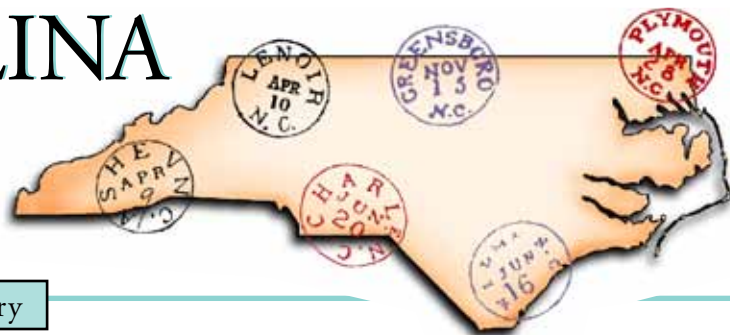


NORTH CAROLINA POSTAL HISTORIAN

The Journal of North Carolina Postal History

VOLUME 37, NO. 1 WINTER 2018 WHOLE 141



Huntsville, Gateway to the
Southern Piedmont



Dunn's Rock
Post Office



New North Carolina
Confederate Semi-official
Cover

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

At the end of July 2017, the 36th year of the North Carolina Postal History Society began. I can report that the society is in good order. Membership is strong and the society remains on a sound financial footing, with the only real expense being printing and mailing of the journal. The quality and diverse subject matter of the articles along with the impressive knowledge and expertise of our editor, Dick Winter, consistently produce an interesting and informative journal. The knowledge and commitment of the membership is not only reflected in the journal content but in the fact that over 40% of the membership are sustaining members, whose contributions help cover the printing costs and keep dues low.

With the help of Harry Albert, our treasurer, I hope to learn how to use the internet to communicate with the membership at large about society business and announcements of interest. Is there interest in starting a postal history blog?

The Carolina Stamp and Coin Show always has a variety of enticing postal history items. The next show will be on January 13-14, 2018, in the Holshouser Building on the North Carolina State Fairgrounds in Raleigh off Hillsboro Street. The hours are Saturday 10:00 am to 6:00 pm and Sunday 10:00 am to 3:00 pm. Admission is free. There is usually not only a good selection of postal history material but also postcards, stamps and a large number of coin and currency dealers. There are also several dealers with a good supply of stamp and coin collector supplies and reference books. The show is also a very good place to meet and visit with fellow society members and other collectors.

I will look forward to another full year of interesting society journals and Dick Winter informs me the next issue has a good

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lineup of articles. As always, if any reader has any suggestion for the society, please contact me, editor Dick Winter, Tony Crumbley or any of the officers.

As the Postal Historian goes to press, an email survey of members asked to vote on continuing the three Directors, whose terms ended in July 2017, for another three-years term is still underway. While we don't have a very complete listing of email addresses, we are using the ones we have to request approval. To date there has been unanimous support for the three Directors and it can be expected they will be approved.

Now is the time to pay your 2018 dues if you have not done so. A large number of our members have already paid their dues for the New Year, with many contributing a little extra as sustaining members. The early and generous response is very encouraging. The extra donations help us with the increased costs of providing the journal. Please take the time to pay your dues now. Dues for 2018 remain at \$15 for the year, which includes the four issues of our journal. Donations above the regular membership amount are deductible as we are a non-profit, educational organization. All contributions will be very helpful to our society.

A red dot on your mailing label means we have not received your dues.



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Huntsville

Gateway to the Southern Piedmont

by George Slaton



In the early fall of 1822, a young and adventuresome Lucius Verus Bierce set forth from Athens, Ohio, on a walking tour of the South. Bierce, a recent graduate of Ohio University and perhaps overly enamored of his prior membership in the Athenian Literary Society, determined to keep a diary of what became a year-long trek of 1800 miles. On October 29, he recorded that he “crossed the Yadkin River into Huntsville” which he described, graphically but with indifferent spelling, as “...a little, mean, richforsaken place, though surrounded by beautiful country and on a handsome site. The inhabitants I saw would have been fit subjects from which a painter could draw the Goddess and children of Ignorance the Landlady for the former. Put up. 24 m.”

It is difficult to judge the accuracy of Bierce’s scathing comments, but his description belies the importance of Huntsville to its state’s history. Huntsville was located astride the west bank of the Yadkin River at Shallow Ford, one of its most accessible crossings. The ford and the community of Huntsville combined to serve as a virtual gateway into the southern piedmont region of North Carolina. The early road system, which branched out in a southerly direction from Huntsville, was crucial to the settlement of this portion of North Carolina and of backcountry South Carolina and Georgia as well.

Shallow Ford had been used for centuries by deer, bison and other large animals. Native Americans also relied on the ford. Early trails formed by animal and human traffic led to the ford. As European Americans began to explore and settle this region, the trails slowly evolved into narrow and primitive roads. By the middle of the 18th century, the road which crossed the Yadkin River at Shallow Ford became known as the Great Wagon Road, and its historical importance cannot be overstated. The Great Wagon Road extended from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania to the backcountry of the southern colonies. It was a kind of 18th century interstate which made possible the journeys of families which settled central Pennsylvania, the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia, the Carolinas, and Georgia all the way to Augusta. Thousands of English, French, Scots-Irish, and German settlers traveled this road. (see Figure 1)

The significance of Huntsville is of course closely tied to Shallow Ford. The settlers, upon crossing the Yadkin River at Shallow Ford, found themselves in a fertile area known as the Forks of the Yadkin. The region quickly, however, came to be associated and identified with the remarkable Morgan Bryan,



who arrived in the Forks of the Yadkin in 1749. Bryan, together with his children and grandchildren, would leave an indelible mark on the early settlement not only of North Carolina, but of Virginia and Kentucky as well.

Morgan Bryan was born in 1671 in Denmark, emigrated to southeastern Pennsylvania about 1695, and married Martha Strode there in 1719. Together, they raised a large family. Bryan, a skilled entrepreneur, soon prospered through trade with the Indians, then successfully acquired a one-hundred thousand acre land grant in the Shenandoah Valley near present Winchester, Virginia. During the period of the 1730s and 1740s, Bryan’s land venture provided him with both prominence and wealth. His spectacular accomplishments in organizing the settlement of Virginia’s Shenandoah Valley inspired him to replicate his success further south. So Morgan Bryan, now seventy-eight years old, accompanied by most of his family, journeyed into North Carolina and settled in the Forks region.



▲ **Figure 1.** The Great Wagon Road which leads from the town of Huntsville down to Shallow Ford. Contemporary signage denotes this portion of the colonial roadbed as “Old Wagon Road.”

Flush with ready funds, Bryan began buying land from Lord Granville and selling it to the families streaming into the Forks region. He intended to consolidate his own personal resources and influence, and to firmly establish his family members as influential and prosperous residents of the region.

Unsurprisingly, the Forks of the Yadkin also became known as Bryan's Settlement.

The enterprising Bryan clan soon forged close relationships with other ambitious families through the bond of marriage. Morgan Bryan and Squire Boone, another family patriarch who emigrated from the Pennsylvania colony, were active together in civic affairs. Three of Squire Boone's children married Bryans. Daniel Boone, America's great frontiersman, married Morgan Bryan's granddaughter, Rebecca. The Bryan and Boone families were instrumental in spurring and organizing the early settlement of Kentucky in the 1770s. (A historical marker in Huntsville commemorates Daniel Boone's visit to Clingman's Store there, prior to his exploratory trek into Kentucky).

