



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

This thesis has been submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for a postgraduate degree (e.g. PhD, MPhil, DClinPsychol) at the University of Edinburgh. Please note the following terms and conditions of use:

- This work is protected by copyright and other intellectual property rights, which are retained by the thesis author, unless otherwise stated.
- A copy can be downloaded for personal non-commercial research or study, without prior permission or charge.
- This thesis cannot be reproduced or quoted extensively from without first obtaining permission in writing from the author.
- The content must not be changed in any way or sold commercially in any format or medium without the formal permission of the author.
- When referring to this work, full bibliographic details including the author, title, awarding institution and date of the thesis must be given.

‘Thomas Jefferson: Image and Ideology’

Gaye S. Wilson

**Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
The University of Edinburgh
2012**

DECLARATION OF OWN WORK

I declare that this thesis is my own work and has not been submitted for another degree.

Signed: _____
Gaye S. Wilson

ABSTRACT

This thesis explores the public image of Thomas Jefferson as recorded in his major life portraits. It consults the traditions that surrounded eighteenth-century portraiture and the history of the portrait as a means of expressing authority, power, and personal interest. This study contends that Jefferson worked within these traditions and fashioned and refashioned an image that promoted his vision of American republicanism. Therefore, it places each portrait within the context of the socio-political environment in which it was created and considers Jefferson's political motives and actions against these recorded images. This departs from previous works that stopped with an identification of the life portraits, a discussion of the artist, and an evaluation of the merits of the portrait as a work of art. Rather it builds upon these earlier studies to approach Jefferson's use of the portrait to manage his image and advance his political and ideological aims for the newly formed nation. The goal of this thesis is to offer an enlarged and diverse assessment of this leading founder of the American republic through the public image he created in his life portraits.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|---|-----|
| Declaration of Own Work | 2 |
| Abstract | 3 |
| Table of Contents | 4 |
| List of Abbreviations | 5 |
| Acknowledgements | 6 |
| Introduction | 8 |
| Chapter 1. The European Experience and an Image for Diplomacy..... | 21 |
| Chapter 2. Return to America and an Image for Partisan Politics | 52 |
| Chapter 3. End of a Decade and an Image for the Election of 1800..... | 79 |
| Chapter 4. The Presidency and an Image for Change..... | 108 |
| Chapter 5. The Presidency and an Image as Statesman..... | 146 |
| Chapter 6. Retirement to Monticello and an Image for History | 177 |
| Conclusion | 209 |
| Bibliography | 215 |
| Appendix A: Illustrations | 227 |
| List of Illustrations | 228 |
| Illustrations | 231 |

ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|--|---|
| <i>America's Historical Newspapers</i> | (Readex, division of NewsBank, 2009) http://infoweb.newsbank.com . Note: this is a subscription database. |
| APS | American Philosophical Society |
| LC | Library of Congress |
| <i>JMB</i> | <i>Jefferson's Memorandum Books: Accounts, with Legal Records and Miscellany, 1767-1826</i> , eds. James A. Bear, Jr. and Lucia C. Stanton, 2 vols. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997) |
| <i>Malone, Jefferson and His Time</i> | Dumas Malone, <i>Jefferson and His Time</i> , 6 vols. (Little, Brown, 1948 – 81) |
| <i>PTJ</i> | <i>The Papers of Thomas Jefferson</i> , eds. Julian P. Boyd et al., 38 vols. to date (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1950 -) |
| <i>PTJ:RS</i> | <i>The Papers of Thomas Jefferson: Retirement Series</i> , ed. J. Jefferson Looney, 8 vols. to date (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004 -) |
| TJ | Thomas Jefferson |
| 'TJP':LC | 'The Thomas Jefferson Papers at the Library of Congress', at: http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/mtjhtml/mtjhome.html |
| <i>TJW</i> | <i>Thomas Jefferson Writings</i> , ed. Merrill D. Peterson (New York: Library of American, 1984) |
| USMA | United States Military Academy |

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The choice of the University of Edinburgh to pursue my doctoral studies on American founder, Thomas Jefferson, might seem incongruous, but it proved a rich and rewarding experience. Much of this was due to my supervisor, Dr Frank Cogliano, who first encouraged me to consider the program at Edinburgh and then continued to support my research and writing with scholarly advice and direction as I progressed through the program. I owe much thanks to Dr Cogliano for his steady encouragement and guidance. My sincere thanks goes as well to my second supervisor, Dr Stana Nenadic, who provided invaluable direction in the reading and study of the British artists who so influenced the Americans painting the portraits of Thomas Jefferson. The combined knowledge of Dr Cogliano in the field of early American history and Dr Nenadic's in art and material culture were invaluable for my research and study of the Jefferson image within early American politics.

I must thank as well my colleagues at the Thomas Jefferson Foundation, who have encouraged my research and the completion of this degree. Former foundation president Daniel Jordan enthusiastically approved the initial sabbatical that launched my studies at Edinburgh and current president Leslie Green Bowman continued to support my progress. My immediate supervisor Andrew O'Shaughnessy, director of the International Center for Jefferson Studies, was equally encouraging and supportive. My work colleague, Mary Scott-Fleming, provided many acts of assistance when I was away in Edinburgh and willing listened during the research and writing process of this thesis.

Many others have provided support and encouragement along the way. Specifically, I must acknowledge the initial confidence expressed by Drs Peter Onuf and Peter Nicolaisen, as they provided letters of recommendation supporting my application to the Edinburgh program and continued to offer assurances throughout my doctoral studies. My acceptance into the University was toasted by good friends and colleagues Linda and Keith Thomson, who on various occasions graciously opened their home during my research trips to Philadelphia, including a month-long fellowship at the American Philosophical Society. My research trips to USMA at West Point were greatly assisted by good friends Christine and Rob McDonald, who provided room and board and pointed the way to the special collections in the

USMA academic library. The McDonalds helped me connect with the Director of the West Point Museum, David Reel, who also deserves recognition for his very generous help with access to files and paintings in the Museum's collection.

I wish to recognize and thank as well my fellow students at the University of Edinburgh. Sonia Baker became a friend and special colleague from my very first days at the University, as we began sharing our research and writing experiences. Rusty Roberson and I began in the American history program at Edinburgh in the same term, and our mutual exchanges and encouragements along the way have been most helpful.

A very special acknowledgement must go to my husband Jim, who often put his own projects on hold to accompany me to Edinburgh. The time we spent in Scotland and England are treasured, and I will always be grateful that he chose to share this experience with me. A special thanks as well to our good friend, Eleanor Winsor, who has been supportive in so many ways and to Stephanie Leap, who made the time away possible by her responsible care of our home and dog. My family deserves my gratitude for their continued concern and encouragement. In summation, this doctoral degree has been possible through the support, advice and good wishes of many people that I sincerely acknowledge and hold dear.

INTRODUCTION

This study is about Thomas Jefferson as seen through his life portraits. More specifically, it focuses upon the Jefferson image within select portraits and proposes that he used this image to express a public self. These portraits span much of his public career and follow him into retirement. The major premise of this thesis is that Jefferson's image within each portrait shows change that is more than just temporal or attributable to the varying style of each artist. It argues that the evolution in Jefferson's self-presentation was calculated to correspond with his political objectives at the time the portrait was taken and was inspired by his goals and vision for the young nation.

The use of portraiture as a means of putting forward a very controlled presentation of self was not unique to Jefferson. Throughout the eighteenth century the portrait was a familiar tool for honouring or memorializing important people and moments in time. It was a means of visually manifesting genealogy and fortuitous marriages or as pertains more directly to this study, creating a public display of national history through the images of its heroes. Jefferson both collected portraits of American heroes and was similarly iconized in other collections of eminent Americans. The tradition of galleries of worthies dated back in western history to Greece and Rome and was known to Europeans through the sculpted busts of deities, scholars, and important political and military leaders of the classical past. As the tradition developed in Europe, the public 'hero' was more often aristocratic or at the least a conquering hero affiliated with military leadership, but in the era of enlightenment and revolution, the criteria began to change. As the eighteenth century progressed, a broader clientele sought to have portraits made, as more wealth was controlled by the rising middle class. This became especially true in Britain, where the portrait was the leading art form. Art historian, Marcia Pointon, cites the Earl of Fife, who observed in 1796:

Before this century, very few people presented themselves to a painter, except those who were of great families, or remarkable for their actions in the service of their country, or for some other extraordinary circumstance,

so that the field for enquiry was not extended, as lately, when every body [sic.] almost who can afford twenty pounds, has the portraits of himself, wife and children painted.¹

To the Earl of Fife this allowed many bad painters into the field portraying in paint the ‘uninteresting, obscure person’. Though the subjects might come to represent a broader spectrum of the populace, the traditional purpose of the portrait did not change, and Jefferson followed established custom in putting together his personal collection of those heroes important to the history of the American republic and in turn contributed his own image for other public collections and requests.²

Jefferson was aware of the functions of portraiture from his youth. The notions of portraiture in the American colonies were borrowed from the mother-country, Britain, and the genre was by far the most common in colonial America, as portraits graced the Virginia plantation homes of Jefferson’s acquaintances and family members. He knew the prestige attached to a well-executed portrait, and how the presence of just the portrait itself implied a level of wealth and status. As a young lawyer for William Byrd III, he had access to the collection assembled by Byrd’s father, William Byrd II of Westover plantation, which was the largest private portrait collection in Virginia, possibly in all of the North American colonies. This collection was distinguished by the many portraits from London studios of richly clad British aristocrats who had been friends or associates of Byrd during his early years in England. This collection was not based just upon family connections, but rather many of these portraits had been deliberately assembled as images of men deemed important for their socio-political standing. The Westover collection offered Jefferson an early acquaintance with the tradition of collecting ‘Worthies’.³

¹ Marcia Pointon, *Hanging the Head: Portraiture and Social Formation in Eighteenth-Century England* (New Haven, CT, 1993), 2.

² For an overview of eighteenth-century British portraiture, see Pointon, *Ibid.*, Part I and for eighteenth-century American portraiture, see *Portrait in Eighteenth-Century America*, ed. Ellen G. Miles (Newark, DE, 1993). Pantheons of Worthies are discussed in various sources on eighteenth-century art; however, for a very thorough study of specifically American collections of worthies, an excellent source is Brandon Brame Fortune, ‘Portraits of Virtue and Genius: Pantheons of Worthies and Public Portraiture in the early American Republic, 1780-1820’ (PhD dissertation, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1987). Fortune engages some of this discussion in a later published work, *Franklin and His Friends* (Washington, DC, 1999), 13-19.

³ David Meschutt, ‘William Byrd and His Portrait Collection’, *Journal of Early Southern Decorative Arts* XIV, no. 2 (May 1988): 19 – 46.

In colonial Virginia's capital of Williamsburg, Jefferson was exposed to the portrait in the service of the state. Full-length portraits of the British monarch George III and his consort Queen Charlotte hung in the Governor's Palace. These large as life images from the studio of British artist Allan Ramsay were installed in 1768 and displayed the elements important to sovereign authority, as both figures appeared richly painted in royal regalia and stood among columns and massive red drapery that had become traditional surroundings for depictions of those in power. Before leaving Virginia for Europe, Jefferson would have observed the purposes of portraiture as preserving and projecting images of lineage, prestige and political authority.⁴

Jefferson began to incorporate the idea of art as integral to the structure of society during the transformation of Virginia from colony to state. He claimed in his *Notes on the State of Virginia* that he inserted a stipend for 'books, paintings, and statues' in the 'Bill for Establishing a Public Library' that was included in the revision of the laws of Virginia that he chaired after independence. Despite his claim, the bill that came before the General Assembly in 1785 and again in 1786 contained stipends for books and maps only with no provision for art work. The bill was not enacted. As the manuscript copy of the bill is not extant, it is possible that Jefferson's original version of the bill provided a broader support for art as he claimed. The Virginia assembly may have hesitated due to the cost of the proposal.⁵

The cost of art was a consideration for Americans both because of economics and because luxury was widely believed to threaten republicanism by undermining civic virtue. An excellent example is Abigail Adams's response to the news of Shays's Rebellion taking place in her native New England. She concluded that 'luxury and extravagance' were to blame and that the desire for the finest in clothing and furniture led to debt and debt was a sure step toward the loss of independence. In her opinion, 'vanity was becoming a more powerful principal than patriotism'.⁶ Americans could look to history and the downfall of the ancient nations of Greece

⁴ Graham Hood, 'Soul or Style? Questions about Early American Portraits', in *Portrait in Eighteenth-Century America*, ed. Ellen G. Miles, 84 – 85.

⁵ Thomas Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia*, ed. William Peden, (Chapel Hill, NC, 1954), 149; *PTJ*, 2: 544 – 45.

⁶ Abigail Adams to Thomas Jefferson, 29 January 1787, *PTJ*, 11: 86.

and Rome, and they had only to look at the corruption that many felt had taken hold in Britain.⁷

This distrust of luxury ran through the formative years of the American republic and resulted in an uneasiness with art. John Barrell in his book, *The Political Theory of Painting from Reynolds to Hazlitt*, presents one of the most thorough discussions of the intertwined relationship of the fine arts, civic virtue, and the political republic during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and points out that the views of the benefit of art balanced against its detriment to society. Just as some feared luxury and therefore corruption, Barrell quotes English artist and writer, Prince Hoare, writing in 1810, who saw a relationship in public taste and public virtue. He wrote, ‘the higher the state of public taste and public virtue can be raised in any nation, and the longer that state can be maintained, the higher and longer will be the glory and pre-eminence, nay, perhaps the safety and existence of the nation’.⁸ Jefferson had expressed similar thoughts much earlier when he wrote from Paris in 1785, ‘You see I am an enthusiast on the subject of the arts. But it is an enthusiasm of which I am not ashamed, as its object is to improve the taste of my countrymen, to increase their reputation, to reconcile to them the respect of the world & procure them its praise’.⁹ It is interesting that he should feel he must defend his enthusiasm for the arts and equally interesting that his defence was based upon the practical objective of increasing the reputation of Americans in order to secure a greater respect from the Old World. As will be discussed in more detail in chapter one, Jefferson would always tout the superiority of America, yet he could never totally dismiss his awe of European culture.¹⁰

After Jefferson admitted his enthusiasm for the arts as a benefit to the nation, he limited that enthusiasm just a few years later in his ‘Hints on European Travel’. He demonstrated his ambivalence when he wrote that architecture was worth study,

⁷ Neil Harris, *Artist in American Society* (New York, 1966), 28 – 35.

⁸ John Barrell, *Political Theory of Painting from Reynolds to Hazlitt* (New Haven, CT, 1986), 1-68; Barrell quotes Prince Hoare, p. 10.

⁹ TJ to James Madison, 20 September 1785, *PTJ*, 8: 535.

¹⁰ Peter S. Onuf, *Jefferson’s Empire* (Charlottesville, VA, 2000), 5. Onuf states that, ‘[the] “new world” was always, necessarily defined against--and therefore in terms of--the Old World’.

but painting and statuary were ‘too expensive for the state of wealth among us’.¹¹ This followed the thoughts of other Americans, such as Jefferson’s colleague, Benjamin Rush, who discouraged those thinking of immigrating to the United States with professions in the fine arts. Rush wrote in an open letter intended for publication, ‘The united states as yet afford but little encouragement to the professors of most of the fine arts. Painting and sculpture flourish chiefly in wealthy and luxurious countries.’¹² In their retirement correspondence, John Adams rhetorically questioned Jefferson on the evils of wealth and luxury and wrote, ‘Will you tell me how to prevent riches from producing luxury? Will you tell me how to prevent luxury from producing effeminacy intoxication extravagance Vice and folly?’ Adams did not name the fine arts specifically in his diatribe, but in that same year in a letter to another colleague, he wrote, ‘The age of sculpture and painting have not yet arrived in this country and I hope it will not arrive very soon’.¹³

Despite these reservations toward luxury and the fine arts in general, portraiture was the exception and was the genre in painting that remained acceptable. The indulgence of collecting fine art was not open to many Americans in the early years of the republic, yet there were many, as the Earl of Fife complained, who could afford a portrait. In addition, portraiture would escape the stigma of extravagance and luxury, as it served the useful purpose of recording the faces of history whether as a public record or for private family purposes. The positive influence of the portrait was supported by early eighteenth-century artist and art theorist, Jonathan Richardson, who wrote that, ‘upon the sight of a portrait, the character, and master-strokes of the history of the person it represents, are apt to flow in upon the mind, and to be the subject of conversation’. He went on to advise, ‘I know not what influence this has, or may have, but methinks it is rational to believe, that pictures of this kind are subservient to virtue; that men are excited to imitate the good actions, and persuaded to shun the vices of those whose examples

¹¹ Thomas Jefferson, ‘Hints to Americans Travelling in Europe’, addressed to Thomas Lee Shippen, 19 June 1788, *PTJ*, 13: 269.

¹² Benjamin Rush, ‘Information to Europeans Who Are Disposed To Migrate To The United States’ (Philadelphia, 1789), 4.

¹³ John Adams to Thomas Jefferson, 21 December 1819, in Lester Cappon, *Adams-Jefferson Letters* (Chapel Hill, NC, reprinted 1959), 551; John Adams to J.B. Binon, 7 February 1819, *Portraits of John and Abigail Adams*, ed. Andrew Oliver (Cambridge, MA, 1967), 1.

are thus set before them'.¹⁴ Jefferson owned a copy of Richardson's widely read *Theory of Painting*, which demonstrated the connection between the portrait and virtue and articulated a theory that supported the collections of worthy and illustrious men popular in post-revolutionary America.¹⁵ Even Benjamin Rush in his open letter to potential immigrants allowed that there was work for those who painted portraits, though he warned that they would need to travel from state to state to support themselves.¹⁶

The insistence that art must prove itself useful persisted on after Jefferson, Rush and Adams. When Alexis de Tocqueville reported observations from his 1831 visit to the United States in his *Democracy in America*, he wrote of the arts, 'Democratic nations . . . will therefore cultivate the arts that serve to render life convenient in preference to those whose object is to embellish it; they will habitually prefer the useful to the beautiful and they will want the beautiful to be useful'.¹⁷ Portraiture satisfied these criteria sufficiently and proved a useful tool for Jefferson. He worked with skilled artists, to create visual statements that reflected his political and ideological concerns. His image evolved through his long years in public service and was fashioned and refashioned to best represent his vision of a free and democratic government.

* * * * *

This investigation of the Jefferson image as an expression of his ideology begins with Jefferson's arrival in Paris and his first known extant portrait taken in London in 1786 and concludes with Jefferson in retirement and a final portrait taken at Monticello in 1821. The chapters are arranged chronologically, as this allows for a clearer demonstration of Jefferson's evolving public image.

The first chapter examines the five years Jefferson spent in Paris, from 1784 to 1789, as Minister Plenipotentiary to the Court of Versailles. The portrait that is

¹⁴ Jonathan Richardson, *Works of Jonathan Richardson* (London, 1792), 10.

¹⁵ E. Millicent Sowerby, comp., *Catalogue of the Library of Thomas Jefferson*, 5 vols. (Charlottesville, VA, 1983), IV: 391 – 92.

¹⁶ Rush, 'Information to Europeans'.

¹⁷ Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, trans. and ed. by Harvey C. Mansfield and Delba Winthrop (Chicago, IL, 2000), 439.

central to this chapter is that by Mather Brown, a young American artist working in London when Jefferson visited there in 1786. Augmenting the portrait by Brown are three small portraits by John Trumbull. These were derived from the original life-study that Trumbull made of Jefferson for his major history painting, *The Declaration of Independence*. Both the works by Brown and Trumbull show Jefferson at his most elegant in appearance. This chapter explores Jefferson's dilemma in his need to appear appropriate for social and court functions while maintaining an appearance of one representing a republican nation. This opposition of images between the formal European and the provincial, republican American is the crux of this chapter's discussion.

Chapters two and three follow Jefferson from his return to America in late 1789 through the turbulent politics of the 1790s and the election of 1800. Portraits by two members of the Peale family of artists present Jefferson at the beginning and at the conclusion of the decade. In 1791 Charles Willson Peale requested that Jefferson sit for a portrait that he would add to his collection of illustrious Americans who were important to the nation's founding. Jefferson would have known that this portrait was intended for public display in the Peale museum, and this chapter posits that his appearance in the colours of the blue and the buff was not coincidental. These colours were still attached to memories of the American Revolution and for Jefferson the founding moment of the new nation and the embodiment of the republican cause. At the close of the decade, on the eve of the election of 1800, he is painted by Rembrandt Peale, son of Charles Willson. For this portrait Jefferson chose to put aside the blue and the buff to appear in the egalitarian black suit. These two chapters explore Jefferson's choices in public presentation and within the turbulent politics of the 1790s. They consider why Jefferson made these choices and what they can tell us about his fears and motives during this pivotal decade.

Chapters four and five cover Jefferson's presidency. He entered the office intent upon eradicating government protocol established during the administrations of Washington and Adams that to him appeared to mimic too closely British aristocracy and display a disparaging attitude toward those of the working classes. As a consequence, he often abandoned the formal and stately for an appearance that the political opposition branded as slovenly and supporters struggled to defend. His

anti-fashion appearance is the focus for the deconstruction of a second portrait by Rembrandt Peale. However, this was not the only side to Jefferson's presidential persona. Chapter 5 utilizes the portraits of Jefferson by the eminent artist, Gilbert Stuart, to discuss his alternate presentation of himself in the reliable black suit with hair well powdered. An additional portrait taken by Stuart at Jefferson's request is in the classic medallion style and the discussion of this work revolves around why it was important to Jefferson to appear in this classically Roman model. This portrait followed him on into retirement at Monticello, as he began contemplating his legacy along with the future of the nation.

The final chapter concentrates upon this issue of legacy, and Jefferson's concerns for a proper remembrance of his role in the nation's founding. He believed it important to the republican future of the country for the history of its founding to be correctly told and remembered. A visual contribution to his legacy was a commission for a full-length portrait placed with a rising American portrait artist, Thomas Sully, by the United States Military Academy at West Point. This final portrait created from studies made at Monticello becomes the focal point for a discussion of the issues from his public life that followed him into retirement and threatened his place in American history.

The portraits that support each chapter spanned a thirty-five year period and as will be argued, reflected Jefferson's determination to firmly establish the principles of self-government in the American republic. Throughout his public life and into his retirement he worked to keep active the ideology that inspired the American Revolution and that he gave form in the Declaration of Independence with the words that 'governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the governed'. The foundation of good government did not rest upon an aristocracy entitled only by the fortunes of birth but rather upon the power and natural rights of the people themselves. In one of his final letters written just ten days before his death, Jefferson still maintained that mankind was bound 'to assume the blessings and security of self-government' and that 'all eyes are opened, or opening, to the rights of man'.¹⁸ Yet his optimism was always tinged with the anxiety that this grand experiment in self-government could fail or be shaped into a less democratic model.

¹⁸ TJ to Roger C. Weightman, 24 June 1826, *TJW*, 1517.

He was constantly vigilant in defending the idea of self-government as a natural right and open to the participation by the people. This premise forms the basis of this study, which intends to show that within his major life portraits, he created an image that could be read by his contemporaries as supporting a democratic-republican ideology.¹⁹

Each chapter is organized around a specific Jefferson portrait that becomes the major reference for the chapter's discussion. The discussion extends from the Jefferson image itself, the artist, and the commission to placing that image against the larger socio-political and cultural issues that were of concern to Jefferson at the time. Portraits other than the primary work under consideration, whether of Jefferson or his contemporaries, are utilized in the discussion when they offer additional information and clarity. There is no attempt, however, at a comprehensive discussion of all known Jefferson life portraits, as this is not the objective of this study, plus the life works are admirably documented in the works of Fiske Kimball and Alfred Bush.²⁰ Rather I have selected portraits that are representative of the public face of Jefferson as executed by leading artists of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. These works are of a skill level to allow in-depth analysis, and the artists were of sufficient reputation to have made them notable to Jefferson's contemporaries.

There is always the final question of how the portrait was received by contemporaries. This has proved the more frustrating portion of this research. Americans in this early period of the republic were notably silent upon discussions of art. A very explicit example is offered by Graham Hood, former curator of the Governor's Palace at Colonial Williamsburg in Virginia. In his discussion of the full-length state portraits of *George III* and *Queen Charlotte* by Allan Ramsay, which were installed in the Governor's Palace in November 1768, he calculates that

¹⁹ Though the term 'democrat' was originally used pejoratively and often associated with mob rule, through Jefferson's career it changed into a more acceptable term. By 1816 Jefferson wrote, 'We of the United States, you know, are constitutionally & conscientiously democrats'. (TJ to Pierre Samuel du Pont de Nemours, 24 April 1816, *TJW*, 1385.) The system which he goes on to describe in this letter, however, is based upon both direct and indirect election of representatives. This thesis uses all three terms, 'republican', 'democrat', and 'democratic-republican' as seems most appropriate for the discussion.

²⁰ Fiske Kimball, *Life Portraits of Thomas Jefferson and Their Replicas* (Philadelphia, 1944) and Alfred L. Bush, *Life Portraits of Thomas Jefferson* (Charlottesville, VA, 1987).

within two years Virginia burgesses, faculty and students of William and Mary College, two neighbouring governors, and gentlemen and their ladies of the vicinity had opportunity and specific occasions upon which to see these portraits, which in Hood's opinion were far finer than anything else offered at this edge of the British empire. Nevertheless, Hood concludes, 'But from all those hundreds of viewers there has not, as far as I know, survived a single word of comment on them'.²¹ Nor has a comment or reference by Thomas Jefferson on these paintings come to light, despite the fact that as a young lawyer, he was moving in and out of Williamsburg with ample occasions to visit the Governor's Palace.

Granted this was during the colonial period, but the silence continued after the revolution and into the early republic. Alexis de Tocqueville remarked that in democracies, 'very refined consumers become rarer'.²² In his *Toward a National Taste*, J. Meredith Neil notes the 'American distrust of connoisseurs and technical jargon'.²³ In other works on the development of the fine arts in America, such as Neil Harris' *The Artist in American Society*, previously cited, the theme of art and the fear of luxury are explored.²⁴ The critical silence could be attributed to various factors, but there is an agreement among scholars writing on the topic that Americans in the early republic were not totally comfortable with the fine arts. When there is a contemporary reference to a Jefferson portrait, the extant remarks were usually limited to whether it was or was not a good likeness.

A study of portraits within American art history must begin with British portraiture, as the British school directly influenced what was being produced in America even after the Revolution. All of the American artists that created the primary portraits being used in this study trained in London, most under Anglo-American artist Benjamin West. Therefore original eighteenth-century writings lend critical insight into the contemporary thinking about the place and function of art. Significant to this study are the writings of early eighteenth century portrait artist and theorist Jonathan Richardson, the *Discourses* of Joshua Reynolds and even the

²¹ Graham Hood, 'Soul or Style? Questions about Early American Portraits', in *Portrait in Eighteenth-Century America*, 84-85.

²² de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, 442.

²³ J. Meredith Neil, *Toward a National Taste: America's Quest for Aesthetic Independence* (Honolulu, 1975), 116.

²⁴ Harris, *Artist in American Society*, especially Chapter 2.

early nineteenth-century comments on portraiture by William Hazlitt. These combined with recent scholarly works by British art historians such as Marcia Pointon, David Solkin, and Desmond Shawe-Taylor among others have formed an important scholarly base of reference.

Works specifically on the Jefferson portraits or even scholarship that places Jefferson within the arts are not numerous. The portraits of Jefferson that are used for this study have been documented by Fiske Kimball in his, *The Life Portraits of Jefferson and Their Replicas* published in 1962 and then later by Alfred L. Bush in *The Life Portraits of Thomas Jefferson* published first in 1962 and reprinted in 1987. In 1981 Jefferson biographer Noble Cunningham published *The Images of Thomas Jefferson in the Public Eye: Portraits of the People, 1801 – 1809*.²⁵ As the title suggests, Cunningham considered only representations of Jefferson during his presidential years and focused on popular delineations and ephemera, not the life portraits. These three works are invaluable in their identification of the life portraits and subsequent prints, providing dates and the provenance of each work. Yet their objectives were to identify and consider the art works but not to discuss them as vehicles of Jefferson political self-fashioning as is the goal of this thesis.

Two books that discuss Jefferson's involvement in the arts of early America are Eleanor D. Berman, *Thomas Jefferson Among the Arts* (1947), and a compilation of essays edited by William Howard Adams, *Jefferson and the Arts: An Extended View* (1976). These two works are excellent factual sources and valuable in their discussions of Jefferson's exposure to the arts both before and after his years in Europe. Other works, Neil Harris's *The Artist in American Society* (1966), and J. Meredith Neil's *Toward a National Taste* (1975) elaborate upon the discussion of the development of art in America, and Lillian B. Miller's *Patrons and Patriotism* (1966) addresses the arts as a part of America politics (though more in the mid-nineteenth century than the era of the early republic). Jefferson is mentioned in these discussions, but the purpose of each is a broader survey of the arts in America.²⁶

²⁵ Kimball, *Life Portraits*, Bush, *Life Portraits*, and Noble E. Cunningham, *Image of Thomas Jefferson in the Public Eye* (Charlottesville, VA, 1981).

²⁶ Eleanor Berman, *Thomas Jefferson Among the Arts* (New York, 1947); *Jefferson and the Arts: an Extended View*, ed. by William Howard Adams (Washington, 1976); Harris, *Artist in American Society*; Neil, *Toward a National Taste*.

One of the most recent collections of essays linking material culture and the political atmosphere of revolutionary and post-revolutionary America is *Shaping the Body Politic: Art and Political Formation in Early America*, edited by Maurie McInnis and Louis Nelson, published in 2011. Some of these essays are pertinent to the approach I am taking with my study of the Jefferson image, especially Paul Staiti's 'Gilbert Stuart's Presidential Imaginary'. Jefferson is mentioned, though Staiti discusses Stuart's portraits of Washington in more depth. Another relevant book published in 2011 is by Christopher J. Lukasik and titled *Discerning Characters: The Culture of Appearance in Early America*. The author uses image as a foundation for his discussion and introduces the eighteenth-century theories of physiognomy and how these were applied in portraiture but then relates his discussion in more detail to early American literature. Both of these works draw from some of the same historic sources that I call upon in my study; however, neither directs this toward a focused discussion of the Jefferson portrait within the early American political and social worlds. It is helpful, nevertheless, to observe the method used by other authors, and it is encouraging that both of these works indicate more recent interest in material culture as a means of broadening the understanding of the political and social issues that shaped the early American republic.

Just as the works on the arts within the early American republic are somewhat limited, scholarly sources on the political history are extensive and continue to expand. As to Jefferson specifically, the six volume biography by Dumas Malone, *Jefferson and His Times* (1948 – 1981) is still a standard reference. The works either written by or edited by Peter Onuf do not approach Jefferson so much biographically but are relevant to this study in their examination of Jefferson's political thought (1993 – 2011). The question of Jefferson's legacy was addressed first by Merrill Peterson in his *The Jefferson Image in the American Mind* (1960) and was followed by Francis D. Cogliano's *Thomas Jefferson: Reputation and Legacy* (2006). Two works which include chapters devoted to profiles of Jefferson are Bernard Bailyn's *To Begin the World Anew* (2004) with the chapter, 'Jefferson and the Ambiguities of Freedom' and Gordon Wood's *Revolutionary Characters* (2006) with his chapter, 'The Trials and Tribulations of Thomas Jefferson'. One of the latest works by Gordon Wood, *Empire for Liberty* (2009) devotes one chapter to

art in the early republic that presents a very comprehensive overview that supports the portion of this study that considers the place of art in early America.

In summation, this thesis seeks to reach a broader understanding of Thomas Jefferson's political vision and how he went about achieving his political goals through a study of the changing image in his life portraits. The portrait as propaganda was not new to Jefferson or his times, but the challenge here is to decipher its use by Jefferson and how the portrait served his democratic-republican vision.

CHAPTER 1: The European Experience and an Image for Diplomacy

Thomas Jefferson first arrived in Paris on 6 August 1784.¹ Here he entered a world that he had known only vicariously: through books, through a limited exposure to original works of art, and through the accounts of others either native to Europe or American visitors. As an American and particularly as a member of the Virginia gentry, he was accustomed to a culture that fashioned itself after the tastes of Europe and especially the mother country, England, but now he would be experiencing directly the larger world of western culture, the intelligentsia, the society and the art. As a young man he had dreamed fleetingly of the grand tour. That idea was put quietly aside with little comment, as he completed his studies at the College of William and Mary in his native Virginia and began the study of the law.² When he arrived in Europe in 1784 at age forty-one, it was not for the grand tour but rather a diplomatic assignment for the newly formed United States. He was to join fellow ministers, John Adams and Benjamin Franklin, already in Paris, to negotiate commercial treaties and explore potential political alliances.

The Old World would prove to be both fascinating and appalling; Jefferson would both applaud and criticize. He would forever weigh the merits of the young American republic against those of Europe and Britain. Politically, he had no reservations that the representative system of government launched in the new republic held the potential to prove far superior to the old monarchical regimes, but in the artistic and intellectual areas he took a more defensive position. For almost two hundred years America had been the frontier of Europe, and Jefferson recognized that the United States must consciously strive to approach the sophistication of these older, more established cultures.

The differences that Jefferson encountered between Old World and New World extended to personal appearance and decorum. The American ministers might

¹ Thomas Jefferson, *JMB*, I: 557.

² TJ to John Page, 20 January 1763, *PTJ*, 1: 7-9. For Jefferson's early life, see Malone: *Jefferson and His Time*, I: 1-8, 3-109.

complain among themselves, but ultimately they knew that they must meet the mandates of the courts of Versailles and Saint James. Jefferson's transition from provincial gentry to a suitably groomed and attired European cosmopolitan was recorded by two young American artists studying and working in London and Paris. He sat first for Mather Brown in London in the spring of 1786 (fig. 1.1), and late the following year his image was taken in Paris by John Trumbull as a study for what eventually became one of Trumbull's most outstanding large history paintings, *The Declaration of Independence*. Of interest here, however, are three small portraits that were produced from this study and given as gifts to two of Jefferson's close friends and to his eldest daughter (figs. 1.2, 1.3, & 1.4).

The following discussion maintains that Jefferson sought to manage a balance in his personal presentation. He was well aware that in order to function effectively in his diplomatic duties, he must adhere to the styles required at court, and as he desired to gain entry into the intellectual circles of Paris, he would be careful to present an appropriate figure there as well. Meanwhile, he wanted to uphold his position as a true and simple republican representing the new United States. This chapter looks at the means he used to achieve an image that could suit this dual objective and consults the portraits by Brown and Trumbull to study this American minister's approach to a cosmopolitan self-fashioning.

* * * * *

After a year in Paris, Jefferson wrote to a good friend in his native Virginia a lengthy letter that revealed his ambivalent response to the Europe he was experiencing for the first time. In his epistolary journal he lists this letter of 30 September 1785 to Charles Bellini as 'My view of Europe'.³ After opening pleasantries he launched into the main topic of his letter with an exclamation, 'Behold me at length on the vaunted scene of Europe!', then poses the question, 'But you are perhaps curious to know how this new scene has struck a savage of the mountains of America'. His answer was negative, 'Not advantageously I assure you. I find the general fate of humanity here most deplorable'. He invoked Voltaire's

³ TJ to Charles Bellini, 30 September 1785, *PTJ*, 8: 568-570.

observation that ‘every man here must be either the hammer or the anvil’. The disparity among classes of people would be a fault he would level against Europe throughout his life, and ignoring the institution of slavery in the United States, he would continue to claim in his letter to Bellini that the masses of Europe did not experience the ‘happiness which is enjoyed in America by every class of people’. He even criticized the European family structure and asserted that it did not afford the stability of that found in America. Then he suddenly changed tone: the savage had to admit to his awe of the ‘vaunted scene’.

Jefferson could not conceal his excitement in finally experiencing the intellectual and cultural atmosphere of Europe. He freely admitted that in science the literati led America by half a dozen years. And then there was the publication of books. He tried taking the position that America was lucky to have the lag time from publisher to book seller to allow the ‘swarm of nonsense’ to fall away, but fifteen crates of books followed him to America upon his return.⁴ Even the polite manners and the ‘pleasures of the table’ were commendable and something to be emulated in the United States. He concluded his summary to Bellini by enthusing, ‘Were I to proceed to tell you how much I enjoy their architecture, sculpture, painting, music, I should want words.’⁵

This letter was not the first instance in which Jefferson had described himself as a ‘savage’ and then claimed a preference for the woods and wilds of America to the brilliance of Europe. Throughout his five years of diplomatic service he would tout the new nation’s ‘honest simplicity’ as something ‘worthy of being cherished’, yet after four months at his post he admitted to James Monroe that ‘we are the lowest and most obscure of the whole diplomatic tribe’.⁶ Despite his republican professions, Jefferson’s diplomatic success depended on his being able to function effectively at a monarchical court. The need for diplomatic leverage combined with Jefferson’s personal drive for inclusion in the scientific and cultural circles of Europe required adherence to a long established decorum and a rigorous attention to

⁴ The invoice from the *emballieur*, Grevin, who packed Jefferson’s books, art, and household goods in Paris, lists crates 1 – 15 as ‘books’, per transcription in *PTJ*, 18:35.

⁵ TJ to Charles Bellini, 30 September 1785, *ibid.*, 8: 568-570, at 569.

⁶ TJ to Geismar, 6 September 1785, *ibid.*, 8: 499-500; TJ, ‘Hints to Americans Travelling in Europe’, *ibid.*, 13: 269-270; TJ to James Monroe, 11 November 1784, *ibid.*, 7: 512.

appearance. Jefferson might pose facetiously as a ‘savage’ in epistolary exchanges, but choices in clothing, accessories, and deportment, the elements of personal self-fashioning, would have to be balanced with European expectations if he were to realize his own ambitions and those he held for his country. The image that he would create as an American diplomat working and circulating within aristocratic circles is preserved in painted and sculpted portraits taken during his five years in Europe. These portraits reveal the image that Jefferson chose to put forward and how he managed to temper his provincial appearance with the polish of the European aristocracy yet without completely negating hints of his republican convictions.

Jefferson became aware quite quickly that he must function within a society that placed extraordinary emphasis upon social and physical appearance. German sociologist Norbert Elias in his influential study of *ancien régime* France, *The Court Society*, explains that rank was asserted through social display. Pre-revolutionary France was an absolutist society where the King alone ruled, and titles were often the King’s award. Land ownership was a source of income, not a source of power; therefore display of rank became a necessity for the elites. As Elias explains, ‘A duke who does not live as a duke has to live, who can no longer properly fulfil the social duties of a duke, is hardly a duke any longer’.⁷ Social demands on the French nobility were also felt by the diplomatic corps. Franklin, Adams, and Jefferson all expressed concerns over the costs associated with attendance on the French court during their tenures. Even Franklin, who famously created his own rustic, less formal style, could not completely escape the sartorial demands of court. ‘As the Article of clothes for ourselves here is necessarily much higher than if we were not in public Service’, he complained to Adams, ‘I submit it to your Consideration whether that Article ought not to be reckoned [*sic*] among Expenses for the Public. I know I had clothes enough at home to have lasted me my Lifetime in a Country where I was under small Necessity of following new Fashions’.⁸

⁷ Norbert Elias, *The Court Society*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (New York, 1983), 62-65, quote at 64.

⁸ Benjamin Franklin to John Adams, 26 September 1778, *Papers of John Adams*, ed. Robert J. Taylor, et al., 15 vols. (Cambridge, MA, 1977-2010), 7:79 ; *Benjamin Franklin’s Autobiographical Writings*, ed. Carl Van Doren, (New York, 1945), 454.

This imperative to look French was noted by Adams, who grumbled that, ‘the first Thing to be done, in Paris, is always to send for a Taylor, Peruke maker and Shoemaker’. He suspected a conspiracy on the part of the French court. ‘For this nation has established such a domination over the Fashion, that neither Cloaths, [*sic*] Wig nor Shoes made in any other Place will do in Paris. This is one of the Ways in which France taxes all Europe, and will tax America’, he predicted. ‘It is a great Branch of the Policy of the Court, to Preserve and increase this national Influence over the Mode, because it occasions an immense Commerce between France and all the other Parts of Europe’.⁹ Adams undoubtedly shared such observations with his family. In a similar vein, his wife Abigail wrote her sister in New England, ‘Fashion is the Deity everyone worships in this country and from the highest to the lowest you must submit’. Their young daughter Abigail, known in the family as ‘Nabby’, wrote in her journal, ‘There is no such thing here as preserving our taste in any thing; we must all sacrifice to custom and fashion’. Nabby saw proof of this in her own father. Even with his ‘firmness and resolution’, he adhered to the French fashion and was ‘a perfect convert to the mode in everything, at least of dress and appearance’.¹⁰

Jefferson must have been aware of these fashion expectations upon his arrival in Paris, and he proved just as willing as Adams to be a ‘convert to the mode’. His accounts show that on his first day in the French capital he purchased a pair of fine lace ruffles, the following day a hat and three days later a dress sword. Lace and sword were the marks of gentility; together with a formal hat, or *chapeau bras*, they were *derigeur* at the French court.¹¹ Before his first month in Paris ended, Jefferson had paid a sizeable amount for what he listed simply as ‘clothes’, in addition to itemized expenses for having shirts made, along with ruffles in both lace

⁹ John Adams, *Diary and Autobiography of John Adams*, ed. L.H. Butterfield, 4 vols. (Cambridge, MA, 1961), 3: 37.

¹⁰ Abigail Adams to Mary Smith Cranch, 5 September 1784, *Adams Family Correspondence*, ed. L.H. Butterfield, et al. 9 vols. (Cambridge, MA, 1963-2009), 5: 443; *Journal and Correspondence of Miss Adams, daughter of John Adams*, ed. her Daughter (New York, 1841), 14.

¹¹ Aileen Ribeiro, *Dress in Eighteenth-Century Europe 1715-1789* (New Haven, CT, 2002), 29-32. Ribeiro identifies the dress sword as, ‘a necessary mark of gentility in France’ but notes that it gave way to the cane in England earlier in the eighteenth century.

and cambric, shoes, stockings and buckles.¹² Thus began the ‘sacrifice to custom and fashion’ in the French style that Nabby Adams had observed in her own family.

Jefferson’s transition from provincial gentry to a suitably groomed and attired European cosmopolitan was recorded by two young American artists studying and working in London and Paris. He sat first for Mather Brown in London in the spring of 1786, (fig.1.1) and late the following year his image was taken in Paris by John Trumbull as a study for what eventually became one of Trumbull’s most outstanding large history paintings, *The Declaration of Independence of the United States of America, July 4th, 1776*. Trumbull used his study (figs. 1.5 & 1.5a) to produce three small portraits of Jefferson that were given as gifts to close friends and family (figs. 1.2, 1.3 & 1.4). The Brown and Trumbull portraits are the earliest known likenesses of Jefferson, and together they contribute to an understanding of how he used clothing as well as the portrait itself to craft his image.

Jefferson sat for Mather Brown during a trip to London in March and April 1786, having been summoned by his diplomatic colleague John Adams, who had been reassigned from Paris to London as the first minister from the United States to the court of St. James. Adams believed there was a favourable opportunity for negotiating a commercial treaty with Great Britain as well as meeting with emissaries from Portugal and Tripoli. Though ultimately the diplomatic negotiations proved unsuccessful, Jefferson seized the opportunity to explore London, its shops and theatres, and to join Adams in a brief excursion into the countryside for a study of English country houses and their gardens.¹³

When the Adams family arrived in the summer of 1785, Mather Brown was establishing himself in the London art market. He had his first portrait accepted in the annual exhibition of the Royal Academy in 1782 and apparently felt confident in soliciting the patronage of the new American minister and his family. By the time of

¹² *JMB*, I: 557-560.

¹³ *Diary and Autobiography of John Adams*, 3:182-83, n.2; for purchases while in London see *JMB*, 1:613-623; ‘Notes of a Tour of English Gardens,’ *PTJ*, 9: 369-375; a summary of Jefferson’s trip to London is found in Malone, *Jefferson and His Times*: 2: 50-63. Portions of the discussion of the Mather Brown portrait and Jefferson’s appearance in Europe appeared in Gaye Wilson and Elizabeth V. Chew, ‘Fashioning an American Diplomat: The Mather Brown Portrait of Thomas Jefferson’, in *Dress* 29 (2002): 19-25.

Jefferson's arrival, Brown had painted John Adams, Abigail and Nabby.¹⁴ It is not known who suggested that Jefferson sit for Brown, but it turned into a dual commission for the young artist. Jefferson commissioned his own portrait as well as an original of Adams, and Adams in turn requested copies of both portraits.¹⁵ Jefferson made little reference to his own portrait, but his stated purpose for that of Adams was 'to add it to those of other principal American characters which I have or shall have'.¹⁶

Following their war for independence, Jefferson and other leading American Patriots began to take interest in the well-established European tradition of collecting iconic representations of national heroes for public or semi-public display. 'Panthoons of worthies' featured those who had distinguished themselves through exceptional accomplishment and promotion of the public good. A 'Worthy' in eighteenth century public portraiture was not just the famous but one who had displayed a 'genius'; that pursued the public interest above his own, that acted with honour, integrity, and perhaps most importantly could possibly inspire this same 'virtue' in his contemporaries.¹⁷ Jonathan Richardson in his *Essay on the Theory of Painting* observed that 'To sit for one's picture, is to have an abstract of one's life written, and published, and ourselves thus consigned over to honour or infamy'. He mused, 'I know not what influence this has, or may have, but methinks 'tis rational to believe that pictures of this kind are subservient to virtue: that men are excited to imitate the good actions, and persuaded to shun the vices of those whose examples are thus set before them.' This produced greater expectations from portrait artists, as Richardson explained, 'It is not enough to make a tame insipid resemblance of the features, so that every body [*sic*] shall know who the picture was intended for, nor even to make the picture what is often said to be prodigious like. . . . A portrait painter must understand mankind, and enter into their characters, and express their minds as well as their faces.'¹⁸

¹⁴ Dorinda Evans, *Mather Brown: Early American Artist in England* (Middletown, CT, 1982), 26, 42-46.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 62-63.

¹⁶ TJ to William Stephens Smith, 22 October 1786, *PTJ*, 10: 479.

¹⁷ Fortune, 'Portraits of Virtue', 1-3, 34; the concept of painting and public virtue is discussed in Barrell, *Political Theory of Painting*, 18-23.

¹⁸ Richardson, *Works of Jonathan Richardson*, 10, 13.

Portraiture had grown in popularity in Britain through the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Some art historians are confident in saying it was the most important art form in Britain and thus in America as well, as the art in the colonies was closely tied to that of the mother country. Even after independence art in the early republic continued to be influenced by the British School.¹⁹ The purposes of portrait art varied. From Britain's wealthy and aristocratic elite to America's planters and merchants, private family portraits were records of ancestry and not meant for a general public. These could lend status and signify economic and social position, but their primary purpose was to illustrate or commemorate the individual and the family, not necessarily to inspire.²⁰ But art displayed in public spaces to honour notable figures existed for other purposes and can be traced back to the traditions of Greece and Rome with statuary that immortalized rulers and military leaders. It was during the Italian Renaissance that collections of portraits began to be put forward as statements of virtue.²¹ This went further with the Enlightenment, as men of science and letters began to be included alongside the political and military figures. It was in the spirit of enlightenment thinking that Pantheons of Worthies began to represent those who exhibited qualities that in some way benefited mankind.²²

Jefferson's collection kept to these established precedents and eventually contained either painted or sculpted portraits of men that had in some way contributed to the history of the New World and the American Republic in particular. He began his collection as he was preparing to leave the United States for Europe with a hurriedly commissioned portrait of George Washington from American artist Joseph Wright working in Philadelphia. Wright had time to complete the head only and indicate drapery before Jefferson sailed for Paris. The background and uniform were completed two years later by artist John Trumbull.²³

¹⁹ Robin Simon, *Portrait in Britain and America* (Oxford, 1987), 6 & 9; Pointon, *Hanging the Head*, 2 & 4.

²⁰ Wayne Craven, *Colonial American Portraiture* (Cambridge, UK, 1986), 179-182.

²¹ Ellen G. Miles, 'Portraits of the Heroes of Louisbourg, 1745-1751' *American Art Journal* 15, no. 1 (Winter, 1983): 49.

²² Fortune, 'Portraits of Virtue', 7-11.

²³ *JMB*, 1:550, entry under May 28, see also n. 40; Francis Hopkinson to TJ, 30 May 1784, *PTJ*, 7: 295; TJ to Francis Hopkinson, 6 July 1785, *ibid.*, 8: 262; Monroe H. Fabian, *Joseph Wright: American Artist, 1756-1793* (Washington, DC, 1985), 101-106.

The idea that images of notable men contributed to national honour and the education of its citizenry was widely shared. An example was the reaction of Joseph Wright's mother, Patience Wright, an artist herself who had gained a reputation in London as a sculptor of waxworks. Excited by what she had heard of the likeness her son Joseph had taken of George Washington, she sought Jefferson's assistance in 'honouring our country, by holding up the likenesses of her eminent men, either in painting or wax-work'.²⁴ Jefferson showed little enthusiasm for Patience Wright's proposed waxworks and does not appear to have responded to her letter with an invitation to Paris as she had hoped, but he continued to add to his collection with more painted and sculpted likenesses of worthy republicans.

He would add a painted portrait of Benjamin Franklin purchased from French painter and art dealer, Jean Valade, which is obviously a copy of the well-known fur collared portrait by Joseph Silfrède Duplessis.²⁵ A series of very fine sculpted bust portraits by the acclaimed French sculptor Jean-Antoine Houdon formed an important part of his collection. He was presented a plaster of the Revolutionary War naval commander, John Paul Jones, by the subject and then obtained busts of George Washington and Benjamin Franklin. Jefferson was responsible for arranging a full-length statue of Washington and a bust of Lafayette for the State of Virginia, both by Houdon and acquired a plaster of the Lafayette for himself.²⁶

His own image was taken by Houdon early in 1789 before he left Paris for America. (figs. 1.6 & 1.6a) The resulting bust portrait was exhibited at the Paris salon which opened on 25 August 1789, almost a month exactly before Jefferson's departure on September 26th. This allowed Jefferson an opportunity to view the bust on display and read the salon review that congratulated Houdon on an excellent likeness and stated, 'M. Houdon. . .distinguished himself in the portrait of M. Jefferson, expressing his lively and witty character.'²⁷ From a remark by Jefferson

²⁴ Patience Wright to TJ, 14 August 1785, *PTJ*, 8: 380; for Patience Wright, her art and politics, see Wendy Bellion, 'Patience Wright's Transatlantic Bodies', in *Shaping the Body Politic: Art and Political Formation in Early America*, eds. Maurie D. McInnis and Louis P. Nelson (Charlottesville, VA, 2011), 15-46.

²⁵ *JMB*, I: 638, 10 September 1786 'payment to 'Valade for picture'. See also, *ibid.*, n. 62.

²⁶ Anne L. Poulet, *Jean-Antoine Houdon: Sculptor of the Enlightenment* (Chicago, 2003), 247-272.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 271.

many years later, it is assumed that Houdon made a life mask, as he so often did for his busts and as he had done of Washington, which could account for the reports of a good likeness.²⁸ Jefferson included his own sculpted bust portrait among those that were shipped to the United States with his other belongings, and the Houdon became a lasting prototype for the Jefferson image that later appeared on medals and coins.²⁹

Jefferson began to extend his collection beyond just American revolutionary heroes to include those who had in some way affected the history of the New World. Through Philip Mazzei, a former neighbour in Virginia who had avidly supported the early revolutionary efforts then had returned to Italy, Jefferson acquired copies from the Uffizi in Florence of painted portraits of the early explorers who had first made contact with the New World. He was satisfied with the works he received and wrote, 'I was much gratified to receive yesterday [11 January 1789] from Italy the portraits of Columbus, Americus Vespucci[s], Cortez, and Magellan'. He continued, 'Observing by the list of the pictures in the gallery of the Grand duke at Florence that these were there, I sent to have them copied. they appear to be well done'.³⁰ On a tour of English gardens with John Adams, he had seen a portrait of the early colonizer of Virginia, Sir Walter Raleigh, in Birmingham and used Adams's son-in-law, William Stephens Smith, to act as his agent in securing a copy.³¹ To Jefferson these particular portraits were important in that they represented American history. Their inclusion indicates that he projected a purpose for the collection he was building beyond filling the walls of his Paris residence. Years later he commented that 'I considered it as even of some public concern that our country should not be without the portraits of its first discoverers'.³²

These art works would eventually follow him back to America, where his was not the only collection in the early republic, but it was notable for its scope.

²⁸ TJ to James Madison, 18 October 1825, *Writings of Thomas Jefferson*, ed. Albert Ellery Bergh (Washington, DC, 1907), 19: 287.

²⁹ The Jefferson image on medals and coins created during his presidency will be discussed in Chapter 5 of this thesis. Anne Poulet in *Jean-Antoine Houdon*, cited above, stated that Houdon was the source for the image on the Jefferson dollar minted in 1903 and for the obverse image of the American nickel, first minted in 1938.

³⁰ TJ to John Trumbull, 12 January 1789, *PTJ*, 14: 440; for the commissions from the Uffizi see TJ to Philip Mazzei, 17 October 1787, *ibid.*, 12: 245,

³¹ TJ to William Stephens Smith, 22 October 1786, *ibid.*, 10: 479.

³² For Jefferson's commission of the Raleigh portrait see TJ to William Stephens Smith, 22 October 1786, *ibid.*, 10: 478-479; Jefferson's quote, '...portraits of its first discoverers' is in TJ to Joseph Delaplaine, 3 May 1814, *PTJ:RS*, 7: 340.

Jefferson's collection included not only recognizable American leaders but portraits of those who had favourably supported the American cause or whose thinking reflected the liberties believed inherent in republican government. From Houdon he obtained plaster copies of busts of French economist and American supporter, Turgot, and noted writer and *philosophe*, Voltaire. He felt he could not leave Europe without portraits of, 'the three greatest men that have ever lived, without any exception', Francis Bacon, John Locke and Isaac Newton, and so commissioned copies of their portraits that hung in London's Royal Society. He wished to have these portraits copied into a large oval that he estimated would measure between four and five feet. Jefferson felt that linking these three men together visually would emphasize their superiority, 'I would wish to form them into a knot on the same canvas, that they may not be confounded at all with the herd of other great men'.³³ He was dissuaded from this plan by artist John Trumbull, who served as his agent in London and would see the commission executed.

Jefferson stated his philosophy toward collecting portraits: 'Like public records, I make them free to be copied. . . .I wish them to be multiplied for safe preservation, and consider them as worthy a place in every collection'. His intent as a collector was didactic. These works were important not so much as art but as icons of American history.³⁴

The collection Jefferson was building in Paris was semi-private, as his position as American minister made these portraits available to a variety of visitors. After assuming his duties as minister plenipotentiary, he moved to the Hôtel de Langeac on the Champs Elysées, where he also conducted official business. Here he received Americans who were stranded abroad or in need of passports as well as affluent young Americans such as William and Anne Bingham, Thomas Lee Shippen and John Rutledge Jr. on their grand tour. Many of his European visitors were aristocratic, educated, well-travelled, and sophisticated enough to understand

³³ TJ to John Trumbull, 15 February 1788, *PTJ*, 14: 561.

³⁴ TJ to Joseph Delaplaine, 3 May 1814, *PTJ:RS* 7: 341.

the message intended in a collection of American portraits placed alongside those of notable Europeans, past and present.³⁵

As Jefferson assembled these painted and sculpted portraits of notables, there is nothing to indicate that he included his own image. As just discussed, the sculpted bust portrait by Houdon was not completed until just before he returned to the United States, and he may or may not have initiated that commission. The first known instance in which Jefferson attempted to procure a formal portrait of himself came about on a trip to London in 1786. Through the Adams family he engaged a young American artist, Mather Brown, who had been busy taking portraits of John Adams, Abigail and Nabby. If indeed Jefferson's intent was for this portrait to be displayed among his growing collection of 'worthies' and available for viewing by a diverse audience, it made sense for him to work closely with Brown in choosing the clothing, the pose and the props needed to create an appropriate image.

Mather Byles Brown was a native of Boston, born 7 October 1761, and was related through his mother to the prominent Mather and Byles families of Harvard-educated Congregationalist ministers. His father was a prosperous clock-maker but following his mother's death, he was sent to live with his Byles grandparents. Though not a family of artists, his grandfather had a close friendship with John Singleton Copley, and grandson Mather was exposed to the work of Copley, as the family owned two of his portraits. Mather Brown claimed to have had drawing lessons from Gilbert Stuart during Stuart's brief residence in Boston prior to his leaving for London, and it is almost certain that Brown knew John Trumbull in Boston, as they had mutual acquaintances.³⁶ Brown began painting miniature portraits while still in America and apparently was good enough to earn his passage to England. He arrived in London via Paris, where he had spent two months with a good friend of his grandfather's, Benjamin Franklin, who introduced him at Versailles and provided him a letter of recommendation to the acclaimed Anglo-American artist Benjamin West. Brown arrived in the British capital in April 1781 to

³⁵ The various visitors to the American legation are discussed in Howard C. Rice, Jr., *Thomas Jefferson's Paris* (Princeton, NJ, 1976), 53-54 and in Marie Kimball, *Jefferson: The Scene of Europe 1784-1789* (New York, 1950), 93, 105.

³⁶ Evans, *Mather Brown*, 3-5; meeting with Stuart 9-10; acquaintance with Trumbull 12.

begin his studies. Before long he could declare, 'I will let them see, if an obscure yankey Boy cannot Shine as great as any of them'.³⁷

Brown depicted Jefferson as elegant, formal, and aristocratic enough in clothing and grooming yet surrounded with objects that placed him within a context of clearly republican ideology (fig.1.1). Jefferson wears a dark untrimmed coat over a light striped waistcoat and shirt with a double ruffled jabot. His coat is cut in the 'frock' style that originated in England and then made its way to France. This garment was notable for reversing the traditional trickle-down movement of fashion from the elite to the lower classes. By the end of the eighteenth-century the frock coat was sartorially associated with democratic levelling tendencies in fashionable society.

The coat gained entry into the English gentleman's wardrobe for informal country wear, especially sporting occasions, early in the eighteenth century. (figs. 1.7 & 1.8) Through the years the term 'frock' had been applied to a variety of men's outer garments and in its earliest usage referred to either a monk's habit or a loose tunic or coat worn by the laity. By the beginning of the eighteenth century the term 'frock' generally referred to the coat worn by men of England's working classes. It could be distinguished from the gentleman's formal dress coat by the loose cut of the body, lack of trim, and the use of utilitarian fabrics. The most notable feature was the turned-down collar, which served the practical function of buttoning up over the throat in inclement weather. As it gained popularity and acceptability, the fit became more exact, requiring finer wool adaptable for tailoring, but the coat retained its turned-down collar. By the 1780s the collar had increased in height to match that of the formal coat but still retained the turned-down shape and the sleeves followed the fashionable trend of a slimmer cut with narrow cuffs or a vertical opening.³⁸

The frock came to represent the English way of life, even encompassing social and political thought. An English traveller wrote in 1752 that while visiting

³⁷ Ibid., 13-16; quote 42, from Mather Brown Correspondence, Massachusetts Historical Society in Boston, 24 July 1784.

³⁸ For origin of the term 'frock' see the *Oxford English Dictionary*, 2nd ed., s.v. 'frock' and C. Willett and Phillis Cunnington, *Handbook of English Costume in the Eighteenth Century*, 2nd ed. (London, 1972). Two of the best sources for the development of the frock coat are Cunnington, 16-20, 193-203, and Nora Waugh, *The Cut of Men's Clothes* (London, 1964), 53-54.

Paris and dressed in the formal French style, 'I frequently sighed for my little loose Frock, which I look upon as an Emblem of our happy Constitution; for it lays a Man under no uneasy Restraint, but leaves it in his Power to do as he pleases'.³⁹

However, with the loss of the American colonies and with revolution against the monarchy in France, some British aristocrats began to view the growing informality in dress represented by the frock with scepticism. Lord Glenbervie wrote in his journal of 1794 that 'for these last three or four years, if a man has been to Court he cannot go. . .to dine out or to an assembly without putting on a frock'. He went on to speculate how this had removed barriers leading to 'levelling and equalising notions'.⁴⁰

The frock was introduced into France by fashion-conscious young men and reflected a more general vogue for things English, from the constitution to the customs of country life. The interest in English-style men's clothing was sparked by France's own changing political and social atmosphere in the last quarter of the century. Looking back from 1816, the comte de Ségur reflected in his *Memoirs* that 'The laws of England were studied and envied by men of a mature age; English horses and jockeys, boots and coats after the English fashion, could alone suit the fancy of young men'. Before leaving France, Nabby Adams noted that 'the beaux in this country aim very much at the English dress'.⁴¹

Jefferson was conscious of this change in fashion and its relationship to politics. 'In Society the *habit habillé* is almost banished', he observed in 1787, 'and they begin to go even to great supper in frock: the court and diplomatic corps however must always be excepted. They are too high to be reached by any improvement'. He added, 'They are the last refuge from which etiquette, formality and folly will be driven. Take away these and they would be on a level with other people'.⁴² Whether or not the Anglophobic Jefferson was aware of the origins of the frock, his comment indicates his endorsement of its fashionable advance in France and the levelling process it signalled.

³⁹ Arthur Murphy, *The Grey's-Inn Journal*, 1752 as quoted in Waugh, *Cut of Men's Clothes*, 105 and Geoffrey Squire, *Dress and Society, 1560-1970* (New York, 1974), 125.

⁴⁰ Waugh, *ibid.*, 110 and Geoffrey Squire, *ibid.*

⁴¹ A.J.P. de Ségur, *Memoirs* as quoted in Aileen Ribeiro, *Fashion in the French Revolution* (London, 1988), 39. Miss Abigail Adams, *Journal and Correspondence*, 63.

⁴² TJ to David Humphreys, 14 August 1787, *PTJ*, 12: 32.

The coat that Jefferson wore for the Brown portrait appears to be a French version of the frock as no buttons or buttonholes are visible. A former curator of the Musée de la Mode et du Costume in Paris, Madeleine Delpierre, identified the French *frac* as, ‘men’s coat in the English style, informal, loose-fitting, and without buttons or pockets’.⁴³ Common to the English frock in the 1780s were flat, decorative metal buttons reaching below the waist and at the sleeve, either in a vertical row or edging the top of a small cuff, as in Brown’s companion portrait of John Adams completed in 1788 (fig. 1.9). No buttons are visible on Jefferson’s coat, plus a survey of his accounting records does not indicate purchases of coats other than those from Parisian tailors. This was prior to the Houdon sculpted bust of Jefferson, yet both works of art verify that Jefferson continued to prefer the French style *frac* without buttons. (figs. 1.1 & 1.6)

Jefferson did set up an account with a London tailor, Robert Cannon, shortly after his arrival in the city. Extant invoices from Robert Cannon and Jefferson’s records of payment show purchases of waistcoats and breeches. In fact, it is possible that the elegant white-and-gold-striped waistcoat Jefferson wears in the Brown portrait was made by Cannon, as his invoice of March 14, 1786, three days after Jefferson’s arrival in London, included a charge for ‘making a waistcoat Silk Strip’d Compleat’ along with two pair of breeches. The choice of stripes showed fashion awareness, whether on the part of Jefferson or of his London tailor, as the curvilinear shapes of the rococo were giving way to the straight lines of the neoclassical. Jefferson continued to order waistcoats and breeches from Cannon during the remainder of his stay in London and even after his return to Paris, but the orders never included coats.⁴⁴ For Jefferson this major body garment remained French in both style and origin.

For Brown’s portrait Jefferson’s hair was dressed and heavily powdered in a style that reflected the formality of the French court. That Jefferson chose to have

⁴³ Madeleine Delpierre, *Dress in France in the Eighteenth Century*, trans. Carolie Beamish (New Haven, CT, 1997), 165; see also Jacques Ruppert, *Le Costume Époques Louis XVI et Directoire* (Paris, 1990), 9; per Ruppert ‘Il y a des fracs sans boutons’.

⁴⁴ Robert Cannon invoices, 14 March, 1 and 24 April 1786, Thomas Jefferson Papers, Special Collections, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Virginia; Jefferson’s records show payments to three different Parisian tailors between the dates of his arrival in Paris in August 1784 and his London visit in March-April 1786. Most are not itemized, but one, a payment to ‘Lonpry, the tailor’, lists payment for a coat at seventy-two francs, *JMB* 1: 563-606.

his own hair dressed with pomatum and then powdered rather than wearing a wig was noted by Abigail Adams. Jefferson's 'hair too is an other (*sic*) affliction which he is tempted to cut off', she reported to her American relatives. 'He expects not to live above a dozen years & he shall loose (*sic*) one of those in hair dressing'.⁴⁵ In addition, Jefferson's accounts show no purchases of wigs but rather a reimbursement to his *valet de chambre* for 'apparatus for shaving & combing' and for pomatum.⁴⁶ Adrienne Petit, who would be promoted to *maitre d'hôtel* following their return to Paris, accompanied Jefferson to England as his valet, and it could be assumed that he would have assisted with shaving and hairdressing. Jefferson's account records would corroborate as there were no payments made while in London for shaving or hairdressing and only one payment to a hairdresser while on the tour of the English countryside with Adams ---apparently Petit remained in London. If indeed Petit was acting as Jefferson's personal servant, it could account for his hair being dressed somewhat higher and fuller in the Brown portrait, somewhat more in the French style than was Adams's in the companion portrait (see figs. 1.1 & 1.9).

Because Jefferson's self-fashioning for the portrait created a very aristocratic image suitable for a European society, it was left to the pose and props to add republican elements. Jefferson's hand rests upon a parchment, and though the document cannot be identified, such a prop was often used to indicate a scholar or statesman and in this case undoubtedly referred to Jefferson's contributions to American political and scientific thought. There has been much speculation as to how well Jefferson's writing was known in Britain and Europe at this point in his public career. His 'Summary View of the Rights of British Americans' and his authorship of the Declaration of Independence are two documents that link his radical thinking and the revolutionary movement in America, but there is not an agreement among scholars as to how broadly his authorship was known, especially of the Declaration. He was very pleased that his Statute for Religious Freedom for the State of Virginia had been published in Europe in several languages, and he reported to James Madison in a letter of 16 December 1786, 'The Virginia act for religious freedom has been received with infinite approbation in Europe and

⁴⁵ Abigail Adams to Cotton Tufts, 8 September 1784, *Adams Family Correspondence*, 5: 458.

⁴⁶ *JMB*, I: 560, 563.

propagated with enthusiasm. . . .It has been translated into French and Italian. . . .It is inserted in the new Encyclopedie, and is appearing in most of the publications respecting America.’⁴⁷ In addition he was gaining recognition for his *Notes on the State of Virginia* and used his trip to arrange publication of his work with London publisher John Stockdale. This would supplant the few copies Jefferson had published in the United States before leaving and had given as gifts and the French version, with which he was never really satisfied.

An even more overt republican icon than the papers is the statue of the Goddess of Liberty that stands behind Jefferson. The statue is identifiable by her antique dress and staff supporting the *pileus* or liberty cap. This symbol of *libertas* dates from the classical world and became a popular icon in Europe and the colonies after Johann Joachim Winckelmann published his archaeological findings in his *Versuch einer Allegorie* in 1766. In Roman rituals freeing slaves from bondage, the slave would be touched by the staff and then given the cap, a symbol of freedom. By the mid-eighteenth century the goddess with staff and cap or just the cap and staff alone began to appear on both sides of the Atlantic. In 1767 Charles Willson Peale used the icon in a commissioned portrait of the great British statesman and friend of America William Pitt. When Franklin, Adams, and Jefferson considered designs for the Seal of the United States in July 1776, the Liberty Goddess with staff and cap was included in all their proposals. Although their designs were not adopted, the Liberty Goddess was incorporated into the Great Seal of Virginia, appearing on the reverse side. The symbol was well known to Jefferson, and including it in his portrait underscored his association with the recent triumph of liberty in America.⁴⁸

Jefferson had to wait two years to receive his portrait and the new portrait of Adams from Brown. As the Adams family prepared to return to the United States, Jefferson’s correspondence with Adams’s son-in-law, William Stephens Smith, became more anxious. ‘Remember Mr. Adam’s picture’, Jefferson wrote Smith, ‘When they shall be ready, I would wish to receive them with my own which Mr.

⁴⁷ *PTJ*, 10: 603-04.

⁴⁸ David Hackett Fischer, *Liberty and Freedom: A Visual History of America’s Founding Ideas* (Oxford, 2005), 6, 41-42, 97-103; Yvonne Korshak, ‘The Liberty Cap as a Revolutionary Symbol in America and France’, in *Smithsonian Studies in American Art* (Fall 1987): 53-69; Jennifer Harris, ‘The Red Cap of Liberty: A Study of Dress Worn by French Revolutionary Partisans 1789-94’, in *Eighteenth Century Studies* 14, no. 3 (1981): 283-312.

Brown has'. Shortly thereafter, Jefferson wrote again, 'I must remind you also of Mr. Adams's picture, as I should be much mortified should I not get it done before he leaves Europe'. In March 1788 Smith could at last report that Brown had begun the Adams portrait, 'Brown is busy about the pictures. Mr. Adams is like. Yours I do not think so well of'. Jefferson's secretary William Short agreed with Smith's opinion that the 'picture by Brown of Mr. Adams is an excellent likeness; that of Mr. Jefferson is supposed by everybody here to be an *étude*'. In September 1788 Jefferson wrote that 'the pictures are received in good condition' but then made no further comment.⁴⁹

Brown's portrait of Adams may have been hurriedly done, but it was considered a good likeness (fig. 1.9). His matching coat and waistcoat, though subdued in colour, were stylish by London standards, with fashionable metal buttons, the high collar of the frock coat and the slimness of the sleeve with a vertical vent in the small cuff. The jabot on the front of Adams's shirt is far less elaborate than the double-fluted ruffle in Jefferson's portrait, yet the ruffle at Adams's wrist appears to be of very fine, lightweight linen edged with narrow lace that is obviously of high quality. His wig or hairdressing is formal, but in being dressed closer to the head and powdered only to a grey tone, it gives a more conservative appearance than Jefferson's in Mather Brown's portrait. In fact, these two companion portraits allow a comparison of the subtleties in men's clothing, accessories, and hairdressing that distinguished the French style from the English. It could be wondered if Jefferson appeared in London and at St. James's looking too French and thus flaunting his preference in foreign relations. If so, it should not be surprising that he was snubbed by George III. Recalling his presentation at the English court, Jefferson remembered with some bitterness in his autobiography that 'on my presentation as usual to the King and Queen at their levees, it was impossible for anything to be more ungracious than their notice of Mr. Adams & myself'.⁵⁰ However, at court the English still clung to the full-dress *habit habillé* despite their taste for simplicity in men's clothing otherwise, and so it may have been more than

⁴⁹ TJ to William Stephens Smith, 19 February 1781, *PTJ*, 11: 169; TJ to Smith, 31 December 1787, *ibid.*, 12: 484; remark by William Short regarding the portraits is from Bush, *Life Portraits of Thomas Jefferson*, 4; portraits received, TJ to John Trumbull, 10 September 1788 in *PTJ*, 13: 597.

