



**GERALD F. MERNA**  
Executive Assistant  
to the  
Postmaster General



THE POSTMASTER GENERAL  
Washington, DC 20260

July 13, 1981

Dear Jerry:

I would appreciate it very much if you would represent the Postal Service and unveil the design of the Battle of Yorktown/Battle of Virginia capes pair of stamps at Virginia Beach on Friday, September 4.

Our Stamps Division staff will prepare remarks for you and provide additional information about the ceremony.

Sincerely,

  
William F. Bolger

Mr. Gerald F. Merna  
Executive Assistant  
to the Postmaster General  
U.S. Postal Service  
Washington, D.C. 20260



# BATTLE OFF THE VIRGINIA CAPES

September 5, 1781 - 1981

## Commemoration Committee Members

J. Roy Alphin, Chairman  
John H. Robertson, Vice Chairman  
Frank I. Adkins, Treasurer  
Mrs. Robert W. Alfriend  
Mrs. W. T. Galliford, Jr.  
John M. Hodgson  
LCDR Sam Jackson  
Mrs. Milton W. Thorpe, Jr.  
Mrs. R. M. Youell, Jr.  
A. James DeBellis, Executive Director

August 28, 1981

Mr. Gerald F. Merna  
Executive Assistant to the  
Postmaster General  
Postmaster General Headquarters  
Washington, D.C. 20260

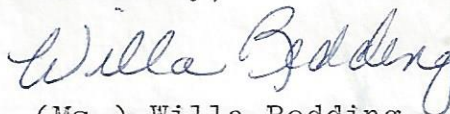
Dear Mr. Merna:

Enclosed for your information please find a copy of the proposed program for the Commemoration of the Battle Off the Virginia Capes.

On behalf of the Committee please accept our appreciation for your participation on this auspicious occasion.

Guest speakers may park directly behind the Showmobile at Fort Story. Please display the enclosed VIP Parking Pass in your car window. Your guests are invited to sit in the reserved seating area.

Sincerely,



(Ms.) Willa Redding  
Coordinator

Enclosure

WR:bmf



200th Anniversary  
PROPOSED PROGRAM FOR THE COMMEMORATION OF THE  
BATTLE OFF THE VIRGINIA CAPES  
SEPTEMBER 5, 1981

Proposed Times

- 1:30 MUSIC by Commander in Chief Atlantic Fleet Band (CINCLANT)
- 2:00 The French Detachment from the Naval Base of NIMES-GARONS  
York County Fife & Drum Corps  
Recreated Revolutionary War Units
- 2:10 POST OF COLORS: United States Marine Corps
- 2:15 NATIONAL ANTHEMS: American National Anthem  
French National Anthem
- 2:20 INVOCATION  
Right Reverend C. Charles Vache', D.D.  
Bishop, Episcopal Diocese of Southern Virginia
- 2:35 SILENT DRILL TEAM DEMONSTRATION: United States Marine Corps
- 2:45 WELCOME  
The Honorable J. Henry McCoy Jr., D.D.S.  
Mayor, City of Virginia Beach, Virginia
- 2:48 PRESIDING MASTER OF CEREMONIES  
The Honorable G. William Whitehurst  
United States Congressman  
(Short address and also introduction of honored guests)
- 2:58 ADDRESS:  
Rear Admiral G. LeCloerec  
Naval Attache  
Embassy of France
- 3:08 ADDRESS:  
The Honorable John W. Warner  
United States Senator
- 3:18 UNVEILING OF THE DESIGNS OF  
THE BATTLE OFF THE VIRGINIA CAPES and THE BATTLE OF YORKTOWN STAMPS  
Gerald F. Merna  
Executive Assistant to the Postmaster General
- 3:23 UNVEILING OF THE MONUMENT  
RADM G. LeCloerec and Senator John W. Warner
- 3:28 PLACING OF THE MEMORIAL WREATH  
IN HONOR OF FRANCOIS JOSEPH PAUL de GRASSE  
Rear Admiral Maurice Soulet  
Head of Military Mission  
Supreme Allied Commander Atlantic (SACLANT)  
and  
Ms. Linda Irons  
Alliance Francaise
- MEMORIAL FLOWER DROP  
LCDR Gerald Schroeder  
NAVAL AIR STATION, OCEANA
- 3:33 21 GUN SALUTE: Marine Saluting Battery/ USS Belknap (CG 26)  
Shore To Ship

BATTLE OFF THE VIRGINIA CAPES

September 5, 1781 - 1981

**VIP  
PARKING**

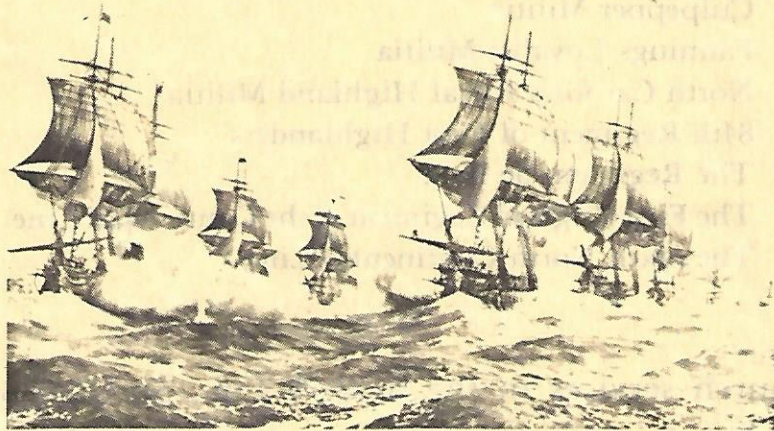
BATTLE OFF THE VIRGINIA CAPES

September 5, 1781 - 1981



Mr. Gerald F. Merna  
Executive Assistant to the  
Postmaster General  
Postmaster General Headquarters  
Washington, D.C. 20260

*The Commemoration of the  
200th Anniversary of the  
Battle Off the Virginia Capes  
Cape Henry,  
Virginia Beach, Virginia  
The Fifth Day of September,  
Nineteen Hundred and Eighty-One*



On September 5, 1781, off the shores of Cape Henry, a French fleet commanded by Admiral Francois Joseph Paul Comte de Grasse defeated a British fleet commanded by Admiral Thomas Graves. Though inadequately recognized or understood by historians, this Revolutionary War sea battle and its forgotten hero, Admiral de Grasse, played a tremendous role in America's struggle for independence.

You are cordially invited to view the Living Encampment at Fort Story. Recreated 18th Century Military Units will be encamped on September 5 and 6, 1981. Tactical Demonstrations are scheduled as follows:

10 a.m. and 3:45 p.m., September 5, 1981

2:30 p.m. Sunday, September 6, 1981

Units Participating:

Gaskins Battalion (Host)

Culpepper Militia

Fannings Loyalist Militia

North Carolina Royal Highland Militia

84th Regiment of Foot Highlanders

The Regiment de Foix

The First Virginia Regiment of the Continental Line

The Sixth North Continental Line

Church services in the field: 9 a.m., Sunday, September 6: Chaplain (Major) Judson P. Nelson, United States Army, Fort Story.

