

Confederate Collectanea

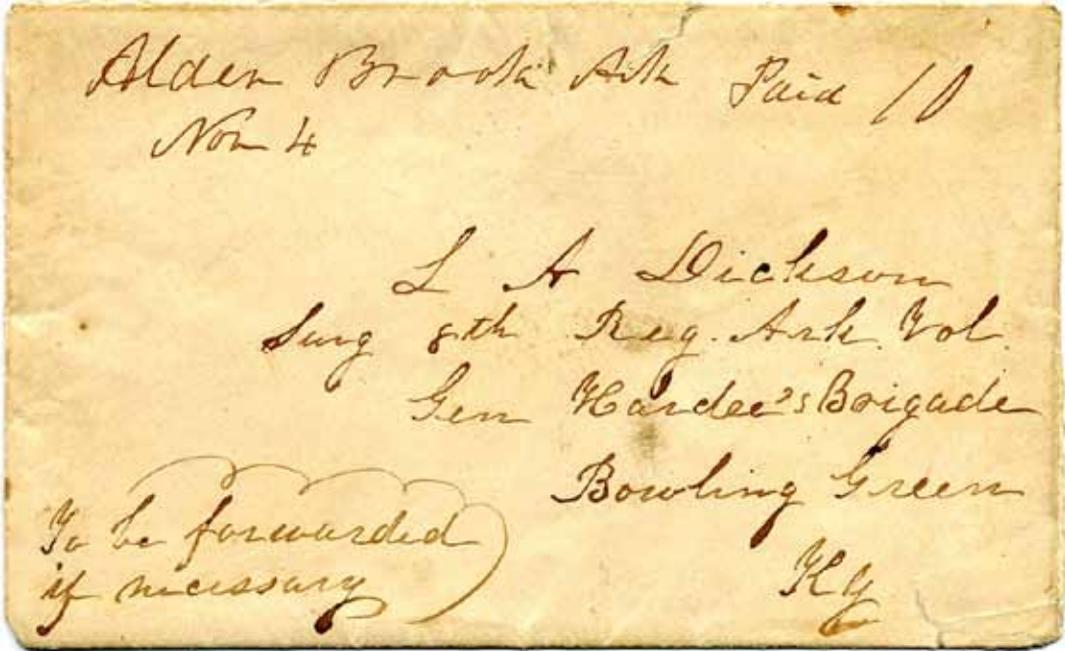


Figure 1: Alder Brook, Ark[ansas] manuscript postmark with matching “Paid 10.” The only such marking recorded.

Lost and Found: A Cover from Alder Brook, Arkansas

By Gen. Patricia A. Kaufmann

Alder Brook, Arkansas

It was listed in the auction catalog as a stampless cover from Alabama. However, the town name scrawled more than a century and a half ago was not the manuscript postmark described in the catalog as Alden Brook, Alabama; it was Alder Brook, Arkansas—a far more rare cover.

The immediate tip-off to the true identity of the cover in Figure 1 is that it is addressed to a surgeon in the 8th Regiment Arkansas Volunteers. Since most correspondence to combatants was from home, it is logical to look at Arkansas towns first. The town of Alder Brook, Arkansas, is listed in the *1862 Post Office Registry*.¹ There is no listing for Alden Brook, Alabama, and, to my knowledge, no town by that name ever existed.

The *CSA Catalog*² shows Alder Brook as the first town in the Arkansas stampless section. There is a manuscript “Paid 10” listed as well,

but with an asterisk, indicating that it was a legacy listing shown in prior catalogs but not seen by the editors.

Furthermore, it was not listed at that time on Dr. Bruce Roberts’ website census of Arkansas Postal History.³ In his census, there was only one stampless listing from Alder Brook and it was a manuscript Paid 5 use from this same correspondence and addressed to Pocahontas, Arkansas.

It was sold at auction in 1982 by John W. Kaufmann Inc. in Sale 83, lot 105, as shown in Figure 2. The Paid 10 use has now been added to Dr. Roberts’ census.

An online search yielded the cover shown in Figure 3,⁴ from Dr. Dickson to his bride to be. It is addressed to “Miss Lizzie G. Neill, Alder Brook, Independence County, Arkansas” on a cover with a manuscript postmark from “Bowling Green Ky/Oct 17” with matching “Paid 10.”

