A Stoic Countenance:
Portraits of George Washington

_Every American considers it his sacred duty to have a likeness of Washington in his house, just as we have images of God’s saints..._

-Russian diplomat Pavel Petrovich Svinin, 1811

Few individuals have been as honored and revered in American history as George Washington. Elected as the rebellion’s military leader in 1775 as Commander-in-Chief of the Continental Army, and eventually unanimously elected as the first American President, he embodied the spirit of the American people. Washington was a symbol of popular political participation and resistance to authority, while also being a champion of law and order. He possessed numerous virtues including duty, bravery, and loyalty that continue to inspire respect and emulation. These attributes along with his impressive physical stature moved numerous artists to create portraits of Washington during his lifetime.

This exhibit demonstrates the rich diversity of George Washington likenesses. The majority of these prints were issued during the last quarter of the 18th century, and seen together they give a rare glimpse into the attitudes and perspectives of that period.

_General Washington_
James Trenchard, published in _Columbia Magazine_
Engraving with Etching
Philadelphia, 1787

Fraunces Tavern® Museum Collection, 1984.12.059
Gift of Stanley DeForest Scott

_His Excellency George Washington Esqr., Captain General of all the American Forces_
John Norman, published in James Murray’s _An Impartial History of the war in America_
Line Engraving
Boston, 1781
(left)

_His Excellency George Washington, Esqr., Captain General of all the American forces_
Unknown Artist, published in James Murray’s _An Impartial History of the war in America_
Line Engraving
London, 1780
(right)
Edward Savage (1761-1817)

Born in Princeton, Massachusetts in 1761, Edward Savage trained as a goldsmith before becoming a portrait painter and engraver. In 1789, he was asked to complete a life portrait of George Washington for Harvard College. He completed the piece in 1790 after three sittings with Washington and later made an engraving from the original portrait. The painting is still part of the Harvard University collection, and one of the engravings is on display here.

Savage is also known for his painting and engravings of the Washington family, which was completed in 1798 and is currently on display at the National Gallery of Art. He also completed portraits of General Wayne, General Knox, and Robert Morris throughout his career. In addition to being an artist, Savage worked as a print publisher and a gallery operator.

George Washington, Esqr., President of the United States of America
Edward Savage
Mezzotint
London, 1793

Memorial Portraits

Washington’s death on December 14, 1799 devastated the people of America. The nation mourned together. Printmakers met the public’s demand for illustration of their beloved leader.

These artists employed an array of symbols and imagery to express the deep emotions felt by this tragic loss. Traditional emblems for death and remembrance such as cypress trees, Father Time, obelisks, weeping mourners, and wreaths were often used in these pictures. America patriotic symbols such as eagles and the liberty cap and pole were also used.

First in War, First in Peace and First in the Hearts of His Country
John Eckstein
The Society of the Cincinnati was a fraternal organization of former military officers that organized following the dissolution of the Continental Army. George Washington was chosen to be its President General on June 19, 1783. This engraving pays tribute to his leadership role within the organization as well as the leader of the nation after his death.

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**General of the Armies of The United States of America**
David Edwin and John James Barralet, after F. Bartoli, published by D. Kennedy
Stipple Engraving
Philadelphia, 1798

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**America Lamenting her Loss at the Tomb of George Washington**
James Akin and William Harrison Jr., after Joseph Wright
Engraving with Hand Coloring
Philadelphia, 1800

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Gift of Stanley DeForest Scott

**Commemoration of Washington**
John James Barralet, published by Simon Chaudron
Stipple Engraving with Etching
Philadelphia, 1802

Washington is being raised from his tomb by Immortality and Father Time who will aid him in his ascension. Faith, Hope, Charity, Liberty, and America surround Washington’s tomb in mourning.

Fraunces Tavern® Museum Collection, 1984.12.035
Gift of Stanley DeForest Scott
**General Washington, late President of the United States**  
**Unknown artist, published by John Fairburn**  
**Mezzotint with Hand Coloring**  
**London, 1801**

Fraunces Tavern® Museum Collection, 1984.12.045  
Gift of Stanley DeForest Scott

**George Washington, Esqr., General and Commander in Chief of the Continental Army in America**  
**Unknown Artist, after “Alexander Campbell”, published by C. Shepard**  
**Mezzotint**  
**London, 1775**

Fraunces Tavern® Museum Collection, 1984.12.012  
Gift of Stanley DeForest Scott

**“Alexander Campbell”**

Although the references on these engravings claim that the originals were “drawn from life by Alexander Campbell of Williamsburg, Virginia,” there is no record of any such painter or draftsman, and Washington himself declared that he never saw Mr. Campbell. Washington recorded in his diary that he received a copy of Campbell’s engraving of himself on horseback, published in London in 1775. He thought the likeness was “not good” and the countenance “ferocious”.

