

Gothic Architecture On Stamps - - - Cathedrals

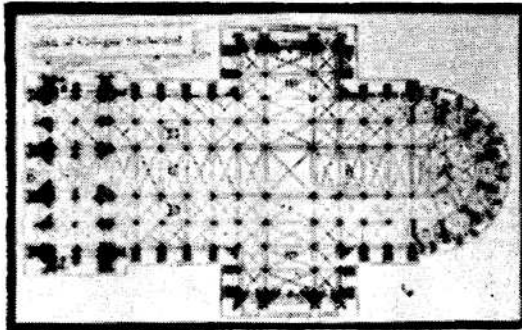
By Harry O. Henneman

The name GOTHIC was applied to a type of architecture . . . it was called a barbaric type. There was quite some resentment among a few leading authorities of the early period. It was also called the FRENCH style, but the name GOTHIC was used first and retained.

Gothic architecture is often called the POINTED Architecture, since it made use of gables, spires, high pitched roofs and pointed arches.

were used by which Masons could recognize each other. The meeting halls were called lodges.

The Cathedral of Strasbourg was begun in 1277 and finished in 1439 A. D. Opposite to the church was a building which served as the workshop of the masons and the stonemasons of the Cathedral. This workshop was the origin of an ancient fraternity of Freemasons of Germany. This lodge was unquestionably the chief lodge.



(Catholic Day Stamp (Germany) showing the floor plan of Germany's celebrated Cathedrals. Floor plan procured from "Dohme Gebauden," a book showing original floor plans).

Cathedrals were always built east and west, the high altar in the east (A) and the main entrance in the west, (B) and occasionally an entrance on the northern part. The inner plan was always in the form of a cross, (C to F and E to E), (C) the stem of the cross is called the nave. In gothic architecture little use was made of columns and piers externally, but were used extensively for the interior, slender shafts for ornament and massive for support.

The earliest example of pointed Gothic was the Cathedral of St. Denis, founded in 1140; then the Cathedrals of Notre Dame (Paris), Chartres and Rheims, completed in 1241 and Beauvais 1225-1272 A. D. Rheims and Amiens vied with each other as to which one was the most beautiful. Strasbourg, Cologne and Freiburg Cathedrals were started about the same time, in the 13th century.

Freemasonry became an institution in the middle of the 12th and the beginning of the 13th centuries. The Freemasons were skilled in masonry of every kind. A system of secret signs



On April 25, 1459, the first statutes were drawn up. The fraternity consisted of Masters, Companions and Apprentices.

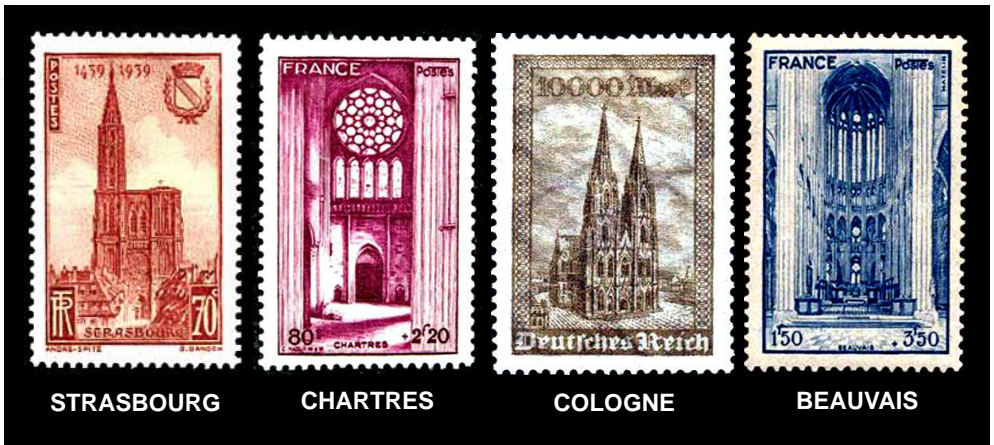
The authority of the lodge tribunal was over the Masons of Bavaria, Franconia, Hesse, Saxony, Swabia, Thuringen, Westphalia and the region of the Moselle. These lodges consisted of Operative Masons. Speculative Masonry did not take place until the 18th century.

The Cathedral of Cologne was consecrated in 873 A. D. and it burned in 1248 A. D. The present one had the corner stone laid on August 14, 1248 by Archbishop Conrad, in the presence of Emperor Frederick II. Up until 1509 A. D. only the choir and the surrounding chapels were finished, then the work stopped and only through subscriptions was the work finally completed.

The Cathedral is memorable on account of its connection with the labors of the Steinmetzen (Stone Masons) of Germany, whence it became the seat of one of the most important Lodges in Europe. The Grand Lodge of Cologne had under its dependence the Lodges on the west bank of the Rhine.

The Cathedral of Speyer was erected in the 11th century, the second and third assemblies of the Lodges were held at Speyer April 9, 1464 and April 23, 1469, by the Grand Lodge of Strasbourg.

St. Stephens Cathedral built in the 14th century, mainly from subscriptions by the "Spinnewetters" or Weavers, an order or guild consisting of several crafts, including Masons. This Cathedral is mentioned in the brother book of 1563, which contained the ordinances and articles of the Fraternity of Stone Masons, Chief Lodge of Strasbourg MDLXIII. The Grand Lodge of St. Stephen founded the Lodges of Austria, Hungary, Styria and all the countries adjacent to the Danube.



Aside: This is an important paper because it underscores the very foundation of the Masonic Order. The Roman Catholic Church was highly central in the lives of most people in Europe during medieval times, and the skilled stone mason craftsmen who were able to construct magnificent cathedrals were held in very high esteem. That the stone masons organized themselves into special groups was a natural outcome—they had a lot in common with each other so wanted to associated on a fraternal basis.

The subsequent association of non-stone masons (accepted masons) came about because it was seen that the groups or "lodges" formed by the stone masons had very high prestige. That prestige carries on to this day in what is now the Masonic Order, although actual stone masons no longer play a major part.

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