

Census of Gonzales, Texas, Postmaster's Provisionals

Compiled by Francis J. Crown, Jr.

Description



GON-TX-A01, A02, A03
(designs are the same, paper colors are different)

The Gonzales Provisionals

The Gonzales labels were printed in gold on glazed sheets of dark blue, black, and garnet paper. The size of the sheets is unknown.

The values of the different colored labels are determined by the postage rate at the time of mailing. The cover (A02, 5 [Dec1861], CN-004) may be an outlier. Most auction catalogs, but not all, describe it as gold on black, and one as gold on dark blue. Normally gold on black is a 10 rate and gold on dark blue a 5c rate. This is why Type A02 is listed with the value [5c] or [10c].

NOTE: The inclusion of an item in this census is not a guarantee of authenticity.

Count of the Gonzales provisionals

Provisional	CSA Cat No	Scott Cat No	Covers
[5c] gold on dark blue	GON-TX-A01		0
[5c] gold on dark blue, pair	GON-TX-A01a	30x1	3
[5c] or [10c] gold on black	GON-TX-A02	30X3	3
[10c] gold on garnet	GON-TX-A03	30X2	3

Notes

History

Coleman & Law operated a bookstore and pharmacy in Gonzales. John Law was also the postmaster and operated the post office in the store. Before the war, the firm used printed labels that were placed inside books and on bottles or boxes of medicine. When the Confederacy took over the postal system in June 1861 there were no stamps. To meet the need, postmaster Law used the store labels as a substitute.

The earliest mention of a Gonzales label used as provisional appeared in the 3 February 1898 edition of *Mekeel's Weekly Stamp News*. A collector in Louisville, Kentucky, reported he had procured three covers from the recipient of the letters. All three covers had vertical pairs of the Gonzales labels. The collector corresponded with the recipient of the letters and received in return information on the use of the Gonzales labels (See Mekeel (a) - Reference).

Important Notes on the Gonzales Labels

The Gonzales provisionals are labels, not stamps. The labels had no printed value, so they were sold as a coupon. When affixed to a letter and left at the post office the coupon was worth 5c or 10c postage. Since the coupons (labels) had no printed value the postmaster had to handstamp or write the word "paid" on the letter. Before the rate change on 1 July 1861 the postmaster also had to write the correct rate. Only the vertical pairs (Type A01a) are known to be precancelled with the Gonzales postmark.

Since the labels were placed inside books and on bottles they could be found in old books and on bottles after the war. Consequently, the label should be canceled on the cover to which it is affixed and must also be marked as "paid" with or without a rate depending on the period of use.

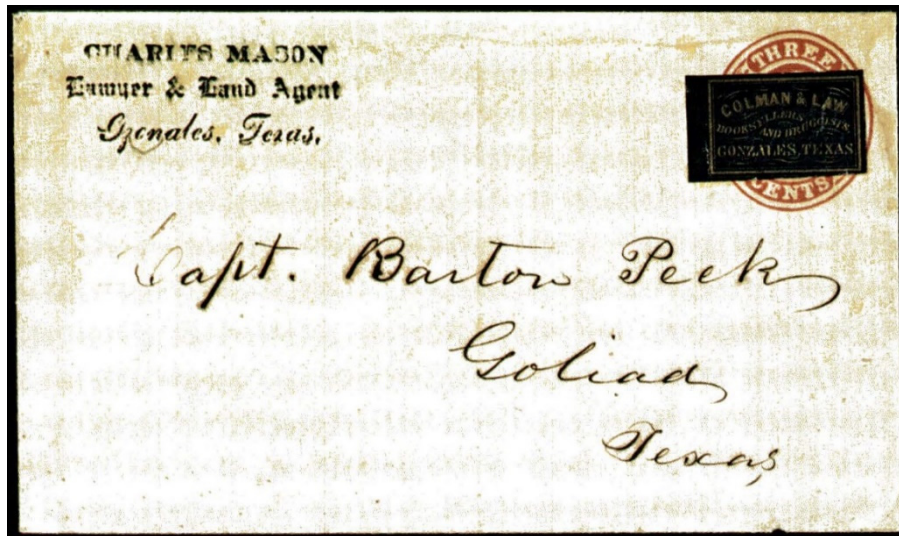
Fake Uses

The "cut square" below shows a label that was placed over a killer marking on a cover piece postmarked Gonzales. The label is not tied to the piece and there is no "Paid" or rate marking to indicate its use as a provisional. The piece has since been reduced to a cut square.



