



FLORIDA POSTAL HISTORY JOURNAL

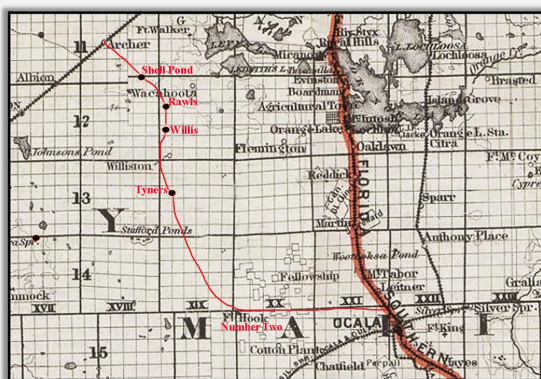
Promoting Philately in the Sunshine State



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Marion County, Florida Stampless Post Offices – Locations Unknown

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE



S.S. Florida



Unique Milton, Florida Cover



Florida Revenue Stamps



1937 Florida Feeder Airline Service Test

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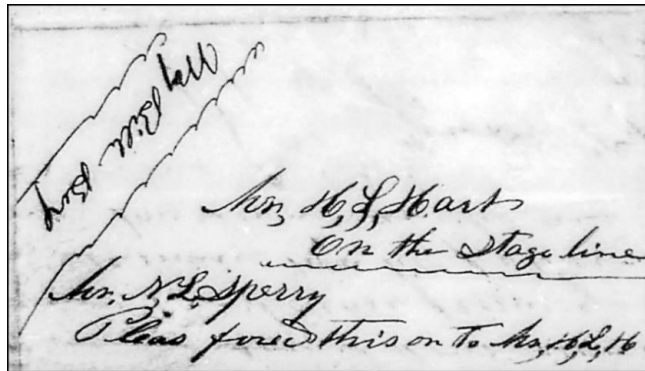
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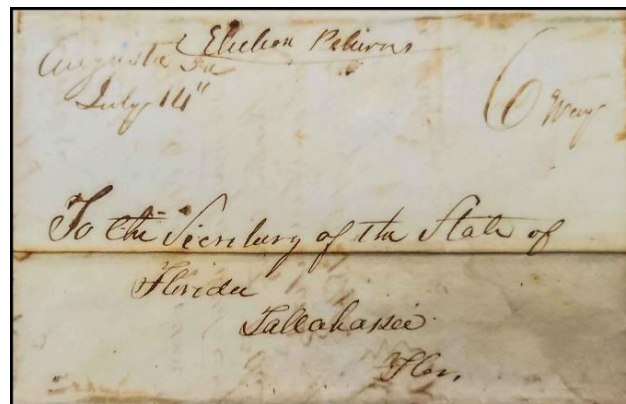
by Thomas Lera

FLORIDA WAY MAIL CENSUS

In the *Florida Postal History Journal*, Vol. 28, No. 3, pages 3-13, Deane Briggs' article about Florida "Way" covers included a census of Spanish West Florida, territorial, and statehood covers. A research article on the Florida Postal History Website has expanded the census and includes three new territorial and statehood covers from the Florida State Archives, three stagecoach way-bill covers, and three railroad way covers.



Letter to H.L. Hart, Stagecoach postal route 6804, datelined Ten Mile House, Hills Borough County from W. H. Bass, placed in Way Bill Box and forwarded on another stagecoach driven by N. L. Sperry who placed the letter in their stagecoach Way Bill Box from Ocala to Palatka, where Hart's office was located. Nov. 18, 1858. (Courtesy of Florida State Archives)



Letter from Augusta, Fa, Type III, July 14th (1846), "6 Way" to the Secretary of the State of Florida, Tallahassee Flor. containing Election Returns. (Courtesy of Florida State Archives)

Marion County, Florida Stampless Post Offices - Locations Unknown Part 1 – Number Two Post Office

By Thomas Lera and Arnold Davis

Editor's Note: Arnold Davis is a new FPHS member and is the Chairman of the Research Committee of the Marion County Genealogical Society.

There were three towns on known post roads in Marion County, Florida, but their exact locations are unknown: Number 2 (Two), Cottage, and Souterville. After reviewing over fifty Florida and Marion County maps from 1828 – 1870, none of these towns could be located.

This first article is about the post road from Ocala to Archer Station (Figure 1) by Number Two as well as Tyner's, Willis', Rawls' and Shell Pond, which in the 1850s were major documented stops along this post road.

