



The Masonic Philatelist

VOL. 11

DECEMBER 1954

NO. 4



The MASONIC PHILATELIST

DECEMBER 1954
VOL. 11 NO. 4



Published by
**The Ralph A. Barry - Al Van Dahl
Publication Fund**
of The Masonic Stamp Club of New York



EDITOR
F. L. Ellis, P. O. Box 477
Pearl River, N. Y.

ASSOCIATED EDITORS
John A. Mirt, 644 Melrose St., Chicago 13, Ill.
R. M. Needham, % B.I.S., Lancaster, Ohio
F. T. Anderson, 1235 Idylwild Dr., Lincoln, Neb.

OFFICERS

Carl H. Pihl	President
Thomas Phillips	1st Vice-Pres.
George B. Wray	2nd Vice-Pres.
Dr. Irwin M. Yarry	Secretary
31-12 54 Street	Woodside, N. Y.
Russell B. Roane	Treasurer
126 Tenth Avenue	New York 11, N. Y.
	Treasurer Emeritus
Harry M. Konwiser	
Carl E. Pelander	Membership
545 Fifth Avenue	New York 17, N. Y.
Harold E. Gunter	Back numbers Masonic Philatelist
141-06 Glassboro Ave.	Jamaica 4, N. Y.



● The Cover ●

Gerald D. Bliss 330, one of the Masonic Stamp Club's eminent members.

Bro. Bliss and his wife recently celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary in Miami, Florida, and on December 11, 1954 he will be a 50 year member of Olive Lodge #575 of Sherman, New York.

The editor of the M. P. has been hoping for a long time that Bro. Bliss would give us some interesting stories of his earlier years as a postmaster in the Canal Zone. We know that he has always been interested in stamp collecting, for we find that as early as February, 1911 he was supplying the editor of the PHILATELIC GAZETTE of New York with stamp information. At that time he was located in Pedro Miguel, Canal Zone.

The MIAMI HERALD of September 15, 1954 tells us that Bro. Bliss was appointed a postal clerk in the Canal Zone in 1905 after being an assistant postmaster in Chatauqua, N. Y. In 1911 he was appointed to postmaster

MEETINGS
First Friday of Each Month
Collectors Club Bldg., 22 E. 35th Street
December 3—Africa Night, arranged by George Camnitzer.
January 7—China Night — China Stamp Society.

at Culebra, C. Z., and in 1913 became postmaster at Cristobal, C. Z. until his retirement in 1934. He then moved to Miami, Florida.

On September 24, 1924 he was coronated in the 33rd degree, Supreme Council for the Northern Masonic Jurisdiction. His Masonic calling card is a double card, printed with all his Masonic affiliations on three sides.

As a pleasing coincident the BUREAU SPECIALIST of November, 1954 has a story, by George W. Brett, "Canal Zone Post Offices Celebrate 50 Anniversary," which tells of the early and recent days of the postal activities in the Canal Zone. One illustration shows a group of postal officials, photographed about 1912, of which Bro. Bliss is seen in the front row.

When the Canal Zone post offices were first opened in 1904, there were no postmasters. The railroad station agents and railroad personnel handled the mail. On 6-24-04, six post offices and on 6-25-04, three more had been opened. During 1905, six more post offices were added and along with the nine others mentioned experienced post office men were placed in charge, as they became available.

AWARD DR. JANSEN

Garfield Lodge #889 of New York City presented on October 25, 1954 an award to Dr. William Jansen, superintendent of schools of New York City, for his "lifetime devotion to teaching and to the welfare of all the children." This award is composed of a presidential medal of James A. Garfield issued on the occasion of Garfield's inauguration in 1881, coined by the U. S. Mint and designed by Charles E. Barber. Of interest to stamp collectors is the fact that this medal was used as a model of design for the 20¢ 1938 presidential issue postage stamp.

Presidential medals were formerly called "Indian peace medals," from the practice of the War Department of giving them as a friendly peace offering to Indians. This practice was in

use up to and including the administration of Benjamin Harrison, although special medals were made for peace offerings from the time of Grant to Harrison. As each medal has the date of inauguration on it, it also became known as an Inaugural Medal.

The officers and editorial staff of the Masonic Stamp Club wish all and everyone all the compliments of the season and hope that your Christmas will be merry and your New Year will be prosperous.

Rollin H. Thomas, Jr., a member of Master's Lodge of Albany, N. Y., was one of the Vice-Chairmen of the stamp ceremonies committee for the issuance of the 3¢ ordinary stamp which had its first day of issue at Albany, N. Y. June 24, 1954, in conjunction with the celebration of the 200th anniversary of the First American Congress.

Out of 1999 lots offered for sale by auction on November 13, 1954 by Sylvester Colby of N.Y.C. from the philatelic library of Ralph Kimble, two lots, #606 and 607, are of interest in the fact that two Masonic stamp publications are listed. The first is that of our own M. P. 23 numbers between Vol. I, #10 and Vol. VII, #9 estimated at \$5. The second, Masonic Stampcraft, Vol. I, #1 and 2, estimated at \$1.

PHILIPPINES, AGUINALDO INSURRECTION STAMP ISSUE

For the collector of philatelic items of Masonic interest, the postage and revenue stamps of the Aguinaldo revolutionary government are worth while investigating. The Postal Issues of the Philippines by Major F. L. Palmer that ran serially in the Philatelic Gazette during 1911 and 1912 tells us in chapter XX about these stamps.

"At the outbreak of the war with Spain, in 1898, the United States fleet at Hong Kong proceeded to Manila, where, on May 1, the memorable naval battle of Manila Bay resulted in the destruction of the entire Spanish fleet and the capture of the naval station at Cavite. On learning of the proposed expedition to Manila, the Philippine leaders of the uprising of 1896 against the Spaniards besieged Commodore Dewey with importunities for permission to return to the islands with his expedition from Hong Kong and Singapore where they had been living and carrying on a continued agitation for freedom from Spanish rule.

