

# The Winton M. Blount Postal History Symposia

Select Papers, 2006–2009

*Thomas Lera*  
Editor



Smithsonian Institution  
Scholarly Press

WASHINGTON D.C.

2010

Cover images are objects from the Smithsonian National Postal Museum Collection. From left to right: envelope with ten-cent black Washington stamp (Scott 2) mailed from Doakesville, Ark, 1850 (NPM 2003.2019.7); Leather satchel for letter carriers, ca. 1920–1950 (NPM 1992.2002.70) Parcel Airlift Issue (Scott 1341) used for parcels being mailed to servicemen in Vietnam 1968 (NPM 1980.2493.571).

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Published by SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION SCHOLARLY PRESS  
P.O. Box 37012  
MRC 957  
Washington, D.C. 20013-7012  
[www.scholarlypress.si.edu](http://www.scholarlypress.si.edu)

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**Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data**

Winton M. Blount Postal History Symposia.

The Winton M. Blount Postal History Symposia : select papers, 2006-2009 / Thomas Lera, editor.  
p. cm. — (Smithsonian contributions to history and technology ; no. 55)

Includes bibliographical references.

1. Postal service—History—Congresses. 2. Postage stamps—History—Congresses. I. Lera, Thomas M. II. Title.  
HE6041.W56 2010  
383'.49--dc22

2010016338

ISSN (print): 1948-5999  
ISSN (online): 1948-6006

∞ The paper used in this publication meets the minimum requirements of the American National Standard for Permanence of Paper for Printed Library Materials Z39.48–1992.

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# “Little Colored Bits of Paper” Collected in the Progressive Era

*Sheila A. Brennan*

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Three months ago he did not know  
His lesson in geography;  
Though he could spell and read quite well,  
And cipher, too, he could not tell  
The least thing in topography.

But what a change! How passing strange!  
This stamp-collecting passion  
Has roused his zeal, for woe or weal,  
And lists of names he now can reel  
Off in amazing fashion.

. . . And now he longs for more Hong Kongs,  
A Rampour, a Mauritius,  
Greece, Borneo, Fernando Po,—  
And how much else no one can know;  
But be, kind fates, propitious.<sup>1</sup>

The merits of stamp collecting are applauded in this poem from 1885, as the practice of philately spread throughout the United States at a time when collecting objects of all kinds flourished. Although collecting art and antiques was an elite activity, collecting stamps was common, accessible, and inexpensive. Government-issued “little colored bits of paper” captured the interest of thousands of people including children, middle-class women, and elite businessmen.<sup>2</sup> Beginning in the 1870s American stamp collecting enthusiasts began to act in public ways typical of the progressive era by incorporating scientific language into their pursuit; organizing formal associations; publishing journals; and developing a relationship with the federal government. Stamp collectors redefined the meanings of federally-issued stamps by not using them for postage and collecting them inside their homes or by selling them on the open market. While the postal service promotes philately today, it was not until the World’s Columbian Exposition in 1892–1893 that the U.S. Post Office Department acknowledged and capitalized on the growing world of philatelists when it issued the first set of American commemorative stamps. Printing limited-issue collectible

stamps generated greater interest in the postal service and for collecting the Department's most popular product.<sup>3</sup>

Nineteenth-century philatelic societies functioned in a world almost completely removed from the producers of American stamps, the U.S. Post Office Department (USPOD), until the World's Columbian Exposition at Chicago in 1892–93. Prior to the 1890s, the USPOD maintained limited contact with stamp collectors. Postmaster General were busy with balancing the duties of the Department with business interests of the press and big business and with morality crusades. Official USPOD records from this time reveal little contact with collectors.<sup>4</sup>

Conversely, philatelic journals did not discuss the USPOD much in their pages. Philatelic societies and journals functioned independently from the federal government. Publishing news releases regarding new issues of stamps was the only role the USPOD played in print until the Columbian Exposition. American stamp collectors were more interested in stamps than the federal agency that produced them.

