

POSTAGE STAMPS OF THE CONFEDERATE STATES OF AMERICA.

By L. W. CROUCH.

By an Act of Congress, approved March 15th, 1861, entitled "An Act to prescribe the rates of postages in the Confederate States of America, and for other purposes," the rates of postage were fixed as follows:—For letters, 5 cents per ½ oz., if conveyed less than 500 miles; 10 cents per ½ oz., if conveyed more than that distance; and for drop letters (*i. e.*, letters to an address in the same town), 2 cents each; for printed matter, various rates per quarter for periodicals sent out by the publishers (this rates did not affect the stamps, as the amounts were collected quarterly from the publishers, and the parcels were not stamped); for other newspapers, circulars, etc., under 3 oz. in weight, 2 cents, and 2 cents per oz. over that weight; for books, 2 cents per oz.; and for newspapers, circulars, &c., posted for delivery only, 1 cent each; the letter registration system was repealed.

This act also enacted that "until postage stamps and stamped envelopes can be procured and distributed, the Postmaster-General may order the postage of the Confederacy to be prepaid in money, under such rules and regulations as he may adopt."

By Section 1 of an Act of Congress, approved April 19th, 1862, the postal rate for letters was increased to 10 cents per ½ oz. for any distance in the Confederate States.

Mr. John H. Reagan, the Postmaster-General of the Confederate States, issued a proclamation to all postmasters, under date of May 13th, 1861, requiring them (*inter alia*) to render to the Post Office Department at Washington their final accounts and their vouchers for postal receipts and expenditures, up to the 31st May, taking care to forward with the said accounts all postage stamps and stamped envelopes remaining on hand, belonging to the Post Office Department of the United States, in order that they might receive the proper credits therefor, in the adjustment of their accounts, and to retain in their possession, to meet the orders of the Postmaster-General of the United States, for the payment of mail service within the Confederate States, all revenue which should have accrued from the postal service prior to the 1st June, 1861, on which day Mr. Reagan took over the entire management of postal affairs.

The regular stamps were a long time forthcoming, as owing to the disturbed state of the country and owing to the fact that the South depended on the North for most commodities, paper and printing ink were scarce and persons capable of engraving and printing stamps scarcer. The difficulties in this direction encountered by the Confederate States Post Office Department are best told in the words of the Confederate States Postmaster-General's report dated November 27th, 1861.

Issue of 1861.—Messrs. Hoyer & Ludwig, of Richmond (Virginia), were the firm of lithographers who were contracted with for the supply of stamps "as a temporary expedient." However, the Confederate States Post Office Department were nearly a year finding suitable stamp engravers, and Messrs. Hoyer & Ludwig printed all the stamps till at any rate the middle of 1862, with the exception of one or two supplies of 1 cent and 5 cents stamps which were printed in London.

There was a great scarcity of paper and printing ink in the Confederate States, and the manner in which the contractors obtained the necessary supplies is rather interesting. The Con-

federate States Government contracted for a large supply of paper and envelopes—this stationery was sold by a citizen of New York to a Mr. Joel White, a stationer of Montgomery. It was delivered at a certain point in Kentucky, whence Mr. White transported it within the Confederate lines. The ink employed came at first from the North and was run through the blockade via Baltimore and Washington. When the United States authorities about those cities became more vigilant it came by sea, mostly by way of Charleston.

The 5 cents was the first value issued; the *Richmond Examiner* of October 19th, 1861, gives the date of issue as October 18th, 1861. The exact date of issue of the 10 cents is unknown, but was probably about November, 1861. Major Evans, in his article, places the 2 cents with this first issue, but a report of the Postmaster-General, dated February 28th, 1862, says: "Two cents stamps have been very much needed, and it is believed that the Department will be able to supply them soon," so March, 1862, is a more probable date for this stamp.

The size of the sheets of these stamps is not known, but they were printed probably in horizontal rows of 10. At the bottom margin of the sheet there appears, "Lith. of Hoyer & Ludwig, Richmond, Va."; on the sheets of the 5 cents this is in upright block capitals, on the sheets of the 10 cents in small italic block capitals. In the sheets of the 10 cents the stamp immediately above the beginning of the marginal inscription shows a flaw in the right side of the circular band, one of the spike-shaped ornaments being white.

The 5 cents bears a portrait of President Jefferson Davis. The portrait on the 10 cents was, according to Colonel H. St. George Offutt, the First Assistant Postmaster-General and chief of the Contract Bureau, originally "designed for James Madison, but the artist made a caricature of it." It appears, however, that the portrait is really intended for Thomas Jefferson and was copied from the portrait on the United States 5 cents of 1851.

