



George Washington

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THE LIFE

OF

1787

GEORGE WASHINGTON,

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COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF
THE AMERICAN ARMY THROUGH THE
REVOLUTIONARY WAR,

AND THE

First President of the United States.

BY

AARON BANCROFT, D.D.

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P R E F A C E .

THE following publication originated in the author's wish to place within reach of the great body of his countrymen, an authentic biography of General WASHINGTON.

Judge Marshall, in his valuable life of this illustrious patriot, has embraced not only the settlement and general history of the North American Colonies, but also the political history of the United States. His work is therefore necessarily too expensive to be obtained by all classes of American people. The writer of these memoirs apprehended, that by publishing the life of WASHINGTON in a compressed form, he should enable those of his fellow-citizens, who are not in possession of Marshall, to leave to their posterity a memorial of a man who was pre-eminently distinguished as a Soldier and Statesman.

General WASHINGTON was from his youth devoted to his country; his character therefore cannot be portrayed without bringing into view many important public transactions. The plan of the writer has been to notice no individual or event, further than was necessary to display the principal character.

He has made Judge Marshall his leading authority for facts, and has in some measure followed him in the order of events. The histories of the war by Doctors Ramsay and Gordon, and several original writings, have been consulted; but he trusts that greater liberty has not been taken with any of them than is fair and honorable. The few facts which have not before been published, were re-

ceived immediately from confidential friends of General WASHINGTON, or from gentlemen who, in respectable official situations, were members of his family during his military command.

It has been the endeavor of the author to display the character of the man who is the subject of the work, by exhibiting in a connected view his actions and his writings ; and he has, as far as possible, made this exhibition in the person of General WASHINGTON.

He has not conceived that he was writing for men of erudition, but for the unlettered portion of the community ; and he has for their benefit more particularly studied simplicity of style. Should he be so happy as to obtain their approbation, he will receive an ample reward of his labor.

He entertains no expectation of acquiring literary fame by this publication ; but he hopes to escape the disgrace of having written a useless book.

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