

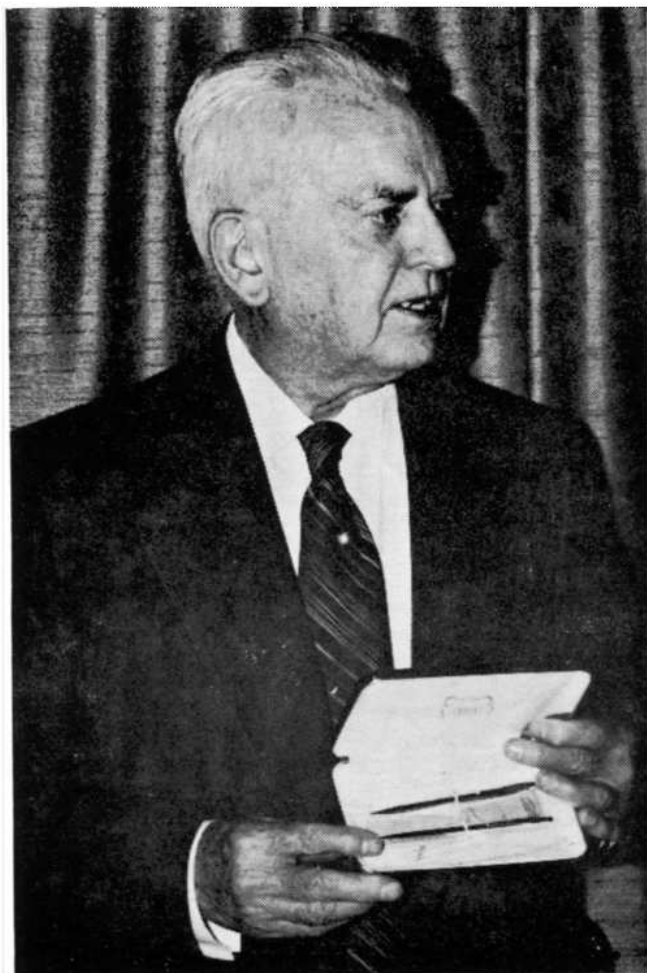


The Masonic Philatelist

VOL. 28

MAY 1972

NO. 9



**Masonic Stamp Club Honors
NORMAN SEHLMAYER**

The MASONIC PHILATELIST

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Published by

The Ralph A. Barry - Al Van Dahl

PUBLICATION FUND

of the Masonic Stamp Club of New York Inc.
22 East 35th St. New York, N. Y. 10016

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ROY T. KETCHAM

Editor

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The Masonic Stamp Club of New York was organized in 1934 for the purpose of encouraging research and study in Masonic Philately, and to establish bonds of good fellowship among Masons who are stamp collectors. The need for the organization has proved itself through the years with its ever-increasing membership and the formation of other Masonic stamp clubs in the United States.

★ MEETINGS ★

First Friday of Every Month
(Except July and August)

COLLECTORS CLUB BUILDING
22 East 35th St., N.Y., N.Y. 10017

THE EDITOR SPEAKS

Marshall S. Loke, the number one supporter of the Masonic Philatelist, has come to the rescue again. He submitted several articles to our publication and we are including two in this issue.

He also sent a letter from which I have taken the following excerpts:

"Surely, you have enough readers who could contribute some original material to give the magazine a shot in the arm and keep it going. It should be a magazine 'of the people, by the people and for the people.'

"The article by Joe Levinson on Masonic Symbols is a very good example of what others could do if they would try. You need more philatelic stories rather than pictures of club banquets. There is no necessity for reprints of past articles. We have plenty of material that has not been published in the M. P. before. I am sure the customers would prefer new cases to re-runs.

"I am willing to produce my share of Masons-on-stamps, but only if others will do likewise. My old typewriter is not doing so well any more, and my eyes are the same way. Have to go in hospital next month for cataract surgery.

Cordially and fraternally,
Marshall S. Loke"

These are my feelings exactly, and during the past 3 years I have tried to reprint as few items as possible. The only exception to his letter is about the pictures of those attending our annual dinners. There are some brothers who like these, so once a year we print two pages of these pictures. Incidentally the article about the dinner was submitted by our president, Mannie Reggel.

