

CONFEDERATE TELEGRAPHY

Beginning in May 1861, the CSA took control of privately-operated telegraph lines in the South. The American Telegraph Company was reconstituted as the Southern Telegraph Company, and the South-Western continued to operate under the same name. All companies were allowed to provide service as private enterprises, but they were subject to government control for military necessity and restricted from transmitting any messages that might aid the enemy or compromise CSA military actions.

CSA 1863—South

Arkansas State Telegraph Company



Arkansas State Telegraph Company printed envelope with letter written by company's superintendent, asking his local representative to clarify the status of telegraph workers—superintendents and operators were originally given exemption from military service, but later legislation did not specify their status and so they were branded as conscripts and unpatriotic citizens—used with 10¢ Die A from Marshall TX to Washington AK, 15 September 1863; the printed telegram shown here is from the same company.

CONFEDERATE TELEGRAPHY

CSA 1863—South

South-Western Telegraph Co.
Southern Express Co.



South-Western Telegraph Co. imprint cover with pair of 5¢ Richmond Typograph used from Thomasville to Charlotte NC, March 1863.



Southern Express Co. "Telegraph" imprint cover with 10¢ Die A used from Columbia to Pendleton SC, 19 December 1863.

CONFEDERATE COLLEGES

Secondary education in the South before and during the Civil War was provided by private schools, usually in connection with a religious institution. Most secondary schools were gender specific, and there was a summer hiatus so that the work requirements of the agriculture-based economy could be met (the traditional summer school break continues today). Communication between families and students attending schools away from home was facilitated by mail, and the use of printed college envelopes by both students and educators was practiced throughout the war.

CSA 1861-1862—South

Wesleyan Female College
Roanoke College



Wesleyan Female College illustrated cameo corner card covers used to Cedar Springs GA with Macon postmaster's provisional 5¢ four-line typeset with post office name.



Four Macon provisionals are known on college covers. This pair of covers with matching red and blue cameos represents half the known population



Roanoke College, Salem VA, illustrated corner card used 18 March 1862 to Churchville VA with 5¢ Green Lithograph.

CONFEDERATE COLLEGES

CSA 1862-1863—South

Marshall College
Trinity College
University North Carolina



Marshall College, Griffin GA, corner card cover used from Savannah to Griffin, 1 March 1862 with 5¢ Green Lithograph.

“TRINITY COLLEGE/
N.C./5/NOV” (ca 1863)
circular datestamp, 10¢
Die A on cover to Flat
Rock NC with
manuscript “Due 10” for
excess weight—Trinity
College is now Duke
University.



University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, gray lithographed overall advertising cover depicting a woman playing a harp surrounded by flowers, used from Chapel Hill to Raleigh NC, 29 May 1862, with 5¢ Light Milky Blue Stone 2 Lithograph.

CSA GOVERNMENT

The CSA abolished the franking privilege that existed in the US prior to the war. Instead, the privilege to send official mail free of charge was authorized for the Post Office Department and later extended to the Agency for the Trans-Mississippi Department. Official mail sent by other departments and agencies required postage, but many of the CSA and state officials prepared imprint envelopes to carry letters—these are known as “semi-official imprints.”

CSA 1862-1863—South

CSA Government Imprints



Imprints from CSA government officials (top to bottom): Commissioner of Taxes (Treasury Dept.); Office of Orders and Detail (Navy Dept.); and Surgeon General's Office (Medical Dept.).

CSA GOVERNMENT

CSA 1861—South

State Imprints



Very few examples of official imprint covers are known with postmasters' provisional stamps

Semi-official imprints (top to bottom): "Controlling Quartermaster's Office, Ala" turned use with 10¢ Engraved Dies A and B; "State of South Carolina, Head Quarters, Adjutant and Inspector General's Office" with 5¢ Blue Lithograph; "Headquarters Reserve, N.C., Official Business" with strip of 2¢ Jackson Engraved; and "State of Tennessee Executive Department" with two Nashville postmaster's provisional (PM) 5¢ Violet Brown paying 10¢ rate for weight over half-ounce and distance under 500 miles, 21 September 1861.

