

AMERICAN INTERVENTION IN THE CARIBBEAN 1898-1934

This exhibit tells the story of U.S. interventions in areas around the Caribbean Sea, starting with the outbreak of the Spanish-American War and continuing through the first quarter of the 20th Century. Energized by the destruction of *USS Maine* in Havana harbor, America adopted a policy of sending military forces to the area to reduce or forestall European influence and to deal with local administrations engaged in "chronic wrongdoing." This took our troops into Cuba three times during this period, as well as to Dominican Republic, Haiti, Nicaragua and Puerto Rico.

The interventions varied as to length and forces involved, although in no case were the numbers of troops large by modern standards. Thus, the availability of postal material differs from area to area and from time to time. A large number of military postal stations were opened in Cuba during and following the war, but examples of mail from many of these are extremely elusive. However, a wide variety of postmarks is shown from this period, including auxiliary markings. Mail from the other areas is easiest to acquire from Haiti and Puerto Rico, with that from the Dominican Republic the most difficult to find.



The first military station opened at Daiquiri, Cuba on 23 June 1898. The first postmark was undated so earliest use cannot be documented. However, based on an average of about 2-1/2 weeks delivery time from Cuba to the U.S., this cover -- which transited New York on 9 July -- would likely have been in the first mail despatched from Daiquiri. It is further distinguished by being addressed to Norway, thus being the only foreign destination mail seen by the exhibitor from this early period. Backstamped for receipt in Khristiana (Oslo) on 23 July.

The main thrust of the exhibit is a comprehensive display of military postal markings of the various stations, some of which are extremely difficult to acquire as the outlying offices often served units as small as a couple of dozen men, sometimes for very short periods of time. As to mail from the larger offices, an effort has been made to emphasize the unusual, including registered mail, supplemental markings, earliest and latest dates, etc. The exhibit is presented chronologically, based on the beginning date of each intervention.

AMERICAN INTERVENTION IN THE CARIBBEAN 1906 - 1934

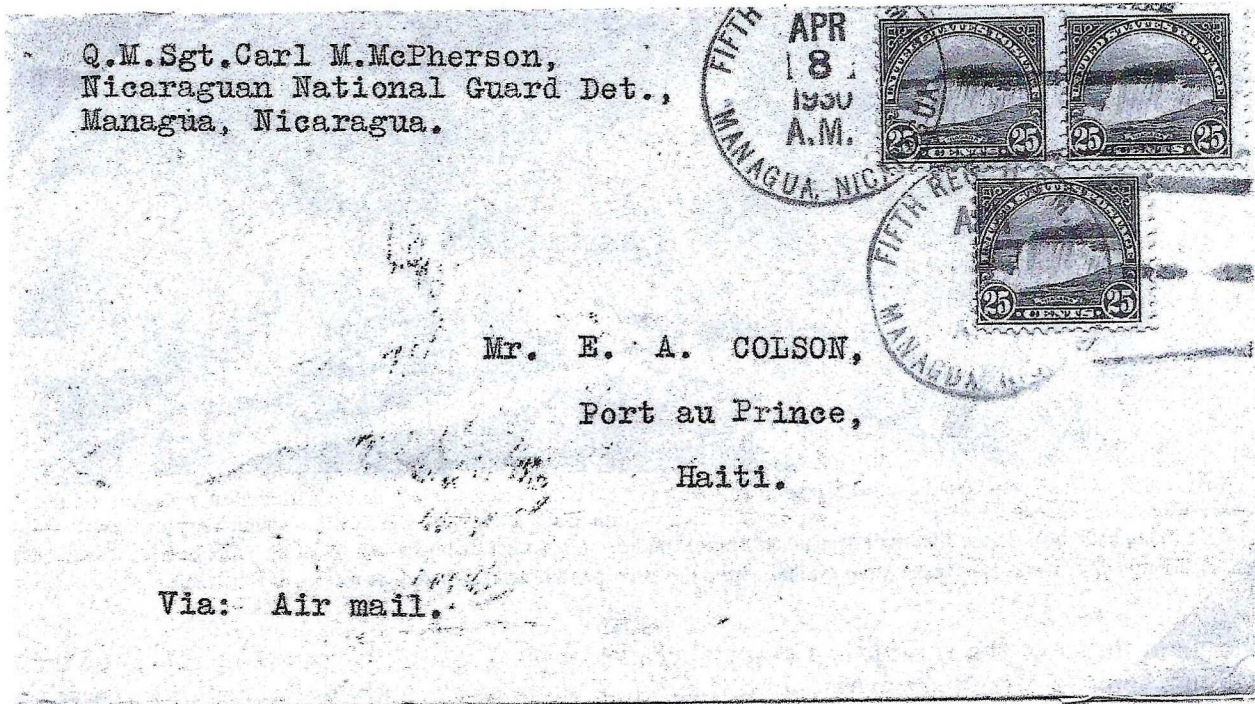
PLAN OF EXHIBIT

The period of active American intervention in the Caribbean area was triggered by our success in the Spanish-American War, which awakened American public interest in the area to the south. In the subsequent three and a half decades, American forces returned to Cuba twice and were also deployed in Haiti, Mexico, Nicaragua and the Dominican Republic on various occasions.

