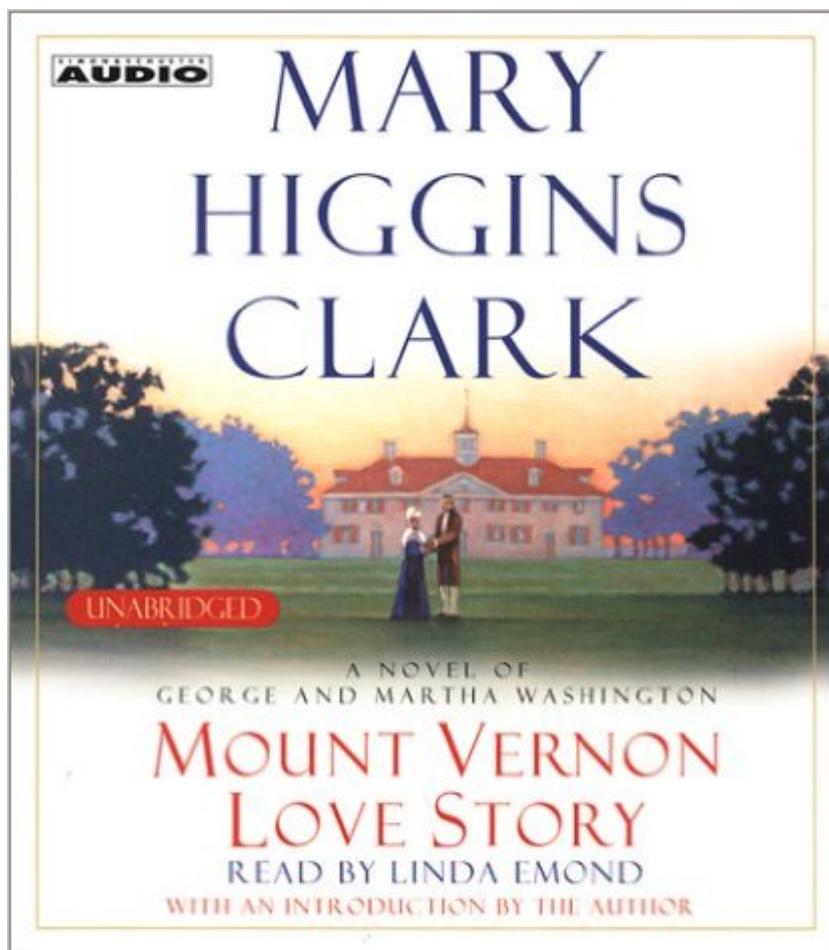


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Mount Vernon Love Story: A Novel Of George And Martha Washington



Synopsis

"Mount Vernon Love Story" was the first novel written by Mary Higgins Clark, the bestselling author of twenty-two novels that have made her America's Queen of Suspense. The role of leader came naturally to George Washington, the man revered as "the father of his Country." But when it came to the social aspects of life in the mid-18th century, he was both awkward and insecure. It was only through the love of a woman that he found the happiness that gave real meaning to his life. In matters of the heart, Washington initially stumbles when he falls in love with Sally Wilcox, his best friend's young bride. But Sally is understanding, and sets out to teach George the art of social graces. When he finds himself attracted to Martha Custis -- a young widow with two children -- he summons the courage to ask her to marry him. As depicted by Clark, their marriage was not without conflict. Their love was strong, and it endured long months of separation and the many dangers that Washington's role as leader of the Army entailed. At the end of his long career, when he and Martha return to Mount Vernon, the fire of their love burns just as brightly as when he took her there as his new bride. Charming, insightful, and immensely entertaining in its unique presentation of one of America's legendary figures, "Mount Vernon Love Story" brings alive the man behind the legend, a man of flesh, blood, and passion.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

George Washington's father died when the future president was young. His mother was a harsh disciplinarian insuring George and his siblings behaved. George seemed to flee her whenever he could get away spending time at his half-brother's Mount Vernon home (yes - that historical home).