Retailer John Wanamaker forever changed that relationship during his tenure as postmaster general (1889–1893) by recognizing that collectors were consumers of stamps and that the government should harness their buying power and tap into their well-formed organizations. His administration is remembered mostly for the rural free delivery plan, but Wanamaker also increased the visibility of the USPOD in the philatelic world. Known more as the creator of the modern department store than as a Washington bureaucrat, Wanamaker brought his business acumen and understanding of customer relations to the Department. Additionally, Wanamaker was heavily influenced by the spectacle of the era's great world fairs, making it possible for him to see great potential in promoting the USPOD through a carefully designed exhibit at the Columbian Exposition.<sup>5</sup>

From the early planning stages of the world's fair, Wanamaker envisioned heightening the postal service's visibility by staging an exhibit and issuing the first series of commemorative American stamps. Immediately after securing funding from Congress, the USPOD contacted philatelists who soon heard from renowned dealer C.H. Mekeel that the USPOD would exhibit a complete set of U.S. stamps with the help of the American Philatelic Association (APA). However, the government's display highlighted more than stamps by exhibiting the USPOD's contributions in transportation and communication.<sup>6</sup> The exhibit promoted good will with its patrons—the American people—and emphasized that the department existed for public service. Constantly seeking to balance its

budget, the department looked to the public for continued financial support and the longevity of its agency.

Soon after the announcement of the exposition, the USPOD sought assistance from philatelists to create an exhibit of American and international stamps. Interestingly in 1891, the APA created a committee to develop its own exhibit at the world's fair. Unable to obtain space in a private building, committee members contacted the Third Assistant Postmaster General, A. D. Hazen, asking for help. Hazen obliged their request and offered gallery space in the government building overlooking the USPOD exhibit. Hazen envisioned that collectors from across the country would contribute stamps through the management of the APA. Capitalizing on its national network of state philatelic societies, the APA asked for stamp and monetary donations “to make this exhibit as complete as possible.” Encouraging wide participation among its members, the APA emphasized the great “impetus this exhibition will give stamp collecting!”<sup>7</sup>

Identifying themselves as stamp experts and enthusiasts, philatelists reflected many of the main devices of the progressive spirit sweeping across America. Though not seeking to solve social ills, these middle-class and elite collectors brought respectability to their leisure activity by mimicking new professional organizations. They accomplished this through constructing the study of stamps as a scientific pursuit, establishing their own professional associations, and publishing journals.

In the late nineteenth century many Americans searched for order when government and big business expanded, and national institutions consumed local organizations. Robert Wiebe's influential work, *The Search for Order*, details the breakdown of local autonomy in small “island communities” beginning in the 1870s as hierarchical needs of industrial life took hold in the United States. With the increased presence of money, workers of all classes produced less inside their homes and began to rely more on stores for consumer goods from necessities to fine goods. Doctors, lawyers, social workers, economists, and psychologists became professional experts who informed the expanding government and the public how to solve social problems in an increasingly urban and industrial America. Professionalization emphasized scientific methods for fixing problems, and those professionals formed associations in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.<sup>8</sup>

Philatelists also participated in a professionalization process that began by promoting scientific aspects of their hobby. In a popular 1886 book, *The Study of Philately*, Arthur Palethorpe proclaimed that “philately now ranks as a science” as he attempted to distinguish the practice

as something different from a mere childhood folly. The *American Journal of Philately* resumed publication in 1888 and its editors wrote about how their readers enjoyed debating “in the field of our sciences,” while the subtitle of the *Northwestern Philatelist* noted it was “a monthly magazine devoted to the sciences of philately.” Other publications reinforced a connection with a scientific method by writing articles about how to properly classify a stamp collection.<sup>9</sup> This science-laden language offered philatelists an opportunity to become experts in the small bits of paper they collected, traded, or bought.

Stamp collectors organized societies to promote philately as a respectable activity. Following the British lead, the American Philatelic Association (APA) formed in 1886 to promote stamp collecting in the United States. The founders encouraged local groups to form wherever “six philatelists can be brought together.” As a national society, the APA connected smaller groups meeting across the country in the pursuit of philatelic knowledge.<sup>10</sup>

Stamp collecting societies were early examples of American middle-class and elite hobby clubs. Many individuals collected various objects inside their homes, but others wanted to connect with like-minded collectors and founded clubs in the late nineteenth century. For instance, the Grolier Club, formed in 1884 in New York City, comprised wealthy male book collectors who also dabbled in poster collecting. Coin collectors started the American Numismatic Association in 1891 and the Collectors Club promoted philately among the elite and middle class beginning in 1896. Many others collected without clubs at this time such as women and children who collected trade cards in scrapbooks kept inside the home, as Ellen Gruber Garvey demonstrates.<sup>11</sup>

