On October 12, 1889, Jefferson bade a sorrowful farewell to the Argentine. He had arrived there six years previously at the age of twenty years and had bettered his knowledge of languages in what was then a philological laboratory. He had earned a good wage throughout those six years, saved a not inconsiderable amount of money, only to be deprived of much of his savings by inflation. But he had enjoyed the privilege of knowing Spanish life and had revelled in a climate that was wholly lacking in the harshness and austerity of the Boston winter season.

Undoubtedly Jefferson was unhappy to leave the Argentine when he did. A variety of circumstances had combined to drive him from the Argentine and to Europe for a brief stay, then home. Of immediate import was the inflation:

I sail for Genoa and Rome on the 12th instant my plans having been hurried by the rise of gold. This has already reached 242% and sanguine people think it may be brought to par in about five years if the proper measures be adopted. In that I have no particle of faith. The Government is undoubtedly afflicted at present as it is difficult to chant the usual hymn of progress and good government in face of such a state of finances. But the necessary reforms are so wholly at variance with the notions of the present generation that I have no hopes. What the republic needs is economy in public and private life, not as they understand the word in France either, but rather a certain moderation
in their extravagance . . . There is nothing to be done here now working on a salary which is paid in paper while you must pay gold rates for everything you consume.

Jefferson's departure from the Argentine was also encouraged by the scourge of yellow fever, the dreaded "chu chu" of South America. In mid 1889 the "chu chu" struck the Argentine as it had done only four years previously. Many thousands of people died from this malady for which there was no known cure at that time. Possibly, knowledge that Theodora's father (a Chickering piano salesman) had died of yellow fever in Texas, 1859, brought the reality of danger closer to him, and possibly the numerous exhortations of his father's correspondence encouraged him to put distance between himself and the yellow fever. Jefferson was certainly cognizant of the dangers of yellow fever for he collected newspaper items and reports from many countries on the yellow fever outbreak of the late 1880's.

Another factor that encouraged Jefferson to sail for Europe and home was concern for his family. Both his father and mother were aged by this time and had lost four of their nine children. A fifth was troubled with a severe nervous condition. Mark was the youngest of their children, and his six year's absence from home had made his parents eager for his homecoming. Frequently in correspondence his father indicated to Mark that there was always a place for him at home if he chose to return, that both he and his mother missed him greatly. Undoubtedly Jefferson began to feel the call of home, his place, where he had grown up, where he had a circle of friends, where indeed he had passed his youth hiding, book in hand. Jefferson began to regard his South American years as a "self-imposed exile," and an experience with the world in which we live. Furthermore, his brother Harry had been taken seriously ill on the occasion of his first return to Massachusetts in 1889. Indeed, Harry might well have died at that time, had not Jefferson, a combination of despair and initiative, applied oxygen immediately.

Jefferson fervently desired to make of language study a career. His saving in the Argentine was predicated by his desire to reside in Europe for several months to study languages at French, German, and Italian universities. He had been given letters of introduction to Heidelberg University by Dr. Kurtz, the German botanist at the University in Cordoba; and from Portabella, his Spanish bookseller friend from Cordoba, a letter of introduction to people in Paris, that his study at the Sorbonne might be facilitated. The Argentine inflation deprived Jefferson of the means to finance this plan, abbreviating his intended European residence, hastening his return to Massachusetts.
Finally his affection for Theodora must be reckoned of account. The two had first met at Boston University in 1882. At that time Jefferson had coached her in Greek, taken her to lectures, skated with her on local ponds, and kept company with Theodora on Boston Common. Resenting the hostility of Theodora's mother, Jefferson had taken himself to South America. During his Argentine years, however, Theodora had regularly sent him letters of affection. Jefferson largely ignored these letters, for he was not able to see a place for a woman in the plans he had set for himself. However, on his return to Massachusetts early in 1889, he had met Theodora, and in a very few weeks his early love for her had returned. They walked the country lanes together, enjoyed surrey rides, and kept company the length of his leave. On his return voyage from Melrose, Massachusetts, to Tucuman in the Argentine, he posted her letters of affection on every conceivable occasion. There is little doubt that he had Theodora in his blood when he left the Argentine that October. Later Jefferson wrote:

Every act of our lives has a thousand determining causes but only one ground. You are the only ground of my returning to this country and Argentine finances and La Torre and the chu-chu etc. only so many determining causes that made it sooner or later, or this way or that, but would never have brought me here. That is the best I can do towards interpreting the last years page out of my life.

Perhaps Jefferson's departure from the Argentine was a product of all of the above forces. The fact is, he sailed on the *Aquila* from Buenos Aires, October 12, 1889, bound for Genoa, Italy. The books that Jefferson had collected over the past six years were packaged and sent to Melrose, Massachusetts, aboard a friend's yacht—Mr. Roberts' *Annie Lewis*. The collection was very considerable, and though Jefferson wished to take it to Europe with him, the expense would have proved prohibitive. The journey over the waves, the schools of whales, flying fish, the ship community, Cape Verdes, Mediterranean and Africanist influences all conjoined to render this the most delightful voyage that he ever experienced. Perhaps the voyage was rendered more happy to Jefferson in the knowledge that he was eventually returning to an harbor he could call home. Six years of vagabonding in exile was fatiguing, Jefferson wrote in his old age. The journey is worthy of record as explained by the wanderer's own pen:

My winter in Tucuman had been a sick one. But the sea voyage has set me right again and I have determined to come here at once, after some months of French I shall go back to the States to pitch my tent, and this time permanently. As it turns out the idea of sailing for Italy was a happy one as the Italian brought me to Genova at half the
expense of the French and English lines, while the fare across the Alps is insignificant and the journey is delightful. November 1st we sighted Cape Spartero on the African coast at 1 a.m. fairly abreast of the “Aquila”. Presently the lights of Trafalgar point on the Spanish side became visible though we could not distinguish the coast in the starlight unlike the African shore which we passed at a distance of only three miles or so. The Strait was as calm as a lake, the sky perfectly clear and the sea full of phosphorescence. Good fortune sent us a breeze from astern almost equal to the steamer's march so that we could promenade about the decks without noticing the slightest motion of the air. Far astern stretched the great wake of the Aquila a stream of liquid fire. Numbers of dolphins met us and clearly outlined in the phosphorescence swam for miles before us so near that their tails seemed to touch the Aquila's cutwater.

Fifteen minutes later we sighted the bright red light of Taija to the Northeast. From here onward the strait narrows continuously until at Monkey Mount a few miles west of Ceuta a mere passage of twelve miles separates Africa from Europe. Even in the starlight we plainly distinguished both coasts. The lights in the town of Ceuta follow and an instant later those of Gibraltar which we passed at 3:30 a.m.

Of the famous rock only the dark silhouette was visible against the sky. Of course I need not say we regretted not passing the famous fortress by day. We saw what was visible and turned in until daylight. From that daybreak onward our voyage was a series of the most beautiful panoramas imaginable. The African coast now loomed faint and blue in the distance but close to the north the Spanish coast displayed all its marvels. It is useless to attempt the description of so much beauty. One must see it to form any idea.

Inland towers the snow-capped range of the Sierra Nevada de Granada. From the water's edge rises the shore range crowned on every headland by ancient moorish beacon towers, clothed with vines and olives, among which are descried white villages clustering along some shelf on the mountain. Sea and air were truly Mediterranean for their blueness. All day the field glasses were passing from hand to hand the passengers grouping about those who knew the coast, every face bright with the knowledge of speedy arrival. The second day we passed the shores of Ibiza and Mallorca the Balearic islands. After a night of fearful plunging in the Gulf of Lions the 3rd dawned clear and calm before Toulon and then began the fitting conclusion of our delightful journey.

We passed so near the Riviera that we could follow for hours the course of the train from Marseilles bound like the Aquila for Genova.
All the mountains in France the Maritime Alps and in Italy the Apennines are richly wooded with olives and densely strewn with hotels, villages and the famous cities of the Riviera, Nice, Monte Carlo, San Remo (we passed so near that an Italian pointed out to me the palace where the late German Emperor passed most of his last illness), Ventimiglia and finally Genoa outspread in an amphitheatre of mountains. I only stayed in Genoa one day, enough to form some idea of its picturesqueness derived from its immense variety of levels. I came here via Turin, Mont Cenis and Dijon. My first view of the Alps was at Modane on the French side of the Mont Cenis tunnel where we were subject to custom house inspection. I had been asleep passing the tunnel, it was raining on the Italian side and nothing could be seen, moreover it was past midnight. But noticing the extreme cold on getting out of the coach I glanced up and saw the finest display I ever beheld. The night was clear with moonlight and straight above us towered the snow peaks of the Alps. I have seen a good deal of higher mountain ranges than these in South America, but nowhere anything as majestic. All through the Alps I noticed the same appearance of immense height due simply to surprising differences of level. The cliffs tower up so sheer that it is often impossible to descry the sky from the car windows.

Jefferson did not attend the University of Rome as anticipated since he had not received word from Boston University that lecture fees would not be charged him. This, together with the knowledge that he could receive free accommodation in a suite of Parisian rooms with his Argentine friend, Garcia, encouraged him to travel immediately to Paris, his faithful poncho slung in cavalier style about him.

In Paris the 1889 exhibition was being enjoyed by an international clientele. A revivalist spirit of the days of 1789 was in the air, a banquet was held for all the mayors of France, a great exhibition attracted to the capital of France many thousand visitors anxious to view the mistress of Europe and the Western world. Boulevards, sidewalk cafes, the Arch of Triumph, efficient embankment of the Seine, were all phenomena which men of culture felt obliged to visit and appreciate. The Eiffel Tower was on display and made eager the people to appreciate the spirit of the New France. Recovery from her brutal beating during the Franco-Prussian War was complete. Parisian morale was high. France had recently recovered from several internal crises, was indulging a colonial venture of breathtaking proportions, and De Lesseps of Suez Canal success was already planning a Panama Canal. Jefferson enjoyed the sophistication and maturity of the European scene after six years of life on an economic frontier that encroached upon the
wilderness. In Paris he was able to forget the strain that a strictly regimented life of responsibility on the sugar plantation entailed. He rowed with his Spanish friend Garcia on the Seine and Marne, in a shell, often patronized the sidewalk cafes, attended the theatre, took many energetic promenades in the first city of France, and visited the Sorbonne:

I attended the first of Gaston Paris' lectures on Old French the other day at the Sorbonne and was rather disappointed. He has nothing to say but what he, Diez and Brachet, Litre etc. have already said and the course is so thinly spread out that I prefer to study in books while earning something. I shall return to the States in December and try to turn my knowledge to account there. My health is greatly improved since leaving South America and now only occasionally reminds me of Tucuman. Here I should be content to stay until next fall if I had occupation but otherwise find it a loss of time.

