

## The Hoover Memorial Stamp

The fourth and most recent First Day of Issue cover associated with Iowa was the Hoover Commemorative Stamp. Issued at West Branch on August 10, 1965, the Hoover Memorial Stamp was a tribute to the only Iowa-born man who rose to the exalted position of President of the United States.

Many of those who gathered at West Branch, on August 10, 1965, were present, or at least could recall from radio or television, that warm October day when Hoover was brought to his final resting place following his death on October 20, 1964. President Hoover paid his last visit to West Branch on the occasion of his 88th birthday on August 10, 1962. At that time, he called for America to organize a "Council of Free Nations" to work for peace when the United Nations failed to act or was "prevented from taking action" to preserve world peace.

Today, the menace of Communism has become worldwide.

The time is here when, if the free nations are to survive, they must have a new and stronger world wide organization. For purposes of this discussion I may call it the "Council of Free Nations." It should include only those



who are willing to stand up and fight for their freedom.

It was against this background that former Vice President Richard M. Nixon delivered the principal address on "American Foreign Policy" on August 10, 1965. Present for the occasion was ex-President Dwight D. Eisenhower, who did not make a speech but did read a greeting from President Lyndon B. Johnson.

On hand for the occasion, too, were the sons of President Hoover — Herbert Hoover, Jr. and Allen Hoover. A 52-piece military band from the Strategic Air Command at Omaha had been flown in to provide music for the occasion.

Among those who attended the program developed around the issuance of the First Day of Issue cover were United States Senator Jack Miller, Representative John Schmidhauser and former Congressmen Fred Schwengel of the First District, and James Bromwell of the Second District. Richard J. Murphy, Assistant Postmaster General, Bureau of Personnel, attended with other prominent postal officials. Donald Johnson, National Commander of the American Legion and himself a resident of West Branch, served as Master of Ceremonies.

To care for the crowd of upwards of 15,000 that was present at West Branch for the occasion, the Heritage Foundation had set up three outdoor concession stands where 5,000 ham sandwiches, 1,000 hot dogs, and nearly 1,500 gallons of soda



pop were on sale. In addition, both the Methodist and Lutheran churches had prepared food for fully 1,000 people. Every effort was made to see that visitors and the 8,000 stamp collectors would not go away hungry.

The big event at West Branch on August 10 was the issuance of the First Day of Issue cover. The philatelic world had been alerted well in advance and the big commercial dealers were on hand, or had hired processors, to service customers ranging from perhaps 25,000 to 50,000. Their orders for the Hoover Stamp had been in the West Branch Post Office for days awaiting the arrival of the Hoover Commemorative Stamp. As soon as the stamps arrived, each order had been specially packed so that no delay would be occasioned for quantity commercial purchasers when they arrived with their checks at 7 a.m. on Tuesday, August 10.

Meanwhile, for almost a month Postmaster Murray Gibson had been checking in the thousands of requests for First Day of Issue covers that had been arriving at West Branch. Starting out with an extra crew of half a dozen, Gibson gradually increased his staff of four until he had a force of forty-five on hand to open letters containing coins or money orders with requests for stamped First Day of Issue covers ranging from one to two hundred. The stamps finally arrived on August 1 whereupon the actual servicing began.

As the orders soared toward a peak, Kenneth



Brooks and James Chapplear arrived from the Post Office Department in Washington to supervise the work. Both men were veterans of First Day of Issue events and did much to smooth out and make easy the Herculean task of processing covers which had reached a total of 450,000 a week before August 10 and which Postmaster Gibson confidently expected to reach 650,000 First Day Covers.

As a further assist to Postmaster Gibson, Leonard Pulinski arrived from Dearborn, Michigan, on Friday, August 6, prepared to use a special canceling machine, and with another on reserve should the first one break down. Soon Pulinski had his machine running through First Day of Issue covers at the rate of 20,000 per hour. Finally, Joe Podzimek of the Cedar Rapids Post Office was sent to West Branch to expedite distribution and dispatch of the mail.

While 600 attended the special luncheon and thousands gathered to hear Richard M. Nixon deliver his address, other thousands swamped the West Branch Post Office for stamps and purchased First Day of Issue covers from stands located on all downtown streets which had been roped off for the day. The Des Moines Stamp Club, the Cedar Rapids Stamp Club, and the West Branch Heritage Foundation were chief among those who offered their own cacheted covers for sale. An estimated 8,000 stamp collectors



were on hand to enjoy the fun of participating in this Philatelic Holiday and brush shoulders with fellow collectors.

