



Head Quarters Cavalry Corps,

ARMY OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA.

W. M. B. ...

Major Wm. B. ...

**Evolution of the Confederate Army
Field Post Service
During the Civil War**

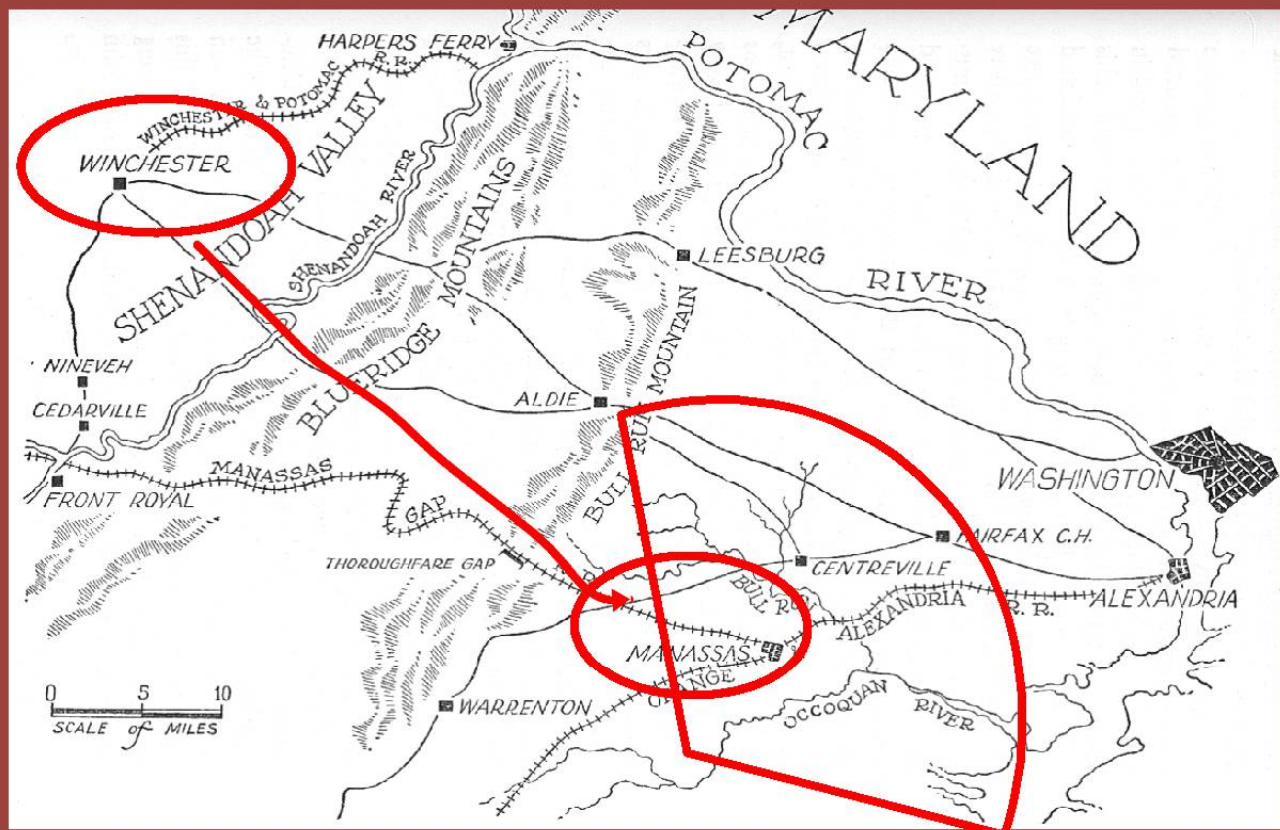
Stefan Jaronski, Ph.D.



Mail was very important to Johnny Reb, as well as Billy Yank, and to every soldier before and after the War Between the States. Army morale was very dependent on news from home. But the fledgling Confederate government didn't recognize the fact until well into the war. And so the development of an army postal system was a slow one, created more as a succession of fixes than a determined evolution

Today I'll be focusing on a microcosm -- albeit a big one -- of Confederate army mail: that of the Army of Northern Virginia, as a reflection of the development of the army postal system in the Confederacy.

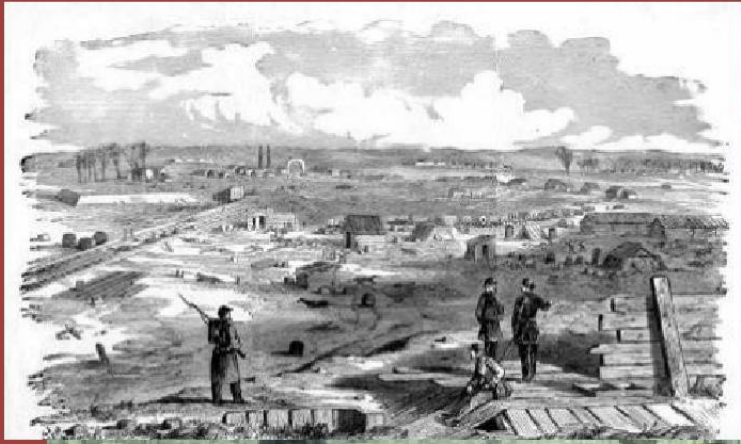
The Army of Northern Virginia was perhaps the largest Confederate army. Certainly it was the most famous of the forces defending the Confederacy. For almost 4 years, this army, under the leadership of men like Lee, Jackson, Longstreet, Early, and others, held off repeated federal advances against the Confederate capital, often against more and better equipped Yankees.



The origin of this army was with the troops that assembled at Manassas Junction in the summer of 1861 to defend Virginia -- Beauregard's Army of the Potomac.

Very soon after formation of the Southern Confederacy, the government realized that the defense of Virginia would center upon the Manassas area and the lower Shenandoah Valley.

Troops were therefore initially concentrated at Manassas and at Winchester; as the battle that would be known as "First Manassas" (or Bull Run) became imminent, Johnston's forces were pulled from the Valley and joined Beauregard. literally on the day of battle.



Bull Run showed both sides that the war would not be a quick one. The Confederate Army settled down around Manassas -- not to leave until March 1862.



Your Sweet letters are more important to me than anything else. So highly are they prized, that I find myself looking for one every day and feeling much disappointed when it does not come. You do not know how it gladdens my heart to hear the joyful messenger, 'A letter from your wife!' My tent seems a palace and I am as happy as I can possibly be.

Gen. Kirby Smith CSA

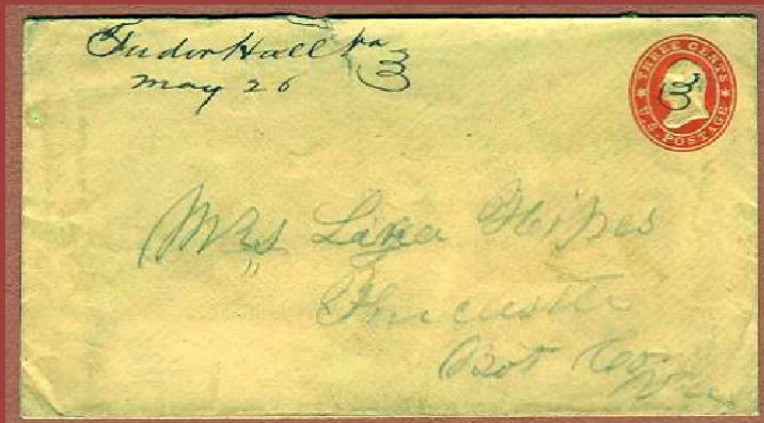
Thousands of men eager to hear news from their families and friends, and to write home. Thousands of letters going to an end -- a challenge for the newly created Post Office Department



During this period -- June 1861 - March 1862, the tiny post office of Tudor Hall, located at Manassas Junction, by default serviced most of the army mail.



Before the war Tudor Hall was a tiny, rural facility serving the 800 folks in its neighborhood. Probably looked not too different from this.



**Prewar: \$47.53
in 1860-61**

**June 21-July 19 1861:
\$780 in postage
collected,
= 7800-15,600 letters**

**= 275-550 prepaid letters
sent out per day**



The postmaster typically marked outgoing mail in manuscript, as here.

In June 1861, George Robinson became the Confederate Postmaster. He encountered a vastly larger volume of mail from over 40,000 men in his locale!

We have an indication of just how much mail: \$780 in postage was collected between just June 21 and July 19. That's between 7,800 to 15,600 letters, or 275-550 *prepaid* letters a day! And that's not counting many more letters -- letters to the soldiers, soldier postage due letters. and newspapers.

As many as 50 bags of mail sent out daily!

For the month of *January*, 1862

WEEKLY REGISTER—POST OFFICE AT *Tadler Hall*

Route No. *4, 241* from *Tadler Hall to Sayreburg*

CONTRACT TIME OF ARRIVAL, *5.15 P.M.*

CONTRACT TIME OF DEPARTURE, *7.10 A.M.*

Day of the week.	Monthly date.	Hour of arrival.	Cause of delay, if known.	Hour of departure.	Cause of detention.	No. of News-paper bags received.	No. of News-paper bags sent.
SUNDAY.	<i>26</i>	<i>5.15</i>		<i>7.10</i>		<i>5</i>	<i>50</i>
MONDAY.	<i>27</i>	<i>5.15</i>		<i>7.10</i>		<i>5</i>	
TUESDAY.	<i>28</i>	<i>5.15</i>		<i>7.10</i>		<i>5</i>	<i>25</i>
WEDNESDAY.	<i>29</i>	<i>6.30</i>		<i>7.10</i>		<i>5</i>	<i>25</i>
THURSDAY.	<i>30</i>	<i>6.</i>		<i>7.10</i>		<i>5</i>	<i>25</i>
FRIDAY.	<i>31</i>	<i>6.</i>		<i>7.10</i>		<i>5</i>	<i>25</i>
SATURDAY.							

Certified to be correct by *Geo. H. Robinson* — P. M.

U. S. D.—When failures occur, note whether they are total failures, or only in connect.
Fill up the blanks at the head of each Register.

As many as 50 bags of mail were sent out daily.



**Postmark ECU:
August 7**



It's not surprising then that Robinson got a brass postmark handstamp and an assortment of rating stamps for prepaid and due mail.

He also got 10 clerks assigned to help him with the mail.

o'clock A. M.

