

**The Ten-Cent Copper Plate Engraved  
Stamps of the Rebel States**

**Daniel Ryterband**

Received for hosting with the permission of the owner

**November 2021**

**Civil War Philatelic Society, Inc.**

The pages have been numbered at the bottom for ease of reference

# THE TEN-CENT COPPER PLATE ENGRAVED STAMPS OF THE REBEL STATES

**Introduction, Purpose and Structure:** The American Civil War spanned four years, commencing in April 1861 and concluding with the surrender of the major CSA armies in the spring of 1865. Confederate Postmaster General John H. Reagan desired engraved stamps printed in similar quality to those available in the North, but was initially forced to accept inferior lithographed and typographed stamps. In April 1863, the firm of Archer & Daly produced the first two engraved stamps, the "TEN" and the 10¢ "Frameline," each of which bears the profile of the Confederate president, Jefferson Davis. These stamps preceded the printing of the Type I and Type II Davis 10¢ engraved stamps that became the workhorses of the Confederate post office. The purpose of this exhibit is to:

- Demonstrate that the "TEN" and "Frameline" stamps were precursors that enabled the Archer & Daly firm to address plate layout and design challenges and eventually mass-produce, with quality, the Type I and Type II stamps, and
- Illustrate the various ways in which these scarce stamps served their postal duty.

It does so primarily via presentation of the largest known multiples and the finest known covers.

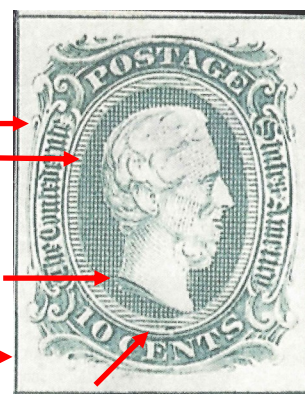
**Background:** The "TEN" was produced on a copper plate and illustrates a variety of layout and design problems, most likely due to the absence of transfer guide dots. The subsequent "Frameline" stamp was also produced on a copper plate, but with guidelines directly engraved to facilitate greater precision in layout. Due to rapid wear of the copper plates, it was not possible to produce large quantities of either stamp and it is estimated that approximately 500,000 of each were printed. By comparison, approximately 62.7 million Type I and Type II 10¢ Davis engraved stamps were produced. The Type I and Type II stamps, which were produced on more durable steel plates of 200 arranged in two panes of 100, 10 by 10, do not illustrate the numerous defects in the plate layout characteristic of the "TEN" and "Frameline" stamps, thereby indicating that the initial challenges experienced with the "TEN" and "Frameline" plates were resolved by the time mass production commenced.

## Enlarged Images of the Four Ten-Cent Davis Engraved Stamps\*



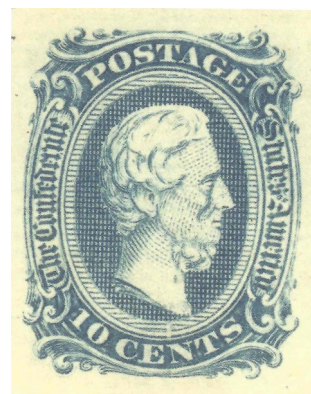
"TEN" Stamp

In the original design, the value is spelled out in letters, TEN, rather than numerals as in all other types. The vignette and Davis portrait also differ primarily by the absence of vertical background lines around the portrait.



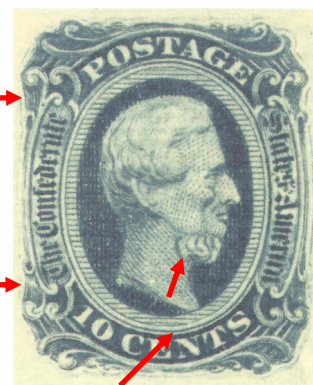
"Frameline" Stamp

The second design included ruled lines that create a box around each stamp and added horizontal lines to frame the portrait, which was revised in several ways.