⁵⁰ Thomas Jefferson, 'Autobiography, 1743-1790,' in *TJW*, 56.

his French appearance that distanced George III, yet appearance could have been a contributing factor.⁵¹

Like Jefferson, Adams is shown with a sheaf of papers and is seated in front of a deep red drape. There is a notable difference in props, however, as the Goddess of Liberty has been replaced with books. The title on the spine clearly visible reads *Jefferson's / Hist. Of/ Virginia*. When the Adams family left France for their new post in London, Jefferson had presented them with a copy of his recently published *Notes on the State of Virginia*. Adams predicted that *Notes* would bring honour to both the author and his country. The obvious reference to the work in the Adams portrait was a tribute to its recipient and a testimonial to viewers of Jefferson's collection of Worthies at his Paris residence of his own contribution to Enlightenment literature. In so doing, Adams was aligning himself with specifically American enlightenment thought. As his initial sitting for Mather Brown took place the year before Adams began publication of his lengthy work, *A Defence of the Constitutions of Government of the United States of America*, Jefferson could be excused for not reciprocating the gesture.

It is interesting that Jefferson made no comment on the portraits once they were finally received. It can be assumed that both hung in his Paris residence that also served as the American legation; however, the ultimate fate of his own portrait by Brown is unknown. In his catalogue of the paintings that hung at Monticello, compiled in Jefferson's own hand between the years 1809 and 1815, the only listing by Mather Brown is the *Adams* that hung in the upper tier of paintings in Monticello's parlour along with the portraits of Newton, Bacon, Locke and other illustrious 'worthies'.⁵² A reproduction of Brown's *Jefferson* was not created until 1860, and this was taken from the portrait belonging to the Adams family. This has lead Alfred Bush to comment in his *Life Portraits of Thomas Jefferson* that Mather Brown's portrait played only a peripheral role in establishing Jefferson's public image.⁵³ Perhaps an image appropriate for European courts, even when allied with

⁵¹ Philip Mansel, *Dressed to rule: Royal and Court Costume from Louis XIV to Elizabeth II* (New Haven, CT, 2005), 64.

⁵² Thomas Jefferson, 'Catalogue of Paintings &c. at Monticello, c.1809-15', Thomas Jefferson Papers, Special Collections, University of Virginia Library; a transcription is published in Susan R. Stein, *Worlds of Thomas Jefferson at Monticello*, (New York, 1993), 434-436.

⁵³ Bush, *Life Portraits of Thomas Jefferson*, 4.

republican iconography, was questionable for an American audience. Certainly a better likeness would be taken by another young American artist studying in London.

Jefferson was introduced to John Trumbull during his London visit in the spring of 1786, and they soon developed a friendship that would prove to be of mutual advantage. Jefferson was thirteen years older than Trumbull and held the prestigious position of minister plenipotentiary to France, while Trumbull was in London to study painting with Benjamin West. However, both men were of prominent American families; Jefferson a representative of the Virginia gentry and Trumbull from a leading Connecticut family, and both were well-educated. Yet there was an even stronger commonality between them that revolved around their personal involvement in the recent American Revolution. This shared history was important to them as individuals, but they also believed it to be an event that would prove its importance to the entire western world. The events of the Revolution must be correctly recorded and preserved.⁵⁴

Trumbull's involvement in the Revolution was through his service in the Continental army. As a New Englander, he had been close to the beginnings of conflict and had observed the Battle of Bunker's Hill through a field glass. In his own words he 'caught the growing enthusiasm' and through family connections, was made an aide-de-camp to General Washington. He was soon appointed to the rank of Colonel but became frustrated when Congress was slow in authorizing and then misdated his field appointment. He resigned abruptly and returned to the study of painting. This impatience and quickness to feel that his honour had been slighted would reappear from time to time and ultimately would colour his relationship with Jefferson. But he retained his title of 'Colonel' and his ardour for the American cause.⁵⁵

It is not surprising that when he launched his ambitious project of painting scenes from the recent war, Trumbull's first subject was *Bunker's Hill*. He wrote to

⁵⁴ Helen A. Cooper, *John Trumbull: The Hand and Spirit of a Painter* (New Haven, CT, 1982), 2-19. For Jefferson's views on American history and his concern for his place in that history, see Frank D. Cogliano, *Thomas Jefferson: Reputation and Legacy* (Charlottesville, VA., 2006), especially Chapter 2.

⁵⁵ Cooper, *Hand and Spirit of a Painter*, 2-4 and Irma B. Jaffe, *John Trumbull: Patriot-Artist of the American Revolution* (Boston, 1975), 27-29.

a friend in New England that he intended writing ‘the History of our country’ but in his own ‘language’, that of the brush.⁵⁶ Trumbull was in London studying at the studio of Benjamin West, an American, who nevertheless was court painter to George III and famous for his history paintings. Trumbull agreed with the premise that depicting heroic scenes from history was the noblest form of art and expressed to his brother, Jonathan Trumbull, his wishes to move beyond the necessity of portrait painting as a means of financial support. Success as a history painter offered freedom from ‘all the trumpery & caprice & nonsense of mere coping faces---& places me the servant not of Vanity but Virtue’.⁵⁷ But heroic scenes still required faces, and ultimately he would devote much time and attention to collecting accurate likenesses, clothing details, and suggestions of character.

Trumbull was finishing his first two paintings of the series he would call his ‘national enterprise’, *The Death of General Warren at the Battle of Bunker’s Hill* and *The Death of General Montgomery at the Battle of Quebec*, and was working upon ideas for three more battle scenes before he visited Jefferson in Paris in the summer of 1786. Upon his return to London that November, his energy had been redirected into a new painting, *The Declaration of Independence*. How much did Jefferson influence this switch from battles to events; from military officers to political statesmen? (fig. 1.5)

In his *Autobiography* Trumbull included considerable detail of his first trip to France. He described Jefferson as having ‘a taste for the fine arts’ and was flattered that his work received Jefferson’s ‘warm approbation’. Then he simply stated that ‘during my visit, I began the composition of the Declaration of Independence, with the assistance of his information and advice’. A part of this information was a diagram drawn by Jefferson from memory of the hall in which the Congress had met while debating the issue of separation from Great Britain. On the extant pen and ink and pencil drawing, Trumbull had noted, ‘done by Mr. Jefferson--Paris 1786: to convey an Idea of the Room in which congress sat, at the

⁵⁶ John Trumbull to Andrew Elliot, 4 March 1786, in Cooper, *Hand and Spirit of a Painter*, 31.

⁵⁷ John Trumbull to Jonathan Trumbull, Jr., 18 January 1785, in Oswaldo Rodriguez Roque, ‘Trumbull’s Portraits’, in Cooper, *Hand and Spirit of a Painter*, p. 98.

Declaration of Independence on the ground floor of the old state house in Philadelphia. . . first Idea of Declaration of Independence Paris Sept. 1786'.⁵⁸

Declaring American independence and the resulting document was of special importance to Thomas Jefferson. He strongly felt this event would forever mark history and cherished his central role. He wished to be recognized for what he believed was his unique contribution as the primary author of the document. In the final years of his life he would boldly claim authorship and even have inscribed on his gravestone, 'Author of the Declaration of Independence', but this was after two terms as United States president and a long life of supporting the American experiment, when he could claim a position as a 'Founder' and as one of the American 'Argonauts'. In the summer of 1786, he was an United States minister to an important European court and was gaining recognition as a leader, as an Enlightenment thinker and writer but still was not as recognizable as a Washington or a Franklin. As a gentleman and therefore a man of virtue, he could not promote his own heroic deeds, but he could encourage a young and upcoming artist to create a visual record.

On Trumbull's return visit to Paris, he painted a sketch of Jefferson into his small study. He had already included an image of John Adams prior to the Adams family's return to the United States and was pleased to have captured Adams looking very American. In his *Reminiscences*, Trumbull mentioned taking John Adams's likeness for his *Declaration* and showed his awareness of the difference in appearance appropriate for an American in his home country as opposed to Europe. Trumbull wrote, 'In the course of the summer of 1787, Mr. Adams took leave of the court of St. James, and preparatory to the voyage to America, had the powder combed out of his hair. Its colour and natural curl were beautiful, and I took that opportunity to paint his portrait in the small Declaration of Independence'.⁵⁹ Unfortunately he did not record as much detail about taking Jefferson's portrait, but he did capture him with his own red hair not powdered and informally dressed. In his composition Jefferson stands in the centre of the focal group, the tallest figure and probably rightly so, handing the document to the president of the Congress,

⁵⁸ John Trumbull, *Autobiography, Reminiscences and Letters of John Trumbull from 1756 to 1841*, (New York, 1841), 93-96.

⁵⁹ John Trumbull, *Autobiography*, 147.

John Hancock. (figs. 1.5 & 1.5a) To further insure that Jefferson and the gesture of presenting the document remained the focal point, Trumbull dressed Jefferson in a red waistcoat and breeches while the other figures of the painting are in neutral or dark tones. The painting becomes evidence that Jefferson stood as the fulcrum of this moment in American history. He could thank John Trumbull for supporting his role in this notable event, and in turn, this would become the work for which Trumbull would be most remembered.

The Declaration of Independence and another painting begun at the same time, *The Surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown*, set Trumbull on the task of gathering portraits. His return trip to Paris was to take not only Jefferson's image but to gather studies of the French officers who had been at Yorktown. Jefferson arranged appointments with the French and provided Trumbull a place to work at his residence, the Hôtel de Langeac. Trumbull had a natural aptitude for capturing a likeness and developed a process of making small, quick, oil-sketches on thin wood panels of the heads he needed. This was the work that Jefferson had seen, and perhaps they had discussed Trumbull's preference for the more illustrious calling of history painting over portraiture. It could account for Jefferson's seeming preference of Mather Brown over Trumbull for his commissions.

Jefferson had previously expressed some reservation at commissioning a portrait from Trumbull. When Brown had not yet begun Adams's portrait and the date for the family's departure was drawing closer, Jefferson's anxiety was met with the suggestion from London that perhaps Trumbull could take the portrait. Jefferson wrote immediately, 'With respect to Mr. Adams's picture, I must again press it to be done by Brown, because Trumbul [*sic*] does not paint of the size of the life, and could not be asked to hazard himself on it'.⁶⁰ Yet Jefferson was confident of Trumbull's abilities and had stated earlier, 'His natural talents for this art seem almost unparalleled.'⁶¹ But 'this art' to which Trumbull aspired was not taking 'the head' but what was viewed by many as the nobler art form, history painting.

⁶⁰ The discussion of the Adams portrait can be found in TJ to Wm. Stephens Smith, 31 December 1787, *PTJ* 12: 485; Wm. Stephens Smith to TJ, 16 January 1788, *ibid.*, 12: 517 and TJ to Wm. Stephens Smith, 2 Feb 1788, *ibid.*, 12: 558.

⁶¹ TJ to Ezra Stiles, 1 September 1786, *ibid.*, 10: 317.

In the previous summer Trumbull had executed two small portraits at the request of women who were particular friends of Jefferson, as well as close mutual friends: Maria Cosway and Angelica Church (figs. 1.2 & 1.3). This was initiated by Maria Cosway, who had met Jefferson in Paris during Trumbull's visit in late summer of 1786, and in fact they were probably introduced by Trumbull, who was acquainted with London based artist, Richard Cosway and his wife Maria, also an artist. The nature of the relationship that formed between Cosway and Jefferson was intimate though how intimate is still debated; nevertheless, they pursued a correspondence that lasted throughout their lives.⁶²

Trumbull must have shown his study for the *Declaration of Independence* to Maria Cosway, as she wrote Jefferson, 'Will you give Mr. Trumbull leave to make a Coppy [*sic*] of a certain portrait he painted at Paris?' With impatience she wrote again the following month, 'I cannot announce the portrait of a friend of mine in my Study yet, Trumbull puts me out of all patience. I allways [*sic*] thought painting slow work, 'tis dreadfull [*sic*] now'. Her Study was on the upper floor of the Cosway's house in London, where she displayed to either side of the fireplace small paintings and drawings of her most intimate friends.⁶³ By the end of the summer in August 1788, she could write happily, 'Wish me joy for I possess your Picture. Trumbull has procured me the happiness which I shall ever be gratfull [*sic*] for'. Jefferson had already heard from Angelica Church, 'Mr. Trumbull has given us each a picture of you. Mrs. Cosway's is a better likeness than mine, but then, I have a better elsewhere and so I console myself'.⁶⁴

Angelica Church may have retained a vivid mental image of Jefferson in her heart and mind, but comparing the small paintings that Trumbull presented to each woman, it is obvious that Cosway's is a stronger resemblance to the sketch taken from life. The set of the mouth, the shape of the chin and the averted yet focused gaze more closely resembles that captured by Trumbull in his initial study. In both

⁶² Carol Burnell, *Divided Affections* (UK and Switzerland, 2007), for Cosway – Jefferson meeting see 437; for final correspondence, 397.

⁶³ Cosway to TJ, 6 March 1788, *PTJ* 12: 645; Cosway to TJ, 29 April 1788, *ibid.*, 13: 115-16. Stephen Lloyd discusses Cosway's study as an example of how intimate portraits were displayed in a domestic setting in Stephen Lloyd and Kim Sloan, *Intimate Portraits* (Edinburgh, 2008), 20-21.

⁶⁴ Cosway to TJ, 19 August 1788, *PTJ*, 13: 525; Angelica Schuyler Church, 21 July 1788, *ibid.*, 13: 391.

miniatures Jefferson wears a dark frock coat that is obviously in the English style with the large metal buttons, over a buff-coloured waistcoat. His hair is formally dressed and powdered in a manner quite similar to that in the Mather Brown portrait. The pose and facial features suggest that Trumbull referred to his preliminary painting closely, but then changed hair and clothing to give a more European demeanour to the Jefferson in the Cosway-Church miniatures than the figure standing central to the action depicted in his *Declaration of Independence*.

The third miniature, painted for Jefferson's sixteen-year-old daughter Martha, depicts Jefferson quite differently (fig. 1.4). Trumbull has him in a dark frock coat in the English style but here double breasted with large brass buttons and with a buff waistcoat worn over an under-waistcoat of light blue. In this portrait, however, the hair is not formally dressed but given a definite red cast with perhaps a hint of light powder. Though it is pulled back into the traditional queue, the sides are loose rather than formed into tight curls, while the crown is left low and smooth and so definitely less aristocratic. The facial features are not as well developed as those of the Cosway-Church miniatures, as the nose is defined with a linear shadow and the mouth is not as detailed, especially as that of the Cosway miniature. The brush work is sketchy as though it were executed quickly; however, this gives a spontaneity absent in the other two. Other than the brushwork, the feeling of openness comes from the frontal positioning of the body with only the head turned in a three-quarter profile.⁶⁵ It is interesting that the pose is like that of the Mather Brown portrait; almost as though Trumbull were suggesting that he could have done better, especially in likeness. In addition he did present Jefferson with a portrait of Tom Paine that Brown promised but did not produce. Trumbull must have given thought to the probability that at some point this portrait of Jefferson would likely be returning to the United States and so presented a look that would be more familiar to American viewers. Cosway and Church moved freely in the aristocratic circles of London and Paris, and the British and European friends with whom they would share their portraits would be better impressed by the more formal appearance.

⁶⁵ These observations were made from a close study of Trumbull's miniature of Jefferson in comparison with that of Thomas Paine in situ at Monticello.

This sharing of portraits with close friends or acquaintances was something that distinguished the intimate portrait from the formal portrait. The small or miniature portraits occupied personal spaces, such as Maria Cosway's study, and some were small enough to be worn, whereas the formal oil portraits, taken the size of life, were generally intended for the more public rooms of the house and viewing by a broader audience. Stephen Lloyd in his book *Intimate Portraits* discusses the placement of these smaller, more personal portraits and defines the purpose of the miniature, 'to provoke memory in the beholder'.⁶⁶ Trumbull's three miniatures of *Jefferson* are somewhat unusual in that they are larger than most, as they measure approximately 3" x 4" and are painted in oil on mahogany panels rather than the more common watercolour on ivory.⁶⁷ Nevertheless, Trumbull did refer to his small oil sketches as 'miniatures' even though the intent of most were as preparations for his large history paintings.⁶⁸ His three portraits of Jefferson would fit Lloyd's definition of 'provoking memory' despite their larger than usual size.

In these three miniatures the clothing and fashioning of the appearance were choices made by the artist, as all were painted in London, where Trumbull, Cosway and Church were living at the time, and the miniature made for Jefferson's daughter was a surprise gift.⁶⁹ Even though in this instance Jefferson had no direct input into the choices used to create the images, they reflect Jefferson's and Trumbull's shared understanding as to the American versus European style in personal appearance. Despite his acquiescence to an aristocratic formality when demanded by court, as the powder was brushed from his hair, Jefferson could revert visually to an American 'son of nature'.⁷⁰

The tug between refinement and democracy would continue to ruffle Jefferson and other Americans as they struggled to establish the United States in the larger world. This dilemma is admirably treated in Richard Bushman's, *The Refinement of America*, as he discusses the impulse of democracy to destroy

⁶⁶ Lloyd, *Intimate Portraits*, 39.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 60.

⁶⁸ Roque, 'Trumbull's Portraits,' in Cooper, *Hand and Spirit of a Painter*, 45.

⁶⁹ Cooper, *ibid.*, 117.

⁷⁰ TJ to Cosway, 24 April 1788, *PTJ* 13: 103-04. In this letter Jefferson claims that 'I am but a son of nature, loving what I see and feel, without being able to give a reason, nor caring much whether there be one'.

aristocracy yet notes that genteel culture could be purchased, and so there was always the temptation to incorporate some elements of material culture into a middle-class and democratic society. ‘Americans were caught in the perplexing contradiction of a democratic government presiding over the spread of an aristocratic culture.’⁷¹ Yet even with Wedgewood vases and fine furniture, the sartorial style of American men remained far subdued when compared to the upper social circles of Britain and Europe, as illustrated by Trumbull’s choices for his three *Jefferson* miniatures.

In the revolutionary and post-revolutionary period only one American had managed to be accepted in Paris as the rustic American provincial with hair not powdered---Benjamin Franklin. Franklin’s reputation as a man of science and as a statesman had preceded him. Following his arrival in Paris late in 1776, the artist Elisabeth Vigée-Lebrun wrote in her description of Franklin that, ‘no-one was more fashionable, more sought after in Paris than Doctor Franklin: the crowd chased after him in parks and public places; hats, canes and snuffboxes were designed in the Franklin style, and people thought themselves very lucky if they were invited to the same dinner party as this famous man’. The first time she saw him, ‘he was dressed in grey and his unpowdered braided hair fell upon his shoulders; if it had not been for the nobility of his face, I would have taken him for a stocky farmer, such was the contrast he made with the other diplomats who were all powdered and dressed in their finest clothes, bedecked with gold and coloured sashes’.⁷²

Franklin must have relished the notoriety ignited by the image he had created for his return to Europe. He described himself with some glee as ‘very plainly dressed, wearing my thin, grey straight hair that peeps out under my only *coiffure*, a fine fur cap, which comes down my forehead almost to my spectacles. Think how this must appear among the powdered heads of Paris!’⁷³ It was Franklin in his fur cap and spectacles as sketched by the artist Charles Nicolas Cochin and engraved by Augustin de Saint-Aubin that caught Europe’s attention (fig. 1.10). Historian

⁷¹ Richard L. Bushman, *Refinement of America: Persons, Houses, Cities* (New York, 1993), 409-413, quote at 411.

⁷² Elisabeth Vigée-Lebrun, *Memoirs of Elisabeth Vigée-Lebrun*, trans. Siân Evans (London., 1989), 318 – 19.

⁷³ Franklin to Mrs Emma Tompson, 8 February 1777, in *Franklin’s Autobiographical Writings*, 427-28.

Charles Sellers explains that even though it was a good likeness, the Cochin-Saint-Aubin print was never intended as a step toward a formal portrait; it was designed instead for publicity purposes. The print, as advertised in the *Journal de Paris* of June 1777, announced Franklin's arrival in his 'sensational' costume that worked exceptionally well to create a strikingly effective image.⁷⁴

Jefferson touted Franklin's abilities as a scientist and innovative thinker in his own *Notes on Virginia*, where he rebuffed the European charge that the New World was devoid of genius: "In physics we have produced a Franklin, than whom no one of the present age has made more important discoveries, nor has enriched philosophy with more, or more ingenious solutions of the phænomena [*sic*] of nature."⁷⁵ Upon his arrival in France Jefferson relied on introductions from Franklin to gain access to fashionable salons. "I took a trip yesterday to Sannois and commenced an acquaintance with the old Countess d'Hocquetout," he reported happily in June 1785. 'I received much pleasure from it and hope it has opened a door of admission for me to the circle of literati with which she is environed'. At the salon of Madame Helvétius, widow of the famous *philosophe* and a very close and particular friend of Franklin's, Jefferson met and established lasting relationships with members of the French literati such as the Comte de Volney, Destutt de Tracy, and Pierre-Georges Cabanis.⁷⁶

The formal portrait by Mather Brown and even the Trumbull miniatures for Cosway and Church give an impression of how Jefferson could have appeared socially in both Paris and London but do not definitively tell us how he presented himself at the French court. There is one written reference to Jefferson at Versailles in a letter from a young Philadelphian, Thomas Shippen, following his own presentation at court under Jefferson's patronage. According to Shippen, 'I observed that although Mr. Jefferson was the plainest man in the room, and the most destitute of ribbands, [*sic*] crosses and other insignia of rank that he was most courted and

⁷⁴ Charles Coleman Sellers, *Benjamin Franklin in Portraiture* (New Haven, CT, 1962), 228-29.

⁷⁵ Jefferson, *Notes*, 64.

⁷⁶ TJ to Abigail Adams, 21 June 1785, *PTJ* 8: 241; Howard C. Rice, Jr., *Thomas Jefferson's Paris* (Princeton, 1976), 94; Kimball, *Jefferson The Scene of Europe*, 78-107.

most attended to (even by the Courtiers themselves) of the whole Diplomatic corps'.⁷⁷

The crosses and ribbons observed by Shippen are well illustrated in a portrait of the comte de Vaudreuil painted by Elisabeth Vigée-Lebrun in 1784 (fig. 1.11). Vaudreuil held the Ordre du Saint-Esprit, the highest knightly order of France, as evidenced by the cross embroidered on the coat and the blue moiré ribbon (the *cordons bleu*) worn diagonally across the chest. From a buttonhole, suspended by a red ribbon, hangs the cross of the military order of St. Louis. Even young Nabby Adams learned to recognize the cordon bleu, observing of fellow dinner guests that 'by their ribbons, I suppose were great folks'.⁷⁸ Some Americans viewed knightly orders such as these with suspicion. Before leaving for Europe Jefferson wrote Washington to express his concerns about the Society of the Cincinnati, the American organization most comparable to a European military order. This hereditary society, formed by Revolutionary officers in 1783, took as its emblem an eagle suspended by a blue and white ribbon.⁷⁹ Jefferson's hostility to such 'aristocratic' organizations may have accounted for his being 'destitute of such insignia'.

In the absence of any image of Jefferson in court dress, some clues about his appearance may be drawn from a full-length formal portrait of his fellow diplomat John Adams by the Anglo-American artist John Singleton Copley (fig. 1.12). When Adams sat for Copley, he had just arrived in London from signing the peace treaty in Paris and may have been wearing the same clothing he wore at Versailles. The painting, begun in the fall of 1783 and not completed until the following year, was contemporary with Vigée-Lebrun's portrait of the comte de Vaudreuil and so invites comparison. Adams posed in a full-dress coat with stiffened pleats in the skirt and wide cuffs. Copley's skilful use of paint implies that the coat was a rich velvet;

⁷⁷ Thomas Lee Shippen to William Shippen, 24 February – 26 March 1788. Shippen Family Papers, Library of Congress, as quoted in *PTJ* 12: 504.

⁷⁸ These knightly orders are referenced in many clothing histories. A good illustration which corresponds closely to those shown in the Comte de Vaudreuil portrait can be found in Riberio, *Fashion in the French Revolution*, 40; for Nabby's reference see *Journal and Correspondence of Miss Adams*, 30.

⁷⁹ TJ to George Washington, 16 April 1784, *PTJ*, 7: 105-10; the emblem of the Society of the Cincinnati is reproduced in Garry Wills, *Cincinnatus: George Washington and the Enlightenment* (New York, 1984), fig. 43 on 143.

however, in contrast to Vaudreuil's dress, Adams's only trim was the ornate buttons. The cut of the collar, much lower than Vaudreuil's, and the fullness in the skirt place Adam's coat far from the leading edge of fashion in the early 1780s. Though his coat is a bit dated, Adams adhered to the courtly tradition of lace at throat and wrists, wore a dress sword, and his hair (or wig) was powdered and formally dressed in the black silk bag that covered the queue and was topped by a flat, black bow. This dressing of the hair continued to be favoured for court wear both in France and England.⁸⁰ Though in comparison to the comte de Vaudreuil's, Adam's look is understated, it was perhaps a bit too aristocratic by republican standards. Adams was somewhat embarrassed by the painting, referring to it as a 'piece of vanity'. When it was suggested as a frontispiece for a new edition of his *Defence of the Constitutions of Government of the United States*, he responded, 'I should be much mortified to see such a Bijou affixed to those Republican Volumes'.⁸¹

John Adams in Copley's portrait is only a suggestion as to how Jefferson may have appeared as an American at the French court, but an anecdote repeated by Abigail Adams offers evidence that Jefferson respected court mandates regarding dress. Within a month of Jefferson's arrival in Paris a period of mourning was declared, which necessitated the purchase of a black suit. According to Mrs Adams, 'Mr. Jefferson had to hie away for a Tailor to get a whole black silk suit made up in two days, and at the end of Eleven days', the designated mourning period, 'should an other death happen, he will be obliged to have a new Suit of mourning of Cloth, because that is the Season when Silk must be cast of. We may groan and scold but these are expences [*sic*] which cannot be avoided'.⁸² The date of her letter, September 5th and the designated mourning period of eleven days tells us that the season for silk ended about mid-September and that the appropriate fabric following that date would be wool broadcloth. Her comment that the expenses could not be avoided again speaks to the position of the American diplomats at the French court.

Before his assignment in Paris ended, Jefferson would complain about the cost of maintaining an appropriate appearance as had his predecessors, Franklin and

⁸⁰ Ribeiro, *Dress in Eighteenth-Century Europe*, 29, 185.

⁸¹ John Adams to John Stockdale, 12 May 1793, quoted in Oliver, *Portraits of John and Abigail Adams*, 25.

⁸² Abigail Adams to Mary Smith Cranch, 5 September 1784, *Adams Family Correspondence*, 5: 443.

Adams. Jefferson wrote Foreign Secretary John Jay that ‘my furniture, carriage, apparel are all plain. Yet they have cost me more than a year’s salary’. The meaning of ‘plain’ is subject to interpretation. Certainly his apparel was not as plain as Benjamin Franklin’s untrimmed grey suit and straight, unpowdered hair as described by Vigée-Lebrun. That option was not open to the relatively unknown Jefferson, who later remarked that ‘the succession to Dr. Franklin, at the court of France, was an excellent school of humility’. To the question, ‘it is you, Sir, who replace Doctor Franklin?’ Jefferson famously replied ‘no one can replace him, Sir: I am only his successor’.⁸³ Nor does Shippen’s description of Jefferson as, ‘the plainest man in the room’ mean that he would have appeared at court in anything other than an appropriate dress coat with sword, lace and *chapeau bras*, an ancien régime dress code that had not been relinquished among courtiers and diplomats even at a time when the less formal frac was gaining wider acceptance in pre-Revolutionary France. Both visual and written references to Jefferson as an American diplomat suggest that he accepted the fashion expectations of the French court and the aristocratic salons of Paris. His concern for the reputation of the new American nation, both its government and its people, motivated him to conform to these expectations. It is undoubtedly true that his own aspirations to be accepted among the scientific and intellectual thinkers of Europe also guided his fashion behaviour.

The formal portrait by Mather Brown and the miniatures by John Trumbull reflect a paradox similar to that expressed by Jefferson in his ‘My view of Europe’ letter. In the Brown portrait his appearance is in keeping with the latest European style, yet he is surrounded with objects signalling his republican commitments. The Trumbull miniatures, when considered together, represent a similar dichotomy. The small portraits intended for women who were socially prominent in aristocratic, European circles delineate a very European image, while the portrait for his daughter shows an American with unpowdered, informally dressed hair. These portraits reflect the Jefferson who criticized European despotism and corruption and extolled the virtue of the new American republic even while acknowledging his powerful attraction to the ‘vaunted scene of Europe’. He would carry these impressions of Europe with him, both positive and negative, as he returned to the United States.

⁸³ TJ to William Smith, 19 February 1791, *PTJ*, 19: 113.

CHAPTER 2: Return to America and an Image for Partisan Politics

Jefferson requested a leave of absence from his ministerial duties in Paris and returned to Virginia for what he intended as a brief stay, however plans changed. Soon after his arrival in Virginia's port city of Norfolk November 23, 1789,¹ he learned that he had been appointed secretary of state in the federal government being formed under the new constitution. Jefferson undertook the office somewhat reluctantly but very soon was embroiled in the issues surrounding the conduct and the character of the national government.²

Jefferson questioned the system of public finance as arranged by Secretary of the Treasury Alexander Hamilton and linked this with what he perceived to be a faction of monocrats. He feared their aim was to shape the government after an exclusive and hierarchical model that looked to Great Britain's constitutional monarchy and away from what he felt were the true republican principles that drove the Revolution.³ These concerns over both government and society moving toward an anglicised and aristocratic model will be given the most attention in this chapter, as it will be argued that this particular tension within the highly charged politics of the 1790s became the source of greatest influence upon Jefferson's change in appearance and presentation as secretary of state. It was within this environment that he would shed the cosmopolitan image of American minister to the courts of Europe and refashion himself to best fit what he believed should influence the new national profile of government.

An image of this fully Americanized Jefferson was recorded by Philadelphia artist Charles Willson Peale in December 1791. (fig. 2.1) This was a self-commission by the artist with the intent that the portrait be added to his gallery of illustrious Americans. Since the Revolution Peale had been painting and displaying the images of men who had been important in some manner to the move for political independence. He began with officers of the Continental Army but then widened his

¹ Jefferson, *JMB*, I: 747.

² Malone, *Jefferson and His Time*, II: 241 – 55.

³ Malone, *ibid.*, 258 – 67; for a broader discussion of the conflicts that quickly arose in Washington's administration see Stanley Elkins & Eric McKittrick, *Age of Federalism* (Oxford, 1993) and Gordon S. Wood, *Empire of Liberty* (Oxford, 2009), chapters 1 – 7, also Joanne B. Freeman, *Affairs of Honor: National Politics in the New Republic* (New Haven, CT., 2002).

choice of subjects to include other men who were contributing notably to the construction of the nation. In the resulting bust portrait, Peale pictured Jefferson dressed in the colours of the blue and the buff that had become emblematic for Revolutionary American figures, whether as a Continental Army uniform or, as Jefferson, in civilian wear of the popular blue frock coat combined with a buff waistcoat. His hair is shown in its natural rusty-red hue, casually dressed and left without powder.

This chapter uses this portrait by Charles Willson Peale as the primary visual evidence of Jefferson's transformation from the nuanced cosmopolitan republican as crafted during his years in France to what he could hope would be recognized as Jefferson the true American republican. Jefferson's refashioning and his need to define himself with the blue and the buff are discussed in relation to the political and cultural conflicts of the 1790s. This chapter proposes that this image as recorded by Peale alluded to Jefferson's eagerness to perpetuate the revolutionary fervour when challenged by what he perceived as threats of a 'republican' monarchy modelled too closely after Britain rather than the true republican ideals of 1776.

* * * * *

Jefferson had planned to stay in Virginia for only a few months and then with spring and the return of favourable sailing weather to re-cross the Atlantic. He anticipated that he would be back in Paris by the end of April to complete the two years remaining on his ministerial appointment.⁴ But as events played out, Jefferson would never return to Europe.

Before he reached Monticello, Jefferson received the official letter from President Washington requesting that he accept an appointment as secretary of state in the national government then being formed under the new constitution. His argument against this assignment is revealing in that it exposes his discomfort with public criticism. He responded, 'I should enter on it with gloomy forebodings from the criticisms and censures of a public[,] just indeed in their intentions, but

⁴ TJ to Maria Cosway, 14 October 1789, *PTJ*, 15: 521.

sometimes misinformed and misled, and always too respectable to be neglected'.⁵ He went on to express that his one motive would be the satisfaction of the people, and if that were not forthcoming, he would feel impelled to retire. There is no way of gauging how much of this reasoning sprang from his eagerness to return to the intellectual and culturally sophisticated circles he had enjoyed in Paris, plus the excitement of the political revolution that was currently evolving there. What is evident was his discomfort with a position in the public eye that was subject to scrutiny and judgment. The role of minister plenipotentiary had suited. He contributed to public service but remained out of the direct gaze of his constituents. In his argument for returning to Paris, he offered his familiarity with ministerial duties and was careful to couch his one reference to the revolution in France not from a personal interest but in terms of commerce, 'the change of government, too, taking place in the country. . .seems to open a possibility of procuring from the new rulers some new advantages in commerce which may be agreeable to our countrymen'. His statement to Washington in regard to his appointment as secretary of state, 'I cannot but foresee the possibility that this may end disagreeably' appears prophetic given the political events of the 1790s that were to come. To James Madison he could be more candid and confessed, 'I expect with anxiety the President's ultimate determination as to what is to be done with me'.⁶ Upon receiving a second letter from Washington urging his acceptance, he felt he had to comply. Again he expressed his unease to Madison, 'I write him [Washington] by this occasion my acceptance, and shall endeavour to subdue the reluctance I have to that office which has increased so as to oppress me extremely'.⁷ With these reservations, Jefferson left Monticello on March 1st following the marriage of his eldest daughter Martha to her third cousin, Thomas Mann Randolph, Jr. of Tuckahoe plantation, to join the national government at its temporary residence in the city of New York.⁸

⁵ TJ to George Washington, 15 December 1789, *PTJ*, 16: 34.

⁶ George Washington to TJ, 13 October 1789, *ibid.*, 15: 519; TJ to George Washington, 15 December 1789, *ibid.*, 16: 34; TJ to James Madison, 9 January 1790, *ibid.*, 16:92.

⁷ George Washington to TJ, 21 January 1790, *ibid.*, 16: 116; TJ to Madison, 14 February 1790, *ibid.*, 16: 182.

⁸ In his *Memorandum Book*, Jefferson noted his daughter's marriage on 23 Feb, his departure from Monticello on 1 March, and his arrival in New York on 23 March, see *JMB*, I: 750 & 754. The

Jefferson was of enough national reputation that his return to Virginia was reported in the newspapers and his progress toward New York to join the federal government was recorded along the way. In Alexandria, Virginia he was feted with a dinner followed by toasts and an address by the mayor that gave an indication of not only Jefferson's reputation but the concerns of the citizens. The mayor referenced Jefferson's recent contribution of representing the United States at the court of France but then recalled his revolutionary participation that was still so fresh in the minds of many Americans. The mayor began, 'But we assure you that these events, though more recent, are not more deeply impressed on our minds, than the whole tenor of your conduct, when we were struggling in the sacred cause of freedom'. The Revolutionary War remained the most important moment in the national identity, though the mayor's remarks then moved on to the importance of the current efforts of forming a government under the new constitution and the anxiety attached to this new government. He named this as also a period of 'crisis', and he called upon Jefferson to again 'fulfill [*sic*] the high expectations of a free and republican people'. The citizens of Alexandria saw Jefferson's participation extremely important at a time, 'when a constitution newly adopted, and which is to decide the fate of republican forms of government, is commencing its operations; and when subjects of the highest importance to the Union, must necessarily be discussed'. They counted upon Jefferson's 'virtue and talents' to once more make a difference in the problems facing the nation.⁹

In his response to the mayor's speech, Jefferson made his feelings clear that, 'the republican is the only form of government which is not eternally at open or secret war with the rights of mankind'. He obviously referred to France when he added with some pride that, 'It is, indeed, an animating thought that, while we are securing the rights of ourselves and our posterity, we are pointing out the way to struggling nations'.¹⁰ A republican form of government with its concept of equality

wedding did make the national newspapers, even though it was announced with the date a day off, 'On Monday the 22d of February, at Monticello, in Albemarle county, Virginia, *Thomas Randolph*, jun. Esq. to Miss *Patsy Jefferson*, eldest daughter of his Excellency Thomas Jefferson, Esquire.' *Pennsylvania Mercury*, Philadelphia, 13 March 1790, *America's Historical Newspapers*.

⁹ "Alexandria, March 18," as reprinted in *The Daily Advertiser*, 29 March 1790, New York, *ibid*. The mayor's speech and Jefferson's reply have been reprinted in *PTJ*, 16: 224-25.

¹⁰ *Ibid*.

and citizen participation was the American achievement that Jefferson felt would become an example to the rest of the world. In living out this example, they would begin to erase their provincial profile to become contributors in cosmopolitan ideology. Jefferson would be extremely disturbed to believe this prospect in danger.

Jefferson arrived in New York still enthused with the early prospects of the French Revolution and the influence provided by the American republic. This was combined with the accolades from mayor and citizens of Alexandria, where he was charged to insure that a republican form of government emerged from the new constitution. It must have been a jolt to hear conversations at New York dinner parties that promoted the need for a more secure executive in the form of a monarchy and to learn of levees with a code of 'full dress' that aped the courtly customs of Europe. This was not a part of Jefferson's vision for a republic whose mission was to defend the rights of mankind and spread the concept of democracy.

He was several years into retirement when he began to reflect on this period of his public service. He relied not just upon memory but looked to drafts and fair copies of his records as secretary of state and to what he described as 'memorandums' jotted at the time on scraps of paper. In 1818 he added an introduction to this collection of documents, but they were not published until after his death and then not in their entirety as arranged by Jefferson. When published they were given the title of the *Anas*.¹¹

It was in his 1818 introduction that Jefferson recalled what he believed had been a critical issue during the early years of the republic, the contest between monarchical versus republican government. His intent in the *Anas* was to show that 'the contests of that day were contests of principle, between the advocates of republican, and those of kingly government', and had he and his political allies not pushed against the monarchists, 'our government would have been, even at this early day, a very different thing from what the successful issue of those efforts have made it'. As evidence to this statement he described his arrival in New York and his shock

¹¹ For an explanation of the compilation often referred to as Thomas Jefferson's *Anas*, see 'The *Anas*: Editorial Note', *PTJ*, 22: 33-38. Biographer, Dumas Malone discusses the publication of the *Anas* in the bibliography of II: 497. Malone expressed the opinion that the *Anas* should not be considered as a stand-alone work but rather as chronological notes, 'which reflected the mood of the moment'. However it was Jefferson who edited and organized these notes into one work.

at finding the prevailing sentiments leaning toward a monarchical form of government:

The President received me cordially, and my Colleagues & the circle of principal citizens, apparently, with welcome. The courtesies of dinner parties given me as a stranger newly arrived among them, placed me at one in their familiar society. But I cannot describe the wonder and mortification with which the table conversations filled me. Politics were the chief topic, and a preference of kingly, over republican, government, was evidently the favorite [*sic*] sentiment.¹²

An entry from his notes dated 1 October 1792 supported his initial experiences, as Jefferson set down a conversation with Washington that had taken place at Mount Vernon. Per his notes, ‘That as to the idea of transforming this government into a monarchy, he [Washington] did not believe there were ten men in the United States whose opinions were worth attention, who entertained such a thought’. Jefferson disagreed and named Secretary of the Treasury Alexander Hamilton as among those who supported the idea of monarchy and further charged that he had attempted to sway the U.S. Constitution toward the English form during its creation. Further, Jefferson accused Hamilton of a corrupting influence upon a cadre within the legislature who looked to the treasury secretary for direction in monetary schemes. Such corruption and self-interest were believed a major threat to the public virtue that upheld a republic, and for Jefferson, Hamilton embodied the threat of monetary policies that could tempt members of the legislature to pursue self-interest over national interests.¹³

How real were Thomas Jefferson’s perceptions of a monarchical threat within the newly formed constitutional government? During the ratification process some had expressed concerns that the structure of the executive opened the way to monarchy. In the words of Virginia leader Patrick Henry the new constitution ‘squinted toward monarchy’ and the primary author of the Virginia constitution, George Mason, felt the national document instituted essentially, an ‘elective

¹² Thomas Jefferson, *Complete Anas of Thomas Jefferson*, ed. Franklin B. Sawvel (New York, 1903), 26, 29-30.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 90-91.

monarchy'.¹⁴ James Monroe agreed with Jefferson, 'That the partisans for monarchy are numerous and powerful, in point of talents and influence is in my estimation certain. Even the list of those who have been and perhaps still are active is formidable'. He concluded, 'I am well satisfied the republican scale will prevail, but consider its preponderance by no means as completely established yet'.¹⁵ The task ahead was to make sure republicanism prevailed.

A monarchical form of government was not that distant either in time or actuality. Jefferson felt confident of the eventual success of republicanism but worried, 'We were educated in royalism; no wonder if some of us retain that idolatry still'.¹⁶ To Jefferson it was 'idolatry', however others did not share his concerns or least not to the same degree. Rufus King, Senator from New York offered an explanation in retrospect that 'We were born the subjects of a King, and were accustomed to subscribe ourselves "His Majesty's most faithful subjects"', but for him a monarchical head of state was not the root problem, and he concluded, 'We began the quarrel which ended in the Revolution, not against the King, but against his parliament'.¹⁷ A close reading of Jefferson's draft of the Declaration of Independence shows their disagreement on this point, but King fell among the group that believed the young nation needed the cohesion of a strong executive that could maintain order and stability and share, if not exceed the power of the legislative body. It followed then, that the one filling this office should be addressed with dignity. How to accord this dignity and its outward trappings in titles and ceremonies was one of the first issues debated in the Houses of Congress.

The Senate took the lead and appointed a committee on the 23rd of April 1789 to consider 'what style or titles it will be proper to annex to the offices of President and of Vice President of the United States; if any other than those given in the constitution'. This decision would require conferring with the House of Representatives. The report that came from the joint meeting was not to the

¹⁴ Louise Burnham Dunbar, *Study of 'Monarchical' Tendencies in the United States from 1776 to 1801*, (Urbana, IL, 1922), 99. See also, Simon P. Newman, 'Principles or Men? George Washington and the Political Culture of National Leadership', *Journal of the Early Republic* 12, no. 4 (Winter, 1992): 477-507.

¹⁵ James Monroe to TJ, 17 July 1792, *PTJ*, 24: 236-67.

¹⁶ TJ to James Madison, 15 March 1789, *ibid.*, 14:661.

¹⁷ Thomas Hart Benton, *Thirty Years View. . .of the American Government. . .from 1820-1850*, 2 vols. (New York, 1856-58), I: 58, as cited in Dunbar, *A Study of 'Monarchical' Tendencies*, 127.

satisfaction of the Senate, as it denied the use of titles additional to those prescribed by the constitution. A petition from the Senate to reconsider this decision provoked an outburst within the House. Thomas Tudor Tucker, Representative from South Carolina, questioned whether it should alarm the citizens, as it seemed contrived, ‘to lead them on by degrees to that kind of government which they have thrown off with abhorrence’. He asked, ‘Does this look like a democracy, when one of the first acts of the two branches of the Legislature is to confer titles? Surely not’. Most were in agreement with Tucker, and it was James Madison who calmed the debate. He pointed out that ‘if we give titles, we must either borrow or invent them’, and ‘if we borrow, the servile imitation will be odious’. He put forward the opinion that, ‘the more republican we are in our manners, the more rational dignity we shall acquire’. After establishing that he was in perfect agreement with the decision of the House, he pushed, however, to respect the opinion of the Senate. Madison supported the concept of a republican image, but he was equally concerned that this new governing machine that he had helped design work smoothly. A second committee was appointed to meet with a committee from the Senate, but the outcome remained the same. The two top executive officers would be addressed simply as president and vice president as designated by the constitution.¹⁸

For James Madison imitation of Old World forms was servile and odious. For John Adams, who as Vice President served as President of the Senate, it was reasonable to look to England as a model of ‘dignified and respectable government’ that at one time had been happily accepted in America. These words were attributed to Adams by Senator William Maclay of Pennsylvania, who opposed the introduction of titles on the basis of a strict reading of the Constitution. However, Maclay did seem to enjoy the title of ‘Rotundity’ given covertly to John Adams by other members of the senate.¹⁹

¹⁸ *Journal of the Senate*, Thursday, 23 April 1789, Vol. 1, p. 16; *Journal of the House*, Friday, 24 April 1789, p. 20; *Annals of Congress*, House of Representatives, “On Titles,” 11 May 1789, p. 331-37; from electronic facsimiles on ‘A Century of Lawmaking for a New Nation: U.S. Congressional Documents and Debates’, <http://memory.loc.gov>.

¹⁹ William Maclay, *Journal of William Maclay*, U.S. Congressional Documents, *ibid*. This edition of Maclay’s journal was edited and published by Edgar S. Maclay in 1891. The Adams quote is found on p. 10; reference to ‘Rotundity’ p. 30. Another publication that includes this work is *The Diary of William Maclay and Other Notes on Senate Debates*, eds. by Kenneth R. Bowling and Helen E. Veit (Baltimore, 1988).

Aristocratic posturing among some members of the Senate had prompted Maclay to keep a careful record of debates within the Senate chamber, and as these discussions were not open to the public as were most debates in the House of Representatives, he felt it even more important that he document what transpired and his personal participation, especially as he often clashed with the President of the Senate, Vice President Adams. Maclay recognized that he had sacrificed popularity in consistently challenging Adams and other leading senatorial voices in what he considered 'high-handed measures'. In his journal, kept daily, he provided a personal and invaluable insight into the workings and personalities of the first Congress. In his estimation the new government was far from being a 'powerful machine' and in this start-up phase 'needs help and props on all sides'.²⁰ He shared the same apprehensions as Jefferson and others that this new experiment in republicanism could gradually slide toward the more familiar monarchical model and suspected there were many who, 'cared for nothing else but a translation of the diadem and sceptre [*sic*] from London to Boston, New York, or Philadelphia; or, in other words, the creation of a new monarchy in America, and to form niches for themselves in the temple of royalty'. He confided to his diary, 'I entertain no doubt but that many people are aiming with all their force to establish a splendid court with all the pomp of majesty'.²¹ Yet Maclay joined his congressional colleagues in attending President Washington's levees.

President Washington's decision to receive visitation only on Tuesdays and Fridays drew discussion and differing opinions. Senator Maclay could understand that he would be overrun with visitors without some form of limitation, yet the idea of the President being seen only at his own levee on Tuesdays and then at Mrs. Washington's drawing rooms on Fridays struck him as too courtly a practice. But Maclay's respect for Washington was completely sincere, as he credited his presence and dignity as the facilitator in smoothing many of the rankling issues surrounding the new government. He had no hesitation in referring to him as 'the greatest man in the world', and felt honoured by a brief conversation with the

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 6. Maclay and his *Diary* are discussed in Joanne B. Freeman, *Affairs of Honor*, chapter 1. Freeman uses Maclay's *Diary* as the bases of her first chapter and develops an excellent discussion on the issues of the first Congress. See also Gordon Wood, *Empire of Liberty*, especially p. 62-65.

²¹ Maclay, *Diary*, p. 12 & 82.

President, as Washington made his way around the room addressing those attending his levee.²²

Most, such as Senator Maclay, could compare these formal, weekly social gatherings in New York to the larger and far more elaborate court functions in London only from what they might read or stories they might hear from the few who had been there. One who spoke from personal experience was John Adams' wife, Abigail. She had participated in the required courtly ceremonies when Adams was the United States minister plenipotentiary to the British court. Following her initial presentation at Saint James in June 1785, she wrote a lengthy letter to her sister in Massachusetts about the ritual and the fatigue attached, as she had stood for four hours waiting to be presented as the king and the queen circled the room. She described how they entered, the king moving to the right and the queen and princesses to the left, while a lord made the presentations to the king and a lady in waiting to the queen. There was a touch of equality, as placement was not based upon rank, but rather, according to Mrs. Adams, 'when the King comes in he takes persons as they stand'. She described George III as, 'a personable Man'. Her only criticism was of his 'red face and white eye brows'.²³

Based upon her London experience, Abigail Adams felt that President Washington practiced, 'no more state than is perfectly consistant [*sic*] with his station', and expressed the opinion that, 'he ought to have still more state, & time will convince our Country of the necessity of it'. It is interesting that she felt there was a 'necessity' in the presidency being awarded a position of lofty distinction. Perhaps influenced by the views of her husband who sought an elevated title for the president (and the vice president), Abigail Adams was obviously a member of the group that felt a strong executive lent stability, and an outward show of ceremony was a legitimate sign of this stability. She continued to send descriptions to her sister of formal social functions but now from New York and of a republican court.²⁴ She must have realized, as did Jefferson, that these were pale imitations of courtly practices in Britain and Europe. Yet for Mrs. Adams these trappings after Old World style were a necessity while to Jefferson, as provincial as Washington's

²² *Ibid.*, p. 15, 4 & 7, 42.

²³ Abigail Adams to Mary Smith Cranch, 24 June 1785, *Adams Family Correspondence*, 6: 189 – 90.

²⁴ Abigail Adams to Mary Smith Cranch, 9 August 1789, *ibid.*, 8: 397 – 400.

levees must have appeared to those who had experienced Europe, they still represented a threat.

While some questioned the republican appropriateness of President and Mrs. Washington's functions, others held them in esteem. Another who joined Abigail Adams in support of the state social events was Representative Michael Stone of Maryland. He remembered the levees and the Friday evening drawing rooms as well attended and that only those who were elegant, refined, and appropriately dressed were admitted. He contended that this was before 'democratic rudeness' intruded into the governmental circles and so good manners could be counted upon with no tolerance for the rabble. Per Stone's account, only those who held an official position or had earned an invitation through merit or character were in attendance, and these were expected to appear in full dress.²⁵ Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson should have qualified for an invitation; however, he was vague as regards his attendance at the levees and eventually would become very critical. Despite Jefferson reservations, Abigail Adams, still fresh from their close family friendship in Europe, was delighted to report to her sister in a letter of April 1790, 'Mr. Jefferson is here, and adds much to the social circle'.²⁶

It is doubtful that Jefferson fully met Abigail Adams's hopes for his participation in New York society. After a month at his new post he began suffering one of his recurring 'periodical' headaches that lingered much longer than usual and impaired full participation in his new office for some time.²⁷ There was concern, but his condition was not believed life threatening. Virginia friend and colleague George Gilmer added a postscript to his letter, 'Hope the Bark [quinine] and rest from business and all attentions will restore you speedily to perfect health'.²⁸ At this same time President Washington became seriously ill, and there was genuine fear that he might not live. Newspapers reported that the President had been 'seized with the Influenza', and though he seemed to be recovering, the fears of many were

²⁵ Rufus Wilmot Griswold, *Republican Court; or American Society in the Days of Washington* (New York, 1867, reprinted 1971), 165.

²⁶ Abigail Adams to Mary Smith Cranch, 3 April 1790, *Adams Family Correspondence*, 9: 40.

²⁷ On 1 May 1790 TJ purchased "1 oz. of [Peruvian] bark," which was his usual treatment for his headaches; *JMB* I: 756, and he mentioned his debilitating headache in letters to George Buchanan and Peter Carr, 13 June 1790, *PTJ*, 16: 605-06 and *JMB* I: 756 – 57, n. 32.

²⁸ George Gilmore to TJ, *PTJ*, 16: 433.

expressed in the news article's exclamation, 'Heaven, in mercy spare his life. Good God! What would our loss have been had he departed at this time'? The concluding sentence of the report informed the public that, 'Mr. Jefferson, the Secretary of State, has also been exceedingly ill', but did not evince the same level of anxiety.²⁹ The brief newspaper account underscores the general feeling that the government at this time was fragile and in the opinion of many, Washington as the figurehead was important. Jefferson's tenure as Secretary of State did not begin well.

The headaches did not end, both literally and metaphorically, as Jefferson began grappling with the disposition of the government. A year later, in June 1791, he would write his daughter Martha that he had been 'persecuted thro the whole winter and spring' with a headache.³⁰ Politically and in areas of protocol, the new government groped along with a general consensus that the constitution was to be respected and the basic form of government was to be democratic-republican, but what were to be the outward trappings? Some were hesitant to follow too closely the models of Europe, even though some, not as Anglophobic as Jefferson, saw benefits in a closer relationship with Great Britain and that the former mother country was not an unfit role model in many aspects. Jefferson's position, as defined in correspondence and personal notes, was one of growing dissatisfaction and anxiety as he began to cultivate his image as secretary of state in Washington's administration.

The most detailed description of Jefferson during his months in New York was recorded by Senator Maclay in his journal. He met Jefferson for the first time on May 24th [1790], while Jefferson was suffering from his headache. Thus Maclay's observation that Jefferson 'had a rambling, vacant look, and nothing of that firm, collected deportment which I expected would dignify the presence of a secretary or minister' was explained by Jefferson biographer, Dumas Malone, as attributable to his illness. Maclay does allow, however, that even though rambling, 'yet he Scattered information wherever he went, and some even brilliant sentiments sparkled from him'. He included a brief description of Jefferson's physical appearance and wrote, 'Jefferson is a slender Man. Has rather the Air of Stiffness in

²⁹ 'Intelligence from New-York of the President', *New-Hampshire Spy*, Portsmouth, New Hampshire, 25 May 1790, p. 35, viewed on *America's Historical Newspapers*.

³⁰ TJ to Martha Jefferson Randolph, 23 June 1791, *PTJ*, 20: 568.

his Manner. His cloaths [*sic*] seem too small for him. He sits in a lounging Manner on one hip, commonly, and with one of his shoulders elevated much above the other. His face has a scrary Aspect. His whole figure has a loose shackling Air. . . . He had been long enough abroad to catch the tone of European folly'.³¹

There was some contradiction in Maclay's description. He noted that Jefferson had an 'air of stiffness in his manner', but claimed 'his whole figure has a loose shackling Air', and so his opinion of Jefferson's manner as stiff and formal did not remain consistent. When he met the three executive secretaries at a dinner a month later, he was still of the opinion that, 'Jefferson transgresses on the extreme of stiff gentility or lofty gravity'. He said of the Secretary of the Treasury, 'Hamilton has a very boyish, giddy manner' and found, Secretary of War Henry Knox 'the easiest man, and has the most dignity of presence'.³² In comparison to Maclay's assessment, the citizens of Alexandria did not seem to find Jefferson quite so lofty, as at the dinner given in his honour on his way to New York, he was reported as having 'amiable manners and engaging conversation'.³³ But in that instant he was speaking to fellow Virginians and did not have a migraine headache.

Maclay's description of Jefferson as slender agrees with images and observations that would follow him through the years. What is interesting is Maclay's comment that his clothes appear too small. This could suggest that Jefferson was still wearing clothes cut after the European style. This could also suggest that Maclay did not keep up with the very latest in fashion, which inevitably came to America from Europe. Through the eighteenth century, the cut of the man's coat had continued toward a slimmer shape. By the beginning of the 1790s, the back of the fashionable coat was being cut very narrow, as the mid-line of the front curved more toward the back creating much narrower skirts. Even the sleeves fit more closely to the arm and if a cuff were attached, it was not over three to four inches wide.³⁴

According to his accounting records, on the first full day after his landing in Norfolk, 24 November 1789, Jefferson, 'Pd. A taylor for blue broadcloth coat' and

³¹ Maclay, *Diary*, 311.

³² *Ibid.*

³³ *Daily Advertiser*, 29 March 1790, *America's Historical Newspapers*.

³⁴ Cunnington, *Handbook of English Costume*, 186, 192-97; Squire, *Dress and Society*, 128.

calculated its cost at 17.33 American dollars.³⁵ What this record doesn't reveal is whether this blue coat was for him personally (as his slave, James Hemings, was travelling with him, although he usually noted 'servants' clothing) or was it a simple travelling coat, and of course, he could have had it cut after the European coats currently in his wardrobe. He began to purchase shirts, gloves and shoes very soon after his arrival, yet his first payment to a New York tailor, Christian Baehr, was not made until July.³⁶ Even though delivery of the merchandise could have been ahead of that date, Jefferson may have been still dependent upon dress coats brought back from Paris during his first few months. Maclay believed that Jefferson 'had been long enough abroad to catch the tone of European folly', and certainly the clothing could have contributed to this assessment without Maclay's awareness, or Jefferson may have retained mannerism acquired while in Paris. Very late in his life one visitor to Monticello remarked of his mannerisms that, 'They are artificial, he shrugs his shoulders when talking, has much of the Frenchman'.³⁷ Something of the Francophile must have remained throughout his life and could have been even more visible during his months in New York.

The premise that the provincial American would be changed upon encountering Europe was widely accepted. An example of this cultural competition was recorded in the correspondence of young Abigail Adams, daughter of John Adams, when she accompanied her parents to France. From her home in Auteuil, outside Paris, she responded to the question from a relative in Massachusetts as to her feelings toward Europe. She maintained that she was unchanged, that she had not been improved by her European experience as was to be expected. Needless to say, she may not have been fully aware of the influence of her new environment, but then Nabby Adams did not remain in France as long as Jefferson. However, an American friend and colleague, Dr. Benjamin Rush, who met Jefferson in Philadelphia as he was on his way to New York, seemed pleased to report that Jefferson appeared unchanged. 'It was the first time I saw him since his return from

³⁵ *JMB*, I: 748.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, I: 760.

³⁷ Samuel Whitcomb, Jr., 'A Book Peddler Invades Monticello', in *William and Mary Quarterly* 6 (1949): 634 – 35.

France. He was plain in his dress and unchanged in his manners'.³⁸ Again, change was expected, and it is interesting that Rush based this assessment upon clothes and manners. Perhaps he was seeing what he wanted to see, as Rush recorded with some relief that Jefferson was still strong in his belief in republican forms of government. Another explanation could be that he resided in Philadelphia, America's most cosmopolitan city at the time and would have been exposed to many travellers, European and American. William Maclay was a successful farmer from the western part of Pennsylvania, far from the metropolitan centre.³⁹ If indeed Jefferson were wearing a French cut coat during his first few months back in the United States, it could have looked more remarkable to Maclay than to Philadelphian, Dr Rush. American provincialism was always uneven, and obviously Rush and Maclay saw two different Jeffersons. What is notable is that both seemed interested in how much of Europe he had absorbed and both looked to his clothing and mannerisms as an indicator. Political independence may have been won, but the cultural influence of Europe and Britain remained intact.

Jefferson was in New York less than six months, arriving March 21st and leaving for Virginia in the company of James Madison on 1 September 1790.⁴⁰ He left disconcerted, fearing that the shaping of the new constitution was going toward a more monarchical model. There are no known visual images and few descriptions outside of William Maclay's to give hints at how he may have begun to alter his image from the world of 'European folly' (as identified by Maclay) to support his vision of a true democratic-republican nation. An extant visual representation of Jefferson would wait until the government's move to Philadelphia and a portrait by one of the city's leading artists, Charles Willson Peale. (fig. 2.1)

* * * * *

Charles Wilson Peale's portrait of *Thomas Jefferson* was initiated by the artist. Peale approached the secretary of state in December 1791 for a sitting but

³⁸ Benjamin Rush, 'Common Place Book', 17 March 1790, as quoted in John P. Kaminski, *Quotable Jefferson* (Princeton, NJ, 2006), 454.

³⁹ Freeman, *Affairs of Honor*, 12.

⁴⁰ *JMB*, I: 754, 'Mar. 21. Arrived in N. York', and I:765, 'Sep. 1. Left N. York'.

Jefferson didn't appear for the first appointed time. He wrote Jefferson a brief note with a tone of reprimand that began, 'I was under the mistake in expecting the favor of your setting at One O'clock this day'. He suggested Jefferson appoint a time of his convenience then concluded, 'I have a great desire to exert my abilities in this portrait and your indulgence will gratefully [*sic*] obligate'.⁴¹ Jefferson apparently made the next appointment, and despite a somewhat tense beginning, the portrait sitting was successful in producing a strong friendship between the two men and a lasting image of Jefferson as secretary of state.

Peale wanted Jefferson's portrait for his 'gallery of distinguished characters'. This collection was begun during the Revolutionary War, and the earliest portraits were primarily of American and French military officers. By the conclusion of the war in 1783 he estimated that he had 'thirty to forty principal characters' that he identified as 'distinguished by their actions as officers'. The original portrait was always retained by Peale as an addition to his own collection, which he estimated 'had cost me much time and labor'.⁴² His subjects soon began to extend beyond the military to include other men who had contributed to American independence. Many years later, as he reflected on his collection, he believed there was a value simply in the number of portraits that could be viewed together as a whole, however the true value was not in the number but in the history they represented. He wrote, 'The memory of very many of these men, for their united efforts to obtain our independence, deserve our grateful remembrance'.⁴³ In the goal of using art as a means of preserving history, Peale's gallery of distinguished characters was not unlike Jefferson's collection of worthies that he had begun in Paris, and certainly there was some over-lap in the subjects chosen. Jefferson's collection, never as extensive as Peale's, remained semi-private while the Peale gallery was a commercial venture as well as a record of American history. Peale wrote of his own collection that he was, 'Ever fond of perpetuating the Remembrance of the Worthies

⁴¹ Charles Willson Peale to TJ, undated, about 12 January 1792, *Selected Papers of Charles Willson Peale and His Family*, ed. Lillian B. Miller, 5 vols. in 6 (New Haven, CT., 1983 – 2000), 2: Part I, 5.

⁴² C.W. Peale to Edmond Jennings, 10 December 1783, in Mrs. Burd Peale Collection, American Philosophical Society Library, B.P. 31.8b. For a history of Peale's collection, see Doris D. Fanelli, *History of the Portrait Collection, Independence National Historical Park*, ed. Karie Diethorn (Philadelphia, 2002) ; see also Fortune, *Portraits of Virtue*.

⁴³ C.W. Peale, 'Address delivered by Charles W. Peale, to the Corporation and Citizens of Philadelphia', 18 July 1816 (Philadelphia), 17, as viewed at <http://infoweb.newsbank.com>.

of my time’, and explained ‘I conceive it will be a means of exciting an Emulation in our Posterity’. He foresaw his portraits as integral to the telling of the history of the American Revolution, and in his words, ‘the Likeness being added to the Historic page [gives] it more force and the Reader more pleasure’.⁴⁴

Peale’s ideas on the value of portraiture as applied to American heroes trace to theories surrounding British painting and the place of art and artists within the larger public sphere. Peale was fortunate to have studied in London from 1767 through 1769 with the support of a group of eleven American subscribers. He had sailed from Maryland in December 1766 with a letter of recommendation to the well-established American-London artist, Benjamin West.⁴⁵ His diary through these years is sparse, but as other of West’s students, he would have had the opportunity to visit the studio of Sir Joshua Reynolds, made drawings from the casts belonging to the Duke of Richmond, viewed the royal collection at Hampton Court and taken advantage of original master paintings and copies in West’s studio.⁴⁶ These years of study allowed Peale to expand in his technical proficiency and his understanding of the broader attitudes toward art, the artist, and their place and function within society. Unlike American born artists Benjamin West and John Singleton Copley who made very successful careers in London, Peale chose to return to his native country to try and make his way. A profession as an artist in America was not easy and required a degree of ingenuity on his part, as he finally expanded his art gallery into a museum that displayed natural history along with his portraits of historical figures.

Art and its role within the eighteenth century British concept of traditional civic humanism began to change by mid-century with the rapid growth of a market economy. John Barrell in his notable book, *The Political Theory of Painting*, explores the ideas of civic humanism and their application to British art. He used the writings of Shaftsbury, George Turnbull, John Brown, James Thomson along with others to illustrate the attitudes early in the century toward the concept of civic

⁴⁴ C.W. Peale to President Reed of the Supreme Executive Council, as quoted in Charles Coleman Sellers, *Charles Willson Peale* (New York, 1969), 183-84.

⁴⁵ C.W. Peale, ‘Diary No. 1’, ‘Memoranda and accounts while in England, 1767’, C.W. Peale Papers, American Philosophical Society Library.

⁴⁶ Lillian B. Miller, ‘In the Shadow of His Father’, in *New Perspectives on Charles Willson Peale*, eds. Lillian B. Miller and David Ward, (Pittsburgh, PA, 1991), 90-91.

virtue and the order this placed upon society. The man of civic virtue must place the interests of the public over those of his private concerns. These would be the leaders who looked to the public good above self and of necessity must be economically independent to allow for participation in public affairs, therefore a gentleman of liberal education. These ideas went back to Aristotle and other classical writers before being picked up in eighteenth century thought. As the century progressed, however, the expansion of commerce and a market economy allowed the bourgeois merchant and entrepreneur to challenge the assumptions of Shaftsbury that their role in the traditions supporting civic humanism must be limited.⁴⁷

Peale's own circumstance would have held him closer to the arguments put forward by artist-writer, Jonathan Richardson, who disagreed with Shaftsbury's premise that portrait painters were 'mere mechanics'. Richardson admitted that the artist must work with his hand and eye as would a mechanic, but also he must think as a gentleman and his head must be 'clear and lively'.⁴⁸ In Richardson's estimation it was possible to be a gentleman, and still pursue a private rather than a public career. To him private enterprise did not conflict with remaining a man of virtue and through his art, he felt he contribute to the public good.⁴⁹ Peale, as Richardson, would rely upon his work as a portrait painter for his main source of income. On various occasions he would declare that his work was undertaken 'with an ardent desire of rendering myself useful to my country'.⁵⁰ The breadth of his correspondence that perpetuated his close friendships with influential American leaders, such as Jefferson, indicates that he did not view himself as a mere mechanic but rather as a contributor to the fabric of civic virtue as it existed in the United States. The men of his portrait collection were those who led and governed and could offer knowledge and inspiration to the viewer. The creation of this collection was, for Peale, a contribution to society.

Peale's portrait of Jefferson as Secretary of State records a significant shift in image from that of Jefferson as Minister to France in the portrait taken by Mather

⁴⁷ Barrell, *Political Theory of Painting*, especially 7 – 20.

⁴⁸ Richardson, *Works of Jonathan Richardson*, 14-15.

⁴⁹ Barrell, 20-21.

⁵⁰ Charles Willson Peale, 'Introductory Lecture', given at the Peale Museum, American Philosophical Society Library, Microfilm, Mss.Film 240, Reel 10.

Brown in London in 1786. (see figs. 1.1 & 2.1) Jefferson's hair, in its natural rusty-red hue, is simply brushed away from his face, which suggests far less time given to grooming than the heavily powdered and formally dressed hair expected of a gentleman in *ancien régime* France. His accounting records through the year of 1791 do show purchases for pomatum and powder even though he was having difficulty retaining a satisfactory valet. Early in the year he had advertised for 'A Genteel Servant, who can shave and dress well, attend a gentleman on horseback, wait at table, and be well recommended', but by December, when he sat for Peale, he was being served by the third to occupy this position.⁵¹ It was not until the following March 1792 that he would hire Joseph, 'the French boy', who had the abilities that he sought.⁵² Yet even without someone on his personal staff who was adept at a shave and dressing the hair well, it would have been possible to find an adequate barber in a city the size of Philadelphia if he had wanted. The decision to have his portrait taken with his hair unpowdered and very simply dressed would have been one of choice.

The clothing which Jefferson chose for his sitting with Peale reflected much the same attitude toward style and taste as did his hair. The simple ruffle without lace on the centre front of his shirt can hardly compare to the prominent pleated frill of the Brown portrait. Only the very tall turn-down collar of the frock coat gives an awareness of current fashion. The coat and waistcoat match in colour those ordered from his New York tailor, Christian Baehr, before he left Philadelphia in August 1791 for Monticello. Jefferson wrote Baehr requesting, 'If either now or at any time hence you can find a superfine French cloth, of the very dark blue which you know I wear, I will be obliged to you to make and send me a coat of it'. Two weeks later he sent another letter to Baehr adding additional items to the order: 'When I wrote you lately desiring some clothes to be made, I omitted to desire a gilet and a pair of breeches of buff Casimir, a very light buff, not a yellow one. I leave this place for Virginia on the 2d. of Sep. and shall not return till the 24th. of Octob. when I shall

⁵¹ *JMB*, II: 815, n. 33. The advertisement appeared in Benjamin Franklin Bache's *General Advertiser* and ran from 7 January to 2 February 1791. On 2 November he hired John Mole, who remained in his employment only until 15 Jan 1792.

⁵² *Ibid.*, II: 865.

be glad to receive the several articles'.⁵³ He settled his account with Baehr in January 1792 for the items received and explained the delay in payment as Baehr's invoice had been sent to Virginia then back to Philadelphia.⁵⁴ It would appear likely that the clothing would have been available to Jefferson at the time of his December meeting with Peale.