Other lectures, too, he attended and derived an appreciation of France and French language. On the months of October and November Jefferson commented:

The weather is by no means agreeable. Paris seems enveloped at this season in perpetual haze. Not fog but a haziness that just suffices to deprive us of the sunlight. The winter will probably be severe as we are already obliged to make a fire in the afternoon though both of us from southern experience are long suffering in the matter of temperatures. The poor will have a hard time in Paris this winter as the affluence of visitors to the Exposition has put up the prices of provisions generally and brought crowds to town from the surrounding country to perform the increased hotel and restaurant service.

Jefferson suffered a severe head cold at this time which contributed to his wretchedness. He had not heard from Theodora and feared that she had ignored his letters. Unknown to Jefferson, Theodora was at that time staying in Paris on her way to visit relatives in Dresden, Germany. Not hearing from Theodora, however, he was encouraged to sail for Massachusetts to learn the circumstances himself. Jefferson did spend three days in London en route, inquiring for his relatives. He found a cousin, Mr. Wigg, in London, who tried in vain to persuade Jefferson that he should return to South America and become an agent of the Wigg Furniture Company. Jefferson crossed the English Channel once again, secured passage on the Normandie, departed Havre, November 30, and arrived in New York, December 10, 1889. A swift visit to New Hampshire revealed that Theodora was still in Europe. Jefferson returned to his parents' home in Massachusetts . . . and waited. Weeks later Theodora did return from Germany and was promptly visited by
an impatient Jefferson. He found her confined to bed with rheumatic fever. From her bed of sickness she insisted that Jefferson must become a "respectable body" before she could marry him. (Almost certainly the influence of Aunt Mary Horne was at work.) To prove respectability, Jefferson submitted to one year's work as schoolmaster in Massachusetts, during which time he was required not to travel.

From the summer of 1890 to the spring of 1891, Jefferson taught at the Mitchell Boys School, Billerica. In his first week at the school he wrote: 7

The school and grounds are the finest I ever saw and Billerica is simply lovely. It lies on a hill overlooking a broad valley clad with trees, and adorned on its further slope with the city of Lowell. Beyond is a blue background of low mountains. There is a river handy, of name to me unknown, and rowing will be possible.

The school building was of wood, pleasingly situated and not overcrowded. Mr. Mitchell, the principal, advertised his boarding school with brochures that had attracted fifty pupils to him by 1890. Jefferson swiftly accommodated himself to a small room he was given on the premises. The floor was of rock maple, neat blackboards surrounded the walls, on whose upper moldings maps on spring rollers soon appeared. A double gas jet provided light from the center of the room, while an iron cot offered him respite from his daily turmoil. A generous row of chairs around the wall, a desk, and a broad window-sill which served as a book shelf, contributed to a spartan room appearance. 8

I am here out of a necessity and still I find it rather better than I had imagined and Mr. Mitchell a much more sympathetic man than I had fancied. There are moments of strain, however, when it seems impossible to complete the year. Such a thought is as dangerous as a downwards glance to him who scales a great height, just exactly: it endangers all caretaking and precautions. Occasionally I have fits of talking Spanish with Elliott that nearly make me frantic. At other times I think tearfully of the personal charms of a young lady up in New Hampshire who is to me as the sour grapes of the fable. Five minutes later I may be playing ball with the boys, or telling a select circle of voyages and foreign lands. Then I get disgusted with all sorts of trifles, as always on returning from home where I have my own bed and Mother's good linen, to come here into this little affair that I have to double up to get into and has linen, well, not very reputable. Bah. I am as happy as can be expected under the circumstances.

And of the boys, Jefferson wrote: 9

With one or two exceptions the motive for their presence here is stupidity, laziness, or mischievousness. Else other schools would have
enjoyed the light of their presence. In short, this is a sort of Hospital for incurables, a last resort and to Mr. Mitchell's credit be it spoken that he has a considerable degree of success.

From the expansive and expanding Argentine, where refrigeration, speedier shipping, English capital, the railway, wire fences, and initiative were transforming a wilderness into an economic empire, Jefferson was obliged to consort with school boarders, the day long, in a little wooden school house in Billerica. Absent was the largeness of his South American undertakings; his vision of language study at a European university had been crushed by the Argentine inflation which decimated his South American savings; gone were the days of the warmth of Spanish life and the Latin graciousness of manner which so appealed to him; gone was his responsibility for running an entire sugar plantation. He was now slave to a love; a love that he could not live without, and yet a love that was not fulfilled. The woman of his dreams was living with her aunt at Gilmanton, New Hampshire, while he labored in a school house at Billerica, Massachusetts. He lived for a long weekend when he might visit her, for a vacation that they might share time together, for a letter from her, for the time when she would consent to engagement.

