On February 15, 2002, the National Portrait Gallery’s iconic image of the father of our country began a national tour at the Museum of Fine Arts in Houston, Texas. For the first time in history, this prized image—the life-sized portrait of George Washington by artist Gilbert Stuart—has gone on the road. An artifact whose historical and cultural significance has been compared to that of the Liberty Bell and the Declaration of Independence, the painting is one of the most important visual documents of the founding of our nation.

George Washington to your comprehension, a man of service is striking. This “man of service” is the George Washington that the National Portrait Gallery explores this man of character, failure, sacrifice, and love. The only man ever to interpret Washington at the general’s home, Mount Vernon in Virginia, Sommerfield draws on more than 10 years of research and performance when creating his character. Every detail, from costume to powdered hair and dress sword, is historically accurate; he even captures the flourish of Washington’s signature.

In 1968 the Lansdowne portrait was loaned to the National Portrait Gallery in Washington, D.C., where it served as the cornerstone of the museum’s opening exhibition. For thirty-two years, it graced the Gallery’s rotunda, greeting visitors as they ascended the building’s grand staircase to the second floor. But in the fall of 2000, its British owner notified the Gallery of his decision to sell it at auction if the Gallery could not meet his asking price of $20 million. The search for a benefactor to the Gallery—and to the nation—began.

In March 2001, a $10 million gift from the Donald W. Reynolds Foundation of Las Vegas, Nevada, assured that the painting would remain in the United States. Of that amount, $10 million went to purchase the painting, $4 million to renovate a gallery space dedicated exclusively to the portrait, and $6 million to ensure that the portrait would be shared with the American people. After the exhibition closes in Houston, it continues to seven other cities, concluding with the portrait’s return to its permanent home in the National Portrait Gallery.

Originally, the portrait hung in Lord Lansdowne’s London house on Berkeley Square, accompanied by other artworks, including a sculpture of the Roman general Cincinnatus, with whom Washington is often compared. Reportedly, Cincinnatus left his plow to save the Roman republic, then relinquished his public role and returned to private life. The parallel between Cincinnatus and Washington as men of service is striking. This “man of service” is the George Washington that the Donald W. Reynolds Foundation wanted America to see. Here was a man who served as commander in chief of the Continental army, who shaped the American presidency, who guided the country through the “fragile experiment” of democracy. Certainly others had greater intellect and were better educated, more articulate, and of a calmer disposition. But Washington was chosen. Unanimously elected to the presidency, he served two terms and then retired from office. Here was a man who refused to be king.

Join the tour at one of its eight locations as the National Portrait Gallery explores this man of character, self-sacrifice, and patriotism. Or follow the tour online, through the Gallery’s Lansdowne website at www.georgewashington.si.edu.

### “George Washington: A National Treasure” on Tour

National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, Opens Exhibition

The only man ever to interpret Washington at the general’s home, Mount Vernon in Virginia, Sommerfield draws on more than 10 years of research and performance when creating his character. Every detail, from costume to powdered hair and dress sword, is historically accurate; he even captures the flourish of Washington’s signature.

In 1968 the Bicentennial Commission on the Constitution selected Sommerfield to portray Washington for the eight-day journey from Mount Vernon to New York in a recreation of the inaugural ride, culminating in the swearing-in of the first President. He has continued to captivate audiences on NBC’s Eyewitness to History, the DC Bicentennial Celebration, the National Bill of Rights Tour, Good Morning America, the Today Show, and A&E’s The Crossing. He has appeared in Time magazine and the New Yorker, and on the covers of USA Today, the New York Times, and the Times of London.

As artistic director and chief writer of the American Historical Theatre in Philadelphia, Sommerfield re-creates history, bringing a piece of the past to life. Favorite performances include “The Glorious Burden,” which explores the presidency, and “The Love Letters of George and Martha.” Join George for an 18th-century news conference or a lesson in the minuet. Don’t miss this trip back in time! Check local venues for details.

### Will the Real George W. Please Stand Up?

“For thousands of Americans, William Sommerfield is George Washington.”

—RICHARD BROOKHISER, WASHINGTON BIOGRAPHER

Hailed by historians and politicians as the definitive dramatic portrayer of George Washington, William Arthur Sommerfield fascinates audiences with the insights, warmth, and humor of our first President. Sommerfield strips away the marble image of the ideal man and replaces it with a portrayal of George Washington, the intensely human being—a man of humor, anger, sorrow, failure, sacrifice, and love.

“George Washington: A National Treasure” is organized by the National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, and made possible through the generosity of the Donald W. Reynolds Foundation.

### Coming Soon to a Museum Near You

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The National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, acquired Gilbert Stuart’s 1796 Lansdowne portrait of George Washington in 2001 as a gift to the nation through the generosity of the Donald W. Reynolds Foundation.
Washington Wins Election to House from Fort Cumberland!

