



The Joy of New Listings

The name of this publication is the *American Stamp Collector & Dealer*, the publication of the American Stamp Dealers Association, which has served philately for more than 100 years. The magazine logically began as the *American Stamp Dealer*, but was widened to include the broader audience in the 21st century, as it was so much more than just a magazine for dealers. *The American Stamp Dealer & Collector* was enthusiastically embraced by the entire philatelic community due to its diversity and the premise that people enjoy reading about people, not solely perforations, mail routes and the various philatelic intricacies many of us clearly also enjoy. At the beginning of this year it became the *American Stamp Collector & Dealer*.

Most – if not all – dealers began as collectors. Some dealers came to the profession as a second career. For me, it has been my first and only career. I'd had other jobs, but they were in no way careers. I was blessed to jump into the wonderful world of philately early in life and I've specialized in Confederate States material from the very beginning, as that was what I first collected.

Being a specialty dealer has given me a special vantage point. While a collector may see a lot of material, especially with the advent of the Internet and fabulous printed auction catalogs, I have the advantage of actually examining thousands of stamps and covers that cross my desk. This is coupled with serious study, research, writing, editing, authentication and cataloging.

I was both blessed and overloaded as the editor-in-chief of the *Confederate States of America Catalog and Handbook of Stamps and Postal History*, published in 2012. It is commonly referred to as the CSA catalog. To say it was a lot of work is quite the understatement.

The other two primary catalog editors were Jerry Palazolo (also a dealer) and Frank Crown, mainly a Georgia collector. The catalog took a new approach, incorporating many of the

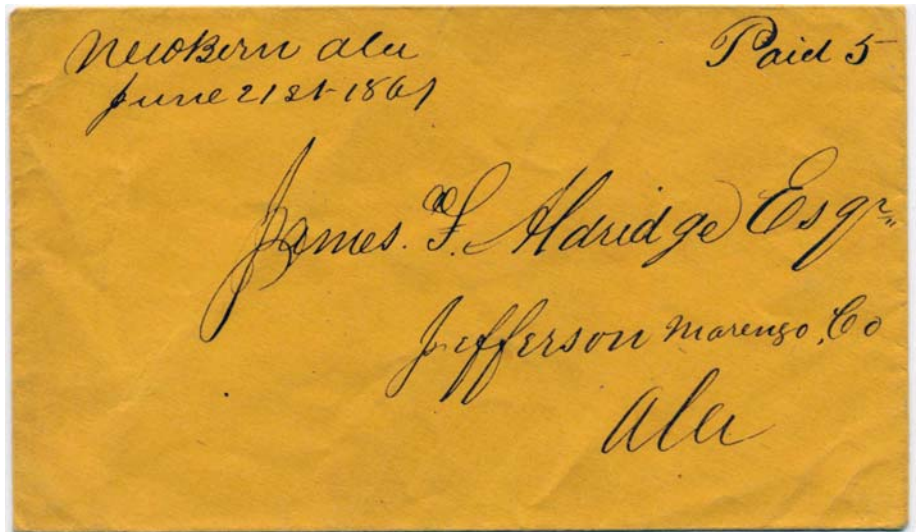


Figure 1. An unlisted manuscript town in the CSA Catalog: New Bern, Ala.

basic features of the old Dietz catalogs but building the actual contents from the ground up. We all learned a lot while working on that catalog – particularly in areas removed from our main areas of study.

General collectors may see Confederates as simply “14 stamps,” a common misconception. Although the Scott catalog may list only 14 main catalog numbers, there is far more to Confederate philately than 14 stamps. Confederate States postal history includes everything that United States postal history does and far more – from flyspeck philately to usages created of wartime necessity.

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But what happens once the five-pound catalog of more than 500 pages is done?

This legacy began with the Dietz catalogs in 1931 and has been sporadically published, with large gaps in between. The last two editions were 1959 and 1986, prior to this completely new endeavor published in 2012. The only thing certain is that the same editorial trio will not be at the helm for the next edition. And, who knows, maybe that next edition will be entirely online and not between the two covers of a catalog.

To whatever end, I have been methodically keeping digital files of new listing additions, corrections, better images and so forth. In the CSA catalog, the self-imposed mandate was that every listing have an image (not necessarily published, but at least in our files), so that we could absolutely verify the use.

Clearly, this image mandate was not always possible, thus some listings were legacy listings noted with an asterisk to indicate it had been listed in a prior catalog but not seen by the current board of editors. One of my post-publication digital file folders contains images of those hitherto missing uses and my file image names begin with “remove asterisk.” Not surprisingly, this occurs in waves as collections are released to the market.

