

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 12th of June, 1857 and ending 16th 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, 12th July, 1857.

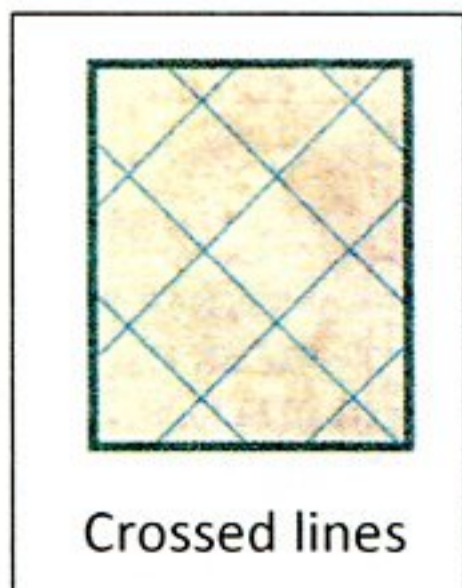
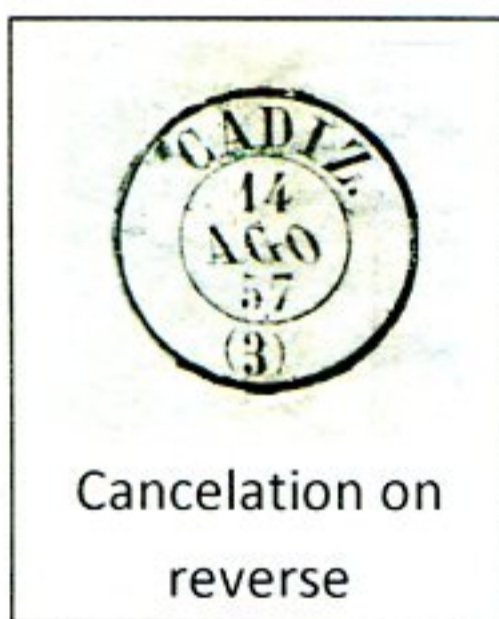
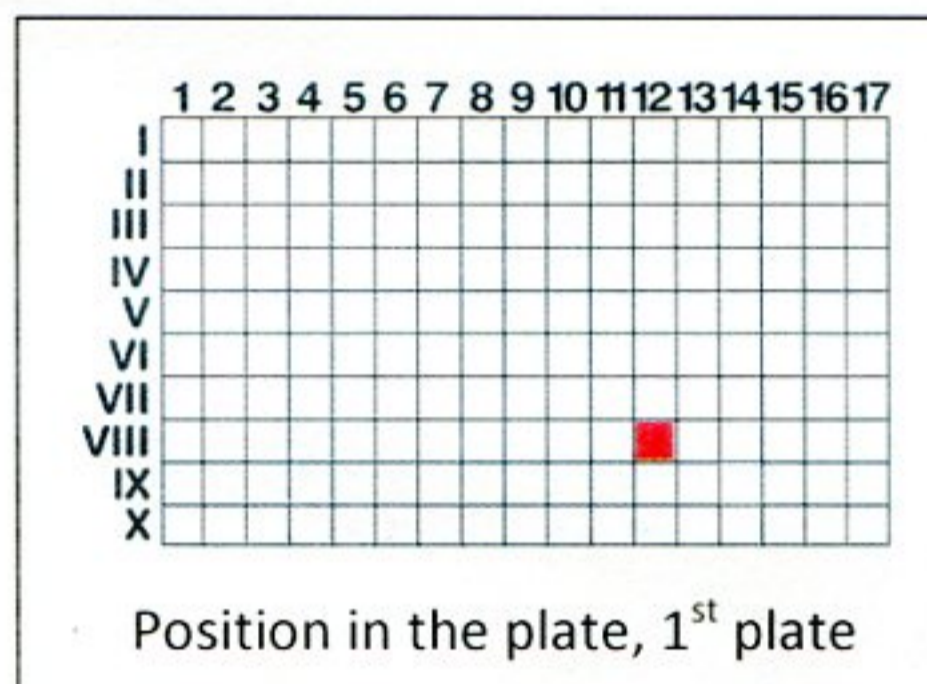
2nd trip to Spain.

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 12th July, 1857 by the steamship Franc-Comtois reaching Cadiz the 14th August, 1857.

Steamship Barcelona, French flag, 12th August, 1857.