Two interesting articles about our 49th state, Alaska, were sent in by Louis F. Biehl and they appear in this issue.

Brother Frank Cochran III sent us an article giving the story of the anti-Masonic stamps of Serbia. Being a new member, he didn't know it ran before. Remembering that we have many new members, and because of its interest, we are including it. Thanks to these brothers and any others who have submitted articles.

OUR THIRTY-EIGHTH ANNUAL DINNER

By Emanuel Reggel

A large and enthusiastic group of members and friends attended on May 5, 1972 our 38th Annual Dinner held at the New York Masonic Club. Our guest of honor was our long-time active and devoted member, Norman Sehl-

meyer, a Past President and former editor of The Masonic Philatelist, and now a director of our Club.

The cocktail hour and the spendid prime ribs of beef dinner were enjoyed by all present. President Mannie Reggel delivered the address of welcome; guest speaker was Fred Jacobs, a lifetime friend of our honored guest. Every one present was afforded the opportunity of saying a few nice things about Norman, who responded in his usual eloquent manner. Later, our president presented him a gift of a Cross pen and pencil set.

Congratulatory letters were read from a number of members who were unable to attend. Adrian Boutrelle was kept very busy taking candid photos.

Brother Sehlmeier was born in Brooklyn, New York and has resided there ever since. He studied at local schools, receiving degrees from New York University and Brooklyn Law School. He is currently engaged in the practice of law and accounting. He has been a stamp collector for many years, collecting general, U.S., U.N., Canada, Tristan da Cunha, used airmails, space covers, etc.

Other philatelic affiliations include membership in Collectors Club, American Topical Society, American First Day Cover Society, Collectors of Religion on Stamps, Cardinal Spellman Philatelic Museum. His scholastic, fraternal and business organizations include Beta Gamma Sigma, Phi Delta Phi, Longi Grotto, Aurora Grata Scottish Rite, Ocean Hill Square Club, Missouri Lodge of Research, National Association of Accountants, N. Y. U. Men in Finance Club and Nassau Central Lodge No. 536 F. & A. M., of which he is a Past Master. He is currently a director of The Protestant Lawyers Association of New York, a Trustee of Faith Home Foundation and Treasurer of The Municipal Club of Brooklyn.

My heartfelt thanks are extended to our perennial chairman, Dr. Yarry, and to all who attended and aided in making this a most memorable evening.

SERBIAN ANTI-MASONIC STAMPS **Submitted by Frank Cochrane III**

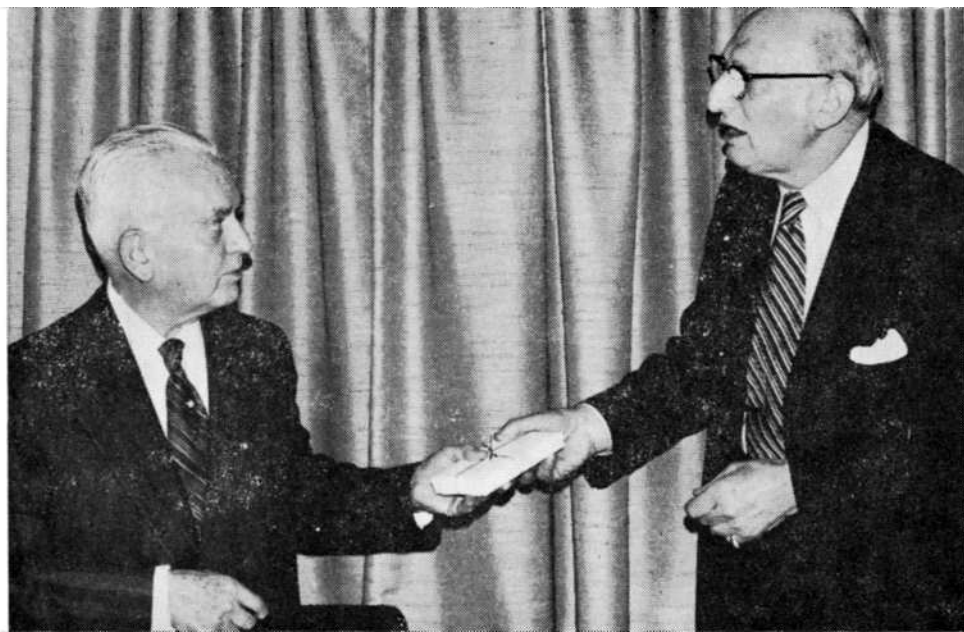
In Serbia in 1941, the German Nazi Government issued a series of Anti-Masonic stamps, Scott No. 2NB 15-18, the first of which shows Masonry, allegorically clad as a hooded figure wearing an apron with a Star of David upon its bosom. This hooded figure is shown cringing from a strong ray of light which emanates from a circular cabalistic design apparently represent-

