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The King Alfonso XIII Issues of Cuba—1890-98

Unpublished photocopies, courtesy of Mr. Robertson, of his gold medal award winning collection of these issues that I received from him on 15 May 1989. This collection was subsequently sold by Mr. Robertson at the Soler & Llach international auction held in Barcelona, Spain on 6-7 March 1990 in lots #1906 to 1981. Lot 1981 was basically the collection presented here minus those items that are marked with individual lot numbers that were extracted from the main body of the collection and offered as separate lots in the sale. Mr. Ignacio Prats purchased lot 1981, extracted some items of interest for his own collection, and then resold the bulk of the lot to me. I was also a heavy buyer of the lots sold separately at the auction. See <S&LL9003> for a listing and prices realized of the Cuban lots in the auction.

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THE KING ALFONSO XIII ISSUES OF CUBA - 1890-98

by Peter A. Robertson

With the ascension of a six year old boy to the throne of Spain, a new series of stamps were needed. His father, King Alfonso XII, had died suddenly while visiting the victims of an epidemic in the south of Spain, making the 'boy'king', the leader of his country.

This collection concentrates on the stamps issued during his reign, during the time that Spain owned Cuba. All phases of the Spanish issues are included. Two different designs were used, and all varieties and errors are shown. Postal stationery and the newspaper stamps are present, along with the regular issues. Postal history items are shown along with some largest known mint and used multiples.

The change of colors are shown and explained. Rates are illustrated and explained where needed. Postal forgeries of the last issue are included, as is the only reported cover with postal forgeries on it.

A spanish military patriotic cover is shown, with the stamps of this issue on it, required as the cover was sent into the United States.

A letter found on a battlefield is also shown, the first conflict between Spanish and U.S. forces in the Spanish-American War. It is addressed to a Cuban fighting against the U.S. forces, he being a volunteer from Santiago fighting to defend his city.

The exhibit concludes with the end of Spanish domination of Cuba in 1898, with the withdrawal of the Spanish soldiers in December.



With the ascension of a six year old boy to the throne of Spain, a new series of stamps were needed. His father, King Alfonso XII, had died of cholera, which he had caught while visiting the victims of an epidemic in the south of Spain, in an attempt to rally his people. His sudden death, made the 'boy king', Spain's new leader.

This collection concentrates on the stamps issued during his reign, while Spain still ruled Cuba. All phases of the Spanish issues are included, from proofs where known, thru the final issued stamps. Two different designs were used, and all recorded errors are shown. Postal stationery and the newspaper issues are presented, along with the regular postage stamps. Large mint and used multiples are included, many being the largest recorded blocks, and various on cover usages are illustrated. Effort has been made to show stamps on cover paying a particular rate, intended for that value. A few examples are also included where postage stamps were used for revenue purposes, and where revenue stamps paid postage. Bisected stamps, to make up a correct rate, are also presented.

The changes of color, for the issues of 1890-97 are shown and explained. This also applied for the newspaper stamps, and they are also shown, in all issued colors.

Postal routes and rates are explained where needed. A spanish military patriotic cover which went via the United States, is shown with this issue on it, as required.

A letter found on a battlefield is presented, addressed to a volunteer fighting for Spain and against the U.S. invaders, he being from Santiago and defending that city.

The only postal forgeries which occurred during this time period are shown, along with the only surviving usage on cover. A piece with the three centavos forgery used in combination with a genuine two centavos stamp, is also present, and is the only reported such configuration and usage.

The 1898 issue is highlighted by the low milesima values on cover paying their intended rates. A half sheet of the fifteen centavos stamp is presented, illustrating the location of the re-entry flaw. Registered usages of postal cards are shown, along with 'SPECIMEN's.

The exhibit concludes with the end of Spanish domination of Cuba in 1898, with the withdrawl of Spanish troops, during December of that year.