



The Masonic Philatelist

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Brother Prince Hall

Honoring African American Freemasons

The Masonic Philatelist

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Contents

Honoring African American Fms	3
From the Editor's Desk	9
Another Honor for Lord Stanley	10
The "Jack the Ripper" Nonsense	11
Masonic Milestones	12
A Brother of the Cloth	13
The Masonic Specialist.	14
Our Remarkable Bro. B. Franklin	20
Bro. Fords Enduring Legacy	24
Sam McLaughlin—Another.	25
Stamp Rant	26
<i>Titanic</i> —Remembering a Tragedy	35
Foreign Stamps—USA/CDN Des.	36
Poussin Revisited.	37
Brothers of the Circus.	39
Freemasonry and the GAR.	40



Dr. Michael Bronner

I wish to introduce our Club Administrator Dr. Michael Bronner who spends many hours working with me on all aspects of Club administration and editing material. Many thanks Michael!
CLM

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Honoring African American Freemasons

Christopher L. Murphy, BF

The African Grand Lodge of North American was formed by Bro. Prince Hall (1735–1807) in the late 1700s. He was a tireless abolitionist, and is regarded as one of the most prominent African Americans in the early years of the United States. This Grand Lodge is now named the Prince Hall Grand Lodge. Members are termed, “Prince Hall Freemasons.”

The Prince Hall Grand Lodge is now recognized (since about 1988) by most Grand Lodges in the United States. There are 51 Grand Lodges, and 9 still do not recognize it. One other does recognize it, but does not allow inter-visitations.



Prince Hall was honored on a postage stamp issued by Barbados in 1976 (Scott #443). He was definitely a major civil rights worker so should be honored on a US stamp along with all the others depicted who have struggled in this cause.

From its inception, the Masonic Order has always considered all men to be equal. There are no provisions that exclude any race. When race is used as a detriment to Masonic membership, this age-old Masonic principle is violated.

The following is a presentation of other postage stamps honoring African American Freemasons who were members of the Prince Hall Grand Lodge. All are US stamps save two. As I proceed to review stamps from other countries, I will likely find others and will present them. The biographical information provided for each entry is from *Wikipedia*.

William James “Count” Basie (1904–1984) was an American jazz pianist, organist, bandleader, and composer. In 1935 he formed his own jazz orchestra, and in 1936 took them to Chicago for a long engagement and their first recording. He led the group for almost 50 years, creating innovations like the use of two “split” tenor saxophones. (USA #3096)



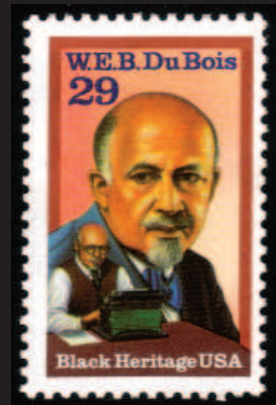
The Masonic Philatelist

James Hubert Blake (1887–1983), better known as Eubie Blake; American composer, lyricist, and pianist of ragtime, jazz, and popular music. In 1921, Blake and long-time collaborator Noble Sissle wrote the Broadway musical *Shuffle Along*, one of the first Broadway musicals to be written and directed by African Americans. (USA #2988)

Nathaniel Adams Coles (1919–1965), known professionally as Nat King Cole, was an American singer and musician who first came to prominence as a leading jazz pianist. He was widely noted for his soft, baritone voice, which he used to perform in big band and jazz genres. (USA #2852).

William Edward Burghardt Du Bois (1868–1963) was an American sociologist, historian, civil rights activist, Pan-Africanist, author and editor. Born in Great Barrington, Massachusetts, Du Bois grew up in a relatively tolerant and integrated community. After graduating from Harvard, where he was the first African American to earn a doctorate, he became a professor of history, sociology and economics at Atlanta University. Du Bois was one of the co-founders of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in 1909. (USA #2617)

Edward Kennedy “Duke” Ellington (1899–1974) was an American composer, pianist and bandleader of jazz orchestras. He led his orchestra from 1923 until his death, his career spanning over 50 years. He was based in New York City from the mid-1920s onward, and gained a national profile through his orchestra’s appearances at the Cotton Club. Though widely considered to have been a pivotal figure in the history of jazz, Ellington himself embraced the phrase “beyond category” as a “liberating principle,” and referred his music to the more general category of “American Music,” rather than to a musical genre such as “jazz.”(USA #2211)



The Masonic Philatelist

Lionel Leo Hampton (1908–2002) was an American jazz vibraphonist, pianist, percussionist, bandleader and actor. Along with Red Norvo, Hampton was one of the first jazz vibraphone players. Hampton ranks among the great names in jazz history, having worked with a who's who of jazz musicians, from Benny Goodman and Buddy Rich to Charlie Parker and Quincy Jones. In 1992, he was inducted into the Alabama Jazz Hall of Fame. (*Mali #622*)



William Christopher Handy (1873–1958) was an American blues composer and musician. He was widely known as the “Father of the Blues.” He remains among the most influential of American songwriters. Handy was an educated musician who used folk material in his compositions. (*USA #1372*)



Matthew Alexander Henson (1866–1955) was the first African American Arctic explorer. He was an associate of Robert Peary on seven voyages over a period of nearly 23 years. They made six voyages and spent a total of 18 years in expeditions. Henson was invited in 1937 to become a member of The Explorers Club due to his achievement and was the first African American to be accepted. (*USA #2223*)



Josiah Henson (1789–1883) was an author, abolitionist, and minister. Born into slavery in Charles County, Maryland, he escaped to Upper Canada (now Ontario) in 1830, and founded a settlement and laborer's school for other fugitive slaves at Dawn, near Dresden in Kent County. Henson's autobiography, *The Life of Josiah Henson, Formerly a Slave, Now an Inhabitant of Canada, as Narrated by Himself* (1849), is widely believed to have inspired the character of the fugitive slave, George Harris, in Harriet Beecher Stowe's novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852). (*CDN #997*)



The Masonic Philatelist

Martin Luther King, Jr. (1929–1968) was an American pastor, activist, humanitarian, and leader in the African American Civil Rights Movement. He is best known for his role in the advancement of civil rights using nonviolent civil disobedience based on his Christian beliefs. On October 14, 1964, King received the Nobel Peace Prize for combating racial inequality through nonviolence. (**Note:** King was made a Mason at Sight posthumously. He was scheduled to receive his degrees but was assassinated. His wife accepted the honor on his behalf.) (USA #1771)



Thurgood Marshall (1908–1993) was an Associate Justice of the United States Supreme Court, serving from October 1967 until October 1991. Marshall was the Court's 96th justice and its first African American justice. Before becoming a judge, Marshall was a lawyer who was best known for his high success rate in arguing before the Supreme Court and for the victory in *Brown v. Board of Education*, a decision that desegregated public schools. (USA #3746)



Asa Philip Randolph (1889–1979) was a leader in the African American civil rights movement, the American labor movement and socialist political parties. He organized and led the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, the first predominantly black labor union. In the early civil rights movement, Randolph led one of the first Marches on Washington which convinced President Franklin D. Roosevelt to issue Executive Order No. 8802 in 1941, banning discrimination in the defense industries during World War II. The group then successfully pressured President Harry S. Truman to issue Executive Order 9981 in 1948, ending segregation in the armed services. (USA #2402)



The Masonic Philatelist

Sugar Ray Robinson (1921–1989) was an American professional boxer. Frequently cited as the greatest boxer of all time, Robinson’s performances in the welterweight and middleweight divisions prompted sportswriters to create “pound for pound” rankings, where they compared fighters regardless of weight. He became the first boxer in history to win a divisional world championship five times. He was inducted into the International Boxing Hall of Fame in 1990. (USA #4020)



Booker Taliaferro Washington (1856–1915) was an African American educator, author, orator, and advisor to presidents of the United States. He founded the Tuskegee Institute of Alabama. Between 1890 and 1915, he was the dominant leader in the African American community. He was the first African American to be depicted on a US postage stamp. It would be 35 years before another was honored. (USA #873)



Whitney Moore Young, Jr. (1921–1971) was an American civil rights leader. He spent most of his career working to end employment discrimination in the United States and turning the National Urban League from a relatively passive civil rights organization into one that aggressively worked for equitable access to socioeconomic opportunity for the historically disenfranchised. In 1960, Young was awarded a Rockefeller Foundation grant for a post-graduate year at Harvard University. In the same year, he joined the NAACP and rose to become state president. He was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1969. (USA #1875)



Appropriate depiction of notable African Americans on US postage stamps only came about after the mid 1970s. Their contribution to American society is finally being recognized, but full acceptance as valued American citizens is sadly lacking. The issue of “mind-sets” concerning African Americans is one that cannot be allowed to continue as it is an affront to our basic values. The enactment of laws to rectify the “imbalance” help, but true change can only come about at the individual level. It’s a simple case of what is right and what is wrong—absolutely nothing more than that.

