

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

This is a study of the US markings and postal history generated during the Spanish-Cuban American War period and the years that followed until the independence of Cuba in 1902. The main areas covered are: a) interrupted mails to Cuba and Spain; b) soldier's mail from training camps in the US; c) mail from US military personnel during the invasion and occupation of the island; d) the markings and postal history of military postal stations; e) the provisional stamp issues of Puerto Principe on cover; f) mail from the military camps established after the closing of the military stations; g) official mail and postal documents; and h) second US military occupation of Cuba.

Most of the exhibit is devoted to the military stations that were created by order of President McKinley on May 3, 1898. All the stations were at some point transferred to civilian control but the markings from the "military" period continued to be used, often for many months or years. Some of the military station postmarks are only known after they were officially under civilian control and they are included in this exhibit. As P.M.G. Emory Smith defined it in December 30, 1898 : "The postal system of Cuba, while for convenience practically administered under the direction of the Post Office Department, is to be maintained by virtue of military authority and as part of the military government established by the US during the period of control."

A total of 39 stations were gradually created as they were needed. No items have been recorded from stations 2, 9, 14, 25, 36, and 39. Markings from stations 2, 14, 25, and 39 have been reported by Dr. Antonio Barreras, a prominent student of Cuban philately in an article published in 1902, but no examples have been seen since his original report. The population figures were obtained from the U.S. census of 1899. The post office class refers to the Spanish colonial period.

This exhibit is divided as follows:

- ◆ The Catalyst for War
- ◆ Suspended Mails
- ◆ Training Camps in the USA
- ◆ Embarkation of Troops
- ◆ Sailor's and Soldier's Mail
- ◆ Military Stations During the War
- ◆ Military Stations After the War
- ◆ Puerto Principe Provisional Stamp Issues on Cover
- ◆ U.S. Military Camps in Cuba
- ◆ Military Hospitals in Cuba
- ◆ Military Camp in USA
- ◆ Postal Department Official Mail and Documents
- ◆ Second US military occupation of Cuba

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

The Catalyst for War

Following riots and rumors of a pro-Spanish and anti-American conspiracy in the Cuban capital, the U.S.S. Maine arrived at Havana on January 25, 1898 on a "friendly visit". It was destroyed by an explosion, under unclear circumstances, on the night of February 15 with the loss of 268 American lives.

A US Naval Court of Inquiry concluded that the explosion was due to a submerged mine and prowar sentiment grew.

Captain Charles Dwight Sigsbee commanded the late battleship and wrote this note:

" U.S.S. Texas,
Havana, Cuba.
February 6th, 1899.

My dear Sir:-

In response to
your inquiry you are
informed that the Maine
was at the berth, when she
[was] destroyed, continuously
from her arrival at Havana,
- from January 25th, 1898.
She was destroyed on Feb.
15th 1898. Hastily.

Very respectfully

Charles D. Sigsbee
Captain, US Navy "

Wreck of the U.S.S. Maine.

U. S. S. Texas,
Havana, Cuba,
February 6th, 1899.

My dear Sir:-

In response to
your inquiry you are
informed that the Maine
was at the berth, when
she destroyed continuously
from her arrival at Havana,
- from January 25th, 1898.
She was destroyed on Feb.
15th 1898. Hastily.
Very respectfully

Charles D. Sigsbee,
Captain, U.S. Navy.



U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Suspended Mails

Order number 161 of April 26, 1898 by Postmaster General Charles E. Smith suspended mails between the US and Spain and its Colonies. However, letters were being held since at least one week earlier.

The US naval blockade of Cuban ports started on April 22 and war was officially declared on the 25th.

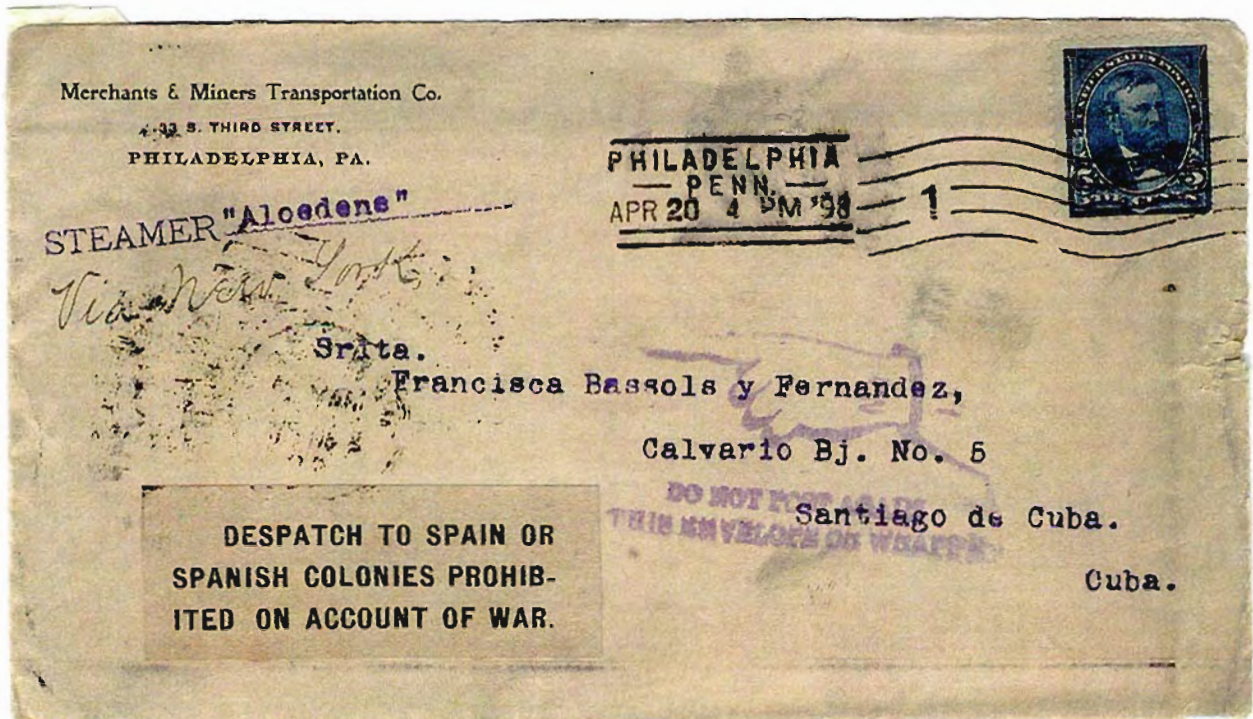


July 6, 1898. Coban, Guatemala to Madrid, Spain via New Orleans (July 23). There is one other recorded example of the marking "Unmailable during/Hostilities with Spain." from New Orleans. Most of the mails from the Caribbean, Central and South America during this period went through New Orleans.

The vast majority of mail to Cuba was dispatched from New York, which was the only other US city that used distinctive handstamps or labels on interrupted mail during the war.

Suspended Mails

New York used two types of labels on suspended mail. The first one has the letter "D" of "DESPATCH" above the "N" of "SPANISH". Two examples of the early type of label on first class mail to Cuba are shown below. Some letters were delivered after the war while those with return address were sent back to the sender.



U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

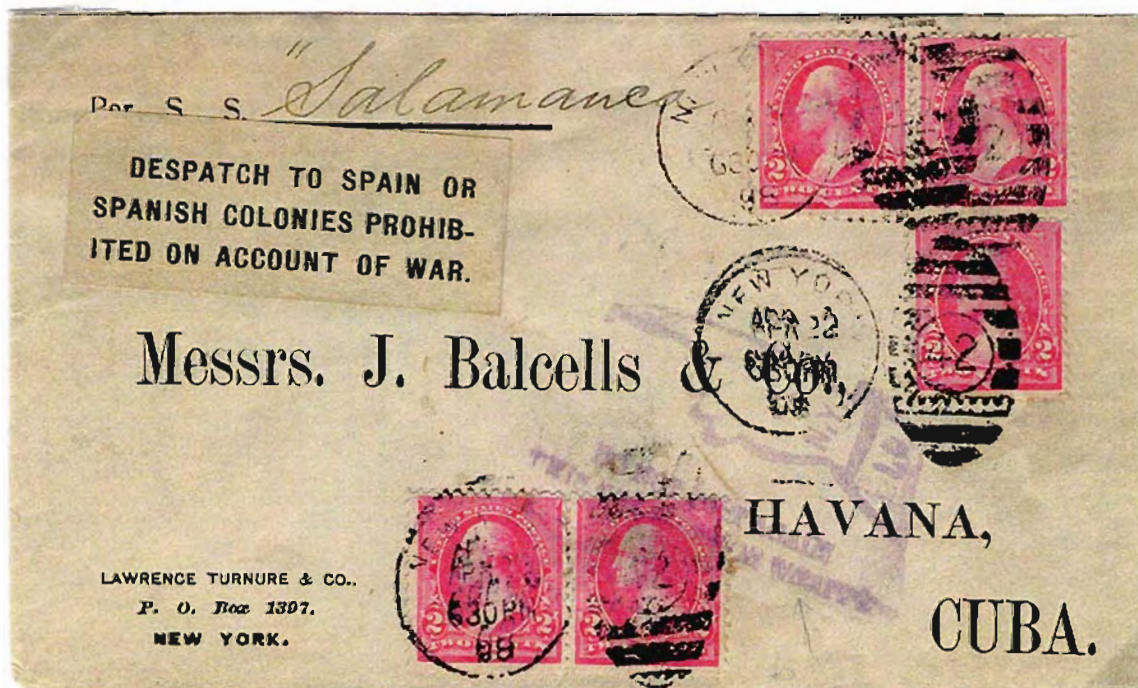
Suspended Mails

The two types of labels used at New York City. The first one on a cover held for insufficient postage. The second one, with the letter "D" of "DESPATCH" above the "A" of "SPANISH", on a first class letter that was returned to the sender.



↓
DESP
SPANISH
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SPANISH
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U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Suspended Mails

During May of 1898 the post office at New York City started using handstamps instead of labels.



April 16, 1898. New York to Havana. Only recorded example of the first type of handstamp dated May 6. This cover was previously held for insufficient postage.



May 28, 1898. New York to Havana. Last type of handstamp used on suspended mail at New York. It incorporates the words "RETURN TO SENDER." and has no date.

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

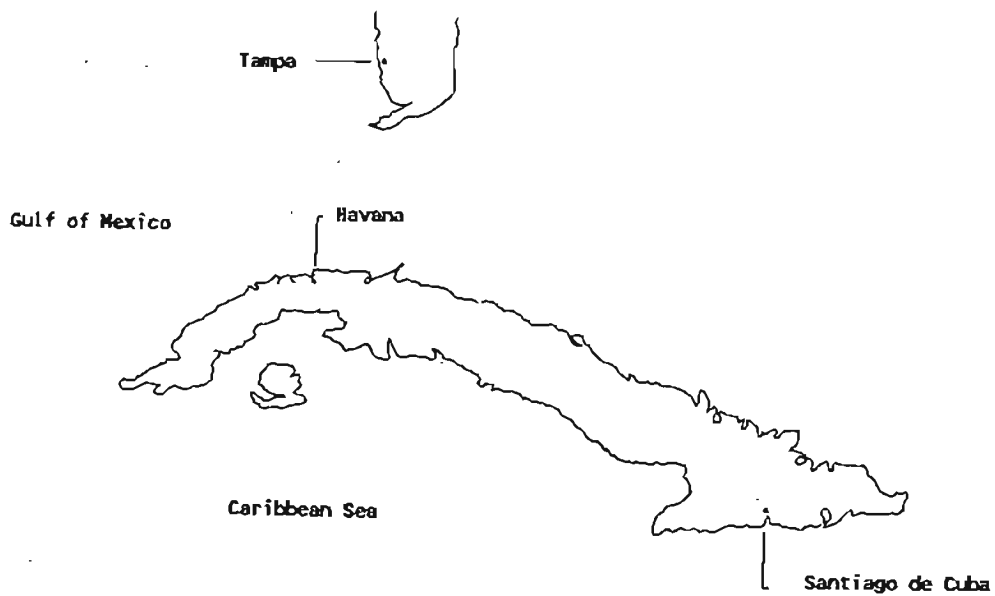
Embarkation of Troops

The US officially declared war on Spain on April 25, 1898 (but made it retroactive to the 21st). On April 22 the North Atlantic Squadron, commanded by Admiral Sampson, was assembled off Key West and steamed towards Cuba to blockade the major ports.

Tampa was the port of embarkation of US troops.



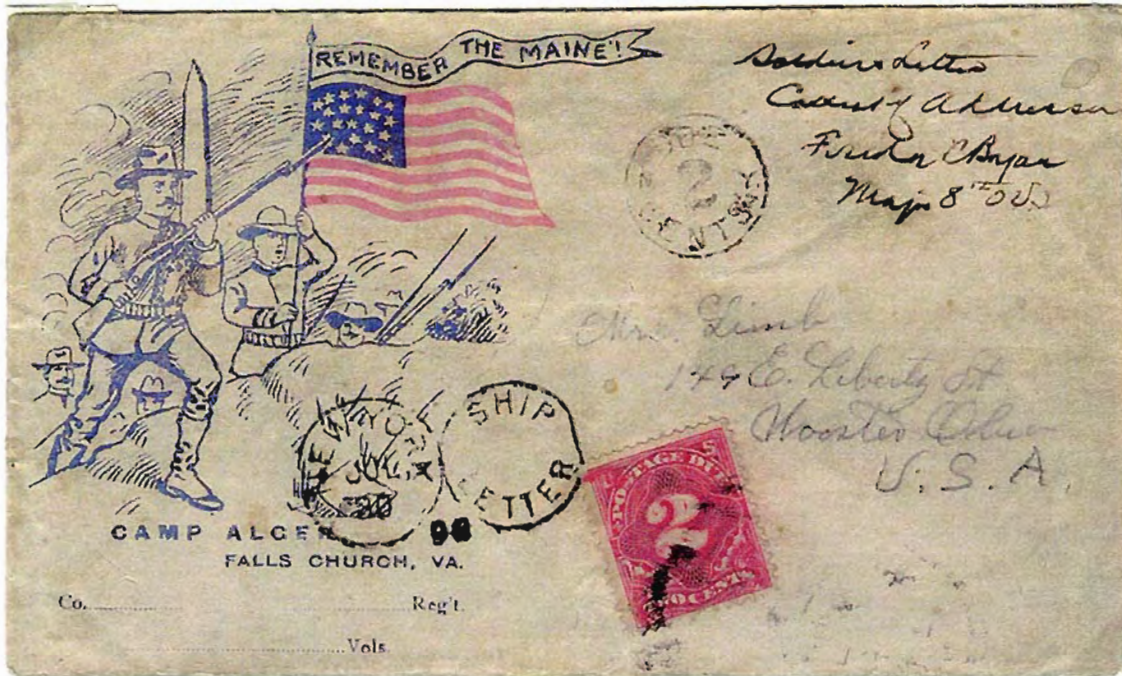
July 18, 1898. Tampa, Florida to Norwalk, OH. Soldier's patriotic cover mailed from "SUB STA. 4" (reportedly an embarkation canceller). The slogan "Remember the Maine" became the battle cry for US troops.



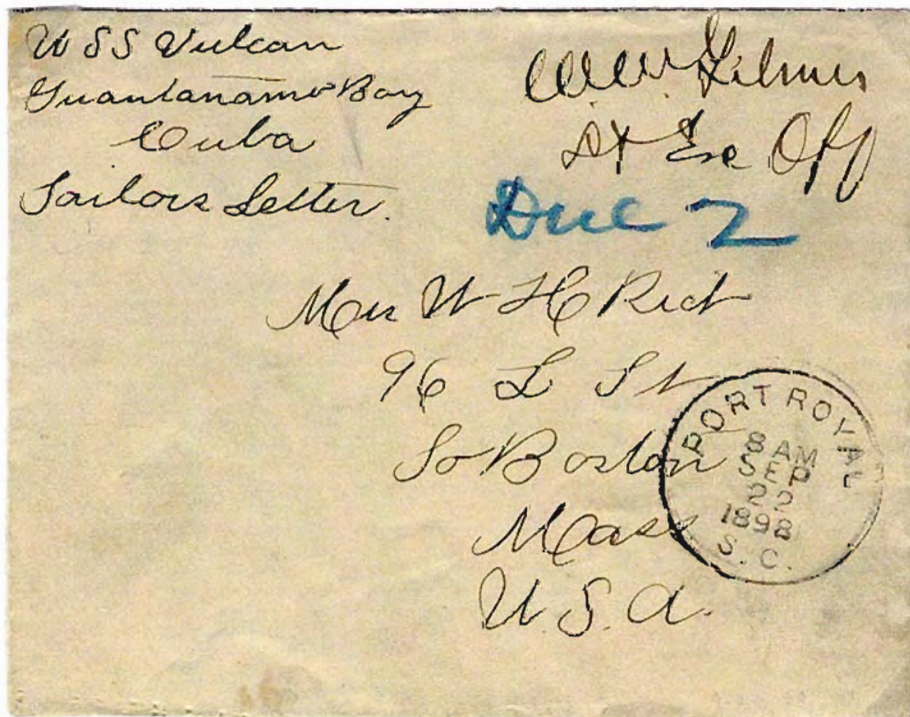
U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Early Soldier's and Sailor's Mail

Most of the mail from US military personnel during the naval blockade of the major Cuban ports and early landing in the southeastern coast was sent collect. The Act of March 3, 1879 allowed mail from active US servicemen to be paid on delivery.