Type I Stamp

The third design is virtually identical to the "Frameline" stamp and is believed to have been produced from the same die. It differs, however, from the Type II stamp, which was produced from a new die.



Type II Stamp

The fourth design differs from the Type I in several ways. Horizontal lines above the portrait and the "EN" of "cents" are complete, additional lines outside the ornaments at the four corners, and greater detail in beard.

**Bold statements describe important and especially rare covers. Items with one or more certificates from The Philatelic Foundation or The Confederate Stamp Alliance are designated with "Cert."**

\* Source: CSA Catalog and Handbook.



## I. THE "TEN" STAMP

There is no definitive proof that the "TEN" was produced before the "Frameline" stamp, but there are several factors strongly in favor of this view. First, the "TEN" is the sole stamp among the 14 general issues in which the denomination is spelled out in lieu of numerals. Second, the vignette of the "TEN" and the Davis portrait differ from the "Frameline" and the identical Type I that followed. Most importantly, the obvious flaws in the construction of the "TEN" plate strongly imply that the ruled lines of the "Frameline" served as a guide for aligning the die images as they were pressed into the plate, thereby improving overall quality.

### The "TEN" Davis Engraved Stamp



Cert.

10¢ Black, "TEN", Archer & Daly, Trial Color Die Proof on Wove, 53 x 50 mm.

**One of two recorded examples of the 10¢ "TEN" die proof and the only one in black. There are no recorded die proofs of the "Frameline."**

The "TEN" design with the denomination spelled out was the first Archer & Daly 10¢ issue. Both the "TEN" and "Frameline" stamps were printed from copper plates, and Archer & Daly's siderographer attempted to enter the subjects from a single-relief transfer roll but failed to achieve uniform spacing and alignment. This was likely due to the absence of transfer guide dots.

This irregular block of 22 with left sheet margin, unused with original gum and minor flaws, illustrates the gross misalignment of the subjects, several short transfers, and plate flaws. These flaws, which are similar to the U.S. pre-war 1¢ 1851-57 plates, are easily identifiable via comparison to the die proof at top.

**The second largest known multiple of the "TEN."**

A block of 24 was held in the Erivan collection, and a block of 30 was illustrated in the original Dietz catalog but has not been seen since 1929 and may have been separated into smaller multiples.



Manuscript "Confederate Stamps" written in margin, most likely after the war when the stamps were discovered.

# THE "TEN" STAMP

## The "TEN" Davis Engraved Stamp



"TEN" horizontal strip of 7, tied by five strikes of "Darlington C.H. S.C./June 2" (ca. 1863) circular datestamp on large courthouse cover to Marianna FL, with court docketing at left that also ties the first stamp.

*The largest recorded used multiple of the "TEN" on or off cover.*



Image of Strip at 140% to illustrate the erratic alignment of the entries on the "TEN" plate. The center stamp, in particular, is significantly higher than the others in the row.



Image of upper left stamp at 150% to illustrate major double transfer, most noticeable in the denomination label.



"TEN" horizontal block of ten with major double transfer in top left stamp, original gum and completely sound, with two stamps never hinged.

*Multiples larger than pairs of the "TEN" are scarce and this example is widely understood to be the finest block in existence.*

John Archer was previously employed as an engraver for the American Banknote Company and formed a printing partnership with Joseph Daly in the Fall of 1861 in Richmond. The firm initially secured a contract to produce the 5¢ Davis Typograph stamps using plates supplied by De La Rue of London, and the firm continued this production until it became able to supply high quality engraved stamps in quantity.

The use of a copper plate, which was subject to significantly faster deterioration than steel, indicates that the "TEN" and subsequent "Frameline" printings were produced by Archer & Daly as a first attempt in the firm's efforts to produce high quality, engraved stamps. The "TEN" has been partially plated and evidence exists to prove it was printed in sheets of 200 subjects arranged in two panes of 100, 10 x 10. The "Frameline" has been plated and was printed in sheets of 100 arranged 10 by 10.