In 2008, this was offered in Sale 966 by Robert A. Siegel Auction Galleries and described as one of two recorded manuscript postmarks from the Confederate post office at Bowling Green, this cover being the earliest recorded. It is from the collection of the late Scott Gallagher.

Arkansas and Alder Brook in the Civil War

Most of the Arkansas populace was not keen to secede, but it was also opposed to Federal coercion of seceding states. This was shown by the results of the state convention referendum in February 1861.

The referendum passed, but the majority of the delegates elected were conditional unionist in sympathy, rather than outright secessionist. The mood changed in this slave state after President Abraham Lincoln called out troops to put down the rebellion when the Confederates attacked Fort Sumter.

Arkansas seceded on May 6, 1861, and joined the Confederacy on May 18. Antebellum Arkansas was still a wilderness in most areas, rural and sparsely populated. As a result, it did not have early military significance in the war. Though Arkansas sided with the Confederacy as a state, not all Arkansans supported the Confederate cause.

As the war progressed, two-thirds of the state was eventually occupied by Union forces, but one-third held out to the end of the war.

According to the "History of Alderbrook Creek" at alderbrookcreek.com/history, Alder Brook, or Alderbrook Creek, had a post office and trading post as early as the early 1830s.

It is situated in Independence County near Batesville and Desha, 24 miles west of Newport. On the website, there is a photo a home built there in 1832 that is believed to be the second oldest Arkansas home still standing.

The Arkansas name of the territory and state came from a tribe of Indians living along the Mississippi, a branch of the Quapaws, called the "Arkansa."⁵

Dr. Lycurgus Adair Dickson (1827-1904)

Dr. Dickson was a prominent physician and surgeon, a native of Murfreesboro, Tennessee.

His parents were Enos H. and Cynthia (Howell) Dickson, both of Tennessee. Enos H. Dickson was a cabinetmaker by trade and Lycurgus' grandfather was a soldier in the Revolutionary War.

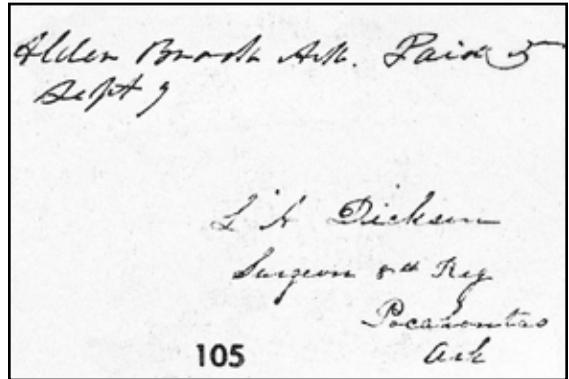


Figure 2: Alder Brook, Ark[ansas] manuscript postmark with matching "Paid 5." The only such marking recorded. (Courtesy John W. Kaufmann Inc.)

Lycurgus was next to the youngest of a family of seven sons. He was left an orphan at the age of fourteen and lived with an uncle, G.B. Lanham, until nearly grown.

His education was that which he could obtain in the common schools, and at the age of nineteen he engaged in teaching, which profession he followed several years.

In 1851 he began the study of medicine in Gibson County, Tennessee. In 1853-54, he attended the medical department of the University of Nashville, graduating from Jefferson Medical College, Philadelphia, in 1855.

He began the practice of medicine in Gibson County, Tennessee, where he remained until 1856. In the latter year he moved to Independence County, Arkansas.

During the war, Dr. Dickson served as regimental officer and surgeon of the 8th Arkansas Infantry.

He was appointed surgeon, Provisional Army of the Confederate States (PACS) on July 15, 1861, by William Kerr Patterson, 8th Arkansas Infantry.

On an unspecified date in 1862, he passed the Confederate Army Board of Medical Examination for the position of surgeon. He is shown on the rolls as a surgeon operating in Arkansas, Kentucky, and Tennessee. He resigned and was discharged on May 8, 1862.

