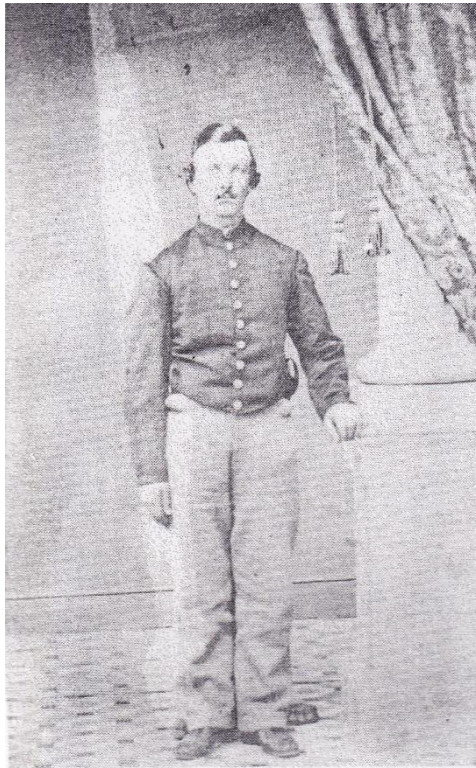


Lebanon Stamp Collectors Club

December, 2021

Number 29

There will not be a regular meeting of the LSCC at the library in December; on December 21 at 5:00 PM we have reservations at the Quentin Haus restaurant, on the southwest corner of RT 72 in Quentin. Please RSVP to Don Smith or Scott Ney if you are able to attend, so that we have an accurate count for the restaurant. As the public health situation of late fall has led us into uncertain territory, keep an eye on your email for any updates on the current plan.



Pension Bureau Philately

By Scott Ney

Pension Bureau Philately is what I called my presentation at the November meeting. Don, Joe, Jim, and I were joined by our club's newest member, Glenn P. I wasn't sure that we'd spend the whole meeting on the pension items, but the discussion which ensued was interesting and lively. What follows is a summary, and if you missed it, I hope to talk on it again sometime in the future. It involves an old favorite subject of mine, family history, and one of the newest ones, philately.

That handsome gentleman above is Levi Ney, who was my great-great grandfather Elias' oldest brother. Some of you may already know Elias was the first postmaster of Ney in northern Lebanon County. Levi was a private in the 46th Pennsylvania Infantry, and was mortally wounded at the Battle of Peachtree Creek outside of Atlanta on July 20, 1864. I first discovered this picture of him in a book about Linglestown's military history at the library in Colonial Park.

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Company D, to which Levi was assigned, consisted in large part of men from the Manada Hill area of Dauphin County, and there's a memorial at the Willow Grove Cemetery in Linglestown with the names of Levi Ney and other men from his company who fell while in the service.

Over the years I have collected copies of the pension files of Levi and some of the men he was close to in the 46th. Most recently, I requested and received a copy of the pension file of Henry Gaither, an ancestor of my wife's family from Baltimore who served as a corporal in the 39th Regiment of U.S. Colored Troops. These files, which are in the custody of the National Archives and Records Administration, preserve the memory of ordinary soldiers who fought for units and commanders who are much better known today. The files are great resources for people interested in studying their Civil War ancestors, or the units and men in which they fought side by side.

Some pension files consist of a few pages, and some files are dozens or even hundreds of pages long. Naturally, the pension system relied heavily on the USPOD to move evidence, affidavits, and general correspondence back and forth from claimants and their attorneys to the pension office in Washington, DC. I spent several months in the past year collecting things, and I broke the items down into categories as follows:

1. The Pension Building

Pensions were granted for military service since the Revolutionary War, but in the decades after the Civil War, the numbers of veterans and their dependents who applied for and received them for their service exploded. A new building needed to be constructed to properly service all of the veterans and the mountains of paperwork that their claims generated. So the new pension building was constructed between 1882 and 1887. Occupying an entire city block, it housed the 1600 clerks whose job it was to process pension activity. Its great inner hall was the site of grand Presidential Inaugural Balls.

