their conduct, and hence the institutions by which they lived, into harmony with the universal natural order. Thus he afforded a philosophic support to the refashioning of the "outward world of human institutions according to the laws of nature and of nature's God."¹²⁰

This aspect of Locke is fundamental in its importance regarding Jefferson in this formative period. It was Locke who completely unfastened the door and opened the way to Jefferson's belief in and desire for the creation of a state in accordance with "the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God." So did Jefferson name the trinity of the enlightenment to be Locke, Bacon and Newton -- "the three greatest men that ever lived, without exception."¹²¹

The fore-going serves to reveal something of the character of the books (and the beliefs of the authors) which largely governed Jefferson's

attitude and policy towards Great Britain. The view of the historians of the eighteenth century was certainly one coloured by political beliefs, in that it sought, and found, historical justification for the rights the Whigs claimed in England, and the rights Jefferson later claimed for America. While political philosophers are generally bad historians, they base their views very much upon the history they read; this is true of Jefferson, who, from his keen appreciation for antiquity, had a feeling for the ideal continuity of man. The history he read provided him with an opinion of England which must be understood in its translation into American policy. The philosophy of Natural Law, so well proclaimed by John Locke, so effectively formulated into a political doctrine by Algernon Sydney, is seen to form Jefferson's basis of thought.

Locke had showed the aims of government to be properly the maintenance of liberty. Sydney demonstrated the necessity of defending liberty with force should it be threatened. Bolingbroke and Burgh provided Jefferson with modern proof that it was time for America to take up the sword on behalf of a liberty, which in England had been in a precarious state since the Norman Conquest, had been almost saved in the seventeenth century, but was being now lost beyond repair.

Revolution was clearly the only means of salvation; the cause of liberty would be saved by Americans to be passed on to their posterity.

II

THE STORMY PETREL

The God that gave us life gave us liberty at the same time

It will always be the peculiar pleasure of the historian to muse upon the 'ifs' of the causation and train of events. Often one is given to considering what would have been the fame of Thomas Jefferson had there been neither a politically inept Hanoverian on the British throne, nor the narrow, factious elements that constituted the Parliament of the day: had there been no crisis in the relationship of Great Britain and her American Colonies, it is possible that Jefferson might have lived out his span as a little known Virginia farmer. It would appear that the crucial period into which he was born was one particularly suited to the character of his genius. The crisis years of 1774-1776 most certainly show Jefferson as one of the great men of the Revolution; his greatness lay in his ability for phrasing the thoughts prevalent throughout America at this time; he exemplifies the Virginia gentleman of his age, in that he was a man well-read in the current histories, a man well-versed in the new philosophy of the enlightenment, and its aptness respecting the claims of Americans. Jefferson has been termed the "penman of the Revolution" -- an apt, if sweeping title.¹ It was his formulation and presentation of the grounds for American opposition to Great Britain that made him a public

figure. His thought was as important as his phrasing and penmanship; he showed the way to independence to the many who hesitated at such a final step.

He became a member of the House of Burgesses in 1769, but already there had been a preliminary initiation into the political situation then existing; four years earlier Jefferson had been in the lobby of the House at the time of Patrick Henry's declamation and paid him the compliment -- "He appeared to me to speak as Homer wrote."²

The first year as a burgess in 1769 was a peaceful one; Jefferson was yet a novice at politics, bent on adding to and improving the background of his knowledge. However, he was able to exhibit his gift for drafting documents when Edmund Pendleton called on him to produce the Resolutions of May 5th, 1769, "returning Thanks for his the Governor's very affectionate Speech at the opening of the Session."³ It was a flowery, if diplomatically worded, address giving little indication of the more famous words to follow in the subsequent seven years; it shows Jefferson with a high regard for Britain -- "her Interests, and ours, are inseparably the same" but the concluding words have a peculiar significance: "And finally, offering our prayers, that Providence, and the Royal Pleasure, may long contrive his Lordship the happy Ruler of a free and happy People."⁴ It was with the desire that America should be a land for the free, for the "pursuit of happiness," that Jefferson later denounced England as a tyrant and urged independence.

He did describe in the 'Autobiography' how he had made "one effort... for the permission for the emancipation of the slaves, which was rejected." His explanation of this rejection is an indication of how he came to view the English unfairly as the ultimate source of evil, for the Burgesses are exonerated: "...indeed, during the regal government nothing liberal could expect success. Our minds were circumscribed within narrow limits by an habitual belief that it was our duty to be subservient to the mother country in all matters of government, and to direct all our labors in subservience of her interests, and even to observe a bigoted intolerance for all religions but hers." However, there is no evidence that Jefferson had such feelings in 1769; it seems to be very largely hindsight on his part that he held "The difficulties with our representatives were of habit and despair, not of reflection and conviction..."⁵ It is a poor explanation of the comparative harmony to be found between the Governor and the Burgesses at this time. Jefferson's later bias against England became so keen that it resulted in a peculiar distortion of facts. While there is no record in the Journal of Burgesses of his efforts on behalf of the slaves, his views were shown in the argument he makes in Howell vs Netherland in April 1770: here he appeals to the law of nature, under which "we are all born free."⁶ There is thus a correlation between Jefferson's humanitarianism and his opposition to England, for he later blames that nation for slavery in America, and it is clear that Jefferson associates the iniquity of the system with the disregard paid by Britain to human rights.

The following period was one largely occupied with personal and professional activities: Jefferson's marriage in 1770 combined with the political calm then existing to keep him from the public eye. The first of the issues to bring Jefferson out of this seclusion was that of the dispatch of the offenders in the Gaspee incident to Britain for trial. Dissatisfied with the seeming lack of zeal on the part of the older Burgesses, Jefferson, together with Patrick Henry, Dabney Carr and others, formed a group which met at the Raleigh Tavern in Williamsburg; this group urged colonial unity, and secured the formation of the Virginia Committee of Correspondence in 1773. Governor Dunmore was able to postpone the approaching crisis by the expedient of proroguing the Assembly until May of 1774, but then events overtook him.

These constituted the fate of the tea cargoes sent to Boston, and the subsequent legislation enacted against that Port by the British government.

Such measures brought forth a most definite response from Jefferson, and it was one which showed that both he and his friends were conscious of the parallel between their times and the days of the Puritan Revolution in England. Jefferson and his group proposed a day of prayer and fasting which was to formally mark the closing of the port of Boston; the proposition was moved by the grave-countenanced Robert Carter Nicholas, and gained the support of the entire Assembly. Jefferson described the occasion as follows: "We were under conviction of the necessity of arousing our people from the lethargy

into which they had fallen, as to passing events; and thought the appointment of a day of general fasting and prayer would be most likely to call up and alarm their attention...with the help of...Rushworth, whom we rummaged over for the revolutionary precedents and forms of the Puritans of that day, preserved by him, we cooked up a resolution... for a day of fasting, humiliation and prayer...to avert from us the evils of civil war, to inspire us with firmness in support of our rights." 7

Dunmore replied by promptly dissolving the House, declaring that the motion passed was a reflection upon both King and parliament. One of the most famous of the meetings held at the Raleigh Tavern followed: Peyton Randolph took the chair, and a call was made for a Continental Congress. The scene was set for Jefferson's first great contribution to the cause of Revolution, a contribution which did much to align the colonists against England.

In 1774, Jefferson's education had reached the stage where he was able to declare his beliefs more clearly. He had studied history and philosophy in his search for his ideals, and his conclusions were outlined as the struggle with England progressed. His chief concern was the attainment and maintenance of liberty; tyranny was both wrong in theory and stupid in practice; he saw self government as right and had no doubt but that it would prove more intelligent than despotism; he believed in an aristocracy of talent and virtue. The Summary View reveals the degree to which his convictions had matured, and indicates the paths by which he came to them.

In May of 1774, the Burgesses returned to their constituencies to seek election to the forthcoming convention in Williamsburg that was to select the delegates to the Continental Congress; they also sought re-election to the Assembly which was to meet eleven days later in August. On July 26, Jefferson and John Walker were returned for Albemarle County.

The Instructions that were given the delegates were drafted by Jefferson, and bear a close resemblance to the contents of the Summary View; it is likely that the two papers were drafted at about the same time. The Resolutions of Albemarle County stated first the legal view of Jefferson towards the unjust laws of England: "...the inhabitants of the Several States of British America are subject to the laws which they adopted at their first settlement, and to such others as have been since made by their respective Legislatures, duly constituted and appointed with their own consent." This is followed by the declaration of his belief in the Natural Rights philosophy: "These privileges they hold as the common rights of mankind...." But Jefferson stresses the historical background that he has discovered; these rights are "confirmed by the political constitutions they have respectively assumed, and also by several charters of compact from the Crown." Thus, the colonies have rights which are both natural and legal, but they have been "in frequent instances invaded by the Parliament of Great Britain" and particular reference is made to the "act lately passed to take away the trade of the town of Boston."

The belligerent tone of the Resolution is exemplified in the incitement that is given for revolt in the rest of the Empire; Jefferson urges that there have been unlawful assumptions of power dangerous to the Empire as a whole, that they should be considered as its common cause, "and that we shall ever be ready to join with our fellow-subjects in every part of the same, in executing all those rightful powers which God has given us...." An immediate measure is proposed in the import embargo on British goods -- as carried out with such effectiveness in 1765 -- only Jefferson suggests breaking off trade with every part of the Empire which does not participate in the embargo against Britain; this embargo is to be in effect until the repeal of the Boston Port Act, and the termination of the restrictions on American trade and manufactures; there is the further assurance that the colonies would then grant "such privileges in commerce as may amply compensate their fraternal assistance, past and future."⁸ The important factor in this somewhat amazing paper is that there is as yet no declaration for the rights of Englishmen; the basis of the argument is that the natural rights of the colonists have been invaded and are threatened.

Soon after the drafting of these instructions for the delegates to the Congress, Jefferson must have set out for the Convention in Williamsburg; he fell ill on the road and so sent on two copies of what became known as the Summary View; the one went to Patrick Henry, the other to Peyton Randolph; the latter copy was laid down for the perusal of the delegates, but apparently did not attract much support. However,

the real import of this document lies in that it shows how far Jefferson had travelled on the road to independence; the paper was too extreme for many. Jefferson saw no basis for the belief that England had any right to regulate American commerce or lay duties upon it for such purposes only -- indeed he described this nearly fifty years later as "the half-way house" of the Randolphs and the Lees.⁹

The Summary View of the Rights of British America, published in the summer of 1774 by its supporters, was the first attempt at assessing the relationship that ought to exist between Britain and America; it was the first attempt at an historical consideration of such a relationship. Here is seen the cumulative effect of the historical research conducted by Jefferson in the past five years. Some idea of its efficacy is seen in the Preface to the published version, where the "unhappy differences" with Britain are described as having been "traced with...faithful accuracy...what were the opinions of every free American." Whether it served to "evince to the world the moderation of our late convention," is a matter for dispute. If the Summary View is to be considered as a document of moderation, it must be declared an utter failure; there is little in it which must not have infuriated George III, if he had the chance to see it.

The Summary View constituted Jefferson's views on what should be the instructions given to the delegates of Virginia to the Continental Congress, and was comprised of a series of resolutions. At first it was misleadingly humble, until it complained of the "unwarrented

encroachments and usurpations attempted upon one part of the empire, upon those rights which God and the laws have given equally and independently to all."¹⁰ Jefferson makes the remarkable presumption that firm language, "divested of those expressions of servility which would persuade his majesty a more respectful acceptance."¹¹ It seems that Jefferson's reading of the history of the Magna Charta, as interpreted by the Whigs, has an influence in his assertion that it is not favours that he asks, but rights. Furthermore, he adds that he does not think the King will view them as unreasonable when he "reflects that he is no more than the chief officer of the people, appointed by the laws, and circumscribed with definite powers...."¹² The influence of the Whig view of history appears as the pamphlet continues; it is only with the knowledge of the character of Jefferson's historical studies at this time that one can appreciate the assertions that he makes as to the limits bounding the British throne.

Jefferson reminds the King that "our ancestors were free inhabitants before their emigration" and that they possessed "a right which nature has given to all men, of departing from the country in which chance, not choice, has placed them, of going in quest of new habitations, and of there establishing new societies, under such laws...as to them seem most likely to promote public happiness." The historical argument continues: "That their Saxon ancestors had, under this universal law, in like manner left their native wilds and woods in the north of Europe, had possessed themselves of the island of Britain...and had established

there that system of laws which has so long been the glory and protection of that country. Nor was any claim ever asserted of superiority or dependence over them by that mother country from which they had migrated...." The use of a historical parallel that would appear grossly inaccurate is only to be explained in the light of the prevailing Whig view of Saxon history; Jefferson might have been attempting to find a historical basis for the case of the colonies, but he did have justification in the history then accepted. He freely translates it to the American scene and enquires whether there is any "circumstance... occurred to distinguish materially the British from the Saxon emigration."¹²

The recent aid given to the colonies is dismissed briefly; the colonies, having become valuable to Britain "for her commercial purposes"; she is "pleased to lend them assistance against the enemy, who would fain have drawn to herself the benefits of their commerce...Such assistance, and in such circumstances, they had often before given to other allied states...yet these states never supposed, that by calling in her aid, they thereby submitted themselves to her sovereignty." Of course, Jefferson does not mean to understate aid "doubtless valuable"; yet he seems to achieve a substantial minimisation of that aid. His main point is to show that there is no ground for the claims now made by Britain for the past aid rendered the colonies -- despite the fact that the claims are mainly such as would render the colonies more self supporting in their defence provisions. Jefferson would repay such aid as was given, by commercial benefits to Britain, which

that country possessed already. He even goes so far as to suggest his version of the political link between the colonies and Britain, a version which was very favorable to the former; the settlers "thought proper to adopt that system of laws under which they had hitherto lived in the mother country, and to continue their union with her by submitting themselves to the same common sovereign, who was thereby made the central link..."

After listing the measures of unjust interference with the commerce and trade of the colonies, Jefferson brings forth one of his most telling phrases, one which has a close similarity to a passage of Locke: "Single acts of tyranny may be ascribed to the accidental opinion of a day; but a series of oppressions begun at a distinguished period, and pursued, unalterably through every change of ministers too plainly prove a deliberate and systematical plan of reducing us to slavery." This sentence makes clear that Jefferson did not write with any genuine hope of a reconciliation between Britain and the Colonies; he was sufficiently intelligent to realise the probable effect of his resolutions upon the King should they reach him. It is obvious that Jefferson was here writing for the American people who formed his audience and the potential force in the struggle. His own reading of history and political thought left him convinced of the rationality of the independence of America; the most that he could concede was a system of home rule, with the colonies linked to the Empire by the Crown. ¹³

There is no adequate answer given to the question as to who is to be considered responsible for the "deliberate and systematical plan" for enslaving the colonies; Jefferson writes of it as continuing through every change of ministers, yet he asserts that it is the King's advisors who seek to embroil Britain to gain occasion to secure knight-hoods. His main appeal is against the iniquities of the British parliament, and the King is addressed as the person who can remedy the situation. Yet Jefferson names his would-be saviour unworthy. The only conclusion to be arrived at from these inconsistencies is that Jefferson did not see the Summary View as a means of effecting reconciliation; he must have been aware that the pamphlet would gain wide circulation -- he was not naive -- and so saw it as a means of persuading the colonists to his conclusions on the crisis. For appearance only must have come the exhortation: "Let not the name of George the third be a blot on the page of history." It was clear to all that in Jefferson's view, George was already a very bad blot.

Throughout the pages of the Summary View one finds an attempted historical justification of the rights of British America; the Saxon myth has its place; Jefferson alludes to the emigration of the Saxons to Britain and the fact that they entered into independence of their mother country; he alludes to the laws they set up "to promote public happiness" he demonstrates that George III can have no rights in America in respect of land, for there is not feudal tenure in America, and he adds: "In the earlier ages of the Saxon settlement, feudal

holdings were certainly altogether unknown....Our Saxon ancestors held their lands...in absolute dominion, disencumbered by any superior.... William the Conqueror introduced the feudal system, parcelling out the land of those who fell at Hastings to his followers..."; since America was not conquered by the Normans, its lands were not surrendered to either him or his successors. This devious reasoning shows the application Jefferson made of the Saxon myth as found in the Whig histories. However, he pointed out: "From the nature of things, every society must at all times possess within itself the sovereign powers of legislation" -- a phrase, which while it might have proof in such a view of history, is more nearly from Algernon Sydney.

