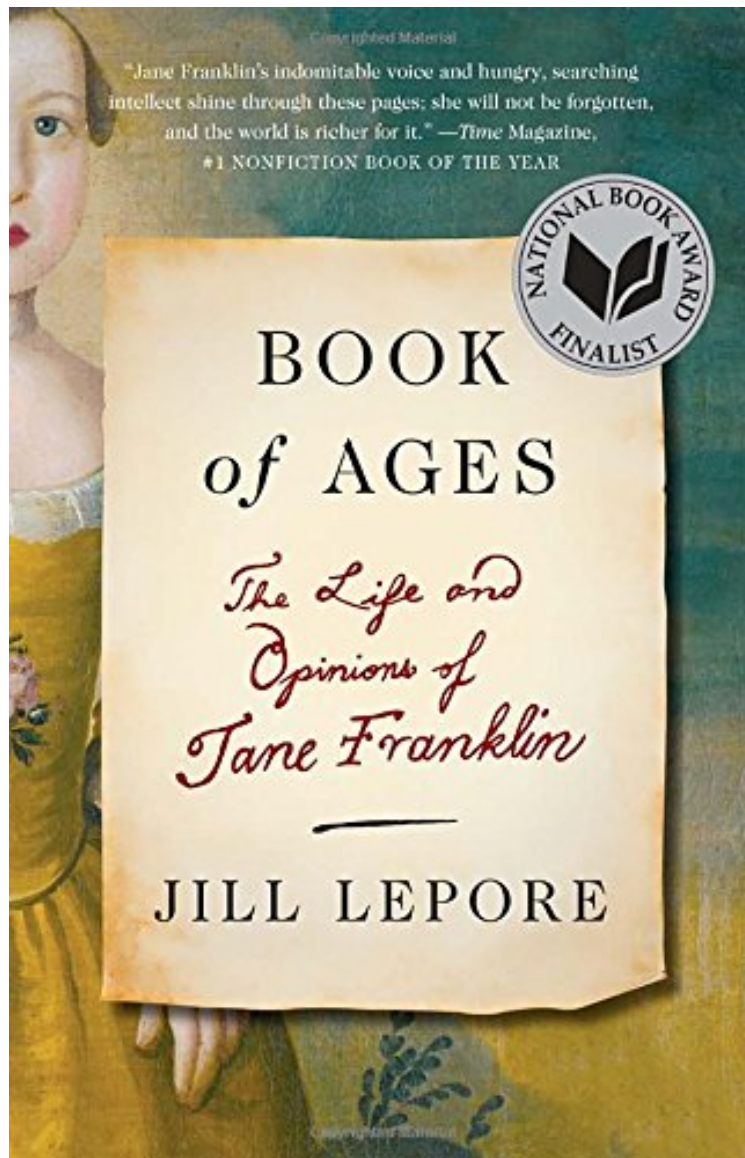


(Free and download) Book of Ages: The Life and Opinions of Jane Franklin

Book of Ages: The Life and Opinions of Jane Franklin

Jill Lepore

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#54365 in Books Lepore Jill 2014-07-01 2014-07-01Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 8.00 x .90 x 5.201, .95 #File Name: 0307948838464 pagesBook of Ages The Life and Opinions of Jane Franklin | File size: 65.Mb

Jill Lepore : Book of Ages: The Life and Opinions of Jane Franklin before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Book of Ages: The Life and Opinions of Jane Franklin:

7 of 7 people found the following review helpful. Jane Franklin, Someone worth knowing.By L. BackThis is an unique approach to history and biography, and I found it fascination. Jane's personality shines through her letters. She