I said there was no regular depot building, but I am mistaken. There is one—a low, dingy looking house, extremely dirty, one end of which is used as the Tudor Hall Post Office and the other as a variety store, where, by the way, a soldier can spend a great deal of money with as little satisfaction as in any place this side of Kansas and Nebraska. The trade here is principally in matches, pipes, tobacco, shoe strings, thread and buttons, and is divided between this store and three sutler shops or tents in the immediate vicinity. There is a long triangular platform beyond the depot building, upon which is piled a large amount of freight, which is received for the different companies and regiments. Three or four sentinels are constantly on guard here, but these are not vigilant enough to prevent about one-third of the freight sent here from being stolen. Many

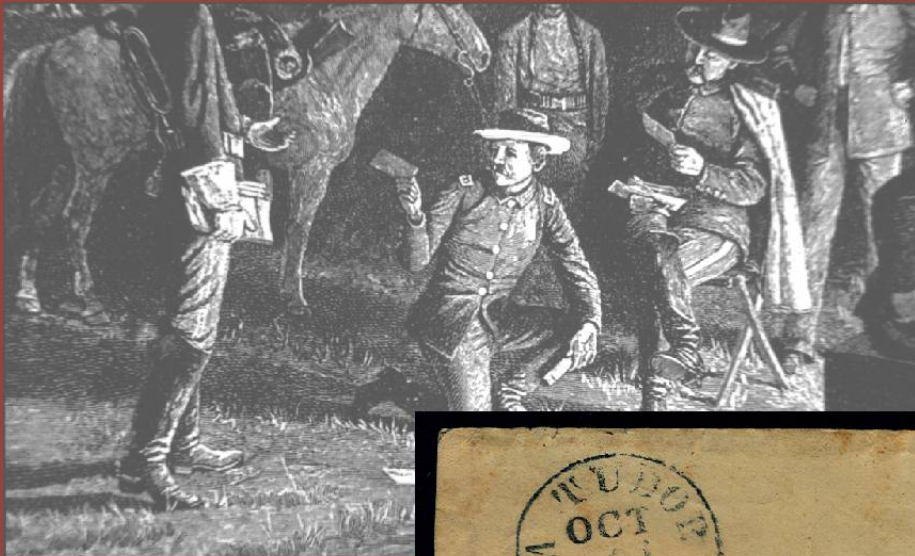


We are very fortunate to have a description of Tudor Hall and its operation:

In the village of manassas proper there are not above 3 or 4 houses and within the circuit of 3 or 4 miles perhaps not more than 500 or 600 inhabitants. There is no regular train depot, but a rudely constructed building answers the purpose at present.

In rainy weather, when the wagon trains of the whole army come to it every day the mud was at least 2 feet deep -- so deep that a horse could sink to its belly, or, in walking on foot, one would have his boots pulled off his feet at least half a dozen times.

There is a dingy looking house, extremely dirty, one end of which is used as the Tudor Hall Post Office and the other end is a variety store where a soldier can spend a great deal of money with a little satisfaction as in any place this side of Kansas and Nebraska.



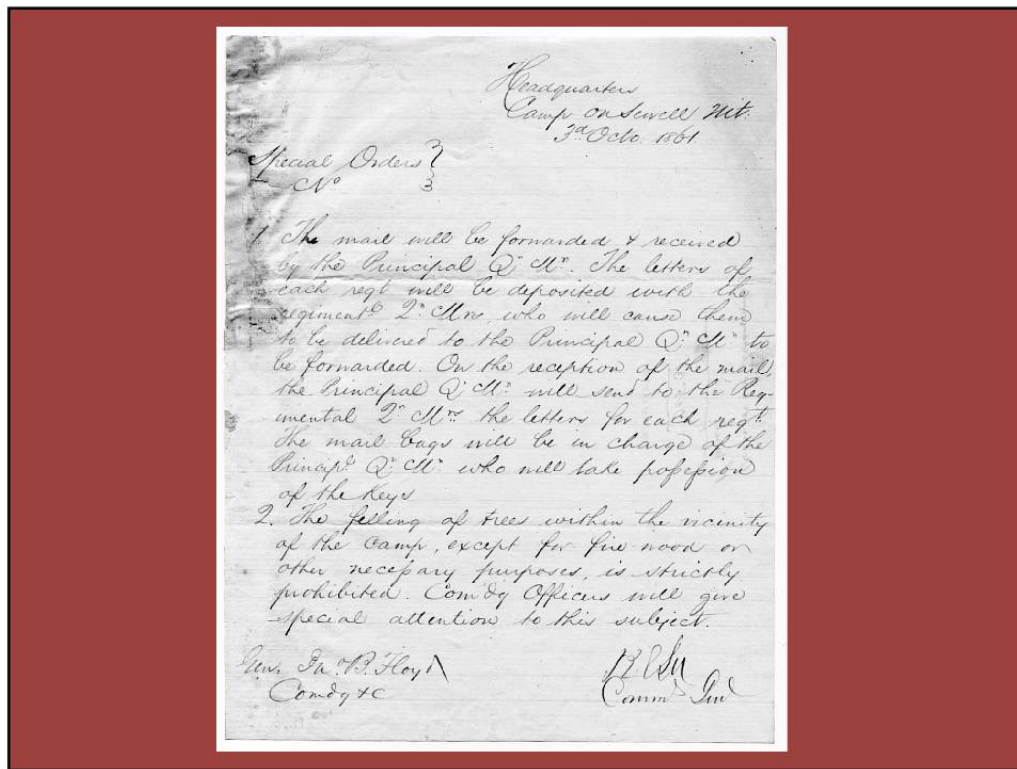
How was army mail handled?

- > Company mail orderly collected letters and \$\$ for postage. > Prepaid letters were marked in mss, "Paid 5 or 10"; soldier due letters required the sender's endorsement.
- > The orderly carried the mail daily to the PO where,

At the post office -- at a window, 2 feet wide, persons are required to stand on a rickety platform with steps at only one end, and, one by one, hand in their letters and distributed first, and then the next man approaches and patiently undergoes the same operation. This situation causes great inconvenience and much confusion.



- > As I mentioned, the company mail orderly often wrote on the envelope if postage had been given him as a crude way of accounting. Thus we have many covers from Tudor Hall bearing "Paid 5" or "Paid" 10 notations.
- > Of course soldier due letters were characterized by the sender's endorsement.
- > Mail was then bundled by destination, a Way Bill placed on top, and the bundle tied with string.
- > Mail to other offices in Virginia were sent direct;
- > Mail to other states was sent in bulk to the Lynchburg Distributing office where it was sorted by state and sent onward to other Distributing offices
- > Postage rates were 5¢ per ½ oz sent under 500 miles and 10¢ for a ½ oz sent over 500 miles. Thus we have PAID 5 and PAID 10 rates.

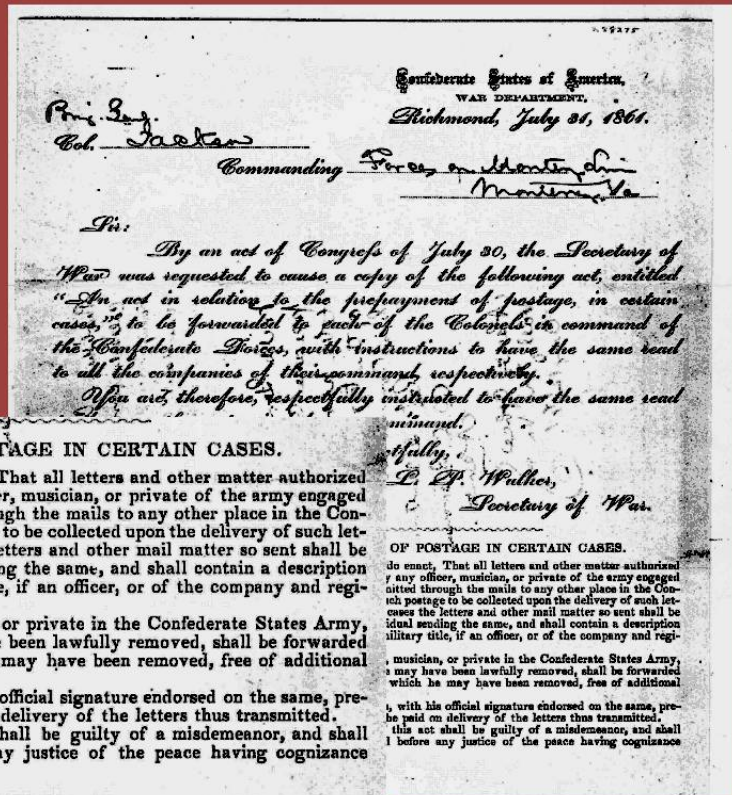


Some level of organization, and the involvement of the quartermasters, was soon initiated.

here is a Special Order issued by General Lee at Sewall Mountain in October 1861, authorizing the Quartermasters to take charge: *The mail will be forwarded and received by the Principle Quartermaster. The letters for each regiment will be deposited with the Regimental Quartermaster who will cause them to be delivered to the Principle QM to be forwarded. On the reception of the mail the Principle QM will send to the Regimental QM the letters for each regiment. The mail bags will be in the charge of the Principle QM who will take possession of the keys.*

My search through the special orders of the forces at Manassas has not revealed this level of organization and involvement of the QMs. But here we have a glimpse of further organization that will occur later.

On July 31, the Confederate Congress enabled the sending of soldiers' letters postage due.



ACT RELATING TO THE PREPAYMENT OF POSTAGE IN CERTAIN CASES.

1. The Congress of the Confederate States of America do enact, That all letters and other matter authorized by law to be transmitted through the mail, written, or sent by any officer, musician, or private of the army engaged in the actual service of the Confederate States, may be transmitted through the mails to any other place in the Confederate States, without prepayment of postage, but leaving such postage to be collected upon the delivery of such letters or other matter: Provided, nevertheless, that in all such cases the letters and other mail matter so sent shall be endorsed with the name, and shall be on account of the individual sending the same, and shall contain a description of the party who sends the same, by endorsement of his military title, if an officer, or of the company and regiment to which he belongs, if a musician or private.
2. That letters and other mail matter sent to any officer, musician, or private in the Confederate States Army, at any point from which the said officer, musician or private may have been lawfully removed, shall be forwarded to the person to whom directed at the post office nearest which he may have been removed, free of additional postage.
3. That on letters transmitted by a member of Congress, with his official signature endorsed on the same, prepayment of postage shall not be required, but the same may be paid on delivery of the letters thus transmitted.
4. Any person attempting to violate the provisions of this act shall be guilty of a misdemeanor, and shall forfeit and pay the sum of twenty dollars, to be recovered before any justice of the peace having cognizance thereof.

Approved July 29th, 1861.

OF POSTAGE IN CERTAIN CASES.

do enact, That all letters and other matter authorized by any officer, musician, or private of the army engaged in the actual service of the Confederate States, may be transmitted through the mails to any other place in the Confederate States, without prepayment of postage, but leaving such postage to be collected upon the delivery of such letters or other matter: Provided, nevertheless, that in all such cases the letters and other mail matter so sent shall be endorsed with the name, and shall be on account of the individual sending the same, and shall contain a description of the party who sends the same, by endorsement of his military title, if an officer, or of the company and regiment to which he belongs, if a musician, or private in the Confederate States Army, at any point from which the said officer, musician or private may have been lawfully removed, shall be forwarded to the person to whom directed at the post office nearest which he may have been removed, free of additional postage.

A PROBLEM: soldiers were not paid very regularly and small change was very scarce. Problem became so serious that Confederate Congress legislated on July 29 that soldiers and officers could send their mail unpaid with postage to be collected from the addressee envelope had to be properly endorsed.



Here we have several examples of soldier due mail, showing the different postage due marking used by the crew at Tudor Hall.

Even Generals were eligible.