The region between the Forks of the Yadkin, in which Huntsville eventually rose to some local prominence, was not always a peaceful environment. The French and Indian War featured raids by Cherokee warriors into this backcountry area, especially from 1758 to 1761, threatening settlers, many of whom sought refuge at nearby Fort Dobbs or fled the area permanently. The war's end finally brought a welcome tranquility to the region.

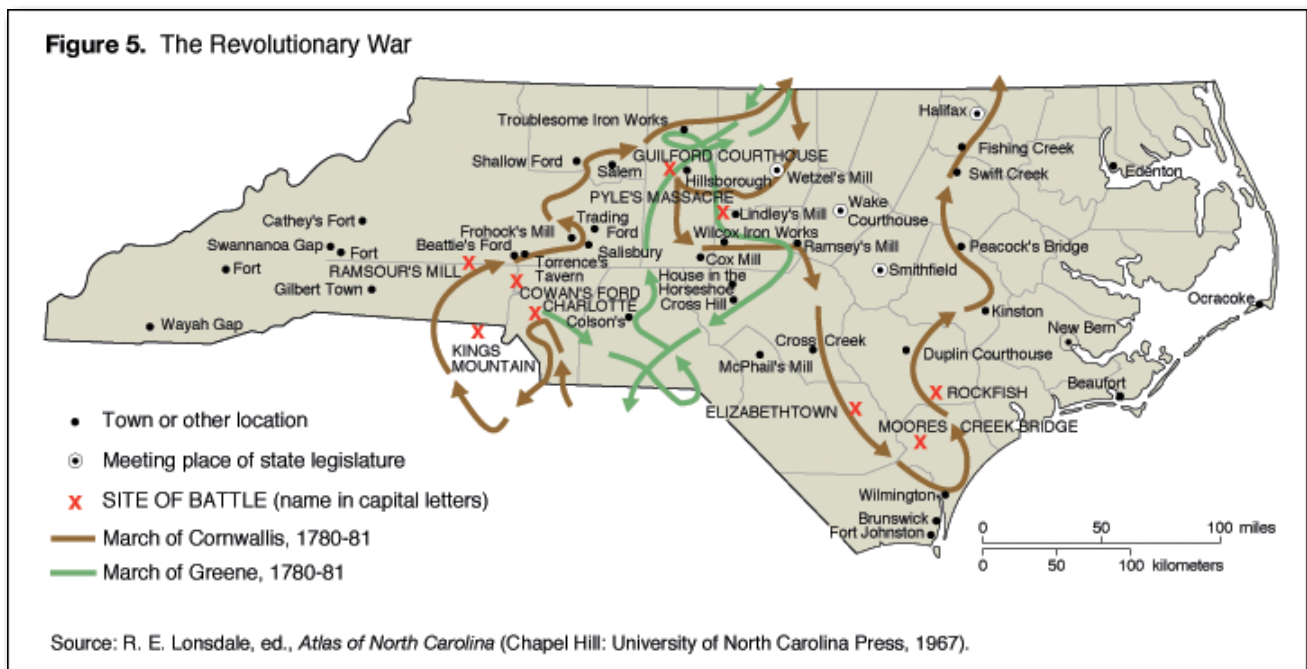
By 1775 however, long-standing and widespread disagreement over the issue of independence from Great Britain led to rising tension among neighboring families in the area. Though fervent Whigs favored rebellion and independence, others argued for continued loyalty to the Crown. A significant portion of settlers in the Forks were either Quakers or sympathetic to the Quaker tradition. In addition, some of the more prominent settlers were thriving economically and,

fearing that war would disrupt their livelihoods, wanted a peaceful resolution.

Historians contend that Bryan's Settlement was a center of Loyalism. But only a few miles to the south, the Whigs in Salisbury wielded and enforced power through an active and unrelenting Committee of Safety which demanded from citizens a commitment to independence. The stage was set for conflict, violence and suffering, the painful hallmarks of revolution.

Many of the Bryans were Loyalists. Samuel Bryan, Morgan's capable and well-regarded son, obtained a colonel's commission in the Royal North Carolina Militia. Colonel Bryan subsequently led militia forces in battle at Moore's Creek and Colson's Mill in North Carolina and Hanging Rock and Camden in South Carolina. At the close of the war, he reconciled with his Whig kin and returned to his home in the Forks where he lived and farmed until his death.

Shallow Ford proved to be a strategic river crossing for both Whig and Tory troops throughout the American Revolution's southern campaign. On October 16, 1780, General William Smallwood wrote from Moravian Town, North Carolina, just north of the ford, to General Horatio Gates, who commanded Whig forces in the South, "I was informed by Express on the 14th Instant...that the Tories had embodied in the Upper part of Surry, and marched down through Richmond (near present day Donna, North Carolina)..., intending to cross at the Shallow Ford over the North branch of the Yadkin to join the British. Their Strength was reported to be nine hundred. As they passed they plundered, disarmed and paroled many of the Inhabitants, and determined to imprison and carry off others



▲ **Figure 2.** Movement of Lord Cornwallis (brown arrows) and General Greene (green arrows) during the Revolutionary War in North Carolina from the *Atlas of North Carolina*, showing many of the places mentioned in the article.

who had been more obnoxious. This induced me to March with all possible expedition to this place, with an intention to attack and intercept them.”

General Smallwood intended to surprise the Tory force on the morning of the 16th, but, as he continues in his report, his scouts “...informed me the Enemy had attempted to cross the Shallow Ford the day before, when they were attacked and defeated by Major Cloyd with 160 of the Virginia and Carolina militia; 15 of the Tories were found dead and four wounded. Our loss, one Capt. killed and four privates wounded. No prisoners were taken. The Tories, being well mounted, made their Escape. I have ordered the Militia in pursuit, and make no doubt many will fall into their hands.” Smallwood’s report reflects the nature of partisan warfare during the Revolution which often affected, with little or no warning, ordinary residents in the path of raiding parties, both Whig and Tory.

Shallow Ford also figured in one of the major campaigns of the Revolution. Lord Cornwallis, the field commander of British forces in the south after the fall of Charleston, South Carolina, faced with military reverses at King’s Mountain in late 1780 and Cowpens in early 1781, decided to invade North Carolina a second time with the aim of engaging and destroying General Nathanael Greene’s patriot army of combined Continentals and militia. Greene was George Washington’s trusted choice to replace the feckless Horatio Gates.

Figure 2 illustrates the movements in North Carolina of Lord Cornwallis’ and General Green’s forces. This campaign highlighted the strategic value of river crossings in 18th century warfare. General Greene, before taking command of the army in the southern colonies, had made a deliberate study of river fords and planned his movements around their location and accessibility.

Cornwallis began his pursuit of Greene on February 1, 1781 when he sought to cross the Catawba River from the west to the east banks at Cowan’s Ford and Beattie’s Ford in Mecklenburg County. Recent rains made the river difficult to cross, and several soldiers drowned in the attempt. A portion of Greene’s troops under General William Lee Davidson managed to resist the British momentarily at Cowan’s Ford. But when Greene determined that the British had successfully crossed the Catawba, he moved rapidly northwards into Rowan County through Salisbury where he desperately ferried his command across the swollen Yadkin River at Trading Ford.

