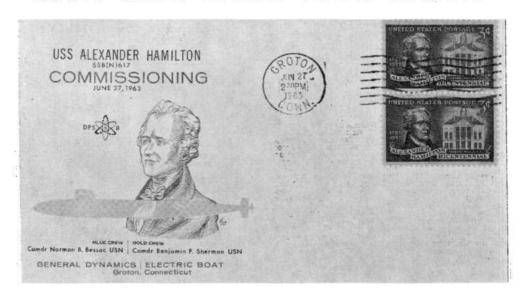


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MANY SHIPS NAMED AFTER MASONS



The MASONIC PHILATELIST

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

> * * * * * FRANKLIN R. BRUNS, JR. Guest 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 Philatelly, 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

By the Sign of the Gavel

It was a great pleasure for me to see so many of our members who attended our Masonic Night, despite the terrible weather. Secretary Charles Morris did an excellent job in showing the slide program, and it was enjoyed by all. My sincere thanks to Bros. Stan Salomon, Edwin Mayer, Charles Morris, and Mannie Reggel who participated in the evening by showing their material. As President, it was a gratifying experience to see such interest in this program. Brother. Stan Salomon centered his Masonic display on Washington, and received the door prize.

The March meeting will be highlighted by a talk on "Jamaica" by a very well-known philatelist in this field, Arthur Spear. He is well known to some of our members of the club, and has distinguished himself many times in the field of "Jamaica". I'm sure that you will enjoy hearing such

an informative speaker.

On the Cover -NAVAL COVERS

Many ships are named after Maons, and as a start in a series, I will devote this article to the SSB(N)617, a nuclear-powered submarine, which is also known as the U.S.S. ALEXANDER HAMILTON. As shown below, this submarine was commissioned in the United States Navy on the 27th June 1963.

Hamilton was the first Secretary of the Treasury and helped put our nation on a sound financial basis after the Revolutionary War. He was born on January 11, 1757 on the island of Nevis in the West Indies. Very little is known about his early life, but after he organized an artillery company in the Revolutionary War, he became private secretary to Gen. George Washington. After the war he helped organize the 1787 Constitution and later became Secretary of State.

Hamilton's Masonic career has never really been determined, and there is some controversy regarding his membership. Some say that his name appears as a visitor of the American Union Lodge at Morristown, New Jersey. His youngest son, Philip, (1802-84) was a Past Master of Albion Lodge #26, of New York City in 1829.

Hamilton died as a result of a bullet fired in a duel with Aaron Burr, former Vice President of the United States, on July 12, 1804.

Hamilton's likeness appears on U.S. Scott 143 and 1086.

For those who are interested in Naval Covers, I will be glad to answer any questions regarding this interesting phase of philately. Robert A. Smith, P.O. Box 142, Bowling Green Station, New York, New York 10004.





NAVAL COVERS U.S.S. BENJAMIN FRANKLIN SSB(N)640

This nuclear-powered submarine was named after our illustrious Brother Benjamin Franklin.

Franklin's Masonic career is as follows: Initiated February, 1731, St. John's Lodge, Philadelphia. Junior Grand Warden, June 24, 1732.

Junior Grand Warden, June 24, 1732. Grand Master of Pennsylvania, June 24, 1734.

August, 1734, reprinted Anderson's "Constitution of the Free Masons," the first Masonic Book printed in

America.

1735-38, Secretary of St. John's Lodge. June 10, 1749, appointed Provincial Grand Master by Thos. Oxnard of Boston.

March 13, 1750, deposed as Provincial Grand Master and immediately appointed Deputy Grand Master by Provincial William Allen, Master.

November 17, 1760, visited the Grand

Lodge of England.

1777, elected Member of Loge des IX (Nine Sisters or Muses) Soeurs France.

1782, elected Venerable (Worshipful Master) of Loge des IX Soeurs.

Franklin appears on many stamps of the United States and the world.

THE 9c BICENTENNIAL

By Herman Herst, Jr., 32° It is a matter of record that the nine cent stamp of our 1932 Bicen-tennial issue pictures our first President in his capacity as Master of his Lodge in Alexandria, Va. Many collectors of Masonic Philately include this stamp in their collection, for this

Not as well remembered is the story of how the stamp came to be issued, and especially, the persistence of a member of the Craft who refused to give up despite early opposition to his efforts.

