



# Lambda Philatelic Journal

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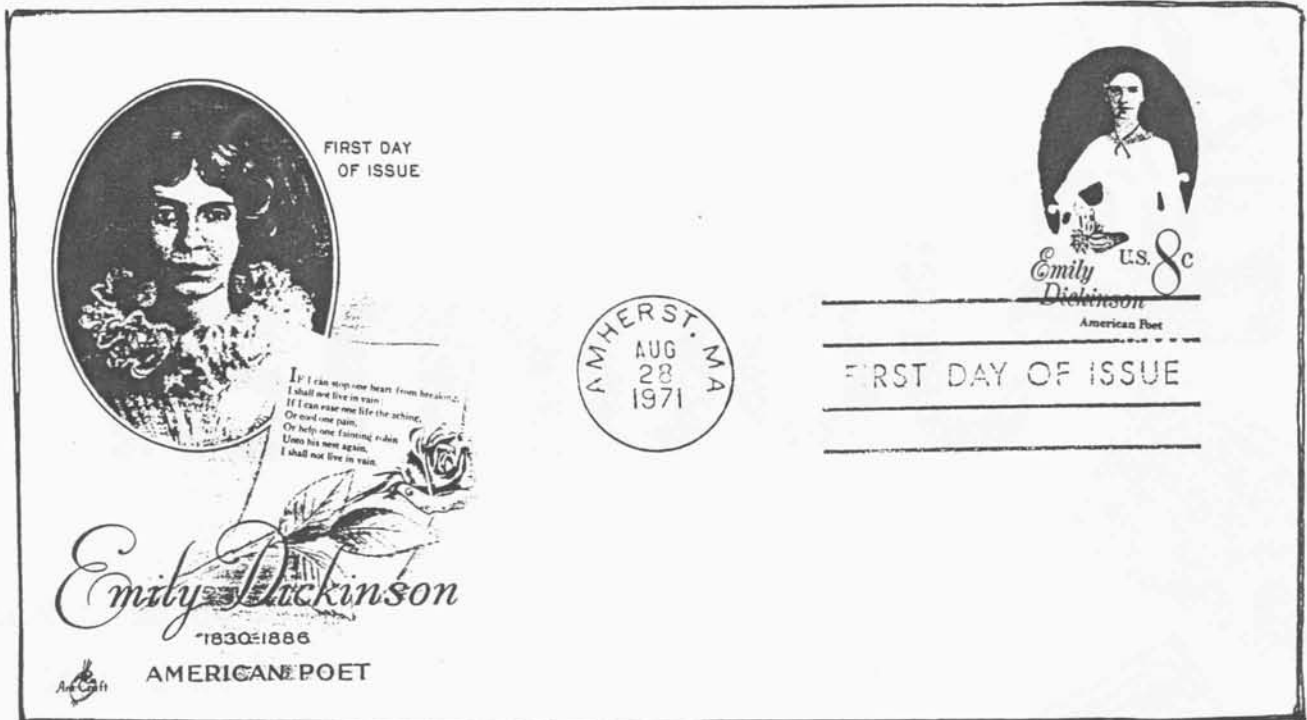
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We look forward to hearing from you, our readers and members, for comments, ideas and articles for future issues.

We encourage advertising and correspondence between readers regarding their philatelic interests.

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## The Belle of Amherst

by

Kathy Hall  
ATA # 39027-8

Lillian Faderman says her groundbreaking study of historic women's relationships, "Surpassing the Love of Men" was inspired by poet Emily Dickinson.

