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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The Florida Postal History Society is now in its second year and seems well on its way toward becoming a respected society. Our membership now stands at 59 active members with a nice response following a Linn's Stamp News article by Richard Graham. This issue is our second and has some nice original articles on Florida Postal History. Our editor needs several more such articles for our next issue this fall. As with any new organization, we have had our share of organizational problems, scheduling glitches, and even a few complaints from members. As President, I hope these will be rectified and not repeated in the future.

At our annual meeting at Florex, November 5, 1993, an excellent slide presentation of early Pre-Territorial Florida postal history was organized by Don Thompson. The turnout and membership comments will encourage more such presentations. Thanks, Don, for a job well done. For those who missed the presentation, the text is published in this issue of The Florida Postal History Journal.

The Sarapex February 5, 1994, meeting was organized by member Ted Light, but unfortunately only two members were able to find the location and a chance for fellowship was lost. Hopefully such a scheduling glitch will not recur.

Our next meeting will be held in conjunction with Stamporee at Jupiter, Florida, Friday, May 13, 1994, at 11:00 a.m. This meeting will also enable Confederate Stamp Alliance members to attend and a good turnout is anticipated. Bring interesting covers for discussion.

Deane R. Briggs, M.D.

# FLORIDA CONFEDERATE CROSS LINES USAGE

Deane R. Briggs, M.D.

Florida cross the lines usage during the Civil War is limited mostly to North to South and South to North prisoner of war correspondence. The establishment of a Confederate postal system with its own postmasters and rates became effective June 1, 1861. Prior to that time mail could be sent with U.S. postal rates and many Florida examples are known. Lawrence L. Shenfield's classic book on The Special Postal Routes covers in detail the various and sometimes ingenious methods used to transfer mail after this date. This article will deal with several of the known Florida cross the line uses.

Late in 1861, regulations were established for transfer of Flag of Truce civilian mail and Prisoner of War letters. Until May 10, 1862, the exchange of mail was handled at Old Point Comfort, Fortress Monroe, and Norfolk, Va. For the duration of the war exchange continued at Old Point Comfort and Fortress Monroe. Mail usually required both U.S. and Confederate postage. A recently discovered civilian use cover used during the early period is recorded in Fig. 1. This cover was postmarked in manuscript at Bay Port, Fla. on January 13, (1862) and rated "Paid 10" in manuscript. It is correctly noted "Via Norfolk & Flag of Truce" and the U.S. 3c rate tied by Old Point Comfort, Va., Feb. 9 postmark. An examiners notation "Exd H" in manuscript is noted at top center. The cover was sent to Miss Abby S. Parsons, Rye, New Hampshire and is from a correspondence of pre-war usages.

Florida prisoner of war usages North to South are well documented in a large correspondence of Capt. B.M. Burroughs. As a prisoner of war confined to Johnson's Island Prison in Sandusky, Ohio, some 25 covers to his mother in Tallahassee are known. Example #17 is shown in Fig. 2. This cover was postmarked Sandusky, Ohio, Feb. 8, '65 and has the oval Johnson's Island, Ohio censors mark and the notation "By Flag of True Via Fortress Monroe, Va.". The Confederate postage was rated "DUE 10" and postmarked Richmond, Va. Feb. 18, for delivery to Tallahassee, Florida.

Incoming Blockade usage to Florida are known but scarce. Mosquito Inlet (New Smyrna), Florida had over 1000 inbound blockade runs but no postal history is known from these entries. Almost all mail entering the Confederacy came through Charleston, Wilmington, N.C., or Savannah. Examples of incoming blockade use from Glasgow, Scotland, to Tallahassee are shown in Fig. 3 and Fig. 4. Both of these covers have manuscript (due) "12" rates with reflected the 10c Confederate postal rate and a 2c ship rate.

Florida, like other states in the Confederacy, had Union occupation of major cities for a large portion of the War. This created hardships for family and friends often separated by only a few miles of picket lines or a narrow river (The Saint Johns River) patrolled by blockading gun boats. Unofficial cross the lines mail did occur and is documented by at least two covers from Confederate Lake City to Union occupied Jacksonville. **Fig. 5** shows a nice example of such cross lines usage postmarked Lake City, Fla. May 22 (1863) and rated PAID/10. No Union postal rate was used. The enclosure is worthy of recording as it shows some of the hardships families had in crossing the lines by flag of truce.

*Head Quarters Dist E Fla.*

*Lake City May 20th 1863*

*Madam.*

*A recent letter of Mrs. Phillips your daughter complaining of your detention here induces the Brig Genl Commd again to direct that permission be granted to you to pass the enemys (sic) lines at Fernandina where evy (sic) facility will be offered you by our officers & a flag of truce sent with you. I send you herewith the necessary orders for your passing to Fernandina. The permission for you to go in the gunboat would be cheerfully granted but there are many objections to that mode of communication.*

*Mrs. Benton  
Care of Judge E C Burriss  
Jacksonville, Fla*

*Respectfully*

*W call aaG*

Another example of civilian cross the lines use in Florida is shown in **Fig. 6**. This is an example ex. Meroni, and has a double strike of an unrecorded Union handstamp used as a receiving mark and probably applied in Jacksonville (Union H.Q.). No postage was paid or assessed "due". The cover is addressed to Union occupied St Augustine, Florida, per flag of truce from Confederate Baldwin. A manuscript "Ex'd Mvirz" notation is at the top. The handstamp is a 20mm. circle with RECEIVED HD. QTS./DIST OF FLA. around the FEB 25 1865 date. This mark is unlike any of the known Jacksonville, Fla. postmarks used during Union occupation. It may represent a censor mark. Any other examples of this mark or ideas regarding its use would be welcomed by the author.

It is hoped that this article will stimulate readers with other examples of Confederate Florida cross the lines usages to contribute an article documenting such use.

Reference: Shenfield, Lawrence L., Confederate States of America - The Special Postal Routes, New York, N.Y.: The Collectors Club. 1961.



Bay View Fla  
Jan 13

Exd 16



Miss Abby S. Parsons  
via Topock Rye  
& Flag of Peace New Hampshire

was Capt. B. M. Burroughs  
Prisoner of War Johnsons Island, O.



#17 17



1st May 1885  
1st Jan 1885

Mrs. B. M. Burroughs  
Tallahassee  
Florida

St. Antonio

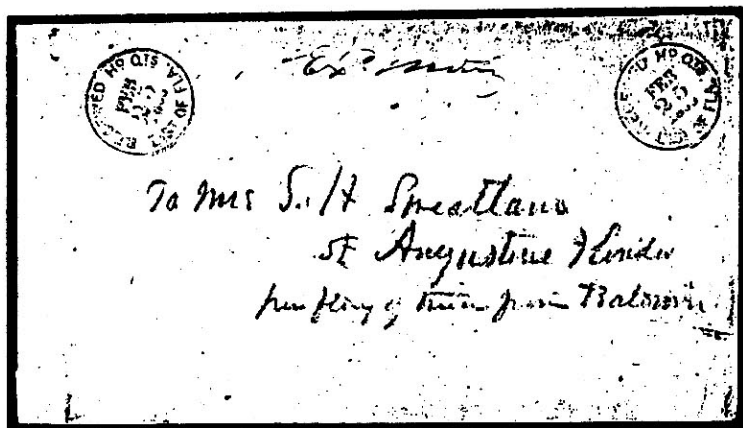
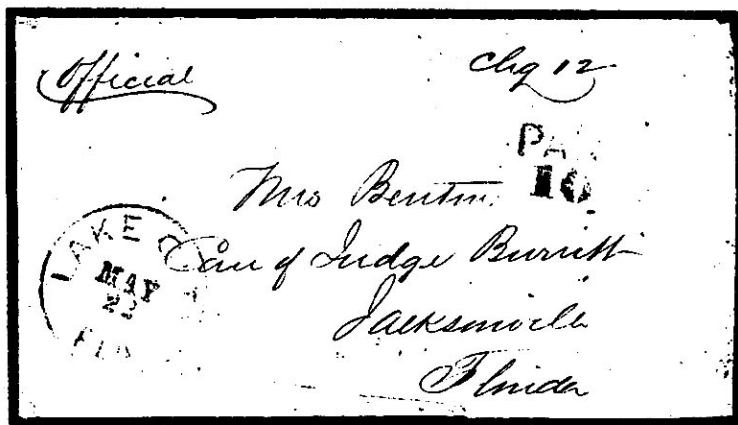
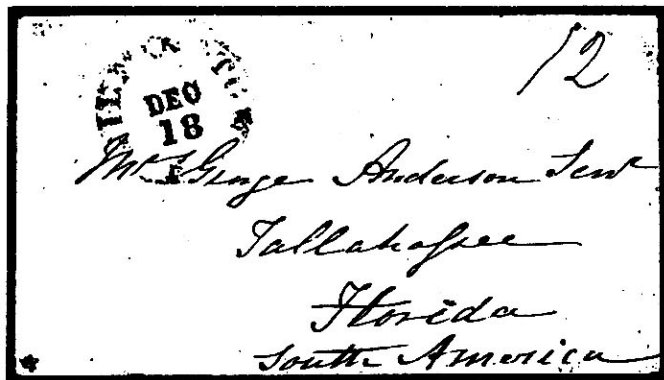
ans 19 March 1885