The “Campbell” engravings are the earliest images of Washington in Europe. An enterprising publisher in London probably commissioned the portraits at the very beginning of the Revolutionary War for the expressed purpose of engraving and distributing them for sale. The publisher must have been counting on Washington’s success. The engravings were published first in 1775, when the colonists were still engaged at the siege of Boston, and Washington had yet to prove himself as a subject of admiring portraits.

**Washington as Commander-in-Chief**

On June 15, 1775, George Washington was chosen to become the Commander-in-Chief of the Continental Army. Throughout the Revolutionary War, Washington faced numerous challenges as a military leader including poor modes of communication and transportation, extremely
limited funds, untrained soldiers, and a short supply of necessary goods. Despite these difficulties, his appointment of competent officers and strategic decisions led the Continental Army to its eventual victory with the aid of the French at Yorktown.

Here at Fraunces Tavern in the Long Room on December 6, 1783 Washington bid farewell to his officers as Commander in Chief. Afterwards, he headed to Annapolis where he formally resigned his position in front of the Continental Congress, believing his time in the public eye to be at its end. Unbeknownst to him, his popularity would lead to his election as president just a few years later.

*The Battle of Lexington*
F. Godfrey
Engraving, published by Nicholas Ponce in *Collection of Engravings representing...the Independence of the Unitd States of America*
Paris, 1784
(left)

*Le General Washington, Commandant en Chef des Armées Américaines*
Unknown Artist, after Charles Wilson Peale
Engraving
France, Late Eighteenth-Century
(center)

*Surrender of the Army of Lord Cornwallis*
F. Godfrey, after Le Barbier
Engraving, published by Nicholas Ponce in *Collection of Engravings representing...the Independence of the Unitd States of America*
Paris, 1784
(right)

Gifts of Stanley DeForest Scott

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**Charles Willson Peale** (1741-1827)

Charles Willson Peale painted and engraved the first authentic portrait of Washington. After having studied under John Singleton Copley in Boston and Benjamin West in London, Peale turned his attention to painting in miniature and engraving. On returning from London in 1770, he set himself up as a portrait painter in Annapolis and Baltimore. Peale’s reputation spread
quickly, and in 1772 he was summoned to Mount Vernon to paint the first portrait of George Washington, the only likeness that predates the Revolution. Peale painted fourteen portraits of Washington from life, the last in the autumn of 1795.

The first authentic portrait of Washington known abroad was a miniature that Peale painted for Lafayette in 1778. From this miniature stemmed the fine French engraving by Noël Le Mire. Le Mire’s engraving then inspired American, English and other French engravers, looking less like Le Mire’s first one and even less like the original Peale miniature.

_George Washington_

_R. Josey, after Charles Willson Peale_

_Mezzotint, published by Joseph F. Sabin_

_New York, 1897_

Fraunces Tavern® Museum Collection, 1984.12.055
Gift of Stanley DeForest Scott

_Georges Washington, Eqr., Général en Chef de l’Armée Anglo-Américaine, nommé Dictateur par le Congres en Fevrier 1777_

_Le Beau, after Charles Willson Peale, published by Esnauts and Rapilley_

_Line Engraving_

_Paris, 1777_

Fraunces Tavern® Museum Collection, 1984.12.003
Gift of Stanley DeForest Scott

_George Washington, Commendant en Chef des Armées Américains_

_Augustin de Saint Aubin, after Charles Willson Peale,_

_Line Engraving_

_Paris, Late Eighteenth-Century_

Fraunces Tavern® Museum Collection, 1984.12.006
Gift of Stanley DeForest Scott

_George Washington_

_Unknown Artist, after Charles Willson Peale_

_Etching with Hand Coloring_

_London, Late Eighteenth-Century_
Gilbert Stuart (1755-1828)

Stuart was born on December 3, 1755 in Narragansett, Rhode Island. He is often referred to as the “Father of American Portraiture”. He spent much of his early life abroad in England and Ireland where he studied art and painted portraits. In 1793, Stuart returned to America with the latest artistic techniques from Europe. Throughout his career, he painted over one thousand portraits. Younger artists such as John Trumbull, Rembrandt Peale, and Stuart’s own children—Charles and Jane, looked to him as a role model.

Stuart completed three life and over one hundred other portraits of George Washington throughout his career. His first life portrait, completed in early 1795, was admired so much by Martha Washington that she commissioned another. In the following year, Washington posed for the full-length Lansdowne portrait and the famous Athenaeum head which is now the image on the one dollar bill.

G. Washington
Unknown Artist, after Gilbert Stuart, published at Rawle’s Republican Store
Line Engraving
Philadelphia, 1799

Giorgio Washington
Giovanni Antonio Sasso, after G.B. Bosio, after Gilbert Stuart
Stipple Engraving with Hand Coloring
Italy, 1810-1816