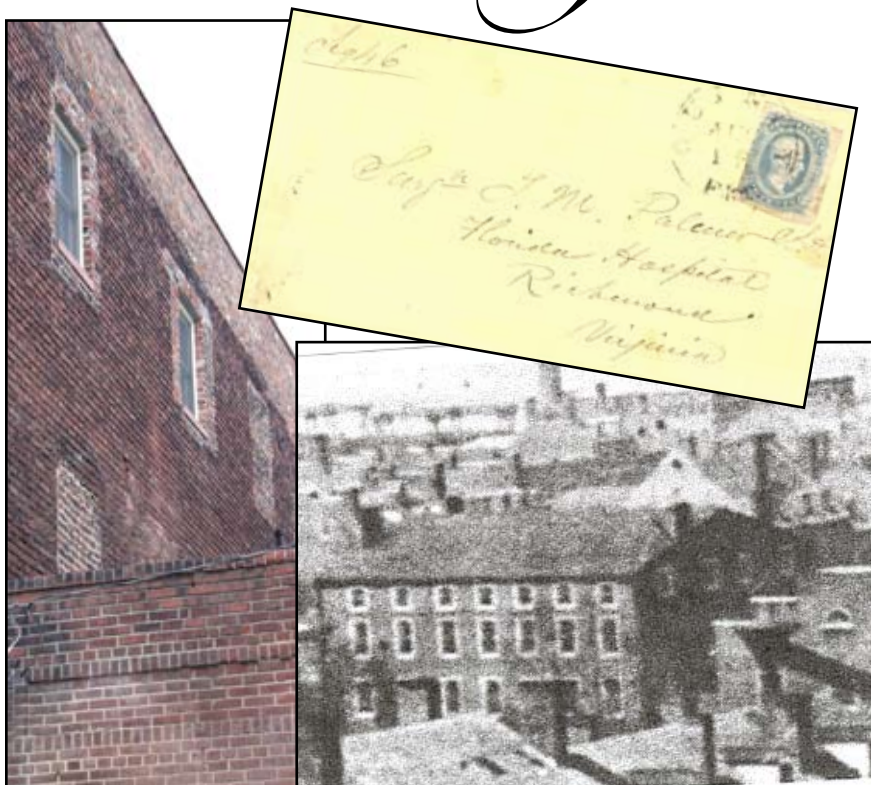


FLORIDA POSTAL HISTORY JOURNAL

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Florida Hospital



Promoting Philately in the Sunshine State



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The Crown Prince of Lipona, Florida

By Douglas S. Files

Catherine “Kate” Willis was born in 1800 into a family of social status but not much wealth. The attractive, well-proportioned girl was the great, great niece of General George Washington. At age 16 she married Atchinson Gray, who died the next year, leaving her a widow. Raised in Virginia, Kate moved with her family to Florida in 1825 where her father, Bird C. Willis, had secured a government post. The vivacious young



*Low resolution image of
Crown Prince Achille Murat
of Naples*

Tallahassee girl took several years to find another husband. One day she attended a picnic, held on the grounds of an abandoned Spanish mission. It was there she met her prince. You can find an image of Prince Achille Murat and Catherine Willis Gray Murat on the internet at: curiositychronicle.blogspot.com. (Florida Memory: State Library of Florida.)

Crown Prince Achille Murat of Naples was the 22-year-old son of Napoleon Bonaparte’s sister Caroline. Caroline had married French Marshal Joachim Murat and Napoleon had installed them as King and Queen of Naples in 1808. After Napoleon’s fall and his father’s death, Achille travelled to America to

seek his fortunes. Swept up by the democratic ideals of the new nation, he decided to settle into the simple life of a Florida cotton plantation owner. He named his plantation “Lipona”—an anagram of Napoli, the Italian name for his hometown of Naples. Not having much money, he built a small log cabin on his land, and his neighbors had trouble believing that he was the close relative of six kings. Still, the young man was elected an alderman of Tallahassee in 1824 and mayor the following year. The erudite but coarse young man was instantly attracted to Kate Willis Gray and they wanted to

marry. Kate's father, however, insisted on negotiating the marriage with the Bonaparte family, which balked until they learned of the family connection to President Washington. There is an image of Princess Murat later in life on the internet at: http://2.bp.blogspot.com/_yjeeN3zdzGs/S7Dij1MMb1I/AAAAAAAAALU/PkVwCg9BVyg/s1600/Murat+portrait+of+his+wife.jpg.



