



FLORIDA POSTAL HISTORY JOURNAL

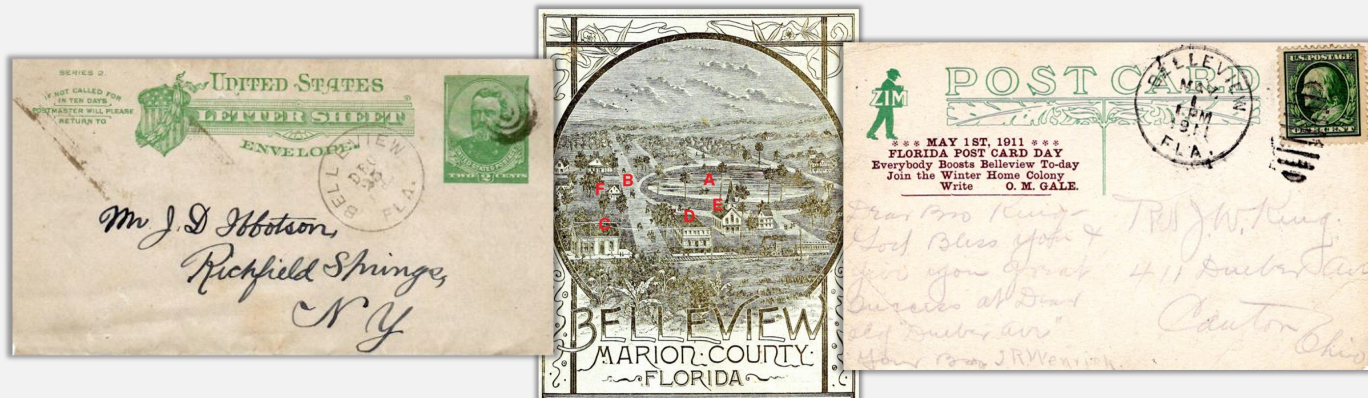
Promoting Philately in the Sunshine State



Vol. 30, No. 1

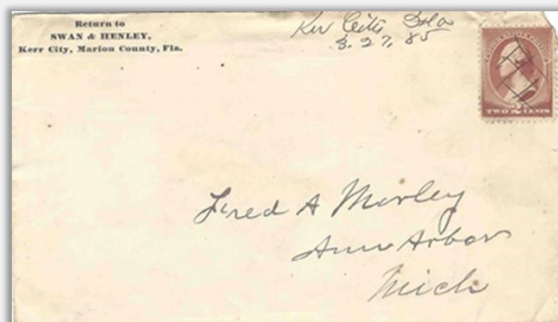
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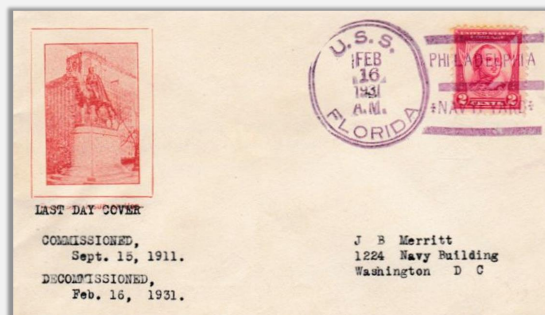
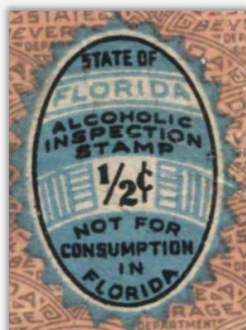


Belleview, Florida: City of Oaks

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE



Kerr City, Florida



Florida Revenue Stamps

The Battleship *Florida* (BB-30)

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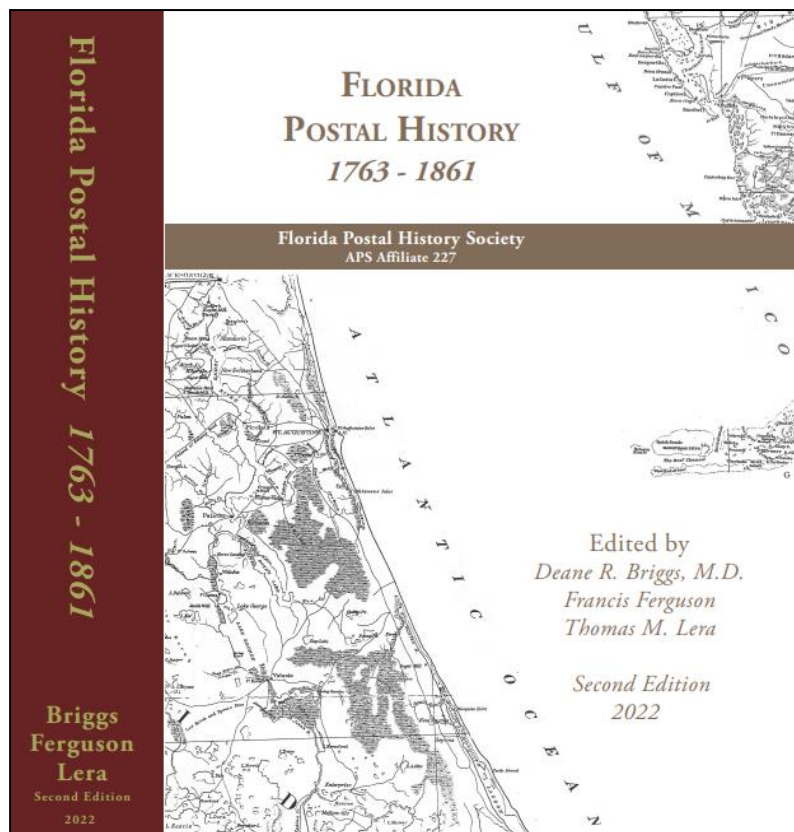
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Florida Postal History 1763 – 1861

2022 Revised Second Edition

In late 2018, the Florida Postal History Society published *Florida Postal History 1763-1861*, a completely revised and updated version of the original publication.

The authors spent over 100 hours at the Florida State Archives researching more than sixty boxes containing hundreds of folders and files for Florida Election Returns and Governor's Papers. This resulted in the discovery of over 200 new EKU and LKU listings, and more than eighty full color scans of new covers including the covers for many of the images printed originally black and white in both the 1999 and 2018 books.



The 2022 Revised Second Edition has updated records for nearly one-half of all towns, and scans of several new postmarks and rate markings. As new US Post Office records have become available on the internet, we have located many post offices where we had originally stated, “the location was not clearly known.”

This Revised Edition is a 456-page, perfect-bound hardback book and includes revisions to the sections on Florida Pre-Territorial Postal History and the Republic of West Florida. An up-to-date census of known covers makes this a must have reference text for Florida postal historians.

One hundred copies of the second edition will be printed and made available for \$50 at FLOREX 2022 and at the 2023 Sarasota National Stamp Exhibition. If a copy is requested by mail, the cost is \$60 which includes postage.

**Please order your copy now, with a check payable to the Florida Postal History Society.
Send it to: Deane R. Briggs, 138 Odin Drive, Winter Haven, Florida 33884**

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Bellevue, Florida: City of Oaks

By Christine C. Sanders

Bellevue, Florida lies eleven miles south of Ocala in Marion County. A map drawn in 1884 indicates its location just below Ocala (Figure 1). The hatched lines for railroads show that even this early in Florida's history, Bellevue was readily accessible by rail as the Florida Railway and Navigation Company had arrived in 1882.

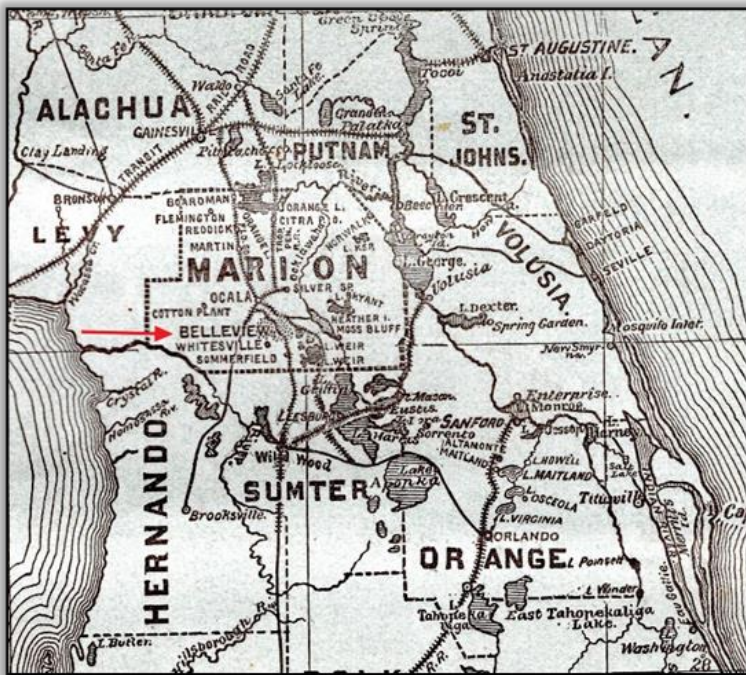


Figure 1. 1884 map of Florida in the area of Bellevue (red arrow).

