

# Transitional Uses During the Transfer from the United States to the Confederate Postal System

**Figure 1. The inauguration of President Jefferson Davis  
in Montgomery, Alabama, February 18, 1861**





## By Patricia A. Kaufmann

### Setting the Scene

It was a challenging transition shifting from the well-established United States postal system to the nascent Confederate States postal system in the early days of the American Civil War.

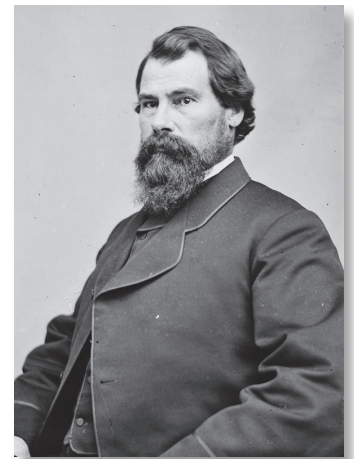
Part of the postal history that is considered “Confederate” is also very much “Union.” This was never truer than in the days that led up to the war, those after the first shots were fired, and as the Confederacy transitioned to take over its own postal affairs on June 1, 1861.

The Confederate States Post Office Department (CSPOD) had to reorganize to become its own entity, but evolved from laws, regulations, practices and procedures, bookkeeping and accounting systems, and official forms that had existed and been used by the US Post Office Department (USPOD) prior to the creation of the Confederacy. Many local postmasters, if they supported the Southern cause, were reappointed as postmasters to the CSPOD, bringing with them their knowledge and experience.

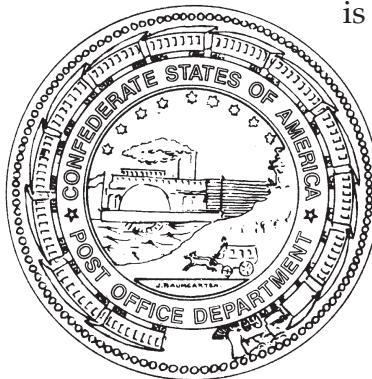
Under the Confederate Constitution, for postal matters not specifically addressed by Confederate statutes or regulations, the US Postal Laws and Regulations in effect in November 1859 (1859 US-PL&R) applied to Confederate mail, unless the 1859 US-PL&R conflicted with Confederate law.

When Southern states seceded from the Union, they became independent states or republics. Representatives from the first six seceded states gathered in Montgomery, Alabama, on February 4, 1861, to create the Confederate States of America; others joined them in quick succession. President Jefferson Davis was inaugurated at Montgomery on February 18, the only person to ever serve in that capacity. An illustration of the inauguration is shown in Figure 1.

The Confederate Post Office Department was established February 21, 1861. Postmaster General (PMG) John Henninger Reagan of Texas was appointed on March 6; he was in office until May 10, 1865. A Brady-Handy portrait of Reagan is shown in Figure 2. He served as a US senator from Texas 1887-1891. The Confederate Post Office Department seal is shown in Figure 3.



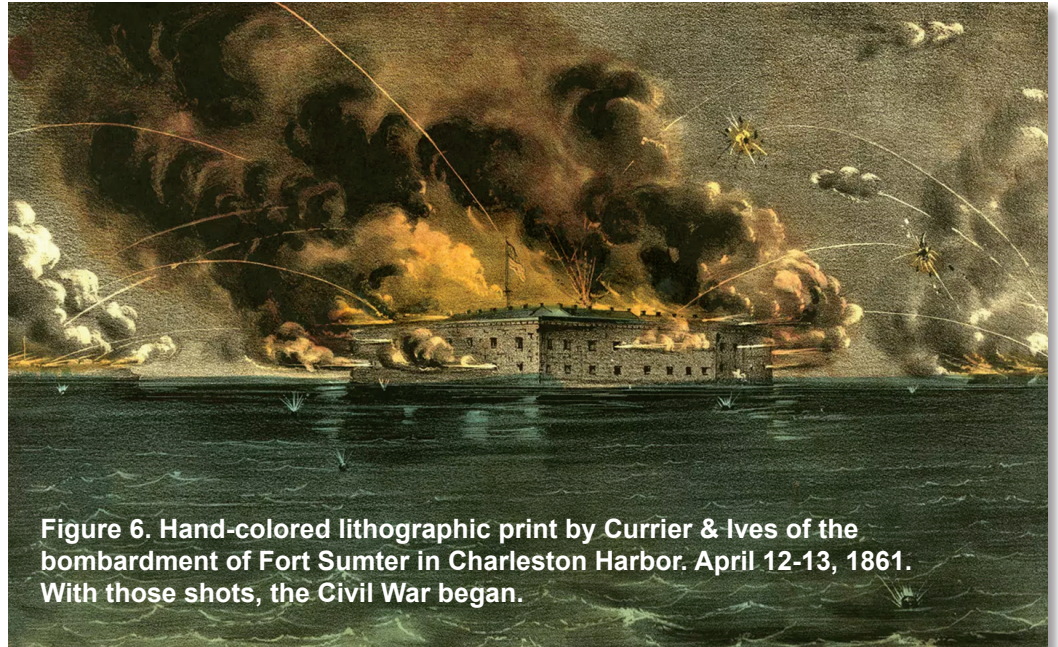
**Figure 2.** Confederate Postmaster General John Henninger Reagan (Brady-Handy photo, Courtesy Library of Congress)



**Figure 3.** Confederate Post Office Department seal



**Figure 4.** US Postmaster General Montgomery Blair (Brady-Handy photo, Courtesy Library of Congress)



**Figure 6.** Hand-colored lithographic print by Currier & Ives of the bombardment of Fort Sumter in Charleston Harbor. April 12-13, 1861. With those shots, the Civil War began.

The US wartime postmaster general was Montgomery Blair, a Marylander who was in office from March 5, 1861, through September 24, 1864. He is shown in Figure 4 in another Brady-Handy portrait. The US Post Office Department seal, used from 1837-1970, is shown in Figure 5. Most of our readership well remember the post rider image that is still iconic to US postal historians.



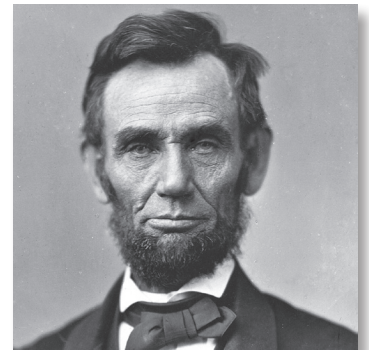
**Figure 5.** US Post Office Department seal as used from 1837-1970

PMG Montgomery Blair imposed a specific condition on postmasters in the seceded states requiring them to agree, in writing, to be personally responsible for all stamps and stamped envelopes shipped to them.

