

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

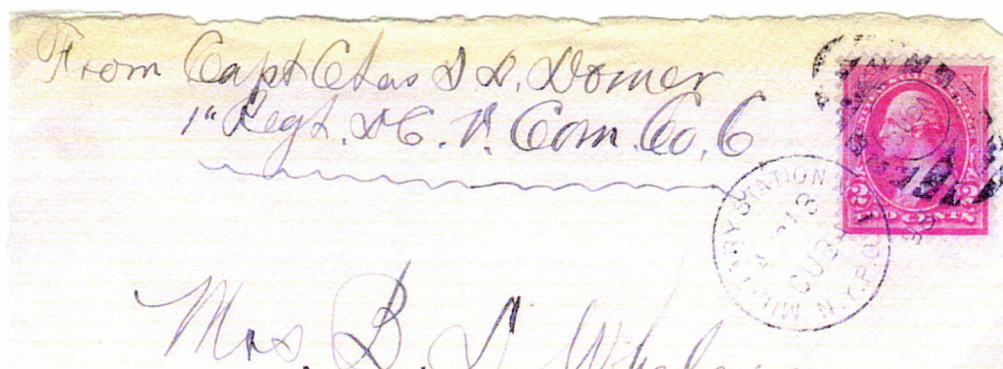
Station Number 1. Santiago

Santiago had a population of 43,090 and was "Administracion Principal" second only to Havana. The city surrendered on July 17 and was occupied a few days later. Military station No. 1 was officially moved to Santiago on July 21, although it is evident that some sort of postal facility operated here during the period in which the post office at Siboney was closed due to "yellow fever".

This Station used two types of duplex killers, two crude ovals, three registered handstamps, a receiving postmark, a postage due and three miscellaneous straightline marking in addition to the captured Spanish cancelers. This station was turned over to civilian authority on February 18, 1899.



July 11, 1898. Unpaid letter from Santiago to Brooklyn. Earliest usage of the first type of duplex ("CUBA" inside small circle) ten days before the official transfer of the Postal Station from Siboney. One other example recorded on this day. (It is also possible that this letter was mailed from Siboney although that station was officially closed from July 10 to July 20 due to a "fever" epidemic).



Aug. 13, 1898. Prepaid fragment from Santiago de Cuba. Latest recorded use of the first type of duplex from this city.

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Soldier Letter from Theodore Roosevelt who in 1901 became the 26th U.S. President.

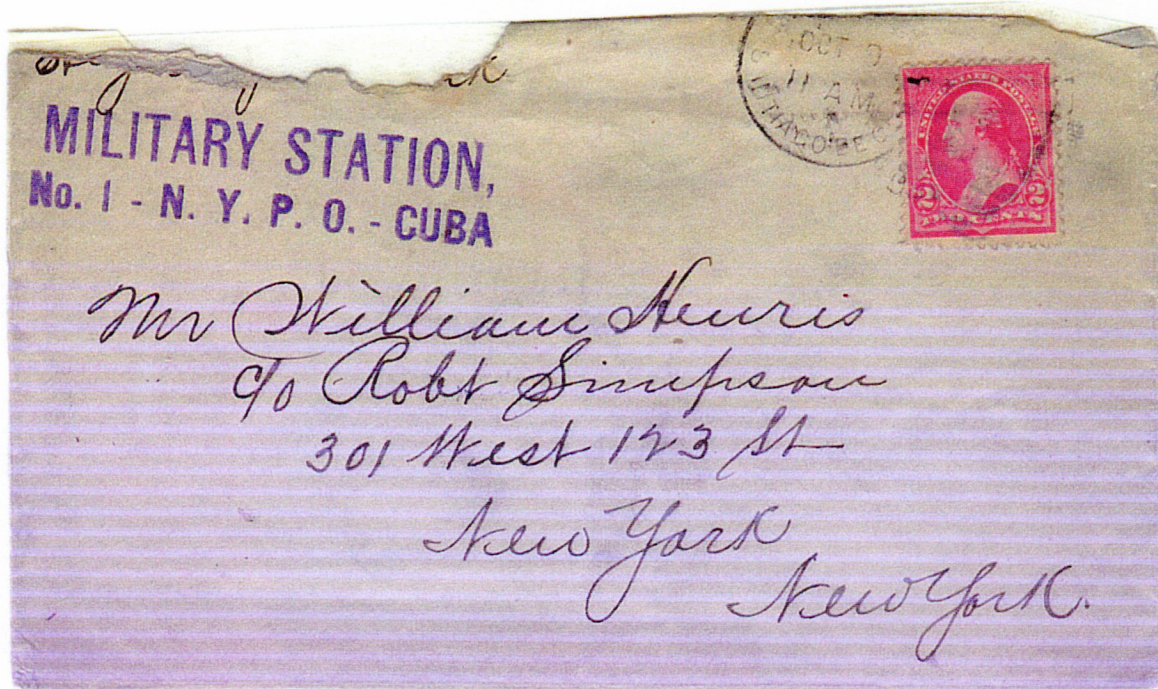


1898. Santiago de Cuba to New York City. One of the few surviving letters sent by Lieutenant Colonel Theodore Roosevelt of the First U. S. Volunteer Cavalry (Rough Riders) just five weeks after the famous battle of San Juan Hill. Two cents postage due were charged to the addressee.

