



Martha's Bible: **Recording Family Histories**

Students will learn...

- The role of women and family bibles in historical record keeping.
- To use fragmented information to create a larger picture.
- To use math to calculate birth/death dates.

You will need...

- A picture of Martha Washington's Bible
- Martha's Family Tree Clues Handout
- *Optional:* Martha's Family Tree Outline Handout
- *Optional:* The color distinction of Martha's Family Tree Outline and Clues Handouts

Opener: Family Records

- Ask your students what records they have that document their life- official records, like a birth certificate, but also unofficial ones, like Facebook posts. Record them.
- Now go back and circle the records that are available to historians of the past- specifically the 18th century.
- Ask how might a person in the 18th century preserve their family history. Where would they keep these records?
- Reveal that a Family Bible is often used as a family records.

Task: Examining Martha's Bible

- Divide your classroom into pairs or small groups and give each group a copy of the pictures from Martha Washington's Bible.

- What do they notice? What has been written?

Most Family Bibles had a "Records" or "Register" section where a person would record all the births, marriages, and deaths in the family. Letters and other documents have also been found in-between the pages of Family Bibles.

- Give each group Martha's Family Tree clues. Their goal is to make a family tree based on that information (names & dates).
 - Start them off with Martha Dandridge (1731-1802)
 - Explain that some of the information may not be relevant to the tree
- *Optional:* hand out Martha's Family Tree Outline (original or color distinction).

Closer: Women and Records

- Explain to them that both men and women recorded information in their Family Bible. However, Martha's Bible went through generations of women- her granddaughter Nelly Custis inherited it after her death and then her daughter, Frances Lewis after her.
- Ask your students - why might Martha might have been the family historian? Looking at her family history, what in her life may have made her interested in recording and remembering her history?
- *Optional:* For homework, have students write out their own family records.

Martha Washington's Bible

George Washington purchased this Bible for Martha Washington in New York on August 18, 1789. Martha signed her name on several pages. It also contains had five pages handwritten family history, obituaries for Eleanor Custis, Lawrence Lewis and M. E. Angela Conrad, a newspaper clipping of a poem and a watercolor of a flower signed by "ECL Carter."



Lawrence Lewis born 4th April 1767. Eleanor Parke Custis
 born 31st March 1779, married at Mount Vernon on Friday 22nd Feb^r
 1790, in the presence of Genl & Mrs Martha Washington.

Their Children.

Francos Parke Lewis born at W^m on Wednesday 27th Dec^r
 1790, Baptized in Feb^r 1800, Her Sponsors, Mrs Eleanor Parke
 & Mr Charles Carter, and Mrs Sarah & Mr G. W. P. Custis.

Martha Betty Lewis born on Wednesday August 19th 1801, at
 W^m. Baptized June 10th 1802, Her Sponsors, Mrs M. P. Peter,

Mr G. Tucker, & Mr Custis, died June 17th after 3 weeks illness, aged 10^{months}.

Lawrence Fielcing Lewis, born on Wednesday August 3th 1802
 at Western Point Culpeper County, died immediately after
 his birth.

H. L. D. Lewis

1852

THE NEW
T E S T A M E N T
Martha OF OUR *Washington*
1757 LORD and SAVIOUR
J E S U S C H R I S T,
TRANSLATED OUT OF THE
O R I G I N A L G R E E K:
A N D
With the former TRANSLATIONS
Diligently Compared and Revifed,
By His MAJESTY's Special Command.

Appointed to be read in CHURCHES.

O X F O R D,
PRINTED AT THE CLARENDON PRESS,
By W. JACKSON and A. HAMILTON, Printers to the UNIVERSITY:
And fold by *W. Dawson*, at the Oxford Bible Warehouse, in Paternoster Row, London. 1783.

CUM PRIVILEGIO.

Martha Washington's Family Tree Clues

Instructions: Use the 26 clues below to make a family tree of Martha Washington's family (her children to her great-grandchildren). Include the 24 people's full names and the year of their birth and death.