## II. THE "FRAMELINE" STAMP

To address the significant alignment and short transfers in the "TEN" plate, the subsequent copper plate was etched with lines to facilitate greater precision in the layout. The "Frameline" issue was followed by the prolific 10¢ Type I and Type II Davis engraved stamps, both of which were produced from steel plates and became the workhorses of the Confederate postal system. The Type I stamp is identical to the "Frameline" and was produced from the same die, whereas the Type II was produced from a new die. Notwithstanding the absence of lines on both the Type I and II stamps, they are much more uniformly aligned and demonstrate that Archer & Daly's struggles were resolved by the time the major printings commenced.

### The "Frameline" Davis Engraved Stamp

### Largest Known Multiples

The frameline was engraved on the plate and served as a guide for the siderographer when aligning the transfer roll. The "Frameline" stamp is the scarcest of all Confederate general issues, and multiples of any kind are rare. The examples presented below illustrate the placement of the lines.



This unused (no gum) block of four illustrates the "+" frameline between the stamps and the framelines at the sides.

*The only recorded block of the "Frameline" stamp. All other multiples are strips or pairs.*

Cert.

### The Famous Lilly Strip of Seven



Unused, original gum, strip of seven from plate positions 53 to 59 showing full framelines at top and left.

*The largest recorded multiple of the scarce "Frameline" stamp.*



Used strip of six, cancelled by four strikes of "Mobile Ala./Jun. 18, 1863" double-circle datestamp showing full framelines at bottom and left.

*The largest recorded used multiple and the finer of two strips of six.*



## III. RATES AND USES

The Confederate postal system officially commenced operation on 1 June 1861, at which point all post offices were required to collect postage on mail and remit receipts to the Post Office Department. Initial rates were 5¢ for distance up to 500 miles and 10¢ over 500 miles, but this changed to 10¢ for all distances as of 1 July 1862. The engraved Davis stamps were produced in April of 1863, at which point there was no five-cent rate.

