



Thomas Barclay (1728-1793): Consul in France, Diplomat in Barbary

Priscilla H. Roberts, Richard S. Roberts

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Long overdue, this is the first-ever biography of Thomas Barclay (1728-93), the first American consul to serve the United States abroad and the first representative to successfully negotiate for America in North Africa, then known as Barbary. It is the account of an Ulster-born immigrant earning his fortune as a Philadelphia merchant and then losing it as he gives priority to his adopted country's fight to gain and build its independence. Thomas Barclay's association with Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, and John Adams brings new insights into the personalities of these men and the international issues they and America faced when peace returned - among them the Barbary corsairs. Challenged by the absence of Barclay letter-books and collections of private writings, the authors traveled widely and dug deeply to tap primary source material in the U.S., Great Britain, France, Holland, Spain, Portugal, and Morocco. The Roberts are independent scholars.

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