Jefferson's stated preference for a dark blue coat with a buff waistcoat (gilet) and breeches was a colour combination that would have been familiar to many Americans. Washington had chosen these colours for his own uniform and had required that his major generals wear a blue coat with buff facings, white or buff breeches and that brigadier generals wear the same with the distinguishing difference of two stars on the epaulets of major generals and one star for the brigadiers.⁵⁵ He left some discretion in regimental uniforms, but from the beginning of actual conflict with the British, Washington was concerned with the 'impolicy of any part of our Troops being Clothed in Red'. He warned that unless the colour was changed immediately, 'our people will be destroying themselves'.⁵⁶ Blue became the choice colour, which created another problem, as in 1779 Washington was complaining that 'Blue Cloth is now higher priced than any other (except scarlet and Buff) because such numbers prefer it'.⁵⁷

Descriptions and portraits of Washington in his uniform became popular during the war and made their way to Europe and England. Jefferson's portrait of Washington by Joseph Wright that hung in his Paris dining room was but one example; Peale's gallery contained many more. (Fig. 2.2) A young Englishman, who had been captured by the American navy when sailing for Jamaica, had the privilege of meeting the famous general during his detention. He wrote his mother in England of Washington's great affability and how, 'in his dress he was perfectly plain—an old blue coat faced with buff [,] waistcoat and britches of the latter, seemingly of the same age & without any lace upon them composed his dress, his shirt had no ruffles at the wrists, but of very fine linen—he always wears Boots. . . .His hair is a little

⁵³ TJ to Christian Baehr, 14 August 1791 and 29 August 1791, *PTJ*, 22: 39.

⁵⁴ *JMB*, II: 861.

⁵⁵ George Washington, "General Orders," 18 June 1780, *Writings of George Washington*, ed. John C. Fitzpatrick, 39 vols. (Washington, DC, 1931–1944), 19: 21–23.

⁵⁶ George Washington to James Mease, 12 May 1777, *ibid.*, 8:55.

⁵⁷ George Washington to Joseph Reed, 5 April 1779, *ibid.*, 14: 341.

gray & combed smoothly back from the forehead & in a small queue—no curls [sic] & but very little Powder to it'.⁵⁸ This was Washington's dress as general in the field and not necessarily his appearance on later, more formal occasions as president.

Yet Jefferson had never been in the army and so had never worn the blue and the buff as a uniform. In fact, his experience as war-time governor of Virginia during the Revolution had been the lowest point of his public career and haunted him for the rest of his life. As Governor during the British invasion of Virginia that began in January 1781, he was accused of negligence in his duty to protect the state and some intimated cowardice on his part. At the British advance, Governor Jefferson and other Virginia delegates had retreated from the capital at Richmond to Charlottesville and then most of the Delegates fled on into the Blue Ridge Mountains. In the flight from Charlottesville, Jefferson had left the body of Delegates, as he considered that his term as governor had ended, and gave precedence to conducting his family to his holdings in southern Virginia. From this action rose the accusations of cowardice and abandonment of duty. Jefferson addressed his resignation as governor in his 'Autobiography' and wrote,

From a belief that under the pressure of the invasion under which we were then labouring the public would have more confidence in a Military chief, and that the Military commander, being invested with the Civil power also, both might be wielded with more energy promptitude and effect for the defence of the state, I resigned the administration at the end of my 2d. year, and General Nelson was appointed to succeed me.⁵⁹

There was a resolution for an inquiry into his conduct brought forward in the House of Delegates that Jefferson believed was secretly initiated by his political rival, Patrick Henry. Jefferson was fully prepared to address every charge, but with the success of the American and French forces at Yorktown and safety restored to Virginia, the charges were not pursued and rather Jefferson was voted an official 'Resolution of Thanks'. Even though he was publically vindicated, the incidence of his fleeing Monticello and the implications of cowardice were referenced over and

⁵⁸ Ibid., 26:321.

⁵⁹ Jefferson, 'Autobiography' in *TJW*, 45.

over by opponents throughout his political career and threatened his honour and legacy.⁶⁰ His recognition that during the invasion the situation called for someone with military expertise and that he was not that person, removed him further from any connection with a uniform. But the blue and the buff took on a wider connotation than just that of the Continental Army Uniform.

The blue and the buff infiltrated British politics as well. It became a badge of political dissent in the British parliament during the American conflict as led by Charles James Fox. He embraced the American cause and at the beginning of parliament in November 1780, Fox openly levelled the accusation against the king that, ‘the present reign offers one uninterrupted series of disgrace, misfortune, and calamity’!⁶¹ He accompanied these charges by appearing in parliament dressed in blue and buff. As described by Sir William Wraxall, ‘He constantly, or at least usually wore in the House of Commons, a blue frock coat, and a buff waistcoat, neither of which seemed in general new, and sometimes appeared to be threadbare. Nor ought it to be forgotten, that these colours, like the *White Rose* formerly worn by the adherents of the family of Stuart, then constituted the distinguishing badge or uniform of Washington and the American Insurgents’. (figs. 2.3 & 2.4) Fox’s political position was joined by Edmund Burke, but he did not go so far as to take up the blue and buff motif. According to Wraxall, ‘In his dress and exterior he was not less negligent than Fox: but, the spirit of party did not blend with the colour of his apparel; and he rarely or never came to the House in Blue and Buff, though he eulogized [Henry] Laurens, the American Ex-President, when a prisoner in the Tower’.⁶²

The wearing of the blue and the buff as a sign of protest against the king and his administration became popularly known. At times it could take an amusing twist when the blue and the buff and a case of mistaken identity caused enough of an uproar to make a news-worthy story. A Doctor Thomasson and his wife from York

⁶⁰ For a very complete account of the invasion of Virginia and Jefferson as war-time governor, see Michael Kranish, *Flight from Monticello: Thomas Jefferson at War* (Oxford, 2010); for Jefferson’s concerns with the effects of accusations stemming from his role as governor upon his legacy, see Francis D. Cogliano, *Thomas Jefferson: Reputation and Legacy* (Charlottesville, VA, 2006), especially Chapter 2: 44-73.

⁶¹ N. William Wraxell, *Historical Memoirs of My Own Time* (London, 1815, reprinted 1904), 349.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 338 & 358.

were visiting a very good friend in Manchester. Unfortunately, according to the newspaper account, ‘The Doctor having a blue and buff coat and waistcoat, and somewhat more than usual preparations having been made for his reception, it was quickly whispered in the neighbourhood that the celebrated Mr. Thomas Paine was arrived’. The local supporters of the ministry, and therefore much opposed to Paine, recruited a mob of ‘ragamuffins’ that surrounded the visiting doctor’s carriage. He saved himself and his carriage by convincing the locals that he was not Thomas Paine nor did he know Thomas Paine.⁶³ There is nothing to indicate either pictorially or in written accounts that Paine had adopted the habit of dressing in the colours of blue and buff, but this incident would affirm that this motif had come to represent opposition to the current ministry and support of the American colonies and their separation from Britain. Paine, of course, was identified with his writings that had spurred on the American insurgence, but then he became even more notorious in his support of the French Revolution.

Yet prior to Fox’s appearance in parliament dressed in colours symbolizing the American conflict, there was a more universal appeal to the blue coat paired with the buff waistcoat. In 1774 Johann Wolfgang von Goethe published his novel that would become popular across Europe, *Die Leiden des jungen Werther*, or in its English translation, *The Sorrows of the Young Werther*. The young protagonist commits suicide dressed, ‘im blauen Frack mit gelber Weste’.⁶⁴ (This literally translates as a blue frock coat with a yellow waistcoat, however ‘buff’ could extend to a yellow hue. As mentioned, Jefferson cautioned his tailor that he preferred a very light buff not a yellow one.) In his memoir *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, Goethe remembered the young man, Karl Wilhelm Jerusalem, who had inspired his character Werther. He noted that, ‘He wore the clothes that were usual, in imitation of the English, in northern Germany: a blue frock-coat, a buff leather waistcoat and

⁶³ ‘Extract of a letter from Manchester England, May 16’ was reprinted in several American newspapers: *Daily Advertiser*, 9 August 1792 (New York), *United Columbia*, 23 August 1792 (Philadelphia), *Massachusetts Spy*, 23 August 1792 (Worcester, MA), as viewed on *America’s Historical Newspapers*.

⁶⁴ Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Die Leiden des jungen Werther*, 1774, p. 49 at <http://www.digbib.org>.

breeches'.⁶⁵ If indeed this assumption is correct, it was ironic that the fashion trend of the blue coat and buff waistcoat and breeches that became so important in the American Revolution was first associated with England before it gained a more universal recognition across Europe with the publication of Goethe's *Werther*. Nevertheless, by the end of the decade in which *Werther* was published and the beginning of the 1780s, the colour choices of a young romantic came in competition with the symbolism attached to an international political contest and took on a far different connotation for many.

When Jefferson chose a blue frock coat and buff waistcoat for his portrait by Peale, he may not have been as concerned with the broader, more universal connection of the romantic everyman, *Werther*, nor had he worn a Continental Army uniform. Still the colour choice created a visual link to the memory of the American Revolution and the implication of maintaining the true republicanism attached to that memory. Many years later as he wrote his 'Autobiography', he recollected how during the War of Independence, the fear of an external enemy had 'hooped us together'. He could hope that the memory of that experience would continue to join the American people together, even though now the enemy, as he saw it, was not just external but included the monocrats within the federal government. He must have been pleased to find that his own role in the revolution not forgotten. This was evidenced at the dinner given in his honour by the citizens of Alexandria, who remembered, 'the tenor of your conduct when we were struggling in the sacred cause of freedom'.⁶⁶ He could hope that the look he put forward in Peale's portrait would make a visual link to that time of struggle for freedom.

Jefferson portrait joined those of other men in Peale's collection that linked in some manner to the American Revolution, with many dressed in the blue and buff of a uniform and others, as Jefferson, displaying the popular colours in civilian wear. 'An Historical Catalogue of Peales' Collection of Paintings' produced in 1795 read like a roster of important figures from the revolutionary period. The entry for the Honourable Thomas Jefferson names him as a 'Member of Congress at the Declaration of American Independence' but does not give him credit as the penman

⁶⁵ As cited in Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *The Sorrows of Young Werther*, trans & intro Michael Hulse (London, Penguin Classics edition, 1989), 9.

⁶⁶ 'Address of Welcome from the Mayor of Alexandria', *PTJ*, 16: 224.

of the document, which would question if at this date Jefferson was being universally recognized as the primary author. After noting that he was ambassador to France and secretary of state, he is given credit as the author of ‘the much admired *Notes on Virginia*’.⁶⁷ It is not surprising that Peale would have a special interest in this work by Jefferson considering his own interest in the natural sciences. By this point he had already begun to add natural history specimens to his gallery of paintings, creating one of the first museums in the country, and over time his interest in natural history came to rival if not exceed that of art.⁶⁸ The natural sciences served as the basis of the long friendship that developed between Jefferson and Peale beginning with the December 1791 portrait. Within two months Jefferson was a subscriber to Peale’s gallery-museum and was appointed as the first president of the Board of Visitors.⁶⁹

At the same time Jefferson began establishing a friendship with Charles Willson Peale, his friendship with artist John Trumbull began to fail. The issues which Trumbull names in his *Autobiography* that caused a cooling of their friendship echoed those reverberating through the federal government. In Trumbull’s view, ‘as the French revolution advanced, my whole soul revolted from the atrocities of France, while he approved or apologized for all. He opposed Washington---I revered him---and a coolness gradually succeeded’. The final incident took place at one of Jefferson’s dinner parties in 1793, when Trumbull felt he was verbally attacked by another of the dinner guests, Virginia Congressman William Branch Giles, while his host, Jefferson, simply looked on, nodded and smiled. ‘From this time my acquaintance with Mr. Jefferson became cold and distant’.⁷⁰

Whether or not Jefferson fully approved of all the events in France that included the deaths of many people he had known and admired, he did publically uphold a sister republic against monarchical tyranny and maintained that eventually

⁶⁷ Charles Willson Peale, *An Historical Catalogue of Peale’s Collection of Paintings* (Philadelphia, 1795), 16.

⁶⁸ For Peale’s Museum and Peale’s theory on the museum within the nation, see David R. Brigham, *Public Culture in the Early Republic: Peale’s Museum and Its Audience* (Washington, DC, 1995).

⁶⁹ *JMB*, II: 865 and n. 45.

⁷⁰ John Trumbull, *Autobiography*, 173-75.

the revolution would succeed.⁷¹ Alexander Hamilton expressed in a letter of 1792 that ‘He [Jefferson] drank deeply of the French Philosophy, in Religion, in Science, in politics. He came from France in the moment of a fermentation which he had had a share in exciting’. Hamilton believed that along with his attachment to France, Jefferson had a plan of ‘knitting together the two Countries in the closest political bands’.⁷²

Word was about that Jefferson would be leaving his position at the end of the year, 1793. John Adams wrote to Abigail concerning their formerly close friend: ‘I am told Mr. Jefferson is to resign tomorrow. I have so long been in an habit of thinking well of his Abilities and general good dispositions, that I cannot but feel some regret at this Event’. He went on to predict, ‘If he is neglected at Montecello [*sic*] he will soon see a Spectre like the disgraced Statesman in Gill Blass, and not long afterwards will die’. Adams was referring to the popular work titled, *The Adventures of Gil Blas*, and was comparing Jefferson to the Count in the story who, after losing position and reputation, retires to his gardens only to be haunted to an early death. Adams concludes his thought, ‘for instead of being the ardent pursuer of science that some think him, I know he is indolent, and his soul is poisoned with Ambition’.⁷³

Jefferson left Philadelphia for Monticello on 5 January 1794, where he would spend the next three years redesigning his house and focusing upon his farms. He did not die as the Count in *Gil Blas*, but then he was hardly neglected and forgotten. Alexander Hamilton recognized in 1795 that, ‘There are three persons prominent in the public eye, as the successor of the actual President of the United States [Washington] in the event of his retreat from the station, Mr. Adams, Mr. Jay, Mr. Jefferson’.⁷⁴ The *Jefferson* dressed in the blue and the buff was still on view at the Peale Museum in Philadelphia, and in 1795 it was chosen as the prototype for a series of engravings of Revolutionary War heroes by artist and engraver William

⁷¹ Malone, II: 265, 355-56; see also TJ to William Short, 3 January 1793, *PTJ*, 25: 14 – 16.

⁷² Alexander Hamilton, *Writings*, ed. Joanne B. Freeman (New York, 2001), 746.

⁷³ John Adams to Abigail Adams, 26 December 1793, *Adams Family Correspondence*, 9: 484-85 & n. 3 at 485. Adams refers to *Histoire de Gil Blas de Santillane Par M. Le Sage*, 1769. There is a copy of this work in the Thomas Jefferson Foundation collection that is believed to have belonged to Martha Jefferson Randolph.

⁷⁴ Alexander Hamilton, *Writings*, 846.

Birch. This will be discussed in more detail in the following chapter, but the selection of Jefferson's image indicated that not only was he not forgotten, but he represented the still vibrant memory of the revolutionary move for independence. The position as secretary of state may not have been his first choice, but obviously he had made the transition from cosmopolitan diplomat with hints of 'European folly' to an image that suited the emerging ideas of nationhood. In 1796 he would rejoin President Adams in Philadelphia as his vice president.

CHAPTER 3: End of a Decade and an Image for the Election of 1800

At the conclusion of the politically turbulent 1790s, a second portrait of Thomas Jefferson was added to the Peale galleries. This painting of Vice President Jefferson was a self-commission by Charles Willson Peale's son, Rembrandt, who capitalized upon his notable surname for his trade name as an artist. Rembrandt's portrait, taken early in 1800, reflected a change in Jefferson's image. The earlier impression of Jefferson the Revolutionary, dressed in the blue and the buff with unpowdered hair from the 1791 C.W. Peale portrait had given way to Jefferson the statesman, dressed in black with moderately dressed and powdered hair that expressed a position which could be interpreted as responsible, moderate, and egalitarian. (fig. 3.1)

This chapter explores the visible shift in Jefferson's self-presentation and proposes that this refashioning of his public image reflected more than just a change in fashion and his personal taste. On the eve of the election of 1800, he could no longer deny his position as the designated leader of the republican faction that opposed the Federalists then in power. His public reputation could influence their ability to gain control of the national government. The political and personal attacks in the newspapers were still virulent on both sides, and many of the same issues that had driven Jefferson into his brief retirement in the middle of the decade remained contentious. The accusations directed toward him of personal ambition, conspiring with France to compromise the United States government, and a desire to undermine the Federal Constitution would have to be countered if the republicans were to be successful. The Revolution that he had recalled in the earlier Peale portrait was still remembered and widely celebrated on the Fourth of July and certainly important to Jefferson personally, but this was equalled by the growing public respect for the Constitution that bound the states together and offered stability and security.¹ It would behove Jefferson to visually offer an equanimity that fully supported all aspects of the nation's founding.

The life portrait by Rembrandt Peale became the foremost and most widely copied image of Jefferson as the country moved toward the election of 1800. This chapter places this portrait within the context of events and the extremely polemical

¹ Simon P. Newman, *Parades and the Politics of the Street* (Philadelphia, 1997), 39 – 43.

opinions of Jefferson at the conclusion of the 1790s and his term as vice president. It becomes a visual reference for the argument that his adoption of the black suit in this very public portrait allowed Jefferson to appear the egalitarian statesman who could guide the nation with equanimity and rise above the divisive political partisanship. As the decade drew to a close, Jefferson took his blows, received his accolades and modified the appearance of his public self.

* * * * *

If Jefferson is to be believed, he did not seek the nomination for the presidential office in 1796. Nevertheless, as the rumour began to spread that Washington intended to step down from the presidency at the conclusion of his current term, James Madison confided to James Monroe, ‘The republicans knowing that Jefferson alone can be started with hope of success mean to push him’. But based upon their recent correspondence, Madison feared that if openly approached, Jefferson would publicly decline standing for the office.² Ironically, Jefferson’s thoughts appeared to be that Madison, still active in the House of Representatives, should pursue the top office in the nation. Jefferson did not want to give up his own retirement ‘for the empire of the Universe’ and admitted some guilt in requesting Madison, ‘one, whose happiness I have as much at heart as yours, to take the front of the battle’. Jefferson’s very brief retirement would not have allowed him to forget the ‘battles’ that were so personally unpleasant given his rather reticent nature. It was not just self-effacement behind his statement to Madison that ‘there is not another person in the US who being placed at the helm of our affairs, my mind would be so completely at rest for the fortune of our political bark’.³ For his own part he claimed that, ‘to glide unnoticed thro’ a silent execution of duty is the only ambition which becomes me’.⁴

Was this simply posturing to cover his own ambition? There can be no absolute answer, but it is certainly possible that Jefferson was experiencing

² James Madison to James Monroe, 26 February 1796, *Papers of James Madison Digital Edition*, ed. J.C.A. Stagg, (Charlottesville, University of Virginia Rotunda Project, 2010), 16: 233-34.

³ TJ to James Madison, 27 April 1795, *PTJ*, 28: 338-39.

⁴ TJ to John Paradise, 5 July 1789, *PTJ*, 15: 242.

uncertainty at stepping once more into a federal position after his experiences as secretary of state and the political animosities laid bare in the press. Jefferson used this April 1795 letter to Madison to summarize his reason for giving up his position as secretary of state and to put forward his reservations at further involvement in public office, 'all office high or low, without exception'. As he explained, it was the accusations hurled at him from the opposition press, especially the charge that his true aim was the presidency that had caused him to examine his own motives very carefully. This examination led to his decision for retirement. He felt the gentlemanly requisite of public duty had been fulfilled, thus he was free to maintain his honour and reputation by removing himself from the public sphere and indulging in the tranquillity of his farms and the satisfaction of personal labour. He considered the question of his holding public office as closed.⁵

Ambition-----this had been a frequent theme of Federalist charges against Jefferson and a charge that he had to counter in order to keep his honour above reproach. In the gentlemanly code still recognized by Jefferson and his generation, true civic virtue did not allow for the promotion of one's own interests above that of the public interest. Ambition was always suspect, as it could drive self-interest and in the process could contribute to the downfall of a republic. Enlightened gentlemen would be aware that history had exposed ambitious men who had destroyed republics through their own desire for power.⁶ Jefferson exonerated himself in his letter to Madison and claimed that, 'The little spice of ambition, which I had in my younger days, has long since evaporated, and I set still less store by a posthumous than present name'.⁷ For John Adams, Jefferson's ambition had not evaporated with youth and even as he left the office of Secretary of State, Adams pronounced that 'his soul is poisoned with Ambition'.⁸ Other key Federalists joined Adams in their uneasiness with Jefferson's ambition, whether real or imagined.

Even though this question of ambition may have been a personal and very private concern, it was the public accusations in the Federalist press that ultimately

⁵ TJ to Madison, 27 April 1795, *ibid.*, 28: 338-39..

⁶ See discussion in Barrell, *Political Theory*, 3-10, and Freeman, *Affairs of Honor*, 7.

⁷ TJ to Madison, 28: 338-39.

⁸ John Adams to Abigail Adams, 26 December 1793, *Adams Family Correspondence*, 9: 484-85 & n. 3, 485.

drove him into retirement. Here he was identified at the head of the Republican faction and with ambitions to the presidency. Ironically, it was Hamilton in his newspaper essays that first identified Jefferson as the ‘head of a party’.⁹ Hamilton’s goal was to alert the public to Jefferson’s duplicity, but those who disagreed with Hamilton’s charges against Jefferson and were wary of the Federalist’s intent for a national government of the elite few used the press with equal vehemence. The press wars of the 1790s were vicious, and it was understandable that Jefferson was reluctant to step back into this ‘battle’.¹⁰ Even as Madison planned Jefferson’s entry into the presidential election of 1796, he confided to Monroe, ‘Whether he will get a majority of vote is uncertain. I am by no means sanguine’, and admitted ‘his enemies are as indefatigable as they are malignant’.¹¹

By October Jefferson would have known his name was being put forward and apparently was resigned to the possibilities of once again entering public service. He made the reflective comment as he responded to a letter from a supporter, ‘I have not the arrogance to say I would refuse the honorable office you mention to me; but I can say with truth that I had rather be thought worthy of it than to be appointed to it’. He concluded his thought and has been quoted often in stating, ‘[For] well I know that no man will ever bring out of that office the reputation which carries him into it’.¹² He would later experience the truth in this statement, however more relevant to this discussion was his concern, ‘I had rather be thought worthy. . . than to be appointed’. Jefferson cared about his public image but knew that image was easier to maintain and direct when standing slightly back, involved but not leading the foray. But in the election of 1796 he was spared the worries of the first office by losing to John Adams by three electoral votes. As vice president he could safely state his observations on the presidency, ‘The second office of this government is honorable and easy. The first is but a splendid misery’.¹³ On March 2,

⁹ Alexander Hamilton, ‘An American No. 1’, 4 August 1792, in *Hamilton Writings*, 759.

¹⁰ For discussions of the Jefferson-Hamilton conflict, see Robert M.S. McDonald, ‘The Hamilton Invention of Thomas Jefferson’ and James H. Read, ‘Alexander Hamilton’s View of Thomas Jefferson’s Ideology and Character’, both essays published in *The Many Faces of Alexander Hamilton*, eds. Douglas Ambrose & Robert W. T. Martin (New York, 2006) 54 – 76; 77 – 106.

¹¹ James Madison to James Monroe, 29 September 1796, *Papers of James Madison Digital Edition*, 16: 403.

¹² TJ to William Cocks, 21 October 1796, *PTJ*, 29: 199.

¹³ TJ to Elbridge Gerry, 13 May 1797, *PTJ* 29: 362.

1797 he arrived once more in Philadelphia. Local newspapers announced his arrival and described the reception of the ‘tried patriot’ with sixteen rounds fired by the Company of Artillery and a flag flown with the motto, ‘Jefferson the Friend of the People’.¹⁴ On the following day he was installed as the president of the American Philosophical Society and then the next day inaugurated as the vice president of the United States.¹⁵ If his protestations about re-entering public office were sincere, then undoubtedly he was much happier with the first installation over the second.

* * * * *

During Jefferson’s absence from the national government, one print was made from his portrait by C.W. Peale by the artist and engraver William Birch, who then placed it in an exhibition held in Philadelphia in 1795. This exhibition was the culminating activity of a group of artists that called their organization the Columbianum. The aim of this group was to establish an academy for the training and improvement of young artists as well as support exhibitions in which the established, practicing artists could publically display their work, but the organization quickly dissolved into schism and acrimony. The short life of this early attempt at creating an academy and organization for American artists demonstrates that even the art world was not immune from the polarity that divided political opinions in the 1790s. The initial disagreements arose from differences in opinion on the structure and goals of the academy but quickly came to include some of the same prejudices that infected national politics as well.

Charles Willson Peale was among the organizers, and the first meeting was held at the Peale Museum on December 29, 1794. The minutes of the first meeting opened with the statement of the group’s aspirations: ‘An association of Artists in America for the protection and encouragement of the Fine Arts’. The original signatories acknowledged that the arts were in their infancy in America and so

¹⁴ *Gazette of the United States*, Philadelphia, 3 March 1797, viewed on *America’s Historical Newspapers*.

¹⁵ See chronology in *JMB*, I: li.

committed to their growth and support by establishing an academy for the study of architecture, sculpture, and painting. They adopted the name the Columbianum.¹⁶

Jefferson would have been aware of this attempt to form an arts organization, as he was contacted by the secretary, Richard Clairborne, who wrote to Jefferson, encouraging his involvement. Clairborne's missing letter is listed as received in Jefferson's journal of letters and his reply on February 21, 1795 obviously responds to Clairborne's solicitation. He wished them well on establishing an academy but was very firm in his desire to maintain his retirement at Monticello by not being drawn into national organizations.¹⁷

Unfortunately, by the time Clairborne was writing his letter to Jefferson, the association was already reaching a split. On February 2nd a group of eight members resigned, 'highly disapproving' of motions brought forward at the previous meeting and of motions that were 'negatived'.¹⁸ The exact nature of the disagreement was not spelled out in the resignation letter that was published in the *Philadelphia Gazette* (26 February 1795) as well as other local newspapers, but the first matter argued publically was who had the right to the name 'Columbianum'. The break-away group of eight claimed they had originated the name and thus should take it with them. The initial members that continued to meet at Peale's Museum countered that the name should remain with the original association. The splinter group pointed out that Columbianum, 'classically speaking, has no other import than the word *American*, *Columbia* and the *American nation* being synonymous', and as they were planning an organization that they felt was of a broader, more national scope than the local 'Academical Drawing-School' being proposed by Peale and his colleagues, then the title was more appropriate for their 'National College'. This group identified themselves as 'The Columbianum, or National College of Painting, Sculpture, Architecture and Engraving'. The original group that collected around

¹⁶ *Selected Papers of Charles Willson Peale*, II, Part 1: 101-04.

¹⁷ TJ to Richard Clairborne, 21 February 1795, *PTJ*, 28: 273.

¹⁸ The names that appeared in the *Philadelphia Gazette* as signatories on the resignation letter were: John James Barralet, George J. Parkyns, Cotton Milbourne, Walter Robertson, Robert Field, William Groombridge, James Haworth, P.P. Price. These, along with other members are identified in *Selected Papers of Charles Willson Peale*, II, Part 1: 107-09.

Peale took the name ‘The Columbianum, or American Academy of Painting, Sculpture, Architecture and Engraving’.¹⁹

This question of who more truly represented the American nation was the flash-point. Peale’s group quickly charged that the eight now aspiring to the founding of a national American college were not qualified for such an undertaking, as they were not citizens and put forward the question, ‘Will the enlightened Americans submit to be dictated to by eight foreigners’?²⁰ Citizen versus alien had become a national concern as well and remained an issue through the rest of the decade.

What may have sparked this particular accusation by the Peale group was the larger debate currently in Congress. In late December, at about the time of the initial organizational meeting of the artists, Congress entered deliberations on a new naturalization act that would become law on January 29, 1795. The revised law increased the residency requirement from two to five years.²¹ The only controversial point was introduced by Virginian, William Branch Giles, who proposed that any alien holding an aristocratic title or some claim to nobility from his previous homeland must renounce the title upon application for citizenship. The Federalists opposed this move, and Senator Samuel Dexter from Massachusetts tried to counter by requiring restrictions on slaveholding immigrants, arguing that, ‘You want to hold us up to the public as aristocrats. I, as a retaliation [*sic*], will hold you up to the same public as dealers in slaves’.²² In James Madison’s regular report to Jefferson on congressional and political activities, he pronounced the Federalist move as a ‘blunder’ not likely to be popular with their constituency. Giles proposal passed by a large margin and Dexter’s was equally defeated.²³ It would seem that more were at ease with new citizens holding slaves than bearing aristocratic titles. This reflected upon the tenor of the argument between the two Columbianum groups.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 27 February 1795, II, Part 1: 2 and Charles Coleman Sellers, *Charles Willson Peale* (New York, 1969), 269.

²⁰ *Papers of Charles Willson Peale*, 26 February 1795, II, Part 1: 3.

²¹ *Annals of Congress*, Chapter XX; Statute II, 29 January 1795, p. 414-15.

²² Samuel Dexter as quoted in *PTJ*, 28: 245, editorial note.

²³ James Madison to TJ, 11 January 1795, *ibid.*, 28: 244; for outcome of voting, see editorial note, *ibid.*, 245.

None of the eight break-away artists involved in the dispute with Peale and his group were claiming titles, however all eight were recent arrivals from Great Britain,²⁴ and in the press-war between the two groups, they were accused of believing themselves to be the ‘lords of human kind’ and having come from ‘the hot bed of monarchy’. In this same diatribe, the eight were described as ‘gentlemen who fancy themselves a better order of beings’, and they were warned that ‘America was not the soil to fatten the seeds of such vanity and arrogance’.²⁵ As the debates continued in the public press, Peale’s group defined themselves as the ‘Columbianum’ and the others as the ‘Anglo-Columbianum’.²⁶ This label was somewhat absurd as many who remained within Peale’s original group were just as recently arrived from Great Britain and would not have completed residency requirements for citizenship. Many others, if not born in Great Britain, had studied in London at some point, including Charles Willson Peale.

The group that had been designated the ‘Anglo-Columbianum’ claimed a more ambitious project than the local ‘Academical Drawing –School’ advanced by Peale’s group. They proposed ‘a national institution, on a broad and enlarged scale, suitable to that open and liberal mode of thinking and acting, which characterizes an enlightened nation’ and in the same extended sentence were adamant in their denial of any self-serving motives not for the public good.²⁷ This statement utilized the vocabulary of civic humanism to establish the disinterested position of these men and their proposal for the incorporation of art into the liberal learning that was associated with public virtue.²⁸

Charles Willson Peale would timidly approach this topic in one of his later museum lectures, as he discussed the magic brush of the artist representing the beauty of virtue and how the production of art should be encouraged,²⁹ but this was not the rhetoric used for the argument with this competitive group made up primarily of recent British immigrants. Rather the charges put forward reflected a growing

²⁴ *Papers of Charles Willson Peale*, II, Part 1: 108-09.

²⁵ *Philadelphia Gazette*, Philadelphia, 26 February 1795, viewed on *America’s Historical Newspapers*.

²⁶ *Aurora General Advertiser*, Philadelphia, 7 March 1795, at *ibid.*

²⁷ *Philadelphia Gazette*, Philadelphia, 27 February 1795, at *ibid.*

²⁸ Barrell, *Political Theory of Painting*, 10-13 and 18-23.

²⁹ Charles Willson Peale Lectures, ‘Lecture , no. 1’, n.d., in Mss. B.P 31-7a, 1 vol., APS Library.

sense of nationalism in denying leadership to non-citizens and at the same time reflected the sensitivity of provincialism in the name-calling of these recent immigrants as vain, arrogant, and monarchical. Art historian, Kenneth Clark, in his essay, 'Provincialism', defines the provincial at the periphery of the metropolitan centre and credits the metropolitan art as always far more powerful and pervasive. Clark surmises that the provincial must not attempt to compete with the metropolitan art on its own ground; this is a 'suicidal form of provincialism' and must find instead its own uniqueness.³⁰ But in 1795 American artists had not discovered their own unique niche and for many years to come would look to Europe and Britain.³¹ Still Peale and his colleagues were not comfortable with ideas too closely drawn from metropolitan London with its Royal Academy of Arts, even though many of them had studied there at one time. Nor were they comfortable with the proposal made prior to the split that the president of the United States be designated the premier patron in much the same fashion as George III's position with the Royal Academy. This was not pursued by the remnants of the association that remained after the battle with the 'Anglo-Columbianum' was won.³² Before Peale's group, who considered themselves the true 'Columbianum', ceased to exist as well, they did mount the one art exhibition that included the print from Peale's *Jefferson*.

The extant catalogue from the Columbianum exhibition that opened on May 22, 1795 indicated a good representation of paintings, both full-sized and miniature in oil and watercolour, engravings, sculpture, and architectural drawings and models. The Peale family took advantage of the showing with submissions from Charles Willson, his brother James Peale, his eldest son Raphaëlle, and six paintings, five of which were portraits, by his younger son, Rembrandt, just launching his career.³³ The twenty-five cents admission charge was to be applied toward the expenses of the Academy, and the public was reminded that the purpose of the school was to allow training in the fine-arts for the American youth, and

³⁰ Kenneth Clark, 'Provincialism', in *Moments of Vision* (London, 1981), 50-51.

³¹ Richard J. Boyle, 'American Art in the 18th and 19th Centuries: Was There a National Style' in *Papers on American Art*, ed. John C. Milley (Maple Shade, NJ, 1976), 12; Harris, *Artist in American Society*, 53; Holger Hock, *The King's Artists: The Royal Academy of Arts and the Politics of British Culture 1760-1840* (Oxford, 2003).

³² *Charles Willson Peale Papers*, II, Part 1: 106 and Sellers, *Charles Willson Peale*, 269.

³³ 'Exhibition of the Columbianum', Philadelphia, 22 May 1795, *America's Historical Newspapers*.

‘thereby supercede the necessity and save the expence of a foreign education’.³⁴

This announcement served also as a final thrust at the rival ‘Anglo-Columbianum’, now defunct. Even though Peale’s group would not survive much longer, their exhibition, mounted in the senate chamber of the state-house, drew enough of a crowd to extend the closing date beyond the projected six weeks to July 6th.³⁵

A significant contributor to the Columbianum exhibition was William Russell Birch. He had just arrived in the United States in 1794 and was a protégé of the late Joshua Reynolds; however he had sided with Peale in the recent controversy. Birch identified himself in the exhibition catalogue as an enamel painter and an engraver. Examples of his enamelling technique were primarily miniature portraits. As a part of his engravings, he submitted a proof print of ‘Mr Jefferson’ taken from the portrait in Peale’s museum gallery. Even though C.W. Peale’s *Jefferson* painted in 1791 remained a part of his collection and on view at his Philadelphia museum, he never made prints or copies from this portrait as he had his paintings of Washington. Obviously there was not the guaranteed market for a *Jefferson*. Nevertheless, Birch expressed a purpose in connection with his choice of Jefferson. The listing in the catalogue informed the public that this was a sample for a projected series of twenty-five prints of ‘celebrated personages in the American Revolution’ that would be created from images in Peale’s collection. The print of Jefferson was to be just the first of a series of revolutionary heroes. Unfortunately there were not enough subscriptions to move the project forward, and neither the proof nor subsequent copies of his *Jefferson* prototype are known to have survived.³⁶

It is interesting that Birch chose Jefferson’s portrait as his prototype to promote the proposed series, suggesting that even following a year’s retirement, ‘Mr Jefferson’ was still a notable name and one linked with the republican faction. Though the two warring groups of Columbianums never openly admitted to political affiliations, nevertheless the charges and counter-charges aligned the two groups

³⁴ *Dunlap’s American Daily Advertiser*, Philadelphia, 4 June 1795, *ibid*.

³⁵ Announcement giving original dates, *Dunlap’s American Advertiser*, *ibid*. and closing announcement in *Gazette of the United States*, Philadelphia, 25 June 1795, *America’s Historical Newspapers*.

³⁶ ‘The Exhibition of the Columbianum or American Academy of Painting, Sculpture, Architecture, Etc.’, Philadelphia, 1795 in the American Antiquarian Society as viewed on *Early American Newsprints*, <http://infoweb.newsbank.com>; referenced in Bush, *Life Portraits of Thomas Jefferson*, 20 and Cunningham, *Image of Thomas Jefferson*, 5.

with either the pro-British sentiments of the Federalists or reflected the monarchical fears of the republican group. Did the failure of Birch's series suggest that an image of Jefferson, currently absent from public involvement, did not catch the needed attention from the public? Yet both Hamilton and Madison believed Jefferson the most likely contender for the presidency should it become vacant. Another explanation could be that the American public was moving past an active interest in collecting images of Revolutionary War heroes. The Revolution remained in its seminal role in the history of the United States, and the events and people who surrounded it were still toasted and recognized regularly,³⁷ but the series of prints that would make a name for William Birch celebrated instead an American city.

The failure of Birch's proposed series of Revolutionary War heroes with Jefferson as the prototype was not due to his inabilities as an artist. In December 1800 he completed his 'Philadelphia views', which proved very successful. Jefferson was among the initial subscribers to 'The City of Philadelphia, in the State of Pennsylvania North America', which consisted of twenty-eight plates of views of the city in 1800. His library catalogue showed that he owned a first edition of the more expensive colour plates and filed the work under 'Geography'.³⁸ This was not inappropriate, as Birch believed his work served the useful purpose of promoting immigration. He wrote in his memoirs that, 'No other work of the kind had ever been published by which an idea of the early improvements of the country could be conveyed to Europe, to promote and encourage settlers'. He proposed that when those in Europe with capital to invest saw that the United States was more than just 'Forrest' and rather could boast a city as elegant as Philadelphia, the series would achieve its intention of attracting the money and talent that could aid the new country.³⁹ He used Jefferson's subscription as a testimonial of the merit of the work on a national level and wrote in his 'Autobiography', 'It may be easily conceived what the opinion was of this work with our late Friend and best wisher to mankind that formed the constitution of the Country, while it is recollected that during the

³⁷ Simon P. Newman, *Parades and Politics*, 83-119.

³⁸ Sowerby, *Library of TJ*, IV: 295-96.

³⁹ William Russell Birch, 'Autobiography', photocopy in Special Collections, Jefferson Library, Charlottesville, VA, p. 47. See also Martin P. Snyder, 'William Birch: His Philadelphia Views', *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 73, no. 3 (July 1949), 274.

whole of his presidency it layed [*sic*] on the sophia [*sic*] in his visiting Room at Washington till it became ragged and dirty, but was not suffered to be taken away'.⁴⁰ Birch throws in some ambiguity with his reference to the forming of the constitution of the country, which would more correctly bring to mind President James Madison, however Madison does not show up as a subscriber to the first publication of the volume of prints, and in a second part to his 'Autobiography', Birch describes a visit to Jefferson at the President's House in 1805, which substantiates that he could have seen the volume being displayed as he described. There is no mention of James Madison throughout his memoir, which would suggest that it was Birch's confusion as to who should be credited as the creator of the constitution.

The verbal images of Jefferson continued to flow quickly during his vice presidency and intensified as the end of the decade neared and the next election loomed. With Birches series of Revolutionary heroes not being published, there were few visual images available for the public to view and inspect for those hints of 'character and master-strokes of the history of the person it represents', as Jonathan Richardson had suggested early in the eighteenth century and as William Birch was echoing as he recorded his notes on the fine arts at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Birch added to his memoirs that, 'He (the connoisseur) meets in portraits of the great the countenance of men marked with the character of their minds'.⁴¹ Birch's notes reflect the continuation of the accepted attitude toward the importance of portraiture as a means of recording history through its notable characters.

* * * * *

Though this study focuses upon the professionally executed portraits of Jefferson that imply this nuance of character as referenced by Richardson and Birch, yet there is one political caricature, titled *The Providential Detection*, by an unknown artist from late in the 1790s that is insightful and worth consideration. It offers a satirical view of Jefferson that suggested a lack of character rather than one

⁴⁰ Birch, 'Autobiography', 47; Snyder, *ibid.*, also interprets Birch's reference to mean President Jefferson.

⁴¹ Jonathan Richardson, *Works of Jonathan Richardson*, 10 and Birch, *Autobiography*, 9.

of depth and supplied in visual form the message so common in the opposition press by visually illustrating his liberal thinking and his pro-French sympathies that some interpreted as boarding on anarchy. (fig. 3.2) In this political caricature Jefferson is presented as a subversive Francophile.

This particular print is more sophisticated than some in that Jefferson's features are clearly defined in profile and bear a good resemblance with little of the exaggeration usually employed for such caricatures.⁴² No uncertainties were risked, however, as to whom might be the object of the satire. The labelled documents, the theme, and even the clothing pointed to Vice President Jefferson. The most recognizable evidence was the document dropping from the right hand of the figure with the visible title 'To Mazzei'. Many Americans would have known that this referred to a letter written by Jefferson to an Italian friend, Philip Mazzei, that contained an unfortunate paragraph criticizing the Washington administration. In the letter Jefferson described the republican government that had successfully carried them through the Revolutionary War as currently overrun by those favouring an 'Anglican, monarchical and aristocratical party'. He seemed to implicate Washington himself when he suggested, 'It would give you a fever were I to name to you the apostates who have gone over to those heresies, men who were Samsons in the field and Solomons in the council, but who have had their heads shorn by the harlot England'.⁴³ Mazzei shared copies of the letter with the result it was published in a French newspaper early in 1797 and by May of that year had made its way back to the United States for local reprinting. Jefferson made no public statement on the matter, but it was a major topic for the press and became an incident that would follow him throughout his public career.⁴⁴ The sentiment of John Marshall as

⁴² The most comprehensive current work on eighteenth-century caricature is Diana Donald, *Age of Caricature: Satirical Prints in the Reign of George III* (New Haven, CT., 1996). Her work focuses upon British caricature but still gives a good background for an understanding of this type of imagery. See also Pointon, *Hanging the Head*, 94-104.

⁴³ TJ to Philip Mazzei, 24 April 1796, *PTJ*, 29: 82.

⁴⁴ For a discussion of the Mazzei letter see editorial notes in *ibid.*, 29: 73-80 and TJ to James Madison, 3 August 1797, *ibid.*, 29: 489 – 91; see also Wood, *Empire of Liberty*, 235 – 36 and Malone, *Jefferson and His Times*, III: 302 – 07.

expressed to Alexander Hamilton, ‘The morals of the Author of the letter to Mazzei cannot be pure’, was the visual aim of the *Providential Detection*.⁴⁵

The Mazzei letter was the boldest link to Jefferson in the political caricature, but the scraps of paper fuelling the flames intended for the Constitution and American independence were a means of identification as well. They contained names that to some were heretical and reflected Jefferson’s all too liberal and philosophic attitudes. It was as though the artist had access to Jefferson’s personal library. There was English writer, William Godwin, whose doctrine on the perfectibility of mankind and therefore a lessening need for government intrigued Jefferson.⁴⁶ The French philosopher, Helvétius, whose views on public ethics Jefferson commended and described him as “the most ingenious advocate of this principle.” (While in Paris Jefferson had frequented the intellectual salons of Helvétius’ widow).⁴⁷ Both Godwin and Helvétius were sometimes interpreted as leaning toward anarchy in their views of less government. Not surprisingly there was the title of Thomas Paine’s more recent work, *Age of Reason*, considered even more controversial than the *Rights of Man* due to its criticism of the established church. Names with a more local connection were those of ‘Munro’ and the ‘Aurora’. James Monroe had published a pamphlet in defence of his recall when minister to France that was critical of the Federalist administration,⁴⁸ and the *Aurora*, a Philadelphia newspaper, was supported by Jefferson and other of his political colleagues in opposition to the Federalist press. The skulls and crossed bones circling the base of the altar indicated the poison in this thinking that fed the flames. Behind all of this lurked the devil.

The figure of Jefferson kneels dramatically before the ‘Altar of Gallic Despotism’ prepared to sacrifice the order and freedom offered by the American Constitution. The sense of drama is augmented by the long cloak. Late in the century greatcoats or surtouts more often took the place of the cloak for outer wear, however they were still regularly a part of military uniforms or used to cover scholar’s gowns

⁴⁵ John Marshall to Alexander Hamilton, 1 January 1801, as cited in Kaminski, *Quotable Jefferson*, 467.

⁴⁶ TJ to Bishop James Madison, 31 January 1800, *PTJ*, 31: 350-51; Sowerby, *Library of TJ*, III: 24-25.

⁴⁷ TJ to Thomas Law, 13 June 1814, *PTJ:RS*, 7: 414-15; TJ library, Sowerby, *Library of TJ*, II: 4-5.

⁴⁸ Discussed in Malone, *Jefferson and His Times*, III: 338 -339.

and became customary for funerals.⁴⁹ The long and dramatic cloak could be interpreted as Jefferson's preparation for the funeral of the constitution and therefore the death of independence. The artist used the clothing to subtly suggest a French allegiance as well. The coat is the slim-cut that to William Maclay appeared too small for Jefferson, and the footwear of ankle high shoes or boots that fastened with laces rather than ornate buckles was a fashion gaining popularity in the 1790s and associated with the egalitarian impulses of the French Revolution. These were noted in a series titled *Caricatures Politiques*, published in France in 1797 – 98, which profiled representative classes from the current French republican social structure. The hero of the series was *L'indendant*, the true republican, who was described as appropriately dressed in his simple frock coat, clean linen, pantaloons and his *bottines* or ankle boots.⁵⁰ This was a style that would become associated with Jefferson and gain more notoriety during his presidency.

The Providential Detection pictured Thomas Jefferson as an anarchist with a dangerously radical philosophy that supported the French Revolution and intended to sabotage the American Constitution. The ideas incorporated into this political print appeared and re-appeared in the press, such as a brief editorial in a New York paper in June 1798 that anonymously proposed that Jefferson and other leaders of the republican faction intended to work with France to overthrow the U.S. government and set up a Directory on the French model.⁵¹

Ironically, there was another Jefferson image equally popular with the political opposition that contradicted this fiery anarchist plotting to bring down the United States Constitution. Jefferson was often sketched in word-portraits as the philosopher-statesman. This could be stated very positively by his supporters, but in the words of members of the opposition, he became the philosopher who was incapable of strong and decisive action. This was a character impression that was attached to Jefferson long before he became embroiled in the political wars of the 1790s. When appointed to the French court in 1784, Chevalier de la Luzerne

⁴⁹ Cunnington, *Handbook of English Costume*, 225.

⁵⁰ Antoine Joseph de Barruel-Beauvert, *Caricatures Politiques*, (Paris, 1797), 5-6; this publication is discussed in Lynn Hunt, *Politics, Culture, and Class in the French Revolution* (Berkeley, CA, 1984, reprinted 2004), 81-83.

⁵¹ *Greenleaf's New York Journal*, 9 June 1798, 3, *America's Historical Newspapers*.

reported to Vergennes in Paris that the new American minister was ‘an enlightened man of integrity’ but that despite his extreme love of his country, he was ‘one incapable of holding the tiller in stormy weather’. Of course, Luzerne was basing this opinion primarily upon Jefferson’s lack of experience in international affairs not upon his character, as he concluded his observations, ‘Mr. Jefferson does not join to his theoretical knowledge much experience and practice of affairs’.⁵² A reputation as a ‘philosopher’ was not necessarily negative, as a toast given on the eve of the 1797 inaugurations in Philadelphia was to ‘Thomas Jefferson, that philosopher and patriot’. Yet at approximately the same time, the pro-Jefferson *Aurora* felt the need to rebut an article by South Carolina congressman, R.G. Harper, who admitted Jefferson’s scientific and literary knowledge but maintained that this only qualified him to be a professor of a college or President of the Philosophical society (which he was) but not the president of the nation.⁵³ Along a similar line of thought an article originating in London compared Adams and Jefferson at the time of the election and predictably felt Adams possessed the stronger qualities for leadership. The article openly admitted Adams as ‘the partisan of England’ and concluded with the opinion that Jefferson’s ‘talents are said to be inferior to those of Mr. Adams, and are thought to possess more shew [*sic*] than solidity’.⁵⁴ Just as the *Aurora* came to the defence of Jefferson and ridiculed the South Carolina congressman as ‘ignorant and inconsistent’, and along with many others held a high regard for his learning and literary skills, yet this lingering accusation that he lacked true qualities of leadership and solidity was a handicap to his political profile.

An opportunity presented itself for a more flattering visual image than that of the *Providential Detection* late in 1799. A younger member of the Peale family, Rembrandt Peale, second son of Charles Willson Peale, had just returned to his home city of Philadelphia from Baltimore to establish himself as a portrait artist. His newspaper advertisements played upon his name, ‘REMBRANDT’ set in bold type across the top of his notice. He explained that as several of the Peale family: father,

⁵² Chevalier de la Luzerne to Comte de Vergennes, 17 May 1784 as cited in Lawrence Kaplan, *Thomas Jefferson, Westward the Course of Empire* (Wilmington, DE, 1999), 35-36.

⁵³ Toast appeared in *Claypool’s American Advertiser*, Philadelphia, 2 March 1797 and rebuttal in the *Aurora General Advertiser*, Philadelphia, 8 March 1797, *America’s Historical Newspapers*.

⁵⁴ *City Gazette and Daily Advertiser*, Charleston, South Carolina, 7 March 1797, on *ibid*.

brother, uncle, were engaged in art, he intended to use just his first name and continued, ‘Therefore Ladies and Gentlemen desirous of viewing a few specimens of my stile [*sic*] of painting, may find me by the following directions. . . .’⁵⁵ A portrait of the vice-president and probable republican presidential candidate for the upcoming election of 1800 would have added prestige to his new painting rooms. This artist-commissioned portrait was executed at some point between Jefferson’s return to Philadelphia in the last week of December 1799 to mid-May 1800, when he left again for Monticello. When Jefferson re-joined the government late in November of that year, the federal seat had moved from Philadelphia to the new and permanent location of Washington City.⁵⁶ The timing was right for an accomplished portrait of the front-running candidate for the presidency to claim the public’s attention. An updated and positive representation of Thomas Jefferson that countered satirical caricature and polemical newspaper editorials could be of benefit to both the artist and to his subject.

Rembrandt Peale was only twenty-two years of age when he painted Jefferson, but already he had proven himself capable of taking a good likeness. He had successfully completed several commissions, one of which was a *Washington* for the city of Charleston, South Carolina, plus he exhibited his work in the one exhibition held by the Columbianum Society.⁵⁷ He was trained by his father and at this point in his career had never travelled abroad for further study. Like many other young American artists he relied upon an innate talent improved by reading and observation but without the assistance of a formal academy. Even the rival Columbianum groups agreed to the need of training for artists in the United States. Rembrandt was fortunate to have instruction from such an accomplished artist as his father and a familiarity with the work of Gilbert Stuart, who worked in Philadelphia from 1794 to 1803.⁵⁸ Through their examples the British school was still the

⁵⁵ ‘Rembrandt’ advertisement in *Poulson’s American Daily Advertiser*, Philadelphia. This advertisement ran on several dates in 1800 and 1801. Just as he used his given name, Rembrandt, to distinguish himself from other family members in the arts, his given name is used in this study for the same purpose.

⁵⁶ Bush, *Life Portraits of Thomas Jefferson*, 37. See also *JMB*, II: 1011 – 19 for the dates Jefferson was in Philadelphia.

⁵⁷ Lillian B. Miller, *In Pursuit of Fame: Rembrandt Peale, 1778 – 1860* (Washington, DC, 1992), 18-19, 30.

⁵⁸ Barratt and Miles, *Gilbert Stuart*, 129.

dominate influence, as both the elder Peale and Stuart had studied in London at the studio of Benjamin West.

When Rembrandt took Jefferson's portrait the influence of C.W. Peale was still very evident. He employed the linear style of his father, as illustrated by the heavy shadow defining the nose and outlining the shadowed side of the face, even though he admitted to admiring the work of Gilbert Stuart that was less dependent upon line.⁵⁹ Yet the colour, always one of Rembrandt's stronger accomplishments, was rich and gave a sense of liveliness and presence to the figure. Rembrandt was adept at capturing a likeness, and to the American viewers, likeness was still the basis for judging the merit of a portrait. His elder brother Raphaele Peale included the by-line, 'No Likeness, No Pay', in his advertisements for portrait commissions.⁶⁰

One gauge of Rembrandt's success in achieving a good Jefferson likeness was the number of prints produced from his portrait. Noble Cunningham, in his work, *The Image of Thomas Jefferson in the Public Eye*, that covers the prints and ephemera surrounding Jefferson's presidency, devoted an entire chapter to 'Variations on a Portrait by Rembrandt Peale'. He opened this chapter with the statement, 'No portrait was more important in establishing the contemporary public image of Jefferson as president than the first life portrait painted by Rembrandt Peale in 1800'. Two prints that utilized Rembrandt's portrait to create full-length images will be discussed in the following chapter as impressions of Jefferson as president, but the point considered here is that Rembrandt's 1800 portrait was well-received and important in that it served as the initial image that would be collected and viewed by many Americans.

Jefferson showed little interest in the portrait, as he never requested a copy for himself, although a year later, in 1801 he inquired about a copy for an unidentified friend. Just four days after being declared president he contacted Rembrandt regarding an exact copy for 'a friend who has expressed a wish for it',

⁵⁹ Bush, *Life Portraits of Thomas Jefferson*, 37. Rembrandt Peale's style is discussed in Miller, *Pursuit of Fame* and Lillian B. Miller, 'In the Shadow of His Father: Rembrandt Peale, Charles Willson Peale, and the American Portrait Tradition' in Lillian B. Miller and David C. Ward, *New Perspectives on Charles Willson Peale* (Pittsburgh, PA, 1991), 89-102.

⁶⁰ See advertisement for 'Raphaele Peale, Portrait Painter' in *Poulson's American Daily Advertiser*, *Philadelphia Gazette*, and *Federal Gazette & Baltimore Daily Advertiser*, 1800 – 1801, *America's Historical Newspapers*.

queried as to the price, and added that he would give directions on where it was to be sent upon completion.⁶¹ In just over a month Jefferson received notice from Rembrandt that the painting was ready and awaited his instructions. Jefferson recorded the letter as received but further correspondence, if any, has not survived nor is there a notation in his accounting records of paying the thirty dollar fee.⁶² It is possible, of course, that the ‘friend’ received and paid for the portrait directly, but it is interesting that a second copy of this portrait has never surfaced nor did it appear in Jefferson’s family or family records. Jefferson may have discouraged further correspondence, as Rembrandt used this exchange with Jefferson to once again inquire as to a possible governmental appointment. His need for additional employment spoke directly to the state of art and the condition of the artist in America at the beginning of the nineteenth century. According to Rembrandt Peale there was a general ‘Want of Encouragement’.⁶³

Though the number of copies made of Rembrandt’s *Jefferson* indicated a favourable likeness, this does not speak to the more intangible element of ‘character’. Jefferson does present a different demeanour, however, than that of his earlier extant portraits. In these he had looked into the distance as though in thought and contemplation rather than taking on the viewer directly. This had been true even in the 1791 portrait taken by Charles Willson Peale. (fig. 2.1) In eighteenth century portraiture there was the thought that the enlightened gentleman, one of intelligence and dignity, should more often be represented with a gaze that was direct and considered purposeful.⁶⁴ There are many fine portraits of the period that contradict this premise, but in Jefferson’s case, his distant gaze could be given the interpretation of the disconnected scholar incapable of decisive action. At the beginning of the election year of 1800, Jefferson needed to be perceived as facing the American viewer directly, with openness and honesty. The popularity of Rembrandt’s portrait suggested that the solid, calm, and straightforward demeanour captured in his *Jefferson* held appeal for many Americans. This was understandable

⁶¹ TJ to Charles Willson Peale, 21 February 1801, *Selected Papers of Charles Willson Peale*, II, Part 1: 298.

⁶² Rembrandt Peale to TJ, 24 March 1801, *ibid.*, 305-06.

⁶³ Rembrandt Peale to TJ, 1 March 1801, *ibid.*, 298-300.

⁶⁴ Stana Nenadic, ‘The Enlightenment in Scotland and the Popular Passion for Portraits’, in *British Journal for Eighteenth Century Studies* 21 (1998), 179.

considering the tumult of the 1790s with the perceived threats to national stability, both internal and external. The look of solidity was enhanced by Jefferson's choice to sit for his portrait dressed in black.

The black coat, often extending to the full black suit, was increasingly popular through the latter decades of the eighteenth century. As was usual for western fashion, the impetus was coming from Europe and Britain, but by the second half of the 1790s, a survey of portraits and prints show that black had definitely taken hold as a colour preference among American men as well. A series of portraits of George Washington in a black suit taken by Gilbert Stuart between late 1794 through 1796 and the innumerable copies and prints that followed may have been proof for many that black was the new favoured colour.⁶⁵ However, as most fashion trends, it is difficult to point to the exact source of a colour choice that by the nineteenth century would become pervasive in western men's clothing. As noted by J.C. Flügel in his *Psychology of Clothes*, 'For a new style of dress to become fashion, it must in some way appeal to a large number of people'.⁶⁶ By the end of the eighteenth century there were several factors contributing to the appeal of black.

Black held a symbolic place in western men's clothing through centuries and in its earliest history was associated with mourning. The darkest wool was woven into the *toga pulla* in the Roman Empire and used by mourners.⁶⁷ By 1600 Shakespeare's audiences would have completely understood the significance of Hamlet's suit of 'solemn black'.⁶⁸ The colour dominated court mourning in both France and England, as experienced by Jefferson and Adams when American ministers in the late 1780s. They had encountered its inclusiveness and strict rules regarding lengths of time and the requirements as to appropriate textiles.⁶⁹ In France the death of a person of rank placed pressure upon the textile industry, as only the

⁶⁵ Black is well represented in the Gilbert Stuart portraits of George Washington: his originals, his many copies and prints taken from these portraits. For examples of Washington in black along with others by Stuart, see Barratt and Miles, *Gilbert Stuart*. Black began to appear as well in the portraits by C.W. and Rembrandt Peale and those by John Trumbull.

⁶⁶ J.C. Flügel, *Psychology of Clothes*, 3rd printing (London, 1950), 147.

⁶⁷ For references to the *toga pulla* see Milia Davenport, *Book of Costume* 10th printing, (New York, 1972), 73; Lucy Barton, *Historic Costume for the Stage*, rev. ed. (Boston, 1963), 76.

⁶⁸ William Shakespeare, 'Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark', Act I: Scene 2, line 78.

⁶⁹ See discussion in Chapter 1, at note 87. See also Madeleine Delpierre, *Dress in France in the Eighteenth Century*, trans. Caroline Beamish (New Haven, CT, 1997), 78 – 80.

highest of the three divisions of fabric dyers, the ‘fast dye masters’, were allowed to produce the true-black. These requirements for mourning extended to all classes, and Mercier in his popular *Tableau de Paris* derided the custom by suggesting that a permanent mourning might be welcomed as, ‘These deaths suit everybody, since black clothes go very nicely with mud, bad weather, thrift and a reluctance to devote hours to one’s toilet’.⁷⁰

Mourning black was inclusive and the colour itself without class distinctions. Another Frenchman, the poet-essayist, Charles Baudelaire, linked the concept of mourning, equality, and the colour black. He recognized death as the ultimate leveller and wrote, ‘A uniform livery of grief is a proof of equality’. He elaborated upon this idea and observed that the black-frock coat and tail-coat represented ‘political beauty’ in that they stood for universal equality. To Baudelaire there was a poetic beauty attached to these black coats as well, as they were an expression of the current public soul and ‘All of us attending some funeral or other’.⁷¹ Baudelaire made these observations in 1846 and his remarks confirmed that the black coat had become a symbol of equality as it remained a symbol for mourning. This symbolism attached to black had much earlier roots that began to become apparent in the late eighteenth century and well-established by the nineteenth.

Linked with the occasion of mourning was the idea of sobriety. Perhaps due to this connotation, black became identified with the ecclesiastic and the scholar but upon occasion appeared in the higher social milieus. When Castiglione wrote his *Book of the Courtier* in the first quarter of the sixteenth century, he advised black as the most agreeable colour for the ‘ordinary attire’ of the polished Renaissance man and advised leaving the brighter colours for special occasions. He made his choice based upon the ‘sobriety’ associated with black and used as an example the soberness of the Spaniards and their preference for black.⁷² From sixteenth century Spain, and through Spanish influence, both political and economic, the use of black

⁷⁰ Daniel Roche, *Culture of Clothing* (Cambridge, UK, 1994), 283 – 85 and Roche citing Louis-Sébastien Mercier, *Tableau de Paris*, 285.

⁷¹ Charles Baudelaire, ‘Salon of 1846’ in *Baudelaire: Selected Writings on Art and Artists*, trans. P.E. Charvet (Cambridge, UK, 1972), 105.

⁷² Baldesar Castiglione, *The Courtier*, trans. George Bull (New York, 1976), 134-35.

clothing was taken up in seventeenth century Holland and became the dominant colour among the Dutch merchants and burghers.⁷³

Black, as the sober insignia of the bourgeois, the professional man, appeared in France and by the eighteenth century was the standard colour for the dress of lawyers and other middle class professionals. Arthur Young, an English traveller and writer, published his observations made during his visit to Paris in 1787. He noted in his journal the predominance of black clothing among those of the middle-class and attributed it to a need for practicality. The city was filled with dusty streets that could quickly turn to mud---Mercier's reasoning for black---and suffered from a small number of hackney-coaches and chairs for hire. He observed, 'To this circumstance also it is owing, that all persons of small or moderate fortunes, are forced to dress in black, with black stockings'. As an Englishman he recognized that this could be a societal issue, as it created a visual distinction between men of good fortune and those with less and doubted that in England this would be tolerated.⁷⁴

These observations were made just prior to the revolution in France, a time when the black suit was briefly pushed to the centre of controversy. In May 1789 the Estates-General were called for the first time since 1614 to debate France's growing financial crisis. The Grand-Master of Ceremonies advised the deputies of the three estates on the protocol to be followed as to dress. The First Estate, the Church, required their clergy to appear in ecclesiastical vestments appropriate to their position in the church. The Second Estate, the nobility, were to appear in black silk suits trimmed in gold, white silk stockings, lace jabots, hats trimmed with braid and plumes and as gentlemen, they would carry a dress sword. The Third Estate, one-half the delegates representing the commoners were to wear black suits as well, but of wool not silk and untrimmed with black stockings, plain muslin cravats with no lace, and untrimmed hats. (figs. 3.3 & 3.3a) As they were not members of the aristocracy, they were not allowed to carry the gentleman's dress sword. As controversy grew, the plain black suit became emblematic of alliance with the Third Estate, the deputies of the people, and for a brief while became an emblem of

⁷³ Anne Hollander, *Seeing Through Clothes* (New York, 1978), 367-68 & 375; Davenport, *Book of Costume*, 609-30.

⁷⁴ Arthur Young, *Travels in France During the Years 1787, 1788, 1789*, intro. M. Bethan-Edwards, (London, 1889), 103-05.

political loyalties.⁷⁵ Some stated that their objections were not with the simple black suit but rather with the continuation of visible distinctions of class imposed by the ordered costumes.⁷⁶ Jefferson was still in Paris for the opening of the Estates-General and attended many of the debates at Versailles. He made no mention of the appearance of the participants and the role of the plain black suit as an emblem of the people, but he could well have registered the egalitarian implication in the clothing of the Third-Estate.

Britain's contribution in this movement toward black began with the simple, unadorned frock-coat, usually cut from dark wool. As discussed more fully in Chapter 1, what had begun early in the century as casual country and sporting wear worn by the men of the landed gentry began to find popularity in the cities. (see figs. 1.7 & 1.8) By the final decade of the century, the frock coat was acceptable for all but the most formal occasions, and the dark, practical wool coat was the growing favourite. During this same time the rise of the middle-class began to be felt. International merchants, those in finance and industry were increasing their wealth and therefore their influence. They built fine houses, travelled, and even some collected art. Yet as they aspired to be gentlemen, they needed clothing suitable for a man who worked. Status began to be expressed through activity.⁷⁷ Roland Barthes in his *Language of Fashion* writes that, 'The idea of democracy produced a form of clothing which was, in theory, uniform, no longer subject to the stated requirements of *appearances* but to those of work and equality'.⁷⁸

Black as a colour choice in the wardrobe of the well-dressed western man evolved from several sources: political revolutions, the rising influence of the commercial middle-class and even Enlightenment thought that fostered the concept of natural equality supported the notion of a uniform black or dark suit for men, which by the early nineteenth century dominated the male wardrobe across social

⁷⁵ Ribeiro, *Fashion in the French Revolution*, 45-46

⁷⁶ Richard Wrigley, *Politics of Appearances: Representations of Dress in Revolutionary France* (Oxford, UK, 2002), 61-62.

⁷⁷ Anne Buck, *Dress in Eighteenth-Century England* (London, 1979), 207. See also David Hancock, *Citizens of the World* (Cambridge, UK, 1995), especially 320 – 381, and David Solkin, *Painting for Money* (New Haven, CT, 1993) for a discussion of the impact of the changing societal structure on art. See also T.H. Breen, 'Ideology and Nationalism on the Eve of the American Revolution' in *Journal of American History* 84, no. 1 (June 1997): 17-19.

⁷⁸ Roland Barthes, *Language of Fashion*, trans. Andy Stafford; eds. Andy Stafford and Michael Carer (Oxford, 2006), 65. Italics are Mr. Barthes.

ranks. It can be explained as a response to the *Zeitgeist*, the spirit of the time, which clothing historian Geoffrey Squire defines as, ‘the mysterious force which results from communally held needs, beliefs and desires’.⁷⁹ Even with its cosmopolitan origins, the black suit met the needs of Americans as they sorted out their national image. They were drawn to the many refinements of Europe and Britain, yet they experienced a constant unease with the possible loss of civic virtue stemming from an over indulgence in the luxuries of art, interior furnishings, and even clothing. In his insightful *The Refinement of America*, Richard Bushman discusses in detail the dilemma of the American republic in balancing the desire for gentility with the fear that the encroaching luxury that often accompanied the elegance of genteel life could enfeeble the character of the republic. He wrote, ‘The contradiction between republican simplicity and genteel elegance was a general problem for many American men of letters trying to conceive a consistent American character’. He concludes this discussion stating that, ‘By emulating, but by stopping short of the farthest reaches of refinement, Americans hoped to create a space in which citizens of a republic might safely enjoy the pleasures of genteel culture’.⁸⁰ The man’s black suit fit this space. Sober black was never so pretentious that it could be accused of reaching the farthest extents of refinement or display. There was always its attachment to mourning, conservative sobriety, and by the end of the eighteenth century, its utilization by the rising professional classes of Europe and Britain, who were aspiring to gentility as well. It was safe, practical, and above all, it was both elegant and egalitarian. It could serve as a bridge between the larger cosmopolitan western world and the image required of a newly formed republican nation.

Rembrandt Peale’s portrait recorded Jefferson’s transition toward two new fashion trends: the black suit just discussed and the latest in men’s hairdressing gaining popularity in Europe and Britain. In the earlier C.W. Peale portrait painted at the beginning of the decade, Jefferson wore his hair brushed away from his face, and even though he appears very American without the powder and side curls, still it was recognizable as the accepted shape that had dominated men’s hairstyles through most of the century. In Rembrandt’s 1799 -1800 portrait, however, the hair was cut

⁷⁹ Squire, *Dress and Society*, 18; ‘Zeitgeist’ is referenced also in Flügel, *Psychology of Clothes*, 149.

⁸⁰ Bushman, *Refinement of America*, 193 & 203.

on the crown so that it could be brushed forward across the forehead. This reflected the eighteenth century's renewed interest in the classical world and its art,⁸¹ and the latest fashion trend coming from Europe. (fig. 3.4) Though the style visually related to Roman statuary, a more immediate inspiration in Paris was credited to the actor Talma for his role as Titus in Voltaire's *Brutus* in May 1791.⁸² This style that came to be called *a la Titus* carried political connotations, as it was associated with those supporting the revolution in France.⁸³

What Rembrandt's portrait does not reveal was whether Jefferson followed the more extreme fashion of cropping the traditional queue, as the 'cropped head' was appearing in France and England among the more rebellious. In France cropped hair was a sign of political affiliation, while in England the rebellion was purportedly against the tax on hair powder begun in 1795. *The Times* reported that 'A club has been formed called the Crop Club, every member of which is obliged to have his head cropped . . . for the purpose of evading the tax on powdered heads'.⁸⁴ However, in his *Memoirs of the times*, William Wraxell placed the trend before the 1795 tax and blamed the 'era of Jacobinism and of equality in 1793 and 1794' as the cause of cropped hair and the disuse of hair powder among the men.⁸⁵ Jefferson's hair in the portrait was more of a compromise, queue or no, as he did still favour a light dusting of hair powder. Whether for reasons of economy or the social levelling brought on by political revolution and economic advances among the middle class, men's hairstyles were changing, and the change suited Jefferson. He appeared ready to participate in the levelling represented in the less formal hair dressing and the abolishing of the wig with its connotations of social and political hierarchy.⁸⁶

⁸¹ Vicky Coltman, *Fabricating the Antique: Neoclassicism in Britain, 1760 – 1800* (Chicago, 2006), 1-16.

⁸² Ludmila Kybalová, Olga Herbenová, & Milena Lamarová, *Pictorial Encyclopedia of Fashion*, trans. Claudia Rosoux (London, 1966; English trans. 1968), 324; Ribeiro, *Fashion in the French Revolution*, 68.

⁸³ Ribeiro, *ibid.*

⁸⁴ Cunningham, *Handbook of English Costume*, citing the *London Times*, 1795, 247; Pointon, *Hanging the Head*, 122.

⁸⁵ Wraxall, *Memoirs*, 83-84.

⁸⁶ Pointon, *Hanging the Head*, 128 – 131.

The wig, never popular with Jefferson personally,⁸⁷ was being worn less and less throughout the western world as the century progressed. Aileen Ribeiro in her study of art and clothing in eighteenth century France and England, astutely notes that the wig had contributed to a sense of order and uniformity by lessening individuality, especially in France. Marcia Pointon reaches a similar conclusion in her discussion of eighteenth-century portraiture that the wig had offered a sign of visible social order.⁸⁸ In this age of revolutions, this order was breaking apart and undergoing change, even in hairdressing. In provincial America, the wig or very formally dressed and powdered hair had never been held as absolutely mandatory for the properly dressed man and by the end of the 1790s was being seen less and less.