The Masonic Philatelist



As philatelists, we like to “say things with stamps.” The two US stamps shown here commemorate the emancipation of all African Americans. In other words, in 1865 all African Americans were officially given equal status as citizens of the United States. After 150 years they are still fighting to achieve this right. It was a God-given right to begin with, but that was not enough for many people, so America stepped up to the plate and made it law (put it in writing).

America is world-renown as the champion of freedom and has spent thousands of lives and billions of dollars to help other countries in their quest for democracy. In this regard, African Americans did more than their share. We all know that having laws does not guarantee that the laws will be respected and that equal opportunity and respect will be offered to all people. That is the challenge that the United States and many other countries around the world face today.

The current situation is definitely not the will of most Americans. However, with a population of 314 million, there are enough people “on the other side of the fence” to continually fan the flames of racism.

Brother Prince Hall was one of the first recognized individual to take up the cause for African American equality. He undoubtedly saw that Freemasonry embodied the process to unite men in a common cause based on friendship, morality, and brotherly love. The fact that so many African Americans embraced Freemasonry is strong indication of their high principles and desire to make the world a better place.



(USA #902, 1233)

The Masonic Philatelist

From the editor's desk...

It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair...

Charles Dickens opens with these memorable words in his epic tome, *A Tale of Two Cities* (1859). Certainly, not much has changed 156 years later. On the “best” side we have phenomenal science and technology, making life easier and more enjoyable; on the “worst” side we have, (stated plainly) the inability to get along with each other.

I have studied our Masonic “dogma” and believe without any reservations that it cannot be “topped” by any other “dogmas” whatever their source. One of the main reasons here is that religion is left to one’s choice. Worship whatever deity you wish, here are the rules for getting along with your fellow human beings.

I will venture to say that Freemasonry as an organization probably has the largest number of famous people depicted on, or associated with, postage stamps. I suppose it might be rivaled with “Catholics on Stamps” if there were such a hobby. Whatever the case, the sheer number of famous Freemasons is astounding, and this has to “say something.” How did the Masonic Order attract so many remarkable people? I have used the word “attract” because Freemasonry does not solicit members (quite unlike other organizations).

Beyond doubt, every candidate was told exactly what was required of him and given a choice to either proceed or withdraw. The result is obvious: millions of men, including about the best men in all disciplines of human endeavor, chose to be Freemasons.

Our hobby of Masonic philately naturally just concentrates on postage stamps. Only one individual in a million (or more) is accorded the honor of depiction on a stamp. For certain, when that person is found to be a Freemason, we have a right to be proud and the right to say, here is another example of how the Masonic Order is regarded by very credible people.

The tide of Freemasons from previous generations will continue to give us new Masonic-related stamps. However, depletion of our ranks will eventually catch up, unless things turn around.

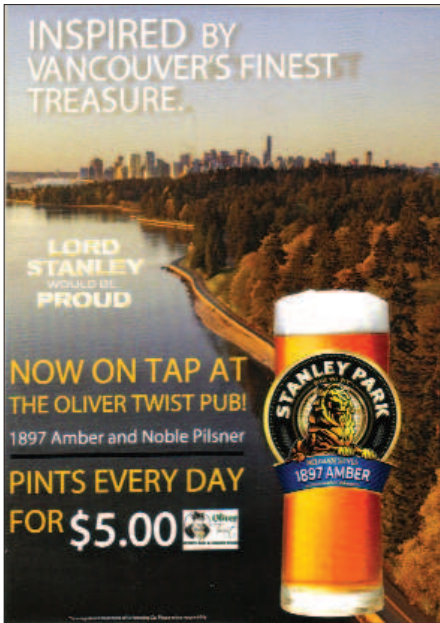
Freemasonry’s “best of times” are definitely in the past, but it does not have to be this way. It’s all up to us.



Another Honor for Lord Stanley

Lord Frederick Arthur Stanley (1841–1908) is best known for hockey’s prestigious Stanley Cup. A monument to him graces the entrance to Vancouver’s Stanley Park, which is a bit larger than New York’s Central Park. A Canadian postage stamp was issued to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Stanley Cup, as illustrated here.

The other night, I noticed a new ad card on the table at a local pub called the Oliver Twist. Lo and Behold! Our distinguished Brother now has a beer that carries his name.



I am not quite sure of the statement, “Lord Stanley would be Proud.” For certain he would be amused in this day and age, but back in the late 1800s, I am really not sure. Whatever the case, times have changed and so have we, and I have no doubt that quality of the beverage would be up to “Stanley’s Standards.” Lord Stanley was a member of Royal Alpha Lodge No. 16, London, England. (*Canada Scott # 1460*)

While we are “in the spirit,” I think I need to mention that one of the biggest names in beer is Molson, named for its founder, and our eminent Brother, John Molson (St. Paul’s Lodge No. 374, Montreal, Quebec—English register). He became provincial grand master for Montreal and William Henry (now Sorel), Quebec, in 1826. There is a Canadian postage stamp that honors Molson (*Canada Scott #117*)

The very fine print you see at the bottom of the ad has the words, “Please enjoy responsibly.” Alcohol comes under the Masonic cardinal virtue, Temperance. This lady does not call for the abolition of alcoholic drinks—just moderation; in other words, be responsible. Prohibition in the United States and Canada was a very bad idea. It was discontinued in the US by our Brother Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

As Freemasons, we might recall the lessons of the 24-inch gauge—there is definitely some time in here for a “Stanley,” or whatever else one might choose.

The Stanley Cup was presented to the Dominion of Canada in 1892 by Frederick Stanley, 16th Earl of Derby, during his tenure as Governor General of Canada.



The “Jack the Ripper” Nonsense

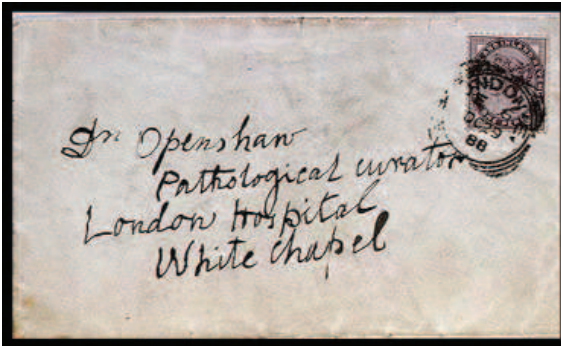
I would venture to say that there is hardly a brother in the English speaking world who has not heard of the ridiculous Jack the Ripper/Masonic connection. Indeed, we are sometimes confronted with this issue, both half-serious or in jest. Astounding and meticulous research on this absurd allegation has been performed by Bro. Paul M. Bessel. His conclusion is as follows:

When carefully examined, there is not a single piece of solid historical evidence to support Stephen Knight's claims of Masonic involvement in the Ripper murders, a theme central to several books and films, including *From Hell*, the recent graphic novel and film by the same title. On the contrary, there is considerable evidence refuting these allegations. Armed with the facts, Masons should have no difficulty

responding to alleged Masonic connections to the Jack the Ripper crimes.

From what I can see from the physical written evidence regarding the case, “Jack” was beyond illiterate, obviously deranged, and would not have been associated with Royalty or England's upper class in any way. Nor would he have stood a chance of getting into the Masonic Order, if one might believe he was himself a Freemason. Requirements are far too stringent. Of course, it will be said that he was just pretending to be such, but I don't buy that for one moment.

What we have here is another journalist/author (Stephen Knight 1951–1985), who was not a Freemason, simply fabricating information on a subject of which he knew nothing. Bro. Bessel certainly sets him straight, but Mr. Knight “cried all the way to the bank.”



An envelope addressed by “Jack the Ripper” (as believed), and a clean illustration of the postage stamp he used. The stamp is Scott GB #89, issued in 1881, so he likely had it for quite some time. I think we can dub Stephen Knight an anti-Mason, so perhaps put this stamp in your anti-Mason section.

Here is Bro. Bessel's website on this case <<http://bessel.org/ripper.htm>>. His credentials and a listing of other work is here <<http://www.tallcedars.org/famous/bois/bessel.htm>>. He is truly a remarkable Masonic researcher.

MASONIC MILESTONES

Centenaries of Events in the World of Masonic Philately For the Year 2015 – USA & Canada



1815 Andrew Jackson defeated the British in New Orleans. Jackson went on to become President of the United States. Greeneville Lodge No. 3, Greeneville, Tennessee. (*USA #1261*)



1815 Stephen Decatur neutralized the pirates off the Barbary Coast. A remarkable American Naval Officer, he is thought to have been a member of a lodge in Maryland or Rhode Island—listed in Denslow. (*USA #791*)



1815 Birth of Sir John A. Macdonald, Canada's first Prime Minister. He was elected to serve two separate terms. St. John's Lodge No. 5, Kingston, Ontario. (*CDN #141*)



1915 Death of Booker Taliaferro Washington, foremost educator and author; founder of the Tuskegee Institute of Alabama; first African American to be depicted on a US postage stamp. He was made a Mason at sight by the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Massachusetts. (*USA # 873*)



A Brother of the Cloth

Back in 1997 we published “Brothers of the Cloth” (MP Vol. 53, No.1). One of the brothers listed is Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla (1753–1811). William Denslow sums up the life of this distinguished Freemason as follows:



...Catholic priest who led the first revolt against the Spaniards in Mexico and started the Mexican revolution that resulted in their freedom five years later. In an attempt to improve the condition of the natives, he proclaimed a revolt on Sept. 16, 1810 against the Spanish government. He seized Guanajuato and Guadalajara and was joined by Allende and Aidama. With an army of 80,000 he marched on Mexico City in October 1810, winning the first battle, but was forced to fall back when defeated by Spanish forces under Felix Calleja on Nov. 6. He was overwhelmed by Calleja in January 1811 near Guadalajara and was forced to flee north. He was betrayed to the Spaniards, and after being degraded [defrocked] from the priesthood, was executed at Chihuahua on July 30, 1811. He joined Arquitectura Moral Lodge of Mexico City in 1806.

