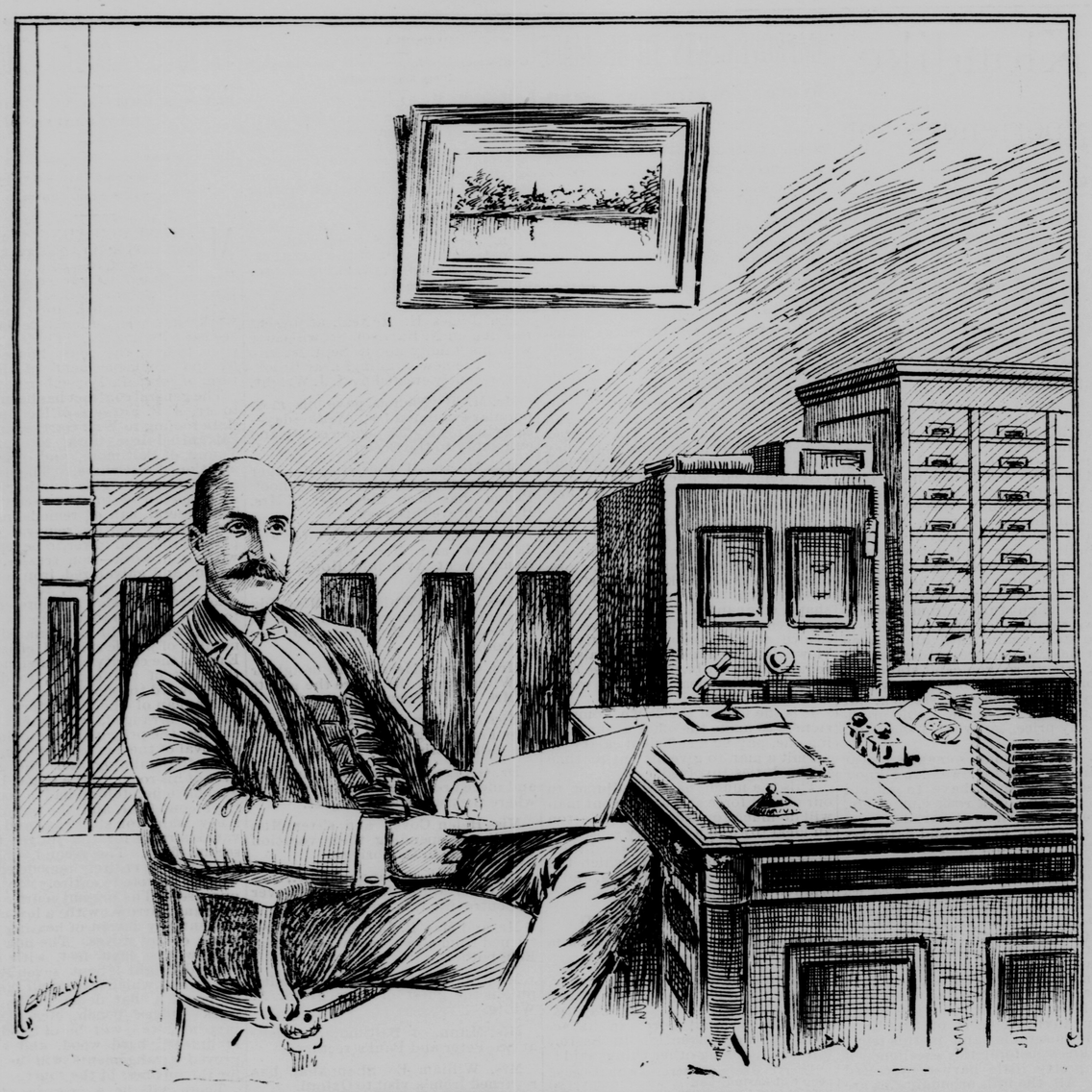
# Internal Revenue Collector B. F. Parlett, and his very Important Duties.



COLLECTOR PARLETT IN HIS PRIVATE OFFICE. Kindly loaned by Sunday Herald.

Not even the departure of the Maryland troops for the front brought home so forcibly to Baltimoreans the fact that the war existed as did the great rush for the revenue stamps when they were placed on sale at the office of Internal Revenue Collector Benjamin F. Parlett.

It is an old saying that when you touch a man's pocketbook he begins to realize, and it is most appropriately applied to the present situation. Thousands of Baltimoreans had lined the streets to cheer the troops on their way, but the actual number affected by the departure of these young men was comparatively insignificant.

Baltimoreans were reading the war news in the papers, but it all seemed a long way off. Manila Bay, on the other side of the globe, was a new world, and even Santiago and Porto Rico, though nearer home, failed to appeal to the average man of affairs. He read the news, but it seemed all dim and misty, for his business was not affected in any way.