When Cornwallis arrived at Trading Ford, he discovered that Greene had retrieved all the available boats, leaving the British stranded on the south bank of the Yadkin.

Captain Joseph Graham attempted to follow and harass the British. Expecting to find the British stymied by the flooded Yadkin and halted for resupply in Salisbury, he was surprised to learn that, in his words, “Lord Cornwallis therefore determined to change his route, by passing up the west side (of the Yadkin River) to Shallow Ford, as he by this movement could place himself nearer the mountains, on the left of his adversary, and would have it in his power either to bring him to a battle, or to intercept his passage over the Dan (River).” Cornwallis, as well as Greene, planned to use the river fords to his advantage.

Pursuing Cornwallis at a cautious distance, Captain Graham was once again surprised when he arrived at the Yadkin “... intending to attack the enemy’s rear at Shallow Ford; (then noting in the third person) as he thought it scarcely possible that they could all have passed the evening before. He proceeded cautiously, and came within half a mile of the ford by light and moved up to it, but not a human being was to be seen. The enemy had all passed over in the night. Some of the officers ascending a hill above the ford could see a field in the low ground, where the whole British army was just parading. As they watched, the front marched off; soon the whole followed, before sunrise.”

Captain Graham confessed that the “American cavalry was mortified at coming so far and achieving nothing.” So Graham picked “twenty of the best mounted,” crossed the ford, and quietly followed a contingent of fifty enemy dragoons for several miles, then prudently turned back to rejoin his company. On their return journey, they were able to capture some British stragglers and “two armed Tories.”

Lord Cornwallis resumed his pursuit of General Greene in what has been called the “Race to the Dan.” Once again, Greene was able to elude the British by reaching the Dan River and crossing into Virginia just before Cornwallis’ planned interception. The British gave up the chase and remained in North Carolina. Greene soon returned to North Carolina and so damaged the British army at the Battle of Guilford Courthouse on March 15, 1781, that Cornwallis retreated to Wilmington, North Carolina and thence to Yorktown, Virginia where he surrendered his battered army.

After the close of the American Revolution, the population

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The North Carolina Postal History Society’s web site is located at
www.ncpostalhistory.com

Take a look and let us know how you feel.

of the Forks region continued to increase. The town of Huntsville emerged directly from this growth. Early maps indicate that several of the earliest roads established to service the burgeoning community intersected at or near Huntsville. A ferry was established by Isaac Ferree near Shallow Ford in 1749. Edward Hughes opened a tavern and inn. Traders and emigrating families continued to cross the Yadkin River, settling near Huntsville.

In 1792, Charles Hunt laid out 111 town lots, and the town of Huntsville was chartered. (see Figure 3) Huntsville's post office opened on August 22, 1794, and was one of the earliest post office sites in the Carolina backcountry.

Lucius Bierce's caustic description of Huntsville in 1822 must surely reflect the limited impression of an overnight traveler who could not have interacted with more than a handful of townspeople. Though we have little documentation of the six decades of Huntsville's affairs between 1794, when the post office was established, and the end of the antebellum period, the town appears to have been a thriving one.

Among the early evidence, in terms of postal history, of the Huntsville post office are two stampless covers with manuscript postmarks from 1835 and 1832. The first cover is addressed to "Mr. Isaac Jarratt, Montgomery, Alabama." (See Figure 4) Jarratt, a resident of Huntsville whom we will describe more fully later in this article, traveled during the ante-bellum period to engage in the Alabama/North Carolina slave trade. The second, a pink cover, is addressed to "Capt isaac Davis, orang (sic) County, Virginia, Stannardsvill (sic) office." (see Figure 5) The addressee is almost certainly the Isaac David who attained the rank of Captain in the American Revolution and who, "aged about 80 years," applied for his war pension in Orange County, Virginia in 1833. He reported service under both Generals Lafayette and Anthony Wayne. Peter Clingman, whose family was prominent in the area, was the postmaster in Huntsville at the time these covers were sent. Both are marked "Huntsville, NC" in manuscript.

Joseph A. Bitting served as Huntsville postmaster when a stampless folded letter was mailed in 1848. (see Figure 6) It contains well-written letters from "Sue" and her mother, "S.P.," at "The Cottage," conveying family news to Miss Fanny Williams in "Wilkesboro', N Ca." The writers briefly mention a Baptist convention held in the nearby Surry County town of Rockford, anxiety about "Richard," a friend or relative whose regiment has been ordered from St. Louis to "New Mexico," and a planned two-week visit by Sue and her sister to Salisbury.

The Salem and Wilkesborough Plank Road, completed in 1858, went through Huntsville. The Red Store, so named because it was painted red, was one of several businesses. (see



▲ **Figure 3.** The red dot on this map shows the location of Huntsville on the west side of the Yadkin River. The Great Wagon road comes in from the northeast, crosses the Yadkin at Shallow Ford, and continues to the southwest. This map is a portion of the first survey map of North Carolina, the Price Strother map of 1808. (NC Archives reproduction)

Figure 7) One account tell us that Huntsville had a pottery, a blacksmith forge, bricklayers, and carpenters. William Douglas and Thomas Kelley were wagon-makers by 1860. L.A. Todd was engaged in cabinet-making and H. J. Gorman in plastering. Three physicians attended to residents' medical needs. There were numerous farms, both large and small. Joseph A. Bitting, Richard C. Puryear, Pleasant Hunt, Thomas L. Davis, William Harding, and John Kimbrough were owners of thriving plantations. Thomas Lanier Clingman (1812-1897), a native of Huntsville, was perhaps the most well-known figure in the town's history. He served for many years in the United States Congress and commanded a brigade in the Army of Northern Virginia during the Civil War.

After Thomas Long's brief service as Huntsville postmaster during most of 1851, Neely Bohannon assumed the position, serving from December 3, 1851 until the middle of October, 1861. Figures 8, 9, and 10 illustrate various uses of a manuscript "Paid 3," postal stationary, and an 1857 3-cents dull red stamp.



◀ **Figure 4.** November 21, 1835, folded letter from Huntsville (Surry County) to Montgomery, Alabama, addressed to Mr. Isaac Jarratt. The letter has a manuscript postmark and is marked for 25 cents postage due for a distance of over 400 miles.

Figure 5. ▶ May 3, 1832, pink, folded letter from Huntsville (Surry County) to Capt Isaac Davis in Stanardsville, Orange County Virginia. Capt. Davis of the Revolutionary War, who, "aged about 80 years," applied for his war pension in Orange County, Virginia in 1833. The letter has a manuscript postmark and is marked for 18¾ cents postage due for a distance of 150-400 miles.



