

RICHARD J. DURBIN
20TH DISTRICT, ILLINOIS

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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

July 18, 1983

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The Honorable William F. Bolger
Postmaster General
U.S. Postal Service
475 L'Enfant Plaza, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20260

Dear Mr. Postmaster General:

We are writing on behalf of the Illinois State Dental Society to request the issuance of a commemorative postage stamp honoring Dr. Greene Vardiman Black. At the 119th Annual Meeting of this Society in May, 1983, a resolution was passed unanimously by the General Assembly to support a request for the issuance of a commemorative postage stamp honoring Dr. Black.

To the best of the Society's knowledge, no dentist has been honored specifically on a U.S. commemorative stamp since the inception of the commemorative program. We feel that the dental profession throughout the United States has steadfastly demonstrated its concern for mankind through the healing art, and Dr. G.V. Black would certainly make a fine representative of the entire profession.

Dr. G.V. Black (1836-1915) is nationally and internationally recognized as the "Father of Modern Dentistry". Born on August 3, 1836, Dr. Black is the foremost pioneer of scientific dentistry. After studying both medicine and dentistry, he chose to practice dentistry at Winchester, Illinois from 1857 until the outbreak of the Civil War, when he left to serve as a Corporal in the 129th Illinois Infantry. Following an early discharge for disability, he resumed active dental practice in Jacksonville, Illinois in 1863. It was here that Dr. Black carried on numerous research projects which laid the foundation for his later accomplishments and worldwide fame. He authored hundreds of papers and books and invented many of the modern dental instruments. Most of his ideas on the care and restoration of teeth became the accepted methods, some even continuing today. He taught pathology and operative dentistry at several colleges and left Jacksonville in 1897 to serve as Dean of the Northwestern University Dental School in Chicago, until his death on August 31, 1915. Dr. Black's foresight and complete and total dedication to the healing art of dentistry is reflected in a statement he made in 1896. "The day is surely coming and perhaps within the lifetime of you young men before me when we will be engaged in practicing preventative rather than reparative dentistry, when we will so understand the etiology and pathology of dental caries that we will be able to combat its destructive effects by systemic medication."

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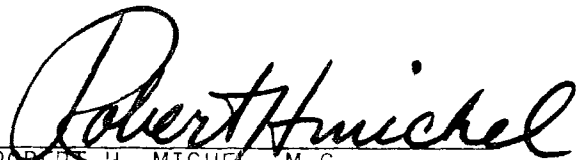
In 1973, the Illinois State Historical Society saw fit to honor Dr. Black by placing an official historic marker at the site of his home and office in Jacksonville, Illinois. This marker stands as a tribute to Dr. Black's immense contributions and accomplishments.

The 150th Anniversary of Dr. Black's birth will occur on August 3, 1986. We believe this time would be most appropriate for his recognition on a commemorative stamp. Further, if such a stamp is issued we would request that the first day of issue be located in Jacksonville, Illinois.

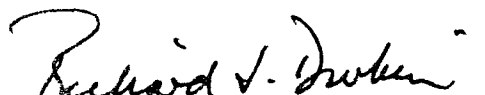
Mr. Postmaster General, for all of the above reasons we respectfully request Dr. G.V. Black be chosen as one of the commemorative stamps to be issued in 1986. As members of the Illinois Congressional Delegation we wish to serve the worthy request of the Illinois State Dental Society and thank you in advance for your consideration of this matter. We look forward to hearing from you with a reply to our request.

With best wishes,

Sincerely,



ROBERT H. MICHEL, M.C.



RICHARD J. DURBIN, M.C.

ALAN J. DIXON, U.S. SENATOR

CHARLES H. PERCY, U.S. SENATOR