



**EMPIRE STATE
POSTAL HISTORY
SOCIETY**

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THE COLLECTING GENE

By Heather Sweeting

Well, I've got it — the collecting gene. I think it first became evident to me at the age of 7, when I became completely obsessed with reading each and every Nancy Drew mystery in numerical order. It later blossomed to include everything from drums, Uncle Sam, Pez® dispensers, CDs, etc.

I can blame both sides of the family for this obsession ... and I'm betting that if you are reading this you are likely suffering from a similar mutation/genetic disposition. I know that my Dad was extremely amused and happy to share this obsession with me ... the thrill of the hunt, finding a missing item, or restoring some old furniture. That was until the



garage he built for storing old cars started to get filled up with my stuff as well. Parking in the garage was never really an option anyway. He had it much too full with other things!

When I moved into the family homestead in Fair Haven I assumed that my father had long ago relieved it of any philatelic materials. This was for the most part true ... but I did find one mystery cover among old papers in a drawer. This cover is certainly not a philatelic gem by any means. The edges of the envelope are rather worn and the three-cent war-rate stamp is torn. The mystery of this cover lies in the pathway it took overseas and back.

A LETTER FROM FAIRHAVEN

My great grandfather, C. (Charlie) Sant, mailed this letter from Fair Haven on May 20, 1918. (Note that FAIRHAVEN in this cancel is one word. Postmarks later separated the town name into two distinct words.) The letter was addressed to his son, Pvt. Joseph Lee Sant, 2nd [unreadable] Battlement Detachment, 2nd Training Brigade, Kelly Field, South San Antonio, Texas. The letter was received at KELLY JUNE Field (stamped in black twice over the address) and Forwarded (Rep) A.S.S. A A.E. F. (American Expeditionary Force) Via New

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