



The Masonic Philatelist

Vol. 41 December 1985 No. 4

We the People

of the United States, in order to form a more perfect Union, secure domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defence, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

Article 1

Section 1. All legislative Powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and House of Representatives.

Section 2. The House of Representatives shall be composed of Members chosen every second Year by the People of the several States, and the Electors in each State shall have the Qualifications requisite for Electors of the most numerous Branch of the State Legislature.

No Person shall be a Representative who shall not have attained to the Age of twenty five Years, seven Years, and be seven Years a Citizen of the United States, and when elected shall have been seven Years a Citizen of the State in which he shall be chosen.

Representatives and Electors in each State shall have the Qualifications requisite for Electors of the most numerous Branch of the State Legislature.

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Section 3. The Senate of the United States shall be composed of two Senators from each State, chosen by the Legislature thereof, for a Term of six Years; and each Senator shall have the Qualifications requisite for Electors of the most numerous Branch of the State Legislature.

Section 4. The Senate shall have the sole and exclusive Power of Impeachment.

Section 5. The Senate shall have the sole and exclusive Power of trying all Impeachments.

Section 6. The Senate shall have the sole and exclusive Power of trying all Impeachments.

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The MASONIC PHILATELIST

VOL. 41

DECEMBER 1985

NO. 4

DR. IRWIN M. YARRY
EDITOR

DR. ALLAN BOUDREAU
PUBLISHER

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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.

ON THE COVER

The 200th Anniversary of the United States Constitution will be celebrated on September 17, 1987. Brother George Washington was the President of the Constitutional Convention that labored all through the summer of 1787 before the document was accepted by the Convention and submitted to the states for ratification.

Delaware was the first state to ratify the constitution, on December 7, 1787 and New Hampshire completed the nine states required for the establishment of the Constitution by ratifying the Constitution on June 21, 1788.

Authorities on the history of the United States agree that Washington held the convention delegates together until they agreed upon a Constitution.

Freemasons everywhere will be participating in the Bicentennial of the Constitution of the United States and we hope the information contained herein will be of value.

Regular meetings, 2:00 p.m., 2nd Wednesday each month except July and August at:

The Collectors Club
22 East 35th Street
New York, NY 10016
Phone (212) 683-0559

Please Address All Communications To The

MASONIC STAMP CLUB OF N.Y.

MASONIC HALL - Box 10
46 West 24th St.
New York, N.Y. 10010

Washington to the Congress

In Convention, September 17, 1787

SIR, we have now the honor to submit to the consideration of the United States in Congress assembled, that Constitution which has appeared to us the most advisable.

The friends of our country have long seen and desired, that the power of making war, peace and treaties, that of levying money and regulating commerce, and the correspondent executive and judicial authorities should be fully and effectually vested in the general government of the Union: but the impropriety of delegating such extensive trust to one body of men is evident — Hence results the necessity of a different organization.

It is obviously impracticable in the foederal government of these States to secure all rights of independent sovereignty to each, and yet provided for the interest and safety of all — Individuals entering into society, must give up a share of liberty to preserve the rest. The maganitude of the sacrifice must depend as well on situation and circumstance, as on the object to be obtained. It is at all times difficult to draw with precision the line between those rights which must by surrendered, and those which may be reserved; and on the present occasion this difficulty was encreased by a difference among the several States as to their situation, extent, habits, and particular interests.

In all our deliberations on this subject we kept steadily in our view, that which appears to us the greatest interest of every true American, the consolidation of our Union, in which is involved our prosperity, felicity, safety, perhaps our national existence. This important consideration, seriously and deeply impressed on our minds, led each State in the Convention to be less rigid on points of inferior magnitude, than might have been other wise expected; and thus the Constitution, which we now present, is the result of a spirit of amity, and of that mutual deference and concession which the peculiarity of our political situation rendered indispensable.

That it will meet the full and entire approbation of every State is not perhaps to be expected; but each will doubtless consider, that had her interests been alone consulted, the consequences might have been particularly disagreeable or injurious to others; that it is liable to as few exceptions as could reasonably have been expected, we hope and believe, that it may promote the lasting welfare of that country so dear to us all, and secure her freedom and happiness, is our most ardent wish.

With great respect, We have the honor to be, SIR, Your Excellency's Most Obedient and humble Servants,

GEORGE WASHINGTON, PRESIDENT,

By unanimous Order of the Convention.

Editor's Note: The fingerprint seen in the 4th paragraph is believed to be that of the original printer of this document.

