

Illustrated Census of the Pioneer Express Covers

Compiled by Dr. Daniel M. Knowles and Francis J. Crown, Jr.

Introduction

This census includes only those covers for which an image of the cover was available. Any cover for which no image was found is not included.

Although every effort is made to exclude fake items from the censuses, the inclusion of an item is not a guarantee of authenticity. An authentication service must make that determination.

The color images viewed on a computer screen may not be representative of the actual color.

A census is only as complete as the information available at the time it was compiled. There will always be another item to add to a census. It may not show up this week, or next month, or next year, but at some point, a new item will be discovered to add to the list.

The following explains what is in each census:

Description and Notes illustrates the different types of Pioneer Express markings in the census. Additional information may be provided. Also included is a table that contains a count of the envelopes by marking type.

Census The components of the census are:

Date: The date is the date of the express marking, postmark if there is no express marking, or docketing on the cover. Dates are given as "Illegible" when the express marking or postmark date cannot be read. "No Postmark" if there is no postmark, and as "Unused" if the envelope is not postally used.

Exp Mrk – The type express marking and the associated town.

Postmark – The town postmark on the cover if there is one.

Postage – The postage used or indicated on the cover.

Address – The full address is given as *written* on the cover with line breaks designated by a slash ("/"). In some cases, the address is taken from an auction description. In such cases the address is in brackets. In other cases, the spelling of a name (person or town) is so poor the correct spelling is given in brackets after the incorrectly spelled word.

Comments – Any comments pertaining to the cover.

Provenance – Provenances are given if the envelope appeared in and was illustrated in a named collection sold at auction, in a book, periodical, an exhibit, or website and current owner if known. A table of all named collections and exhibits can be found in the Provenances Section.

Source: These are the sources of information about individual covers. Sources are given by an abbreviation. The abbreviation is followed by a certificate number for authentication services; a page number or date and page number, if a book, publication, or exhibit; and the date, sale number (if known), and lot number, if an auction. If a bound sale has more than one sale number, only the first sale is listed. When a public source is not available a private source is used. These are identified as "Private collection" or the name of the owner. Sources are listed in the following order: authentication services, books, journals, exhibits and auction catalogs. Within each group they are arranged in chronological sequence. Color images are indicated by an asterisk after the source. A table of source abbreviations can be found in the Source Abbreviation Section.

Image Credit – The source of the image

Census Number (CN): The number in brackets that follows the last listed source. This number can be useful in identify an individual cover or stamp, particularly for covers with the same date. These are the same numbers used in the census accompanying the article by Kenneth M. Knowles ("The Pioneer Express Company: Its History and a Cover Census), in the 3rd Quarter 2021, *Civil War Philatelist*.

Version Number: From time-to-time corrections and additions will be made to the census. These are noted by the version number (v) following the date in the lower left corner of each page. The first census is v1.0 Corrections are indicated by an incremented sub number (v1.1). If a new item is added or an old one removed the basic version number is incremented (v2.0).

To aid the user each census is bookmarked in the left panel.

Description and Notes

The Pioneer Express Company is not as well-known as the Adams Express and Southern Express Companies. However, available evidence indicates it was the third largest express company to operate in the Confederacy.

The earliest evidence of the company is found in the *Mobile Register* of 1 April 1862. The accompany advertisement offered the following incentive. "Letters to soldiers postage paid – for the law requires this – will be carried through without charge, if left at the Express Office on Royal north of St. Michael street [in Mobile]." On 13 December 1864 the company was chartered by the State of Alabama.

The majority of the Pioneer Express covers are from the post war period, even though the company began operation in 1862. After the war, the company expanded its operations beyond the old Confederate states to include Columbus, Kentucky and Cairo, Illinois. It also teamed with the Commercial Express Company in June 1865 to provide money and package service in the Northern States, Texas, Mexico, Canada, and Europe. By early 1866 the company had fallen on hard times and a notice in the 11 March 1866 Memphis *Daily Avalanche* announced that the Pioneer Express had sold out to the Southern Express Company.

Three different Pioneer Express markings are known and are illustrated below. Each type except Type B is known from more than one town.

The Pioneer Express office in Mobile, is also known to have used express labels.

For more information on the history of the Pioneer Express see Daniel M. Knowles, "The Pioneer Express Company: Its History and a Cover Census," *Civil War Philatelist*, Third Quarter 2021 (66:3), 14-27.

