

CHAPTER FOUR

THE YPSILANTI YEARS

Jefferson arrived in southeastern Michigan's Ypsilanti late in September, 1901, direct from his post in the Brockton High School. His family and personal effects followed in a few days. Ypsilanti presented itself as a town not long since on the frontier, able to boast a population of over 5,000, the owner of the first Normal School established west of the Alleghenies which had only recently celebrated its 50th anniversary (an event feted by Putnam's *A History of the Michigan State Normal School at Ypsilanti, Michigan, 1849-1899*),¹ and a name borrowed from Demetrios Ypsilanti who had led the Greeks in their War of Independence against the Turks in 1823. Ypsilanti, clinging snugly to the banks of the ever-widening Huron River, rose on either side of the river's oft over-flowed banks to enjoy an invigorating air at elevations rising to over 800 feet. Meadows of grass, alternating with fields of corn, punctuated by knotted woodland, assured the Ypsilanti citizenry a certain rural charm. Situated on the Chicago Road, the main highway between Detroit and Chicago, which followed closely the old Sauk Indian Trail, Ypsilanti did not suffer isolation; she prospered in catering to travellers, and she learned the news from the big cities.

The people of the town were most friendly towards the newly arrived Jeffersons. The man of the house, Professor Jefferson, had already won the confidence and respect of the people by his very selection as a faculty member of the Normal. At the age of 38 Jefferson possessed in fair measure the attributes of all phases of academic success: a good physique, a yearning for knowledge, a passion for intellectual honesty, the habit of long hours, care and patience for all in need. And if there were any doubters in the community, some talks he gave from church and campus, open to students and public both, hastily reassured all that

Mark S. W. Jefferson was an erudite man indeed, versed thoroughly not only in land lore and earth lore, but also in philology and happenings during classical times. Faculty, in starched collar, cravat, hat in hand, came to his home, presented their cards and would wait to be introduced to Mr. Jefferson. If the manner were formal, it was also sincere and friendly. The natural science faculty members from the eight-mile distant University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, travelled to Ypsilanti on the inter-urban railway car and formally welcomed Mark Jefferson to the academic community. Mrs. Theodora Jefferson was made to feel comfortable in her new surroundings and in short time was active in civic affairs. Jefferson's wife, Theodora, was a tireless worker: meeting the needs of her family, maintaining her husband's affairs in his absences, investing thriftily the family savings, creatively experimenting with tree grafts, were all part of her daily round. Theodora was also the first woman in Ypsilanti to have a washing machine, to play tennis in public (though this was accomplished at sunrise), actively to support the movement for women's emancipation, crusade against the dreaded tuberculosis and check the cleanliness of the fresh milk being sold in Ypsilanti.² A Regency in the Daughters of the American Revolution meant several Colonial dress parties. "Wealthy Jackson," a huge negro lady from Ypsilanti's Hungry Hill, would arrange for helpers to aid Theodora and housekeeper-cook Mary Breen. When, in 1905, Theodora did not wish to continue renting from a neighbor, she designed a house with assistance from architect Gregory. A double lot was purchased on Normal Street, only yards distant from the College campus, and by 1906 the Jefferson family—mother, father, five children and housekeeper and cook, Mary Breen—had moved into the house of Mrs. Jefferson's design and in close proximity to a Mr. Sweet who would often take the children for a car ride around the block to their delight. Excerpts from a 4,000 word article written by Mrs. Jefferson, after the completion of the house, offer insight into the planning and care lavished upon the project by the mother and provide a notion of the type of house in which the Jefferson family lived:³

A house costing \$6,933.64 (furniture estimated at \$1,628.24) by Theodora A. B. Jefferson. E. W. Gregory of Detroit, Architect. Drawings by Geoffrey Jefferson (aged 13), photographs by the author. Building finished March, 1906.

. . . in building this house the health, comfort and happiness of the children was considered paramount to all else In proposing the plans, the absolute essentials were a room for each member of the family, the best facilities for work and play, and the most sanitary construction The colonial style was our preference Because

it seemed more hygienic than paper, the walls are daintily tinted, and every effort is made to reduce dust-catchers, the door and window casing are as nearly flat as I could persuade the carpenter to make them. The doors have but two panels, which run up and down, the baseboards are perfectly flat with a simple ogee at the top . . . no draperies are allowed, except plain lawn sash curtains. All wood work except in ballroom is Georgia pine, the floors quarter sawed . . . Metal work of the simplest, is all of old brass . . . we consider the bathroom eminently a successful room . . . shower and needle baths . . . We feel the bannister and newel post are a distinct failure. In other parts of the house I persisted in my own ideas until I got the minimum of dust catching surface, but when it came to the bannisters I succumbed and let the carpenter have his own way, and I believe they will catch more dust than all the rest of the house together . . . Oak and maple (not painted) . . . Oak book cases line the two blank walls of the study, a typewriter is by one of the windows, an oak cabinet stands between the two wide windows, to hold the unsightly necessities of a study, such as letter files, paste pot, Kodak, etc.; plenty of light, good writing table and easy chairs make this the coziest room in the house . . .