This pamphlet would appear to be a judicious political mixture of colonial grievances and historical justification of their rights. The tone of the concluding paragraphs indicate its real character; it is in effect an ultimatum to George III. There could be only one outcome. "We are willing, on our part, to sacrifice everything which reason can ask to the restoration of that tranquillity for which all must wish. On their part let them be ready to establish union on a generous plan." Jefferson gives due warning to George III that: "The God who gave us life gave us liberty at the same time; The hand of force may destroy, but cannot disjoin them." Jefferson shows that he has become indoctrinated with both the Whig view of the indestructibility of rights once possessed, and the law of nature envisaged by John Locke. It seems almost emotional anticlimax when Jefferson adds "It is neither

our wish nor our interest to separate from Great Britain," and appeals to the King as the only effective authority to "procure redress of our grievances...to establish fraternal love and harmony through the whole empire," concluding this to be the "fervent prayer of all British America."

The importance of the pamphlet was considerable; it gained wider currency than any other writing of Jefferson's during the Revolution, excepting the Declaration which was of a different character. The many inaccuracies were not noticed by the reading public that Jefferson reached; probably they were the result of the short time in which he had to draft the twenty three pages of denunciation. In place of historical precision and literary grace is found a new boldness and fervour, an indignation at the recent coercive measures. It is easy to see the cause of the lack of interest shown by the Virginia Convention; the majority of the Virginians were not yet ready to take the decisive step that would cause a breach; Jefferson was almost anticipating that step by the force with which he proclaimed the injustice suffered by the Colonies, and the terms with which he criticized the King and Parliament. It embodied a reasoned theory of imperial relations that was better adapted to a later era; he denied the very authority of Parliament and envisaged a system "having the same executive chief but no other necessary political connection."¹⁴ He overstated the case for the individual settlers, who could not have survived without British protection prior to his own day. The charters were not viewed

as royal gifts, but as restrictions on royal power. The practice inaugurated by the Stuarts of parcelling out lands in America to their favorites was branded as iniquitous, with an appeal to the history of feudalism. Jefferson shows his study of the Saxons, and his concept of their embodying and exemplifying English liberties, for his main argument here is not one based on philosophical, but historical authority; it was an argument which had a wider appeal to the masses than would any attempt at a philosophical justification. Since there was no sound historical argument Jefferson was obliged to resort to a series of half truths, to form his "connected chain of parliamentary usurpation." The Summary View was in effect a declaration of independence on the part of Jefferson, of the authority of the British parliament.

There is no doubt that he believed in the stand that he took; he later declared: "If it had any merit, it was that of first taking our true ground, and that which was afterwards assumed and maintained." 15 The language used by Jefferson doomed the appeal -- if such it can be called -- to failure; the unconciliatory manner of his advocacy of an empire of self governing units, bound together by mutual benefits, with the King a mere formality, and ultimate authority laying in the laws of nature, resulted in a weakening of the position of the supporters of the colonists in Parliament; Ministers were able to point to the Americans as extremists, and to continue to give some grounds for Jefferson's alleged "chain of parliamentary usurpation." 18

By 1774, Jefferson was, in effect, a well-read Southern radical; he saw the parallel of circumstances in the history of the English struggle for liberty and the struggle he came to lead in America; the justification found by the Whig historians was no less applicable to the lot of the colonists. If the charters that had been granted in England by the King were but the acknowledgement of rights earlier possessed by the earlier inhabitants of that island, then the charters granted to the colonists were no less an incomplete acknowledgement of their rights; in this aspect they were clearly restrictions on the power of the King. It did not matter for either the Whigs or Jefferson that the Crown did not accept their view of history; it served to secure the support of the people, and to offer adequate justification for their struggle for rights and liberties.

The influence of Jefferson's recent studies is manifest at this time, but his political immaturity was no less apparent; however, at a time when passions were running high, and few were capable of clear thought, Jefferson's impractical proposals, resulting from insufficient digestion of his material, were not entirely out of place. They served to set many thinking with some seriousness of the possibility of leaving the Empire; while Jefferson did not advocate secession, he left the door wide open. There was every indication that Jefferson's feelings ran less strongly after the publication of the Summary View; his desire for the maintenance of the liberties of the colonists was unabated, but it was

with apparent regret that he wrote to Dr. William Small on the news of Lexington: "...the unhappy news of an action of considerable magnitude, between the King's troops and our brethren of Boston.... This action has cut off our last hope of reconciliation, and a phrensy of revenge seems to have seized all ranks of the people."¹⁷ He seemed sincerely to regret that there should be an open breach with Britain, despite the impetus that he gave to the course of events in his paper of the previous year; yet he is not slow to lay the blame for the situation at the door of George III. He wrote: "It is a lamentable circumstance, that the only mediatory power, acknowledged by both parties, instead of leading to a reconciliation his divided people, should pursue the incendiary purpose of still blowing up the flames, as we find him constantly doing, in every speech and public declaration." Jefferson remarks, almost ironically: "A little knowledge of human nature... might have seen that the spirits of the people here were in a state, in which they were more likely to be provoked, than frightened, by haughty deportment."¹⁸ Even in this more moderate letter, he indulges in rhetoric; he queries whether it can be a crime to develop and assert one's rights, and notes that "the dignity of Parliament can brook no opposition to its power." Significant is the further comment on the nature of that body which he so despised: "Strange, that a set of men, who have made sale of their virtue to the Minister, should yet talk of retaining dignity."¹⁹ Here are Bolingbroke's sentiments re-echoed, that hatred of the corruption which has rotted the core of the British constitution.

Already he is driven by the logic of his own reasoning to the conclusion that the ultimate responsibility for corruption in Britain lies with the King; he looks for the source of that corruption which allows a set of men to make a sale of their virtue to the "Minister" and it becomes clear that it is the King who is behind that Minister, and is the source of the evil.

There is occasion, when one might wonder if Jefferson nears inconsistency: he had the honour of phrasing the Address to Governor Dunmore in June 1775, and made strong professions of his sincere desire for "the perpetual continuance of that brotherly love which we bear to our fellow-subjects of Great Britain, and...hope...that they do not approve the measures which have so long oppressed their brethren in America." However, this was in accordance with the statement in the Summary View in which Jefferson declares that Parliament does not represent the people of Britain; it is important to note that liberty is the most vital consideration of the relations between England and the colonies: "Next to the possession of liberty, my Lord, we should consider such a reconciliation as the greatest of all human blessings." It is clear from the course of events and the feelings aroused at this time that such a reconciliation was hardly practical; the resolutions framed by Jefferson in conjunction with this Address were of such a sweeping character, that the possibility of a Tory Ministry accepting such views was exceedingly remote. He asserted that "the British Government has no right to

intermeddle with the support of civil government in the Colonies. For us, not for them, has Government been instituted here." Regarding the issue of taxation, Jefferson moved the rejection of a fixed tax, and suggested that since "we have a right to give our money, as the Parliament do theirs" it is to be without coercion, "from time to time, as public exigencies may require," -- for "without this, we possess no check on the royal prerogative." Protest is made at the presence of standing armies, and the many other injustices, including the restrictions on trade; particularly does Jefferson object to the request made by Britain for financial grants at a time when an invasion of America is planned -- "which is a style of asking gifts not reconcilable to our freedom." He finally declares that "we have wearied our King with application: he has not deigned to answer us." ²⁰ It is clear that Jefferson is resigned, to say the least, to the prospect of secession from an Empire in which liberty is alien to every land, even including the mother country.

The Summary View rendered Jefferson a considerable measure of fame; after this, writings of his were passed around as remarkable for their peculiar felicity of expression; he shortly had occasion to establish more firmly this reputation that he achieved. He left Virginia in June 1775 to take his place as a delegate to the Congress at Philadelphia; his recent part in formulating Virginia's reply to the so called Conciliatory proposition assured him of his place in the

councils of the Congress. John Adams noted his arrival: "Mr Jefferson came into Congress in June 1775, and brought with him a reputation for literature, science and a happy talent of composition...." 21 Five days later he was placed on the committee set up to draw a Declaration of the Causes of Taking Up Arms.

His influence in this important document was modified by the cautious John Dickinson, and this probably accounts for the two drafts, which Malone sees as proof of a more fastidious craftsmanship on Jefferson's part. Jefferson claimed only the last four paragraphs for his own, and they certainly show a forcefulness which came to be associated with him on the topic of England. In general the paper was a catalogue of the grievances of the colonies against Britain; it is largely a summary of points made in earlier papers of Jefferson. The import of the Declaration was that the actions of the British government had forced the Americans to change the ground of their opposition and to accept the appeal from reason to arms; the length of the catalogue is explained by Jefferson's desire to seek the approval of "supreme reason" and also to make known to the world the justice of the colonists' cause. The question of the precise authority of Parliament is avoided, due to the moderation of Dickinson, but there is further enunciation of the historical basis of the rights of the Colonies in the vein found in the Summary View; it is demonstrated how "our forefathers, inhabitants of the island of Great Britain, left their native land to seek on these shores a residence for civil and

religious freedom." The past attempts at securing the remedy of grievances are listed dramatically: "We have supplicated our king at various times in terms almost disgraceful to freedom; we have reasoned, we have remonstrated with parliament in the most decent language...to preserve that liberty which He committed to our sacred deposit." The affront at Boston, and the vile calumnies of General Gage are named as the final occasion for taking up arms, but the main theme is the same: "...no nation on earth should supplant our attachment to liberty." 22

Jefferson still burns with a sense of injustice, but he is less impetuous in his phraseology; the metamorphosis of Jefferson into a statesman is apparent. The Report on Lord North's Motion drawn up shortly after the Declaration is more vigorous, if more specific, but lacks the quality of immortality that one has come to look for. Jefferson calls North's proposal one in which the Americans were "to give...money, accompanied with large fleets and armies" which "seems addressed to our fears rather than to our freedom." He points out that "while there are restrictions on our trade" the resources of wealth are shut, and he asks the justice of America's bearing all other burdens equally with those with whom every resource is open. His conviction as to the corruption existing in England is once again pronounced: "We do not mean that our people shall be burthened with oppressive taxes, to provide sinecures for the idle or the wicked, under colour of providing for a civil list." The proposal

is thereupon dismissed as "altogether unsatisfactory, because it imports only a suspension of the mode, not a renunciation of the pretended right to tax us"; and, thus, with the final link broken, the need for concerted efforts is made known. The efforts of the British government were belated, and had some title to the criticism they received from Jefferson; there was indeed the appearance of "indiscriminate legislation," of unreasonableness but there was no ground for the deep suspicion with which Jefferson viewed the move. There was no insidious plan to reduce the privileges and rights of the American colonists; the majority of the "rights" were unknown prior to 1763; the widening currency of the publications and views of the English seventeenth century philosophers and historians who had prepared the way for the revolution of 1688 in Britain, made for the general awareness of the importance of liberty and natural rights, and accounts largely for the new suspicion that greeted actions of Britain. The transference of these ideas to America has its place in any explanation of Jefferson's final bold statement that "nothing but our own exertions may defeat the ministerial sentence of death or abject submission."²⁸ It was, among other things, a time for change; it was the misfortune of Britain that she was unaware of the new sentiments in America, or their cause; the revolutionary creeds of Sydney and Locke were forgotten in a land where the settlement of 1688 had been overset by the canker of corruption as Bolingbroke and Burgh depicted it.

The position of a letter that Jefferson wrote to his friend John Randolph appears to have been much misunderstood. Randolph was a tory, and very pro-British, so much so that he purposed to go to England. It is therefore clear that Jefferson was not writing for the edification of the general public when he wrote "I hope the returning wisdom of Great Britain will ere long, put an end to this unnatural contest." He was writing to give some measure of reassurance to his friend, and while he declares "My first wish is a restoration of our just rights; my second, a return of the happy period, when, consistently with duty, I may withdraw myself from the public stage...." He asserts that if the British were "thoroughly and minutely acquainted with every circumstance relative to America as it exists in truth, I am persuaded this would go far towards disposing them to reconciliation....I would rather be in dependence on Great Britain, properly limited, than on any other nation on earth...." Jefferson talks of reconciliation as but a vague possibility, yet seeks to comfort Randolph; he is firm on the importance of self government for the colonies, and even declares that "rather than submit the rights of legislating for us, assumed by the British Parliament, and which late experience has shown they will so cruelly exercise, would lead my hand to sink the whole Island in the ocean."²⁴ There was no doubt in the mind of Jefferson that the powers of Parliament over America were "assumed," and he shows, in this private letter, the extent of his hatred of England on this ground; as yet, he has not

included the English people in his hatred; the real force of his antagonism is emphasized in that he did not wish to offend Randolph.

Later in the same year, Jefferson wrote again to Randolph, and again there is reference to his affection for Great Britain, an affection that is constantly belied by his words: "Believe me, my dear sir, there is not in the British empire, a man who more cordially loves a union with Great Britain than I do." Significant is the following passage, so often played down by biographers who believe that Jefferson was not thinking of independence in 1776: "...by the God that made me, I will cease to exist before I yield to a connection on such terms as the British parliament propose; and in this I think I speak the sentiment of America. We want neither inducement nor power, to declare and assert a separation. It is will alone which is wanting, and that is growing under the fostering hand of our King." 25

These words make clear, in their context, that Jefferson was fully prepared for the breach with Britain, and saw no other solution in the nature of things; he has hinted at his feelings in the Summary View in 1774, but that was mainly in the nature of an educational pamphlet; Jefferson realized that the people had yet to be informed as to the threat to their rights. In June of 1775, he wrote to Francis Eppes, with some jubilation, that "the war is now heartily entered into, without a prospect of accomodation but through the effectual interposition of arms." 26

Jefferson returned to Virginia in the summer of 1775, and was able to attend to his correspondence, and enjoy his family for a brief period. It was in November that he heard that the King had finally proclaimed the colonies in a state of rebellion, and threatened dire punishment for traitors. Possibly this had some effect upon his opinion of George III, but already he was directing his scorn to include the King, even in the petition which he had addressed to George in August 1774. At the end of November he commented "It is an immense misfortune to the whole empire, to have a King of such a disposition at such a time. We are told, and everything proves it true, that he is the bitterest enemy we have...the sceptred tyrant will know we are not mere brutes, to crouch under his hand and kiss the rod with which he designs to scourge us."²⁷ Later that year, Jefferson's belief in Providence's interest in American liberty is exemplified dramatically in his remark to John Page: "A forty gun ship blew up the other day by accident in the harbour of Boston. Of a certainty the hand of God is upon them [the English]."²⁸

The momentous year of 1776 found Jefferson once again attending the Congress at Philadelphia; he had occupied himself during his sojourn at Monticello in sounding out the strength of the local sentiment in favour of independence, and in sorting out his own thoughts on the matter. It would seem that he noted the efficacy of branding George III as the nominal cause of the straits in which the colonies had found themselves: Jefferson's success as a politician

is partly explained by his aptitude for selecting suitable points of criticism which would assist in the formulation of popular opinion.

An indication of the trend of Jefferson's thought is shown in the draft of a proposed constitution that he sent to Williamsburg for consideration; it arrived too late for much of it to be included in the final draft, but it is nevertheless a capital document for the history of Jefferson's political thought, as well as for the views it had led him to take of Great Britain. Many of the charges levelled at the King find a place in the Declaration of Independence which was drafted shortly after.

The draft constitution commences with a prologue which describes how "George Guelf king of Great Britain and Ireland and Elector of Hanover, heretofore entrusted with the exercise of the kingly office in this government hath endeavored to pervert the same in a detestable and insupportable tyranny." The same is said in the Declaration: "The History of his present Majesty, is a History of unremitting Injuries and Usurpations...all of which have in direct object, the Establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these states." The parallel extends also to the list of "injuries" that follows in each case: the use of the royal veto on laws which were "most wholesome and necessary for the public good;" the dissolutions of the Assemblies and thwarting the will of the people: "endeavoring to prevent the population of our country...and...obstructing the laws for the naturalisation of foreigners & raising the condition [lacking

Appropriations of lands; the presence of standing armies in time of peace; the quartering of troops; cutting off of trade; taxation without consent; and "by prompting our negroes to rise in arms among us; those very negroes whom by an inhuman use of his negative he hath refused permission to exclude by law." The list is as long as it is conclusive. Primarily it shows that Jefferson could still write a fine piece of propaganda when the spirit so moved him. He builds up to a climax which must be regarded as a model of such writing; the masterpiece of understatement which follows the list -- "by which several acts of misrule the said George Guelf has forfeited the kingly office and has rendered it necessary for the preservation of the people that he should be immediately deposed from the same, and divested of all its privileges, powers, & prerogatives." 29

Jefferson thus adopts a new approach to the problem of justifying the stand he has taken towards Great Britain; he has temporarily abandoned the historical approach to enter into that of justification through his theory of natural rights. He has merely developed the thesis which was previously only a subordinate one in the Summary View. The past injustices suffered by the colonies are now made the cause for their move to arms and to independence; here are applied the theories that Jefferson became acquainted with in Sydney's Discourses and Locke's Essay on Civil Government; the long train of events has now formed in itself the justification for revolt. Of course, it could not be called revolt by Jefferson; had not Sydney

declared that "The general revolt of a nation cannot be called a rebellion." Clearly Jefferson was convinced that there was ^{no} longer reason to remain in the Empire, and now that the people were ready for independence, it was time to formally pronounce that which he had so long looked upon as a fact.

