

<SPOO9309>* Spooner, Robert B.

Cuban Air Mail Service 1914-35, '39

Ambler, Pa.: The author; philatelic exhibit presented at the BALPEX 93 Philatelic Exhibition held September 4-6, 1993 in Hunt Valley, Maryland; 128 unnumbered pages (8 frames of 16 pages each). The reference is to a photocopy of the exhibit, courtesy of Mr. Spooner. The collection was awarded a silver medal at the exhibition.

Quoting from the introductory page of the exhibit: "The collection uses mostly flown covers to portray developments during 1914-1935, when pioneers, international airlines, and Cuba's national airline attempted and then inaugurated air mail service to most of Cuba. It also focuses on two special projects, supported by the Cuban post office in 1935 and 1939, to fly mail by gliders and postal rockets." The exhibit consisted of two frames covering the National air mail service within Cuba, two frames each covering the International air mail service to and from Cuba, and two frames on the glider and rocket service special projects.

CUBAN AIR MAIL SERVICE

1914-35, '39

By its pioneer attempts and early scheduled air mail service, Cuba became the gateway to Latin America. International flights from Key West and Miami found airfields ready and the gate open, by the Machado/Trippe agreement, which gave Pan Am landing rights in Cuba. Although Cuba dreamed of a national airline, it took many years.

The collection uses mostly flown covers to portray developments during 1914-1935, when pioneers, international airlines, and Cuba's national airline attempted and then inaugurated air mail service to most of Cuba. It also focuses on two special projects, supported by the Cuban post office in 1935 and 1939, to fly mail by gliders and Postal rockets.

PLAN OF THE COLLECTION

National air mail service within Cuba: (frames 1 and 2) Following Pioneer efforts and Lindbergh's Caribbean tour, activity began on the country's wish for a national and international air mail service. A Pan Am survey found that the time was not yet right. Finally, after more than two years, Cuba's dream started to take shape, but with another contractor. Under their direction, several internal routes developed.

International air mail service to Cuba: (frames 3 and 4) Starting with crossings from Key West to Havana by Aeromarine West Indies Airways, a number of air mail carriers (WIAE, Pan Am, NYRBA, Mexican CTAMC, Carib. Air., and the German DO X and Graf Zep.) had vied for the rights to provide air mail services to Cuba. Special impetus for these later services came from Lindbergh's Caribbean goodwill tour, which surveyed the entire area for airline routes. However, by the end of the period, Pan Am dominated the picture.

International air mail service from Cuba: (frames 5 and 6) Although the national route continued to grow for several years, its economic strength did not permit extension to international routes. Foreign carrier international service to other than Miami or WIAE destinations waited while Cuban officials bargained over more favorable contract terms without results. Dispatches to Pan Am and U.S. routes required first, flight to Miami via FAM 4 with Cuban franking, then application of U.S. stamps for the ongoing dispatch. When the national route lost momentum, Cuba worked out a contract with Pan Am to dispatch to all destinations.

Special projects: glider and rocket service: (frames 7 and 8) The two projects aimed at new approaches to transporting mail that the Cuban post office considered worthy of study and testing for use by their postal system, if successful. Although they never developed into working systems, they brought much attention to the efforts of the Cuban postal system.

Most difficult to collect items

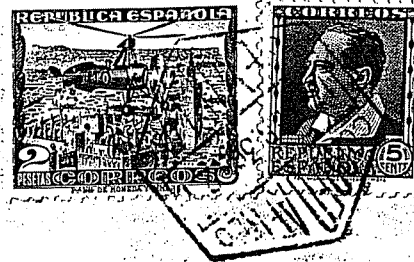
Lindbergh-flown items

Robert B. Spooner
Sept 1993

Esta carta se llevo de
CUBA a ESPAÑA

el
Tte. Col. Gonzales
Enero 1936

[Handwritten signature]



Mr. John G. Kunz

Miranda

Oriente

Cuba

Llevado por el Tte. Menendez en
el Avion "4 de Septiembre"

**CORREO AÉREO
PAR AVION**

NATIONAL AIR MAIL SERVICE WITHIN CUBA

Jaime Gonzalez Pioneer Flight

First air mail attempt poorly reported by the literature. First listed successful, then as a crash on take off. In 1943, experts concluded crash was night before flight. Only 4 specially printed covers have been reported.

**DIRECCION AQUI
ADDRESS HERE
ADRESO TIE CI**

*Sr. Felipe Sapeyera
Villagab 13
Habana*

**Correo Aereo
Aera - Postvojo
Air - Postway**

**SELLOS AQUI
STAMPS HERE
POSMARKOJ TIE CI**

AVISO

Esta carta fué llevada a la Habana por el aire, desde Cienfuegos en el viaje efectuado hoy día 24 de Febrero de 1914, por el aviador JAIMÉ GONZÁLEZ, en su monoplano "MORANE".

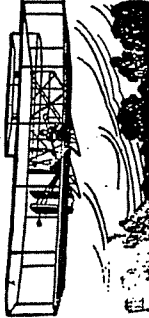
NOTICE

This letter was carried to Havana by the air, from Cienfuegos, in his trip of today 24th February 1914, by the flyman JAIMÉ GONZÁLEZ in his monoplane "MORANE".

38290

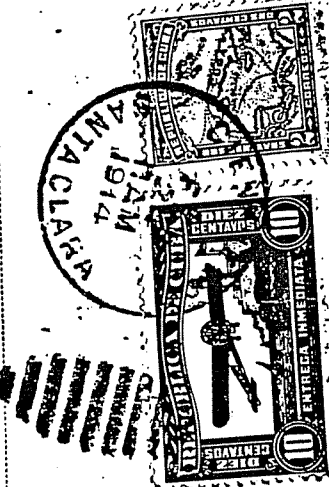
AVISO

Tu el lettero estas portita aere, de JAIMÉ GONZÁLEZ, de urbo Cienfuegos al cesurbo Habana, hodiau, la 24a de Febrero 1914, je unoplano "MORANE".

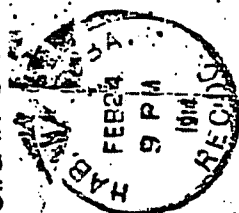


Mr.

Sa.



Pictured in Terry's book. Similar cover to Lapeira in Cruz Planas Museum of Ministry of Communications.



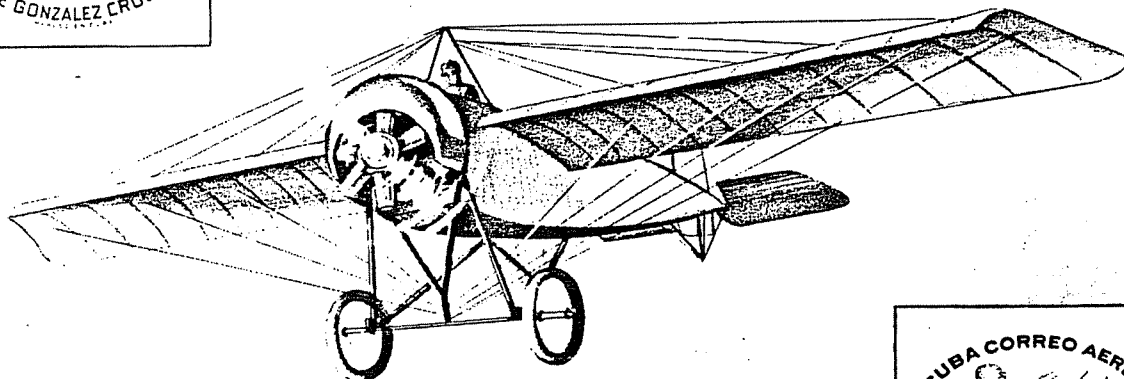
Backstamp 9 PM

Jaime Gonzalez Pioneer Flight

After repairing the plane, Gonzalez agreed to a new flight date, the XII anniversary of Cuban independence. This time he completed the flight nonstop as required for a prize from the Cuban Congress.



REPUBLICA DE CUBA
MINISTERIO DE COMUNICACIONES
DIRECCION DE CORREOS
Negociado de Servicio Internacional y
Asuntos Generales



JAIME GONZALEZ CROCIER
VUELO CIENTFUEGOS-HABANA
20 DE MAYO DE 1914



Announcement for Gonzalez commemorative stamps issued on the 35th anniversary of his death trying to establish a southern air route.

Survey flights for National Route

Pilots: C. B. Collyer and Grant Mason
Contractor: Pan American Airways
Route: Havana to Santiago de Cuba
(stops, Santa Clara and Camaguey)
Rate 5 cents per ounce

Primer Vuelo Experimental
Havana-Santiago de Cuba
Piloto: Grant Mason Jr.
y C.B. Colleyer.



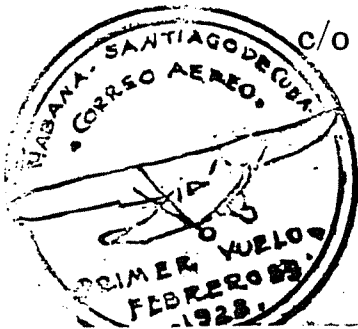
Sr. M. A. MOENCK

c/o Sr. URBANO DEL REAL

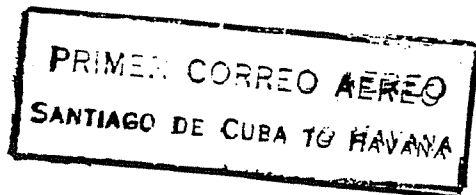
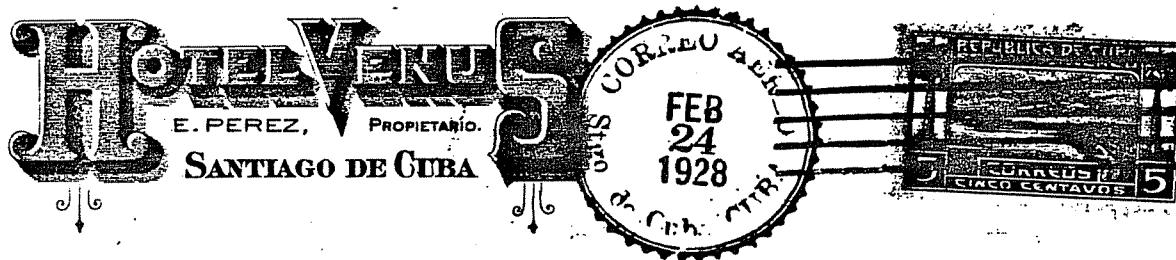
Compañía Ron Bacardí

Santiago de Cuba

ORIENTE



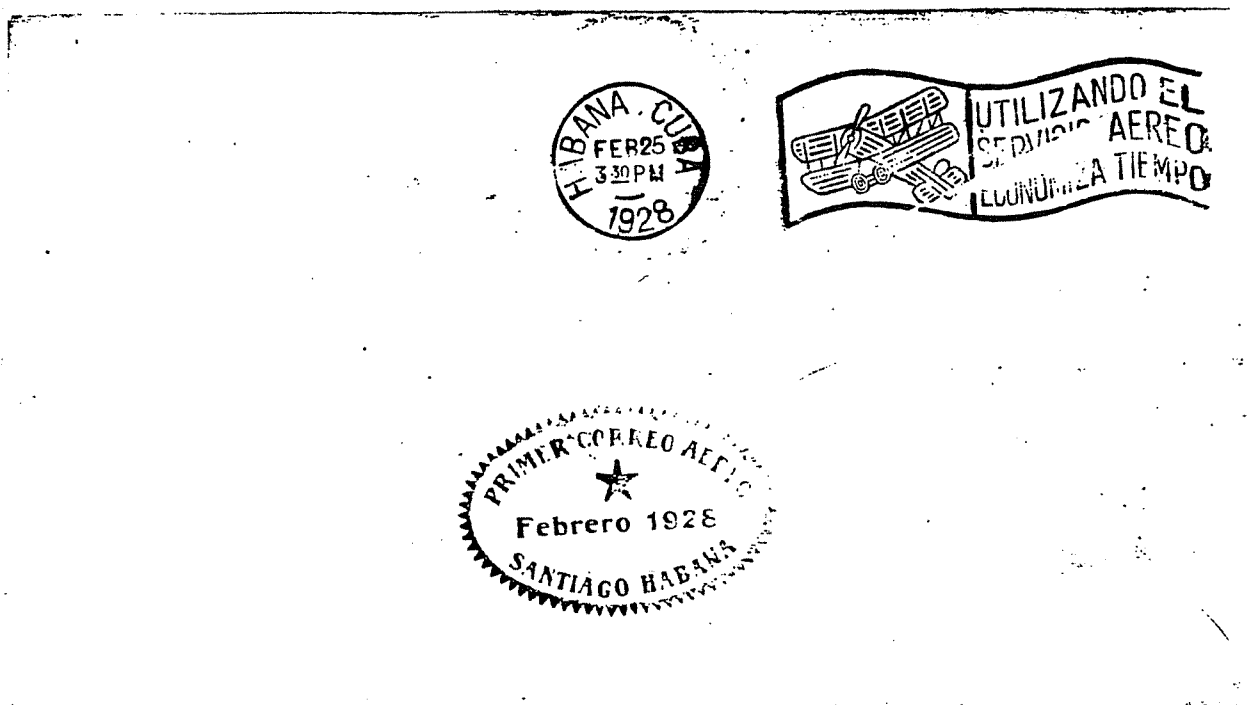
Eastbound cover has special purple cachet and 5 cent Lindbergh air mail stamp.
Havana postmark shows dispatch at 9 AM; backstamped Santiago de Cuba, 5:30 PM.



B.L.Rowe
Manzana de Gomez, 343
Havana, Cuba.

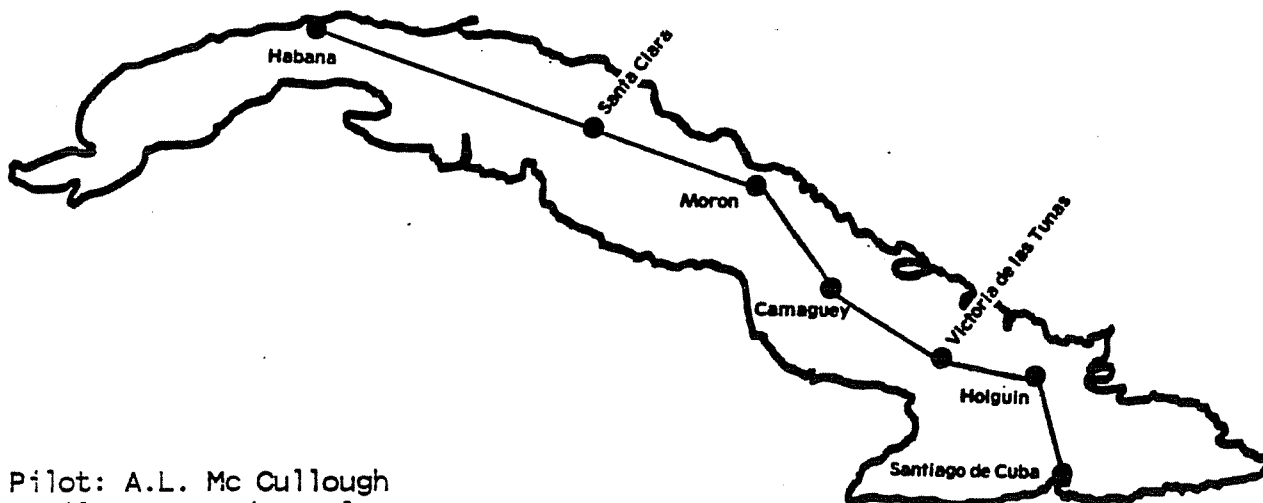
BANKARD ST LOUIS

Basil Rowe return cover the next day with boxed cachet, a first Cuban air mail stamp, and special Santiago de Cuba postmark. It has Havana backstamp 3:30 PM.



Another return cover received this oval cachet with star.
Final result of survey: decision to wait two years before activating service.

Inauguration of Route No. 1



Pilot: A.L. Mc Cullough

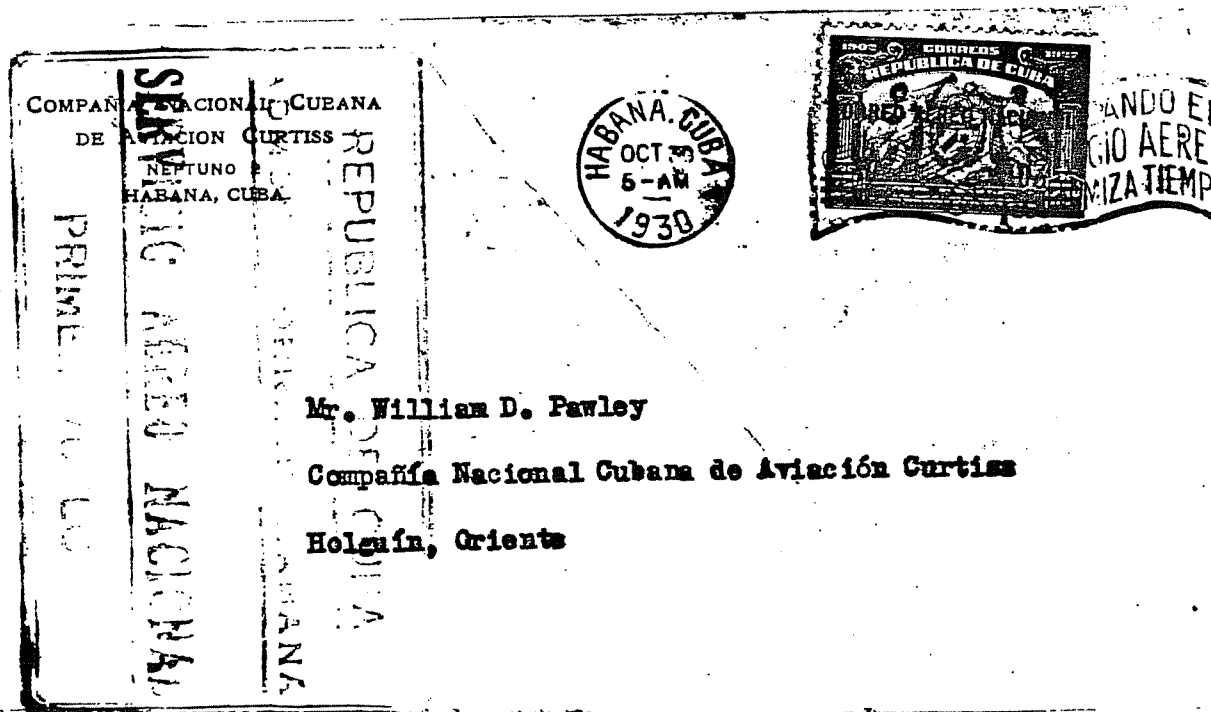
Copilot: Rene de Ayala

Contractor: Compania Nacional Cubana de
Aviacion Curtiss (CNCAC)

Aircraft: Ford Trimotor from Curtiss-Wright Flying Service

Frequency of service: Daily, except Sundays

A special 10 Centavo air mail stamp was issued for the flight by overprinting 25th anniversary stamps. They provided franking for up to 1 oz weight. The eastbound flight covers were, thus, first day covers and first flight covers.



CNCAC return address identifies cover sent to President of airline via Holguin.

Santa Clara, first stop on the route, used a black cachet and 7:00 AM postmark.

John G. Kunz

Miranda, Oriente
Cuba

Primer Vuelo
Santa Clara - Holguin



Por Avion

Via Airmail

REPUBLICA DE CUBA

ADMON. CORREOS SANTA CLARA

SERVICIO AEREO NACIONAL

PRIMER VUELO

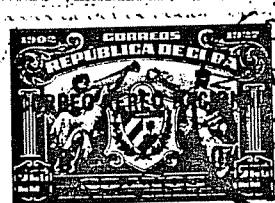
Mr. John G. Kunz
Lista de Correos
Holguin
Oriente

This regular air mail cover received its 1:30 PM backstamp on reaching Holguin.

John G. Kunz

Miranda, Oriente
Cuba

Primer Vuelo
Santa Clara - Santiago



Por Avion

Via Airmail

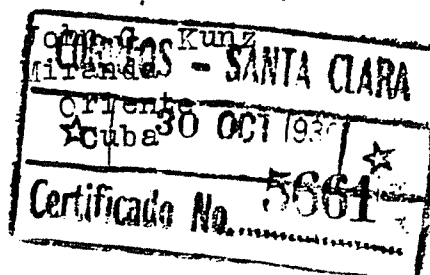
REPUBLICA DE CUBA

ADMON. CORREOS SANTA CLARA

SERVICIO AEREO NACIONAL

PRIMER VUELO

Mr.



Registered cover via Santiago received same cachet no backstamps until Miranda.

Moron covers on eastbound flight were postmarked 9:30 AM, black cachet on back.

John G. Kunz

Miranda, Oriente

Cuba

Primer Vuelo

Moron - Holguin



Por Avion

Via Airmail

Mr. John G. Kunz
Lista de Correos
Holguin
Oriente

Holguin backstamp: 1:30 PM.

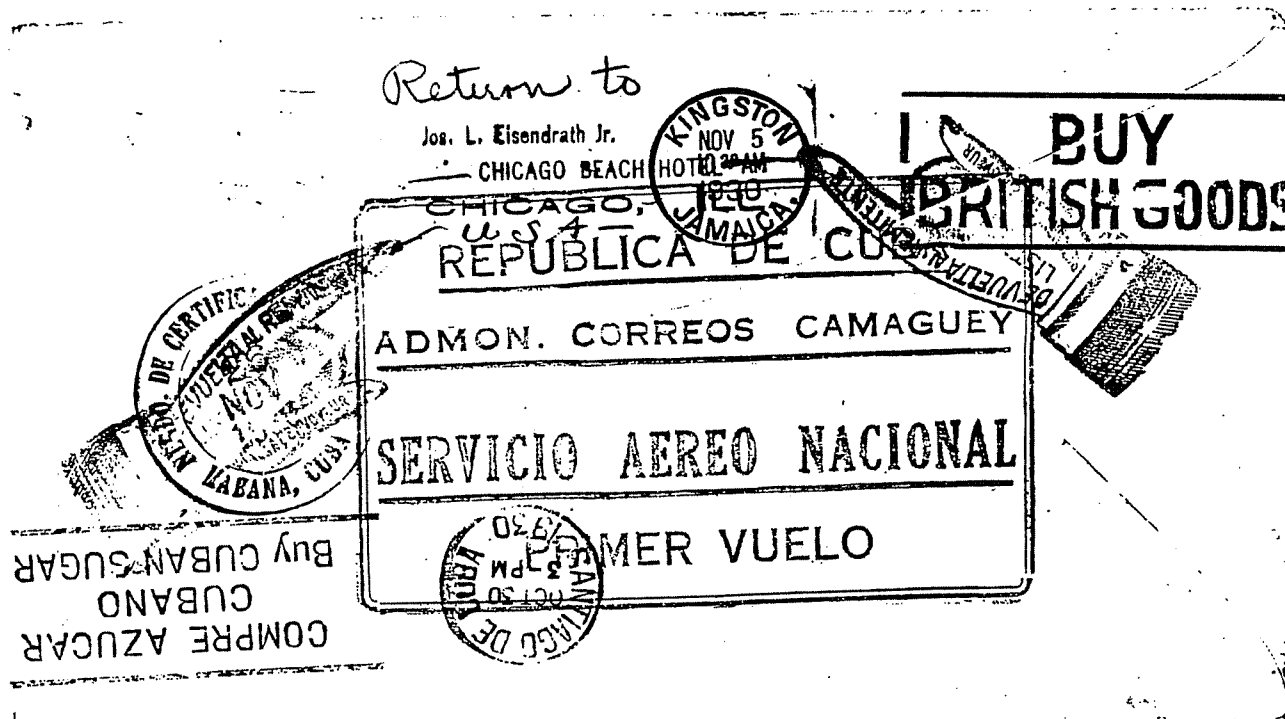


COMPRE AZUCAR
CUBANO
Buy CUBAN SUGAR



Santiago de Cuba backstamp: 3:00 PM.

CNCAC offered to service first flight covers for US collectors. A charge of 15 cents covered the special stamps and distribution of covers to dispatch points.



Cover to Jamaica for Eisendrath has Camaguey cachets on both front and reverse.



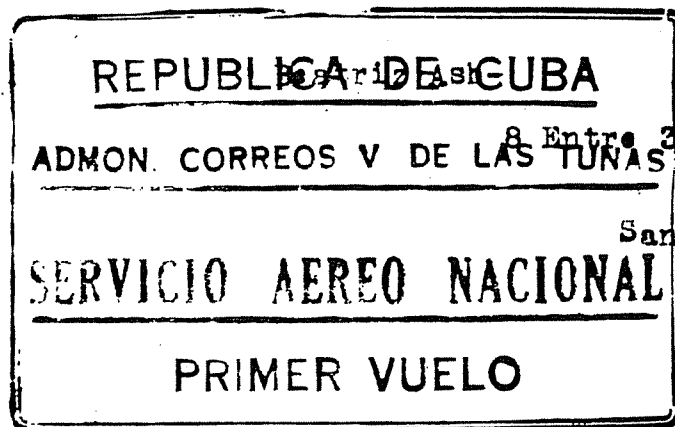
A. L. McCullough, Pilot

SR. BENITO A. RODRIGUEZ ESTRADA
INGENIERO CIVIL
CALLE 6 entre 7 y 9,
Vista Alegre,
Santiago de Cuba.

Camaguey-Santiago de Cuba cover includes signature of pilot, A. L. McCullough.



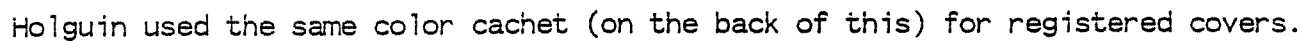
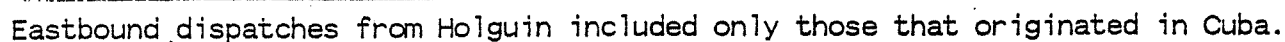
Srta-



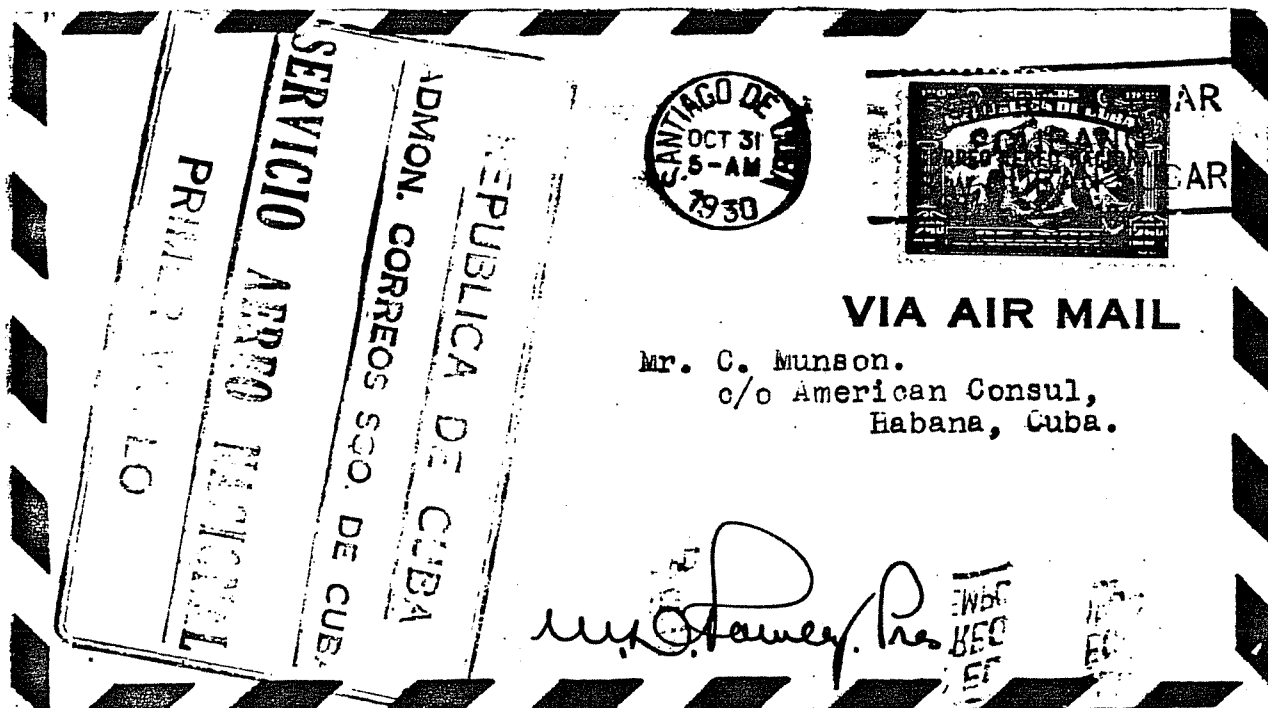
ADMN. CORREOS V DE LAS TUNAS y 5- Vista Alegre-

Santiago de Cuba-

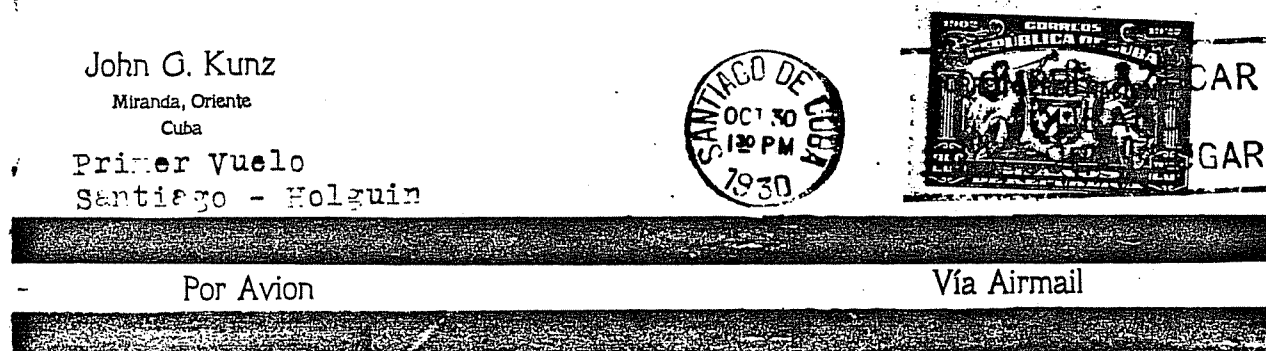
Blue cachet used on Victoria de las Tunas dispatches. Backstamp, 3 PM.



The return flight from Santiago de Cuba was on October 31. Postmarks on covers were for 1:30 PM the day before or for 5AM on the morning of the return flight.



This cover to the end of the line in Havana was signed by Pres. Pawley, CNCAC.



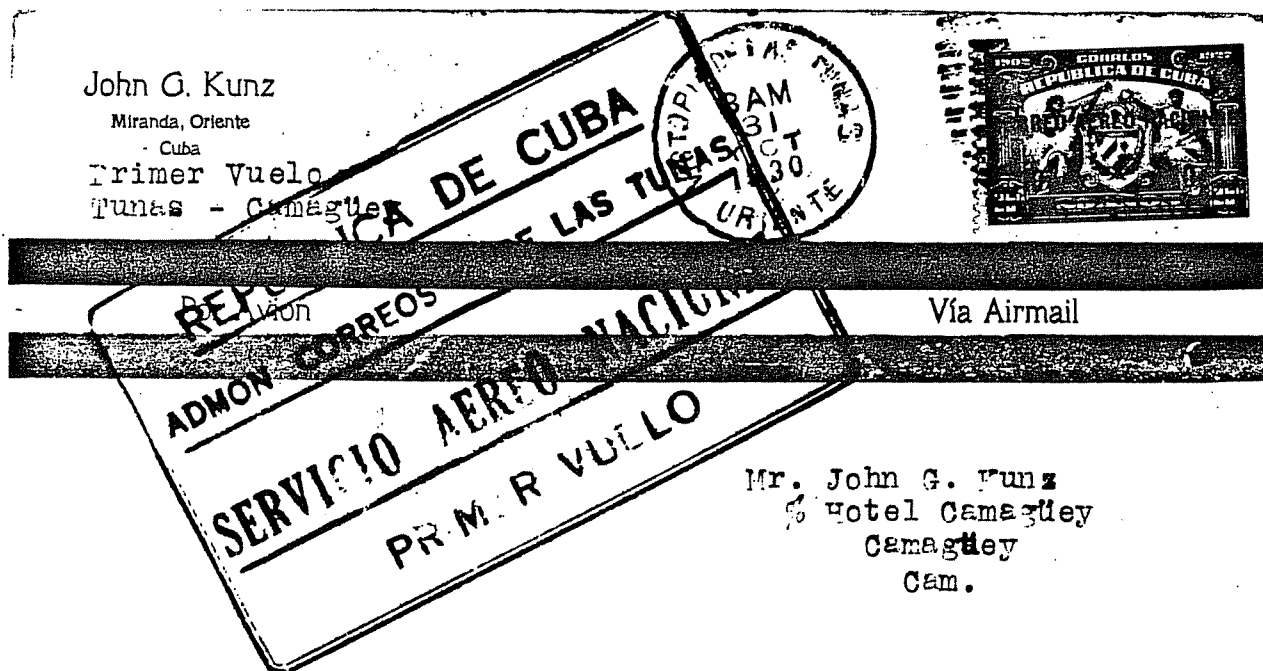
Handwritten signature of the Postmaster, likely Antonio de la Cruz.

Mr. John G. Kunz
Lista de Correos
Holguin
Oriente

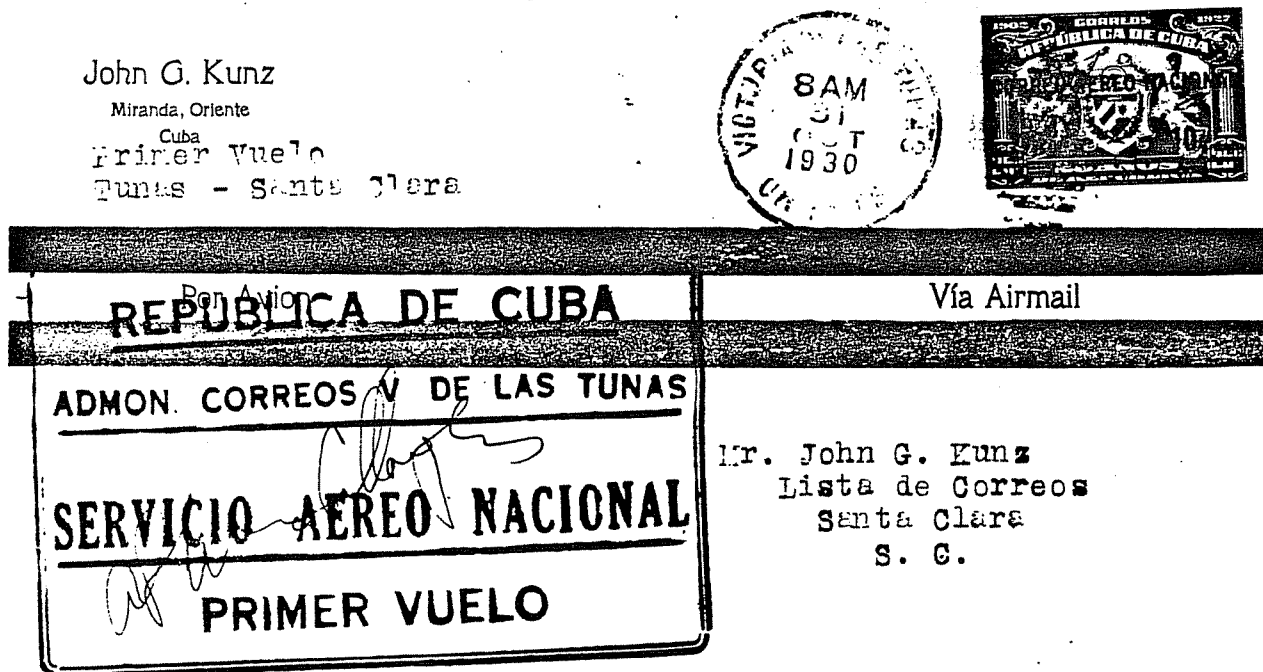
This has signature of Postmaster on front and black Santiago cachet on reverse.



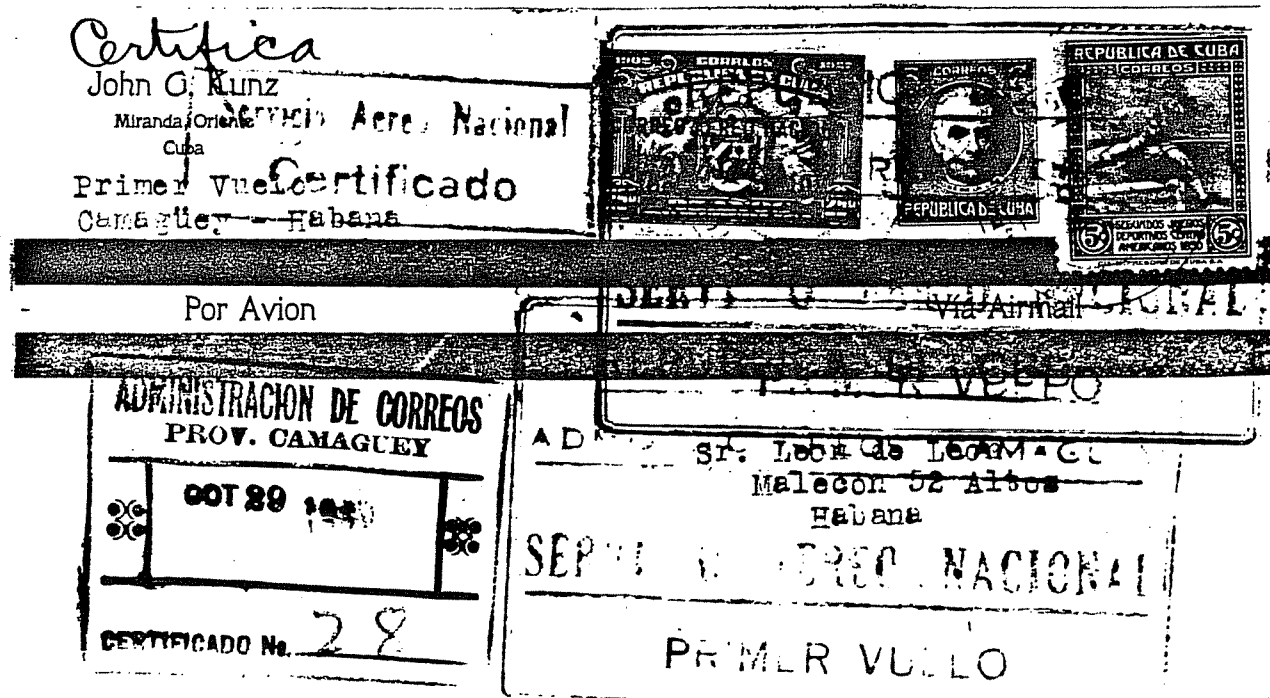
Holguin dispatched cover (postmarked 6:30 AM Oct 31) to Havana was backstamped with special slogan air mail postmark at 2PM and by regular backstamp at 3 PM.