*Historic Cachets are offered for sale by the Virginia Philatelic Federation immediately following the ceremony.*

*Visit the de Grasse Room of the new Virginia Beach Maritime Historic Museum at Atlantic and 24th Street.*

*200th Anniversary*  
**Program For The Commemoration  
Of The Battle Off The Virginia Capes  
September 5, 1981**

1:30 p.m. MUSIC by Commander in Chief Atlantic Fleet Band (CINCLANT)

2:00 p.m. The French Detachment from the Naval Base of NIMES-GARONS  
York County Fife and Drum Corps  
Recreated Revolutionary War Units

NATIONAL ANTHEMS:                      French National Anthem  
   American National Anthem

**INVOCATION**

*Right Reverend C. Charles Vache, D.D.  
Bishop, Episcopal Diocese of Southern Virginia*

Silent Drill Team Demonstration:  
*United States Marine Corps  
Marine Barracks, Norfolk, Va.*

**WELCOME**

*The Honorable J. Henry McCoy, Jr., D.D.S.  
Mayor, City of Virginia Beach, Virginia*

Presiding Master of Ceremonies  
*The Honorable G. William Whitehurst, United States Congressman  
(Short address and also introduction of honored guests)*

**ADDRESS:**

*Rear Admiral G. LeCloerec, Naval Attache, Embassy of France*

**ADDRESS:**

*The Honorable John W. Warner, United States Senator*

Unveiling of the Designs of Commemorative Stamps  
*Gerald F. Merna, Executive Assistant to the Postmaster General*

**UNVEILING OF THE MONUMENT**

*RADM G. LeCloerec and Senator John W. Warner*

**PLACING OF THE MEMORIAL WREATH  
IN HONOR OF FRANCOIS JOSEPH PAUL DE GRASSE**

*Rear Admiral Maurice Soulet, Head of Military Mission  
Supreme Allied Commander Atlantic (SACLANT)  
and*

*Ms. Linda Irons, Alliance Francaise*

**MEMORIAL FLOWER DROP**

*LCDR Gerald Schroeder, Naval Air Station, Oceana*

**21 GUN SALUTE:**

*Marine Saluting Battery/USC Belknap  
Shore to Ship*

**BENEDICTION**

*Right Reverend C. Charles Vache, D.D.  
Bishop, Episcopal Diocese of Southern Virginia*



# City Council

City of Virginia Beach, Virginia

John A. Baum  
Reid Ervin  
Harold Heischober, Vice Mayor  
Barbara Henley  
Dr. Clarence A. Holland  
William H. Kitchin, III  
Reba McClanan  
Dr. J. Henry McCoy, Jr., Mayor  
Dr. E. T. Buchanan, III  
Meyera Oberndorf  
Patrick L. Standing

Virginia Independence Bicentennial Commission  
The Hon. Lewis A. McMurrin, Chairman

## Battle Off the Virginia Capes Commemoration Committee

### Members

J. Roy Alphin, Chairman  
John H. Robertson,  
Vice Chairman  
Frank I. Adkins, Treasurer  
Mrs. Robert W. Alfriend  
Mrs. W. T. Galliford, Jr.  
John M. Hodgson  
LCDR Sam Jackson  
Mrs. Milton W. Thorpe  
Mrs. Rice M. Youell, Jr.  
A. James DeBellis,  
Executive Director  
Willa Redding, Coordinator

### Advisory Board

Dr. William J. Morgan,  
Naval Historian  
Commander Yves M. Tarquis  
LCDR John Alexander  
Michael Curtin  
Edward Rykbos  
J. Davis, Gaskins Battalion  
Paul Stamas  
Mrs. Charles Traub

*Landscaping of the Statue of Admiral Francois Joseph Paul  
Comte de Grasse sponsored by the Council of Garden Clubs  
of Virginia Beach, designed by Landscape Services, City of  
Virginia Beach.*



The stamp designs were unveiled Saturday at a ceremony commemorating the Battle off the Virginia Capes.

# Revolution Stamps Unveiled

VIRGINIA BEACH — The design of two stamps to be issued to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the battles that led to British surrender at Yorktown, were unveiled here Saturday.

The designs were unveiled by Gerald Merna, executive assistant to the Postmaster General, at a ceremony commemorating the Battle of the Virginia Capes, which also was the theme of one of the stamps.

The other stamp commemorates the victory at Yorktown.

Artist Carl Sachs based the design on early French maps published in the American Heritage book, "Battle of Yorktown."

The stamp commemorating the naval battle shows the French and British fleets between Cape Henry and Cape Charles.

The Yorktown commemorative stamp features Yorktown on a map

of the Peninsula.

The first day of issue for the first class stamps will be Oct. 16 at York High School, as a part of the four-day Yorktown Bicentennial celebration.

The issuing ceremony will be held at 11 a.m. and will include postal service officials and officials of the Yorktown Bicentennial Committee.

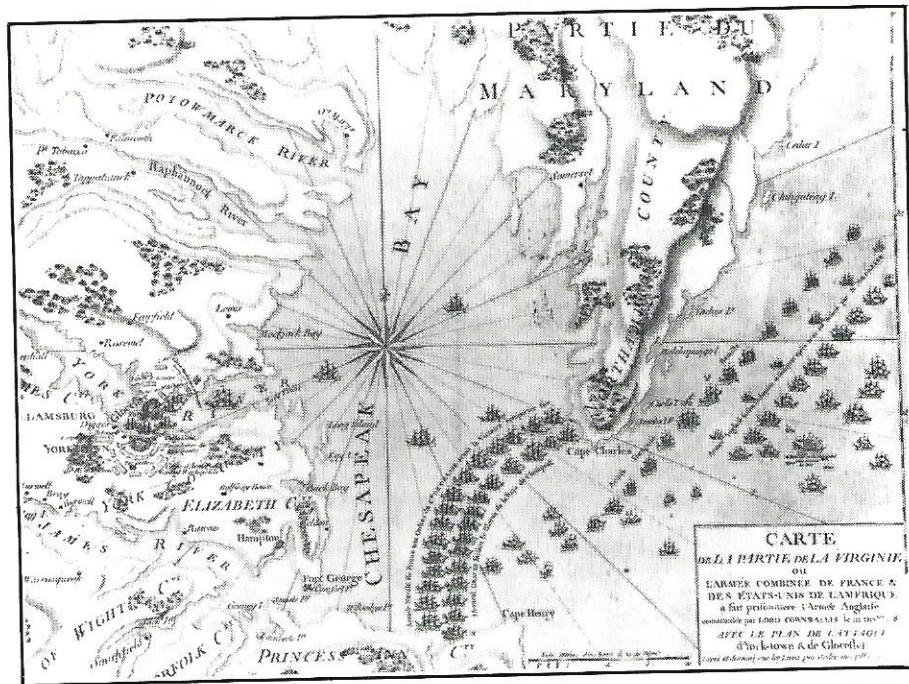
The Battle off the Virginia

Capes was waged Sept. 5, 1781.

It was fought between French Rear Adm. Comte de Grasse's fleet of 24 ships and British Adm. Thomas Graves' 19 ships.

In the battle de Grasse denied the British access to the Chesapeake Bay and the York River to rescue General Cornwallis, who was to surrender Oct. 19 following a siege.

# THE CRUCIAL BLOCKADE



While Gen. George Washington and his French allies were making Cornwallis squirm at Yorktown, a pivotal piece of strategy was unfolding near Cape Henry in Virginia Beach. The Battle off the Virginia Capes is being commemorated this month with bands, salutes, VIPs and flowers.

First, some history. In September 1781, the French fleet under Admiral de Grasse blockaded the Chesapeake Bay. The significant encounter was a sea battle on Sept. 5 which denied British supplies and reinforcements to Cornwallis, whose troops were already landlocked at Yorktown. This battle proved to be a powerful domino toward the British surrender.

Kicking off this month's ceremony is a concert by the Virginia Pops at 8:30 p.m., Sept. 4, at the Pavilion. "Salut a la Franch" features French

music (from 18th Century to modern) and champagne. Tickets are \$10.

