

**GEORGE  
WASHINGTON  
DAY BY DAY**

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George Washington day by day by Elizabeth Bryant Johnston

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**ELIZABETH BRYANT JOHNSTON**

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*Photographed by Frances B. Johnston.*

**MOUNT VERNON — WEST FRONT.**

"THE MAN WHOM LANGUAGE CANNOT EXALT,"

# GEORGE WASHINGTON DAY BY DAY

BY

ELIZABETH BRYANT JOHNSTON

*Author of "Original Portraits of Washington,"  
"Christmas in Kentucky, 1862,"  
Etc., Etc.*



WASHINGTON, D. C.

1894

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ELIZABETH BRYANT JOHNSTON

TO  
THE CHILDREN OF MY COUNTRY  
THE ARMY WHICH WASHINGTON SAID COULD  
NEVER BE CONQUERED





## PREFACE.

**I**T has been claimed, and frequently conceded, that the world—however much it may admire the patriot, the warrior, the statesman—does not know *the man*, George Washington. No better way can be adopted for the study of the life and character of an individual than by the presentation of a direct, well-supported statement of events of that life, though, compared with historic narrative, such a work must lose in grace of composition. Acting upon this self-evident fact, the author offers to students incidents in the life of Washington on the day of their occurrence, endeavoring to bring their minds into intimate relation with events, public and personal, which show all sides of his character—from which they can draw their own conclusions and adjust their own standards. The purpose of this book is educational—such education as should spring from, flourish in, and be forever associated with, the home. As a whole, it is suggestive and intended to arouse a spirit of inquiry; it contains more than a thousand facts illustrating the daily walk and conversation of Washington. The field for a work that may be so happy as to nourish patriotism extends from ocean to ocean—from the noble pines of the North to the cotton-fields of the South. It is with the hope of leading the American youth to a direct personal acquaintance with the man to whom the world from generation to generation has given the first place in American citizenship that this book is offered. It has been a work of labor and of love.

No other country has ever possessed a representative who by all countries has been so enthusiastically appreciated. Lord Byron truly says

"Washington 's a watchword such as ne'er  
Shall sink while there 's an echo left to air."

Therefore, any expression of pride we utter may be pardoned. Let us not only take pride in Washington's memory, but let us emulate his virtues; and his greatest virtue was his sorely tried, self-forgetting, unflinching, exalted patriotism.

With the Greeks, love of country was piety. Let it become more a part of our religion, that part which rises above all theories, philosophies, and creeds, uniting us, if in nothing else, in the divine fellowship of the love of country.

There is much to encourage the young in the close study of the events in Washington's life, which show an evolution upon philosophical principles — from a boyhood loving and strong, a manhood honest and patriotic, to an old age illustrious and beloved. The youth of America who have educational advantages which Washington could not command, may develop on the same principles, the canons of which are high purpose and duty never ignored. Note Washington's first crude, ill-spelt efforts; and yet, in the years of his laborious life he became — to quote one who has studied him in detail — “the most felicitous letter-writer of the ages.” His letters, it is truly said, are his most complete biography, and for that and other reasons should be placed in the hands of every American boy and girl. His evolution in military affairs was the wonder of all Europe. He had no master, was not in the beginning familiar with the dogmatic etiquette of academies, nor even with the usual routine, as is indicated by his correspondence with Governor Dinwiddie; yet he learned in the hard school of experience, and so developed that at the very opening of the struggle for Independence he gave severe rebukes to Lord Howe regarding military amenities. He never failed to yield all the courtesy the enemy could claim; he never failed to demand every iota that was his due — not for his own aggrandizement, but for the dignity of that body whose servant he was, “The Congress.”

In studying the life of Washington, one thing cannot be overlooked; and that is, his reverence for law. There were many opportunities in his career when he could have exalted the military over the civil; but to none of these, save under dire pressure, did he yield. He honored civil authority in letter and in spirit, and strove to imbue his soldiers with the same principle. Though a military chieftain, he stood with uncovered head before the President of Congress; and when a grateful people wished to perpetuate him in marble, he said: “Let it be as a private citizen.” A deeper reverence for law and a greater devotion to our national institutions are the lessons of the day. The very life of the nation depends on sustaining the majesty of the law, and instilling into the hearts of American children an earnest reverence for its sacred power.

This record must of necessity be a disjointed, kaleidoscopic presentation, a mosaic of events; but it is given with the hope of preserving the theme, so that the result will be a character-study. The aim will have been achieved if the youthful reader realizes the immense labor, devotion, and chief attributes of George Washington. The difficulties of collecting facts for this book and of establishing events on the day of their occurrence, cannot be appreciated. The negligence of biographers — it being so much easier to gracefully describe an event than to be exact — has caused labor, doubt, and confusion. Much good work is being accomplished in Washingtoniana, and more penetrating light thrown on “the days that tried men's souls.” Hale, Ford, Conway, Baker, and Toner have