

The Cover Story

Local Postal History Comes at a Price

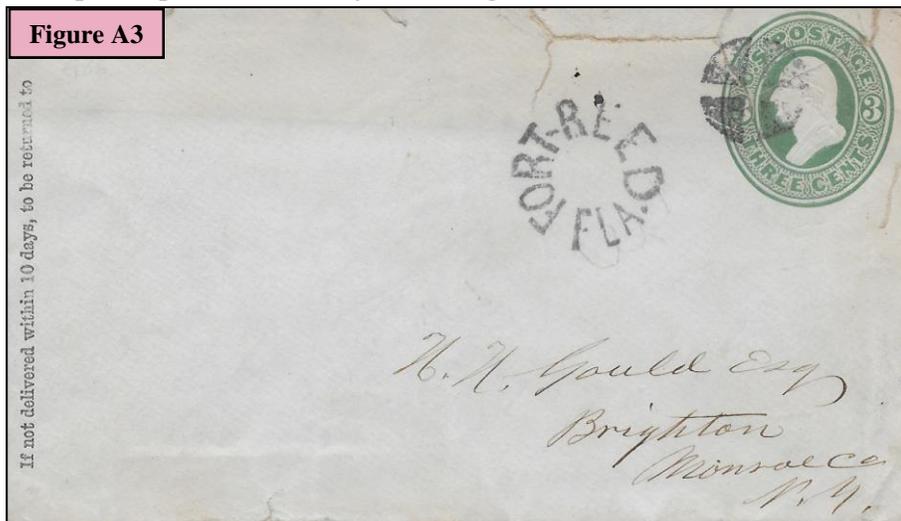
by A. Stephen Patrick

When I attend the APS annual show or FLOREX, my main shopping these days is looking in the boxes marked Florida Postal History. The search can lead to emptying one's wallet of his budgeted income with only one purchase.

Some boxes may contain cheap post cards, 20th century covers, Postique marks, airport openings, last day cancels of closing post offices, event cancels, and other miscellaneous markings worth \$1.00 to \$25. I'm always looking for bargains.

However, several dealers have those elusive covers from the 19th century from discontinued post offices (DPO's), interesting railroad post office (RPO) markings, advertising corner cards, and interesting cancellations that put the cover in the \$25 to \$100 range. Those really pricey \$100 to \$1000 and up stampless covers are usually in a notebook or "special box" that is opened with great care and with an eye to try and see whether the customer has the funds to afford such items.

For this article I share a cover [Figure A1, on front cover] bought several years ago that even after bargaining with the dealer cost more than \$50. What drew me to it? First was the color advertisement for the Mallory Line whose steam vessels brought many tourists from New York City and up the St. Johns River to Sanford, Florida. Second was the light octagonal cancel from Fort Reed, now a DPO and a suburb of Sanford. Third was the example of postal stationery #U 35 light blue one cent Franklin on cream stock with the mixed use of a Scott's



#183 two-cent vermilion Jackson to make a three-cent rate.

At FLOREX 2018 I was able to buy two Ft. Reed covers from the 1870s to help document this post office's development. The large circular Fort Reid cancel [Figure A2, on front cover] from 1876 is spelled like the Florida territorial governor who had died about the time the 1839 military fort was founded – Reid. The next cover [Figure A3] corrects the spelling to Fort Reed, the more common spelling used for 40 years until the

town was absorbed by Sanford.

Since then, researching the addressee on Figure A1 on the front cover, Major G. W. Wyly, I found that he was a prominent citizen and businessman of Savannah, GA, who built a winter estate in Sanford and would come each season until his death in 1905 in Sanford. George Washington Wyly was an alderman of Savannah that participated in the surrender of the city to Sherman in 1864 that saved its destruction. He owned significant orange groves in Sanford until the 1894/5 freeze.

I have discovered that in trying to tell the postal history of Central Florida that the best stories probably won't be found in the dollar boxes.

Stamp Collecting on eBay!

by Mike Schumacher

As we stamp collectors add to our collections, we find various ways to locate that elusive “must have” item to fill a space in an album, add to an exhibit, or to write an article about. Of course, we have found some of those items at club auctions, stamp shows, dealer approvals and auction catalogs, but a newer method has been searching “eBay”. I first started adding to my collection with eBay offerings almost 16 years ago. Back then I proceeded with caution and skepticism, however as purchases worked out successfully and I got to know some of the people that I was buying from, I must say stamp collecting from eBay has been very successful.

One of the things that I find helpful shopping eBay, is seeing what prices are realized on completed transactions. Thus, I can get a good sense of what to pay for items. Sellers of course are looking to make a fair profit for their efforts, but it is amazing the wide range of starting price an item is listed at.



Being patient can be helpful when the price seems a bit high, as in time another may come along with a lower starting price.

Sometimes, however when that item is that elusive “must have item” to improve an exhibit there may be other bidders and it requires watching the listing closely in the final minutes of the sale --- to be able to make that last minute bid to secure the purchase. Some things just get away to a higher bidder with deeper pockets.

All-in-all adding to my collection from eBay has been a very successful method. I have

automatic searches that result in receiving an email notice when an item that I am looking for becomes available, and of course getting to know some of the sellers helps in that when they come across items that they know I am looking for, they will alert me and sometimes offer me the items before they are listed on eBay. So, eBay can be a very useful tool for stamp collectors. However, occasionally “buyer beware”, sometimes a seller gets it wrong, as seen in the example **Figure A4**: “Iceland Scott 115 © extra fine used 10 Aur, mute cancel”.

Needless to say --- this is no Iceland stamp!

Best of success to all collectors as they pursue their collecting passion!

[Editor’s note: eBay is the wild and woolly world. Not everything is as it appears. Common sense must dictate what one does on eBay. The fever of last-minute bidding can sometimes end in a serious case of buyer remorse. I must credit eBay for my return to the hobby in 1998, but I also have learned to view an enticing eBay listing with a jaundice eye before bidding. Common sense must be rule – not the exception!]