The constitution that Jefferson outlined was one which revealed his views of the deficiencies in that of England. To avoid the corruption that had permeated the British constitution, he declared that "The Legislative, Executive, and Judiciary shall be forever separate"; the House was to be elected by "all male persons of full age and sane mind having a freehold estate in (one fourth of an acre) of land in any town or in 25 acres of land in the county...." But since most Virginians were landowners in a day when it was both cheap and easily obtainable, the qualification was not important. Jefferson showed thus his belief that government should be democratic and represent the people as a whole. His further stipulations that there should be no standing armies but in time of actual war and that slaves should not be introduced into the State show he saw the threat that force constituted and how his belief in the British responsibility for slavery persisted. ³⁰ Interesting too is the remark that he makes concerning the position of Senators in his proposed constitution; he insisted that "While in the senatorial office they shall be incapable of holding any public pension or post of profit either themselves, or by others for their use." ³¹ This would appear to be the first practical

remedy Jefferson suggested for the manner of the corruption achieved in England under Walpole and his successors, and there is a connection here with the views with which he was well acquainted in both Bolingbroke and Burgh.

Jefferson's opinions of England in this crucial period are made known in the several public papers he penned, which had their theme in the present, past, and future, position of Britain and America. His suggestions for a constitution for Virginia show the features which he desired reformed, features which were unfortunate, in his view, in the Britain of his day. These suggestions are related to the historical justification which is clearly assumed throughout; the British government since 1688 has failed to restrain Kings from trampling the natural and historical rights of Americans underfoot.

That Jefferson was chosen for the committee that was to prepare the document which formally declared American independence of England is not surprising. It was not the inevitability of there being a Virginian on the committee that assured Jefferson of his place, but his past contribution to the American cause. He had done as much as any one else to prepare the colonists for the final breach with the mother country. He expressed their sense of injustice in phrases which inspired them to continued resistance. Not only had he laid before his countrymen the issues at stake, but by his presentation of the situation as he saw it, had indicated the course that should be taken to ensure the maintenance of colonial rights.

To Jefferson was assigned the task of framing the first draft for the consideration of the committee; he took only seventeen days to complete the document that was finally presented to Congress for its approval on June 28. The influence of Adams and Franklin must not be discounted, but the Declaration of Independence must be viewed as expressing the ideas and ideals of Thomas Jefferson, expressing his maturing attitude towards Great Britain. Here are found the varied feelings that Britain brought forth in Jefferson; some develop further, some are modified as the years pass; the nature of the document, as a public declaration of America, and as a propaganda declaration therefore, must always be remembered.

There have been many studies on the text and the amendments made to it; one of the most brilliant was that of Carl Becker, who analysed the document as falling into two sections.³² First there is enunciated a democratic political philosophy, the philosophy which underlay Jefferson's fundamental attitude to the revolution, and the rights which he claimed as inherently belonging to the Americans; the second section relates the specific grievances against England, which are ostensibly presented as the historical causes of the movement which culminated in the declaration of independence. Particularly important are the parts dealing with the theory of government; Jefferson gives less emphasis to a historical justification, as he did in the Summary View. The reasons for the change in strategy are clear; Jefferson became convinced that the involved explanation that the historical

method resorted was not suited to the occasion; perhaps he saw the need for a proclamation of the political philosophy on which the revolution was based; it is more likely that he realized it was far easier to portray the King as violating the law of nature by persistent encroachment upon inalienable rights of his subjects. The political effectiveness of such a move has never been disproved. The address to the King was deliberate, but for another reason, apart from the simplicity achieved; in Jefferson's view, and consequently that of many of his fellows, the authority of Parliament had been denied in the Summary View; in the Declaration the last link is severed, that of the Crown.

Jefferson had devoted considerable attention to a study of political thought in the years immediate to the revolution, just as he had studied history. The ideas found in the Declaration are found in his books of Sydney and Locke. It is noteworthy that he did not seek praise for new arguments; he avowed that he desired "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. Neither aiming at originality of principle or sentiment, nor yet copying from any particular and previous writing, it was intended to give expression to the American mind...." ³³ So, he produced a synthesis of the thought he found in the Discourses and in the Essay on Civil Government, thought which had become the commonplace of American

political philosophy in the past two decades. Sydney had written in justification of revolution per se while Locke had written for the English revolution which followed, and their applicability to the American situation was plain to the embittered colonists.

The first paragraphs of the Declaration are concerned with the political philosophy on which independence is claimed: yet the first sentence is also reminiscent of a quotation from Stanyan that Jefferson transcribed into his: Commonplace Book. This transcription describes the history of Syracuse and Corcyra, which had been subject to Corinth "but as they increased in power, they renounced their obedience." ³⁴ In the first sentence of the Declaration, there are the famous words: "When in the Course of human Events it becomes necessary for a People to advance from that Subordination in which they have hitherto remained..."

However, full rein is then given to the doctrine of natural rights, "...and to assume among the Powers of the Earth, the equal and independent Station to which the Laws of Nature, and of Nature's God entitle them..." and Jefferson goes on to declare "the Causes which impel them to the Change." ³⁵

These causes are, in order of importance, the "self evident" truths of man's natural rights, and the "unremitting Injuries and Usurpations" of George III.

The exposition of fundamental rights is brief and to the point: "Men are created equal and independent; that from that equal Creation they derive Rights inherent and unalienable; among which

are the Preservation of Life, and Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness; that to secure these Ends, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just Powers from the Consent of the governed; that whenever any form of Government shall become destructive of these 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... to effect their safety and Happiness."

Thus far, the doctrine of natural rights that is presented is that of Sydney with the merit of a far happier mode of expression than that ever attained by the English radical. The subsequent passage, however, reverts to John Locke's interpretation of the doctrine: the reason would seem to be that Jefferson possessed sufficient political sense to realise that the conservatives in Congress (the majority of that body) would react against Sydney's pure philosophy of revolution. Therefore Locke's belief in the conservatism of man is proclaimed: "Prudence indeed will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient Causes; and accordingly all Experience hath shown, that Mankind are more disposed to Suffer, while Evils are Sufferable, than to right themselves, by abolishing the Forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long Train of Abuses and Usurpations...evinces a Design to reduce them under absolute Power, it is their Duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future Security." 36

Two points are made clear by this passage: Jefferson was skilful enough a politician to know how to use even a doctrine of conservatism against the British, while he also knew how to submerge his private inclinations to Sydney's philosophy; these inclinations are revealed in a letter written in 1787, when he speaks of rebellion as "a medicine necessary for the sound health of government."³⁷

It is to prove the assertion that George III sought the "Establishment of an absolute Tyranny" over these colonies that Jefferson lists the "Facts" that the "candid World" might be convinced. This list is identical in content with that which prefaced Jefferson's proposed Constitution for Virginia. Certainly Jefferson shows himself as not above relating a biased account of the justice accorded to the British soldiers who had fired on the mob in the famed Boston "massacre;" the narrative did serve to enhance the immediate propaganda value of the Declaration.

The attitude taken towards the infractions of the colonial charters is revealed as one which is in full accordance with the interpretation of history identified with the English Whigs. In this view, charters were but a measure of reclaiming the original rights of Englishmen, and constituted a limitation of the prerogative of the Crown. It has been shown that Jefferson accepted this interpretation of history, and this explains his claim that the King had no right to suspend or alter the colonial charters. Jefferson was not alone in discrediting the concept of such charters being concessions of the Crown, and liable to withdrawal at the pleasure of the King.

After the catalogue of crimes laid at the door of George III, Jefferson cleverly reverts to the earlier theme of the virtues of mankind, and the philosophy he has attached to that theme, when he labels the King as: "A Prince, whose character is thus marked by every Act which may define a Tyrant,...unfit to be the Ruler of a People who mean to be free." For these grievances constitute "...so many Acts of Tyranny...over a People fostered and fixed in the Principles of Liberty."

Significant is the manner that Jefferson adopts to the English nation as a whole. He has already branded Parliament as unrepresentative, yet he declares that "...occasions have been given them [the people] by the regular Course of their Laws of removing their Councils, the Disturbers of our Harmony," and he concludes that "...they have by their free Election, re-established them in Power." It would seem no mere propaganda device of Jefferson's in naming the British nation as guilty of injustice, when he says: "We have warned them from Time to Time of attempts of their Legislature to extend a Jurisdiction over these our States" with negative results. He gives further evidence of the treacherous nature of the British: "At this very Time too, they are permitting their Chief Magistrate to send over not only soldiers of our common Blood, but Scotch and foreign mercenaries, to invade and deluge us in Blood." ³⁹ This is named the "last Stab to agonizing affection" and the final blow from unfeeling Brethren."

The grievances were thus shown to be in direct contravention to the rights of the Colonies, to justify both the renunciation of "all Allegiance and Subjection to the Kings of Great Britain" and the breaking off of all "political Connection which may have heretofore subsisted between us and the People or Parliament of Great Britain." Jefferson's concept of the fundamental issue was simple: there was a dangerous threat to liberties in the British policy, a policy apparently backed by King, Parliament, and people.

While Jefferson was certainly partisan in his devotion to the cause of the colonies, the Declaration shows him under the influence of feelings that were modified by the political needs of the document, together with the character of the Congress whose approval was vital.

The Declaration was indeed a profound inspiration for revolution, not only in eighteenth century America, but in nineteenth century Europe. But it was not founded upon "a superficial knowledge of history" and "upon a naive faith in the instinctive virtues of human kind" as Carl Becker believes. Whatever Jefferson's instinctive inclination towards the rights, liberties, and virtues, of mankind, he did not base his beliefs upon superficial knowledge or naive faith. His research was as thorough as it was detailed, when it is viewed in the light of the resources available in the eighteenth century. The history to which Jefferson makes frequent appeal and reference, was neither inaccurate or inadequate; it was as complete as that possessed in the present day. Its trend, its bias, and emphasis in interpretation

has only recently been discarded. Jefferson's "naive faith" was based upon the firm foundation of philosophy, comprising Sydney's doctrine of revolution and Locke's enunciation of liberty as the aim of government, a foundation achieved in the close study Jefferson made in his vitally important early years.

The Declaration of Independence ends a phase in the life of

Jefferson, and begins another, but in its relevance to his attitude to Great Britain, it is not a phase, but the final establishment of the view which remained with him throughout his life. It affirms his opinion of Britain as a nation morally and physically corrupt, a nation for whom Jefferson bore a persistent dislike.

It has been pointed out that Thomas Jefferson was peculiarly well fitted for the national positions he filled, that his education had a particular aptness and influence regarding his subsequent career: the role he played in the Revolution not only made him a national figure, but continued his training in statesmanship as well as in politics. Both the revolutionary years and the six years immediate to his appointment as Secretary of State, show something of his development and the feelings he held for late mother country, Great Britain.

The Declaration did not mean any departure from the theory of history relied upon in the Summary View. Jefferson did not subscribe to the Whig interpretation of history for mere propaganda purposes; he subscribed to the interpretation no less sincerely when the political importance decreased.

Jefferson's firmness of purpose was shown to advantage in his drafting of the Resolutions on Peace Propositions at the end of August. He points out in "this great controversey with Britain... there never was a time when these states intimated a disposition to give away in perpetuum their essential right of judging whether they should give or withhold their money for what purposes they should make the gift, or what should be its continuance." Furthermore, "this Congress...have no power to enter into conference or to receive any propositions on the subject of peace which do not as a preliminary acknowledge these states to be soveraign and independent" only then would there be any conference, "for the purpose of stopping the effusion of so much kindred blood."³⁹ A year later, Jefferson waxed more passionate, but circumstances gave him cause for his vehemence: "they [the British] will continue to grasp at their desperate sovereignty, till every benefit short of that is forever out of their reach."⁴⁰

It is noteworthy that at this time he writes that if only England would acknowledge American independence, there might be arranged a commercial treaty, and possibly an offensive-defensive alliance. This would indicate Jefferson as not visualising any considerable separation from Britain; events seem largely to account for his change in opinion: the overrunning of his State during his governorship had a considerable effect upon Jefferson's sentiments. Certainly the concept of such friendly relations with Britain is not in accordance

with the general trend of his thought; his fundamental attitude towards that country did not change from that manifest in the early 1770's.

Jefferson never wavered in his conviction that the British government had abused the trusts reposed in it, and was sure that independence was the only solution to the needs of America. His dedication to this cause was followed by his adherence to policies which he viewed as vital to the maintenance of American interests. The continued conflict with Great Britain was inevitable.

III

THE INTERREGNUM

That Thomas Jefferson was not the greatest of War Governors is generally admitted today; his scruples in the devotion he paid to the sovereign law were something of an embarrassment in the abnormal period over which his governorship extended; as an executive he was not well suited to the exigencies of war. He resigned his office on June 1st, 1781, and, deeply wounded by the criticism which he had met in office, he was now determined to quit public life; and very shortly, his resolution was put to the test. Two weeks after his resignation, he was appointed by Congress to be one of the four commissioners to negotiate the peace; not until August did Jefferson finally dispatch his reply, in which he gracefully but firmly declined the honour.

He did indeed find it a difficult decision to make; he was aware of the trust that the Continental Congress was manifesting, but he did never the less "sincerely lament the existence of circumstances which take from me the right of accepting so desirable an office."¹ Jefferson's attitude was not unreasonable, for he had been able to spend but little time with his family in the past seven years, while the criticism of his governorship he took far more seriously than did the critics; his desire for the companionship of his family was strengthened by the tragic illness of his wife. He reiterated his reasons for declining the post offered, in a letter to Edmund Randolph:

"...I have taken my final leave of everything of that nature. I have retired to my farm, my family, and my books, from which I think nothing will evermore separate me." He desired the "independence of private life."² The very marked disappointment shown by Jefferson's friends on this occasion emphasises his resolution to take his final leave of public life; Madison viewed the decision narrowly: "Great as is my partiality to Mr. Jefferson, the mode in which he seems determined to revenge the wrong received from his country does not appear to me to be dictated either by philosophy or patriotism."³ It is evident that Jefferson believed he had now retired; this was no mere pause, no mere interval between the acts in the political drama.

When this is realised, the famous Notes on Virginia that he wrote at this time take on a new significance; Jefferson was in effect writing the equivalent of his valedictory address, a summary of his ideas, and his ideals, of his political views, and his aspirations for his country's future, all clothed in the misleading garb of answers to a questionnaire.

The Notes on Virginia cannot be regarded as mere items of interest concerning the Virginia of Jefferson's day: important as the facts, geological, geographical, are in all aspects, the review of politics that Jefferson makes in the course of the work are of far greater significance. These notes hold a new interest when viewed as what Jefferson thought was his final testament. They constitute his thought on the political

scene, in Virginia, America, and Great Britain. It was not in his nature to confine his study to his country; in his description of Virginia, there is revealed much of his own thought, probably intentionally, since he was still seeking vindication for the recent past.

Jefferson says he did not compose the Notes extemporaneously, but had been collecting information over many years; the request of Marbois for information on Virginia would seem too accidental an inspiration for the considerable work that the request brought forth. While the Notes are best described as an ad hoc work, and are as unpretentious as they are unlabored, there are many reflections which gave the work as a whole a philosophical tone not related to Virginia alone. The radical nature of many of the ideas contained, is explained when it is realised that Jefferson did not write for general publication, but for his own satisfaction and personal friends; it was at their importuning that the Notes were finally published a year later in Paris.

One of the most significant aspects found in Jefferson's paper is the new nationalism that pervades his observations; he compares his own country with those of Northern Europe, and asks "how many good poets, how many able mathematicians, how many great inventors in arts or sciences" there had been produced in Europe since the Roman Empire, and remarks in answer that "it was sixteen centuries after this before a Newton could be formed." He points with pride to the great men that America has produced, naming Washington, "whose

memory will be adored while liberty shall have votaries" as well as Franklin and Rittenhouse in the fields of science; he goes on to show how this narrow patriotism affects him, by his declaration that Great Britain, with ten million inhabitants, has no claim to comparison with the learned men possessed by America. He does qualify that assertion to the extent of admitting that the absence of communication with Britain makes difficult "a fair estimate of the state of science in that country," but he adds his personal opinion that "The spirit in which she wages war, is the only sample before our eyes, and that does not seem the legitimate offspring either of science or or civilization." Jefferson is now convinced that "The sun of her glory is fast descending to the horizon. Her philosophy has crossed the channel, her freedom the Atlantic, and herself seems passing to that awful dissolution whose issue is not given human foresight to scan." ⁴ He makes clear in these few words that he still believes that Britain once enjoyed the liberty that the Americans have waged war to maintain; once again does Jefferson record his view of English freedom, that England has lost her freedom and liberty as a result of the corruption that has destroyed the balance in the constitution. There was added cause for his belief that "the sun of her glory is fast descending to the horizon."