Mrs. P. M. Burroughs



Tallahassee  
Florida

America



## Theodore Light

The most populous county in Florida at the present time is Dade County, and few of its present inhabitants know the source of its name. Major Francis L. Dade, a hero of the Seminole War, with a company of 109 men were attacked by the Seminole Indians on December 28, 1835, while enroute from Fort Brooke (Tampa) to Fort King (Ocala). All were killed with one exception; a Private Ransom Clarke, who although left for dead, was able to make his way back to Fort Brooke and report on the incident.

A crude log fort was erected near the site of the massacre and named Fort Dade. It was located about 50 miles north-east of Fort Brooke and was a good stop-off place for the journey to Fort King. It remained in use for the duration of the war from 1836 to 1843. Near the end of the Seminole Wars and needing much repair and rebuilding, it was soon abandoned.

Tampa Bay as Tampa was originally called, had an excellent harbor, well protected and was ideally located for the receipt and shipment of the bulk of supplies needed in the field by the troops engaged in the war. Of the 136 forts established and maintained during the duration of the Seminole Wars, most were located in the northern half of the state.

Postally, none of these forts had established post offices and mail was handled by the nearest post office or by military courier. Post offices at Chattahoochee, Tallahassee, Tampa Bay, St. Augustine, and Savannah, Ga. are known to have handled Seminole War mail. The clue is in the dateline of the letter and many are very difficult to obtain and present a challenge for the postal historian.

After the war the site in Pasco County was established as a memorial park and is now called The Dade Battlefield. A town developed nearby and was named Fort Dade and on January 2, 1845 a post office was established, discontinued on October 1, 1851, and reestablished the following year. It was again discontinued on December 2, 1873, reestablished on July 20, 1876 and eventually changed to present day Dade City on April 15, 1889.

The story of the Fort Dade post office does not end with the name change to Dade City. In Hillsboro county an Egmont post office was established on Egmont Key in Tampa Bay on November 25, 1900. It was

changed to Fort Dade on August 19, 1910, and functioned until November 15, 1922, when it was discontinued and mail handled by the Tampa post office.

*Alvin*

Quater Masters Office  
Fort Brooke 5<sup>th</sup> Feb. 1838.

I have sent out by the  
teams the articles embraced on the inclosed  
invoice, when delivered to you, do  
me the favor to sign and return  
the inclosed receipt therefor. I  
think you had better keep them  
wagons, hauling between this and  
Fort Dade till you have a sufficient

Fort Brooke on Tampa Bay, principle port for supplies during Seminole War.  
Fort Dade about 50 miles N. E. of Fort Brooke.

the articles has this day been sent  
to Ensl Nelsons Head quarters  
Quater  
Very respectfully  
Yours probt. servt  
J. S. Grant  
2nd

Chas. E. W. Morgan  
A. S. M.  
Fort Dade

Over

Fig. 1 shows a letter without postal markings, evidently hand carried by military courier from the Quarter Masters Office at Fort Brooke, dated February 5, 1838. It was addressed to the officer in charge at Fort Dade to inform him of the twenty-two wagon loads of forage now

enroute to his post. The second page is shown as Fig. 2, and represents the inventory of supplies being sent.

The Twenty-two Wagons belonging to the Georgia Volunteers have been loaded with following Quantity of forage

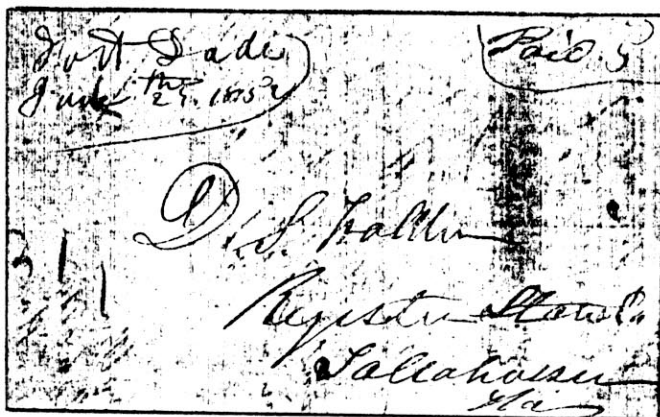
17 Bales	4496 Pounds of Hay
426 Sacks	852 Bushels of Oats
134 Sacks	297½ Bushels of Corn

Fort Brooks  
Feb 25 1862

All the Animals in the train have been foraged to include the 8th (that is the five Wagons in Charge of Wrecks)

FIG. 2 - Inventory of supplies.

A folded letter sheet from civilian Fort Dade, dated June 29, 1852, is shown in **Fig. 3**. The use of a manuscript postmark is the only form of postmark used for the duration of this office.



**FIG. 3 -**

Manuscript Postmark, June 29, 1852

Offer to buy land from the state at \$1.50 per acre.

Fort Dade, located near the present town of Dade City, was scene of the 1835 massacre of Major Dade and almost his entire command, who while enroute from Fort Brooke, near Tampa Bay, to Fort King, located near present day Ocala, were attacked by Seminole Indians.

Endorsed paid 5, this in error as rate was 3 for up to 3000 miles if prepaid.

Only 4 covers known.

ex Jarrett

## LETTERS TO " THE RICHEST MAN IN THE WORLD"

By Herbert P. McNeal

The letter, headed Live Oak (Florida), March 9th, 1869, begins:

"Mr. A.T. Stewart, Sir,

"Seeing in a recent paper your magnificent donation to President Grant and Gen. Sherman, in a moment of inspiration perhaps, I have taken up my pen to make application to you for a sum insignificant it may seem to one of your means, but vast to me when I consider the benefits that will accrue to me from your timely assistance".

"I stand alone in the world wrecked in fortune by the late war & have nothing left me but five hundred acres of land, which is now under execution. The sum I solicit, \$600.00 (six hundred dollars) would enable me to purchase this last remnant of their father's property for my children..."

Very respectfully, Your Obt Serv—

Mrs. L. D. W.

It is one of thousands of letters (many from Florida) sent to Alexander T. Stewart of New York City, reputed to be the richest man in the world. Perhaps he was.

The deluge of letters began shortly after the War Between the States, and continued for years. Letters from individuals, churches, and institutions of learning flooded in on Mr. Stewart.

Alexander Turney Stewart was born Oct. 12, 1803 in Lisburn, County Antrim, Ireland of Scotch Protestant parents in moderately comfortable circumstances.

After the death of his father (shortly after or before the birth of Alexander), he was placed in the care of his maternal grandfather. The boy is said to have been bright, orderly, and careful.