The Pioneer Express Markings



Type A



Type B



Type C

The Pioneer Express was headquartered at Mobile, Alabama and by the end of 1865 had principal offices in the following seven states:

Alabama – Decatur, Demopolis, Gainesville, Huntsville, Mobile*, Montgomery*, Selma*, and Stevenson

Florida – Pensacola

Kentucky – Columbus*

Illinois – Cairo

Louisiana – New Orleans*

Mississippi – Canton, Columbus*, Corinth, Grenada, Jackson, Meridian, Okolona, and Vicksburg

Tennessee – Chattanooga, Grand Junction, Jackson, Memphis, and Nashville

* Express markings known from these towns.

List of Pioneer Express Covers by Type and Town

Marking Type	Town	Earliest Date	Count
Type A (large)	Columbus, MS	26 Jan [186-]	1
	Mobile, AL	11 May 1862	2
Type B (large)	Selma, AL	31 Jul 1865	3
Type C (small)	Columbus, KY	28 Nov 1865	1
	Columbus, MS	20 Aug 1865	1
	Mobile, AL	29 Aug 1865	4
	Montgomery, AL	2 Sep 1865	3
	New Orleans, LA	19 May 1865	1
Manuscript	Unknown	28 Jul 1865	1
Label Only	Mobile, LA	Confederate	1
Envelope	Corner Card	2 --- [186-]	2

Census of Pioneer Express Covers

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Type A - Large Express Marking with Year Date

11 May [1862]

Exp Mrk: Type A - Mobile, AL

Postmark: None.

Postage: None.

Address: To Mr Gilispie / Auditor of State of Mississippi / Jackson / Miss

Comments: Docketed "\$1035 In Confederate Notes / 75.00 in Gold / \$1100" at UL and "By Express" at LL.

Provenance: None recorded.

Source: RAS-24Jun2015(1104)-2407 [002]

Image Credit: Robert A Siegel Auctions



21 Jul [1862]

Exp Mrk: Type A - Mobile, AL

Postmark: None.

Postage: CSA 5c rose #5.

Address: Tricullers Gillespie / Macon / Miss

Comments: Docketed "(\$50) dollars enclosed" across top.

Provenance: Brandon.

Source: RAS-20Nov2014(1087)-529* [003]

Image Credit: Robert A Siegel Auctions



26 Jan [186-]

Exp Mrk: Type A - Columbus, MS

Postmark: None.

Postage: None.

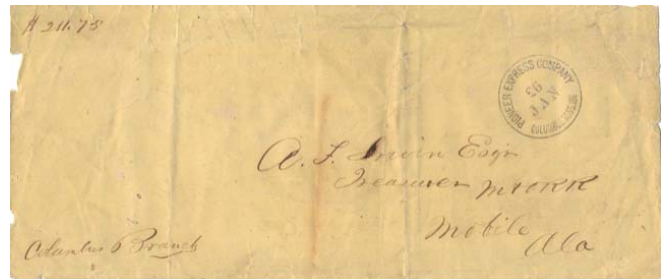
Address: A. F. Irwin Esqr / Treasurer / M*O RR /
Mobile / Ala

Comments: Docketed "\$211.75" at UL and
"Columbus Branch" at LL.

Provenance: None recorded.

Source: CWP-3Atr2021(66-3)-19* [004]

Image Credit: Daniel M. Knowles Collection



Type B - Large Express Marking without Year Date

31 Jul 1865

Exp Mrk: Type B - Selma, AL

Postmark: MOBILE / ALA.

Postage: Two copies US 3c rose #65 and US 3c
pink postal stationary envelope #U59.

Address: Miss Emma A. Taylor, / College Hill, /
Ohio

Comments: Docketed "Mail at Mobile 10 Chi" at UL-
UC.

Provenance: None recorded

Source: Daniel M. Knowles Collection [009]

Image Credit: Daniel M. Knowles Collection



1 Aug [1865]

Exp Mrk: Type B - Selma, AL

Postmark: New Orleans, LA.

Postage: Two copies US 3c rose #65.

Address: John W. Lapsley Esqr. / Care of Messrs
Wm. Smith Brown & Co / New York City

Comments: "pr Express" at LL.

Provenance: Muzzy.

Source: PF-386705*; HRH-2 Apr1967(1764)-
2196; RAS-18May2002(846)-2521*; RAS-
23Jun2021(1238)-409* [006]

Image Credit: Robert A Siegel Auctions



--Jul [1865]

Exp Mrk: Type B - Selma, AL

Postmark: None.

Postage: None.

