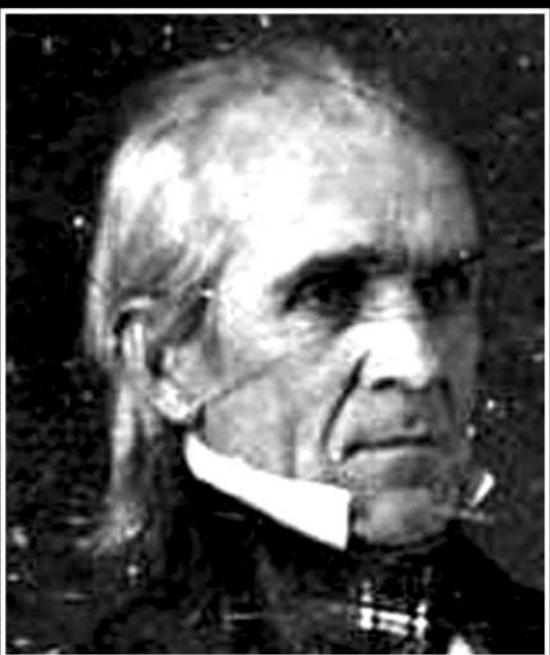
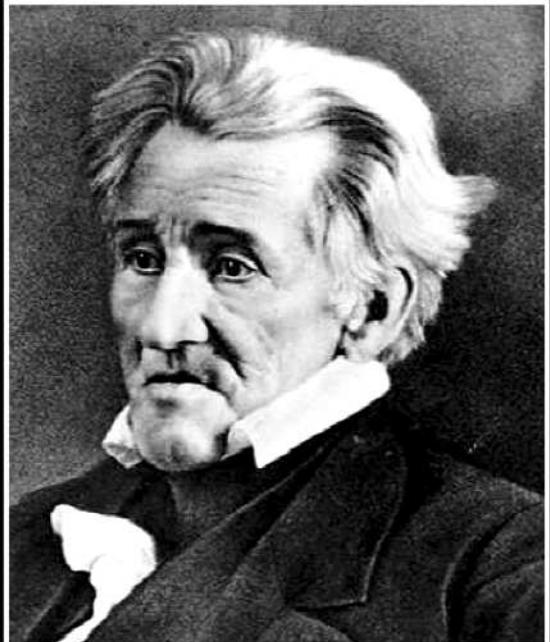


**FREEMASONS  
&  
DAGUERREOTYPES**  
**United States of America**



Christopher L. Murphy, BF



# Freemasons & Daguerreotypes

## *United States of America*

Christopher L. Murphy, BF

Prior to the use of film for taking photographs, the daguerreotype process was used. It dawned in 1839 and faded into the past in the 1860s.

Some famous Freemasons who were alive during the “daguerreotype era” were photographed under this process. It was highly involved and totally different from the later more advanced photographic process. Here is how daguerreotype worked (from Wikipedia):

To make a daguerreotype, the daguerreotypist polished a sheet of silver-plated copper to a mirror finish; treated it with fumes that made its surface light-sensitive; exposed it in a camera for as long as was judged to be necessary, which could be as little as a few seconds for brightly sunlit subjects or much longer with less intense lighting; made the resulting latent image on it visible by fuming it with mercury vapor; removed its sensitivity to light by liquid chemical treatment; rinsed and dried it; then sealed the easily marred result behind glass in a protective enclosure.

As a result, photography was expensive and very involved. One had to actually “sit” for a photograph, so there are few “candid” or “spur-of-the-moment” shots which make photographs so interesting. Nevertheless, with the advent of the daguerreotype, we were able to get an exact image of how a person appeared. Indeed, prior to the invention of photography, all we have is testimony as to the existence of anyone or anything.

Now and then in researching famous Freemasons, a daguerreotype pops up. The subject is often quite old in the image because if he were much

younger, then he would have “made it” into the next era when usually many photographs were taken of him. In other words, he died before about the end of 1860. We must also consider the fact that it usually takes time to become famous.