Jul. 1898. Soldier's patriotic envelope to Wooster, OH. Very early mail sent from Daiquiri or Siboney and received at New York on July 30.



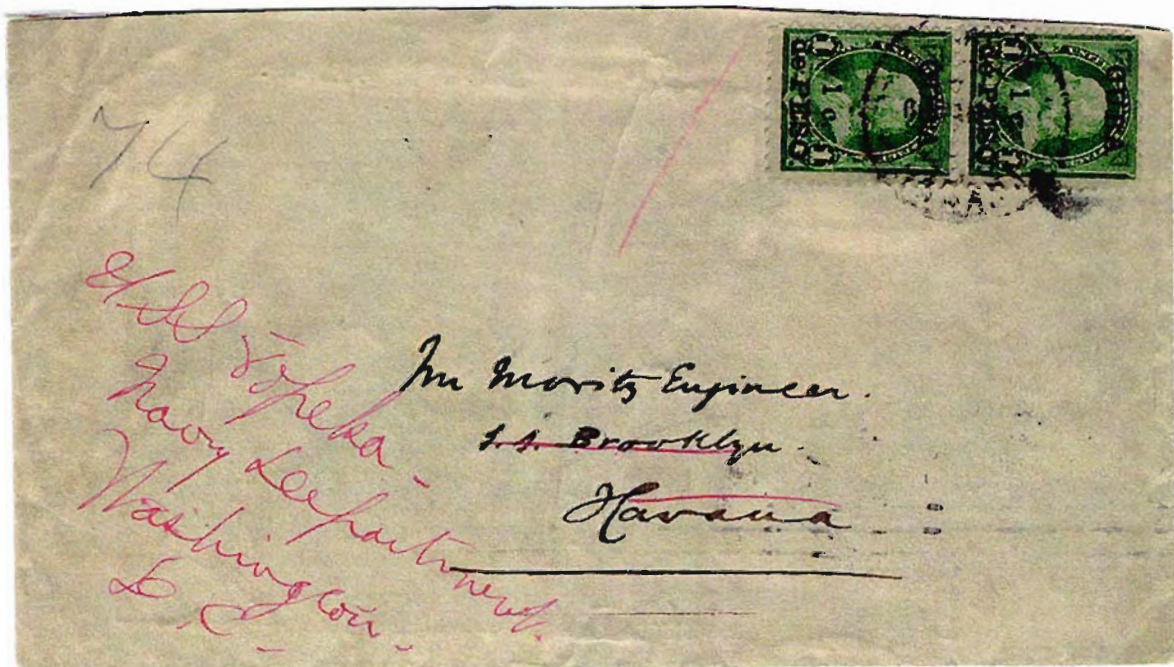
Sep. 1898. Sailor's letter to Boston from the U.S.S. Vulcan guarding Guantanamo Bay, the site of the first landing of US troops in Cuba on June 10.

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Early Sailor's Mail



Oct. 1898. Letter from the U.S.S. Resolute to Cranford, NJ. It was probably carried on the U.S.S. Nashville into Key West.



Jan. 1899. Letter to an engineer aboard the U.S.S. Brooklyn at Havana. By the time it arrived to Cuba (Jan. 24) the addressee had been transferred to the U.S.S. Topeka at Washington, DC.

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

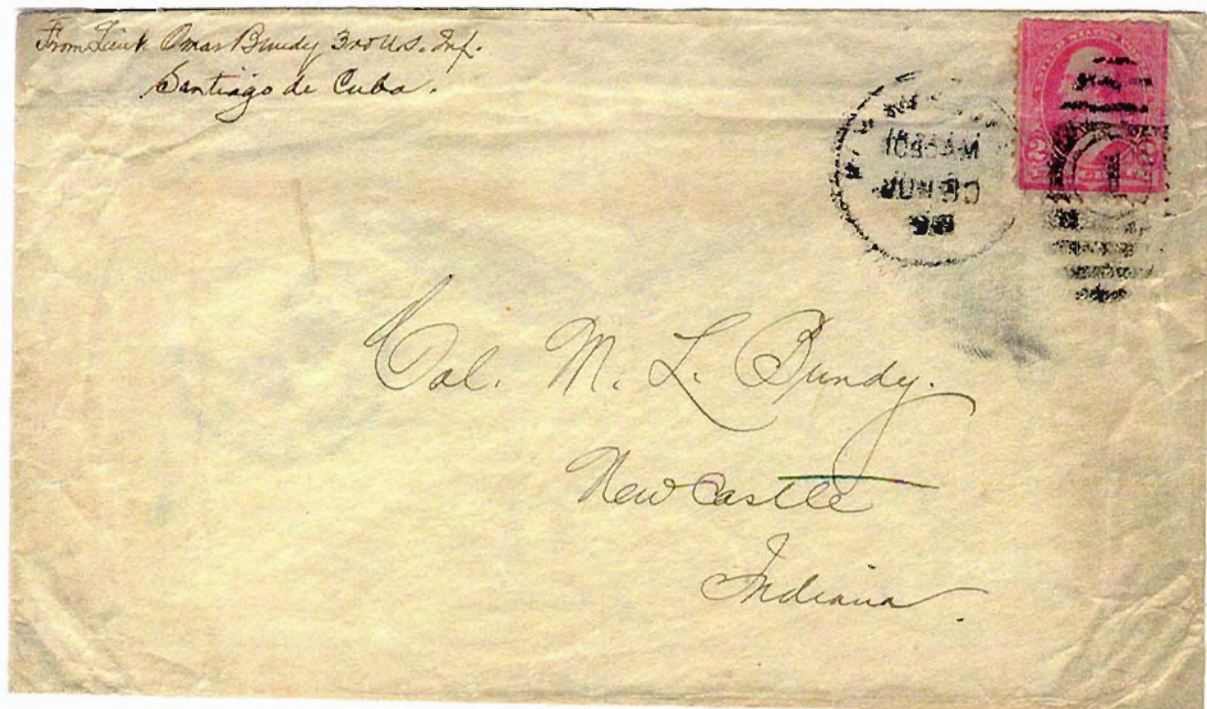
First Mail from Cuba

Lieutenant Omar Bundy, the sender of this letter, led one of the two initial assaults at Daiquiri on June 24 and later became a Brigadier General in the First World War. The addressee, his father, was a Colonel during the US Civil War.

This cover was sent on the first northbound mail that was dispatched on the U.S.S. Dolphin after calling at Daiquiri on June 26, 1898. It arrived at Key West on June 30.

It is possible that this letter was written and mailed before the official opening of the first military post office at Daiquiri since it bears no postal markings from the station and most soldiers had provided themselves with postage stamps before leaving Tampa, in accordance to instructions from the high command. Order number 219 of June 7, 1898 fixed domestic rates and conditions for "mail matter for or from persons connected with the US forces at and near the islands of Cuba and Puerto Rico". First class letter rate was two cents per ounce.

Civilian mails could neither be sent to nor dispatched from the island.

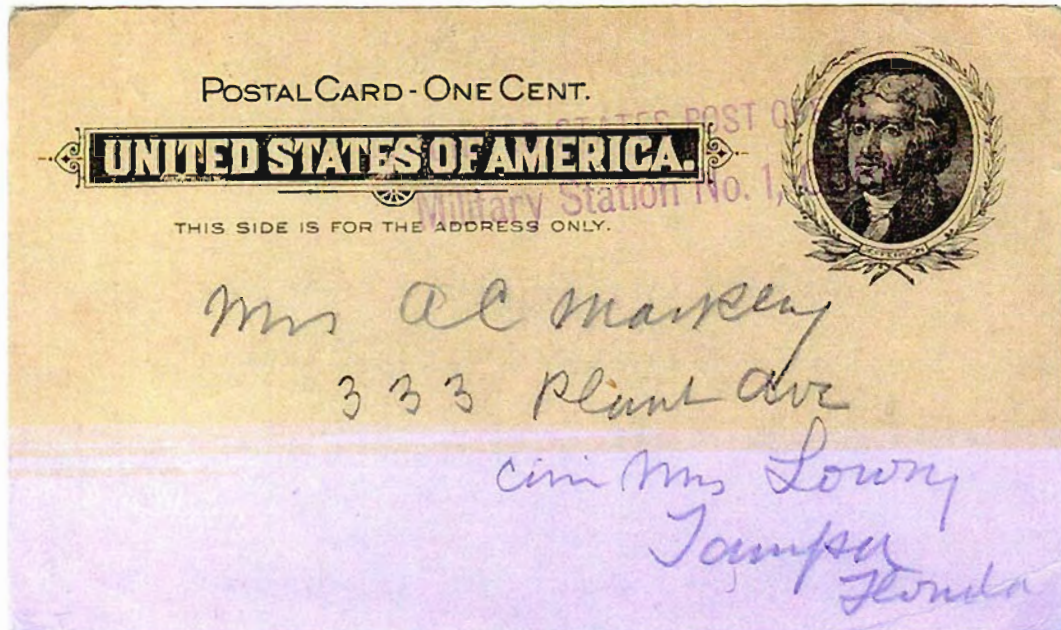


U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 1. Daiquiri

One day after the first troops landed in this town, "United States Post Office, Military Station No. 1" opened for business on June 23, 1898, although stamps were not available for sale until June 25 when the last US soldiers from the first transports went ashore.

The post office was set up in a small farmhouse and the Postmaster was Mr. Louis Kempner, from the New York Postal Service, who was also Assistant Postal Agent for Cuba.



June 27, 1898. Mailed from the field to Tampa, Florida. This is the earliest known usage of this two-line handstamp or of any other military station marking during the Spanish American War. It arrived to Tampa on June 30. Domestic postal card rate of one cent.

The contents of the postcard:

" 24 Inf 3d Brig 1st Div. 5th Corps

Near Santiago Cuba June 27/98

Dear Wife

I am well and all
right - but we live like privates
left (?) my valise on the ship -
write to you by dim moonlight
live on rations but am in fine
health. dont know any thing
but will write when I get an envelope

Alfred "

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 1. Daiquiri

This town was previously known as Baiquiri and had a population of 1,380 and a fourth class post office. The first US post office operated here for 13 days until it was transferred to Siboney on July 6, 1898.

A second military postal station, Number 2, officially opened at Daiquiri on December 1, 1898 and was transferred to civilian control on February 27, 1899. No items have been recorded from Military Station No. 2, but Barreras reported a straightline handwriting handstamp.

Postal Money Order Payable in the United States only

Military Station No. 1, New York, N. Y.
Cuba, No. 6

Pay to the order of *Daiquiri, Cuba*
June 27 1898

Marie Genovar
THE PAYEE NAMED IN MY ADVICE OF SAME NUMBER AND DATE

One Dollars *—* Cents
THE SUM INDICATED BY FIGURES IN THE MARGIN HEREOF AND MY ADVICE

To the Postmaster at
St Augustine Fla

L. Van Cott
POSTMASTER
J. Kempner

RECEIVED PAYMENT

SEE SPACE ON THE BACK FOR ENDORSEMENT

DATED STAMP: JUN 27 1898 M.Q.B. OF ISSUING OFFICE

DATED STAMP: OF PAYING OFFICE

DOLLARS: 13 (vertical column on left)

CENTS: 13 (vertical column on left)

Postal Money Order issued at Daiquiri on June 27, 1898. This is the only item positively identifying military station number 1 with Daiquiri and the only recorded example of the circular "Money Order Bureau" handstamp.

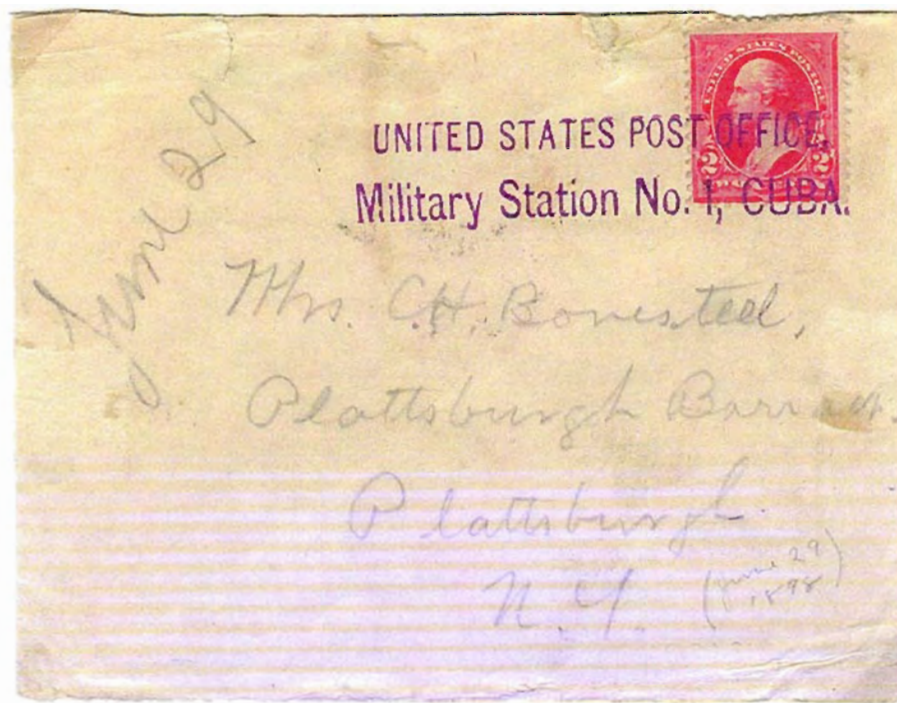
This money order was signed by Postmaster Louis Kempner, was never cashed and it is the sixth money order sold in Cuba.

Markings of the first 13 military stations generally made reference to the Post Office at New York which was in charge of administrating the entire Cuban postal system.

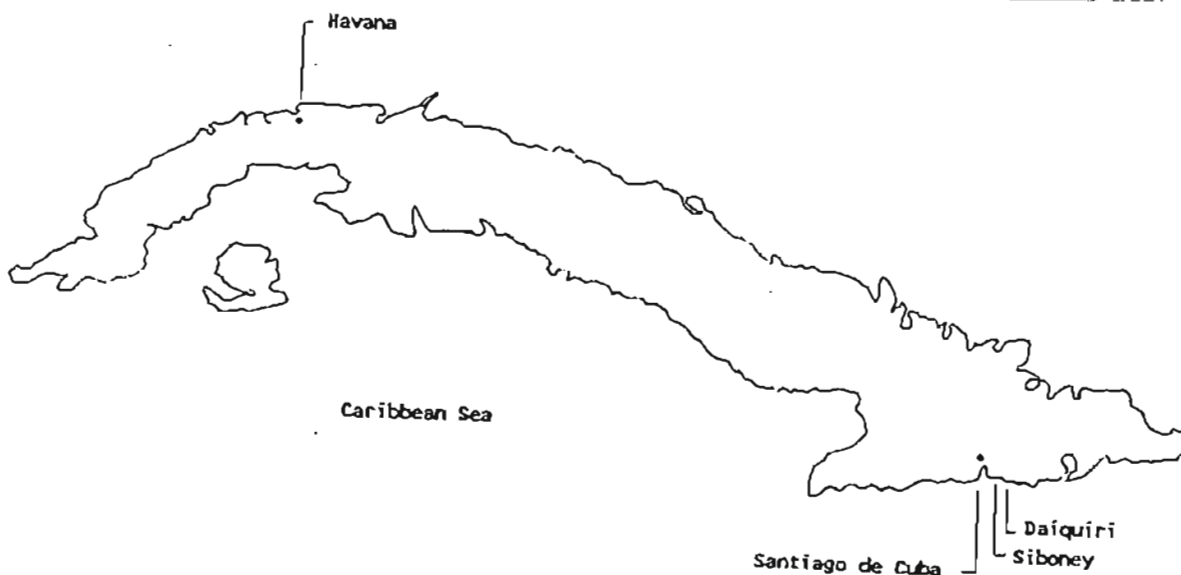
U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 1. Daiquiri

There are very few "War Covers" from Cuba during the 26 day campaign that ended with the occupation of Santiago on July 17.