The series of twelve stamps, as well we know, shows the Father of His Country at various times during his life. There was no shortage of paintings of him at the height of his career, but few existed in his old age. For the nine cent value, a portrait by Gilbert Stuart was selected and announced. Mr. Peter Gouled, a Mason and a stamp collector, immediately contacted the Bureau and recommended instead a portrait made from life, showing Washington at an advanced age, which is still on display at the George Washington Masonic Museum at Alexandria, Va.

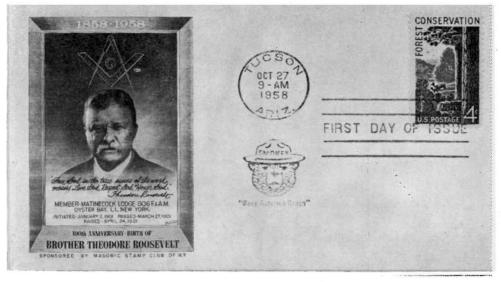
Mr. F. A. Tilton, the 3rd Assistant Postmaster General, aware no doubt,

of the opposition that would ensue at that time to an apparent Masonic portrait on a stamp, wrote Bro. Gouled:

"the rules governing the issue of United States stamps have been not to depict any individual in his fraternal capacity."

The stamp, as those who have seen it are aware, shows Washington in his full Masonic regalia, as Master of his Lodge.

Bro. Gouled did not give up, and he persisted. He had a portrait made of the painting, with sash and regalia



THIS COVER IS STILL AVAILABLE FROM OUR CACHET SALES CHAIRMAN For information regarding the purchase of this cover, write to: Louis Bernstein, Chairman, Masonic Cachets, 451 West 46th Street, New York, New York 10036

omitted. With the revisions, the Post-master General concluded that Bro. Gouled's picture was more fitting for the nine cent value than yet another Gilbert Stuart portrait, and on March 13, 1913, he wrote Bro. Gouled that his suggestion would be followed when the set of stamps was issued on January 1, 1932.

A MASON'S NEAR TRAGIC ENDING IN OLD NEBRASKA TERRITORY

Philately has many fascinations, but one of special interest to many col-lectors is the reading of letters from long ago. "Reading other people's mail" in the contemporary sense is a shocking lapse from good manners, but when we "read other people's mail" from a century or more ago, we are almost literally transplanting ourselves from the current scene to an era long past. Better than that, we are living side by side with people long since dead, sharing their deeds, their thoughts and their very words.

Not long ago while admiring the collection of early Nebraska covers, the property of a good philatelic friend, my eye chanced to rest on an ordinary stampless cover with a neat manu-script marking of El Dorado, N.T. It was a nice cover, as Territorial covers go, although in truth, the entire col-lection of Nebraska Territorials was what might be called "nice."

"You might be caned ince.

"You might be interested in the contents", said my friend. "Some day I would like someone to write it up."

That "some day" has arrived, and

the contents are perhaps interesting enough for them to be shared with the readers of this book.

Jan 8 1858

"My beloved wife and daughter

I am in El Dorado, Nebraska Territory and anxiously awaiting a chance to leave a town where I hope the Lord will never let me enter again. I have had a horrifying experience but I want you both to know that I am well and none the worse for it and I am glad that I can tell you the whole story just as it happened.

"I arrived in El Dorado yesterday about noon. I called on several stables but was able to sell very little. I was back at the hotel almost decided to leave when I got to talking with a farmer from a town not far distant called Franklin. He told me of a new stable there and thought the owner might need harnesses.

"Since it wasn't far, I decided I could

run over in a few hours and tried to make a deal with one of the stables here for a rig. They wanted five dollars which I said was too much. Finally the lad said I could have it for four dollars, and I paid him and went to Franklin where I did some good busi-

"But when I come back the stable owner told me the lad had no right to drop the price and he insisted that I pay the other dollar. I stood my ground insisting that even four dollars was too much. The man got pretty noisy and when he started threatening, I figured it was better to pay the dollar and get out of there which is what I

"I went back to the hotel, had a right good dinner. Met a doctor chap from St. Louis who said he was looking the country over for a place to set up his office and to bring his family, and he seemed to take a liking to El Dorado. We were enjoying cigars when we heard the fire alarm. We ran out and I was treated to a terrible scene. The stable where I had had the altercation was in flames. They got all of the horses out, but the stable was gone in a few minutes. I felt sorry for the owner, and told the doctor of my experience of a few hours earlier.

