



George Washington

250th Birthday Anniversary

George Washington

1732 - 1799

By J. Richard Gaintner

Introductory Notes

As part of the celebration of the 250th anniversary of the birth of George Washington, the writer is pleased to present *A Story of George Washington in Postage Stamps, Envelopes, Postcards and Postmarks*. This story and the stamp collection was prepared fifty years ago in commemoration of the 200th anniversary celebration that took place in 1932.

This is a different historical view of George Washington as the most celebrated hero in American history. He is the first historical figure that children learn about in school. We all know the story of the cherry tree and how he could not tell a lie. His face is familiar to all of us on paintings, statues, currency and postage stamps. It is this latter category that I wrote about a half century ago. It was assembled in book form and although we cannot illustrate all of the stamped envelopes, we are showing the important ones as well as the full story.

Collecting Stamps
An Interesting Hobby

Like a library of books containing classics, histories, biographies, fiction, etc., so in stamps we find a variety of subjects. Stamps of nations, picture stamps, pre-cancels, post marks, first-day covers – all considered specialized collections.

“Lives of great men, thus remind us” so says the poet, Longfellow. During the term of Calvin Coolidge, the thirty-first president of the United States, a proclamation was issued that from February twenty-second until November twenty-fifth, nineteen hundred and thirty two, a celebration should take place in the United States commemorating the two hundredth anniversary of the birth of one of the greatest men that ever lived – George Washington – the first president of the United States.

There have been more stamps issued by the United States Government with the head of George Washington or a picture of some event in connection with him than any other person in the world, except possibly King George of England, whose head is not only on stamps of Great Britain but all of its colonies. And too, each state in the Union has some share in claiming honor and respect to our first president. Sentiment plays a part – the birthday of the owner of this collection is also on February twenty-second.

This collection of stamps, envelopes, and post cards was arranged in January, 1932. Each envelope or card was inserted in another envelope addressed to sixty-eight towns and cities, accompanied by a letter requesting that the contents be mailed back to the sender on George Washington’s birthday. Every one of the sixty-eight Postmasters complied and every card and envelope was returned to Lancaster. All were received in excellent condition. Every one is postmarked FEBRUARY 22, 1932, two hundred years after the birth of the famous statesman. The majority were beautifully postmarked, the earliest hour recorded being 1:00 A.M. and the latest hour 8:00 P.M.*

The historical data contained herein is authentic and was obtained from publications issued by the United States George Washington Bicentennial Commission.

Bicentennial 1932
Commemorative Issue

In commemoration of the 200th Anniversary of the birth of George Washington, the Government issued a special group of postage stamps early in 1932.

* Postage 50 years ago was only 2 cents



J. Richard Gaintner
 560 West Orange St.
 Lancaster, Penna.

Plate 1

There were twelve denominations ranging from one-half cent to ten cents. The entire group is shown on the two-cent Mount Vernon envelope on Plate 1. There are many paintings, etchings, and statues of George Washington. The Post Office Department chose the twelve most famous and reproduced them on the stamps. The following are the values and the artists' names.

- One-half Cent – John Singleton Copley
- One Cent – Jeane Antoine Houdon
- One-and-one-half Cent – Charles Wilson Peale
- Two Cent – Gilbert Stuart
- Three Cent – Charles Wilson Peale
- Four Cent – Charles Wilson Peale
- Five Cent – Charles Wilson Peale
- Six Cent – John Trumbull
- Seven Cent – John Trumbull
- Eight Cent – Charles Saint-Memin
- Nine Cent – William Williams
- Ten Cent – Gilbert Stuart

The Towns of Washington

*T*wenty-eight towns in the United States honored the name of George Washington. The greatest of them all is

WASHINGTON – DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

The capital of the United States. The Cornerstone of the capital building was laid in 1793 and built in the Renaissance style. Extensive additions have been made to both wings since 1850. The material used was handsome marble, the original building being of sandstone. In front stands Greenough's famous colossal statue of General Washington. In the Mall, a public park on the banks of the Potomac, stands the Washington Monument, erected by the American people. The cornerstone of this Monument was laid by President Polk, July 4,

1848, and thirty-six years later it was completed. It is a shaft 555 feet high and is considered the tallest monument in the world – a fitting tribute to a worthy man.

