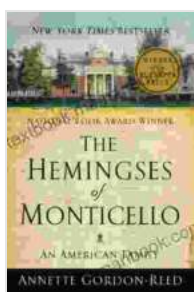


# The Hemingses of Monticello: An American Family

The Hemingses of Monticello were an enslaved African American family who lived and worked on Thomas Jefferson's plantation in Virginia. Their story is a complex and tragic one, but it is also a story of resilience and hope.



## The Hemingses of Monticello: An American Family

by Annette Gordon-Reed

★★★★☆ 4.5 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 1833 KB

Text-to-Speech : Enabled

Screen Reader : Supported

Enhanced typesetting : Enabled

X-Ray : Enabled

Word Wise : Enabled

Print length : 1026 pages



## The Early Years

The Hemings family arrived at Monticello in 1774, when they were purchased by Jefferson from a neighboring plantation. The family consisted of John Hemings, his wife Elizabeth, and their six children. John Hemings was a skilled carpenter, and Elizabeth was a weaver. Their children were also taught various trades, and they all worked hard to contribute to the Jefferson household.

Despite their enslavement, the Hemingses were treated relatively well by Jefferson. They were given their own quarters, and they were allowed to raise their own food. They were also allowed to attend church and to learn to read and write.

## **The Hemings-Jefferson Relationship**

In the late 1780s, Jefferson began a sexual relationship with Sally Hemings, one of the Hemings' daughters. Sally was a young and beautiful woman, and Jefferson was obviously attracted to her. The relationship was consensual, but it was also deeply problematic. Sally was a slave, and Jefferson was her master. This meant that the relationship was inherently unequal, and it could not have been truly consensual.

Sally Hemings gave birth to six children by Jefferson. The first child, Harriet, was born in 1790. The other children followed at regular intervals. Jefferson never publicly acknowledged his paternity of these children, but there is strong evidence to suggest that he was their father.

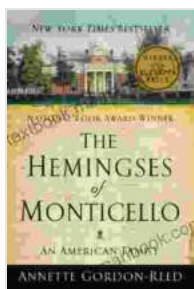
## **The Hemingses' Legacy**

The Hemingses of Monticello were an important part of Thomas Jefferson's life, and their story has much to tell us about the complexities of race and slavery in the United States. Their story is also a reminder of the resilience and hope of the African American people.

Today, the Hemingses' story is being told in a new way. In recent years, there has been a growing interest in the lives of enslaved people, and the Hemingses are now recognized as one of the most important African American families in American history.

## Further Reading

- The Hemings Family at Monticello
- Frontline: Jefferson's Blood
- Review: 'The Hemingses of Monticello' by Annette Gordon-Reed



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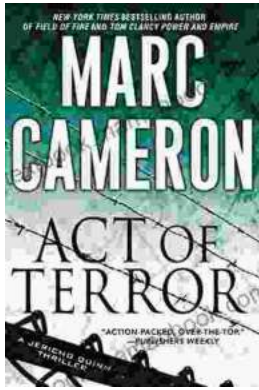
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