Of course, eyebrows raise with the first two word “Catholic priest.” We can see from the dates and a little arithmetic that Bro. Costilla was 53 years old when he became a Freemason. For certain, he knew what he was doing and evidently saw that Freemasonry was not diametrically opposed to the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church.

Unfortunately, the animosity and misunderstandings of the past still casts a shadow on the subject of religion and Freemasonry. In essence, the animosity was political in nature; nothing to do with theology or dogma. Take a moment to look over the listings in “Brothers of the Cloth.” Those brethren were extremely religious and extremely intelligent. We can all be very proud that they chose to become Freemasons; and perhaps consider this in any discussions that crop up as to religion and Freemasonry. (*Mexico #314*)



The Masonic Specialist

Note: This series is being updated with stamps subsequently issued showing the image of the subject (Class II stamps). Also, other editing has been done.

ARNOLD, HENRY HARLEY (1886–1950); U.S. Air Force officer; aviation pioneer and first general of the U.S. Air Force; Union Lodge No. 7, Junction City, Kansas.

Primary Stamp: USA No. 2192

Year: 1988

Type: Commemorative

Issue: Great American Issue

Designer: Christopher Calle

MP Class: Class II

Artwork: Not applicable

Design: H. H. 'Hap' Arnold



Secondary Stamp(s): USA No. 2191, C6, C49

Stamp Facts: The pilot shown in the cock pit on secondary stamp No. C6 is said to be Arnold.

Additional Masonic Information: Arnold was initiated in the stated lodge on August 15, passed on September 15, and he received his Master Mason's Degree on November 3, 1927. He was also an AASR Mason, receiving his 32nd Degree on April 11, 1929. He was then granted the honorary 33rd Degree on October 19, 1945. On November 21, 1958, the lodge at Edwards Air Force Base, California, was constituted as General Henry H. Arnold Lodge No. 791. This lodge later moved to the nearby town of Rosemond, California.

ASTOR, JOHN JACOB (1763–1848); fur trader, financier; founder of Oregon Territory; the city of Astoria is named after him; Holland Lodge No. 8, New York City, New York.

Primary Stamp: USA No. 783

Year: 1936

Type: Commemorative

Issue: Oregon Territorial Issue

Designer: Not indicated

MP Class: Class III

Artwork: Not Indicated



The Masonic Philatelist

Design: Map of Oregon Territory

Secondary Stamp(s): USA No. 964,1124

Stamp Facts: The primary stamp (#783) commemorated the 100th anniversary of the opening of the Oregon Territory (1836). The city of Astoria, Oregon, however, which is shown on the stamp, was founded in the spring of 1811. Unfortunately, the first group of pioneers destined to arrive in June of that year was either massacred by Indians or died in an explosion on their ship.

Additional Masonic Information: Astor was one of the founders of his lodge (Holland Lodge). He served as master of this lodge in 1788. He was grand treasurer of the Grand Lodge of New York from 1798 to 1801. He was a Knight Templar and for a time, he was secretary of a commandery that met in the Holland Lodge room.

ATCHISON, DAVID RICE (1807–1886); lawyer, political leader; senator from Missouri; as president *pro tempore* of the senate, he was president of the United States for one day (March 4, 1849) when Zachary Taylor refused to be inaugurated on a Sunday; Platte Lodge No. 56, Platte City, Missouri.

Primary Stamp: USA No. CE1

Year: 1934

Type: Commemorative

Issue: Air Post Special Delivery

Designer: Franklin Delano Roosevelt

MP Class: Class IV

Artwork: Not applicable

Design: Great Seal of the United States



Secondary Stamp(s): None

Stamp Facts: Although not acknowledged in the official list of U.S. presidents, the legal “stand-in,” David Rice Atchison, was president of the United States for one day—March 4, 1849, a Sunday. This was the day Zachary Taylor was supposed to be inaugurated as president. However, Taylor was a staunch Episcopalian so he postponed the event to the following Monday. As the office of vice-president was not yet filled, coverage of the presidential office fell to the president *pro tempore* of the senate, David Rice Atchison. What happened on that day? By his own admission, Atchison slept most of the day, arriving at the office quite late. His senate colleagues jested with him about changing certain cabinet posts seeing he was president and the day just quietly slipped into history.

The Masonic Philatelist

The primary stamp was designed by Franklin Delano Roosevelt while he was president of the United States. However, a number of people contributed to the design of the Great Seal, among who was Benjamin Franklin and other possible Masons. This fact has led to the conclusion that some of the symbols on the Great Seal (both sides) are Masonic in nature (eagle, stars, clouds, pyramid, all-seeing eye, etc.).

Note on the Eagle: The bald eagle is the national emblem of the United States. It would, therefore, seem to make more sense if the eagle used on the Great Seal of the United States were the bald eagle rather than the eagle of heraldry. The latter is immediately distinguished by the little tuft of feathers on the back of the eagle's head (extends beyond the head). It is apparent other people have been of this opinion because the original eagle of heraldry used for the seal in 1782 was changed to a bald eagle in 1841. The next revision in 1902 continued with the national bird. However, after 1964 the heraldry side won the toss because the eagle of heraldry was back (almost with a vengeance).

To my surprise, when I recently (2014) checked, the bald eagle was back. There is still a tiny little "tuft," but it so marginal I will consider it simply a ruffled feather.

The adjacent illustrations show the different eagles used for the Great Seal throughout history. Few people would disagree that the eagle of heraldry is the most impressive for a seal. However, nothing is really lost by making the eagle a bald eagle and thereby using the actual national emblem of the United States.



Suggested Head

(Left) The seal I obtained in Washington D.C., in 1995 and found that it was created after 1964. (Center) The current seal shown on Wikipedia. It has definitely been redesigned, but now reminds me of a sea gull. I prefer the more "aggressive" eagle on the 1965 seal. Really, all they had to do was get rid of its topnotch and do a little touch-up as shown on the right. Bald eagles are very aggressive looking birds—I see them regularly.

The Masonic Philatelist

AUDUBON, JOHN JAMES (1785–1851); ornithologist; noted U.S. artist; no documentation of Masonic membership; he referred to himself as a Mason and a “brother” in his personal diary.

Primary Stamp: USA No. 847

Year: 1940

Type: Commemorative

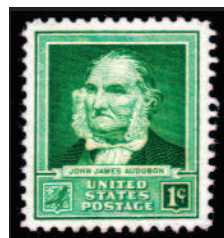
Issue: Famous Americans Issue

Designer: Not indicated

MP Class: Class II

Artwork: Not indicated

Design: John James Audubon



Secondary Stamp(s): USA No. 1241, 1863, 3236e, 3650, C71

Stamp Facts: The secondary stamp(s) No. 1241 and C71 have exactly the same design, that of two birds. It was taken from an Audubon painting, which is said to be entitled *Columbia Jays*. However, the birds shown in the painting are Collie’s magpie jays.

Additional Masonic Information: Audubon referred to himself as a “Mason” and a brother” in his diary. He also made other Masonic references in his personal letters. In a letter he wrote to his wife, Lucy, he states that he can still see his good friend, DeWitt Clinton, Grand Master and governor of New York, presiding over the Masonic Knighting of Lafayette in New York with Robert Bakewell Atterbury, Lucy’s first cousin, standing beside the Marquis at the ceremony. In another letter he mentions a Mr. Bently and states that: “Mr. Bently is a brother Mason.” Furthermore, Audubon’s journal entry for Sunday, March 18, 1821 describes the Masonic initiation ceremony of a Mr. Liataud. Audubon states: “My being a brother entitled me at once to a seat.”

Although Audubon was known to be eccentric, his journals were factual and well-written. There would be no purpose in including information that would deceive the reader. Also, his wife, Alice, was a school teacher and apparently an extremely astute woman. It does not appear reasonable that Audubon would include information in his letters to her that was not true.

