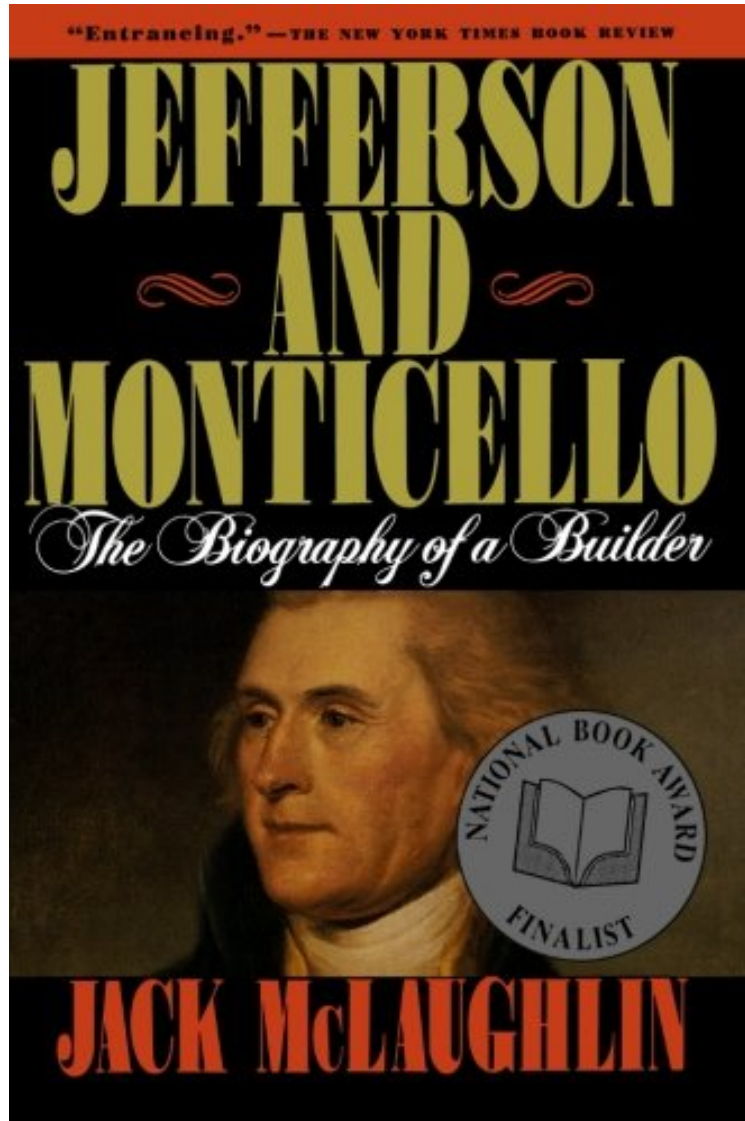


(Library ebook) Jefferson and Monticello: The Biography of a Builder

Jefferson and Monticello: The Biography of a Builder

Jack McLaughlin

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Jack McLaughlin : Jefferson and Monticello: The Biography of a Builder before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Jefferson and Monticello: The Biography of a Builder:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Seeing Monticello in a Different Light By J. M. Williams I really like this book. It is well written and has many points of interest regarding the building of Monticello that are relevant to the Revolutionary Period in America. It raises points that we otherwise probably would not have thought about or fully understood in our modern times. It's the kind of book that once read makes you feel like you have really learned a lot

about many different things. I also enjoyed the way it relates to the life and times of Mr. Jefferson not only in regard to the building of his estate, but also as it relates to building methods common during that period while it also gives us a glimpse into some of the real life events that Mr. Jefferson was involved in during this time period. I'd definitely recommend this book to those who enjoy history and who wish to learn more about this particular period of time in America. You begin to look at Monticello in a different light once you've read this book. Thanks to Mr. McLaughlin for the contribution of this interesting work.

