

# FLORIDA POSTAL HISTORY JOURNAL

*Promoting Philately in the Sunshine State*



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## Interesting 1864 letter from Fort Jefferson, Florida

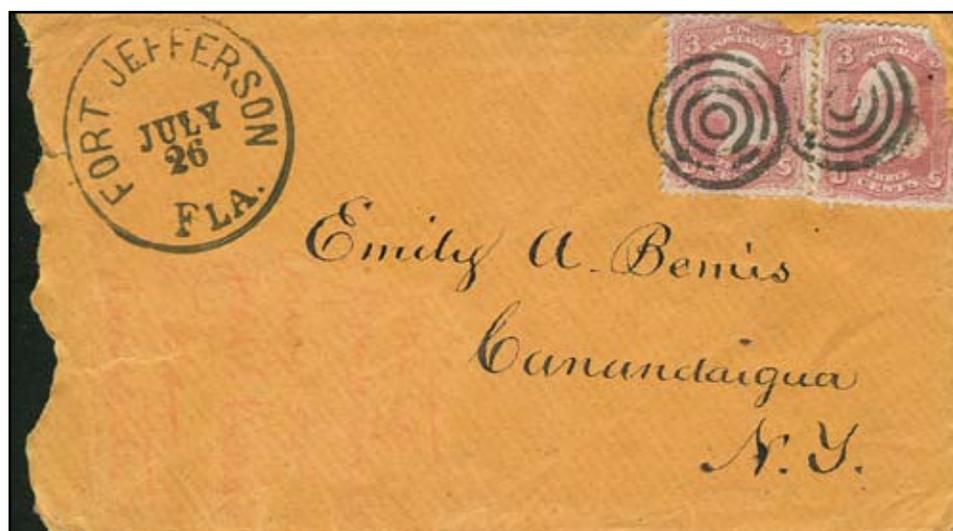
By Todd A. Hirn  
*FPHS Vice President*

George Washington Bemis was a First Lieutenant in Company E of the 110th N.Y. Volunteer Infantry Regiment stationed at Fort Jefferson, Florida from March 1864 to August 1865. Bemis survived the war and was mustered out with his unit on August 28, 1865 in Albany, New York at the rather advanced age of 52 years.

The following letter was written to his 13-year-old daughter, Emily, in upstate New York and is dated July 25, 1864. It was postmarked the following day at Fort Jefferson, as Figure 1 shows. The language and infor-



*Fort Jefferson is no longer in use and is currently part of the Dry Tortugas National Park.*



**FIGURE 1**

*Fort Jefferson postmark on cover to Canandaigua, New York.*

mation is fascinating, and thus of interest to postal historians.

The Fort Jefferson post office was established in Monroe County on October 28, 1861 and was discontinued October 27, 1868. Having significant historical content, the letter is transcribed in its entirety below.

----

*My dear daughter,*

*You don't know how disappointed I am in not having heard from*

*Continued on page 9*

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*For the bibliophiles in our group, we correct the Whole Number of this issue. After careful examination of prior issues by Dr. Briggs, it was determined this Whole Number should be 50. Sorry about any confusion this may have caused.*

# *The Tuckers of the Christmas (Florida) Post Office*

By Christine C. Sanders

Christmas, Florida is a tiny town one passes when traveling between Orlando and Titusville on State Road 50. It is easy to miss as there are only a few buildings of the town located on this major road. Time seems to have passed this community by as there are still numerous large oaks with long flowing Spanish moss hanging from them. However, there is a rich history of Christmas, Florida, its residents, and its post office.

In 1837, the U.S. Army under the command of General Abraham Eustis established a fort to help supply



**FIGURE 1**

*Postcard mailed by A.F. Tucker on March 25, 1910 from Christmas to Orlando (Doane Type 3, No. 1 postmark).*



**FIGURE 2**

*Picture side of postcard in Figure 1 shows Tucker's General Store and Post Office in Christmas.*

the troops fighting in the Second Seminole Indian War. It was named Fort Christmas in honor of the day on which construction had begun. It was utilized for only a short time, but became the site around which homesteaders and pioneers settled to form a community of farmers, ranchers and citrus growers. The post office was established on June 27, 1892. However, the word "Fort" was dropped from the name, and the community became known as Christmas, Florida.

The Tuckers were one of the pioneer families of the region. John R. A. Tucker arrived in the 1860s and

*Continued on page 4*

took up ranching in the area. He and his wife, Sarah Ann Elizabeth, had nine children. His second eldest, Richard Franklin Tucker, married Eliza Douglas and they had seven children. Their fourth child, A. F. Tucker, initiated the relationship with the Christmas Post Office that would span 60 years. A cover from a letter mailed by A. F. Tucker, on March 25, 1910 is shown in **Figure 1**. The postmark is a Doane Type 3, No. 1. This letter took six days to travel to Orlando via Oviedo. A. F. Tucker served as the unofficial postmaster of Christmas from 1914 to 1916.

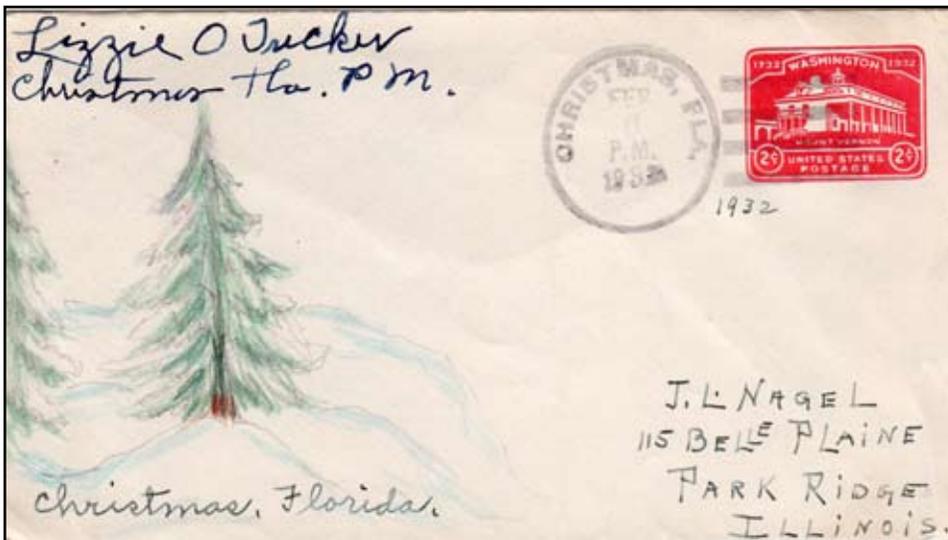


**FIGURE 3**  
*Christmas Day (1927) cover with Type C/1 4-bar postmark, signed by Postmaster Lizzie Tucker.*

His wife, Lizzie, then officially took over as the sixth postmaster. A. F. Tucker built a general store and moved the post office into it in 1918 (**Figure 2**). A 1927 Christmas Day cover bearing a Type C/1 4-bar postmark signed by Lizzie Tucker is shown in **Figure 3**. This postmark was used until 1931 when a Type E

Juanita Smith.

Juanita Elisabeth Smith was born in Rockwood, Tennessee and moved with her family to Christmas. She attended Cocoa High School where she met Cecil A. Tucker. They married in 1930. On August 27, 1932, Juanita took over the duties of postmaster from her mother-in-law, Lizzie. For the next 42 years, she put the tiny Christmas Post Office on the map. A Christmas Day cover from Juanita Tucker's first Christmas as postmaster is shown in **Figure 5**. Its Type C/1 (KS) and Type E (FL) 4-bar postmarks read "Christmas Holliday."



