



eBay For Genealogists

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One person's trash is another person's treasure epitomizes the nature of family related items for sale on eBay. eBay has approximately 25 million sellers, and 162 million users worldwide. There are approximately 800 million items listed at any given time. eBay also has 25 localized websites in foreign countries. Although 80% of the items for sale on eBay are new, it is the other 20% where one might find family-related treasures.

Every day there are more than 15,000 family bibles listed on eBay. Many of those had family pages where births, marriages, and deaths were recorded. Some contain a "family album" section that holds vintage photographs. Other family related items may include such things as promissory notes, diaries, documents, quilts, war memorabilia, letters, baptismal and marriage certificates, business ledgers, family and county histories, and a lot more.

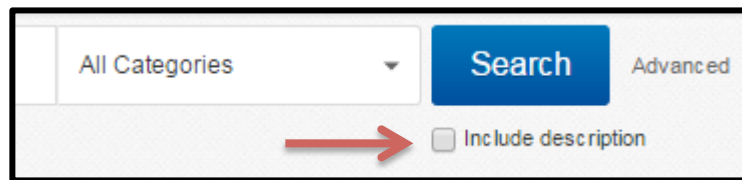
WHERE TO BEGIN

1. Register to set up a free account using a strong password:
https://reg.ebay.com/reg/PartialReg?_trksid=m37&rmvSB=true&rv4=1
2. Set up a PayPal account using a strong password. PayPal keeps your credit or debit card private so the seller doesn't have access to your personal information. PayPal can also be used at thousands of stores worldwide.
<http://pages.ebay.com/help/pay/paypal.html> . You can link your PayPal account to eBay to make the checkout process simple.
3. Please read the helpful Guides on eBay about the bidding or buying processes, and how to pay for items, etc. <http://ocsnext.ebay.com/ocs/home?&from=vtv>

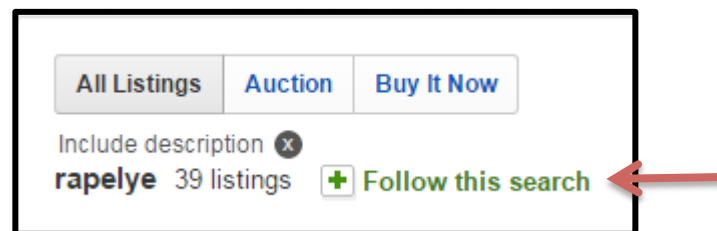
THE FUN BEGINS – SEARCH STRATEGIES ON eBay

There isn't a "Genealogy" category available on eBay. Such items can appear across a wide range of categories, but especially in the "Everything Else" section. It is best to search All Categories.

Sellers may not include family names in the title of the object they offer for sale. It is extremely important for genealogist's check the box "Include description" once your initial search term results appear. This will open a much wider door to finding family treasures.



A great feature on eBay will allow you to "save" your individual search terms and have them send you an email notification whenever a new item is listed with that word or phrase. It lets eBay essentially do the shopping for you, and is a major time saver. Just check the box called "follow this search" and you are done.



READ ABOUT A SELLER BEFORE BIDDING OR BUYING

Each seller on eBay has a rating based on buyer's experiences. Some sellers list their items for auction, and others set a firm price and use the "Buy it Now" option. Customers offer "Feedback" on their purchasing experience with a seller. Pay attention to both the Rating and Feedback as the seller's reputation is important. Read the description of an item of interest carefully to avoid buyer's remorse. Carefully read the seller's shipping, return, and payment options. Feel free to ask a seller a question before bidding or buying an item.

DOES A SELLER HAVE MORE OF YOUR FAMILY'S ITEMS FOR SALE?

If you find a family photo or some other form of family memorabilia on a seller's site, don't hesitate to ask the history of the item, or if he or she has other family items available that may not have yet been listed. You may even discover the seller is a distant cousin!

SUGGESTED SEARCH TERMS

As time goes on you will develop new ideas about what you want to find on eBay. One thing to keep in mind is "less is more" when formulating search terms. As few words as possible will work better than longer search terms. Placing quotation marks around your search term will only yield results where that exact term appears. Sellers list items in all manner of ways – no two alike. Get creative, and experiment to find what works best for you.

If you receive too many irrelevant results, you may want to add a word with the minus sign to eliminate any results with that one word such as: bible smith –new.

The following search terms provide a place to begin:

- Surname or surname and place (Featherston Mississippi)
- Bible surname
- Photograph surname (photograph (or photo) Eastman)
- Letter surname (letter Featherston)
- School yearbook with the city or title
- Plat book with the addition of the city or county (plat book McDonough County)
- Name of a company where an ancestor worked (Armco Steel, Berkeley)
- Fraternal organization name or place (Grand Army of the Republic)
- County & state histories (also check to see if they have been digitized on FamilySearch, Archive.org, Google Books, or Haiti Trust?)
- Genealogy surname (Genealogy Eastman)
- Marriage certificate surname
- Military - Unit (18th US Infantry) or (18th Infantry 1898)
- Military battles or events – (Iwo Jima)
- Ship names (immigrant ships or military vessels)
- Church and place (Dutch Reformed Church Poughkeepsie)
- Diary surname
- Baptismal certificate surname
- Promissory Note surname
- Postcards - place or subject

EBAY IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES

eBay sponsors websites in 25 foreign countries. There is a link to their foreign websites at the bottom right side of eBay's home page. Simply adding the extension .fr (ebay.fr) provided instant access to the French eBay site. A list of foreign domain extensions can be viewed at: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Internet_top-level_domains

Genealogists would be well advised to use the Chrome Browser when using foreign websites because it will usually automatically translate the site to English; however, it will sometimes be necessary to right click your mouse to translate the webpage.

When an item of interest has been discovered, read the seller's rating, and whether the item can be shipped to the U.S. Be sure to know the cost of shipping as it might be more than the item's cost. Feel free to ask the seller questions, but always use "Google Translate" to translate your message into the seller's native language.

Happy Hunting!