



The Confederate Post

By Patricia A. Kaufmann

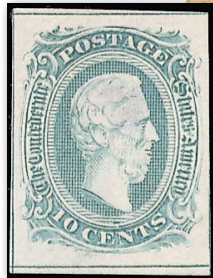


Figure 2. Unused
CSA 10¢ Frame
Line stamp.

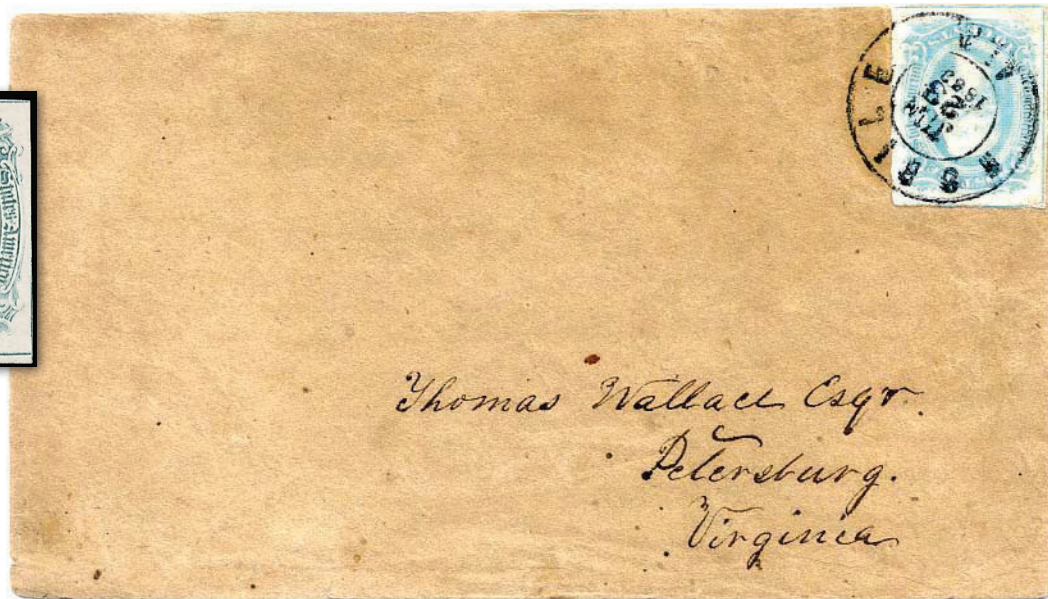


Figure 1. CSA 10¢ Frame Line stamp tied by a
Mobile, Ala, June 23, 1863, double-circle datestamp on a cover to
Thomas Wallace, Petersburg, Virginia.

Lincoln and Grant's Last Meeting Petersburg, Virginia, April 3, 1865, the Thomas Wallace House

The cover in Figure 1 bears the premier engraved stamp of the Confederacy, the 10¢ “Frame Line.” It is tied by a Mobile, Ala, June 23, 1863, double-circle datestamp on a homemade cover addressed to Thomas Wallace, Petersburg, Virginia. (Figure 1)

This cover has excellent provenance, as it is backstamped “Henry C. Gibson Collection / Ward Sale 12.”

The distinctive feature of the Frame Line stamp is the rectangular frame around each subject. These lines were engraved on the printing plate as a guide for aligning the die images as they were pressed into the plate. Because the frame lines are shared by adjacent stamps, a single stamp cut from a sheet may show only a portion of a single line or no lines at all. In the latter instance, to the naked eye it is a common CSA 11 which is an inexpensive stamp.¹

The 10¢ Frame Line stamp was engraved on steel by John Ar-

cher. It was then transferred onto a single copper plate of 100 subjects arranged 10 x 10. There was no imprint. The stamp was on white wove paper of varying thickness. The stamps are blue with shades ranging from blue to milky blue and a greenish blue. The gum ranges from colorless to a light yellow. (Figure 2)

Current research indicates the original engraved die used for the Frame Line was later used for the Type I engraved stamps, CSA 11 printed by both Archer & Daly of Richmond, Virginia, and Keatinge & Ball of Columbia, South Carolina.

As with all Confederate general issues, the stamps were issued imperforate, although some issues were experimentally perforated. The copper plate on which they were printed and the small number of subjects on the plate indicate this issue was produced as a trial or experiment. The quantity printed was small and distribution was limited.



Figure 8. Wallace House sign, 2012.

Figure 6.
President Abraham Lincoln

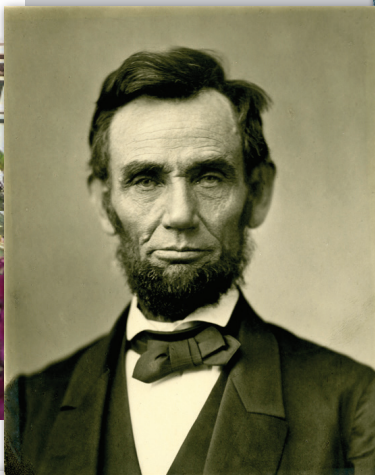


Figure 9. Thomas Wallace house in Petersburg where Grant and Lincoln met for the last time before the president's assassination; state of disrepair is sadly evident, 2009.



Figure 7.
General Ulysses S. Grant

Although the Frame Line stamp is lovely and sought-after, the cover addressee is the more interesting part about this cover—Thomas Wallace of Petersburg, Virginia.

Thomas Wallace (1812-1868) was a lawyer who graduated William and Mary College 1832-32 and the University of Virginia 1832. He was Commonwealth's Attorney for Petersburg for many years and a member of the Virginia House of Delegates from Petersburg 1850-51. Wallace knew Lincoln from the time he was a Congressman, as they were both members of the Whig party.

