



# Cancellation Club NEWS

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## Edward Stabler — Quaker Postmaster

Prof. C.S. Thompson, Jr.

The postmaster at Sandy Spring, Maryland was a member of The Society of Friends, an organization which is more commonly referred to as The Quakers. The teachings of this sect are primarily directed toward living your life according to Christian principles rather than as preparation for an afterlife. This sect got its start during the Reformation in Europe but its present-day counterparts trace their lineage to one George Fox, an English lay preacher who, about 1647, began to preach the doctrine of "inner light." As a formal organization, The Society of Friends dates from 1668, when William Dewsbury, along with Fox, introduced formal rules based on Fox's "Paper of Advice." Because of their beliefs and confrontations with the Church of England, William Penn founded a Quaker refuge in Pennsylvania, he too being a Quaker. While the total congregation has always been relatively small in numbers, they still remain quite active as of this writing. Figures 1 and 2 are used to show the carryover into the member's daily lives of the Quaker teachings.

The folded letter illustrated in Figure 1, bears the free frank of Edward Stabler, Quaker postmaster at Sandy Spring, Maryland. According to Delph Norona, in his book "Cyclopedia of United States Postmarks and Postal History," he states that Mr. Stabler held the position of postmaster at this location from approximately 1836 to 1869. The circular handstamped town mark is struck in red as is the straight line FREE. Both markings appear to have been strengthened at some time after their initial application. This was quite possibly the work of a previous owner who was dissatisfied with the quality of the strikes.

The writer states this observation based on the completely spelled state name rather than from any inconsistencies in the color, millimeter size, or layout pattern. The ASCC listing indicates that all reported stampless markings from this town during this time period (1855) show the state name abbreviated to MARYLD. In any event, the postmasters signature frank is genuine and the folded letter employ demonstrates the substitution of the Quaker dating system in the handstamp for the traditional January-December usage. A variation of this stampless period handstamp continued in us in an altered form after the introduction of postage stamps.

