

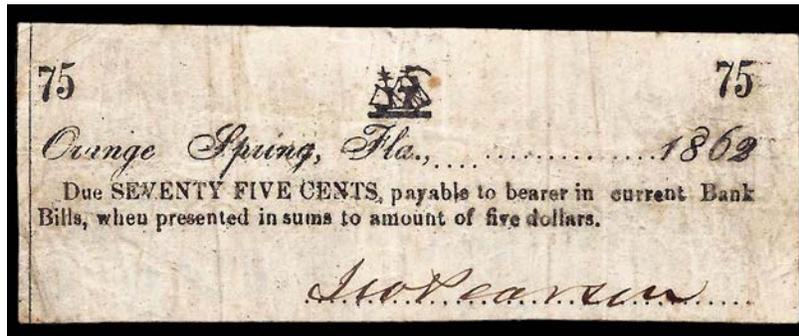
# ORANGE SPRING POST OFFICE

By Thomas Lera

The Orange Springs Methodist Episcopal Church, located at SR 315 and Church Street, is an historic church that was added to the U.S. National Register of Historic Places on December 22, 1988. Also, known as Orange Springs Community Church and Cemetery, it was built around 1852 on land donated by John W. Pearson. The community church served as a Confederate hospital and the cemetery contains remains of both Confederate and Union Soldiers, along with a memorial monument of Pearson.

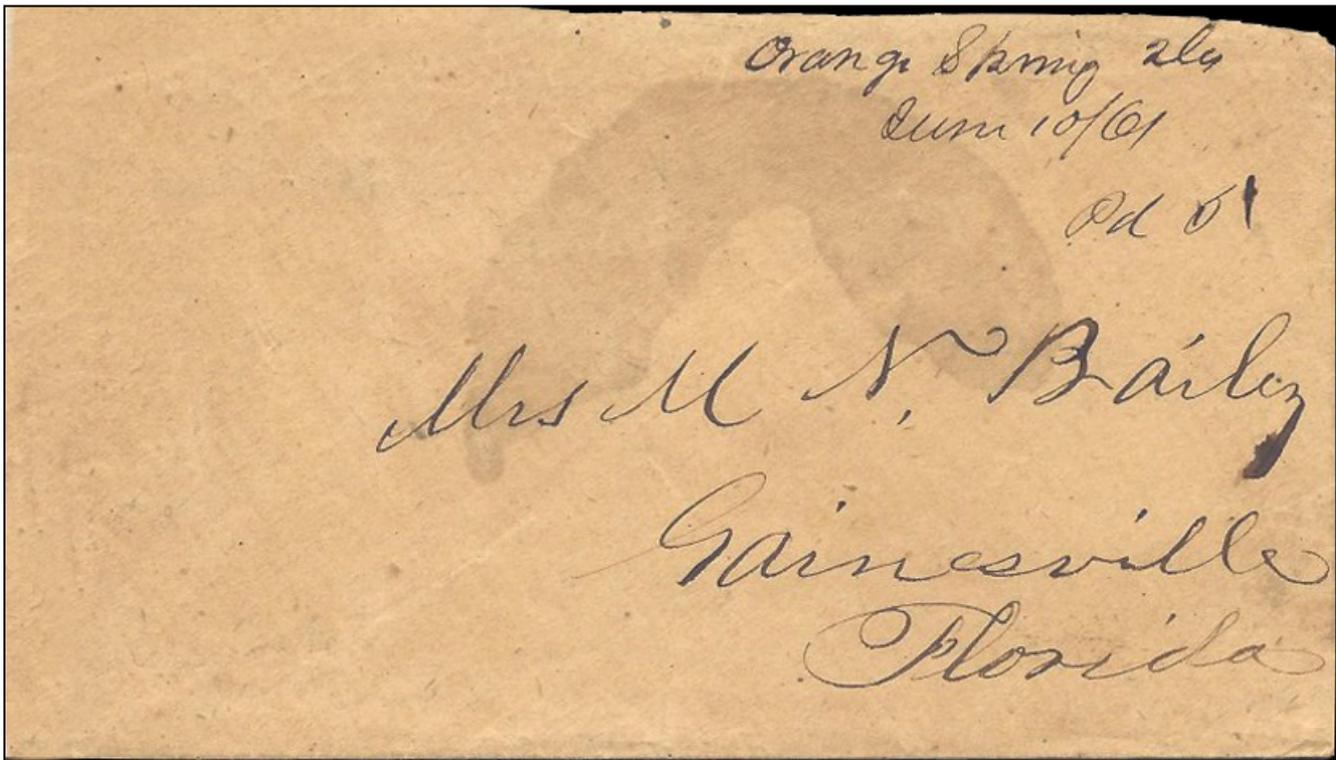


John William Pearson (January 19, 1808 – September 30, 1864) was a businessman and Civil War Confederate Captain who established a popular health resort hotel and grist mill in Orange Springs as well as a machine shop which manufactured artillery and refurbished firearms for the Confederates.<sup>i</sup> Pearson also issued Orange Spring script, as seen below, in 50 cents, 75 cents and One Dollar denominations.



Pearson is best known for forming the Oklawaha Rangers named after the Ocklawaha River in Orange Springs.<sup>ii</sup> The Oklawaha Rangers were used in the Civil War for guerrilla tactics against the Federal troops throughout North and Central Florida.

The Orange Spring Post Office was open during the Civil War as seen in the Confederate cover below. James C. Cameron, U.S. postmaster since May 16, 1860, received a Confederate postmaster appointment on July 25, 1861. Orange Spring had mail service with postal route 6513 from Waldo to Orange Spring by way of Morrison's Mills, 20 miles, with twice weekly service. The route number changed to 1505 when the contract was let to G. A. Lamb of Gainesville on June 16, 1863 for \$250 per annum. It was later given the C. A. Robinson of Gainesville for \$125 per annum.<sup>iii</sup>



Orange Spring Fla, Jun 10 1861 manuscript postmark with Pd 5 [Paid 5].

Note: Orange Spring is **not** open to the public. The **Orange Springs Specialty Water & Beverage Company** has fenced off the spring and uses water from the natural flow of the artesian spring cavern to produce their bottled water.

Orange Spring and Orange Springs are used interchangeably throughout the literature. In 2007, the U.S. Geological Survey lists Orange Springs as a populated place with the post office at 24282 U.S. Highway 315. The pictures of the Church and Pearson's Memorial are courtesy of Thomas Lera. The script and the cover images are courtesy of Deane Briggs.

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<sup>i</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Orange\\_Springs,\\_Florida](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Orange_Springs,_Florida). Cook, David (December 6, 1987). "Orange Springs Once Thriving Resort". *Ocala Star-Banner*. Retrieved May 2, 2014.

<sup>ii</sup> Gary, Loderhose (2000). *Way Down the Suwannee River: Sketches of Florida During the Civil War*. *Authors Choice Press*. p. 13.

<sup>iii</sup> Stefan T. Jaronski. "The Postal Routes of Confederate Florida". *The Confederate Philatelist*. Vol 37, No. 1. Whole 265. January-February 1992. p.28.; Theron Wirenga, editor. 1979. *Official Documents of the Post-office Department of the Confederate States of America*. Holland, Michigan: The Editor, 1979. Two Volumes.; Brian M. Green. 1980. Review of "Official Documents of the Post Office Department of the Confederate States of America" *The Chronicle of U.S. Classic Postal Issues*. Volume: 32, No. 1. p.42-43.