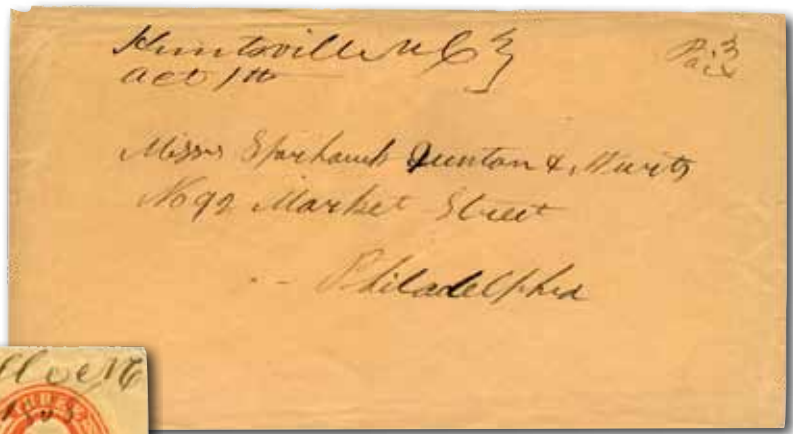
◀ **Figure 6.** October 20, 1848, folded letter from Huntsville (Surry County) to Wilkesboro (Wilkes County). The contents are well-written letters from "Sue" and her mother, "S.P.," at "The Cottage," conveying family news to Miss Fanny Williams, anxiety about "Richard," a friend or relative whose regiment has been ordered from St. Louis to "New Mexico," and a planned two-week visit by Sue and her sister to Salisbury.

Figure 7. ▶ Trace of an early roadbed, possibly from the colonial period, which lies a few yards from the site of the Red Store and other commercial businesses in 19th century Huntsville. It may have been a portion of or may have led into the Great Wagon Road.



Figure 8 ▶

October 1, 185x, envelope from Huntsville (Yadkin County) to Messrs Sparhawk, Quenton & Wurts, No. 92 Market Street, in Philadelphia, paid 3 cents to its destination. Manuscript postmark in upper left corner. The street address indicates that Philadelphia had postal carriers to deliver the letter.



◀ **Figure 9.** May 10, 1858, Nesbitt 3-cent red 1853 stamped envelope from Huntsville (Yadkin County) on a paid letter to Chapel Hill (Orange County). The addressee is the same one shown on the Figure 4 cover, Isaac A Jarratt.

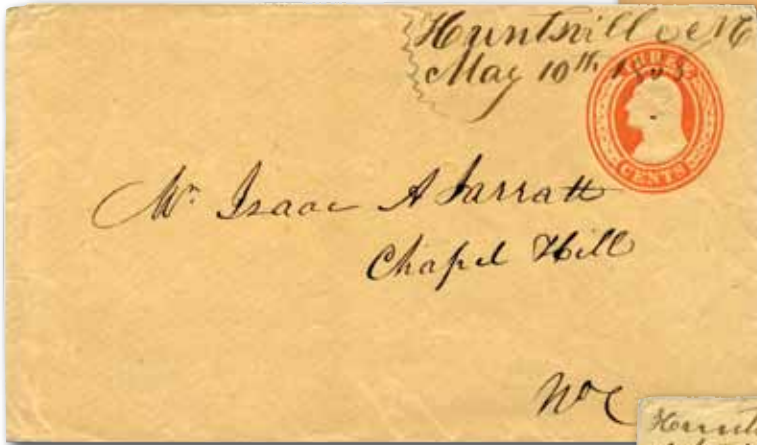
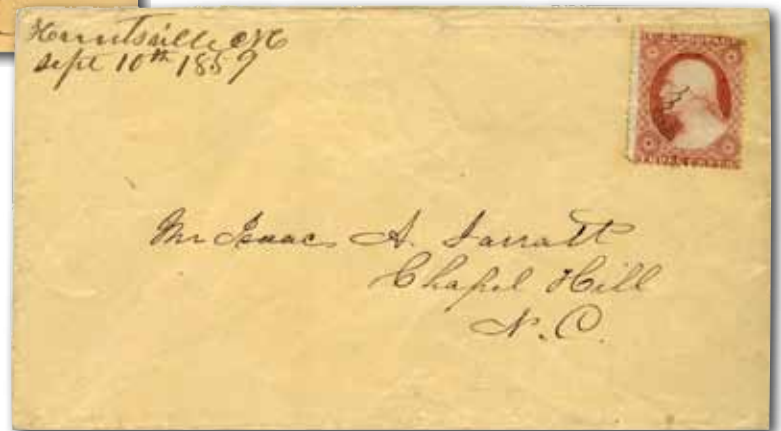


Figure 10. ▶

September 10, 1859, envelope from Huntsville (Yadkin County) to Chapel Hill paid with a 3-cent dull red, Type III, 1857 stamp on another cover to Isaac A Jarratt. Huntsville still had not started to use a circular datestamp.



Each of these covers bear manuscript town postmarks. Figure 11 shows the use of three 1857 1-cent blue stamps canceled with a circular datestamp.

Huntsville's fortunes began to experience a decline around 1850 when Yadkin County was formed out of Surry, and Yadkinville was designated as the county seat. The county provided fifty acres of land for the new town site, and soon a number of old and established Huntsville families relocated to Yadkinville. Merchants flocked to the new town as well.

The Election of 1860 was marked by a renewal of political unrest similar to that which swept the area in the 1770s. Yadkin County was one of a number of North Carolina counties wracked by division during both Revolutionary and Civil War periods.

Even though Abraham Lincoln was not on the state's ballot, the votes cast in the county for the other three candidates

reflected a preference for remaining in the Union. The presidential candidate, John Bell, garnered 742 votes. Bell's Constitutional Union party favored moderation and compromise and opposed secession. By contrast, John C. Breakinridge (Southern Democrat) received 545. Yadkin residents cast a mere 22 votes for Stephen A. Douglas (Northern Democrat). The county's few wealthy slaveowners generally supported secession, but many small farmers and tradespeople were politically content. As a consequence, the war years in Yadkin County were marred by partisanship and violence. Conscription was often resisted, desertion was common, and the Home Guard, which sought out the disaffected, often employed extralegal tactics which further alienated the citizenry.

Though partisan warfare was a constant threat and frequent reality around Huntsville, the area escaped invasion by Federal



◀ **Figure 11.** February 25, 185x, from Huntsville (Yadkin County) to Greenville, Butler County, Alabama, on a paid letter with a vertical strip of three 1 cent blue stamps. The right-hand stamps are canceled with the first circular datestamp of Huntsville, which appeared in the late 1850s or early 1860.

Figure 12. ▶

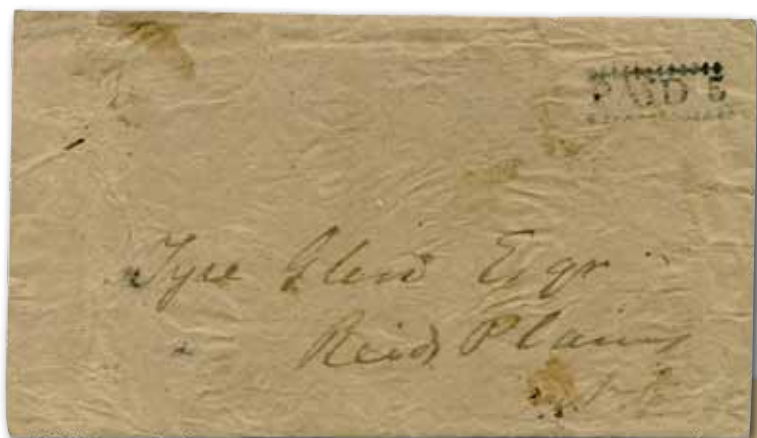
The Dalton House on Farmington Road, one mile south of Huntsville. Some of General Stoneman's cavalymen stopped to rest in the fields around the home of Sarah Dalton, a Union sympathizer, on April 11, 1865.



forces until the closing weeks of the conflict. Early in 1865, General Ulysses Grant had issued orders for General George Stoneman to destroy railroads and military supply depots in southwest Virginia and central North Carolina, anticipating that General Robert E. Lee might choose these areas as an escape route for his hard-pressed army. On March 21, the dilatory Stoneman finally led some 4,000 cavalymen from his quarters in Knoxville, Tennessee, to accomplish his mission of destruction. By April 10, Stoneman was in Germanton, a small town in Stokes County, North Carolina, where he divided his force. Stoneman directed Colonel William Palmer with one brigade of cavalry to raid nearby Salem, while he led his remaining two brigades south toward Shallow Ford, arriving there on the morning of April 11. The few Confederates guarding the ford were no match for the determined Federal troopers who stormed across the shallows of the river and into

the little town of Huntsville. Stoneman and his staff stopped at the Red Store in Huntsville. A contingent of raiders halted one mile south of Huntsville at the home of Sarah Dalton on the Farmington Road. (see Figure 12) Sarah, an elderly widow, was a Union sympathizer and she welcomed and fed a number of officers as their troopers rested in the expansive fields around the house and broke out their rations. Later that day, the Federals continued their foray toward Salisbury and its vast stores of military supplies.