*Low resolution image of
Catherine Daingerfield Willis
Gray Murat*

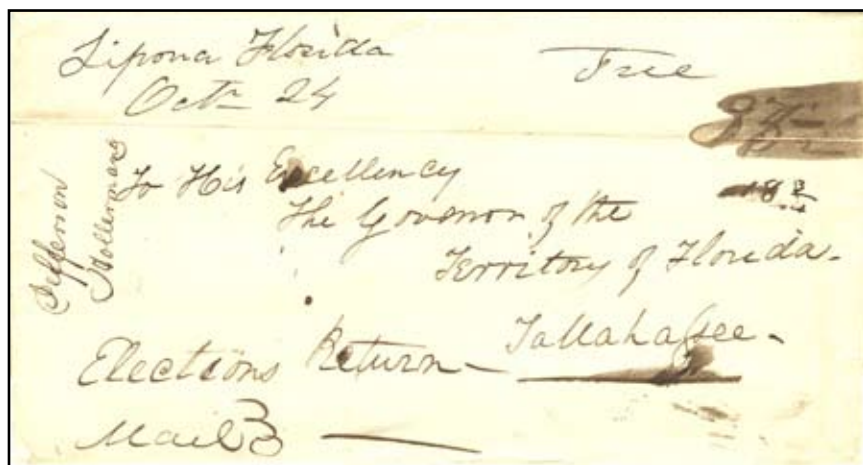
The couple married on July 12, 1826 and President John Quincy Adams attended the nuptials. Since the groom was an avowed atheist, a justice of the peace performed the quiet ceremony. Kate thus became a princess and set her table with an embroidered tablecloth containing the symbols of the Naples royal family and gold teaspoons with coats of arms.

Serially, Murat's money-making schemes failed, and he spent the last 20 years of his life working to restore the Bonaparte family to power in Europe. Kate and Achille moved briefly to London where they were given prime seats in Westminster Abbey for the 1830 coronation of King William IV. They returned to the U.S., this time to New Orleans, where Achille practiced law. A lack of money soon drove the couple back to Lipona in Jefferson County, Florida. Eventually, they were forced to sell the 900-acre plantation and move to a smaller property named Econchatti, yet Kate maintained her cheerful disposition.

Murat died in 1847 and was buried at the St. John's Episcopal Church cemetery in Tallahassee. His death at the age of 46 was only 10 months before a Bonaparte was restored to the throne of France. Six years later, Napoleon III established the Second Empire, and sent Kate enough money to travel to France. When she arrived, the emperor offered her a chateau, but she refused, preferring to remain in Florida, where, admittedly she was a big fish in a smaller pond. Napoleon III gave her enough money to pay

off Achille's debts and she bought a 520 acre cotton plantation on Jackson Bluff Road near Tallahassee in 1854. The Belleview house, a modest Florida plantation home of the era, was the centerpiece of the farm. Built in around 1840, the frame house had whitewashed interior walls and a detached kitchen to rear. It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is described as an excellent example of "indigenous Southern architecture." There is an image of Belleview and explanation about the estate on the internet at: <http://www.exploresouthernhistory.com/belleview.html>.

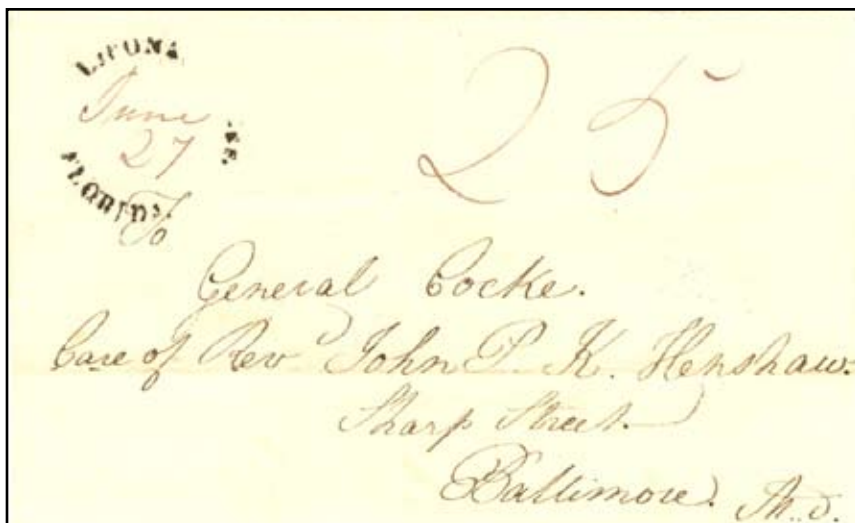
At Belleview, Kate's coach bore Napoleon III's coat of arms, and her servants wore Imperial livery: the same uniforms worn by servants of the emperor. She participated actively in raising money to restore President Washington's Mount Vernon home. When the Civil War broke out in 1861 she strongly supported the Confederate cause and she was heartbroken by its defeat four years later. In 1866 Napoleon III granted her an annual allowance of 50,000 francs from the coffers of France, but she succumbed to typhoid fever in 1867. The lively niece of both George Washington and Napoleon was 64 at her death. The Crown Prince and Princess of Naples were buried at St. John's Episcopal Church in Tallahassee where obelisks still mark their gravesites. Just down Monroe Street in Tallahassee stands the Prince Murat Motel. Note that Achille Murat had no connection to Naples, Florida, which did not exist during his lifetime. That city was named after promoters in the late 1800s compared its mild climate and abundant