ing the forces of anti-Masonry. Nowhere in Masonry, at least as far as this writer has sojourned, does a hooded figure appear. Also, any Mason could readily see the fallacy of "cringing from light"—did not we beg to see light at one time or another? Then too, the attempt to link Jewry with Freemasonry is oh, so evident by the Star of David on the figures bosom, although the Star of David does play a part in the long list of signs and symbols of the order. Yes, the stamp would bring only a smile to the lips of one who has stood in the northeast corner and been properly invested and informed.

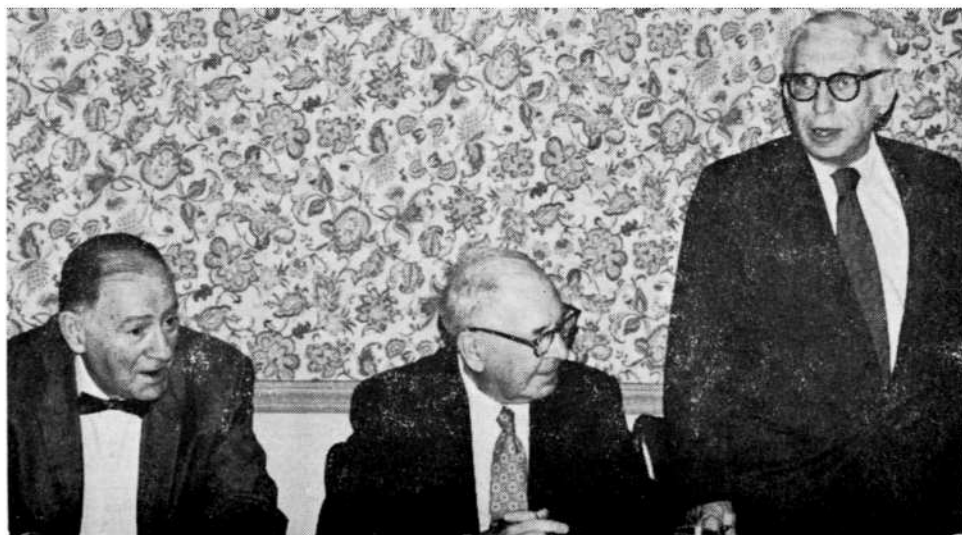
The second stamp of the series shows a hand emanating from a silvery light, as in the first stamp, and grasping the neck of a huge viper whose head rests on a square and compasses. This viper or snake is clothed in a number of Stars of David rather than the scale of nature. The design is misleading to the uninitiated in that it, too, like the hooded figure, is not used or seen among the symbols of Masonry. Biblically, the snake represents the forces of evil, the attempt here is to show that the forces of evil (Jew and Mason) are being stopped by the hand of Nazism.

