

The Cover Story

What Cover Is In Your Collection?

by Phil Fettig

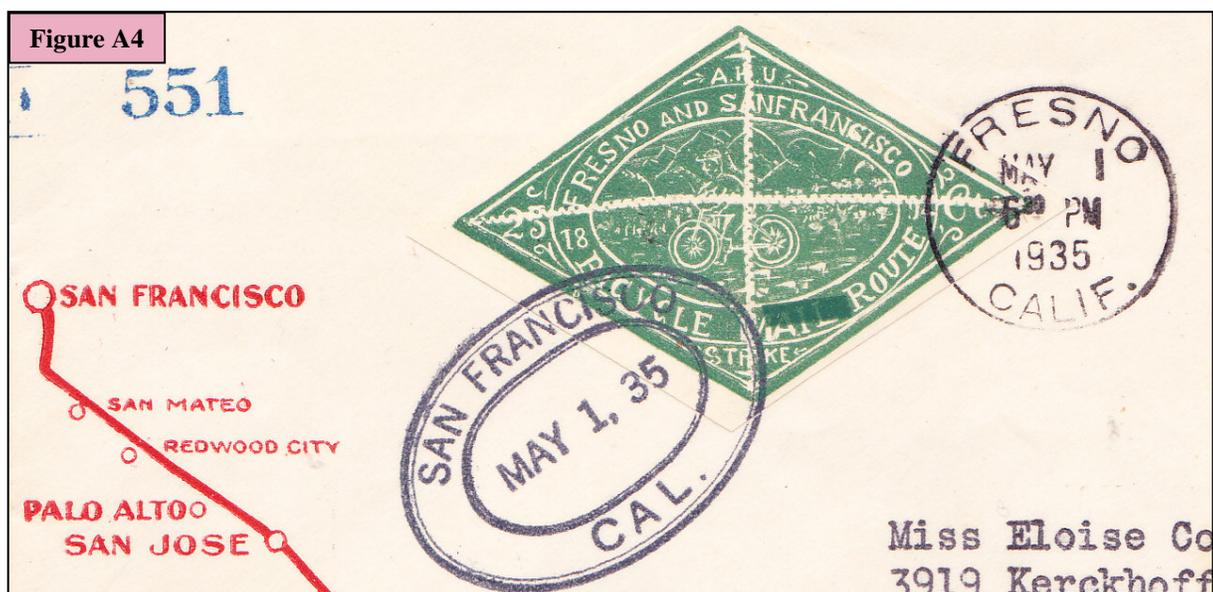
Remember the commercial that asks: “What credit card is in your wallet”? I recently purchased a large collection of Philatelic “stuff” that included thousands of covers. Unfortunately, this collector never met a UN first day cover that he did not love! Even after boxing those up (For what purpose I don't know) Ann and I were left with hours of items to search through. I guess I could try writing an article on the number of early covers with early Scott numbers, such as 11, 26, etc, on them, but how many of you would really be interested?

What really was fascinating to me was the many ways collectors, especially in the 1930s – 1950s, could use their imagination to either make up covers or define their interest in a topic. The additional benefit to collecting in this manner was it appeared to be relatively inexpensive.

Several factors combined to make this period a heyday for cover collecting. Society was forging ahead after the Depression. Transportation was improving with better roads, more trains and aircraft. Postal regulations were lax on controlling locally produced cancel devices. The reasons to collect covers in one form or another were as big as your imagination and many individual covers could match different areas of interest. What follows did not take major philatelic knowledge or cost, just an awareness of what might make something collectable. One departure from norm will be noticed. Due space limitations, most items have been cropped just to show the main point. Sit back, take a trip and I hope you enjoy or get a new idea of what to collect!

Figure (A1) on front cover is from a WWII Patriotic Cover, collectable in its own right. However, the neat thing here is the name of Squirrel, Idaho, with the appropriate cancel. I could not find a current post office by that name, but the area is (or was) an unincorporated area in a National Forest in Idaho. Just over the state line is Yellowstone National Park. We have several covers from that period with “fancy” cancels showing unusual

use of common names. **Figure (A2) on front cover** shows a cover mailed beneath the earth's surface in Carlsbad Cavern with a 1932 cancel of the same name. This item could also be shown in a Rotary International collection.



This country was settled by many families moving west in a Conestoga Wagon. **Figure (A3) on front cover** is from a 1964 trip from Lancaster, PA to Triadelphia, WV in 1954. In 1894, a railroad strike disrupted mail in California. A local delivery system was set up using bicycles to deliver mail between Fresno and San Francisco. **Figure (A4)** shows part of the route and a reproduction of the local stamp used. The last method of transportation shown in this article is by dispatch in a Goodyear Airship. **Figure (A5)** shows a cachet, a rubber stamp cachet and the notation that special mail was dispatched.