"Freemasonry and the Constitution"

Almost two hundred years ago, on September 17, 1787, The Constitution of the United States was born; the Constitutional convention completed the draft of the historical document, and it was signed by the thirty-nine Deputies of their respective States then present.

Soon the entire country will celebrate the Bicentennial of that momentous event, and call to the attention of the entire world the vital importance of this unique instrument.

To understand the influences of Freemasonry upon the framing of our Constitution we should have in mind certain significant facts about the Constitution itself. The ability of the framers and the completeness with which they accomplished their task are evident in the fact that today the Constitution of the United States is the oldest government in existence. These men were better political scientists than at times they have been credited with being. Every other government has experienced essential changes in the intervening two hundred years. Even the government of Great Britain is not what it was under George III. Yet the document produced by Philadelphia Convention remains fundamentally and essentially the instrument of government for our land. A document with such a life history required men of brains, leadership and common sense for its creation.

The date of our Constitution is given September 17, 1787, the day of its signing by the Delegates. Yet we ought to remember that it did not spring into being full orbed, nor was it conceived and born between May and September, the period of the Constitutional Convention itself. It grew as the Colonies faced the

problems of government which their new freedom presented. One of the earliest seeds for Union was planted by Brother Daniel Coxe, first Provincial Grand Master for New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania, who published a plan for the Union of the Colonies in 1730 which Brother Benjamin Franklin advocated in 1754. Two conventions also preceded the Constitutional Convention in which the ideas embodied in the final document were set forth and developed. The Mount Vernon meeting between Virginia and Maryland in 1785 and the Annapolis Convention in 1786 laid the groundwork of ideas and established the points of view without which the Philadelphia Convention could never have accomplished its work. Ideas had to percolate in the minds of the leaders of the Colonies and public opinion had to be formulated before a living and durable system of government, the scope of its provisions and the genius of its form evolving through these years of discussion made the Constitution a living and growing thing.

It should be borne in mind that the Constitution thus produced was not a theoretical document created solely in the minds of political doctrinaires. It was essentially a human document written with the needs of the new country and its people in mind, solving concrete problems by the method of adaptation and embodying compromises which were necessary for its acceptance and operation. In defense of this procedure Washington wrote to Humphreys "The Constitution which is submitted is not free from imperfections, but there are few radical defects in it, as will be expected, considering the heterogeneous and diversity of interests."

Some people have advanced this fact about the framing of the Constitution as an argument against its

continuance in its original form. They have, however, forgotten the observation of Bollinbroke which the facts of history amply substantiate, that "The true point of political wisdom consists in distinguishing justly between what is absolutely best in speculation and what is best of things practical in particular conjectures." The fact is that the humanness of this document with its compromises and adaptations has given it a flexibility which accounts for its longevity. Masonry for more than 50 years in this new country had been providing the background out of which this kind of a constitution could emerge.

Then, too, if we wish to understand and appreciate the influences of Freemasonry upon the framing of the Constitution, we must know something of the status of the Country in 1787, the conditions which had to be met, the ideas which were generally accepted and the difficulties which had to be faced.

America in 1787 had no such thing as a racial solidarity whose unity of tradition could simplify the formulation of a government. Seven different nationalities came to these shores on the Mayflower and these racial groups had not passed through sufficient generations to weld them into an Americanism with traditions such as we can count upon today.

There was no unity of government in the new country. The Colonies were separate and their government for the most part represented the circumstances of their individual and particular founding.

There was no religious unity in the sense of a state church. The Church of England never set up complete local autonomy in the Colonies and was demoralized by the Revolution. Congregationalism dominated two or three states. The Friends and Lutherans had their sections, and so it went. The

church unified, so strong an ally in European governments, could not be used in the same way by the framers of the new government.

There was no unity in education and no universal education in the Colonies in 1787. What modern propaganda depends upon for the creation of public opinion was unheard of and impossible in the American of two hundred years ago.

In fact Freemasonry was really the only common bond of unity in the Colonies in 1787. Eighty-five Lodges had been chartered and were operating at that time and while Masonry was then and has always been a non-political organization, basing its influence upon its fellowship and its principles, rather than upon active and organized participation in governmental affairs, the unusual ratio of Masons prominent in the Revolution and in the framing of the new government in proportion to the relation its membership bore to the population is accounted for by the fact that the formulation of a government under those precarious conditions had to have some bond of unity as a basis for its operation and this bond was found in the Masonic Fraternity.