1. Martha Dandridge **Custis** (F) born June 13, 1731, and George Washington (M) born February 22, 1732, were married on January 6, 1759. They had no children.

-
2. Martha Dandridge and Daniel Parke Custis (M) born October 15, 1711, married on May 15, 1750. They had four children, born in the years 1751, 1753, 1754, and 1756.

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3. Daniel Parke Custis died on July 8, 1757.

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4. Martha and Daniel Parke Custis's eldest child, Daniel Parke Custis Jr. (M), died at the age of 3. Their next child, Frances Parke Custis (F), died at the age of 4.

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5. Martha and Daniel Parke Custis's youngest child, Martha "Patsy" Parke Custis (F) died of epilepsy when she was 17 years old.

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6. John Parke Custis (M) born on November 27, 1754, married Eleanor Calvert (F) born in 1758. They had four children together- at first three girls and then a boy.

-
7. John Parke Custis died of camp fever at Yorktown on November 5, 1781. His wife, Eleanor, lived another 30 years.

-
8. John Parke Custis's daughter-in-law was Mary Lee Fitzhugh (F) born April 22, 1788, and died April 23, 1853.

9. Mary Lee Fitzhugh's husband had three sisters- the oldest was Elizabeth Parke Custis, who was 12 years older than Mary Lee. Next was Martha Parke Custis, born the year after Elizabeth, and then Eleanor "Nelly" Parke Custis, born two years after Martha.

.....

10. Eleanor "Nelly" Parke Custis married Lawrence Lewis (M) in 1799 and within the year, they had their first child, Frances Parke Lewis (F).

.....

11. Frances Parke Lewis had two siblings that lived past childhood, Lorenzo (M) born in 1803, and Mary Eliza (F) born in 1813.

.....

12. George Washington died the same year Frances Parke Lewis was born and his wife, Martha Washington died two and a half years later.

.....

13. Thomas Peter, born in 1776, died at the age of 58. He was survived by his wife, Martha Parke Custis **Peter**, with whom he had 8 children.

.....

14. Mary Anna Custis (F) was born on October 1, 1807, to George Washington Parke Custis (M) born on April 30, 1781, and Mary Lee Fitzhugh **Custis**.

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15. Robert E. Lee (M) was born January 19, 1807, married Mary Anna Custis on June 30, 1831.

.....

16. Robert E. Lee was the Commander of the Confederate States Army during the Civil War. He surrendered in 1865 and died five years later of a stroke.

.....

17. Mary Anna Custis died three years after her husband.

.....

18. Martha Parke Custis **Peter** died 20 years after her husband, the same year that her sister Eleanor Parke Custis died, who outlived her own husband by 15 years.

19. Elizabeth Parke Custis (F) who died in 1831, was the only sister to die before her husband. Thomas Law, Elizabeth's first husband, was born on October 23, 1756, survived her by three years.

.....

20. Charles Conrad (M) born December 24, 1804, married Mary Eliza Lewis on July 30, 1835.

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21. Charles Conrad later went on to be the Secretary of War under Presidents Fillmore and Pierce. He also later served under the Confederate Government during the Civil War. He died in 1878, 39 years after his wife's death.

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22. Despite being the youngest, Mary Eliza Lewis was the first to die of her siblings at the age of 26. Her sister died in 1875 and her brother died in 1847.

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23. Edward George Washington Butler (M) born on February 22, 1800, and became the ward (under the care) of President Andrew Jackson after his father's death, when he was only three years old.

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24. Edward George Washington Butler died at the age of 88, 11 years after the death of his wife.

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25. Ester Maria Coxe (F) born July 10, 1804, died as Ester Maria Coxe **Lewis** on June 23, 1885.

.....

