

Do You Collect Air Mail Stamps? You're An Aerophilatelist

Value of First-Flight Covers Enhanced By Demand

The hobby of collecting air mail stamps and covers is rapidly growing in popularity and threatens to win more enthusiasts than the old philately, in which stamps of all kinds were sought for.

Each time that a new city is added to our wonderful air mail system, the Government provides the postmaster of the newcomer with a special first-flight cancellation which is applied to all letters mailed the first day. The collecting of these first-flight, or first-day covers, with their official cachets, has developed into one of the most popular branches of present-day philately. The Government has done a great deal for the hobby by varying the style, size and color of the cancels, so as to make them especially attractive.

Previous to 1926, the existing air mail lines (the Transcontinental between New York and San Francisco and the Overnight Service between New York and Chicago) were operated directly by the Post Office Department under authority of, and with an appropriation by Congress. The Post Office Department, by the Air Mail Act passed in 1925, was authorized to contract with private capital for the carrying of mails via the air. These contracts were to be let by public competitive bidding as is the custom in practically all Government work, and in the carrying of the ordinary mails. The act also provided assistance to these contractors such as the lighting of airways, etc., which work was to be entrusted to the Department of Commerce at Washington.

Acting under this authority the Post Office Department immediately called for bids on a number of contemplated routes, the first two routes being placed in service simultaneously on Feb. 6, 1926.

From the above, the term "Contract Air Mail" will be readily understood. In addition to this, for purposes of designation, each route as awarded has been given a number, starting with 1. These routes are familiarly referred to as C. A. M. No. 1, etc., and this designation is also carried out in Department correspondence, orders, etc.

From the beginning, the Post Office Department at Washington has recognized the inauguration of each route by providing a special cancellation on cachet, appropriately worded to express the significance of the event. This cachet is furnished for use on the first trip of such route only, and thus makes the cover or letter of historical interest and significance.

To collect the Air Mail covers intelligently, several "tools" are necessary, one of which is to join an Air Mail Society. Some of the most enthusiastic believers in the hobby of aerophilately have organized a society in Chicago.

Here is what they are doing. Members are supplied with advance information of special flights, dedications, and official flights if they so desire. At every meeting one of the members gives a lecture on the first flight over a different U. S. air mail route, telling any interesting facts that careful research offers. These talks are duplicated and every member receives a copy for his files, thereby gradually accumulating a history of the first flights in the U. S. A sales department is maintained for members through which they may buy covers they need or dispose of any duplicates.

The headquarters of the National Air Mail Society, as the organization is called, are in the Capitol Building, at 159 N. State St., Room 1623.

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Varied are the part time positions held by Armour students, but Louis Polan, sophomore chemical, lays claim to the most unusual, and probably the most lucrative of them all. He holds down a character part in George Jessel's current production, "The War Song."

"Lou's" present job was obtained largely through chance. Previous to this time he was working on the managing staff of the Garrick Theater. The superintendent of "The War Song," during one of his visits to the Garrick, saw Lou and asked him to try out for the part of a doughboy in his show. The tryout revealed Lou's natural ability, and he was given a part immediately.

The show is soon to go on tour, but Lou is undecided as yet whether or not he will go with it. "I realize that I am passing up an opportunity, but I believe that I will come out ahead in the end by finishing my four years at Armour," he declared.

Art Institute Curator Of Prints Dies of Flu

William McCulloch McKee, curator of prints at the Chicago Art Institute who died Saturday night at his mother's home in Pittsburgh, was buried there Monday afternoon.

Mr. McKee had gone east to spend the Christmas holidays with his mother and contracted the flu soon after reaching Pittsburgh. Pneumonia developed, causing his death. His mother, Mrs. James McKee, also was stricken by the flu and is reported to be still seriously ill.

Mr. McKee was born in Pittsburgh, educated at the University of Pittsburgh, and became affiliated with the staff of the Carnegie library there upon his graduation. He later travelled extensively in Europe, studying the collections in continental museums. On his return from abroad, he became curator of prints at the Cleveland Art museum, leaving there to assume the same post with the Art Institute seven years ago. Mr. McKee was known as one of the most popular bachelors in Chicago society. He was 44 years old and a member of the Arts Club.