Nevertheless, some further unusual information has come to light on Audubon— he claimed to be Louis XVII of France! As the story goes, Louis XVII was born in 1785, the same year as Audubon. After Louis XVI was deposed (guillotined) in 1793, his son, then 8 years old, was imprisoned and reportedly died of tuberculosis in 1795 at the age of ten. However, Madame Simon, the wife of the boy’s jailer, asserted in 1814 that the boy had been

The Masonic Philatelist

replaced with a dumb child who had rickets and the young king was smuggled out of the prison in 1794. She did not know what became of him. Over the next fifty years, 70 men claimed to be the elusive king. Audubon was one of them.

AUGUSTA, ALEXANDER T. (1825–1890); physician and surgeon; first African American commissioned officer in the Union Army; also, he was the first African American to head a hospital in the United States; Mason (no details); Prince Hall affiliation.

Primary Stamp: USA No. 2210

Year: 1986

Type: Commemorative

Issue: Public Hospitals

Designer: Uldis Purins

MP Class: Class IV

Artwork: Not applicable

Design: Hospital sign and building



Secondary Stamp(s): None

Stamp Facts: Hospitals can trace their origination to public alms houses which started in England during the 16th century. In the United States, the earliest almshouse that became a hospital was the Philadelphia General Hospital which opened about 1731 and stayed in operation until 1977.

Additional Masonic Information: The fact that Augusta was a Prince Hall Freemason was reported in the *Masonic News Quarterly*—Prince Hall Freemason, Southern Jurisdiction (Williamson collection on African American Freemasonry).

AUSTIN, STEPHEN FULLER (1793–1836); American frontier colonizer; established settlements in Texas and was commander-in-chief of the Army of Texas; first secretary of state of the Republic of Texas; Louisiana Lodge No. 109, St. Genevieve, Missouri.

Primary Stamp: USA No. 776

Year: 1936

Type: Commemorative

Issue: Texas Centennial

Designer: Alvin R. Meissner

MP Class: Class II



The Masonic Philatelist

Artwork: Not applicable

Design: Sam Houston, Stephen F. Austin and the Alamo

Secondary Stamp(s): USA No. 938, 1043, 2204

Stamp Facts: The picture of the Alamo shown on the primary stamp (#776) is quite different from that of the secondary stamp No. 1043. The primary stamp may also be said to commemorate the death of Stephen Austin (1836).

Additional Masonic Information: Austin was initiated in Louisiana Lodge (first lodge West of the Mississippi), on June 23, 1815. He was 22 years old at that time. The lodge was then under Pennsylvania charter. In Texas, he headed the first attempt to establish a lodge. He and several other Masons petitioned the Yorkino Grand Lodge of Mexico for a charter. Austin was named to be the first master of the new lodge, but the petition was lost and the lodge was not formed. The city of Austin, Texas and Austin Lodge No. 12, in that city are named after him.

AUSTIN, WARREN ROBINSON (1877–1962); lawyer; first U.S. ambassador to the United Nations; originally a member of Brattleboro Lodge No. 102, Burlington, Vermont.

Primary Stamp: USA No. 928

Year: 1945

Type: Commemorative

Issue: United Nations Conference Issue

Designer: Not indicated

MP Class: Class IV

Artwork: Not applicable

Design: “TOWARDS UNITED NATIONS”



Secondary Stamp(s): None

Stamp Facts: The primary stamp pays tribute to President Franklin Delano Roosevelt who called the conference that led the way to the organization of the United Nations.

Additional Masonic Information: Warren later affiliated with Franklin Lodge No. 4, St. Albans, Vermont. He was a recipient of the Distinguished Achievement Medal of the Grand Lodge of New York. He was a Knight Templar and 33rd Degree AASR Mason.

The Masonic Philatelist

AUTRY, GENE (1907–1998); singer, actor, producer, writer; made first phonograph records of western songs; Catoosa Lodge No. 185, Catoosa, Oklahoma.

Primary Stamp: USA No. 4449

Year: 2010

Type: Commemorative

Issue: Cowboys of the Silver Screen

Designer: Not indicated

MP Class II

Artwork: Not applicable

Design: Gene Autry



Secondary Stamp(s): No. 1252

Stamp Facts:

Additional Masonic Information: Gene Autry received his Masonic degrees in the stated lodge in 1927. He was a 32nd degree AASR Mason and a Shriner (Malaika Shrine Temple, Los Angeles, California).

AVERS, HENRY G. (1886–1947); mathematician; chief mathematician of the Geodetic Survey (1942); Mason (no details).

Primary Stamp: USA No. 1088

Year: 1957

Type: Commemorative

Issue: Coast and Geodetic Survey

Designer: Harold E. MacEwen

MP Class: Class IV

Artwork: Not applicable

Design: Flag of Coast and Geodetic Survey and ship at sea



Secondary Stamp(s): None

Stamp Facts: The primary stamp commemorates the 150th anniversary of the founding of the Coast and Geodetic Survey. This service surveys and charts American coasts and harbors.

Additional Masonic Information: While Avers' lodge affiliation is not known, it is known that he was a 32nd degree AASR Mason and a Shriner.

The Masonic Philatelist

AXTELL, SAMUEL B. (1819–1891); political leader; first governor of New Mexico; Amador Lodge No. 65, Jackson, California.

Primary Stamp: USA No. 1191

Year: 1962

Type: Commemorative

Issue: New Mexico Statehood Issue

Designer: Robert J. Jones

MP Class: Class IV

Artwork: Not applicable

Design: Shiprock



Secondary Stamp(s): None

Stamp Facts: The primary stamp shows Shiprock which is a mass of volcanic rock on the Navajo reservation near Farmington, New Mexico. The shape of the rock resembles a ship in full sail. It towers 1,400 feet above the New Mexico plain. A Navajo Indian legend says the landmark was once a giant bird which brought the tribe to the state.

Shiprock must not be confused with Ship Rock Peak, another mountain in the same area, which is 7,178 feet high. The Navajos call this mountain the Rock with Wings.

Additional Masonic Information: Axtell helped organize and presided over the first meeting of the Grand Lodge of New Mexico.

Note to Seniors

If you do not have access to the Internet, you can go to your local public library, which will likely have computer stations. Simply ask one of the librarians to bring up our website and show you have to use it. Take along a copy of the MP and show the librarian the back cover, which has our site address. Library staff will be happy to assist you, and you will be surprised how easy it is to use the Internet.

Our Remarkable Brother Ben Franklin

Few highly acclaimed notables in the history of the world can match Benjamin Franklin (1706–1790). He was proficient in many disciplines and is likely one of the most (if not the most) remembered person in history besides George Washington.

He certainly was not a handsome man—short, (squat in later years), and probably started going bald at an early age. We are told that he certainly “had a way with the ladies,” so we have to add “charm” to all of his other astounding attributes.

Franklin came along at a time in American history when they really needed “a guy like that.” He was 26 years older than George Washington (1732–1799), so would have been considered a bit of a “father figure,” and perhaps herein lies a part of the reason Washington joined the Masonic Order.

Franklin became a Freemason in 1731. He would likely have joined for reasons of fellowship—an opportunity to mingle with other intellectuals. He became extremely active in the Order, so evidently found everything to his liking.

In 2006, the US issued four excellent postage stamps honoring Franklin and his achievements, as shown here.

The first stamp is titled “BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, STATESMAN.” The figures in the background are (left to right) John Adams, Roger Sherman, Robert Livingston, Thomas Jefferson, and Benjamin Franklin. This stamp, I believe, is the second US “double image” stamp (first is #2513). In the foreground is Franklin’s famous political cartoon with the words “Join, or Die.” We see a snake chopped-up representing the various colonies (adjacent image). The message is that if you don’t join the revolution, you will die under British rule. We also see the Declaration *as to* Independence presented to Congress. This is not the actual Declaration of Independence that was signed by Congress, it came later. Franklin was involved in both and printed the documents. We also see hand-written information in French that says: “Treaty of possible and defensive alliance. The most Christian King and...”



The Masonic Philatelist

This is the title and first line of a treaty between the United States and France negotiated by Franklin and others. What it did was ensure France that if it went to war with Great Britain, then the US would side with France.

The second stamp is titled “BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, SCIENTIST.” We see Franklin in the background with a kite in a thunder storm, experimenting with lightning (electricity). We are lucky he did not get “fried” but he evidently knew what he was doing. There are also scientific drawings. Again, we have another “double image” stamp.

The third stamp is titled “BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, PRINTER.” Here we see Franklin with a front page of the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, a front cover from his *Poor Richard Almanac* and a book showing Franklin as the printer.

The last stamp is a little different. It shows the title “B. FREE FRANKLIN, POSTMASTER.” The meaning of this is that in Benjamin Franklin’s day there were

no stamps; people wrote their names in the top corners of envelopes. Those receiving mail—not the senders—paid the postage. The postmaster (in this case Franklin) signed envelopes. Franklin signed them “B. Free Franklin” as a protest against British rule. It appears that he got “under the wire” by showing a “B” (initial) for the word “Be.” In the background we see a post-rider, and in the foreground an envelope/letter signed by Franklin. There is also what appears to be a cancellation impression. The letter/envelope would have been of the nature I explained in the March 2014, *Masonic Philatelist* (Vol. 20, No. 1, pages 18, 19), however postage stamps were some 57 years beyond Franklin’s time.