On May 13, 1861, Confederate PMG Reagan issued a proclamation announcing that on June 1, 1861, the CSPOD would take over all postal operations in the Confederate States. The first Confederate general issue stamps were not offered to the Southern public until October 16 in Richmond, Virginia.

Reagan requested that all postmasters remain in their positions and report their names and the

name of their office to Richmond so new commissions could be issued. He also urged all postmasters to settle their financial accounts with Washington. The USPOD continued services in the seceded states and the Confederacy through May 31, 1861.



**Figure 7.** President Abraham Lincoln

It was a time of civil cooperation, despite the first shots of the war fired by Confederate troops at the US garrison of Fort Sumter on April 12, 1861, shown in Figure 6. South Carolina, the first state to secede, could not tolerate a federal fort blocking the important seaport of Charleston.

After Fort Sumter, President Lincoln, shown in Figure 7, issued a public declaration that an insurrection existed and called for 75,000 militia to stop the rebellion. As a result of this call for volunteers, Virginia, Arkansas, North Carolina, and Tennessee seceded from the Union not long after. On May 3rd, Lincoln called for an additional 43,000+ volunteers to serve for three years, expanding the size of the Regular Army.

In Virginia, Kentucky and Missouri, there were both pro-Confederate and pro-Union





**Figure 8.** US 3¢ dull red 1857 issue properly used on the second to the last day of validity from Covington, Ga., but arrived in Richmond after June 1 and was thus forwarded to Crawfordville, Ga., necessitating 10¢ in CSA postage.

governments. West Virginia was formed in 1862-63 after unionists from the northwestern counties of Virginia, then occupied by the Union Army, had set up a loyalist (“restored”) state government of Virginia. President Lincoln recognized this government and allowed them to divide the state.

Every slave state except South Carolina contributed white battalions to both the Union and Confederate armies. South Carolina Unionists fought in units from other Union states. The divide was understandably the most severe in border states, where members of the same family often fought on opposing sides.

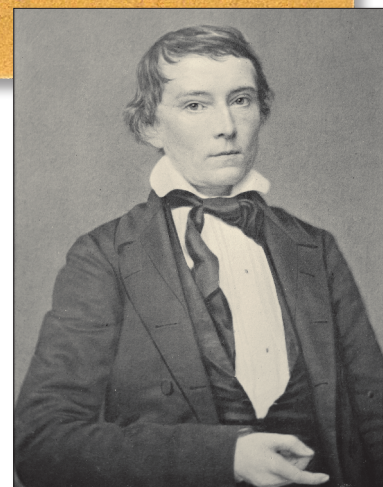
### The Postal Consequences

Rare, and often spectacular, postal history uses resulted from the transition from the US to the CSA postal system. Sometimes, the postal customer used old US stamps that were no longer valid for use after June 1 in the new Confederacy. Or patrons mailed their letters just before the change of rate, but the letters were ensnared by other circumstances.

### Arrived Too Late

Such an example is shown in Figure 8. The cover is franked with a 3¢ dull red (Scott 26)<sup>1</sup> tied on cover by a Covington, Georgia, circular datestamp (CDS) addressed to Confederate Vice President Alexander H. Stephens (1812-1883) in Richmond, Virginia (Figure 9). The US stamp was properly used on the second to the last day of validity, but the cover arrived in Richmond after June 1st and was thus forwarded to Crawfordville, Georgia, necessitating 10¢ in Confederate postage to pay for the forwarding.

The postal rate was increased 66.7% by the Confederate Post Office Department from the US 3¢ rate to 5¢ per half ounce up to 500 miles. If the distance was greater than 500 miles, that already greater rate was doubled.

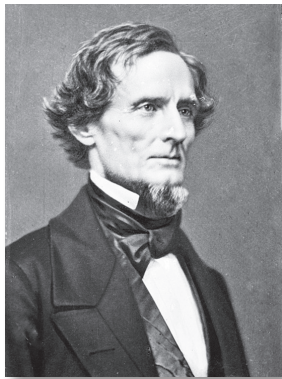


**Figure 9.** CSA Vice President Alexander H. Stephens portrait by Matthew Brady circa 1860-1865. (Courtesy Library of Congress)



The cover bears the circular datestamp of Richmond Va. Jun 3 1861, with a FORWARDED straightline handstamp and matching (due) 10. The Richmond destination was crossed out and the letter redirected to Stephens' home in Crawfordville, Georgia. This is a wonderful example of a combination of the postal stamps or marking of both warring factions on one cover, known in philately as a mixed franking.

Alexander H. Stephens was the sole vice president of the Confederate States and often at odds with President Jefferson Davis, shown in Figure 10. Stephens was the 50th governor of Georgia from 1882 until his death in 1883. He represented Georgia in the US House of Representatives before and after the war. He was sickly and frail throughout his life, as is apparent from his portraits.



**Figure 10.**  
Confederate President  
Jefferson F. Davis

## One Cover Tells the Entire Story

The folded letter shown in Figure 11 is perhaps my favorite example of a transitional June 1 use. One cover tells the full story — out with the old, in with the new.

The letter was written in late May 1861 but did not make it to the post office until June 1, by which time the US stamp and 3¢ rate were not recognized. The Confederate postmaster for Troy, Alabama, rerated the letter with the higher Confederate rate of 5¢.

Most Southern postmasters reverted to the mid-1800s practice of handstamping postal markings on envelopes or folded letters. Some particularly ambitious postmasters created their own stamps, which collectors call postmasters' provisionals.

This transitional cover is addressed to James Harlow (1802-1889) of Summerville, Georgia. The Harlow farm was in west Summerville and comprised about 600 acres. In April 1862, James Harlow organized a company of men that later became Company E, 6th Georgia Cavalry, Smith's Legion, Georgia Partisan Rangers. He resigned

**Figure 11.** Folded letter written in late May 1861 but was not posted until June, by which time the US 3¢ stamp was rejected; the envelope was rerated at the higher 5¢ Confederate rate.





