

## FLORIDA POSTAL HISTORY - 1763-1865

Following the discovery of Florida in 1513 by Ponce de Leon and throughout the First Spanish Period (1513-1763) postal history is lacking. The first recorded letter from Florida is a privately carried letter to London from John Campbell datelined "Exiled Pensacola Sept 5<sup>th</sup> 1763" with docketing for receipt "R January 19, 1764". This exhibit will show examples from the various periods in Florida's history through the end of the Civil War.

First Spanish Period 1513 - 1763

British Period 1763 - 1784

Second Spanish Period 1784 - 1821

Pre-Territorial (Military Government Period) 1821 - 1822

Florida Territorial Period 1822 - 1845

Florida Statehood Period 1845 - 1861

Florida Confederate Period 1861 - 1865



Earliest recorded postal rated cover from Florida datelined "St. Augustine, 20th April 1767". Carried by ship to Charleston where Chas. Town Ship / 2d Ster. rate applied. Carried to Philadelphia by ship where Sh 6 rate applied (4d overland to Northfolk, Va. + 2d ship fee). ASCC listing Chas Town Ship marking.

BRITISH PERIOD 1763 - 1784

Florida was ceded to the British by Spain on August 6, 1763 under terms of the Treaty of Paris and for the first time a postal system was established. John Haley is recorded as Deputy Post Master in St. Augustine prior to 1881 and a Mr. Blackwell was postmaster in Pensacola prior to 1777. The Falmouth Packets made stops at Pensacola and St. Augustine and a PENSACOLA backstamped transit mark is recorded with use from 1772-1774. No other Florida postal markings are known during the British period.



December 5<sup>th</sup> 1770 dateline on cover to British Governor of East Florida in St. Augustine which entered mails rated 1/ with CHARLES/TOWN backstamp and 6/DE bishop's mark. Other recorded examples from this correspondence are dated 1769-1770.



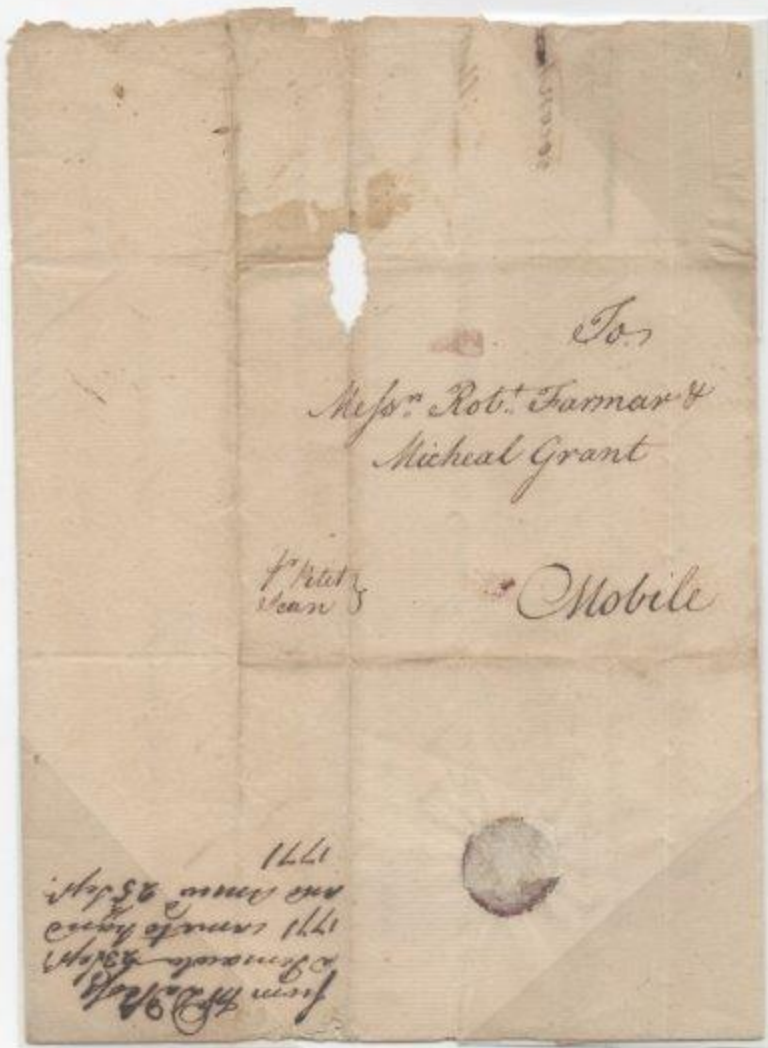
St. Augustine 23<sup>rd</sup> July 1777 dateline on cover with 1/ packet rate and 8d inland rate to Berwick, England. DOVER / SHIP LRE and 25/SE bishop's mark denotes a 60 day transit time.