**FIGURE 4**  
*Scott's U525 envelope with Type E 4-bar postmark, signed by Postmaster Lizzie Tucker. The cover features a hand-drawn and painted evergreen tree.*

4-bar postmark characterized by the presence of the town and state names at the top of the circular date-stamp (CDS) and squared ends of the fourbars next to the CDS was introduced (**Figure 4**). A. F. and Lizzie Tucker had seven sons, one of whom, Cecil A., married

In 1933, Juanita Tucker began designing rubber stamp cachets to place on Christmas mail processed through the post office during the Christmas season, and in 1934, she introduced the now famous "little green Christmas tree" cachet (**Figure 6**). This was the same year in which the post office began using a Type C/2 4-bar postmark. The Christmas tree cachet with various slogans and year marks was used throughout her tenure as postmaster and beyond, and in 1948, "Glory to God in the Highest" (Luke 2: 14) became a permanent part of the cachet.

slogans and year marks was used throughout her tenure as postmaster and beyond, and in 1948, "Glory to God in the Highest" (Luke 2: 14) became a permanent part of the cachet.



**FIGURE 5**  
An interesting 1932 Christmas Day cover with two postmarks, "CHRISTMAS (FLA.)" and "HOLLIDAY (KANS.)."

**FIGURE 6**  
Christmas Day 1934 cover with Type C/2 4-bar postmark franked with Trans-Mississippi Exposition souvenir sheet of six Yosemite stamps. This was the first year the small Christmas tree cachet (upper center) was used.



In 1937, the post office was moved from Tucker's General Store into a small wood building that had been built by Cecil A. Tucker (Figure 7) on the south side of the road that would become SR 50. As shown in Figure 7, the right side of the structure contained the post office while the left side contained a gift shop from which post cards and a variety of illustrated covers and other souvenirs were sold. Also in 1937, the post office received its first machine cancel (Universal) and began using an F/1 4-bar handstamp postmark. Both of these postmarks are shown on the unusually cut Scott #UX27 postal card in Figure 8.



**FIGURE 7**  
Postcard showing the wooden structure that would house the post office (right side) and gift shop (left side) from 1937 to 1970.

Over the years, Juanita Tucker focused her energies on making the



**FIGURE 8**

*Unusual Scott's #UX27 postal card postmarked Christmas Day 1937. Notice the tiny tree cachet with two-line "MERRY CHRISTMAS/1937."*

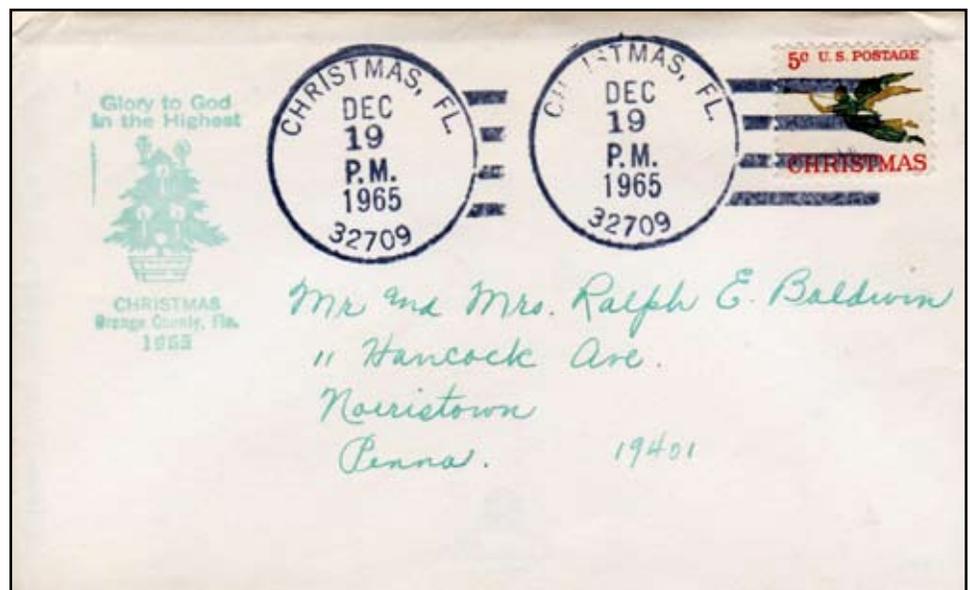
town a place for people to mail their Christmas cards and letters. An artist and philatelist herself, she designed many of the cards and covers sold in the gift shop. By 1949, the post office was raised to Class 3 status due in large part to the size of the Christmas mailings. By the early 1950s, the post office was processing over 100,000 pieces of Christmas mail annually.

In 1965, the post office began using the new Type F/2 4-bar handstamp showing the 32709 Zip Code (**Figure 9**), although it continued to use the F/1 4-bar handstamp during that year as well. In 1969, Christmas was named the first day city for the U. S. Christmas issue, due in large part to Juanita Tucker's efforts.

A hand-colored cachet she drew for this event (Number 40 in Mellone's FDC catalogue) is shown in **Figure 10**. Juanita Tucker recognized the importance of philatelists to her post office. She was a member of the Christmas Philatelic Club and the Central Florida Stamp Club that used the Christmas tree cachet for its mailings in 1949 (**Figure 11**). Many cachet makers utilized the Christmas Post Office for their mailings as well. These included among others, Walt Czuby, Gladys Adler, and L. W. Staehle.

In 1970, the post office was moved to a new brick building and the small wood post office became a museum. In 1972, Juanita Tucker's 40th Christmas as postmaster was commemorated with a special cover (**Figure 12**).

She retired in 1974. During her 42 years as postmaster she had seen the town grow from 250 to 900 inhabitants and the post office grow from Fourth to Second Class. On April 10, 1999 the post office celebrated Juanita Tucker's 92nd birthday with a commemorative cover with a cachet detailing the history of the little green Christmas tree cachet. A special postmark was issued for the occasion (**Figure 13**). Juanita Tucker ultimately moved to Orlando and died at



**FIGURE 9**

*Cover dated December 19, 1965 with two Type F/2 4-bar handstamps with Zip Code. Also notice the Christmas tree cachet with text above and below the tree.*

the age of 101 in 2008.

Her legacy and that of the Tucker family will live on not only through the special cachets that adorn so many items in Christmas philatelic collections, but also through the impact this family has made on the community it helped to found so many years ago.

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**FIGURE 10**

*First day cover of 1969 Christmas stamp with cachet designed and hand-colored by Juanita Tucker.*

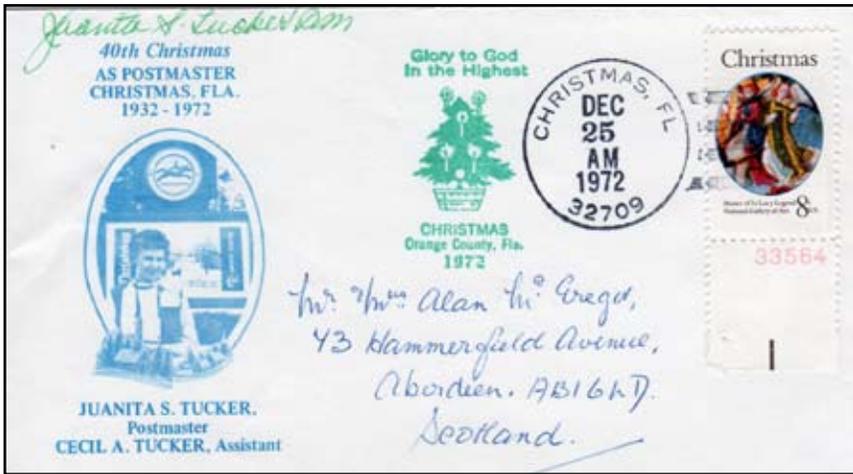


**FIGURE 11**

*Christmas Day 1949 cover sponsored by the Central Florida Stamp Club. Type F/1 4-bar postmark. No text above Christmas tree cachet.*



