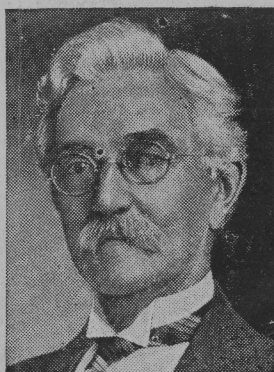


NOTED ARTISTS HAVE CREATED DESIGNS FOR CHRISTMAS SEALS



Sketch in center shows Christmas Seal Designs of 1908, 1920, 1922 and 1928. At right, John W. Evans, who designed several Christmas Seals. At left, Howard Pyle, famous artist, who designed the 1908 seal.

By DWIGHT ANDERSON

TWENTY-SIX different Christmas seal designs have appeared on the wafers used to raise money to fight tuberculosis since Emily P. Bissell of Wilmington, Delaware, created the first one in 1907. As the space devoted to the pictorial part of the seal occupies less than a square inch, the ingenuity and skill of many notable American artists have been drawn upon to produce striking effects in miniature.



The 1932 Christmas Seal

Foremost, perhaps, among the names of these artists stands that of Howard Pyle, an illustrator of a generation ago, whose technique and historical scholarship made him easily the acknowledged leader in depicting colonial scenes, as well as those of medieval days. He designed the seal for 1908, showing a holly wreath and the words "Merry Christmas."

Fully as notable, though not so well known, is John W. Evans of Baldwin, L. I., whose deft fingers drew seals for 1927, 1928, 1930 and 1931. Evans is one of the last of the old-time wood engravers, who practiced an art still considered unsurpassed, but whose occupation, pursued by the use of hundreds of tiny tools, has been replaced by the cheaper, more accurate, and wholly uncreative process of photo-engraving. His seal for 1927 showed Santa Claus and his team of reindeer; for 1930, Santa Claus carrying a Christmas tree, and for 1931, a stage coach to commemorate the 25th Annual Seal Sale.

This record for designing more seals than any other of the artists falls to

George V. Curtis of New York, whose four seals were used in 1921, 1924, 1926 and 1929. Curtis is a painter of international reputation, his work appearing in many celebrated American and European galleries. In 1921 he provided a design showing Santa Claus with two children in his arms; in 1924, the figure of an angel holding a torch aloft; while in 1926 his seal showed a group of troubadours and in 1929 a medieval bell-ringer.

In all, 16 designers provided the 26 seals which mark the growth of America's organized war against tuberculosis. Four others besides those named above have drawn more than one seal each. They are: Thomas M. Cleland of New York, whose work was used in 1916, 1917 and 1922; Benjamin S. Nash of New York, 1914 and 1915; Ernest Hamlin Baker, of Carmel, N. Y., 1919 and 1920; and Edward Volkman of Weehawken, N. J., 1928 and 1932. For the 1932 seal Mr. Volkman has created a picture of two children standing in the snow, singing Christmas carols.

Other artists responsible for one seal each are: Carl Wingate, New York, 1909; Mrs. Guion Thompson, Waterbury, Conn., 1910; Anton Rudert, Bayside, Long Island, 1911; John H. Zeh, Philadelphia, Pa., 1912; C. J. Budd, New York, 1913; Charles Winter, New York, 1918; Rudolph Ruzicka, New York, 1923; Robert G. Eberhard, New York, 1925.

Many stamp collectors possess complete sets of all these seals, some of which are becoming rare. One who inspects such a collection may read in the development of the designs much of the history of the tuberculosis movement. Seals for the first four years were purely decorative, using the holly wreath vaguely without much effort to portray specific ideas. These were the formative years of the

war on the "Captain of the men of death," when even the leaders were none too sure of the best way to go.

An inspection of all the seals might suggest that next came an era of transition, when from 1911 to 1918 the decorative type of design gradually became submerged in the pictorial type. Santa Claus—who brings the greatest gift of all, good health—figured prominently, and Liberty, symbolizing freedom from disease, was not forgotten. This was the period when science, aided in part by money raised by the seals, was more and more helping to clear away the ignorance and confusion which obstructed the path to victory. Then emerged the years from 1920 until the present, when knowledge and diffusion of knowledge were increasing just as the seals themselves attained a more definite personality. Two candles "lit the way" in 1925; three minstrels sang a song of hope in 1926. The ship under full sail charted a course to a destined port in 1923, and the bell-ringer of 1929 represented the change which had taken place since the days when church bells were rung to ward off pestilence.

During this period it became increasingly apparent that the greatest good to the greatest number required emphasis on preventive work with children, for tuberculosis usually starts in childhood.

And at the time when the war on tuberculosis has become concentrated on the most secret ambush of the enemy, childhood, has the seal's design become the most clearly expressive of its purpose. For now it is known that the slogan must be "Children First," and Mr. Volkman, in his seal for 1932, shows two little singers whose voices are raised, as are their hopes, for the success of their continuing protection.