



# The Masonic Philatelist

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**The Declaration that Changed the World**

# *The Masonic Philatelist*

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*We continue to remain in touch with our distinguished Brother, Dr. Allan Boudreau. He is comfortable and receiving the best care possible. He is being informed of everything happening with our Club and is pleased with our progress.*



**Our Club now has its own  
Internet website**

**<<http://www.mscnewyork.net>>**

**Please see page 24**

## **THE MASONIC PHILATELIST**

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## **The Declaration that Changed the World**

Christopher L. Murphy, BF

We often hear today of major events that “changed the world.” However, nothing can, or likely ever will, compare to the change brought about by the American Declaration of Independence, now some 238 years in the past. At that time the United States declared independence from Great Britain and moved forward to form its own country. Volumes have been written on the American Revolution (War of Independence) with the burning question, “How did they do it?”



Britain’s George III was no slouch. He had the biggest and best equipped army the world had ever known. Soldiers arrived in the “colonies” dressed in smart uniforms, and each equipped with the best arms and supplies available. The American forces did not have enough uniforms to go around, and their equipment was pitiful.

Nevertheless, the American soldiers had the best incentive to win—freedom from unjust treatment by Britain. The end result was that George Washington’s “rag-tag” army through will alone forced the British to surrender and thus was born the United States of America. It was an amazing feat, with the odds of winning bordering on zero.

So how did the Declaration of Independence change the world? At the time there was no world-wide news service, so both the Declaration and its aftermath were hardly noticed. What the Declaration did for America was set the ball rolling for a true and just society with liberty and freedom for all. As a result, America became the model for every other country in the world. Many countries followed suit, and numerous other countries are struggling to achieve the same status. They look to America and the American way as their “guiding star.” We see daily in the news many countries grappling with injustice. People in these countries say to themselves, “America did it, and so can we.” The American Declaration of Independence changed “mind sets” as to what is possible and thus brought about, and is still bringing about, the biggest changes in society the world has ever known.

The stamp illustrated shows the first use of John Trumbull’s painting of the “Declaration” on a postage stamp (1869). Many of those present were Freemasons. A key to all the individuals present can be found in the MP, Vol. 56, No. 4, page 19. The part played by Freemasons in both the Declaration and the subsequent American Revolution was extremely significant. John

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Trumbull's painting shows 48 individuals at the signing of the Declaration. Of that number 29 (60%) were definitely, or very likely, Freemasons. I believe the stamp illustrated shows the largest assembly of Freemasons ever depicted on a single stamp. Perhaps we have to call this stamp America's "Most Masonic."

The main significance of the Masonic Order in colonial days was that members knew they could trust each other. In attempting to effectively "take down" Great Britain, trust was paramount. There was only one Freemason detractor that we know of—Benedict Arnold.

The stamp I have used for the cover, and also shown in this article, is a rare variety—only 2,091 were issued. (*USA #120*)



John Trumbull's remarkable painting of the Declaration of Independence.

**The Wonder Drug:** Few members have not been prescribed penicillin. It was the wonder drug of the 1940s and beyond. The main discoverer of the drug was Dr. Alexander Fleming (1881–1955), later Sir Alexander Fleming. He was a member of London Scottish Rifles Lodge No. 2310, London, England. This is another case where a Freemason has made a tremendous difference in the world. (*Andorra #228*)





*From the editor's desk...*

## Introducing a New *Masonic Philatelist Series*

Some members will recall my work, *The Masonic Specialist—USA and Canada*, which I created about 20 years ago (last stamps reviewed were for the year 1991). This work is a series of ten volumes housed in 3-ring binders featuring hundreds of Masonic-related stamps. It was a highly energetic project, but the work had very limited distribution. The cost was just too high. I did not get enough commitments to have the work printed and bound so did not pursue things any further.

I featured every stamp I could find in our Club publication, and the various Masonic philately newsletters created up to that time (1991). I also perused Denslow's *10,000 Famous Freemasons* and matched numerous noteworthy Masons to US and Canadian stamps—both direct and indirect references. Most are in the category whereby a famous Freemason played a part in the event featured or celebrated on the stamp. Full details pertaining to the work are in the Vol. 49, No. 3 of the MP.

In the work, I was not highly discriminating as to Masonic membership proof (documentation), and included anti-Masons. However, there are numerous stamps and related write-ups of interest. Club members who did not get the work may like to have this information.

Starting with this edition of the MP, pages from *The Masonic Specialist* will be presented as space permits. The entries will be in alphabetical order by the subject's last name. I am deleting entries with highly questionable Masonic membership claims, and the anti-Mason entries. Please note that the lodges shown for a subject may no longer exist.

In the entries, I present what I consider the best stamp for the Freemason discussed. Other applicable stamps are shown as "Secondary Stamps."

I wish to stress that this series will not override other pertinent material that is sent to the Club or found in the regular course of research done by Club members or myself.

One final note, although I compiled this work, the contents are from contributions made by hundreds of Freemasons over about 60 years. They sent their findings to our Club and several other Masonic philately newsletters (particularly *The Philatelic Freemason*, edited by Robert Domingue) and what they wrote came into my hands. Due acknowledgement is therefore extended to all of these distinguished brethren.

I do not plan to update the work at this time. I plan to get what I have "on the table" and then look at updates.

As always, comments on all aspects of Club activities are welcome.

**Note:** See page 27 for the stamp classifications used in this series.

## The Masonic Specialist

**ABBOTT, SIR JOHN JOSEPH CALDWELL** (1821–1893); lawyer; Canadian prime minister; St. Paul's Lodge No. 374, Montreal, Quebec, Canada.

**Primary Stamp:** Canada No. 318  
**Year:** 1952  
**Type:** Definitive  
**Issue:** Prime Ministers  
**Designer:** Not indicated  
**MP Class:** II  
**Artwork:** Not indicated  
**Design:** Sir John Joseph Caldwell Abbott



**Secondary Stamp(s):** None

**Stamp Facts:** Abbott served as Canada's fourth prime minister (1891–1892). He personally professed a hatred for politics, but put his feelings aside to lead his country. In his earlier career, while serving as a member of Parliament in the Macdonald government, one of Abbott's confidential clerks stole and revealed evidence that brought about the fall of the government. Abbott retired from politics for six years after this incident. One of Abbott's main accomplishments in office was the organization of the trade and commerce department.

**Additional Masonic Information:** The stated lodge was on the English Register in Montreal, Quebec, Canada. Abbott was initiated January 26, 1847, passed March 9 and received his Master Mason's degree April 13 of the same year. He retired from this lodge on May 9 of the following year and then rejoined on January 8, 1856. He retired permanently on August 12, 1859.

**ABERNATHY, RALPH DAVID** (1926–1990); Baptist minister and civil rights leader; Mason (no details), Prince Hall affiliation.

**Primary Stamp:** USA No. 1771  
**Year:** 1979  
**Type:** Commemorative  
**Issue:** Black Heritage  
**Designer:** Jerry Pinkney  
**MP Class:** IV  
**Artwork:** Not applicable  
**Design:** Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and civil rights marchers.