His grandfather placed him in an academy in Belfast, intending to prepare him for the ministry, but after his grandfather died, Alexander decided to visit America.

He reached New York about 1820, carrying letters of introduction to several prominent persons, and began to live a quiet and rather studious life.

He returned to Ireland to claim an inheritance, amounting to

about \$5,000, and had intended to invest it in Ireland. It is said that a friend urged him to go in business in New York instead, specifically advising him to import Irish lace.

Alexander knew little of business, but took the advice and invested some \$3,000 in Irish laces, returned to New York, and in the summer of 1823 opened a shop on lower Broadway in a room measuring about twelve by thirty feet. Soon he moved to a larger store, and then to a still larger.

From the first he showed a knack for observing the market and the fashions, plus an exactitude in method which was uncommon for the time.

During the depression of 1837, he bought at auction the stocks of many merchants who had failed, and made good profits on them.

In 1846 he built a marble-faced building at Broadway and Chambers Street for both wholesale and retail dry-goods, and in 1850 extended the building to Reade Street, making his the largest establishment in the city. His business soon outgrew the new quarters.

In 1862 he completed a new building of steel and stone, eight stories high, covering the entire block between Ninth and Tenth Streets, Broadway and Fourth Avenue, costing some \$2,750,000 and opened the largest retail store in the world.

His firm established offices in other U.S. cities, France, Germany, and the United Kingdom.

During the war he had large Army and Navy contracts, and his annual income averaged some \$2,000,000.

Shortly after the war, Stewart built a mansion on Fifth Avenue regarded as one of the finest in the United States, and there gave sumptuous receptions and dinners. Guests ran the gamut from diplomats and millionaires to struggling artists and musicians.

Stewart was described as a small, wiry, active man, with sharp features, keen blue eyes, and reddish-sandy hair, always carefully dressed.

President Grant appointed him Secretary of the Treasury in 1869, but he was prevented from taking office by the law which prohibited holding of the post by one engaged in business.

Stewart gave largely to charity, but was criticized for a low wage policy and strict dealings with employees.



Prior to the war, during the Irish famine of 1847, he sent a shipload of provisions to Ireland, and brought back a load of immigrants.

During the war, he gave \$100,000 to the U.S. Sanitary Commission. In 1871 he sent a shipload of flour to France after its war with Prussia, and in the same year donated \$50,000 to Chicago fire victims.

Perhaps his largest altruistic project was building the "model town" of Garden City, Long Island for persons of moderate means.

Not surprisingly, news of his largess spread far and wide, and he received thousands of "begging" letters from across the United States (and probably from foreign countries, although I have not seen an example).

Letters to Stewart from Florida are typical.

Mrs. R. V. P. wrote from Sandy Ford in 1869:

"I am very much in need of some money. I have in the town of Madison, Fla. a very pretty, two story house with seven rooms, kitchen, smoke house, two servants rooms, and lot and stables. There are seven acres of land attached, which could be built up.

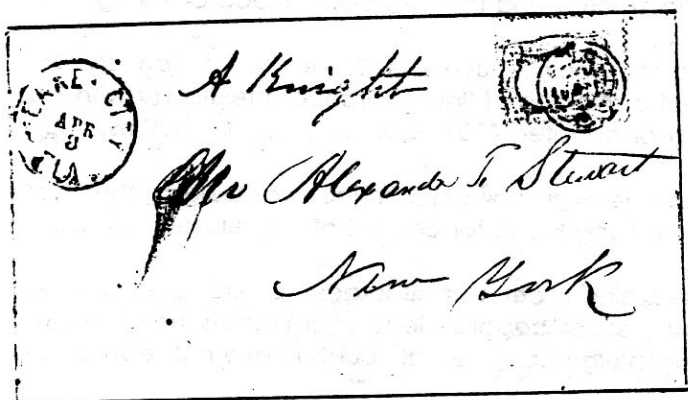
"Will you be so kind as to lend me three thousand (3,000) dollars, and take mortgage on the place, or I will sell you the house and lot for \$4,000, which I had much rather do..."

The flow of letters extended into the 1870s, and in 1874 Mrs. M. L. G. addressed Stewart from Lake City:

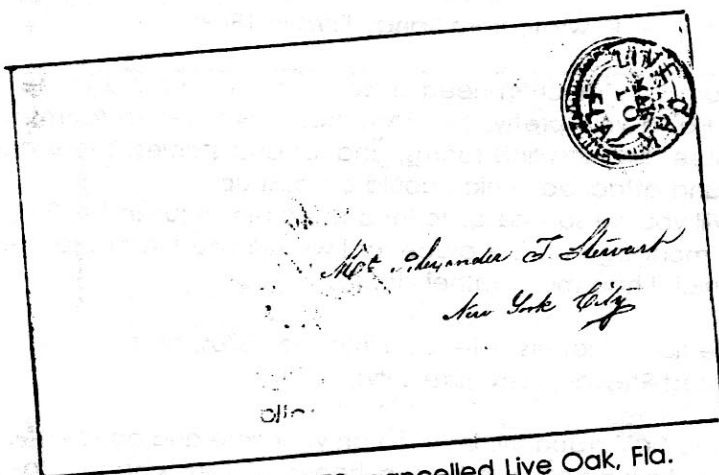
"Kind Sir, Pardon this intrusion on your time and notice of one who is unknown to yourself, but having heard of your kindness to those in distress and want encourages me to ask your assistance."

"I will not trespass upon your time and patience by telling the old story of woe, but simply write to ask your assistance—Anything you send will be gratefully received..."

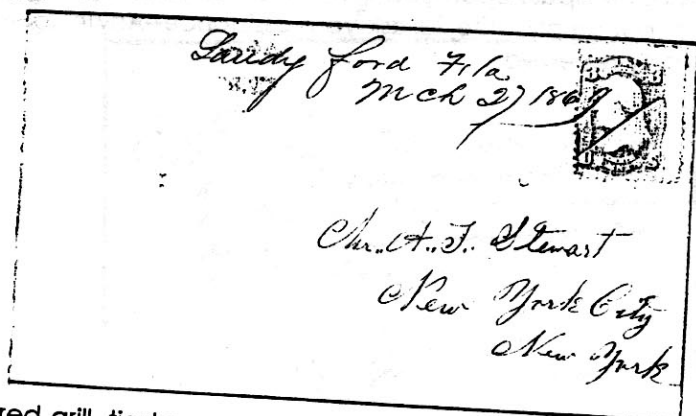
Florida covers addressed to A.T. Stewart.



3c 1861, #65, tied target, Lake City, Fla. cds



3c red entire, U58, cancelled Live Oak, Fla.



3c red grill, tied ms postmark of Sandy Ford, Fla., Mch 27, 1869

A.T. Stewart & Co.

**NEW YORK**  
 BOSTON ... Whittier Square  
 PHILADELPHIA ... Chestnut Street  
 PARIS ... Rue de la Harpe  
 LONDON ... Rue de la Harpe  
 MANCHESTER ... Market Street  
 NOTTINGHAM ... Great Market Street  
 BRISTOL ... Whitson Place  
 GLASGOW ... West Gate Street  
 DUBLIN ... The Exchange

New York, November 11, 1871.

Mr. W. S. Pritchard,  
 Des Moines, Iowa.

Dear Sir,

We are in receipt of your favor of 8<sup>th</sup>,  
 contents noted. We filled your order, and sent the  
 goods forward yesterday by N.Y. Express. We  
 have sent you 19 yards of black Alpaca of the  
 best value and lustre we have. Enclosed please  
 find receipted bill for \$25.00.

Yours Truly,

A.T. Stewart & Co.

Mod.

The letterhead of A.T. Stewart & Co. in 1871 shows offices located in Boston, Philadelphia, France, England, Scotland, and Germany.

RETAIL DEPARTMENT.

New York, Nov 13<sup>th</sup> 1871.

Mr. W. S. Pritchard  
 Des Moines Iowa  
 Bought of ALEX. T. STEWART & CO.