Neely Bohannon, postmaster, and the Huntsville post office came under the control of the Confederate Post Office Department on June 1, 1861. L.M. Cornelius assumed the postmaster's position on October 16, 1861. Thomas Long, and afterwards, Marshall Osborne subsequently served as postmasters until Confederate control of North Carolina's postal system ceased by April 30, 1865.

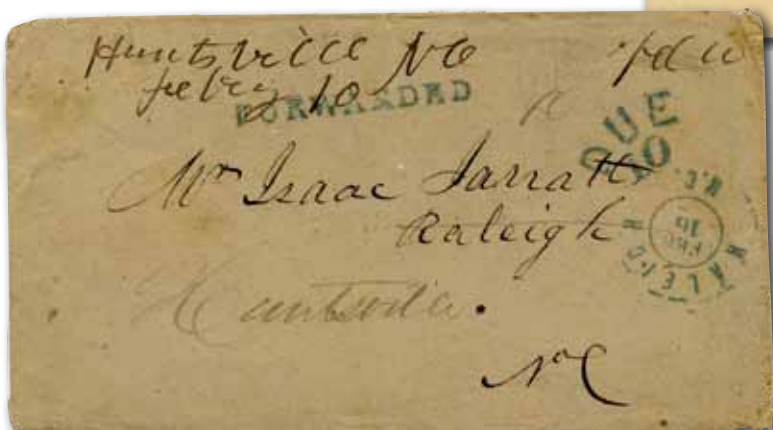


◀ **Figure 13.** An unusual, early Confederate home-made cover addressed to "Tyre Glen, Esq" in the small community of "Reid (sic) Plains" (Yadkin County) is shown without a date. Glen was a former postmaster of Red Plains, a large plantation owner, and a Union sympathizer during the war. This cover is the only one recorded with the boxed, fancy ornamental "PAID 5" of Huntsville.

Figure 14. ▶
November 4, 1864, envelope from Huntsville (Yadkin County) paid 10 cents with a blue CSA No. 12 stamp, and addressed to the conscription and training camp just outside Greensboro, Camp Stokes.



◀ **Figure 15.** Turned cover originally used from Raleigh on May 3, 1862. Later it was posted from Huntsville on 10 February 186x addressed to Isaac Jarratt in Raleigh, having been paid 10 cents. On February 186x it was forwarded back to Huntsville and marked for 10 cents postage due in blue ink. Note that the Huntsville postmaster again used a manuscript postmark



A very interesting cover from the early Confederate period is shown in Figure 13. It is addressed to "Tyre Glen, Esq" in the small community of "Reid (sic) Plains" in Yadkin County. Glen was a former postmaster of Red Plains, a large plantation owner, and a Union sympathizer during the war. This cover is the only one recorded with the boxed, fancy ornamental "PAID 5" handstamp of Huntsville. Since there is no postmark it would be difficult to know the origin except for this unusual PAID 5 handstamp, which appears on no other Confederate North Carolina post office cover.

The cover in Figure 14 was mailed with a blue 10-cents CSA No. 12 stamp and tied by the Huntsville circular datestamp, which began use just prior to the war. It was addressed to "Camp Stokes, Greensborough," a conscription and training camp just outside Greensboro (see article by Stefan T. Jaronski in *North Carolina Postal Historian*, Spring 2015, Whole No. 130).

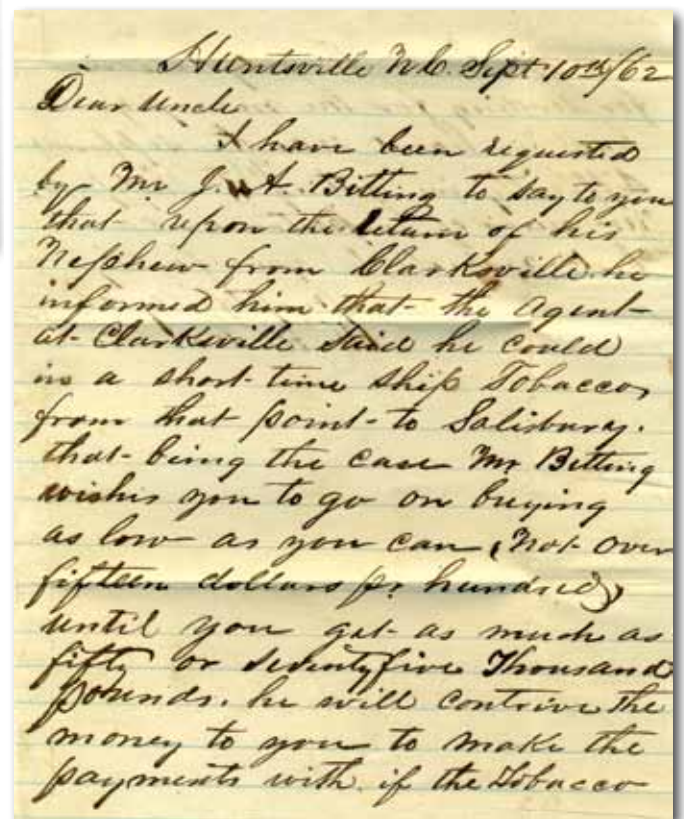
Figure 15 features another interesting example of Confederate postal history. It is a turned cover. Originally, the cover was postmarked in Raleigh on May 3, 1862 and sent to Huntsville. It was turned for use again on February 10, 186x, when it was mailed from Huntsville to Raleigh, and paid 10 cents, with a manuscript "Huntsville NC, Feby 10" and "pd 10." On February 16, 186x, it was forwarded back to Huntsville from Raleigh. This time it received the blue double circle datestamp of Raleigh and the handstamp markings "DUE/10" and "FORWARDED."

The addressee of the cover in Figure 15, Isaac C. Jarratt (1794-1880), and his son, Isaac Augustus Jarratt (1841-1890) were prominent figures in the Huntsville area during the war. The elder Isaac engaged in the slave trade between his home state and Alabama prior to the war. In 1835 he purchased the plantation house later to be known as the Durrett-Jarratt house

Figure 16. ▶
Durrett-Jarratt House, constructed about 1820 by Davis Durrett and purchased in 1835 by Isaac C. Jarratt (1794-1880). It is located in the vicinity of Enon about four miles north of Huntsville. The house is currently undergoing restoration.