Those interested in stamp collecting who did not want to join a club could connect to the emerging philatelic community by participating in the flourishing print culture that emerged in the late nineteenth century. The first serial, *Stamp Collector's Record*, was issued in Albany, New York, by S. A. Taylor in December 1864, and the numbers grew exponentially from there so that between 1864 and 1906 over 900 stamp papers were published in the United States alone. Even though many journals were short-lived, they demonstrate that stamp collecting indeed was a national pastime.<sup>12</sup>

So prolific were philatelic publications that by 1892 they became the subject of separate articles in the *Pennsylvania Philatelist*. Harry Franklin Kantner declared that the “philatelic writer” was “one of the most potent factors in the Philatelic field” fighting for the progression of the hobby. The following year Kantner noted his excitement

when reading his first small stamp journal but regretted that there were too many publications available and that “the ‘stamp fever’ became the ‘publishing fever’.” His article actively discouraged “all ambitious young men” from starting new papers.<sup>13</sup>

While philatelic associations openly encouraged all to collect stamps, Kantner’s comments suggest that lines were beginning to be drawn within the philatelic community. Applying a hierarchical framework to stamp papers and journalists is reminiscent of the post-Civil War tendency to distinguish between high and lowbrow activities. Quite aware of philatelists’ place within the greater context of American culture, Kantner commented that it was “not only a progressive age in general affairs but also in philatelic matters.”<sup>14</sup>

Federal promotion of stamp collecting at the Chicago world’s fair thrilled this growing philatelic community because they believed the fair brought recognition for their pursuit and their associations. Furthermore, philately extended beyond stamp and postal exhibits to the physical presence of stamp collectors who gathered in Chicago for their convention. Just as the American Historical Association held their annual meeting in Chicago, so did the American Philatelic Association. In anticipation of their meeting, the editor of *American Philatelist* grew excited because “the eyes of the entire civilized world” “turned towards Chicago” for the Exposition where their associates met.<sup>15</sup> Believing in the power of this mass cultural gathering, private collectors and the federal government together promoted philately in very public ways for the first time.

To further this relationship, Postmaster General Wanamaker proposed designing and issuing special stamps to appeal to collectors in and outside of the U.S. Wanamaker recognized the stamp collecting “mania” and wanted the USPOD to capitalize on philatelists’ desire to acquire new stamps and perhaps attract new collectors amazed by a beautifully-designed set of sixteen stamps depicting the story of Columbus and his journey. Estimating that millions of collectors, from the “school boy and girl to the monarch and the millionaire,” kept stamps in collections “never (to) be drawn upon to pay postage,” Wanamaker saw great potential for profit. The Columbians’ limited issue, combined with a larger size and beautiful design, would attract international dealers and collectors (Figure 1). He also envisioned these stamps stimulating correspondence, private and commercial, because affixing a Columbian stamp brought more attention to what was inside that piece of mail. Not just for collecting, Columbians held value and represented pre-paid postage but did not replace the contemporary issue of stamps from that



FIGURE 1. Landing of Columbus, 2-cent, 1892–1893, Courtesy Smithsonian National Postal Museum. (TMS Object No. 1980.2493.1609).

year. “Though not designed primarily for that object,” the profit-making potential of these commemoratives was “of highest importance to the public service,” Wanamaker emphasized. He estimated that these stamps would bring in revenues to the federal government of 2.5 million dollars.<sup>16</sup>

Releasing the Columbians turned a spotlight towards collectors in the popular press. Writing one month after their issue, the *New York Times* featured an article on philately claiming that the new stamps gave “extra temporary impetus to the regular trade in stamps which has grown to proportions entirely amazing to persons not informed of its extent and diffusion.” This journalist also recognized the profit-making potential of the Columbians that proved “a lucky speculation on the part of the Government.” They brought “clean profit,” because the stamps would “be locked up in albums and never put upon letters for the Government to carry.” E.S. Martin wrote in his *Harper’s Weekly* column how the success of the Columbian stamps “called attention to the very lively status of the stamp-collecting mania.” So lively, that he noticed the presence of stamps in many homes was as prevalent as soap.<sup>17</sup>

Despite such praises, some criticism surrounded the release of the Columbians. Senator Edwin Oliver Wolcott (R-CO), for example, called for a joint congressional resolution to discontinue the Columbian stamps, exclaiming that he did not want a “cruel and unusual stamp” unloaded on collectors. Wolcott criticized fellow Republican Wanamaker for acting in a mercantilistic manner by profiting from philatelists.<sup>18</sup> Correct about Wanamaker’s

retailing instinct, Wolcott’s assumptions were slightly flawed because Wanamaker would not profit personally—only the government reaped those monetary benefits. If fiscally successful, the USPOD would require less in appropriations from Congress.