BROADWAY, NINTH AND TENTH STREETS, FOR CASH ONLY.

All correspondence relating to the business of the House, to secure prompt attention, should be directed to the firm, and sent by mail.

19 Yds	Alpaca	60	11	40
16 "	Silk	185	11	10
14 1/4 "	Fs. Muslin	17	2	50
				\$ 25 00

Wm. Stewart

A bill for goods sold by A.T. Stewart & Co. in 1871.

## POSTMASTER COMPENSATION IN FLORIDA, 1821-1859

Niles Schuh

The compensation that postmasters received in the performance of their duties is of interest to postal historians for several reasons. It is a measure of a post office's activity and therefore the size of the community being served. Increases or decreases in compensation reflect changes in community size and importance. Compensation above or below certain levels indicate which post offices receive their postmarking devices from the Post Office Department and, if so, what material they were made of, and, therefore, their wear out rate. And, as will be explained, the source of this compensation data includes other information of interest.

The State Library in Tallahassee holds the **Register of all Officers and Agents, Civil, Military, and Naval, in the Service of the United States** for every other year from 1821 through 1859, with the exception of 1853, which is missing. Other years are available but the author is concerned only with the stampless period of Florida postal history in this article. The **Register** contains much useful information on Federal activities. Data such as names and birth places of office holders and employees and their compensation, Army officers and their regiments, and a list of Navy ships and their status are included.

As might be expected in a country that was expanding and whose population was growing rapidly, the data in the **Register** also grew rapidly and therefore the manner in which it was organized changed through the years. From 1821 through 1833 the listing of post offices in the **Register** is alphabetical for the whole country with no separation into states and territories. Starting in 1835 the offices are listed by state and territory and are thus much easier to study. Starting in 1841 the net proceeds of each office, in addition to the postmaster's compensation, is listed. The writer has prepared several lists or tables gleaned from the data for the years of interest and they are presented here.

Rather than try to list all the **Register's** Florida post offices in this short article, the writer arbitrarily chose to make a list of all Florida post offices whose postmasters received \$200 or more in compensation in 1851. The figures for just those offices are listed as they appeared over the years starting in 1821. Therefore the following are NOT complete lists of offices to be found in the **Registers**.

Annual Compensation Paid to Postmasters  
at Selected Florida Post Offices, 1821-1833

1821	Pensacola	—	St. Augustine	—
1823	Pensacola	\$335.88	St. Augustine	\$310.09
1825	Pensacola	248.72	St. Augustine	220.05
	Tallahassee	—		
1827	Pensacola	528.91	St. Augustine	308.03
	Tallahassee	306.13	Jacksonville	43.57
	Quincy	36.32	Palatka (sic)	0.58
1829	Pensacola	597.31	St. Augustine	352.29
	Tallahassee	521.70	Jacksonville	97.67
	Quincy	128.35	(no Palatka listed)	
	Apalachicola	—	Key West	—
	Marianna	38.63	Monticello	23.46
1831	Pensacola	651.98	St. Augustine	485.53
	Tallahassee	565.15	Jacksonville	92.45
	Quincy	153.16	(no Palatka listed)	
	(no Apalachicola listed)		Key West	50.59
	Marianna	126.93	Monticello	100.37
1833	Pensacola	608.19	St. Augustine	361.73
	Tallahassee	718.16	Jacksonville	124.26
	Quincy	242.02	(no Palatka listed)	
	Apalachicola	66.08	Key West	147.71
	Marianna	139.40	Monticello	94.80
	Tampa Bay	19.06		

Note on above listing:

The **Register** also includes the name of the postmaster for each of the offices listed. In some cases there are two postmasters listed, with the compensation paid to each.

In some cases no dollar figure is given for a town, even though a postmaster is listed. According to the **Chronology of Florida Post Offices**, those post office were established shortly before the date of the listing. The **Chronology** also indicates that the Palatka (or Pilatka) office was shut down during the years it is not listed.

As already explained, this is NOT a complete list of current post offices. For example, the 1829 list includes Magnolia at \$52.87 and Rocky Comfort at \$40.17. The 1831 list includes Wanton at \$15.23 and Micco Town at \$0.26.

The 1821-1833 **Registers** also list the Postmaster General and his assistants, clerks and messengers, and their places of birth and compensation. Post office contractors names and compensation are also listed.

ANNUAL COMPENSATION PAID TO POSTMASTERS  
AT SELECTED POST OFFICES, 1835-1859

	Apala	Jax	Key W	Pensa	St. A	Talla	Tampa
1835	345	115	202	733	370	808	42
1837	713	152	204	1196	579	1279	223
1839	1406	280	191	1081	765	1547	231
1841	962	246	235	797	646	1478	181
1843	1754	—	—	1414	1131	2394	398
1845	1002	354	283	874	716	871	105
1847	822	301	219	1060	537	779	107
1849	856	297	346	955	444	856	227
1851	1026	606	587	922	496	833	425
1853	(This volume missing from State Library)						
1855	704	898	460	561	449	912	363
1857	617	936	573	546	426	974	472
1859	684	901	666	917	492	1245	359

Notes on above table:

All dollar figures in this and the next table have been rounded off to the nearest dollar. The blanks in 1843 for Jacksonville and Key West are not explained.

The 1859 **Register**, for example, also lists under General Post Office,

- \* Special Agents - Name, Where Employed, When Born, Whence Appointed, and Compensation. (By state only, no towns listed)
- \* Route Agents - ditto above data (only one agent listed in Florida)
- \* Clerks in Post Offices - Post Office, Name, When Employed (MDY), Compensation.
- \* Mail Contractors - Route Number, Contractor, Contract Pay, Additional, Total.
- \* Mail Messengers and Special Mail Service are also listed.

ANNUAL TOTAL RETURNS  
FOR SELECTED POST OFFICES, 1841-1859

		Apala	Jax	Key W	Pensa	St. A	Talla
1841	Comp (\$)	962	246	235	797	646	1478
	Net (\$)	2745	592	494	2137	1543	4239
	Total (\$)	3707	838	729	2934	2189	5717
1843		1754	—	—	1414	1131	2394
		5050	—	—	3611	2636	6963
		6804			5025	3767	9357
1845		1002	354	283	874	716	871
		2853	675	623	2342	1460	2543
		3855	1029	906	3216	2176	3414
1847		822	301	219	1060	537	779
		1377	463	286	2587	495	1401
		2199	764	505	3647	1032	2180
1849		856	297	346	955	444	856
		1477	438	445	1521	561	1518
		2333	735	791	2476	1005	2374
1851		1026	606	587	922	496	833
		1755	954	914	1467	785	1430
		2781	1560	1501	2389	1281	2263
1853	(This volume missing from State Library)						
1855		704	898	460	561	449	912
		716	988	309	497	395	1071
		1420	1886	769	1058	844	1983
1857		617	936	573	546	426	974
		691	1019	790	353	320	1057
		1308	1955	1363	899	746	2031
1859		684	901	666	917	492	1245
		749	1121	881	853	346	1188
		1433	2022	1547	1770	838	2433

Notes on above table:

For the period 1841-1859 the **Register** included the net return to the Department, in addition to the postmaster's compensation, for each office

listed. For this table the writer has added the two figures to give total income for each of the six largest and most important offices of the period.

The largest office in the Territory/State at this time was usually Tallahassee, with Apalachicola and Pensacola taking the lead for two years each. Jacksonville and Key West were catching up rapidly during these years.

## POSTMASTER COMPENSATION

Postmasters of the time were compensated for their efforts by being paid a commission based on the postage they collected. A complex formula based on the amount of postage collected, what part was for letter mail and what part for newspapers, etc., and "extras" such as whether they had to stay open at night to receive mail, determined their pay.

For example, from 1825 to 1841 postmasters received 30% of the first \$100 of letter postage per quarter, 25% of that from \$100 to \$400, 20% from \$400 to \$2400, and 8% above \$2400. They received 50% of postage for newspapers, magazines and pamphlets. If they had to be open at night they got 50% of the first \$100 instead of 30%.