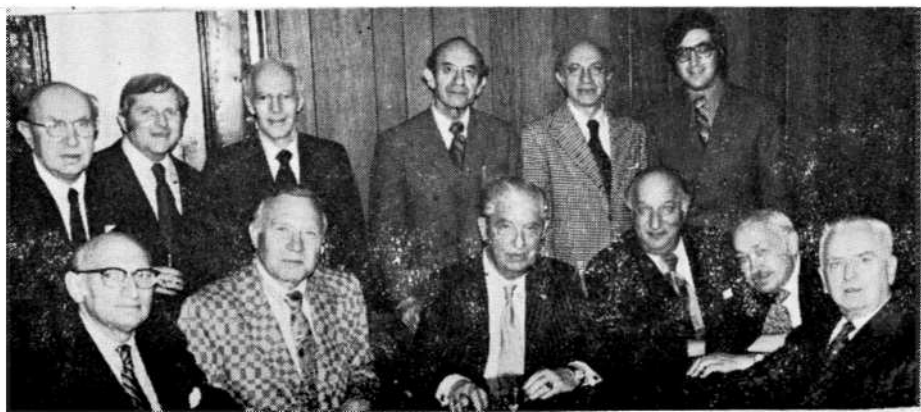
The third stamp shows a sheaf of wheat superimposed on a cross which has a point-like lower leg. This point is shown splitting a large star upon which rests a hammer and sickle. Members of the craft will note that the cross and the sheaf of wheat are both symbols of Freemasonry and that if the intention is to show the possible destruction of Communism as indicated by the hammer & sickle—Freemasonry is in there pitching. However because of the nature of this issue, it is evident that the series is intended to be anti-Masonic. This, all tied together, attempts to show that the Jew, the Mason, and the communist are alike in spirit and ideal if not one and the same.

The last stamp of the series shows a star of David upon the curved surface of the earth between the pillars which are being rent asunder by a zealous modern Serbian Sampson. These pillars presumably refer to the two pillars of the temple of Solomon. But in no way resemble either the Biblical or the Masonic Descriptions of these structures. They are rather like two plain posts, not pillars. On each is superimposed a large letter, on one of the pillars "B" and on the other the letter "J". If, by chance, these letters are representative of the initials of the names given the pillars of the temple of Solomon as described in the Holy Bible.



Masonic Stamp Club 38th annual dinner honored Norman Sehlmeier. Above, President Mannie Reggel presents gift to Norman. Below, Joseph N. Kane, Acting Chaplain for the evening, gives invocation. Pictured on the next page are members and friends who attended the affair.





The first book of Kings. Chapter seven, verse 21, they are decidedly backward or reversed.

This series of stamps, although anti-Masonic, is shown by the inference of the Star of David on every stamp. First, cringing and fearful, second being represented by a snake and being choked, third, stabbed by an invader and temple destroyed.

MASONRY IN ALASKA

By Louis F. Biehl

Alaska! Forty-ninth State! Land of the Gold Rush! Outer rim of atomic defense! What of the Craft in this amazing new state that has flag makers working double shifts?



The first Masonic Lodge instituted within the Territory was Alaska Lodge No. 14, at Sitka, September 17, 1869, under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Washington. All Masonic Lodges ever established within the Territory have been under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Washington.

Alaska Lodge No. 14 continued to function, but rather poorly, by reason of the withdrawal of United States Army forces from Sitka, until its charter was revoked October 18, 1872.

Jamestown Lodge No. 33, also located at Sitka, was the second Masonic

Lodge instituted in Alaska, June 3, 1880. It lasted until June 2, 1887, when its charter was also arrested.

The first permanent Masonic Lodge was White Pass Lodge No. 113, at Skagway, in 1901. It has been a thriving, though small Lodge, having a present membership of ninety Brethren.

Fifteen Masonic Lodges are now functioning in Alaska.

Total membership of these Lodges was 2,985 on December 31, 1957, an increase of 88 over the previous year.

Mostly Masonic Lodges in Alaska own their buildings, some spacious and modern. Many visitors speak of the high quality of the work and the friendly feeling among the Brethren. There are four Scottish Rite Valleys in Alaska, located at Fairbanks, Juneau, Ketchikan and Anchorage.

Alaska has five Chapters of Royal Arch Masons, working under a Grand Jurisdiction of their own, the headquarters of which is at Fairbanks; there are at least two Commanderies of Knights Templar.

The Orders of Eastern Star and Amaranth are also active, the latter having courts at Fairbanks and Anchorage.

The Order of DeMolay is making progress, as well as other societies of a Masonic background. There are nine Shrine Clubs in Alaska, all working in conjunction with Nile or other Shrine Temples.

Fraternal relations between the Masonic Lodges in Alaska and the Grand Lodge of Washington, of which they form a part, are friendly, but who can say that there will not be a new Masonic Grand Lodge in the new state?