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There are only three recorded covers with miscellaneous straightline markings from Santiago.



Oct. 9, 1898. Prepaid soldier's rate from Santiago to New York City. Only reported cover with the two-line "MILITARY STATION, No. 1 - N.Y.P.O. - CUBA". The stamp is obliterated with the second type of duplex canceller.

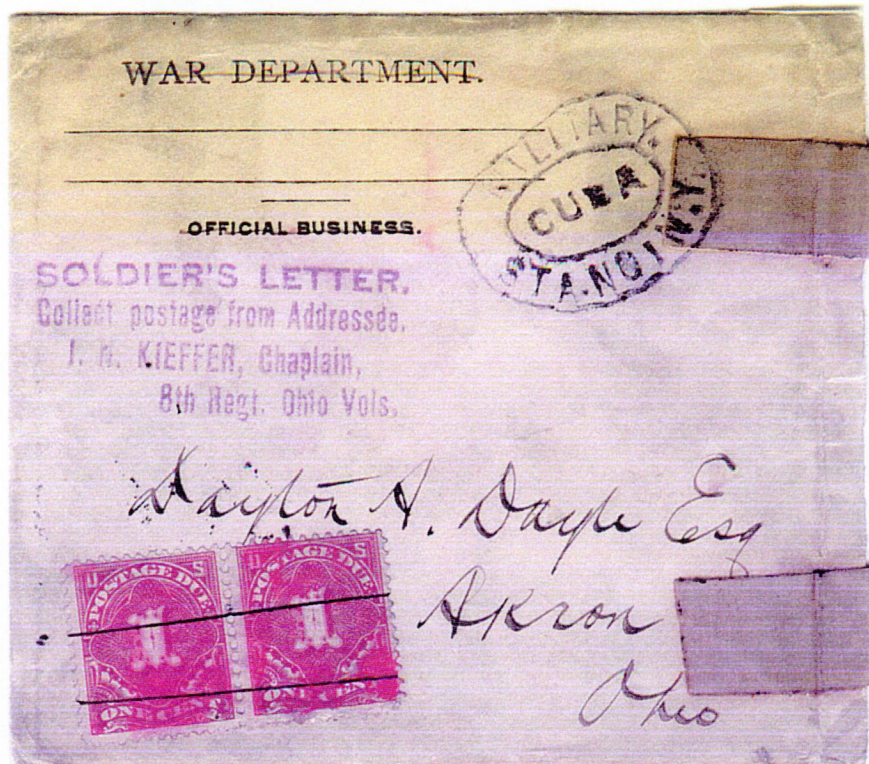


Sep. 5, 1898. Patriotic cover from New Orleans to Siboney, near Santiago de Cuba. The ten cent rate corresponds to eight cents registry fee plus two cents for letters to active US military personnel. There is one other example of the two-line "NOT IN CUBA./Military Station No. 1, Cuba.". This is the only reported example of the marking "SECOND NOTICE./(Military Station No. 1, Cuba.)".

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Of the three types of crude double oval cancellers, the first two were used in Santiago de Cuba. Type one, which was used also at Siboney, has the word "CUBA" in the center and "MILITARY./STA.NO 1 N.Y." between the two ovals. These handstamps were made of rubber and due to the tropical weather they often appear with gross deformities. Two examples of the first type are shown below.



Unpaid soldier's rate from Santiago to Akron, OH. It was received in Akron on July 30, making this is one of the earliest (if not the earliest) recorded covers from this station. The envelope was improvised by cutting in two an Official Business envelope from the War Department and sealing it with surgical tape. Note that the handstamp from the sender included the phrase "Collect postage from the Addressee.".



Registered letter from Santiago to New Orleans. The registry fee was 8 cents and the single letter soldier's rate was 2 cents. This is the earliest known registered cover from Cuba. The manuscript notation "# 55" may indicate that this was only the fifty-fifth registered letter from Santiago. Also, this is the only recorded

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Order No. 395 of September 19, 1898 authorized Military Station No. 1 at Santiago to dispatch registered mail via New York instead of via Tampa.



Oct. 1898. Santiago de Cuba to Havana. Civilian letter rate of five cents plus eight cents registry fee. This is the first type of straightline registry marking from Santiago. The stamps are canceled with the first type of crude oval.



March 4, 1898. Santiago de Cuba to Switzerland via New York. Second type of straightline registry marking and second type of crude oval which has the word "SANTIAGO" in the bottom. Santiago was the only military station that used to different types of oval cancelers.

