

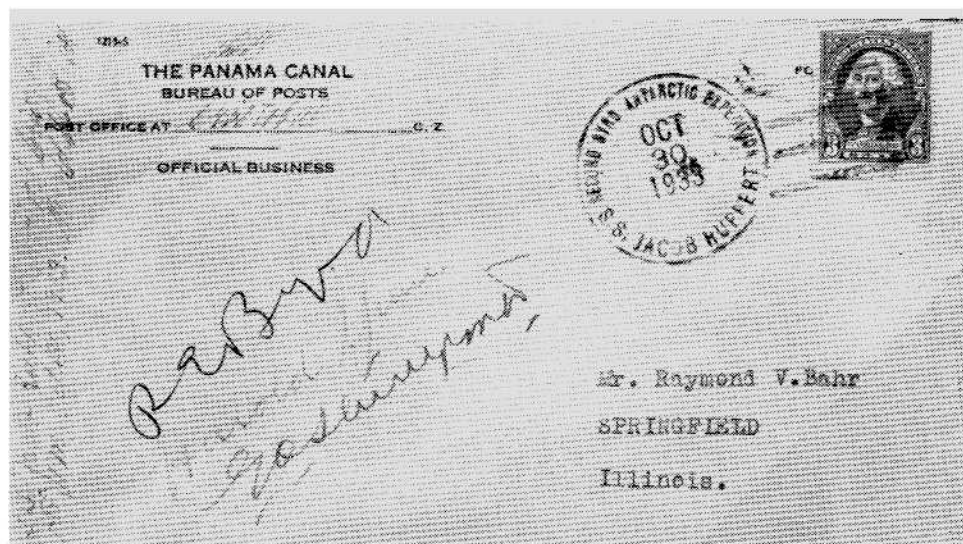


the Masonic Philatelist

VOL. 13

MARCH 1957

NO. 7



This envelope is of unusual interest to members of the Masonic Stamp Club of New York not only because it was sent from the Second Byrd Antarctic Expedition by one Mason to another, but the inscription in longhand reads "S.S. Jacob Ruppert, arrived Cristobal 1:55 P. M., Oct. 30, 1933 Gerald D. Bliss." Brother Bliss is a member of the MSC and was Postmaster, The Canal Zone, 1905 to 1934. Gerald Bliss is now in Miami recuperating after a long siege of illness. Inside the envelope was an interesting card, and without trespassing on its privacy, let us print just the beginning: "Dear Noble.—Did you know that the four men who flew over the So. Pole on the first Expedition are all Masons, and three—Byrd, June and Capt. McKinley are members of the same Lodge, Kane 454 New York City while Berni Balchen is a member of Norse-mans Lodge, same place and of Kismet Temple, Brooklyn.

Balchen told me he dropped his fez on the Pole."

The MASONIC PHILATELIST

MARCH 1957
VOL. 13 NO. 7



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MASONIC STAMP CLUB OF NEW YORK 1957 PROGRAM

May 3—Annual Members' Exhibition.
Plan now to bring your treasures
for others to enjoy. Originally
planned for February but moved
up to give time for preparation.

**June 7—Annual Meeting and Election
of Officers.** Be sure to reserve
this date. Grace us with your
presence.

Bro. John V. Shelse,
Chairman, Program Committee.

Please Note: All meetings begin at 8
P. M. The Board of Governors meets
at 7:30 P. M. on each meeting night.
Many of the members meet for dinner
on each meeting night at 6:00 P. M. at
Sacher Restaurant, 41st Street and
Madison Avenue, New York City.

★ MEETINGS ★

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

Next Meeting

Apr. 5—Master of Philately Degree.
Members notify Sec. Yarry if
they intend to present them-
selves for initiation.

In Memoriam

Bro. Frederick T. Pack
May his soul find eternal rest.

WELCOME ! !

Greeting to our new members:

THOMAS B. ALLEN
3918 Beard Ave., South,
Minneapolis 10, Minnesota

ELWYN H. BUSH
234 Chafee Ave., Syracuse 7, N. Y.

JOSEPH P. CLAXTON
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3 Hillside Ave., Roslyn Hts., N. Y.

E. O. SWEARINGEN
13 Meadowbrook, Corning, N. Y.

CARL E. WALD
502 Belleview Drive
Falls Church, Virginia

PAUL D. WEEKS
1841 Col Road, Washington, D. C.