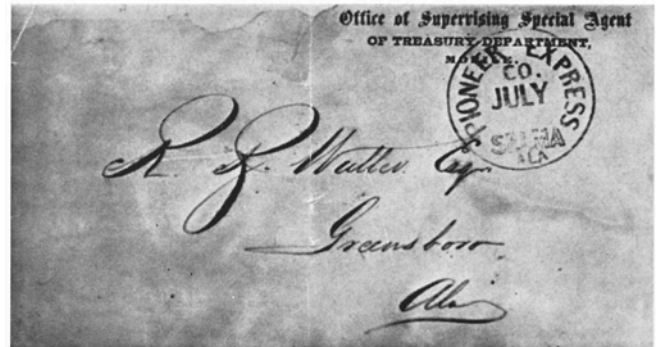
Address: R. G. Waller Esq / Greensboro / Ala

Comments: Treasury Department envelope.

Provenance: None recorded.

Source: SMR-206 [008]

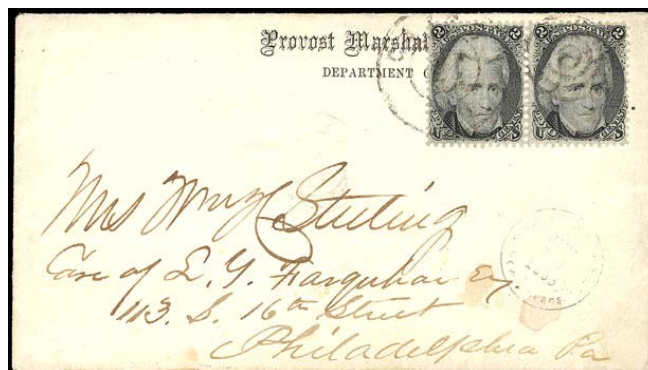
Image Credit: Special Mail Routes of the American Civil War (book)



Type C - Small Double Circle Express Marking

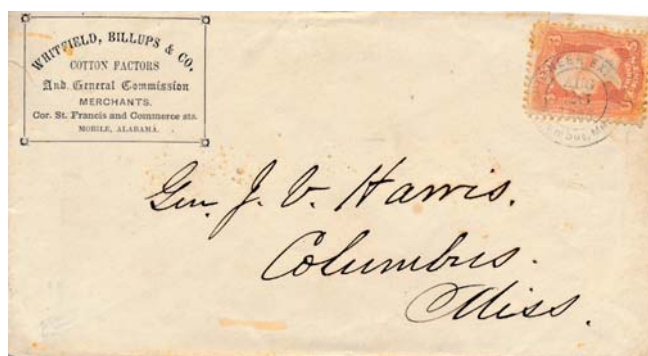
19 May 1865

Exp Mrk: Type C - New Orleans, LA
Postmark: Cairo, IL.
Postage: Pair US 2c black #73.
Address: Mrs Mary Sterling / Care of L. Y. Farquhar Esq / 113. S. 16th Street / Philadelphia, Pa
Comments: Official Provost Marshal envelope.
Provenance: Faust.
Source: SR-26Apr2012(47)-268*; RAS-23Apr2018(1181)-1378* [005]
Image Credit: Schuyler Rumsey Auctions



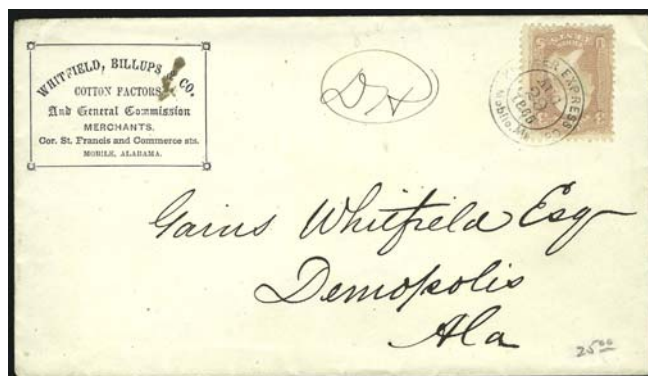
26 Aug 1865

Exp Mrk: Type C - Columbus, MS
Postmark: None.
Postage: US 3c rose #65.
Address: Gen. J. V. Harris / Columbus / Miss.
Comments: Corner card of Whitfield, Billups & Co.
Provenance: None recorded.
Source: Daniel M. Knowles Collection [010]
Image Credit: Daniel M. Knowles Collection



29 Aug 1865

Exp Mrk: Type C - Mobile, AL
Postmark: None.
Postage: US 3c rose #65.
Address: Gains Whitfield Esq / Demopolis / Ala
Comments: Docketed "DH" at UC. Corner card of Whitfield, Billups & Co., Cotton Factors.
Provenance: Hall.
Source: CWP-3Qtr2021 (66:3)-24*; RAS-17Dec2001(840)-13* [011]
Image Credit: Robert A Siegel Auctions



