

## THE MARCH OF MARY JANE

Lisa Foster, Washington

### Industrial Hemp

Industrial hemp is a variety of the plant species *Cannabis sativa* that has been cultivated around the world for thousands of years. Hemp produces a larger yield per acre than do common substitutes such as cotton, and requires few pesticides. In addition, hemp has an average growing cycle of only 100 days. It is easy to grow because it requires little water or fertilizer and does not need replanting year after year.

After harvesting, various parts of the plant can be utilized in the making of products. The oil extract of the hemp seeds has been used in paints, varnishes, soaps, and for lighting. Historically, the seeds were used as bird feed and human food.

The stalks have been used to make rope, paper, and cloth. It is believed that hemp sails and rope carried Columbus to the Americas in 1492. In addition, Columbus's ships carried hemp seeds for use in case of a shipwreck to grow crops for raw materials and as a source of nutrition.



Mount Vernon  
U.S., 1956, Sc#1032

George Washington cultivated hemp at Mount Vernon for industrial uses including making rope and sail canvas. The hemp fibers were spun into thread used to sew sacks and canvas and to repair the large seine fishing nets that Washington used in his fishing operation along the Potomac.

In addition, Washington used some of what he grew to make hemp clothing worn by his slaves. Colonial soldiers and sailors in the Revolutionary War were also clothed in hemp fabric. Most textiles were made from hemp until the 1820s with the introduction of the cotton gin.



Franklin  
U.S., 1973, Sc#1393D

Rumor has it that Benjamin Franklin owned a paper mill that made hemp paper and/or ran off hemp oil in the 1730s. Although the paper on which the Declaration of Independence (1776) and the Constitution (1789) were recorded was parchment, it is believed that some working drafts were composed on paper made from hemp, which was widely used at that time.

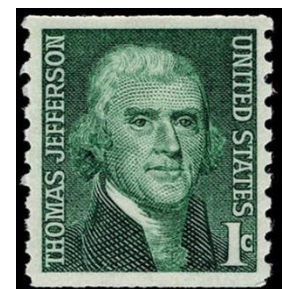
In the 1790s, hemp was grown mainly for its industrial value and for soil stabilization. Thomas Jefferson also grew hemp on his plantation for local use. In 1816, Jefferson adapted a "hemp brake" to a thrashing machine, which broke and beat about 80 pounds per day with a single horse.



Columbus's Ships  
U.S., 1992, Sc#2621



Colonial Seamstress  
U.S., 1977, Sc#1717



Jefferson  
U.S., 1966, Sc#1299

### Marijuana

Industrial hemp (*Cannabis sativa sativa*), the kind that Washington and Jefferson grew, is not the same strain of the plant as *Cannabis sativa indica* that is used as a drug (marijuana). *Cannabis sativa sativa* (industrial hemp) contains less than 0.3 percent of tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), the primary psychoactive ingredient in marijuana.

*Cannabis sativa indica* grown for marijuana can contain between 6–20 percent THC. It is the psychoactive properties of its resin that led to its regulation, taxation, and prohibition.

Physicians often prescribed marijuana for its therapeutic value to treat pain, nausea, spasticity, glaucoma, movement disorders, and to stimulate appetite. The Pure Food and Drug Act of 1906 required labeling of any cannabis contained in over-the-counter remedies.



1906 Food & Drug Act  
U.S., 1998, Sc#3182f

Following the Mexican Revolution of 1910, Mexican immigrants flooded into the United States and introduced the American culture to the recreational use of marijuana.

During the Great Depression, unemployment increased public resentment and fear of Mexican immigrants. By 1931, 29 states had outlawed marijuana. Harry Anslinger, the first Commissioner of the Federal Bureau of Narcotics, joined forces with newspaper publishers and started a campaign against marijuana by pointing to the association of the drug with the primary users at that time; poor Mexican and black workers.

Although the American Medical Association opposed it, Congress passed the Marijuana Tax Act in 1937. This was an attempt to control and eliminate marijuana use through the imposition of an annual occupational tax on those who dealt in, or possessed marijuana. It also imposed a tax upon all transfers of marijuana, with stamps reflecting payment.



Marijuana Tax Stamp  
U.S., 1937, Sc#RMJ1



Agriculture for Defense  
U.S., 1940, Sc#899

During World War II, imports of hemp and other materials used for producing marine cordage, parachutes, and other military necessities became scarce.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture launched a "Hemp for Victory" program, and encouraged farmers to grow hemp for the war effort by handing out seeds and granting draft deferments for participants. By 1943, American farmers registered in the program harvested 375,000 acres of hemp.