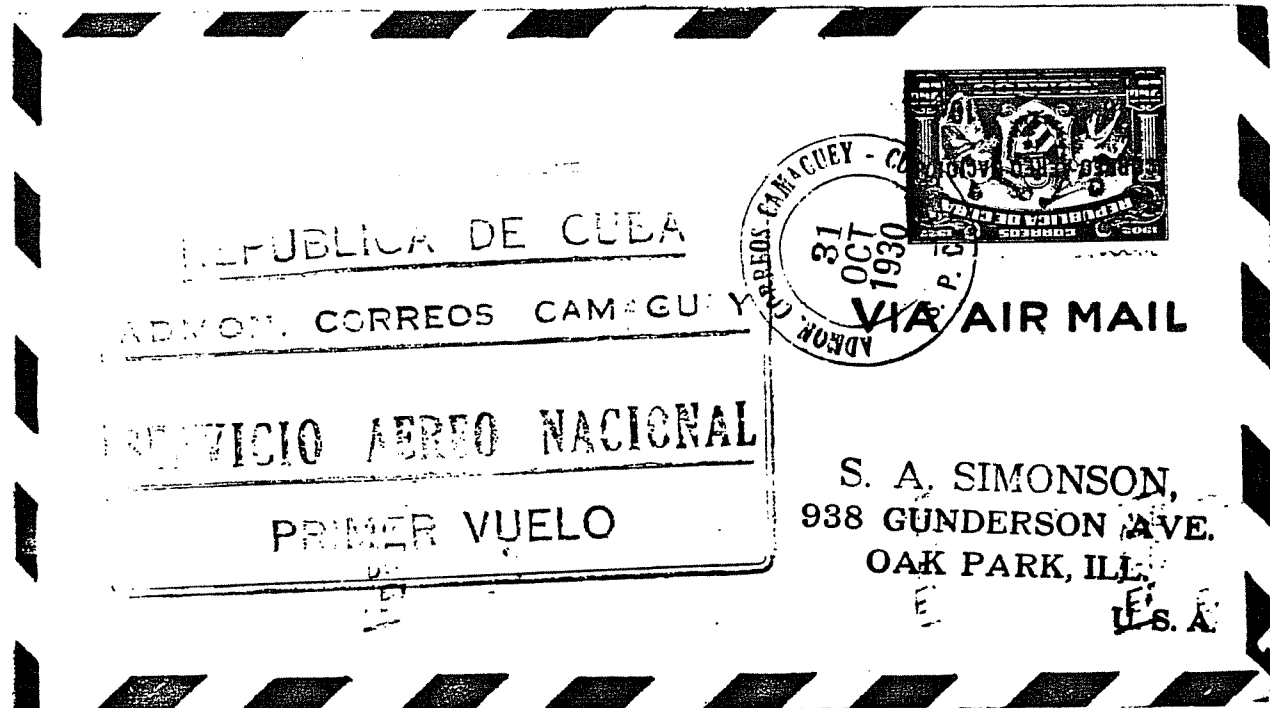
Victoria de las Tunas cover to the next stop back along the line, Camaguey.



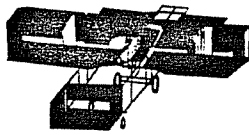
Another, to Santa Clara, was signed by the pilot and received backstamp at 12M.



Registered Camaguey cover has special purple cachet on front and regular violet cachet on reverse; 8 centavos registration is paid by two additional adhesives.



To the U.S. via Havana with an air mail backstamp, but then went ordinary mail.



Not In U.S. Air Mail



VIA AIR MAIL

M B Smith
1101 W Market
Pottsville, Penna
PA 577

Moron to U.S. via Havana, "Not In U.S. Air Mail." Black cachet on back.



Sr.

E.F. MARCET.

Estafeta de Correos.

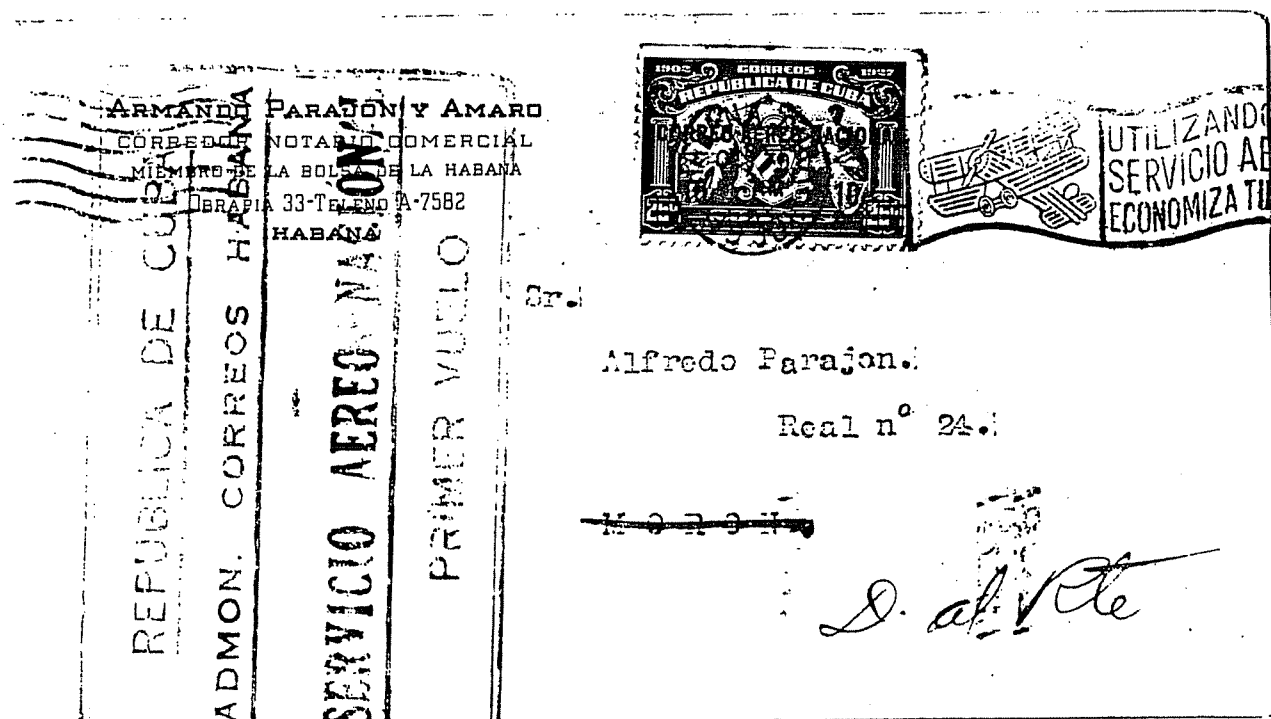
SANTA CLARA.

Remite: E.F. Marcet.
Contreras. 179
Matanzas.

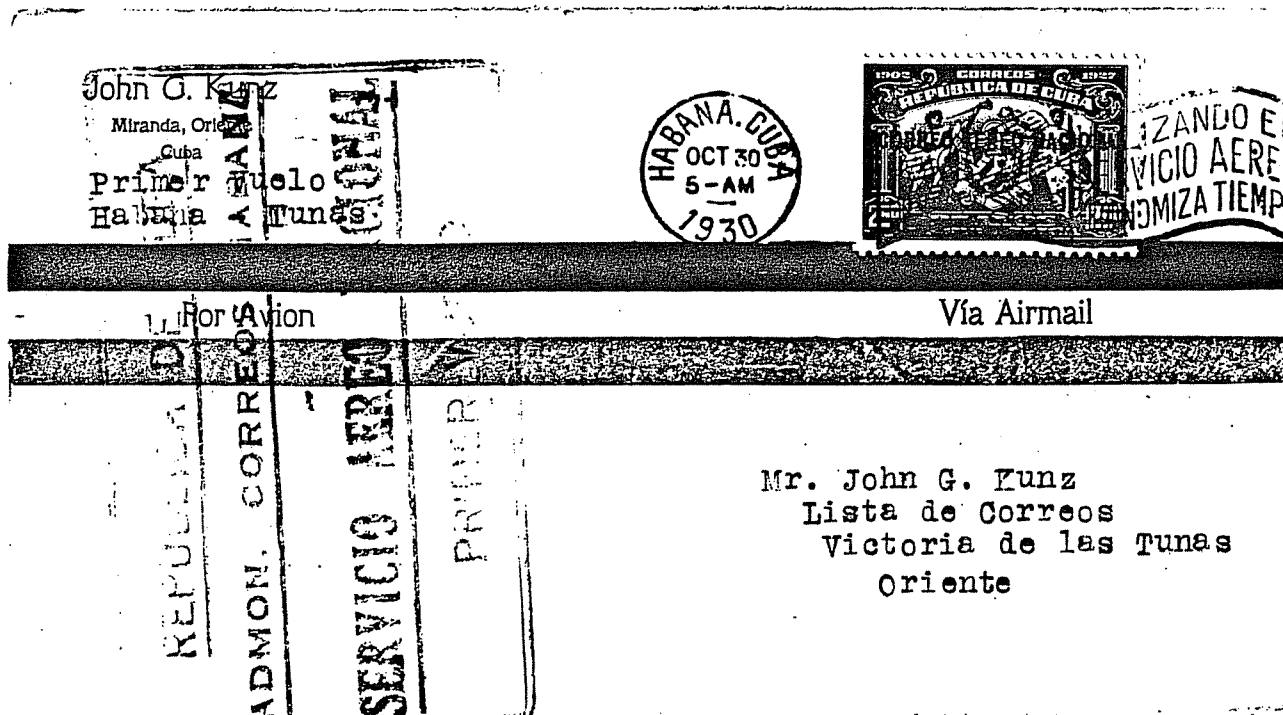
To Santa Clara. Backstamped "Buy Cuban Sugar" at 12 M. Moron cachet on back.

Inauguration of Route No. 1

Havana dispatched mail to all stops on the route on the first eastbound flight. Covers received blue cachets and 5:00 AM postmarks for the very early take off.

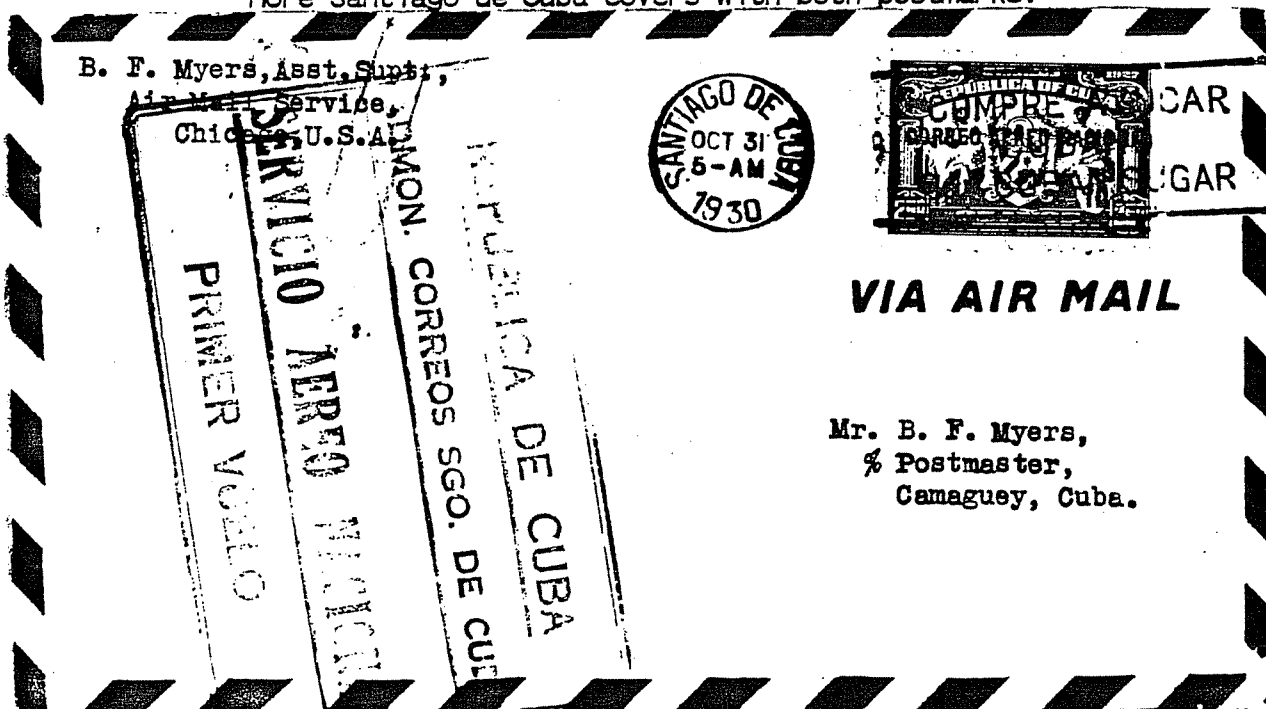


The Moron backstamp has an inverted "30" date and a 12:00 PM time.

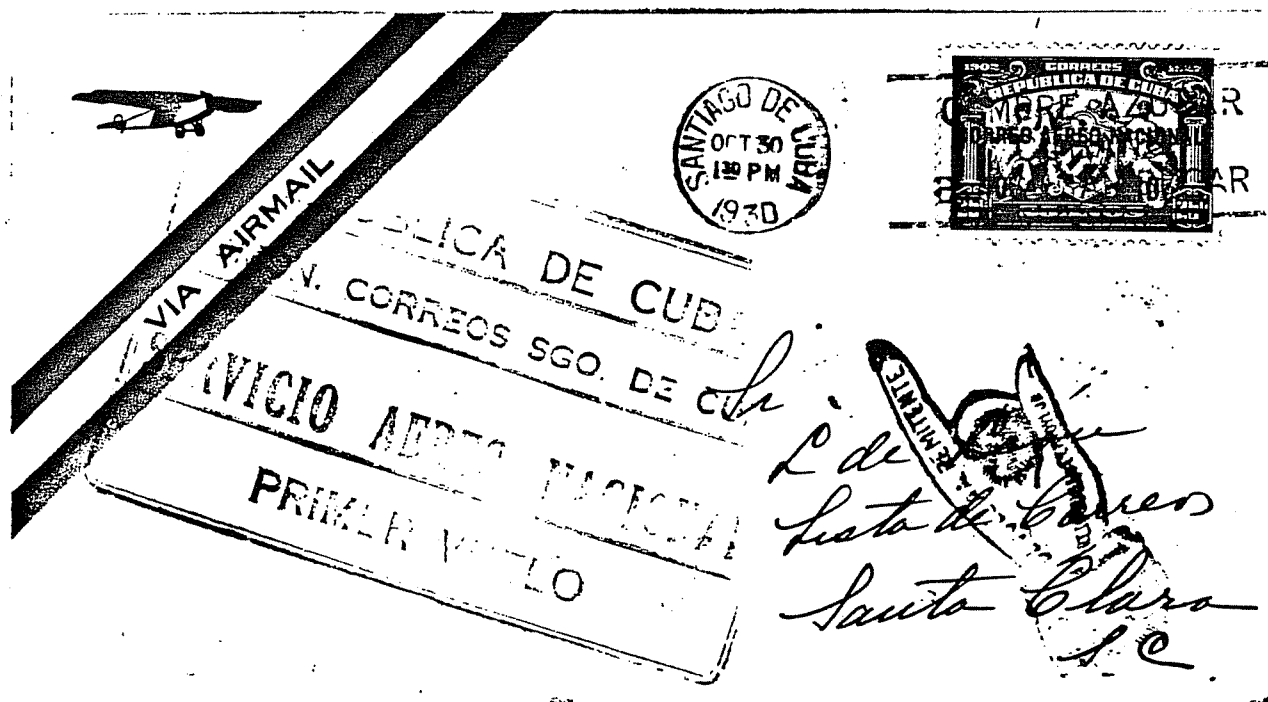


Victoria de las Tunas used a 3:30 PM time on this cover's backstamp.

More Santiago de Cuba covers with both postmarks.



Flown to Camaguey.



Flown to Santa Clara.



Santa Clara to Havana cover. Air mail backstamp applied at 2 PM.



Cover to Oklahoma, signed by Postmaster, has additional air mail stamp, but got Not In U.S. Air Mail. Bartlesville backstamp Nov 5 confirms surface transport.

Experimental Hydroplane Route



Pilots: H. Ramsdell

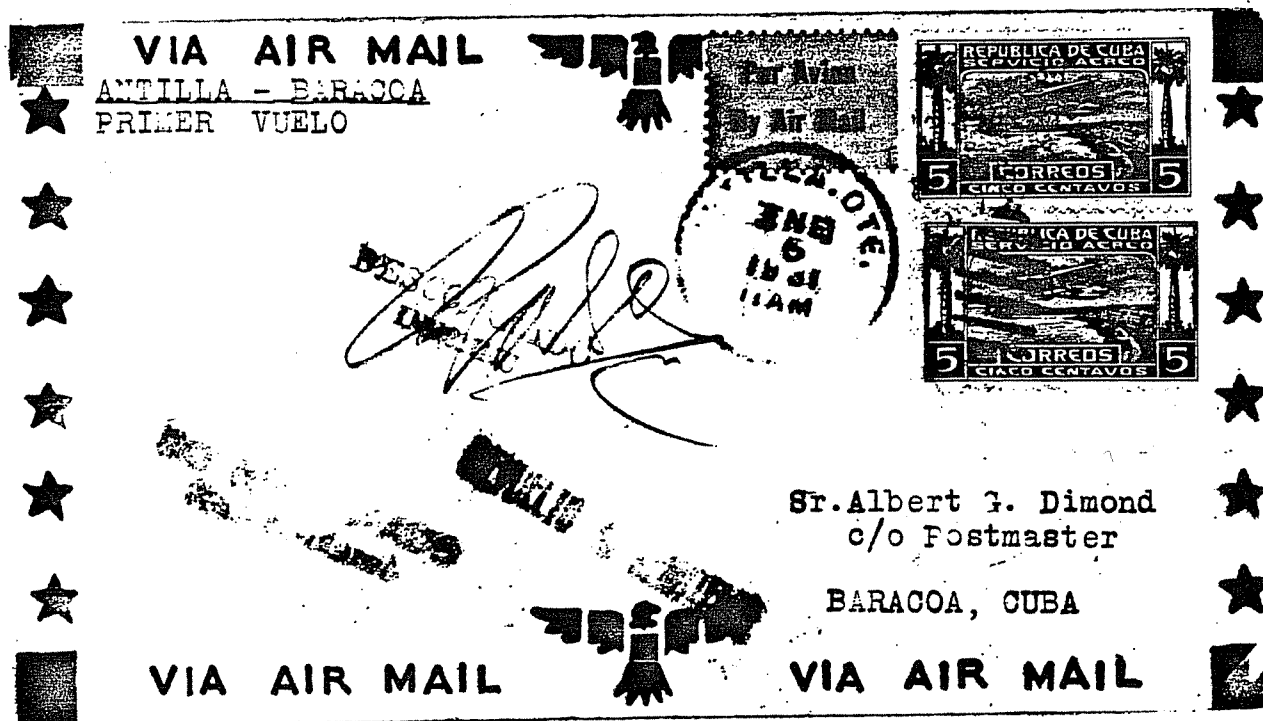
Oscar Santamaria

Contractor: Corporacion Aeronautica
de Cuba

Postal rate: Regular 2 cents/oz

Frequency of service: Daily round trip

Route tested for establishing service to towns along Cuba's far eastern coast.



Antilla to Baracoa dispatch was overpaid at the current national air mail rate. Handstamps on front show that cover was almost destroyed, rather than returned.



Pilot: R. H. McGlohn
Contractor: Compania Nacional Cubana de
Aviacion Curtiss (CNCAC)
Postal rate: 3 cents/oz

Tested as branch of Route 1 service, Holguin to towns along Cuba's east coast.

John G. Kunz

Miranda, Oriente
Cuba

Primer Vuelo
Holguin - Baracoa



Por Avión

Via Airmail

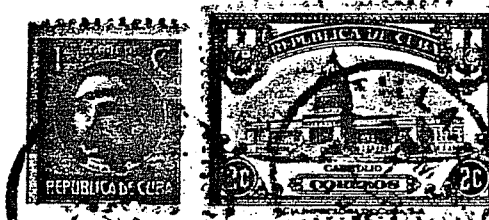
Mr. John G. Kunz
Lista de Correos
Baracoa
Oriente

Holguin to Baracoa dispatch with the correct postage, one of 54 covers carried.

John G. Kunz

Miranda, Oriente
Cuba

Primer Vuelo
Antilla - Holguin



Por Avión

Via Airmail

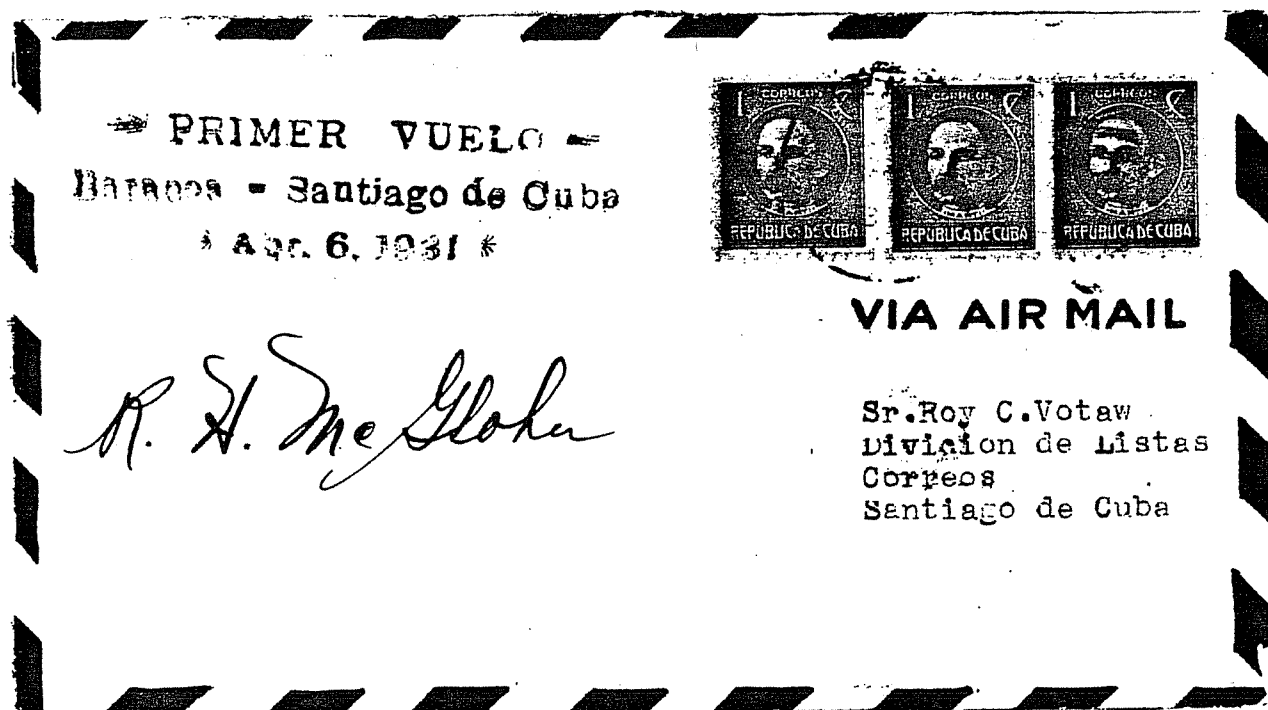
Mr. John G. Kunz
Lista de Correos
Holguin
Oriente

Return flight cover, Antilla to Holguin. Only 31 dispatches on this segment.

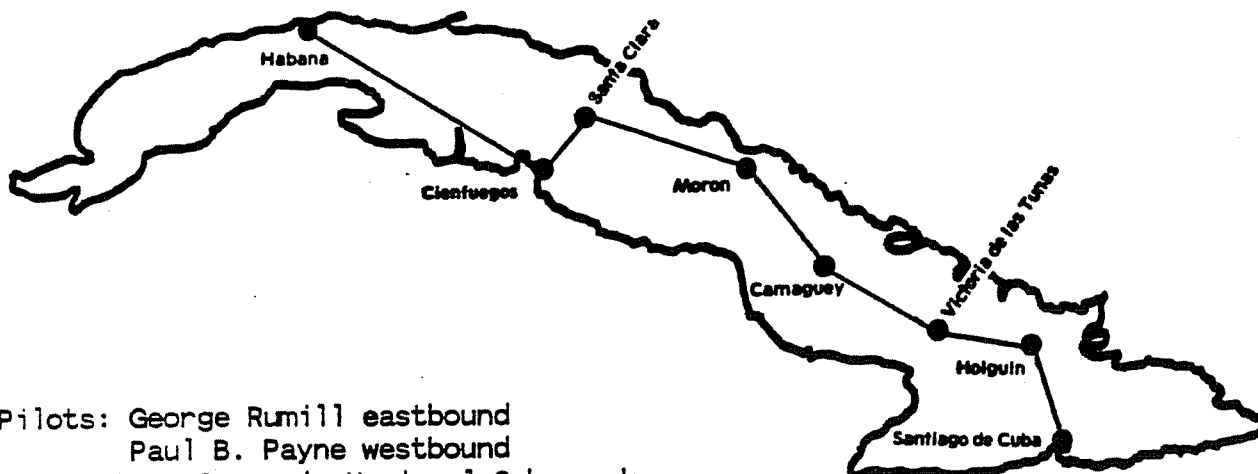


Pilot: R.H.McGlohn
Contractor: Compania Nacional Cubana de
Aviacion Curtiss (CNCAC)
Postal rate: 3 cents/oz

Just five days after that previous experimental service started, National Route 2 took over as an extension of Route 1 east from Santiago de Cuba, not Holguin.

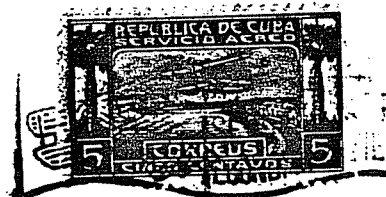


Short time for change of route gave little time to prepare first flight covers. Votaw return cover, signed by pilot, has special cachet for flight from Baracoa and is one of only 9 covers to make the full return flight to Santiago de Cuba.



Pilots: George Rumill eastbound
Paul B. Payne westbound
Contractor: Compania Nacional Cubana de
Aviacion Curtiss (CNCAC)
Rate: Changed to 5 cents per ounce for
combined routes 1 and 2

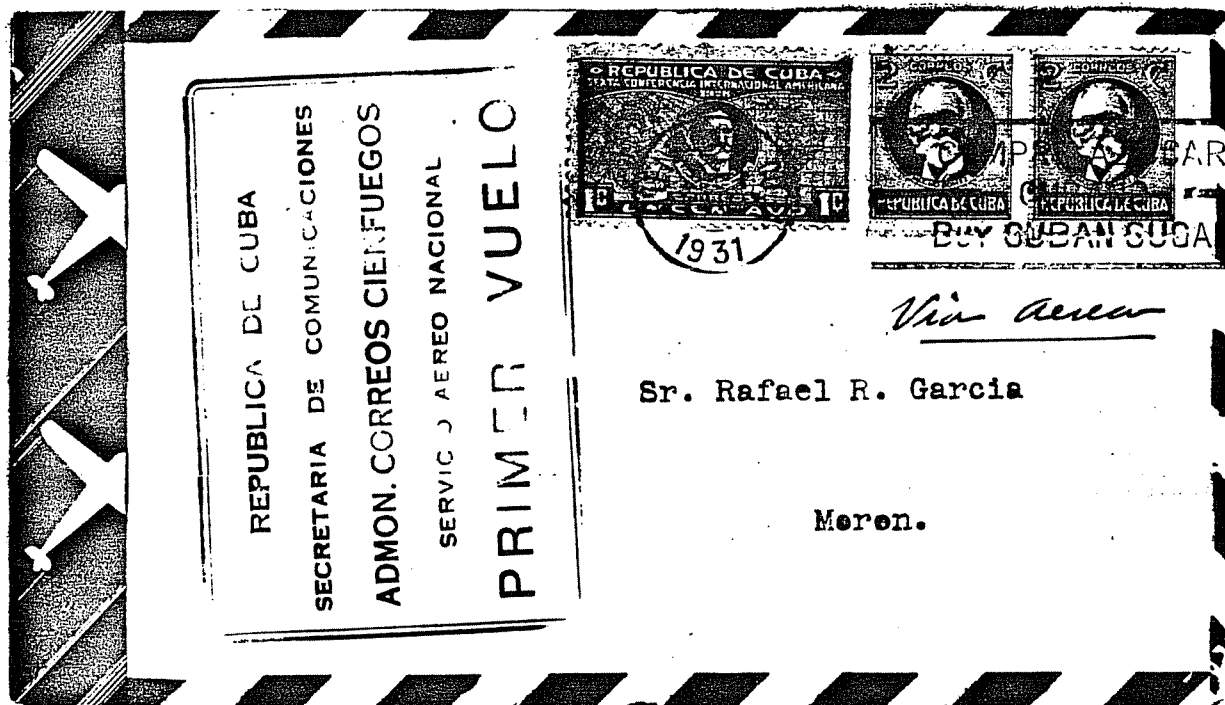
Cienfuegos, an important south coast city, became route's first stop eastbound.



CORREO AEREO

Srta Beatriz M Ash.
Estacion FC.
Cienfuegos.

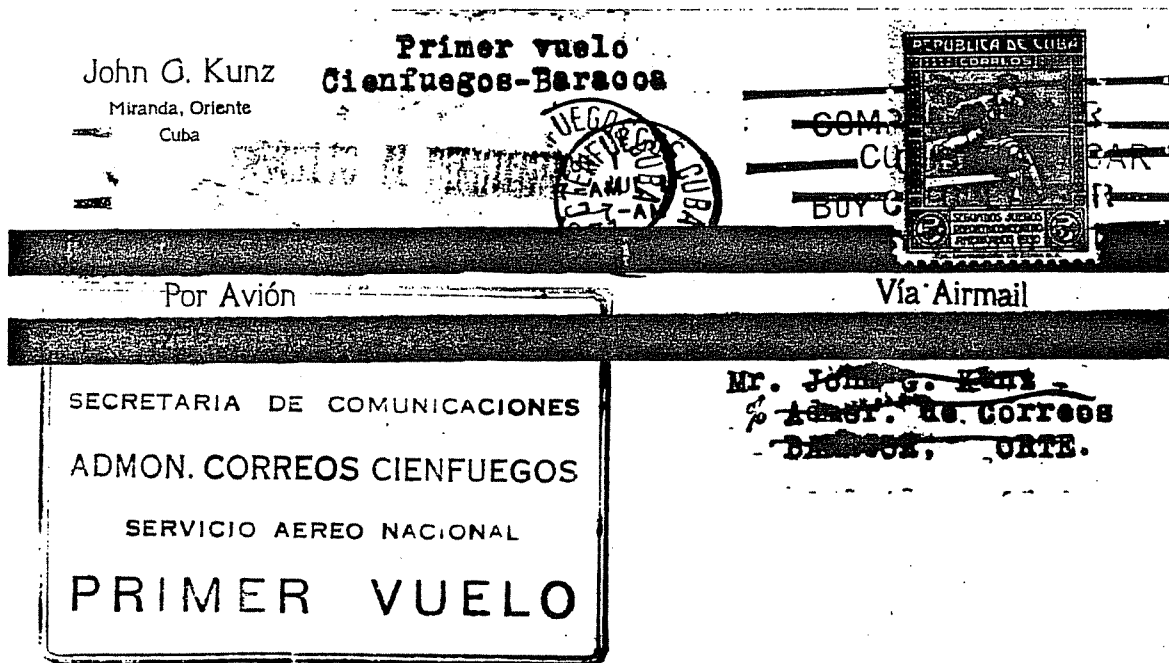
Havana provided special cachet for mail flown on first flight into Cienfuegos.



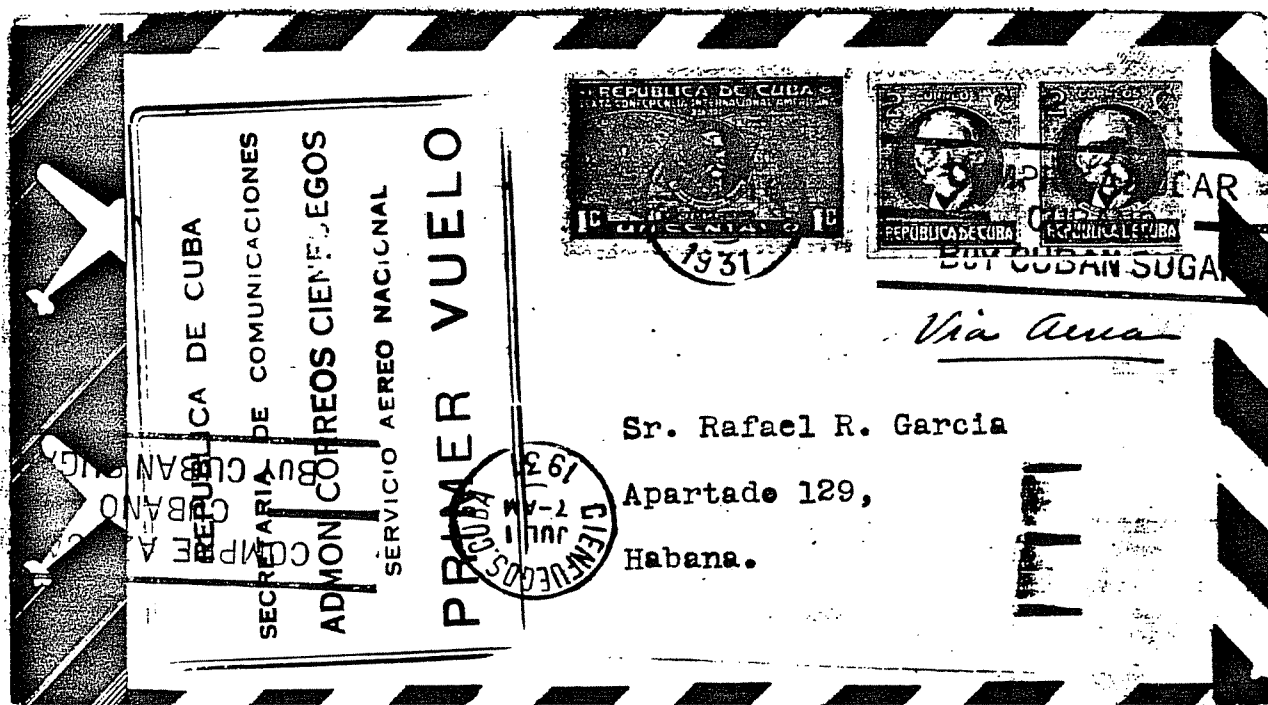
Cienfuegos dispatches included Garcia cover with purple cachet to Moron.



Another to Holguin with 12 M backstamp was signed by pilot George Rumill.



Postmarked 7 AM July 1 and backstamped July 2, this cover traversed most of national route 1 and route 2 to get to the eastern terminus, Baracoa.

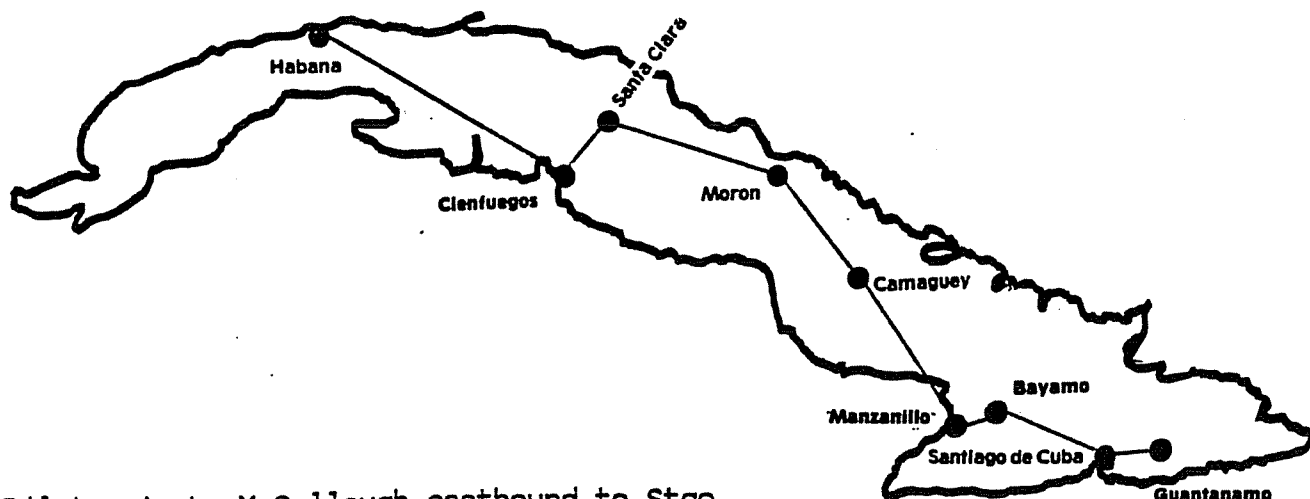


Westbound dispatches from Cienfuegos reached Havana with no intermediate stops.



Rate to London was 5 cents national and 10 cents international air mail. Since cover was only partly flown, two magenta bars show interruption for ocean trip.

Additional Changes to Route No. 1



Pilots: A. L. McCullough eastbound to Stgo.
R. H. McGlohn westbound from Stgo.
M. Quevedo, Jr. to and from Guantanamo
Contractor: Compania Nacional Cubana de
Aviacion Curtiss (CNCAC)
Rate: 5 cents per ounce

In a major change, Manzanillo, Bayamo, and Guantanamo became new stops on Route 1, while Victoria de las Tunas and Holguin stops were eliminated Feb 15, 1932.

