

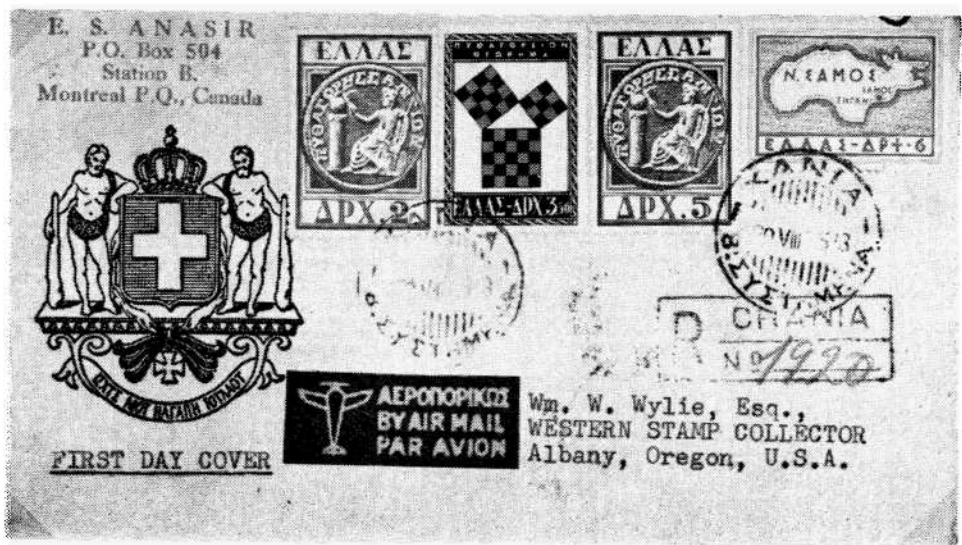


The Masonic Philatelist

VOL. 12

DECEMBER 1955

NO. 4



The Pythagoras Issue of Greece

Dr. Irwin M. Yarry

A commemorative issue of four stamps depicting the mathematical theorem of the hypotenuse where the square is equal to the sum of two squares, namely: 5^2 equals 25 equals $4^2 + 3^2$ ($16 + 9$) is depicted on the 3.50 drachmae. These stamps bear Masonic significance which should be included in its entirety.

Pythagoras (C582-500 B.C) founder of Pythagorean philosophy, made a deep impression and lasting influence upon ancient science, philosophy and religion from Socrates and Plato, together with Masonry and theology. He was born in Samos C. 582 B.C. and was influenced by the Ionic and Egyp-

tian philosophers during his travels and founded when he was about 30 years of age, a moral and religious school in Samos, which adhered to very strict rules for admission, with obedience, silence, abstinence and simplicity of dress and food.

The science of mathematics received the most intensive investigation and developed such a mysterious significance in their research that they regarded all natural laws and behavior as completely dependent upon this numerical scheme. The many mathematical discoveries gave rise to geometry, the study of the earth and stars and pre-determined a harmonious

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arrangement and order. They attained such great political power that it endangered the basis of the Greek hierarchy and many were banished but Pythagoras managed to escape to Crotona where he continued his teachings but was forced again to flee for his life. The Pythagorean cult lasted only a short period after 500 B.C. the probable date of his death.

The theorems and studies of Pythagoras have true Masonic connotations which would take many pages to explain; but all those willing to follow up this mere introduction can fill up many a page with references to Pythagoras as one of the pillars of our craft. Philatelically these four stamps speak for themselves.

An 8¢ Dominica stamp portrays King George VI and vanilla beans drying.

★ MEETINGS ★

First Friday of Each Month
Collectors Club Building
22 East 35th street

In and Around the Club

At our last meeting Bro. Herman Herst again afforded us a most interesting evening by showing and talking to us about his Balloon Posts Siege of Paris 1871. It's always a pleasure to have Bro. Herst with us as his talks are always informative and he leaves us with much enlightenment. We are already looking forward to another such evening.

Bro. George A. Urlaub brought an album of stamps along to ask Bro. Herst for information. He showed this album to us. It contained Local Post and odds and ends, but was very interesting.

