

# Collector's Journal

A Service of Collectors Alliance

## 2011 Vicksburg National Military Park Quarter - Mississippi

### *Ninth in the America the Beautiful Quarters Collection*

The fourth America the Beautiful Quarter issued in 2011 honors Vicksburg National Military Park in Mississippi. Coins are issued at the rate of five per year, and the 2011 series will be completed in late 2011 with the coin for Chickasaw National Recreation Area in Oklahoma.

Each coin in the collection honors a National Park or other national site in each of the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the five overseas U.S. territories. The order of issue is the order in which the sites came under federal jurisdiction.

The reverse of each America the Beautiful Quarter is a unique one-time-only design, but the obverse retains the portrait of George Washington that has appeared on all Quarters since 1932. The portrait by artist John Flanagan was based on a bust of Washington that was created by Jean Antoine Houdon in 1785. The first Washington Quarter was issued in 1932 to coincide with the 200th anniversary of George Washington's birth.

America the Beautiful Quarters are struck for circulation at the United States Mints in Philadelphia and Denver. The two different versions are identified by the small "P" (Philadelphia) or "D" (Denver) mint mark under "In God We Trust" to the right of Washington's portrait.

Vicksburg National Military Park in west-central Mississippi was established in 1899 to commemorate the Vicksburg campaign in the Civil War. Following the Union siege of Vicksburg, Mississippi, that started on May 18, 1863, the Confederate forces finally surrendered on July 4, 1863. As a result of the victory at Vicksburg, the Union controlled the Mississippi River.

In addition to the battle site, the park also includes the Vicksburg National Cemetery that is the final resting place for more than 17,000 Union soldiers. More Union soldiers are buried at Vicksburg than at any site in the nation.



The park covers more than 1,800 acres and contains over 1,340 monuments erected to the memory of both Union and Confederate soldiers. It also contains two antebellum homes, numerous Civil War cannons, and the restored USS Cairo gunboat. A 16-mile road allows visitors to view the most important sites.

The unique reverse design on the Vicksburg National Military Park Quarter features the USS Cairo as it would have appeared as a U.S. Navy warship in the Civil War. An ironclad gunboat, the ship was used on the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers and their tributaries in the early part of the Civil War. She joined a Union expedition on the Yazoo River near Vicksburg, Mississippi, and on December 12 she struck a mine and sank. The wreck was salvaged in 1964 and was put on permanent display at Vicksburg National Military Park in 1977.

The USS Cairo design was one of four prospective designs for the Vicksburg National Military Park Quarter. One of the other designs depicted the park's monument honoring African-American soldiers who fought in the Vicksburg campaign, one showed the Mississippi Monument, while the third featured the arch that marks the park's entrance.

The Vicksburg National Military Park Quarter was released by the U.S. Mint in August 2011.

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