



The Civil War Post

Patricia A. Kaufmann

A Voice of the Past Regarding Those Spurious Essays

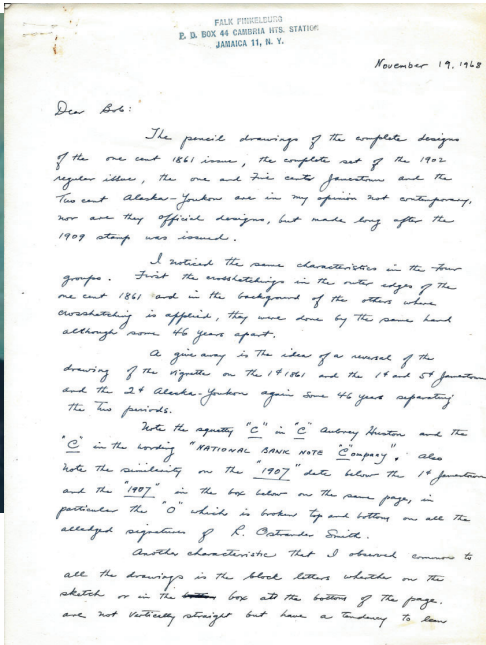
In my May 2022 column (page 24), I wrote about a pair of bogus Confederate essays that some thought were genuine original Civil War-era pencil-drawn compositions. I laid out the reasons why I did not feel they were authentic. To my delight, Lewis Kaufman, a retired curator and long-time expert of the Philatelic Foundation, emailed me with more information regarding these bogus creations.



Lewis and I have known each other a long time. We have often had to disclaim our association. At a show last year, a client of mine insisted he had visited Washington when, "...your husband, Lewis, and you ran the auction house there." Uh, no. Lewis Kaufman (one N) never had anything to do with the auction house my late husband, John Kaufmann (two Ns) and I owned and operated in Washington, D.C., in the 1970s and 1980s. Lewis and I chuckle that – had we ever married – we'd just have to spell our name with three Ns. To be very clear, we have never been romantically involved and are both happily married to others.

Lewis' email began, "And I thought these things had been buried long ago. Attached please find a lengthy letter from Falk Finkelburg to Bob Markovits in late 1968 explaining in detail why items of this ilk were just no good ... But sometimes it's really hard to drive a stake through the heart of items that collectors/dealers want so much to be real." Indeed!

Lewis worked with the late Bob Markovits of Quality Investors during the same period John and I ran Kaufmann Auctions. Robert L. Markovits (1937-2015) was an attorney, a vocation mostly incidental to the collecting world where he was best known as a prominent philatelist, respected dealer, exhibitor and writer who made his mark on our hobby in



Far left: Robert Markovits.

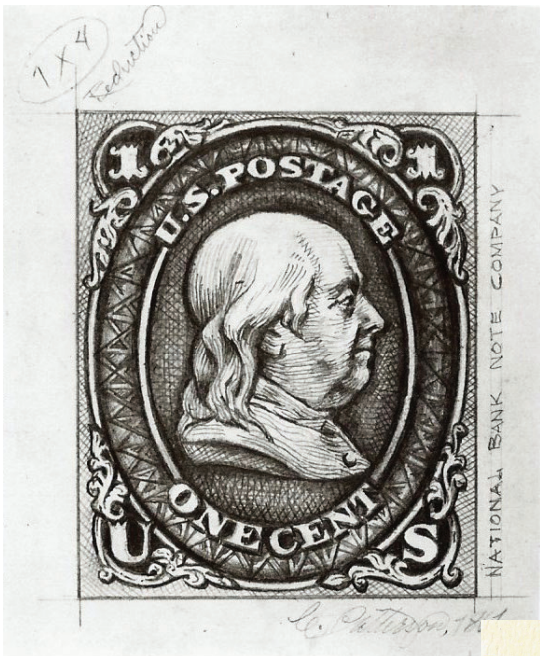
Center: A 1968 letter to Markovits from Falk Finkelburg.

Above: Falk Finkelburg.

many ways. He was a keen student of many United States issues, particularly those in the "back-of-the-book." He won the 1999 APS Champion of Champions award for his splendid exhibit of *U.S. Official Stamps, 1873-1884*. Bob was inducted into the American Philatelic Society Hall of Fame in 2017.

Falk Finkelburg (1902-94), a keen and well-respected philatelic student, was one of the great collectors and exhibitors of United States essays and proofs. The 1999 sale catalog of his collection by Robert A. Siegel Auction Galleries is an invaluable reference for collectors of essays and proofs. Falk was a dealer and acknowledged mentor to current Essay/Proof specialist James Lee.