The other twenty-seven towns with the name of WASHINGTON are shown on Plates 2, 3, 4 and 5.

1. WASHINGTON, ARKANSAS

The first stamp, #220, is of the 1890 issue. The second stamp, #248, is of the 1894 issue and differs only with triangles in the upper corners and the shade.

2. WASHINGTON, CALIFORNIA

Two picture stamps. #301 is of the 1902-03 issue. #319, also of the latter year, has a shield-shaped background.

3. WASHINGTON, CONNECTICUT

Imperforated stamps. The three stamps are of the 1908-09 issue. #344 has the words "two cents", while #408 and #409 have numerals in the corners.

4. WASHINGTON, GEORGIA

The first city in the United States named in honor of George Washington. Coil stamps, perforated horizontally. #486, #487, and #489 are of the 1902 issue.

5. WASHINGTON, ILLINOIS

Coil stamps with perforations vertically. #490, #491, and #493 are of the 1902 issue.

6. WASHINGTON, INDIANA

Coil stamps with perforations vertically. #495 and #496 are a continuation of the set on envelope #5.

7. WASHINGTON, IOWA

This and envelopes #8 and #9 have a complete issue of Washington heads, all of the same design. The three stamps on this envelope are #498, #499, and #501.

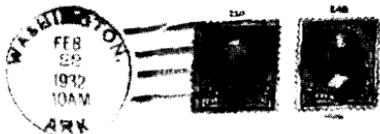
8. WASHINGTON, KANSAS

#503 and #504 are the stamps on this envelope and are of the 1917-19 issue, along with the three-stamps on the preceding envelope and the two stamps on the following envelope.

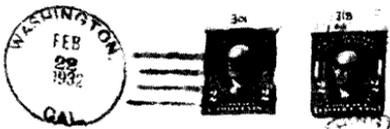
9. WASHINGTON, KENTUCKY

Completing the set of seven stamps are #506 and #507. They were the

1



2



3



4



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Plate 2

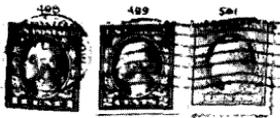
5



6



7



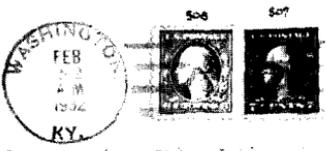
8



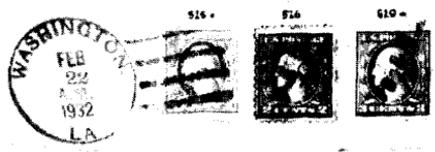
J. Richard Gaintner
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Plate 3