Our Club boasts of so many "FA-
MOUS PHILATELISTS" and so many
able and interesting members, that we
hope to speed up our "introductions"
by printing more than one an issue, as
originally planned. The order of ap-
pearance of these sketches in no way
intends to place emphasis on the im-
portance of the person or position,
which is many times dictated by not
having all the information we need; or
the lack of a photograph; or even the
space available in a certain issue.

"FAMOUS PHILATELIST"**CARL E. PELANDER**

"GOING, GOING, GONE." Slowly, but surely, Brother Carl is becoming as famous as a stamp auctioneer, as he is a collector.



Carl E. Pelander

Because his activities are so numerous, and his biography so interesting, we could hardly find space to give them their proper coverage, so we must be content to present in detailed form, what we would very much like to dwell upon in detail.

Born. Abo, Finland, Oct. 18, 1894.

Education: Graduate New York University, B. S. degree, majored in chemistry. Class of 1917.

Enlisted in U.S. Army. April 1917 and served with the 26th (Yankee) Division, W.W.I., holding every rank from private to Major. Decorations Distinguished Service Cross, Croix de Guerre with Palm, etc.

Active in Philately from early childhood, having written a number of articles on Philatelic subjects for various publications, including the book "Postal Issues of Finland," which was published and sold for benefit of Finnish Relief, during the winter war in Finland 1937-38. Over 3000 copies were sold, making this the best selling Philatelic publication.

Founded the Scandinavian Collectors Club (736 members today) in 1935. Elected the first honorary member and only living today of the H.F.F. (Finnish Philatelic Association).

Entered the Professional Field in 1937, branching out into Auction sales in January 1940.

Knighted by the Republic of Finland in 1950, with the order of "Lion of Finland, 1st Class.

Recreation. collects stamps, Masonic Cancellations and Tonga. Captain of the Red Team of the Rainbow Bowling League at the New York Athletic Club.

MEMBERSHIPS:

Clubs: University and New York Athletic Club.

Masonic: Northeast Lodge 995, Buffalo, N. Y. Aurora Grata Consistory.

Kismet Temple. Royal Order of the Jesters, Court 30.

Veterans: American Legion, Advertising Mens Post 209, courtesy member N. Y. A. C. Post. Society of American Wars, Vice Commander General, National Organization. Member of board of Officers N. Y. Commandery. Yankee Division Veterans Assn., Past Department Commander. Retreads, Hut 4.

Philatelic: Collectors Club of New York; Finnish Philatelic Assn. (Honorary); Scandinavian Collectors Club (Honorary); Masonic Stamp Club of New York (Past President); Philatelic Foundation (Life); Association for Stamp Exhibitions, Inc. (Life), member of the Board and also Executive Committee.; Scandinavian Collectors Group, London.; A.P.S., S.P.A. and many others. Also American Stamp Dealers Assn. (was treasurer for nine years).