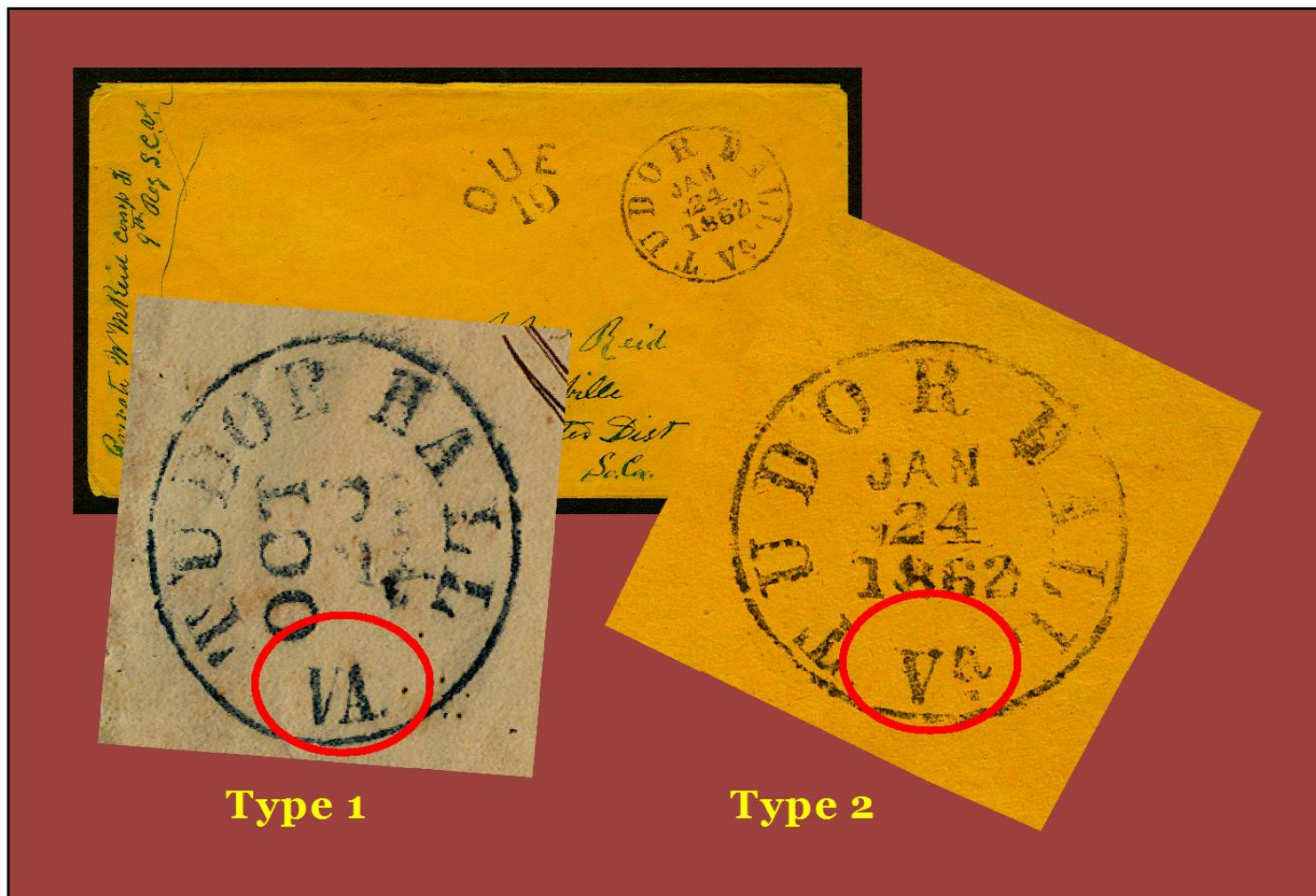


EKU: Oct 23

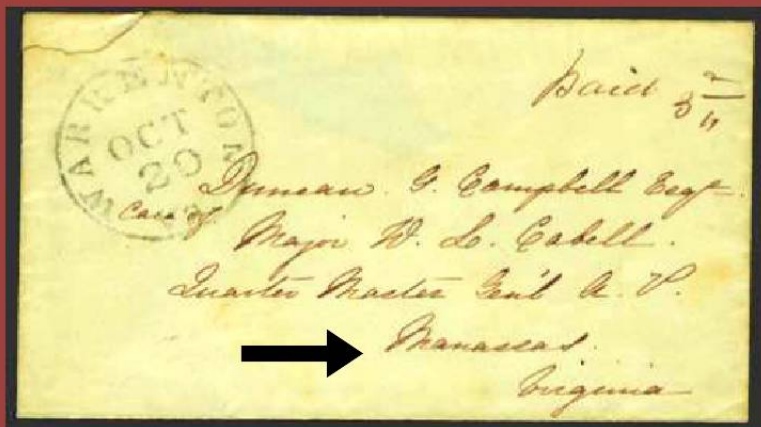
EKU: Nov 14



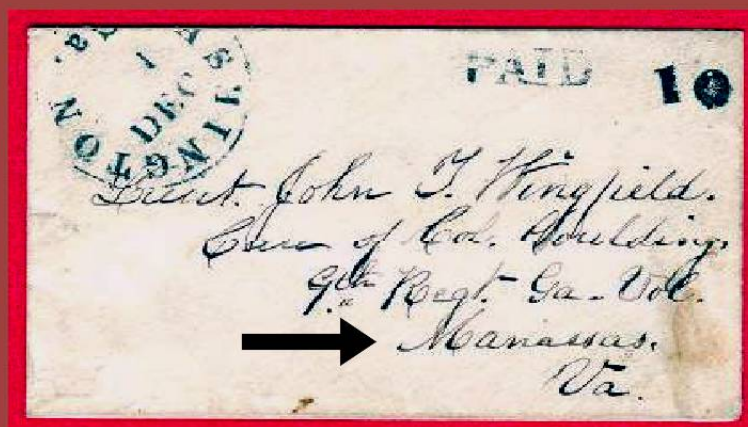
The first regular postage stamps were issued by the Post Office in October and quickly reached Tudor Hall and other "army post Offices" This partially alleviated the problem about no small change being available, as well as troops getting paid promptly.



Postmarking outgoing mail was so voluminous that the first postmarking device wore out by December and was replaced by a second device and additional due rate markings. The two are most readily differentiated by the state abbreviation.



**Mail was addressed
to Manassas,
not Tudor Hall**



Interestingly mail TO the army was addressed to Manassas not Tudor Hall



One can imagine how the workload was such that mistakes were made. here, a soldier's due letter was erroneously marked PAID 5. "Oh darn" said the clerk and quickly corrected his mistake with pen and ink.

Complaints continue to reach this office that you do not take care to calculate distances with any approach to accuracy in your rating postage. Many postmasters in South Carolina who charge 10 cents on letters posted to your office are placed in perplexing positions by finding that the return letters carried over the same route are only charged at the rate of 5 cents full postage.



> The volume of mail caused the PO to send almost all mail to Lynchburg Distribution Office for redirection, causing added 24 hr delay in transit and added expense (12½% to the DO) to the CSPO. This was quickly corrected!

> Errors in rates also caused a flurry of concern.

This cover should have been charged 10 cents because the distance was greater than 500 miles.

There resulted stern words from the CSPOD in Richmond to Postmaster Robinson.



After those stern words from Richmond, Robinson and his clerks got more careful: as result we have corrected paid and due covers.

And then there was negligence . . .

That mud hole Manassas is a veritable slough of despair, in which letters as well as every kind of transportation come to a stand still. A whole barrel of letters was a short time since brought to light from some old corner of the Manassas post office. They had been collecting for weeks and the only excuse offered was that the press of business had prevented their assortment and delivery.

-- Richmond Daily Dispatch

> Then there was sheer negligence. I quote:

That mudhole Manassas is a veritable slough of despair, in which letters as well as every kind of transportation come to a stand. A whole barrel of letters was a short time since brought to light from some old corner of the Manassas post office. They had been collecting for weeks and the only excuse offered was that the press of business had prevented their assortment and delivery.



Last Day: March 8, 1862

On March 8, 1862 the Confederate Army abandoned Manassas, ending Tudor Hall's period of philatelic glory. Here's a cover from that last day.



Other post offices in the Manassas vicinity also serviced army mail -- Fairfax Court House, which like Tudor Hall initially postmarked mail in manuscript then got handstamps to make the job easier.



Here we have another small rural office -- Fairfax Station -- that underwent a similar transition from writer's cramp to handstamped postmark and ratings.

Still, most mail went through the Tudor Hall post office.



This practice of using local offices was not restricted to the army around Manassas Junction. Here we see mail from and to the Army of Northwest in the hills west of Shenandoah Valley.

- > Huntersville Va [CLICK](#)
- > Traveler's Repose VA.

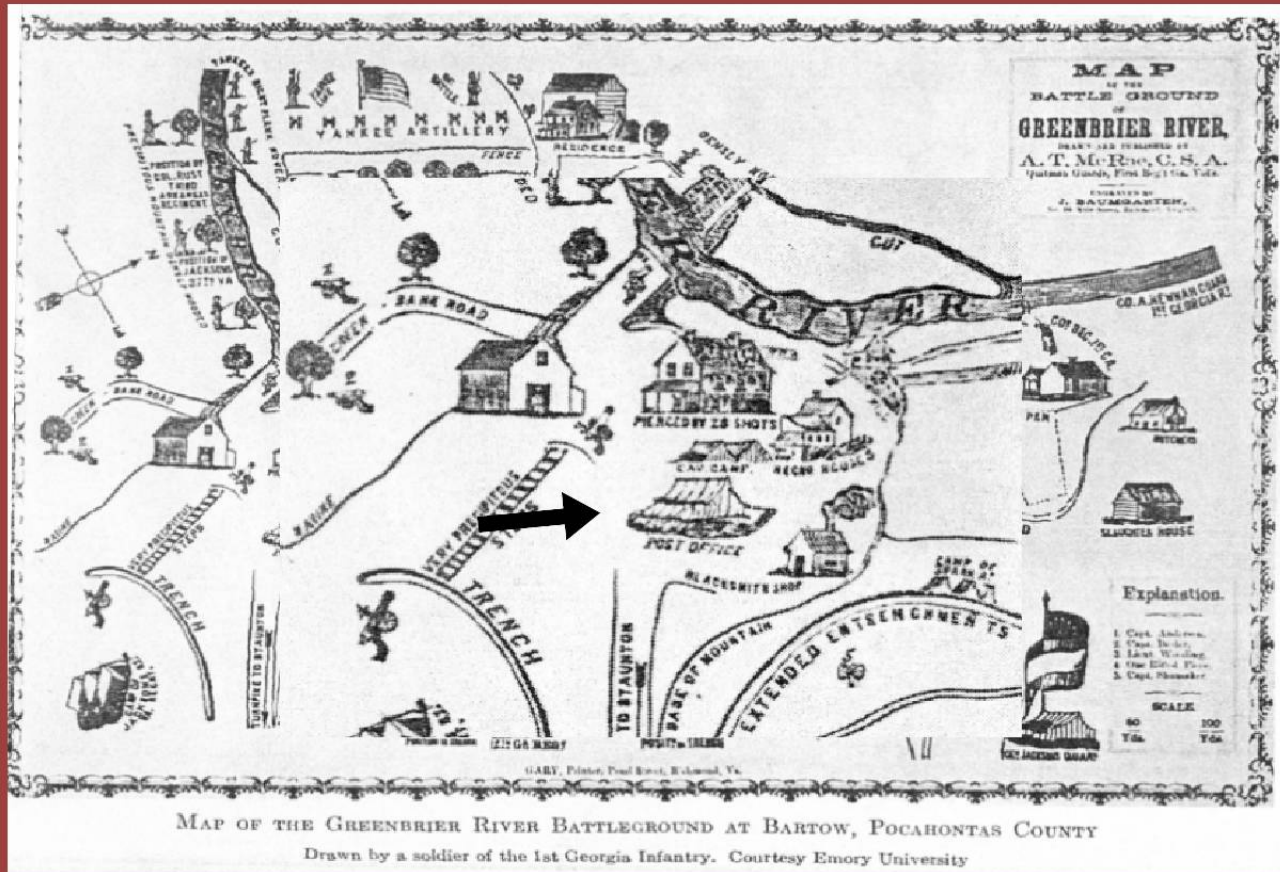
Travellers Rest Va
Sept 18

Pa
5

Mrs Maria L Harrison
do



Lt. G. D. M. Co. Vy.
Augustine Lee Rifles
Travellers Rest
(Camp Alleghany) Beckmantal Co Va



Traveler's Repose presents an interesting story. When the Confederate forces withdrew to the summit of Sewell Mountain, the Traveler's Repose postmaster went with them and set up shop in a tent, indicated by the arrow.