Reprinted from Robert Laurence Auction Catalog, 23 May 1935.

The cover below has a Gonzales label affixed over a prewar U. S. 3c Nisbet indicium. The label is not canceled or tied to the cover, there is no "Paid" marking and no indication of a rate. Without a "Paid" marking and rate the label would not pass as postage. For this reason, the cover must be considered a fake use of the label..



Reprinted from John W. Kaufmann Auctions, Sale 68, 1 December 1980.

The cover below contained legal documents and was mailed in April 1861 as endorsed by the receiving postmaster. The right side of the cover was cut off removing all indications of postage. Then the four Gonzales labels were added creating an unusual fake cover.



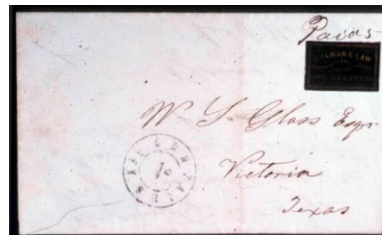
Reprinted from the Ashbrook Papers, Bound Book 6 – Trepel.

Uncertain Uses

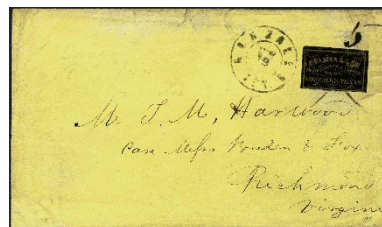
Some covers present a degree of uncertainty regarding their authenticity. These covers are listed below with the reason for the uncertainty. This information is provided so users of the census are aware of the characteristics and features and can draw their own conclusions regarding authenticity. All the covers are included in the census.

The covers are listed below by provisional type (last character set of CSA catalog number), postmark date, and census number.

A02, 5 [Dec 1861], CN-004 – There is no evidence the label on this cover is canceled. Without a cancel did the label originate on the cover or was it added later? On the positive side the lack of a cancel may have been an oversight. The manuscript “Paid 5” indicates the postage was paid.



A02, 19 --- [186-], CN-008 – The label is pen cancelled with an “X.” All other pen cancelled labels are cancelled with parallel pen strokes. Although there is a manuscript “5” indicating a rate there is no accompanying “Paid” marking to indicate the cover was prepaid. The cover is addressed to Richmond, Virginia, over 1,000 miles distant. The correct rate was 10c. The label has no rate, and the only evident rate is the “5,” which is incorrect for the distance.



A03, Illegible Date, CN-009 – The label appears to be pen cancelled. On close examination the extensions of the marks tying the label to the cover appear to be in pencil. For this reason, the Civil War Philatelic Authentication Service concluded the label did not originate on the cover (Certificate 05080).



References

- Dietz, August, “When is a Stamp Not a Stamp,” *Stamp and Cover Collecting* 2:12 (Oct 1935): 442.
- Mekeel, I. A., ed., “Coleman & Law Stamps,” *Mekeel's Weekly Stamp News* 11:5 (3 February 1898): 57.
- Mekeel, I. A. ed., “Confederate Provisional for Gonzales, Texas,” *Mekeel's Weekly Stamp News* 11:7 (17 February 1898): 82.