3rd trip to Spain

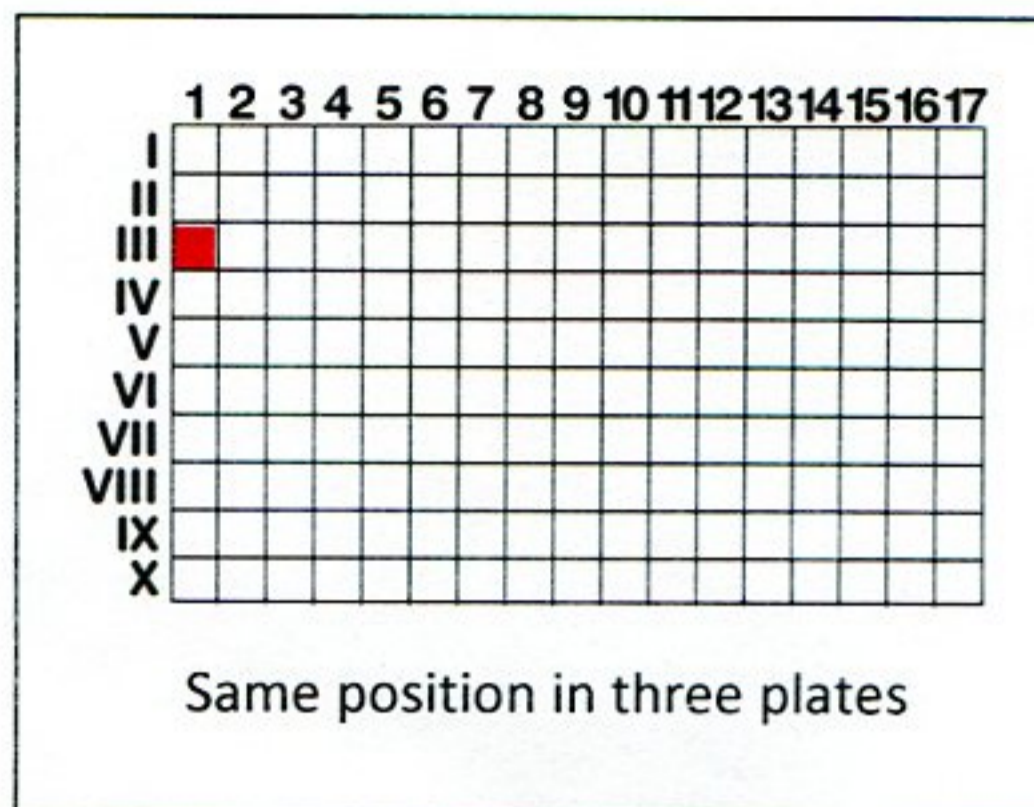
Length 392 ft

Beam 38 ft

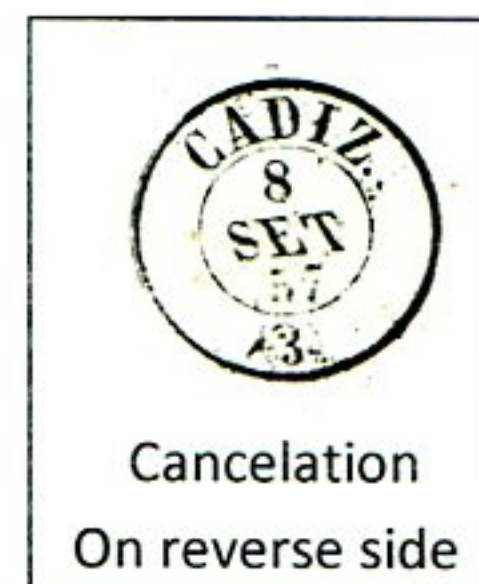
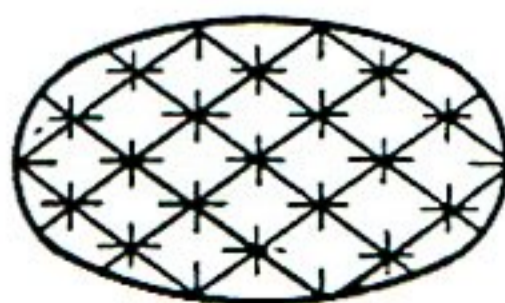
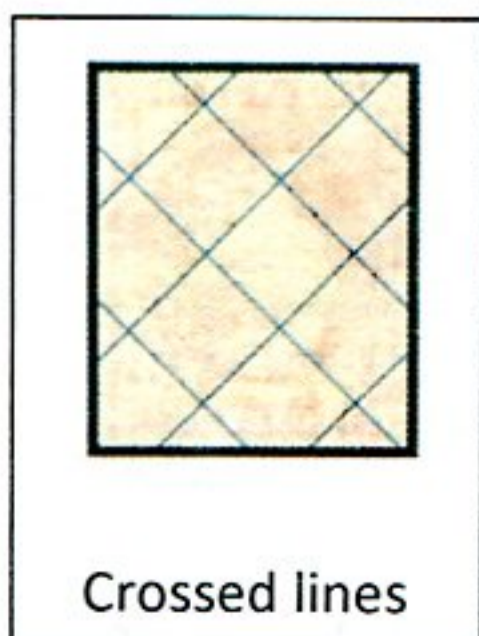
Ship Captain "L. Marie"



Pos III-1



Cover sent from Havana origin to Cadiz, southern city in Spain, final destination bearing one stamp of 1/2 RPF for a single rate to Spain up to 1/2 ounce of weight. The cover left the harbor of Havana the 12th August, 1857 by the steamship Barcelona reaching Cadiz the 8th September, 1857.



Another sample of Steamship Barcelona, 12th of August, 1857

3rd trip to Spain.

Cover from Havana origin to Valmaseda, Vizcaya, Spain final destination. The cover is bearing one stamp of ½ RPF, crossed lines watermarks, representing the single fee to Spain up to ½ ounce of weight.



Crossed lines watermarks



Pos. I-3



Inside the cover the letter mentions about a construction project of properties at the city of Havana in which D. Francisco de Arteche was involved.
 Receipt deposit made into the account of D. Francisco de Arteche, a prominent lender in Valmaseda, Vizcaya , Spain.



Queen Isabella II

CUBA 1857

Steamship Alma, French Flag, 12th September, 1857.

4th trip to Spain.

Length 392 ft.