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The third and last type of registry marking used in this station is only recorded after it passed under civilian control. This style of boxed registry handstamp was also used in stations 11 and 13. The civilian first class rate to Spain from Santiago de Cuba appears to have been one cent higher (six cents) than the rate to other foreign countries. The registry fee was the same (8 cents).

The first cover, a mourning envelope, is a single weight civilian letter overpaid by one cent ($7+8=15$). The second cover is double weight ($6 \times 6 = 12 + 8 = 20$). In both cases the stamps are obliterated by the second crude oval.



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Civilian mail from the Province of Santiago was authorized by postal order No. 296 of July 21, 1898.



Aug. 31, 1898. Santiago to Havana. Civilian rate on domestic first class letters was 5 cent per 1/2 Oz. The oval "LISTA" was the equivalent to "ADVERTISED". Second type of duplex canceller from Santiago.



Jan. 23. 1899. Santiago to Madrid Spain via New York Double weight letter at the old Spanish period rate of

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The two types of straightline handstamps used at Santiago to indicate postage due are shown below.

Right:

New York City to Santiago de Cuba. Part of a double weight envelope underpaid by five cents. The UPU penalty of double the deficit was assessed in Santiago, and the addressee was charged ten cents postage due. This first type of marking, used in September 1898, leaves a space where the amount to be collected was written in.

Below:

New York City to Santiago de Cuba. Double weight envelope underpaid by five cents. This second type of handstamp, used in January 1899, incorporates the rate and the location of the station.



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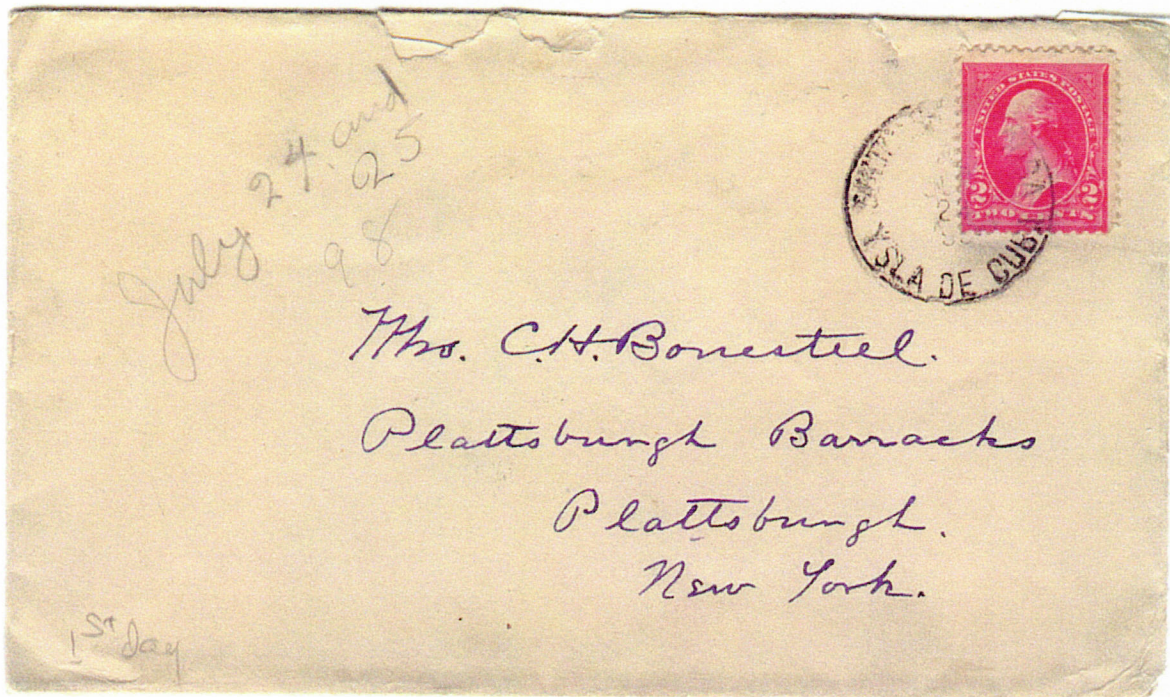
TOP: Nov. 5, 1898. Santiago to Florida. US entire prepaying soldier's rate. On the back there is the earliest recorded example of the Receiving marking from this station (Nov. 5, 1898). Type one crude oval.

BOTTOM: Later example of the receiving handstamp.