FREDERICKSBURG, 1758—George Washington, son of Augustine and Mary Ball Washington, has been elected to the Virginia House of Burgesses while serving with the British regulars at Fort Cumberland. Although urged by friends to return to the colony of Virginia and “show his face,” Washington opted to remain with his men and was successful in winning a seat in the House from Frederick County.

General Washington Rallies Troops at Valley Forge

VALLEY FORGE, 1777–1778—General Washington struggles to keep his troops alive and well in Valley Forge, Pennsylvania, this winter. Inadequate shipments of food, clothing, and supplies have left the regiments in shambles; poor hygiene and rampant disease threaten the lives of all the soldiers camped there. General Washington has made repeated appeals for increased supplies, but the mismanagement of the supply trade has yet to be resolved. In the meantime, General Washington struggles alongside his men while political rivals threaten to remove his power. Military and civilian critics, particularly Thomas Conway and Dr. Benjamin Rush, feel that there are several men who are better suited to lead the Continental army.

Martha Washington Buries Fourth Child, John P. Custis

YORKTOWN, 1781—After losing two children in infancy and her daughter Patsy to epilepsy, Martha Washington lost her last child to camp fever. John Parke Custis, known as Jacky to family and friends, passed away on November 5 at Yorktown, merely seventeen days after the surrender of Britain’s General Cornwallis. Jacky leaves behind a wife and four children. General and Mrs. Washington will raise the younger two children, Eleanor “Nelly” Custis and George Washington Parke Custis, at Mount Vernon, their home in Virginia.

Washington Unanimous Pick for President at Convention!

NEW YORK, 1789 (AP)—After many months of debate to establish our new American government, the first official election was held on February 4, 1789. George Washington has received all 69 electoral votes! Washington, who will be inaugurated on April 30 of this year, accepted his new office, despite his overwhelming desire to return to his estate at Mount Vernon: “I was summoned by my country . . . from a retreat which I had chosen with the fondest predilection, and . . . with an immutable decision, as the asylum of my declining years.” Washington and his wife Martha will move to the country’s capital, New York City.

Washington Graciously Delays Retirement for a Second Term

PHILADELPHIA, 1793 (AP)—President George Washington has won his second election to the presidency of the United States! The inauguration will take place on March 4 in Philadelphia, the new capital of the United States. However, the prospect of returning to the stress of presidential life has left Washington doubtful. Washington wrote to his friend Henry Lee, “that it was after a long and painful conflict in my own breast, that I was withheld from requesting, in time, that no votes might be thrown away upon me; it being my fixed determination to return to the walks of private life.” The next four years do in fact promise to be difficult; factionalism has already begun to sprout in government over constitutional interpretation. Secretary of the Treasury Alexander Hamilton, who was the driving force behind the creation of the National Bank and National Mint, will remain in the service of the President. Edmund Randolph will replace Thomas Jefferson as secretary of state.

The Patriot Papers

The Patriot Papers serves students of all ages. It is published quarterly by the National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, P.O. Box 37022, Washington, D.C., 20013-7022.

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The opinions expressed in The Patriot Papers are not necessarily those of the Smithsonian Institution or the National Portrait Gallery.

Teaching materials to accompany the exhibition “George Washington: A National Treasure” are available to educators at no cost by visiting www.george washington.si.edu or by calling 1-866-NPG-KITS.

Smithsonian
National Portrait Gallery

Whiskey Rebellion Shakes Pennsylvania

PHILADELPHIA, 1794—Western Pennsylvanians have turned their resentment over recent taxes on whiskey into a violent opposition. They are launching the first major civil disturbance of President Washington’s term in office. Last week, U.S. Marshal David Lenox met with resistance in Westmoreland County while trying to collect taxes on locally distilled liquor. Military action will be taken, much to the regret of the President: “I have accordingly determined to do so, feeling the deepest regret for the occasion, but withal, the most solemn conviction, that the essential interests of the Union demand it.” The army is being organized from other northern states, and it will advance into Pennsylvania shortly.

On Tuesday next, being the 14th Instant, A new COMEDY, called FALSE DELICACY

By the author of A WORD TO THE WISE

(It may not be improper to give Notice that the Theatre in Williamsburg will be closed at the End of the April Court, the American Company’s Engagements calling them to the Northward, from whence, it is probable, they will not return for several years.)