**Pensacola 6<sup>th</sup> August 1768** dateline on cover to Pontefract, England. Originally to go on Falmouth packet "Anna Teresa" which was wrecked off Florida a week earlier. Carried by private ship to London rated **In all 5** (1d ship fee + 4d inland rate) with **LONDON/SHIP LRE** and **15/NO** bishop's mark reflecting 3 month transit. Enclosure mentions Mr. Blackwell, Pensacola postmaster and also distributor of stamps for stamp duty.



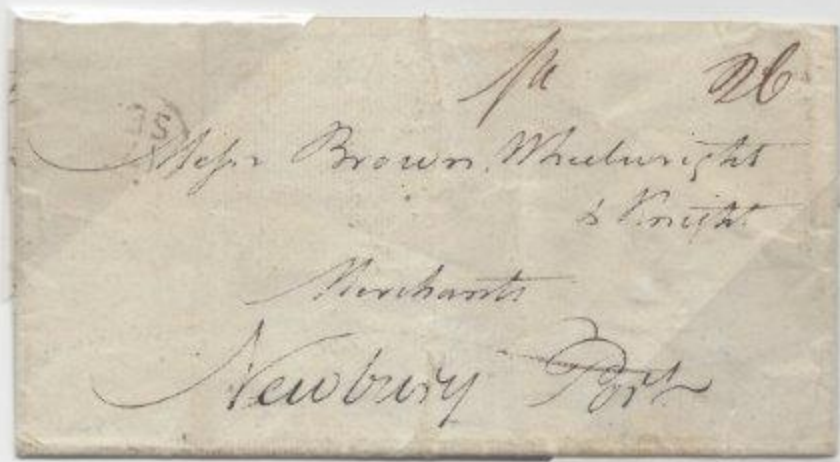
**Saml Fontenell Pensacola April 9 & 10 May Reed 26 July 1779** docketing on outer letter sheet carried privately by ship with **DEAL/SHIP LRE** rated **10d** to London with **24/JY** bishop's receiving mark. Originally two letters were enclosed (double rated cover). Fontenell and three partners had purchased an estate of 1000 acres in West Florida in 1775.



Pensacola 23<sup>rd</sup> Sepr. 1771 dateline on cover sent by favor of ship captain of the **Petit Jean** for delivery to Mobile. This is the earliest British Period cover sent within British West Florida.

## SECOND SPANISH PERIOD 1784 - 1821

The Treaty of Paris of 1783 returned Florida to Spain on June 27, 1784. No formal postal system was established by the Spanish in Florida and mail was handled for a "Way" fee by post riders to nearby American post offices to enter the mail. St. Mary's, Georgia handled mail from East Florida and Fort Adams, Pinckneyville, and Natchez in the Mississippi Territory handled most West Florida mail.



St. Marc (St. Marks) August 1<sup>st</sup> 1795 dateline on letter carried by ship to Philadelphia with Sh 26 rate (22 cent + 4 cent ship fee) for inland 350-450 mile delivery to Newbury Port. 17/SE Franklin receiving mark denotes a six week transit.



Fernandina April 30<sup>th</sup> 1812 dateline on cover entering mails at St. Mary's, Georgia with 17 cent rate for delivery to Charleston (150-300 miles).



Anastasia Island, E. F. October 16, 1813 dateline on cover to Bethlehem, Pennsylvania which entered the mails at St. Marys (Georgia) 30 October and rated unpaid 25 for over 500 miles. Enclosure discusses failed "Patriot's Rebellion".



Smyrna, East Florida January 1, 1819 dateline on cover to Durham, Connecticut with manuscript Smyrna 25ct Postage mimicked circular postmark probably applied in an effort to avoid postage to be paid by recipient. The ASCC listing example, ex. Jarret.



Bayou Sara (Spanish West Florida) July 25, 1807 dateline on folded letter which entered the mails with Pinckneyville M.T. Au 10 postmark and Way 26 rate (25c over 500 mile rate + 1 c Way fee). This letter was carried on the Natchez Trace mail route to Cincinnati, Ohio.