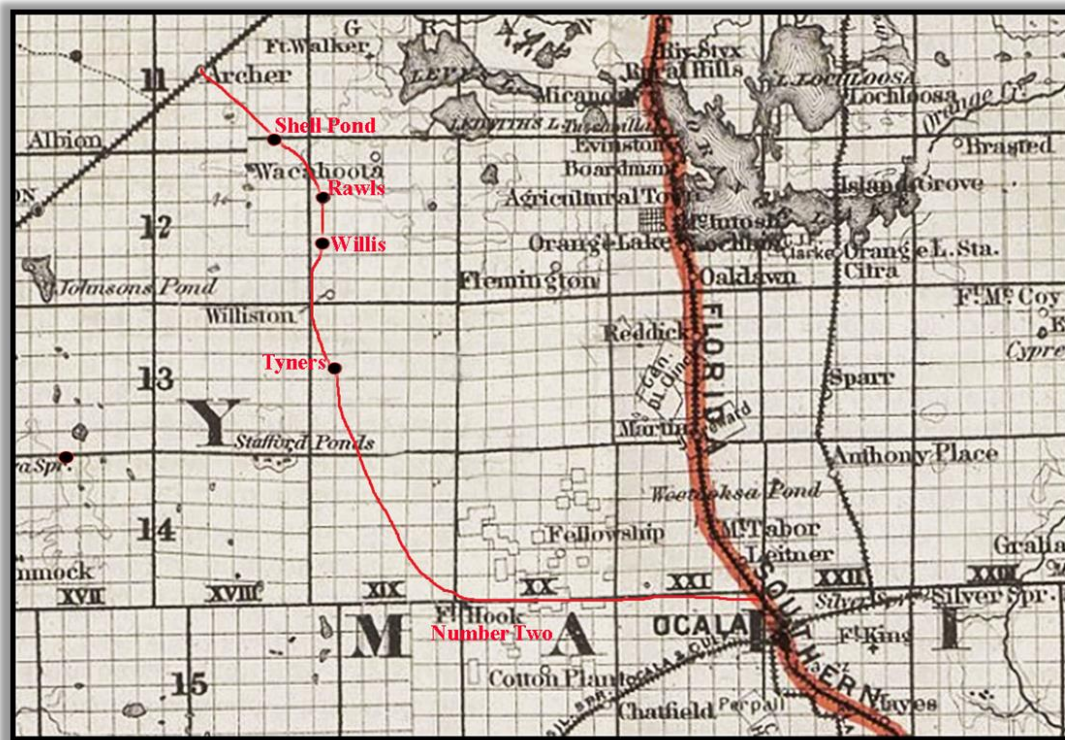


Figure 1. Portion of Colton's New Section Map of the Marion and Levy Counties, Florida. Red line shows the approximate location of the Ocala to Archer Station post road stops. (Source: Touchton Map Library, Image No. 2018.095.001.)

The Florida Postal History 1763-1861 Second Edition shows the Ocala post office first opened in 1842 and is still operating, as is and the Archer (Station) post office opened in 1852. Number Two post office operated from 1848 to 1854.¹

In September 2022, I contacted Arnold Davis at the Marion County Genealogical Society to see if he had any information on Number Two post office. Together we have located the town and stops on this post road.

Ocala, first built in 1827, was originally Fort King (Figure 2). It closed between 1829 - 1832 due to budget cuts but, with the signing of the Treaty of Payne's Landing, reopened in June 1832. It was abandoned in May 1836 and burned to the ground by the Seminoles. Rebuilt in 1837, it was active during the Second Seminole War which ended in 1842.



Figure 2. Fort King historical road marker.

In 1839, during the Second Seminole War, General Zachary Taylor implemented a plan to divide East and Middle Florida into eighteen- or twenty-mile squares with a twenty-man garrison in the center of each. Fort King, originally known as Cantonment King or Camp King (1), was designated Fort Number One (E) in 1839. (Note: duplicate fort numbers were used in “East” (E) and “Middle” (M) Florida).

Fort King, in Alachua County, was 3.6 miles east of present-day Ocala and was the terminus of a military trail connecting with Fort Brooke, now Tampa. In 1844, the Fort King post office was established with John G. Reardon as its first postmaster. It was discontinued in 1847 when another post office was established at nearby Ocala.

Fort Hook was located eighteen miles west of Fort King. It was designated Fort Number Two in 1839. Clearly, this was the location of Number Two post office on the post road which then turned north to Archer. Number Two post office operated from September 27, 1848 – May 22, 1854. William Sterling Fish was its first and only postmaster.²

In 1842, Fort King was turned over to Marion County where its first Court House was established. A town developed around the Court House and, in 1849, was established as Ocala.

Arnold's genealogical research showed William Sterling Fish married Elender Blitch, daughter of James Blitch and Mehala Tison, in 1847. The *1850 Federal Census* showed William Fish and his wife, Elender, and their two children lived next door to her father, James Blitch, and his second wife, Martha Ann Willis, of the Willis family.³ Jesse M. Willis was the founder of Williston in 1853.

Jackson Tyner was born July 9, 1811, in Effingham County, Georgia. On December 13, 1832, he married Sarah Ann Pace. Between 1836 and 1838, the family moved to Florida. In the *1850 US Federal Census*, Tyner's occupation is listed as “farmer & County Court.” On April 1, 1854, Tyner was granted Bounty Land in Marion County as a result of his military service in the Florida Indian Wars. His daughter, Susan Tyner, married Joseph J. Willis, the brother of Martha Ann Willis.

There must have been several family homes grouped along the post road as these names are similar to Tyner's and Willis' stops. Searching the family names on the Bureau of Land Management General Land Office Records website (<https://glorerecords.blm.gov/search/default.aspx>), many records of land ownership with township, range, section, and subdivisions were found.

The *Fourteenth Census of the United States, Table 53 Population of Counties by Minor Civil Division*, shows population change for the years 1900, 1910, and 1920. On page 372, Precinct 11, in 1900 Raleigh was known as Shell Pond and became Raleigh in 1920. It was located seven miles southeast of Archer.⁴

Cotton Rawls was very well known in Alachua and Marion Counties as an honored veteran of the Seminole and Civil Wars, and one of the first Marion County Commissioners. He owned slaves and had many land grants and other land acquisitions. His plantation was two miles west of Wacahoota, whose early spelling was "Wacahootie" when it was part of Alachua, Florida Territory.

Rawls served as the Wacahootie postmaster from September 23, 1842 – October 9, 1842, then again on May 24, 1843 – January 22, 1845, and finally February 26, 1851 – August 23, 1852.⁵

We believe Cotton Rawls was so well-known that locals referred to the Wacahootie Post Office as Rawls. Besides, it was much easier to spell!

