

One of our great American Specialties

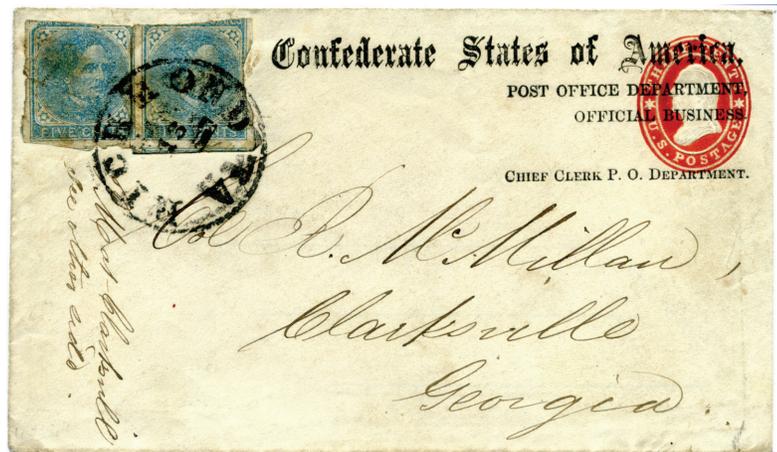
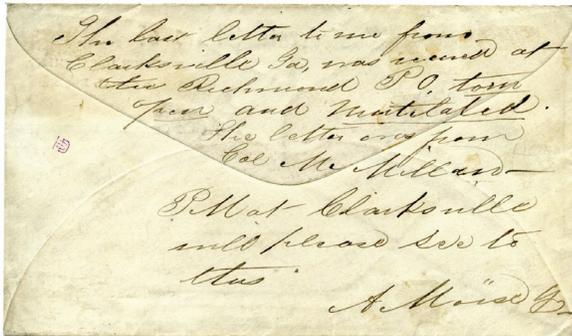
Here is a subject philatelists have been enthralled with for over 100 years.



The Confederate Post

By Patricia A. Kaufmann

A scolding note from the CSAPOD Chief Clerk



The illustrated U.S. 3¢ star-die entire is imprinted “Confederate States of America, Post Office Department, Official Business, Chief Clerk P.O. Department.” It is franked with two singles of the 5¢ blue London print tied with a Richmond, Virginia, January 13 (1863) postmark and addressed to Col. R. McMillan, Clarksville, Georgia” with a penned alert “P.M. [postmaster] at Clarksville see other side.” On the back is written in most irritated terms, “The last letter to me from Clarksville Ga. was received at the Richmond P.O. torn open and mutilated. The letter was from Col. McMillan, P.M. at Clarksville will please see to this. A. Moise”

Aaron Moise, of the Third Auditor’s Office, addressed and penned this terse complaint. Moise was a lawyer and editor. He was descended from the prominent American Jewish family of Abraham Moise, who was born in Alsace and emigrated to the West Indies where he married his wife Sarah, who was from a prominent Jewish family in St. Eustatius. He amassed great wealth, but in 1791 was compelled to flee, narrowly escaping the horrors of the slave insurrection in Haiti. He settled in Charleston, S.C., after his family fled Santo Domingo when his son Aaron (1783-1852) was about eight years old. The Aaron of the next generation—the Aaron of this missive—was born in Charleston in 1820.

Moise was appointed clerk in the United States Treasury in 1853, which position he resigned in 1861, when he went to Nashville, Tennessee and, according to JewishEncyclopedia.com, was there appointed captain in a Tennessee regiment. Those in the Moise family were ardent states’ rights supporters. Three months later, Moise was called to Richmond and made chief clerk in the auditor’s office of the Confederate government. After the war he took up the practice of law, which he continued until his death in Richmond in 1880.

Col. Robert McMillan, the addressee of this cover, was a distinguished lawyer and legislator who served with “gallantry and coolness”. Col. McMillan immigrated from Ireland in 1831. He put his

heart, soul, and money into the Confederate cause and raised and commanded the 24th Georgia Regiment, Army of Northern Virginia. Although nearly sixty years old, he was noted for his bravery. When General Thomas R.R. Cobb fell, mortally wounded at Fredricksburg, Col. McMillan was placed in temporary command and would have been made Brigadier-General, but his health failed and he went home to die.

U.S. stamped envelopes used by the CSA Post Office Department (POD): With the outbreak of the Civil War, the use of stamped envelopes became a problem for both sides. Effective June 1, 1861, Confederate Postmaster General John H. Reagan ordered all Southern postmasters to render to the U.S. Post Office Department their final accounts as well as returning remaining U.S. postage stamps and stamped envelopes belonging to the U.S. Not all stamped envelopes, however, were returned. Many were printed with Confederate POD imprints and used for official POD mail.

“Official Mail” has a distinct meaning in the Confederate postal system and refers only to “Free” mail of an official POD nature. The free franking privilege was abolished by the CSA Postage Act of March 15, 1861, but provision was made for the Postmaster General and other POD officials to send official mail free of postage when endorsed “Official Business”. The illustrated envelope addressed to Col. McMillan was not Post Office Department business, thus it was franked with Confederate stamps to pay the postage rather than receiving a “FREE” handstamp of official status. The U.S. 3¢ star-die, of course, did not serve any postal purpose in the Confederacy.

The small purple hand stamp on the back of this cover is the owner handstamp of Hiram E. Deats, who was an early president of the American Philatelic Society and one of the luminaries of the Confederate Stamp Alliance (CSA) in the generation of August Dietz. For more information on the CSA, now celebrating its 75th year, see www.csalliance.org or contact Trish Kaufmann, 10194 N. Old State Road, Lincoln DE 19960 trishkauf@comcast.net ✉