26. Ester Maria Coxe **Lewis**'s father-in-law died on November 20, 1839, at the age of 72.

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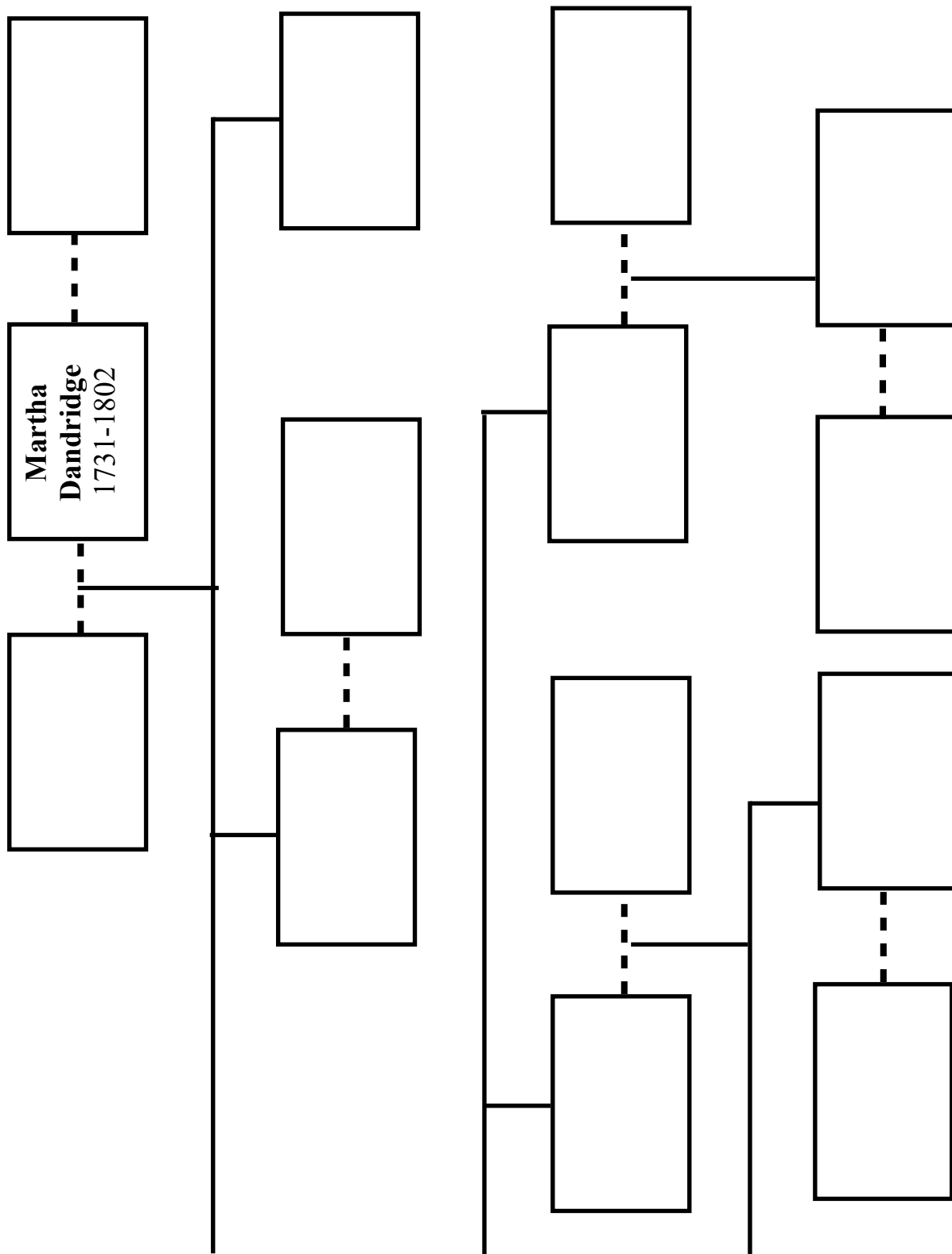
