

Palm Beach Stamp Club

Volume 13 / No. 10

NEWSLETTER

October 2026



Palm Beach Stamp Club
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American Philatelic Society
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October has a special place in the philatelic calendar. Since October 1, 1981, when the USPS launched the very first National Stamp Collecting Month, this time of year has been dedicated to celebrating the hobby, inspiring new collectors, and reminding seasoned philatelists why stamps continue to fascinate generation after generation. The celebration was created jointly by the USPS and the Council of Philatelic Organizations, with Postmaster General William F. Bolger encouraging “employees and customers alike to discover the joy of stamp collecting – the hobby of a lifetime.” That spirit still resonates today. Each October, postal groups, clubs, schools, and community organizations across the country host events, exhibits, youth activities, and special cancellations to mark the occasion.

Stamp of the Month

As we begin this year’s celebration, it’s fitting to look back at a stamp that honors the very roots of American philately: Scott #1474, issued November 17, 1972, for the 125th anniversary of the first U.S. postage stamps.



Scott # 1474

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The Robert A. Mason Digital Collections at the American Philatelic Research Library helps preserve and share philatelic resources by making important research materials accessible to collectors around the world. Through digitization, rare and valuable philatelic literature, publications, and historical resources can be preserved while expanding access for today's researchers and tomorrow's collectors.

Do you have philatelic materials that could benefit the hobby through digital access? The APRL welcomes inquiries about potential contributions to the Robert A. Mason Digital Collections. By supporting these efforts, you can help ensure that valuable philatelic knowledge remains accessible for research, education, and future generations. To learn more about contributing materials, please contact the American Philatelic Research Library at: digitalcollections@stamps.org

Our September 10th meeting was very well attended and offered a large auction. The meeting on the 24th was lightly attended but had quality auction lots. Dan Maddalino made a presentation featuring British Royalty on postage stamps.

President Richard Kaye and Auditor Robert Mendelsohn are in the process of updating our club roster. Please let them know if there are any changes to your address, phone, email, etc.

We welcome new member Ruhullah Izadyar of Wellington to the club. Be sure to introduce yourself to him at the next meeting.

Plans continue for our club's fall stamp show at the West Palm Beach Embassy Suites on Saturday, October 31st. Advertising appears in the American Philatelic Societies events calendar, Linn's Stamp News, and Florida Stamps Shows.



October 6th, West Volusia Stamp Club, Collector to Collector Sale, Sanborn Activity Center, 815 S. Alabama Ave., Deland 32724

October 11th, Second Sunday Stamp & Coin Show, Azan Shrine Center, Sunday 9:30-3:00, Melbourne 32935.

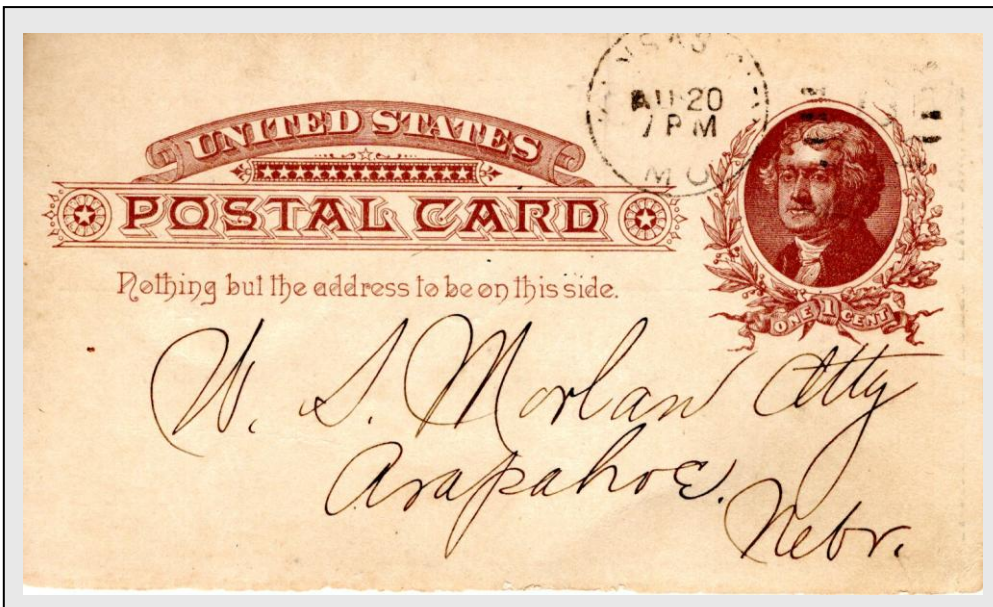
October 31st, Palm Beach Stamp Club Fall Show, Embassy Suites, West Palm Beach, Saturday, 10-3.