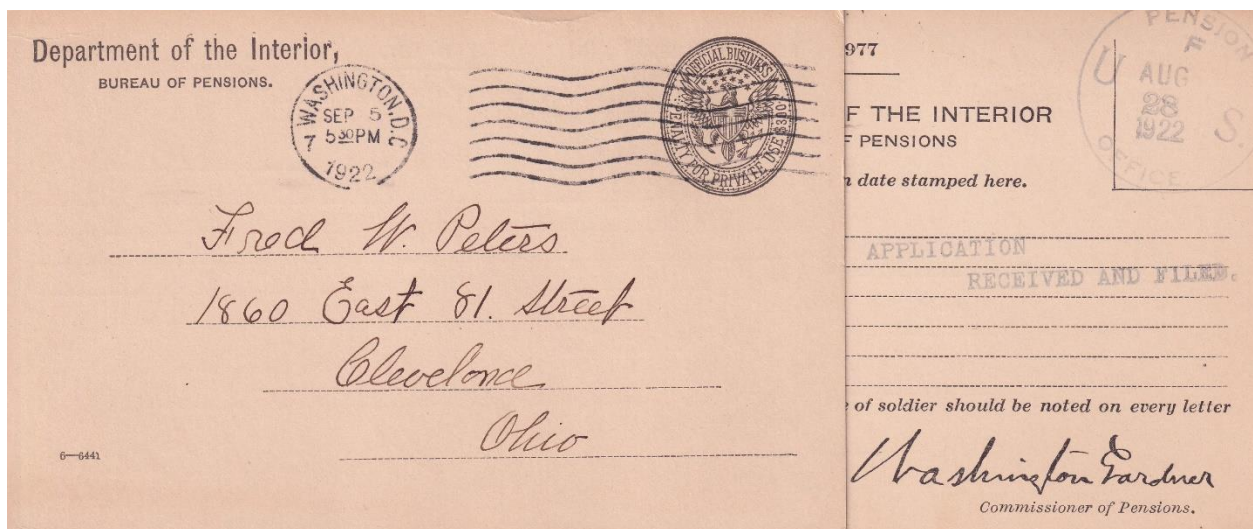


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In 1930, such a massive building was no longer needed to house the pension office, so it was repurposed to house the U.S. General Accounting Office, until it became unsuitable for that purpose in 1950. Thankfully, its architectural significance was sufficiently appreciated, and it was spared the wrecking ball in the 1950's. Today it is the home of the National Building Museum. During the presentation Glenn found information about the building on the US General Services Administration website. [Pension Building \(National Building Museum\), Washington, DC | GSA](#)

2. Response Cards

These were utilized to inform claimants that their applications or other important paperwork was received. They came from different sections and divisions of the office, and were sometimes stamped with the circular date stamp of the U.S. Pension Office.



3. Penalty Envelopes

These were the envelopes that the department used to mail correspondence to claimants and their attorneys. The "Official Business: Penalty for Private Use" insignia (as seen above) was pre-printed on most of the cards and envelopes used by the pension office. It's very uncommon to find an official stamp of the Department of the Interior on a cover from the pension office.

4. Reply Envelopes

These are also penalty envelopes, but had pre-printed addresses and were provided to claimants to return materials to the department.

5. Pension Attorneys

There's a diversity of materials available that came from attorneys. The business of pensions was a competitive one, and it generated a lot of promotional items. I provided an illustration of a "patriotic" style cover from C. E. Foote's Pension Claim Agency in last month's newsletter.

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6. Pension Certificates

The pensioner's certificate certified his or her claim and provided payout information. From time to time the pensioner was fortunate to get an increase, and many certificates have slips of colored paper fastened to them by a straight pin or other means with this information.

7. Pension Checks

Canceled checks can be found, and it's interesting to note that pension checks from the revenue stamp period did not require one.



8. Miscellaneous Items

Some items I have collected, such as ordinary covers addressed to the Commissioner of Pensions, don't necessarily fit into other categories I have used to group things.

I acquired all of these items from sellers on eBay using keyword searches like "Interior Pension" and "Pension Documents", but there are undoubtedly other places that "Pension Philately" can be found.

There's one item I have which I give its own category: a letter that a man wrote the War Department in 1896 seeking to verify that his great-grandfather served in the Revolutionary War (he added that he was quite sure that his great-grandfather was appointed by Hamilton to an assistant position in the Treasury department, which he held until Jackson's time). He received a reply from the War Department stating that there was no record of his great-grandfather's service in the Continental Army, but the reply added that the War Department's records from that era are far from complete.

It's true that if one has an ancestor who fought for independence, their service was likely in a state organized militia, and not necessarily recorded with the federal government. The thing I find most interesting about this piece of memorabilia is that it shows descendants were looking for military info on their ancestors even in the 19th century. In this age of readily available

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information, I haven't confirmed that this man's great-grandfather, who was originally from Pennsylvania, knew Alexander Hamilton, but I did find that the man who wrote this letter, Walter Chambers Bradish, lived from 1873 to 1968, and made an application to the Sons of the American Revolution. He likely needed the info from the War Department to verify that he was the grandson of a soldier, and I hope that he ultimately found what he needed to satisfy his inquiry!