Somehow, a daguerreotype taken in the little “window” (about 30 years) have a kind of intrigue. We sort of reflect on them longer than a regular photograph and dwell on various details. The reason, of course, is that they are the earliest actual images.

Daguerreotypes have always been a prized collectors’ item, but for some 145 years many have remained hidden in family archives. Even those that did find their way to public awareness did not receive a lot of attention. It was not until the dawn of the Internet that we became aware of their existence.

Because daguerreotypes show exactly how a person appeared, they were used to create paintings and engravings used for postage stamps. A daguerreotype is “many notches up” even from the most perfect paintings created at “portrait sittings” where the artist “interprets” the subject (a camera does not lie).

Portrait art depends on two important factors: the exact placement of facial features, and the exact shading caused by those features (this provides the depth). Artists used various methods to get these things right, but all we have is their word that they are right. With a daguerreotype or a regular photograph there can be no doubt that everything is right.

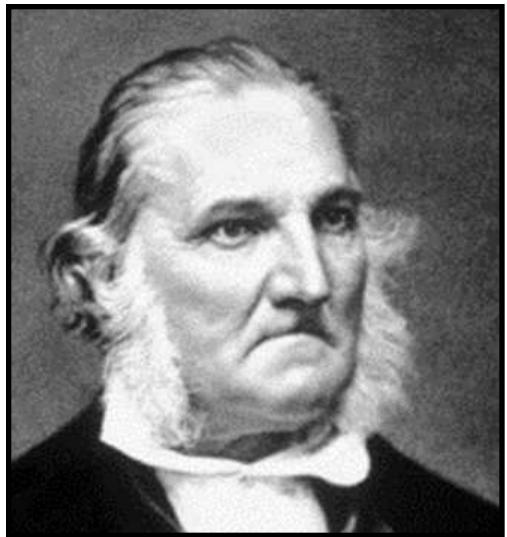
Could early daguerreotypes be altered (other than simple clean up)? The short answer to this is yes.

However, the only indication I have found so far as to the daguerreotypes featured in this paper is that showing Joseph Smith, the Mormon leader. The allegation is that something was done with regard to his eyes. Nevertheless, even daguerreotype photographers (like artists) were aware that people look better at a certain angle. As a result, we normally (most of the time) see the subject at his or her best.

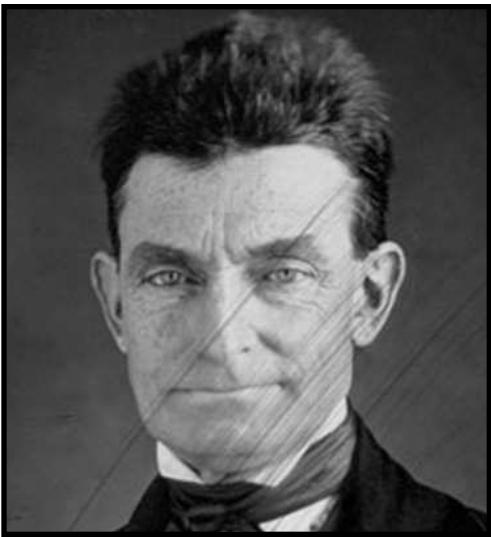
The following are head and shoulders daguerreotype images that have emerged in the studies I am performing. The full size image has been cropped to just include the head and shoulders. Not all of the individuals shown are depicted on stamps, but they are related to Masonic Philately. For certain, some of the images have been “touched up” or enhanced using later or current technology. On the other hand, some images are quite poor. They were likely marginal to begin with and have deteriorated “with the ravages of time.” Nevertheless, what you see is an actual image of the subject.

It needs to be mentioned that some individuals are only connected to Freemasonry by unofficial documentation or insinuation. Those with an asterisk after their name are in this category.