The Petersburg Campaign went on for an agonizing 292 days and the Siege of Petersburg, which lasted about nine months, said to be the longest yet on U.S. soil. On April 2, 1865, Grant at last penetrated Lee's defenses southwest of the city, and the Confederate commander ordered an evacuation that night. (Figures 3-5)

At 4:28 a.m. on April 3, a Michigan regiment entered Petersburg and raised the United States flag above the courthouse. Soon thousands of Union soldiers converged on the city from all directions, much to the delight of the African-American population. Residents in Petersburg, per the 1860 census, were divided almost equally

between black and white. No other Southern city during the war boasted a higher percent of free African-Americans.²

Later that morning, U.S. president Abraham Lincoln arrived in town from City Point and met with General U.S. Grant. President Lincoln also had his son Tad with him, who was celebrating his twelfth birthday. (Figures 6 and 7)

Lincoln rode Grant's horse Cincinnati to the Wallace House where they discussed contingencies for ninety minutes, until Grant left to orchestrate his pursuit of Lee. At what was their last meeting before the President was assassinated, they

discussed the impending conclusion of the war and plans for Reconstruction.

Serving as General Grant's headquarters in Petersburg, it was on the front porch of the Thomas Wallace house that he learned of the fall of Richmond to Union forces. Some sources say that they met in the library while others say they stayed on the porch.³ (Figure 8 and 9)

The Wallace House is on the National Register of Historic Places, privately owned, vacant, and not open to the public.⁴ It appears to need substantial restoration.⁵ It was built circa 1853-55,



Figure 3. Currier & Ives print of the April 2n, 1865 Battle of Petersburg.

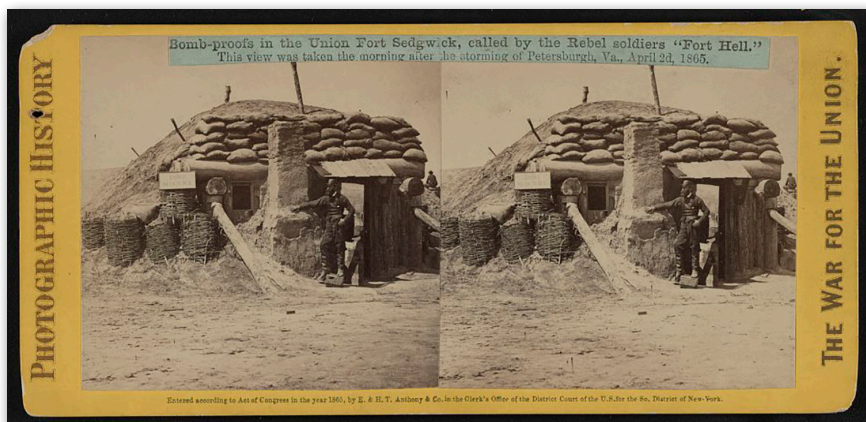


Figure 4. "Bomb-proofs" at Union Fort Sedgwick, called "Fort Hell" by the Rebel soldiers. April 3, 1865.

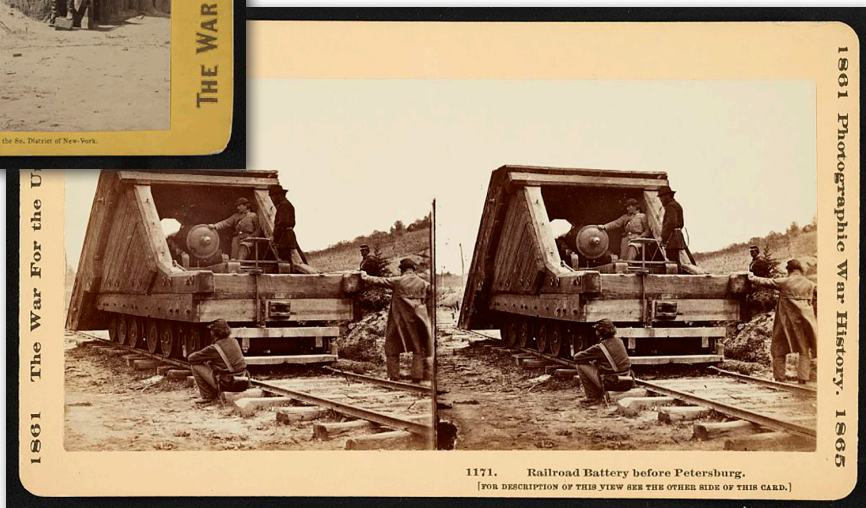


Figure 5. Railroad Battery before Petersburg.

depending on source cited, in the then popular Italianate style.⁶

Grant would corner Lee on April 9, 1865, at Appomattox Court House. The surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia marked the practical end of the Civil War in Virginia. ☐

Endnotes

¹Patricia A. Kaufmann, Francis J. Crown Jr., Jerry S. Palazolo, *Confederate States of America Catalog and Handbook of Stamps and Postal History*, 2012, Confederate Stamp Alliance.

²"Petersburg during the Civil War", *Encyclopedia Virginia*. http://www.encyclopediavirginia.org/Petersburg_During_the_Civil_War/ Accessed March 29, 2017.

³"Abraham Lincoln in Virginia," *Virginia is for Lovers*. <http://www.virginia.org/LincolninVirginia/> Accessed March 29, 2017.

⁴*The Travelers Two, The Thomas Wallace House*. <http://www.thetravelerstwo.net/2012/04/thomas-wallace-house.html> Accessed March 29, 2017.

⁵National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form. http://www.dhr.virginia.gov/registers/Cities/Petersburg/123-0031_Wallace,Thomas,House_1975_Final_Nomination.pdf Accessed March 29, 2017.

⁶*Thomas Wallace House*, Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_Wallace_House Accessed March 29, 2017.