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Valley Forge:
An Eyewitness Account

In the winter of 1777, Commander in Chief George Washington moved his army to a winter camp at Valley Forge, some 20 miles outside of Philadelphia. For the next few months, the soldiers suffered from starvation, the lack of adequate clothing, and poor hygiene. Although morale was low, Washington managed to keep the struggling army together. A new quartermaster general, Nathanael Greene, and a German drillmaster, Baron von Steuben, helped bring supplies and order to the broken army. The following diary entry from Dr. Albignon Waldo describes the physical and emotional suffering endured by the troops at Valley Forge:

“December 14—Prisoners & Deserters are continually coming in. The Army which has been surprisingly healthy hitherto, now begins to grow sickly from the continued fatigues they have suffered this Campaign. Yet they still show a spirit of Alacrity & Contentment not to be expected from so young Troops. I am Sick—contemplated—and out of humour. Poor food—hard lodging—Cold Weather—fatigue—Nasty Clouds—nasty Cookery—Smok’d half my time—Smok’d out of my senses (by the smoke created by the guns)—the Devil’s in it—I can’t Endure it.—Why are we sent here to starve and Freeze.—What sweet Felicities have I left at home; A charming Wife—pretty Children—Good Beds—good food—good Cookery—All agreeable—all harmonious. Here all Confusion—smoke & Cold—hunger & filthiness—a pope on my bad luck. There comes a bowl of beef soup—full of burnt leaves and dirt. . . . Away with it Boys—I’ll live like the Chameleon upon Air. Poh! Poh! Cries Patience within me—you talk like a fool. Your being Covers your mind with a Melancholic Gloom, which makes everything about you appear gloomy. See the poor Soldier, when in health—with what cheerfulness he meets his foes and encounters every hardship—if barefoot, he labours thro’ the Mud & Cold with a Song in his mouth extolling War & Washington—if his food be bad, he eats it notwithstanding with seeming content—blesses God for a good Stomach and Whistles it into digestion. But harkee Patience, a moment—There comes a Soldier, his bare feet are seen thro’ his worn out Shoes, his legs nearly naked from the tatter’d remains of an only pair of stockings, his Breeches not sufficient to cover his nakedness, his Shirt hanging in Strings, his hair dishevell’d, his face meager; his whole appearance pictures a person forsaken & discouraged. He comes, and cries with and air of wretchedness & despair, I am Sick, my feet swell, my legs sore, my body cover’d with this tormenting lynch—my Clouds are worn out, my Constitution is broken, my Former Activity is exhausted by fatigue, hunger & Cold, I fail fast I shall soon be no more! And all the reward I shall get will be—Poor Will is dead. People who live at home in Luxury and Ease, quietly possessing their habitations, Enjoying their Wives & families in peace, have but a very faint idea of the unpleasing sensations, and continual Anxiety that Man endures who is in a Camp, and is the husband and parent of an agreeable family. These same People are willing we should suffer every thing for their Benefit & advantage, and yet are the first to Condemn us for not doing more!”

December 1790

PRESIDENTIAL RESIDENCE, 190 HIGH STREET, PHILADELPHIA. Senator Robert Morris’s dwelling at 190 High Street has turned out to be the best house available for the President’s use, and Mr. Morris has graciously agreed to move around the corner. Additions will be made to accommodate Mrs. Washington and her two grandchildren, Nelly, who is about twelve, and George Washington, who is about ten, as well as the President’s secretary and numerous servants. The bathing room has been turned into a study to provide for a room in which the President can do business, but unfortunately, it will be necessary for visitors to walk up two flights of stairs and pass by the public rooms and private chambers to get to it. The President has insisted that the house is to be finished in a plain and neat manner and has ruled out tapestry or very rich and costly wallpaper. He has also ruled that the back yard be kept as clean as the parlor since it is in full view from the best rooms in the house.

Throughout the coming months The Patriot Papers will address the issue of slavery during Washington’s time. In view of Washington’s many attributes and accomplishments, it is difficult to acknowledge his role as slave owner. Guest historians will share their perspectives. We invite you to share yours. Hopefully, through dialogue, we will increase our understanding.

—F.A. Pulles, editor
PatriotPapers@npg.si.edu

November 1796

RUNAWAY SLAVE. Mrs. Washington is greatly distressed by the loss of Olney Judge, her Mount Vernon servant so skilled in needlework. The girl, we hear, was lured away by a Frenchman who tricked her and left her stranded in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. President Washington has sent word that all will be forgiven if she returns to her mistress, but she has refused to come back unless promised her freedom. This puts the President in an awkward situation. Privately he has said that although he is sympathetic to her demand, setting her free would only reward her for running away, and would spread discontent among the rest of his servants (as he calls them), who by being faithful are more deserving of their freedom than the runaway. Above all, the President cautioned that no violent means should be used to bring her back, lest a mob or riot be excited. Rather than risk this happening, he would tell Mrs. Washington she must get along without the services of Olney Judge.

