

# Ben Franklin

by Ben Franklin (1793)

He was born 17Jan1706 in Boston and died 17Apr1790 in Philadelphia. He was open to criticism & determined at improvement. The Boston Newsletter was the first newspaper in the US. At age 12 he became a printing apprentice to his brother in Boson. At 16 he left for Philadelphia, went to London at 18 and return at 20. At 20 he wrote "The Plan" regulating future conduct of life. He opened a print shop at 21 and married at 24. He opened Philadelphia Public Library in 1730. Hard workers prevail. He lists his virtues on page 125 to be: temperance, silence, order, resolution, frugality, industry, sincerity, justice, moderation, cleanliness, tranquility, charity & humility. Opinions presented modestly are more receptive (don't be dogmatic). He spoke English, French, Italian, Spanish & Latin. 1736 his son died of small-pox at age 4. He regrets not giving him the inoculation. Business owners must keep good records. He set up the volunteer fire dept and militia in Philadelphia. He started a secret society for intellectual enlightenment (Junto). He was given honorary college degrees. 1742 he invented an open stove, but refused the patent, stating the idea is for the people (someone else revised it, got the patent and made a fortune). He also invented the lightning rod and bifocals. 1749 he started the Pennsylvania Academy in an old church (now the University of Philadelphia). He setup several business partnerships to help young honest men. He was elected to the Assembly. 1751 he helped a friend build the first hospital in Philadelphia. He lobbied for paved & lit streets (for a small tax) & light houses. He made improvements to become profitable as the US Postmaster General. He setup forts & militia to fight off the Indians and the French (who was at war with England in 1756). When the English troops came through, they took everything they wanted (1755), but the French did not (1780). The Royal Society gave him a gold medal for his experiments of lightning & electricity. 1756 he saw how vulnerable the British troops were to Indian assaults.

## Quotes:

"In youth the character is determined."

"He that has once done you a kindness will be more ready to do you another"

"After getting the first hundred pounds, it is more easy to get the second."

"Human felicity is produced not so much by great pieces of good fortune that seldom happen, as by little advances that occur every day."

Books: Art of Virtue (Ben Franklin); Poor Richard's Almanac (Ben Franklin); Pilgrim's Progress (John Bunyan)