In determining what constituted an "intervention," the criteria applied for the purpose of the exhibit included the involvement of ground forces and the creation of a postal history record through our establishment of postal facilities on foreign territory. (Therefore, the presence of U.S. Navy ships "showing the flag" by landing a few Marines in various ports did not qualify as an intervention.)

The exhibit is laid out chronologically, based on the earliest date of each intervention. In those cases in which one intervention ended but U.S. troops were sent back to the same country later on, it is treated as a new intervention. On this basis, the order in which the various activities are shown is as follows:

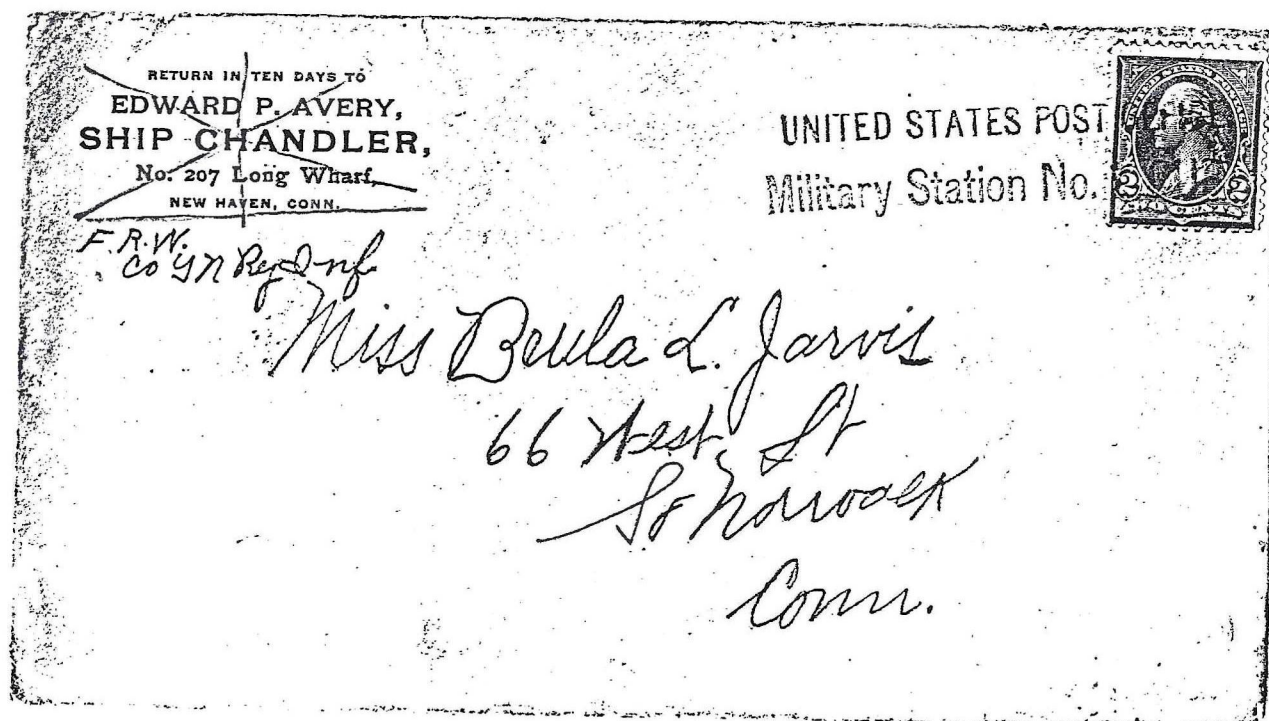
CUBA	1906-1909	HAITI	1915-1934
NICARAGUA	1912-1925	DOMINICAN REPUBLIC	1916-1924
MEXICO	1914	CUBA	1917-1922
	NICARAGUA	1927-1933	



There was no direct air service from Nicaragua to Haiti, so postage on this triple-weight letter was then calculated at 15 cents per half ounce from Managua to Miami plus 10 cents from Miami to Port au Prince. A highly unusual Marine Corps franking.