December 1790

FREEDOM TOO GREAT A TEMPTATION. President Washington has brought a handful of servants from Mount Vernon, but he will be faced with the difficulty of complying with the Pennsylvania law freeing adult slaves who have lived in Pennsylvania for six months in a row. It is believed that the President, therefore, will have to shuttle these servants back and forth and suffer the inconvenience of sometimes being without his cook Hercules. Asked if he feared his slaves might take advantage of being in the north to run away, the President has privately conceded that “the idea of freedom might be too great a temptation for them to resist.”

RUN AWAY FROM MY PLANTATION, called Newpart News, on the 17th of January, a very likely Negro Fellow named Stranbury, about thirty Years of Age, has lost one of his fore Teeth, and had on a Cotton Waistcoat and Breeches, Plaid Stockings, and Negro Shoes. The Negroes upon the Plantation saw him go away with two Sailors; he can read, and I imagine he will attempt to go out of the Country on Board a Vessel. I do hereby forewarn all Masters of Vessels from carrying him away, as they shall answer it at their Peril. Whoever brings the said Negro to me, in York County, shall have TEN POUNDS Reward if he is taken in this Colony, and TWENTY POUNDS if out thereof.

WILLIAM DIGGES, Junior
April 23, 1789

HE COMES! HE COMES! George Washington, President-elect of the United States, has just set foot on the New York shore after an eight-day triumphal journey from Mount Vernon. The excitement here is unbelievable. Thousands line the streets—all you can see are heads standing as thick as ears of corn before the harvest. Ladies are crowded in every window, anxious for a glimpse of the illustrious man. “I have seen him!” we heard one young lady call out, “and though I had been entirely ignorant that he was arrived in the city, I should have known at a glance that it was General Washington: I never saw a human being that looked so great and noble as he does. I could fall down on my knees before him.” Washington, it can well be believed, is more popular than the new government he is to head.

May 14, 1789

WHAT IS THE PRESIDENT TO BE CALLED? Debate, May 14, 1789

The President’s Lady. Mrs. Washington, who needed some time to prepare for her journey, has now arrived in New York. The President’s lady will give no interviews to the press, but this correspondent has talked to many of her friends and acquaintances. Mrs. Adams, the Vice President’s lady, who first met Mrs. Washington when she came to be with the general in Cambridge at the beginning of the war, told The Patriot Papers that Mrs. Washington is a lady of patience and prudence. “Her manners are modest and unassuming, dignified and feminine, not the Tincture of ha’re about her.” Others tell us that Mrs. President Washington [no one thought to call her the first lady] is very friendly and likes to talk, but never about politics. “I little thought that when the war was finished that anything would call the General into public life again,” she had told friends. “Yet I cannot blame him for having acted according to his ideas of duty in obeying the voice of his country.”

July 9, 1790

WHERE IS THE CAPITAL TO BE? Ever since the old Congress left Philadelphia in 1783, arguments have raged over where the permanent seat of government should be built. At last, the residence is decided. The government is to leave New York and spend the next ten years in Philadelphia. The permanent capital will be a new city created on the banks of the Potomac River, the exact location to be chosen by President Washington. Some folks speculate that it will not be far from Mount Vernon. New Yorkers, after they have gone to so much trouble and expense to accommodate the government, feel betrayed, and one angry letter to the editor speaks of the President as the country’s “fiercest favorite guardian and deliverer.”

February 1792

POLITICAL PARTIES. Not a word about political parties in the Constitution, but they are here and with a passion. Federalists, who are friends of the government, and the Republicans, who find much to criticize, are at it tooth and nail. Most folks say the parties started over the differences between Secretary of the Treasury Alexander Hamilton and Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson. Hamilton, the friend of business and manufacturers, has pushed for a strong federal government; Jefferson, who wants to see America stay a land of farmers, is deeply suspicious of moneymen and banks. But what has really stirred things up is the war between France and England, with the Republicans being passionately on the side of France, which has beheaded its king and become a republic, and the Federalists seeing the old mother country as an important trading partner. The President, who wants to keep both Hamilton and Jefferson in his cabinet and to steer a neutral course between France and England, is beset by difficulties.

August 2, 1793

THE PRESIDENT ENRAGED. Sources tell us that the President lost his usually well-controlled temper at a recent meeting of his cabinet. Shown a satirical piece describing his head being chopped off by the guillotine, printed in Republican editor Philip Freneau’s newspaper, the President went suddenly into a towering rage, spoke bitterly of the newspaper abuse to which he had been subjected in past months, and defied any critic to indicate one selfish act committed by him in office. He said he would rather be a farmer than emperor of the world, and yet that “rascal Freneau” insinuated that he would like to be a king. To add insult to injury, Freneau sent three copies of every issue to the President’s dwelling.

