
HUGH McLELLAN SOUTHGATE PAPERS AND DOCUMENTS

FINDING GUIDE

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COLLECTION SCOPE & CONTENT

The Hugh McLellan Southgate Papers and Documents Collection consist of 26 volumes totaling over 6,900 pages of information.

PROVENANCE

The Hugh McLellan Southgate papers were donated by George Brett to the Smithsonian National Postal Museum. George Brett was widely regarded as the greatest living authority on United States stamp production. For over 60 years he had written groundbreaking research on U.S. stamps from the first issue in 1847 to the most recent issues. Brett was the author of over 500 reports, articles and books. A great teacher and a living legend in the field of philately, Brett was unanimously voted "Chairman Emeritus" for the United States Stamp Society in 2000.

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

Hugh McLellan Southgate (H.M.S.) was an important collector and student of the Bureau Issues of the United States. He was a founder and first president of the Philatelic Plate Number Association (1926-1928). He was also the first president and chairman of the board (1930-1940) of its successor, the Bureau Issues Association (now the United States Stamp Society).

"H.M.S." was among the first researchers to make extensive use of the archival material held by the Bureau of Engraving and Printing. He was prominent in the philatelic activities of the Washington, DC area and in the APS.

The Southgate notebooks consist mainly of manuscript notes taken of information he found in BEP archives on stamps printed by them, and supplemented by articles written by him and others. They cover the stamps issued by the Bureau-regular and BOB. These notebooks also contain biographical information on collectors, dealers, and others related mostly to the Bureau stamps.

INVENTORY

Listed numerically as numbered on the backs of each volume

George Brett prepared a detailed inventory. This is only his summary.

- 1a. This is an odd thin book with 1939 – 1940 lists not filed in the other books and includes unfinished things to check – so a sort of temporary and preliminary housing volume. HMS passed away October 23, 1940. (44 pages with 10 blank pages for net of 34 pages with information)
1. This is a thick book in keeping with the others. It contains mostly personal information such as accounts with other collectors, supplies, mounting schemes and recipes, advertisements that he had run, along with stories, famous sayings and information on philatelic personalities. (340 pages with 98 blank pages for net of 242 pages with information)

2. Development of BIA seal, "technical reprints" of published articles, personals on employees of Bureau of Engraving and Printing and Post Office Department; change in plate number reporting, fakes, inspector's marks and minor odds and ends. (362 pages with 99 blank pages for net of 263 pages with information)
3. Personal collection checklists, mostly air mails, commemoratives and some precancels including playing cards and Washington D.C. (368 pages with 157 blank pages for net of 211 pages with information)
4. Some First Days, schedules, addresses; want lists; checklists of gum breakers, Kansas-Nebraskas; some revenues and odds like things to do look up. (206 pages with 74 blank pages for net of 132 pages with information)
5. Collection checklist of Bureau precancels, one city per sheet in alphabetical order – Presidential series and then only years 1938 – 1940. (Checklist not reproduced)
6. Personal collection checklists of U.S. plate numbers with some related information. (516 pages with 107 blank pages for net of 409 pages with information)
7. Pre-Bureau information (pre 1894) – mostly clippings and copied published material; plus some 1902 material and odds and ends on rotary plates, star plates, and questions to ask. (240 pages with 74 blank pages for net of 166 pages with information)
8. Primarily on gum, gum breakers, and little else on dies, etc. with apparently 21 pages on the latter loaned to George Sloane. (292 pages with 71 blank pages for net of 221 pages with information)
9. Production details – plate marginal markings, transferring and cleaners, paper, dimensions, chrome plating, electrolytic, pantograph work, etc. (496 pages with 116 blank pages for net of 380 pages with information)
10. Perforating notes, printing varieties; question on waste punching (cancelling). (460 pages with 109 blank pages for net of 351 pages with information)
11. Missing (loan to George Sloane). From numbering scheme however one can figure that it included information on the list and possible 2nd Bureau series of ordinaries – 1894 – 1902. (232 pages with 54 blank pages for net of 178 pages with information)
12. Third Bureau series, 1908 – 1911, such as information on the blue paper, china clay, chalky surface papers, first rotaries, types, double prints, etc. (184 pages with 49 blank pages for net of 135 pages with information)
13. Fourth Bureau series or ordinaries, 1922, including Kansas – Nebraska, and high value rotaries. (478 pages with 110 blank pages for net of 368 pages with information)
14. Fifth Bureau series, the Presidentials – covers design competition for which HMS was one of the judges. (250 pages with 90 blank pages for net of 160 pages with information)
15. U.S. air mails from 1918 issue to and including the 50c Trans-Pacific. (474 pages with 104 blank pages for net of 370 pages with information)
16. U.S. booklets with considerable information on the 1917 war booklets and the Lindbergh issue. (260 pages with 54 blank pages for net of 206 pages with information)

17. Bureau precancels, including historical background and including thus from 1916 - 1917 experimentals to the end of his records, ca. 1940; much technical details of plate, proof and shipment data. (496 pages with 98 blank pages for net of 398 pages with information)
18. Bureau precancels, general: compilations on prices, number of cities, orders, some varieties, counterfeits, etc. (564 pages with 141 blank pages for net of 423 pages with information)
19. Bureau precancels, alphabetically by cities. (602 pages with 168 blank pages for net of 434 pages with information)
20. U.S. coils and U.S. possessions. (490 pages with 161 blank pages for net of 329 pages with information)
21. U. S. commemoratives from Trans-Mississippi issue to and including the 1929 Edison and Clark issues. (310 pages with 88 blank pages for net of 222 pages with information)
22. U.S. commemoratives, from 1929 Sullivan to and including the 1932 Washington Bicentennial issue. (282 pages with 69 blank pages for net of 213 pages with information)
23. U.S. commemoratives, from the 1932 Winter Olympics to and including the National Park issue and the Farleys. (452 pages with 82 blank pages for net of 370 pages with information)
24. U.S. commemoratives, from 1935 – 1937, including the Army and Navy Series. (250 pages with 63 blank pages for net of 187 pages with information)
25. U.S. commemoratives, 1937 – 1940; plus sketchy information on U.S. envelopes and other back-of-the-book material. (376 pages with 129 blank pages for net of 247 pages with information)
26. U.S. revenues, special handling, special delivery, philatelic truck and other odds and ends. (360 pages with 108 blank pages for net of 252 pages with information)

As usual with Hugh McLellan Southgate's notes, they are very small and sometimes difficult to read; practically all are handwritten with most in ink but some in pencil.

CREDITS & ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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