CUBA 1898-1902

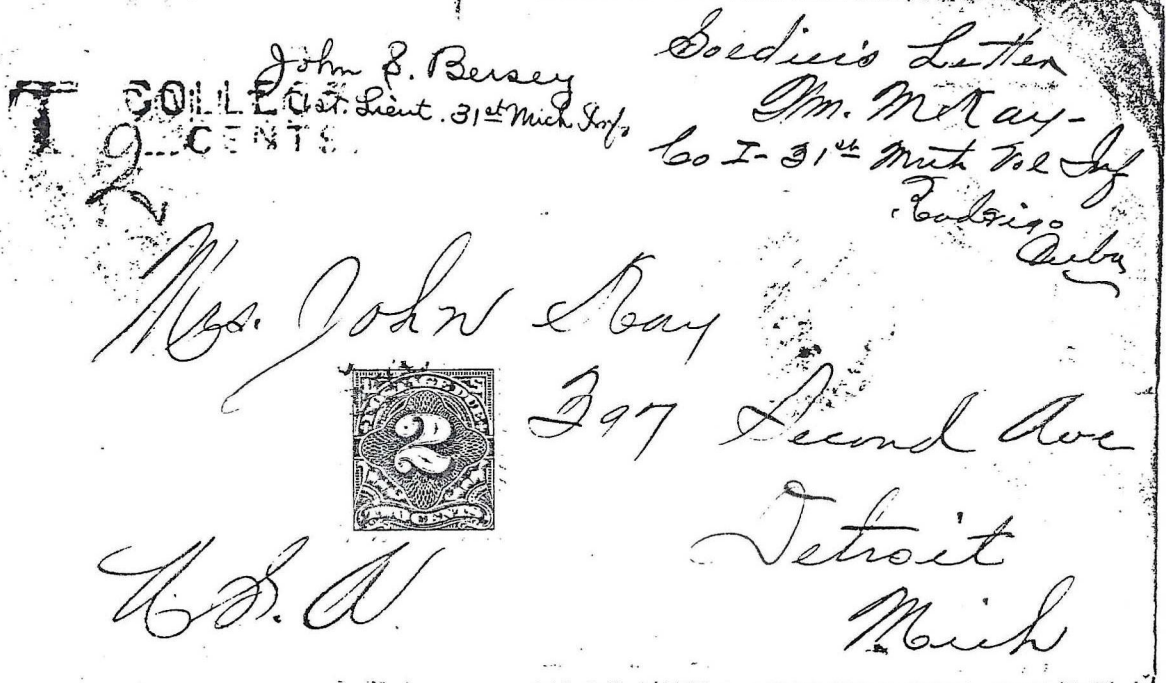
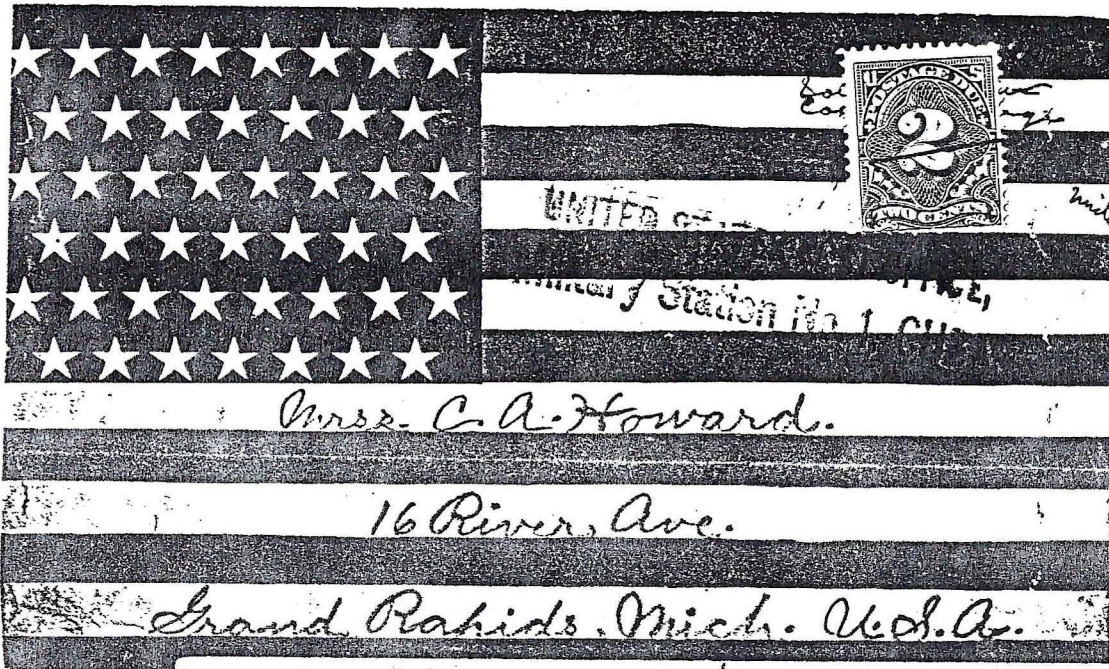
Following the sinking of the *U.S.S. Maine* in Havana Harbor, the United States declared war on Spain on 21 April 1898. On 20 June American troops landed in Cuba, and on 3 July destruction of the Spanish fleet in the Battle of Santiago sealed the fate of the defenders. An armistice was signed on 12 August, and the Treaty of Paris, 10 December 1898, fixed the rights of the Cubans, Spaniards and Americans. These included the right of the United States to administer Cuba until the establishment of a stable independent republic. This administration, under the jurisdiction of the War Department, ended on 20 May 1902.



