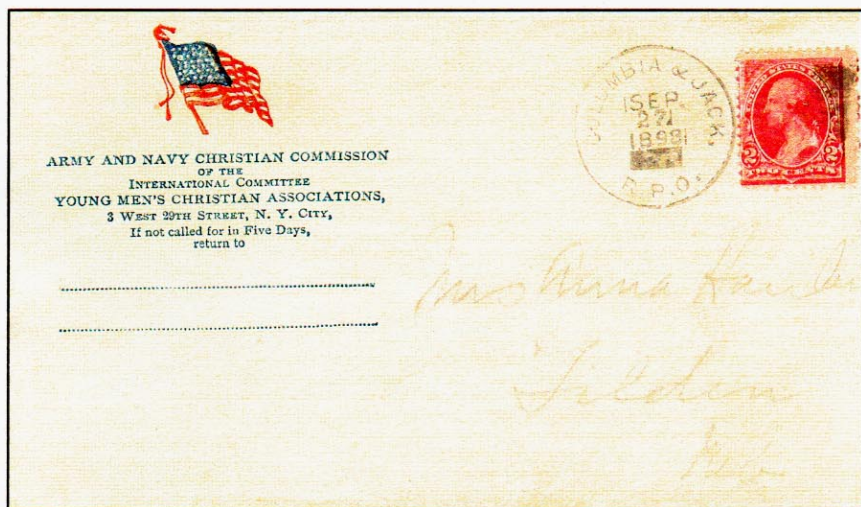


# FLORIDA POSTAL HISTORY JOURNAL

Vol. 15, No. 2

July 2008



***COLUMBIA & JACK. R.P.O. SEP 27 1898 postmark with killer cancelled two-cent red banknote on Spanish American War patriotic cover. See page 22 for a new Florida RPO listing.***



*Promoting Philately in the Sunshine State*



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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Florida Postal History Society Officers .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Fort No. 4 Florida</b>	
<i>by Deane R. Briggs, M.D. ....</i>	<b>4</b>
<b>Stephensville, Florida Fancy Postmark</b>	
<i>by Deane R. Briggs, M.D. ....</i>	<b>5</b>
<b>Florida Department of Interior Official Cover</b>	
<i>by Niles Schuh .....</i>	<b>6-9</b>
<b>Florida Official Covers</b>	
<i>by Daniel Curtis .....</i>	<b>10-11</b>
<b>Bemis &amp; Dutton Postmark</b>	
<i>by Deane R. Briggs, M.D. ....</i>	<b>12-15</b>
<b>Fraudulent handstamped mail</b>	
<i>by Deane R. Briggs, M.D. ....</i>	<b>16</b>
<b>Armstrong, Florida Doanes</b>	
<i>by Michael Wiedemann .....</i>	<b>17-19</b>
<b>Steamer <i>Florida</i> cover</b>	
<i>by Deane R. Briggs, M.D. ....</i>	<b>20-21</b>
<b>A new Florida RPO Listing</b>	
<i>by Deane R. Briggs, M.D. ....</i>	<b>22</b>
<b>Tampa use of Canal Zone stamps</b>	
<i>by Deane R. Briggs, M.D. ....</i>	<b>23</b>
<b>Florida Postal History Society</b>	
<b>Contributing Members .....</b>	<b>24</b>



# FORT NO. 4 FLORIDA

By Deane R. Briggs, M.D.



***Folded letter from Stockholm, Sweden forwarded to Fort No. 4 Florida via Whitesville, Florida.***

The above cover is a most unusual trans-Atlantic Florida territorial cover from Stockholm, Sweden datelined January 22, 1841 and sent to a Captain T. L. Alexander, 6th Infantry, U.S. Army in Washington City, U.S. America. It was sent by private ship to New York where it received a red "Mar 3" handstamp and sent on to Washington. It was rated "due 25" and forwarded on March 5 to Fort No. 4 Florida via Savannah and Palatka (both deleted) and Whitesville, Florida. Fort No. 4 was a Second Seminole War fort located in East Florida along with a series of at least five other small forts only recorded as numbers and not named for officers as were most other larger forts. Our book, *Florida Stampless Postal History 1763-1861*, has an archival example listed on page 136 with a manuscript Fort No. 6 E.F. postmark (probably a docketing on a military hand carried cover) mailed as an invoice to Fort No. 3 East Florida. I have not been able to identify the location of any of these forts and presumably all mail at these outposts was handled by courier.

# STEPHENSVILLE, FLORIDA FANCY POSTMARK

By Deane R. Briggs, M.D.