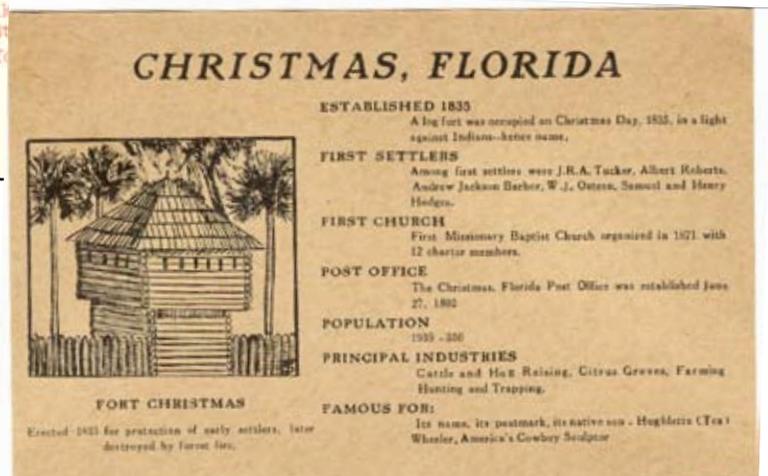
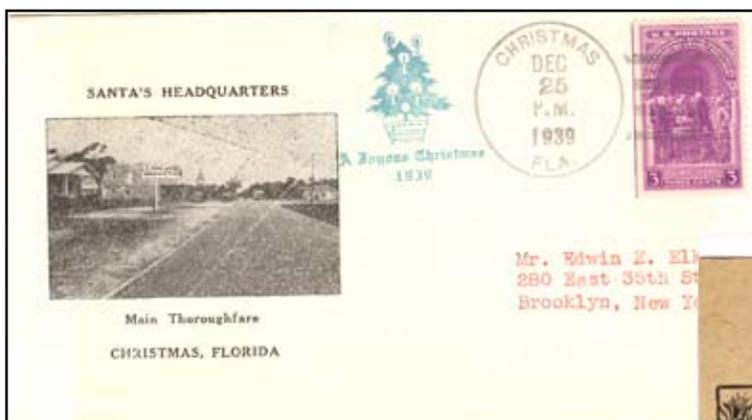
*This photograph, taken by photo-journalist Max Hunn, shows Juanita Tucker at the Christmas Post Office in 1954. The photograph appeared in the magazine Scenic South, Vol. 11, No. 12, in December 1954. It is reproduced with permission.*



**FIGURE 12**  
Signed Christmas Day 1972 cover commemorating Juanita Tucker's 40th Christmas as postmaster of Christmas, Florida. There is a printed cachet in blue showing Mrs. Tucker. The cover also has the Christmas tree cachet with text above and below the tree.



**FIGURE 13**  
A 1999 cover commemorating Juanita Tucker's 92nd birthday. The cover has a special printed cachet providing history of the little green Christmas tree cachet.



**FIGURE 14 (above and right)**  
This 1939 Christmas, Florida cover provided by Steve Patrick had an enclosure (shown at right) about Christmas, Florida.

*Fort Jefferson, Fla. July 25 '64*

**FIGURE 2**

***Dateline of letter: Fort Jefferson, Fla. July 25 (18)'64.***

*home since the 8th inst(ant) and that was dated about the 1st. When I was near Washington I received letters regularly every week, but here it is quite different. The latest N.Y. papers we have seen were dated the 9th.*

*I am writing this without knowing when it will go, but will have it ready for the next vessel. We hear that a Government transport called The Electric Spark and having on board the letters &c for this Regiment as well as a Surgeon who was coming to us, was captured by the rebel cruiser Florida near the Chesapeake Bay some days since. So, if I had any letters there, they are lost. Perhaps that will account for my not hearing from home of late.*

*It seems very strange to be here, twelve hundred miles from home and shut up in a Fort on an island out of*



**FIGURE 4**

***Undated photograph of Emily Bemis.***



**FIGURE 3**

***A "Carte de visite" or CDV of 1st. Lt. George W. Bemis.***

*sight of any thing but the broad Gulf and some small island of white sand. It would be very lonesome to me were it not for Col. Hamilton & wife and some few others.*

*I must tell you of the nice time we have had the last three days. On Friday morning, the monitor Tecumseh, escorted by two gunboats, the Augusta and Eutaw, put in here for coal, and the officers of the vessels and the Fort have been constant in their endeavors to be polite. On the first day I dined alone with the Captain of the monitor. The next day a party of about a dozen of us ladies & gentlemen, dined on board the Eutaw. We remained on shipboard till nearly midnight having dancing and music in abundance. On Sunday morning one of the officers came on shore to invite us to attend service. Several of us went and the Captain read the*

service of the Episcopal church, very much as we have it at home, adding the prayers in the "Service of the Sea." It was a fine sight – the crew in their white caps & shirts with blue trimmings and pants were drawn up in a line on one side of the deck, while we with the officers, were on the other. When the Captain came up the hatchway, the officer of the deck called out "attention," when the crew all raised their caps. During the service they remained perfectly quiet & at the close, under the charge of the sergeant, marched off to their quarters.

There has been a constant going to & fro between the Fort and the vessel, and, while I write, the Col. has taken the ladies in the parapet to see the latter go out. The monitor, with a pilot on board, laid off and the others follow. They left the James River on the 9th and are going to join the fleet off Mobile. May we hear a good account of them.

I am laying in a good supply of shells and other nice things to send home to be distributed among you all and when I reach home one of these days, I shall expect to see the fruits of my trip to the Tortugas on the mantelpieces of the cottage &c.

It is so warm and every thing so sticky. I can not write more now, but will close with requesting remembrance to all friends & much love to mother & the boys, Uncle Iasius(?) & family and all of our proper(?).

Your affectionate Father

----

The USS *Tecumseh* struck a Confederate torpedo (mine) in the Battle of Mobile Bay on August 5, 1864, heeled over and sank in 25 seconds, with the loss of 93 men out of a total crew of 100, including Commodore Craven. The gunboats *Augusta* and *Eutaw* were not involved in the battle. It would be very interesting to read the letters home from Lt. Bemis after he had learned of the fate of all the sailors that he had dined with aboard the USS *Tecumseh* only a few short days before!

Born on March 21, 1813 at Canandaigua, New York, George W. Bemis was listed in the 1850 census as a bookseller. He died at the age of 67 in 1880. Emily Adams Bemis was born January 9, 1851 in Canandaigua. She would marry U.S. Army Lt. Hiram H. Ketchum on August 24, 1878.

The steamer *Electric Spark* was captured by the Confederate cruiser *Florida* on July 10, 1864 and was sunk the following day. Commissioned in the Confederate States Navy on August 17, 1862, the CSS *Florida* was captured in the neutral port of Bahia, Brazil by the USS *Wachusett* on October 7, 1864. During her career the CSS *Florida* seized 37 Union prizes.

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# The Island Grove and Lochloosa (Alachua County) Post Offices

By Dr. Vernon N. Kisling, Jr.

This is the second part of a series of articles on small Alachua County post offices bordering Orange Lake and Lochloosa Lake. These two large lakes (about 13,000 and 6,000 acres respectively) are separated by a narrow strip of land and are located in portions of both Alachua and Marion counties, south of

Gainesville and east of Micanopy. There are several small towns with post offices along the shores of these two lakes, including: Boardman (Marion, 1882-1947), Citra (Marion, 1881+), Evinston (covered in the first part of this series), Alachua (1882+), Island Grove (Alachua, 1884+), Lochloosa (Alachua, 1881+), McIntosh (Marion, 1887+) and Orange Lake (Marion, 1847-52, 1853-67, 1876+). At the present time, only the Boardman post office is non-operational.