describe the routines of her day, soap making, sewing, knitting, child care, reading, the historic events passing by her house in Boston, her family's difficulties, mentally, physically, and economically, and her sometimes desperate circumstances. It is surprising how someone who had so little and faced so much could survive, and keep her spirit. but she did. And while she may occasionally complain, for the most part she is a cheerful, and resilient soul. I really liked her, especially when she was bold enough to speak her mind about the politics, or when she scolded her famous brother. A very interesting and enjoyable read. The one thing that sometimes intruded into the story was the author's asides, or comments. They weren't helpful. 3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Well-written history By Mirillie It was a little disappointing to think I was going to be reading a book about Jane Franklin to find out the first half was really about her brother because there is very little of her from that time that remains. I would have like the note from the author at the very end to be in the beginning. My expectations for information on Jane were higher than what I got based on the title, but that being said this is a well-written book. I listened to it on Audible because even though I had it on my Kindle, the quotes from the time before American English had standardized spelling was bogging me down in print. Listening to Robin Miles read it to me added greatly to my enjoyment of it. At the end when Jill Lepore explains her process of getting letters and information on Jane, I was able to appreciate the book better. I found that the turning point for me that made me start to enjoy the book more was when Jane's husband died and her brother the famous Franklin starts providing for her. Jane had an incredibly hard life with a husband who was an extremely poor provider, many of her children dying young, trying to keep family out of the poor house and mental illness in her family. When Benjamin Franklin removes her stress by providing for her and more of her letters survive, it is a much more enjoyable book. There was a distracting part early on where Jill Lepore keeps comparing Jane to another Jane who grew up in richer circumstances. This was confusing, but it did show the difference in upbringing that Jane Franklin had compared to wealthier women at her time. I have always been a fan of history that tells us how people really lived. Yes, Benjamin Franklin was an important figure in American history, but to know what a particular woman of his time had to go through (lack of education, evacuation during war, loss of family) was enlightening. If you realize that this book is hampered by a lack of first hand information on Jane Franklin's early years and adjust your expectations accordingly, you will enjoy it. 73 of 75 people found the following review helpful. Delightful comparison of two very different siblings By Kate Stout Most know of Benjamin Franklin, American entrepreneur, inventor, printer, writer, patriot and statesman. In the aftermath of the American Revolution, when he served as the American Ambassador to France, he became international famous, with his picture appearing on many every day articles. Few know of his sister Jane, who leads a ordinary life in Franklin's hometown of Boston - marrying, suffering through a life burdened by debt, raising and losing children. But in this delightful book, the author Jill Lepore creates a lively parallel biography of the two siblings, who correspond with one another until Franklin's death, using their letters as the unifying element. In doing so, the author paints a picture of the specifics of each person, as well as how the differences in the opportunities for men and woman shaped the lives of these people. This is done both through the thoughts of each, and by bringing in other contemporary sources. However this is not a harangue about "how women were put down"; it is described through the writings of real people of the period, and feels more like a reporting on the period. I found their stories fascinating - though I am quite familiar with Ben Franklin, and the time period, I learned many new things, and found this a wonderful view into the life of a relatively ordinary woman of the period. Jane is less educated than her brother, and often apologizes for her spelling and writing, but is a woman with a love of thought, though for many of her child bearing years, she has no money or time to invest in books or learning. Ben Franklin leaves behind religion, while it remains an important part of Jane's life - this becomes a point of contention at times. The book covers from their childhood in the early 1700's til nearly 1800, and then describes what happens to the letters after Jane's death (an interesting story on its own). Jane's account of fleeing Boston after the British occupation is compelling - it made a picture for me that I had not imagined - of how ordinary middle-aged people fled the city for fear of their homes and good being confiscated. This is one of the most unusually conceived and most delightful books I've read in some time. I highly recommend for those interested in the time period, or in the social history of women, or just want to read an interesting family story.

NATIONAL BOOK AWARD FINALIST ONE OF THE BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR NPR Time Magazine The Washington Post Entertainment Weekly The Boston Globe A NEW YORK TIMES NOTABLE BOOK From one of our most accomplished and widely admired historians a revelatory portrait of Benjamin Franklin's youngest sister, Jane, whose obscurity and poverty were matched only by her brother's fame and wealth but who, like him, was a passionate reader, a gifted writer, and an astonishingly shrewd political commentator. Making use of an astonishing cache of little-studied material, including documents, objects, and portraits only just discovered, Jill Lepore brings Jane Franklin to life in a way that illuminates not only this one extraordinary woman but an entire world.