***STEPHENSVILLE, FLORIDA serrated cds postmark with fancy Maltese “cross pattee” killer on 1880 three-cent entire.***

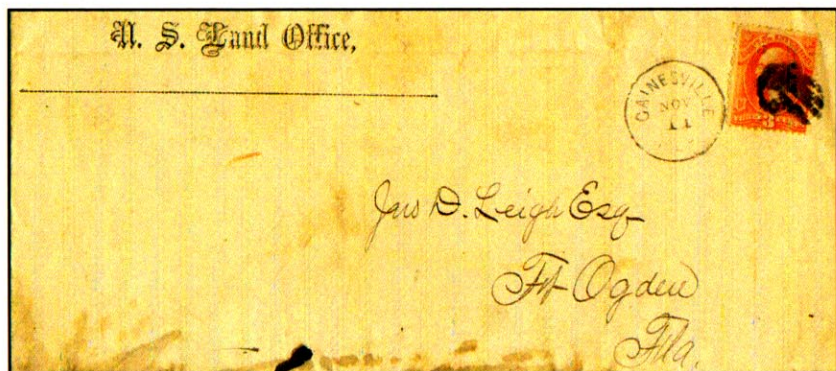
**T**he above cover has a beautifully struck serrated cds postmark from Stephenville, Florida with a fancy Maltese “cross pattee” killer. The Stephenville Post Office was established in Taylor County as a name change from Deadman’s Bay on December 17, 1879. This postmark must have been one of the first issued to the newly named town as it was used seven months after establishment. For collectors of fancy cancellations, this cover certainly has a great strike of a scarce cross killer and also has the addition of an unusual serrated cds postmark.

The Stephenville Post Office was discontinued on August 19, 1931 with mail handled at the Jena Post Office, which itself was changed to Steinhatchee seven years later.



# Florida Department of Interior Official Cover

By Niles Schuh



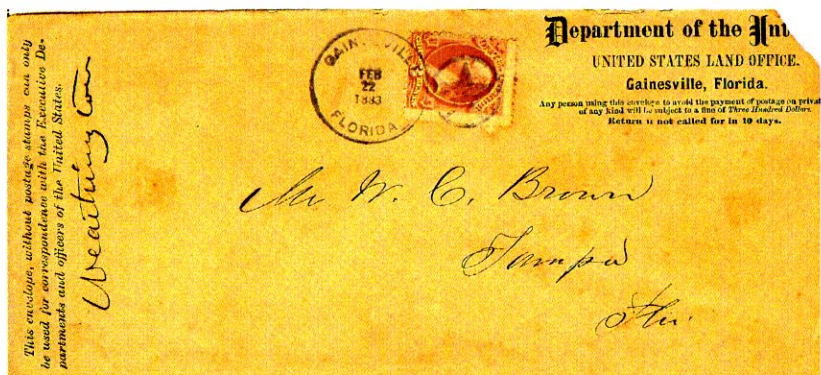
*Figure 1*

***GAINESVILLE / FLA NOV 14 postmark with killer tied #017  
on U.S. Land Office official cover to Fort Ogden, Florida.***

I read with interest the article on Florida official covers by Dan Curtis. I have one official cover from Florida in my collection which I reproduce in Figure 1. It is a U.S. Land Office, (blank space for town name) official corner card cover with a three-cent Department of the Interior stamp (Scott #O17), postmarked at Gainesville, Florida and cancelled with a cork killer. Although the postmark is without a year date, its use was before the postal rate changed to two-cents, probably in the late 1870s or early 1880s.

EDITOR'S NOTE: I have checked my collection and can add two additional official stamped covers to those recorded by Dan Curtis and Niles Schuh as well as one stamped official cover pre-dating the 1873 beginning use of official stamps, and another stampless Jacksonville example. Figure 2 is another example of a Department of the Interior, United States Land Office, Gainesville, Florida official corner card cover with three-cent #O17 postmarked GAINESVILLE

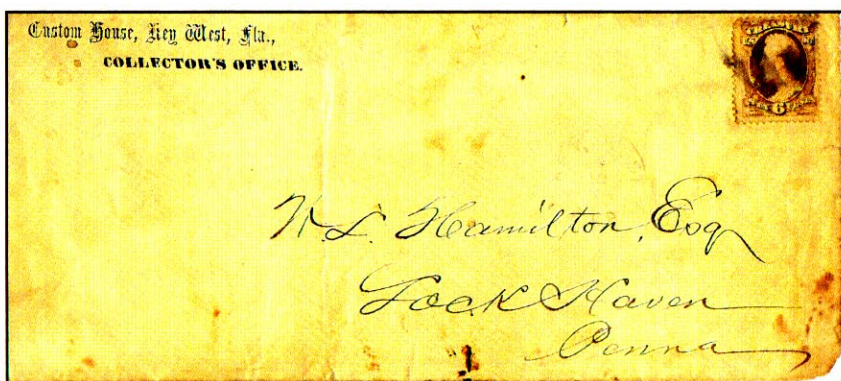
/ FLORIDA FEB 22 1883 in blue black ink with star in circle killer. This is a fairly late usage of an official stamp, as they were declared obsolete on July 5, 1884.