Bayou Sara (Spanish West Florida) August 13<sup>th</sup> 1807 dateline on folded letter which entered the mails with F\* Adams \* Aug 17 postmark and unpaid 25 rate. Note that this cover from the same correspondence as the above cover was delivered to the Ft. Adams, Mississippi Territory post office without a "way" fee.

**PRE-TERRITORIAL (MILITARY GOVERNMENT PERIOD)  
JULY 10, 1821 – MARCH 29, 1822**

On February 22, 1819, Spain signed a treaty of cession by which the United States received Florida. Delays in ratification postponed the formal transfer until July 10, 1821 in St. Augustine and July 17, 1821 in Pensacola. Andrew Jackson was appointed the Military Governor and made Pensacola his headquarters. United States post offices were established in St. Augustine and Pensacola in July 1821 and also in Fernandina on September 22, 1821. To date, no postmarks are known from Fernandina during this period.



**Pensacola 6<sup>th</sup> Aug. -21-** postmark with **Paid 25** rate on cover to New York, forwarded to Providence. The enclosure states "this is the first mail since the Government has been changed" and therefore is the earliest known cover to have an actual Florida postmark. Ex. Meroni.



**PENSACOLA. Oct. 8.** postmark with **Paid 25** manuscript rate on 1821 folded letter. The earliest of 14 known examples with this handstamped pre-territorial postmark.





St. Augustine 30 Oct postmark with unpaid 25 rate on 1821 folded letter to Philadelphia. 5 known manuscript postmarked pre-territorial period covers.



ST. AUGUSTINE 12 Feby 1822 postmark with Paid 25 rate on folded letter to Portsmouth, New Hampshire. 4 known examples of this handstamped pre-territorial postmark.

TERRITORIAL PERIOD 1822 - 1845

Florida became a United States Territory on March 30, 1822 with 3 post offices. The post office in Jacksonville was established in 1824, followed by Tallahassee and Quincy in 1825. By 1830, there were 37 post offices in the territory with a population of 35,000, growing to 54,000 by 1840.



Earliest known postmarks from Apalachicola (1833) and Jacksonville (1827). Jacksonville still used a manuscript postmark and "way" post riders 3 years after the post office was established.

KEY WEST  
APL 27  
FLORIDA

Public Service  
**FREE**

Gen. W. Lewis  
Adjutant General  
U. S. Army  
Washington  
D. C.

LIPONA  
June  
27  
FLORIDA

25

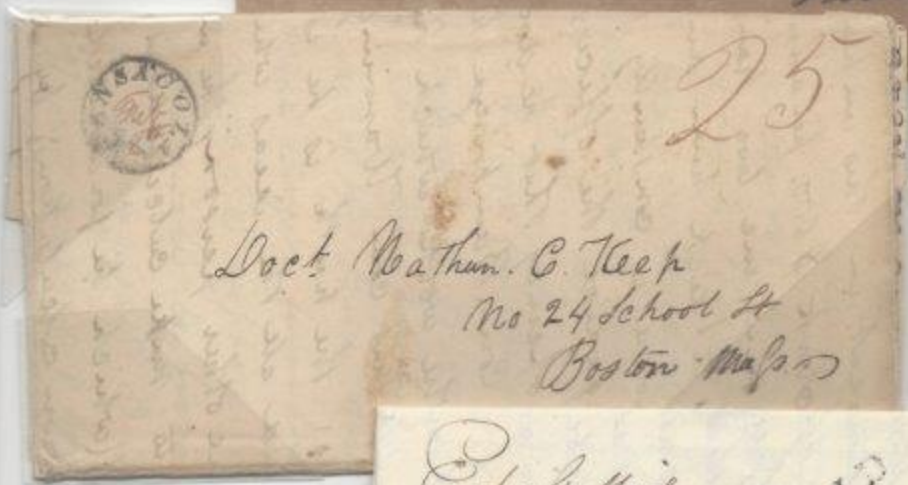
General Cooke.  
Care of Rev John P. K. Henshaw  
Sharp Street  
Baltimore Md.

MOUNT VERNON  
4 Oct  
FLO.