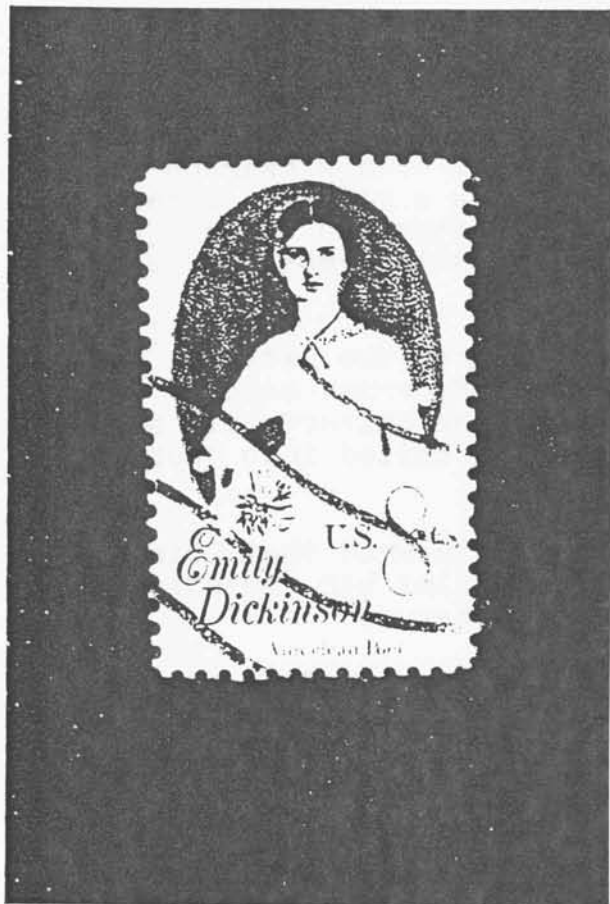
In the introduction to her 1981 book, Dr. Faderman says, "This book began as a study of Emily Dickinson's love poems and letters to Sue Gilbert."

Those letters, to Faderman, provided "irrefutable evidence that the grand passion of her life was not one of the 10 or 12 men with whom she had been romantically linked by her 20th century biographers, but rather another woman." Gilbert was married to Dickinson's brother Austin.

One thing puzzled the California professor. These passionate letters showed no trace of the guilt and secrecy that would be expected in a love relationship between two women. This led Dr. Faderman to research other 19th century relationships and discover that romantic friendships between women were prevalent and acceptable in the Western culture of that day.

She defines such relationships as lesbian in the sense that they were an all-consuming emotional tie. Most were probably non-sexual, Faderman concludes, as were many passionate male-female relationships of that era.

(continued on pg. 3)



Scott #1436

Stamp designed by Bernard Fuchs from a photo. First day of issue 28 August 1971, at Amherst, MA.

If you have this stamp, check to see if either the black and olive or pale rose colors are missing. These are both errors and are quite valuable.

## THE BELLE OF AMHERST

Faderman says that romantic love and sexual impulse were often considered unrelated until the 20th century. By the 1920s, when Dickinson's niece edited her aunt's letters, lesbianism bore a stigma. Faderman gives several examples of complete Dickinson letters to Gilbert and compares them with Martha Dickinson Bianchi's edited versions (Bianchi was Gilbert's daughter).

"Bianchi must have felt that if she did not censor the letters, her aunt's literary reputation could be at stake," Faderman said. "If Emily Dickinson were suspected of lesbianism, the universality and validity of her poetic sentiments might even be called into question, just as Amy Lowell's were in the 1920s."

Of course Dickinson's references were so well obscured that 20th century biographers have had scant evidence to link her romantically to Ben Newton, the Rev. Charles Wadsworth or other men.

The first biographer to suggest a lesbian nature, according to Jonathan Katz' "Gay American History", was Rebecca Patterson, author of the 1951 book, "The Riddle of Emily Dickinson". Reviewers denied Patterson's allegation of lesbianism, Katz says, and the book's style made it difficult to document Patterson's sources.

Although Dickinson had some contact with her literary world, her fame was posthumous. She died in 1886, at the age of 55, but she didn't gain a reputation as a major poet until after 1914. By then, biographers had to do a lot of guess-work to piece together details of this very private woman's life.

The American Topical Association's one-paragraph biography (Women on Stamps, Vol. 2, ATA Handbook 93 by Betty Killingbeck) portrays Dickinson as reclusive:

Dickinson, Emily (1830-1886). American poetess. Born Amherst, MA, and led a normal life until she retired into seclusion at about age thirty. Frail, usually wore white, and guarded her poetry so that only a few poems were published in her lifetime, and those anonymously. A small collection appeared 1892. Complete volumes and letters not published until 1924.

(continued on pg. 4)

## THE BELLE OF AMHERST

Here is one of the poems that has puzzled Dickinson's biographers, who have tried to identify the two loves:

My life closed twice before its close;  
It remains to see  
If Immortality unveil  
A third event to me,

So huge, so hopeless to conceive,  
As these that twice befell.  
Parting is all we know of heaven,  
And all we need of hell.