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**Secondary Stamp(s):** None

**Stamp Facts:** Ralph Abernathy was the successor to Dr. Martin Luther King. Although not identified on the primary stamp, it is reasonable to assume that Abernathy is represented by one of the civil rights marchers shown.

**Additional Masonic Information:** Abernathy was also a 32nd degree A.A.S.R. Mason, Prince Hall affiliation.

**ADAMS, CHARLES F.** (1876–1946); sports executive; pioneered and developed national league hockey in the United States; Mason, (no details).

**Primary Stamp:** USA No. 1798

**Year:** 1980

**Type:** Commemorative Issue  
Olympic Games

**Designer:** Robert M. Cunningham

**MP Class:** IV

**Artwork:** Not applicable

**Design:** Hockey goal tender



**Secondary Stamp(s):** USA No. 2070

**Stamp Facts:** The primary stamp (No. 1798) commemorated the 13th Winter Olympic Games at Lake Placid, New York in 1980. The secondary stamp (No. 2070) was issued for the Winter Olympic Games, Sarajevo, Yugoslavia in 1984. It is amusing to note that the hockey players depicted on both stamps are left-handed.

**Additional Masonic Information:** Adams was also a Knight Templar and a Shriner.

**ADAMS, SAMUEL** (1722–1803); political leader; signer of the Declaration of Independence; may have been a Mason; purported to have received his Masonic degrees in St. John's Lodge Boston, Massachusetts.

**Primary Stamp:** USA No. 1691

**Year:** 1976

**Type:** Commemorative

**Issue:** American Bicentennial

**Designer:** Vincent E. Hoffman

**MP Class:** II

**Artwork:** Declaration of Independence by John Trumbull

**Design:** Signing of the Declaration of Independence.



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**Secondary Stamp(s):** USA No. 120

**Stamp Facts:** The primary stamp (No. 1691) is one of four (4) stamps that collectively form the entire painting entitled *Declaration of Independence* by John Trumbull. The stamp shows sixteen (16) delegates who are all identified. Samuel Adams is figure Number 7 in the stamp key (MP Vol. 56, No. 4, page 19). The secondary stamp No. 120 shows the entire painting, save two figures on the extreme left.

**Additional Masonic Information:** The idea that Samuel Adams was in the Masonic Order is based on the company he kept, notably John Hancock and Paul Revere, both Freemasons. When Adams was governor of Massachusetts, Revere was Grand Master of Massachusetts. Revere assisted Adams in laying the cornerstone of the Massachusetts State House. Also, many members of the Boston Tea Party (which Adams helped to organize) were Freemasons, (for example, John Crane, Thomas Machin, Thomas Melville, Eliphalet Newell, Henry Purkitt, Paul Revere, John Rowe, and Elisha Story). It is unlikely Samuel Adams would have played a major part in this event without being a Freemason.

**ALBRIGHT, HORACE M.** (1890–1987); conservationist; Director of National Park Service; Livingston Lodge No. 32, Livingston, Montana.

**Primary Stamp:** USA No. 1314

**Year:** 1966

**Type:** Commemorative

**Designer:** Thomas H. Geismer

**MP Class:** IV

**Artwork:** Not applicable

**Design:** National Park Service emblem



**Secondary Stamp(s):** USA No. 740–749, 750, 751, 1122

**Stamp Facts:** The design of the primary stamp (No. 1314) is entitled *Parkscape U.S.A.* The design was intended to identify National Park Service facilities and commemorate the 50th anniversary of the National Park Service. The logo symbolizes the three categories of parks—natural, historical and recreational. The green angular elements suggest nature through mountains and recreation through tents. The three black dots represent cannon balls, symbolic of historic areas such as Fort McHenry, Gettysburg and Independence Hall. While the intent of this logo is sound, it is somewhat strange to associate cannon balls in any aspect, with nature.

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The secondary stamps No. 740–749 were issued in 1934 to commemorate National Park Year. These stamps show scenes in various parks. Souvenir sheets of two stamps in this series (No. 740 and 742) were printed in compliment to the American Philatelic society. The stamps in the sheets are Cataloged No. 750 and 751. The secondary stamp No. 1122 was issued to publicize forest conservation and the protection of national resources. Also, it honored Theodore Roosevelt, a leading forest conservationist, on the centenary of his birth. The stamp shows two large trees between which is a tree stump. The stump has the typical two-level chain-saw cut. It was, therefore, obviously a victim of a logging operation. Might we assume that the message of the stamp is “Don’t do this?”

**Additional Masonic Information:** Albright received his Master Mason’s Degree in the stated lodge in June, 1923. At that time, he was in charge of Yellowstone National Park. He was given his degrees in five weeks. The purpose of the rush was so he would be a member in time to entertain President Harding (a Freemason), who was visiting Yellowstone National Park on June 30th of that year.

**ALDRIN, EDWIN EUGENE, JR.** (1930–); astronaut; second man to walk on the moon; Montclair Lodge No. 144, Montclair, New Jersey.

**Primary Stamp:** USA No. 2419

**Year:** 1989

**Type:** Commemorative

**Issue:** Moon Landing, 20th Anniversary

**Designer:** Christopher Calle

**MP Class:** IV

**Artwork:** Not indicated

**Design:** Astronauts raising the United States flag on the lunar surface



**Secondary Stamp(s):** USA No. C76

**Stamp Facts:** Despite the U.S. Postal Service regulation that a living person may not be shown on a postage stamp, there is no doubt that the people shown on the primary stamp are Neil Armstrong and Edwin Eugene Aldrin, Jr. However, there is no way to specifically identify each of the figures on the stamp, so the postal regulation was not technically broken. Some writers point out that the same reasoning is not applicable to the secondary stamp (No. C76). They say the person shown on this stamp has to be Neil Armstrong. They say this statement is confirmed by the wording on the stamp: “First Man on the Moon.” Armstrong was

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the first man on the moon, so the figure must be him.

Nevertheless, the U.S. Postal Service has a loophole. The word “man” can also be taken as “mankind,” a word that represents all human beings. With this interpretation, the figure on the stamp could be either of the two humans who walked on the surface of the moon. Masonic philatelists may therefore choose to say that the person on the stamp is Aldrin because by the Postal Service’s reasoning, “it could be.”

The stamp also has another rare distinction—the master die that produced the plates for printing the stamp traveled to the moon and back with the astronauts. The following is a reprint of an article on this subject:

During the Apollo 11 moon flight in 1969 the astronauts took with them a die for a postage stamp actually showing them setting foot on the moon’s surface. When the lunar module touched down on the moon the astronauts pulled an impression of this die on paper, thus creating the moon’s first postage stamp. The die was returned to earth and then used in the production of the printing plate for America’s 10c airmail stamp issued in September 1969. The astronauts also took to the moon an envelope franked with an imperforate colored die proof of the stamp. This they cancelled on the moon with a special postmark inscribed MOON LANDING USA, with the date July 20, 1969 in the center. The first lunar post office had the minimum amount of equipment, one rubber stamp and an ink-pad. All three astronauts laid hands on the rubber stamp and cancelled the envelope together.

