

# FINDING FAMILY TREASURES ON eBay

By Judy Janes

eBay is the world's largest online auction community. There are 100 million registered members (buyers and sellers) around the world. In 2011, the total value of goods sold on eBay was \$68.6 billion.

What family-related treasures might you find on eBay? Look for special items which will bring to life a moment in your ancestor's past. Look for clues at home such as memorabilia from schools, veteran's organizations, sporting events, fraternal organizations, hospitals, employers, churches, vacation destinations, as well as marriage or death certificates, and obituaries.

## I. Some of the best places to start:

### A. Old postcards provide a photographic history.

1. Town or city, and county where your family lived.
2. Church or courthouse where ancestors were married.
3. Schools and churches they attended.
4. Street scenes of the era.
5. Catastrophes – floods, earthquakes, etc.
6. Train depots.
7. Veteran homes.

### B. Yearbooks and commemorative books.

1. High school or college.
2. Church.
3. Fraternal – Masonic, I.O.O.F, etc.
4. Veteran organizations.

### C. Family bibles

### D. Photos and photo albums.

1. Family members.
2. Photos from the area where your family lived.
3. Military
4. Special events.

### E. Books.

1. County and town histories.
2. Family histories.
3. Birth, marriage, cemetery books.
4. Military unit histories.
5. General history for a particular time period.
6. Ethnic histories – German, Huguenot, Dutch, Slovak, etc.
7. Always check book values at [www.bookfinder.com](http://www.bookfinder.com) BEFORE bidding.

### F. Grand Army of the Republic.

1. Artifacts – photos, rosters, postcards, buttons, swords, pins, cups, etc.
2. Ladies of the Grand Army of the Republic.
3. Women's Relief Corps.

### G. Old newspapers from the county or town where your family lived.

1. Provide advertisements.
2. A clear picture of what life was like at the time.
3. Marriage and obituary notices.

II. The key to your success is determined by the way you frame your searches. It is important to find relevant results among the millions of items listed.

A. Search for specific words not general ones.

1. Use the “titles and descriptions” search feature.
2. To be more specific use quotation marks such as “New York documents” or “Icabod Crane.”
3. Search for exact book titles in quotes.
4. Eliminate items by entering a minus sign before a word “St. Louis –Cardinals.”

B. Search for “old family bibles” and “antique family bibles.”

III. Set up custom searches and receive daily e-mail alerts.

A. Enter a search term either through the home page, or by using the “Advanced Search” web page.

1. Click on the “Add to Favorite Searches” link.
2. Check the box “Receive a daily e-mail when new items appear for” and enter the number of months you desire.
3. Click “Save Search.”

IV. How to set up an account.

A. See the “Learning Center” from the drop-down list under the “Customer Support” tab.

B. Register to become a member of eBay.

1. From the eBay home page, click on “Register.”
2. Choose a user name and password.
  - a. Choose your user name carefully as you shouldn’t change it later on.
  - b. It is a good idea to choose a password that includes both letters and numbers.

C. Set up a PayPal account from the link provided on eBay’s home page.

1. PayPal is a safe and secure way to pay for items without revealing your financial information to a seller.
  - a. I suggest you use one credit card only for online purchases.
  - b. Beware of fraudulent spam e-mails purporting to be from PayPal.
2. BEFORE bidding, carefully check the seller’s history, feedback, terms, and shipping charges.
  - a. Use the “Ask seller a question” feature if you have questions.
3. The bidding process.
  - a. Determine your maximum bid and click on the “Place Bid” link.
    1. Confirm bid.
    2. You will know immediately if you are the high bidder.
    3. eBay will notify you via email if you are outbid.
    4. Bid again if necessary, but set a limit for yourself to avoid a bidding “frenzy.”
4. If you win an auction.
  - a. eBay will send an e-mail notification that you won.
  - b. The seller will send you an invoice via e-mail and a link to use to pay for your purchase, or you can pay from your “My eBay” website.
  - c. Once you receive your item in the mail, place feedback about the seller from your “My eBay” website.
  - d. The seller will leave feedback about you.



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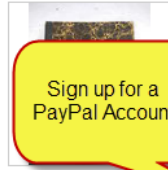
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1 2 3 4 5

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