**Figure 2**

**GAINESVILLE / FLORIDA FEB 22 1883 blue postmark and star in circle killer ties #017 to Department of the Interior official cover to Tampa.**

The cover in Figure 3 is a Custom House, Key West, Florida Collector's Office official corner card cover with six-cent official Treasury stamp #075 tied by grid cancel with a small KEY WEST / FLA. postmark with indistinct date. This postmark was used in the 1870s.

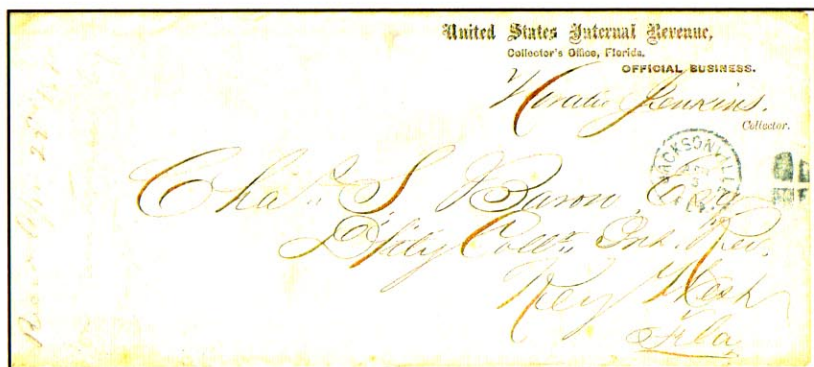


**Figure 3**

**KEY WEST / FLA. postmark with killer tied #075 on official Custom House Collector's Office cover to Lock Haven, Penn.**



The cover in Figure 4 is similar to the one recorded by Dan Curtis as Figure 2 in his article in the last issue of the FPHJ. It is a stampless official cover with "United States Internal Revenue, Collector's Office, Florida / Official Business" corner card with the endorsement of Horatio Jenkins, Collector. It has a blue small JACKSONVILLE / FLA. APR 5 postmark with a cork killer and is docketed 1870.

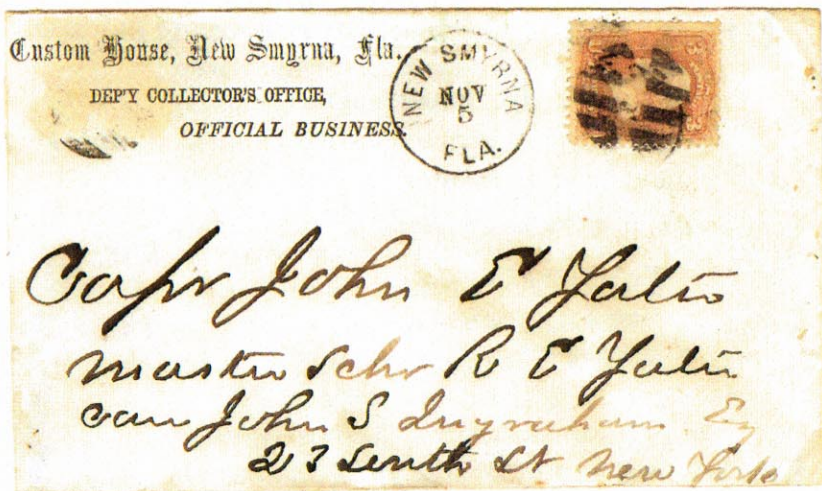


**Figure 4**  
***JACKSONVILLE / FLA. APR 5 (1870) blue postmark with duplex cork cross killer on stampless United States Internal Revenue, Collector's Office official cover, usage to Key West and endorsed by Horatio Jenkins.***

The cover in Figure 5 is an official Custom House, New Smyrna, Fla., Dep'y Collector's Office corner card cover with NEW SMYRNA / FLA. NOV 5 postmark and killer tied 3 cent rose #65 on cover to New York. Although there is no year date, it must date from the 1866-1869 period.

*Figure 5 is shown at  
top of the next page.*





**Figure 5**  
**NEW SMYRNA / FLA. NOV 5 postmark with killer**  
**tied #65 on official Custom House, New Smyrna, Fla.,**  
**Dep’y Collector’s Office cover to New York.**

Members are encouraged to contribute any additional “official” usage from Florida to add to the census compiled by Dan Curtis.