Figure 17. and 17a. ▲ ▶
September 11, 1862, envelope and portion of a letter from Huntsville (Yadkin County) to Plantersville, Lunenburg Counth, Virginia, regarding the purchase of fifty or seventy-five thousand pounds of tobacco by former Huntsville postmaster Joseph A. Bitting. Letter paid 10 cents in cash. Faint strike of the Huntsville circular datestamp on a homemade envelope.



(see Figures 16). The house had been built about 1820 in the vicinity of Enon about four miles north of Huntsville. The elder Isaac became a wealthy plantation owner. The younger Isaac, known as "Gus," graduated from the University at Chapel Hill in 1861, enlisted in the soon to be famous 26th North Carolina Regiment, and rose quickly to the captaincy of Company C. He was wounded in the hand and face at Gettysburg, returned to duty, was wounded again in 1864, and resigned in early 1865, perhaps due to his injuries.

Interestingly, in spite of challenging economic conditions in the state during the war, Joseph A. Bitting (1820-1901), a local planter and former Huntsville postmaster, sought to buy large quantities of tobacco. On September 10, 1862, W.H. Robertson,

a Huntsville physician, wrote to his uncle, Josephus Gregory of Lunenburg County, Virginia, on behalf of Bitting, confirming that the tobacco buyer desired to purchase "as much as fifty or seventy-five thousand pounds." (see Figures 17 and 17a) Bitting operated a tobacco manufactory in Huntsville, producing chewing and smoking products. After the war, he transferred

Figure 18. ▶ Letterhead of Bitting & Hay, Manufacturers of Plug and Twist Tobacco, July 2, 1888. Joseph A. Bitting of Huntsville moved his tobacco manufactory to Winston, North Carolina, after the Civil War.



◀ **Figure 19.** February 19, 1864, envelope from Huntsville (Yadkin County) to Plantersville, Lunenburg County, Virginia, another cover from the same correspondence as Figure 17, this time with a manuscript postmark and "Paid 10" postage due marking.



Figure 20. ▶ Huntsville, May 26, 1866, Reconstruction period envelope addressed to General Jasper Packard, U.S. Army, Commanding the military occupation of Salisbury (Rowan County). The boxed FORWARDED handstamp and crossed out "Due 3 Cts" by blurring the ink were necessary as he had mustered out of the Army on April 10, 1865, over a month before the cover was posted.



◀ **Figure 21.** Huntsville, November 9, 1869, another Reconstruction period envelope addressed to Mrs. I.A. Jarratt in Fayetteville (Cumberland County). Most likely, she was the wife of Isaac Jarratt, Jr., and daughter of Richard C. Puryear, postmaster of Huntsville from 1835-1838, while in Surry County.



his business to Winston, now Winston-Salem (see Figure 18). Kate, his daughter, met her future husband, Will Reynolds, when he came to Huntsville to buy tobacco from her father. Kate Biting Reynolds, eventually became a prominent North Carolina philanthropist. Another cover from this correspondence (see Figure 19), dated “19th Feby 64,” bears only manuscript markings.

Two Huntsville covers from the Reconstruction period are illustrated. The cover in Figure 20 was posted from Huntsville on “26 May 66” to “Gen Jasper Packard U.S.A., Commg’ Post, Salisbury, N.C.” Nearby Salisbury, the site of the former Confederate prison for captured Federal soldiers and a target of Stoneman’s raid, was at that time occupied by the victorious Federals. Jasper Packard, former commander of the 128th Indiana Volunteer Infantry Regiment, a unit which saw action in Georgia, Tennessee, and North Carolina, was brevetted Brigadier General on March 13, 1865, and was in charge of Salisbury’s military occupation. The cover’s “FORWARDED” and “Due 3 Cts” markings reflect Packard’s service record which notes that he was mustered out of service on April 10, 1865, over a month before the cover was mailed.

The second Reconstruction period cover is featured in Figure 21. It bears a manuscript “Huntsville, N.C., Nov 9th 1869” postmark. The cover is addressed to “Mrs. I.A. Jarratt, Fayetteville, N.C.” Mrs. Jarratt is likely the former Sarah Puryear who married Isaac Jarratt, Jr. on April 20, 1869. She was the daughter of Richard C. Puryear, the former Huntsville postmaster. Isaac Jarratt, Jr. is known to have lived in Fayetteville, North Carolina, where he had business interests.

We have a brief description of life in Huntsville during the

closing quarter of the 19th century. Miss Emma Long, born in Huntsville in 1875 and a life long resident, recorded some of her memories in 1949. She mentions the Red Store and a large tavern owned by her father, Dr. Thomas Long; both businesses appear to have been prosperous for many years. She mentions other stores and a nearby plug tobacco manufactory. Regarding education, Miss Long reported that “Reverend Moses Baldwin operated the Old Academy in Huntsville, together with his wife, and they taught and kept boarding students. ...there was another lady who operated a school for select young ladies, and most of the students in the Huntsville section attended one or the other of these schools.” She adds that frequent horse races, attended by large crowds, were held near the tavern. And, finally, Miss Long recalls the performance in Huntsville of the Ringling Brothers Circus. The Huntsville post office was discontinued on January 31, 1907, and local mail was directed to Cana in Davie County.

Today Huntsville is a quiet and picturesque small town. There is little there now to suggest its witness to the passage of thousands of emigrant families and traders as they made their way to new lives and prosperous enterprises during the early years of American settlement. A North Carolina Civil War Trails marker, however, does commemorate Stoneman’s cavalry raid in 1865. ■

Author’s Note: Thanks to Tony Crumbley for providing cover illustrations for this article, and to Marc Thomas of East Bend, North Carolina and Anne Clingman White of Huntsville, North Carolina for their invaluable help.

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Dunn's Rock, NC Post Office 1855-1877



by Tony L. Crumley

One of the favorite postmarks in my collection is the bold red circular datestamp of Dunn's Rock, shown in Figure

1. Some of you may remember J. V. Nelsen ("JV" to all his friends) from Charleston, South Carolina, who assembled the largest collection of South Carolina covers to date. At



◀ **Figure 1.** Bold red circular datestamp of Dunn's Rock, Transylvania County used only during the Confederate period by postmaster D. Pickney Johnstone.

most shows, JV would bring items to sale or trade. In the early 1980s, he brought to the Charleston show two Dunn's Rock covers, which have always struck my fancy. I guess it's time that I share them and the little history that I can find on this early western North Carolina community.

For the first six years of its operation, the Dunn's Rock post office was located in Henderson County. With the establishment of Transylvania County on February 15, 1861, the post office was now located in this new county.

The first postmaster appointed to the Henderson County, Dunn's Rock post office, was Ethan Davis, who took office on August 3, 1855. Postmaster Davis served until November 1, 1859, when D. Pinckney Johnstone was appointed postmaster. Johnstone served as postmaster during the change to Transylvania County and throughout the war as the Confederate postmaster of that office. Very little information can be found on these two postmasters during the Henderson County period.

What we do know of the early history is that the area was first called Indian Rock or Indian Mountain by the earlier settlers. These early settlers moved into Cherokee Indian land without permission, settling at the base of the mountain. The small town that developed there was called Dunn's Rock after the rock outcrop at the top of the mountain overlooking the town. This town is long gone, but the area is still called Dunns Rock and lies just four miles south of Brevard (Transylvania County)

On August 15, 1800, Zachariah Candler was granted 640 acres in what was then Buncombe County along both sides of the French Broad River. The deed identifies the land as being

"on the East side of the River above Nathaniel Johnstone's House." There is little doubt that postmaster Johnstone was a descendent of Nathaniel Johnstone.