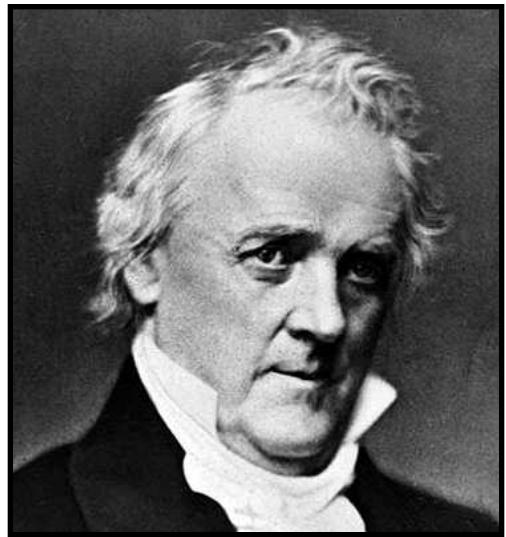
Really, all daguerreotypes did was push back the age of actual photography by about 30 years. This is hardly significant, but from a Masonic standpoint we managed to get some remarkable images of quite a few very high-profile Freemasons in what might be termed the “golden age” of Freemasonry.



John James Audubon\*



John Brown



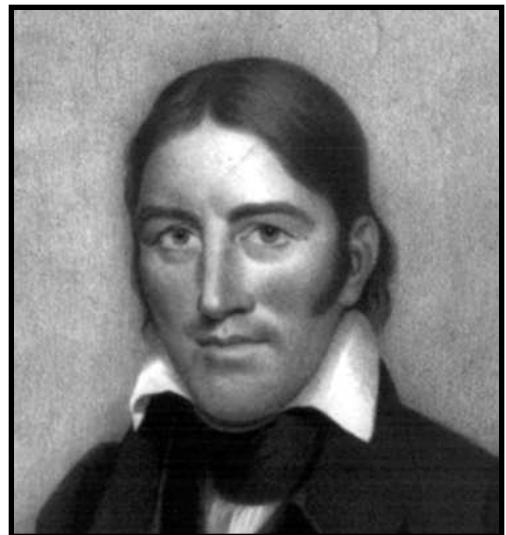
James Buchanan



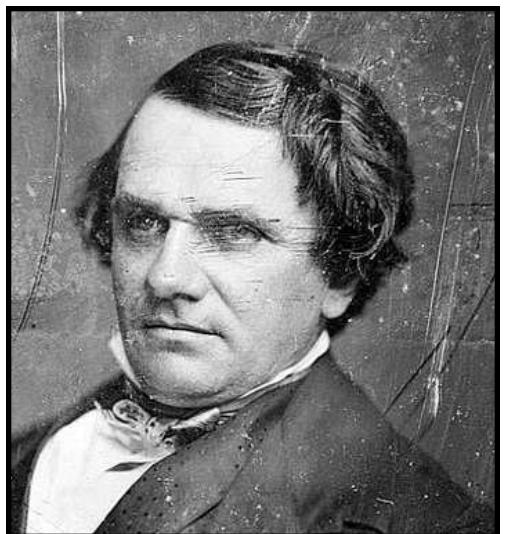
Jonas Chickering



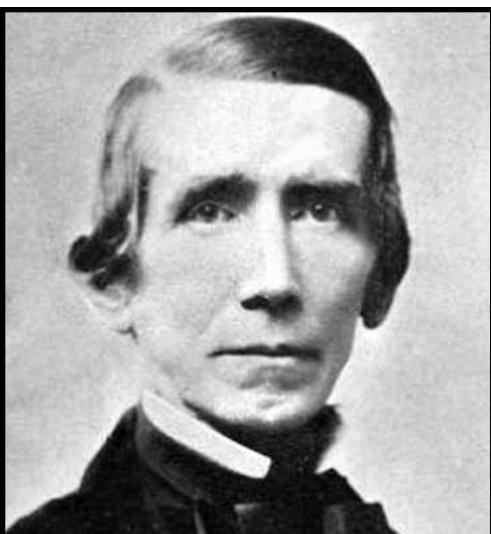
Henry Clay



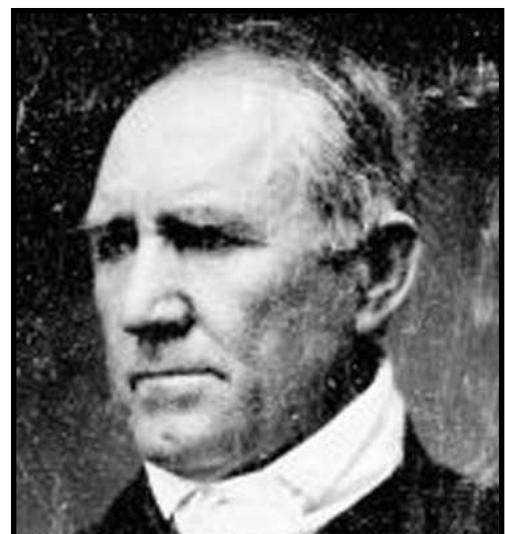
David (Davy) Crockett\*



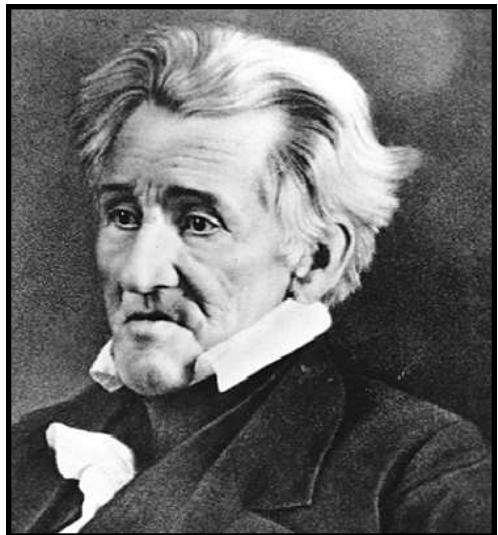
Stephen Arnold Douglas



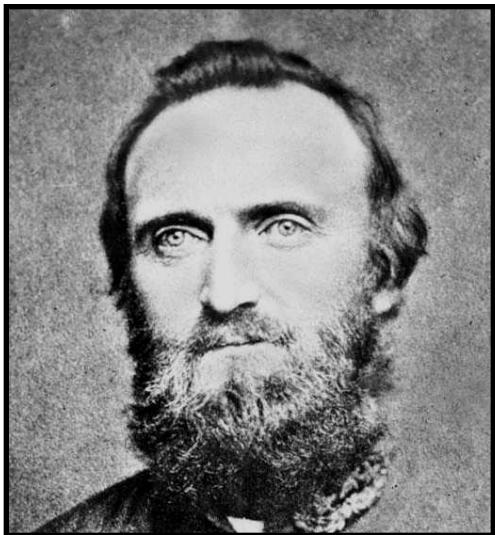
James Pickney Henderson



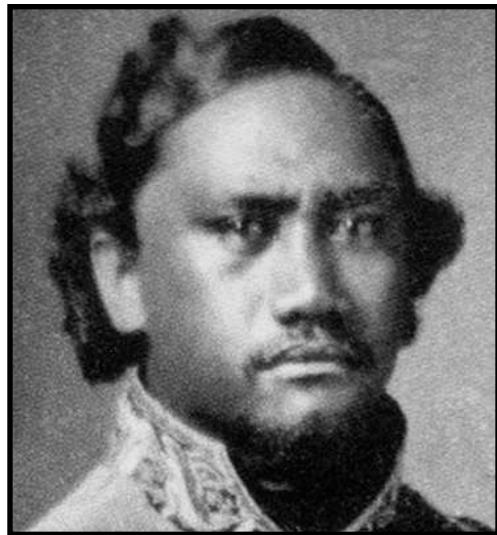
Samuel Houston



Andrew Jackson



Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson



Kamehameha IV



Elisha Kent Kane



William King



Robert Lucas



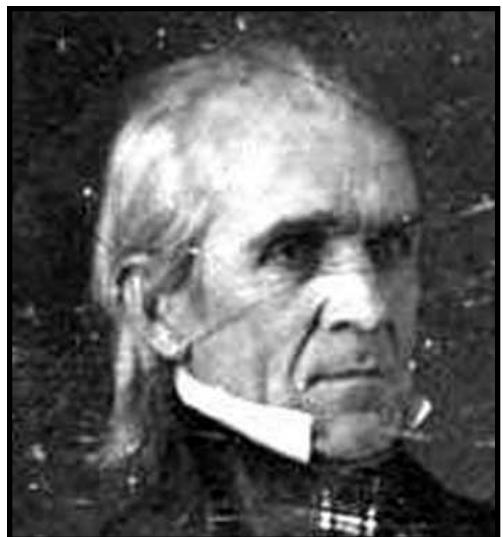
Clark Mills



William D. Mosley



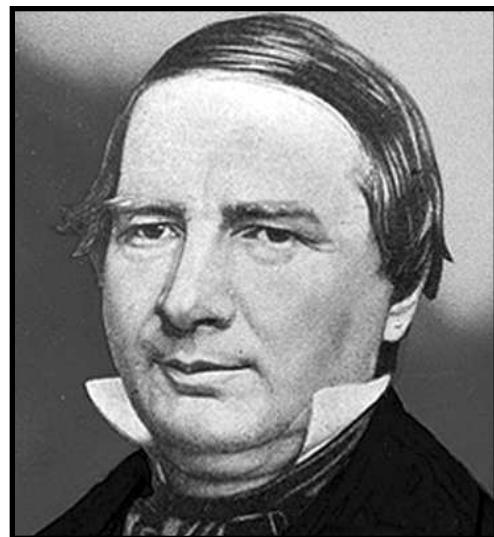
Joel Roberts Poinsett



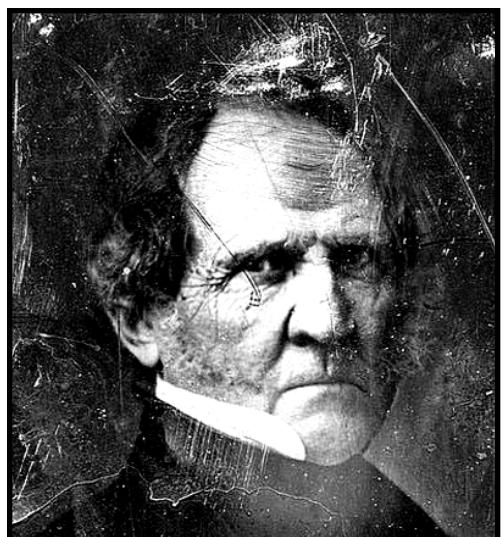
James Polk



Henry Purkitt



Thomas J. Rusk



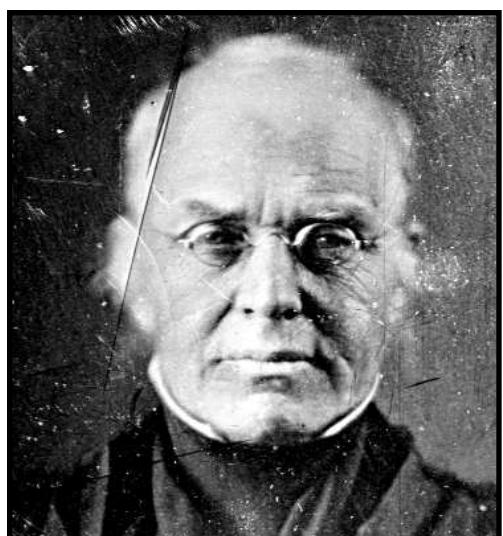
Winfield Scott



Delazon Smith



