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## Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings and the Cross Creek mail

By Vernon N. Kisling, Jr.

This is the third part in a series on Orange Lake and Lochloosa Lake post offices in north central Florida. These two large lakes are connected by Cross Creek and are found in both Alachua and Marion counties south of Gainesville and east of Micanopy. Several small town post offices line the shores of these two lakes, including Boardman (Marion, 1882-1947), Citra (Marion, 1881+), Evinston (Alachua 1882+, covered in the first part of this series), Island Grove (Alachua, 1884+, covered in the second part of this series), Lochloosa (Alachua, 1881+, covered in the second part of



**Figure 1**  
*Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings.*  
(Palm Beach County  
Library System)

McIntosh (Marion, 1887+) and Orange Lake (Marion, 1847-67, 1876+). Hawthorne, farther to the north, is not one of these lake post offices but is important to this story. Cross Creek, which is central to this story, is an unincorporated community and has never had a post office.

Cross Creek is in the center of this region between the two lakes and next to the creek of the same name.

Cross Creek's most famous resident, Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings, wrote several novels that were published in New York, as well as many letters. So, why would a person whose life centered on writing settle in a small rural community that didn't have a post office? Obvi-



**Figure 2**  
*Rawlings' house in Cross Creek, Alachua County.*  
(Florida State Parks)

ously, the inconvenience of not having a post office was not a factor in choosing Cross Creek. It was a place that appealed to her for personal reasons. But she did send and receive a great deal of mail, so what post office did she use to mail all those letters and manuscripts?

Marjorie Kinnan was born in Washington, D.C. on August 8, 1896. She married Charles Rawlings in 1919 and the two of them moved from New York to Cross Creek in 1928 (**Figures 1-2**). While in Cross Creek she published many novels and articles, including her well known *The Yearling* (which won a Pulitzer Prize) and *Cross Creek*. She married her second husband, Norton

*Continued on page 3*

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Baskin, in 1941 and left Cross Creek in 1947. After this time she lived in Van Hornesville, New York and Crescent Beach, Florida. She died on December 14, 1953 and is buried in Antioch Cemetery, Lochloosa (actually the cemetery is located halfway between Lochloosa and Island Grove off U.S. 301) [see **Figure 3**].



**Figure 3**

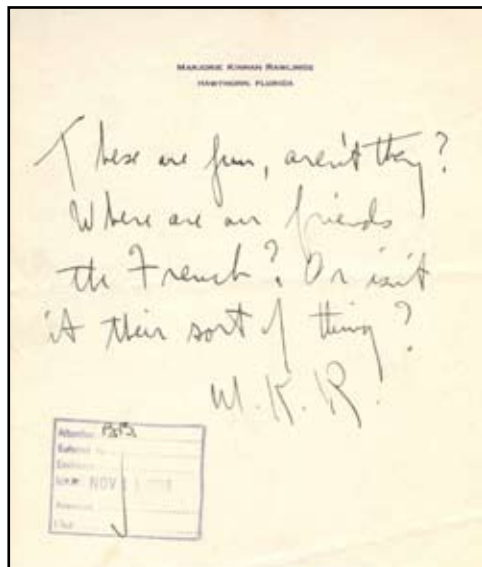
**Rawlings' grave in Antioch Cemetery, Lochloosa, Alachua County. (Photo by Kate Lee.)**



**Figure 4**

**Map showing Orange Lake and Lochloosa Lake regional post offices near Cross Creek. (Mapquest: [www.mapquest.com](http://www.mapquest.com))**

Looking at a map of the area (**Figure 4**) it is evident that Island Grove is the closest post office to Cross Creek, a short 4.5 mile drive down County Road 325. How-



**Figure 5**

**Rawlings' letterhead. (Rawlings Manuscripts, Series 1, Correspondence, Box 5: 1937-38, University of Florida George A. Smathers Libraries Special Collections).**

ever, a random examination of the Rawlings' correspondence indicates that she most often used the Hawthorne Post Office, followed by Citra, and then Island Grove. The examination was random because the Rawlings archive collection at the University of Florida Libraries contains some 4,100 letters (about 1,400 of

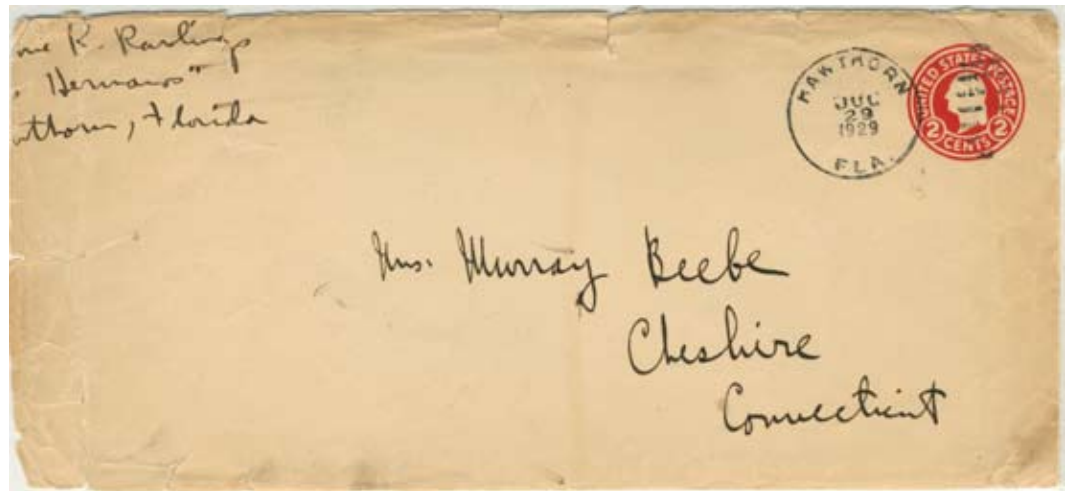
which were mailed by Rawlings to others). Several of these include the envelopes used to mail the letters.

It is interesting that Rawlings used the Hawthorne Post Office more than the others since it is about 4.5 miles from Cross Creek to Island Grove (south on County Road 325) and then another 10 miles north to Hawthorne on U.S. 301. Citra is about three miles south of Island Grove on U.S. 301. However, it was noticed that her incoming mail was sent to "Cross Creek / Route 1/ Hawthorn, Florida" (often with "Route 1" left off the address). Cross Creek was a rural delivery route out of the Hawthorn Post Office. Even her printed stationery had "Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings / Hawthorn, Florida" as the letterhead (*see Figure 5*). Note that her mail, like her stationery, had the spelling "Hawthorn" rather than the current spelling "Hawthorne" (*see Figures 6-7*).

