

CLUB SEAL (from Scrapbooks in computer)

"Prof. Davis brought up the subject of awarding a medal next winter to some man, who will have made and properly recorded a worthy piece of travel in the preceding summer. ... It was also moved, seconded, and unanimously adopted by the Fellows that the Council shall report on a design for the medal and a seal for the Club, at their autumn meeting."
(Fellows Meeting minutes, April 13, 1905. Book1 p73 item98)

"The Fellows at a meeting held last April passed resolution adopting a Club seal and medal. ... The committee will be glad to receive from any member of the Club suggestions and designs for the medal, seal and inscription as soon as possible."

Medal Committee

Edward J. Homes, Chairman

Robert Walcott

Townsend W. Thorndike

R. C. Sturgis, Jr.

(Resolution regarding the Club Medal. Book1 p193 item239)

"February 1906. Mr. Walcott and Mr. Holmes suggest that each member of the Club be asked to send suggestions and designs relative to the seal and medal, Dr. Thorndike concurring with them. In accordance with this resolution, Dr. Thorndike is to draw up a notice, to be sent to each member, requesting him to submit suggestions and designs."

(Minutes of the Medal Committee. Book1 p193 item240)

"The accompanying design, seal and motto was submitted to the committee for consideration. It met with approval in general, although Mr. Holmes did not thoroughly approve either of the symbol or the motto. He thought that the former was too ecclesiastical. In this, however, he was not sustained by the other two committeemen. These thought the the Pilgrim staff and wallet not only denoted travelling, but that its conotation included simplicity, strength and determination, thses qualities we read of as being possessed by the Plymouth Colonies; Massachusetts, especially eastern Massachusetts, this section of the state being the residence of the H. T. C.; Harvard, the history of which is so closely identified with the early austere Puritans, and that the staff and wallet are almost the first articles that a man who starts out on a long journey on foot provides himself. It was decided that this design be submitted to the Council only as a tentative one, and if subsequently necessary it would be changed.

Dr. Thorndike suggested in place of the staff and wallet a compass."

(Minutes of the Medal Committee, March 19, 1906. Book1 p194 item242)

On letterhead of T.W. Thorndike, dated March 20, 1906.

"The committee on the medal presented the following tentative design for a medal seal and motto of the Harvard Travellers Club. This design is not to be understood as being fully completed..."

(Notice to the Council. Book1 p195 item243)

Design of medal, obverse and reverse and actual size. Drawn in pencil or stiff paper.

Shows design and inscription: "When I travelled I saw many things, And I understand more than I can express."

(Book1 p195 item245)

"I put in a couple of hours with the books of ancient discoveries in the college library last week with this result.

In John Ashton's [sp?] edition of Sir John Mandeville's Travels. Pickering and Chatto. 66 Haymarket. London 1887 printed for the Roxburghe club has some nearly contemporary prints from the British Museum of which Plate III represents a group of pilgrims starting out on their travels, Mandeville himself being shown as a knight. The staff is head-high and the hat [sketch] like the designs Kittredge referred us to. Plate VIII represented Seth [sp?] as a pilgrim with an excellent shoe [sketch] and [sketch] water ? Bottle. Archibald Constable's edition 1895 has at p. 218 a fancy sketch of Mandeville in Pilgrim's garb, very likely suggested by the above.

The original edition of Coryat's Crudities, London 1611, has a remarkable copperplate frontispiece, Wm. Hall sculpcit. with a numbr of figures ludicrously descriptive of the contents, but I find nothing that we can use unless possibly the Homeric motto: [in greek]

Hakluyt is barren of suggestions.

On the whole my best find was Las Casas Frankfurt 1571 which has a frontispiece that I think would be most effective and appropriate for a medal-die. I wish you would look at it. I suppose the Public Library is likely to have it among the early Spanish voyages:

A female figure rolling toward the reader on a ball with arms outstretched partly draped in a cloak flying in the winds, blowing a horn, while behind her she is leaving civilized country, meadows and cities.

Sincerely Yours

Robert Walcott

I enclose Mr. Kittredge's letter which has been wearing out in my pocketbook. I've written Prof. Wright on the propriety of the various Latin inscriptions."

(Letter to T.W. Thorndike from Robert Walcott, dated April 26, 1906. Book1 p196 item247)

"A staff and wallet would be highly appropriate. You will find a first-class representation of both in Strutt's Regal & Eccleastical Antiquities, pl. XLV. The kneeling figure is as good a pilgrim as you can find anywhere. The scallop-shell on his wallet indicates that he has visited the shrine of St. James at Compostella. The strips on his staff are mere ornaments and may be discarded. The hat on his head is characteristic. Some armorial designer ought to be able to make a good thing out of this staff & script, utilizing perhaps the hat also. Then a fine motto would be PEREGRINANTUR, "they wander in foreign lands," which would also suggest the pilgrim, i.e. Peregrinus (you remember pilgrim comes ultimately from peregrinus). The form peregrinantur might also be regarded [or recorded] as a quotation from Cicero's oration for Archias [sp?] (chap. 7 & 16),--a fact which makes it none the less available as a motto. ...