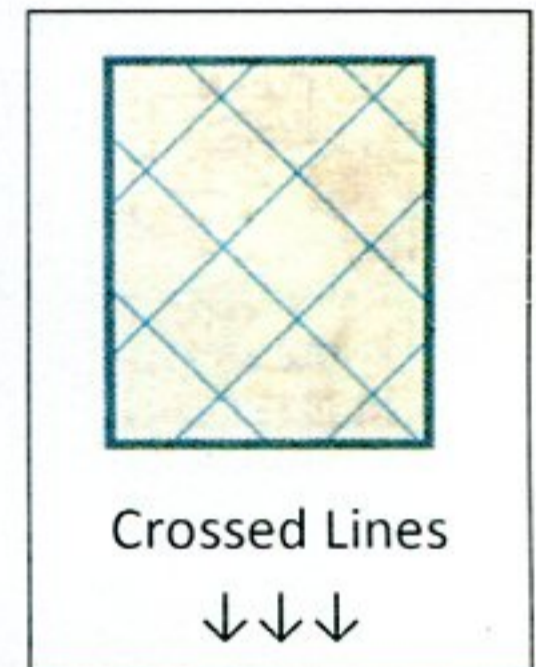
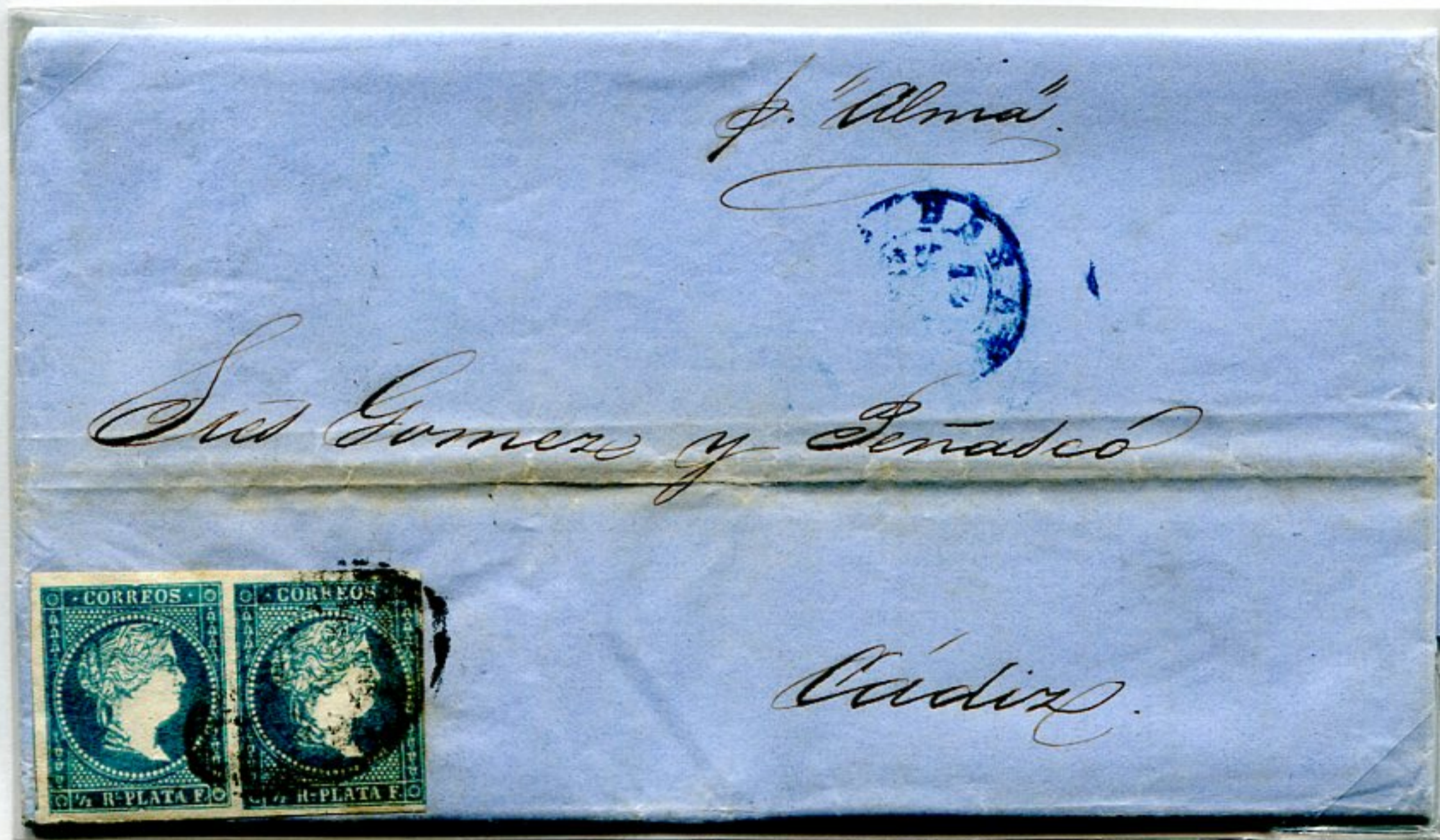