Let us also remember that in 1787 there was no guaranteed religious liberty in the Colonies, no equality before the law, no equality of opportunity and no recognition of the need for universal education, though at that time they were the active principles of the Masonic order, devotion to which every Mason pledged himself and exemplification of which he was expected to make operative in his life.

Bearing in mind the character of the final document produced by the Constitutional Convention, the organizational aspects of the Country, the nature of the general and common ideas held by the rank and

file and the non-political aspect of the Masonic Fraternity, you can understand both that the Fraternity was in a position to wield a most potent influence on the form of the new government and that its influence must essentially be indirect, working in the background through the personalities who made the Republic.

In the tracing of these indirect influences we can discover the significant contribution which Masonry made to the framing of the Constitution and they reveal themselves most unmistakably in a study of the Masonic organization, the Masonic principles and the Masonic personalities of that time.

The Masonic Organization

In 1787 Masonry had been operative under the so-called "constitutions" for more than 60 years. This document gave Masons an opportunity to practice self-government in their Lodges under democratic forms and at the same time impressed upon them the freedom and limitation, the checks and balances which constitutional government requires. The Masonic Lodge was a training ground for constitutional and self-government in a country where all other government was vested in the hands of a few. It also provided a common meeting place where men could gather under the cover of privacy and enjoy the protection of the Masonic oath which in turn created a trust and confidence and fidelity essential in the business of designing a new government. The organizational importance of Masonry to the success of the Revolution may be inferred from the story of the Green Dragon Tavern and the minutes of St. Andrews Lodge on the night of the Boston Tea Party, where, though no word of the impending visit was transcribed, a row of Ts appeared. American never could have had a revolution

without opportunities for freedom of thought and expression and some unity of action under protected circumstances such as the Masonic Brotherhood guaranteed. Some modern tyrannies have recognized this and safe-guarded their continuance accordingly.

Lafayette is reputed to have said that Washington never gave independent command to officers who were not Freemasons. He had to have men whom he could trust by a bond whose potency has been the attractive appeal of Freemasonry.

When the Delegates to the Constitutional Convention met in Philadelphia, we know that they represented at least thirteen different sets of ideas and thirteen different and distinct interests. They were Delegates of States who had not yet sensed that the whole must be greater than the part. Each State wanted its own interests placed first without relation to the interests of the other States. The isolation of the States due to inadequate means of communication and social intercourse characteristic of the times, made them suspicious of one another. The Delegates themselves had their pet theories which in many cases were considered complete and final by their authors. How they could be brought together was a paramount problem, concerning which both Washington and Franklin at times despaired. We know now how many times they were on the brink of breaking up before their purpose was accomplished. We know also that the differences of the Delegates and the sectional suspicions were more frequently eradicated outside the Convention hall than inside it. The greater conciliator Franklin, a Mason who no doubt used his Masonic connections to bring these contending and suspicious factors together, since there existed no wider common ground for their meeting than Masonry. Knowing the

relationship of Masons to each other today, it is not too much to suppose that the Masonic Brotherhood could provide a common meeting place and a trust and confidence in each other's word which at least gave the necessary compromises a change.

So far as we know Washington never publicly thanked the Masonic Lodge for the part it played in establishing the new government. But what more eloquent and meaningful expression of that recognition could he have extended to Masonry than the administration of his inaugural oath by Robert R. Livingston the Grand Master of Masons in New York upon The Masonic Bible of St. John's Lodge No. 1, New York City.

Masonic Principles

The second stream of Masonic influence affecting the formulation of the Constitution came from the principles of Freemasonry. Recall the national situation in 1787, characterized by a lack of general recognition for religious liberty, equality and universal education; then read the Preamble to the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence and you cannot fail to catch the traces of Masonic influence in the principles and language which they set forth.

Masons were builders, and the construction of a government had to follow the destruction of a revolution if the gains were to be preserved. Their working tools were the square of justice and equality and the compass of due restraint, symbolizing respect for law and order. They were taught to dwell together in unity and when they met it was on the level which recognized no class distinction. The plumb reminded them of the necessity for the rectitude of their conduct, a distinctive morality which in the opinion of at least one outstanding European political philosopher

explains the progress of the great American Republic. The Bible lay open upon the altar. There Franklin kissed it in recognition of the Great Light — man's infallible guide in all his relationships, the basic and ultimate law for human society. There it reminded Washington, champion of religious liberty and freedom of conscience, of his obligation to establish the principle for all mankind. Within the Lodge the rights of free men were exalted and the duties accompanying those rights entailed. There they were all workmen and no one could claim privileges through membership in a favored class. Contentment was exalted as a virtue necessary to progress, while enlightenment and instruction were held to be man's greatest need. The provisions of the Constitution were built around these very principles.