The Marion Land and Improvement Company had been formed to promote and sell land around Lake Lillian, a central feature in the original "New England Colony" developed here in the 1880s. Its early moniker of "City of Oaks" came from the many trees that were planted in the area around Lake Lillian and the early town to enhance the comfort of inhabitants and winter visitors in this area of high rolling terrain, fertile soil and mild climate.

Early History

Bellevue was founded in 1884 and incorporated in 1885. In 1886, a brochure was produced by the Marion Land and Improvement Company to attract more investors and visitors to the area. On its front was an image of the early town (Figure 2).

The purpose of Bellevue's founding was clearly stated in the brochure: "Bellevue, Marion County, Florida was founded by several gentlemen who have long had a desire to establish a model town which should combine the greatest natural, social and religious advantages with freedom from the curses of intemperance and pauperism." In fact, those purchasing land signed a deed with provisions that "no intoxicating liquors shall be sold, nor any gambling allowed."

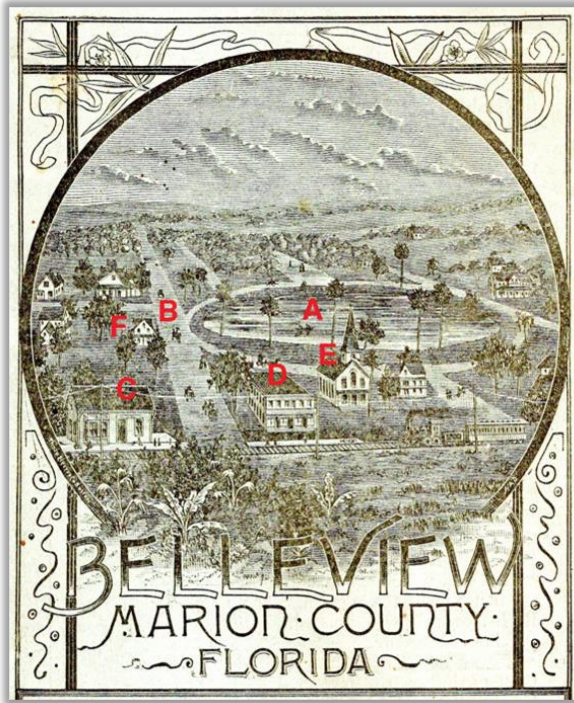


Figure 2. Front of 1886 brochure produced by the Marion Land and Improvement Company to attract visitors and investors to Belleview.

The large oval area in Figure 2 (marked A) is Lake Lillian. The major road to the left (marked B) is S.E. Robinson Road, named for the President of the Marion Land and Development Co. In the left foreground is the railroad station (marked C) that was also shown in detail in the brochure (Figure 3).

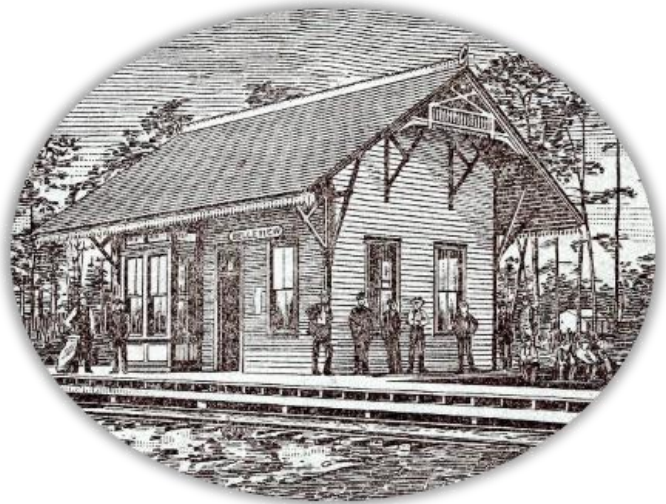


Figure 3. Belleview's first railroad depot.

Just behind the railroad tracks was S.E. Front Road, the location of the business area that developed in the town. The Marion Land and Improvement Co. was located here (marked D).

The building at the center of Figure 2 (marked E) served as the first Town Hall, school and church with ministers of different denominations rotating on Sundays. A drawing of this appeared in the 1886 brochure (Figure 4).



Figure 4. School house that was also used as the town hall and a church.

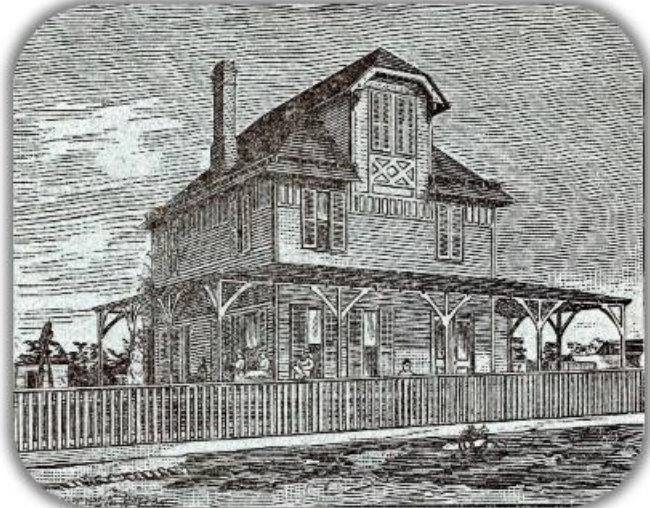
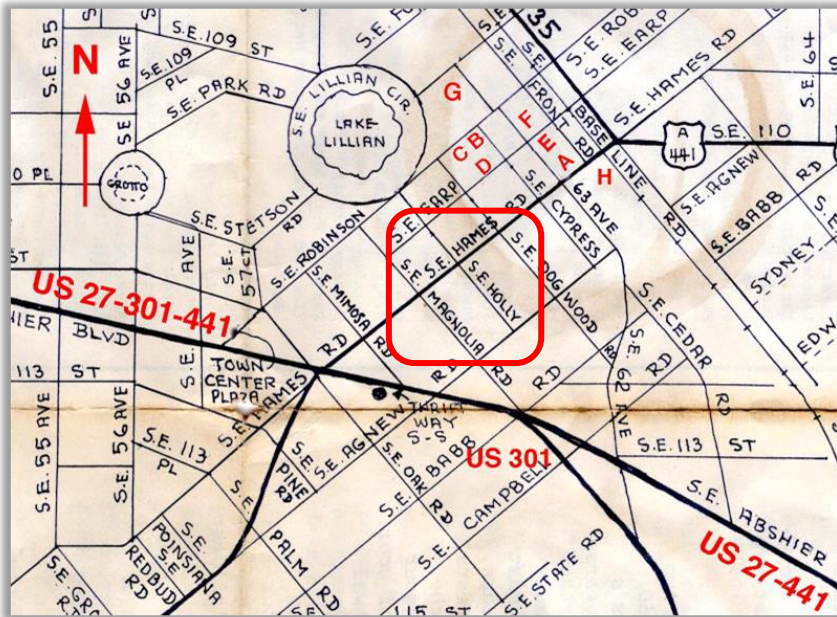


Figure 5. Dr. Harvey Knight's home and Sanitarium.

A prominent feature of early Bellevue was the Sanitarium (marked F) built by Dr. Harvey Knight in 1884 – 85. Its appearance in the 1886 brochure is shown in Figure 5. This was initially Dr. Knight's residence as well as a sanitarium. It helped to attract winter visitors who wanted the escape the cold weather for health reasons. Over time, two additional connected buildings were added. In the 1920s, the Sanitarium became the Lakeview Hotel. By 1886, Bellevue had 300 residents, and by 1887 most of the residential lots had been sold. Major industries included citrus, timber and turpentine.



The post office in Bellevue was established in 1884 with Charles A. Babb Postmaster and Railroad Station Depot Agent. The mail arrived by being thrown off a train in the evening and was picked up by the train from a mail arm as it passed by.

Over time, the post office would be relocated to various stores in town, and even to the Masonic Hall.

The post office was given a home of its own in 1954 at S.E. Magnolia and S.E. Hames Road (boxed area, Figure 6 map).

Figure 6. Map of area of New England Colony within Bellevue. (A) Gale & Nott store; (B) Town Hall/School/Church; (C) Methodist Church; (D) Bush memorial Library; (E) Masonic Hall; (F) Bellevue Trading Company store; (G) Bellevue Civic Center; (H) Railroad Station.

A letter written and mailed from Bellevue on December 25, 1889, reflects life in early Bellevue. It was written on the 2-cent Grant letter sheet (Scott U293) issued August 18, 1886 (Figure 7) by a son to his father in Richfield Springs, NY. From the contents of the letter, it appears that the son is developing an orange grove for the family back at home in New York.

A couple, named Parkes, had been very kind to him and gave him some trees from their nursery for Christmas in lieu of a present since "it is so hard to get anything."



Figure 7. Grant letter sheet postmarked December 25, 1889, in Bellevue.

They and others in the community offered him rides, invited him to meals, and to sit on the "piazza or in the parlor" of their homes. He requests that his father or mother write to thank the Parkes for all of their kindnesses to him.

The son also mentions that he expects to receive the Christmas box the parents have sent him soon. He complains that it seems much more like the Fourth of July than Christmas since it is hot, and people here “fire off fire-crackers” and the hired help get drunk. This last bit of news indicates that the early colony’s prohibition against alcohol was either not being followed or it was possible to get alcohol nearby.