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Not Just Any Lawyer

Keith Lichtman

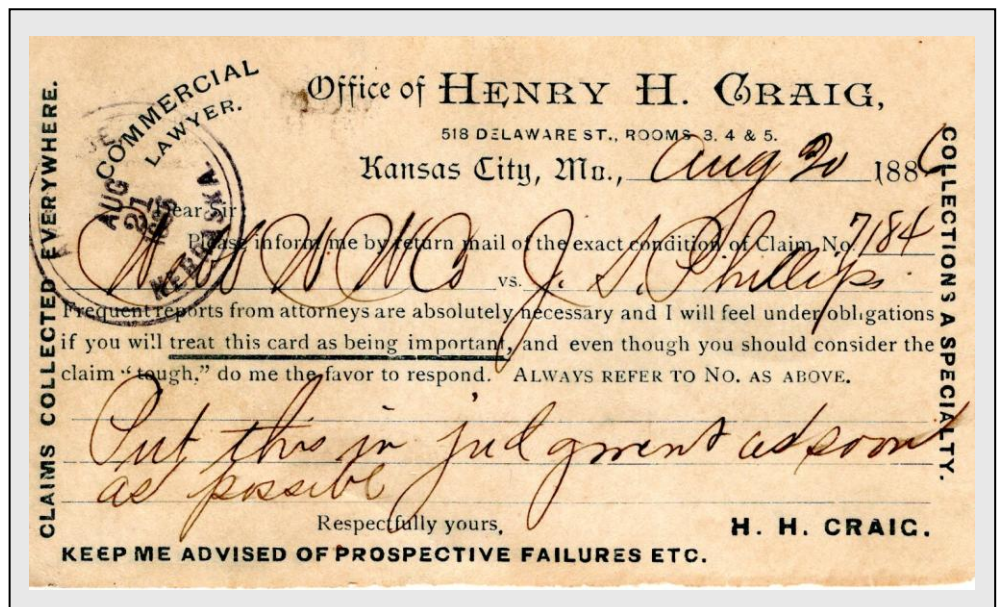
I recently wrote about postal cards and the remarkable historical advertisements that often hide on their backs. Every so often, I like to share a few of my favorite finds—those cards that stop me in my tracks and send me down a research rabbit hole. When time allows, I browse postal cards on *eBay* or *HipStamp*, always checking the reverse side for advertisements, announcements, or anything that hints at a story. Most of the time, a search turns up very little. But sometimes—just sometimes—I strike gold.



The postal card featured here is one of those gold strikes. It's a 1¢ Jefferson, Scott #UX8, canceled on August 20, 1886, with a next-day receiving hand stamp at Arapahoe, Nebraska. The message comes from the office of Henry H. Craig, a Kansas City, Missouri, attorney.

Curious, I began an online search and found Craig's obituary.

What I discovered was far more than a lawyer's résumé. Craig lived a life that reads like a frontier novel. Here is the story, exactly as his memorial page recorded it:



Henry Harrison Craig II was born in Versailles, Kentucky, and as a teenager left home to join Scott's Louisiana Cavalry. After a brief period teaching school, he studied law under his uncle, Kentucky Governor Thomas P. Porter. In 1869 he moved to Kansas City, Missouri, where his career—and reputation—quickly grew.

Craig was elected to the Missouri House of Representatives in 1876. The following year, when railroad strikes left Kansas City vulnerable to rioters and roaming gangs, he helped form a private militia to maintain order. After the crisis passed, younger members of the militia reorganized as a fraternal group called Craig's Rifles, known for public drills, parades, shooting competitions, and social events.

In 1880 Craig was appointed Police Commissioner of Kansas City, a role that placed him squarely in the path of one of America's most notorious outlaw gangs. Working with Clay County Sheriff James Timberlake, Craig joined the effort to eliminate the criminal band led by Frank and Jesse James. In 1882, Craig and Timberlake arranged a meeting between Missouri Governor Thomas Crittenden and two young outlaws associated with Jesse James—Bob and Charley Ford. The governor promised them pardons and a bounty for James's capture. Instead, Bob Ford shot Jesse James in the back of the head while James was adjusting a picture frame in his home.

