



APS: The First Century

by Robert L.D. Davidson

Foreword

This account of 100 years of the American Philatelic Society was done as a labor of love by your historian. For references I used much material, but largely depended on *The American Philatelist*. The American Philatelic Research Library provided me with a complete run of this official organ, and with many other letters and publications as needed.

I received much assistance. The current executive director as well as his immediate predecessor, the librarian, and members of the secretarial staff all were generous with time and resources. The early chapters are in part lifted from the *AP*, because several members previously have written so well about those early years.

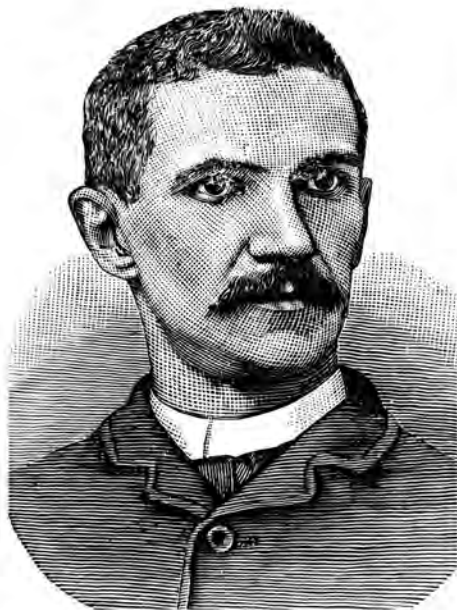
That there are mistakes, I acknowledge now. That there are omissions of events and persons that should not have been overlooked, I am certain. I have tried to include what might be interesting to read, and not a chronology of meetings, with their debates and sometimes explosive exchanges.

I originally had planned to include much more about other aspects of American philately, some history of other societies, details of some of the chapters and units, and perhaps some depth of discussion of great exhibitions and events. But space would not permit and there will be others who will pick up on those topics at some future time.

You have my assurance that, in reading through nearly 100 years of *The American Philatelist*, I have discovered some marvelously interesting articles that budding



THE
PHILATELIST'S
DREAM



S.B. Bradt.

writers today (giving proper credits) might use for ideas and information for articles of interest to contemporary readers. I wonder how many members are aware that some of the most valuable philatelic writing of such authors as Chase, Ashbrook, Perry, and Brookman (to name only a few) first appeared serially in our magazine.

Thanks to many people, who know who they are, for help and encouragement.

Forerunners

A history of the American Philatelic Society comes close to being a history of American philately. Although surely there were other groups, and individuals, who were part of the stamp collecting movement in the United States, the APS emerges in the forefront in nearly every aspect of the hobby.

Philatelists are gregarious as well as acquisitive. Perhaps that is because they are eager to acquire means to purchase, exchange, and grow in knowledge. These objectives can be achieved more easily by joining with other collectors into groups. And join they did.

In a thorough article in *The American Philatelist* of March 1977, Col. James T. DeVoss gave an account of these APS forerunners. We quote in part as follows: [Footnote numbers have been eliminated from the quoted text.]

Although the American Philatelic Association was the first national organization to be formed in the United States, there were many local philatelic groups in existence prior to 1886. The first of these most likely was the New York Philatelic Society, formed on January 19, 1868, and believed likely to have been the first local stamp society formed in the entire western hemi-

sphere. J.W. Scott, a name known to all stamp collectors, was elected first treasurer of this group and was also appointed the editor of the society's official journal, *The American Journal of Philately*. Yet *The American Journal of Philately*, generally recognized as one of the better early stamp publications, was not the first published in the western hemisphere. It was preceded by *The Stamp Collector's Record*, which was edited by S. Allan Taylor, with a first issue bearing a dateline of February 15, 1864, from Montreal, Canada. Taylor moved to Albany, New York, where he published eight issues, with the first one dated December 15, 1864. He subsequently moved to Boston where he published issues nine through 40 of the same journal.

W. Dudley Atlee of Brighton, England, in a letter dated March 12, 1869, addressed to the New York Philatelic Society, suggested the establishment of an "international philatelic society" with three divisions: one in New York City, one in Paris, and the third in London. This letter was read before the members of the New York Philatelic Society at their meeting of April 10, 1869. They rejected the idea of an international philatelic organization, but voted to thank W.D. Atlee for his efforts to establish such a society. They further assured him that should a separate philatelic group be formed in England, some of the New Yorkers undoubtedly would request admission.