At the time when the Constitution was being written and public opinion was needed for its support, here was an organization of select citizens teaching the principles of duty, industry, honest, fidelity, charity, truth, toleration, harmony and education without which the Constitution itself would have been abortive and the Nation stillborn.

There was no other single organization reaching all the Colonies standing for and practicing so many of the principles embodied in our Constitution which at the time were novelties in contemporary governmental forms. From New Hampshire to Georgia, Masons met on the level and departed on the square, reiterated the beauty of dwelling together in unity and repeated the same oath in support of these principles and for the maintenance of the Brotherhood.

Masonic Personalities

Principles however fine are dormant apart from

personalities, who have been indoctrinated with them and have opportunity to apply them; and whatever else may be said of the Constitution in the final analysis, it was the work of men and the expression of personalities. We explain the Constitution today by a study of the men who made it. Many of the 55 were Freemasons, Brothers in the bond, accepting its principles and indoctrinated with its ideas.

Many of the fifty-five were brethren who had paid great attention to the Fraternity and whose influence in the Craft is felt to this day. Washington, first Master of his lodge, Grand Master *pro tem* of Maryland when laying the corner stone of the Capital; Benjamin Franklin, Grand Master in Pennsylvania; Gunning, Bedford, Jr., first Grand Master of Delaware; John Blair, first Grand Master of Virginia; David Brearley, first Grand Master in New Jersey; William Davie, a Grand Master in North Carolina; Edmund Randolph, a Grand Master in Virginia and many others.

That Freemasonry meant much to the leaders of the Revolution is known from countless letters, documents, contemporary accounts of the Craft in the days of terrible struggle. At least Thirty-one Masons of fifty-five Deputies had the fundamental teachings of the Fraternity in mind when they labored to produce a fundamental law to act as a cement never to give way, between Peoples and States of greatly varying size, power, wealth, industry, climate, ideas and ideals.

It was also a prominent Mason, John Hancock, who persuaded ratification by the State of Massachusetts at a time when the fate of the Constitution hung in the balance, and it was the same John Han-

cock who was responsible for the first 10 amendments to the Constitution — the Bill of Rights whose catalogue of principles insured to all Americans reads like a Masonic lecture.

To say that without Masonry these men would not have been in positions of leadership, would be indulging simply in the unsatisfactory and inconclusive philosophy of what might have been. The statement, however, that their Masonic connections profoundly influenced the nature and expression of their leadership and buttressed their positions finds psychological and sociological support in the interpretation of the facts.

On August 8, 1787, a Delegate to the Constitutional Convention, arose in his place and said, "Can it be supposed that this vast country including the Western Territory will 200 years hence remain a nation?"

Today, 200 years from that time, we have the answer to his question. But even though we have the answer, we would do well to consider the reasons for continued success of this unique experiment in democratic government. The Constitution itself is, of course, the first reason and its defenders and the fidelity of the people whose duty it has been to execute it is the second. But in addition to these factors, without a body of public opinion believing in the principles of our governments, their validity and the adequacy of their provisions, The Delegate's question would have received a negative answer long before the two centuries had elapsed.

Masonry had an honorable and important part in the establishing of this new government. It has had an influence upon public opinion in support of these principles of government far out of proportion to the number within the Craft, yet its work in behalf of the Constitution is not done. Masonry has also a duty to the future. In a day when vast sections of the world have witnessed the overthrow of free governments, our work as nation builders is clearly laid out for us upon the Masonic trestleboard. The principles of the Craft which inspired and prepared our fathers to be active and influential in the forming of our government must still be dominant in molding public opinion. Their fidelity must continue to be our fidelity, if this government of the people, by the people and for the people surviving these 200 years shall not perish from the earth.

Facts About the Constitution

In the following order the Constitution was ratified by the several states:

Delaware, December 7, 1787; Yeas, 30 (unanimous).

Pennsylvania, December 12, 1787; Yeas, 43; Nays, 23.

New-Jersey, December 18, 1787, Yeas, 38 (unanimous).

Georgia, January 2, 1788, Yeas, 26 (unanimous).

Connecticut, January 9, 1788, Yeas, 128; Nays, 40.

Massachusetts, February 6, 1788, Yeas, 187; Nays, 168.

Maryland, April 28, 1788, Yeas, 63; Nays, 11.

South-Carolina, May 23, 1788, Yeas, 149; Nays, 73.

New-Hampshire, June 21, 1788, Yeas, 56; Nays, 46.

