



# THE PHILATELIC FREEMASON



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## EDVARD BENES: SCHOLAR, POLITICAL, MASON

by Walter Benesch

One of the most interesting leaders of Eastern Europe during the 20th Century was Edvard Beneš. Edvard was born in the small town of Bohemia, May 17, 1884 of a peasant family. Edvard spent much of his youth in Prague but excelled in his academic studies. After graduating from the Faculty of Philosophy of Charles University in Prague he received his doctorate of law from the Sorbonne in Paris. Back in Prague, he became a lecturer in in old University in sociology at the Academy of Commerce.



During the First World War Beneš helped lead the independent Czechoslovakia movement. He organized a Czech pro-independence anti- Austrian resistance movement. In September 1915, he exiled to Paris, with visits to the United States to promote the creation of Czechoslovakia. This included visits to his distant cousin in NYC, the authors grandfather (the "Little Bohemia" representative to Tammy Hall at the time).

Thanks to his efforts in England, France and the USA, Czechoslovakia was formed by the League of Nations. As recognition for his considerable efforts in 1918–1935, Beneš was the first and longest serving Foreign Minister - a position which he held through 10 successive governments including one of which he headed in 1921 to 1922. He represented Czechoslovakia in talks on the Treaty of Versailles. Between 1923 and 1927 he was a member of the League of Nations Council and became a renowned figure internationally.

In May 1919, Lodge "Jan Amos Komenský" (*Comenius Lodge*) received a letter from the Grand Orient of France in Paris informing that its application for membership had been approved. The official charter was delivered on 28th September of that year at the hands of Ill. Bro. René Henry Besnard, 33°, French Senator who had been French Minister of War from 1915 to 1917. The Supreme Council of the A. & A. S. R. for Czechoslovakia led by world famous art-nouveau painter S.G.C. the Ill. Bro. Alphonse Mucha 33°, was admitted at the Lausanne Conference and it was recognized on the 8th June 1922 by all the Supreme Councils of the A. & A. S. R. present or represented in Switzerland. About this time Benes joined Jan Amos Komensky Lodge No.1, in Prague. Though re-chartered in 1919, according Czech Masonic legends, it may have first been formed around 1726.



Unfortunately the records of Benes membership were likely destroyed during WWII. During and after WWII he encouraged other Czech Masons to keep an eye on the re-forming of the Czechoslovakia Grand Lodge.



As the Vice President when President Tomas Masaryk (left) retired in 1935, Beneš was the obvious successor. He opposed Nazi Germany's claim to the German-speaking Sudetenland in 1938 which brought Europe to the brink of war. Betrayed by England, Beneš was forced to surrender the

Sudetenland. Then in October 1938, under German pressure, Benes resigned and eventually had to seek exile in England and later in the USA where he headed the Czechoslovakian government in exile. While in London he helped continue the existence of the National Grand Lodge of Czechoslovakia, which was given a fraternal asylum by the United Grand Lodge of England and was allowed to meet at 2 Great Queen Street during World War II. On July 21, 1941 Great Britain formally recognized the Czechoslovak Government in exile in London headed by President Edvard Beneš. Two months later, i.e. in September 1941, the United Grand Lodge of England formally recognized the Czechoslovak Grand Lodge in Exile and its newly elected Grand Master Bro. Professor Vladimir Klečanda.

While visiting his brother who was teaching at the University of Chicago, Benes found time to write the book which would be considered a major threat in the years to come: Democracy Today and Tomorrow. It was the fear that this book would be distributed in Czechoslovakia after WWII which may have led to suspicion from the Communists and the house arrest of his widow after Benes' death.

At the end of WWII, Beneš returned home and reassumed his former position as President. He was unanimously confirmed as the president of the Republic by the National Assembly on 28 October 1945. Under article 58.5 of the Constitution, "The former president shall stay in his or her function till the new president shall be elected." On 19 June 1946 Beneš was formally elected to his term as President.