PAID 10

His Excellency James P. Westcott  
Governor of Florida  
Tallahassee

**KEY WEST / FLORIDA (1832)** oval postmark was used from 1831 -1853, longest use of any Florida territorial postmark. **LIPONA JEF. / FLORIDA (1829-30)** earliest use of a "county" designation (Jefferson Co.) in any Florida postmark, the latest of 3 known examples . **MOUNT VERNON / FLO.** oval (1833-4) earliest of 3 known examples, only example with oval **PAID**.



PENSACOLA Feb 8<sup>th</sup> (1827) latest use of 4 known "thimble" postmarks. Pensacola 31<sup>st</sup> July (1827) Excess Free 18 <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> cent rated cover for <sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> oz. enclosure within folded letter. The known "Excess Free" rated Florida cover (by Athens, Alabama post master). PENZA F. (1837) PAID 75 "Express Mail" to U.S. Post Master General Amos Kendall who initiated the Express Mail service in 1836.

PORT LEON, FLA

FEB 11<sup>th</sup> 41

25

Mess. Spear & Patton  
New York

In public Service

PORT LEON, FLA  
Nov 24 42

Prof. Genl R. Jones  
Adj. General  
U.S. Army

FREE

PORT LEON, Fla.

Nov 16<sup>th</sup> 43

Election Returns  
To the  
Secretary of Florida  
Tallahassee

PORT LEON, FLA FEBY 11<sup>th</sup> (1841) postmark in use 3 months from Dec. 31, 1840 to April 6, 1841.  
PORT LEON / FLO Nov 24 (1842) postmark with FREE rate, the known Free usage. PORT LEON, Fla Nov 16<sup>th</sup> 43 the known example of this postmark. Port Leon was established in 1840 as the terminus of the first railroad in Florida, connecting the Gulf of Mexico with Tallahassee. Yellow Fever and a hurricane destroyed the town in 1844, resulting in the town and post office being moved a few miles inland and renamed Newport.



**QUINCY / FLO May 6 (1834)** earliest known use of this oval postmark which was used from 1834-1837. **TALLAHASSEE / FLORIDA DEC 29 (1825)** red ink postmark with PAID 25 rate, 3 known examples, the known PAID rate example. **TALLAHASSEE / FLORIDA JUNE 20 (1827)** black ink postmark with manuscript date and FLORIDA upside down. 4 known examples.



ST. AUGUSTINE, / DEC. 17 (1822) postmark used April 8, 1822 to December 19, 1822.  
 ST. AUGUSTINE, / 17 SEPT 1822 postmark used April 2, 1822 to August 4, 1825.  
 ST. AUGUSTINE, / JULY 19<sup>TH</sup>, 1825 postmark with FREE rate. The known example.  
 ST. AUGUSTINE, / SEPTEMBER 10 (1825) with FREE rate. The known example.



SEM. AGENCY \* FLO \* Nov 25 (1831) fancy double oval postmark used from 1831-1835.

TAMPA FLOIRDA AUGUST 4<sup>th</sup> 1841 rimless circle postmark used from 1840-1841.

WANTON'S FLO / FEBRU 9 (1828) red ink postmark, earliest of 2 known examples.

WOODSTOCK MILLS / E. FLORA OCT 12 (1844) serrated circle postmark, earliest known use.