(Published 1896, Thomas Johnson catalog number J. 1732,  
Date of composition unknown.)

## Gay And Lesbian History on Stamps

(CONTINUED FROM Vol. #1 Summer Issue)



Scott #638



222A



727



87

Alexander the Great, Julius Caesar and Titus, James I

## Statesmen & Women

*The Persian Boy* by Mary Renault tells of the love between Alexander the Great and Hephaestion. When Hephaestion died, the doctor who failed to save his life was crucified at Alexander the Great's order. Alexander can be found on many stamps as can Aristotle who was his tutor when he was a young boy. Aristotle was also a lover of men.

Julius Caesar, depicted on many Italian stamps, was known as "Husband to every woman and wife to every man."

The Emperor Titus of Rome, while Crown Prince, had many homosexual relations with boys and was suspected to have had relations with the eunuchs of his Court while Emperor. Titus is pictured on an Argentinian stamp.

The Emperor Trajan, who is also on an Argentinian stamp, is said to have taken a harem of boys with him on his campaigns for the Roman Empire. He performed religious rites as sacrifices to homosexual relations.

Another Roman, the Emperor Hadrian, adopted son of Trajan, is also honored on a stamp. The love of his life was the beautiful youth Antinous, who was constantly at his side.

(CONTINUED ON P. 5)

## Statesmen & Women

Richard the Lion-Hearted of England, a leader of the Third Crusade, negotiated a treaty with Sultan Saladin of Egypt and Syria. Both men are depicted on stamps and both were known to have enjoyed sex with men. The two must have had some joyful negotiations.

Sir Roger Casement, the martyr of Irish nationalism and the author of some hitherto unpublished sexually scandalous diaries, was well-known in the homosexual world. He is pictured on two Irish stamps.

Alexander Hamilton and his army-mate John Laurens stand side by side on the U.S. Bicentennial Souvenir Sheet of "Surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown." Hamilton wrote a number of love letters to Laurens and certain portions of these letters have been scratched out by the Hamilton family. God only knows how many of Hamilton's letters to Laurens may have been entirely destroyed.

Other world leaders who were either gay or bisexual and who have been depicted on stamps include such notables as: Charles the Bold of France, James I, William III, and George III of England, Peter the Great and Paul I of Russia; and Queen Christina of Sweden.

Most recently, Dag Hammarskjöld and Eleanor Roosevelt have been honored on stamps of many nations. And, I am anxiously waiting for someone to publish all of the letters that Lorena Hickok wrote to Eleanor Roosevelt.



Scott #1236



Scott # 91 & #98

**Peter the Great and Paul I of Russia**



Scott #812

**Jean Baptiste Lully**



Scott #804a

**George Frederic Handel**

## Music

Jean Baptiste Lully (1632-1687) an Italian violinist living in Paris, who later became the dictator of official music during Louis XIV's reign, was homosexual. It was well-known in musical circles that catering to the sexual proclivities of Lully could have most beneficial influences on the career of an aspiring musician. Lully can be found on a French stamp.

George Frederic Handel (1658-1759) was without a doubt gay and can be found on several stamps. His relationship with Johann Mattheson, a gifted tenor, was shortlived as Mattheson was vain, selfish, and exceedingly difficult. The relationship ended in a quarrel and a duel; neither man was injured. Gian Gastone, one of the most open homosexuals of his day, encouraged Handel to visit Italy. Handel went to Italy where he met and became intimate with Alessandro Scarlatti and his son Domenico (both men had happy marriages and had many children, but enjoyed sex with men). They introduced Handel into the Arcadians, whose membership was made up predominantly of homosexuals. For a while Handel resided in the palace of Prince Ruspoli and then in the palace of Cardinal Ottoboni. While in Naples, Agustina Steffani (composer, diplomat, and supposedly gay) urged Handel to go to Hanover where he became Kapellmeister of the Court. Handel next visited England, where he lived with Mr. Andrews and then Richard Boyle, third Earl of Burlington. On a visit to Germany in 1716, he brought back John Schmidt and John Jr. to England. They probably lived together in his townhouse on Brook Street. In Handel's household, apart from the chambermaids, all the servants and associates were male. Rumor has it, that in a private collection in England, there exists several love letters written by Handel to another man. Handel is pictured on stamps of East Germany, West Germany, and Romania.