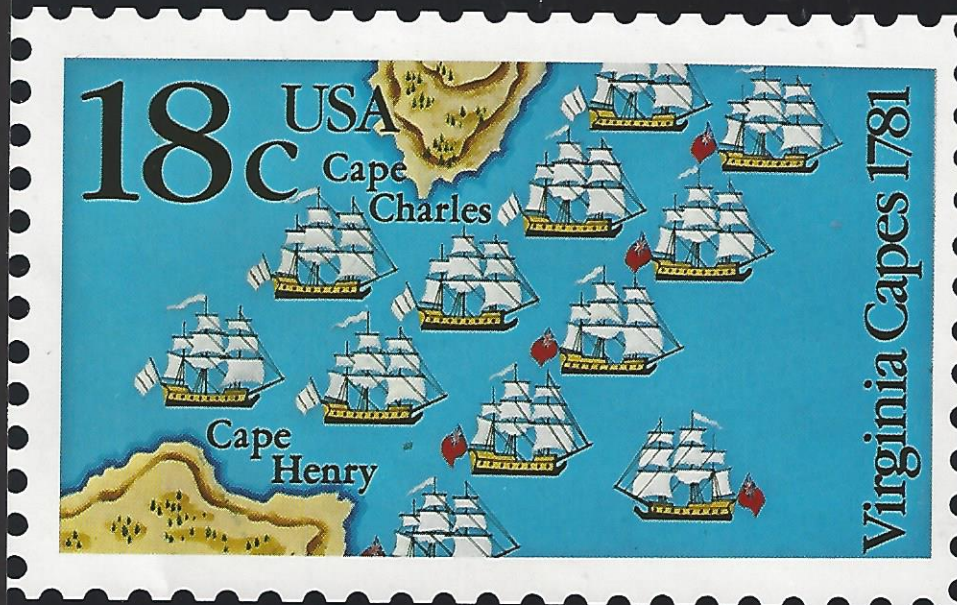
The formal commemoration starts at 1:30 on the 5th. A Navy band and the Yorktown Fife and Drum Corps will play and march. The mayor of Virginia Beach and Congressman Whitehurst will do the honors, and the French Naval Attache and Sen. Warner will offer formal addresses. They will then unveil a monument to the battle, a granite carving.

Next a French admiral will place a wreath in honor of the sailors who died in the battle. A Navy helicopter will drop flowers at sea, and a Marine shore battery and a Navy warship will offer 21-gun ship-to-shore salutes.

The ceremony takes place near the statue of Admiral de Grasse, which stands 100 yards south of the Cape Henry lighthouse in Fort Story. For more info, call 428-8000, ext. 203.



The designs of these two commemorative stamps marking the historic Battle of the Virginia Capes and the British surrender at Yorktown in 1781 were unveiled September 5, 1981, at Virginia Beach, Virginia. The pair of stamps will be issued October 16 at Yorktown, Virginia.



The Battle of the Virginia Capes and the Battle of Yorktown stamps are the latest issues in a series which has highlighted significant events and important persons of the American Revolution over the past ten years. The stamps were designed by Cal Sacks of Westport, Connecticut.

e  
Charles



Unveiling Ceremony  
Battle of Yorktown and  
Battle of Virginia Capes  
Commemorative Postage Stamps  
Virginia Beach, Virginia  
September 5, 1981



# Revolutionary War fray relived in skirmishes and celebrations

□ **Battle, from Page B1**

Navy, used the occasion to say, "Should world peace ever again be threatened on a global scale, it's doubtful that freedom can be preserved without the same arm-in-arm Franco-American military cooperation" that marked the American Revolution.

"Regrettably, as the British Navy retrenches in the face of economic dilemmas, the French Navy is moving ahead with boldness and determination to become the third-largest Navy in the

world," he said. "It is embarked upon a shipbuilding program as aggressive as the Soviet Union's, and as I hope and pray ours will soon be."

Warner then made note of a large military exercise that will begin Tuesday and will involve not only U.S. and other NATO forces, but also the French Navy.

"France will participate in the exercise with a powerful, well-balanced force—the equivalent of a U.S. carrier task force," Warner said. "It is reas-

suring to realize that our naval forces are still working together just as they did at Yorktown 200 years ago."

Then the ceremonies moved on.

The earth shook when two 40-mm saluting batteries sounded and the air crackled when more than 60 men whose hobby is recreating Revolutionary battles fired reproductions of 18th Century 5-foot muskets topped with 2-foot bayonets.

"One of the reasons I participate would be because it shows in real life the things you read about in books and couldn't imagine," said John T. Davis, commanding officer of the host Gaskins Battalion, the only Virginian continental line regiment at the original Yorktown conflict. Seven other units were represented.

At 2:30 p.m. today, the hobbyist Revolutionary soldiers will continue their observance of the battle's bicentennial at Fort Story. Their encampment, recreations of Revolutionary times, and contests will be free and open to the public.

Davis, a 32-year-old Navy man, said his interest in history spans 14th Century English parliamentary law, 18th Century French and American history, and Austrian history during the Napoleonic period. He said he had been doing re-enactments since 1975.

"Everything has to be authentic and documented," the Virginia Beach resident said. "You've got to know how to make your uniforms."



AP photo

The U.S. Postal Service announced Saturday these designs for stamps commemorating the bicentennial of the Battle of Yorktown and the Battle Off the Virginia Capes. The stamps will go on sale Oct. 16.

## 'Soliders' stage battle of Revolutionary War

NEW LONDON, Conn. (AP)—Bearing guns and hurling smoke bombs, 800 British and Colonial troops went to war Saturday in a bicentennial re-enactment of the Revolutionary War's Battle of Groton Heights.

Traitor Benedict Arnold led the British to victory in 1781 as they burned buildings on New London's shore and then assaulted Groton. About 1,000 spectators witnessed the re-enactment Saturday.

Cannon roared as 100 mock British troops stormed from ships onto the New London shore. More troops arrived by bus to play out a skirmish in which city residents tried to turn back the invaders.

A bicentennial committee had been readying the mock battle for 1½ years, said Eugene Gumbs Jr. of Groton, a committee member. The last time the battle was staged

was for the 150th anniversary in 1931.

The actual battle began at midnight after 32 British ships arrived at New London. The British put ashore and burned buildings along the coast.

Arnold, who knew the area because he was a native of nearby Norwich, ordered troops to head to Groton. By early afternoon, they arrived below Fort Griswold in Groton.

The British ordered the Colonists to surrender. "We will let the consequences be what they may," replied the Colonial commander, Col. William Ledyard, who refused to give up.

Eventually, facing defeat, Ledyard offered to surrender by giving his sword to a British officer. The officer ran him through with his sword and a melee ensued.

# Pops thanks the French with elegance

## Review

SALUT A LA FRANCE, performed by the Virginia Pops. Conducted by Walter Noona. In honor of the 200th anniversary of the Battle Off the Virginia Capes. Presented by the Virginia Beach Bicentennial Commission. PROGRAM: "Star Spangled Banner" (Key); "La Marseillaise" (Hougei de L'Isle); "Marche Joyeux" (Chabrier); "Rondeau" (Mouret); "L'Arlesienne," Suite No. 1 (Bizet); "Clair de Lune" (Debussy, transcribed by McGovern); French National Defile March (Turlet); Michel LeGrand medley (arranged by McGovern); Medley of Contemporary French Songs for Piano and Strings (arranged by McGovern); "An American in Paris" (Gershwin). Friday evening in the Pavilion Theater, Virginia Beach.

By MAL VINCENT

Virginian-Pilot Entertainment Editor

With a little bit of can-can and a great deal of lyrical elegance, the Virginia Pops staged a pleasant party Friday to say "thank you" to the French.

The occasion was the 200th anniversary of the Battle Off the Virginia Capes. In this Revolutionary encounter, the French navy, led by an Adm. de Grasse, defeated the British and blocked the Chesapeake Bay. This feat paved the way for Gen. George Washington's victory at Yorktown six weeks later.

But who would think that out of war would come such soothing and cajoling sounds as the music programmed at the Pavilion Theater Friday? Even Tolstoy could not have envisioned such a contrast between war and peace.

The Pops did, indeed, prove that it could can-can (to the tune of Offenbach's "Orpheus in Hades").

Walter Noona is a conductor of charisma and charm who relentlessly coaxes the best from his orchestra. He continues to present the perfect choice for light musical evenings, with an emphasis on entertainment rather than brooding.

Now that the Pops has declared itself "fully professional," it has lost the

charm of that former "community orchestra" that banded together to make music in a thoroughly informal manner. Now we have every right to expect a polished Pop orchestra.

At this first outing, the goal clearly has not yet been reached. The brasses had a particularly troublesome night, and the strings were often scrawny. The acoustics of the still-new Pavilion Theater are so admirable that the auditorium magnifies every slight tremor. (Each visit to this a hall reinforces the original feeling that, for a change locally, it is acoustically excellent.)