**Additional Masonic Information:** Aldrin received his Masonic degrees in two different lodges. He was initiated on February 17, and passed April 12, 1955 in Oak Park Lodge No. 864, Montgomery, Alabama. He received his Master Mason’s degree on February 21, 1956 in Lawrence N. Greenleaf Lodge No. 169, Denver, Colorado. He then affiliated with Montclair Lodge No. 144, Montclair, New Jersey. When he made his trip to the moon, he car-



A fresco painting commemorating the first moon landing in 1969 is seen in the lower chamber of the United States Capitol Building, Washington, D.C. The moon landing was the most astounding accomplishment in the history of the world, and one of the men shown here is a Freemason.

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ried a special deputation from the grand master of the Grand Lodge of Texas. This document deputized Aldrin as the special representative of the Grand Master. It authorized him to open a representation of the Grand Lodge of Texas on the moon and establish Masonic territorial jurisdiction there for the Texas Grand Lodge. *There is definitely no argument now with Texas on the question of Grand Lodge territorial size.*

**NOTE:** The only lodge in Montclair, New Jersey is now listed as Edgemont-Columbia Lodge, No. 267. Lodge No. 144 is no longer listed in this state.

**ALEXANDER, GROVER CLEVELAND** (1887–1950); baseball player (pitcher); member of the National Baseball Hall of Fame; St. Paul Lodge No. 82, St. Paul, Nebraska.

**Primary Stamp:** USA No. 1381

**Year:** 1969

**Type:** Commemorative

**Issue:** Professional Baseball

**Designer:** Alex Ross

**MP Class:** IV

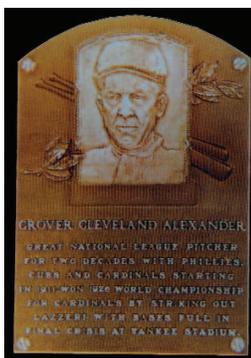
**Artwork:** Not indicated

**Design:** Batter



**Secondary Stamp(s):** USA No. 855

**Stamp Facts:** The primary stamp (No. 1381) marked the 100th anniversary of baseball as it relates to salaried players. The Red Stockings of Cincinnati (later Cincinnati Reds) became the first team to pay team members (1869). The secondary stamp (No. 855) commemorated the centenary (1839–1939) of the game of baseball itself.



Plaque reads:  
“Great National League pitcher for two decades with Phillies Cubs and Cardinals starting in 1911. Won 1926 World Championship for Cardinals by striking out Lazzeri with bases full in final crisis at Yankee Stadium.”

Alexander’s Hall of Fame Plaque

As mentioned on Alexander’s Hall of Fame plaque (shown here), the highlight of his career came in the 1926 World Series when his team, the St. Louis Cardinals, played against the New York Yankees. In the seventh inning, the Yankees were at bat. They had the bases loaded and the score was 3 – 2 for Alexander’s team. The Yankee

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slugger, Tony Lazzeri, was up and few fans doubted anything less than a single from the great Lazzeri. After Alexander worked Lazzeri up to a strike one, ball two count, he connected, but the hit fouled. The next pitch got past the slugger for strike three. Alexander followed-up with two more shut-out innings and cinched the game for his team. This historic episode in baseball later found its way into a movie called *The Winning Team*. Former United States president, Ronald Reagan, played the part of Alexander.

**Additional Masonic Information:** Alexander's Masonic career was disappointing. He was raised in St. Paul Lodge No. 82, Saint Paul, Nebraska on February 8, 1923. Seven years later, his lodge expelled him for un-Masonic conduct.

**ALLEN, CHARLES H.** (1848–1934); political leader; first governor of Puerto Rico when the U.S. freed the island from Spanish rule; William North Lodge, Lowell, Massachusetts.

**Primary Stamp:** USA No. 801

**Year:** 1937

**Type:** Commemorative

**Issue:** Territorial Issue

**Designer:** Not indicated

**MP Class:** Class IV

**Artwork:** Not indicated

**Design:** Fortaleza Palace



**Secondary Stamp(s):** USA No. 983

**Stamp Facts:** The primary stamp (No. 801) honored the Territory of Puerto Rico which was ceded to the United States by Spain after the Spanish–American War (1898). The stamp shows the old governor's palace, known as La Fortaleza.

The secondary stamp (No. 983) commemorates Puerto Rico's first gubernatorial election (1948). The stamp shows the word "INAUGURATION," followed by the date "JANUARY 2, 1949." These inscriptions refer to the inauguration of Louis Munoz-Martin, the first elected governor of Puerto Rico. The reason Munoz-Martin's name is not shown along with his inauguration date is probably due to the U.S. Postal Service restriction on showing a living person (in this case the name of such) on a postage stamp.

**Additional Masonic Information:** The lodges in Massachusetts are not numbered. This stated lodge is still shown on the Grand Lodge of

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Massachusetts registry. The Grand Lodge of Puerto Rico was established in 1885, just 15 years before Allen's appointment as governor. The 2013 statistics (last figures) on Puerto Rico show 70 lodges with about 2,700 members.

**ALLEN, IRA** (1751–1814); political leader; led fight with others for Vermont statehood; first secretary of state for Vermont; Vermont Lodge No. 1, (now No. 18) Charleston, New Hampshire.

**Primary Stamp:** USA No. 903

**Year:** 1941

**Type:** Commemorative

**Issue:** Vermont Statehood

**Designer:** Alvin R. Meissner

**MP Class:** Class IV

**Artwork:** Not indicated

**Design:** State Capitol, Montpelier



**Secondary Stamp(s):** None

**Stamp Facts:** Vermont was the 14th state to gain statehood. The primary stamp shows a shield with 13 purple stars which represent the states already in the union at that time. Above the shield (i.e., outside the shield's boundary) is a large white star which, of course, represents Vermont. As Vermont is in the union, why is the white star outside the shield?

**Additional Masonic Information:** Ira Allen was initiated in the stated lodge in 1782. Two other Masons, Thomas Chittenden and Jonas Fay were active with him in establishing Vermont statehood.

**ALLEN, WILLIAM JR., MD** (1903–1981); physician and radiologist; first black radiologist in the world to receive a gold medal from the American College of Radiology; Square Deal Lodge, St. Louis, Missouri, Prince Hall affiliation.

**Primary Stamp:** USA No. 949

**Year:** 1947

**Type:** Commemorative

**Issue:** Doctors' Issue

**Designer:** Charles R. Chickering

**MP Class:** Class IV

**Artwork:** Painting by Sir Luke Fildes

**Design:** Doctor at a patient's bedside



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**Secondary Stamp(s):** None

**Stamp Facts:** The primary stamp was issued in honor of the doctors of America. Sir Luke Fildes (1844–1927), the artist who painted the picture from which the stamp is taken, was a British artist. He painted state portraits of King Edward VI, Queen Alexandra and King George V. He was a member of the Royal Academy and was knighted in 1906. There is no indication that he ever visited America.

**Additional Masonic Information:** Allen was chairman of the Prince Hall Grand Lodge Library Committee and also Grand Medical Examiner of Missouri.



