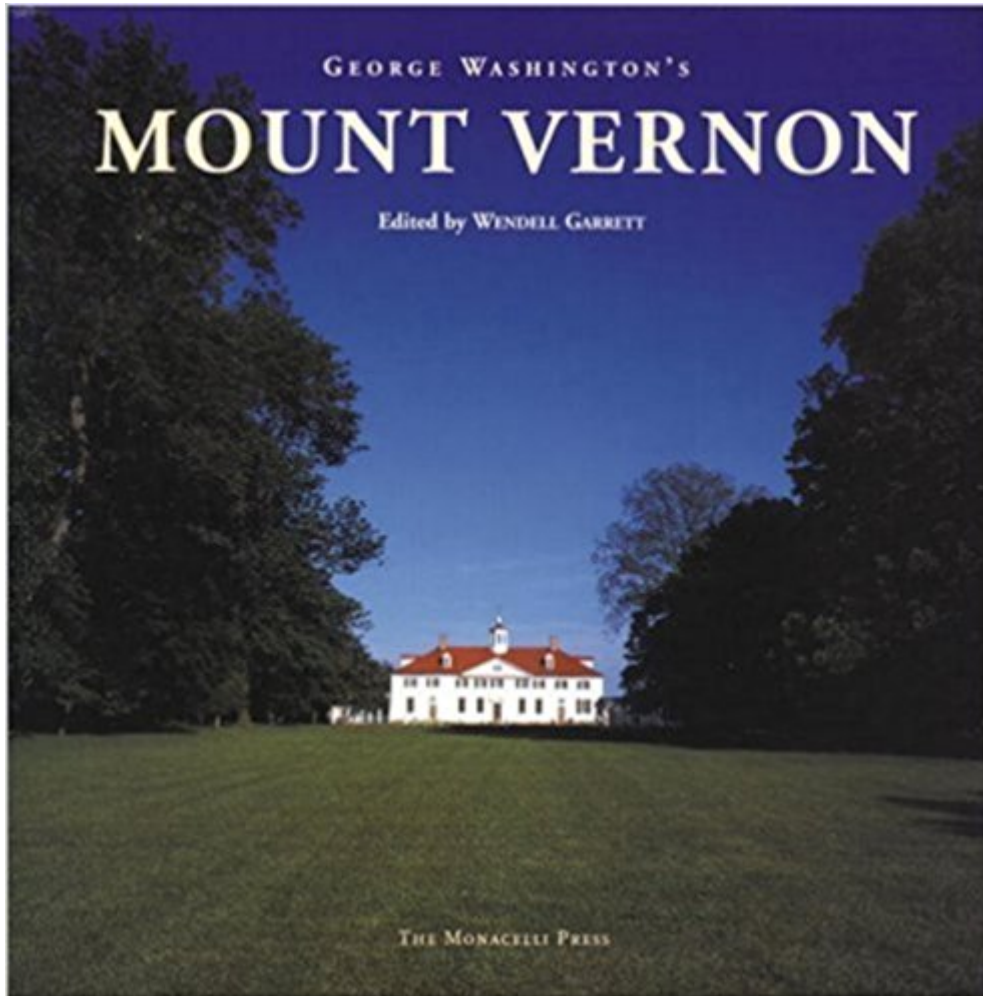




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George Washington's Mount Vernon



Synopsis

Before the White House, there was Mount Vernon, the home of this nation's first president -- George Washington. Profiled here for the first time in full color by award-winning photographers Robert Lautman and Edward Owen and thoroughly documented in eight essays by eminent historians, the fascinating story of Mount Vernon -- from Washington's life to the finely furnished home that he and his wife, Martha, created over the years to the struggle and perseverance of the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association to save this national treasure -- is presented in this exceptional volume. From the time Washington first leased the house and farm in 1754 until his death in 1799, he increased the estate from 2,126 acres to more than 8,000. Every aspect of Mount Vernon -- from the expansion and decoration of the house to the purchase of the silver and china, planting of the gardens, and management of the plantation -- was personally handled by Washington. The estate's elegant simplicity has been likened to the personality that so diligently shaped it. Celebrated leaders from all walks of life -- including Henry Ford, Thomas Edison, and almost every American president since Washington -- make brief but important appearances in the Mount Vernon saga. In addition to historical significance, the rescue and subsequent restoration of Mount Vernon represent a milestone in America's preservation movement. The exemplary research and implementation of preservation techniques employed in the restoration of Mount Vernon, many of which are detailed here, have set precedents in the field.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Marking the bicentenary of George Washington's death, an exhibition of artifacts from his Virginia estate will travel later this year to museums from coast to coast. Tourists, historians and home stylists with a fondness for Washingtonia won't want to miss what must be one of the first coffee-table books to be published on our first president's home. The essays and photographs (mostly taken by Robert Lautman and Edward Owen) document Washington's manse from all angles in all seasons, showcasing its classical 18th-century architecture and landscape, its furnishings and art works, and its significance as a reflection of Washington, and as a typical upper-class Chesapeake Bay plantation of the period. Because Mount Vernon housed and was worked by slaves, one of the book's more compelling features is its depiction of slave quarters and a monument that was erected in the 20th century in memory of Mount Vernon's slave inhabitants, though these images would have benefited from more detailed commentary. It's the photographs, which take the viewer from the home's landscaped gardens into the large dining room, and finally into the kitchen and wash house, that are the book's strongest point and provide a vivid window onto 18th-century America. More than 300 illustrations (200 in color). Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Contrary to the publisher's claims, this is not the "first book ever published on" Mount Vernon, although it does appear to be the first book that combines dozens of dazzling color photographs with scholarly essays. Robert and Lee Dalzell's similarly titled *George Washington's Mount Vernon: At Home in Revolutionary America* (LJ 7/98) discusses the architecture of Washington's home within the social and political fabric of the time and includes a few dozen small black-and-white photographs. Editor Garrett, former editor of *Antiques* magazine, instead gives us a carefully balanced collection of superior color portfolios interspersed with nicely crafted historical essays. The essays provide a portrait of George Washington as well as discussions of Mount Vernon's architecture, landscape, furniture, fine arts collections, table- and teawares, and current preservation efforts. A beautiful work recommended for school, public, and academic libraries. AP. Steven Thomas, Central Michigan Univ. Lib., Mt. Pleasant Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc.

great

This is not the book I wanted.

I have numerous books about Mount Vernon. This book is an especially nice one with up-to-date photographs and new discoveries from one of America's most visited homes. If you are a fan of George Washington and his Mount Vernon, then this book is a "must have!"

George Washington's Mount Vernon is not only an American landmark but a landmark of what America is, a warm, welcoming and gracious home. This beautiful book takes you through a four season walk of Mount Vernons spectacular grounds and a detailed and historical tour of the homes interior. With the easy interesting writing and the spectacular color photography all guided by the expert hand of Wendell Garrett, we learn and understand Washington's love and devotion to his beloved home. For anyone searching for detailed information on colonial interiors or historical gardening ideas, this book will be a welcomed addition to your home library.

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