### DEALER ADVERTISING

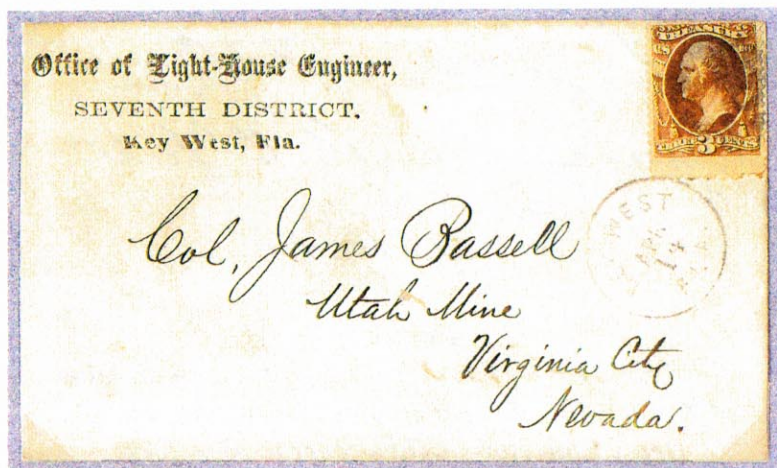
Dealer members of the Florida Postal History Society are encouraged to place a color advertisement in the *Journal*. Contact Editor Deane R. Briggs at [drb@gte.net](mailto:drb@gte.net) or call (863) 299-1251. Pricing should be between \$50 and \$150 per year for the three issues published annually.

### Stamp Club and Stamp Show News

As discussed at our last annual meeting, the *Journal* will include local chapter meeting times and locations as well as local stamp shows and bourses free of charge. Members should contact their stamp club and encourage club membership. Special show cancellations will also be announced for postmark collectors. Please send information to be listed to the editor with a three month lead time if possible.

# Florida Official Covers

By Daniel Curtis



**Figure 1**  
**KEY WEST / FLA. (1877) postmark on official cover to**  
**Virginia City, Nevada.**

**T**his is a follow up on my article in the last issue of the *Florida Postal History Journal*, Vol. 14, No. 1, March 2008. I quote verbatim the following listing of known Florida covers with Official adhesive stamps from the research of Alan Campbell:

<b>Executive:</b>	Not used.
<b>State:</b>	Not used.
<b>Navy:</b>	At least one cover, and a number of off-cover stamps exist, postmarked Warrington, Florida, from the Naval Yard at Pensacola.
<b>War:</b>	Used for filing weather reports from the ubiquitous Signal Service Corps, but I have no covers, only a stamp postmarked from St. Augustine.
<b>Justice:</b>	There must have been a U.S. Attorney, but no

covers are recorded.

**Agriculture:** Surely used on mail backs (pre-stamped reply envelopes) from farmers, but no covers or postmarked stamps have been reported.

**Post Office:** Distributed to all postmasters, but I don't recall seeing a cover or postmarked stamp from Florida.

**Interior:** I have seen legal-sized Land Office covers from Jacksonville and Gainesville. There were several in a Land Office balance lot sold in Starnes.

**Treasury:** From the Starnes Treasury balance lot, I got a small cover (*Figure 1*) postmarked at Key West, addressed to the Utah Mine, Virginia City, Nevada, enclosure dated 14 April 1877. It has an interesting enclosure discussing drilling equipment from the office of the Lighthouse Engineer, 7th District. (*Figure 2*)

The Curtis Collection has a strip of four three-cent stamps on a Cedar Keys to Tampa cover (*Figure 1* in my article in the March 2008 issue of the *Florida Postal History Journal*). Surely we can add to this list. Please research your collections and old covers for additional examples of Official Stamps used on cover from Florida. Does anyone have the time and ability to research sales data from Auction catalogs of Official Stamps on cover, especially those from great Florida collections.

Office of Light-House Engineer,

SEVENTH DISTRICT.

Key West Fla. April 14, 1877.

My dear Bussell.

Yours of March 27<sup>th</sup> recd  
last evening, and I was glad to hear from  
you - First - I'll tell you what I  
know of rock drills - Have tried the  
Berleigh - Ingersoll - Gardner - Winchester -  
Hord - Rand and Diamond - Kept a  
careful record of work performed by each  
together with the cost of running each, amount  
of air consumed per foot of hole drilled,  
average depth drilled per hour, in fact had  
a complete record, of each and every  
style of machine - I have not the figures