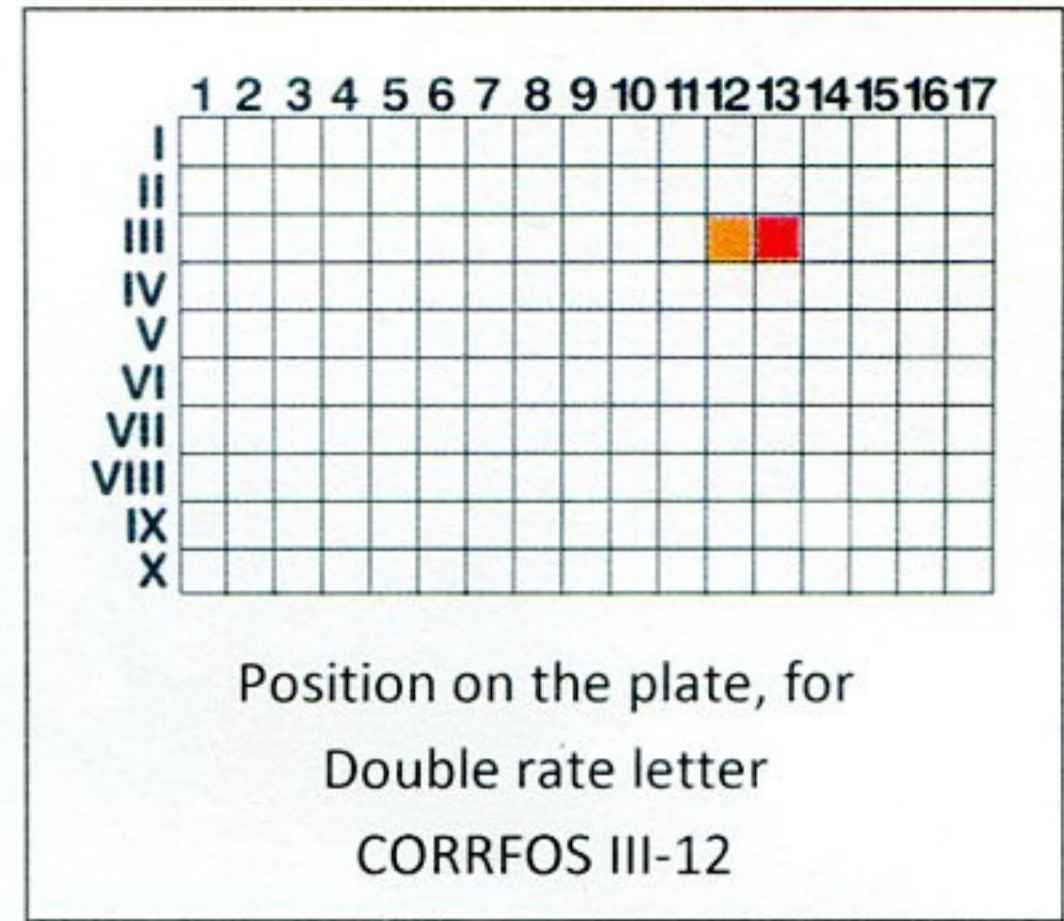
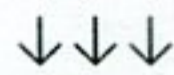
Beam 36 ft.

