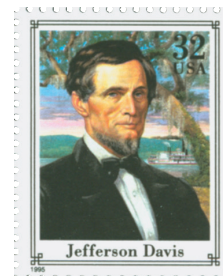


This Day in History... June 3, 1808

Birth of Jefferson Davis

Jefferson Davis was born on June 3, 1808, in Fairview, Kentucky, though he grew up in Wilkinson County, deep in Mississippi's cotton country.

Davis entered West Point in 1824. Two years later, he was placed under house arrest for his involvement in the "Eggnog Riot." Following graduation, he served under Zachary Taylor and became smitten with Taylor's daughter, Sarah. Taylor was against the courtship and didn't attend their wedding. His animosity grew three months later when the young couple contracted malaria while visiting Davis's sister in Louisiana. Jefferson survived; Sarah did not.



Davis Stamp from the 1995 Civil War Sheet



The first stamp issued on US soil to picture a living president!

Stricken with grief, Davis retreated to a 800-acre plot his brother Joseph had given him. The land had previously been part of Joseph's substantial Hurricane Plantation. Jefferson's plot was named Brierfield Plantation and a manor was built in 1847. With his brother's financial assistance, the plantation grew to 1,700 acres with over 300 enslaved people by the time the Civil War began.

During this period, Davis became involved in politics, serving as a delegate to the Democratic state convention and campaigning for James K. Polk. He also remarried, taking Varina Howell as his bride in 1845. The couple would have six children, although only one lived to marry and raise a family.



Printed from the same stones as the first CSA stamp above.

Davis raised a volunteer regiment at the outbreak of the Mexican-American War and served as its colonel under commanding General Zachary Taylor. His troops participated in the siege of Monterrey and the Battle of Buena Vista, where he was shot in the leg. Learning of Davis's bravery, Taylor is alleged to have said, "My daughter, sir, was a better judge of men than I was."



Printed in England, stamps were brought to the CSA by blockade runners.

Davis was appointed to temporarily fill a vacant Mississippi Senate seat in 1847, and was later elected to it. The Smithsonian Institution also appointed him a regent during this time. Each of these honors stemmed largely from Davis's distinguished military service.

As a senator, Davis introduced several amendments to the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, which sought unsuccessfully to annex northwestern Mexico. He also declared Cuba "must be ours" to "increase the number of slaveholding constituencies. Opposed to the Compromise of 1850, Davis resigned to run for the governorship of Mississippi, but lost the election.



This stamp was often used in pairs to pay the 10¢ letter rate.

Left without a political office, Davis took part in a pro-slavery convention and campaigned throughout the South for presidential candidate Franklin Pierce. He was rewarded with an appointment to serve as US secretary of War following Pierce's election. Davis pushed for the Gadsden Purchase of

This Day in History... June 3, 1808 continued

today's southern Arizona from Mexico, increased the Army from 11,000 to 15,000 troops, and modernized its weaponry. He also oversaw the building of the Capitol Dome. When Pierce lost his bid for re-election in 1857, Davis resumed his own career in the Senate.

On July 4, 1858, Davis delivered an anti-secessionist speech near Boston – a platform he would repeat in October. As he explained after the Civil War, Davis felt each state was sovereign and had the right to secede. But he didn't believe the North would allow a peaceful separation and urged the South to delay secession for that reason. Davis also knew the South lacked the military and naval resources that the North could field. Lincoln's election and the rapid declarations of secession sealed Davis's fate, and he delivered a farewell address to the US Senate on January 21, 1861. He would call that day the saddest in his life.



Some argued Davis looked too much like Lincoln on this stamp.



This stamp has the denomination in numerals, rather than spelled out, to make it easier for postal clerks.

Davis told the governor of Mississippi he would do whatever the state required of him. On January 23, he was made major general of the Army of Mississippi. Then in early February, the Confederacy held a constitutional convention, which selected Davis as its new president. Davis received the news via telegraph and according to his wife, "looked so grieved that I feared something had befallen our family. He told me (of his appointment) as a man might speak a sentence of death." Davis was inaugurated on February 18 in front of 5,000 people cheering with zeal. Looking out over them, Davis recalled, "I saw smiling faces, but beyond them I saw troubles and thorns innumerable."

Davis had been a staunch defender of slavery in the years building up to the Civil War, but preferred to avoid both secession and war. He spent the first six weeks of his presidency trying to negotiate with Northern officials until talks broke down over Fort Sumter. When they did, Davis gave the order to fire on the federal fort.

Early on, Davis displayed the characteristics that doomed his leadership, the largest being his reluctance to delegate authority and a dependence on old cronies. Flawed military strategy and insensitivity to the suffering of his followers also hampered Davis's administration.



This stamp is similar to CSA10 but the frame lines were removed.



This stamp was printed by two different firms between 1863 and 1864.

Captured on May 10, 1865, Davis spent two years in prison before being released on a bond of \$100,000, which was raised by a group of prominent citizens including Horace Greeley, Cornelius Vanderbilt, and abolitionist Gerrit Smith. While he became a symbol of the Confederate "Lost Cause," Davis urged loyalty to the nation during Reconstruction. Following his death on December 6, 1889, Davis's funeral, which was one of the largest in the South, included a continuous procession from New Orleans to Richmond.

Davis had outlived the Confederacy, buried all four of his sons, and witnessed his daughter's engagement to a Yankee from New York. Yet he remained unapologetic to the end. "Were the thing to be done over again, I would do as I then did. Disappointments have not changed my conviction."



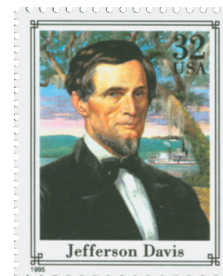
Stamp pictures Stone Mountain, which honors Robert E. Lee, Jefferson Davis, and Stonewall Jackson.

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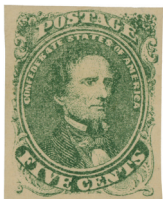
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