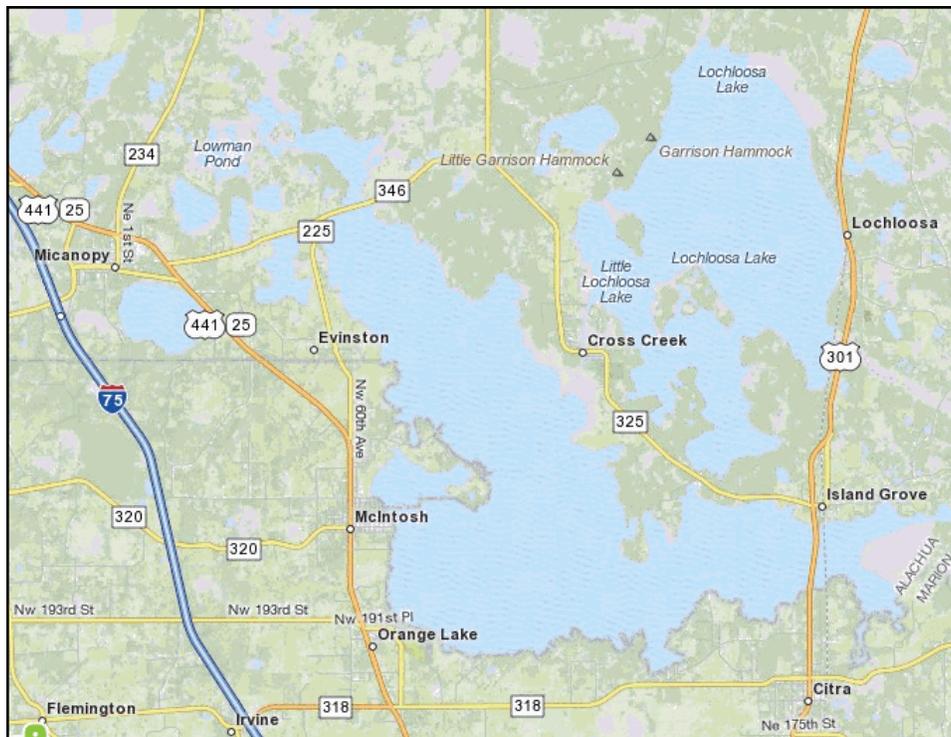
Cross Creek, a settlement in the center of this region, is located between the two lakes and near a creek of the same name. It has never had a post office and mail was likely handled through the Island Grove Post Office. Island Grove and Lochloosa are the two eastern shore post offices. Lochloosa is three miles north of Island

Grove, as the road goes (in this case, U.S. 301). Cross Creek is 4.5 miles from Island Grove on County Road 325 and eight miles from Evinston via highways 325, 346, and 225 (much shorter if you cross Orange Lake directly west in a boat).

Island Grove was so named because it was the site of a large fruit grove surrounded by lakes, ponds, creeks and

cypress swamps. It was a community established by William J. Moore in 1882, who was also the town's first postmaster on February 17, 1884. Fruit groves and truck farming were the main economic mainstay for a town that reached about 400 residents at its height (it now numbers about 110). The lakes also provided good fishing although I don't think this was exploited commercially.

The post card in Figure 2 documents a very early Florida commercial orange shipment to Baltimore with the monetary returns being sent to Mr. George K. Browne, Esq., presumably an attorney who collected monies from businesses. Having a railroad servicing the town allowed for oranges to be shipped north and received in good condition.



**FIGURE 1**

**Map showing Orange Lake and Lochloosa Lake regional post offices. Boardman is not shown, but is located where U.S. 441 intersects NW 60th Avenue west of Orange Lake (the lake west of Cross Creek).**

**Map courtesy of Mapquest. Website: [www.mapquest.com](http://www.mapquest.com)**

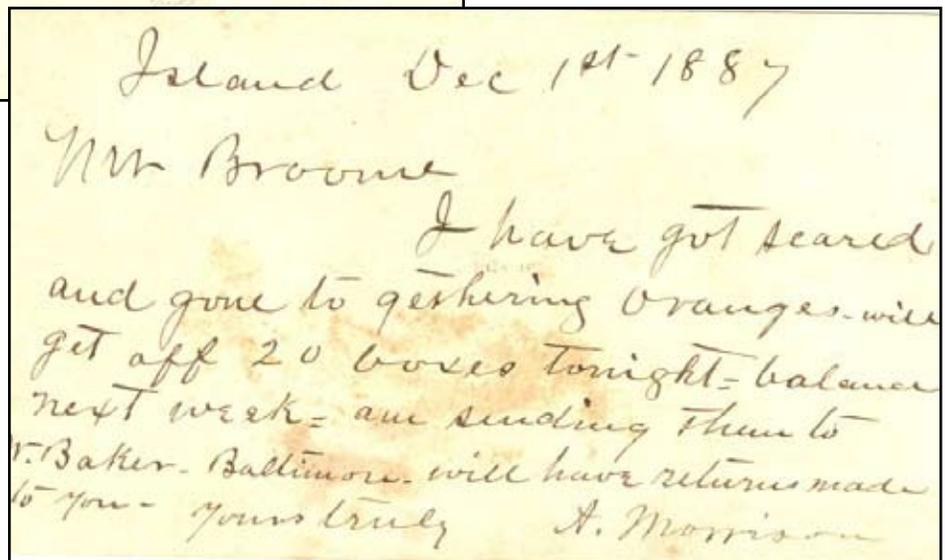
*Continued on page 12*



through Evinston and Boardman on the western side of the lakes (that was the Florida Southern Railroad, later named Atlanta Coast Line Railroad, which ran from Jacksonville to St. Petersburg). For many years, the railroad and boats were the only way to reach Island Grove and the trains carried the mail. As the wetlands were dried and used for farming and cattle, roads were added to the high areas. Now the main roads

**FIGURE 2**  
 September 29, 1887 double circle postmark on cover to the small PO town of Iamonia. Note the year slug is inverted.  
 From the Deane R. Briggs, M.D. Collection

The town, along with Lochloosa, was served by the Florida Railway & Navigation Co. later known as the Florida Central and Peninsular Railroad, which ran from Silver Springs north to Waldo where it connected the line running from Fernandina to Cedar Key. These eastern tracks paralleled the north-south tracks that used to run



**FIGURE 3**  
 Postcard with same postmark as Figure 2, documenting 1887 commercial orange shipment to Baltimore.  
 From the Deane R. Briggs, M.D. Collection



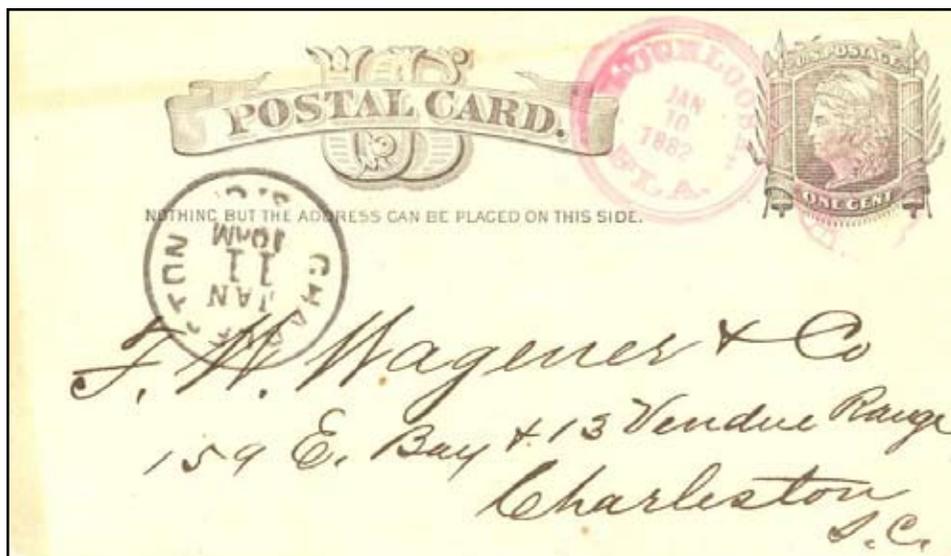
**FIGURE 4**  
 This Island Grove cover is dated July 15, 1894.  
 From the Deane R. Briggs, M.D. Collection

are U.S. 301 going north and south, and CR 325 going northwest to Cross Creek.