**Figure 2**



# BEMIS & DUTTON POSTMARK

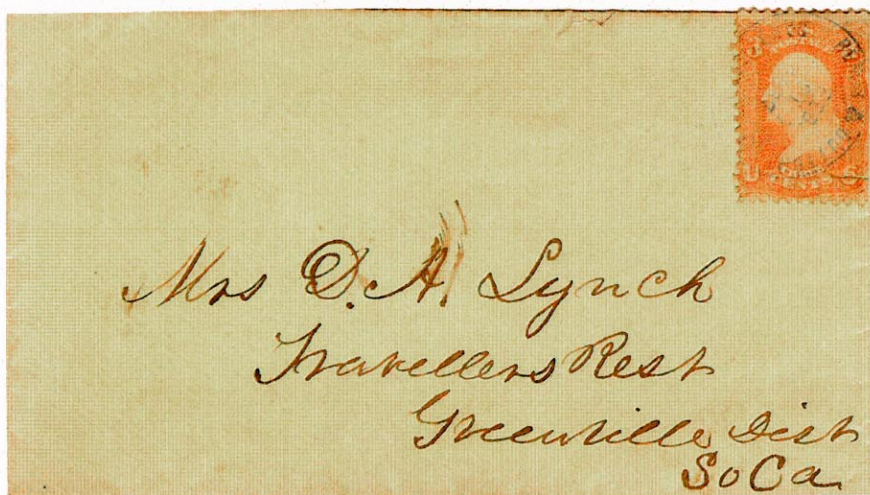
By Deane R. Briggs, M.D.

The postmark on the cover in Figure 1 is a most unusual one, with the appearance of a possible hotel mark or a proprietary date received marking. It even bothered a prior owner of the cover as it has the docketing on the reverse “clearest strike I’ve seen of this mysterious cancel.” I have seen other examples of this marking prior to obtaining this cover but was not sure of the (Dutton) portion until I received the example in Figure 2. It has a full cancellation, although somewhat lightly struck. It is also struck in blue ink and predates the example in Figure 1 by five years. It also has an enclosure which helps make this article all the more interesting.



*Figure 1*

**BEMIS & (DUTTON) / SANDY FORD, FLA. JAN 1 1872 blue  
24 x 22 mm oval postmark with pen-cancelled  
three-cent green on cover to Charleston.**



**Figure 2**

**BEMIS & DUTTON / SANDY FORD, FLA. FEB 20 1867**  
**blue oval postmark which ties #65 on cover to Greenville, S.C.**

The letter enclosure is datelined "Station 5 P & G RR Florida, Wednesday 20th Feby 1867" and is written to inform Mrs. Lynch that "Eliza & the children arrived here safely on Monday at 11 am without incident except detention one day by rail being blocked up below Columbia with a run off of a freight train." The postmark on this cover is the clearest example I have seen and confirms the original use with Dutton.

The town of Sandy Ford was located, as the name implies, at a ford on the Aucilla River on a main post route connecting Monticello and Madison in Jefferson County. The county name changed to Madison County in 1854. Sandy Ford was also a crossroad connecting Clifton and Aucilla with Beazley and Fort Hamilton. A post office was established on December 20, 1851, and continued to function until a name change to Greenville in 1876. Little early postal history is documented with only a single stampless pre-war cover recorded. Yearly postal receipts reached a peak for the year ending June 30, 1859, with \$34.18 of business. During the Civil War, its location on the Pensacola & Georgia Rail Road gave it increased activity and sev-



Station 5 P & G RR Florida  
Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> July 1867

My dear Mrs Lynch

I have the pleasure of  
informing you that Eliza & the children  
arrived here safely on Monday at 11 A.M.  
without incident except detention one  
day by Rail being blocked up below  
Columbia with a run off of a freight  
train. Eliza is quite well, Mary is  
unwell from cutting a tooth. I was  
as you know most glad to see them  
& only wish I could also see you & Col  
Lynch & my other two sweet little ones.  
I tried to have things somewhat  
comfortable for Eliza & think we can  
live here quite so. I have laid in  
2 Barrels Flour a barrel Sausage Kit  
macaroni half a bag Java Coffee ~~cheese~~  
etc & we can buy fresh Fish & Oysters  
nearly every day in the Rail House.

Patty will Cook & wash & Mick two cows  
I have & I have this morning got a  
nurse for baby so I hope you see  
to take good care of your only child  
the first time she has really left you  
& hope to bring her back by 1<sup>st</sup> July

**Figure 3**

**Enclosure datelined Station 5 P & G RR Florida.**



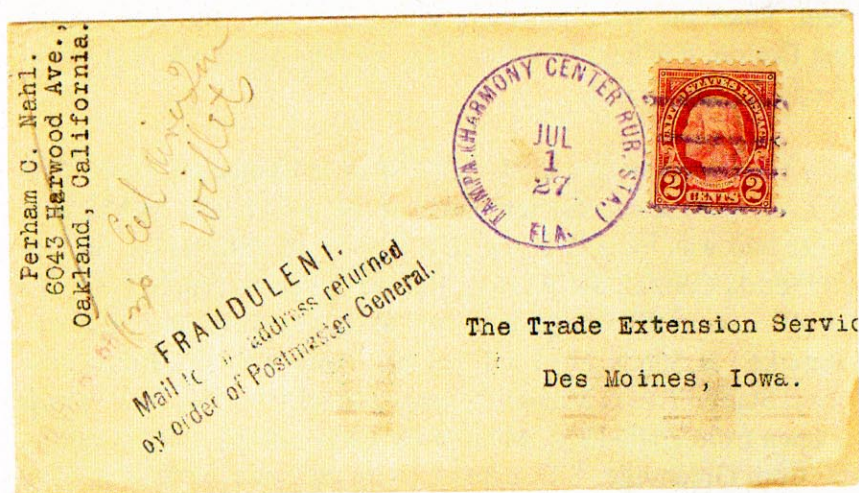
eral covers from Confederate Sandy Ford are recorded.