Virginia, June 26, 1788, Yeas, 89; Nays, 79.

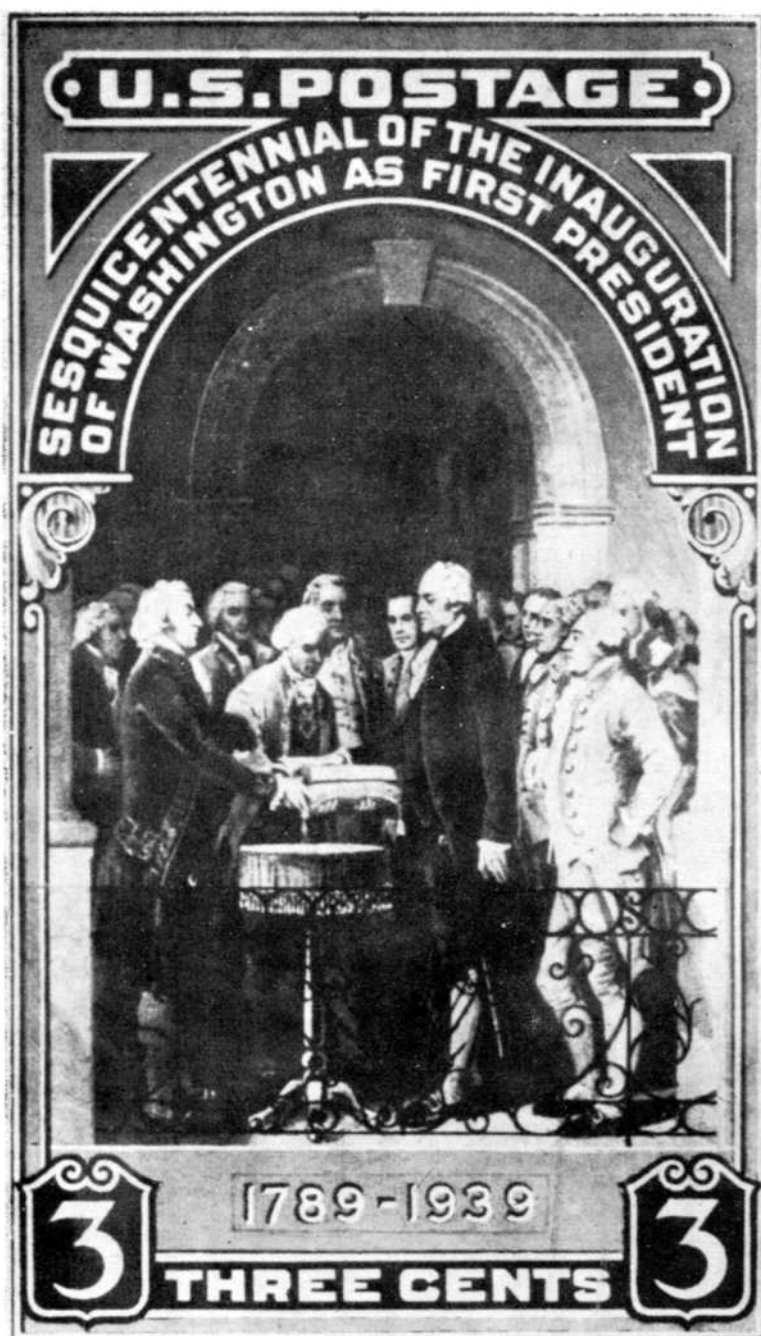
New-York, July 26, 1788, Yeas, 30; Nays, 27.

North-Carolina, November 21, 1789, Yeas, 194; Nays, 77.

Rhode-Island and Providence Plantations, May 29, 1790, Yeas, 34; Nays, 32.

Vermont, January 10, 1791, Yeas, 105; Nays, 4.

New-Hampshire completed the nine states required by article seven needed for the establishment of the Constitution.



Greta Kempton, F.R.S.A.

14 East 75th Street
New York, N. Y. 10021
September 30, 1985

Nicholas Batalias,
President
27-05 Urban Place
Fair Lawn, New Jersey 07410

Dear Mr. Batalias:

The Masonic Stamp Club acted very graciously in presenting me with the beautiful First Day Issue of the Colorado Silk Cachet. It's a pleasure for me to own them especially for the honor they show President Harry Truman as a Mason.

You were particularly kind to single out my work and I am delighted to know that it was instrumental in the creation of this First Day Issue.

If I am late in responding to your kindness, please know I have had a very busy time meeting a deadline for a portrait. I know you will understand. Meantime, should there be anything I can do in the future, please feel free to call on me.

