

Cuba Postal Stationery 1898 - 1958

US Administration and Republic Eras

Scope - This is an exhibit of postal stationery issued by, or authorized for use in, Cuba. It covers the US Administration and Republic periods, beginning with US stationery used in the Military Post Offices in Cuba and proceeding to the end of the Republic era in 1958. Spanish colonial issues are excluded from this exhibit.

Organization - The exhibit follows a traditional presentation. The issues are presented chronologically, starting with the basic set, followed by essays and proofs (when available), then varieties and lastly usage. The exhibitor has chosen to structure the presentation by issue since it better explains the purpose of each value in the set .

Treatment - This is the most complete exhibit of the material shown to date. Of the regularly issued stationery, the exhibit is only missing the unwatermarked 2 c. Columbus legal size amber envelope and two uses of the watermarked 1 c. Columbus envelopes. A well balanced treatment demands that one consider the number of items (including varieties) issued and their period of use. Thus, the short lived but prolific US Administration period takes up almost a third of the frames, in spite of representing only four of the sixty years covered by the exhibit. On the other hand, the Patriots Cards of 1904 consisted of only three items, but they were in use for over fifty years. During that time, the issue experienced numerous reprints and significant socio-economic developments (two World Wars and the birth of Airmail service). Extensive usage is included, however, this is not a postal history exhibit. The exhibitor has chosen a more comprehensive approach that includes equal attention to proofs, specimens, varieties, etc.

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Condition/Rarity - The material is in the best condition available. One must remember, however, that Cuba's humid, hot weather makes the paper susceptible to toning. Rarity of US Administration items is based on the UPSS catalog. Other rarity statements are based on the exhibitor's personal knowledge.

Presentation - Special items in the exhibit are highlighted by blue matting. An underlined heading signals the start of a new issue. Expertized items are identified by a notation of the expertizing service. Envelope knives & sizes follow the latest UPSS numbering system.

Bibliography - The most authoritative/current writings on the subject are: "*The Postal Stationery of the Possessions and Administrative Areas of the United States of America*" 3rd Edition by the United Postal Stationery Society, for the US Administration era and the Jones-Roy "*Handbook of Cuba - Part III - The Republic*", for the Republic era.

US Military Station No. 1 opened June 23, 1898 at Daiquiri and was later moved to Siboney (July 6). On July 10, an outbreak of yellow fever at Siboney prompted the burning of the town, including the post office. On July 23 it was finally relocated to Santiago.



Straight-line Military Station No. 1 marking, from Siboney. US 2 c. Washington envelope used to Fort Sheridan, IL. Arrival postmark of July 18, 1898. The envelope shows evidence of having been "**disinfected**" (cut open at left). **Soldier's Concessionary Rate** - US POD Order of June 1898 granted domestic rates to US forces in & around Cuba.



Military Station No. 1, Santiago. US 2 c. Washington envelope used to Marion Co., FL, October 1, 1898. Contents, dated Sept. 25, 1898, identify the writer as a US soldier stationed at Guantanamo. *Military Station No. 3 at Guantanamo, did not officially open until Dec. 1, 1898.*



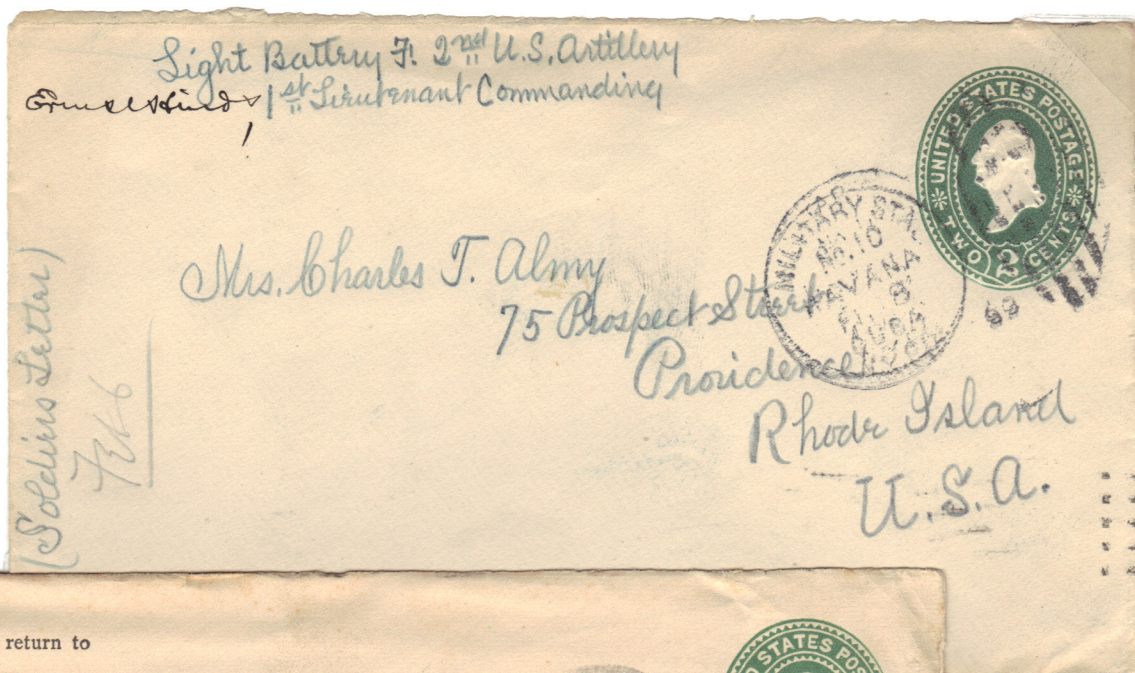
Soldier's mail from Military Station No. 1 - Prior to the arrival of the US cancel for Santiago.
US 2 c. Washington envelope of 1894 used Santiago to Plattsburg, NY July 24, 1898.
Use of the Spanish cancel is known from July 24 to August 15, 1898.