In response to these criticisms, Wanamaker shot back a letter defending his actions. Asserting his domain over postage regulations, he found the special stamps in line with other financial investments contributed by the federal government for mounting the Columbian Exposition. This included “the issue of five million silver souvenir coins,” the Treasury Department’s production of a collectible related to the fair. He emphasized the Post Office’s ability to educate “the people with the story of Columbus.” Wanamaker recognized that through stamps, the USPOD “more than any other branch of the Government, comes into familiar contact with all of the people.” Citing the popularity of the stamps, Wanamaker referred to a prominent officer in the American Philatelic Society who commended the issuing of the stamp. Moreover, he received letters from private citizens “warmly approving the new stamps.” The Senate was unsuccessful in removing the commemoratives from circulation.

Wanamaker’s successor, Wilson S. Bissel however, found that the previous administration optimistically predicted stamp sales. According to Bissel, the rate of purchase for the commemoratives fell by mid-1893, and he renegotiated the original order for three billion Columbian stamps down to two because he felt the collectors’ purchasing power was not as great as Wanamaker predicted.<sup>19</sup> Prior to his departure, Wanamaker defended himself and the Department, referencing a public-private relationship between the Post Office and the American people that justified the grand issuing of the Columbians.

After the public success of the USPOD’s first commemoratives, the government continued to experiment with special-issue stamps celebrating other occasions. World’s fairs and historic anniversaries appeared on these stamps, such as the Trans-Mississippi and International Exposition (1898), Pan-American Exposition (1901), and the anniversaries of the Louisiana Purchase Exposition (1904) and of Jamestown Exposition (1907). After projected revenues from the Columbians fell short of Wanamaker’s 2.5 million dollar estimate, postal officials commissioned more conservative numbers of commemoratives and shortened the period of availability from a year to a few months. Though not attracting nearly as much publicity, these stamps were successful and collected.<sup>20</sup>

Some philatelists felt uncomfortable with the new role the government played in the stamp market. Outrage and



protest came from the editors of the *American Journal of Philately (AJP)* in 1898, who tried stopping the issue of the Trans-Mississippi Exposition commemorative stamp and encouraged other collectors to join them in a letter-writing campaign complaining to the USPOD. Proclaiming that the Columbians “should not be considered a precedent for future issues,” the editors lamented that philatelists would endure “a sad blow to (their) hobby if the government of the United States should lend itself to so reprehensible a scheme.” Even “The Busy World” columnist at *Harper’s Weekly* agreed with the *AJP* but saw the USPOD’s role as “going outside its legitimate business in advertising even an enterprise of national moment.” In contrast, the *Virginian Philatelist* endorsed the new stamp and revealed that they received only one negative response from a collector. The editor knew that despite the protest of others, “the stamps will be issued nevertheless.”<sup>21</sup> Philatelists experienced some growing pains as the USPOD—which prior to Chicago played a minimal role in stamp collecting—now actively influenced the stamp market by issuing special commemorative stamps.

Into the twentieth century, stamp collecting grew in popularity, as did support from the USPOD. The postal service officially supported collecting when it created the United States Philatelic Agency in 1921 to serve American and international collectors exclusively. Currently, the U.S. Postal Service takes an active role in encouraging philately and works to accommodate philatelists even as stamp collecting is on the wane.

The Columbian Exposition forever linked the postal service with stamp collectors after years of traveling on separate paths. The USPOD recognized the public presence of philatelists and spoke to them through promoting philately and issuing a decorative series of commemorative stamps. Philatelists participated in the world’s fair and perpetuated a dialog that they had begun decades earlier through buying, trading, and collecting stamps. Because philatelists professionalized by forming associations and publishing journals, Postmaster General Wanamaker recognized their presence and understood that the government needed those private organizations to promote good will and help to maintain the fiscal health of the US Post Office Department.

