



Benjamin Franklin

Edmund S. Morgan

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Benjamin Franklin is perhaps the most remarkable figure in American history: the greatest statesman of his age, he played a pivotal role in the formation of the American republic. He was also a pioneering scientist, a best-selling author, the country's first postmaster general, a printer, a bon vivant, a diplomat, a ladies' man, and a moralist - and the most prominent celebrity of the 18th century. Franklin was, however, a man of vast contradictions, as Edmund Morgan demonstrates in this biography. A reluctant revolutionary, Franklin had desperately wished to preserve the British Empire, and he mourned the break even as he led the fight for American independence. Despite his passion for science, Franklin viewed his groundbreaking experiments as secondary to his civic duties. And although he helped to draft both the Declaration of Independence and the American Constitution, he had personally hoped that the new American government would take a different shape. Seeking to unravel the enigma of Franklin's character, Morgan shows that he was the rare individual who consistently placed the public interest before his own desires.

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