CSA GOVERNMENT

CSA 1863-1864—South

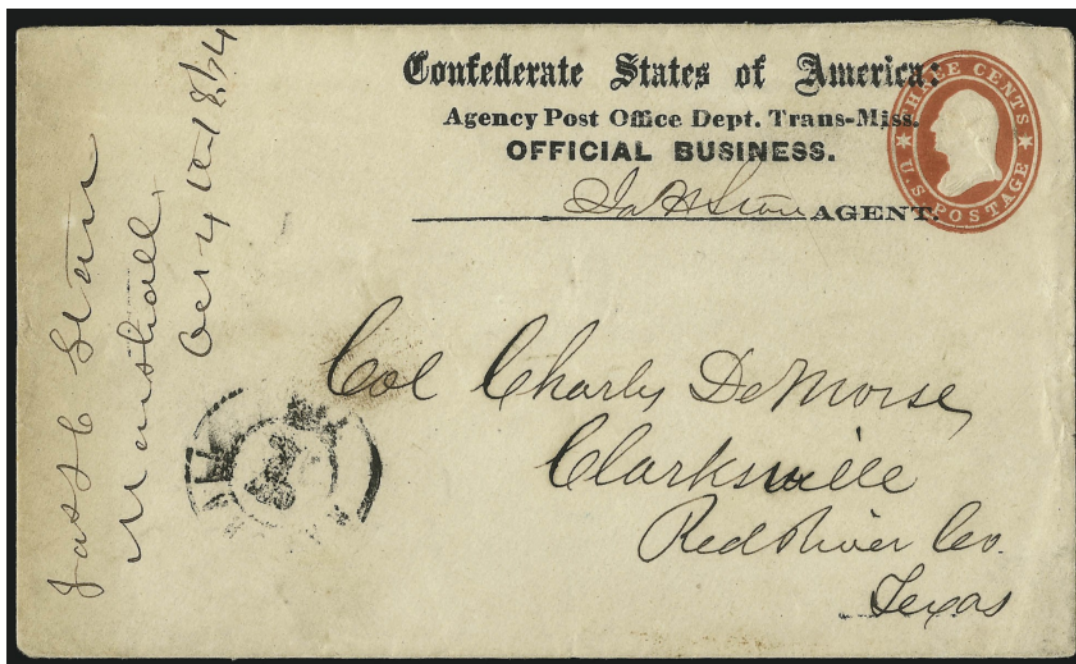
Post Office Department

The CSA Post Office Department was allowed to send official mail free of postage. Special imprinted envelopes (some on old US entires) were prepared for the different departments, and a signature was required on each envelope mailed; shown above are Appointment Bureau and Chief Clerk imprints.

Contract Bureau



Finance Bureau



The official mail privilege was extended to the Agency of the Trans-Mississippi Department in May 1864 and imprint envelopes were prepared at that time; they were signed by Jas. H. Starr and are very scarce due to the short period and circumstances of use—this example used from Marshall TX, October 1864.

SOUTHERN WATERWAYS

The South's inland waterways provided an important means of transportation for passengers, freight and mail prior to and during the first year of the war. After US forces captured New Orleans in 1862 and Vicksburg in 1863, navigation on the Mississippi River was controlled by US Navy gunboats, but other waterways remained open. The CSA postal laws governing waterway mail followed 1859 US laws. The classification of vessels (contract vs. non-contract), whether letters were prepaid or unpaid, and the destination (port of entry or beyond) determined the rates and markings, but confusion resulted in misapplied markings and rates (in New Orleans, for example).