2 Sep 1865

Exp Mrk: Type C - Montgomery, AL
Postmark: None.
Postage: US 3c rose #65.
Address: Dr. G W Archer / Care Col Jno M Hill /
 Newnan / Geo.
Comments: Docketed "Pd 2/" at LL.
Provenance: None recorded.
Source: CWP-3Qtr2021 (66-3)25* [012]
Image Credit: Civil War Philatelist (journal)



14 Sep 1865

Exp Mrk: Type C - Montgomery, AL
Postmark: None.
Postage: US 3c pink postal stationery envelope #U59.
Address: John W Lapsley Esq / [Selma, Ala]
Comments: Docketed "Express, Pioneer" at UL.
Provenance: None recorded.
Source: RGK-14Jun1990(69)-93, Daniel M. Knowles Collection [013]
Image Credit: Daniel M. Knowles Collection



22 Sep 1865

Exp Mrk: Type C - Mobile, AL
Postmark: Macon, Mississippi.
Postage: Strip of three US 3c rose #65 and US 3c pink postal stationery envelope #U59.
Address: Mr. J. L. Hunter, / Macon, / Missi.
Comments:
Provenance: None recorded.
Source: Daniel M. Knowles Collection. [014]
Image Credit: Daniel M. Knowles Collection



30 Sep 1865

Exp Mrk: Type C - Mobile, AL

Postmark: None.

Postage: US 3c pink postal stationery envelope #U59.

Address: Mrs D W Hopkins / Enterprise / Miss

Comments: Manuscript "Pioneer Express" at UC.

Provenance: Gallagher.

Source: RAS-9Jun199(801)-175; RAS-15May2002(845)-1067*; RAS-28Sep2021(1241)-1268& [015]

Image Credit: Robert A Siegel Auctions



11 Oct 1865

Exp Mrk: Type C - Mobile, AL

Postmark: None.

Postage: US 3c pink postal stationery envelope #U59.

Address: Mr Gaines Whitfield / Demopolis / Ala

Comments: Express marking struck twice. Docketed "express" at UL.

Provenance: None recorded.

Source: Daniel M. Knowles Collection [016]

Image Credit: Daniel M. Knowles Collection



18 Oct 1865

Exp Mrk: Type C - Montgomery, AL

Postmark: None.

Postage: US 3c pink postal stationery envelope #U59.

Address: Major G. W. Cox / Columbus / Miss

Comments: Montgomery, AL express marking at UC. Columbus, MS express marking dated 28 Oct ties PSE.

Provenance: None recorded.

Source: DMK; CWP-3Qtr2021 (66-3)-24* [017]

Image Credit: Civil War Philatelist (journal)



28 Nov 1865

Exp Mrk: Type C - Columbus, KY

Postmark: None.

Postage: US 3c pink postal stationery envelope #U59.

Address: Mrs C. E. Rushing / Marion Station / M&ORR / Miss

Comments: Corner Card of Pioneer Express Company, Mobile, Ala.

Provenance: Gallagher.

Source: CWP-3Qtr22021 (66-3)-21*; RAS-9Jun199(801)-174; RAS-27Apr1999(810)-2423 [019]

Image Credit: Civil War Philatelist (journal)



Manuscript Express Marking

28 Jul 1865

Exp Mrk: "Per Pioneer Express Compy"

Postmark: Manuscript "C."

Postage: US 3c rose #65.

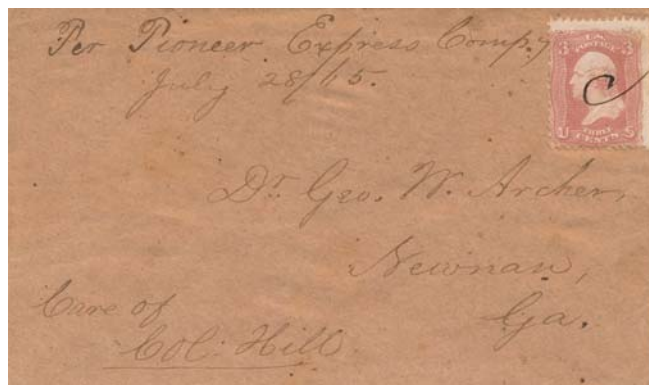
Address: Dr. Geo. W. Archer, / Newnan, / Ga.

Comments: Docketed "Per Pioneer Express Compy / July 28/65" across top.

Provenance: None recorded.

Source: Daniel M. Knowles Collection [007]

Image Credit: Daniel M. Knowles Collection



Express Label Only

No Date

Exp Mrk: Express Label - Mobile, AL

Postmark: None.

Postage: CSA 5c green #1.

