

# Home Life of George Washington



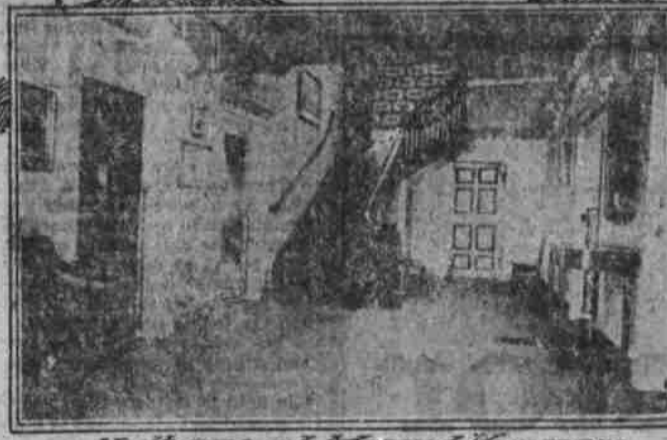
The Heron's Nest—A Life of George Washington



Martha Washington in late Middle Life—From a Little-known Portrait



Mount Vernon



Interior of Mount Vernon



Washington's Bedroom which is said to be furnished

## A Pen Picture of Mount Vernon As It Was When the Father of His Country Dwelt There.

**ROBERT TIGHE**

**M**ARTHA DANDRIDGE CUSTIS was in the richest bloom of young womanhood when, at the age of twenty-seven, she married George Washington. The wedding feast was held in the "six chimney house," at Williamsburg, which had been bequeathed to her by her first husband, Daniel Parke Custis, together with a large fortune in lands and money. The property she had thus inherited included many slaves and \$100,000 worth of bonds and mortgages.

Washington had been a poor young man; but his inheritance of the Mount Vernon estate from his half-brother Lawrence made him wealthy. Not long after he enlarged the house at Mount Vernon, which, built by his half-brother in 1743, mainly by the labor of convicts deported from England, was what was known in those days as a "four room cottage"—meaning that it had only four rooms on the first floor.

After his marriage he added a "boquet hall" at the north end, and a library at the south end. The kitchen was detached from the main

structure, but connected with the latter (as one sees it today) by a covered way. There were a number of outbuildings, in one of which, called the "spinning house," sixteen negro women were kept constantly at work. Washington added much land to the estate by purchase, and in his day it covered nearly thirteen square miles—though now it comprises only 227 acres. The establishment was patriarchal, and there were many slaves, whom the proprietor was accustomed to call "my people." When he died, he left, as part of his property, 125 slaves. He was not an advocate of slavery, and declared on a number of occasions that he would give his own negroes their freedom were it not that they had become matrimonially mixed with the "dower negroes" belonging to his wife, to such an extent that much distress would be caused by their manumission.

**Farm Self Supporting**

The negro women in the spinning house spun cotton and wool, did the weaving of cloth, and made all the clothing for the master and his family, as well as for the slaves. Mrs.

Washington never had to go to market, because the estate produced its own food supplies. At one count that was made, there were 296 head of cattle, 33 horses, 77 mules, 388 sheep and 227 hogs. Mount Vernon, economically speaking, was self-supporting. Nevertheless, some things were bought in Alexandria, and the scale of living may be judged from such items (in Washington's accounts) as "53 barrels of shad" and "117 barrels of herring."

The estate embraced a number of farms, on which a variety of crops were grown, the most important being tobacco. Washington had a talent for farming, as was proved by the fact that he made a great deal of money by it. Most of his produce was sent to market, and his tobacco was of so superior a quality that it always fetched an extra high price. He got up every morning at 4 o'clock, and made a tour of inspection on horseback. It was one of these expeditions, by the way, that he underwent untold exposure, the day being cold and wet, and caught the cold which resulted in his death.

It is rather surprising how little is definitely known about his wife. She does not appear to have been a woman of exceptional intelligence, but

was an admirable housekeeper. She was described by one contemporary as "overfond, hot-tempered, and obstinate." Nevertheless, her marriage was certainly a very happy one. Her husband was devoted to her, and, as will be remembered, he adopted her two grandchildren, the Custis boy and girl, and brought them up as if they had been his own offspring.