Beneš presided over a coalition government, from 1947 but the Communist Klement Gottwald was the prime minister and demanded more and more of his party's members be appointed to all levels of Government. By February 1948, 12 non-Communist ministers being fed up with the strong arm tactics, resigned to protest Gottwald's refusal to stop the packing the appointments and the police with Communists. Beneš at first refused to accept their resignations and insisted that no government could be formed without the non-Communist parties. However, Gottwald threatened a general strike unless Beneš appointed a Communist-dominated government. Rumors were that the Red Army would back Gottwald if Beneš didn't give in. On 25 February, he accepted the resignations of the non-Communist ministers and appointed a new government in accordance with Gottwald's specifications. In many ways this was the death stroke to a free Czechoslovakia. Benes was heartbroken which led to his illness and death on

September 3, 1948. His wife remained under house arrest by the Communists in their country home until her death in the 1960's.



The philatelic items with Benes' images include stamps, pre-stamped envelopes, post cards and even an underground resistance stamp printed by the Czech underground movement during WWII with profiles of Benes and Masaryk portrayed in profile in the mountains (one of the few Benes philatelic items the author does not have). Some of the most noteworthy stamps are shown here to show a few denominations issued during his presidency.



At the turn of this century there has been a re-examination of the contributions of Benes to both the culture and morals of the Czech Republic. As a professor of sociology, an attorney at law, an exceptional leader during very difficult times, much of what once was considered as negative is being looked at in terms of the years and external influences which shaped his decision making. In retrospect he is being viewed as an exceptional leader who did the very best in creating and sustaining a free and independent Czechoslovakia. In honor of this commemorative exceptional coffee is notably absent are which hopefully may



his lasting influence and exceptional leadership stamp was issued. This was accompanied by an table book on the country home he loved. What any covers or special Masonic philatelic items be considered in the future.

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Many thanks to Wor. Bro. Walter Benesch, President of the George Washington Masonic Stamp Club for this excellent article.

## MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

### NEW MEMBERS:

206. Thomas L. Brady, Sr., 2500 Knights Road, Apt. 165-02, Bensalem, PA 19020  
207. Jay Krumholtz, P.O. Box 7815, Riverside, CA 92513

### ADDRESS CHANGES:

233. Marvin Scheer, 2111 Acacia Pack Drive, Suite 607, Cleveland, OH 44124

### CLOSED ALBUMS:

103. Allen L. Formby, 105 Cloud Rest Court, Hot Springs, AR 71901

Your Editor was pleased to see the July 2014 issue of *The Watermark*, Canada's Online Masonic Philatelic Newsletter, appear on his computer. It has been a while since Bro. Larry Burden has issued a new copy of this newsletter but it was a welcome sight. To quote his explanation: "The reason I have not been producing an issue ten times a year is because after 33 years I became disheartened and disillusioned with the Craft and have had health issues as well. Thanks to the encouragement of many of you from around the world I am back at it. I do not know how many issues I can produce a year, but I will do my best to do what I can. Food for thought; Freemasonry is more than what happens in your local Lodge."

Personally, I can understand what Larry may have gone through as I have had perhaps similar experiences but mine have dealt with the hierarchy rather than the local Lodges – especially near the end of my 19 year tenure as the secretary of my Mother Lodge. I have been able to develop the attitude and approach that as long as I maintain my actions in line with those expected of a Freemason, I believe that I am fulfilling my obligations. Those who would like to be included in Bro. Burden's distribution list should contact him at [larryburden8@gmail.com](mailto:larryburden8@gmail.com) – previous issues of *The Watermark* can be found online at <http://bytown.ottawamasons.ca/Stamp.html>

It was also a pleasure to receive the June 2014 issue of *The Masonic Philatelist*, the quarterly publication of the Masonic Stamp Club of New York. Bro. Chris Murphy, President of the Club, has taken on the editing/publishing of *The Masonic Philatelist* and the Club Administrator, Dr. Michael Bronner is handling all of the administration as well as keeping in close contact with Bro. Dr. Allan Boudreau who is comfortable and getting the best care possible. The latest issue is packed with 24 pages of interesting Masonic Philatelic information. Bro. Murphy is developing a new Club website which will be designated as <http://mscnewyork.com>. It is in development and will include many of the very early editions of the Club magazine which are interesting and a gold mine for Masonic stamp-related material. Thank you for your efforts, Bro. Murphy.

