

Thomas Jefferson

Thomas Jefferson, the author of the Declaration of Independence and America's third President, was a man of wide-ranging interests and many talents. He was a statesman, a politician, an architect, a philosopher, and an inventor.

But he also possessed some jarring contradictions. In the Declaration of Independence, for example, he wrote, "... all men are created equal," but he himself was a slave owner. He wrote that God had endowed men with the right to "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness," yet he was a skeptic, who questioned the existence of God.

Jefferson campaigned for frugality in government but paid \$15 million, a huge sum at the time, for the Louisiana Purchase.

Abraham Lincoln

Few American Presidents are remembered more for their humility and depth of human feeling than Abraham Lincoln. His sympathy for the suffering of others may be traced to his own personal tragedies.

In 1818, when he was only a boy, his mother died of milk sickness.

Without a woman to keep the household functioning, Lincoln and his family lived in virtual squalor. As President, Lincoln, endured other personal hardships.

His wife, Mary Todd Lincoln, suffered from severe emotional problems.

Though she was known to be a gracious hostess, her servants feared her many unexpected tantrums. She was also prone to angry quarrels with the wives of the members of Lincoln's Cabinet.