The Madison, Florida
Postmaster Provisionals

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The Lines are Drawn

- South Carolina secedes on December 20, 1860
- Florida secedes on January 11, 1861
- Samuel J. Perry replaces John L. Miller as the U.S. postmaster. Miller resigned only days after Florida seceded from the Union
- The Confederacy is formed February 4, 1861
January 26, 1861, the U.S. Postmaster General sends a letter to Madison Postmaster Samuel J. Perry, as well as to about 1,200 other Southern postmasters, according to the Blair letter-book, stating:

“In view of recent political events in the State of Florida, I feel it my duty to inquire whether you do now and will continue to hold yourself responsible to the government of the United States in conformity to existing laws for all postal revenues received by you as Postmaster at Madison Court House.”

From the Pickett Papers in the National Archives
Civil Cooperation Early in the Conflict

- When the new Confederate government was established in February 1861, there was no Confederate POD. It was not established until February 21, 1861. Confederate Postmaster General John H. Reagan was appointed on March 6th.

- In the meantime, the US continued to provide postal service in the seceded states with US postage rates in effect. Confederate postage rates did not go into effect until June 1, 1861.

- Confederate Postmaster General John H. Reagan advised Southern postmasters that, in the interests of people in both parts of the country, it was the wish of the Confederate government that all postmasters continue their duties, render their accounts and pay all monies to the Government of the United States until the Confederate P.O.D. could assume control over its own affairs.
The Stage is Set for Provisionals

In a letter written by Confederate Postmaster General John H. Reagan in 1898 in reply to some inquiries concerning Confederate postal matters, he explained the Confederate Post Office Department's official position relative to postmasters’ provisional stamps.

“I stated in the report referred to that it was necessary ‘to leave it to postmasters and persons paying postage to arrange between themselves the manner in which these notes may be used.’ Under this condition occurred the issuance of local stamps and stamped envelopes by quite a number of Confederate postmasters.”
A spectacular original correspondence was offered to us in 1984 and included this intriguing cover with a Hillsboro, NC postmaster provisional dated May 27, 1861 – the day North Carolina was admitted into the Confederacy. Notice that there is no rate on the crude stamp; the 3¢ value is understood.

What does this have to do with the Madison provisionals?
These five Madison provisionals (5 of the 7 recorded) were offered to Kaufmann Auctions as one unit for a goodly sum of money. They came with fabulous provenance and substantial background information, but also with the taint of having been de-listed from the Scott Catalogue. There was much new work to be done to reverse this injustice.
I wrote an article entitled “U.S. 3¢ 1861 Postmaster Provisionals Used in the Confederacy”, which ran concurrently in the *The American Philatelist* and *The Confederate Philatelist*, promoting the theory that there should be a new and separate category of provisionals.

Listed in the article as new 3¢ provisional catalog candidates were:

- Madison C.H., Florida
- Hillsboro, North Carolina
- Tuscumbia, Alabama
- Jackson, Mississippi
- Nashville, Tennessee
Were there other 3¢ provisionals? Yes, there were.

- **Tuscumbia, Alabama** - listed in the U.S. section of the *Scott Catalog* for close to a century as #12XU1 and as having been issued in 1858. Yet every other U.S. provisional is either a 5¢ or 10¢ value and issued in 1845 or 1846. And there were Tuscumbia Confederate rated provisionals. This is coupled with the fact that most of the few known Tuscumbia 3¢ provisionals were from the Carroll Hoy correspondence. Buchanan, Carroll and Co. became Carroll Hoy & Co. in mid-1858. At left is the H.R. Harmer auction page from the U.S. section of the Caspary collection, where the only Madison provisional on cover was sold as well.

- **Nashville, Tennessee** – U.S. 3¢ rated, yet cataloged for years in both *Scott* and *Dietz* catalogs as Confederate. Why the discrepancy?