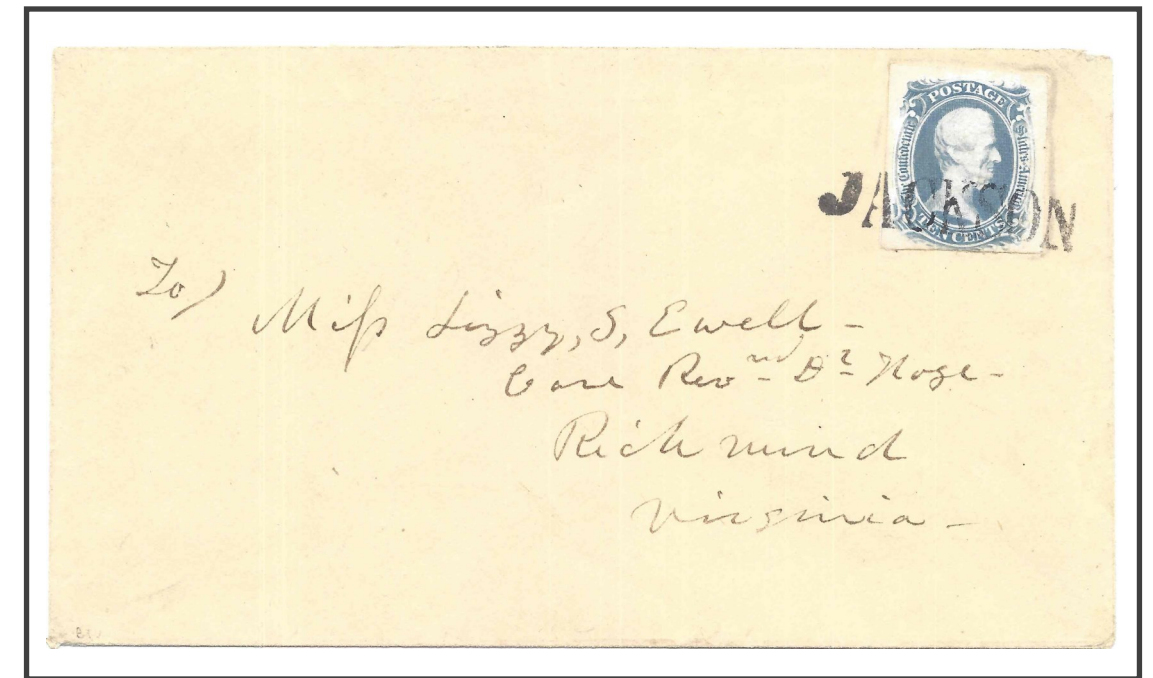
### Ten-Cent Rate

### "TEN" Examples



Cert.

"TEN", scarce Gray Blue shade, tied by "Culpeper C.H. VA/Jun \_\_\_" circular datestamp on cover to Lawrenceville GA.



Cert.

"TEN" tied by large "JACKSON" straightline cancel on cover to Richmond VA. The Jackson MS post office was one of the few to use straightline handstamps to postmark mail, and examples are scarce.

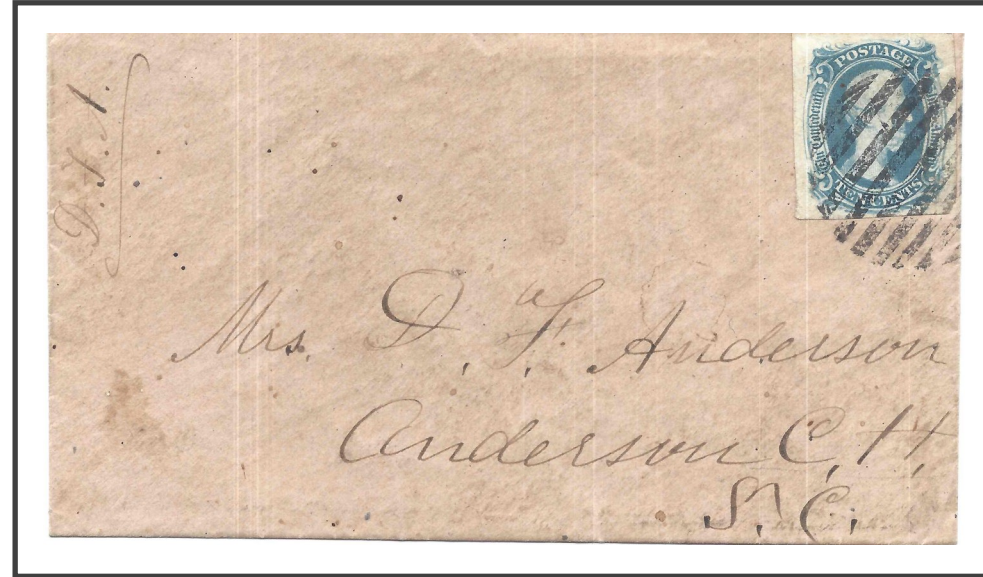
*The only recorded example of the Jackson straightline cancel on a "TEN."*

# RATES AND USES

## Ten-Cent Rate

Prior to 1863, the CSA military used civilian post offices exclusively to process mail to and from troops in the field. Beginning in August 1863, the CSA Post Office Department established official post offices for the Army of Northern Virginia and the Army of Tennessee (another for the Army of the Valley is believed to have operated in 1864). Markings applied by official military post offices include grids, targets, "Due" and rate handstamps, so-called "roving" town markings carried from place to place and the "ARMY/OF/TENN" handstamp.