"With a view to utilizing their influence over the Filipinos to insure a pacific or neutral attitude on their part toward the Americans during future operations against the Spaniards, two of these leaders were permitted to accompany the expedition; Aguinaldo, generally regarded as the most influential of the leaders, was later brought from Hong Kong to Cavite on the U. S. despatch-boat McCulloch. He landed at Cavite on May 19, and found himself once more among not only his own family, friends, and immediate following, but also among those Filipinos who were the most strongly disaffected toward all things Spanish and most eager to resume the struggle for independence, viz.: The members of the great Katipunan Society. Because this society was the very backbone of the Insurrection and its emblems accordingly appear on the stamps later issued by the Revolutionary government, a few words of description may not be out of place.

"The Kalaastaasen Kagalang-galang Katipunan (meaning 'very exalted and honorable union') was an outgrowth of the native Masonic lodges, and its object was the extermination of the friars and the Spanish officials. It had arisen through the admission of a number of Filipinos to Free-Masonry, which had been introduced by the Spanish but had existed under the utmost difficulty on account of the opposition of the Church. The mystery, secrecy, and Masonic symbols employed appealed strongly to the native character, and a degenerate form of Masonry quickly sprang up throughout the islands. The leaders quickly recognized the power of such a combination, and the ignorant natives, confused by the mysticism, became imbued with the belief that the spurious order conveyed supernatural powers. From this came the Anting-anting, a charm which, originally burnt or tattooed on the skin but later worn about the neck, was believed to confer invulnerability to bullet or steel of an enemy. Aguinaldo was accredited with this power, and the shrewd leaders associated with him encouraged acceptance of this belief. Upon joining the Katipunan Society, Aguinaldo had become ambitious to become a leader in it; in this he was encouraged by his old schoolmaster, Andres Bonifacio, the original founder of the society and then its chief.

"It was to his prominence in this society that Aguinaldo owed his influ-

ence in the Revolution of 1896, from which, in turn, arose his prominence in 1898 and his later career as Dictator of the Revolutionary Government and as president of the Filipino Republic.

"Without going into details, we may note that from the very beginning of their 'co-operation' in 1898, the Americans and Filipinos were at cross-purposes with each other. The American policy was at that time, too vague and uncertain to be convincing to anyone, especially to Filipinos who, misled by their own ardent desires, too readily invested the Americans with the status of allies in their own struggle for liberty. Hence the Dictatorial Government set up by Aguinaldo at Cavite on May 24 was probably regarded by the Americans as merely a means of controlling the Filipinos and holding them in check, while the latter looked upon it as preliminary step to a government of the Philippines by and for the Filipinos themselves.

"On June 18, Aguinaldo claimed that he was called on to assume the role of Dictator, and five days later the Revolutionary Government was declared with the avowed object of struggling 'for the independence of the Philippines until all the nations, including the Spanish, shall expressly recognize it, and to prepare the country so that a true Republic shall be established.' This all took place with the knowledge of the Americans, but they were powerless to enforce or protest as the only forces available were then on the ships and at Cavite. So the breach continued to widen, and the Filipinos passed from American control.

(To Be Continued)

MONROE ON NEW STAMP

The 5¢ stamp of the new United States regular issue bears the portrait of James Monroe, fifth President of the United States (1817-1825) and a Mason. First day of issue was December 2 at Fredericksburg, Va.

On that date in 1823, President Monroe proclaimed the Monroe Doctrine in a message to Congress. In this, he told the world that the United States would resist foreign interference in affairs of the American nations. That policy still is in effect.

Monroe had a distinguished record of service to his country. He was a student in William and Mary College, Williamsburg, Va., when the Revolutionary War broke out. He joined the American army and fought in numer-

ous battles, rising in rank to lieutenant colonel. After the war, he served in the legislature and Congress. In 1794, he was appointed minister to France. He became governor of Virginia in 1799. In 1803, he and Robert R. Livingston, a Past Grand Master of New York, negotiated the purchase of Louisiana Territory from France, doubling the area of this country.

Monroe was inaugurated as President in 1817 and reinstalled four years later after an almost unanimous re-election. Among other accomplishments during his terms were the acquisition of Florida from Spain and the settlement of a vexing slavery problem which threatened the peace of this country.

During both of his terms as President, his vice president was Daniel D. Tompkins who served as Grand Master of New York in 1820-1821 and as Sovereign Grand Commander of the Supreme Council, Scottish Rite for the Northern Masonic Jurisdiction in 1813-1825.

Monroe was initiated in Williamsburg Lodge, No. 6, November 9, 1775, while attending William and Mary College. He was not yet 18, but in those days strict attention was not paid to age. He is believed to have received his other degrees in a military lodge. He was later recorded as a member of Kilwinning Lodge, No. 2, Port Royal, Va., now Kilwinning-Crosse Lodge, No. 2-237, Bowling Green, Va.—From Mirt's "Masonry on Postage Stamps."

Just a little hint, our good friend and brother John Mirt's birthday is December 23.

NOTES

The post office department issued new plate numbers for the pregummed paper \$1 postage stamp issued August 31, 1954. These numbers for the new gauge centers were 25017, 25018, 25019 and 25020. The numbers for the colored frame are in combination with the black numbers and consisted of new numbers such as 25015, 25016, 25026. There may be others listed in the recent P. O. press releases. We find that old \$1 frame numbers may have been used in combination with the new center numbers. Plate number 24836, that went to press on 10-2-1952 was used in combination with plate 25017.

Over 1300 small post offices have been closed since January, 1953. More patrons now get their mail by rural mail boxes.