June 29, 1898. Daiquiri to Plattsburg, NY. There are two other covers recorded on this early date. Prepayment of letters during the first few weeks following the landing of troops is very unusual.



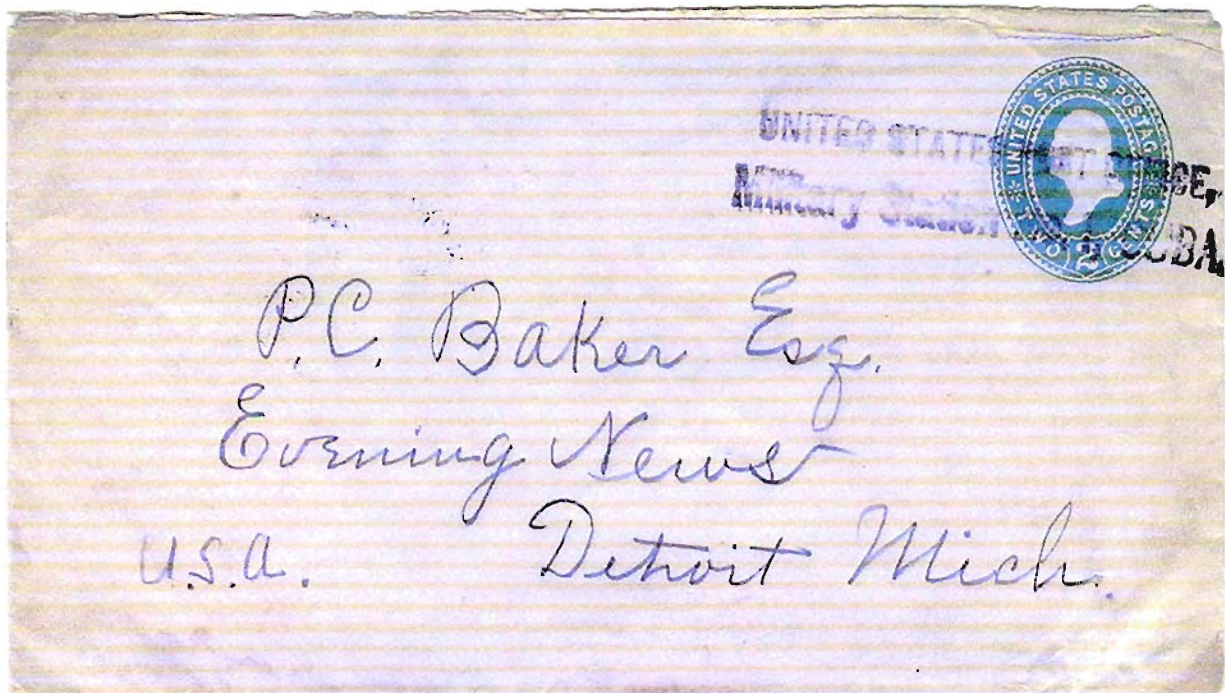
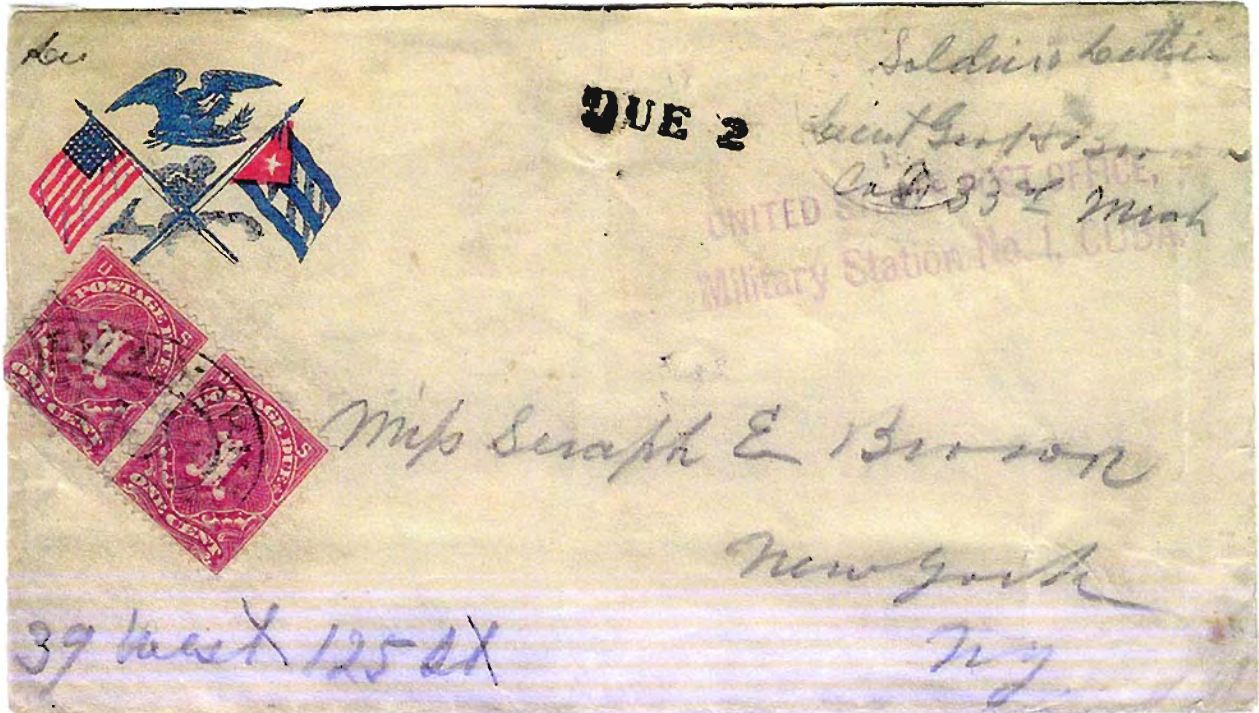
U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 1. Siboney

Siboney was a very small town that had no postal facilities during the Spanish administration. As the troops moved towards Santiago, the first military postal station was moved four miles west to Siboney which was closer to Cuba's second largest city. It operated from July 6 to about July 21 when it was transferred to the outskirts of Santiago.

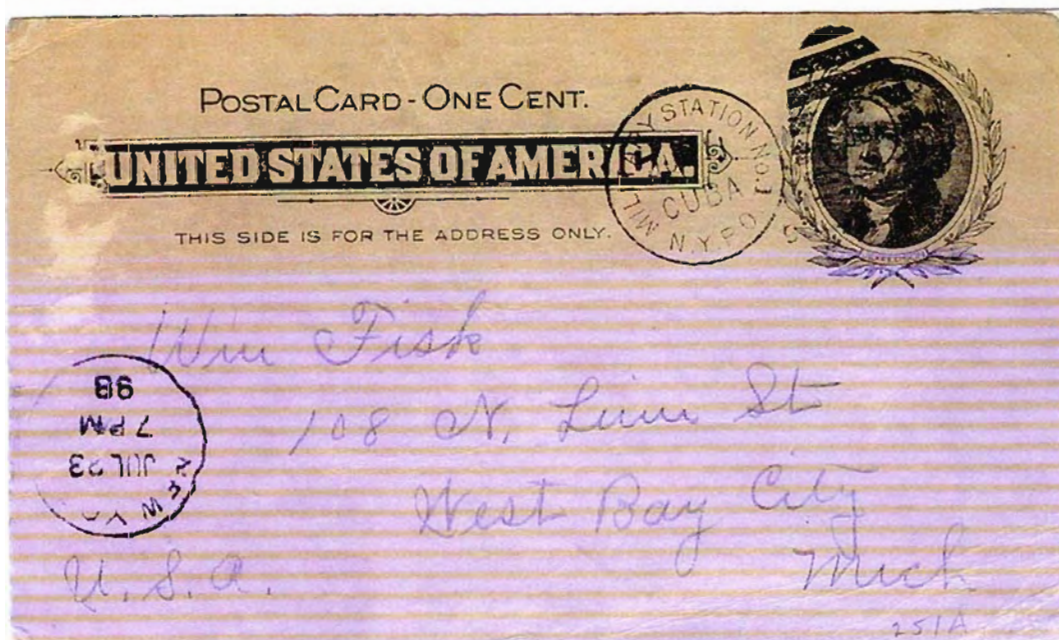
Due to a "yellow fever" epidemic which forced the closing of this station, no mail was handled here from July 10 to July 20. During the second week of July, all the buildings in the village had to be burnt and the station moved to a near by location, probably an improvised "fever hospital".

Below are two items most likely mailed at Siboney. The first one, with the purple marking, was sent unpaid to New York and was received on July 17. The second one, with the black handstamp, was prepaid to Michigan and received in transit at New York on July 23.



U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 1. Siboney



Siboney, July 10, 1898. This postcard, addressed to West Bay City, Michigan, was written on the day when mail delivery from this station was first suspended because of the fever epidemic. It was postmarked the following day, probably on the outskirts of Santiago.

It has the earliest example of this handstamp (two other known), the first type of duplex canceler used by the US Military Stations in Cuba. The New York City transit marking is dated July 23, same as the previous cover with the straightline marking from this station.

Station Number 1. Siboney

This is the only recorded letter mailed from Military Station No. 1 at Siboney while it operated from a "fever hospital". It was written two days before the station was transferred to the outskirts of Santiago. This is also the earliest use of the first type of crude oval canceller which was later used in Santiago de Cuba.

There were three different types of crude oval killers which were probably sent to all 39 military postal stations although they only have been recorded in less than half.

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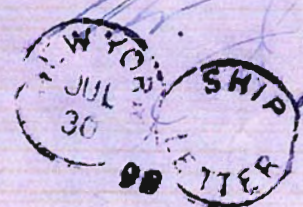
Fever Hospital, 1 1/2 miles
East of Siboney Cuba.

July-19-98

Dear Folks at home. I am
as yet o.k. and of course
have heard nothing but he
has not the yellow fever
else he would be here and
I am at the train each day
to see after of the boys
who may be sick from



Soldier's Letter
Henry



Dear
July 19
Mr. L. Thomas
515 Webster St
Traverse City
Mich
U.S.A

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

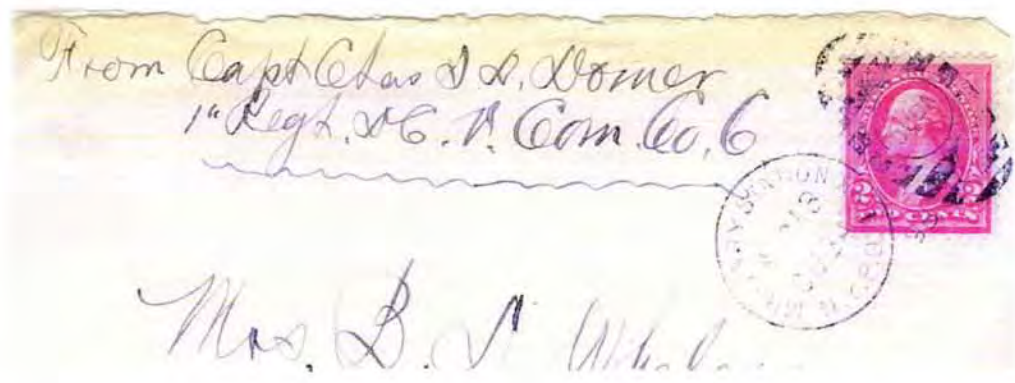
Station Number 1. Santiago

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.

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 1. Santiago.

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.

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 1. Santiago

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.)".

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 1. Santiago

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

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 1. Santiago

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.

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 1. Santiago

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 (6x6=12 + 8=20). In both cases the stamps are obliterated by the second crude oval.



U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 1. Santiago

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

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 1. Santiago.

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.



U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 1. Santiago



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.

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

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.



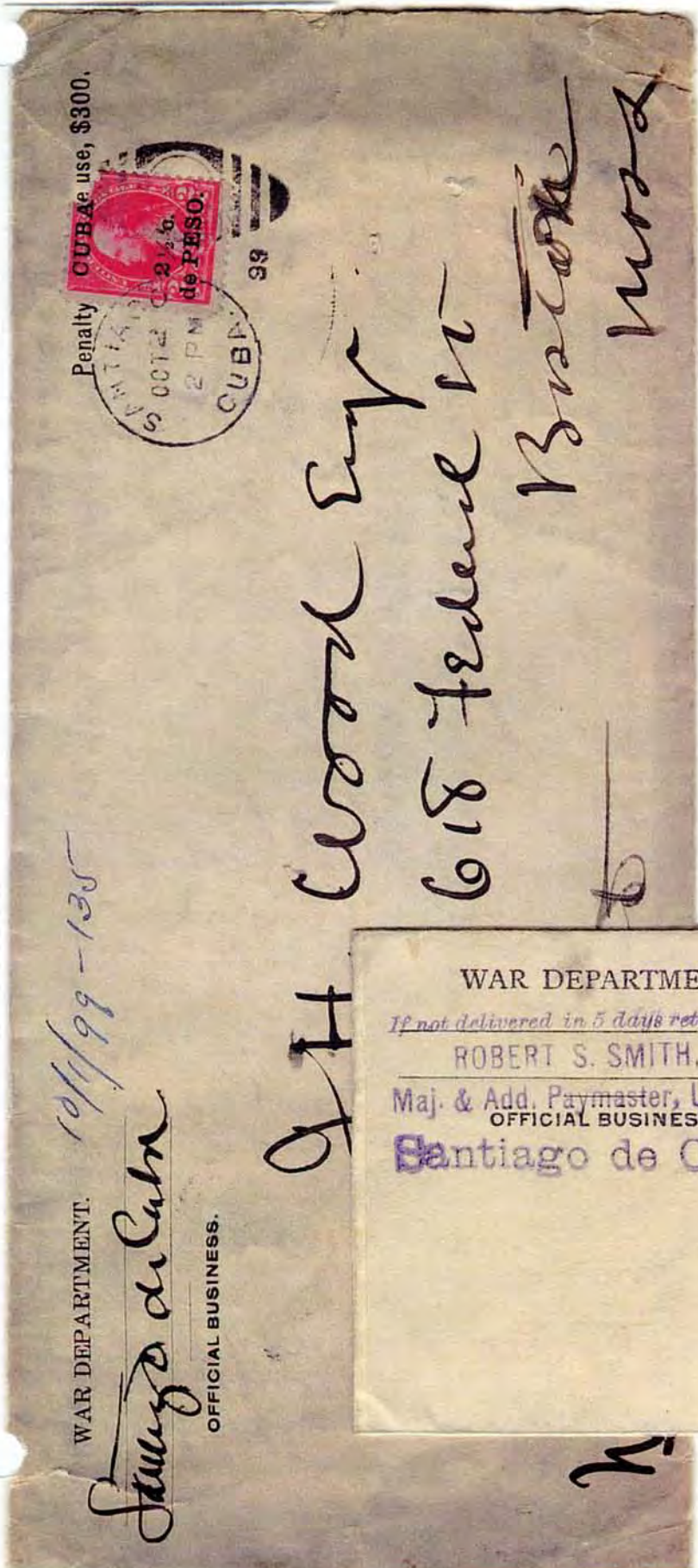
July 23, 1898. Santiago to Plattsburg, NY. Prepaid soldier's rate. This is the earliest example of the Spanish killer from Santiago on US stamps used only a few days after the surrender of the city.



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.

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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U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

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.