I have written before about the US stamp that inadvertently shows Franklin’s arch-enemy, England’s George III. He is, “The most Christian King,” referred to in the hand-written note shown on the first stamp. Just to kind of “round things off,” here is the stamp showing George III:



The coin in the background (arrow) shows the likeness of George III. The colonies did not have their own coins at that time, so used British coins. The actual coin illustrated was over-stamped by an American colonist.



Bro. Ben Franklin was a member of St. John’s Lodge, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. His Masonic activities are extensive and will be provided in *The*

Masonic Specialist as we move forward with this series. (USA #4021–4024, 1561–Salomon was also a Freemason)

Brother Ford's Enduring Legacy

Just the word “Ford” immediately brings to mind fabulous automobiles and often a flashback of the first car we owned back in the 1940s or 1950s. This was all brought about by our eminent Brother, Henry Ford (1863–1947). He did not invent the automobile, but he did something equally important—he brought it within the purse-strings on the average American.

The repercussions were astounding. Americans could now travel many miles very quickly and in reasonable comfort (becoming much greater as time went on). People were brought together more than at any time in history. Travelers from the large cities became “tourists,” and stimulated the economy in all the little towns, villages, and historic sites right across the nation.

The demand for cars was so great that the automobile industry became the back-bone of the American economy. Detroit with its massive manufacturing facilities became world-renown.

Cars themselves became more and more beautiful—absolute works of art. From the mid 1950s to 1960 they reached their peak in “artistic beauty.” Not only were they beautiful, but also very powerful, extremely comfortable and reliable. The high-end models (Cadillac, Lincoln, and Chrysler Imperial) were so exotic you stopped in your tracks when one went by. I recall thinking what cars would be like 50 years in the future.

The “wonderful” 1950s concept cars never went into production. A more scientific approach was taken with the emphasis on aerodynamics, safety, practicality, and econo-

my. Car performance and reliability dramatically improved. New technology essentially eliminated flat tires and “rust-buckets.”



General Motors 1950s concept car.



A 1957 Lincoln Premiere. I think Bro. Henry would have approved.

Henry Ford was a member of Palestine Lodge No. 357, Detroit, Michigan, and a 33° AASR Mason.

The US and Canada (mainly) have issued some beautiful stamps depicting cars. The three main Freemasons who pioneered the automotive industry were Henry Ford, Walter P. Chrysler, and Robert Samuel McLaughlin. The US issued a stamp in 1960 (shown below) that can be used for all brethren related to the automotive industry. (USA #1286A, 1162)



Sam McLaughlin – Another Automotive Brother

Brother Robert Samuel “Sam” McLaughlin (1871–1972) was an influential Canadian businessman and philanthropist. He started the McLaughlin Motor Car Company in 1907, one of the first major automobile manufacturers in Canada, which evolved into General Motors of Canada. A member of Cedar Lodge No. 270, Oshawa, Ontario, McLaughlin was a Royal Arch Mason, Knight Templar, AASR Mason, and President of the Oshawa Shrine Club.

The “Big Three” automobile manufacturers (Ford, Chrysler, and General Motors) had their heyday in the 1950s. There was fierce competition among them. Automobile dealers did not mix makes, were extremely loyal to their brand, and proud of their dealerships. A man often stayed with one brand and became associated with it (Ford man, Chrysler man, GM man). (CDN #2284, 1490e)



GENERAL MOTORS GOLDEN FIVE for '58

The '58 Golden Anniversary Chevrolet

The '58 Golden Anniversary American

The '58 Golden Anniversary Oldsmobile

The '58 Golden Anniversary Buick

The '58 Golden Anniversary Cadillac

GM

EACH THE ADDRESS OF THE PAST THE PIONEER OF THE FUTURE

It is this General Motors knowledge which has created such outstanding values in the cars now ready for just inspection in the showrooms of GM dealers. This effort, too, before the public's attention and the most satisfying manner, to be listed below.

Please note that the following series is general in nature.
The entries are not intended to be Masonic-related.



Murphy's

STAMP RANT

Errors, Oddities & Oversights

USA & CANADA

Book One: Design Anomalies – Part 5

TIME WARP

Stamp collecting was promoted by the U.S. Postal Service with this special stamp. The stamps shown in the stamp design background and the stamp on the cover in the foreground were issued September 18, 1887. However, the postmark on the cover envelope shows the date June 16, 1886. How could a stamp be canceled over fifteen months before it was issued? It



is evident the stamp designers meant to use stamps issued in 1883 or 1885, which have the same design. Enlargements of the stamp used and postmark follow. (*USA #2198, 213*)



WILLIAMSBURG WONDER

This stamp commemorated the ratification of the United States Constitution in 1788. The official Postal Service description for the stamp states: “The central design is a reproduction of a colonial-type courthouse, with two horsemen in the foreground, one in the act of mounting and the other galloping away carrying news of the ratification.” The building shown is designed after the courthouse in Williamsburg, Virginia., However that building does not have pillars holding up the portico Nevertheless, pillars were added in 1911 and then removed in about 1932 to restore the building to its original design. Could it be that the stamp designer used an out-dated photo for his design? Coupled with this, there seems to be a question as to where the Constitution was ratified—Williamsburg or Richmond? My guess is that the postal service found themselves in this dilemma after they had designed the stamp. As a result, they simply said that the building was representative and did not show a specific location for it. Nevertheless, it might be noted that the Scott Catalogue shows “Old Courthouse, Williamsburg, Va.” (USA #835)



WILLIE WASN'T THERE

This stamp showing Sir Wilfrid Laurier (1841–1919) is one of the stamps in Canada’s Sixtieth Anniversary of Confederation (1867–1927) series. The word “CONFEDERATION” is shown on the stamp as can be clearly seen. Why Sir Wilfrid Laurier is honored in the Confederation series is totally beyond comprehension. At the time of Confederation, Laurier was 26 years old and had not yet entered politics! Laurier was not one of Canada’s Fathers of Confederation. Certainly, he was a distinguished statesman and could have been one of the Fathers. He did not, however, become involved in Federal politics until 1874, seven years after Confederation. (CDN #144)



WINDOW PAINS

Gunston Hall, the home of George Mason, is shown on this stamp. Mason himself was also shown on a stamp—twenty-three years after his house was depicted.



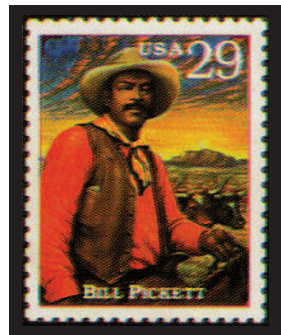
Mason, therefore, becomes the only person on a U.S. stamp to have his real estate honored first. While Mason himself was missed, there is also something missing on the Gunston Hall stamp—the basement windows.



It is certain such windows were in the original building. Kevin Shupe of the Gunston Hall Library tells us the original windows probably had vertical bar grills, one of which still survives on a basement window at the back on the other side of the building. If the stamp designer, Rene Clarke, purposely excluded the windows for design purposes, he would have been wise to have shown more shrubbery. (*USA #1108, 1858*)

WRONG PICKETT PICK

In preparing for the design of this stamp, the stamp designers picked a photograph of the wrong person. Rather than the famous Bill Pickett (1870–1932), one of Bill’s relatives was chosen for the design. The error was noticed by Bill’s descendants so the stamps were recalled and a revised stamp was prepared and released.



Unfortunately, some of the original stamps had been released prior to the recall resulting in a nightmare for the U.S. Postal Service. The matter was resolved by a limited “sale by lottery” of the recalled stamps. (*USA #2869g*)

Book Two: Design Curiosities – Part 1

Introduction: In this category the stamp design has been examined/researched and various curiosities revealed. Such are not errors, although in some cases they might be. Generally, they are just amusing facts as a result of applying logic and common sense, along with being highly critical (which is simply fun).

AGING STAGING

When this stamp was issued, there were about 230 million people in the United States of America. Remarkably, it appears the designer of the stamp, Paul Calle, was unable to find an elderly American couple to model for him.