*"Lipona Florida Oct 24" (1835) manuscript postmark, latest of three known.
From the Deane R. Briggs, M.D. Collection*

fish and game to the sunny Italian peninsula. There is an image of the gravesite of Catherine and Achille Murat on the internet at: <http://fcit.usf.edu/florida/photos/cities/tallah/tall1/tall103.htm>

As of May 8, 1828, Lipona had its own post office, with Prince Achille Murat serving as postmaster from 1828 to December 29, 1831, when Octavius H. Gadsden took over. The post office was established in Jefferson County as a replacement for the Jena Post Office, and it was located along the main postal route connecting Jacksonville and Tallahassee (Post Route #2455). The same route connected Alligator, San Pedro, West Hill and



***“LIPONA,FLORIDA. JEF. June 27” (1830) rimless postmark, latest of three known.
From the Deane R. Briggs, M.D. Collection***

Weelaunee with weekly stage service. On December 16, 1847, the Lipona Post Office was closed. It had employed mostly manuscript postal markings (Types I and II) and only three Lipona handstamped covers (Type III) are known. These covers were postmarked with the words “Lipona Jef. Florida” printed in arcs, but without a circle surrounding the words. These were the earliest Florida postmarks to incorporate the county name, albeit abbreviated. The Lipona Post Office was likely located on the Lipona plantation and did a fairly large annual volume of business ranging from \$16.14 in 1831 to \$43.60 in 1835.

Bibliography is found on page 8.

February Annual Meeting Set

The Annual Meeting of the Florida Postal History Society will be held on Saturday, February 5, 2011, in Sarasota. The meeting will begin at noon in the balcony of the Municipal Auditorium at the Sarasota National Stamp Exhibition. The Municipal Auditorium is located at 801 N. Tamiami Trail, Sarasota. This is a National APS accredited show with an outstanding dealer bourse and excellent exhibits.

Incoming President Alex Hall will be introduced at the meeting, and a good turnout of members to welcome him to his new position would be greatly appreciated.

In addition to attending this annual event and taking part in society activities, it is also an excellent opportunity to bring a friend and introduce him or her to the society. Remember that person-to-person contacts and introductions to our society are the best way for us to continue to grow!

The Crown Prince of Lipona, Florida

Continued from page 7

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“Naples, Florida,” Wikipedia, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Naples,_Florida.

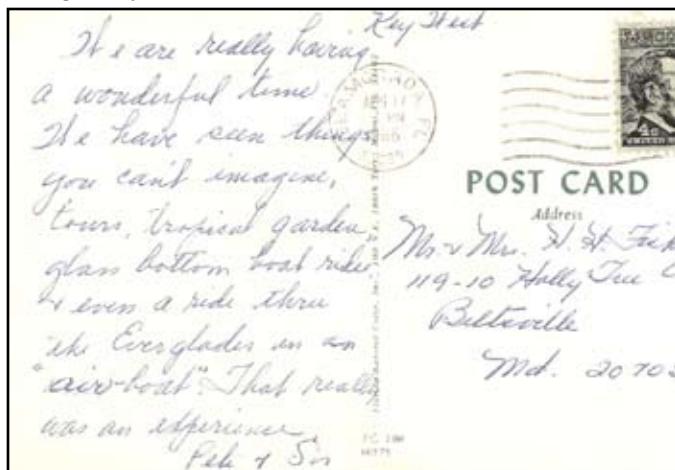
Junk box postal cards

By Stephen Patrick

*Figure 1a
Humorous
post card
extolling the
wonders of
Florida. It
came from
a box of low
cost covers at
FLOREX.*



One of the joys of stamp and postal history collecting is to find a great item in a low priced dealer's box at a stamp show. At the recent FLOREX show in Orlando, I found this humorous card and even showed it to fellow members of the Florida Postal History Society at our semi-annual meeting. I thought I would pass it on to other members as one of those funny things you see that gets your attention. I encourage all members to try to come to the Sarasota National Stamp Exhibition and attend our next meeting on Saturday, February 5 at noon and greet my replacement as President of our society, Alex Hall. Perhaps you too can find something inexpensive that grabs you.



*Figure 1b
The post card
was mailed
from
Islamorada,
Florida, and
has a
machine
cancel dated
August 17,
1966.*