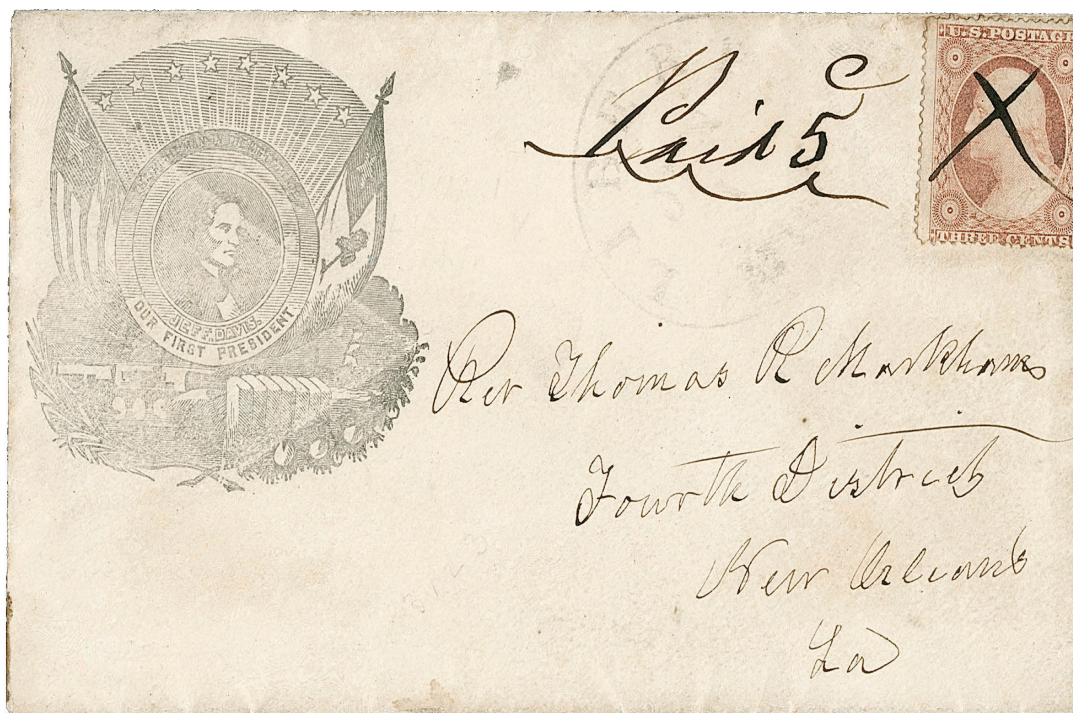
his captain's commission in August 1862 due to illness. After he recovered his health, he organized a second company for the 6th Cavalry. This was designated Company H. He served with Company H for the duration of the war.<sup>2</sup>

L. James Harlow and his wife, Elizabeth *Parker* Harlow (1804-1881) had twelve children.<sup>3</sup> Of their six sons, all fought in the war and four lost their lives due to the war.

Shared with his permission, this Alabama gem is in the collection of Van Koppersmith. It is also one of his favorite covers. Van revealed that when it was sold to him by private treaty, he was then told that it was newly on the market. He extensively searched through auction records but never found it offered anywhere at auction.

### An All-in-One Patriotic Cover

The Jefferson Davis sunburst medallion patriotic (CSA catalog type JD-4), shown in Figure 12, is another June 1 cover representing the first day of the Confederate postal system. The scarce patriotic, showing 8 stars, is one of the cruder Davis medallion designs and offers a poor likeness of Davis.



**Figure 12.** Jefferson Davis sunburst medallion patriotic (JD-4) franked with a US 3¢ dull red (26) that was rejected as invalid for postage, next to which was written “Paid 5” for the new CSA rate.

The cover is franked with a rejected US 3¢ dull red (26) that was strongly crossed out as invalid for postage, next to which the postmaster boldly wrote “Paid 5” to indicate the new Confederate rate. The lightly struck postmark is that of Liberty, Mississippi.

The cover is addressed to Rev. Thomas R(ailey). Markham, Fourth District, New Orleans, Louisiana. Rev. Markham (1828-1894), shown in Figure 13, who was 37 years pastor of the Lafayette Presbyterian Church in New Orleans. During the war, he was Chaplain of the 1st Mississippi Light Artillery (Withers) and later Featherstone's Brigade, Army of Tennessee.<sup>5</sup>

### Premature Rejection

Peyton, the sender as identified by the contents docketing up the left side of the envelope, may have been a bit miffed. The 3¢ Nesbitt entire (U10) in Figure 14 was posted in Richmond, Virginia, on May 30, two days before the change-over to the new system on June 1. Nonetheless, the envelope was handstamped Due 5, as well as a red crayon “Due” and penned “5.”

The cover was addressed to Eugene Davis Esq.



**Figure 13.** Rev. Thomas Railey Markham, pastor of the Lafayette Presbyterian Church in New Orleans.





**Figure 14.** 3¢ A Nesbitt entire (U10) posted in Richmond, Va., on May 30, two days before the change-over to the new system on June 1. It was questionably charged 5¢ postage due for the CSA.



**Figure 15.** Photo of Eugene Davis in later years

Charlottesville, Albemarle (County, Virginia). Davis (1822-1894) was a lawyer and a farmer who served as a captain in Company K, 2nd Virginia Cavalry (Albemarle Light Horse), Army of Northern Virginia. Shown in Figure 15, Eugene Davis was volunteer aide to General William Nelson Pendleton (1809-1883).

After the war, Davis was mayor of Charlottesville.

### From the "Show Me" State into Confederate Arkansas

Missouri was a border state that sent men, armies, generals, and supplies to both sides, had its star on both flags, had separate governments representing each side, and endured an intrastate

war within the larger national war. There are no recorded Confederate postal uses.

The Missouri Ordinance of Secession passed the Senate on October 28, 1861. It was passed by the House on October 30, 1861, and was signed into law by Governor Claiborne Fox Jackson on October 31, 1861. Governor Jackson was an ardent supporter of the South. Secession gave Missouri votes in the Confederate Congress, but otherwise was symbolic since the Confederacy did not control any part of the state. Jackson died in office in 1862.

Figure 16 is a 3¢ red Nesbitt entire (U9) tied by a Bolivar Mo. April 30 (1861) circular datestamp. The cover is addressed to Dr. John F. Snyder, Camden Washitaw Co(unt)y Arkansas. It bears a Camden Ark. Jun 5 CDS as well as a manuscript "For./5 due" (Forwarded/5 due) at left. It is an unusual combination of US and CS rates before and after June 1, 1861. The cover was not redirected to another post office. Presumably, the forwarding notation indicates the US postage was



