AMERICAN COMMEMORATIVE CANCELLATIONS

Issue Date
January 31, 2012

First Day City Chicago, IL

Existing Photograph by David McCann Bachrach Studios, Chicago, IL

Designer Howard E. Paine Delaplane, VA

Art Director Howard E. Paine

Typographer Howard E. Paine

Modeler Joseph Sheeran

Manufacturing Process Offset/Microprint "USPS"

Printer Ashton Potter (USA) Ltd. (APU) Engraver N/A

Colors Black, Cyan, Magenta, Yellow, Tan (PMS 728)

Image Area (w x h) 0.84 x 1.42 in. 21.34 x 36.07 mm

Format
Pane of 20 (1 design)

Plate Numbers
"P" followed by five
single digits

Marginal Markings
Header: "BLACK
HERITAGE" "35th
IN A SERIES,"
plate numbers,
© 2011 USPS, plate
position diagram,
USPS logo, barcodes,
descriptive text,
promotional text

John H. Johnson

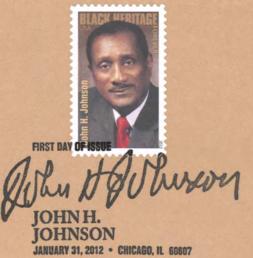
John H. Johnson (1918-2005) was the publisher of *Ebony, Jet*, and other magazines. In 1982, this trailblazing entrepreneur became the first African American listed by *Forbes* magazine as one of the 400 wealthiest people in America.

Ebony, the flagship publication of Johnson's publishing company, was a monthly general-interest magazine similar to *Life* and *Look*. At the time it was launched in 1945, black representation in the mainstream media was often negative. In its articles about current events and cultural issues, *Ebony* highlighted African-American success stories; its circulation rose into the millions. In 1985, Johnson said, "I hope future historians will say that we changed the negative image Black people had of themselves."

In 1946, the year after it was started, *Ebony* landed its first national advertising account (with Zenith). Selling advertising space to white-owned corporations and persuading them to use black models in their ads were major breakthroughs.

In addition to these successes, *Ebony* played a role in the civil rights movement. Johnson was a friend and supporter of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and provided coverage of protest marches and other events. Even during tension-filled times in the Deep South, photographers from *Ebony*—white or black, depending on the circumstances—were on the scene to capture the news.

Johnson, honored on this 35th stamp in the Black Heritage series, rose from poverty to command a business empire. In 1966, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) awarded him its prestigious Spingarn Medal. Six years later, in 1972, his industry peers named him publisher of the year—a prize Johnson compared to winning an Oscar. In presenting Johnson with the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1996, President Bill Clinton lauded him for giving hope to African Americans during difficult times. A panel of experts polled by Baylor University in 2003 named Johnson "the greatest minority entrepreneur in American history."



John H. Johnson







HE WAS BORN IN humble circumstances, but he ended up on *Forbes* magazine's list of the 400 wealthiest people in America — the first African American to be named there. John H. Johnson was born on January 19, 1918, in Arkansas City, Arkansas, a small town on the Mississippi River, where he attended a segregated elementary school. His father died in an accident when he was six years old. Then, in the Great Flood of 1927, the house he lived in with his mother floated away. They recovered with help from the Red Cross.

In Arkansas City, there were no high schools for African Americans. Johnson's mother saved money to be able to move in search of greater educational opportunities for her son. Despite being teased for his country ways and his feelings of humiliation about receiving public assistance, Johnson quickly distinguished himself in Chicago. He edited his high school paper and was president of his class, graduating in 1936.

Six years later, he launched Negro Digest. Its success inspired him to found another magazine, Ebony. It, too, was an immediate success; its circulation eventually rose into the millions. A monthly general-interest magazine, Ebony was similar to the popular Life and Look. When it was launched in 1945, black representation in the mainstream media was often negative. The recognition that African Americans were hungry for positive images of black life was critical to Johnson's success.

He began publishing Jet, a newsweekly, in 1951, and his empire continued to grow. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) awarded him its prestigious Spingarn Medal in 1966. Six years later, in 1972, his industry peers named him publisher of the year. President Bill Clinton presented Johnson with the Medal of Freedom in 1996. Subsequently, a panel of experts polled by Baylor University named him "the greatest minority entrepreneur in American history." Johnson died August 8, 2005.