. . . Our foundations were made of the beautiful field stones found about here: then all the joints were cemented over outside and in . . . On entering this house our friends exclaim "What a bright, cheerful house." And this is so all through, we tolerate no dark corners. Windows are large and numerous. The red oak and Georgia pine have not been stained. Dainty buffs, grays, grayish greens and light terra cotta colors are on the walls . . . When we bought our lot eighty-two by one hundred and fifty feet there was a disreputable old red barn on the northwest corner; we have not as yet accomplished the devised transformation with this. The back yard has been graded and seeded, but the children use it for a playground and we feel that is more essential than the grass which consequently has not thriven . . . yard provides tennis court, basketball and newcomb and space for a croquet set. An old wooden fence at the back is screened by white lilacs, old fashioned larkspur, golden glow and hop vines which run wild.

The father of the family insists on "plain, clean grass" in front of the house, so mother has only the south side of the house left for flowers, a space twenty-four by thirty-five feet . . . She has a luxuriant growth and flowers at all seasons.

The house still stands at 205 North Normal Street, Ypsilanti.

The children had a spacious home, plenty of garden space in which to play, and Mary Breen who was always able to suggest a new game, a

mother for whom nothing was too great a trouble, and a papa who would read them stories, let them hustle down to the ground floor living room at night time when it thundered, and would take them on summer holidays quite regularly. Cat "Penny Brown" and dog "Toby" completed the hearth. When Theodora died November 6, 1913, of a heart condition at the age of fifty the family suffered a tragedy, and Ypsilanti lost one of its foremost citizens.⁴ In the summer of 1915 Jefferson remarried to Clara Frances Hopkins, a lady from Holland, Michigan. They had become acquainted on the campus of the Normal College. Clara raised three children by Jefferson, was a good mother and a faithful wife.

This was the domestic hearth to Jefferson's geographic accomplishment. It was here that his life as a devoted geophile began. On campus his task was to teach geography; off campus his self-imposed task was that of further geographic study. He ensconced himself in his study, began a contribution which was to effect a shift in the direction of American geographic thought in the first half of the twentieth century.

In these same years, 1901-1949, he proved to be a diligent worker in the cause of civic improvement. He helped found the Twenty Club (1905), instituted a discussion group in the Congregational Church (1906), encouraged the establishment of a Board of Commerce (1920), invested funds in the construction of a community hotel (1920), gave freely of his time to Harvey Colburn who wrote the history of Ypsilanti in book form to celebrate the centennial of the town in 1923,⁵ and for many years constituted a one man city planning commission before being appointed chairman to the Ypsilanti City Planning Commission (1939). When the fifteenth Kiwanis Club of Michigan was founded in Ypsilanti, April 1921, Jefferson became a charter member. Rarely did he absent himself from a meeting. Frequently he attended the Kiwanis National Convention. He found the Kiwanis Club to be an instrument for civic improvement through which he could function efficiently. Whenever he wished to effect civic change he had himself appointed chairman of a Kiwanis committee. Noteworthy improvements accomplished included the installation of a softwater plant in Ypsilanti, school consolidation which eliminated the one-room schoolhouse, campaigns to have honest officials elected to office. His Kiwanis activity was to intensify in his retirement years.⁶

He often spoke to the townspeople through the medium of groups as the Congregational Church, the Ladies Literary Society, the Ladies Library Association, the Ypsilanti Study Club, the Ypsilanti Woman's Club, and meetings of the Civic Improvement Association. He ex-

plained star clusters to them; he lectured on the weather; compared parts of Norway to northern Michigan; unfolded his South American experiences; offered commentary on the Russo-Japanese War in the local newspaper; reported on the difficulties Amundsen faced in his journey to the South Pole; made comment on Ypsilanti rainfall and the level of Lake Huron. During both World Wars he gave numerous illustrated talks on the progress of the allies. Following both World Wars he lectured frequently on the peace treaties.⁷ These talks to the townsfolk coupled with his Kiwanian work constituted a large part of the meagre time Jefferson allowed himself for social intercourse. The Twenty Club, Edwin Atson Strong, and visiting geographers virtually accounted for the remainder of Jefferson's social activity. The functioning of the Twenty Club, however, was one social activity very dear to Jefferson. Rarely in the next 44 years did he miss a meeting. The Club, which may well have owed to a Jefferson suggestion,⁸ emerged during 1905 after four or five of the Normal faculty had dined one evening at the home of Clyde Ford, Head of the Language Department at the College (and the only person besides Ellsworth Huntington that Jefferson was to term "a gracious pen"). The largely built, amiable Ford, faintly coppered by the presence of Indian blood, had addressed his company after the meal. The occasion was a success and similar evenings followed. Attendance at these gatherings steadily increased. When the number reached twenty, the men present agreed not to increase membership in order that the group might preserve its social character. The Twenty Club had been born. Once each month a member would host the Club in his home and present a guest speaker for the evening. The after-meal presentations were of a high caliber. Jefferson arranged to have some of his geographer friends address the Twenty Club, including M. Arousseau, H. H. Barrows, I. Bowman, C. Colby, D. Davis, W. M. Davis, E. Huntington, Clifton Johnson, R. Light, A. E. Parkins, V. Stefansson, G. Taylor. At other times Jefferson would invite a friend to be his guest at a Twenty Club meeting. One such guest was his friend J. Allende Posse (Argentine Republic) who, impressed with Jefferson's studies, wrote of the Ypsilanti Normal School and the Twenty Club in *Las Universidades En America Del Norte*.⁹ Jefferson attempted to carry the idea of the Twenty Club into the Congregational Church by establishing a six o'clock Sunday tea followed by a talk and discussion of liberal leaning. Each of these meetings attracted twenty to thirty students from the Normal, but they seem not to have been continued after World War I.