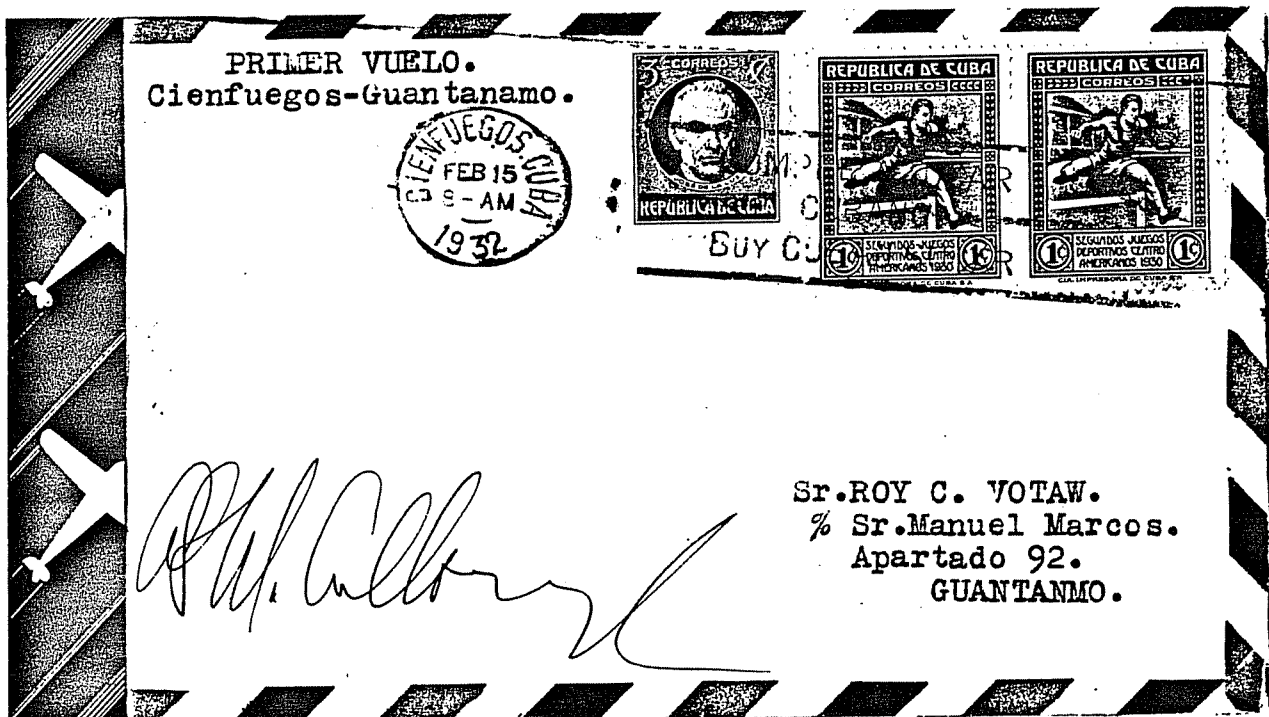


Dr Antonio Bravo Acosta.-
Lista de Correos.-

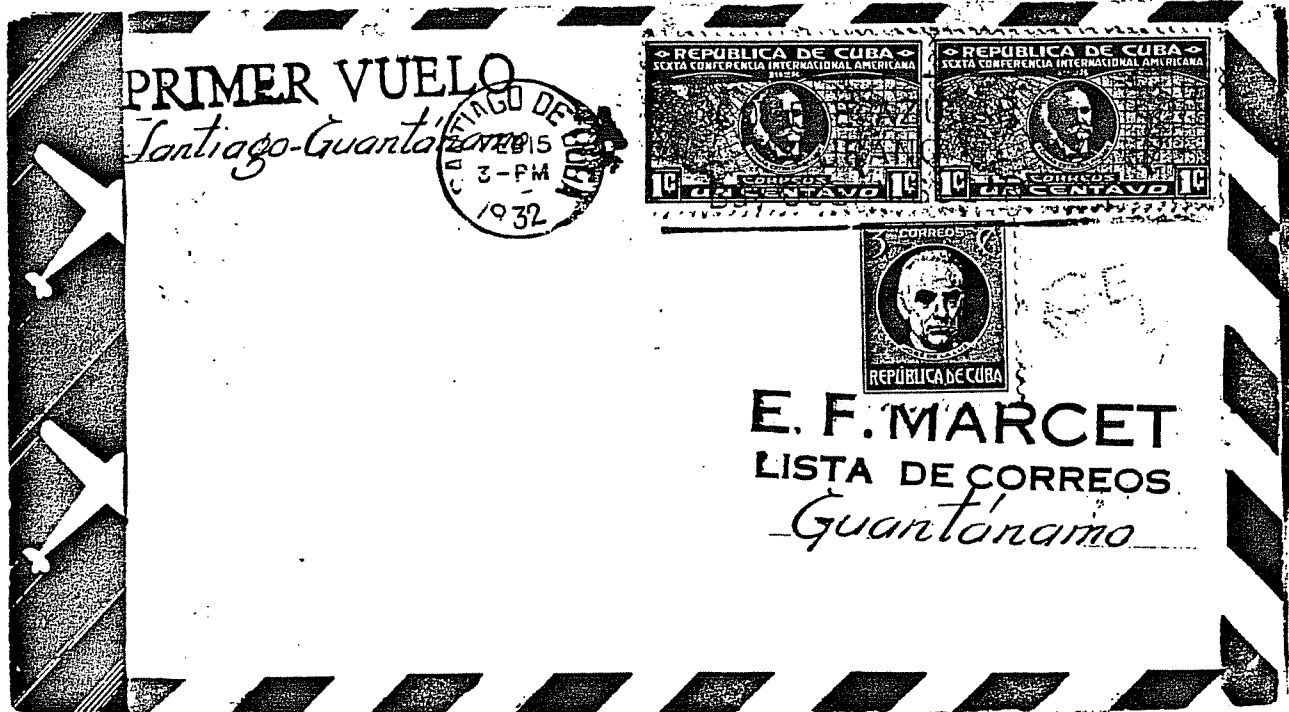
Bayamo.-



Havana cover postmarked 5 AM has Bayamo cachet on reverse with 2 PM backstamp.



Eastbound 8 AM dispatch from Cienfuegos signed by McCullough reached Guantánamo and received the Guantánamo cachet on reverse as well as its backstamp at 4 PM.



Santiago de Cuba postmarked its covers at 3 PM for this first Route 1 dispatch.



10 AM dispatch from Manzanillo to Guantánamo has both city cachets, front/back.

Westbound dispatches from Guantanamo exhibit the city's official flight cachet.

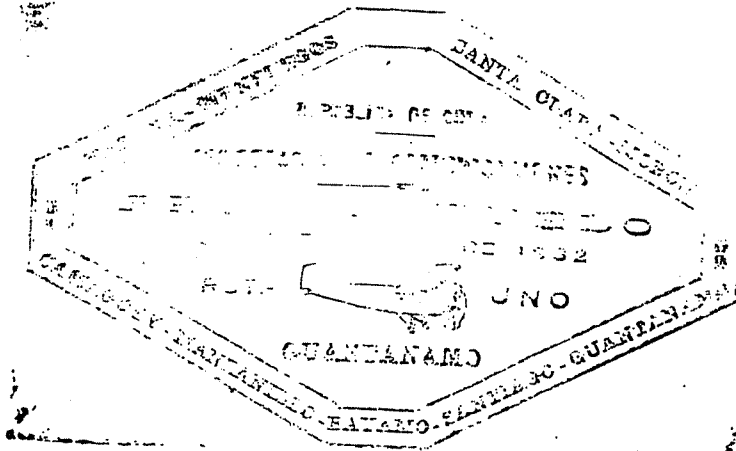


Santiago de Cuba cover has special first flight postmark, lacks dispatch time.



Specially printed cover to Manzanillo uses first flight cachets front and back.

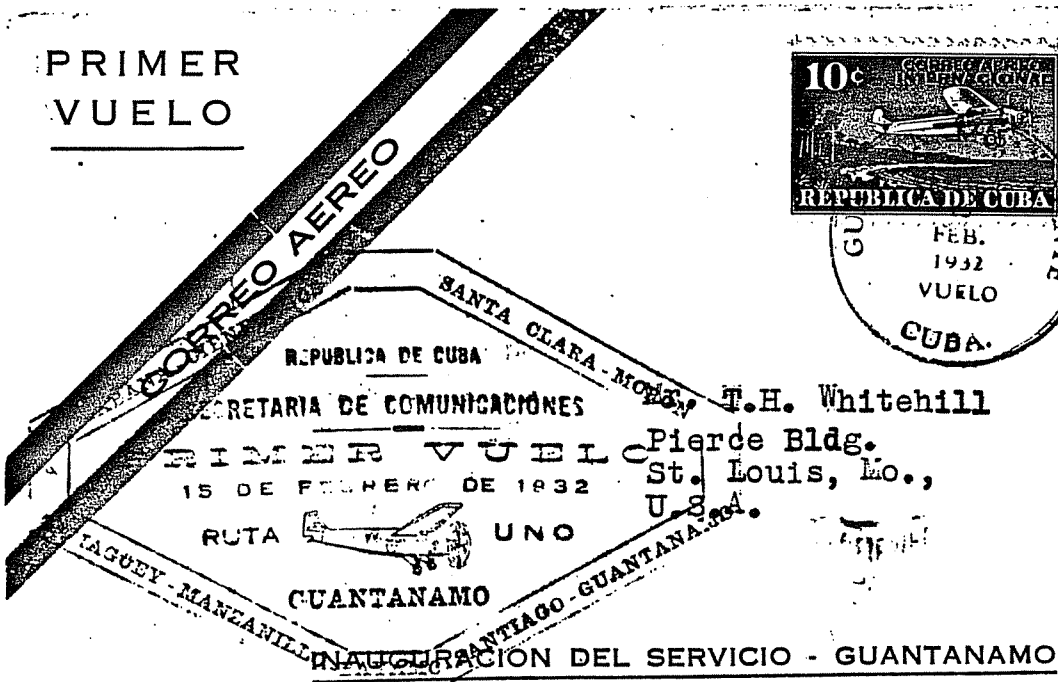
PRIMER VUELO



Miss Betty Ash
Martires 166
CAMAGUEY

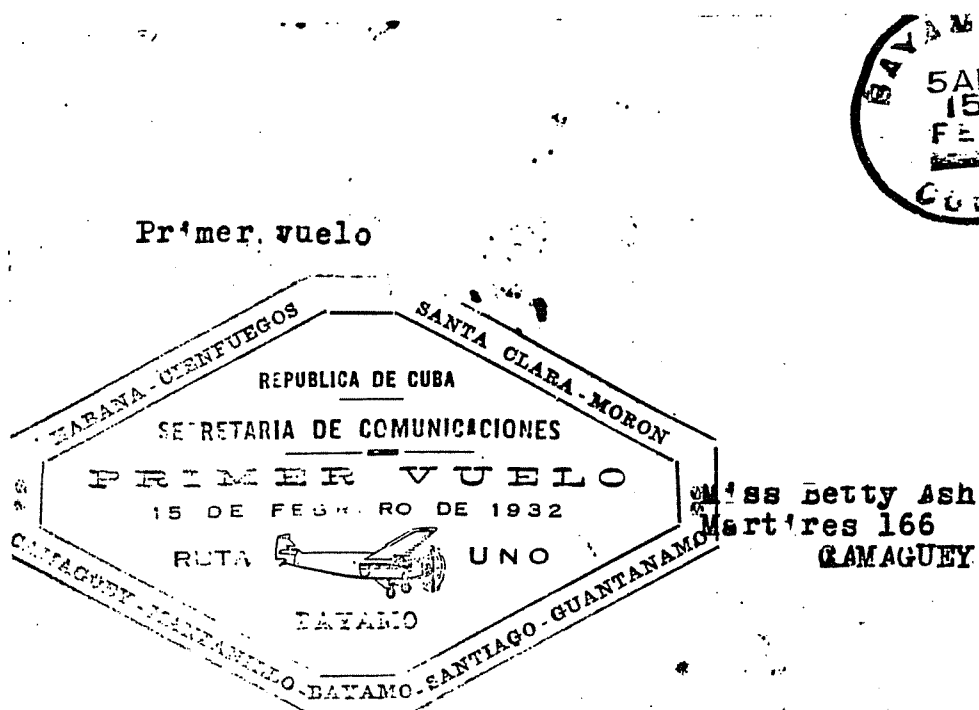
Guantanamo to Camaguey cover received backstamp at 9 AM.

PRIMER
VUELO

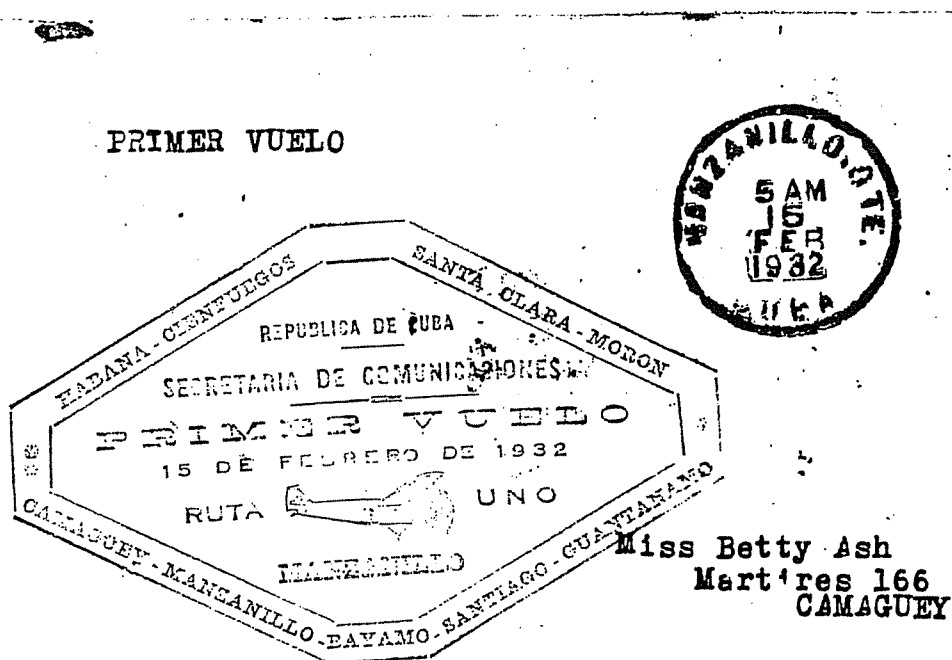


T.H. Whitehill
Pierce Bldg.
St. Louis, Mo.,
U.S.A.

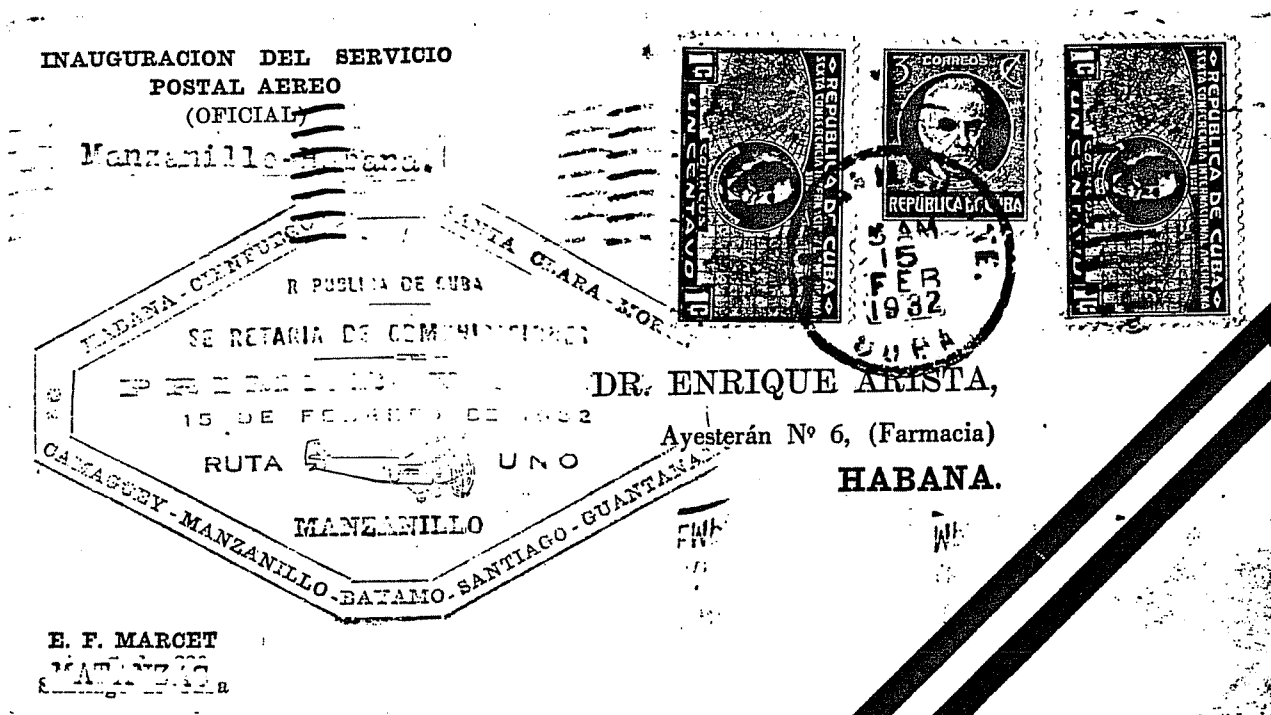
Cover to the U.S. via Havana requires 10 cent additional international postage.



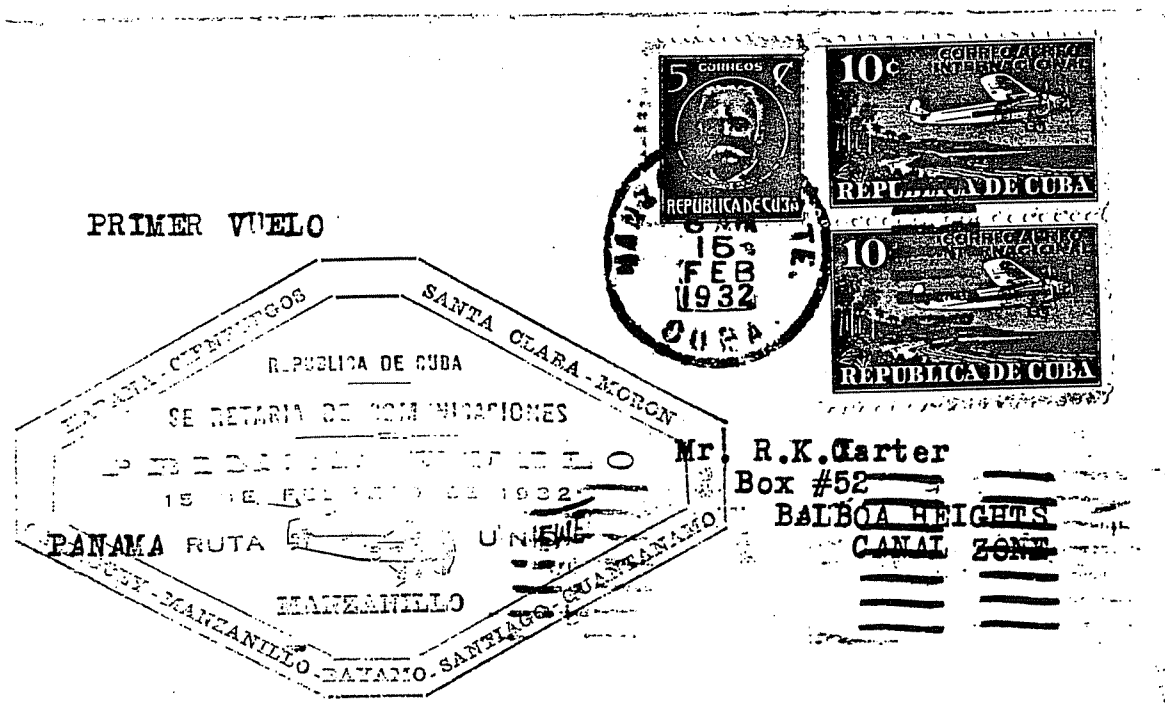
5 AM Bayamo-Camaguey cover with black Bayamo cachet received backstamp at 9 AM.



Cover from Manzanillo to Camaguey received a violet Manzanillo cachet at 5 AM.



Specially printed cover with Manzanillo cachet went to eastern terminal Havana.

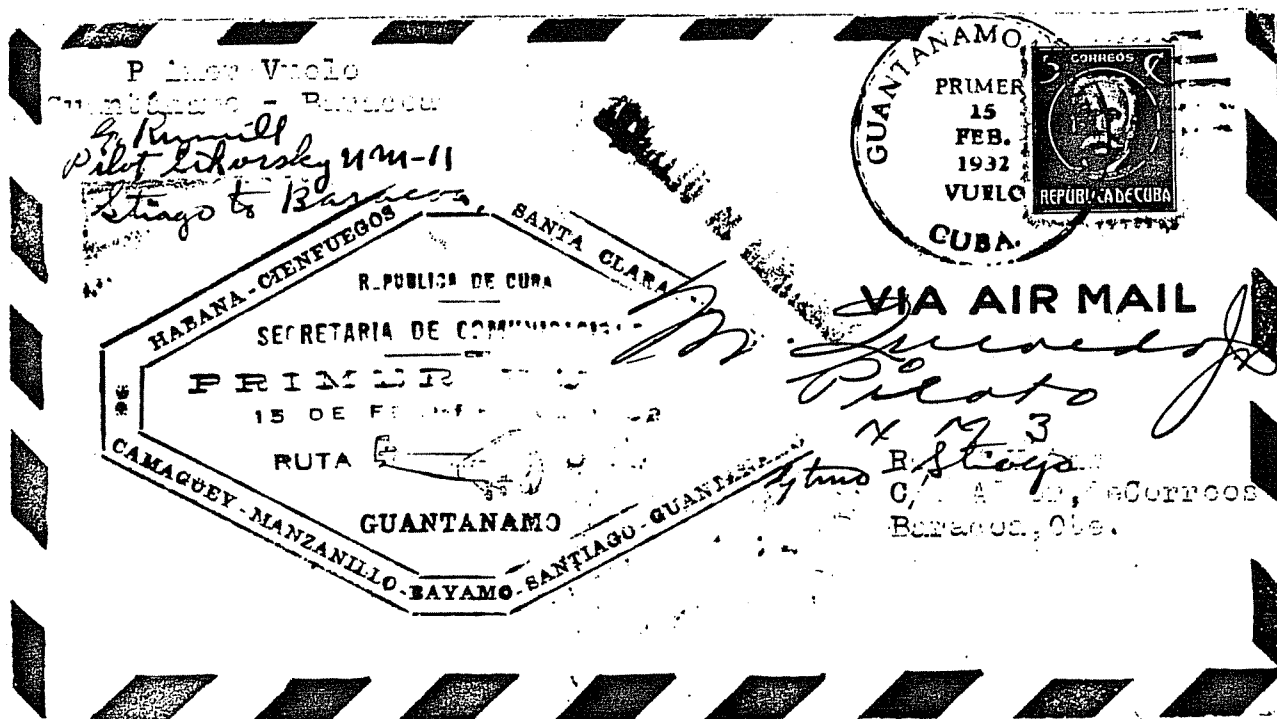


Manzanillo to the Canal Zone via Havana required 20 cents international postage.



Pilot: George Rumill
Contractor: Compania Nacional Cubana de
Aviacion Curtiss (CNCAC)
Aircraft: Sikorsky Amphibian
Postal rate: 5 cents/oz

The day after Guantanamo became the eastern terminal of Route 1, it served as a new terminal for Route 2 and dispatches (postmarked the day before) went ahead.



A special Guantanamo first flight postmark and the previous day's cachet signal new routing. Signed by Rumill, pilot on new route as well as by Quevedo, pilot Route 1 arrival, this cover went to postmaster at Baracoa and return to sender.

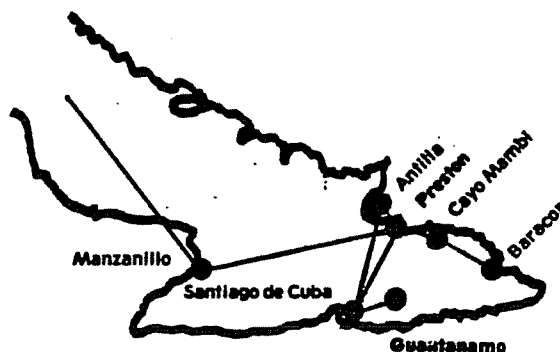


Cover to Cayo Mambi reached its destination by 11 AM.



Cover to Antilla at the end of the route arrived by 12 M.

Preston added to Routes No. 1 and 2.

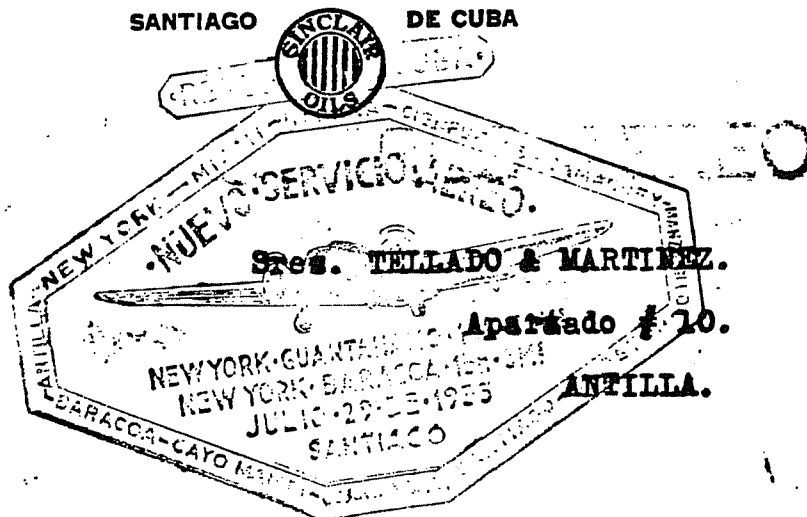


Aircraft: Lockheed Electra "Maceo", Havana to Guantanamo (Route 1.) —
Ford Trimotor, Santiago to Baracoa loop (Route 2.) —
Contractor: Compania Nacional Cubana de Aviacion (CNCA)
(Pan American Airways had taken over 6 May 1932)
Rate: 5 cents per ounce

In a change to routes 1. and 2., Preston became a stop as services improved for handling both national and international mail. These routes remained separate.

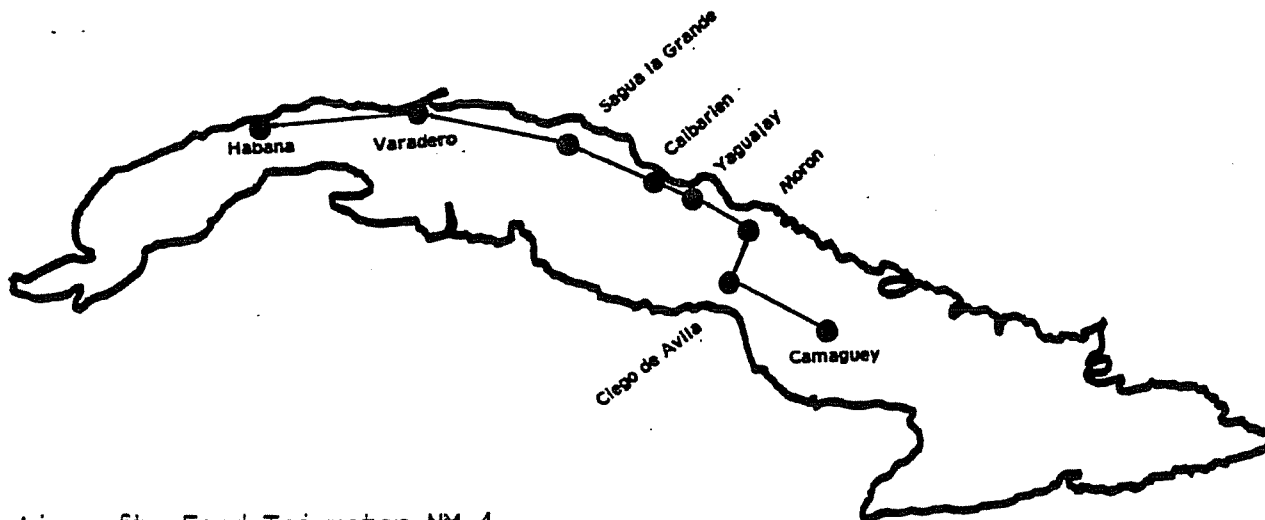
SINCLAIR CUBA OIL COMPANY, S. A.

APARTADO 455
SANTIAGO DE CUBA



Magenta cachet applied in Santiago de Cuba listed all connections now possible.

Inauguration of Route No. 3



Aircraft: Ford Tri-motor NM-4
 Contractor: Compania Nacional Cubana de
 Aviacion S.A.
 Rate: 5 cents per ounce

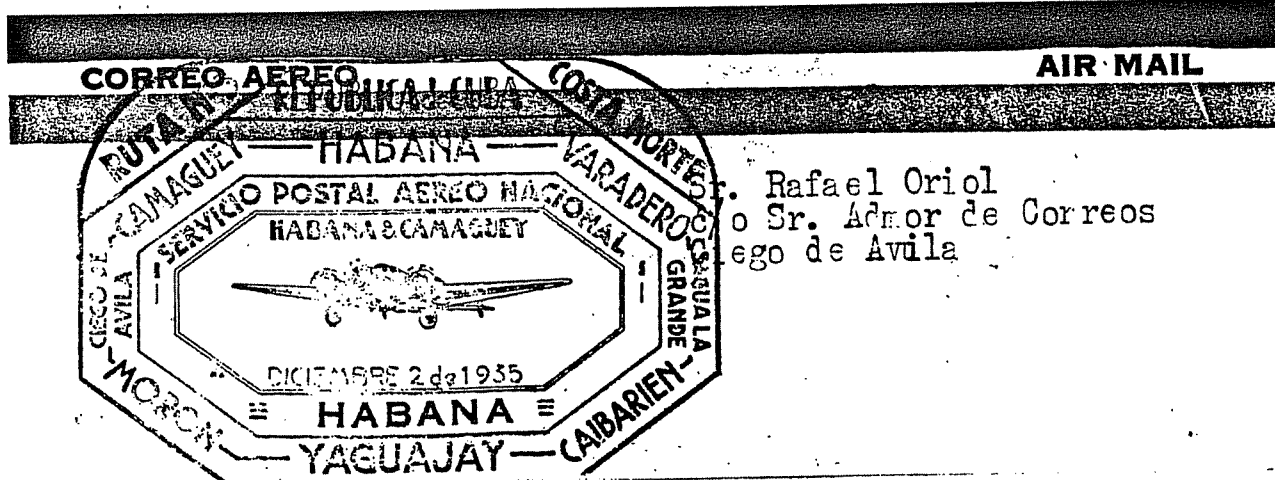
No. 3 was a new Havana-north coast cities-Camaguey route with tourists in mind.

RAFAEL ORIOL

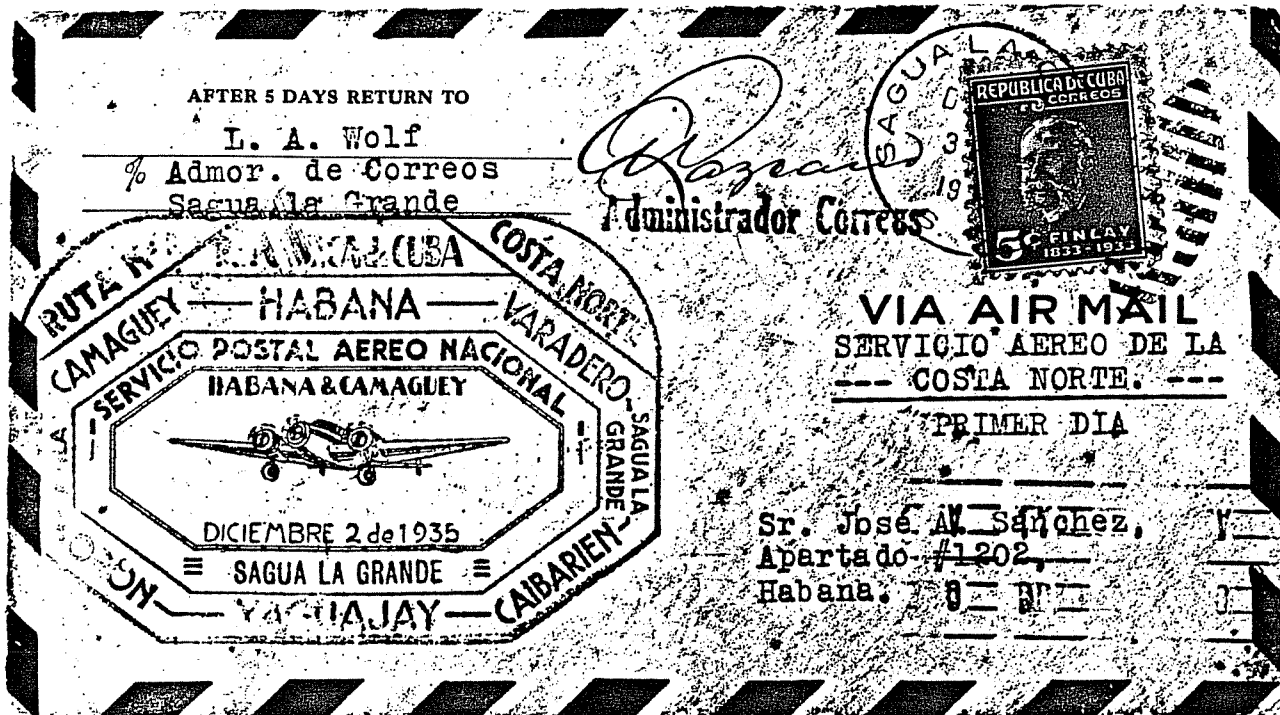
ESTRAMPES 90

REPT. MENDOZA

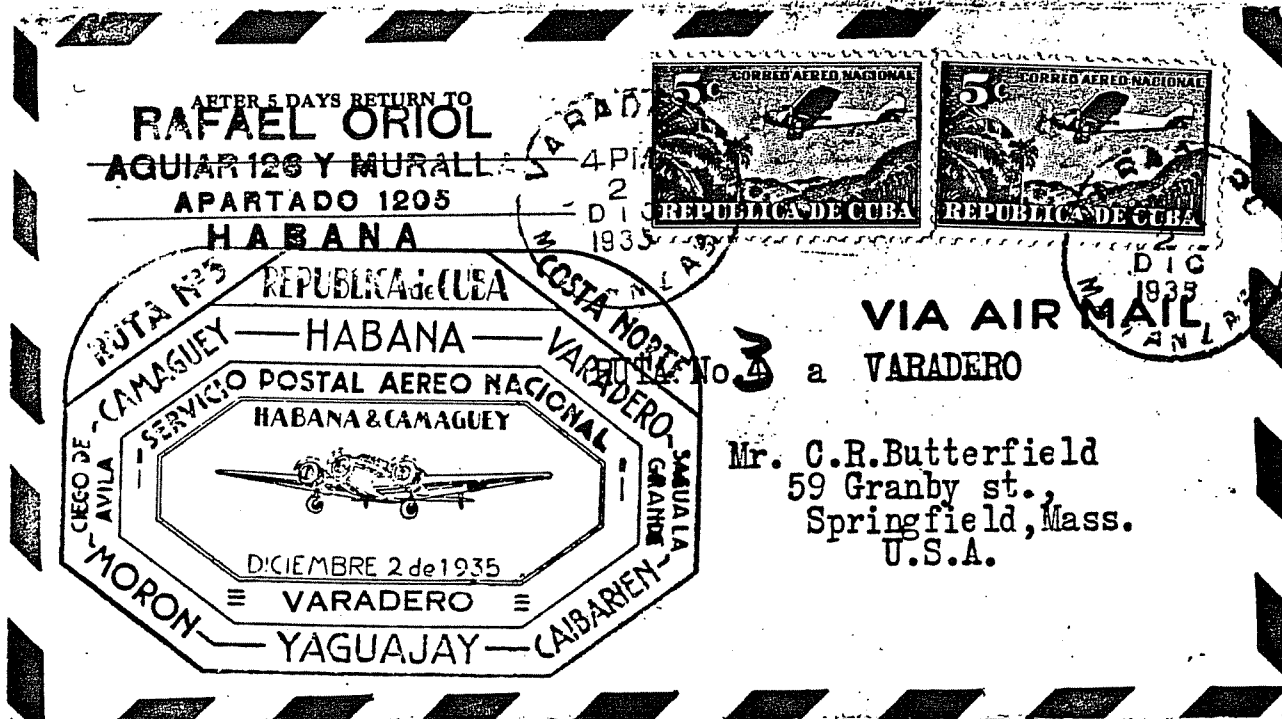
HABANA, CUBA



Havana cover postmarked 6:30 AM has a purple Ciego de Avila cachet on reverse.

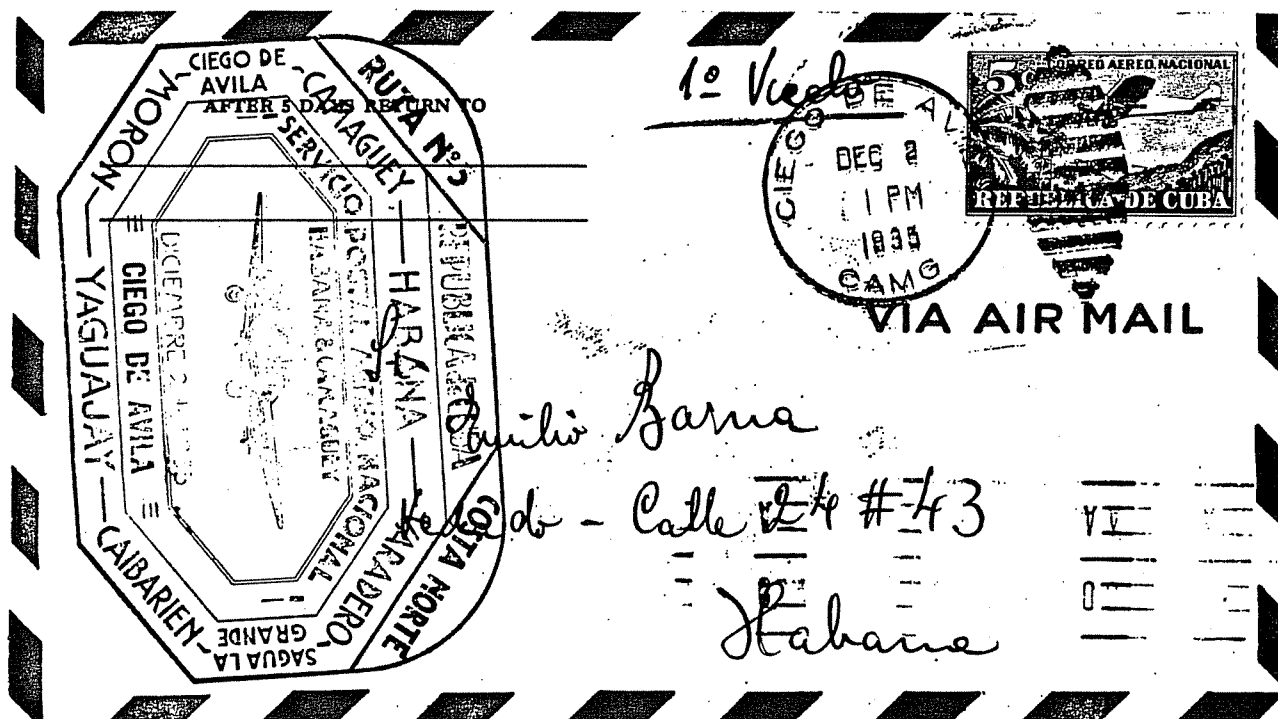


Sagua la Grande to Havana cover has its purple cachet and postmaster signature.

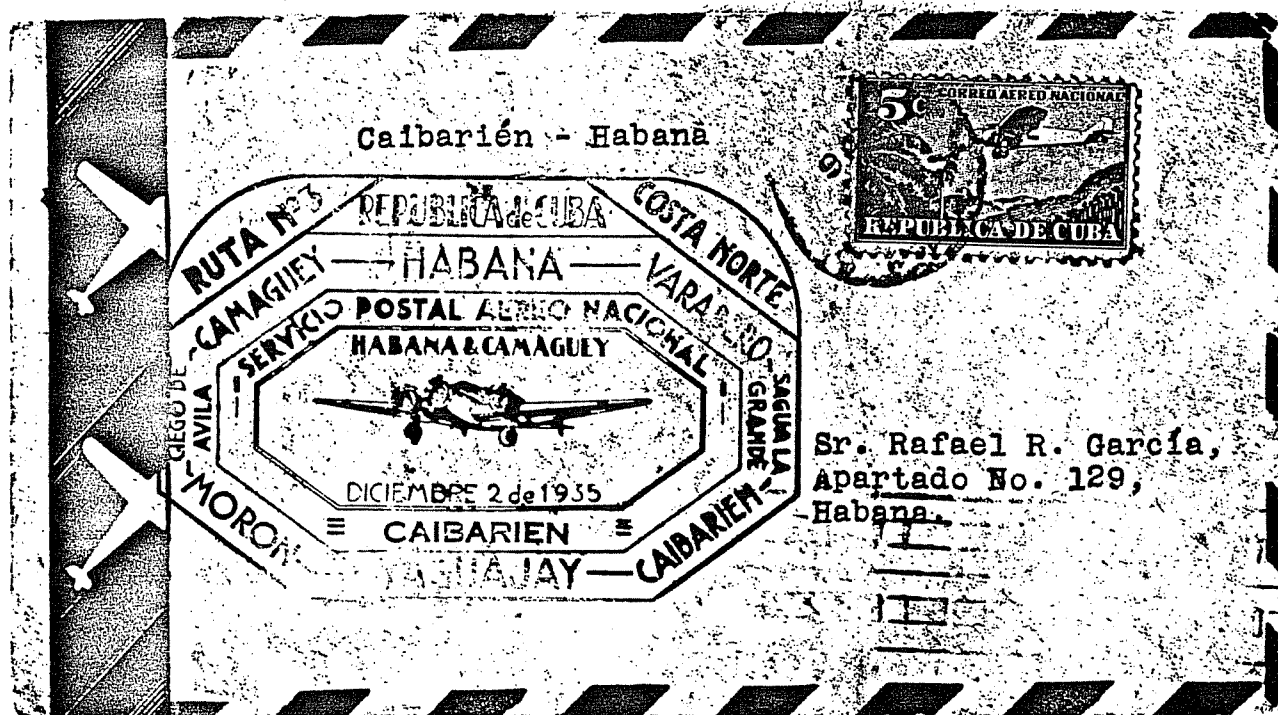


Varadero to U.S. cover did not receive blue Havana cachet or a 4 PM backstamp.