The community began as Jamestown about 1840. In 1880, this town was named after James M. Hawthorn, a veteran of the Second Seminole War who donated property to the Peninsular Railroad line which traveled through town from Waldo to Ocala beginning in 1879. The original post office was moved from Morrison's

**Continued on page 4**

Mills (1854-79) to James-town in 1879 (with Lawrence J. Stokes as the first postmaster, 1879-1880) and then changed to Hawthorn in 1880. Later postmasters included: James Bell, Lorenzo Bell, John L. Brown, William H. Berkstresser, T. J. Hammond, Nina Berkstresser, Mrs. Kirby Smith, Leslie A. Sherouse, Clara E. Sherouse, and William Baker.



**Figure 6**

**Rawlings cover mailed from Hawthorn, 1929.**  
(*Rawlings Manuscripts, Series 1, Correspondence, Box 3: 1926-34, University of Florida George A. Smathers Libraries Special Collections*).

When Rawlings moved to Cross Creek, Hawthorn had some 950 citizens. The town added an “e” to the end of the name in 1950 and the post office changed to this spelling as well, but this was after Rawlings left Cross

grocery store where he worked as a boy, as did Francis Moore when she shopped at the Better Food Store.



**Figure 7**

**Rawlings cover mailed from Hawthorn, 1945.**  
(*Rawlings Manuscripts, Series 1, Correspondence, Box 15: 1945, University of Florida George A. Smathers Libraries Special Collections*).

Creek. Apparently the “e” was added to the town name accidentally by the railroad early on but the town and post office resisted this spelling until 1950.

Rawlings may have taken her mail to Hawthorn since she did her shopping there. Robert Morrison recalls meeting Rawlings when she shopped at Earl Gay’s

Or perhaps her mail was picked up by the Hawthorn postman when he delivered mail to her house. Either way, this would account for much of the mail going through Hawthorn, but not why the second most used post office was Citra (**Figure 8**) rather than Island Grove (**Figure 9**). It was also noticed that most of the telegrams she sent originated from Island Grove, with a few being sent from Evinston and Gainesville, which simply indicates she visited many of the nearby towns with post offices.

Cross Creek mail is still delivered out of Hawthorne. When the Rawlings stamp was issued in 2008 it was postmarked Hawthorne (**Figure 10**) while the first day of issue ceremony was held at the Rawlings house in Cross Creek.

## References

*Historic Hawthorne Florida: Survey and Plan.* Florida Division of Historic Resources, Florida Historic Preservation Council, and City of Hawthorne. University of Florida: Gainesville, 1996.



**Figure 8**

**Rawlings' cover mailed from Citra in 1943. (Rawlings Manuscripts, Series 1, Correspondence, Box 9: 1943, University of Florida George A. Smathers Libraries Special Collections)**

Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Papers, Series 1: Correspondence. George A. Smathers Libraries Special and Area Studies Collections, University of Florida. Finding Guide online: <http://web.uflib.ufl.edu/spec/manuscript/rawlings/rawlingsfull.htm>  
*Postmaster Finder*. U.S. Postal Service. Online: <http://www.usps.com/postmasterfinder/>  
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of Florida Libraries, Reel 111-D.] *Record of Appointment of Postmasters, 1832-1971*. U.S. Post Office Department / U.S. National Archives and Records Administration: Washington, D.C. 1973. [The section on Florida is in the Special Collections, University of Florida Libraries, Reel 112-I.]  
 "Some Early Railroads in Alachua County." Caroline Watkins. *The Florida Historical Quarterly* 53(4/April): 450-459, 1975.  
*United States Post Offices. Volume 8: The Southeast*. Richard W. Helbock. LaPosta Publications: Scappoose (Oregon), 2007.



**Figure 9**

**Rawlings cover mailed from Island Grove, 1933. (Rawlings Manuscripts, Series 1, Correspondence, Box 3: 1926-34, University of Florida George A. Smathers Libraries Special Collections).**



**Figure 10**

**Rawlings stamp issued in 2008 with Hawthorne as the FDI post office, although the FDI ceremony was held at the Rawlings house in Cross Creek. (Author's collection)**

# THE DICTATOR

By Deane R. Briggs, M.D.

In the May 2013 issue of the *Florida Postal History Journal*, Christine Sanders and myself discussed two unusual steamboat covers postmarked on the St. John's River. This led me to review the book *St. John's River Steamboats* by Edward A. Mueller and check my collection for a steamboat cover. Mueller's book is filled with stories about the steamboats that carried not only the tourist passengers and commerce but also the mail. The cover in Figure 1 is an example of such mail with enclosure datelined Savannah, "Feb 9 1867." This cover is docketed "Per 'Dictator'" and carried on the regular Charleston – Savannah – Palatka mail route for the 3¢ rate.

After the Civil War, steamboat navigation of the St. John's River was reinstated using steamboats constructed during the war. Two steamers of particular interest were the *City Point* and the *Dictator*. The *City Point*, built in 1864 in Mystic, Connecticut, was a 204 foot by 31 foot sidewheel vessel with a draft of seven feet, which enabled her to navigate the shallow "bar" at the mouth of the St. John's River. She was initially used by the U.S. government to carry troops and supplies on the James River in Virginia for Grant's offensive against Petersburg. After the war, she began weekly service between Charleston and Florida, arriving at



**Figure 1**  
**"SAVANNAH GA FEB 10" (1867) blue postmark**  
**on 3¢ postal entire carried on the steamboat**  
**Dictator to Palatka.**

Jacksonville on November 23, 1865. Her owners were reported to have spent \$150,000 to make her the most prestigious of St. John's River tourist steamers.

The 1865 winter tourist season must have been so successful that by December 1865 talk about another steamer being added was noted in the press. The *Dictator* made her first appearance in Jacksonville on March 22, 1866 (see Figures 2 and 3). She was a similar "look alike" vessel, 205.8 feet by 30 feet with an 8.6 foot draft, and was built in 1863 in Williamsburgh, New York. The *Dictator* and the *City Point* worked for many years into



**Figure 2**  
**Steamboat Dictator.**

the 1880s, running in tandem, and making weekly trips between Charleston and Palatka, with stops at Savannah, Fernandina, Jacksonville, Hibernia, Green Cove Springs, Magnolia, and Toco. The *Dictator* was eventually purchased in December 1883 by James McKay, a Tampa pioneer, to service the Tampa to Cedar Key connections for the Plant Railroad. She ran aground in the Hillsborough River on a return to Tampa and caught fire and sunk on December 26, 1884.