Florida Hospital

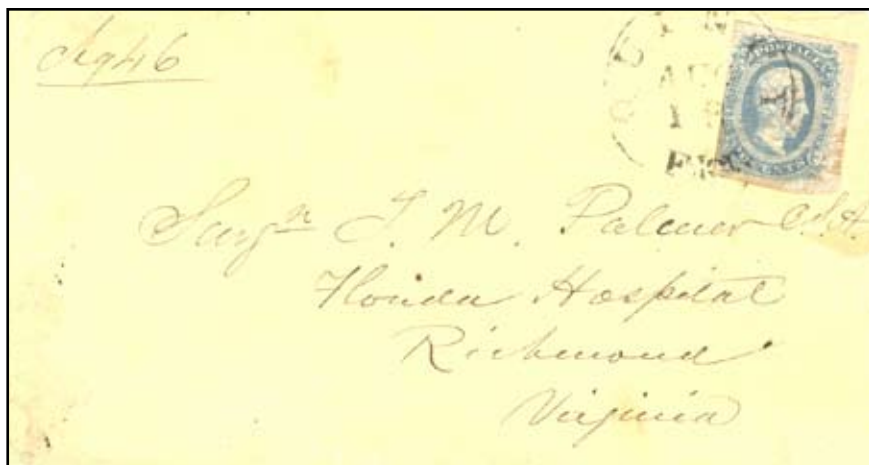


FIGURE 1

QUINCY/Flor. AUG 18 postmark ties CSA #11 to cover addressed to Surgn T. M. Palmer, C.S.A., Florida Hospital, Richmond, Virginia.

By Deane R. Briggs, M.D.

Richmond, Virginia, the seat of the Confederate government for the most part of the Civil War and being within a 75 mile radius of 25 percent of the battles and 60 percent of the casualties, of necessity became the center of treatment and convalescence for the injured military. Richmond was also fortunately the home of the Medical College of Virginia, the south's only continuously functioning medical school. Because of the heavy casualties early in the war, several hundred homes, factories, schools, and warehouses were turned into small hospitals. Included among these was the James H. Grant & Company tobacco factory, located on 19th Street, between Main and Franklin (**Figures 2, 6**). Between December 10, 1861, and September 1863, when it was closed for cleaning (and never re-opened), it functioned as the Florida Hospital, also called the Globe Hospital.¹ The hospital became very busy after the Seven Days' Battle and cared for most of the sick and wounded Florida

FIGURE 2
Photograph of the
Grant tobacco factory,
circa 1865, after it
closed as Florida
Hospital.



troops as well as some patients from Alabama. St. George Peachy was the initial Surgeon-in-Charge. This was a 150 bed hospital funded by the State of Florida and cared for over 1,000 Florida soldiers annually. The Florida Hospital served its soldiers well as is reflected in these statistics during one year of its operation: 1,076 patients, only 53 deaths, 360 gunshot wounds, 111 cases of typhoid fever, 103 cases of catarrhal fever, 48 rheumatism, 86 pneumonia, 71 diarrhea, and even two cases of syphilis. Remarkably, most of the original building housing the Florida Hospital still stands and for a while after the war served as a jail, a warehouse, cooperage, food packing plant, and until recently, a furniture store warehouse. During the recent CSA 75th Anniversary meeting in Richmond, I made a specific trip to find this building and photograph it (*Figures 3, 4, next page*).

The cover in Figure 1 is addressed to Surgeon Thomas M. Palmer at the Florida Hospital in Richmond. He was a good friend of Florida Governor Milton and offered his services to care for the injured Florida soldiers. Accompanying him was the widow of ex-Governor Robert R. Reid, Mary Martha (Mimi) Reid, who became the Matron of the Florida Hospital throughout the war. Her husband had died in 1841, and she ran a boarding house in St. Augustine prior to the war. She went to Richmond to be near her only surviving son, Raymond, who was serving as a First Lieutenant and Adjutant of the 2nd Florida Regiment. She actively solicited money, food and supplies from the people of Florida while nursing the sick, wounded and dying. During her time in Richmond, she had the misfortune to care for her son, who was wounded at the Battle of the Wilderness and eventually died the following day on May 6, 1864. Following his death, numerous condolence mourning letters were sent to Mary Reid and are



FIGURE 3
*Current
 photograph
 of the building
 which housed
 the Florida
 Hospital.*

currently housed with other Reid papers at the Florida Historical Society in Cocoa, Florida. The illustration in Figure 5 is a cover front from the Ed Joyce collection addressed to her at Florida Hospital and discussed in the *Florida Postal History Journal*, Vol. 3, No. 1, February 1996.



After the closure of the Florida Hospital in September 1863, Florida troops were treated in several wards at the Howard's Grove Hospital complex, completed in 1862, just before the Seven Day's Battle. Dr. Palmer is recorded as a surgeon-in-chief at Howard's Grove Hospital.² This was originally a picnic and recreation site for Richmond's residents, but was constructed into a hospital complex comprising 62 buildings with an initial capacity of 659 and was eventually enlarged to handle

FIGURE 4
*Close up of remaining portion of
 the original Florida Hospital.*



FIGURE 5

LAKE CITY/ FLA. JUNE 26 postmark ties #11 to cover front addressed to Mrs. Mimi Reid, Florida Hospital, Richmond, Virginia.

over 1,800 patients. A portion of Howard's Grove Hospital was also set aside for smallpox isolation and for local Richmond civilians. Mimi Reid continued as the Matron of the Florida Hospital section at Howard's Grove Hospital throughout the war.