## "TEN" Examples

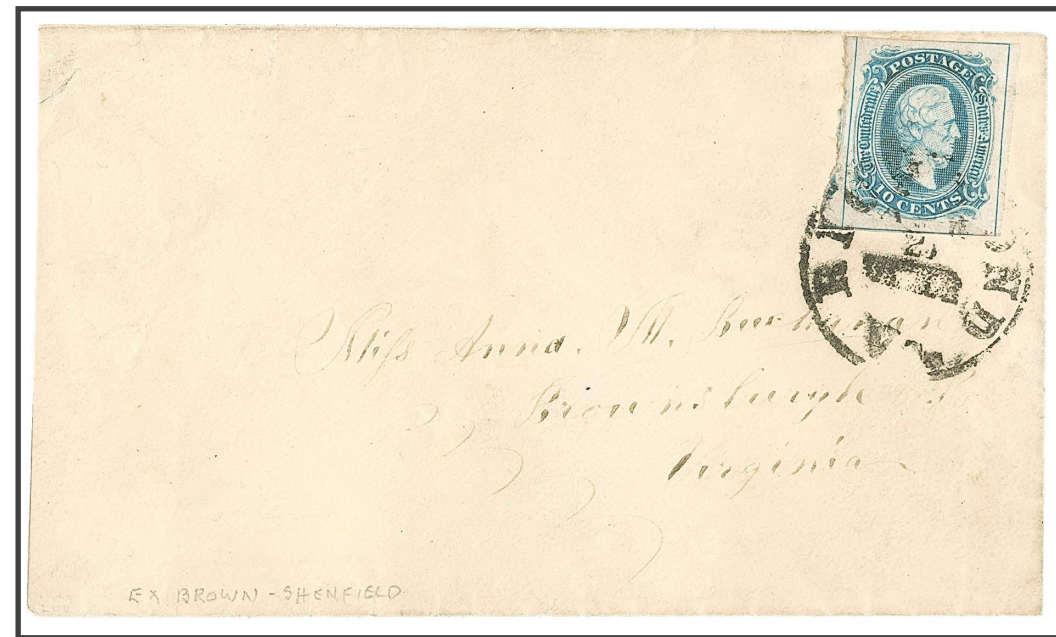


Cert.

Army of Northern Virginia military post office large 9-bar grid tying "TEN" on cover to Anderson Court House SC.

## Ten-Cent Rate

## "Frameline" Example



Cert.

"Frameline" tied by "Richmond Va./Apr. 23, 1863" circular datestamp on cover to Brownsburgh VA.

Most stamps show only a portion of the four framelines because each stamp on the sheet shares the lines with adjacent positions. Stamps that include most or all of the framelines do so at the expense of neighboring positions and are very rare. The example here presents complete framelines at both sides, all but 1mm complete at bottom and a large portion at top.

## Double-Rate



Vertical pair of "TEN" tied by Richmond Va. circular datestamp, paying double 10¢ rate to Coolwell VA.

Cert.

Horizontal pair of "TEN" tied by "Adams Run S.C./ Sep. 14" (1863) circular datestamp on cover paying double 10¢ rate to Spartanburg C.H. SC.



Cert.



Horizontal pair of "Frameline" tied by "Sumter S.C./Jul 3, 1863" circular datestamp, paying double 10¢ rate to Darlington SC.

Cert.

Pairs of both the "TEN" and "Frameline" stamps on cover are scarce. The exhibitor's research indicates five known pairs of each.

## RATES AND USES

### Forwarded Uses

*The three covers presented here represent unique uses of the "TEN" and "Frameline" stamps used as initial or forwarding postage in combination with other stamps.*

Unidentified origin to Richmond VA, then forwarded to Fredericksburg VA; 10¢ Blue Type I Davis engraved pays initial postage and "TEN" tied by "Richmond Va. Jul. 15, 1863" circular datestamp pays forwarding fee.



Cert.



Mobile AL to Montgomery AL, 27 May 1863, then forwarded to Auburn AL, 29 May; 10¢ "Frameline" pays initial postage and 5¢ Davis Local printing underpays forwarding fee, marked "Due 5" in crayon.

Cert.

Tazewell TN to Mobile AL, 3 June (ca. 1863), then forwarded to Montgomery AL; horizontal pair 5¢ Davis Local printing pays initial postage and 10¢ "Frameline" pays forwarding fee.



Cert.