If any Club member would like to join our editorial staff and provide a little help by editing and proofing *The Masonic Philatelist*, this would be much appreciated. You need to be on the Internet and have the Adobe Reader program. I send out pdf documents, which you read and get back to me with any comments or corrections. You don't need to be highly knowledgeable in Freemasonry or philately—mainly just have an eye for spotting composition or text errors. **Editor**

### **The Rickenbacker/Sea Gull Story**

In 2008 I was working with a lady on a new book. She told me of a very good friend, Bill White (in his 80s), who was a pilot and a neighbor of Eddie Rickenbacker (1890–1973). He said that Eddie would go down to the seaside regularly and feed sea gulls, and as he did so he would say, “thank you.” When questioned, Rickenbacker told White that during World War II, the transport plane he was in crashed at sea, hundreds of miles from land. He and seven others managed to get into a life raft and paddled away. The group ran out of provisions after 8 days and were now starving. Rickenbacker reclined at the back of the raft with his cap over his face. Suddenly he felt something land on his cap, so he grabbed it. It was a sea gull, which he quickly killed. The meat provided a meal, and the entrails served as bait for fishing, thus the group survived and made it to land. I have now confirmed that the story is true. Eddie Rickenbacker was a member of Kilwinning Lodge, No. 297, Detroit, Michigan. (USA #2998)





# **Murphy's**

## **STAMP RANT**

**Errors, Oddities & Oversights**  
**USA & CANADA**

### **Book One: Design Anomalies – Part 3**

#### **HISTORICAL HYSTERICS**



The illustrated Huguenot-Walloon Tercentenary stamp series is probably the biggest mess-up in U.S. postal history. The main problem lies in combining the two entities, Huguenot and Walloon, on the same stamps. The third stamp illustrated is strictly a Huguenot stamp, but along with referencing the Walloons, it has dates that primarily apply to the Walloons. The stamp shows a monument erected by the French Huguenots at Fort Carolina (now Mayport), Florida in 1564. It was destroyed by the Spanish in 1565. The monument was replaced and dedicated in 1924. This date, therefore, has significance, but not in the context of a tercentenary (1624–1924). The other two stamps are essentially correct except they reference the Huguenots. The Walloons, by and large, did arrive in North America in 1624; however, there were Dutch settlements as early as 1614. This fact prompted the New York Holland Society to object to the dates shown on the stamps.

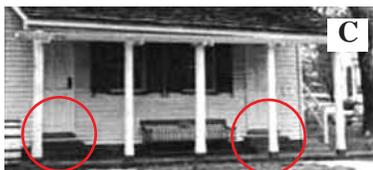
The entire controversy related to these stamps is primarily in connection with the difference between Walloons and Huguenots. Very basically, Walloons were French-dialect speaking Protestants living in parts of Belgium. In the late 1500s and early 1600s, many Walloons fled to the Netherlands

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to escape religious persecution. Here, they became known to the Dutch people as Huguenots (French-Protestants). In 1624, a large number of Walloons emigrated to North America. The “Huguenots”(now with this same name) living in France were also subjected to religious persecution. In 1562, some of these people made an unsuccessful attempt to establish a colony in North America (referred to with the monument stamp). In 1685, a mass emigration of “Huguenots” from France to other countries took place. Many of these people went to North America. The Scott Catalogue shows the following regarding the three stamps: “300th anniversary of the settling of the Walloons, and in honor of the Huguenots.” Given the circumstances, this statement appears to be the best way to resolve the mess. (USA #614–616)

### INDIANA TWO-STEP

The little old house that served as the first Capitol of Indiana is shown in the background of this stamp. The house was built around the year 1800 and has been preserved as a historical landmark. It appears the stamp was designed after a photograph that did not include the steps leading up to the two front doors. Another photograph shows the steps which I gather are removable. In other words, they are simple little wooden “two step” units. The following illustrations show the stamp “steps” detail and the actual photographs. (USA #996)

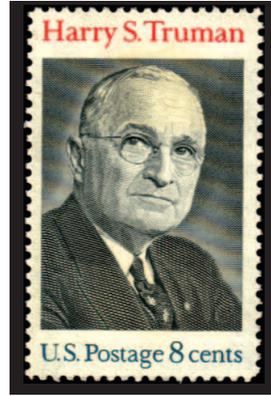


- A. Stamp detail.
- B. Probable photo used for the stamp design (likely taken off-season, with the steps in storage).
- C. Photo showing the steps.

### INITIAL ISSUE

It is common knowledge that Harry S Truman's middle "initial" did not stand for any specific name. He tells us that one of his grandfathers' name was Shipp and the other Solomon. As his parents could not decide which of these two names to give their son, they decided to just give him the letter "S," thus honoring both grandfathers. You will note that I have shown the word "initial" in quotations. This distinction was used because the letter is not an initial—it is just a letter.

Consequently, the letter must not be shown with a period like a regular initial. When a period is used after a letter, the period takes the place of missing letters. In Truman's case, there were no missing letters because they were undecided. For this reason, Harry Truman himself never used a period when he wrote or signed his name, nor did his printed letterheads show a period. Both the Encyclopedia Americana and the Merriam Webster people abide by this rule. The illustrated stamp and two other U.S. Truman stamps issued to date are therefore incorrect in this regard. (*USA #1499*)



### IT'S THE THOUGHT THAT COUNTS

A man with a strange hat and a long, flowing white beard graces this Newfoundland stamp issued in 1897. The inscription reads, "CABOT, HYM THAT FOUND THE NEW ISLE." The intention of the stamp, of course, is to honor John Cabot who discovered Newfoundland in 1497. However, because no portrait of John Cabot could be found for the stamp design, the likeness of Cabot's son, Sebastian, was substituted. To make matters worse, recent evidence suggests that Sebastian may not have even accompanied his father on the 1497 voyage to Newfoundland as was generally believed. Moreover, some historians remark that Sebastian was a bit of a "bad egg" in the world of explorers, who was prone to telling tall tales of his travels



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and experiences. For the well-intentioned stamp designer we can offer some solace by saying, it's the thought that counts. (NFD #62)

### LET THERE BE LIGHT

The church tower shown on the Old North Church depicted on this stamp gives one the impression that it is circular. However, the entire structure is square. Furthermore, we might also wonder as to the placement of the lanterns shown on the stamp. Given the narrow window or opening, the lanterns probably did not appear as the stamp design indicates. It is far more likely that they were placed vertically in a straight line (one atop the other with as much space as possible in-between).



Surprisingly, *Chronicle of America* (1988) states that only one lantern was hung, quote: “At sunrise, the sexton at Christ’s Church ascended the tower and hung a single lantern.” As the story goes, the plan called for two (2) lanterns if the British were seen to be coming in boats across the River Charles; one (1) lantern if they were seen going on foot by Boston Neck in the south. The British crossed the river so two (2) lanterns, as the stamp shows, were hung.

The expression “One if by land, two if by sea,” as shown on the stamp, is from Henry Wadsworth Longfellow’s poem, *Paul Revere’s Ride* (1860). We have to accept that the word “sea” simply meant “water,” which in this case was a river crossing. There are no seas or even large lakes anywhere near the River Charles. The word “sea,” therefore, cannot be taken literally. In all likelihood, the patriots did not even use the word “sea” in their plans. We can be reasonably sure they just stated, “land route or river crossing,” or words to that effect.