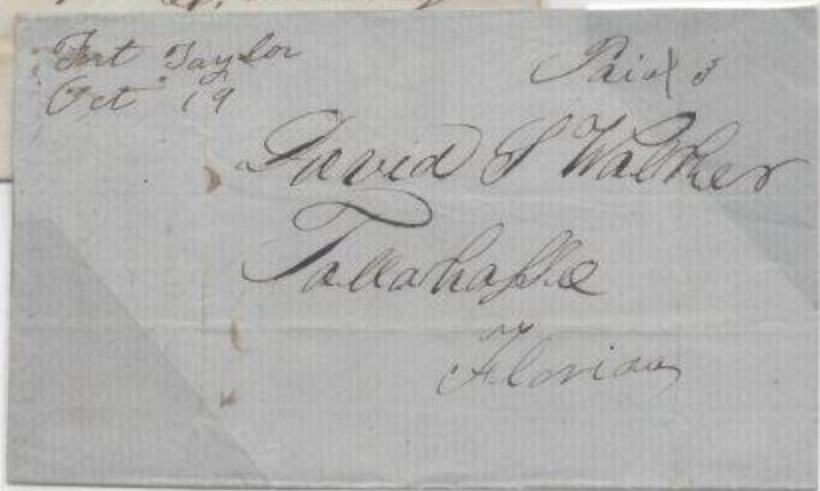
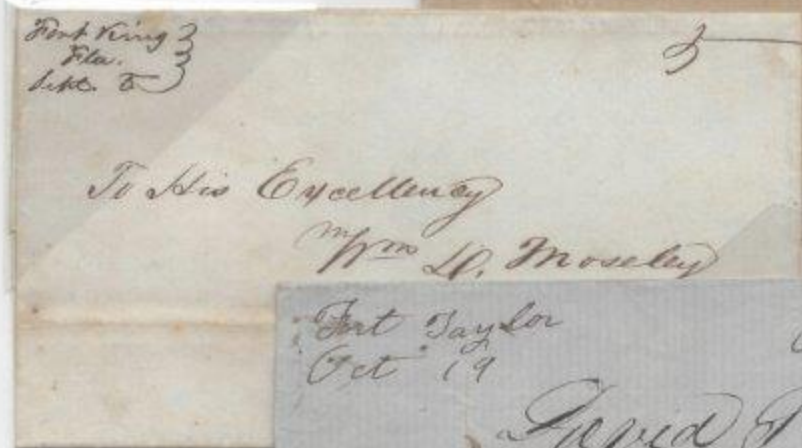
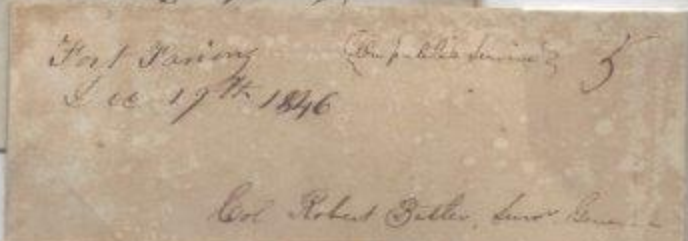


## STATEHOOD PERIOD 1845 - 1861

Florida gained her statehood on March 3, 1845. Florida had 153 functioning post offices by the onset of the Civil War and had grown to a population of 140,000. Postmarks with "territorial" indicia were used during the statehood period well into the 1850's. Stampless usage continued during the Statehood period until 1860, despite adhesive stamps being available since late 1847 in Florida.



**CLAY LANDING / FLA. SEP 7 (1858)** postmark with postmaster **FREE** rate on very late stampless usage. The known example. **ST.AUGUSTINE / FLA. DEC 18 (1852)** late use of territorial postmark with **FREE** rate. The known example in green ink. **YELLOW BLUFF / T.F. March 23 (1855)** late territorial postmark ties #11. Post office was established in 1853, 8 years after statehood.



Post offices were established at or near many of the Seminole War forts throughout central Florida. Most were short lived and used manuscript postmarks. **Fort Dade Fla / July 16 (1849)** postmark, earliest of 2 known examples. **Fort Fanning / Dec 19<sup>th</sup> 1845** postmark, the known example with Fanning misspelled. **Fort King Fla. Sept 5 (1846)**, the known example. **Fort Taylor Oct 19 (1854)**, latest of 3 known examples.



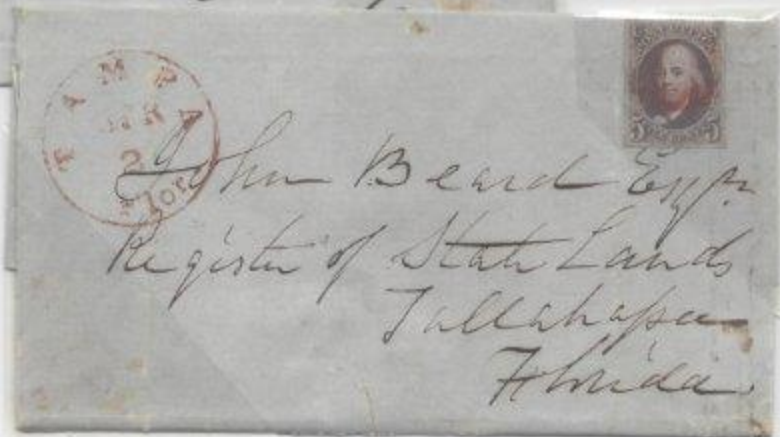
**FERNANDINA / FLA JUL 1** postmark with senatorial **FREE** rate of David L. Yulee. Yulee was president of the Florida Rail Road and resigned his senate seat in January 1861 when Florida seceded. **Miami Fla. May 1 (1852)** manuscript forwarding postmark to San Francisco, the earliest known Miami postmark. **WHITE SPRING FLA / June 4 (1853)** postmark with boxed **PAID 3** rate, two known examples.

