**Guide to the Luther H. Foster, Jr. Ephemera Collection**

1940-1985

Prepared by Dana Chandler, 2007

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**Ford Motor Company Library/Learning Resource Center**, **Tuskegee University**

**Archives and Museums**

**Tuskegee, AL 36088**

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**Collection Summary**

**Creator:** Foster**,** Jr.**,** Luther Hilton (1913-94)

**Title:** Luther H. Foster Ephemera Collection

**Dates:** 1940-85

**Quantity:** .33 cubic feet

**Identification:**

**Abstract:** The first issue of an African American on a U.S. stamp, Booker T. Washington, occurred in 1940. Further stamps were released during the U.S. Bi-Centennial, with the Black Heritage Series (1978-2003).

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**Administrative Information**

**Preferred Citation**

Luther H. Foster Ephemera Collection

**Acquisition Information**

Collection arrived in an album from President and Mrs. Luther H. Foster, July, 1981.

**Processing Information**

The stamps and papers were received for processing in one archival storage container, with the items in what was assumed to be their original album leaves. From their arrangement in the storage container, it was assumed that all items were as arranged in original stamp album. It appears that some items were not in the original format and were subsequently placed in the container after they were donated. Also, one item was missing (a commemorative coin) which was apparently lost or misplaced.

In processing the collection, stamp album leaves were left mostly intact and placed in acid-free folders. Folders were labeled with assigned folder titles based on location in the box. Folder titles assigned by the processors are indicated in the inventory enclosed in square brackets. All metal fasteners were removed, rough edges from the albums were trimmed back and excess tape removed.

**Index Terms**

The collection is indexed under the following headings in the Tuskegee University Libraries online catalog. Researchers seeking materials about related subjects, persons, organizations or places should search the catalog using these headings.

**Subjects:**

Tuskegee Institute

Tuskegee University

Washington, Booker T., 1856-1915

Wells, Ida B., 1802-1931

Carver, George Washington, 1864-1943

King, Martin Luther, Jr., 1929-1968

Randolph, A. Philip (Asa Philip), 1889-

Bunche, Ralph J. (Ralph Johnson), 1904-1971

African Americans-Celebrities

Stamp Collections

American Revolution Bicentennial, 1776-1976, on postage stamps

**Persons:**

# Foster, Luther H. (Luther Hilton), 1913-

Payton, Benjamin Franklin, 1932

**Historical Background**

Booker T. Washington (1856-1915) was the first African American to be featured on a U.S. postage stamp. The ten cent stamp, showing a middle aged Washington, went on sale at Tuskegee Institute, Alabama, on April 7, 1940. This stamp was soon followed by a three cent stamp honoring George Washington Carver which was released at Tuskegee, on January 5, 1948, the fourth anniversary of his death. Subsequent stamps were released by the U.S. Postal Service featuring famous African Americans throughout the years following 1967. Stamps included: Frederick Douglas, orator and diplomat (1967); Peter Salem, a hero of the Revolutionary Battle of Bunker’s Hill (1969); and Paul Laurence Dunbar, poet (1975).

In 1978, the USPS released the “Black Heritage Series” recognizing the achievements of 27 prominent African Americans. The idea for this series was first proposed by Clarence L. Irving, in 1975, at a Queens County, New York, Bicentennial meeting. Through the efforts of Irving, Robert Parmet, Karen Burstein and others, the idea was presented to the U.S. House appropriations subcommittee dealing with the Postal Service by Representative Joseph Addabbo. The series was adopted as a part of the activities revolving around the U.S. bicentennial celebration.

In 1978 the USPS released its “Black Heritage USA Series” which further recognized prominent African Americans. Harriet Tubman, famous “conductor” of the Underground Railroad during the Civil War, was featured on the first stamp of the latter series. Furthermore, the Tubman stamp was the first to feature an African American woman.

**Scope and Contents**

The ephemera collection of Luther H. Foster, Jr., consists of stamps and documents spanning 1940-86, and include “first day of issue” stamps commemorating many famous African Americans within a variety of professions. Collection includes loose and block stamps, special “first day of issue” cancelled envelopes with stamps, specialty stamps, brochures, and correspondence.

**Arrangement**

The papers are arranged in one box.

**Restrictions**

**Restrictions on Access**

There are no restrictions on access to this collection.

**Restrictions on Use**

Researchers are responsible for addressing copyright issues on materials not in the public domain.

**Inventory**

**Series 1. Luther H. Foster, Jr. Ephemera Collection** **correspondence and stamps.**

**Box Folder**

1 1 [Correspondence- 1986]

1 2 [Stamps- Ida B. Wells, 1989]

1 3 [Stamps- Martin L. King, 1979]

1 4 [Stamps- George Washington Carver National Monument, 1953]

1 5 [Stamps- First Day Issue, 1978-81]

1 6 [Education- Booker T. Washington Stamp]

1 7 [Stamps- Booker T. Washington & William Allen White, 1940 & 48]

1 8 [Stamps- First Day Issue, 1947 & 48]

1 9 [Stamps- First Day of Issue, 1940-78]

1 10 [Stamps- First Day of Issue, 1940-81]

1 11 [Stamps- A. Philip Randolph & Booker T. Washington]

1 12 [Stamps- Booker T. Washington]

1 13 [Stamps- George Washington Carver, From Estate of R.S. Darnaby, Sept. 29, 1978]

1 14 [Stamps- U.S.S.R., 1972]

1 15 [Stamps- First Day of Issue, 1980-81]

1 16 [Stamps- Fiftieth Anniversary- Opening of Tomb of Tutankhamen, 1972]

1 17 [Stamps- First Day of Issue, 1978-81]

1 18 [Stamps- First Day of Issue, 1978-79]

1 19 [Stamps- Misc.]

1 20 [Stamps- First Day of Issue, 1947-78]

1 21 [Stamps- Celebrate the Century, Series No. 2]

1 22 [Stamps- Scott Joplin & A. Philip Randolph]

1 23 [Stamps- First Day of Issue, 1983 & 86]

1 24 [Booklet- Black American Heritage Through U.S. Postage Stamps, R. Charles Allen, 1979]

1 25 [Stamps- W.E.B. DuBois & A. Philip Randolph]

1 26 [Envelope- Fredricka Johnson to Claudia Brown]

1 27 [Stamps- Commemorative (U.S.) Groups]

1 28 [Stamps- First Day of Issue, Ralph J. Bunche, 1982]

1 29 [Stamps- Senegal]

1 30 [Stamps- First Day of Issue, Mary McLeod Bethune, 1985]