In Batesville, Arkansas, on January 1, 1863, Dr. Dickson married Elizabeth G. Neill, daughter of Judge Henry Neill. They had seven children. After the war, he practiced medicine in the towns of Greenbrier, Jamestown, and Desha, Arkansas. All were in Independence County.⁶⁻¹¹

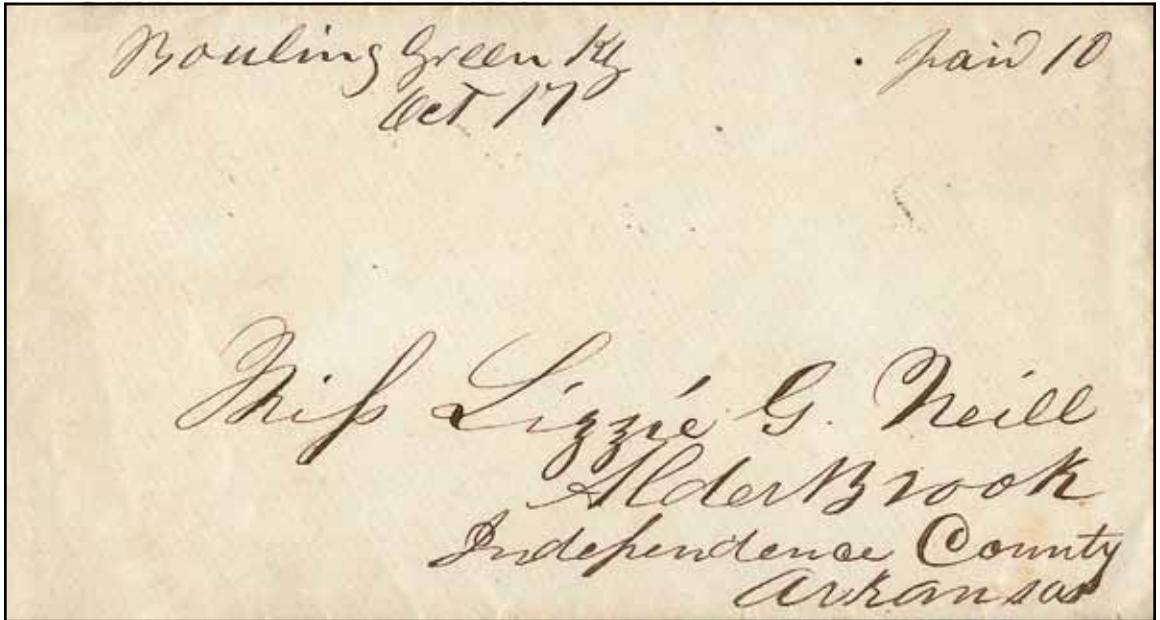


Figure 3: Bowling Green, Ky., manuscript postmark with matching “Paid 10” on cover from Dr. Lycurgus Dickson to his future wife, Elizabeth Neill. Reported to be one of two recorded manuscript postmarks from the Confederate post office at Bowling Green. (Courtesy Robert A. Siegel Auction Galleries)

8th Regiment Arkansas Volunteer Infantry

The 8th Arkansas Infantry Regiment (July 13, 1861–April 26, 1865) served throughout the war in the western theater, seeing action in the Kentucky, Tennessee, and Georgia campaigns.

Following its depletion in numbers, the regiment was consolidated several times with other Arkansas regiments, finally merging in 1865 into the 1st Arkansas Consolidated Infantry Regiment. The remnants of ten depleted Arkansas regiments, along with one mostly-Arkansas regiment in the Army of Tennessee, were consolidated into a single regiment at Smithfield, North Carolina, on April 9, 1865.

Fortunately for Dr. Dickson, he had resigned and returned home to marry his sweetheart relatively early in the war.

In conclusion

Here is another asterisk that can be removed from a future edition of the *CSA Catalog*. Asterisks in the catalog note legacy listings for items not seen by the editors. At some point, the Alder Brook Paid 10 cover in Figure 1 was seen by a postal historian who recorded it, unless there is another example somewhere. It was well written up and correctly noted as Arkansas in the collection, but was not correctly noted in the auction catalog. Trying to put out auction

catalogs under deadline pressures, these things happen. As a former auctioneer and describer, I’ve been there.

