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Sought After Postcards

Always remember first, because old post card collecting is such an expansive subject, there are few experts. That puts you in the middle of the runners before you've even started the race. Secondly, remember there are millions of cards out there on virtually every subject. Many have been priced in a hurry and without knowledge. They show up at all the same flea markets, garage sales, shops and auctions you go to. You can have fun collecting old post cards perhaps even make money in the hobby. Begin by understanding because there's such a wide variety of postcards that they are collected and valued by category. Here's a few postcard categories much sought after by collectors. It's easy to understand why. Price averages are for early cards in good condition.

1. Artist Signed - Just as you'd be proud to hang a signed painting by Howard Chandler Christy, Thomas Kinkade, Kate Greenaway or Frederick Remington, so we should with signed postcards. Less famous of course, but equally prized postcard artists signed by Rose O'Neil, Charles Twelvetrees and many others can be recognized by their talent. Appraise postcards as you appraise art.

2. Mechanical and Hold up to the Light- People love gadgets. Occasionally, an old postcard is found with moving parts or a special message revealed when held up to light or even heat. Other varieties of Novelty cards are also collected.

3. Advertising - These cards draw the collectors: Coca-Cola, S & H Green Stamps, International Harvester, Bell Telephone, Expo's and Fairs, etc.. Interesting small business ads like, "Dr. Keating's Wooden Legs," are also coveted.

4. Pioneer - Rare early Souvenir, Mail or Correspondence Cards with US Postal markings dating from 1861 to May 19, 1898.

Truthfully, the only difference between you and Post Card experts is time. If you'll invest a little more time in reading, you'll be that much nearer to expert status when it comes to Post Card.

5. View Cards - A majority of cards published in the United States are view or picture cards. Most valued are pre W.W.I cards with real brown-shaded sepia photos.

Later to come would be the color photo prints. Interesting shots are much more valuable than boring ones but then again that is in the eye of the beholder. What kind of views are interesting? Famous people, early aviation, trains & depots, Indians, disaster scenes, occupational and bird's-eye-views, etc..

6. Holiday Post Cards - Halloween, Thanksgiving, 4th of July and Saint Patrick's Day cards were not produced in great numbers like Christmas Cards. Christmas Cards are still very valuable especially if the picture is of an old fashioned Saint Nick in a coat of green, blue, or white compared with what is common today.

7. Political Cards - Like advertising postcards, political cards bring a new category of collector into the market. One card featuring Uncle Sam scolding a baseball uniformed Teddy Roosevelt for having already batting twice would definitely attract collectors.

8. By Manufacturer - Raphael Tuck and Sons are probably most famous. Early examples have a tiny easel in the corner on the picture side. Later cards will have Tuck's name or that of his brands: Oilette, Charmette, Raphotype, Rapholette, and Aquarette.

Of course, it's impossible to put everything about Post Card into just one article. But you can't deny that you've just added to your understanding about Post Card, and that's time well spent.

About the Author

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