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The Confederate Post

The Calhoun Legacy

By Patricia A. Kaufmann



The CSA's never-put-into-use Calhoun stamp

When I first saw the name Andrew P. Calhoun on a cover, my first thought was that he might be related to John C. Calhoun. Sure enough, I found that he was the son of the famous pro-slavery Southern statesman John C. Calhoun, whose portrait appears on the Confederate 1¢ Orange, Scott #14.

The illustrated cover bears a CSA #1 variety, 5¢ green with “cedilla C” variety caused by an acid bite. This variety is illustrated on page 108 of the 1929 Dietz opus and page 128 of the 1986 New Dietz Catalogue and Handbook. The cover is addressed to “Col. Andrew P. Calhoun, Pendleton, S.C.” and the stamp is tied by a Savannah, Ga. Postmark.

Andrew P. Calhoun was born October 15, 1812 in Abbeville District South Carolina and died March 16, 1865 at “Fort Hill,” his plantation home. Fort Hill is also known as John C. Calhoun Mansion and Library, Clemson University campus, Clemson.

John Caldwell Calhoun (1782–1850) was stern-looking with icy blue eyes. A brilliant and intense man, he spent his entire career working for the United States government in a variety of high offices. He served as the seventh Vice President of the United States, first under John Quincy Adams (1825–1829) and then under Andrew Jackson (1829–1832), but resigned the Vice Presidency to enter the United States Senate, where he had more power and could better serve his state and the South. He also served in the U.S. House of Representatives (1810–1817), was Secretary of War (1817–1824) under James Monroe and Secretary of State (1844–1845) under John Tyler.

South Carolina politician John C. Calhoun was an outspoken proponent of slavery and the rights of electoral minorities, such as slave-holders. Calhoun pushed the theory of nullification, a states’ rights theory under which states could declare null and void any federal law they deemed to be unconstitutional. He defended slavery as a “positive good” rather than as a necessary evil. His rhetorical defense of slavery was partially responsible for escalating Southern threats of secession in the face of mounting abolitionist sentiment in the North and his ideas helped lead to the Civil War a decade after his death.

Calhoun made his last appearance in the Senate in 1850. The senate was debating the Compromise of 1850, which dealt with the problem of slavery in the western states. Though very ill, Calhoun insisted on protesting the compromise. A month later, Calhoun died. Among his last words were, “The South, the poor South.”

As an influential son of the South, Calhoun was honored with his likeness on a postage stamp. Jean Ferdinand Joubert De La Ferte designed and engraved the CSA one-cent Calhoun issue. There were 400,000 stamps printed from one four hundred-subject electrotype plate. They were delivered in half sheets of two hundred, two panes of one hundred each, divided by a vertical gutter, and there was no imprint. The stamps were printed on thin, white wove, hard surface paper with colorless gum, and they were imperforate. These stamps were printed and delivered, but never issued. Even though the printing number was low, the stamps are not particularly rare because most survived. At the time the stamp was ordered, the rate for drop letters and circulars was projected to be one cent. This rate never materialized; the two-cent rate was adopted instead. Consequently, there was no need for the one-cent stamps when they were delivered by De La Rue & Co. Color shades include deep orange, light orange, and yellow, which may be due to fading.

For information on the Confederate Stamp Alliance write Trish Kaufmann, 10194 N. Old State Road, Lincoln, DE 19960 or e-mail trishkauf@comcast.net. Information is also available on websites www.csalliance.org and www.csacatalog.org. ✉



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