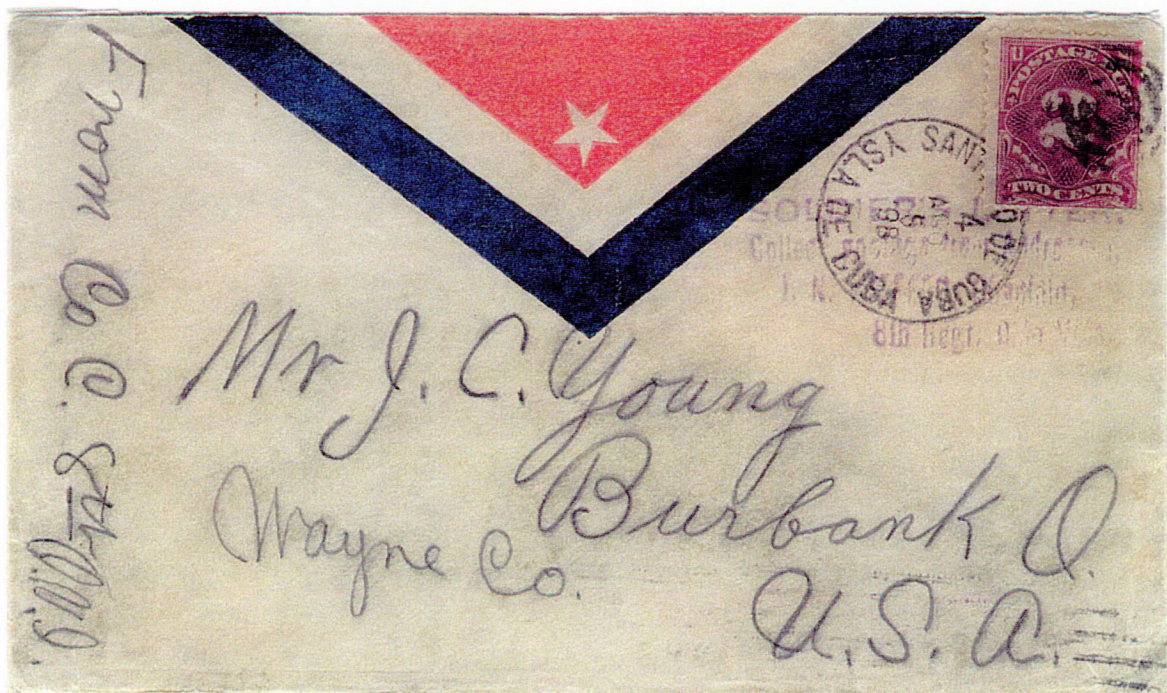
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Station Number 1. Santiago

Captured Spanish cancellers from Santiago were used for a brief period until the new American handstamps arrived at the Military Station. A few other Stations did the same. This style of marking was first introduced by the Spanish in Cuba in 1888.



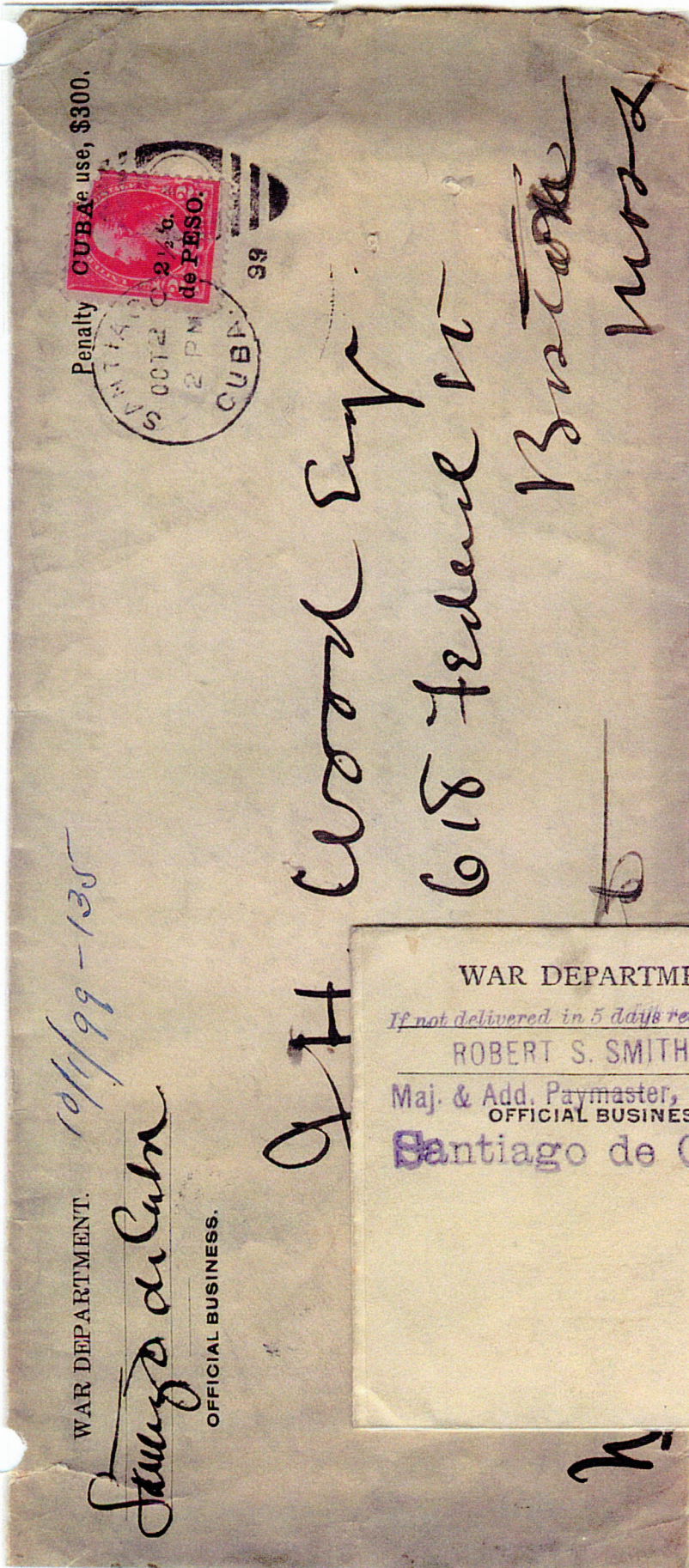
July 23, 1898. Santiago to Plattsburg, NY. Prepaid soldier's rate. This is the earliest example of the Spanish killer from Santiago on US stamps used only a few days after the surrender of the city.