For a time, this area had been known as Connestee, a name that the Indians identi-

fied with the land. The earliest white settlers to this area were a part of a strange series of events involving three states and the Federal government.

The United States officially obtained the land from the Cherokees in 1798. The settlers had formed their own government in 1793, and petitioned South Carolina for land grants. In 1802, the Federal government, thinking the land was further south and west, gave the land to Georgia. In 1803, Georgia created Walton County, named for a signer of the Declaration of Independence. Walton County included the Dunn's Rock area.

There was increasing conflict between Buncombe County, North Carolina, and the state of Georgia over ownership of the land. At the time, Buncombe County contained all the land that would become the western most counties of North Carolina. Militias were raised by both sides and armed conflict between the state of North Carolina and Georgia in 1804. This conflict was known as the "Walton War."

The Federal government intervened and conducted a survey of the area. With the location of the 35th parallel being the dividing line between Georgia and North Carolina, Georgia yielded to these results in 1813.

During the time that this area was designated as Walton County, Georgia, a census was conducted and listed Phoebe Dunn as the head of a family of eight. Joseph A. Dunn was born at the base of the rock in 1793. By the time Zachariah Candler sold part of his land in 1819, the area was known as Dunn's Rock.

Zachariah Candler was born in Virginia, fought in the Battle of Kings Mountain during the American Revolution. In 1798, Candler was sent to the North Carolina mountains to survey the southern portion of the Butler line between the whites and the Cherokees. While at Fort Prince, Georgia, he married Mary "Polly" Boone, grand-niece of Daniel Boone. They settled first in Dunn's Rock where he owned land. They later moved to Hominy Valley in Buncombe County. Candler is said to have owned 200,000 acres when he died in 1845.

At some point well before the Civil War, Robert L. Hume built a stone hotel at the foot of Dunn's Rock. Mr. Hume kept summer boarders at the hotel. Dunn's Rock is pictured in an old photograph (Figure 2), which shows the remains of the 1840s

Hume Hotel lying at the base of the mountain with its rock outcrop called Dunn's Rock. At the time the hotel was built, it was the first hotel in Transylvania County. During the war, the hotel was burned by raiders in the area. All that remained were the stone walls which stood for decades. In the *North Carolina Postal History Society Newsletter*, Winter 1990, Whole No. 31, Ruth Wetmore indicated the post office was located at the "Hume Hotel and Pat Allison's."

We do know from the surviving postal history material that postmaster Johnstone was meticulous with his duties and in the preparation of outstanding covers. To date, ten items with and without Confederate stamps from the Dunn's Rock post office have been recorded in the North Carolina Postal History Society Confederate database. Most show carefully struck postmarks. Of these covers, two different handstamps were used along with red and black ink during the war. Three of the listings are just cut squares and not full covers. No covers, however, have been recorded from the short time pre-war period that Dunn's Rock was located in Henderson County.

Figure 3 is the earliest recorded cover from Dunn's Rock. The cover was posted by postmaster Johnstone on August 2, 1861, to Mrs. C. G. Morris in Charleston, South Carolina.



Figure 2. ▲

Remains of the old stone Hume Hotel at the foot of the mountain with the rock outcrop called Dunn's Rock. When built in the 1840s it was the first hotel in Transylvania County. During the Civil War it was burned by raiders in the area. At one time the Hume Hotel was the location of the Dunn's Rock post office.



Figure 3. ▲ August 2, 1861, Dunn's Rock (Transylvania County) cover to Charleston, South Carolina, with the bold, red Type 1, 34 ½ mm circular datestamp and manuscript "Paid 5" of postmaster Johnstone. This cover is the earliest recorded Dunn's Rock cover and one of only three recorded paid 5 cent covers of Dunn's Rock from the Civil War era.

Figure 4. ► April 7, 1862, Dunn's Rock, (Transylvania County) cover to Clarksville, Georgia, with a Type 1 circular datestamp and a PAID 5 handstamp. This is the only recorded example of the handstamp Paid 5 marking. It's small type size would indicate it was made from printer's type. The position of the "5" would indicate it may have been struck separately in two parts.



The bold 34 ½ mm circular datestamp, designated Type 1, was the first recorded circular datestamp used in Dunn's Rock. The year was not included in the datestamp. No handstamp device was available for the rate marking so postmaster Johnstone wrote on the cover, "Paid 5." This is one of three recorded five-cent rate covers of Dunn's Rock.

By 1862, the postmaster had acquired some handstamp rate devices. Figure 4 is an example of the red circular datestamp with a small "PAID 5" handstamp rate. This cover was posted on April 7, 1862, to Miss Mollie J. Fuller, in Clarksville, Georgia. The small type size of this marking indicates it was made from printer's type. The angled position of the "5" suggests that it may have been struck separately.

Figure 5. ▶

March 10, 1864, Dunn's Rock, (Transylvania County) to Marietta, South Carolina with an arc PAID/10. Note the hyphen between the "Dunn's" and "Rock" in this Type 2 circular datestamp. The Type 2 circular datestamp was used in 1863 and 1864. It is known used with red and black ink.



◀ **Figure 6.** July 1, 1863, Dunn's Rock (Transylvania County) to Pickens Court House, South Carolina, with an arc PAID/10 handstamp indicating prepayment. This is the second of the two recorded Paid/10 covers, the first being shown in Figure 5.



Figure 7. ▶

October 16, 1862, Dunn's Rock to Anderson, South Carolina, with a Type 1 circular datestamp in red canceling a horizontal pair of CSA No. 6 stamps printed by Thomas De LaRue in London. The 10-cent rate became effective July 1, 1862. The cover is posted to Mrs. C. G. Morris, now in Anderson Court House. The envelope is made of paper from a covering for ruled post paper.



◀ **Figure 8.** September 11, 1863, Dunn's Rock red Type 2 circular datestamp used to cancel CSA No.11, Archer & Daly printed stamp, addressed to Rev. E. C. Logan, Reidville, Spartanburg District, South Carolina. One of three recorded Type 2 red canceled cover.





◀ **Figure 9.** October 11, 187x, Dunn's Rock, (Transylvania County) to Charlottesville, Virginia, the only recorded handstamp postmark of postmaster George C. Neill, who was appointed postmaster in 1866 at the age of 80. Neill served until 1877 when the post office closed. Note also his locally-created cork killer canceling the stamp.

Figure 5 is an example of the Type 2 circular datestamp of the Dunn's Rock post office. Note that a hyphen was added between "Dunn's" and "Rock." This circular datestamp measures 32.5 mm, much smaller than the Type 1 marking. The year was included in the date of this handstamp. This cover was posted to Capt. Goodlet in Marietta, South Carolina, with an arc PAID/10 handstamp on March 10, 1864. Five examples of this Type 2 handstamp have been recorded. Of these five covers, two are in black and are stampless with Paid/10 rate handstamps. The other three are used in red to cancel CSA No. 11 stamps.

The second example of the Type 2 handstamp used with the Paid 10 handstamp is shown in Figure 6. This cover was posted July 1, 1863 to Mrs. J. R. Hamlin, Pickens, CH, South Carolina.

