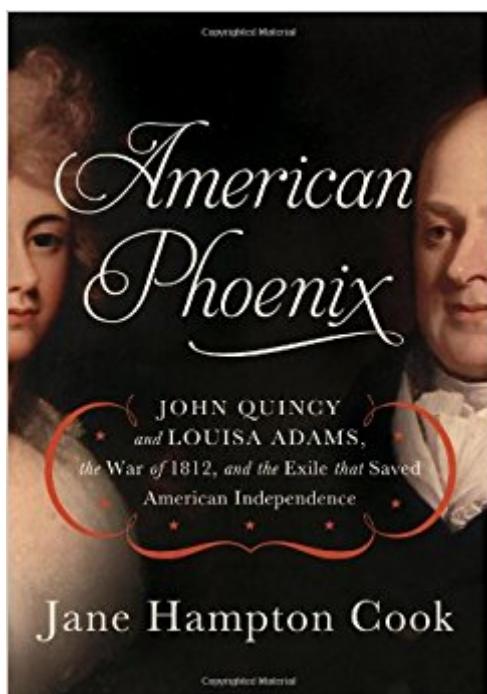


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American Phoenix: John Quincy And Louisa Adams, The War Of 1812, And The Exile That Saved American Independence



Synopsis

John Quincy and Louisa Adams' unexpected journey that changed everything. American Phoenix is the sweeping, riveting tale of a grand historic adventure across forbidding oceans and frozen tundra—from the bustling ports and towering birches of Boston to the remote reaches of pre-Soviet Russia, from an exile in arctic St. Petersburg to resurrection and reunion among the gardens of Paris. Upon these varied landscapes this Adams and his Eve must find a way to transform their banishment into America's salvation. Author, historian, and national media commentator Jane Hampton Cook breathes life into once-obscure history, weaving a meticulously researched biographical tapestry that reads like a gripping novel. With the arc and intrigue of Shakespearean drama in a Jane Austen era, American Phoenix is a timely yet timeless addition to the recent renaissance of works on the founding Adams family, from patriarchs John and Abigail to the second-generation of John Quincy and Louisa and beyond. Cook has crafted not only a riveting narrative but also an easy-to-understand history filled with fly-on-the-wall vignettes from 1812 and its hardscrabble, freedom-hungry people. While unveiling vivid portrayals of each character—a colorful assortment of heroes and villains, patriots and pirates, rogues and rabble-rousers—she paints equally fresh, intimate portraits of both John Quincy and Louisa Adams. Cook artfully reveals John Quincy's devastation after losing the job of his dreams, battle for America's need to thrive economically, and sojourn to secure his homeland's survival as a sovereign nation. She reserves her most detailed brushstrokes for the inner struggles of Louisa, using this quietly inspirational woman's own words to amplify her fears, faith, and fortitude along a deeply personal, often heart-rending journey. Cook's close-up perspective shows how this American couple's Russian destination changed US destiny. 

Book Information

Hardcover: 512 pages

Publisher: Thomas Nelson; 1 edition (May 6, 2013)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1595555412

ISBN-13: 978-1595555410

Product Dimensions: 6.5 x 1.5 x 9.6 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.6 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.3 out of 5 stars 89 customer reviews

Customer Reviews

In a marriage that lasted more than 50 years, John Quincy and Louisa Adams shared a life as full and eventful as John Quincy's more celebrated parents, John and Abigail Adams. Here, Cook concentrates on a critical phase of their personal lives as well as an important formative period in the history of the young American republic. In 1809, John Quincy was appointed first minister to the Russian court. Distance and the severe climate meant it wasn't a plum assignment, but it became an increasingly important one. Louisa, not blessed with good health, found their stay especially difficult; her two young sons were left at home, and she endured the sorrow of the death of an infant daughter. Yet Cook utilizes the letters and diaries of the Adamses to indicate that she was a great asset, using her social graces to compensate for John's blunt, gruff manner. She also traversed a war-torn continent in an effort to rejoin John in Paris. Historians may question Cook's assertion that the diplomatic efforts of the Adamses saved American independence, but this is an informative, easily digestible glimpse at a successful political partnership. --Jay Freeman

Excellent history of John Quincy & Louisa's time as the US Representative to the Russian Court. Perspective is everything and this volume gives us both John & Louisa's perspective.

An illuminating insight into a true patriot, the astonishing sacrifices he and spouse and children made which had significant bearing on our fledgling country.

Well researched and educational. Needed the redundant cliches edited out. Almost put the book down after the repeated references to fig leafs and Adam and Eve.

The author uses the writings of John Q and Louisa Adams seamlessly woven together with a outstanding narrative. It makes history come alive.

Jane Hampton Cook did a great job recreating history using the personal notes of John & Louisa Adams while including her own insights regarding the personal sacrifices they made for America. Great read!

Makes you appreciate the times we live in today!

I love any thing about the Adams. I did not know a lot about Louisa Adams but found out how brave and fabulous a person she was, as was her husband. Very interesting book. Held my interest all the way through.

A slow read at first but a wonderful glimpse into our history. It covers areas and issues we forget were a part of the world happenings at that time. I would recommend it to anyone wanting to know more of the back story of the United States' early years.

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