

## THE LIFE OF WASHINGTON IRVING.

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WASHINGTON IRVING first saw the light on April 3, 1783. His birthplace was a house on William Street, midway between Fulton and John Streets, in the city of New York. He was the eighth son and the youngest of the eleven children of William and Sarah Sanders Irving. He was baptized by a Presbyterian minister in the chapel of St. George, in Beekman Street, soon after General Washington and his army had entered the city. "Washington's work is ended," said Mrs. Irving, "and the child shall be named after him."

Washington himself gave the infant his blessing; for when the seat of the new government was established in New York the first President happened to step into a shop, and a Scotch servant-maid of the family saw him and followed him in, saying, "Please, your honor, here is a bairn was named after you." And the grave and stately Washington is said to have placed his hands on the head of his future biographer with a paternal benediction.

Washington Irving's father was a Scotchman, descended from William De Irwyn, the secretary and armor-bearer of Robert Bruce. He was a man of high character, a strict Presbyterian, stern and sedate, in spite of his early adventures at sea. During the French war, while serving in an armed packet plying between Falmouth and New York, he