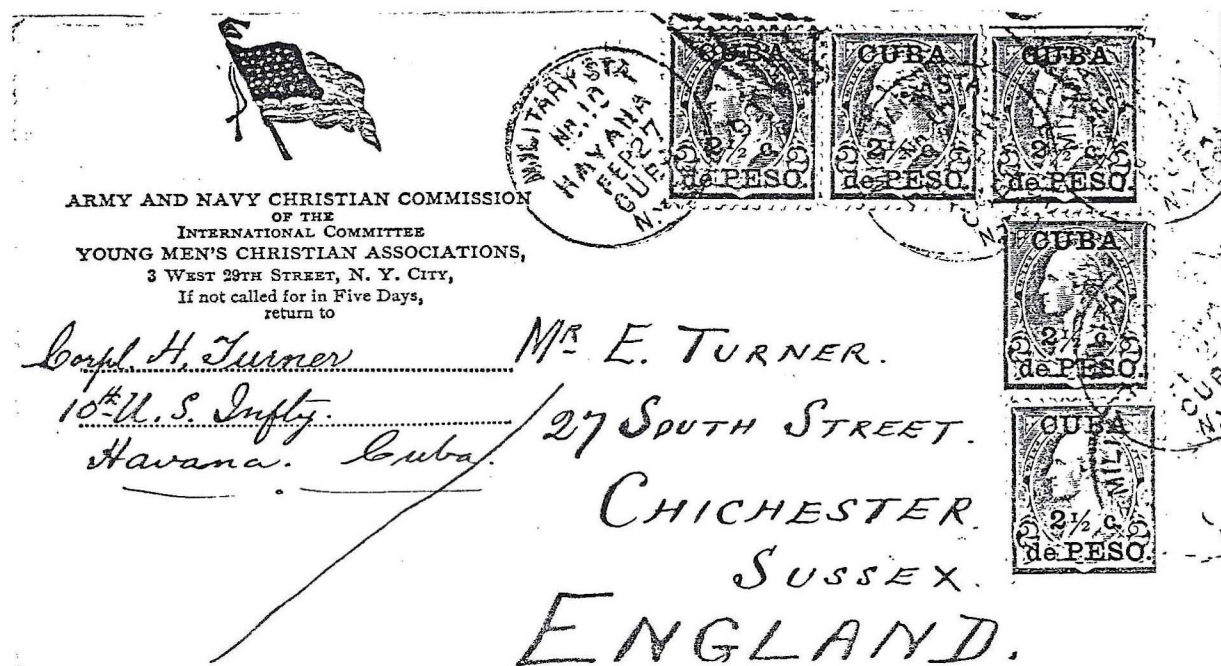
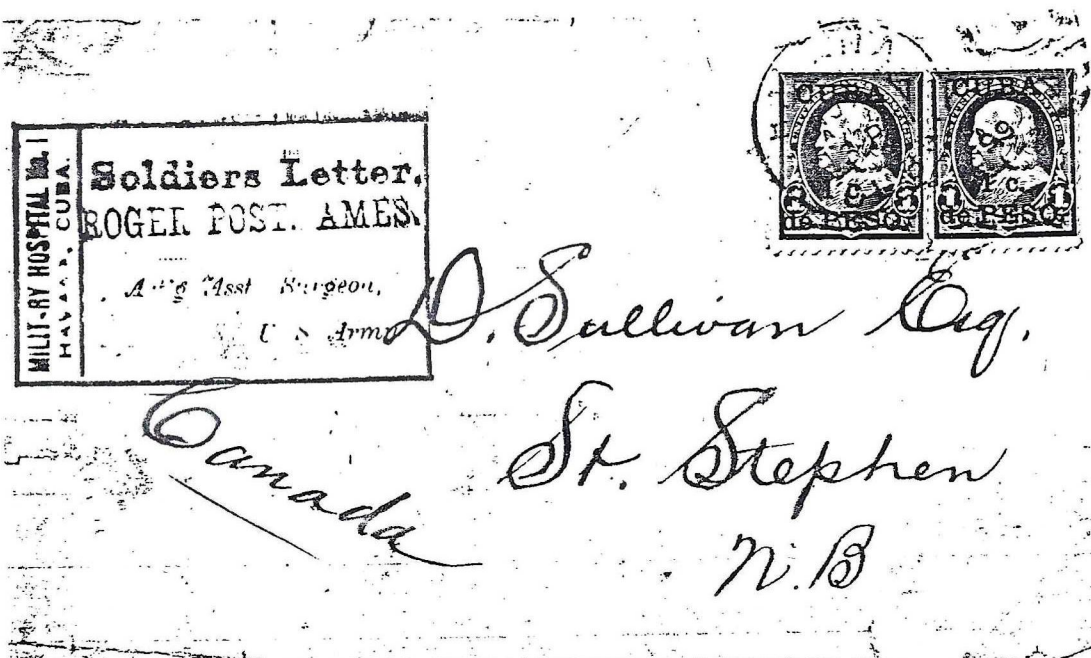
The earliest postmark used overseas by U.S. forces. The first military post office was placed in service at Daiquiri on 23 June 1898. Based on approximate 2½-week transit at that time and 11 July Norwich receiving backstamp, this was likely a part of the earliest despatch of U.S. military mail from Cuba.