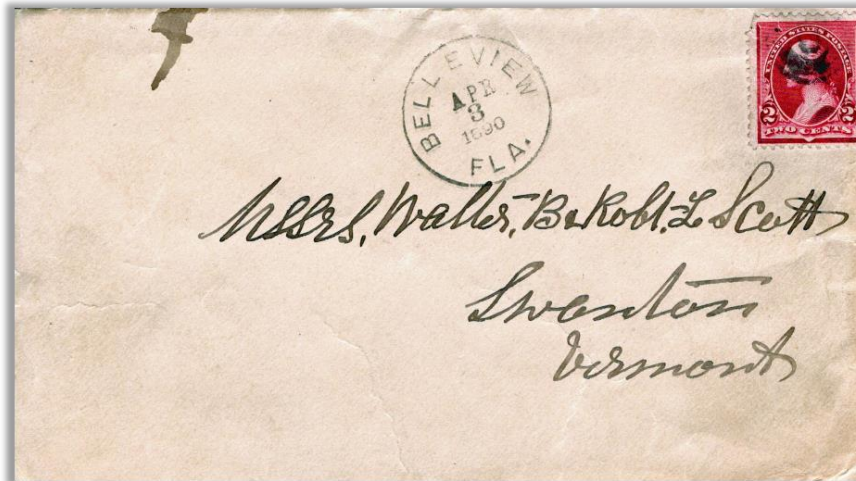


Figure 8. Cover postmarked April 3, 1890, in Belleview, Florida.

Some grove owners were wiped out and returned north. Others persisted and recovered while still others turned to raising produce that grew well in the rich soil of the area.

The citrus industry in Belleview continued into the twentieth century with one of the best-known companies of the area, Belleview Growers Packing Company, featuring Sunbrite brand Florida Citrus (Figure 9). Unfortunately, a big freeze in 1985 destroyed most of the citrus in this area.

The Early 1900s

Images of Lake Lillian were popular on early postcards from Belleview. A black and white photo on paper with a postcard



Figure 9. Label for Belleview Growers Packing Company, Belleview, Florida.



Figure 10. Postcard (circa 1901 – 1907) with photo of Lake Lillian.

Most residences of the early New England Colony were established by 1890 around Lake Lillian (S.E. Lillian Circle), S.E. Robinson Road and S.E. Earp Road (see map in Figure 6).

A cover mailed from Belleview on April 3, 1890, is shown in Figure 8.

In the late 1880s, citrus was the major crop of Belleview. The “Big Freeze” of December 1894 and February 1895 destroyed many of the groves and young trees.

back (circa 1901 – 1907) shows an area of Lake Lillian with few homes in the background (Figure 10).

Another view of the lake on a postcard postmarked May 1, 1911, is shown in Figure 11a. More homes surround this area, and a horse-drawn buggy can be seen at the water’s edge.

On the address side of the postcard, is a message about Florida Post Card Day with “Everybody Boosts Belleview To-day Join the Winter Home Colony, Write O.M. Gale (Figure 11b).

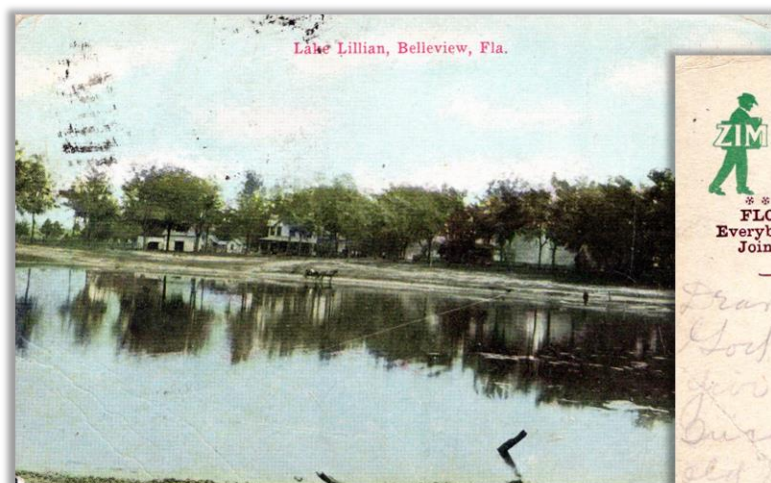


Figure 11a. 1911 postcard with photo of Lake Lillian.

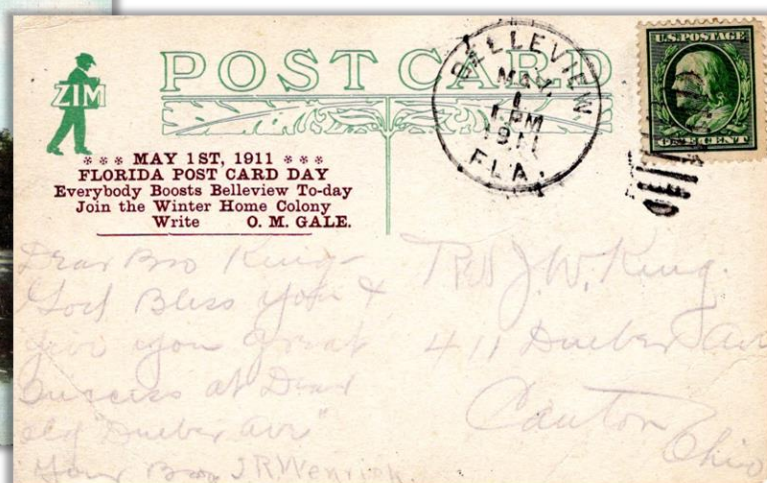


Figure 11b. Reverse of postcard in Figure 11a with message about Florida Post Card Day from O. M. Gale, early merchant in Belleview, Florida.

Gale & Nott was a dry goods store (marked A on Figure 6) on S.E. Front Street near the railroad depot (marked H on Figure 6) that at one time had housed the post office. A fire in the early 1930s burned the store down which necessitated moving the post office to the Masonic Hall on S.E. Front Road (marked E on Figure 6).

A postcard mailed February 24, 1922, shows a similar area of the lake as Figure 11a with even more residences facing the lake (Figure 12).



Figure 12. 1922 postcard showing increase in residences along Lake Lillian in comparison to view shown in Figure 11a.

The card's message states:

"This is the life sister. I can see this lake from my front porch. There's an alligator in it, but they say he is mighty shy of Conn. Yankees. I'm going gunning for him some day. Ed off fishing—hope he has luck. I've got the pan hot and my appetite ready."

The postcard was mailed to Ridgefield, CT.

S.E. Robinson Road became an important roadway for the New England Colony residences and town buildings. A 1910 postcard of S.E. Robinson Road (labeled "Ave.") looking west is shown in Figure 13.



Figure 13. 1910 postcard showing S.E. Robinson Road, looking west.

On the right side of the road are homes with fences around them. In the early years, carriage horses and other animals, vegetable gardens, and fruit trees were kept within the fenced-in areas of the homes.

A 1917 postcard of the road looking east is shown in Figure 14. The first building on the right is the Methodist Church built in 1900 (marked C on Figure 6) while the second building on the right is the Town Hall (marked B on Figure 6).

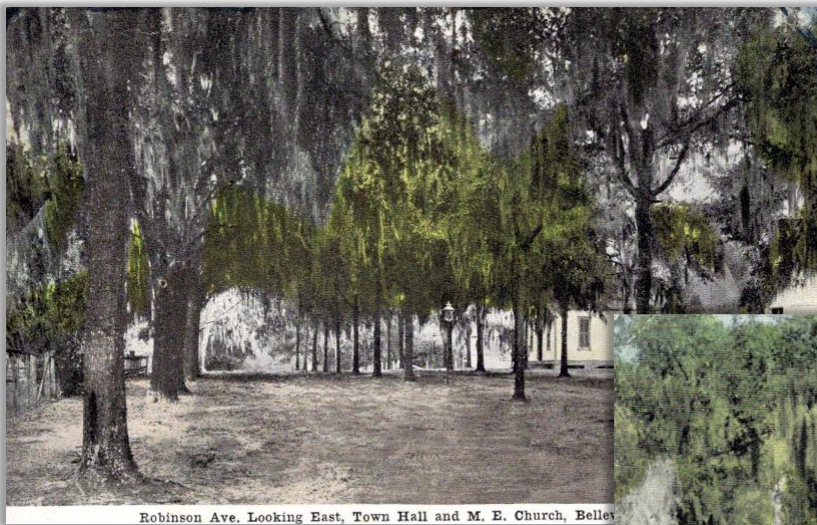


Figure 14. 1917 postcard showing S.E. Robinson Road, looking east.

This was built in 1908 using native fieldstone after a fire in 1904 destroyed the original library reading room. Although surrounded by newer construction, this building is still part of the Bellevue Public Library.

A 1909 postcard image from S.E. Earp Road (Figure 15) shows the Bush Memorial Library (marked D on Figure 6) behind the Methodist Church on S.E. Robinson Road.



Figure 15. 1909 postcard with view of Library (foreground) and Methodist Church (background) from S.E. Earp Road.

The 1904 fire destroyed a number of buildings on S.E. Front Street as well. The Marion Land and Improvement Company hotel and store was destroyed, and the site was sold to the Masons who built their Masonic Hall there (marked E on Figure 6).

