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September 13, 2004

Professor Tom Averill
Washburn University
Topeka, KS

Re: Stan Pennell

Dear Professor Averill:

A number of years ago, you presented a talk at our local library, and I talked to you afterward. You kindly loaned me materials you had on Stanley Pennell. I see you are talking again here this weekend on Stan; unfortunately, I won't be able to attend.

Back in eighth grade at Junction City Junior High, my English teacher, Mary Louise Scothorn, talked about this local writer who had written a great book but had been driven out of town by a loud merry-go-round. Somehow, that sparked an interest in Pennell in me, and I have sort of made him my "project." (I recently discovered she had been in high school with him here in Junction, graduating in 1922, a year after Stan)

I am enclosing a couple articles I wrote for the local paper. My wife and I spent a day in Eugene, Ore., at the University, going through Pennell's papers (3 large boxes) - we didn't have time to read it all, but had copies made of some of the letters, articles and essays (published and unpublished). His third (and unpublished) novel is in the collection - someday I'd like to read it or get a copy of it (a glance at a few pages showed it was even "darker" than his first two).

I am also enclosing a copy of my notes from a conversation with Leona Crabtree Glick - the second page has her memories of Stan. There aren't many around anymore who really knew Stan - I suspect Mrs. Miscoe out in Seaside is dead by now.

One other bit on info: the little house Rev. Bagnall lived in was demolished shortly after my article appeared (I don't think there was a connection!). The house Stan grew up in at 228 W. Fourth St. is still there - a stylized version of it is on either the dust jacket or title page of "Nora Beckham." The stained glass window he describes the fern plant being in (in "Beckham") is on the east side.

Just thought I'd share this stuff with you. Use it if you want. Good luck with your talk!