(CONTINUED ON Pg. 6)

## Music

Ludwig von Beethoven (1770-1827) is one of the greatest of composers, and he is found on stamps of many nations. He is reported to have been timid around women, but was able to be very intimate with male friends. For a time, Beethoven shared an apartment with Stephen von Breuning. He wrote the A-Major Violin Sonata, Opus 47 for George Bridgetower, but there was an unholy row about this and it was re-dedicated to Rudolphe Kreutzer. Beethoven dedicated the C-Minor Piano Concerto to his dear friend Prince Louis Ferdinand of Prussia, who was romantically attached to the pianist Jan Lodislav Dussek. A gay pupil of Beethoven's was Carl Czerny. The Opus 111 Sonata was considered by nineteenth century German and Austrian homosexuals to be "The Uranian Sonata."

Franz Schubert (1797-1828), found on stamps in India, Austria, and Germany, was predominantly homosexual. Schubert had many loves during his 31 years. At the age of 18, he lived with poet-lawyer Johann Mayrhofer. The following year, he lived with a wealthy attractive actor named Franz von Schober. Other men with whom Schubert was romantically involved were: Johann Michael Vogl (a tenor), Eduard Bauernfeld (a playwright), and Moritz von Schwind (German romantic master). Schwind, a painter, was referred to by Schubert as "Beloved." Another intimate friend was Anselm Hattenbrenner, in whose arms Schubert died.

Peter Ilich Tchaikovsky (1840-1893) can be found on several Russian stamps. As a music student, he had a passionate relationship with poet Apukhtin. As professor at the Moscow Conservatory, he had a long affair with Vladimir Shilovskiy. Tchaikovsky writes of going to bed with a piano student, Vassily Sapellnikoff, who had a beautiful mane of blond hair. Tchaikovsky naively thought that he could cure his homosexuality, and with this in mind he married Antonia Milyukova in 1877. The marriage drove him to the verge of suicide. Tchaikovsky was smitten with love for his blond nephew, Vladimir Davidov, and dedicated his Symphony Number 6 in B-Minor to him. However, his affections for Vladimir were not returned.

The first American homosexual composer to gain renown was Stephen Foster. He abandoned his family for his lover George Cooper. Foster is depicted on a U.S. Famous American stamp.



Scott #1257

Ludwig van Beethoven



#491

Franz Schubert

CONTINUED IN THE NEXT ISSUE

# last lick

- Does every reader know who are our cover persons? If not, you should. Try and discover who they are. Answers next issue.
- In the May 17, 1982 issue of "Newsweek" on page 114 is an article about animals and plants that change their sex. The clownfish and bluehead wrasse both can be found on stamps.
- All Lesbian and Gay Male stampcollectors should know about Lambda Stamps P.O.Box 5968 Philadelphia, Pa. 19137

PAUL VERLAINE  
(1844-1896)

AND

ARTHUR RIMBAUD  
(1854-1891)



Scott # 667

# 668

Issued by France on October 27, 1951, in a set of three stamps honoring French poets: Charles Baudelaire, Paul Verlaine and Arthur Rimbaud.

Undisputed "Prince" of French symbolist poets, Paul Verlaine led a life racked with pain, misery, decadence and disease. The intensely-devoted only son of a possessive mother, Verlaine was acutely aware of his homeliness. His bourgeois marriage in 1870 to a girl ten years his junior disintegrated with Verlaine's infatuation with "that genius of perversity", Arthur Rimbaud.

This affair lead to Verlaine's imprisonment for his attempt to kill his lover after two years of numerous quarrels and scandals. However, there has never been a comparable liaison between two poets of recognized genius, and it was the paramount experience of Verlaine's life: supreme physical attraction fused with the lure of poetic brilliance.

Verlaine continued to scandalize his friends and admirers by flaunting his debauchery and homosexuality, but at the time of his death, he was the most celebrated French poet in Europe.

By: Ken Morris

The Horatio Alger cover below, was sent to us by Joseph Viscarra, ATA 29081-7