A small number of additional Florida troops were cared for at the 40 acre Chimborazo General Hospital which was constructed at the onset of the war and opened on October 17, 1861. Chimborazo was one of the largest military hospitals in its time with a normal occupancy of 3,000 and a medical staff of 500 with 45 surgeons. It consisted of between 120 and 150 buildings, each 100 feet by 30 feet with a capacity of 40 patients, and about 100 Sibley tents housing eight to 10 convalescing patients. During the war it treated more than 76,000 patients, more than any other hospital in the Confederacy.³

In addition to the Florida Hospital at Richmond, the Confederate government maintained six hospitals in Florida with a total of 515 beds, 150 at Lake City, 126 at Quincy, 100 at Tallahassee, 75 at Madison, 50 at Marianna, and 14 at Camp Long, near Madison.⁴

After the war, Martha Reid left Richmond, living for a while in Monticello, Jacksonville and Savannah before settling in Fernandina where she became

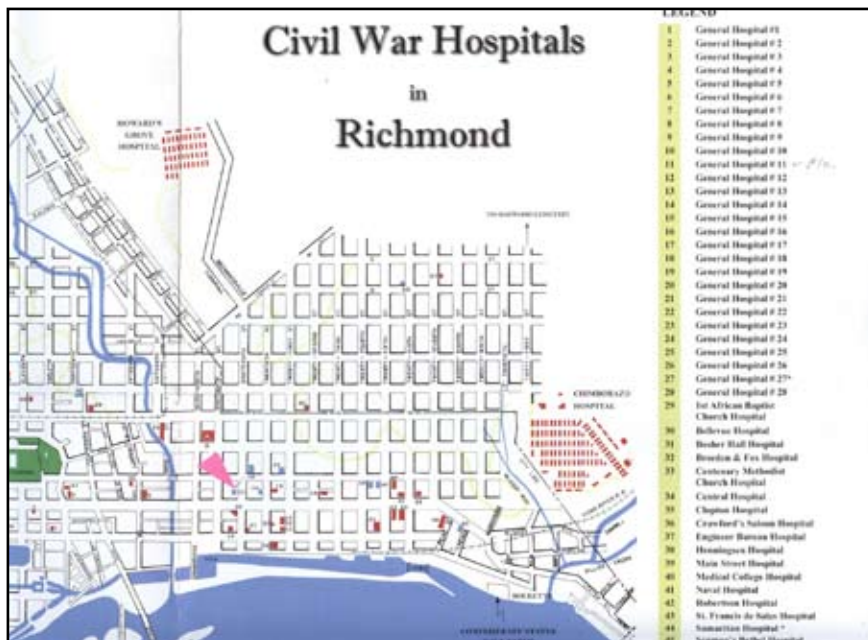


FIGURE 6
*Richmond hospitals site map with location of Florida Hospital
(pink arrow).*

a school teacher. In 1866 the Reconstruction Florida legislature provided a \$600 annual annuity in recognition of her services. She died at the age of 82 on June 24, 1894 and is buried in the St. Peters Episcopal Church cemetery. In 1950, the University of Florida named a dormitory in her honor. Because of her service as matron of the Florida Hospital, she has been called “The Florence Nightingale of Florida”.⁵

Several years ago, during a visit to the small antebellum towns around Tallahassee, I stayed at the Palmer House in Monticello, Florida, a bed and breakfast that was the actual antebellum home of Dr. Thomas M. Palmer. After my visit, I made color copies of the cover in Figure 1, which were framed and placed as decorations in each guest room. I have recently been informed that the home is now a private residence and no longer housing visitors. What a shame, as it was a beautiful as well as an historic place to stay.

Footnotes at bottom of page 15

Market is strong for early Florida postal history

The late Donald Thompson's cover collection was auctioned by Schuyler Rumsey on December 6, 2010 and the "Stampless Florida" section had some wonderful covers, many of which were reproduced in our society book *Florida Stampless Postal History 1763-1861*.

Highlights of the sale included the Apalachicola fancy arch, which sold for \$4,600; the Chattahoochie oval, which went for \$1,840; Jacksonville rimless oval which fetched \$1,955; Port Leon straightline to Scotland which sold for \$2,300, "Sem. Agency" oval which reached \$1,207.50; St. Augustine straightline in italic which sold for \$1,207.50; St. Augustine Express Mail, which sold for \$1,380, "Wanton's Flo" which reached \$1,485; and Waukeenah manuscript "Way 10," which sold for \$1,955.

There were many other manuscript markings which sold for over \$1,000 each. This sale and one completed 18 months ago recorded some of the highest prices ever for stampless Florida territorial and statehood covers and demonstrates a firmness in the marketplace for Florida material.

FOOTNOTES

¹ Robert W. Waitt Jr., *Confederate Military Hospitals in Richmond*. (Richmond, Virginia: Eastern National, 2002), 25.

² *Ibid*, 151-156.

³ Rebecca Barbour Calcut, *Richmond's Wartime Hospitals*. (Grenta, Louisiana: Pelican Publishing Company, Inc.), 2005, n.p.