With great appreciation,

Greta Kempton



IN MEMORIAM
WORSHIPFUL JOHN F. FISK, IV
Raised December 3, 1947 **Died September 20, 1985**

Dear Mr. Batalias:

How very kind of you to make a gift to the Masonic Brotherhood Fund dedicated to John's memory. I am sure that would have pleased him very much, as it does his family. Thank you very much for this most appropriate expression of sympathy.

Cordially,
Martha R. Fisk

MORE ABOUT "MASONIC" POSTMARKS

George H. Wettach

It is relatively easy to collect Masons on stamps because so much has been written on the subject. Much research has been done and, for the most part, the collector has merely to research the literature rather than the individuals.

Lists of "Masonic" postmarks also exist. They usually consist of words that have some Masonic significance, even if only by coincidence, such a Temple, Southgate, Fidelity, etc. Our former member, the late Edward R. Walsh used to include a number of them in his price lists.

The writer has never seen a list of postmarks of places named after Freemasons although such a list may exist. It would be a long one considering how many places have been named after Brothers George Washington and Benjamin Franklin to cite just to examples.

What originally directed my thoughts to this area was coming upon the name of George Yount in Denslow's 10,000 Famous Freemasons. Several years ago my wife and I were visiting some of her relatives who lived in Petaluma, California at the time. They drove us around to show us the area and one of the towns we stopped in was Yountsville. The unusual name stayed in my memory and popped out when I recently came upon the name of George Yount after whom the town was named. Unfortunately there is no significant anniversary of any event in his life to warrant issuing a commemorative cover in the near future but one could acquire the postmark of any date to add to one's Masonic collection with appropriate biographical and Masonic information.

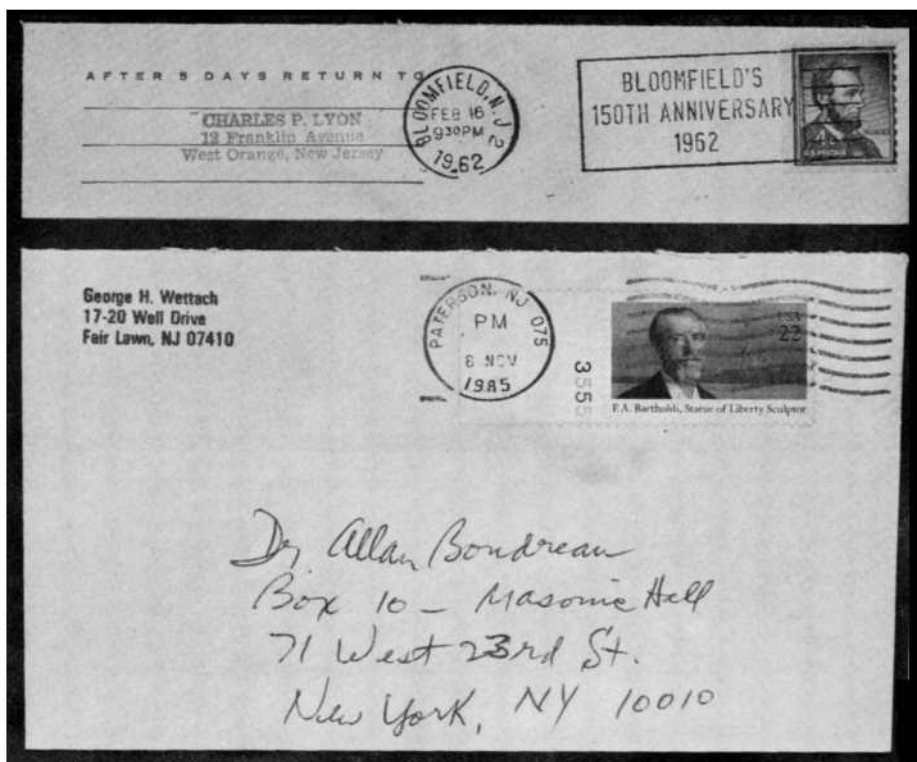
Was Brantford, Ontario named after Joseph Brant, the Mohawk Indian Chief who was Mason?

Bloomfield, New Jersey was named after Joseph Bloomfield who had been Governor of New Jersey and

Grand Master of New Jersey Masons. Brother Bloomfield had fought in the Revolution and was a Brigadier General in the War of 1812. The town was founded in 1812 which event was commemorated in 1962 by a special postmark.

