

[Free] The Washingtons: George and Martha: Partners in Friendship and Love

# The Washingtons: George and Martha: Partners in Friendship and Love

Flora Fraser

DOC | \*audiobook | ebooks | Download PDF | ePub



## THE WASHINGTONS



GEORGE AND MARTHA  
*Partners in Friendship and Love*



FLORA FRASER  
Author of *Princesses*

"Fraser [is] an accomplished biographer who writes with great ease and wit." —*The New York Times Book Review*

Copyrighted Material

DOWNLOAD



READ ONLINE

#554467 in Books Flora Fraser 2016-10-18 2016-10-18 Original language: English PDF # 1 8.00 x .90 x 5.201, 1.01 #File Name: 0307474437464 pages The Washingtons George and Martha Partners in Friendship and Love | File size: 15.Mb

Flora Fraser : The Washingtons: George and Martha: Partners in Friendship and Love before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Washingtons: George and Martha: Partners in Friendship and Love:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. *The Couple Remain As Private As They Wished* By MickM While an entertaining read, I found the lack of detail about the personal lives of George and Martha Washington disappointing. The book clarified some misconceptions, e.g. Martha, while she was indeed older than George, the age difference was only a few months. We learn that Martha and George were often together in winter camp during the Revolutionary War, but little about their interactions with others or each other. Unfortunately, of course, they both destroyed most of their personal correspondence, but surely there are letters or memoirs of people who stayed with them and dined with them when they were both already held in high esteem. I would have enjoyed reading more about those interactions than merely that Martha had grown plump, or that George remained largely silent. Perhaps this book is the result of the lack of such information, but that is hard to believe in an age of letters and diaries. The communications between George and his siblings, and with his step-children are enlightening, not only as to their relationships, but as to George's values and economic sense. I came away with a better knowledge of those interactions than of those between the couple. Unlike some of the other reviewers, I thought the information about the purchases of goods from overseas very informative. The Washingtons wanted quality and fashion. There was vanity and nobility in the household, and the Washingtons' interactions with their agents and the items they sought fills out those traits, and their personal tastes in consumer goods. The book yields a better sense of the household and its operations, and of the relationships among the extended family. The relations between George and Martha are still veiled, at best, and that may be how it remains (it was certainly how they wished.) All in all a good read, and worth the time.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. *Providence Prevailed* By Flower This is an interesting overview of the Washingtons and their time period, without feeling too much like a history textbook. I learned a few new interesting things about both George and Martha. One can appreciate and be reminded of the exemplary contributions and sacrifices each was willing to make. Relationships within and outside the family are brought to life, as well as key historical and military events. An easy read even if history is not your favorite subject.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. *Martha George Washington's Life* By Bonnie This is the story of a married couple. It was also the first time I read a detailed account of Martha's life and family background. I recommend it to all who are interested in American history and the lives of the "Founding Mothers" who gave as much as their husbands to our identity as a nation.

In these pages, acclaimed historian Flora Fraser unfurls the story of George and Martha, brilliantly narrating the lives of an extraordinarily dedicated, accomplished, and historic couple. When they married in colonial Virginia in 1759, he was an awkward but ambitious young officer, she, a graceful, wealthy young widow. They were devoted to one another, and George was as a father to Marthas children by her first husband. She endowed Washington with the confidence and resources that would aid him when elected commander-in-chief of the Continental army. During the war, Martha resolutely supported her husband, the General, joining him every winter in headquarters; she was essential to his well-being and was a redoubtable, vastly admired figure. After the American victory, George was elected our first president and Martha became an impeccable first First Lady. During his presidency, the two established the tenets and traditions of our highest office. This is the story of a pioneering partnership and an enthralling narrative of our nations emergence onto the world stage.