Another interesting situation was Camp Shenandoah up in the mountains between Virginia and the future West Virginia.

In late March 1862, Stonewall Jackson's defeat at Kernstown on March 23 caused Johnson to move his forces closer to Staunton, Virginia. Allegheny Mountain was abandoned on April 1. The Confederate troops positioned themselves atop Shenandoah Mountain, blocking direct access to Staunton and the upper Shenandoah Valley. The site was known officially as Ft. Edward Johnson. It was during this time that the Camp Shenandoah postmark appeared. Only eight covers bearing the famous postmark and two having a manuscript Camp Shenandoah postmark were recorded by General Sheppard. The known period of operation, based on the covers, extends from April 11 to April 16, 1862.

the CSPOD Records tell more of the story.

On April 16, 1862, Benjamin Clements, the Chief of the Appointment Bureau, wrote to a J. S. McNulty at Camp Shenandoah:

I cannot give you any formal authority such as you require to the removal of the office at Monterey to Camp Shenandoah until I know how far it is from the old site, how situated with regard to other offices, and how supplied with the mails.

You are perfectly justified in leaving a place threatened, as Monterey seems to have been: but I would not be justified without the information I ask, in taking any course in regularizing your action.

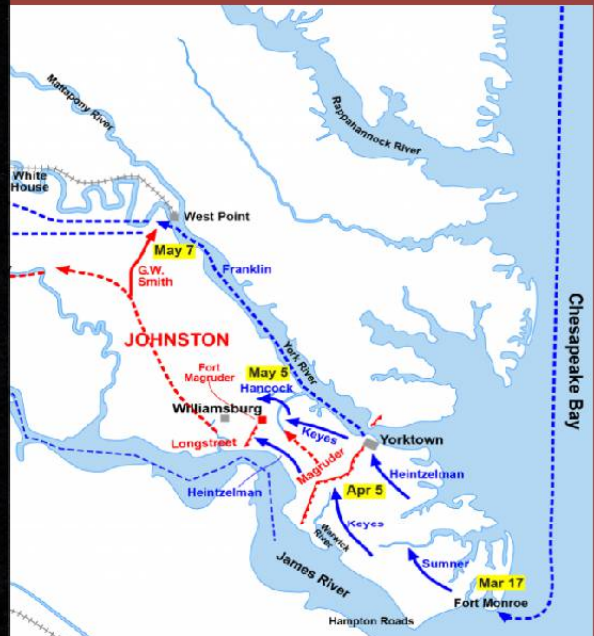
McNulty was Monterey's postmaster in 1861. When the Army of the Northwest Virginia withdrew to Shenandoah Mountain, they exposed Monterey to possible federal occupation. The above letter makes it clear that McNulty followed the army and continued postal service for the troops (who undoubtedly were his major customers).



Over in Kentucky, similar use of local post offices was the norm. Here we have examples of Bowling Green and Columbus Kentucky.

An interesting aspect was that the Columbus postmaster was really an army appointee under direct command of General Beauregard. And left behind detailed operations records now in the National Archives. So we know the volume of mail...

The Peninsula Campaign



In March 1862, The Confederate forces, now known as the Army of Northern Virginia and now commanded by Robert E Lee, shifted to the James River Peninsula to defend Richmond against a Federal advance from the East.

At first local offices were used -- Yorktown, Williamsburg, Jamestown.

By late April mail processing was shifted to the Richmond post office.



The CSPO had begun to learn its lesson, however, and began to take counter measures. An "Army Office" was established within the Richmond post office to handle mail of the Confederate troops on the Peninsula. Mail from the troops was transported by steamboat and rail to Richmond for processing.

During that summer's campaigns the Richmond Post Office processed the mail. At top is an example posted on the eve of the 7 Days' Battles by a Georgia surgeon.

Mail to the soldiers was directed to Army Mail Richmond, as we see here in the direction added by the Prince Edward CH postmaster.

Postmaster Biggers of Richmond did not handle his responsibility well -- only 3 clerks in an "Army Mail Office" were assigned to handle the mail of 90,000 troops, as well as redirect all the mail addressed to the now abandoned Manassas. Volume and mismanagement took their toll.

overwhelming majority.

SOLDIERS' LETTERS.

To the Editors of the Enquirer :

CAMP NEAR RICHMOND, Va., }
July 22d, 1862. }

GENTLEMEN:—Under the above caption, the "Whig," of Saturday, very justly exposes the negligence on the part of the proper officers in not having a sufficient number of clerks to guarantee a speedy distribution and delivery of soldiers' letters. Now, Messrs. Editors while I am not one to complain of those high in authority, yet this is a gross injustice, and wanton negligence on the part of those entrusted with this important department; and I feel the lowest private in our noble army has a right to enter his complaint. Indeed, such gross injustice should be frowned down by every soldier in arms.

Now, Messrs. Editors, were the delay in the delivery of their letters unavoidable—could it

our holy cause, and which the most important pleasure left to man. The writer of this has frequently received letters from Petersburg that had been mailed *ten days*; this delay, I suppose, was inevitable. Why? Look, reader, in the Army Post Office, and see for yourselves. *Three* clerks to assort and deliver letters for an army of ——— men. Now, without taking one man from the service, this delay can be prevented. There are hundreds

An insight into what was NOT being done is provided by the Richmond Enquirer: READ ABOVE

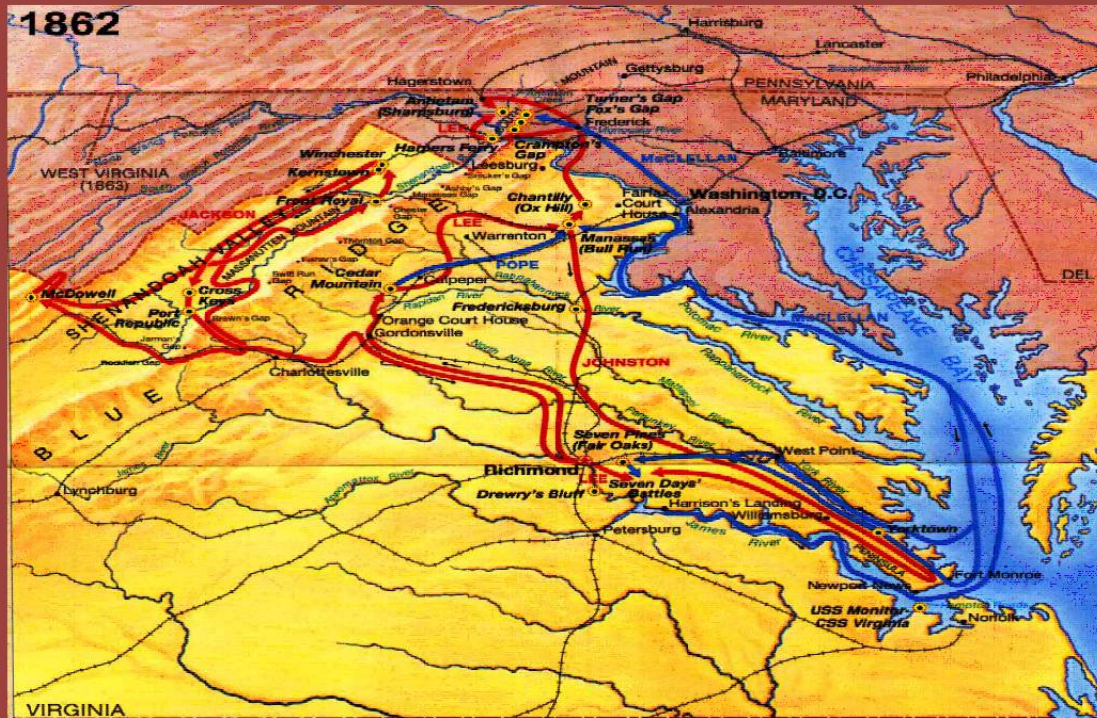
The correspondent goes on,

The poor facilities which the soldiers around Richmond enjoy for obtaining letters addressed to them there, is a subject which deserves the attention of the government. In order to obviate the difficulty to the greatest possible extent a daily list should be published and a corps of mail carriers established, say one to each brigade, and persons writing to friends and relative in the army should always add to the name and address, the name of the company and the brigade and state, so there will be no confusion in the delivery. A courier for each brigade would be sufficient.

By mid-July Biggers was publicly declaring himself not responsible for the prompt delivery of army mail. Another 4 clerks were assigned to help, and in the end Biggers lost his job.

Nevertheless a start to centralize army mail was made.

Second Manassas and Sharpsburg Campaigns



The next major military events were the Second Manassas and Sharpsburg/Antietam Campaigns. [Describe]

During these army movements the post offices nearest the army still bore the brunt, first Gordonsville, then Winchester.

I dislike very much to be troublesome to you, but I hope you will have the army mail directed to Orange C.H. instead of this place and have it put into a separate bag. I can see no reason why it should be sent here to be readdressed to that place when we are so short of hands. I have 4 hands and all are perfectly green in this business and they require me to pay them \$2 a day. I tried Gen Jackson and Longstreet to get them to detail me some hands but they positively refused to let me have any upon the plea that all are needed in the army. I have endeavoured to keep up by working late at night but my health is beginning to fail and I fear I shall have to give it up entirely. I hope the Department will establish an Army PO at Orange CH and get competent hands to attend to it. And at the same time to see that the mail for this place is not kept back at Richmond for 4 days at a time as it was last week and all sent upon one day's train.

Their experience can be summarized by one letter from the postmaster at Gordonsville:

I dislike very much to be troublesome to you, But I hope you will have the army mail directed to Orange C.H. instead of to this place and have it put into a separate bag. I can see no reason why it should be sent here to be readdressed to that place when we are so short of hands. I have 4 hands and all are perfectly green in this business and they require me to pay them \$2 a day. I tried Gen Jackson and Longstreet to get them to detail me some hands but they positively refused to let me have any upon the plea that all are needed in the army. I have endeavored to keep up by working late at night but my health is beginning to fail and I fear I shall have to give it up entirely. I hope the Dept will establish an Army PO at Orange C.H. and get competent hands to attend to it. And at the same time to see that the mail for this place is not kept back in Richmond for 4 days at a time as it was last week and all sent upon us in one day's train.



