

The Freemasons in President Lincoln's Cabinet

MSCNY ARTICLE No. 39

This stamp showing Abraham Lincoln and his cabinet members at the first reading of the Emancipation Proclamation, shows four Freemasons. However, it is impossible to tell which individuals they are. We can certainly guess, but I must leave that to the reader, notwithstanding further information.

The official painting of the event was created by Francis Bicknell Carpenter, and is shown below with a key. It was created after the event. President Lincoln explained to Carpenter who was there and where he recalled each individual was standing or sitting. Photographs were used to create the scene, and then a painting done from a photograph composite, as follows:



The entire story of the painting is provided on the following website: <https://abrahamlincolnatgettyburg.wordpress.com/2015/02/10/february-9-1864-lincolns-magical-photographic-session-with-anthony-berger/>

Although it's a stretch of the imagination, I suppose it is possible Honduras found documentation (photo?) that showed the actual scene, and used this to create the postage stamp. More likely, however, their stamp designers just "did their own thing."

(Honduras #C292)

Reference: MP Vol. 20, No. 2, October 1963 – article by Marshall S. Loke, page 3.



First Reading of the Emancipation Proclamation of President Lincoln by Francis Bicknell Carpenter. From left to right:

1. Edwin Stanton (Secretary of War) – Steubenville Lodge No. 44, Steubenville, Ohio
2. Salmon Chase (Secretary of the Treasury)
3. Abraham Lincoln (President of the United States)
4. Gideon Welles (Secretary of the Navy) – St. John's Lodge No. 4, Hartford, Connecticut
5. Caleb B. Smith (Secretary of the Interior) – Warren Lodge No. 15, Cannonsville, Indiana
6. William Seward [sitting] (Secretary of State)
7. Montgomery Blair (Postmaster General)
8. Edward Bates (Attorney General) – Missouri Lodge No. 12; Grand Master of Missouri