Return flight from Camaguey had engine trouble, brought down at Ciego de Avila.



Repairs delayed flight until Dec 3, although this was postmarked on day before.



Caibarien cover received blue Havana cachet and its backstamp at 4 PM on Dec 3.

INTERNATIONAL AIR MAIL SERVICE TO CUBA

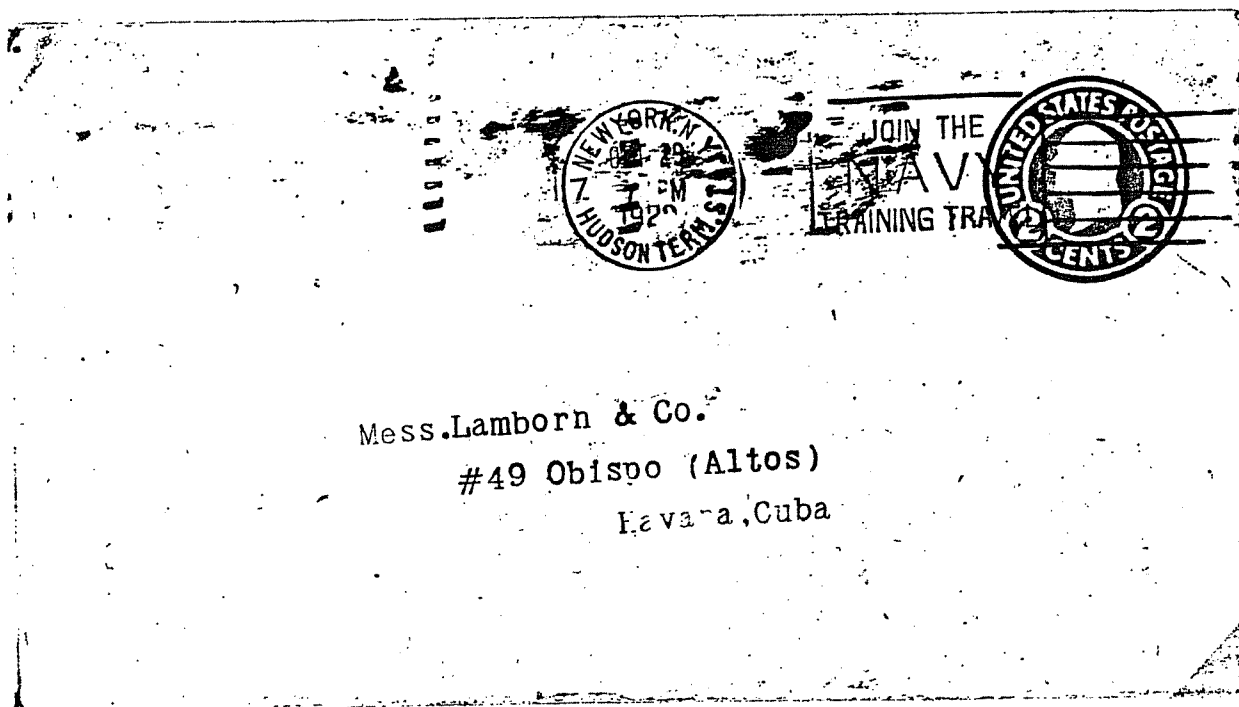
Inaugural Service, Foreign Route 1.

Aircraft: Curtiss F-5-L (conversions)
Santa Maria and Pinta
Pilots: John W. Isemann
T.L. Tibbs
Contractor: Aeromarine West Indies Airways



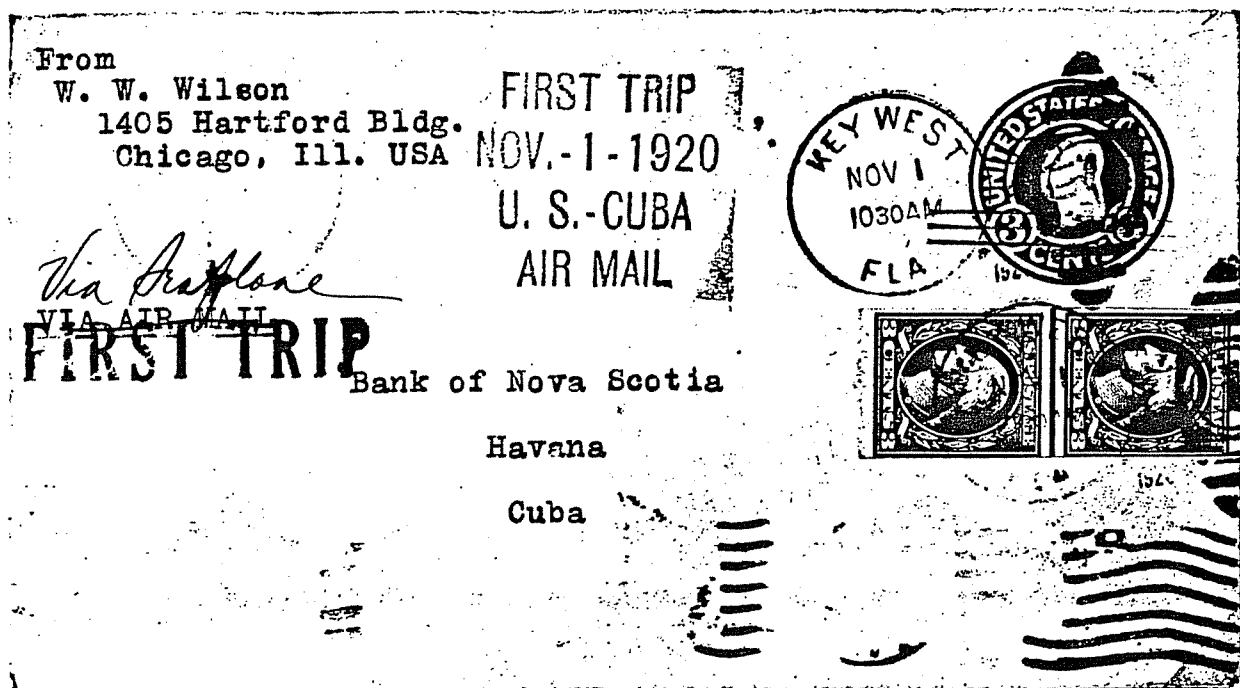
Official Cachet
Applied to all mail

This was the first U.S. foreign air mail service to any destination country.
First class mail was carried on space available basis. No Cuban dispatches.

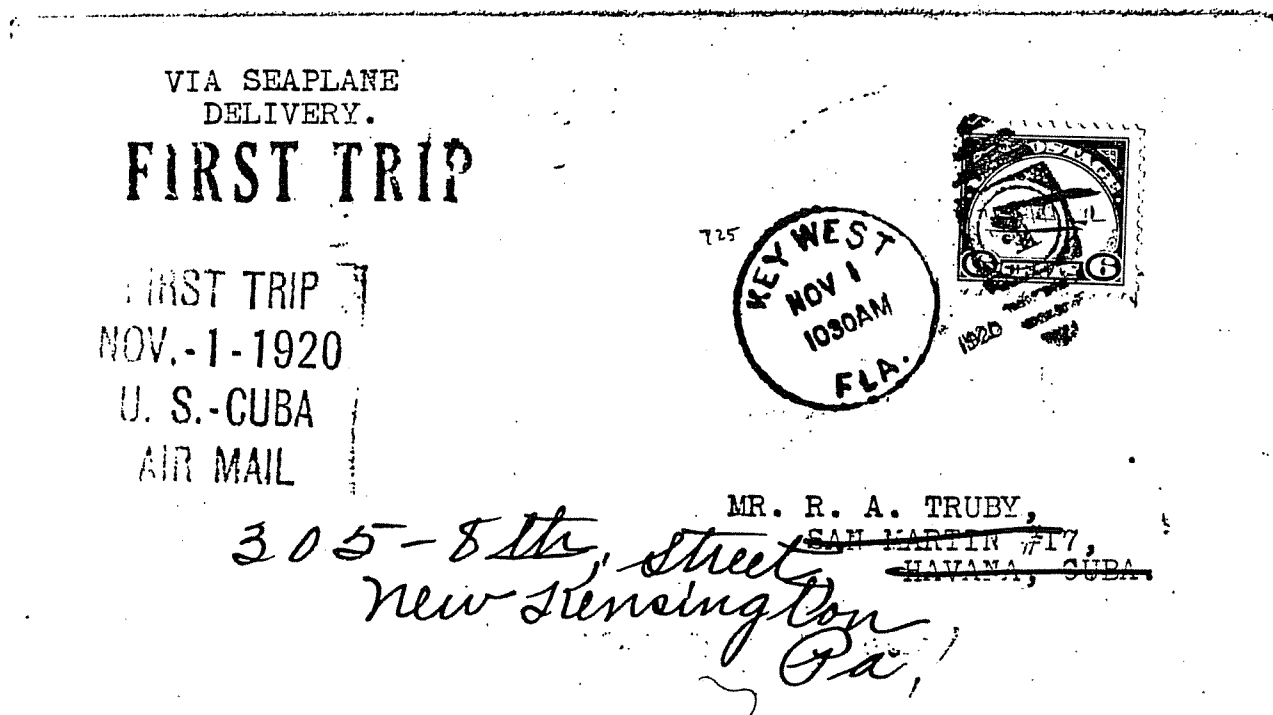


First class business letter brought in from north by train 1/2 hour before these flights left for Havana. One of the few nonphilatelic covers saved.

Philatelic mail could be sent from Key West, if marked "VIA SEAPLANE" and the air mail rate of 6 cents/oz applied in stamps. Cachets were added privately.



W.W. Wilson, the most prolific cover preparer, used two first trip cachets.

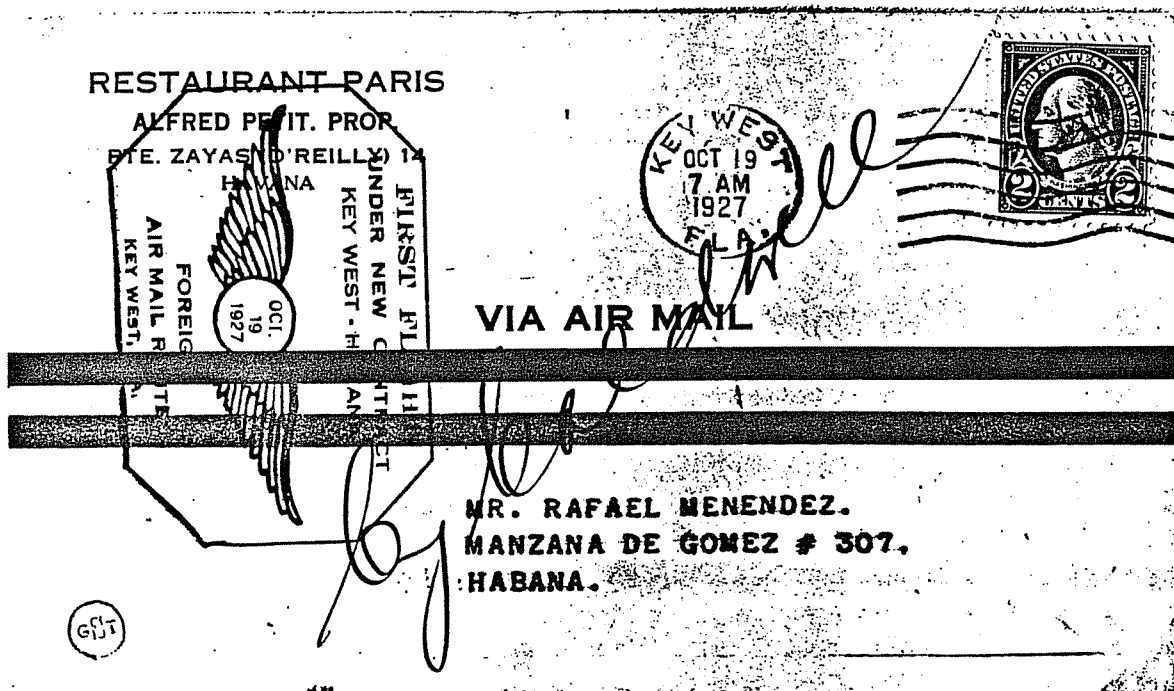


The Truby brothers used the same cachets on cover with six cent air mail stamp.

Inauguration of Resumed Route 1, Renamed FAM 4

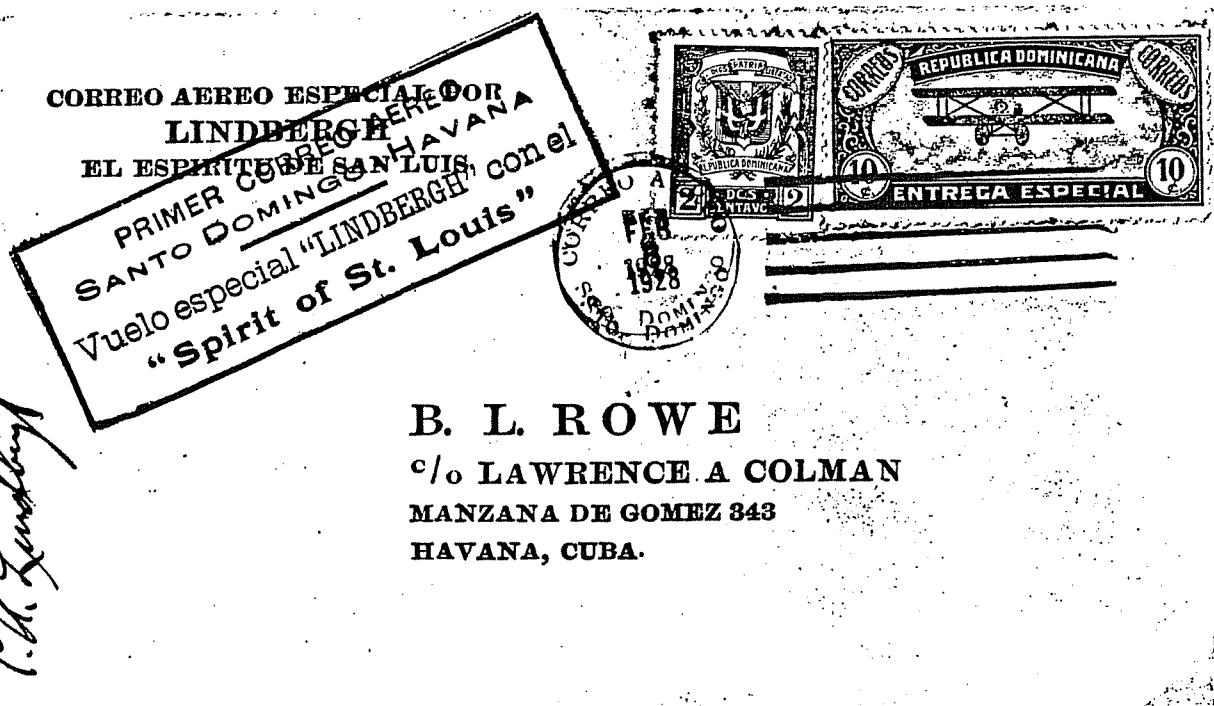
Aircraft: La Nina, Fairchild floatplane
(property of West Indian Aerial Express)
Pilot: Cy Caldwell, ferry pilot for WIAE
Contractor: Pan American Airways (about to lose contract)
Rate: First class mail (2 cents) no added fee

Pan Am's inauguration date for first contract arrived, but they were not ready to fly. WIAE permitted Caldwell to make first flight in time.



First flight cover signed by Caldwell, part of 251 lbs of mail carried.

For first time, Lindbergh agreed to fly air mail for Basil Rowe and Dominican Republic postal service. A blue cachet hand stamp has: First Air Mail - Santo Domingo to Havana - Special Lindbergh Flight by the - "Spirit of Saint Louis."



Covers to Havana were first air mail flights, since West Indian Aerial Express had not yet begun service to Cuba, planned for Feb 20. The covers remained on board during the Port-au-Prince visit, but reached Cuba ahead of regular mail.

Caribbean Goodwill Tour

Most of the covers dispatched from Santo Domingo on the Lindbergh flight were standard air mail letters. Then, along came this registered cover.



It has the required postmarks and cachets to verify Spirit of St. Louis dispatch. It has both of the Basil Rowe cachets, a correct 12 centavos for postage and air mail, 10 for registry; with Havana receiving stamp.

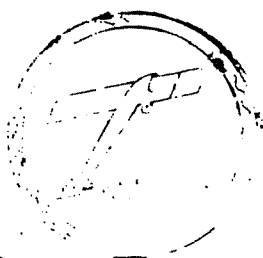
Caribbean Goodwill Tour

Haitian PO also cooperated with Basil Rowe to dispatch special covers for Cuba by Spirit of Saint Louis. They are characterized by both the Lindbergh cachet and the red AVION, which had already been used regularly in blue on WIAE mail.

POSTE AERIEEN SPECIAL POUR
LINDBERGH
"ESPRIT DE ST. LOUIS"



*C. A. Lindbergh
April 1934*

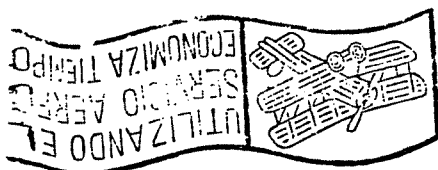


B. L. ROWE
c/o LAWRENCE A COLMAN
MANZANA DE GOMEZ 343
HAVANA, CUBA.

Reverse of cover shows special cachet, "First Air Mail Port-au-Prince-Havana". Havana back stamps register 4 PM Feb 8, when he touched down, and 11 AM Feb 9, when mail was processed. Most of these covers were later lost in a hurricane.

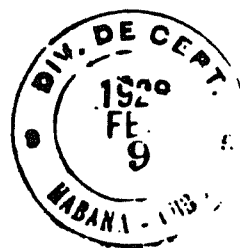
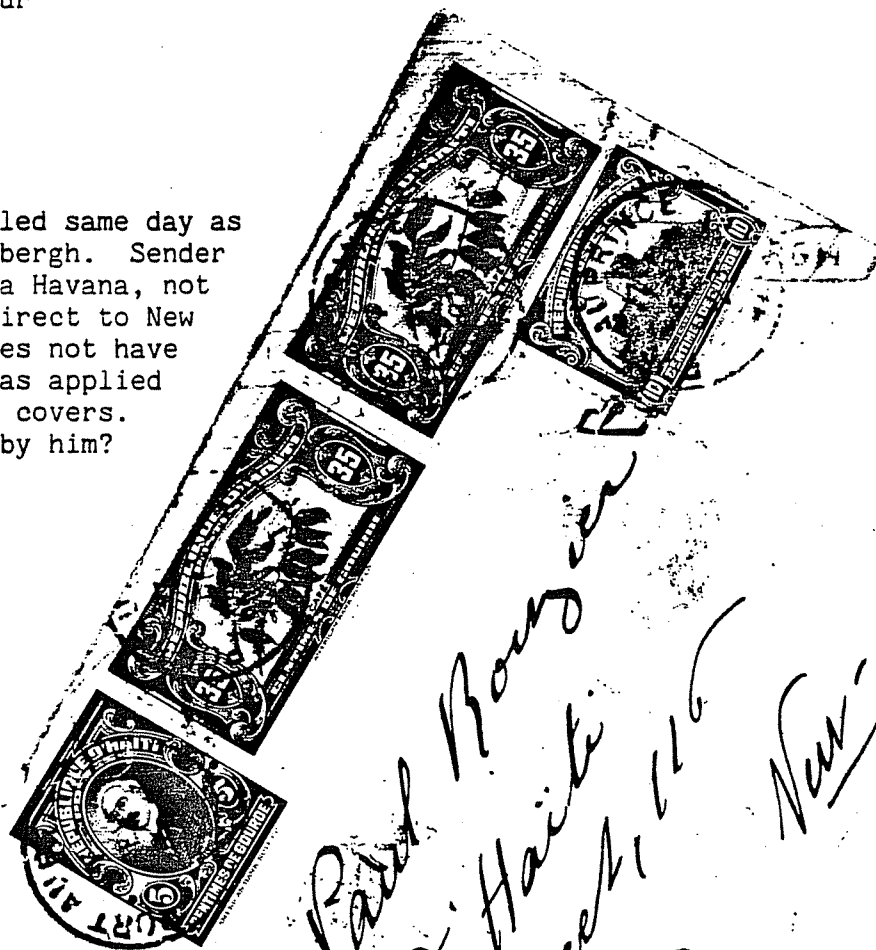


PREMIER COURRIER AERIEEN
PORT-AU-PRINCE-HAVANE
RAID SPECIAL "LINDBERGH"
A BORD DU
"Spirit of St. Louis"



On Feb 8 Lindbergh departed early for an all day flight to Havana and his most important "diplomatic" appearance at the Sixth Pan American Conference, where air line negotiations had been under way. By 9:20 AM he was over eastern Cuba.

Registered cover mailed same day as covers flown by Lindbergh. Sender requested routing via Havana, not the regular packet direct to New York. However, it does not have a circle/AVION mark as applied on regular Lindbergh covers. Was it really flown by him?



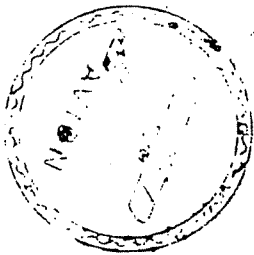
Havana backstamp shows it was worked the same day as Lindbergh covers. No other known official routing could give this same schedule. The Lindbergh Study Group examined this cover and believes that it was one of the Lindbergh covers. At least one other similar cover exists. They were in New York two days ahead of the Bertolini cover.

This cover and its research described in The Airpost Journal, Vol. 59, p.20.

This has all of the proper postmarks for dispatch via the Spirit of St. Louis to Havana and then Miranda. However, has no Havana backstamps, only Miranda.

Was it flown by Lindbergh?

Par avion Spirit of St. Louis



Mr. John G. Kunz,

Miranda, Oriente,

Cuba.

?



1. If it was flown by Lindbergh, time Havana to Miranda, 1 day, 13 hours, was less than other later covers until 1931, after inauguration of Cuba air mail.
2. It may also have been sent by the steamer, which had just arrived with the previous Valentine cover, offering quicker service to Miranda. Arrived 10th.

Who has other Miranda covers that may answer the question?

After the initial Lindbergh flight to Cuba, Santo Domingo was ready for regular interisland mail service to include Santiago de Cuba as well as Port au Prince.

FIRST DAY AIR MAIL
SANTO DOMINGO TO SANTIAGO DE CUBA
AIRPLANE SANTA MARIA

PILOT:

B. L. Rowe



B. L. ROWE
WEST INDIAN AERIAL EXPRESS
SANTIAGO DE CUBA, CUBA.

PRIMER VIAJE AEREO
CUBA, HAITI-SANTO DOMINGO, PTO. RICO
Aeroplano "Santa Maria"

Basil Rowe signed cover with purple postmark has special first flight cachets.

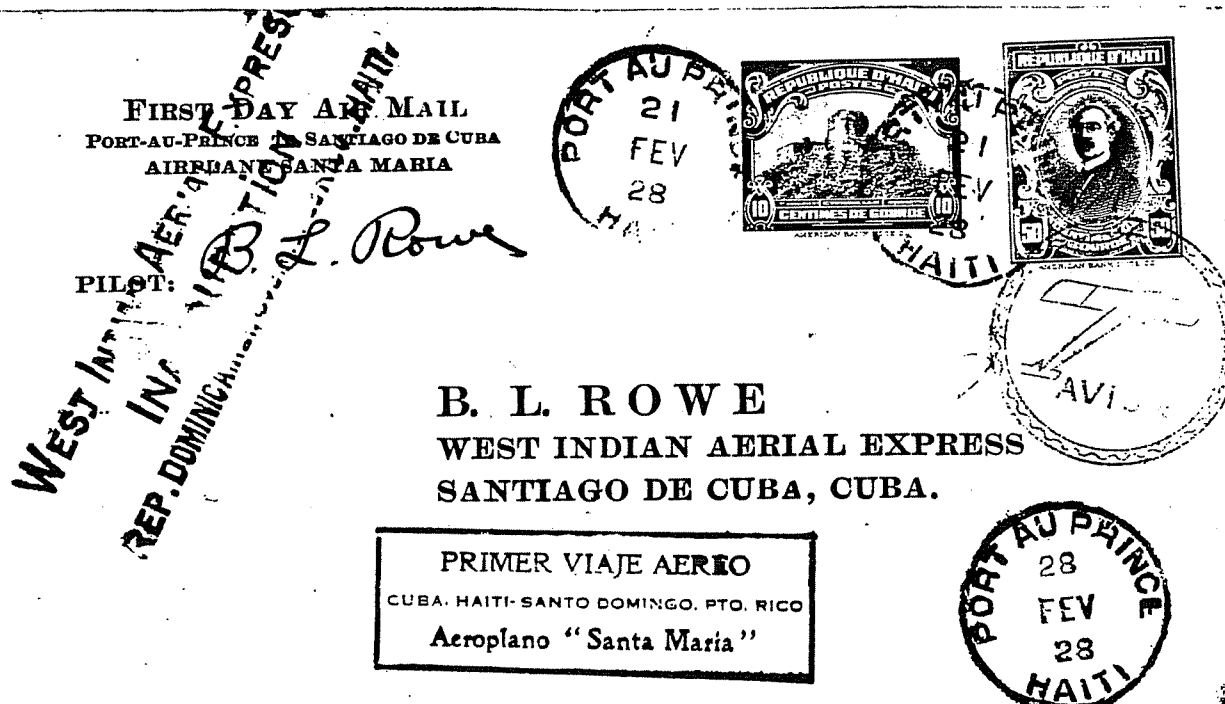
FIRST DAY AIR MAIL
SANTO DOMINGO TO SANTIAGO DE CUBA



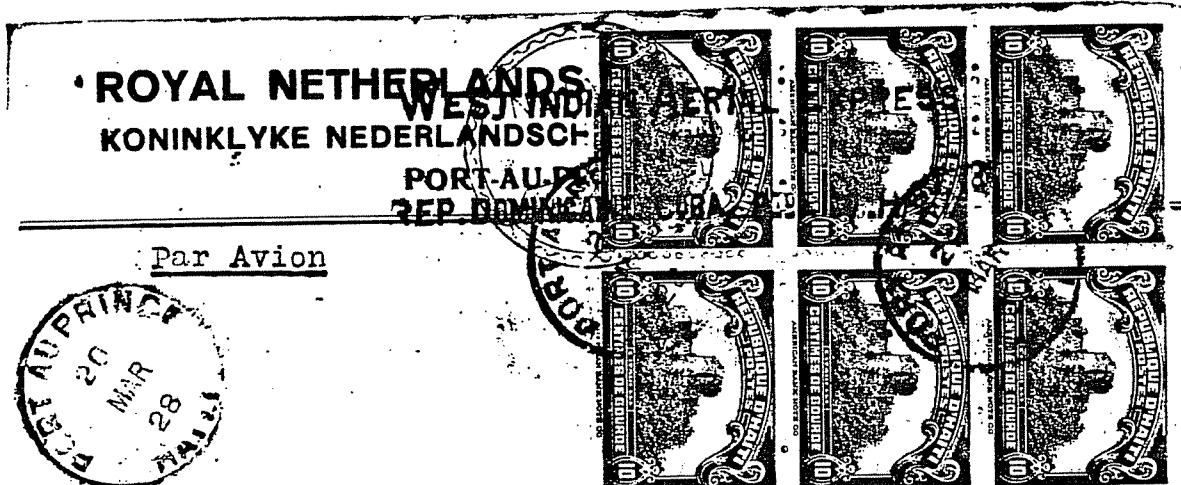
R. I. DUNTEN, VICE PRESIDENT,
WEST INDIAN AERIAL EXPRESS, C. FOR A.
SANTIAGO DE CUBA, CUBA.

Another by WIAE Vice President Dunten was given blue postmark, printed cachet.

Port au Prince was not as ready for new service and took an extra week to start.

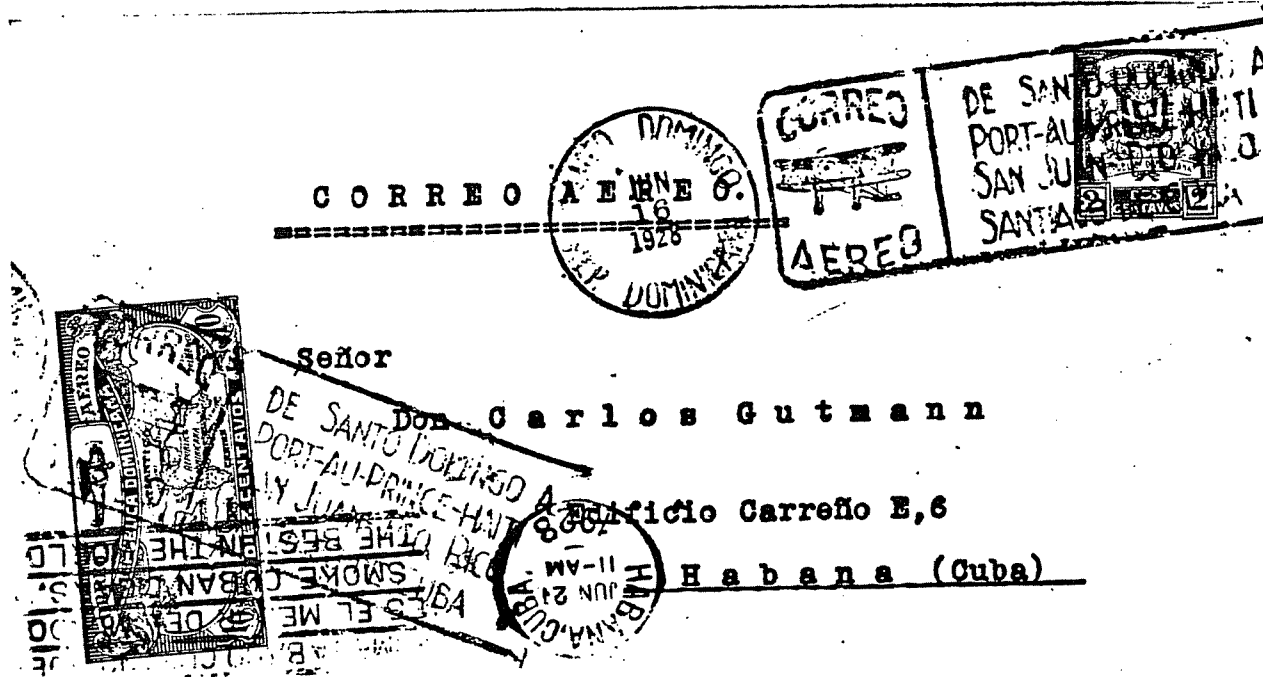


Three cachets and circular air mail handstamp on first flight cover to Santiago de Cuba was postmarked both 21 and 28 Feb. Backstamp shows flight on the 28th.



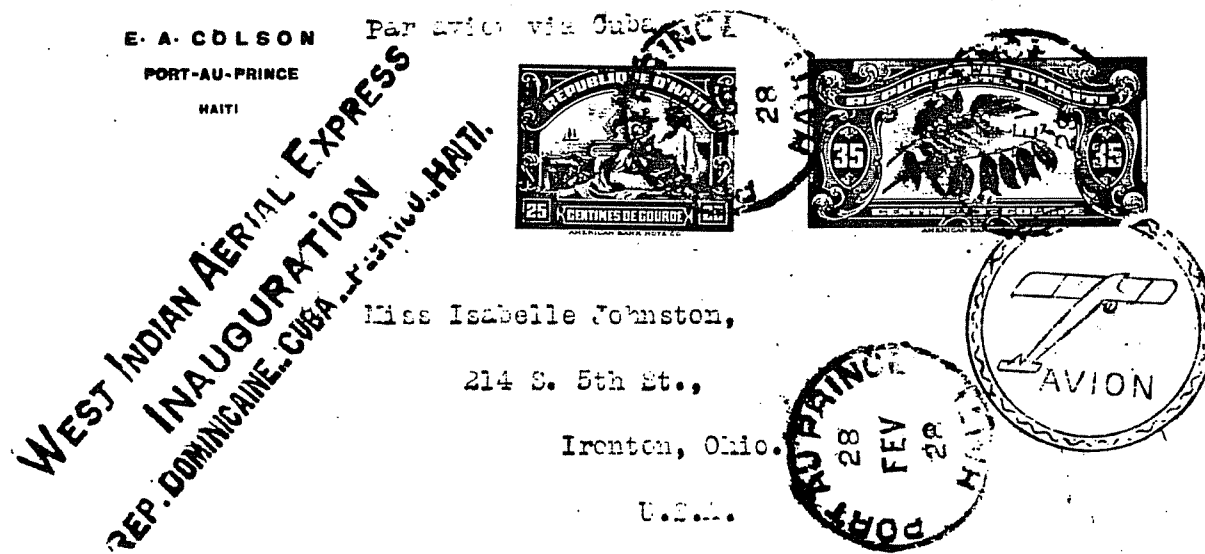
Messrs. L. Abascal & Co.,

Santiago de Cuba



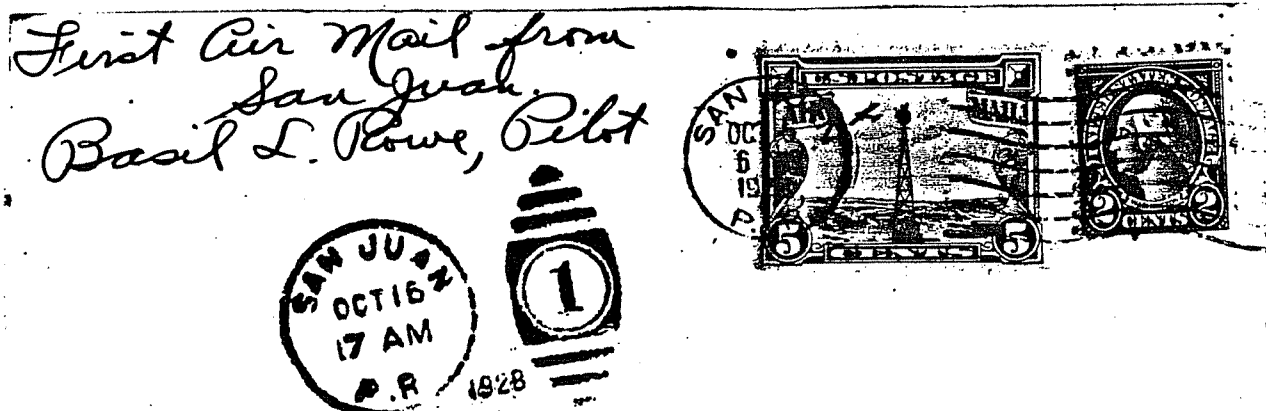
Business covers from Port au Prince and Santo Domingo during regular service.

Port au Prince was not as ready for new service and took an extra week to start.



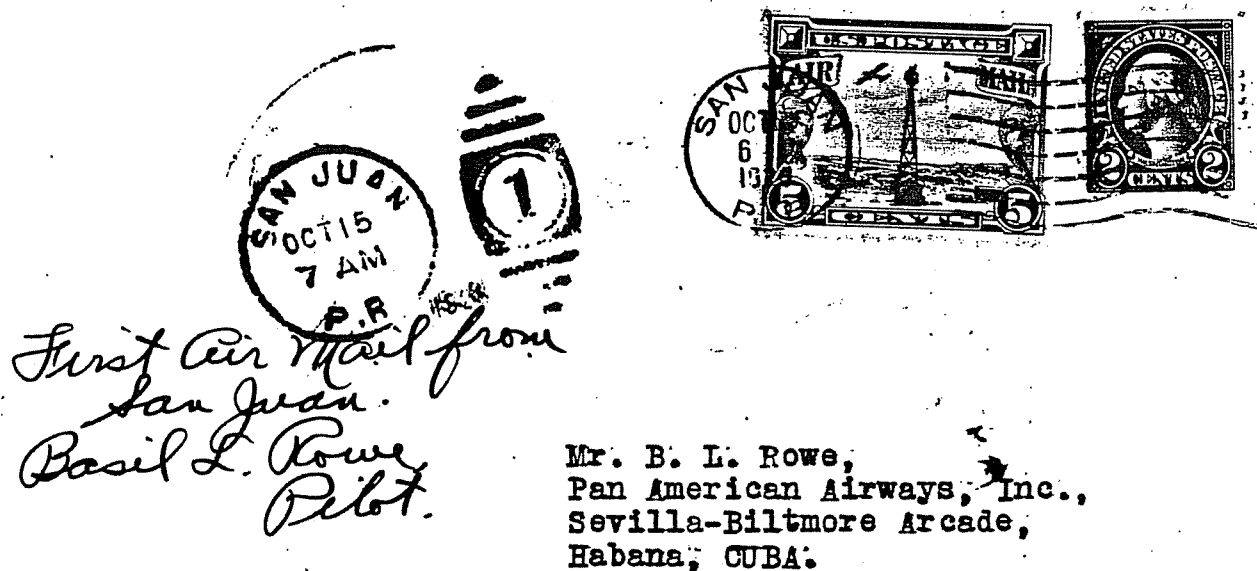
Blue cachet and circular air mail handstamp on first regular cover to U.S., via Santiago de Cuba (backstamp shows same day, Feb 28) did not get U.S. backstamp.

After the takeover by Pan Am, Rowe made one more flight to deliver his flagship Santa Maria to new owners. First time he flew mail (unofficial) from San Juan.



Mr. B. L. Rowe,
Sr. Federico Reimers,
Apartado 285,
Santiago de Cuba.

Basil Rowe signed cover with San Juan postmark Oct 15. Backstamp was a favor.



Mr. B. L. Rowe,
Pan American Airways, Inc.,
Sevilla-Biltmore Arcade,
Habana, CUBA.

Another to Havana with a Nov 4 backstamp was also unofficial, but sentimental.

On September 15, 1928, Pan Am opened a new northern terminal in Miami.

FIRST FLIGHT
FOREIGN CAM 4
MIAMI-HAVANA



GEO. T. STREET
APARTADO 1702
HAVANA, CUBA.

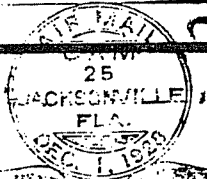
This was flown on the new regular daily service from Miami to Havana.

VIA AIRMAIL
FIRST TRIP

Via Miami, Fla. to Havanna, Cuba



FIRST FLIGHT



MR. LEON DE LEON
Callecon 12 Altos

HAVANNA, CUBA

In December, a new CAM service from the north made Havana connection at Miami.

