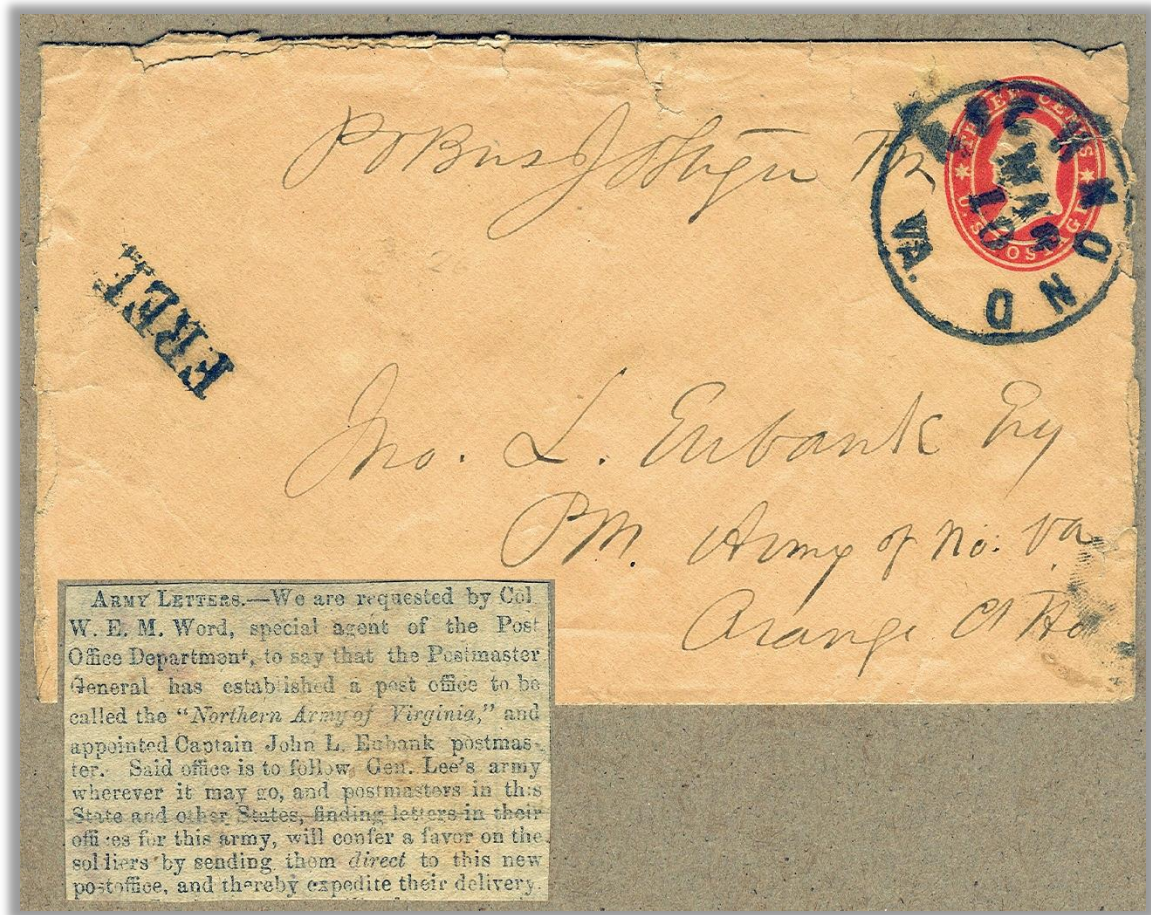


Evolution of Confederate Army Field Post Service During the War Between the States

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When the Confederate armies took the field in 1861, almost 1,000,000 men found themselves away from home for the first time. Not surprisingly, contact with loved ones back home was very important for these men. Many soldiers wrote home at least once a week; those who couldn't write had others write their letters for them.

When the fledgling Confederate Post Office Department was organized, it quickly found itself unprepared to handle the enormous volume of mail to and from the armies. The initial burden of processing army mail fell on the shoulders of often unprepared postmasters near each army. More than two years would pass before a coherent army postal system was put into operation for the two main Confederate armies. My talk will trace that development.