The post office was closed by the U.S. Post Office Department during reconstruction but was re-opened on June 29, 1866, with Miss Louise Bemis the postmistress. It is likely that the post office was located in a general store (possibly operated by Dutton) and she used the name Bemis & Dutton on the postmarking device. This can possibly be classified as a "postmaster postmark" although a "P.M." is absent. Since the 1872 postmark is boldly struck and missing the name Dutton, this later postmark may well have had the Dutton removed for some reason.

Sandy Ford was the first town established in Madison County. Station Five was the second settlement to be established in Madison County and was located at the fifth stop from Tallahassee on the then Florida Central and Western Railway close to Sandy Ford. No post office was officially established at Station Five and mail was postmarked at Sandy Ford. Of interest, there was an official post office at Station Two in Madison County named "Number Two" which was open from 1848-1854. Most of the early settlers at Station Five were from Greenville, S.C. and by 1876, the town of Station Five had actually outgrown Sandy Ford in importance. Elijah James Hays had purchased a huge tract of land surrounding Station Five and used it to market his plantation livestock, cotton, tobacco, and timber. He owned a general store, a brickyard, and a turpentine still. As this village prospered, the town's Ladies Aid Society decided that Station Five needed a more genteel name and a Mrs. Morgan, a native of Greenville, S.C., prevailed in having the name changed and on April 13, 1876, both Station Five and Sandy Ford became the town of Greenville.

# Fraudulent handstamped mail

By Deane R. Briggs, M.D.



***HARMONY CENTER RUR. STA. TAMPA FLA. magenta 4-bar postmark on cover to The Trade Extension Service, Des Moines, Iowa, with “FRAUDULENT” handstamp.***

**A**ncillary handstamp markings are becoming more collectible and the above example is quite unusual. It reads: “Fraudulent, Mail to an address returned by order of Postmaster General.” This cover is not only unusual because of this marking but has a first day of use magenta postmark from Harmony Center, Rural Station of Tampa, Florida. This is a fairly scarce postmark and is known in magenta and black ink, and was only used for about 18 months until 1929. The year date is only the last two digits. The reason for the Fraudulent handstamp and return to Oakland, California is unclear. Perhaps it was addressed to a business closed by the federal government. A “terrorist” organization?

# Armstrong, Florida Doanes

**By Michael Wiedemann**

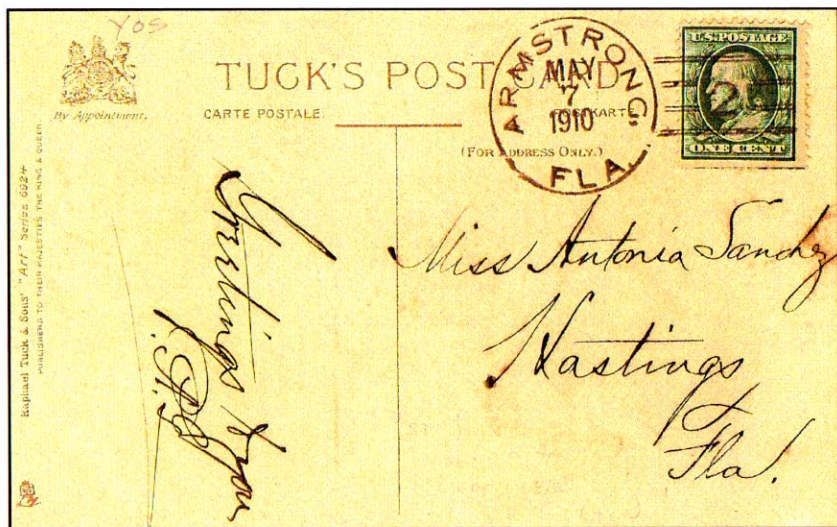
I recently came across an Armstrong, Florida Doane postmarked card (*Figure 1*) with a “4” in the killer bars. I contacted the Florida Doane postmark coordinator, Deane Briggs, and he offered to help confirm this as a new listing. The only Doane listing for Armstrong was Type II (2) which has a number of known verified usages from April 11, 1906 to January 1, 1912. Thus to have a new Type II (4) usage used at the same time as a Type II (2) device would be most unusual. There are also several Type A four-bar postmark examples from Armstrong dating from November 14, 1908, and predating several of the Doane examples. We know, therefore, that there were at least two different postmarking handstamps used by the Armstrong



**Figure 1**

**ARMSTRONG / FLA. SEP 28 1909 Doane Type II postmark  
with possible "4" in killer bars.**





**Figure 2**

**ARMSTRONG / FLA. MAY 7 1910 bold Type II (2) postmark.**

postmaster during the 1909 period and a third would be possible.