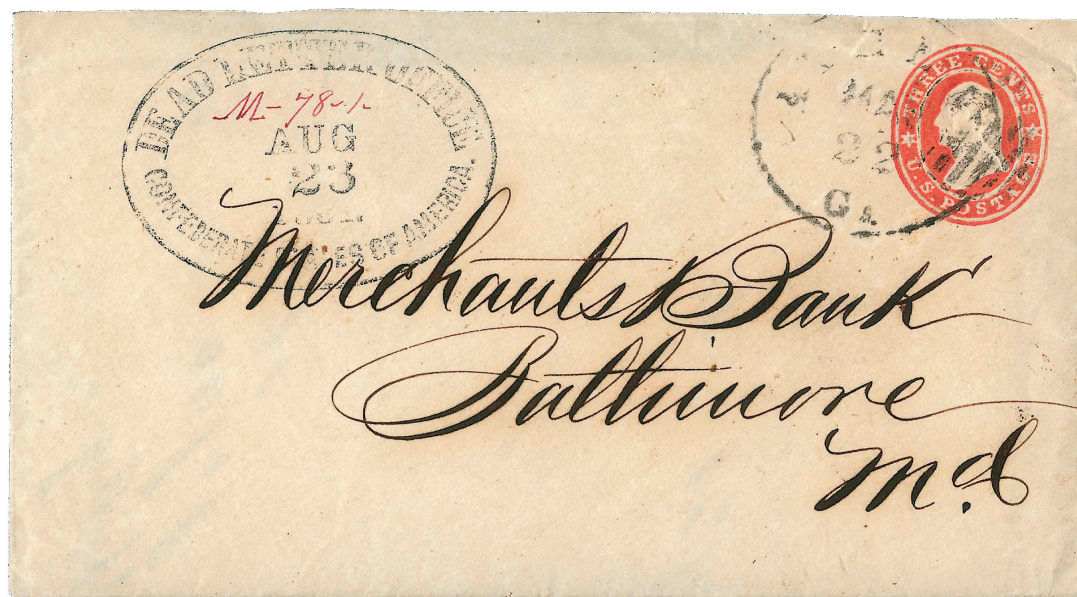


**Figure 16.** 3¢ red Nesbitt (U9) tied by a Bolivar Mo. April 30 (1861) CDS; addressed to Camden, Arkansas, where the Camden Jun 5 CDS was applied, as well as manuscript 5¢ CSA forwarding and due markings.

not recognized and that Dr. Snyder's mail was held pending his return or a new address.

### CS Dead Letter Office

Northbound mail from the eastern Confederate States to the US was normally carried via Richmond and Washington, D.C., until May 23, 1861. This route was rendered unusable that evening because of the federal military occupation of Alexandria, Virginia. Thus northbound mail was diverted to the Confederate Dead Letter Office (DLO) at Richmond from May 24 until June 1. Fewer than ten examples of CSA Dead Letter Office markings are recorded, including both handstamped and manuscript.



**Figure 17.** Confederate Dead Letter Office use

The US star-die entire in Figure 17 is tied by an Athens Georgia May 22 (1861) CDS as well as a grid cancel. The original enclosure was a printed form from the Bank of Georgia that was being sent to Merchants Bank in Baltimore, Maryland. The DLO handstamp has a magenta "M-76-1" record notation at top center.





**Figure 18.** US Dead Letter Office use

### US Dead Letter Office

One of the last covers to cross the lines by regular mail from South to North is shown in Figure 18. On June 12, the United States suspended service at the Nashville post office, which effectively closed down the last remaining northbound mail route from the Confederate States. The Nashville postmaster continued to forward northbound mail, but letters were stopped at Louisville beginning on June 13. This letter reached Louisville around June 11 and was sent on to St. Louis, but from there it was diverted to the US Dead Letter Office (DLO).

The US 3¢ star-die entire is used with the manuscript postmark of Monroe NC June 5 (1861) with a matching bold manuscript Paid 10 written across the 3¢ indicia to pay for the Confederate postage. The letter passed through Louisville two days before that mail route was closed. Upon arrival in Saint Louis, it was backstamped with a Saint Louis



**Figure 19.** US postage inexplicably accepted by Confederate Charlotte NC postmaster six days after the changeover from US to CS postal operations.

Mo. Jun 13 1861 CDS and diverted to the US Dead Letter Office. The DEAD LETTER OFFICE P.O. DP<sup>t</sup> JUN 29 1861 oval datestamp and DUE 3 cts straightline handstamp were applied upon release.

The letter enclosure (not shown) was dated May 28 at Monroe, North Carolina, written to the addressee's sister in Manchester, Missouri. It describes war preparations in great detail and with clear trepidation of the coming conflict.



## Confederate Postmaster Accepts US Postage?

The 3¢ star-die entire (U27) shown in Figure 19 is canceled by a blue grid and matching Charlotte N.C. Jun 6 (1861) CDS. This is the only possible year the star-die envelopes could be used in June because the 3¢ star-die envelopes were issued in August 1860 and demonetized (rendered invalid) in August 1861.

North Carolina seceded from the Union on May 20, 1861, and joined the Confederacy a week later on May 27. The CSPOD took over its own affairs on June 1, 1861.<sup>6</sup> So why did the Charlotte postmaster accept the US star-die envelope in payment of Confederate postage on June 6? He should have marked the envelope 5¢ postage due or sent it to the Dead Letter Office. The cover was addressed to Brinkleyville, Halifax County, N.C. The receiving post office turned a blind eye to it as well.

All these questions were posed by Tony L. Crumbley, who owns this cover. Tony is aware of at least one other cover from Charlotte treated the same way. The other is addressed to Statesville, N.C., and dated June 17 (1861). It raises the same questions.

## Tennessee – a House Divided

On the same day that Mississippi left the Union (January 9, 1861), the voters of Tennessee voted 80 percent against secession.

Fort Sumter turned the tide, coupled with Lincoln's call for troops to fight the rebellion. The legislature—with 32 percent of the House and 16 percent of the Senate dissenting—voted on May 6 to join her "Southern brothers."

However, the legislators insisted that the public ratify their decision. While the state government prepared for secession and war, Tennessee was technically not yet a member of the separatist government.

After the passage of the ordinance, all actions other than the mandated referendum related to secession—such as the governor issuing his freedom proclamation on May 24—were superfluous and had no legal effect.

On June 8, by a two-to-one majority, Tennessee's



**Tennessee State Capitol during the Civil War**, photo courtesy of Tennessee State Museum

electorate confirmed the General Assembly's verdict. Thus, Tennessee was still legally part of the Union when the CSPOD took over its own affairs on June 1, 1861.

Tennessee remained divided throughout the war. About 25 percent of the men who fought did so for the North. There were widespread ironies in Tennessee during this period.

Preceding Tennessee's admission to the Confederacy, postal operations in Tennessee, especially in the eastern part of the state, were complex and chaotic. They reflected an erratic blend of US and CS postal services and, occasionally, an attempt to amalgamate both.

Postmaster General Blair's May 27, 1861, order suspending federal mail service beginning May 31 in the ten states then part of the Confederacy did not apply to Tennessee which, as of June 1, had not yet passed an ordinance of secession. The process of secession was finalized on June 8 with a referendum approving Tennessee's Ordinance of Secession.

On June 10, Blair responded to Tennessee's secession by formally suspending US mail operations in Middle and West Tennessee, which were strongly sympathetic to secession.

Blair's order excepted East Tennessee, which had opposed secession. On June 17, a notice appeared in Memphis newspapers stating that the Confederacy had taken control of the mails in Tennessee.





**Figure 20.** Rare Southern Letter Unpaid use addressed to inventor of the Gatling Gun.

During the period beginning when the Confederacy took over its own postal operations (June 1) and the date Tennessee formally entered the Confederacy (July 2), the mail situation in the state was confused and sometimes deliberately in violation of official regulations on both sides.