And then there is Paterson, New Jersey which was named after William Paterson, U. S. Senator, Governor of New Jersey and Justice of the U. S. Supreme Court. Brother Paterson received his third degree in Trenton Lodge No. 5, Trenton, N. J. on November 7, 1791. Someone please make a note to issue covers on November 7, 1991 to commemorate the event. One should be postmarked in Paterson and the other in Trenton.

Hopefully some curious and ambitious Brother will dig into this wide area and send us a list for publication. Remember that not only towns but camps, forts and ships have been named for Freemasons. There are lots of postmarks out there that would fit into a Masonic collection. Please let us hear from you.





First Continental Congress Cover First Day Cover, July 4, 1974.....\$3.00 _____

Boston Tea Party First Day Cover, July 4, 1973.....\$3.00 _____

A very limited number of the above covers have been found in our files, available to our members while the supply lasts at \$3.00 each plus SASE, send to:

Nicholas Batalias 27-05 Urban Place Fair Lawn, NJ 07410

"FIRST DAYS" recommended by PAT HERST

Writing of Stamps, Etc.

By Herman Herst, Jr.

There are all sorts of hobbies, and most of them have their publications. Glance over the array of magazines on any newsstand, and see how many are devoted to photography. There are publications devoted to hair-dos for sixteen year olds, for leather jacketed machos who ride motorcycles, and even for people who own those devices which detect metal underground.

But I do not believe that there is any hobby which spawns the number of publications that are devoted to philatelic specialties. No one has ever counted the number of stamp magazines that are intended to keep the devotees of a single philatelic interest up to date.

And I seem to get many of them. I find them of considerable interest, even if I do not collect the particular subject to which they are dedicated. And I learn a lot from them. I have no more interest in Haitian philately than any other non-Haitian collector, but the experiences of a collector in obtaining postmarks of remote Haitian post offices was as exciting (to me) as any Agatha Christie mystery.

While sitting at a typewriter in Florida, watching friendly palms billowing in the wind, I read of postal problems in China, mailships on early transatlantic routes, local posts operating during the Australian gold rush, and mail going illegally during World War II by way of Post Office Box 506 in Lisbon. (What a story that would make!)

But sometimes a magazine comes in that does more than enlighten. It simply brings pleasure.

Such is "First Days", the publication of the American First Day Cover Society. Edited by Sol Koved, this magazine (the May 1983 issue was 180 pages!) exudes happiness on every page as well as philatelic information. Just as they say that one does not have to be Jewish to enjoy a certain kind of bread made on traditional Jewish formulae, one does not have to collect first day covers to enjoy this magazine.

There was a time when I said that I had no interest in first day covers, because I was bitten by one years ago. There is more truth than fiction in this statement.

About forty years ago, a cover bearing a \$2 Columbian came into my possession. I no longer recall where I

obtained it, but I debated for several days whether I ought to soak the stamp off. There was little interest in first day covers at the time. I found that out when I advertised in this very magazine first day covers of the 1923 air mail stamps, #C4-C6, at \$5 per set. They did not sell, but I spent a weekend soaking them off, so that I might advertise them as used stamps at \$6 per set. Today, as first day covers, they list at \$2800. One reason for their scarcity might well be the fact that I soaked one hundred of them off cover, but I had to get rid of them.

In this same magazine, I offered the \$2 Columbian FDC for \$60.00. No one answered. For the next several issues, I dropped the price \$1 per week. Each week my ad offered various items, with a two line postscript at the bottom, giving the price of the cover. I do not recall at what price it finally sold; perhaps it was \$50 or \$52, but it sold. (Today, it is in Scott as the only first day cover known of the dollar values. The price is \$14,000, and the owner wrote me a couple of years ago to tell me how he treasures it!)

Now if this is not being "bitten by a first day cover", I do not know what is!

The Editor of the magazine "First Days" is Sol Koved, of Cranford, N.J. and I defy any philatelist, whether he collects first day covers or not, to tell me that the magazine he edits is not tops in philatelic enjoyment. We have a great number of philatelists editing philatelic specialty magazines — dozens of them. Most do a creditable job; all of them try hard.

There is never a day that I do not get two or three — or more — stamp magazines. I put them aside to be read when times permits. But at the top of the pile, when "First Days" comes in, is Sol Koved's publication.