Cuba 1898-1902

Rates
Servicemen's Mail



American troops participating in the war with Spain enjoyed 2 postal concessions. First, mail within the occupied territories, and between these and the U.S., was carried at U.S. domestic rates. Second, first class mail endorsed "Soldier's Letter" and signed by an officer could be sent without postage, with postage due, but not the deficiency penalty, being charged to the addressee. These benefits continued for troops after the peace treaty. Upper cover backstamped on arrival 17 July 1898; lower backstamped Habana 6 February 1899.



American military mail to foreign destinations was paid at the rates applicable to mail sent from the U.S. Wrapper usage to Canada is most unusual. Cover paid at 5c per ½-ounce (stamps valued at 2c. de peso despite surcharge of 2½c.).

Cuba 1898-1902

Penalty for private use, \$300.



A. M. M.

Philadelphia

Pa. U. S. A.

WAR DEPARTMENT

*Genl Armstrong 2d Inf ACS
Morro Castle Santiago Cuba*

OFFICIAL BUSINESS.

Penalty for private use, \$300.



The Wall Safe Rock Co

~~San Francisco~~ 30-4

Hamilton, Ohio

WAR DEPARTMENT.

HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF HAVANA.

DEPARTMENT OF CHARITIES AND HOSPITALS.

OFFICIAL BUSINESS.

Official military mail, properly endorsed, was entitled to free carriage. It is surprisingly scarce.

Cuba Philadelphia Medical Journal

Cuba 1898-1902

Rates
Civilian Mail

tonio P. García.
ADUANAS Y COMISIONISTA.
Calle de Santa, (Cuba.)

VIA TAMPA



REG. No. 23

Messrs John S Emery & Co.

After.....days, return to

Via Estados Unidos



2c. DE PESO.

3545
Mass.

Sr. Antonio Rodriguez
Morey
Fermis in porta

HAVANA, CUBA

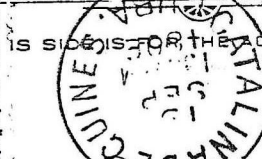
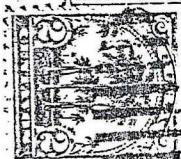
JUL 399

Registered No. 201

Anticoli &

99-OKT.6-N 5 #21
G POSTAL CARD - ONE CENT.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

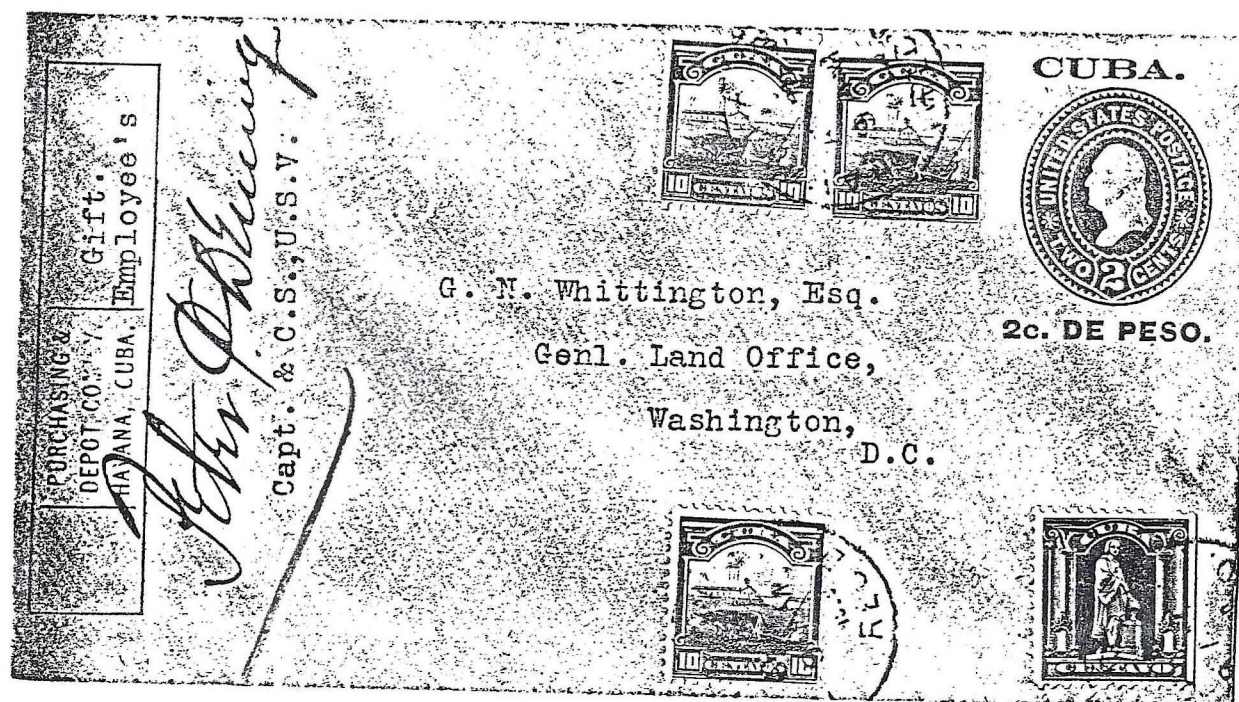


CUBA.-1c. de Peso.