Coincidentally, on the very same day that this New York group was meeting, stamp collectors in London were in the process of forming "The Philatelic Society, London." Little did the New York collectors know that such a distinguished organization was being formed, one that eventually would become the oldest philatelic society in the world in continuous existence.

Whereas the Royal Philatelic Society, London, survived, the New York Philatelic Society did not. At a meeting on May 8, 1869, J.W. Scott tendered his resignation as treasurer. The secretary of the society also resigned at the same time. *The American Journal of Philately* continued to be edited by Scott, but as a private endeavor and not as the official journal of the New York Philatelic Society. Little was heard from the New York Philatelic Society after that meeting except for a brief report appearing in the July 20, 1871, issue of *The American Journal of Philately* indicating that an informal meeting of some of the old members of the group was held in the residence of W.R. Pettrigrew of Williamsburgh, New York, for the purpose of reorganizing the old society. Whether they were successful is not known, but no further reference to the New York Philatelic Society appeared in any of the philatelic publications of that period.

The next local stamp organization to appear on the scene was the National Philatelic Society of New York, which was formed on October 17, 1874. R.R. Bogert was its first secretary and treasurer. He later became president of the society and, as we know, is the same individual who became the first vice president of the American Philatelic Association.

This National Philatelic Society of New York voted to become a branch of the American

Philatelic Association on February 10, 1887. Like the New York Philatelic Society, it too vanished from the scene sometime during the 1890s.

Although other local groups may have been formed, the early philatelic publications refer to only a few societies having been in existence before the formation of the American Philatelic Association in 1886. *The Philatelic Monthly*, published in Philadelphia by L.W. Durbin, in its October 1878 issue carried a news article of a meeting of the Wytheville (Virginia) Philatelic Association, which had been organized on July 29, 1878. It seemed appropriate for Durbin to publish this news article, for he had been proposed as an honorary member of the association.

In addition to being the first treasurer of the American Philatelic Association, Durbin, a stamp dealer whose business was located on Fifth and Library Streets in Philadelphia, claims, in an advertisement appearing in *The Collector's Companion*, to have been "the only one in the United States exclusively in the stamp trade." He had organized his stamp business in 1869, at the age of 20. Before his death on August 14, 1887, he had published 16 editions of the *Standard Catalogue of Postage Stamps*. His catalogue was extremely popular, and it was accepted by most collectors and societies as the preferred catalogue. It was customary in those days for the local stamp clubs to designate the catalogue they were going to accept. Comparing the Durbin and Scott catalogues of the period, it is easy to see why the Durbin catalogue was generally the favorite. Durbin was extremely popular with stamp collectors during the 1880s, and he refused to accept the presidency of the American Philatelic Association.

The Springfield (Massachusetts) Philatelic Association, which was formed in 1879 with William C. Stone as its first president, was another early local group to be mentioned in *The Philatelic Monthly*. Stone, a charter member and later president of the American Philatelic Association, had moved to Springfield in



John K. Tiffany.

1873 and was instrumental in forming the Springfield group. He was also editor of *The Philatelic News*, which was published in 1880.

The May 1882 issue of *The Stamp World* referred to an Ohio Philatelic Society which apparently was located in Cincinnati. Clinton Collins, editor of that publication, had refused the presidency of this group.

One local stamp group which originally had been organized in 1882 was the Emporia (Kansas) Philatelic Society. How long it existed is not known, but later reference appears in print indicating that the group reorganized on March 19, 1885.

The Staten Island Philatelic Society was formed on March 19, 1884. Its members were active in the formation of the American Philatelic Association. It became a branch of the APA and remained a branch until 1897, when it dropped its affiliation. The Staten Island Philatelic Society rejoined the American Philatelic Society in February 1972 as Chapter No. 814.