George's first love is Sally Fairfax and his chosen profession surveyor, but war seemed to be his destiny. First he fought (unsuccessfully) during the French and Indian War and then the American Revolution. This biography uses Washington's retirement to Mount Vernon with his beloved Patsy (Martha's nickname) as a focal point for looking back over the lives of the first president and his spouse. The book concentrates on his personal life not his public life. Thus, readers see another side to Washington. Though opinions are interspersed throughout, mystery suspense thriller writer Mary Higgins Clark provides a strong insightful look at Washington and literally the first "First Lady" that historical readers will enjoy. Harriet Klausner

I've always enjoyed Mary Higgins Clark's mysteries and this historical love story has proven to me that Ms. Clark is more than a great mistress of suspense - she is quite capable of entertaining in other genres as well! This charming historical novel was actually the author's first novel, originally published in 1968 under the title "Aspire to the Heavens". It was re-released in 2002 and I can't think of a more appropriate time to do so! With the tragic attacks on our nation on September 11, 2001, it is wonderful to read this highly-readable, well-researched novel about George Washington - the man who helped to give us the freedoms we so enjoy today! As Washington passes the presidential torch onto John Adams and returns to his beloved Mount Vernon, both he and his wife Martha (aka Patsy) flashback to their younger years. We're so used to stodgy accounts of Washington's military victories and political accomplishments that it was a pleasure to read a well-crafted story about Washington as a man and a husband. This is a short novel and a fast-read so it's a great beach or airplane book. I would love to see it made into a television movie, perhaps to be aired on George Washington's birthday!

Having recently visited Mount Vernon on vacation, I was very interested to read "Mount Vernon Love Story" by Mary Higgins Clark since I assumed it would lead into further insight of the relationship between George and Martha ("Patsy") Washington. Not only did it delve deeper into their relationship than was learned on the visit to their home, but it also provided a deeper insight into the history of the United States. The book's chapters alternate between the beginning of George and Martha's relationship and the end of his presidency. It's a very clever way of storytelling, and each chapter leads into the next with grace, bouncing between time. I must admit that this is the first book I've ever read by Mary Higgins Clark, so I am not familiar with her writing style. And I am sure that this book of history is quite different from her mystery books. It is her first book, however, and it shows. The love story in the title is more the love of Mount Vernon -- the home, the grounds, the idea

of it, etc. -- than the love story between George and Martha Washington. It's about the growth of Mount Vernon and the love its owners and visitors had for it. And why they couldn't stop being excited returning to it day after day. Although I wasn't that drawn into the book and the romance between George and Martha, it was intriguing to learn some details about the Washingtons' lives. I especially enjoyed the chapter involving George introducing Martha to his domineering mother for the first time. Here, I felt drawn into the characters and loved the interaction between them. George tries to keep his temper in place over his mother's criticisms while Martha calms him down with her gentle touch. Unfortunately, this type of character development did not seem to continue through the rest of the book. It was definitely an enjoyable read, but I guess I was hoping for something more.

While the battle scenes and political stuff seemed to drag somewhat, the true wealth of this book lies in discovering the domestic personality of George Washington. The book makes the man seem all the more human, all the more flawed and all the more courageous. The segments/chapters were short enough to keep me interested but long enough to shed some light on each aspect of his life. The part that interested me the most were the sections on how George fell in love with his friend's wife Sally, but eventually came to see that this could never be and eventually fell in love with another lady, Martha Washington. I liked how it explained that Sally was charismatic, charming, exciting to be with yet utterly taken and Martha was a quieter, more domestic, a more rational choice.. yet he was able to love them both in different ways. It was like a page out of my own history and made me relate to him in a way I never have before. This was the first historical fiction I've read in a long time, but it was good enough to make me want to go to the library and check out some more.

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