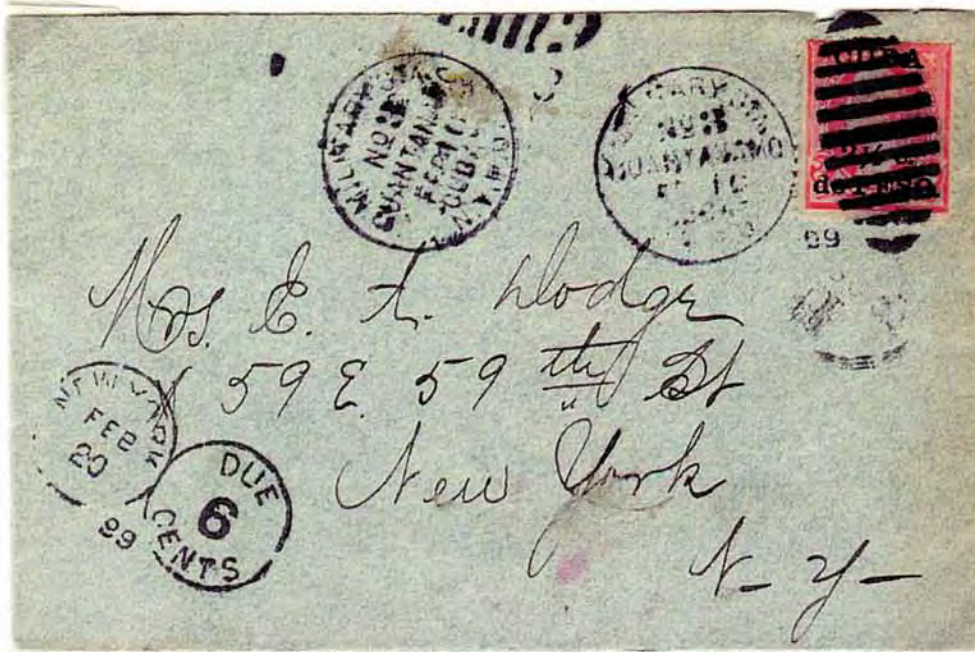
Dec. 11, 1898. Guantanamo to New York. Civilian rate of five cents per 1/2 Oz. This is the first type of duplex handstamp (large circle) used in this station which is recorded from December 8, 1898 to July 28, 1899. This style of duplex marking was also used in stations 5, 6, and 7.



U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 3. Guantanamo

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.

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

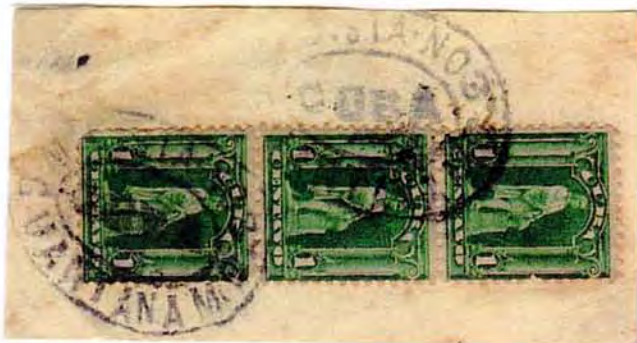
Station Number 3. Guantanamo



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.

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

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.

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

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.



99



Latest recorded usage.

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 5. San Luis



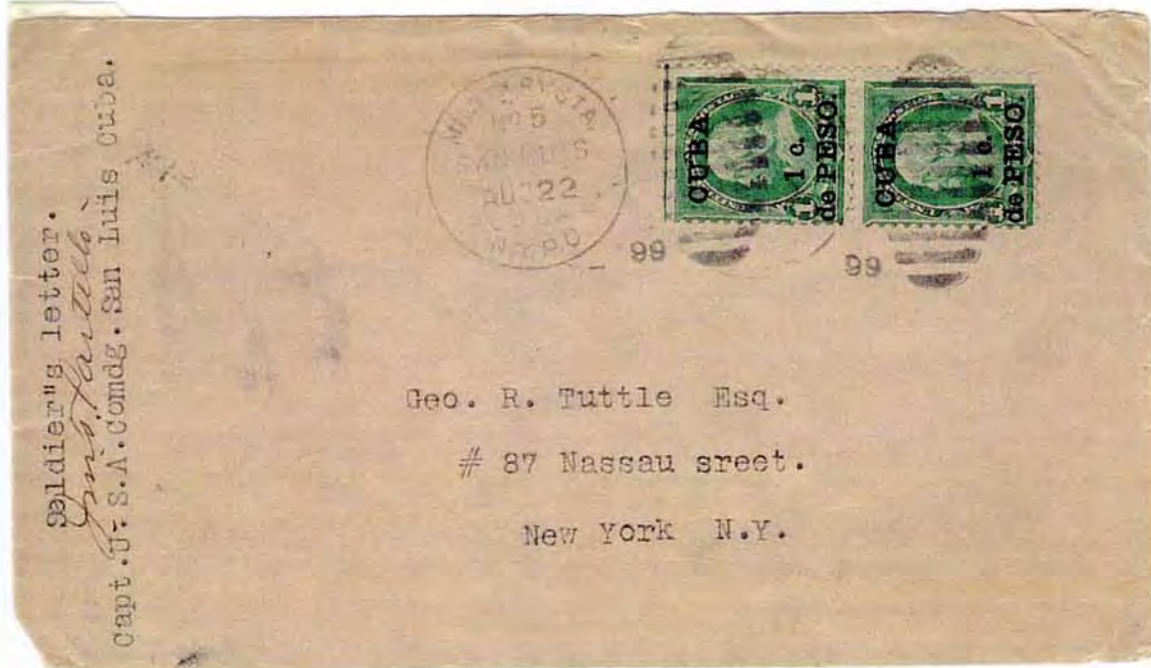
June 29, 1899. War Department official envelope from Guantanamo to San Luis. This is the only recorded example of the receiving marking. This style of handstamp was also used in stations 6, 8, 11, and 13; generally as a receiving marking.

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

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.

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

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.



U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 6. Manzanillo

This important southern coastal city had a population of 14,464 and a second class post office. US troops landed here on October 3, 1898. The military post office officially opened on December 1, 1898 and was handed over to civilian control on February 19, 1899. There were two types of duplex cancelers, an auxiliary straightline marking, a receiving, and a crude oval handstamp used at this station.



Nov. 24, 1898. Manzanillo to Havana. First class civilian domestic rate of five cents per 1/2 Oz. Post office order 296 of July 21, 1898 authorized civilian use of military postal service at higher rates. This is the earliest cover from this station mailed before the official opening date. It arrived at Havana on Nov. 28.

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 6. Manzanillo



Dec. 15, 1898. Manzanillo to New York. Civilian rate. First type of duplex canceler from this town last recorded on December 22, 1898.



Dec. 17, 1898. Manzanillo to Wheeling, West Virginia. Prepaid soldier's rate.

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 6. Manzanillo



May 4, 1899. Manzanillo to Amesbury, MA. Single weight civilian rate. This is the second type of duplex canceler used in this station.

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 6. Manzanillo



March 1899. Niquero to Baltimore via Manzanillo. Niquero was a small village that had no postal facilities and its only means of communication was a small road to Manzanillo. Unpaid soldier's rate. The postal act of March 3, 1879 specified that servicemen on duty could mail letters unpaid to be paid upon delivery at no extra charge. This is the only recorded example of this auxiliary straightline marking from Manzanillo.



U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 6. Manzanillo

May 12, 1899. Baracoa to Napa, California posted at Bayamo (Military Postal Station No. 22). The only recorded copy of the Manzanillo receiving handstamp that was applied to this cover in transit. Private correspondence of the acting American Postmaster at Baracoa (Military Postal Station No. 4).



Box Act. P.M.
Baracoa Cuba.



Mr. Harry Lancaster
Napa
Cal.



U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 6. Manzanillo



Manzanillo to Fort Logan, Colorado. Large fragment of a package with manuscript 'Christmas present'. There are very few surviving examples of parcel of parcel post from this period. Prepaid soldier's fourth class rate of one cent per ounce (17 cents). Four examples of the crude oval have been reported from Manzanillo, three of them on loose stamps or small fragments.

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 7. Gibara

This important town on the north coast had a population of 6,841 and a second class post office. The military post office opened on December 1, 1898 and passed to civilian control on February 28, 1899. Two types of duplex cancelers were used in this station and there are only five full covers recorded.



Dec. 27, 1898. Gibara to Matanzas. Domestic civilian rate of five cents per 1/2 oz. This is the only reported example of the first type of duplex canceler (large circle) and the earliest cover from this station.



July 10, 1899. Gibara to New York. Civilian rate. First type of duplex canceler but with the words "MIL. STA. No. 7" deleted. Used when the station was under civilian administration.

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 7. Gibara



May 25, 1899. Letter from the mayor of Gibara to the military governor of Holguin. Second type of duplex canceler (small circle) from this station. On the reverse there is the only postally used example of the receiving handstamp from Holguin. This is an example of the old Spanish colonial rate of 2 cents for letters within the same province.

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 8. Holguin

This town had a second class colonial post office and a population of 6,045. The military station officially opened on December 1, 1898 and was transferred to civilian control on February 28, 1899. A duplex canceler, a receiving marking, and an oval handstamp were used at this station. All of these markings have the town's name misspelled "HOLQUIN". There are very few covers recorded and the earliest is dated February 10, 1899.



This fragment probably comes from a post office impression book and shows the receiving and duplex markings.



The only reported example of the crude oval marking from this station.

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 8. Holguin



Feb. 17, 1899. Soldier's letter from Holguin to Washington DC. This is the only type of duplex canceler (small circle) recorded from this town.



Feb. 28, 1899. Soldier's patriotic envelope from Holguin to Cincinnati. Patriotic covers from Cuba are very scarce. All of the patriotic covers with this design (Richard Pearson Hobson) seem to have been posted at Holguin.

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 10. Havana

The capital city had a population of 235,981 and the largest postal facility in the island. It was under naval blockade at the suspension of hostilities on July 17. An army survey group sailed from Savannah on November 13 to make preparations for the military occupation. The first major forces arrived on November 26 and the city was formally surrendered on January 1, 1899. The military station officially opened on December 12, 1898 and was transferred to civilian control on February 17, 1899.

The first type of marking used in this station was a duplex canceler with movable characters. This style of marking was first used at many army camps in the US and by several military stations in Puerto Rico but apparently Havana was the only Cuban city that had it. It was in use until the end of January.



Earliest type of cancellation used at this station and only known example of this variant (date on bottom). Most likely brought by the early survey group and used before the station had officially opened.



Numeral "10" in grid. Used from December 21, 1898 to January 26, 1899.

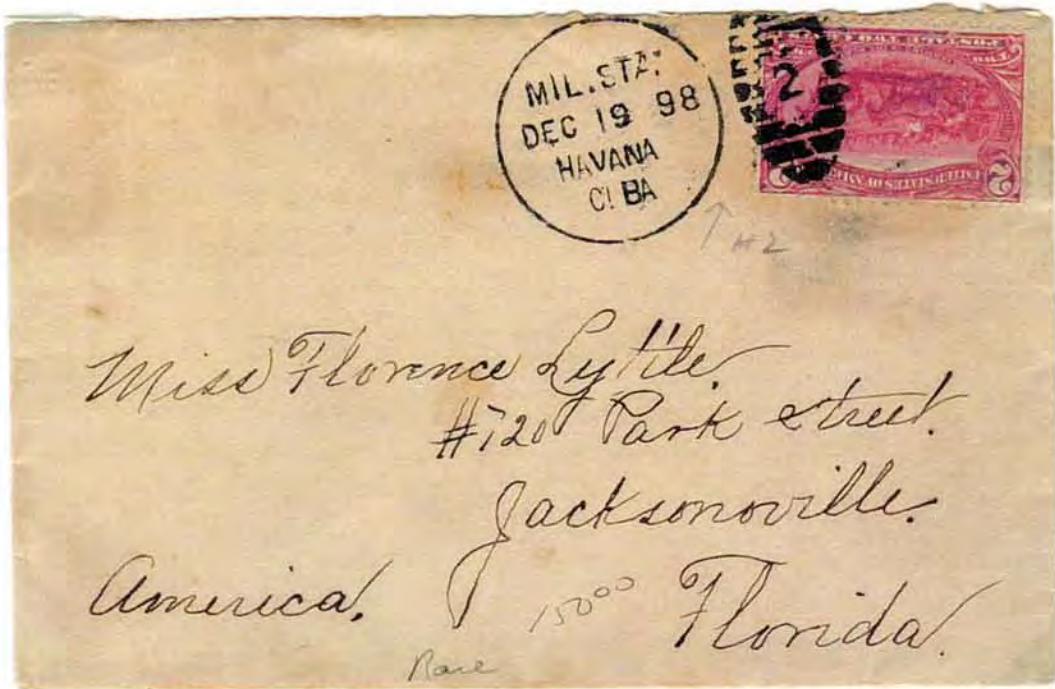


U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 10. Havana

Another type of duplex canceler with movable letters had the numeral "2" in the grid. It is only recorded from December 19 to December 24, 1898.

Below there are two examples of this marking on soldier's and civilian letters to the US.



U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 10. Havana

Below there are two variants of the first duplex canceler from this station. The first one, with the numeral "1" in the grid, has only the month and day on the second line (no year). The second cover, with the numeral "10" in the grid, has "PM" instead of the year.



U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 10. Havana

In February of 1899, the post office at Havana started using two new duplex cancelers, one with horizontal and one with vertical lines in the grid. They were used until mid 1899. Below there are two examples of the killer with horizontal bars on civilian mail to the US. The first letter was underpaid by three cents and was therefore charged double the deficit upon arrival to New York.



U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

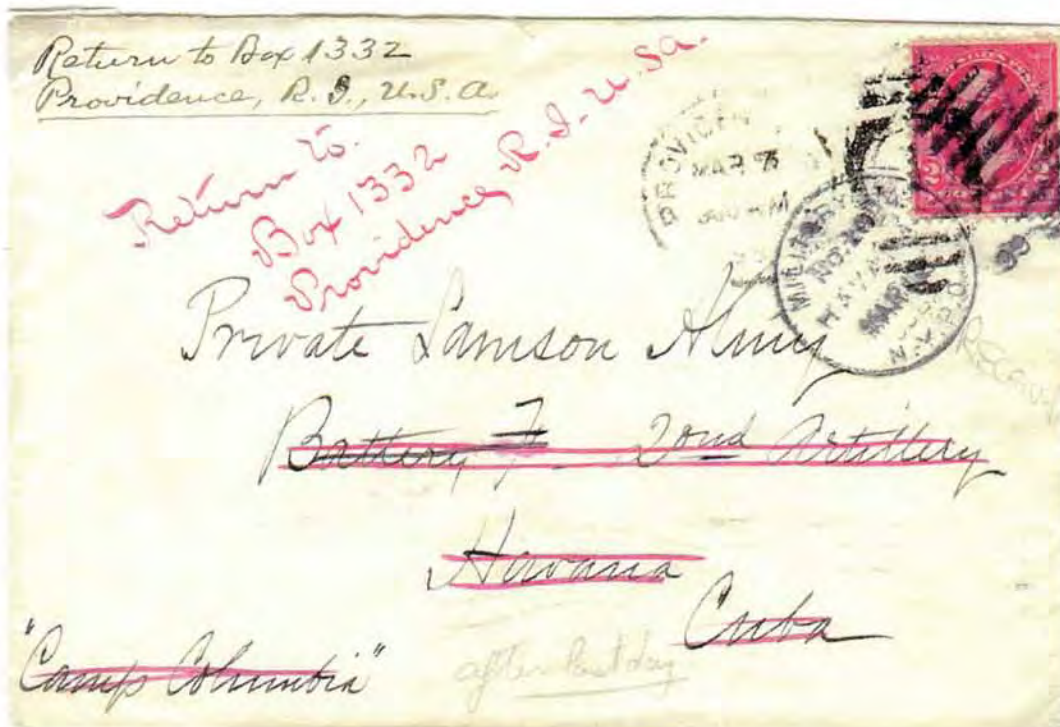
Station Number 10. Havana

Havana had by far the largest concentration of US soldiers and the busiest military postal station in Cuba. Below there are two examples of the duplex killer with vertical bars on soldier's mail to the US. The second cover was sent from the rare Military Hospital No. 1. Patriotic covers from Cuba are very unusual.



U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 10. Havana



Mar. 1899. Providence to Havana. First class letter rate to military personnel. The addressee was not in Cuba and the duplex canceler was used as a receiving (or transit) marking.