The Kansas City Council later praised Craig and Timberlake for "so nearly destroying the notorious Jesse James band of outlaws." Craig returned to private practice, invested in Texas real estate, and eventually worked as an attorney for the Armour Packing Company. He died in Corpus Christi in 1914. His role in the James saga earned him a place in Ron Hansen's novel "The Assassination of Jesse James by the Coward Robert Ford," and he was portrayed by actor Michael Parks in the film adaptation.

Back to me now... This is what I mean about postal cards and history. You never know what story is waiting on the back of a simple one cent postal card. In this case, the man behind the advertisement wasn't just a lawyer—he helped bring down the James Brothers.

That's my gold card!

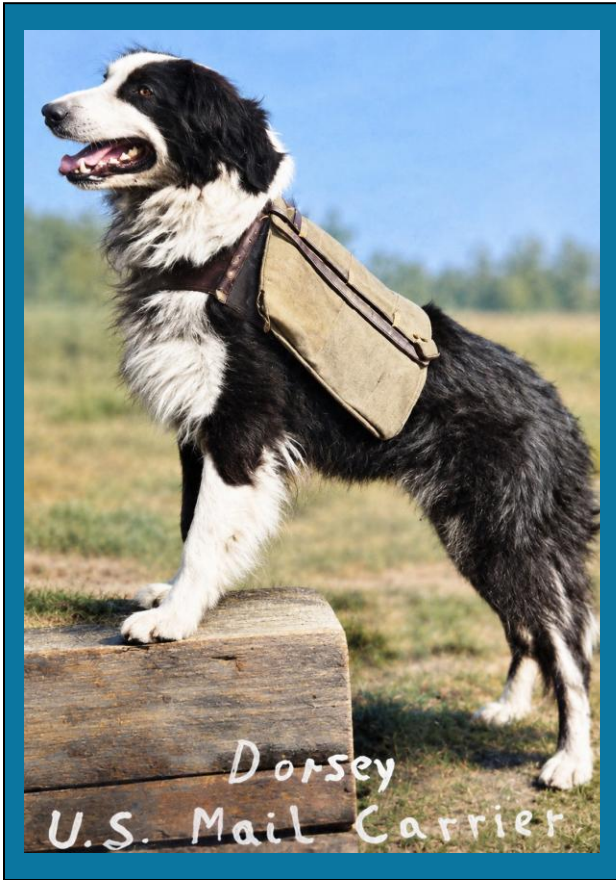
References:

Postal card from Author's collection.

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/23414198/henry-harrison-craig>

Dorsey

Michael Swope



Every so often, postal history gives us a story so charming—and so improbable—that it feels tailor-made for a stamp club newsletter. One of those gems comes from Calico, California, in 1885, where a black-and-white collie named Dorsey briefly became one of the most beloved mail carriers in the American West.

Calico was a booming silver-mining town at the time, perched in the rugged hills of San Bernardino County. The terrain between the Calico Post Office and the nearby mining camp was rough, dusty, and steep enough to make mail delivery a challenge. That's where Dorsey entered the picture. Adopted by the local postmaster, the clever collie quickly proved he could navigate the trail with ease. After a few successful tests, Dorsey was outfitted with a specially made mailbag strapped securely to his back—and just like that, Calico had an unofficial canine courier.

