



## Union Patriotic Label: “Taken near Pittsburg” and Used in the Confederacy

The cover shown in Figure 1 is franked with an example of the first Confederate general issue, a 5¢ green lithograph lightly tied by a Corinth, Miss., circular datestamp on a cover addressed to “Mrs. Sallie W. Bullock, Montgomery, Ala., Care F.M. Gilmer” with a mandated soldier’s endorsement “J.A.B. C.S.M.M.R. Sr., 1st Cavy Reg. Ala. V’ls.”

There is also a pencil docketing “Corinth April 9, 1862 after the Battle,” which runs around a Union shield patriotic label, upon which is written “taken near Pittsburg [Landing]” (Shiloh). These were likely written by Bullock.

This is a rare use of a captured patriotic label. I checked with Arthur Groten, no stranger to these pages, who used to collect both Union and Confederate patriotic labels. He had never seen a captured Union patriotic label used in the Confederate mails, nor had I, although it is not impossible others may exist.



**James Atwood Bullock:** In the military records at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), Bullock’s name appears on a register of claims of deceased officers and soldiers from Alabama, which were filed for settlement Oct. 21, 1862, but it does not indicate how or when he died. It records him as enlisted at Montgomery, Ala., April 30, 1861, at age 24 as a 2nd Sgt. of Capt. James H. Clanton’s Company (Montgomery Mounted Rifles, Alabama Volunteers, Company K).

A more thorough search of the Internet turned up his name as a graduate of the University of Alabama (UA).<sup>1</sup> It identified him as a planter, the son of Dr. James A. Bullock and Drucilla A. Turner, and lists him as a private in Clanton’s Cavalry. In 1860, he was married to the cover addressee, Sallie M. Gilmer. The UA source indicates he died in military service April 27, 1862. He is also shown as a member of Sigma Alpha Epsilon, a fraternity born in Tuscaloosa at the University of Alabama in 1856.

In November 1861, Brig.-Gen. James Holt Clanton (1827-71), a Montgomery attorney and a veteran of the

Figure 1 (above). A Confederate cover from Corinth, Miss., used with a Union patriotic label upon which is written “taken near Pittsburg [Landing]” (Shiloh).

Figure 2 (left). This copy of an April 14, 1862, newspaper article details the aftermath of the Battle of Shiloh.

### BURYING THE DEAD.

Correspondence of the *St. Louis Democrat*.

PITTSBURGH, Monday, April 14, 1862.

The great force here has, during the last few days, been resolved into an army of sextons, and, from morning to night, spades are busy scooping resting-places in the mud for the five thousand dead. Foe and friend are buried side by side, and Pittsburg, within a vicinity of five miles around, has been turned into a vast graveyard. No marble tells who are underneath, but a piece of board occasionally marks the name of an officer. Sometimes a fence (logs piled one on another) keeps wagons and cavalry from obliterating the rude mounds.

The task of burying has been a sad one. Fathers found sons and sons fathers among the slain, and the two or three left of companies from some towns assisted in gathering their comrades’ bodies and placing them in the pits where fifty or more were hidden at once from view. The air is already tainted, in places sickening from the horrible stench. We rode, yesterday, over the entire battle-field, commencing on the left wing, where the foe first engaged our pickets, then swarmed instantly forth and threw themselves upon the surprised soldiers by thousands, passing along the half circle line the army formed to where the ambushes were prepared Friday night, and then following the route of retreat as the fresh troops of CRITTENDEN and NELSON, the division of WALLACE and the shattered regiments of the previous day’s battle, renewed the fight on Monday and drove the enemy back.





Figure 3. Battle of Shiloh drawing done by Thure de Thulstrup and produced by L. Prang & Co.

Image courtesy Library of Congress.

Mexican War, raised and commanded the 1st Alabama Cavalry as a colonel, a regiment that served with distinction at the bloody Battle of Shiloh in April 1862, also known as Pittsburg Landing.

The Battle of Shiloh took place April 6-7, 1862. It was one of the major early engagements in the Civil War. The battle began when the Confederate Army launched a surprise attack on Union forces under Gen. Ulysses S. Grant. After initial successes, the Confederates were unable to hold their positions and were forced back, resulting in a Union victory. Both sides suffered massive casualties, which were a shock to both belligerents. It was the battle with the highest number of casualties in American history until the Battle of Stone's River (Murfreesboro), which was then surpassed by Chancellorsville and, later, Gettysburg. Figure 2, a newspaper article, describes the aftermath.

Figure 3 shows an illustration of the Battle of Shiloh done by Thure de Thulstrup, a leading American illustrator. It was produced by L. Prang & Co. and is housed in the Prints and Photographs Division of the Library of Congress.