US 1861—South

US Route Agent in CSA

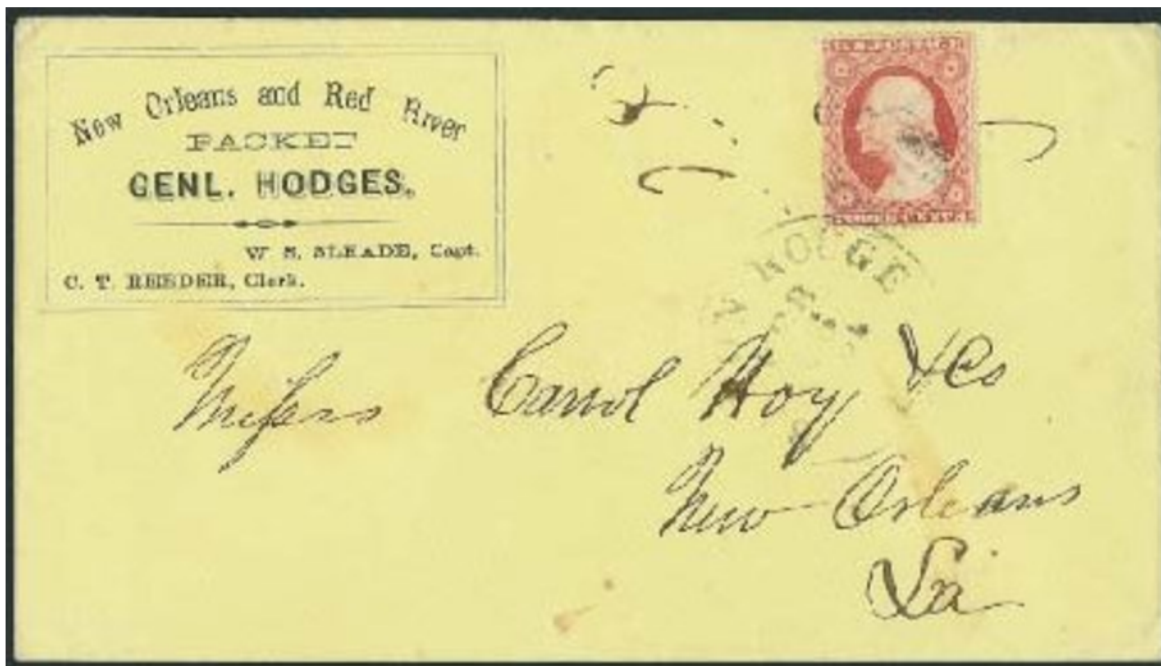


"STEAMER GRAND DUKE" route agent's name-of-boat 30 April 1861 datestamp on US 3c Star Die envelope to Montgomery AL, used after the formation of the CSA on 4 February 1861 and before the start of the CSA postal system on 1 June 1861; carried by steamboat on Red River, entered New Orleans post office 1 May and sent by regular mail to Montgomery; shown with cover are two pre-war documents related to *Grand Duke*.