But then came the passage of the war-revenue bill, with its countless provisions and whereases, and the ordinary man perceived at once that he was to play a part, no matter how small, in the great international drama. He began to ask questions, to see just how he was affected; he scanned the newspapers more closely, and, perhaps, he even sighed at the wasting of shot and shell on Cuban fortifications, shot and shell for which he must, in his modest and unassuming way, help to pay for.

As July 1 appeared, this man of business, this Baltimorean who was beginning to realize that war was really on, became even more anxious and excited. He knew that he must have the war-tax stamps in order to continue certain features of his business, but he also learned that the war-tax stamps were not yet on sale. The prospect alarmed him, for he feared that he might have to discontinue his lucrative business until the stamps were ready.

**How Crowds Were Handled.**

It was this method of reasoning which resulted in that wild stampede toward the internal revenue office. Hundreds of merchants feared the prospect of having to shut up shop on account of lack of stamps, and they all, of one accord, straightway rushed off to consult the Collector. In the corridors outside the Collector's office and in the rooms on the two or three days immediately preceding and following the 1st of July there were scenes enacted that baffled description.

A largely augmented force of clerks, trying to do justice to all comers, were dealing out, in proportion, the few stamps which had been received, while on the outside were clamoring thousands begging not to be left out in the distribution. The clerks worked rapidly, doing the very best to satisfy all comers. It was impossible for them to do so, however, owing, as said before, to the small number of stamps which the department at Washington had sent over. Immediate wants were attended to, and applicants had to rest content with this. Later stamps began to come in larger quantities, and then things settled down to the normal situation.

During the great rush, and, in fact, for the week preceding it, Collector Parlett was easily the busiest man in town. Coming down to his office each morning, he spent 10 or 12 hours at his desk, working as hard as any clerk in his office. It was due in no small measure to his own labors that the crisis passed off as well as it did. Mr. Parlett was even more worried over the lack of stamps than the people on the outside, who formed the clamoring mob. He begged and plead with the authorities at Washington to give him a fair supply, well knowing what the demand would be, but the Department could not give what it did not have.

During the great rush he was everywhere; now in the main office superintending the distribution of the stamps; now mingling with the crowd trying to pacify the most impatient ones; now in his office trying to answer some of the thousand and one technical questions which were all hurled at him at one and the same time. The interpretation of the law for the benefit of the man who did not think he was required to use a stamp on this or that article was one of the most perplexing features of the whole situation, but the Collector came out of the ordeal without having turned gray, and still wearing that smile which his friends, and even the public, have come to know so well.

**The Collector's Office.**

Collector Parlett's office, where he can always be found during business hours, is in the northeast corner of the Postoffice Building on the second floor. It is a fair-sized room, furnished in that heavy manner which the Government affects in all public offices, and is well lighted by two large windows. The Collector's desk is right beside the door. It is a roll-top affair, having numerous well-stocked pigeon-holes, denoting the fact that the Collector is a busy man.

There is no red tape about approaching him, provided he is not too busy. People who know him walk right into his private office and are greeted with a cordial salutation and a hearty shake of the hand. Strangers speak to one of the clerks, and if the Collector is at leisure, are ushered in at once. Mr. Parlett believes in coming down to business and getting at the root of the matter at once. He talks rapidly but cogently, and makes all decisions quickly though not thoughtlessly. He seems to grasp the subject-matter in an instant. To the clerks in the office the Collector is always cordial and pleasant. He moves around among them a great deal, seeing that all matters are attended to promptly, and scanning every feature of the work.

The office force is a large one and must needs be, as the volume of business transacted there yearly amounts well up into the millions. The employes are scattered through a suite of rooms extending the full length of the east corridor in the big grey granite pile. Just off the Collector's room is that occupied by the chief deputies and stenographer. This is a larger room than the Collector's, and is lighted by four big windows, two facing on Lexington street and two on North street. This is also the reception and waiting rooms for visitors to the Collector.

The next room to this on the south is occupied by more of the chief clerks, and is directly connected with the big outer office, where practically all the business is transacted. Here are all the bookkeepers, license clerks and so forth, to the number of 30 or more. Each man has his desk and his own official line of work. The main part of the office is railed off from the room for the public. Back of this office is the vault where all the valuables, including the precious stamps, are kept. It was in this big outer office that most of the exciting scenes during the rush for the stamps were enacted.

**Everything Quiet Now.**

Now the whole office is as quiet as if war-tax stamps had never been heard of. There is no great hurry or excitement, and things are going along as smoothly as in any well-regulated business house. The clerks have not yet finished up all the work in connection with the first issue of the stamps, but everything is in shipshape order nevertheless. When it is considered that during the month of July the office has transacted almost double the amount of business it did in the same month last year, it will be seen that there have been busy times in the neighborhood of Mr. Parlett's apartments.

No statement can be made as to the exact figures for July, for the obvious reason that the Collector is not permitted to give out such information, all queries on the subject being referred to Washington. It is, however, not very far from correct to say that the receipts so far from the war tax in Baltimore will foot up nearly a million dollars. That is a pretty big sum, when you come to consider it, but it only represents a drop in the exhaustless bucket from which the Government draws its sinews of war.