The Postmaster-General's report of February 28th, 1862, says:—

"The first postage stamps were delivered to the Department under the contract by which it is now supplied, on the 15th of October, 1861. Since then 9,280,400 5 cents stamps have been received, equal to \$464,470.00 and 902,100 10 cents stamps, 90,210.00"

Making in all 10,191,500. \$554,680.00"

As the 5 cents and 10 cents in blue and rose respectively were issued in February, 1862, we may take the above figures as representing approximately the numbers of the 5 cents green and 10 cents blue supplied by the contractors.

Both these values are known rouletted, but this is probably of a private nature.

Issue of 1862 (January).—This issue was obtained from Messrs. Thomas De La Rue & Co. of London, as the Confederate Government were afraid that Messrs. Hoyt & Ludwig would be unable to supply a sufficient quantity of stamps to meet the public demands. According to the report of the Postmaster-General, dated November 27th, 1861: "On the first day of October a confidential agent was provided with ample means, and despatched to Europe to procure the manufacture of steel dies and plates for printing stamps of the several denominations provided by law, and for procuring for use, as soon as practicable, 15 millions of stamps, and to forward the dies, plates, and stamps to this city." Another report, dated

February 28th, 1862, says: "The Department, however, has just received from Europe, under the order referred to in my last report (see supra), 2,150,000 5 cents stamps, equal to \$107,500." Apparently this consignment contained only 5 cents stamps and no plates. Other consignments of 1 cent and 5 cents stamps were despatched later; concerning these Colonel Offutt says: "I think that at least three plates, and about the nominal value of 400,000 dollars of printed stamps ready for use (among which were some of the 1 cent) were shipped by De La Rue & Co. on a vessel that was captured by the United States off the port of Wilmington, N.C., and the agent of the Department threw the plates overboard; the stamps were captured, but what disposition was made of them I never knew. These plates were never recovered, but subsequently one plate, denomination 5 cents, and one plate, denomination 1 cent, were successfully shipped to Richmond, and were, with some other matters (the printing press from the same London house being among them) sent southward, prior to the evacuation of Richmond, in charge of a special agent, with a view to their safety in the event of that city being captured, but what became of them I do not know."

The 1 cent stamp bore a portrait of John C. Calhoun, and the 5 cents a portrait of Jefferson Davis. The 1 cent was never issued owing to a change in the postal rates. Both stamps were printed by typography in sheets of 100 stamps in 10 rows of 10. Mr. Coster, in the *Stamp Collectors' Magazine* for March, 1874, states that the 1 cent was printed from three stages of the plate, but Major Evans is of the opinion that "the differences seem hardly to amount to more than might exist between good impressions and poor impressions from the same plate." Colonel Offutt also doubts the accuracy of this account.

Issue of 1862 (February and March).—Although, as above mentioned, consignments of 5 cents stamps were obtained from London, they did not supersede Messrs. Hoyer & Ludwig's lithographed stamps, but were in use concurrently with them. The 2 cents had not been issued at the date of the Postmaster-General's report of February 28th, 1862, as above mentioned, but must have come out some time in March. About February, 1862, the colours of the 5 cents and 10 cents were changed from green and blue to blue and rose respectively. The new 2 cents stamp bore a portrait of Andrew Jackson, the 5 cents and 10 cents being, of course, of the same design as those of 1861. The 5 cents and 10 cents were printed from the same stones as those of 1861, and the sheets, the size of which is unknown, bear the same marginal inscriptions. The 10 cents stamp over the first part of the inscription shows the same flaw.

The Postmaster-General's report, dated December 7th, 1863, states that 557,200 2 cents stamps, value \$11,144.00, were supplied between July 1st, 1862, and June 30th, 1863. These must have been the lithographed stamps, but we have no record of the number supplied between February 28th, 1862, and June 30th, 1862.

The 5 cents blue is known rouletted unofficially.

Issue of 1862 (June or July).—This issue consists of a re-issue of the lithographed 10 cents in blue. Several theories have been propounded for the reason for all these changes of colour, but Major Evans' seems to be the most plausible. He says:—

"According to Colonel Offutt's original statement, a supply of the 5 cents stamps made by De La Rue & Co. was received and issued before the end of 1861; the supply was very likely only a small one, as dies or electrotypes were being sent out. A 5 cents blue, having been received from England, it would be natural enough to use green for the 2 cents, and when the first English supply was exhausted, and the lithographic stone of the 5 cents was again brought into use, it would be equally natural to print stamps from it in blue—both because that was the colour of what was to be the permanent issue of that value, and because there was another value being printed in green. I think we may safely assume that the colour of the 10 cents was changed at the same time, so as to avoid having two stamps of about the same size printed in the same colour. Later still, when a further supply of the small 5 cents was received, together, perhaps, with a plate for printing them from, it would be safe to return to blue for the 10 cents, because the difference in size, and in the general appearance of the two stamps, was sufficient to prevent confusion."