TWO, TOO LATE INAUGURATION DAY CANCELLATION

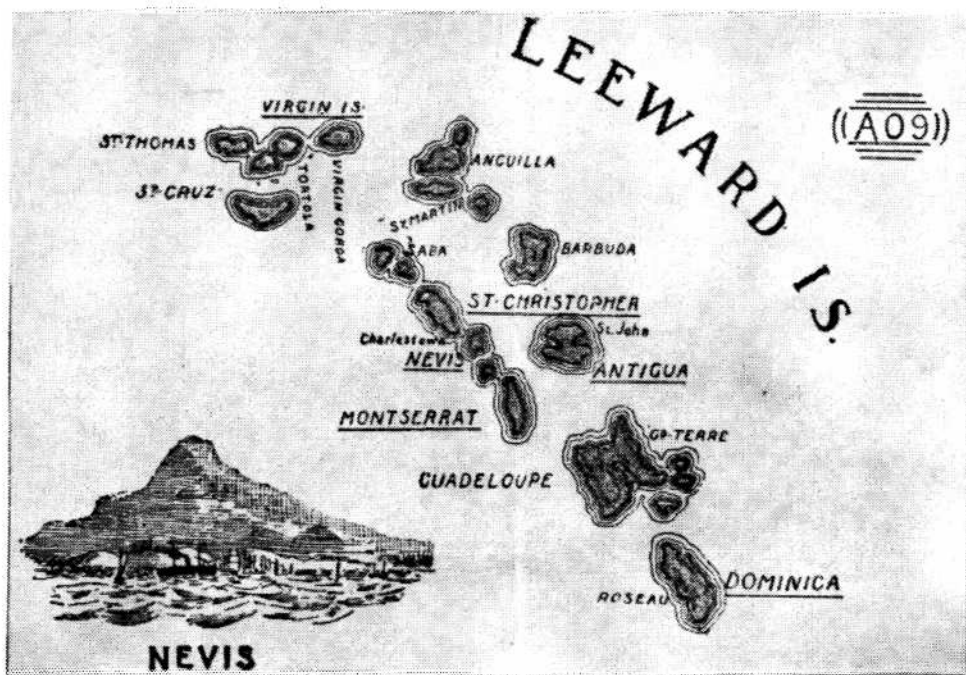
The Geo. Washington Chapter of the MSC in Washington, D. C. sponsored a special inaugural day cacheted envelope, dated January 21, franked with either the Capitol or White House stamps of 1950, and postmarked at 12:00 noon. Someone erred in sending this information to the wrong address and much too late to appear in either our January or February issue, for we are certain that many of our members would want this fine souvenir that was cancelled at the very moment that the President was taking the oath of office. The Chapter prepared 500 such covers, and if available, will fill requests in the order received. The covers, priced at 25 cents for one; two for 45¢ and three for 60¢. Address Masonic Stamp Club of Washington, D. C., P. O. Box 406, Washington 4, D. C.

BROTHER JOSE MARTI, CUBAN HERO

Every Lodge in Cuba displays a bust of Bro. Jose Marti, the "George Washington of Cuba." Martyr Bro. Marti was an ardent Mason, who led his people to victory at the cost of his own life . . . this brave Mason headed the movement which threw off the yoke of 400 years of churchstate slavery by Spanish tyranny. Marti is commemorated on many Cuban stamps, but in 1953 they issued a series of 10 regular and 11 air mail stamps to commemorate the centenary of his birth.—Chas. Van Cott, "Masonic Inspiration."

The Leeward Islands

By DR. IRWIN M. YARRY



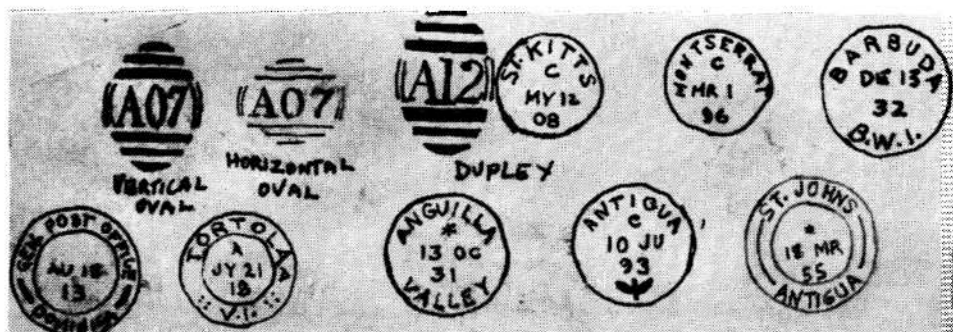
(At the February 1 meeting of the MSC, Bro. Irwin M. Yarry presented nineteen frames, each containing nine pages of his splendid collection, and his most interesting talk was enjoyed by the few brave souls who ventured out on one of the stormiest nights of the winter. To those loyal members who make up the hard core of this club, we can apply the credo of the mailmen: "Neither snow, nor rain, nor heat, nor gloom of night stays these couriers from the swift completion of their rounds."—Ed.)

During the past few weeks, a series of events have suddenly pin-pointed some of the Caribbean Islands as major news. The interest in the tiny island of Nevis as the birthplace of Alexander Hamilton on January 11, 1757, resulted in the simultaneous issues of commemorative stamps by our government and the British Colonial office, honoring our great American statesman's 200th anniversary on January 11, 1957. Another event in the news is the birth of a new British Commonwealth nation by the forma-

tion of The Federation of the West Indies, uniting the islands of Trinidad, Jamaica, Barbados, Windward Island (Dominica, Grenada, St. Lucia and St. Vincent) and the Leeward Islands (Antigua, Barbuda, Montserrat, St. Kitts, Nevis & Anguilla into a single self-governing unit. Collectors are quite familiar with these various island stamps, but may be a little confused as to the reason for these individual stamps, especially as it pertains to the Leeward Islands.