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### **MASONIC STUDY UNIT OF THE AMERICAN TOPICAL ASSOCIATION**

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## JAMAL AD-DIN-AL-AFGHANI

Also known as Sayyid Jamāl ad-Dīn Asadābādī, he was commonly known as Al-Afghani. He was a political activist and Islamic ideologist in the Muslim world during the late 19th century, particularly in the Middle East, South Asia and Europe. One of the founders of Islamic Modernism and an advocate of Pan-Islamic unity it has been said that he was less interested in theology than he was in organizing a Muslim response to Western pressure. He is pictured on a stamp issued by Egypt on March 22, 1967 for Arab Publicity Week.



Born in 1838/1839 in Asadabad, Iran, he claimed to be from Asadabad, Afghanistan. At the age of 17 or 18, he travelled to British India and spent a number of years there studying religions. In 1859, a British spy reported that Al-Afghani was a possible Russian agent. The British representatives reported that he wore traditional clothes of Noghai Turks in Central Asia and spoke Dari, Arabic, and Turkish language fluently. After this first Indian tour, he decided to perform Hajj or pilgrimage at Mecca. His first documents are dated from the autumn of 1865, where he mentions leaving the "revered place" and arriving in Tehran around mid-December of the same year. In the spring of 1866 he left Iran for Afghanistan, passing through Mashad and Herat. He was spotted in Afghanistan in 1866 and spent time in Qandahar Ghazni, and Kabul. He became a counsellor to the King Dost Mohammad Khan (who died, however, on June 9, 1863) and later to Mohammad Azam. At that time he encouraged the king to oppose the British but turn to the Russians.

He travelled to Constantinople, passing through Cairo. He stayed in Cairo long enough to meet a young student who would become a devoted disciple of his, Muhammad 'Abduh. He entered the Star of East Masonic Lodge in 7 July 1868 during his stay in Cairo. His membership number was 1355. He also founded the Masonic Lodge of Cairo and became its first Grand Master. He had been excluded from the Scottish Masonic Lodge due to accusations of atheism and he joined the French Grand Orient and became Grand Master of it.

In 1871, Al-Afghani moved back to Egypt and began preaching his ideas of political reform. His ideas were considered radical, and he was exiled in 1879. He then travelled to different European and non-European cities: Constantinople, London, Paris, Moscow, St. Petersburg and Munich. Al-Afghani's ideology has been described as a welding of "traditional" religious antipathy toward non-Muslims "to a modern critique of Western imperialism and an appeal for the unity of Islam", urging the adoption of Western sciences

and institutions that might strengthen Islam. Although called a liberal by the contemporary English admirer, Wilfrid Scawen Blunt, Jamal ad-Din did not advocate constitutional government. In the volumes of the newspaper he published in Paris, "there is no word in the paper's theoretical articles favoring political democracy or parliamentarianism," according to his biographer. Jamal ad-Din simply envisioned "the overthrow of individual rulers who were lax or subservient to foreigners, and their replacement by strong and patriotic men."

He believed that Islam and its revealed law were compatible with rationality and, thus, Muslims could become politically unified while still maintaining their faith based on a religious social morality. These beliefs had a profound effect on Muhammad Abduh, who went on to expand on the notion of using rationality in the human relations aspect of Islam. He was invited by Abdulhamid II in 1882 to travel to Constantinople being provided a house and salary. Abdulhamid II's aim was to use Afghani for Panislamism propaganda. Al-Afghani died of throat cancer on March 9, 1897 in Constantinople and was buried there. In late 1944, due to the request of the Afghan government, his remains were taken to Afghanistan and laid in Kabul inside the Kabul University; a mausoleum was erected for him there. In Afghanistan, a university is named after him (Sayed Jamaluddin Afghan University) in Kabul and there is also street in the center of Kabul which is called by the name Afghani. In other parts of Afghanistan, there are many places such as hospitals, schools, Madrasas, Parks, and roads named Jamaluddin Afghan.

-many thanks to Bro. Emiel Crab and De Getande Rand for this article.