This situation is illustrated by covers that demonstrate the often-contradictory situation existing in all parts of the state. There are covers that show US postal rates paid with US stamps, Confederate postal rates paid in cash or by postmasters' provisional stamps, both US stamps and Confederate postage on the same cover, and a choice of using either US or CS postage, determined not by the nature of the originating Tennessee post office, but by the destination of the cover.<sup>7</sup>

### Southern Letter Unpaid

One of the iconic rarities of Civil War postal history is the large blue Louisville, Kentucky, double-line SOUTH<sup>N</sup>. LETTER UNPAID (SLU).

It is compulsory in a comprehensive exhibit of Confederate postal history for any chance of a high award.

The SLU in Figure 20 shows one of the finest examples of this rare marking. The 3¢ star-die entire (U26) began its journey in the South with a Murfreesborough N.C. Jun 28 CDS and PAID 10 Confederate rate stamps. It was mailed by James Henry Gatling to his younger brother, Richard in Indianapolis. It passed through Nashville and reached Louisville about July 4. Two days later, it was marked with the large blue SLU and matching DUE 3 handstamp, as well as the July 6 Louisville double-circle postmark.

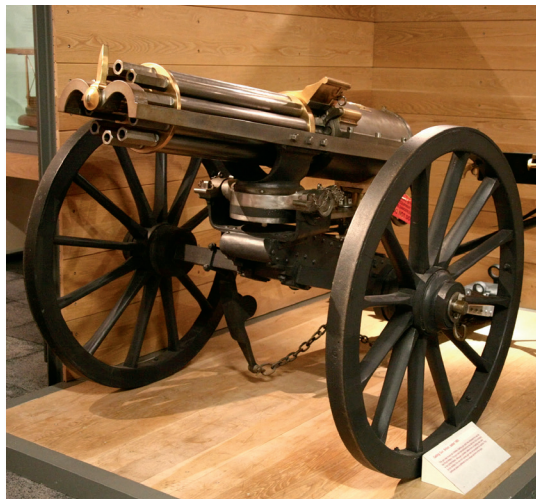
Gatling is an immediately recognizable name to most. The addressee, Richard Jordan Gatling (1818-1903), shown in Figure 21, was the inventor of the Gatling Gun.<sup>8</sup> The 1865 model pictured in Figure 22 is on display in the Royal Artillery Museum in London.

Although little used in the Civil War, Gatling's crank-operated multi-barrel machine gun was the

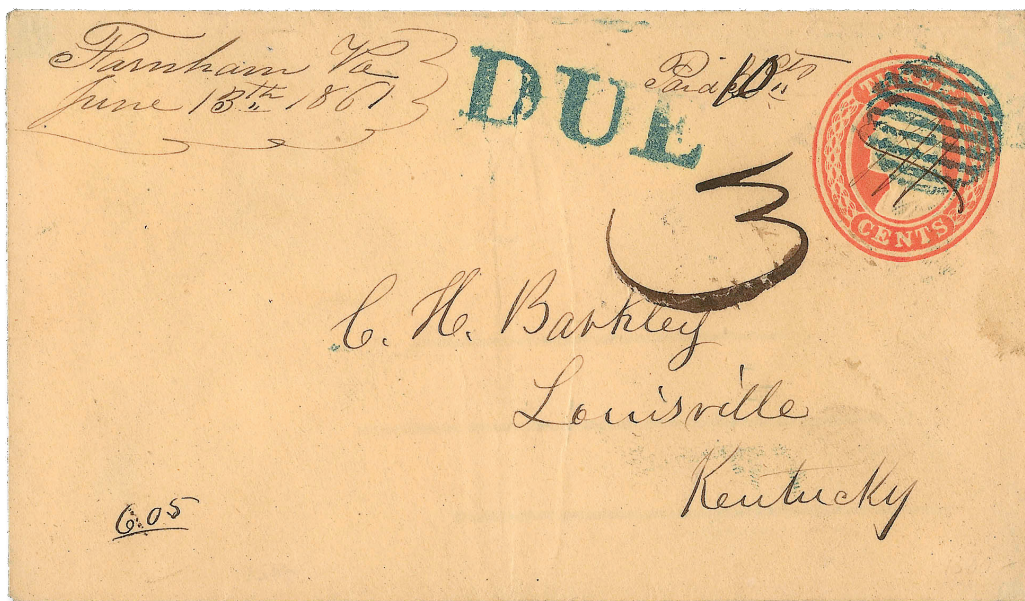




**Figure 21.** Richard Jordan Gatling in later years. (Brady-Handy photo, Courtesy Library of Congress)



**Figure 22.** 1865 model Gatling Gun in the Royal Artillery Museum in London. (Photo courtesy of Max Smith)



**Figure 23.** Southern Letter Unpaid (CSA catalog SL-04) without the larger 2-line handstamp.

first rapid-fire firearm. It was invented in 1861, the year this letter was posted to him by his brother. The Gatling Gun was patented in 1862. Gatling wrote that he created it to reduce the size of armies and thus reduce the number of deaths by combat and disease.

### It's Still a Southern Letter Unpaid

The recognizable double-line SLU handstamp was used by the Louisville post office on mail sent north, but letters addressed locally were simply marked DUE 3 for unpaid postage after

suspension of the Nashville-Louisville mail route. The large blue Louisville DUE 3 handstamp marking by itself is immediately recognizable. Although valued lower than the more distinguishable double-line marking, the use is still a Southern Letter Unpaid. It is listed in the CSA catalog as type SL-04.

The cover shown in Figure 23 is such an example. The 3¢ Nesbitt entire (U10) was posted with the manuscript postmark of "Farnham Va. June 13th 1861" accompanied by a pen cancel on the indicia. The CSA "Paid 5cts" was re-rated "10." The large blue "DUE" straightline and blue grid are joined by a bold manuscript "3" representing US postage that were applied at Louisville. The cover was addressed to C.H. (Crawford Hartley) Barkley, who was a notary public in Jefferson County.

The US May 27 suspension order prohibited post offices from forwarding southbound mail to disloyal

Southern states. However, northbound mail continued to be sent via Louisville. Through June 6, northbound mails were forwarded to Louisville from Memphis or Nashville. From June 7 through 12, only the Nashville post office forwarded mail to Louisville, and Louisville continued to forward mail north. On June 15, after the US mail agent had been withdrawn from the Nashville-Louisville route, Nashville postmaster W. D. McNish started to forward mail to Louisville by using the American Letter Express Company. The express company took the mails across the lines





**Figure 24.** Northern Letter Unpaid franked with a 3¢ dull red (26) from Nashville, Ten., June 4, 1861, and sent this letter south via Memphis. New Orleans assessed 10¢ due on arrival.

and deposited them in the Louisville post office. This letter was in one of the daily mails forwarded by express under this arrangement, arriving in Louisville on or about June 18.