Edwin Strong and Jefferson became firm friends. Strong, astrologer and Normal College professor of physical sciences, lived only yards

distant from Jefferson. They visited each other frequently, talked much of scientific advance, played chess, and watched the stars from an apparatus that Strong had designed and installed in his own home. If Jefferson were ill and unable to hold class, Strong would frequently hold geography class for Jefferson. Similarly, Strong could and did teach literature, language and history. After the death of Strong in 1920 Jefferson never did find another such intellect with whom he could companion.¹⁰ Visitation by geographer friends also constituted a part of Jefferson's social life. When he learned that one of his geographer friends was travelling between Harvard and Chicago, two of the most active centers of geography in early twentieth-century U.S.A., he would be sure to invite him to break his rail journey at Ypsilanti. Fortunately, Ypsilanti lay on the main east-west rail track from New York to Chicago, and his house was only a ten-minute walk from the railroad station. This encouraged a steady stream of geographers to visit Jefferson through the years, which intrusion upon his sequestered but not restful existence was a revel to his mind. On more than one occasion when W. M. Davis passed through Ypsilanti by train, yet could not break his journey, Jefferson took his children to greet Davis at the railway station. There, Davis, hanging from a train window, exchanged his bags of candy for home-made pastries baked by little Jefferson girls.

The absence of serious association was as unfortunate to Jefferson as an over-abundance of social visitors. How he enjoyed kindred geographic spirits! His children too enjoyed Papa's visitors who sent toys, or brought candy with them, even gave them time in play. Ellsworth Huntington was a constant source of delight to the young children; Isaiah Bowman who would take them on his knee was at ease in their presence, though W. M. Davis never seemed totally able to unbend and relax with them.¹¹ Huntington and Bowman were two of the most frequent visitors to the Jefferson home. Papa would soon take the new plaything from the children's grasp, then would follow in the study exchange of ideas, meditations, and undigested thoughts. At such times as those, the elusive gentle values and full meaning of scholarship would present itself to the two men in concert. This was American geography in the making.

Jefferson quite came to be regarded as the community geographer. He had made the subject well respected on the campus, was training teachers of geography and finding them school positions, was generous with his time and would offer an address free of charge to any citizens group, and was constantly winning mention from some other part of the state which would faithfully be reported in the Ypsilanti daily paper. Frequently Jefferson's studies would attract the attention of the commu-

nity. The community learned of Jefferson's river researches, his study of the meander belts of rivers from Harvard's map collection, and his observation that the limiting width of a meander belt seemed to be eighteen times the mean width of the stream at any one given place. The resultant publication entitled, "Limiting Width of Meander Belts," published in the *National Geographic Magazine*, 1902, had attracted the attention of Ypsilanti's citizenry.¹² Later Baron Sten de Geer and Vujevic confirmed Jefferson's findings from their respective works on the Swedish Klarelv and the Hungarian Theiss.¹³ Jefferson made a map and Davisian "mud-pie" model of the town and its environs, vertical scale exaggerated to show the town's proximity to the Huron River. He claimed that the river used a meandering process to move, that housing should not be permitted in the river meander belt, and suggested that Ypsilanti should build away from the river and toward the 800' contour some quarter of a mile from the tumbling stream that once was fording place to Indians and fur trappers. The community listened to Jefferson's river geography with surprise and concern and later decided his watchful eye could well service Ypsilanti. He was appointed a one man City Planning Authority.

When it was supposed (1904) that there might be a goodly supply of oil south of Ypsilanti, both the geologist, William H. Sherzer, and Jefferson became the center of much attention.¹⁴ A company was at once organized which drilled a well on the Martin Cremer farm, on the flats skirting the town. Both Jefferson and campus geologist W. H. Sherzer doubted the presence of a considerable quantity of oil, but seized the opportunity to demand better mapping of the State of Michigan. State geologists Lane and Leverett of the U.S. Survey (the latter stationed at Ann Arbor while making a study of pleistocene geology with special reference to Michigan) were agreed on the need for a more thorough cartographic state coverage and inventory.