**Mrs. Washington A Good Cook**

Although not obliged to practice the art, unless as a way of supervision, Martha Washington was a first-rate cook. She knew how to make most notable pump puddings, and in her time nine pies at Mount Vernon were famous. The old kitchen is kept today exactly as it was when she was alive. There was no range, of course, such conveniences being then un-

known, and all the cooking was done over a wood fire in a huge fireplace, above which a big iron pot was suspended.

That was a primitive age, as judged from our present viewpoint. The mansion at Mount Vernon was one of the finest and most thoroughly improved residences of its day. But it had no bathroom; there was no plumbing, and therefore no running water. All the water supplied to the establishment was drawn in buckets from a well. There were no carpets on the floors, and, needless to say, there was no central heating plant, open fires being the only dependence for warmth in winter. Of wood for burning there was, of course, a plentiful supply, and in the principal rooms there were fireplaces. Slaves lighted the fires in the

bed rooms before the master and mistress and their guests got up on cold mornings. It was the final touch of luxury at that period.

**Good Living At Mount Vernon**

On the other hand, there was always a most bountiful supply of delicacies in the way of food. Game in any quantity was to be had for the trouble of shooting it. There were plenty of deer and the marshes of the Potomac were alive with canvasback and other ducks. Wild turkeys could be bought in the markets of Alexandria for 25 cents apiece, and terrapin for 5 cents. In the river there were unlimited quantities of shad and other fishes. The high cost of living had not begun to be talked of in Washington's time.

Dinner at Mount Vernon was in the early afternoon. It was a liberal meal, and everything was put on the table at one time—meats, vegetables, game, fish and even pies and puddings. When the cloth was "drawn," the ladies retired and the men enjoyed the war of the Revolution the house became "like a tavern" (as Washington wrote in one of his letters); and more or less distinguished visitors were constantly there, some of them staying for months.

Washington was a sportsman. He rode to hounds; he fished, and often he went shooting for ducks. In his kennels he kept some fine dogs, a favorite being called "Sweetlips." He liked to play cards, though a mild gambler and possibly unlucky. His diary records his largest winning as 3 pounds, and on one occasion he lost 3 pounds, 14 shillings and 9 pence.

He was a born speculator, and was constantly engaged in land deals. He was an enthusiastic patron of raffles and lotteries, which were fashionable in his day, and frequent entries in his accounts are found of sums ranging as high as 50 pounds, invested in

lottery tickets. He put up a pound for a chance on a necktie, 21 pounds, 4 shillings on an encyclopedia, and other sums on a coach, a pair of silver buckles, a watch, a gun, etc.

**Fond Of Dancing**

The Father of His Country was exceedingly fond of pretty women, and he liked to dance. He danced up to within three years of his death, and regularly attended the assembly balls at Alexandria, to which all the great families of the "Northern Neck" of Virginia subscribed. Those were early affairs, however, and by midnight he was home again. Ordinarily he went to bed at 9 o'clock.

An entry in his diary of 1789, for February 12 (referring to the previous day) says: "Went up to Alexandria to the celebration of my birthday. Many ranceovers were performed by an uniformed corps, and an elegant ball and supper at night."

Last the above date he deemed a mistake, it should be explained that Washington was born not on the 22d of February, but on the 11th day of that month, a fact testified to in his own diary. He was born before the American Colonies adopted the Gregorian calendar, which put all dates forward eleven days.

**A Stay-at-Home Man**

Washington was a home-lover, and, although circumstances forced him conspicuously into public life, he never cared for it. After he had relinquished the Presidency, he wrote to a friend: "I can truly say I had rather be at Mount Vernon, with a friend or two about me, than be attended at the seat of government by the officers of state and the representatives of every Power in Europe."

It was at about this time that Nellie Custis, his granddaughter, sold in a letter: "Grandfather is so delighted to find himself once again snugly Partner Washington."

