

---

---

**HEROES of AMERICA™**

---

---

# George Washington

*by* **Marian Leighton**

*illustrations by* **Martin Salvador**



**BARONET  
BOOKS**

**BARONET BOOKS, New York, New York**

Copyright © 2008  
Waldman Publishing Corp.  
P.O. Box 1587  
New York, NY 10028  
Phone: (212) 730-9590

All rights reserved.

No part of this book may be reproduced or copied in any form without written permission from the publisher.

Please visit us at <http://www.waldmanbooks.com>.

Printed in the United States of America

## Chapter 1

# A Virginia Boyhood

“Hang on, George! Hang on there, boy!” Lawrence Washington shouted. The young man was sitting on a fence, watching his little seven-year-old half-brother as the youngster bucked and bounced in the saddle of the unbroken horse he had determined to train by himself.

George bit his lip, clutching at the reins. He forced his long, strong legs around the horse’s flank, digging his heels into the underbelly and holding on for dear life. He was very strong for a seven year old,



George Clutched at the Reins.

## GEORGE WASHINGTON

because even for wealthy families like the Washingtons who had slaves to do most of their work for them, life in colonial America was hard and active, and lived mainly in the rugged outdoors.

It was more than two hours since George had thrown his saddle over the horse's back, and still the animal struggled with all its might, trying to throw its young rider. But George was even more determined. He had announced that he would break this headstrong animal, and break it he would.

Suddenly, the horse dropped to the ground. Its knees buckled as it went down. George sprang away quickly to keep from being thrown, or worse, crushed underneath.

Lawrence jumped down from the fence and raced across the pasture. "George, are you all right?" he asked, kneeling down to where the young rider was sprawled on the grass. "What happened?"

"He didn't throw me," George answered defiantly.

## GEORGE WASHINGTON

“I jumped when I felt him going down.” George rubbed his scraped elbows and knees.

“Why did he do that, I wonder?” Lawrence muttered. Satisfied that George wasn’t seriously hurt himself, Lawrence turned his attention to the horse.

The large animal groaned and turned its head aside.

“He’s dead!” Lawrence said in amazement, almost to himself. He turned back to his half-brother. “He just gave up!” he said. “But you didn’t—did you, George?”

George tried to smile, but he was still hurting a little too much for that. “No, I didn’t,” he said proudly. “I never give up.”

Lawrence smiled at those words. He squeezed his stepbrother’s shoulder playfully. Although Lawrence was fifteen years older and one of the sons of their father’s first marriage, he and George were great friends.



The Horse Turned Its Head Aside.