

Were the First “Dead Heads” Special Agents? (Images)

By Steven W. Hooper

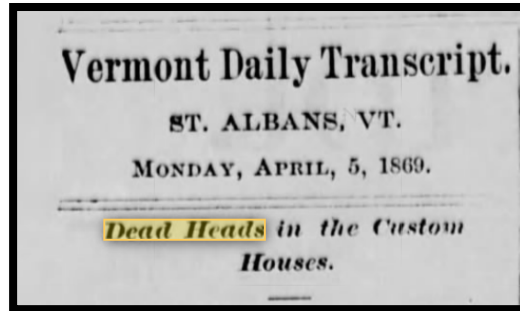


Figure 1: Headline in the *Vermont Daily Transcript* critical of Treasury special agents. The newspaper supported local U.S. Customs officers led by Collector of Customs General George J. Stannard who was a Civil War hero. The *Transcript* felt there was no need for special agents to “watch over” U.S. Customs operations in the State of Vermont.

Source: “Dead Heads in the Customs Houses,” *Vermont Daily Transcript* (Saint Albans, Vermont), April 5, 1869, p. 2.

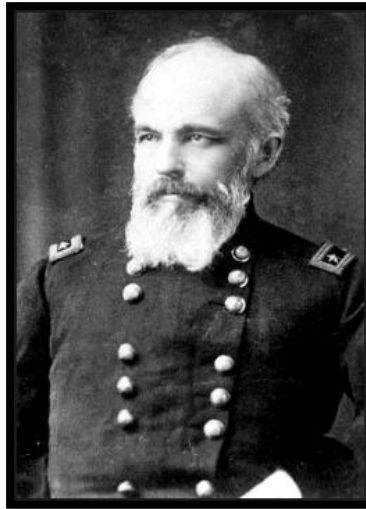


Figure 2: Major General George J. Stannard (1820-1886) and his Vermont troops are credited with repelling Pickett’s Charge at the Battle of Gettysburg. Major General Abner Doubleday observed after the battle, “I can only say that they performed perhaps the most brilliant feat during the war. For they broke the desperate charge of Pickett, saved the day and with it, the whole North from invasion and devastation.” In 1868, General Stannard was appointed Collector of Customs for Vermont. Later he served as a doorkeeper of the U.S. House of Representatives.

Source: Wikipedia website, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_J._Stannard.



*Figure 3: (L) Singer songwriter Jerry Garcia (1942-1995), leader of the band *The Grateful Dead*. The band developed a group of colorful fans known as “Deadheads” who followed them around the United States during their tours. The band’s 1987 song “Touch of Grey” was their only hit song to reach the top ten charts. The song is about the band aging gracefully.*

Source: *American Routes* website, <http://americanroutes.wwno.org/archives/show/449/Jerry-Garcia>.



*Figure 4: The Romanesque style U.S. Customhouse in St. Albans, Vermont was completed in 1896 after the criticism of special agents by the *Transcript*. According to the website SAH Archipedia, “By 1905 this custom office ranked among the top 20 percent in the nation in receipts. In the 1920s a monthly average of 5,000 bottles of liquor were confiscated at the border crossings in its charge. Violations reported in 1928 included the seizure of 190 cars and more than 100,000 bottles of ‘spirituous beverages’ valued at \$250,000.”*

Source: Society of Architectural Historians website, <https://sah-archipedia.org/buildings/VT-01-FR37>.