The town of Archer, named in honor of Gen. James J. Archer (Figure 3), a Seminole Indian War officer, was established on September 26, 1859, at the crossing point of the Wacasassee to Wachahoota road and the Florida Rail Road, (later the Florida Central and Peninsular Railroad). The town, previously known as Deer Hammock, eventually became a depot on the Florida Rail Road, between Gainesville and Bronson, with George R. Clotfelter postmaster.

Our next article, Part 2, will be about Postal Route No. 6522 from Pilatka to Ocala, through Orange Springs, Orange Lake, Cottage, and Souterville. The article will present the location of the towns of Cottage and Souterville.



Figure 3. Gen. James J. Archer.
(Courtesy CivilWarTalk.com.)

Endnotes

¹ Briggs, Deane R., Ferguson, Francis, Lera, Thomas M., *Florida Postal History 1763-1861, Second Edition* (Winter Haven, Florida, USA: Florida Postal History Society, 2022), pp. 73, 277, and 279.

² Briggs, et al., p. 277.

³ *Seventh Census of the United States, 1850*, accessed Nov. 29, 2022, on Ancestry.com.

⁴ *Fourteenth Census of the United States taken in the year 1920...[Reports]* - Google Books page 372.

⁵ Briggs, et al., *Florida Postal History 1763-1861, Second Edition*, p. 427.

Articles of Distinction Awards

At the Society's January 21, 2023, annual meeting, Articles of Distinction winners were announced. Congratulations are extended to the following members for their "best of the best" articles in the 2022 issues of the Florida Postal History Journal.

First Place

"Military Fort Myers from 1850"
Vernon R. Morris, Jr.

Second Place - Tie

"State Revenue Stamps of Florida"
Richard Lomax

"Fort Myakka and the Seminole War That Never Happened"
Deane R. Briggs

Third Place

"Stories Discovered Behind a Florida Cover"
Christine Sanders

Literature Competition Awards

Congratulations are extended to Society members for awards earned at the Sarasota National Stamp Exhibition, January 20-22, 2023.

- Collectors Club of Sarasota Award for Treatment and Large Gold:
Bill DiPaolo, "Thomas Edison and the Bulb"
- Gold: **Vernon R. Morris**, "Military Fort Myers from 1850"
- Vermeil: **Jack Malarkey and Pat Malarkey-Stallard**, "St. Joseph, FL"
- Silver: **Juan L. Riera**, "The Sikorsky S-38 in the British West Indies"
- Silver Bronze: **Juan L. Riera**, "The Bahamian Hotel for International Businessmen, Royalty ... and Spies"
- Silver Bronze: **Richard Lomax**, "State Revenue Stamps of Florida: An Introduction"

S.S. Florida

By Juan L. Riera (with images provided by Steve Swain)

The S.S. (steam ship) *Florida* was a well-loved cruise ship. Although not a luxury liner, it served the residents and tourists of the state of Florida well and also provided an important mail link. The *Florida* was part of the P & O (Peninsular and Occidental) Line.



Figure 1. S.S. Florida linen postcard.

To the left of the postmark is a red handstamp applied by the Hotel Sevilla. The card's message includes "The Sevilla is fine" confirming the card's sender stayed at the Sevilla where the "PERMISO" postmark was possibly applied.

Also note the REGULAR marking at the bottom center of the card instructing the card to be delivered via regular mail as opposed to air mail.

Figure 1 is a linen postcard showing the *Florida* passing through the channel at Miami, Florida upon arrival from Havana, Cuba.

The address and message side of the card (Figure 2) has a red LA HABANA PERMISO 467 23 VI '53 (June 23, 1953) postmark that includes an 03 postage indicator. A seven-line wavy duplex circular datestamp was applied the next day (June 24) to cancel the permission marking.

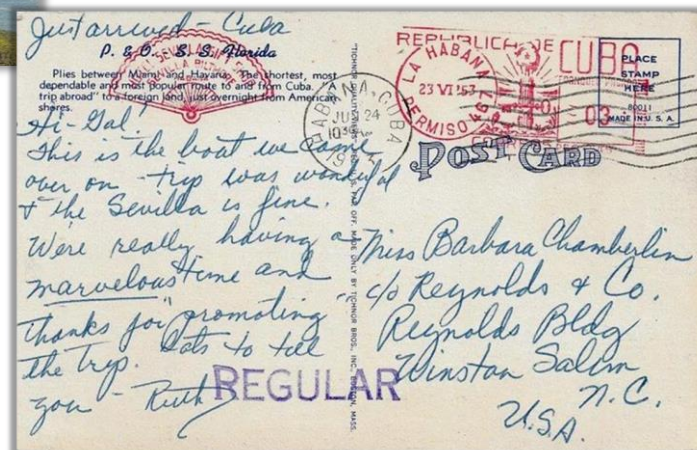


Figure 2. Address side of card showing PERMISO postmark.



Be careful not to confuse the P & O with the British company of the same name. The *Florida* served in the Peninsular and Occidental Steamship Company, a Florida based shipping/cruise line formed in 1900. The Figure 3 Peninsular & Occidental cruise ship schedule¹ has a drawing of the *Florida*.

The British P & O, dating to the early 1800s and originally named the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company, was responsible for mail transportation between Great Britain and the Iberian Peninsula and the Orient. The British company was sold to DP World (Dubai) in March 2006.

Figure 3. P & O cruise ship schedule for the *Florida*.

The Peninsular & Occidental Steam Ship Company was formed by the merger of the Florida East Coast Line and The Plant Line, both of which were owned by railroads. Both railroad lines were formed by Henry Flagler along the east coast of Florida and by Henry Plant along the west.

The company owned and operated thirteen ships built between 1865 and 1931 as well as one ship chartered from Bath, Maine, for winter sailings between 1923 and 1931. The company was involved in shipping, cruising, and transporting mail which would be put on the Plant line and Florida East Coast Railway to be sorted by RPO.