Periodic drastic reductions in postal rates starting in 1845 caused a problem with this commission system. Reduction in rates resulted first in a sharp reduction in income, but then, as the public began writing more at the cheaper rates, the income rose significantly. Approximately one third of the postmasters quit before commissions were finally adjusted to an acceptable level.

Gross postage received at each post office was also important to the smaller offices because it determined the amount and type of supplies the postmasters were provided at government expense. In 1832, if you collected less than \$100 per quarter, you had to either pay for your own handstamp townmark or use an ink pen and manually write the name of your office and the rate charged. The minimum gross postage necessary to receive Department handstamps changed over the years. In 1852 it was \$300 per year to receive a metal handstamp and \$200 per year for a wooden one. In 1855 a further distinction of steel, iron or wood was initiated. Such items as balances, paper and twine were also supplied later, depending on receipts.

## INTERPRETATION OF DATA

Total gross receipts for post offices before 1841 cannot be gotten



from the **Register** data. The method for calculating the postmaster's compensation is a function of so many variables, those discussed above and also the social and business makeup of the town, that one cannot use fixed percentages to calculate the total from the compensation. Looking at the years starting in 1841, the compensation as a percentage of the total varies from 26% to 61%. Percentages are more consistent for any given year but are not the same for each office. In general, the percentages are higher for the smaller offices. They also become higher after each rate change, reflecting attempts to keep postmasters from quitting because of drops in compensation.

Because of all the variables involved, the data presented is not very useful for comparing towns with each other from year to year. For any one given year the data does reflect the amount of activity in each town and comparisons can be made.

Postmaster's names from the **Registers** can be useful although the exact dates for their terms are not given. Because the names are printed in the **Register** they may be used to check the spelling against names obtained from manuscript records. However, the writer noticed that these names in the **Register** are not always correct. In at least one case the same name was spelled differently from one issue to the next.

## VISIT

### STAMPOREE '94

EXHIBIT - BOURSE

JUPITER BEACH RESORT

FIVE NORTH A1A

JUPITER, FL

MAY 13-15, 1994

FLORIDA POSTAL HISTORY SOCIETY MEETING  
11:00 AM - MAY 13TH

CONFEDERATE STAMP ALLIANCE MEETING

POSTAL HISTORY AUCTION - 1:00 PM - MAY 14TH

## EARLY NORTHEAST FLORIDA POSTAL HISTORY

Donald G. Thompson

A combination of Native Americans, Spanish, French and British shaped most of early Florida history, however, Postal history seems to be lacking before 1763. This date coincides with the temporary exit of Spain, as they ceded Florida to Great Britain in exchange for Havana, which the British had captured in 1762.

By proclamation on October 7, 1763, George III, together with other changes in North America, established an East and West Florida, stating further: "That the several Nations or Tribes of Indians...should not be molested or disturbed in the possession of such Parts of our Dominion and Territories as, not having been ceded to, or purchased by Us are reserved to them...as their hunting grounds", thus making certain the Seminole Wars in the future and litigation which continues to the present.

The first recorded letters are from Pensacola (West Florida) and one in 1764 describes an indolent occupation by the Spaniards, with little development, the area being used primarily as a source for ship masts and other building materials and also a place of banishment for felons.

This discussion will concentrate on the northeastern part of East Florida, presently Duval and Nassau Counties, this area being shown in **Figure 1**.

The first recorded letter from this area is datelined St. Augustine, 20th April 1767 during the British Colonial Period (**Fig 2**), and it is a folded letter with a manuscript Sh 6 (4d + 2d ship free) and PHILA/DELPHIA receiving handstamp on the reverse which was then sent to Charleston with manuscript Chas. Town Ship 2 d. Sterl. postmark and rate for delivery in what is now spelled Norfolk, Virginia, (then Northfolk). This cover documents the difficulty in postal routing of the time and represents one of the few British period covers extant. It is the earliest known postally used Florida cover and the American Stampless Cover Catalog Chas.Town Ship listing.

There is another early letter Datelined St. Augustine Sept. 14, 1770, no postal markings, which describes a "very disagreeable part of the world". Many of the surviving letters from this period bear no postal markings, most of them being hand carried by land or given to a ship captain who dropped them into the U.S. mails, quite often Charleston or Philadelphia. At this point there were no post offices in East Florida.



Le B 6

2<sup>nd</sup> Seal.

Messrs Neil Jameson & Co  
Church in Northfolky  
Virginia

1667.2.24

PHILA  
DELPHIA

5.16.6  
10.5  
1.14.6

7200.92  
70.6.6  
402.3.22

This letter (**Figure 3**) is datelined Mt. Oswald Plantation 11 July 1773 (40 miles southwest of St. Augustine) and it carries a two-line Charles Town handstamp with accompanying bishop mark. As with others of this time, it may well have been carried there by Mackenfuss, an employee of the Colonial Post Office who rode monthly between St. Augustine and Charleston. Contrary to the Spanish who looked upon the area as a supply point for the ships, with fortifications to protect same, the British colonized and developed extensive plantations throughout which specialized in indigo, cotton, and all manner of other crops, as well as harvesting lumber. East Florida remained loyal to Great Britain during the American Revolution and proved to be a haven for Loyalists fleeing from the North. Another letter datelined April 12, 1774 at Cowper (on the Timoka estate) bears the two-line Charles Town postmark as well as "Inland and Packet Postage" with 4 N postage, 3 N being corrected.

A 21 September 1774 letter (**Figure 4**) perhaps bears the first actual East Florida postmark: "St. Augustine" in faint but legible manuscript and "To Pay IN", addressed to London, it also has the two-line Charles Town handstamp, bishop mark, and "Inld. & Pact/Postage", also in two lines.

Spain sided with the Americans, and with war breaking out, the Spanish recaptured Pensacola. Also at this time the United Colonies plotted and conducted various forays into the area below the St. Mary's river culminating in a battle at Alligator Bridge. In spite of strong disagreement by Continental General Robert Howe and because of the divided command between him and the Georgia Militia, the Patriot army was soundly beaten by the British, thus temporarily ending the Patriot's aspirations toward East Florida together with any legal claim they might have had. The Treaty of Paris in 1783 ceded Florida back to Spain, causing many of the Loyalists to flee to the West Indies rather than accept an offer of Spanish citizenship.

The Spanish government was weak and could only try to control with words and declarations of intent, and the result was a steady increase in self-serving interests and schemes, particularly from north of the St. Mary's, many clearly illegal. President Jefferson's 1807 embargo against further importation of slaves produced a surge in shipping on Amelia Island at its fine deep water port of Fernandina. The easy access to the Georgia side of the St. Mary's river made the smuggling of slaves and goods comparatively easy and added to the activity of this thriving port.