"About two hours later I was in my room and I heard a great commotion. I went to the window and saw about fifty men marching to the hotel. They stopped at the front door and demanded that the proprietor turn me over to them. I could hear clearly that they were accusing me of burning down the stable. I didn't know what to do. They sure seemed to mean business. I found the doctor's room and asked if he could hide me. Of course it did no good for they knew I was in the hotel. The proprietor when he found I wasn't in my room came to the doctor's room.

"Pretty soon four or five husky men came up and tried to take me down. The doctor told them that I had been with him all evening, had not left the hotel, and could not have done the foul deed. They seemed to believe him and they went down to report and I thought that I was out of danger. But soon about ten more came up and they grabbed me and carried me kicking down the stairs. The doctor, and I will be eternally grateful to him, went with me, trying to reason with the leaders. I did not know what they were going to do with me but I actually felt sorry for the doctor at that time too since I was afraid they might rough him up too. But when I got outside and saw several men playing with some rope and saw a horse and wagon I know what they were going to do.

"I think you know that there is a sign that a Mason can give when he is in serious trouble. It was the only thing that I could think of, but when they threw me on the wagon and told me to get on my feet, I decided to use it. The sign did not go unnoticed by many in the crowd. Suddenly it grew almost quiet, and the leader came over and said something to me. Apparently I must have said the right thing. He climbed on the wagon with me and held up his hands and said to the crowd which then must have numbered over a hundred "Well, I reckon we got the wrong guy."

"A few men brushed me off for I was pretty dusty from the 'ride' down the stairs and out of the hotel. Many of the crowd came over to tell me that I had had a lucky escape which was something I did not need them to tell me. The doctor did not know what

had happened to change the crowd so suddenly, and I guess he is still won-dering. Maybe I should have told him for he tried to save my life, but it was

not proper for me to do it.
"I almost forgot. The next day I heard that the stable was burned down, but by the lad who had given me the rig. The owner had given the boy a bad lacing, and the boy chose this way to get even. I don't know what they are going to do to the lad, if anything, but I am not going to stay in El Dorado

to see.
"I go from here to Plattsmouth which is one of the largest cities in the Territory and I expect to do some good business there. Give my love to all who ask, and I miss you both great-

Lovingly, George"

For those who want the full philatelic picture completed, the cover was addressed to Mrs. George Lucas, Indianapolis, Indiana. (From "Stories to Collect Stamps

By", by Herman Herst, Jr., 32°.)

Scottish Rite and the Presidency

By JAMES R. CASE, 33°

Reprint From "The Northern Light" Vol. 4 #2, April, 1973

The late Harry S. Truman is the only President of the United States to have attained the Thirty-third and Last Degree of the Scottish Rite. He was so honored by the Supreme Council of the Southern Jurisdiction at the House of the Temple in Washington on October 19, 1945, while he was in office. In the same class were Generals Hap Arnold, Ben Lear, and Jimmy Doolittle. At a meeting of the Supreme Council

for the Northern Masonic Jurisdiction at Cincinnati on September 23, 1947, Sovereign Grand Commander Melvin M. Johnson announced that the President had accepted with appreciation election as an Emeritus Member of Honor. President Truman also was the first recipient of the Gourgas Medal, the highest honorary decoration authorized by the Supreme Council, NMJ. It was presented to him at the White House on November 21, 1945, by Commander Johnson.

Brother Truman once said, "I never shirked a job in my life," but when he came to the Presidency through the death of Franklin D. Roosevelt, he was

almost overwhelmed by the magnitude and multiplicity of the duties and problems, for which he had been given very little briefing. His energy, decisiveness, integrity, and patriotism carried him along over a rough and rugged path. His actions and accomplishments dur-ing those difficult days mark him as one to be counted among our great Presidents.

His achievements in military and political fields are chronicled elsewhere and at length. Here we will only touch upon his Masonic career which spanned more than 60 years. Made a Mason in 1909 and charter Master of Grandview Lodge two years later, it was not until he came home from service in World War I that he had the opportunity to advance in the coordinate bodies. He received the 32° in the Valley of Kansas City in 1917.