North from Island Grove about three miles on U.S. 301 is Lochloosa with a population currently down to only 47 residents. In between these two towns is the Antioch Cemetery, which is the resting place of Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings of Cross Creek fame and author of *The Yearling*. Neither of these towns (more like populated places, as they are referred to officially) are as prosperous as they once were, and recently the U. S. Postal Ser-

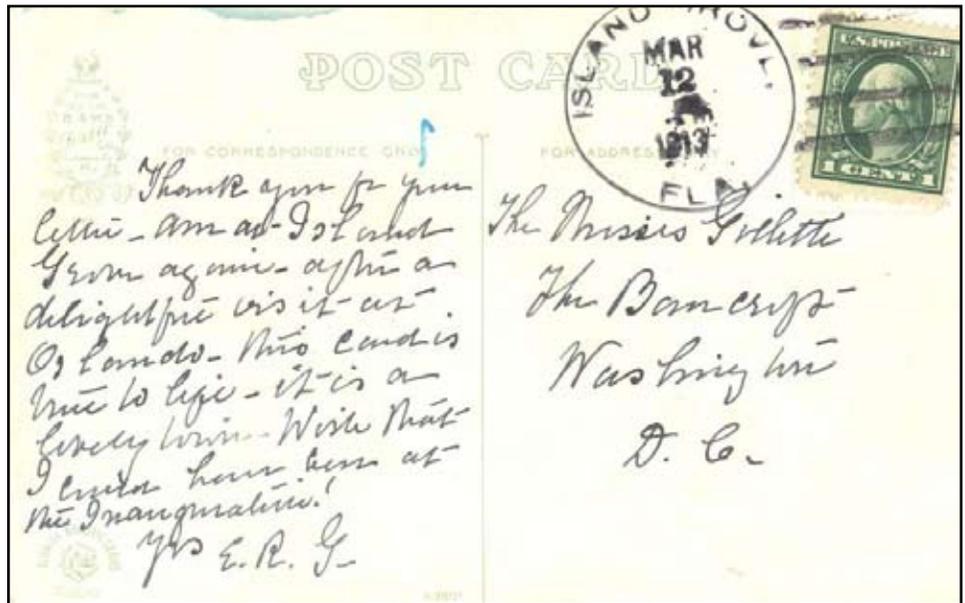
vice has indicated that they plan to close the Lochloosa Post Office (as well as the Evinston Post Office) this year due to “a steady decline in revenue and/or volume” (from the official USPS communication). Of the post offices in this region, only Boardman has been permanently closed, and that was because no replacement could be found when the postmaster retired in 1947.

As with every new post office proposal during the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century, Island Grove and Lochloosa filed an official Post Office Department form with the Office of the First Assistant P.M. General, which had to be endorsed by an existing postmaster from a neighboring post office. There was no need for the proposal to state a reason for establishing a new post office; however, a few criteria were important. It needed to be located on an existing mail contractor’s route (under certain conditions, a “Special Office” could be established, but without P.O. Department funds), and it needed to be a certain distance from existing post of-



**FIGURE 6**  
**LOCKLOOSA/FLA. JAN 10 1882 pink-magenta d/c 27mm postmark.**  
From the Deane R. Briggs, M.D. Collection

fices (although no minimum distance is stated). Also, the new post office proposer had to “select a short name for the proposed office, which, when written, will not



**FIGURE 5**  
**Four bar Type B Island Grove postmark dated March 12, 1913.**  
From the Deane R. Briggs, M.D. Collection

resemble the name of any other post office in the United States.”

The Island Grove Post Office is located at the intersection of U.S. 301 and CR 325. Originally it was located in a residential house, but at some point the house was moved and a new building built to serve as a post office at the same location. The original application (dated December 14, 1883) listed the railroad as the contractor with mail carried six times per week. At that time, the nearest post offices were Citra, three miles to the south and Lochloosa, three miles to the north. These seem like short distances, but there is a lake between Island Grove and Citra and swamps between Island Grove and Lochloosa and there were no roads at the time.

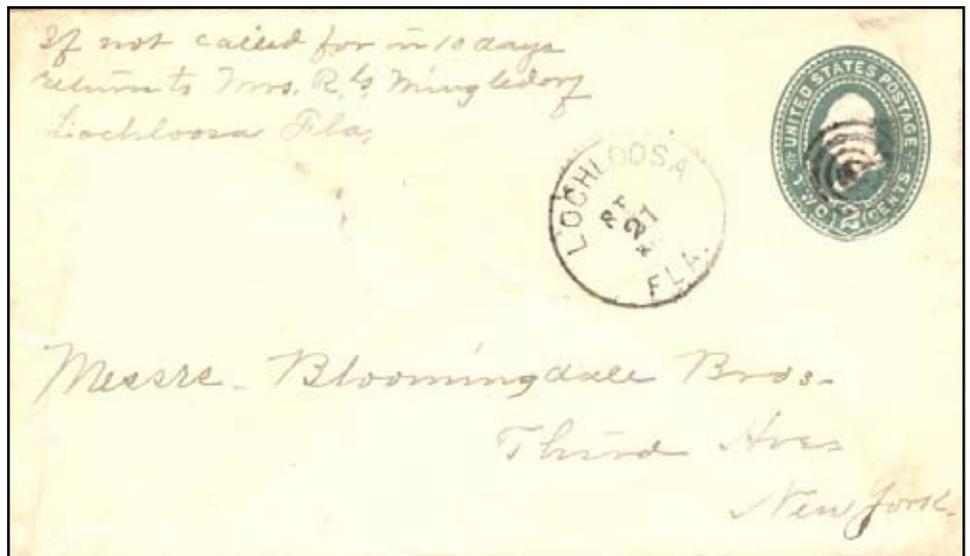
Island Grove postmasters have included: William J. Moore, February 17, 1884-87; John N. Hayman, 1887-89; Henry C. Sykes, 1889-93; James Weeks, 1893-97; William Evans, 1897-1914; William J. Evans, 1914-49; Maggie Evans, 1949-50; Harry T. Evans, 1950-90; Lawrence Crippen (Officer-In-Charge), 1990-91; Diana M. Strick-

land, 1991-92/93; Patricia Hamlin (Officer-In-Charge), 1992/93(?); Carolyn D. Dailey (later Carolyn D. Diaz), 1993-2003; Carolyn E. Jordan (Officer-In-Charge), 2003; Jackie L. Adams, 2003-05; Patricia A. Harman, 2005-06; Irene S. Welch, 2006-09; Scarlett Kinder (Officer-In-Charge), 2009-10; and Irene S. Welch, 2010-present. For gaps between postmaster appointments, "Officers-In-Charge" (Acting Postmasters) have been responsible for the post office.

The Lochloosa Post Office is located to the west of U.S. 301 on the shoreline of Lochloosa Lake. The original application (dated July 22, 1881) listed Graham and Wilson as the contractor with mail carried daily. At that time, the nearest post office was Citra (opened earlier that year), six miles to the south though swamps and a lake. Island Grove was not yet an established town. Lochloosa postmasters have included: Herman J. Koerner, September 9, 1881-83; George A. Hall, 1883; Herman J. Koerner, 1883-87; George F. Bates, 1887; Robert G. Mingleorff, 1887-1905; Francis M. Coleman, 1905-12; Harriett J. Coleman, 1912-20; Ida Pring, 1920-50; Oliver J. Jackson, 1950-56; Ione E. Austin, 1956-58; Thomas M. Reeves, 1958-91; Linda S. Penix (then Linda S. McRae), 1991-2000; Amy E. Britton, 2000-03; Scarlett L. Kinder (Officer-In-Charge), 2003-04; Robert M. Yeargan, 2004-2010; and Micca D. Cole, 2010-present.