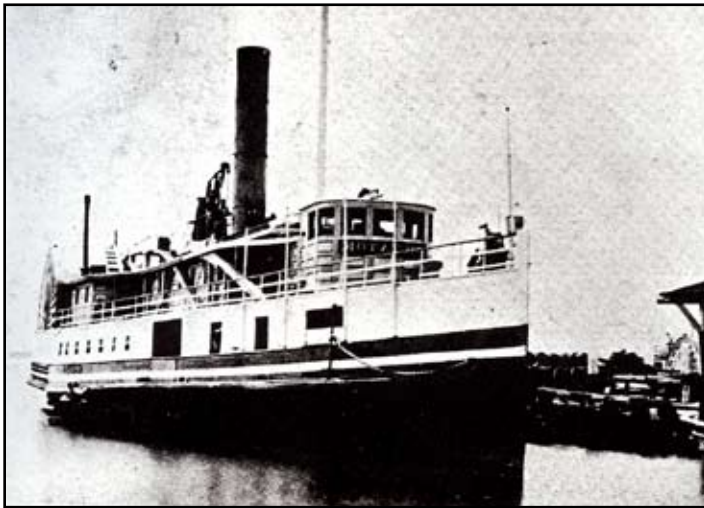


Figure 3

Front view of Dictator at wharf in Jacksonville.


Advertisements for the *Dictator* were frequent in the northern press, but also noted in Florida papers such as this note in the *St. Augustine News*: “From the unsettled state of affairs in Florida the past four or five years, an impression seems to prevail at the North, that our City is almost inaccessible, or reached with many difficulties. This is not the case. All the traveler has to do is embark for Savannah and then take the fine Steamer Dictator, the Sylvan Shore, or the Lizzie Barker to Picolata, on the St. John’s River, where stages are always in waiting for the arrival of the boat, and to take passengers to this City. The distances but eighteen miles, with a fine road, which is cover come with ease in three hours. From the number of strangers now in town we are becoming more generally known” (see Figures 4 and 5).

**Endnote**

Mueller, Edward A. *St. John’s River Steamboats*, Jacksonville, Florida, 1986.

**FOR FLORIDA.**

The Safest, Cheapest, and only Comfortable Route to Florida.




THE FIRST-CLASS NEW YORK BUILT STEAMERS  
**Dictator, . . . . . Capt. Cozetter,**  
**City Point, . . . . . Capt. McMillen,**

Having been completely refurnished and refitted,  
**CONNECT AT CHARLESTON AND SAVANNAH**  
*With Railroad and Steamers for*  
 Fernandina, Jacksonville, St. Augustine, Hibernia, Magnolia,  
 Green Cove Springs, and Palatka,  
 INCLUDING  
**All Landings on the St. John’s River,**  
 Connecting at PILATKA with Steamers for ENTERPRISE, SANFORD,  
 and INDIAN RIVER, as also with Steamers for the  
 OCELAWAHA RIVER.  
*A first-class table and clean, comfortable State-Rooms provided.*  
*No extra charge for Meals and State-Rooms. All*  
*Railroad Tickets good by this Line.*  
 For Freight or Passage, apply to  
**AGENTS IN NEW YORK** of the various  
 Charleston and Savannah Steamship Lines;  
 Or, to **RAVENEL & CO., Agents,**  
 CORNER OF VANDERHORST’S WHARF AND EAST BAY,  
 Charleston, South Carolina.

Figure 4

Advertisement for Dictator and City Point with connections.

FOR  
**Florida and Charleston.**



THE STEAMERS  
**Dictator**  
 AND  
**City Point**

Will leave wharf foot of Gas-House Hill every  
**WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON at 3 o’clock**  
 FOR  
**Fernandina, Jacksonville, and Palatka,**  
 AND FOR  
**CHARLESTON**  
 Every **SATURDAY MORNING at 8 o’clock.**  
**W. CUMMING & CO.,**  
 AGENTS.

Figure 5

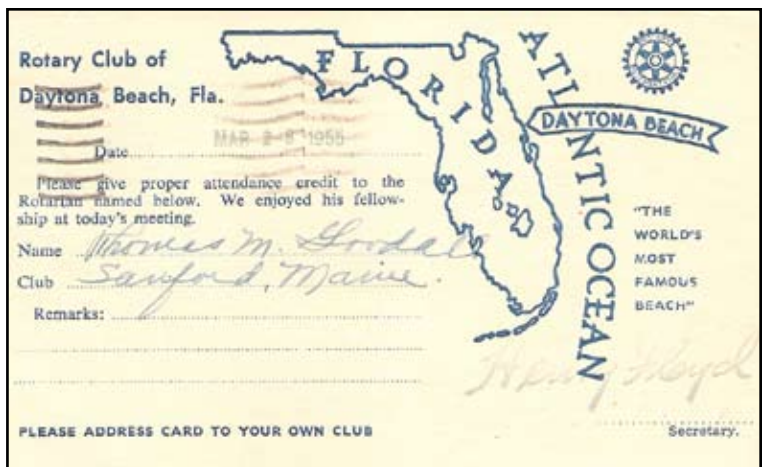
Advertisement for Dictator and City Point in Savannah press.

# “See It! Drive It!” “The World’s Most Famous Beach”

By Stephen Patrick

While checking the dealers at the APS show in Milwaukee, I ran across this postal card (Scott #UY13) sent March 28, 1955, from Daytona Beach, Florida to Sanford, Maine. It advertises “the world’s most famous beach” in a special way.

Rotary Club members are known for their careful attention to attendance at their meetings. Members are expected to attend even when on vacation by seeking out a local club. This pre-printed card reports the attendance of Tom Goodall back home, but it also boosts Florida tourism, and gives a very subtle “wish you were here” message to the folks back home.



## “Head ‘Er Fer Floridy!”

Stephen Patrick also submitted this cute postcard at left, and it appears to be circa the 1930s. In “those days,” it took longer for our “snow bird” friends to get to the Sunshine State, but the desire to beat the snow was strong even then. “The weather-man says, that’s a blizzard comin’ so crank up the Lizzy an’ keep ‘her a-humming! Head ‘er fer Floridy, as fast as we can go!”