Address: Mrs J. J. S. Smith / Care Jno. C. Boyle / Macon Miss

Comments: Docketed "\$78 20/100 / Collect 50c" at UC. Pioneer Express Co., Mobile, AL, label on reverse

Provenance: Brandon.

Source: JWK-17Feb1973(8)-407; RAS-20Nov2014(1087)-528* [001]

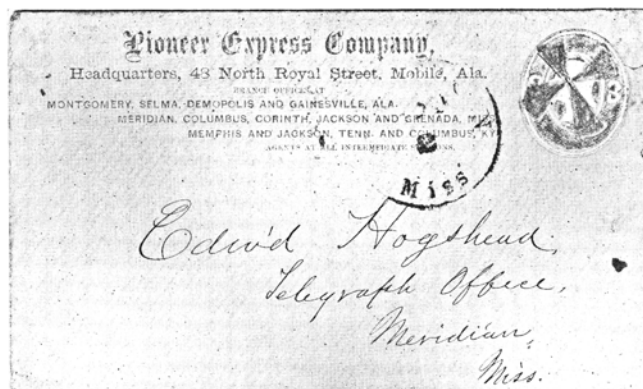
Image Credit: Robert A Siegel Auctions



Express Corner Card Envelopes

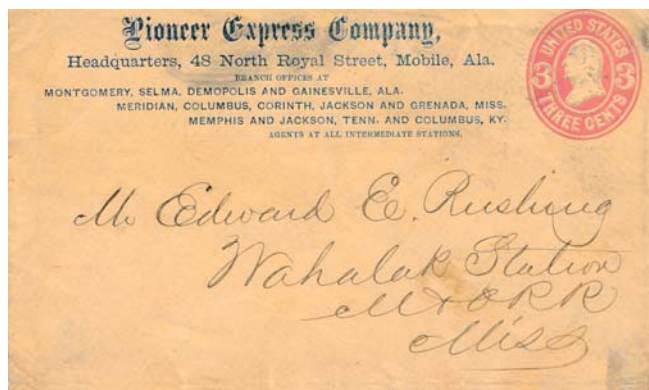
2 --- [1865]

Exp Mrk: Express Envelope
Postmark: Unknown Mississippi postmark.
Postage: US 3c pink postal stationery envelope #U59.
Address: Edw'd Hogshead, / Telegraph Office, / Meridian, / Miss.
Comments: Corner card of Pioneer Express Company
Provenance: None recorded.
Source: SOPH- Sep1927(3-11)-210 [018]
Image Credit: Southern Philatelist (journal)



Illegible

Exp Mrk: Express Envelope
Postmark: Illegible.
Postage: US 3c pink postal stationery envelope #U59.
Address: Mr Edward E. Rushing / Wahalak Station / Ill & O R R / Miss
Comments: Corner card of Pioneer Express Company
Provenance: None recorded.
Source: Daniel M. Knowles Collection [020]
Image Credit: Daniel M. Knowles Collection



Provenances

Provenances are given for named collections that were sold at auction, described in publications, or were in exhibits.

Brandon – *The Brandon Collection of Confederate States Stamps and Postal History*, Sale 1087 (Robert A. Siegel Auctions, 20 November 2014).

Faust – The Bernard Faust Collection of the United States 1863-68 Black Jack Issue, Sale 1181 (Robert A. Siegel Auctions, 23 April 2018).

Gallagher – *The D. Scott Gallaher Collection of Kentucky Postal History During the Civil War and Post-War Southern Expresses*, Sale 801 (Robert A. Siegel Auctions, 9 June 1998).

Hall – *The Hall Collection*, Sale 840 (Robert A. Siegel Auctions, 17 December 2001).

Muzzy – [H. Gray Muzzy] *The SIPEX Gold-Silver Medal Collection of Confederate State Entires Comprising Postmasters' Provisionals and General Issues*, Sale 1764 (H. R. Harmer (NY) Auctions, 21 April 1967).

Source Abbreviations

Sources are given in abbreviated format in the census. The list below includes the abbreviations used for books, authentication services, journals, auctions, and exhibits.

CWP – Civil War Philatelist (journal)

DMK – Daniel M. Knowles Collection

HRH – H. R. Harmer, New York (auctions)

JWK – John W. Kaufmann (auctions)

PF – Philatelic Foundation (authentication service)

RAS – Robert A. Siegel (auctions)

RGK – Robert G. Kaufmann (auctions)

SMR – *Special Mail Routes of the American Civil War: A Guide to Across-the-Lines Post History* (2008 - Steven C Walske and Scott R. Trepel - book)

SR – Schuyler Rumsey (auctions)