Civilian mail out of Santiago was allowed as of July 21, 1898 (US POD Order No. 296).
US 2 c. Liberty card of 1897 used from Santiago to Troisdorf, Germany August 12, 1898.
Arrival mark: Troisdorf, Sept. 2, 1898.

On August 12, the US President announced a suspension of hostilities.

Military Station No.
10, Havana. US 2 c.
Washington
envelope used to
Providence, RI,
February 8, 1899.



(Soldiers Letter)
Feb 6

Light Battery F. 2nd U.S. Artillery
1st Lieutenant Commanding
Mrs. Charles T. Almy
75 Prospect Street
Providence
Rhode Island
U.S.A.

After.....days, return to

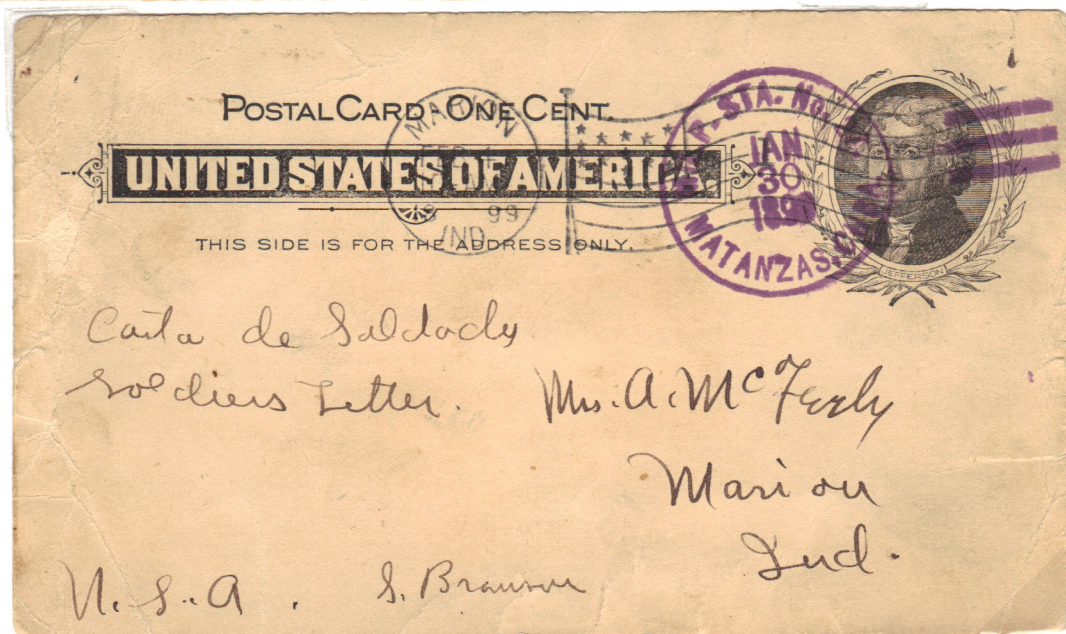
Indians Town
J. P. Ryan
Capt. of "Clemens"
Clemens Troop "S"

Mrs. J. Buchanan Ryan,
1009 Linden Avenue,
Baltimore, Md.

Military Station No.
15, Pinar del Rio.
US 2 c. Washington
envelope of 1894
used to Baltimore,
MD, April 9, 1899.



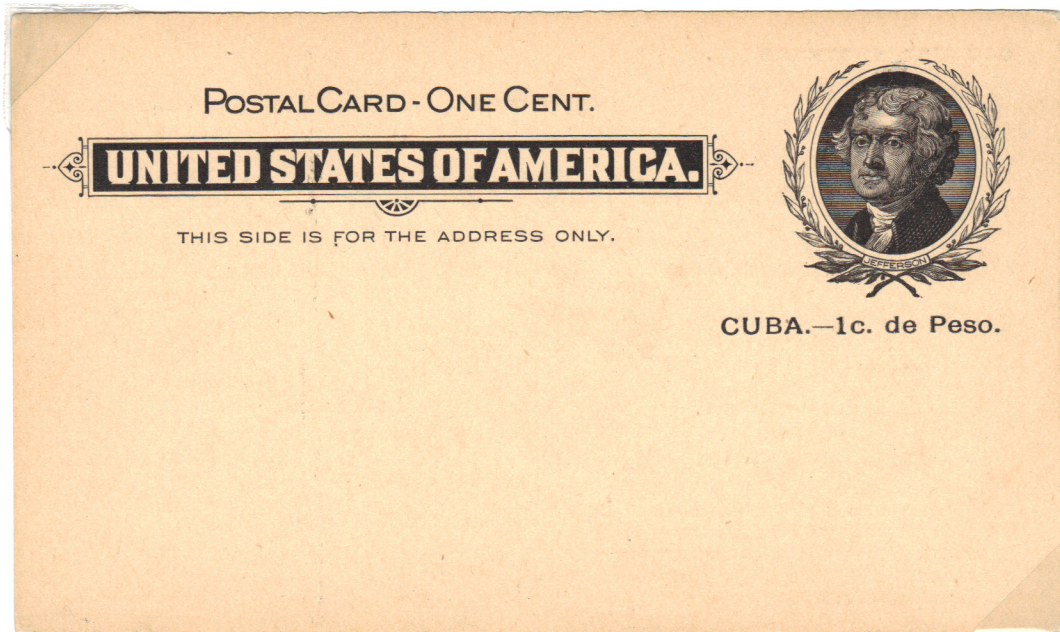
Military Station No.
27, Matanzas. US 1
c. Jefferson postal
card of 1897 used
to Marion, IN
January 30, 1899.