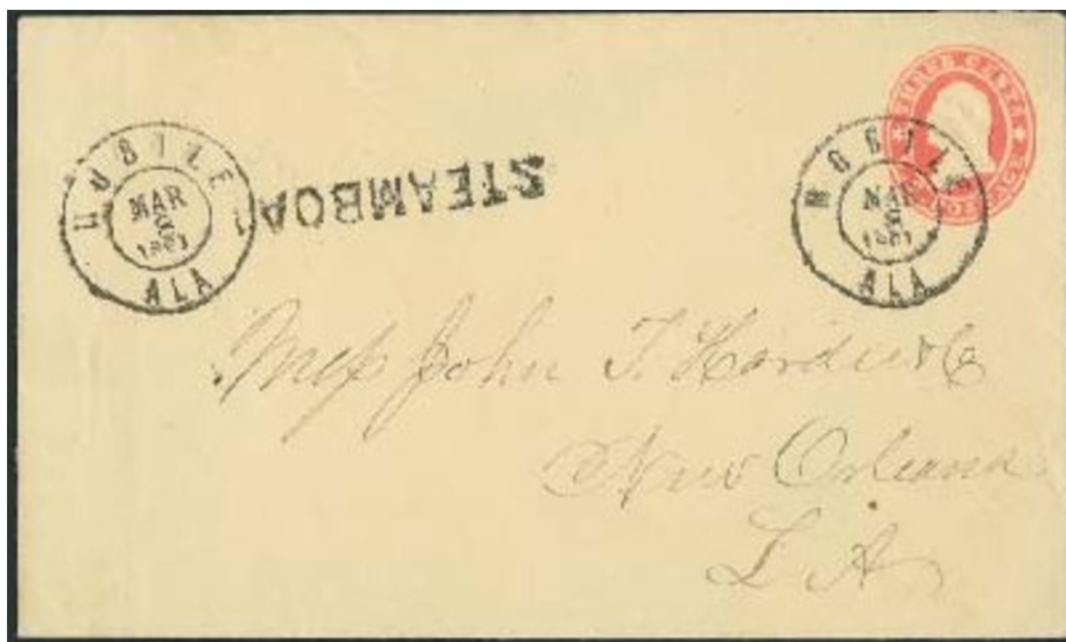
SOUTHERN WATERWAYS

US 1861—South

US Post Office in CSA

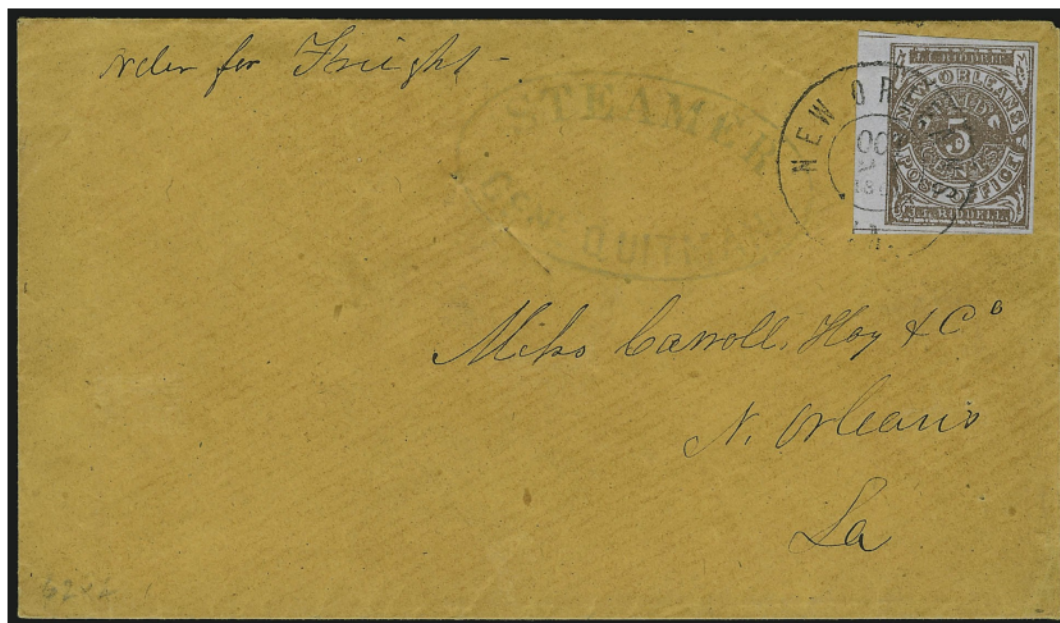


New Orleans and Red River Packet, General Hodges corner card, entered post office at Baton Rouge LA 16 February 1861 with US 3¢ 1857, carried to New Orleans by Mississippi River steamboat.



