PREFACE

Born into a United States torn by civil strife and into a world which had recently witnessed the publication of Darwin's *Origin of Species*, Jefferson lived at a time when the gathering forces of the scientific spirit were being unleashed. The age of the geographer as cosmologist, explorer, traveller was soon to be replaced by a world in which geography was rapidly to win for itself respect as a discipline. In the U.S.A. geography enjoyed the successive traditions of thought merging from Davisian physiography, to military geographic thought predicated by the Second World War. Jefferson lived through all these developments. System builders graced collections of geographic fact with form, others made detailed microcosmic studies of a climate, a region, a country. Jefferson studied what interested him and built with the strength, viability, and largeness of his contribution both spoken and written.

How geography came to arrive at its present position is surely a matter of interest and significance to geographers. The study of the life and works of Mark Jefferson, one of the most scholarly geographers ever to grace the U.S. scene, is an attempt to fill, in part, the void in the literature of geographers' lives and thoughts and contribute to an understanding of the geography of American geographers. The study has been motivated in part by a belief that geographers incur a responsibility to piece together the past and see how a given geography has been produced. The work constitutes an examination of all the archival sources available and relevant to Jefferson, the man and his work. Faults there are many. The work was undertaken with the responsibility in mind not to write up the man so that his life is presented merely as an extension of the idealized moments of his existence, rather has an honest attempt been made to recapture the earth and salt of his life, the very complexion of his human thought. Much of the life of the man has been lost to record. Intellectual honesty necessitates adherence to recorded fact—letters, archives, personal effects, and carefully considered testimony of those who knew him. Strict adherence necessitates omission: honest omission is better than that which a writer in biographical vein thinks may or should have happened.

It has been a pleasure to investigate a vigorous mind, reading, thinking, writing, and talking frankly. No effortless superiority belonged to
Jefferson. He was a quiet achiever rather than a stylish failure. The book constitutes a study of the forces that shaped Jefferson and his thinking—a seeing of the way in which scholarship negotiates life, taking from it what it will, living the rest of time as a necessity, but ever awake to necessity offering chance...chance to grow academically, to piece together something new and acquire understanding. The work demonstrates that it is the patient and slow accumulation of a man’s work over a lifetime that energizes the discipline with a nonspectacular part of its warp and woof, and that constant teaching over a period of time teaches the teacher and breeds its own essential extension. Some ideas announce their arrival to the academic world with a Caesar-like entry, but others creep in quietly, leaving people largely unaware of their presence until later times. Incidentally revealed is an age when higher education was singularly devoid of procrastination and an academic who derived his vitality and life’s sustenance from study. His enjoyment of learning coupled with a sense of what was responsible behaviour led him to a total dedication of self. No promotions were extended to encourage Jefferson to perform well, nor were they needed.

As professor of geography at the Michigan State Normal College (1901-39), he schooled future generations of teachers in the subject matter of geography, influenced geographic thinking by his numerous writings and oral presentations, and helped win respect in the U.S. for his subject as a discipline. As savant he ably represented that which was fine in the U.S. normal school tradition. He was the dedicated scholar and the concerned pedagogue. As scholar he corresponded with an international community, published books and articles noted for their originality of viewpoint, and won corresponding memberships and gold medals from geographical societies. As pedagogue he gave twenty hours weekly to classroom teaching, made his course, “ Teachers Geography,” an institution, found time to visit Michigan schools and advise on the matter of geography and the curriculum, composed much needed textbooks at a time when the subject was only just beginning to establish itself in the U.S. university, and encouraged numerous students to make of geography a successful life’s work. The form and content of the Jefferson legacy is sought in the pages that follow.

The author wishes to express his thanks to all the people and institutions who have made his study a possibility:

To the Jefferson family; to Clara Jefferson, late widow of Mark Jefferson who made available to the author the personal effects and correspondence of Mark Jefferson; to Sally Robinson (née Jefferson) who has extended this privilege without qualification and who has given much of her time to recall; to Phoebe Jefferson who loaned her father's
invaluable correspondence of the Paris Peace Conference months; to Barbara Eastman (nee Jefferson) who revealed numerous archives and artifacts and corresponded with the author, becoming his most thorough informant; to Geoffrey, Hilary, and Mary Jefferson (now Seaman) who have either spoken with the author or provided archival material.

To the contemporaries of Jefferson who lived with the man in the context of his times and who spoke of him so: Professor Margaret Sill, one-time student of Jefferson, later (1921), faculty colleague of the man until his retirement, and who continues with the geography department of the one-time Michigan State Normal College, has given unremittingly of her time in recollection and recall. Charles C. Colby, also a Jefferson student, has helped in interview and via correspondence. Richard Mahard, another Jefferson student, loaned extensive notes taken from Jefferson's courses in 1935. S. S. Visher has provided information and made numerous valuable suggestions, both in person, and via correspondence. His published obituaries of Mark Jefferson were genesis to this study. Helpful and informative conversations were enjoyed with Raye R. Platt, Gladys Wrigley, Pierre Delvert, and Madame M. Jean-Brunhes Delamarre (Paris). Informative and noteworthy correspondence was enjoyed with Marcel Aurousseau, Charles Seymour, and Griffith Taylor.

To the individuals and institutions who have been of assistance: The American Geographical Society made available its fine archives and resources, otherwise helping with inquiries; Kimball C. Elkins of the Harvard University Library archives; Yale University for access to the Charles Seymour Peace Collection; the National Archives, Washington, D.C., and to senior archivist Herman Friis; the Stratton archives of Wisconsin State University, River Falls, Wisconsin; Robert Bowman who granted the author access to the personal papers of his father at Lincoln, Nebraska; the National Council for Geographic Education who provided some funds for travel in connection with this study. My thanks are due to Sheila Bareham for numerous assistances including the typing of correspondence and manuscript; to Linda Miller (nee Berns) for help with archival organization and typing; and to my wife, Norma, who has been living the life of an author's wife!

Finally my thanks are due to the library staff of Eastern Michigan University; to Egbert Isbell, historian and authority on the history of the Michigan State Normal School; to Eugene Elliott (President E.M.U. 1948-1965) who demonstrated faith in the worth of the study; to Carl R. Anderson (historian and Vice-President of Eastern Michigan University), without whose personal encouragement and assistance the completion of the manuscript would not have been possible, this book is

The very kind J. K. Wright (Lyme, New Hampshire) lent his exemplary scholarship to a reading of the manuscript during April-May, 1965, gave the author freely of his time in discussing revision, and otherwise made numerous valuable suggestions for manuscript improvement. It is pleasurably appropriate that Preston James (Syracuse University)—personal friend and enthusiast of the work of Mark Jefferson—should write the foreword.

GEOFFREY J. MARTIN

Southern Connecticut State College

New Haven, Connecticut