Mini Census of Gonzales, Texas, Provisionals

<u>Pmk Date</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>PmkPos</u>	<u>PrvPos</u>	<u>CN</u>
[5c] gold on dark blue, pair -- GON-TX-A01 (30X1)				
2 --- [186-]	Mr James F Miller / Company I. 8th Texas Cavalry / Corinth Miss / Forward to Headquarters of 8th Texas Cavalry	UL	UL	001
10 --- [186-]	Mr. James F. Miller / Company I, 8th Texas Cavalry / Corinth / Miss / Forward to headquarters of 8th / Texas Cavalry Texas Rangers	UL-CTR	UL	002
Illegible Date	J F Miller Company / I. 8th Texas Cavalry / Corinth	UL	UL	003
[5c] or [10c] gold on black -- GON-TX-A02 (30X3)				
5 [Dec 1861]	W Y Glass Esqr / Victoria / Texas	LC	UR	004
1 Apr [1865]	Mr. A. G. Clark / Galveston / Texas	UC-UL	UR	005
19 --- [186-]	M T. M Harwood / Care Messrs Breeden & Fox / Richmond / Virginia	UC-UR	UR	008
[10c] gold on garnet (shades) -- GON-TX-A03 (30X2)				
14 [Jul 1864]	Elder J. H. Thurmond / San Antonio / Texas	UL	UR	007
[--Jul 1864]	Eustace St. P. Bellinger / "Co." B 8th Texas Inf / Hobbys Regt. / Galveston / Texas	UL	UR	009
1 [Nov 1864]	Mr T W House / Houston / Texas	UL	UR	006

Full Census of Gonzales, Texas, Provisionals

Compiled by Francis J. Crown, Jr.

[5c] gold on dark blue, pair -- GON-TX-A01 (30X1)

2 --- [186-]

Description: Black "GONZALES / TEX." postmark ties precanceled provisional UL. Rated "Paid 10" in manuscript at UL.

Address: Mr James F Miller / Company I. 8th Texas Cavalry / Corinth Miss / Forward to Headquarters of 8th Texas Cavalry

Provenance: Caspary.

Source: CWPAS-01318*; MEKE-3Feb1898(11-:5)-57; MESC-5May1902(15:18)-149; HRH-5Mar1956(989)-136; RAS-(24Apr1982(596)-19. [001]

Image Credit: Civil War Philatelic Authentication Service.



10 --- [186-]

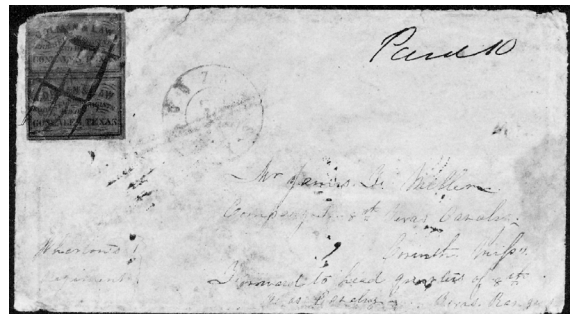
Description: "GONZALES / TEX." postmark UL-CTR, precanceled provisional pen canceled UL. Rated "Paid 10" in manuscript at UR.

Address: Mr. James F. Miller / Company I, 8th Texas Cavalry / Corinth / Miss / Forward to headquarters of 8th / Texas Cavalry Texas Rangers

Provenance: Hessel, Carnahan.

Source: PF-49950; MEKE-3Feb1898(11:5)-57; HRH-21Oct1975(2291)-181; SPB-9Mar1978(4091)-2046. [002]

Image Credit: H R Harmer Auctions.



Illegible Date

Description: Black "GONZALES / TEX." postmark ties precanceled provisional UL. Rated "Paid 10" in manuscript at UR.

Address: J F Miller Company / I. 8th Texas Cavalry / Corinth

Provenance: Ferrary, Moody, Erivan.

Source: PF-585852*; MEKE-3Feb1898(11-5)-57; GIL-5Apr1922(96-3)-633; HRH-27Nov1950(621)-52; HRH-24Jun2022(3060-7)-103*. [003]

Image Credit: H R Harmer Auctions.



[5c] or [10c] gold on black -- GON-TX-A02 (30X3)

5 [Dec 1861]

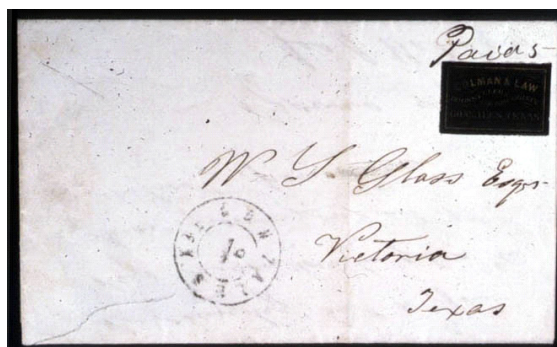
Description: Black "GONZALES / TEX." postmark LC, provisional uncanceled UR. Rated "Paid 5" in manuscript over provisional marking. Folded letter dated 2 Dec 1861. Uncertain use - see "Notes."