## NOTES

1. Mary L. B. Branch, “The Little Stamp Collector,” *St. Nicholas; an Illustrated Magazine for Young Folks* (August 1885): 12. This poem was reprinted in *The Washington Post*, November 11, 1888, 10.

2. “Postage Stamp Collectors: Enthusiasts Who Spend Much Money and Time on Their Hobby,” *New York Times*, September 7, 1890: 17. While evidence suggests that nineteenth-century Americans collected many things, little secondary research tells us those stories. To read more about the history of American collecting see: Douglas and Elizabeth Rigby, *Lock, Stock, and Barrel: The Story of Collecting* (Philadelphia: Lippencott, 1949). Thomas J. Schlereth, ed., *Material Culture Studies in America* (Nashville, TN: American Association for State and Local History, 1982). Roy Rosenzweig and Warren Leon, ed., *History Museums in the United States: A Critical Assessment* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989). Werner Muensterberger, *Collecting: An Unruly Passion: Psychological Perspectives* (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 1994). Russell W. Belk, *Collecting in a Consumer Society, Collecting Cultures Series* (London; New York: Routledge, 1995). Susan M Pearce, *On Collecting: An Investigation into Collecting in the European Tradition* (London: Routledge, 1995). Leah Dilworth, ed., *Acts of Possession: Collecting in America* (New Brunswick, N. J.: Rutgers University Press, 2003).

3. Scholarship on stamp collecting is thin, despite its popularity as a hobby in the United States and internationally. Stamp collecting falls between institutional histories of the postal service and material culture studies. A few historians, such as Wayne Fuller and Richard John, recognize the prominent role played by the American postal system in nineteenth-century public policy and communications. Unfortunately, they neglect the explosion of stamp collecting that occurred after the first federally-issued U. S. stamp appeared in 1847. For sources on stamp collecting see: Mauritz Hallgren, *All About Stamps: Their History and the Art of Collecting Them* (New York and London: Alfred A. Knopf, 1940). Rigby, *Lock, Stock, and Barrel: The Story of Collecting*. John Bryant, “Stamp and Coin Collecting,” in *Handbook of American Popular Culture*, Vol. 3, ed. M. Thomas Inge (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1981); Kenneth Ames and K. Martinez, ed., *Material Culture of Gender/Gender of Material Culture* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1992). Steven M. Gelber, “Free Market Metaphor: The Historical Dynamics of Stamp Collecting,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 34, no. 4 (October 1992). Neil Harris, “American Poster Collecting: A Fitful History,” *American Art* 12, no. 1 (Spring 1998). Steven M. Gelber, *Hobbies: Leisure and the Culture of Work in America* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999).

4. Overall, the USPOD records are very spotty in the late nineteenth century. Archivists from the National Archives told me that federal records often are missing significant amounts of paperwork because there were no requirements to keep files indefinitely. Historians at the U.S. Postal Service concur that few stamp-related records exist from that era. Often records were legally destroyed.

5. Robert Stockwell Hatcher, “United States Postal Notes,” *American Philatelist*, Vol. 6, no. 11 (November 10, 1892): 185. John Wanamaker began and operated one of the first department stores in the US, Wanamaker’s in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He forever transformed the retail business and was referred to as

the “greatest merchant in America.” As postmaster general he spearheaded postal reform, such as the RFD experiment, which some progressive reformers supported because of its capacity to unify the nation. William Leach argues that Wanamaker’s goal was to increase the public’s access to goods, subsidized by the government. Since he was a department store merchant, he favored other large-scale retailers, like Sears, Roebuck, and Company’s mail order business. See: William Leach, *Land of Desire: Merchants, Power, and the Rise of a New American Culture* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1993), 32–35, 182–184. For Wanamaker’s fascination with world fairs, see: Herbert Adams Gibbons, *John Wanamaker* (Port Washington, N.Y.: Kennikat Press, 1971), 153–180.

6. Mekeel was interviewed in “Postage-Stamp Collectors,” *New York Times* September 7, 1890, 17. The government’s exhibit included stamped paper, models of postal coaches and mail equipment, photographs, maps, and examples from the Dead Letter Office. USPOD also operated a working post office where Columbians could be purchased at the Fair. United States Post Office Department, *Annual Report of the Postmaster-General of the United States for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 1892* (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1892): 74. Congress appropriated \$40,000 for the postal station and an additional \$23,000 for transporting the mail to and from the fairgrounds over the course of the Exposition.