It was in the first week of June that there occurred the riots in London instigated by Lord George Gordon; the occasion was of small import to Jefferson, but the fact that London was temporarily ruled by

mob, with its drunken orgies and brawls, was an example of the approaching "awful dissolution" that seemed so imminent. The Gordon Riots must have appeared symbolic of the decay into which Britain was falling. How could Jefferson have anything but scorn for the situation of England? If the sun was fast descending upon the glory of England, it was assuredly rising upon the new freedom that was America.

The section on the "Constitution of the State and its several charters" naturally contained much of Jefferson's thought on the relationship with Great Britain. He traces the history of the colony of Virginia: "And in 1650, the parliament...began to assume a right over the colonies, passing an act for inhibiting their trade with foreign nations"; he brands this as "that fatal precedent which they continued to follow, after they had retired, in other respects, within their proper functions." However, when Virginians were "induced in 1651 to lay down their arms, they previously secured most of their essential rights by a solemn convention."; this convention is described in detail. Its significance for Jefferson lay in the further link that it provided in his historical interpretation of the rights of the Virginians in particular, and the colonists in general. He gives some attention to the point made in the Summary View: that the colonists were under no obligation to the crown in their original settlements: but the convention of 1651 is the cornerstone of the historical justification in the Notes on Virginia. It appears in the character of a Magna Charta:

it confirmed the rights of the Virginians; like the Magna Charta, it was violated: "The colony supposed, that by this solemn convention, entered into with arms in their hands, they had secured the antient limits of their country, its free trade, its exemption from taxation but by their own assembly, and exclusion of military force from among them. Yet in every of these points was this convention violated by subsequent kings and parliaments, and other infractions of their constitutions, equally dangerous, committed."

Inevitably, Jefferson discusses events following "the accession of the present king" and he finds specimens of all these infractions and violations of colonial rights, "aggravated, multiplied, and crowded within a small compass of time, so as to evince a fixed design of considering our rights natural, conventional and chartered as mere nullities." Again are listed the crimes: the story of the "essential interests" of the colonies being "sacrificed to individuals in Great Britain, which finally left no alternative...but resistance, or unconditional submission."

Jefferson goes on to examine the constitution of Virginia, and particularly to offer his views on the faults inherent in it; here the influence of Bolingbroke, Sydney and Locke is manifest. He criticises the enormous power residing in the legislature: "All the powers of government, legislature, executive, and judiciary, result to the legislative body. The concentrating of these in the same hands is precisely the definition of despotic government: It will be no alleviation

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that these powers will be exercised by a plurality of hands, and not by a single one. One hundred and seventy-three despots would be as oppressive as one." Clearly Jefferson is thinking of the situation in England, where there was not, in his opinion, adequate safeguard for the separation of the executive and legislative departments. He declares that "An elective despotism was not the government that we fought for, but one which should not only be founded on free principles, but in which the powers of government should be so divided and balanced among several bodies...as that no one could transcend their legal limits, without being effectually checked and restrained by others." He realises that the human nature of the Englishman and the colonist is fundamentally the same, and "will be alike influenced by the same causes", and adds that "The time to guard against corruption and tyranny, is before they shall have gotten hold of us."

In reflecting upon the importance of education to make the people "the safe, as they are the ultimate, guardians of their own liberty," he underlines his own approach to history: it appries one of the past; it will avail one of the experience of other times and other nations. He reiterates Sydney in the brief sentence: "Every government degenerates when trusted to the rulers of the people alone. The people themselves are its only safe depositaries;" again he looks on England, and comments that "the corruption of the whole mass will exceed any private resources of wealth" when the people as a whole have control of their government. The British constitution has

been corrupted largely because "but one man in ten has a right to vote for members of parliament. The sellers of the government, therefore get nine tenths of their price clear." Jefferson follows this cynical criticism with an even more effective summation: "Thus in Great Britain it is said their constitution relies on the house of commons for honesty, and the lords for wisdom; which would be a rational reliance, if honesty were to be bought with money, and if wisdom were hereditary." He draws his lesson from England's plight: freedom cannot be left to chance: it must be buttressed by law. America is unique, however, and the reason for it lies in the different situation of the people, a situation which will be of considerable duration; the Americans are a nation of property owners, and as such can be trusted with political power. As long as land remains plentiful, there is little danger, in Jefferson's eyes, of America emulating England.

The section dealing with commerce and manufacturing is of particular interest: Jefferson writes, unwittingly, of the policies he later came to carry out. His first interest was America: "Young as we are, and with such a country before us to fill with people and with happiness, we should point in that direction the whole generative force of nature, wasting none of it in efforts of mutual destruction. It should be our endeavour to cultivate the peace and friendship of every nation, even of that which has injured us most, when we shall have carried our point against her."

He speaks of it as the interest of the whole union to throw open the doors of commerce and to ask European countries to do the same. Self sufficiency was Jefferson's aim, but it was not the economic independence desired by Alexander Hamilton; Jefferson would leave shipping and manufacturing to Europe, and so enable Americans to direct their energies to the more salutary occupation of cultivating the soil. He felt that a dependence on manufactures would beget "Subservience and venality," suffocating the germ of virtue, and preparing "fit tools for ambition." There was no need for American manufacturing, since there was enough land for all in the New World, unlike the situation in Europe; he suggested that "for the general operation of manufacture, let our workshops remain in Europe."

Dumas Malone has aptly commented: "The industrial revolution was dawning in England but he did not care to live or labor in that light. With freedom of trade (which he hoped for) a country could be free to make the economic arrangements best suited to its circumstances."⁵ Jefferson went so far as to assert that: "The loss by the transportation of commodities across the Atlantic will be made up in the happiness and permanence of government."

In the Notes on Virginia, Jefferson shows that there were more important factors influencing his agrarianism than his being a plantation owner. He found that "corruption of morals in the mass of cultivators is a phaenomenon of which no age nor nation has furnished an example," and affirmed that "cultivators of the earth are the most

virtuous and independent citizens." Yet, it was no mere idealisation of agriculture that prompted Jefferson to take this stand: it was his hatred of the congregation of people in vast cities, and the instability of such groups. The influence of the Gordon Riots in England would appear to have combined with the industrial unrest which characterised the industrial revolution in that country to stimulate one of Jefferson's most outspoken comments on both government in general and England in particular: "The mobs of great cities add just so much to the support of pure government, as sores do to the strength of the human body. It is the manners and spirit of a people which preserves a republic in vigour. A degeneracy in these is a canker which soon eats to the heart of its laws and constitutions."

Jefferson's conclusion was that a cause of the decay of Great Britain was industrialisation and the rise of great cities, with their attendant mobs, and luxury. He wrote later that "I had under my eye when writing, the manufactures of the great cities in the old countries, at the present time, with whom the want of food and clothing necessary to sustain life, has begotten a depravity of morals, a dependence and corruption, which renders them an undesirable accession to a country whose morals are sound." ⁶ It was clear to Jefferson that democracy could not function in a manufacturing nation; it could not, and did not, exist in England, on that account.

In the Notes on Virginia, fresh information on Jefferson is found: he is shown as a political scientist and an economist, making

a practical application of his studies and available information. He proclaimed his conclusions, conclusions which were instructive to the America which was to follow the revolution. When Jefferson wrote his book, the worries of his governorship were over, the struggle with Britain was virtually ended, and peace was near; he was able to survey his earlier thought and to declare his present attitude in politics, and his attitude towards Great Britain. While he did not anticipate his later position in the United States government, the policies he enacted had their place in this proclamation of his ideas in 1781.

IV

THE STATESMAN

The interests of a nation, when well understood, will be found to coincide with their moral duties.

Jefferson's public life was extended after his 'retirement' in 1781 to cover the next thirty years of the young republic, and it was appropriate that the man who shared responsibility for the very existence of the United States should play such a vital role in those early years. Ambassador to France, Secretary of State, and finally, President of the United States, Jefferson developed into a statesman of high character, a man who did not judge issues from the narrow viewpoint of self-interest or short-term advantage, but who strove for peace and lasting security for America. Jefferson showed a conscious determination to avoid his deep rooted dislike for Great Britain, and his instinctive partiality to France; instead he essayed to interpret the interests of America, and to guide his thought accordingly.

The roots of Jefferson's foreign policy naturally go back to his early life; his attitude to Great Britain was certainly molded to a considerable degree by the thoughts and ideas that he entertained during the vital years of 1774-1781. It is known that he was constantly adding to his collection of books and those concerning England must have augmented his previous understanding of that country; however, there is no indication that Jefferson modified his thought. Indeed, many of the books that Jefferson added to his library were similar

in character to those he already possessed. The later editions of Mrs. Macaulay's protracted work, and the two folio edition of the Domesday Book would seem in full accord with the interests and views manifested by Jefferson in his stormier and less mature days. Included in the list of later volumes, is found Lewis Goldsmith's Crimes of Cabinets and Lord Orrery's more recent History of England, 55 A.D. - 1793.¹ The main themes that underlay Jefferson's earlier thought on Great Britain persisted, and the ideas that ruled so many of his favourite authors hold sway. The circumstances may have changed, but the thought remains the same.

The Notes on Virginia had shown Jefferson as a nationalist, an American. To him the two were synonymous. He had been a zealous patriot during the movement toward independence, and now, as a member of the newly recognised nation, he was its most fervent advocate. The dominant theme of Jefferson's policy to England in the years after the war was one of interest: American interest. Often he is personally incensed with Britain, yet he only takes moderate steps, steps commensurate with American interest. His interpretation of that interest was generally at one with the viewpoint of the agricultural community, yet he also paid considerable attention to the commercial classes, especially when the honour and dignity of America was involved. He was sincerely concerned with America's position as a World Power, believing this position essential to her prosperity. It is Jefferson's earlier opinions, however, which provide

ultimate foundation of American policy, in so far as he fashioned it.

Jefferson loved his homeland; his travels in Europe served to show him how much America meant to him: when he returned to Monticello in 1788, he noted with feeling "I am happy nowhere else."² He strove for a new balance in his views subsequent to the conclusion of hostilities with England, and this new statesmanship stemmed directly from a desire to serve the needs of his country without bias or personal prejudice. It was a task of considerable magnitude, but one to which he addressed himself with some success.

He commenced his new role, as a diplomat, in 1783, and, in the Report on the Definitive Treaty, occurred such terms as "justice and equity," and "the spirit of conciliation, which on the return of the blessings of peace, should universally prevail."³ A suggestion of Jefferson's later firmness of language is found in the Resolutions Relating to the British Treaty, where he framed the requirement of Congress for "full satisfaction for all slaves & other property belonging to the citizens of these states taken and carried away in violation of the preliminary and definitive articles of peace."⁴

At the same time, he recorded the visit paid by "Messrs Adam & Jay" to the court of London, "unordered and uninvited. Their reception has been forbidding."⁵ Jefferson experienced a similar slight himself in 1786, and described it thus: "On my presentation

as usual to the King & Queen at their levies, it was impossible for anything to be more ungracious than their notice of Mr. Adams and myself. I saw at once that the ulcerations in the narrow mind of that mulish being left nothing to be expected on the subject of my attendance; and on the first conference with the Marquis of Caermarthen, his Minister of Foreign Affairs...confirmed me in the belief of their aversion to have anything to do with us." 6

In key with his fundamental attitude is a letter to Washington of March 1784; in it he passes on views received from Franklin, with which he is in full agreement: "He observes that tho' they [the British] have made peace with us, they are not reconciled to us nor to the loss of us. He calls to our attention the numerous royal progeny to be provided for, the military education given to some of them, the ideas in England of the distraction among ourselves, that the people here are already fatigued with their new governments, the possibility of circumstances arising on the Continent of Europe which might countenance the wishes of Gr Britain to recover us, and from hence inculcates a useful lesson to cement the friendships we possess in Europe." 7 There is here provided support for Jefferson's own suspicions of England, and impetus to his desire for retaining the friendship of France.

The sojourn in Europe did little to change Jefferson's opinions of England and France; he manifested continued interest in English affairs in many letters written at this time. He surveyed the European situation as a whole, and noted that England is too preoccupied to

participate very actively, for "Ireland is likely to find employment for England."⁸ He was shocked at the political situation in France, but his loyalty to that nation was such that he urged the prompt payment of debts to France, so supporting a regime opposed to the rights of man. He makes his earliest suggestion for the American policy of neutrality and avoidance of entangling alliances at this time, and the reason given is that which he maintains throughout his life: American interests were best served thus. It is an echo of James Burgh, who had urged that it is wiser "to keep clear of quarrels among other states" and had emphasised the foolishness of becoming "entangled with the disputes between the powers of the continent" for continental connections "had only ruinous effects."⁹ Jefferson would seem to have translated Burgh's precepts to the American contest. He was so engrossed in the advantage of America, that he suggested further that in the event of a war in Europe, America as a neutral would be sought as an ally -- so, "war may raise our position in European eyes."¹⁰

Jefferson noted with evident approval that "Congress have passed some recommendations to the States to vest Congress with such power over their commerce as will enable them to retaliate on any nation who may wish to grasp it on unequal terms," for he believed it necessary for Congress to pass its equivalent of the British navigation act in order to combat the trade war waged by that nation immediate to the peace settlement.¹⁰ His opinion of the navigation

acts was well-known; in this measure, the English had shown their essential craftiness, for they allowed all nations to carry their own commodities, knowing full well that there was not sufficient shipping available. He added: "In casting our eyes over the earth, we see no instance of a nation forbidden, as we are, by foreign powers, to deal with neighbours, and obliged, with them, to carry into another hemisphere, the mutual supplies necessary to relieve the mutual wants."¹² It was logical that Jefferson concluded: "With England, nothing will produce a treaty but an enforcement of the resolutions of Congress proposing that there should be no trade where there is no treaty"; for Jefferson, "the infatuation" of England was "really preternatural." However, he also criticised the British merchants, who from avarice, "opposed the treaty first mediated, and who have excited the spirit of hostility at present prevailing against us"; it appeared to Jefferson that these merchants believed America would let them have all the carrying trade without retaliation, and that it would be in American interest so to do. Obviously, he thought, it would be difficult to reason with such people.¹³

In 1784, Jefferson was ready to await the decision of the British Ministers, as apart from the known sentiment of the mass of the people, and he was anxious to see "whether their ministers suffer themselves to be led by their passions also."¹⁴ Already, however, he was finding cause for complaint in the slowness of any dealings with England; to Monroe, he commented: "Our business goes on very slowly. No answers from Spain or Britain. The backwardness of the latter is not new."¹⁵

Madison was the subject of several confidences from Jefferson at this time on the conduct of Britain. The late mother country is accused of "a perseverance in the system of managing for us as well as for themselves in their connection with us. The administration of that country are governed by the people, & the people by their own interested wishes without calculating whether they are just or capable of being effected." Jefferson affirmed that : "Nothing will bring them to reason but physical obstruction, applied to their bodily senses. We must show that we are capable of foregoing commerce with them before they will be capable of consenting to an equal commerce." ¹⁶ This last passage presages the later embargo policy, and shows that Jefferson looks back to the usages of the revolutionary period. He is incensed at the apparent obstinacy of the British who fail to realise that it is in their interest to cultivate the friendship of America by rendering attention to her claims. The irony of the situation is all too clear: Jefferson feels that America's claims are just, and that it will be in the interest of Britain to comply; yet he also admits that the British are so deluded as to be governed only by what constitutes their gain; the crux of the matter is that the British do not realise what constitutes their real interest, and they are hardly likely to listen to Americans, who appear as interested parties.

Jefferson is indeed in a dilemma; he talks of closing the transportation of American products to Europe to American shipping, yet those

shipping facilities are inadequate; he talks of stopping American tobacco exports to England, yet realises that Americans have become accustomed to English luxury goods and would object to closing their line of supply.¹⁷ Whatever the character of Jefferson's personal dilemma, he realises that America "is getting into a firment" against England -- "God knows how this will end; but assuredly in one extreme or the other."¹⁸

It was at about this time that Jefferson records his conviction that the English people as a whole were antagonistic towards America. Whereas hitherto he had suggested that the responsibility for Britain's attitude lay with the small ruling clique in that nation. From this date, Jefferson is ever prepared to name the English nation as the evil genius in world politics. His decision is understood when his feelings regarding "the mobs of great Cities" are remembered, for it was this element which he saw as hostile to America; this hostility was, of course, brought about by the unhealthy tendency of large groups to be easily swayed, undermining the foundations of any democratic system of government.