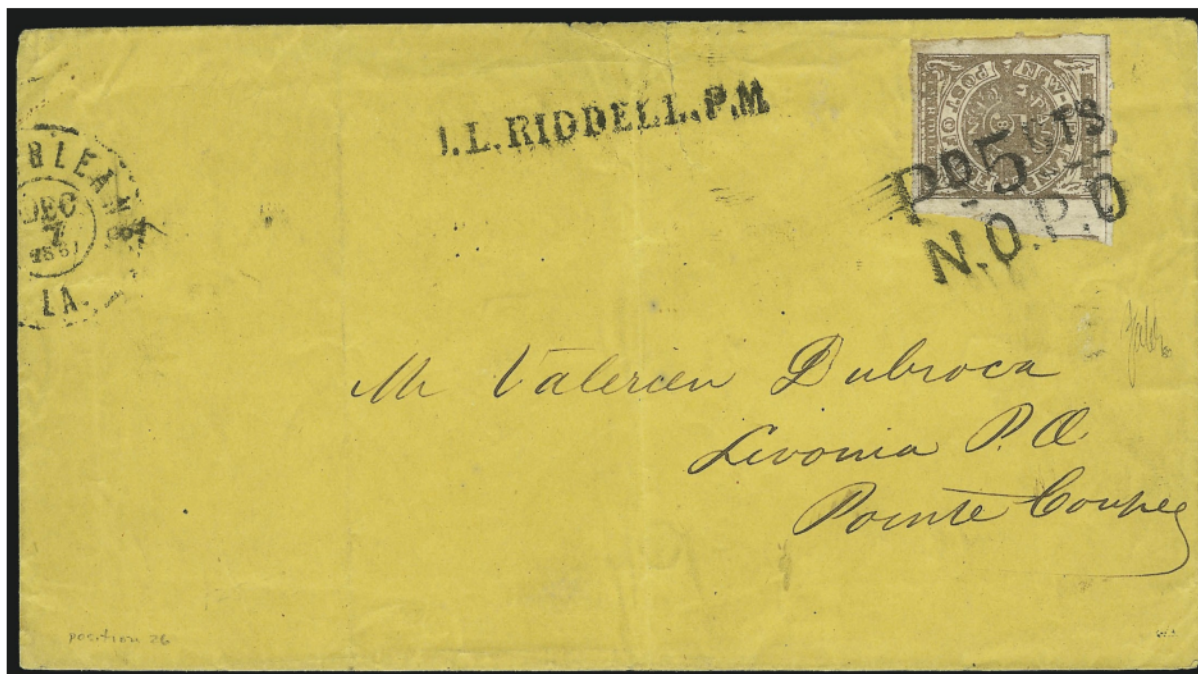
US 3¢ Star Die envelope entered mails at Mobile AL 8 March 1861 where "STEAMBOAT" handstamp was applied, this marking was used to indicate that the letter was received from a non-contract vessel and the captain had received his 2¢ per letter fee; sent from Mobile to New Orleans by regular mail.

Both covers show use of US stamps in the CSA after formation of the CSA government on 4 February 1861 and prior to the commencement date of the CSA postal system on 1 June 1861.



Rare use of name-of-boat marking with a postmaster's provisional stamp

“STEAMER GENL. QUITMAN” name-of-boat handstamp in ultramarine applied by purser or crew member on cover to New Orleans, carried on the Mississippi River (possibly from Natchez or Vicksburg), entered CSA mails at New Orleans with 5¢ Red Brown on Bluish postmaster's provisional already affixed, cancelled on arrival 23 October 1861, prepaid so no postage or ship captain's fee charged to addressee.



New Orleans to Livonia LA with 5¢ Yellow Brown on Off-White Third Printing cancelled “PD. 5CTS/N.O.P.O.”, straightline “J. L. RIDDELL, P.M.” and 7 December 1861 double-circle datestamp associated with river mail; probably carried north on Mississippi River to Baton Rouge and then by land to Livonia

One of two recorded covers with 5¢ Third Printing cancelled by river-mail markings