- **Jackson, Mississippi** – the 3¢ Jackson marking was used during the February-May 1861 period and is known revalued with both 5¢ and 10¢ markings.
“CNETS” Error the First Discovered - 1872

• J. W. Scott, the founder of the Scott Catalogue (1868) and called “The Father of American Philately” in his lifetime, had discovered the first of the Madison provisionals (the "CNETS" error) and stated in print in 1872 that "the Madison was the first issued, best authenticated, and scarcest Confederate provisional."

• Passed through the hands of some of the most prominent early collectors, as well as celebrated dealers of the time: Ex-Philbrick, Duveen, Ferrari, Lapham, and Moody. Briggs collection.

• Listed in the Scott Catalogue only through 1896. Unsure exactly why de-listed, although John Luff appears to be the cause – in print, Luff called them “nothing but labels.” J. W. Scott died in 1919.
• The only known Confederate rated 5¢ press printed entire was discovered in 1895 by C. H. Mekeel, founder of Mekeel's Weekly Stamp News and in the APS Hall of Fame.

• Initially suspect by the Philatelic Foundation because they had no record of a small “FLO” cancel of that type for any Florida town.

• Ex-Ferrari, Lapham, and Moody. Briggs collection.

C. H. Mekeel
Only 3¢ Madison Known on Cover
Discovered 1895

- Discovered in 1895 by Dr. Gaius M. Brumbaugh, a physician in Washington, D.C. who described the find in an August 1896 letter to New York dealer R. F. Albrecht to whom he sold it. Dr. Brumbaugh bought it from a patient and cut off the dateline to establish date of use, returning the remaining portion of the letter to his patient to protect family privacy.
- The death certificate of Mrs. Thomas W. Thompson (Fannie) showed her physician to be Dr. G. Brumbaugh (researched after 1984 CP/AP article published)
- Tiny “WHC” initials in blue at bottom right of cover – dealer Warren H. Colson
- Oblong enclosed PAID cancellation – not tied, always troublesome to experts
Madison Provisional Census
7 recorded, mostly all different

- 3¢ Madison, Florida postmaster provisional canceled with the **town cancel** - **2 copies recorded**. One copy was at one time owned by the Weill brothers in New Orleans. The current owner is unknown – the only one unaccounted for.

- 3¢ Madison, Florida postmaster provisional canceled with a **manuscript cancel (P)aid in (Money)** - **one recorded**. Ex Ferrary, Moody, Felton.


- 3¢ Madison, Florida postmaster provisional **"CNETS" error**, town canceled, **one recorded**.

- 3¢ Madison, Florida postmaster provisional canceled by **oblong PAID cancel on cover** with a clipping from the original letter headed "Madison Florida Feb 13 1861" and manuscript note "This part of letter with envelope." Only **3¢ use recorded used on cover**.

- 5¢ black on yellow Madison, Florida postmaster provisional press printed entire used with Madison, Flo. Sep 2 (1861) town cancel - **one recorded** – the only Confederate rated use.
From the March 1872 *American Journal of Philately* published a long detailed letter from former Postmaster Perry to J. W. Scott in response to Scott's inquiry after discovering the "CNETS" error, “before the ink became dry, [we] sprinkled yellow bronze on it, which gave the stars and border the appearance of gold.” Ordinary (blue wove) foolscap paper was used. All the fractional currency in circulation disappeared about that time, and it was difficult to make change; indeed almost impossible to conduct the post-office, having no United States postage stamps, as my supply was exhausted soon after the assemblage of the Confederate Congress…and under whose authority I was instructed to…pay over all monies due to that (U.S.) Government…and believing my allegiance due to the Confederacy, I was loath to apply for stamps to the United States and determined to mail letters paid in money only.”
3¢ Provisional Production

- The two stamps on the left are obvious counterfeits produced by S. Allan Taylor in different colors and values. Genuine stamp at right.