April 1796

GEORGE WASHINGTON LAFAYETTE. The fourteen-year-old son of the Marquis de Lafayette arrived in Philadelphia on the 11th of this month. His father, who had tried to save the King and Queen of France from losing their heads, remains in prison, and the lad has been sent to America to be under the protection of President Washington. “I will be his friend,” the President declared and has taken him into his household, even though he worries that the revolutionary government of France might take offense. He has instructed young Lafayette to study hard to be worthy of his father. Washington has a special place in his heart for the Marquis de Lafayette, who had come from France to fight in the American Revolution when he was nineteen years old.
Did George Washington Stand a Chance?

Colonial Practice of Bloodletting Helped Cause Washington's Death

—by Vicki Fama, assistant editor

T
oday, it is easy to criticize the medical methods performed in colonial times. When we read that George Washington died of a simple bacterial infection, we wonder why measures we now consider primitive, such as bloodletting, were even employed in the fight to save the first President's life. Medical training was primitive as well: although some American doctors were fortunate enough to study in England or Scotland, others were less fortunate. American medical schools did not yet exist; thus, many doctors were self-trained. In view of our present medical understanding, did George Washington even stand a chance of being saved?

Colonial medicine was based on European medical methods and theories; no one then understood how diseases or infection spread. One of the main theories focused on the need for a total balance of tension and fluids in the body; this delicate balance was essential to both physical and mental health. This concept played an important role in Washington's death.

On the morning of December 14, 1799, George Washington, who had felt ill for several days, sent for a plantation worker who could bleed him. Bloodletting was a common practice: by releasing blood from the body of a sick person, doctors believed they could alleviate excessive pressure and tension and return the body to a healthy balance. Washington's doctors may have thought that bloodletting would thus extract the constricting fluids around his throat. However, within 2 hours, Washington was bled several times, losing an estimated 5 pints of blood—approximately one-third of the blood in his body! This was certainly a factor in his death.

The doctors also tried other methods of withdrawing fluids. Washington was given an tartar emetic, which induced vomiting. Again, this practice would have dehydrated him and lessened his chance of recovery.

Washington was also subjected to the intake of fluids. Doctors tried to administer mixtures of molasses, vinegar, and butter, hoping to heal his throat from the inside. They also used a gargle of vinegar and sage tea for the same purpose. But because of the severe swelling of Washington's throat, both attempts were unsuccessful and even threatened to choke the sick General.

The most dramatic medical treatment, proposed by Dr. Elisha Dick, was a tracheotomy (the creation of an air hole in the throat to allow for easier breathing). While the other physicians treating Washington rejected the idea, some scientists today believe that a tracheotomy could have been beneficial. Nonetheless, the lack of sterile equipment and anesthesia might have easily caused a deadly infection or put Washington's body in shock, an equally threatening possibility.

The doctors who cared for the dying George Washington did all that they thought medically possible. While it is tempting to judge their methods with the benefit of hindsight, we should appreciate the context and limitations of the colonial era. George Washington died the way he lived, with courage and a belief in a greater force beyond mankind.
Abigail and John Proctor, two very sensible people who believe in a life of simplicity and purity. For more than 200 years, we Proctors have preserved the ideals set forth by George Washington, our nation’s first President. It was not until my recent 18th birthday that I learned of the existence of my distant cousins in Washington, D.C. My parents decided it was time that one of us ventured into “big-city America” to see what advances had been made.  

Meeting my aunt, uncle, and cousins was enormously exciting, and I was simply awestruck by all of the amazing inventions of the 21st century outside world. First and foremost in my thoughts, however, is my trip with my cousin Melody to the “mall.” At Melody’s first mention of the mall, my heart pounded with fear. Mistaking the word for “mual,” I feared they planned to leave me in the forest to be attacked by wolves. Melody carefully explained that the mall was like a large market where tradesmen gathered to sell their wares. My fears allayed, we entered the mall. I was shocked to see all the women in pants! The most popular pants seemed to be a very low-slung pair of dungarees called “hipsters.” I think they should be called “come hither msters,” for this will most certainly be the effect of wearing such pants. Looking down at my own ankle-length skirt and quilted petticoat, I reminded myself of the prudence of keeping some details hidden from young gentlemen.

We next came upon a shoe seller called Paidless. Over the door hung a sign that read “Buy One, Get One Free.” Well obviously! One wouldn’t get very far with only one shoe and no mate. This seemed to me one of the most unscrupulous vendors. Upon entering the store, I found none of the sturdy leathers lace-up boots to which I am accustomed, but instead found boxes and boxes of large wocks and wood with small straps of leather attached to the top. How uncomfortable and impractical! However would one walk to the well?  