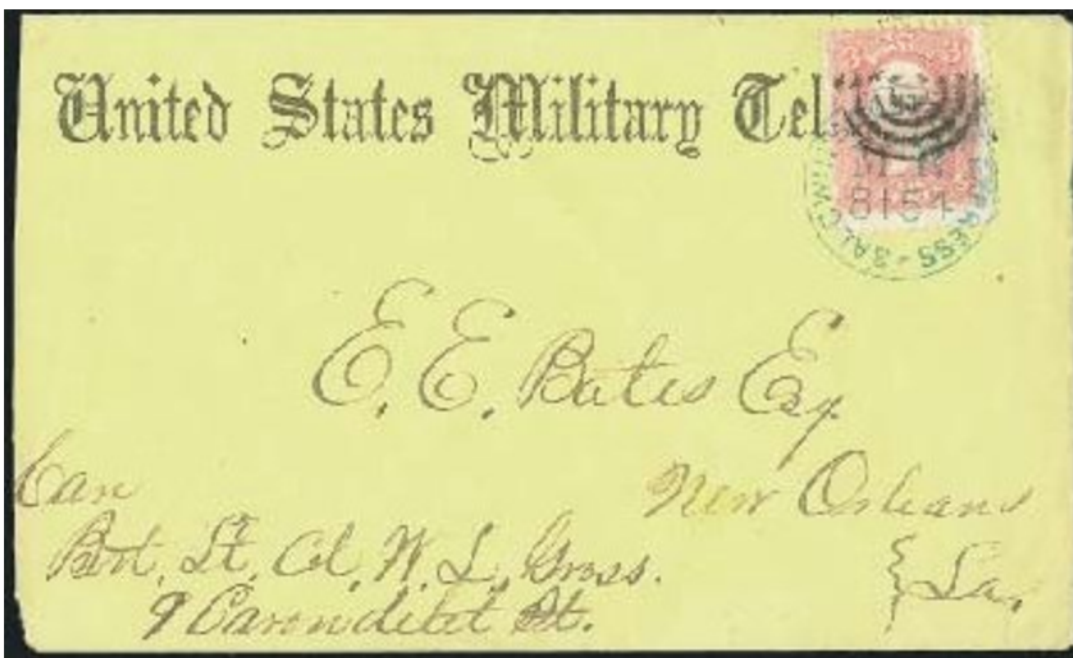
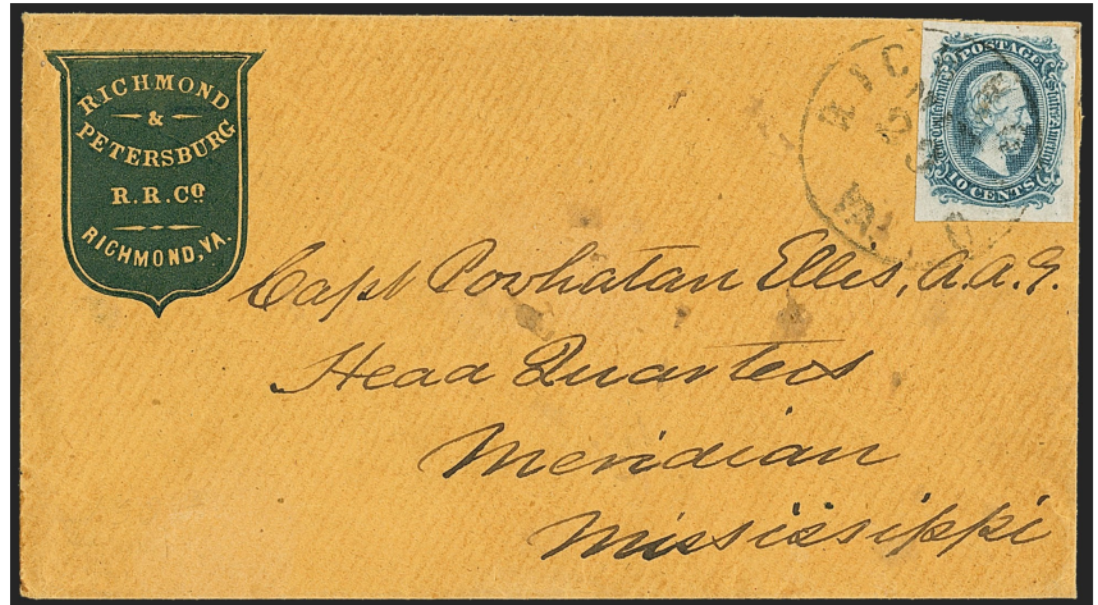
SOUTHERN RAILROADS

In 1860, there were 22,000 miles of railroad lines in the North and 9,500 miles in the South. In November 1861 the CSA tried to persuade 91 railroads to carry mail at reduced contract rates, but the railroads resisted, and only 15 companies complied. CSA mail was carried on trains in one of three ways: 1) locked through-bags between terminal offices; 2) local or way-mail bags received and delivered along the route; and 3) loose letters given to route agents aboard the trains. Only loose letters handled by route agents received CSA railroad markings. Many lines were destroyed during the war, by both sides. Certain lines were taken over by US forces and operated under military authority, as the post-war Baldwin's Express cover shown below illustrates.

CSA/US 1861-1866—South

CSA and US Route Agent Markings

Richmond & Petersburg R.R. shield-shaped cameo corner card cover with 10¢ Die A, tied by "Richmond Va. Nov. 29" circular datestamp from Richmond to Meridian Miss.



US Military Telegraph imprint cover to New Orleans, carried on NOO & GWRR by Baldwin's Express as the route agent, circa 1866, US 3¢ 1861 cancelled on arrival.