It might be that this was one of the early postcards promoting Florida as the ideal spot to escape the rigors of Old Man Winter!



# Burrin, Florida, a ghost town briefly found



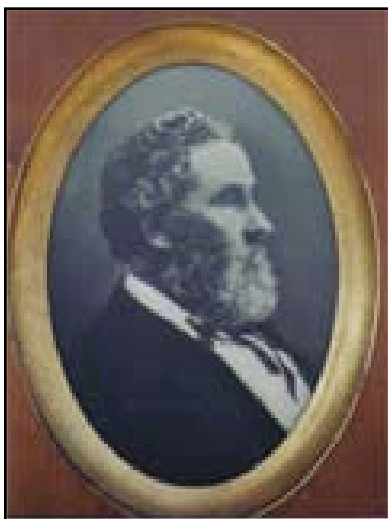
**Figure 1**

***BURRIN / FLORIDA*** large oval “JUN 3 1884” postmark on 2¢ entire with “Due 2” paid with adhesive for double weight cover.

By Bill Johnson

When I came upon this “BURRIN/FLORIDA” postmarked Scott #U231 entire addressed to Philadelphia, along with a two-cent postage due stamp and handstamp, I had no idea how little is known about this town.

Capt. Thomas J. Burrin (1822-1898) established a sawmill on 18,000 acres about 50 miles southwest of Jack-



***This photograph of Thomas Josiah Burrin (1822-1898) was located in the Lawtey town hall.***

sonville in 1877 and donated 220 acres for a town to be established. A bit ... or a lot ... of confusion now exists about this.

According to *A Chronicle of Florida Post Offices*, a post office was established at this organized town under the name Burrin on August 19, 1881 and was changed to Lawtey on October 27, 1884. Another listing from the archives of the *U.S. Post Office Department Record of Post Masters* of Bradford County (Florida) records Thomas J. Burrin as the first postmaster of Lawtey on May 5, 1875.

The same ledger lists Joseph P. McCulley as the first postmaster of Burrin, on August 19, 1881. Whichever is correct, Burrin no longer exists and Lawtey is regarded as a ghost town since only a few buildings remain.

The cover above is postmarked on June 3, 1884, and indicates the post office was present at that time. Thus the mystery of the town itself remains.

# Penn, a Putnum County Discontinued Post Office

By **Todd A. Hirn**  
*FPHS President*

Shown in Figure 1 is an 1886 mourning cover with a non-standard serif postmark with four-ring target killer sent to New York Mills, New York. Penn, a relatively short-lived Putnam County post office, was established on November 18, 1881 and discontinued on January 27, 1893 when the name was changed to Clayton.

Orange Mills and was elected Florida Comptroller in 1873, a position he held until 1877. During this period he lived in Tallahassee, but maintained his plantation home. His son, Throop M. Cowgill became postmaster on December 29, 1882 and served until May 19, 1888, when Joseph I. McCallum became postmaster. His wife, Josephine, served as postmaster from June 13, 1888, until the town name was changed to Clayton, likely in honor of Clayton Cowgill. Clayton was another rather short lived office that was discontinued



**Figure 1 (left)**  
*“Penn Florida Apr 1 1886” non-standard postmark and target cancel on mourning cover.*



**Figure 2 (right)**  
*Another mourning cover with “Penn, Putnam Co., Florida Feb 18 1889” cogged outer rim county postmark with fancy negative star cancel.*

Penn’s first postmaster was Clayton Augustus Cowgill, M.D. The village was located on the east bank of the St. Johns River, about four miles northeast of the county seat of Palatka. It is presently part of East Palatka.

Clayton Cowgill had been a surgeon during the Civil War and moved to Florida in 1867 for health reasons. He purchased a plantation on the St. Johns River near

on December 15, 1899. Its initial postmaster was Josephine M. McCallum, who had served as the previous postmaster at Penn. After the Clayton Post Office was closed, the mails were sent to Orange Mills, about two miles to the north.

Figure 2 shows an 1889 cover from the same correspondence with a scarce newly discovered county postmark different from the one listed and illustrated as number

689 in the Doane-Thompson Catalog. This postmark has a cogged outer rim and the county name is in lower case lettering. Note the fancy five-pointed negative star

an 1887 Florida map. Figure 5 is an 1889 letter written from Esparanza. It is worth noting the town of Esparanza existed for only a few months in 1870 and is now Picolata. The cover was posted at Penn.



**Figure 3**  
**“PENN, PUTNAM CO., /FLA. JAN 14 1892”**  
**magenta county postmark.**

cancel. To date, this is the only recorded example of this type of county postmark from Penn.

Figure 3 shows an example of the later type of county postmark used at Penn with a cds and all upper case non-serif lettering with the state abbreviated as “FLA.” To date, there are three known examples of this postmark, one of which is on a piece only. Period of use of

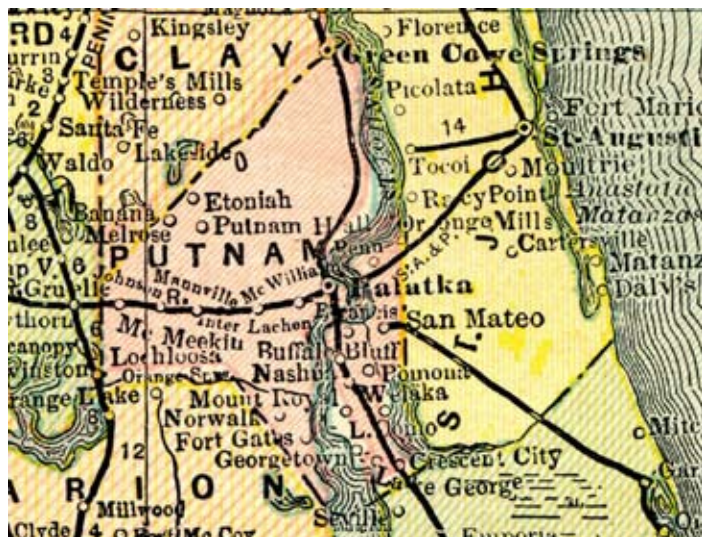
*The author wishes to thank Deane R. Briggs, M.D. for his assistance with this article.*

