

## SPANISH MAIL PACKETS WITH SPAIN

### THE CIA. FRANCO-AMERICANA DE VAPOR, 1856-58

The Franco-Americana company of steamers owned by the Gauthier brothers, with headquarters in Lyon and Paris began its operations in 1856. This was the second attempt by a French company to enter the highly competitive world of transatlantic transportation. The Gauthier brothers' company was, at least at the outset, a completely private venture, without any governmental subsidies to provide their service.

There were eleven trips made from Havana to Cadiz starting 12<sup>th</sup> of June, 1857 and ending 16<sup>th</sup> of April, 1858. In this exhibit we show several covers from some of these trips, indicating the name of the ship and its characteristics and the dates of their departure from Havana and arrival in Spain. We also identify the stamps on each of the covers, their position in the plate, and the postage rate they paid on each cover.

**Steamship Franc-Comtois, French flag, 12<sup>th</sup> July, 1857.**

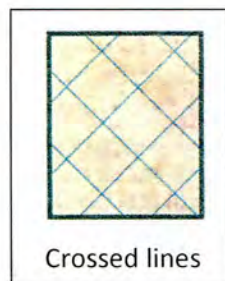
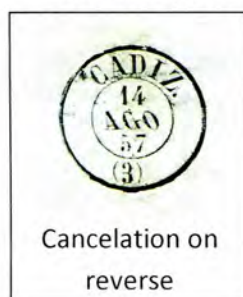
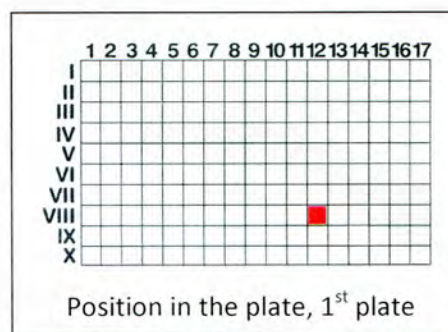
2<sup>nd</sup> trip to Spain.

Length 260 ft.

Beam 36.90 ft.

Moulded depth 20.00 ft.

200 horse power



Cover sent from Havana origin to Cadiz, southern city in Spain, final destination bearing one stamp of ½ RPF for a single rate to Spain up to ½ ounce of weight. The cover left the harbor of Havana the 12<sup>th</sup> July, 1857 by the steamship Franc-Comtois reaching Cadiz the 14<sup>th</sup> August, 1857.



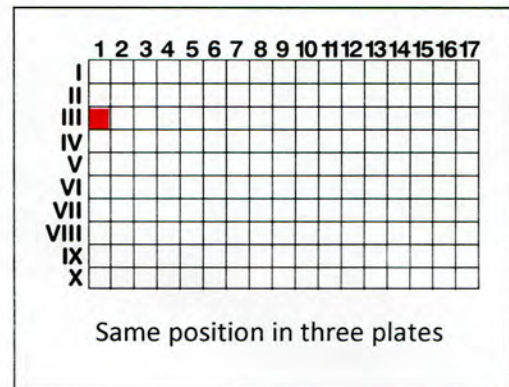
Steamship Barcelona, French flag, 12<sup>th</sup> August, 1857.

3<sup>rd</sup> trip to Spain

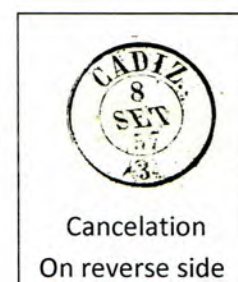
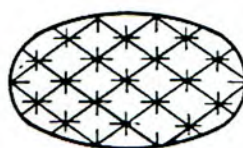
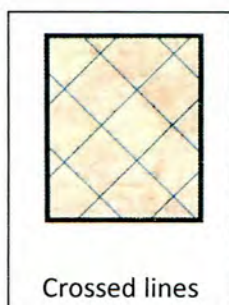
Length 392 ft

Beam 38 ft

Ship Captain "L. Marie"



Cover sent from Havana origin to Cadiz, southern city in Spain, final destination bearing one stamp of ½ RPF for a single rate to Spain up to ½ ounce of weight. The cover left the harbor of Havana the 12<sup>th</sup> August, 1857 by the steamship Barcelona reaching Cadiz the 8<sup>th</sup> September, 1857.





Steamship Alma, French Flag, 12<sup>th</sup> September, 1857.

4<sup>th</sup> trip to Spain.

Length 392 ft.

Beam 36 ft.

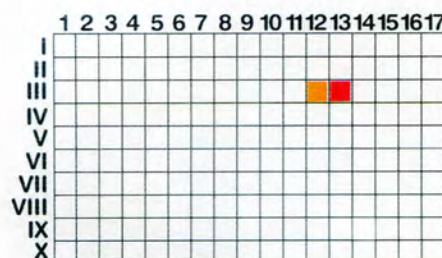
Moulded depth 18ft.