The cover was in an estate in an unidentified collection formed around military mail and, although I had already figured it out as Alder Brook, Arkansas, to my surprise it was properly noted on the album page that came with the lot. The take-away for today is to keep your eyes open!

Endnotes

1. *U.S. Post Office Department, List of Post Offices in the United States, with the Names of Postmasters Annexed, Except at Suspended Offices] with an Appendix containing the Names of Post Offices, Arranged by States and Counties. Embracing also Certain Important Regulations, and Other Postal Information.* Washington: Government Printing Office, 1862. Reprint by Theron Wierenga.

2. Patricia A. Kaufmann, Francis J. Crown, Jr., and Jerry S. Palazolo, *Confederate States of America Catalog and Handbook of Stamps and Postal History*, Confederate Stamp Alliance, 2012, p. 57.

3. Bruce Roberts, *Arkansas Postal History* www.arkph.com



Figure 4: Gravestone of Dr. Lycurgus Adair Dickson at Oak Lawn Cemetery, Batesville, Arkansas.

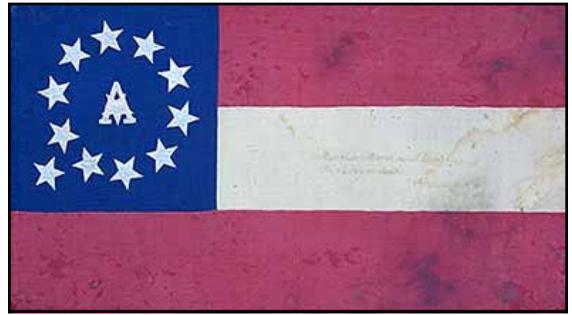


Figure 5: The regimental flag of the 8th Arkansas Volunteer Infantry. A variation on the first Confederate national flag pattern, it was presented to the unit raised in Jacksonport by William Patterson, who appointed Dr. Dickson Surgeon in the PACS during the summer of 1861. It is preserved in the Old State House Museum in Little Rock, Arkansas—a symbol of the past.¹²

4. Robert A. Siegel Auction Galleries, Inc., Sale 966, lot 2503.

5. Bruce Roberts, *Arkansas Postal History* www.arkph.com

6. Mrs. E. Leister, *Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Northeast Arkansas, Comprising a Condensed History of the State ...Biographies of Distinguished Citizens...a Brief Descriptive History...of the Counties....* Chicago: Goodspeed Publishing Company, 1889.

7. <http://files.usgwararchives.net/ar/independence/bios/dicksonla.txt>, Accessed January 3, 2014.

8. *1860 U.S. census, Independence County, Arkansas*, pop. schedule, Greenbrier Township, Alderbrook post office, pp. 315-316 (penned), dwelling 2,077, family 2,066, Henry Neill; digital image, *Ancestry.com*; citing NARA series M653, roll 43.

9. “Civil War Service Records,” “Confederate Records,” “Civil War Soldiers – Confederate – AR”; database and digital images, www.fold3.com; citing Compiled service records of Confederate soldiers who served in organizations from the state of Arkansas, Lycurgus A. Dickson, NARA series M317, roll 101.

10. “Arkansas, County Marriages, 1837-1957,” database and digital images, *FamilySearch.org* entry for L.A. Dickson and E.G. Neill, married 1 January 1863, Independence County, p. 84; *1870 U.S. census, Independence County, Arkansas*, pop. schedule, Greenbrier Township, Batesville post office, p. 16 (penned), dwelling 104, family 146, Lycurgus A. Dickson; digital image, *Ancestry.com*; citing NARA series M593, roll 55.

11. F.T. Hambrecht & J.L. Koste. *Biographical Register of Physicians who Served the Confederacy in a Medical Capacity*. Unpublished database. January 2, 2014.

12. Wikipedia: 8th Arkansas, 1st National Flag Pattern wikipedia.org/wiki/File:8th_Arkansas,_1st_National_Flag_Pattern.jpg Accessed January 2, 2014.

(Gen. Patricia A. Kaufmann has collected, researched and written about Confederates for 50 years; she has been a dealer since 1973, specializing in Confederate stamps and postal history.)