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THE AMERICAN

PHILATELIC ASSOCIATION



WHAT IT AIMS TO DO; WHAT IT ACCOM-
PLISHES; AND WHY ALL PHILAT-
ELISTS SHOULD BE NUM-
BERED AMONG ITS
MEMBERS

GRAND CROSSING, ILL
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1888



Tiffany

DEAR SIR:

Having heard of the American Philatelic Association you are perhaps desirous to know what are its objects and what is its method of accomplishing them, and you are perhaps considering whether it is worth your while to apply for membership.

It may be unnecessary at this day to call your attention to those general advantages that individuals interested in any object or pursuit find in associating themselves together. It is to the advantage of every stamp collector that his pursuit should be recognized as a worthy and rational one, and that it should be regarded with the same consideration as those other branches of collecting, which were formerly considered as mere hobbies or individual whims, but have now become recognized as worthy the attention of sober men. To obtain this result for any object no better means has ever been devised than that of association. The mere fact that men in numbers are willing to give their means and time to the furtherance of an object proves to others that the object is worth attaining. The larger the number known to be so interested, the greater the proof of its worth, the smaller the tax on each individual member. But this is not the only way in which association compels respect. Indi-

vidual effort is apt to be misdirected and misinterpreted. The more energetic the individual, unrecognized as one of a body working for a common object, the more apt is he to be considered an enthusiast with a mild mania, or, as it is popularly phrased, *a crank*, alone against the world. Have you never experienced this? Have you never felt that many people, even some of your best friends, regarded your interest in stamp collecting with an amused smile, as an indication that you were, as commonly expressed, "a little off?" Would it not be a little more comfortable for you if this could be changed? Would it not be worth a little expenditure both of time and money to you personally to be regarded as are your friends whose cabinets and collections of coins or minerals, or paper money, of bric-a-brac or engravings or antique books are admired by all? Let it once be known that you are not alone, but with thousands of others interested in the same way, are associated together and organized in the same pursuit. Show them the publications on the subject, the number and standing of the members of the Association, the character of its official journal, and note the result. You will find it alone worth more to you than your dues in the Association if you are a member. You will find it rather embarrassing to confess that you are not a member. After a few such experiences you will wish to become one. If you wish to see what effect on public opinion our organization has had, compare the tone of the articles in the Chicago

daily papers before our convention with what they said when their reporters were sitting among us and saw what we were doing, or with what they said after we were gone and the excitement of the moment had passed. Can you, as a lover of our pursuit, afford to hold aloof from us? Will you be so ungenerous as not to aid in furthering our object? Are you willing to let us do the work without the assistance you can give us? Surely not.

But association not only corrects the evils of individual effort and gives direction to each in his pursuit, but it gives strength also for defense—not merely defense against those who misunderstand and slightly regard the pursuit, but strength against those more active pests known as manufacturers and dealers in wares intended to mislead the collector; or those others who strive to obtain his duplicates or money without making due return. This, too, is worth some expenditure of time and money to every collector. Even if you have no occasion to ask the aid of the officers whose duty it is to give such information to members, if you do not care to obtain the knowledge on this subject that is at hand, it is worth more to you than your annual dues as a member to have some one doing such work, for collectors to know that at least with the members of the Association you may deal with safety. And in this you can help us more than you may think and be helped yourself more than you may imagine. Some parties have thought that we have not done all we professed in this direction.

From the necessity of the case this sort of work must be done quietly, with no show or noisy parade about it. It is not our intention to put up signboards at every cross road, emblazoned with the names of those who are untrustworthy, or to fill the columns of the philatelic press with accounts of their shortcomings. Such a course would be most inexpedient. It is easy to change both name and domicile. But have you not often had the desire, when tempted to have dealings with parties you have not known, to make some little inquiry about them, and known of no one to whom to apply? If you are a member of our Association, in all probability either the proper officers can give you the information, or some member of the Association will be near the locality, to whom, as a fellow member, you can apply. In this you can aid us by being a member to whom we may apply. The mere fact that our membership is so widely scattered and liable to compare notes at any moment is in itself a wholesome restraint upon would-be evildoers.

All these irregularities are also contrary to the law of the land. As yet we have not felt ourselves strong enough to undertake active measures in this direction. Every name added to our list of members hastens the time when we can go to the proper authorities and say: "Here is an association organized, as you see from our Constitution and By-Laws, for the purpose, among other things, of protecting ourselves against law breakers. Here is our membership. You can see how large and how

respectable a body we are. We have our machinery for ascertaining these things, and the law has been violated here; here is the evidence and we want the authorities to do their duty. We want the authorities to understand that we want to work with them and not against them." We must first be of sufficient numbers and character ourselves before we can expect to be listened to with respect. Come and join us and help to give us that number and standing.