⁴ Charlton W. Tebeau, *A History of Florida*. (Coral Gables: University of Miami Press, 1980), 225.

⁵ Nell S. Murfree, *History of Martha Reid Chapter No. 19 United Daughters of the Confederacy*. Available on internet at: <http://www.marthareid19udc.com/namesake/>

Newnansville "PAID 3" Handstamp

By Deane R. Briggs, M.D.



FIGURE 1

NEWNANSVILLE / Flor. Jun 25 (1856) postmark with newly discovered stampless PAID/3 rate on folded letter to Micanopy, Fla.

The cover in Figure 1 records not only a new stampless rate handstamp listing for Newnansville, Florida but a very late stampless usage as well. The postmark is a black Type VIII handstamp with the date corrected in manuscript. This was a lone Florida cover in a large mixed auction lot of covers and has a bold strike of both the postmark and the rate. This rate marking was previously unrecorded as a stampless usage. The enclosure is datelined Newnansville, Fla., June 24, 1856, and is a late stampless use, after prepayment, usually by stamps, was required per act of March 3, 1855. The town of Newnansville is known to have had postage stamps and postal entires with covers documented with use of U.S. #11 and U.S. #U-10 pre-dating this cover. The previous latest known use of a stampless cover from Newnansville is from 1853 with a red type

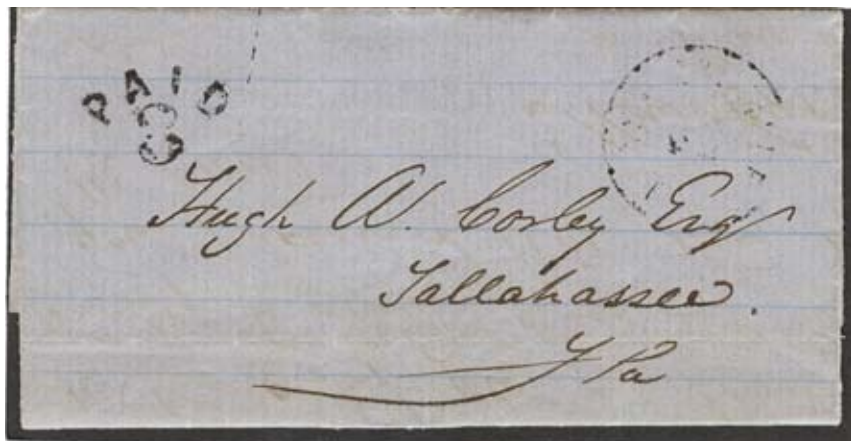


FIGURE 2

NEWNANSVILLE / FLA. 24mm cds postmark, weakly struck with unclear date, on FL to Tallahassee, Fla., datelined: Newnansville, Fla. May 21, 1861.

VIII postmark. The previous latest use of the black cds postmark on a stampless cover was December 20, 1847, nearly nine years earlier than this cover!

I have in my Confederate Florida collection an 1861 cover from Newnansville (*Figure 2, above*) with the same “PAID/3” marking to pay the three-cent rate during the period of Confederate State use of the U.S. postage rates (February 4, 1861-May 31, 1861). The postmark on this cover is a very weakly struck 24mm cds with unclear date. The enclosure confirms the usage with dateline: Newnansville, Fla. May 21, 1861. I had considered this cover to be the known use of this PAID/3 rate marking device until the discovery of the cover in Figure 1.

Tropical Post Card Show

The Tropical Post Card Show is held each January and August in Pompano Beach, Florida. Those interested in having a booth should contact Tom Moore, show chairman, at (305) 666-0219 or email him at tommoo7@aol.com. According to FPHS member Burnham Neill, the club also holds meetings each month on the second Saturday, beginning at noon at the E.L. Olson Civic Center, 1801 NE Sixth Street in Pompano Beach. There is a web site at www.tropicalpcc.com.

A matching New Port cover

By David G. Phillips



FIGURE 1

NEW PORT / Flor. SEP 8 (1858) postmark ties three pairs of #36 on cover to Nottingham, England, with manuscript “Short Paid” debit 20¢ and New York BR. PKT SEP 15 marking and British manuscript 4/ (due). The “314” at lower left is the lot number from the David G. Phillips’ auction catalogue and is not part of the cover.

The cover in Figure 1 above is almost identical to the one discussed by Deane R. Briggs in the *Florida Postal History Journal*, Vol. 17, No.1 (January 2010) [See Figure 2 at bottom of page 19]. The cover in Figure 1 was sold in the 1985 auction of “The Florida Collection” by Charles F. Meroni which I conducted. It was Lot 314. It realized \$800 plus 10 percent buyer’s premium, a tidy sum 25 years ago. It was a very unusual usage from the small town of New Port, Florida and the Briggs’ example made me check my records to see if it was the same cover. It is so similar in the franking, the same date of mailing, and the same addressee that on cursory look would seem identical. The only real difference is the manuscript “Short Paid” notation reflecting the underpayment of the 96 cent rate instead of the handstamped boxed “SHORT PAID” in the Briggs example.