Aug. 4, 1898. Unpaid patriotic cover from Santiago to Ohio. The number "4" above the month inside the canceller refers to postal station number four (Santiago). There were over three hundred post offices in Cuba by the end of Spanish domination.

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Santiago. Official Mail Envelopes



Postal order of January 3, 1899 established that all matter entitled to be carried "free" in the US mails was also to be carried free in the Cuban mails. Below there are two official mail envelopes used after the transfer of the postal station to civilian control.

LEFT: Oct. 2, 1899. Privately used War Department envelope from Santiago to Boston.

BELOW: Dec. 30, 1899. War Department envelope from Santiago to Guantanamo.

10/1/99-135

WAR DEPARTMENT.

Santiago de Cuba

OFFICIAL BUSINESS.

WAR DEPARTMENT.

If not delivered in 5 days return to

ROBERT S. SMITH,

Maj. & Add. Paymaster, U.S.V.
OFFICIAL BUSINESS.

Santiago de Cuba.

Penalty for private use, \$300.



Capt. Partello

Guantanamo

Cuba

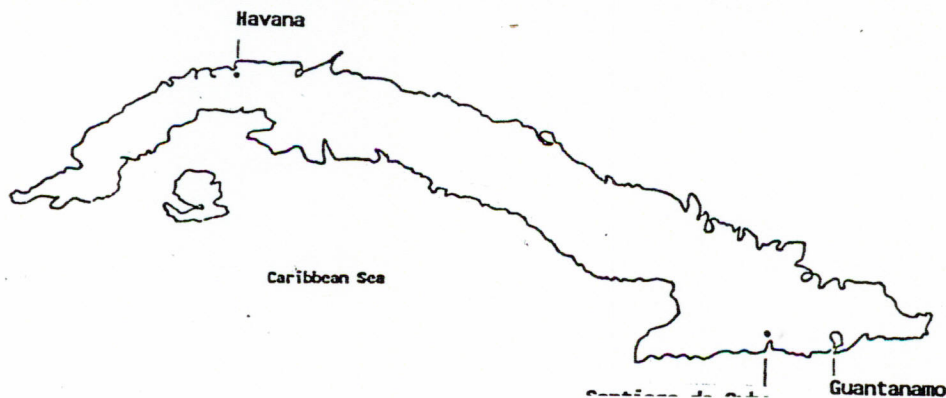
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Station Number 3. Guantanamo

This city had a population of 7,137 and a first class post office. US military forces arrived on August 21, 1898 and the military post office officially opened on December 1st. On February 22, 1899 it reverted to civilian administration. There were two duplex handstamps and a crude oval canceller used in this station.