Despite the flaws, one must realize that this is but the beginning of the season for the Pops. Even at that, there was some fine playing here.

Costumed French soldiers of the 1781 era roamed about the lobby as the evening began with the national anthems of the two countries.

Bizet's Suite No. 1 from "L'Arlesienne" was the most demanding selection of the early evening, and the orchestra took a serious approach to this light classic. Greater subtlety might have been desired, but it was played with great passion and with suitable French ardor.

Overfamiliar as this score may be, many in the audience must have renewed interest in the musical felicities revealed in this performance. Noona proved that he could restrain the orchestra and sustain an elegant mood.

Emmanuel Chabrier's "Marche Joy-

eux" was a rousing opener and reminds one, once again, that this contemporary of Toulouse-Lautrec had a kindred knack for producing brightly colored, swiftly impetuous creations.

The orchestra's version of Debussy's "Clair de Lune" was a rather gushy transcription by Mark McGovern, an alumnus of the Naval School of Music, who is responsible for many arrangements played by the Pops.

One can be grateful for his prolific abilities, but there is a sameness about his arrangements that can become tiresome over time. His orchestrations, for example, of a Michel LeGrand medley and a "medley of contemporary French songs" amounted to no more than a few random bars at beginning and end, bridged by straightforward tunes.

The LeGrand grouping included "What Are You Doing the Rest of My Life?" and the pleasingly enigmatic "Windmills of Your Mind." The other medley, quite predictably, included "La Vie En Rose," "April in Paris,"

and "Under Paris Skies." For the "Clair de Lune," the orchestra might have better sought out the Stokowski or Ravel arrangements.

The piece de resistance of the evening was an exuberant and lighthearted reading of George Gershwin's "An American in Paris," a work that modern moviegoers have come to associate with the choreography of Gene Kelly. The work was perfect for the dual concept of the evening, for it brilliantly suggests an intoxication with Paris combined with homesickness for America—represented by jazz motifs.

Standouts included the trombone solo not far into the blues section and the bass clarinet solo at the beginning of the "walking" music, as well as the humorous tuba. And, of course, there were those taxicab horns.

The audience, which celebrated with champagne during the intermission, could well thank the French more for their elegant joie de vivre than for their war-making abilities. Music of this type is fitting for a celebration. C'est ci bon.



# NEWS

U.S. Postal Service • Washington, DC 20260

For further information call

Jack Williams  
(202) 245-4956  
PHILATELIC RELEASE NO. 60

FOR RELEASE AT 4:00 P.M.  
Saturday September 5, 1981  
(with one photo)

## DESIGNS FOR BATTLE OF YORKTOWN/VIRGINIA CAPE STAMPS UNVEILED

The U. S. Postal Service today released the designs of a pair of se-tenant 18-cent stamps which commemorate the Bicentennial of the Battle of Yorktown and of the Virginia Capes. The stamps will be issued October 16 at Yorktown, Virginia.

Gerald F. Merna, Executive Assistant to the Postmaster General, unveiled the designs for the two stamps at a ceremony marking the 200th anniversary of the Battle of the Virginia Capes. The ceremony was held at Cape Henry, Virginia Beach, Virginia. Also participating in the celebration were U.S. Senator John W. Warner of Virginia and U.S. Representative G. William Whitehurst, also of Virginia, and Rear Admiral G. LeCloerec, Naval Attache, Embassy of France.

The stamp commemorating the Battle of the Virginia Capes presents a drawing of a map showing Cape Charles and Cape Henry with French ships blocking the passage of British ships up the Chesapeake Bay channel at the present line of the bridge-tunnel. Most historians refer to this sea battle on September 5, 1781, with Comte de Grasse commanding the French armada, as a critical turning point in the Revolutionary War. The blockade effectively sealed off

(more)



Lord Cornwallis, the British Commander at Yorktown, from much-needed supplies and reinforcements.

After a three-day engagement, the French fleet was able to return to the Chesapeake Bay, thus denying access to the British fleet under the command of Admiral Sir Thomas Graves. The British then retreated to New York.

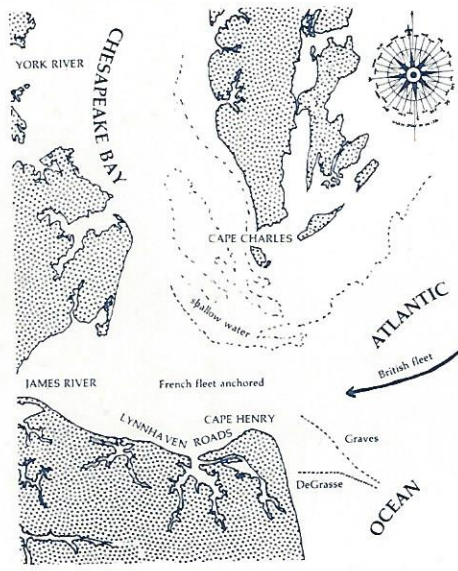
The Battle of Yorktown stamp features a map of the peninsula between the York and James rivers on which Yorktown and Williamsburg are located. Several French ships are shown on the York River near Yorktown. With sea aid cut off, the American and French armies under Washington and Rochambeau laid siege to the British forces under Cornwallis, beginning October 16, 1781. Three days later, the British surrendered, marking the end of the final battle of the Revolutionary War.

"Virginia Capes 1781" and "Yorktown 1781" appear respectively along the right side of each stamp. "18c USA" is printed in the lower left corner of the Yorktown stamp and in the upper left corner of the Virginia Capes stamp. All type is black.

The horizontally oriented standard-size commemoratives were designed by Cal Sacks of Westport, Connecticut. Sacks' first U.S. Postal Service design was the America's Cup embossed envelope issued in 1980.

The models for the stamps were prepared by Clarence Holbert, and the lettering and numerals were engraved by Robert Culin, Sr. Both are with the Bureau of Engraving and Printing.

(more)



The Battle off the Virginia Capes

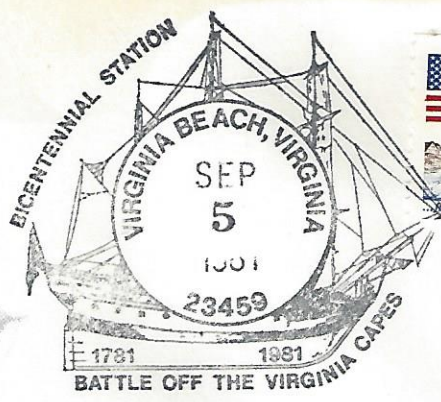
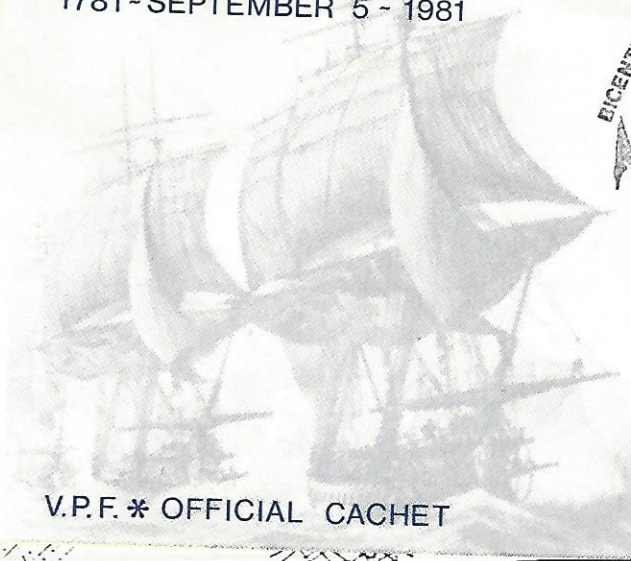
On September 5, 1781, off the shores of Cape Henry (now a part of Fort Story, Va.), a French fleet commanded by Admiral Francois Joseph Paul Comte de Grasse defeated a British fleet commanded by Admiral Thomas Graves.