From Booklist *Starred * Award-winning historian, Harvard professor, and New Yorker staff writer Lepore, whose *The Mansion of Happiness* (2012) was a Carnegie Medal for Excellence in Nonfiction finalist, was intrigued to learn that Benjamin Franklin and his youngest sister, Jane, were so close they were called Benny and Jenny. Renowned,

world-traveling brother and obscure, homebound sister exchanged loving, newsy, bantering letters for more than 60 years. Most of his were preserved, while three decades worth of hers disappeared. This near-erasure, along with the gender bias that determined the vast differences in the siblings education, opportunities, and experiences, become as much a focus in this zestfully rigorous portrait as Jane herself. The most poignant artifact Lepore unearthed was Janes handmade Book of Ages, recording the birth of her 12 children and, excruciatingly, the eventual deaths of all but one of them. In spite of the tragedies she endured, Janes surviving letters are gabby, frank, and vexed, the correspondence of a smart, witty, hardworking woman who loved best books about ideas, reveled in gossip, expressed impolite opinions on religion and politics, and shared piquant observations of the struggle for American independence. By restoring Jane so vividly to the historical record, Lepore also provides a fresh, personal perspective on Benjamin. And so extraordinarily demanding was her research, even the appendixes in Lepores vibrantly enlightening biography are dramatic. **HIGH-DEMAND BACKSTORY:** Lepores stature grows with each book, and this first telling of a remarkable American story, supported by a national tour and generous print run, is destined for an even greater readership. --Donna Seaman ****The New York Times 100 Notable Books of 2013****Barnes and Noble Best Books of 2013****Kirkus Best Books of 2013****Time Magazine#1 Nonfiction Book of 2013****The Week Best Nonfiction Books of 2013****Jane Franklins indomitable voice and hungry, searching intellect shine through these pages; she will not be forgotten, and the world is richer for it. Time Magazine, Top 10 Nonfiction Books of the YearLuminous.Lepore gives us a woman in the flesh, with no hints and hedges about what she must, or might, have felt.Jane emerges as witty, curious, and resilient in the face of unimaginable grief, yet she is not an unsung hero of the revolution, a forgotten Abigail Adams. Her importance, as Lepores portrait memorably shows, lies in her ordinarinessher learning thwarted by circumstance, but her intelligence shaped by her uniquely female experience. We may know about Jane Franklin only because of her famous brother, but he is not why she matters. Joanna Scutts, Washington PostAs she stitches together Janes story, Lepore gives us a side of Benjamin Franklin we have never seenan evocative look at what life was like for most 18th-century women. Tina Jordan, Entertainment WeeklyBook of Ages is the name of Lepores extraordinary new book about Jane Franklin, but to call it simply a biography would be like calling Bens experiments with electricity mere kite flying.The end product is thrillingan example of how a gifted scholar and writer can lift the obscure out of silence. In so doing, Lepore enriches our sense of everyday life and relationships and conversational styles in Colonial America. . . . The brilliance of Lepores book is that plain Janes story becomes every bit as grippingand, in its own way, importantas Big Bens public triumphs. Maureen Corrigan, NPRIn this beautifully written double biography, Lepore brings into focus not just the life of Jane Franklin Mecom, alongside that of her brother, but illuminates the dynamic era through which they lived and gives us a birds-eye view of history from the vantage point of a powerless woman who grew up in a Boston family alongside one of the 18th centurys greatest authors, entrepreneurs, scientists and statesmen.Remarkably, in the end Janes story comes to life; we know her or at least about her. But, in fact, we know her because her life is one that we recognize, perhaps better than that of her familiar brother. That is the brilliance of this book. . . . This lyrical and meditative book ranks familiarly as a history or biography, but is more than either. . . . It descends historiographically from Laurel Thatcher Ulrichs *A Midwifes Tale* as a classic and enduring tribute to an obscure woman, only this one also had a famous brother. Edith B. Gelles, San Francisco ChronicleMs. Lepore is a fantastic historian, and meticulous research brings this portrait to life. . . . In the hands of a less accomplished writer, Jane Franklin might have appeared merely a pale shadow in contrast to her brothers accomplishments. But the portrait that emerges here is both frank and astute, an observant witness to the time. Madeleine Schwartz, Pittsburgh Post-GazetteTo stare at these siblings is to stare at sun and moon. But in Jill Lepores meticulously constructed biography, *Book of Ages: The Life and Opinions of Jane Franklin*, recently placed on the long list of nominees for the National Book Award in nonfiction, this moon casts a beguiling glow.Consistently first rate. Dwight Garner, The New York TimesThis book is a tour de force that can only evoke admiration. Priscilla S. Taylor, The Washington TimesGo read Jill Lepores *Book of Ages*. A biography of Jane Franklin, Benjamins sister, it is simultaneously a fascinating look at early America, a meditation on one remarkable mind by another, and, implicitly, a biography of all the other Janeshistorys anonymous and overlooked women. Kathryn Schulz, New York MagazineIt is uncanny how vividly personal, how vibrantly colored, Janes voice sounds from these pages . . . lets call it genius. Melissa H. Pierson, The Barnes Noble Book of Ages is an artful, serious, marvelous book. Lepore brings to it focus, intensity, and proud delight in her subject. Bob Blaisdell, The Christian Science MonitorEloquent . . . deeply sensitive to language. Susan Dunn, The New York of BooksAstonishing. . . . This is a work of meticulous reconstruction and high ambition.In *Book of Ages*, Lepore has lovingly resurrected [Jane Franklin]. Julia M. Klein, The Boston GlobeA thoughtful and illuminating biography. O Magazine, Ten Titles to Pick Up NowBy restoring Jane so vividly to the historical record, Lepore provides a fresh, personal perspective on Benjamin. And so extraordinarily demanding was her research, even the appendixes in Lepores vibrantly enlightening biography are dramatic. . . . Lepores stature grows with each book, and this first telling of a remarkable American story, supported by a national tour and generous print run, is destined for an even greater readership. Donna Seaman, Booklist (starred review)New Yorker writer Lepore masterfully formulates the story of Benjamin Franklins youngest sister, who will be virtually unknown to many readers, using only a few of her letters and a small archive of births and