These islands were discovered by Columbus on his second voyage and were not of any value to the Spaniards except for obtaining natives for working the mines of Mexico. The British, after the defeat of the Spanish Armada, were free to move into these Caribbean islands and settled them between 1623 and 1666, except Dominica, which was finally acquired in 1763.

The idea of federation is not new, for in 1672 the islands of Nevis, St. Kitts, Montserrat and Virgins were loosely united as the Caribbean Islands in America, which remained until



1816, when the original charter was revoked. The group was split only to be re-grouped on Nov. 23, 1832, as a confederation under a single governor. The growing importance of these islands commercially, and the large amount of correspondence and trade with England, required a more reliable means of communication. Prior to 1840, the hazards connected with commerce on the high seas was most costly, what with legitimate piracy, open warfare among the great powers, dangerous storms, etc., a vessel traversing in these waters was fair game for anyone who could muster enough cut-throats to man a vessel.

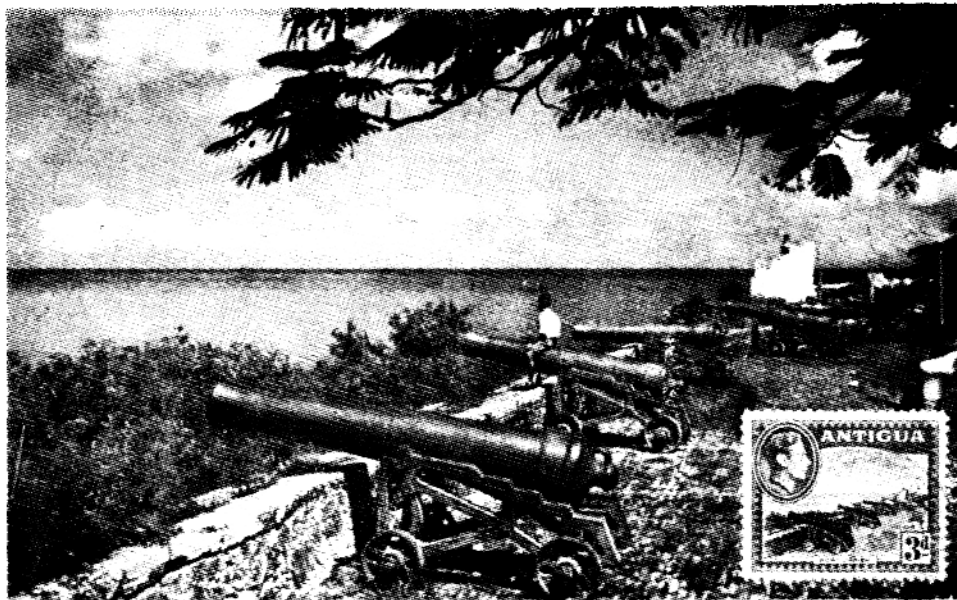
The opening of regular packet service in 1840 and a developing postal system in the islands, required branch post offices in these spots in the Caribbean Islands, and postage stamps were issued on May 1, 1858 in the form of British stamps, only. This was the "used-abroad" period, and can be recognized by a "killer" allotted to each island, as follows:

A02—Antigua; A07—Dominica; A08—Montserrat; A09—Nevis; A12—St. Kitts; A13—Virgin Islands.

A date stamp was also provided. The scarcity of these cancels on British stamps is due to the short period of usage, which terminated in 1860. However, definitive stamps for each of the islands came into use at intervals between 1861-1876, with intervening absence of stamps and the use of a provisional handstamp, showing postage paid for each of the colonies. This versatile handstamp, or "Crown Circle type" is seen on covers from practically every British colony. The definitive stamps for each of the Leeward Islands appeared in the following order: Nevis, 1861; Antigua, 1862; Virgin Islands, 1866; St. Kitts, (or St. Christopher) 1870; Dominica, 1874; Montserrat, 1876.