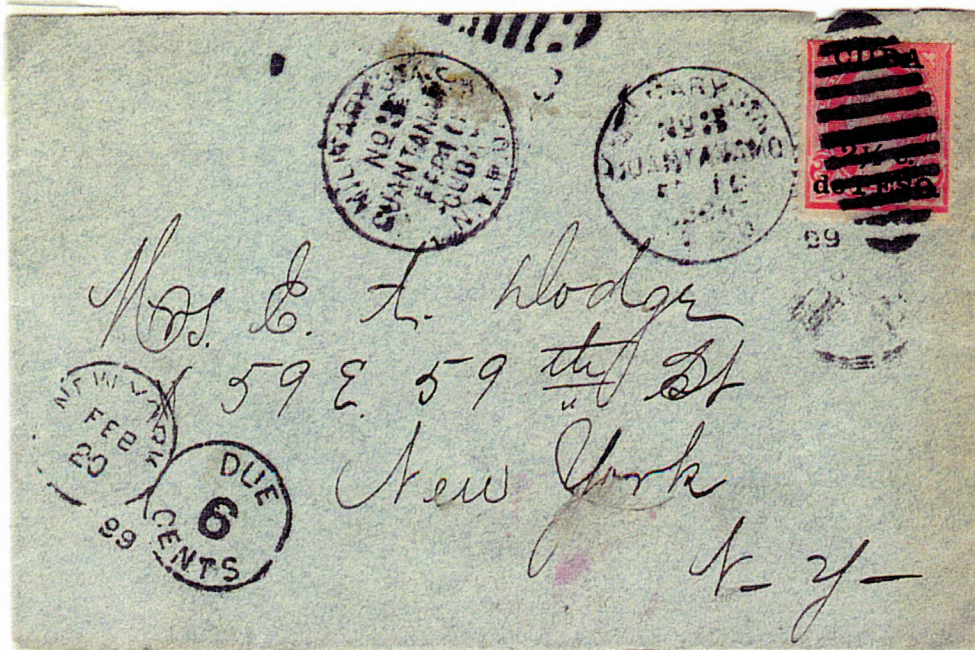
Dec. 11, 1898. Guantanamo to New York. Civilian rate of five cents per 1/2 Oz. This is the first type of duplex handstamp (large circle) used in this station which is recorded from December 8, 1898 to July 28, 1899. This style of duplex marking was also used in stations 5, 6, and 7.



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This style of duplex canceller was also used in stations 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, and 13.



Feb. 10, 1898. Guantanamo to New York. Prepaid military personnel rate but since it was not properly endorsed, six cents postage due were charged at New York (double the three cent deficiency). This is the second type of duplex handstamp (small circle) from this city which is recorded from January 7, 1898 to June 28, 1899.



Feb. 18, 1898. Guantanamo to New York via Santiago de Cuba. Civilian rate. Probably carried on the steamer "Thomas Brooks" which made semi-weekly trips between Santiago and Guantanamo.

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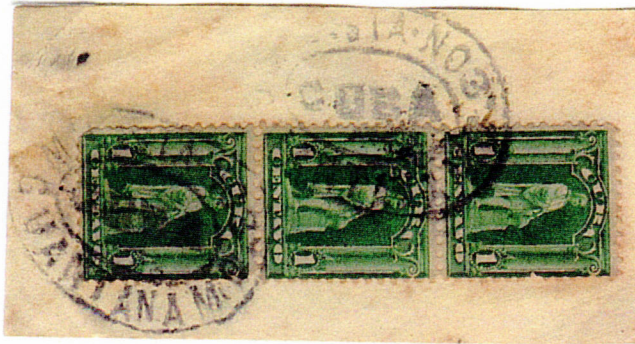
Station Number 3. Guantanamo



Apr. 5, 1899. Guantanamo to Bordeaux via Havana and New York. Very unusual printed matter rate to foreign countries. The stamp was obliterated by the second type of duplex canceller used after the station had officially been transferred to civilian control.

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Station Number 3. Guantanamo



June 1900. Guantanamo to New York via Havana. Registered double weight military rate (2 cents x 2 = 4 + 8 cents registry fee = 12 cents). The letter is properly endorsed by a soldier on the reverse.

These are the only two reported usages of the crude oval handstamp which evidently was used very late since the definitive stamp issues for Cuba were only available after September 1, 1899.

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Station Number 4. Baracoa

This town had a second class post office and a population of 4,937. US troops first landed on September 5, 1898. The military postal station opened on October 28, 1898 and passed to civilian control on February 27, 1899.

Two duplex cancellers, a receiving handstamp, and a straightline marking were used in this station. There are about half a dozen covers reported from Baracoa. The earliest is dated on December 21, 1898 and the latest on July 7, 1899.



April 1, 1899. Baracoa to Exeter, New Hampshire. Civilian rate of five cents per 1/2 Oz. Second type of duplex canceller (small circle) from this town.