(Letter to Robert Walcott from G.L. Kittredge, dated March 30, 1906. Book1 p197 item248)

Letter to Robert Walcott from John H. Wright, dated April 27, 1906 on Harvard University letterhead. Concerning a choice of a motto.

(Book1 p198 item249)

Obverse and Reverse shown. Peregrinantur appears. Design shows staff and wallet. Some of the notes in pencil: Size of 20 dollar gold piece. [The design is not the one eventually chosen]

Last page in Scrapbook 1.

(Design for the seal submitted by T.W. Thorndike. Book1 p200 item251)

First recorded appearance of the Club seal.


Preliminary Program of Meetings of the Club.

Book2 p38 item69)

"Among various plans for the encouragement of effective travel, especially among the younger men, Professor Davis early proposed that a medal should be awarded from time to time to some person whose record of travel or exploration should be deemed unusually worthy of recognition. Accordingly, in April, 1906, the Fellows appointed a committee consisting of Edward J. Holmes, chairman, Townsend W. Thorndike, and Robert Walcott, to prepare and submit designs for a suitable medal. In this the committee had also the helpful cooperation of R. C. Sturgis, Jr. The committee at once requested suggestions for a suitable design from the members, at the same time having in view its use as the Club's seal."

The Medal was first presented at the Annual Meeting of the Club held at the University Club, 270 Beacon Street, Boston, on May 18, 1906. The speaker that evening was Professor Solon I. Bailey of Harvard College Observatory. His talk was entitled "A Journey made in 1905 from Arequipa, Peru, over the Andes to the Headwaters of the Amazon." Sixty members were in attendance. The recipient of the Medal was WILLIAM BROOKS CABOT (*For explorations in Labrador*)

The *History of the Harvard Travellers Club* (1933) noted that "Cabot's remarkable canoe journeys along the coast and up the rivers of eastern Labrador, his meeting with the Indians of the interior, and other incidents of several summers' travel, much of it alone, are set forth in his book, *Northern Labrador*."

 Prepared for the 739th Meeting, February 12, in the Centennial Year of the Harvard Travellers Club 2002.



The Seal of the Harvard Travellers Club

"... a design was adopted showing a pilgrim in oldtime costume, with his staff in his hand and his wallet slung over his shoulder, surmounted by the word "Peregrinantur"—"they wander in foreign lands." Our pilgrim is walking along the shore of the sea, which appears in the background, bounded on the right by steeply conventional peaks, the mountains of his desire, toward which his face is set. A lonely flower blossoming at his feet on the edge of the strand, and a wheeling dolphin, the fish that is the friend of man, thrusting its head above water, symbolize the flora and fauna, while a distant caraval is significant of travel by sea. At that time, travel by air had not been thought of, so no symbol is included!"

—From the *History of the Harvard Travellers Club*, 1933.



The Club Seal as it appeared for the first time in the fall of 1907.



The Club Seal as it appears today.



An early, more detailed version of the Club Seal which was incorporated into a bookplate for the Club Library which was established in 1914 and originally housed at the Harvard Club. With the opening of the Institute of Geographical Exploration in Cambridge, the over 400 volumes were moved there and accommodated in "...modern bookcases in the Club's room..." Alas, only a few titles remain from the collection which was otherwise dispersed.

Computer File: CentenaryMinute2LOGO

Centenary Minute No 2 - February 12, 2002

The Club seal which graces each Meeting Notice first appeared on the 'Preliminary Programme of Meetings of the Club' issued in the fall of 1907 which was found in the earliest of the Club's scrapbooks. It is essentially unchanged today although one can notice some subtle differences. It was designed initially for the Club Medal.

From the 1933 Club History: "Among various plans for the encouragement of effective travel, especially among the younger men, Professor Davis [the founding force behind the Club] early proposed that a medal should be awarded from time to time to some person whose record of travel or exploration should be deemed unusually worthy of recognition. Accordingly, in April, 1906, the Fellows appointed a committee . . . to prepare and submit designs for a suitable medal. The committee at once requested suggestions for a suitable design from the members, at the same time having in view its use as the Club's seal."

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The design of the seal shows [again from the Club History] “. . . a pilgrim in oldtime costume, with his staff in his hand and his wallet slung over his shoulder, surmounted by the word “Peregrinantur”—“they wander in foreign lands.” Our pilgrim is walking along the shore of the sea, which appears in the background, bounded on the right by steeply conventional peaks, the mountains of his desire, toward which his face is set. A lonely flower blossoming at his feet on the edge of the strand, and a wheeling dolphin, the fish that is the friend of man, thrusting its head above water, symbolize the flora and fauna, while a distant caraval is significant of travel by sea. At that time, travel by air had not been thought of, so no symbol is included!”

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