deaths. Jane Franklin was an amazing woman who raised her children and grandchildren while still having the time to read and think for herself. We can only see into her mind because her correspondent was famous and because a vastly talented biographer reassembled her for us. Kirkus (starred review) This book is an important, inspiring portrait of a determined and faith-filled woman who just happened to be the sister of a big shot. It will be enjoyed by all. Library Journal (starred review) This is a brilliant and delightful book! By weaving together the tales of Benjamin Franklin and his beloved little sister, Jill Lepore creates a richly-textured tapestry of life in early America. Deeply researched and passionately written, it brings us inside a poignant relationship between two lovable people who seemed so different but were also so connected. I devoured this book and will treasure it. Walter Isaacson, author of *Steve Jobs* Book of Ages is an ardently told life story, brimming with love and loss against a background of political strife and war. Jill Lepore opens a smeared casement on the life of Jane, Benjamin Franklin's gifted sister, confidante and life-long correspondent. While Benjamin was able to forge a path to greatness from his obscure beginnings, Jane, trapped by gender, starved of education, was not. The contrast between the two destinies is by turns captivating, enraging and profoundly moving. As Lepore sheds light on this one, unsung life, she brilliantly illuminates an entire era. Geraldine Brooks, author of *March* From scraps and whispers, Jill Lepore has resurrected Ben Franklin's youngest sister, the only relative who could truthfully say, "Every line from him was a pleasure." The subject is tailor-made for Lepore, as artful a writer as she is exact a scholar. She delivers two marvels at once: An authentic 18th century female voice, cheerful, inquisitive, and saucy, as well as an intimate portrait of Jane Franklin's revered brother himself. Stacy Schiff, author of *Cleopatra* This poetic and powerful diptych takes readers on a fascinating journey. With consummate skill, Lepore moves us beyond the story of a famous brother and his woebegone sister, instead bringing both Benny and Jenny--and the relationship between them--to life. A book to ponder and prose to savor. Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, author of *A Midwife's Tale* "With careful and ingenious research, Jill Lepore uncovers the surprising life of the obscure sister to a very famous man. This eloquent book reveals two remarkable siblings and their intertwined and revolutionary lives." Alan Taylor, author of *The Civil War of 1812* About the Author Jill Lepore is the David Woods Kemper 41 Professor of American History at Harvard University and a staff writer at *The New Yorker*. Her books include *New York Burning*, a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize; *The Name of War*, winner of the Bancroft Prize; and *The Mansion of Happiness*, which was short-listed for the 2013 Andrew Carnegie Medal for Excellence in Nonfiction. She lives in Cambridge, Massachusetts.