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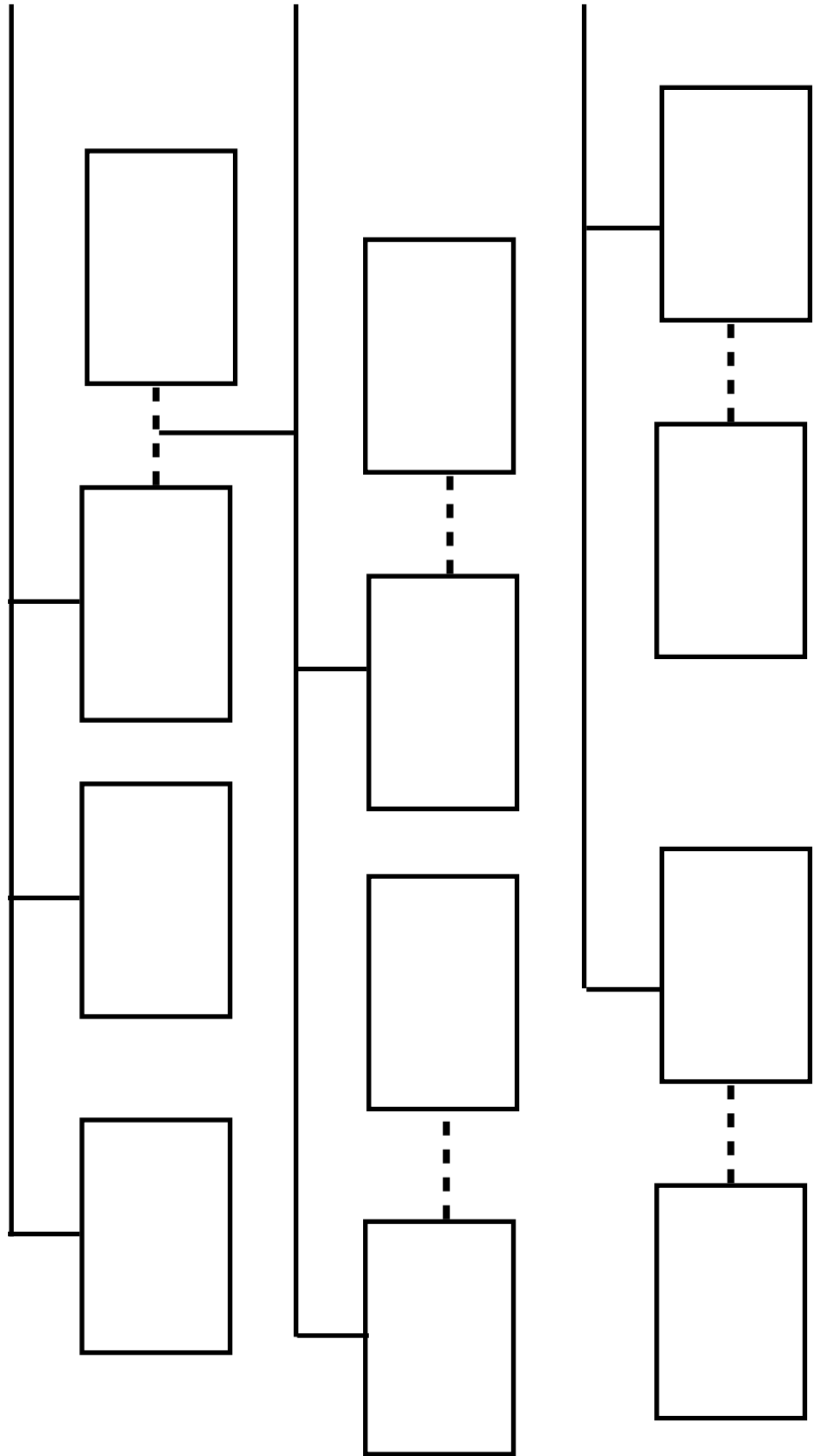
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Martha Washington's Family Tree