Monsieur Charles Emery
Sec. de la Chambre de Commerce.
à Sopron. — 4424
Hungary



Mail from civilian senders -- including the post office department -- was charged at rates equivalent to U.S. domestic rates for mail within Cuba and UPU rates for foreign mail -- including mail to the U.S.



U.S.P.O. order #874, 26 July 1900, provided that unsealed packages and parcels containing only gifts or souvenirs sent by persons in the U.S. service in the recently-acquired Spanish possessions could be sent to family members in the U.S. provided that they were clearly marked as a gift or souvenir, and showed the sender's official capacity. Such parcels could weigh up to 64 ounces and were to be carried at domestic postal rates (1c per ounce for 4th class mail).

Envelope with 4 glue spots on back from attachment to 33 ounce parcel. A very seldom seen class of mail; most parcel post wrappings were destroyed in opening and immediately consigned to the trash.

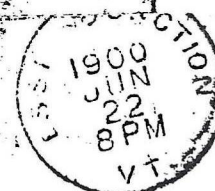
Cuba 1898-1902

Incoming Mail

After 5 days, return to
SANDY RIVER RAILROAD COMPANY,
GARDINER, ME.



Arthur B. Lancaster,
Battery C, 1st Marine Art.
Military Station Co. Me.
Buena Vista,
Cuba



Capt. L. Buchanan Tugan
7th U.S. Army
Pinar del Rio Barahona
Pinar del Rio - Cuba

Incoming mail from the U.S. to American military personnel, both during the war and after, was carried at U.S. domestic rates. U.S. mail to others in Cuba required UPU postage (5¢ postage per ½-ounce for letters). Registered cover is to Spanish General officer on the commission responsible for repatriation of Spaniards pursuant to the Treaty of Paris.

Cuba 1898-1902

Postage
Spanish Issues

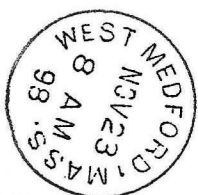
Estados Unidos
de America



Mr Fausto Sanchez Cardona.
Ingeniero.

No 134-Grant Avenue.

Medford.