"MR. ALASKA" BROTHER JAMES WICKERSHAM By Louis F. Biehl

The name of "FIGHTIN' JIM" WICKERSHAM brings a cheer from every Alaskan pioneer and sourdough. To Alaskans everywhere, JUDGE JAMES WICKERSHAM was "Mr. Alaska." Pioneer judge, statesman, scholar, explorer and author, he probably did more than any one man to build Alaska. Already famous in the States, Wickersham's pioneer instinct eagerly accepted the herculean challenge of establishing courts in Alaska. Appointed by President McKinley in June, 1900, he became the first judge of the Third Division, District of Alaska, embracing about 300,000 square miles of virgin country, without roads, schools, cities; only a few mining camps far apart. Eagle City, first incorporated town in Alaska, became the seat of his

Court. He also held court in Rampart, 528 miles distant. During winter he traveled by dog team, breaking trail and walking over 1,000 miles with temperatures from 20 to 40 below!

Judge Wickersham organized all the District's minor courts, reserved sites for court houses and jails, drawing plans and letting contracts for their construction. He appointed clerks, commissioners, justices of the peace and probate judges. In 1901-1902 he was brought to Nome, the Second Division Court, and cleaned up the scandalous mess in the court, due to the claim jumpers. This was the bases of Rex Beach's classic story "The Spoilers." A murder case in the Aleutian Islands caused him to call a special court session in Unalaska; beginning the first floating court, which has been an integral part of Alaska's court system ever since. From 1900 to 1908 Judge Wickersham's decisions formed the background for Alaska's mining law.

In 1903 Wickersham published the first newspaper, the "News Miner" in Fairbanks.

Ardent supporter of Alaska's right to elect a delegate to Congress, passed in 1905. Wickersham resigned from the bench in 1908 and was elected delegate to Congress, serving until 1921.

His work toward home rule for Alaska resulted in the signing of the Organic Act by President Taft in 1912. August 24, 1914, Wickersham's birthday marked another milestone when he succeeded in getting the Alaska Railroad Bill enacted into law. This marked the birth of Anchorage, which began as a railroad construction camp.

The University of Alaska was founded by Judge Wickersham, in his fight for the Alaska Public School Bill in 1915. His efforts gave Alaska its first national park in 1917, Mt. McKinley National Park. Judge Wickersham introduced the first Alaska Statehood Bill to Congress in 1916, providing greater home rule than enjoyed under the Organic Act of 1912.

In 1910 James Wickersham wrote "The Forty-Ninth Star" for Collier's Magazine, the first articles published nationally on Statehood for Alaska. He contributed to many national magazines and scientific journals throughout his life. His Bibliography of Alaska Literature—1724-1924, catalogs over ten thousand items.

His own personal library, the greatest single collection of Alaskan in existence, is now owned by the Territory of Alaska. His private papers, books, artifacts, including his diary, are still in his home in Juneau. His bio-

graphy, "Old Yukon — Tales, Trails and Trials," is a classic.

Brother Wickersham at the time of his death, October 24, 1939, was a member in good standing in Tacoma Lodge #22, Tacoma, Washington.

FIRST MASONS AT THE POLES

By Marshall S. Loke

Admiral Robert Edwin Peary who discovered the North Pole on April 6, 1909 was a member of Kane Lodge No. 454 of New York City. He received his degrees Feb. 4, Feb. 18 and March 3, 1896.

The man who went to the North Pole with Peary was Matthew A. Hensen, a negro and member of Celestial Lodge No. 3, Prince Hall, of New York City. He was initiated Nov. 5, 1904.

The 50th anniversary of the arrival of these two Masons at the North Pole was marked by a commemorative stamp, U.S. No. 1128 issued April 6, 1959.

The distinction of being the first Mason at the South Pole January 18, 1912, belongs to Capt. Robert Falcon Scott. He was initiated in Drury Lane Lodge No. 2127 in London, England on April 9, 1901 and passed on May 14, 1901. He received the M. M. degree overseas on June 2, 1904. Bro. Scott's portrait is on a 1957 Ross Dependency stamp, No. L2, and on a 1972 Great Britain issue.

Although Roald Amundsen beat Scott to the South Pole by 35 days, no one in the Amundsen group at the pole was a Mason (at that time, December 14, 1911) and none of the men who accompanied Bro. Scott there were Masons.