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## JAMES WATT

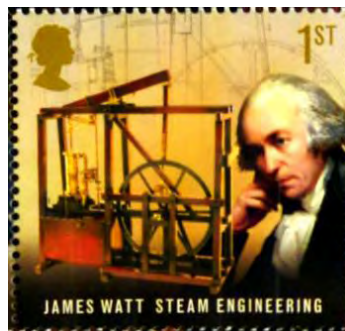
James Watt was initiated in a Scottish Lodge in 1763 but his record of membership is not to be found in the register of members held by the Grand Lodge of Scotland; therefore some explanation is required. When a man was initiated in a Scottish Lodge in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the individual's name (and occasionally occupation) was meant to be sent to Grand Lodge where the details were recorded Lodge by Lodge in registers in chronological order. Payment of one shilling was to accompany the sending of these details. The temptation not to send details to Grand Lodge is obvious. The fact that there are numerous instances of Lodges' recorded members which do not appear in the central Grand Lodge register is proof of that! This seems to have occurred when Lodges were under financial pressure but this merely had the effect of transferring financial problems to Grand Lodge. Over time, Grand Lodge reacted to this situation by creating Provincial Grand Masters who lived locally and who could therefore supervise Lodges more closely. By the early 19<sup>th</sup> century no one could be considered to be a Scottish Freemason without a certificate issued by Grand Lodge on payment by the Lodge in which the individual had been initiated. How then is it known that James Watt was a Freemason? During the 18<sup>th</sup> century it was the responsibility of the Lodge, not Grand Lodge, to issue to each new member a certificate proving that he was a Freemason. The certificate issued to James Watt is extant and reads:

“To all and Sundry to whom these presents Come Greetings. Know ye that the most worshipful, the Grand Master of Scotland and Grand Lodge aforesaid having Granted a Charter Constituting and erecting a Lodge of free and Accepted Masons in this place under the stile and title of The Glasgow Royal Arch Lodge.

“These are to Certify that the Bearer hereof Brother James Watt was Admitted and Received an Entered Apprentice, Past a Fellow Craft and Raised a Master After having payd the usual dues According to the bylaws of the Lodge and has behaved himself as becometh. Given under our hands at Glasgow this 10<sup>th</sup> June 1763.

“Rob. Dobson (?) Masr  
James Wright SW  
William Dick J.W.”

Bro. Watt is pictured on a stamp issued by Great Britain on March 10, 2009 as part of a set honoring noted engineers.



Bro. Watt was born January 30, 1736 in Greenock, Renfrewshire, Scotland. He became a Scottish inventor and mechanical engineer whose improvements to the Newcomen steam engine were fundamental to the changes brought by the Industrial Revolution in both his native Great Britain and the rest of the world. While working as an instrument maker at the University of Glasgow, Watt became interested in the technology of steam engines. He realized that contemporary engine designs wasted a great deal of energy by repeatedly cooling and re-heating the cylinder. He introduced a design enhancement, the separate condenser, which avoided this waste of energy and radically improved the power, efficiency, and cost-effectiveness of steam engines. Eventually he adapted his engine to produce rotary motion, greatly broadening its use beyond pumping water.

Watt attempted to commercialize his invention but experienced great financial difficulties until he entered a partnership with Matthew Boulton in 1775. The new firm of Boulton and Watt was eventually highly successful and Watt became a wealthy man. In his retirement, Watt continued to develop new inventions though none was as significant as his steam engine work. He died August 25, 1819 in Handsworth, Birmingham, England.

-again, many thanks to Bro. Emiel Crab for this article.

## MASONIC CACHETED COVERS FROM ITALY

The covers shown here were issued by the Associazione Italiana di Filatelia Massonica of the Grande Oriente d'Italia in April 2014. They have also issued a catalog of all the Masonic cacheted covers and cancellations issued by them from 2009 to 2013. Information on their acquisition can be obtained from Bro. Massimo Morgantini, at AIFM-Grande Oriente d'Italia, Via San Pancrazio 8, 00152 Roma – Italia or via e-mail at [filatelia.massonica@grandeoriente.it](mailto:filatelia.massonica@grandeoriente.it). The Club's web site is [www.grandeoriente.it](http://www.grandeoriente.it) (fiatelia).