The re-issue of the 10 cents in blue may be distinguished from the first issue by being printed in a brighter blue and by showing a very worn state of the stone.

Issue of 1862 (July?).—As has been mentioned above, one or more plates for printing 5 cents stamps were sent over to the Confederate States by Messrs. De La Rue & Co. The Post Office Department had contracted with Messrs. Archer & Daly of Richmond for supplying postage stamps and, accordingly, this firm employed De La Rue & Co.'s plates for printing the 5 cents stamps. The size of the sheets is, of course, exactly the same as of the London impressions. The stamps printed by Messrs. Archer & Daly may be recognised by the rough printing; the paper employed is quite different from that used by De La Rue & Co., which is always glazed. The paper used for local impressions varies considerably in thickness. A report of the Postmaster-General, dated December 7th, 1863, gives in a list of "the stamps supplied to postmasters from July 1st, 1862, to June 30th, 1863," the number of 5 cents issued during that period as 37,953,977, value \$1,897,698.85. Another report dated November 7th, 1864, states that 3,626,600 5 cents stamps, value \$181,330.00, were supplied to postmasters from July 1st, 1863, to June 30th, 1864. This gives a total of 41,580,577 5 cents stamps, value \$2,079,028.85; whether any further supplies were issued I do not know, but probably not. As this stamp was first issued about the beginning of July, 1862, the above figures may be taken to represent the number issued.

Issue of 1863 (January).—Some time in January, 1863, Messrs. Archer & Daly supplied engraved 10 cents stamps for the first time. The die for this stamp was engraved by Mr. Archer, who had been in the employ of the American Bank Note Company of New York, the well known stamp printers. His speciality was in letter and scroll-engraving. This die was the only one engraved by him. According to Mr. Corwin, "he was brought to Richmond for the express purpose of attending to the engraving on steel of the new stamps for the Confederacy, and inasmuch as Mr. Halpin had not yet arrived, immediately following his appearance there was provided with the proper utensils and dispatched to a quiet village, where, in a few weeks, he produced the die of the TEN cents blue."

The prominent feature of this stamp is the value being expressed in words "Ten Cents." The portrait is of Jefferson Davis and was engraved from a photograph.

The size of the sheets of this stamp is unknown. A great outcry was raised against the portrait, and the stamp was soon withdrawn. In consequence it is now rather scarce.

Major Evans lists this stamp on laid paper, but it is not now mentioned in the catalogues.

Issue of 1863 (April?).—A new die for the 10 cents stamp was prepared owing to the dissatisfaction with the die engraved by Mr. Archer. This new die and a die for a new value, 20 cents, were engraved by Mr. Halpin, an engraver in the employ of Messrs. Archer & Daly. The new 10 cents die bore a better portrait of Jefferson Davis and the new value thus "10 cents." The 20 cents bore a portrait of Washington.

The first plate constructed for the 10 cents showed frame line around each stamp. It is not known how many stamps a sheet contained, but probably 200 stamps in 2 panes of 100 in 10 rows of 10. This plate was constructed from the first state of the 10 cents die, the two states of which will be explained under the next issue. One of the distinguishing marks of the first state is a flaw in the lines of shading immediately below the bust and over the "E" of "Cents." This flaw was apparently repaired on some of the stamps on this plate, as specimens of the 10 cents with the rectangular frame are known with the flaw corrected. Apparently there was no marginal inscription on the sheets of this stamp.

The 20 cents stamp was printed in sheets of 200 stamps in 2 panes of 100 in 10 rows of 10, the panes being placed side by side. Under each pane there is a marginal inscription in Old English letters, "Archer & Daly, Richmond, Va."

The plate of the 10 cents showing the rectangular frame was abandoned very soon, and this stamp is extremely scarce.

A report of the Postmaster-General, dated December 7th, 1863, states that 10,417,700 10 cents stamps, value \$1,041,770.00, were issued from July 1st, 1862, to June 30th, 1863. This number must have included the lithographed 10 cents blue, the TEN cents, the 10 cents with the rectangular frame, and probably a few of the common 10 cents. The same report states that 95,100 20 cents stamps, value \$19,020.00, were issued during that time, which small number indicates that this value was issued towards the end of that period. Major Evans gives the date of issue as 1864, but this report proves that it was about April or May, 1863. In another report, dated November 7th, 1864, it is stated that 1,833,300 20 cents stamps, value \$366,660.00, were issued between July 1st, 1863, and June 30th, 1864, but this number no doubt includes some printings by Messrs. Keatinge & Ball.