We have already alluded to the advantage of having the privilege of addressing members elsewhere; you will more frequently want to apply to some of them for information upon some particular topic that you suppose them particularly posted about. Do you not think that the answer will come more cheerfully if you too are a member? You may be a traveler, and if you are will it not be pleasant, and profitable likewise, to be welcomed here and there by your fellow members? You may never or seldom leave your home; will it not be pleasant and profitable to be visited now and then by members who do travel? In other words, is the friendly feeling which it is one of the objects of the Association to cultivate, with its natural results, not worth something to you? Do these meetings or communications often take place without adding something to your store of knowledge or to the specimens in your collection? Are you willing to be either a stamp hermit, living apart from other collectors, or a stamp miser, gloating over your treas-

ures alone, and tortured with jealousy if you happen to see those of others?

But if you do not care for any of these things which the Association, in its wider and higher field, aims to acquire for you and all stamp collectors, even those who will not help to get them, and which it aims to obtain at the smallest expenditure of time and money possible, let us call your attention to the more personal and direct advantages the Association offers you. An essay lately published in the *American Philatelist*, published by the Association, so clearly sets forth these advantages that we reprint a portion of it here:

"It is a society of nearly four hundred active collectors, most of whom are in constant communication with one another, either directly or indirectly, and who are determined to do all they can for their mutual benefit.

"The one thing that all collectors wish is to dispose of their duplicates in such a way as to benefit their collection as much as possible. The American Philatelic Association, knowing this, at once established an Exchange Department to accommodate its members. And how does this work?

"One writes that some months ago he bought a collection, and after taking from it for his own collection much more than the value of the actual cash cost, he procured Exchange Sheets from the superintendent of the Exchange Department for some five hundred of the best duplicates, which were then sent to the Exchange Department, and passed through the hands of a number of collectors (all personally unknown to the owner of the stamps) who took from the sheets stamps to about twice the amount paid for the collection.

Though this is perhaps an exceptional case, it certainly shows conclusively that at least one member profited. But did not the buyers of these stamps profit? Surely they must have, for would they have taken them unless they had been priced sufficiently low to satisfy them that each was well worth its cost to them. The great number of sheets, however, which have passed through the Superintendent's hands, according to his last report, is the most convincing proof that members of the Association find this department a success—which it can be only by being profitable to members.

"After the disposition of one's duplicates, the most important object to be sought is the procuring of all new issues as quickly and cheaply as possible.

"Can one who belongs to no society procure them until long after the time of issue, except through a dealer, who must make a large profit in order to carry on his business?

"Again the American Philatelic Association is called upon. The Purchasing Agent, to whom most members have sent a deposit of from \$1 to \$25, is enabled to procure the new stamps at cost, from the country issuing them, as soon as it is known that a change is made, and as soon as they are received by him they are sent to such members as have given him a deposit in advance, and who are charged just enough over the face value to pay the expenses of operating the Purchasing Department.

"As for stamps now in use, and not strictly speaking *new issues*, the First Assistant Purchasing Agent will procure them for members under the same conditions required by the Purchasing Agent.

"A great many collectors find that there are certain stamps which cannot be bought from any dealer, on account of their scarcity. What are they to do but wait until they happen to see one which is for sale? A member of the

American Philatelic Association simply sends a list of such rarities as he wants to the Second Assistant Purchasing Agent, who publishes the list in the official journal of the Association, so that if there are any of its hundreds of readers who have the desired stamp to dispose of for the price offered, they will advise the Second Assistant Purchasing Agent. And, again, the same is the case with any great rarities one may have. If sold to a dealer, it is generally at a great sacrifice, but if advertised there is almost always some one found who has long been on the lookout for the very stamp you wish to dispose of, and who is glad to pay a fair price for it.

"In addition to these and other practical advantages, members of the Association can at all times have the use of such publications as comprise the Library of the Association. And now that there is such an immense mass of Philatelic literature it is almost impossible for any one person to have even a fairly complete library.

"The most conclusive proof of the general satisfaction which members feel in having joined the Association is, that barely two per cent of the members who join are willing to withdraw and go back to their former state of isolation."