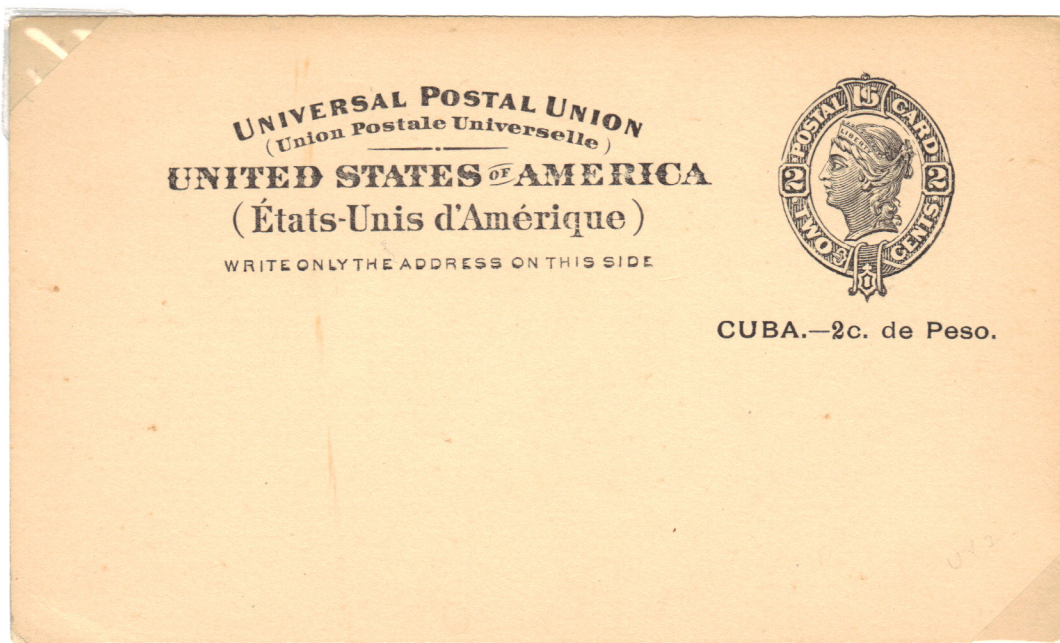
The overprinted
cards had not yet
been released.

Carta de Saldo
Soldiers Letter. Mrs. A. McFarly
Marion
Ind.
U.S.A. S. Brown

U.S. postal cards of the 1897-98 issues, overprinted for use in Cuba. The overprint was applied in Washington, D.C. The Department of Posts - Cuba started operations on January 1, 1899 and on February 10th, the Military Station System was officially merged with the civilian posts.



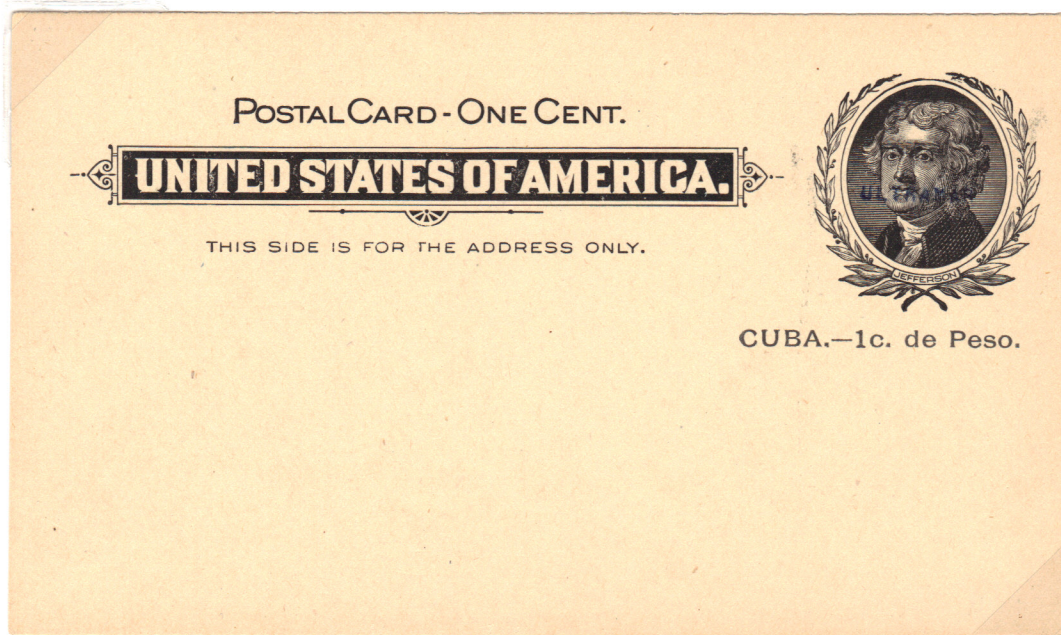
1 c. Jefferson card overprinted: Cuba. - 1 c. de Peso.