If the citizenry were to excite over abnormal weather conditions, he would address them on the matter or put an article in the daily. Jefferson arranged gatherings on the campus of the Michigan State Normal College which the citizenry might attend. To these gatherings he would occasionally bring his geographer friends, as he would to College functions. In 1923 Jefferson arranged for Stefansson to address a college group and then build an ice house on the campus (Ypsilanti's senior citizens still talk of "that man who built the ice house."). Four years later Jefferson arranged for Huntington to address the Normal College on the occasion of its 75th anniversary—"How Environment Strengthens its Chain."¹⁵ Frequently on Saturdays he, together with Sherzer, would take a group of Michigan school teachers, students, and inter-

ested citizens through glaciated southeastern Michigan. It was exciting to the citizenry to learn that students as Bowman, Colby, Davis, Parkins, and Stratton had all secured significant college appointments. Ypsilanti was proud of its Normal College. The good work of the Normal geography department, frequently evidenced, was again noticed in 1918 when five geographers who had studied at the Normal were engaged in the peace negotiations. Jefferson was appointed Chief Cartographer for the American Delegation to negotiate peace at Paris, Charles Stratton was first cartographic assistant, Isaiah Bowman was Chief Territorial Adviser to President Wilson. Harlan Barrows and Charles Colby worked with the U.S. War Trade Board in Washington, also as part of the war effort.¹⁶ Barrows had graduated from the Normal under Jefferson's predecessor, C. T. McFarlane. The other three geographers had been Jefferson's students and one-time departmental assistants. Additionally, Frank Cobb, a graduate (history) of the Normal (1890) travelled to Paris as first secretary to Colonel House.

Jefferson was certainly one of the best known of Ypsilanti's citizens. If he had an article published, delivered a paper, were elected to an office, even if he took a vacation, the daily reported the matter. The town quite respected Jefferson as a geographer, as did the Normal College faculty and administration. He valued the collective town-gown unwritten expression of endorsement and proceeded to develop the geography department as he wished without bothersome restriction from administration. In his 39 years of service at the Normal College Jefferson experienced the administration of four presidents: Elmer A. Lyman, 1899-1902, Lewis H. Jones, 1902-1912, Charles McKenny, 1912-1933, and John Munson, 1933-1948. (In retirement he also came to know a fifth President, Eugene Elliott 1948-1965.) Fortunately Jefferson enjoyed good relations with all four presidents. Roles were well defined, responsibilities were assumed, and just enough administration was introduced to get the job done with no loss of time or energy. The number of administrative tasks for which he assumed responsibility was very limited . . . Chairman of the Honorary Degree Committee, member of President McKenny's (1912-33) five-man Executive Committee of the College Faculty (the Cabinet), and occasional member of a committee to report on departmental library needs. Jefferson was geography department head, spent his budget as he elected, hired his staff, decided what courses should be listed in the catalogue and how often they should be offered. A secretary assumed responsibility for routine detail: Jefferson did not allow himself to fall victim to the wasteful practice of investing intellectual capacity upon petty detail. A fundamental prerequisite to the Jefferson accomplishment was his ability to husband his

own strengths and invest just enough time on the mechanics of life as was necessary. He spent his energy wisely. He would not engage in the great game of bunk versus debunk, did not waste time on his discreditors, allowed himself to be only a little peeved at academic piracies of his work. If a few minutes only were available, there would be a letter to type or a map to finish. Map-making on drawing boards which were kept both at his home and in his office could be undertaken when he felt ready. Larger periods of time were spent in his study where he could further the work he was currently engaged upon. He led a full life centered on his work at the College—"I have so much time on my hands that I have to sit up nights to use it all up."

Between the years 1901 and 1933 Jefferson placed much of geographic interest into the Normal College publication, whose circulation was not confined to Ypsilanti, but was national. Included were excerpts from geographic works as Hanns' *Meteorology*, Marsh's *Man and Nature*, Scott Keltie's report of 1885 to the Royal Geographical Society in Britain, Davis' *Physiography of the Lands*. If an issue of geographic import arose, Jefferson would write an opinion for the *News*, or, on occasion, submit opinion from several of his geographer friends together with his own; for example, the *News* of April 20, 1906, devoted two full columns of its front page to printing the opinions of I. C. Russell (University of Michigan), J. Paul Goode (University of Chicago), R. S. Tarr (Cornell University), W. H. Sherzer and M. Jefferson (Michigan State Normal College) concerning the extent of the upheaval that caused the San Francisco earthquake. Articles published in the *College News* included "Geography in the Grades," "The Educational Value of Geography," "Geography Work in the Grades," "The State Normal College as a Land Owner," and a series of six articles entitled "Material for Geography of Michigan."¹⁷ *The Normal College News*, Magazine Number of October 20, 1905, gave a detailed account of this Michigan study, under the heading, "On the Geography of Michigan."¹⁸ The same six articles were republished as a book in Ypsilanti, 1906,¹⁹ which was later revised and rewritten as the Michigan State supplement to Dodge's *Geography of the United States*.²⁰

