

Confederate Stamp Alliance

Volume: 22 Number: 3 Year: 1977 Confederate_Philatelist: 022-03

Article: Modern Fake Patriotic Covers

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Vol. 22, No. 3

May-June, 1977

Whole No. 177

The official publication of the Confederate Stamp Alliance. Issued in alternate months. Copyright Confederate Stamp Alliance 1977. Manuscripts submitted for publication and advertising copy must reach the editor at least thirty days prior to date of publication. Neither the editor nor the Confederate Stamp Alliance accept responsibility for material sent to "The Confederate Philatelist." Price \$2.00 per single copy. Application to mail at Second Class postage rates pending at Ord, Nebr.

Printed by Quiz Graphic Arts, Inc., 305 South 16th Street, Ord, Nebraska 68662

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Modern Fake Patriotic Covers

By Benjamin Wishnietsky



Figure No. 1. Overall flag design. Pair of genuine 5c lithographed stamps tied by counterfeit Griffin, Ga. postmark. This printed patriotic design, consisting of 11-star field and solid bars without inscriptions, is not known to have been genuinely used in the Confederate States.

From about 1953, for a period of about twelve years, a group of rather sophisticated fake Confederate covers, including patriotic covers, appeared on the philatelic market. Emanating from a single source, they plagued collectors until they were recognized for what they are. Now well-known to Confederate specialists, dealers and cognizant auctioneers, they seem to have disappeared recently from legitimate philatelic channels.

The fakes were made sometimes from genuine unused patriotic envelopes, and sometimes from similar souvenir types not known to have been genuinely used in the Confederate States. On these were placed either counterfeit provisional handstamps or genuine unused Confederate stamps canceled by counterfeit circular postmarks tying the stamps to the envelopes. An address added to each completed the fake production.

There are a number of clues that show up the fakes. All will not be described, but a few characteristics will be given to alert collectors. Suspicious covers should be submitted to the C.S.A. Authorization Committee.

The addresses were often, if not always, copied from genuine covers. Written by a single hand, they have a similar angle and general appearance, usually with some of the letters unconnected. Please study



Figure No. 2. 10-star flag design. Genuine 10c lithographed stamp tied by counterfeit Flat Rock, N. C. postmark. The "SEPT" in the postmark is the wrong type style and the correct abbreviation should be "SEP," three letters instead of four. This patriotic design, with spearhead on the staff and field holding three inner stars within a ring of seven outer stars, is not known to have been postally used in the Confederate States.

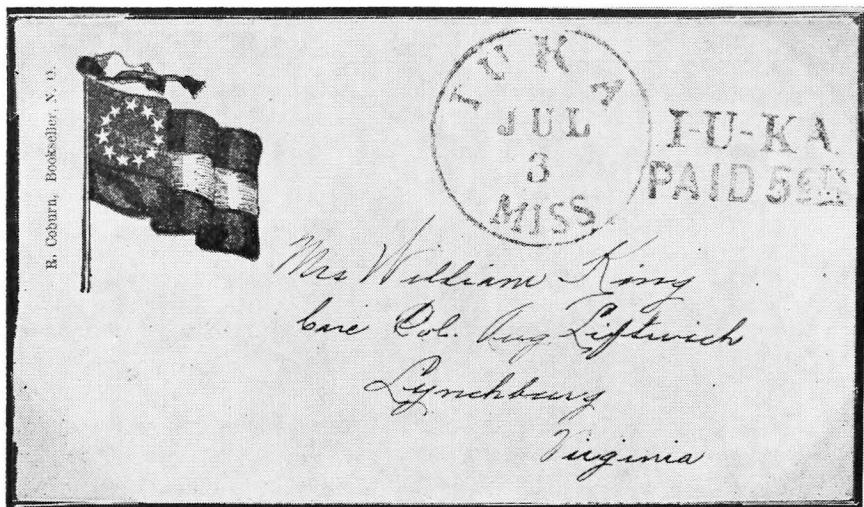


Figure No. 3. Genuine flag design, Dietz Type B-52-a. Counterfeit luka provisional handstamp and counterfeit luka, Miss. postmark. This spurious cover can be most easily recognized by the luka, Miss. circular postmark. This counterfeit all-handstamped postmark has "MISS" in capitals, and month and day, but no year date. One type of genuine postmark is all-handstamped, and includes the year date. In "Miss." only the "M" is capital. Another type of genuine postmark has "MISS" in capitals, but date added in manuscript.

the handwriting on the three illustrated fake covers. Covers with such handwriting should be subjected to further scrutiny. Other suspicious points are mentioned in the descriptions with the three illustrated fake covers.

(Photos courtesy of Col. John F. Rider)