Moulded depth 18ft.

Ship Captain "Bocande"



Reverse side



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 12th September, 1857 by the steamship Alma reaching Santander the 11th and Cadiz the 12th of October, 1857.

Queen Isabella II

CUBA | 1857

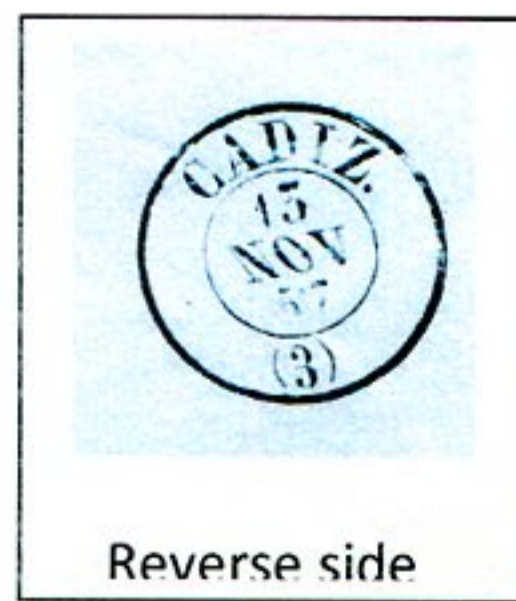
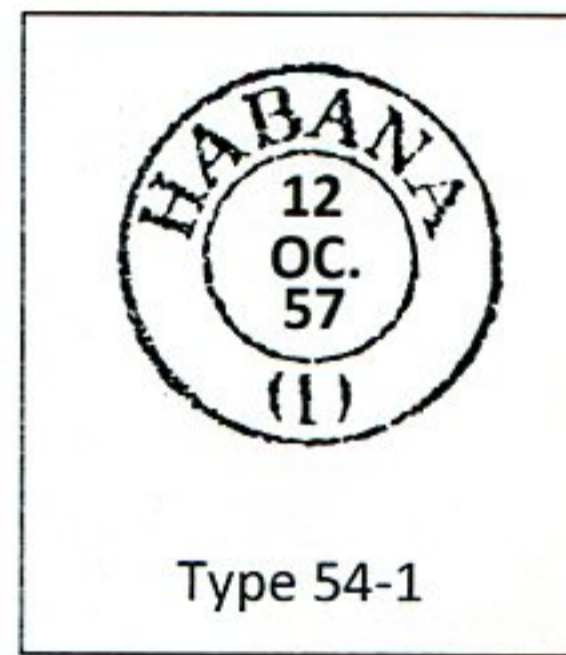
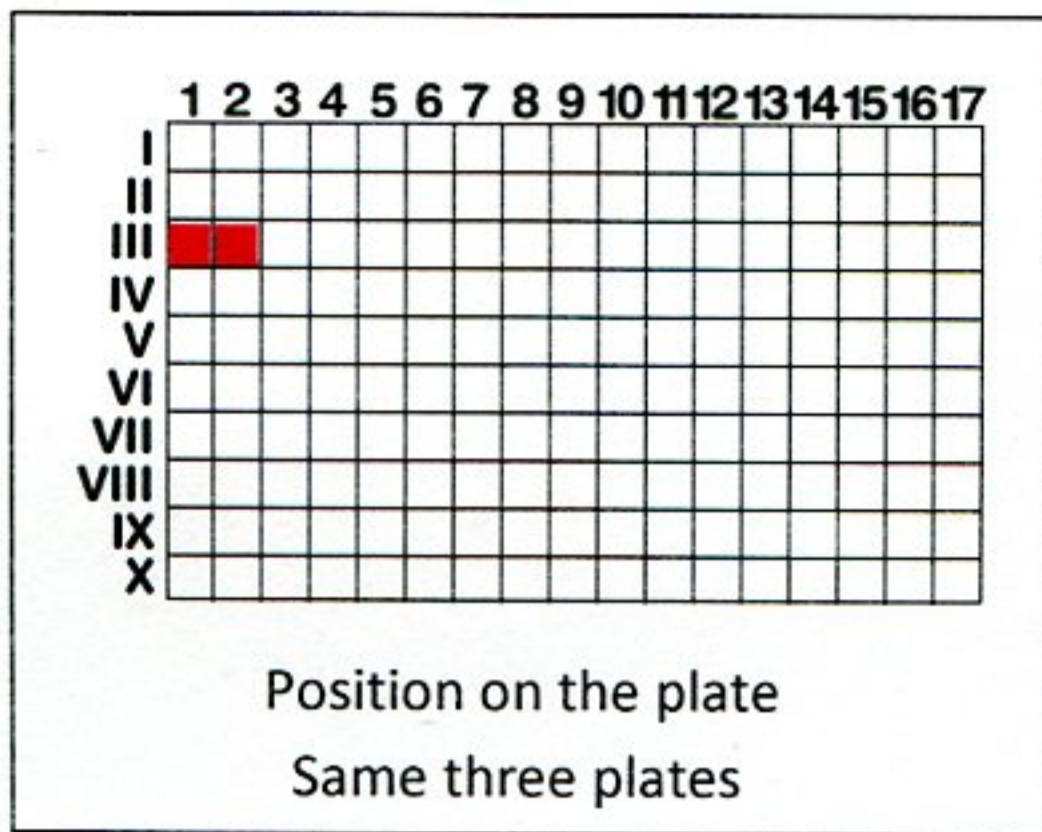
Steamship Cádiz, French flag, 12th October, 1857.

5th 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 1/2 RPF for a double rate to Spain up to 1 ounce of weight. The cover left the harbor of Havana the 12th October, 1857 by the steamship Cádiz reaching Cádiz the 15th November, 1857.

Steamship Alma, 12th December, 1857

7th trip to Spain.



↑ 1-2-2A

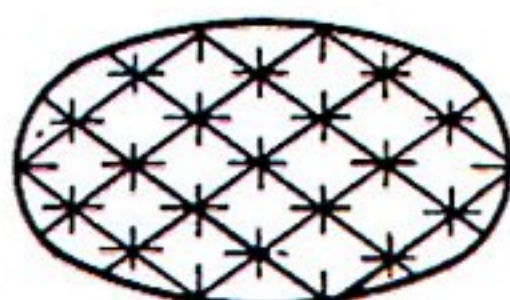
Pos, III-9



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 12th 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.

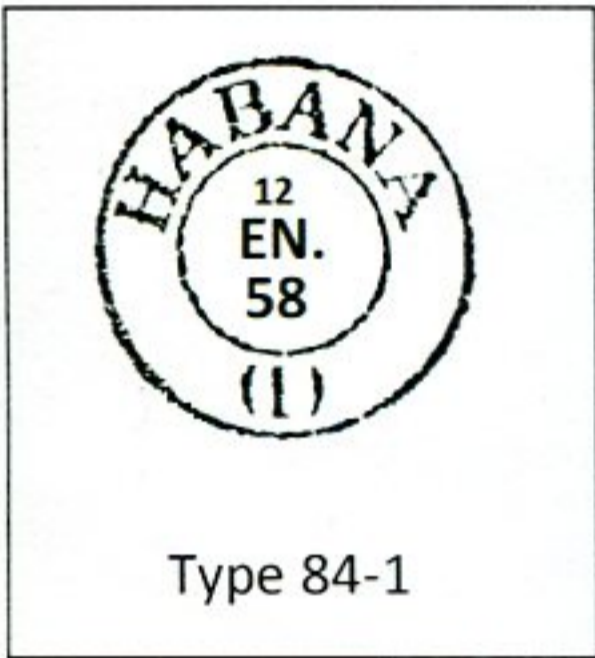


Steamship Cadiz, 12th of January, 1858

8th 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 1st, 2nd and 3rd plates.
(the stamp on the left and in the middle are in red, the one in yellowish is the variety CORRFOSS IV-16).



