

The Cover Story

“Library” Postal Cards Part II By Josh Furman

Melvil Dewey (remember the Dewey Decimal System?) who was a stickler for efficiency and standardization lobbied the Post Office for many years to issue postal cards in a size that could be used by libraries.

In 1898 the Post Office responded to his request and issued a card that was 1/16 of an inch smaller on each side than a standard 3" by 5" index card. Scott's Stamp Catalogue identifies this card as UX 15. Collectors of postal stationary refer to this postal card and subsequent postal cards of this size as "library cards". See Fig. 3.

The next iteration came on January 21, 1911 when UX23 was issued. It measured 3" x 5", the same size as the common index card. In addition to use by libraries, this card became common for personal mailing as well. See Fig. 4.

Other cards in the "library" size were UX26, a one cent green version of UX23, UX28, a one cent green with a different picture of Abraham Lincoln, UX40, which was UX28 revalued to two cents, and UX43 which was the second Lincoln design but in a red, two cents version.

These cards are a fascinating field of study and collection, partly for their usages, and partly for the varieties and errors that one can find, especially in the overprinted issues.

Please note that the first part of this article appeared in the August newsletter which can be found online at www.CentralFloridaStampClub.org



Fig. 9. UX43. Postal cards have first days too. This was the last "library" card issued.

Summer Philatelic Adventures

By Josh Furman

Steve and Josh had a great time in Richmond, VA at the APS Summer Show on the weekend of August 12 – 15. There were many dealers, including the ones with dollar boxes (yum, yum!) Our hotel was one of two catering specially to show-goers. It was diagonally across the street from the Richmond Convention Center where all the action was. Our very reasonable room rate included a full breakfast, even with custom-made omelets, and the hotel staff couldn't have been more courteous and helpful.

Josh spent all four days at the show, partly shopping and largely flogging his newly published book to any and all who would listen to all the reasons they needed this book in their library. So Josh did acquire two precanceled postal cards, some bureau-precanceled stamps and several other treasures from the dollar box.

Steve's quest was attractively decorated first day covers, art, and cacheted covers autographed by the designer, Chris Calli—as nice and as talented a young man as you'd want to meet. He, too, ravaged the dollar boxes for treasures to bring home, including some early Florida covers. Steve took some time off from the show—history buff that he is—to visit St. Paul's church, John Marshall's House, the White House of the Confederacy and Confederate Museum, and the state capitol.



Neither of us ignored the hundreds of pages of championship exhibits that were on display. See the photo of Steve listening to Elliot Landau discuss his “Lincoln, Slavery and the Civil War”. Elliot is a showman and has a number of gold medal exhibits to his name. This one is spectacular! It includes free franks by Lincoln, including the only one known when he was a congressman. The emotional wrench in this exhibit is the child's shackle, shown hanging between the first two frames of the exhibit just above Elliot's arm.

We urge all who are able: visit these APS shows. The dealer representation is wide and the exhibits are indeed extraordinary.

Trivia question: What was the hobby of stamp collecting called before it became 'philately'? Bonus question: Roughly when did the transition take place? Answers next month.

[by Josh Furman]