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## BOGUS MASONIC STAMPS OF BRAZIL

In response to an e-mail which I sent to him, Bro. Dr. Renato Mauro Schramm, President of the Clube Filatelico Maconico do Brasil has provided some insight to the “Masonic” stamps that we are seeing listed on e-Bay. He states that the dealer offering these “bogus” stamps is a resident of Brazil but not of Minas Gerais. He makes a living creating custom stamps to sell. He makes at most five sheets of each stamp and puts them on the e-Bay site for as much as \$150.00. This individual is a persona non-gratis in Brazilian Masonic Philately. Dr. Schramm advises us to beware of the seals he puts up for sale since they should never be placed in collections as they are considered undesirable and prohibited by the FIP (International Philatelic Federation). Be careful in ordering anything from this association he cites as it consists of him only. Masons within Brazil are very familiar with that crook. Thank you for the advice Bro. Schramm.



## NEW ISSUES

Very few issues of interest to Masonic Philatelists seem to be appearing in Linn's Stamp Monthly listings. Those in the July issue are listed below as well as some found on recent dealer listings that have not yet made it to Linn's. Illustrations of some are included.

Monaco 5/30/14 #2761 A stamp picturing Prince Honore IV for the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Treaty of Paris which restored him to the Monegasque throne.

Sweden 3/27/14 #2725 A stamp picturing Carl Michael Bellman, composer

U.S. Recent Stamps part of the circus sheet honoring Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey. Heinrich Ringling and his 7 sons were all members of Baraboo Lodge #34 of Baraboo, Wisconsin

Gabon – a souvenir sheet issued in 2014 issued to honor Carl Benz – includes 2 “triangular” stamps.

Madagasakara (Malagasy?) – two souvenir sheets issued in 2013 to honor Enrico Fermi. One includes four stamps and the other one stamp.

Mali – a souvenir sheet honoring Robert Stephenson which includes two stamps – one picturing him and one depicting his locomotive.

Togo – a souvenir sheet including one triangular stamp picturing Ludwig von Beethoven with Bach and Hayden in the background of the sheet



## RECENT PHILATELIC ISSUES FROM BRAZIL

Bro. Dr. Renato Mauro Schramm, President of the Clube Filatelico Maconico do Brasil, has forwarded some recent Masonic Cacheted covers and stamps released by his organization. The 2013-14 cover commemorates the 50 year anniversary of the Grand Lodge of the State of Sao Paulo; the late-April 2014 cover honors the XI Encontro Graos Mestres e FRAFEM N/NE do Grande Oriente do Brasil. They can be ordered from The Masonic Philatelic Club of Brazil, P.O. Box 3085, 88010-970 Florianopolis, SC, Brazil. The June-July 2014 cover commemorates the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the “Aug. e Resp” Symbolic Lodge Sublime Universo 125;a personalized stamp was also issued to honor this event. These items should be ordered from Ven. Mestre Bro. Katrus Tober Santarosa, Aug. e Resp. Loja Simbolica Universo 125, Rua Jose Bonifacio 339, Chacara Machadino, 13478-040 AMERICANA SP – Brazil or from the Club. The other personalized stamp was issued to commemorate the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Lodge Estrela da Guanabara – it can be ordered from the Club.



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Bro. Jean-Claude Vilespey, a member residing in France, has pointed out an error in the article about Bro. Bougainville appearing on page 2576 in the most recent issue. He states that he was initiated in a military Lodge of the French Royal Navy that is identified as “Loge Militaire de la Marine” – not “Maine” as was stated.

## FRANZ JOSEPH MULLER, FREIHERR von REICHENSTEIN

Franz Muller has been pictured on a stamp issued by Austria in 1992 on the occasion of his 250<sup>th</sup> birthday and on one released on September 26, 2011 by Romania.



Bro Müller was initiated in 1785 in the Lodge "ZumWahrenEintracht", in Vienna, Austria. His name was deleted from the Loge Archives, presumably by a higher power and eventually he left the Order. Freemasonry was not particularly popular amongst scientists at that time.

