

George Washington

George Washington was the first president of the United States. He was born in Virginia in 1732 and lived on the family farm. Although he never went to school, he did study school subjects from his father and older brother. His favorite subject was math and he loved surveying. He also learned to read many books. George wanted to be a sailor, but his mother didn't want him to work on the sea. Instead, George went to work as a surveyor for Lord Fairfax to survey the land in the Shenandoah Valley.

The French and the English wanted control of this valley and in 1753, war broke out. This war has been called the French and Indian War because many of the native people fought against the English on the side of the French. The war lasted for seven years and ended in 1761. During this war, Washington was sent to warn the French not to enter on any more land claimed by Britain. At this time, the country was still part of Britain and was called the Thirteen Colonies. George kept a diary of all his troubles on this trip and it was later published as a book. Some of these troubles included trying to get troops and being surrounded by French troops.

He was disappointed by this and resigned from the army in 1754. He volunteered again the next year and was later promoted to colonel and then commander-in-chief. He left the army in 1758 and began to run the family estate known as Mount Vernon. He then entered politics and became a representative in the government. When the Thirteen Colonies wanted to make their own decisions about government and taxes, they revolted against the British. This was called the American Revolution and George Washington became an important General who trained the American troops.

During the war he led the troops to victory in many battles. After the war he went back to his large farm and began experimenting with different ways to grow crops. In 1787, he went to Washington as a delegate to help form a new government for the country now called the United States of America. He was elected president of the new country.

While he was president, he toured all parts of the new country, and supported the development of the Bank of The United States, paying off state debts and a tax on whiskey. Many people did not like his ideas, but he was elected as President again in 1792. By the time he retired, he had established the financial system, settled problems with the Indians, signed the Jay's Treaty to settle the differences between the U.S. and Britain and the Pinckney's Treaty with Spain and actually enlarged the country by adding new lands.

In 1798, he was once again back in command of the army, but this time he did not take an active role preferring to give advice rather than go on the battlefield. He liked to spend most of his time at his home. In 1799, he developed a disease of the throat and died soon afterwards.