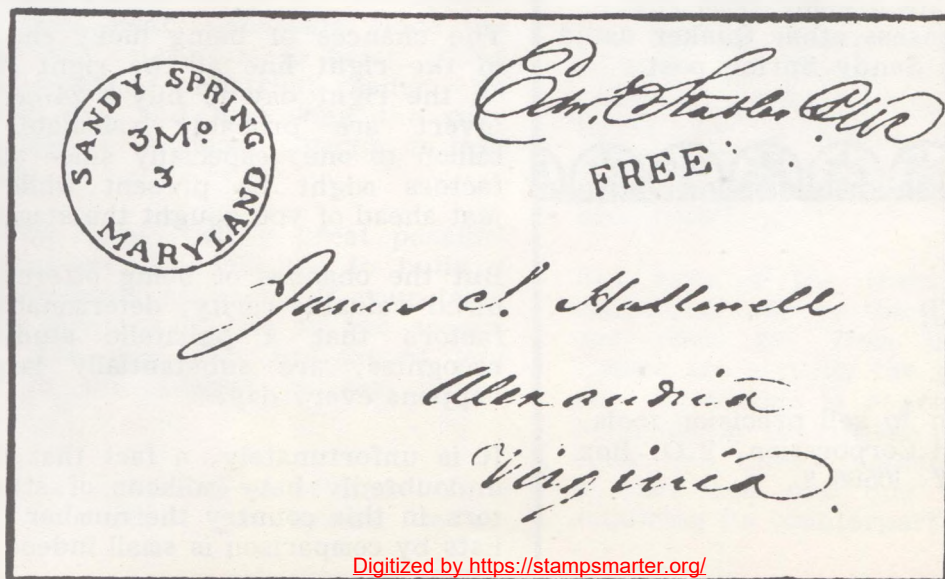


Figure 1



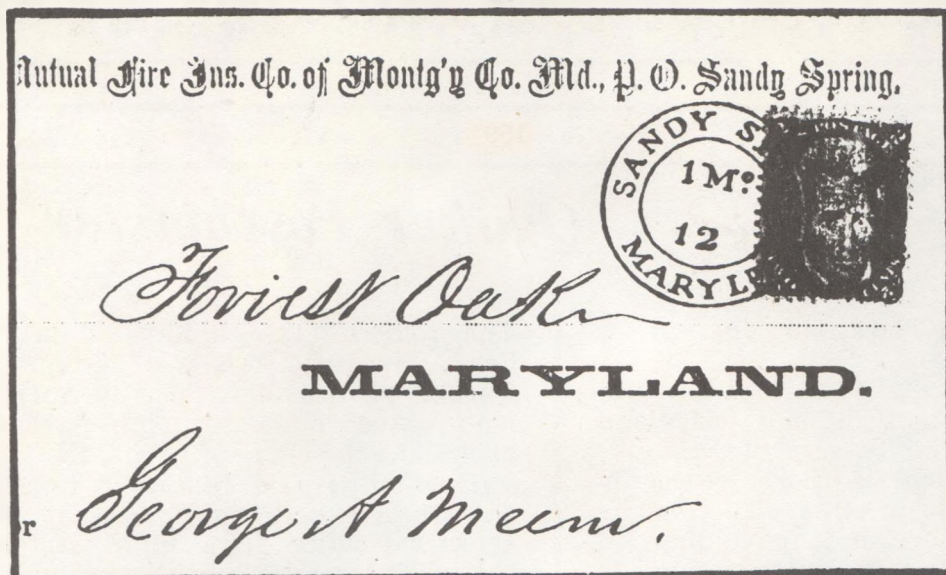


Figure 2

The cover illustrated in Figure 2, is a fine example of the continued later use of the SANDY SPRING MARYLD. double circle postmark. The Quaker date shows it to have been posted on the "1 Mo. 12." Maryette B. Lane, in her book, "The Harry F. Allen Collection of Black Jacks", illustrates a similar cover in Figure 141. The month and day of the Allen cover is given as "1 Mo. 14", and like the cover shown above is on the same company's envelope. Each bears the legend, "Mutual Fire Ins. Co. of Montg'y Co. Md., P.O. Sandy Spring." No date is given for this cover nor is one in evidence on that of the writer's. It does conjure up the unique possibility that the cover illustrated here and that in the Allen collection may very well have been posted just two days apart. However, the absence of a year date makes this possibility pure conjecture. The writer would appreciate hearing from any readers who may possess other Quaker dated marketings from the Sandy Spring post office.



### WANTED

"Retired Gentlemen to sell precision tools. Reply to Grit Tool Corporation, P.O. Box 526, Peekskill, N.Y. 10566."

## *On Keeping a Philatelic Scrapbook*

By Herman Herst, Jr.

Not all of us are gifted with a phenomenal memory such as will permit our remembering that the day of issue of the 2-cent brown United States stamp was October 1, 1883. Nor can we remember that the postal rate for an ordinary letter was reduced from 5 cents to 3 cents on July 1, 1851.

Yet information of that sort is precisely the type of information that pay the greatest dividends in philately.

The chances of being lucky enough to be in the right line at the right Post Office on the right day to buy a 24-cent air mail invert are probably calculable at five billion to one, especially since all of those factors might be present while the guy just ahead of you bought the stamps!

But the chances of being offered a recognized valuable rarity, determinable only by factors that a philatelic student would recognize, are substantially large. This happens every day.

It is unfortunately, a fact that though we undoubtedly have millions of stamp collectors in this country the number of philatelists by comparison is small indeed.



## ..Scrapbook (cont'd)

A stamp collector, of course, merely accumulates. He does not wish to know philatelic facts about the objects of his endeavors. A philatelist, on the other hand, wishes to know all he can about his hobby. The difference, to use an extreme, is somewhat the same as a Doctor of Medicine in contrast with little Bobby playing with and enjoying his \$1.98 medical kit.