The Chicago Stamp Collectors' Union was formed December 20, 1884. It held its first meeting in Room 23 at 169 Washington Street. J.H. Raymond was elected the first president. At a meeting on Friday, October 8, 1886, the members disbanded the Chicago Stamp Collectors' Union and immediately reformed as the Chicago Philatelic Society. The Chicago members of the American Philatelic Association were the first group to become a branch of the APA, on November 18, 1886. The Chicago branch, known as APA Branch No. 1, remained affiliated with the American Philatelic Society until 1917. In 1936, the Chicago Philatelic Society rejoined the APS as Life Chapter No. 19 and Life Member No. 562. As a life chapter, CPS was reassigned its original Chapter No. 1 designation and its original society membership number, No. 1775.

The next local stamp group to appear on the scene was the Rhode Island Philatelic Society of Providence, which was formed on February 2, 1885. This group continued its affiliation with the American Philatelic Association until 1891. What happened to this group is not known, but it was not among the list of all philatelic societies in the United States which was published in the June 10, 1892, issue of *The American Philatelist*. Likewise, the Rhode Island Philatelic Society was not listed in the pages of *The Blue Book* published in 1893. Whatever its intervening history, it rejoined the American Philatelic Society in June 1954.

The March 1885 issue of *The Empire State Philatelist* carried a news item indicating that the Fitchburg (Massachusetts) Philatelic Society was formed on February 6, 1885. How long this group continued to function is not known, but in Volume 2 of *The American Philatelist*, mention is made that it was reorganized on January 9, 1888.

The Quaker City Philatelic Society of Philadelphia was formed on February 18, 1885. A report of its formation meeting indicates that after a spirited debate it was decided to admit ladies to membership. In the columns of *The Collector's Companion*, issue of March 1886, reference was made to an argument between the Quaker City Philatelic Society and the Chicago Stamp Collectors' Union as to which society

first received public notice in a daily newspaper. The Quaker City group had received a notice in the *Philadelphia Inquirer* of February 19, 1885, the day following its formation. The Chicago collectors won the argument when they were able to prove that the *Chicago News and Times* of December 21, 1884, carried an item about the organization the day following its formation.

Another local organization, the Erie (Pennsylvania) Philatelic and Numismatic Society, was formed on March 11, 1885.

The April-May 1885 issue of *The Empire State Philatelist* mentioned that the Chicago Stamp Collectors' Union had become a chapter of the Northwest Philatelic Society. The editor remarked, "We hope before many years there will be state and national philatelic societies as there are in the Odd Fellows and Masonic associations."

The May 1885 issue of *The Collector's Companion* referred to the Unicorn Philatelic Socie-



R.R. Bogert.

ty of Lancaster, Ohio, but gave no additional information as to when it was formed. The same issue also referred to a Central New Jersey Philatelic Association with its headquarters at Bergen Point.

The July 1885 issue of the same journal carried a news item stating that "another philatelic society has been added to the constantly increasing list, this time it is San Francisco that comes to the front, with the California Philatelic Club."

The next local stamp group to appear on the scene was the Centennial State Philatelic Society of Denver, Colorado, formed on July 23, 1885. The Denver publication, *The Stamp*, in its issue of September 1886, reported "the Centennial State Philatelic Society is no more. Long live the Denver Stamp Collectors' League." Apparently a change of name was voted by the stamp collectors of Denver. It is interesting to note that they tried to solve the question of female membership by admitting all lady stamp collectors as honorary members. The American

Philatelic Association had no such problem, accepting women from the very beginning. Mrs. R.L. Phillips of Poughkeepsie, New York, was a charter member.

The Philatelic Press Association was formed on October 1, 1885. *The Collector's Companion* carried a news story which said, "The Philatelic Press Association has been formed, having for its objective the protection of philatelic publishers and the reform of the numerous evils now existing in the literary part of philately. Its prospects, at present, are very bright."

A rash of local organizations now started to be heard from. The Atlanta Philatelic Society was formed on October 2, 1885, with 21 members present at its first meeting. A news story carried in *The Western Philatelist* indicated that the New Milford (Massachusetts) Philatelic Society was formed on November 17, 1885. The St. Paul (Minnesota) Philatelic Society was formed on November 30, 1885. A subsequent reference to this organization indicated that it was reorganized on April 4, 1891.