The Leewards, as such, came into existence in 1871, by an Imperial Act of Her Majesty's Government. The use of definitive stamps for each of the islands ceased in 1890, and were replaced by a Federal issue for all the islands which we know as Leeward Island stamps—key plate design showing the Queen Head. The remainders of the individual islands stamps were sold as tender, resulting in much agitation by collectors. The stamps of the islands became very unpopular and lost prestige among collectors. In spite of this, and adding to the disaffection, a special commemorative issue appeared in 1897, for the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria, which did not sell well. The agitation, and virtual boycott of these stamps, by the Society for Suppression of Speculative Stamps (or the "S.S.S.S.") had a sobering effect in the loss of revenue from the sale of postage stamps to collectors. The answer to the problem only aggravated the situation when, in 1899, the Virgin Islands again issued definitive stamps, although the Federal issues were also valid, and in 1903, the other islands followed with their own respective island stamps.

Thus, two separate issues were valid in each of the islands—the Federal stamps of the Leeward Islands and the definitive issues for each of the islands. This condition remained up to May 1, 1956 when the stamps of the Leeward Islands were discontinued and the definitive issues remained. To the adventurous collector, a new field of collecting came into being—showing use of each stamp of the Leeward Islands cancelled for different islands, plus definitives. The revenue from stamp sales began to mount, right up to the present time. Dominica dropped out of the Leeward Island group in January 1939.



Old Guns of Fort James Flank the Antigua Roadstead

The situation today, with the Federation of the West Indies now in effect, holds the possibility of a new Federal issue sometime in 1958, and who knows whether the definitives, on even a larger scale, will not continue since it embraces such a larger grouping of the islands, as noted above.

The growing popularity of the West Indies as a winter resort, is second to none. The stamps of the various islands are now part of a tourist's purchase in his desire to bring souvenirs home from his Caribbean trip. How, now, does one collect these island stamps?

* A point of philatelic Masonic interest is the 3 pence George VI stamp of Antigua showing Fort James. The foundation stone was laid with full Masonic honors—a most unusual proceeding for a purely military structure. The inscription, weather worn and mutilated, reads as follows: (the bracketed parts are barely readable)

THIS (FIRST STONE) WAS LAID BY

(I) SAAC MATHEW

THE RIGHT WORSHIPFUL

(THE) PROV (INCIAL) GRAND

MASTER

WITH HIS (GRA) ND OFFICERS

AND

THE WARDENS (AND) BROTHERS
OF

THE THREE LODGES (OF F) REE
AND ACCEPTED MASONS
OF ANTIGUA

NOVEMBER 15th 1739

The Lodges referred to were Parham Lodge constituted Jan. 31, 1737, Bakers Lodge constituted March 14, 1738, and Court House Lodge, constituted Nov. 22, 1738.

* (From the Pocket Guide to the West Indies, pg. 199 A. Aspinall, 1923).

We wish to acknowledge and thank the several philatelic publications that printed such complete and deservedly glowing tributes to our late, and beloved George Birch Wray. From the intimate and touching one by his close friend, Bro. Harry Lindquist, in "STAMPS," to "Closed Albums" in the Western Stamp Collector, all agreed that we had lost a kind, warm and good friend. May his soul rest in eternal peace.

PETER LASSEN GOLD DIGGING MASON

We have received from Brother Ray W. Head, a most interesting letter and several snapshots taken at the grave of Peter Lassen, near Susanville, California. Lassen was not only a 49er, but he is credited with bringing the first Masonic charter to California.



However, this is a disputed point, but let us quote Brother Sam Brooks, who wrote a splendid article in the January 1948 issue of the MP, when the California Gold Centennial stamp was issued: "It is believed that this honor (the first Masonic charter to Calif.) rightfully belongs to Saschel Woods, who organized Western Star Lodge from a charter dated May 10, 1848, issued by the Grand Lodge of Missouri. Both Lassen and Woods left their marks on the early life of California." But let us go on with the intriguing story that Bro. Brooks titled "FREEMASONRY IN CALIFORNIA IN GOLD RUSH DAYS," and at a later date we hope to reprint the entire article:

As always, when a new territory was opened up, Freemasons were among the pioneer settlers. Early in 1843, a Philadelphia Mason, Carter M. Carew, arrived in Yerba Buena (now San Francisco), and in a letter to his brother, also a Mason, dated June 14, 1843, advised him of his arrival and of conditions in and near the town. He wrote that some Americans had spoken to him about forming a "Society of Freemasons," but he advised against it at the time. He stated that most of the trading was with the priests of the Missions, and that they would probably resent it. He added that some day there would be a strong "Society of our Order here." How prophetic

were his words!! The Grand Lodge of California was organized only seven years later, in 1850. According to Grand Lodge records, the first Master Mason to settle in California was Abel Stearns, from Salem, Mass. He resided at the pueblo of Los Angeles in 1829.