Admiral de Grasse with 28 vessels under his command arrived in the Chesapeake Bay on August 30, 1781 and had the fleet anchor in the area extending from Cape Henry to about where the Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel now connects the two shores.

The English fleet arrived at the mouth of the Chesapeake on September 5 and a battle began. After two days the British retreated and the French succeeded in blockading the York and James Rivers thus cutting off supplies and reinforcements from the British commanded by Lord Cornwallis at Yorktown. Unable to sustain the defense of Yorktown without supplies and reinforcements, Lord Cornwallis surrendered on October 19, 1781.

**BATTLE OFF THE VIRGINIA CAPES**

1781 - SEPTEMBER 5 - 1981



V.P.F. \* OFFICIAL CACHET

OFFICIAL  
FIRST DAY  
OF ISSUE



DE GRASSE BLOCKADES CORNWALLIS BY SEA



CORNWALLIS SURRENDERS AT YORKTOWN

## Battles of VIRGINIA CAPES AND YORKTOWN

1781 • BICENTENNIAL • 1981



FIRST DAY OF ISSUE

THE WASHINGTON POST

Saturday, September 5, 1981

... B5

# Radio Station's License

The tab for the dinner for Coleman, the Old Dominion's GOP gubernatorial candidate, will be only \$2,500, and will offer guests a chance not only to hear from the candidate but also to break bread with President **Ronald Reagan**.

Coleman supporters will gather at the John Marshall Hotel roof garden in Richmond Sept. 24 for the lower-priced spread. Real bargain hunters can see the president for \$100 at a rally downstairs in the Grand Ballroom before the dinner.

For their \$5,000, supporters of Robb, the Democratic candidate for governor, got strolling violinists and champagne at the historic Berkeley Plantation last June.



Compte **Francois Joseph Paul de Grasse**, an 18th century admiral of the

French fleet, may finally get his due. Virginia Beach and its neighboring communities today plan to recognize the strategic but almost unknown naval victory won by the Frenchman 200 hundred years ago in the Chesapeake Bay.

Called the "Battle off the Virginia Capes," the naval engagement pitted the fleets of the French, who were aiding the colonial Revolutionaries, against the British, who were bringing reinforcements to the army of Lord **Cornwallis**.

De Grasse turned back the reinforcements, and Cornwallis surrendered at Yorktown, ending the war. But because of illness De Grasse never attended the surrender ceremonies and lost his share of glory. This weekend's ceremonies are an attempt to make amends.

Compiled by Sandra Saperstein  
from news services and staff reports

EVENT: DESIGN UNVEILING  
BATTLE OF YORKTOWN/VIRGINIA CAPES COMMEMORATIVE STAMPS

SPEAKER: GERALD F. MERNA  
EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT TO THE POSTMASTER GENERAL

LOCATION: VIRGINIA BEACH PAVILION  
VIRGINIA BEACH, VIRGINIA

DATE: SEPTEMBER 5, 1981

TIME: 1:30 P.M.



*Gerald F. Merna, executive assistant  
to the Postmaster General.*



UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE  
475 L'Enfant Plaza, SW  
Washington, DC 20260

GERALD F. MERNA  
(JERRY)

Mr. Merna is currently the Executive Assistant to Postmaster General William F. Bolger. He joined the Postal Service as a Program Analyst in the Bureau of Research and Engineering in October 1968 and advanced through management positions of Administrative Officer, Branch Manager in the Office of Compensation (Job Evaluation), General Manager of Budget and Planning in the Employee and Labor Relations Group, and National Coordinator of the Postal Service's Revenue Protection Task Force. Prior to his most recent position, he was Special Assistant to Postmaster General Benjamin F. Bailar. Postal field experience includes assignments as Acting Postmaster/OIC of the Lynchburg, Virginia, Post Office/General Mail Facility, and Acting Manager of the Northern Virginia Management Sectional Center.

He was born in New York City, and at an early age became a resident of St. Dominic's and St. Agnes Convents in Rockland County, New York. From age 17 he served for almost 22 years as an enlisted man and a commissioned officer in the U.S. Marine Corps, with combat service in the Korean Conflict in 1952-1953 and the Vietnam War in 1966-1967, and is the recipient of numerous personal and unit military awards, decorations, and citations.

Mr. Merna graduated from Tappan Zee High School in Piermont, New York, and received his Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration and Master's degree in Personnel Management from The George Washington University in Washington, D.C. He has also completed the Advanced Management Program at the University of Southern California and management seminars at Harvard University, the University of Virginia, American Management Associations, and the National Institute of Public Affairs. He also attended the Systems Acquisition Management Course for General/Flag Officers, Department of Defense, at Ft. Belvoir, Virginia, in 1981.

Mr. Merna is active in civic and community affairs. He is an elected member of the Board of Governors of The George Washington University General Alumni Association and also served as Vice President for Operations of the Virginia Hills Citizens Association in Alexandria (Fairfax County), Virginia.

He and his wife, Dorothy, have two children, Mrs. Linda Figura, 27, of Annandale, Virginia; and Gerald T., 25, of Springfield, Virginia.

THANK YOU, AND GOOD AFTERNOON, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN. IT IS AN HONOR AND A PLEASURE FOR ME TO SHARE THIS OCCASION WITH YOU.

*I WOULD ESPEC. LIKE TO ACKNOWLEDGE THREE INDIVIDUALS HERE TODAY— MY WIFE DOT, MRS RUTH HARPER, DIC OF VA BEACH P.O. AND MR DON LEDBETTER, PRES OF NAPS*

TO BE A PART OF THIS MAGNIFICENT DISPLAY OF PATRIOTIC ENDEAVOR IS TO RECOGNIZE THE SPIRIT, THE ENERGY, AND THE DEDICATION OF OUR FOREFATHERS, WHO STRUGGLED VALIANTLY TO ESTABLISH THE INDEPENDENCE OF OUR BELOVED UNITED STATES OF AMERICA. IT IS GOOD TO KNOW THAT LOVE OF COUNTRY STILL EXISTS TODAY . . . THAT IT IS STILL VIABLE AND VISIBLE . . . THAT PEOPLE WILL INVEST THEIR TIME, THEIR TALENTS, AND THEIR FUNDS TO DEMONSTRATE THEIR JOY IN THIS LAND.

IT IS A GOOD FEELING FOR ME TO BE PART OF ALL THIS, ~~AND TO HAVE MY "BRIDE" OF 30 YEARS WITH ME TODAY,~~ AND NOT JUST BECAUSE I SERVED AS A U.S. MARINE FOR 22 YEARS . . . NOT JUST BECAUSE I AM REPRESENTING POSTMASTER GENERAL BOLGER AND THE U.S. POSTAL SERVICE . . . NOT EVEN BECAUSE I COUNT MYSELF A VIRGINIAN INASMUCHAS I HAVE LIVED IN THIS STATE FOR ALMOST 30 YEARS . . . MY DAUGHTER WAS BORN IN QUANTICO ~~IN 1954~~ . . . AND MY POSTAL SERVICE HAS INCLUDED ASSIGNMENTS AS OFFICER-IN-CHARGE OF THE LYNCHBURG POST OFFICE AND AS MANAGER OF THE MORE THAN 50 POST OFFICES THAT COMPRISE THE NORTHERN VIRGINIA MANAGEMENT SECTIONAL CENTER.

IT FEELS GOOD BECAUSE I AM AN AMERICAN . . . AND A PROUD AMERICAN AT THAT.

I HAVE NO HESITATION IN SAYING: "I LOVE THIS COUNTRY . . . I LOVE WHAT IT STANDS FOR . . . I LOVE WHAT IT HAS BEEN, WHAT IT IS, AND WHAT IT WILL BECOME."

*WHILE* THERE ARE DIFFICULTIES CONFRONTING US TODAY, THERE WERE *ALSO* DIFFICULTIES AND DANGERS CONFRONTING GEORGE WASHINGTON AND HIS ADVISERS 200 YEARS AGO.