A postcard (circa 1910) shows an image of the Masonic Hall with a store to the right (Figure 16). Note the top front of the store is just a wall.



Figure 16. Pre-1914 postcard of Masonic Hall and store on S.E. Front Road. Note lack of second floor.

The blackened area at the beginning of the text at the card's bottom obliterates "Post Office." Thus, this store at a former time, housed the post office as well. The proprietor is pictured at the top right. The message on the card's reverse identifies him as Mr. Tremere who served as Postmaster for Belleview 1911 – 1912.

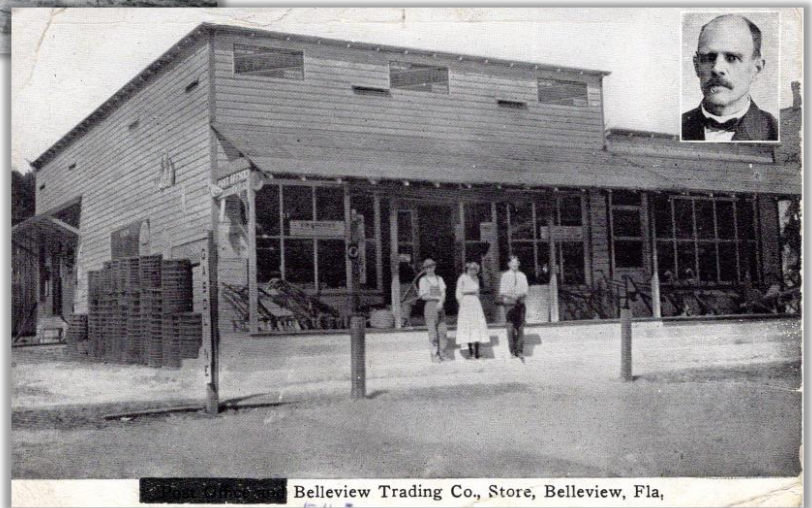


Figure 17. 1914 postcard of Belleview Trading Company store, with second floor and extended first floor in comparison to the image in Figure 16. The image at the top right is C. A. Tremere, proprietor.

There were many other stores in early Belleview. A 1907 calendar given away by McGehee & Mayo is shown in Figure 18.

This store sold groceries, dry goods, furniture and hardware. It was owned in part by Nathan Mayo, owner of the Mayo Turpentine Still located one-half mile north of the town limits and a major industry of the area. Mayo served as Florida's Commissioner of Agriculture from 1923 to 1960.

The Belleview Civic League constructed its Club House in 1912 on S.E. Stetson Road near Lake Lillian (marked G on Figure 6). It had a native field stone base with one-half wood columns supporting the expanded hip roof over the front porch (Figure 19).

Figure 18. 1907 calendar for McGehee & Mayo, turpentine operators and dealers in general merchandise.

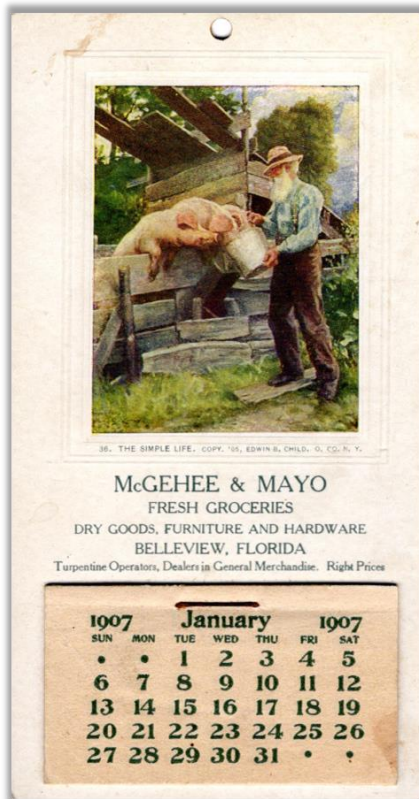




Figure 19. Postcard (circa 1912 – 1915) with photograph of the Belleview Fla Civic League Club House.

In addition to Lake Lillian, another natural attraction in early Belleview was The Grotto (Figure 20, location shown in Figure 6 to the left of Lake Lillian). This consisted of a clear pool of water fed from subterranean sources lying seventy-five feet below land. In 1918, a pipe was placed into the water which provided water for the town for several years.

In 1910, a new railroad station was built on the same site as the original one (see Figure 6, area marked H). It was larger than the original station that is shown in Figure 3 and had a loading dock. The photograph on the postcard shown in Figure 21 is probably this second station.

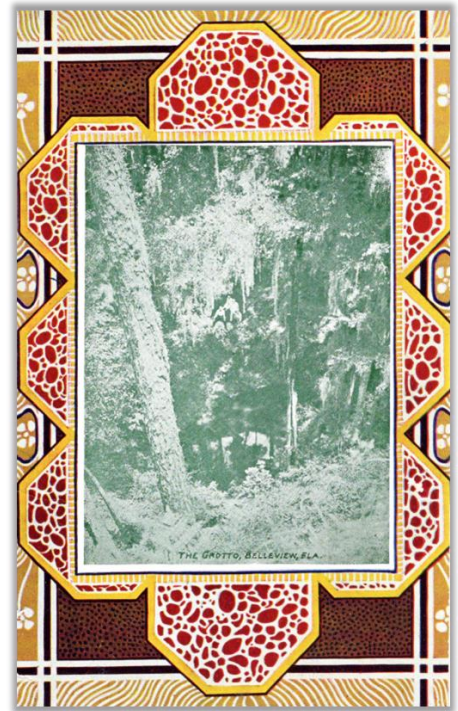


Figure 20. Postcard (pre-1925) with photograph of The Grotto in Belleview, source of the town's water for many years.



Figure 21. Postcard with photograph of second railroad station in Belleview (circa 1930 – 1950).

The Club House was the center of early Belleview social life as local and traveling plays were performed there. Al Jolson type minstrel shows also appeared there.

This station was used from 1910 until the 1950s, when it was replaced by a depot solely for freight. Several items of evidence suggest this is the second railroad station.

The postcard is unused and is printed on Kodak Paper. In 1903, Kodak introduced a camera that produced a postcard sized negative that could be printed directly onto a blank card. The presence of both white and colored restrooms in the photograph dates the image to earlier than 1954 and suggests that this was a station for passengers as well as freight.

Later History

In the 1950s, water was supplied from the town's three wells, stored in a large water tower. In 1982, gasoline was detected in the town's water supply forcing closure of the municipal water supply. New wells had to be dug and most of the water system replaced. This included the old water tower. Clean water became available in 1983.

Most roads in the area of the New England Colony were two lane dirt roads. S.E. Hames Road (Highway 441A/27A) was paved in 1928 (see Figure 6 for location). Most of the other roads were not paved until the 1950s. Highway 441/301/27 (S.E. Abshier Blvd) that runs just to the south and west of the area, was paved in 1926 (see Figure 6 for location).

The Dixie Highway when it was originally developed between 1915 and 1927 had two divisions. One ran down the east coast, today's US 1, while the other ran down the center of the state, today's US 441. With the addition of other major roads, US 441 through portions of Marion County including Belleview became US 27-301-441.

An unused linen postcard (Figure 22, circa 1940s) shows the merging of US 301 (marked A) with US 27-441 (marked B). The New England Colony area of Belleview would be to the right of the merging of the roads (see Figure 6 for location).

This merging of multiple highways facilitated the influx of visitors to Belleview, especially near Lake Lillian and the New England Colony. The "tin can" tourists were early visitors, necessitating trailer camps nearby.

An early trailer camp near Belleview is shown on the postcard in Figure 23. It is postmarked Belleview, FL, November 18, 1939. These tourists earned their nickname, not from the shape/metal of their trailers, but from the tin cans many brought with them containing the food they had canned before they left home for consumption during their visit to Florida.



Figure 23. 1939 postcard of a trailer camp near Belleview.

Motor courts began appearing along the highway as well. The Wishing Well Court, shown on the postcard in Figure 24, was an early motor court located 1 mile south of Belleview on US 27-441 prior to its merging with US 301.



Figure 24. Postcard (circa 1950s) of Wishing Well Court in Belleview on US 27-441.

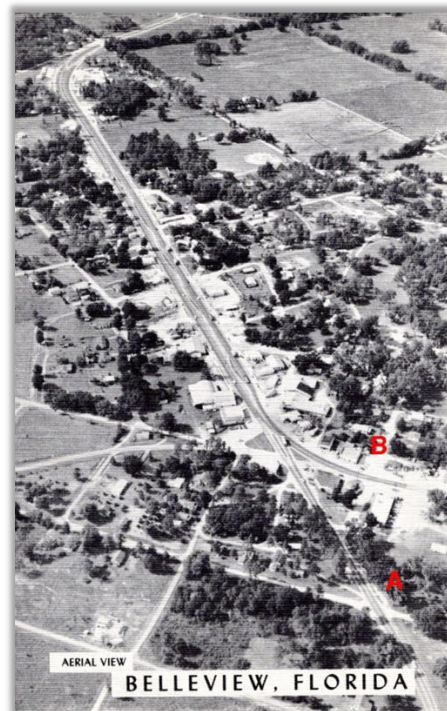


Figure 22. Belleview Chamber of Commerce postcard with aerial view of Belleview showing convergence of US 301 (A) with US 27-441 (B). New England Colony area to the right of the convergence.