Jefferson tolerated this situation by creating his own amusements, driving himself always into work, play, or leisure with a fierce energy that quite infected the boys and made them wonder at him. The two other masters of the school, considerably older than the youthful Jefferson, were too stern and unbending to break faculty-student distance. When he collected stamps, the boys of the school collected stamps, writing to their friends and relatives in many parts of the world for the little adhesives. When the baseball season arrived Jefferson organized a team, managed it, and played pitcher against all comers. He pole vaulted, to keep his body a hard 132 pounds—the boys pole vaulted. He visited his family at Melrose for the weekend, playing whist with the group and talking books with his father—the boys fretted. He organized snowball fights, making sure that the rules of the game were observed. He would go for a walk and allow as many boys to go with him as chose, but few ever completed a Jefferson Saturday walk that might take him many miles on foot. He would row at a furious pace down the little river by the school house, and the boys would try to keep apace of him for a few yards. He would conduct searches for flint arrowheads, enjoy the extravagance of his Parisian-made bow ties, and sling hash for ten boys at his table, and yet find time to mark out a tennis court and teach the boys how to play with improvised bats. Jefferson was so
intense, so empathetic under a seemingly gruff exterior, that the boys came to regard him with a fatherly affection. They would crowd into his bedroom-study at night and beg him to tell them more about his South American days. These experiences thrilled the boys so much, that he published "The Adventures of Don Marcos in South America," in the School weekly Echo. Within a very few weeks principal Mitchell had appointed Jefferson business manager, editor, and reporter for the school paper. In a fashion the boys became part of a family to Jefferson, and the school a form of home. As the months passed, he wrestled on the mat with the boys in their physical education classes, showed them how to tap maple trees, explained to them how he tried to combat a receding hairline by the application first of Jamaica rum, then of kerosene rubbed deep into the roots of the scalp, and finally by alternate hot and cold water massages. Regularly on Sunday he took twenty of them in line to church. After the service they would retire to Jefferson's room and make maps of the places mentioned in church. He won their respect, encountered no classroom discipline problem as did the second master, Mr. Parmenter, neither did Jefferson refer to force as the supreme arbiter as did principal Mitchell. In his spare moments he frequently indulged a deep and solitary study that obliged him to comment, "There is an amount of enjoyment in solitary study that can hardly be imagined by the uninitiated, yet it certainly tends to unfit a man to live among his kind which makes it dangerous." His pedagogics would occasionally find their way into the letters he would write to Theodora from his bedroom, or prison chamber as he chose to call it: 11

Really a teacher should become quite encyclopaedic! I wonder why they don't? Probably the best teachers are those who are most positive of character and such persons naturally are slow to learn. That may seem like a paradox yet I firmly believe it—that he who is slowest to learn may be best fitted to teach . . . For this week's English I am proposing to read to the boys one of Dickens' Christmas stories and make the boys retell as much of the story from memory as they can.

Numerous evidences suggest that Jefferson was appreciating the role of pedagogue and that he was beginning to realize he could never teach if the future meritorious works of his pupils were to be his sole reward, other than a modest salary. From 1901-1939 he was to spend thirty-nine years at the Michigan State Normal College training teachers, but he never did teach solely. At this later date he shared his thoughts with his students, discovering and relating his discoveries, making available to them what was believed and thought in the academic world.

While at the Mitchell Boys School Jefferson taught mathematics,
At the Mitchell Boys School, Billerica, Massachusetts.
English, Latin, Spanish, French, enough history to make the languages meaningful, and geography. It is interesting and instructive to trace the growth of a geographic interest on his part:

Notably in geography there exists such an ignorance that I invited my students to my room after dinner. I had prepared everything for map making. I set them to work, and it pleased them so much that they did not want to leave. If this continues I can have them learn to draw all the continents from memory. By this they will learn something, which seems to me a good point of departure for the geographer. Speaking of such matters, have I already told you that I was made active member of the Geographic Institute of the Republic of Argentina in 1887?12

Last night I spent in drawing a map of Europe. What a handy thing it is sometimes to teach a particular subject! I am immensely fond of geography and of some regions, notably South America, have some knowledge. But this class work is benefitting me immensely in such regions as the U.S. where I am very ignorant. I certainly doubt if the boys learn as much as I. My method is to draw an outline map on the blackboard without any names or divisions of countries. Then I point out seas, rivers, mountains and cities and demand the names.13

Now joined to certain facts suggested by yourself time since, and the remark of a distinguished townswoman of mine, Mrs. Farwell, that I might give "Illustrated Talks on S.A." before the Melrose clubs—all this sets me wondering whether I could interest average American audiences in a modest way in South American things, life, and ways, if aided by proper pictorial accessories.

I always have interested people about those lands, even without picture, witness the select companies that used to assemble nightly in the Cushing House, Hingham.14

The singing master sang the boys a song about the Bay o' Biscay this morning and made me think how I last saw it with the sun glancing across the rough crests and up against the black rock cliffs of Spain hanging rainbows through the spray that fell back after each thunderous crash on Finisterre. To think that same sun that shines so brightly in Billerica today may still be sending its slanting evening rays across those black seas to the lofty shore. Shall we ever gaze on those scenes together? The whole coast of Spain, North, East, South, and West, the Atlantic islands, the Riviera, the Pacific coast of South America, Brazil about Rio and the West Indian islands are all shores of towering rock, as different to gaze on from the sea, from Atlantic U.S. and northern Europe as can be. Low shores, like the American and northern French, make me feel as if the world was Sea, and Land the exception and insignificant. Mountain shores make me think less of
the ocean and more of the significance of the land. There I realize that
the Ocean is but the Highway of the Nations, the notion I remember
having from books until the disillusion of my first voyage, which took
me along our wretched flat coast as far as Virginia and gave me a poor
idea of my country. I should so like to have you see such scenes as the
Spanish and Mediterranean coast afford.  