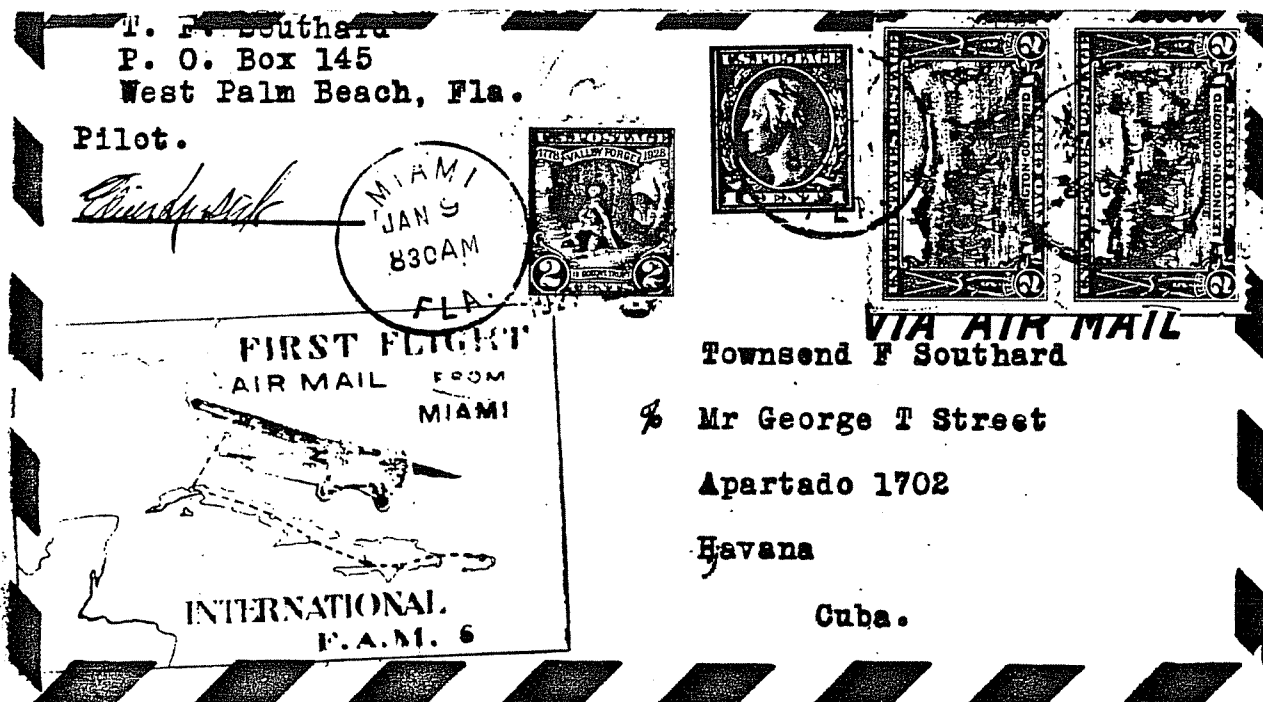
FAM 6 inaugural Flight Miami-San Juan



Contractor: Pan American Airways (won award over WIAE)
 Rate: 10 cents per 1/2 oz air mail (5 cents to Cuba) plus regular postage

| Route Segment | Trimotor Aircraft | Pilot |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------|
| Miami-Havana | "Cristobal Colon" Fokker F-10A | Ed Musick |
| Havana-Santiago de Cuba | "Cuba" Ford 5-AT-B | C.D. Swinson |
| Santiago de Cuba-San Juan | NC 5192 Fokker F-VIIa | Basil L. Rowe |

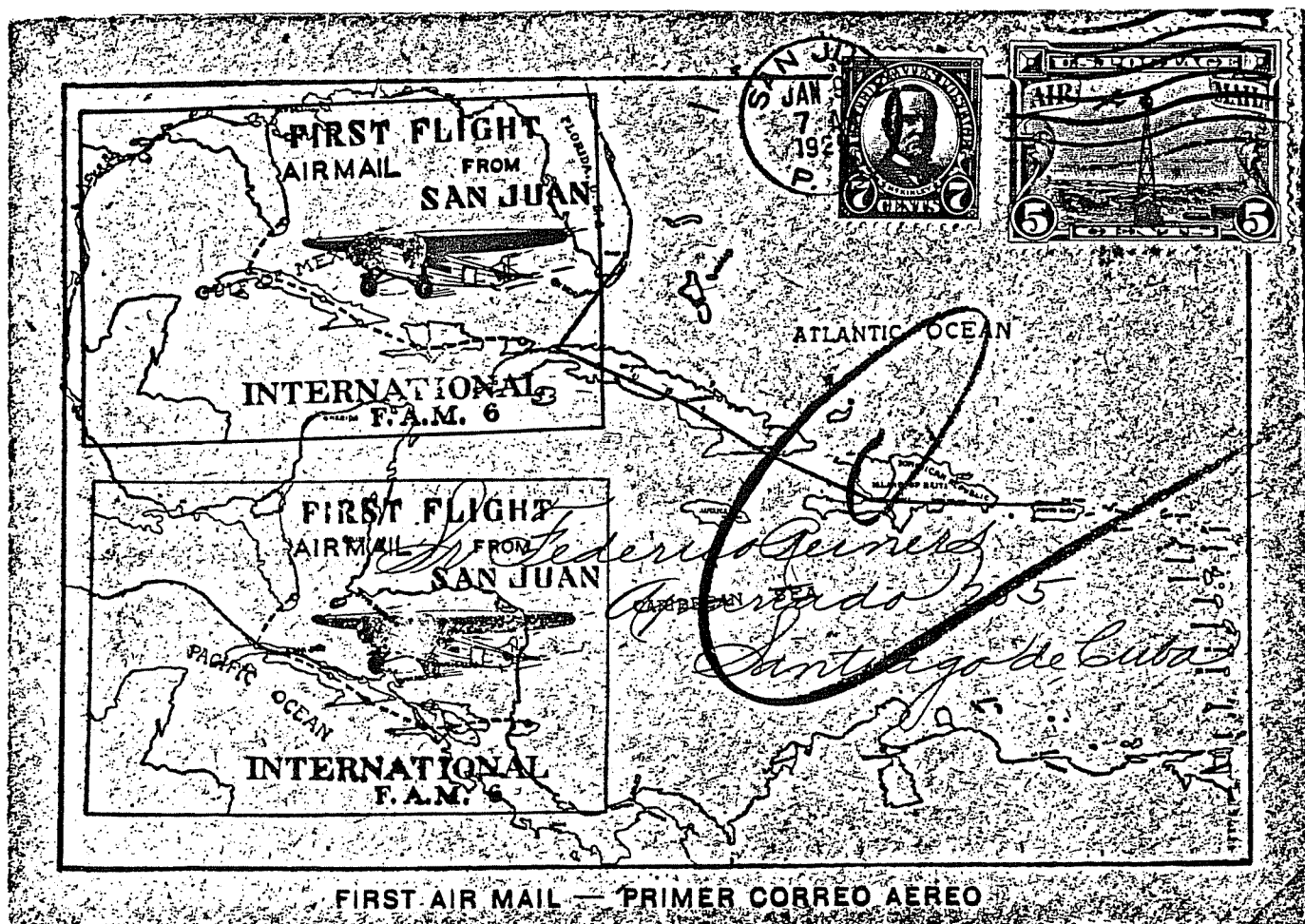
Pan Am did not announce rates until last moment. Many postage due stamps added.



Musick signed this cover he flew. It reached Havana an hour later than FAM 4.



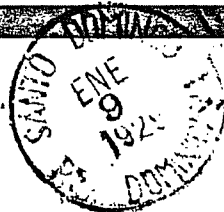
Incorrect (Haitian) postage due handstamp, but Cuban postage due stamps on Maria Melendez cover with Santiago de Cuba machine backstamp, 9 PM, January 11, 1929.



Map of route inscribed on cover has the magenta and blue cachets and the backstamp.

Santo Domingo dispatched three bags of covers to Cuba, for Santiago de Cuba, Camaguey, and Havana, using usual blue green air mail canceller.

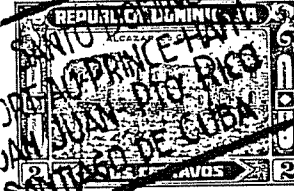
FIRST FLIGHT
FAM 6,
FLORIDA - PORTO RICO.



GEO. T. STREET,
SANTIAGO DE CUBA,
CUBA.

Street cover has 3:30 PM Santiago de Cuba backstamp, route map on reverse.

FIRST FLIGHT
FAM 6,
FLORIDA - PORTO RICO.



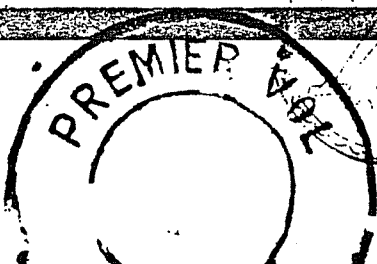
AEREO

GEO. T. STREET,
CAMAGÜEY,
CUBA.

Camaguey cover delivered by air next day received 9:30 AM backstamp on 10th.

Port au Prince dispatched two bags for Havana and Santiago de Cuba. Latter held Camaguey mail. Used circle air mail (AVION) and first flight cachets.

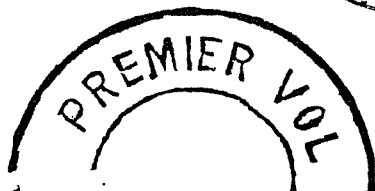
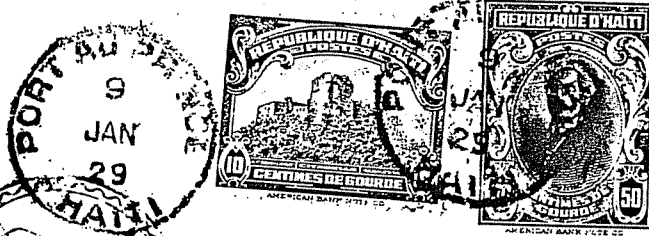
FIRST FLIGHT
FAM 6,
FLORIDA - PORTO RICO.



GEO. T. STREET,
SANTIAGO DE CUBA,
CUBA.

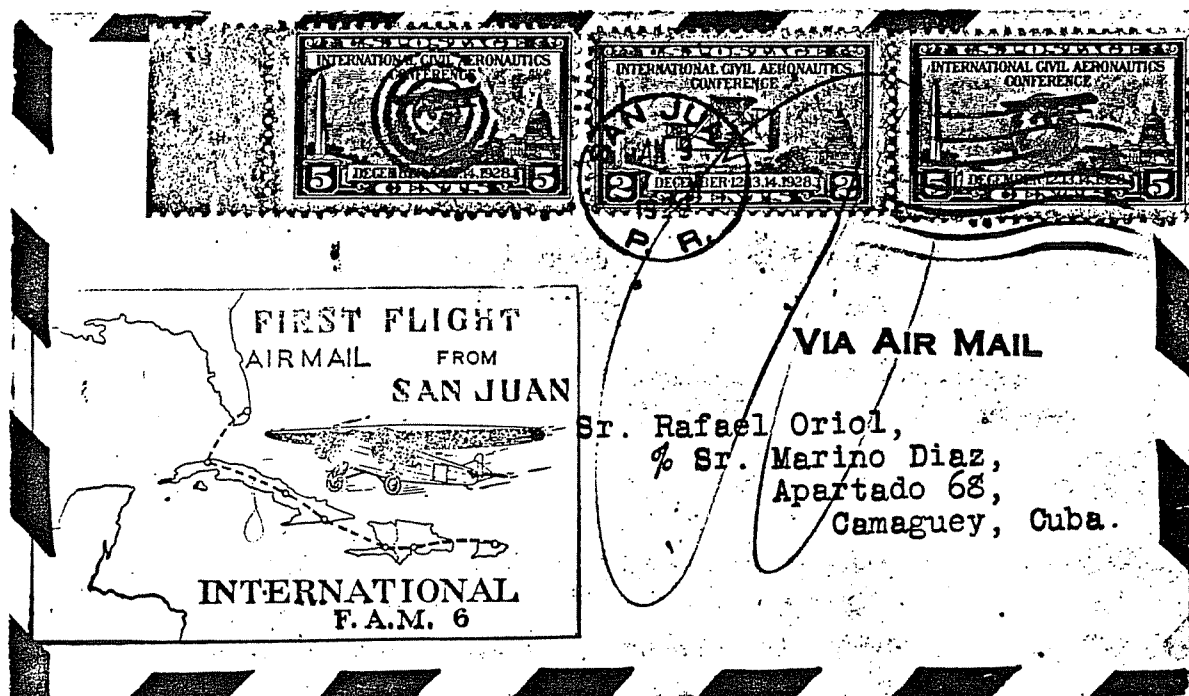
Street cover has 3:30 PM Santiago de Cuba backstamp, route map on reverse.

FIRST FLIGHT
FAM 6,
FLORIDA - PORTO RICO.

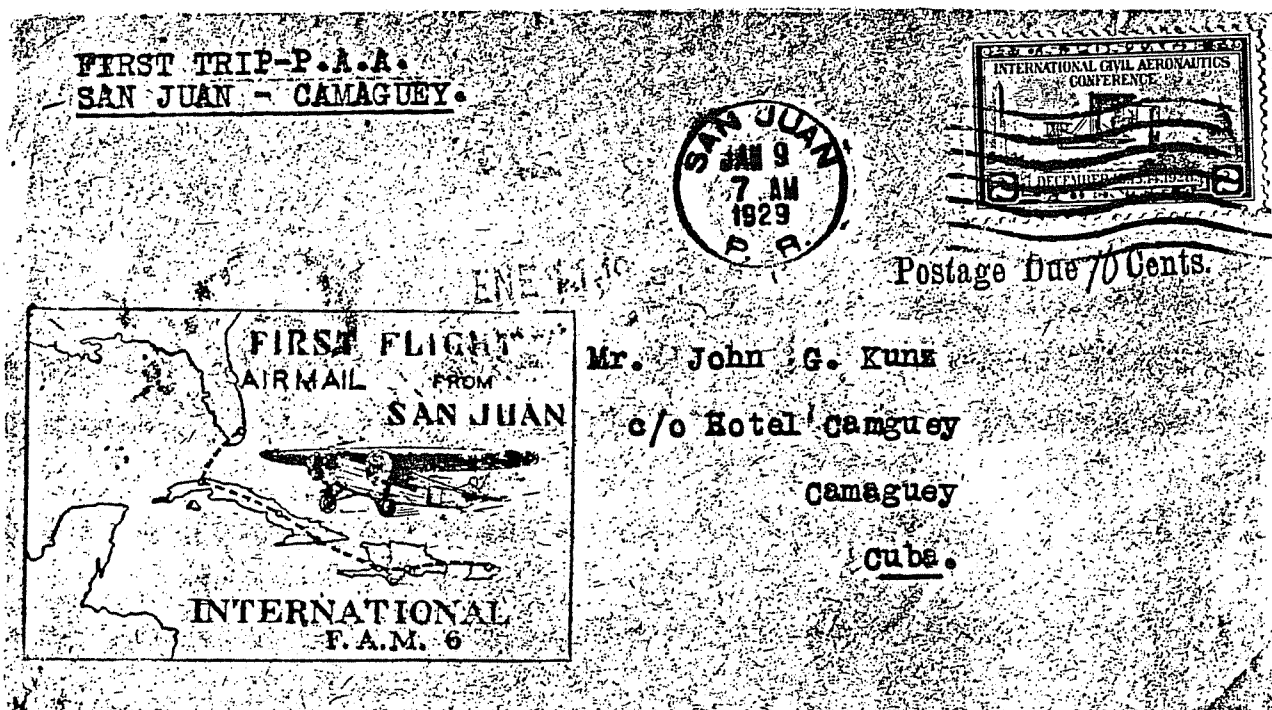


GEO. T. STREET,
CAMAGÜEY,
CUBA.

Camaguey cover delivered via rail next day received 3 PM backstamp on 10th.

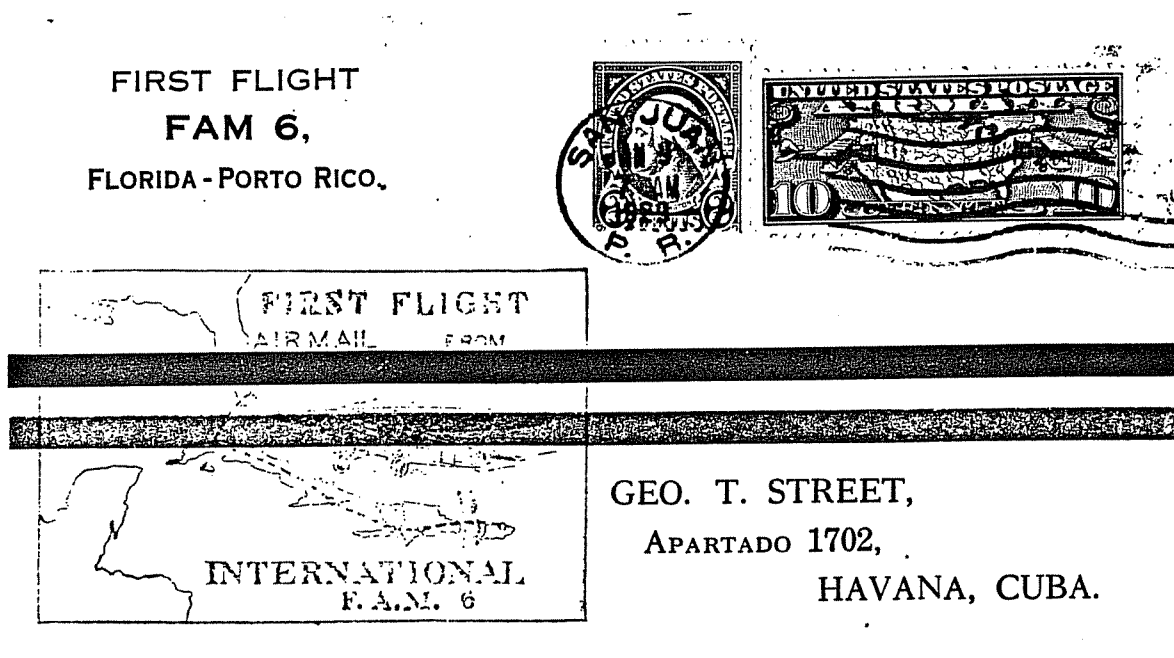


Oriol cover to Camaguey with magenta cachet was backstamped 1 PM, Jan 11.

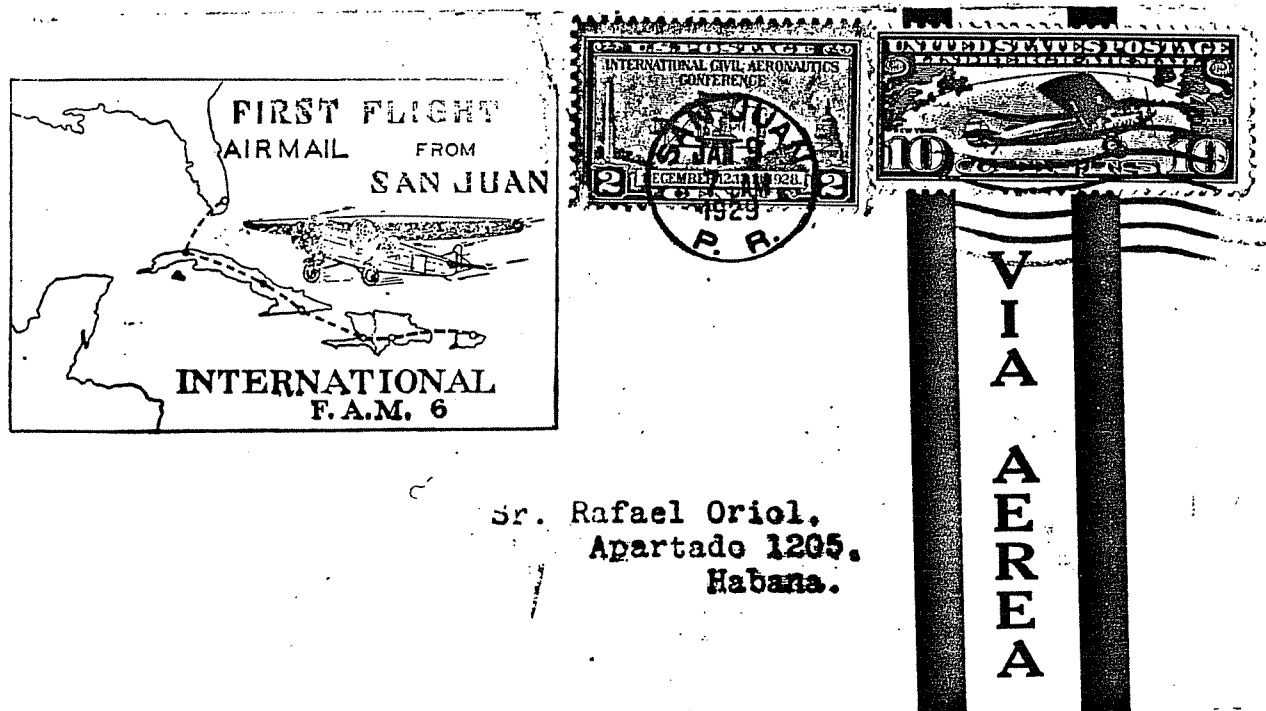


Magenta cacheted postage due Kunz cover has the Havana and Camaguey backstamps.

San Juan dispatches to all the Cuban cities were delivered only to Havana.

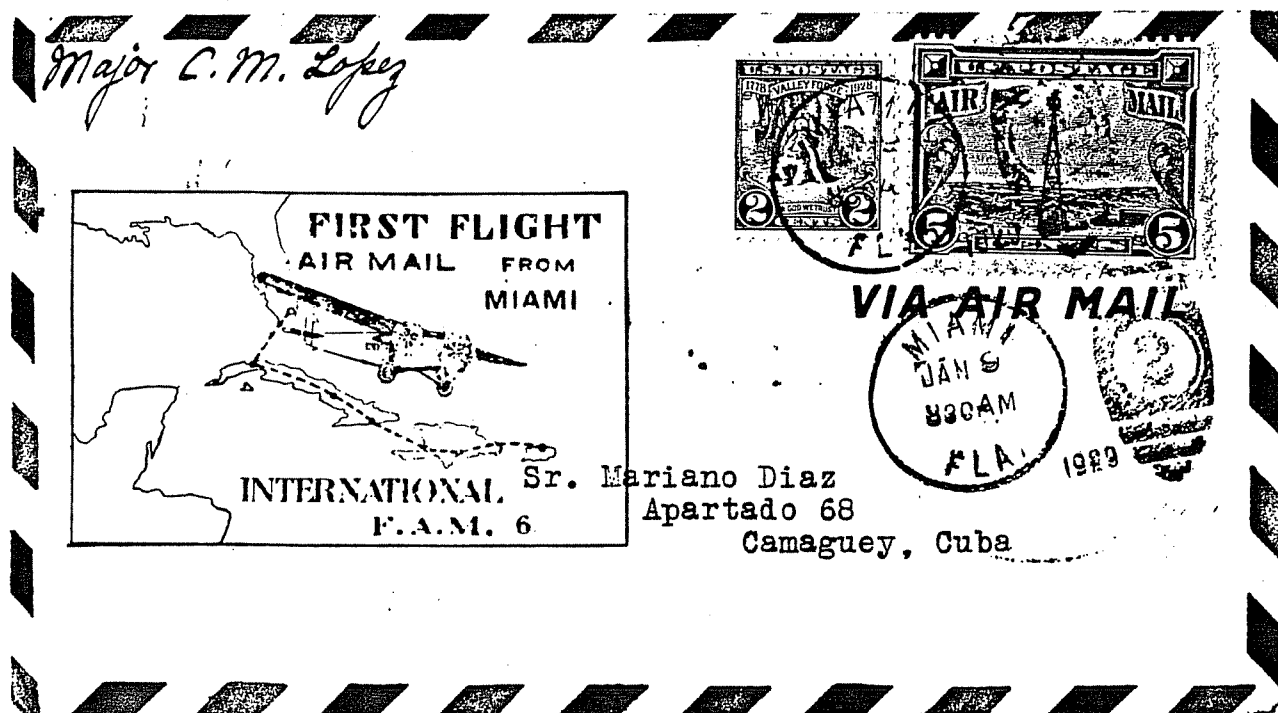


Street cover with purple cachet and correct rate has route map on reverse.

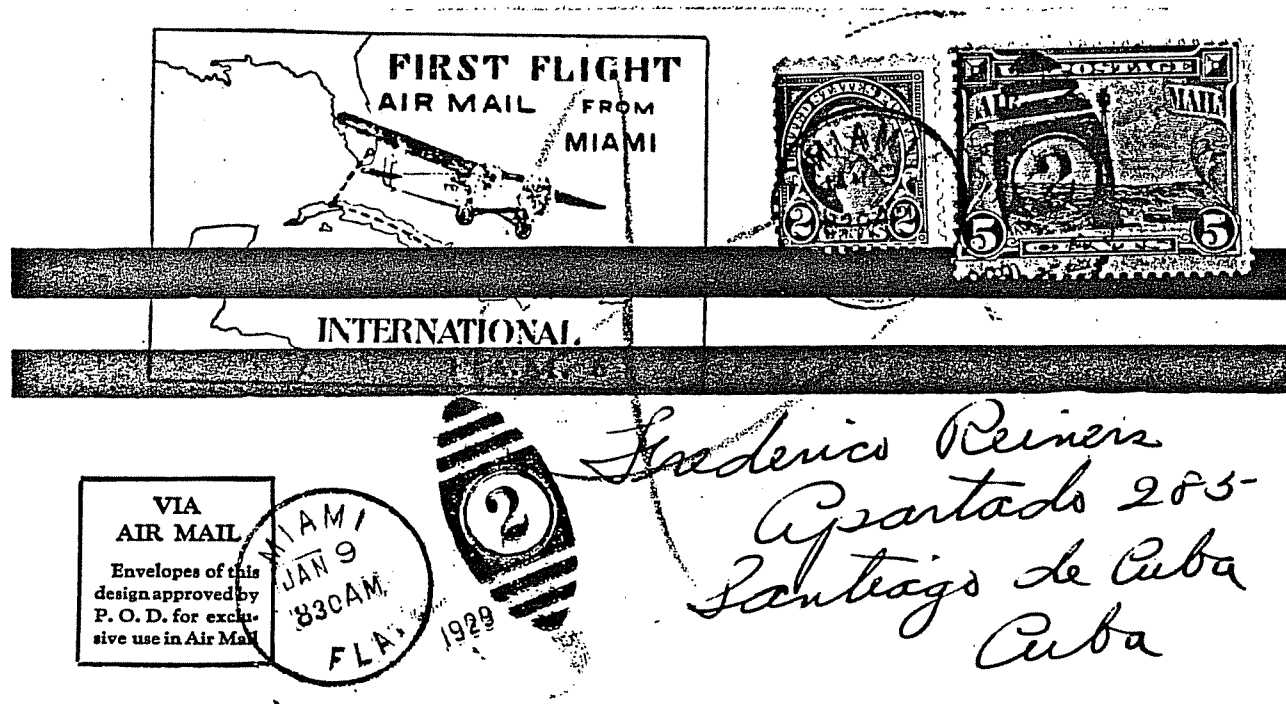


Magenta cacheted Oriol cover shows the usual Havana backstamp of 5 PM, Jan 10th.

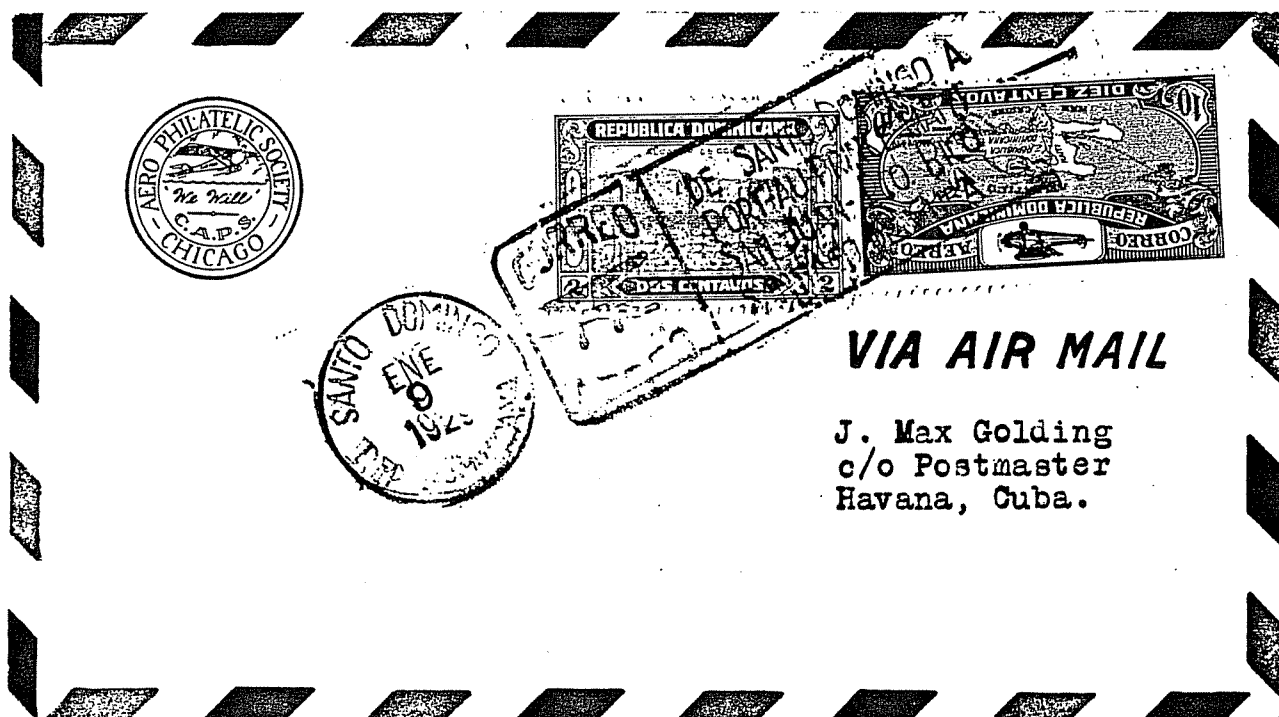
Miami dispatched Cuban mail only to Havana, from there it went further by rail.



Although flight arrived in Camaguey at 3:10 PM, this has backstamp: 1 PM, 10th.



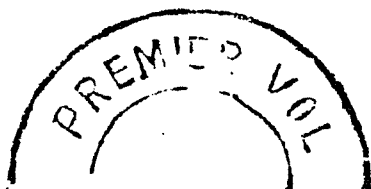
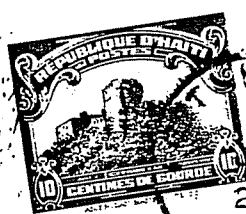
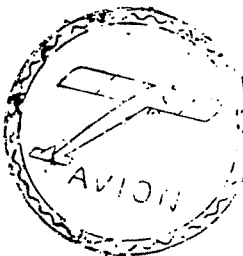
Another in the same Havana dispatch went on to Santiago de Cuba, no backstamp.



Santo Domingo to Havana cover with Chicago Aero Philatelic Society cachet.

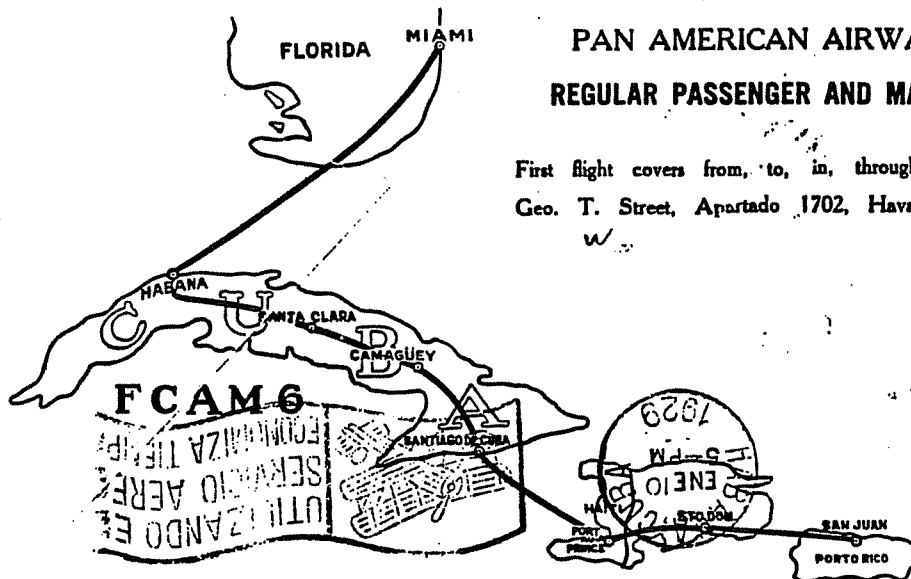
FAM 6 Inaugural Flight Miami-San Juan

FIRST FLIGHT
FAM 6,
FLORIDA - PORTO RICO.



GEO. T. STREET,
APARTADO 1702,
HAVANA, CUBA.

Port au Prince to Havana cover Jan 9, has same cachets.



PAN AMERICAN AIRWAYS, INC.
REGULAR PASSENGER AND MAIL SERVICE.

First flight covers from, to, in, through or near CUBA.
Geo. T. Street, Apartado 1702, Havana, Cuba. ,
w

This cover, like all Street covers shows entire route and ads on reverse.

FAM 5 Inaugural Flight Miami-Cristobal

Although FAM and outlaw planes flew together, services offered were not equal. Both arrived in Havana the afternoon of Feb 12 then in Miami the next morning. FAM mail via Miami was forwarded by air mail; outlaw mail was sent by ordinary means. Official mail was backstamped in Miami at 12 M Feb 13; outlaw was not.



FAM cover, if returned via air from the southbound flight, was not backstamped Miami. It was backstamped in Havana at 12 M Feb 13. The landing in Miami was too late to connect with FAM 6 9:15 Havana flight. Either it was held over in Havana until morning or it was dispatched by steamer from Cristobal to Havana.

Remitente:
V. B. Leon
Box 739, Panama, R. P.

CORREO AEREO



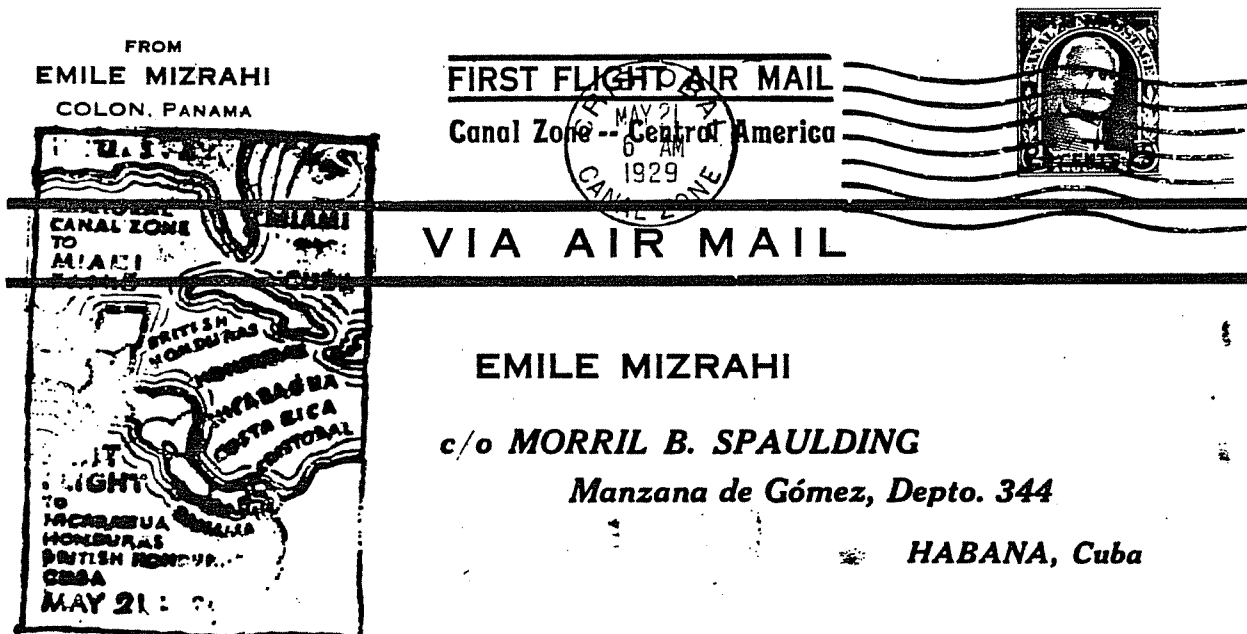
Dirección del destinatario

Mr. Leon de Leon

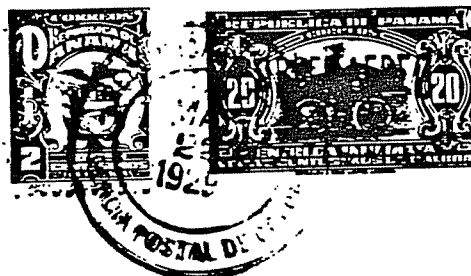
Malecon 52 altos

Havana, Cuba

Outlaw cover most likely made the correct stop at Miami and could have reached Havana easily by 12 M Feb 14 backstamp time. Even an overnight boat would do.



Cristobal to Havana has special flight cachet, a 5/21 postmark, backstamp 5/23.

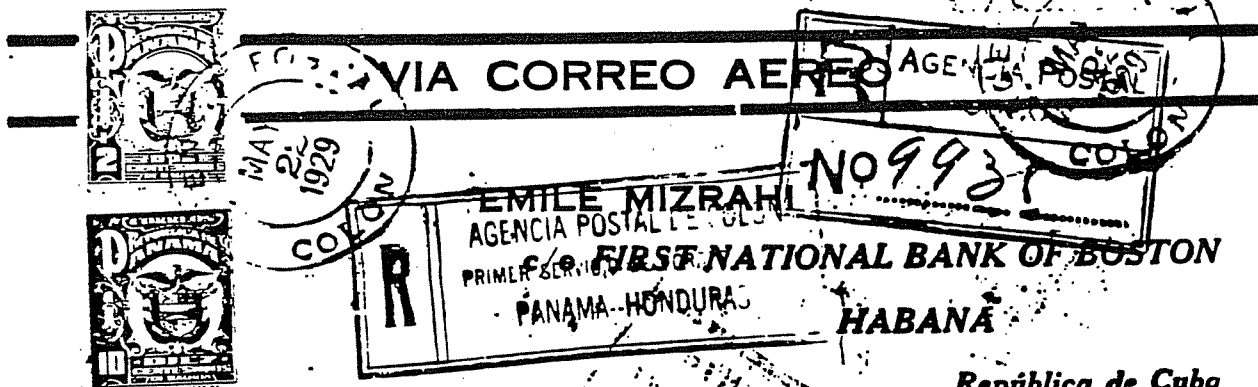


*B. L. Rowe
Pan American Airways
Havana, Cuba*

Self addressed cover by Rowe has cachet, first air mail service Panama to Cuba. Flights left Canal Zone Tu and Th (May 21 and 23). Panama mail arrived May 25.

FROM
EMILE MIZRAHI
COLON, PANAMA

PRIMER CORREO AEREO
Panamá y Centro América



República de Cuba

7754

Registered cover Colon to Havana has wrong Honduras cachet, Cuba cachet on back.

The key to the dilemma is this cover intended for the FAM 5 flight to Cristobal, but without adequate air mail postage. However, it was flown to Havana by FAM 4 where it was transferred to a steamer for crossing to Cristobal, arriving Feb 9.



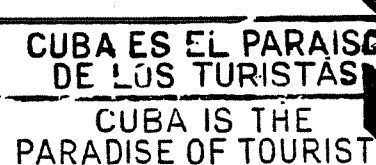
Similar transit time was possible for returning FAM 5 cover and explains return by Feb. 13. Its Havana backstamp, not air mail type, further confirms steamer.



FAM 4 type backstamp



FAM 5 cover backstamp



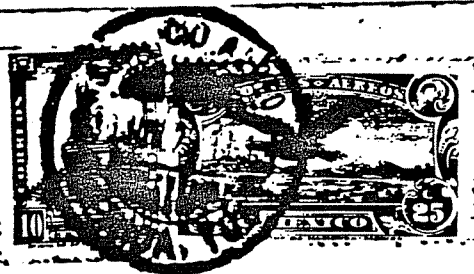
B. L. Rowe

Banco Refaccionario de

CAPITAL SOCIAL: \$ 1,000,000.00 TO

CALLE 58 No. 519.