A philatelic library well may be beyond the reach of many collectors of modest means. Actually, a current edition of a stamp catalog may loom as too large an expense, even in these affluent times. But you can buy the same catalog, obsolete only a year or two later, at a cost of perhaps a half-cent a day, if apportioned over a two-year period.

Often, articles of philatelic interest appear in daily papers. These articles contain information of interest and value to collectors. However, it must be mentioned that articles on stamps may have inaccuracies which never should have been "immortalized" in print.

This is especially true to articles in papers of limited circulation which concern local collectors. Too often, the Bugtown "Bugle" will print an article about John Smith of Bugtown, who just has found a stamp with a single perf hole not punched out, which he feels is worth at least \$50,000.

Many collectors tell us they make a scrap book of our columns for later reference when circumstances warrant. We appreciate the compliment, especially since the purpose of our columns is to bring added dimensions to every philatelist reader. We try to help him and her along the road from the status of a stamp collector to that of philatelist.

The philatelic press offers great possibilities in enabling the collector to build a library at virtually no cost. If your taste lies in the direction of one or two special countries, you may clip and mount any reference to the subject in any publication.

Of course, a scrapbook is of little use if there is no order nor system to it.

Though an index may not be practicable, you should adopt a plan before you start. One book may be devoted to United States stamps, another to British Commonwealth, and a third to stamps of other countries, or you may use the commercially-made scrapbooks found in stationery stores. It does not take any great ability to manufacture your own scrap book, for that matter, if your funds are limited.

It sometimes may happen that a desired magazine article is continued on another page, and that the continuation is on the opposite side of the very same part of the paper on which the article began. This is no great problem.

Simply affix only part of the article to the scrapbook page, by affixing the adhesive substance used to just the side edge of the article; in that way, it easily can be turned over if reference is needed to the second side.

Obvious is the fact that the side should be pasted, rather than the top portion. If the latter is done, then the article, when referred to, would be upside down and best read by acrobats or those who have mastered the art of upside down reading.

Ordinary mucilage is perhaps the best substance to use as an adhesive. Household paste does not last too long. It dries out, and cracks and flakes, and eventually the articles come loose from the pages. By that time, the paper may have become brittle, and in no time at all, the scrapbook may become unuseable for reference.

The sole reward for maintaining a scrapbook reference file will be the dividends paid to the user in learning more about his stamps. The compiler of such a reference file will be disappointed eventually if he feels he is adding to the value of his collection by maintaining it. A prospective buyer for a stamp collection naturally values only those parts of it which he can sell, and there are no buyers of philatelic scrapbooks.

But even if the rewards in dollars and cents may not be there, the rewards that one does get from learning about his stamps are actually the greatest rewards of all. Knowledge is a priceless asset. It is priceless in the truest sense of the word, since one cannot deplete it when he sells it, nor can one buy it except through acquiring its counterpart himself.



# Five Years of The U.S.C.C. may 1975 to may 1980

(EDITOR NOTE: For a few months ye olde editor has been planning his self-serving editorial on his accomplishments in five years on this job. Unfortunately it did not turn out that way.)

In May of 1975 the present editor of the U.S.C.C. Newsletter assumed his new duties. A four-page edition of the Newsletter was published announcing that the U.S.C.C. had resumed publication and circuits. On this fifth anniversary, I would like to summarize these five years in this six-page edition. The subjects will be discussed individually.

**NEWSLETTER.** The May, 1975 edition was four pages by choice. Our objective was to inform everyone that publication had been resumed, and to retain as many members as possible despite the 14 month hiatus between issues. This 1980 May edition is six pages not by choice. It is six pages because we have no material. For five years the Newsletter has lived from hand to mouth surviving through the cajoling, wheeling and threats of your editor to prospective authors to maintain sufficient literary input to justify the following issue. Each time, with little to spare, and often late, the publication appeared.

Part of the lack of material may well be my fault. I have attempted to publish articles in their entirety at all times. This objective meant that members have received 16 page and 12 page editions as well as the standard eight pages. If the articles had been split into several segments, there would probably sufficient material remaining for the next six editions.