### Northern Letter Unpaid

Serious students of Confederate postal history are well familiar with Southern Letter Unpaid uses. Figure 24 represents a “Northern Letter Unpaid,” although not with the spectacular 2-line handstamp that makes the Louisville, Kentucky, postmark famous.

The cover is franked with a 3¢ dull red (26) tied by the blue CDS of Nashville, Ten., dated June 4, 1861. Nashville did not apply the May 27 US Suspension Order and sent this letter south via Memphis.

Prepayment of postage within the Confederacy was normally required in the early days of transition before prepayment exemptions were instituted with the Acts of July 29, 1861, August 29, 1861, and August 31, 1861. Nonetheless, a number of incoming letters from the North or abroad, which did not have prepaid Confederate postage,

were treated as due mail. New Orleans assessed 10¢ due on arrival for this cover. Such mixed frankings on southbound covers were only possible from June 1 to 7, because the distributing post office in Louisville stopped forwarding southbound mail on June 8 per the June 7 US Postal Discontinuance Notice.

Addressee Duncan Green Campbell (1835-1888) studied engineering in Austria before the war. He served as a lieutenant in the Confederate Engineer Corps in September 1861. He was the Volunteer Engineering Officer to General Gustavus Woodson Smith, more commonly known as G.W. Smith. Campbell then served on the staffs of Generals D.R. Jones and McLaws, rising to the rank of either captain or major by the end of the war. The Find A Grave website shows him as major, but in more than 100 Campbell documents in the National Archives, I never saw him with that rank. One document for a “G. Campbell” showed a rank of major, but I believe that to be a misfiled record for a different man. After the war, Campbell was a practicing lawyer in partnership with his father in New Orleans.





**Figure 25.** Northern Letter Unpaid franked with a 3¢ dull red (26) from Glasgow, Ky.; US stamp rejected in Nashville where a blue “5” rate was applied for CSA rate; re-rated “Due 10” on its arrival in Arkansas.

He was the only son of John Archibald Campbell (1811-1899), an associate justice of the US Supreme Court (1853-1861) and Assistant Secretary of War in the Confederate government (1862-65).

### It Was the Correct Rate When He Mailed It

Another “Northern Letter Unpaid” is represented in Figure 25. The cover is franked with a 3¢ dull red (26) tied by a grid and matching double-circle datestamp from Glasgow Ky dated June 24 (?) (1861). It was addressed to S.S. Kimball, Dardanelle, Arkansas. This attempted use of a US stamp was rejected in Nashville where a blue “5” rate handstamp was applied for the Confederate rate. It was re-rated “Due 10” in manuscript on its arrival in Arkansas because the distance was more than 500 miles.

The sender prepaid the 3¢ US rate, which was technically correct in Kentucky, but mail to the South through Nashville had been stopped by the US Post Office Department on June 7 per the US Postal Discontinuance Notice. The Confederate-sympathizing Glasgow postmaster disregarded the suspension order and sent this southbound cover through. Kentucky did not secede until November 20, 1861. It was admitted to the Confederacy December 10, 1861.

Kentucky was torn between loyalty to her sister slave states and the national Union. They tried

initially to remain neutral, but it was much more complicated in practice than in principle. In response to the Unionists’ growing political power, the state’s Southern sympathizers formed a rival Confederate government. Kentucky’s dual governments and military forces caused many divisions between Kentucky families. As in so many places throughout the South, this was famously a war of brother against brother and neighbor against neighbor.

There are no recorded listings of Kentucky independent state use in the CSA catalog. Kentucky never

used US postage after it seceded because the Kentucky date of admission was after June 1 and US stamps no longer were valid in the South.

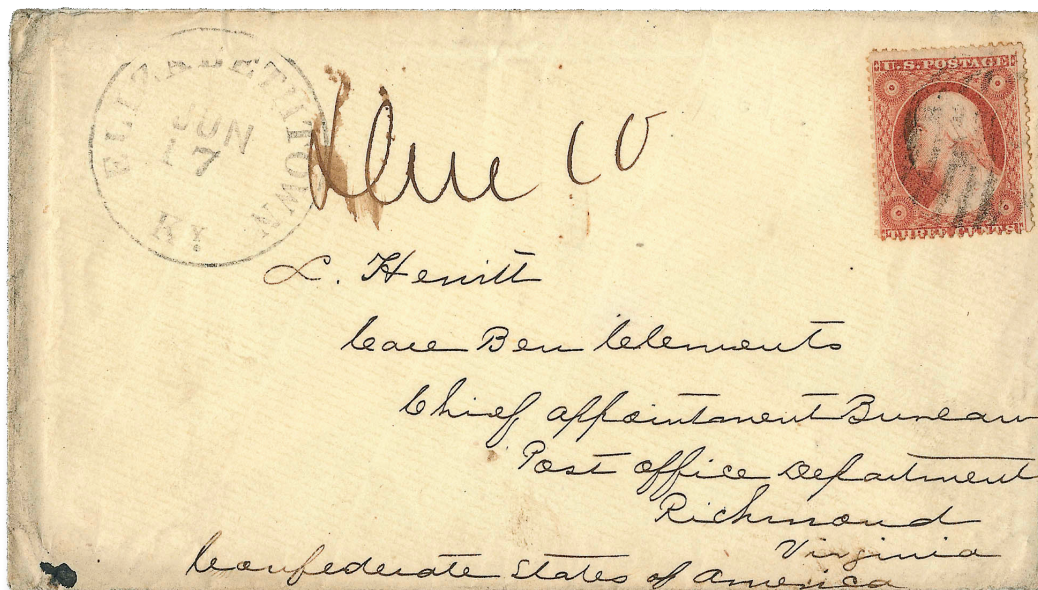
In 1850, addressee S.S. Kimball was a principal in the general merchandise firm of Murdoch & Kimball in partnership with C.M. Murdoch in Dardanelle, Arkansas. They also transacted a loaning, collection, and exchange business. They continued until 1857 when Murdoch sold his interest to Kimball who continued until 1863 when the banking part of his business was discontinued due to the Civil War.<sup>9</sup>

### Last Day for Southbound Mail into the Confederate States

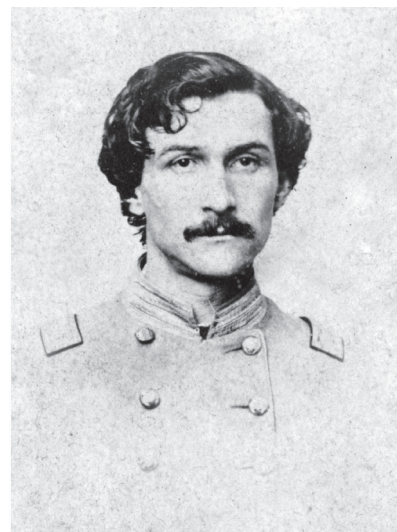
The cover in Figure 26 is franked with a 3¢ dull red (26) tied by a grid and matching Elizabethtown Ky Jun 17 (1861) CDS. The cover is addressed to L. (Lafayette, known as Fayette) Hewitt, Care Ben Clements, Chief Appointment Bureau, Post Office Department, Richmond, Virginia, Confederate States of America. It bears a manuscript “Due 10” CSA rate. Such mixed frankings on southbound covers were only possible from June 1 to 7.