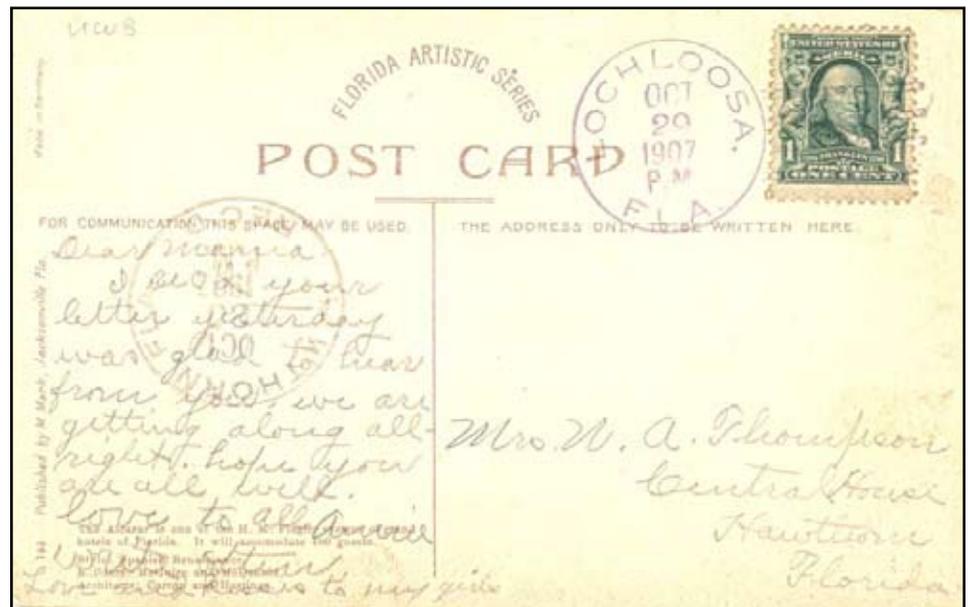
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**FIGURE 7**

*Sent to New York, this cover requests return if not called for in 10 days.*  
From the Deane R. Briggs, M.D. Collection



**FIGURE 8**

*LOCHLOOSA, FLA OCT 28 1907 magenta EKU Doane Type II postmark.*  
From the Deane R. Briggs, M.D. Collection

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## We had a good meeting in Sarasota!

*The 19th annual meeting of the Florida Postal History Society was held at the Sarasota National Stamp Exhibition on February 4, 2012. A special presentation was offered by Yamil Kouri, which members greatly enjoyed. These photographs, provided by Steve Patrick and Mitch Sapp, show the group meeting at the Municipal Auditorium in Sarasota.*



### *Island Grove and Lochloosa post offices* ————— *Concluded from previous page*

Record of Appointment of Postmasters, 1832-1971. U.S. Post Office Department/U.S. National Archives and Records Administration: Washington D.C., 1973. [The section on Florida is in the Special Collections, University of Florida Libraries, Reel 112-I.]  
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# Postal history of Disston City and the Pinellas Peninsula

By Dr. Douglas S. Files

Hamilton Disston (1844-1896) was a Philadelphia industrialist who invested heavily in Florida real estate after a fishing trip to the state in the early 1880s. He and his partners dredged significant swampland throughout Florida in order to reclaim useful land. In 1884, Disston established the town of Tarpon Springs through his Lake Butler Villa Company. Additionally, he built a commercial pier and two hotels in Tarpon Springs.

Once he understood that Tarpon Springs would never become a major city, Disston established another town on the outskirts of what is currently St. Petersburg, which he termed Disston City. In 1885, a Maryland doctor proclaimed Pinellas County to be the healthiest area in the world. This garnered much publicity for the region. Around the same time, Russian businessman Peter Demens built the Orange Belt Railway across the state, intending to stop around Tampa. Disston offered Demens 60,000 acres of land if he would continue his railway farther west to Disston City, but Demens de-



*Sugar Mill, Disston City, Florida  
Photo courtesy of the Florida State Archives*

murred. Instead, he ended his railroad at St. Petersburg, which he named after his hometown in Russia. St. Petersburg became a major city and Disston City (now Gulfport) never really developed and still has a population of less than 13,000. Hamilton Disston continued to live in Disston City until a financial calamity forced him to return to Philadelphia, where he died in 1896.

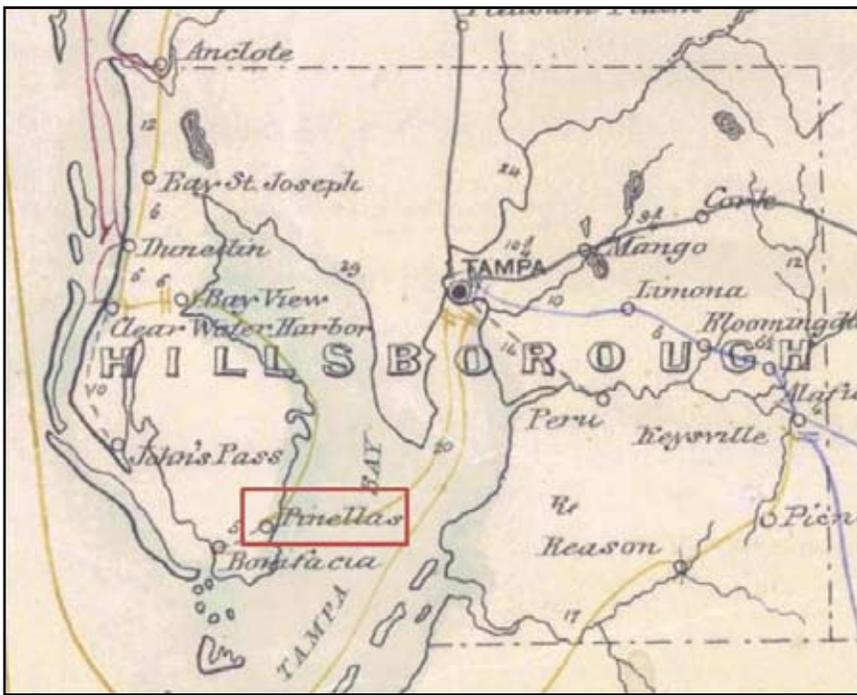
## Postal History



In 1876 the area around Big Bayou, just south of what is now St. Petersburg, was known as Pinellas Village. It boasted both a hotel and a post office, both of which were rare in Reconstruction Florida. The Pinellas post office was established on June 8, 1876, and was located in a cottage along the shore of the Gulf of Mexico. An early settler, John A. Bethell,



*Left: The Pinellas Village Post Office, circa 1900, with Sarah Bethell on the porch.  
Right: John Bethell, longtime postmaster of the Pinellas Post Office. (Arsenault 1996)  
Photos used with permission of the Special & Digital Collections, Tampa Library,  
University of South Florida.*



Petersburg Post Office was not established until eight years later on May 10, 1888. Note the lack of St. Petersburg on the 1876 postal map at left.

