

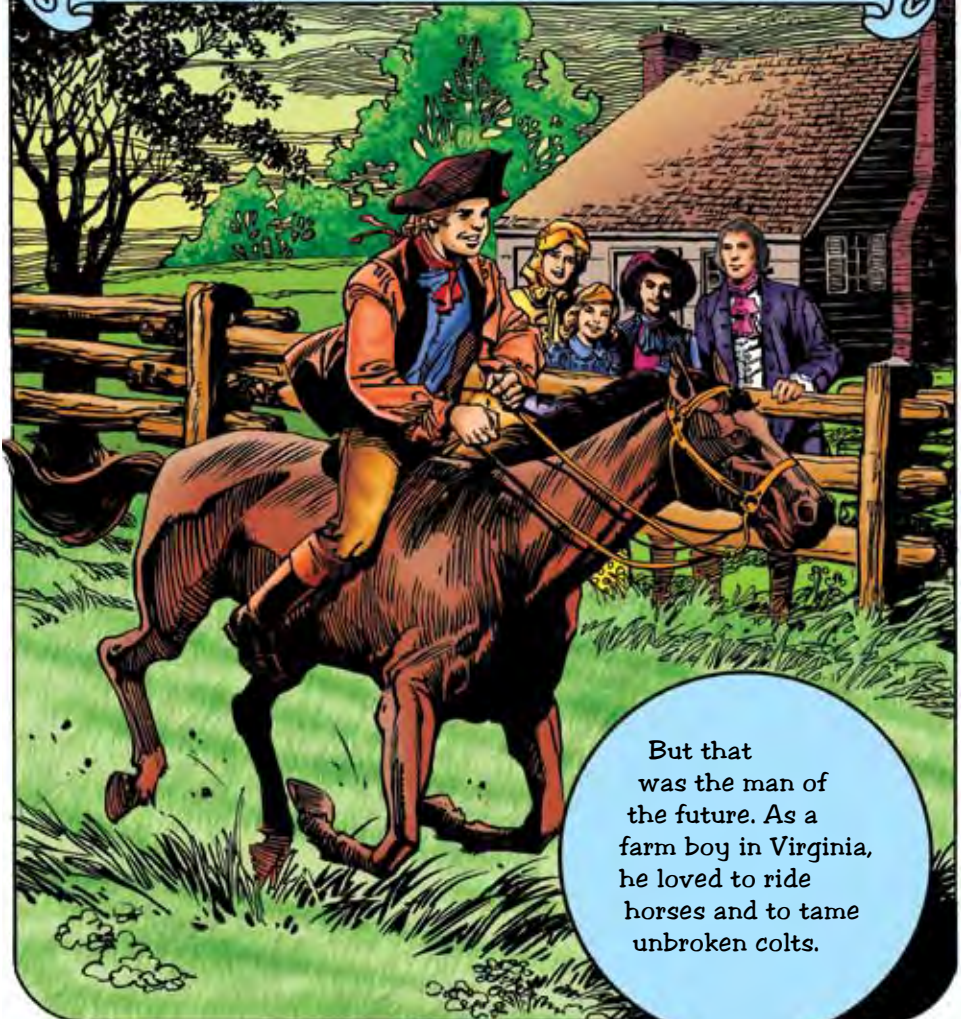
**GRAPHIC
BIOGRAPHY**

George Washington





When George Washington was born in 1732, there was no United States. The American colonies belonged to England. He led the army that fought for and won our freedom. He helped to form our government. He became our first president.



But that was the man of the future. As a farm boy in Virginia, he loved to ride horses and to tame unbroken colts.

Sometimes he was thrown off.



Let go, George. You'll be hurt!



He would climb back on again until he had mastered the horse.



Go, George! You're really riding him!

His mother fussed at his foolishness.

