

George Washington

By Rosemary and Stephen Vincent Benet

*Sing hey! For bold George Washington
That jolly British tar,
King George's famous admiral
From hull to Zanzibar!*

No - wait a minute - something's wrong -
George wished to sail the foam.
But, when his mother thought, aghast,
Of Georgie shinning up a mast,
Her tears and protests flowed so fast
That George remained at home.

*Sing ho! for grave Washington,
The staid Virginia squire,
Who farms his fields and hunts his hounds
And aims at nothing higher!
Stop, stop, it's going wrong again!
George liked to live on farms,
But, when the colonies agreed
They could and should and would be freed,
They called on George to do the deed
And George cried "Shoulder arms!"*

*Sing ha! for Emperor Washington,
That hero of renown,
Who freed his land from Britain's rule
To win a golden crown!
No, no, that's what George might have won
But didn't, for he said,
"There's not much point about a king,
They're pretty but they're apt to sting
And, as for crowns - the heavy thing
Would only hurt my head."*

*Sing ho! for our George Washington!
(At last I've got it straight.)
The first in war, the first in peace,
The goodly and the great.
But, when you think about him now,
From here to Valley Forge,
Remember this - he might have been
A highly different specimen,
And, where on earth would we be, then?
I'm glad that George was George.*