The couple shown on the stamp are Canadian citizens—Mr. and Mrs. Joe Ackle. The children shown are their grandchildren. Hopefully the children are Americans, which would give the stamp a 50% domestic content. (*USA #2011*)

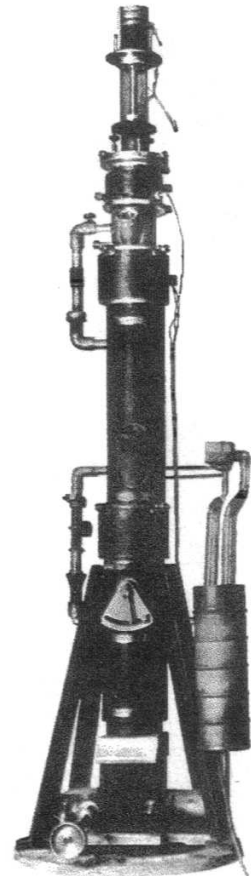
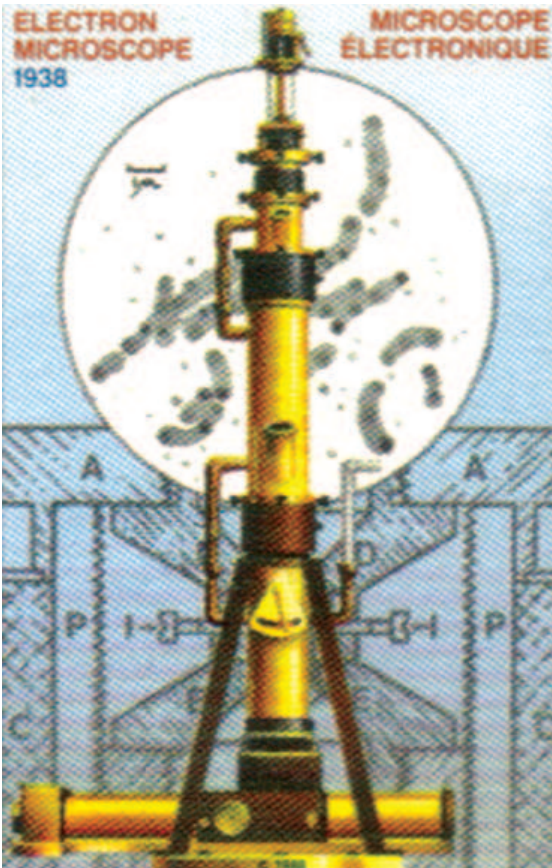
ANY OLD PORT IN A STORM

This Canadian postage stamp commemorated the centenary (1862–1962) of the City of Victoria, which is located on Vancouver Island, (now part of British Columbia). The stamp features a reprint of the design used for the first two stamps planned to be issued jointly by British Columbia and Vancouver Island. The design is strange for three reasons. First, the reprinted stamp was made in 1860, not 1862. Second, if the reprint represents the first stamp planned to be issued (a non-perforated version), then it shows a stamp that was never placed in use. Finally, the original stamp (and reprint) shows “Vancouver’s Island” (plural) for “Vancouver” (singular). There was likely a reason for this; however, I can’t find anything. If it were possessive (i.e., Vancouver’s) then perhaps it would refer to Captain George Vancouver, from whom the island got its name. In other words, his island. (*CDN #399*)



APPARATUS STATUS

The design of this stamp is based on a photograph of an early (1938) electron microscope. The photograph of the “scope” probably used by the stamp designer, Roger Hill, and the microscope shown on the stamp are compared in the following illustrations. It is immediately seen, of course, that there are differences between the two microscopes. The major difference is the apparatus mounted on the right side (facing) of the microscope in the photograph. Roger Hill did not include this apparatus in the stamp design. The question one must therefore ask is, would the stamp microscope work effectively and produce an image (as seen in the stamp background) without the additional apparatus? (CDN #1208)



APRON ART

The design of this unusual Newfoundland stamp is said to be based on the Royal Arch Masonic apron worn by Thomas Dundas, the second Earl of Zetland (1795–1873). Dundas was Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of England from 1844 to 1870. However, research done by Bro. Larry Burden revealed that the three flowers (in circles) are not Masonic in nature. They are symbols of Great Britain which were used on Royal Arch regalia for general ornamentation. That such were simply the inspiration for the stamp is probably the case. (*NFD #3*)



ARBOR DAY DIGGINGS

The boy's stance on this Arbor Day stamp is amusing. The boy's right foot is not pushing down the shovel as his stance implies. His foot appears to be on the ground, but it is impossible to assume such a stance on level ground with both feet on the surface.

The adjacent enlargement of the stamp detail shows the boy's unusual stance. The stamp was definitely modeled by real children as they have been identified. They are Ruth and Alvin Hall Jr., the daughter and son of Alvin W. Hall, director of the U.S. Bureau of Engraving and Printing at the time. (*USA #717*)



ARRIVAL DEPARTURE

This stamp was issued to celebrate the 175th anniversary of the arrival of Lafayette in America. However, the stamp just shows, "ARRIVAL OF LAFAYETTE IN AMERICA 1777." As "anniversary" is not mentioned, the 40-star American flag is technically out of place. The nation certainly had a flag in 1777 which is seen on another US stamp, #1350 issued in 1968. Given the circumstances, the 1777 flag would have been far more appropriate for this stamp (i.e., the flag in use when he arrived). (*USA #1010*)



ARTISTRY AND REALITY

In the scene depicted on this stamp, the man with the ram-rod loading the cannon is doing so from the left. We have to assume, therefore, that this man is either left-handed, ambidextrous or right-handed but prefers to work from the left with some things. In reality, having a man with any of these attributes is ideal in the situation depicted. Such a man would not get in the way of the man who loads the cannon balls. He would merely step back to let the other man do his job. In a normal situation, however, both men would probably be right-handed and would therefore both work on the same side of the cannon. While the action in the stamp design is certainly possible, it is unlikely. It has been suggested that the stamp design may have been inadvertently reversed. In other words, what we should be seeing is a mirror image of the scene. However, while this conclusion corrects the man with the ram-rod, it raises the same questions with the other man. Given this analysis, what we have with the design is a large measure of artistic license. In other words, the scene is more artistically acceptable in the way it is shown. Having both men on the same side of the cannon would ruin the action. The following is an enlargement of the stamp detail showing the men. (*USA #629*)



B.C.'s BEAUTIFUL BUTTON

Design of this highly attractive British Columbia stamp was based on a Royal Engineers uniform button. The distinctive “V” stands for Queen Victoria. (BC #7)



BABY BRATTLING

If the baby used for the design of this 1981 U.S. stamp is a boy and if he could be identified, then other than the Christ infant, the depicted baby would be the only identifiable male baby on a U.S. postage stamp to that time. In Canada, the same situation applies to the next stamp (right). This stamp, however, is not directly from a photograph as with the U.S. Stamp. Nevertheless, a model had to be used for the design.



The youngest identifiable male shown on a U.S. or Canadian stamp is King Edward VII. He is seen on the adjacent (left) Newfoundland stamp, which shows the king when he was about three years old.



The Christ infant, of course, is depicted on many Christmas issue stamps. The sources used for these stamp designs are very often old paintings, such as seen on the following Canadian stamps. The stamp on the top is from a painting by Hans Memling. The stamp below is from a painting by Nardo di Cione. Both artists lived in the 14th century. Unfortunately, when we look at these paintings and certainly many other early paintings showing the Christ infant, we immediately sense that there is something wrong with the infant—it looks too old to be a baby. The reason we get this impression is because many early artists never took the trouble to determine the proper and natural proportions of human infants. At birth, the head of a human baby is about one-quarter (25%) to one-

The Masonic Philatelist

third (33%) the size of its standing height. At two years of age, the head is about one-fifth (20%) the standing height. At maturity (adult) the head is about one-eighth (13%) the standing height. There are also a lot of other considerations related to facial feature together with the shape of an infant's body and limbs. Human infants are not miniature adults, they have a totally different shape. Memling's infant (top stamp on the right) has a head/body relationship of about 22% which is greater than that of a two-year old child. Di Cione's infant (lower stamp on the right) has a factor of about 19%, again far too small for an infant. Other proportions and aspects of both infants are also totally out-of-line. Even if we assumed the infants depicted on the foregoing stamps were around two years old, there are problems with these other considerations. Many early artists had a real problem depicting both babies and children. Because the artists failed to study infant and child proportions, they ended-up with miniature adults in their paintings. While we are inclined to "forgive" these artists, perhaps for the reverence associated with the subject matter, or for the age in which the artists lived, there is little doubt they messed up. When one reads the flowering accounts associated with their work, the story of the little boy in *The King Who Wore No Clothes* comes to mind. (US #1910, CDN #1523a, NFD #78. CDN #774, 775)



On a Personal Note: Your editor has a bit of an issue here with regard to human proportions and indeed that concerning perspective in early paintings. I just cannot rationalize how some of the great artists of that era were unable to sort out the simple and basic rules that apply. We laud their work as being "wonderful," but really it is only its age and our "forgiveness" and "it's the thought that counts" that deems it so. Certainly, there were many other early artists who had no problem in this regard. Putting the "faulty" paintings in books is one thing, but showing them on postage stamps is quite another. It might be noted that technology has nothing to do with this issue. All you need is a piece of string to determine proper proportions. Perspective is a little more complex, but nothing beyond common sense. I'm afraid the "wisdom of the ages" went drastically askew in many disciplines—art being the least important.

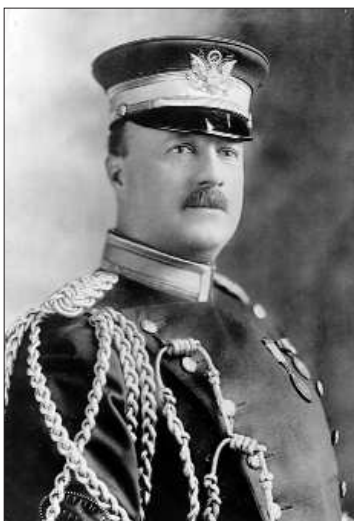
But I do Understand...In November 2013, the first fully identifiable and intentionally depicted living people were shown on US postage stamps; finally doing away with the USPS policy that only deceased people were eligible. Who are the first to get this honor? They are characters from the Harry Potter movies. However they are portraying characters rather than themselves, so there's a bit of a "twist" here.