The magazine edition of *The Normal College News* was replaced in October 1906 by *The Western Journal of Education*, and with the first edition of this publication in January 1913 came a new name—*The American Schoolmaster*. This publication continued as a regular feature of the Normal program until June of 1933. In the latter year, a depression year, the budget of Ypsilanti's Normal was pared drastically and the 27 years continuum of the publication was halted, never to be revived. Largely stemming from Jefferson's correspondence and re-

quests, the editors of the Normal publication received manuscripts from many geographers including: H. H. Barrows (University of Chicago), L. Blakenship (Norton, Virginia), M. Bransom (Harris Teachers College, St. Louis, Missouri), A. P. Brigham (Colgate University), J. W. Brouillette (Principal, Port Barre School, Louisiana), R. M. Brown (Rhode Island College of Education, Providence), A. Farnham, J. Paul Goode (University of Chicago), Ellsworth Huntington (Yale University), A. E. Parkins (Peabody College, Nashville, Tennessee), D. Ridgley (Illinois State Normal University), Julia Shipman (State Normal School, New Britain, Connecticut), M. Sill (Michigan State Normal College, Ypsilanti), G. Taylor (University of Chicago), R. H. Whitbeck (University of Wisconsin), Ella Wilson (Michigan State Normal College). Jefferson himself was a frequent contributor of articles, notices, and book reviews to this publication.

For each of the courses Jefferson taught at the Normal College he developed written notes. Each course was planned in a separate notebook written in Jefferson's study.²¹ Masses of information were accumulated in these notebooks. As the notebooks filled, a second and sometimes third notebook was added. This task of maintaining his notebooks became a hobby with him. Sometimes just for his own pleasure he would draw the most meticulous of maps in his notebook, otherwise surrounded by a sea of scribbled notes. They became, in fact, Jefferson's course books, and repositories of material from which he developed his textbooks. *Teachers Geography* published in 1906 was the first such text to emerge. These notebooks received addition throughout Jefferson's life, even into the retirement years. He had hoped to convert his notebooks on South America, Iberia, and Switzerland into texts, but never did.

His notebooks became more than collections of class notes and texts in embryo. In his 39 years at the Normal, Jefferson presented a total of over 600 courses to students. Teaching in so large an amount breeds its own essential extension, and concepts developed in the classroom became foci around which much of Jefferson's reading and thinking revolved. Frequently, the information he amassed in this way, and which he had been offering to his classes, became the subject matter of a paper which might be delivered before the Michigan Academy of Science, but after 1907 more probably would be presented before the Association of American Geographers. In written form prior to 1908 the essay might have been published in the *Journal of Geology*, the *Journal of School Geography*, the *Journal of Geography*, *Monthly Weather Review*, *Michigan Academy of Science Bulletin*, *Normal College News*, or *Science*, but after 1908 publication was very frequently

with the *Geographical Review*. He was both a concerned teacher and a concerned geographer.

The teacher in him was largely responsible for his association with the *Journal of School Geography*. During his first year in Ypsilanti Jefferson became an associate editor for that publication at the invitation of the editor, R. E. Dodge.²² Jefferson retained the position when, in the following year, 1902, the *Journal* changed its name to the *Journal of Geography* and increased its scope and circulation. He continued to contribute notes and articles to the *Journal* in his Ypsilanti years although after 1908 his more substantial contributions found their way to the pages of the *Geographical Review*. Jefferson did continue to review books for the *Journal of Geography* and had his own texts reviewed in the *Journal*. He gave much time and energy to encouraging the growth of the National Council of Geography Teachers founded in 1916 by G. J. Miller who worked through the offices of the *Journal*²³ (Miller had taken his first geography course under Jefferson 13 years earlier). Jefferson very frequently addressed the members of the National Council of Geography Teachers at their annual meetings in the years that followed. Since the National Council of Geography Teachers coupled its meetings with those of the Association of American Geographers at the same venue in the Christmas vacation for many years, Jefferson would address one or the other group and sometimes both groups. Complete record of his addresses to the National Council of Geography Teachers does not exist;²⁴ only partial record is available from the pages of the *Journal*. He did encourage the Michigan chapter of the National Council of Geography Teachers. When it lagged in the early 1920's, he took charge without taking office, had the names and addresses of the Michigan membership listed, sent letters to G. J. Miller insisting he must offer geography teachers something for their money and invited the Michigan chapter to a day's geography if they would come to Ypsilanti.²⁵