Fort Reid

By Deane R. Briggs, M.D.

The postmarks on the covers in Figures 1 and 2 are most unusual and unique for Florida. They are a large 36mm rimless postmark made apparently from a woodblock. The settlement of Fort Reid was located near the original site of a Second Seminole War fort of the same name established on July 7, 1840. Fort Reid was one of a series of forts placed every 30 miles or so along a military supply road from the St. John's River to Fort Brooke in Tampa. Fort Monroe, located on the southern bank of Lake Monroe, was a major supply depot for materials coming from the St. John's River for distribution to interior forts in the central and southern portions of the state. In 1837, following a skirmish, the name was changed to Fort Mellon (in honor of Capt. Mellon who was the lone casualty). For health reasons, Fort Mellon was temporarily closed in 1840,

Continued on page 20

A matching New Port cover

Continued from page 18



Figure 2. NEW PORT / Flor. SEP 8 (1858) cover discussed by Deane R. Briggs in the January 2010 issue of the Florida Postal History Journal.



FIGURE 1

FORT REID / FL. dateless rimless postmark with small “star” killer on 3¢ postal entire, enclosure datelined: Fort Reid, Orange County Feb. 11, 1876.



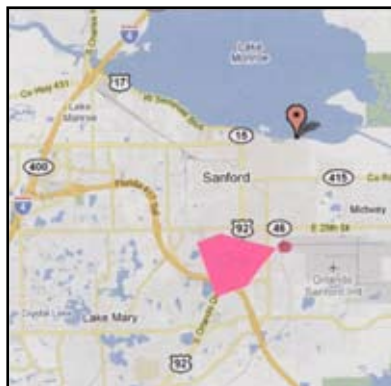
FIGURE 2

FORT REID / FL. dateless rimless postmark with large “star” killer.

and Fort Reid, located only a mile and a half to the south, was constructed. It was named for Gov. Robert Raymond Reid, the fourth territorial Florida governor. Fort Reid functioned for a little more than a year, reaching a force of 417 men before being disbanded toward the end of the Second Seminole War. No postal records are recorded from Fort Reid although records show that mail from Fort Mellon was handled via St. Augustine.

FIGURE 3

Map showing site of Fort Reid at the western end of the major runway at Orlando Sanford International Airport. The site of Fort Mellon is located on the southern bank of Lake Monroe, 1 1/2 miles north of Fort Reid.



It was not until the early 1870s that a settlement around the area of the old Fort Reid was established. Finally, on September 12, 1873, a post office of that name was opened in then Orange County with James MacDonald as postmaster. Toward the end of the 1870s, more development was begun and a housing subdivision was platted. By this time the spelling had changed to Fort Reed and all postmarks dating from the late 1870s until the post office was closed on October 31, 1903 continued to use that spelling. Currently the site of Fort Reid (Reed) makes up the western portion of the Orlando Sanford International Airport (*Figure 3*).

The postmark on the cover in *Figure 4* is also a rimless dateless circular postmark likely made from a woodblock as in the earlier examples, but is

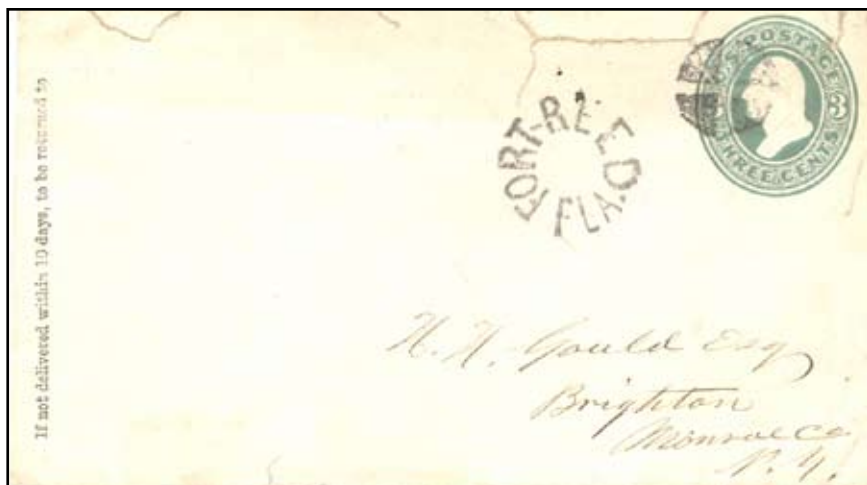


FIGURE 4

FORT REED / FLA. rimless circle postmark with cork killer.



FIGURE 5

FORT REED / FLA. NOV 6 (1878) postmark with fancy “B” in circle killer.