## FLORIDA ADHESIVE STAMP USAGE

Adhesive stamps were distributed to the major Florida post offices in late 1847 with US 5c #1 and 10c #2 sent to the following post offices in these quantities: Apalachicola 700/900, Jacksonville 600/500, Key West 500/1400, Quincy 600/200, Tallahassee 1700/1400, and Tampa 200/200. To date only 82 covers with US #1 or #2 have been recorded with Florida usage, the majority from Apalachicola (26), Key West (10), and Tallahassee (30).



**TALLAHASSEE / Flor. MAY 7 (1850)** green ink postmark on cover with pair #1 paying over 300 mile rate for usage to Virginia. **TALLAHASSEE / Flor. NOV 10 (1847)** green ink postmark on cover with #2 with usage to New Jersey. This is the **earliest known use** of an adhesive stamp from Florida, with a June 9, 1848 EKU of US #1. Tallahassee used green as well as the more common black ink during the 1847-1850 period.



APALACHICOLA / F.T.Y. MAY 19 (1851) red ink postmark with US #2 usage to Massachusetts. Late use of the territorial postmark. QUINCY / Flor. JAN 9 (1850) red ink postmark with US #2 usage to Philadelphia. TAMPA / Flor. MAR 2 (1850) red ink postmark with #1 usage to Tallahassee. Single usage of US #1 for the under 300 mile rate is uncommon in Florida with only 5 recorded examples.



APALACHICOLA / FLA. dateless postmarks tie pair US #5A plated 5RIE and 6RIE by Ashbrook on January 19, 1852 prices current circular. APALACHICOLA FLA / PAID/3 / MAR 23 (1852) postmark ties pair US #7 plated 41/42 RIE on p/c circular. APALACHICOLA / FLA. dateless postmarks tie pair US #8A on March 1, 1852 p/c circular.



TALLAHASSEE / FLA. postmarks tie strip of 3 US #9 plated 78-79-80 R2 with "double dot" on middle stamp on "mourning cover" to Virginia. JACKSONVILLE / Flor. JAN 12 (1855) postmark ties US #10 on cover to New York. WARRINGTON / FLA. postmarks tie US #9 and strip of three US #11 on cover to California (over 3000 mile 10 c rate). Florida usage to or from California is uncommon.



**NEW PORT / Flor. SEP 8 (1858)** postmarks tie two pairs and two single copies US #36 usage to England. **FLORIDA R.R. / 4 JUL** postmark on US #U10 three cent entire. The earliest known Florida rail road postal marking with 2 known examples. **KEY WEST / FLA DEC 31 (1862)** postmark on double rated cover with pair US #63, US #68, and two US #71 for usage to Ireland.



## FLORIDA CONFEDERATE PERIOD 1861 - 1865

Florida seceded from the United States and became an Independent State on January 11, 1861 (Independent State Period). She joined the Confederate States of America as one of the six original members on February 4, 1861 rate (Confederate State Period). Mail was handled by the United States postal service with the 3c rate until June 1, 1861, when the Confederate postal system took effect with an initial 5c under 500 mile rate. On June 1, 1862, the rate changed to 10c for any distance.



**SAINT AUGUSTINE / Fla. JAN 29 (1861) Independent State** usage on hotel advertising cover. 4 known Florida Confederate advertising covers recorded. The known Independent State period usage.



**JACKSONVILLE / Flor. FEB 23 (1861) Confederate State** usage with Advertised, For'd 3 rate and Dead Letter Office (CDO-02 type B) file notation. The known Florida Confederate DLO cover.

When stamps were not available some Confederate postmasters prepared handstamped paid envelopes or had adhesive stamps printed for sale to patrons in advance of actual use. These stamps and envelopes have become known as "Postmaster Provisionals" and were accepted as postage when mailed at town of origin.