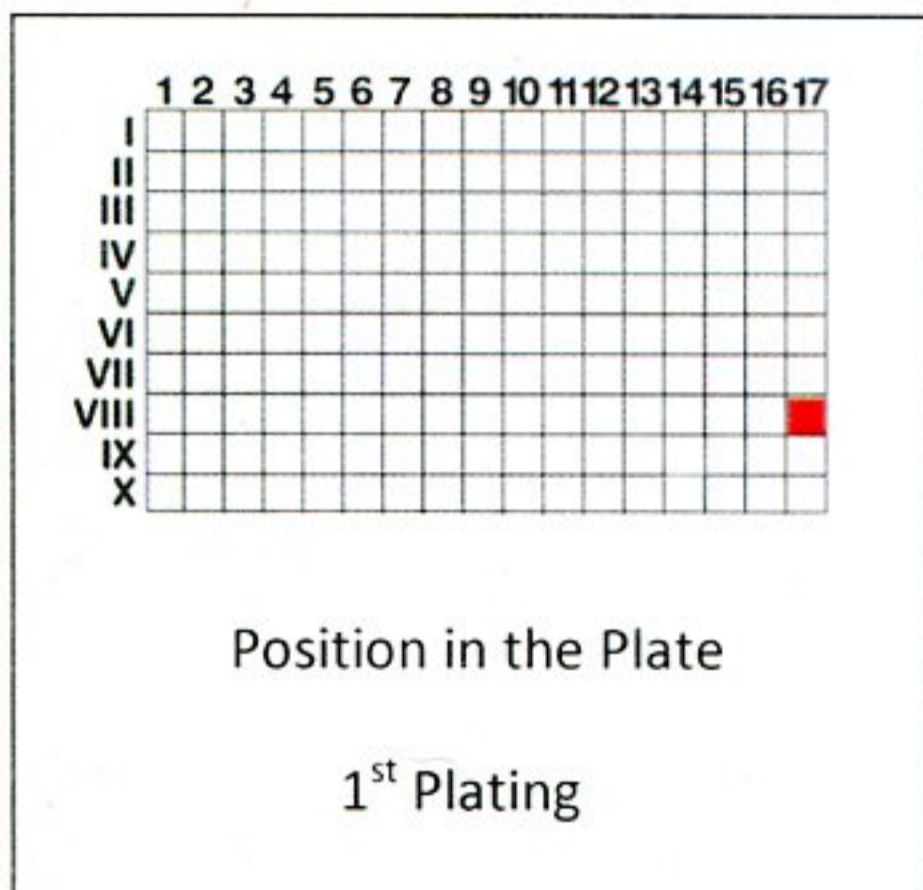
Cover from Havana origin to Cadiz final destination bearing three stamps of ½ RPF with a total of 1 ½ RPF for a triple rate to Spain up to 1 ½ ounce of weight. The cover left the harbor of Havana the 12th of January, 1858 by the steamship "Cadiz" arriving at Cadiz 31st of January, 1858.

Steamship Franc-Comtois, 12th February, 1858

9th trip to Spain.



VIII-17



Cover from Havana origin to Barcelona final destination bearing a stamp of 1/2 RPF for a single rate to Spain up to 1/2 ounce of weight. The cover left the harbor of Havana the 12th of February, 1858 by the Steamship "Franc-Comtois" arriving at Barcelona 11th 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



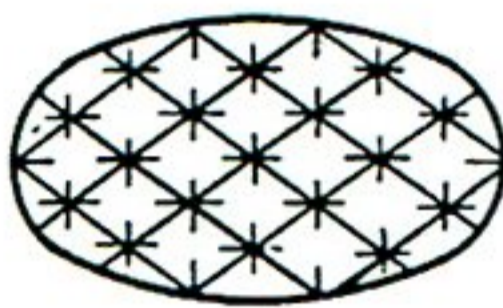
Type 84-1

Steamship Barcelona, 12th of March, 1858

10th 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 12th 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.

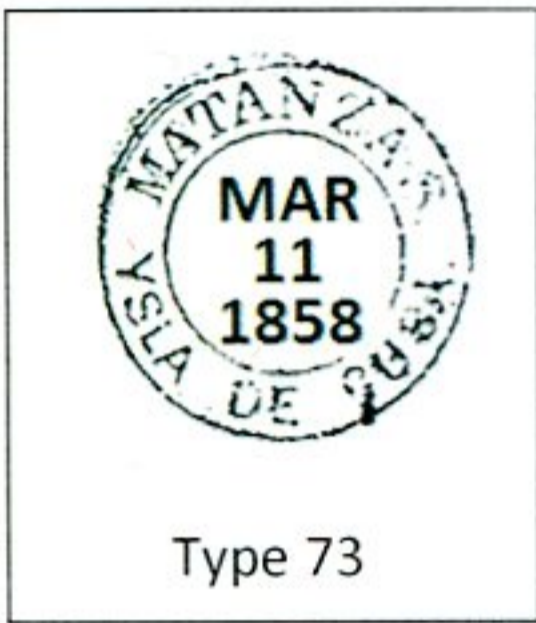
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
I																	
II																	
III																	
IV																	
V																	
VI																	
VII																	
VIII																	
IX																	
X																	

