

AN
ORATION

ON THE
DEATH
OF
General George Washington,
LATE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES;

DELIVERED IN CHARLOTTE,

February 22, 1800,

TO THE
CITIZENS OF MECKLENBURGH COUNTY,

And published at the Request of

THE MILITIA OFFICERS OF SAID COUNTY.



BY
JAMES WALLIS.



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1800.

MY FELLOW-CITIZENS,

THIS is a day for ever to be distinguished in the annals of our country—This day has been set apart by the highest legislative authority of these United States as a day of *national mourning*—This day thousands and tens of thousands of American citizens, willingly comply with the appointment, and assemble together, as we have done, in the character and habiliments of *mourners*, publicly to give vent to their sorrowful feelings, and sympathetic condolence. What afflicting disaster—what heavy national calamity can call forth such universal, such spontaneous and disinterested sorrow? The occasion is mournful indeed, and justly demands the tears of all American citizens—**WASHINGTON IS NO MORE! WASHINGTON**, the Father of our Country, the Hero and Patriot of America, now lies numbered with the dead! **WASHINGTON**, the Founder of this new and rising Empire, the Asserter of our Rights, the Guardian of our Liberty, the Terror of Tyrants, the Friend of Man, the Benefactor of Millions!—**WASHINGTON**, the Great, the Good, the Gentle, and the Wise—The man on whom every eye was turned, during our great struggle for National Liberty and Independence; and to whom United America is so highly indebted for the successful issue of the conflict, now lives only in his great actions, and in the affectionate remembrance of his countrymen.

In the removal from this world of that great man, whose death we this day deplore, the Supreme Disposer of Human Events, has taken from us the greatest benefactor and ornament of our country; and although it becomes us to submit with reverence and Christian resignation to such afflictive dispensations of Divine Providence; yet, neither religion or decency will forbid us, on this occasion, to testify in the most public and impressive manner, our regard for the virtues, our gratitude for the services, and our sorrow for the loss of so beloved and excellent a citizen.

The mournful service to which we are this day invited by our National Legislature, will not only be congenial to the feelings of every true American, but may be profitable to our country on a variety of accounts. In reviewing the life of the great Washington, it will naturally fall in our way to take into recollection some of the most interesting events which preceded, accompanied and followed the late American revolution (for in effecting this revolution Washington acted a most conspicuous part). And by contemplating this revolution, and the circumstances that led to it; by reflecting on the mighty magnitude of the object for which we engaged in a dangerous and bloody war with a potent foreign power; by recollecting the numerous and complicated dangers which we suffered or escaped during the contest, together with our attainment of national Freedom and Independence, and the creation of a Government founded upon the Rights of Man; and by considering the distinguishedly happy situation of the citizens of these United States since the conclusion of the war; by such contemplations we shall be taught to make a due estimate of our national advantages, and properly to appreciate our civil privileges.

In tracing the life and delineating the character of Washington, to the honour of whose memory this day is devoted, I am at a loss to determine whether we are chiefly to applaud him as an Hero, or as a Patriot; whether we are most to admire him for his military skill or political wisdom; for, in both these respects, he shone forth with conspicuous splendor, and will bear comparison with those characters in other countries that have been pre-eminent in fame. It will be the province of future historians, and the subject of volumes, to do ample justice to his amiable character, and to display his distinguished virtues and meritorious services to his country in these respects. All that I intend at present, is a sketch of the life of Washington, in connection with the history of our country, and to make such reflections as we proceed, as may naturally arise out of the subject.

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