Why Halburson

background: Courtesy Johnson Publishing Company, LLC. All rights reserved; top left: © Bettmann/Corbis; bottom left: Courtesy Johnson Publishing Company, LLC. All rights reserved; right: Jonathan Kirn/Getty Images; intaglio: Courtesy Johnson Publishing Company, LLC. All rights reserved.

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BLACK HERITAGE

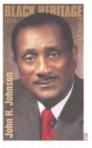
35th IN A SERIES

P11111



























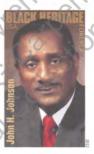














John H. Johnson (1918-2005)

From poverty to the pinnacle of American society, John H. Johnson's journey was extraordinary. He was born in Arkansas City, Arkansas, where schools were segregated and there were no high schools for black students. By the time of his death at age 87, he commanded a business empire encompassing magazines, cosmetics, radio stations, book publishing, and more. In 1982, he became the first black person to appear on Forbes magazine's annual list of the 400 wealthiest people in America.

Johnson was the trailblazing publisher of *Negro Digest*, *Ebony*, *Jet*, and other magazines that showcased African-American accomplishments at a time when such affirmation was rare in mainstream media. In 1946, the year after it was founded, Ebony landed its first national advertising account. Selling advertising space to white-owned corporations and persuading them to use black models in their ads were major breakthroughs.

In recognition of his achievements, Johnson received many prizes and honors, including the prestigious Spingarn Medal in 1966 and being named publisher of the year by his industry peers in 1972. President Clinton awarded him the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1996, and a panel of experts polled by Baylor University in 2003 named Johnson the greatest an hist minority entrepreneur in American history.









FIRST-DAY-OF-ISSUE CEREMONY ● JANUARY 31, 2012

Johnson Publishing Company Building Ochicago, IL

THE EMANCIPATION PROCLAMAT

MASTER OF CEREMONIES

Desiree Rogers, CEO

Johnson Publishing Company, LLC

NATIONAL ANTHEM

Columbia College Choir

INVOCATION

Reverend James T. Meeks

Salem Baptist Church of Chicago

WELCOME

Linda Johnson Rice, Chairman Johnson Publishing Company, LLC

REMARKS

Rahm Emanuel Mayor of Chicago

OFFICIAL DEDICATION

Ronald A. Stroman

Deputy Postmaster General United States Postal Service

REMARKS

Richard M. Daley

Former Mayor of Chicago

The Honorable Danny K. Davis 7th Congressional District of Illinois

MUSICAL TRIBUTE

Columbia College Choir

CLOSING Desiree Rogers



JOHN H. JOHNSON

n 2012, the Postal Service is pleased to honor John H. Johnson, the trailblazing publisher of *Ebony*, *Jet*, and other magazines. Johnson overcame poverty and racism to build a business empire embracing magazines, radio stations, cosmetics, and more. His magazines portrayed black people positively at a time when such representation was rare, and played an important role in the civil rights movement.

His unwillingness to accept defeat was a key to Johnson's success. When he was unable to buy a lot in downtown Chicago because of his skin color, he hired a white lawyer who bought the land in trust. Thus, Johnson became the first black person to build a major building in Chicago's Loop.

As Johnson's influence, accomplishments, and fortune grew, he received many prizes and honors. He joined Vice President Richard Nixon on a goodwill tour of Africa and served as a Special United States Ambassador for Presidents Kennedy and Johnson. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)

awarded him its prestigious Spingarn Medal in 1966. Six years later, in 1972, his industry peers named him publisher of the year—a prize Johnson compared to winning an Oscar. In presenting Johnson with the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1996, President Bill Clinton lauded him for giving hope to African Americans during difficult times. A panel of experts polled by Baylor University in 2003 named Johnson "the greatest minority entrepreneur in American history." That same year, Howard University named its journalism school after him.

The stamp, designed by Postal Service art director Howard Paine, features a color photograph of Johnson taken by Bachrach Studios. The photographer was David McCann.

The U.S. Postal Service has recognized the achievements of prominent African Americans through the Black Heritage series since 1978. This stamp honoring Johnson is the 35th stamp in that series, which highlights outstanding individuals who helped shape American culture.



First Day of Issue Ceremony

FIRST DAY OF ISSU

JOHN H.
JOHNSON

JANUARY 31, 2012 - CHICAGO, IL 60607

Celebrate the Art of Stamps