9



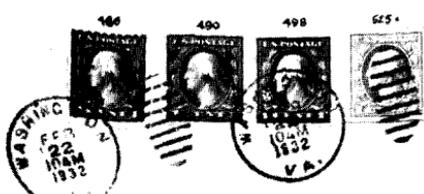
10



11



12



J. Richard Gaintner
560 West Orange St.

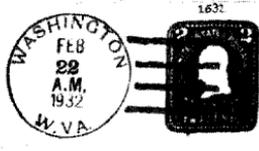
13



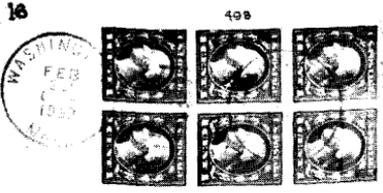
14



15



16



J. Richard Gaintner
560 West Orange St.

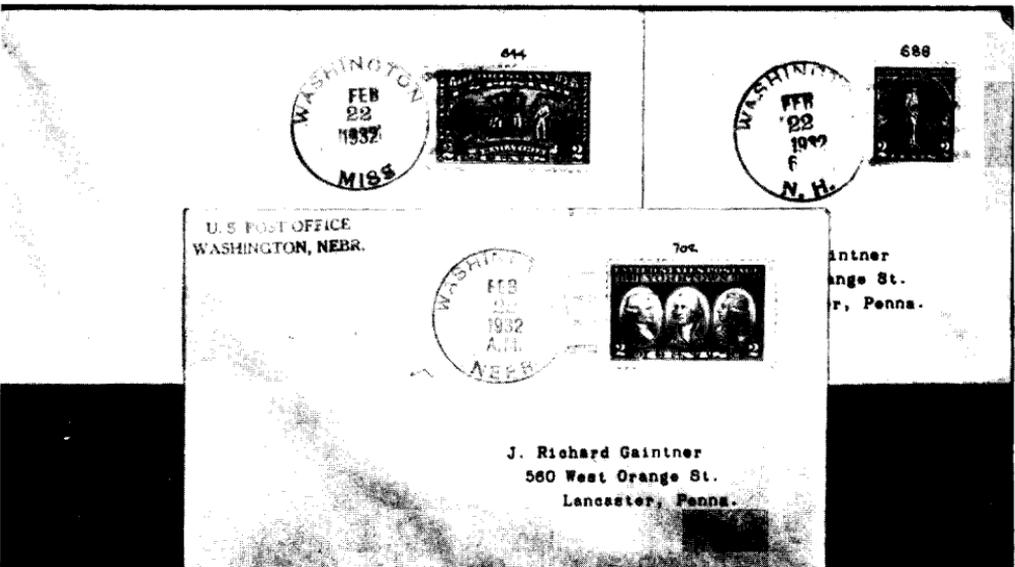


J. Richard Gaintner
560 West Orange St.

J. Richard Gaintner
560 West Orange St.
Lancaster, Penna.

Plate 4 ▲

▼ Plate 5



U.S. POST OFFICE
WASHINGTON, NEBR.

J. Richard Gaintner
560 West Orange St.
Lancaster, Penna.

J. Richard Gaintner
560 West Orange St.
Lancaster, Penna.

185th Anniversary issue.

10. WASHINGTON, LOUISIANA

Issue of 1918-20, known as "offset" printing. Note the grey-green of #525c, dull carmine of #526, and light violet of #529c.

11. WASHINGTON, MASSACHUSETTS

A pair of imperforated two-cent stamps of the 1922-23 issue. Connecting stamps like these are considered more valuable than single stamps.

12. WASHINGTON, VIRGINIA

Four different one-cent stamps. #486 coil stamp perforated horizontally. #490 coil stamp perforated vertically. #498 flat-plate printing perforated 11. #525c offset printing.

13. WASHINGTON, MICHIGAN

Two-cent coil stamps. #599 perforated vertically. #606 perforated horizontally. Both are of the 1922-23 issue.

14. WASHINGTON, MISSOURI

#646, surcharged "Molly Pitcher", and #647, surcharged "Hawaii 1778-1928". Both are commemorative stamps.

15. WASHINGTON, WEST VIRGINIA

An envelope stamp. Printed on blue paper, #2632 is of the 1904 issue. Eight other envelope stamps are shown on plate 4.

16. WASHINGTON, MAINE

A pane of stamps from a booklet. Issue of 1917-19.

17. WASHINGTON, NEW JERSEY — Issue of 1899

18. WASHINGTON, OKLAHOMA — Issue of 1907-10

19. WASHINGTON, RHODE ISLAND — Issue of 1925

20. WASHINGTON, UTAH — Issue of 1916-21

21. WASHINGTON, NORTH CAROLINA — Issue of 1887-95

22. WASHINGTON, PENNSYLVANIA — Issue of 1904

23. WASHINGTON, TEXAS — Issue of 1916-21

24. WASHINGTON, VERMONT — Issue of 1916-21

25. WASHINGTON, MISSISSIPPI

This stamp, #644, issued in 1927, commemorates the surrender of General Burgoyne in 1777.

26. WASHINGTON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

This stamp, #688, commemorates the Battle of Braddock's Field and shows George Washington as a colonel. It was the 175th Anniversary stamp issued in 1930.

27. WASHINGTON, NEBRASKA

This stamp, #702, commemorates the surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown in 1781. On the stamp are pictured Rochambeau, Washington, and De Grasse. It was issued in 1931 on the 150th Anniversary.

The Sixteen Homes of George Washington Plates 6 and 7

1. WAKEFIELD, VIRGINIA

Then known as "Popes Creek" or "Bridges Creek." George Washington was born on February 22, 1732 and spent his first six years here. The stamps are a block of one-half cent value of the 1932 commemorative issue.

2. FREDERICKSBURG, VIRGINIA

From 1738 to 1753 spent at the Homestead on the Rappahannock River just across from this town. This is known as his boyhood home. The nine-cent stamp shows a portrait, the original of which hangs in the Masonic Hall in Fredericksburg where his Masonic affiliations started.