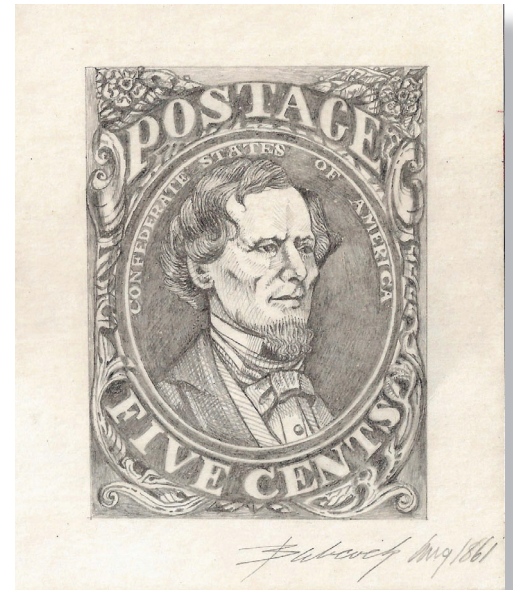
I will not transcribe Finkelburg's lengthy four-page letter to Markovits, but suffice it to say that he meticulously laid out his careful observations as to why the pencil drawings of the complete designs of the 1¢ 1861 issue and subsequent stamp issues were not contemporaneous. Those identical-design characteristics were present on the "original drawings" done almost five decades apart. I show only one, but Lewis kindly sent images of the several so-called essays directly discussed



Left: One of the “essays” discussed in Finkleburg’s lengthy letter to Markovits is this identical-design pencil drawing of the 1¢ 1861 issue.

Right: The Figure 1 image from the author’s May column. This pencil drawing, originally from the George B. Sloane reference collection (now owned by the author), was purported to be an essay by “Babcock.”

Below: Also from the author’s collection comes this pen-and-ink De La Rue “essay,” by “W.M. Proctor.” It is the author’s opinion that all three items were created by the same individual.



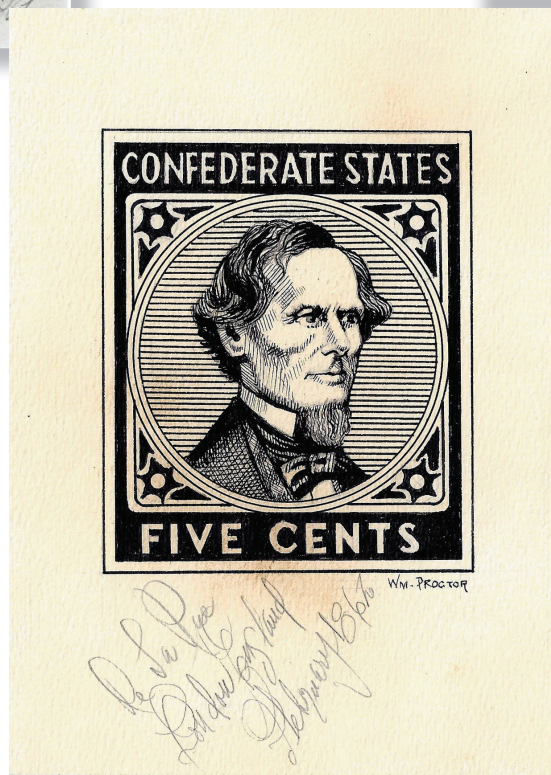
in Falk’s letter so as to more easily connect the dots.

One similar misstep to the Confederate 1¢ “essay” is that the pencil drawing of the U.S. 1¢ 1861 issue is signed by E. Patterson as the designer. Finkelburg asks who Patterson is, as he had never seen nor read any reference to this name as a stamp designer. This aligns with the identical observation made by me in my May column, asking who the supposed designer Babcock was. No current Confederate student of whom I am aware has ever heard of anyone named Babcock in connection with Confederate stamp design.

I draw your attention to the 63E fake, shown above. Note the “C. Patterson, 1861” signature at the bottom. Finkelburg correctly points out that the numeral 1s have stems at the top. This is characteristic of the European style of writing. He speculates that these pretenders were all created in Europe at roughly the same time. I concur.

In a comparison of the drawing style of the 1¢ 1861 (above) to the two “essays” of 5¢ Confederates shown at top right and center (previously shown in my May column as Figures 1 and 5), it is my opinion they were likely all done by the same hand.

Finkelburg closes his long letter to Markovits with, “In conclusion all the differences and characteristics as explained and pointed up above convince me very strongly that this group of drawings are crude reproductions of the stamps instead of a supposedly [sic] set of original drawings.”



My sincere thanks to Lewis Kaufman for sharing the several U.S. examples of these frauds as described in Falk’s illuminating letter. This additional background helps flesh out the true story and maybe – once again – helps drive a stake in the heart of these frauds.

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Patricia A. (Trish) Kaufmann was first introduced to Confederate postal history in 1965. She became actively involved in organized philately in 1969, became a dealer in 1973 and today specializes solely in Confederate stamps and postal history. She enjoys hearing from readers and may be reached at [trishkauf@comcast.net](mailto:trishkauf@comcast.net).

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