I spent a good deal of time yesterday drawing my map of Massachu­
setts on the board. I am quite proud of it. It is about a yard long with
blue coast line and rivers, red cities and brown mountains. I am going
to teach this state very elaborately, the subject is one I am very fond
of and I incline to be as luxurious in the purchase of maps as of
books.  

I have ... drawn a Mercator's projection map of the world, as far
as the outline is concerned. I have yet to strengthen the lines and rub
out some construction squares. Mr. Mitchell stopped before the boys
the other day to congratulate me on my Geographical classes; said he
never saw so much interest displayed in the study in his school as now.
It is very fascinating to me and always has been, although it is not so
easy to keep the boys attentive to the subject in hand.  

To one of my geography classes I gave as a reward of good work a
15 minute talk on how mountains came into existence which I had
been holding over their heads for some time. Of course I didn't pretend
to be deep: only tried to give them a simple, general notion of the way
the earth came to wrinkle up in cooling. They seemed to like it.  

As the weeks passed a burning resentment of the high school situa­
tion consumed him. He was not conditioned to the cramping influence
of the schoolhouse, was not used to accepting orders on matters of
trivia from higher up, was bored with supervising a class of boys the
day long and then shunting them off to bed. Letters from his South
American friends continually turned his thoughts away from Billerica
and southward toward the Spanish life. After receiving a letter from
Kentuckian Alexander, a companion during Cordoban days, he wrote
of his feeling in a letter to Theodora:  

What did I thrill to on reading Alexander's letter? Why the pleasurable
excitement of an adventure loving young man who imagines a friend
passing through such scenes as those of the Northern Argentine and
Bolivia while I have been leading the slothful enervated life of an
American school teacher. Imagine mule trains winding in sinuous
course along the margin of torrential streams between fields of cane,
tobacco and rice interspersed with groves of lemons and oranges. Fur­
ther on, behind the plantation the tropical forest rears its deep green
tangled mat, clothing the lower swell of hills that pile themselves, five
Mt. Washingtons high in the clear air to hide their snow crests in the clouds.

Presently the road leaves the lower reaches, plunges into the forests. A week later the party is winding up long slopes of grass and heather, soon to pass through the Andine portals to the sterile uplands of Bolivia and toil across barren stretches of sand and rock relieved mostly by patches of sage bush, on by the shores of Titicaca, across the nitrous plain of Atacama, till the defile of Antofagasta frames their first vision of a Pacific sunset! This is the vision filled in with a thousand details from Alexander's character as I read his lines. He says little about the journey, save that he made it. But it is as clear to me as if I had accompanied him. As I love such journeys and am fond of his company on them, I thrill to think of them.

Under these circumstances, Jefferson proclaimed:

I hate the Mitchell School, and I am tired of the boys. What a state of affairs! I am tired of it. What would be nice would be to take passage to Mexico in the first boat . . . I certainly gain daily the conviction that I cannot teach school permanently anywhere. Life under such circumstances is not worth living.

Theodora, anxious to have Jefferson please her aunt with whom she lived, requested that he stop smoking—which he did on September 20, 1890. But obedience without reason, brought only conformity without conviction, which led Jefferson to essay numerous brilliant, provocative, and passionate declarations against the indifference of New England conformity. He lived the year at the Mitchell Boys School in love: a shell of a man performed at the High School. His totality was a constellation, an hierarchy of aching assent to Theodora's every wish. It was a beautiful, total love. He spent much of his time, as do men in love, meditating, making notes on scraps of paper, ranging in subject from Greek speculation to the contemporary inadequacy of the Church, but spending most of his time writing letters to Theodora. These letters, sent thrice weekly, averaged not less than 5,000 words each. They were beautifully scribed, indeed works of art quite unlike Jefferson's later inimitable style handed down to the geographic world—terse, concise, without embellishment. It was a poetry that not only won the hand of Theodora from another suitor, a Mr. Curtis Page, but also provided Jefferson with a period of introspection. He was able to use his languages, frequently writing to Theodora in German, French, and occasionally Greek. In the August of 1891, after serving one year in the Billerica Boarding School, he married Theodora and consummated a romance commenced at Boston University some nine years previously.

In the fall of 1891 Jefferson accepted a position as principal of the
Turners Falls High School. He had resigned his position at the Mitchell Boys School, but had not at that time, been able to find another position, especially as he desired $1200 a year instead of the more usually offered $1000 a year. In seeking a position, Jefferson had a rather embittering experience. He obtained interviews for several positions through a “five-percent teachers’ agency,” only to be rejected once for smoking, a habit recently regained, once for not going to church regularly, once for drinking, and once for travelling far too much, which showed naturally, that he was not a settled body.

At the Turner Falls school Jefferson was requested to teach a class in physical geography. Not having studied physical geography, he refused to teach the subject, and substituted a course in French. The students learned to speak the French language while solving geometrical problems from Bos' *Géométrie Élémentaire*. Jefferson wrote:  

*This book gave us vocabulary and theorems to demonstrate and the familiarity of the subject matter made a sort of conversation possible. The first thing they knew, they were talking a little in French, or something like it. From then on, progress was automatic.*

Jefferson wanted to teach the requested course in physical geography at Turners Falls High School and so, in the summer of 1892, he took an intensive six-week summer course at Harvard University in earth science. It delighted a Jefferson who now began to understand a physical landscape that previously he had but looked upon.  