After the United States suspended mail service at Memphis, the only available route into the Confederacy from the United States was via Nashville. The last day for the route via Nashville





**Figure 26.** Last Day for Southbound mail into the Confederate States



**Figure 27.** Capt. Lafayette Hewitt of the First Kentucky Brigade (Orphan Brigade)

was June 7, after which all southbound mail was diverted to the US Dead Letter Office per the June 7 US Postal Discontinuance Notice.

Captain Layette Hewitt (1831-1909) was an educator, postmaster, and a lawyer. Not long before the war, during the administration of President James Buchanan, he worked as superintendent of the US Dead Letter Office. PMG John Reagan also made use of his expertise in the newly formed CSPOD. But he preferred to be on the field of battle. Hewitt served as a captain in the First Kentucky Brigade, famously known as the Orphan Brigade, serving as assistant adjutant to numerous general officers. His portrait, shown in uniform is Figure 27.

### Didn't Get the Memo? Or Still Beholden to the USPOD?

Figure 28 shows a Dalton, Georgia, 5¢ black Confederate handstamped provisional (20XU1) used with a Dalton Ga Jun 26 1861 circular date-stamp. The entire is addressed to Jonesboro, East



**Figure 28.** Dalton, Georgia, 5¢ black CSA handstamped provisional (20XU1) to Jonesboro, East Tenn., where a penciled "Due 3" US rate was applied.

Tenn. A penciled "Due 3" US rate was applied by the Jonesboro postmaster, who clearly considered his office to still be part of the United States, even though Tennessee seceded more than two weeks earlier on June 8.

PMG Blair's June 10 order formally suspending US mail operations in Middle and West Tennessee excluded East Tennessee, which had strongly opposed secession. On June 17, a notice appeared in Memphis newspapers stating that the Confederacy had taken control of the mails in



Tennessee. But Memphis is in the southwest part of the state, nearly 500 miles away. Tennessee did not join the Confederacy until July 2, so it is conceivable no CSA postal routes were in operation in that part of the state.

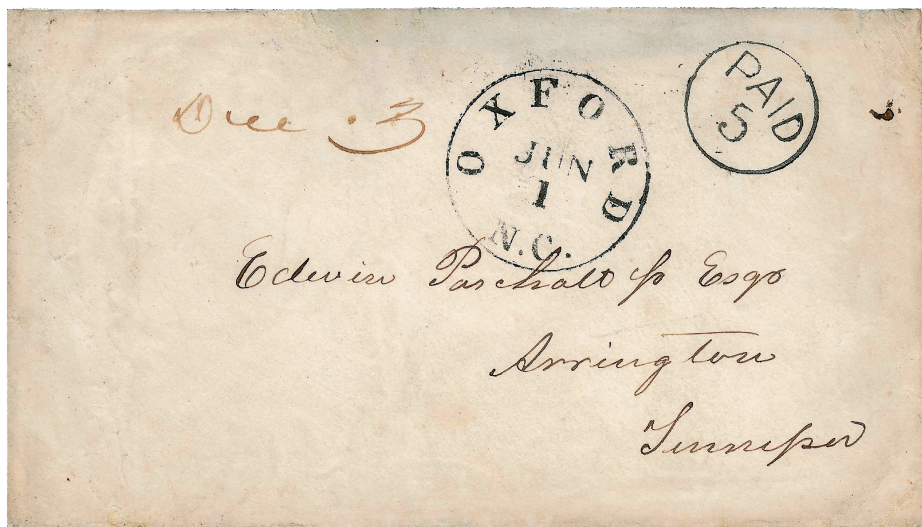
Either the Jonesboro postmaster was uninformed, or the postmaster stayed with the Union out of necessity or preference. One has to wonder to which post office department he submitted his funds. If Jonesboro was not yet part of the Confederacy, how could the postmaster remit monies to the CSPOD? Although I did not attempt to research the identity of postmasters in that period, it would be interesting to know if and when there was a change of postmaster in June 1861.

On the Jonesborough website, the town timeline relates the uncomfortable division of loyalties during the war. At the end of the war, the town was pro-Union and several citizens who had supported the Confederacy were driven from the town for a number of years.<sup>10</sup>

### Warring Factions Both Collect Postage for the Same Letter

Another mixed franking is shown in Figure 29. It bears the crisp strikes of an Oxford NC Jun 1 (1861) CDS with a matching encircled PAID 5. The cover is addressed to Edwin Paschall Sr. Esq., Arrington, Tennessee. The date was the first day of the Confederate postal system and the North Carolina postmaster properly collected 5¢ for the new rate. However, the envelope was addressed to Tennessee, which was still part of the Union and thus the Arrington postmaster collected 3¢ for the US post office, as indicated by the manuscript "Due 3."

Addressee Edwin Burford Paschall (1799-1869)



**Figure 29.** Oxford, N.C., Jun 1 (1861) CDS and PAID 5, the first day of the changeover to the CSPOD system, addressed to Tennessee which was still part of the Union, thus the Arrington postmaster collected 3¢ for the US.



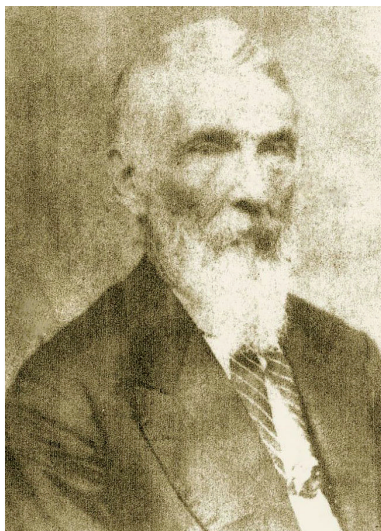
**Figure 30.** Mixed franking of CSA Paid 5 the first day of Nashville's conversion to the Confederate postal system as well as the US Due 3 applied at Chattanooga since East Tennessee was still loyal to the Union.

was the editor and lead writer for the *Nashville (Tennessee) Press* newspaper. His son, Dr. Benjamin Hillyard Paschall (1826-1898), lived in Arrington. The father was likely visiting his son when this letter was posted.<sup>11</sup> Edwin was born in Mecklenburg County, Virginia, educated as a lawyer, and moved to Tennessee in 1833. He taught school for many years in various Tennessee towns, as well as actively working as a journalist.<sup>12</sup>

### Nashville Postmaster Closes Out US Accounts

Figure 30 shows a Nashville, Tennessee, cover used with a blue town postmark dated June 13,





**Figure 31.** David Cleage, of Athens, Tenn., is well known to postal historians as a clerk at Planters Bank.

1861, The day is inverted. There is a matching "PAID" and "5" Confederate rate which was applied on the first day of Nashville's conversion to the Confederate postal system. The envelope bears a penciled a US rate of Due 3 applied at Chattanooga since East Tennessee was still loyal to the Union. On June 12, Nashville postmaster

McNish closed out his US postal accounts and on June 12 started charging Confederate postage.