Leaving the shoe-seller, we entered a very large vendor called Gracy’s, with many varied wares to sell. In the clothing area, my eyes fell upon a one-armed shirt! I asked Melody if this was another “buy one get one free” swindle, wherein the other sleeve would be supplied only after purchase.

Rule 22: Show not yourself glad at the misfortune of another.  

Rule 79: Be not apt to relate news if you know not the truth thereof. In discussing of things that you have heard, name not your author. Always, a secret discover not [that is, do not reveal]. In other words . . . don’t pass rumors if you’re not sure they’re true. Best to keep a secret a secret and not tell at all, unless her actions are such that they may do harm to her person or to that of another. Then ‘tis kind and quite your duty to reveal the truth to your superiors or loved ones.

Rule 90: Being set at meat, scratch not neither spit, cough nor blow your nose, except when there is a necessity for it.

Rule 100: Cleanse not your teeth with the tablecloth, napkin, fork, knife; but if others do it, let it be done with a pick tooth [i.e., a toothpick].

Mistress Goody,  
My very best friend just broke up with her boyfriend. But we both asked each other to stay and we’ll just die when she finds out. Should I go? What should I do?

Mistress Goody,  
At the lunch table most everyone eats and talks at the same time. I think that’s pretty gross. What do you think?

Mistress Goody,  
I’m a high school girl. I just want to be associated with anyone who might help me?

Mistress Goody,  
I heard a really bad thing about one of my best friends. I think our other friends should know how this girl is acting when we’re not around. Should I tell them?

Rule 110: Labour to keep a little regard for your intimate friend and calls into question your upbringing.  
Heed also  
Rule 10: Labour to keep alive in your breast that little spark of celestial fire called conscience. Have you misplaced yours, my dear?  
Mistress Goody,  
I am a high school girl. I suppose the guys think I’m cute, because I get asked out on dates a lot. I go and have a nice time, but eventually they are ready to get “serious.” They all want to be my only boyfriend. My problem is I don’t know how to pick a good boyfriend. And that means I don’t know how to pick a good husband! I mean, what does a girl look for in a guy? Can you help me?

Mistress Goody,  
I have contemplated this very question many, many times. I’ve always found the male point of view regarding love and marriage most helpful. As a matter of fact, the most sage advice comes from George Washington in a letter he wrote to Martha’s granddaughter, Nelly Custis. I will share a portion of it with you here. I do hope this “checklist” of sorts helps to settle your quandary.

“...When the fire is beginning to kindle, and your heart growing warm, propose your question to it. Who is the inquirer? Have I competent knowledge of him? Is he a man of good character? A man of sense? For he assured a sensible woman can never be happy with a fool. What has been his walk in life? Is he a gambler? A spendthrift, a drunkard? Is his fortune sufficient to maintain me in a manner I have been accustomed to live? And is he one to whom my friends have no reasonable objection? If these interrogations can be satisfactorily answered, there will remain but one more to be asked; that, however, is an important one. Have I sufficient grounds to conclude that his affections are returned to me? Without this the heart of sensibility will struggle against a passion that is not reciprocated.”  
—George Washington
Philadelphia, January 1791

MRS. WASHINGTON’S DRAWING ROOM. On Friday evening at eight, your humble correspondent was among the ladies and gentlemen in attendance at Mrs. Washington’s weekly reception. Mrs. Washington, plainly dressed, but in a gown of rich silk, sat on a sofa by the fireplace and arose to greet her guests with a curtsey which each lady returned. Each gentleman bowed low. Coffee, tea, and cake were served, and had I come in the summer, I would have offered lemonade and ice cream. The ladies swish about, and as candlelight is a great improver of beauty, they appear to great advantage. President Washington circulated among the crowd, chatting agreeably with all the ladies.

It is said that he keeps count of the numbers who come to pay their respects to Mrs. Washington and was pleased to find the room so crowded.

Philadelphia, April 1791

OUT AND ABOUT: The President of the United States, it is well known, is very fond of the theater and has gone outside the city to Southwark, where plays are performed. During an affecting moment leading to a happy ending, Washington was observed to shed a tear. As the humorous scenes unfolded, those playing the parts of Priscilla Tomboy and Young Cockney received the approving smiles of the old hero. General Washington goes often to concerts but has been heard to say, “I can neither play Musick nor sing Songs.”