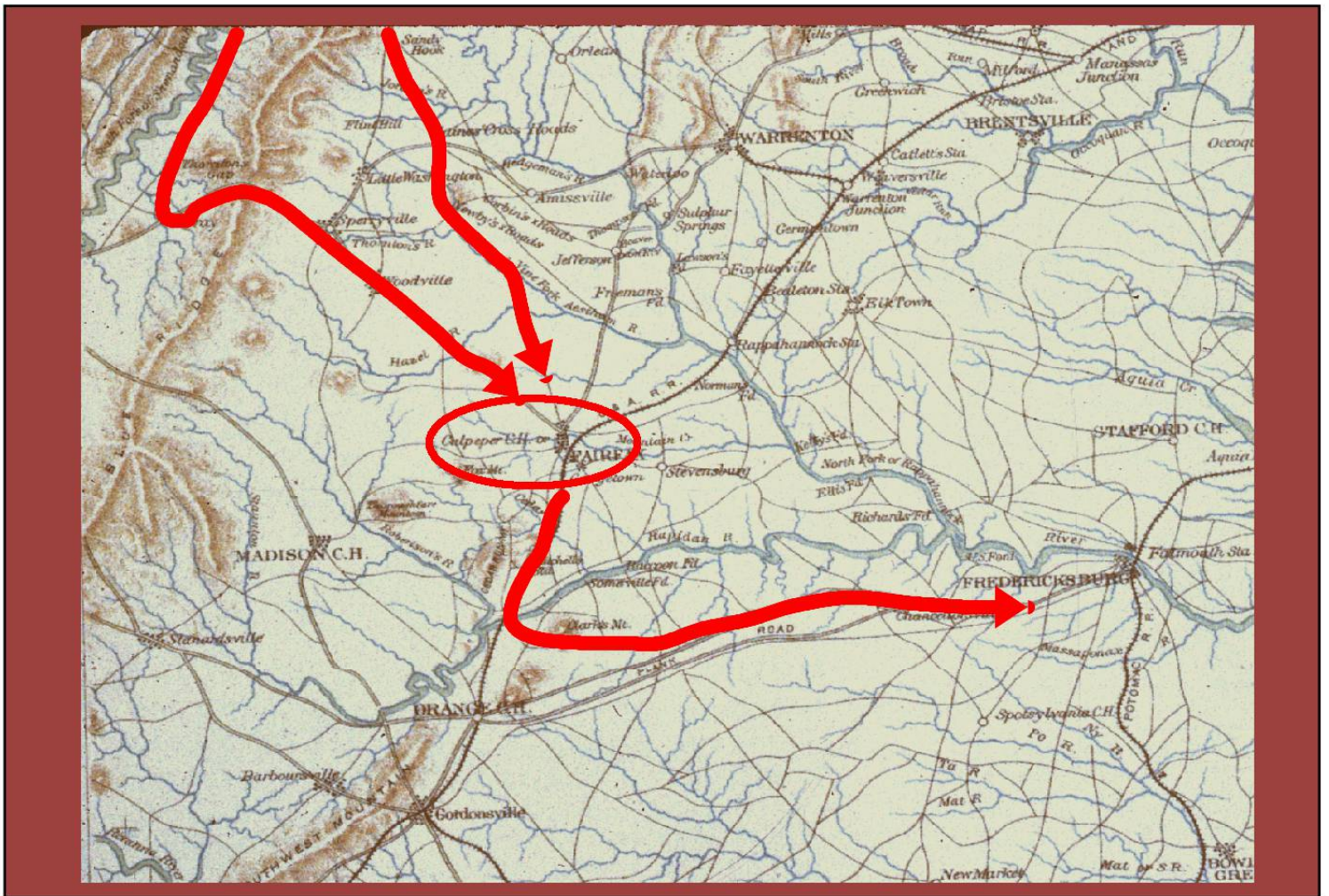
As the army marched north into Maryland Winchester became the unofficial army post office Sept 15, relieving the poor PM at Gordonsville.

- > George Graves and 4 clerks operated as such until November.
- > The Army Mail Office at the Richmond PO continued to act as a Distributing office, forwarding mail to the army at Winchester.

A new problem arose: undeliverable soldier due mail:

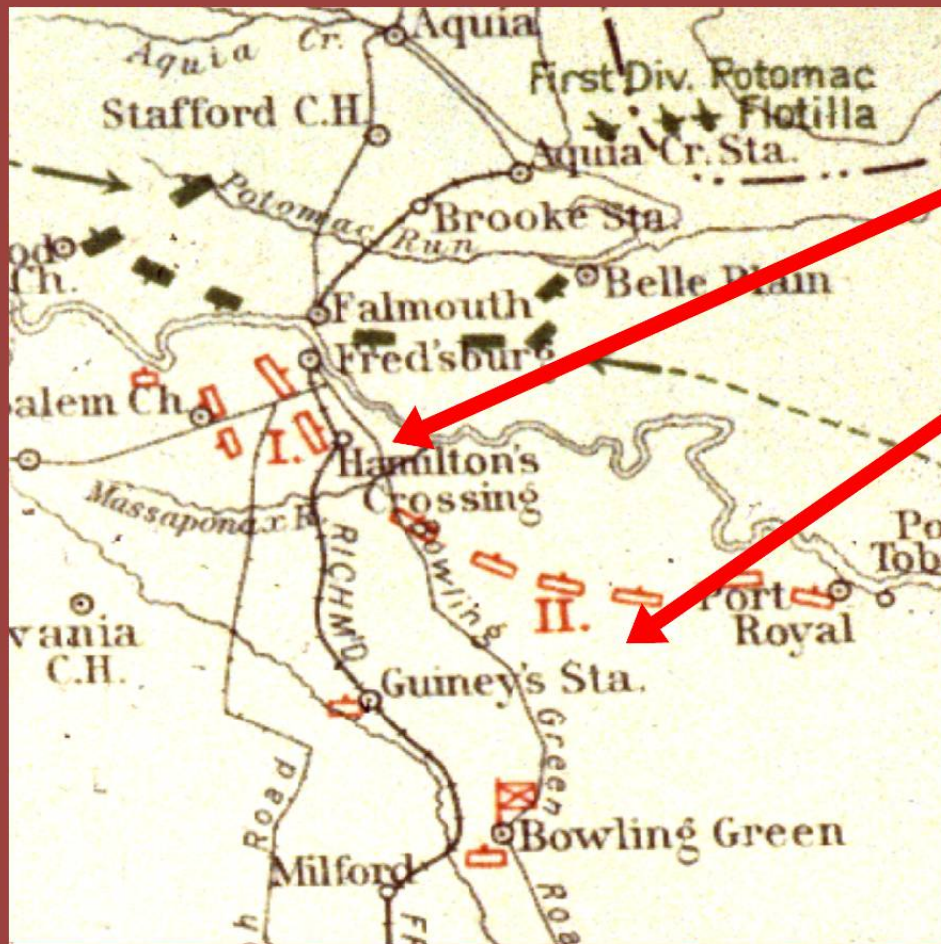
...I will mention that some days ago a very large number of letters from the army was returned from the office at Winchester to the office in this city [Richmond] and 6800 of them were franked letters, on which the postage was payable at the office of delivery. Mr. Word, the Special Agent of the Dept, was informed by the PM at Winchester that the carriers who called for the letters of the different commands refused generally to take out the letters on which the postage was due on the grounds that by doing so they would lose a considerable amount of the money they had paid as postage on letters, which for various causes would never be called for by the persons to whom they were addressed. The Postmasters are obliged to charge themselves with the postage on such letters at the time of delivery and hence do not deliver them until the postage is paid.

This was a serious loss of revenue to an economy-minded Post Office. One that was never really resolved. One result is that soldier due mail *TO* a soldier is rather rare.



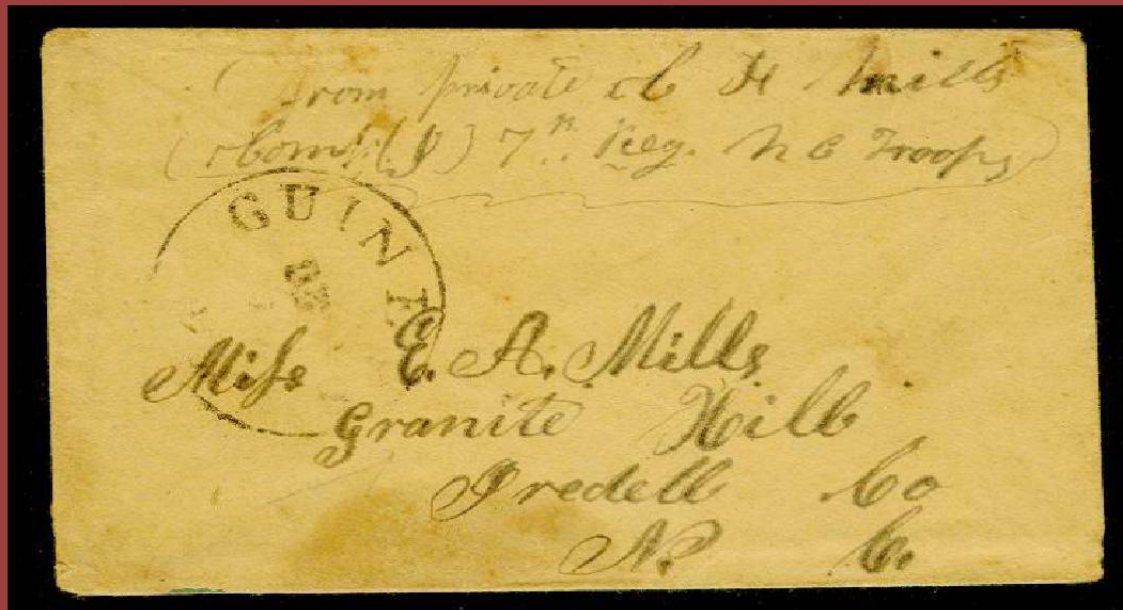
The next phase in the development of an army postal system occurred during the winter of 1862-63.

In Nov 1862, Lee's army moved to static positions behind the Rappahannock River.



In addition, the office at Guiney's or Guinea Station was put to use processing mail from the troops in its vicinity. The antics of that PM however, put him out of business in 1863.

In response to a specific request from Gen Lee, the CSPOD put sent Col. Word to rectify the situation. He appointed J K Cook as Agent at Hamilton's Crossing. Mail was collected at Hamilton's Crossing and shipped unprocessed to Richmond.



Here's an example of mail processed by the postmaster at Guiney's Station.



The special office created in May in the Richmond PO had continued to operate all summer -- as a Distributing Office for army mail. It now took on the additional task of processing outgoing mail.

Thus we see numerous examples such as the one here: A Richmond Due cover with true origin being Lee's Army on the Rappahannock Line.



Here are additional examples of mail originating from the troops at Fredericksburg, but processed by the Richmond post office, using a variety of postmarking devices

... a special corps of clerks have been on duty in the Richmond post office, charged with the special duty of making up mails for the army, and that they forward letters for each general officer, and for each regiment, battalion, and independent company, or other separate command, in a separate package, to be delivered to the persons entitled to them, when informed where the commands are stationed. Letters so forwarded will be delivered to the Chief Quartermaster of the Army or to such others as may be sent by their respective commands.

-- PMG Reagan to Gen Lee

mail to the army was handled as follows:

ARMY LETTERS.