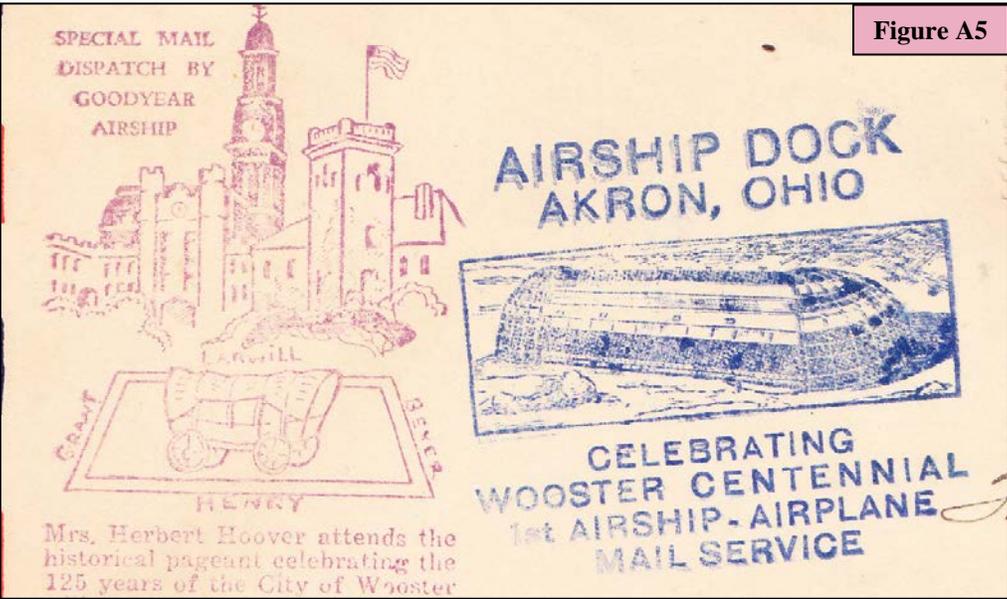


Figure A5

Even an uncached first day cover can be used. I'm sure **figure (A6)** started out life in that manner. I believe the color cachet was added after the cover received the 2nd Tallahassee FD cancel 57 years after the Florida Centennial FD cancel. Another Florida related item is **Figure (A7)** showing St. Petersburg, a blimp, airplane, sailing ship and the famous Million Dollar Pier. The cancel is from the USS CONSTITUTION, a very big collecting interest all by itself.



Figure A6

Finally, we close out our Florida related items (and the article) with a cover from the Clermont Citrus Tower. This cover honors the opening of the Citrus Tower Post Office Station. So, there you have it – how many ways can you collect covers or stamps? Actually – really only one – The way you want to do it!

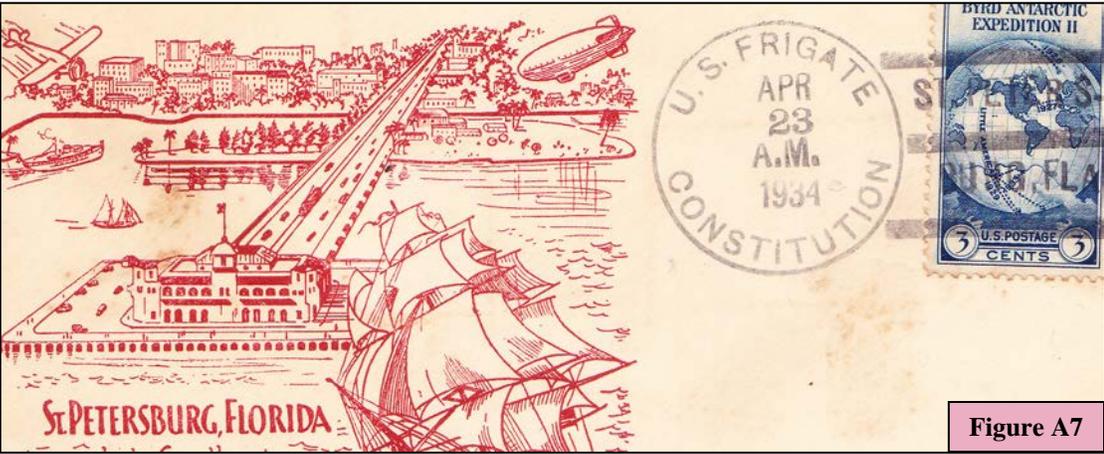


Figure A7