Both types of handstamps were used to cancel Confederate stamps. Six examples of CSA No. 11 are known cancelled. An example of a pair of CSA No. 6 and a pair of CSA No. 7 are also recorded used from Dunn's Rock.

The Type 1 handstamp was used to cancel the horizontal pair of CSA No. 7 shown in Figure 7. This cover was posted on October 16, 1862, to Mrs. C. G. Morris in Anderson, South Carolina. The envelope is made of paper from a covering for ruled post paper.

Figure 8 is an example of the Type 2 handstamp in red used to cancel a single copy of CSA No. 11. The cover was posted to Rev. E.C. Logan, Reidsville, Spartanburg District, South Carolina, on September 11, 1863.

These covers show clearly that Dunn's Rock had a South Carolina connection as much of this mountain area did. All but one of the Confederate covers recorded from there were addressed to South Carolina families. Much of this area was known for its summer homes used by Charleston families to escape the heat of the coastal plain.

When the war ended, postmaster Johnstone was relieved of his duties by Federal authorities. The office was officially closed on or before April 30, 1865. On October 29, 1866, George C.

Neill was appointed the postmaster of Dunn's Rock. George was born September 27, 1786. He married his first cousin, Nancy Ann Clayton on April 13, 1813. They had 11 children. Nancy died in August 1840. He married Rebecca Hogshead on October 11, 1843. They had one son. Records indicate George was appointed postmaster at the age of 80, quite an accomplishment. He would serve until the post office closed on August 13, 1877. Postmaster Neill died on June 18, 1878. He had been a school teacher, postmaster, and served in the War of 1812 and the state militia.

Figure 9 is an example of an 1870s Bank Note issue stamp on an envelope posted from Dunn's Rock on 21 October 187x. A new 25 mm circular datestamp is illustrated on the cover as well as a cork killer canceling the stamp. This cover would have been posted by postmaster Neill.

For such a small community with little written history, the postal history of Dunn's Rock remains outstanding. As a side note, only 17 towns in North Carolina use red ink during the Civil War. As a researcher, it makes me wonder why Dunn's Rock chose to make these striking red postmarks. ■

Authors Note: the author would like to thank Marcy Thompson of the Transylvania County Library for her assistance in researching the history of the community.

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A New Confederate Semi-Official Cover from North Carolina

by Stefan T. Jaronski



In the past year I was fortunate to discover, and obtain, a new Confederate semi-official imprint, pictured here, from the District of the Pamlico (Figure 1). This imprint is new; it is not listed in the comprehensive *Confederate States Catalog and Handbook*, the current “bible” of collectors in this subject area.

In the summer of 1861, news that a large Federal force under Nathaniel Banks had sailed for some point on the southern coast alarmed Confederate authorities. In partial response, Brig. Gen. Richard Gatlin, serving with North Carolina state forces at Goldsborough, was appointed to the Confederate States Provisional Army and assigned to command the Department of North Carolina and coast defenses. Where would Banks’ forces land? The North Carolina coast seemed a likely target. Suspicions were soon verified with the sighting of Banks’ expedition off Hatteras Inlet on August 28. Fort Hatteras fell the next day. The Federals were here.

As Confederate military forces subsequently organized their defense of the long North Carolina coast, the District of the Pamlico was established on September 29, 1861, with General Daniel Harvey Hill assigned to command. Initially, the military district was assigned the coast defense from Albemarle Sound to the White Oak River including Pamlico Sound (see Figure 2). It was complimented by the District of the Albemarle, under General Henry Wise, to the north, and the District of Cape Fear, commanded by General J. R. Anderson, to its south. Construction of a number of gunboats was authorized, to be placed upon Pamlico Sound. Defensive works in both districts were pushed forward during the months of November and December. In November the district’s jurisdiction was extended to Roanoke Island and on December 21 to the territory between General Wise’s command and Bogue Inlet. After the fall of Roanoke Island (8 February 1862), and the battle of New Bern (25-26 March 1862), and the withdrawal of Confederate troops

to Kinston, the district was assigned the counties of Edgecombe, Wilson, Pitt, Greene, Lenoir, Duplin, Jones, Carteret, Craven, Beaufort and Hyde.

Let’s take a closer look at the cover. It was postmarked with the characteristic blue “NEWBERN N.C/5 PAID”, dated January 20, 1862. The “5 PAID” indicates the 5-cents postage was prepaid on the letter. The postmark saw use from 12 August 1861 to 10 March 1862. Semi-official imprints were those printed by the various Confederate and state governmental departments for use in the conduct of official business. Such imprints are differentiated from the “official imprints” of the Confederate Post Office Department,



▲ **Figure 1.** Hitherto undescribed Confederate States semi-official envelope of the Quartermaster’s Department, District of Pamlico. Addressed to Mr. A. A. McKithan, Fayetteville, (Cumberland County), it is evidently from Major J.B.F. Boone, Quartermaster, New Bern (Craven County). The cover is postmarked Newbern, January 20, 1862.



▲ **Figure 2.** Map of the North Carolina Coast showing limits of the District of the Pamlico in September 1861 (dashed line) and as adjusted to include Roanoke Island in November (solid lines).

which was authorized to send communications postage free. Semi-official mail required postage. The official business indicia on this cover is not crossed out as it was on many private letters when paper for envelopes became in short supply. Thus this cover was really used on official business.

The manuscript receipt notation reads, "Maj Boone, Q Master, New Bern, No Ca," Who was Major Boone? A search of the "Compiled Military Service Records" identified Major J. B. F. Boone was the Brigade Quartermaster for the troops stationed at New Bern during the fall and winter of 1861. At war's outbreak, he had originally been appointed a Captain and Quartermaster of the First North Carolina regiment. However, on September 30, he was promoted to Major, reporting to General D. H. Hill, the commanding officer of the Pamlico District. There were several infantry regiments and artillery batteries at New Bern; the town also served as a supply base for troops at Fort Macon and Carolina City.

The cover is addressed to "Mr A A McKidthen, Fayetteville N.C." A little searching on the Internet revealed the addressee was Alfred A. McKethan (alternatively spelled in various records as McKithan), a partner in Gardner and McKethan of Fayetteville, makers of wagons, carriages, buggies, etc. from 1832 to 1866. His biography can be found on NCPedia, which states, "Originally, the firm of McKethan and Gardner made wagons and carriages; eventually, McKethan became sole owner and concentrated on carriages. By 1853 he was reputed to be the largest carriage manufacturer in the South, producing a variety of vehicles, including sulkies, gigs, rockaways, buggies, and the more elaborate barouches; orders came from as far away as Kentucky and Texas. In 1866 his sons joined the business, which grew to six buildings, including two smith shops with several forges." During the war he specialized in construction of ambulances. In 1866, Gardner sold his interest to McKithan, who renamed the firm and continued operations, later with his sons until at least 1896. I would therefore surmise that Major Boone had written McKithan about obtaining ambulances for army service in the District of Pamlico. An 1867 advertise-



◀ **Figure 3.** Advertisement of A. A. McKethan & Sons, Carriage-Makers, Fayetteville, N.C., in *Branson's North Carolina Business Directory for 1867-68*.

ment in *Branson's North Carolina Business Directory for 1867-68* is shown in Figure 3.

This cover is another example of new finds that are possible in our hobby. Just keep looking. And expect the unexpected.

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