Joseph Smith



Joseph Story



William Strickland



Brigham Young\*

## **Field of Acclaim, Lodge, and Associated Postage Stamp Number**

- AUDUBON**, John James (1785–1851), ornithologist; referred to himself as a Mason; USA #874
- BROWN**, John (1800–1859), abolitionist; Hudson Lodge No. 68, Hudson, Ohio; USA #1233
- BUCHANAN**, James (1791–1868), U.S. President; Lodge No. 43, Lancaster, Pennsylvania; USA #820
- CHICKERING**, Jonas (1798–1853), pioneer in piano manufacturing; St. Andrew's Lodge, Boston, Massachusetts; USA #1151C
- CLAY, Henry** (1777–1852), Secretary of State, Lexington Lodge No. 1, Lexington, Kentucky; USA #1846
- CROCKETT**, David “Davy” (1786–1836), frontiersman and politician; believed to have been a Freemason; USA #1330
- DOUGLAS**, Stephen (1813–1861), politician, senator and congressman from Illinois, Springfield Lodge No. 4, Springfield, Illinois; USA #1115
- HENDERSON**, James Pickney (1808–1858), first governor of Texas; Redland Lodge No. 3, San Antonio, Texas; USA #938
- HOUSTON**, Samuel (1793–1863), President of the Republic of Texas; Cumberland Lodge No. 8, Nashville, Tennessee; USA #1243
- JACKSON**, Andrew (1767–1845), President of the United States; Greeneville Lodge No. 3, Greeneville, Tennessee; USA #812