A 1961 stamp of Norway, No. 400, shows Amundsen and party at the South Pole. One member of that party did become a Mason less than a year afterwards.

Helmer Julius Hanssen received the E. A. degree in "Nordlyset" (Aurora Borealis) Lodge, in Trondheim, Norway on October 7, 1912 and the other degrees on April 14 and April 15, 1913.

Bro. Hanssen was born at Andoya, in Tromso province, Norway in 1870. The most notable of the several expeditions on which he served as First Mate were those under Roald Amundsen, (a) through the historic Northwest Passage 1903-1906 in the 70-foot sloop "Gjoa", and (b) in the ship "Fram" on the 1910-1912 South Pole Expedition. He also worked as a customs official at the port of Tromso in northern Norway. He died in 1956.

BENJAMIN APTHORP GOULD

The story behind the recently issued (Nov. 27, 1971) Argentine stamp commemorating the centenary of the Astronomical Observatory at Cordoba, Argentina, should be of special interest to U.S. Masons. The observatory is really a monument to the memory of its director, a remarkable American Mason and astronomer, Illustrious Benjamin Apthorp Gould.

He was born in Boston, Mass., September 27, 1824, of colonial ancestry;



entered Harvard in 1840 and graduated in 1844; attained distinction in mathematics and physics and was admitted to the Phi Beta Kappa.

A year after leaving college he sailed for Europe to study astronomy. In his three years abroad he made the acquaintance of the most eminent scientists and became familiar with the principal observatories of Europe. During the twenty years following his return to America, he published his "Astronomical Journal", rendered important service to the Coast Survey, the National Academy of Sciences, the U.S. Naval Observatory, etc., etc.

Dr. Gould's interest in Freemasonry began in 1869. He was accepted April 26, initiated May 3, crafted May 31 and raised June 26 in Liberty Lodge, Beverly, Massachusetts. Having in mind the exploration of the Southern Celestial Hemisphere which would involve a long residence in South America and knowing that no institution other than Freemasonry could give him that friendship and companionship which every stranger seeks in a foreign land, he accordingly took 32 degrees of the Scottish Rite in the spring of 1870 before he left Boston.

He embarked for South America in May 1870, establishing his residence in Cordoba and beginning at once the construction of the National Observatory of the Argentine Republic. His astronomical work here extended over fifteen years. In the midst of this absorbing labor he still found time for

Masonic work. He was Worshipful Master of the Lodge of the Southern Cross at Cordoba from 1879 to 1882 and was an Honorary Member of the District Grand Lodge under the same jurisdiction.

On a visit to Boston in 1874, he became a life member of Massachusetts Consistory and on August 20 was created a Sovereign Inspector General and admitted an Honorary Member of the Supreme Council of the Scottish Rite, Northern Jurisdiction. He also became a life member of Mount Olivet Chapter of Rose Croix.

He was appointed Special Representative near the Argentine Supreme Council and was made an Honorary Member of the same, as well as of the Lodge "Piedad y Union" and of the Rose Croix Chapter of the same name at Cordoba. He often helped them in their labors, working of course in Spanish, which was as familiar to him as English. He was also an Honorary Member of an English Chapter of Rose Croix in Buenos Aires.

Meantime, he kept in touch with the Masonry of his native city. On one of his visits home in 1880, he received the Chapter Degrees in St. Andrew's Chapter, and on another in 1883 the Templar Orders in St. Bernard Commandery.

Brother Gould finished his work in South America and came home to stay in 1885. The remainder of his distinguished life was mainly spent in putting the mass of astronomical material which he had collected in Cordoba into condition for publication and in conducting his "Astronomical Journal". He was active in the various historical societies and attended meetings of scientific associations both in Europe and in America.

On his return to Boston, Brother Gould took membership in St. Bernard Commandery and in the Lodge of St. Andrew and was rarely absent from their meetings. In St. Andrew's Lodge he was Junior Steward in 1887 and Senior Warden in 1894 which office he held until his death, November 20, 1896. In the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts he held the office of Senior Grand Deacon in 1887, of Corresponding Grand Secretary in 1888 and 1889 and of Deputy Grand Master in 1890 and 1891.

—The above data was condensed from the Massachusetts Council of Deliberation, 1897.

—Submitted by Marshall S. Loke.