An interesting observation that enlarges upon the views by Ribeiro and Pointon of the wig as a part of social order and class distinction appeared in the biography of a Virginian born in 1732 and so contemporary to Jefferson. The Reverend Devereaux Jarratt, a clergyman in the Anglican, then Episcopal Church following the Revolution, made an interesting reference to the wig as a means of class distinction in Virginia. He recalled in his biography,

We were accustomed to look upon, what were called *gentle folks*, as being of a superior order. For my part, I was quite shy of *them*, and kept off at a humble distance. A *periwig*, in those days, was a distinguishing badge of *gentle folk*-----and when I saw a man riding the road, near our house, with a wig on, it would so alarm my fears, and give me such a disagreeable feeling, that I dare say, I would run off, as for my life. Such ideas of the difference between *gentle* and *simple*, were, I believe, universal among all of my rank and age.⁸⁹

What seems almost contradictory was that given Jarratt's admitted shyness around periwigs, he was also uneasy with the opposite social trends developing in the post-revolutionary period. He continued in his biography to explain his feelings toward the 'levelling' that was replacing the status of the periwig and wrote, 'But I have

⁸⁷ Jefferson's preference for having his own hair dressed rather than wearing a wig is discussed in Chapter 1 at note 45.

⁸⁸ Aileen Ribeiro, *Art of Dress: Fashion in England and France, 1750 – 1820* (New Haven, CT, 1995), 18. Pointon also discusses the importance of the wig as a visual sign of order in *Hanging the Head*, 121, 128 – 131.

⁸⁹ Devereaux Jarratt, *Life of Devereaux Jarratt*, (1806; reprinted, Applewood Books, Bedford, MA, 2009), 14.

lived to see, a vast alteration, in this respect, and the contrary extreme prevail. In our high *republican times*, there is more *levelling* than ought to be, consistent with good government. In his opinion, ‘There is too little regard and reverence paid to magistrates and persons in public office; and whence do this disregard and irreverence originate, but from the notion and practice of levelling’?⁹⁰ This particular segment of his biography was written in October 1794, and so blame cannot be totally assigned to Jefferson. In fact, Jarratt was probably not aware that the idea of levelling was becoming a trans-Atlantic concern and that his anxieties aligned with those of Sir William Wraxall, who complained of the levelling brought about by Jacobinism and manifested itself in cropped hair without hair powder. Jarratt was not a loyalist during the Revolution but rather fought with the Virginia militia, and in his memoirs claimed a superiority for the United States government, but he saw problems created by, ‘the want of a proper distinction, between the various orders of the people’. The distinctions he missed could have been very personal, as he had worked his way from admitted humble beginnings to a position first in the Church of England then transferring his position to the Episcopal Church of the United States and may have felt he was missing the distinction that should be due his position as clergy. In the coming election, for Jefferson to lead his party with their republican ideals to victory, he could not totally discount those such as the Reverend Jarratt. He must hold out an image that could offer them some assurance as to the direction of the nation.

Rembrant Peale’s portrait provides a visual record of Jefferson adapting his image to change. Toward the end of the 1790s, he still linked republican government with the ‘principles of 1776’ and recalled the war for independence when ‘we acted together in a virtuous cause’.⁹¹ His participation in the American Revolution would always be of utmost importance to him, but more recently he had become heavily invested in the formation and stabilizing of the Republic. He had even begun to speak of the Revolution as in ‘antient times’.⁹² It was a time to figuratively put aside the blue and buff and look to a solidity that came from sharing and implementing those republican principles won during the Revolution.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 15.

⁹¹ TJ to Arthur Campbell, 1 September 1797, *PTJ*, 29: 522.

⁹² TJ to Robert Lawson, 31 August 1797, *ibid.*, 29: 520.

In adopting the black suit, Jefferson was certainly not alone with black fast becoming the leader as the fashionable colour for men whether as a coat or a complete suit. In his book, *Men in Black*, John Harvey sorted out his thoughts as to the predominance of the colour for menswear and considered the diametric, 'One may say that if there is a dominant meaning in the widespread use of black, that meaning is associated at once with intensity and with effacement: with importance, and with the putting on of impersonality'. Harvey admitted to an ambiguity attached to the colour black but still stated, 'Alone or in ranks, the man in black is the agent of a serious power'.⁹³ As suggested by Harvey, black was appropriate to many situations and thus to some extent remained ambiguous, but black's role as a symbol of class levelling was becoming more apparent. It was the shifting power base in the eighteenth century---politically, economically, then socially that propelled this need for change. The *Zeitgeist* in fashion reflected the levelling of political and social barriers, and black for men became its primary representative. Absolute monarchy was being challenged while economic influence and power were shifting to the commercial and professional men, not just those with hereditary claims to land.

As the election of 1800 approached, Jefferson could no longer deny his position as the leading figure of the republican faction. To some he stood as the champion of the people and defender of republican principles; to others he was a frightening personification of anarchy and federal instability. Jefferson advocated that 'It was by the sober sense of our citizens that we were safely and steadily conducted from monarchy to republicanism, and it is by the same agency alone we can be kept from falling back'.⁹⁴ In order to consolidate the support of these American citizens, he needed to put forward an image that would be acceptable and reassuring to a majority. He must hone a reputation as one who could provide strong leadership without appearing too ambitious or one who supported the anarchy and revolution in France, as he was accused by the Federalist press. With these considerations, perhaps it was time to move past the blue and the buff to the black suit that was crossing the lines between merchant to statesman. As John Harvey suggested, the ambiguity of black allowed a broad appeal that permitted it to be

⁹³ Harvey, *Men in Black*, 257.

⁹⁴ TJ to Arthur Campbell, 1 September 1797, *PTJ*, 29: 522.

claimed as representing republican simplicity by both the Federalists and Jefferson's republicans and thus extend beyond partisanship. Jefferson's hopes rested with 'the people, using their elective rights with prudence, and self-possession, and not suffering themselves to be duped by treacherous emissaries [*sic*]'.⁹⁵ Visitors to Rembrandt Peale's studio would have been visually assured of Jefferson's reliability, as he gazed directly at them, calmly, and dressed in the respectable black suit and projected an image that was a harbinger to the celebrated phrase from his first inaugural address, 'We are all Republicans; we are all Federalists'.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

CHAPTER 4: The Presidency and an Image for Change

Thomas Jefferson entered the office of president of the United States intent upon change. He opposed precedents begun during the administrations of Washington and Adams that he felt were elitist and aped old world courtly procedures that favoured a select few over the majority of the citizenry. As the election of 1800 was getting underway, he expressed his feelings clearly when he wrote, 'I never doubted the impropriety of our adopting as a system that of pomp & fulsome attentions by our citizens to their functionaries'. He saw a danger in these practices that could undermine the moral fibre of the republic and reasoned, 'I am decidedly against degrading the citizen in his own eye, exalting his functionary, & creating a distance between the two which does not tend to aid the morals of either. I think it a practice which we ought to destroy & must destroy'.¹ Once the election was resolved, the unexpected tie with Aaron Burr broken, and Jefferson was declared president, he set out to uproot these practices that for him represented inequality. He began establishing immediately a new protocol for the presidency that even extended to his personal appearance and self-presentation.

As he began putting a new stamp on the presidency, Jefferson appeared in public and received guests and official visitors at the President's House in worn, informal clothing that some pronounced slovenly. Political adversaries accused him of deliberately dressing down as a means of appealing to the middling and lower classes and thus promoting himself as 'a man of the people,' not as the stately leader of a nation. Whether the new presidential image provoked censure or approval, more often opinions still broke along the party lines formed between the Federalists and the Jeffersonian-republicans. Friends and supporters defended his actions and appearance; Federalists criticized, lampooned and derided this president, who had abdicated his gentlemanly status to appear as a common citizen and in their opinion, behaved far too much as the democrat in playing to the mob.

This chapter examines the tactics Jefferson employed in creating a new image for the American presidency. The discussion follows his changes in protocol

¹ TJ to James Monroe, 13 April 1800, *PTJ*, 31: 499.

soon after he took office and looks to a second portrait by Rembrandt Peale taken at the conclusion of his first term for a visual indication of how he altered his personal presentation. (fig. 4.1) This portrait raises questions as to his clothing choices of a red coat covered by a large, fur-lined cape that was far different from the moderate black suit he wore for his first portrait by Rembrandt in 1800. (fig. 3.1) A comparison of these two portraits by the same artist allows a study of Jefferson's transformation in personal style that is augmented by the written descriptions and comments made chiefly by his political opponents and more quietly defended by his 'supporters.

When Jefferson sat for Rembrandt Peale in January 1805, the electoral votes had not been officially tallied in the Senate, but it appeared certain that he would receive an overwhelming majority supporting him for a second term. He was at the peak of his presidential success and could appear confident in this portrait that was intended for display at the Peale Museum in Philadelphia. This chapter argues that this portrait served as visual propaganda in support of Jefferson's efforts to introduce more egalitarian social and political practices into the executive branch of the central government that could be a model for the rest of the country. It becomes a primary visual source among many written commentaries to trace Jefferson's self-presentation from the accepted black suit to the edge of eccentricity as he implemented a new style in the presidency.

* * * * *

After his first year in office, President Jefferson reported to a close colleague in Europe on the status of the American government. He was obviously pleased to say that, 'republicanism has recovered its ascendancy' and went on to explain, 'we have suppressed all those public forms & ceremonies which tended to familiarize the public eye to the harbingers of another form of government'.² His changes in the presidential image and in the protocol attached to the office began almost immediately. Accounts of his first inauguration mention that he walked to the Senate chamber in the north wing of the capitol (all that was completed at the time) from

² TJ to Tadeusz Kosciuszko, 2 April 1802, *ibid.*, 37: 168.

where he was staying at Conrad and McMunn's boarding house.³ However, this was not without some ceremonial display, as newspaper accounts supplied the number of artillery rounds discharged and described his short walk to the capitol building as in the company of militia, citizens, and members of congress.⁴ The British chargé de affaires, Edward Thornton⁵, supplied a brief description of the new president in his report to the foreign office in London and alluded to the 'republican spirit' that ran through this 'performance'. He confirmed that Jefferson went 'on foot, in his ordinary dress, escorted by a body of militia artillery from the neighbouring State, and accompanied by the Secretaries of the Navy and the Treasury, and a number of his political friends in the House of Representatives'.⁶

Local newspapers were more respectful of the ceremony itself but confirmed Thornton's observations that, 'His dress was, as usual, that of a plain citizen, without any distinctive badge of office'.⁷ Whether this ordinary dress was the black suit recorded in Rembrandt Peale's portrait of just a year before or some other combination of day wear was not made explicit, but Jefferson's choice of clothing did strike both Thornton and those providing news coverage as 'ordinary' and representing a 'plain citizen'. The small bit of additional information included in the newspaper account was that his ordinary/plain dress was without 'any distinctive badge of office'. Even though titles and manner of address had been debated in Congress, there had never been a consideration of state robes or other distinguishing insignia assigned to the American president. This may have been the object of the British chargé's comment and seen by him as deliberate costuming for the 'republican performance'. As former President Washington, Jefferson could have worn a dress sword, retained a touch of lace at throat and wrists, and attached a cockade to a dress hat; however, these contemporary observations implied that he

³ 'Terms for Conrad & McMunn's Boarding House', *ibid.*, 32: 260.

⁴ *National Intelligencer*, Washington, D.C., 6 March 1801, and *Alexandria Times*, Alexandria, Virginia, 6 March 1801 on *America's Historical Newspapers*.

⁵ Edward Thornton had served in various posts within the British ministry since 1791. He was appointed chargé d'affaires in 1800 and held this post until the arrival of Anthony Merry. For further details of his appointments, see *PTJ*, 33: 190.

⁶ Edward Thornton to Lord Grenville, Foreign Secretary, 4 Marcy 1801, as reprinted in Henry Adams, *History of the United States of America during the Administrations of Thomas Jefferson*, rev. ed. (NY, 1986), 134.

⁷ *National Intelligencer*, 6 March 1801, *America's Historical Newspapers*.

avoided even these elite accessories and appeared quite simply dressed, stressing his position as a democratic citizen.

These accounts gave only a very general notion of Jefferson's appearance at the time of his inaugural ceremony; however, as he took office, two Philadelphia engravers were at work creating prints that offered full-length impressions of the new president. These were executed by engravers and printers working in competitive pairs: printer George Helmbold employed David Edwin and printer Augustus Day worked with Cornelius Tiebout. These prints make for an interesting and informative comparison, even though neither would be taken directly from life. Rather the Rembrandt Peale portrait of 1800 would have provided the model for the head and facial features, and so they underscore again the popularity of Rembrandt's portrait. More importantly they provide visual references of what must have been the popular concept of Jefferson at the time of his first inauguration, as the goal was for an image that would sell among the American public. Printer, George Helmbold, advertised that his portrait would portray 'The Man of the People', while Augustus Day intended to represent Mr. Jefferson as 'a philosopher and statesman'.⁸ Neither of these appellations was new; both had been attached to pro-Jefferson references in the 1790s. When he returned to Philadelphia to assume the office of vice president, republican newspapers hailed him as 'Man of the People'. Earlier in the decade while secretary of state, various news articles coupled his name with that of Dr. Franklin, while he was identified as a gentleman of eminence in both "politics and literature" and was recognized as 'amiable and philosophic'.⁹ This profile of Jefferson as the advocate of the people as well as a man of science and learning, President of the American Philosophical Society and author of a published book, *Notes on the State of Virginia*, had been honed by his supporters through the political trials of the 1790s. That both printers, Helmbold and Day, chose to build their own interpretations of the Jefferson image and subsequent publicity around this

⁸ *Aurora*, Philadelphia, 26, 27 February 1801 and 23 February 1801, in Cunningham, *Image of Thomas Jefferson*, 56 & 58.

⁹ For examples see, *Federal Gazette*, Philadelphia, 21 April 1790; *Cumberland Gazette*, Portland, Maine, 31 May 1790; *General Advertiser*, Philadelphia, 19 January 1792. Reference to Jefferson as 'Man of the People' found in *Philadelphia Gazette*, Philadelphia, 3 March 1797. All can be viewed on *America's Historical Newspapers*.

profile indicates the degree to which it was recognized and accepted by the American public.

As noted in the previous chapter, the Rembrandt Peale portrait of Jefferson in black taken at the very beginning of 1800 served as the primary source for an increased number of images that circulated during the election year. Noble Cunningham outlined these carefully in his book on the popular image of Jefferson during his presidency, *The Image of Thomas Jefferson in the Public Eye* and discussed the number of Jefferson prints that began to circulate in the build-up to the election.¹⁰ He effectively traced these to Rembrandt's work and made a very effective argument for the influence of this portrait. Per Cunningham, the numerous bust-sized images taken directly from Rembrandt's painting were supplemented upon Jefferson's election by the two full-length images that borrowed the head then added the figure and supplied a setting. Cunningham's study is invaluable in identifying the prints, supplying dates, names of engravers, and circulation of these prints, but his work allows room for further interpretation of the prints themselves, especially in clothing details.

George Helmbold began advertising for subscriptions for his forthcoming full-length print of Thomas Jefferson as early as September 1800. His initial plan was to produce a companion portrait of the republican vice-presidential candidate Aaron Burr; however, once it became apparent that the two republican candidates were tied in the number of electoral votes, and Burrs actions became questionable, Helmbold very astutely announced that he was withdrawing the proposal for a Burr portrait.¹¹ A subsequent letter assured President Jefferson of his support of the 'republican cause', as he inquired about a possible government appointment.¹² His advertisements, which extended though a number of cities along the eastern seaboard, always appeared in the pro-republican press, plus he attempted to undermine his competition by publically stating his belief that Augustus Day's, 'republicanism was doubtful'.¹³ Day's response to this charge was less direct;

¹⁰ Cunningham, *Image of Jefferson*, 23-53.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 56. This work has proved extremely thorough and exact in recording the sequence of advertising and publication dates and has been a valuable source of background data surrounding these two prints.

¹² George Helmbold to TJ, 3 April 1801, *PTJ*, 33: 529.

¹³ Cunningham, *Image of Thomas Jefferson*, 59.

nevertheless, he included in his advertisement that his engraver, Mr. Tiebout, was ‘an American artist of the first abilities’.¹⁴ This pointed to the fact that Helmbold’s engraver, David Edwin, was from England and an American resident of just over three years.¹⁵ It recalled the old contests of the previous decade between the rival Columbianum art societies as to who was legitimate in the American art world.¹⁶ Helmbold’s main complaint seemed to revolve around his sense of priority---it was his idea first. His endeavour had been more of a gamble, as he had begun preparations for the engraving in September 1800 before all electoral votes were in and before the tie between Jefferson and Burr became evident. Augustus Day did not announce his plan for a *Jefferson* print until February 20th, three days after the final decision was made in the House of Representatives that resolved the presidential contest. In the race to produce a full-length print of the new president, it was a draw, as both prints became available to the public on July 4, 1801.¹⁷ Shortly after initial release the Helmbold-Edwin team produced a revised print to replace their first that showed a slimmer, thus seemingly taller Jefferson that stood more squarely on both feet. (figs. 4.2, 4.3 & 4.3a)

These prints celebrated the inauguration of a new American president who based his reputation on upholding a republican form of government, and who in his inaugural address described the United States’ relationship with Europe as ‘kindly separated by nature and a wide ocean’.¹⁸ Yet the artistic ties to Europe were evident in the Edwin and Tiebout prints, as the artists called upon old world traditions for the setting. The figure of Jefferson stands among massive columns and drapery, balustrades and richly patterned carpet, all standard features since the seventeenth century and the grand Baroque style, with inspiration that was traceable to antiquity. These elements were standard for state portraits and served as backdrops for monarchs and nobles of Great Britain and Europe.¹⁹ Edwin, recently arrived from

¹⁴ *Aurora*, 23 February 1801, as cited in *ibid.*, 57.

¹⁵ Mantle Fielding, ‘David Edwin, Engraver’, in *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 29, no. 1 (1905):82. Unfortunately, there is no mention of the Jefferson print in this article.

¹⁶ See Chapter 3 of this study for a more complete discussion of the Columbianum(s).

¹⁷ Cunningham, *Image of Thomas Jefferson*, 57, 60, 64.

¹⁸ ‘First Inaugural Address’, final version, *PTJ*, 33:150.

¹⁹ These elements as a part of state and aristocratic portraiture are discussed in many sources, see: Christopher Lloyd, ‘Portraits of Sovereigns and Heads of State’ in *Citizens and Kings: Portraits in*

England, could have had a richer exposure to such paintings than American Tiebout, however some images were available for study in Philadelphia.

Impressive examples were the portraits of Louis XVI and his Queen Marie Antoinette that hung in the senate chamber of the state house in Philadelphia. Upon the occasion of Washington's second inauguration in 1793, which took place in the senate chamber, the same Edward Thornton of the British ministry, who would later report on Jefferson's inauguration, commented upon the portraits. He assumed these had been presented during the war for independence, as he had noticed them before, but felt it strange that on the occasion of the inauguration, they were covered with draperies. To his thinking, this was 'trifling' but nevertheless an indicator of the American mindset. The visual presence of monarchy as a backdrop to what Thornton later termed a 'republican performance' must have seemed inappropriate, even when that monarch had been an ally. He added to his observation, 'Alas! Poor Louis', though he was probably unaware of the recent execution of the French king.²⁰ Both Washington and Jefferson owned engraved copies of the portrait of King Louis. In a different context, it was Chargé Thornton who mentioned that Washington displayed an engraving of Louis XVI in his drawing room.²¹ This would have been a gift from the French minister, Jean Baptiste Ternant, who arrived in Philadelphia in 1791 with twenty of the engravings by Charles-Clement Bervic after the painting by Antoine-François Callet. Jefferson was presented with an engraving of the king at the conclusion of his ministry at the French court and could possibly have received one from the French minister as well. Whatever the source, an engraving of Louis was listed in his list of artwork at Monticello.²² (fig. 4.4)

In addition to the Louis XVI portrait there was another that was available and quickly becoming the premier icon of an American statesman. This was the engraving released in January 1800 by John Heath of the full-length portrait of

the Age of Revolution, exhibition catalogue, Royal Academy of Arts (London, 2006-07), 60 – 62; Desmond Shawe-Taylor, *The Georgians*, (London, 1990), 83.

²⁰ S.W. Jackman, 'A Young Englishman Reports on the New Nation: Edward Thornton to James Bland Burges, 1791-1793', in *William and Mary Quarterly* 18, no. 1 (January 1961):121. Per Dumas Malone, the news of Louis XVI's execution on 21 January did not reach the United States until late in March 1793, see Malone, *Jefferson and His Times*, 'Chronology', III: xxi.

²¹ Jackman, 'Young Englishman', 121.

²² Stein, *Worlds of Thomas Jefferson*, 168.

George Washington painted by Gilbert Stuart.²³ (fig. 4.5) The popularity of this Washington image was so instantaneous that George Helmbold announced in his initial advertisement of September 1800 that his print of Jefferson would be ‘22 inches in length and 14 inches in breadth, in order to make it a match for Stuart’s print of Gen. Washington’.²⁴ Helmbold was mistaken in labelling this ‘Stuart’s’ print of Washington, as the engraving was not authorized by Stuart, and he felt his image had been pirated, much to his financial loss.²⁵ Even though Stuart claimed the likeness inadequate, Heath was true to the composition and detail of Stuart’s painting. (fig. 4.6)

The Washington portrait is both congruent and incongruent with the European tradition of state portraiture. In the original painting, Stuart gave the figure a background suitable for a king with columns and floating drapery and adopted a classic pose with right hand extended in the oratorical gesture, yet the American president was without crown, sceptre, or even a panache of plumes. Denied luxuriant state robes as those worn by Louis, Washington does not fill the space in the same manner as the French king. In his *Psychology of Clothes*, J.C. Flügel notes that ‘clothing, by adding to the apparent size of the body in one way or another, gives us an increased sense of power, a sense of extension of our bodily self---ultimately by enabling us to fill more space’.²⁶ This extension of the bodily self, the duty performed by robes of state, was related in principle to the republican controversy that occupied Jefferson and others. How was power and authority to be expressed when there could be no titles or other insignias of position? Abigail Adams was convinced that President Washington, ‘ought to have more state’,²⁷ whereas Jefferson was equally convinced otherwise, and as president, his goal was to eliminate any sense of a ‘republican court’, those ‘harbingers of another form of

²³ This famous portrait of George Washington by Gilbert Stuart, referred to as the ‘Landsdowne Portrait’ is discussed in many sources. One of the more recent and extremely thorough is the discussion by Ellen Miles that explains the John Heath engraving and can be found in Barrett and Miles, *Gilbert Stuart*, 166 – 175. See also Paul Saiti, ‘Gilbert Stuart’s Presidential Imaginary’ in *Shaping the Body Politic*, 162 - 193.

²⁴ *Aurora*, 8 September 1800, in Cunningham, *Image of Thomas Jefferson*, 55.

²⁵ Barratt and Miles, *Gilbert Stuart*, 166-175.

²⁶ J.C. Flügel, *Psychology of Clothes*, 34.

²⁷ Abigail Adams to Mary Smith Cranch, 9 August 1789, *Adams Family Correspondence*, 8: 397-400.

government'.²⁸ The power rested with the people, not the individual they voted into office. The earliest presidential images by Edwin and Tiebout did place the figure of Jefferson within a traditional, aristocratic setting but then stopped any further comparison by presenting him dressed in the egalitarian black suit.

David Edwin's print showed the more direct influence of the Louis XVI portrait in his creation of the setting. He placed the figure of Jefferson before a column and balustrade with drapery suspended from above. Even an elaborately framed painting was visible on the far back wall with the placement almost identical to that in the French king's portrait.²⁹ In his second version of the print, columns and balustrade remained but a chair was added that replicated in shape that in the Washington print. Just as in the Stuart - Heath *Washington*, the very grand setting was mitigated with books, writing implements, and a globe of the world. In both of Edwin's versions, Jefferson rested his arm upon the globe, alluding to authority and proprietorship. (Figs. 4.3 & 4.3a)

Tiebout's print suggests that he may have been looking closer at the Stuart-Heath *Washington* for background inspiration, but then made the setting more personal with the addition of props very specific to Jefferson. Along with books on the draped table, there stood a bust portrait of Benjamin Franklin, and behind the Jefferson figure stood another reference to Franklin, the electrical machine, which Day's advertisements identified as a 'philosophical apparatus'.³⁰ A globe of the world was included but sat on the floor, as Jefferson held a copy of the Declaration of Independence in his outstretched right hand and gestured toward it with his left. This became the major focus of the composition. It was as though Tiebout chose to place emphasis upon the power of the ideas inherent in Jefferson's document, whereas Edwin relied upon the more overt gesture of Jefferson wrapping an arm around the globe. There is no evidence of Jefferson commenting directly upon either

²⁸ TJ to Tadeusz Kosciuszko, 2 April 1802, *PTJ*, 37: 168.

²⁹ The close similarities are obvious in comparing the Bervic engraving of Louis XVI with Edwin's *Jefferson*. This is noted in Noble Cunningham, *Popular Images of the Presidency from Washington to Lincoln* (Columbia, MO., 1991), 139.

³⁰ There is an 'electric machine' dated from c. 1775-1800 in the American Philosophical Society collection, catalogue #58.39. As its notations for 'high' and 'low' are in French, it is believed of French origin and could possibly have been owned by Franklin, or it could be the one presented to the APS in 1785 by M. Noel. An image and information on this machine can be accessed through <http://amphilsoc.pastperfect-online.com>. Cunningham in *Image of TJ*, refers to this machine as a 'static electrical machine' on 67 and cites Day's advertisement on 58.

engraving, yet no doubt he appreciated the visual attempts of each artist to use his image as a means of expressing the concept of American democracy enveloping the world. Jefferson underscored this thought in his inaugural address, as he pronounced the government of the United States as ‘the world’s best hope’.³¹

Certainly Gilbert Stuart can be credited with setting the standard for presenting an image of American leadership using Old World criteria for a state portrait. Obviously, both Edwin and Tiebout drew from his portrait of Washington as interpreted by John Heath, yet they managed to include elements that were unique to Jefferson. These are apparent in the props chosen by Tiebout, but a close look at the figure of each engraving reveals subtle differences in dress and presentation. Both Washington and Jefferson are depicted in black suits; however, the figure of Washington in the Stuart – Heath print displays a greater degree of formality with his wig dressed in the black silk bag topped by a rosette that was generally reserved for very formal occasions, even in Europe. There are touches of lace at throat and wrists, and he carries a dress sword ornamented with a gold tassel. A formal hat with a black cockade rests on the table. In comparison the Jefferson figure does not appear with anything as formal as a gentleman’s dress sword, bag wig, lace or even a hat. Still the most notable distinction in the dress of the two figures is in the footwear. Washington’s shoes are fastened with elegant buckles, while Jefferson, in all versions of the prints, wears the same ankle high, laced shoes that apparently had begun to be associated with him. While he was still vice president, the footwear became a means of identification in the political caricature *The Providential Detection* (fig. 3.2) and could be interpreted in that instance as indicating a political affinity for France. Edwin and Tiebout were working as competitors, not collaborators, yet each identified this type shoe with Jefferson. There must have been a basis for such similar but independent decisions.

Men’s footwear that tied with strings rather than buckled were associated with the egalitarian ideas of the French Revolution and appeared as well in the levelling process affecting England. In his *Memoirs*, British writer and member of parliament, Sir William Wraxall, reflected that dress in England totally ‘fell’ in the ‘era of Jacobinism and equality in 1793 and 1794’. In Wraxall’s eyes ‘it was then

³¹ ‘First Inaugural Address’, *PTJ*, 33: 149.

that pantaloons, cropped hair, and shoe-strings, as well as the total abolition of buckles and ruffles, together with the disuse of hair-powder, characterized the men'. He blamed much of this on Charles James Fox and his political allies but noted that Jacobinism from across the channel as the final leveller. In France boots were viewed as more democratic, but if shoes were the choice, then they should fasten with strings rather than fine buckles. There was a description from Paris in 1792 of the duc d'Orléans sympathizing with the revolutionary faction by wearing a short jacket with pantaloons, his hair cut short without powder, and shoes tied with strings.³² As mentioned in the preceding chapter, a French publication of 1797, *Caricatures Politiques* described the perfect republican wearing 'bottines' or ankle boots that were much like Jefferson's choice in footwear.³³

The notice given Jefferson's footwear continued during his presidency and elicited comment by members of the Federalist faction, who called attention to the fact that rather than displaying elegant buckles their president wore shoes that laced. With a tone of sarcasm, one Federalist remarked that Jefferson's shoes 'closed tight round his ankles, laced up with neat leathern strings and absolutely without buckles'. For this observer Jefferson's footwear made the statement that buckles were 'superfluous and anti-republican especially when he has strings'. Another Federalist attributed this style preference to Jefferson's deliberate attempt at 'singularity'. These comments appeared in the *New York Commercial Advertiser* in 1802 and claimed that 'in every age of the world, rulers and philosophers have made themselves remarkable for the affectation of some singularity'. The writer also speculated that 'our philosophic president chooses to have his singularities as well as European kings---He prefers shoestrings, when other folks wear buckles'.³⁴ Jefferson may have bristled at being compared to a European king, especially since laced shoes were considered by many as another sign of republican levelling and an association with the French Revolution.

³² Ribeiro, *Fashion in the French Revolution*, 54 & 67, citing Madame Trussand's *Memoirs and Reminiscences of France*, ed. F. Hervé (London, 1838), 177.

³³ Antoine Joseph de Barruel-Beauvert, *Caricatures Politiques* (Paris, 1797), 6 and cited in Wrigley, *Politics of Appearances*, 260.

³⁴ First quote from Bernard Mayo, 'A Peppercorn for Mr. Jefferson' in *Virginia Quarterly Review* (Spring 1943): 224. Second quote from the *Commercial Advertiser*, New York, 21 July 1802, *America's Historical Newspapers*.

Jefferson's accounting records substantiate that during his first year as president, he purchased his 'bootees' and shoe strings from John Minchin, a boot and shoemaker who had relocated from Philadelphia to Washington. An invoice from Minchin to Jefferson dated March 5, 1801 listed charges for a pair of shoes, one pair of bootees, and silk strings. The bootees were six dollars and the strings twenty-five cents; the shoes only three dollars. Obviously Jefferson was still ordering shoes but willing to pay double the price for the bootees. Later in the year, on November 19 his accounting records show a payment to Minchin for six pair of shoe strings at one dollar fifty cents. As a further price comparison on footwear, Jefferson paid eleven dollars for 'boots' in the following January, indicating that the bootees did not take the place of more utilitarian boots.³⁵

The brief descriptions of Jefferson at his inauguration and the visual interpretations of the new president engraved and printed by the teams of Helmbold-Edwin and Day-Tiebout left the impression of a simply dressed President Jefferson, perhaps in a black suit, wearing his laced bootees. There was nothing to suggest that his appearance was not suitable for a republican president even if some interpreted the bootees as foreign with even a hint of the French Jacobin. It was not far into his presidency, however, that political opponents began to remark upon an appearance that many questioned and found inappropriate, as it ran counter to even the most understated dress for a gentleman.

* * * * *

Jefferson began changing protocol within the first year of taking office. Newly elected Federalist Representative Manasseh Cutler was curious as to 'what events are to follow the *new order of things*'. In his letters he informed acquaintances in Massachusetts that the new president would host no levees nor give an opening address to the first session of congress, claiming that such speeches were anti-republican, as they followed a monarchical mode. Toward the conclusion of his first year in the city of Washington, he wrote, 'You would be ready to doubt my

³⁵ John Minchin invoice, Henry E. Huntington Library, San Marino, California, microfilm, 'Jefferson Accounts 1797-1824'; John Minichin identified in *JMB*, II: 984, n. 59; payment to Minichin for shoe strings, *ibid.*, II: 1059 & a payment to Minchin for boots, *ibid.*, II: 1064.

veracity, were I to recite to you the debasing methods which are pursued here and in this part of the county to gain the applause of the multitude'. Despite the methods used, Cutler's sense was that the president was highly popular with the people in the Washington area, and he joined other congressmen in attending the President's dinners. He left details of the foods served, pronounced one dessert 'very fine' and seemed to appreciate the plenitude of good wine but made no comment upon Jefferson's personal appearance.³⁶

At the conclusion of Jefferson's first year in the presidency, a report reached leading New York Federalist, Rufus King, that the president had made himself accessible and 'familiar with, the sovereign people' but was not holding levee days and observed no ceremony. Equally notable was that the president 'often sees company in an undress, sometimes with his slippers on'.³⁷ Later in the same year a more detailed impression was recorded by Federalist Senator William Plumer of New Hampshire upon his initial meeting with President Jefferson. He wrote, 'In a few moments, a tall highboned man came into the room; he was drest, or rather *undrest*, with an old brown coat, red waistcoat, old corduroy small clothes, much soiled---woolen hose---& slippers without heels'. Plumer first mistook him for a servant, but then following introductions, he reached the conclusion that, 'I certainly dress as well as the first officer of the nation'. Despite appearances, Plumer did add to his account that Jefferson was 'easy of access, & conversed with great ease & freedom'.³⁸

Jefferson's new mode of presenting himself in undress and slippers provided gossip among the Federalist in Washington, but it reached international proportions with the arrival of the new British minister, Anthony Merry, in November 1803. (fig. 4.7) Soon after Merry's arrival, Secretary of State Madison escorted him to the President's House to present his credentials to the President. According to Merry's account, he was dressed 'in full official costume, as the etiquette of my place required on such a formal introduction of a Minister from Great Britain to the

³⁶ Manasseh Cutler, *Life, Journals and Correspondence*, ed. William P Cutler & Julia Perkins Cutler, 2 vols. (Athens, Ohio, 1888; republished 2010), II: 43-64; direct quotes found on 43 & 64. Emphasis on 'new order of things' was Cutler's.

³⁷ Robert Troup to Rufus King, 9 April 1802, in Kaminski, *Quotable Jefferson*, 473.

³⁸ William Plumer to Jeremiah Smith, 9 December 1802, 'William Plumer's Letterbook', as cited in Lynn W. Turner, *William Plumer of New Hampshire* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1962), 94-95.

President of the United States'. He was shocked to find the President 'not merely in undress, but actually standing in slippers down at the heels' and wearing clothing that was 'indicative of utter slovenliness and indifference to appearances, and in a state of negligence actually studied'. Merry went on to conclude that, 'I could not doubt that the whole scene was prepared and intended as an insult, not to me personally, but to the sovereign I represented'.³⁹

Federalists were delighted in Minister Merry's outrage. As the story was told and re-told, there were sometimes variations in Jefferson's attire. Congressman Samuel Taggart, Federalist from Massachusetts, described the scene with Merry in 'the robes of his office' while 'our exalted chief magistrate received him in his gown and slippers; some add his night cap', but then Taggart had to admit that the night cap was probably 'hyperbole'. Nevertheless, Taggart reported that, 'It is whispered that the British Ambassador is not at all charmed with Democratic Majesty'.⁴⁰ Another high Federalist added the news in a family letter that 'Mr. Merry, the English Ambassador who arrived recently, is the news of the day in Washington. Tommy Jeff and his party don't care for him'.⁴¹ Things had not begun well with the new British envoy and would become worse.

In the weeks following his initial interview, Merry was further outraged at what he felt were improprieties that occurred at dinners hosted by the president and his secretary of state. As a former diplomat Jefferson would have been aware that representatives of countries at war were generally not invited to the same social functions, but he had included in his dinner list M. Pichon, French chargé d'affaires and his wife. To add to this insult, when dinner was announced, Jefferson offered his hand to Mrs Madison and escorted her to table rather than Mrs Merry. A similar scene played out at the Madison's dinner party, when Madison escorted Mrs Gallatin, wife of the secretary of the treasury, leaving Mrs Merry to be rescued by

³⁹ Anthony Merry's account as recorded by Josiah Quincy, printed in Edmund Quincy, *Life of Josiah Quincy* (Boston, 1868), 92-93.

⁴⁰ Samuel Taggart, 'Letters of Samuel Taggart; Part I, 1803 – 1807' printed in *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society* 33, Part 1 (Worcester, MA, 1924), 113. All of Taggart's letters were to the Reverend John Taylor.

⁴¹ Rosalie Stier Calvert, *Mistress of Riversdale, the Plantation: Letters of Rosalie Stier Calvert, 1795 – 1821*, ed. Margaret Law Callcott (Baltimore, MD, 1991), 72.

her husband and guided to a place at table.⁴² Merry believed the actions of the president and secretary of state were intended as a deliberate insult and aimed not just at him but at Great Britain.

Soon after the dinner party incidents, a brief executive memorandum ‘Rules of Etiquette’ appeared that summarized the order of initial visits, reiterated that no titles would be recognized nor a difference of grade among diplomatic members. As to dinner seating, the rule of *pêle mêle* would be observed and this extended to dinners hosted by any member of the executive staff. The only precedence was given to ladies to pass before gentlemen from one room to another.⁴³ Had this memorandum been available upon Merry’s arrival, the ensuing social debacles might have been avoided, and if Merry had been given some indication that full dress was not expected upon his initial presentation of his papers, another incident might have been lessened at least. Chargé Thornton had noted that Washington had been pleased that former Minister Hammond had called upon him in full dress.⁴⁴ Based upon the experiences of former ministers, Merry could have expected to be received by the President of the United States looking much as the Washington of the Stuart-Heath engraving, and certainly Jefferson could have received Merry in the black suit had he chosen.

The issues of etiquette between the executive branch and the British legation remained unresolved when a new attaché, Augustus John Foster, arrived in December 1804. He quickly surmised that, ‘Mr. Jefferson knew too well what he was about’. He formed this opinion knowing of Jefferson’s diplomatic career in Paris that had allowed him to circulate among some of the best of French society. In addition, Jefferson was born a Virginian and therefore in Foster’s view, an American aristocrat. Foster argued that with his background and experiences, Jefferson should have been naturally attuned to the ‘decencies and proprieties of life’. Foster joined many of the Federalists in the belief that Jefferson was playing a game, and the object of this game was to retain the highest office in a land where, in his estimation,

⁴² James Madison to James Monroe, 19 January 1804, *Papers of James Madison: Secretary of State*, ed. Robert J. Brugger, et al., 9 vols. (Charlottesville, VA, 1986 -), 6: 361 – 66. See also Adams, *Administration of Thomas Jefferson*, 551 – 53; Malone, *Jefferson and His Time*, 4: 378 – 81.

⁴³ *TJW*, 705.

⁴⁴ Jackman, ‘A Young Englishman. . .Edward Thornton’, 110.

manners were not esteemed by the mass of society.⁴⁵ This joined the opinion put forward by Federalist Manassah Cutler that Jefferson was playing to the masses.

Foster recorded his own initial impression of Jefferson's appearance and concluded that he looked much like 'a tall large-boned farmer'. He described him as 'a tall man with a very red freckled face and grey neglected hair, his manners good natured, frank, and rather friendly though he had somewhat a cynical expression of countenance'. Of his clothing, Foster noted that he wore, 'a blue coat, a thick grey-coloured hairy waistcoat with a red under-waistcoat lapped over it, green velveteen breeches with pearl buttons, yarn stockings and slippers down at the heel'.⁴⁶ Obviously Jefferson greeted the new attaché in much the same apparel as that in which he had welcomed the British minister, and he was still wearing those down at the heel slippers that were becoming as notorious as his laced bootees.

As Minister Merry and his predecessor Edward Thornton, Foster was far more comfortable with the Federalist faction in Washington and agreed with many of their views. He placed Jefferson's political game against the backdrop of the new capital, in that he felt the president could not have behaved as he did were the government still in Philadelphia or New York. Only the remote, rural nature of the current capital allowed him to ride without an attendant and so fasten his horse himself to a shop door, as Foster witnessed upon one occasion when his fingernail was torn off in the process. Nor could Jefferson have received guests in yarn stockings and old slippers. Foster saw the issues surrounding the location of the capital as not only a part of the political divisions but a division in the levels of society as well. In Foster's view the wealthy and 'more respectable' congressmen would vote to return to Philadelphia or another of the larger cities, whereas the majority, 'being composed of rough and unfashioned persons' were more comfortable in the rural setting of Washington, where servants were not mandatory or even expected. He believed that without this remote location, Jefferson could not play this role of the common citizen, presenting himself in public wearing clothing

⁴⁵ Augustus John Foster, *Jeffersonian America: Notes on the United States of America Collected in the Years 1805-6-7 and 11-12*, ed. Richard Beale Davis (San Marino, CA, 1954), x, 9-10 & 50.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 10.

and adopting a demeanour that could define him as one of them, a man of the people.⁴⁷

Minister Merry did not let go of his indignation quickly. After being recalled from the United States and given another assignment to Denmark and Sweden, he was still telling the story of his first meeting with the American president. On this assignment his under-secretary was Stratford Canning, who included Merry's story in his 'Memoirs'. Canning began by comparing Jefferson to his predecessors, 'Jefferson helped materially to introduce that loose tone, which differed so much from his illustrious predecessor's', and then continued, 'It is reported of him that he received Mr. Merry, our first envoy to the independent States in his dressing-gown, seated on a sofa catching a slipper after tossing it up, on the point of his foot'.⁴⁸ This account, as Taggart's, has Jefferson in a dressing gown, though from earlier accounts by Merry and the experiences of others, it seems more likely that the encounter took place with Jefferson in casual daywear. Only the slippers remained consistent.

Whether Jefferson received Merry in a dressing gown or casual clothing, there was a subtle connotation that would have been known to any eighteenth-century gentleman. This was the tradition that those of superior social rank could receive their equals or social inferiors in undress, most notably in a banyan or dressing gown, especially for morning visits. The reverse would not have been acceptable.⁴⁹ Did this play into Jefferson's motives as he prepared to greet the new minister? Yet he had on previous occasions and would continue to greet both friends and opponents, in similar clothing. Even though Senator William Plumer had been startled with the president's appearance on his initial meeting, on subsequent visits he seemed to link this dressing down to time of day. He wrote of a visit in November 1804, 'I found the President dressed better than I ever saw him at any time when I called on a morning visit'. Plumer described his clothing upon this occasion, 'Though his coat was old and thread bare, his scarlet vest, his corduroy

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 8-10.

⁴⁸ Stanley Lane-Poole, *Life of the Right Honourable Stratford Canning, Viscount Stratford de Redcliffe*, 2 vols. (London, 1888), I: 315 – 16.

⁴⁹ Diana de Marly, *Fashion for Men, an Illustrated History* (New York, 1985), 65 and Brandon Brame Fortune with Deborah J. Warner, *Franklin & His Friends: Portraying the Man of Science in Eighteenth-Century America* (Washington, DC and Philadelphia, 1999), 51-52.

small cloths, and his white cotton hose, were new and clean---but his linen was much soiled, and his slippers old'. When Plumer made an 11:00 a.m. call the following summer, he simply states 'the president was in an undress', which now seemed of little consequence, though he did note that Jefferson was wearing, 'slippers with his toes out'.⁵⁰ (The infamous slippers were deteriorating further.) Someone outside the government, artist William Dunlap, had opportunity to call upon 'the great man' at the President's House and assumed that he had interrupted Jefferson in study or pursuing business, as he appeared '*en dishabille* and slippere'd'. Dunlap was hardly offended but rather pleased at being allowed the introduction.⁵¹ Considering again the question of whether Jefferson's dress contained a subtext of rank that Merry would have understood, quite possibly this was a factor. However, this was not reserved just for Merry, and Jefferson's appearance seemed to be irritating or excused according to political proclivity and eventually, as in the case of Plumer, excused with familiarity.

In exploring Jefferson's behaviour, questions can be asked as well of Merry's attitude toward the new republic and its elected leader. As a representative of the British sovereign, could he have felt on a level with an American president, at one time a British subject? When informed that Danish chargé, Peter Pedersen, had been received by Jefferson in slippers, Merry's response was that Pedersen was a minister of the third rank, whereas he was of the second rank, a minister plenipotentiary.⁵² Certainly Merry was aware of rank and position.

When chargé Edward Thornton applied to return to England, he strongly suggested that his position should be filled by a minister with more rank. He advised the Foreign Office to send someone to the United States with title and social standing, a background in diplomacy and someone, therefore, of enough self-assurance to function in a society that was still quite fluid and at times unpredictable. Anthony Merry did not meet Thornton's suggested qualifications. He was the son of a wine merchant, who had worked his way upward from a consular position. The

⁵⁰ William Plumer, *Memorandum of Proceedings in the United States Senate, 1803-1807*, ed. Everett Somerville Brown (New York, 1923), 179 and 193.

⁵¹ William Dunlap, *Diary of William Dunlap*, ed. Dorothy C. Barch, 2 vols. (New York, 1930) II: 388.

⁵² Madison to Monroe, 19 January 1804, *Papers of James Madison Digital Edition*, ed. J.C.A. Stagg (Charlottesville, VA, 2010), 6: 362; Foster, *Jeffersonian America*, 54.

United States was his first assignment as a minister plenipotentiary.⁵³ Obviously he was a sensitive man, as his predecessor Thornton was certainly no admirer of Jefferson but had registered no complaints. Jefferson held a reputation among British diplomats of favouring France and bearing resentments toward Britain.⁵⁴ Nevertheless, upon Merry's arrival, Jefferson initially agreed that he appeared a reasonable and good man.⁵⁵

Jefferson defended his actions in the issues with Merry and explained himself in a letter to James Monroe, then serving as the American minister at the court of St. James. He explained that he depended upon the wives of his four secretaries to assist when needed as hostess and upon these occasions, he would escort his acting hostess to table. This had been Dolley Madison's duty at the unfortunate dinner with the Merrys. He was adamant as well that Merry must understand United States' protocol in that, 'the principle of society, as well as of government, with us, is the equality of the individuals composing it. That no man here would come to a dinner, where he was to be marked with inferiority to any other'.⁵⁶ This addressed the issues arising around dinner etiquette but made no reference to Merry's displeasure with Jefferson's personal appearance.

Despite his strong statement about American protocol and equality, Jefferson seemed somewhat uneasy with the situation, as he encouraged Monroe to try and make their position on protocol clear and to counter misrepresentations by Merry. Madison sent a similar request, as he advised Monroe that, 'To apply an antidote to this poison will require your vigilant and prudent attention'.⁵⁷ James Monroe was alert to any change in attitude but could hardly be sure that his dinner invitations refused and visits not returned were related to the Merry affair, as some of these refusals were prior. He questioned whether he had been snubbed by the Queen at her levee, as she walked directly past him with no pause. It was about the time the

⁵³ For a biography of Anthony Merry, see Malcolm Lester, *Anthony Merry 'Redivivus': A Reappraisal of the British Minister to the United States, 1803-6* (Charlottesville, VA, 1978). Lester has achieved a concise but still detailed account of this British statesman about whom relatively little has been written.

⁵⁴ 'Memorandum of Conversation between Philemon Dickinson and George Hammond', *PTJ*, 23: 345.

⁵⁵ TJ to James Monroe, 8 January 1804, 'TJP':LC.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷ James Madison to James Monroe, 16 February 1804, *Papers of James Madison*, 6: 485.

‘Etiquette story’ was circulating, but then Monroe rationalized that the Queen was old, her sight was not good and her drawing room was always a ‘confused multitude’.⁵⁸ Monroe was not pleased with the occasional derogatory remarks regarding the United States that were made within his hearing but decided a better course was to ignore them, not taking them personally and therefore not to acknowledge ‘any inferiority in a national or individual sense’. He took the larger view of the entire situation that, ‘it was the impulse of ancient feelings excited at present by light causes’.⁵⁹

Indeed there were much weightier causes of concern for both Britain and the United States from the time of Merry’s arrival in November 1803 through the etiquette crisis that continued through the early months of 1804. James Monroe was in London as minister and was joined by William Pinkney to negotiate a new treaty with Britain that would secure American commerce and shipping rights as a neutral nation in the global wars led by Britain and France. This was joined to the ongoing grievance surrounding the impressment of American seamen. These issues were all intertwined with Britain’s need to guard against an invasion by Napoleon that would not be relieved until the defeat of the French navy at the Battle of Trafalgar in 1805.⁶⁰ It is understandable that Merry’s displeasure with his treatment in the United States was not given more attention by the London Foreign Office. British poet Thomas Moore had become friends with Minister Merry and his wife on his American tour and in a letter home mentioned that, ‘they have been treated with the most pointed incivility by the present democratic president, Mr. Jefferson’. He expressed the opinion that, ‘it is only the precarious situation of Great Britain which could possibly induce it to overlook such indecent, though, at the same time, petty hostility’.⁶¹

In Jefferson’s initial letter to Monroe concerning the Merry affair, he had acknowledged the dangers faced by Britain and professed that the United States was not indifferent to the issue. He understood the importance that both England and

⁵⁸ James Monroe to James Madison, 3 March 1804, *ibid.*, 6: 538 & James Madison to TJ, 15 March 1804, ‘TJP’:LC.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰ This period in American diplomacy is discussed in Wood, *Empire of Liberty*, 620-658.

⁶¹ Thomas Moore to “His Mother,” 13 June 1804 in *Memoirs, Journal, and Correspondence of Thomas Moore*, ed. John Russell, 8 vols. (London, 1853), I: 162.

France maintain balanced positions so that one might check the other for the safety of all nations. Another of his reasons for encouraging Monroe to counteract any misrepresentations coming from Merry was his learning that former chargé Thornton perceived the United States not as friendly to Britain following the recent U.S. purchase of the Louisiana territory from France. Per Jefferson, ‘this is totally without foundation’.⁶² The acquisition of New Orleans and the entire territory of Louisiana, the extent of which was still undetermined, afforded the United States greater commercial possibilities and so held the potential of future global leverage. Anthony Merry, along with many north-eastern Federalists, looked for signs that the Louisiana acquisition was unstable and a source of discontent possibly leading to disunion. Merry could see the threat to the British interests in the Caribbean if the United States acquired too much strength along the gulf coast,⁶³ and the Federalists that backed the north-eastern shipping trade saw New Orleans and the gulf as competition that could direct commerce away from the original American port cities. The purchase of Louisiana would remain of concern to the British minister and north-eastern Federalists, while it proved a major achievement of Jefferson’s first term as president.

As Jefferson completed this first term, his relationship with Anthony Merry and most high-Federalists did not improve, nevertheless he was re-elected by an overwhelming majority. The Jeffersonian-Republicans defeated the Federalists in every state except Connecticut and Delaware, and Jefferson collected 162 electoral votes to fourteen votes for the Federalist candidate, Charles Cotesworth Pickney of South Carolina.⁶⁴ Jefferson’s stated motive in standing again for the presidency was to test whether or not he had the nation’s approval. He wrote in January 1804, ‘The abominable slanders of my political enemies have obliged me to call for that verdict from my country in the only way it can be obtained’. He concluded that a favourable vote would become, ‘my sufficient voucher to the rest of the world and to

⁶² TJ to James Monroe, 8 January 1804, ‘TJP’:LC.

⁶³ Lester, *Anthony Merry*, 88-90.

⁶⁴ *Political Observatory*, Walpole, NH, 2 March 1805, *America’s Historical Newspapers*. These numbers were reported in many American newspapers at this time.

posterity'.⁶⁵ He was seeking the assurance that the achievements he would outline in his second inaugural address were recognized by a majority of Americans.

In his address Jefferson reminded his constituency that foreign relations were improved and internal taxes had been discontinued, based upon his belief that import taxes could support a smaller government and a reduced standing army. An important topic was Louisiana, as the purchase treaty was an outstanding achievement of his administration. Nor could he forgo the partisan opportunity to remind the public that 'the acquisition of Louisiana has been disapproved by some'.⁶⁶ Nevertheless, his 1804 election victory marked the acceptance of his western vision by a majority of Americans. His second inaugural address did not have as memorable a phrase as, 'We are all republicans: we are all federalists',⁶⁷ but a similar sentiment was there. He predicted that 'our doubting brethren will at length see that the mass of their fellow citizens, with whom they cannot yet resolve to act, as to principles and measures, think as they think, and desire what they desire'.⁶⁸ Not as succinctly said, yet it was left open for Federalists to become good republicans. He put forward the idea that the Federalists, in their smaller, elite numbers would come to recognize that their thinking was not so removed from other citizens and that all shared the desire for the public good.

While Jefferson served as secretary of state, New England Federalist, Oliver Wolcott, Jr. predicted that 'he will become popular in ale houses', and during his first term as president more political opponents joined in the accusations that he was playing to the masses.⁶⁹ No matter how his actions might be interpreted, as he sat for a public portrait in January 1805, he must have given some thought to the image that he wished to put forward. He was concluding a very successful first term and could afford to make a strong statement that would support his agenda of democratizing the protocol awarded elected officials in the national government.

⁶⁵ TJ to Thomas McKean, 17 January 1804, 'TJP':LC.

⁶⁶ As summarized from TJ's address of 4 March 1805, reprinted in *Inaugural Addresses of President Thomas Jefferson, 1801 and 1805*, ed. Noble Cunningham (Columbus, MO, 2001), 76-79.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 5.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 79.

⁶⁹ Oliver Wolcott, Jr. to Oliver Wolcott, Sr., 14 February 1792, in Kaminski, *Quotable Jefferson*, 458. A profile of Wolcott is in Elkins and McKittrick, *Age of Federalism*, 626 – 28.

* * * * *

This would be Rembrandt Peale's second portrait of Jefferson. He arrived in Washington in January 1805, accompanied by his father Charles Willson Peale. The two had made the trip from Philadelphia to seek commissions for Rembrandt and to add new portraits to the Peale Museum. A portrait of the re-elected president, who was at the peak of his popularity, would be a notable addition to Rembrandt's oeuvre. On their first full day in the city, they called upon Jefferson and were invited to attend the evening's dinner with several members of congress. On that particular evening of January 9, 1805, they were all Jefferson's republican colleagues, and so the Peales would have been a very comfortable addition.⁷⁰

The presence of the artist in the capital was noted in Washington newspapers and reprinted by others throughout the northeast. 'We learn that Mr. Rembrandt Peale has arrived in this city for the purpose of taking portraits of distinguished characters for the Museum in Philadelphia'. A Baltimore paper created a pun especially enjoyed by the elder Peale, 'Rembrandt Peale is taking off the heads of Members of Congress for his Museum at Philada'[sic].⁷¹ C.W. Peale was very interested in supporting the interests of his son's career but is clear when writing of the trip to Washington that the likenesses collected of public officials were 'for my museum'.⁷² He involved himself in the process and the bits of information about the portraits resulting from the trip are primarily from his journal notes and letters home.

Late in January Rembrandt Peale and his father called upon the president at the executive mansion for two sittings and then a final session for 'touch-up'.⁷³ Charles Willson Peale was pleased with the portrait of the sixty-one year old Jefferson and announced in a letter to the family in Philadelphia that it was completed on January 31st and 'much to our satisfaction'. He also described it as a

⁷⁰ Charles Willson Peale, 'Diary 20, Part 3: A Journey to Baltimore and Washington, D.C., 27 December 1804 – 3 February 1805', entry for 9 January, *Selected Papers of Charles Willson Peale*, II, Part 2: 785; Jefferson's Presidential Dinner Lists, original, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston; facsimile copy in Special Collections Jefferson Library, Thomas Jefferson Foundation.

⁷¹ *Norwich Courier*, Norwich, Connecticut, 6 February 1805, *America's Historical Newspapers*; "taking off heads" in C.W. Peale to Rembrandt Peale, 9 February 1805, *Selected Papers of Charles Willson Peale*, II, Part 2: 805.

⁷² C.W. Peale, 27 December 1804, 'Diary', *Select Papers of Charles Willson Peale*, II, Part 2: 783 & 793.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 786.

‘charming portrait’.⁷⁴ His plan was to feature the portrait at an evening illumination of the Peale Museum on March 4, the eve of the inauguration. There was a twenty-five cent admission fee, but this included an organ performance as well. Apparently his plan went well, as subsequent newspaper announcements let the public know that there would be another illumination, ‘By the desire of many who wished to bring their families and friends’. There is no way to determine the bigger draw---a view of the president or an organ recital, or perhaps both together made for an appealing experience. The event was popular enough to be repeated for two more evenings on March 11 and 12.⁷⁵

Prior to the evening illuminations at the Peale Museum, Rembrandt had advertised upon his return to Philadelphia from Washington that the president’s portrait could be viewed in his painting rooms on the lower floor of the State House on Monday and Thursday, between 12 and 2 o’clock. Through the marketing efforts of the Peale family, the new Jefferson portrait was given ample public exposure and allowed those in the Philadelphia area an idea of the appearance of their president.⁷⁶ Jefferson was quite familiar with the Peale Museum, and as he prepared for his sittings with Rembrandt, he would have been aware that many Americans could potentially view this image.

From what can be seen of Jefferson’s high, rolled coat collar, he did not choose to be painted again in the black suit but rather in red. It is interesting that he opted to step away from the egalitarian black that had defined him in Rembrandt’s 1800 portrait (fig. 3.1), yet the red coat does not make the major statement, as it is swallowed in the large, fur-lined cloak in which Jefferson wrapped himself. (fig. 4.1) This is the most defining garment in the painting and along with the hint of red of the coat creates a sharp visual contrast not only to his first portrait by Rembrandt but to the other portraits taken by the artist on this trip to the city of Washington. Congressman William Findley and Treasury Secretary Albert Gallatin sat for their

⁷⁴ C.W. Peale to Raphaele, Rubens, and Sophonisba Peale, 19 and 30 January 1805, *ibid.*, 793-94 & 797.

⁷⁵ *Poulson’s American Daily Advertiser*, Philadelphia, 11-12 March 1805, *America’s Historical Newspapers*.

⁷⁶ Reference to exhibiting the portrait, C.W. Peale to John DePeyster, 3 March 1805, *Select Papers of Charles Willson Peale*, II, Part 2: 815-16; advertisements for the illuminations in *Poulson’s American Daily Advertiser*, Philadelphia, 2, 11, & 12 March 1805, *America’s Historical Newspapers*.

portraits dressed in standard, dark suits.⁷⁷ (figs. 4.8 and 4.9) The fur cape becomes the most provocative feature in Rembrandt's portrait and raises the question of Jefferson's message in this public portrait at the conclusion of a very successful term in the presidency.

In looking for the 'why' of the cloak, the simplest explanation might be the extreme cold that the region was experiencing. In his diary, C.W. Peale mentioned on several days that the weather was severe and uncomfortably cold. He displayed his humanity by observing that 'the intense cold here I think must be severely felt by the poor inhabitants of this large wilderness of City'. Peale the business man went on to speculate that the cold was deterring commissions as no one wanted to travel out to inspect the examples of Rembrandt's talent and have a portrait taken.⁷⁸ Jefferson expressed many times his sensitivity to cold. He wrote in 1801, 'When I recollect on one hand all the sufferings I have had from cold, & on the other all my other pains, the former preponderate greatly'.⁷⁹ Cold may have accounted for the presence of the cloak but not its inclusion in the finished portrait. Jefferson could have remained wrapped comfortably in the fur through most of his sitting then put it aside as Rembrandt laid in the clothing. The portraits of Findley and Gallatin painted during the same period of cold show them dressed only in their respectable dark suits. Of course, the artist may have encouraged the cape, as it gave a marvellous opportunity for Rembrandt to display his skills in rendering fur. Jefferson may have been inclined toward the fur, as it was sure to project a look quite distinct from what was generally seen among the portraits collected in the Peale Museum and was equally sure to remove him even further from the well-known images of Washington in the black suit.

One of the most colourful accounts of a fur cloak belonging to Jefferson was written by a close friend and admirer, Margaret Bayard Smith, wife of Samuel Harrison Smith, the editor of the pro-republican newspaper, *The National Intelligencer*. The Smiths were occasional dinner guests at the President's House,

⁷⁷ Rembrandt also took the portrait of Pennsylvania congressman John Baptiste Charles Lucas, however this portrait is in a private collection. Gallatin, Findley and Lucas were the only portraits painted by Rembrandt while in Washington other than Jefferson's.

⁷⁸ Charles Willson Peale to Ruben and Sophonisba Peale, 19 January 1805, *Select Papers*, II, Part 2: 785, 794.

⁷⁹ TJ to William Dunbar, 12 January 1801, *PTJ*, 32: 448.

and on one of these evenings, Mrs. Smith began to feel ill. She began her reminiscence, which she titled 'The Fur Cloak', by identifying the time and situation, 'It was in the winter of 1805, that I was dining at Mr. Jefferson's, when soon after leaving the table, I was seized with an ague'. For her carriage ride home, Jefferson loaned her his fur cloak. She knew the history of this fur, and her imagination was stirred to think that, 'I, an obscure individual in America, should be wrapped in the same mantle that once enveloped the Czar of Russia---that was afterwards long worn by the . . . Hero, of Poland, and now belongs to one of the greatest men alive'! She proved on many occasions to be a great supporter of Jefferson and had no hesitation in giving him such tribute. In her account of the fur cloak, the 'Hero of Poland' was Thaddeus Kosciuszko, who proved equally admirable in Smith's estimation. He had become highly regarded during the American Revolution with his military engineering skills that were significant in the American victory at Saratoga and then used to fortify West Point on the Hudson River; however, the young Margaret Bayard did not come to know him until after the Revolution and his second trip to America.

Smith described herself as just a girl when Kosciuszko returned to America in 1797 after his failed insurgency against the Russian army occupying Poland, when he had been badly injured and then imprisoned in Saint Petersburg. After an eighteen month incarceration, Kosciuszko was personally released by the new Russian Emperor, Paul I, following the death of Catherine II with the stipulation that he could not return to his native Poland. Kosciuszko refused to accept money from the Emperor, and according to Smith's recounting of Kosciuszko's story, Paul presented his own fur cloak to the Polish hero as a parting gesture. Upon his arrival back in America, he had resided for a while with relatives of Margaret Bayard, and here she heard the story of the fur cloak that had so captured her imagination.⁸⁰

Smith's version of the story correlates with the circumstances of Kosciuszko's return to the United States in 1797. He was greeted as a returning hero for his participation in the American Revolution and his gallant though failed attempts in his revolution against the Russian armies occupying Poland. As he arrived in Philadelphia, the horses were removed and citizens pulled his carriage into

⁸⁰ Margaret Bayard Smith, 'The Fur Cloak', *Margaret Bayard Smith Papers*, LC, container 5, reel 2.

the city. Newspapers announced his arrival and articles and biographies appeared that defined him as a man of character, a hero, a statesman and a philosopher. A story reprinted in several American newspapers stressed his participation in revolutions: American, French, and Polish and went on to label him a 'leveller', and elaborated, 'If Kosciuszko be a leveller, (which by the bye every revolutionist who exerts himself for the benefit of humanity ought to be) he is a leveller who. . .wishes to level, as it were, in order to raise all to the same height, but not to trample every thing [*sic*] under foot'.⁸¹

This description was one that Jefferson could wish to apply to himself, as it aligned so closely with his goals of maintaining the ideals of the American Revolution and that of a government that existed for the people. Throughout the remainder of his life he would esteem and identify with the generation of 1776, as he would remain opposed to any system that would be 'degrading the citizen in his own eye'. In his first revolutionary writing to gain public recognition, 'A Summary View of the Rights of British Americans', he reminded the king that, 'he is no more than the chief officer of the people'⁸²

Kosciuszko remained in the United States for only ten months before returning to Europe. During this time the two men formed a lasting friendship and continued to correspond until Kosciuszko's death in 1817. In gratitude for Jefferson's aid and friendship Kosciuszko wrote a brief note just prior to his leaving in which he requested, 'Give me leave to present you a Fur'.⁸³ Smith had used this as the conclusion to her own story and wrote, 'On leaving this country for Europe, Kasioskio [*sic*], left this cloak, with his revered friend Jefferson'.⁸⁴ In her version, the fur cloak had dramatically transitioned from a monarch to a Polish patriot then to an American revolutionary.

Neither Smith's story nor Kosciuszko's brief note specifies the type fur, but following Kosciuszko's departure a 'fur' begins to appear in Jefferson family correspondence and through the years becomes more clearly defined. Jefferson first

⁸¹ *Federal Gazette*, Baltimore, 8 April 1797. This same story appeared in newspapers from New York, New Jersey, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and others. *America's Historical Newspapers*.

⁸² TJ, 'A Summary View of the Rights of British Americans', *TJW*, 103.

⁸³ T. Kosciuszko to TJ, before 5 May 1798, *PTJ*, 30: 331.

⁸⁴ Smith, 'Fur Cloak', *Smith Papers*, LC.

mentioned a fur garment in December 1798 following Kosciuszko's departure in May. He reported to his daughter Martha that the weather was extremely cold on his return to Philadelphia from Monticello, yet he assured her that he stayed as comfortable as if he had been in a 'warm bed' --- 'thanks to my pelisse'. Here, Jefferson used the term 'pelisse', which at that time would have designated an outer garment, cut either as a cloak, coat, or jacket with the distinguishing feature of a fur lining or fur trim, and so the term could be used interchangeably with the fur cloak described by Margaret Bayard Smith. Years later, well into his retirement, he made another reference to his pelisse that identified the type fur. He had suffered from the cold on the three-day trip from Monticello to his retreat home, Poplar Forest, in southern Virginia. He requested that Martha send 'my wolf-skin pelisse and fur-boots'. She would find the items in the closet over his bed, and he was specific as to how the items should be packed. 'The pelisse had better be sowed up in a striped blanket to keep it clean and uninjured', he suggested, but it would suffice to package 'the boots in any course wrapper'. Jefferson's request reveals not only the type fur but that he obviously regarded the wolf-skin pelisse as valuable.⁸⁵

After Jefferson's death the cloak that Margaret Bayard Smith had contemplated with such awe came once more into her care. In January 1837, as his grandchildren took an inventory of furniture items, probably in relation to their mother's death the previous October, their correspondence related that 'Mary says Kosciusko's wolf skin pelisse is at Mrs. H[arrison] Smith's who suggested it would be well to give it to some society which she named (but Mary had forgotten). She thought they would go to the expense of having a glass case made for it to preserve it from the moths'. It is not known whether this idea was carried forward and what ultimately became of the Kosciuszko-Jefferson wolf skin pelisse. This exchange among grandchildren is interesting in that it connects Jefferson's wolf-skin cape to Kosciuszko and indicates that it was viewed as possessing enough historical importance to merit preservation.⁸⁶

⁸⁵ Jefferson to Martha Jefferson Randolph, 27 December 1798, *PTJ*, 30: 605; Jefferson to Martha Jefferson Randolph, 4 November 1815, *Family Letters of Thomas Jefferson*, eds. Edwin M. Betts and James A. Bear, Jr. (Charlottesville, VA, 1986), 411.

⁸⁶ Jane Hollins Randolph to Thomas Jefferson Randolph, [no day] January 1837, Edgehill-Randolph Papers, Special Collections, University of Virginia Library.

The fur that Jefferson wore for Rembrandt's portrait fits with the compilation of references to his wolf-skin pelisse and links it to General Kosciuszko, plus the portrait date of 1805 correlates to the date of the event related in Margaret Bayard Smith's reminiscence. This would give the fur shown in the portrait a significant provenance, still it must be asked if this was a factor in Jefferson's choice of the cloak, although at the time Kosciuszko was still recognized as an American hero. In Jefferson's words, he was as 'pure a son of liberty as I have ever known'. He qualified this by adding that his liberty was 'to go to all, and not to the few or the rich alone'.⁸⁷ This respect was mutual and when first elected to the presidency, Jefferson received a letter from Kosciuszko congratulating the United States on their choice of president, as he predicted, 'there will no longer be any doubt that republicanism is to be inseparable from honesty, probity, and strict justice, and that a man must be more highly honoured for his virtues and his knowledge than for his luxury'.⁸⁸ This exchange presaged Jefferson's own often quoted statement that he believed in aristocracy, but a natural aristocracy based upon 'virtue and talents'.⁸⁹ Jefferson and Kosciuszko shared an ideology as to good government, and it can be asked if this would have influenced Jefferson's choices in his self-presentation for this presidential portrait.

Provenance aside, the cloak functioned within the portrait to strengthen the figure and so acted much as robes of state in providing an 'extension of the bodily self' as recognized by Flügel in his *Psychology of Clothes* previously discussed. Visually it created a solid base around Jefferson, as he looked straight at the viewer from a three-quarter profile. The cloak could remind visitors to the Peale Museum that European nobility might drape themselves in ermine; Jefferson sat wrapped in wolf-skins.

Fur could be incorporated into garments for a variety of reasons: comfort and protection, insignias of rank, or fashion. In the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, fur was worn generally to the inside and exposed only at collar, cuffs and openings. The origin of the pelisse was associated with Slavic countries, and the original Polish and Russian coats were generally lined with wolf. R. Turner Wilcox

⁸⁷ TJ to Horatio Gates, 21 February 1798, *PTJ*, 30: 123.

⁸⁸ T. Kosciuszko to TJ, 13 May 1801, *PTJ*, 34: 107.

⁸⁹ TJ to John Adams, 28 October 1813, *PTJ:RS*, 6: 562 – 67, reference at 563.

in his historic survey, *The Mode in Furs*, points out that during the Napoleonic wars, when the pelisse gained in popularity, especially in Britain due to their eastern European allies, the pelisse was sometimes referred to as a ‘witzchoura’ which was the Polish term for ‘wolfskin’. He notes as well that the Slavic nobleman would often prefer a more precious fur than wolf, but the wolf-skin was the traditional.⁹⁰

The wearing of wolf-skin was used as an illustration by the renowned Lord Byron when re-telling of his meeting with a young admirer from Boston, Joseph Coolidge, who would one day marry Jefferson’s granddaughter Ellen. Byron speculated that he may have disappointed the young Coolidge, as he presented himself very much as a man of the world rather than as a ‘misanthropical gentleman, in wolf-skin breeches, and answering in fierce monosyllables’.⁹¹ This allusion gave a somewhat exotic cast to a wolf-skin garment.⁹² Lord Byron contemplated the wolf-skin breeches as a means of appearing totally outrageous, but how outrageous did Jefferson wish to be perceived? With hair not dressed and wrapped in fur, he does appear, however, to have intentions of stepping outside the expected. His appearance would be notable alongside the suits and uniforms of the other portraits in Peale’s gallery.