- JACKSON**, Thomas “Stone Wall,” (1824–1863), Confederate Major General; Freemason but lodge not known; USA #788
- KAMEHAMEHA IV** (1834–1863), King of Hawaii; Lodge Le Progres de Oceanie No. 124, Hawaii; Hawaii #31  
(Note: Included because Hawaii became a US state.)
- KANE**, Elisha Kent (1820–1857), Arctic Explorer; Franklin Lodge No. 134, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; USA #2220
- KING**, William (1768–1852), first governor Maine; Massachusetts Lodge, Boston, Massachusetts; USA #1391
- LUCAS**, Robert (1781–1853), first territorial governor of Iowa; Scioto Lodge No. 6, Chillicothe, Ohio; USA #838
- MILLS**, Clark (1810–1883), sculptor; Lebanon Lodge No. 7, Washington, District of Columbia, USA #989 (Note: Image appears to be the earliest one taken of Mills.)
- MOSLEY**, William (1795–1863), first governor of Florida; St. John’s Lodge No. 1, Wilmington, North Carolina; USA #927
- PERRY**, Matthew (1794–1858), Commodore in the US Navy; Holland Lodge No. 8, New York City, New York; USA #1021
- POINSETT**, Joel (1779–1851), Secretary of War and Minister to Mexico; Recovery Lodge No. 31, Greenville, South Carolina; USA #1256
- POLK**, James (1795–1849), President of the United States; Columbia Lodge No. 31, Columbia, Tennessee; USA #816