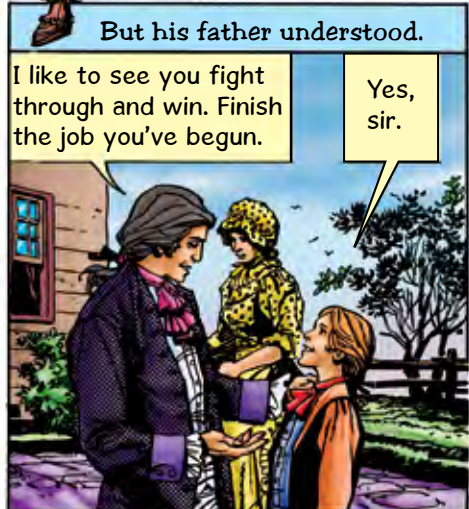
Look at you. You might have been killed.



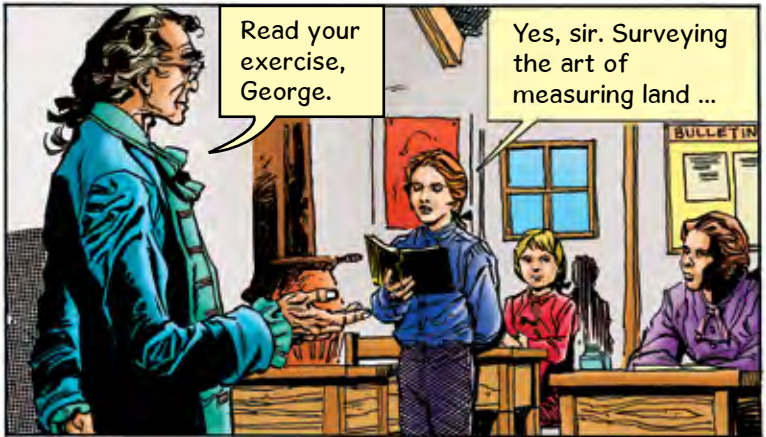
But his father understood.

I like to see you fight through and win. Finish the job you've begun.

Yes, sir.



He loved outdoor things—hunting, fishing, swimming, boating. He did not like school as much, but he worked at his lessons.



Read your exercise, George.

Yes, sir. Surveying the art of measuring land ...

Your spelling is very bad. But you are ahead of the class in arithmetic.

I like figuring.



When he was eleven, his father died. His half-brother, Lawrence, became like a father to him.

I am afraid there isn't enough money now to send you to England to school.

I can study alone. And I learn from listening to you and your friends.



Later, he found out how to combine his gift for figuring and his love for the outdoors.

Could I learn to be a surveyor?



That would be good work for you! Thousands of miles of country need to be measured and mapped.

At fifteen he became a surveyor's helper to learn the job.



I'll have this map finished in an hour.

Good.



His hard work paid off with a great opportunity.

Lord Fairfax is sending a party over the mountains to survey his great tract of land. You may go if you wish.



If I wish? It's too good to be true!

He was well paid, but he would have gone for nothing for the chance to explore the wilderness—to learn to live in it—and to meet the pioneer settlers.

Howdy, folks. Come in.

How did one man, without slaves or servants, clear this land and build the cabin?



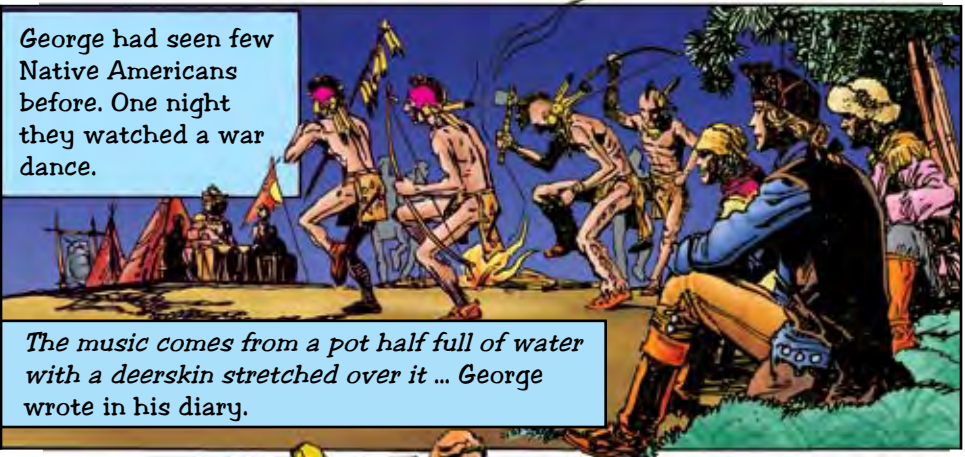
They shot game for food.