Philadelphia, July 13, 1793

RICKETT’S AMPHITHEATRE. Word that the President and his family were to attend a performance of Mr. John Bill Rickett’s dangerous feats on horseback brought a large crowd this evening to what is called the Circus. The acrobatic performance was held to raise money to buy firewood for the poor during the coming winter. Mr. Ricketts, demonstrating his agility by drinking a glass of wine while on horseback, raised his glass to the health of “The Man of the People.” This produced an immediate clap of applause and a loud hurray from every part of the Circus. Mr. Ricketts has expressed his agreement with those who call General Washington the finest horseman of the age, saying “I delight to see the general ride, and make it a point to fall in with him when I hear that he is abroad on horseback; his seat is so firm, his management so easy and graceful, that I who am a professor of horsemanship, would go to him and learn to ride.”

Philadelphia, September 1796

PEALE’S MUSEUM. A visit to Mr. Peale’s museum, Prudence Pudding tells us, is well worth the admission fee of one fourth of a dollar, if only to see the huge American Buffalo. Peale’s rooms are filled with monsters of the earth and sea, a rich array of birds, and a great collection of the bones, jaws, and teeth of tigers, sharks, and many other fearful animals. In one room are rattles, black, and spotted snakes, confined in cases enclosed with wire and glass. She was astonished to see Mr. Peale take out a black snake about four or five feet long, long, which he permitted to touch his cheek and twine itself around his neck. In the yard and stable were eagles, owls, baboons, monkeys, and a six-footed cow. Mr. Peale is also a painter, and there can be seen in his museum more than a hundred portraits of our illustrious Washington.

June 1791

THE PRESIDENT ON TOUR. When he entered upon the duties of his office, George Washington decided he would visit all parts of the United States to please the citizens and to see how they felt about the new government. Silas Silvertongue, who is with the President’s party, reports that they are nearing the end of their two-month journey of 1,887 miles. Everywhere there has been a remarkable outpouring of affection for the President, Silvertongue informs. Towns have been in a bustle of preparation, and at every stop the citizens have come out to meet him with addresses of welcome. Ladies, some rouged up to the ears, have bedecked themselves with sashes and headbands painted with images of the President and patriotic slogans. The festivities include the ringing of bells, bands of music, cannon salutes, and some very bad poetry.

Social Notes from All Over...

Philadelphia, January 1791

Mrs. Washington’s Drawing Room. On Friday evening at eight, your humble correspondent was among the ladies and gentlemen in attendance at Mrs. Washington’s weekly reception. Mrs. Washington, plainly dressed, but in a gown of rich silk, sat on a sofa by the fireplace and arose to greet her guests with a curtsey which each lady returned. Each gentleman bowed low. Coffee, tea, and cake were served, and had I come in the summer, I would have offered lemonade and ice cream. The ladies swish about, and as candlelight is a great improver of beauty, they appear to great advantage. President Washington circulated among the crowd, chatting agreeably with all the ladies.

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Future Flash:

Patriots Prove Victorious in Great Bowl on the Green

Recently I, Mistress Goody, was privy to a most unusual glimpse into the future regarding our fellow countrymen. It seems that on Sunday, February 3, 2002, a rather unusual sporting event pitted a most honorable group of fellow Patriots from my beloved New England against a rather brutish bunch of Rams from the remote region of Missouri. It took place in a very large Bowl somewhere in the South. Very large men wearing tight breeches and silk stockings bandied about the green in a quest to capture a small oval pigskin. The poor pig was repeatedly thrown, kicked, and spiked into the ground. And I’m afraid our fellow countrymen grew rather violent as the afternoon progressed. Such pushing, shoving, shouting, and spitting have never before, I assure you, been witnessed by Mistress Goody, who prefers more refined entertain-ment. Several gentlemen grew so agitated as to hurl themselves at their opponents; others, totally unruly, grabbed legs, arms, and all accessible appendages, and flung their counterparts to the ground. Although Mistress Goody certainly found it to be a most discourteous display, lacking in all decorum and civility, it is fortunate that our beloved Patriots proved victorious.

Affectionately, Constance Goody—a former Bostonian
Together, Museums Create Wall of Expression

On the morning of September 11, 2001, Americans watched in horror as we witnessed the sheer force of hatred. As a nation we mourned, and as a nation we must heal.

Voicing our collective sorrow, we used art as our medium and created the Wall of Expression, seeking to heal ourselves and support a grieving nation. This wall stands as a memorial to those who sacrificed, a tribute to those who served, and as an expression of hope for the future.

These are the times that try men’s souls.

The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot

will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of their country; but he that stands it now, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman.

THOMAS PAINE, FROM THE AMERICAN CRISIS; DECEMBER 1776

Pledge It Forward—From Self to Service: A Challenge from The Patriot Papers — F. A. Pulles, Editor-in-Chief

When studying George Washington, I was struck by his reluctance to accept the presidential nomination. In this age of costly campaigns, hanging chads, and fights to the bitter end, it’s hard to imagine. But perhaps Washington’s hesitancy is understandable. In 1788 he was fifty-six years old and had already sacrificed many years in service to his country. In 1789, after eight-and-a-half years as commander in chief of the Continental army, he had resigned his commission. His own affairs and the management of Mount Vernon absorbed his energies, and he had stressed the finality of his retirement. But when unanimously elected, he served. His formal notification of nomination to the presidency praised him for “the proof given of patriotism, of his readiness to sacrifice domestic separation and private enjoyment to preserve the liberty and promote the happiness of the country.”

