



# The Private Jefferson: Perspectives from the Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society

*Peter S. Onuf, Andrea Wulf, Henry Adams*

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One of U.S. history's most eminent figures, Thomas Jefferson is as elusive as he is revered. *The Private Jefferson* opens a window onto the third president's inner life by exploring the single largest cache of Thomas Jefferson's private papers, held--to the surprise of many--at the Massachusetts Historical Society. Essays by Peter S. Onuf ("The State of the World: Thomas Jefferson's Political Vision"), Andrea Wulf ("Revolutionary Gardens: Jefferson, Politics, and Plants"), and Henry Adams ("The Architectural Jefferson: The Draftsman and His Ideals") underscore aspects of Jefferson's character--his unusual creativity and less frequently studied perspectives on the world--rather than retelling the well-known achievements of his political career. The qualities that come to the forefront are, instead, the principles, passions, and faith that suffused his actions as a statesman, including his love of the natural world as well as his lifelong effort to find a balance between his role on an international stage and his need for a domestic retreat, a reverie for study and experimentation.

Generously illustrated with full color reproductions of architectural drawings, letters, and other manuscripts, this volume is published as a companion to the exhibition *The Private Jefferson: From the Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society*. Both exhibition and book celebrate the society's 225th year.

Distributed for the Massachusetts Historical Society

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