

Martha Wayles Jefferson, Jefferson's wife

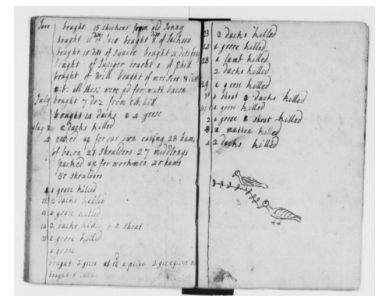
Reading Level: Elementary School

Only a few facts are known about Thomas Jefferson's wife. There are no letters written by her. There are no pictures of her.

Martha Wayles was born October 19, 1748 in Charles City County, Virginia. She married Thomas Jefferson in 1772 on New Year's Day. She was twenty-three years old. Martha shared with Jefferson a love of music and record-keeping.

Martha gave birth to six children. Two daughters and a son died as infants. In 1782, her daughter Lucy was born. Four months later, Martha died. She was thirty-three years old. Lucy died two years later from whooping cough. Only two daughters, Martha and Mary, lived to become adults.

Thomas Jefferson loved his home and his wife. He believed that his "heart would be happier enjoying the affections of a family fireside." He was overcome with sadness by his wife's death.



Two pages from house-keeping records Jefferson's wife kept in the unused pages of one of his law books. The sketch of the birds is by her.