In 1884, the U. S. Post Office Department would not recognize the name Disston City for Hamilton Disston's town. It was too

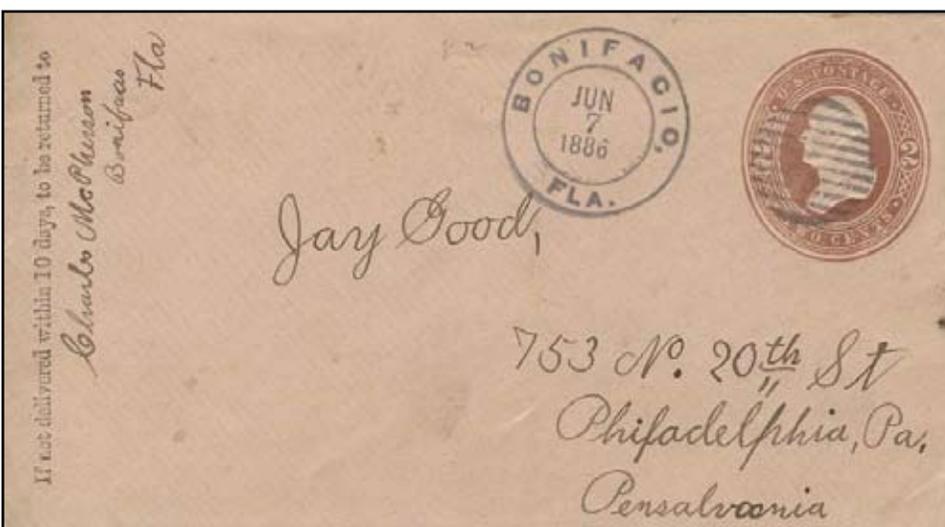


*November 6, 1893  
PINELLAS postmark*

**Post route map of the State of Florida, 1876. This section shows portion of Hillsborough County, and the Pinellas Peninsula. Used with permission of the Special & Digital Collections, Tampa Library, University of South Florida.**

who later wrote a history of the region, served as the Pinellas postmaster for 14 years. He was succeeded by his daughter, Mary, and then by his wife. On September 29, 1906, the Pinellas Post Office closed, with mail handled by St. Petersburg. It is interesting to note that the Pinellas Post Office was the first one established in the vicinity of present day St. Petersburg. The St.

similar to the name of a rural post office in the same Hillsborough County named "Diston." Instead, the post office at Disston City was re-opened as "Bonifacia" (established May 10, 1880; discontinued April 6, 1883). On September 15, 1888, in the midst of the yellow fever epidemic, the Diston Post Office (in the newly named Pasco County) was changed to Drexel, so the name Disston City was once again available. The post office named Bonifacia was in fact changed to Disston City on October 16, 1889.



In 1905, a trolley line connected Disston City to St. Petersburg, but the population of Disston City remained small. After Hamilton Disston moved from the town, a movement by other developers subsequently grew to change the name of the town to Veteran City in hopes of luring Civil War veterans to retire there. The town name did change with the post office officially changing to Veteran on July 10, 1906. The town was subsequently incorporated with the name Gulfport with the post office name changed on December 27, 1910. The town name has continued to remain Gulfport with mail handled as a branch of St.

**The first post office at the newly named Disston City was called "Bonifacia." This cover has a "BONIFACIO/FLA. JUN 7 1886 d/c postmark with grid cancellation on two-cent brown entire.**

**Note misspelling of "Bonifacia" in postmark.**

**From the Deane R. Briggs, M.D. Collection**

Petersburg since April 15, 1937.

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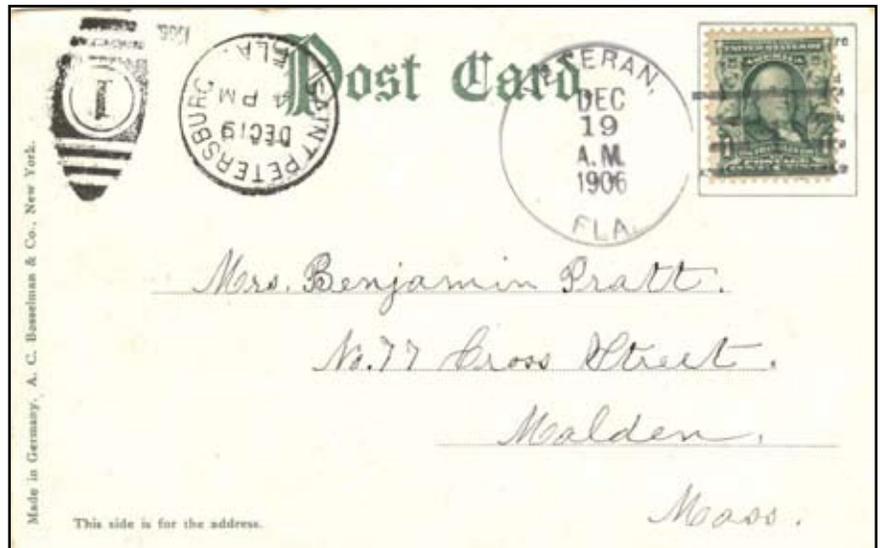
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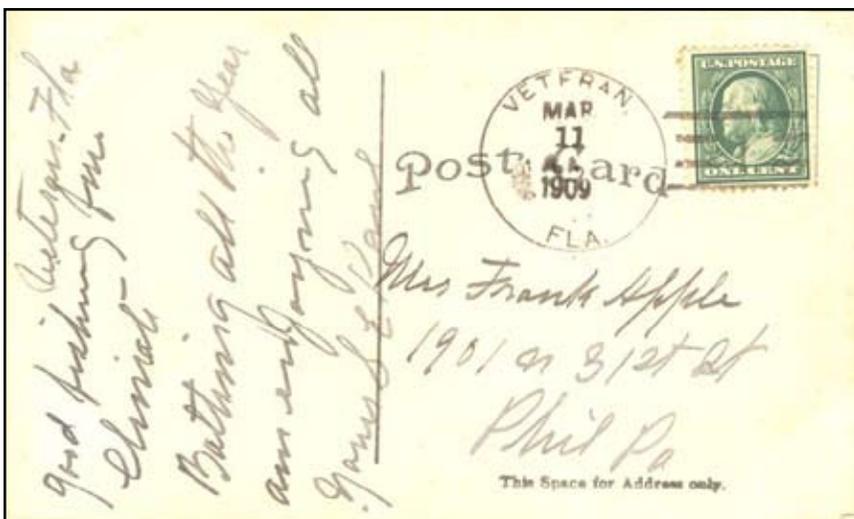
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**DISSTON CITY/ FLA. NOV 10 1896 postmark with "D in small circle" fancy killer cancellation on two-cent green entire. From the Deane R. Briggs, M.D. Collection**



**VETERAN / FLA. DEC 19 1906 Doane type III(1) EKU from class four post office with under \$100 annual receipts. From the Deane R. Briggs, M.D. Collection**



**VETERAN / FLA. MAR 11 1909 boldly struck late use of the Doane postmark with lower portion of the "ERA" now missing. From the Deane R. Briggs, M.D. Collection**



**PINELLAS / FLA. FEB 6 (1883) CDS on three-cent entire with weak Tallahassee Feb 10 received mark. From the Deane R. Briggs, M.D. Collection**

# Whatzit?

Here's an opportunity for members to offer their expertise and also play detective. There are many unanswered questions about Florida postal history. Countless strange and unusual pieces of postal history exist, and often they defy logical explanation. Or do they? Here is your chance to provide an answer or at least an opinion to help your fellow researchers. Send scans of your "problem covers" or unanswered questions to the editor at [eparker@hughes.net](mailto:eparker@hughes.net), or by snail mail to Dr. Everett L. Parker, 249 NW Live Oak Place, Lake City, FL 32055.