3. WILLIAMSBURG, VIRGINIA

Here is where he met Martha Danbridge Custis. They were married January 6, 1759 and lived in this town until 1761. The stamps are the four-cent and two-cent issue of 1922-23.

4. ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA

Next to their home in Mount Vernon, this little home at Pitt and Cameron Streets was the dearest to them. They lived here from 1761 to 1774. The stamps are of the one-cent denomination of the Bicentennial issue.

5. CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

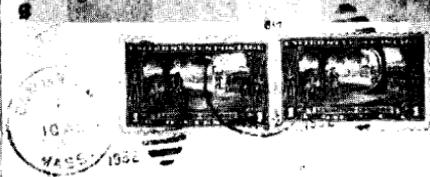
Took command of the Continental Army on July 3, 1775 and remained here until April 4, 1776. The stamps are the one-cent commemorative issue of 1925 – the 150th Anniversary – showing Washington reviewing his troops.

6. NEW YORK, NEW YORK

His headquarters were on Pearl Street for the last eight months of 1776.



WAKEFIELD
FEB 22
1932
A.M.
VA



2

BRIDGES ST
FEB 22
4 AM
VA



6

BRIDGE ST
FEB 22
1932



3

BILLINGSBURY
FEB 22
10 AM
1932



7

PHILADELPHIA
FEB 22
1 AM
1932



4

ALEXANDRIA
FEB 22
10 AM
VA



8

WICKES
FEB 22
1130AM
N.J.



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560 West Orange St.
Lancaster, Penna.

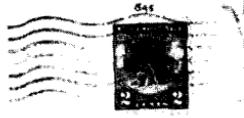
J. Richard Gaintner
560 West Orange St.
Lancaster, Penna.

Plate 6 ▲

▼ Plate 7

9

VALLEY Forge
FEB 22
1932



13

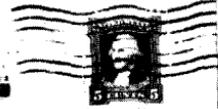
FEB 22
1932



10

NEW WINDSOR

NEWBURGH
FEB 22
6:30AM
1932



14

FEB 22
7 AM
BRIDGE



11

NEWBURGH
FEB 22
6:30AM
1932



15

PHILADELPHIA
FEB 22
1 AM
PA.

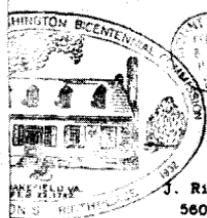


12

PRINCETON
FEB 22
10AM
N.J.



16



J. Richard Gaintner
560 West Orange St.
Lancaster, Penna.

J. Richard Gaintner
560 West Orange St.
Lancaster, Penna.

The stamps are the two-cent value, showing the official portrait of the Bicentennial Commemoration.

7. PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA

Although the General did not reside here during the war, Mrs. Washington made it her home from April, 1776 to March, 1777. The stamp is the three-cent denomination of the 200th Anniversary issue.

8. MORRISTOWN, NEW JERSEY

In the winter and spring of 1776 and later in 1779, General Washington made his headquarters here, occupying the Arnold Tavern. The stamp is the four-cent value of the Commemorative issue.

9. VALLEY FORGE, PENNSYLVANIA

The dreadful winter of 1777-78 was spent here and was the most gruesome period of his entire life. The stamp is the 150th Anniversary commemorative issue and shows the General praying to God to come to the aid of the American Army.

10. NEW WINDSOR, NEW YORK

(No post office here. Postmarked Newburgh — 2½ miles distant.) His headquarters in 1780 and '82 were situated upon the high bluffs of the Hudson. The stamp is the Bicentennial five-cent value.

11. NEWBURGH, NEW YORK

Lived here in 1783 in a plain Dutch house where he made his headquarters during the latter part of the war. The stamp is the commemorative six-cent denomination.

12. PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY

His headquarters were at Rocky Hill. This was his last home during his military career. The stamp is the seven-cent value of the 200th Anniversary issue.

13. BERKLEY SPRINGS, WEST VIRGINIA

Then called, "The Town of Bath". Historically known as "Warm Springs" and "Frederick Springs". It was their summer residence after the war, about 1784. The stamps are the one and a half-cent value of the Bicentennial issue.