Reminiscent of the ideas found in the Notes on Virginia are similar words he wrote in a private letter to John Jay, dated August 23, 1785: "Cultivators of the earth are the most valuable citizens. They are the most vigorous, the most independent, the most virtuous, and they are tied to their country, and wedded to its liberty and interests, by the most lasting bonds"; he added that "I should...wish to turn them

to the sea in preference to manufactures..." Obviously, industrial workers had no real roots, as had "cultivators of the earth."¹⁹ As far as Jefferson was concerned, "the class of artificers" were "the panders of vice, and the instruments by which the liberties of a country are generally overturned." Thoughts of England's plight were clearly uppermost in his mind, and his view of the decay of that country is the key to his feelings on domestic economy and the character of the occupations of his countrymen. He has showed that he believed the sea the preferable calling for Americans in the place of manufacturing, and he is aware of what is involved. He agrees with Jay that "we should, in every instance, preserve an equality of right...in the transportation of commodities, in the right of fishing, and in the other uses of the sea." And he adds: "But what will be the consequence" of such a policy? "Frequent wars without a doubt...I look forward with horror to the very possible case of war with an European power, and think there is no protection against them, but from the possession of some force on the sea."²⁰ In a sense, the origin of the American navy may be traced to Jefferson's hatred of England's political and economic development.

Jefferson was no pacifist, as Mr. Sears would suggest, but was ready for war if there was no satisfactory alternative; he is found moodily commenting that "England is not likely to offer war to any nation, unless perhaps to ours. This would cost us our whole shipping, but in every other respect we might flatter ourselves with success." He realised, however, that "the most successful war seldom pays for its losses."²¹

The cause for further hostilities were ever present: the issues which occupied so much of Jefferson's attention in later years were the subject of letters in 1785. He wrote to Izard that "England shows no disposition to enter into friendly connections with us," and noted "her detention of our posts." Here again he declared that "a war with America would be a popular one in England." ²² He was particularly annoyed by "the lies propagated by the London papers," and suggested that they "are probably paid for by the minister to reconcile the loss of us" and to bring about a difficult credit situation for America. The notion that the loss of America was unpopular with the English was a natural one, and its appeal to Jefferson is reasonable; he thought that the lies propagated by the newspapers of that country "were essential to the repose, perhaps even to the safety of the King and his ministers." He was able to find some good in the results: "They have checked our credit and thus checked our disposition to luxury." ²³

The year 1786 was one which saw the confirmation of many of Jefferson's beliefs; before the visit, he declared his belief that the King, ministers and nation are more bitterly hostile to America than at any period of the late war: "our enemies (for such they are, in fact) have for twelve years past followed but one uniform rule, that of doing exactly the contrary of what reason points out." ²⁴ His visit to England was apparently as uneventful as it was fruitless, but the aftermath was one of more frequent and assured denunciations of England and what Jefferson saw her as standing for. He affirmed after the stay in England

that "the English are still our enemies" and he gave thought to the future -- "We are young and can survive them; but their rotten machine must crush under the trial. The animosities of sovereigns are temporary, and may be allayed; but those which seize the whole body of a people, and a people, too, who dictate their own measures, produce calamities of long duration." Then followed one of the more significant passages in relevance to Jefferson and England: "I shall not wonder to see the scenes of ancient Rome and Carthage renewed in our day." This, coupled with later statements on his expectation of the decline and decay of England, show Jefferson's real conviction that England was the mortal enemy of America, and was doomed as a world Power; the latter was not necessarily the outcome of the former -- indeed, he expected the disruption of England at any time, as a result of the chaotic state of her economy with its extremes of wealth. Strong as was his dislike for England, he was consistent in re-iterating that "Peace and friendship with all mankind is our wisest policy, and I wish we may be permitted to pursue it?"; he feared "the temper and folly of our enemies."²⁵ The cause of this "folly" lay in the English domestic and political situation -- a conclusion to which Jefferson had been assisted by his reading of both Bolingbroke and Burgh -- "No race of kings has ever presented above one man of common sense in twenty generations. The best they can do is, to leave things to their ministers; and what are ministers, but a committee, badly chosen?"²⁶ As for George III, Jefferson commented that "his

hostility we have known, and it is embittered by ill success," but with his tongue in cheek, he said that he hoped George III would live long -- for, "Twenty long years has he been labouring to drive us to our good, and we shall have need of him for twenty more. The Prince of Wales on the throne, Lansdowne & Fox in the Ministry & we are undone." 27

As for the character of the common people of England, he affirmed that "the foundation is laid in their dispositions for the establishment of a despotism. Nobility, wealth & pomp are the objects of their adoration." 28

It is not surprising that Jefferson occasionally delivered himself of statements which were plainly vindictive towards England, as when he said "We shall, I hope, enjoy the blessings of neutrality and probably see England once more humbled," but such phrases must be treated with reserve, since, as has been pointed out, Jefferson had some concern for the future position of England from the viewpoint of world diplomacy; yet even in the passage here quoted, the prime factor is his attention to the interest of America in neutrality. 29

Jefferson left his friends with little room for doubt concerning his feelings towards Europe as a whole and England in particular. The monarchy as an institution was naturally the butt of his remarks, and his opposition to it is quite as firm as Sydney's in the seventeenth century. To Washington, Jefferson wrote: "I was much an enemy to monarchy before I came to Europe. I am ten thousand times more so since I have seen what they are. There is scarcely an evil which may not be traced to their king as its source, nor a good which is not derived from the small fibres of republicanism existing among them. I can further

say with safety there is not a crowned head in Europe whose talents or merit would entitle him to be elected a vestryman by the people of any parish in America." ³⁰ Certainly the last part of the quotation would show Jefferson's new nationalism, yet his belief in the essential irrationality of monarchy is nevertheless clear. On the other hand, he was ready to allow that a hereditary monarchy did avoid the jealousies involved in an elective system; this did not make republicanism any less attractive to Jefferson, however. His suspicion of the English king was only allayed when that unfortunate monarch suffered his bouts of insanity -- "The present state of the King of England promises a long and wholesome inactivity in that kingdom..."; ³¹ in his eyes, England had the role of a troublemaker in Europe. ³² But if that nation was the troublemaker, then its King was the ultimate cause of mischief in that country; Jefferson became very excited at a rumour he heard in 1800, to the effect that "the King of England is dead." He could not forbear the comment that "As this would insure general peace, I do not know that it would be any misfortune to humanity." ³³

Jefferson as Secretary of State is the same Jefferson who went to Europe, and had such fixed ideas regarding Great Britain; his post carried more responsibility, and his problems were more immediate and varied, but his policy was unchanged.

It is not the purpose of this study to examine the diplomacy or the details of the events of this period; in surveying Jefferson's statesmanship, it is desired to understand the guiding thought of the man, and the

nature of his ideas. Consequently the only source is Jefferson's correspondence, and it is important to assess the significance of certain of the writings involved: his Annals are more reliable than the Autobiography, since he was writing the latter with the knowledge that it would be the object of study by posterity; his letters are generally the surest guide. One of significance is that addressed to Doctor Gordon, dated two years before his taking office as Secretary of State, in which he looks back on the depredations of the British in Virginia during the revolutionary war; he reckoned that "the State of Virginia lost, under Lord Cornwallis' hands that year, about thirty thousand slaves...." and added: "History will never relate the horrors committed by the British army in the southern States of America." 34

The character of the British soldier was not good, and Jefferson was not slow in noting this; it fitted in with his attitude to the economic situation in England: as long as there were great cities, there would be a poverty stricken multitude who would be available to carry out the orders of those with wealth; the army was merely a large group of hirelings from the dregs of that society, and had no understanding of liberty or mannerly conduct.

In the light of Jefferson's unhappy experiences with the British, it is to his credit as a statesman that he strove to maintain a balance between that nation, and the late allies, the French. He made his profession that: "as a political man, they shall never find any passion in me either for or against them [the British]." The obstacle to

better understanding was "their avarice of commerce"; if only that avarice might be put aside and "let them meet us fairly half way, I should meet them with satisfaction, because it would be for our benefit; but I mistake their character if they do this under present circumstances."³⁵ Unfortunately for Anglo-American relations, Jefferson's conclusion was correct; the British government was not prepared to treat with, on equal terms, a nation which had so recently severed political connection with it, and there was much support for further war with America, as shown particularly clearly in 1814-15. Jefferson's desire for accommodation was not based on any altruistic motive; it would be "for our benefit," since it would be a step towards the economic emancipation of America.

As Secretary of State, Jefferson hoped to put into practice an idea which he had long urged; he planned "to meet the English with some restrictions which might induce them to abate their severities against our commerce."³⁶ The measures sought by Jefferson did not materialise, and, the final answer that he made to the encroachments of the British came during his Presidency.

The peculiar conditions of the 1790's, with the Anglo-French struggle placed Jefferson in a difficult position, and tested his conception of American interests. His application of the issues underlying the war was limited; and he noted with disapproval: "Europeans in general, have been too long in the habit of confounding force with right."³⁷ Although he was more alert to the advantages which might accrue to

to America during such a conflict as he saw impending in 1790; to Francis Eppes he wrote: "...war...we cannot help, and therefore we must console ourselves with the good price for wheat which it will bring us." Prosperity of this character would make America "a great and happy nation."³⁸ War conditions taught Jefferson that the difficulties and trials of neutrality were not conducive to American advancement.

From the first, he stated his official attitude to Great Britain as one of neutrality conditional to the fair execution of the Treaty of 1784, and there be no attempt at "conquests adjoining us." The issue of the posts was still in existence, and he added: "But in no case, need they think of our accepting any equivalent for the posts."³⁹ He reiterated "our determination to prefer war in all cases to tribute under any form and to any people whatever"; there would be no entangling alliances -- it being "better without treaties with any nation," for "our connection with Europe is less political than commercial."⁴⁰

Jefferson's early reaction to the troubles with Europe which so plagued his later public life was in accord with his known dislike of the English economic system and his fear of its political results; when he first noted "Very considerable discouragement...recently established by France, Spain, and England, with respect to our commerce," he announced it as "Our best interest...to employ our principal labour in agriculture," for there was great risk in "hanging our prosperity on the fluctuating⁴¹ counsels and caprices of others."

Further annoyance was given by the "peculiar custom in England of impressing seamen on every appearance of war," but Jefferson did not consider this a serious enough topic upon which to threaten action, although he did give the matter much attention. He was more alarmed at the emergence of a sect at home, who were "preaching up & pouting after an English constitution of king, lords, & commons, & whose heads are itching for crowns, coronets, & mitres?"; he pointed out to Thomas Paine that the "bulk below" -- the common people, in whom Jefferson had great confidence as long as they were engaged in agricultural pursuits -- "is sound & pure."⁴²

The scene had been set for the revolution in France when Jefferson was ambassador to that country, and he naturally welcomed "so beautiful a revolution." The decapitation of the King of France was the signal for thought on its significance, which clearly was not confined to recent events in France: "Should the present ferment in Europe not produce republics everywhere, it will at least soften the monarchical governments by rendering monarchs amenable to punishment like other criminals, and doing away that ...insolence and oppression, the inviolability of the king's person."⁴³ The Jacobins gained Jefferson's support for a time, "as representing the true revolution spirit of the whole nation," but their excesses disgusted him, and he saw that they would endanger the popularity of the revolution in America.⁴⁴ His natural inclination was to give France what aid he could, but he insisted on America maintaining strict neutrality; he suggested to France that

he would be more useful to her thus, and it seems that this is so, for America had no defense against a hostile England.

The guiding principle was still that of American interest. The resurrection of the "spirit of '76" which occurred in 1793 made Jefferson's official position difficult, since he did not wish to overstep the modest bounds of neutrality. Writing to Monroe, he said: "I wish we may be able to repress the spirit of the people within the limits of a fair neutrality." He was at this moment engaged in controversy with Britain, and noted that there had been no reply to his protests on the violations on American sailors; nor had Britain made any request that America be neutral in the conflict in Europe -- which caused Jefferson to comment that "Indeed we promise beforehand so fast that she has not time to ask anything." 45

When France sought to invoke further American support, there was open conflict in the cabinet between Hamilton and Jefferson as to whether the Treaty of 1778 should be suspended on the grounds that there was a new government in France; Jefferson successfully upheld the validity of the treaty against the avowedly Anglophil Hamilton. His point was one which Algernon Sydney would have supported: "I consider the people who constitute a society or nation as the source of all authority in that nation; as free to transact their common concerns by any agents they think proper; to change these agents individually, or the organization of them in form or function whenever they please; that all the acts done by these agents under

the authority of the nation, are the acts of the nation...."⁴⁶ He assured Hamilton that the reception of a Minister from France "is an act of no significance." The character of Genet was then unknown; his activities so menaced American authority and neutral claims, that Jefferson was finally obliged to insist on his recall, terming him "hotheaded, all imagination, no judgement, passionate, disrespectful, and even indecent towards the President."⁴⁷ The young Frenchman rendered Jefferson's position extremely difficult, no less difficult in the light of Jefferson's personal sentiments: "His conduct has given room for the enemies of liberty and of France to come forward in a state of acrimony against that nation...."⁴⁸

At the end of 1793, Jefferson retired to Monticello, later to be drawn back to the public scene as the Federalists, or Monocrats, as he called them, threatened public liberties. His comments during the period leading up to his election to the Presidency are therefore more in keeping with a leader of an opposition party than a responsible statesman; he denounced the actions of the Government, yet was not able to offer any sound constructive advice. He criticised the policy to England, and urged a firm stand, when there was little America could do. This he finally admitted in a letter to Elbridge Gerry in 1797: "Peace is undoubtedly at present the first object of our nation. Interest and honor are also national considerations. But interest, duly weighed, is in favor of peace even at the expence of spoliations, past and future; & honor cannot now be an object. The insults & injuries committed on us by both the belligerent parties, from the beginning

of 1793 to this day, & still continuing, cannot now be wiped off by engaging in war with one of them." This letter is a remarkable testament to Jefferson's ultimate balance and statesmanship, since he had passed through a period of considerable indignity at the hands of the belligerents: he had witnessed that "infamous act" of John Jay, "which is really nothing more than a treaty of alliance between England & the Anglomen of this country against the legislature & people of the United States." ⁵⁰

The increase in British encroachments on American commerce caused Jefferson to raise his voice in protest -- "We see that the British piracies have multiplied upon us lately more than ever." But there were other circumstances to be taken into account in surveying the English scene; that nation was fast "advancing to the establishment of an absolute monarchy." ⁵¹ He noted the many "insults and injuries committed on us by both the belligerent parties from the beginning of 1793 to this day, & still continuing," and called for the "dictates of reason & pure Americanism." ⁵² His final dictum he laid down thus: "We owe gratitude to France, justice to England, goodwill to all, and subservience to none." ⁵³ He seriously believed that the Federalists would have brought America into the War on the side of Great Britain, and he paid tribute to the effectiveness of the "warning voice" of Mr. King, who had declared to Congress that Britain was "going down irrevocably, and will sink us also, if we do not clear ourselves." Reason for this conviction lay in the unrest in Ireland, the

mutinous character of the British fleet, and the apparent imminence of invasion by Napoleon of the British Isles. The true nature of the decline of England is analysed by Jefferson more carefully in later years. At this time he was relieved that the 'pacific party' had held its own.

Had England been invaded, there is reason to believe that Jefferson's ideas would have altered; he admitted that the subjugation of that country would be "a general calamity"; he did not follow through this line of thought, since he was convinced that "it is impossible."⁵⁴

Thomas Jefferson as President of the United States was inaugurating the first of the "New Deals" in American politics, and the development naturally invaded the foreign policy of America. In this field, there is the added significance of a change which has lasted in many aspects up the present day; Jefferson's influence was felt particularly by his successors -- "the Virginia dynasty" and to him may be ascribed the basis of the Monroe Doctrine.