The geophile in him was responsible for his enthusiasm for the Association of American Geographers. He was one of the forty-six Charter Members who gathered at Philadelphia in 1904 to give birth to the Association which W. M. Davis had suggested at St. Louis in 1903. At the outset the Association of American Geographers was little more than a program and a promise. It had no central office but it had strong officials. The Association met annually, usually during the Christmas Vacation (although between 1914 and 1922 an annual joint spring meeting of the Association and the American Geographical Society was held in the Society's rooms in New York). Jefferson spent the days following Christmas attending the annual meeting of the Association,

frequently presenting a paper himself, listening attentively to the papers of others, and talking with correspondents of past months. Between the years 1904 and 1939 it is doubtful that he missed more than two meetings. In these same years he presented 33 papers before the Association,²⁶ a larger number than any other geographer in Association history. He was elected Second Vice President in 1910, First Vice President in 1915, President in 1916, and Councilor 1929-1931. In retirement he held office and attempted his annual paper, but age, winter ailments, and expense conspired against his attendance. Then, he sadly wrote "I am losing an old friend." He was much in favor of the annual meetings of the Association of American Geographers. He felt that a true association between geographers was being effected. Many geographers did not see each other from one year's end to the next excepting at the annual meeting. As J. Russell Smith wrote in 1962: "my sole relationship with him [Mark Jefferson] has been as a fellow member of the Association of American Geographers, and in this relation I met him a number of times from 1905 on."²⁷ He would arrange to dine with geographers at the meeting and discuss geographic matters of mutual interest. Occasionally if one of the better read geographers had absented himself from an association meeting, Jefferson would correspond with him and urge his attendance at the next meeting. Geographers who had presented thoughts which interested Jefferson would receive a letter from him on the subject and usually encouragement to continue in that line of work. If Jefferson felt a geographer should contribute a paper to the annual meeting he would insist this be accomplished. When in 1925, he felt that the work of his colleague, Ella Wilson, on the potato industry of Maine would interest the membership of the Association he insisted she present the essence of her study.²⁸ He encouraged and aided her with papers delivered at Association meetings in Philadelphia, 1926, Washington, 1932, and Evanston, 1932.²⁹ If a geographic matter were of interest to a group of geographers, Jefferson would write to the current president and urge a round-table conference on the matter. He felt that the role of the Association of American Geographers was to inspire, to bring geographers together annually, to serve as a clearing house of ideas. He felt the Association of American Geographers was a device, an instrument, and to that end on more than one occasion proposed that each member of the Association attach his specialty to his name on the annual roster of membership and a scheme be arranged whereby each geographer give a certain number of hours from his specialty to other geographer members requiring such. This notion probably developed from Jefferson's own experiences; he had exchanged thoughts which proved most fruitful to him, especially with

G. K. Gilbert on rivers, F. Matthes on glaciers, J. P. Goode on cartography, Barrows on human ecology, and all of these at Association meetings. But Jefferson did not believe in crusading for his notions regarding the Association. One letter sent was sufficient, and quite frequently his suggestions passed unheeded. He was not sympathetic toward the publication of the *Annals*. From his study in Ypsilanti he would prepare his paper for the next Association meeting quite as though this was the most important activity in his life. If he were particularly pleased with his work, he might venture to mention in correspondence to daughter Phoebe, "I have an idea that will tell well next Christmas," and to Bowman, "I shall bring a paper to—." Always he typed a copy of the paper he wished to present, but frequently, in the telling, the typed statement was discarded and he would talk impromptu. Frequently his paper won special mention in the *Geographical Review*. Always his talks were illustrated, and always they won interest from the membership:³⁰

He [Jefferson] will be remembered best, possibly, for his talks at the annual geographic conferences. All geographers know that when a speaker is announced, many people who have been listening to previous speakers head for the exit. I never saw this happen to Mark Jefferson. Every time he appeared on the program there was a rush to get into the conference room, not to get out of it.

His orally presented paper would be re-written, in greater detail, and then published, usually in the *Bulletin of the American Geographical Society* and after 1915 in the *Geographical Review*. He mentioned in correspondence that although he thought the *Review* was "the best thing of its kind in the English language," he published there in order to secure much needed additional income which such writing afforded. "Since 1908 when the American Geographical Society invited me to be a contributing editor I have not cared to publish in the *Annals* (A.A.G.). Everything in the *Review* is PAID. A writer finds that very desirable."³¹

Jefferson developed a close relationship with the American Geographical Society commencing in 1908, initially through the person of Cyrus Adams, and later through the persons of Isaiah Bowman, and Gladys Wrigley. Jefferson was impressed with the accomplishments of the Society. Additionally, the American Geographical Society paid Jefferson promptly for all he sent them. Such income was much appreciated by Jefferson, whose carefully maintained ledgers indicate that his savings were never able to withstand extravagance. Between the years 1909 and 1941 he published 31 papers in the American Geographical Society publication, a number unequaled by any geographer, and is

awarded the appellation “seraph of the tried and true” by J. K. Wright in *Geography in the Making*.³² The American Geographical Society provided Jefferson with 25 or 50 reprints of each of his articles and many of his reviews. Jefferson sent these to his geographer friends especially in the United States and Europe, who in turn, sent Jefferson reprints of many of their studies. In this way Jefferson developed a collection of many hundreds of reprints.