# Among the Movie Stars



Lucy Cotton and Bert Lyell in "The Misleading Lady"



Dorothy Green



Marie Prevost



Mary Miles Minter and William F. Parsons in "Eyes of the Heart"



Charlie Chaplin in "The Kid"



Josef Swickard

## "Eyes of the Heart"—Chaplin Creates New Role—"The Good Bad Wife"—Cave-Man Tactics—Makes Good As Spanish Dancer—A Poem To Beauty.

**M**ARY MILES MINTER proves that she is a real dramatic actress in her latest picture, "Eyes of the Heart." She is not the blonde, rapid, innocent ingenue but a little blind girl who is brought up by a band of crooks, who she believes to be honest people. It is only when she regains her eyesight and learns what the people with whom she is living really are that she begins to realize that she is not all one bed of roses as she has been led to believe.

William E. Parsons is the "villain" of the picture, and it is he who teaches Miss Minter as the blind girl to steal and rob safes.

**Charlie Chaplin**

Charlie Chaplin, as the foster father to a two weeks old baby! It took the famous comedian himself to create such a role, and from it he wrote what is declared to be one of the most humorous comedies ever made for the screen. The picture is entitled "The Kid," and the title role is played by young Jackie Coogan, said to be a child prodigy.

While it is no doubt a most helpful hint to do in watching Chaplin as "the kid." In spite of all the kid grows to sturdy boyhood under the tutelage and care of his foster father. He develops the art of window crawling to a high degree

in order to provide work for a friendly class. It proves to be an exalting as well as profitable pursuit. It is also highly humorous especially when Jackie Coogan is the breaker of glass and Charlie Chaplin the repairer.

**Dorothy Green**

A product of the music halls, a wild, unconventional, beautiful, physical creature is the heroine of "The Good Bad Wife." Dorothy Green. The play was adapted from "The Wild Fawn," by Mary Inlay Taylor, recently appearing in Minter's "Mansions."

The trouble starts when the beautiful Parisian dancer marries the son of an aristocratic Southern family, and puts him and his very respectable parents through emotions of alternate alarm, indignation, vexation, aggravation, fright and worry. Before the end of the play, however, she proves to them that she is a regular genuine, true-blue woman, ready to sacrifice her happiness for her husband's, and ready and willing to accept a life of loneliness and sadness, so that he may be free from her and the constant plights in which she places him.

**Marguerite Courtot**

Marguerite Courtot, who really doesn't appear older than her companion to twenty-three, has worked in pictures since she was sixteen. She is slender, dark and graceful, and wears a mantle with all the natural charm

of a Spanish senorita—as the screen comedy demonstrates in "Rogues and Romance."

Miss Courtot began her screen career in "Rube Marquand Wins" about eight years ago. One of her best characterizations was in the screen adaptation of the Arzene Lupin story, "The Touch of the Tiger."

**Josef Swickard**

Josef Swickard, who has jumped from slapstick comedy to the biggest dramatic role of the year. He creates the role of "Marcello the Nigger" in Vicente Blasco Ibañez's great story, "The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse."

**Lucy Cotton and Bert Lyell**

Bert Lyell in the shoes of Kean, played by the wife of Helen Steele, the decidedly misleading name for the "The Misleading Lady." Mr. Lyell is a very safe bet as the most recent starring medium on the

screen. The part of Helen Steele is played by Lucy Cotton. Just what Mr. Lyell's return at the paper in the so-called "misleading" name is, is not clear. But it will mean by the playful winking of an eye and a wink in the mail-box of the office and duns in the mail-box of the impudencies.

**Marie Prevost**

"Marie Queens" of filmland are deluged with a variety of mail, and proposals of marriage are as frequent as bills and duns in the mail-box of the impudencies.

What makes Miss Prevost so

a recent letter addressed to her is that it contains no proposal, nor even a hint of one. And this is the poem:

"I've never heard your voice nor hold Your hand, so slim and fair, But I've looked into your eyes of blue And seen your smile so rare. I've never asked you to dine and see A show or game or two, No one's ever even introduced us, But I'm just crazy over you. I know I'll never see you My girl or wife to be, For you're only my movie sweetheart, You're just a dream to me."