

# The Story of a Stamp

US #855 1939 Centennial of Baseball

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James Farley

In 1937 the Cooperstown, NY Chamber of Commerce requested, and Congress approved, its first sports related stamp to celebrate 100 years of Baseball. Designed by William Roach of BoE and issued as part of the 1939 "Cavalcade of Baseball", the 1939 Baseball Centennial stamp was an integral part of the Hall of Fame (HoF) inauguration ceremonies and Doubleday Field opening in Cooperstown, NY.

Postmaster General (PMG) James Farley collaborated with local postmaster Melvin Bundy to provide extra cancelation personnel and equipment to ensure fans could get stamps and FDCs. Over 630,000 stamps were issued 12 June 1939. The first set was sold to Commissioner Kenesaw Landis.

James Farley was a patient of Washington, D.C. Dr. Joseph P. Shearer (my grandfather) and he knew his son Joseph B. (my father) collected stamps. On his PMG Stationary Mr. Farley sent an autographed FDC directly to my father.



Dr. Shearer



There were 11 living HoF inductees in attendance that day. All signed the FDC along with future inductee Clark Griffith (1946) and the PMG himself in his famous green ink! Note the very neat linear arrangement of the signatures suggests a planned personal favor. (FDC at left is 65% actual size)