Naturally all philatelists want to see famous people from the real world on stamps—those that make a difference in society rather than just entertaining us. However, the USPS apparently had to make a decision as to what would generate the most revenue—we are all aware of its dire financial situation. In this case, it likely made the right decision.

Will the USPS be able to get back to being self-supporting? I really don't think so. Nevertheless, we all need postal service, albeit significantly less than in the past. It appears to me that the only option is have it financed as necessary through taxes like the many other government services we receive.

Titanic – Remembering a Tragedy

In 2012 Canada marked the 100th Anniversary of the tragic sinking of the *Titanic* with the stamp shown here. Our late Brother and Club President, Nicholas Batalias, provided us with a full account of known Masons who were on the ship in the December 1996 edition of *The Masonic Philatelist* (Vol. 52, No. 4).



One of the distinguished brethren who died in the sinking was Major Archibald Butt, personal aide to President William Howard Taft (previously served as aide to President Theodore Roosevelt—both Masons). Bro. Butt was a member of Temple Lodge No. 32, Washington D.C.

Current technology has been used to determine why the mighty ship sank so quickly. After the iceberg ripped a hole in the ship, the captain ordered the ship to be thrust forward (or backwards). This action increased the amount of water entering the ship. Had the ship remained stationery, there may have been enough time for rescue ships to arrive at the scene, or at least have allowed for a more orderly evacuation. (CDN #2534i)

Lieutenant Archibald Butt in 1909.

Foreign Masonic-related Stamps that Parallel USA & Canadian Designs/Themes

Class II: ROOSEVELT, Franklin Delano: President of the United States. Here we see this beloved President with his “Little White House” in the background. The stamp commemorated the 100th anniversary of his birth. He was noted for his long cigarette holder. (*Antigua & Barbuda* #676)

Class IV: BARTHOLDI, Frederick Auguste: Sculptor. He created the Statue of Liberty. Here we see just the hand holding the torch, which went on display in Madison Square Park, New York, in 1886. (*Antigua & Barbuda* #828)

Class II: FRANKLIN, Benjamin: Scientist, philosopher and author. His image on this stamp is in connection with his position as the postmaster general of British North America prior to the American Revolution. (*Antigua & Barbuda* #901)

Class II: ALDRIN, Edwin Eugene, Jr.: Astronaut on the first manned Moon landing; second man to walk on the Moon. Hopefully he will not leave this world for the last time before he is depicted and acknowledged on a US stamp. (*Antigua & Barbuda* #1821a)

Class II: LINDBERGH, Charles A.: American pioneer aviator. He was the first to undertake and complete a solo flight across the Atlantic Ocean. Obviously taken from a photograph, this stamp fully captures the “moment” (sorry USPS). (*Antigua & Barbuda* #2573)

Class II: CHURCHILL, Sir Winston Leonard: Prime Minister of Great Britain. Stamps showing Churchill at various stages of “growing up” are likely second only to stamps depicting royalty. His last surviving child, Lady Mary Somes, died in 2014 at the age of 91. (*Ascension Island* #181)

Note: As subjects in this series are well-known, lodge information will not be shown except in special cases.



Poussin Revisited



In the March 2011 *Masonic Philatelist* (Vol. 67, No. 1) I provided an article entitled “The Unwitting Masonic Legacy of Nicolas Poussin” (1594–1665) that involved his magnificent painting seen here. The painting had been brought to my attention by the ridiculous docu-fiction, *The Holy Blood and The Holy Grail*, by Baigent, Leigh, and Lincoln (1996). In this book, the three authors, with their primary-school imaginations, make all sorts of unsupported claims about the Masonic Order. The only reason the painting is mentioned is because likely a Mason used a mirror-image version of it in a relief sculpture, located in Staffordshire, England.

The three authors do not interpret the painting. None of them were Masons, so they would not have any idea in this regard. Anyway, thanks to the authors, I was shown the painting

and it has since become to me one of the most Masonic paintings in the world and I would like to discuss it a little further.

Of course Nicolas Poussin was probably not a Freemason; he was far too early for Freemasonry as we know it. However, he may have been acquainted with early Masonic dogma—we go back much further in time. That he was possibly a Knights Templar Grand Master as reported by the BBC in 2004 is highly speculative.

Whatever the case, the theme of Poussin’s painting goes right back to the time when humans became aware of a Supreme Being of some sort and a life hereafter. Early Masons embraced this theme and it became central to Masonic teaching with, of course, the conditions for achieving, “where all Freemasons hope to arrive at last...”

The Masonic Philatelist

So what in my opinion is going on in the painting? The three men we see represent youth, adulthood, and senior (essentially the three stages of human life). They have found a tomb that has the Latin inscription, *Et in Arcadia ego*. They are simple men and don't know what this means, so the youngest man turns to a beautifully draped woman and asks her the meaning. This woman is the personification of "Hope," who has also been around since the dawn of humanity.

"Hope" tells the men that the meaning of the inscription is, "I too here lived in Arcadia;" and she explains its meaning as follows: Arcadia" is NOT a place; it is a "state" in which one is alive, happy and not concerned about death; so the dead person is saying "I was once like you." We now have to conjecture that "Hope" comforts the men (note that she has her right hand/arm on the youngest man's shoulder/back) by saying something like, "don't worry good people go to a finer place after they die." Masonically, the three young men are an Entered Apprentice, Fellowcraft, and Master Mason; as we see in the wonderful Masonic sculpture entitled "Labor is Worship – Master, Craftsman, Apprentice." The word "Labor" means the building of one's "Spiritual Temple — that house not made with hands..."

A similar Latin saying that is associated with graves or cemeteries is "*Hodie mihi cras tibi*," which means, "I today, you tomorrow." Some Masonic tracing boards (art for instruction purposes) have the impermanency of life as a central theme. Those people without Masonic knowledge apply all sorts of sinister meanings and associations with such imagery. All it means is that one must live life "on the level and by the square," because one day everyone and everything passes away. The Latin term, *Et in Arcadia ego*, would be equal-



ly appropriate for a Masonic theme as with the tomb seen in Poussin's painting. We all just need to keep in mind that there is nothing wrong or "evil" about it.

France issued this postage stamp honoring Poussin. I think we can consider him an honorary Freemason.
(France #B388)



Brothers of the Circus

The fabulous Ringling brothers are honored on this great US sheet issued in 2014. There were seven brothers and all were Freemasons in the same lodge, Baraboo Lodge No. 34, Baraboo Valley, Wisconsin. All were also Royal Arch Masons, Knights Templars, and 32nd Degree AASR Masons.

In 1884, five of the seven Ringling brothers started a small circus and moved forward with continuing success. In 1907 the brothers acquired the Barnum & Bailey Circus, merging them in 1919 to become Ringling Brothers Barnum and Bailey Circus, promoted as The Greatest Show on Earth. By 1929, the last living brother, John, owned virtually every traveling circus in America. In a day before television, the circus was a very big event.



The Ringling family (no key provided).

There are still circus companies, but their productions are a mere shadow of former times. Use and care of trained animals became a major issue as time went on, and restrictions in this regard limited acts, and eroded circus appeal. However, there can be no doubt that it was the right thing to do. For the record, the Ringling Brothers were: Albert, August, William, Alfred, Charles, John and Henry. They were all born in the 1850s or 1860s, and the second youngest, John, died in 1936 at age 70—the longest lived of all the brothers. (USA # Not available)

Freemasonry and the Grand Army of the Republic

What was the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR)? Because it passed into history 59 years ago, it is possible that some Club members do not know, and those that do, may not know its significant association with the Masonic Order. To set the stage for this discussion, the following is from Wikipedia:



The Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) was a fraternal organization composed of veterans of the Union Army, US Navy, Marines and Revenue Cutter Service who served in the American Civil War. Founded in 1866 in Decatur, Illinois, it was dissolved in 1956 when its last member died. Linking men through their experience of the war, the GAR became among the first organized advocacy groups in American politics, supporting voting rights for black veterans, lobbying the US Congress to establish veterans' pensions, and supporting Republican political candidates. Its peak membership, at more than 490,000, was in 1890, a high point of Civil War commemorative ceremonies. It was succeeded by the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War (SUVCW), composed of male descendants of Union veterans.

The Masonic aspects of the GAR were thoroughly researched by Brother John A. Mirt, a member of our Club, in 1949. His article was published in the *Chicago Scottish Rite* magazine in October of that year, and subsequently published in *The Masonic Philatelist* in November (MP Vol. 6, No. 8).

I found the article while in the process of scanning our archives, and was so taken aback that I decided to republish it.