It claimed to be “one of the most modern and unusual Tourist Courts” with infra-red Panel Ray heat and colored tile baths with step-down showers. Its location would place it very close to the New England Colony area.

The Bellevue Motor Court was located at the intersection of US 27-301-441 and S.E. Hames Road (Figure 25), a location within the area of the New England Colony. It featured reasonable rates, one block to a café, private tile baths, hot and cold water, and steam heat.



Figure 25. White border postcard (circa 1950s) of the Bellevue Motor Court on US 27-301-441 and S.E. Hames Road.

Motels made their appearances with rooms connected under the same roof. In the 1960s, the Vin Mar Motel and Restaurant was located on US 27-301-441 in Bellevue (Figure 26). It featured air-conditioning, free room TV, hot water, heat, beauty rest beds, and offered family units and kitchenettes.

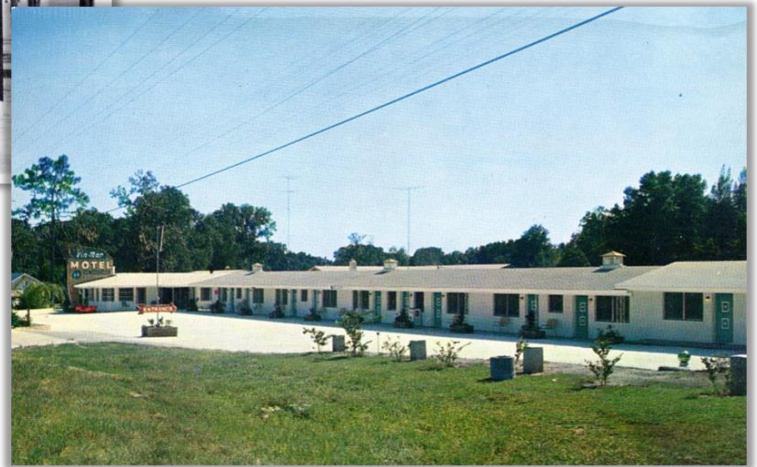


Figure 26. 1960s postcard of Vin Mar Motel on US 27-301-441 in Bellevue.



Figure 27. 1961 postcard of Sandy's Motel in Bellevue.

Sandy's Motel was shown on a postcard postmarked May 18, 1961 (Figure 27). It was located on US 27-301-441 in the north city limits of Bellevue. It too featured air-conditioning, TV and efficiency apartments by day or week.

A 1964 postcard showed two images of the Silver Belle Motel (Figure 28) located on US 27-301-441. It had eighteen units with air-conditioning, TV, heating, kitchenettes and family units. A 1973 postcard showed two images of the Bellevue Motel (Figure 29) also on US 27-310-441.

In addition to air-conditioning/heat, and TVs, it boasted of terrazzo tile floors, connecting rooms for group or family accommodations, efficiencies and an excellent adjoining restaurant. The message on the postcard mentioned the room cost of \$9.00 plus tax for one night.



Figure 28. 1964 postcard of the Silver Belle Motel on US 27-301-441 in Belleview.



Figure 29. 1973 postcard of the Belleview Motel on US 27-301-441.

Good things to eat appeared along the highways of Belleview in the 1950s and 1960s as well. Bob and Barb's Buffet (Figure 30) was located along US 441 just south of Belleview. Prices for full meals ranged from \$1.55 for children and supper for \$2.50. The Friday night seafood buffet was \$3.80.



Figure 30. Postcard for Bob and Barb's Buffet on Highway 441 just south of Belleview.



Figure 31. Folding postcard for the Alrmina Restaurant on US 27-301-441 in Belleview.

Some restaurants provided fold-out postcards with their picture on the outside, and menu on the inside. One such postcard for the Alrmina Restaurant located on US 27-301-441 in Belleview is shown in Figure 31.

BREAKFAST MENU	
SPECIAL BREAKFAST 1 Egg Any Style + 1 Slice of Toast + Cup Coffee .34 1 EGG, ANY STYLE, TOAST AND COFFEE .45 2 EGGS, ANY STYLE, TOAST AND COFFEE .55 1 EGG, WITH BACON, HAM or SAUSAGE, TOAST AND COFFEE .75 2 EGGS, WITH BACON, HAM or SAUSAGE, TOAST AND COFFEE .85 <small>EGGS or POTATOES SERVED WITH ABOVE ORDERS CHOICE OF TOAST OR BISCUITS</small> PLAIN OMELET, TOAST AND COFFEE .40 CHEESE OMELET, TOAST AND COFFEE .75 HAM or BACON OMELET, TOAST AND COFFEE .85 HOT Cakes or WAFFLES AND COFFEE .45 HOT Cakes or WAFFLES, AND 1 EGG, ANY STYLE, AND COFFEE .55 HOT Cakes or WAFFLES, AND 2 EGGS, ANY STYLE, AND COFFEE .65 HOT Cakes or WAFFLES, BACON, HAM, or SAUSAGE AND COFFEE .75 HOT Cakes or WAFFLES, AND 1 EGG, BACON, HAM, or SAUSAGE AND COFFEE .85 HOT Cakes or WAFFLES, AND 2 EGGS, BACON, HAM, or SAUSAGE AND COFFEE .95 SHORTSTACK AND COFFEE .40 SHORTSTACK, 1 EGG AND COFFEE .50 SHORTSTACK, 2 EGGS AND COFFEE .60 SHORTSTACK, BACON, HAM or SAUSAGE AND COFFEE .65 SHORTSTACK, 1 EGG, BACON, HAM, or SAUSAGE AND COFFEE .75 SHORTSTACK, 2 EGGS, BACON, HAM, or SAUSAGE AND COFFEE .85 CEREAL with MILK .30 1/2 GRAPEFRUIT .30 OATMEAL with MILK .30 DISH OF PEACHES .25 FRESH TOAST .30 TOAST and JELLY .25 ALL FRUIT PRICES .10 - .15 - .30 MILK and CHOCOLATE MILK .10 - .15 - .20 COKE & 7-UP .09 COFFEE .05 TEA .10 HOT CHOCOLATE .10 MADE with MILK .15	
SHORT ORDERS	
All Steaks are U.S. Western Grade or Better T-Bone 2.00 to 4.50 Filet Mignon 2.00 to 2.50 Top Sirloin 2.00 Rib Steak 1.75 Club Steak 1.45 Hamburger Steak 1.25 SPECIAL — 1.35 FRIED TURKEY BREAST with Cranberry Sauce, One Vegetable, Rolls & Butter, Coffee or Tea SEA FOOD Oysters 1/2 Fry 1.25 Shrimp 1/2 Fry 1.25 White Fry 2.00 Deviled Crab on Half Shell 1.25 Scallops 1.25 Above Orders Served with French Fries, Salad, Hot Rolls and Coffee or Tea Shrimp Cocktail 1.25 Oyster Cocktail 1.25 Oyster Stew55 Homemade Chili50 French Fried Onion Rings35 SANDWICHES Hot Turkey with French Fries85 Hot Roast Beef with French Fries85 Hot Roast Pork with French Fries85 Hot Steak with French Fries85 Hamburger, Plain 15 & 25 Hamburger, All the Way 19 & 30 Cheeseburger35 Fried Egg25 Egg Salad25 Deviled Egg25 Hot Dog25 Cold Beef or Pork50 Western Sandwich45 Bar-B-Q Beef or Pork45 Jumbo Bar-B-Q Turkey65 Corn Beef Sandwich50 Cuban Sandwich25 Grilled or On Toast65 All Sandwiches to Take Out — BOB LUNCHES SALADS Lettuce 1.25 Shrimp 1.25 Chef's Salad50 Lettuce & Tomato25 Cottage Cheese25 French40 Tuna Fish25 Ice Cream40	

Figure 32. Menu for the Alrmina Restaurant on the inside of the folding postcard.



Figure 33. Postcard for the Green Shelter Restaurant on US 27-301-441 in Belleview.

The menu on the inside featured breakfast, short orders, sea food, sandwiches and salads (Figure 32). The most expensive item on the menu was a T-bone steak for \$4.50 while most items were \$1.00 or less.

A postcard for the Green Shelter Restaurant on US 27-301-441 is shown in Figure 33. Its specialties were listed on the edge of the roof facing the parking lot and included smoked turkey, sea food, bar-b-que, and steaks.



Figure 34. Postcard for Stuckey's Candy Shoppe in Belleview.

The lake has a dock, and there is still a walking trail around the lake. On the first Saturday in December, Lake Lillian is lighted for the holiday season with Santa Claus in attendance along with arts and crafts, children's activities and food. There is also an annual fishing derby for children at Lake Lillian in the spring. The history of Lake Lillian and Belleview is celebrated each October.

In the 1830s, Lake Lillian was known as Nine Mile Pond, for it was nine miles south of Fort King in present day Ocala. Early homesteaders around Lake Lillian had no idea of the historic importance of their decision to settle there. The Lake Lillian Historic Neighborhood, also known as The New England Colony at Belleview, was

Although closed, but not forgotten, the ever-present Stuckey's stores along Florida highways were represented in Belleview (Figure 34). Who could resist those pecan rolls?