As with the graphics used for the *Florida's* transport schedule to Havana shown in Figure 3, the P & O's advertising for the *Florida* sought to capitalize on the intrigue of a cruise to Cuba, as seen in the Figure 4 advertisement.² Figure 5 is a photograph of *Florida* passengers enjoying the cruise.³



Figure 4. "Romantic Overnight Cruise."

Figure 5. *Florida* passengers enjoying the cruise.

In addition to transporting the mail, the ships also had the capacity to accept mail from passengers, although I am not aware if these ships served as sea posts or simply added to the mail transported to the railways or otherwise.

The P & O operated the *Florida* throughout her thirty-seven-year career, except for four years during World War II. Built in Newport News, Virginia, in 1931, the ship accommodated 612 passengers in first class and 130 in second class. The *Florida's* service included Miami to Nassau cruises. Figure 6's postcard with a photograph of the *Florida* is postmarked NASSAU BAHAMAS AUG 14 1965. The stamp used for the mailing shows the ship Queen Elizabeth and is from the Bahamas' 1965 definitive set.

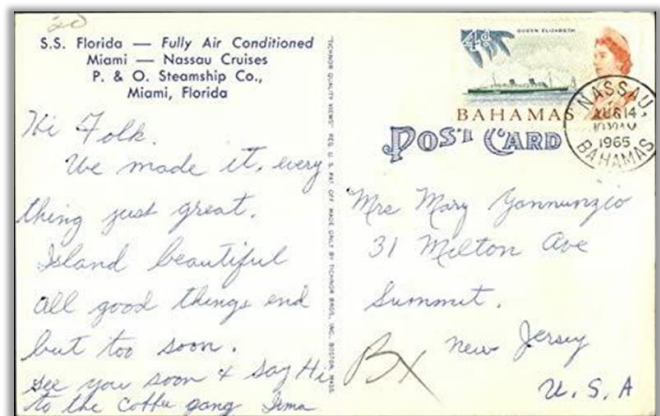


Figure 6. "S.S. Florida – Fully Air Conditioned. Miami – Nassau Cruises – P & O Steamship Co."

By 1959, the Cuban revolution put a stop to the *Florida*. Cuba passenger service and the company tried to continue in the Caribbean cruise market but ceased in about 1967.

Endnotes

- ¹ <http://www.latecruisenews.com/2017/09/11/tampa-havana-route-cruise-news-aidanovas-virtual-keel-laid-hamburg-irma-plays-havoc-cruise-ship-schedules>.
- ² <https://www.cruiselinehistory.com/cruise-ship-history-ss-florida-sails-to-havana-cuba-in-1952-for-4200-per-person-including-two-nights-aboard-ship-a-day-in-havana-and-all-meals-today-americans-can-travel-to-china-but-not-cub>.
- ³ <https://www.cruiselinehistory.com/ss-florida-miami-florida-to-havana-cuba-42-per-person-cruise-during-the-1940s>.

Unique Milton, Florida Cover By Phil Eschbach

I recently purchased a unique Florida cover (Figure 1) from an Australian auction. The U.S. Philatelic Classics Society has a census that lists all covers stamped with U.S. #1s and #2s for each state. There were none in the census cancelled from Milton, Florida until I registered my cover with the Society.



Figure 1. July 9, 1850, from Milton, Florida to Tallahassee.

The mailing was cancelled on July 9, 1850, from Milton, Florida to Tallahassee. The cover has a Type IV, red cancel, with pair of U.S. #1s, manuscript cancellations. It is a folded letter from Joseph Forsyth to H.R.W. Andrews.

Figure 2 is a December 1895 Florida post route map showing the location of the Milton post office.