On a different note, for many years, there has been debate as to who actually hung the lanterns in the steeple. Credit has been generally given to John Pulling who was the church sexton at the time. However, the question was put to a recent curator of the church who stated that Pulling was too old and too feeble to even walk out in the night, let alone climb the stairs to the steeple. The curator informed that it was Robert Newman, a 26-

## *The Masonic Philatelist*

year-old patriot, who performed the deed. The following illustrations show the stamp design tower (left) and the actual tower (right). (USA #1603)



### LIGHT DIFFERENCES

Indiana's old Capital at Corydon as it is shown on this stamp appears to have been short-changed window-wise. The windows on the upper floor show only two panes across and 4 down. The actual building has three panes across and 6 down. In like manner, the stamp building lower floor has 4 by 4 windows; the building 4 by 6. The following illustrations compare the stamp design detail (left) with a photograph of the actual building. (USA #1308)



The actual photo (right) shows the side of the building; however, all windows are uniform.

LIGHT READING

This stamp makes two claims. First, that Edison's original lamp was invented in 1879. Second, that 1929 was the Golden Jubilee of electric light. On the first claim, Edison invented many lamps prior to 1879, however, they were not practical. The problem was the filament. Edison tried many different materials for use as the filament. He needed to find something that could be heated to give off light but would not burn into ashes. Everything he tried prior to 1879 had such limited life it was not practical. He invented the carbon filament in 1879 which had a practical life expectancy. On the second claim, the first incandescent electric lamp was invented in 1802 by Sir Humphrey Davy, an English chemist. However, again the lamp was not practical. Somewhat practical (though unsatisfactory) electric lamps are traced to as early as 1859. In that year, Moses Farmer lit his house in Salem, Massachusetts with electric lamps.



Edison's invention brought about a practical electric lamp and thus practical electric light. The statements on the stamp, therefore, are only correct when they are taken to include the word "practical." (USA #654)

LITTLE THINGS MEAN A LOT

This stamp depicts the Great Seal of the State of Wyoming. While there are several versions of the seal, the stamp designer's rendition is greatly superior to any in my opinion. Unfortunately, there is one minor omission that has significant meaning. Left and right of the shield (lower, center) there should be a ribbon with the dates 1869 and 1890. Although the date 1890 (statehood date) is naturally shown further down on the stamp, there is no reference anywhere to the date 1869. This date is important because it was in that year that women were given the right to vote and hold public office in Wyoming Territory. It was the date of Wyoming's EQUAL RIGHTS and these words are shown on the banner behind the



## The Masonic Philatelist

woman who is the central figure on the seal. Wyoming is very proud (and rightly so) of its very early attention to equal rights. That is why the central seal figure is a woman. Without the date, the important time reference for Wyoming's equal rights is lost. Although not as important, Wyoming's statehood number (44) is also missing on the stamp. The following illustrations show the unfortunate omissions and the remarkable stamp artistry. (USA #897)



Actual seal with omissions circled (XLIV is No. 44).



## MEDAL MUDDLE

There are three (3) different types of U.S. medals of honor depicted on the illustrated stamp. The use of the singular "Medal of Honor" as shown on the stamp is misleading. The medal on the left is the Army-Air Force medal. This medal was used when the Air



Force (or Air Service) was part of the Army. The medal in the center is the Air Force medal which was used after the Air Force became a separate military establishment. The medal on the right is the Navy-Marine Corps medal. (USA #2045)

## *What's New?*

Notification was received of a stamp issued to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the Grand Lodge of India, issued November 25, 2011. An image of the stamp, and of the First Day Cover was sent by Bro. Tofique Fatehi.



The information provided is as follows: “Freemasonry society in India was established in 1729 at Kolkota. The apex body of Freemasonry is called ‘the Grand Lodge.’ After the independence of India, Lodges in India decided to constitute a sovereign body of Freemasonry and accordingly the Grand Lodge of India was consecrated on 24th November 1961 at New Delhi. Some of the prominent Freemasons of India include Swami Vevekananda, C. Rajagopalachari, and Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed.”

Another submission came from Dr. Renato-Mauro Schramm in Brazil. He provided a new stamp/seal commemorating the 12th Anniversary of Lodge Samuel Fonseca, No. 42, York Rite, Orient of Florianopolis, Santa Catarina, Brazil. Those interesting in obtaining this item can write to Bro. José Alcides Fernandes Andujar, Rua Dom Jaime Camara, Apt., 301. 234 Centro, CEP 88015-120 Florianopolis, SC, Brazil.



In studying the new stamp and stamp/seal, I noticed some amusing points. First, the India stamp shows a “Star of David” on the Grand Lodge building. This symbol is not a Masonic symbol; however, it might be considered such because King Solomon inherited the seal from his father (King David) and adopted it as the “Seal of Solomon.” Masonic ritual, of course, is based on the building of King Solomon’s Temple, so there is a connection.

Secondly, both the stamp and the seal show the Masonic emblem

## The Masonic Philatelist

(square and compasses) in the Entered Apprentice Degree. In other words, both points (legs) of the compasses covered. The three degrees in Freemasonry are *progressive*. In other words, the further you go, then the more you know. It is only when a new member attains the degree of a Master Mason they he has all of the knowledge needed for this great honor. In this degree, the compasses points (legs) are placed on top of the square to signify that the necessary Masonic knowledge has been imparted to the new member.

I do note that the Entered Apprentice Degree positions were used on stamps issued by Barbados, Curacao, and for one of the stamps in the series issued by Tadjikistan.

Certainly none of this makes any great difference in the application of Freemasonry to a postage stamp—any of the three different positions of the square and compasses are Masonic. I suppose I would just prefer to see the Master Mason position used in all cases.

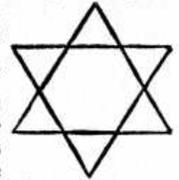
(Note: If any brother has other knowledge in this regard, I would appreciate hearing from him.)

**Star Gazing:** A “Star of David” was surreptitiously engraved in the beard of Bernard Revel (USA #2193). Given one agrees that the symbol has Masonic significance, then this stamp might be included in a Masonic collection. It is a highly intriguing symbol, composed of two equilateral triangles, and such triangles are Masonic symbols.



On the right is an entry from Albert Mackey's *Encyclopedia of Freemasonry*. As can be seen, the symbol had great significance to ancient people. The Masonic Order does not assign “supernatural” significance to any of its symbolism, and for certain current day use of the “Star of David” does not carry such either. We are far beyond such “notions.”

**Seal of Solomon.** The Seal of Solomon or the Shield of David, for under both names the same thing was denoted, is a hexagonal figure consisting of two interlaced triangles, thus forming the outlines of a six-pointed star. Upon it was inscribed one of the sacred names of God, from which inscription it was supposed principally to derive its talismanic powers. These



powers were very extensive, for it was believed that it would extinguish fire, prevent wounds in a conflict, and perform many other wonders. The Jews called it the Shield of David in reference to the protection which it gave to its possessors. But to the other Orientalists it was more familiarly known as the Seal of Solomon. Among these imaginative people, there was a very prevalent belief in the magical character of the King of Israel. He was esteemed rather as a great magician than as a great monarch, and by the signet which he wore, on which this talismanic seal was engraved, he is supposed to have accomplished the most extraordinary actions, and by it to have enlisted in his service the labors of the genii for the construction of his celebrated Temple.