However, my goal has been an ongoing attempt to upgrade the quality of the Newsletter. Our objective has been to present finished articles as well as formative material from authors so that additional information could be obtained by them to produce larger monographs or even books. The aim has been to disseminate information, to use the U.S.C.C. as a vehicle for research and to obtain the cooperation of each member in adding to the collection of facts on a subject. To an extent we have succeeded, in view of the

fact that more complete evaluations of the subject discussed in the U.S.C.C. have appeared in other publications.

Nevertheless for many months I have pleaded in the Newsletter more articles. This plea brought forth the excellent, regular column by Alyce Evans, which has been appearing this year in the Newsletter. It has elicited continuing articles from the members who have submitted stories in the past. But it has not prompted enough to fill this May issue, being published in June.

**SALES CIRCUITS.** Under my direction the sales circuits have paradoxically improved and failed. At this juncture we have well over double the number of circuits in the mail compared to those in existence in 1974. If one counts the circuit members, we have double the number of members using the circuits (realizing that some members are on as many as four different kinds of circuits in this enumeration).

The sales circuits have been computerized. It is a positive accomplishment from the standpoint of your editor. Whether the computerization is beneficial to the members may be an open point, but it certainly facilitates the keeping of accurate records. It assures that the mailings are at random, and I have significantly eliminated the complaints that from members "who have never been first on a circuit". Automation ensures everyone that equal opportunity to appear first and last exists. Nevertheless almost all cover books sell out well over half before the books are returned to the owner. The only exceptions appear to be first day covers, ship covers and stampless covers. Everything else sells. My conclusion therefore, on balance, seems to be that the circuits are still accomplishing their purpose.

On the negative side, I have been unable to improve the quality of the circuits. Each circuit that is mailed receives almost regularly the comment from some member that "it is the worst batch of material I have ever seen". At the same time another member will buy \$50.00 - \$100.00 of covers/stamps from the identical circuit.



## *Five Years..(cont'd)*

Continuing with the negative factors...we are running out of 19th century material. At the writing of this editorial every 19th century cover in our possession is out on a circuit with the exception of those received in the last three weeks. Conversely I have two drawers full of 20th century covers. Twentieth century circuits have probably quadrupled, yet I cannot keep the covers in circulation. Obviously the membership is much more interested in the 19th century material and just as logically the demand exceeds the supply.

I have concluded that the success of the sales circuits is entirely dependent upon material. At my request, the Board of Governors approved the U.S.C.C. relinquishing its 15% commission on circuit sales. My objective was to attract better material, to permit members to sell at full market value. This action did not involve a monetary loss to the U.S.C.C. Before I became secretary, the commission had been given to the secretary in return for services. When I accepted this position I turned the commission back to the U.S.C.C. Therefore, the Board of Governors was effectively returning to members which was rightfully theirs to begin with. However, this change has not (for all practical purposes) attracted any new covers/stamps. failures.

**FINANCES.** The U.S.C.C. is in excellent financial shape. The money that was in the bank at the time that I began is still there. We operate at almost breakeven. Our only losses are a continuing disappearance of covers from the circuits without payment, and usually one or two packages a year lost in the mail. Without these problems, it would be a profitable organization. With the use of the computer we are able to pinpoint the sources of the missing covers, but there is little that can be done. The mail loss is unfortunate because so many circuit members refuse to pay for the \$200 of insurance which we require on each circuit mailing. In each case the defalcations are covered by the U.S.C.C.

**MEMBERSHIP.** Under my leadership, the U.S.C.C. has lost about 100 members. My only conclusion is that I have done a bad job. I have not made the U.S.C.C. attractive to the existing members nor has it been able to lure new members to equal those lost. I have concurrently with this issue of the Newsletter offered to resign as secretary, if the Board of Governors can find someone who can help the U.S.C.C. grow. My efforts cannot have fulfilled my announced goals in 1975 judging by the mass departure of members.