NOTED GERMAN SCIENTIST DESIGNS COAL DUST ENGINE

Rudolf Pawlikowski, of the Kosmos engine works at Goerlitz, Germany, and collaborator with Dr. Deisel who introduced the Diesel engine to the world in 1897, has designed a new type of engine called the "dust engine" or "rupamotor." This engine, which runs on pulverized coal instead of fuel oil, has been successfully operated since 1916. The operating cost is less than that of any other engine. Mr. Pawlikowski thinks it is very probable that this engine will be used in automobiles sometime in the future.

Junior: Can you typewrite?
Senior: Yes, I use the biblical system.
Junior: What's that?
Senior: Seek and ye shall find.
—A.J.

Lee De Forest Made Early Wireless Tests From A.I.T. To Lakota

Upon visiting the attic of the Institute, which is only attainable by means of a small stairway from the fifth floor, one discovers that it is used as a store-room for chemical supplies. Like all attics, possessing opportunities for mysterious discoveries, this one is not devoid of this item. One's attention is attracted by a rod hanging from the ceiling from which are suspended four balls, from about four to eight inches in diameter. There appearance is not very indicative of the history which goes with them.

In 1900, when wireless telegraphy was in its infancy, these spheres were used for wireless communication experiments conducted between the Institute and the Lakota Hotel, on 31st and Michigan Ave., by a man who has made the great progress of radio possible through his invention. This person, who later discovered the radio vacuum tube, was Lee De Forest.

De Forest moved to the Armour Flats in 1900, where he roomed with a good friend and grub-staker. Like all good engineers, the problem which confronted him most was that of finance. He was a past-master of the art of economics. The electrical faculty of the Institute gave him every practical facility in its power to enable him to carry on his experiments with the electrolytic detector and wireless receiving system on which he was then working. Particularly interested in his experiments was the late Professor Clarence E. Freeman, to whom De Forest acted as laboratory assistant. Professor Clarence E. Freeman was a brother of the present head of the Electrical Engineering Department, Professor Ernest H. Freeman.

After many months of enduring hardships and confronting many obstacles, one may imagine his anticipation when, standing in the rain on top of the Lakota Hotel, he anxiously listened in the telephone receivers for the prearranged signal. Upon hearing the signal, De Forest, an ardent lover of the opera, exclaimed that the sound of the signal was the sweetest music heard by man. This experiment started De Forest, who now is recognized as a pioneer and leader in the field of wireless telegraphy and telephony, on the path to many inventions in that line, finally leading to the perfection of the audion tube which made him world famous. His intensely human recountal of success attained by pluck and tenacity of will are admired by every engineer and prove invigorating to the student who looks into the future and sees only stern toil ahead.

Coffin Foundation Awards Fellowships

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work as a part of the requirements for an advanced degree as well as graduates of universities, colleges, and technical schools, but any award to a senior will be conditioned upon his graduation.
Applications should be brought in to the Dean's office in time to be forwarded to Schenectady before Mar. 1. The Dean's office will send the names of the two men who in the opinion of the faculty are best qualified to receive the award.

Carnegie Professor Develops New Process

A new process for the making of wrought iron, the invention of Professor Aston, head of the Metallurgy Department of Carnegie Tech, has recently been patented by the A. M. Byers Company of Pittsburgh. The Aston Process, as it is known, has been many years in preparation and was sponsored during that time by the present controllers. The Byers Company, it has been said, is to erect a ten-million dollar plant to exploit their newly acquired patent.

ENROLLMENT AT WISCONSIN ESTABLISHES NEW RECORD

University of Wisconsin reports a larger enrollment this year than in any former year in the history of the institution. The total number of students is 9,042, according to figures announced recently by Miss A. B. Kirch, university statistician. The college of letters and sciences has 6,681 students; the college of engineering has 962, and the college of agriculture has 705 students. The review further discloses that men outnumbered women 5,641 to 3,401.

Fraternity Contests Now Take Spotlight

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last ten years no team has been able to defeat the Phi Pi Phis and as a result the champions have in their possession three trophies, each of which was earned by process of holding the inter-fraternity championship for three consecutive years. Besides this collection of trophies they have established a foothold in the fourth trophy which is up for this season's competition.

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