FATHER of the LAND WE LOVE
Written For the American People
By
GEORGE M. COHAN
To Commemorate the
Two Hundredth Anniversary
Of the Birth of
GEORGE WASHINGTON
Painting contributed by James Montgomery Flagg
The Story of Washington

FIRST IN WAR

George Washington was truly "First in War," not only from any militant disposition of his character, but because of his environment and the times in which he lived. Born at Bridges Creek, Virginia, February 22, 1732, upon a plantation known as Mount Vernon, he was destined to leave a blood and memory of those early colonial pioneers who were almost constantly armed and alert against the invasion of warlike enemies. It was the same blood and memory that inspired the pioners of America everywhere to push onward and establish homes amid hostile surroundings. When George Washington was seven years old the family moved to the farm on the Rappahannock River, opposite the town of Fredericksburg. It was in this locality that George began his schooling, which consisted principally in reading, writing, and arithmetic. When he was eleven years old he was sent to drill and discipline the British Navy, but his mother persuaded him to give up this idea. Shortly thereafter he went to live with his half-brother Lawrence at Mount Vernon, which his father had inherited from his father. He continued to be deeply interested in surveying and assisted in surveying the lands of Lord Fairfax, whose home, Belvoir, was only a few miles distant. At sixteen he made a month's surveying journey beyond the Alleghenies. The military career of Washington began when he was twenty-one. He was commissioned by Governor Dinwiddie to deliver a message to the French on the Ohio, who were encroaching upon what was then Virginia territory. His subsequent activities during the Braddock campaign are all well known.

At the age of twenty, Washington came into possession of Mount Vernon through the death of his half-brother Lawrence. Washington was married to Martha Dandridge Custis and brought her to Mount Vernon, which was home to remain the remainder of his life, and where he died, December 14, 1799.

George Washington was not only "First in War," but was among the very first to be prepared for war in the event that England persisted in her encroaching attitude toward the colonies. Washington was a leading member of the First Continental Congress. When called to serve in the Second Continental Congress, he said: "I am full intention to devote my life and my property to the cause of my country.

Upon assuming command of the American Army at Cambridge, July 3, 1775, he solemnly vowed that he would fight as long as he possessed his liberty. This was the beginning of seven years of warfare that was destined to change the history of the world, and bring happiness and prosperity to millions of people.

Never in all history did a commander conduct a war under such discouraging conditions. But discouragement to this hardy pioneer meant nothing. His first work was to convert an aggregation of 16,000 men, mostly farmers, into a disciplined fighting machine. His next big job was to arouse the love and patriotism of his soldiers for the cause for which they were fighting, that they would be willing to endure the hardships of the English and go shoeless and well-nigh naked.

In a short time Washington drove the enemy out of Boston and took a position behind New York. When the British thought they had him cornered there, he quietly moved his army of 10,000 across the river. His retreats were as annoying to the enemy as his victories. He could always turn a defeat into a reason for more determined fighting.

Today all the world applauds his midnight crossing of the ice-freeing Delaware and the dramatic battle of Trenton, where he surprised the Hessians and won a victory that electrified the nation.

The Battle of Monmouth, in New Jersey, is equally famous. There was a clash of arms, and Washington personally led his troops in the most critical part of the battle, where they were about to breach before the enemy.

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But the battle of Monmouth is to be remembered for the remarkable generalship displayed by Washington.

Military genius throughout the world have ever marveled at the brilliant success of Washington's maneuvers across New Jersey.

From Valley Forge, during the winter of 1777-78, Washington wrote Congress saying of his soldiers: "Their courage may be traced by the blood of their feet." There was never a finer example of the loyalty of soldiers to their leader.

On October 19, 1781, Washington, for all time to come, became a world-figure in military history. That was the day that Cornwallis surrendered at Yorktown. That was the day that the last remnant of British influence on the continent was defeated. That was the day that the American people were freed from the oppression of the British and the British government of the world.

And then came peace and quiet. Carnarvon ceased to roar. Musket was occupied in a place of honor behind the kitchen door. Swords were hammered into ropes. Old war horses were hitched to plows and wagons. Crops were planted. Houses and barns were repainted. Churches and schools were put in order.

Washington again became the outstanding American farmer. He was happy at his beloved Mount Vernon, beautifying his estate, enriching his fields, improving his crops and livestock, and doing everything possible to bring happiness and contentment to his loved ones.

The wise and far-seeing statesman-ship of Washington was clearly and effectively shown in his last circular letter to the governors of the states, dated February 23, 1791. It was of vital importance to the young republic and its people, and was the recognized model for the very existence of the country.

Always a wise citizen, he kept a sharp eye on the scale of measures, and was no great task for this versatile man to change from soldier to statesman. Washington could come to place with all the young country on a more permanent foundation, Washington was made President of the convention which framed the Constitution under which we now live. His advice and diplomacy were invaluable.

A great time to elect a President. Washington was unanimously chosen. How he got Congress to function, how he governed, how he could create and maintain our government, how he had educated our entire governmental machinery, and how he won the honor and respect of the civilized world that has long been a matter of history.

Why was George Washington "First in the Hearts of his Countrymen" and why does he continue to hold that place?

Because, he was courageous enough to go to war with one of the most powerful nations on earth for the freedom of his own country. He built an army out of the raw material that came to him from the farms and the towns. He led this army through all its most unbelievable hardships, and with it he outmaneuvered and defeated some of the most experienced military minds in Europe. What he could boast. By his own example of patience, dogged determination he inspired the men to persevere in the face of privation and discouragement.

Because, after independence had been won, he set examples of patriotic generosity that the world has ever known. He laid aside his sword and his medal which had placed him at the head of a great army and voluntarily returned to the quiet of his beloved residence. He placed no honor or personal glory when he saw his country free he asked nothing from her, but was content with the happy life of a private citizen which had been interrupted by the war.

Because, when the Constitutional Convention was called to frame a new government, he yielded to the importunities of his countrymen and became a delegate to that meeting. He was immediately elected president of the convention. The long and arduous debates were over, and Washington exerted a powerful influence for a compromise that cannot be over-estimated.

Because, as First President of the United States, he started this country on her career as one of the great nations in all history. It has been said that the framers of the Constitution created the Presidency of the United States with George Washington in mind at the ideal man for the office.

Because, he possessed the qualities of leadership and knowledge of men that inspired confidence among all classes of people. Faith in him was well-nigh universal. Complete understanding existed between him and the people. His general conduct was such as to hold the affection of the public. He was the one man who could harmonize all factions and bring men together in the adjustment of important questions. He was the one who could overcome the contentious elements which sought to create national disturb-
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Father of the Land We Love
Written for the American People

Moderato

VOICE

Ev'ry little lad and lass, Boys and Girls of ev'ry class, Here be-nearth the
When to man-hood comes the youth, With the knowl-edge and the truth. Of the rev-o-

flag of stripe and star From the time they start to school,
lu- tion-ar-y fray Proud he is to be a son

When they learn the gold-en rule Al-ways have been proud of what they are. And
Of Im-mor-tal Wash-ing-ton Sac-red is the mem'-ry of his day. When
ev'ry day with lessons done, They sing their song of Washington, A
ev'er drums begin to roll, Within the nation's heart and soul, A

song of love that reaches near and far:
patriotic something seems to say:

CHORUS

First in War, First in Peace, First in the hearts of his

countrymen That is the story of Washington,

Father of the Land We Love.
That is the glory of Washington, His spirit is here.

His spirit is here—He's standing, commanding above.

In word and deed we follow the lead of the Father—Of the land we love.

Father of the Land We Love.