**We are Now on the Internet:** <<http://www.msclnewyork.net>>

For the benefit of Club members who are not on the Internet, the following shows what our website looks like:

## The Masonic Stamp Club of New York



Thank you for visiting the  
**Masonic Stamp Club of New York**  
Information & Research Site  
Our Club is dedicated to the study of  
**Masonic Philately**  
Membership in the club is open  
*We welcome all inquires*

Masonic Philately is the study of postage stamp designs that are or may be associated with the Masonic Order. There are various stamp classifications — primarily, stamps issued for a Masonic purpose; Freemasons shown on stamps; and stamps showing objects with Masonic connections.

Our Club publishes a quarterly journal called *The Masonic Philatelist* which is sent to all members. It provides articles related to postage stamps world-wide, both on Masonic subjects and general stamp-related subjects. Back issues of our publication are provided below as pdf documents. You are welcome to review all entries and print material for your personal use.

A complete history of our Club is provided here **CLUB HISTORY**. If you would like to join our club and receive our printed quarterly, please access the **APPLICATION** provided.

**Club Contact Information**

If you have any membership-related questions, please contact our Club Administrator, Dr. Michael Bronner, Email: <[mb7@nyu.edu](mailto:mb7@nyu.edu)>.

The Club mailing address is: The Masonic Stamp Club of New York, 22 East 35th Street, New York, NY, 10016, U.S.A.

Our Club President and Editor/Publisher of our quarterly publication is Christopher L. Murphy, Email: <[cmurphy101@shaw.ca](mailto:cmurphy101@shaw.ca)>

***The Masonic Philatelist* (MP) Back Issues**

MP Vol. 9, No. 3 November 1952  
MP Vol. 53, No. 1 March 1997 – Brothers of the Cloth  
MP Vol. 56, No. 4 December 2000 – Group Stamps  
MP Vol. 70, No. 1 March 2014  
MP Vol. 70, No. 2 June 2014  
MP Special Edition – Masonic Musicians, Summer 2014

(Additional entries will be added.)



This stamp showing The Inauguration of George Washington (a Freemason) was petitioned by Our Club in 1938.



President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, an avid stamp collector and Freemason, was a member of our Club.



The Shriners were honored on a Canadian stamp in 2001.

## The Masonic Philatelist

The site is, of course, in color and specific information (CLUB HISTORY, APPLICATION, EMAILS, and MP BACK ISSUES) are “linked” so that when a person “clicks” on them, they are taken to the documents, which can be any number of pages.

I suppose a valid question is, why do we need the Internet? We have been doing fine for 80 years, so why change anything? The short answer is that 81% of Americans are now on the Internet, and if they wish to find anything, this is where they will go to find it..

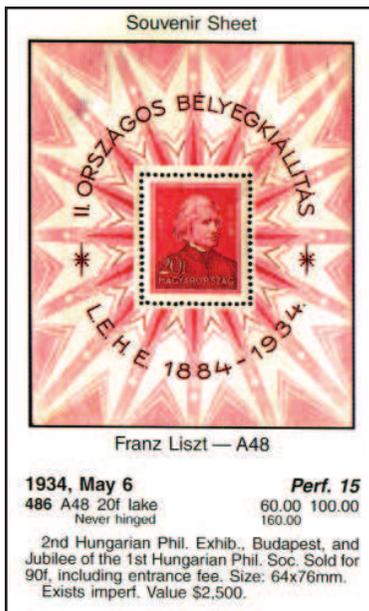
Our Club is doing fine at the moment, but our “closed albums” are surpassing our “new albums.” We now have an open membership policy and it is hoped that our Internet presence will attract more new Club members.

At the same time, membership in the Masonic Order is drastically decreasing, and we are equally interested in trying to do something to turn this around. Most certainly, one of the highest honors one can receive is to be depicted on a government postage stamp. Few non-Masons are aware of just how many highly distinguished men have been Freemasons. Perhaps if this were more widely known, it would encourage more young men to join our Order.

Our objective is to get as many websites as we can to show a link to our site and thereby increase our exposure. The Internet started to become a way of life in the mid 1990s, so after 20 years, it is definitely here to stay. Your Club will continue to provide a printed quarterly journal for as long as such is feasibly possible. Indeed, we are starting to look at providing this publication in color..

### Across the Ocean and Far Away

While our Club founding Brethren chatted in New York City in 1934, a stamp was issued in Hungary depicting a highly distinguished Freemason, Franz Liszt (1811–1886), Lodge Zur Einigkeit, Frankfort-on-the-Main, Germany. In 1962, another stamp showing Liszt was featured in the MP. (Vol. 18, No. 5). In the article we learn that in 1861 Liszt went to Rome and became a member of the Catholic Franciscan Order, whereupon he was known as Abbe Liszt. This might surprise some Club members, but I think Brother Liszt could do most anything he wanted to do. (Image is from the Scott Catalogue.)



## Club Membership Dues – A New Perspective

Commencing immediately our Club membership dues policy will be \$15 per year or BY DONATION. What we are asking here is that members contribute as liberally as they can to our Club without inconvenience to themselves. We will not drop a member from our role for non-payment of dues.

Dues are used to print and mail our quarterly publication and general miscellaneous administration expenses (stationery, packaging, postage). Club officers are volunteers.

We produce a printed quarterly journal because we know this is what most stamp collectors prefer, and we realize that perhaps most of our members are not on the Internet.

As long as we receive sufficient funding to cover our expenses, we will continue to provide our quarterly to all Club members and organizations (Masonic and public libraries).

Over the last 80 years Club members have been very generous so we have operated with absolutely no financial concerns. By providing a little extra in your dues remittance, you will help to bring *The Masonic Philatelist* to a member who might be having some financial difficulties. I ask all Brethren to reflect for a moment on a very small, but enormous part of our ritual.



In the unlikely event we are not able to meet our financial requirements, then we will come to you with our situation.

**Essay Musing:** Back in the 1860s, the stamp design seen here was proposed, but somehow never “made the cut.” It was a great idea—two of the greatest men who every lived fully side-by-side on the same stamp. This “essay” is now one of the most sought, with a value of \$6,000.

It would be great if the USPS would dig this one out and put it on the table for another look. (#100-E1)



## **A Special Series: Foreign Masonic-related Stamps that Parallel USA and Canadian Designs & Themes**

My specialty has always been the stamps of USA and Canada, so I never seriously got into the stamps from foreign countries. In looking through a Scott Catalog for other countries, I was a little surprised to see some highly prominent Freemasons and Masonic-related themes previously used for USA and Canadian stamps.

Of course, one can reason that if he/she has a stamp from the USA or Canada showing a particular subject, why bother with a stamp from another country? Well, the designs of the other stamps are totally different, and dare I say that in some cases they might be better? Stamp collectors are generally “art lovers” (every stamp is a miniature work of art) so there is definitely an incentive to look at what other countries have done with a particular subject.