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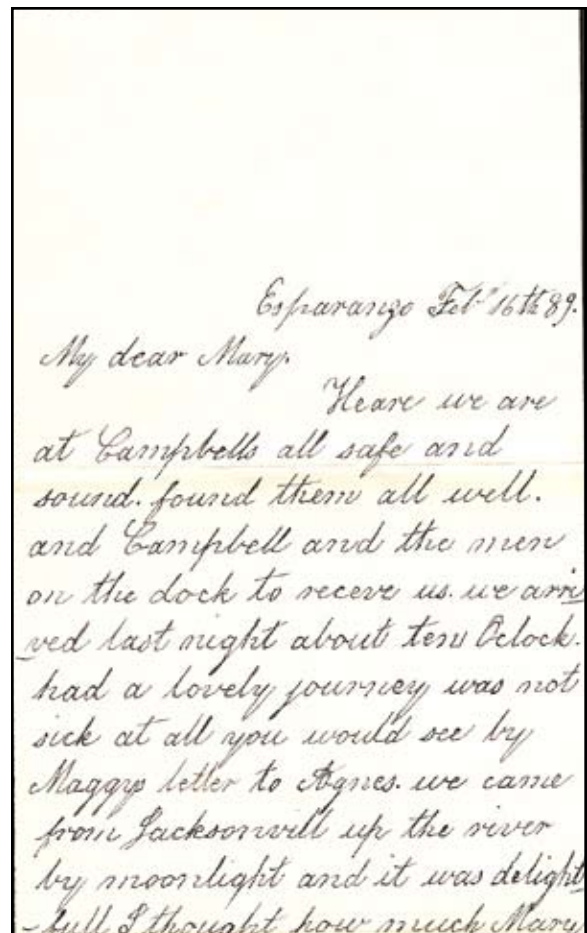
Gilman, Kenneth L., ed. *Doane-Thompson Catalog of U.S. County and Postmaster Postmarks*. North Miami, Florida: David G. Phillips Publishing Co., Inc., 1990. See page 37.

[www.rabgenioalogy.com/p4666.htm](http://www.rabgenioalogy.com/p4666.htm).



**Figure 4**  
**Location of Penn just north of Palatka as shown on an 1887 Florida Cram Atlas map.**

this postmark was January 14, 1892 through August 22, 1892, five months before the name change to Clayton. Figure 4 shows Penn located just north of Palatka on



**Figure 5**  
**Letter from Esparanza, near Penn.**

# The St. Johns River Lighthouse

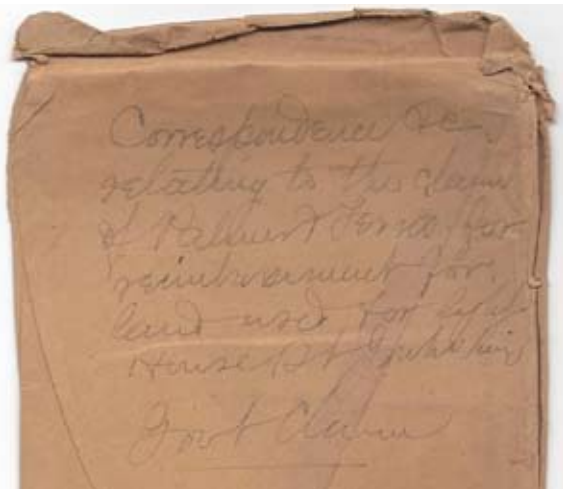


*Figure 1*

**“JACKSONVILLE / Flor. MAY 2” postmark with “FREE” rate on legal cover to Senator David L. Yulee in Washington, D.C.**

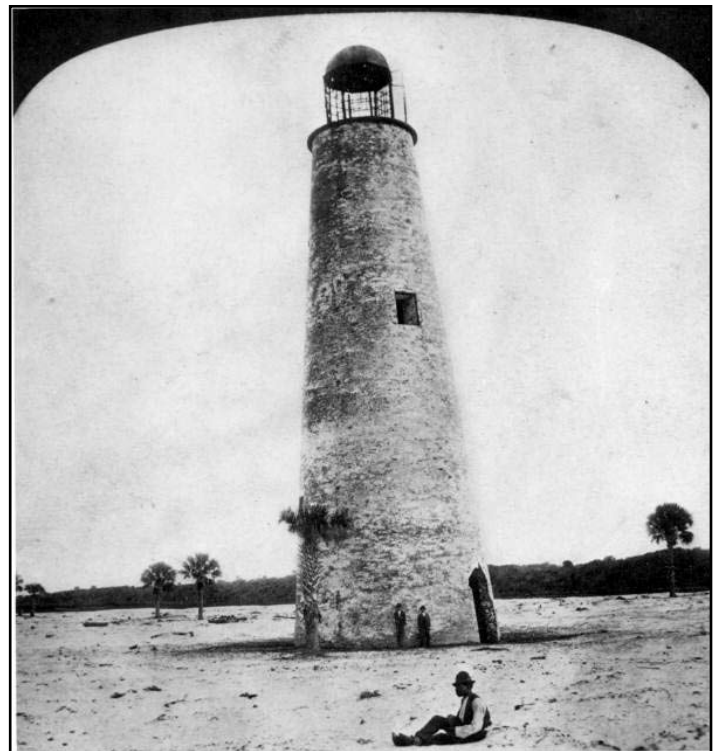
By Deane R. Briggs, M.D.

The cover in Figure 1 appears at first glance to be a fairly common Jacksonville statehood period stampless cover with “FREE” rate. The recipient, however, is Florida’s first U.S. senator and the docketing makes for some interesting conjecture. There are some notations on the front “The St Johns Light” in pen and “Lighthouse on St Johns” in pencil. The reverse has a note in Yulee’s handwriting, “Correspondence etc relating to the claim of Palmert Lewis for reimburse-



