



None is unaware of the part George Washington played in the American Revolution. Few have forgotten his crossing of the Delaware in a surprise movement upon the enemy. All know of the tragic winter at Valley Forge and most are aware that he might easily have become a dictator had it not been for his great love of democracy. But what of his early life? What of Washington the man? What forces in his life so ideally equipped him to lead our nation to freedom and independence?

Washington inherited a fine physique and an alert mind. At an early age he divided his time between schooling and vigorous outdoor activity. At the age of twenty he was a Major in the Virginia Militia. By the time he was twenty-two he had been named a Colonel and at twenty-three, he was Commander-in-Chief of the Virginia Forces. From this experience he learned military strategy, tactics, diplomacy and the handling of men and material.

Washington, too, was a man of great religious

conviction. As Vestryman of his parish he was chairman of the building committee for several churches, receiving experience in executive management.

As a member of the Virginia Legislature, Washington learned law making and as a judge in Fairfax County, he gained knowledge that later became invaluable to him as our first President.

In addition Washington was a good businessman. He kept elaborate books and always knew where he stood on his assets and liabilities. For many years he was a stockholder in the Bank of England, a holding which much to his surprise he found intact after the Revolution.

So as we look over Washington's life prior to his appointment as Commander-in-Chief of the Continental Army we find that he had fitted himself well for that post. Sometimes history leads us to believe that in time of great crisis, a hero appears suddenly upon the stage. But if we think more deeply we find that all great men have risen to high positions through their own initiative.

George Washington was no exception.