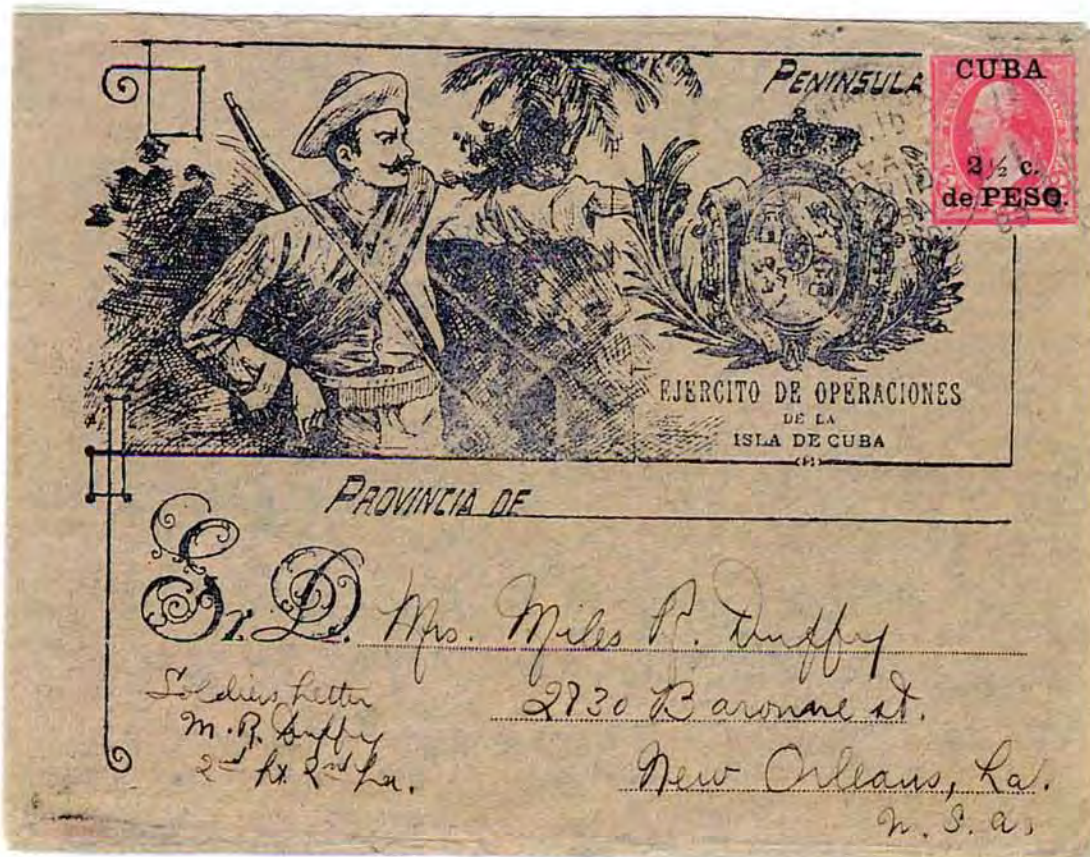


Mar. 13, 1899. Soldier's patriotic cover from Havana to Brooklyn. It originated from the US Army Hospital ship, Bay State.

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 10. Havana

Souvenir envelope and captured Spanish patriotic cover on soldier's letters to the US. Both designs were mostly used by Spanish troops who enjoyed postal franchise and therefore did not leave a space in the design for stamps to be affixed.



U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 10. Havana



Large fragment of a multiple weight letter from Havana. There are five recorded examples of the crude oval from Havana.



Soldier's letter from Havana to Illinois. Overpaid by one cent.

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 10. Havana

General Fitzhugh Lee was a nephew of Robert E. Lee and had been the US Consul General in Havana since 1896. It was he who requested the presence of the U.S.S. Maine at Havana, and after it was blown up and war was imminent, he resigned as Consul to join the Volunteer Army. He left Cuba on April 10, Easter Sunday, to return later as Major General of the invading forces. Below there are two items of soldier's mail duly certified by his signature.

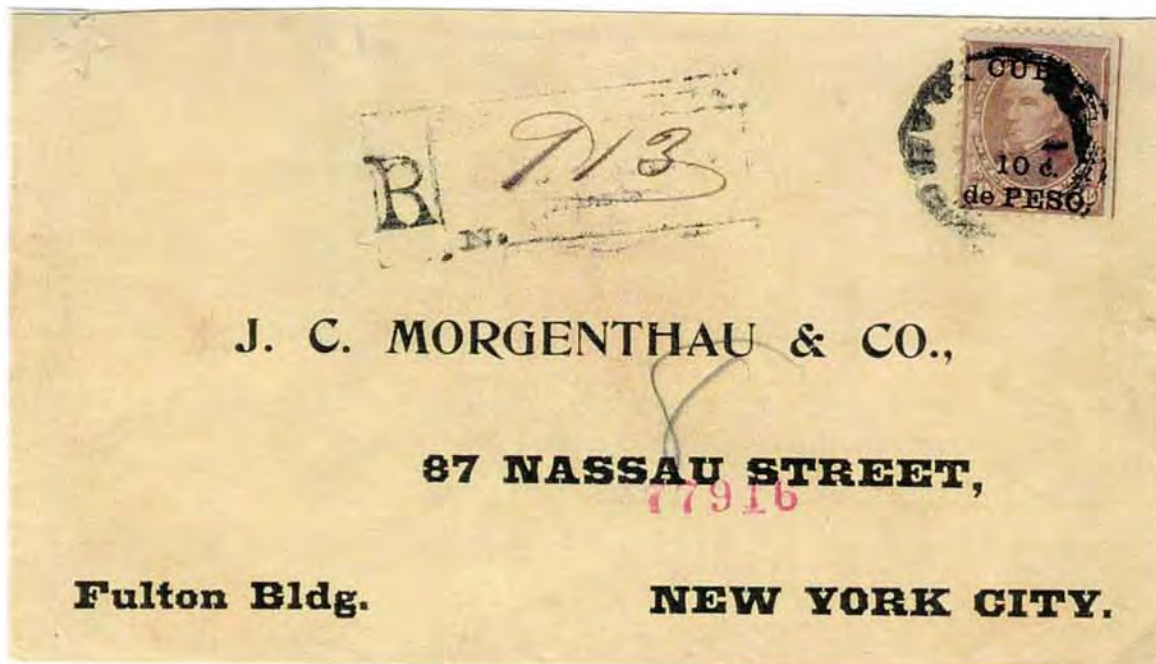


U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 10. Havana



Jan. 30, 1899. Multiple weight registered cover from Havana to New York. The only reported example of the straightline "Military Station No. 10, Havana, Cuba".



Jan. 1899. Registered cover from Havana to New York City. The worn out captured Spanish colonial canceller was rarely used on mail from this military station.

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 10. Havana

The official Spanish newspaper, "Gaceta de La Habana", continued to enjoy postal franchise during the US occupation.



U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 10. Havana

Jan. 1899. Privately used official mail envelope from Havana to Washington DC. It is a double weight civilian rate or a quintuple weight soldier's letter (less likely). The stamps are obliterated by a Spanish colonial canceling device. It is addressed to the famous stamp dealer and philatelic writer J. M. Bartels.



Post Office Department.

POST OFFICE AT NEW YORK, N. Y.

OFFICIAL BUSINESS.

(No. 6-A.)

Havana
Cuba

J. M. Bartels Co

725 Seventh St.

Washington, D.C.

Post Office Department.

POST OFFICE AT NEW YORK, N. Y.

OFFICIAL BUSINESS.

(No. G-A.)



Havana

Cuba

J. M. Bartels Co

725 Eleventh St.

Washington, D. C.

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 11. Puerto Principe

A duplex killer, an oval canceller, a receiving marking, a boxed registry, and straightline and postage due handstamps were used in this station.



Only type of duplex used at this station.



Feb. 11, 1899. Single rate civilian cover from Puerto Principe to Detroit.

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 11. Puerto Principe

Since the new type of handstamps on many occasions were not delivered on time, the post offices continued to use the same military station markings after they were transferred to civilian control. Some were modified to eliminate the words "Military Station".



The framed registry marking with the station number deleted.



Apr. 11, 1899. Puerto Principe to Pittsburg. Probably a philatelic use on a civilian registered cover (5 cents first class + 8 cents registry fee = 13 cents). The registry marking has the number of the military station deleted. This is the only reported example of the straightline handstamp from this station.

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 11. Puerto Principe



Apr. 29, 1899. Civilian registered cover from Puerto Principe to Germany (5 cents first class + 8 cents registry fee = 13 cents). Both the registry marking and crude oval canceler have the words "Military Station" and "No. 11" deleted.



Jul. 11, 1899. Registered civilian letter from Puerto Principe to Santiago de Cuba. Underpaid by one cent. Modified registry marking without the words "Military Station No. 11."

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 11. Puerto Principe

Provisional Stamp Issues

This large city, now known as Camaguey, had a "Principal" postal administration and a population of 25,102. The military station officially opened on December 12, 1898 and was transferred to civilians on March 1, 1899.

Despite banning the use of Spanish Colonial stamps in US occupied areas, they continued to be used in the Province of Puerto Principe after the arrival of American forces on November 24, 1898. Since there were no US stamps available, General R. Carpenter, the US military governor of the province ordered the purchase and overprinting of the Spanish colonial stamps. Their use was valid in the towns of Puerto Principe, Minas del Principe, Nuevitas, and Santa Cruz del Sur from December 19, 1898 until January 22, 1899 when US stamps overprinted for Cuba finally arrived. In the town of Santa Cruz, however, US stamps were not available until February 28.

The overprinting was done at night, for security reasons, on a pedal-operated flat press at the print shop of the newspaper "Las Dos Republicas". The stamps were overprinted in strips of five thus, no blocks or vertical multiples exist. The print shop only had sets of four of the same type of numerals chosen hence, a different thinner type was added to each setting of five.

There were five printings with different settings which made possible the reconstruction and identification of the distinct overprints. Between 21,400 and 28,000 stamps were surcharged. Less than 25 covers of this rare provisional issue have been recorded.



The three different Military Station cancelers used to obliterate these provisional stamps.

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 11. Puerto Principe

Provisional Stamp Issues

First Printing. December 19, 1898.

The surcharge is 17.5 mm in height, in dull black ink on the orange brown "milesima" Spanish Cuba issue of 1898. The narrow numerals are on position two.

2 cents on 2 milesimas



Jan. 1899. Civilian registered letter from Puerto Principe to Germany. Only recorded cover of the provisional issue with a complete setting of five stamps and only recorded usage to Germany.

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 11. Puerto Principe

Provisional Stamp Issues

Third Printing. December 24, 1898.

The surcharge is 19.5 mm in height, in bright black ink on the orange brown "milesima" Spanish Cuba issue of 1898 and the one half "milesima" newspaper stamp of 1896.

1 cents on 1 milesima



Jan. 1899. Soldier's rate from Puerto Principe to New York City. Position one used after the provisional issue was demonetized on January 23, and therefore not accepted as postage by the New York post office. The overprinted US stamp was accepted and the letter was charged only one cent postage due.

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 11. Puerto Principe

Provisional Stamp Issues

Third Printing. December 24, 1898.

The surcharge is 19.5 mm in height, in bright black ink on the orange brown "milesima" Spanish Cuba issue of 1898 and the one half "milesima" newspaper stamp of 1896.

3 cents on 1 milesima



Jan. 6, 1899. Single weight civilian rate from Puerto Principe to New York City. A position three 3 cents on 1 milesima surcharge (third printing) combined with a 2 cent on 2 milesimas surcharge from the first printing.

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 11. Puerto Principe

Provisional Stamp Issues

Fourth Printing. December 27, 1898.

The surcharge is 19.5 mm in height, in red ink on the one centavo black violet Spanish Cuba issue of 1898.

3 cents on 1 centavo



Jan. 9, 1899. Civilian single rate letter (probably overpaid by one cent) from Santa Cruz del Sur to Puerto Principe. Position five. One other recorded cover with this postmark.

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 11. Puerto Principe

Provisional Stamp Issues

Fourth Printing. December 27, 1898.

The surcharge is 19.5 mm in height, in red ink on the one centavo black violet Spanish Cuba issue of 1898.

5 cents on 1 centavo



Feb. 1899. Third printing, 5 cents on 1 cent. Civilian registered letter from Puerto Principe to New York.

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 11. Puerto Principe

Provisional Stamp Issues

Fourth Printing. December 27, 1898.

The surcharge is 19.5 mm in height, in red ink on the one centavo black violet Spanish Cuba issue of 1898.

10 cents on 1 centavo



Jan. 1899. Single weight registered letter from Puerto Principe to Munich, Germany via Havana. A 10 cents on 1 centavo surcharge from the fourth printing combined with a 2 cents on 2 milesimas from the first printing. One of the two recorded covers with the ten cent stamp from the fourth printing.

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 11. Puerto Principe

Provisional Stamp Issues

Fourth Printing. December 27, 1898.

The surcharge is 19.5 mm in height, in red ink on the one centavo black violet Spanish Cuba issue of 1898.

10 cents on 1 centavo



Jan. 1899. Multiple weight registered letter from puerto Principe to Havana. A 10 cents on 1 centavo surcharge, position two, from the fourth printing combined with a 5 cents on 4 milesimas from the fifth printing. There is one other recorded covers with the ten cent stamp from the fourth printing. Probably unique combination of printings on cover.

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 11. Puerto Principe

Provisional Stamp Issues

Fifth Printing. January 11, 1899.

The surcharge is 19.5 mm in height, in black ink on the one half "milesima" newspaper stamp of 1896.

3 cents on 1 milesima



Jan. 1899. Civilian single letter rate from Puerto Principe to Havana. A 3 cents on 1 milesima surcharge, position two. Of the four recorded covers from the fifth printing this is the only one known with the three cent overprint.

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 12. Nuevitas

An important town on the north coast with a population of 4,228 and a second class post office. American troops arrived on November 16, 1898. The military post office officially opened on December 12, 1898 and on February 28, 1899 it was turned over to civilian control.

The only style of marking from this station is the small circular duplex with the possible exception of a straightline registered handstamp reported by Barreras. The earliest recorded date is February 19. The postmark from this station has the misspelling "NEUYITAS".



Mar. 11, 1899. Prepaid soldier's letter from Nuevitas to Carbondale, PA.



U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 12. Nuevitas



Mar. 30, 1899. Unendorsed soldier's rate from Nuevitas to Philadelphia.

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 13. Cienfuegos

The largest city in the province of the same name. It had a first class post office and a population of 30,038. US soldiers arrived on November 1898. Although Americans did not control the city until January 1, 1899, the military post office began operating in the outskirts of Cienfuegos on December 21, 1898 and later moved into the city to occupy the building of the local Spanish post office. It was transferred to civilians on February 17, 1899.

This station used a duplex canceler, a receiving marking, a crude oval canceler, a straightline handstamp, and a boxed registry marking. The earliest example dates from February 6, 1899.



Feb. 29, 1899. Cienfuegos to New York. Underpaid civilian rate which was charged double the deficit (four cents) upon arrival to New York. This is the only style of duplex canceler used in this station.

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 13. Cienfuegos

Two covers showing the civilian rate to the U.S.A.



U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 13. Cienfuegos



Feb. 27, 1899. Cienfuegos to Barcelona. Unusual civilian printed matter rate to foreign destinations.



April 1899. Civilian cover from Los Abreus to San Francisco, California via Cienfuegos. Abreus was a small village whose only postal route was with Cienfuegos. This is the only reported example of the receiving handstamp from this station.

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 13. Cienfuegos



July 26, 1899. Registered letter from Cienfuegos to Havana. Civilian rate overpaid by one cent. It was addressed to General Maximo Gomez, Commander in Chief of the Cuban insurgents. There are very few items with the crude oval from this town which was generally used for registered mail.

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 13. Cienfuegos



May 22, 1899. Registered letter from Cienfuegos to San Francisco. Civilian rate overpaid by two cents. This is one of the two recorded copies of the boxed registry marking from Cienfuegos. Note that the words "Mil. Sta. No. 13" have been deleted from this handstamp.



Unused official Money Order Business envelope from the military post office at Cienfuegos. It also has the only reported example of the straightline marking from this town.

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 15. Pinar del Rio

This city had one of the four principal postal administrations of the island and a population of 8,880. This station opened on January 1, 1899 and was transferred to civilian control on February 23, 1899.

In this and all the subsequent stations, the word "POST." (for postal) was inserted in the duplex cancelers which were also made of rubber instead of steel. Three type of handstamps were used in this station: a duplex canceler, a crude oval handstamp, and a receiving marking.



Feb. 6, 1899. Pinar del Rio to Pennsylvania. Prepaid soldier's rate. Rare usage of the only type of duplex canceler from this station before it was transferred to civilian control.



The only reported example of the crude oval postmark from this station.