The New Orleans, Opelousas & Great Western Railroad line was under US military control from 1 July 1862 to 1 February 1866; the "BALDWIN'S SOUTH LA. EXPRESS/M.R./8154" circle was used from January through May 1866 (the route contract number was 8154).

SPECIAL ROUTES

CSA 1863—South

Louisiana Relief Committee

The Louisiana Relief Committee was formed on 31 May 1863 by a group of expatriate New Orleans citizens in Mobile AL to alleviate the suffering of poor citizens who remained in US-occupied New Orleans. With the tacit concurrence of US authorities, they arranged shipments of food and clothing to New Orleans and helped citizens leave the city for the CSA. The trips between Mobile and New Orleans via Pascagoula ran along the Mississippi Sound and carried letters that were not sanctioned by the US authorities.



Carried from US-occupied New Orleans by Louisiana Relief Committee courier, manuscript "(La. Com.);" applied by agent for the committee, pencil "Appd JCDenis PMG" censor marking applied on back by Mobile Provost Marshal Jules C. Denis, entered CSA mails for local delivery in Mobile with 2¢ Jackson Engraved cancelled on 28 October 1863.

CSA—South

Trans—Rio Grande/Eagle Pass, Texas



5¢ De La Rue
Typograph pair,
tied by Eagle Pass
Tex. May 19 cds.

Carried from Mexico across the Rio Grande to San Antonio in Confederate Texas via the Eagle Pass post office, which operated as the drop point for mail originating in Mexico to the CSA.

SPECIAL ROUTES

CSA 1863-1864—South

Government Trans-Mississippi Mails

The first step in the Union's Mississippi River strategy was the capture of New Orleans on 26 April 1862. US Navy gunboats then ranged up the river, capturing Baton Rouge, Natchez, and arriving off Vicksburg on 18 May 1862. Memphis fell on 6 June, opening up the upper Mississippi to US gunboats. The resulting US naval presence along the Mississippi disrupted CSA Trans-Mississippi postal service.

On 16 April 1863, the CSA authorized PMG Reagan to establish a "Preferred" mail route to facilitate communications and "more speedy transmission of letters and dispatches" across the Mississippi River. The rate for this service was initially set at 50¢. The "Preferred" service was advertised, but no written evidence has been found documenting its formal implementation. However, there are several westbound covers bearing 50¢ in postage with Trans-Mississippi notations.

On 1 May 1863, a "Trans-Mississippi Express Mail" service was established, with the CSA authorizing PMG Reagan to establish post routes and rates to be designated by him. The rate was established at 40¢ per half-ounce and a contractor was hired to carry the express mails twice weekly, starting 20 October 1863. Letters were directed to terminal post office locations on either side of the river, and Post Office Special Agents at those locations determined which courier would carry the mail across the river.



Westbound from Marion VA to Marshall TX, 21 May 1864, with 10¢ Davis Die A horizontal pair and strip of three paying the 50¢ "Preferred" mail Trans-Mississippi rate and sender's directive "C.S. via Meridian Miss".

One of less than five known Trans-Mississippi express covers paid at the 50¢ "Preferred" mail rate

The addressee, William W. Heartsill, was one of the first Confederate soldiers to enlist, joining W. P. Lane's Texas Rangers. In 1862 his Texas unit moved into Arkansas as a cavalry unit and was soon overwhelmed by a Union force. Heartsill was taken prisoner and transported to a Federal prison camp. In April 1863, he and other members of Lane's Rangers were exchanged for Federal prisoners and recirculated into the Confederate army. After the war, Heartsill sold groceries and saddles in Marshall, Texas.

SPECIAL ROUTES

CSA 1863-1864—South

Government Trans-Mississippi Mails

It took several months to establish the routes and arrange the necessary services, and Trans-Mississippi Express mail is recorded as early as October 1863 and late as April 1865.



Westbound from Petersburg VA to Shreveport AL, 26 October 1863, with strip of four 10¢ Die A; Collegiate Seminary for Young Ladies embossed corner card; sender's directive "Via Meridian Miss".