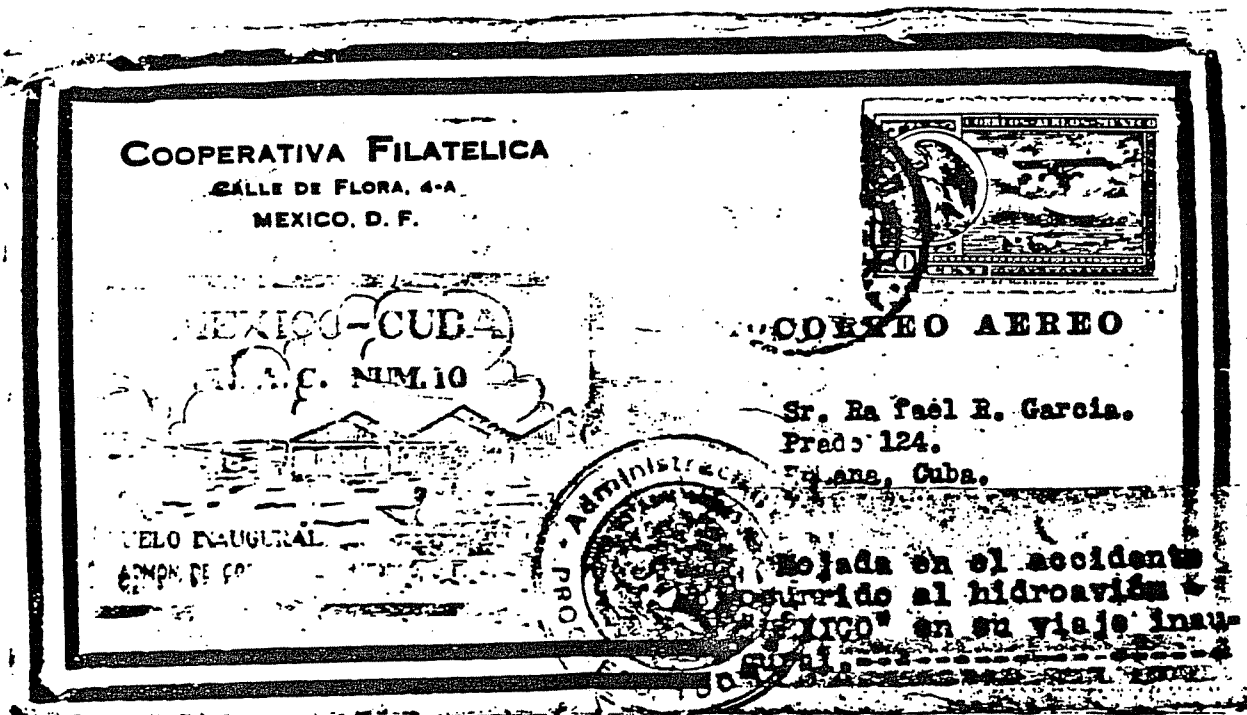
MERIDA, YUC. ME.



SERVICIO POSTAL AEREO

Cristen Brewer
Pan American Airways
Havana
Cuba

Pan American survey flight from Merida to Havana by Basil L. Rowe, Chief Pilot, was postmarked June 30, 1929 in Merida, YUC and backstamped Havana 8 PM July 1.



Mexico route 10 first flight to Havana ran into storms off Progreso was forced down in the Gulf of Mexico near Suculu. Trip discontinued, mail sent by boat.

Other FAM routes, not through Cuba made some of their first dispatches to Cuba.

Dr. Walter Bess,
NASSAU, N. P., BAHAMAS.

BY FIRST AIR MAIL

TO MIAMI, FLA.




S. L. de Lema

Palmer 52 Alta

*Havana
Cuba*





FAM 7, Nassau Jan 2, 1929, backstamped Miami 6 PM Jan 2, Havana, 12 M Jan 3.

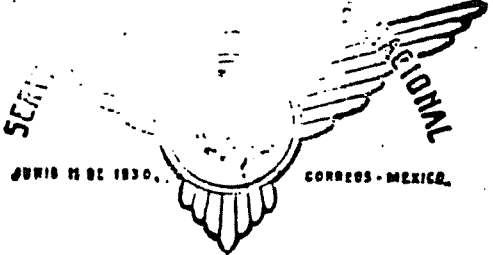


El Correo Aereo

REVISTA AEROFILATELICA MENSUAL
APARTADO POSTAL NO. 2654.
MEXICO, D. F.

CORREO AEREO



SECCION
JUNIO 15 DE 1930.
CORREOS - MEXICO.

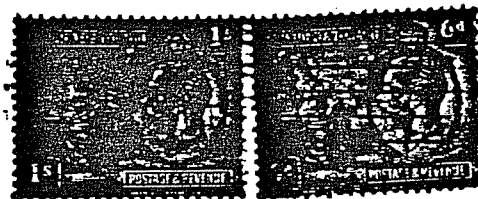
Sr. Manuel Castro Limón,
c/o. Sr. Rafael R. García.
Prado 124.
HABANA, CUBA.

FAM 8 initial Mexican foreign dispatches Jun 1, 1930 to Havana Jun 4 via FAM 5.

Extension of FAM 6 to South America

At Port of Spain, the Lindberghs and Trippes left the flight and started westward across northern edge of South America, surveyed the uncompleted segment of route 5. Tilton flew the northbound first flight of route 6.

BY AIR MAIL
PAR AVION



John G. Kunz

Miranda

Oriente

Cuba.

FAM 6
TRINIDAD

All of the northbound mail dispatched to Cuba was backstamped in Havana.



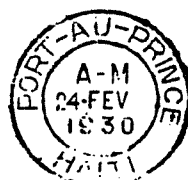
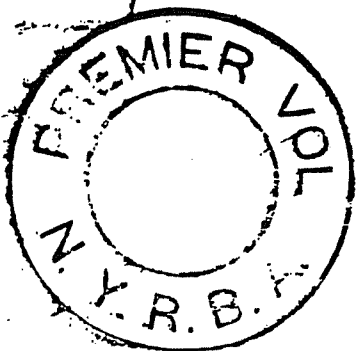
Sr. George H. Street,

Apartado 1702,

Havana, CUBA.

Only 22 covers, including this Street cover, were dispatched to Havana.

In San Juan, routing was split with Huey Wells flying a Consolidated Fleetster via Santo Domingo, Cienfuegos, and Havana to Miami, while the main flight took the short direct route via Port au Prince and Santiago de Cuba to reach Miami.



S. VISITEZ
QUE D'HAÏTI

S. VISIT
DE HAÏTI

PAR AVION VIA NYRBA

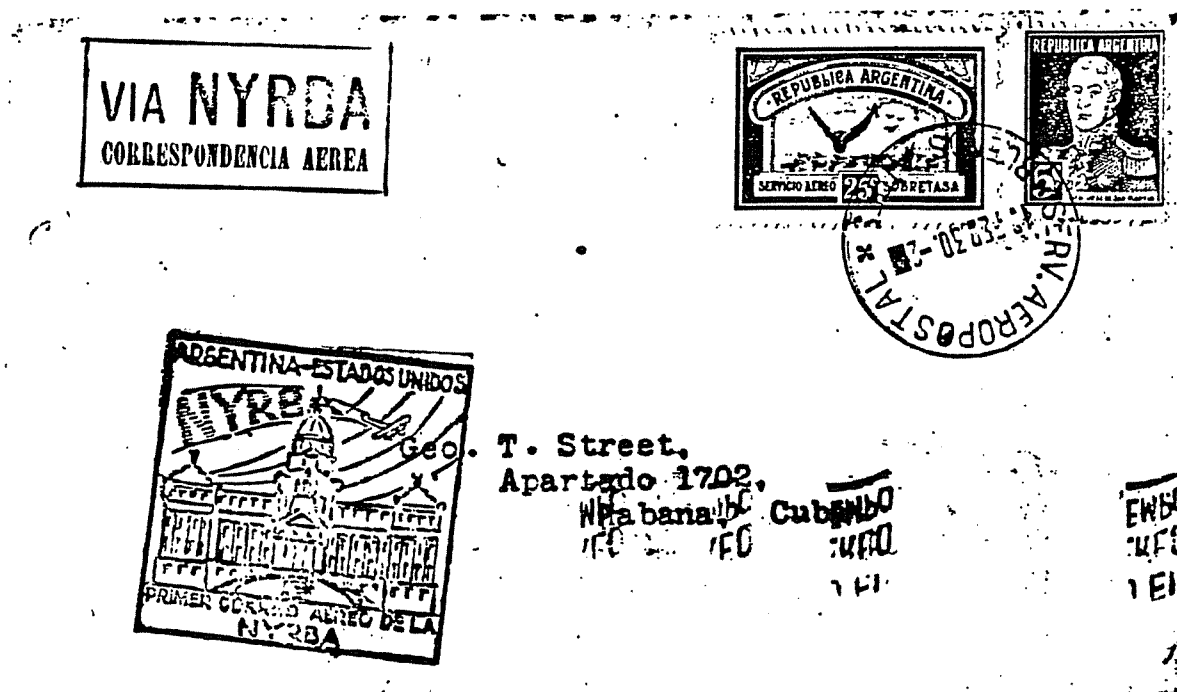
Mr. Clement Deslandes,

Consul General d'Haïti,

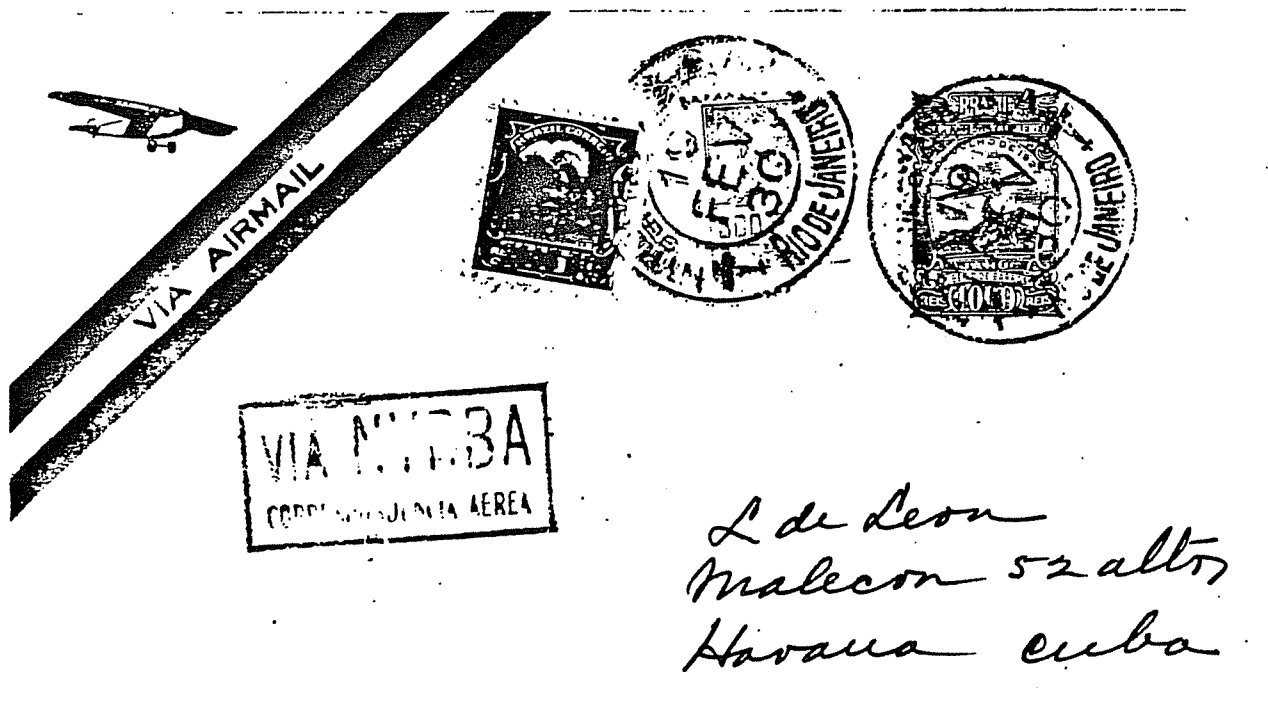
Santiago de Cuba.

NYRBA cachet shows cover picked up by main flight during Port au Prince stop. Backstamp applied 9:30 AM Feb 26, the date main flight reached Miami on time.

Havana covers, routed via Fleetster, got tied up in Santo Domingo two days by a storm and missed schedule. Backstamps 12 M, Feb 27 showed extent of delay.



Two brown NYRBA cachets on Street cover with 25 cent air mail franking.



Cover dispatched from Rio de Janeiro has circular NYRBA postmark and a cachet.

BY AIR MAIL
PAR AVION

FIRST AIR MAIL FROM
TRINIDAD via NYRBALINE



2/4/1930

C. R. Stollmeyer

c/o G. T. Street,

Apartado 1702

Habana, Cuba.

WED
4 FEB

WED
4 FEB

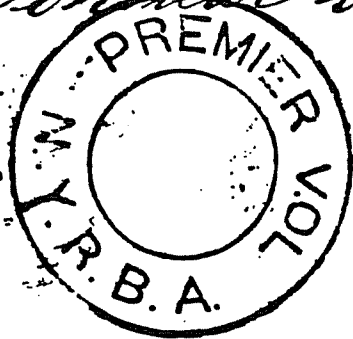
Port of Spain dispatch to Havana in mail transferred to Fleetster in San Juan.



*New York
Buenos Aires*



Monsieur le Directeur de la Poste



*La Habana
Cuba*

Apparently held in Haiti for Fleetster, but does not have Haiti date postmark. Only postmarks, correct Haiti cachet and Havana backstamp showing 12 M Feb 27.

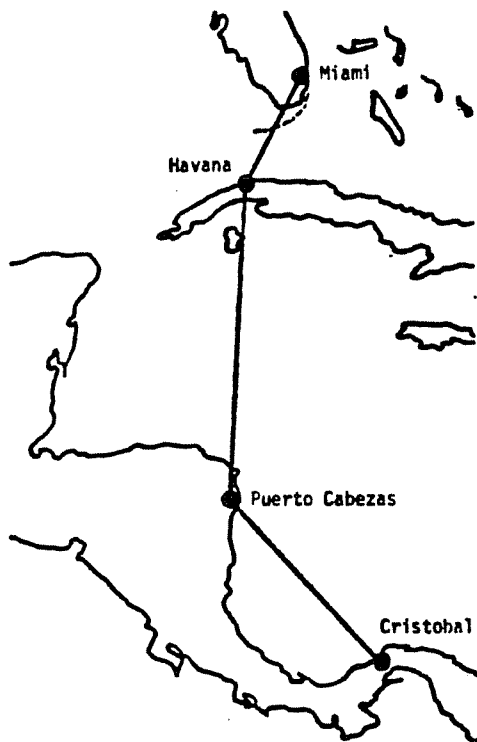
For more service to Cuba, Cienfuegos added between Santiago de Cuba and Havana.



Mr. L. de Leon,

Cienfuegos, Cuba.

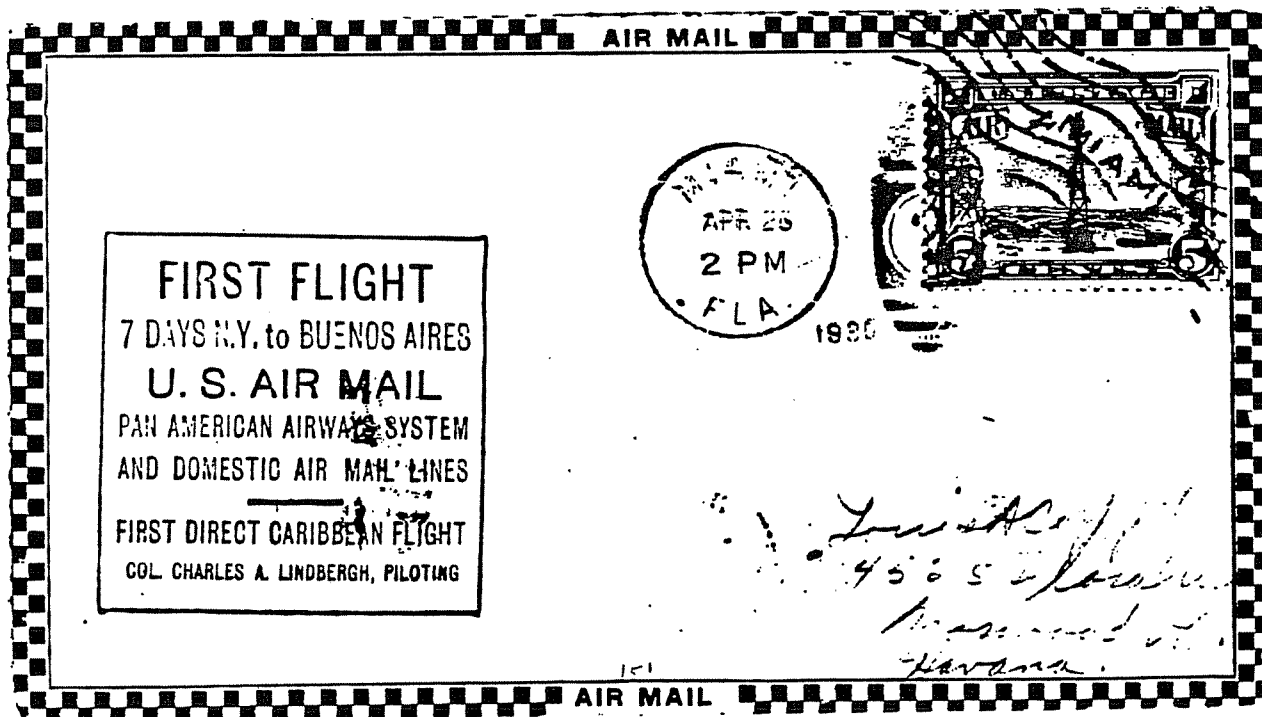
No NYRBA first flight cachet but circle AVION on Port au Prince regular cover
Postmarked March 28. A backstamp applied 9 AM March 29, 1930 in Cienfuegos.



Aircraft: Sikorsky S-38 especially modified by lightening to the last ounce and adding a large fuel tank to make 650 mile over water flight

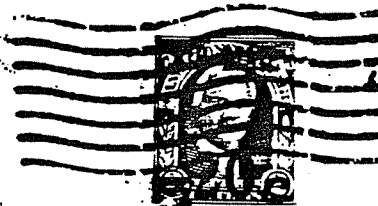
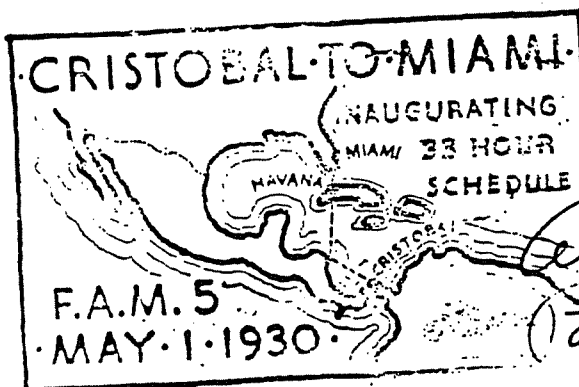
Pilots: C A Lindbergh and B L Rowe

Competitor NYRBA was giving 7 days Commodore mail service, Buenos Aires to US. Pan Am had to match this schedule to get Argentine mails to use their flights. Three days Canal Zone to US leg was main target and was shortened to 33 hours.



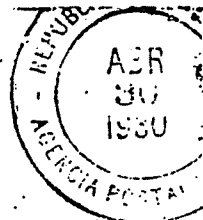
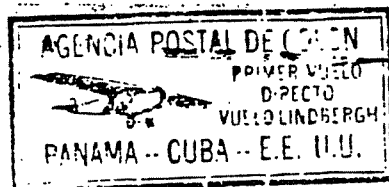
Modified S-38 took off with 249 pounds of mail and 520 gallons of gas. Single weekly flight took express route. Others followed a regular route 5 schedule.

123.7.0 cover



Cristin Brewer
Pan American Airways
Havana
Cuba

Rowe cover part of 3 lbs carried to Havana, which had not dispatched on flight.



Primer vuelo Colon, R.P. - Pto. Cabezas - Cuba

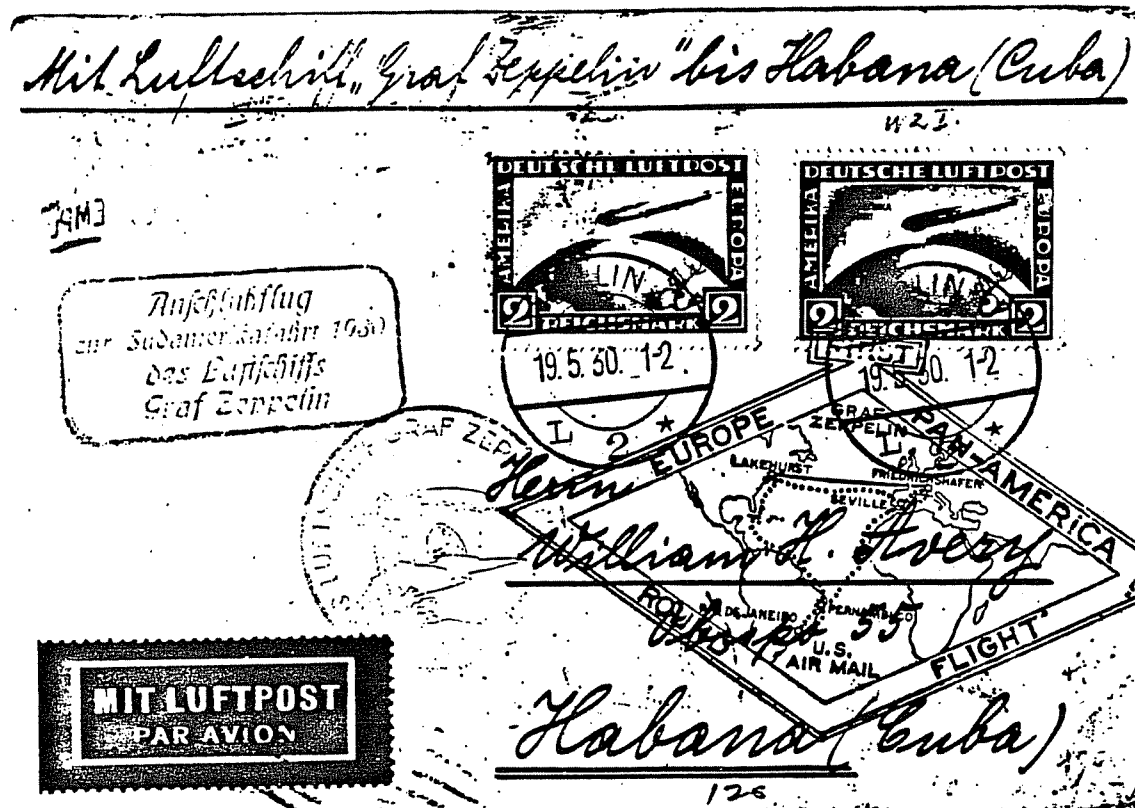


Sr. A. Gomez Herrero
~~Estrecha Palma baja 36~~
Santiago
Cuba

P. O. Box 238 -
Cristobal, C.Z.

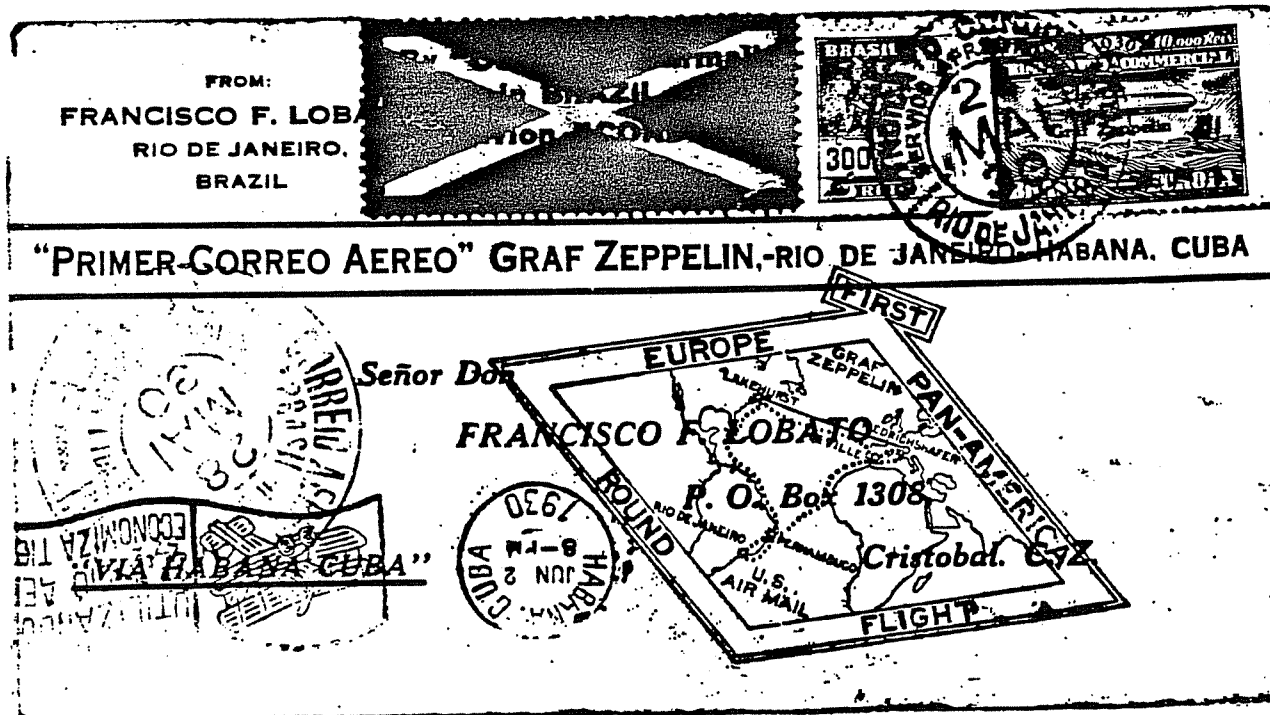
Cover to Cuba has special cachet stamped in magenta and reached Santiago May 3.

Berlin applied red connecting flight cachet for Friedrichshafen mail.

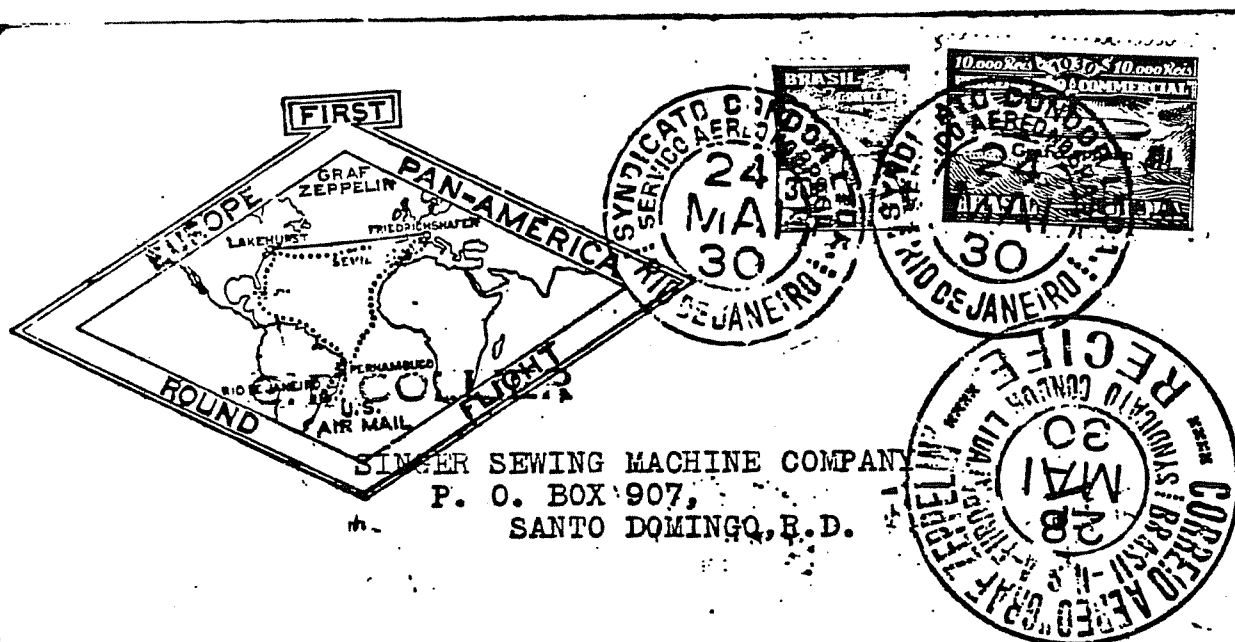


Although flight plans called for landing or mail drop at Havana, rain in Recife before Graf's northbound flight to U.S. restricted the fuel weight permitted. So Cuba bypassed. Mail flown back from Lakehurst.

Brazil also dispatched mail to Cuba and via Cuba to near Caribbean destinations. This mail bypassed Cuba and was sent back from Lakehurst after receiving cachet.



Dispatch to Havana and Cristobal, this reached Havana JUN 2 and Cristobal JUN 8.

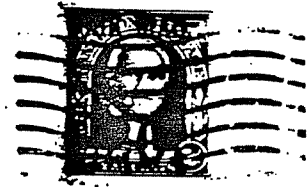


Santo Domingo cover has same Havana postmark on reverse, Dominican Rep. JUN 14.

For the new express route from the Canal Zone, although a Commodore carried the first southbound mail, Basil Rowe used the Sikorsky he and Lindbergh used for a survey of the long overwater leg to Jamaica to carry the first northbound mail.

FIRST FLIGHT
CRISTOBAL - CIENFUEGOS, CUBA

B. L. Rowe, Pilot



MR. F. W. KUMMER,
12TH FLOOR,
48 WALL STREET,
NEW YORK, N.Y. U.S.A.

Cover signed by Rowe shows that the loaded Sikorsky was able to make the trip.

PRIMER VUELO
PANAMA - CIENFUEGOS, CUBA

B. L. Rowe, Pilot



MR. F. W. KUMMER,
12TH FLOOR,
48 WALL STREET,
NEW YORK, N.Y. U.S.A.

Panama City cover without cachet was backstamped Cienfuegos 8 PM December 3rd.

Starting July 1930, FAM 6 was rerouted via Camaguey, omitting Havana.
However, Cuban postal service continued its no mail dispatch policy.

First Flight
Miami-Camaguey
VIA F.A.M. 6



George S. Hill
c/o U.S. American Consul
Camaguey, Cuba.

Still 5 cent air mail postage. 5:30 AM dispatch earlier than before.

Via First Flight
MIAMI-CAMAGUEY
F.A.M. #6

Ralph W. Daltatum, Pilot P.A.A.

Mr. Edgar C. Cantrell,
c/o Postmaster,
Camaguey, Cuba.



5 cent albino envelope with pilot signature and 12 M, Jul 2 Camaguey backstamp.

First direct dispatch
SAN JUAN - CAMAGUEY
Change of Schedule
July 2, 1930.

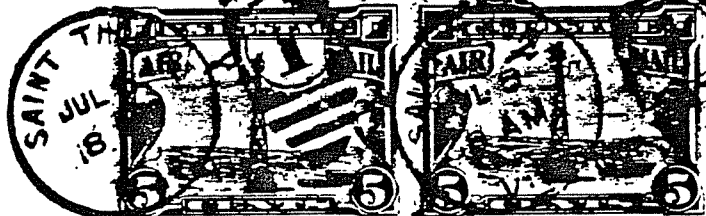


Par Avion
By Air Mail

VIA AIR MAIL

Mr. Jaime Gonzalez
c/o Adm'dor. de Correos
Camaguey, Cuba.

San Juan return flights started same day, Jul 2. Rate from U.S. islands, same.

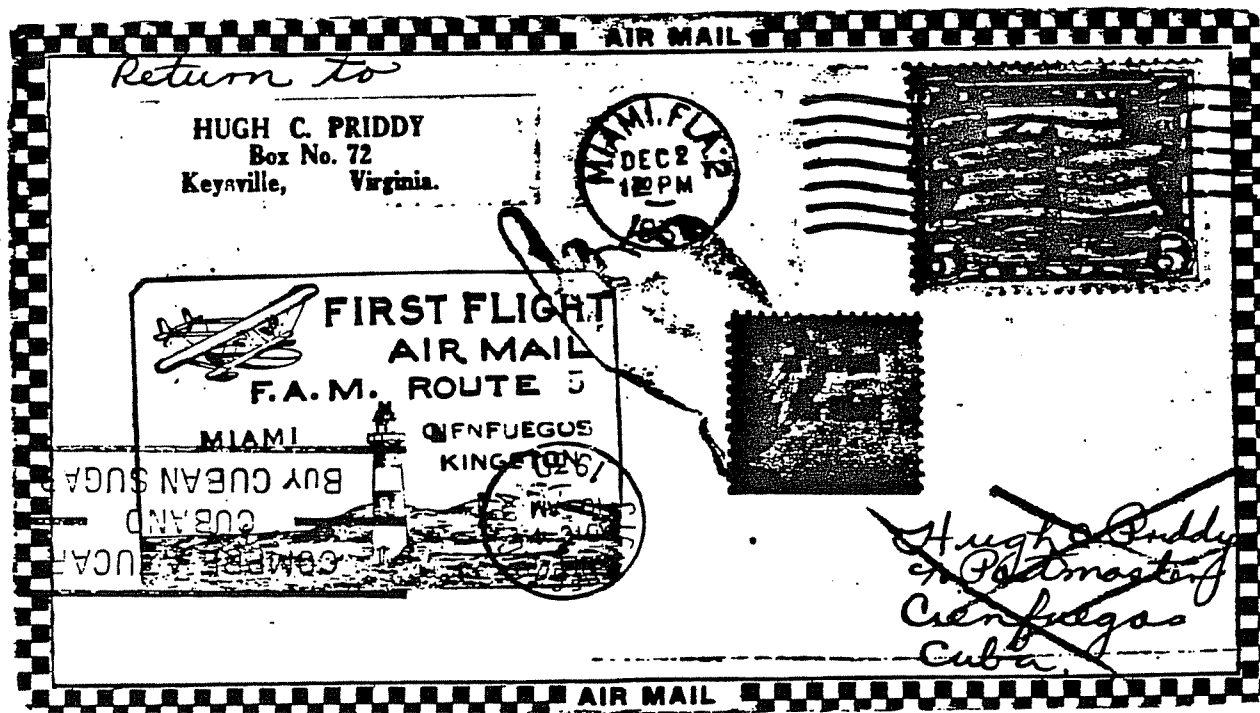


VIA AIR MAIL

Frank Harget
% Postmaster
Camaguey
Cuba

Saint Thomas first dispatches later, on Jul 5. Reached Camaguey 11 AM, Jul 8.

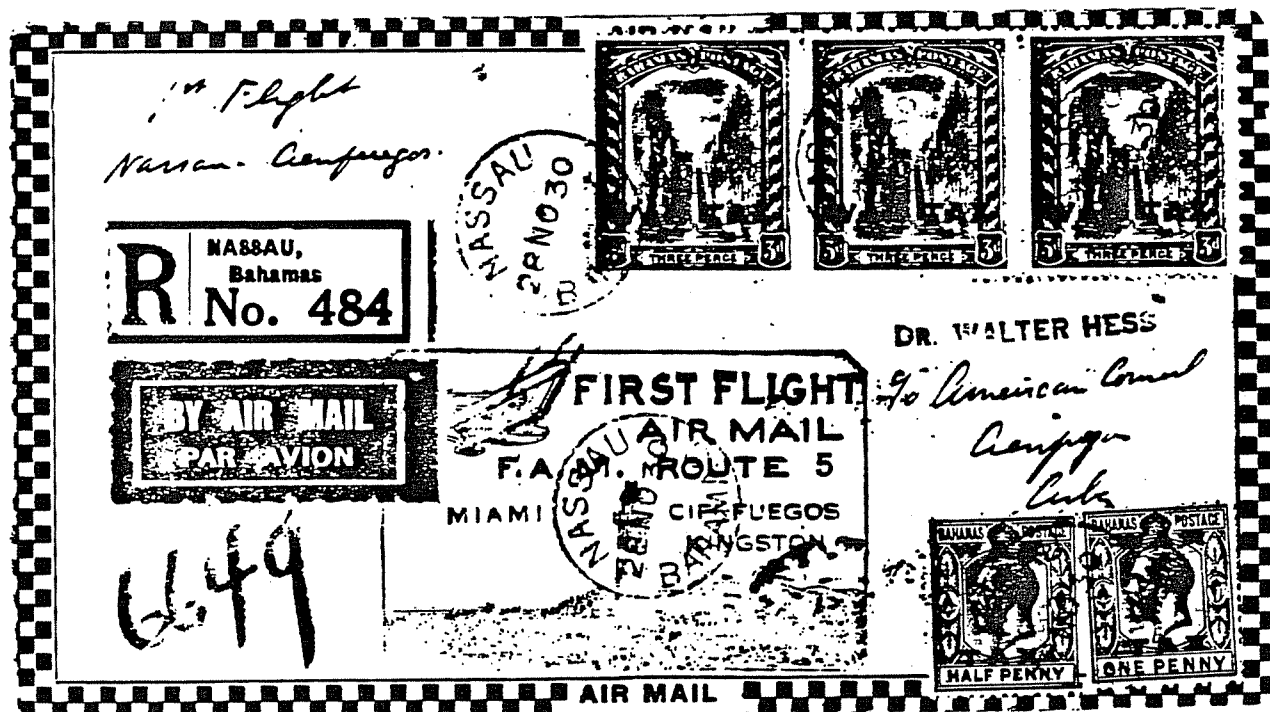
With the new (to Pan Am) Commodore flying boats with longer range, the Express Route now headed straight south to the Canal Zone via Cienfuegos and Kingston.



Dispatched at 1:30 PM with black cachet, reached Cienfuegos for 6 PM backstamp.



Example signed by pilot E. Schultz, also has less seen magenta official cachet.



Registered cover from Nassau arrived in Miami Nov 29, connected with express.

Kingston dispatches to this new express route were not scheduled to begin until Dec 10, a week after first flight north. Then flight arrived late.



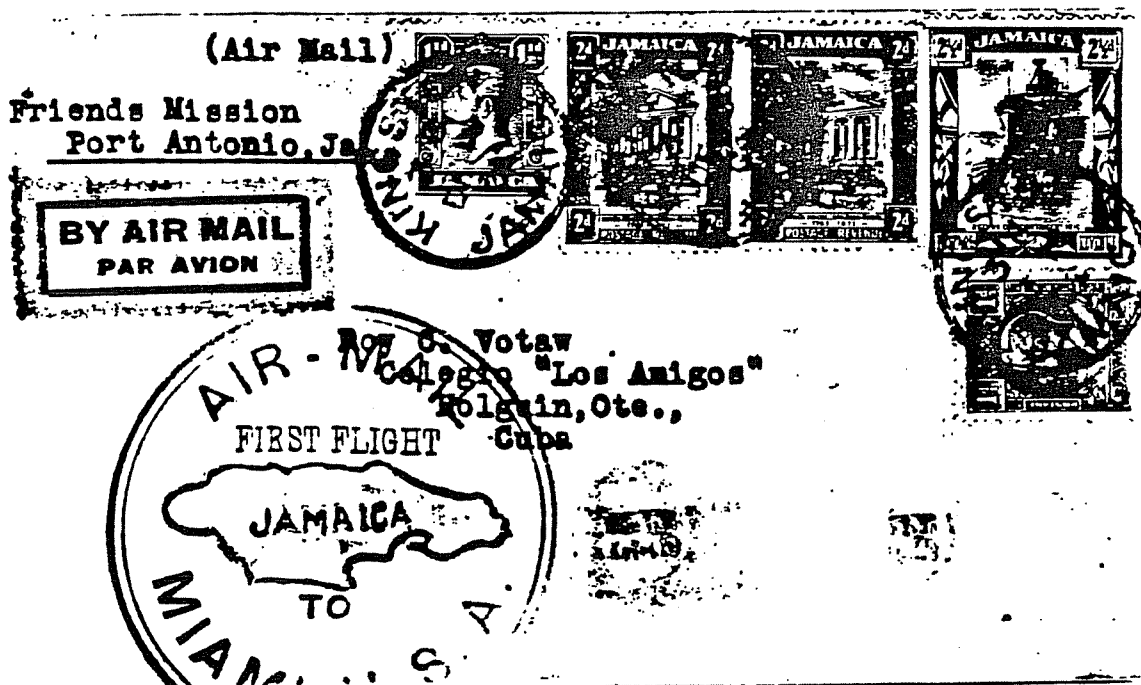
Mr. Arthur S. Woods,
c/o U.S. Consul,
Cienfuegos, Cuba

Flight came too late to continue until 11th. Cienfuegos backstamp 11th.



