

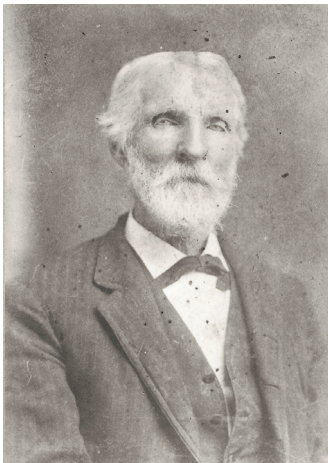
**Madison Court House, Florida**  
**U.S.-Rated 3-cent 1861 Provisional**  
**Samuel J. Perry, Postmaster**

Between the time that each state seceded from the Union and the June 1st commencement date of the Confederate postal system, postmasters in the South were still obligated to report to the United States Post Office Department. Instructions from C.S.A. Postmaster General John H. Reagan specifically ordered Southern postmasters to:

...continue the performance of their duties as such, and render all accounts and pay all moneys to the order of the Government of the U.S. as they have heretofore done, until the Government of the Confederate States shall be prepared to assume control of its postal affairs.

Reagan also recognized the difficulties postmasters would experience in securing postage stamps during this interim period and decided "to leave it to postmasters and persons paying postage to arrange between themselves the manner in which these notes may be used." In effect, Reagan authorized postmasters to issue provisional postage until Confederate stamps were supplied, although provisional postage was specifically banned by the Federal government. Nonetheless, postmasters who knew they would soon be reporting to the Confederate government could be expected to improvise as they deemed necessary, especially when U.S. postal officials were unwilling to send supplies of stamps or stationery.

Prior to June 1, 1861, postmasters' provisionals would necessarily be rated 3¢, the basic United States letter postage. The Scott Catalogue lists 3¢ 1861 Postmasters' Provisional adhesive stamps for Hillsboro N.C., Madison Court House Fla. and Nashville Tenn. (the Nashville 3¢ stamp was never issued). Scott also lists handstamped envelopes for Jackson Miss., Selma Ala. and Tuscumbia Ala. (the Tuscumbia was formerly listed as 12XU1 in the U.S. provisionals section of the catalogue).



Samuel J. Perry, Postmaster  
Madison C.H., Florida

The Madison 3c provisionals were issued by Postmaster Samuel J. Perry only days after the Confederate States were formed at Montgomery, Alabama, on February 4, 1861. The earliest recorded use of the Madison provisional is dated February 13, 1861, by an enclosure (see Siegel Sale 824, lot 439). One of the off-cover stamps is cancelled by a February 21 (1861) Madison circular datestamp. These are the earliest postmasters' provisionals issued in the Confederacy. Postmaster Perry issued the printed 5c entire sometime later (see Siegel Sale 824, lot 442).

Through testimony and contemporary source material, the Madison provisionals have been thoroughly documented and authenticated. The 3c was first reported by John W. Scott, who discovered the "CNETS" error in 1872. Scott described the Madison stamp as "the first issued, best authenticated and scarcest Confederate provisional." The Madison 5c entire was found by C. H. Mekeel in 1895. In recent years, extensive research by Patricia A. Kaufmann has consolidated an enormous volume of information about the stamps, the postmaster and the unusual nature of these rarities. A brief excerpt of information provided in her two definitive articles follows (reference: "U.S. 3-Cent 1861 Postmaster Provisionals Used in the Confederacy," *American Philatelist*, November 1984, and "The Madison, Florida, Postmaster Provisionals; Anatomy of a Postal History Research Project," *American Philatelist*, February 2000).

Postmaster Perry had his stamps typeset and printed at the offices of *The Southern Messenger*, the newspaper published by his eldest son William. Soon after the stamps appeared, they were reported in *The New York Herald* under the headline "The PostMaster at Madison Fla has offered P Office Stamps contrary to Law," which prompted an investigation by the United States postal inspectors. Perry was cleared of any wrongdoing, and he ended his tenure as a Federal appointee by filing all returns and remitting all money owed to the U.S. government.

Six examples of the Madison Court House 3c provisional are recorded (four normal off cover, one off cover with "CNETS" error, and one normal on cover):

- 1) Town circular datestamp dated Feb. 21 (1861), ex Philbrick, Avery, Ferrary, Lapham and Moody, Siegel 2000 Rarities sale (Sale 824, lot 440)
- 2) Circular datestamp, formerly owned by the Weills
- 3) Manuscript "(P)aid in (Money)" cancel, ex Ferrary, Moody, Felton (Siegel Sale 1019, lot 594)
- 4) Pen cancel, ex Piller inventory (stamp stolen and recovered), the stamp offered here;
- 5) Used on cover, cancelled by "Paid" in oval, ex Avery, Ferrary, Duveen, Hind, Caspary and Gross (Spink/Shreves sale, Nov. 19, 2009, lot 1)
- 6) "CNETS" error (Scott 3AX1a), town datestamp, ex Philbrick, Ferrary, Duveen, Lapham, Moody, Siegel 2000 Rarities sale (Sale 824, lot 441)

In addition to the 3c adhesive stamps, there is one 5c Confederate-rate entire, ex Ferrary, Lapham and Moody, and last offered in Siegel 2000 Rarities sale (Sale 824, lot 442).

We are grateful to Patricia A. Kaufmann for her permission to quote from her research in this introduction. Her article, with updates, can be viewed at <http://webuystamps.com/madison.htm>