



The Great Texas Stamp Collection (Charles N. Prothro Texana)

Charles W. Deaton

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Among the many difficulties the newly formed Confederate States of America endured in the summer of 1861 was the failure of its post office department to provide sufficient numbers of that item most crucial to its service: the postage stamp. Faced with the resulting din of customer complaints, a handful of industrious Texas postmasters solved the problem by simply making their own homemade stamps. In this thoroughly researched history of these rare and highly coveted stamps, *The Great Texas Stamp Collection* traces their journey from creation through their rediscovery years later by local, and then international, stamp collectors—a journey that culminated in the sale of a few pieces at a recent auction in New York that fetched more than \$250,000. Weaving the larger contexts of Texas and U.S. postal history together with individual tales of greed, intrigue, forgery, and discovery, Deaton's book is rich with characters from European royalty to early stamp dealers to common criminals, while also providing detailed examinations of the stamps themselves, including a complete census of the stamps now known as the Texas Confederate Postmasters' Provisionals. Appealing at once to devoted philatelists, Texas and U.S. history buffs, and amateur collectors of all kinds, *The Great Texas Stamp Collection* offers a unique vantage point from which to view our history as well as the very nature of collecting.

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