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Fascinating and worthwhile if sometimes a bit boring

By Ricardo Mio It was not the Monticello we admire today, yet the influence of architect Andrea Palladio was unmistakable. The double porticoes on the east and west front--one order of doric columns on the lower level topped by four Ionic columns on the upper level--was copied directly from Palladio's "The Four Books of Architecture." Still, it was about to be changed. Having returned from Paris in 1789 (after four years as minister to France), Jefferson walked around the exterior of his house and noted several signs of neglect. A few repairs, a fresh coat of paint, and the house he had designed would be finished. Instead, he decided much of the house would have to come down and be redone in a new style. His European experience had given him the opportunity to see for himself several of the most stylish examples of French Palladianism. One residence in particular had caught his attention: the Hotel de Salm. It was a wide rectangular structure with a central, semicircular columned bay, capped with an intriguing dome. When Jefferson remodeled Monticello into the house we know today, the image of this stylish rectangular building with the unique dome was foremost in his mind. It's information such as this that makes "Jefferson and Monticello: the Biography of Builder" by Jack McLaughlin, an important and worthwhile book. We live in an age where Jefferson slamming has become fashionable among book writers. McLaughlin reminds us that Jefferson, despite being all too human, was also a genius and an artist. Monticello was his passion, and he spent most of his life perfecting it. Work began in 1768, with the clearing of a mountaintop, and was never really finished until 1823, three years before Jefferson's death. McLaughlin is a fine writer and did his homework. He offers up mountains of information, perhaps more than the average, curious reader expects or wants. I enjoyed McLaughlin's book but found myself wading through the details at times. A student of architecture might enjoy the many details; I didn't. I like a book that keeps things moving. Nonetheless, I found the story of Monticello fascinating if a bit boring at times. I give it four stars.

14 of 16 people found the following review helpful. A well written account of the complex man that was Jefferson

By Joe Owen This is a very informative and well written account about the 3rd President of the United States, the immortal Thomas Jefferson. This biography about the man and his passion for architecture are written down in easy to follow text that is difficult to accomplish about the complex man. The planning of Monticello and the labor of building and re-building are fascinating to think of, especially in the timeframe of which it was built. Jefferson was a true genius in his inventions and insight of how he wanted Monticello to work and function. People seem to forget that Jefferson was a gifted man of many talents, and in my opinion, one of his greatest gifts was architecture. In architecture of Monticello and the University of Virginia, Jefferson gives an insight to the man himself. Simple yet very complex. Jefferson enjoyed simplicity on the surface, but peel away the layers of the man, you found a very complex and intellectual person. The way Monticello was built and rebuilt due to Jefferson changing tastes and ideas says a lot about the man's personal life himself. The only disturbing thing about Monticello was the human cost of labor that was used in it being built. The African-American slaves were the backbone of building to Jefferson's whim. This must have taken a heavy toll of labor and lives, due to the magnificence of Monticello. This by the man who wrote that "all men are created equal". An interesting point to ponder. Overall, this is an excellent read and highly recommended to any history enthusiasts and enthusiasts of early American architecture.

This book, a National Book Award nominee in 1988, is the life of Thomas Jefferson as seen through the prism of his love affair with Monticello. For over half a century, it was his consuming passion, his most serious amusement. With a sure command of sources and skilled intuitive understanding of Jefferson, McLaughlin crafts an uncommon portrait of builder and building alike. En route he tells us much about life in Virginia; about Monticello's craftsmen and how they worked their materials; about slavery, class, and family; and, above all, about the multiplicity of domestic concerns that preoccupied this complex man. It is an engaging and incisive look at the eighteenth-century mind: systematic, rational, and curious, but also playful, comfort-loving, and amusing. Ultimately, it provides readers with great insight into daily life in Colonial and Federal America.

Gracefully written . . . Jefferson and Monticello melds biography and social history to plumb the complexities and contradictions of our most gifted president. John Catanzariti, Editor, *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*

McLaughlin's command of Jefferson's papers and drawings is astonishing. His research, combined with an engaging writing style, makes this an entertaining and informative volume for anyone with an interest in architecture, Jefferson, or his times.

Charles L. Granquist, *Historic Preservation*

About the Author John McLaughlin is head of the Humanities Division of Clemson University and has contributed to such scholarly journals as *Shakespeare Quarterly* and *Modern Drama*. He is also the author of *The Housebuilding Experience*.

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and Monticello