



## George Washington Carver

George was born to an enslaved woman living with the Carver family in Missouri. He and his mother were kidnapped by night riders. Night riders stole enslaved people and resold them. Mr. Carver tried to find them. Baby George was recovered, but his mother was never found.

The Carvers raised George and his brother Jim like sons.

Jim was strong and able to do outside labor on the farm. George was small and weak. He helped Mrs. Carver with household chores. He learned to knit, cook, clean, and he learned to read.

George was very curious. He learned everything he could and was especially fond of plants. He learned how to care for plants and he helped the neighbors with their sick plants.

When George was ten years old he left home to go to a nearby town where black children went to school. For many years he worked to support himself while he went to school part time.

Finally after many years and many disappointments he got into college. Because he was a talented artist, he studied art. Later he switched to agriculture because he felt God had a special purpose for his life and he wanted to help "his people." He spent years studying plants and soil. Booker T. Washington asked him to come head up a small, impoverished college in Tuskegee Alabama.

The farmers in the South had grown cotton for many years. This had stripped the soil of important nutrients. The Southern farmers were getting poorer every year. George Washington Carver began to teach the farmers and the agriculture students how to rotate crops and let the soil rest.

George was interested in helping the poorest of the poor farmers. He taught them how to grow vegetable gardens and gave them seeds. He also gave them flower seeds to feed their souls. He encouraged the farmers to plant peanuts, a plant that feeds the soil. Many farmers followed his advice. Unfortunately there was no big market for peanuts.

George locked himself up in "God's Little Workshop" (that is what he called his laboratory). He asked God to tell him why he had created the peanut. George took the peanut apart: water, fats,