In examining the September 28, 1909 example from Figure 1, it shows that it had a double strike at a slightly different location, but with the killer bars of both supposedly hitting the one-cent Franklin stamp (Figure 3). A 600 dpi scan still makes it appear to be clearly a "4" but close examination shows that the killer bars on the stamp do not



**Figure 3**  
**High**  
**resolution**  
**of Figure 1**  
**postmark.**



**Figure 4**  
***Armstrong Doane postmark with year slug at top.***

match those on the card. The upper bars are slightly off line and of different spacing. The lowest bar (the fifth one due to the double strike) is not on the stamp, while the portion of the double struck dial is on the stamp, but not in correct position. Thus it is the opinion of Dr. Briggs that this is an added stamp with Doane Type II (4) killer bars but not a Type II (4) Doane postmark from Armstrong.

There are several variations of the Armstrong Doane dial which are of interest as an addendum to this article. At least three variations of the dial are known. The example in Figure 1 has the month, day, PM and year slugs in order. Figure 4 shows an example with the year slug at the top and the AM at the bottom, while Figure 2 shows an absence of the AM or PM slugs. Other variations are likely to exist.



# Steamer Florida cover

By Deane R. Briggs, M.D.



Figure 1

*Grid-tied Scott #11 x 2 to pay six-cent, non-contract rate on cover to Savannah, Georgia, docketed "per Steamer Florida."*

The above cover (Figure 1) caught my attention with the docketing "per Steamer Florida" on an 1850s era cover without postmark. Could this be a Florida cover originating along the St. Johns River? After researching the "Steamer Florida" on the Internet, I found no less than four different steamboats in use during the 1850-1870s period that were named "Florida." Two could be quickly discarded as they were too large to navigate the St. Johns River. One was a 1,261-ton wooden side wheel steamship *Florida* (Figure 2) built in New York in 1849-50 and purchased by the U.S. Navy in 1861 to participate in the Confederate blockade and in the capture of blockade runners.

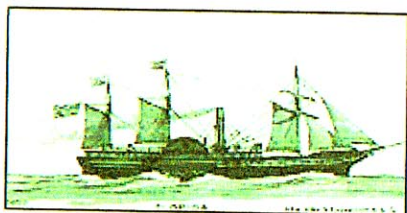
It was commissioned the U.S.S. *Florida* in October 1861 and after the war was used to carry supplies along the Atlantic coast into the



Gulf of Mexico. It was decommissioned in April 1867 and sold in December 1868, as a merchant ship, the *Delphine*. It was disposed of in mid-1870. It could have made commercial runs along the Atlantic in the 1850s, but I could find no actual records of its use or routes, and its size prohibited use in the St. Johns River. The other named vessel was the C.S.S. *Florida*, built for the Confederacy in 1862 and with a colorful history and outside the time frame of this cover.

The most likely “Steamer Florida” to have carried this cover was a sternwheel steamboat built in 1826. Several references to its use in Florida show as early as 1835 the Steamboat *Florida* made stops at Mandarin on its way from Savannah to Picolata transporting passengers and agricultural goods. In 1836 the 4th U.S. Infantry involved in the Seminole War was put on board the little steamer *Florida*. Another excerpt from a book records that “the Steamer Florida in 1839 began weekly runs from Savannah to Picolata stopping at St. Mary’s, Georgia, Jacksonville and Black Creek.” It is likely that this Steamer *Florida* was still plying the St. Johns in the early 1850s.

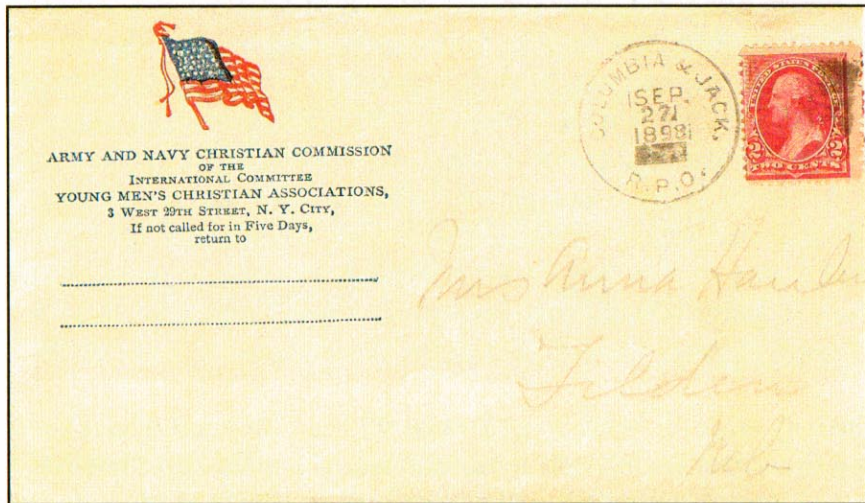
The only other reference to a “Steamer Florida” that could have carried this cover is one I found mentioned in a diary of John Holly Knapp written during a vacation along the St. Johns River in early 1874. In his February 5, 1874 entry, he mentions leaving Jacksonville on the “Florida” at 9 a.m. and arriving at Palatka at 3:30 p.m. This Steamer *Florida* could have been the same one built in 1826, but if so would have been in service for nearly 50 years. More likely a newer Steamer *Florida* had been built by 1874 which replaced the one carrying this cover.