MANY SCOFFED AT THE IDEA OF AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE . . . THEY THOUGHT IT AN "IMPOSSIBLE DREAM," AND THEY THOUGHT THE AMERICANS PURSUING IT A FOOLHARDY GROUP.

WHAT SORT OF MAN WAS THAT GREAT VIRGINIAN, THE "FATHER OF OUR COUNTRY"? GEORGE WASHINGTON WAS A PROUD ~~MAN, AN~~ INDEPENDENT ~~MAN.~~ <sup>BUT</sup> ABOVE ALL, HE WAS A REALISTIC MAN. HE RECOGNIZED THE NEED FOR ALLIES: HE SOUGHT THEIR HELP, AND HE WAS WILLING TO LISTEN WITH AN OPEN MIND TO THEIR SUGGESTIONS. WASHINGTON KNEW HOW TO COPE WITH DISAPPOINTMENT TOO, WITHOUT GIVING UP. HE WAS CAPABLE OF PATIENCE. ~~INDEED, ENDURANCE AT TIMES MAY BE THE HIGHEST FORM OF COURAGE.~~

TWO HUNDRED YEARS AGO TODAY WHEN THE BATTLE OFF THE VIRGINIA CAPES TOOK PLACE, THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION WAS SIX YEARS OLD, THE SAME AGE AS THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE, WHICH HAD IN 1775 ASSERTED THE AMERICAN DESIRE FOR, AND CLAIM TO, SELF-DETERMINATION. AND, WHILE WE COUNT OUR INDEPENDENCE FROM THE TIME OF THAT DECLARATION, A NATION, NOT UNLIKE AN INDIVIDUAL, FINDS THAT ASSERTING ONE'S INDEPENDENCE DOES NOT GUARANTEE ACHIEVING IT.

IT WAS HERE, OFF THE VIRGINIA CAPES, THAT AMERICANS FOUND THEY WERE CAPABLE OF ACHIEVING INDEPENDENCE. AND THAT CAME ABOUT BECAUSE SO MANY COURAGEOUS PEOPLE HAD A TREMENDOUS SENSE OF PURPOSE AND DEDICATION.

*OMIT*  
 TODAY, LIKE MOST AMERICANS, I WONDER IF SOME OF US HAVE LOST PART OF THAT SENSE OF HIGH PURPOSE AND DEDICATION -- IF MANY ARE NOT PREPARED TODAY TO DO EVERYTHING THEY CAN FOR OUR COUNTRY OR ALTERNATIVELY TO DO WITHOUT EVERYTHING FOR OUR COUNTRY . . . FOR WHICH IN THE PAST SO MANY SACRIFICED SO MUCH.

THE BATTLE OFF THE VIRGINIA CAPES HAS NEVER RECEIVED THE ATTENTION IT MERITED IN THE HISTORY BOOKS OF OUR NATION. YET, MOST HISTORIANS AGREE THAT IT WAS THE SEA VICTORY AT THE CAPES THAT BROUGHT ABOUT THE TRIUMPHANT CLIMAX AT YORKTOWN.



A MOMENT AGO, I SPOKE OF MY ASSOCIATION WITH THE POSTAL SERVICE. I AM PROUD OF MY 13 YEARS WITH THE SERVICE AND ITS ROLE IN OUR NATION'S COMMUNICATION NETWORKS. OR COURSE, OUR PRIMARY MISSION IS TO DELIVER THE MAIL AND, SINCE OUR HISTORY BEGAN THE SAME YEAR AS THE REVOLUTION, WE ARE PROUD OF DOING THAT FOR 206 YEARS! WE ARE ALSO PROUD OF OUR STAMPS AND POSTAL STATIONERY, AND YOU MAY BE ASSURED THAT A GREAT DEAL OF THOUGHT AND PLANNING GOES INTO THE SELECTION OF SUBJECTS FOR THOSE ITEMS.

THE STAMP DESIGNS WE UNVEIL THIS AFTERNOON WILL BE ISSUED AT YORKTOWN ON OCTOBER 16, BUT I THINK IT IS VERY APPROPRIATE THAT THE FIRST OFFICIAL VIEWING IS BEING SHARED WITH YOU TODAY.

THESE STAMPS DO NOT FOCUS ON INDIVIDUALS. AND I THINK THIS IS GOOD. ONE STAMP FOCUSES ON THE FLEET OFF THE CAPES AND THE OTHER ON A MAP OF THE SEA. THE SHIPS AND THE MAP TELL A UNIQUE AND GRAPHIC STORY ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED HERE AND WHEN.

IN THIS WAY, IN A VERY REAL SENSE, THEY SYMBOLIZE THE FACT THAT IT WAS GROUP ACTION THAT DETERMINED THE OUTCOME OF BOTH BATTLES. IT WAS ORGANIZATION, TEAMWORK.

IN PREPARING FOR TODAY'S EVENT, I REFRESHED MY MEMORY ABOUT THE LEADERS ENGAGED IN THE STRUGGLE THAT TOOK PLACE HERE 200 YEARS AGO.

*Can be omitted*

THE AMERICANS AND THEIR FRENCH ALLIES WERE FORTUNATE. THEIR LEADERS WERE ABLE TO COMMUNICATE WITH ONE ANOTHER AND WITH THEIR FOLLOWERS AS WELL. THE LEADERS COULD LISTEN AS WELL AS COMMAND, AND THE FOLLOWERS RISKED THEIR LIVES WITH DEMONSTRABLE RESPECT FOR THEIR COMMANDERS AND THE NEW COUNTRY FOR WHICH THEY WERE STRUGGLING.

A STUDY OF THE CHARACTERS ON THE STAGE OF THAT STRUGGLE REVEALS THAT THE RELATIONSHIPS AMONG THE LEADERS OF THE AMERICAN AND FRENCH FORCES AND THEIR RELATIONSHIPS WITH THOSE UNDER THEIR COMMANDS WERE FAR SUPERIOR TO THOSE OF THE OPPOSING FORCES.

DA GRAHS'S  
OUR ESTEEMED ALLY, ADMIRAL FRANCOIS JOSEPH PAUL DE GRASSE, CAME FROM A NOBLE FAMILY. HE HAD BEEN TRAINED IN BOTH A JESUIT SEMINARY AND A WELL-KNOWN SCHOOL AT MALTA WHICH PREPARED YOUNG MEN FOR COMBAT AT SEA. HE HAD FOUGHT THE BRITISH SINCE BOYHOOD, AND HAD ONCE BEEN CAPTURED AND THROWN INTO A BRITISH JAIL - - WHERE HE MADE FRIENDS AND STUDIED THE WAYS OF THE BRITISH NAVY.

DA GRAHS'S

DE GRASSE HAD BEEN PROMOTED TO FLAG RANK ONLY ONE YEAR BEFORE WHEN HE WAS GIVEN COMMAND OF THE FRENCH NAVAL FORCES IN AMERICAN WATERS.

HE WAS CONSIDERED ONE OF THE HANDSOMEST MEN OF HIS DAY. HE WAS OVER SIX FEET TALL - - ONE OF THE TALLEST MEN IN THE FLEET - - AND HIS MEN SAID OF HIM THAT HE WAS "SIX FEET SIX" ON DAYS OF BATTLE. THEY ALSO SAID THAT HE WAS "A GOOD SEAMAN," AND "A CAUTIOUS MAN."

THIS (QUOTE) "CAUTIOUS MAN" KNEW THAT THE AMERICAN FORCES WERE RAGGED AND UNDERFED. HE KNEW THE FLEDGLING GOVERNMENT WAS SHORT OF FUNDS. STILL, HE BELIEVED THAT IT WAS POSSIBLE TO SAVE THE CAUSE OF THE AMERICANS, AND HE AGREED WITH GENERAL <sup>RO SHAM BO</sup> ROCHAMBEAU THAT HE SHOULD SAIL FROM THE INDIES TO THE CHESAPEAKE BAY.