Cover to Havana was also delayed and it did not reach Cuba until the next day.

Caribbean Airways, about to lose its contract to carry Jamaican air mails to Cuba for inability to build air base at Kingston, got in one flight to Santiago de Cuba on morning Pan Am inaugural flight was delayed until PM.



Cover to Holguin was already postmarked DE 10 and given FAM 5 cachet for the Pan Am flight. Mr Holland flew it to Santiago de Cuba in "Fairchild monoplane," where distinguishing backstamp, 1;30 pm Dec 10th, was added.

Foreign mail carried out of Brazil typically received 2200 Reis franking, regardless of destination. Numerous stops were made in antilles and U.S.

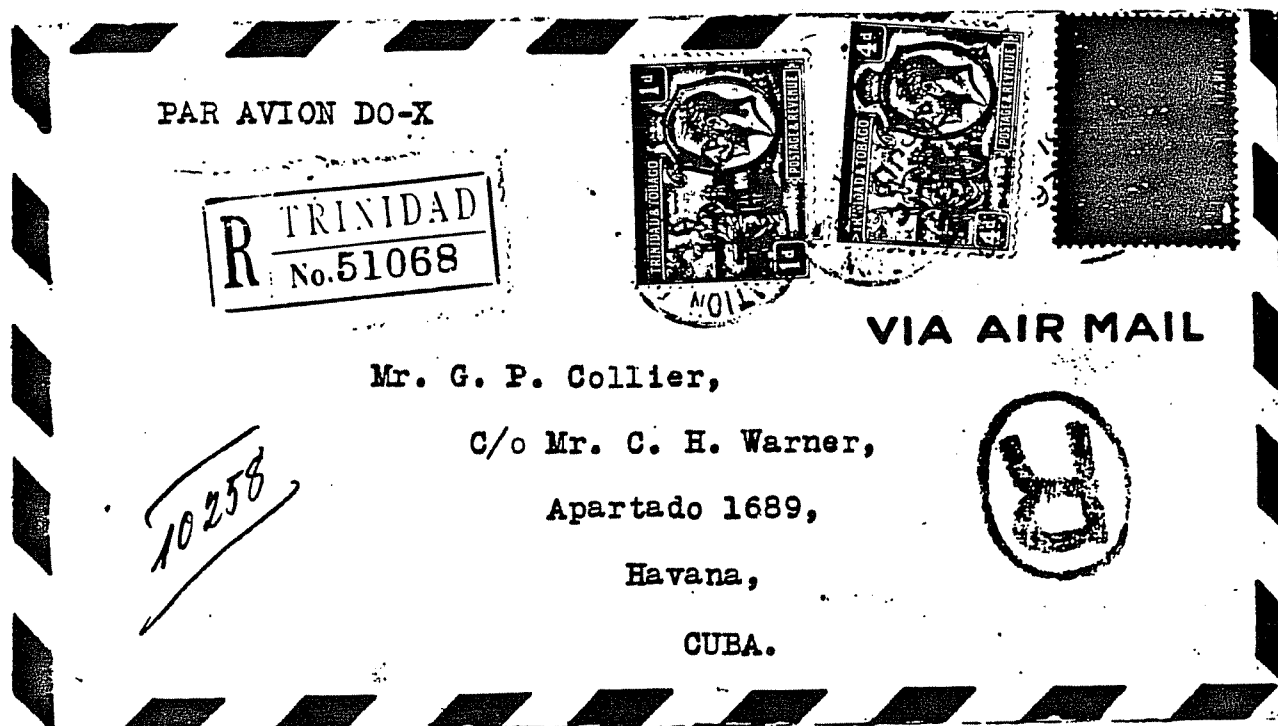


On leaving San Juan, PAA radio reported Havana landing permission was not granted because of Cuban revolution. Flight landed instead in Antillas. Backstamps: Antillas, 7:30 PM Aug 21, Havana, 9:00 AM or 12:00 PM Aug 23.

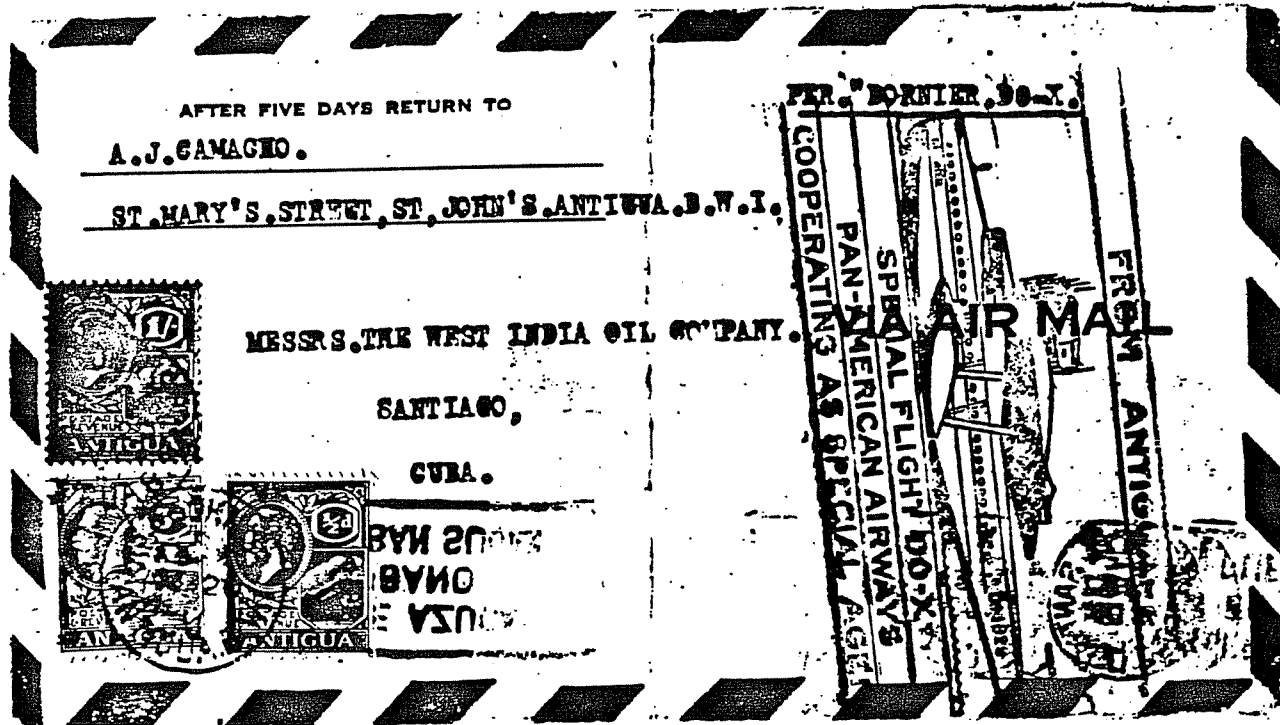


Unusual cover Para to Havana has Aug 6 postmark although DO X landed Aug 8 and did not leave again until Aug 18. An overnight stop turned into a long 10 day layover, more repairs, and an engine change before DO X was ready to continue.

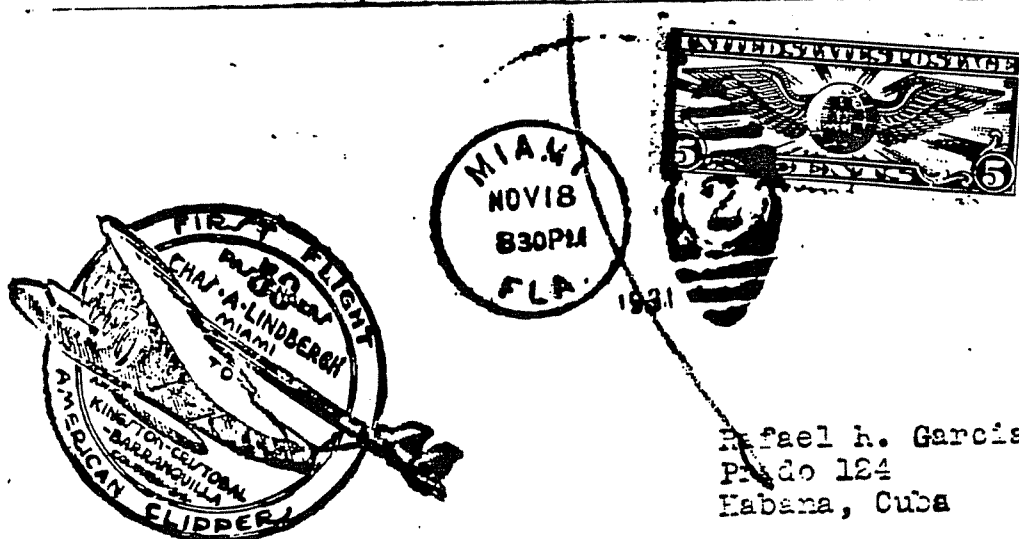
As the DO X came north through the Antilles, it picked up covers made for Cuba.



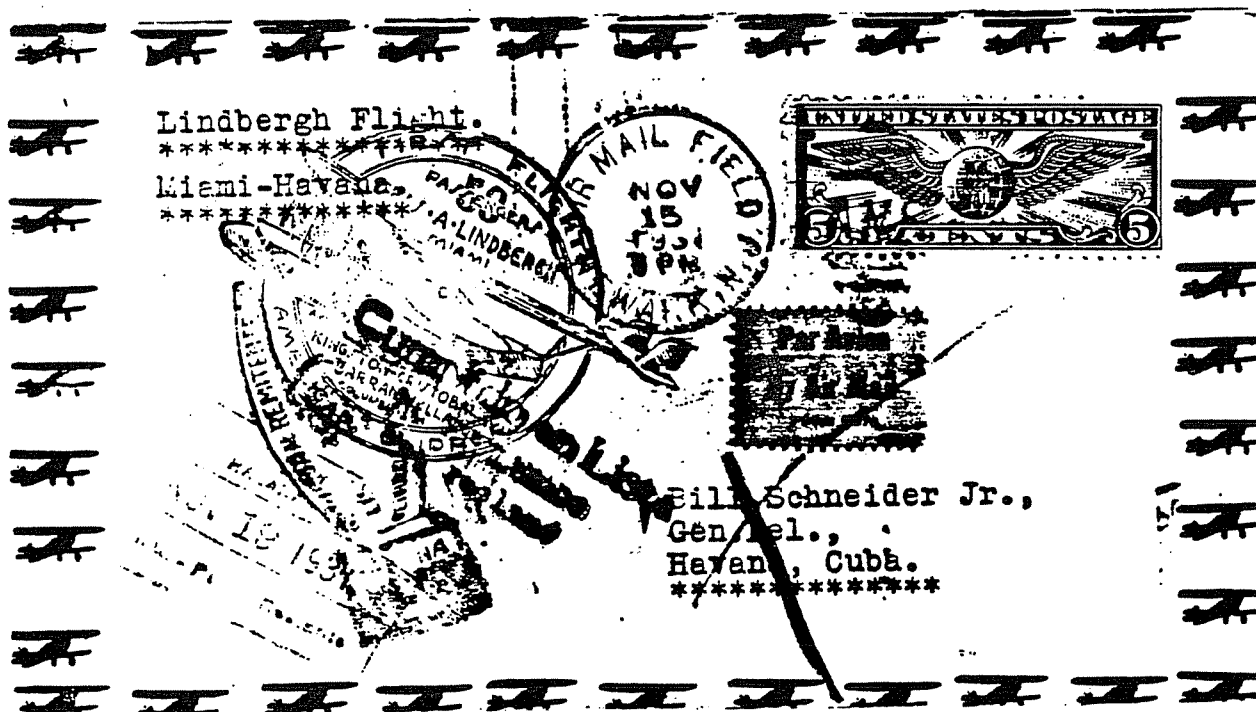
As marked on this cover, it was intended for DO X transmission on June 26th, but was not held for the DO X. It was still in Rio, far behind its schedule. The cover had been forwarded via Pan Am long before DO X arrival August 19th.



Instead of being delivered directly to Santiago de Cuba, backstamps show this cover went into Havana and the revolution before reaching its own destination.

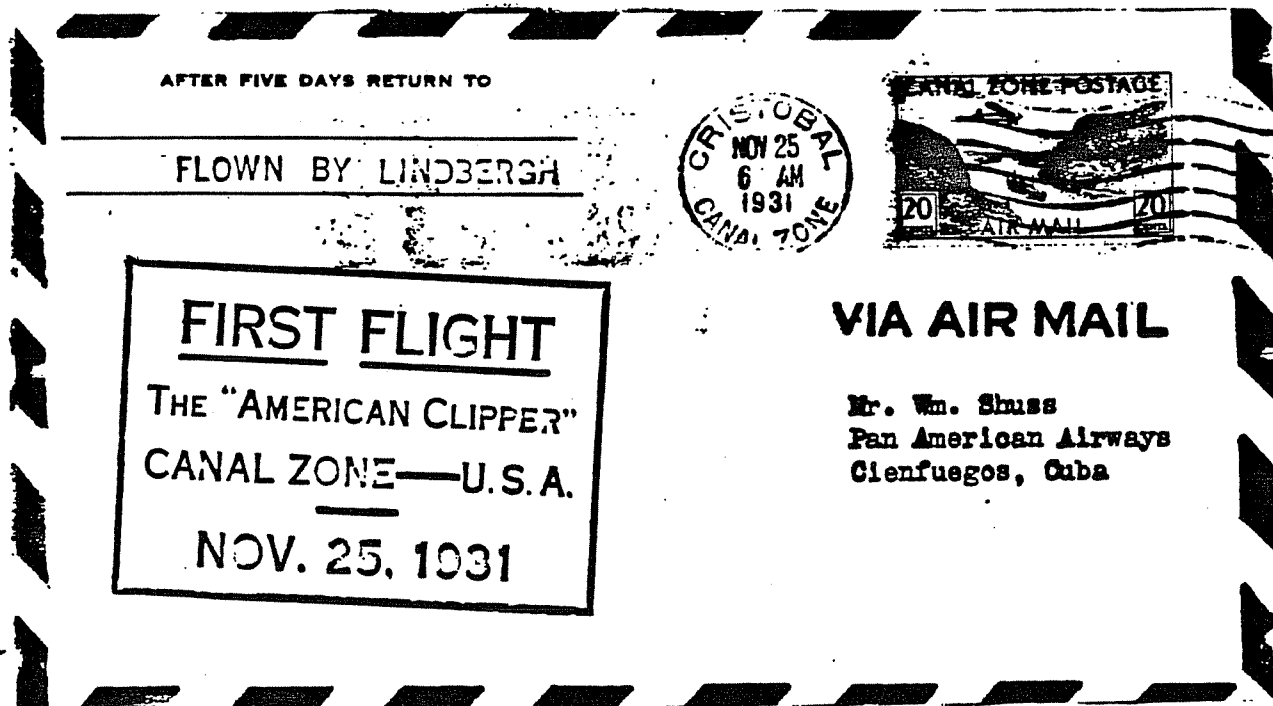


Other colors were also used for the Miami cachets, such as on this black cacheted cover, Dickason (Standard Airpost Catalog) to Garcia in Havana.

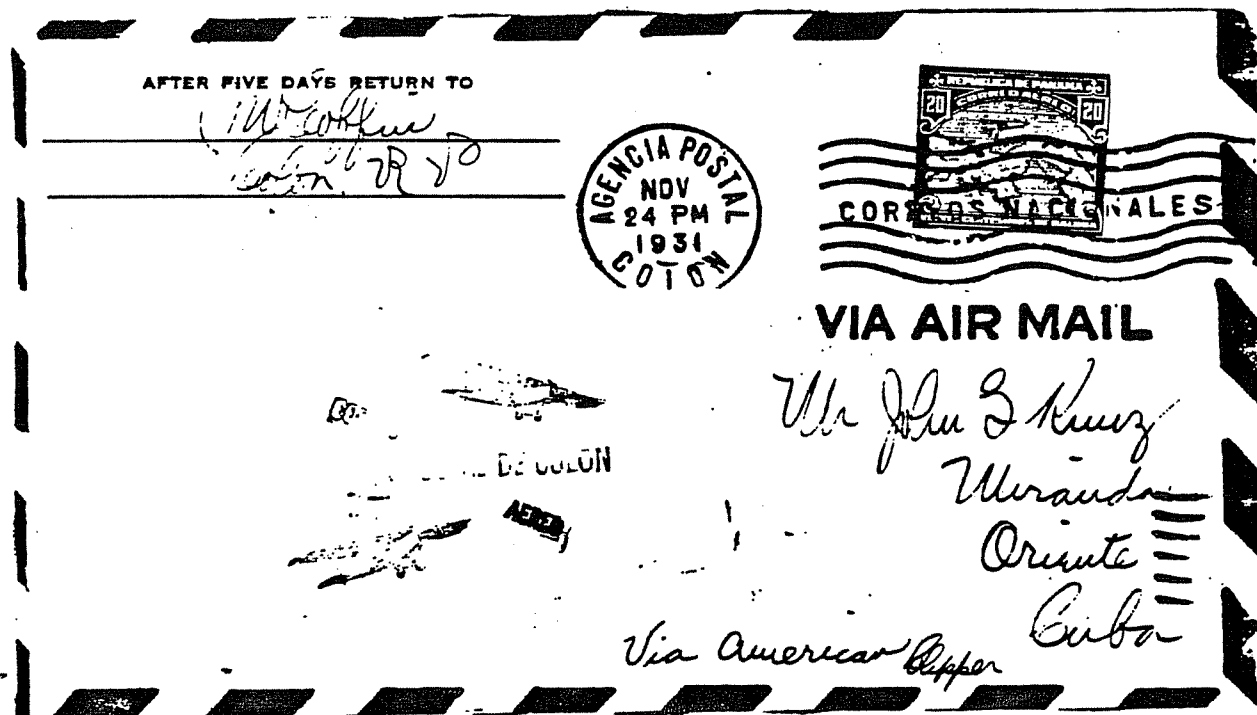


Schneider cover received front and back purple cachets on way to Havana P.O.

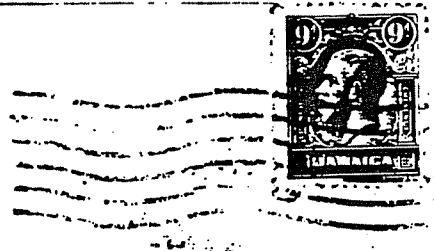
Basil Rowe covers had cachets printed with other colors than usual blue-green.



Cover for Cienfuegos, where Cuban Philatelic Club was waiting for date to put on cachet. On southbound trip cachet was made too early and wrong date shown.



Kunz prepared cover from Colon to Miranda, Cuba was transmitted through Havana.



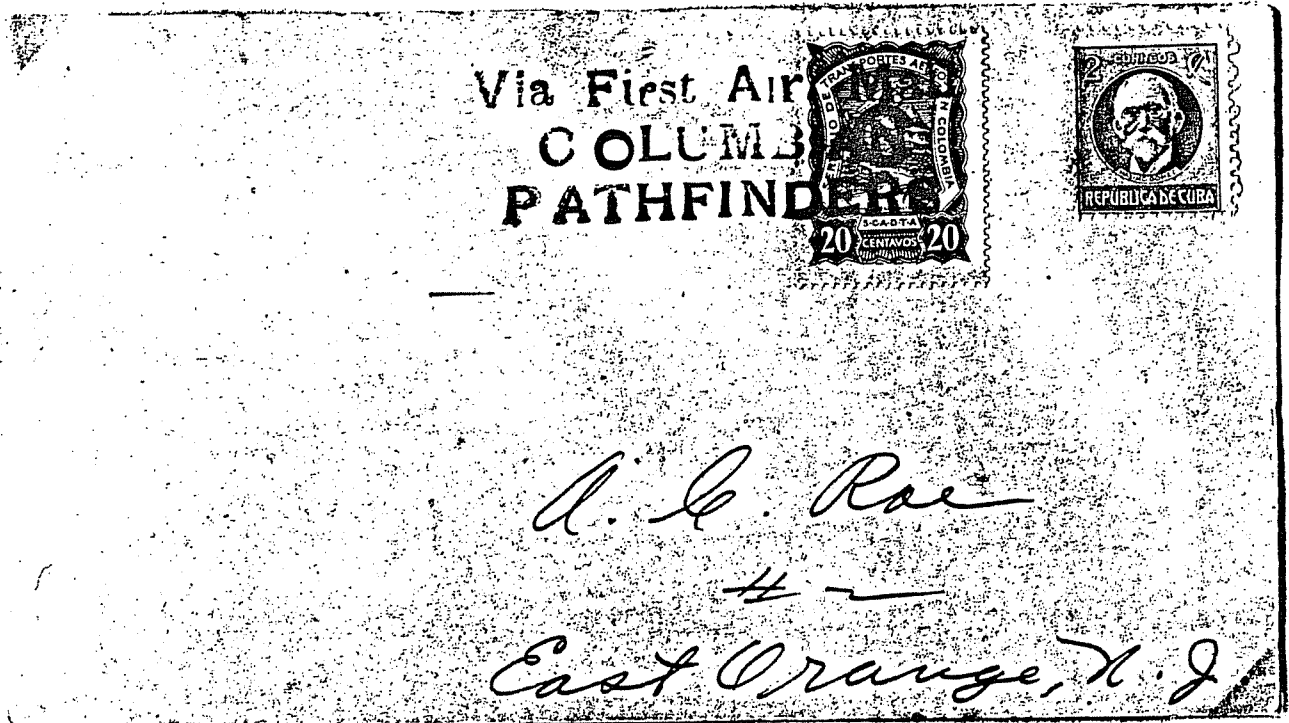
F. D. DEER,
c/o U. S. CONSUL,
CIENFUEGOS,
CUBA.

This Peer cover had the correct 9d franking from Kingston to Cienfuegos.

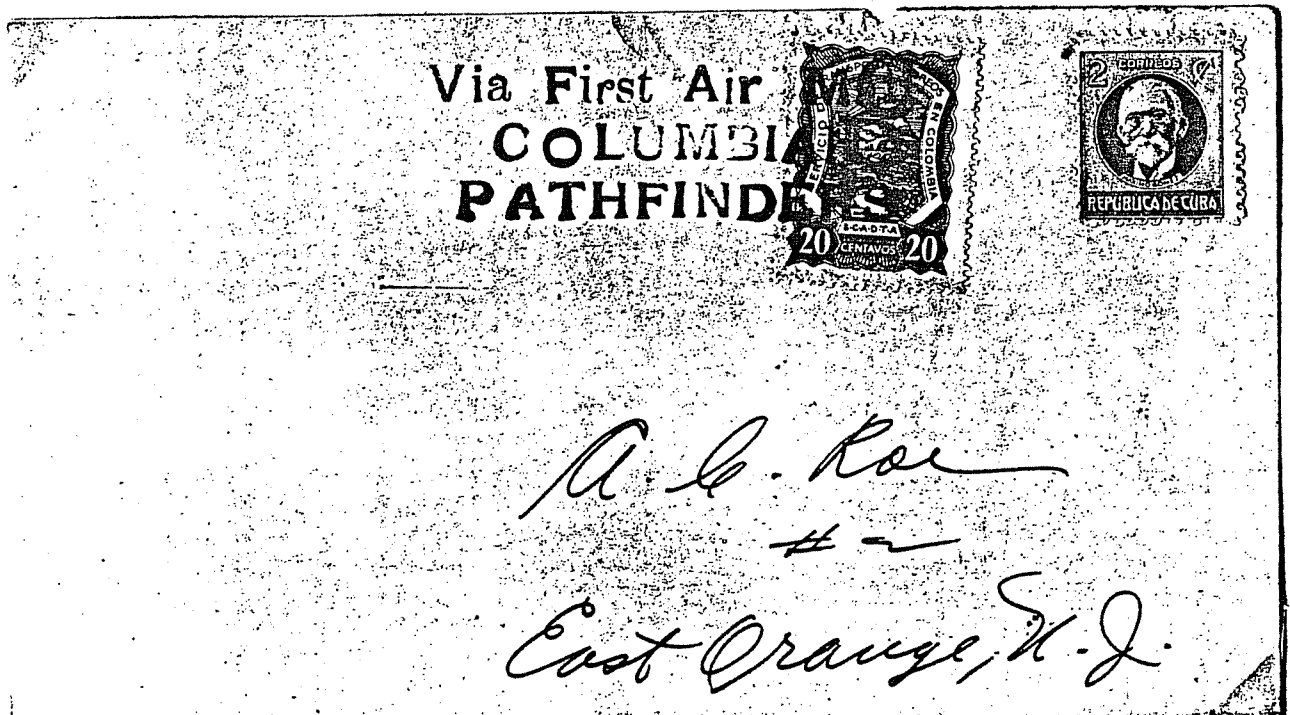
INTERNATIONAL AIR MAIL SERVICE FROM CUBA

Sociedad Colombo-Alemana de Transportes Aereos (SCADTA)

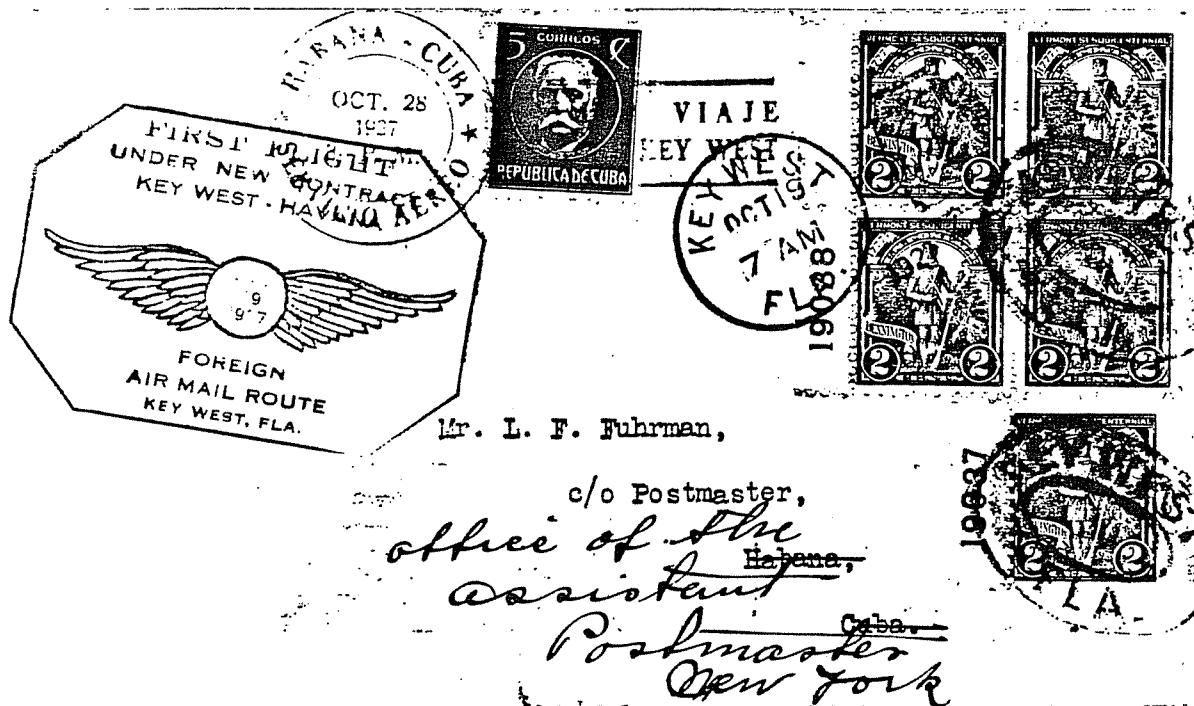
Roesler-prepared covers for fliers' homeward flight from Cuba to Colombia used SCADTA stamps bearing Cuban consular overprints with the letter "C". However, there has been no evidence that these covers were flown on that return flight.



Misspelling of Colombia as "Columbia" in his cachet may have led to rejection.

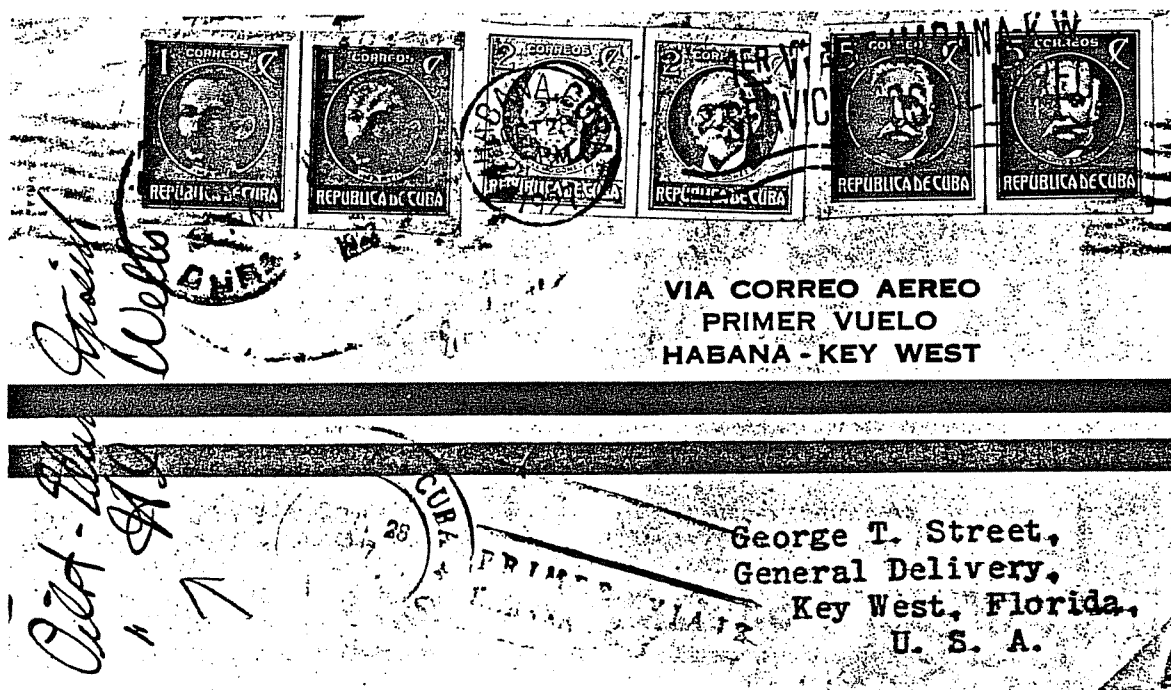


Another, maybe intended as registered cover, has SCADTA registered mail stamp.

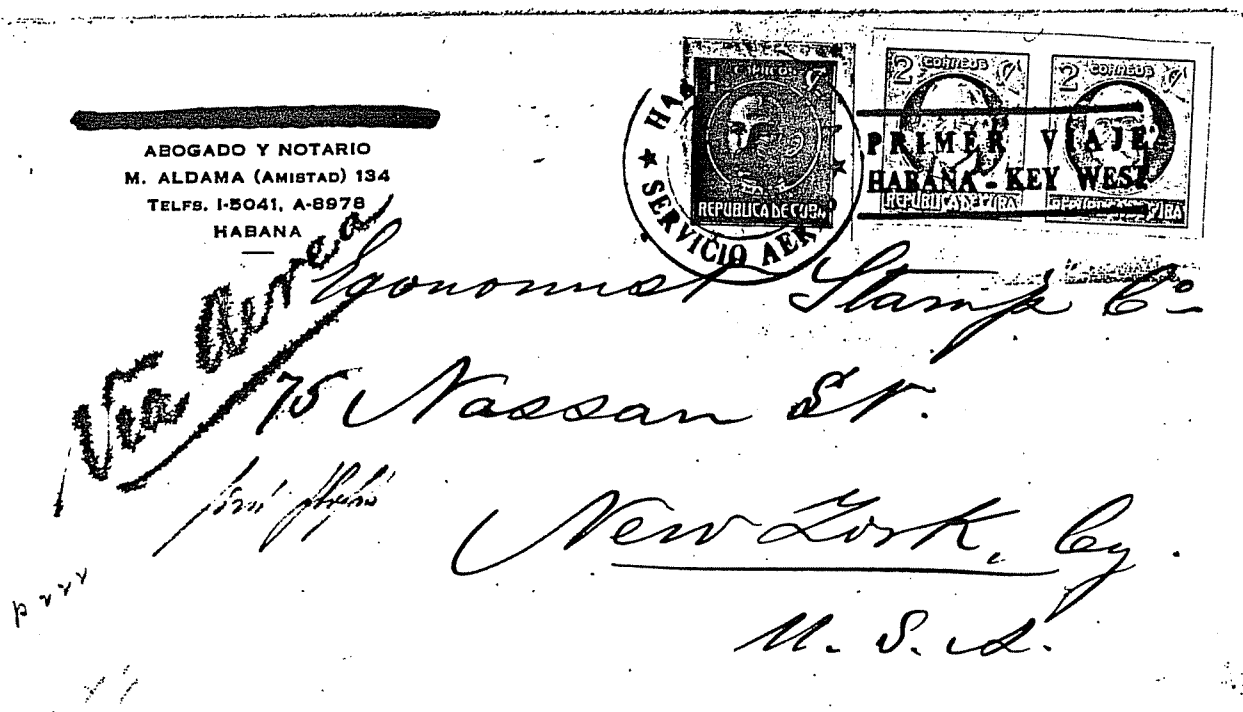


Extra time between south- and northbound flights made round trip cover possible.

Return flight from Havana 10 days later, delayed one day by wet weather. Pan Am pilots Wells and Musick (not yet certified) used their new Fokker trimotor, General Machado; this was the first regular service from Cuba.

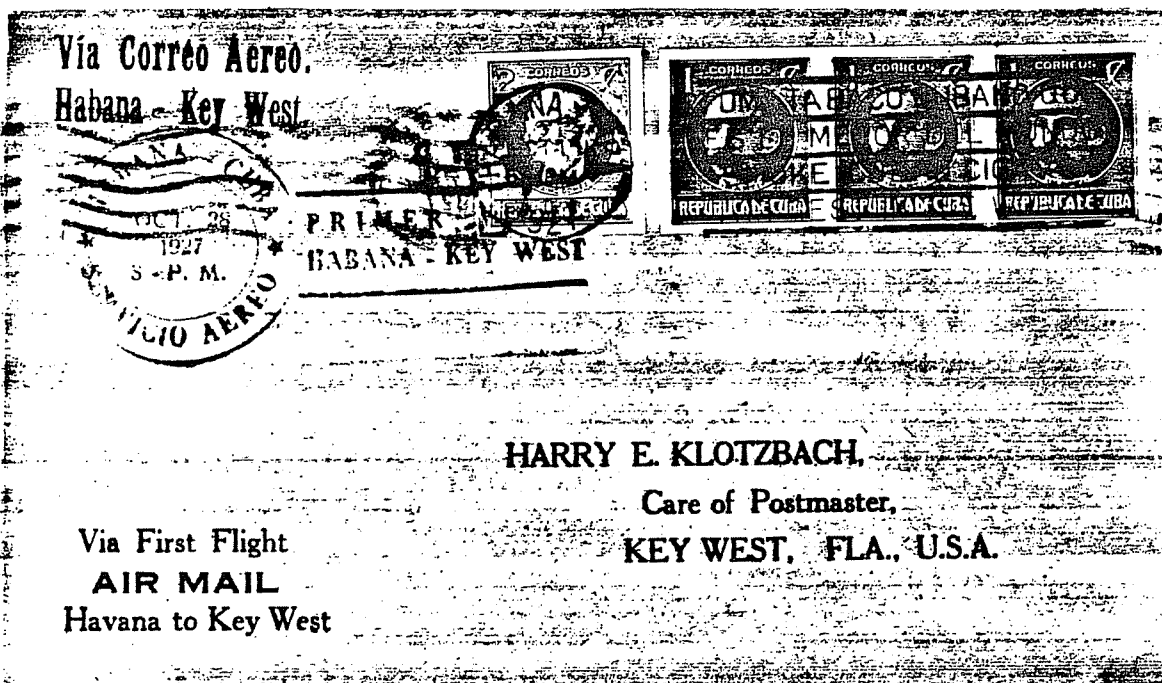


Both black and magenta first flight cachets with signatures of Wells and Musick. Franking with line pairs of imperf stamps overpays 5 cent rate.

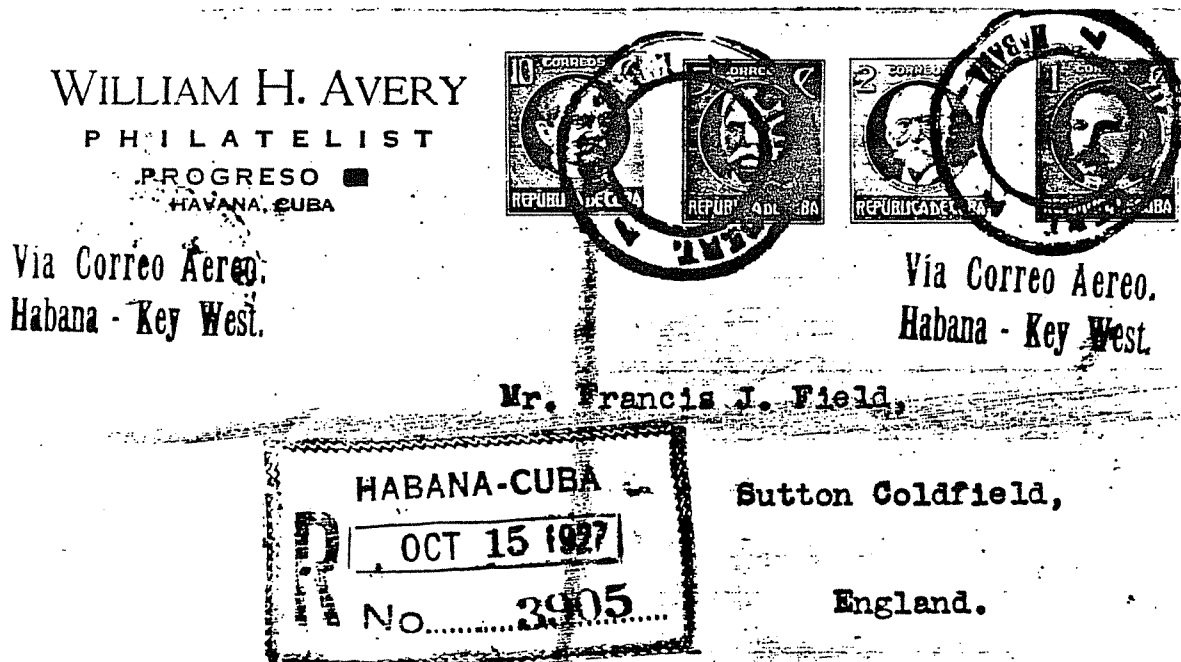


First flight cover to New York with correct franking has unusual blue cachet.