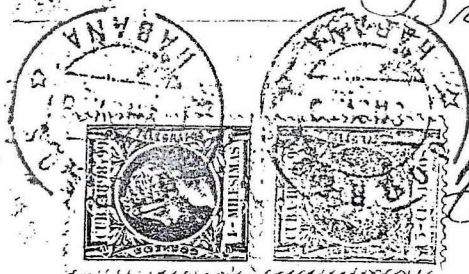
E. Unidos

21597



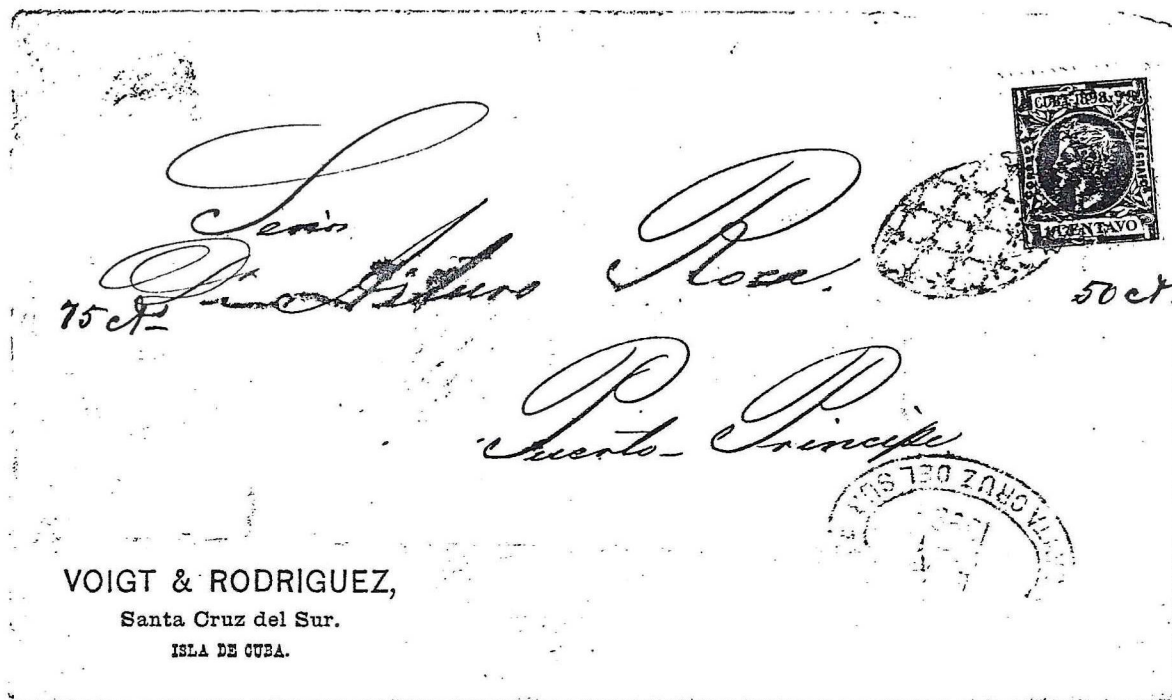
Dr. Dr. Francisco Plerin

Box 520



Campana.

Following surrender of Spanish land forces at Santiago (16 July 1898) the U.S. Postmaster General ordered establishment of civil postal service in eastern Cuba, stipulating that U.S. stamps be used. On 19 August 1898 the civil postal service was expanded to all of Cuba, again with the requirement that U.S. stamps be used. However, as noted by Jones & Roy, Spanish colonial stamps continued to be used in the civilian offices until stocks of U.S. stamps overprinted for use in Cuba were received. Such usages are found until July 1899 (and occasionally later).



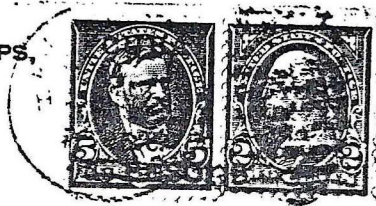
American and Cuban revolutionary forces entered Puerto Principe on 24 November 1898. When it was learned that no U.S. Stamps were immediately available, the Cuban Liberation Army proposed, and the U.S. military governor sanctioned, the overprinting of Spanish stamps. On 19 December the order was given for the local production of 5 values, and 5 printings were made during December 1898 and January 1899, with a total production of between 21,400 and 28,000 stamps (Jones & Roy).

The "Puerto Principe Provisionals" were used in only 4 towns: Puerto Principe, Minas del Principe, Nuevitas and Santa Cruz del Sur. On-cover examples are particularly elusive, with only 2 covers recorded from Santa Cruz. They were withdrawn after approximately 1 month, following arrival of a supply of regular stamps on 20 January 1899.

Cuba 1898-1902

Postage
United States Issues

HEADQUARTERS SEVENTH ARMY CORPS,
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF SIGNAL OFFICER.



Mrs E. T. Morris

*John F. Wilkinson
1st Lieut. 15th Inf. Arty.*

Rom.

Mr Charles Tripney
The Morristown Herald



*Soldiers Letter
Lieut - J. A. Douglas
6th Cav.*

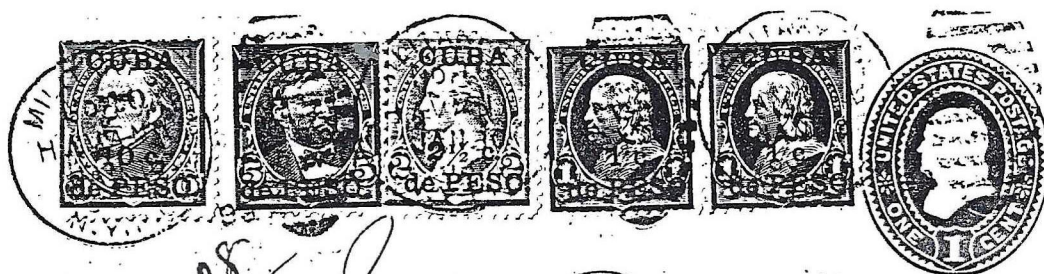


Mr. E. M. Schrey
Townsend P. C. Sandusky & Co
Chgo. Ill.

United States stamps continued to be acceptable in Cuba, at least on soldier's mail, even following issuance of the CUBA surcharges. Bottom cover is backstamped Habana 2 February 1899.

Cuba 1898-1902

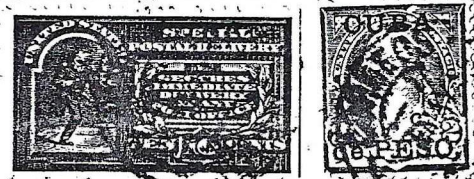
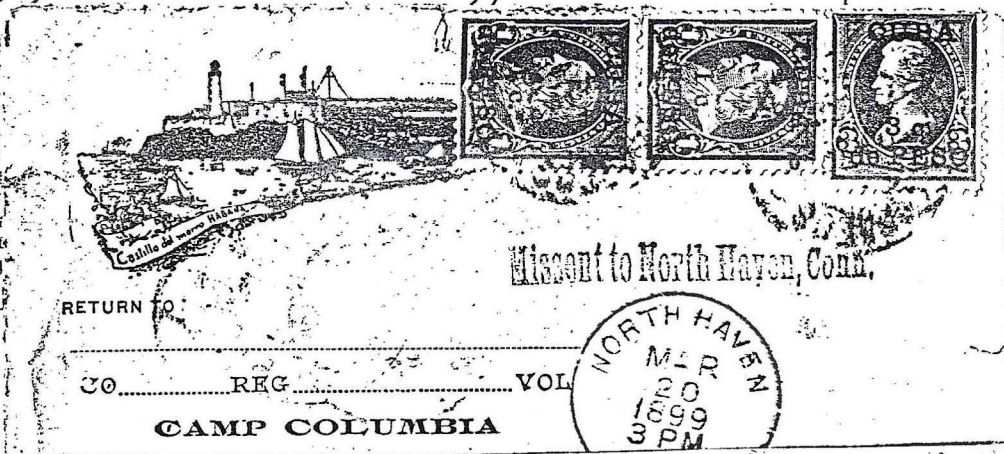
Postage
Cuban General Issues



