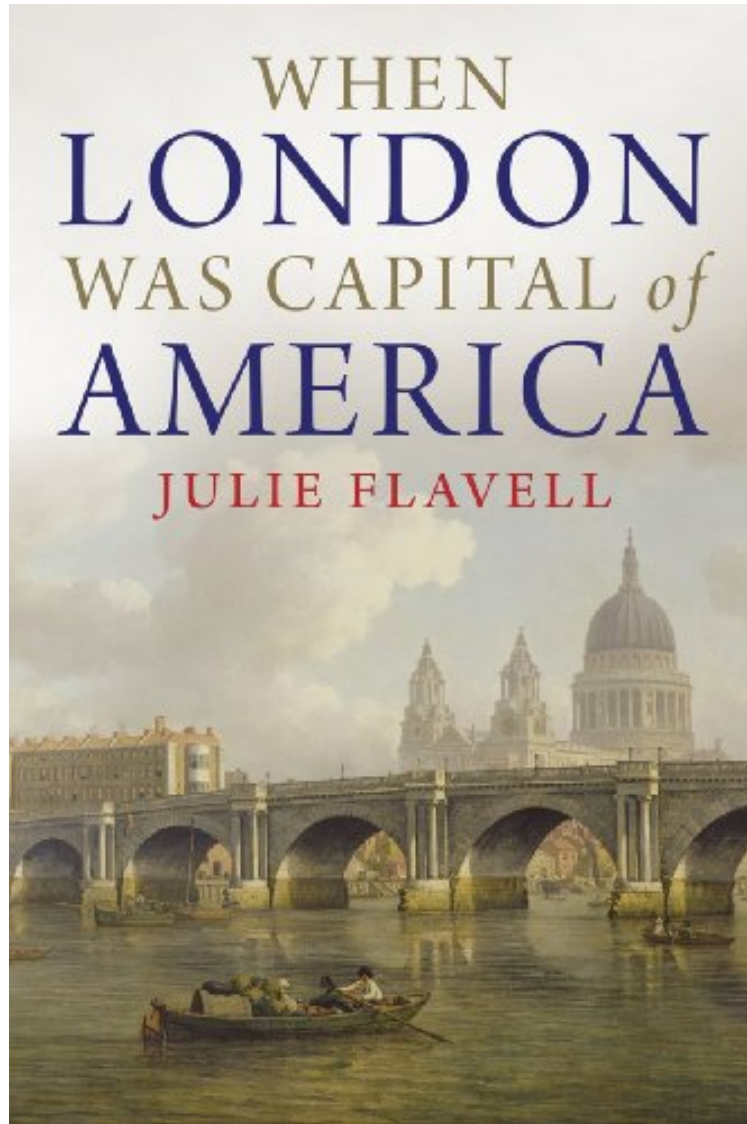


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When London Was Capital of America

Julie Flavell

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Julie Flavell : When London Was Capital of America before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised When London Was Capital of America:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Very informative and readable By Dr. Emily Kurtz This book was a great read and offered a lot of new perspective on London and the Colonial period. You get lots of interesting social history, background on luminaries such as Ben Franklin, and a fresh take on slavery and how London's attitude toward it differed from America's. Finally, you get the clear distinction even back then between North and South, between Southern Planter and New England tradesman and what exactly constituted being an American. There were a few

solecisms and misspellings (charicature! Yale UP needs more copy editors...), but on the whole it was well done and eminently entertaining. The Georgian period in England remains one of its most fascinating, with so many shades of meaning and various expressions as to defy most preconceived notions. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. How the Past looks from here By Barbara B. Carroll How the Past looks from here This a fascinating account of the attitudes in both England and the Colonies before and during the American Revolution. The Rebellion, as it was termed, was viewed in that era, as a tedious but justified uprising against government policy, just that -- not a bid for separation. In American History Classes, this has long been presented as an heroic, single-minded endeavor toward Liberty. 1 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Needs a More Critical Editor By Somersent Ms. Flavell obviously knows her history, and I guess her book does address the main subject matter of what life was like for Colonists living in London during the years shortly before 1776. But I was disturbed by the repetitiveness of much of the material. And her almost constant references to "Pride and Prejudice," "Sense and Sensibility" and other novels and their characters was alright at first but then became oddly disturbing. I own and have carefully read countless books about that era in our American past, and I was looking forward to some new insight regarding the mindset of the citizens of that day. And that is what was somewhat disappointing to me. She goes on at great length about one Henry Laurens, a Southern plantation owner with close ties to London, but perhaps more should have been revealed about others rather than devoting a good third of the book to someone who has disappeared in the fog of time. The best part of her book is near the end when good old Ben Franklin appears. But for me it was too little too late. And the spelling of "defense" as "defence", and "gaol" for "jail" throughout the book was distracting at best. I firmly believe Ms. Flavell has a great deal to offer but Heather McCallum, her editor at Yale University Press, should have told her that one mention of an occasion or situation is enough. Telling us the same details over and over again simply becomes tedious.

Benjamin Franklin secretly loved London more than Philadelphia: it was simply the most exciting place to be in the British Empire. And in the decade before the outbreak of the American Revolution, thousands of his fellow colonists flocked to the Georgian city in its first big wave of American visitors. At the very point of political rupture, mother country and colonies were socially and culturally closer than ever before. In this first-ever portrait of eighteenth-century London as the capital of America, Julie M. Flavell re-creates the famous city's heyday as the center of an empire that encompassed North America and the West Indies. The momentous years before independence saw more colonial Americans than ever in London's streets: wealthy Southern plantation owners in quest of culture, slaves hoping for a chance of freedom, Yankee businessmen looking for opportunities in the city, even Ben Franklin seeking a second, more distinguished career. The stories of the colonials, no innocents abroad, vividly re-create a time when Americans saw London as their own and remind us of the complex, multiracial at times even decadent nature of America's colonial British heritage.

From Publishers Weekly Before the Revolutionary War, England had a complex relationship with its colonial properties, but one truth always held: London was the center of the British Empire and therefore, the center of the world, politically, culturally, and intellectually. As such, it drew students, merchants, intellectuals, and fortune hunters from all over the empire. Flavell's comprehensive examination of London's lure to colonists focuses on specific individuals, including a wealthy merchant, his scientist son, the slave who makes a gamble on freedom, and Benjamin Franklin. Through these sketches readers begin to derive a complex understanding of London's role in the Empire and its influence over colonial styles, affiliations, and racial attitudes. Having poured through manuscripts from the time, Flavell argues that the American colonies were a far more multicultural place than American history books tend to depict, and that the British perception of the colonies was not as simplistic as we've been led to believe. Flavell writes in a compelling and succinct style, and history fans will be intrigued by his interpretation of a tumultuous time that shaped the fate of nations. Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. "Julie Flavell has produced not an account of the administration of the American colonies from London but something much more original... She reveals an extraordinary, almost forgotten world, rich with anecdote." (Duncan Fallowell, Daily Express) 'An engaging social history, written with a novelist's eye for character and plot.' (Gaiutra Bahadur, The Observer) 'This is a fine, original book, and a jolly good read.' (Tim Richardson, Country Life) 'a well-researched and enjoyable book' (Leslie Mitchell, Literary)" About the Author Julie Flavell, the author and editor of many scholarly and popular publications on the relationship between colonial America and Britain, including Britain and America Go to War, is a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society and an independent scholar. Born in the United States, she currently lives in Scotland.