Fur as a plentiful and an indigenous commodity of North American was well recognized. When Jefferson was serving as secretary of state, he was unsure as to what was considered an appropriate gift for a foreign minister returning to Europe and counselled with William Temple Franklin, grandson of Benjamin Franklin. As Franklin had served in Europe, initially with his grandfather, he was knowledgeable of diplomatic protocol. He advised Secretary Jefferson that ‘as we do not deal so much in jewels or Gold, perhaps a tract of land, or a present of valuable fur might

⁹⁰ R. Turner Wilcox, *The Mode in Furs* (New York, 1951; reprinted 2010), 104, 120. See also Lloyd and Sloan, *Intimate Portrait*, 181; Ribeiro, *Art of Dress*, 230.

⁹¹ George Gordon Byron to Thomas Moore, 5 July 1821, reprinted in Walter Muir Whitehill, ‘Eleanora Wayles Randolph and Joseph Coolidge, Jr.’ in *Collected Papers of the Monticello Association* (Princeton, NJ, 1965), 89.

⁹² See Doris Devine Fanelli and Karie Diethorn, *History of the Portrait Collection, Independence National Historical Park* (Philadelphia, 2001) for a reconstruction and catalogue of portraits known to have been a part of the Peale gallery, later the Philadelphia Museum. Most in the portraits wear uniforms or suits but none appear in fur. This is not a totally comprehensive reconstruction, however it is believed representative.

answer the purpose'.⁹³ This reference to land and furs as an appropriate American gift lends insight into not only the abundance of both but how they could be appropriated as representative of the new nation.

By the time of Rembrandt's 1805 portrait, Jefferson was definitely looking westward toward the potential offered by the extensive Louisiana territory and the expansion of American trade. It would be later in his presidency, in 1808, that he would encourage John Jacob Astor in the development of the western fur trade and wrote, 'I consider it as highly desirable to have that trade centered in the hands of our own citizens. . . .All beyond the Mississippi is ours exclusively, and it will be in our power to give our own traders great advantages over their foreign competitors'.⁹⁴ With this encouragement, Astor began his American Fur Company that came to rival the Hudson's Bay Company of Canada and made him a very wealthy man.⁹⁵ This lay in the not distant future, but meanwhile as Rembrandt painted his portrait in January 1805, Jefferson anxiously awaited some news from the Lewis and Clark expedition working its way along the Missouri River toward the Pacific Ocean. (The first shipment of objects and data from the expedition arrived in Washington in mid-August 1805.)⁹⁶ Jefferson's presented himself in a fur that despite its possible European origins offered a visual connection to an important American resource and suggested the potential that existed in the opening of exploration and trade in the trans-Mississippi region of the Louisiana territory. The purchase treaty with France had been an important accomplishment of his administration, and in just over a month he would remind the country in his 'Second Inaugural Address' that even though some had opposed the purchase, he could question, 'is it not better that the opposite bank of the Mississippi should be settled by our own brethren and children, than by strangers of another family? With which shall we be most likely to live in harmony and friendly intercourse.' Whether or not the fur surrounding Jefferson served as a reminder of the new western territory, the

⁹³ William Temple Franklin to Thomas Jefferson, 27 April 1790, *PTJ*, 16: 366. See also Martha E. Rojas, 'Negotiating Gifts: Jefferson's Diplomatic Presents' in *Old World; New World*, ed. Leonard Sadosky, et al., (Charlottesville, VA, 2010), 179-99.

⁹⁴ TJ to John Jacob Astor, 13 April 1808, 'TJP':LC.

⁹⁵ Wilcox, *Mode in Furs*, 102.

⁹⁶ Donald Jackson, *Letters of the Lewis and Clark Expedition*, 2 vols. (Chicago, 1978), I: 253 – 54.

purchase of Louisiana added to the look of confidence that Jefferson's was able to display in Rembrandt's portrait.

Jefferson was very aware of another founding leader that had been successful in using fur as an insignia of America. As detailed in chapter one, Jefferson had followed Benjamin Franklin in his diplomatic assignment to France and could not have escaped the poplar print by artist Charles Nicolas Cochin and engraver Augustin de Saint-Aubin of Franklin in his well-publicized fur cap worn over his straight, undressed hair. (fig. 1.10) As previously discussed, Franklin managed an image that personified the rustic American, yet his reputation as a man of science mitigated this posturing and created interest among Europeans. Charles Coleman Sellers in his *Benjamin Franklin in Portraiture* says of this print that it announced, 'the sensational fact of Franklin's arrival in France and the sensational costume which so effectively dramatized his role as envoy from the New World to the Old reached every part of Europe, creating an image of tremendous value to Franklin's purpose'.⁹⁷

Another image of Franklin that was widely dispersed through prints and copies was that by Joseph Siffred Duplessis of Franklin wearing a fur-collared coat. A copy of this famous portrait, believed painted by Jean Valade, was one of Jefferson's early acquisitions as he began building his portrait collection while in Paris (fig. 4.10).⁹⁸ Not only did Franklin appear with a fur collar in the Duplessis, but his coat and waistcoat were red, which forms an interesting analogy with the red coat that Jefferson was obviously wearing under his fur cape. A print of the Duplessis portrait by Juste Chevillet was completed in 1778 soon after the original painting and according to Charles Coleman Sellers enjoyed a wide sale and supported the American cause in France. Many painted copies in addition to the one owned by Jefferson are identified by Sellers, and through prints and copies, the portrait had a wide distribution.⁹⁹ It was an image familiar to many Americans.

⁹⁷ Sellers, *Benjamin Franklin in Portraiture*, 228.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 253 – 54.

⁹⁹ For Sellers complete discussion of the Duplessis portrait of Franklin in the fur collar and its copies, see *ibid.*, 247 – 264; Neil Harris in his *Artist in American Society*, references the popularity of the portrait and its support of the American cause in France, 18.

As has been pointed out, Jefferson's name was often linked to that of Franklin's, both politically and in the study of science. In his print of President Jefferson, engraver Augustus Day depicted a bust portrait of Franklin on the table. (Fig. 4.2) He could have easily used an image of Washington, but obviously the public was aware that this was not an accurate pairing; Franklin was. Both Jefferson and Franklin were viewed as pro-French, and for many Federalists this created suspicion, even toward the venerable Doctor Franklin. This was illustrated upon the news of Franklin's death on April 17, 1790. The House of Representatives did not hesitate to declare an official mourning, yet the Senate debated. Jefferson wrote to William Short in Paris, 'You will see, in the newspapers which accompany this, the details of Dr. Franklin's death. The house of representatives resolved to wear mourning, and do it. The Senate neither resolved it nor do it'.¹⁰⁰ These polemics could have pulled Jefferson even closer to the memory of Franklin, whom he had just visited on his way to New York in March 1790 to join the federal government.¹⁰¹ For Jefferson, Franklin remained 'the ornament of our country and I may say of the world'.¹⁰² Wood in his *Empire of Liberty* substantiates that it was Franklin who was the model for the middle-class artisans and businessmen, as they sought to improve their positions socially and financially, both for themselves and their families.¹⁰³ Should Jefferson's appearance in Rembrandt's portrait recall an image of Doctor Franklin, it would reiterate his goal of destroying the distance that had been placed between citizens and their functionaries.

Whether or not he was inspired by a fur cape once belonging to revolutionary hero Kosciuszko or whether he wished to present an analogy to the esteemed Benjamin Franklin with his use of fur, Jefferson is silent. What is evident, however, is an appearance that was definitely outside the expected for an American portrait of a national leader. The Rembrandt Peale portrait suggests that Jefferson relied upon the 'Zeitgeist', the spirit of the times, in his creation of a personal image that could first gain notice and then relate to current notions of levelling, reform and even

¹⁰⁰ TJ to William Short, 27 April 1790, *PTJ*, 16: 388.

¹⁰¹ Jefferson's account of this visit is in his 'Autobiography', *TJW*, 99 - 100.

¹⁰² TJ to Ferdinand Grand, 23 April 1790, *PTJ*, 16: 369. Jefferson used similar words when referring to Franklin in 1798, see TJ to Samuel Smith, 22 August 1798, *PTJ*, 30: 484.

¹⁰³ Wood, *Empire for Liberty*, 712 - 13.

recall revolutionary principles. Anne Hollander in her book, *Seeing Through Clothes*, discusses counterculture or anti-fashion clothing and notes that anti-fashion has been a recurring theme throughout the history of dress. She reasons that ‘antifashion had to be invented as a necessary means of indicating objections to existing social, economic, and sexual standards’. She does not specifically add political objections to this list; however, she presents the argument that a charged political atmosphere can offer the ideological material for the introduction of counterculture clothing, even though ultimately clothing must conform to the inevitable evolution of visual taste. She writes that, ‘the desired way of looking at the moment, had to be flouted and if possible impugned’, and goes on to say, ‘this is next to impossible without very heavy ideological weapons’.¹⁰⁴ Jefferson had a strong ideological agenda in his determination to eradicate the mimetic ‘republican court’ established by the previous Federalists administrations. He could look to both France and England for examples of appearance becoming a part of politics. Perhaps at no point in history has this been more obvious than in revolutionary France and even in England among specific groups intent upon reform. In utilizing these trends in his own self-fashioning, Jefferson was joining a larger cosmopolitan movement, as he consciously dressed-down as a part of his public presidential image.

Jefferson paid attention to events in France and was accused by some of having maintained too much support for the revolution there. Many believed he was still the Francophile, even though he held reservations in regard to Napoleonic France. Still the French revolution had been a major social and political upheaval that affected many. Wraxall wrote in his memoirs of the perspective from Britain during the age of revolutions and reflected, ‘The sinister events of the American war, had already begun to shed a degree of political gloom over the Capital and the kingdom; but this cloud bore no comparison with the terror and alarm that pervaded the firmest minds in 1792, and 1793, after the first burst of the French Revolution’.¹⁰⁵ Flügel pointed to the upheaval in France as a major influence in the radical shift in men’s clothing that came about at the conclusion of the eighteenth century. He made a logical case that the major purpose of decorative splendour in

¹⁰⁴ Anne Hollander, *Seeing Through Clothes* (New York, 1978), 364-65.

¹⁰⁵ Wraxell, *Historical Memoirs*, 83.

clothing was to visually establish rank and wealth, but with the French Revolution and ‘its world-echoing slogan of “Liberty, Equality, Fraternity”’, these visual distinctions had to be abolished. He wrote, ‘The doctrine of the brotherhood of man was obviously incompatible with garments which, by their very nature and associations, emphasized the differences in wealth and station between one man and another’.¹⁰⁶ Closer to the scene, British traveller and writer John Moore published his first journal in 1793 and a second in 1795 that recorded his observations of the changes taking place in France. His first work, *A Journal during a residence in France* was listed in Jefferson’s library catalogue, and so Moore’s impressions should have been familiar. He was dubious that ‘Republican manners would have been much to the taste of the French nation’, yet he observed, ‘There is however in Paris at present, a great affectation of plainness in dress, and simplicity of expression, which are supposed to belong to Republicans’. As an example he related an encounter with a young Frenchman trying on republicanism who joined him one evening in his box at the theatre. Per Moore, ‘He was in boots, his hair cropt, and his whole dress slovenly: on his being taken notice of, he said, “that he was accustoming himself to appear like a Republican”’. In a second work published in 1795, Moore noted that, ‘a great plainness or rather shabbiness of dress was. . . considered as a presumption of patriotism’.¹⁰⁷

In England these experiments in appearance were exploited by those who favoured egalitarian changes in government, most notably Charles James Fox.¹⁰⁸ As previously discussed in relation to Jefferson’s laced bootees, Wraxall blamed the ‘discredit’ placed upon dress in England with ‘Fox and his friends’ and their casual attitude toward appearance that underscored their political agenda. He seemed to feel that the Foxites in ‘affecting a style of neglect about their persons, and manifesting a contempt of all the usages hitherto established, first threw a sort of

¹⁰⁶ Flügel, *Psychology of Clothes*, 111 – 12.

¹⁰⁷ John Moore, *A Journal during a residence in France from the beginning of August to the middle of December 1792*, 2 vols. (London, 1793), II: 429 – 30 and *A View of the Causes and Progress of the French Revolution*, 2 vols. (London, 1795), I: 150.

¹⁰⁸ For discussion of issues surrounding proposed parliamentary changes and the unrest following the American war and the war with France, see Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707-1837* (New Haven, CT, 1992; reprinted 2008), especially pages 149 – 155.

discredit on dress'.¹⁰⁹ Jefferson was aware of Charles James Fox and his politics, though he never made reference to Fox in relation to dress or his adoption of the blue and buff as a supporter of the American colonies. After Fox became foreign secretary in February 1806 in the Grenville ministry, Jefferson wrote to American minister James Monroe in London, 'The late change in the ministry I consider as insuring us a just settlement of our differences, and we ask no more. In Mr. Fox, personally, I have more confidence than in any man in England, and it is founded in what, through unquestionable channels, I have had opportunities of knowing of his honesty and his good sense. While he shall be in the administration, my reliance on that government will be solid'.¹¹⁰ He had hopes that Fox would be able to facilitate an equitable treaty with the United States, but unfortunately Fox died in September after taking office in February, and the United States lost whatever support he may have offered. (However, Fox did recall Minister Anthony Merry during his brief months as foreign secretary.¹¹¹) Even though the more radical changes in clothing were never as pervasive in England as France, their adoption by Fox could have served to encourage Jefferson's emulation. His remarks to Monroe reveal that he was satisfied with Fox's politics and character, plus Fox also carried the title, 'Man of the People'.¹¹²

The descriptions of the clothing in revolutionary France that was used to express republican ideology---plain, shabby, even slovenly, and Wraxall's description of Fox and his circle and their deliberate negligence in matters of dress were similar to the claims against Jefferson. His borrowing of anti-fashion trends began with something as seemly simple as shoe laces over buckles, but this was not lost on those closely watching Jefferson as leader of what some pejoratively labelled a 'democratic' faction. After his first inauguration he began to incorporate a greater use of counterculture clothing that was amplified by his position as president. As he sat for Rembrandt a second time, the recent results of the election had confirmed that a majority of the polity approved the direction and image he had placed upon the

¹⁰⁹ Wraxall, *Memoirs*, 1: 99.

¹¹⁰ TJ to Monroe, 4 May 1806, 'TJP':LC.

¹¹¹ Lester, *Anthony Merry*, 116.

¹¹² Fox as "Man of the People," see Colley, *Britons*, 246. For Fox as foreign secretary and "the Ministry of All the Talents," see John Drinkwater, *Charles James Fox* (New York, 1928), 362 – 66.

executive branch of government. As Franklin and Kosciuszko, he could claim a continued reputation as revolutionist, leveller, and man of the people.

Though Jefferson appears confident of the statement he was making as he sat solidly in his fur cloak looking straight out from the canvas, the viewing public may not have been as receptive of this rather exceptional look for their president. As Alfred Bush compiled his catalogue of the life portraits of Jefferson in 1962 and then again in 1987, he found there were no prints made of this portrait in the nineteenth century and only one copy that appeared traceable to Rembrandt, even though the portrait remained on display in the Peale Museum.¹¹³ The look achieved may have been somewhat perplexing to the American viewers, even when a majority supported his policies and a second term as their president. That C.W. Peale extended the number of evenings that the portrait was featured during the illumination of the museum would point to public interest or perhaps curiosity as to the latest image of their president, yet it was Rembrandt's first portrait of Jefferson in the black suit that continued to be copied and remained in circulation.

Rembrandt's 1805 portrait became a means for Jefferson to register a visual declaration of his democratic ambitions for the nation. It allowed him to step away from the iconic Washington in the black suit with lace and dress sword to test an alternative interpretation of the presidency. With hair not formally dressed and powdered and wearing fur but a very utilitarian fur that could suggest the natural resources of the nation, he displayed his determination to 'destroy' the distance created by the Federalists between the citizens and their functionaries. As he had advised George III in his 'Summary View of the Rights of British Americans', he was to keep the 'great machine of government' effectively running without ever forgetting that he was simply the chief superintendent who served at the will of the people.

Yet one of the interesting dichotomies of Jefferson's presidential image was that he never totally put aside black. Later in 1805, for his portrait by the popular American artist Gilbert Stuart, Jefferson resorted again to the black suit. The following chapter looks at this alternative image of President Jefferson that existed alongside that of the anti-fashion Jefferson. Which look registered the truest image

¹¹³ Bush, *Life Portraits*, 40, 55-56.

of his ideas for the American presidency, or did his image shift as he needed to best operate the machine of government effectively?

CHAPTER 5: The Presidency and an Image as Statesman

On the day of Jefferson's second inauguration, British attaché, John Augustus Foster, found it noteworthy enough to enter into his journal that, 'He was in high spirits, dressed in black and even in black silk stockings'.¹ Foster's was not the only description of Jefferson on various occasions dressed in a black suit, and interestingly, the descriptions generally came from the same pens that had described his radical, anti-fashion appearance. This swing from one extreme to another in his personal self-presentation was one of the more interesting dichotomies of Jefferson's presidential image. This chapter looks more closely at the formal, moderately dressed Jefferson as recorded in the portraits by the eminent American artist, Gilbert Stuart and pursues the question of why these two looks, from conservative to extreme, co-existed and were utilized by Jefferson upon different occasions and not always in a predictable pattern.

This duality of image extended beyond just dress and appearance. His elegant dinners served in the President's House included fine, imported European wines and food prepared under the supervision of a French chef. These dinners, supported by a liveried staff, were known for their culinary sophistication----even if the seating was *pêle mêle*. As one dinner guest commented, 'He is accused of being very slovenly in his dress, & to be sure he is not very particular in that respect, but however he may neglect his person he takes good care of his table. No man in America keeps a better'.² Many noted that he was generally seen around Washington alone on horseback and not accompanied by an attendant as might be expected of a gentleman; however, he employed a coachman and had purchased a carriage, plated harness and four carriage horses in his first year as president that were used on the infrequent visits of his Virginia family. These aspects of Jefferson's presidency underscore and edify his contradictions in appearance, as he swung from accomplished gentleman to an image of revolutionary leveller.

Jefferson in black is ably defined by artist Gilbert Stuart. Jefferson sat for the artist in late May-June 1805 at Stuart's Washington studio. This was actually

¹ Foster, *Jeffersonian America*, 15.

² Mahlon Dickerson to Silas Dickerson, 21 April 1802, reprinted in *Letters of the Lewis and Clark Expedition*, ed. Jackson, 2: 677.

Jefferson's second time to pose for Stuart, as the artist had taken Jefferson's likeness while both were living in Philadelphia in 1800, but he had never delivered the finished painting. This has generated much discussion among art historians as to which is the original Stuart portrait of Jefferson and which are the copies. However, originality is not so much the concern of this chapter as is the purpose of the portraits. Of particular interest is a portrait known to have been a copy that was commissioned by James Bowdoin III. (fig. 5.1) Jefferson appointed Bowdoin as minister to the court of Spain, and as he left for his assignment, Bowdoin commissioned pendant portraits of the president and secretary of state for the American legation in Madrid. The resulting portrait is especially interesting to this study as it was the closest example of all Jefferson's life portraits to that of an official state portrait. Stuart completed and delivered the Bowdoin commission in a timely manner and made several subsequent copies, yet he did not send what was supposedly the original from this sitting to Monticello until many years later, in 1821. (fig. 5.2) This much delayed delivery has led to the debate as to whether the portrait that Jefferson finally received was the original or yet another copy. However, what is of importance to this discussion is not the originality of the painting but how Jefferson chose to appear for this very important portrait sitting.

Upon Jefferson's request, Stuart took a second portrait that enters this discussion as well, the *Medallion Profile*. (fig. 5.3) This portrait, depicting Jefferson as the classic republican, in the medallion format was one of very few portraits initiated by Jefferson and was known to have hung at the President's House in Washington. This portrait is approached as a visual connection between Jefferson and his interest in the classic world, both culturally and as a source of political ideology.³ All of these works by Gilbert Stuart have been written about and evaluated far more than the other Jefferson portraits, nevertheless they form a necessary part of this study in exemplifying the dichotomy of image that Jefferson fashioned and utilized while president.

³ For discussions of Jefferson, classicism, and republicanism see Gordon S. Wood, 'Legacy of Rome in the American Revolution' and Peter S. Onuf, 'Ancients, Moderns, and the Progress of Mankind: Thomas Jefferson's Classical World', in *Thomas Jefferson, the Classical World, and Early America*, eds. Peter S. Onuf and Nicholas P. Cole (Charlottesville, VA, 2011).

Through these portraits by Stuart, this chapter seeks to show that Jefferson was very aware of instances in which the black suit was the necessary attire for the elected leader of the United States, and when needed, he could put aside his demonstration of democratic leveller. It will be argued that Stuart's *Medallion Profile* of Jefferson allowed him to indirectly suggest to visitors to the President's House that he represented the true republican ideology. This was a visual form of legacy that he could hope would accompany him on his permanent return to Monticello and final retirement.

William Plumer, Federalist senator from New Hampshire, noted in his journal on November 26, 1804 that the new minister from Napoleonic France, General Turreau, had just arrived in Washington. He observed that the Frenchman appeared very attentive to dress and equipage and learned that he had inquired as to the 'court-dress'. Plumer may have chuckled at the idea of this inquiry, as he thought of how he had seen President Jefferson earlier in the month when he had called at the President's House: 'Though his coat was old & thread bare, his scarlet vest, his corduroy small cloths, & his white cotton hose, were new & clean---but his linen was much soiled, & his slippers old---His hair was cropt & powdered'.⁴ Plumer seemed surprised when exactly a week after this journal entry, he accepted a dinner invitation from the president and found him dressed in, 'A new suit of black--silk hose---shoes---clean linen, & his hair highly powdered'. Plumer's observations presented one example of the dichotomy in dress employed by Jefferson in his role as president. The senator's journal account of this presidential dinner goes on to give further insights into Jefferson's balancing of his presidential image.

Plumer added to his notes on Jefferson's appearance his impressions of the dinner itself. He seemed impressed that, 'His dinner was elegant & rich', and was accompanied by eight different wines. One, an excellent Tokay, was much to Plumer's liking, but he was taken aback to learn that Jefferson had paid a guinea a

⁴Plumer, *Proceedings in the United States Senate, 1803-1807*, 205 & 193.

bottle, and it was ‘little more than a quart’.⁵ What first aroused Plumer’s curiosity was the dinner invitation itself. ‘His cards of invitations are unlike those of former President’s---their’s issued in the name of *The President of the United States*’. He thought it odd that the card he received said only, ‘*Th: Jefferson* requests the favor of Mr. Plumer to dine with him on monday [sic] next at half after three, or at whatever later hour the *house* may rise. The favor of an answer is *asked*’.⁶ (fig. 5.4) This was simply an invitation from Thomas Jefferson, but Plumer reasoned that if the invitation were not being extended due to their roles in government: Jefferson’s as president and Plumer’s as senator, would there have been an invitation at all? He inquired of Virginia senator and personal friend of Jefferson, William Branch Giles, who assured him that the invitation was simply from Thomas Jefferson, gentleman. The reasoning being that if invitations were issued as from the president, he would be obligated to methodically invite each member of congress. Plumer accepted this answer, as he recognized there were some congressmen who publically opposed and ridiculed Jefferson and his policies from the floor of congress. Controlling his guest list, as Giles implies, may have been a secondary consideration, yet invitations addressed simply as from one gentleman to another allowed Jefferson another instance in which to implement an egalitarian gesture. Besides, over his two terms as president, there were few congressmen who were not eventually invited for dinner.⁷

The egalitarian tone of the invitation was carried through in the seating at dinner. His entertainment of congressional members was usually confined to about twelve plus himself and his personal secretary who were often seated at a round or oval table. Friend and admirer, Margaret Bayard Smith, noted the small numbers and the positive effect of seeing faces around the table and how it encouraged ‘the animating influence of looks as well as of words’.⁸ Jefferson explained that at these small and intimate gatherings, ‘I cultivate personal intercourse with the members of the legislature that we may know one another and have opportunities of little explanations of circumstances’, plus he confided, ‘I depend much on the members

⁵ Ibid., 211-12.

⁶ Ibid.; italics are Plumer’s emphasis.

⁷ Mary Ellen Scofield, ‘The Fatigues of His Table: The Politics of Presidential Dining during the Jefferson Administration’, *Journal of the Early Republic* 26, no. 3 (Fall, 2006): 453, 457 & 468.

⁸ Margaret Bayard Smith, *First Forty Years of Washington Society*, (New York, 1906), 389 & 391. This edition can be viewed electronically at <http://memory.loc.gov/>.

for the local information necessary on local matters, as well as for the means of getting at public sentiment'.⁹ Obviously these less formal gatherings suited not only an image of republican simplicity but aided in a transfer of information and impressions. But along with this simplicity of arrangement, there was elegance in the cuisine and service.

William Plumer may have been puzzled at the nature of the invitation he received but seemed pleasantly surprised by the abundant fine wines served and equally surprised to find the president dressed in a new black suit and even in silk stockings. Congressman Samuel Taggart shared in the same dinner with Plumer and noted as well the variety of foods and 'very good wine'. He remarked also on the improved appearance of the president, who 'for once was dressed like a gentleman'.¹⁰ Plumer and Taggart had only their own provincial tastes to judge the merits of food and wine, but Louisa Catherine Adams, wife of John Quincy Adams, had a broader base of comparison. She grew up in England, and as wife of Minister Adams, Catherine had lived and travelled in Europe and had dined at some very fine tables. She remarked in her journal of one dinner at the President's House on a very cold Washington evening. She wrote, 'The entertainment was handsome. French servants in livery, a French butler, a French cuisine, and a buffet full of choice wine'. Though she was not fond of Jefferson, her only complaint was about the weather, as she wrote, 'had he had a tolerable fire on one of the bitterest days I ever experienced, we might almost have fancied ourselves in Europe'.¹¹

Even though Jefferson sought to steer the nation away from the patterns and influences of Britain and Europe and in his appearance often strongly emphasized the idea of simplicity in dress, yet he obviously appreciated and enjoyed the comforts accorded by his experienced maître d'hôtel, Étienne Lemaire, and chef, Honoré Julien. These two Frenchmen headed a staff of approximately ten to twelve through most of the years Jefferson was in Washington. Frequent guest, Margaret

⁹ TJ to David R Williams, 31 January 1806, as quoted in Charles T. Cullen, 'Jefferson's White House Dinner Guests,' in *White House History* 17 (Winter 2006): 29. Cullen's essay is an excellent resource on Jefferson's presidential dinners. See also Scofield, 'The Fatigues of His Table', previously cited.

¹⁰ Plumer, *Proceedings in the United States Senate*, 212; Samuel Taggart, 'Letters of Samuel Taggart' ed. George Henry Haynes in *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society* (Worcester, MA, 1924), 140.

¹¹ Louisa Catherine Adams, 'Autobiographical Sketches' as quoted in Malone, *Jefferson and His Time*, IV: 375.

Bayard Smith, wrote of Lemaire and Julien, ‘His maître d’hôtel had served in some of the first families abroad, and understood his business to perfection. The excellence and superior skill of his French cook was acknowledged by all who frequented his table’. She had no hesitation in acknowledging that Lemaire brought skills gained in Europe, and that in the President’s House ‘republican simplicity was united to Epicurean delicacy’. She remarked as well that, ‘the whole of Mr Jefferson’s domestic establishment at the Presidents House exhibited good taste and good judgment’.¹² Threads of European cosmopolitanism continued to be incorporated into the process of building a unique republican nation, but in Smith’s opinion, the two could blend as long as good judgment was in place. In his efforts to exorcise what he felt was excessive state ceremony, Jefferson put aside the formality of large state dinners in favour of small, but frequent groups that were treated to excellent food and wine. He complained to his eldest daughter about the ‘fatigues of the table in such a round of company’ and perhaps exaggerated in naming his entertaining ‘as the most serious trials I undergo’.¹³ Yet his private dinners were possibly his most effective method of introducing ‘republican’ culture without sacrificing Old World quality.

Those invited to Mr Jefferson’s dinners---and there were many from congressional members to local residents and visitors¹⁴---could have experienced this blend of epicurean delicacy as hosted by the nation’s leading republican. But those not invited to the president’s table, who observed him only from outside his domestic establishment, were given a different view of the president. They might see Jefferson in a black suit and silk stockings and perhaps sample exceptional food only on January 1st or July 4th, when the President’s House was opened to all the populace in celebration. At other times they would see him riding alone around Washington with no attendant and in very common clothing. Senator William Plumer and British attaché Augustus John Foster shared similar opinions on this view of the president. Plumer wrote, ‘I have never seen the President of the United States when he rides

¹² Smith, *Washington Society*, 391 – 92. Jefferson’s Washington household is discussed in Lucia Stanton, “‘A Well-Ordered Household’: Domestic Servants in Jefferson’s White House”, in *White House History* 17 (Winter, 2006): 5-23.

¹³ TJ to MJR, 7 October 1804, *Family Letters* eds. Betts and Bear, 262.

¹⁴ See Cullen, ‘Dinner Guests’ and Scofield, ‘Fatigues of His Table’ for discussions of the number and variety of dinner guests.

horseback, which is almost every pleasant day, that I am here accompanied with a servant. . . . I do not know the cause of this singularity—for gentlemen of rank & consequence here are usually attended when they ride, by their servants---It may proceed from affectation---& it may arise from other causes’. But in Plumer’s opinion, ‘The appearance ill accords with the dignity of the Chief of a great nation’.¹⁵ Foster, ever critical of positioning the national government in such a remote and undeveloped location as Washington, felt Jefferson riding without attendants would not have been acceptable in a more cosmopolitan environment. He cited an occasion, when alone, Jefferson was ‘fastening his horse’s bridle himself to the shop doors (as I have once witnessed his doing, when his nail was torn off in the operation)’. This to Foster was as undignified as receiving visitors in yarn stockings and slippers.¹⁶ These views were expressed by political opponents, and as could be expected, admirer Margaret Bayard Smith took a much more generous view of his solitary rides. She commented, ‘When he took his daily ride, it was always on horseback and alone. It was then he enjoyed solitude, surrounded only by the works of nature of which he was a fond lover and great admirer’. She attributed these lonely rides to his love of botany and the many plants available for study along the Potomac River bordering Washington.¹⁷

Bayard’s argument is supportive of Jefferson but not totally defensible, as an attendant would not necessarily preclude his botanical studies, and Jefferson had not always ridden unattended. When in Philadelphia in 1791, serving as Secretary of State, he had advertised for ‘A Genteel Servant, who can shave and dress well, attend a gentleman on horseback, wait at table, and be well recommended.’ He had trouble satisfactorily filling this position and a year later was inquiring again for a body servant that in addition to being able to shave and dress hair, could ‘follow me on horseback’. The man filling this position would be given a salary, room and board, and ‘have a livery’.¹⁸ At that point in time and his career, Jefferson did not deviate from the gentlemanly practice of employing a liveried body servant to

¹⁵ Plumer, *Proceedings in the United States Senate*, 550 – 51.

¹⁶ Foster, *Jeffersonian America*, 9.

¹⁷ Smith, *Washington Society*, 392.

¹⁸ *JMB*, I: 815, n. 33 and TJ to Daniel L. Hylton, 5 February 1792, *PTJ*, 23: 102.

accompany him on horseback, while as president riding alone became another means of demonstrating his commonality with other Americans.

Despite these reports of Jefferson riding alone and on horseback, in his first year as president he had a new carriage built in Philadelphia with plated harness for four horses at a cost of \$1206.¹⁹ His son-in-law John Wayles Eppes assisted him in purchasing some fine Virginia horses, and the correspondence indicated he was intent upon bays, matching in height and colour.²⁰ He added to his staff an Irish coachman named Joseph Dougherty, who served him the full eight years of his presidency.²¹ According to Margaret Bayard Smith, however, ‘The place of coachman, was little more than a sinecure, as his handsome chariot and four beautiful horses, were never used except when his daughters visited him’.²²

Unfortunately, the visits of his daughters were extremely limited. They made a visit together in late fall 1802 and remained until January 1803, but then the younger daughter Maria died in 1804. The elder Martha made only one other visit in late 1805, though she did remain in Washington for five months.²³ The 1802 family visit included Jefferson’s ten year old grandson Jeff Randolph, who in his *Memoirs* remembered his mother going out in the coach and his own adventure of being taken to the navy yard by the coachman, apparently Dougherty, and gaining immediate entry due to the recognition of the president’s equipage.²⁴

As further proof that it was seldom used, Congressman Samuel Taggart was not aware that the president even owned a coach. He was another Federalist who commented upon Jefferson’s riding alone and unattended and wrote, ‘He keeps no carriage but when he goes abroad it is on horse back and commonly without any servant to attend him, which is more strange in this country than in New England, for here it is very rare for any man affecting the stile of a gentleman to ride out

¹⁹ ‘Conrad Hanse’s Account’, *ibid.*, 35: 181.

²⁰ TJ to John Wayles Eppes, 25 April 1801, *ibid.*, 33: 641.

²¹ TJ to Samuel H. Smith, 15 August 1813, *PTJ:RS*, 6: 399.

²² Smith, *Washington Society*, 393.

²³ Per dates given in Betts and Bear, *Family Letters*, 284, n. 1 and *JMB*, II:1084, n. 90; 1166, n. 98.

²⁴ Thomas Jefferson Randolph, ‘Memoirs’, original manuscript in Special Collections, University of Virginia; transcription consulted in Special Collections, Jefferson Library.

without a servant'.²⁵ Even though the coach had little use, Jefferson sold it at quite a loss when he left Washington in 1809.²⁶

There were obvious dichotomies in Jefferson's self-presentation as president. It was as if he were producing a piece of theatre in which the main plot dealt with the symbolic changes in decorum that mimicked European aristocracy, yet in his own role he could not totally let go appropriate gentlemanly habits. Gordon Wood effectively summarized Jefferson's behaviour as president when he wrote, 'While Jefferson's gentlemanly tastes scarcely allowed for any actual levelling in social gatherings, his symbolic transformation of manners at the capital reflected changes that were taking place in American society'.²⁷ As a consequence more formal state dinners were replaced with small, informal and egalitarian dinner parties, but then guests were honoured with elegant food and European wines served by an equally elegant liveried staff. He rode alone but on blooded horses with a fine coach held in abeyance. Then, of course there was the worn clothing and slippers that could be quickly exchanged for a fashionable black suit, silk stockings and powdered hair. Old World fashion and taste so permeated his entertaining and self-presentation that even Louisa Adams could almost believe she were in Europe. These issues of entertaining and decorum may seem inconsequential when considered alongside the broader political issues at stake at the time, but obviously the president's conduct in these matters was noticed and was important. When called upon to sit a second time to Gilbert Stuart for a portrait that was intended to represent the American government abroad and be a lasting image for his own collection, he resorted once more to the black suit and powdered hair. His presidential duality expressed itself as he replaced the unconventional appearance presented in the second Rembrandt Peale portrait for the more responsible look of black.

* * * * *

Gilbert Stuart was the most sought after portrait artist during the formative years of the American republic. Perhaps due to his fame, Jefferson commissioned

²⁵ Taggart, 'Letters', 125.

²⁶ *JMB*, II: 1067-68, n. 48.

²⁷ Wood, *Empire of Liberty*, 288.

two different portraits of himself from Stuart, which is notable, as the only other formal life portrait initiated by Jefferson was the earlier Mather Brown painted in London. With the fame of the artist and the historical importance of the sitter, Stuart's portraits of *Jefferson* have received attention from art historians and have been the topic of many articles and segments of larger works.²⁸ Nevertheless, they are still necessary to this study, as it was Stuart who recorded the alternate image of Jefferson in the black suit and created the closest representation of a state portrait of the third president. This image was taken only a few months after the somewhat unconventional portrait by Rembrandt Peale and again illustrates that Jefferson's presidential image could vary with differing situations and demands.

Stuart made the move to Washington from Philadelphia in December 1803, though Jefferson did not sit for the artist until June 1805. He may have felt it unnecessary, as he was owed a portrait by Stuart that had never been delivered. It was when both men were still in Philadelphia and Jefferson serving as vice president that his accounting records show in an entry on 12 May 1800, 'Paid Stuart for my portrait 100.D'.²⁹ Stuart's habits of late and sporadic delivery of a painting were known and not unique to Jefferson. The two excellent portraits of John and Abigail Adams now in the National Gallery of Art in Washington were begun at about the same time as Jefferson's, probably in May 1800, and were finally completed and delivered in 1815. Abigail Adams stated her opinion of Stuart's behaviour and wrote, 'Genius is always eccentric, I think. Superiour [sic] talents give no security

²⁸Published discussions of Jefferson portraits by Stuart are included in: Carrie R. Barratt & Ellen G. Miles, *Gilbert Stuart* (New Haven, CT, 2005), 273-85; Orland & Courtney Campbell, *Lost Portraits of Thomas Jefferson Painted by Gilbert Stuart* (Amherst, MA, 1959); Linda J. Docherty, 'Original Copies: Gilbert Stuart's Companion Portraits of Thomas Jefferson and James Madison', *American Art* 22, no. 2 (2008): 85-97; Charles Henry Hart, 'The Life Portraits of Thomas Jefferson', *McClure's Magazine* 11 (1898), 47-55; Dorinda Evans, *Genius of Gilbert Stuart* (Princeton, NJ, 1999), 92 & 104-05; Fiske Kimball, 'The Stuart Portraits of Jefferson', *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 23 (June, 1943), 329-44; David Meschutt, 'Gilbert Stuart's Portraits of Thomas Jefferson', *American Art Journal* 13, no. 1 (Winter, 1981): 2-16; Charles Merrill Mount, 'Gilbert Stuart in Washington: With a Catalogue of His Portraits Painted between December 1803 and July 1805', *Columbia Historical Society, Washington, D.C. 71/72* (1971/1972): 81-127; Marvin S. Sadik, *Colonial and Federal Portraits at Bowdoin College* (Brunswick, ME, 1966), 155-66. Richard McLanathan, *Gilbert Stuart* (New York, 1986) is an interesting biography of Stuart but contains only a brief mention of Jefferson portraits on page 122.

²⁹ *JMB*, II: 1018.

for propriety of conduct'.³⁰ This 'superiour talent' allowed Stuart to continue his erratic execution of commissions and accounted for a second sitting with Jefferson.

Jefferson had attempted to claim this original commission the following year, in 1801, through his financial agent John Barnes, who had a Philadelphia contact willing to call upon Stuart at his Germantown studio. Even Barnes recognized that Stuart was 'careless in these matters' when it came to delivering the finished work. Ultimately Barnes had no success, but it did come out in the correspondence that once the portrait was obtained, Jefferson directed that it was to be shipped to Richmond and then on to Monticello, not to Washington.³¹ He did not intend to display his own portrait, even one by Gilbert Stuart, at the President's House. The portrait that eventually he did keep in Washington was the second commission that he placed with Stuart, the *Medallion Profile*. It is interesting that while president he was willing to display his image in the classic, Roman style, as will be discussed in more detail, but had he received the portrait in the traditional suit, it was to be shipped to Monticello.

The fate of this first portrait commissioned in Philadelphia is uncertain. According to Jefferson, it was not collected from Stuart as, 'he was yet to put the last hand to it, so it was left with him'. After Stuart relocated to Washington, the artist claimed that he was dissatisfied with the work and asked Jefferson for another sitting.³² Art historian and Stuart biographer, Dorinda Evans, stated that it was not unusual for Stuart to paint over or discard an initial work if he was not pleased, and thus she felt this was probably the fate of the 1800 portrait.³³ Art historian, David Meschutt, made a different argument. He believed that the Jefferson portrait which Stuart sold to James Madison was the original from the 1800 sitting. This would have taken place just before Stuart left Washington to relocate to Boston.³⁴ A third idea supported by Fiske Kimball and Alfred Bush proposed that Stuart may have shipped the portrait to London to be engraved, as two Jefferson prints were

³⁰ As quoted in Barratt & Miles, *Gilbert Stuart*, 220; account of Adams portraits, *ibid.*, 219-21.

³¹ Quote from John Barnes to TJ, 7 September 1801, *PTJ*, 35: 225; other references, Barnes to TJ, 14 September 1801, *ibid.*, 282; Barnes to TJ, 21 September 1801, *ibid.*, 329.

³² TJ to Henry Dearborn, 5 July 1819, 'TJP':LC.

³³ Evans, *Genius of Gilbert Stuart*, 60-61, 92.

³⁴ Meschutt, 'Gilbert Stuart's Portraits of Thomas Jefferson', 2-16.

published in 1801, one of which credited the original portrait to Stuart.³⁵ Noble Cunningham in his *Image of Thomas Jefferson* argued against this, however. He presented a very convincing case that the engraved portraits that appeared in London were actually taken from images originating with Rembrandt Peale's 1800 portrait of Vice President Jefferson.³⁶ And still another portrait that surfaced at a 1937 auction was claimed by brothers, Orland and Courtney Campbell, to be a badly damaged Stuart portrait of Jefferson painted over the first lost portrait of 1800.³⁷ Others have remained sceptical of this find, including David Meschutt, who argued that the painting restored by Orland Campbell did not reveal the quality of Stuart's work.³⁸ This interest in the missing 1800 portrait reflects the historic standing of both Jefferson and the artist Gilbert Stuart, while it creates confusion as to which of the extant Jefferson images by Stuart is the original. What can be agreed upon is that when the newly appointed minister to Spain James Bowdoin III placed a commission for paired portraits of the president and the secretary of state, Jefferson sat for Stuart a second time.

William Plumer made a routine entry in his journal on 20 November 1804 that the president had nominated and the Senate advised to the appointment of James Bowdoin of Massachusetts as minister plenipotentiary from the United States to the court of Madrid.³⁹ Bowdoin had been awaiting an appointment for three years. In a letter dated a week after the election was decided in 1801, he wrote congratulating Jefferson and commending his sound political principles and character. Within this he added that if his 'feeble aid' could contribute in any way to the success of Jefferson's administration, he was more than ready to offer his services.⁴⁰ Jefferson replied to Bowdoin within the month but did not suggest an appointment, nevertheless he mentioned the respect he held for his late father, James Bowdoin II, and seemed aware that Bowdoin himself was following the example set by his father as both a cultural and political leader in Massachusetts.

³⁵ Bush, *Life Portraits*, 45 – 47; Kimball, 'Stuart's Portraits of Jefferson', 331 – 32.

³⁶ Cunningham, *Image of Thomas Jefferson*, 31 – 45.

³⁷ Campbell, *Lost Portraits*, 3.

³⁸ Meschutt, 'Gilbert Stuart's Portraits of Thomas Jefferson', 9.

³⁹ Plumer, *Proceedings of the US Senate*, 200.

⁴⁰ James Bowdoin to TJ, 24 February 1801, *PTJ*, 33: 55.

In acknowledging Bowdoin's words of congratulations, Jefferson drew an interesting profile of his own leadership in the recent election. He wrote, 'Though it was a contest of principle, merely, in the zealous friends of good government, yet as a name was necessarily to be connected with the contest I viewed with due respect & consolation my name selected for that purpose, and myself considered as the safe depository of the principle for which we were contending'.⁴¹ This self-effacing description of his own role in the recent election placed him as a conduit only of the principle of good government. This description eliminated the need for a definitive personality and character outside that required to uphold good government.⁴² This letter to Bowdoin was written within his first month in office, and as he very quickly began to initiate change in the executive protocol, this benign cast that he gave his presidential role would not be shared by the political opposition. Looking again at the portrait by Rembrandt Peale that concluded his first term, the image achieved with the large fur-lined cape and red coat was not one of a dispassionate position. (fig. 4.1) This *Jefferson* did not reflect the same neutrality as the black suit and powdered hair of the vice-president of Rembrandt's first portrait of 1800. (fig. 3.1) This was the image, however, that of the black suit, which Jefferson would assume when he sat to Stuart a second time, and as Bowdoin prepared to undertake ministerial duties in Spain.

James Bowdoin III was of an affluent and influential Massachusetts family. Bowdoin's father, James Bowdoin II, was a friend of Benjamin Franklin and a gentleman dilettante in the study of science. Bowdoin College of Brunswick, Maine, then a part of Massachusetts, was founded in his honour.⁴³ James Bowdoin III came not only with his father's reputation behind him, but he was well acquainted with Jefferson's Secretary of War Henry Dearborn and his Attorney General Levi Lincoln vouched for Bowdoin as a 'republican'.⁴⁴ Like his father he attended Harvard and then went on to spend a brief time studying at Oxford. He returned to America for a short stay before leaving on his grand tour of Italy. Through his travels and family influence, he developed an appreciation of the fine arts, and the paintings, prints, and

⁴¹ TJ to Bowdoin, 8 March 1801, *PTJ*, 33: 213.

⁴² Newman, 'Principles or Men?', 477-507.

⁴³ Sadik, *Portraits at Bowdoin College*, 40-48.

⁴⁴ Identification of Bowdoin as a 'republican' in Levi Lincoln to TJ, 16 April 1801, *PTJ*, 33: 596.

old master drawings that he left to Bowdoin College indicate that he was active as an art collector.⁴⁵

With his knowledge of art, Bowdoin was aware of the significance of displaying a portrait of the president of the United States in the American legation in Madrid, in this instance to be accompanied by a portrait of the secretary of state as well. Time spent in England and then his grand tour of Italy exposed Bowdoin to a variety of art, but even growing up in pre-revolutionary Boston, he had the opportunity to see state portraits with their inherent implications of authority. Boston's council chambers were hung with portraits of royal governors alongside those of the British monarchs.⁴⁶ Just as Jefferson hurriedly commissioned a portrait of George Washington as he prepared to leave for his own ministerial assignment in France in 1784, Bowdoin made his own efforts to secure a portrait of the American president and secretary of state. He understood the importance of a state portrait and the authority implied in the formality and decorum inherent in the figure and in the institutionalized settings that surrounded that figure. Even a republican version with lessened pomp and ostentation still signified the absent leader and would lend credibility to his ministerial mission.⁴⁷

This mission was not without some immediate importance. The United States was pushing for the possession of East Florida and especially West Florida from Spain. When Jefferson first began negotiations for New Orleans, his interest included the gulf coast, at least to the Perdido River.⁴⁸ He saw this area as vital for U.S. commerce and security, promising more immediate rewards to the growth and prosperity of the country than the far west. Jefferson tried to argue that the region, having at one time been claimed by France, was included in the Louisiana Purchase Treaty. Spain, however, maintained their rights of possession. They asserted that West Florida was not a part of the retrocession of Louisiana to France, and France did not contend this claim. Still Jefferson believed that he could obtain Napoleon's

⁴⁵ David P. Becker, 'James Bowdoin's Drawing Collection', *Master Drawings* 38, no. 3 (Autumn, 2000): 223-24 and Sadik, 208-19.

⁴⁶ Richard Saunders and Ellen Miles, *American Colonial Portraits, 1700-1776* (Washington, DC, 1987), 20-21.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*; Andrew Wilton, *Swagger Portrait*, (London, 1992), 19; Christopher Lloyd, 'Portraits of Sovereigns and Heads of State' in *Citizens and Kings* (London, 2006-07), 60-61; Barratt and Miles, *Gilbert Stuart*, 274.

⁴⁸ The Perdido River forms the boundary between the current states of Alabama and Florida.

support in these negotiations.⁴⁹ In his instructions to Bowdoin, Jefferson claimed that the United States had desired only peaceful relations with Spain and a co-existence between the two countries in North America, but Spain had acted with ‘jealousy, secret malice and ill-faith. Our patience under this unworthy return of disposition is now on it’s [sic.] last trial’.⁵⁰ With such strained relations, a show of resolve and political awareness was needed in order for the United States to be acknowledged as a political power. Jefferson must have thought Bowdoin to be enough the cosmopolitan that he could represent the United States appropriately. The portraits that would represent the country’s leadership must appear equally appropriate.

Bowdoin contacted his good friend Henry Dearborn, Secretary of War, to negotiate the portraits. He requested, ‘I shall be much obliged to you to procure me the portraits of Mr. Jefferson and Mr. Madison if a good painter can be found at Washington, and they should be willing to take the trouble of sitting therefor’. After a short explanation of where in Spain the paintings were to be shipped and how payment should be collected, he became more explicit as to the painter he would prefer and stated, ‘I should like to have them done by Stuart, could he be induced to execute them, as well he is able’. He went on to specify that they need not be framed as he could obtain finer frames in Europe, and as to the paintings themselves, he wanted them of half-length and to be a matching pair.⁵¹ Bowdoin’s comment, ‘as well he is able’ would commend Stuart’s abilities, as through his own travels and collecting, Bowdoin had a basis for discernment. This was yet another instance in which the talents of Stuart were preferred over other American artists, but then he had established a successful studio in London and later Dublin before mismanagement of his business caused his return to America in 1793. This would have given him credibility with an American audience, plus his abilities at executing an ambitious state portrait were known through his full-length portrait of Washington and subsequent copies.⁵²

⁴⁹ Wood, *Empire of Liberty*, 374-75; Malone, *Jefferson and his Time*, 5:93-94, 437.

⁵⁰ TJ to Bowdoin, 27 April 1805, ‘TJP’:LC.

⁵¹ James Bowdoin to Henry Dearborn, 25 March 1805, as cited in Sadik, *Portraits at Bowdoin College*, 155 and Barratt and Miles, *Gilbert Stuart*, 273.

⁵² Stuart’s career is well documented in Barratt and Miles, *Gilbert Stuart*; Evans, *Genius of Gilbert Stuart*; McLanathan, *Gilbert Stuart*.

When Jefferson sat for Stuart a second time in late May or early June 1805, he was fulfilling two commissions----the portrait he had paid for in 1800 but never received and Bowdoin's commission for portraits of the president and secretary of state. There is no known written evidence to confirm that he was aware of the Bowdoin commission, but considering the charge to Dearborn to determine whether Jefferson and Madison would be willing 'to take the trouble of sitting,' it would seem reasonable that Dearborn would have communicated Bowdoin's wishes to the two men. In addition the timing of Jefferson's appointment with Stuart coincides with Bowdoin's request for the portraits and his departure for Spain in May 1805.⁵³ Prior to this Jefferson had not renewed his efforts to collect the portrait he was due, even though Stuart had been working in Washington for over a year. Stuart had taken portraits of James and Dolley Madison the previous year and so a current original of Madison was available to copy, but either as he no longer had Jefferson's portrait, or as he claimed, was dissatisfied with it, Stuart needed another sitting from Jefferson. He worked quickly, and in a letter dated June 27, Dearborn reported on the portraits to Bowdoin's Boston agent that, 'Mr. Stuart has nearly completed them and will take them with his other effects to Boston and when completed will deliver them to you, to be forwarded to Mr. Bowdoin'.⁵⁴

These portraits were intended to have international exposure and visually represent the leadership of the United States at a time when diplomatic acumen was especially needed. Stuart's completed portraits depict both Jefferson and Madison in black suits with hair well powdered. (figs. 5.1 & 5.5) As Madison's portrait was an adaptation from Stuart's work of the previous year, his appearance in a black suit was already established and his pose was modified only slightly.⁵⁵ Stuart left the angle of the head but turned the body slightly more frontal with the arm over the back of the chair, which opens the body even more. The forward gaze was moved from the viewer to the right, toward the companion portrait of Jefferson. The

⁵³ James Bowdoin to TJ, 7 May 1805, 'TJP':LC. In this letter written from Boston, Bowdoin stated that he anticipated leaving for Spain in the next two days.

⁵⁴ Henry Dearborn to Thomas Winthrop, 27 June 1805 as cited in Sadik, *Portraits at Bowdoin College*, 156.

⁵⁵ Historian Henry Adams referenced Madison's preference for black, as he quoted 'The Quarterly Review,' London, 1841, 'I have heard in early life he sometimes wore light-colored clothes; but from the time I first knew him [Madison], . . . never any other color than black.' Henry Adams, *Administrations of Thomas Jefferson*, 128.

expression is far more intense with a slight frown added and the hint of a smile that appeared in the original portrait had vanished. Even the lighting is more dramatic with the shadowing of the face more pronounced.

As Jefferson prepared to sit again for Stuart, he would be considering how he wished to appear in his own collection at Monticello and how he should appear before European viewers visiting or conducting business at the American ministry in Spain. The *Jefferson* image completed for Bowdoin aligned much more closely with that of Rembrandt Peale's portrait of 1800 of Jefferson in the black suit than the more provocative image from the 1805 portrait by Peale with the fur lined cape. (figs. 3.1 & 4.1) Jefferson appears older than in his first Peale portrait dressed in black and his hair is no longer brushed forward *a la Titus* but allowed to part slightly and fall more irregularly about the face, but the role of the black suit had not really changed. As more fully discussed in relation to the Rembrandt Peale portrait of 1800, it fulfilled the understated dignity considered appropriate for a republican leader. Americans would prove far more comfortable with an appearance comparable to a bourgeois man of business, but in this instance, as Jefferson sat for Stuart, the business was nation building, both in terms of geographic boundaries and in the internal political structure.

In Stuart's finished pendant portraits, the setting of the figures, especially that of Jefferson, does more to convey the idea of official state portraits. The elements Stuart used in his successful portrait of Washington presented to the Marquis of Lansdowne appear again in both the *Jefferson* and the *Madison*: the column, the red swag of drapery, plus red drapery covering the table and the red upholstery of the chair, all still echoing the grand manner tradition borrowed from Europe. (see comparison of figs. 5.1, 5.5 & 4.6) Yet he did not include the richness of detail that distinguished the *Lansdowne Washington* but added only the usual books upon the tables in each portrait and placed papers under Jefferson's hand to indicate a man of learning and statecraft. His *Jefferson* and *Madison* appear to have been executed more hurriedly, which could have been the case as Stuart was preparing to leave Washington and relocate to Boston. However, as Bowdoin had specifically requested half-length, not full-length portraits, limits were immediately placed upon an elaboration in the pose and so both men were pictured seated.

Jefferson was placed in a three-quarter position but with his gaze directly toward the viewer as a compliment to the frontal posture of Madison with his eyes turned to the right. The expressions that Stuart assigned to each man offer different interpretations, as though the artist were illustrating through paint and canvas the roles of each. Madison, as he looked to Jefferson, appeared more intense and the open pose accentuated an ability to move instantly into action. As Jefferson sat more fully behind the draped table, his posture appears more stable and settled. Should the portraits ever have been viewed by the Spanish authorities for whom they were intended, would they have read into the character of the president the resolve and control that Jefferson would have wished, which was then complimented by the commitment to action that was suggested by the secretary of state? Would the two together have implied a determination on the part of the United States in the geopolitical arena that should not be entirely ignored?

Unfortunately the impact of the portraits was never tested on a Spanish audience as they remained in Boston. Due to recurring health issues, Bowdoin left for London to consult doctors there almost immediately upon his arrival in Spain, and by the time of his recovery it had been decided that negotiations over West Florida could be conducted from Paris as well as from Madrid, as Napoleonic France dominated the coalition between the two countries. Bowdoin joined John Armstrong in Paris as co-commissioner, however the working relationship between the two men was not good nor were the negotiations going well. This led to Bowdoin's request for recall in May 1807, and by April 1808 he was back in Boston.⁵⁶ Shortly after his return, he received a letter from President Jefferson welcoming him back to the United States and assuring him that there was no dissatisfaction with his service in Europe.⁵⁷ Meanwhile the dual portraits had remained in Boston, and in October 1807 Bowdoin instructed, 'With respect to Mr Jefferson's and Mr Madison's pictures, I wish them to be retained to be put up in my house'.⁵⁸ Following his death in 1811 they, along with other works from his private collection, were sent to Bowdoin College in Maine.⁵⁹ Ultimately the two portraits

⁵⁶ Sadik, *Portraits at Bowdoin College*, 143-44.

⁵⁷ TJ to James Bowdoin, 29 May 1808, 'TJP':LC.

⁵⁸ James Bowdoin to Thomas L. Winthrop, 13 October 1807, as cited in Sadik, 161.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

were placed before a public audience but American rather than European. Bowdoin's commission from Stuart remained the closest to a state portrait of any made of Jefferson while president.⁶⁰

The Jefferson image taken by Stuart in Washington in 1805 did reach a wider audience through engravings and through copies made by Stuart and by other artists. In 1807 artist Robert Field made an engraving from the recently completed portrait that was widely circulated, and Stuart himself created five portraits from this second sitting with Jefferson, including the one for James Bowdoin. Four are still in existence, and one was known to have been destroyed in the Library of Congress fire of 1851.⁶¹ From Stuart's copies many prints were created, and the iconographic importance of the artist's work maintained its influence as evidenced in an 1863 portrait for the collection in the City Hall of New York by Charles Wesley Jarvis, son of artist John Wesley Jarvis. (fig. 5.6) The head is obviously taken from Stuart. With replicas and prints in mind, Stuart petitioned to keep this second image of Jefferson, and as a consequence Jefferson left Washington for retirement at Monticello in 1809 without his long-awaited oil portrait from Stuart. However he did receive a portrait from the artist that pleased him very much and that he would describe as 'deemed the best which has been taken of me'.⁶²

* * * * *

Jefferson's dealings with Stuart were frustrating; however, he did obtain a portrait from the sittings in Washington that was promptly delivered and that he seemed to favour above any other. In June 1805 his accounting records show a payment to Stuart for one hundred dollars 'for drawing my portrait' that was

⁶⁰ Stuart's *Jefferson* and *Madison* are central in an essay by Linda Docherty, 'Original Copies: Gilbert Stuart's Companion Portraits of Thomas Jefferson and James Madison,' *American Art* 22, no. 2 (2008): 85-97. Docherty reaches many of the same conclusions as this study but without a discussion of the republican meaning inherent in the black suit. Another essay, Paul Staiti's 'Gilbert Stuart's Presidential Imaginary' in *Shaping the Body Politic*, ed. by Maurie McInnis and Louis Nelson (Charlottesville, VA, 2011), 162-193, primarily discusses the *Lansdowne Washington* with only brief comparison to the Bowdoin *Jefferson*, but does note that Stuart did not add the opulence of the *Lansdowne* to the *Jefferson*, but I must disagree with his statement that Jefferson appears as, 'a scholar in his study', as the intent was a state-portrait.

⁶¹ Bush, *Life Portraits*, 59.

⁶² TJ to Horatio Spafford, 21 February 1815, *PTJ:RS*, 8: 281.

accompanied by a note of the same date that elaborated, ‘Mr. Jefferson presents his compliments to Mr. Stewart, and begs leave to send him the inclosed [*sic*] for the trouble he gave him in taking the head *a la antique*.’⁶³ This portrait generally referred to today as the *Medallion Profile*, is distinctive from Stuart’s usual style. (fig. 5.3) Rather than oil, the medium is a blend of gouache, an opaque watercolour, over a crayon drawing on hand-laid paper that was then mounted on thin linen with glue sizing.⁶⁴ Jefferson described it on different occasions as ‘in water colours, a profile in the medallion stile’, and again, ‘I soon after got him to sketch me in the Medallion form, which he did on paper with Crayons’. In this instance he described it as, ‘a slight thing’ but then added, ‘it is a very fine thing altho’ very perishable’.⁶⁵ On another occasion he reported the profile as ‘deemed the best which has been taken of me’. This was far more praise, as recorded in his correspondence, than he would attach to any of his other portraits. It could be questioned whether he was reacting to the true merit of the portrait, the reputation attached to the work of Gilbert Stuart, or if he was particularly taken with his own image replicating the form of a classic medallion.

The brief note Jefferson sent to Stuart acknowledging, ‘the trouble he gave him in taking the head *a la antique*’ and his later reference, ‘I got him to sketch me in the Medallion form’ implied that the format of the portrait originated with Jefferson’s request. Jefferson’s interest in the classical world was not unique. Motifs from the Greek and the Roman art and architecture were frequently present in the material culture of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries in a style that came to be known as the ‘neoclassic’. This term did not appear until later in the nineteenth century and was used disparagingly at that time according to art historian Vicky Coltman. She notes that the Victorians viewed the earlier generation as indulgent in the ‘affectations of classical taste’ and goes on to define ‘classicism as a style of thought’ and ‘neoclassicism as the material application of this process’.⁶⁶

⁶³ *JMB*, II: 1156; TJ to Gilbert Stuart, 18 June 1805 as cited in Charles H. Hart, ‘Life Portraits of Thomas Jefferson,’ 48.

⁶⁴ Report from Orland Campbell to James A. Bear, Jr., Curator, the Thomas Jefferson Memorial Foundation, 16 December 1956, Special Collections, Jefferson Library.

⁶⁵ TJ to Joseph Delaplaine, 30 May 1813, *PTJ:RS*, 6: 148; TJ to Henry Dearborn, 5 July 1819, ‘TJP’:LC.

⁶⁶ Vicky Coltman, *Fabricating the Antique* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2006), 1 & 11.

What Jefferson referred to as *a la antique* is an excellent example of this neoclassical style, as it manifested a taste for classical models through the medium of a portrait executed in paint and chalk on paper.

The profile portrait, especially in the medallion format, carried a connotation of fame and immortality. Alexander Pope addressed the role of the commemorative medal in one of his poems, and wrote:

The Medal, faithful to its charge of fame
Thro' climes and ages bears each form and name.

This excerpt from Pope was cited by Desmond Shawe-Taylor in his book *Genial Company* to discuss the function of the medal or a coin and their relationship to fame, as they immortalize a person and an event. He points out that in Pope's poem, 'Ambition' chooses the medal over triumphal arches or columns that can crumble with time. The nature of the artefact, a round format constructed from metal, made for a very durable piece that could be handed along over many years. This would preserve the image of the great man, more often in profile, on the obverse and an allusion to his honourable deeds on the reverse.⁶⁷ Just the profile itself created more distance between the subject and the viewer than a full frontal or even three-quarter view of the face and in this distance suggested immortalization.⁶⁸

Early in the eighteenth century, artist and art theorist, Jonathan Richardson, in his *Essay on the Theory of Painting*, advised painters to study the ancients in matters of beauty and suit them to the modern taste. He had encouraged that, 'Painters should take a Face and make an Antique Medal, Bas-Relief of it, by divesting it of its Modern Disguises, raising the Air, and the Features, and giving it the Dress of those Times, and suitable to the Character intended'.⁶⁹ Artists who followed this advice would sometimes give the effect of stone or metal to their drawings or paintings.⁷⁰ Stuart's colour palette of warm greys in a near monochromatic range followed this tradition; however modern reproductions often give a more brownish cast to the work. In 1814 William Thornton identified the

⁶⁷ Desmond Shawe-Taylor, *Genial Company: The Theme of Genius in Eighteenth-Century British Portraiture* (Nottingham, UK, 1987) 53.

⁶⁸ Pointon, *Hanging the Head*, 95.

⁶⁹ Richardson, *Theory of Painting* 88.

⁷⁰ Shawe-Taylor, *Genial Company*, 57.

portrait as ‘on a blue ground—in chiaroscuro’.⁷¹ When the portrait was examined in 1956 by artist and Stuart authority, Orland Campbell, he described it as ‘subtly painted in tones of warm, silvery gray against a deeper bluish-gray background’.⁷² It is possible that the colour of paper and pigment could have altered over time; however, the important point is that it does give an impression of metal, and there was absolutely no attempt at creating a flesh tone for the profile.

Jefferson’s profile already had appeared in this format on national medals prior to his portrait request of Stuart. An Indian peace medal was struck in 1801 to mark the beginning of his presidency. These were distributed through the War Department to military officers, Indian commissioners and agents who worked on the frontier and were used as presentation gifts for various transactions with Native Americans. These medals were carried as well by Lewis and Clark on their expedition of 1803-1806 along the Missouri River. (fig. 5.7) In 1802 a presidential medal was struck that was the first commemorative medal from the new United States mint. (fig. 5.8)⁷³ Jefferson sent copies of this medal to his two daughters and sister-in-law, Elizabeth Eppes with the comment that the medal ‘sells more readily as the prints which have been offered the public are such miserable caricatures [*sic*]’.⁷⁴ Apparently Jefferson had little to do with the design and production of the medal, as he mentioned in his accompanying letters to his daughters that the image had been taken from the bust by Houdon, as he never met with the designer, John Reich. The iconography chosen for the reverse should have met with his approval, however, and would not have been a surprise. The goddess Minerva holds a staff topped with a liberty cap in one hand, as she places a copy of the Declaration of Independence on a rock labelled the ‘Constitution’. Meanwhile the national eagle bearing a wreath hovers above. The inscription reads, ‘Under his Wing is Protection’ and ‘To Commemorate July 4, 1776’.⁷⁵ These had become standard and dependable icons but still were in keeping with the historic traditions of the medal, and the

⁷¹ William Thornton to TJ, 11 December 1814, *PTJ:RS*, 8:136.

⁷² ‘Notes on the Medallion Portrait of Thomas Jefferson by Gilbert Stuart’, Research Report, 1957, Special Collections, Jefferson Library. This report contains a summary of an onsite study by Orland Campbell in 1956 of the original *Medallion Portrait*, then privately owned.

⁷³ For a full discussion of these two medals, see Cunningham, *Image of Thomas Jefferson*, 71 – 78.

⁷⁴ TJ to Mary Jefferson Eppes, 29 March 1802; TJ to Martha Jefferson Randolph, 3 April 1802, *Family Letters*, eds, Betts and Bear, 220 – 21.

⁷⁵ Cunningham, *Image of Thomas Jefferson*, 71-73.

reference to July 4th, 1776 connected directly to Jefferson's most notable 'deed'. Even the presence of the liberty cap affirmed his support of the idea of a free and republican system of government.

In addition to these medals with his own image, commemorative medals were a part of his collection at Monticello.⁷⁶ This classic format was a tradition with which he was quite familiar and was obviously the prototype for the Stuart portrait. There is one major difference between the national medals with his image and the portrait he initiated. The national medals show him dressed in contemporary clothing and hair dressed in the traditional queue, following the Houdon bust, whereas in the Stuart portrait Jefferson chose to appear very Roman with bare neck and cropped hair. Modern dress versus the more classic appearance was debated in the late eighteenth century. When negotiating the Houdon sculpted full-length portrait of George Washington in 1784 from Paris, Jefferson suggested following the current vogue inspired by Benjamin West's success with his *The Death of General Wolf* in the use of contemporary clothing to depict a scene from recent history. As a consequence, the life-size statue of Washington created for the Virginia capitol was dressed in uniform, but later Jefferson returned to the idea popular much earlier in the century that classical clothing and presentation lent to the idea of timelessness---and thus to fame.⁷⁷

Further inspiration may have come from a collection of Roman coins that he received just a few months before he sat for Stuart. In April prior to his sitting in June, he received 150 bronze Roman coins as a gift from a gentleman scholar in Denmark, Nicholai H. Weinwich. Whether they were sent to Jefferson as president of the United States or as president of the American Philosophical Society, his first thought was that they must be deposited with the APS, as the donor had requested that they be made available for extensive use by the literati of the United States.⁷⁸ Jefferson's letter of acceptance to Mr. Weinwich allowed him to express a favourite theme, that of the republic of letters, 'which banishing geographical limits

⁷⁶ Stein, *Worlds of Thomas Jefferson*, 240 – 47.

⁷⁷ Ann Uhry Abrams, *The Valiant Hero: Benjamin West and Grand-Style History Painting* (Washington, DC, 1985), 170 – 80; Berman, *Thomas Jefferson Among the Arts*, 84. Solkin, *Painting for Money*, 3-13; Solkin uses as example the Closterman portrait of *The 3rd Earl of Shaftesbury and the Hon. Maurice Ashley-Cooper* depicted in classical dress.

⁷⁸ TJ to Caspar Wistar, 30 April 1805, 'TJP':LC.

comprehends all countries in one fraternity'.⁷⁹ Even while he worked to establish a national profile for the American republic, he still preferred to view the world of science and scholarship as above the bounds of nationhood. This did not exempt art, however, from becoming a useful tool to link his own image to the concept of classic republicanism.

Jefferson's short hair was not invented by the artist, nor was it freshly cropped for the portrait. The previous November Senator William Plumer had mentioned the president's hair as 'cropt and powdered', in his notes made on a visit to the President's House.⁸⁰ As discussed in the previous chapter, there was a political connotation attached to cropped hair, as it called up associations with the 'levelling' process in England and the revolution in France. Then in 1801 General James Wilkinson had issued an order to those under his command, 'For the accommodation, comfort & health of the Troops, the hair is to be cropped without exception'. This was resisted by some of the Federalist officers who believed it originated with the new republicanism that had taken control of the national government and the taste of President Jefferson.⁸¹ But by 1805 and Stuart's portrait, short hair for men was becoming much less controversial. What is perhaps more interesting is that in the more formal state portrait that Stuart created for Minister Bowdoin, a black ribbon is visible over Jefferson's shoulder that would have traditionally tied the hair back in the queue. Thus in portraits created at the same sitting, the one intended for formal presentation in Europe adheres to the traditional in hairdressing, while the *Medallion Profile*, as a private portrait, allowed Jefferson to indulge his taste for the classic and present himself in the purest republican manner.

It is notable that Jefferson was comfortable enough with the Stuart *Medallion Profile* to display it at the President's House in Washington. As discussed earlier, had he been able to secure the first portrait he was due from Stuart, he planned to ship it on to Monticello, per his instructions to his agent John Barnes. But the *Medallion Profile* remained in Washington and at least one visitor to the President's

⁷⁹ TJ to Nicholai H. Weinwich, 30 April 1805, 'TJP':LC.

⁸⁰ Plumer, *Proceedings in the US Senate*, 193.

⁸¹ General James Wilkinson, 1801, as quoted in Ellen G. Miles, *Saint-Mémin and the Neoclassical Profile Portrait in America* (Washington, DC, 1994), 86.

House allows that Jefferson did show the portrait. Artist William Russell Birch wrote about seeing the portrait when he called upon the president while traveling through Washington late in 1805. In his estimation it was the best thing ever done of Jefferson. He could claim to be a valid critic, as he had some familiarity with the Jefferson image due to a prototype print he had made from Charles Willson Peale's *Jefferson* several years earlier.⁸² In addition it would seem probable that he had seen both the Rembrandt Peale portraits of Jefferson, as he worked primarily out of the Philadelphia area, and they were on public view.