The Nashville (Tennessee) Philatelic Society was formed on March 17, 1886, according to an article appearing in an issue of *The Collector's Companion*. The Pomeroy Philatelic Society of Toledo, Ohio, was formed on May 5, 1886. This group was an active branch of the American Philatelic Association and remained in existence for several years.

When the St. Louis Philatelic Society was formed is not known. It was reorganized on July 17, 1886. Its president, John K. Tiffany, became the first president of the American Philatelic Association.

The Lansing (Michigan) Philatelic Society was formed on October 22, 1886, a month after the formation of the first national society in the United States. It was reorganized on January 19, 1888, as the Wolverine Philatelic Society.

Little is known about the early days of the Tucson (Arizona) Philatelic Society, but the Denver publication, *The Stamp*, of November 1886 raised the question as to whether the Tucson group was defunct.

It is clear that philatelists were actively "joining up" before the organization of the American Philatelic Association, the earliest name of the APS. Records and minutes of some of these clubs still exist, the ones from St. Louis being quite complete for a number of years. They are still in the possession of that organization, APS Chapter No. 4.

Stamp collecting in some form began in Europe as early as 1850. It is possible that, in some areas of the United States, collectors shared their interests with others, formally or informally, beginning about the same time. Records, if they ever existed, are not available of these early contacts. But it is clear that, by 1886, American stamp enthusiasts were extremely active. With a comparatively limited number to draw from, the means of exchange and purchase restricted, the journals many but widely diverse in quality and time of publication, a number of prominent business-

NEW YORK, }
CHICAGO, } June 25, 1886.
ATLANTA, }

To the Philatelists of the United States :

The project of establishing a National Philatelic Society has now been the leading subject with philatelists, philatelic societies, and the philatelic press for a sufficient length of time, and has received enough emphatic and hearty indorsement from leading philatelists, to warrant an effort being made at organization. In order to bring about this result without delay, a National Committee, consisting of the persons whose names are affixed to this circular, has been formed, to undertake the first efforts in this direction, and to take the steps necessary for organizing at as early a day as may be expedient.

The objects we are striving for through the medium of a National Society are the promotion and advancement of Stamp Collecting in all its branches; the dissemination of philatelic knowledge; facilitating the exchange of duplicates (through a bureau of exchanges); and obtaining new issues at cost price.

There is no reason why philatelists in this country should not have as successful a society, with a complete international correspondence, as any of those that are now flourishing in other lands; on the contrary, there is every reason to look forward to a grand organization that shall eclipse them all. It is only a question of time and united effort, and if you will seize upon the present favorable opportunity, and work together, this year will yet witness the organization of a society that any philatelist will be proud to be a member of.

We desire the aid of every philatelist in the land, and would strongly urge the formation of local societies in every community where six philatelists can be brought together. Let every society communicate with the member of this committee who is most convenient to it; and let every individual philatelist, who is not connected with any society, do the same. In this way we will soon be able to ascertain how many, and who, are willing to unite with us. And we would, furthermore, urge the desirability of doing this *at once*; it is not a question that requires a great amount of time for consideration, but one that needs your prompt and earnest action.

We trust that the philatelists to whom this appeal is sent will extend us their aid and support by forwarding their names without delay for enrollment on our list of prospective members.

THEO. F. CUNO (N. P. S. of New York),
148 Jefferson Ave., Brooklyn, N. Y.
S. B. BRADT (Chicago S. C. U.),
Grand Crossing, Ill.
W. G. WHILDEN, JR.,
93 Washington St., Atlanta, Ga.



Theo. F. Cuno.



Hiram E. Deats.



W.C. Stone.

men who had been attracted to stamp collecting began to discuss the possibility of forming a national organization of philatelists. These discussions were summarized by **S.B. Bradt** of Grand Crossing, then a Chicago suburb, in an article in the April 1886 issue of the *Philatelic Journal of America*. Bradt wrote in part:

“And why should we not have a national organization, and a grand one too? Is not this country large enough to admit of it? Are there not enough collectors in this country to support such an organization? It would be utter folly, you say, to answer No to either of these questions, but the fact remains that we have no kind of organization at all — hardly any existence as a recognized class, even — and that, too, in spite of the fact that efforts have been made in the past to effect this result.”