The following quotation from another letter, this from a Charleston ship owner addressed to his agent on Amelia Island, is appropriate to the times: "I'm sorry I cannot yet order you into this port (i.e. Charleston) as the nonimportation act being still in force". It is dated December 2, 1811 and is historically interesting being addressed to Amelia Island and is also

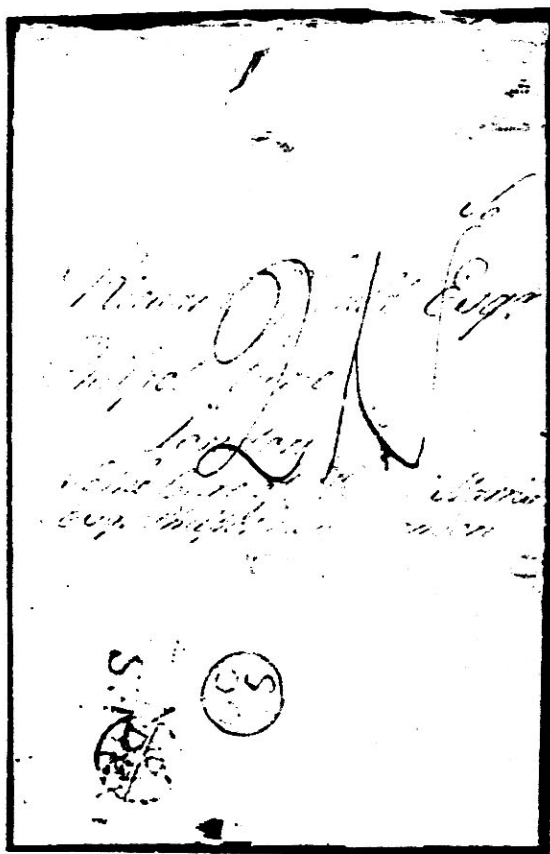


FIG. 3

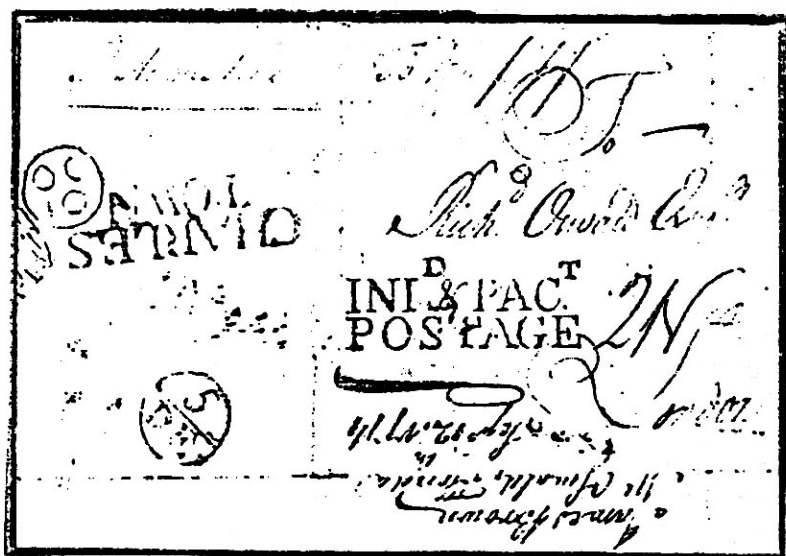


FIG. 4

very early. It carries a circular Charln. handstamp and a 17c rate presumably to the transfer point at St. Mary's Ga. The letter is a prelude to the Embargo Act imposed against British goods which was due to continuing provocations against this new country and which in part led to the War of 1812.

This newly found cover (**Figure 5**) is datelined Amelia, Christmas day 1811 and bears a St. Mary's, Georgia postmark. It was addressed to Philadelphia with a 25c rate and then forwarded back down to Charleston with an additional 25c due. The writer is apparently a local agent who says there are plenty of ships there but that the ship in question (the "Franklin") "might get a freight from this place to H.M.'s dock yards with a cargo of timber", thus showing the thriving Florida trade at Amelia Island. There is another letter with a Charleston CDS dated Dec. 27, 1811 addressed to Amelia Island which contains owners instructions to the captain of their ship.

**Figure 6** shows a hand carried letter again from an owner to a ship captain, presumably in the same area and again illustrates the embargo situation. It is datelined New York 4 April 1812: "An embargo is certainly laid at Washington, we expect it here tomorrow morning...I will therefore recommend your going to Amelia...but you must take care to keep out of the waters of the United States".

At this time agitation as far as the top level of the American government developed toward taking Florida, particularly as it was settled principally by Americans and since the political, social, and economic situation at Amelia was almost chaotic due to the lack of a firm Spanish hand in government. In January 1811, Congress secretly authorized President Monroe to acquire the area by negotiation or by force, the latter to be employed only if requested by the Spanish owners or if threatened by another country. The President's agent in the matter was retired Gen. John Mathews who hoped to raise a small army of volunteers above the border, joined by army or militia troops, all to be augmented by residents below the border at St. Mary's. His recruiting was largely unsuccessful but on March 13, 1812 his small group, 80 or so Georgians and Floridians, invaded Florida from Georgia and called on the local inhabitants to join them, thus starting the Patriots Rebellion. (**Figure 7**) In June, the Spanish Governor not only refused to negotiate but ordered the American troops under Lt. Col. Thomas Smith to leave and to cease his "vexations". Then in a letter August 8 postmarked Savan. Ga. Congressman Troup explains to Col. Smith why a Major Laval has been released in spite of being arrested for insubordination. A French patriot in the mold of Lafayette, Laval came over to help the patriot cause in the Revolution and was appalled by this brazen attempt at a land grab by what he considered avaricious people. He refused to release any of his men or supplies since he had no orders from on high to do so and since





  
 Capt Wm Conners  
 Ship Symmetry  
 from Portsmouth  
 to the West Indies  
 and the East India

FIG. 5


  
 Capt Thomas J. Morton  
 Ship Symmetry  
 from Portsmouth

FIG. 6

M<sup>r</sup> Sec<sup>r</sup> D<sup>r</sup> J. A. Smith, Ten<sup>te</sup> Com<sup>te</sup>  
 et Major<sup>te</sup> a Dublin et les Six<sup>tes</sup> de  
 l'Inde, y com<sup>te</sup> et les Six<sup>tes</sup> de l'Inde  
 des et les Six<sup>tes</sup> de l'Inde  
 et l'Inde et les Six<sup>tes</sup> de l'Inde  
 et l'Inde et les Six<sup>tes</sup> de l'Inde  
 et l'Inde et les Six<sup>tes</sup> de l'Inde

FIG. 7



there was no request from the Spanish for help. General Mathews could produce no such orders since nothing came from the President and he was acting only by default (hearing nothing to the contrary he presumed that he was acting in accordance with the President's wishes as initially stated).

**Figure 8** is of a cover postmarked Augusta, August 20, 1812 and addressed to Lt. Col. Smith "near Augustine" . Because Col. Smith has been placed under command of the Governor of Georgia (!), Gen. Flournoy can offer help only should it become necessary, and he expresses fear of Lt. Smith's "peril". Thus we see the beginning of the collapse of the fiasco, taking also into account the adamant refusal of Major Laval to help.

In the meantime, one John Houstoun McIntosh had been a resident on the St. Mary's Florida side and had been thrown into jail by the Spanish, for a year, first at St. Augustine and later at Morrow Castle prison in Cuba; so he had a hatred of the Spanish as well as an appetite for more land. He had undoubtedly been agitating for secession of Florida from Spain. McIntosh joined the Patriots and got himself elected "Director" of the Territory of East Florida in July 1812, and fully expected strong support from the U.S. government. On August 1812 in a hand carried letter, he set up an attack on St. Augustine, which was to fail due to the poor execution of his complicated plan and also opposition by the Indians who had been stirred up by the Spanish. An ensuing letter August 27, 1812 from McIntosh to Col. Smith shows a chaotic situation with undisciplined troops and hopes of raising his own militia. (Incidentally, McIntosh paid for his own militia @ \$10 per month for each man out of his own pocket, so desperate was his need, and he expected to be reimbursed by the government. This action finally bankrupted him, since he never was reimbursed). On September 6, 1812 there is another letter, hand carried, this from Daniel Newman, commanding the Georgia volunteers at New Switzerland written to Col. Smith decrying the poor state of his troops and doubting whether he could raise 100 able men.

A letter postmarked Augusta Sept. 14, 1812 (**Figure 9**), Manuscript "Public Service" but rated 17c, Flournoy to Col. Smith August 14, 1812 orders some reinforcements for him, recognizing his alarming situation due to the Indian uprising. The Indians were really the only effective allies and source of strength which the Spanish had and they were easily stirred up against the settlers and invaders. This letter (**Figure 10**) from David Ewing to his brother in Philadelphia, dateline and manuscript postmark Robertville Black Swamp S.C. November 3, 1812 describes his incarceration for 5 months at St. Augustine under wretched conditions as a POW of the Spanish. He complains of a lack of support promised from the United States and explains his anonymous release after passing Masonic tokens to the Catholic Spanish Governor.