## IV. ADVERSITY USES

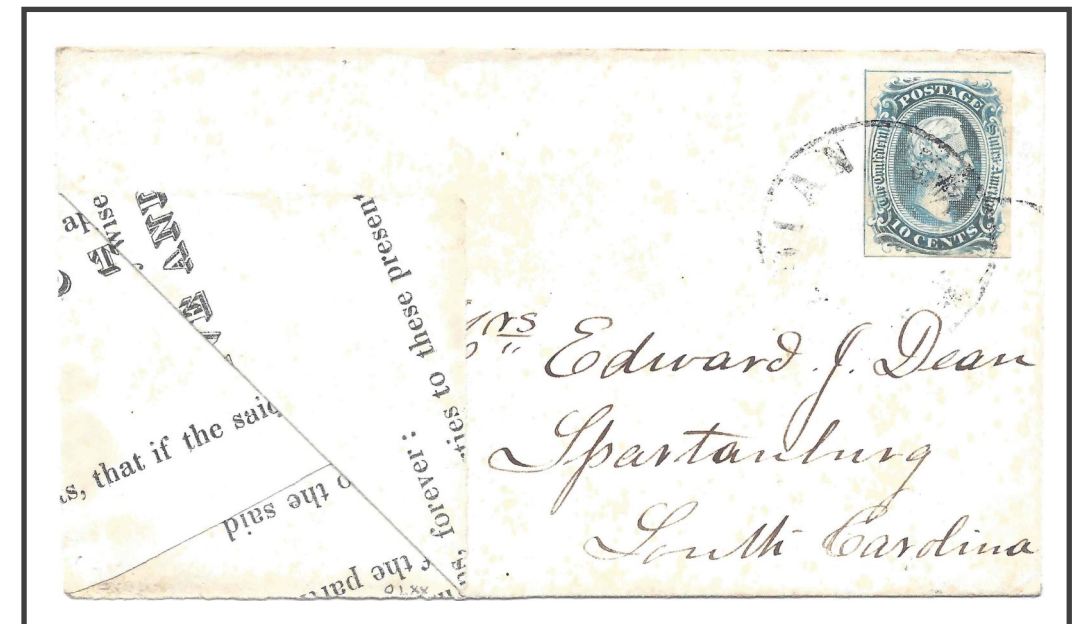
The Civil War caused shortages of basic supplies among the soldiers and civilian population, and the blockade of CSA ports and waterways made shortages of manufactured goods much worse in the South. Stationery and envelopes of good quality were among the staples in short supply, and Southern letter writers had to resort to a wide variety of products and methods to fill the void. Known to collectors as *adversity covers*, this broad category includes envelopes made from paper used for other purposes (printed forms, wallpaper, etc.) and re-used or modified envelopes.

### Printed Forms



Cert.

Envelope made from a ledger sheet for the sale of cotton with "Frameline" used from Montgomery AL to Crawford AL, 20 May 1863.



Cert.

Envelope made from a legal form with "Frameline" used from Meriden MS, ca. 1863.

# ADVERSITY USES

## Wallpaper Covers



Cert.

Envelope made from wallpaper with "Frameline" used from Mobile AL to Marianna FL, 19 September 1863.



Cert.

Envelope made from wallpaper with "Frameline" used from Mobile AL to Bellville AL, October 1863.

*There are only two known wallpaper covers bearing the "Frameline."*

## Re-Used Envelopes



This cover is addressed in the hand of CSA Navy Lieutenant George W. Gift, one of the officers who accompanied Captain John Wilkinson to Canada in October 1863 on a secret mission to organize a raid on Johnson's Island Prison; Lt. Gift sent this cover to his future wife a few months before leaving on the mission.

Cert.

Obsolete US 3¢ Star Die envelope, franked with two copies "Frameline" (Positions 89 and 81), paying two times the letter rate, Mobile AL 31 August 1863 date-stamp.

*The "Frameline" is rare when used on an adversity cover, and this example with two copies paying the double rate is one of two known examples, both from the same correspondence.*



Cert.