The experience of one member, as related in his own words from the same paper, shows how another department works:

"To the Editor American Philatelist:

Sir:—I cannot understand why the members of the A. P. A. should give our Purchasing Agent cause to complain of lack of interest on their part in his Department. Why, sir, I was one of the first to invest \$5 in that department, and never regretted having done so. Since that time I have added about \$20 more during

the past year, and my collection is worth about \$75 more if I only count the stamps received, from time to time, from Mr. Cuno. The purchasing of new issues through this department has given me more satisfaction than anything else since I began to take an interest in Philately. You get your new stamps a few months after their issue has become known. You get them at a little over face value, and they make in their neatness and newness the most brilliant showing in your entire collection. Is it possible that there are so few among nearly 300 advanced and intelligent collectors to appreciate such an opportunity? I think the advantages of the Purchasing Department are not considered in the right light by our members, or else we would not hear the agent complain that he cannot order all low values because so few members participate. I have received from the Purchasing Agent since December, 1886, over 150 different specimens of stamps, envelopes, and newsbands, costing me on an average six cents each; and there are stamps among these catalogued at present at \$5. If this is not worth while I want to know what we have organized for? I hope that the members will "see the point," because I want them to enable me to get *all* new issues, and not only the high values, as has been the case so far. Let us make the most of this Association, and not be contented with the least. Yours, for new issues."

CORNELIUS.

We might continue at length, but the best advice that can be given to those who would understand the advantages offered by the American Philatelic Association, and to those who would know how they will be benefitted, is the old but new invitation, "Come and see."

Forms of application may be obtained from the Secretary, whose address will be found on

another page; or any member of the Association will cheerfully procure such blanks. In order that the method of joining the Association may be fully understood we append the following extracts from the Constitution and By-Laws.

"Any stamp collector may become a member of this Association by applying to the Secretary; such application shall be signed by at least two references. The Secretary shall thereupon cause the name and address of the applicant and his references to be published in the next number of the Official Journal, or in an official circular, and if no objection shall be received by the Secretary within one month after such publication the applicant shall be considered elected, and entitled to receive the membership card of the Association on payment of dues. In case any member shall object to an applicant, the application shall be submitted to the Trustees. The Secretary shall notify the objecting member that he must submit the reasons for his objections and the proofs to substantiate them. The applicant shall also be notified of the reasons for the objection and of the proofs offered, and may submit his defence. The Trustees shall consider the matter and shall accept or reject the applicant.

"Only those members of the Association resident in the United States and Canada, and who have attained the age of seventeen years, shall be entitled to vote, either in person or by proxy, in any convention, at any election, or upon any question submitted to a general vote of the Association.

"All dues shall be payable semi-annually in advance, on the first day of September and the first day of March of each year.

"The fiscal year shall commence on the first of September, and shall be divided into quar-

ters. The dues to be paid by new members shall be computed from the beginning of the quarter in which they shall have been elected to membership in the Association.

"The dues of all voting members shall be two (\$2) dollars per annum, and of non-voting members shall be one (\$1) per annum. Every non-voting member resident in the United States or Canada, upon reaching the age of seventeen years shall inform the General Secretary of the fact, and shall pay the full dues of two dollars per annum, computed from the beginning of the next succeeding quarter.

"In case any member fails to settle his account within thirty days from the time when due, the Secretary shall notify such delinquent member; and unless such dues are paid within thirty days thereafter, his name shall be dropped from the rolls unless otherwise ordered by the Official Board."

How shall I help to make stamp collecting appreciated? Join the A. P. A.

How shall I help to abolish forgeries? Join the A. P. A.

How shall I help to put down swindlers? Join the A. P. A.

How shall I know who to deal with? Join the A. P. A. Ask the trustees. Ask the members. Read the *American Philatelist*.

How shall I get the best and latest stamp news? Join the A. P. A. Read the *American Philatelist*.

How shall I get new issues cheapest? Join the A. P. A. Patronize the Purchasing Agent.

How shall I get current stamps unused?

Join the A. P. A. Patronize the 1st Assistant Purchasing Agent.

How shall I get varieties I cannot find and sell those I cannot dispose of? Join the A. P. A. Patronize the 2d Assistant Purchasing Agent.

How shall I tell whether my specimens are genuine? Join the A. P. A. and ask its Counterfeit Director.

How shall I get the most for my duplicates? Join the A. P. A. and its Exchange Department.

How shall I get acquainted with the foremost collectors and dealers? Join the A. P. A.



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