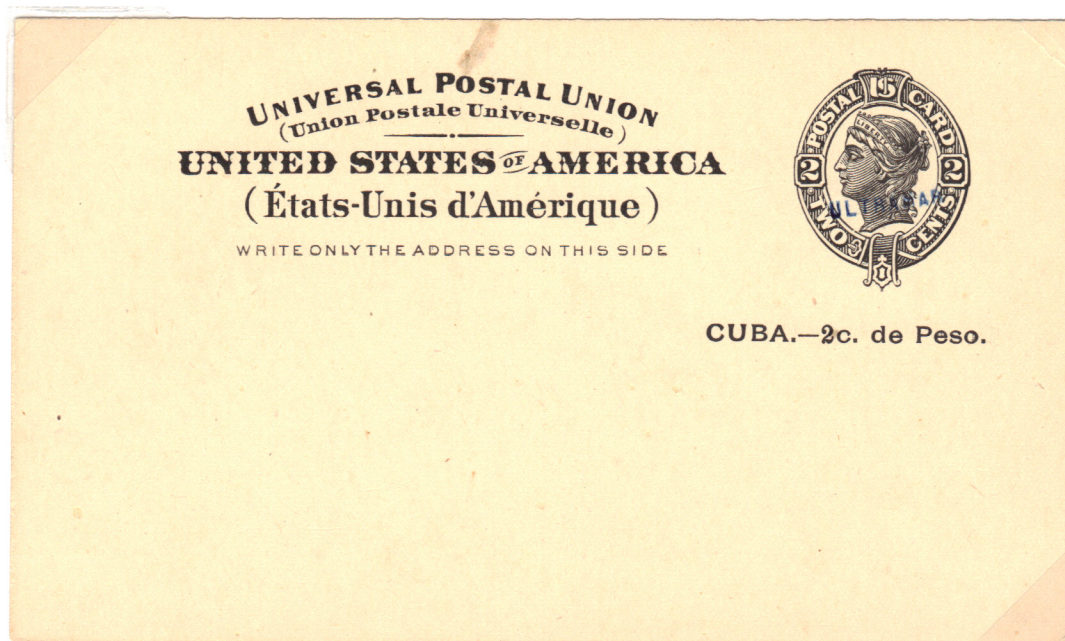
2 c. Liberty card overprinted: Cuba. - 2 c. de Peso.

While most catalogs list the date of issue as January, 1899, the third edition of the United Postal Stationery Society's (UPSS) Possessions Catalog (2009) contains the initial listing of ERPs (Earliest Recorded Postmark) for overprinted US issues of Cuba. The current ERP for the 2 c. Liberty card is February 10, 1899 (shown with the 2 c. usages), while the ERP for the 1 c. Jefferson card is over a month later, March 24, 1899.

The "Ultramar" handstamp was applied by the Portuguese post office to specimens received from the U.P.U., prior to distribution to their overseas (Ultramar) colonies.



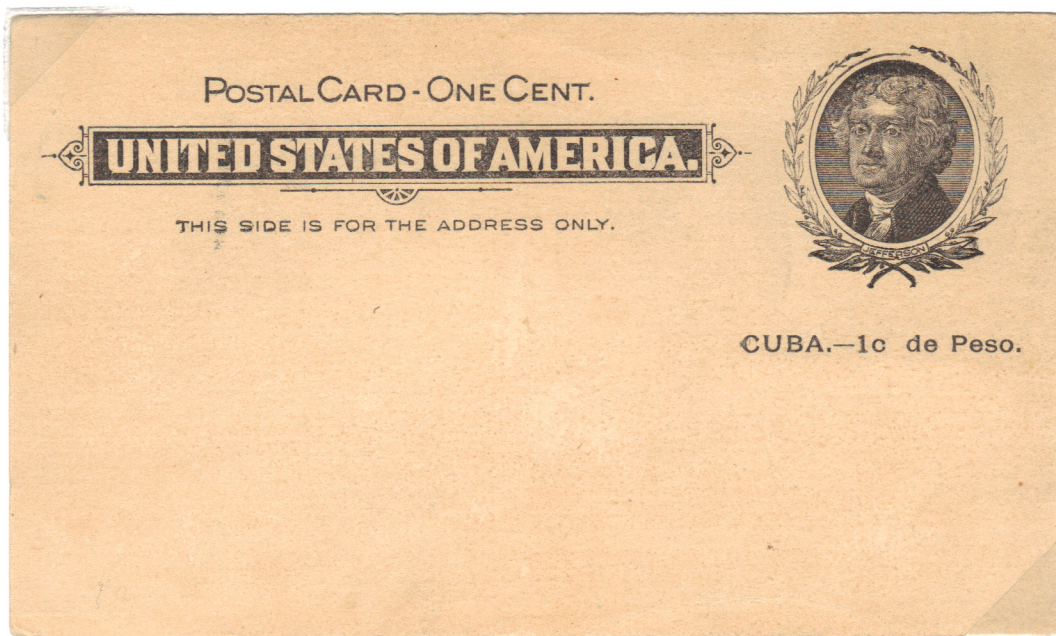
Ultramar handstamp on overprinted Jefferson card.



