



Thomas Jefferson's Scrapbooks: Poems of Nation, Family and Romantic Love Collected by America's Third President

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While in office from 1801 to 1809, Thomas Jefferson cut and pasted into homemade scrapbooks hundreds of poems of nation – early odes to the still coalescing republic – family, and romantic love. He gave the books as gifts to his granddaughters and for nearly 200 years it was believed the girls had compiled the collections themselves. No previous biography of Jefferson has drawn on this important resource. In unexpected ways this groundbreaking work will help demystify “the American sphinx.” 243 of the poems that captured Jefferson’s imagination are published here for the first time, with essays, annotations and photographs that make this historically important and revealing volume a delight to explore.

Thomas Jefferson’s Scrapbooks shows our third president’s taste for sentimental verse and abolitionist poems, and will modify his reputation as a strict neo-classicist. It includes a poem by Benjamin Franklin, several odes on the death of Alexander Hamilton, poems by women writers who have not been fully recovered in recent anthologies, and corrects the assumption that newspaper verse did not shape Jefferson's thinking on foreign affairs. Jefferson's interest in young American poets will surprise even his biographers who do not always include his literary tastes while in office in their studies of the man. And numerous anti-Federalist poems will correct the view of Jefferson as a reluctant politician.

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