In that same month, April 1886, *The American Philatelist*, an independent journal published in Altoona, Pennsylvania, by W.R. Fraser, printed an announcement of the possible formation of a national organization of philatelists.

Several persons have been honored as having originated the concept of a national organization and, indeed, the idea may have arisen simultaneously from a number of sources. Some have given the credit to Bradt; others have named Thomas C. Watkins, editor of the *Empire State Philatelist*.

In any event, a contemporary account tells us that, “Following Bradt’s efforts and those of others, some 400 collectors indicated their interest in the movement to found a national stamp society, and 219 of
The American Philatelist

them sent in their proxies — together with 25 cents for the privilege of voting by proxy.

“An organization committee, composed of Theodore F. Cuno of New York City, George Henderson of Philadelphia, Charles H. Mekeel of St. Louis, W.G. Whilden Jr. of Atlanta, and S.B. Bradt, issued a call for an organization meeting in the Metropolitan Assembly Rooms, 64 East Fourth Street, New York City, on September 13, 1886.”

Founding

The founders of our Society had to be unusual men. Stamp collecting was not common in the United States and, then as now, no one really knew how many collectors there were. Yet they established a new unity among philatelists from throughout the nation, building, however shakily, the foundation of the Society that still flourishes 100 years later.

At the September 13, 1886, meeting in New York, a committee chosen by interested local groups agreed to form a national stamp society, the American Philatelic Association. The efforts of these unusual men had led to this remarkable step forward for philately.

Forty collectors (diminishing in number as the meeting progressed) attended that first session. When one considers the distances involved and the means of transportation available at the time, to have attracted that many participants is no small indication of interest in the formation of a national organization.

The following day, September 14, 1886, the new group adopted a constitution and

bylaws; that date became the official birthday of our Society. Officers elected included, as president, **John K. Tiffany**, a St. Louis lawyer, and, as vice president, **R.R. Bogert** of New York. Other officers and a board of directors were selected, and 157 charter members were enrolled. (See the detailed and thorough article, *Lest We Forget*, by Lois M. Evans in the November 1977 *AP*.)

To be a charter member, one had to pay a fee of twenty-five cents and to use his vote at meetings either directly or by proxy. Dues were set at \$2 a year.

This proxy voting scheme, not unusual in other national organizations of the day, was to cause much grief at subsequent meetings. It may have reduced attendance at some later meetings, and it certainly led to political maneuvering at the annual conventions.

Two problems that plagued the organization in its early days were the selection and support of a journal, and the regular appearance of fraudulent stamps. The former was discussed at the organizational meeting, but no decisions were made. As to the latter, the organization took prompt action. E.A. Holton, a Boston dealer, was elected “counterfeit detector.” His was a heavy burden, yet this forerunner of today’s expertizing agencies served without a fee!

Who were the men who founded our Society?

Tiffany, the St. Louis lawyer, probably was the best known philatelist in the country. Born in Massachusetts to some wealth, he studied as a schoolboy in France, where he started collecting. Later he settled in St. Louis, eventually becoming a well-known



Charles H. Mekeel.



E. Doebelin.



Alvah Davison.

citizen. He had a fine philatelic library and a worldwide collection of stamps that many considered to be the best in existence.

He was a tireless writer of articles, and he authored at least one book on philatelic literature. He wrote in both French and English, and was a philatelic scholar of high order for his or any other day. After his first two-year term as president, he won re-election four more times. Thus, for its first decade, the new society had strong and stable leadership. Tiffany seems to have been even-handed, maintaining control through those early years despite many periods of contention.

Bogert was a New York dealer and collector who collaborated with Tiffany in some of his early writings. He was a loyal member of the Society for many years, as well as a strong leader, although his terms in office were sporadic.

Hiram E. Deats was only twenty-three years old when he became a founding member of the APA. When he died in 1963, he had been a member of the Society for seventy-seven years, and a leading philatelist for that entire time. He was a banker in the county-seat town of Flemington, New Jersey, where, in later years, the famous Lindbergh kidnapping trial was held. Deats was foreman of the grand jury that indicted Bruno Hauptmann for the crime.