Bro. Herman Herst is planning a trip to England for the Christmas holidays, taking with him his son and daughter. They are flying over—we wish them a Happy, Healthy trip and safe return.

Bro. John A. Mirt of Chicago, Ill. sends regards and best wishes to all of the boys at the club, also the following:

Supplementing Bro. Needham's interesting item concerning Japanese Freemasonry, which appeared in the November issue, I might add that Premier Hatoyama was raised to the Sublime Degree of a Master Mason on March 26, 1955.

The ceremony took place in his home and was attended by American dignitaries, including Gen. John E. Hull, the U. S. Far East Commander. Among those sending congratulations were Gen. Douglas MacArthur. Philippine Grand Lodge officers also were in attendance.

With pride we bring to the attention of our brothers that Bro. Sidney F. Barrett has joined the staff of Scott Publications Inc. as associate editor of Scott's U. S. Specialized Catalog.

In addition Bro. Barrett will act as consultant on new issue listings in the supplements to Scott's Catalog which appear in Scott's Monthly Journal. As soon as the 1956 edition of Scott's "Specialized" appears, Bro. Barrett will begin the annual task of

the revision and repricing for the 1957 edition.

Bro. Barrett is a former president of the American Stamp Dealers Association and now is one of its directors and treasurer. He is a director of the Association for Stamp Exhibitions and directed dealer activities in the 1947 Centenary exhibition. He is governor of the Collectors Club of New York, a life member of the American Philatelic Society, and is active in the Philatelic Foundation where he is a consultant to its Expert Committee.

Brother Barrett has done much for the Masonic Stamp Club, and we are always happy when he can find time to be with us at our meeting.

We wish him success in this new undertaking.

By the Sign of the GAVEL

Our Editor tells me that we are to be privileged to have in printed form the story of the Masonic Cancellations as given at our October meeting by Brother Swan. That will be something each of us can appreciate and value in our collections for reference. BUT, those of us who were present to enjoy this meeting can never forget the manner of presentation, the deep knowledge of the subject, and, best of all, the enthusiasm with which our Brother treated his subject. The ability to carry over to the audience the enjoyment felt by the speaker in the treatment and love of his subject is not given to many of us. The meeting was outstanding and we only regret that more could not have been there to enjoy it.

A note from Bro. Jacob S. Glaser informs that the work on the Masonic Exhibition for our part in the coming Fipex is progressing but that he feels that there is much to be done to make it the full success we desire. All who are contemplating the use of one or more frames are urged to communicate with Bro. Glaser at The Collectors Club, 22 East 35th street, without further delay. A competition within the Craft is to be held and it behooves all who have material to show to attend to all preliminaries without further delay. We are informed by the grapevine that there is a good chance that some of our Brothers in foreign lands will participate. That is good news. The more exhibits and the greater spread from which they are shown will add greatly to our interest and enjoyment.

—Thomas Phillips.

MASONIC MATERIAL FOR FIPEX

Most of the exhibitors of Masonic material have been furnished with rules and applications. Such applications and checks are coming in.

Any one wanting to exhibit, who did not receive rules and applications can get them from Jacob Simon Glaser, 845 East 13th street, Brooklyn 30, N. Y.

We wish to fill all of the 36 frames. A good friend has volunteered to microfilm all Masonic exhibits so that we can have a permanent record.

The Grand Lodge of New York will celebrate its 175th anniversary during week of Fipex and we might get a fine Masonic cachet.

We anticipate an interesting announcement.

PUZZLERS FOR PHILATELISTS

Conducted by Dr. Irwin M. Yarry

Answers to last month's puzzlers.

1. Because they are attached by gum.
2. Both are associated with strikes.
3. Both a naughty child and a stamp are licked and put in a corner.

Unscrambled Words Found on Stamps.

1. Confederate States One Cent.
2. Postage One Penny.
3. Romagne, BAI.

Double Acrostic
MOEN'S ALBUM
M a i t A
Oregon Trail
East PunjaB
N a u r U
S u r i n a M

Puzzlers For the Month

1. If I am your little pet, for me little you will get.
2. If I'm mauled upon my way I'll be forgotten till this day.
3. As I go upon my way, I'll always reach you on Sunday.