Uncle Sam's Fiscals (concluded from last newsletter)

From the Pennsylvania Philatelist, June 1892

By E. E. M'D. Oliver

The first issue had been in use several years when they were discontinued and a new set was issued consisting of thirty-one different values, similar to those of the first issue, from one cent to two hundred dollars. These stamps were printed in two colors, black and blue, and did not have any expressed words at the bottom as in the first issue to show on what or for what the stamps were to be used, merely Internal Revenue. The general design of the first nine values from one to twenty cents was the head of Washington in an octagon with small rectangle. None of these are rare, the scarcest being the six cent which is worth about a dime. The design of the other values from the twenty five cent to the five hundred dollar stamp is similar to the same values of the first issue only instead of the head of Washington being inscribed in an oval, in the second issue we find it inscribed in a circle. The five hundred dollar stamp differs from the rest of the series in that it is printed in blue and red. The sizes of the stamps in the set are the same of those of the same values of the first issue. The rarest of this issue are the twenty, twenty-five, fifty, two hundred, and five hundred dollar stamps which were generally used by railroad companies or other large corporations.

The third issue consists of only seventeen values, ranging from one cent to twenty dollars. The designs are similar to the corresponding values in the second issue. Each stamp is printed in two colors, one being black and the other either brown, claret, green, orange, or vermilion. This is a very pretty set. None are rare except the twenty dollar stamp which in a recent auction sale brought four dollars. Like the stamps of the second issue, these stamps are found only in perforated condition. Two varieties of the two cent stamp have been found, the one being printed in orange on green paper, the other being in blue on the regular government paper.

The documentary stamps were followed by a set of proprietary stamps used on patent medicines and preparations, etc., issued in June, 1871, ranging in value from one cent to ten cents, printed in black and green on violet paper, all being perforated. The general design was the head of Washington in an oval. The scarcest stamp is the ten cent which is worth about eighty cents. This set was superseded in August 1875 by the same values with the addition of three new ones, the fifty cent and the one and five dollar stamps which were somewhat larger than the others. The design was the same as that in the first issue of proprietary stamps. These

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stamps were printed in black and green on green paper, the rarest ones being the last four values. Another set of proprietary stamps was issued in 1870, having the same values and designs as the first issue. They were printed in one color only, but each value was printed in a different color. Ten Cent blue is worth about two dollars in good condition.

Having now given a description of the regular government issues of fiscals (excluding the tobacco and spirits stamps) I will take up the private revenue stamps which will form the subject for a future article. *(Editor's note: I don't believe such an article ever made it to the pages of the Pennsylvania Philatelist)*

In closing this article, I would respectfully urge upon every stamp collector the necessity of taking up the branch of revenues which will in time be the most important department of philatelics.

Calendar of Events

December 8: PSLC virtual meeting U.S. International Stamp Shows: 1956 – 1976 (Part II) presented by Dr. Paul Peterson.

December 18 and 19: Some Sunday (& Saturday) Stamp Show 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM both days at the Lancaster Farm and Home Center, 1383 Arcadia Road, 17601

December 21: LSCC Christmas Dinner 5:00 PM at the Quentin Haus on RT 72 in Quentin. Please contact Don Smith or Scott Ney to RSVP

December 22: PSLC virtual meeting Transparent Motto Wafers Seals on U.S. Folded Letters and Covers, 1840 – 1860's, presented by Charles J. DiComo, PhD

January 12, 2022: PSLC virtual meeting The Postal History of Lititz, PA presented by Dick Colberg

January 18, 2022: LSCC meeting at the Lebanon Community Library, program to be determined

January 26, 2022: PSLC virtual meeting Early French Definitive Stamps, presented by Larry Rosenblum

For information on PSLC programs, please visit [Philatelic Society of Lancaster County – Award-winning, non-profit community organization dedicated to promoting stamp and postal history collecting as a hobby for education and fun. \(lcps-stamps.org\)](http://lcps-stamps.org)

For information on LSCC meetings, please contact Scott Ney at stnst2@aol.com.

For upcoming APS World Series of Philately shows, check out [WSP Shows \(stamps.org\)](http://WSPShows.org) (thanks to Jim Joppy for supplying the link!)

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Its dues time again!

Now that we're back to meeting in person, dues for 2022 can be paid in cash at your next LSCC meeting. Dues remain \$10 this year. Our dues go towards the cost of renting the room on every third Tuesday of the month at the Lebanon Community Library, which remains a great bargain at \$15 per month. If you'd like to pay your dues by PayPal, please send them to my email address stnst2@aol.com. If you use the "friends and family" option, no fees will be charged; however I will forward the full amount, should any fees be assessed, to Don Smith. Some of you paid by check last year, but unfortunately I learned a bit too late that the club doesn't have a checking account, so your checks were destroyed. Rest assured, however, that if that was the case with you, you remained a paid member in good standing for 2021. If you'd still prefer to pay by check this year, please make the check out to Don Smith.



The Lebanon Stamp Collectors Club

Since 1968