In these same Ypsilanti years Jefferson augmented his knowledge, supplemented his income, and enlarged his personal library by reviewing books which he was frequently invited to retain. Most of these reviews were written for the *Geographical Review*,³³ but other of his reviews appeared irregularly in other magazines and newspapers. He gave much time and thought to the reading of a book before he wrote a word of review. He insisted on the necessity of adequate book reviews as an aid to scientific advance and had published a note on the subject in the *Bulletin of the American Geographical Society*.³⁴ Jefferson’s reviews were much sought by the American Geographical Society, and between the years 1910 and 1942 Jefferson reviewed 146 books for that Society. His reviews varied in length from 100 to 2,000 words, gave to many readers of the *Review* an intimate account of author accomplishment, rendered reviews in the English language of German, French, Spanish, and Swedish books which were otherwise inaccessible to American geographers. Several of his reviews have been cited and quoted as authoritative themselves. Occasionally he would reveal his own point of view in a review if he felt the author had become improbable, but usually an air of objective authority characterized his comment. He acquired a wonderful collection of geographic literature, certainly not equalled by the Normal School library. He collected atlases with the same zeal as he collected postage stamps. Geographical periodicals which he could not well afford, he ordered for the library, then insisted the periodicals be bound and shelved in his office, which caused many a tussle with librarian Genevieve Walton. Jefferson won out and held the periodicals. If his own library did not contain a book or article he needed, he would request the item or the information from the American Geographical Society rather than travel to eight-mile distant Ann Arbor and consult the library of the University of Michigan. If the American Geographical Society did not possess the item they would seek to purchase it at once, then forward it to Jefferson.

Publication of Jefferson’s work in the *Geographical Review* meant a certain and substantial circulation for him. Summaries and notes of his *Geographical Review* articles were published in many geographical journals including: *Annales de Géographie*, *Geografiska Annaler*, the

Geographical Journal, the *Geographical Teacher*, *Geographisches Jahrbuch*, the *Scottish Geographical Magazine*, *Pettermanns Mitteilungen*, *Ymer*, and *Zeitschrift für Geopolitik*.

Frequently his articles from the *Geographical Review* would be summarized in the pages of the *New York Times*. This was largely due to the influence of John H. Finley, President of the American Geographical Society, 1925-1934 (later Honorary President), and Editor for the *New York Times* (later editor emeritus).³⁵ In consequence, many geographers came to know of Jefferson's interests, which brought him into contact with men interested in matters similar to himself. It also increased his set of correspondents and was, in part, responsible for the honorifics bestowed upon the man.

Jefferson's services were sought by publishing companies who requested him to critique manuscripts of a geographic nature for a much needed \$25 fee (one such manuscript was *Asia*, by Ellsworth Huntington).³⁶ In 1913 the Hanson Bellows Company wished to add a geography section to their encyclopedia which had already passed through several successful editions. The company invited Jefferson to assume the role of editor to this large undertaking. Owing to the pressure of classroom work, his own writing program, and the extended sickness of his wife which resulted in her death later that same year, Jefferson declined the invitation, at the same time recommending Ellsworth Huntington most strongly for the position. Huntington was duly offered the position of Encyclopedia editor which he accepted: Jefferson did contribute some dozen articles to the Encyclopedia at Huntington's request.³⁷ Map publishing companies hired his services as a cartographic editor; Jefferson was a member of the Editorial Board for A. J. Nystrom and Company for many years. Other companies requested his services. In order that he might give more of his time to thinking and writing geography and less to teaching, Jefferson had tried to secure as permanent teachers in his department Ellsworth Huntington, George McBride, and George T. Renner, but lack of funds had prevented on each occasion. Once he invited Miss G. Wrigley to teach summer school in 1924, but as Editor of the *Review*, Miss Wrigley was otherwise occupied. In the summer of 1925, Jefferson did employ a Miss Gorrie from Scotland, recommended by his friend George Chisholm, but that did not release him from a weekly classroom responsibility approximating twenty hours.

Frequently in the 1920's Jefferson was given to extended writing and map-making sessions. At these times his classes would have to wait. With two capable colleagues (Miss Sill and Miss Wilson) to attend his classes and give him time in library research, an admonition from President McKenny "to take time when he needed it," and a jolting note

from Bowman in 1921 making reference to his advancing years, Jefferson's classroom absences were frequent and pronounced. Perhaps he felt he was writing in the sound of Time's hurrying chariot. His health was poorer in the 1920's than at any other time in his life. But the 1920's constituted Jefferson's most prolific decade as a glance at the bibliography indicates. In addition to the publication of ideas which had been with him for a long time he became involved in the making of maps not for companies or his own publications so much as for his own delight. "Nothing is so geographic as a map," he would declare. By the end of the 1920's Jefferson had produced and copyrighted approximately 18 base maps, of countries, continents, states, and the world, that were selling throughout the U.S.A. This map making spree culminated with the "6:6 World Map" in 1930.³⁸

Many geographers and other academics came to wonder at the unusual spectacle of a normal school professor who was also one of the leading scholars in his field.³⁹ Many wondered why he never sought a chair of geography in one of the country's better known universities. Several of his critics advanced the notion that he had not acquired a doctor of philosophy degree and had best therefore remain as a Normal school teacher of teachers. His friends offered the apocryphal story that when asked why he had no doctoral degree, Jefferson had queried, "who would examine me?" Certainly little known is the fact that he had declined the opportunity of an honorary doctorate from Harvard University in the fall of 1922 when that University informally extended the offer to him.⁴⁰ He was writing "Peopling the Argentine Pampa" and stated simply he could not well afford the time or the money involved in its collection. Honorifics were an effort for the man. The honorifics that did come his way were strictly the product of his geographic ideas, industry, and contribution, and were in no way the product of a winning smile.

