



George Washington

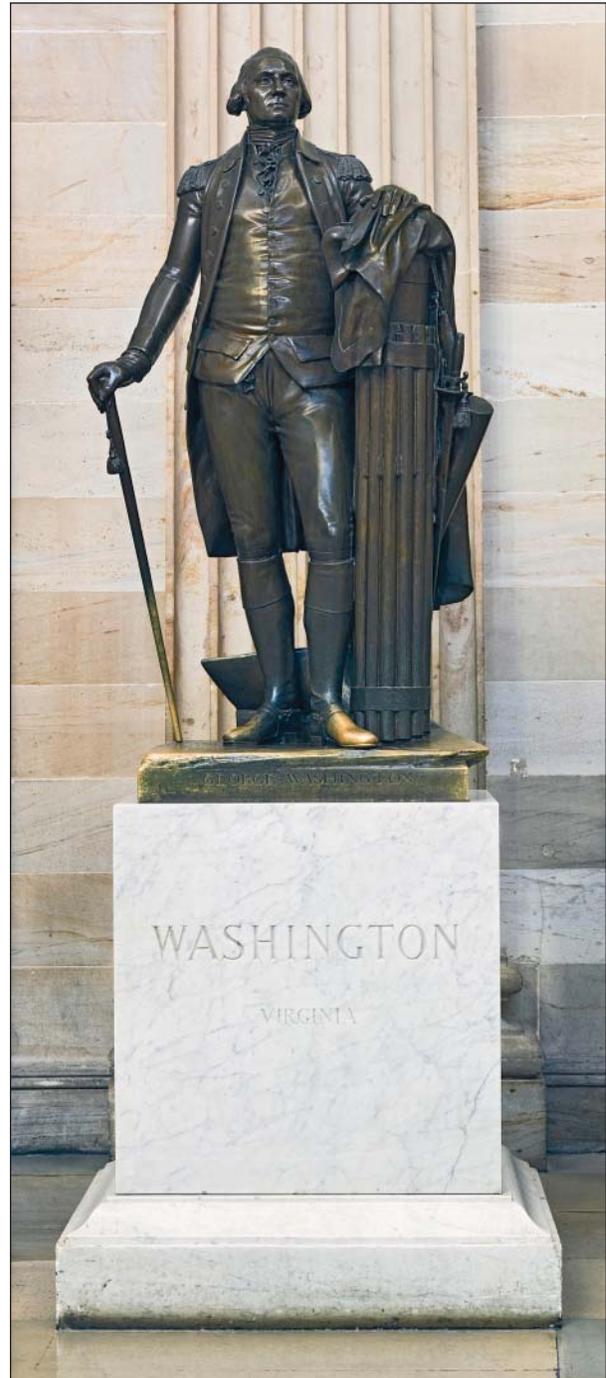
Given by Virginia to the National Statuary Hall Collection

GEORGE WASHINGTON WAS BORN IN Westmoreland County, Virginia, on February 22, 1732. After his father's death in 1743, he lived chiefly at Mount Vernon and worked as a surveyor. Sent by Governor Dinwiddie in 1753 to warn the French against encroaching on land in the Ohio Valley, he served in the French and Indian War as a lieutenant colonel. He was obliged to surrender Fort Necessity on July 3, 1754; distinguished himself in the engagement known as Braddock's Defeat on July 9, 1755; and participated in the capture of Fort Duquesne in 1758.

He inherited Mount Vernon from his half-brother Lawrence in 1752. He married Martha Custis on January 6, 1759, and entered the Virginia House of Burgesses that same year. A leader in the movement for independence, he was a delegate to the First and Second Continental Congresses. On June 15, 1775, he was chosen to command the Continental Army, and he assumed his duties on July 3, 1775. He took leave of his officers at Fraunces' Tavern, New York, on December 4, 1783, and retired to Mount Vernon.

Returning to public life, he attended the Annapolis Convention in 1786 and presided over the Constitutional Convention in 1787. Unanimously elected the first President of the United States, he was inaugurated in New York on April 30, 1789, served for two terms, and declined a third. When war with France threatened in 1798, he was called from retirement as commander in chief, but hostilities were averted. He died on December 14, 1799, and is buried at Mount Vernon.

April 2011



Bronze by Jean Antoine Houdon
Given in 1934; located in Rotunda.