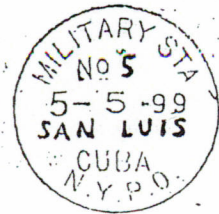
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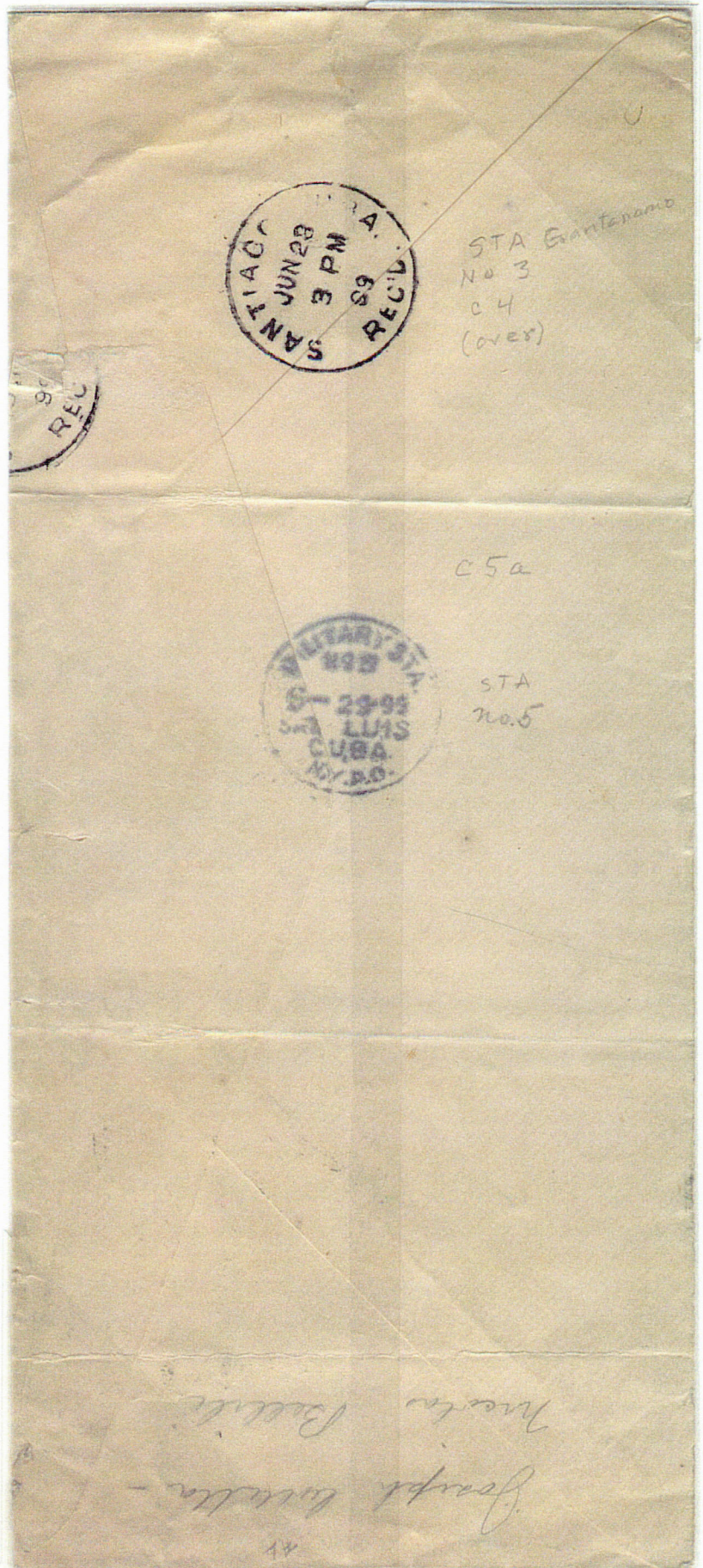
Latest recorded usage.

