Lebanon Stamp Collectors Club

February, 2022 **Number 31**

Harriet Tubman

By Jim Joppy and Scott Ney

Harriet Tubman was the first African-American woman to be honored on a U.S postage stamp, and the first honoree in the Black Heritage series. Initiated with this stamp, the USPS continues to issue a stamp featuring a notable Black American every February in conjunction with Black History Month and at other times during the year. The 13-cent Harriet Tubman commemorative stamp was first available on February 1, 1978, at Washington, D.C.

Born into slavery on Maryland's Eastern Shore in 1822, Tubman escaped her enslavers in 1849 and spent the next ten years making over a dozen trips into Maryland to rescue her family and friends. She also gave instructions to about 70 more people who found their way to freedom.

Tubman used the skills she honed while working on the wharves, in the fields, and in the woods, observing the stars and natural environment, and employing the secret communication networks of free and enslaved African Americans to successfully deliver dozens of people to freedom.

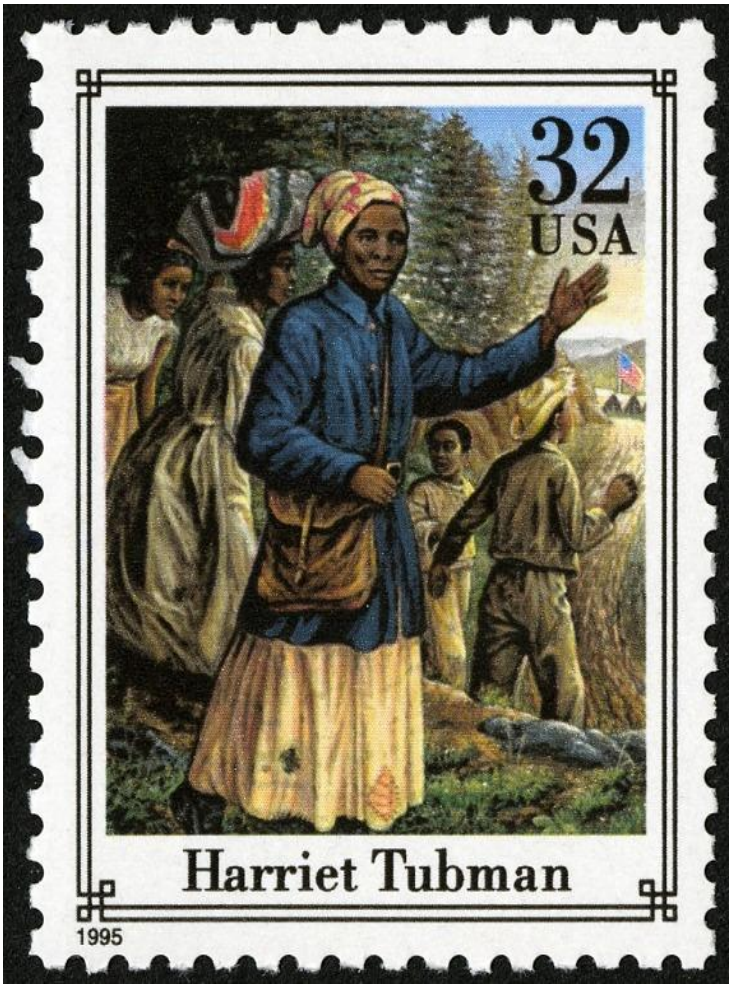
On June 1, 1863, she joined the 2nd South Carolina Infantry, a regiment composed of emancipated slaves, in a raid on several plantations along the Combahee River, an operation that rescued more than

700 enslaved people, many of whom would later enlist in the Union army. She died on March 10, 1913 in Auburn, New York.

[Harriet Tubman (U.S. National Park Service) (nps.gov)]

Harriet Tubman in 1868 or 1869 (U.S. National Park Service)

A second Harriet Tubman stamp was issued June 29, 1995 in the year of the 130th Anniversary of the end of the Civil War.



U.S. Postal Service Issuing Edmonia Lewis Black Heritage Forever Stamp Jan. 26

The 45th stamp in the Black Heritage series honors sculptor Edmonia Lewis (circa 1844-1907). As the first African American and Native American sculptor to earn international recognition, Edmonia Lewis challenged social barriers and assumptions about artists in mid-19th century America.

Born in Greenbush, NY, Lewis spent most of her career in Rome, where her studio became a must-see attraction for American tourists. In addition to portrait busts of prominent people, Lewis's work incorporated African American themes, including the celebration of newly won freedoms, and sensitively depicted her Native American heritage as peaceful and dignified.