#12
#828

John Faabow

Military Station No. 10, Havana, Cuba.



*Dr. D. Angel Morales
Obispo 100*

Habana

The civil postal administration was established for Cuba on 1 January 1899. Some authorities state that the USPOD placed on sale 4 values of surcharges on U.S. postage stamps at noon on that day, with a 3 centavo value being added on 23 January. (The 2½ centavo value did not meet any postal need, so it was sold for 2 centavos until a new surcharge in the correct denomination could be prepared; this corrected stamp was placed on sale in late February). The final surcharged stamp was a 10c Special Delivery, reported to have been issued on 15 April 1899.

Cuba 1898-1902

Postage
Cuban General Issues

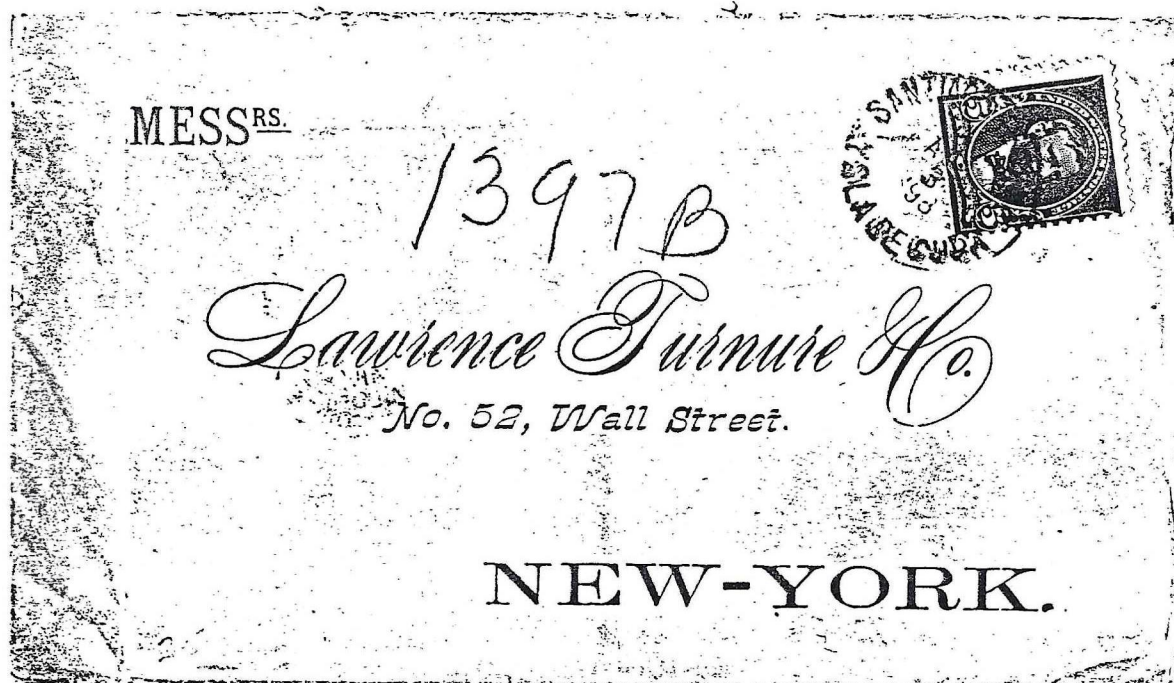


On 1 September 1899 the second and final set issued by the U.S. administration was issued, followed by a Special Delivery stamp on 15 December 1899.

Postal stationery, at first surcharged and overprinted, later with "Cuba" in the printed design, was introduced in conjunction with the issuance of the postage stamps.

Cuba 1898-1902

Postmarks
Military Sta. No. 1 Santiago



Military Station No. 1 operated at the U.S. Army encampment outside Santiago from 21 July 1898, first using the 2-line provisional previously employed at Siboney, and subsequently a series of postmarks shown below. Inside the town itself, the civilian post office continued to operate, under authority of the U.S. Postmaster General. While U.S. stamps were supplied from shortly after the U.S. occupation of the town, the Spanish postmark continued in use until at least mid-August 1898.