The South Carolina stampless section of the catalog was updated a year or so ago by section editor Richard Murphy and published in the *Confederate Philatelist* (CP), journal of the Confederate Stamp Alliance. I anticipate other sections may be published on the Alliance website at www.csalliance.org if volunteers step forward to work with various sections. I would also like to think someone will step forward in the future to continue this effort and make use of what is being accumulated, which now amounts to hundreds of new or corrected listings.

I recently bought a collection of Alabama postal history. While modest in price, this cover hoard produced many new small-town listings such as the one illustrated in Figure 1. It is a delightful stampless use from Newbern, Ala[bama], clearly dated June 21, 1861, with the Confederate postage paid, as indicated by manuscript markings.

Although the Confederate Post Office Department took over from the United States system on June 1, 1861, general-issue adhesive postage stamps were not available to the public until Oct. 16, 1861. In the interim, local postmasters were left to their own devices. Many reverted to the antebellum practice of handstamping postmarks and rates on envelopes. Some created their own handstamped or adhesive postage stamps, which we call postmasters' provisionals. And some small towns simply handwrote the post office name, date and rate, such as the illustrated Alabama cover.

So, you'd think that most new listings would be for postal history and not stamps. What could we possibly find that is



Figure 2. Newly listed “vertical plate scratch at right” on Scott CSA 7. Variety (shown inset and enlarged) is very easily visible down the right side of the left stamp.

new on stamps from well over a century ago and all the catalogs that have followed? A lot.

One of the things about Confederate stamp production is that it was pretty sub-par, particularly on the lithographed issues. There are untold numbers of transient varieties that will never be cataloged because they are non-repeating.

Figure 2 shows a hitherto-unlisted vertical plate scratch on a Richmond-produced typographed (letterpress) issue (Scott CSA 7) that I kept finding as I worked up stamps for my stock. I finally determined that it was a consistent repeating variety. After conferring with other students, I found they were in agreement. I approached Scott editor Jim Kloetzel with this information. It is now listed in the *Specialized* catalog.

I found the scratch was on a left-margin sheet stamp, as indicated by a large multiple, but I did not have enough stamps to determine the exact pane. It

extends from position L31 to L41 on the printing plate. Maybe the exact pane will be identified sometime in the future. This stamp variety was discussed in a joint article I did with Kevin Andersen in the First Quarter 2019 issue of the *Confederate Philatelist*, mostly discussing the Brass Rules varieties (listed in the CSA catalog, but not in Scott, as the variety is in the margin and is considered too esoteric for Scott).

Figure 3 is another item that is now listed in the Scott *Specialized Catalogue of United States Stamps and Covers*. That block displays a variety that used to be called “laid paper” in Scott. It was listed years ago, but later removed as students quibbled over the designation. The laid-like lines cannot be laid paper, due to the lack of cross-chain lines (too long of a discussion for this publication but discussed at length in the CP).

What I determined and wrote up for the Second Quarter 2019 *Confederate Philatelist*, is that these lines are a paper variety caused by the inability of stamp printers to replace worn felts used to remove excess moisture from the stamps during



Figure 3. Stamp printed on paper with horizontal “textile marks” (lines).

the papermaking process. It is a variety that I am confident is now correctly identified.

Sometimes stamp discoveries disprove a listing. In the Fourth Quarter 2015 issue of the *Confederate Philatelist*, I wrote an article titled “The Discredited Twin Crescents Variety.” See Figure 4.

Again, this was the result of a stamp that crossed my desk in my capacity as a dealer. I figuratively tore my hair out trying to find what I “knew” was this listing variety. I found it was first listed by August Dietz in his 1937 catalog and subsequently in the 1945, 1959 and 1986 editions.

By the time the 2012 CSA catalog finally made an appearance, the erroneous “Twin Crescents” listing was removed. Instead of a constant variety, high magnification showed this to be a carefully hand-altered design in the upper corners that bears no resemblance to the genuine design. It is unique and more correctly identified as bogus. The upper corners were so different that even lithograph plating guru Leonard Hartmann could not determine the actual plate position as too much of the original design was missing. It now graces my collection of fakes, which I find as much or more fun than playing with genuine items.

For me, the joy of collecting extends far beyond putting



Figure 4 (above). The discredited so-called “Twin Crescents” variety. Formerly listed in four Dietz catalogs, the item was delisted after being found to be a manually altered stamp design. Note the difference between corner ornaments of the insets of the altered stamp (top right) and a normal (above right).

actual items in an album. It includes the collection and dissemination of valuable philatelic information. Like the hunt for that elusive stamp or cover to fill that space, the pursuit of information is equally rewarding.

If you find these sorts of topics interesting, you should probably be a member of the Confederate Stamp Alliance. Society information and application is available from the author at 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.



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