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 15. Pinar del Rio



Feb. 24, 1899. Pinar del Rio to California. Prepaid soldier's rate. Usage of the duplex canceler one day after this station was officially turned over to civilian administration.



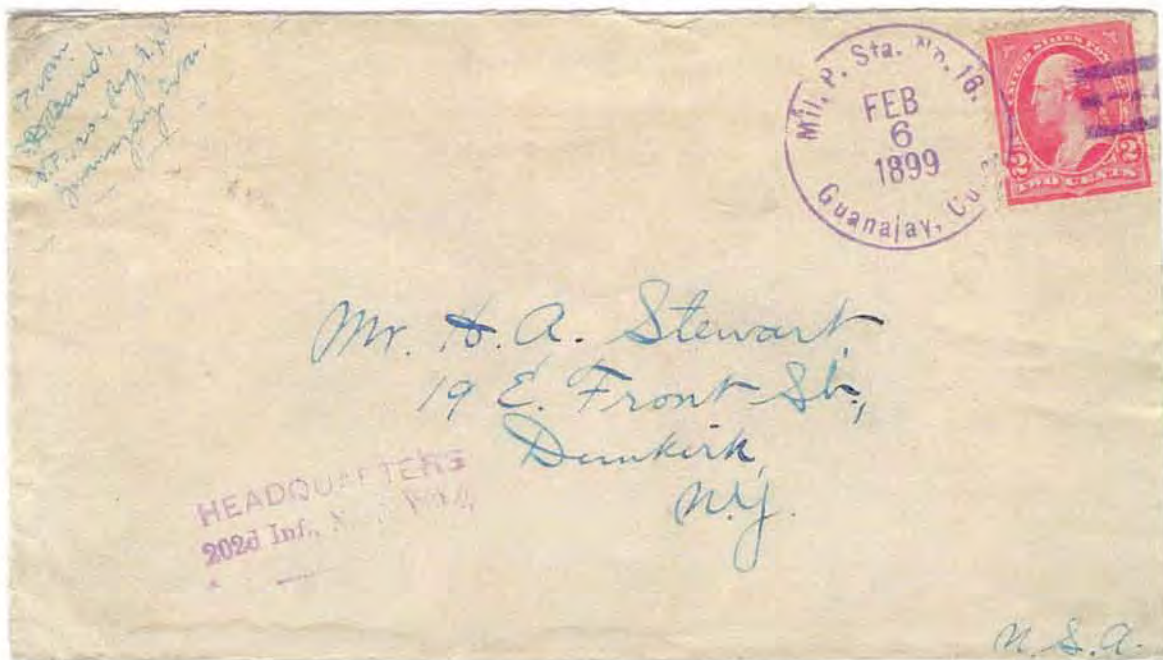
Jan. 30, 1899. Macon, Georgia to Pinar del Rio. Only recorded example of the receiving handstamp from this station.

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 16. Guanajay

This town had a population of 6,483 and a third class post office. The military station opened on January 1, 1899 and was transferred to civilian control on February 26, 1899.

A duplex canceler and a crude oval are the only markings recorded from this station.



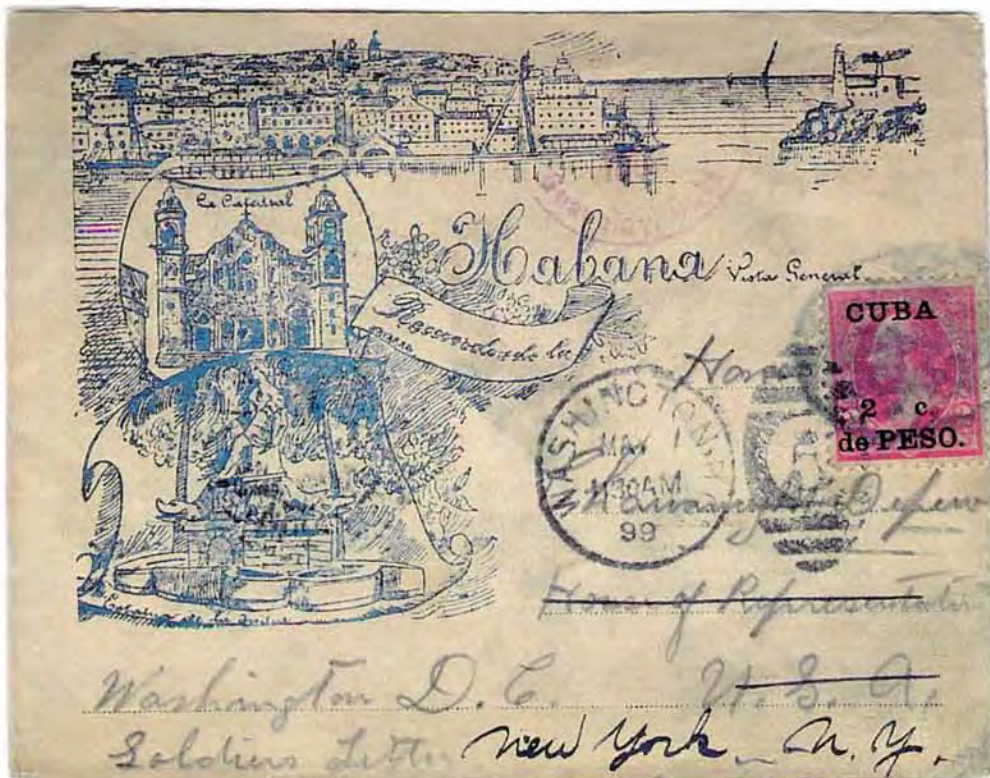
Feb. 6, 1899. Guanajay to Dunkirk, NY. Prepaid soldier's rate. The duplex canceler was always applied in magenta. Earliest known cover from this town.



U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 16. Guanajay

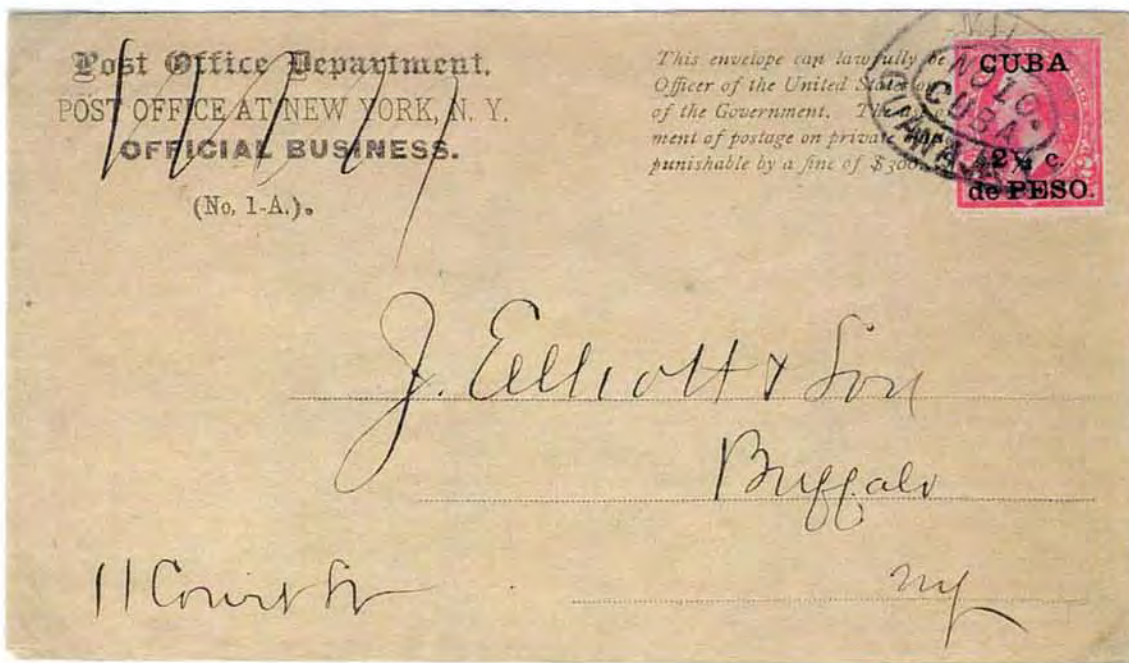
Soldier's rate to USA on captured Spanish patriotic envelope and souvenir cover with a view of the city of Havana. Both covers bear the duplex canceler. The stamp on the bottom cover, like most items from this station, is obliterated by a crude oval handstamp.



U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 16. Guanajay

Two examples of the crude oval from this station, which is most often illegible, on civilian and soldier's mail to the US.



U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 17. Mariel

This town had a population of 3,631 and a fourth class post office. The military station opened on January 1, 1899 and was transferred to civilians on February 27, 1899.



The only two items recorded from this station.



U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 18. Trinidad

This town had a second class colonial post office and a population of 11,120. The military post office opened on January 1, 1899 and was handed over to civilians in mid-March 1899.

A duplex canceler is the only postmark reported from this town. Four covers have been recorded from this military station.



Feb. 17, 1899. Trinidad to Sidney, OH. Prepaid soldier's rate. This marking was applied in black ink during the first months of operation.

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 18. Trinidad



May 4, 1899. Trinidad to Philadelphia. Prepaid soldier's rate. This marking was applied in magenta ink during the last few months of operation.

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 19. Las Tunas

This small town was known as Tunas de Zaza and had a population of 1,014. The military station opened on January 1, 1899 and reverted to civilian control on February 16, 1899.

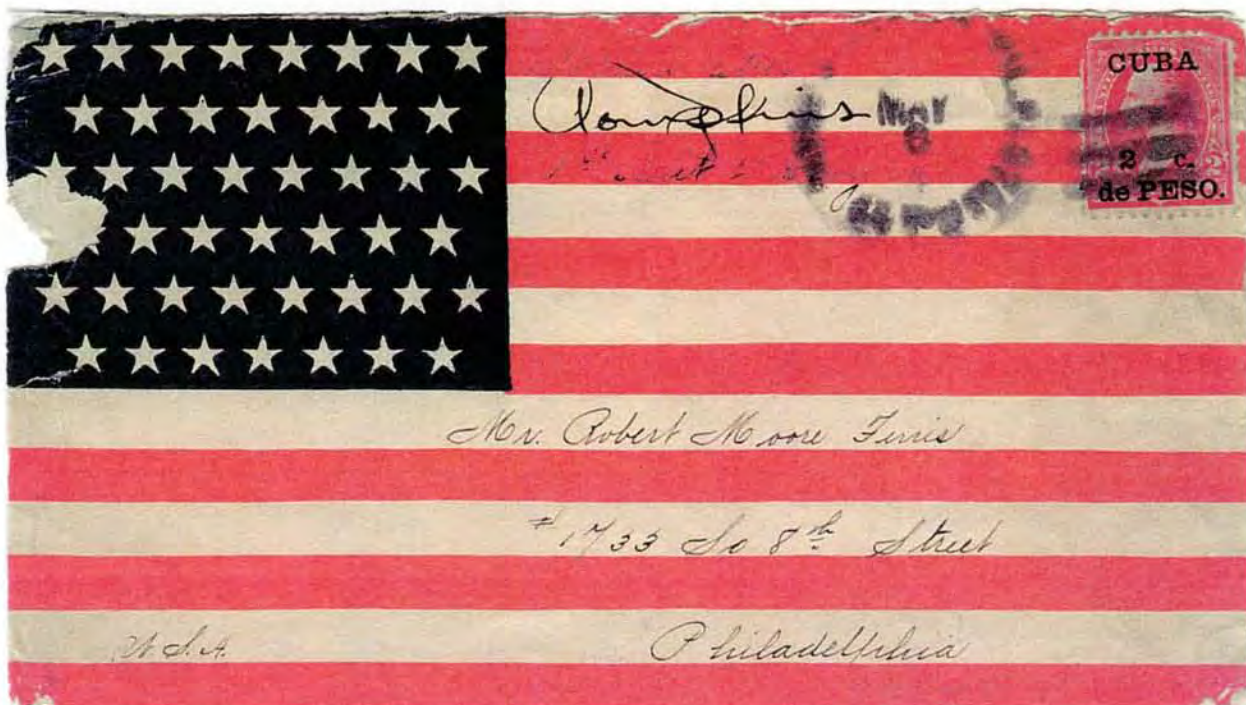
The only marking reported from this station is a duplex canceler although Barreras described a Money Order Business handstamp that has never been seen. Four items have been recorded from this station.



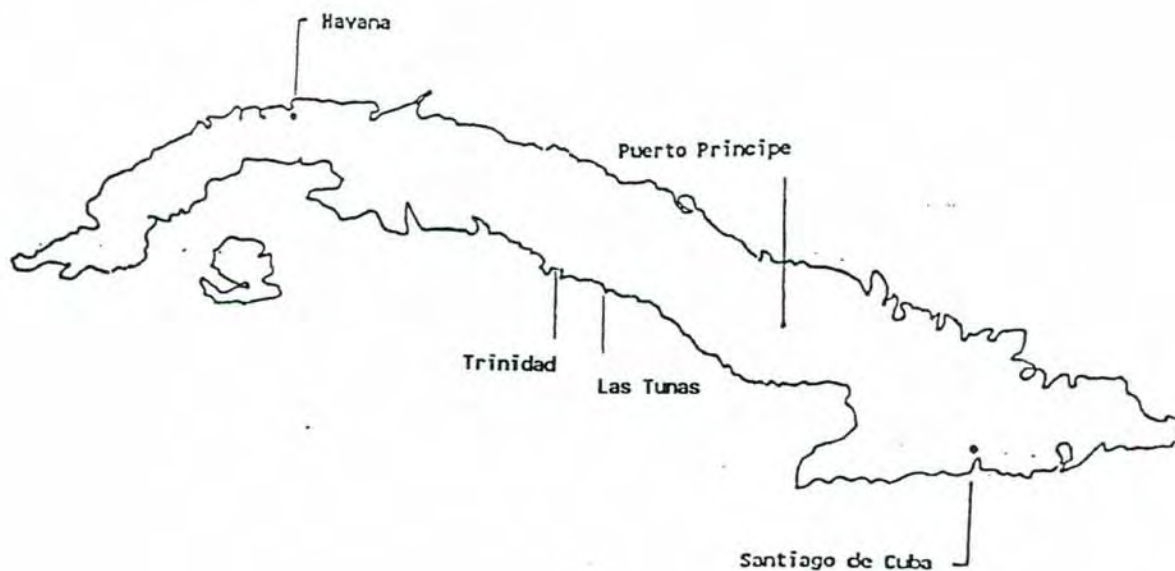
Mar. 31, 1899. Single weight civilian letter from Las Tunas to New York. Earliest recorded item from this station.

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 19. Las Tunas



May 6, 1899. Patriotic soldier's cover from Las Tunas to Philadelphia. Note the poor impression of this marking which was made of rubber.



U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 20. Sancti Spiritus

This city had a first class colonial post office and a population of 122,696. The military station opened on January 1, 1899 and passed to civilian control on February 20, 1899.

A duplex canceler and an auxiliary straightline handstamp are the only markings recorded from this large city. Very few items reported from this station.



The stamp on the left is the earliest recorded item from this station.



Mar. 17, 1899. Prepaid soldier's rate from Sancti Spiritus to Knoxville, TN.

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 20. Sancti Spiritus



Mar. 17, 1899. Civilian single weight letter from Sancti Spiritus to New York.

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 20. Sancti Spiritus



Sep. 1900. Canterbury, Great Britain to Santa Cruz del Sur, Puerto Principe province. Missent to Sancti Spiritus. Only recorded usage of a "MISSENT" from any of the military stations in Cuba. Very late usage of a military station marking.



U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 21. Cardenas

This city had a population of 21,940 and a second class post office. The military station officially opened on January 1, 1899 and reverted to civilian control around March 5, 1899.

This station continued using the Spanish colonial handstamps since the military station cancelers did not arrive until March 20. Three types of military markings have been recorded here: a duplex canceler which was always applied in blue ink, a receiving handstamp, and a straightline registry marking.



Feb. 1899. Cardenas to Owensboro, KY. Prepaid soldier's letter. The captured Spanish canceler was used until late March 1899.



U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 21. Cardenas



Apr. 10, 1899. Civilian letter from Cardenas to Brooklyn.



Apr. 11, 1899. Cardenas to Havana. Civilian single letter rate of two cents within the same province. This rate was changed to five cents by the postal order of March 18, 1899.

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 21. Cardenas



Apr. 8, 1899. Civilian letter from Cardenas to Providence, RI. Only recorded example of the receiving marking.