*Figure 2*

**Portion of reverse side of cover in Figure 1 showing manuscript writing.**

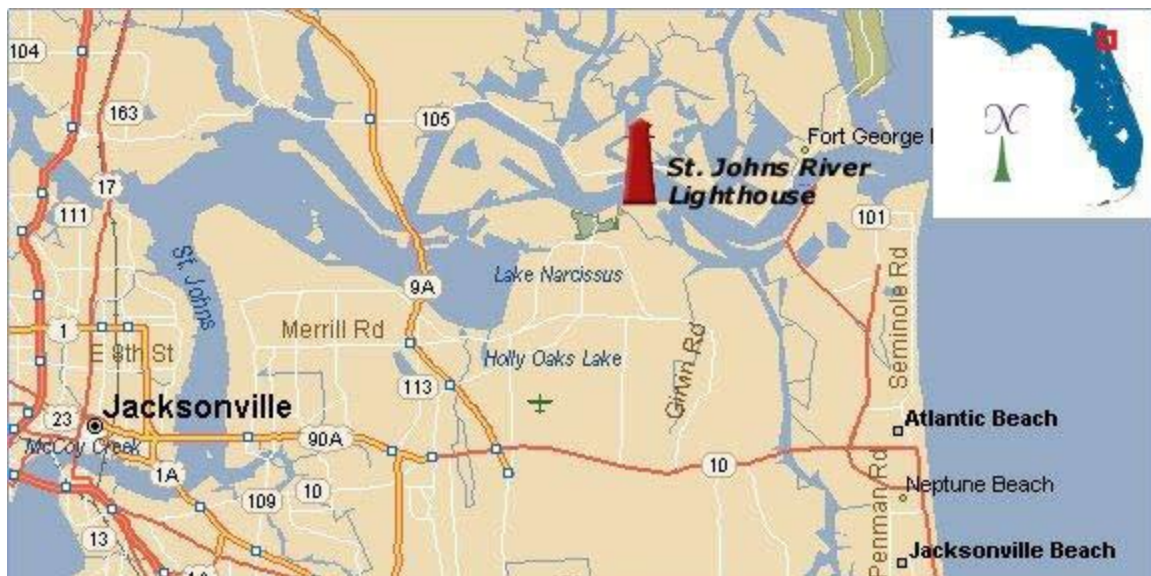


*Figure 3*

**Second St. Johns River lighthouse. 1835-1853.  
(Courtesy State Archives of Florida.)**

ment for land used for light House St Johns River / Govt Claim.”

David Levy Yulee served as a Florida territorial del-



**Figure 4**  
*Map with location of lighthouse.*

egate to Congress from March 31, 1841 until Florida statehood on March 3, 1845, and was subsequently elected as Florida's first Senator, serving from December 1, 1845 until March 3, 1851. He was re-elected a Senator in 1855 and served until he resigned in support of the Confederacy on January 21, 1861. The cover is from the 1855-1860 period.

As Jacksonville started to develop as a seaport in the early 1820s, citizens petitioned Congress for a naviga-

tional beacon in 1822 and again in 1827, but to no avail. Finally in May 1828, the Florida Territorial legislature approved the "St. Johns Pilot Age Act" which led to the settlement of the town of Hazzard and a \$10,550 appropriation for construction of a 65 foot conical brick tower lighthouse housing 15 whale-oil lamps.

The lighthouse was completed in the spring of 1830 close to the entrance of the St. Johns River where the present south jetty is located. Tidal action, however,

washed away the foundation, causing the structure to lean and requiring it to be dismantled to save the lamps and reflectors. By June 30, 1834, Congress approved new funding for a second lighthouse a mile inland which became operational in the winter of 1835, with John Warren as keeper.

This second lighthouse fared only a little longer than the first as the shifting river and rising sand dunes nearly buried the structure. Congress authorized \$10,000 on August 31, 1852 to preserve the lighthouse, but after \$1,800 had been spent it was decided to build a third lighthouse. On August 3, 1854 an additional \$15,000 was authorized in addition to the unspent remainder from the 1852 appropriation.



**Figure 5**  
*The third St. Johns River lighthouse, circa 1900.*  
*(Courtesy State Archives of Florida.)*

Construction of the third lighthouse was  
*Continued on page 14*

## St. Johns River Lighthouse

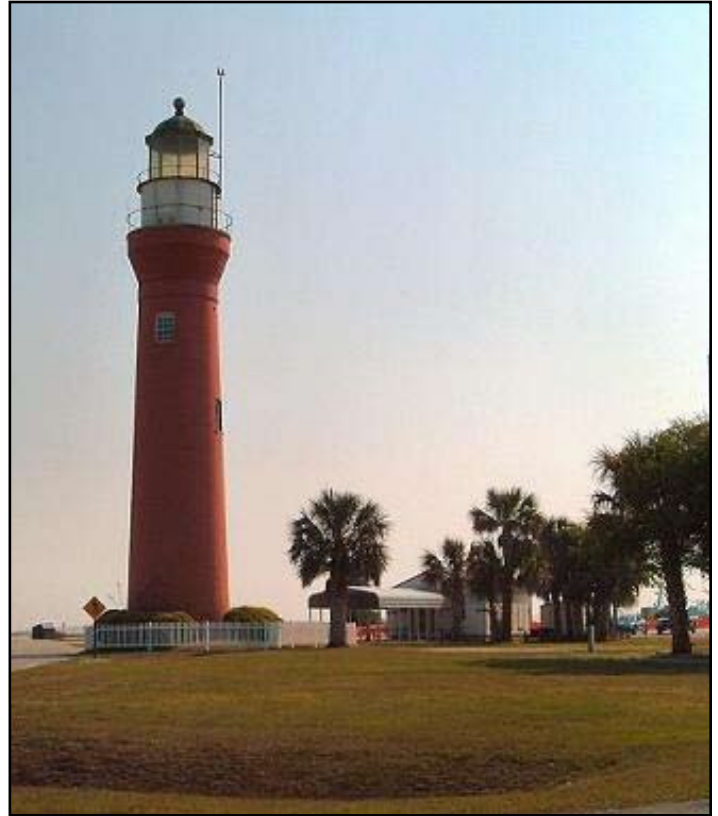
*Continued from page 13*

delayed as title for the new site farther inland could not be secured until 1857. It appears from the docketing on the cover in Figure 1 that Senator Yulee must have been involved in getting the title resolved and Lewis' claim with the government settled. Construction was eventually carried out during the winter of 1857-1858. This third structure was built of brick and stood 74 feet tall, and the fixed, third-order Frenzel lens was finally lit on January 1, 1859.

The St. Johns River Lighthouse remained in operation (except for a period from 1864-1867 when a Confederate sympathizer shot out the lens) until May 5, 1930 when a radio beacon and an off-shore lightship beacon was utilized. The lighthouse structure is currently maintained at the Mayport Naval Air Station as a tourist site.

### Reference

<http://www.lighthousefriends.com/light.asp?ID=859>.



*Figure 6*

*St. Johns River Lighthouse as currently maintained.*

## *Florida Postal History Society Annual Meeting 2014*

The Annual Meeting of the Florida Postal History Society will begin at noon on Saturday, February 8, 2014, at the Sarasota National Stamp Exhibition.