Deats had a remarkable collection of United States stamps and an extensive philatelic library. Years later, much of that library would become part of the nucleus of the American Philatelic Research Library. He served the Society as president, as editor of *The American Philatelist*, and as

a remarkably loyal worker for much of his life.

Alvah Davison was a New York publisher of several periodicals and of books related to the textile industry. His family was among the financial elite of the day. He remained an enthusiastic collector throughout his long life.

N.W. Chandler lived in Illinois, across the river from St. Louis. A successful accountant, he managed the financial affairs of the new organization. He was a close friend of two charter members from St. Louis, Tiffany and **Charles H. Mekeel**, a respected stamp dealer.

E. Doebelin, a German immigrant, published a German-language newspaper in Pennsylvania. He was an obvious choice to be international secretary, a post he held in the 1890s.

E.A. Holton, the "counterfeit detector," had served in a Massachusetts division during the Civil War, later becoming a stamp dealer and an authority on counterfeits.

W.H. Bodine also lived in Flemington, New Jersey, and was a great friend of Deats.

J.A. Wainwright, a lawyer from Massachusetts, was a successful "collection attorney," which no doubt explains why he was collection agent for the Society during its early days.

Dr. George Campbell, a physician, later became the literary exchange manager.

J.O. Rice, a Trenton, New Jersey, clothier, was an early writer of philatelic material who later served several terms on the Literary Board.

Harvard graduate **Samuel Leland** was an early member of the Chicago forerunner. As a professor, he added distinction and prestige to the Literary Board.

W.C. Stone of Springfield, Massachusetts, a professional librarian in that city's fine facility, left a mark on the future of postal history by his interest and collecting in that area. He was known all over the world and received such foreign decorations as the Iron Cross of Germany. His service to philately over a long life was very great indeed, and he served in many offices of the Society. He was the first official historian.

S.B. Bradt, the first secretary, was a Chicago collector and writer who, as mentioned above, was perhaps the man whose idea it was to form a national organization. He also served the Society long and productively.

Another German immigrant, **Theo. F. Cuno** of New York, was editor of a German-language newspaper and a well-known labor leader. He was an avid collector and acted as purchasing agent for club members at New York auctions. He was Society member No. 1. He later left the Society, but on his return a decade later, the convention voted to restore his original number.

Lawyers, physicians, college professors, librarians, editors, businessmen, bankers, and labor leaders; blue bloods and immigrants; Easterners and Midwesterners — a cross-section of Americans launched the American Philatelic Association.

It might be claimed, as Herman Herst Jr. does, that the brief organizational meeting of September 13, 1886, in New

York City was not the real beginning of the APA, but that the convention called for August 1887 in Chicago actually marked the Society's founding. In the June 1983 *AP*, Herst wrote as follows:

The first official convention of the Society (regarded today as the second) opened in Chicago on August 8, 1887 — and opened with great enthusiasm. There were dozens and dozens of stamp magazines in the United States at that time. Printing and postage were cheap, and hopeful publishers were putting out weeklies and monthlies with a subscription price of as little as ten cents per year.

All the magazines had carried the news of the founding of the American Philatelic Association. (That name of the group was kept until early in this century, when anti-Catholicism in the United States rendered the initials "APA" offensive to many people, standing as they did also for the "Anti-Papacy Association.") In 1897, for only a few months, the group became the APS, but reverted to APA. The initials and the name were changed to their present form in September 1908, and have remained unchanged since).

Beginning in January 1887 a publication called *The American Philatelist* served as the official organ of the APA. Unlike today's publication, that *AP* magazine was a privately published one, and although carrying the Association's news, it had no connection with the group. Since one of the first orders of business would be the selection of a magazine to be the group's official publication, however, every magazine seeking the plum sought to do as much as it could for the organization.

The publicity resulted in a discouraging attendance of only twenty-seven collectors at the Chicago convention. However, a system of proxy representation had been allowed. This system was to wreck the Society in subsequent conventions, when delegates came with dozens of proxy votes, completely thwarting the democratic efforts of those who actually attended. Within five years, the number of proxies allowed to a single member was limited to fifty.

