

Living an American Lifestyle in 18th Century Philadelphia—Robert Morris, Prosperous Merchant and Family Man

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Abstract

Robert Morris (1734-1806), an English-born merchant and later one of the American Founding Fathers, has not attracted the attention of national icons like Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, or Alexander Hamilton. There are obvious reasons for his comparative obscurity. Morris was not a charismatic speaker; he did not write influential books or pamphlets and did not actively take part in military campaigns. He was, however, one of the most powerful political leaders during the Revolutionary period. His undertakings in the political sphere have been fairly well studied but his personal life, including his lifestyle has not yet been adequately examined by scholars of American history. In this paper, it is my intention to shed light on the daily existence of Philadelphia's wealthy merchant community by closely scrutinizing Robert Morris's life and character. My purpose is not to generalize too much based on analysis on Robert Morris, but to use him as a case in point to reveal

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some aspects of the life of upper class in 18th century Philadelphia.

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