Commencing with this edition of the MP, we will feature selected stamps from foreign countries of the nature I have explained. The entries will be in alphabetical order (countries starting with the letter “A” then “B” and so forth.

At this point, I would like to review exactly what is the criteria for a “Masonic-related” stamp. The classifications are as follows:

- Class I:** Stamps issued for a specific Masonic purpose (honoring or commemorating the Masonic Order).
- Class II:** Stamps that depict a person who is or was a Freemason.
- Class III:** Stamps that depict objects built, discovered, invented or created by a Freemason, places named after a Freemason, and monuments to Freemasons (includes houses).
- Class IV:** Stamps that commemorate a certain event or undertaking in which a Freemason played a major role.
- Class V:** Stamps that were designed by a Freemason.
- Class VI:** Stamps that intentionally or inadvertently show symbols associated with the Masonic Order.

Naturally, a stamp can fit into more than one class; however, it is recognized by its highest class. The following are *selected* stamps for the countries indicated.

If you have a suggestion for a stamp to include in this series (future countries), I would be pleased to hear from you.

**NOTE:** The classifications shown were revised on April 22, 2015 and now differ from those shown in the printed *Masonic Philatelist*.

**Foreign Stamps that Parallel USA & Canadian Designs/Themes**

**Class II: FORD, Henry:** Inventor. He is credited with the invention of the assembly line for automobiles, making them affordable to average people. Palestine Lodge No. 375, Detroit, Michigan. (*Afghanistan #1098*)

**Class II: CHURCHILL, Winston:** Prime Minister of Great Britain. Image shows him when he was 5 years old. Studholm Lodge No. 1591, London, England. (*Aitutaki #110*)

**Class II: The United States Declaration of Independence.** The U.S. issued the same stamps in 1976. There are probably 29 Masons depicted—see cover story. (*Aitutaki #124–126*)

**Class II: ALDRIN, Edwin Eugene, Jr.:** Astronaut on the first manned Moon landing. Aldrin is shown on the right. This is a unique stamp. Aldrin has yet to be shown on a U.S. stamp. Montclair Lodge No. 144, Montclair, New Jersey. (*Aitutaki #506*)

**Class II: KING GEORGE VI and PRINCE PHILIP:** Royal anniversary. King George VI, right, and Prince Philip, left. Navy Lodge No. 2612, London, England. (*Aitutaki #520*)

**Class II: WASHINGTON, George:** First President of the United States. Alexandria Lodge No. 22, Alexandria, Virginia. (*Albania #2584a*)



## George Washington Masonic Stamp Club Update

Walter P. Benesch, President

In February 2014 at the Annual Meeting George Washington Masonic Stamp Club (GWMSC), after the conferral of the Degree of Philately upon all the candidates at the meeting, the Club had the audacity to re-elect as President, the former, present, and 1st Vice-President—the author of this announcement. Offices are held for two years. But the last time this president took over the position it lasted for 11 years! Hopefully some youthful Masons will join the club and assist in preventing such a long term of office from recurring.

The GWMSC holds two meetings a year. The Annual Meeting is at the George Washington Masonic National Memorial (North room) which is located on Shooter's Hill, in Alexandria, Virginia (up the hill from the Metro and Amtrak station). Newly elected members receive the Degree of Philately at that meeting, along with those members who have not had the opportunity to be at an Annual Meeting previously. For those members as well as any other Masonic philatelists, this is a degree not to be missed (as long as you have a sense of humor). For those interested in joining the Club and receiving the degree, applications can be downloaded from the Club's web site at: <[wmssc.tripod.com/](http://wmssc.tripod.com/)>. As has often been said, membership in the GWMSC is one of best bargains in Masonry—\$20 for a life time membership. The website also shows several of the covers produced by the Club, and occasionally new stamp-related information is provided.

The second meeting of the current calendar year will be held on Saturday, August 30, 2014 at the BALPEX convention, Ft. Hunt Marriott Hotel in Maryland. Yes, this is Labor Day weekend, but you cannot find a more delightful place to spend a philatelic weekend than in the beautiful countryside north of Baltimore. The meetings at BALPEX are open to the public. Everyone is more than welcomed. By the way, there are a variety of restaurants and shops just a few blocks away. The GWMSC program for the meeting will be, "Is Harry Potter a Master Mason?" This will be a look at the Masonic symbolism in the J.K. Rowling's books. This has been a very popular talk at various Lodges, Masonic Research organizations and other Masonic bodies. What will be different is that some uniquely Harry Potter philately items may be up for auction.

With the recent release of the Harry Potter series of stamps, a series of covers with the stamps were taken to the Mt. Vernon Post Office and cancelled with the GWMSC cancellation stamp on February 22, 2014 (George Washington's birthday). This is a complete set of the stamps, one stamp per cover, with the Club's Masonic cancellation. **THERE IS ONLY ONE SUCH SET IN THE WORLD.** The complete set will be up for sale for those interested. The proceeds of the sale for this collection of covers will go to support the Club expenses and its selected charity. Of course there will also be the usual door prizes and sales of previous official Club covers. If you have not attended BALPEX or the GWMSC this will be your opportunity to see what fun Masonic philately can be.

## The Masonic Philatelist

### Profile of '34: What was Going with our Founding Brethren?



When our founding Brethren looked out over New York in 1934, above is what they saw. In May, the newspaper headlines would have read **BONNY AND CLYDE KILLED**. Then in July, **G-MEN RUB OUT DILLINGER**. In August they would have seen a new comic strip, Al Capp's *Li'l Abner*. Then in November, **BABY FACE AND PRETTY BOY BITE THE DUST**. About the end of the year, their kids would be talking about a new Disney character—**Donald Duck**. They would have hardly dreamed that *Li'l Abner* and Donald would one day be shown on postage stamps. At the movies, the main attraction would have been **KING KONG**, and again, who would have considered a postage stamp for the beast?



Bonny and Clyde  
in better days.



For stamp collectors, 1934 was a bit of a bonus year because the spectacular National Parks Issue came out. There are ten stamps all together, four of which are provided below.



## First Day Covers – What is the MSCNY Situation?

For many years our Club arranged for the provision of First Day Covers (FDCs), which has now been discontinued. I was not involved in this process, so am not familiar with how they are ordered and so forth. However, I can see that things would have been greatly simplified by the use of the Internet.

Bro. Allan Boudreau and others did send me FDCs over the years, and I have ended up with some duplicates as follows:

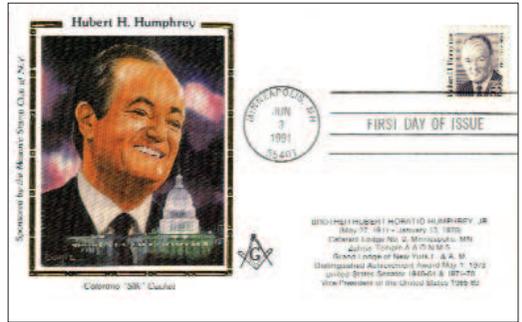
- Hubert H Humphrey, 1991, MSCNY (1)
- Gutzon Borglum, 1991, MSCNY (3)
- Philippines – Grand Lodge 75 years, 1987, Masonic Stamp (2)

I will be sending these to Bro. Bronner for subsequent sale to Club members.