In recalling his visit with the President, Birch recorded in his *Autobiography* that Jefferson presented him with a small print of himself, which he accepted graciously, but then felt he had to offer the opinion that the gift print was really too much of a caricature. He took this opportunity of soliciting a loan of the *Medallion Profile* in order to make a drawing and then a print of it, which he proposed would be far more prestigious. He remembered Jefferson smiling and agreeing on the caricature quality of the presentation print he had offered Birch and so agreed to the loan.⁸³ Birch related that he kept the portrait for two days, made a drawing, and then decided to involve engraver, David Edwin, in creating the stipple engraving.⁸⁴ It would be interesting if Birch had identified the artist who's print of Jefferson he felt to border on the caricature, but he did not.

The completed print was documented with 'G. Stuart Pinx W. Birch delin. D. Edwin sc. 1809'.⁸⁵ (fig. 5.9) Even though the print was dated 1809, Jefferson did not receive copies until Birch forwarded 'a few impressions of the Plate' via James Madison in July 1812. Unfortunately they never became presidential gifts while Jefferson was in Washington, but he did use them in retirement. Birch's explained in his accompanying letter the steps in production that had taken time. First he had determined that Stuart was not planning to reproduce the image, and in fact it could well be that Stuart did not have a copy of the *Medallion*, as it was relinquished to

⁸² See discussion of Birch and his work in Chapter 2.

⁸³ There is no further evidence at this point that could conclusively identify the print that Jefferson was giving as gifts, however two that can be proved in his possession at the President's House at the time were the print by St. Memin created in 1804-05 and an earlier print based upon a drawing by Kosciuszko. Either could be interpreted as a 'caricature'.

⁸⁴ Birch, 'Life of William Birch'.

⁸⁵ Cunningham, *Image of Thomas Jefferson*, 93, 94.

Jefferson soon after completion and the spontaneous nature of this portrait does not indicate that previous studies were necessary. Birch was pleased with the result of the print and wrote, 'I think it forms a butiful [sic] imitation of the Antiqua, and a strong Likeness of yourself'.⁸⁶ Jefferson seemed genuinely appreciative and promptly relayed to Birch his gratitude and wrote of the prints, 'they are an elegant specimen of Mr. Edwin's talent in this line, and prove also that the design has well conformed to the original'.⁸⁷ The correspondence leaves it unclear as to how many Jefferson received and in his *Autobiography* Birch confessed to ruining the plate. He wrote that after he took a few impressions to send Jefferson, 'intending to reabite the plate to make it more lasting but spoilt the plate in the attempt to reabite'.⁸⁸ Thus, this print may not have been widely circulated at the time. Nevertheless, Jefferson's approval of the print was evident through a presentation that he made in 1815, although he did not credit Birch for initiating the engravings. When a correspondent asked for 'some small trifle as a memento', Jefferson responded with one of the prints received from Birch. In his accompanying letter he wrote, 'it is a profile, engraved by Edwin, from an original drawn by Stewart, and deemed the best which has been taken of me'.⁸⁹

Jefferson had reassurance from several sources of the merits of Stuart's *Medallion Profile*. Washington architect and amateur artist, William Thornton, was very admiring of the work and later in Jefferson's retirement made arrangements to borrow the portrait for the purpose of making copies. Thornton actually asked the loan of two works in Jefferson's collection. In addition to Stuart's *Medallion Profile*, he requested a Benjamin West drawing that West had presented to Thaddeus Kosciuszko when he came through London on his way to America, which Kosciuszko then gave to Jefferson upon his return to Europe in 1798. (fig. 5.10) The subject of the drawing is Hector taking leave of his wife Andromache and son Astyanax. Executed in ink and gouache on paper, it is comparable to the *Medallion Profile* in both medium and as it echoes the classic in its subject matter. That

⁸⁶ Birch to TJ, 8 July 1812, *PTJ:RS*, 5: 221.

⁸⁷ TJ to William Birch, 3 August 1812, *ibid.*, 288.

⁸⁸ Birch, 'Autobiography'.

⁸⁹ Horatio G. Spafford to TJ, 28 January 1815, *PTJ:RS*, 8: 211; TJ to Spafford, 21 February 1815, *ibid.*, 281.

Thornton should be interested in replicating these two particular works emphasized again the contemporary interest in the classic, whether in subject matter or in style.

Thornton assured Jefferson, ‘The head by Stewart I really think one of the finest I ever saw’. He must have expressed his admiration of the portrait to Stuart also, for he related to Jefferson that Stuart had offered to take his in the same manner, but the sitting never happened. Whereas Birch kept the portrait two days, Thornton had Jefferson’s portrait for over two years, however in that time it is believed that he made as many as three copies. The first, which he identified in ‘swiss crayons’, he donated to the Library of Congress in 1816.⁹⁰ Thus through the works of Birch and Thornton, the profile of Jefferson was given a wider audience, even with Birch’s mishap with the print plate.

In 1821 Jefferson finally received an oil portrait from Stuart that fulfilled the commission that had begun in Philadelphia in 1800.⁹¹ It was obtained through the assistance of his former Secretary of War Henry Dearborn, who had served as go-between for Bowdoin’s commission and who still lived in Boston, Stuart’s current residence. It is fortunate that within these transactions, Stuart tried to claim that Jefferson had made only one payment of \$100 that had been fulfilled with the profile portrait. This generated a salvo from Jefferson to Dearborn that has assisted art historians in clarifying the circumstances of the Jefferson-Stuart exchange. Jefferson outlined the history of his commissions:

With respect to mr Stuart, it was in May 1800 I got him to draw my picture, and immediately after the last sitting I paid him his price. he was yet to put the last hand to it, so it was left with him. when he came to Washington in 1805, he told me he was not satisfied with it, and therefore begged me to sit again, and he drew another which he was to deliver me instead of the first, but begged permission to keep it until he could get an engraving from it. I soon after got him to sketch me in the Medallion form, which he did on paper with Crayons. although a slight thing I gave him another 100.D. probably the treble of what he would have asked. this I have; it is a very fine thing altho’ very perishable.

Jefferson’s only obvious mistake was the date of Stuart’s return to Washington, as he gave the date he actually sat to Stuart. With this information Dearborn, with the

⁹⁰ Bush, *Life Portraits*, 62-63.

⁹¹ TJ to Henry Dearborn, 17 August 1821, ‘TJP’:LC.

assistance of his son, who was better acquainted with Stuart, was able to obtain the promise of a portrait. The only question remaining was whether Jefferson would prefer the smaller bust size for the \$100 already paid or whether he would prefer a half-length at \$300. His preference for the smaller size did not seem to rest so much on cost as his plans for the portrait. He relayed to Dearborn, ‘I should be perfectly content to receive the original he drew in Philadelphia in 1800, which was of the common size (what the painters call, I believe, a bust). It will suit me better than a half length, as it will range better in the line of my other portraits, not one of which is half length’. This indicates a plan to place his own image among others at Monticello, where apparently his *Medallion Profile* already hung, ‘with the memorials of those worthies whose remembrance I feel a pride & comports in consecrating there’.⁹²

Jefferson would not receive the first image Stuart took in Philadelphia, as was his stated preference, but rather one that was obviously either the prototype or a copy of the image used for the Bowdoin commission. In this same exchange with Dearborn, Jefferson went on to say, ‘I have no doubt that Mr Stuart’s justice will think me entitled to the original, & not merely a copy’.⁹³ As previously referenced, there has been much speculation among art historians as to whether the portrait received is the original or a copy. What is known today as the *Jefferson Edgehill* portrait, (fig. 5.2) named after the family plantation where it hung for many years, joined the *Medallion Profile* as an important image of Jefferson.

Despite their difficulty doing business, Jefferson and Stuart seemed to share a mutual respect. Jefferson addressed Stuart ‘with a high veneration for your talents’ and encouraged that he move back to Washington as, ‘I am not without a hope that you will resume the function of leaving to the world your own excellent originals rather than copies from inferior hands’. Jefferson continued to believe that the national history should be illustrated with inspirational likenesses of its leaders. Of Jefferson, Stuart reportedly said ‘they had long been friends, tho’ they differed in politicks’. His remarks on his relationship with Jefferson indicated that he had attended dinner at the President’s House, and based upon his various exchanges with

⁹² TJ to Henry Dearborn, 17 August 1821, ‘TJP’:LC.

⁹³ Ibid.

Jefferson, he went on to comment that, ‘Mr. Jefferson took very good care not to make a too great display of his learning’.⁹⁴ Yet the *Medallion Profile* was a display of his learning, as it demonstrated his understanding of the classical in art and its link to western thought.

Stuart’s profile represents Jefferson’s interest in the classical world, which was life-long. As a young man he encountered the languages and the literature, and certainly it was visually manifest in his architecture.⁹⁵ He studied the classical political philosophy as well; however, as Peter Onuf argues succinctly and effectively in his essay for a collection titled *Thomas Jefferson, the Classical World, and Early America*, Jefferson perceived that the needs of the modern government were moving past the classical legacy toward the idea of nationhood. Onuf writes that as Jefferson’s political career evolved, and he met new political and conceptual challenges that ‘cumulatively, these challenges led him to reassess and ultimately reject the teachings of classical political philosophy and its modern interpreters’.⁹⁶ Jefferson let go the tenets of classical republicanism, which limited participation in governance and leadership to those who enjoyed economic freedom and a liberal education. His expanded views incorporating the concept of natural rights and a participatory form in government had made him the titular head of the popular Republican movement that opposed the high Federalists.⁹⁷ But just as Jefferson continued to respect classical motifs in architecture, he valued his *Medallion Profile*

⁹⁴ Henry Pickering quoting Stuart, 1817 as cited in Barratt and Miles, *Gilbert Stuart*, 280.

⁹⁵ For a discussion of the classical influence in Jefferson’s architecture, see Richard Guy Wilson, ‘Thomas Jefferson’s Classical Architecture: An American Agenda’, in *Thomas Jefferson, the Classical World, and Early America*, ed. by Peter Onuf and Nicholas Cole (Charlottesville, VA, 2011), 99 – 127.

⁹⁶ Peter S. Onuf, ‘Ancients, Moderns, and the Progress of Mankind: Thomas Jefferson’s Classical World’ in, *ibid.*, 35 – 55; quote on 42. For a corollary discussion, see also Peter Onuf, ‘Jefferson and American Democracy’, *A Companion to Thomas Jefferson*, ed. Frank Cogliano (Malden, MA, 2012), 397 – 418.

⁹⁷ In his *William Cooper’s Town*, Alan Taylor maintains that, ‘in New York, as in the other northern states, the Republican Insurgency owed precious little to Jefferson and Madison. Northern Republicanism is better seen as a popular movement, as the aggregation of many local challenges to Federalist gentlemen by ambitious democrats.’ See Alan Taylor, *William Cooper’s Town* (New York, 1995), 257-58. In his *Parades and Politics*, Simon Newman addresses a wider range of the American populace than just New York but expresses a similar idea and writes, ‘thus these common folk affirmed that they were far more than simple subjects of power; in these rites and festivals they continually demonstrated that power was not inherent in a single individual or a small group, but was instead exercised in the negotiation between rulers and ruled that took place in public places and print as much as in congressional and state assembly chambers. See Simon Newman, *Parades and Politics*, 7. This study agrees with these assessments and that Jefferson became the visible head of a larger, popular movement.

that linked him visually to the ancient world. This spoke to legacy and immortality; the other presidential portraits spoke more to his political agenda.

The presidential portraits by Rembrandt Peale and Gilbert Stuart recorded Jefferson as he steered executive protocol away from the vestiges of Federalist elitism but without totally abandoning the role of gentleman and statesman. (figs. 4.1 & 5.1) The second portrait by Rembrandt Peale and the works of Gilbert Stuart were taken just months apart, at the beginning of his second term and the height of his presidential acclaim. They illustrate the dichotomy of his self-presentation as president: Jefferson the radical posed in red coat, unkempt hair and fur cape; Jefferson the statesman posed in the accepted black suit, fresh linen and with hair powdered. His habits in entertaining and receiving guests continued to fluctuate to the end of his presidency. Late in his second term, a dinner guest made a journal entry of 11 October 1808 that read, 'I dined with the President---he is a tall thin man not very distinguished in his appearance but very agreeable in his manner'. She went on to describe, 'He was dressed in a pair of dark corduroy breeches---an old fringed dimity jacket that he brought with him from France which reached down to his hips--a blue cloth coat with metal buttons---worsted stockings nicely drawn up & a clean pair of leather shoes'.⁹⁸ (At least the 'down-at-the-heel slippers' so often commented upon had been replaced by clean leather shoes.) At the time of this dinner in October 1808 he was preparing to leave the presidency with the assurance that in all probability James Madison would be stepping into the office, and therefore a republican agenda would be perpetuated. It would seem that he could let go his appearances at the dinner table in mismatched and out-dated clothing, but he must have found it important not to give up his image as simply the 'depository of the principle' of good republican government, as he had described himself to James Bowdoin following his first election as president. Whether he posed in the more radical garb of Peale's portrait or the accepted black suit of Stuart's, he remained a representative of a principle, not the leader to be extolled.

Late in his retirement, two Stuart portraits of Jefferson hung at Monticello, the *Medallion Profile* and the *Edgehill*. In different ways they both represented his

⁹⁸ Noble Cunningham, 'The Diary of Frances Few 1808-1809', *Journal of Southern History* 29, no. 3 (August, 1963): 350-51.

image as president from classical thinker to egalitarian republican-statesman. It is interesting, however, that he never pursued a copy of Rembrandt's 1805 portrait that would have offered visitors to Monticello some visual evidence of the more radical Jefferson. Though he never lost his fear of a Federalist come-back, once out of office he did not pursue the notably worn and outdated clothing and shoes. Visitor accounts that mention clothing report a comfortable, somewhat old-fashioned Jefferson dressed in locally made clothing. His look remained simple but not deliberately notorious.⁹⁹

Upon its arrival in 1821, the *Edgehill* did not replace the *Medallion Profile* as the favourite among the family and with some visitors. A German traveller, Duke Bernhard of Saxe-Weimar-Eisenach paid a visit in November 1825 and noted that of the several portraits of Jefferson at Monticello, 'the best was that in profile by Stuart'.¹⁰⁰ Jefferson's daughter Martha admired the portrait as the one which, 'best gives the shape of his magnificent head' and her daughter Ellen thought the *Medallion* 'an incomparable portrait, and the only likeness of him I think that gives a good idea of the original'.¹⁰¹ With a portrait that commemorated him with bare neck, cropped hair, and in the medallion format that implied fame and immortality, Jefferson could look toward the next step of preserving his legacy and a place in history.

⁹⁹ For visitor accounts see *Visitors to Monticello*, ed. Merrill D. Peterson (Charlottesville, 1989). As noted, not all of these accounts specifically mention the clothing, but most give some impression of Jefferson's appearance.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 107.

¹⁰¹ Ellen Randolph Coolidge to Virginia Randolph Trist, 13 May 1828, Ellen Randolph Coolidge Papers (File 9090), Special Collections, University of Virginia Library.

CHAPTER 6: Retirement to Monticello and an Image for History

Jefferson left the presidency assured that the policies of his administration would continue as his good friend and political colleague James Madison stepped from the office of secretary of state into that of president. With James Monroe following Madison, Jefferson's direct line of communication with the president's office continued. In 1821 Monroe was preparing to enter a second term, which insured that the generation of 1776 would continue as a presence in the national government for four more years but what then? Monroe would be the last of the Founders to serve as president. With the next election the office would pass to a new generation.¹

Jefferson was anxious for the future of the republic. He believed that a true history of the Revolution and the principles on which the American republic were founded would influence the future direction of the nation and ultimately the destiny of representative government throughout the world. He had not given up the belief that he expressed upon first entering the presidential office himself so many years before that, 'a just & solid republican government maintained here, will be a standing monument & example for the aim & imitation of the people of other countries.'² As the Founders were leaving their positions as national leaders, Jefferson worried whether the sacrifices of 'the generation of 1776' were to be thrown away by 'the unwise and unworthy passions of their sons'?³ The next generation might hold a memory, but they had not been fully involved in the debates and long years of conflict that had secured independence from Britain. Jefferson questioned whether they truly understood the significance of the struggle and could

¹ James Monroe *The Papers of James Monroe*, ed. Daniel Preston, 3 vols. (Westport, CT, 2003-2009), 1:124, 128, 444; John Quincy Adams, *Memoirs of John Quincy Adams*, ed. Charles Francis Adams, 12 vols. (Philadelphia, PA, 1874-77), 5: 317. Monroe was inaugurated for a second term on Monday, March 5, 1821 rather than the traditional March 4, as it seemed inappropriate that the inauguration should take place on a Sunday; see Lee Langston-Harrison, *A Presidential Legacy: Monroe Collection* (Fredericksburg, VA, 1997), 235. It could be argued that Andrew Jackson was a participant in the American Revolution, as at age thirteen he did join in irregular fighting against the British and was captured, however his public reputation was linked to the next war with Britain, the War of 1812; see Sean Wilentz, *Rise of American Democracy: Jefferson to Lincoln* (New York, 2005), 168-70.

² TJ to John Dickinson, 6 March 1801, *PTJ* 33: 196.

³ TJ to John Holmes, 22 April 1820, *TJW*, 1434. See also TJ to Albert Gallatin, 26 December 1820, *ibid.*, 1447-50; TJ to James Breckinridge, 15 February 1821, *ibid.*, 1452-54.

appreciate that something ‘new under the sun’ had been created in a republic as extensive and diverse as that of the United States.⁴ He believed it important that subsequent generations fully comprehend the character of the Founders, their motives, actions, and their concept of republican virtue. The future was irrevocably linked to the past; a correct understanding of history was, therefore, imperative.⁵

Jefferson’s concerns extended to more tangible issues as well. These related to the on-going westward migration with more and more Americans relocating to the territories in the trans-Appalachian and trans-Mississippi regions. The result was a decrease in land values in the areas of earliest settlement along the Atlantic seaboard. Jefferson and his fellow planters and farmers were left to contend with land overworked and no longer fertile, while prices for agricultural products remained low with the economic downswing following the conclusion of the War of 1812 and building to the Panic of 1819. Jefferson and many other Virginians were contending with mounting debts. Aligned with the westward movement were the questions surrounding the conditions of statehood and the issue of slavery. Jefferson was greatly alarmed by the Missouri crisis and the congressional debates over Missouri’s petition to enter the Union as a slave state. He saw this questioning of a state’s prerogatives a threat to the cohesion of the United States.⁶

This chapter addresses the aging Thomas Jefferson faced with the personal complexities of debt and therefore the welfare and security of his family. In the broader context he was equally anxious for the welfare and security of the nation, as all moved forward into a new era. He questioned who were to be the new leaders as the founding generation disappeared from the national scene and whether the next generation could hold the nation together. Within this he had to question as well his own legacy as a part of American history.

⁴ On 21 March 1801 Jefferson wrote Joseph Priestley, ‘we can no longer say there is nothing new under the sun. for this whole chapter in the history of man is new. the great extent of our Republic is new’, in *PTJ*, 33: 394.

⁵ For a discussion of Jefferson’s views on history and his personal legacy, see Cogliano, *Thomas Jefferson: Reputation and Legacy*, chapter 2.

⁶ For Jefferson and debt see Herbert E. Sloan, *Principle and Interest* (Charlottesville, VA, 1995); for discussions of western migration see, Rhys Isaac, *Transformation of Virginia, 1740 – 1790* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1982 & 1999) and Avery O. Craven, *Soil Exhaustion as a Factor in the Agricultural History of Virginia and Maryland* (Columbia, SC, 2006); for the Panic of 1819 see Daniel S. Dupre, ‘Panic of 1819 and the Political Economy of Sectionalism’, *Economy of Early America*, ed. Cathy Matson (University Park, PA., 2006), 263 – 293, and Clyde Haulman, ‘Virginia Commodity Prices during the Panic of 1819’, *Journal of the Early Republic* 22, no. 4 (Winter, 2002): 675 – 88.

This chapter's discussion is supported by the very fine portraits of Jefferson by Thomas Sully that were commissioned by the United States Military Academy at West Point. It uses the original bust portrait taken at Monticello in March 1821 (fig. 6.1) and the subsequent studies and, most importantly, the full-length portrait completed the following year that was to hang in the academic library at the Academy. (fig. 6.2) These become examples of how Jefferson presented himself for posterity as one of the remaining Founders and lend to the discussion of Jefferson's concern for his legacy. The main premise of this chapter is that he worked with the acclaimed artist, Thomas Sully, to create an image that upheld his past contributions as Founder and as president. This rests upon the established traditions of portraiture as explored throughout this thesis that the image on the canvas should be more than just a likeness. In the hands of a skilled artist it became a record for history of personal character and accomplishment. This chapter contends that Jefferson was invested in working with artist Thomas Sully to create a fine and meaningful portrait that fulfilled the expectations of the Military Academy while expressing his own character and contributions to the nation. Both stood to gain. This portrait held the potential of enhancing the reputation of Sully and guarding the memory of Thomas Jefferson.

* * * * *

In early February 1821 Thomas Jefferson received a letter posted from West Point, New York that must have given some satisfaction at a time when he was troubled both by personal and by national issues. The letter was penned by Jared Mansfield on behalf of his fellow professors, the officers and the cadets at the United States Military Academy. The request was straight-forward; they wished to have a portrait of Jefferson that would be 'an appropriate memorial of your person which may descend to posterity'. The portrait would hang in the Academy's library alongside that 'of the great Washington, The Founder of the Republic and Col. [Jonathan] Williams the first chief of the Mil[itary] Academy'. (fig. 6.8)⁷ This

⁷ This letter confirms that the Academy had a portrait of Washington, however per West Point Museum curator, Gary Hood, it is not known which image of Washington originally hung there.

honour was being extended both for his service to the nation and patronage of the Academy, as it was on 16 March 1802 that President Jefferson signed the congressional bill officially establishing the Academy at West Point. Feeling confident of Jefferson's consent, they had commissioned Thomas Sully, one of America's leading portrait artist, to call upon Jefferson at his Virginia home to take the portrait and so requested dates that would be convenient.⁸

Jefferson responded to the West Point letter in a true gentlemanly fashion with an acknowledgement of the honour attached to such a request but then demurred slightly. He suggested that the artist Sully might find the 'employment of his fine pencil as illy bestowed on an ottamy of 78'. Nevertheless, he recommended suitable dates and cautioned that Mr. Sully might consider the state of the roads in planning his visit to Monticello.⁹ Though his response was appropriately reserved, he must have realized the opportunity this presented. The portrait would become a lasting visual legacy, especially as it was intended to be hung in the academic library at the Academy and thus would be available for public viewing. The tradition of displaying either sculpted or painted likenesses of writers, philosophers, theologians and scholars in library reading rooms was a custom going back for many centuries in western culture.¹⁰ Jefferson could qualify on several counts to have his image included in a scholar's library, and what would have been equally attractive in this proposal from West Point was that his portrait was to hang alongside that of Washington's. This would add legitimacy in the minds of most viewers to Jefferson's position as an important member of the founding of the American republic.

The request from West Point arrived at a time when the ageing Jefferson felt anxious about the future of the nation, the great 'experiment' in which he had invested so much of his life. In the previous year he had become extremely agitated by the Missouri question, as he received accounts of the highly charged

⁸ Jared Mansfield to TJ, 26 January 1821, transcription from original document in the USMA Library, West Point, Special Collections, MS 1047. The Congressional Bill establishing the US Military Academy can be found on the Library of Congress website, 'A Century of Lawmaking', Statues at Large, 'Public Acts of the Seventh Congress, Session I; 16 March 1802, Statue I, Military Peace Establishment'.

⁹ TJ to Jared Mansfield, 13 February 1821, 'TJP':LC.

¹⁰ Fortune, *Portraits of Virtue and Genius*, 15.

congressional debates that surrounded Missouri's petition to enter the union as a slave state. For Jefferson this became a 'fire bell in the night' that roused him in his retirement. In the geographical lines being drawn between the slave and non-slave holding states, he saw what could become the death knell of the Union and caused him to question whether a state should not have the right to enter the nation on a parity with the existing states without federal restrictions? The alarm had been 'hushed' by a tenuous compromise, but Jefferson feared this was only a temporary reprieve. He worried that the principles fought for in the Revolution would not be strenuously upheld by the generation moving into positions of leadership and questioned whether they fully appreciated the potential for democratic governance that came out of that struggle.¹¹

From his seat at Monticello he could only watch and receive news from a distance. He had left the presidency assured that the policies of his administration would continue as his good friend and political colleague James Madison stepped from the office of secretary of state into that of president. Then friend and former protégé James Monroe had followed Madison, and so Jefferson continued to be reassured with communication and personal contact with the presidential office. When Jefferson received the request from West Point, Monroe was preparing to enter a second term, which insured that the generation of 1776 would continue as a presence in the national government for four more years. Many American citizens shared Jefferson's realization and knew as they greeted President Monroe on one of his many tours through the states attired in the outdated knee breeches, buckled shoes and tri-cornered hat that he was providing them a visual reminder of their history, while all realized as well that he would be the last of the Founders to serve as their president. A new generation would be stepping into the national leadership.¹²

¹¹ TJ to John Holmes, 22 April 1820, *TJW*, 1433-1435. See also TJ to Albert Gallatin, 26 December 1820, *ibid.*, 1447-50; TJ to James Breckinridge, 15 February 1821, *ibid.*, 1452-54; Peter S. Onuf, *Jefferson's Empire*, Chapter 4.

¹² Daniel Preston, ed., *Papers of James Monroe*, 3 vols. (Westport, CN, 2003-2009), 1:124, 128, 444; John Quincy Adams, *Memoirs of John Quincy Adams*, ed. Charles Francis Adams (Philadelphia, 1875), V: 317. Monroe was inaugurated for a second term on Monday, 5 March 1821 rather than the traditional March 4th, as it seemed inappropriate that the inauguration should take place on a Sunday; see Lee Langston-Harrison, *A Presidential Legacy: The Monroe Collection* (Fredericksburg, VA, 1997), 235. It could be argued that Andrew Jackson was a participant in the American Revolution, as

Jefferson's fears for the future of the republic connected directly with his insistence that its history be correctly remembered and recorded. In addition to a true and accurate understanding of the events of the Revolution, subsequent generations needed to fully comprehend the character of the founders, their motives, actions, and their concept of republican virtue. The future was irrevocably linked to the past; a correct understanding of history was, therefore, imperative.¹³ These fears had been aroused by contemporary histories that cast doubts upon his own role in the American Revolution and early formation of the nation. The first edition of John Marshall's five-volume *The Life of George Washington* had been completed in 1807. This work extended beyond just a biography of Washington and outlined American history from colonial settlement through the Revolution and the founding of the republic. The final volume dealt with the rise of the partisan politics of the 1790s and unfavourably compared Jefferson and his political allies with the Federalists and their initial leader, Alexander Hamilton. This provoked from Jefferson a complaint against 'the party diatribe of Marshall'.¹⁴ Jefferson's perceived pro-French sympathies were questioned as well. Equally unsettling was an 1812 publication by fellow Virginian Henry Lee III. In his *Memoirs of the War in the southern Department*, Lee resurrected the criticism of Jefferson as an incompetent wartime governor who reacted with cowardice during the British invasion of Virginia.¹⁵ This had haunted Jefferson throughout his public career and still threatened his reputation in history. This was another reason that hanging alongside the 'great Washington' in the academic library at West Point would be advantageous.

To Jefferson these histories by Marshall and Lee were dangerous, not just to his own reputation but also to American republicanism in general. Their retelling of early American history gave a more favourable impression of those who supported

at age thirteen he did join in irregular fighting against the British and was captured, however his public reputation was linked to the next war with Britain, the War of 1812; see Sean Wilentz, *Rise of American Democracy*, 168-70.

¹³ Cogliano, *Thomas Jefferson: Reputation and Legacy*, 26, 36, 49.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 50-52; John Marshall, *The Life of George Washington*, ed. Robert Faulkner and Paul Cerrese (Indianapolis, IN, 2000), xii, xv, 366. Quote is in Jefferson to John Adams, 10 August 1815, *PTJ:RS*, 8: 656-58 at 657.

¹⁵ Jefferson as wartime governor was first introduced in Chapter 2 of this thesis. See also Cogliano, *Thomas Jefferson Reputation and Legacy*, 50-52, 62-65 and Kranish, *Flight from Monticello*.

the Federalists and their ambitions for a more powerful, more centralized government. Even though the Federalists had been in decline since his election to the presidency in 1801, Jefferson continued to fear his old enemies' monarchical leanings and the influence of their ideas on future generations of Americans.¹⁶ With all this in mind, Jefferson began writing his own autobiography in January 1821 at about the same time Jared Mansfield was composing his letter at West Point.

Weighing equally upon him was the more personal worry of debt. Jefferson's financial base was in Virginia agriculture, and like many planters, his estates had been in financial decline since the revolution. Years away from his farms and additional debt attached to public office had compounded his financial problems, but the real crisis came when the inflation bubble following the close of the War of 1812 burst, causing the closure of many banks and a drop in agriculture and land prices. The Panic of 1819 would become a prolonged recession, and Jefferson would not live long enough to see a financial reversal. Even though he had never fully trusted the banking system and always opposed too much paper money in circulation, he could take no satisfaction in the bank closures, as the financial panic threatened the well-being of the nation and on a personal level that of friends and family. It raised the very real possibility of his own family becoming destitute.¹⁷

In early 1821 he was especially pressured by notes he had felt obligated to co-sign for long-term friend, Wilson Cary Nicholas, who was connected by marriage to his family and had assisted Jefferson previously with many loans. Nicholas had died in October 1820 deeply in debt with all his devalued property mortgaged, and Jefferson was faced with absorbing the two notes of ten thousand each with an annual interest payment of twelve hundred dollars. To Jefferson this was his financial *coup de grace*; his estate holdings could no longer begin to cover what was owed, especially in the current deflated real estate market.¹⁸

¹⁶ Cogliano, *Thomas Jefferson: Reputation and Legacy*, 50-65; Sam W. Haynes, *Unfinished Revolution* (Charlottesville, 2010), 106-112.

¹⁷ Jefferson's debts are fully discussed in Sloan, *Principle and Interest*. Debt among Virginia planters and their issues with British merchants found in T.H. Breen, *Tobacco Culture: The Mentality of the Great Tidewater Planters on the Eve of Revolution* (Princeton, NJ, 1985) and David Hancock, *Citizens of the World: London Merchants and the Integration of the British Atlantic Community, 1735 to 1785* (Cambridge, UK, 1995).

¹⁸ Sloan, *Principle and Interest*, 219-20.

The threat of becoming financially insolvent placed Jefferson in an extremely vulnerable position. As a gentleman and leader in his native state, the loss of his estate---land, elegant house with fine furniture, books and art, supported by an enslaved serving staff---would compromise his dignity and station. Even though Jefferson supported the concept of an independent nation of yeoman farmers living in republican simplicity, he was astute enough to know that his was not the profile of the traditional leadership of Virginia. Loss of property could diminish his ability to influence the local constituency.¹⁹ Even though much of the financial crisis whirled out of his control, still a patriarch who could not protect those under his care would be suspect with the larger issues of leadership. Though his influence in national political decisions and policy making was receding, still he had one final project that he regarded as ‘the last service I can render my country’, ---the establishment of the University of Virginia.²⁰ Jefferson had long believed that the education and encouragement of a ‘natural aristocracy among men’ based upon ‘virtue and talent’ should be honed in the United States and that such a leadership could be a guard against political implosion within the Republic.²¹ He was intent upon the creation of a state supported university for Virginia truly based on ‘the illimitable freedom of the human mind’ with no ties to a religious organization. Trusting that his final efforts were worthwhile, he wrote, ‘I am closing the last scenes of my life by fashioning and fostering an establishment for the instruction of those who are to come after us. I hope its influence on their virtue, freedom, fame, and happiness will be salutary and permanent’.²² Had he forgotten before receiving the letter from Jared Mansfield that he had been instrumental in the establishment of another educational institution for young men? Though he was far removed from any direct influence at the Military Academy, perhaps he could trust the power of a finely executed portrait to suggest a republican virtue that would be somehow inspiring or imitable.

¹⁹ Bushman, *Refinement of America*, 193- 97; Michal J. Rozbicki, *Complete Colonial Gentleman* (Charlottesville, VA, 1998), 127-36.

²⁰ TJ to Abbé Correa de Serra, 24 October 1820, ‘TJP’:LC.

²¹ TJ to John Adams, 28 October 1813, *PTJ:RS*, 562-67, at 563.

²² Jefferson used the phrase, ‘the illimitable freedom of the human mind’ in letters to Destutt Tracy, 26 December 1820 and to William Roscoe, 27 December 1820, both in ‘TJP’:LC.; second quote, TJ to Augustus B. Woodward, 3 April 1825, *ibid*.

Not long into his retirement from public office Jefferson cavalierly remarked, ‘I leave for others to judge of what I have done, & to give me exactly that place which they shall think I have occupied’.²³ Now, in early 1821, at seventy-eight years of age, he not only faced every-increasing debts that could leave his family destitute but also felt ever-increasing anxiety that the experiment in representative government to which he had devoted so much of his life was headed toward irrevocable scission. Succeeding generations would need to understand the character and the aims of the founders and their concept of republican virtue. Thus the West Point commission arrived at a time when Jefferson’s thoughts revolved around preserving his own legacy in order to exemplify the virtue that could strengthen the republic. As a gentleman he could not be seen promoting his own reputation without compromising the selflessness on which it was based. He could, however, support the efforts of a talented artist and collaborate on a portrait that could potentially capture for posterity a sense of character that suggested civic virtue and an enlightened world view, a character befitting a founder of a new republican nation. He could justify this portrait as not just as a contribution to his own legacy but as a record of early American history as well.

* * * * *

Jefferson had not met Thomas Sully prior to the artist’s visit to Monticello in March 1821, but he would have know of his reputation as one of the country’s leading portrait artists and proponents of the fine arts in the United States. In a May 1811 letter, Benjamin Henry Latrobe, the architect who had worked so closely with Jefferson during his presidency on the Capitol and the President’s House in Washington, gave the retired President an assessment of the current art scene and noted that ‘a Young artist, Tho[mas] Sully, is certainly the first on the list of our portrait painters’.²⁴ When Sully reached Monticello ten years later, his talents were being placed alongside those of Gilbert Stuart and Rembrandt Peale. The artist was slight, five-foot eight-inches in height, and possessed a demeanour that would later

²³ TJ to John Adams, 15 June 1813, *PTJ:RS*, 6: 195.

²⁴ Benjamin Henry Latrobe to TJ, 19 May 1811, *ibid.*, 3: 625.

be described as a ‘general gentleness of character’ that apparently appealed to Jefferson.²⁵ (fig. 6.4) William Dunlap, artist, writer and close acquaintance of Sully, wrote of his experience in taking the full-length portrait for West Point: ‘For this purpose he visited the sage at Monticello, and in his house made a painting, head size, of the venerable ex-president. The painter was an inmate of Monticello twelve days, and left the place with the greatest reluctance’.²⁶

Sully and Jefferson had a brief, formal correspondence when Jefferson was elected an honorary member of the newly formed Society of Artists of the United States on 11 December 1811, and Sully was acting as secretary of the organization. Jefferson must have agreed with the stated purpose of the new Society, as it echoed closely what he had written to James Madison so many years before on the importance of the arts to the new, developing United States and that the objective was, ‘to improve the taste of my countrymen, to increase their reputation, to reconcile to them the respect of the world and procure them it’s praise’.²⁷ Sully’s letter proposed in a similar patriotic tone that the Society would have ‘a tendency to form a correct taste in this Country’ and that ‘by calling into Action Native genius, many prejudices will be removed with respect to foreign productions’.²⁸ He was reiterating the purposes outlined in the Society’s constitution not only to teach the elements of art but ‘to correct and improve the public taste by stated exhibitions’. The Society pledged to support fellow artists with financial relief to them or their families in cases of emergency and so looked to improve the state of art and artists in the United States or at least in Philadelphia, where the Society was headquartered.²⁹ As Jefferson had supported a fellow arts organization, the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts with a cash donation during his presidency and even earlier had served as the first president of the Board of Visitors of Charles

²⁵ William H. Gerds, ‘Natural Aristocrats in a Democracy, 1818-1870’, *American Portraiture in the Grand Manner: 1720 – 1920*, ed. Marvin Quick (Los Angeles, 1981), 33; Monroe H. Fabian, *Mr Sully Portrait Painter* (Washington: 1983), 10-22; ‘gentleness of character’ from ‘Recollections of Jonathan Mason, Jr.’, Joseph Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera, vol. 3; doc. 30, Winterthur Research Library.

²⁶ William Dunlap, *History of the Rise and Progress of the Arts of Design in the United States*, 2 vols. in 3, rev. ed. (New York: 1834; reprinted 1969), 2: 135.

²⁷ TJ to James Madison, 20 September 1785, *PTJ*, 8:535.

²⁸ Thomas Sully (for the Society of Artists of the U.S.) to TJ, 22 December 1811, *PTJ:RS*, 4: 355-56.

²⁹ Constitution of the Society of Artists as quoted in James Mease, *Picture of Philadelphia* (Carlisle, MA, 1811), 316-17.

Willson Peale's museum of natural history and art, the Society of Artists obviously looked to Jefferson with hope that he would lend a prestigious name to an organization that shared his belief that America's artists could one day rival those of Europe.³⁰

Jefferson's response to the Society was positive, and he had just sent his letter of thanks for the offer of honorary membership and expressed his good wishes, when he received a second letter from Sully announcing that he had been elected president of the organization. Sully's letter was candid in the hope that the infant society might benefit from its association with Jefferson's name. Jefferson graciously declined the appointment, expressing 'uneasiness of unmerited distinction'. He was still trying to convince the American Philosophical Society that he should be replaced as president of that organization arguing that the distance between Philadelphia and Monticello was far too great for the leadership that he had at one time provided.³¹ Apparently he did not want to engage another titular office, even though it was an organization with goals that he fully approved. However, as the society included architecture along with painting, sculpture, and engraving, Jefferson's excuse of 'unmerited distinction' was not totally valid even though it would be several years before his finest public buildings for the University of Virginia would be realized.³²

Thomas Sully had personal knowledge of Jefferson's earliest public architectural work, the capitol building for the state of Virginia. The Sully family had lived in Richmond for a short while upon their arrival in the United States from Britain before moving on to Charleston, South Carolina. In 1799, at age sixteen, Thomas returned to Richmond to study art with his eldest brother Lawrence Sully, who had established himself in the Richmond-Norfolk area and advertised his talents

³⁰ Jefferson donated 50.D. to the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, payment authorized 20 July 1806, see *JMB*, II:1185 and subscribed to Peale's museum for two years, 29 February 1792, see *JMB*, II: 865 and *n.* 45 on Jefferson as first president of the Board of Visitors.

³¹ 'Manuscript Minutes' published in the *Early Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* (Philadelphia: 1884) reflect that Jefferson submitted letters of resignation on 2 January 1801; 30 November 1808; and 23 November 1814. This final letter was accepted at the meeting of 20 January 1815. (See entries according to date.)

³² TJ to Thomas Sully, 8 January 1812, *PTJ:RS*, 4:407; Thomas Sully to TJ, 6 January 1812, *ibid.*, 4: 398-400; TJ to Thomas Sully, 25 January 1812, *ibid.*, 4: 459-60.

as a painter of ‘miniatures and devices’.³³ In 1800 Lawrence was commissioned to make a drawing of the Virginia capitol that would then be engraved by a Philadelphia printmaker, Alexander Lawson. (fig. 6.3) This view of the building from the west side was reprinted many times in various publications.³⁴ His brother’s image of the capitol must have aroused Thomas Sully’s awareness. Late in life when he wrote ‘Recollections of an Old Painter’, he still remembered that he had admired Jefferson’s model, on view in the capitol’s library, but found many faults in the execution of the building itself. Even so, he maintained that ‘Mr. Jefferson was a very good judge of architecture’.³⁵

The Virginia capitol would have been fresh in Jefferson’s mind during Sully’s visit, as in the memoirs that he had begun writing shortly before the artist’s arrival he discussed his contribution of a design for the capitol building. He would have been thinking back to the summer of 1785 when he was in Paris, assuming the position of Minister Plenipotentiary from Benjamin Franklin, who was finally returning to the United States. He had received a request from the Directors of Public Buildings in Richmond for architectural plans for a capitol, whereupon he engaged the talents of a highly regarded architectural draftsman, Charles-Louis Clérisseau to execute the drawings, who in turn hired another French artisan, Jean-Pierre Fouquet, to create a very detailed model. The inspiration for the classic temple design has been debated by architectural historians, but in his 1821 recollections Jefferson simply states, ‘Thinking it a favorable opportunity of introducing into the State an example of architecture, in the classic style of antiquity, and the Maison Quarrée of Nismes, an ancient Roman temple, being considered as the most perfect model existing of what may be called Cubic architecture, I applied to M. Clerissault, who had published drawings of the Antiquities of Nismes, to have

³³ The most extensive biography of Sully is Edward Biddle and Mantle Fielding, *Life and Works of Thomas Sully, (1783-1782)* (Philadelphia, 1921), Ch. 1 covers early life. Biddle and Fielding rely heavily upon the works of Dunlap, *Arts of Design in the United State*, 2: 101-141. See also Fabian, *Mr. Sully, Portrait Painter*, 10-11.

³⁴ George Douglas to TJ, 2 August 1801, *PTJ*, 35: 8-9. Douglas used the image of the Virginia capitol on his *Virginia and North Carolina Almanack for the Year 1802*, discussed in Fiske Kimball, *Capitol of Virginia: A Landmark of Virginia Architecture*, rev. ed. (Richmond, VA, 2002), 31-32; noted in *PTJ*, 35: 9. The Sully-Lawson engraving appeared as the frontispiece for a textbook, *The American Nepos: A Collection of the Lives of the Most Remarkable and the Most Eminent Men* (Baltimore, 1806).

³⁵ Thomas Sully, ‘Recollections of an Old Painter’, *Hours at Home: A Popular Monthly of Instruction and Recreation* 10 (November, 1869): 69-74.

me a model of the building made in stucco, only changing the order from Corinthian to Ionic, on account of the difficulty of the Corinthian capitals'.³⁶

What seemed of most importance to Jefferson was the opportunity of introducing the forms and proportions of classical architecture into the United States as a means of educating the citizenry and ultimately gaining artistic credibility with the Old World. In a letter to James Madison he emphasized that his proposed design for the Virginia State capitol building based upon classical models would provide 'an object and proof of national good taste'. He expanded upon this idea by speculating that such architecture would demonstrate to European visitors, 'a morsel of taste in our infancy promising much for our mature age'.³⁷ Yet upon seeing the completed building following his return to the United States, his impression was much like that of Sully. He admitted in his memoir that his plans were executed with 'some variations, not for the better', but he optimistically saw opportunity for 'future correction'.³⁸ Despite these variations, his design after a Roman model was a major change from other American 'state houses' as they existed at the time. Architectural Historian, Richard Guy Wilson has described most state buildings that held over from the Colonial era into the Early Republic as simply enlarged houses with modifications. Jefferson continued in his pursuit of classic architectural models as a means to set a new standard in American architecture with his designs for the University of Virginia. Wilson credits Jefferson's University of Virginia buildings with the Rotunda at the centre as a marked departure from other American colleges and universities.³⁹

Perhaps this contributed to his eagerness to have Sully view the buildings under construction at the University in the neighbouring village of Charlottesville. Jefferson made arrangements for the artist to tour the site but did not accompany him due to the unusually cold weather and instead sent a note stating, 'The bearer, Mr. Sully, a celebrated Portrait painter of Philadelphia calls to see the University,

³⁶ Thomas Jefferson, 'Autobiography', (1821), in *TJW*, p. 41; Charles Brownell, 'Introduction to the 2002 Edition', in Kimball, *Capitol of Virginia*, xviii & xix.

³⁷ TJ to James Madison, 20 September 1785, *PTJ*, 8:534-35.

³⁸ TJ, *Anas*, portion as reprinted in Kimball, *Capitol of Virginia*, 5.

³⁹ Wilson, 'Thomas Jefferson's Classical Architecture' in Onuf and Coles, *Thomas Jefferson's Classical World*, 99 – 127, especially 117 – 123.

and as he is a judge, and will be questioned about it on his return, I will request you to shew [*sic*] it to him advantageously'.⁴⁰

Obviously Jefferson valued Sully's opinion and conversations about architecture must have ensued. Upon Sully's return to Baltimore, where he was maintaining a studio at the time, he apologized for his inability to locate a copy of a book he had promised to send his host, a French architectural work by J.N.L. Durand titled *Recueil et parallele des Edifices de tout genre, anciens et modernes*. Jefferson assured Sully not to worry; he would add this title to a book order that he was preparing to send to Paris. He must have approved of Sully's recommendation, for he included Durand's study in his list of books for the library at the University of Virginia.⁴¹

Before Sully departed Monticello, Jefferson favoured him with a gift that reflected their mutual interest in the classical world. When in Nîmes studying the Maison Carrée, Jefferson had been quite taken with a bronze askos, a type of Roman pouring vessel, in an antiquarian collection at the Académie de Nîmes. He commissioned a copy of the askos in wood with the intent that he would then have it cast in silver as a gift to Charles Louis Clérisseau for his assistance with the architectural plans for the Virginia capitol. However the wooden copy never reached him in Paris, and he found another gift for Clérisseau. His interest was strong enough, however, that he ordered a second wooden copy, which he received in May 1789. (figs. 6.5 & 6.5a) The wooden model was shipped to the United States with other household items following Jefferson's return, and the silver version made in 1801 became a favourite among the family, who used it most often as a chocolate pot. The wooden prototype was apparently presented to Sully, as on the bottom it now bears an inscription, 'Presented/by Ex-Pres. Thos./Jefferson to Thos./Sully'.⁴² The classical world and its architecture must have formed a part of their conversations while Sully attended Jefferson at Monticello. Certainly it is reflected in the final full-length portrait for West Point.

⁴⁰ JT to Arthur Brockenbrough, 28 March 1821, TJ Papers, Special Collections, University of Virginia Library.

⁴¹ Sully to TJ, 6 April 1821, 'TJP':LC; TJ to Sully, 17 April 1821, *ibid.*; William B. O'Neal, *Jefferson's Fine Arts Library* (Charlottesville, VA, 1976), 106-108.

⁴² *JMB*, I: 666, note 61; Stein, *Worlds of Thomas Jefferson*, 328. This entry in *Worlds* explains in greater detail the provenance of the wooden askos.

Whether Jefferson had seen any prior examples of Sully's work is uncertain. Sully had painted a small, full-length portrait of James Madison in 1809, during Madison's first year as president, specifically for reproduction by Philadelphia engraver David Edwin. (fig. 6.6) Though Jefferson would not have the advantage of seeing Sully's original, as the intent of this commission was a print of the new president intended for public sale, it is possible Jefferson could have seen one of the resulting prints. James and Dolley Madison visited Monticello regularly, and if they did not have a print in-hand, some mention might have been made of Madison's experience with the well-known artist. For sure Jefferson had another reassurance of Sully's merits from John Vaughn, a good friend and fellow member of the American Philosophical Society. Sully arrived at Monticello with Vaughn's letter expressing that he had 'learnt with pleasure that the Establishment of West Point is to possess a full length portrait of yourself executed by Mr. Sully. . .I am gratified that it has fallen to Mr. Sully's lot to be the artist employed and beg leave to recommend him'.⁴³

Given their mutual interest in the arts in the United States as well as their respect of each other's work, it is not unreasonable to speculate that artist and subject worked closely in creating the portrait for West Point. The reputation of each would be invested in the portrait's success. It was up to Sully to capture a truthful likeness that suggested an elevated character and gentleman of virtue. Jefferson could participate in the process with recommendations as the artist considered the appropriate pose, choice of props and clothing, and the background that would surround the figure. All elements working together should appropriately reflect Jefferson's role as a founder of both the nation and the military academy.⁴⁴

* * * * *

⁴³ The portrait of Madison is listed in *A Register of Portraits Painted by Thomas Sully*, ed. Charles Henry Hart (Philadelphia, PA, 1909), 114; John Vaughn to TJ, 14 March 1821, Thomas Jefferson Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston; from microfilm, Jefferson Library.

⁴⁴ The importance of an image of civility and virtue is discussed in Gordon Wood, *Revolutionary Characters*, (New York, 2006), 13-14.

The collaboration between Sully and Jefferson resulted in a half-length portrait taken on site during Sully's stay at Monticello, which became the basis for the full-length portrait that was finalized the following year in May 1822 and completed the commission for the Military Academy at West Point. Two preliminary sketches are extant that relate to the full-length portrait, though it cannot be determined whether Sully made them on site, as was often his practice, or if he made them later in his studio. Still they are helpful in creating a fuller understanding of how he came to his final image of Jefferson and will be addressed later in this discussion. Sully made other known replicas from the original life-portrait before completing and selling the original to Jefferson protégé William Short, who donated it to the American Philosophical Society in June 1830. It hangs today very appropriately in Benjamin Franklin Hall at the American Philosophical Society in Philadelphia.⁴⁵ The half-length life portrait shows Jefferson in a black coat and waistcoat with just a very small area of red that appears to be the collar of an under-waistcoat. This is covered by a fur-lined greatcoat. The full-length portrait follows the original very closely and provides more information as to the choices made for Jefferson's clothing and appearance and how Sully chose to present the figure.

Art and clothing historian Aileen Ribeiro comments upon the function of clothing in a portrait: 'A portrait suggests a precise moment in history, and often the costume is so important to the image that it transfixes the sitter in a kind of time-warp'. But she goes on to explain that a portrait is both 'of its time and yet timeless in claims on posterity'.⁴⁶ This would speak to the desires for the West Point commission---a marker of a specific time and event, which was the establishment of the Military Academy in 1802, but then overriding the specific temporal moment to stand as well as a lasting reminder of an even larger historic contribution, the founding of the American republic.

The suit and shoes that Jefferson and Sully selected for the portrait connected stylistically to a past point in time, Jefferson's years as president. He wears a black, three-piece suit that with Sully's skilful rendering appears to be of velvet. The suit-coat has long, sloping sides angling away from centre front, a cut fashionable late in

⁴⁵ Bush, *Life Portraits*, 77. I was allowed to study this portrait during my fellowship with the APS; it hangs behind the lectern in Benjamin Franklin Hall.

⁴⁶ Ribeiro, *Art of Dress*, 6-7.

the eighteenth century and carrying over into the early nineteenth. This earlier date is re-enforced with the wide ‘V’ shaping of the front of the waistcoat, plus coat and waistcoat are paired with knee-breeches not the more fashionable pantaloons.⁴⁷ (Knee-breeches continued to be worn fashionably for very formal occasions, though more common in Europe than America.) As a comparison of current with past styles, just a few years after his *Jefferson*, Sully recorded an example of the more up-to-date fashion for the 1820s with his portrait of Revolutionary War hero, the Marquis de Lafayette, painted during Lafayette’s celebratory return visit to the United States in 1824-25. (fig. 6.7) Sully detailed Lafayette’s fashionable dark suit with high, rolled collar and the slightly rounded, almost horizontal waistline that opened the front of coat. This is the feature that so readily distinguished Lafayette’s coat from that of Jefferson’s. The horizontal cut that crossed just above the natural waistline began to define a shape that remained significant for the man’s nineteenth century day coat or later called more colloquially the ‘tail-coat’, which has been retained into the twenty-first century for very formal occasions. The horizontal cut of Lafayette’s waistcoat, visible just below the waistline of the coat, contrasts with the ‘V’ shape of Jefferson’s. In addition, Lafayette chose pantaloons over knee breeches. Stylistically, Jefferson’s suit dates back to his presidency and the description of him at his second presidential inauguration ‘dressed in black and even in black silk stockings’.⁴⁸ The cut of the suit in Sully’s full-length portrait was fashionable when he was signing into law the establishment of the Military Academy at West Point in 1802. If Jefferson had packed away such a suit from the presidential years, this would have been the moment to bring it forward.

The shoes that Jefferson wears in the portrait visually connect to his presidential years as well, as they look exactly as the low ‘bootees’ depicted in the engravings made by Edwin and Tiebout in recognition of his first inauguration (discussed in Chapter 4; see figs. 4.2 & 4.3) Apparently Jefferson continued to favour the laced, ankle-high boots in retirement whether due to ideological leanings--as was once claimed, or simply practicality and comfort. When Congressman

⁴⁷ According to Jefferson’s granddaughter Ellen, he did not adopt the newer fashion of pantaloons until much later in life, Ellen Randolph Coolidge to biographer W.H. Randall, c. 1856 in Family Papers, file 9090, University of Virginia Library, Special Collections,.

⁴⁸ Foster, *Jeffersonian America*, 15.

Daniel Webster visited Monticello in 1824, he described Jefferson as wearing ‘shoes of the kind that bear his name’.⁴⁹ The bootees worked with the suit to relate the figure in Sully’s portrait to Jefferson as president.

The most notable garment in the portrait is the long, fur-lined great coat worn over the black suit, and its explanation is not so straight-forward. The coat could be presumed to have come from Jefferson’s wardrobe or at least to have been a part of the original study, as Sully preferred to sketch in drapery at the first sitting. He advised beginning painters that, ‘If it is a large picture where more of the person is seen, the drapery must be painted from an exact study made from the person’.⁵⁰ Jefferson had such a coat according to family members, and interestingly enough this was another fur that linked to Revolutionary War hero, Thaddeus Kosciuszko. The discussion of Rembrandt Peale’s 1805 portrait of Jefferson addressed in Chapter 4 (see fig. 4.1), proposed that the fur shown in that portrait was the parting gift presented by Kosciuszko to Jefferson. A second Kosciuszko fur came into Jefferson’s possession, however, when he inventoried the items that Kosciuszko left behind on his return to Europe. Jefferson listed among them ‘a pelisse of fine fur’. Due to its value, he decided to store it at his own apartments rather than placing it in the warehouse with the remainder of his friend’s property. He reported to Kosciuszko that ‘your fur was valued by an honest furrier here at 25 Doll. according to the price of Martins [*sic*] here’. The marten, the North American equivalent of the Russian sable, was considered a very fine fur, and thus Jefferson thought that the pelisse should be sold privately rather than at public auction. No additional information about this marten/sable-skin pelisse appears in the known Kosciuszko-Jefferson correspondence.⁵¹

Much, much later, in May 1907, one of Jefferson’s great-granddaughters was making a written inventory of ‘Monticello relics’ that had remained within the family. Among these she listed, ‘The splendid “Golden Sables” over coat, very large

⁴⁹ Daniel Webster, ‘Memorandum of Mr. Jefferson’s Conversations’ in *Private Correspondence of Daniel Webster*, Fletcher Webster (Boston, 1857), 1:364 – 66, reprinted in *Visitors to Monticello*, ed. Peterson, 97-99.

⁵⁰ Thomas Sully, *Hints to Young Painters*, reprint (New York, 1965), 15. In a study of Thomas Sully’s portraits, both originals and printed reproductions, I have never found another coat exactly as this one in his work nor does his register of paintings list a ‘mauve coat with fur collar’. Therefore, I do not believe this to have been a studio piece belonging to or borrowed by Sully.

⁵¹ Jefferson to Kosciuszko, 21 February 1799, *PTJ*, 31:52.

& long, which ‘Kosiosko’ [*sic*] wore during his “Russian Campaign”, this garment was cut up into Muffs & Tippetts.⁵² This suggests that the fine pelisse left behind by Kosciuszko remained with Jefferson, and its tradition was known in the family. Certainly Sully’s rendering implies a fur such as marten or sable, and as the commission came from West Point, it could have brought up recollections of Kosciuszko’s fortification of the Hudson River stronghold during the War for American Independence. Kosciuszko remained a legend at the ‘Point’ and early in the nineteenth century, the Corps of Cadets began raising money toward a monument that stands today in a prominent position on the Academy’s grounds.⁵³ A small garden that bears his name is located on the cliff side above the Hudson River and is well maintained. Margaret Bayard Smith mentioned this garden in her reminiscence, ‘The Fur Cloak’ referenced in connection with the Rembrandt Peale 1805 portrait of Jefferson. She wrote, ‘There on the high & roky [*sic*] banks of the Hudson, he amused his leisure moments in the cultivating of flowers’ and goes on to describe how he planted and cared for his garden.⁵⁴ It would stand to reason that Sully might not be interested in replicating the fur used in Rembrandt Peale’s presidential portrait, especially as the painting was still on display in the Peale galleries; however, if Jefferson owned a second garment with a Kosciuszko connection, it would be a logical consideration for the West Point commission.

The sable lined coat is far more elegant in line and texture than the wolf-skin cape used in Rembrandt’s work and adds dignity to the figure. The wolf-skin had served its purpose when Jefferson was posing as the democratic ‘man of the people’ but as a memorial to his legacy, it would be understandable that he would reach for something that could define him as a gentleman and statesman of the world. The coat conveys a look of eastern European origin with the fur lining and the frog closures pictured in the original half-length. It is interesting that Sully changed the frog closures to round buttons in the final full-length. In reality this would have been impractical for this completely fur-lined garment, as the artist indicated with brush

⁵² Martha Trist Burke, ‘List of Monticello Relics, 1907-08’, Trist-Burke Family Papers 1825-1936, MSS 6696, Special Collections, University of Virginia Library.

⁵³ Samuel J. Watson, ‘Developing “Republican Machines”’, *Thomas Jefferson’s Military Academy*, ed. Robert M.S. McDonald (Charlottesville, VA, 2004), 170.

⁵⁴ Smith, ‘Fur Cloak: A Reminiscence’ [*sic*], Margaret Bayard Smith Papers, LC.

strokes that the fur continued to the hem, which is visible in the portion of the skirt behind Jefferson's left leg. Sully even included the wear to the edge of the fur collar giving visual evidence that the fur was not new. As previously mentioned in the discussion of the Rembrandt Peale portrait, fashionable fur-lined garments that went beyond the duty of simple practicality were attached stylistically to the hussars of Eastern Europe, especially Poland.⁵⁵ The family tradition attached to the golden-sable great coat referenced by a great-granddaughter makes the connection between Jefferson, Kosciuszko, and the West Point portrait probable.

When Sully visited Monticello in March 1821, Jefferson had just begun writing his own autobiography. He was revisiting that time in American history when Kosciuszko fortified West Point during the War for Independence and he was personally engaged as its statesman and penman. This review of the past together with the anxieties provoked by the Missouri Crisis and the Republic's future could have generated thoughts of the Poland that Kosciuszko had defended. On the eve of another crisis, the War of 1812, Jefferson contemplated the hard lesson that Poland provided: 'a lesson which all our countrymen should study; the example of a country erased from the map of the world by the dissensions of its own citizens'.⁵⁶

The fur-lined greatcoat may have been encouraged by the artist, not so much for provenance but in that it adds compositionally, as it echoes the long line of the column and makes the figure far more substantial than it would have appeared otherwise. Sully's *Jefferson* stands erect, confident, and with an air of composure. In the pose of the figure, the artist demonstrates elements of the traditional grand manner style with the head turned to the right and the gaze directed into the distance and away from the viewer; the stance adheres to the requirement that the weight of the body rest on the right foot with the left foot slightly advanced. But rather than portray the right hand extended in the usual oratorical gesture or as an alternative, resting in the waistcoat, Sully leaves the arms at the sides with a document in the left hand.⁵⁷ This rolled piece of paper serves as the only prop within the painting. As such it becomes notable, especially with Sully's subtle placement of light along the

⁵⁵ Ribiero, *Art of Dress*, 229-30.

⁵⁶ TJ to William Duane, 25 July 1811, *PTJ:RS*, 4: 56.

⁵⁷ F. Nivelon, 'Rudiments of Genteel Behavior', (1737), as quoted in Robin Simon, *Portrait in Britain and America* (Oxford, UK, 1978), 76.

leading edge of the paper. A close examination of the document gives no clue as to its identity. The absence of visible writing leaves open the possibilities of the many documents linked to Jefferson's name, or of course it could represent the bill he signed in 1802 establishing the military academy.⁵⁸

Sully is skilful in guiding the eye through the painting with his placement of areas of light and shadow. His effect in his *Jefferson* portrait is quite dramatic and perhaps reflects his upbringing in a theatrical family, as he creates an environment within the painting that makes it seem as though Jefferson had just stepped before his audience, the viewer. Light calls attention to the document in Jefferson's hand, but the face is given the most pronounced area of light. It is illuminated as though by a theatrical spotlight, and the slight dash of red provided by the collar of Jefferson's under-waistcoat draws further focus to the face. Sully followed his own advice offered in his *Hints to Young Painters and the Process of Portrait Painting* that, 'In a portrait every part may be exactly rendered, but should be kept subordinate in regard to the face'.⁵⁹

The setting of the figure, just as the pose, borrows elements of the grand manner style. Jefferson stands by an impressive column backed by a swag of red drapery, but to this tradition that is often found in European state portraits, Sully added detail that makes the space specific to the United States. From Jefferson's face Sully guides the eye downward through his placement of light, tipping the rolled document in the hand but then strongly illuminating the lower shaft of the column to the right in the painting. The lower shaft and base of the column catch almost as much light as the face and become a secondary area of focus. Sully's careful rendering of the base's carved water leaf design and his painterly indication that the shaft is breccia marble, distinct from the marble of the base, identify the column as belonging in the rebuilt Hall of Representatives (known after 1857 as National Statuary Hall). (Fig. 6.2 & 6.14a) When Capitol architect Benjamin Henry Latrobe redesigned the House chamber after the Capitol was burned by British forces in August 1814 during the War of 1812, he replaced the sandstone columns

⁵⁸ I was allowed to study this painting very closely in October 2007, prior to the painting being glazed and hung in its current location in the Jefferson Library at the USMA at West Point and noted that there was no indication of writing on the document in the figure's right hand.

⁵⁹ Sully, *Hints to Young Painters*, 31.

with the breccia marble and added the unique water leaf pattern to the base, as the unpredictable nature of breccia made it problematic to attempt a cincture at the bottom of the shaft. To compensate for the lack of a cincture, Latrobe devised the water leaf design, resulting in the unique and identifiable base. He designed a very grand room that would be completed in 1819 by his successor, architect Charles Bullfinch. It became the pride of the country at the time, but one that Jefferson would never see.⁶⁰

Sully was in a position to inform Jefferson of the reconstruction of the Capitol and of the President's House then underway in Washington. Prior to his trip to Monticello he had been working in Baltimore, giving him closer proximity to Washington than his home and studio in Philadelphia. In his 'Journal', under 20 November 1820 he wrote, 'Visited Baltimore and painted during the Winter & following summer'.⁶¹ The new Hall of the House of Representatives had been in use for a year and had opened to the first session of the 16th Congress in December 1819.⁶² During Jefferson's years in the national government, especially during his presidency, he had been quite involved in the creation of the national buildings. In his *History of the United States Capitol*, William Allen opens his chapter on the Jefferson-Latrobe era with the statement, 'Few people had such an enduring influence on the Capitol's early history as Thomas Jefferson. . . . Until his retirement in 1809, Jefferson managed affairs at the Capitol with the same care and attention he lavished on his beloved Monticello, and later on the University of Virginia'.⁶³ Though Jefferson never revisited Washington after leaving in March 1809, he was very aware that the major buildings had been torched during the recent war. He wrote Madison expressing his outrage over the enemies 'barbarous achievements at Washington', perhaps forgetting that the US forces had first looted and torched York

⁶⁰ Verification of the column as from the Hall of the House of Representatives was obtained from correspondence with Architect of the Capitol, William Allen, 5 July 2006. For further discussion of Latrobe's design of the Capitol, see William C. Allen, *History of the United States Capitol: A Chronicle of Design, Construction and Politics* (Washington, DC: 2001); electronic version at <http://www.gpo.gov/>.

⁶¹ Thomas Sully, 'Thomas Sully's Journal,' from typescript copy at the New York Public Library; copy viewed at Winterthur Research Library.

⁶² Allen, *History of the United States Capitol*, 140.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 49;

(now Toronto), the capital of Upper Canada in April 1813.⁶⁴ Obviously this brought up reminders of his own situation as Virginia governor during the first war with Britain, as he expressed to Madison, ‘I have felt so much for you’, as ‘I know that when such failures happen they afflict even those who have done everything they could to prevent them’.⁶⁵ It would be reasonable to expect that the rebuilding of Washington would have been a conversation topic between Jefferson and Sully, especially as Jefferson demonstrated his confidence in Sully’s architectural judgement on the building’s going up at the University of Virginia.

The architectural setting and the sparseness of that setting made Sully’s *Jefferson* unique. This is apparent when compared with two other full-length portraits that would eventually hang alongside that of Jefferson’s. Sully’s earlier 1815 portrait of Jonathan Williams would be an obvious comparison, as Jared Sparks mentioned it when contacting Jefferson about the painting commission. (fig. 6.8) Looking past the seated figure of Williams dressed in his officer’s uniform is a view of Castle Williams, a part of his fortifications for New York Harbour. Including this fort as a part of the background was a tribute to Williams’ position as the ranking engineer in the army and a reminder of its importance to the defence of New York during the War of 1812. Sully adds a dark, turbulent sky as those often found in British military portraits and notable in the portraits of officers by Joshua Reynolds and Thomas Lawrence, whose work and opinions Sully admired.⁶⁶

In 1829 the Military Academy commissioned Sully for another full-length portrait of a former US president who had been very supportive of the Academy, that of James Monroe. (fig. 6.9) Sully called upon Monroe at his home, Oak Hill.⁶⁷ The resulting portrait places Monroe in an interior scene dressed in clothing that could recall his presidency, or with the dark dress coat, pale knee breeches and white stockings, it is also reminiscent of what Monroe had prescribed as official dress for the US diplomatic corps in 1813 and so would recall his own earlier diplomatic

⁶⁴ Alan Taylor, *Civil War of 1812* (New York, 2010), 214-17.

⁶⁵ TJ to James Madison, 24 September 1814, *PTJ:RS*, 7: 692.

⁶⁶ For discussion of British military portraits see Desmond Shawe-Taylor, *The Georgians: Eighteenth-Century Portraiture and Society*, (London: 1990), Chapter 3, ‘Heroes in a Painted Field’. In his *Hints to Young Painters*, Sully recommended the study of Reynolds’ *Discourses*; he studied under Lawrence while in London, 1809-10.

⁶⁷ Hart, *Register of Portraits Painted by Thomas Sully*, 121.

service to his country as well.⁶⁸ What could have been of more interest at West Point, however, was his military participation during the Revolutionary War and his position as Secretary of War as well as Secretary of State during the War of 1812. This is suggested by the cape, hat, and sword that lie before him. The figure of Monroe rests against a large sculptural piece that appears to be in classical drapery, and what is more specific is the fasces held by the figure that was an accepted symbol for republican power and values. The interior scene is not specific, and the view through an open doorway gives only an idealized pastoral scene. Perhaps the bucolic landscape was a visual metaphor for the term 'Era of Good Feelings' that had been applied to Monroe's first term in office when all seemed right with the country and political polarization had diminished.

These life-size portraits would hang together eventually in the library at the Military Academy even though Sully did not design them as companion pieces. A photograph of the library at West Point in the mid-nineteenth century gives the earliest extant view of the *Jefferson* and the *Monroe*, though this would not have been the earliest arrangement. It shows the two portraits placed high upon the wall of the library separated by a portrait of Sylvanus Thayer, who had been superintendent of the Academy when both portraits were commissioned of Sully.⁶⁹ (However, the Thayer is not a Sully.) Today the portraits of Jefferson and Monroe are joined by Sully's original portrait of Jonathan Williams, and the three hang together in the academy's new library, Jefferson Hall opened in 2008. (fig. 6.10 and 6.10a)

The Williams portrait was painted six years before Jefferson's; Monroe's eight years after, and so the simplicity Sully gave his *Jefferson* was not an evolution of artistic style but was specific to this particular portrait. A small, loose study made in oil on paper indicates that at some point Sully had thoughts of placing Jefferson in a very different setting that was far more complex. (6.11) This study was not recorded in Sully's register of paintings, as is the small study that is obviously the prototype for the final full-length portrait, (6.12) yet the figure of Jefferson is

⁶⁸ Robert Ralph Davis, 'Diplomatic Plumage', *American Quarterly* 20, no. 2, part 1 (Summer, 1968): 169 & 217.

⁶⁹ 'Interior View of Old Cadet Library,' c. 1862, USMA Library, Special Collections. This would not be the first library in which Jefferson's portrait hung, but the earliest of which there is an image.

recognizable in this loose sketch and comparable to the final West Point version. The pose is similar, and the long coat, although closed, is essentially the same. Here a sheaf of papers replaces the rolled document, and they are moved from the left to the right hand, leaving the left hand free to gesture toward a crowd of people. Men stand behind Jefferson, and a crowd is gathered in front of what appears to be an outdoor terrace with a large column and steps leading downward from where the Jefferson figure stands. The original half-length made at Monticello from life has a very atmospheric background, as though Sully may have initially been contemplating an outdoor scene. (fig. 6.1) Yet it was an idea that did not move forward, whether the small study was made at Monticello or later in his studio, and it was set aside in favour of a setting in the chamber of the House of Representatives.