Address: W Y Glass Esqr / Victoria / Texas

Provenance: Caspary, Lilly.

Source: PF-100673; HRH-5Mar1956(989-3)-139; RAS-27Apr1967(317)-312; RAS-25Mar1969(350)-238*; RAS-29Apr1981(579)-478*. [004]

Image Credit: Robert A Siegel Auctions.



1 Apr [1865]

Description: Black "GONZALES / TEX." postmark UC-UL, provisional tied by pen cancel UR. Handstamped "PAID" to left of provisional. Original enclosure dated 28 March 1865. Docketed "Company. B. Cooks / Regiment. incare [sic] of / Captain Riley" across left end of cover

Address: Mr. A. G. Clark / Galveston / Texas

Provenance: Hessel, Brandon.

Source: PF-49949.tif; HRH-21Oct1975(2291)-182; RAS-24Jun2014(1073)-253*. [005]

Image Credit: Robert A Siegel Auctions.



19 --- [186-]

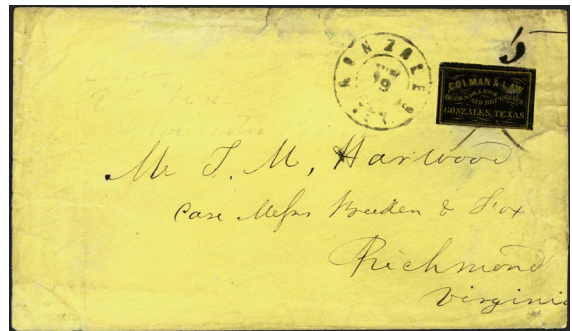
Description: Black "GONZALES / TEX." postmark UC-UR, provisional tied by pen cancel UR. Rated "5" in manuscript above provisional. Uncertain use - see "Notes."

Address: M T. M Harwood / Care Messrs Breeden & Fox / Richmond / Virginia

Provenance: Erivan.

Source: PF-105517; JWK-8Sep1979(56)-1276; HRH-10Dec2020(3039-4)-67*. [008]

Image Credit: H R Harmer Auctions.



[10c] gold on garnet (shades) -- GON-TX-A03 (30X2)

14 [Jul 1864]

Description: "GONZALES / TEX." postmark UL, provisional tied by pen cancel UR. Handstamped "PAID" at UC.

Address: Elder J. H. Thurmond / San Antonio / Texas

Provenance: Caspary, Lilly, Weatherly, Rosenberg.

Source: PF-25683; PPH--97*; HRH-5Mar1956(989)-137; RAS-27Apr1967(317)-311; RAS-25Mar1969(350)-237; RAS-20Oct1972(420)-628; JWK-13Jun1981(73)-1034. [007]

Image Credit: Philatelic Foundation.



[--Jul 1864]

Description: Black "GONZALES / TEX." postmark UL, provisional tied by pen cancel UR. Handstamped "PAID" at UC. Enclosure dated 3 July 1864. Cover restored at left. Uncertain use - see "Notes."

Address: Eustace St. P. Bellinger / "Co." B 8th Texas Inf't / Hobbys Regt. / Galveston / Texas

Provenance: Walcott, Hughes.

Source: CWPAS-05080*; RLA-23May1935-68; SR-22Apr2010(37)-1399*. [009]

Image Credit: Schuyler Rumsey Auctions.



1 [Nov 1864]

Description: Black "GONZALES / TEX." postmark UL, provisional pen cancelled UR. Handstamped "PAID" at UC. Folded letter dated 1 Nov 1864.

Address: Mr T W House / Houston / Texas

Provenance: Caspary, Kilbourne.

Source: HRH-5Mar1956(989-3)-138; RAS-28Sep1999(815)-45*. [006]

Image Credit: Robert A Siegel Auctions.