A genuine US First Day Cover is one that has the stamp cancelled with the words “FIRST DAY OF ISSUE,” as seen on the sample provided here (but cancellation formats vary). Other countries do the same sort of thing. It simply means that the the stamp was cancelled on the first day it was released. Generally I believe the PLACE of cancellation is relevant to the subject (hometown or something like that). This gives the cover a little more appeal.

If foreign Brethren wish to send me FDCs for inclusion in the *Masonic Philatelist*, would you please confirm in your letter that they are genuine First Day Covers for your country.

The question I have at the moment is, should the MSC again produce First Day Covers? Perhaps we will try one and see what response we get.



I see nothing on the horizon as to Masonic-related US or Canadian stamps. However, there is a little bit of nostalgia from the US for those who are sort of getting on a bit—**Janice Joplin** (should be out by the time you receive this MP issue). Back “in the day” I even bought her LP, along with about 7.8 million others (to date).



## Fred Boothe and the Little Town that Pulled Off a Philatelic Miracle

by  
Jim Dougherty

I admit it... I'm an eBay-aholic! There's scarcely a day I don't look at what has been newly listed under "Texas 776," the Texas Independence commemorative stamp of 1936.

After publishing the *Collector's Guide to 1936 Texas Independence Centennial and 1945 Statehood Centennial Cachets* back in 1996, it was obvious that there was a substantial hole in my collection. I even had to appeal to my dear friend Monte Eisermann to loan me her set of Supreme Court Justices cachets to appear in the book. (She had previously loaned them to Dr. Earl Planty for his *Planty Encyclopedia of 1936 cachets*). At the time, "The Justices" and four other individuals were the only cachets directly attributed to Gonzales, Texas, Postmaster Fred Boothe.

So, I was thumbing through eBay offerings when I found a rather sad looking gentleman in a portrait cachet. The hand-written name did not sort of "register" and there was no description or caption. But, there was a "look" to the cachet and the opening bid was very low. I full-well expected an all-out bidding war with the several other Scott #776 collectors around the state, and even a transplanted Texan living in Georgia. For some reason, bidding was all but non-existent and I won the cover for what I'd expect to pay for a common first day cover with, or without, a cachet. When the cover arrived I knew immediately what I had—a first day cover for the Texas Independence Stamp (1936) showing Postmaster Fred Boothe, as seen here:



## *The Masonic Philatelist*

I contacted the seller, Pat Patterson, and asked if he had any information about the source of the cover; and he most certainly did! His deceased wife was one of the daughters of the late postmaster, Fred Boothe. Sometime after Pat's wife died, he started going through her "archives" and found a treasure-trove of philatelic material from her father.

I soon found an excuse to personally meet Pat, a retired businessman, at his home in the San Francisco Bay area. A Texas native, he never met his father-in-law as postmaster. Boothe died after a long illness in the mid-1940s. His obituary in the local newspaper outlined his life and career.

During my previous research for the book, I found Boothe's grave in the Gonzales Masonic Cemetery. His obituary confirmed that he was a Freemason; a member of Gonzales Lodge No. 30, Colorado Commandery No. 4, K.T., and Ben Hur Shrine, both in Austin, Texas.

So, why was Gonzales, a relatively small town, chosen to premier the Texas Independence Centennial stamp over much bigger postal facilities in San Antonio, Houston, or the capital city of Austin? The answer is that Gonzales is noted for its standing up to the invading Mexican Army, and not surrendering its defensive cannon. With the cry "Come and Take it!" the Mexican army retreated and the cannon was buried by town folk, just in case the Mexicans came back with a stronger force.



Gonzales post office on a rainy March 2, 1936.

When Gonzales was chosen the official "First Day City," Boothe had a grandiose idea to create special First Day Covers. He called on his close friend, Henry Reese, the editor of the *Gonzales Daily Inquirer*, to provide press photos of the governors of the then 48 states, the U.S. Trust Territories, members of the Supreme Court, along with many Texas and national officials. He also obtained photos of the luminaries from the U.S. Post Office and Federal Government, who were scheduled to visit "The Lexington of Texas" for First Day Ceremonies.

Postmaster Boothe commissioned the newspaper's commercial print shop to prepare a small number of each cachet, which he sent to the office holder requesting that the recipient autograph and return some of the covers and retain the rest with his compliments. The Supreme Court covers were posted to the court and ultimately returned with no autographs, or explanation. Furthermore, despite the fact that the Postmaster was an active leader in the Democratic Party, he was only able to get a

## *The Masonic Philatelist*

couple of autographs from President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, and these only after apparently exhausting all manner of access to the President.

From newspaper accounts, Postmaster Boothe rallied the people of the Gonzales area to help service the expected demand for first day cancellations. His small, two story post office was soon crowded with volunteers who “licked and sticked,” before, during and after the big day.



Volunteers assisting with the the monumental task of creating over 319,000 covers.



Gonzales Post Office force on the big day, March 2, 1936. Fred Boothe is seen second from the left.

## The Masonic Philatelist

In a telegram dated March 3, 1936, Postal Superintendent R.E. Fellers reported back to Washington that 319,150 covers were serviced and 1,020,000 stamps were sold. It was considered the largest first day sale in history.

Pat Patterson had a wealth of knowledge from his late wife's recollections of her father and the Texas Centennial year. Among the Boothe archives were literally hundreds of cached first and special day covers, a well-worn hand cancellation device dated "March 2, 1936," and an album containing about a hundred neatly mounted covers autographed by the government officials. Also in the album were the Justices of the Supreme Court First Day Covers—all unsigned.

Later in 1936, Boothe produced tongue-in-cheek cachets with photos of the Duke and Duchess of Windsor, and another more congratulatory for King George VI and Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother. It would be interesting to know if Boothe knew that the brothers, Edward and George, were also Masonic Brothers and that their Thirty-third Degree trappings are on display at the United Grand Lodge of England Museum (Great Queen's Street, London).

Fred Boothe apparently gave up cachet making after 1936. However, his significance during the Texas Centennial Year is without question a demonstration of highly "level and square" work. I need to mention here that Sam Houston and Stephen Fuller Austin (shown on the stamp) were both Freemasons—well-known to Masonic philatelists.

*Jim Dougherty is a Past Master of Parsons Lodge No. 222, Austin, Texas, and the Texas Lodge of Research. His three-part series of articles on Texas Centennial Covers was published in The Texas Philatelist magazine and won the 2012 Forcheimer Literature Award of the Texas Philatelic Association.*



A tongue-in-cheek cachet showing Edward VIII with the caption, "Renounced British Throne."



Vice President John Nance Garner. Postmaster Boothe had better luck getting the Vice President and fellow Texan to autograph cachets than he did from President Franklin Roosevelt.

# *We are now on the Internet!*

**<<http://www.msclnewyork.net>>**



The image shown is from the University of Denver, which is offering a New Media and Internet Marketing Degree. The Internet is no longer a world unto itself; it is the world.

**Our Club is now a part of the ever-growing Internet. We can now reach out to the entire world with an invitation to join us in our fascinating hobby. Please help to promote our website in any way you can.**