- Genuine stamp design is 21 mm wide by 17 mm high. Fourteen boxed ornamental stars comprise the frame surrounding the value. The center of each star contains a semi-circle. The semi-circles do not all face the same way, which would make them easy to plate were there enough of them to do so.

- Printed at the local newspaper, *The Southern Messenger*. Postmaster Perry’s eldest son, William L. Perry, was the editor and publisher of that paper, as well as a Confederate postal clerk with a salary of $1,200. per year.
Letter from Postmaster Perry to U.S. Postmaster General dated 8 March 1861 justifying why he made his own postage stamps and that he has and will remit all monies to USPOD. Perry indicates he made both 3¢ and 1¢ (no 1¢ yet recorded) values.
• The Philatelic Foundation declined opinions on all of the Madison provisionals yet gave the Hillsboro, NC 3¢ certificate #139969 with the wording as submitted. The Foundation did not condemn the Madisons; merely required more proof.
• Lunch with P.F. staff revealed that no one knew exactly why the Madisons had been de-listed from the various catalogs years before. My inquiry of Scott Publishing produced the reply: "Any files of J. W. Scott before 1880 were burned in a fire."
• The P.F. had no records of any other examples of the canceling devices used on the Madisons, either the oblong "PAID" or the rare small Madison "FLO" circular datestamp.
• Some felt that original papers I had found in the National Archives written by Madison postmaster Samuel J. Perry might somehow have been "planted" by Petrie in the 1800s (??) to help authenticate the provisionals. I felt that was a stretch!
I mounted a massive search of private collections and dealer stocks for the various markings used on the Madison stamps. The late Morris Everett had listed two Type II Madison oblong PAIDs from the Borland correspondence in his extensive handstamped paid files.

This was a perfect match for the oblong PAID used to cancel the only known 3-cent Madison used on cover.

Added bonus – the cover is addressed in Postmaster Perry’s handwriting
Cancel Corroboration – “FLO”

• It had been suggested by the P.F. that cancellations other than “FLA” weren’t used in Florida during the Civil War.

• At left are “FLO” cancellations from Civil War era Pensacola, Saint Augustine and Madison C.H. that I turned up, as well as others.

• Comparison of the “FLO” cancels on the 5¢ press printed provisional entire to an example on a Confederate stampless cover. A match!
• This 3¢ Star-Die entire canceled with the Feb 20 [1861] MADISON C.H. / FLO is incontrovertible proof that the “FLO” cancellation was used in the early 1861 postmaster provisional period.

• The late Bill Bogg, a serious Florida collector and prominent Confederate dealer, pointed me to this clinching cover, which he told me came from the collection of the late Henry Spelman.

• The U.S. Star-Die envelopes were not issued until after August 1860 and were not valid in the Confederacy in 1862, thus narrowing down the use to 1861.
Clockwise from upper left:

- **small “FLO” postmark used during 1861 - early 1862**
- **large “FLO” postmark used early in 1862 on an 1862 dated folded letter as well as the oblong “PAID” cancel used during 1861 and 1862**
- **larger most common “FLA” cancel used during 1863 and 1864**
- **interim manuscript cancel used during 1862 and 1863**
April 8, 1985 - Red-letter Research Day

- Library of Congress reading room in the Madison Building – a good omen!
- Florida State University in Tallahassee – The Madison Recorder 1865-1908
- University of Florida in Gainesville – The Madison Recorder also on file
- P.K. Younge Library – The Southern Messenger, copies from 1858, 1866, 1867
- Spoke to Beth Sims – Madison County historian who led me to
- James H. Perry (Buddy) of Palatka, Florida - surprised to find out that his great-great-grandfather, Samuel James Bradley Perry, had been postmaster during the Civil War.
- Buddy’s wife, Mary Jo Perry, then the conference chairman for the Florida State Genealogical Society, and a wealth of knowledge on Florida pioneers.
- A few weeks later we had dinner at the Perry home in Palatka and exchanged invaluable research on “Col. Sam.” They provided copies of original documents in S. J. Perry’s hand.
- Col. Sam’s eldest son, William, who printed the Madison provisionals, was the editor and publisher of The Southern Messenger.
- Post Script - May 2006 – While researching a completely different subject at the Library of Congress, I found William Perry was also appointed a Confederate postal clerk.
A Visit to Madison


Oakland Cemetery 1985


Madison County is in northern Florida near the border of Georgia between Tallahassee and Jacksonville.