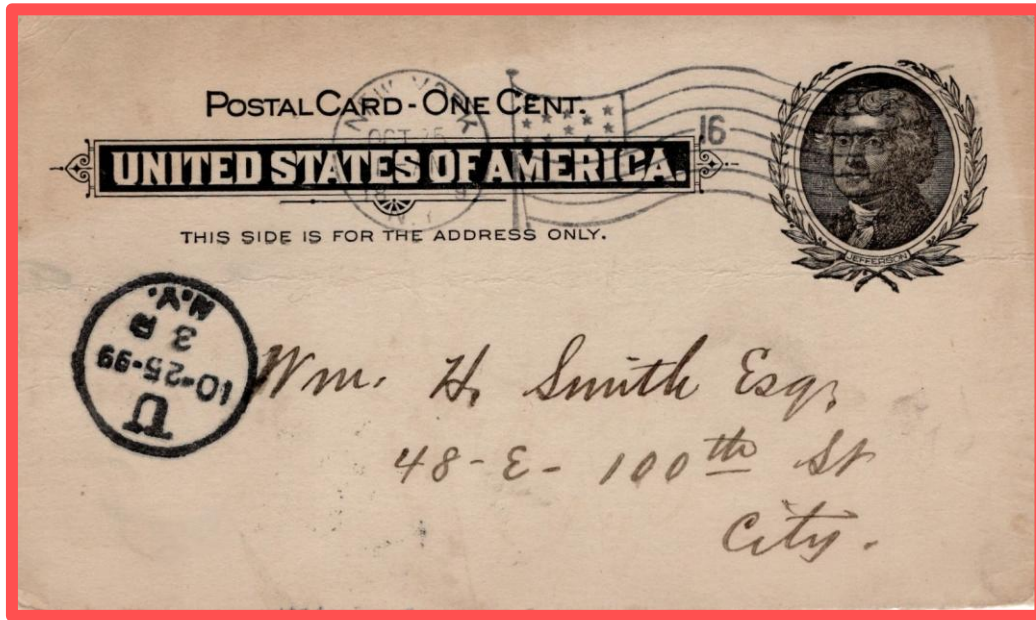
Miners soon learned to watch for the flash of black-and-white fur trotting up the path. Dorsey carried letters, small parcels, and the hopes of workers eager for news from home. His reliability earned him a reputation that spread far beyond the camp. According to one oft-retold story, the miners were so grateful to receive their mail early that they ordered a steak for Dorsey every night. Whether that detail is fact or frontier folklore, it captures the affection Calico's residents felt for their four-legged postman.

Today, Dorsey's tale survives in scattered newspaper clippings, postal anecdotes, and a handful of photographs—one of which has been beautifully colorized for this month's newsletter. This image brings new life to a dog who, for a brief moment in 1885, embodied the spirit of ingenuity and determination that runs through so much of postal history.

For collectors, Dorsey's story is a reminder that the mail has never been just about stamps and cancellations. It's about people, places, and occasionally a very good dog who helped keep a community connected.

A Framing Connection Hidden in a Postal Card

Keith Lichtman



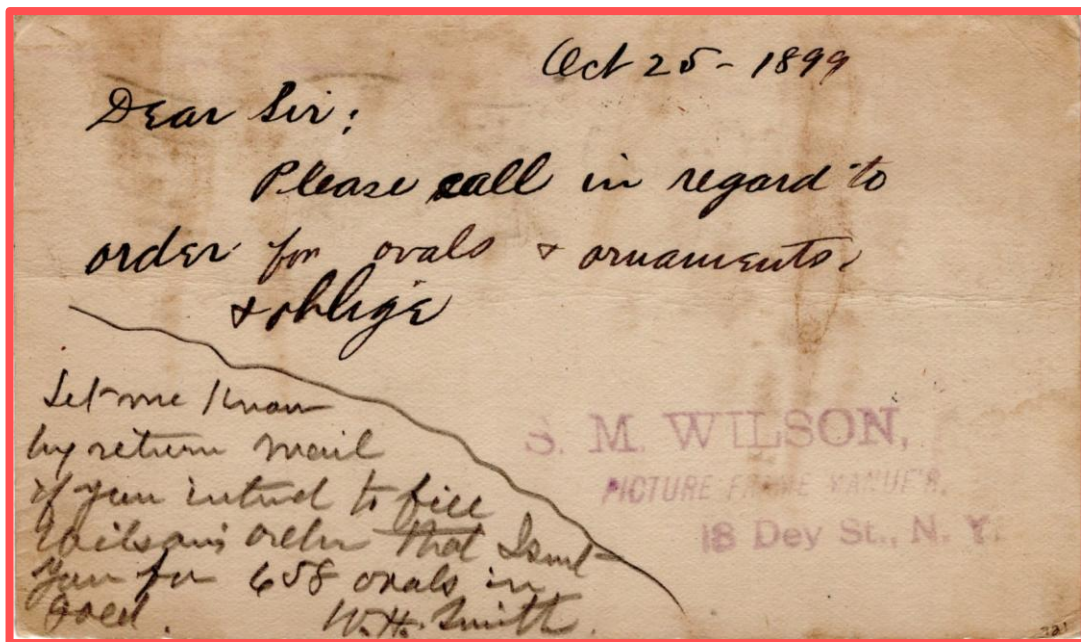
I've been expanding my postal card collection lately by picking up inexpensive cards on eBay, choosing them for their advertisements and the professions they represent. One recent purchase — an 1899 postal card about picture framing — caught my attention for a very personal reason.