Public Service  
 74  
 Lieut. Col. Smith,  
 near  
Augustine.

FIG. 8

Public Service  
 74  
 Lieut. Col. Smith  
 near  
 St. Mary's  
 Piqua

FIG. 9

Noted  
 25  
 & Messrs. Ewing Esq.  
 Attorney at Law  
Philadelphia

FIG. 10

A November 3, 1812 letter shows St. Mary's Georgia as the transit point, typical of the correspondence to and from East Florida, as St. Mary's is only 8 miles from the Fernandina area. It bears a Charleston S.C. circular postmark, Nov. 4, 1812, a 34c rate has been corrected to 25c.

Lack of support was soon explained when the President and Congress had second thoughts, culminating with the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Florida on May 6, 1813, a dishonorable act which left the Patriots high and dry. This, after the United States government actively fomented the rebellion in the first place! On September 13, 1813 in a hand carried letter to the Collector of Customs at St. Mares, McIntosh complains bitterly about duty imposed by the U.S. on his Florida cotton "while the United States held possession of East Florida". He further states that he has been ruined by this very government which he has supported.

The cover in **Figure 11** bears a St. Mary's manuscript October 18, 1813 postmark and is datelined Anastia Island, a barrier island below St. Augustine. A wife left behind while her husband is fighting complains about being wiped out by the war, her poor health, and the safety of her children. **Figure 12** is of a letter datelined Amelia Island and postmarked with a Richmond Aug. 29, 1814 circle and written by an American ship officer captured by the British, imprisoned, and apparently released or escaped, for he is again seeking further employment as a mate. He speaks of rumors of peace and asks that correspondence be directed to St. Mary's Georgia "from which I can easily get it since Capt. Dahl will go there at least once a week". This letter (**Figure 13**) was hand carried but is an early nonmilitary cover addressed to Fernandina itself. It confirms that a peace has been brought about in the War of 1812.

McIntosh, now in financial ruin, had abandoned his political efforts and had gone to join up with General Jackson. With another political vacuum present, in stepped Sir Gregor MacGregor, a Scottish adventurer and mercenary who came up from South America with the idea of taking over Florida and selling it to the United States or Great Britain. He obtained supplies and recruits in the North and with threats and much fanfare, bluffed the Spanish out of Fernandina on June 29, 1817. He declared Florida a country and set up a government complete with a flag called the Green Cross of Florida. But his financial support failed and he left after only three months.

The last chapter before U.S. possession started when the pirate and thug Louis Aury arrived from Vera Cruz, Mexico, from whence he had been driven out. He proceeded to claim Amelia Island in the name of Mexico, which was a subterfuge of legitimacy to permit him and his cutthroats to open Amelia and the deep port of Fernandina to fellow pirates and therefore to the slave and other smuggling trade.

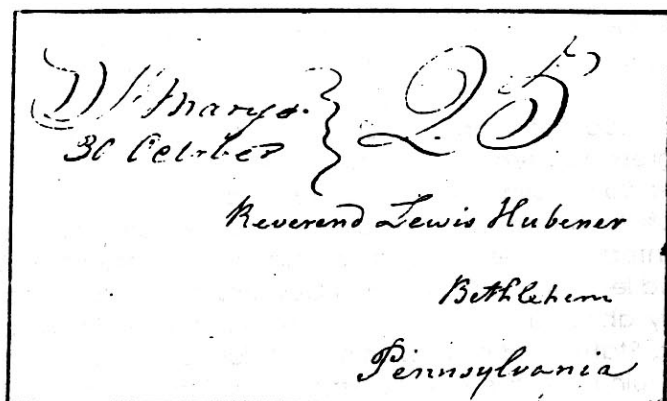


FIG. 11

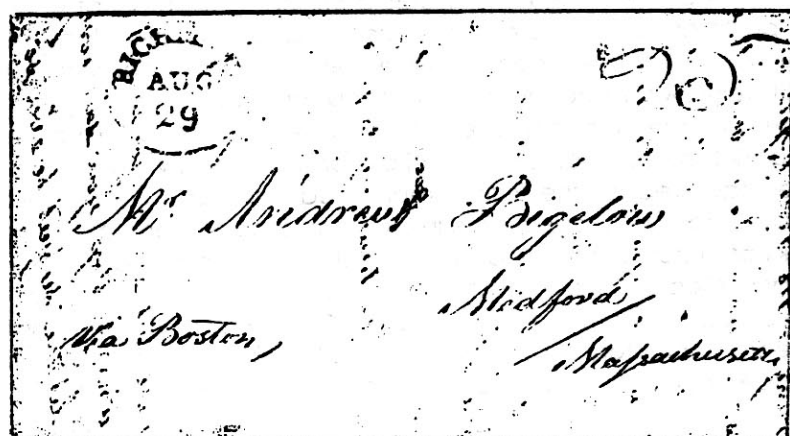


FIG. 12

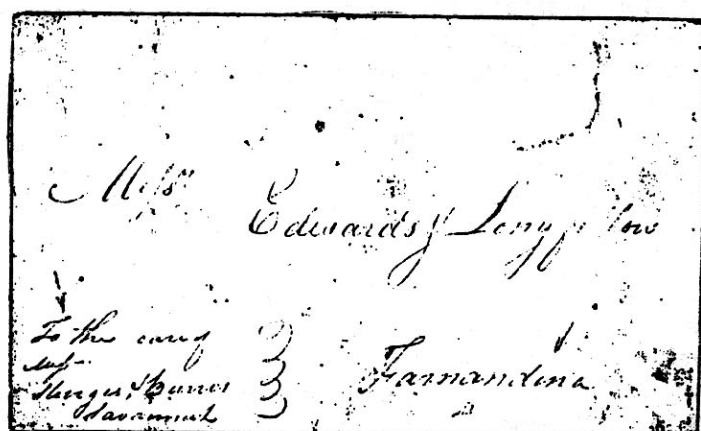


FIG. 13

For the United States, this was finally enough. John Quincy Adams, now Secretary of State, felt that if the Spanish could not govern the area, the United States must step in, which was indeed done. General Andrew Jackson was sent in to take Pensacola and then move East across Florida, a move which brought about almost universal criticism (at least formally) to Adams and Jackson. The U.S. Navy was dispatched, and we have a fascinating set of letters from Commodore J.D. Henly aboard the powerful U.S. Ship John Adams to Commodore John Rodgers in Washington. Although the others were hand carried, one bears a St. Mary's January 8, 1818 manuscript postmark with a Free designation (**Figure 14** - letters from a recent find were treated at length in the June 1993 issue of the F.P.H.J.). Henly reports on the condition of his ship, capturing a British slave smuggling ship, and of an unsatisfactory correspondence with the pirate Aury. After many excuses and procrastination by Aury, Commodore Henly ends the correspondence with a very strong letter and threat to him. Aury soon left and the U.S. finally took over Amelia Island permanently in December of 1817.

Postmarked Feb. 14, 1818 at St. Mary's, Midshipman Thornly of the U.S. ship John Adams writes to his uncle from Fernandina and speaks of an odd assortment of residents, capturing two slave ships, produce, and excellent lumber from Georgia. A February 25, 1819 hand carried letter from a Harry W. Hunt in Fernandina to H.P. Doring confirms the occupation by the United States. Hunt appears to be a malcontent as he is complimentary about Aury and his officers but about a message from President Monroe, he writes as follows: "for that message as it respects this place is a complete tissue of falsehoods and misrepresentations instigated by a low time serving policy to get possession here, unworthy of the President of a great and free people." He may just be right.

A cover dated April 29, 1818 bears a Mille G. (Milledgeville Georgia) circle with Manuscript Free (addressed to the Paymaster General). It reports on General Jackson and his actions in the first Seminole War and it mentions the Englishman Arbuthnot who, with Ambrister, were executed for stirring up the Indians and helping to start this war. (General Jackson was at the least heavy handed and at the worst acting completely illegally, causing an international incident with the British).