Current Day

Belleview, Florida has a population of around 5,000, and Lake Lillian is still a focal point for the community. There is a community park next to Lake Lillian with a large playground for children, pavilions for events, and picnic areas.

proposed for entry into the National Register of Historic Places. The proposal included forty-four buildings, mostly original residences but also Dr. Harvey Knight's Sanitarium, Masonic Hall (now a medical office), the Methodist Church built in 1900, and the Bellevue Community Center. Its entry was approved on August 20, 1999, a testament to the historic importance of the New England Colony that gave birth to Bellevue, Florida.

Kerr City, Florida

By Phil Eschbach

Kerr City was originally referred to as Ker City. Its origins go back to 1835 when government surveyor Robert Ker named the nearby lake, Lake Ker (Figure 2). The first settler in the area prior to the Civil War was Mr. Williamson from the Carolinas who had a cotton plantation.



Figure 1. Kerr City entrance sign.

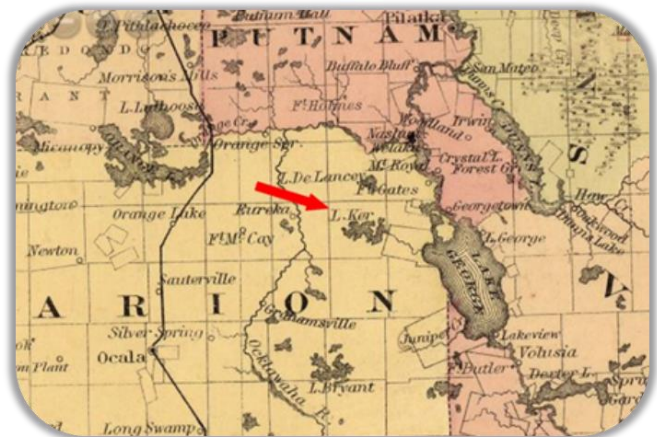


Figure 2. 1868 Florida map. Red arrow indicates Lake Ker. (Courtesy Florida Memory.com)

After the war, a stagecoach route was established from Palatka to Tampa which ran through the area. Settlers began to arrive, who turned to planting citrus. The town, the second platted city in Marion County after Ocala, was then platted on 205 acres in 1884 on a grid system. It had streets named for states, such as Ohio, Indiana, and Michigan, but the main street was called Beulah Avenue.

A post office (Figure 3) was established in 1884 under the name of Ker City. The first postmaster was Zella Terry, wife of Dr. Junis Terry who built the first and only hotel.

In 1886, the spelling was changed to Kerr City and Summer Satterthwaite became postmaster until 1887 when Robert Willmott took over. The post office name was again changed, this time to Lake Kerr in 1888, which lasted intermittently until 1942. Briefly in 1920, the post office was discontinued in favor of Eureka but



Figure 3. Ker (Kerr) City post office.

re-established in 1921, only to be finally discontinued in favor of Citra in 1942. The last postmaster was Zora Oliver.

Beginning in 1884, the town prospered for about ten years. In addition to the post office, a hotel, church, sawmill, general store, pharmacy, school, and many houses were built. It even had a newspaper called the *Kerr City Advertiser*. But after the devastating freezes of 1894-5, the citrus-based town began to decline. The stagecoach line was discontinued due to new railroads being built that bypassed Kerr City. By 1905, it was mostly abandoned.

Soon after, a preacher and his followers moved into the town for its tranquility and settled in the old hotel. One morning they woke up to find the preacher and all their money and possessions gone. The hotel burned down in 1907. In the 1920s, the town had a brief revival but didn't last after the post office closed in 1942.

Original families that settled in the town were the Swans, Henleys, Terrys, Giles, Fords, Elliotts, and Smileys (Figure 4). George Smiley was a descendant of one of the original settlers.

In Kerr City in 1925, Texaco established its first gas station in Florida which still existed until it burned down a few years ago. After near total abandonment in the 1940s, George Smiley bought up most of the property of the entire town.

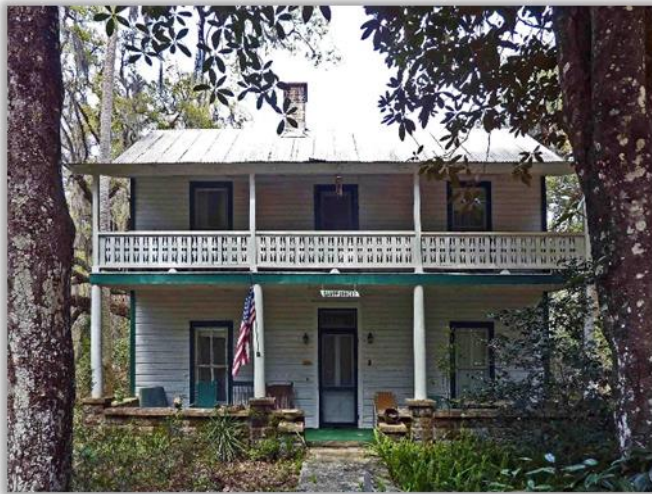


Figure 4. The Smiley home.



Figure 5. Arthur Brennan on his front porch.

In the 1940s, Marjorie Rawlings, Pulitzer Prize author of *The Yearling*, visited Kerr City and briefly stabled her horses there. By 1955, Smiley's son Fletcher, a graduate of Stetson, owned the entire town. Fletcher's grandson, the most recent owner, Arthur Brennan (Figure 5) inherited the property and lived there until his recent death. There are fourteen structures remaining with five listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

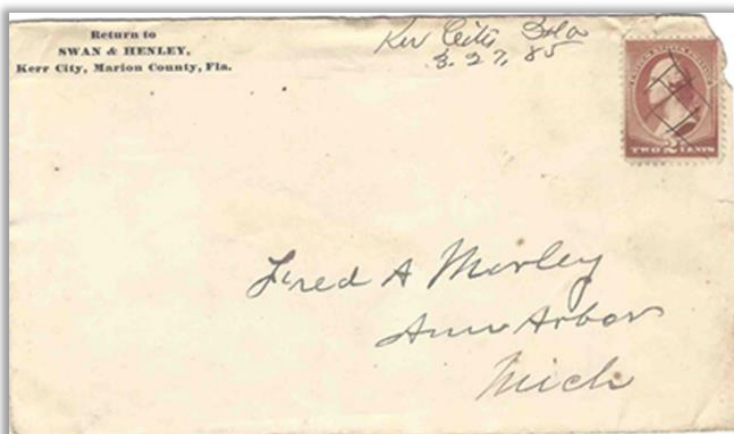


Figure 6. "Ker City Fla 3 27 85" manuscript marking.

The cover in Figure 6 shows a manuscript cancel for a March 27, 1885, mailing to Fred Morley in Ann Arbor, Michigan. The enclosure on letterhead (Figure 7) shows that J.B. Swan was originally from Tecumseh, Michigan and that his partner, R.B. Henley, was from Carthage, Indiana. They either were winter residents or had moved to Kerr City permanently.

The letter, from Henley, mentions a \$100 draft but is not clear what it is for, possibly for a sale of property. But it also confirms that Fred Morley must have visited Kerr City since Henley wrote “hope you had a safe trip north.” Apparently, in 1885 there wasn’t consensus on the spelling of the town since his letterhead spells it “Kerr” and the postmaster cancelled the cover with “Ker.”

The cover in Figures 8 (front) and 9 (reverse) shows a Ker City, May 8, 1885, manuscript cancel with a backstamp from Norwalk dated the same day.

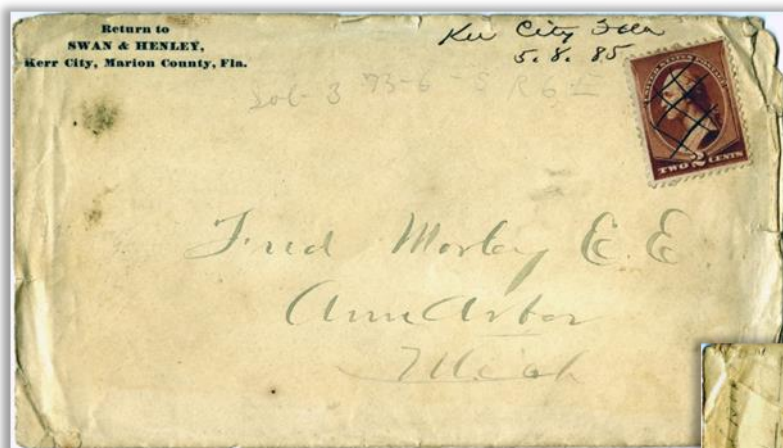


Figure 8. Ker City, May 8, 1885, mailing.

Norwalk, only seven miles to the east, is still a town but lost its post office in 1916 to Lake Kerr. It had been established in 1876. Norwalk is on the St. Johns River and was undoubtedly the jump-off Site for river traffic going inland to Kerr City.