In the fiscal year ending July 1, the internal revenue collections in the Baltimore office, which draws tribute from Maryland, Delaware, District of Columbia and the counties of Accomac and Northampton in Virginia, amounted to about $6,000,000. This year it is expected that the collections will amount to at least $10,000,000, of which $3,000,000 will surely represent the donations to the war fund. Of course these figures are quite unofficial, but they are based on reliable statements.

**Traders' Licenses.**

The general public is more intimately concerned with the little adhesive stamps than with the big traders's licenses. The little fellows are found everywhere, on patent medicines, express packages, telegrams, checks and a hundred and one other documents. It was to get these that the rush was made. Now everybody has a goodly supply, but should there suddenly be a great demand for them, the internal revenue office would be equal to the demand, having hundreds of thousands of all descriptions locked up in the big vault.

These little stamps are of two classes, documentary and proprietary. The former is self-explanatory. The latter classes are used principally on patent medicines and other proprietary articles. The documentary stamps are ½ cent, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 10, 25 and 50 cents, and $1, $3, $5, $10 and $50. The proprietary stamps are ⅛, ¼, ⅜ and ⅝ of 1 cent, 1, 1¼, 2, 2¼, 4 and 5 cents. The Government used the regulation one-cent postage stamp marked "I.-R." in the early rush, but now they have the real article, which is very much like the ordinary stamp, though perhaps a trifle larger.

During the past week the official force was engaged in circulating the special tax stamps for traders and dealers. This was somewhat of a job, and on Thursday and Friday there was a great rush on the office, though not as notable a one as occurred when the small stamps were distributed. The work of getting out the license stamps is now practically over. It was finished up last night.

After today, by the way, a trader or dealer who is liable for this special tax and who has failed to secure his stamps will have to pay just half as much again, or 50 per cent. more for it. These stamps are somewhat similar to the old internal revenue licenses for liquor dealers, the coupons being torn off to show the amount of time paid for. They must be hung up conspicuously in the store. Each contains the name of the dealer and place of business, there being a special blank for each line of business. As these stamps will bring in the greater part of the revenue, the following list, showing those liable to the tax, will be interesting:

**Businesses That Are Taxed.**

Under the provisions of the internal revenue laws of the United States, every person engaged in any business avocation or employment which renders him liable to a special tax is required to procure and place and keep conspicuously in his establishment or place of business a stamp denoting the payment of said special tax for the special tax year beginning July 1, 1898, before commencing or continuing business after June 30, 1898. A return as prescribed on Form 11 is also required by law of every person liable to special tax as above. The taxes embraced within the provisions above quoted are the following, viz:

Rectifiers of less than 500 barrels, $100.

Rectifiers of 500 barrels or more, $200.

Dealers, retail liquor, $25.

Dealers, wholesale liquor, $100.

Dealers in malt liquors only, wholesale, $50.

Dealers in malt liquors only, retail, $20.

Retail dealers in oleomargarine, $48.

Wholesale dealers in oleomargarine, $480.

Manufacturers of oleomargarine, per annum, $600.

Manufacturers of stills, $50.

And for each still manufactured, $20.

And for each worm manufactured, $20.

Brewers of less than 500 barrels, $50.

Brewers of 500 barrels or more, $100.

Manufacturers of filled cheese, $400.

Wholesale dealers in filled cheese, $250.

Retail dealers in filled cheese, $12.

Bankers—On capital and surplus of $25,000, $50; for each additional $1,000 of capital or surplus, $2.

Brokers, $50.

Pawnbrokers, $20.

Commercial brokers, $20.

Custom-house brokers, $10.

Proprietors or lessees of theaters, museums and concert halls in cities of over 25,000 population, $100.

Proprietors of circuses, $100.

Proprietors of all other exhibitions or shows for money, $10.

Proprietors of bowling alleys and billiard rooms, for each alley or table, $5.

Dealers in leaf tobacco, for sales not exceeding 50,000 pounds, $6.

Dealers in leaf tobacco, for sales exceeding 50,000 and not exceeding 100,000 pounds, $12.

Dealers in leaf tobacco, for sales exceeding 100,000 pounds, $24.

Dealers in tobacco (persons who sell manufactured tobacco, snuff or cigars) whose annual sales exceed 50,000 pounds, $12.

Manufacturers of tobacco whose annual sales do not exceed 50,000 pounds, $6.

Manufacturers of tobacco whose annual sales exceed 50,000 and do not exceed 100,000 pounds, $12.

Manufacturers of tobacco whose annual sales exceed 100,000 pounds, $24.

Manufacturers of cigars whose annual sales do not exceed 100,000 cigars per annum, $6.

Manufacturers of cigars whose annual sales exceed 100,000 but do not exceed 200,000, $12.

Manufacturers of cigars whose annual sales exceed 200,000 per annum, $24.

Manufacturers and packers of mixed flour (on and after August 12, 1898), $12.—*Baltimore Sunday Herald.*

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