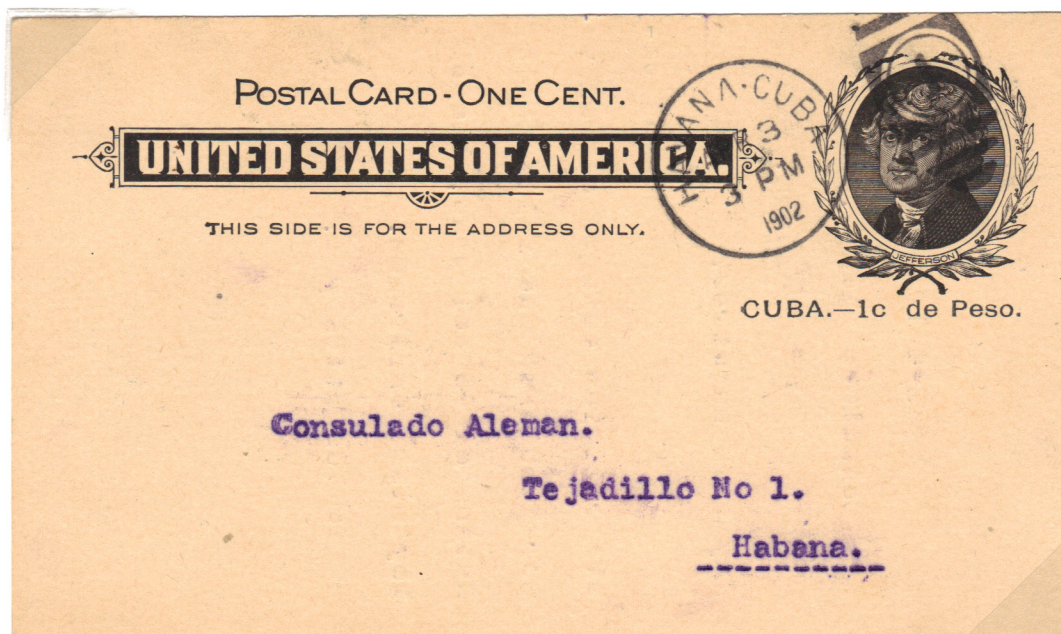
Ultramar handstamp on overprinted Liberty card.

The surcharge was applied to previously printed cards. There are a number of production varieties, on these cards. The missing periods being the most sought after.

Missing Period after 1 c



Variety missing period after 1 c

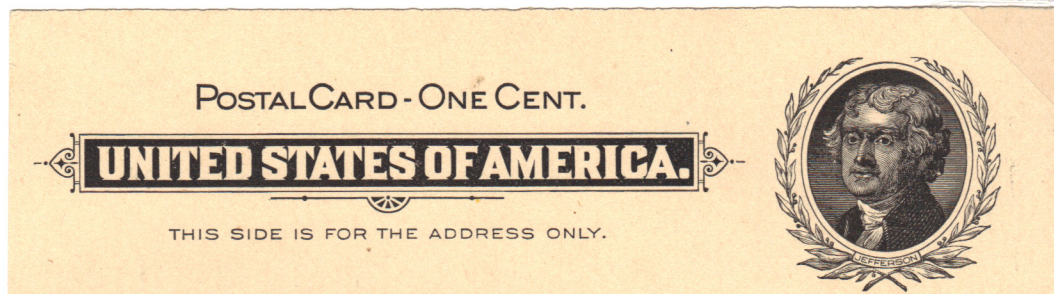


Variety missing period, used within Havana on April 3, 1902.

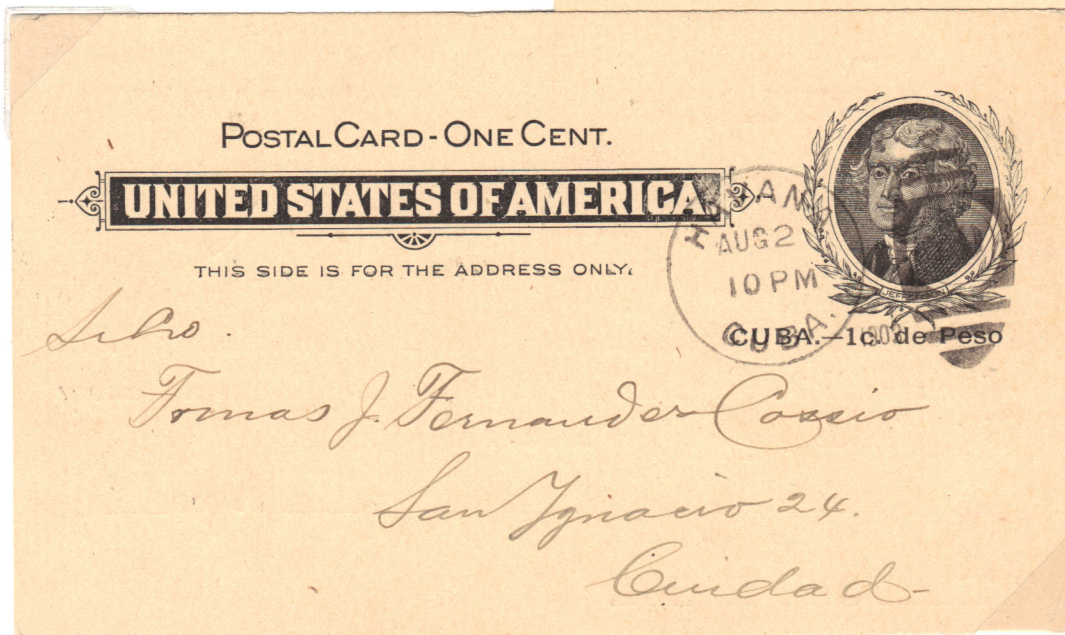
January 1899
Overprinted U.S. Cards

Printing Varieties
on the Jefferson Card.