Position in the plate

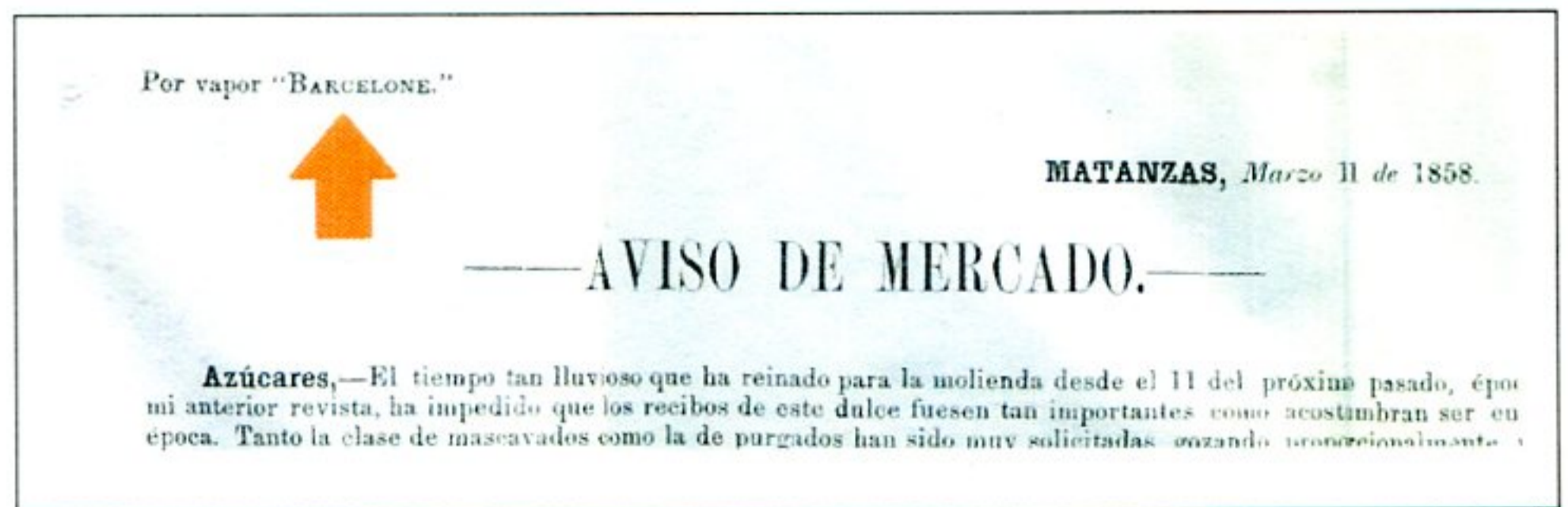
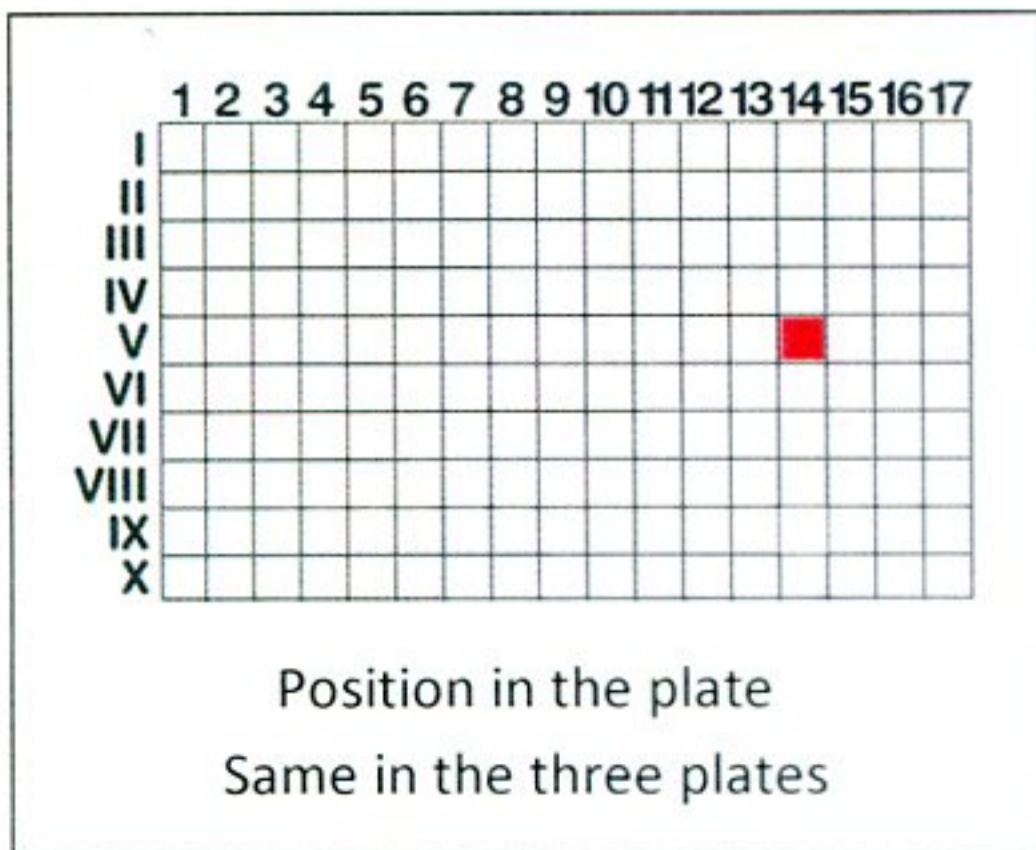


Another sample of Steamship Barcelona, 12th of March, 1858

10th trip to Spain.



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 11th of March to Havana taking the steamship in schedule to Spain the following day arriving at Barcelona on the 5th of April, 1858.