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Station Number 5. San Luis

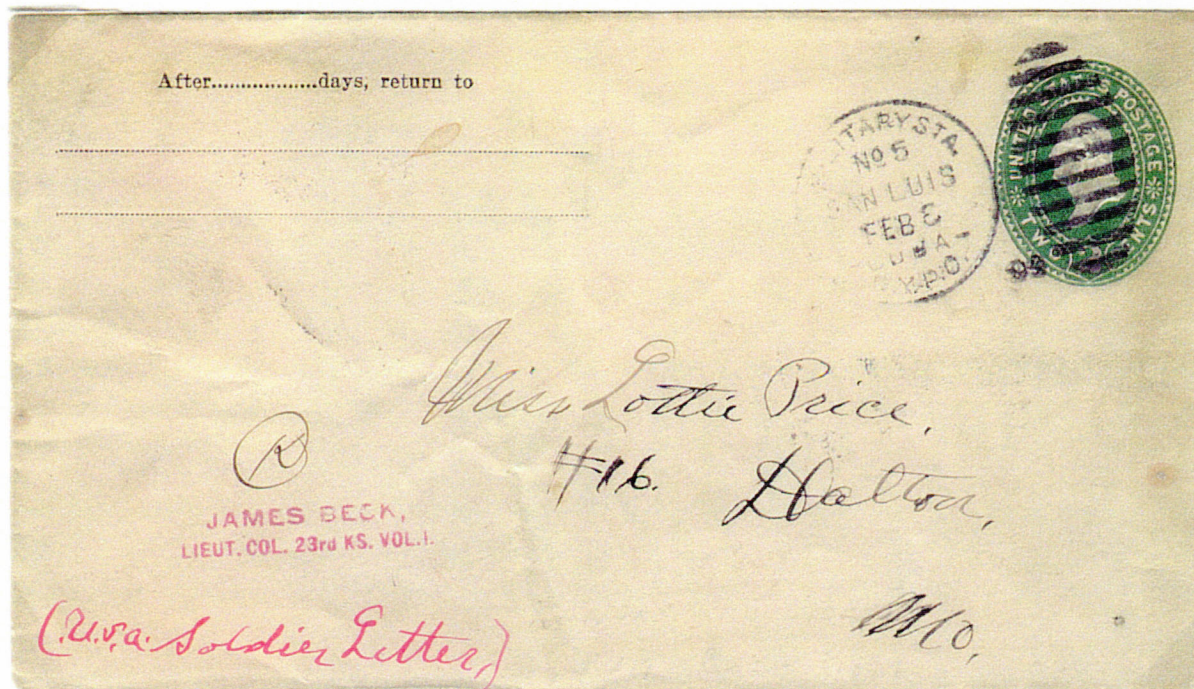


June 29, 1899. War Department official envelope from Guantanamo to San Luis. This is the only recorded example of the receiving marking. This style of handstamp was also used in stations 6, 8, 11, and 13; generally as a receiving marking.

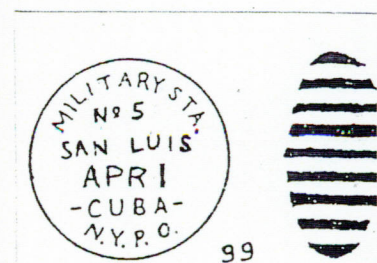
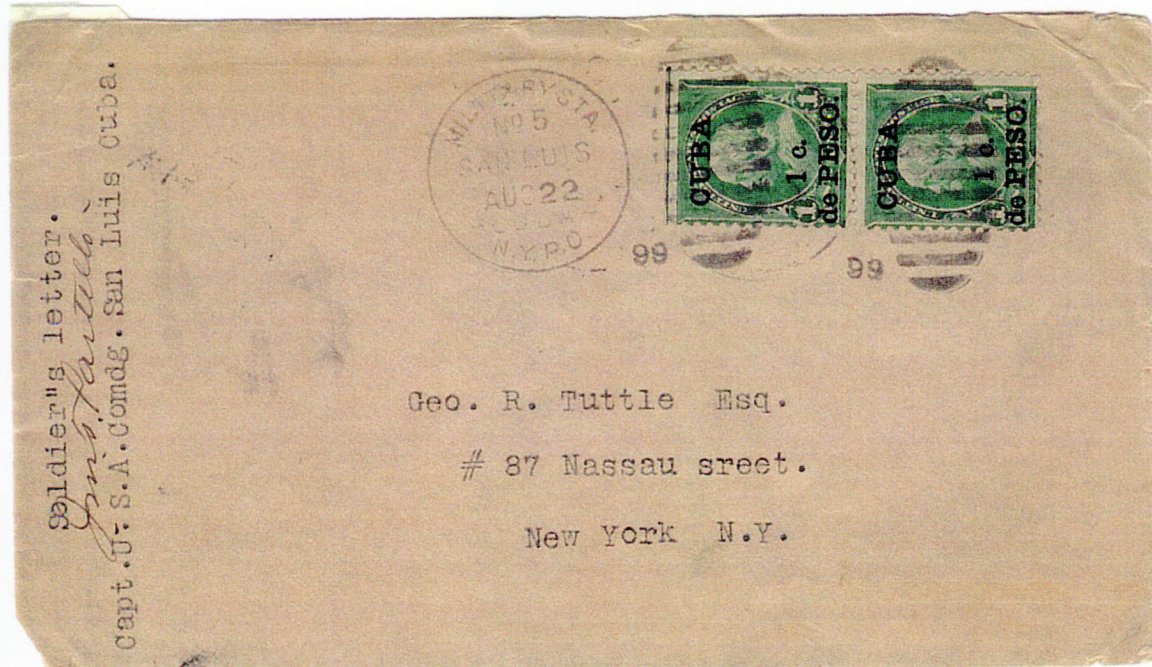


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Station Number 5. San Luis



Feb. 8, 1899. San Luis to Dalton, MO. Soldier's rate. This is the second type of duplex canceler (small circle) used in this town.



Aug. 22, 1899. San Luis to New York. Prepaid soldier's rate of 2 cents per ounce.

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Station Number 5. San Luis

This town had a population of 5,059 and a fourth class post office. US troops arrived on August 16, 1898. The military postal station officially opened on December 1, 1898 and was transferred to civilian authorities on February 24, 1899. Two duplex cancelers, a receiving handstamp, and a straightline marking were used in this station. There are less than ten covers reported from San Luis.



Dec. 1898. Post office department official money order business envelope from San Luis to Chicago. These are the only known examples of the first type of duplex canceler (large circle) and purple straightline marking from this town. This is also the earliest cover from this station.