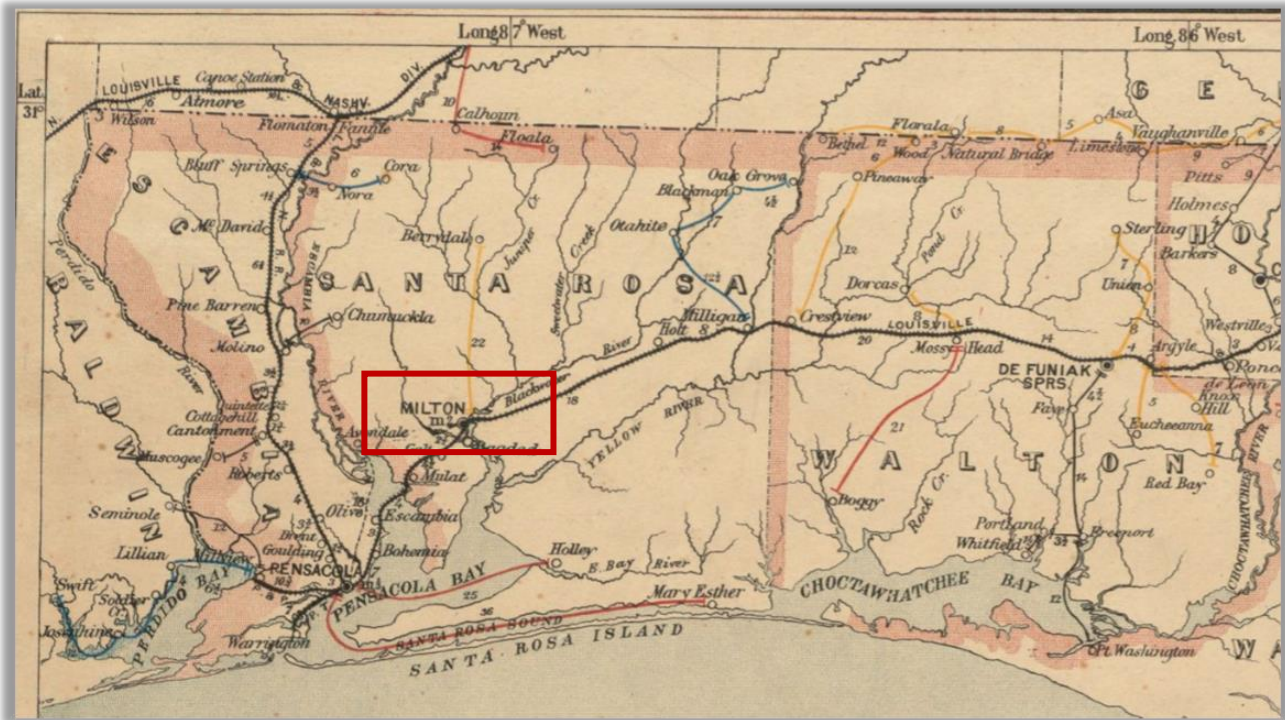


Figure 2. Milton on December 1895 Florida post route map.

The scarcity of the cover is indeed noteworthy. But the two individuals associated with the mailing are equally interesting as related to the history of Milton.

The contents of the Milton mailing (Figure 3) reveal that Forsyth is asking for a plat of an area where he possibly wants to purchase some land.

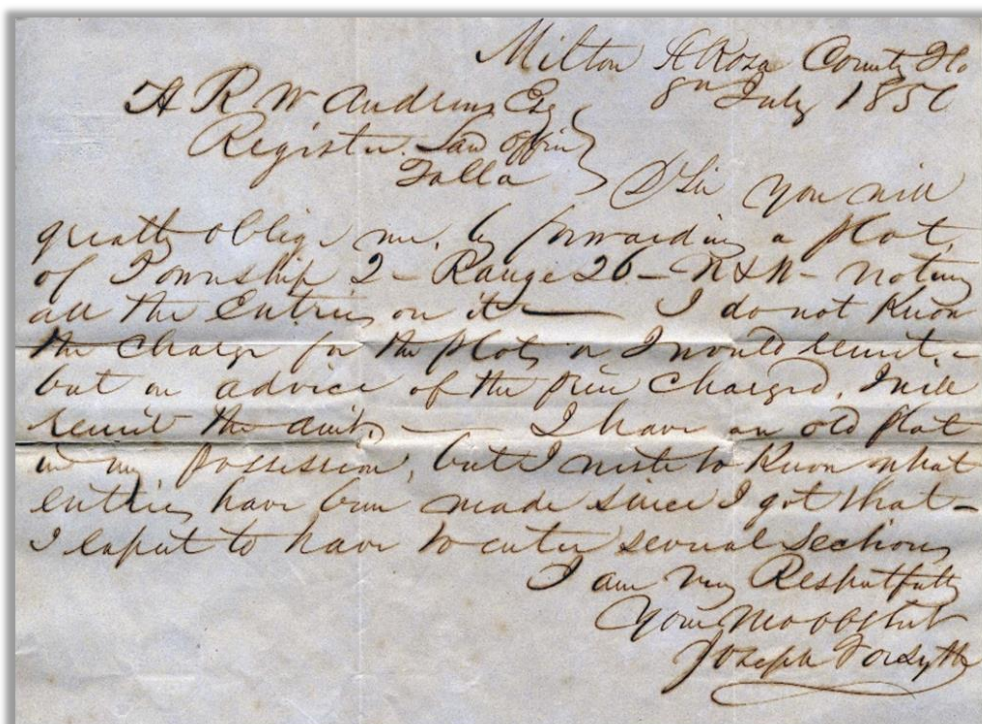


Figure 3. "Greatly oblige me by forwarding a plat of Township 2"

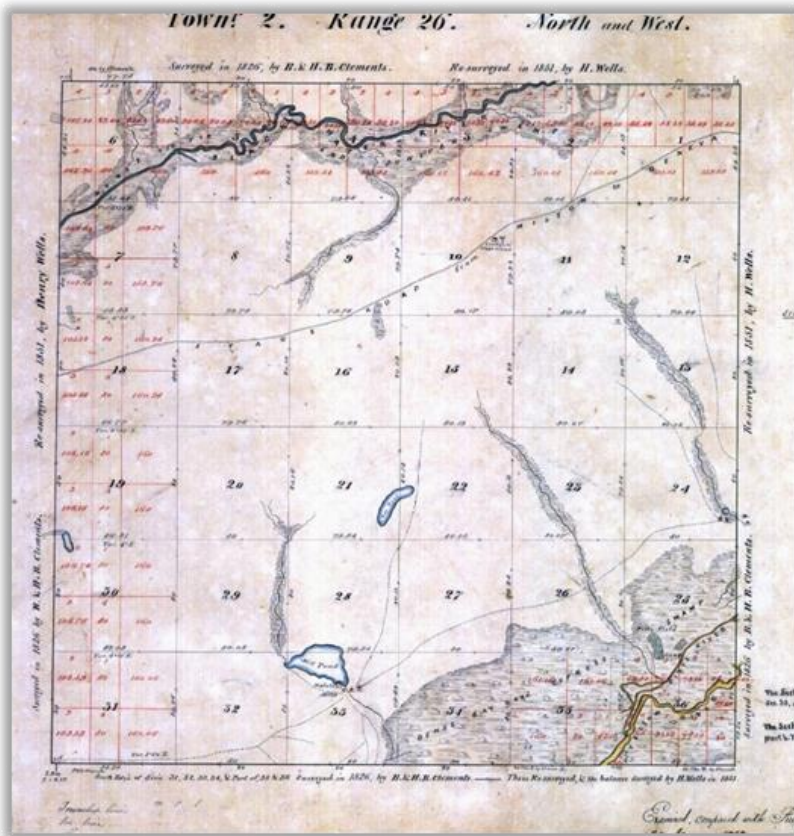


Figure 4. Land plat of "Township 2."

