



Thomas Jefferson: An Address, Delivered at Columbia, on June 4, 1885 (Classic Reprint)

George Graham Vest

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Excerpt from Thomas Jefferson: An Address, Delivered at Columbia, on June 4, 1885

Two miles from the spot where Thomas Jefferson was born, near the junction of the Rivanna and James rivers, in Albemarle county, Virginia, on the lands which he inherited from his father, rises Monticello or the Little Mount, five hundred and eighty feet high, the home for more than sixty years, and the final resting place, of the patriot and statesman.

During the long summer days of the year 1765, on a rustic bench near its summit, beneath the branches of a majestic oak, could be seen two young men, in the early bloom of manhood, students of the law, and devoted friends. The one was Thomas Jefferson, and the other Dabney Carr.

Lifting their eyes from the pages of Coke on Lyttleton they rested upon a landscape of enchanting beauty. On their right the lowlands of Virginia stretched away in an unbroken plain to the ocean, with the Rivanna and James like threads of silver; whilst on their left the Blue Ridge, "robed in azure hue," looked down upon the billowy hills that nestled at their feet. It was here that the two friends made solemn compact, mutually pledging their sacred honor, that beneath this oak should be their burial place; and here their ashes rest.

Dabney Carr married Martha Jefferson, his friend's sister, and died eight years after, in the outset of his splendid career, leaving a widow and six children, who became inmates of Jefferson's household, and the objects, during life, of his unceasing love and care. Fifty-three years afterwards, having served his country for forty-four years, with an unselfish honesty, and unwearied industry unequalled in all history, Thomas Jefferson was buried by the side of his boyhood's friend.

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