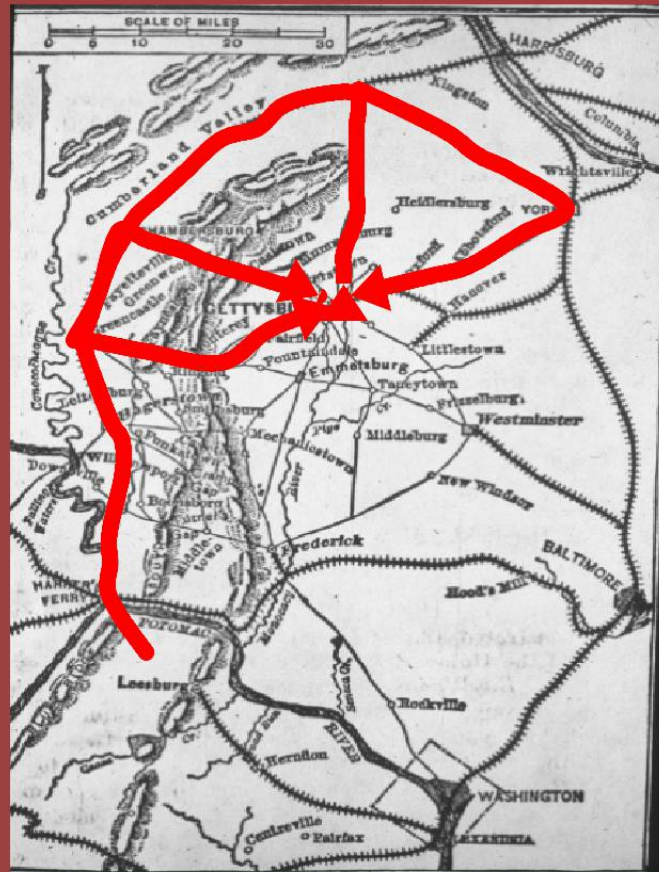
Mr. W. E. M. Word, Special Agent of the Post-Office Department, publishes a card, in which he suggests, for the benefit of the soldier and his friends, that all letters sent to soldiers should be carefully addressed to the care of the *regiment* and *company* of which he is a member, and always bear the *number* of the regiment and name of the *State* to which it belongs. Attention to this suggestion, it is believed, will obviate one of the chief causes of the non-delivery of letters. It is also suggested that all letters sent to soldiers should be pre-paid before mailing, as in many instances this is neglected, and the letter fails to reach its destination. The following may answer as a form of address, in accordance with the S Jones, care Frederick

Army letters.

Mr. W. E. M. Word, Special Agent of the Post-Office Department, publishes a card, in which he suggests, for the benefit of the soldier and his friends that all letters sent to soldiers should be carefully addressed to the care of the regiment and company of which he is a member, and always bear the number of the regiment and name of the State to which it belongs. Attention to this suggestion, it is believed, will obviate one of the chief causes of the non-delivery of letters. It is also suggested that all letters sent to soldiers should be pre-paid before mailing, as in many instances this is neglected, and the letter fails to reach its destination. The following may answer as a form of address, in accordance with the Special Agent's directions: "Private Jno. Jones, care of Company K, 47th Reg. Ga. Vols., Fredericksburg, Va."

The Richmond *Daily Dispatch*: December 11, 1862.

In addition Special Agent Word took action to better organize mail and make sorting more efficient. READ



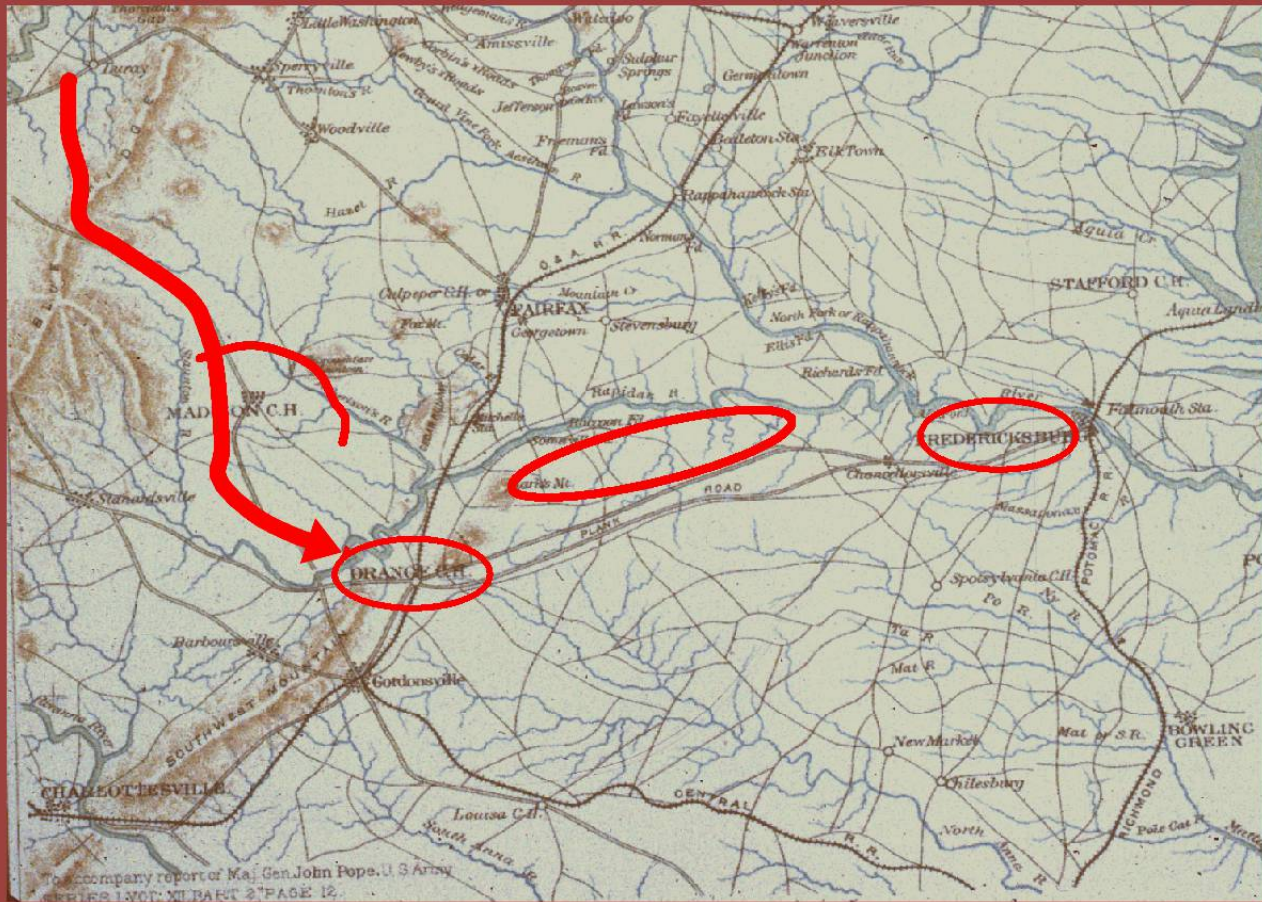
The Summer of 1863 brought on new campaigns--the invasion of Pennsylvania and the battle of Gettysburg. And new problems: delivery of mail to a moving army.

Winchester Va was the de facto army post office during the campaign, with the Army Mail Office in Richmond still serving as the DPO. The few mails to or from the army during the advance were carried by couriers. One, belonging to McLaw's Division was captured and the mail lost - evidence for the precariousness of this practice.



Here's a beautiful example, perhaps my favorite cover. Look at the letter heading.

Winchester was used until July 22, when the last CS units left, to move south back to the Rappahannock River line.



By August Lee's army was in central Virginia, behind the Rapidan and Rappahannock Rivers, with HQ at Orange C.H.

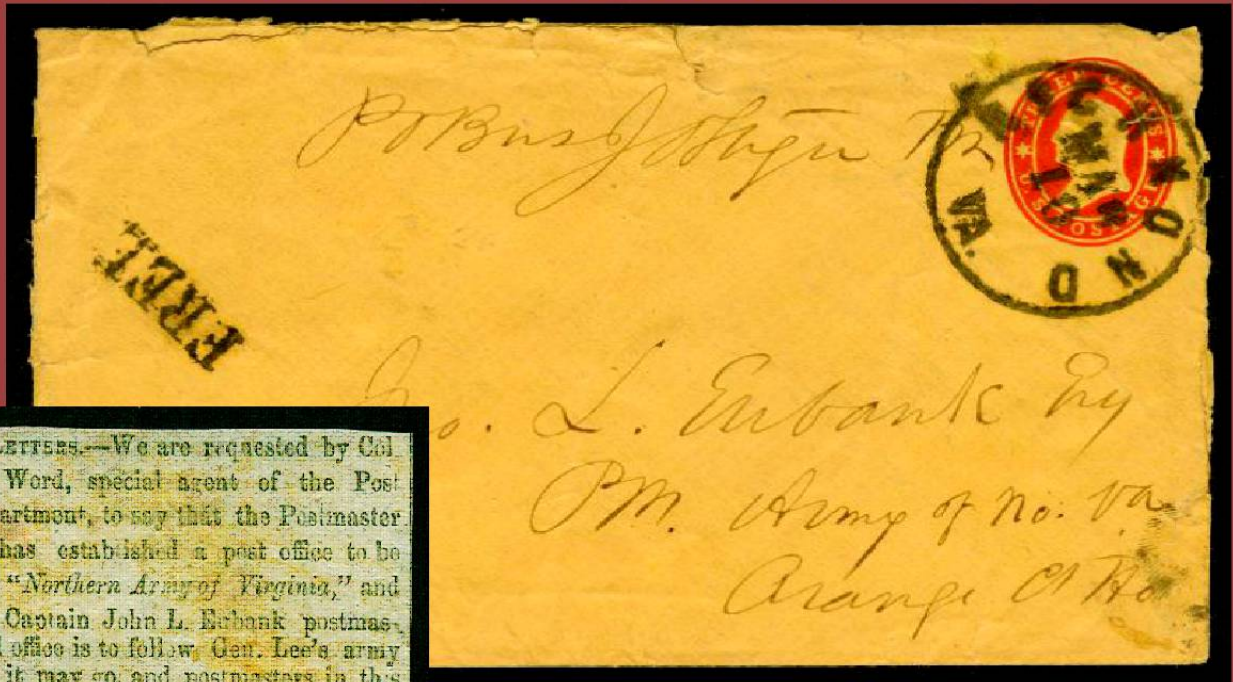


At first the Orange CH PM dealt with all the mail -- nothing really new here. The Orange CH postmaster evidently secured a new postmarking device, shown here. Earliest date seems to be September 8.



I have a suspicion that the CSPD gave Orange CH the DUE marking that had been used by the Richmond office. The two are very very similar if not identical. At this point in time a new DUE 10 marking appeared on Richmond mail.

A post office is created for Lee's army



ARMY LETTERS.—We are requested by Col. W. E. M. Word, special agent of the Post Office Department, to say that the Postmaster General has established a post office to be called the "Northern Army of Virginia," and appointed Captain John L. Eubank postmaster. Said office is to follow Gen. Lee's army wherever it may go, and postmasters in this State and other States, finding letters in their offices for this army, will confer a favor on the soldiers by sending them *direct* to this new postoffice, and thereby expedite their delivery.

But This time the PO did more than subject a local PM to a ton of mail: It created a special army post office to travel with the army in the late summer - early autumn of 1863.

