

America's Archives

Often enchanting stories of historic documents and artifacts (including sometimes ones that are postally related)—and how things that may have once seemed rather ordinary can turn out to be important treasures. On other occasions, they immediately become artifacts of history the minute they were created.

Civil War Mails: BOTH SIDES

Though it may seem impossible, various pieces of correspondence from the Civil War era of the 1860s are still turning up on the market. Some of these items may, of course, have been in someone's stamp collection over many decades and only now are seeing the light of day after many decades. But there are other examples that have truly been stored away in an attic for nearly 150 years. Shown here are some examples of Civil War covers that are among the chief areas of American postal history that continue to climb in value every year.

A world famous patriotic cover from the Confederate States of America in 1861 showing President Abraham Lincoln being hung in effigy. Such a cover would bring over \$20,000 if sold today.



Many people showed their patriotism during the Civil War by applying colorful stickers to their mail. This cover shows a red, white and blue Union shield on this cover from Kentucky to Ohio in 1862.



A rare Confederate patriotic cover that demonstrates "wishful thinking" on the part of the maker: a 12-star CSA flag, which depicts three more states than the Confederacy actually had. A stampless use valued at \$2,500.

When it came to expressing their candid and true feelings, the citizens of both sides during the Civil War spared no words when making up patriotic sentiments on their mails. At left, a group of Union flags are draped around the slogan, "Annihilation to Traitors." This particular cover is one of only a few known with this sentiment in the cachet. The cover was sent from Philadelphia to Springfield, Mass. The value is nearly \$1,000.

Fred Schmitt's

PERSPECTIVE



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This brings up the subject of the various containers and wrappings that have conveyed our mail over the years. Look at the photo above—a small box sent within Germany 70 years ago. Who knows what it contained, but the very fact that it still exists helps to place a nice value on it of perhaps \$75.

Mail was sent in all sorts of conveyances: mailing tubes for maps, charts and blueprints, tiny boxes for things like mens' smoking pipes, giant cardboard envelopes for huge photographs, and of course, simple wrapping paper for Christmas gifts and packages for soldiers overseas.

Most of these containers were simply torn up and thrown away. Few of them exist today—but the ones that do exist are to be kept and, hopefully, sold to someone who knows their value. That's where we can come in mighty handy. If it carried the mails anytime, anywhere, let us buy it from you!

Call us! You'll be glad you did.

