

NEWS RELEASE

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART
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SATURDAY, DECEMBER 10, 1955.

David E. Finley, Director of the National Gallery of Art, announced today that commemorative exercises will be held in the National Gallery at noon on December 20th, inaugurating the first day issue of the 3-cent stamp bearing the portrait of Andrew W. Mellon.

The stamp is being issued during the centennial year of the birth of Mr. Mellon. The ceremonies are being held in Washington in the auditorium of the National Gallery of Art, which was founded by Mr. Mellon.

Postmaster General Arthur E. Summerfield and United States Senator Edward Martin of Pennsylvania will be the principal speakers at the ceremonies which will begin promptly at noon and will last one-half hour. A response on behalf of the Mellon family will be made by Mr. Mellon's son, Paul Mellon.

The invocation will be delivered by Dr. Edward L. R. Elson, Pastor of the National Presbyterian Church, Washington, and the benediction will be pronounced by the Reverend Frederick Brown Harris, Chaplain of the United States Senate.

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Music will be provided by the National Gallery orchestra under the direction of Richard Bales.

The audience will include members of the President's Cabinet; Assistant Postmasters General; representatives of the Pennsylvania congressional delegation in the Senate and House of Representatives; international and domestic philatelic experts; and a number of Mr. Mellon's friends from Pittsburgh.

The stamp will be 0.85 by 0.98 of an inch in dimension, arranged vertically with a double outline frame, printed by the rotary process, electric-eye perforated and issued in sheets of 70. The stamp will be maroon in color. The central and dominating design of the stamp is a likeness of Mr. Mellon, reproduced from the portrait by Oswald Birley, which hangs in the Founder's Room in the National Gallery of Art.

The lettering "United States Postage" appears across the top of the stamp. Arranged in two lines just below the right center of the portrait is the lettering - "Andrew W. Mellon", and the denomination "3¢" is placed in the lower left-hand corner of the stamp. All lettering is in white-face Gothic.

Stamp collectors desiring first day cancellations of the 3-cent Andrew W. Mellon stamp may send a reasonable number of addressed envelopes to the Postmaster at Washington, D. C., with money order remittance to cover the cost of the stamps to be affixed. An enclosure of medium weight should be placed in each envelope and the flap either sealed or turned in. The outside envelope to the Postmaster should be endorsed "First Day Covers."

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MELLON BIOGRAPHY

Andrew W. Mellon was born in Pittsburgh, March 24, 1855, the son of Judge Thomas Mellon and Mrs. Sarah Negley Mellon. He received his education in the public schools of Pittsburgh, and attended the University of Pittsburgh, class of 1873. He was married September 12, 1900, to Miss Nora McMullen. They had two children, Mrs. Ailsa Mellon Bruce and Mr. Paul Mellon.

Mr. Mellon embarked on his career in the realty and lumber business with his brother, Richard B. Mellon, in Allegheny County, Pennsylvania. In 1874 he became associated with his father in the banking house of T. Mellon and Sons in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. In 1902 this institution became the Mellon National Bank, with Andrew W. Mellon as its first president.

Mr. Mellon organized and directed other banks and in the early 1890's organized or helped to organize various industrial and financial enterprises.

Mr. Mellon and his brother, Richard B. Mellon, founded the Mellon Institute of Industrial Research of Pittsburgh as a memorial to their father, Judge Thomas Mellon.

In 1921 Mr. Mellon became Secretary of the Treasury and continued in office until he resigned in 1932 to become Ambassador to Great Britain. Mr. Mellon was awarded honorary degrees by fourteen colleges and universities in the United States and two abroad. He died in 1937.

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Mr. Mellon gave the building for the National Gallery of Art, together with his famous collection of works of art, for the benefit of the American people. The National Gallery of Art was established by Joint Resolution of the Congress approved March 24, 1937. Mr. Mellon died in that same year

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shortly after the first excavations for the building had been made. The construction of the building was completed under the direction of his son, Paul Mellon, Donald D. Shepard, and David K. E. Bruce, Trustees of the A. W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust.

The National Gallery was opened on March 17, 1941. The collection consisted largely of paintings and sculpture by great masters from the thirteenth to the nineteenth century given by Mr. Mellon; also the large and important collection of Italian paintings and sculpture given by Mr. Samuel H. Kress; and a fine group of American paintings from the collection of Mr. Chester Dale. Subsequently, the Gallery received the gift of the Widener Collection with its Rembrandts, Vermeers, Bellinis, Van Dycks, etc. Mr. Chester Dale gave an important group of paintings by old masters, such as Rubens, El Greco, Boucher, etc., and sent from his home in New York his superb collection of paintings by nineteenth century artists such as Manet, Cezanne, Renoir, van Gogh, etc. The Gallery received a large and important collection of prints and drawings from Mr. Lessing Rosenwald, who has continued to add to his collection. Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Harmon Booth gave a group of paintings by such famous artists as Bellini, Boltraffio, Cranach, etc.

The collection of the National Gallery has more than doubled since 1941. Today in the scope and quality of its collections of paintings, sculpture and the graphic arts, the National Gallery ranks with the greatest art galleries in the world. More than 22,000,000 persons have visited the Gallery since it opened in 1941.