Unscramble Words Found on Stamps

1. ACEEGHH NNN OO RRSV
(2 words - 19th Century Europe)
2. AAA BE GG H III NO PRSSTTU
(3 words - South America)
3. AAAA CEG I J MOPST.
(2 words - America)

Double Acrostic

Word I—Early Design.

Word II—Necessary in Printing Stamps

1. Common to Both I & II.
2. Real name for the person depicted on a stamp series.
3. Former Name of a stamp issuing country.
4. A well known issue of postage stamps.
5. One who derives pleasure in stamps.

MASONIC CANCELLATIONS ON EARLY U. S. STAMPS

By Dr. S. Duffield Swan

Part 2

By 1868 the vogue of Masonic cancellers had spread from New England and reached such towns as Bangor, Wis., Marengo, Ia., Douglas, Kan., Austin, Tex., and Mobile, Ala. Copies of these cancellations on cover have brought excellent prices in auction.

Beginning in 1868 we start to see the use of minor Masonic symbols, but of course, the square and compasses continued to be the principal ones found. Those of special interest are the Lowell, Mass., Spade; Pittston, Pa., Trowell; and the Centerville, Mich., square, triangle and G. These are quite rare as in 25 years only one of each on cover has come to our attention.

Minor symbols continued to appear in increasing numbers after 1868. King Solomon's Seal, trowels, Master Squares, Enblazoned "G," Allseeing eyes, Euclids 47th problem, Cane with two dots, Sun and Moon, Moon and Star, and a number of others that have been accepted by some collectors as Masonic.

This brings up the subject of just which are Masonic cancellations. Of course, the Square and Compasses with the letter G or blazing sun are easily recognizable as truly Masonic. However, it is frequently difficult to decide on some negative cork cancels which resemble a Square and Compasses. I have made it a rule that the corner of the square must be entirely within the cork and if possible the ends of the Square and Compasses also should be entirely within the cork. The angle of the square should be 90°, however, in some known cases it has been found to be either a little more or less than this figure, so the final judgment is individual and dependent on interpretation of intent.

Some Square and Compasses may be derived from other organizations such as the "Junior Order of American Mechanics"; one of the early Temperance Societies; or certain Benevolent societies that claimed relationship to the Masonic principles. Such emblems are without the letter "G" or have some other figure to replace it.

In the case of minor symbols, some are very definitely intended to be Masonic. Some others that have been attributed to Masonry have definite other connections. One such illustra-

tion is the various "Mummer Fezzes" from Philadelphia. Many of the "King Solomon's Seal" or six pointed line star have no Masonic significance, but do have religious or other society background. Two of the "all seeing eyes" are definitely applicable to the "Odd Fellows." Again we must research on the purpose of the postmaster who issued these cancellers. For instance, one case developed where a maiden lady was Postmistress, and yet the canceller used seemed to have definite Masonic significance. Could it have been she was intrigued with the design and had some one prepare a canceller for her? In another case a Brother Mason left the canceller in the post office when he retired as postmaster and it was used for a time thereafter.

In the period 1928 to 1930 several fancy cancellations appeared from various small cities, such as Sharon, Pa. and Ed, Ky. It has been established that in no case was the Post Office responsible for these cancellers. Ambitious philatelists sent the prepared canceller together with envelopes bearing satisfactory postage to these offices. The cancellers were then destroyed or returned to the sender, and no record made of the transaction. It is barely possible that similar conditions existed in the earlier days in a few post offices.

(To Be Continued)

In Central Park, New York, stands an historic, 70-foot obelisk, known as "Cleopatra's Needle," originally erected in Heliopolis, Egypt, about 1500 B. C. It was presented to this country in 1879 by Khedive Ismail Pasha, at that time Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Egypt.

The removal of the monument to the United States was a prodigious task, not only because of the size and weight—200 tons—but because of the obstacles created by opponents to its removal.

A MERRY CHRISTMAS!

Those serving with the publication of our Masonic Philatelist take this opportunity to wish each and every club member all the joys of the Christmas Season, and the best of personal blessings in the New Year just around the corner.