Missing period after Peso.

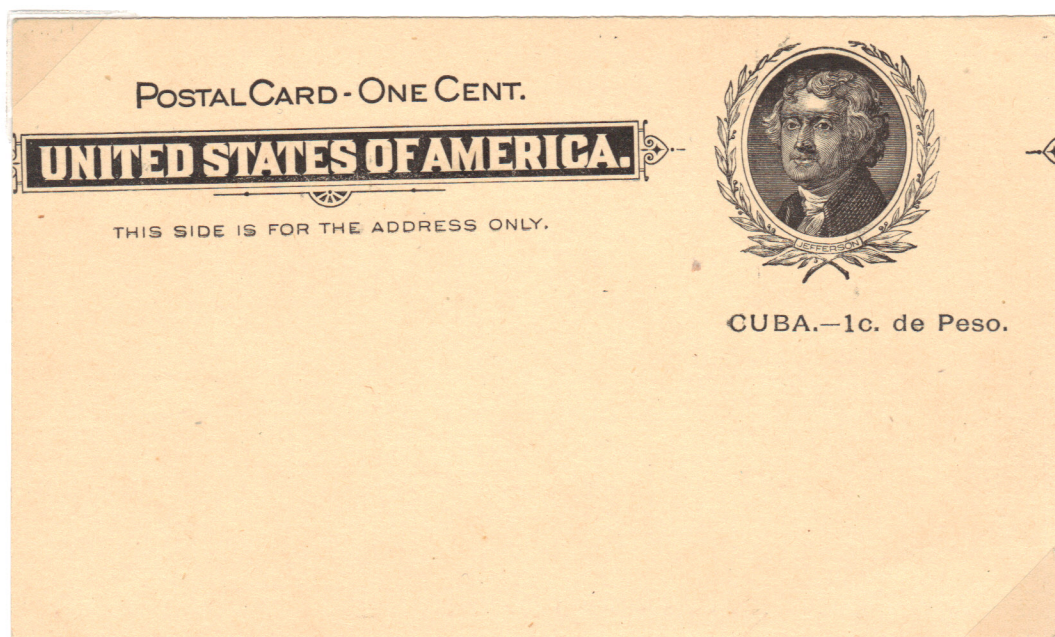


CUBA.—1c. de Peso



Missing period after Peso. Used in Havana, August 8, 1902.

Miscut Card



CUBA.—1c. de Peso.

This card proves that the surcharge was applied to pre-cut cards.

Missing period
after Peso.

UNIVERSAL POSTAL UNION
(Union Postale Universelle)
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
(États-Unis d'Amérique)
WRITE ONLY THE ADDRESS ON THIS SIDE



CUBA.—2c. de Peso

UNIVERSAL POSTAL UNION
(Union Postale Universelle)
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
(États-Unis d'Amérique)
WRITE ONLY THE ADDRESS ON THIS SIDE



CUBA.—2c. de Peso.

Missing grommet.



The true missing grommet variety
has a bump on the outer frame
by the "W" of TWO.

UNIVERSAL POSTAL UNION
(Union Postale Universelle)
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
(États-Unis d'Amérique)
WRITE ONLY THE ADDRESS ON THIS SIDE



CUBA.—2c. de Peso.

Cracked buckle.

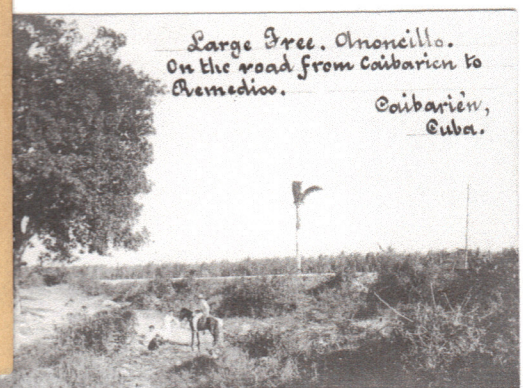
Photographer Martinez Otero of Caibarien, Cuba, prepared these view cards by affixing photographs to the backs of 1 c. cards. He must have found his plan to be a violation of postal regulations because postally used copies have not been found.

UPU regulations (1878 Convention) stated that when mailing government issued postal cards: *"It is forbidden to join or attach to post cards any article whatsoever."*

Scan of view side.



Scan of view side.