Fraser [is] an accomplished biographer who writes with great ease and wit. *The New York Times Book* An important story delightfully told. . . . Charmingly insightful. H. W. Brands, author of *Reagan* Smartly written. . . . A searing look into the private lives of very public men and women. *The Boston Globe* An ambitious, well-researched and highly readable dual biography. *The Wall Street Journal* A meticulously researched and insightful dual biography. . . . Fraser has successfully depicted a portrait of a long and extremely happy marriage. *The Daily Beast* Impressive and highly readable. . . . Flora Fraser has added an absorbing portrayal of George and Martha Washington and their extended family to the catalog of books on early American icons. *The Missourian* A balanced and vivid account of a marriage which was both remarkable and strikingly down-to-earth. . . . A thrilling story. *The Spectator* An insightful portrait in elegant prose with a dash of wit. The book is based on a mastery of the original sources and brings to life, with much imagination, a wonderful marriage in a period of revolution and war. It is written with a light touch, but is a serious account in every respect. This is a book worthy of its subject. Robert Middlekauff, author *The Glorious Cause* Flora Fraser's *The Washingtons* is a vivid and intimate history of America's first First Family. . . . With her usual flair and grace, Fraser proves the old adage that no man is an island, particularly when it comes to achieving great success. Amanda Foreman, author of *A World on Fire* "Fresh and highly informative. . . . Graceful, incisive." *Booklist* (starred review) About the Author Flora Fraser is author of *Beloved Emma: The Life of Emma, Lady Hamilton*; *The Unruly Queen: The Life of Queen Caroline*; *Princesses: The Six Daughters of George III*; and *Pauline Bonaparte: Venus of Empire*. The Washingtons won the George Washington Book Prize. She is chair of the Elizabeth Longford Prize for Historical Biography, established in 2003 in affectionate memory of her biographer grandmother. She lives in London. Excerpt. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved.

1 Colonial Colonel no prospect of preferment George Washington, anxious by nature, was fractious in the spring of 1758 at Mount Vernon, his plantation home on the Potomac River in northern Virginia. Six years earlier the young man had seen his older half-brother Lawrence waste

away from decay, as tuberculosis was then termed, and die at Mount Vernon while still in his early thirties. Now George himself had, as he wrote on March 4, 1758, to Colonel John Stanwix, a British officer serving in America and formerly his commander, some reason to apprehend an approaching decay. While serving with his regiment in northwestern Virginia the previous year, he had suffered for months from a bloody flux, or dysentery. In November he had retreated to Mount Vernon, a home that he rented from his brothers widow. Here he dieted on medicinal jellies and brooded on his misfortunes. He wrote to Stanwix in March that his constitution was greatly injured: nothing can retrieve it but the greatest care, and most circumspect conduct. To compound his dejection, as he informed Stanwix, Washington saw no prospect of preferment or promotion in a military life. He had served in the Virginia Regiment since it was raised in 1754, and he was now its colonel. But he had failed, like so many provincial or colonial officers, to win a commission in the regular British army. First settled by the Virginia Company in 1607, Virginia had come under the direct rule of James I of England in 1625. Within America the colony was often named the Old Dominion. It was the fifth dominion that the Crown claimed, Scotland, Ireland, and France, besides England, being the others. After the 1707 Act of Union united the English and Scottish thrones as the kingdom of Great Britain, Virginias seal featured the words *En Dat Virginia Quartam Virginia Makes a Fourth*. (Ireland was to remain a separate kingdom until 1801, at which time the claim to France was finally dropped.) Twelve other colonies on the American eastern seaboard were established, the last being Georgia in 1733. New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island were known as the New England colonies. New York, with Pennsylvania and Delaware, constituted the middle colonies. Virginia and Maryland were known together as the Chesapeake colonies or, with North and South Carolina and Georgia, as the southern colonies. Britain had other colonies, too, on the Atlantic coast of America, both north and south of the thirteen colonies, as the above-named were known. Newfoundland and Nova Scotia were among those to the north; East Florida and West Florida, with other colonies in the British West Indies notably Jamaica, Barbados, and the Bahamas lay to the south. Meanwhile, Canada and Louisiana were part of colonial New France. In principle, there was nothing to prevent colonial subjects from serving in the British army. In practice, the War Office in London advanced the claims of young Englishmen with interest an influential patron in the metropolis. As a result of his ill health and poor military prospects, as Washington now wrote to inform Stanwix, he meant to quit his command and retire from all public business. It was a dismal outlook for one who had turned twenty-six on February 22 of this year and who had exulted, till his recent illness, in physical strength and stamina. George had been born at Popes Creek, Westmoreland County, on land near that originally settled by a Washington ancestor in 1657. His birth date was February 11, 1732, according to the Julian calendar that Britain and its colonies then followed. After the Gregorian calendar was adopted in 1752, entailing a loss of eleven days in that year, Washington gave the date of his birth as the eleventh, Old Style. But he kept its anniversary on the twenty-second, New Style. Washingtons physical strength was to become legendary later in his life. At Home House, the small plantation outside Fredericksburg, Virginia, to which his parents moved when he was young, he could pitch a stone across the wide Rappahannock River, according to Parson Weems. Mason Locke Weems is also author of the story that, when aged six, George swung at his fathers cherry tree with a hatchet and could not tell a lie. Though Weems published his narrative in 1800, the year after Washingtons death, the infant Hercules of myth was father of the flesh-and-blood man. George Mercer, the colonels aide-de-camp in the Virginia Regiment, reportedly wrote in a letter of 1760 that Washington was straight as an Indian, measuring 6 feet 2 inches in his stockings. His frame, according to this letter, was padded with well developed muscles, indicating great strength. This impression of great strength Washington conveyed for most of his life. When Washington wrote to Stanwix, in the spring of 1758, both health and strength were in abeyance. Upon his arrival at Mount Vernon the previous November, he had outlined to a neighbor, Mrs. George William Fairfax of Belvoir, the regimen that a local reverend, who doubled as physician, had prescribed for him: He forbids the use of meats, and substitutes jellies and such kind of food . . . I have no person that has been used to making these kind of things, and no directions. Georges younger brother John Augustine, with his wife, Hannah, looked after Mount Vernon and kept house while its tenant served with his regiment. Now, in his sister-in-laws absence, George applied to Sally Fairfax: I find myself under a necessity of applying to you for your receipt [recipe] book for a little while, and indeed for such materials to make jellies as you think I may not just at this time have. For I cant get hartshorn shavings [gelatin] anywhere. Of hyson, or green, tea, he wrote: I am quite out, and cannot get a supply anywhere in these parts. He begged also a bottle or two of mountain or canary [sweet] wine. The Reverend Charles Green had ordered him to take a glass or two each day, mixed with water of gum arabic. The bachelor colonel had been confident that Sally Fairfax, whose husband was away on business in England, would provide. Not only did the Mount Vernon lands share a border with those of Belvoir, where her father-in-law, Colonel William, had built a handsome brick mansion in the 1730s. Lawrence Washington had married William Fairfaxes daughter Ann in 1743, when she was fourteen. Furthermore, in that same year Lawrence and Georges father, Augustine Washington, had died unexpectedly at home in Fredericksburg. Over the succeeding years George aged eleven when his father died completed a sketchy education in Fredericksburg and spent time increasingly at Mount Vernon. At Belvoir, Colonel William took an interest in the boy, and George Washington responded with enthusiasm. Fairfax was a man of influence as well as one with close connections to the English nobility, being cousin and land agent to Thomas, 6th Lord Fairfax of Cameron. He also