Is there a solution to the ills of the U.S.C.C.? In a previous editorial I suggested that the proliferation of small philatelic organizations can only eventually mean a death for all of them. In my mind there is insufficient worthwhile literature to justify each of the clubs from a written word viewpoint. The New Jersey, Illinois, Ohio postal history clubs, and the Machine Cancel Forum all contain writings that might have appeared in the U.S.C.C. Newsletter (and I am not singling these publications out from a negative standpoint but merely as illustrative of a few of the organizations who compete from a literary standpoint). A simple solution would be to have the organizations band together and have their own page or pages incorporated into one massive publication. This solution would provide an outstanding publication, but it is doubtful that the members of these various groups would be willing to relinquish their autonomy. I spoke with Henry Spelman in Chicago last month (May), and he suggested that it might be well for the U.S.C.C. to join another society (specifically named). Henry may be correct, but one lone group turning its members over to another will not suffice. It would take this altruism on the part of a plethora of associations.

In conclusion, I hope that these statements do not further hurt the U.S.C.C. Whether I continue, or whether a better editor/secretary is found, it is my belief that the U.S.C.C. cannot continue as a one-man organization. It needs authors, a membership committee that seeks out new members and most of all it needs members who take more than a passive interest in the organization. The last editorial that I wrote did not provoke one comment, pro or con. My pleas for authors have gone unheeded (apart from Alyce Evans). My begging for better circuit material, for more 19th century material has not been answered.



The same 20 members that supplied material in 1975 are, for all practical purposes the same 20 members who send in the covers for the 300+ users of the circuits today.

This editorial has not been written to solicit a lot of statements saying "Gee, Jim, you have done a good job" or conversely "Boy, we certainly need a new editor". I am seeking a realistic solution to the ills of the U.S.C.C. My questions are -- Is the U.S.C.C. a viable and needed organization? Are the members willing to help it succeed?

## For Love of a Cancel

by Alyce Evans

### The Camouflaged Cat

#### Preface

Lurk: To be concealed, but capable of being discovered.

Within the pages of the Herst-Zareski book on fancy cancels, lurks a most curious cat (HZ 162), Figure 1. This same cat, in a 1mm. smaller version, reappears in the Herst-Sampson edition (HS 1458). I do not think this is a cat at all. I believe it has merely been posing as one, hiding all these years behind a "spray of leaves", Figure 2.

I have in my collection, two cancels, similar in outline, which are sprays of leaves, Figures 2 and 3. Figure 2 is struck in black on the 3¢ green Continental banknote of 1873, (as is the Herst example). Figure 3, a mirror image, is struck on the 3¢ 1869 issue, and the ink is purplish-black, having an oily appearance.

All three of these examples resemble each other at first glance, the rounded tail being the most prominent feature. The over-all linear dimensions are within 1mm. of each other. Figure 4 illustrates the similarities between Figure 1 and Figure 2.



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3

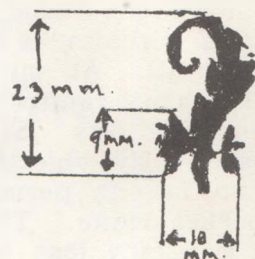
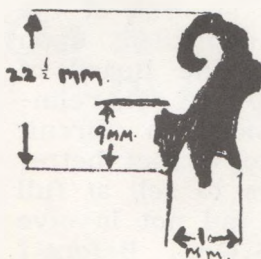


Figure 4

Several factors could explain the discrepancies in outline. Perhaps M. Zareski was tracing from a poor, or lightly-struck cancel, and that can be difficult, particularly on the 3¢ greens. Over-inking, under-inking, a smeared or carelessly applied strike, or a badly worn canceler are also possibilities.

In view of the above, perhaps we could hypothesize the following:

1. Figure 2 was carved first, and that it wore down to Figure 1.
2. Figure 3, the mirror image, was carved after Figure 1 had been worn down.
3. That our "cat" is actually a spray of leaves, which coincidentally, has outlines similar to those of a cat.

Little feline, we think you've just used up the last of your nine lives!