JOURNAL OF MY JOURNEY OVER THE MOUNTAINS; IN THE NORTHERN NECK OF VIRGINIA, BEYOND THE BLUE RIDGE, IN 1747-8

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Journal of My Journey over the Mountains; In the Northern Neck of Virginia, beyond the Blue Ridge, in 1747-8 by George Washington & J. M. Toner

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GEORGE WASHINGTON & J. M. TONER

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Trieste

JOURNAL

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Journey Over the Mountains;

FY GEORGE WASHINGTON,

WHILE SURVEYING FOR LORD THOMAS FAIRFAX, BARON OF CAMERON,

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NORTHERN NECK OF VIRGINIA,

BRYOND THE BLUE RIDGE.

IN

1747-8.

Copied from the Original with Literal Exactness and Edited with Notes

J. M. TONER, M. D.

ALBANY, N. Y. JOEL MUNSELL'S SONS, PUBLISHERS 1892

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PREFACE.

Washington's Journal here given to the public, if we except his version of the "Rules of Civility and Decent Behaviour in Company and Conversation," is the earliest literary effort of this, the most admirable character in all history. The editor has long been engaged in collecting accurate copies of all the obtainable writings of this great man. Wherever it has been found practicable to examine and critically compare even his generally accepted writings with the originals, it has been, or will be done to secure a copy of exact and verified conformity, in every particular, with the text as it left the hand of the writer.

It is a well-known fact that editors have taken great liberties with Washington's writings, not for the purpose of falsifying history, or aspersing his character, but from a variety of reasons, often to suppress caustic expressions, or to substitute a more euphonious word to give to his sentences a fine, rhetorical finish. Such editorial dressing, even where the motive is well intended, is vicious in principle and liable to abuse; and, in the case of Washington's writings, is neither justifiable nor desirable. The time has come when the people want to know intimately and without glamour or false coloring, the father of his country as he actually lived and labored,

Preface.

and to possess his writings, just as he left them, on every subject which engaged his attention. It is the purpose of the editor to prepare a complete collection of all the writings of George Washington, from his youth to the close of his eventful life, with that literal exactness as to text which can only be assured by the careful efforts of an experienced copyist and expert proof reader having access to and comparing in every possible case the copies with the originals. This initial Diary of Washington opens with his sixteenth year, and plainly shows the energy and the maturity of his judgment, and his capability to discharge even then important trusts with efficiency.

Forthcoming volumes will give, in chronological order, his co-operation in the march of events on this continent, and his life and opinions as seen through the writings he left. This volume must be viewed as the work of a youth, making a few, brief and hurried memoranda while in the depths of the forest and intended for no eye but his own. The time is not far distant when an edition of Washington's more important papers will be called for in facsimile by some one of the photogravure processes now available for such purposes, because of the unquestionable fidelity to the original it secures and which is approximately arrived at in this publication.

This is the first systematic attempt to produce the writings of Washington with literal exactness as to abbreviations, the use of capitals, punctuation, spelling, etc. It is possible that the plan pursued may

Preface.

not, at first, meet with an unqualified commendation from the public. But if the editor does not much mistake the desire of students, the admirers of Washington and the demand of historians, this method, if faithfully executed, must produce the preferred edition of his writings.

A few miscellaneous pieces in Washington's youthful handwriting are preserved in this Journal, and are here printed with the same effort for literal accuracy which has been bestowed upon the Journal itself, and upon his field notes of land surveys.

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