6c. Treasury	.02	Wren	.06	PRICE CATALOGUE OF CONFEDERATE MONEY, STAMPS, CURIOSITIES, BIRD'S EGGS, SHELLS AND MINERALS, FOR SALE BY F. C. SAWYER, Beauclerc, Fla.	
12c. "	.04	Quail	.12		
15c. "	.05	Lark	.12	TERMS: Cash with ALL ORDERS. POSITIVELY NO GOODS ON APPROVAL. Orders under 50 cents must contain 5 cents for postage. Remit by Postal Note or Registered Letter. Orders amounting to \$2.00 I will Register FREE. Am not responsible for packages lost. Always enclose a 2 cent stamp for any information desired.	
50c. "	.15	SHELLS—MARINE.			
1c. War	.02	"Bleeding-tooth" .05 and .08		CONFEDERATE MONEY.	
2c. "	.03	Polished, per doz. .30		EACH	
3c. "	.01	Money Cowries, Africa .10		1864. \$500.00, very rare,	\$ .30
6c. "	.02	Trochus .05 to .10		" 100.00, small, rare,	.50
10c. "	.08	Bivalve, polished, red and white .05 to .10		" 100.00, large,	.06
12c. "	.05	Other shells .01 to .15		" 100.00 Bond, (52 coupons),	.75
30c. "	.05	SHELLS—LAND.		" 50.00	.05
3c. War Env. (white)	.10	Small, per doz. .05 and .10		" 20.00	.04
3c. War Env. (cream)	.05	Large, each ST. JOHN'S RIVER.		" 10.00	.03
3c. War Env. (blue)	.02	Small, per doz. .05 and .10		" 5.00	.05
1c. War wrapper	.02	Large, each MINERALS.		" 2.00	.06
UNUSED STAMPS.		Coquina Rock, St. Augustine .10 to .25		" 1.00	.06
1c. Postage due	.03	Granite .10 to .25		" .50	.15
2c. "	.04	Gold Ore .25			
3c. Green, '70	.06	Silver Ore .25			
5c. Brown, '84	.10	Feldspar .15			
10c. Special Delivery, '85	.15	Itacoluminite, or Moving Sandstone .10 to .25			
1c. P. O. Department	.10	Petrified Wood .10 to .25			
3c. "	.06	Quartz, various .20			
6c. "	.10	Quartz, XI's .15			
10. "	.40	Calcite .20			
3c. " " Env.	.10	MISCELLANEOUS.			
6c. " " "	.20	Agent for Youth's Ledger .25c. per year			
1c. War Dep't	.03	Agent for American Numismatist 50c. per yr			
2c. "	.03	Agent for The Hoosier Naturalist, 50c. per yr			
3c. "	.03	Agent for West Am. Scientist, \$1.00 per year			
6c. " " "	.05	Agent for Western Naturalist, 50c. per year			
10c. " " "	.10	WANTED—All kinds of U. S. Stamps.			
		Cash or good exchanges offered. Give full description always and enclose stamp for reply.			
		F. C. SAWYER, Beauclerc, Fla.			
		R. B. Troustot & Co., Printers, Valparaiso, Ind.			

STAMPS.		1870 10c. brown	.01	6c. Treasury	.02
Sheets of U. S. Stamps of all kinds, including Rio's. Also foreign on approval. Agents wanted. Commission on all sales less than \$1.00 25 per cent. Over \$1.00 40 percent. Send stamp and reference and state what kind of stamps and country.		1882 " chocolate	.02	12c. "	.04
1851 1 c. blue unsp.	\$ .01	1870 15c. orange	.02	15c. "	.05
" 3c. red "	.01	" 30 black	.03	90c. "	.15
1857 1c. blue,	.05	1882 5c. "	.01	1c. War	.02
" 3c. red	.01	1883 " brown	.01	2c. "	.03
1861 1c. blue	.02	1885 Sp. 110c. 10c. blue	.05	3c. "	.01
" 2c. black	.02	POSTAGE DUE.		6c. "	.02
1868 " " gilded	.10	Brown 1870, 1, 2 and 3c. each	.02	10c. "	.08
" 3c. rose, 5 var.	.01	5 and 10c. each	.05	12c. "	.05
" 3c. " gilded, 2 var.	.02	Red-brown, 1886, 1 and 2c. each	.01	30c. "	.05
" 10c. green	.05	5 and 10c. each	.03	3c. War Env. (white)	.10
1869 2c. brown, gilded	.03	DEPARTMENTS.		3c. War Env. (cream)	.05
" 3c. blue	.05	1c. Interior	.05	3c. War Env. (blue)	.02
" " " gilded	.01	2c. "	.02	1c. War wrapper	.02
1870 1c. "	.01	3c. "	.01	UNUSED STAMPS.	
" 2c. brown dark	.02	6c. "	.05	1c. Postage due	.03
" " " light	.01	12c. "	.15	2c. "	.04
" " " gilded	.25	15c. "	.15	3c. Green, '70	.06
1875 2c. vermilion	.01	2c. Navy	.15	5c. Brown, '84	.10
1870 3c. green light	.01	1c. P. O.	.10	10c. Special Delivery, '85	.15
" " " dark	.01	2c. "	.15	1c. P. O. Department	.10
1875 5c. blue	.01	3c. "	.01	3c. " " "	.06
1870 6c. carmine	.10	6c. " Env. '73	.10	6c. " " "	.10
1871 6c. red	.01	3c. " " '75	.02	10. " " " "	.40
1883 " lake	.02	6c. " " "	.05	3c. " " " Env.	.10
		1c. Treasury	.05	6c. " " " "	.20
		2c. "	.03	1c. War Dep't	.03
		3c. "	.01	2c. "	.03
				3c. "	.03
				6c. "	.05
				10c. "	.10

Past President Steve Patrick of Apopka asked in the last issue if anyone had a cover or knew of a stamp dealer who was in business in Florida prior to 1901. These scans show a sales flier from a Beauclerc, Florida stamp dealer circa 1888.

Do you have a question about a cover, or Sunshine State philately in general that we can feature in this spot? Please send scans to the editor!

## FLORIDA POSTAL HISTORY SOCIETY DEALER MEMBERS

Below is a listing of FPHS members who are also stamp dealers. Please support our dealer members when visiting stamp shows, or by mail!

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<b>RICHARD FRAJOLA</b> P.O. Box 2679 Ranchos De Taos, NM 87557 (505) 751-7607	<b>MICHAEL ROGERS INC.</b> 415 S. Orlando Ave. Suite 4-1 Winter Park, FL 32789 (407) 644-2290
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<b>PATRICIA A. KAUFMANN</b> 10194 N. Old State Road Lincoln, DE 19960 (302) 422-2656	<b>PHIL V. WARMAN</b> Suncoast Stamp Co., Inc. 3231 Gulf Gate Dr. #102 Sarasota, FL 34231 (800) 921-3316
<b>JOHN L. KIMBROUGH</b> 10140 Wandering Way Benbrook, TX 76126 (817) 244-2447	<b>C. MICHAEL WIEDEMANN</b> Box 6130A Titusville, FL 32782 (321) 269-3377

*We note with regret the passing of two FPHS members, Ken Rice and Harry S. Dow. Both men were Contributing Members and will be missed. Ken co-edited the first handbook on Florida stampless covers, Florida Postal History and Postal Markings of the Stampless Period in 1957. This and his extensive reference listing of known stampless markings and covers were essential for the publication of our society's stampless book in 1999.*

## FLORIDA POSTAL HISTORY SOCIETY CONTRIBUTING MEMBERS - 2012

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

<b>Hector Arvelo</b>	<b>Leon King</b>
<b>Donald Ball</b>	<b>Dr. Vernon Kisling</b>
<b>Ray Bartlett</b>	<b>Alan E. Knight</b>
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<b>William H. Johnston</b>	<b>C. Michael Wiedemann</b>
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<b>John L. Kimbrough, M.D.</b>	<b>Central Florida</b>
<b>Richard D. Kinner, CLUFIC</b>	<b>Stamp Club</b>
<b>Howard King</b>	