Other known Masons of the period were Kit Carson, who carried the first overland mail from Taos, New Mexico to Monterey, Calif. in 1842; Benjamin D. Wilson, Mayor of Los Angeles in 1851; Lt. Joseph Warren Revere, a grandson of two Grand Masters, Paul Revere and Joseph Warren, had the honor of lowering the Bear flag and raising the American flag at Sonoma on July 9, 1846. There were many, many more. An interesting note is that John A. Sutter, the proprietor of Sutter's Mill where gold was first found, was elected to receive the degrees in Marysville Lodge No. 9, September 1, 1853, but so far as known, he was never initiated.

THE STAMP POST By ALVIN D. LURCH



ON THE TOPIC OF TOPICAL COLLECTING

This form of collecting has become increasingly popular during recent years. Due to its basic idea, wherein each stamp in the collection supports the same theme, it is also termed Thematic collecting.

It has many interesting angles, even though it by-passes much important philatelic data such as watermarks, paper, perforations and printing methods. But in the last analysis why should a hobby be made complicated if the collector can obtain the desired

degree of enjoyment with a minimum of concentration? There is no doubt that many fine Topical collections have resulted only after much study, however, with the research being directed almost entirely to the theme matter rather than to philatelic data.

One type of Topical which ties in closely with philately and which could be divided into several sub-divisions is Postal History. It includes the following subjects: (1) Stamps on Stamps, (2) Postal Administrations, (3) Postal Services, (4) International Stamp Exhibitions and (5) Stamp Days.

A fine example of division one, is the set of stamps issued by Mauritius in 1948 to commemorate the stamps issued in 1847. An example of number two, are the stamps issued by Switzerland on May 16, 1949, to commemorate the centenary of the Federal Post in Switzerland. The Pony Express stamp of the U. S. fits into division three and the U. S. Fipex 1956 belong in division four.

Letters To The Editor

Clearwater, Florida

Dear Editor:

I miss the meetings since moving to Florida. I do, however, enjoy the Masonic Philatelist. The last number had an outline of Masonry which every Mason should have and study. I doubt if half the Masons ever saw one.

We have a stamp club here, which I have joined . . . the Clearwater Coin & Stamp Club. As its name implies, it tries to do double duty, which does not work very well. The club has no educational program, which I miss. Best regards to everyone.

Fraternally,

Harry L. Kinne.

(Harry, we miss you, too. Many thanks for your kind words. If you had seen the blizzard on our last meeting night, you would have quickly changed your mind.—Ed.)

Dear Editor:

I was very sorry to receive a letter from Brother John A. Mirt of Chicago stating that he was forced to discontinue his monthly Masonic Bulletin and also his First Day cover service. Since I assume that a considerable number of the members of the Masonic Stamp Club of New York were also receiving this service, I think it no more than proper that we should publicly show our appreciation of the good

work that Brother Mirt did. It is with that idea in mind that I am writing this letter.

I know from a slight amount of research that I have done on the Philatelic-Masonic combination that Brother Mirt must have put in a terrific amount of time to dig out the facts and present them for our benefit. All this was done at no profit to himself, as he gave all the gain to aid the Masonic Orphans of Illinois. It was never my pleasure to meet Brother Mirt in person, but through correspondence with him, I got the impression that here was a Mason who really lived his obligation.

It is my hope that he will enjoy many years and that he will be able to contribute articles to the Masonic Philatelist. With best wishes for the continued success of our organization, I am,

Fraternally,

F. T. Anderson.

(Brother Anderson has expressed the sentiments of all of us who have received the articles from Brother Mirt, and the various services that he so ably performed, at no profit to himself, except the deep satisfaction of a job well done. We are certain that as long as John Mirt's name appears on the masthead of the Masonic Philatelist, that he will continue to contribute interesting and important articles on past and current Masonic Philately, and we hope to soon have a statement from Brother Mirt as to how he will keep his many followers informed. You may be sure that he will not let them down. Ed.)



3¢ Commemorative issued in 1933 for Admiral Byrd's Antarctic Expedition II. Death claimed Admiral Byrd March 11.