Figure 4 is an image of the land plat. The only road shown on it mostly follows what is today's US 90 which today goes from Jacksonville via Tallahassee to Pensacola, passing through Milton.

In 1829, H.R.W. Andrews, an early resident, maintained a shoe store on Jefferson Street. He later became an attorney and in 1849 was appointed the land registrar in Tallahassee and remained in that position for several years.

Andrews died in Tallahassee and is buried in the Old Cemetery, but the marker shows no dates.

Figure 5 is an entry from the *American Almanac* for H.R.W. Andrews as the state registrar in 1850.

1850.]

REGISTERS AND RECEIVERS OF THE LAND-OFFICE.

107

REGISTERS, RECEIVERS, SURVEYORS, AND GEOLOGISTS CONNECTED WITH
THE LAND-OFFICE.

Names of Registers and Receivers in Office August 10th, 1849.

State.	Place.	Registers.	Receivers.
ALABAMA,	St. Stephens,	James Magoffin,	Elijah H. Gordy.
"	Cahawba,	Alanson Saltmarsh,	Wm. W. Fambro.
"	Huntsville,	John J. Coleman,	Samuel Cruse.
"	Tuscaloosa,	Monroe Donoho,	Edward F. Comegys.
"	Sparta,	Wade H. Greening,	Armstead D. Carey.
"	Demopolis,	Lewis B. McCarty,	David E. Moore.
"	Montgomery,	Duncan B. Graham,	Nimrod E. Benson.
"	Lebanon,	Sampson Clayton,	Peter I. Walker.
ARKANSAS,	Batesville,	James H. Patterson,	William S. Hynson.
"	Little Rock,	William W. Adams,	Cyrus W. Wilson.
"	Washington,	William H. Etter,	B. F. Hempstead.
"	Fayetteville,	James H. Stirman,	Rich'd M. Thruston.
"	Helena,	Henry F. Mooney,	William H. Ringo.
"	Clarksville,	John E. Manly,	William Goodrich.
"	Champagnolle,	William E. Powell,	Ezra Hill.
FLORIDA,	Tallahassee,	H. R. W. Andrews,	John W. Argyle.
"	St. Augustine,	William H. Simmons	Thomas T. Russell.
"	Newnansville,	Samuel Russell,	George H. Smith.

Figure 5. American Almanac entry for H.R.W. Andrews, Register and Receiver of the Land-Office.

Joseph Forsyth (Figure 6) was born in Connecticut in 1803 and migrated to Florida after it became a U.S. territory. He purchased a property outside Milton in 1828 for \$400 and began building a dam and sawmill in what became the Arcadia Mill. He took in brothers Andrew and Ezekiel Simpson as investors.



Figure 6. Joseph Forsyth.
(Courtesy bagdadliving.com.)

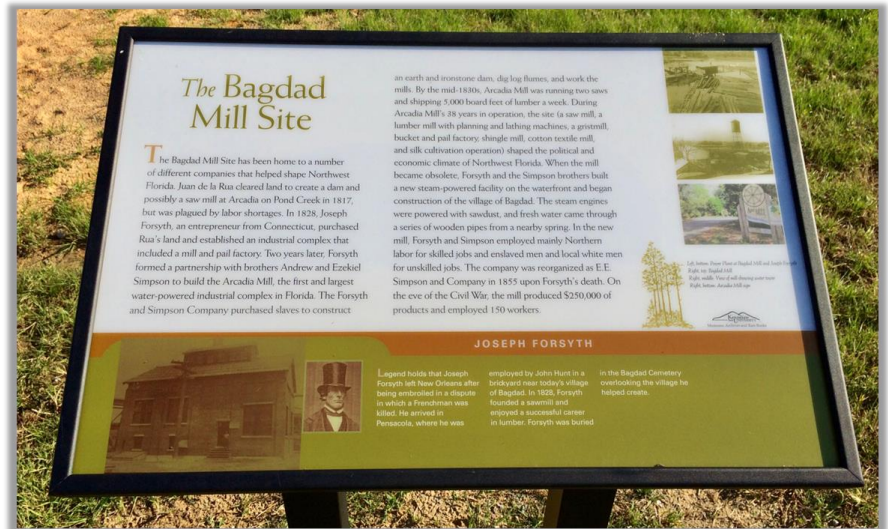


Figure 7. Arcadia Mil Park / Bagdad Mill marker.
(Courtesy hmdb.org.)

In 1845, the Arcadia Manufacturing Company was formed, and a textile mill was added. The company produced everything from flour to lumber. Over the next thirty-eight years, it became the largest industrial complex in Florida and was instrumental in the political and economic development of West Florida.

Forsyth died in 1855 in Bagdad, a community just south of Milton. Forsyth is credited with the founding of Bagdad. Soon after Forsyth's death, a fire destroyed the textile mill. The complex was abandoned by the end of the Civil War.

However, the site has been excavated by archaeologists and is now a public park (Figure 7).

Sources

- Norman B. Leventhal Map & Education Center, Boston University; leventhalmap.org.
- *American Almanac & Repository of Useful Knowledge for the year of 1850*, Boston, Charles Little & James Brown, pg. 107.
- Groene, Bertram, *Ante-Bellum Tallahassee*, Florida Heritage Foundation, 1971.
- McKeon, Jennie, "No Longer Forgotten" an article in the "Santa Rosa Gazette," Feb. 6, 2018.
- Florida Back Roads Travel.com.