served on the Governors Council in Williamsburg and was at one time its president. As senior colonial official in the county, besides, he commanded, with the rank of colonel, the local militia. This was the home guard composed of able-bodied men in the neighborhood, who were formally under the command of the resident royal governor, or deputizing lieutenant governor. As in other colonies, they turned out, bearing arms, a few times a year for training by an adjutant. About a quarter of them trained more regularly and were known as minutemen, from the requirement that they respond at a minutes notice to news of public danger or affray. George Washington benefited greatly from Colonel Williams professional relationship with Lord Fairfax. This peer had inherited a vast tract of Virginia, five million acres in all, land that had originally been granted in 1649 by King Charles II, living in exile in France during the English Civil War, to several supporters. On his restoration as king in 1660, the grant assumed substance. By 1719 the land was vested in Lord Fairfax alone and was known as the Fairfax Proprietary. Eccentric but tenacious, he triumphed, in 1745, in a boundary dispute with the Virginia government in the Privy Council in London. His lands included the entire Northern Neck, as the peninsula between the Potomac and Rappahannock Rivers that jutted out into Chesapeake Bay was known. The extent of his land to the northwest satisfactorily settled, he made his home in the seclusion of the Shenandoah Valley and left it to his cousin William to administer the proprietary. It is easy to see why life at Mount Vernon and at Belvoir attracted the young George Washington. His father had been a restless spirit who invested in land and iron mines with no great success. What little income Home Housethe family farm in Fredericksburg and his inheritance from his fatheryielded was swallowed up by the demands of Georges mother and younger brothers and sister who continued to live there. He was in need of a profession and an income. But his mother, Mary Ball Washington, in 1746 stood out against a plan endorsed by Colonel William that George should join the British navy. A friend wrote to Lawrence, who had himself served as a captain of marines in the Spanish Caribbean five years earlier: She offers several trifling objections such as fond and unthinking mothers habitually suggest; I find that one word against his going has more weight than ten for it.