**Figure 2**  
**“U.S.S. Florida”**  
**(1861-1868) watercolor**  
**painted by Erik Heyl**  
**in 1948.**

# A new Florida RPO Listing

By Deane R. Briggs, M.D.



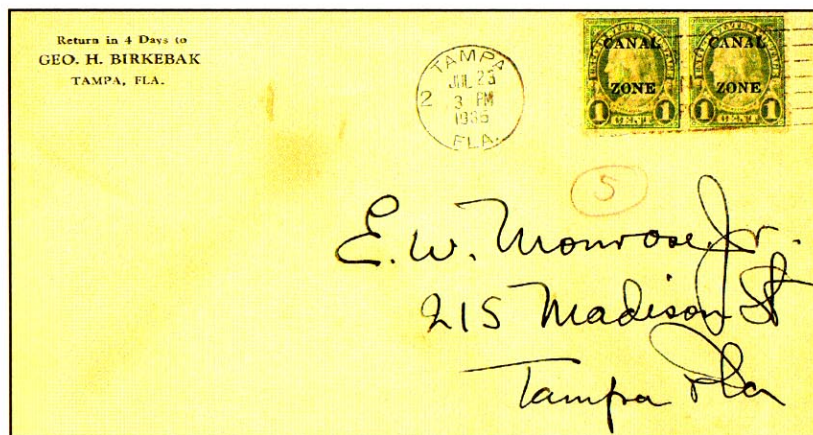
***COLUMBIA & JACK. R.P.O. SEP 27 1898 postmark with  
killer cancelled two-cent red banknote on Spanish American  
War patriotic cover.***

**T**he Mobile Post Office Society publishes a very extensive catalog of all known RPO postmarks with listings of each variation in dial slugs mentioned. It is updated periodically to record new listings. The above 29.5mm Columbia & Jack. R.P.O. marking is a new unrecorded listing as a variant of number 328-E1. That listing has the month and day slugs reversed and has a TR 33 train slug instead of this one which is obliterated. The Columbia, South Carolina and Jacksonville, Florida R.P.O. covered 279 miles on the rails of the Southbound R.R. and the Florida Central & Peninsular R.R. and had a short 2.5 year existence. This R.P.O. began operation on July 1, 1897, as a change from Charleston & Savannah R.P.O. and



# Tampa use of Canal Zone stamps

By Deane R. Briggs, M.D.



*Pair of one-cent Franklin stamps overprinted Canal Zone Scott #71 accepted and used as postage from Tampa, Florida.*

**The above cover has a pair of U.S. one-cent Franklin stamps overprinted "Canal Zone" (Scott #71) with a Tampa, Florida "Jul 25 1935" machine postmark cancellation and with usage locally to Tampa. The use of overprinted U.S. stamps in Florida is uncommon, much more so for the use of Canal Zone stamps, which were accepted for postage.**

Savannah & Jacksonville R.P.O. Service ended on December 10, 1899, with a short run of the Charlotte & Jacksonville R.P.O. which in turn became Hamlet & Jacksonville R.P.O. on May 12, 1900. This cover has a nice strike of the RPO postmark and is on a Spanish American War YMCA patriotic cover. The enclosure was written on patriotic stationery from the Secretary of the YMCA for the 3rd Nebraska Volunteers at Pablo Beach Florida. He wrote to the mother of a soldier who was recovering from a severe sickness to inform her that her son, Leroy, was improving and when stronger should be able to have a furlough. He wrote the letter from his bedside. Apparently Leroy was too incapacitated to even sign his own name on the letter.



## **FLORIDA POSTAL HISTORY SOCIETY CONTRIBUTING MEMBERS - 2008**

The following members of the Florida Postal History Society have been denoted as "**Contributing Members**" for their additional contribution to the Society. The support of these members keeps our Society fiscally sound and enables us to respond to member and non-member inquiries regarding Florida postal history and send sample copies of our *Journal*.

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