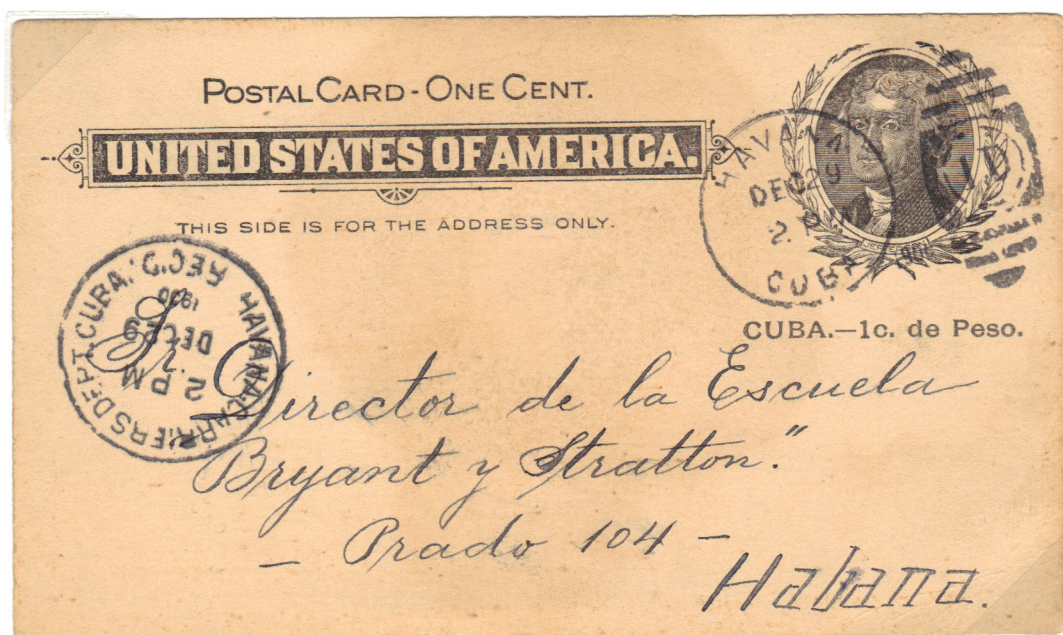


As we shall see later in this exhibit, Mr. Martinez Otero was not ready to abandon his idea of preparing view cards using government issued postal cards.

January 1899
Overprinted U.S. Cards

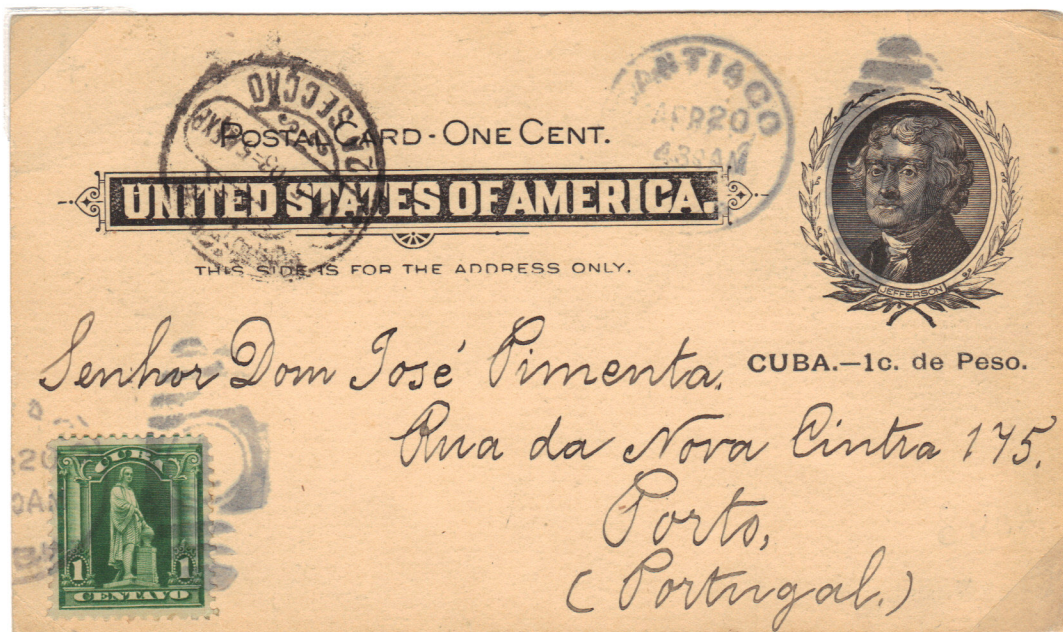
Usage of the 1 c. Jefferson Cards.

Used within Havana, Dec. 29, 1900. The Carrier's Dept. Cancel was applied to mail picked up by the letter carriers during their rounds.



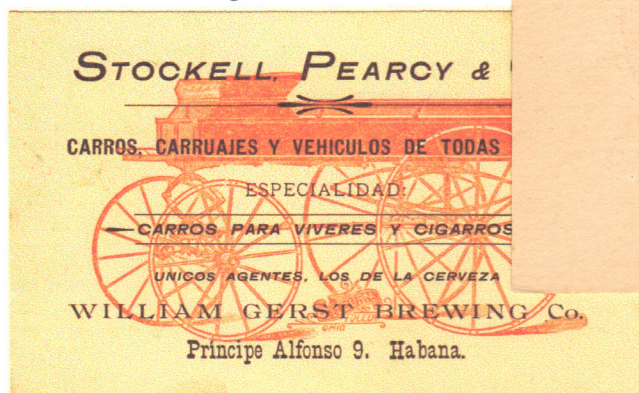
Havana to Montevideo, Uruguay, on May 31, 1902. Transit mark New York.

Santiago to Portugal, April 20, 1903. A 1c. Columbus stamp of 1899 makes up the international rate. These cards continued to be used by the Cuban Republic after the transfer of power.