Washington was far more reluctant to consider serving a second term. Historian Marcus Cunliffe writes: He celebrated his sixtieth birthday in February 1792, and felt older than his years. He had survived serious illnesses in 1790 and 1792. He was, he complained, growing deaf; his eyesight was deteriorating; and his memory was beginning to be defective. Yet the detailed, and far from absent-minded, letters that he wrote on Sundays and sent to his agents at Mount Vernon on points of farm management, reveal that he was not so much tired of life as tired of being President.

But his colleagues felt that only he could lead at this difficult time. Thomas Jefferson’s plea, “I cannot but hope that you can resolve to add one or two more to the many years you have already sacrificed to the good of mankind,” and Hamilton’s request to make “a further sacrifice, trusting that it need not continue above a year or two more,” helped press him to service. In a letter to his friend Henry Lee dated 1793, Washington confided that he had decided to accept a second term of office only “after a long and painful conflict in my own breast.” He was reelected unanimously. Again, he served the whole term.

Washington’s life was one of service and sacrifice. And it came at a great cost—to his health, to his marriage, to the productiveness of Mount Vernon. Throughout our country’s history, Americans have been asked to serve and sacrifice for the good of country and community. On September 11, we were called once again and America answered. Many sacrificed; many served.

As the 2000 film Pay It Forward suggests, it is often difficult to pay back those who have influenced our lives—our forefathers, our mentors, our heroes, our friends. But we can pay it forward. We can give to the next generation. We can care about community. The National Portrait Gallery’s Office of Education would like to recognize those who continue to care about community. We challenge you to Pledge It Forward—pledge time to your schools, youth organizations, senior centers. Pick a project, pledge your time, and make a difference. If a high-school student tutors one child, once a week, if a 6th grader reads to an elderly shut-in, if kids in South Texas start a small library by collecting used books, if senior citizens plant flowers on Main Street, if teens answer a hotline, volunteer at a shelter, or simply read to a child, we would all be stronger.

E-mail us your pledges; write to us about your projects. We’d like to recognize Americans working for America and will feature your pictures and stories on our website at www.georgewashington.si.edu. Projects of particular merit will be published in The Patriot Papers. Get creative; get busy. And together, we can build a community of caring.

Write to us at PatriotPapers@npg.si.edu

Students in Pasadena, Texas Help Fund The Patriot Papers

Their Campaign—“By George We’ve Got It, Help Us Keep It”

When the National Portrait Gallery announced in February 2001 that it needed $20 million to keep the Lansdowne portrait of George Washington, the children of the Pasadena Independent School District decided to do something about it. They wanted to save George from the auction block.

They developed the “By George, We’ve Got It, Help Us Keep It” campaign to raise funds for the famous Gilbert Stuart painting. The school district set a goal of one dollar for every student in PISD, and the children raised an inspiring $4,200 before the Donald W. Reynolds Foundation donated the needed $20 million. The monies raised by Pasadena students helped to fund The Patriot Papers.

As a Texas Recognized District for outstanding student achievement, the Pasadena District has been involved in local fundraising projects before. Its students contributed to the saving of the Alamo, the San Jacinto Monument, and the renovation of the battleship Texas. The Lansdowne portrait, like these other American treasures, is one that the children of Pasadena hoped to save.

Although most of the children had never seen the Lansdowne portrait in person, their enthusiasm for saving the national treasure was high. District spokesman Kirk Lewis also saw great potential in the project: “This is a teachable moment in terms of our national art history and national American history. It’s a great way to energize our kids to learn about our country.”

The “By George” campaign began as a local project, but gained national attention with its call to raise money. The school district challenged other school districts in the area to join the campaign. Ultimately, the Pasadena fundraisers hoped to relay the challenge across the nation. Fortunately for all Americans, the Donald W. Reynolds Foundation contributed the needed funds in March 2001. Just as George Washington sacrificed his time and energy for the good of the nation, so too have the children of the Pasadena Independent School District. They have shown the country that national spirit is alive in our nation’s youth. The National Portrait Gallery thanks those in Pasadena who contributed to the Lansdowne portrait campaign. We also encourage all Americans to continue the spirit of giving in their own communities, school districts, and neighborhoods by joining our current campaign “Pledge It Forward—Self to Service.” Take your lead from Pasadena and take time to make a difference.