

Finding Treasures

Are multiples on cover an investment?

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Not long ago at a large stamp show, I came across the cover shown above of the 1926 2-cent booklet pane (Scott No. 563a) and found it priced as an ordinary use when, in fact, it is a nice first day cover from the rather well known (at the time) Washington, D.C., stamp dealer, H.F. Colman. It was the stamp dealer corner card that caught my eye first—for I figured, if a stamp dealer had sent the cover, it might be something out of the ordinary.

This is one example of blocks and even large multiples used on cover—there are another four shown above. Over the course of time, I've come upon a little known fact: if one stays pretty much in the pre-1940 era, covers that are franked with sizable multiples of a given stamp (especially scarce to semi-scarce stamps like the Scott No. 833, the

\$2.00 Presidential Series stamp), can bring a nice premium in the marketplace.

This can be especially true when such multiples (like the registered cover above bearing no fewer than 16 copies of Scott No. 573, the \$5.00 definitive of 1922—including two plate number blocks) are not gratuitously applied to a cover and actually help make up a legitimate postage rate. This \$5.00 multiple use pays registry insurance for negotiable securities from a Chicago bank—a nice piece of postal history.

Take a look at the three George Rogers Clark stamps (No. 651) on the airmail cover with an air show cachet from 1929. This is another cover that might have been asleep for a number of years. At first glance, it's just another air show cover. But examine the fountain pen scrawl just to the lower left of the bottom Detroit, Michigan, postmark. That is the signature of Amelia Earhart—an added attraction that, conserva-

tively, drives up the value of the cover from about \$20 to nearly \$2,000! It's not the multiples of the Clark stamp that make the cover so unusual, but it's nice to have an Earhart autograph on cover where the stamps overpaid the 5-cent airmail rate by one cent.

The Simionescu stamp dealer business reply cover definitely does bear a gratuitous franking—four of No. C13, the 65-cent Graf Zeppelin stamp. Try as one might, one will never find an appropriate rate for this cover, but since such Zepps are rather unusual on common covers, the use could sell for well over \$700.

Multiples, especially larges one, on covers are always conversation pieces—but they are also generally worth more than ordinary covers with smaller frankings. Not to mention how beautiful they can be! ✉