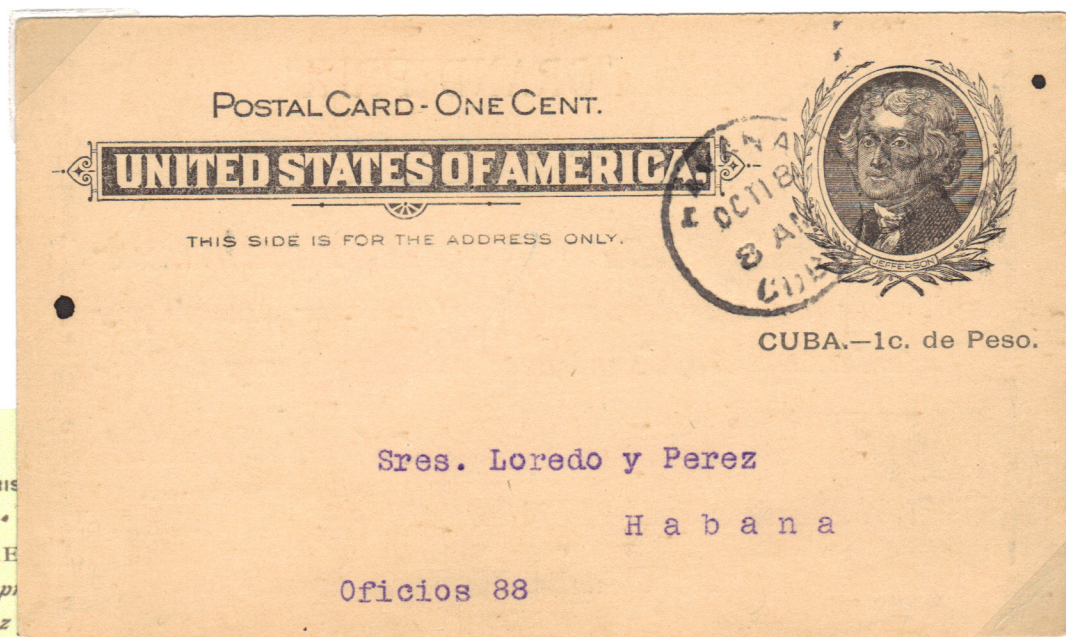
While there was a prohibition on attachments, there was no such prohibition on printed commercial ads on the message side of the cards. Some cards are known with rather elaborate illustrations.

Scan of message side.



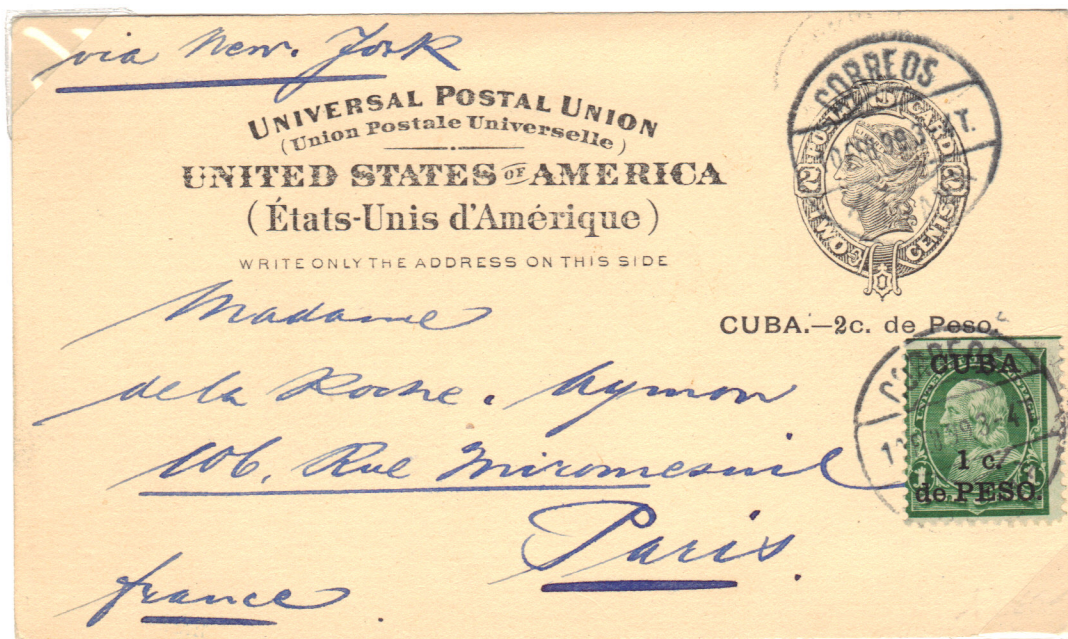
Stockell, Percy & Co. - Carriages.
Used within Havana, December 2, 1899.

Scan of message side.



Smith Premier - Typewriters.
Used within Havana, October 18, 1900

The 2 c. cards were released first, since the postal card rate between Cuba and the US was already 2 c. prior to the War. The postal card rate to other UPU countries, however, remained at 3 c. until it was reduced to 2 c. on April 1, 1899 (following Spain's Royal Decree of March 24, 1899 nullifying all previous postal agreements with Cuba).



Havana to Paris, France, **February 10, 1899.**
Added 1 c Franklin stamp paid the required 3 c. postage to Europe.
At this time, the old UPU rates from colonial times were still in effect.

Earliest Reported Postmark (ERP) on the 2 c. card, according to the UPSS.



Military Station No. 10, Havana, to Fremont, Nebraska,
March 2, 1899.



Matanzas to Nagasaki, Japan, December 19, 1900.
Addressed to hospital ship "Relief", forwarded to Manila, Philippines.



Havana to Stotternheim, Germany, January 28, 1903.
This card exhibits the "Large period after Peso" variety.

Like the overprinted 1 c. Jefferson cards, the overprinted 2 c. Liberty cards remained in circulation well after the start of the Cuban Republic, in May of 1902.