The 20 cents is known divided diagonally and used as a 10 cents.

Issue of 1863 (June).—As I have mentioned before, the plate of the 10 cents with rectangular frame was abandoned. Four new plates were made, two from the first state of the die, and two from the finished die. These plates were numbered and all used concurrently. The two states of the die are usually called dies A and B. Die A is distinguished by the incomplete appearance of the corners and by the flaw already described; die B shows the finished work of the engraver, the corners completed, the flaw corrected, and a thin line drawn all around the design; the head had also been entirely re-engraved. These four plates all contained 200 stamps each in 2 panes of 100 in 10 rows of 10, the panes being placed side by side. Below each pane was a marginal inscription and the plate number. This inscription was originally "Archer & Daly, Bank-Note Engravers, Richmond, Va." in italics. Portions of this were at an early date erased. Plates 1 and 3 are known inscribed "Archer" (with a space after it), "Bank-Note Engravers, Richmond, Va." and plate 4, "Bank-Note Engraver, Richmond, Va," with the "s" of "Engravers" erased.

The 2 cents bears a portrait of Andrew Jackson; the die for this value was also engraved by Mr. Halpin. The plate contained 200 stamps in 2 panes of 100 in 10 rows of 10, and apparently bore no marginal inscription.

The 2 cents and 10 cents dies A and B are known on laid paper.

The Postmaster-General's report, dated November 7th, 1864, states that 869,200 2 cents stamps, value \$17,384.00, were issued between July 1st, 1863, and June 30th, 1864. These, no doubt, were all engraved stamps. The same report tells us that 33,450,400 10 cents stamps, value \$3,345,040.00, were also issued during that period. This number must have included some printings by Keatinge & Ball.

Issue of 1864.—Sometime in 1864 Messrs. Keatinge & Ball of Columbia (South Carolina) obtained the stamp-printing contract, doubtless owing to the threatened evacuation of Richmond, and the plates and machinery were handed over to them. They used the plates engraved by Archer & Daly, but altered the marginal inscriptions.

They probably did not have occasion to print any 2 cents stamps though they may have done so. They altered the marginal inscriptions on all four plates of the 10 cents to "KEATINGE & BALL, Bank-Note Engravers, COLUMBIA, S.C.," and erased altogether the inscription on the plate of the 20 cents.

The stamps printed by the Columbia firm may be recognised by the rough printing and the brown dull gum. The Richmond prints are always clear and have almost colourless shiny gum.

Major Evans chronicles the 10 cents die B on grey-brown paper.

The Perforated Stamps.—All the stamps before described were issued imperforate, but we find all the engraved stamps and the typographed 5 cents perforated. Mr. Coster says: "In the early part of the late war Mr. Offutt (the Assistant Postmaster-General) ordered from Messrs. De La Rue & Co. a perforating machine, and on its arrival in Richmond he applied it to a few sheets of each value for the purpose of seeing 'how the thing worked.'" These perforated sheets were duly issued, though now no copy of the perforated 5 cents is known. This perforation gauges 12½. Other perforations are known but all these are fraudulent. The unissued 1 cent is known with a forged perforation.

Bogus Stamps.—During the war several absolutely bogus varieties were printed for sale to collectors. Of these two are in the design of the small De La Rue 5 cents but with the word "Five" erased and "Ten" substituted. One bore the same portrait as the genuine. It was printed in sheets of 70 in 7 rows of 10. Major Evans mentions a sheet in his possession issued as an advertisement by a bookseller at Atlanta. There is printed on the back:—"This sheet of stamps is presented by The Old Book Store. Is printed from the genuine plate captured at the fall of Atlanta on Confederate made paper. Stamps of this kind that have passed through the mails are very rare, bringing from \$10 to \$30 each." These labels are found in blue and carmine.

Another bogus variety is a would-be 10 cents stamp in the same design as the last but with a portrait of General Thomas J. Jackson, commonly known as "Stonewall" Jackson, the famous Confederate general. Several stories have been told as to its origin, but there is no doubt that it is absolutely fraudulent. It is said to have been printed by Messrs. Hoyer & Ludwig, and is only known in carmine, the ink for which colour is said to have been made from the juice of "the Pokeberry," whatever that may be.—*Stamp Lover.*