John L. Eubank, formerly an artillery commander, then Conscription Officer, was appointed the Postmaster ANV.

Officially, because of CSPOD bureaucracy, his appointment was not official until December 1863. The delay was bureaucracy. Eubank's bond as a postmaster was delivered to the department in early December, but it had only one surety, not two. Back it went. Then, the bond wasn't dated. Back it went Finally it wasn't properly witnessed by a magistrate. Once again, it was returned . Eubank was not a bona fide postmaster, eligible to sell postage stamps, until January!

Public announcement about his appointment was not made until December, when this notice appeared in the Richmond Dispatch.

From this point on Army of Northern Virginia Mail was processed through a dedicated, mobile office, centralizing operations, with up to 14 army clerks detailed from the ranks, and using a system of mail orderlies connecting the army PO with the troops. The Richmond Post office continued to act as a DPO, with mail transported in mail cars attached to the trains.



He seems to have started operation in mid August. And through September at least operated at Orange CH, literally along side the Orange CH PM [map]. Perhaps from a tent like this, a Union army post office.

I Certify, on honor, that the foregoing amount is correct and true; that the letters and packages on which post thereon stated, were all on public service, and that I have actually paid the amount charged.

(责任编辑: 王 强)

Mr. S. C. ...

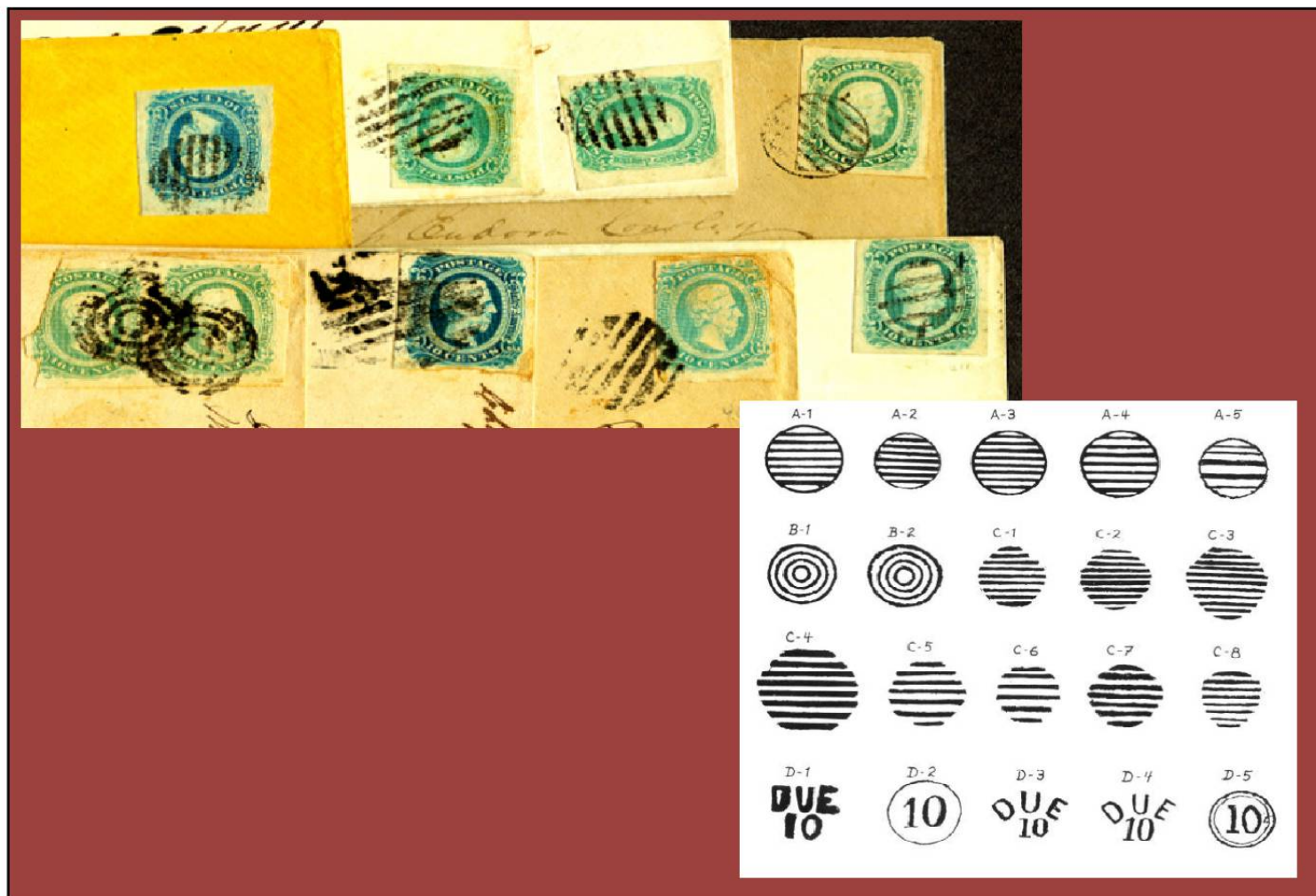
SPECIAL REQUISITION.

Issue the articles specified in the above regulation.

Two Corals used

[Signed in Duplicate.]

And on the right a requisition for two cords of wood for military post office *"that the mails requiring to be opened and made up after night render more than usual allowance fuel as actually necessary"*



Eubank was immediately beset with a problem: the need for a postmarking device. Julius Baumgartner, who had handled all the handstamp contracts for the CSPOD had gone out of business.

His Solution? A series of grids and targets drawn from various sources to "kill" the postage stamps And a variety of due markings, taken from nearby towns or made from scratch.

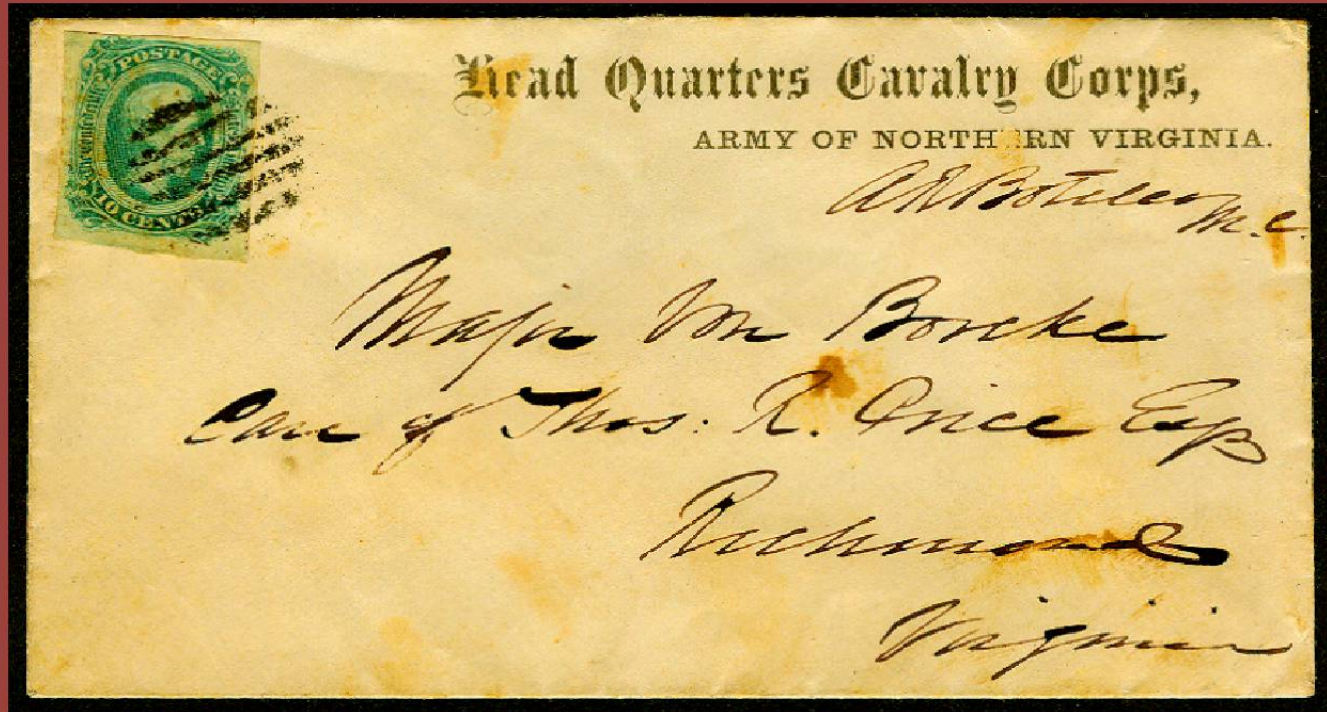
I have spent much of the past 50 years studying these anonymous markings, which are listed in the current catalog.

BTW those identification numbers are my own old codes



Some of the grid killers seem to have been transferred from civilian postoffices

Proving Origin: the easy ones ...



As I mentioned, I have been studying these grids and targets, and due marking for some 50 years.

Proving the origin of some is easy, as here.

Proving Origin: Cover annotations



In other cases, such as with the Hammond correspondence, annotations indicate the origin.

Proving Origin: from contents



Contents still with the covers or reposing in some archives are also good proof of origin.

Proving Origin: from genealogical search



Some examples require more work, using research in the Confederate service records and the 1860 and 1870 Census records. Here, the handwriting of the address matches that on forms signed by a Captain in the 5th Texas.

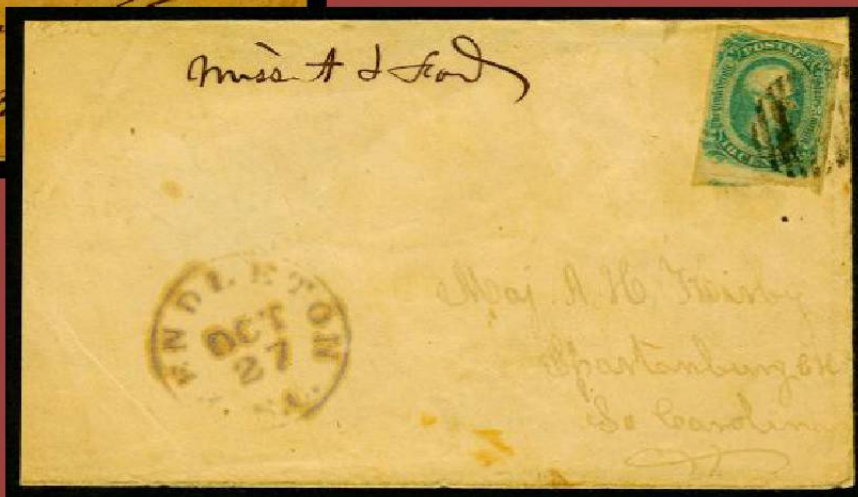
Proving dates of use:

**Cover
annotations**



Determining dates of use of the different killers also depends on cover annotations

Proving dates of use: Postmark dates on turned and forwarded covers



Or on turned cover, or forwarded covers.