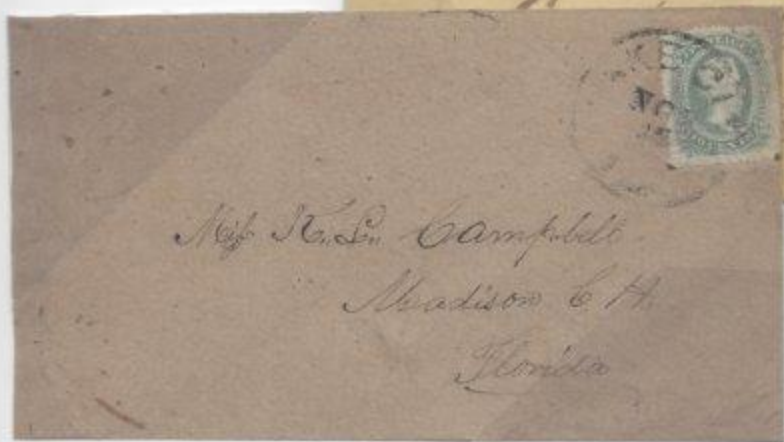
**Madison Court House, Florida 3 cent Postmaster Provisional type A-MAD-FL-A01** with boxed PAID cancellation with clipped enclosure datelined "Madison Florida / February 13, 1861". This is the earliest use of any Confederate provisional stamp, ex. Ferrary, Hind, Caspary and Gross. **MICHANOPY, FLA. / PAID 5 Postmaster Provisional type MIC-L-E01a** on "Mourning cover" uprated with PAID/5 to reflect the over 500 mile rate making this a "Conjunctive use" cover. **Pensacola PAID 5 revalued 10 Postmaster Provisional type PEN-FL-E01a** with Richmond ADVERTISED 2 on 7 star patriotic cover.



Little River Fla / June 1<sup>st</sup> 1861 postmark with PAID in Money 5c rate on First Day of Confederate Postal System "adversity" use of star die entire. PENSACOLA / Fla. JUN 1 (1861) with PAID 5 uprated 10 to reflect the over 500 mile rate on First Day of Confederate Postal System cover. The known type a 10c rate. PENSACOLA / Fla. NOV 1 (1861) postmark, earliest known Florida use of Confederate adhesive stamp.



**MONTICELLO / Flor.** postmark with PAID /10 type B rate on 9 star patriotic cover (two known Florida 9 star examples). **MONTICELLO / Flor.** postmark with PAID 10 type C rate on wallpaper adversity cover. **(Tallahassee) ADVERTISED 2** rate on cover from Jackson, Miss. The known Florida advertised cover. **WARRINGTON / Fla.** postmark with POSTAGE / DUE 5 type G rate on 11 star patriotic cover with "Bartow" added to note the first Confederate officer killed at 1<sup>st</sup> Manassus.



Brooksville Fla postmark with #1 and #6 on cover. Two known Florida "combination" covers. WELAKA FLA. postmark with #5 tied with postmark on cover. Two known examples. TALLAHASSEE / FLA. postmark ties #10 on cover. Four known Florida "frameline" examples. LAKE CITY / FLA. postmark ties "privately perforated" #11 on cover. Two known Florida "perforated" adhesive examples.



**Bay Port Fla** postmark with Paid 10 rate on South to North Flag of Truce cover. The known Florida example from this short lived civilian Flag of Truce via Norfolk. **WARRINGTON / Fla.** postmark ties #2 on **post evacuation** cover to daughter of CSA Postmaster General John Reagan. Pensacola and Warrington were evacuated in May 1862, with civilian population moving to Pollard, Ala. where the Warrington postmaster used his handstamp until he was commissioned the Pollard postmaster. **POLLARD / ALA** postmark on **cross the lines** cover from Union occupied Pensacola to enter the Confederate mails at Pollard.



**Cross the lines** cover from Union occupied Jacksonville to **Andersonville Prison** with Henry Wirz examined marking which entered the Confederate mails at Lake City where the type **E PAID/10** rate was applied. **Prisoner of War** cover from Johnson's Island to Florida with Confederate **DUE 10** rate applied at Richmond. **Prisoner of War** cover from Fort Delaware to Florida with mixed franking.



**Incoming Blockade cover** from Glasgow, Scotland to Tallahassee, carried on the blockade runner "Heroine" from Bermuda to enter at Wilmington, NC with unpaid 12 rate (10c CSA rate + 2c ship fee). **Incoming Blockade cover** to Tallahassee, carried on the Steamer Antonica from Nassau which entered at Charleston. **Incoming Blockade cover** to Ocala, carried on the "S.S. Princess Royal" from Bermuda which entered at Charleston. These represent the 3 known inbound blockade covers to Florida out of over 200 in total.