Before and after my time on Wall Street, I worked in the framing business, so naturally I dug into the history behind this card. What I found absolutely stunned me.

The company named on the postal card, S. M. Wilson, Picture Frame Manufacturer, turned out to be the very same firm my wife and I dealt with when we owned a framing store on Staten Island, New York. Our supplier was their Long Island location. A close friend of mine, Phil, was the head framer there, and he and his boss, Mark, were instrumental in helping me get started again in the framing business after I left Wall Street. I never expected a postal card to bring that part of my life full circle.

Here is a portion of the company history, taken from their website: S. M. Wilson opened Wilson Picture Frames on Dey Street in Manhattan in 1872, crafting frames by hand for some of New York's most treasured pictures. The business passed to his son, who later sold it to a new owner that moved operations to Long Island, making Wilson the first picture frame shop there. In the early 1980s, the company was purchased by Mark Sternberg, who ran it for nearly 40 years, expanding operations while maintaining the tradition of quality craftsmanship. In 2016, Mr. Sternberg sold the business to its current ownership.

The postal card itself is the 1¢ Jefferson, Scott UX14, with a flag cancellation. The dial reads: NEW YORK NY / OCT 25 / ?-AM / 18 99 The receiving circular cancel reads: U / 10-25-99 3P NY.



The correspondence is a wonderful glimpse into everyday business communication of the era: “Oct 25 – 1899 Dear Sir: Please call in regard to order for oval & ornaments & oblige. (in pencil) Let me know by return mail if you intend to fill Wilson’s order that I sent you for 658 ovals in gold. — W. H. Smith.”

A simple postal card turned out to be a direct link to my own past — proof that in philately, history has a way of finding you when you least expect it. What began as an ordinary purchase, just another interesting advertising card to add to my collection, suddenly became a bridge between two very different chapters of my life. One moment I was examining a 1¢ Jefferson postal card from 1899; the next, I was staring at the name of a company that had once played a major role in my own career.

That’s the magic of this hobby. You sift through old paper, faded ink, and forgotten correspondence, and every so often something reaches across time and taps you on the shoulder. A card mailed 125 years ago, written in pencil by someone long gone, somehow loops back and touches your own story. It reminds you that the world of postal history isn’t just about dates, rates, and cancellations — it’s about people, places, and connections that continue to ripple forward.

Moments like this are why collectors keep digging through boxes, albums, and dealer stock. You never know when a card will stop being just an artifact and become a personal discovery. In philately, the past is never entirely past; it has a remarkable habit of finding its way back to you.

SAMHAIN

Michael Swope



Samhain (Old Irish for “summer’s end”) is often considered to be one of the oldest precursors to Halloween. It’s a traditional Gaelic festival first documented around the 10th century. It is believed modern Jack-o’-lanterns were inspired by a Samhain custom. People would hollow out turnips and carve faces into them to use as lanterns at night.

Samhain was a festival to prepare for winter. It lasted from sunset on October 31st to sunset on November 1st. Huge bonfires were lit as a cleansing ritual, crops were harvested and stored, and animals were moved to winter pastures. It was a celebration to hold people through the long, cold days to come.



Samhain was also believed to be a day when the barrier to the otherworld could be crossed by fairies, spirits, or souls of the dead. Although some spirits were good or the souls of loved ones, others were evil and needed to be warded off. It was said that dressing in disguise and mimicking a spirit would prevent it from harming you. Some of these disguised people went door-to-door singing or reciting verses in exchange for food.



Scott 5137-40

In 2016, the U.S. Postal Service finally embraced one of America’s most beloved holidays with the release of its first Halloween-themed stamps: the Jack-O’-Lanterns, Scott 5137–5140. Issued September 29 in Anoka, Minnesota—a town proudly known as the “Halloween Capital of the World”—the four Forever stamps feature glowing carved pumpkins photographed against a dark autumn backdrop.

Have a safe and happy Halloween!