**(Figure 15):** This manuscript letter, postmarked St. Mary's and datelined Fernandina Dec. 26, 1818 from Gen. Gaines acknowledges receipt of \$18,000 in drafts for payroll use. We thus see the extent of the U.S. involvement in East Florida, at this time still a possession of Spain. Next is a May 23, 1819 letter with a St. Mary's manuscript postmark May 23, Free since it is addressed to the Commissary General in Washington. It details a series of complaints from Lt. Col. Clinch who was later to be heavily involved in the Seminole Wars and rose to the rank of General. Afterwards

Thompson  
Jan 3 &

Jan

Commodore John Rodgers

Washington City

D. C.

FIG. 14

Thompson  
Jan 26 &

Jan 26

Reagan, Barry, Esquire

Editor U. S.

mail.

Savannah Ga

FIG. 15

Gen. Johnson, Ga  
Feb 1, 1890

Jan 26

Jan 26

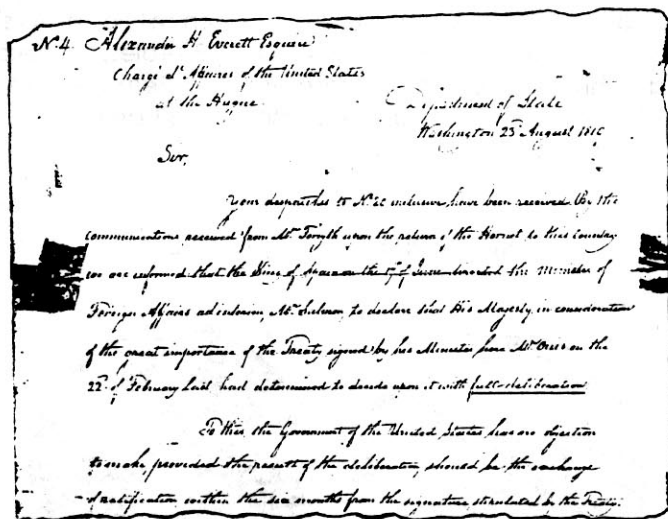
Col. Nathan Johnson

By mail from

Washington City

FIG. 16

Ft. Clinch on Amelia Island was named for him. Then there is a cover (Figure 16) dated October 15, 1820 bearing a Fort Harrison, Ga. postmark but is datelined at Fort Gadsden E. Florida, still in Spanish territory. Major Fanning complains of being underpaid: "My station in a foreign territory is one of the most important...at the same time most unhealthy and disagreeable". Talk about an undeclared war!



(Figure 17): The last letter is on August 23, 1819 from John Quincy Adams, as Secretary of State, giving instructions to Alexander Everett, Charge D'Affaires at the Hague and urging Spain to ratify the February 22, 1819 Treaty of Adams-Onís, since King Ferdinand had been procrastinating. Adams said that otherwise "it will remain for the United States to assert their rights in another form". These negotiations dragged on until February 22, 1821 when the Treaty was finally ratified, thus beginning formally the United States' authority over Florida and ending a very sordid chapter in its history.

The writer would emphasize that this presentation is about postal history, held together with a thread of political history. Further philatelic material is always being turned up and it should be added to this ongoing project; so your comments, suggestions, and additions are most welcome. Letters outside of archives on Gen. John Mathews and his untenable position would be particularly interesting.

Thanks are sincerely given to (in alphabetical order): Amelia Island Museum of History, Deane Briggs, Duke University Library, Richard Frajola, Wilfred Haworth, Gordon McHenry, Herbert McNeal, "The Philatelist" (APS), David G. Phillips, and the P.K. Yonge Library of Florida History at Gainesville. Also some of the references are from the authors collection.

David G. Phillips

Territorial Florida, in common with the rest of the country, suffered a chronic shortage of "specie" (small coins of copper, silver or gold). The bulk of circulating coinage consisted of Spanish milled "dollars", known as "pillar dollars" or "pieces of eight", valued at 8 reales, minted at Mexico City, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Guatemala and Peru between 1732 and 1772 they circulated the world over, and are still being recovered from sunken wrecks of Spanish treasure ships.

## THE SPANISH MILLED DOLLAR

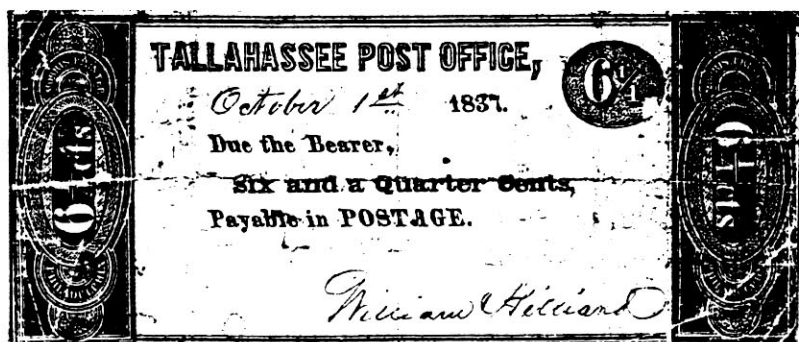


Chopped to Bits

The common practice of chopping these coins into small pieces for making change introduced the vernacular term "bit" into American usage. Thus one half dollar (50 cents)= 4 reales or 4 "bits"; 1/4 dollar (25 cents)= 2 reales or 2 "bits". Chopping the coins into still smaller segments provided a means of paying the awkward early postal and express company rates calling for such payments as 6-1/4 cents, 12-1/2 cents, and 18-3/4 cents.

In times of economic difficulty, such as the panic of 1837, specie, always scarce, disappeared completely from circulation, and there was a proliferation of substitutes in the form of paper money and other promises to pay put out by such diverse issuers as general stores, cities and towns, manufacturing companies, schools, banks, turnpikes, and railroads, and in at least one instance a post office.





Between 1837 and 1839 the post office at Tallahassee issued scrip, quite similar in appearance to paper money, in the denominations of 6-1/4 cents, 12-1/2 cents, 25 cents, 50 cents, and 75 cents. Inscribed "Payable in Postage", or "Payable in Postage or Current Bank Notes". The notes were signed by Tallahassee postmaster William Hilliard. Some notes are quite elaborate in make up and bear the imprint "New England Bank Note Co., Boston", while a plain 6-1/4 cents note dated 1837 has the imprint of "Morris Printer/Philadelphia" worked into the design.





Since postmaster Hilliard was unable to make change with specie, patrons of the Tallahassee post office were obliged to settle for scrip. However, when Hilliard settled his accounts with the Post Office Department in Washington, his locally issued scrip would not do. Postmaster General Amos Kendall had made it clear that financial panic or not, all postmasters would be required to settle their accounts with Washington in hard money, specie only, no paper scrip or IOUs permitted.

Surviving examples of Tallahassee post office scrip are scarce and command prices from collectors which would amaze William Hilliard. They also form an interesting footnote to Florida Postal History.

FLORIDA POSTAL HISTORY SOCIETY

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

The Florida Postal History Society  
William J. Bomar, Sec-Treas.  
P.O. Box 560065  
Dixie Village Station  
Orlando, FL 32856

I hereby apply for membership in the Florida Postal History Society and enclose \$\_\_\_\_\_ for annual dues including subscription to The Journal of Florida Postal History. I agree to abide by the policies and by-laws of the Society, and understand that said membership may be terminated by the Society in accordance with the by-laws.

Date:\_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Please print or type:

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

Collecting Interests \_\_\_\_\_

Membership in other philatelic societies (indicate membership #)

Local Stamp Club \_\_\_\_\_

APS \_\_\_\_\_ Others \_\_\_\_\_

DUES \$10.00 per year (Contributing member, \$20.00) Charter  
Membership will be denoted on memberships prior to Dec. 31, 1993.