May 25, 1899. Multiple weight registered letter from Cardenas to New York. Only reported example of the straightline registry marking.

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 22. Bayamo

This small town had a population of 3,022 but a first class colonial post office. The military station officially opened on January 1, 1899 and was transferred to civilians on February 20, 1899.

All of the items from this station have been recorded while under civilian administration. A duplex canceler is the only type of marking reported from this station.



Mar. 21, 1899. Bayamo to Elizabeth City, VA. Prepaid soldier's rate.

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 23. Mayari

This town had a population of 1,821 and a third class post office. The official opening date of the military station was January 1, 1899 and it passed under civilian control on February 23, 1899.

There are only two covers recorded from this station and two types of handstamps: a duplex canceler and a straightline auxiliary marking.



May 18, 1899. Prepaid soldier's letter from Mayari to Athens, OH. The sender did not properly identify the cover with the company's number and officer's signature but the post office was able to verify its origin and applied the straightline marking "Military Station No. 23, Mayari Cuba." and the manuscript notation "Carta de Militar" (Soldier's letter). This was authorized by postal order number 63 of February 23, 1899. This is one of the two duplex cancelers and the only known straightline marking from this station.

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 23. Mayari



Oct. 8, 1899. Mayari to Bastrop, TX. It was sent as a prepaid soldier's letter but since the sender failed to endorse it as such, it was treated as a civilian letter and therefore charged six cents postage due, double the deficit, while in transit at Santiago. The postage due straightline handstamp from Santiago is a military postal station marking with the words "Military Station" deleted. One of the two recorded items from Mayari.



U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 24. Palma Soriano

A third class colonial post office functioned in this town that had a population of 1,776. The military station officially opened on January 1, 1899 and was transferred to civilian control on February 23, 1899.

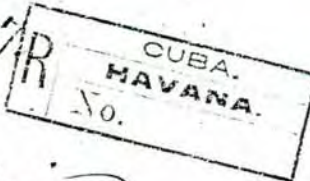
Belgica



Monsieur A. Tynan. Avocat.



Plau de Marais 17R



Recommande

Gand. Belgica

2744



Mar. 26, 1900. Registered wrapper from Palma Soriano to Gand, Belgium. This wrapper was "discovered" in 1990 and is the only item ever recorded from this station. Very late usage of a military station marking.

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 26. Buena Vista

This suburb of Havana had 4,071 inhabitants but no postal facilities during the Spanish colonial period. One of the busiest military postal stations, officially opened on January 5, 1899 and was handed over to civilians on February 20, 1899.

This station had a duplex canceler, a receiving postmark, a crude oval marking, a receiving handstamp, and a straightline auxiliary marking.



Jan 30, 1899. Buena Vista to Richmond, VA. Registered double weight civilian rate to US (5 cents x 2 = 10 cents + 8 cents registry fee = 18 cents). Early cover from this station before the registry marking was in use.



Feb. 6, 1899. Patriotic cover from Buena Vista to Chicago. The Spanish colonial stamp from Puerto Rico was obliterated with crayon and evidently accepted as part of the postage.

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 26. Buena Vista



Feb. 13, 1899. Patriotic cover from Buena Vista to Waterville, ME. Single weight registered soldier's letter (2 cents first class soldier's rate + 8 cents registry fee = 10 cents).



May 10, 1899. Privately used Department of Posts penalty envelope from Buena Vista to Utica, NY. Quintuple weight registered letter (2 cents x 5 = 10 cents + 8 cents registry fee = 18 cents).

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 26. Buena Vista



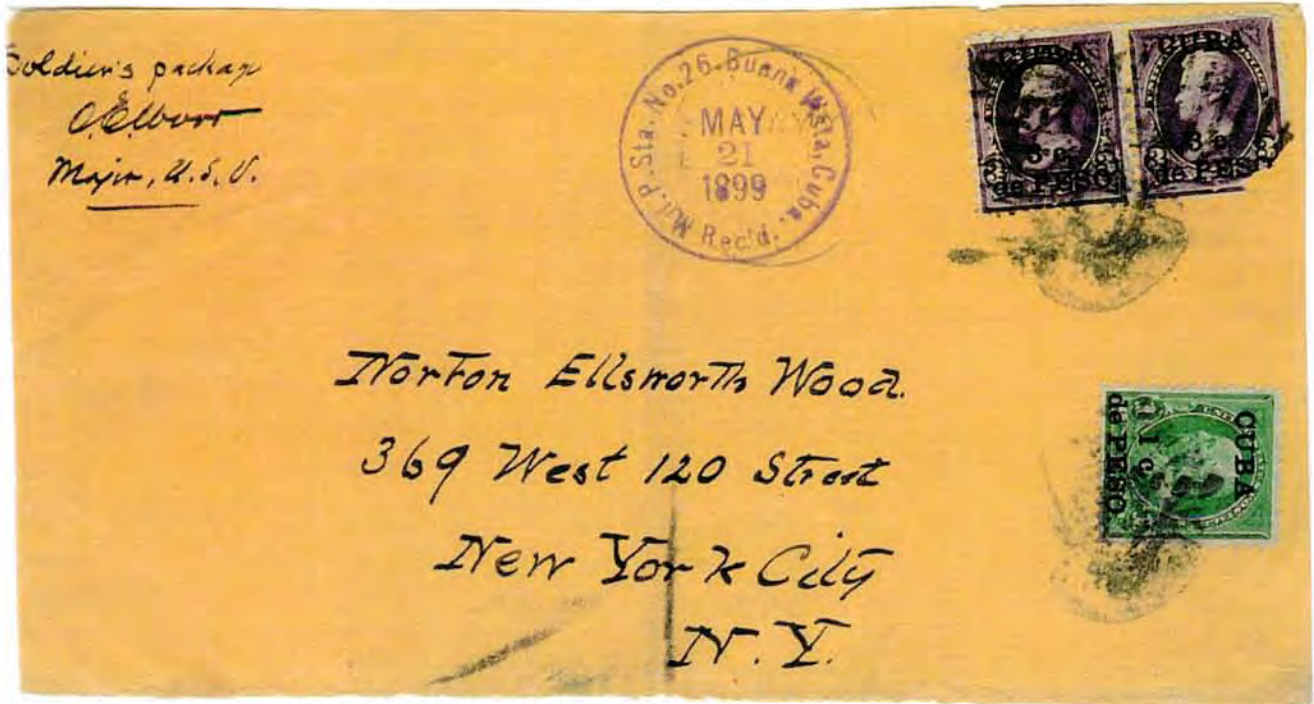
Feb. 10, 1899. Patriotic cover from Buena Vista to New York City. Prepaid soldier's rate. Even though this stamp had a 2 1/2 cent overprint, it was sold and used as a two cent stamp all over the island.



Mar. 4, 1899. Department of Posts penalty envelope from Buena Vista to Utica NY. It was used privately by the Deputy Postmaster. This is the only reported example of the auxiliary straightline handstamp from this station.

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 26. Buena Vista



May 21, 1899. Soldier's package from Buena Vista to New York City. The soldier's fourth class rate was one cent per ounce (7 cents). Very few examples of parcel post from this period have survived. The stamps are canceled with the crude oval handstamp. This is the recording copy of the receiving handstamp from Buena Vista.

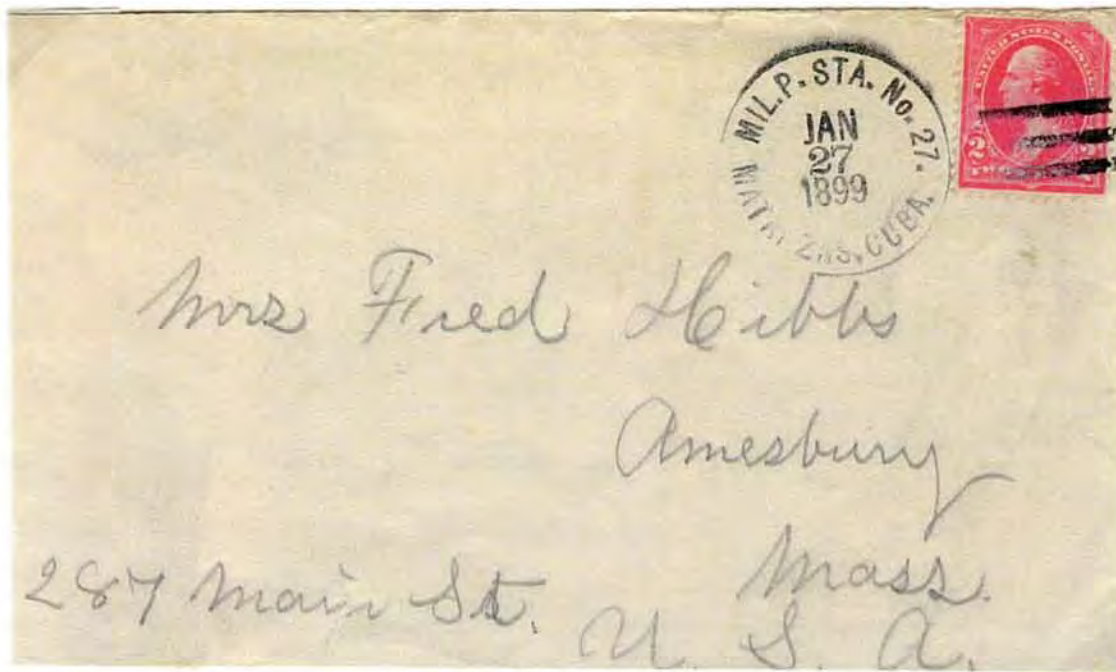


U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 27. Matanzas

This was Cuba's third largest city with a population of 36,374 and a "principal" postal administration. The military station opened on January 6, 1899 and reverted to civilian control on February 26, 1899.

This station used two identical duplex cancelers, a crude oval postmark, a receiving handstamp, and three straightline postage due markings.



Jan. 27, 1899. Prepaid soldier's letter from Matanzas to Amesbury, MA. The earliest recorded date of this marking is January 26. Not properly endorsed as a soldier's letter. Note the clear impression of the handstamp.

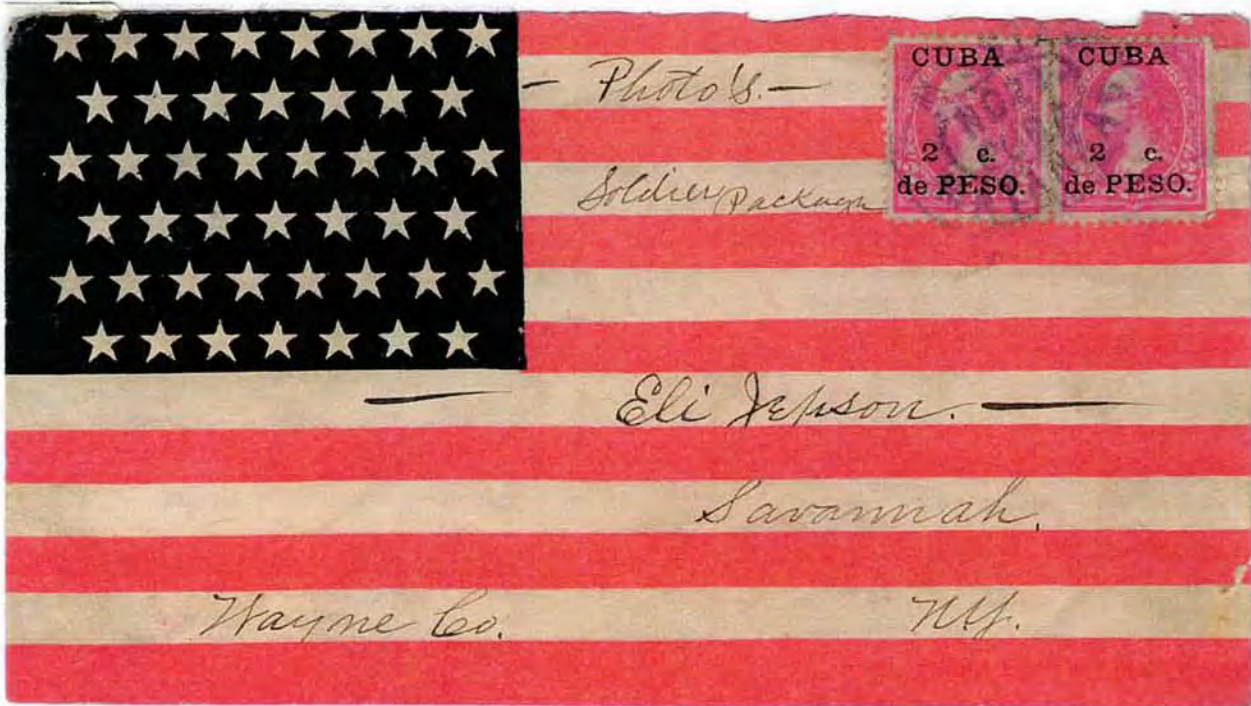


Feb. 6, 1899. Illustrated envelope on a prepaid soldier's rate from Matanzas to Taylorsville, KY. The letter

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 27. Matanzas

There is one other example recorded of the crude oval handstamp from this station on a small fragment.



Undated patriotic envelope from Matanzas to New York State containing photographs that were sent as parcel post. Its weight must not have exceeded four ounces since the rate for packages (fourth class) was one cent per ounce.

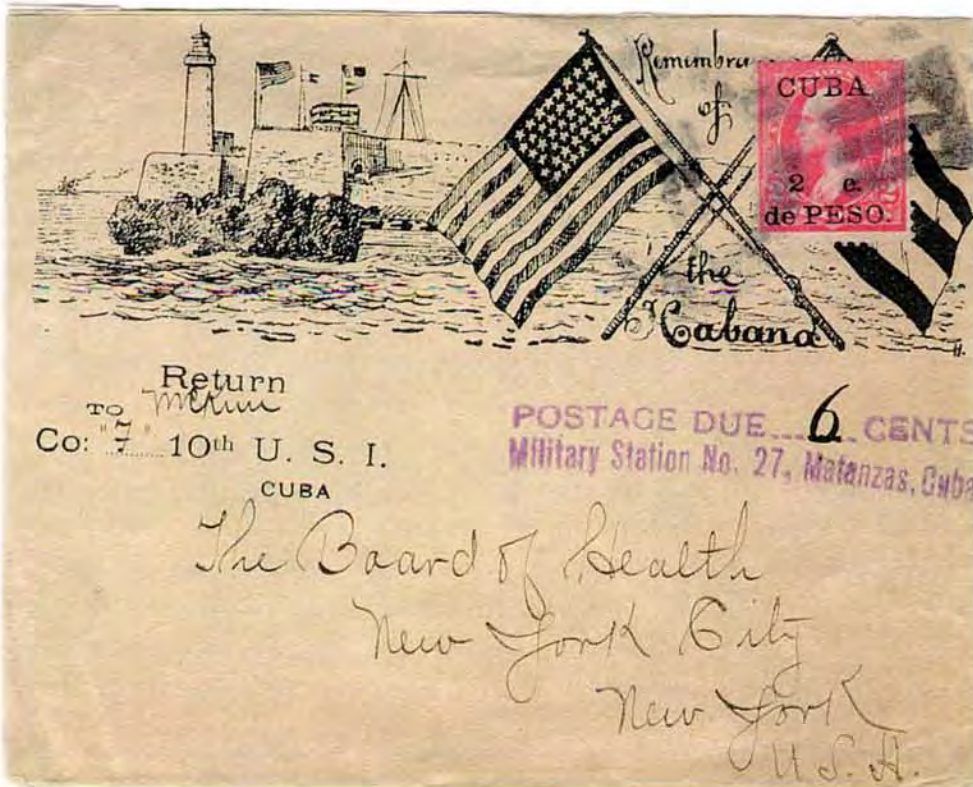
U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 27. Matanzas

Two of the four reported examples of postage due markings from this station are shown below. These two leave a blank space to write the amount due.



Apr. 6, 1899. Matanzas to Tarrytown, TN. It is most likely a soldier's letter but since it was not properly endorsed as such, it was charged six cents postage due, double the deficit. Note the grossly deformed canceler.



May 29, 1899. Patriotic envelope from Matanzas to New York City. Obviously a soldier's letter but not signed by an officer or chaplain and therefore charged six cents postage due. Again, note the marked deterioration of the canceling device.

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 27. Matanzas

Two of the four reported examples of postage due markings from this station are shown below. These two have the specific amount due within the handstamp.