Proving dates of use: from contents

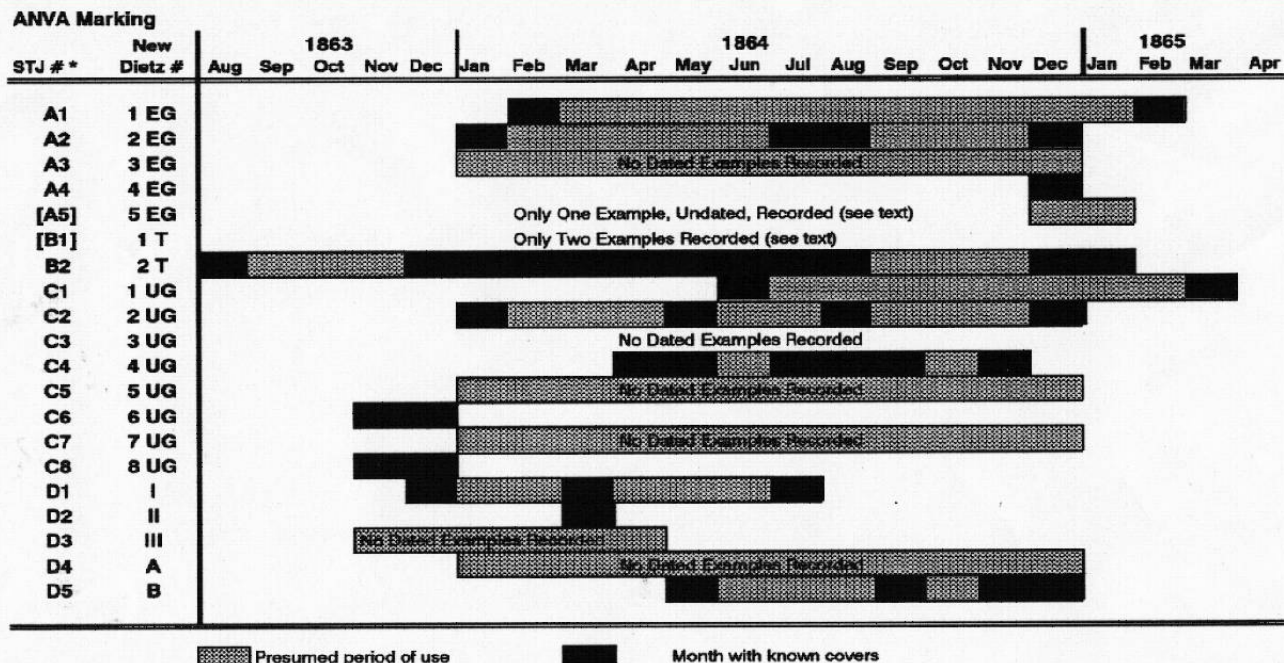


Contents are another evidence for periods of use.

Proving dates of use: from military data



Lastly, researching the service records of addressees helps narrow down the period of use by determining when the addressee was at the location of the address.



* Jaronski, S. T. 1984 The 50th American Philatelic Congress Book. pp. 10-68.

From all my research I am piecing together periods of use of each marking.

The scheme here is a bit dated 1984! But gives you an idea of my project to which I can really return now that I'm retired!



Petersburg post office processed a lot of army mail also, with no clear emphasis on any one part of Lee's army. A lot (but not all) of the soldier due mail lacks the town postmark, having just the characteristic circle 10.

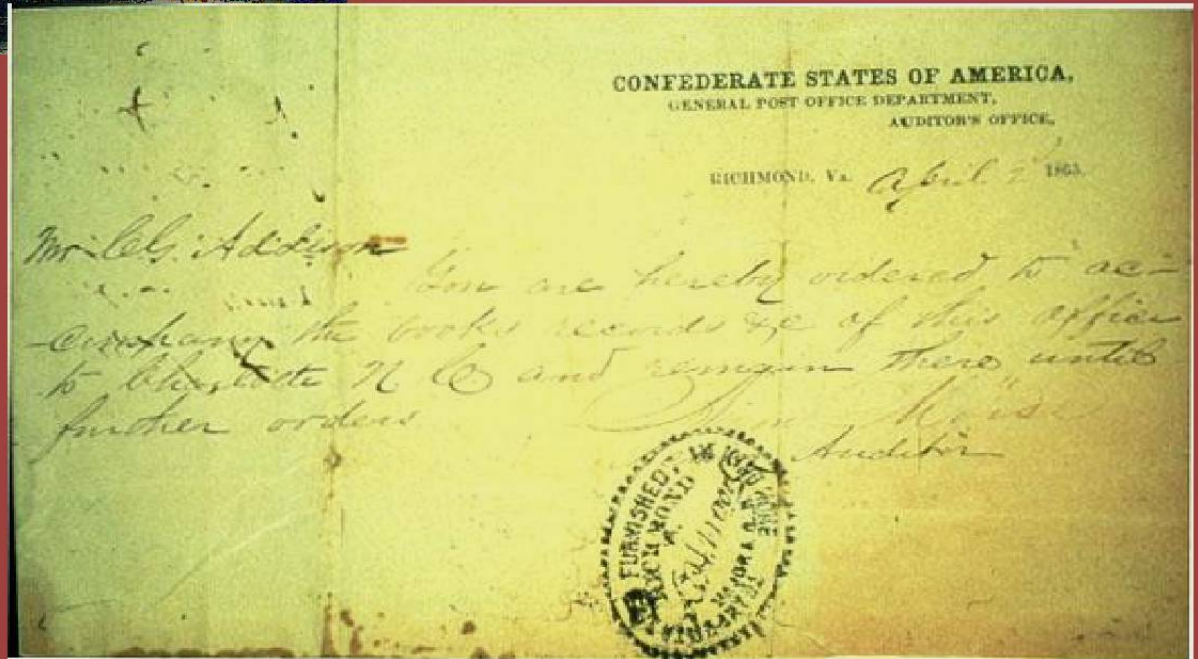
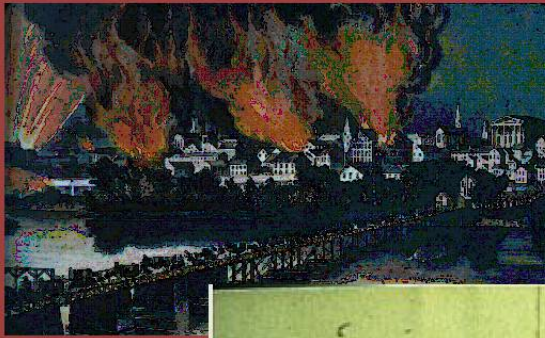
in BLUE until about Sept 2

in RED until Dec 23

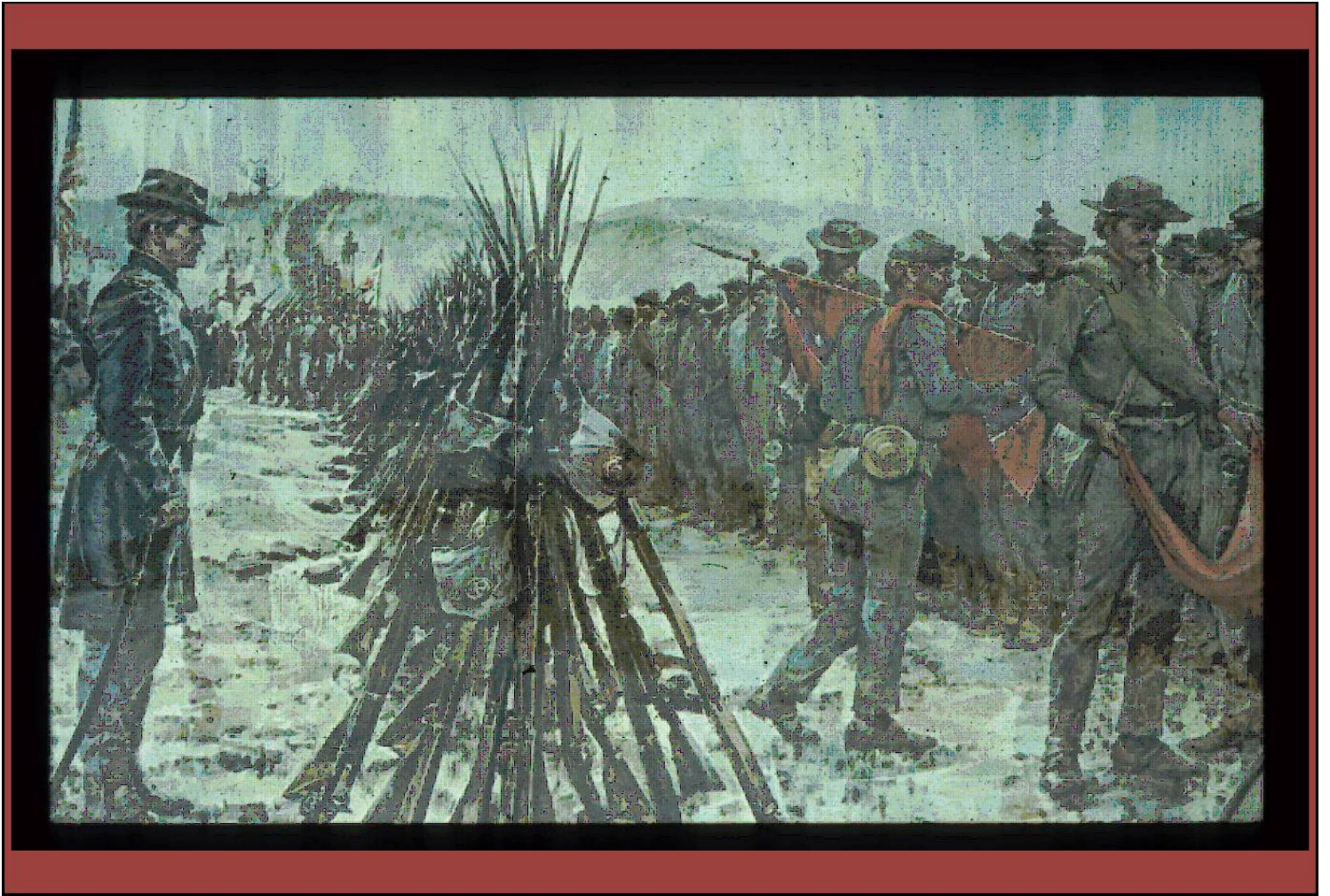
in BLACK in 1865

Why no town mark?

1. Really army use...and this is just another ANV marking BUT
2. More efficient -- only adding one stamp to each of many, many covers.



In April 1865 the war ended quickly in Virginia
On April 2nd Lee evacuated Richmond-Petersburg lines
The Confederate Post Office sent their records to Charlotte NC where they
were eventually captured by Federal forces.



On April 9th He surrendered the remnants of his army at Appomattox

Post Office Army N Va
Danville Va April 11/65

The following named clerks
my Office I A Hope
J. S. Moon, S. J. Edwards
J. S. Stralton & B. O. Malden
J. R. Wilkerson W. Goodwin
are in charge of the Mail
of the Army N Va. Injuncting
said the Mail Matter for
the Post Office Dpt of C.S.
with instructions to proceed
to Charlotte N.C. or other
places they may find it
necessary to go. This is
given for their protection
and I hope it will be
observed by all Generals
and Commanders
D. S. Eubank
P.M. A N Va

But wasn't quite the end for Eubank's operation. Shown here is a request for safe conduct, dated April 11, of Eubank's 7 clerks "in charge of the Mail of the Army of Northern Virginia, as well as mail matter of the CS Post Office Department"

Presumably this was the last mail from the army and the clerks succeeded, because I have seen a letter written at or just before Appomattox, in a cover bearing an army grid.

But this, however, my story comes to an end.