The basis of his policy had been already laid: "I am for free commerce with all nations; political connection with none; & little or no diplomatic establishment. And I am not for linking ourselves by new treaties with the quarrels of Europe...joining in the confederacy of Kings to war against the principles of liberty."⁵⁵ The principle of abstinence from European troubles was qualified with the admonition that Jefferson had made to Jay, that "acquiescence under insult is not the way to escape war."⁵⁶ Peace was the aim -- "if it can be

preserved, *salve fide et honore.*"⁵⁷ The importance given to relations with Great Britain are shown clearly in the Anas, where Jefferson looks back "there was nothing I so much desired as to be on a footing of intimate friendship with England,...I knew as long as she was our friend no enemy could hurt...for although the question of impressment was difficult on their side & was insuperable with us, yet had that been the sole question, we might have shoved along, in the hope of some compromise, that indeed there was a ground of accomodation which his ministry had on two occasions yielded for a short time, but retracted...I had hoped such a friendship practicable."⁵⁸

Jefferson's professions can only be examined in the light of his earlier policies and known ideas about England; these, together with his recorded thoughts and acts during his two administrations show that the same acquired prejudices governed his policies to the mother country, tempered by a matured conception of American interest. He had no desire to waste "the energies of our people in war and destruction" even in support of "principles which we mean to pursue" (but a decade later he was ready to wage war on Britain, vanquish her, and then turn upon France).⁵⁹

Early in his administration, the international picture was far brighter than it had been during Adams's presidency; there were signs of reason on the part of Britain, and Jefferson was moved to note in his Second Annual Message: "It is with satisfaction I lay

before you an act of the British parliament anticipating this subject commerce " and he described "a spirit of justice and friendly accomodation which it is our duty and our interest to cultivate with all nations".⁶⁰ The resumption of the struggle with Napoleonic France in the following year brought a rapid change in the situation, however, and to his English friend, Sir John Sinclair, Jefferson wrote, very tactfully, of how he saw "with great concern, the position in which Great Britain is placed, and should be sincerely afflicted were any disaster to deprive mankind of the benefit of such a bulwark against the torrent which has for some time been bearing down all before it. But her power and powers at sea seem to render everything safe in the end." Jefferson's solicitude is not vouched for in later letters. ⁶¹ To Benjamin Rush he wrote excitedly of the "Tremendous time in Europe. How mighty is this battle of lions & tygers. With what sensations should the common herd of cattle look on it? With no partialities, certainly. If they can so worry one another as to destroy their power of tyrannizing, the one over the earth, the other the waters, the world may perhaps enjoy peace." ⁶²

With the renewal of hostilities, Jefferson planned to "cultivate the friendship of the belligerent nations by every act of justice and of incessant kindness." Neutrality was the theme, with the hope that the two tyrants, England, the naval and France, the military power might exhaust each other, so reducing their capacity for interfering with America. Jefferson even reiterated his earlier belief that the position occupied by America was one singularly blessed; in this he

was proved utter mislead. Neutrality proved most difficult and expensive for the United States. The hope of relying on "voluntary good treatment" at the hands of both Britain and France was without any foundation. 63

It was difficult for Jefferson to understand other nations' inability to see that their interest called for respect to and friendship with, the United States; at times he appeared almost naive in his declarations. However, Jefferson is not alone in failing to understand that wars call for new practices hitherto unsanctioned by international usage, and that belligerents are ill-equipped for rational thinking regarding neutrals. In vain did he exclaim: "Would to God that nation Britain would so far be just in her conduct, as that we might with honor give her that friendship it is so much our interest to bear her." 64

Only when he fears the combination of France and Spain against the United States, does Jefferson make some modification in his attitude to England; in 1805, as in 1823, it is in the direct interest of America. His early intentions of seeking "something more than a mutual friendship with England" soon change to "no idea of committing ourselves"; there is the idea that "our cooperation in the war would be a sufficient consideration for Great Britain to engage for its object...." 65 He revealed that it was really "the first wish of every Englishman's heart is to see us once more fighting by their sides against France." Clearly, necessity prompted remarkable thoughts; there is no evidence that Jefferson ever repeated such a theme. Only two months later he commented that "it would have been

disagreeable to have proposed closer connections with England at a moment when so much just clamour exists against her for new encroachments on neutral rights." ⁶⁶

By the close of 1805, the "encroachments on neutral rights" had reached a new level, and Jefferson was obliged to take steps in order to protect even American coasts: "These enormities appearing to be unreachd by any control of their sovereigns, I found it necessary to equip a force, to cruise within our own seas..." and he gave consideration to suspending intercourse with nations that harass American commerce. ⁶⁷ He wrote to Thomas Paine to the effect that "all we can do...is to encourage others to declare & guarantee neutral rights, by excluding all intercourse with any nation which infringes them....With England, I flatter myself our difficulties will be dissipated by the disasters of her allies, the change of ministry, and measures planned to motivate her to be just."⁶⁸ England would yet learn that justice and interest should go hand in hand. To the Minister in London, Jefferson expressed his sentiment that if England should only be "just to us, conciliatory, and encourage the sentiment of family feelings & conduct, it cannot fail to befriend the security of both." The reference to "family feelings" has little significance save to show that Britain was regarded as the mother country in name at least. There were faint leanings in favour of Britain at this time since Jefferson wished well of the new Fox Ministry, and feared Napoleonic domination of Europe: "...we will remain uprightly neutral

in fact, tho' leaning in belief to the opinion that an English ascendancy on the ocean is safer for us than that of France."⁶⁹ The customary frustration for Jefferson followed hard upon the untimely death of Fox: within a year, he was again exclaiming: "I have but little expectation that the British government will retire from their habitual wrongs."⁷⁰

The year 1807 was one of crisis, in which Jefferson showed himself as patiently attempting the practice of his theory that "there are peaceable means of repressing injustice, by making it the interest of the aggressor to do what is just, and abstain from future wrong."⁷¹ Certainly he revealed a commendable restraint over the Chesapeake incident: he successfully cooled down the passions of his countrymen, and carried the matter before the British government; he explained his belief that it was the irresponsibility of the officers which caused such outrages, and the ministers could not control them -- "the officers were allied to the highest families in the kingdom were supported by such an aristocracy as that no Minister dare move against one, unless he had acted as a coward, & then the nation would support the Minister in shooting him."⁷² The encroachments which followed almost drove America to war in the summer of 1807; at one time Jefferson wrote to his Secretary of State that war was "probable," and to Thomas Paine, he denounced the British policy as one of "war in disguise," of making the property of all nations lawful plunder to support a navy which their own resources cannot support; they will ... [not] ... readily

relinquish it." ⁷³ But soon he was talking of reducing the "great Monopoliser" of the ocean by navigation acts. In a Special Message to Congress dated December 18, 1807, Jefferson urged the adoption of "an inhibition of the departure of our vessels from the ports of the United States," it being of great importance to keep in safety the "essential resources" of the United States. ⁷⁴ The Embargo had finally arrived.

The Embargo, as Louis Martin Sears observes, was no new weapon; it had been forged in 1774; it was never fully tested before, however. This Jefferson had acknowledged in a letter to James Bowdoin. ⁷⁵ In his own mind there was no doubt as to the wisdom of the measure -- "There can be no question in a mind truly American, whether it is best to send our citizens & property into certain captivity, and then wage war for their recovery, or to keep them at home, and turn seriously to that policy which plant the manufacturer & the husbandman side by side, and so establish at the door of everyone that exchange of mutual labors & comforts which we have hitherto sought in distant regions, and under perpetual risk of broils with them." ⁷⁶ The final outcome was less certain: "Whether the pressure on the throne from the suffering people of England & of their islands, the conviction of the dishonorable as well as dishonest character of their orders in council, the strength of their parliamentary opposition, & remarkable weakness of defence of their ministry, will produce a repeal of these orders and cessation of our embargo is yet to be seen." ⁷⁷

Britain was still a nation "more puffed up by small events than any one on earth" and he foresaw that the successes in Spain would "mount them on their stilts again." He distrusted George Canning, and named the government of which Canning was a member as one "of no faith." ⁷⁸ However, Jefferson was attached to his policy of temporary isolation; his plea was for peace, until that time when "our income, liberated from debt, will be adequate to any war, without new taxes or loans, and our position and increasing strength put us hors d'insulte from any nation." ⁷⁹

The desire manifested by Jefferson for remaining out of the European struggle had a firm basis in his hatred of debt; he did not wish America to undertake that which she could not pay for; in his opinion, "the modern theory of the perpetuation of debt, has drenched the earth with blood." For substantiation, he looked to the English situation; there, he saw a nation which had contracted an enormous debt in her wars for commerce, "so that citizens are reduced to wretchedness for the avidity of a few millionary merchants." ⁸⁰ To Governor Plumer of New Hampshire, he described more graphically the results in England of public debt -- "their laborers reduced to live on a penny in the shilling of their earnings, to give up bread, and resort to oatmeal and potatoes for food; and their landlords exiling themselves to live in penury and obscurity abroad, because at home the government must have all the clear profits of their land." ⁸¹

The breakdown of the Embargo was inevitable; American industry was not able to meet the needs of a nation dependent upon British

manufactures, nor were the shipping interests content to see what trade they had possessed earlier melt away; one pamphlet among Jefferson's personal collection criticizes his "pretty theoretical impossibilities that it would be better for us to abandon the ocean."⁸² Jefferson became resigned to the change in policy, forced by those who feared for the Union, but insisted on the maintenance of enough of the non-importation law to force the belligerents to relax their seizures, and the British their impressments, as well as to "support those manufacturing establishments which their orders [the British] and our interests, forced us to make."⁸³

It would seem that there was a volte-face on the part of Jefferson in respect of manufactures; it was more apparent than real, however, and was the outcome of the conflict of his views on England and her economic plight, and the immediate interest of America. He confessed to De Nemours: "It is true that we are going greatly into manufactures; but the mass of them are household manufactures of the coarse articles worn by the labourers and farmers of the family."⁸⁴ To La Fayette, he pointed out how the growth of manufactures would mean a final independence of Great Britain.⁸⁵

The stress and strains of the times led Jefferson to rephrase many of his earlier thoughts on Great Britain and the nature of that country; he discussed the situation with Caesar Rodney, and asserted that "The death of Bonaparte would...remove the first and chiefest apostle of the desolation of men and morals;" to secure "order and

safety on the ocean," was a far different matter. The death of George III would not solve it; "he is only stupid; and his ministers, however weak and profligate in morals, are ephemeral. But his nation is permanent, and it is that which is the tyrant of the ocean. The principle that force is right, is become the principle of the nation itself. They would not permit an honest minister, were a accident to bring such an one into power, to relax their system of lawless piracy." 86

To William Duane, Jefferson hazarded that England would become a military despotism, for "Their recollections of liberty they have enjoyed will render force necessary to retain them under pure monarchy." He foresaw an early economic collapse -- "and the modern Carthage will end as the old one has done?"; he was sorry for the people "who are as individually respectable as those of other nations -- it is her government which is so corrupt, and which has destroyed the nation...." He added that, in his opinion, "The English hate us because our prosperity filched from theirs...." Jefferson had not given up his early conception of English liberties as existing in former centuries; the whig tradition remained with him; no less lasting was his conviction that England hated America, and that the latter had every reason to reciprocate that hate. He would reiterate his sensibility "of the just value of the friendship of England" but clearly he believed that nation desired no such friendship. Jefferson was indeed incensed at newspaper reports that he entertained any personal enmity towards England; he felt it "beneath the notice of

wise men" adding that "England never did me a personal injury, other than in open war....My affections were first for my own country and then, generally, for all mankind...." He analysed the "war interests in England" as including "a numerous and wealthy part of their population" whose influence is deemed worth courting by ministers wishing to keep their places -- "they find it convenient to humor the popular passions at the expense of the public good." Of course, the feelings of the King were not disregarded in this analysis; he is described as "fundamentally adverse to us" so adding another motive for the unfriendliness of the ministers. Jefferson could at this time envisage the "crush of their internal structure, now seeming to be begun."⁸⁷ He adds that he is glad that he no longer has the responsibility for these anxieties; yet Madison frequently wrote to him, discussing such problems. Jefferson was still a force in American politics.

The period of Jefferson's nominal retirement is one of the most informative in surveying his views on England, views which formed the background to his policies as an American statesman in one of the most important periods of his country's history. It has been shown how several fundamental ideas ruled his actions, how these ideas derived from the books on English history and political thought current in the eighteenth century. The years subsequent to his second administration reveal the culmination of such thought under conditions of peace and of war.

During the year immediate to the outbreak of war, Jefferson penned two interesting letters which assessed both England solely and as related to Europe. The one, written to James Ogilvie is a clear enunciation of Jefferson's attitude: "The English have been a wise, a virtuous and truly estimable people. But commerce and a corrupt government have rotted them to the core. Every generous, nay, every just sentiment, is absorbed in the thirst for gold. I speak of their cities, which we may certainly pronounce to be ripe for despotism, and fitted for no other government. Whether the leaven of the agricultural body is sufficient to regenerate the residuary mass, and maintain it in a sound state, under any reformation of government, may well be doubted."⁸⁸ This statement is in full accord with a more famous one Jefferson made to Madison: "I think our governments will remain virtuous for many centuries; as long as they are chiefly agricultural; and this will be as long as there shall be vacant lands in any part of America. When they get piled upon one another in large cities, as in Europe, they will become as corrupt as in Europe."⁸⁹

In another notable letter, to Clement Caine, dated September 16, 1811, Jefferson surveyed the "habitual violation of the equal rights of the colonist by the dominant (for I will not call them the mother) countries of Europe" which are described as "immoral in principle as the continuance is...unwise in practice...." Indeed the "whole system of Europe towards America" is named "an atrocious and

insulting tyranny...." In Jefferson's view, "these abuses of human rights are drawing to a close on both our continents, and are not likely to survive the present mad contest of the lions and tigers." He notes -- with some satisfaction -- the progressing bankruptcies of England, and her present weakness; in this connection he suggests that it is now possible to make new effort "towards indemnification and retaliation by reprisal."⁹⁰

The War of 1812 caught Jefferson in its excitement just as he had been in 1776; his interest was keen, and he asserted that the struggle would be prolonged, because England's object -- long obvious -- "is to claim the ocean as her domain, and exact transit duties from every vessel traversing it," for such is the sum of the orders in council as he saw it. He confidently declared that the end would be brought on by the final exhaustion of Great Britain "by her exaggerated efforts." The result would be the rise of England from the ruins and her occupation of "that place among nations which is proportioned to her natural means, and which we all wish her to hold." There should be no alliance to another power, so that there would be absolute freedom to make peace -- "whenever England will separately give us peace and future security."⁹¹ In actual fact, the war was to bring the final independence of America -- "a complete emancipation from Anglomania, Gallomania, and all the manias of a demoralised Europe...." -- and possibly the conquest of Canada.⁹² Smugly, he wrote to Richard Rush of American separation

from Britain: "Every day's history proves more and more the wisdom and salutary result of that measure, by developments of the degeneracy of the British nation, and of its rapid decline towards some awful catastrophe, from which their injustice and the favor of Heaven have separated us."⁹³ A sign of Jefferson's bellicosity is his talk of burning London, St. James, and St. Pauls, with the aid of incendiaries -- "of which her starving manufacturers will furnish abundance."⁹⁴ Possibly Jefferson had in mind the case of James Aitken, a Scot who took the torch of liberty seriously, and acted as an incendiary agent for Silas Deane during the American revolution.⁹⁵ Certainly he must have known of the Luddite riots which occurred in England at this time.⁹⁶

The War itself saw Jefferson uttering fulminations against the den of pirates that was Britain. When the news of the repeal of the Orders in Council reached him, there was no diminution in his war ardour: "The sword once drawn, full justice must be done. 'Indemnification for the past and security for the future,' should be painted on our banners."⁹⁷ The war against "a nation of buccaneers, urged by sordid avarice" was to continue unabated; England had aimed at the monopoly of world trade since the days of William Pitt, and finally she was to be placed in her proper position among world powers, paying due respect to others. It was no war against the King only, but "the aristocracy of the country" which formed the real government and controlled the House of Commons.⁹⁸ Jefferson made known his

personal disgust at the bigotry of the British "to the bastard liberty of their own country and habitual hostility to every degree of freedom in any other"; here is shown his continued adherence to the Anglo-Saxon Myth described in an earlier chapter. He named "Anglo-mercantile cupidity" as the cause of the deluging of the earth with human blood. The English had always valued their colonies only for "the bales of cloth they take from them...."⁹⁸ Naturally, the events of the war added to the flames of Jefferson's fire against England, and he had cause for his denunciation of "the Vandalism and brutal character of the English government" as shown in the senseless burning of Washington.¹⁰⁰ Soon, he was calling for peace, twenty years peace, indeed, by which time "we will be twenty millions in number, and forty in energy, when encountering the starved and rickety paupers and dwarfs of English workshops."¹⁰¹

An aid to strengthening the United States was to be the impetus given to manufactures; Jefferson acknowledged "We owe to their past follies and wrongs the incalculable advantage of being made independent of them for every material manufacture...."¹⁰² He explains the change in attitude here: during his opposition to industries, "We were then at peace...it was expected that those especially to whom manufacturing industry was important, would cherish the friendship of such customers by every favor, by every act of justice and friendship;" but the concept of interest and reason proved false, and it became a matter whether "we make our own comforts, or go without

them, at the will of a foreign nation." 103 He added that "experience has taught me that manufactures are now as necessary to our independence as to our comfort." Yet his acceptance was a qualified one; he added: "It does not follow that with a territory so boundless, it is the interest of the whole to become a mere city of London, to carry on the business of one half of the world at the expense of eternal war with the other half."

