



Selected Letters of John Jay and Sarah Livingston Jay: Correspondence by or to the First Chief Justice of the United States and His Wife

Sarah Livingston Jay, John Jay

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This collection of letters chronicles the personal lives of founding father John Jay and his wife, Sarah Livingston Jay, in the tumultuous times during and after the American Revolution. The letters showcase Sarah as a devoted wife and mother, who welcomed friends and government officials into her home and helped further her husband's political career. Her intelligence, powers of observation, social skills, political savvy and more than competent management of family affairs, including finances, during her husband's frequent absences, are clearly reflected in her letters. The book includes essays on the Jay and Livingston families, family trees, a chronology of John Jay's life, and information about the character and appearance of both husband and wife. Importantly, there are bridges between the letters where necessary and essays on several topics - the mail, health and medicine, education, religion and slavery - which provide an 18th century context for the reader. The correspondence reveals the abiding love of husband and wife, their concern for their children, the dangers and difficulties of travel, descriptions of the lands they visited and events they witnessed, as well as a sense of the effort it took to survive in the era even with the buffer of wealth. Illustrations include several portraits, the signatures of John and Sarah, the Jays' wax seal and a period map of New York Harbor.

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