Ship Captain "Bocande"



Reverse side

↓↓↓



Position on the plate, for  
Double rate letter  
CORRFOS III-12



Crossed Lines

↓↓↓



Pos III-12

Same three plates



Type 42



Front of cover from Havana origin to Abadilla (province of Santander Spain final destination) bearing one stamp ½ RPF for a single rate to Spain up to ½ ounce of weight.

The cover bears two stamps of ½ RPF, no watermarks, with a total fee of 1 RPF for a double rate to Spain up to 1 ounce of weight. The covers left the harbor of Havana the 12<sup>th</sup> September, 1857 by the steamship Alma reaching Santander the 11<sup>th</sup> and Cadiz the 12<sup>th</sup> of October, 1857.



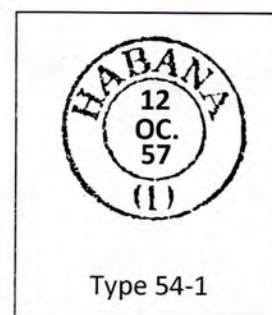
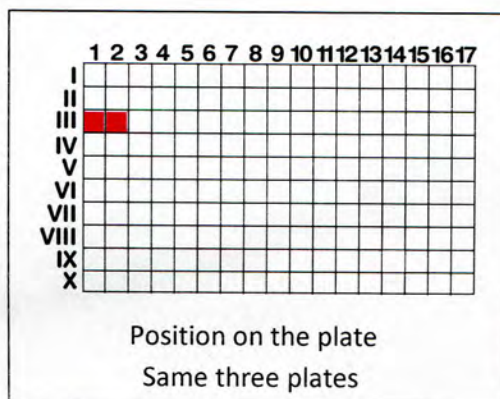
Steamship Cádiz, French flag, 12<sup>th</sup> October, 1857.

5<sup>th</sup> trip to Spain.

Length 271 ft

Beam 37 ft

Ship Captain "Suart"



Cover sent from Havana origin to Cadiz, southern city in Spain, final destination bearing two stamps of ½ RPF for a double rate to Spain up to 1 ounce of weight. The cover left the harbor of Havana the 12<sup>th</sup> October, 1857 by the steamship Cádiz reaching Cádiz the 15<sup>th</sup> November, 1857.

Steamship Alma, 12<sup>th</sup> December, 1857

7<sup>th</sup> trip to Spain.



1-2-2A

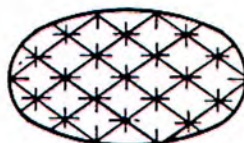
Pos, III-9



Tipo III



Cover from Santiago de Cuba (Principal Administration, Oriente Prov.) to Saltadero closed to Santa Cruz, Canary Islands. The cover left Santiago de Cuba to Havana to get the next steamship in schedule to Spain. Based on the information the date of departure was supposed to be the 12<sup>th</sup> of December, but some annotations indicate that the scheduled trips were not necessarily the actual departures. The cover bears one stamp of 1 RPF for a double rate to Spain up to one ounce of weight to Spain.





Steamship Cadiz, 12<sup>th</sup> of January, 1858

8<sup>th</sup> trip to Spain

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
I																	
II																	
III																	
IV																	
V																	
VI																	
VII																	
VIII																	
IX																	
X																	

Same position in the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> plates.

(the stamp on the left and in the middle are in red, the one in yellowish is the variety CORRFOS IV-16).



1-2-3

Pos III-7



Type 84-1



Cadiz arrival  
Cancellation on  
reverse.



Cover from Havana origin to Cadiz final destination bearing three stamps of ½ RPF with a total of 1 ½ RPF for a triple rate to Spain up to 1 ½ ounce of weight. The cover left the harbor of Havana the 12<sup>th</sup> of January, 1858 by the steamship "Cadiz" arriving at Cadiz 31<sup>st</sup> of January, 1858.



Steamship Franc-Comtois, 12<sup>th</sup> February, 1858

9<sup>th</sup> trip to Spain.



VIII-17

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
I																	
II																	
III																	
IV																	
V																	
VI																	
VII																	
VIII																	
IX																	
X																	

Position in the Plate

1<sup>st</sup> Plating



Cover from Havana origin to Barcelona final destination bearing a stamp of ½ RPF for a single rate to Spain up to ½ ounce of weight. The cover left the harbor of Havana the 12<sup>th</sup> of February, 1858 by the Steamship "Franc-Comtois" arriving at Barcelona 11<sup>th</sup> March, 1858. The stamp (without watermark) is from plate position VIII-17 that eventually degenerated from wear into the famous "Pinocchio" nose flaw that is illustrated to the left of the cover.