The loose sketch is intriguing, however, in following the artist's development of the final painting. The outdoor setting of the small study cannot be conclusively identified, yet Sully gave it characteristics quite similar to the north entrance of the President's House in Washington. When Jefferson first occupied the house in 1801, the north entrance was accessed by temporary wooden steps leading to a wooden platform; the Adams's had utilized the south entrance as the main, public entrance. Jefferson and architect Latrobe made the north entrance the main entry by adding a terrace to the four-columned frontispiece that was a part of the original design. Broad stone steps extended from the terrace to ground level. This configuration continued in use until the north and south porticos were added in 1824 and 1829.⁷⁰ A watercolour by Latrobe dated 1811 shows the enhanced north entrance with the stone steps leading from the terrace in front of the main doorway between the columns. (fig. 6.13) Looking carefully at Sully's study (fig. 6.11), it does appear that the men behind Jefferson are following him onto a narrow terrace through a dark doorway opening slightly behind the column. Steps are visible descending from the terrace. This would suggest the north entrance to the President's House, though Sully's rendering is not completely accurate. The façade of the house should have continued in the same plane as the columns, as they were a frontispiece to the house, not free standing. There is no written account from either Sully or Jefferson to substantiate this interpretation; however it is somehow

⁷⁰ William Seale, *White House: History of an American Idea* (Washington DC, 1992), 39, 47, 61.

appropriate that the figure of Jefferson should be moved from the executive mansion, (even though it was a space he had occupied) to the House chamber that signified a more direct link with the people. In the final portrait, Sully gives the figure of Jefferson a stronger focus----and a stronger sense of character by having him stand quietly and alone holding a single document rather than backed by the bustle of a crowd of people. The column alongside him becomes a universal symbol of the western classical world, but then upon closer inspection, with the water leaf cincture, it is particular to a space very American.

It is interesting to think that Sully was prompted to move the Jefferson figure into the House chamber due to an awareness of political ideology stemming from discussions with Jefferson during his stay at Monticello; however, he could have been equally prompted by the work of another artist. At the time Sully was completing his *Jefferson* in 1822, fellow artist Samuel F.B. Morse was at work on a large and complex painting that depicted a night session of the House of Representatives that included miniature but recognizable portraits of many of the congressmen. (fig. 6.14) Morse had been given studio space in the Capitol itself and wrote to his wife in January 1822 that, 'I find the picture becoming the subject of much conversation, and every day gives me greater encouragement to believe that it will be more popular than any picture heretofore exhibited'. A few weeks later, Samuel Harrison Smith's *National Intelligence* described Morse's rendering of the chamber interior 'mathematically correct'.⁷¹

It is probable that Sully would have been aware of the attention being given Morse's work, which could have spurred his own interest and influenced his decision to use the new House chamber as the setting for his commission. Yet it is equally possible that he and Jefferson discussed various settings. His obvious familiarity with the detail and placement of the columns and the drapery of the room suggest that the site was known to him. The very deep red of the drapery worked well for his theory that, 'in large pictures very sober colours may be employed to

⁷¹ Samuel F.B. Morse to Lucretia Pickering Walker Morse, 5 January 1822, Samuel F.B. Morse Papers, LC, Bound Vol: 24 January 1821 – 8 December 1823, 129-131; *National Intelligencer*, 16 February 1822, as quoted in William Kloss, *Samuel F.B. Morse* (New York, 1988), 69-70.

produce the richness of effect'.⁷² The final portrait, with its simplified composition and classical yet specifically American setting became a much stronger work than the oil sketch busy with people. The focus rests completely upon Jefferson and allows a strength, focus, and dignity of character that was diluted when surrounded by the busyness of many people.

Jefferson never saw the completed full-length portrait. Sully finished the West Point commission in May 1822, but the earliest known engraving was not produced until 1834. Would it have fulfilled Jefferson's hopes for an appropriate and enduring likeness? He never mentioned the portrait, but his granddaughter, Ellen Randolph, expressed her views of the original half-length in a letter to her cousin shortly after Sully left Monticello. She believed that he had 'succeeded admirably'. The area around Jefferson's mouth and chin constituted the only shortcoming, 'but the painter seems to be aware of this defect and will endeavor to correct it'. She predicted that the finished full-length portrait 'will probably be the best representation existing of one to whom future ages must look back with gratitude and admiration'.⁷³ Jefferson could have hoped Ellen's predicted reception of his portrait correct and the place in American history that it affirmed.

Approximately 120 people paid to see the completed full-length portrait during the ten days that Sully displayed it in his Philadelphia gallery. In his journal he noted that he made about thirty dollars from the showing, and as the usual price of admission to the gallery was twenty-five cents per person, over one hundred Philadelphians must have had the means and the desire to see the portrait of the former president. Sully's matter-of-fact records give no indication whether he considered the showing successful, but on 20 May 1822 he packaged the portrait and frame for shipment to West Point.⁷⁴

There was one published critique that pronounced Sully's *Jefferson* a success. On an 1823 tour up the Hudson River, American writer James Fenimore Cooper was assured that he really must see a portrait recently installed at the United

⁷² Thomas Sully, 'Notes on Pictures and Painting', as reprinted in Dunlap, *Arts of Design in the United States*, 2: 137.

⁷³ Ellen Wayles Randolph to Francis Eppes, 5 April 1821, Papers of the Eppes Family, MSS 7109, Special Collections, University of Virginia Library.

⁷⁴ Sully, 'Journal', microfilm copy of transcription held at the New York Public Library.

States Military Academy at West Point, New York. According to Cooper's account, he was following the urging of men that he respected and deemed intelligent, which would indicate that there was some interest in the painting. Despite his personal 'antipathies' to Jefferson, he made a visit to the library at the Academy to view Sully's full-length work.⁷⁵ Cooper's commentary is interesting not only as a contemporary reaction to the portrait but as a reaction from one who strongly disagreed with Jefferson politically and distrusted him personally. His critique validates the underlying political message that Jefferson could have wished for the portrait.

James Fenimore was the son of Judge William Cooper, a prominent New York Federalist, and so had been raised in an environment decidedly opposed to the Democratic-Republicans. Judge Cooper had worked his way upward to wealth and power primarily through land speculation. He aspired to gentility but failed in completely removing the rougher side of his nature yet held hopes that his children would rise to an unquestionable position among the better sort. Despite his humble beginnings, he aligned politically with the Federalists and tried to make sure his sons stayed clear of any democratic notions.⁷⁶ And so when it was suggested to James Fenimore Cooper that he should view the West Point portrait of Thomas Jefferson, he grumbled that he 'would have gone twice as far to see the picture of almost any other man'. He admitted, 'I was brought up in that school where his [Jefferson's] image seldom appeared, unless it was clad in red breeches, and where it was always associated with the idea of infidelity and political heresy'.⁷⁷

It is interesting that in 1823, after seventeen years in retirement, Jefferson was still associated with 'red breeches' and 'political heresy'. During his presidency, the 'red breeches' became an icon for Jefferson. The term began to appear in the opposition press as a means of ridicule and in some instances even bordered on lewdness and barely disguised sexual innuendo. A Federalist newspaper in Philadelphia following a local election in 1806 attacked a newly elected Democratic-

⁷⁵ James Fenimore Cooper to Charles Kitchel Gardner, between 24 April – 17 June 1823, *Letters and Journals of James Fenimore Cooper*, ed., James Franklin Beard, 6 vols. (Cambridge, MA, 1960-68), I: 95-97.

⁷⁶ Taylor, *William Cooper's Town*, 5-6, 13-14, 297.

⁷⁷ Cooper to Kitchel, 24 April – 17 June 1823, *Letters and Journals*, I: 95-97.

Republican candidate by offering to send him a pair of ‘red breeches’ and enough red cloth to ‘furnish him with a pair of *rosy organs*’. Anyone reading these remarks would have realized that this innuendo related the newly elected candidate directly to the President. Jefferson supporters played down any significance to red breeches and pointed to the pettiness of such an image. One example is an imagined dialogue published in 1804 titled ‘Confabulation between a Federalist & a Democrat’. The scene is constructed from the Democratic-Republican point of view, as the Democrat attempts to initiate a conversation around the benefits to the United States of the possession of Louisiana and the benefits to the new territory in good laws and light taxes, while the Federalist wants to dwell upon the gossip surrounding the President and his red breeches. In his eyes, ‘Any man that can say red breeches are constitutional, I say he is a Jacobin! a disorganizer, a blood thirsty French cut throat’.⁷⁸

The origin of this image is vague, but there does seem to be a recurring link to Jefferson’s red breeches and his pro-French sympathies. Many would have known that Jefferson had served as US Minister to France from 1784 to 1789, and there is an apocryphal story that is set shortly after his return to the United States. It places Secretary of State Jefferson at a dinner party in New York, then the seat of the Federal government, as the guest of Vice President John Adams. One dinner guest is to have commented that, ‘Mr. Jefferson, who has just returned from France, was conspicuous in his red waistcoat and breeches, the fashion of Versailles’. This story was not printed until 1830 in *The Talisman*, edited by Gulian Verplanck, William Cullen Bryant, and Robert Sands. It was presented, however, as a memoir and titled ‘Reminiscences of New York’ and supposedly authored by a Francis Herbert, though it was very possibly written by one of the editors. Nevertheless the story is colourful and follows many historical events of the time yet contains contradictions as well. Jefferson was placed at the same dinner table as the French Minister, the Count Du Moustiers. Jefferson knew Moustiers while in Paris, but the Count was returning to France as Jefferson was sailing back to the United States; the two never met at an American dinner table. But even with this and other discrepancies, it can

⁷⁸ Attack on Democratic-Republican, Alexander Ogle appeared in the *Spirit of the Press*, Philadelphia, 8 December 1806; ‘Confabulation between a Federalist & a Democrat’ appeared in the *Alexandria Expositor*, Alexandria 16 February 1804, *America’s Historical Newspapers*.

be wondered if the allusion to Jefferson dressed in the fashion of Versailles was totally fabricated or one that persisted in the popular imagination.⁷⁹

Early Jefferson biographer, George Tucker, in his 1837 publication gave an excuse for his ‘supposed predilection for red breeches’. According to Tucker, ‘This, indeed, was a part of his official dress when minister to France’.⁸⁰ But at the time of Jefferson’s tenure, there was no ‘official dress’ for a United States minister other than that proscribed by the protocol of the French court. Jefferson’s grandson, Thomas Jefferson Randolph, dismissed any political connection in his own memoirs by reminding his readers that red was quite popular for men’s clothing at one time and that, ‘Mr. Jefferson changed his fashion slowly hence doubtless was the origin of his red breeches known to fame in their day’.⁸¹ It is even questionable as to how often Jefferson actually wore red breeches. A 1792 order placed with a New York tailor requested, ‘a waistcoat and pair of breeches of best scarlet *French* cloth’.⁸² Yet most of his accounting records are ambiguous, and if a colour is specified in a tailor’s bill the favoured colour for breeches is more frequently buff. The only visual record of Jefferson in red breeches taken from life is John Trumbull’s study for *The Declaration of Independence* that he began at Jefferson’s Paris residence in late 1787. (see figs. 1.5 & 1.5a) The study places Jefferson at the centre of the group presenting the draft of the Declaration dressed in a dark frock coat over red waistcoat and red breeches. Trumbull maintained that he had recreated the clothing of 1776, but as he depicted all the men in the more casual frock coat, the line of the coat had not changed radically other than the increased height of the collar in the eleven years between the actual event and Trumbull’s study. It is difficult to determine how much he might have been influenced by Jefferson’s Parisian clothing, but by placing the central figure (Jefferson) in red among others in either dark or neutral colours, he creates a focus upon the central group of figures in the

⁷⁹ ‘Reminiscences of New York’, *The Talisman* (1828 – 1830), eds. Gulian Verplanck, William Cullen Bryant, and Robert Sands, New York, 1830, Vol. 3: 340.

⁸⁰ George Tucker, *Life of Thomas Jefferson*, 2 vols. (Philadelphia, 1837), 2: 506.

⁸¹ A ‘uniform’ for US diplomats was prescribed in 1813 by Secretary of State James Monroe during the Madison administration and was first worn in St. Petersburg in 1813 and then in 1814 for the signing of the treaty at Ghent that ended the War of 1812. See Robert Ralph Davis, ‘Diplomatic Plumage’, 169 & 217. Thomas Jefferson Randolph, ‘Memoirs’, Edgehill-Randolph Collection, MSS 1397, Special Collections, University of Virginia Library.

⁸² Jefferson to Christian Baehr, 14 November 1792, *PTJ*, 24: 617.

composition. Trumbull continued to add to his study after returning to the United States in December 1789⁸³ by collecting small portraits of the men who had participated in the acceptance of the Declaration, but it was not until the close of 1816 that he wrote Jefferson announcing the *Declaration of Independence* as finished and outlined his hopes that it, along with three of his other history paintings, might be used in the rotunda of the rebuilt capitol building in Washington.⁸⁴ Trumbull achieved this goal; however the twelve by eighteen foot paintings were not completed until 1818, which makes it doubtful that this work would have been a source for the public image of Jefferson in red breeches. Yet, it suggested that when Trumbull painted Jefferson in Paris, he was dressed in red.

What could have begun as an emblem of Jefferson's pro-French sympathies, though his years in political office took on a broader connotation and became a symbol for Jefferson himself. On the date of his retirement from the presidency, March 4th, 1809, a leading Federalist newspaper, the *New York Evening Post*, reported an incident that had Jefferson hanging in effigy from the city's liberty pole. According to the *Post*, 'Last evening between 10 and 11 o'clock, a sailor was perceived by one of the City Watch to make several attempts to climb the Liberty Pole, planted in the *Republican Square*. . . . At length he succeeded in ascending, and suspended for the top of the pole, a pair of *Red Breeches*, stuffed with straw, in honour of the 4th of March, the day which reduces Thomas Jefferson "to the level of private citizen"'.⁸⁵ James Fenimore Cooper's 1823 remembrance of Jefferson's 'red breeches' attested to the longevity of this political alter ego, at least in the minds of the political opposition.

Yet Cooper admitted to a change in sentiment as he stood before Sully's portrait. 'It has really shaken my opinion of Jefferson as a man, if not as a politician'. He elaborated upon his encounter with this life-sized image and wrote, 'I saw nothing but Jefferson, standing before me, not in red breeches and slovenly attire, but a gentleman, appearing in all republican simplicity, with a grace and ease on the canvas, that to me seemed unrivalled'. He concluded, 'And when his image

⁸³ Trumbull, *Autobiography*, 163.

⁸⁴ John Trumbull to TJ, 26 December, 1816, John Trumbull, *Autobiography*, 310.

⁸⁵ *New York Evening Post*, New York, 4 March 1809, *America's Historical Newspapers*.

occurs to me now, it is in the simple robes of Sully, sans red breeches, or even without any of the repulsive accompaniments of a political “sans culotte”.⁸⁶

The assessment by James Fenimore Cooper of Jefferson’s portrait in his letter to Charles Kitchell Gardner is the most vivid and detailed viewer’s response. Cooper may have written his review with the assumption that it would be read by more than just the recipient, and indeed, Gardner used the story in an editorial on the fine arts in his newly established paper, *American Patriot*.⁸⁷ Cooper included the remarks of his traveling companion, British actor, Charles Matthews, as he felt his critical judgment of art superior to his own. Matthews ‘pronounced it one of the finest portraits he had ever beheld’.

Cooper’s publically printed assessment of the Sully *Jefferson* has remained the best known and an often cited critique of the painting. As further proof of the success of the painting, West Point obviously favoured Sully’s work, as many more commissions followed including a portrait of Professor Jared Mansfield, who had negotiated Jefferson’s portrait. Then there was the full-length of James Monroe and six more commissions for portraits of outstanding officers associated with the Academy.⁸⁸

Jefferson would have been reassured by Cooper’s remark, ‘I saw nothing but Jefferson, standing before me, not in red breeches and slovenly attire, but a gentleman, appearing in all republican simplicity’. This could have eased his anxieties as to how he would be remembered, especially coming from Cooper with his family link to the Federalists. Through the work of the painter Thomas Sully and the words of the novelist James Fenimore Cooper, the arts had again supported Jefferson in creating a final image for his place in history.

⁸⁶ Cooper, *Letters and Journals*, 1: 95-97.

⁸⁷ Wayne Franklin, *James Fenimore Cooper: The Early Years* (New Haven, CT, 2007), 382.

⁸⁸ William E. Steadman, ‘The Sully Portraits at West Point’, in *Portrait Painting in America: the Nineteenth Century*, ed. Ellen Miles (New York, 1977), 62-65.

CONCLUSION

The life portraits discussed in this study are a visual record of the public image that Jefferson constructed to support his ideas and convictions for the American experiment. When considering them as a group, they present a changing image of Jefferson as he reacted to the political atmosphere and positioned himself on issues that either sustained or threatened his vision for the republic's future. Bernard Bailyn in his essay on Jefferson in his *To Begin the World Anew*, recognized that, 'Jefferson slipped easily from role to role.'¹ Never as notorious as Benjamin Franklin nor with the prolific number of portraits as Washington, still Jefferson subtly honed an image to fit his purpose.

The earliest extant portrait by Mather Brown placed Jefferson the diplomat in his finest and most fashionable clothing, though as argued in Chapter 1, still modest by European standards. We can only wonder why he did not retain this portrait, as the only extant version came down through the Adams family, and the whereabouts of Jefferson's version is unknown. The painting now at the National Portrait Gallery in Washington is the one brought from London by Adams. Was it due to its formality or that it was pronounced not a good likeness by critics that he trusted? Possibly the latter, as the artist had included enough references to his republican stature to offset the European style in clothing.²

Once Jefferson was involved in the politics of the 1790s erupting in the United States, coats and waistcoats in the blue and buff or sedate black suited the needs for an appropriate American image as registered in the portraits by Charles Willson Peale and his son Rembrandt. These two portraits were displayed publically throughout Jefferson's lifetime and into the mid-nineteenth century, the C.W. Peale portrait in Philadelphia at the original Peale Museum and Rembrandt's portrait in his Baltimore Museum. Both of these collections were sold in 1854. C.W. Peale's *Jefferson* was purchased by the City of Philadelphia and has remained almost continuously available

¹ Bailyn, *Begin the World Anew*, 41.

² This portrait was donated to the National Portrait Gallery, Washington, D.C. in 1999 as a bequest of Charles Francis Adams; catalogue information available at <http://npgportraits.si.edu>. Fiske Kimball proposes that this portrait was accidentally destroyed, possible among Jefferson items lost in the James River on their return to Monticello or when granddaughter Ellen's things were lost at sea on her move to Boston following her marriage. I have found no evidence of it referenced by the family.

to the public and today is a part of the restored Peale gallery of patriots under the care of the Independence National Historical Park in Philadelphia. Rembrandt's 1800 *Jefferson* went into a private collection upon sale and then was believed lost through most of the twentieth century. It was identified in 1959 and today is a part of the White House Collection in Washington, D.C.³

In the presidential office Jefferson pushed boundaries in the 1805 portrait by Rembrandt Peale with the fur-lined cape over a red coat, but still reverted to the safe and calm 'black' when he sat to the renowned Gilbert Stuart for a portrait intended for an American ministry in a European capital. Rembrandt's portrait remained with his father's collection in the Peale Museum in Philadelphia until the dispersal sale in 1854 and spent a few years in a private collection before donation to the New York Historical Society, where it is today. The Gilbert Stuart *Jefferson* painted for James Bowdoin III never made the trip to Madrid, but it remained a part of Bowdoin's private collection at his home in Boston before moving to Bowdoin College in Maine in 1813 following Bowdoin's death.⁴

Jefferson's desire to have Stuart take him 'a la antique' and the resulting *Medallion Profile* reflected his looking ahead to retirement and legacy, as this portrait was personal and one of the very few that he actually commissioned himself. After being hung in the President's House in Washington, it moved with Jefferson to Monticello and was a part of the collection there until Jefferson's death. This portrait was kept by the family, as was the Stuart portrait of Jefferson in the black suit that was finally received in 1821 and became known as the *Edgehill Jefferson*. Today these portraits are generally available for public viewing, as the *Medallion Profile* was donated to the Fogg Art Museum at Harvard University and the *Edgehill* is jointly owned by the National Portrait Gallery in Washington and the Thomas Jefferson Foundation.⁵

The final full-length by Thomas Sully was the largest and the grandest, though still understated by European standards, which was befitting for the legacy of one who

³ Bush, *Life Portraits*, 19-29; 37-39. Alfred Bush very modestly does not relate that he was the one who identified the missing Rembrandt Peale of Jefferson, then at the Peabody Institute. I learned this in a conversation with Mr Bush in 2005 at the Jefferson Papers at Princeton University.

⁴ History of the 1805 Rembrandt Peale from *ibid.*, 55; the information on the Bowdoin *Jefferson* is from Sadik, *Portraits at Bowdoin College*, 161.

⁵ Bush, *Life Portraits*, the *Medallion Profile*, 62; the *Edgehill Jefferson*, 57-58.

was founder, statesman, and politician yet reticent before the public that still he courted ideologically. The portrait has remained a part of the collection at West Point and most appropriately was hung in the new academic library in Jefferson Hall in 2008. Equally appropriate, Jefferson protégé William Short purchased the original portrait taken by Sully at Monticello from the artist in 1830 and donated it to the American Philosophical Society. It hangs today in the Society's Franklin Hall. At the APS it joined one of the sculpted busts of Jefferson by the French artist Jean-Antoine Houdon that was donated in 1811 from the estate of David Rittenhouse by his daughter. Rittenhouse preceded Jefferson as president of the Society, and Jefferson presented him with the bust in 1793. This was one of the terra-cotta versions that the APS had bronzed upon receipt. The marble *Jefferson* by Houdon is currently at the Museum of Fine Arts Boston.⁶

In an essay for the 2003 exhibit catalogue, *Jefferson's America & Napoleon's France*, art historian David O'Brien questioned of Jefferson, 'why he sat for so few portraits'?⁷ His essay contrasted the portraits of Jefferson and Napoleon, and needless to say, the images of Jefferson appear rather timid when compared to the numerous and grand portraits of Napoleon that employed the skills of such artists as David, Gros, Gérard and others of the French neoclassic school. O'Brien reasoned that due to the American political system, Jefferson had no need to indulge in 'overtly propagandistic portraits' as those of Napoleon. This is the one point that I would challenge in O'Brien's otherwise superb essay. Jefferson's was not the overt propaganda meant to proclaim authority and power that is notable in the portraits of Napoleon and other European and British rulers, yet as I have presented in this thesis, the greater objective of Jefferson's portraits was nevertheless propagandistic. The message was there, and the elements used to create the message were really very traditional though definitely subtle compared to the prototypes of Europe. Jefferson, working with the artists, managed the message in the portraits through subtle self-presentation in choices of clothing and in the dressing---or lack of dressing---of his hair and through props,

⁶ Sully's *Jefferson* at West Point from files and personal research and observation at the Academy; the sale of the bust portrait to Short is recorded in Sully's 'Register of Paintings' and Bush, *Life Portraits*, 77; the donation of the Houdon to the APS is noted in Anne L. Poulet, *Jean-Antoine Houdon*, 272; the marble bust at the Museum of Fine Arts Boston and the chronologies of the other plaster and terra cotta Houdon busts of Jefferson are noted in Bush, *Life Portraits*, 11-14.

⁷ David O'Brien, 'Executive Authority: Images of Leadership in Post-Revolutionary France and America' in *Jefferson's America & Napoleon's France*, ed. Victoria Cooke (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2003), 45 – 74; quote at 50.

whether traditional as books and documents or as specific as an image representing liberty or even the large fur cape of Rembrandt's 1805 portrait that becomes almost as much a prop as a garment. Even the personally commissioned *Medallion Profile* by Stuart that was displayed at the President's House and Monticello served to visually connect Jefferson with classic Rome and the historic ideas of true republicanism. The political became more direct when he was recalling the revolutionary spirit with the blue and buff of the 1791 C.W. Peale portrait or appealing to the people with the undressed hair and rustic fur cape of the 1805 Rembrandt Peale portrait. The Stuart commissioned by Bowdoin for the American ministry in Madrid and the full-length Sully commissioned by the Military Academy at West Point are the only two that could approach a label of a state-portrait, and they are modest when compared to their Old World prototypes; even Stuart's *Washington* for Lansdowne was more elaborate in detail, setting and pose.

This use of the portrait was not novel but a part of the greater tradition of western art. What differed from Europe was the lack of grandeur, and as O'Brien noted in his essay, there were fewer portraits of Jefferson than what might be expected of a national leader. But simplicity agreed with the American taste and suited a people that were uncomfortable with grand art. As cited earlier, Alexis de Tocqueville observed that 'Democratic nations . . . will therefore cultivate the arts that serve to render life convenient in preference to those whose object is to embellish it'.⁸ To most, art remained extravagant and associated with expense and therefore luxury and so could compromise the integrity of a republican state. When John Trumbull solicited John Adams's support to have his large history paintings placed in the rotunda of the newly rebuilt capitol, Adams offered a brief sermon. He warned, 'the Burin and the Pencil, the Chisel and the Trowell [*sic*], have in all ages and Countries of which we have any Information, been enlisted on the side of Despotism and Superstition. . . . Architecture, Sculpture, Painting, and Poetry have conspir'd against the Rights of Mankind: and the Protestant Religion is now unpopular and Odious because it is not friendly to the Fine Arts.'⁹ Nevertheless, Adams did support Trumbull's endeavour. As was Jefferson, he was invested in his image visually linked forever with the Declaration of Independence

⁸ De Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, trans. Mansfield and Winthrop, II: 439.

⁹ John Adams to John Trumbull, 1 July 1817 and TJ to Senator James Barbour, 3 March 1817, as quoted in John Trumbull, *Autobiography*, ed. and Appendix by Sizer, 310-11.

in a prominent public space. Trumbull was successful in securing an appropriation from Congress for four of his large history paintings of the American Revolution, including the *Declaration of Independence*. The Revolution was worth commemorating, but attitudes toward art, as expressed by Adams, persisted.¹⁰

How effective these Jefferson portraits were in their public communication is not easy to evaluate, as the public, though often ready to express a political opinion in the newspapers, were not as outspoken in their evaluation of art. Was it a good likeness? This was the usual question asked, as it was the one most easily answered, and most Americans did not venture beyond this observation. Charles Willson Peale wrote home that Rembrandt's 1805 portrait of the somewhat unkempt president wrapped in a fur cape was 'lovely' ----and added, of course, that it was a good likeness. Charles Fenimore Cooper's assessment of the full-length *Jefferson* at West Point is one of the very few contemporary critiques of a Jefferson portrait that ventures beyond the question of likeness.¹¹

Though the viewing public offered few critiques, the reception of these portraits can be evaluated as a part of the overall success of Jefferson's efforts to pull power away from the Federalist and the old concept of leadership by a class of gentlemanly elites. Again turning to Alexis de Tocqueville, he titled a section in his *Democracy in America*, 'On the Remains of the Aristocratic Party in the United States'. By the time of his visit in 1831, Tocqueville noted that 'the democratic party had obtained preponderance'. He believed that the rich had retreated into their private life and the making of wealth. He observed that in outward appearances the wealthy man was simple in his clothing and modest in his self-presentation, though Tocqueville thought, 'it easy to perceive in the rich a great disgust for the democratic institutions of their country'. He added to this, 'the people are a power that they fear and scorn'.¹²

Jefferson was optimistic that the democratic institutions would prevail, but at the same time it was an optimism tempered with caution, as he never totally lost his fear that the Federalists and the aristocratic mind-set could rise again to power. In one of his many exit letters written to various democratic-republican groups upon his

¹⁰ Harris, *Artist in American Society*, viii, 16.

¹¹ As cited earlier, J. Meredith Neil in his *Toward a National Taste* noted the American distrust of the connoisseurs and his 'technical jargon', p. 116.

¹² De Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, 171-72.

retirement from the presidency, he reminded the Democratic-Republican Delegates of Washington County, Pennsylvania that unlike the degrading and oppressive practices of Europe, 'it is our happiness that honourable distinctions flow only from public approbation; & that finds no object in titled dignitaries and pageants'. He had worked against claims to titles and against state-sponsored pageantry; still he warned that they must keep, 'a watchful eye over the disaffection of wealth & ambition to the republican principles of our constitution'.¹³

His evolution of portraits that began in 1786 and extended through 1821 presents a visual history of Thomas Jefferson and his commitment to the idea of popular sovereignty based upon democratic principles. They are few in number and not on a grand scale, but they contained a message for his constituents and have remained a part of his legacy. The public may not have been outspoken in their regard of these portraits, but as a majority continued to support the popular movement that had designated Jefferson as its leader, the images he created through the talents of artists can be counted as successful. The painted and sculpted image was only a part of Jefferson's means of communicating an ideology, but they are left to us today as another approach in understanding the formative period of the American republic.

¹³ TJ to the Democratic Republican Delegate of Washington County, Pennsylvania, 31 March 1809, *PTJ:RS* 1: 99-100.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

UNPUBLISHED PRIMARY SOURCES

American Philosophical Society Library, Philadelphia

Mrs. Burd Peale Collection

Charles Willson Peale, Diary No. 1

Charles Willson Peale, Lectures

Rembrandt Peale Papers, 1808-1833, MSS Film.1081

Library of Congress, Washington

Thomas Jefferson Papers

Shippen Family Papers

Margaret Bayard Smith Papers

Samuel F.B. Morse Papers

Jefferson Library, Thomas Jefferson Foundation, Special Collections, Charlottesville

Birch, William Russell. 'Autobiography', typescript copy

'Manuscript Minutes', American Philosophical Society, 1884

University of Virginia Library, Special Collections, Charlottesville

Edgehill-Randolph Collection, MSS 1397

Ellen Wayles Randolph Coolidge Correspondence, MSS 9090

Papers of the Eppes Family, MSS 7109

Trist-Burke Family Papers, 1825-1936, MSS 6696

United States Military Academy Library, Special Collections, West Point

Thomas Jefferson files

Jared Mansfield files

United States Military Academy Museum, West Point

Thomas Jefferson files

James Monroe files

Thomas Sully's paintings on display and in storage

Winterthur Research Library, Winterthur, Delaware

Joseph Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera

Thomas Sully, 'Journal' from typescript copy at the New York Public Library

PUBLISHED PRIMARY SOURCES

- Adams, John. *Adams Family Correspondence*. Edited by L.H. Butterfield, et al. 10 vols. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1963 – 2011.
- . *Diary and Autobiography of John Adams*. Edited by L.H. Butterfield. 4 vols. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1961.
- . *The Adams-Jefferson Letters: The Complete Correspondence Between Thomas Jefferson and Abigail and John Adams*. Edited by Lester J. Cappon. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1959.
- Adams, Abigail II. *Journal and Correspondence of Miss Adams, Daughter of John Adams*. Edited by Her Daughter. New York: Wiley and Putnam, 1841.
- . *Correspondence of Miss Adams, Daughter of John Adams*. Edited by Her Daughter. New York: Wiley and Putnam, 1842.
- Adams, John Quincy. *Diary of John Quincy Adams*. Edited by Marc Friedlaender and Robert J. Taylor. 2 vols. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1981.
- . *Memoirs of John Quincy Adams*. Edited by Charles Francis Adams. 12 vols. Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott and Company, 1874-77.
- Annals of Congress, 1789*. Electronic facsimiles on ‘A Century of Lawmaking for a New Nation: U.S. Congressional Documents and Debates.’
<http://memory.loc.gov>.
- Betts, Edwin Morris and James Adam Bear, Jr., eds. *The Family Letters of Thomas Jefferson*. rev. ed. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1986.
- Calvert, Rosalie Stier. *Mistress of Riversdale: The Plantation Letters of Rosalie Stier Calvert, 1795-1821*. Edited and translated by Margaret Law Callcott. Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991.
- Cooper, James Fenimore, *Letters and Journals of James Fenimore Cooper*. Edited by James Franklin Beard. 6 vols. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1960-68.
- Dunlap, William. *Diary of William Dunlap*. Edited by Dorothy C. Barch. New York: New York Historical Society, 1930.
- . *History of the Rise and Progress of the Arts of Design in the United States*. 2 vols. New York: George C. Scott and Co., 1834.
- Foster, Augustus John. *Jeffersonian America: Notes on the United States of America Collected in the Years 1805-6-7 and 11-12 by Sir Augustus John Foster, Bart.* Edited by Richard Beale Davis. San Marino, CA: Huntington Library, 1954.
- Franklin, Benjamin. *Benjamin Franklin's Autobiographical Writings*. Edited by Carl Van Doren. New York: Viking Press, 1945.
- Hamilton, Alexander. *Alexander Hamilton: Writings*. Edited by Joanne B. Freeman. New York: The Library of America, 2001.
- Hazlitt, William. *The Collected Works of William Hazlitt*. Edited by A. R. Waller and Arnold Glover. London: J.M. Dent and Company, 1903.

- Hogarth, William. *Analysis of Beauty*. Edited, introduction and notes by Ronald Paulson. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1997.
- Jarratt, Devereaux. *Life of Devereaux Jarratt, Rector of Bath Parish, Dinwiddie County, Virginia: In a Series of Letters to John Coleman*. 1806. Reprint, Bedford, MA: Applewood Books, 2009).
- Jefferson, Thomas. *Complete Anas*. Edited by Franklin B. Sawvel. New York: Round Table Press, 1903.
- . *Jefferson's Memorandum Books: Accounts, with Legal Records and Miscellany, 1767-1826*. Edited by James A. Bear, Jr. and Lucia C. Stanton. 2 vols. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997.
- . *Notes on the State of Virginia*. Edited by William Peden. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1954.
- . *Papers of Thomas Jefferson*. Edited by Julian P. Boyd et al. 38 vols. to date. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1950-.
- . *Papers of Thomas Jefferson: Retirement Series*. 8 vols. to date. Edited by J. Jefferson Looney. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004 -.
- . *Thomas Jefferson: Writings*. Edited by Merrill D. Peterson. New York: Library of America, 1984.
- . *Writings of Thomas Jefferson*. Edited by Albert Ellery Bergh. Washington, D.C.: 1907.
- Madison, James. *The Papers of James Madison Digital Edition*. Edited by J.C.A. Stagg. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, Rotunda, 2010.
- . *The Papers of James Madison: Secretary of State Series*. Edited by Robert J. Brugger, et al. 9 vols. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1986 -.
- Maclay, William. *The Diary of William Maclay And Other Notes On Senate Debates*. Edited by Kenneth R. Bowling and Helen E. Veit. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988.
- Monroe, James. *The Papers of James Monroe*. Edited by Daniel Preston, 3 vols. to date. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2003-.
- Moore, Thomas. *Memoirs, Journal and Correspondence of Thomas Moore*. Edited by John Russell. 8 vols. London: 1853.
- Peale, Charles Willson. *The Selected Papers of Charles Willson Peale and His Family*. 5 vols. in 6. Edited by Lillian B. Miller, et al. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1983 – 2000.
- Peale, Charles Willson. *An Historical Catalogue of Peale's Collection of Paintings*. Philadelphia, 1795.
- Plumer, William. *William Plumer's Memorandum of Proceedings in the United States Senate, 1803 – 1807*. Edited by Everett Somerville Brown. New York: Macmillan, 1923.
- Reynolds, Joshua. *Sir Joshua Reynolds Discourses*. Edited and introduction by Helen Zimmern. London: Walter Scott, 1887.
- Richardson, Jonathan. *The Works of Jonathan Richardson: Containing I. The Theory of Painting II. Essay on the Art of Criticism III. The Science of a Connoisseur*. London: 1792.

- Rush, Benjamin. *Information to Europeans Who Are Disposed to Migrate to the United States*. Philadelphia: Carey, Stewart, & Company, 1789. Available at <http://va012.newsbank.com/evans/>.
- Smith, Margaret Bayard. *First Forty Years of Washington Society in the Family Letters of Margaret Bayard Smith*. Edited by Gaillard Hunt. New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1906.
- Sowerby, E. Millicent, compiler. *Catalogue of the Library of Thomas Jefferson*. 5 vols. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1983.
- Sully, Thomas. 'Recollections of an Old Painter'. *Hours at Home: A Popular Monthly of Instruction and Recreation*, 10. (November, 1869): 69-74.
- . *A Register of Portraits Painted by Thomas Sully*. Edited, introduction and notes by Charles Henry Hart. Philadelphia: 1909.
- . *Hints to Young Painters*, 1873. 2nd printing. New York: Reinhold Publishing, 1965.
- Taggart, Samuel. 'Letters of Samuel Taggart'. *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society* 33, part I. Worcester, MA: American Antiquarian Society, 1924.
- Trumbull, John. *The Autobiography of Colonel John Trumbull, Patriot-Artist, 1756-1843*. Edited by Theodore Sizer. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1953.
- . *Autobiography, Reminiscences and Letters of John Trumbull from 1756 to 1841*. New York, 1841.
- Vigée-Lebrun, Elisabeth. *Memoirs of Elisabeth Vigée-Lebrun*. Translated by Siân Evans. London: Camden Press, 1989.
- Washington, George. *The Writings of George Washington*. Edited by John C. Fitzpatrick. 39 vols. Washington, DC: United States Printing Office, 1931-1944.
- Wraxall, Nathaniel William. *Historical Memoirs of My Own Time*. Edited by Richard Askham. London: Kegan Paul, Trench Trubner, 1904.
- Young, Arthur. *Travels in France During the Years 1787, 1788, 1789*. Introduction by M. Bethan-Edwards. London, 1889.

SECONDARY SOURCES

- Abrams, Ann Uhry. *The Valiant Hero: Benjamin West and Grand-Style History Painting*. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1985.
- Adams, Henry. *History of the United States during the Administrations of Thomas Jefferson*. Reprinted. New York, Library Classics, 1986.
- Allen, William C. *History of the United Stated Capitol: A Chronicle of Design, Construction and Politics*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. G.P.O., 2001. Electronic version available at <http://www.gpo.gov/>

- Appleby, Joyce. 'Thomas Jefferson and the Psychology of Democracy'. *The Revolution of 1800*. Edited by James Horn, Jan Ellen Lewis, and Peter S. Onuf. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2002.
- Arch, Nigel and Joanna Marschner. *Splendour at Court: Dressing for Royal Occasions since 1700*. London: Unwin Hyman, 1987.
- Bailyn, Bernard. *To Begin the World Anew*. New York: Random House, Inc., 2003.
- Baumgarten, Linda. *What Clothes Reveal: The Language of Clothing in Colonial and Federal America*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2002.
- Baudelaire, Charles. *Baudelaire: Selected Writings on Art and Artists*. Translated by P.E. Charvet. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972.
- Barratt, Carrie Rebora and Ellen G. Miles. *Gilbert Stuart*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2005.
- Barrell, John. *The Political Theory of Painting from Reynolds to Hazlitt*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1986.
- Barthes, Roland. *The Language of Fashion*. Translated by Andy Stafford; edited by Andy Stafford and Michael Carter. Oxford, UK: Berg, 2006.
- Barton, Lucy. *Historic Costume for the Stage*, rev. ed. Boston: Walter H. Baker, 1963.
- Becker, David P. 'James Bowdoin's Drawing Collection'. *Master Drawings* 38, no. 2 (Autumn, 2000), 223-232.
- Bellion, Wendy. 'Patience Wright's Transatlantic Bodies.' In *Shaping the Body Politic: Art and Political Formation in Early America*. Edited by Maurie D. McInnis and Louis P. Nelson, 15-46. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2011.
- Berman, Eleanor Davidson. *Thomas Jefferson Among the Arts: An Essay in Early American Aesthetics*. New York: Philosophical Library, 1947.
- Breen, T.H. *Tobacco Culture: The Mentality of the Great Tidewater Planters on the Eve of Revolution*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1985.
- Brigham, David R. *Public Culture in the Early Republic: Peale's Museum and Its Audience*. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1995.
- Buck, Anne. *Dress in Eighteenth-Century England*. London: B.T. Batsford, 1979.
- Burnell, Carol. *Divided Affections: The Extraordinary Life of Maria Cosway*. Switzerland: Column House, 2007.
- Bush, Alfred L. *The Life Portraits of Thomas Jefferson*. Charlottesville, VA: Thomas Jefferson Memorial Foundation, 1987.
- Bushman, Richard L. *Refinement in America: Persons, Houses, Cities*. New York: Vintage Books, 1993.
- Carr, Carolyn K. and Ellen G. Miles. *A Brush with History: Paintings from the National Portrait Gallery*. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2001.
- Castiglione, Baldesar. *The Book of the Courtier*. Translated and introduction by George Bull. London: Penguin Books, 1967, reprinted 1976.
- Christman, Margaret C.S. *The First Federal Congress, 1789-1791*. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1989.
- . *The Spirit of Party: Hamilton and Jefferson at Odds*. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992.
- Clark, Kenneth. *Moments of Vision*. London: John Murray, Ltd., 1981.

- Cogliano, Francis D. *Thomas Jefferson: Reputation and Legacy*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2006.
- Colley, Linda. *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707 – 1837*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1992; reprinted 2008.
- Coltman, Viccy. *Fabricating the Antique: Neoclassicism in Britain, 1760-1800*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006.
- Cooper, Helen A. *John Trumbull: The Hand and Spirit of a Painter*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1982.
- Craven, Avery O. *Soil Exhaustion as a Factor in the Agricultural History of Virginia and Maryland, 1606-1860*. Rev. ed. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2006.
- Craven, Wayne. *Colonial American Portraiture*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986.
- Cullen, Charles T. 'Jefferson's White House Dinner Guests'. *White House History* 17 (Winter 2006).
- Cunningham, Noble E., Jr. 'The Diary of Frances Few, 1808-1809'. *Journal of Southern History* 29, no. 3 (August, 1962): 345-361.
- . *The Image of Thomas Jefferson in the Public Eye: Portraits for the People, 1800-1809*. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1981.
- . *The Inaugural Addresses of President Thomas Jefferson, 1801 and 1805*. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2001.
- . *Popular Images of the Presidency: From Washington to Lincoln*. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1991.
- Cunnington, C. Willett and Phillis. *Handbook of English Costume in the Eighteenth Century*. 2nd ed. London: Faber and Faber, 1972.
- Davenport, Millia. *The Book of Costume*. New York: Crown Publishers, 1948, tenth printing, 1972.
- Davis, Robert Ralph, Jr. 'Diplomatic Plumage: American Court Dress in the Early National Period'. *American Quarterly* 20, no. 2, part 1 (Summer: 1968): 164-179.
- Delpierre, Madeleine. *Dress in France in the Eighteenth Century*. Translated by Carolie Beamish. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1997.
- de Marly, Diana. *Fashion for Men: An Illustrated History*. New York: Holmes & Meier, 1985.
- de Tocqueville, Alexis. *Democracy in America*. 2 vols in 1. Translated and edited by Harvey C. Mansfield and Delba Winthrop. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000.
- Docherty, Linda. 'Original Copies: Gilbert Stuart's Companion Portraits of Thomas Jefferson and James Madison'. *American Art* 22, no. 2 (2008): 85-97.
- Donald, Diana. *The Age of Caricature: Satirical Prints in the Reign of George III*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1996.
- Drinkwater, John. *Charles James Fox*. New York: Ernest Benn, 1928.
- Dull, Jonathan R. *A Diplomatic History of the American Revolution*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1985.

- Dunbar, Louise Burnham. *A Study of 'Monarchical' Tendencies in the United States from 1776 to 1801*. Urbana: University of Illinois, 1922.
- Dunlap, William. *A History of the Rise and Progress of the Arts of Design in the United States*. 1834. Reprint, 2 vols. in 3. New York: Dover Publications, 1969.
- Dupre, Daniel S. 'Panic of 1819 and the Political Economy of Sectionalism'. *Economy of Early America*. Edited by Cathy Matson. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2006.
- Elias, Norbert. *The Court Society*. Translated by Edmund Jephcott. New York: Pantheon, 1983.
- Elkins, Stanley and Eric McKittrick. *The Age of Federalism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993.
- Evans, Dorinda. *Benjamin West and His American Students*. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press for the National Portrait Gallery, 1980.
- . *The Genius of Gilbert Stuart*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999.
- . *Mather Brown: Early American Artist in England*. Middletown, Ct: Wesleyan, 1982.
- Fabian, Monroe H. *Joseph Wright: American Artist, 1756-1793*. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1985.
- . *Mr. Sully, Portrait Painter: The Works of Thomas Sully, 1783-1872*. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1983.
- Feigenbaum, Gail. *Jefferson's America and Napoleon's France*. Edited by Victoria Cooke. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2003.
- Fischer, David Hackett. *Liberty and Freedom: A Visual History of America's Founding Ideas*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.
- Flügel, J.C. *The Psychology of Clothes*. London: John Murray, 1981.
- Fortune, Brandon Brame. *Franklin and His Friends: Portraying the Man of Science in Eighteenth-Century America*. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1999.
- . 'Portraits of Virtue and Genius: Pantheons of Worthies and Public Portraiture in the Early American Republic, 1780-1820.' PhD diss., University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1987.
- Franklin, Wayne. *James Fenimore Cooper: The Early Years*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007.
- Freeman, Joanne B. *Affairs of Honor: National Politics in the New Republic*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, paperback edition, 2002.
- Gerdts, William H. 'Natural Aristocrats in a Democracy, 1818-1870'. *American Portraiture in the Grand Manner, 1720-1920*. Edited by Michael Quick. Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Museum, 1981.
- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang von. *Die Leiden des jungen Werther*, 1774.
<http://www.digbib.org>.
- . *The Sorrows of Young Werther*. Translated and introduced by Michael Hulse. London: Penguin Classics, 1989.
- Griswold, Rufus Wilmot. *The Republican Court; or, Society in the Days of Washington*. 1867. Facsimile of the first edition. New York: Haskell House Publishers, 1971.

- Hancock, David. *Citizens of the World*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995.
- Harris, Jennifer. 'The Red Cap of Liberty: A Study of Dress Worn by French Revolutionary Partisans, 1789-94'. *Eighteenth Century Studies* 14, no. 3 (1981): 283-312.
- Harris, Neil. *The Artist in American Society: The Formative Years, 1790-1860*. New York: George Braziller, 1966.
- Harvey, John. *Men in Black*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995.
- Haulman, Clyde. 'Virginia Commodity Prices during the Panic of 1819'. *Journal of the Early American Republic* 22, no. 4 (Winter: 2002): 675-88.
- Haynes, Sam W. *Unfinished Revolution: The Early American Republic in a British World*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2010.
- Hollander, Anne. *Seeing Through Clothes*. New York: Viking Press, 1978.
- Hooek, Holger. *The King's Artists: The Royal Academy of Arts and the Politics of British Culture 1760-1840*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003.
- Hood, Graham. 'Soul or Style? Questions about Early American Portraits.' In *The Portrait in Eighteenth-Century America*, edited by Ellen G. Miles, 84-88. Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1993.
- Hunt, Lynn. *Politics, Culture, and Class in the French Revolution*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984, reprinted 2004.
- Isaac, Rhys. *The Transformation of Virginia, 1740-1790*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1982.
- Jackman, S.W. 'A Young Englishman Reports on the New Nation: Edward Thornton to James Bland Burgess, 1791-1793'. *William and Mary Quarterly* 18, no. 1 (January 1961).
- Jaffe, Irma B. *John Trumbull: Patriot-Artist of the American Revolution*. Boston: New York Graphic Society, 1975.
- Jarrett, Derek. *Britain, 1688-1815*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1965.
- Kaplan, Lawrence. *Thomas Jefferson, Westward the Course of Empire*. Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 1999.
- Kaminski, John P., ed. *The Quotable Jefferson*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006.
- Kimball, Fiske. *The Capitol of Virginia: A Landmark of American Architecture*, rev. ed. Richmond: Library of Virginia, 2002.
- . *Life Portraits of Thomas Jefferson and Their Replicas*. Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1944.
- Kimball, Marie. *Jefferson: The Scene of Europe, 1784-1789*. New York: Coward-McCann, 1950.
- Kloss, William. *Samuel F.B. Morse*. New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1988.
- Korshak, Yvonne. 'The Liberty Cap as a Revolutionary Symbol in America and France.' *Smithsonian Studies in American Art* (Fall 1987).
- Kranish, Michael. *Flight from Monticello: Thomas Jefferson at War*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.
- Kybalová, Ludmila, Olga Herbenová and Milena Lamarová. *Pictorial Encyclopedia of Fashion*. Translated by Claudia Rosoux. London: Hamlyn, 1968.

- Lane-Poole, Stanley. *Life of the Right Honourable Stratford Canning, Viscount Stratford de Redcliffe*, 2 vols. London: 1888.
- Lester, Malcolm. *Anthony Merry 'Redivivus': A Reappraisal of the British Minister to the United States, 1803-6*. Charlottesville, University of Virginia Press, 1978.
- Lloyd, Stephen and Kim Sloan. *The Intimate Portrait: Drawings, Miniatures and Pastels from Ramsay to Lawrence*. Edinburgh: National Galleries of Scotland, 2009.
- Malone, Dumas. *Jefferson and His Time*. 6 vols. Boston: Little, Brown, 1948-1981.
- Mannings, David. *Sir Joshua Reynolds: A Complete Catalogue of His Paintings*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2000.
- Mansel, Philip. *Dressed to Rule: Royal and Court Costume from Louis XIV to Elizabeth II*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2005.
- Mayo, Bernard. 'A Peppercorn for Mr. Jefferson'. *Virginia Quarterly Review* (Spring, 1943).
- McDonald, Robert M.S. 'The Hamiltonian Invention of Thomas Jefferson'. *The Many Faces of Alexander Hamilton: The Life and Legacy of America's Most Elusive Founding Father*. Edited by Douglas Ambrose and Robert W. T. Martin. New York: New York University Press, 2006.
- . 'Jefferson & America: Episodes in Image Formation'. PhD Dissertation, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, 1998.
- , ed. *Thomas Jefferson's Military Academy: Founding West Point*. Charlottesville, University of Virginia Press, 2004.
- McLanathan, Richard. *Gilbert Stuart*. New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1986.
- Mease, James. *A Picture of Philadelphia*. Carlisle, MA: 1811.
- Meschutt, David. 'William Byrd and His Portrait Collection.' *Journal of Early Southern Decorative Arts* XIV, no. 2 (May 1988): 19-46.
- Miles, Ellen G., ed. *Portrait in Eighteenth-Century America*. Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1993.
- . 'Portraits of the Heroes of Louisbourg, 1745-1751.' *American Art Journal* 15, no. 2 (Winter: 1983).
- . *Saint-Mémin and the Neoclassical Profile Portrait in America*. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1994.
- Miller, Lillian B. *In Pursuit of Fame: Rembrandt Peale, 1778-1860*. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution, 1992.
- . and David Ward, eds. *New Perspectives on Charles Willson Peale*. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1991.
- . *Patrons and Patriotism: The Encouragement of the Fine Arts in the United States, 1790-1860*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966.
- Nenadic, Stana. 'The Enlightenment in Scotland and the Popular Passion for Portraits'. *British Journal for Eighteenth Studies* 21 (1998): 175-92.
- Newman, Simon P. 'Principles or Men? George Washington and the Political Culture of National Leadership, 1776-1801'. *Journal of the Early Republic* 12, no. 4 (Winter: 1992): 477-507.

- . *Parades and the Politics of the Street: Festive Culture in the Early American Republic*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1997.
- Neil, J. Meredith. *Toward A National Taste: America's Quest for Aesthetic Independence*. Honolulu: University Press of Hawaii, 1975.
- Onuf, Peter S. *Jefferson's Empire: The Language of American Nationhood*. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2000.
- . *Mind of Thomas Jefferson*. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2007.
- , and Nicholas P. Cole, eds. *Thomas Jefferson, the Classical World, and Early America*. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2011.
- Peter, Merrill D. *Jefferson Image in the American Mind*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1960.
- . *Visitors to Monticello*. 2nd ed. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1993.
- Pointon, Marcia. *Hanging the Head: Portraiture and Social Formation in Eighteenth-Century England*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1993.
- Poulet, Anne L. *Jean-Antoine Houdon: Sculptor of the Enlightenment*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003.
- Quincy, Edmund. *Life of Josiah Quincy*. Boston: 1868.
- Read, James H. 'Alexander Hamilton's View of Thomas Jefferson's Ideology and Character.' *Many Faces of Alexander Hamilton: The Life and Legacy of America's Most Elusive Founding Father*. Edited by Douglas Ambrose and Robert W.T. Martin. New York: New York University Press, 2006.
- Ribeiro, Aileen. *Art of Dress: Fashion in England and France, 1750-1820*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1995.
- . *Dress in Eighteenth-Century Europe*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2002.
- . *Fashion in the French Revolution*. London: B.T. Batsford, 1988.
- Rice, Howard C. Jr. *Thomas Jefferson's Paris*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976.
- Roche, Daniel. *Culture of Clothing: Dress and Fashion in the Ancien Regime*. Translated by Jean Birrell. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994.
- Royal Academy of Arts. *Citizens and Kings: Portraits in the Age of Revolution, 1760-1830*. London: Royal Academy of Arts, 2007.
- Rozbicki, Michal J. *Complete Colonial Gentleman*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1998.
- Ruppert, Jacques. *Le Costume Époques Louis XVI et Directoire*. Paris: Flammarion, 1990.
- Sadik, Marvin S. *Colonial and Federal Portraits at Bowdoin College*. Brunswick, ME: Bowdoin College, 1966.
- Saunders, Richard H. and Ellen G. Miles. *American Colonial Portraits, 1700-1776*. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press for the National Portrait Gallery, 1987.
- Seale, William. *The White House: The History of an American Idea*. Washington, DC: American Institute of Architects Press, 1992.

- Sellers, Charles Coleman. *Benjamin Franklin in Portraiture*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1962.
- . *Charles Willson Peale*. New York: Scribner, 1969.
- Shawe-Taylor, Desmond. *Genial Company: The Theme of Genius in Eighteenth-Century British Portraiture*. Nottingham: University Art Gallery, 1987.
- . *The Georgians: Eighteenth-Century Portraiture and Society*. London: Barrie and Jenkins, 1990.
- Simon, Robert. *Portrait in Britain and America*. Oxford: Phaidon, 1987.
- Sloan, Herbert E. *Principle and Interest: Thomas Jefferson and the Problem of Debt*. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1995.
- Solkin, David H. *Painting for Money: The Visual Arts and the Public Sphere in Eighteenth-Century England*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1993.
- Stanton, Lucia. “‘A Well-Ordered Household’: Domestic Servants in Jefferson’s White House”. *White House History* 17 (Winter, 2006): 5-23.
- Steadman, William E. ‘Sully Portraits at West Point’. *Portrait Painting in America: the Nineteenth Century*. Edited by Ellen G. Miles. New York: Main Street/Universe Books, c. 1977.
- Stein, Susan R. *Worlds of Thomas Jefferson at Monticello*. New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1993.
- Squire, Geoffrey. *Dress and Society, 1560-1970*. New York: Viking Press, 1974.
- Taylor, Alan. *Civil War of 1812: American Citizens, British Subjects, Irish Rebels, & Indian Allies*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2010.
- . *William Cooper’s Town: Power and Persuasion on the Frontier of the Early American Republic*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1995.
- Tucker, George. *Life of Thomas Jefferson*. 2 vols. Philadelphia: 1837.
- Turner, Lynn W. *William Plumer of New Hampshire*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1962.
- Ward, David C. *Charles Willson Peale: Art and Selfhood in the Early Republic*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004.
- Samuel J. Watson. ‘Developing “Republican Machines”’. In *Thomas Jefferson’s Military Academy*. Edited by Robert M.S. McDonald. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2004.
- Verplanck, Gulian, William Cullen Bryant, and Robert Sands, eds. *The Talisman 3 (1828 – 1830)*. New York: 1830.
- Waugh, Norah. *Cut of Men’s Clothes, 1600-1900*. London: Faber and Faber, 1964.
- Wilcox, R. Turner. *Mode in Furs: A Historical Survey*. Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 2010. First published 1951 by Charles Scribner’s Sons.
- Wills, Garry. *Cincinnatus, George Washington and the Enlightenment*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1984.
- Wilton, Andrew. *Swagger Portrait: Grand Manner Portraiture in Britain from Van Dyck to Augustus John, 1630-1930*. London: Tate Gallery Publications, 1992.
- Witcomb, Samuel, Jr. ‘A Book Peddler Invades Monticello.’ *William and Mary Quarterly* 6 (1949): 634-35.

- Wood, Gordon. *Empire of Liberty: A History of the Early Republic, 1789-1815*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.
- . *Revolutionary Characters: What Made the Founders Different*. New York: Penguin Press, 2006.
- Wrigley, Richard. *Politics of Appearances: Representations of Dress in Revolutionary France*. Oxford, UK: Berg, 2002.
- Zakim, Michael. *Ready-Made Democracy: A History of Men's Dress in the American Republic, 1760-1860*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003.

APPENDIX A: ILLUSTRATIONS

List of Illustrations

Illustrations for Chapters 1 – 6

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Chapter 1

- Fig. 1.1. Mather Brown, *Thomas Jefferson*, 1786-88. National Portrait Gallery, Washington, D.C.
- Fig. 1.2. John Trumbull, *Thomas Jefferson*, 1788. Metropolitan Museum, New York. Painted for Angelica Church.
- Fig. 1.3. John Trumbull, *Thomas Jefferson*, 1788. The White House. Painted for Maria Cosway.
- Fig. 1.4. John Trumbull, *Thomas Jefferson*, 1788. Thomas Jefferson Foundation. Painted for Jefferson's daughter Martha.
- Fig. 1.5. John Trumbull, *Declaration of Independence, July 4th 1776*. Study begun 1786. Yale University Art Gallery.
- Fig. 1.5a. John Trumbull, *Declaration of Independence*, detail of study.
- Fig. 1.6. Jean-Antoine Houdon, *Thomas Jefferson*, 1789. Private Collection.
- Fig. 1.6a. Jean-Antoine Houdon, *Thomas Jefferson*, 1789, profile.
- Fig. 1.7. George Stubbs, *Melbourne & Milbanks Families*, 1769-1770, National Gallery, London.
- Fig. 1.8. Joseph Wright of Derby, *Mr and Mrs Thomas Coltman*, c. 1769. National Gallery, London.
- Fig. 1.9. Mather Brown, *John Adams*, 1788. Boston Athenaeum.
- Fig. 1.10. *Benjamin Franklin*, engraved by Augustin de Saint Aubin after a drawing by Charles Nicolas Cochin, 1777. Philadelphia Museum of Art.
- Fig. 1.11. Élisabeth-Louise Vigée-Le Brun, *Le comte de Vaudreuil*, 1784. Virginia Museum of Fine Arts.
- Fig. 1.12. John Singleton Copley, *John Adams*, 1783. Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University.

Chapter 2

- Fig. 2.1. Charles Willson Peale, *Thomas Jefferson*, 1791. Independence National Historical Park.
- Fig. 2.2. Joseph Wright, completed by John Trumbull, *George Washington*, 1784/1786.
- Fig. 2.3. Henry Raeburn, copy after John Opie, *Charles James Fox*, c. 1790.
- Fig. 2.4. Joshua Reynolds, *Charles James Fox*, 1782. Collection of the Earl of Leicester and Holkam Hall Estate.

Chapter 3

- Fig. 3.1. Rembrandt Peale, *Thomas Jefferson*, 1800. The White House, Washington, DC.
- Fig. 3.2. *The Providential Detection*, unidentified artist, c. 1799. Library Company of Philadelphia.

- Fig. 3.3. Adélaïde Labille-Guiard, Maximillian de Robespierre, c. 1790.
 Fig. 3.3a. Anonymous engraving, 'Je suis de Député de Tiers', 1789.
 Fig. 3.4. *Titus*, Roman, c. 70AD. British Museum, London.

Chapter 4

- Fig. 4.1. Rembrandt Peale, *Thomas Jefferson*, 1805. New York Historical Society.
 Fig. 4.2. *Thomas Jefferson*. Engraving by Cornelius Tiebout, published by Augustus Day, 1801, Philadelphia. Library of Congress, Washington, DC.
 Fig. 4.3. *Thomas Jefferson*. Engraving by David Edwin, published by George Helmbold, Jr. 1801, Philadelphia.
 Fig. 4.3a. *Thomas Jefferson*. Engraving by David Edwin, published by George Helmbold, Jr., second state, 1801, Philadelphia.
 Fig. 4.4. *Louis XVI*. Engraving by Charles-Clément Bervic after Antoine-François Callet.
 Fig. 4.5. *George Washington*. Engraving by John Heath after Gilbert Stuart, 1800. National Portrait Gallery, Washington, D.C.
 Fig. 4.6. Gilbert Stuart, *George Washington (The Lansdowne Portrait)*, 1796. National Portrait Gallery, Washington, D.C.
 Fig. 4.7. Gilbert Stuart, *Anthony Merry*, 1805. From a glass negative of the lost portrait. Library of Congress.
 Fig. 4.8. Rembrandt Peale, *Albert Gallatin*, 1805. Independence National Historical Park, Philadelphia.
 Fig. 4.9. Rembrandt Peale, *William Findley*, 1805. Independence National Historical Park, Philadelphia.
 Fig. 4.10. *Benjamin Franklin*. Copy attributed to Jean Valade after 1778 original by Joseph-Silfrede Duplessis. Thomas Jefferson Foundation.
 Fig. 4.11. *Thaddeus Kosciuszko*. Engraved by Christian Josi after Joseph Grassi, c. 1796. Library of Congress.

Chapter 5

- Fig. 5.1. Gilbert Stuart, *Thomas Jefferson (Bowdoin Commission)*, 1805-7. Bowdoin College Museum of Art, Brunswick, ME.
 Fig. 5.2. Gilbert Stuart, *Thomas Jefferson (The Edgehill Portrait)*, 1805/21. Thomas Jefferson Foundation and National Portrait Gallery, Washington, D.C.
 Fig. 5.3. Gilbert Stuart, *Thomas Jefferson (The Medallion Profile)*, 1805. Fogg Art Museum of Harvard University Art Museums.
 Fig. 5.4. Thomas Jefferson, 'Dinner Invitation,' 1801-9. Thomas Jefferson Foundation.
 Fig. 5.5. Gilbert Stuart, *James Madison (Bowdoin Commission)*, 1805-7. Bowdoin College Museum of Art, Brunswick, ME.
 Fig. 5.6. Charles Wesley Jarvis, *Thomas Jefferson*, 1863. City of New York.

- Fig. 5.7 Robert Scott and John Reich, 'Indian Peace Medal', obverse and reverse, 1801. American Numismatic Society.
- Fig. 5.8. John Reich, 'Commemorative Medal', obverse and reverse, 1801.
- Fig. 5.9. *Thomas Jefferson, 1809-11*. Engraved by David Edwin; William Birch delineator after Gilbert Stuart. University of Virginia Library.
- Fig. 5.10. Benjamin West, *Hector Taking Leave of Andromache*, 1797. J. Paul Getty Museum.

Chapter 6

- Fig. 6.1. Thomas Sully, *Thomas Jefferson*, original bust portrait taken at Monticello, 1821. American Philosophical Society.
- Fig. 6.2. Thomas Sully, *Thomas Jefferson*, 1822. United States Military Academy, West Point, New York.
- Fig. 6.3. Lawrence Sully, engraved by Alexander Lawson, *Virginia Capitol at Richmond*, 1800-02. Library of Virginia.
- Fig. 6.3a. Benjamin Henry Latrobe, *View of the City of Richmond*, 1798. Maryland Historical Society.
- Fig. 6.4. Thomas Sully, *Self-portrait*, 1821. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.
- Fig. 6.5. Souche, *Askos*, model in wood, 1789. Thomas Jefferson Foundation.
- Fig. 6.5a. Anthony Simmons and Samuel Alexander, *Askos*, in silver, 1801. Thomas Jefferson Foundation.
- Fig. 6.6. Thomas Sully, engraved by David Edwin, *James Madison*, 1809. Library of Congress.
- Fig. 6.7. Thomas Sully, *Marquis De Lafayette*, 1825-26. Independence National Historical Park, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.
- Fig. 6.8. Thomas Sully, *Jonathan Williams*, 1815. United States Military Academy, West Point, New York.
- Fig. 6.8a & b. Thomas Sully. *Studies for Jonathan Williams*, 1815.
- Fig. 6.9. Thomas Sully, *James Monroe*, 1829-31. United States Military Academy, West Point, New York.
- Fig. 6.10. Photograph, *Old Library*, c. 1863, United States Military Academy Collection.
- Fig. 6.10a. Photograph, *Haig Room*. Academic Library in Jefferson Hall, 2008. Personal photograph.
- Fig. 6.11. Thomas Sully. *Study for Thomas Jefferson*, c. 1821. Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, CT.
- Fig. 6.12. Thomas Sully, *Study for Thomas Jefferson*, 1822. The White House.
- Fig. 6.13. Benjamin Henry Latrobe, *The President's House*, 1811. Private Collection.
- Fig. 6.14. Samuel F.B. Morse, *House of Representatives*, 1821-23. Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.



Fig. 1.1. Mather Brown. *Thomas Jefferson*, 1786 – 1788. National Portrait Gallery, Washington, DC.



Fig. 1.2. John Trumbull. *Thomas Jefferson*, 1788, for Angelica Church. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.



Fig. 1.3. John Trumbull, *Thomas Jefferson*, 1788, for Maria Cosway. White House, Washington, DC.



Fig. 1.4. John Trumbull. *Thomas Jefferson*, 1788, for Martha Jefferson. Thomas Jefferson Foundation, Charlottesville, VA.



Fig.1.5. John Trumbull, *Study for Declaration of Independence, July 4th 1776*, begun 1786. Yale University Art Gallery.

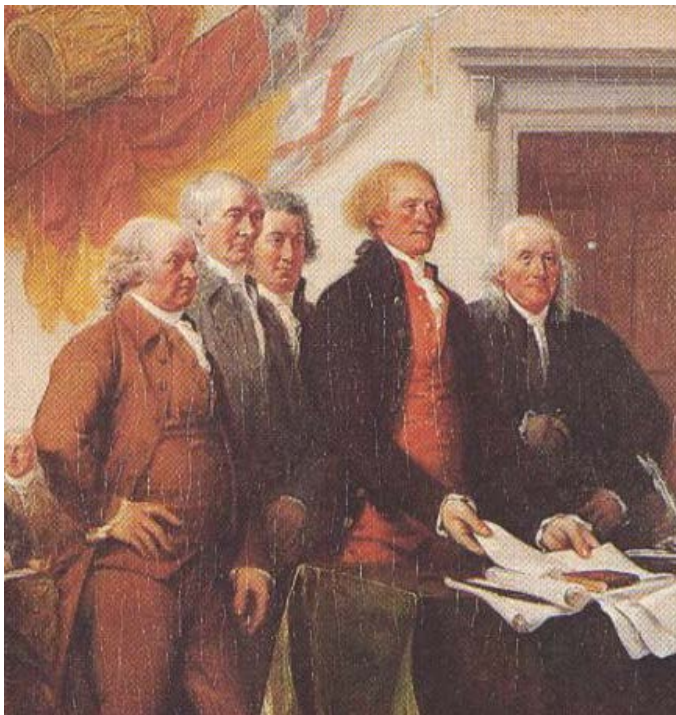


Fig. 1.5a. John Trumbull, *Declaration of Independence*, detail.



Fig. 1.6. Jean-Antoine Houdon,
Thomas Jefferson, 1789.
Private Collection.

Fig. 1.6a. Jean-Antoine Houdon.
Thomas Jefferson, 1789.
Private Collection.

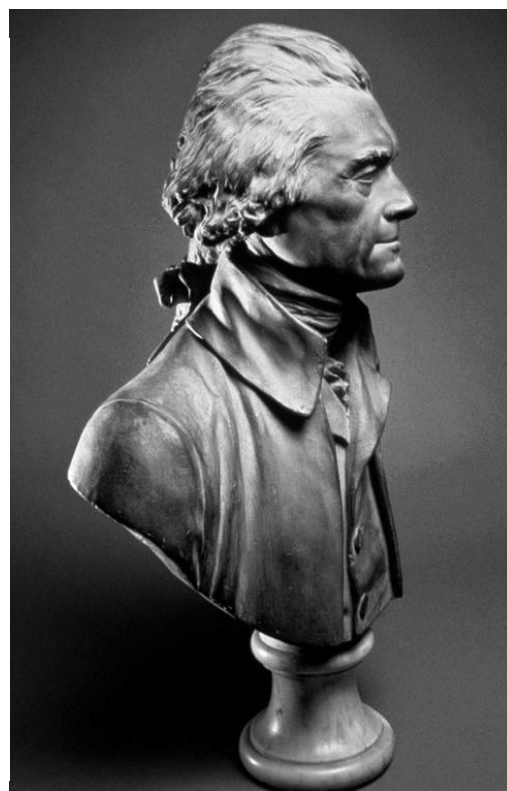




Fig. 1.7. George Stubbs. Melbourne & Milbanks Families, 1769-1770. National Gallery, London.



Fig. 1.8. Joseph Wright of Derby. Mr. & Mrs. Coltman, c. 1770.

These are examples of the frock coat as used by the English country gentleman, initially for outdoor and sporting occasions.

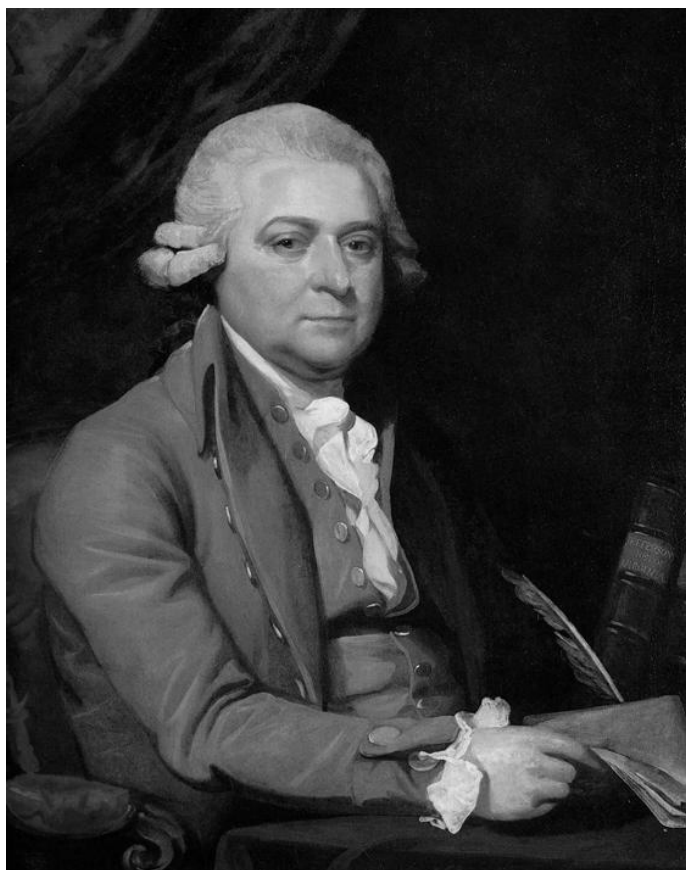


Fig. 1.9. Mather Brown,
John Adams, 1788.
Boston Athenaeum.