A special presentation will be given in conjunction with the Confederate Stamp Alliance annual meeting following our meeting. This will begin at 12:30 p.m. and will consist of "Jacksonville During the Civil War."

A second presentation on the "Stephens-Bryant Correspondence" will follow. Members are strongly encouraged to attend and also support our dealer member bourse.

## *2014 Dues Announcement*

Enclosed in this issue of the *Journal* is the 2014 dues statement. Due to the cost of publishing a high quality color journal three times a year and the ever-increasing postal costs, the Regular Dues of \$15 will cover a digital copy of the *Journal* but no longer a mailed printed copy.

Contributing Member dues of \$25 will continue to include a mailed printed copy. Nearly 70 percent of our membership are Contributing Members and we hope those who wish a printed *Journal* will move up to that level. Dues are payable by April 30, 2014, so please keep your membership active and renew now.

# Early Orlando covers

By Deane R. Briggs, M.D.

Central Florida was a sparsely inhabited area of the state during the territorial period with post offices quite a distance away from settlements in many cases. Settlers would move into the area during the Second Seminole War with the protection of troops from the many small forts that were established during the late 1830s.



**Figure 1**  
**"Orlando Fla Mar 1st" (1859) postmark on triple rated cover.**

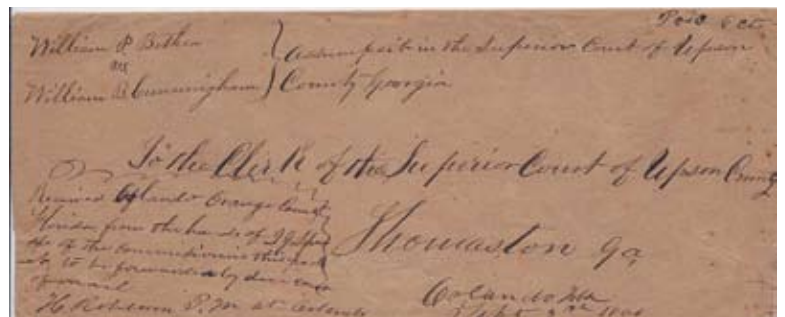
Orange County was established just before statehood on January 30, 1845, with Mellonville as the county seat. The current site of Orlando was near the protection of Fort Lane, Fort Gatlin, Fort Mason, Fort Mellon, and Fort Maitland. Early settlers included the Jernigan family and a post office was established as Jernigan on May 30, 1850, with Wright Patrick as the first postmaster. Wright Patrick was a distant relative of Florida Postal History Society past President Steven Patrick.

Wright served as postmaster until February 9, 1852, when he was replaced by Aaron Jernigan. Mail was handled only once a week on route 3527 with a member of the Jernigan family bringing the mail from Mellonville (currently Sanford). The post office at Jernigan was likely in a Jernigan family store and postal revenues from 1850-1855 averaged only \$4 a year. Only a single stampless cover is recorded from Jernigan with a manuscript postmark "Dec 8th 1851" usage with "Free" rate.

The post office name changed to Orlando on September 19, 1857, and even in that year post office business only totaled \$9.56.

The Orlando Post Office must have seen an increase in business after becoming the county seat and by 1859, did \$32.94 in postal revenues. The cover in Figure 1 was felt by the late Herbert P. McNeal to be the earliest known example from Orlando. It is a triple rated legal cover with a strip of three pen cancelled Scott #11 with "Orlando Fla Mar 1st 1859" manuscript postmark. It is docketed "L. Andreu P.M." but postal records do not contain the Andreu name as a postmaster from Orlando. Perhaps this person was an assistant postmaster covering for the initial Orlando postmaster, John R. Worthington.

The cover in Figure 2 is the only known example of a stampless cover from Orlando, used just before the Orlando Post Office was discontinued at the onset of the Civil War. It is docketed "H Robeson P.M. at Orlando" by Henry Robeson who was postmaster from March 9, 1860, until he resigned when Florida seceded the Union and became an in-



**Figure 2**  
**"Orlando Fla Sept 3rd 1860" double rated stampless cover.**

dependent state. He was replaced by D. K. Hall who served only three months from January 10, 1861, until the U.S. Post Office Department closed the Orlando Post Office on March 19, 1861. The Orlando Post Office was re-opened during reconstruction on December 4, 1866, with Miss Mary A. McGinnis as postmaster. The author would appreciate scans of any other Orlando covers from the 1857-1861 period.

# Tallahassee “Drop 2” A new listing



**Figure 1**  
**“TALLAHASSEE / Flor. OCT 6” postmark with large “2” rate on drop cover, Type VII.**

By Deane R. Briggs, M.D.

The cover in Figure 1 is a new listing of a Tallahassee handstamp with a large black ink 2 on a drop outer cover sheet, ex. Donald Thompson collection, addressed to J & L Branch, Esquires, Tallahassee. The postmark is a very weakly struck Type VII also in black ink. This is the only example of a drop usage from Tallahassee, and really one of less than three known from all of Florida during the stampless period.

There are a number of examples of Apalachicola “circular” rated 2 usages, but not drop usage. What is most unusual is the extremely large size of the “2.” At first, I thought it might be a manuscript marking, but on close inspection it appears to have definitely been struck from a handstamp, probably from a carved wood block hand-made device.

The bottom is perfectly straight with a square end and the rest of the marking is of even width and the ink appears to have partially adhered to the handstamp resulting in a blotchy inked strike. This would not have happened with a manuscript marking. This marking will be newly listed in the new update of our society book *Florida Stampless Postal History 1763-1861* as “L” for the rate during the statehood period and while the date is unclear will be October 6 ? (year unknown but from a period of use of the cds postmark from 1844-1855). It is possible it could have been used during October 1844 in the Territorial period, but to date there are only three to five known actual usages of the Type VII postmark in black ink during the Territorial period which leads me to place this as a statehood usage.