Added to the twenty-seven votes of those in attendance in August 1887 were the proxies of 192 members, for a total of 219 — a fairly respectable evidence of interest, as the Association had but 276 members at the time. A report showed that of 260 collectors who had indicated a desire to join, only 119 had actually done so. Perhaps it was the dues: They were one dollar per year. At a time when a working man earned five dollars a week, this dues figure undoubtedly was a consideration to some.

The most exciting item on the agenda was the selection of an official publication. Those attending spent much of their time buttonholing other members, urging support for one magazine or another. There was substantial agreement on one thing: the choice would not be *The American Philatelist*. Members eventually voted for the *Philatelic Journal of America*, but in an undemocratic slap at the choice, the Official Board disregarded the vote and chose the *Western Philatelist*.

THE AMERICAN PHILATELIST.

Issued by The American Philatelic Association.

VOL. I.

ALTOONA, PA., JAN. 10, 1887.

No. 1.

Report December, 1886.

SECRETARY'S OFFICE,
S. B. BRADT, Sec., }
GRAND CROSSING, ILL., }

Some words of apology are due for the typographical errors that disfigured CIRCULAR No. 2, but having been obliged to issue the circular at a time when the proper amount of attention could not be given it, owing to the extreme pressure of business last month, the burden of proof reading was left entirely to the printers.

The Association begins the new year with a membership, in good standing, of 143—a gain of 27 since the last report. Of these twenty-seven, nineteen are from the list of newly elected members announced last month, the other eight being charter members who have settled their accounts with the Association. Five of the twenty-four new members have not yet paid their dues. These have been notified several times, and requested to remit or notify the Secretary that they did not wish to make good their applications. Several of the delinquent charter members have agreed to remit their dues in a short time; three, F. D. Reamer, C. D. Smith and B. Maier have resigned. Again it is necessary to record the loss, by death, of one of our members, Walter B. Platt, of Grand Island, Nebraska. Mr. Platt was a young but promising devotee of philately and his loss is deeply regretted by all who knew him. One more branch society has been formed (the Pomeroy Philatelic Society). Why the existing societies are so loth to become branches is a question I am unable to answer.

Late in the month the appointment of Counterfeit Detector was made. The Board of Officers

were unanimous in the selection of Mr. E. A. Holten, (8 Summer St., Boston, Mass.) for this important position. The only other official act of the Board of Officers was the forwarding of a letter to the Dresden Society in reply to the letter from them published last month. It was as follows:

THE AMERICAN PHILATELIC Ass'n., }
ST. LOUIS, U. S. A., Nov. 15, 1886. }

MR. F. A. B. BLEMBEL, President of International Philatelisten-Verein, Dresden:

DEAR SIR:

It is with great pleasure that the undersigned president and officers of the American Philatelic Association have received your communication tendering us your good wishes in behalf of our enterprise.

The good example shown us by the "Internationaler Philatelisten-Verein of Dresden"—an Association reaching now nearly one thousand members, stimulated the desire to create a similar organization on this continent, and through the good services of several ardent and energetic philatelists, we have succeeded in a comparatively short time to bring this Association into existence.

Much as we are aware of the difficulties in keeping a large number of philatelists together where jealousies and prejudices will always make themselves heard, yet our good intentions will not fail to overcome such obstacles, and we feel confident of our success. It is also our desire that in due course of time correspondence between our associations may become regular, which cannot fail to be mutually advantageous.

J. K. TIFFANY, R. R. BOGERT,
President. Vice President.
S. B. BRADT, L. W. DURBIN,
Secretary. Treasurer.

JOSEPH RECHERT, International Secretary.

Members are aware by this time of the fact that the Exchange Department is in running order and ready to perform its very important part in our organization. It is to be hoped that all will promptly take hold and make this feature the success that was promised; which promise

The Treasurer reported a balance of \$88, to which was to be added \$15 the Secretary had not yet turned over to him. Then came a vote on the most important question on the agenda: Who had invented the postage stamp? At that time this issue was being argued on a worldwide basis in stamp clubs and on stamp magazine pages. The APA thought it would settle it once and for all. It was decided that James

Chalmers had invented the postage stamp.

It is interesting to note that twenty-five years later, some of those who attended the August 1887 meeting again were present in Chicago to celebrate the Society's twenty-fifth birthday!

Next Month: The Official Publication, and Other Growing Pains.