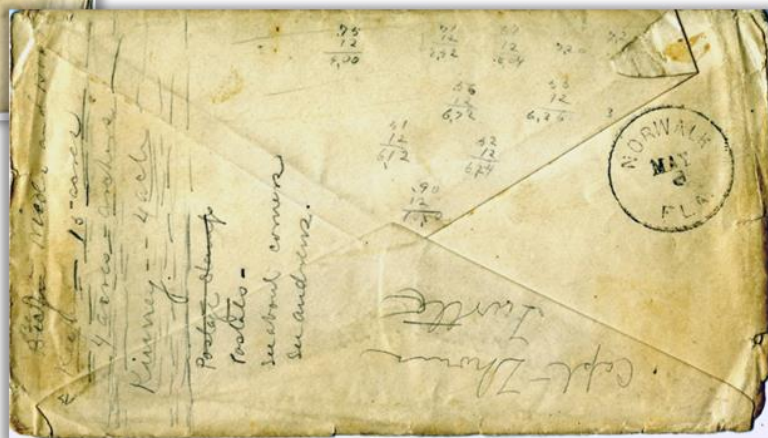


Figure 9. NORWALK FLA. backstamp on May 8 mailing.

These covers show that they were from the business owned by Swan and Henley with a Kerr City return address. Swan owned the hotel, and his wife was the schoolteacher. Henley was the superintendent of schools and together they owned a real estate business as well as a nursery.



Figure 10. August 10, 1894, Lake Kerr mailing.

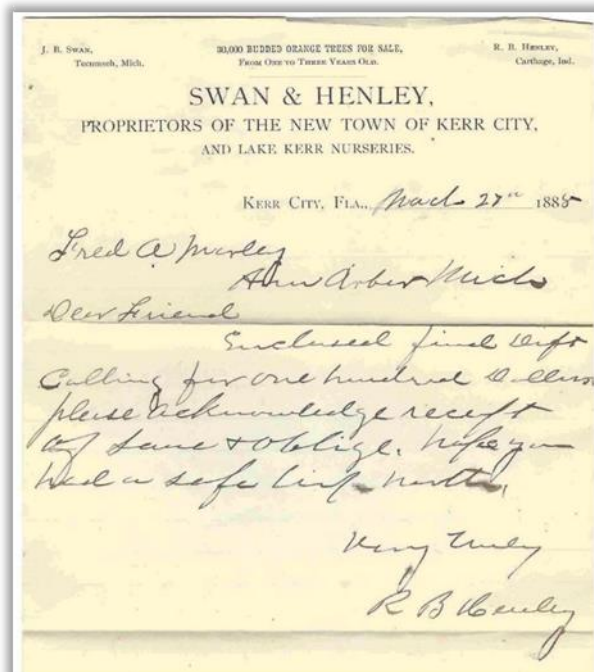


Figure 7. Mailing's letterhead enclosure.

Both are addressed to Fred Morley in Ann Arbor, Michigan. He was a civil engineer and taught at Michigan University in the 1890s. There was no enclosure in the second cover so the letter must have either been a follow-up to the first letter or else a personal note to a friend, perhaps encouraging the Morleys to move to Florida.

Figure 10 is a later cover dated 1894 after the name change in 1888 to Lake Kerr.

Figure 11 illustrates a cover with a manuscript postmark from Norwalk and is the earliest known use. Mail to and from Kerr City went through Norwalk to be sent by boat north probably to Jacksonville or St. Augustine.



Today, Kerr City is a ghost town, privately owned and closed to the public.

Sources

- Information about the history of Kerr City came from a private interview with Arthur Brennan, verified from *Wikipedia*
- Color photos are by the author
- Many thanks to Deane Briggs for finding the covers and Tom Lera for obtaining the postmaster's names

Figure 11. Norwalk manuscript postmark.

State Revenue Stamps of Florida: Alcoholic Products By Richard Lomax

This is the third article in the series of state revenue stamps of Florida and considers alcoholic products. As with previous articles, we follow the categories and subcategories of the Wrisley catalog (*The State Revenue Catalog: Revenue Stamps and Related Materials of the States of the United States of America*, 2013, State Revenue Society).

The Alcoholic Products are: (a) Beer, Bottle Caps & Labels; (b) Citrus Beverage; (c) Liquor; and (d) Liquor, Exported. Let us take a look at the specifics of each product, including examples from my collection.

The first subcategory is Beer, Bottle Caps & Labels. Beginning on October 1, 1959, taxable malt beverages in individual bottles or cans available for sale or resale in Florida were required to have "FLORIDA" or "FL" printed on their caps and labels. After 1995, this was no longer required if the manufacturer had a way of tracking these items. As there are thousands and thousands of different items from that long timeframe, no specific cataloging along these lines has been done.



A Samuel Adams beer cap is shown in Figure 1, where you note the large "FLORIDA" printed at the bottom of the cap.

Figure 2, courtesy of eBay, is a FLORIDA unused tax stamp cap, Pittsburgh Brewing Company.



Figure 1. Samuel Adams beer bottle cap.

Figure 2. "FLORIDA" beer bottle cap.

The next subcategory is Citrus Beverage, which deals with alcoholic beverages made and produced in Florida using Florida citrus products. (Citrus products by themselves were discussed in a previous article.) A stamp was required by Florida law from 1963 to 1969. Only three citrus beverage stamps were generated: CB1, CB2 and CB6. These stamps are rather rare and not present in my collection. Example scans of these stamps are shown in Wrisley (p. 139).

The third subcategory of Florida alcoholic products is Liquor. These decals were required from 1935 to 1969. Given the length of time these decals were required, quite a variety were produced.

Although numbered from L1 to L198, there are a few exceptions to the numbering system. Specifically, the following numbers were not used or known: L39, 47, 48, 94, 95, 98, 101, 104, 106, 107, 110, 113, 114, 116, 119, 123, 125, 128, 130, 131, 134, 137, 160-163, 166, 167, 172, 175, 178, 184, 185, 187, 189, 191, and 195-198.

There were also many specimen numbers, as well as several variations. Thus, one could make a collection just of this subcategory, although many of these labels are rather expensive. An example label from my collection is shown in Figure 3 (L24) from 1937.



Figure 3. 1½-cent excise tax.



Figure 4. 7½-cent excise tax.



Figure 5. 20-cent excise tax.

A 7½-cent tax label and a 20-cent tax label, courtesy of Eric Jackson.com, are shown in Figures 4 and 5, respectively. Note that both stamps have a hole punch, i.e., they have been “cancelled.”



Figure 6. Liquor, Exported, catalog number EL1.

The fourth and final subcategory is Liquor, Exported. This consisted of liquor products made not for consumption in Florida, meaning they were exported out of the state.

These labels were only required from 1935 to 1937. Thus, there were a limited number of these labels, known as EL1-6, plus four specimens of those. Most of these labels are also rather expensive. Figure 6 displays label EL1 from 1935.

To this point, an overview of Florida Revenues, Food Products, and Alcoholic Products have been offered. The next article in this series will present the Documentary and General Inspection & Excise categories. Until next time.

The Battleship *Florida* (BB-30)

By Juan L. Riera

Commissioned on September 15, 1911, the U.S.S. *Florida* (BB-30) (Figure 1) was the lead ship of the *Florida* class of dreadnought battleships of the United States Navy. “BB” designates a battleship; the number “30” means she was the thirtieth vessel built.

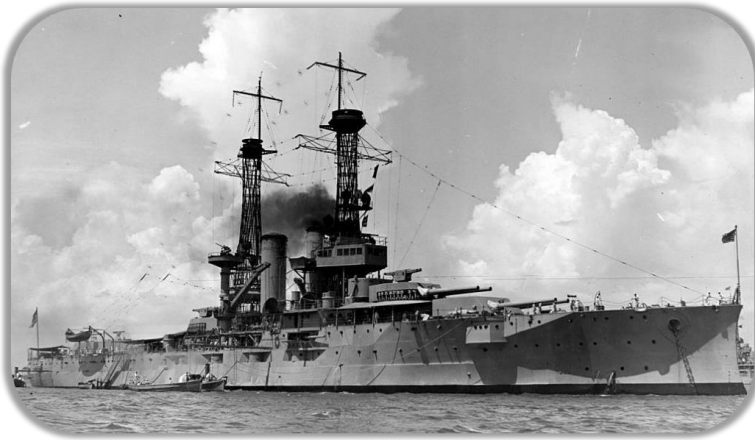


Figure 1. U.S.S. *Florida*, circa 1921. (Wikipedia.)

The U.S.S. *Florida* was one of two ships to land marines and sailors for the 1914 capture and occupation of Veracruz, Mexico. During the First World War, the battleship was engaged in convoy duty as well as patrolling the North Sea. After the war, along with the U.S.S. *George Washington*, she escorted Woodrow Wilson to France for peace negotiations. Afterwards, the *Florida* was involved with training exercises for midshipman as well as military exercises and patrol duties in the Caribbean.

Under the terms of the *London Naval Treaty* of 1930, limits on the number and types of ships in various navies as well as tonnage limits were imposed. The *Florida* and its crew of 1,001 was decommissioned on February 16, 1931.

In the first decade of the twentieth century, legislation was passed for U.S. naval ships of a certain size to have the ability to process mail. The mail was serviced through the ship's on-board facilities and then transferred to other ships or dropped into the local postal stream as ships stopped in port. Mail pieces would, therefore, bear a cancellation designating the name of the ship.

For example, Figure 2 shows a U.S.S. *Florida* cancellation dated February 16, 1931, the day the U.S.S. *Florida* was decommissioned.