Meanwhile, the commercial dealers had purchased their stamps early Tuesday morning and had set up quarters at the Jefferson Hotel and other places in the vicinity of Iowa City where they had their own force employed to prepare their First Day of Issue covers. One processor alone had the responsibility of preparing 150,000 covers for cancellation, a good illustration of the magnitude of the venture by 1965.

The First Day of Issue sale at West Branch was augmented by large purchases from various institutions. The State Historical Society of Iowa processed 10,000 cacheted Hoover Memorial covers using its own corporate seal dating back to 1857 as a part of its special cacheted envelope. Penn College at Oskaloosa sent out over 9,000 cacheted First Day of Issue covers to its alumni. The West Branch State Bank sent out a locally printed Hoover Memorial cover to 2,500 depositors. Smaller quantities were sent out by various individuals and groups. Where the number exceeded 200, however, it was necessary to purchase stamps, affix them to their covers, and either mail them out or allow stamped envelopes to be run through the cancelling machine and turned back to the purchaser.

The variety of covers cancelled at West Branch



is ample proof of the popularity of Herbert Hoover. The total number mailed, which approaches the 700,000 figure, proves that Iowans, as well as Americans, have become avid First Day of Issue collectors. The more than two hundred members of the State Historical Society of Iowa who have written enthusiastic letters of thanks for their Hoover Memorial covers will be interested to know that their letters will form part of a specially bound book to be deposited in the Hoover Presidential Library where they will be consulted by scholars for generations to come.

Herbert Hoover is the 208th person to be honored with a Commemorative stamp, the highest tribute one can receive from the United States. The sale of almost 1,000,000 stamps on August 10 is eloquent proof of the affection held for Hoover.

WILLIAM J. PETERSEN

#### CONTEMPORARY COMMEMORATIVE STAMPS

<i>Name</i>	<i>Place</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>First Day Covers</i>
Roosevelt 1¢	Hyde Park, N.Y.	7-26-1945	390,219
Roosevelt 2¢	Warm Springs, Ga.	8-24-1945	426,142
Roosevelt 3¢	Washington, D.C.	6-27-1945	391,650
Roosevelt 5¢	Washington, D.C.	1-30-1946	466,766
Robert A. Taft 4¢	Cincinnati, Ohio	10-10-1960	758,187
Walter F. George 4¢	Vienna, Ga.	11-5-1960	218,890
John Foster Dulles 4¢	Washington, D.C.	12-6-1960	400,055
George W. Norris 4¢	Washington, D.C.	7-11-1961	482,875
Charles Evans Hughes 4¢	Washington, D.C.	4-11-1962	544,424
Sam Rayburn 4¢	Bonham, Texas	9-16-1962	401,042
Cordell Hull 5¢	Carthage, Tenn.	10-5-1963	391,631
Eleanor Roosevelt 5¢	Washington, D.C.	10-11-1963	860,155
John F. Kennedy 5¢	Boston, Mass.	5-29-1964	2,003,096
Herbert Hoover 5¢	West Branch, Iowa	8-10-1965	699,000



## STATEHOOD COMMEMORATIVE STAMPS

<i>Name</i>	<i>Anniver- sary</i>	<i>Place</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>First Day Covers</i>
Idaho	50	Boise	7-3-1940	156,429
Wyoming	50	Cheyenne	7-10-1940	156,709
Vermont	150	Montpelier	3-4-1941	182,423
Kentucky	150	Frankfort	6-1-1942	155,730
Florida	100	Tallahassee	3-3-1945	228,435
Texas	100	Austin	12-29-1945	397,866
Tennessee	150	Nashville	6-1-1946	463,512
Iowa	100	Iowa City	8-3-1946	517,505
Wisconsin	100	Madison	5-29-1948	470,280
California	100	Sacramento	9-9-1950	391,919
Colorado	75	Minturn	8-1-1951	311,568
Ohio	150	Chillicothe	8-2-1953	407,983
Oklahoma	50	Oklahoma City	6-14-1957	327,172
Minnesota	100	St. Paul	5-11-1958	475,552
Oregon	100	Astoria	2-14-1959	452,764
Kansas	100	Council Grove	5-10-1961	480,561
New Mexico	50	Santa Fe	1-6-1962	365,330
Arizona	50	Phoenix	2-14-1962	508,216
Louisiana	150	New Orleans	4-30-1962	436,681
West Virginia	100	Wheeling	6-20-1963	413,389
Nevada	100	Carson City	7-22-1964	584,973