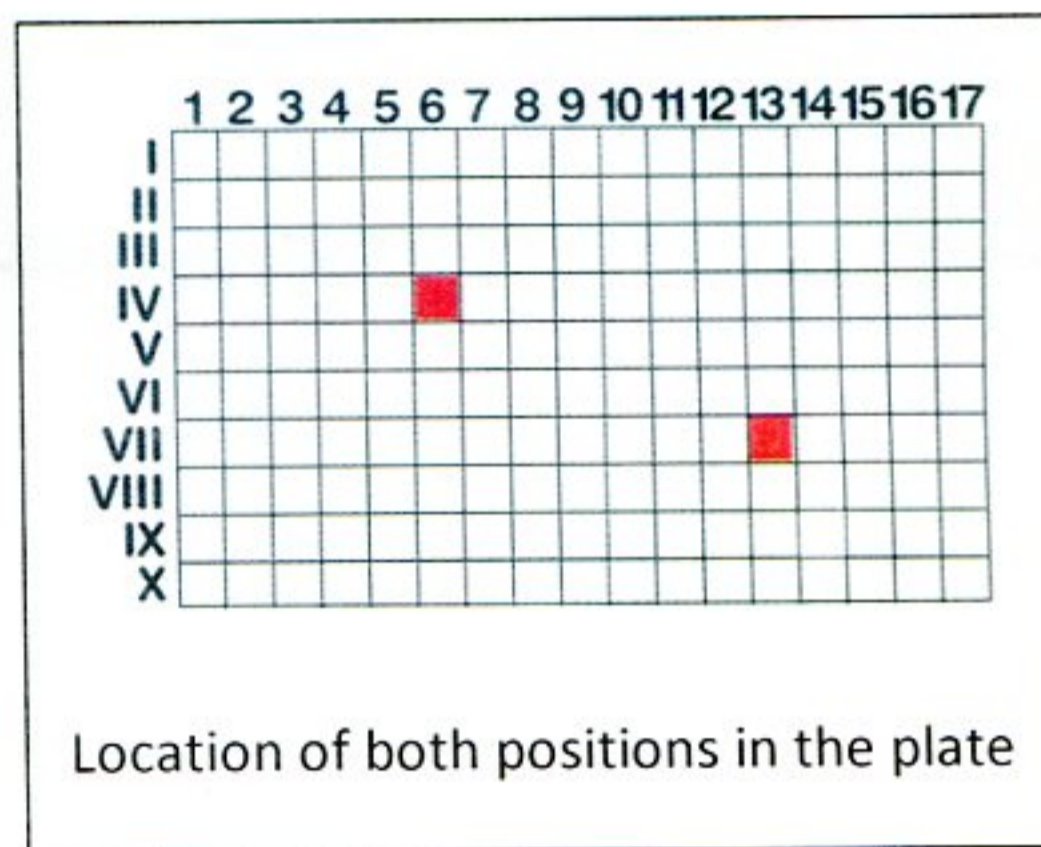
Showing part of the inside letter mentioning the name of the steamship "Barcelone" and the place and the date of origin, Matanzas.

Queen Isabella II

CUBA 1857

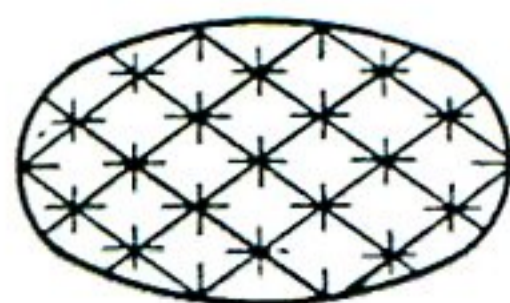
Steamship Alma, 16th April, 1858

11th 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 16th of April, 1858, arriving at Valencia 19th, and Santander 20th of May, 1858 being the last trip to Spain by the Gauthier Brothers.



Type 1



Type 42



Valencia cancelation



Santander cancelation

The company of the Brothers Gauthier provided the service from Cuba to Spain and vice versa. The covers leaving Spain were done from the Cádiz harbor leaving every 12th of every month starting on 12th of May, 1857 and finalizing the last voyage on the 12th of March, 1858. The ships came down from Le Havre five to 10 days before leaving Cádiz. The calls were Canary Islands, San Juan de Puerto Rico and arriving at Havana, Cuba.

The following two covers are the only ones in this collection with final destination Puerto Rico and Cuba.

Covers from Spain to Cuba are seldom seen in addition to Puerto Rico final destination which is harder to be found.

Steamship Cádiz, 12th September, 1857.

Cover from Barcelona to Ponce, Puerto Rico with transit in Cádiz, southern harbor in Spain. The cover bears one stamp of 1 Real of Vellón, **crossed lines watermarks**, representing the single rate to the Antilles up to ½ ounce of weight. The cover is dated 2nd of September in Barcelona which arrived in Cádiz until the departure date of 12th of September. The cover was received on the 5th of October, 1857 in Puerto Rico.



Very seldom seen cover from Spain to Puerto Rico. RR

Steamship Franc-Comtois, 12th January, 1858.

Cover sent from Santander, Spain origin to Puerto Principe, Cuba final destination. The cover bears two stamps of 1 Real of Vellón with a total of 2 Reales of Vellón representing double rate to the Antilles up to 1 ounce of weight. The stamps belong to the 1856 series with **crossed lines watermarks**.

The cover was originated in Santander on the 4th of January with transit at the harbor of Cádiz for the next scheduled steamship to the Antilles. Departed on the 12th of January, 1858 arriving at the final destination of Puerto Príncipe, Cuba.



Cover from Spain to Cuba bearing two stamps of 1 Real de Vellón, crossed lines watermarks.

(RRR)