They camped in the wilderness.



George had seen few Native Americans before. One night they watched a war dance.



The music comes from a pot half full of water with a deerskin stretched over it ... George wrote in his diary.

When he was seventeen, he passed a test and became a licensed surveyor. But he did not spend all of his time working.



He learned to dance and enjoyed it all of his life.

You dance well, sir.



He loved the fox hunts that were popular. No one could outstride him.

In 1752 he was saddened by the death of Lawrence. He inherited responsibilities, including the estate of Mount Vernon.

He also became Major George Washington of the Virginia militia.



Congratulations, Major.

I only hope, sir, that I can do half as fine a job as Lawrence did in training our troops.

England and France were rivals for American land. On surveying trips, George heard talk from traders and trappers.

The French are building forts all the way from Canada to Ohio. They mean to take our land.

They're stirring up the Native Americans to fight us. They won't let us trap in the Ohio country.



But the Ohio country is claimed by Virginia! I'll see Governor Dinwiddie.



He talked with the Virginia governor.

I have been told by King George to send a letter demanding that the French withdraw.

I want to deliver that message.



I accept! It will be a hard winter trip through the mountains.

Your message shall be delivered to the French commander, sir!



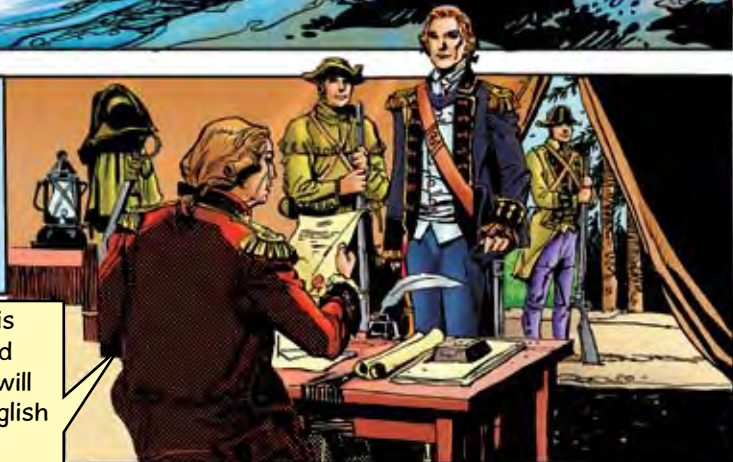
For forty-one days George and his party traveled on rough paths, through rain and snow, across dangerous waters.

Watch the luggage! Don't let it tip.



The French commander welcomed George politely, but his answer was firm.

France claims this land! We will build more forts. We will drive out any English who come here.



George talked with the scout who was his guide.

I must hurry back with the French answer; and with information about the French and the Native Americans.



The horses are thinner and weaker every day.

Then we will leave them and the rest of the party to follow slowly. You and I will go on foot!



They plodded many miles through heavy snow.



They escaped an Indian ambush.



Rafting across a great, ice-choked river, George fell in and swam for his life.

Look out!





But they arrived safely. Governor Dinwiddie was pleased with the hard, fast trip George had made. He formed new plans.

Major, I want you to lead a force of men against the French. Build a fort at the fork of the Ohio River.

I will do my best, sir.

The men George led were too few to fight the French army. Badly defeated, they surrendered their arms and marched back to Virginia.



But people began to know that George Washington was brave and strong and a good leader.

The English king sent an army to Virginia to fight the French.



General Braddock and the British regulars.

Aren't they grand in their red coats?

They'll send the French flying.