HUMOR

Stoddard King

(1889-1933)

Poem for Benjamin Franklin's Birthday (1926)

Benjamin Franklin, good old Ben,
Didn't you ever, now and then,
Squander tuppence at the corner bar,
Or shoot a whole shilling for a good cigar?
Benjamin, surely it can't be true
That wisdom and thrift were the whole of you?

Benjamin, were you alive today
Would you always labor and never play?
Would you utter poor richards through serious lips,
And have no time for the comic strips?
And, Ben, would it be your proudest boast
That you founded the *Saturday Evening Post*?

Benjamin Franklin, it's a shame
To have you cooped in the Hall of Fame,
Chained to a pedestal cold and damp,
And your face on a one-cent postage stamp!
Or else embalmed in a thrift-week ad--
Surely you couldn't have been that bad!

Benjamin Franklin, sober Ben--
The things we do to our famous men!
We raise them up from the merest clods,
And make them impossible demigods.
So I'm keeping your birthday, Ben, today,
In a totally flippant and useless way!