

# The CCCC and how it all started

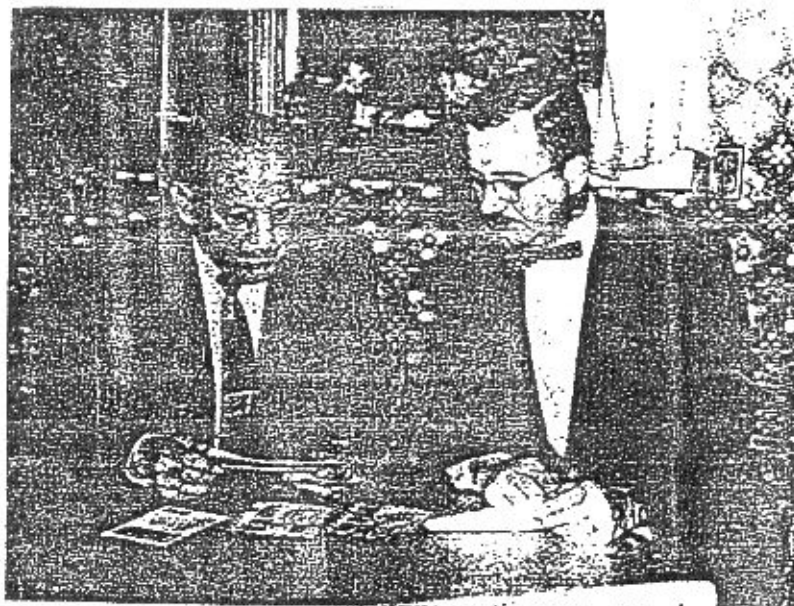
By MERRITT LETSON

Up until a year ago, the CCCC's didn't mean a thing to me, but then I met King Beal, and a whole new facet of an old hobby that I had almost completely forgotten was suddenly opened up for me.

I had been a stamp collector of sorts for several years. That is, I had all sorts of stamps in old cigar boxes, with a few neatly arranged in a loose-leaf binder. My interest had more than waned, it had almost faded out completely. Then one day I went to see King Beal, my neighbor. We were chatting about things far removed from stamps, when I spotted his mail lying on his desk. There were letters from Israel, East Germany, Japan,

nary forms were printed, and the CCCC was launched on March 5, 1947.

It was originally planned that the two men would originate all the circuits from Waterloo. They had about fifty names of people in other lands, and membership applications were sent out to these contacts. The immediate reaction can be most easily described as terrific. The idea of a circuit club caught the fancy of foreign collectors, and soon the applications began to roll in. In a few weeks, over 100 applications were received. Then the enrollment began to snow-ball, and in a few months, memberships had reached over 1,000. It soon became apparent that Mr.



King Beal, left, and C. Robert Pritchard, the heads of the CCCC, examine some covers that they received in the day's mail. Fancy foreign covers arrive daily at the post office box of the CCCC. Their box is Box 2535, Waterloo, Iowa.

Ryukyu, all bearing the most beautiful stamps that I had ever seen. I asked him where he got all the foreign contacts, and that, my friend, was my undoing. Who could resist those beautiful covers from all over the world.

That was when I got the story of the birth of the Cover Collectors Circuit Club. It seems that early in 1947, King began to formulate the plan for a cover collectors club that would link a number of collectors in this country with many foreign contacts for the purpose of exchanging first day covers. He talked to another advanced stamp and cover collector in Waterloo, Mr. C. Robert Pritchard, and after several meetings, the neces-

Beal and Mr. Pritchard could no longer handle it alone, and they began to screen the members of the Waterloo Stamp Club for collectors who were interested in fancy foreign covers. The idea caught on, and the word spread across the nation.

The phenomenal growth of the club is due to the fact that no other club offers such wonderful returns for so small an investment. The rules of membership are very simple. There are two kinds of members, the Originating Member and the Circuit Member. The O. M. must be a resident of the U. S. or Canada. All circuits originate from the O. M., and are sent to the foreign members, or Circuit

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Members who forward them on as per instructions contained in the circuit. In order to enroll as an O. M., one must be recommended by an O. M., or belong to a national philatelic organization with its headquarters in this country. Or you may send the names of three business men in your community. The age limit for O. M.'s is twenty-one.

There is no membership fee for O. M.'s, but in order to defray the cost of the printed matter necessary to be active in the club, a fee of \$2 is needed. For enrolling foreign members, the O. M. keeps the membership fee sent him by the new circuit member and thus his supplies are paid for with only two enrollments. The C. M. must send either \$1 U. S. currency or money order, or ten I. R. Coupons or fifty mint stamps of the country with a catalogue value of \$1, not more than five of a kind. This entitles him to a life-time membership, with no further dues. The C. M. must be sixteen years old or older.

At this writing, the CCCC has over 32,000 members in 200 different countries, and some 700 O. M.'s representing nearly all the states and all the Provinces of Canada. There are twelve CCCC Chapters located from coast to coast: Rochester and Buffalo, New York, Hartford, Conn., Chicago and Waukegan, Ill., Kenosha, Wis., Spencer and Keokuk, Iowa, Portland and Klamath Falls, Ore., and Seattle and Sedro Woolley, Washington. This record of amazing growth makes the CCCC the largest cover club in the world. The club has brought romance, adventure, pleasure and profit to stamp and cover collectors all over the world. Members are kept active both here and abroad through the circuit system. Your returns are in direct proportion to your circuit activity. Each O. M. receives a new membership list every two months listing all the new members in foreign countries, and showing any address changes of old members. This is only one of the services that Mr. Beal, a writer for a local radio station, and Mr. C. Robert Pritchard, vice-president of a local wholesale firm, perform as officers in the CCCC. Mr. Beal is secretary of the club, and it takes every spare minute of his time to take care of the processing of the new members, while Mr. Pritchard, circuit director, makes up all the supplies and sends them to the O. M.'s. The CCCC is a non-profit organization, and in the ten years of its existence, the rough spots have been ironed out, and it now runs like clock-work.

Yes, from a very small beginning just ten years ago, the fame of the CCCC has spread to the far corners of the world. In these days of international tension, it is a link with freedom for many who have the misfortune of being trod on by the Communists. It is too bad that the statesmen of our world cannot take the cue from our 32,000 friends, representing every race, color and religious creed, yet live in complete friendship with one another. May the work of the CCCC continue, and may it be profitable for YOU, just as it has been for me.