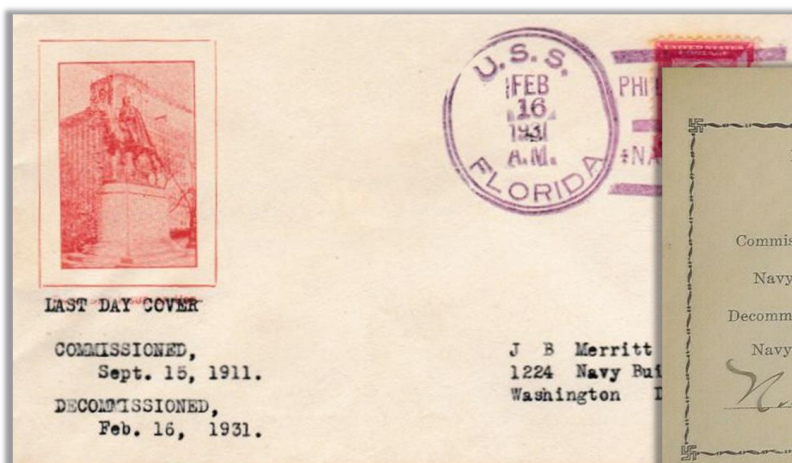


Figure 2. U.S.S. *Florida* Last Day cover. (Author's collection.)

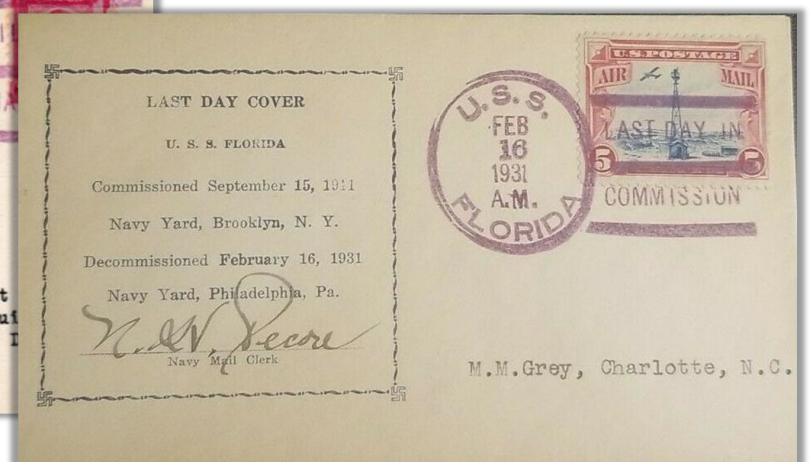


Figure 3. U.S.S. *Florida* Last Day with mail clerk signature.

Another *Florida* Last Day cover is shown in Figure 3 (courtesy of eBay). Note the signature of the Navy Mail Clerk at the bottom of the cover's cachet.

To serve as a morale booster, several battleships had on-board musical bands, as did the U.S.S. *Florida*. The Figure 4 March 25, 1921, postcard to Middleton, Connecticut (courtesy of temposenzatempo blogspot) shows a photograph of the *Florida* band posing on the ship's deck

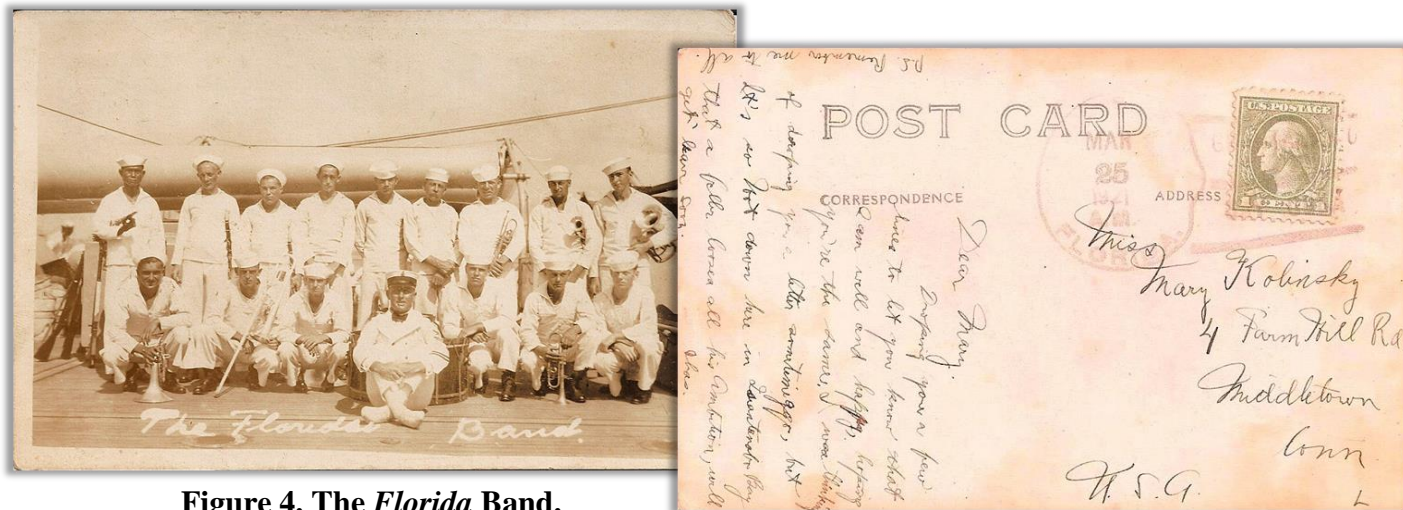
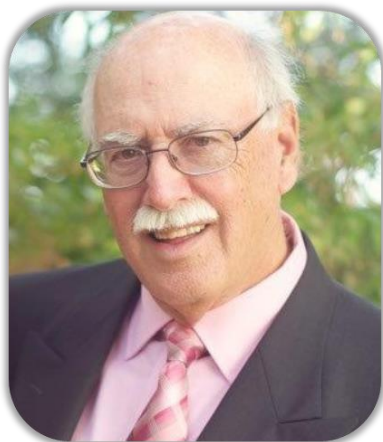


Figure 4. The *Florida* Band.

Collecting naval covers from ships named after your state, town, or a local individual can be a very enjoyable and rewarding postal history endeavor.



William H. Johnson, DDS, of Fort Myers, Florida, passed away on August 24, 2022, at the age of 82, with his wife, Barbara, at his side.

Bill was born in Tuscaloosa, Alabama on September 21, 1939. He graduated from the University of Maryland where he was an "All American" high hurdler on the track team.

Bill graduated from the School of Dentistry at the Medical College of Virginia in 1966. After graduation, he served two years in the United States Navy before setting up his dental practice in Fort Myers in 1968, where he practiced until he retired in 2018.

Bill was an avid golfer, and although I never played with him, we did have lunch during a "stamp" visit at his Fiddlesticks Country Club.

Bill was a charter member of the Florida Postal History Society, its President from 2007 to 2009, and a close friend for more than thirty years. We would meet at the Sarasota National Stamp Exhibition every year to look at new acquisitions and just catch up. He helped me immensely with our first book, *Florida Stampless Postal History 1763-1861*, and after that publication in 1999, added many new updates for the 2018 and the recently published 2022 revision of the book, *Florida Postal History 1763-1861*. He will be dearly missed.

Deane R. Briggs, M.D.

Congratulations are extended to members of the Florida Postal History Society for awards earned at literature competitions.



APS Great American Stamp Show 2022

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Large Vermeil: Vernon R. Morris, MD, "Military Fort Myers from 1850"

Large Vermeil: Vernon R. Morris, MD, "The Birth of New Jersey's Post"

Large Vermeil: Steve Swain, "Local Usage Prevails for Name of Town and Post Office"

Vermeil: Jack Malarkey and Pat Malarkey-Stallard, "St. Joseph, Florida"

Vermeil: Steve Swain, *The Postal History of Saint Simons Island, Georgia*

Silver Bronze: Dan Maddalino, "Little River P.O. Keeps Town Name Alive"



SESCAL 2022

Gold: Michael Mahler, "\$2.50 Inland Exchange Color Wheel Revisited"

Large Vermeil: Christine C. Sanders, "Philatelic Glimpse of Christmas in the U.S. in the Latter Part of the 19th Century"

Large Vermeil: Steve Swain, "Local Usage Prevails for Name of Town and Post Office"

Vermeil: Michael Mahler, Don Woodworth and Hermann Ivester, "The Kountze Brothers, Bankers of the High Plains: Their Revenue Stamped Paper and Its Antecedents"

Silver Bronze: Jack and Pat Malarkey, "St. Joseph, Florida"

Bronze: Juan L. Riera, "Airmail from Bermuda"

Bronze: Juan L. Riera, "Matías Pérez: Famous Disappeared Balloonist"



CHICAGOPEX 2022

Reserve Grand and Large Gold: Michael T. Mahler, *New York Stamp Taxes on Bonds, 1910–1920. A Spectacular Philatelic Sub-field Hidden for a Century, (Second Edition)*

Large Gold: Michael T. Mahler, Editor, *The American Revenuer*

Gold: Thomas Lera, *Hubbard L. Hart's Influence on Stagecoach and Steamboat Travel and Commerce in Central Florida*

Large Vermeil: Steve Swain, Editor, *Florida Postal History Journal*

Vermeil: Jack Malarkey and Pat Malarkey-Stallard, "St. Joseph, Florida"

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