7. American Philatelic Association, *Catalogue of the American Philatelic Association’s Loan Exhibit of Postage Stamps to the United States Post Office Department at the World’s Columbian Exposition Chicago, 1893*: 3. Albert R. Rogers, “American Philatelic Association’s Exhibit of Postage Stamps at the World’s Columbian Exposition, Chicago, 1893,” *American Philatelist*, Vol. 7, no. 3 (March 10, 1893): 33–35. Memo, “Inventory of Articles turned over to Mr. Tyler,” Albert H. Hall, “Letter to Hon. Wilson S. Bissell,” in RG 28, *Records of the Post Office Department, Office of the Third Assistant Postmaster General (Stamps and Stamped Envelopes) Correspondence, 1847–1907* (Washington, D. C.: March 2, 1894). There is a slight disconnect between Mekeel’s and the APA’s version of who asked whom to participate in the exhibition. I represented both here, but tend to believe APA’s version since it was their committee. Mekeel may have been discussing what he heard through his network, because APA hadn’t formed a committee to deal with the exhibition in 1890.

8. For background information on the post-Civil War and progressive eras see: Robert H. Wiebe, *The Search for Order, 1877–1920*, 1st ed. (New York: Hill and Wang, 1967). Steven J. Diner, *A Very Different Age: Americans of the Progressive Era*, 1st ed. (New York: Hill and Wang, 1998), William Leach, *Land of Desire: Merchants, Power, and the Rise of a New American Culture* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1993), Alan Trachtenberg and Eric Foner, *The Incorporation of America : Culture and Society in the Gilded Age* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1982). Arthur Stanley Link and Richard L. McCormick, *Progressivism* (Arlington Heights, Ill.: Harlan Davidson Inc., 1983).

9. Arthur J. Palethorpe, *The Study of Philately* (Bury S. Edmund’s, England: Nunn, Christie & Co., 1886): 6. *American Journal of Philately*, Second Series, Vol. 1, (1888), opening page. *The Northwestern Philatelist: A Monthly Magazine Devoted to the Science of Philately* (Elk Point, South Dakota: J.C. Richard, R.J. Ellis, 1899–1900). American Philatelic Association, *Catalogue of the American Philatelic Association’s Loan Exhibit of Postage Stamps to the United States Post Office Department at the World’s Columbian Exposition Chicago, 1893* (Birmingham, CT: D.H. Bacon and Company, 1893), 10; James Rees, “Clerk in the Philadelphia Post Office,” *Foot-prints of a Letter-Carrier*, (Philadelphia, 1866).

10. Hallgren, *All About Stamps*, 185–186. The first permanent organization in the world was the London Philatelic Group in 1869, now known as the Royal Philatelic Society. Letter from Theo. F. Cuno, S. B. Bradt, W. G. Whilden, Jr. to The Philatelists of the United States, June 25, 1886 published in *Official Circular Number 1*, American Philatelic Association, (November 1886): opening page.

11. Neil Harris, “American Poster Collecting,” 13–15. Ellen Gruber Garvey, “Dreaming in Commerce: Advertising Trade Card Scrapbooks,” in *Acts of Possession: Collecting in America*, ed., Leah Dilworth (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2003), 66–85.

12. Edward Denny Bacon, *Catalogue of the Crawford Library of Philatelic Literature at the British Library*, Rev. ed. (Fishkill, N. Y.: Printer’s Stone in association with the British Library, 1991). For example of such journals see: *Evergreen State Philatelist* (Hartland, Wash.: R. W. French, 1894–1900), *California Philatelist* (San Francisco, Ca.: E. F. Gambbs, 1883–1899), *Southern Philatelist* (Charleston, S. C.: Southern Stamp and Publishing, 1889–1896), *Virginia Philatelist* (Richmond, Va.: Virginia Philatelic Publishing, 1897–1905), *Ohio Philatelist* (Westerville, Ohio: H. W. Keller, 1888–1889), *St. Louis Philatelist* (St. Louis, Mo.: E. F. Gambbs, 1876–1882), *Michigan Philatelist* (Detroit: Union Stamp Company, 1877–1879), *Pennsylvania Philatelist*, (Reading, Pa.: C. W. Kissinger, 1891–1898), *Eastern Philatelist* (Fitchburg, Mass.: Eastern Philatelic Publishing, 1887–1899), *Western Philatelist: A Monthly Journal for Stamp Collectors* (Chicago: Western Philatelic Publishing Company, 1887–1888) *Lone Star State Philatelist* (Abilene, Tex.: Bradley, 1894–1899). *American Journal of Philately*, Second Series (New York: Scott and Company, 1888–1906), *Mekeel’s Weekly Stamp News* (Portland, Maine: Severn-Wylie-Jewett Co, 1891–1996). Mekeel’s is still an active publication, but with a different publisher.