Feb. 19, 1899. Illustrated envelope from Matanzas to Somerville, MA. Properly endorsed soldier's letter that was sent unpaid. Domestic two cent first class letter rate. No penalty fee was collected from the addressee on unpaid soldier's letters. Only reported example of the "...TWO CENTS." marking and only example in black.



May 14, 1899. Matanzas to Chattanooga, TN. The cover was not properly endorsed as a soldier's letter and was

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 27. Matanzas

The two recorded examples of the receiving marking from this station are shown below.



TOP: Mar. 1899. Registered letter from Madrid to Matanzas.

BOTTOM: Feb. 1899. Registered multiple weight civilian letter from Matanzas to Paris. The oval "CERTIFICADO" handstamp is a captured Spanish Colonial marking. The receiving postmark in this case is used to cancel the stamps.

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 27. Matanzas



Mar. 8, 1899. Registered civilian letter from Matanzas to Catalina, Cuba. Unusual example of old Spanish period rates since the new postal code was not enforced in this province until April 1, 1899 (3 cents inter-province single letter rate + 5 cents registry fee = 8 cents). This is probably the only example of the Registry marking from this station.



U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 28. Santa Clara

Santa Clara had one of the four principal postal administrations under the Spanish and had a population of 13,763. The military station opened on January 10, 1899 and was transferred to civilians on February 22 of the same year.

The only recorded markings from this station are the duplex canceler applied in red and a modified postage due straightline handstamp. Below there are examples of the duplex canceler on soldier's letters franked with overprinted and non-overprinted stamps. Order of March 24, 1899 specified that the special stamps overprinted for Cuba must be used in the island.



U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

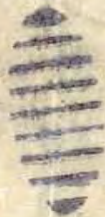
Station Number 28. Santa Clara

Nov. 29, 1899. Double weight unpaid war department penalty envelope from Cienfuegos to Santa Clara. Since the free franking privileges of the sender were unclear, the letter was charged the deficit (4 cents) upon arrival to Santa Clara. Only recorded example of this postage due marking from which the words "Military Station" were deleted after the station passed under civilian control.



~~War Department,
Official Business.~~

POSTAGE DUE 4 CENTS
Santa Clara, Cuba.



NOV 30 1899

The Quartermaster,

Santa Clara, Cuba.

11° 459

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 29. Placetas

This town had a population of 5,409 and a fourth class post office. the military station opened on February 1, 1899 and passed under civilian control on February 26, 1899.

The two types of cancellers used on this station are shown below.



The only recorded example of the crude oval from this station.



Apr. 7, 1899. Patriotic wrapper from Placetas to Michigan. Prepaid soldier's newspaper rate. There are two other recorded examples of this cancellation.

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 30. Santa Cruz

This town had a population of 1,210 and a third class colonial post office. The military station opened on February 1, 1899 and reverted to civilian control on February 17 of the same year.

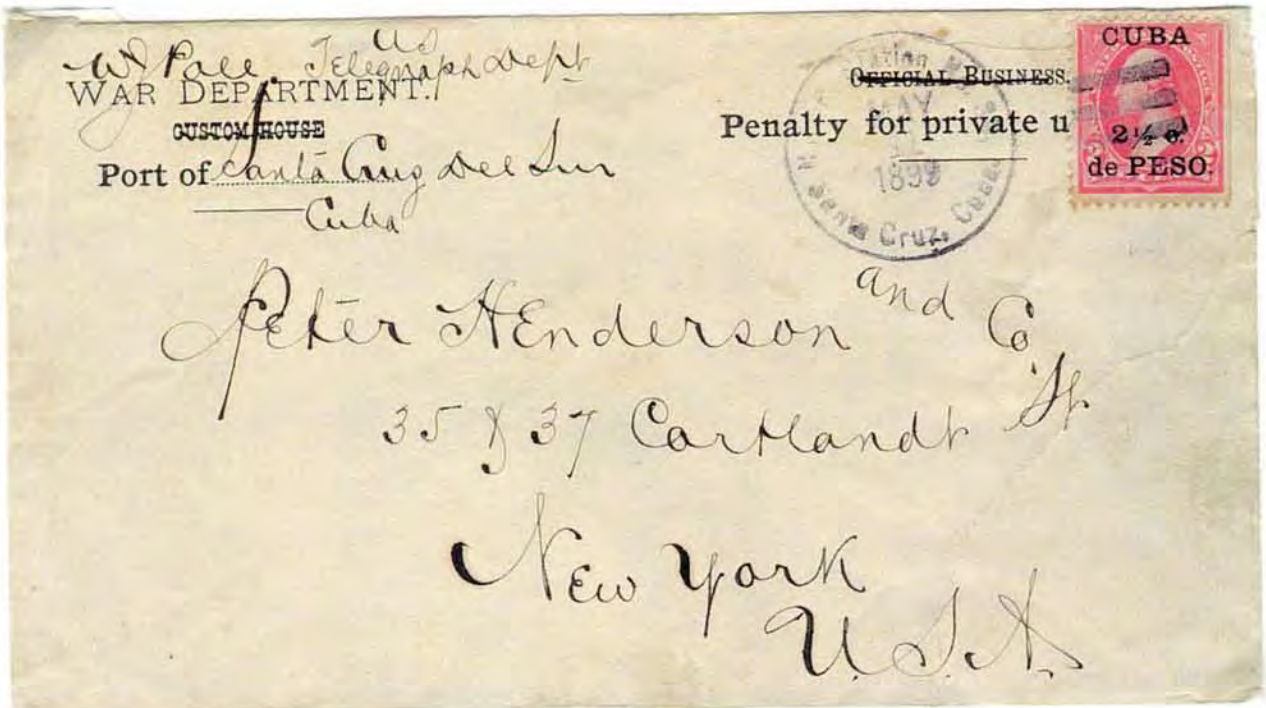
Four types of markings were used in this station: a duplex canceler, a receiving postmark, a registry handstamp, and a straightline auxiliary marking.



Mar. 23, 1899. Santa Cruz del Sur to Washington, DC. Registered soldier's letter (2 cents first class + 8 cents registry fee = 10 cents). There is one other example of each the registered and straightline auxiliary marking. This is the only recorded copy of the receiving handstamp which obliterates the stamps.

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 30. Santa Cruz



May 11, 1899. Privately used War Department penalty envelope from Santa Cruz del Sur to New York. Prepaid soldier's rate. Latest recorded usage from this station.



U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 31. Santo Domingo

This town had a third class post office and a population of 2,079. The official opening date of the military station was February 1, 1899 and it reverted to civilian management on February 11, 1899. The garrison at this station consisted of twelve men.

The only recorded items from this station are the three loose stamps canceled with the crude oval shown below.



U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 32. Jucaro

This small southern coast town was inhabited by only 468 people and had a fourth class colonial post office. The military station opened on February 1, 1899 and was transferred to civilians on the 17th of the same month.

This station used a duplex killer, a postage due straightline marking, and a crude oval handstamp. About half a dozen items have been recorded from Jucaro.



Mar. 16, 1899. Soldier's letter from Jucaro to New York City. Since the envelope was not properly endorsed as a soldier's letter, it was treated as a civilian letter charged the deficit (3 cents) at Jucaro. It should have been charged double the deficit. This is the only reported example of the postage due marking from this station.

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 32. Jucaro



ABOVE: Latest recorded usage from this station showing the rubber device breaking up.

RIGHT: Prepaid triple weight soldier's rate to Pennsylvania.

BELOW: The only recorded usage of the crude oval from this office.



WAR DEPARTMENT.

Post Ciego de Avila, Cuba,

Miss Annie E. Defurk,
 Defurksvilley,
 Schuykill County,
 Penna.,
 U.S.A.



WAR DEPARTMENT.

Post Ciego de Avila, Cuba.

~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~



Miss Annie E. DeTurk,

DeTurksville,

Schuylkill County.

Penna.

U.S.A.

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 33. Sagua la Grande

This town had a second class colonial post office and a population of 12,728. The military post office officially operated from February 1 to 27, 1899.

The only type of marking from this station is the duplex canceler. About a dozen covers have been recorded from this station.



Apr. 25, 1899. Civilian rate letter from Sagua la Grande to New York.



Jun. 10, 1899. Patriotic soldier's cover from Sagua la Grande to Illinois.

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 34. Caibarien

This town had a third class post office and a population of 7,013. The military post office officially operated from February 1 to 27, 1899.

A duplex canceler and a postage due straightline marking were used at this station. All five recorded usages are known used in March.



Mar. 1899. Prepaid soldier's rate from Caibarien to St. Louis, MO.

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 34. Caibarien



Mar. 28, 1899. Unpaid soldier's patriotic envelope from Caibarien to Detroit. This is the only recorded example of the postage due marking from this station.



U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 35. Batabano

This small village near the southern coast had 1,025 inhabitants and a third class post office. The military post office officially operated from February 1 to 17, 1899.

The only item ever recorded from this station is illustrated below.

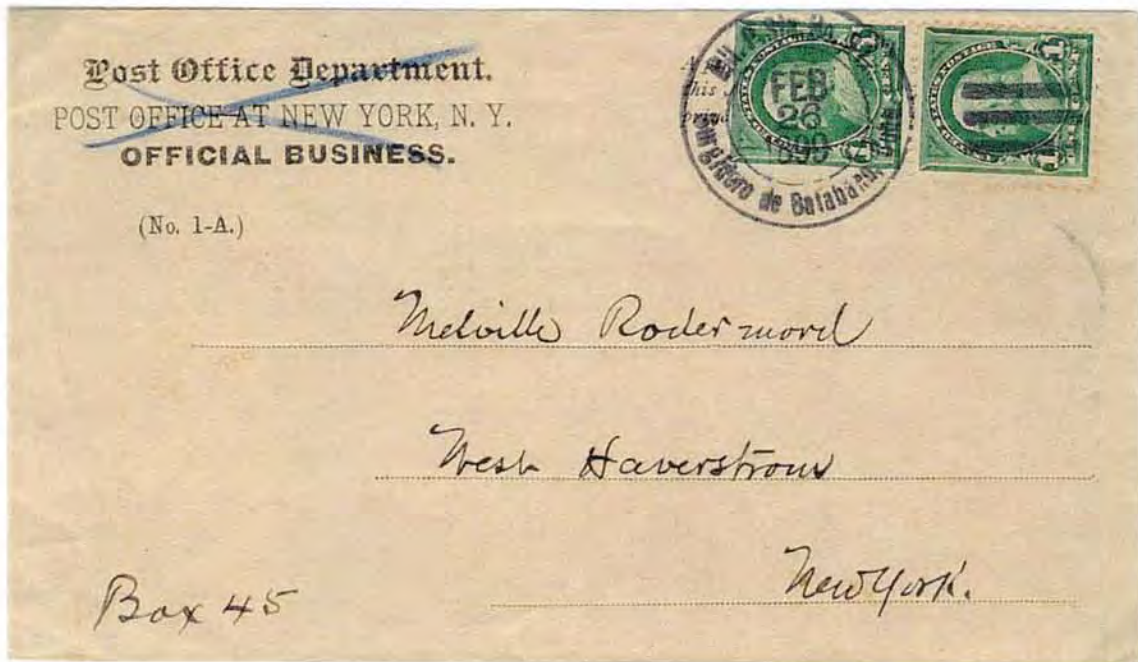


U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 37. Surgidero de Batabano

This town had a population of 3,638 and a third class post office. The military post office officially opened on February 10, 1899 and "closed" on February 26, 1899.

A new style of duplex canceler was used in this station and at station # 38. The only two items recorded from this station are illustrated below.



Feb. 26, 1899. Post Office Department official envelope used privately on a soldier's letter from Surgidero de Batabano to New York State.

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 38. Guines

This town possessed a third class post office and a population of 8,149. The military post office officially opened on February 10, 1899 and reverted to civilian control on the 24th of the same month.

This station used a double circle duplex killer, a crude oval canceler, and a receiving handstamp. Barreras reported a straightline postage due marking with the words "Military Station" deleted but no examples have been seen. A total of six items are recorded from this station, all of them fragments.



The fragment on the left is the earliest recorded item from this station.



Latest usage from Guines.

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Station Number 38. Guines



Only reported example of the crude oval.



There is one other example of the receiving handstamp from this station which is also canceling a bisected Spanish colonial stamp.



U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Military Camps. Cuba

After the closing of the military stations, US soldiers were housed in military camps that were near the largest cities. Only three military camps used distinctive cancellations on their mail.

The biggest military installation in Cuba was Columbia Barracks. It was located near Havana and operated from the day after the closing of military station number 10 until the day before Cuba became independent (February 18, 1899 to May 19, 1902).



Camp Mackenzie was located near the city of Puerto Principe. It opened around April 28, 1900 and closed on January 27, 1902. There are four items recorded with this cancellation.



U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Military Camps. Cuba

Rowel Barracks was located near the city of Cienfuegos and most of its mails were sent through the local civilian post office. Below there are two examples of letters originating in this Camp. On the first one it is indicated in manuscript and on the second by handstamp.



U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Military Camps. Cuba

Below there is one of the two recorded examples of the Rowell Barracks canceler.



Most of the mails from the military were handled by the local civilian post offices. Sancti Spiritus Barracks used an auxiliary straightline marking on letters originating there. Two examples known.



U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Military Hospitals. Cuba

WAR DEPARTMENT.

Post OFFICIAL BUSINESS.

Field Hospital

Camp Columbia Havana Cuba

May 2nd 1899

Wm. H. White

New York City

Gen. Sherman

Washington, D.C.



Penalty for private use, \$300.

May 2, 1899. War Department Official Business envelope from a Field Hospital in Camp Columbia at Havana. It is addressed to a US Senator in Washington DC, and was forwarded to New York City.

Jul. 6, 1899. Marine Hospital Service Official Business envelope used privately by an assistant surgeon from Cienfuegos. It is addressed to a surgeon at the US Marine Hospital Boat in Washington DC.



Treasury Department
MARINE-HOSPITAL SERVICE
OFFICIAL BUSINESS.

Penalty for private use, \$300

Surgeon J. H. White
U.S. Marine Hospital
Washington
D.C.

WAR DEPARTMENT.

Post

OFFICIAL BUSINESS.

Field Hospital

Camp Columbia Havana Cuba

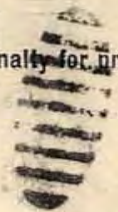
May 2nd 1899

W. Woodruff
W.S.C.

Gen. Chas. M. Depue
(W.S. Quator, S. Ky.)

New York
at

~~*Washington*~~
~~*D.C.*~~



Penalty for private use, \$300.

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Military Camps. USA

By the end of June 1899, 496 officers and men had died in action, 202 others had died of wounds, and 5,509 died of disease.



Aug. 21, 1898. Soldier's letter to Orange, NJ. It was written on board the U.S.S. Prairie and mailed at Montauk Station.



Aug. 31, 1898. Late usage of the Montauk Station canceler

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Military Camps. USA

Aug. 20, 1899. Soldier's postcard from Montauk Station to Hookset, NH. It arrived at its destination in just one day. The text is reproduced below.



"Montauk Point

Aug 20 - 98

Dear Mother;

We have land
ed once more on good
American soil this morning. very
good sailing but nothing to
eat till we struck here and
we found food that we were
able to eat from the
state & Red Cross.

Have felt good up to the
last few days. I have
got an awful Diarrhoea
so am pretty weak. will
write you a letter in a day or
two.

Your Son Henry"

U.S. MILITARY POSTAL STATIONS IN CUBA

Department of Posts



*Mr. Wm.
Trea*

OFFICIAL BUSINESS
PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE \$ 300.

*Mr. Henry G. Muller,
Boston Building,
Cincinnati Ohio.*

OFFICE OF
DIRECTOR OF POSTS FOR CUBA
HAVANA

Top:

Dec. 30, 1901. Official envelope from the department of Posts used privately on a letter from Havana to Washington DC.

Bottom:

On December 19, 1898 Mr. Estes G. Rathbone was appointed Director of Posts for Cuba effective January 1, 1899. This is one of the envelopes he brought with him and used shortly after his arrival to Cuba. The letter, recruiting a clerk for the post office, was written on board the ship to Cuba and mailed on January 7.

Mr. Rathbone was later imprisoned, in 1902, for embezzlement of funds from the Cuban postal system.

There is one other reported envelope of this type.

OFFICE OF
DIRECTOR OF POSTS FOR CUBA
HAVANA

OFFICIAL BUSINESS
PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE \$ 300.

Mr. Henry H. Muller.

Trouton Building,

Cincinnati

Ohio.