Envelope used twice - both times with "Frameline" - first from Milledgeville GA to Col. John G. Park at Indian Springs GA and then turned and sent from Indian Springs to Milledgeville GA, ca 1863.

*The only known example of a turned cover bearing two copies of the "Frameline" from different origins.*



## V. ILLUSTRATED COVERS

Illustrated envelopes were used during the war to promote sympathy for the cause as well as to advertise Southern businesses. By the time the 10¢ Davis engraved stamps were produced in April 1863, paper shortages and the absence of manufacturing capacity resulted in an extremely limited supply of “patriotic” and “advertising” covers. Those bearing the “TEN” and “Frameline” stamps are rare.

### Multi-colored Patriotic Covers



Cert.

Red and blue Hand-Held 8-Star Confederate Flag with “TEN” used from Mobile AL to Long Meadows VA, 23 May 1863.

*One of less than five known multi-colored patriotic covers bearing the “TEN” engraved stamp.*



Cert.

Red and blue 8-Star Confederate Flag with “Frameline” used from Mobile AL to Greensboro AL, June 1863.

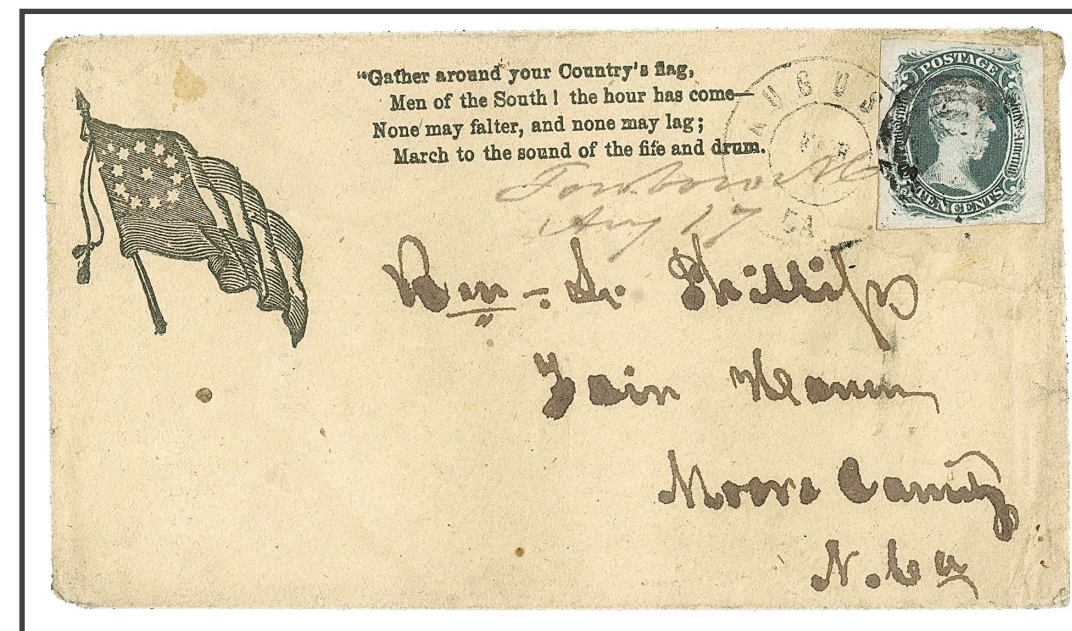
*The only multicolored patriotic cover bearing the “Frameline” according to Siegel PowerSearch and the Philatelic Foundation.*

### Monochrome Designs with Verse



Cert.

Romantic image of Mounted Dragoon, Sword, Verse and “Gather around your country’s flag, Men of the South...” slogan with “TEN” used from Richmond VA to Hanover C.H. VA, 30 June 1863.



Cert.

11-star Confederate Flag and Verse “Gather around your country’s flag, Men of the South...” slogan with “TEN” used from Augusta GA to Zain Manan NC, with additional Tawboro NC manuscript postmark indicating the cover was reused in correspondence between the same parties.





Cert.