13. Harry Franklin Kantner, “The Philatelic Writer,” *The Pennsylvania Philatelist*, Vol. 2, no.1 (June 1892): 3. H. Franklin Kantner, “The Philatelic Publisher’s Soliloquy,” *The Pennsylvania Philatelist*, Vol. 2, no. 1 (June 1892): 3. H. Franklin Kantner, “Philatelic Journalism,” *The Pennsylvania Philatelist*, Vol. 3, no. 3 (February 1893): 49–52. His use of “young men” indicates that a majority of the publications were headed by men in the late nineteenth century. Few female writers appeared in the jour-

nals I reviewed, but some like Eva Earl mentioned earlier in the paper encouraged women to collect and participate in philatelic societies.

14. Kantner, "Philatelic Journalism," 52. For a discussion of nineteenth-century cultural hierarchies see: Lawrence W. Levine, *Highbrow/Lowbrow: The Emergence of Cultural Hierarchy in America* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1988).

15. "Postage Stamps at the World's Fair," *American Journal of Philately* Vol. 6, (July 31, 1893): 373–374. "Editorial Comment," *American Philatelist*, Vol. 7, no. 5 (May 10, 1893): 73.

16. United States Post Office Department, *Annual Report for 1892*, 77. A. D. Hazen, Third Assistant Postmaster General under Wanamaker echoed those sentiments, 110–111. Marshall Cushing, *The Story of Our Post Office*, Boston: A. M. Thayer, 1893.

17. "Costly Bits of Paper: Extraordinary Prices Paid for Postage Stamps," *New York Times*, February 5, 1893: 20. E. S. Martin, "This Busy World," *Harper's Weekly* (April 14, 1894): 346.

18. "The New Stamps Ridiculed," *New York Times*, January 22, 1893, 1. Senator Wolcott's interest may have influenced his appointment in the 54th Congress to the Committee on Post Office and Post Roads. In one speech, Wolcott referred to a physician's letter suggesting that any unused stamps might have a second life as "chest protectors" due to their unusually large size. "Good as Chest Protectors," *New York Times*, January 23, 1893, 4. This stamp series featured rectangular and longer stamps than previous issues that mostly featured portraits on nearly-square-shaped stamps. The engravings from which the commemoratives were printed from historical painting depicting scenes of Columbus landing in the "new world," his sailing fleet, Columbus in Europe presenting "natives" to the Spanish, and other scenes relating to his life and conquests.

19. Letter from John Wanamaker to Honorable Philetus Sawyer, (February 13, 1893) "Of Interest to Postmasters in Relation to Columbian Postage Stamps—Answer to the Senate Resolution," reprinted in *American Journal of Philately*, Second Series, Vol. 6 (March 31, 1893): 189–193. United States Post Office Department, *Annual Report of the Postmaster-General of the United States for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 1892*. (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1893), XXX, 473.

20. United States Post Office Department, *Annual Report of the Postmaster-General of the United States for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 1901* (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1901), United States Post Office Department, *Annual Report of the Postmaster-General of the United States for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 1904* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1904), Kenneth A. Wood, *Post Dates: A Chronology of Intriguing Events in the Mails and Philately* (Albany, Or.: Van Dahl Publications, 1985).

21. *American Journal of Philately*, Vol. 9 (January 1898): opening page; and other *AJP* related to the protest included: "Omaha Exposition Stamps—Protest of San Francisco Collectors" (March 1898): 132; "Omaha Stamps at the S. S. S. S." (May 1898): 209; reprinted memo from John A. Merritt, Third

Assistant Postmaster General (September 1898): 374–375. "This Busy World," *Harper's Weekly* (January 22, 1898): 79. *The Virginian Philatelist*, Vol. 1, no. 7 (March 1898): 127.

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