- PURKITT**, Henry (1755–1846), participated in the Boston Tea Party; St. Andrew’s Lodge, Boston, Massachusetts; USA #1480–1483
- RUSK**, Thomas (1803–1857), president of the convention that confirmed the annexation of Texas to the United States; Milan Lodge No. 40, Nacogdoches, Texas; USA #776
- SCOTT**, Winfield (1786–1866), Commander-in-chief of American forces in the Mexican War; founder of Soldier’s Home in Washington, D.C.; Dinwiddie Union Lodge No. 23, Dinwiddie Court House, Virginia; USA #786
- SMITH**, Delazon (1816–1860), one of the first two senators from Oregon; Corinthian Lodge No. 17, Albany, Oregon; USA #1124
- SMITH**, Joseph (1805–1844), founder of the Mormon Church; Nauvoo Lodge, Nauvoo, Illinois; USA #950 (Note: The lodge charter was revoked because of irregularities.)
- STORY**, Joseph (1779–1845), Justice of the US Supreme Court; Philanthropic Lodge of Marblehead, Massachusetts; USA #991
- STRICKLAND**, William (1788–1854), noted architect, Columbia Lodge No. 91, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; USA #1782
- YOUNG**, Brigham (1801–1877), Mormon leader; likely a member of one of the Mormon Lodges in Nauvoo, Illinois; USA #950. (Note: This appears to be the earliest image of Young. Many photographs were taken of him later.)