State Revenue Stamps of Florida: Documentary and General Inspection & Excise By Richard Lomax

Welcome to the fourth article in our series of state revenue stamps of Florida. This piece describes two categories: Documentary stamps and General Inspection & Excise stamps. We again 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 term “Documentary” does not refer to documentary films or the like. It has to do with legal documents, such as stock transfers, deeds, titles, promissory notes, and, in later years, surtaxes. The Documentary subcategories are (a) Documentary Stamps and (b) Documentary Meter Stamps. Thus, the subcategories have to do with the type of stamp that was affixed to the actual document. Let us take a look at the specifics of each type of stamp, including examples of each from my collection.

The first subcategory of Documentary is Documentary Stamps. These stamps have been in use since 1931 and are still being utilized to this day.

Documentary Stamps have a numbering system from D1 to D113. However, several stamps have not been seen (D10, 11, 44, 53, 54, 56, 58, 60, 64, 66-67, 70, 72), and there are quite a few variations, some of which involve imperforates. Seemingly every color has been printed in one series or another, so this would be a colorful collection to have.

The stamp denominations have a very wide range from 2¢ to \$110, with the larger values being more rare and more expensive. Figure 1 are examples of the 5-cent D35, the 15-cent D104, and the \$10 D100.



Figure 1. Documentary stamps D35, D104, and D100.

The second and final subcategory of Documentary is Documentary Meter Stamps. As expected, these are meter-type stamps rather than the postage-type stamps of the previous subcategory. Essentially, these were an alternative to postage-type stamps. Individual counties in Florida decided which alternative they wanted to utilize.

These stamps were in use from 1957 to 1997. Metered stamps are denoted as DM 1-21, plus some variations. As well, each numbered stamp was printed for many denominations and for numerous Florida counties (with some stamps having no county shown).

One could form a collection of Florida Documentary Meter Stamps in and of itself. Figure 2 shows meter stamp DM2 from Dade County, dated 1958 (of the 1957 series).



Note that postage meter stamps are an entire category of philately with their own catalogs. For further information, see J.A. Hawkins & R. Stambaugh, *United States Postage Meter Stamp Catalog*, 1994, as well as the *International Postage Meter Stamp Catalog*, 2005, by the same authors.

Figure 2. Dade County DM2 documentary meter stamp.

The General Inspection & Excise subcategories are: (a) Bedding Inspection; (b) ICC (Interstate Commerce Commission); (c) Oil Inspection; and (d) Weights & Measures.

For the Bedding subcategory, the purpose of these stamps was to regulate the material with which bedding is stuffed. Before government regulation, mattresses, cushions, and the like were stuffed with less than healthy materials. Florida is one of nineteen states with bedding inspection stamps.

Typically, the stamps were affixed to tags which were sewn to the bedding item. The Florida stamps were required from 1953 to 1965, with two series for a total of six BD stamps, plus a few variations.

Figure 3 shows BD1. The first article in this series from the May 2022 issue included a Florida bedding stamp affixed to a tag. See Figure 1 of that article. Not to be removed under penalty of law!

The second subcategory is for the ICC (Interstate Commerce Commission). The purpose of these stamps was to indicate that trucks were licensed and inspected. These stamps were used in numerous states and displayed in the vehicle on what is called a cab card (i.e., in the truck cab).



Figure 3. Bedding Inspection stamp BD1.

In Florida, this was required by law from 1974 to 1980, resulting in eleven IC stamps, plus a variation. These stamps are not readily available, but an example is shown in Wrisley (p. 155).

Next is the Oil Inspection subcategory. This was only required from 1919 to circa 1930. Florida had a total of nine stamps, denoted by O1 – O9, which were attached to oil containers. Likely due to their age and the difficulty of being saved, these stamps are rare and expensive. An example, O7, is shown in Figure 4, courtesy of Eric Jackson.



Figure 4. Oil Inspection stamp O7.

The fourth and final subcategory is Weights & Measures. There are a wide variety of labels attached to weight scales in grocery stores, gasoline pumps, among other uses. The purpose was to regulate the accuracy of weights and other measurement devices.

There is no cataloging of these labels in Wrisley, probably given the huge volume of labels that have been produced over the past fifty years (from the 1970s through the present). Figure 5 is an example from my local gas station.



Figure 5. Weights & Measures stamp from author's local gas station.

In the series of articles to this point, we have covered the categories of Food Products, Alcoholic Products, Documentary, and General Inspection & Excise. The last two articles in the series will cover the remaining categories of Florida revenue stamps, which are Tobacco Products and Agriculture Products. Until then.

1937 Florida Feeder Airline Service Test Promotions - Precursors to the 1938 National Air Mail Week?

By Steve Swain

It is well known to air mail postal historians that the 1938 National Air Mail Week event (May 15-21) was an enormously successful series of celebrations and festivities orchestrated by Postmaster James Farley and President Franklin Roosevelt. The well-designed national campaign to promote air mail included a special issue stamp (Scott C23), thousands of town and city cachets, covers autographed by postmasters and pilots, 24-hour airmail duty by many volunteer pilots, school essay contests, and more. Figure 1 are two 1938 National Air Mail Week covers with special Miami and Saint Petersburg, Florida cachets.



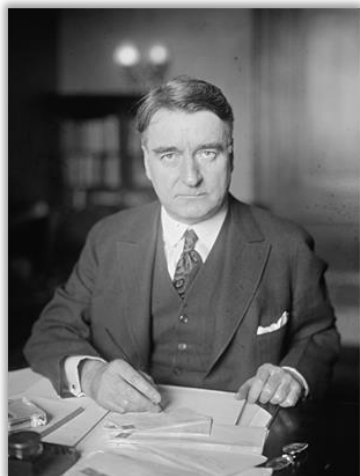
Figure 1. 1938 National Air Mail Week covers with Miami and Saint Petersburg cachets.

