

April 5, 1999

Producer: C Spain's American Presidents:
Life Portraits

Your list of American presidents begins with George Washington and ends with Bill Clinton.

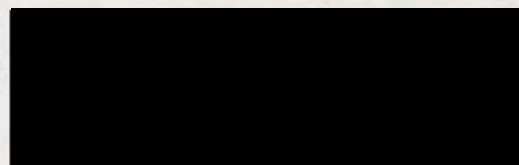
I am enclosing documented information stating that there were seven presidents before George Washington. This document states that John Hanson was the first president of the United States and six presidents followed him. These presidents served the United States from 1781-1788.

Mercedes Benz ran an add stating John Hanson as the first president of the United States.

I would appreciate you further researching this information.

Thank you,

O-AmerPre



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Dick Gregory

From The File

**A "Black" Man, A Moor, John Hanson
Was the First President of the United States! 1781-1782 A.D.**

**George Washington
was really the 8th President of the United States!**

George Washington was not the first President of the United States. In fact, the first President of the United States was one John Hanson. Don't go checking the encyclopedia for this guy's name - he is one of those great men that are lost to history. If you're extremely lucky, you may actually find a brief mention of his name.

The new country was actually formed on March 1, 1781 with the adoption of The Articles of Confederation. This document was actually proposed on June 11, 1776, but not agreed upon by Congress until November 15, 1777. Maryland refused to sign this document until Virginia and New York ceded their western lands (Maryland was afraid that these states would gain too much power in the new government from such large amounts of land).

Once the signing took place in 1781, a President was needed to run the country. John Hanson was chosen unanimously by Congress (which included George Washington). In fact, all the other potential candidates refused to run against him, as he was a major player in the revolution and an extremely influential member of Congress.

As the first President, Hanson had quite the shoes to fill. No one had ever been President and the role was poorly defined. His actions in office would set precedent for all future Presidents.

He took office just as the Revolutionary War ended. Almost immediately, the troops demanded to be paid. As would be expected after any long war, there were no funds to meet the salaries. As a result, the soldiers threatened to overthrow the new government and put Washington on the throne as a monarch.

All the members of Congress ran for their lives, leaving Hanson as the only guy left running the government. He somehow managed to calm the troops down and hold the country together. If he had failed, the government would have fallen almost immediately and everyone would have been bowing to King Washington. In fact, Hanson sent 800 pounds of sterling silver by his brother Samuel Hanson to George Washington to provide the troops with shoes.

Hanson, as President, ordered all foreign troops off American soil, as well as the removal of all foreign flags. This was quite the feat, considering the fact that so many European countries had a stake in the United States since the days following Columbus.

Hanson established the Great Seal of the United States, which all

Presidents have since been required to use on all official documents.

President Hanson also established the first Treasury Department, the first Secretary of War, and the first Foreign Affairs Department.

Lastly, he declared that the fourth Thursday of every November was to be Thanksgiving Day, which is still true today.

The Articles of Confederation only allowed a President to serve a one year term during any three year period, so Hanson actually accomplished quite a bit in such little time.

Six other presidents were elected after him - Elias Boudinot (1783), Thomas Mifflin (1784), Richard Henry Lee (1785), Nathan Gorman (1786), Arthur St. Clair (1787), and Cyrus Griffin (1788) - all prior to Washington taking office.

So what happened?

Why don't we ever hear about the first seven Presidents of the United States?

It's quite simple - The Articles of Confederation didn't work well. The individual states had too much power and nothing could be agreed upon.

A new doctrine needed to be written - something we know as the Constitution.

And that leads us to the end of our story.

George Washington was definitely not the first President of the United States. He was the first President of the United States under the Constitution we follow today.

And the first seven Presidents are forgotten in history.

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