WHEN HE ORDERED HIS ENTIRE FLEET TO PREPARE TO SAIL FOR THE NORTH, HE WAS WELL AWARE OF THE RISKS. ACCORDING TO THE WRITERS OF THAT TIME, "HIS CAPTAINS WERE ASTOUNDED BY THE AUDACITY OF THE MOVE." HE WAS TAKING A CHANCE OF LOSING ALL HIS MERCHANT SHIPS, HIS PERSONAL FINANCIAL SECURITY, AND THE RICH PRODUCE OF THE ISLANDS.

WHEN NEWS OF HIS VENTURE REACHED THE BRITISH AUTHORITIES, THEY COULD NOT BELIEVE HE HAD TAKEN EVERY ONE OF HIS FIGHTING SHIPS FROM THE INDIES. AS ONE HISTORIAN WROTE, "SUCH BOLDNESS WAS BEYOND THEIR IMAGINATION."

TO ILLUSTRATE THE SIGNIFICANCE OF HIS MOVE TO THE AMERICANS, I WOULD LIKE TO SHARE WITH YOU A DESCRIPTION OF GEORGE WASHINGTON'S REACTION TO IT.

IN THE BOOK, THE CAMPAIGN THAT WON AMERICA: THE STORY OF YORKTOWN, AUTHOR BURKE DAVIS DISCUSSES THE EVENTS THAT LED UP TO YORKTOWN. HE RELATES IN DETAIL THE EVENTS OF SEPTEMBER 5, 1781, NOT ONLY THOSE THAT WERE TAKING PLACE OFF THE CAPES, BUT THOSE OCCURRING IN PENNSYLVANIA AS WELL.

FOR ON THE MORNING OF SEPTEMBER 5, 1781, GEORGE WASHINGTON WAS PASSING THROUGH CHESTER, PENNSYLVANIA, ON HIS WAY TO VIRGINIA. HE WAS RIDING ALONG THE BANKS OF THE DELAWARE ACCOMPANIED BY A FEW OFFICERS WHEN A COURIER FROM BALTIMORE GALLOPED INTO SIGHT.

WASHINGTON COULD NOT HIDE HIS EXCITEMENT WHEN HE OPENED THE DISPATCH. AND THE GENERAL, OFTEN SO ALOOF AND CONTAINED, SHOUTED BOYISHLY WHEN HE READ THEM: "DE GRASSE HAS COME . . .  
DA GRAHS'S  
 DE GRASSE HAS COME!"

WASHINGTON'S SHOUTING STUNNED HIS STAFF. THEY HAD NEVER SEEN HIM SO ANIMATED. ONE WITNESS WOULD LATER SAY HE SAW THE "NATURALLY COLD" MANNER DISAPPEAR . . . HIS FEATURES, HIS EXPRESSION, HIS WHOLE CARRIAGE WERE CHANGED IN AN INSTANT."

RIDING ON TO THE WHARF, THE OFFICERS SAW GENERAL ROCHAMBEAU'S <sup>RO SHAM BO</sup> SHIP COMING INTO SIGHT. WASHINGTON DISMOUNTED, AND ROCHAMBEAU'S AIDE (WHO WAS ON THE BOAT) WROTE THAT HE COULD HARDLY BELIEVE HIS EYES WHEN HE SAW GENERAL WASHINGTON STANDING ON THE SHORE, WAVING HIS HAT AND A WHITE HANDKERCHIEF IN GREETING.

AS ROCHAMBEAU CAME TO THE DOCK, WASHINGTON SHOUTED THE NEWS TO HIM, "STILL WHIPPING HIS HAT AND HANDKERCHIEF OVERHEAD IN WIDE CIRCLES."

AND, WHEN THE FRENCH GENERAL STEPPED ASHORE, HE WAS (QUOTE) "ASTOUNDED TO BE CLASPED IN A FIERCE EMBRACE BY WASHINGTON," WHO AGAIN REPEATED THE NEWS OF <sup>DA GRAHS'S</sup> DE GRASSE'S ARRIVAL.

THE NEXT DAY, WASHINGTON WROTE A TRIUMPHANT ORDER TO HIS ARMY AND I QUOTE FROM IT:

"IT IS WITH THE HIGHEST PLEASURE AND SATISFACTION THAT THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF ANNOUNCES TO THE ARMY THE ARRIVAL OF COUNT DE GRASSE IN THE CHESAPEAK . . ."

HE CONCLUDED THE ORDER BY CALLING UPON ". . . THE GENTLEMEN OFFICERS, THE BRAVE AND FAITHFUL SOLDIERS . . . TO EXERT THEIR UTMOST ABILITIES IN THE CAUSE OF THEIR COUNTRY, TO SHARE WITH HIM . . . THE DIFFICULTIES, DANGERS, AND GLORY OF THE ENTERPRISE."

HIS WORDS HOLD TRUE EVEN TODAY FOR US ALL. YOUR PRESENCE HERE TODAY EXHIBITS YOUR STRONG SENSE OF PATRIOTISM AND FIRM BELIEF IN OUR FORM OF GOVERNMENT AND THE FREEDOM PROVIDED BY OUR FOREFATHERS.

AND, NOW IT IS MY PLEASURE TO UNVEIL THE DESIGNS OF THE BATTLE OF YORKTOWN AND VIRGINIA CAPES COMMEMORATIVE STAMPS.

203 36th Street  
Virginia Beach, VA 23451  
September 8, 1981

Mr. Gerald F. Merna  
Executive Assistant to the  
Postmaster General  
United State Postal Service  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Merna:

I would like to take this opportunity, as a private citizen, to thank you for your address at the 200th anniversary program for the commemoration of the battle off of the Virginia Capes in Virginia Beach, Virginia.

I particularly enjoyed your talk. Your remarks were very well prepared and that is the purpose of my letter. If at all possible, would you please send me a copy of your speech.

Thank you very much for visiting with us in Virginia Beach and participating in the program. Incidentally, the commemorative stamp is beautifully designed.

Sincerely yours,

*J. D. White*  
J. D. White

After 5 days, return to  
SUFFOLK CITY SCHOOL BOARD  
P. O. Box 1549  
SUFFOLK, VIRGINIA 23434



Mr. Gerald F. Merna  
Executive Assistant to the  
Postmaster General  
United States Postal Service  
Washington, D. C.

MR. FRANK B. THOMAS  
6231 LEITH WALK, BALTIMORE, MARYLAND 21239

9/9/81

Dear Jerry -

While the pleasant memories are still fresh, I wanted to express my appreciation for your cooperation, sense of humor, and kindness during the recent ceremony and the entire weekend in Virginia Beach. Laven and I both also enjoyed the opportunity to spend time socially with you and your wonderful wife Dot.

The wine and cheese reception, the symphony and champagne, and the excellent dinner at Quon's provided the opportunity for me to become better acquainted with you on other than just a professional level. Unfortunately, this is not always the case with other stamp ceremony participants.

By the way, Laven promises that next time the first dance is yours, though she feels it will be hard to top Don's "folding feet." At least that promise takes the pressure off of me.

I look forward to the opportunity to talk and work with you on future ceremonies.



Please give Karen's and my best wishes  
to Dot.

With kind regards -

~~Frank~~

P.S. - Sorry you left early to see that "Sims"  
game. You may have noticed that the  
Cotts won. What a real surprise.



Mr. Gerald F. Thomas  
Executive Assistant to the  
Postmaster General  
Rm 10146  
U.S. Postal Service  
Washington, D.C. 20260

Personal



OFFICE OF THE POSTMASTER GENERAL  
Washington, DC 20260-0011

September 11, 1981

Mr. Frank B. Thomas  
Philatelic Program Specialist  
Stamps Division  
Customer Services Department

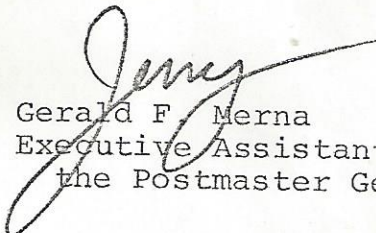
Dear Frank:

Thank you for your dedication, attention to detail, and the myriad follow-up activities that made such a resounding success of the Postal Service's Unveiling Ceremony of the "Battle Off the Capes" and "Battle of Yorktown" stamps at Virginia Beach on September 5, 1981.