I next checked one of my most productive (but often conflicting) sources, [www.findagrave.com](http://www.findagrave.com), where I found

Bullock's gravestone at Oakwood Cemetery in Montgomery, Ala.<sup>2</sup> Shown in Figure 4, the gravestone indicates he was born in August 1836 and died April 1862 as a lieutenant in the 1st Alabama Cavalry. This information points up the fact that the military records are often woefully incomplete.

A second headstone more specifically shows Bullock was born Aug. 30, 1836. Another source shows he died April 27, 1862, at age 25. Sadly, a note on the website reveals he contracted typhoid fever while in Corinth, Miss., was sent home and died about a week later.

The Find A Grave memorial for his wife, Sarah "Sallie" Gilmer Bullock-Eckford (1839-1921),<sup>3</sup> indicates that after Bullock died, she married Walter Eckford on July 18, 1867.

The listing for Sallie is noted as "Sarah Bullock 'Sallie' Gilmer Eckford." It doesn't read that way on the gravestone on said website. Obviously, the maiden name of Gilmer came first and Bullock directly before Eckford; it is hyphenated Bullock-Eckford on the gravestone.

The reason the information on the Find A Grave website is sometimes inaccurate is because the information is provided by thousands of volunteers who may or may not be adept at ferreting out the proper information.



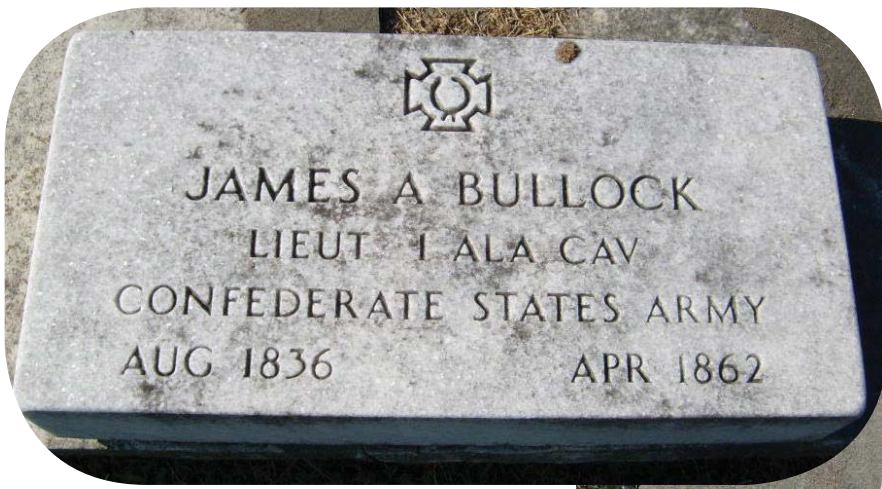


Figure 4 (left). James Atwood Bullock's gravestone at Oakwood Cemetery in Montgomery, Ala.



Figure 5 (below). Sallie Gilmer Bullock-Eckford's dual grave, where she is buried with both her first and second husbands.

Although the name Walker was not noted on Sallie's gravestone, it was clearly used by both James and Sallie Bullock, as the subject envelope was addressed to Sallie W. Bullock. I found the Walker reference in another source. The manuscript directive "care of F.M. Gilmer" on the subject envelope referred to her father, Francis Meriwether Gilmer, Jr., a wealthy planter.

Thus, Sallie's birth name was Sarah Walker Gilmer. She is buried with her first husband, Bullock, but Eckford is

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close by in what is a double lot, as shown in Figure 5.

The headstone (since broken off, as evidenced by another photo not herein illustrated), appears to be that of Bullock's father, as a small stone below the broken headstone reads, "My son, James A. Bullock born August 30th 1836." The bottom of his gravestone appears to be missing and the gravestone in Figure 4 is evidently a newer replacement for it.

James Atwood Bullock, Jr., was born Jan. 11, 1862, only three months before his father died. One can only hope he had a chance to meet his only child before typhoid took his life.

Once again, an envelope reveals so much history and, in this case, provides postal historians a rare – if not unique – use of a Union patriotic label used in the Confederate postal system.

Trish enjoys hearing from readers and may be reached at [trishkauf@comcast.net](mailto:trishkauf@comcast.net).

Patricia (Trish) Kaufmann was first introduced to Confederate philately in 1965, became active in organized philately in 1969, and became a full-time dealer in 1973.

Endnotes:

1. Thomas Waverly Palmer, *A Register of the Officers and Students of the University of Alabama, 1831-1901*, published by the University of Alabama, 1901.
2. Find a Grave Memorial 30682935, accessed May 24, 2020.
3. Find a Grave Memorial 30683008, accessed May 24, 2020.