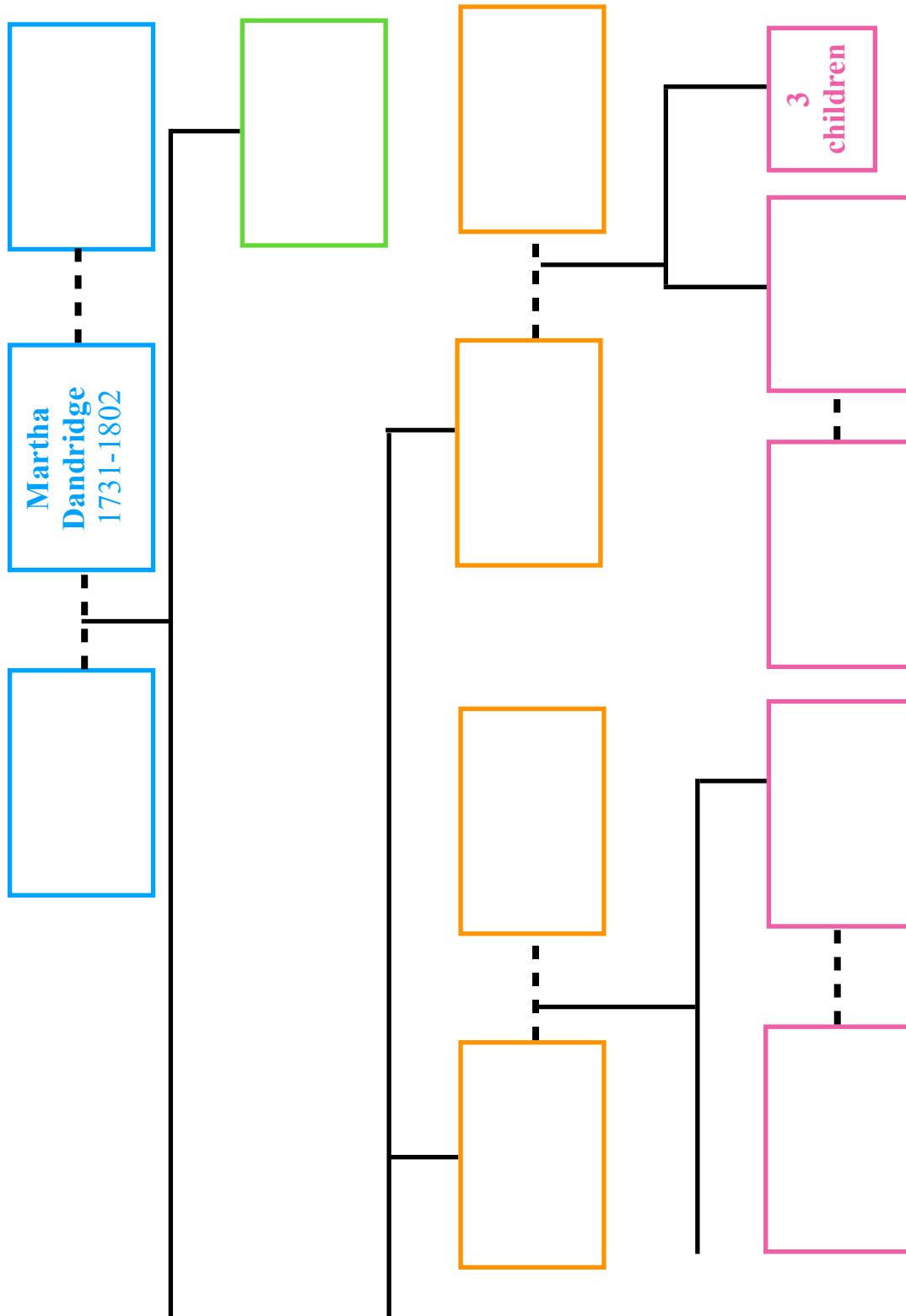
Instructions: Use the Martha Washington's family tree clues to fill out the family tree below.

