



Farmer Jefferson

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Like George Washington, Jefferson was a farmer, constantly on the lookout for new and better ways to do things. He experimented with crop rotation and new varieties of crops and new crops themselves.

Jefferson is of course known for his political writing, most notably the Declaration of Independence. What one quickly learns in visiting his fabled home is the breadth of his creativity.

From the weather vane he could read from inside, to a seven-day clock that indicated the day as the weights unwound and a book stand designed for comparing multiple books at one time, Jefferson was always looking for ways to expand on the availability and ease of accessing information.

As a farmer, Jefferson was an early adapter of technology, redesigning a new plow of his day. The iron covered wood plowshare turned the dirt better and easier. It was a little thing, but calculated to save energy and time in the field.

No sooner had he tested it than he shared it with other farmers in this country and Europe, just as he shared his successes and failures with crops.

When I walked away from Monticello, one of the things that stuck with me was Jefferson's desire to share information and better the conditions of his fellow man. From great writings to initiating a fine university to reporting on the use of clover seed, Jefferson realized that an idea had no value if kept to one's self. Imagine what he would have done with a blog!

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