Masonry Behind a Postage Stamp

By John A. Mirt, 32°

If the recently issued 3c U.S. postage stamp in commemoration of the final encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic could talk it would tell a most interesting story about Masons in Illinois who long ago passed to their rewards.

Members of the Craft charted the course of the GAR during its infancy. Brethren who worked in the vineyards of Masonry developed the early ritual for the organization, made up of men who had

fought and bled that the Union might be preserved.

And it was a member of the Scottish Rite Bodies of Chicago—Maj. Gen. John A. Logan—who is recorded in the GAR annals as the most outstanding leader the Grand Army ever had. To Gen. Logan goes the credit for the establishment of Memorial Day as a countrywide holiday for the honoring of those who had served their country on the battlefields.

The Masonic Philatelist

The idea of a GAR originated in a camp during the Civil War. Maj. Benjamin F. Stephenson of Springfield, Ill., a surgeon, and the Rev. William J. Rutledge of Petersburg, Ill., frequently discussed the project.

With the war's end, Dr. Stephenson decided to carry out the idea. He discussed the organization with others in Springfield, but it was in Decatur that the first post was established. There on April 6, 1866, Dr. Stephenson installed Capt. M. F. Kannan, a member of Macon Lodge No. 8, Decatur, as commander of the first post.

Of the twelve charter members, I have found the names of four enrolled in Masonic Lodges at the time: Brig. Gen Isaac C. Pugh and Major. John H Nale also were members of Macon Lodge No. 8. Capt Christian Reibasame was a member of Ionic Lodge No. 312, Decatur. Gen Pugh had served in the Black Hawk and Mexican Wars as well as the Civil War. He was chosen district commandant.

Other posts were chartered in rapid succession. There were 60 posts when the first state convention was held in Springfield, July 12, 1866. A permanent state organization was effected with the election of Maj. Gen. John M. Palmer as commander. Gen. Palmer was a member of Mt. Nebo Lodge No. 76, Carlinville, Ill., and a Past Grand Orator of the Grand Lodge of Illinois.

The movement spread to other states and on November 20, 1866, a convention of state departments was held for the first time in Indianapolis. Brig. Gen Stephen A. Hurlbut, a member of Belvidere Lodge No. 60 of Belvidere, Ill., and also a Past Grand Orator of the Grand Lodge of Illinois, was elected as the national commander-in-chief.

Meanwhile, Dr. Stephenson had been conferring with others on a ritual for the GAR. Among those who participated in its development were Gen. Logan, Gen Palmer and Capt. Kanan. The handiwork of the Masons was seen in the form of the early initiation ceremonies. The ritual provided for three grades of membership—Recruit, Soldier and Veteran. Each had its sign, grip and password. The initiatory work, including the obligation assumed, had many familiar passages. Assistance of distressed comrades, “their widows and orphans” was stressed. Later, one class of membership was established.

At the second national convention, held in Philadelphia, January 15, 1868, Gen. Logan was elected commander-in-chief of the GAR, which had grown to a membership of more than 200,000. His reign was popular and he was re-elected twice.

It was at the start of the first term that he issued his historic general order for all posts to decorate the graves of soldiers on May 30. He remains today the most outstanding of the commanders-in-chief of the GAR.

The three-fold objectives of the GAR were explained by Gen. Logan in one of his talks. They were: “Fraternity among its members which shall bind them together in one great brotherhood; the exercise of Charity in the broadest sense of liberal distribution to and sympathy for those in want and distress and unswerving Loyalty to our government and its great principles, coupled with a determination to maintain its integrity unimpaired.”

On another occasion—a Memorial Day oration—he said: “The Grand Army of the Republic has been organized on nearly the same basis as the ‘The Cincinnati’ and for

The Masonic Philatelist

nearly the same object. It is a secret society, taken from the order of our forefathers, and here are the first fruits of that society.”

“The Cincinnati” was composed of leaders in the Revolutionary War. The moving spirits were Masons who had served with Gen. George Washington, America’s most revered Mason.

General Logan’s biography is a brilliant one—too long to detail. Most of his life was given to the service of his country. He was born in Murphysboro, Ill., February 9, 1826. After serving in the Mexican War he studied law and was admitted to the bar in 1851.

The Civil War broke out while he was serving in Congress. Actuated by a patriotic impulse, he left his seat and fought as a private in the Battle of Bull Run. Returning to his state, he recruited the 31st Illinois Volunteer Regiment. Thereafter, throughout the war, he displayed skill and heroism. he was promoted by stages to major general. In that capacity, he led the Army of the Tennessee in Gen. Sherman’s march to the sea.

After the Civil War he was elected to the United States Senate several times. He campaigned zealously in behalf of those who had fought for their country. In 1884, he was a candidate on the Republican ticket for vice-president. His death in Washington, December 26, 1886, was mourned nationally. Tens of thousands viewed his remains in the rotunda of the National Capitol. Thousands lined the streets as his body was borne to a resting place.

The Rev. Dr. John P. Newman, in his funeral orations said:

“Today 350,000 veterans in the Grand Army of the Republic feel they have lost a

friend. Today, 622,000 pensioners bless his memory. Today, 230,000 widows and orphans breathe a pray to Heaven for the peace of his soul. And now the spirits of 350,000 patriotic soldiers, slain in the war, gather around the great soul of Logan and thank him that on each returning May their graves are not forgotten, but are covered with flowers.”

When the \$75,000 St. Gaudens’ statue of Gen. Logan astride a charger was unveiled in Grant Park, Chicago, on July 22, 1897, the occasion was virtually a state holiday. nearly 17,000 men, including 1,552 in Knights Templar uniform, took part in a parade. Hundreds of thousands attended the dedication ceremonies.

Gen. Logan was raised in Mitchell Lodge No. 85, Pinckneyville, Ill., and in 1851 affiliated with Benton (Ill.) Lodge No. 64. At the time of his death he also was a member of the Scottish rite Bodies of Chicago; Washington Chapter No. 43. R.A.M., Chicago, and Chevalier Bayard Commandery No. 52, K.T., Chicago. he was elected to receive the 33rd Degree, but died before it could be conferred.

Gen. Palmer also served his country gallantly and with skill during the Civil War. In 1866, he was elected governor of Illinois, serving four years with credit to himself and satisfaction to his people. He occupied other public offices in later years, including that of Senator from Illinois. He died September 25, 1900, and was buried with Masonic honors at Carlinville.

Gen. Hurlbut fought nobly throughout the Civil War and was mustered out in July, 1865, as a major general. He held numerous public offices. He died of a heart attack in Lima, Peru, March 27,

The Masonic Philatelist

1882, while serving there as minister to Peru.

Whether Major. Stephenson, who died in 1871, was a Mason has not been established. In his talks he frequently referred to his comrades and “their widows and orphans.” He studied medicine with his brother, Dr. William Stephenson of Mount Pleasant, Iowa, who later became a member of the Masonic Lodge there.

When the remains of Maj. Stephenson were reburied at Petersburg, Ill., August 29, 1882, the GAR services were conducted by Judge James H. Hatheny of Springfield. Judge Matheny was a Past Deputy Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Illinois and in his oration he said:

“I am here today with the single purpose of laying a spring of ‘Immortelle upon the grave of our departed comrade.”

Maj. Stephenson nurtured the idea of the GAR and was elected its first adjutant general. It was the consensus—and he agreed—that more colorful and nationally known figures should head the GAR in its formative stages in order to assure its success. He died when the organization was still young.

There are two surviving members of the Grand Army of the Republic in Illinois. One of these is Bro. Thomas Ambrose, who was born in Ohio, May 5, 1849. He was raised in McMillan Lodge No 141, Cincinnati, and affiliated with Covenant Lodge No, 526, Chicago, January 19, 1894. He is one of Covenant’s 50-year members. The other survivor is Lewis Fablinger. *[Please remember that this was written in 1949. Ed] (USA #985)*

—END—

After digesting this remarkable article, I decided to remind myself of what the American Civil War was all about. Here (again) is what Wikipedia states:

The American Civil War, widely known in the United States as simply the Civil War as well as other sectional names, was fought from 1861 to 1865. Seven Southern slave states individually declared their secession from the United States and formed the Confederate States of America, known as the “Confederacy” or the “South”. They grew to include eleven states, and although they claimed thirteen states and additional western territories, the Confederacy was never recognized by a foreign country. The states that did not declare secession were known as the “Union” or the “North”. The war had its origin in the fractious issue of slavery, especially the extension of slavery into the western territories. After four years of bloody combat that left over 600,000 Union and Confederate soldiers dead, and destroyed much of the South’s infrastructure, the Confederacy collapsed, slavery was abolished, and the difficult Reconstruction process of restoring national unity and guaranteeing civil rights to the freed slaves began.

The cause of the North in the American Civil War (civil rights) was the greatest initiative undertaken by any government in this pursuit. It confirmed that America was “the land of the free.” This year marks the 150th Anniversary of the end of the Civil War, and perhaps we need to think about this in light of the war’s objective and the current civil rights situation.

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