*That summer I met Professor Shaler, spent a week with him making photographs of Cape Cod for the State Road Commission. But I soon found William Morris Davis who was making a revolution in physical geography at Harvard. Shaler, head of the Lawrence Scientific School, pulled hundreds of students into the Department of Geology by a freshman course of lectures (geology 4) which was immensely popular. He gave them poetic aspects of earth science. From the start in two summer courses I found the work exactly what I wanted.*

He kept diaries of his summer’s work, thought the “one R at a time” a great scheme, wore out two pairs of boots tramping the New England countryside six days a week. This training enabled Jefferson to understand Darwin’s comprehension of South America. He wanted to pursue such study. Of the following year at Turners Falls High School Jefferson wrote in notes to himself, “This was a marvellous revelation of a world unknown. Now Jefferson must study natural sciences. This year a wonderful class in physical geography among Turners Falls’ marvellous Triassic trap and sandstone ridges.”

It was not long before word of his ability as a school teacher began
to travel. A lawyer and member of the Lexington board of trustees, came to hear him conducting his class. Jefferson was offered a position as both teacher and superintendent of Lexington schools, and at a considerably higher pay than previously. Jefferson accepted the position and in the same year commenced a family which was to include five children by the turn of the century. Possessed of a great measure of efficiency and initiative, Jefferson was not willing merely to execute policy pronounced by the School Board of Education. And there lay a trouble. Soon the Board and Jefferson were opposed on matters which included the time at which school should open, the number of spelling classes to be held each week, what bible instruction should be given, who should read the Lord's Prayer, how Latin should be taught, the amount of woodwork instruction which should be granted each week. Recognizing Jefferson as administratively competent and able of intellect, they were reluctant to release him from his duties. The Board encouraged him to take a vacation, since they felt that his terseness of manner stemmed from overwork. In the February and early March of 1895 he took his wife and first born son, Geoffrey, on a month's cruise through the Windward Islands of the Caribbean Sea, stopping at St. Thomas, St. Kitts, Montserrat, Antigua, Nevis, Guadeloupe, St. Lucia, Martinique, Dominica, St. Vincent, Barbados, and Trinidad. They escaped the coldness of winter, a season that Jefferson shunned till the end of his days. The geographer of the family took many photographs, and spent much of his time trying to convince his wife that the year-round warmth was good for her rheumatism and that life under the Southern Heavens would hold a happy future for them and their family. But Theodora did not wish to leave the New England she knew so well, and Jefferson refrained from pressing her further. On his return from the Caribbean, Jefferson continued as superintendent of the Lexington School, but was hardly happy in the position. Early in 1896, his wife's aunt, Mary Horne, died. By the terms of her will, money had been made available to Jefferson for the purpose of furthering his education. He resigned his post at the Lexington School and enrolled as student in Harvard University.

From the September of 1896 to the July of 1898 Jefferson studied geography and geology at Harvard. He planned to study all the natural science that had enabled Darwin to comprehend the Argentine as evidenced by the *Journal of Researches*. Jefferson selected all the elementary courses possible:23

When the Director of the Graduate School found in 1896 that I was electing so many elementary courses and already had an A.B. degree,
he suggested that I might be able to get a Ph.D. in the two years I meant to spend if I would select advanced courses following some of the work I had already done. He did not realize that he was cutting the ground from under my feet. I wanted those elementary courses. They were what brought me to Harvard. His suggestion fell on stony ground. I took elementary everything in Natural Science and all the geology and geography I could get.

In his first year at Harvard (1896-1897) Jefferson was awarded an A.B. degree, and in his second year (1897-1898) he was awarded an A.M. degree. More important to Jefferson than the acquisition of these degrees was the discovery of William Morris Davis. Davis had occupied the same post in the Argentine National Observatory at Cordoba in 1873, as had Jefferson in 1883. On his return to Harvard in 1873 Davis was made instructor under Shaler in the Department of Geology. From 1885-1889 Davis enjoyed first an assistant professorship and then a professorship of physical geography. From 1899 until his retirement from Harvard in 1912, Davis held the Sturgis Hooper professorship of geology. Notwithstanding President Eliot's suggestion in a letter of January 1882 that he seek opportunity elsewhere, Davis retained his employ, emerged with his concept of the cycle of erosion, and inspired students (five of them starred in American Men of Science) including Bowman, Dodge, Goldthwaite, Huntington, Jefferson, Johnson, Keith, Marbut, and Tarr. It was in 1907 that Huntington dedicated The Pulse of Asia, "To William Morris Davis First of Modern Geographers." In the preface to his book Huntington proclaimed "To him [Davis] half the geographers of America, myself among number, owe their instruction in the new science . . . ."

When Jefferson enrolled at Harvard in 1896 he met a confident, well-read, much thinking, much published 46-year-old Davis who was finding a place for physical geography as a worthy discipline. Listening to Davis intently, seeing virtue in every idea, hungrily consuming Davis' every spoken and written word, travelling many a field mile with the man, and believing in the value of earth science was a perceptive, intelligent, and well-travelled Jefferson. Davis had an educated audience in the 33-year-old Jefferson: Jefferson had a teacher. Davis and Jefferson were drawn closely together in an enduring relationship which extended from 1896 to the time of Davis' death in 1934. Years later, in autobiographical notes, Jefferson was to write:24

When Davis commenced teaching at Harvard, his subject was physical geography, in those days the foundling orphan of the natural sciences. But Davis had made his subject respected on both sides of the Atlan-
tic: in 1899, ten years after he developed the peneplain concept, Davis was given ovations in London, Cambridge and Oxford, where Professor Sollas introduced him as Professor Peneplain Davis. Later the universities of Paris and Berlin called him to give courses, which he did in French and German.