Barcelona arrival cancelation



Type 84-1

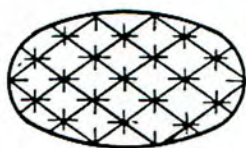


Steamship Barcelona, 12<sup>th</sup> of March, 1858

10<sup>th</sup> trip to Spain.



Crossed Lines  
Water mark



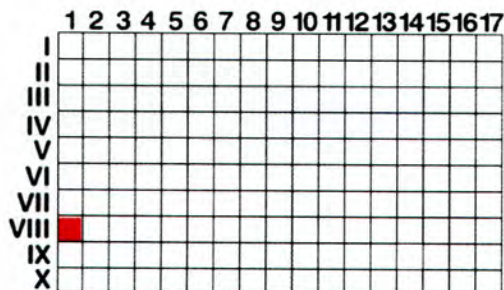
Type 1



Type 84-1



Cover from Havana origin to Villa de Orotava in Tenerife, Canary Islands final destination bearing one stamp of ½ RPF representing the single rate to Spain up to ½ ounce of weight. The cover left the harbor of Havana on the 12<sup>th</sup> of March 1858 arriving on mid of April. Note: The Canary Islands was the region of Spain with a lot of relationship with Cuba due to the large amount of immigrants.



Position in the plate





Another sample of **Steamship Barcelona**, 12<sup>th</sup> of March, 1858

10<sup>th</sup> trip to Spain.



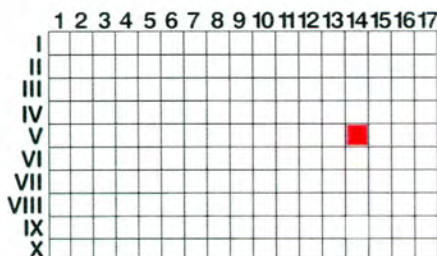
Barcelona cancellation  
on reverse.



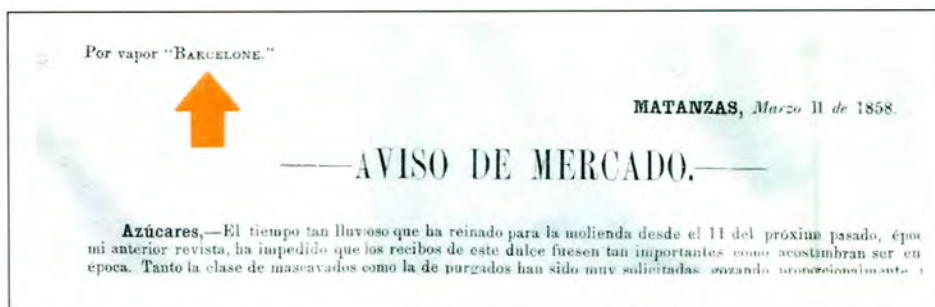
Type 73



Cover from Matanzas origin to Barcelona, Spain final destination with transit in Havana. The cover is bearing one stamp of ½ RPF, no watermarks, representing the single rate to Spain up to ½ ounce of weight. The cover left Matanzas on the 11<sup>th</sup> of March to Havana taking the steamship in schedule to Spain the following day arriving at Barcelona on the 5<sup>th</sup> of April, 1858.



Position in the plate  
Same in the three plates

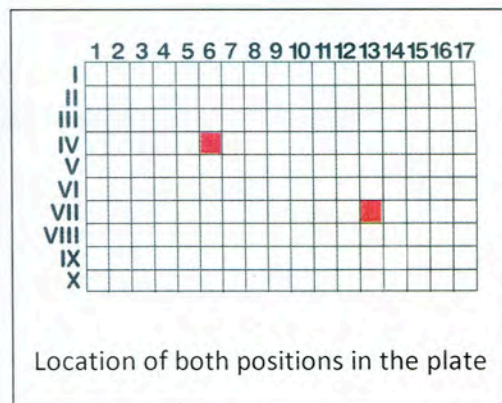


Showing part of the inside letter mentioning the name of the steamship "Barcelone" and the place and the date of origin, Matanzas.



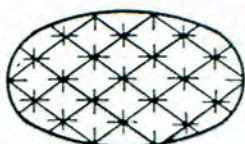
Steamship Alma, 16<sup>th</sup> April, 1858

11<sup>th</sup> trip to Spain and last.



Cover from Havana origin to Omoño ( Santander Province) final destination bearing one stamp of ½ RPF for a single rate to Spain up to ½ ounce of weight, no watermark.

The other cover also from Havana origin to Valencia final destination bearing one stamp of ½ RPF for a single rate to Spain up to ½ ounce of weight, no watermark. The covers left the harbour of Havana 16<sup>th</sup> of April, 1858, arriving at Valencia 19<sup>th</sup>, and Santander 20<sup>th</sup> of May, 1858 being the last trip to Spain by the Gauthier Brothers.



Type 1



Type 42



Valencia cancelation



Santander cancelation