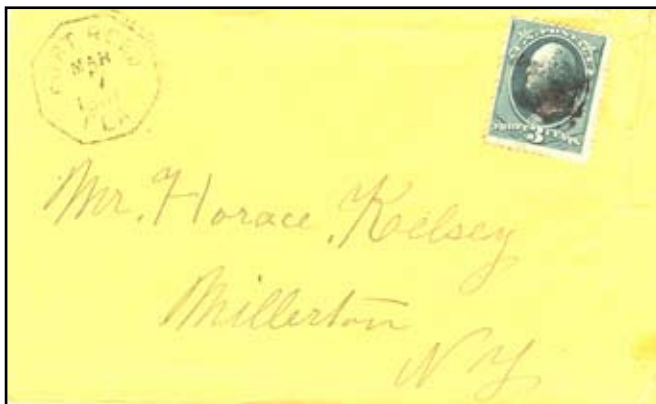


FIGURE 6

FORT REED / FLA. MAR 7 1881 octagonal postmark.

22mm in size and has the spelling changed to Fort Reed and has an “A” after the “FL” in the state abbreviation. This device must have been used for a very short while since a standard cds postmarking device was used by November 1878 (an example shown in Figure 5). That cover has an enclosure datelined “Fort Reed, Fla. Nov. 6, 1878.”

By 1881 yet another type of postmark was used. This time it was an octagonal cds device which included the year date (Figure 6). By the 1890s, standard cds year-dated postmarks were used until the post office was closed in 1903 and mail absorbed by the Sanford Post Office.

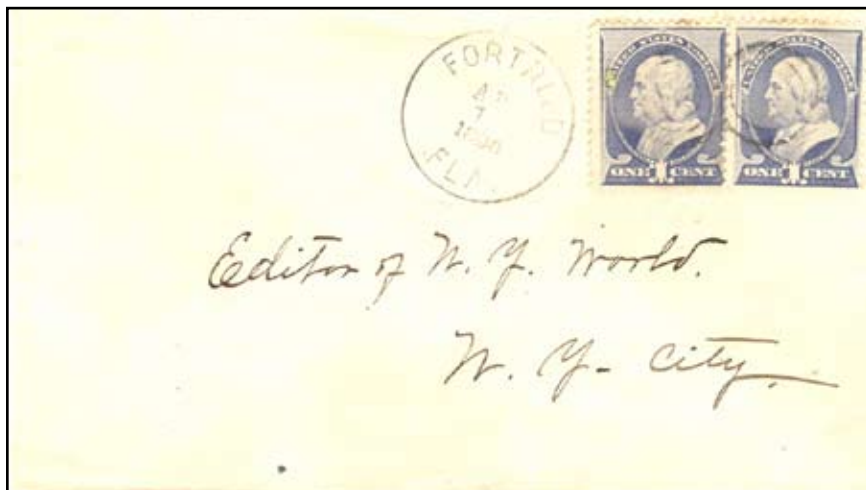


FIGURE 7
FORT REED / FLA. APR 10 1890 cds postmark.

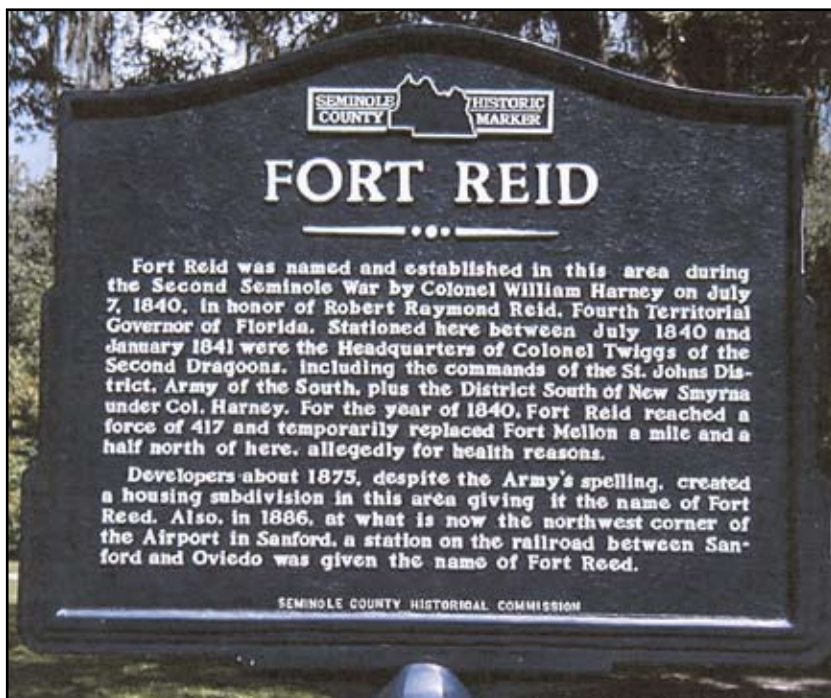


FIGURE 8
FORT REID historical marker in current Seminole County.

FLORIDA POSTAL HISTORY SOCIETY

CONTRIBUTING MEMBERS - 2010

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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