

A VERY MASONIC STAMP

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Bro. Sergio Ferrando of Italy sent a photocopy of this stamp. It is from Belgium (1993) and the Scott description reads: “Alumni Assoc., (UAE) Free University of Brussels, 150th Anniversary.”

The image, of course, resembles a cable-tow, and it has been used on government issued Masonic stamps of the Dominican Republic.

The Masonic cable-tow is symbolic of “binding” and tying together (as in the covenant on which all Masons are tied). It has the distinction of being purely Masonic in nature (not borrowed from an ancient source; although there are some similarities).

This brings us to the question of how what appears to be a cable-tow ended-up on a postage stamp associated with a Free University.

The answer lies in the following quoted material from Wikipedia (slightly edited for clarity):

In 1834, in response to the foundation of the Catholic University of Mechlin by the Catholic Church, many recognized the need for a secular counterweight to the new Catholic University. After sufficient funding was collected from many individuals (including Freemasons, led by Pierre-Théodore Verhaegen and Auguste Baron), the Free University of Brussels was inaugurated on 20 November 1834, in the Gothic room of the city hall of Brussels. This day, called St. V [Verhaegen—but not a recognized saint], is still celebrated today. After its establishment, the Free University of Brussels faced difficult times, since it received no subsidies or grants from the government; yearly fund-raising events and tuition fees provided the only financial means. Verhaegen, who became a professor and later head of the new university, gave it [fund raising] a mission statement which he summarized in a speech to King Leopold I: “the principle of ‘free inquiry’ and academic freedom uninfluenced by any political or religious authority.”

Auguste Baron's inauguration lecture is highly noteworthy:

We solemnly pledge to inspire our pupils, whatever the object of our teaching, [with] the love for all mankind, without distinction of caste, opinion, nation; we pledge to learn how to them



(Left) Bro. Pierre-Théodore Verhaegen (1796–1862);
(Right) Bro. Auguste Baron (1794–1862).

[teach them] to devote their thoughts, their work, their talents to the happiness and the improvement of the conditions of their fellow-citizens and of humanity.

I will surmise that Freemasons currently at the university (or recently there) selected the cable-tow for use on the postage stamp. Given the “pledge” provided by Auguste Baron, the choice was very wise.

Verhaegen and Baron were two highly distinguished Freemasons who early learned the true aims and objectives of the Masonic Order and devoted their lives to it. Their university carries on, and we can be perhaps a little relieved (and proud) of this. CLM