14. NEW YORK, NEW YORK

For the second time he made his home here, but this time as "The First President of the United States". In 1785 he lived at Franklin Square and in 1790 at 39 Broadway. The eight-cent stamp is postmarked at the Washington Bridge

Station where the world's longest suspension bridge has been completed and named in his honor.

15. PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA

The capital from 1791 where the Washingtons lived until the third of March, 1797, which ended his two terms as President. The stamp is the highest value of the Bicentennial Commemorative issue.

16. MOUNT VERNON, VIRGINIA

Of the sixteen important homes his one real home was on the banks of the Potomac just a dozen miles from the Capital of the United States. It was named Mount Vernon in 1743 by Lawrence Washington, an elder half brother of George and, like him, a great-grandson of the original owner, John Washington, who secured a land grant of 5000 acres in 1674 and called it Washington Plantation. Here George Washington spent a good part of his time between his migratory abiding places and after serving two terms as the First President of the United States remained here until his death on the fourteenth of December, 1799.

The most beloved home in the world is kept in excellent condition by the Government. A replica of Mount Vernon was reproduced at an exposition held in France during 1932 and was the United States' contribution celebrating the 200th Anniversary of a man the whole world honors.

The two-cent stamp is printed and embossed on the envelope. It was the only denomination available to have the 200th Anniversary post mark stamped upon it. Other denominations of 1¢, 1½¢, 3¢, 4¢ and 5¢ were issued later in 1932.

*Mount Vernon Honored by
Sixteen Other Towns in the U. S.
(Not Illustrated)*

1. MOUNT VERNON, ALABAMA
2. MOUNT VERNON, ARKANSAS
3. MOUNT VERNON, GEORGIA
4. MOUNT VERNON, INDIANA
5. MOUNT VERNON, ILLINOIS
6. MOUNT VERNON, IOWA
7. MOUNT VERNON, KENTUCKY
8. MOUNT VERNON, MAINE
9. MOUNT VERNON, WASHINGTON

10. MOUNT VERNON, OHIO
11. MOUNT VERNON, OREGON
12. MOUNT VERNON, MISSOURI
13. MOUNT VERNON, NEW YORK
14. MOUNT VERNON, SOUTH DAKOTA
15. MOUNT VERNON, TENNESSEE
16. MOUNT VERNON, TEXAS

"Mr. and Mrs."

Four towns in the United States honored "The Father of Our Country" while four other towns honored "The Very First Lady of the Land" by using their first names as names of their towns.

- | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| 9. GEORGE, ARKANSAS | 13. MARTHA, KENTUCKY |
| 10. GEORGE, IOWA | 14. MARTHA, NEBRASKA |
| 11. GEORGE, NORTH CAROLINA | 15. MARTHA, OKLAHOMA |
| 12. GEORGE, TEXAS | 16. MARTHA, TENNESSEE |

Plate 8 ▼



The post marks are shown on Plate 8. There are three sets of post cards called "reply" cards. #9 and #13, for example, were fastened together. The sender would state his purpose on the reverse side of card #9 while the person replying would give his answer on the reverse side of card #13. However, they were separated for purpose of obtaining February 22, 1932 post mark cancellations on both GEORGE and MARTHA stamps.

Three Additional Stamps And a Coin



Envelopes #10 and #11 in the "Homes of George Washington," Plate 7, show post marks of Newburgh, New York, where the General made his headquarters from 1780 to 1783. Although the location of the first headquarters at New Windsor was satisfactory, he found he was able to control Army maneuvers to better advantage about 2½ miles down the river. Newburgh, therefore, has become more historically known, and in 1933 a stamp was issued celebrating the 150th Anniversary.

Poland contributed to the glorious celebration in 1932 by issuing a commemorative stamp. Pictured on the 200th Anniversary issue with General Washington are Count Kosciuszko and General Count Pulaski.

The year of 1932 was not alone a celebration of an Anniversary, but it was the depth of a "depression". Prices went up – wages went down. Postage increased to three cents on first-class letters. The Government issued a three-cent stamp similar to the Bicentennial two-cent stamp, although it is not considered in the commemorative series.

Although stamps represent the theme in this story, a coin finds its place in this book. The Houdon bust was the Government's choice for this commemorative twenty-five cent piece. □