Samuel J. B. Perry (1810-1898): territorial judge, tax collector, deputy surveyor general, superintendent of schools and Confederate postmaster.
A Visit to Madison

Spring 1985

Madison Courthouse
Madison Post Office
Office of the Enterprise Recorder
Handwriting expert Marie Bernard examined copies of six items:

- the provisional with the manuscript cancel
- the letter on file at the National Archives from the Madison postmaster to the U.S. Postmaster General dated March 8, 1861
- the letter from Perry to Dr. Petrie in 1880
- a few covers with manuscript cancels and addresses in Perry's hand that came from an original find made by Joe Holleman.

In a multi-page analysis, professional graphologist Marie Bernard returned the opinion that there was no doubt that they were all written by Samuel J. Perry.
Special Meeting of the Philatelic Foundation

- **May 1987** – sent to the P.F. a one-inch thick report with 18 pages of explanatory footnoted text and 33 separate multi-page exhibits.

- **March 1988** - special meeting of the Philatelic Foundation to which we were invited to attend – an active meeting of open dialog

- Confederate 5¢ press-printed cover opinion: “It is a genuine pre-printed Confederate Postmaster Provisional entire used from Madison C. H., Florida.”

- Other opinions, declaring the patients "genuine", contained most unusual wording *i.e.*, “It is a genuine printed adhesive used as indicia of prepayment of postage at Madison, Florida but not authorized by the U.S. Post Office.”
Michael Laurence in his editor's column in *Linn's Stamp News*: “In my dictionary, this is precisely the definition of a provisional stamp... This strikes me as the sort of scholarship that in earlier ages would have been devoted to determine how many angels could dance on the head of a pin. In my view, a provisional is a provisional... It is too bad that the Foundation refused to drop the other shoe, to declare that these are genuine U.S. postmaster provisional stamps.”

Square Two – at least the Madisons were declared “genuine”, but I hadn’t crossed home plate yet. I still was determined to forge ahead to procure the Madisons their rightful place in postal history.

Confederate Stamp Alliance Authentication Committee was reluctant to render an opinion, because I had originally written them up as "U.S.", not Confederate.

Five months after the Madisons received “good indicia” certificates, my personal world fell apart with the sudden death of my husband, John Kaufmann, from a cerebral aneurysm. I put the Madison project on hold while I picked up the pieces of my life.
The Final Journey

- 1996 – I was asked to join the CSA Authentication Committee by then chairman Peter Powell and thus had the opportunity to discuss my theories on the Madisons.

- The CSAAC accepted the challenge.

- CSA certificates #02903, 02904, 02906 dated December 30, 1996 - “3¢ Madison, Florida post secession postmaster provisionals”

- Asked to join the CSA Postmaster Provisional Revision Committee working with the editors of the Scott Catalogue to revise their listings

Ultimate Success

2012 Scott Specialized Catalogue

It was a long hard road, but ultimately the *Scott Catalogue* added an entirely new section (2000) preceding the Confederate postmasters’ provisional section - **3¢ 1861 Postmasters’ Provisionals**.

**3AX1** – 3¢ gold typeset adhesive

- On cover $65,000.
- **a. “CNETS”** $17,500.

**137XU1** – 5¢ black on yellow, typeset envelope $23,000.

In 2012, the two pen canceled Madisons both sold for over $25,000 each.

New listing in the 2012 CSA Catalog for 3¢ Fort Valley GA provisional.