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GEORGE WASHINGTON PLAQUE

In Issue #10 of our e-newsletter, we had a follow-up article on the George Washington plaque which was featured in Issue #9. In a recent trip to the Brimfield Flea Market, I came across an interesting little booklet entitled, The BOOK of Authentic Colonial Costumes for the GEORGE WASHINGTON BICENTENNIAL CELEBRATION 1732-1932 (which will be donated to the Museum and Archives collection). The booklet states:

"This celebration is planned by the United States Government. The United States George Washington Bicentennial Commission was created by an Act of Congress, and the President of the United States is its chairman. It will not be a world's fair or exposition and it will not be held in any one place. It will be a nation-wide, even a world-wide, series of celebrations in which every state, city and town – every organization and institution, every home and individual – in this country, together with Americans and others in many foreign countries, will participate. Every community is expected to plan and carry out its own program of events by its own efforts, in cooperation with the United States Commission. The celebration will last from Washington's Birthday, February 22, 1932, to Thanksgiving Day, 1932 with special local and national celebrations everywhere on all holidays, anniversaries or other days which can be connected with the life of George Washington. In cooperation with the United States George Washington Bicentennial Commission, mayors and other officials of every city and town in the United States have appointed George Washington Bicentennial Committees to plan and carry out local celebrations. All organizations of whatever character – civic, business, labor, educational, religious, fraternal, literary, social and others – are planning for a George Washington year in 1932."

With all that said – no wonder Stockbridge spent \$200 in 1932 on a celebration for the 200th anniversary of George Washington's birth with a tree planting, plaque, band and something at the Play House. The booklet goes on to tell us more about the outstanding dates for the year of 1932 to be celebrated and more information about what type of parties, balls, masques, plays, pageants etc that could be held.

It also includes 18 pages of costumes which were reproductions of actual garments preserved since the time of Washington based on dresses in the Smithsonian Institution in Washington and the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. The cost for these costumes ranged from \$2.98 to \$9.98 delivered (today the postage would cost more than that!).