He joined the Royal Arch Chapter, Council of Royal and Select Masters, and the Commandery of Knights Tem-plar in Kansas City. In 1925, he began his career in the Grand Lodge of Mis-souri as a District Deputy. Progressing through the appointive and elective chairs in the Grand Lodge line, he was chosen Grand Master in 1941, while campaigning for Senator. He considered his selection as Grand Master the highest honor that had come to him.

While in public office and the public eye, he appeared in the character of a Freemason on many occasions. His attachment to the fraternity was so con-spicuous that the press could not ignore it, although on some occasions the fact was not given understanding, sympa-

thetic, or appreciative treatment.
Four of Ill: Brother Truman's predecessors in the Presidency were Scottish Rite Masons, equally proud of their membership in Freemasonry, and often appearing in public as well as behind tiled doors in Masonic dress.

The first President to hold Scottish Rite membership was Andrew Johnson (1808-75). He was our 17th President (1865-69) and came to the office through the tragic assassination of

Abraham Lincoln.

Benjamin B. French, Lieutenant Grand Commander of the Supreme Council, S.J., accompanied by Azariah T. C. Pierson, Grand Prior and Active for Minnesota, were entertained by the President in the White House on June 20, 1867, and, after dinner, communicated to him the degrees as an honorarium—up to and including the 32°. Not long afterward, at a reception to members of the Supreme Council, President Johnson handed to Albert President Johnson handed to Albert Pike, who had reluctantly presented himself, a letter extending complete amnesty and pardon for Pike's ad-herence to the Confederacy, 1861-65, (Pike had served part of this period as a brigadier general and also was Grand Commander, S. J. 1859-91). The controversial Tenure of Office

Act, pushed through by a group of antagonists some of whom were known for their anti-Masonic sentiments, was an attempt to limit the power of the President to remove from office his appointees who had been named by and with the consent of the Senate. Johnson's defiance of this legislation led to his impeachment, and while the President was exonerated May 16, 1868, not until 60 years later did the Supreme Court declare the Act invalid. But the strife between the Executive and Legis-

lative branches continues.

While it appears that Andrew Johnson never held office in any Masonic body, he was present in Masonic dress when the cornerstones were laid with Masonic ceremony at the Temples in Baltimore, Boston, and Washington, and for a similar event at the Antietam Battle Monument. Time and again he appeared as a Mason in public, and at Lodge, Chapter, and Commandery

functions, although it has never been ascertained where he was arched or

knighted.

When he died, the Knights Templar took over. His body rested in the Masonic Hall for a time before being taken to the county court house to lie in state. The funeral procession included many Knights Templar, and services at the graveside were in their charge. The Trumpeter sounded "taps" as the Great Commoner was laid to rest.

James A. Garfield (1831-81), the last President to be born in a log cabin, was graduated from Williams College with honors, and became the head of Hiram College, which he had attended when it was the Western Reserve Eclectic Institute. He was a licensed preacher in the Christian Church, had begun the study of law, and was a member of the Ohio Senate when the Civil War broke out. He entered service as a lieutenant colonel of Ohio Volunteer Infantry and left with the rank of major general.

After serving as Congressman and United States Senator, he was the com-promise candidate of the Republican Party when the Convention of 1880 was deadlocked. In the election which followed, he defeated another General (and Brother) Winfield Scott Hancock.

Made a Mason while in training camp at Columbus, pressure of military duties postponed his raising until 1864. Upon removal to Washington he had become a member of Pentalpha Lodge No. 23, Columbia Chapter No. 1 of Royal Arch Masons, and Columbia Commandery No. 2 of Knights Tem-plar. In 1871, he was elected to membership in Mithras Lodge of Perfection in Washington, the fourth and fifth degrees being communicated to him by Albert Pike, Sovereign Grand Commander.

Just a few months after his inauguration, on May 20, 1881, he re-viewed a number of Commanderies vis-Washington and tendered reception to Commanderies from Boston and Providence. He was assassinated by a disappointed office seeker in the railroad station at Washington and died at a seaside rest home at Long Branch, N.J., September 19, 1881.

(To be Continued April Issue)

1972 BRAZIL MASONIC COVERS

5 different Masonic Covers were issued last year by the Brazilian Masonic Stamp Club. Information may be obtained by writing to Filatelica, H. Brill, Caixa Postal, 417, Florianopolis, S. C., BRASIL.

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