The conclusion of the fruitless struggle brought Jefferson's conviction of the imminence of revolution in England to a new height; the causes went further than mere wishful thinking; the after effects of the Wars and the immature nature of the industrialisation of that country led to a glut in labour and manufactures; in 1816, Jefferson foretold of the "ruin of its people" with the ruin falling heaviest, "as it ought to fall, on that hereditary aristocracy which has for generations been preparing the catastrophe." 105 In January of the following year, he noted the rising number of bank failures and the immense debts "accumulated by their follies & frauds"; all income he saw as having to go to pay interest, so that "nothing remains to carry on the government...." 106 He even declared that "I should not wonder to see the deportation of their king to Indostan, and of their Prince Regent to Botany Bay"; somewhat maliciously he added: "There imbecility might be governed by imbecility, and vice by vice...." His antagonism did not extend to the common people of England, however; he looked "for the good of the people of England, and for our peace,

that they may secure a government & constitution so they might enjoy the fruits of their own labor in peace." It would indeed be for the peace of America, since he felt that "if we can avoid war with that nation we need never have it with any other...."¹⁰⁷ To his friend, Sir John Sinclair at this time he wrote: "Both ought to wish for peace and cordial friendship; we, because you can do us more harm than any other nation; and you, because we can do you more good than any other."¹⁰⁸

It was, fundamentally, the corruption of the English system which Jefferson so hated. He indicted George III and Pitt, and his successors, for having "spent the fee simple of the kingdom, under pretence of governing it; their sinecures, salaries, pensions, priests, prelates, princes, and eternal wars, have mortgaged to its full value the last foot of their soil." He urged the dismissal of the parasites, and the shipping to America of the paupers; there would still remain a fertile island which would hold a position in the world commensurate with its resources.

He commented shrewdly that, as it is, "their first efforts will probably be to quiet things awhile by the palliatives of reformation; to nibble a little at pensions and sinecures...The princes and priests will hold to the flesh-pots, the empty bellies will seize on them, and these being the multitude, the issue is obvious, civil war, massacre...." After the revolution, the future would be brighter: "Their habits of law and order, their ideas almost innate of the vital elements of free

government, of trial by jury, habeas corpus, freedom of the press, freedom of opinion, and representative government, make them, I think, capable of bearing a considerable portion of liberty." ¹⁰⁹ There would not need to be a republic in England, for that nation to be among the more enlightened; Jefferson doubted whether Europe could take such a form of government, and was ready to see "A hereditary chief, strictly limited, the right of war vested in the legislative body, a rigid economy of the public contributions, and absolute interdiction of useless expenses, will go far towards keeping the government honest and unoppressive." ¹¹⁰ The constitutional monarchy here suggested is not too far removed from the hopes of seventeenth century England, and the Benthamite radicals of Jefferson's day.

The issue of recognition of the independence of the South American republics in 1823 was the last major occasion in which Jefferson made a contribution to American policy towards Great Britain. It was fitting that this occasion should be one in which America drew closer to England, and in which Jefferson drafted a letter to President Monroe that was notable for its sober statesmanlike judgement.

There had been many occasions on which Jefferson urged America's peculiar interest in the Western hemisphere; in 1812, he wrote to Dr. John Crawford: "When our strength will permit us to give the law of our hemisphere, it should be that the meridian of the mid-Atlantic should be the line of demarkation between war and peace, on this side of which

no act of hostility should be committed, and the lion and the lamb lie down in peace together." ¹¹¹

In the famous letter of October 24, 1823, replying to Monroe, Jefferson stated his concept of American foreign policy. Again quoting such words as "entangle," which he had read so many years before, Jefferson wrote: "Our first and fundamental maxim should be, never to entangle ourselves in the broils of Europe. Our second, never to suffer Europe to intermeddle with cis-Atlantic affairs. America ... has a set of interests distinct from those of Europe, and peculiarly her own. She should therefore have a system of her own, separate and part from that of Europe. While the last is labouring to become the domicile of despotism, our endeavour should surely be, to make our hemisphere that of freedom." He sees the position of England as unchanged; he asserts that "with her on our side, we need not fear for the whole world. With her, then, we should most sedulously cherish a cordial friendship; and nothing would tend more to knit our affections than to be fighting once more side by side, in the same cause." He hastens to add, however, that "I would not purchase even her amity at the price of taking part in her wars." ¹¹² Jefferson was not sentimental, but adhering to his doctrine of paying first regard to American interest. His suggestions were not fully followed by the President, but the main lines of policy as enunciated in 1823 have been pursued by American Secretaries of State until the present day; the only change has been one of advance in weapons of war, resulting in a widening of the conception of American interest and stretching of the first lines of defense.

A Frenchman made a very fine analysis of Thomas Jefferson when he met him in 1784 in Paris; he described him thus: "He passionately loves the arts and sciences and cultivates them with some success. He is full of honor and sincerity and loves his country greatly, but he is too philosophical and tranquil to hate or love any other nation unless it is for the interest of the United States to do so. He has a principle that it is for the happiness and welfare of the United States to hold itself as much aloof from England as a peaceful state of affairs permits, that as a consequence of this system, it becomes them to attach themselves particularly to France..."¹¹³

This is a remarkably accurate analysis; throughout his life, Jefferson fought for liberty, which he saw as the inherent right of man, and when he achieved freedom for America, he made it his primary object to maintain that freedom; so did he work consistently for the interest of the United States.

His suspicion of Great Britain he never surrendered, for he felt that nation to be a corrupt and perverted form of democratic state which had lost its heritage of personal liberties and rights. His principle achievement in the later relations of America and Britain was the placing of the true interests of the United States above personal bias. It is only in times of great stress that Jefferson's basic disgust for England overcame his high level of statesmanship; and never did his personal feelings prejudice the "happiness and welfare of the United States."

The story of Jefferson and England has two phases: first, Jefferson accepts the current ideas and thought of the seventeenth century English Whigs, and transplants that thought to the fertile ground of America, inevitably incurring strife with eighteenth century England; finally, he sublimates his cordial dislike of England to serve conscientiously and constantly the larger interests of America.

A P P E N D I X

THE MYTHICAL DEMOCRACY OF ANGLO-SAXON ENGLAND

The Whig interpretation of history has its place in the historiography of Anglo-Saxon England; there is the obvious corollary. In surveying the implications of the Saxon Myth, it is interesting to assess its value and influence upon recent historians. There are two questions to be answered: does English history show an unbroken development? Does the present-day historian acknowledge Anglo-Saxon society as a democratic one?

It is known that Jefferson and the Whigs believed that there was a considerable break in the development of England in 1066, and that Anglo-Saxon liberties were then vanquished. In the nineteenth century, two of the most prominent historians, Neaman and Stubbs, held that English history was unbroken in its development, and their influence upon Stenton is evident. However, J. H. Round argued that there had been a clear break in 1066, and there have been many historians who follow him (such as G. B. Adams). Today, the prevailing tendency is to regard the Anglo-Norman State as unique, as the result of many antecedents, such as the English, Danish, Flemish and Breton. In this connection, the article "The Norman Conquest and English Feudalism" by D. Douglas should be consulted (English Historical Review, 1X, 1938-39, 128).

There has been considerable discussion of the true democratic nature of Anglo-Saxon society; the nineteenth century historians, including

Kemble, Freeman, and Stubbs, believed that Anglo-Saxon society was democratic. Probably the best study made of the origins of this theory is that by Carl Stephenson, in an article titled "The Common Man in Early Medieval Europe" (*American Historical Review*, LI, 1945-46, 419). He sees the Anglo-Saxon sources as portraying an aristocratic, rather than a democratic society; he pointed out that it is recognised that Anglo-Saxon sources cannot be matched by any contemporary series on the Continent, so that there is no cause to accept the ideas developed by nationalist historians in Germany. The qualified acceptance of this view of Anglo-Saxon society is found in F. M. Stenton's social chapters of Anglo-Saxon England (Oxford 1943). H. Munro Chadwick also supported the theme that Anglo-Saxon society had in fact been very aristocratic (Studies on Anglo-Saxon Institutions, Cambridge, 1905; Origin of the English Nation, Cambridge, 1907). Tacitus, the main source for Jefferson and the Whig historians, has received a closer examination than that given him in the eighteenth century, and it has been shown to be a perverted reading that Tacitus supported any concept of Germanic democracy. Indeed, he depicts an aristocracy so clearly, that the Whigs must have approached Tacitus with the belief that what they sought they would find. It is difficult for present-day historians to deduce a democratic society from a description of warrior chieftains surrounded by professional soldiers.

Yet, Jefferson's idea of English history and his ready acceptance of the Saxon Myth was neither remarkable, in the light of the sources available to him, nor was it highly inaccurate. The continued influence of the Whig interpretation is a testament to the strength that it possessed.

A recent publication, The Concern for Social Justice in The Puritan Revolution, by W. Schenk (London 1948) supports this; Schenk shows the downfall of Charles I and his followers as emanating from the very fact that they were made representative of "the Norman tyranny" which had destroyed what was in fact the mythical democracy of Anglo-Saxon England.

FOOTNOTES

INTRODUCTION

1. The attention given to Jefferson as a political theorist has largely been confined to his Declaration of Independence, and this has been employed as a political club against him. See Julian P. Boyd, The Declaration of Independence. The Evolution of the Text (Princeton, 1945), and Carl Becker, The Declaration of Independence (New York, 1940).
2. Douglass Adair, "The New Thomas Jefferson," The William and Mary Quarterly, 3d ser., III (1946), 123.
3. George Tucker, The Life of Thomas Jefferson, Third President of the United States (Philadelphia, 1837). See Preface, addressed to James Madison.
4. Henry S. Randall, The Life of Thomas Jefferson (New York, 1858).
5. George Bancroft, History of the United States (Boston, 1867); James Schouler, History of the United States of America under the Constitution (New York, 1894-99).
6. James Parton, Life of Thomas Jefferson (Boston, 1874). See Preface, iv.
7. Ibid., 746.
8. Henry Adams, History of the United States of America (New York, 1891-1898).
9. Ibid., I, 144-47.
10. Thomas E. Watson, The Life and Times of Thomas Jefferson (New York, 1903).
11. Edward Channing, History of the United States (New York, 1906); The Jeffersonian System (New York, 1906), 72.
12. Frederick Jackson Turner, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History," American Historical Association, Annual Report for the Year 1893 (Washington, 1894), 201.
13. Frederick J. Turner, The Frontier in American History (New York, 1920), 93.

14. Ibid., 250.
 15. William E. Dodd, Statesmen of the Old South (New York, 1921), 23.
 16. Charles A. Beard, Economic Origins of Jeffersonian Democracy (New York, 1915).
 17. Vernon L. Parrington, Main Currents in American Thought (New York, 1930), II, 343.
 18. Albert Jay Nock, Jefferson (Washington, 1926);
Claude G. Bowers, Jefferson and Hamilton (Boston, 1925).
 19. Gilbert Chinard, Thomas Jefferson: The Apostle of Americanism (Boston, 1929), xiii.
 20. Marie Kimball, Jefferson: The Road to Glory (New York, 1943).
 21. Dumas Malone, Jefferson the Virginian (Boston, 1948), xiv.
 22. Evarts B. Greehe, The Revolutionary Generation (New York, 1946), 187.
 23. Paul L. Ford, ed., The Writings of Thomas Jefferson (New York, 1892-1899), IV, 98.
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CHAPTER ONE

1. "Autobiography," in P. L. Ford, ed., Writings of Thomas Jefferson (hereafter cited as Ford), I, 1-155. Writing for later publication, Jefferson was aware of the political implications of his owing to a pride in ancestry.
2. Ford, I, 387.
3. Marie Kimball, Jefferson: The Road to Glory, 3.
4. Dumas Malone, Jefferson the Virginian, 26.
5. "Autobiography."
6. Ford, I, 353.
7. "Autobiography." The College of William and Mary probably constituted as good a centre of learning as any in Western Europe in the eighteenth century: both Oxford and Cambridge were in decline at this time, and Edinburgh was probably the leading University. It was from the Scottish University that William Small came. Small was a scholar and intellectual, and this is borne out by his later career in England. As a scientist, he was friendly with Darwin, Wedgewood, and Watt. He was an accepted member of the 'Lichfield Circle.'
8. "Autobiography."
9. Ibid.; the important point is that Fauquier, Wythe, and Small, were all intellectuals.
10. Ibid.
11. Ford, X, 126.
12. H. A. Washington, ed., The Works of Thomas Jefferson (Washington, 1853), VI, 460.
13. Saul K. Padover, The Complete Jefferson (New York, 1943), 1043.
14. Ford, IX, 480-85.
15. "Autobiography"; Jefferson heard Patrick Henry's declamation in 1765.
16. "Diffusion of Knowledge Bill," in Ford, II, 221.
17. Ford, III, 252.
18. The thoroughness of Jefferson's research in certain fields is exemplified in his Essay On The Anglo-Saxon Language (Padover, 855) as well as in the Notes on Virginia (Ford, III, 85-295) and in his law briefs, as shown in the Commonplace Book (#873).

19. H. Butterfield, The Englishman and His History (Cambridge, 1945).
20. Ibid., 77.
21. Ford, I, 396.
22. Kimball, Road to Glory, 105.
23. Ford, IX, 480. This list shows that Jefferson was certain of his books. Hume is the only noteworthy omission during the fifty years of reading which intervened between the time of the list drawn up for Bernard Moore, and the revised one sent to John Minor. Baxter has been added -- for he is "Hume's history republicanised."
24. Gilbert Chinard, ed., The Commonplace Book of Thomas Jefferson. A Repertory of his Ideas on Government (Baltimore, 1926); The Literary Bible of Thomas Jefferson. His Commonplace Book of Philosophers and Poets (Baltimore, 1928).
25. A. A. Lipscombe and A. E. Bergh, ed., The Writings of Thomas Jefferson (Washington, 1903), XV, 41. Referred hereafter as the Memorial Edition.
26. Commonplace Book, #231, 80.
27. Ford, IX, 483.
28. Max Lerner, Ideas are Weapons (New York, 1939).
29. Ibid., 12.
30. Carl L. Becker, The Heavenly City of the Eighteenth Century Philosophers (New Haven, 1932), 102.
31. Butterfield, History, 2.
32. Kimball, Road to Glory, 113.
33. Ibid., 115.
34. Ford, X, 91.
35. Literary Bible, 41.
36. Bolingbroke, Henry St. John, 1st Viscount, Philosophical Works (London, 1754), I, 314-15.
37. Memorial Edition, XVI, 42.
38. The vagueness of the British constitution made it a useful weapon for Radicals and Whigs alike. Jefferson himself consciously sought to obviate that vagueness; for him, it was more than a mere propaganda device. Supporting this, is his study of Anglo-Saxon and his instituting it as a required language at the University of Virginia. Symbolic

of his keen interest in the Anglo-Saxons (his source for the British constitution) is his suggestion for "a device for a seal for the United States"; he proposed using the figures of Hengist and Horsa, the chieftains who had led the first Saxons to settle in England. See Marie Kimball, Jefferson: War and Peace (New York, 1945), I, 5.

39. Bolingbroke, Works, I, 316-20.
40. Ibid., I, 342.
41. Ibid., I, 388.
42. Ibid., II, 225.
43. Ibid., II, 227.
44. Memorial Edition, XIII, 94.
45. Ford, I, 430.
46. A Summary View of the Rights of British America. Text in Ford, I, 421-47.
47. Memorial Edition, VI, 258.
48. Jefferson to Francis Calley after his visit to Monticello in 1815, in the Jefferson Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress (cited as LC hereafter). Also quoted in the Sowerby MSS (see Bibliographical Notes).
49. Jefferson writes to G. W. Lewis about books for the University of Virginia, October 25, 1825, LC.
50. Nathaniel Bacon, An Historical Discourse of the Uniformity of the Government of England, With A Preface, Being a Vindication of the Ancient Way of Parliaments in England (London, 1651).
51. Ibid., 47.
52. Ibid., 49.
53. Henry Care, English Liberties: The Free Born Subject's Inheritance (London, 1680).
54. Ibid., 5.
55. Ibid., 19.
56. Ibid., 20.
57. Sir John Dalrymple, Essay Towards a General History of Feudal Property in Great Britain (London, 1757).
58. Ibid., 2.