Franz Muller was born July 1, 1740 or October 4, 1742 in Poysdorf which was part of an Austria-Hungary dual monarchy, now Austria. Some sources claim that he was born in Sibiu, Romania in 1742. He studied philosophy and law in Vienna and then studied at the Mining Academy in Schemnitz (Hungary), at present Banska Stiavnica (Slovakia) in 1763. He concentrated on mining, mechanics, mineralogy and chemistry. When he got his diplomas, he officially became a mine supervisor. In 1770 Müller was appointed head of the Commission for Regulation of Banater mining and iron foundries, where he gained a lot of practical experience in the field of mining. He was promoted to Senior Mining Official and later that same year to manager. In 1772 he was appointed Senior Mining Official in Schwaz in Tyrol, Austria, where the largest silver and copper mines were located at that time. In 1778 he discovered tourmaline in Zillertal. That year he was responsible for the supervision of all mines and related activities in Transylvania and subsequently became Superintendent of all mines, smelters and salt production in Transylvania. He performed many analyses on ore samples, such as the gold ore from Zlatua (now called Sibiu). In 1782 he discovered the metal Tellurium, but was not completely sure about it. On July 24, 1788 he was knighted by King Leopold II. In 1798 the German chemist Martin Heinrich Klaproth isolated an element from a sample sent to him by Müller for further investigation. Klaproth discovered this new metal and called it Tellurium (TE). Klaproth awarded the honor of the discovery to Müller. Müller was appointed as a member of the "Berlin Society of Friends of Natural Science". In 1798 he became court counselor in Vienna (part of the Imperial Council). In 1818 he retired, but retained his position in the Council. That same year he was knighted in the Order of the Saint Stephen of Hungary and received the title of Freiherr from Emperor Franz I. He died on October 12, 1825 (1826 per the Julian calendar)

-many thanks to Bro. Emiel Crab for his translation and to Henk Godthelp of De Getande Rand.

## MARTIN HEINRICH KLAPROTH

As a follow-on to the preceding article on Franz Muller, Bro. Henk Godthelp provided some added information on Bro. Martin Klaproth. Born December 1, 1743 in Weznigrade he was a German pharmacist. In 1791 he became a professor of chemistry at the Royal Artillery School in Berlin. In 1810 he was appointed professor of chemistry at the Berlin University and was credited as being the discoverer of rare metals: Uranium in 1789, Zircon in 1789, Titanium, Tellurium, and Cerium in 1803. He died on January 1, 1817 in Berlin.

Bro. Klaproth became a member of the Lodge “Zur Eintracht”, Berlin in 1776 and later became Deputy National Grand Master of “Zu den Drei Weltkugeln”.

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## DIONYSIOS SOLOMOS

Dionysios Solomos is pictured on a stamp issued by Greece on April 1, 1930 as part of a set issued for the centenary of Independence. Communications from the United Grand Lodge of England have stated that Dionysios Solomos was a Freemason and is believed to have belonged to Venezelos Athena Lodge.



Born in 1798, Dionysios Solomos spent his childhood years under the supervision of his tutor abbey, Santo Rossi, an Italian refugee. He was sent to Italy in 1808 to study law enrolling in the Lyceum of St. Catherine in Venice but left there and completed his high-school education in Cremona. He graduated from Pavia’s Law University in 1817 and started writing poems in Italian. Returning to Zakynthos in 1818 with a solid background in literature, he acquainted himself with people interested in literature. He started to learn to write in Greek, in addition to his Italian efforts, and the first important effort was his *Hymn to Liberty* which was completed in May 1823. It was inspired by the Greek Revolution of 1821 and resulted in fame outside the Greek Borders. The first two stanzas became the Greek national anthem. He relocated to Corfu in 1825 and was the central figure of the Heptanese School of poetry and was considered the national poet of Greece. After 1847 he again started writing in Italian and most of his works from this period are half-finished poems and prose drafts that he might have been intending to translate into Greek. No poem except the *Hymn to Liberty* was completed and almost nothing was published during his lifetime. He died from apoplexy on February 9, 1857 in Corfu and his remains were transferred to Zakynthos in 1865.