But was the organization and campaign for the 1938 national event truly an original design of Farley's and Roosevelt's? The 1938 celebration was preceded by a lesser known 1937 air mail event in Florida, and in only a limited number of other states. The 1937 event was most likely the foundation for the marketing design and strategy associated with the 1938 national celebration.

In the mid-1930s, air mail volume was growing at a significant rate in the United States. Reports confirmed that almost eleven million pounds of air mail had been flown in the first ten months of 1935 compared to just over seven million for the entire year of 1934.¹ As such, feeder service was more and more looked upon as a viable air mail solution.

Relying on a 1942 article published in the "Journal and Air Law and Commerce"², a feeder airline is "(1) a common carrier (2) performing the dual function of concentrating and dispersing mail, passengers, and/or property (3) within a given marketing area (4) from widely scattered points (5) to a few terminal points. This definition has purposely avoided limiting the scope of a feeder airline by any preconceived notion as to what shall be the size of the area served; whether a community is or is not at present served-by an airline; or if the distance between stops shall be a minimum, a maximum or an average of so many miles."

In April 1937, U.S. Senator Royal S. Copeland of New York (Figure 2) introduced bills directing the Postmaster General to "conduct a survey with a view to carrying all first-class mail by air, providing reduction of air mail rates and the creation of a federal bureau to improve air navigation." Copeland also asked the bureau of air commerce, "to pass on the practicability of establishing feeder air lines into state capitals and cities over 15,000 population."



In the summer of 1937, the U.S. House Post Office Committee began consideration of legislation designed to permit the post office department to undertake experimental air mail services. A series of “All-State Air Mail Feeder Flight Survey Tests”, sponsored by Eastern Air Lines and the U.S. Post Office Department, began in August.

The five states chosen for the feeder service tests, and associated dates, were:

- Georgia: August 9-16
- Florida: August 23-30
- North Carolina: October 11-16
- New Jersey: November 15-20
- Texas: December 6-12

Figure 2. U.S. Senator Royal S. Copeland of New York (Wikipedia.org.)

To promote awareness and to stimulate air mail usage during the events, the five states declared a “special air mail week” celebration in conjunction with their feeder air mail surveys. Special town cachets were created, most with the same design that included Eastern Air Lines’ “The Great Silver Fleet” slogan and logo (Figure 3).

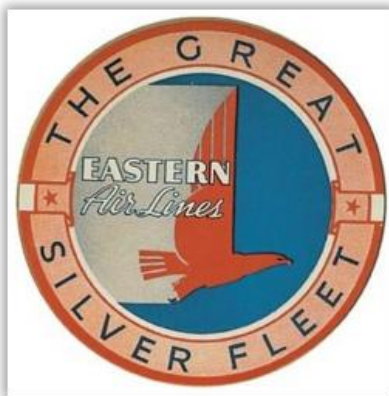


Figure 3. Eastern Air logo “The Great Silver Fleet”.

1937 feeder service air mail week covers include two Deland, Florida mailings postmarked DAYTONA BEACH FLA. AUG 26 1937 (Figures 4 and 5).



Figures 4 and 5. Deland, Florida 1937 feeder service air mail covers.

Figure 6's JACKSONVILLE, FLA. AUG 26, 1937, mailing is adorned on the cover's reverse with a "certification" label (indicated by arrow) from St. Augustine's Postmaster J. Herman Manucy testifying that the "letter was dispatched from St. Augustine, Florida by Plane."



Figure 6. Jacksonville, Florida 1937 feeder service cover with "certification."

Also applied to the cover's reverse was an oval handstamp "COMMEMORATING THE DEDICATION OF ST AUGUSTINE'S NEW POST OFFICE – FEBRUARY 22, 1937."

Other strategies used to promote the event in the five states included special boxes in town post offices to post event mailings, letters addressed to President Franklin D. Roosevelt, gongs installed in post office lobbies for patrons to strike when posting an air mail letter, and model airplane contests for youngsters.



Were these events inspirations for the National Air Mail Week celebration just five months later in 1938? Although many will characterize the marketing ideas and strategy for the 1938 event as the brainchild of Postmaster General James A. Farley, significant credit for the marketing strategy for the 1938 National Air Mail Week should be given to Eastern Air Lines' public relations director, Beverly Howard Griffith (1887 – 1970) (Figure 7³).

Subsequent to Beverly Griffith's sales and promotion jobs in Hollywood, he became the director of public affairs at Eastern Airlines. He was hired in 1936 by close friend and famed WWI Medal of Honor pilot Eddie Rickenbacker, who had recently been appointed as General Manager of Eastern. Griffith's tireless work and affability with all garnered him the honor of being listed as one of the "Big Four" of 1939 airline publicity men.

Figure 7. Beverly Howard Griffith.

Griffith was the "idea man" for the various unique promotions and events supporting the 1937 feeder air mail flights: town cachets, letters addressed to President Roosevelt, "special air mail week" promotions, contests, etc. Given this, the 1937 feeder service tests were indeed precursors to, the foundation for, the marketing design used for the 1938 National Air Mail Week celebration.

Endnotes

¹ <http://www.texasstamps.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/V34N4.pdf>.

² <https://scholar.smu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3293&context=jalc>.

³ <https://classicfilmfictionados.wordpress.com/2015/03/09/beverly-griffith-gaining-ground-by-grit-a-hollywood-story>.

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