The earliest recorded Trans-Mississippi Express 40¢ rate cover and one of two recorded college covers sent by Trans-Mississippi Express



Eastbound from an unknown place west of the Mississippi, addressed to Greenville CH SC, 40¢ rate paid with two 5¢ Blue Lithograph and two 10¢ Die A —cancelled at Shreveport LA, 29 August 1864.

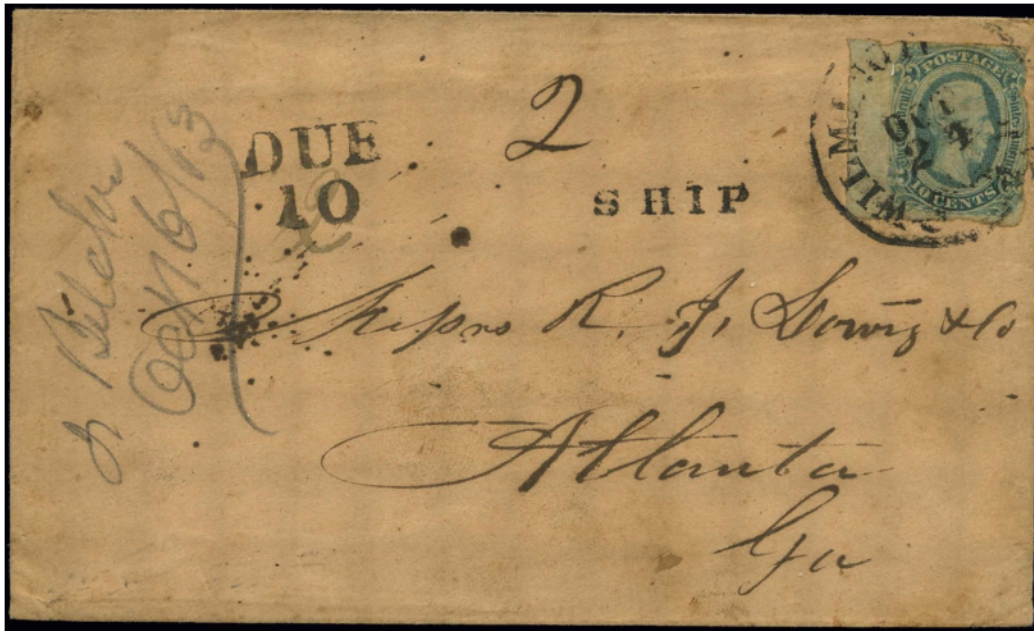
The only Trans-Mississippi Express cover known with the 5¢ Blue Lithograph or a mixed-issue combination

SPECIAL ROUTES

CSA 1863—South

Blockade-Run Mail

On 19 April 1861 President Lincoln proclaimed the blockade of the South, encompassing over 3,500 miles of coastline. To stop goods and mail from leaving or entering the CSA, the US naval forces focused on major ports; by mid-1862 the majority were effectively closed. Most surviving blockade-run covers are to or from Europe via the West Indies, sent on vessels through Charleston SC and Wilmington NC and connecting with Nassau, Bermuda and occasionally Halifax, Nova Scotia. Blockade runners also operated on a more limited basis out of Mobile, Savannah, New Orleans and ports in Texas.



Inbound from unknown origin 16 October 1863 to Atlanta GA via Wilmington where 10¢ Die B cancelled 24 October, “SHIP” handstamp and “2” cents captain’s fee due; additional “DUE/10” handstamp possibly for weight over half-ounce.



Carried on blockade-runner *Lucy*, departing Wilmington 1 May 1864, arriving Nassau 7 May; then Cunarder *Corsica*, departing Nassau 9 May and arriving New York 13 May.

The letter that was contained in this envelope is datelined “In Camp” on Jan. 12, 1864, from Edward L. Wells, a private in the Charleston Light Dragoons, Co. J., 4th SC Cavalry.

The only recorded example of the Bahamas 6-pence Lilac used on a blockade-run cover

Outbound from Charleston SC to New York City via Wilmington NC and Nassau Bahamas, entered the British Mails with Bahamas 6p Lilac (overpaying the 4p rate from the Bahamas), 8 May 1864 cds on back with “5” in circle handstamp applied in NY for postage due on British packet mail.