The envelope is addressed to D(avid) Cleage (1806-1887) in Athens, Tennessee. Cleage, shown in Figure 31, is well known to postal historians as a clerk for the Planters Bank in Athens; many covers are addressed to him care of the bank.

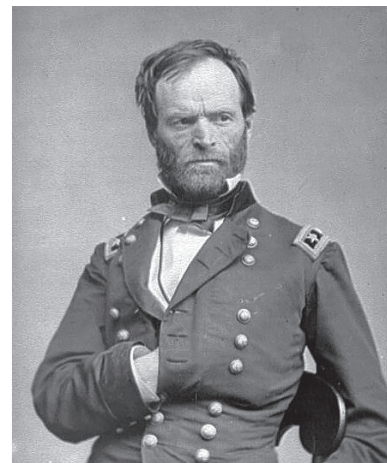
David's father, Samuel Cleage, was the contractor who constructed Planters Bank in 1836 in partnership with his son-in-law, Thomas Crutchfield. Employees of the construction and merchandising firm included his sons, David and Alexander, the Crutchfield sons, apprentices, journeymen, and slave craftsmen. David Cleage continued to run the firm following his father's death, although he spent time in banking and real estate as well. David was instrumental in the establishment of the first banking developments in Athens.<sup>13</sup> When the bank closed circa 1865, David Cleage bought the house and lived there until his death.<sup>14</sup>

## War is Hell

In these transitional covers are gathered the fundamental elements of disunion at the start of the Civil War. Postal systems on each side struggled to maintain the thin thread of mail exchange. In the South, there was a dramatic increase in the cost of sending letters. Letters were filled with

angst and apprehension as they anticipated the coming struggle.

Sherman, shown in Figure 32, was an early advocate of what is now known as "total war," as evidenced by his scorched earth policy and his many published post-war justifications. He termed it "hard war."



**Figure 32.** US Maj. Gen. William Tecumseh Sherman (Courtesy Library of Congress)

## US Major General William Tecumseh Sherman:

*I am tired and sick of war.  
Its glory is all moonshine.  
It is only those who have  
neither fired a shot nor  
heard the shrieks and  
groans of the wounded  
who cry aloud for blood,  
for vengeance, for  
desolation. War is hell.*

## Acknowledgements:

I am grateful to Siegel Auction Galleries for many of images used. It is likely no surprise that many of the covers came from the fabulous collection of across-the-lines mail put together by Steve Walske. Walske and Trepel's award-winning book, *Special Mail Routes of the American*





**U.S. Military Railroad Base**, Johnsonville, Tennessee, 1864

*Civil War: A Guide to Across-the-Lines Postal History*, published by the Confederate Stamp Alliance in 2008, was a companion piece to the then-forthcoming 2012 CSA catalog. The philatelic public owes them a debt of gratitude for so ably educating us about this fascinating area. The Walske-Trepel work covers not only the suspension of US postal routes, but also

private express routes, across-the-lines mail, flag-of-truce mail, blockade-run mail, the Trans-Rio Grande and Trans-Mississippi routes, and covert mail. It is rich with tables that disclose ship sailings and detailed censuses. This publication is still available on the open market at a modest price and is worth every penny to acquire. ■

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Jay Bigalke, Jim Kloetzel et al, *Scott Specialized Catalogue of United States Stamps & Covers*, 2024. All catalog numbers cited in parentheses are from Scott.

<sup>2</sup> Military History Online, <https://www.militaryhistoryonline.com/Genealogy/Regiment/Georgia/2/2143> Accessed November 29, 2023.

<sup>3</sup> Harriet Harlow, Ancestry.com <https://www.ancestry.com/genealogy/records/harriet-harlow-24-29www9> Accessed November 29, 2023.

<sup>4</sup> Georgia: Chattooga County: Biography of James and Elizabeth Parker Harlow Family, <http://files.usgwarchives.net/ga/chattooga/bios/harlow.txt> Accessed November 29, 2023.

<sup>5</sup> Rev. Thomas Railey Markham, FindAGrave.com, <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/6884681/thomas-railey-markham> Accessed November 30, 2023.

<sup>6</sup> Dwight Pitcaithley, "When Tennessee Turned South," *Opinionator*, *New York Times*, June 1, 2011. [http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/06/01/when-tennessee-turned-south/?\\_r=0](http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/06/01/when-tennessee-turned-south/?_r=0). Accessed November 30, 2023.

<sup>7</sup> Patricia A. Kaufmann, Francis J. Crown Jr., Jerry S. Palazolo, *Confederate States of America Catalog and Handbook of Stamps and Postal History*, Confederate Stamp Alliance, 2012.

<sup>8</sup> Richard Jordan Gatling, Britannica.com, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Richard-Jordan-Gatling/> Accessed December 2, 2023.

<sup>9</sup> William Booker Worthen, *Early Banking in Arkansas*, Arkansas Bankers Association, 2022, p. 123.

<sup>10</sup> History, Historic Jonesborough, Tennessee, <https://www.jonesboroughtn.org/about/history/> Accessed November 30, 2023.

<sup>11</sup> Case Auctions, Lot 717 Civil War Buckle Plates, Letter, CDVV, 6 items. <https://caseantiques.com/item/lot-717-civil-war-buckle-plates-letter-cdv-6-items/> Accessed December 1, 2023.

<sup>12</sup> Edwin Paschall, Virtual American Biographies, Edited Appletons Encyclopedia, Virtualology, <http://famousamericans.net/edwinpaschall/> Accessed December 1, 2023.

<sup>13</sup> Samuel Cleage House, Historic American Buildings Survey, National Parks Survey, <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/master/pnp/habshaer/tn/tn0000/tn0098/data/tn0098data.pdf> Accessed December 1, 2023.

<sup>14</sup> Planters Bank, HMdb.org Historical Marker Database, <https://www.hmdb.org/m.asp?m=177779> Accessed December 1, 2023.