The more you checked his teaching against the out-of-doors, the sounder you found it. Surely Davis read God's thoughts about the surface of the earth... As a geographer he (Davis) was entirely new to me: his teaching the best of considerable good teaching. But he was not always easy to take. His was a school of intellectual hard knocks.

We had a would-be student from the Sorbonne with us for some days, but presently he departed with actual tears in his eyes. Professor Davis' teaching was the most interesting thing I ever met. Confronted with the world of out-of-doors his formulae proved up. I took all his courses at Harvard, a summer school with him and two other students in the Rocky Mountains in 1910, a trip in 1911 across Wales, England, France, Switzerland and Italy as far as Milan by train, carriage and on foot, with three Germans, a Norwegian and Czech and Jap, and locally guided and accompanied by native geographers all the way, among them the cream of European geography. Invited to an international geographical Congress at Rome, we were stopped at Milan by a request from Italian royalty to come no further. Italy and Turkey were at war.

One year later Jefferson was appointed first marshall of the Davis-American Geographical Society Transcontinental Excursion (U.S.A.). He [Davis] put me in personal touch with the geographers of the world. He gave me his books and papers and asked for mine. I was privileged to know his charming home in Cambridge and was in correspondence with him to the end of his life. What a teacher! The courses that Jefferson studied at Harvard in the Geography and Geology Department included:

Shaler, Woodworth, and Woodman—Elementary Geology (Lectures with collateral reading, 2 hours)

Davis—Physiography (Lectures, written exercises, laboratory and field work, 4 hours and additional laboratory and field work)

Ward—Meteorology (Lectures, written exercises, observations, and laboratory work, 4 hours and additional laboratory work)

Davis and Ward—Physiography and Meteorology (Lectures, 2 hours)

Jaggar—Experimental and Dynamical Geology (Lectures [2 hours], laboratory work, and occasional field work)
Ward—Climatology (Lectures, library work, and reports, 3 hours)
Shaler and Jackson—General Palaeontology (Lectures and thesis, 2 hours)
Jackson—Invertebrate Palaeontology (Lectures (2 hours) and laboratory work)
Davis—Physiography (advanced course), (Conferences, reports, and thesis, 1 hour)
Davis—Research Course
Jaggar, in cooperation with Shaler, Davis, Wolff, Smyth, and Woodworth—Advanced Geological Field Work (Field and Library work, with reports, conference of 1 hour, and additional laboratory hours)
Shaler and Jackson—Advanced Palaeontology (Laboratory work and thesis)

This was the only formal education Jefferson ever received in geography. It was sufficient to inspire him to the end of his days.

During Jefferson's years at Harvard, the University boasted 4,000 students, over 400 faculty and research fellows, half a million bound volumes, and was under the sound and imaginative leadership of Charles Eliot. Davis and Shaler were already names recognized wherever geography and geology were read and spoken. Harvard University constituted a fine galaxy of minds which included, among many more, James, Royce, Santayana, Münsterberg, Wright, Greenough, and Cope-land. The Harvard Yard was a meeting place of intellect, and Jefferson treasured the privilege those two years afforded him.

In 1897 Davis suggested to Jefferson that he write a thesis concerning the geography of tides. Although Jefferson did not like the suggestion, “saw nothing in it,” he undertook the study. Davis approved the paper, wanted to see it in print, but cautioned that it was rather long for magazine publication. Davis arranged for his pupil to read part of the paper to a student-faculty club at Harvard, encouraged him to revise and rearrange the study, then to send an extract to the National Geographic Magazine. Editor John Hyde accepted Jefferson's “Atlantic Estuarine Tides” enthusiastically:

'It has . . . been arranged for the National Geographic Society to have a session at the meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science at Boston, on August the 25th, and it occurs to me that your paper might with great advantage be read at that meeting, and published in the September number of the Magazine.'

The paper was read and W. J. McGee was one of a number who listened attentively. A little later he wrote to Jefferson inquiring if the
secretaryship of the National Geographic Society would be "a temptation" to him. Jefferson replied that the offer was gratifying but $1500 a year in Washington, D.C. would not feed the family. Parts of Jefferson's thesis on tides were printed in three subsequent issues of the *National Geographic Magazine* under the titles "Atlantic Estuarine Tides," "What is the Tide of the Open Atlantic," and "Atlantic Coast Tides." From Cannes, France, December 17, 1898, Davis sent a postcard to Jefferson:

*Your article on Tide of Open Atlantic is very interesting and instructive. I am very glad to have so many important points brought together so concisely—The historical is very nicely presented. Keep it up, if you have the time. I have to differ from your closing speculation. Would not the mid-ocean be swept clean and deepened if its form depended on tides alone? The mid-ocean bottom must be the place of strongest back and forth horizontal currents while mid-ocean surface is stationary at the node. Try it in a basin and see where the sediment will collect. Perhaps you have done so already—and your experiment may show my objection to be wrong. I am glad to hear from Ginn and Co.*

Davis continually encouraged Jefferson by taking a personal interest in him and his work. Later Jefferson wrote:

*During a ten days' confinement to my bed in the spring of 1898, I re-read Caesar's commentaries, partly to pass the time and partly to find out whether Caesar's campaigns were more intelligible in the light of Professor Davis' lectures on French geography, which I had recently heard. Judge of my delight when I found that the origin and course of the Gallic wars were closely bound up with a very prominent feature in the physical geography of France: namely the Central Plateau.*

While Jefferson had been confined to bed with pneumonia, Davis visited him and noticed Allen and Greenough's *Caesar* on his bed of sickness. He was interested to find the paper that Jefferson had recently completed, and sent it to Professor Greenough. The latter invited Jefferson to his house where "a pleasant half hour resulted." He was given an autographed copy of Greenough's latest *Caesar*, and "Allen and Greenough" meant two genial gentlemen to Jefferson rather than the Latin Grammar and an edition of the commentaries with which he had been familiar for twenty-two years. "Caesar and the Central Plateau of France" was published in the *Journal of School Geography*, 1899, with a footnote: "I am indebted to Professors W. M. Davis and J. B. Greenough of Harvard University for a careful reading of this paper and valuable suggestions as to the manner of presentation."
Davis had shown Jefferson that Harvard was not merely a collection of books, faculty, and buildings—that it was the hearthplace of an academic way of life.  

I was learning that the great University in a little city has both students and faculty in residence, to its very great advantage. Has it not always been so? Can the University of London ever mean to England what Cambridge and Oxford have meant? 

If I had wanted to draw some comparisons between Xenophon and Arrian in my great city university (Boston), how could the instructor help pulling out his watch? Did he not live thirty miles away with a train leaving in a few minutes? At Harvard I knew the dining rooms of several of my instructors... Geography was indicated for my life's work by Davis.

In the summer of 1898 Jefferson taught geography at Harvard University as assistant to W. M. Davis. In the fall of the same year, Jefferson was appointed sub-master of six hundred students at the Brockton High School, and was required to teach “too many subjects”: Greek, Latin, bookkeeping, geology, and astronomy. Jefferson asked to add a voluntary course in field work, “the geology of Brockton.” Students who took this voluntary work were obliged to come out of school hours, either before eight in the morning or after one o’clock when school closed for the day. Many students accompanied Jefferson on these trips which encouraged other schools to adopt classes in field studies. This encouraged the School Board to print Jefferson’s twenty-four page account of “The Fields of Brockton,”36 which was then adopted as a field text by several schools in the area. Attention was brought to these field trips in The Brockton Enterprise, November 13, 1899:

The session (Conference of Educators in Springfield) began at 11 a.m. at the High Schoolhouse. Mr. Perry of Worcester introducing the subject of field excursions in connection with High School work in geology... No other town is doing so much systematic work in this direction, as Brockton. Attention was called in the discussion to the Brockton plan of weekly excursions...

Mr. Jefferson followed with an account of work with the weather map in the Brockton school, pointing out the devices employed to make the work practicable, and the way in which the map is actually handled by the pupils until it is familiarly understood.

At this time inference strongly suggests that Jefferson was corresponding with Britain’s A. J. Herbertson who was then engaged in preparing a rainfall map of the world,37 and this fascinated Jefferson who passed what information he had on to his students.
The following year Jefferson taught Greek and four sections of physical geography which included field work. A number of talks he gave in the community further advertised physiography and geography. *The Brockton Enterprise* occasionally reported Jefferson’s talks as “The Physiography of Brockton,” November 6, 1889, and “The Geography of Melrose,” November 15, 1900. He submitted brief articles to the *Enterprise* on a variety of subjects which included: erratic weather behavior, geographic interpretation of local art, photographic exhibits, or recently published postage stamps, and the geography of current events.

Davis did not forget his pupil teaching at Brockton some twenty miles removed from Harvard. Occasionally Davis would visit Jefferson, talk to his pupils, or address a gathering of teachers from nearby schools which Jefferson might have arranged. He recognized Jefferson as a well-educated mind, and, in March 1899, he wrote:

*If you have time, I wish you would mark in your copy of my Physical Geography the paragraphs that should be retained, compressed, expanded, and omitted, in reducing the book to Grammar grade. I will then exchange your copy for a new one! Two pamphlets go to you by mail today.*

Later in the same year Davis suggested Jefferson’s name to President Eliot as the man to teach geography to the Cubans in the forthcoming Harvard Summer School. From the summer of 1898 until Davis’ death in 1934, the two men corresponded. They exchanged published papers, ideas and observations relating largely to physiography, and news of their families. Davis’ appreciation of Jefferson was fortunate for the latter, who did not find it easy to win people to his side.

In the years 1899-1901, Jefferson lived at Elmwood, an attractive village three miles from Brockton. Founded originally to make cotton gins for sale in the South, the Elmwood community now found its main business accommodating railway commuters from the Brockton shoe factories. W. L. Douglas of the Brockton bank, well known for a “Three Dollar Shoe,” offered Jefferson a house at Elmwood possessed by the bank after the financial collapse of the builder. The accommodation was good. The house had its own lighting and sewage system, “an admirable polished oak interior,” and was surrounded by fruit trees set in spacious grounds. Jefferson paid twenty dollars a month rental to Douglas, who was anxious to have the dwelling inhabited.

The Jefferson family was happy and content. In 1901 both Mark and Theodora passed their thirty-eighth birthday and had a family of five children. Jefferson was beginning to wonder if he would find a university position, or whether he would settle in Elmwood.