With so many things to attend to when even a minor lapse could have meant disaster, your professional efforts carried the day. You even got the weatherman to cooperate!

It was a great pleasure to be a part of that momentous occasion, and I am proud to have been associated with you. Congratulations on an outstanding achievement.

Sincerely,

  
Gerald F. Merna  
Executive Assistant to  
the Postmaster General

cc: Mr. Biglin  
Mr. Morison  
OPF



OFFICE OF THE POSTMASTER GENERAL  
Washington, DC 20260-0011

September 11, 1981

Mrs. Frances Feldman  
Philatelic Program Specialist  
Stamps Division  
Customer Services Department

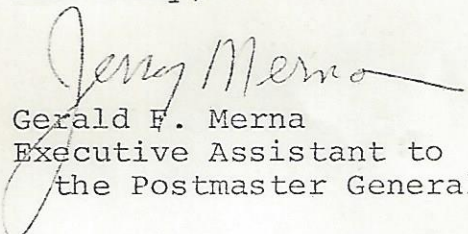
Dear Fran:

Upon the conclusion of my remarks at Virginia Beach on September 5th to unveil the "Battle Off the Virginia Capes" and "Battle of Yorktown" stamps, I was approached by a member of the Commemoration Committee for that city's two-day ceremony. While I do not remember her name, I vividly recall her remarks which were complimentary to me, but more importantly, a tribute to you. For the latter, her remarks were to the effect that she had been "working for this occasion for a long time, had heard so much about the Battle and the Comte de Grasse, but was fascinated with the facts and details about both as described in my remarks." In effect, she thought she had heard it all but was so pleased to learn of some new and interesting details and insights. I told this lady I would pass her comments along to you, the "writer behind the speaker."

This is the best way I know to thank you for your thorough research and "personalized" preparation of the remarks that made my presentation a singular success and contributed to the overall successful U.S. Postal Service Unveiling Ceremony for these appropriate and beautiful stamps.

I thought you might like to have the enclosed items as a souvenir.

Sincerely,

  
Gerald F. Merna  
Executive Assistant to  
the Postmaster General

Enclosures:

- (1) Battle Off the Virginia Capes Commemoration Committee Program
- (2) Virginia Beach Bicentennial Commission Souvenir Folder
- (3) VPF \* Official Cachet Cover

cc: Mr. Biglin, Mr. Morison, OPF



OFFICE OF THE POSTMASTER GENERAL  
Washington, DC 20260-0011

September 11, 1981

Mr. Donald N. Ledbetter  
President, National Association  
of Postal Supervisors  
P. O. Box 23456  
L'Enfant Plaza Station  
Washington, D.C. 20024

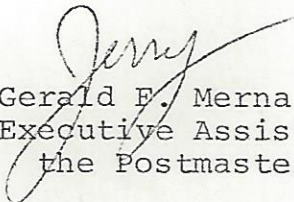
Dear Don:

It was a great pleasure to see you again at Virginia Beach on September 5th for the "Battle Off the Virginia Capes" and the "Battle of Yorktown" stamps ceremony.

As pleasant as that ceremony was, however, both Dot and I felt the highlight of our weekend was the wonderful dinner we shared with you and your other guests on Saturday evening. Indeed, the whole evening was a delight, and I know we will both cherish it for a long time to come.

Thank you again. I am looking forward to our next visit together.

Sincerely,

  
Gerald E. Merna  
Executive Assistant to  
the Postmaster General



OFFICE OF THE POSTMASTER GENERAL  
Washington, DC 20260-0011

September 14, 1981

Mr. J. D. White  
203 36th Street  
Virginia Beach, Virginia 23451

Dear Mr. White:


Thank you for your letter of September 8, 1981. I appreciate your complimentary remarks concerning my talk at the Unveiling Ceremony for the Battles of Yorktown and Virginia Capes Commemorative Postal Stamps.

As requested, I am pleased to send you the enclosed copy of my speech.

Both my wife and I enjoyed the fine hospitality of the citizens of Virginia Beach and were proud to be there to help you celebrate this historic occasion.

Best wishes.

Sincerely,

  
Gerald F. Merna  
Executive Assistant to  
the Postmaster General

Enclosure

bcc: Mrs. Fran Feldman



OFFICE OF THE POSTMASTER GENERAL  
Washington, DC 20260-0011

October 19, 1981

Honorable G. William Whitehurst  
House of Representatives  
Washington, D. C. 20515

Dear Congressman Whitehurst:

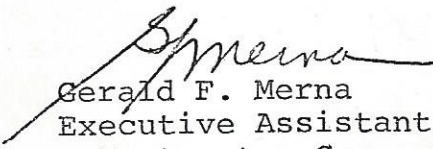
While the memory remains fresh, I want to express how much I enjoyed participating in the Battle of the Virginia Capes bicentennial ceremony at which you presided in Virginia Beach, Virginia, during the Labor Day weekend. Certainly, it was a most opportune time for the Postal Service to unveil the stamps commemorating that battle and the Battle of Yorktown, and I was honored to represent Postmaster General William F. Bolger at the celebration.

The ceremony, and indeed, the events of the entire weekend, including the special concert, wine and cheese reception, and 18th century encampment, provided a most gratifying experience for Mrs. Merna and me. The success of all these activities reflected the great amount of planning and preparation put forth by you and the members of the Virginia Beach Bicentennial Commission.

In view of your personal interest in the celebration, I had a special presentation album containing a pane of the Battle of Yorktown/Battle of the Virginia Capes stamps, issued on October 16 in Yorktown, prepared for you. I have also enclosed several copies of the program from that dedication ceremony and two of the lobby posters announcing the issuance of the stamps.

It was a singular pleasure to participate with you in the Battle of the Virginia Capes bicentennial celebration. Best personal wishes,

Sincerely,

  
Gerald F. Merna  
Executive Assistant to the  
Postmaster General

G. WILLIAM WHITEHURST  
2<sup>D</sup> DISTRICT, VIRGINIA

COMMITTEES:

ARMED SERVICES

SUBCOMMITTEES:

READINESS  
RANKING MINORITY MEMBER

MILITARY INSTALLATIONS AND  
FACILITIES

PERMANENT SELECT COMMITTEE  
ON INTELLIGENCE

SUBCOMMITTEES:

PROGRAM AND BUDGET AUTHORIZATION

U.S. DELEGATE TO  
NORTH ATLANTIC ASSEMBLY

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, D.C. 20515**

October 20, 1981

WASHINGTON OFFICE:  
2469 RAYBURN BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515  
(202) 225-4215

JOHN P. MAGILL  
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

CONSTITUENT SERVICE OFFICES:  
815 FEDERAL BUILDING  
NORFOLK, VIRGINIA 23510  
(804) 441-3340

VERENA C. WASSERMAN  
OFFICE MANAGER

ROOM 601, PEMBROKE ONE  
VIRGINIA BEACH, VIRGINIA 23462  
(804) 490-2393

BLANCHE M. BOYLES  
OFFICE MANAGER

Mr. Gerald F. Merna  
Executive Assistant to the  
Postmaster General  
United States Postal Service  
Washington, D. C. 20260

RECEIVED  
OCT 21 1981  
Executive Assistant to  
Postmaster General

Dear Mr. Merna:

Thanks very much for sending me the very handsome folder, so beautifully embossed, of the special pane of the Battle of Yorktown/Battle of the Virginia Capes stamps. I am pleased to keep these among my memorabilia of my Congressional service, and I am very grateful to you for sending me such a splendid gift.

Most sincerely,

*Bill Whitehurst*  
G. WILLIAM WHITEHURST

GWW:dtw

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, D.C. 20515**

OFFICIAL BUSINESS

*G. William Whitehurst*  
M.C.

Mr. Gerald F. Merna  
Executive Assistant to the  
Postmaster General  
United States Postal Service  
Washington, D. C. 20260