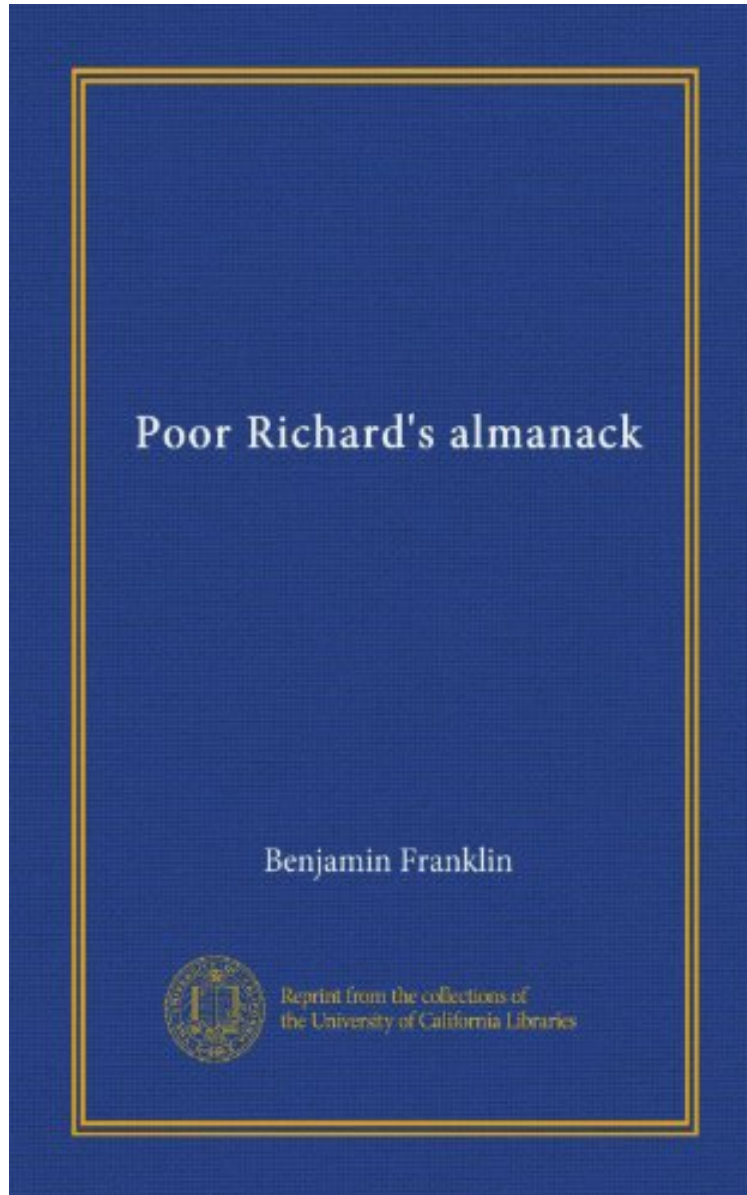


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Poor Richard's almanack

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About the Author
Benjamin Franklin (1706-1790) was one of America's most influential Founding Fathers. He was an author, printer, politician, postmaster, scientist, musician, inventor, statesman, and diplomat. Franklin invented the lightning rod, the Franklin stove, a carriage odometer, and bifocals. He served as President of Pennsylvania (which would be Governor today), United States Minister to France, United States Minister to Sweden, and United States Postmaster General. At 70, he was the oldest signer of the Declaration of Independence. He was a publisher; most famously of *Poor Richard's Almanack*, which was published from 1732 to 1757. He charted the Gulf Stream in 1770, developed meteorological theories, and, in a letter dated 1772, laid out the earliest known description of a Pro Con list. Franklin played the violin, harp, and guitar, and was the first chess player known by name in the American colonies. He created one of the first volunteer firefighting companies in America, was instrumental in the founding of the University of Pennsylvania, and founded the American Philosophical Society. Franklin biographer Walter Isaacson calls him "the most accomplished American of his age and the most influential in inventing the type of society America would become."