The stamp art is a casein-on-wood portrait of Lewis, based on a photograph taken in Boston between 1864 and 1871. Art director Antonio Alcalá designed the stamp with original art by Alex Bostic. – USPS news release courtesy of Jim Joppy

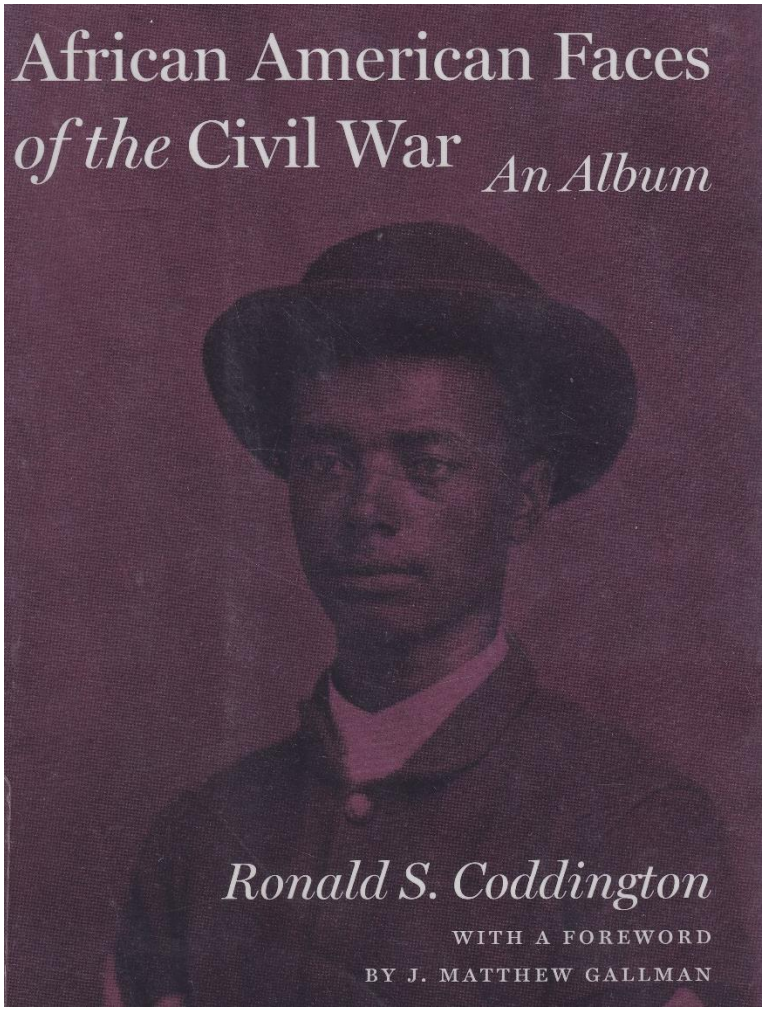
Introducing another Civil War ancestor

In the December issue of the LSCC newsletter, I introduced you to my ancestor, great-great-granduncle Levi Ney, as part of my piece about collecting Civil War pension philately. I found him in a book on the reference shelves of the Dauphin County Library branch in Colonial Park. It turns out that he's not the only Civil War ancestor my family has that has appeared in a book, and I'd like to introduce you to the other, who I am related to by marriage.

Henry C. Gaither, from Baltimore, enlisted in the 39th United States Colored Troops in 1864. Ronald Coddington, author of the book *African-American Faces of the Civil War,* published by Johns Hopkins University in 2012, remarked that Gaither was "one of the few free men of color in this book when the war began." Henry rose to the rank of Corporal, and survived the Battle of the Crater in Petersburg, VA, a battle infamous for the horrors endured by its participants. His picture is preserved in the collection of the Gettysburg National Military Park Museum, and his story at the National Archives and Records Administration in his service and pension files.

Fortunately, my wife's Aunt Catherine, who is the family historian, knew about Henry, whose wife Rachel had to show quite a bit of persistence before she was finally awarded a widow's pension. Henry met a similar fate to one of my other granduncles, who suffered a chest wound during the first day's fighting at the Battle of Gettysburg – his mental state deteriorated, until he was committed to an asylum and declared insane. Corporal Henry C. Gaither died in 1888 at 60 years of age, and his wife Rachel died in 1905.

Of Henry's picture, Coddington remarked, "This is one of my favorite images in the book." – Scott Ney [African-American Faces Of The Civil War | WLRN]



The January meeting of the Lebanon Stamp Collectors Club

In January the club was treated to a presentation on domestic and colonial French railway post cancels by club president Dick Colberg. Dick discussed the types of cancels available to collectors, and explored methods of collecting by route, illustrated by the Serquigny to Rouen railway route. He shared items from his own collection as well as blog posts from a French-language rail-post aficionado which are found at ambulantconvoyeurpar.com. The discussion lasted well past the time the lights went out in the library, and we continued chatting for a few minutes out in the parking lot in smaller groups.

News from the PAPHS

The members of the Pennsylvania Postal History Society selected Dick Colberg's article "Corner Cards of Lititz, Pennsylvania" as the winner of the 2021 Norman Shachat Literature Award. Dick's article will be entered in the literature competition at the 2022 Great American Stamp

Show, which will be held this year in Sacramento, California on August 25 – 28. Dick's article appeared in the November, 2021 edition of the PAPHS bulletin, the *Pennsylvania Postal Historian*.

