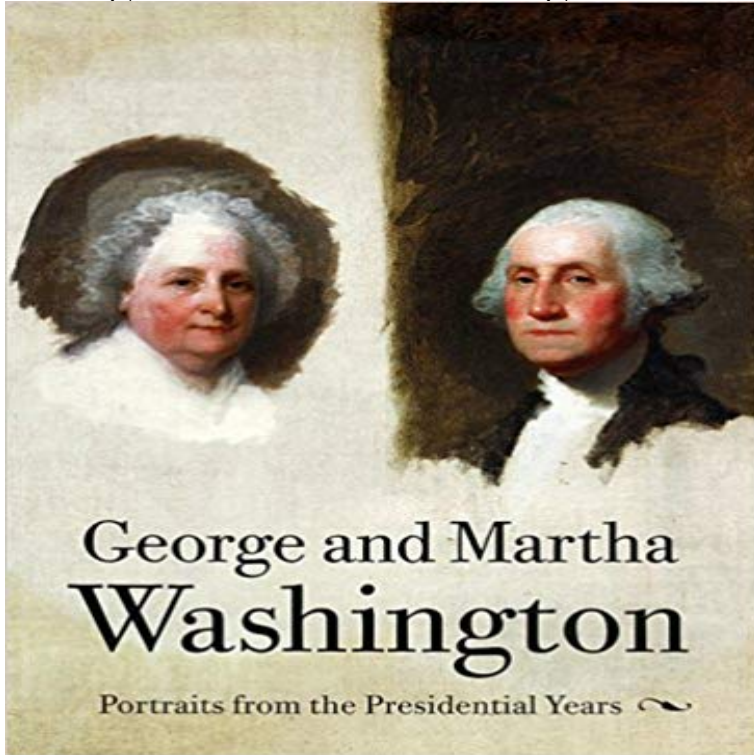


## George and Martha Washington: Portraits from the Presidential Years



RESPONDING TO a near-constant flow of requests, George and Martha Washington sat for about two dozen portraits from 1789 to 1797, collected here in this elegantly illustrated volume. From miniatures executed on ivory for family and friends to a historical portrait that depicts Washington during the Revolution, the images vary widely in treatment and setting. What they all reflect, Ellen Miles suggests, is the great need the new republic had for portraits of its first chief executive, often to stand in for Washington himself. In the portraits, Martha Washington is usually dressed plainly, her round face composed in a benign but cheerful expression. Portraits of George Washington often show him in military uniform, the pin of the Society of the Cincinnati on his lapel; others have him in black velvet, wearing a simple ruffled white shirt, his hair tied back in a queue. Most observers agreed that Martha was short and pleasant-looking, and that George was nearly six feet tall, had a long nose, large and penetrating light eyes, and a noble forehead. The state of his teeth affects his appearance in some portraits. Washington responded to having his likeness taken with a characteristic mixture of pride in his position and mild irritation. Once, a painter in Boston hid behind a church pulpit to sketch him. Washington's mild chafing at requests for him to sit illustrates the conflict he felt between his obligation to the nation and his desire to return to private life. As Edmund Morgan writes in his preface, Washington succeeded in clothing the new government with his own honor and left the presidency with a heritage of independence and respect which, despite the antics of so many of his successors, has never quite left it. *George and Martha Washington: Portraits from the Presidential Years* offers, quite literally, a unique portrait of the original First Couple.

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**Items** George and Martha Washington: Portraits from the Presidential Years. Ellen G. Miles with a preface by Edmund S. Morgan Published by the University Press of **Martha Washington - National Portrait Gallery** Featured are some 25 portraits made during Washington's 2 terms as president (1789-1797), including the Athenaeum portraits by Gilbert Stuart, along with **Perfect Likeness: European and American Portrait Miniatures from - Google Books Result** George Washington Charles Willson Peale (1741-1827) Oil on canvas, 1795 73.7 x 60.3 cm (29 x 23 3/4 in.) The New-York Historical Society, New York City **Images for George and Martha Washington: Portraits from the Presidential Years** Martha Washington Charles Willson Peale (1741-1827) Oil on canvas, 1795 72.7 x 59.2 cm (28 5/8 x 23 5/16 in.) Independence National Historical Park **George and Martha Washington: Portraits from the Presidential Years** In the late eighteenth century, portraits played a significant role in recalling a person's character as well as appearance, because it was believed that a person's