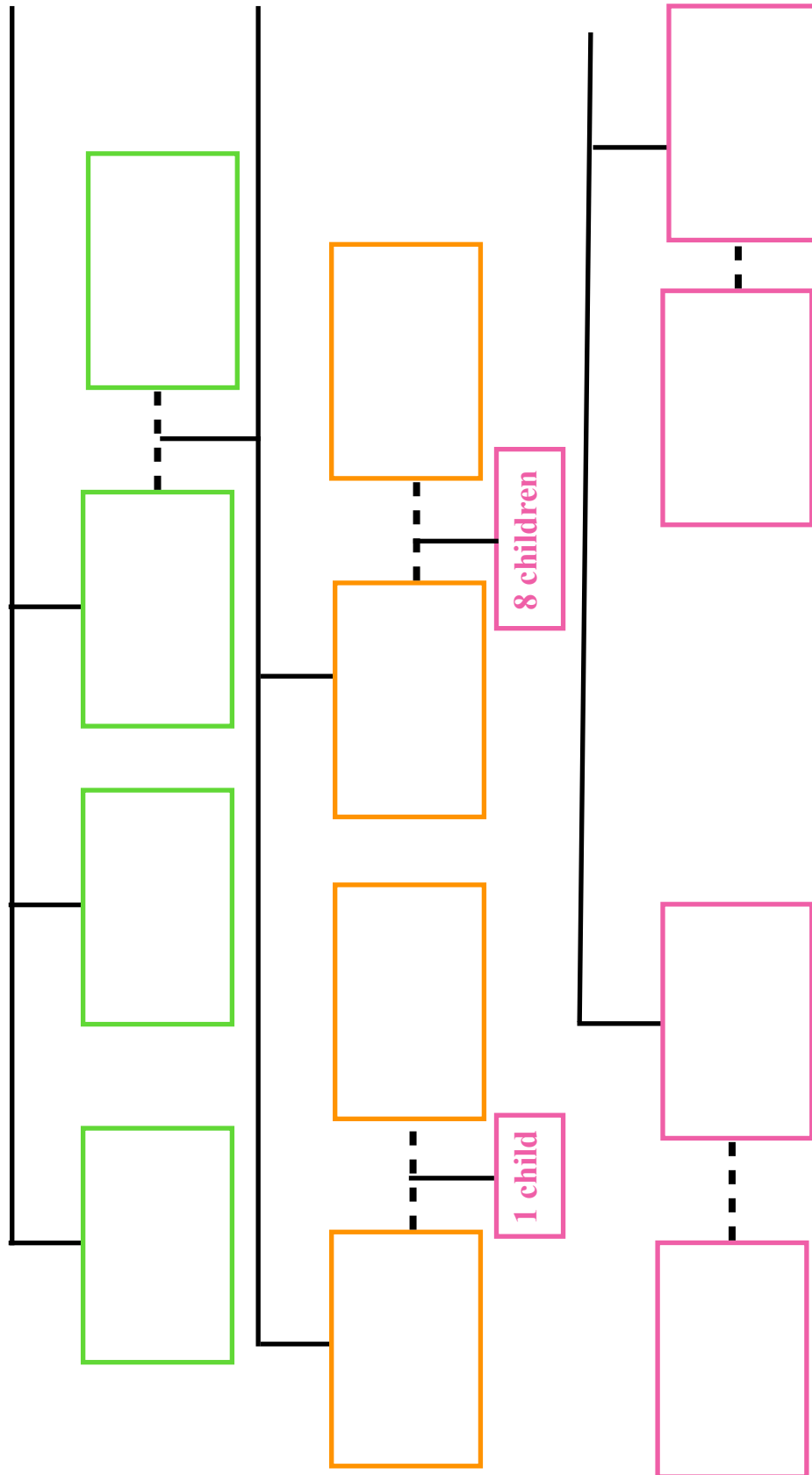




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