It was a little concealed honorific, when, in the December of 1931 the Association of American Geographers held their 28th annual meeting at Ypsilanti's Normal College. (The only occasion in the history of the Association when a Normal College was so honored.) The Charles McKenny Union Building had been recently completed and named in honor of the retiring Normal College President. Isaiah Bowman, President of the Association for that year, and former student of Jefferson, brought with him to Ypsilanti the Cullum Gold Medal from the American Geographical Society which was then presented to Jefferson at the banquet. In presenting the medal, Isaiah Bowman said:⁴¹

To point the way of my remarks I choose an ancient and familiar text: "A man's gift maketh room for him and bringeth him unto the company of great men." Upon the walls of the Central Hall of the Ameri-

can Geographical Society are the names of representative men of that company in the field of geography. First I mention Professor William Morris Davis, who needs no characterization; Stefansson, the Arctic explorer; Sir John Murray and the Prince of Monaco, oceanographers and many others.

To win this judgment Professor Jefferson would not lift a finger. In an age of unblushing self-praise he stands out by contrast with the multitude.

The Cullum Medal is a work of art as well as a form of recognition. On one side it portrays a man in a boat. He searches eagerly the unknown shore before him to find a landing place and a way toward the unexplored interior. On the other side is a figure standing beside a globe on which Jefferson's friends will observe with approval a network of meridians and parallels! Beside the figure is a panel and into it Dr. Wrigley, the editor of the Geographical Review, has condensed an inscription far more expressive than the words I have used in this citation:

*To
Professor Mark Jefferson
For The
Savor of True Geography
In His Ingenious And
Fruitful Inquiries
Into Man's Distribution
On the Earth
1931.*

Jefferson's recorded final words of reply were, "I thank you, Dr. Bowman, for the honor of this medal and I will try to be worthy of it."

Hardly had Jefferson had time to recover from the Cullum Gold Medal shock when another former student of Jefferson's, Charles Colby, arose and announced that The Geographical Society of Chicago had presented the Helen Culver Medal, founded 1907, to Jefferson. The heavy gold medal carried the inscription: "Awarded to Mark Jefferson, pioneer in the development of scientific geography in America, inspiring teacher, distinguished contributor. December 21, 1931." Jefferson later remarked that two gold medals and a banquet were too much for the digestive system at a single sitting. This latter medal Jefferson collected from the Chicago Geographical Society in October of 1932. He wrote briefly of the occasion to his daughter, Phoebe:⁴²

Saturday had to go to Chicago, the presentation-luncheon of the Chicago Geographic Society. Rather resplendent affair at Stevens Hotel in the Grand Ball Room. "The Greatest Hotel in the World." They admit it. There were 350 at table, largely Society people, the Society

having become fashionable. Seven newspaper shootings and a microphone in front of each speaker, though I did not know it and no one in Ypsilanti heard the talks. In all getting the medal cost me \$20 which I cannot well spare. The medals repose in my drawer at the bank. The A.G.S. has given me a replica of their's in bronze which is gilded over and looks like the original.

Soon he had sold both the gold medals to a jeweller in Ypsilanti to help finance another printing of *Man in Europe*. The Cullum Medal fetched \$75. He later wrote "that much gold made me feel nervous." He was, nevertheless, deeply moved by the double occasion as some scribbled autobiographical notes show.

Honors bestowed upon the man include Corresponding Memberships to the Belgrade Geographical Society, 1920; the American Geographical Society, 1922; the Society of Anthropology and Geography, Stockholm, 1925; the University of Belgrade Geographical Society, 1932. He was elected to several offices including the Presidency of the Michigan Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters, 1907, and the Presidency of the Association of American Geographers 1916. He was listed in the first eight editions of *American Men of Science* . . . 1906, 1910, 1921, 1927, 1933, 1938, 1944, 1949; *Who's Who in America*, 1906 to 1941 in sixteen biennial editions (volumes 4-21); the official *Who's Who in Michigan* (1936), *Leaders in Education* (1941). And as he entered retirement, in the December of 1939 on the occasion of the Association of American Geographers—National Council of Geography Teachers meeting at Chicago, the National Council of Geography Teachers presented Jefferson with their Annual Distinguished Service Award, "in recognition of outstanding Contributions to Educational Geography."⁴³