59. Ibid., 19.
60. Ibid., 338. James Harrington presented his idea of utopia in his Oceana in which he stressed the economic basis of government as a source of political power: he inclined to Aristotle's view that inequality of property and land ownership caused revolutions --- which Harrington disliked intensely. He thought that social and economic forces made for the natural evolution of a republic. There is no record, however, of Jefferson obtaining a copy of the Oceana until his purchase of the Byrd books in 1776, although he may have read it before then. There is no indication that Harrington played any part in the formation of Jefferson's thought. If there was, it would constitute considerable support for Beard's concept of Jeffersonian democracy.
61. Ford, II, 78.
62. Allan Ramsay, An Historical Essay on the English Constitution (London, 1771).
63. Ibid., 9.
64. Ibid., 6-8.
65. Ibid., 31.
66. Ibid., 297.
67. Ibid., 179.
68. Ibid., 209.
69. June 11, 1807, LC.
70. August 12 1810, LC.
71. David Hume, History of England (London, 1762), 11.
72. Ibid., 163.
73. Ibid., 422-23.
74. August 12 1810, LC.
75. Memorial Edition, XVI, 42.
76. James Burgh, Political Disquisitions (Philadelphia, 1775-76), I, Preface.
77. Memorial Edition, XIII, 129.
78. See Jefferson's booklist to Thomas Mann Randolph, Memorial Edition, VIII, 29.

79. Ford, IX, 480.
80. Burgh, Disquisitions, I, 71-72.
81. Ibid., I, 104.
82. Ibid., I, 191.
83. Ibid., I, 204.
84. Ibid., I, 403.
85. Ibid., II, Preface.
86. Ibid., II, 36.
87. Ibid., II, 82.
88. Memorial Edition, XI, 224-25.
89. Ibid., XIV, 134.
90. August 12, 1810, LC.
91. Commonplace Book, 181-82.
92. Ibid., 175.
93. Burgh, Disquisitions, II, 313.
94. Ibid., II, 292.
95. Ibid., II, 314.
96. Ibid., III, 288.
97. Burgh, Disquisitions, III, 267.
98. Jefferson to Baron Quenette de Rochmont, September 30, 1817, in the St. George Tucker Papers (hitherto unpublished).
99. Memorial Edition, XV, 83.
100. Burgh, Disquisitions, I, 34.
101. Algernon Sydney, Discourses on Government (London, 1763), II, XIX, 137.
102. Jefferson to Mason Locke Weems, November 22, 1804, LC.
103. December 13, 1804, LC.
104. Caroline Robbins, "Algernon Sidney's Discourses Concerning Government:"

Textbook of Revolution," The William and Mary Quarterly, 3d ser.,
IV (1947), 267-96.

105. Sydney, Discourses, II, 43.
 106. Ibid., II, 44.
 107. Ibid., II, 43.
 108. Ibid., II, 54.
 109. Ibid., II, 445.
 110. Ibid., II, 417.
 111. Ibid., II, 413.
 112. Ibid., II, 200.
 113. Ford, IV, 455.
 114. January 30, 1787, LC.
 115. Memorial Edition, VIII, 29.
 116. John Locke, Of Civil Government: Two Treatises (New York, 1924),
22.
 117. Ibid., 225.
 118. Ford, I, 435.
 119. Commonplace Book, 19.
 120. John Locke, An Essay Concerning Human Understanding (Oxford, 1894)
I, 1.
 121. February 13, 1789, LC.
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CHAPTER TWO

1. Claude G. Bowers, The Young Jefferson (Boston, 1945), 83.
2. Ford, I, 6.
3. Ibid., I, 369.
4. Ibid., I, 370.
5. "Autobiography."
6. Ford, I, 373-81.
7. "Autobiography."
8. The text of the Resolution is in Ford, I, 418-20.
9. "Autobiography."
10. The text of the Summary View is in Ford, I, 429-47.
11. Ford, I, 429.
12. Jefferson appears to mix together both history and his imagination in the assertions he makes here; he ignores fact when he declares: "America was conquered, and her settlement made, and firmly established, at the expense of individuals, and not of the British public." Instead he presents a picturesque version of the settlement of America -- of individuals who fought for themselves, who had no assistance of any kind, and who therefore hold their land of their own right.
13. He provided further instances of his political acumen in this pamphlet, when he discusses the injustice of the recent suspension of the New York legislature, asking: "Can any one reason be assigned why 160,000 electors in the island of Great Britain should give law to four millions in the states of America, every individual of whom is equal to every individual of them...?" Here, Jefferson is inaccurate, and his errors favour the case of the colonies. Without debating the essential justice of his exposition, he did not enhance it by assessing a mere 160,000 electors for the whole of Britain (which number includes only the county franchise) and by adding a million to the population of the American colonies.
14. "Autobiography."
15. Ford, IX, 258.
16. Jefferson was informed that as a result of the publication of the Summary View, he had been listed on a Bill of Attainder to be proscribed. He felt not a little pride in this, although there is no proof of there having been such a proscription.

17. Ford, I, 453.
18. Ibid., I, 454.
19. Ibid., I, 455.
20. Ibid., I, 455-59.
21. Malone, Jefferson the Virginian, 204.
22. Ford, I, 462-76.
23. Ibid., I, 476-82.
24. Ibid., I, 482.
25. Ibid., I, 492.
26. Ibid., I, 459.
27. Ibid., I, 493.
28. Ibid., I, 495.
29. Ibid., II, 7-29.
30. Burgh, in his Political Disquisitions, had pointed out how Cromwell had usurped power by the agency of the Army; a standing force was a perpetual threat to the integrity of the state.
31. Ford, II, 16.
32. Carl L. Becker, The Declaration of Independence, Introduction.
33. Ford, X, 343.
34. Commonplace Book, 182.
35. The text of the Declaration of Independence (final draft) cited here, is in Ford, II, 42-58.
36. For the parrallel found in Locke: "Revolutions happen not upon every little mismanagement in public affairs; but if a long train of abuses, prevarications and artifices, all tending the same way, make the design visible to the people...it is not to be wondered that they should then rouse themselves...." -- Second Essay on Civil Liberty, 225.
37. January 30, 1787, LC.
38. The position occupied by the Scotch in the eighteenth century is an interesting one: many of the principal British statesmen were of that race, as were most of the successful merchants and many of the leading

scholars. Only the latter gained respect. Scotsmen were despised in much the same way that the Jews have been. During the revolutionary war, Jefferson noted that "those who joined Lord Dunmore were mainly Scottish merchants and factors." (Ford, IV, 300.)

39. Ford, II, 90-91.

40. Ford, II, 139.

CHAPTER THREE

1. Edmund C. Burnett, ed., Letters of Members of the Continental Congress (Washington, 1921-36), VI, 190.
 2. Ibid., VI, 211.
 3. Gaillard Hunt, ed., Writings of James Madison (New York, 1900-10), I, 207-08.
 4. The quotations from the Notes on the State of Virginia are from the text in Ford, III, 85-295.
 5. Malone, Jefferson the Virginian, 383, 403.
 6. January 4, 1805, LC.
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CHAPTER FOUR

1. Sowerby MSS (see Bibliographical Notes).
2. Memorial Edition, VI, 265.
3. Ford, III, 349.
4. Ibid., III, 355.
5. Ibid., III, 399.
6. "Anas," in Ford, I, 89.
7. Ford, III, 419.
8. Ibid., III, 371.
9. Burgh, Disquisitions, I, xcii.
10. Ford, IV, 4.
11. Memorial Edition, IV, 450.
12. Ibid., III, 216.
13. Ford, IV, 4.
14. Ibid., IV, 123.
15. Ibid., IV, 29.
16. Ibid., IV, 34.
17. Ibid., IV, 38.
18. Ibid., IV, 82.
19. Ibid., IV, 87.
20. Memorial Edition, V, 93.
21. Ibid., V, 139.
22. Ibid., V, 149.
23. Ibid., V, 180.
24. Ibid., V, 306.
25. Ibid., V, 309.
26. Ibid., VI, 231.

27. Ford, IV, 260.
28. Ibid., IV, 266.
29. Memorial Edition, VI, 328.
30. Ford, V, 7.
31. Ibid., V, 97.
32. Memorial Edition, VII, 360.
33. Ford, VII, 410.
34. Memorial Edition, VII, 66.
35. Ibid., VIII, 106.
36. Ibid., III, 394.
37. Ibid., III, 216.
38. Ibid., VIII, 211.
39. Ibid., VIII, 224.
40. Jefferson to C. W. F. Dumas, May 13, 1791, in National Archives (cited hereafter as NA).
41. Jefferson to Colonel David Humphreys, June 23, 1791, NA.
42. Ford, VI, 87.
43. Memorial Edition, IX, 45.
44. Ford, VI, 95.
45. Ibid., VI, 238.
46. Memorial Edition, III, 226.
47. Ford, VI, 338.
48. Memorial Edition, IV, 212.
49. June 21, 1791, LC.
50. Ford, VII, 39.
51. Ibid., VII, 13.
52. Ibid., VII, 149.
53. Ibid., VII, 169.

54. Ford, VII, 208.
55. Ibid., VII, 323.
56. Ibid., IX, 308.
57. Ibid., VI, 503.
58. Ibid., I, 335.
59. Memorial Edition, XIII, 184.
60. Ford, VIII, 99.
61. Memorial Edition, X, 396.
62. Ford, VIII, 264.
63. Memorial Edition, II, 38.
64. Ford, VIII, 300.
65. Ford, VIII, 378.
66. Ibid., VIII, 382.
67. Ibid., VIII, 384.
68. Ibid., VIII, 436.
69. Ibid., VIII, 492.
70. Ibid., IX, 39.
71. Ibid., IX, 87.
72. Ibid., IX, 200.
73. Ibid., IX, 134-36.
74. Memorial Edition, III, 455.
75. Ford, IX, 39.
76. Jefferson to the Tammany Society, February 29, 1808, LC.
77. Jefferson to Mr. Lieper, May 25, 1808, LC.
78. Jefferson to Thomas Digges, August 10, 1808, LC.
79. Jefferson to John Taylor, June 23, 1808, LC.

80. Ford, X, 34.
81. Memorial Edition, XV, 461.
82. Political Pamphlet 378 (181 a), 19, in Jefferson Collection.
83. Ford, IX, 251.
84. Memorial Edition, XIII, 37.
85. Ford, IX, 434.
86. Ibid., IX, 271-85.
87. Ibid., IX, 291.
88. Memorial Edition, XIII, 60.
89. Ford, IV, 479.
90. Ibid., IX, 329.
91. Ibid., IX, 348.
92. Ibid., IX, 355.
93. Jefferson to Richard Rush, August 2, 1812, LC.
94. Ford, IX, 338; Memorial Edition, XIV, 189.
95. See the "Deane Papers" II, 6-11, in the Collections of the New York Historical Society (New York, 1887).
96. It is noteworthy that Jefferson's remarks about the unrest and the imminence of revolution in England always coincide with internal disturbances in that country: the Gordon Riots of 1780, the Luddite Riots in 1812, and the continuous unrest which culminated in the St. Peter's Field's Massacre in 1817, provided Jefferson with grounds for his apparently wishful thinking.
97. Memorial Edition, XIII, 184.
98. Ibid., XIII, 310.
99. Ford, IX, 430.
100. Memorial Edition, XIV, 319.
101. Ibid., XIV, 369.
102. Ibid., XIV, 301.

103. Ford, X, 7.
 104. Ibid., X, 34.
 105. Ibid., X, 68.
 106. Ibid., X, 73.
 107. Memorial Edition, XIX, 276.
 108. Ibid., XV, 51.
 109. Ibid., XV, 82-83.
 110. Ford, X, 279.
 111. Memorial Edition, XIII, 117.
 112. Ford, X, 279.
 113. Samuel F. Bemis, The American Secretaries of State and their Diplomacy (New York, 1927), I, 7.
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B I B L I O G R A P H Y

The most important source for any study on Jeffersonian thought must be the Jefferson Collection of the Rare Book Division in the Library of Congress. The books examined in the first chapter were repeatedly included in the lists of recommended reading that Jefferson sent his friends. In the section on this Collection which follows here, the books marked with an asterisk (*) still remain in the Library of Congress. Many of the books which comprised Jefferson's library, and which were sold to the United States government in 1815, were destroyed in the fire of 1850 at the Library of Congress. These losses were also added to, through the negligence of certain past Library officials.

At present, there is concluding the long awaited project of surveying and annotating the books constituting the Jefferson Collection. Under this Project, many of Jefferson's volumes have been discovered in the general Stacks. It is possible that a considerable number of the books hitherto thought lost will be recovered. The Jefferson volumes of Locke and Macaulay are still missing, however.

Considerable assistance has been rendered by Millicent Sowerby, who heads the Jefferson Project. Particularly useful has been Miss Sowerby's manuscript material, which she placed at my disposal. The Sowerby MSS contains reference to remarks which Jefferson is recorded to have made about the many books in his library, and there are details of his purchase of them. The most important part of the Project is the record made of Jefferson's comments, emendations, and marginalia, which give clues as to his reaction: unfortunately, these are fewer than might have been hoped.

Lyman H. Butterfield has also helped, by supplying details of a particularly important letter of Edmund Pendleton to which Jefferson replied

on August 13, 1776. There are many aspects of this correspondence which require further examination, especially the issues of land tenure in Virginia.

A. PRIMARY SOURCES

1. MANUSCRIPT MATERIAL.

THE JEFFERSON PAPERS, in the Manuscript Division, Library of Congress.

This is the largest collection of Jefferson's Papers: the difficulty in making any survey of this huge mass of material lies in the absence of a satisfactory index.

THE JEFFERSON PAPERS, in the Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society.

Second in size to that collection of the Library of Congress, these Papers are generally more personal in character.

THE ST. GEORGE TUCKER PAPERS, belonging to Mrs. George Coleman, Williamsburg, Virginia.

This collection contains a number of letters written by Jefferson, but mostly deal with domestic affairs. There has been no publication as yet of the Tucker Papers, although Colonial Williamsburg Inc., has micro-filmed the collection.

UNITED STATES MINISTERS INSTRUCTIONS, in the National Archives; constitutes Jefferson's records of instructions to Ministers when he was Secretary of State.

In excellent condition, these Papers provide much information on Jefferson's policy and thought during 1791-93.

2. PRINTED MATERIAL.

Abernethy, Thomas P., ed., A Summary View of the Rights of British America. New York, 1943.

Adams, C. E., ed., The Works of John Adams. 10 vols., Boston, 1850-56.

Burnett, Edmund C., ed., Letters of Members of the Continental Congress. 8 vols., Washington, 1921-36.

Chinard, Gilbert, ed., The Commonplace Book of Thomas Jefferson. A Repertory of his Ideas on Government. Baltimore, 1926. Excellent for the period prior to 1776.

Chinard, Gilbert, ed., The Literary Bible of Thomas Jefferson. His Commonplace Book of Philosophers and Poets. Baltimore, 1928. A fruitful source of information on Jefferson's early interests.

Fitzpatrick, J. C. ed., The Writings of George Washington. 33 vols., Washington, 1931-41.

Ford, Paul Leicester, ed., The Writings of Thomas Jefferson. 10 vols., New York, 1892-99. Well annotated and reliable in content.

Hamilton, S. M., ed., The Writings of James Monroe. 7 vols., New York, 1898-1903. Very useful in securing understanding of factors governing Jefferson's thought subsequent to his second Administration.

Hunt, Gaillard, ed., The Writings of James Madison. 9 vols., New York, 1910. An important supplement to Jefferson's writings.

Lipscombe, A. A., and Bergh, A. E., ed., The Writings of Thomas Jefferson. 20 vols., Washington, 1903. Often referred to as the Memorial Edition, this is the most extensive collection of Jefferson's writings printed. It will be superseded by the complete edition being prepared at Princeton. The Memorial Edition has little or no annotation, and is unreliable in text; the arrangement has nothing to commend it.

Padover, Saul K., ed., The Complete Jefferson. New York, 1943. A useful reference book, containing Jefferson's major writings, but not his letters; its handiness lies in its compactness.

Washington, H. A., ed., The Writings of Thomas Jefferson. 9 vols., Washington, 1853-54. This edition has been superseded by that of Ford and the Memorial Edition, but still has its uses for reference.

3. SOURCE MATERIALS USED BY JEFFERSON.

For the original catalogue of Jefferson's library, see Catalogue of the Library of the United States, drawn up by Jonathan Eliot (Washington, 1815). After Jefferson sold his fine library to the United States government in 1815, he started to collect yet another, which was finally sold at public auction after his death. The catalogue of this collection, published in Washington in 1829, is among the Miscellaneous Pamphlets (Vol. CCMLIX, 14) in the Library of Congress Jefferson Collection. The close identity in the content of these two catalogues is significant; see footnote 23, I.

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Baxter, John, A New and Improved History of England. London, 1801.

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- Locke, Two Treatises on Government. London, 1728.
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