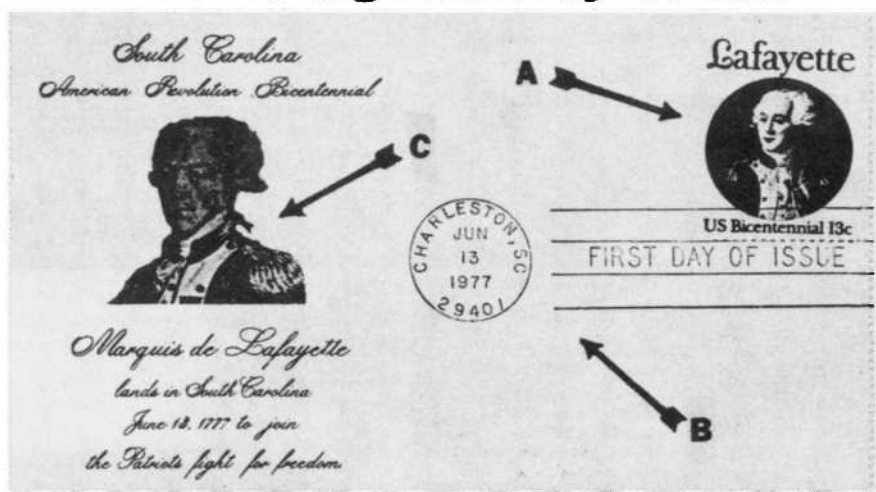
One has to join the American First Day Cover Society to get the magazine. Any reader who might be interested is invited to contact the membership chairman, Mrs. Monte Eiserman, 14359 Chadbourne, Houston TX 77079. Dues to the Society are on a sliding scale, according to the month in which one applies, but in no case, are they expensive. And the opportunity to read a really topgrade philatelic magazine is one of the many advantages of joining the Society.

STAMPS ★ July 2, 1983

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A Short Course In Collecting First Day Covers



What is a First Day Cover?

A First Day Cover (FDC) is an envelope or card bearing a stamp which is cancelled on the day the stamp is initially placed on sale by the postal authorities. A FDC with the Lafayette stamp (A) is shown with a Charleston, SC, First Day Of Issue cancel (B) and a cachet (C), pronounced *ka-shay*, which tells us something about the stamp.

Where are stamps first sold?

In the United States the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) may designate one or more cities as "official" — the location where the new stamp is first released to the public. The location is usually appropriate to the subject of the stamp. The George Eastman stamp on the FDC shown here was released in Rochester, NY, home of the Eastman-Kodak Company.



When are FDCs prepared?

A specific day is selected for release of the new stamp, one which is usually significant to the subject — such as the Eleanor Roosevelt stamp issued on the 100th anniversary of her birth shown here on a FDC. On the day following the First Day, the stamp is available virtually everywhere in the country.



How are stamps first released?

Generally a First Day Of Issue (FDOI) ceremony is sponsored by the Postal Service or an organization associated with the new stamp. It is a colorful and entertaining ceremony which enables collectors to attend to prepare special souvenirs. Programs such as the one shown here are usually distributed free of charge.



What is the significance of the cachet?

The cachet enhances the cover by complementing the stamp and can be attractive, educational, humorous, and other things. There are many different cachets for each new stamp — such as two shown here. The choice adds an exciting dimension to the hobby.



How do I choose a cachet?

The designs come in all shapes, sizes, and colors. They may be printed, engraved, thermographed or produced by a variety of other methods. Some collectors make their own. One collecting challenge is to see how many different cachets can be found for a particular stamp.

How do I obtain FDCs?

Collectors may buy envelopes and send them to the USPS for servicing (canceling). The instructions for doing this are in your local Post Office. Or the covers may be purchased ready made from stamp dealers.

First Day Cover Collecting —

is a hands-on hobby, unlike stamp collecting, where the FDC collector actively participates. Collectors may make their own covers or collect covers in many dozens of different ways — the result is a personal involvement that is extremely gratifying.

How can I get more information?

The American First Day Cover Society is a not-for-profit organization of over 3500 members like yourself. The Society publishes a magazine and other booklets that will help you expand your knowledge of FDCs. For further information, write to Mrs. Monte Eiserman, 14359 Chadbourne, Houston, TX 77079. Please be sure to include a large (#10) self-addressed and stamped envelope for a detailed reply.

A Philatelic Visit to New Jersey

THE MASONIC STAMP CLUB OF NEW YORK

will present a program on

MASONIC PHILATELY

Friday

April 11, 1986

at

Fidelity Lodge No. 113

Masonic Temple

99 South Maple Avenue

Ridgewood, New Jersey

(Lodge opens at 7:30 p.m.)

All Masons interested in stamp and cover
collecting are invited to attend

Additional Directions and Information

George Wettach - Past President MSCNY

201-796-0799