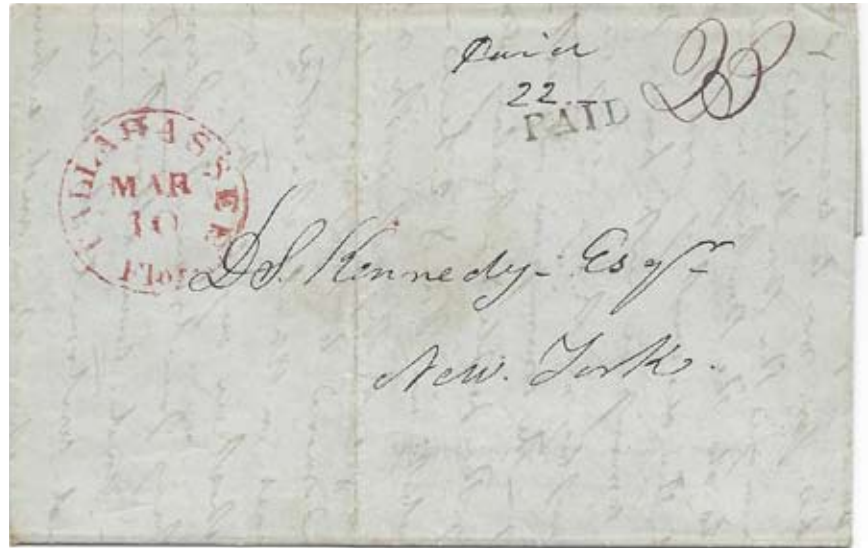


# Tallahassee Mixed Ink Postmark and Paid Usages

By Deane R. Briggs, M.D.

While reviewing covers for the revision of our society book *Florida Stampless Postal History 1763-1861*, I have found a couple of examples which did not fit or at least were not listed as separate entities in our 1999 edition.

Both these examples in Figure 1 and 2 appear to be common Tallahassee usages, but on close inspection have different colored inking for the postmark and the rate marking. The red inked cds postmark in the Territorial example in Figure 1 is a very common usage. Black ink examples of this Type VII postmark with Territorial usage are quite scarce with only three to five known as it appears that the black ink did not begin to be used until January 1844 for this device while use with red ink dates to November 1841.



**Figure 1**

**“TALLAHASSEE / Flor. MAR 10” (1844) Type VII postmark in red ink with “PAID” Type e handstamp in black ink.**

The Type g “PAID” marking is fairly common in red ink, but to date this is the first example I have confirmed with usage in black ink. I will call this a “mixed ink” example for lack of a better term.



**Figure 2**

**“TALLAHASSEE / Flor. SEP 20” (1846) Type VII postmark in red ink with “PAID” Type e handstamp in black ink and 10 Type H rate in red ink.**

The example in Figure 2 is a similar “mixed ink” example used during the Statehood period in 1846 and is the latest use of this Type VII postmark used with red ink. This cover has the “PAID” Type g marking in black but the type H 10 rate marking is in the same red ink as the postmark. All in all an unusual usage with the postmaster having to strike three devices, two with red ink and one with black ink.

Members are requested to check their Tallahassee covers to see if there are more of these “mixed ink” examples which should be added to the updated book which hopefully will be completed within the next year.

# Tallahassee “FREE 5”

## A new listing



**Figure 1**  
 “TALLAHASSEE / Flor. NOV 10” postmark with “FREE” and (unpaid) 5 rates.

By Deane R. Briggs, M.D.

The cover in Figure 1 is most unusual and somewhat confusing. The cover was mailed from Tallahassee on November 10 during the Statehood period when David L. Yulee was Florida State Senator (1846-1850 and 1856-1860). Since the postmark (Type VII) has known use from 1845 until January 2, 1855, this cover dates from the 1846-1850 period.

The “FREE” (Type h) rate is known with several usages during this time period and is appropriate for mail sent to Yulee as Senator. It is the 5 rate marking that is unusual. This is either an (unpaid) 5 placed in Washington which did not recognize the “FREE” rate or is a

new listing example of an (unpaid) 5 from Tallahassee. There is no reason for the post office in Washington to correct a “FREE” rate to a U.S. Senator in Washington, making this “5” a new Tallahassee listing.

The only question is to why both rates were placed and the 5 not deleted. I have added this 5 as Type L in the FPHS’s soon to be updated *Florida Stamps Postal History* book. Members are encouraged to check any Tallahassee cover with a 5 rate in their collections to see if there are more of this type to be recorded.

*Editor's Note***David G. Phillips writes; also, do you remember the “Woodpecker Route”?**

An article by Todd A. Hirn on a St. Augustine 1832 cover in the last *Florida Postal History Journal* prompted a response from David G. Phillips, a charter member of our society and the journal editor for the first two years. He writes: “Congratulations on another excellent issue of the *Florida Postal History Journal*. This one is of special interest to me for the article on the 1832 St. Augustine cover to Lewis Case. I acquired that cover in 1950 from Miami dealer Bruce Ball for the simple reason that as a newly minted Army ordinance officer on my way to Korea, I had a special interest in the subject matter. Later on it ignited my interest in Florida postal history and I held it for many years.

“Over the years I also made an effort to make photocopies of some of the interesting Florida covers which passed through my hands as an auctioneer-dealer. Most have now disappeared, but I enclose a few which you are welcome to make use of. The copies of the original album pages of the Meroni Florida Collection are a mine of information.” These copies have been passed on to Dr. Deane R. Briggs for use in future issues.

Florida has a wonderful history, but most emphasis is placed on the “discovery” period and the ancient Native

Americans who once lived along the peninsula. More modern history (thinking here of 1900 to 1950) is often ignored.

There are numerous subjects that need further investigation and publication in these pages. One vastly understudied topic is the emergence of the tourism industry in Florida pre-Disney. We have published articles about some of the early hotels and “attractions” that were found, particularly in North Florida, in the era after 1900.

One particular topic that your editor is currently researching is what was once called “The Woodpecker Route” from South Carolina to Florida. In Florida, it supposedly followed State Road 121 through Macclenny, Lake Butler, Worthington, La Crosse, Gainesville, Williston, Crystal River, Tarpon Springs, Clearwater and into St. Petersburg.

Curiously, however, a 1923 Georgia map shows “The Woodpecker Route” as traveling through White Springs and Lake City, then down to Gainesville, etc. Also known as “The Woodpecker Trail,” it is one of the oldest tourist routes in the U.S. It is listed in the 1922 *Automobile Green Book*.

Today, one can still find old, abandoned gas stations and stores along U.S. 441 from Lake City to the Georgia line and beyond. One might wonder if abandoned post offices might also be found?

Do you have postal history showing this route, especially cacheted covers with one of several logos? Please send scans to your editor.

-- Dr. Everett L. Parker

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them for their continued support and friendship.

We also thank the

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for their financial help as website sponsors.

-- Deane R. Briggs, M.D.

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

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