Fig. 1.10. *Benjamin Franklin*,
engraved by Augustin de
Saint Aubin, after a drawing
by Charles Nicolas Cochin,
1777. Philadelphia Museum
of Art.



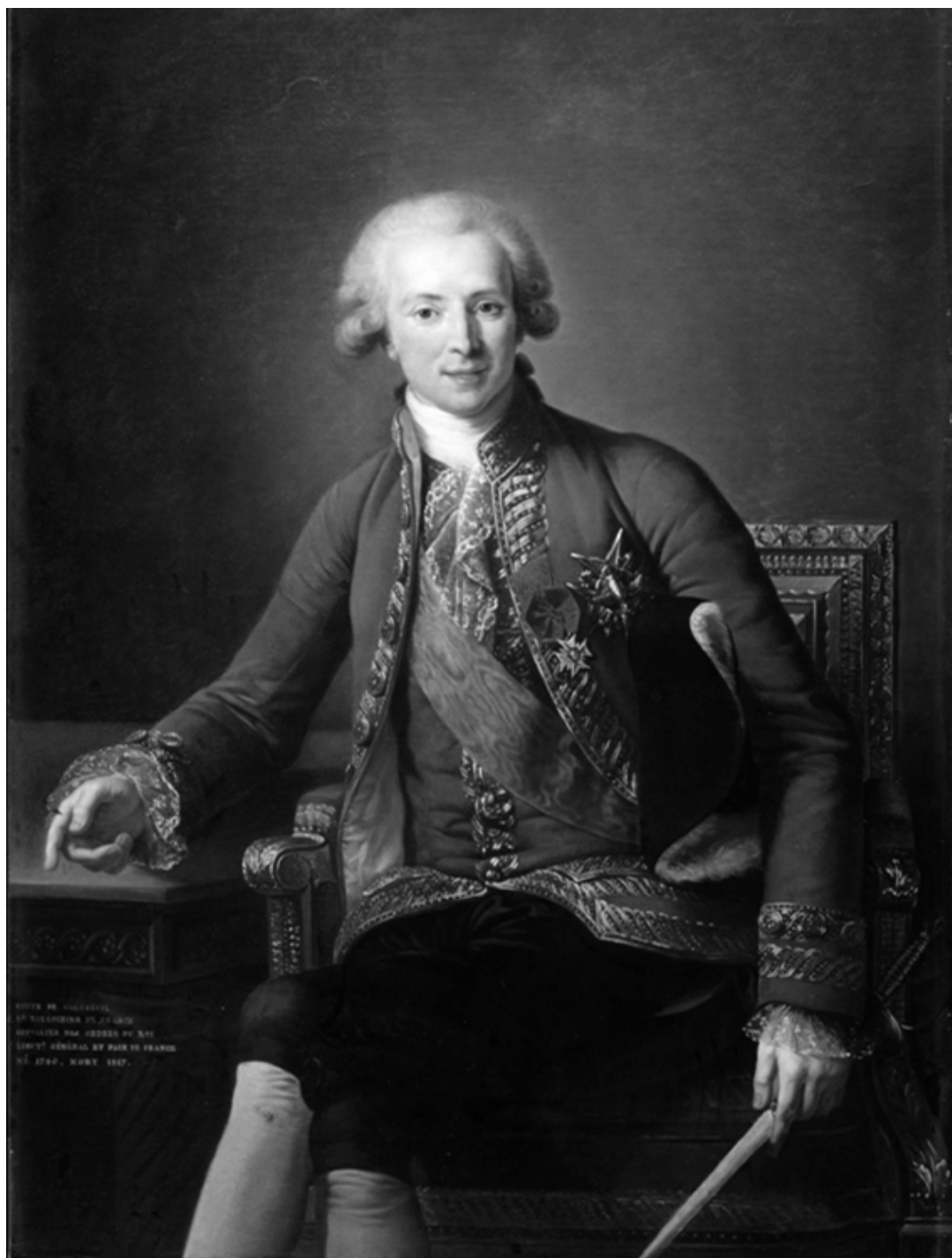


Fig. 1.11. Élisabeth-Louise Vigée-LeBrun, *Le Comte de Vaudreuil*, 1784. Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, VA.



Fig. 1.12. John Singleton Copley, *John Adams*, 1783. Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University.



Fig. 2.1. Charles Willson Peale, *Thomas Jefferson*, 1791. Independence National Historical Park, Philadelphia.

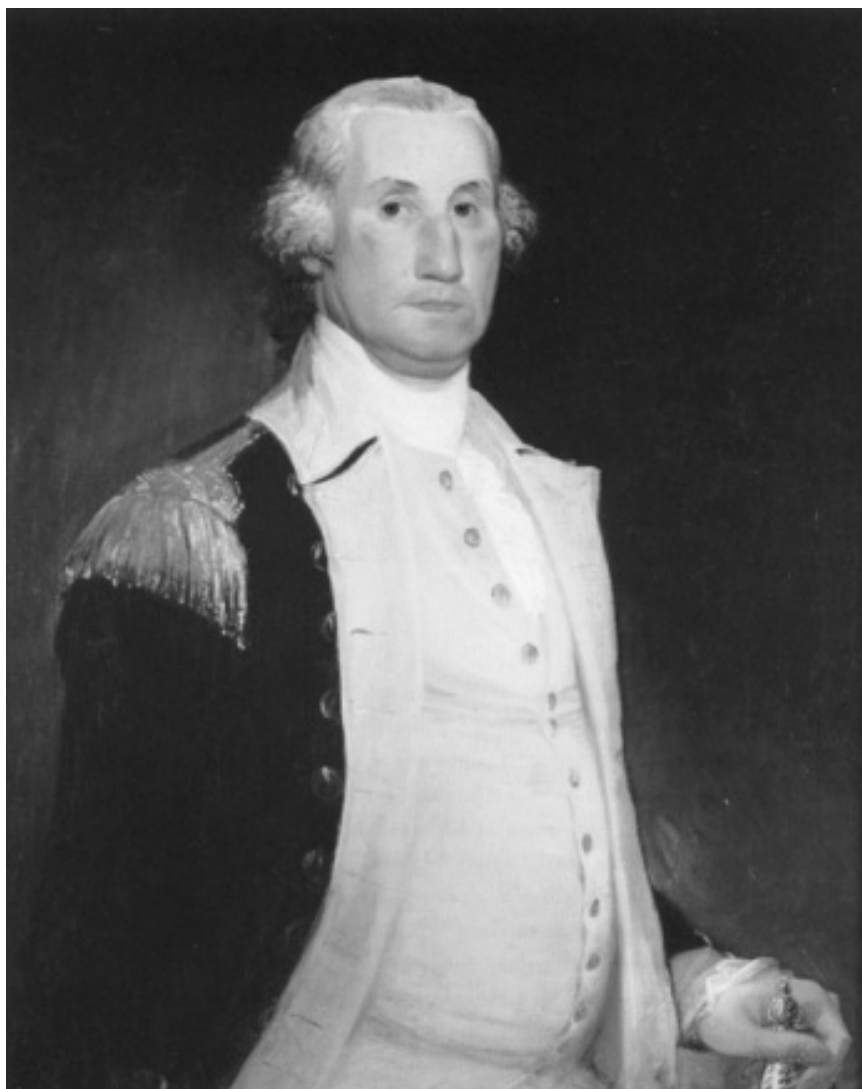


Fig. 2.2. Joseph Wright, completed by John Trumbull. *George Washington*, 1784/86. Massachusetts Historical Society.



Fig. 2.3. Henry Raeburn, copy after John Opie. *Charles James Fox*, c. 1790.

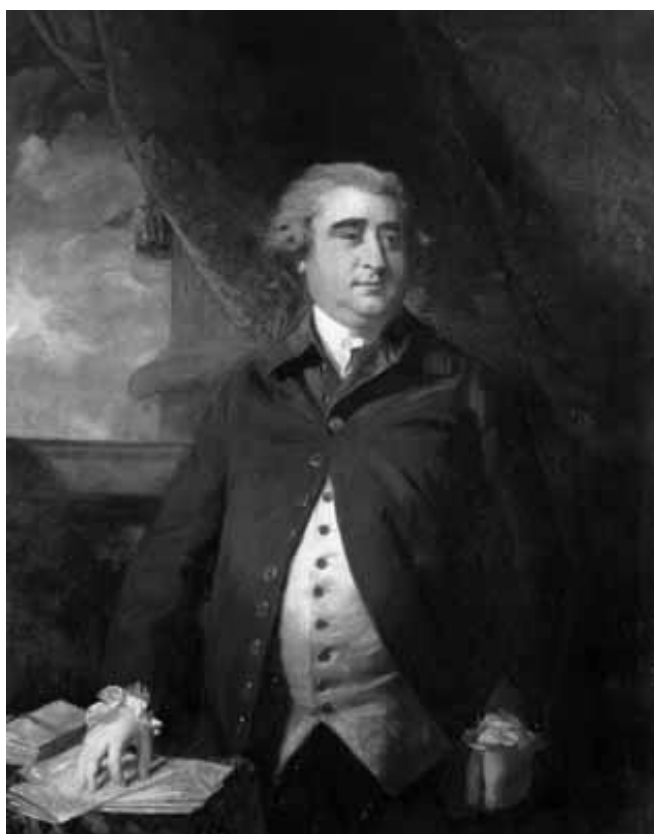


Fig. 2.4. Joshua Reynolds, *Charles James Fox*, 1782. Collection of the Earl of Leicester and Holkam Hall Estate.

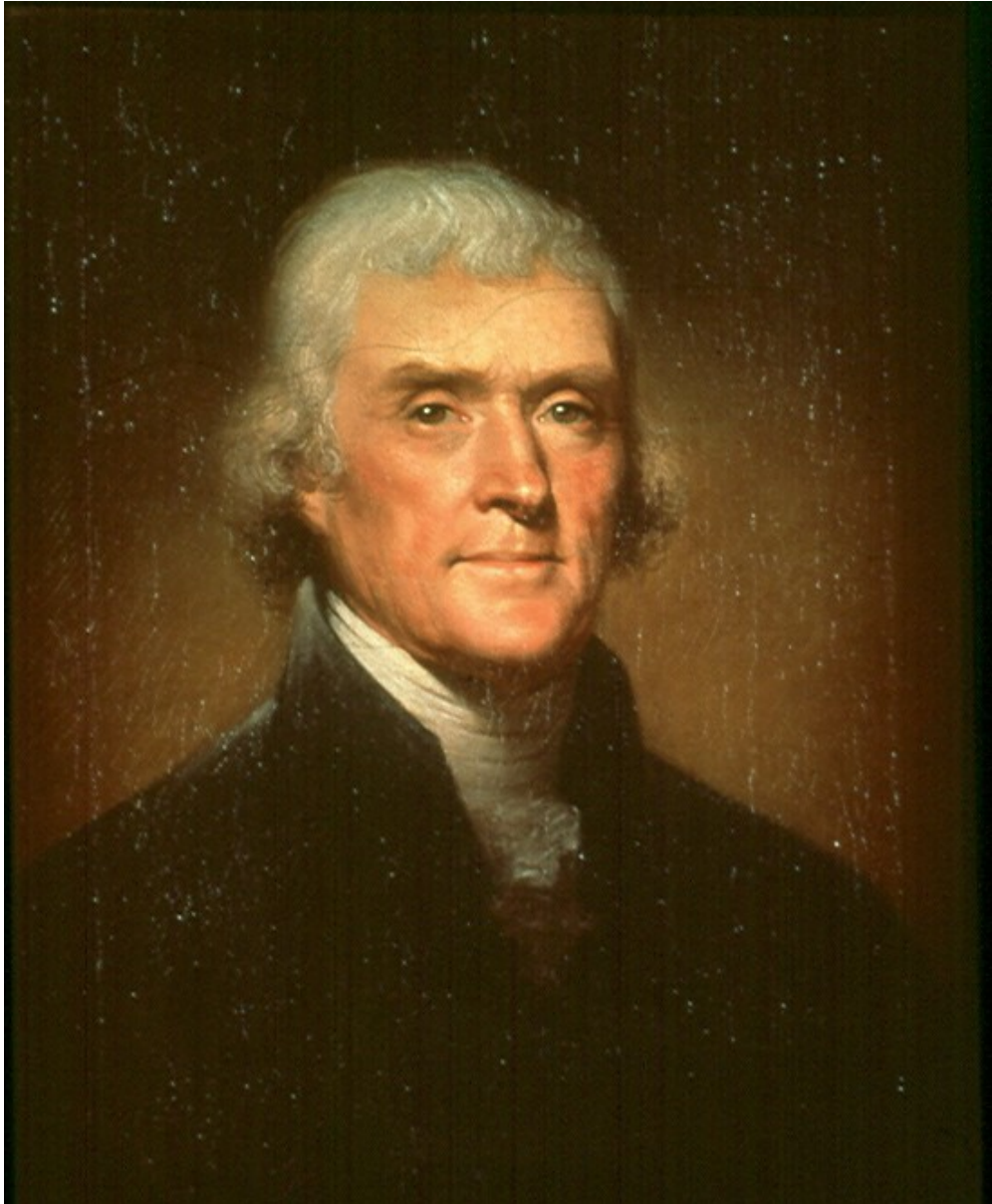


Fig. 3.1. Rembrandt Peale. *Thomas Jefferson*, c. 1800. White House, Washington, DC.



Fig. 3.2. *The Providential Detection*, c. 1797-1800. Unidentified artist. Library Company of Philadelphia.



Fig. 3.3. Adélaïde Labille-Guiard, *Maximilian de Robespierre*, c. 1790.

Robespierre as a Député du Tiers.



Fig. 3.3a. Anonymous engraving. 'Je suis Député du Tiers', c. 1789.

Clothing prescribed for a member of the Third Estate



Fig. 3.4. *Titus*, Roman, c. 70 AD. British Museum, London.

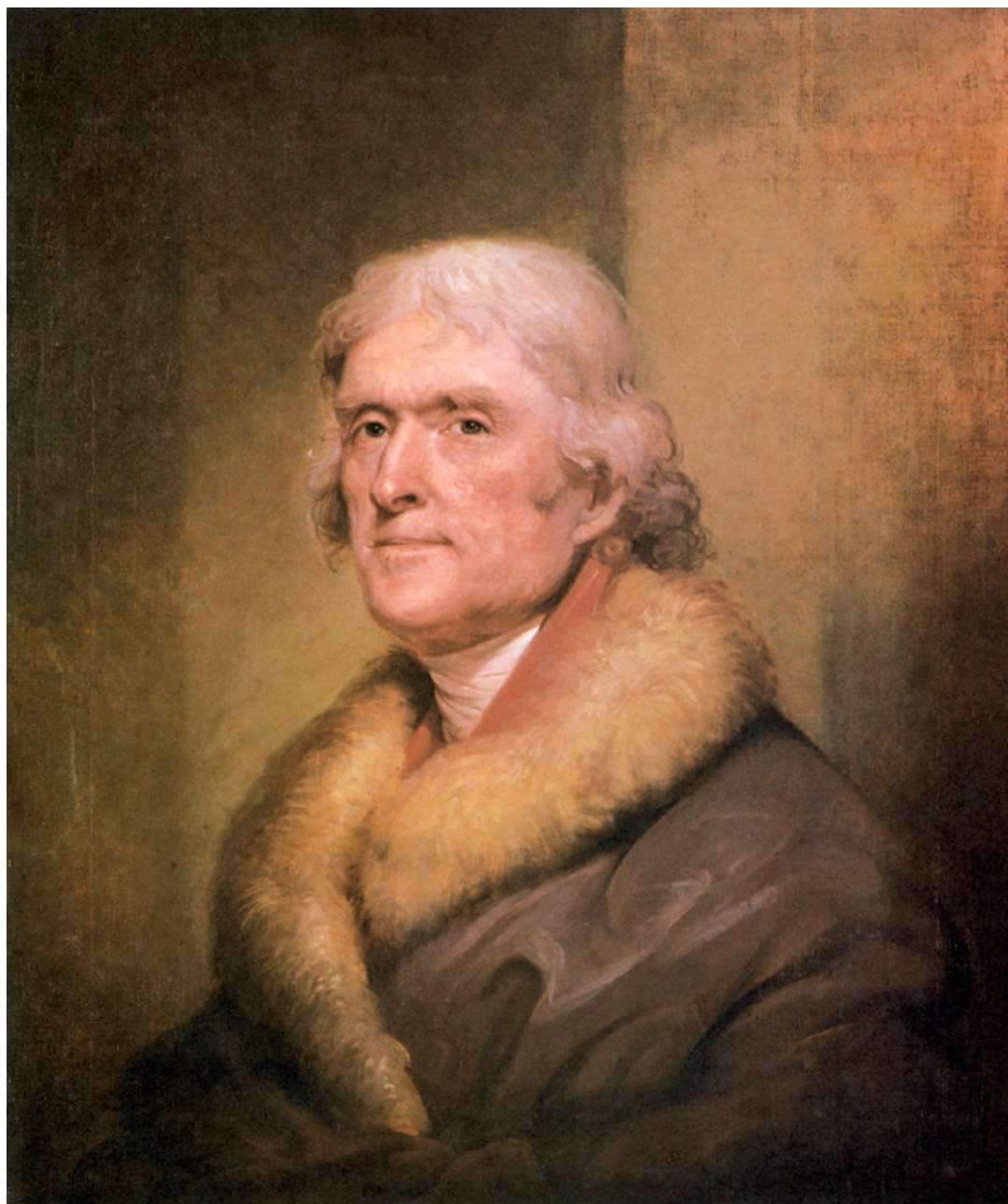


Fig. 4.1. Rembrandt Peale. *Thomas Jefferson*, 1805. New York Historical Society.

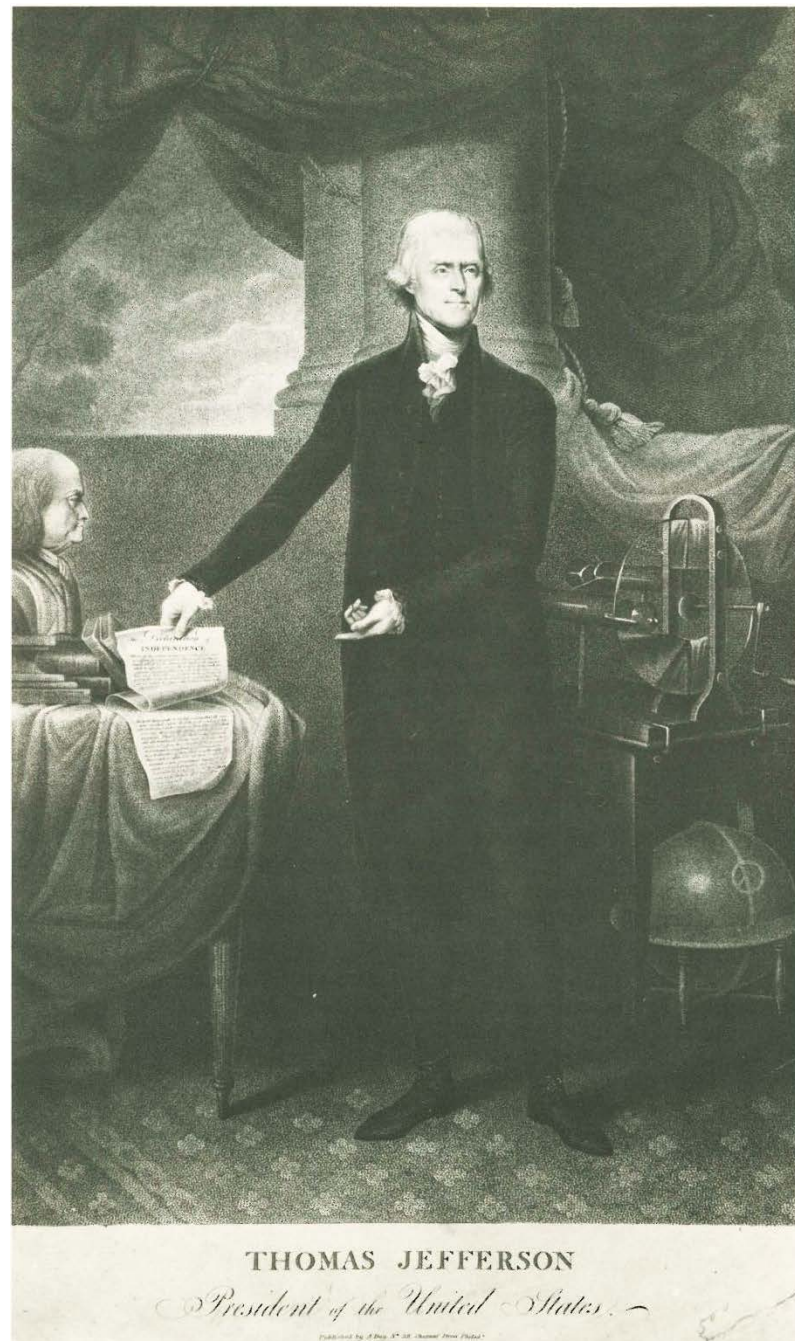


Fig. 4.2. *Thomas Jefferson*. Engraved by Cornelius Tiebout, published by Augustus Day, Philadelphia, 1801. Library of Congress.

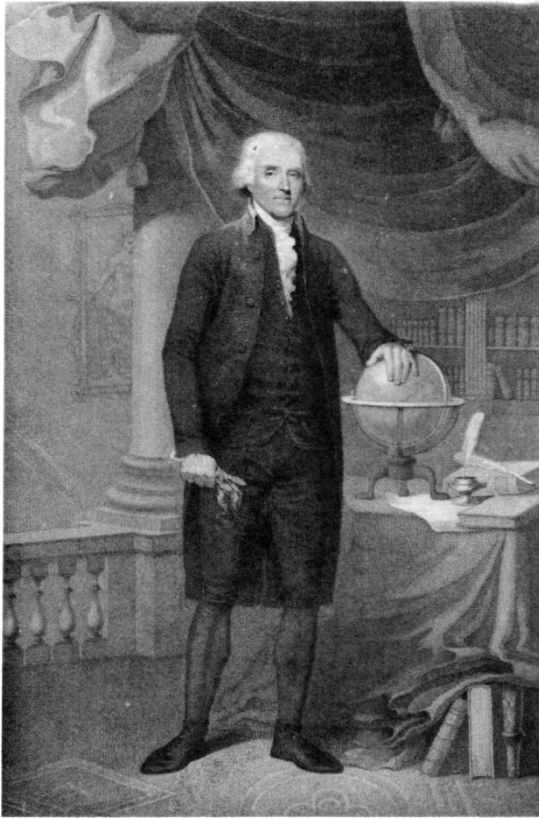


Fig. 4.3. *Thomas Jefferson*.
Engraved by David Edwin, published
by George Helmbold, Jr., Philadelphia,
1801.

Fig. 4.3a. *Thomas Jefferson*,
(second state). Engraved by David Edwin,
published by George Helmbold, Jr.
Philadelphia, 1801.

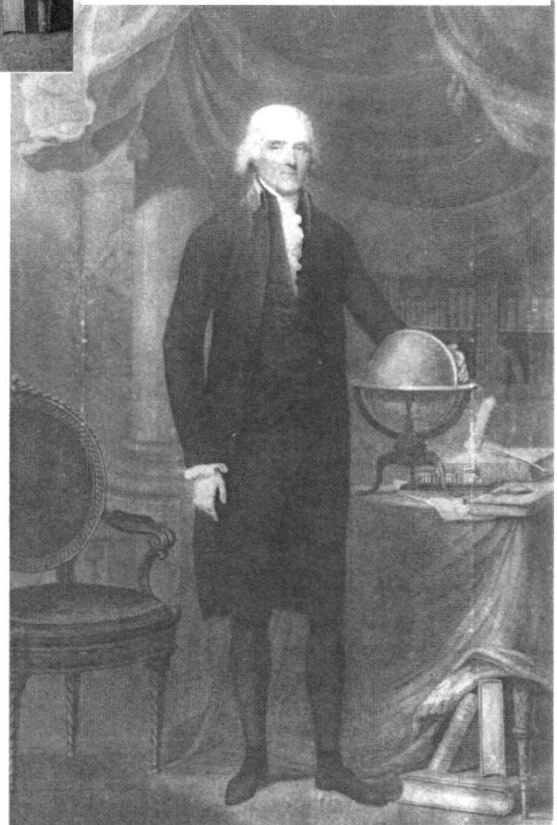




Fig. 4.4. *Louis XIV*. Engraving by Charles-Clément Bervic after Antoine-François Callet.



Fig. 4.5. *George Washington*. Engraving by John Heath after Gilbert Stuart, 1800. National Portrait Gallery, Washington, DC.



Fig. 4.6. Gilbert Stuart. *George Washington (The Lansdowne Portrait)*, 1796. National Portrait Gallery, Washington, DC.

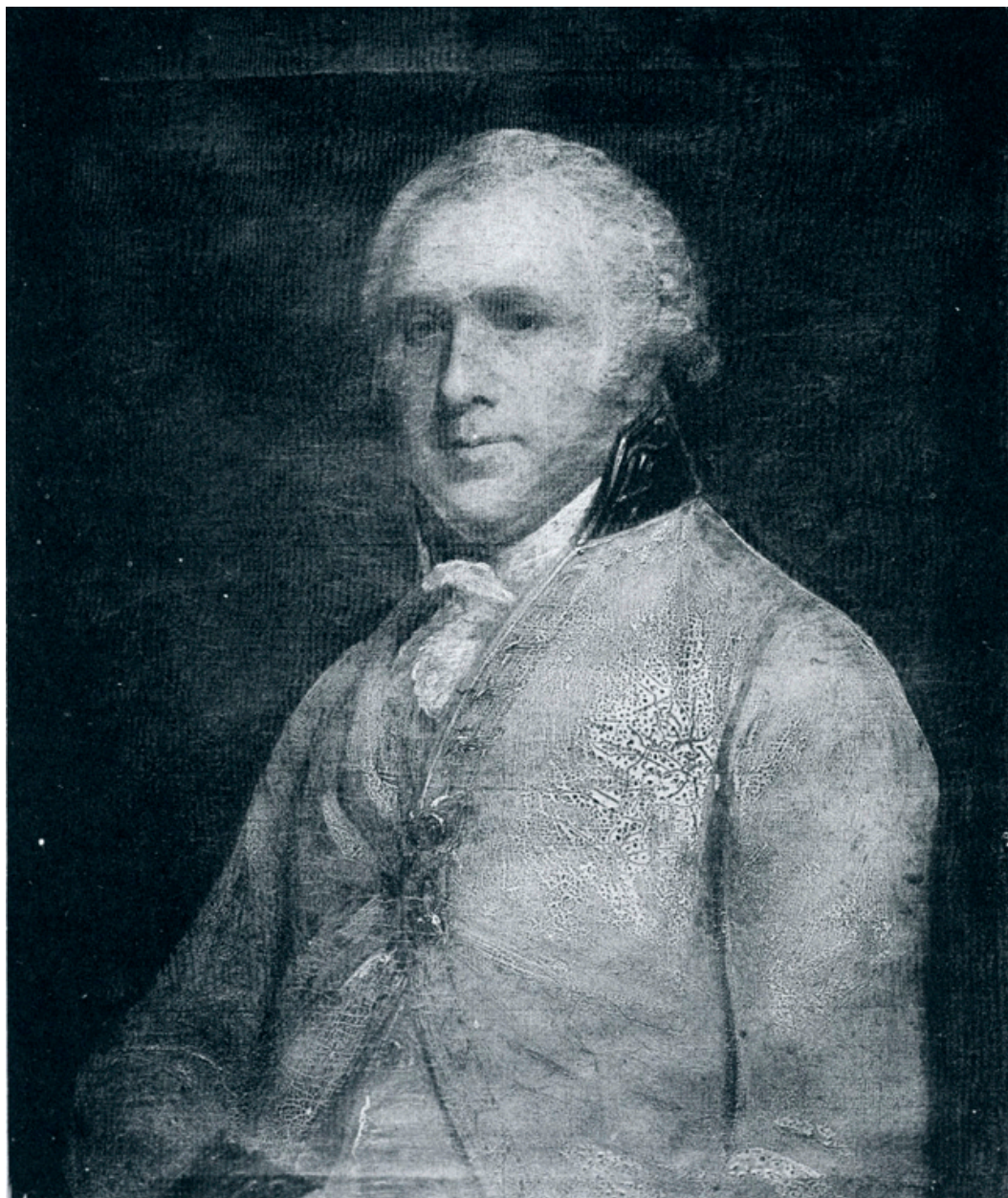


Fig. 4.7. Gilbert Stuart. *Anthony Merry*, 1805. From a glass negative of the lost portrait. Library of Congress, Washington, DC.



Fig. 4.8. Rembrandt Peale.
Albert Gallatin, 1805.

Independence National
Historical Park, Philadelphia.

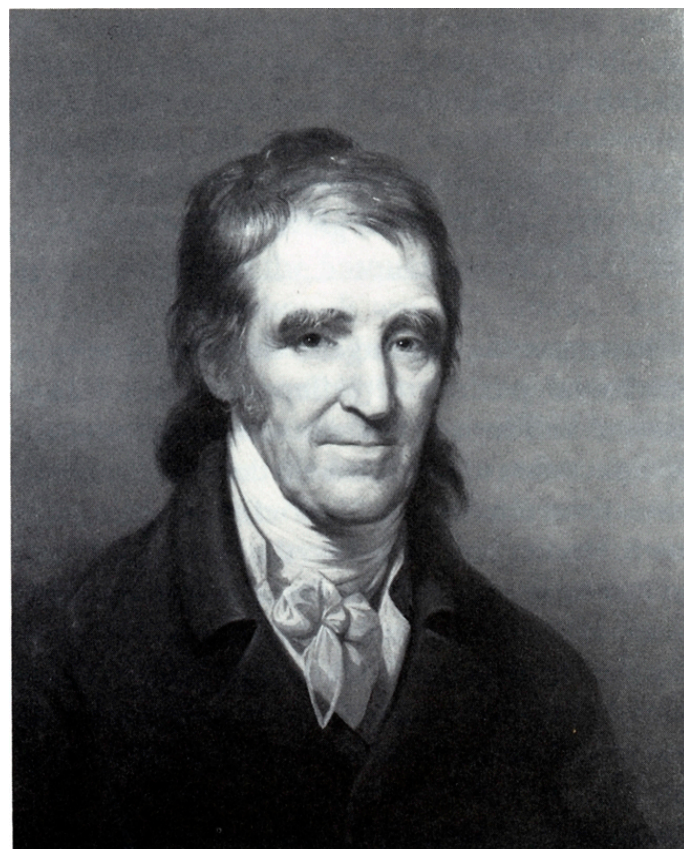


Fig. 4.9. Rembrandt Peale.
William Findley, 1805.

Independence National
Historical Park,
Philadelphia.



Fig. 4.10. *Benjamin Franklin*.
Copy attributed to Jean Valade
after 1778 original by
Joseph-Silfrede Duplessis.

Thomas Jefferson Foundation,
Charlottesville, VA.



Fig. 4.11. *Thaddeus Kosciuszko*.
Engraved by Christian Josi after
Joseph Grassi, c. 1796.

Library of Congress, Washington,
DC.



Fig. 5.1. Gilbert Stuart. *Thomas Jefferson, (Bowdoin Commission)*, 1805-07. Bowdoin College Museum of Art, Brunswick, ME.

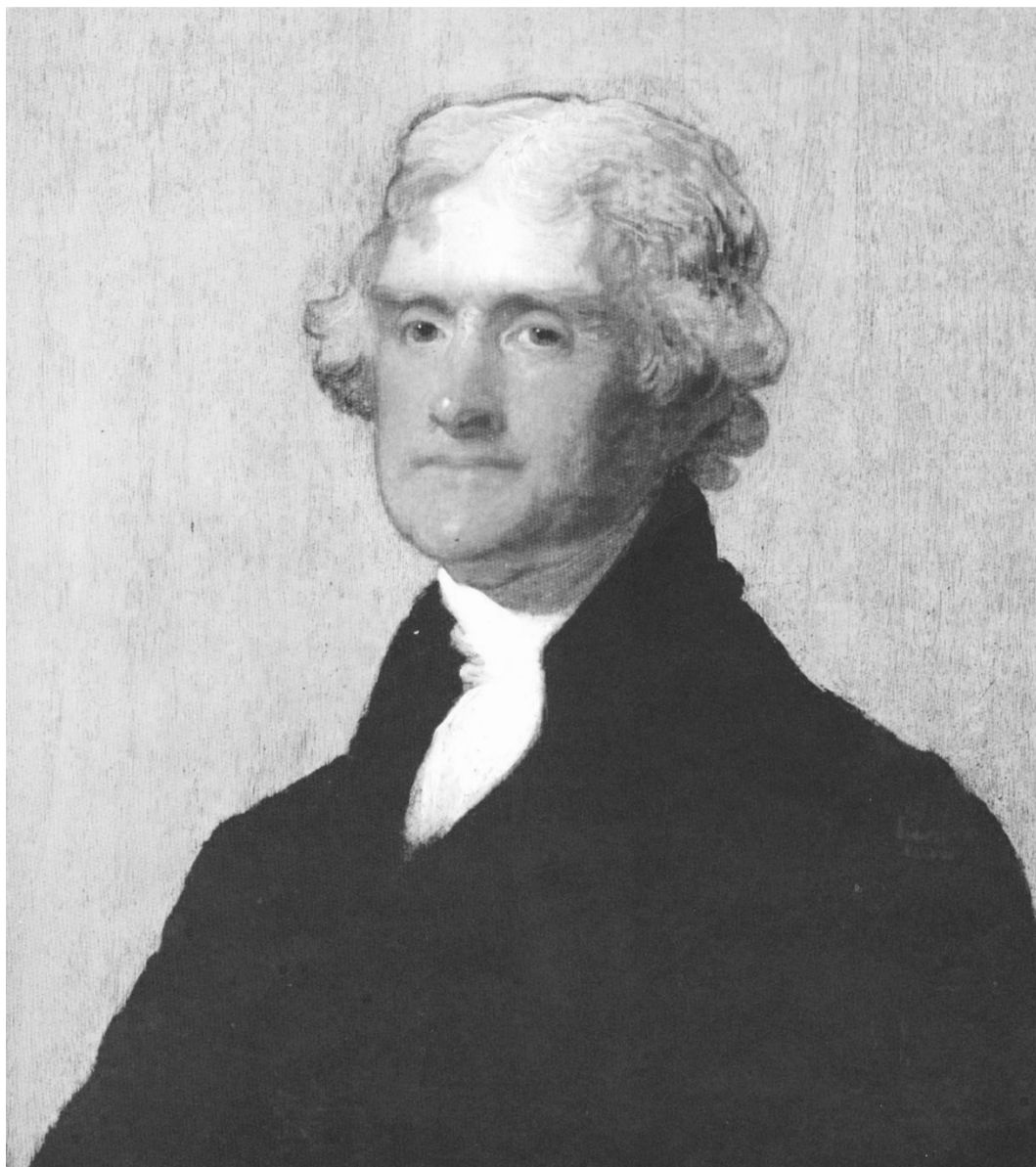


Fig. 5.2. Gilbert Stuart. *Thomas Jefferson (The Edgehill Portrait)*, 1805/21.
Thomas Jefferson Foundation and the National Portrait Gallery, Washington, DC.

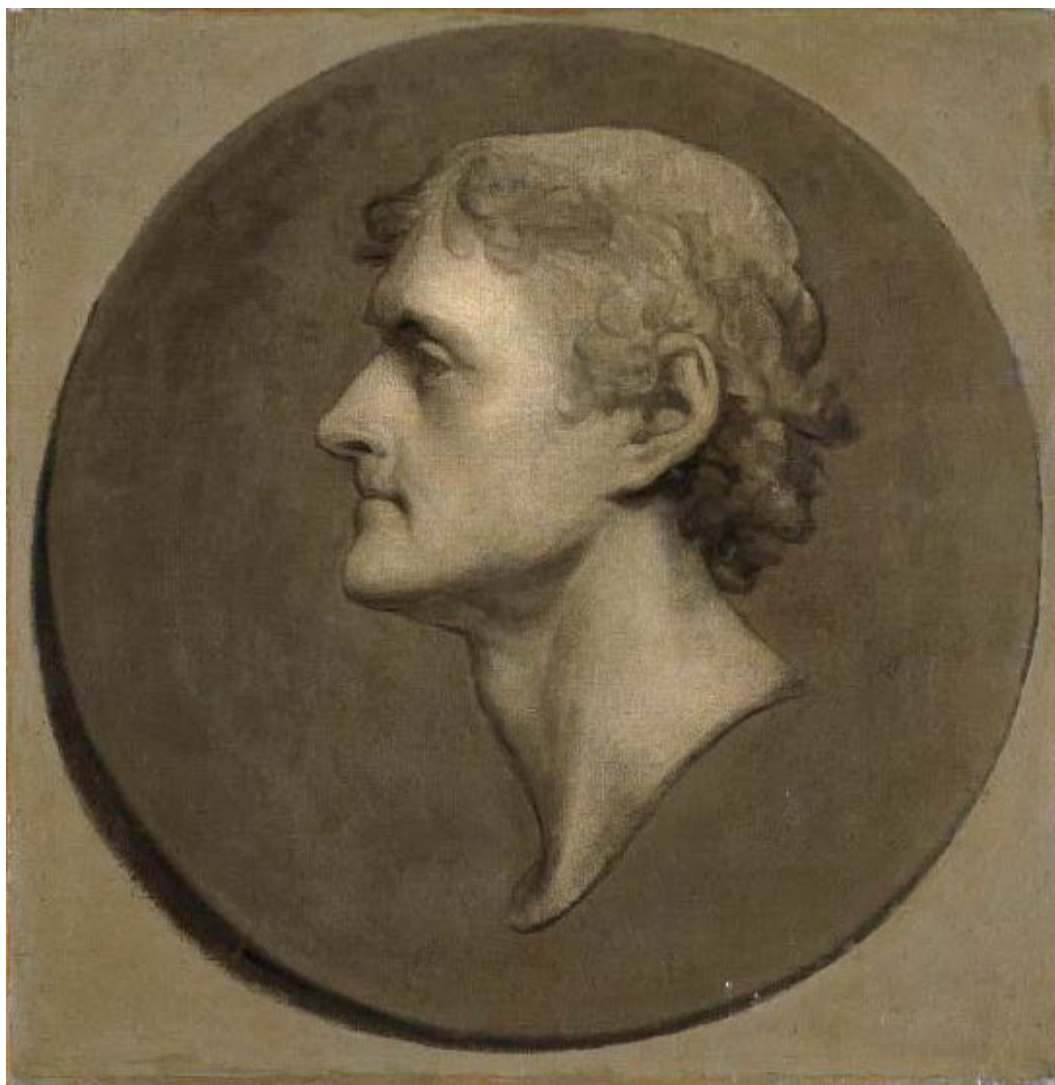


Fig. 5.3. Gilbert Stuart. *Thomas Jefferson (The Medallion Profile)*, 1805.

Fogg Art Museum of Harvard University Art Museums.

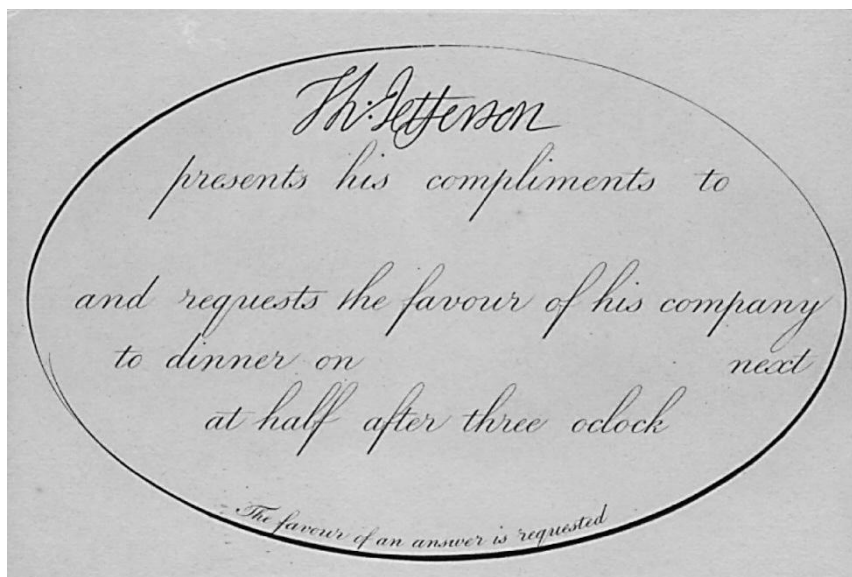


Fig. 5.4. Thomas Jefferson. 'Dinner Invitation', 1801-09. Thomas Jefferson Foundation, Charlottesville, VA.

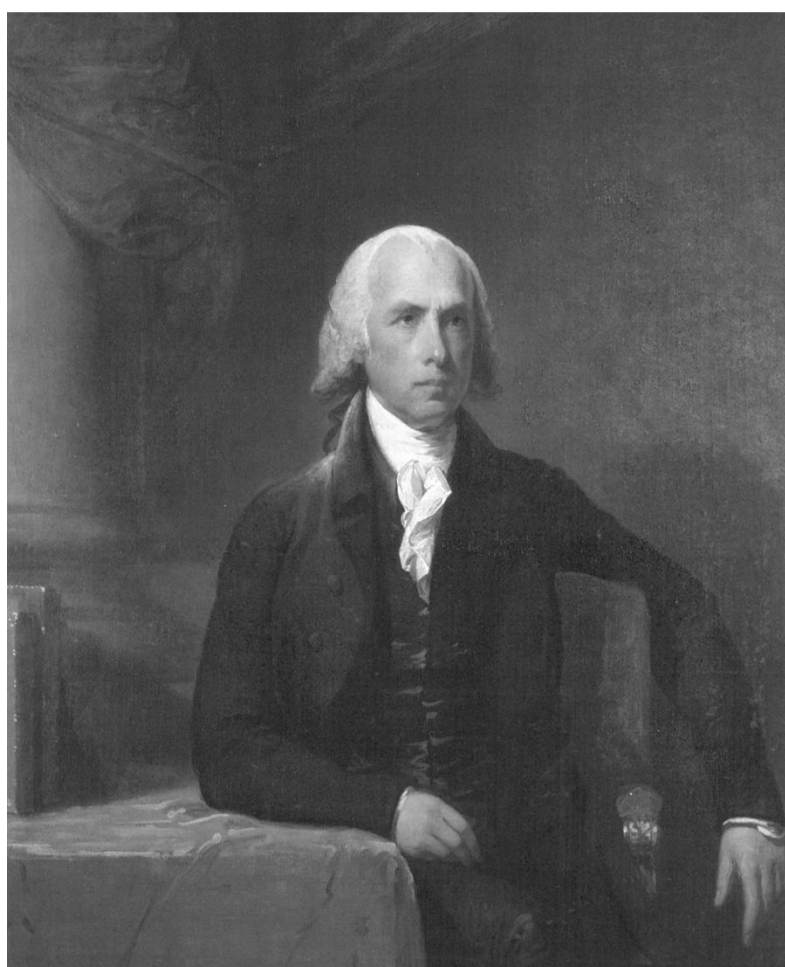


Fig. 5.5. Gilbert Stuart. *James Madison*, 1805-07. Bowdoin College Art Museum, Brunswick, ME.



Fig. 5.6. Charles Wesley Jarvis. *Thomas Jefferson*, 1863. City of New York.



Fig. 5.7. Indian Peace Medal by Robert Scott and John Reich, 1801. Obverse and Reverse.



Fig. 5.8. Presidential Commemorative Medal by John Reich, 1802. Obverse and Reverse.



Fig. 5.9. *Thomas Jefferson*, 1809-11, David Edwin, engraver; William Birch, delineator after Gilbert Stuart. University of Virginia Library.



Fig. 5.10. Benjamin West, *Hector Taking Leave of Andromache*, 1797. Pen, ink, gouache on paper. J. Paul Getty Museum.



Fig. 6.1. Thomas Sully. *Thomas Jefferson*, 1821. American Philosophical Society.



Fig. 6.2. Thomas Sully. *Thomas Jefferson*, 1822. West Point Museum at the United States Military Academy, West Point, NY.



Fig. 6.3. Lawrence Sully, engraved by Alexander Lawson, *Virginia Capitol at Richmond*, 1801-02.



Fig. 6.3a. Benjamin Henry Latrobe. *View of the City of Richmond*, 1789. Maryland Historical Society.

The Capitol stands on the far hill overlooking the town.

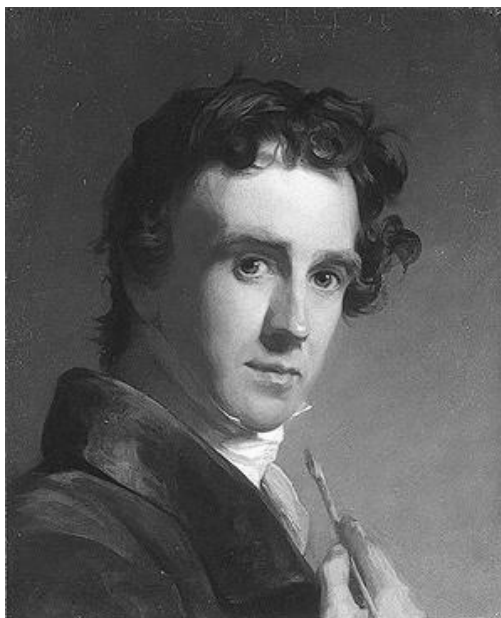


Fig. 6.4. Thomas Sully. *Self-portrait*, 1821. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.



Fig. 6.5. Souche, *Wooden Askos Model*, 1789. Thomas Jefferson Foundation.

Fig. 6.5a. Anthony Simmons and Samuel Alexander.

Silver Askos, 1801.

Thomas Jefferson Foundation,



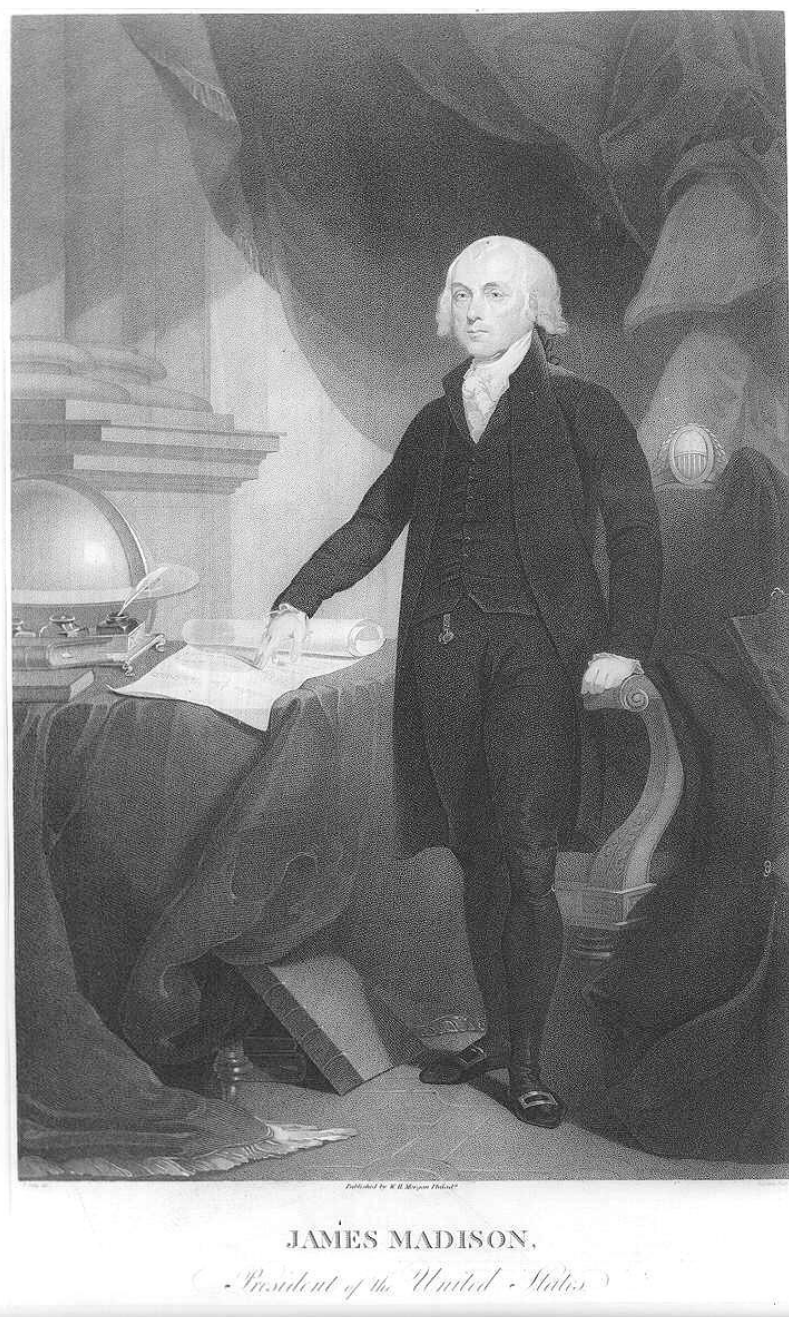


Fig. 6.6. Thomas Sully, engraved by David Edwin. *James Madison*, 1809. Library of Congress, Washington, DC.



Fig. 6.7. Thomas Sully. *Marquis De Lafayette*, 1825-26.
Independence National Historical Park, Philadelphia.

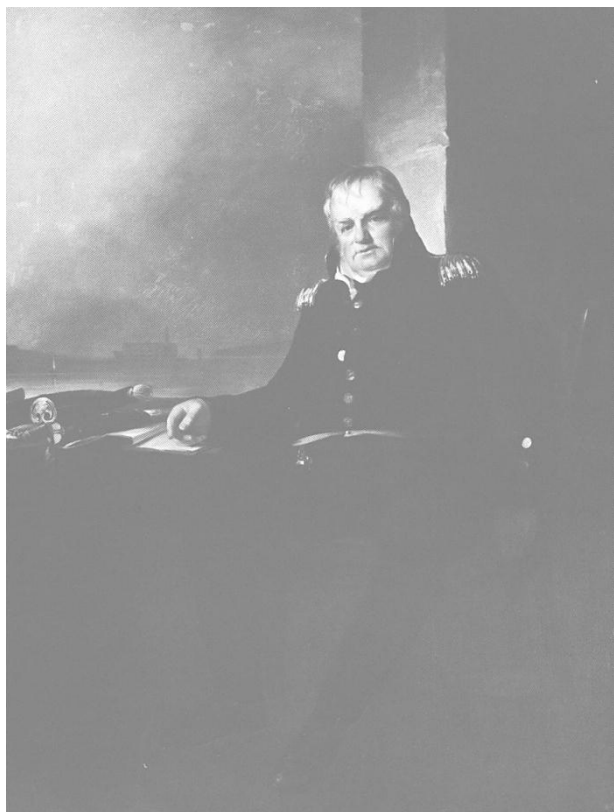


Fig. 6.8. (Upper left) Thomas Sully. *Jonathan Williams*, 1815. West Point Museum, USMA, West Point, NY.



Fig. 6.8a. (Upper right) Study for *Jonathan Williams*, ink on paper. Private Collection.



Fig. 6.8b. (Lower right) Study for *Jonathan Williams*, charcoal on paper. Philadelphia Museum of Art.

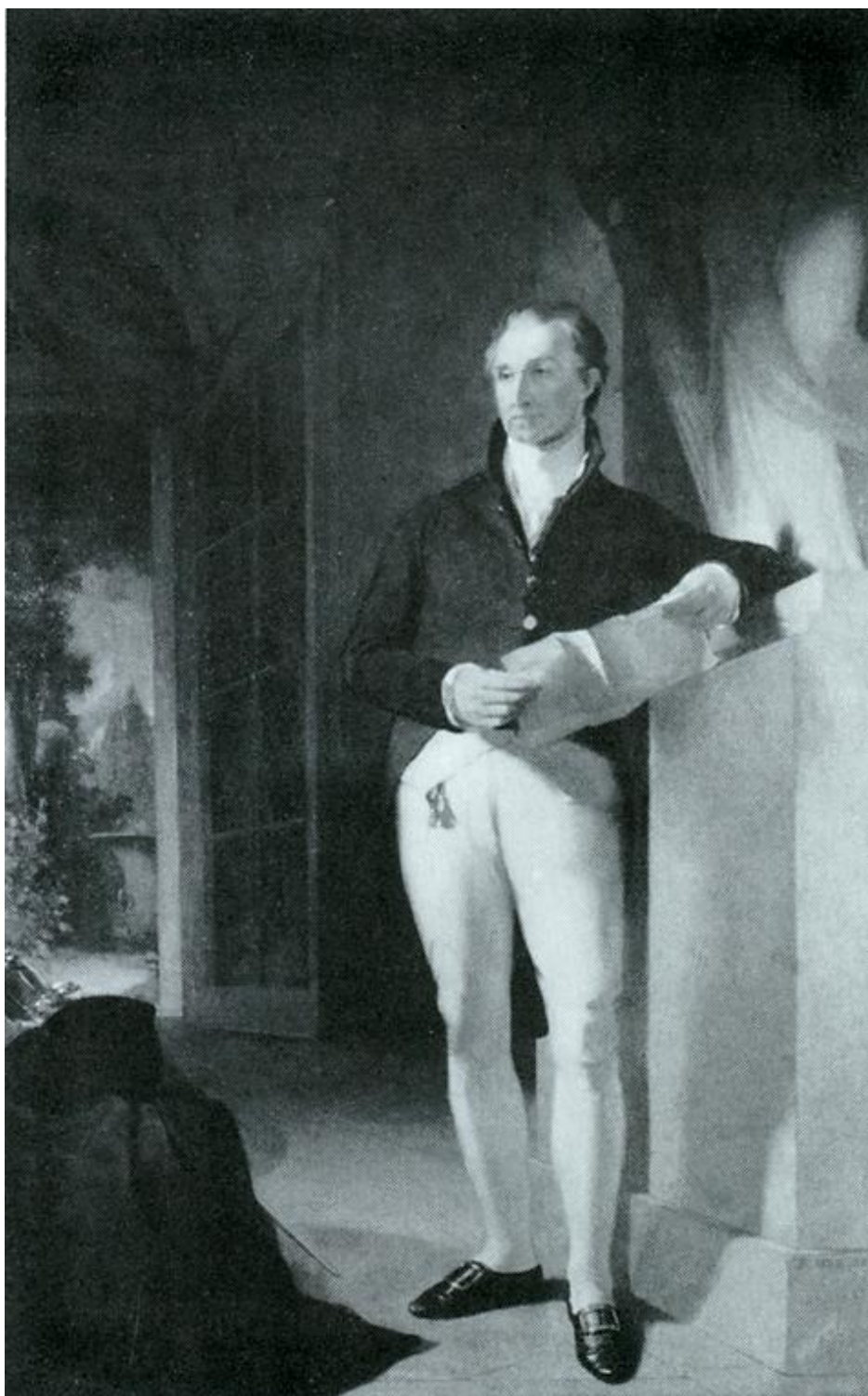


Fig. 6.9. Thomas Sully. *James Monroe*, 1829-31. West Point Museum, United States Military Academy, West Point, NY.

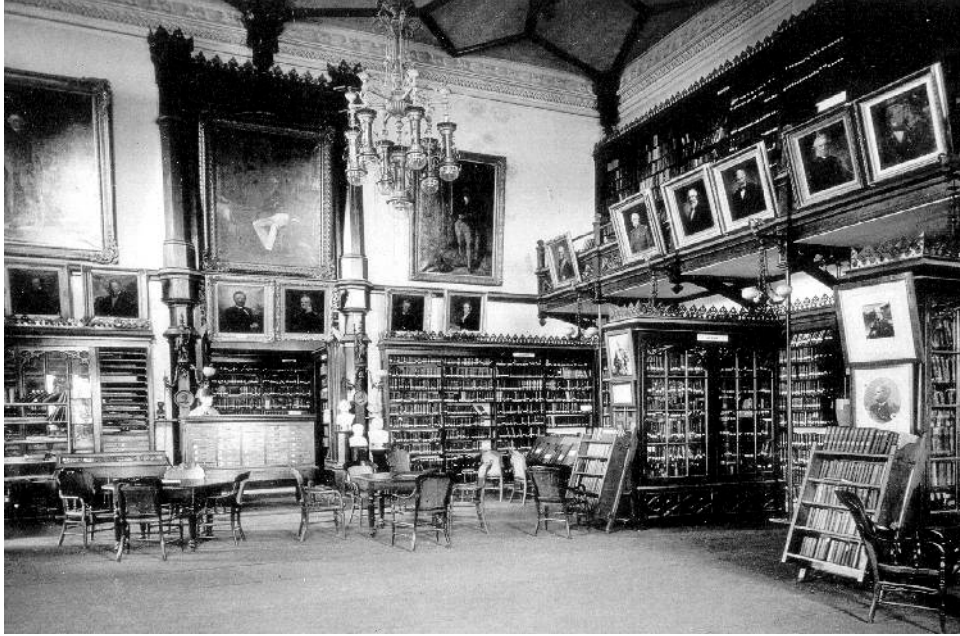


Fig. 6.10. Interior view of the Old Cadet Library, c. 1862. USMA Library.

Sully's *Jefferson* hangs far left on the back wall and Sully's *Monroe* to the far right.



Fig. 6.10a. Haig Room in the Academic Library, Jefferson Hall, USMA, West Point, NY. Personal photograph, 2008. Sully's *Monroe*, *Jefferson*, and *Jonathan Williams* hang on the far wall.

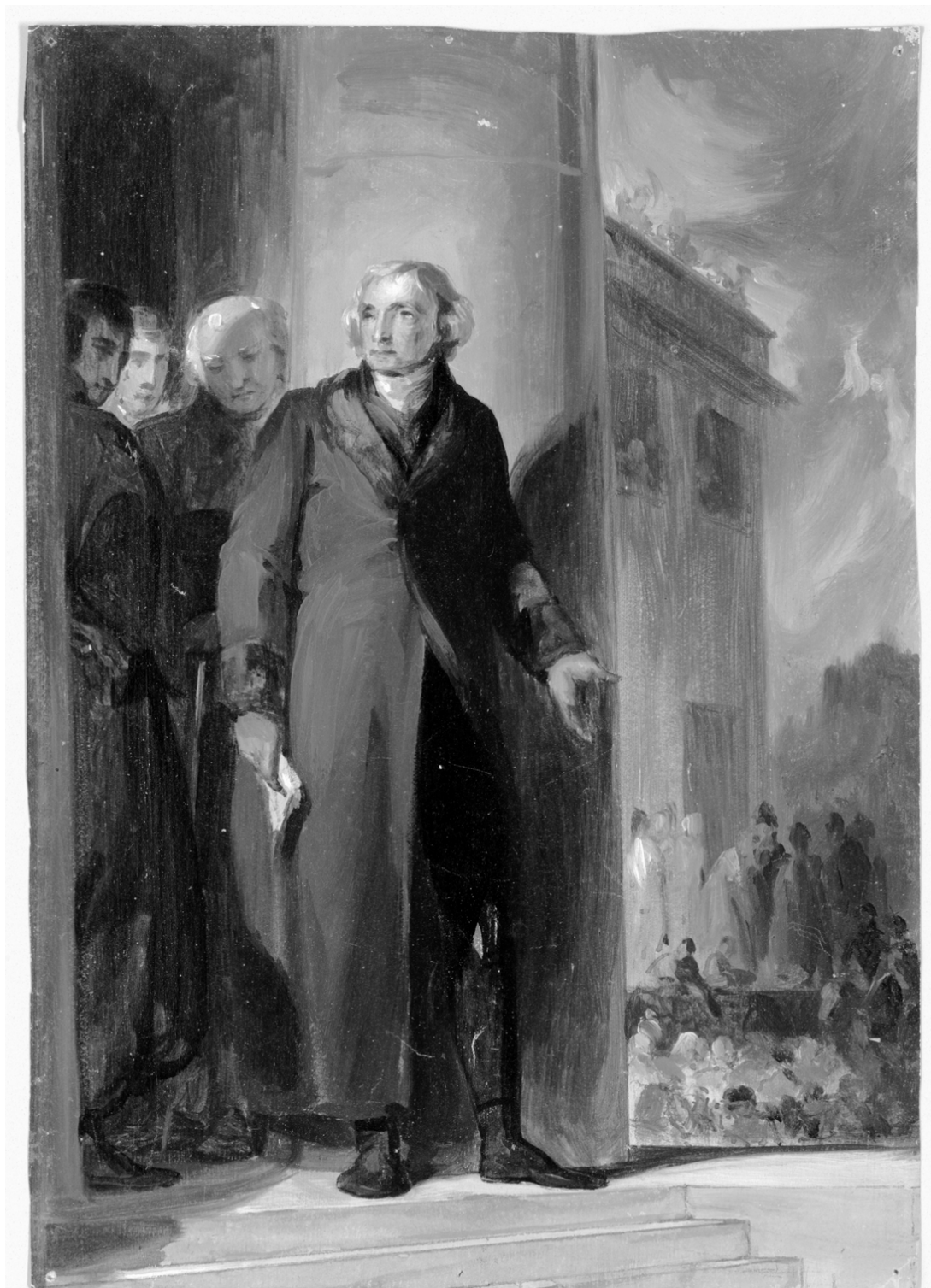


Fig. 6.11. Thomas Sully. *Study for Thomas Jefferson*, c. 1821. Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, CT.

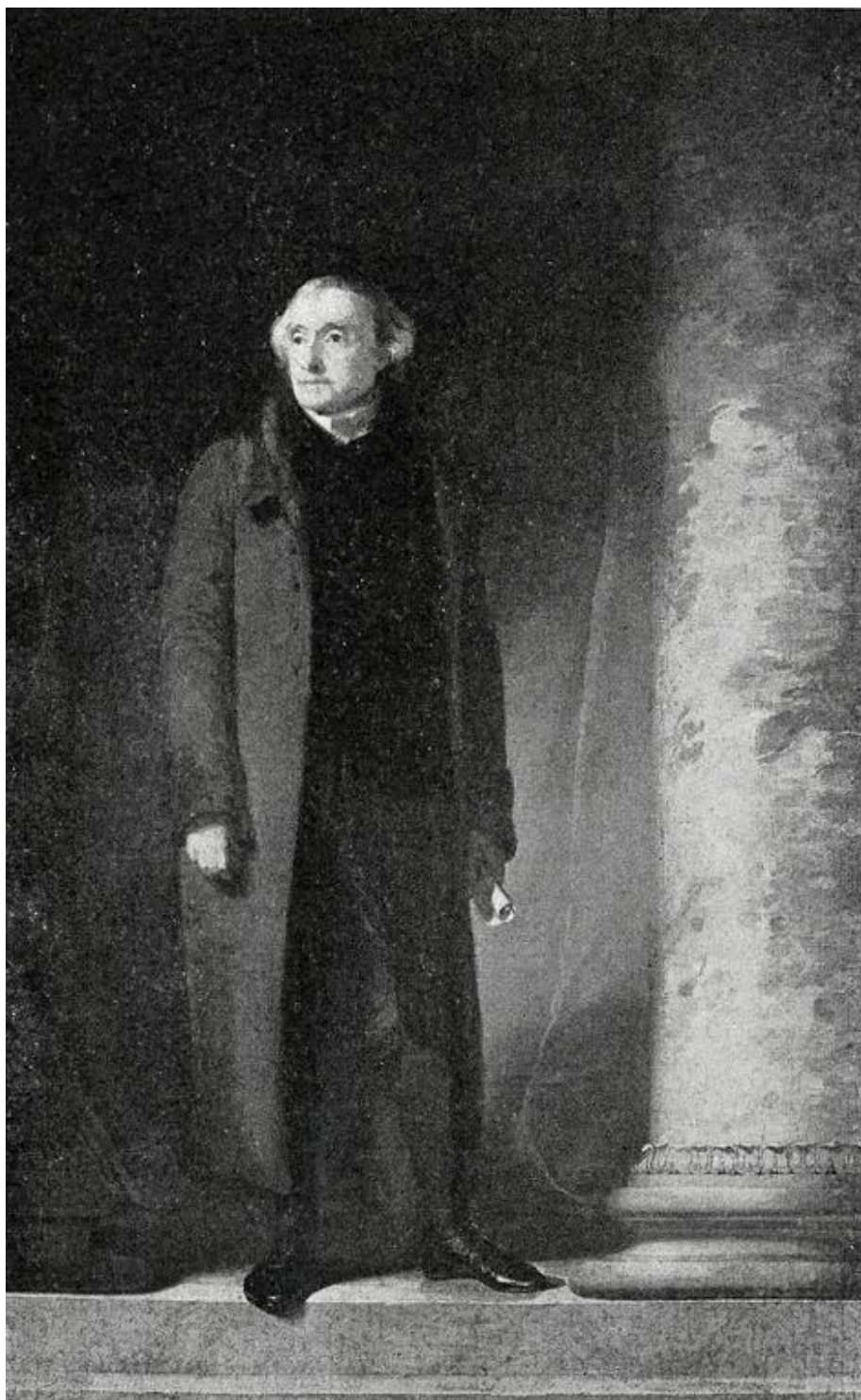


Fig. 6.12. Thomas Sully. *Study for Thomas Jefferson*, 1822.
White House, Washington,DC.

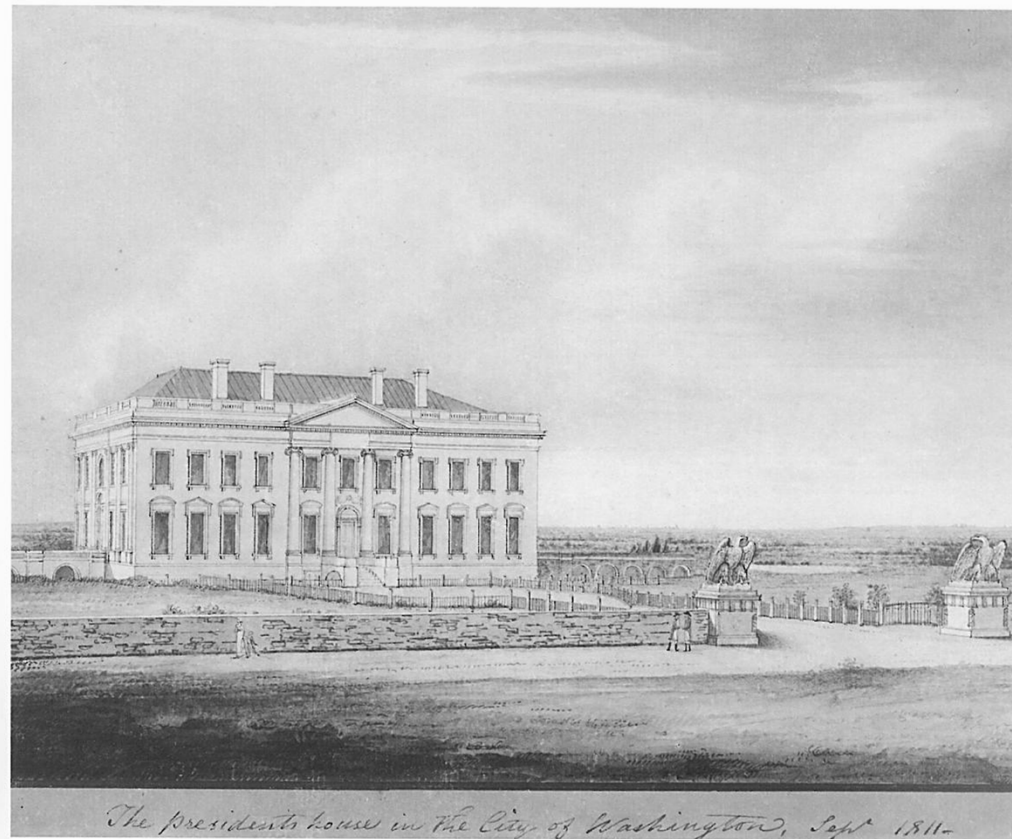


Fig. 6.13. Benjamin Henry Latrobe. *President's House in the City of Washington*, 1811. Private Collection. View of the north entrance as it would have appeared during Jefferson's second term.

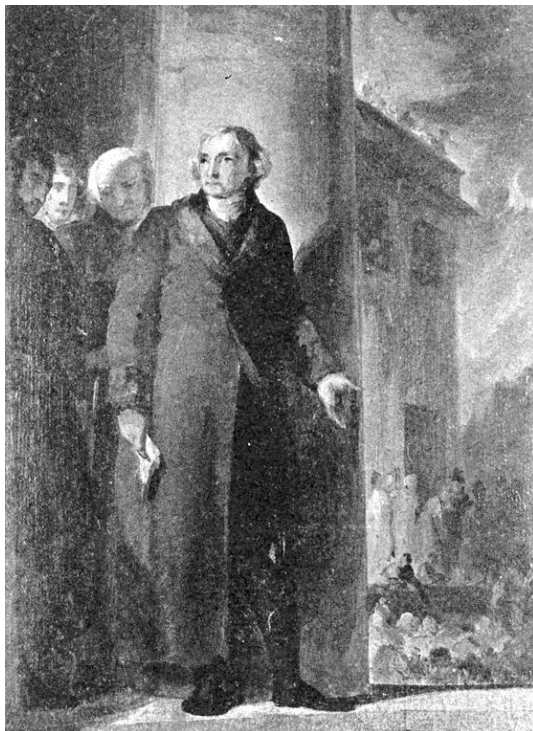


Fig. 6.11. Thomas Sully. Detail of Study for *Thomas Jefferson*.

There are architectural similarities in comparing Sully's study to Latrobe's watercolour,. The north front would not have changed notably when Sully was preparing his *Jefferson* for West Point in 1821-22.



Fig. 6.14. S.F.B. Morse. *The House of Representatives at Night*, 1821-23. Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, DC.