In January, Dick treated us to a presentation on the stampless mail of Lititz at the first meeting of the Philatelic Society of Lancaster County. Informative and entertaining, the presentation has 46 views as I write this report (I can report that it was in some respects even more interesting the second time I watched it as a recording). Dick compiled a catalogue of Postal Markings on Stampless Mail from Lancaster County with James G. Boyles and Thomas Mazza, which is available for purchase from the PAPHS. The presentation, which is available at The Postal History of Lititz, Pennsylvania in Lancaster County - YouTube, was a useful tutorial for me on how to use their guide to reference the different types of postmarks found on stampless mail. – Scott Ney

Calendar of Events

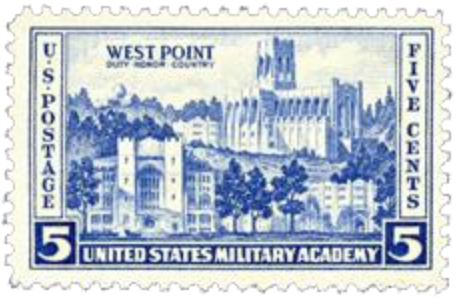
The next meeting of the LSCC is on Tuesday, February 15, 2022 at the Lebanon Community Library, 125 N. 7th Street in Lebanon. The presenter that evening will be Don Smith.

The March meeting of the LSCC is on Tuesday, March 15, 2022 at the Library. Presenter to be determined.

Some Sunday Stamp Show is on Saturday and Sunday, February 12 and 13 at the Lancaster Farm and Home Center, 1383 Arcadia Road.

2022 Philatelic Society of Lancaster County programs and events:

We are planning to hold **Virtual Bi-Monthly Meetings** until further notice, which shall begin promptly at 6:30 PM and run for ~90 minutes via Zoom video conferencing. For details to attend these meetings please contact Paul Petersen via email (pcpetersen@comcast.net) or call +1 (717) 299-5640. We usually hold a brief business meeting led by President DiComo, followed by our keynote speaker(s) and a Show & Tell, where Members & Guests can share in a few minutes their favorite stamp, cover, or other philatelic item(s) and take a question or two. We look forward to seeing you! And it is never too late to start planning ahead – speakers are requested. Philatelic Society of Lancaster County – Award-winning, non-profit community organization dedicated to promoting stamp and postal history collecting as a hobby for education and fun. (lcps-stamps.org)



February 9: *The Five Cent West Point Stamp of 1937*, by Mick Zais. This presentation is a review of the stamp issued Wednesday, May 26, 1937 at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, New York. Designed by a captain on West Point's faculty, the stamp was the fifth and final issue of the Army half of the 10–stamp Army Navy series. These stamps were prepared at the direction of President Roosevelt to engender appreciation of and support for a tiny, depression-era military that was totally inadequate for the coming global conflagration which Roosevelt sensed would draw in a reluctant nation. This 5–cent stamp paid the international, surface rate for a 1-ounce, first class letter.

February 23: *Alfred Hitchcock on Stamps*, by Ron Breznay. A favorite movie maker of the speaker, Alfred Hitchcock directed 53 films, two short subjects, and twenty television episodes. Ron has copies in his collection of all but one film, one that has been lost. And he seen each at least three times and viewed eight on the big screen though in times after the release dates. A collection of Hitchcock on stamps came naturally.

His collection expands beyond the images of Hitchcock on stamps, as there really aren't that many. Included, therefor, are stamps that depict the films Hitchcock made, the actors and actresses who stared in his movies, and some of the behind-the-scenes people.

Finally, Ron will show stamps that contain images of places and items that were used in Hitchcock's films. This is a fun and challenging aspect of his collection, as it requires having knowledge of the films in order to seek out appropriate stamps.

- March 9: *The Domestic Postal History of Postal, Postal-Reply and Postcards*, by Tony Wawrukiewicz

March 23: *The Reading Newspapers in John Lewis Krimmel's Downington Tavern Post Office*. Postal historians, editors, and independent researchers, Diane DeBlois and Robert Dalton Harris will analyze an 1814 painting to conclude that the artist was picturing Downington, Chester County, Pennsylvania, on the Lancaster Turnpike.

- April 30: 37th LANCOPEX Stamp Show & Exhibition. Click LANCOPEX 2022 for more information.

A chronological look at the Black Heritage Series

The scan on the following page, courtesy of Jim Joppy, shows issues from the USPS Black Heritage series over the years.

Websites of Interest

- Ebony Society of Philatelic Events and Reflections: ESPER (African American Stamp Society) (esperstamps.org)
- National Museum of African Americans on Stamps: National Museum of African Americans on Stamps - Keeper of the Past and Promise of our People (nmaas.org)

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