Standing soldier and 11-star Confederate flag design, circa 1863, from Gainesville AL to Eutaw AL, with "Frameline" stamp.

*The "Frameline" stamp is extremely rare on a patriotic cover, and the standing soldier design is also rare. This cover is unique based on the exhibitor's research.*



Cert.

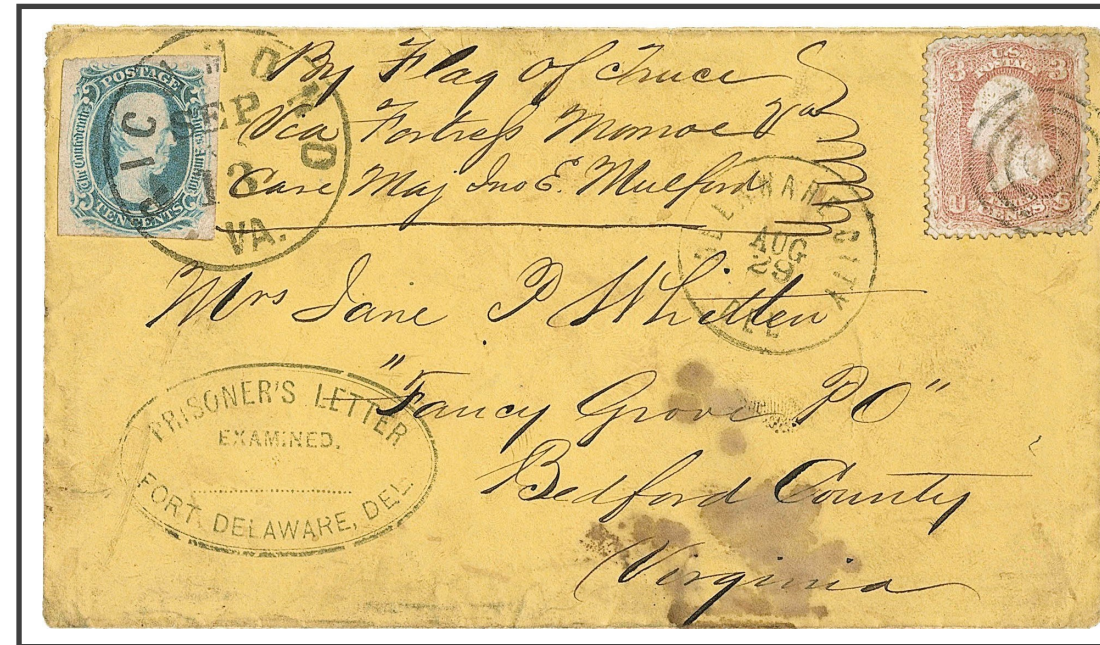
27 May 1863 with "Frameline" on illustrated overall lithographed hardware and cutlery dealer advertising cover to Camden AL.

*Rare use of the "Frameline" on an all-over advertising cover. This cover is unique based on the exhibitor's research.*



VI. PRISONER OF WAR COVERS

Letters to and from prisoners of war represent perhaps the most significant human element of the Civil War mails. US and CSA flag of truce exchanges facilitated POW correspondence and the return of released POWs. Exchanges of POW mail were permitted from September 1861 to September 1862 and from July 1863 to June 1865.



Cert.

US 3c 1861 and CSA "TEN" cancelled 29 August and 13 September 1864 at Delaware City DE and Richmond VA, respectively, with Type I "Prisoner's Letter Examined/Fort Delaware, Del" censor's handstamp to Fancy Grove VA.

*One of three known POW covers originating in a prison with the "TEN".*



Cert.

US 3c 1861 and CSA "Frameline" cancelled 23 December 1863 and 19 January 1864 at Sandusky OH and Richmond VA, respectively, with manuscript "Ex. DSA" censor's mark (DeAlva S. Alexander, 128th Ohio Volunteers).

*One of two known POW covers with the "Frameline" and the only known example used in conjunction with a Union adhesive according to the Antrim book.*