Following the war, the government resumed the initiative to reduce hemp use and passed the Narcotics Control Act in 1956, which set mandatory sentences for drug-related offences, including marijuana.

In the 1960s, the culture of rebellious freedom and increased use of marijuana among white upper class Americans contributed to more lenient attitudes among the populous. And in 1969, the Supreme Court held the Marijuana Tax Act unconstitutional on self-incriminating grounds.



Abuse Prevention  
U.S., 1971, Sc#1438

In 1970, the Comprehensive Drug Prevention and Control Act (more commonly known as the Controlled Substances Act) was signed into law by President Richard Nixon as part of his "war on drugs" campaign.

Nixon temporarily classified marijuana as a Schedule One drug indicating it had a high potential for abuse, no accredited medical use, and a lack of accepted safety.

In 1976, Jimmy Carter, whose campaign platform included marijuana decriminalization, was elected President. In 1977, the Senate Judiciary Committee voted to eliminate mandatory federal sentences for possession of small amounts of marijuana.

The election of President Ronald Reagan began an expansion on the "War on Drugs" in the 1980s. The President's wife, Nancy, led a highly publicized anti-drug campaign, "Just Say No."



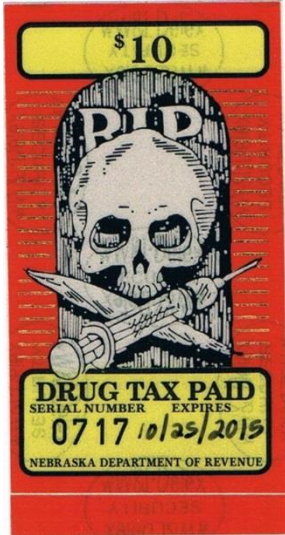
Psychedelic entertainers  
U.S., 2014, Sc#4916

Beginning with Arizona in 1983, states revived the taxation of marijuana as part of the new campaign. In total, 25 states issued tax stamps that the drug dealer was required to put on the stash at the time of sale to prove that the tax was paid.

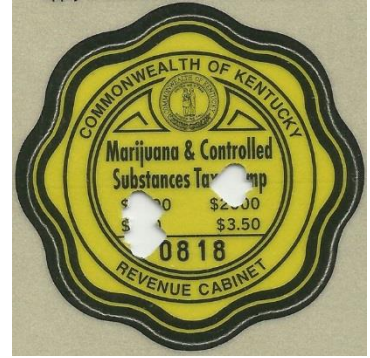
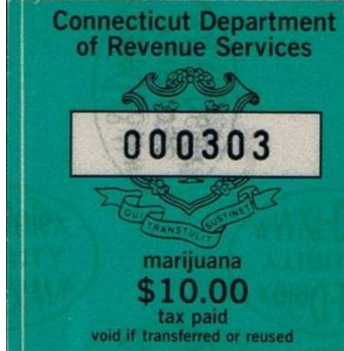
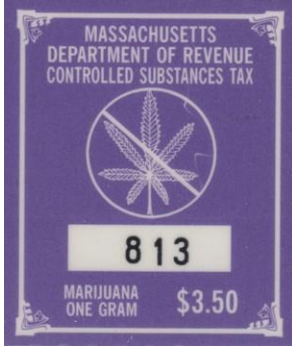
Compliance with the law was minimal as payment did not legalize marijuana possession, and dealers feared disclosing their profession. As a result, most of the tax stamps have been sold to collectors.



Arizona tax stamp



State Marijuana tax stamp examples



In addition, to the states that used tax stamps, at least five other states have taxed marijuana, but did not use stamps. Georgia and Indiana use receipts. Florida, Montana, and New Mexico have since repealed their drug tax laws.

In recent years, some states have adopted a legally controlled market for marijuana where consumers can buy marijuana for personal use from a safe legal source. This policy, generally known as legalization, was adopted by voter initiative in 2012 in Washington (I-502) and Colorado (A-64).

Oregon (Measure 91) and Alaska (Ballot Measure 2) followed suit and passed legalization bills in November 2014. Legalization advocates are preparing to put similar measures on ballots in 2016 in Arizona, California, Maine, Massachusetts, and Nevada.



Washington tax stamp