Anticipating a return flight on the 19th, some collectors acted early.



This was held in Havana awaiting the eventual start of regular service.



Collector intended this Registered cover to England to be dispatched on return flight, but Sutton Coldfield backstamp Oct 31 shows its dispatch on a steamer.

LINDBERGH DAY
HAVANA, CUBA



Mr. Arthur Barger
46 Cornhill
Boston, Mass. U.S.A.

Sent Lindbergh's arrival day before special stamp was put on sale.

EL DIA DE



Pilot Edwin Musick
C. A. Lindbergh
EN HABANA.
FEBRERO 8
- 1928 -

VIA CORREO AEREO

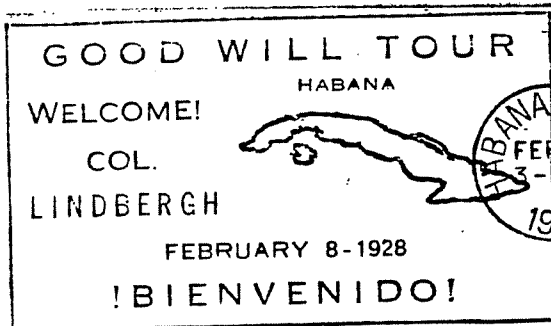
HABANA - KEY WEST

GEO. T. STREET
KEY WEST
FLA.

Greeting cover with special Lindbergh stamp was flown to Key West by the afternoon Pan Am flight. It also was signed by its Pilot, Edwin Musick.

Caribbean Goodwill Tour

Between 50 and 75 of these covers with the boxed cachet were prepared each day throughout Lindbergh's Havana visit to commemorate his activities and honors.



Mr. Chas, W.Housman
638 Chesnut st.,
Bridgeville
Penna

Feb 9: Lindbergh returned to Camp Columbia, where he supervised the tune-up of the Spirit of Saint Louis and had a lunch at Officers' Club with Cuban pilots. Later, he was guest of honor at a reception for 3000 guests at the US Embassy.



Mr. Wm. F. Housman,
Trust Bldg.
Steelton, Pa. U. S. A.

Feb 10: Medals. First, the Province of Havana Medal struck to commemorate his transatlantic flight. Then 50,000 people crammed into Central Park and packed rooftops and balconies to see him receive keys to the city. Later, from Pres. Machado, the Grand Cross of Order of Miguel de Cespedes, Cuba's highest honor.

He left Havana in low clouds at 2:26 AM, lost his way when two compasses became erratic. After finding his position over Bahamas, he made direct track through bad weather to Saint Louis. Only "We" could have made this flight before dark.



MR AGUSTIN GOYTISOLO

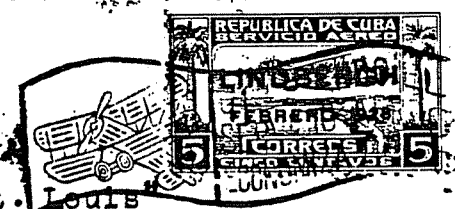
% Cuban Consulate

St. Louis. Mo.

U. S. A.



Cover purported to have been carried by Lindbergh or escort was postmarked in Havana hours after Lindbergh left. Backstamp has an impossible arrival time. Even the special Lindbergh cachet is not seen on other Havana welcome covers.



"Via Lindbergh Phone-St. Louis"

Piece of cover by another unsuccessful collector confirms 6 AM postmark.

First dispatches from Santiago de Cuba after WIAE/Cuba contract were on Feb 24.



Basil Rowe signed cover with purple postmark has special first flight cachets.



Another by Kunz reached Santo Domingo Feb 25 after overnight at Port au Prince.

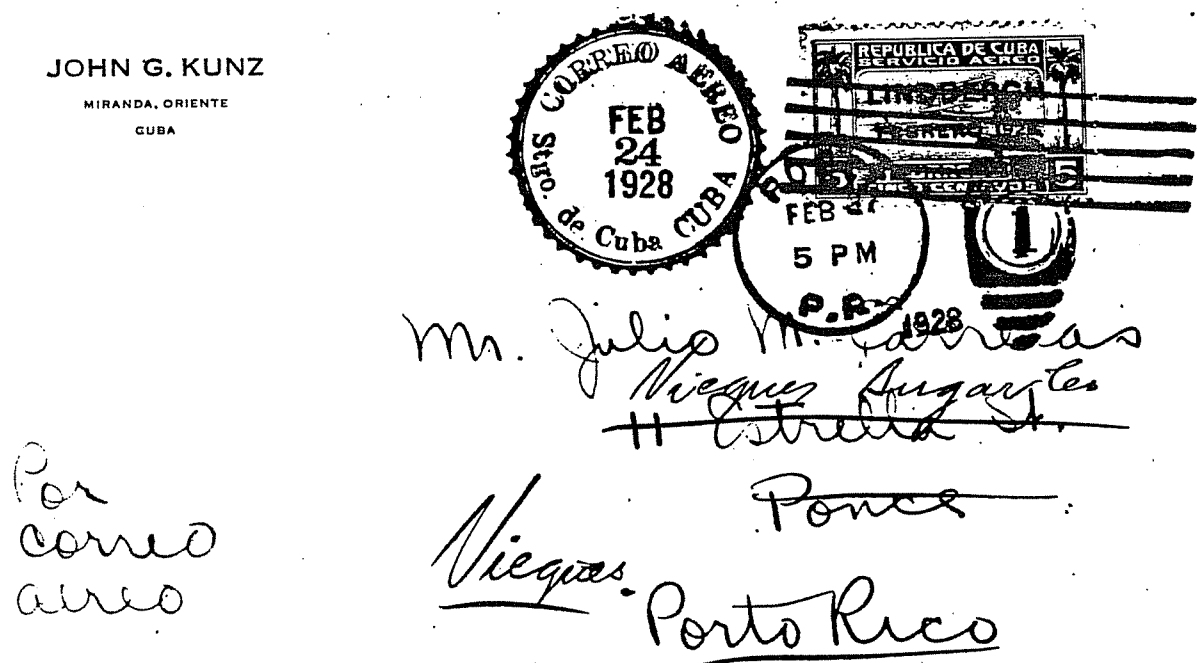
Although no U.S. mail could be sent from San Juan, Cuba could dispatch there.



Austin Brewer
Room 304 Cchoa Bldg
San Juan, P. R.

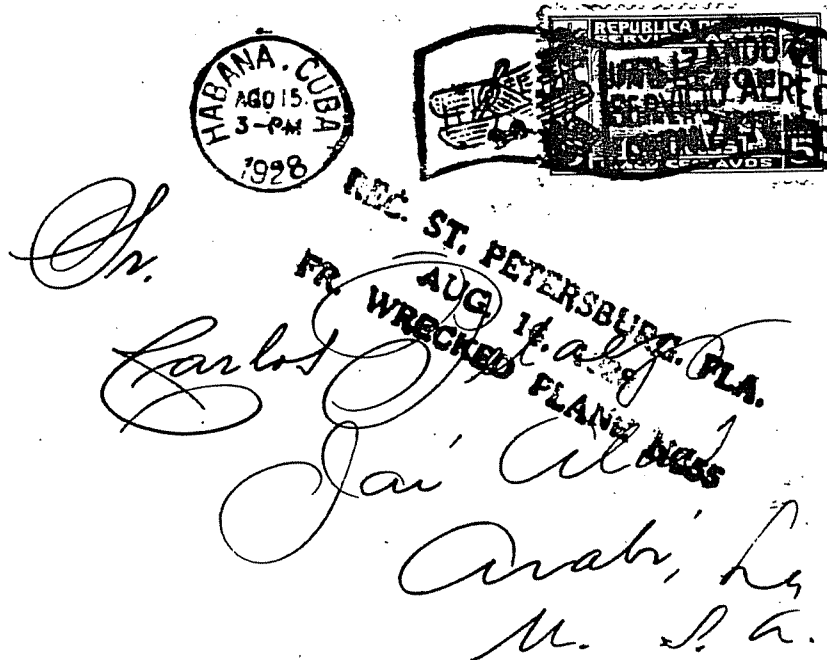
PRIMER VIAJE AEREO
CUBA. HAITI. SANTO DOMINGO. PTO. RICO
Aeroplano "Santa Maria"

Basil Rowe signed cover with purple Feb 23 postmark has first flight cachets.



Kunz cover to Ponce, Puerto Rico reached San Juan Feb 25 and Ponce on Feb 27.

Pilot Fatt on northbound flight missed Key West and forced to land in Gulf of Mexico. Rescue by SS Legionnaire crew.



Minimally damaged by water, but requiring official seals to close, this received cachet and was forwarded to addressee.

Mrs. M. Kempton.
C. Reilly #51,
Havana, Cuba.

Mrs. Margaret Hagerty,

807 Archer St.,

Nashville, Tennessee.

U. S. A.

REC. ST. PETERSBURG, FLA.
AUG. 16, 1928
FR. WRECKED PLANE

Another more thoroughly soaked and damaged cover backstamped Nashville Aug 18.

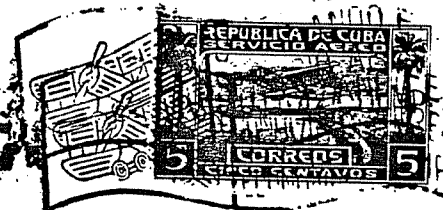
FAM 4
LAST FLIGHT
HAVANA-KEY WEST



GEO. T. STREET
KEY WEST
FLA.

Havana did not make its last dispatch to Key West until December 4th.

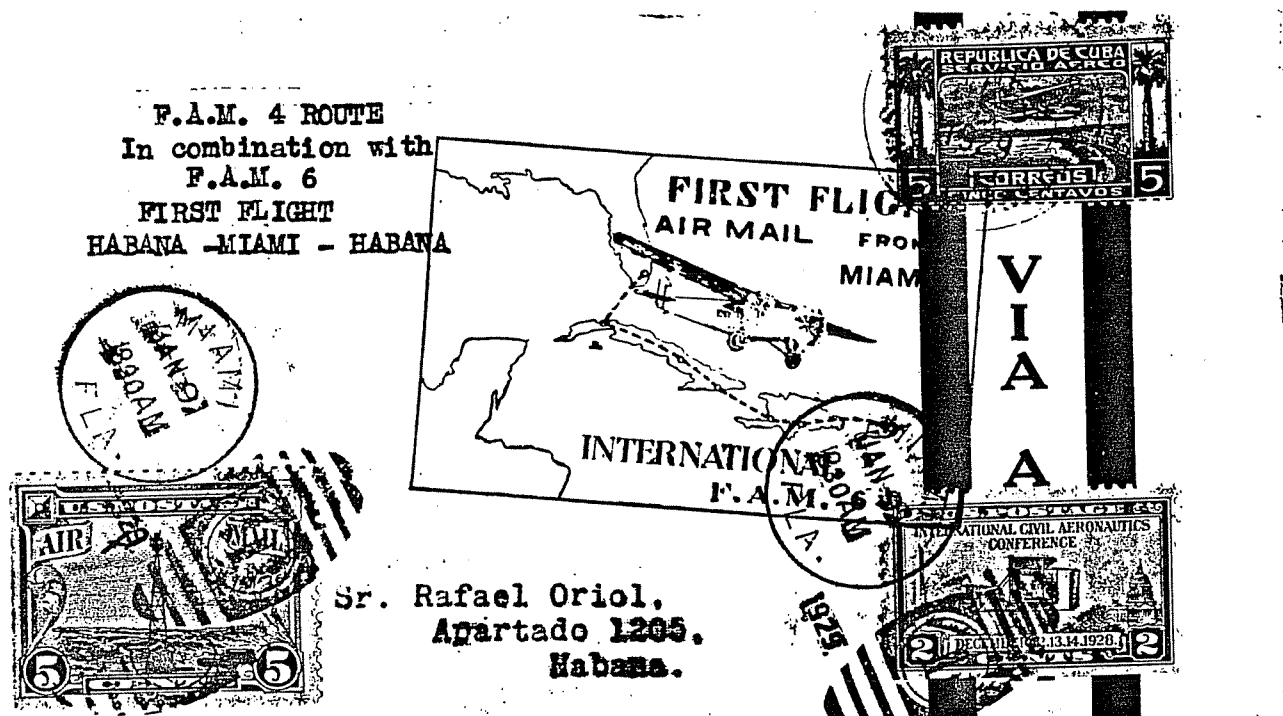
FAM 4
FIRST FLIGHT
HAVANA-MIAMI



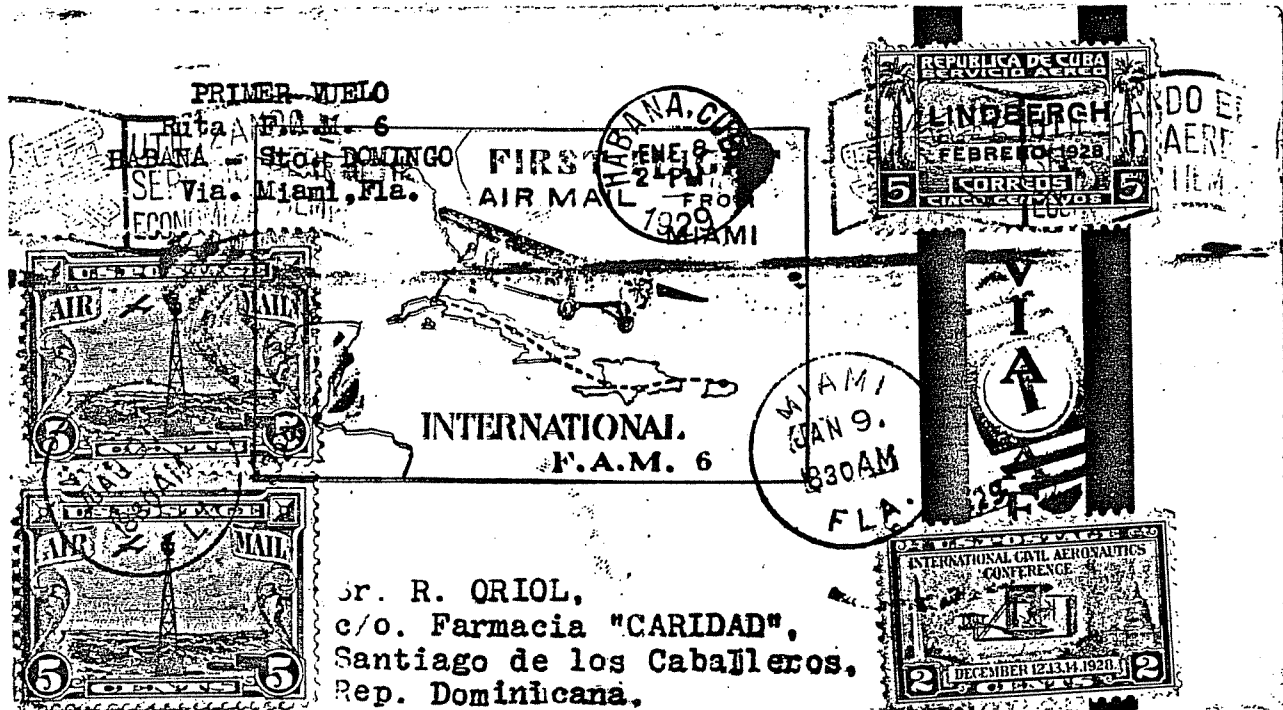
GEO. T. STREET,
MIAMI
FLA.

From December 5 on, all flights went directly to Miami.

The only way Cuban collectors could dispatch mail on the outbound flight to the other islands was to direct it to Miami by FAM 4, with U.S. stamps for postage.

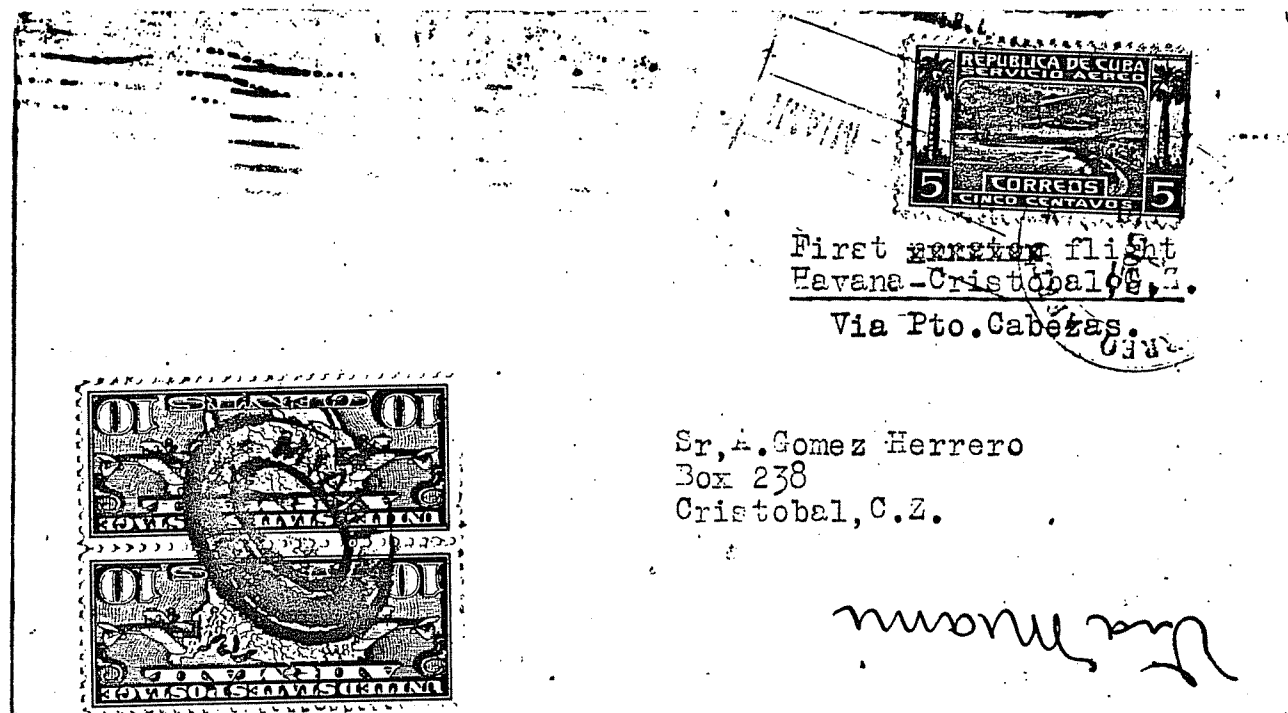


This went to Miami afternoon before first FAM 6 flight for quick return flight.



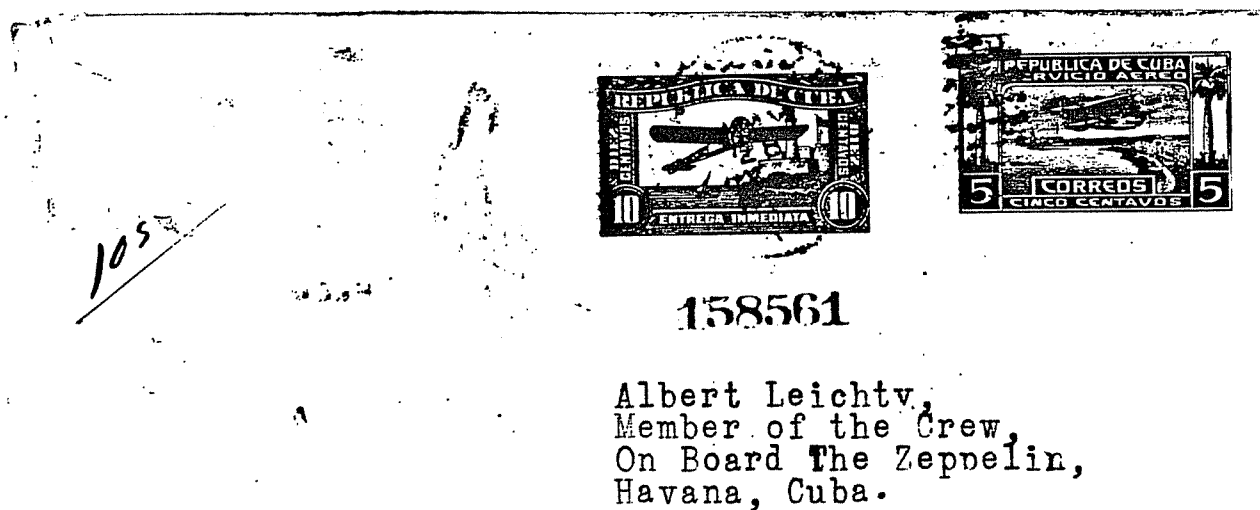
Correct 12 cents U.S. air mail and regular postage for Dominican Republic mail.

Cuba did not dispatch directly to express route. Had to use FAM 4 or 6 first.



Dual franking on cover from Cuba paid for flights to Miami and on to Cristobal.

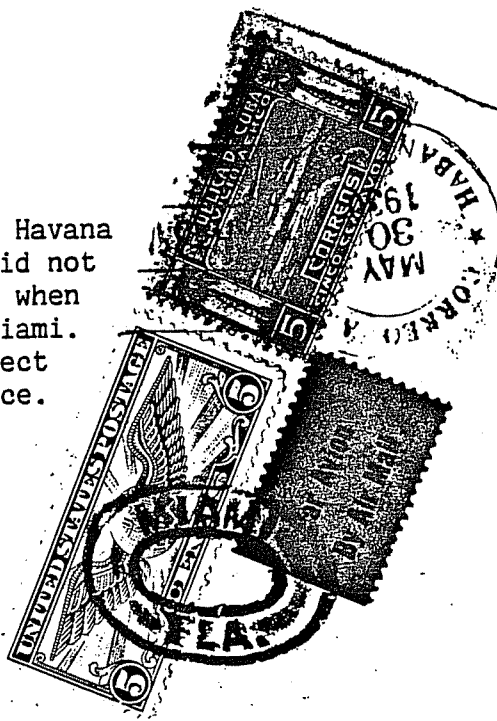
Roessler "Fantastic Cover" intended delivery to a crew member on Graf Zeppelin for subsequent flight to New York. Connection missed when Graf bypassed Cuba.



Reverse of cover has Cuban franking, including special delivery. Postmark was MAY 28. Front has 12 cents U.S. postage and Havana receiving stamp of 26 MAY. U.S. postage is cancelled with East Orange postmark JUN 4, probably on return.

FAM 4 Flights via Miami

Air mail went by air between Havana and Miami but the contract did not provide for air mail service when it required service beyond Miami. A sender had to provide correct U.S. franking for this service.



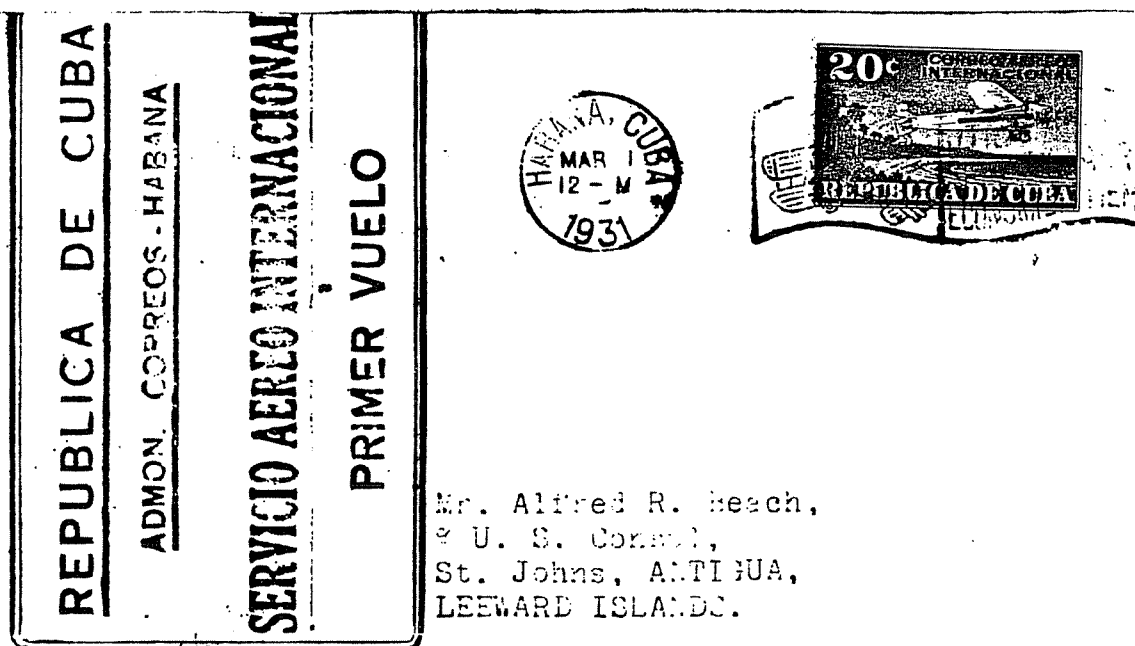
U. S. A.

Sales Promotion Dept.,
General Electric Co.,
Hanna Bldg.,
Cleveland, Ohio.

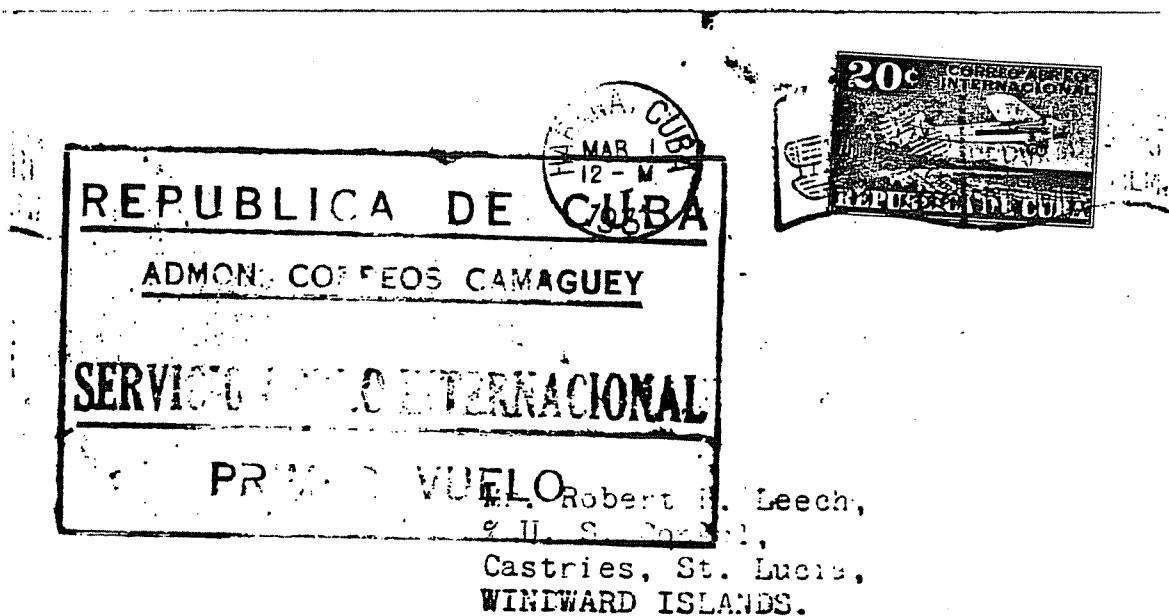
GENERAL ELECTRIC COMPANY OF CUBA
APARTADO 1689 - HABANA

1930 cover from Havana to Cleveland using 5 centavos Cuban with 5 cents U.S. for continuing air mail in U.S.

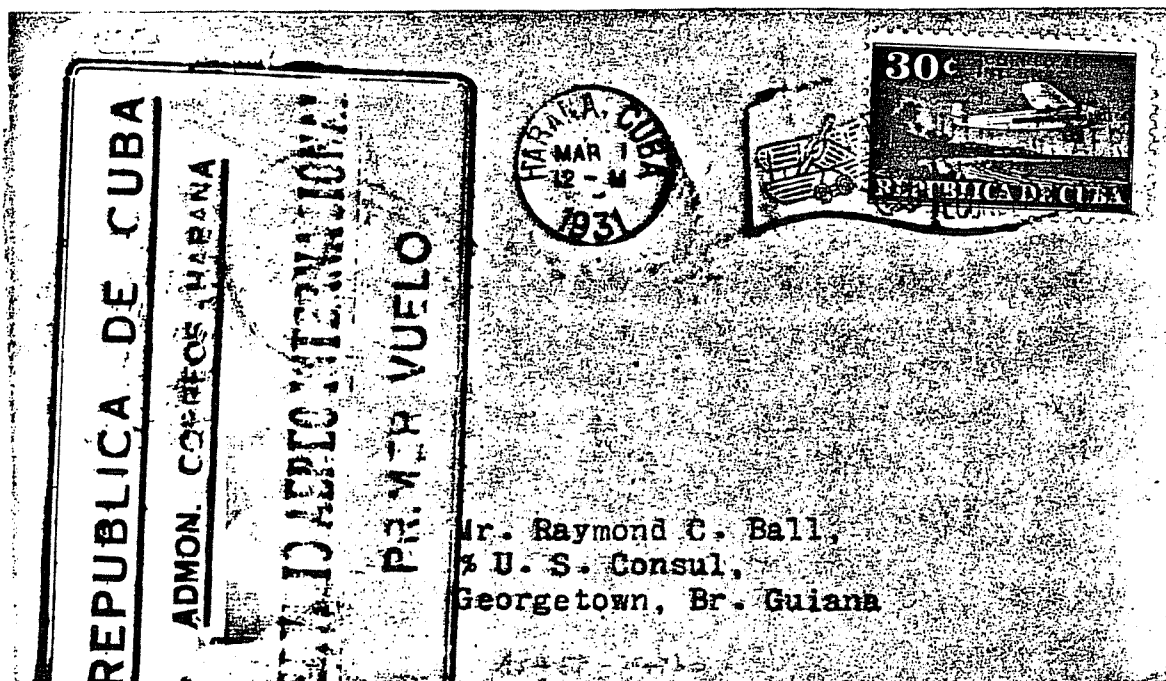
In May, 1931, Cuba PO and Pan Am finally came to an agreement on dispatch of international air mail on FAM 5 and 6, first from Camaguey and Havana. Both Camaguey and Havana cachets and postmarks were used on these covers, but all FAM 6 dispatches can be identified by their Camaguey backstamps.



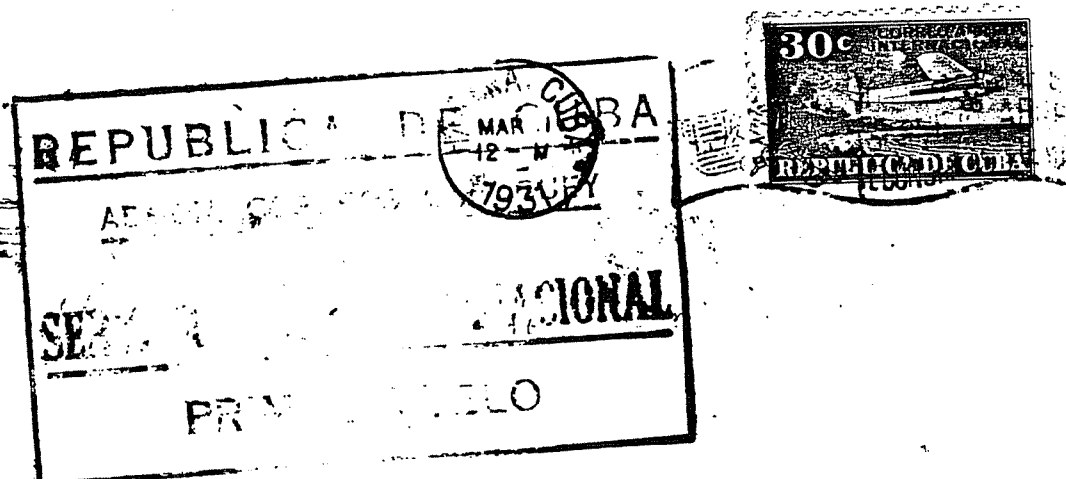
First dispatch to St. John's, 41 covers.



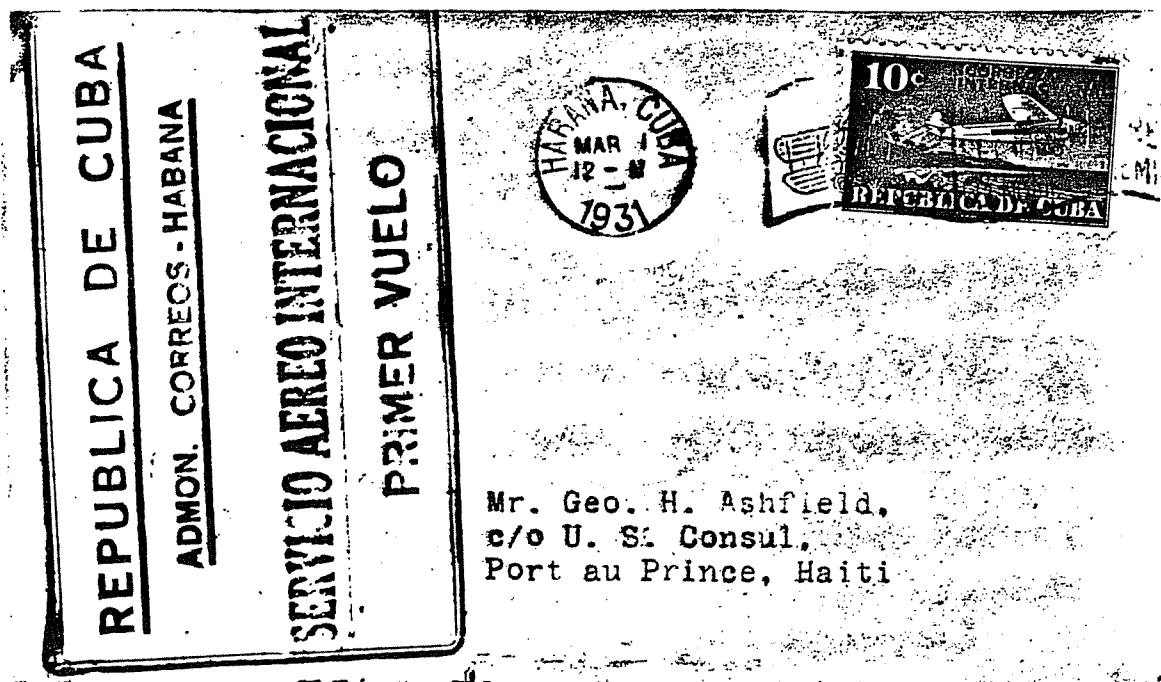
To Castries, 39 covers.



To Georgetown, 35 covers.



To Paramaribo, 30 covers.

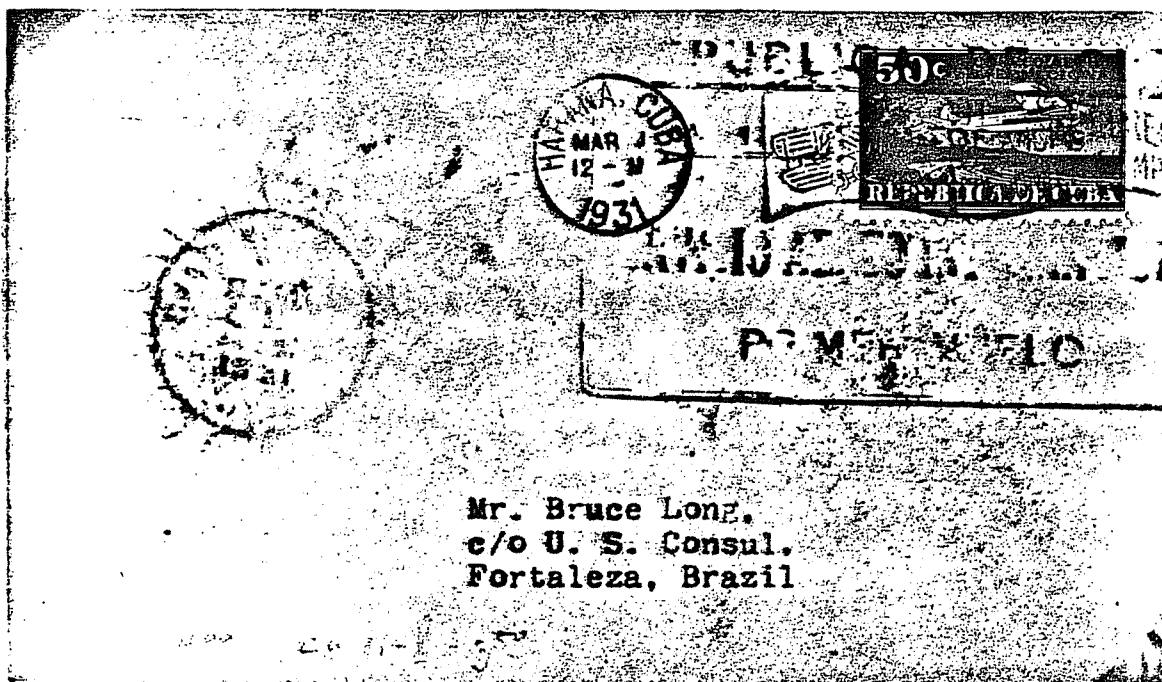


To Port au Prince, Haiti

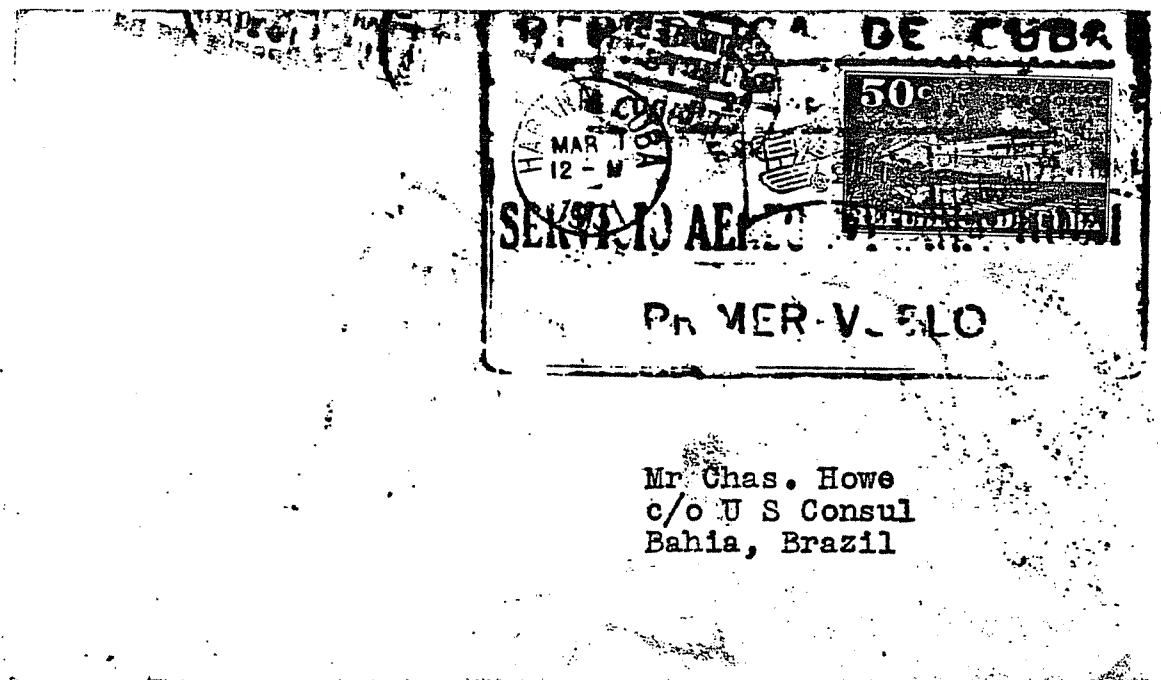


To Saint Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands

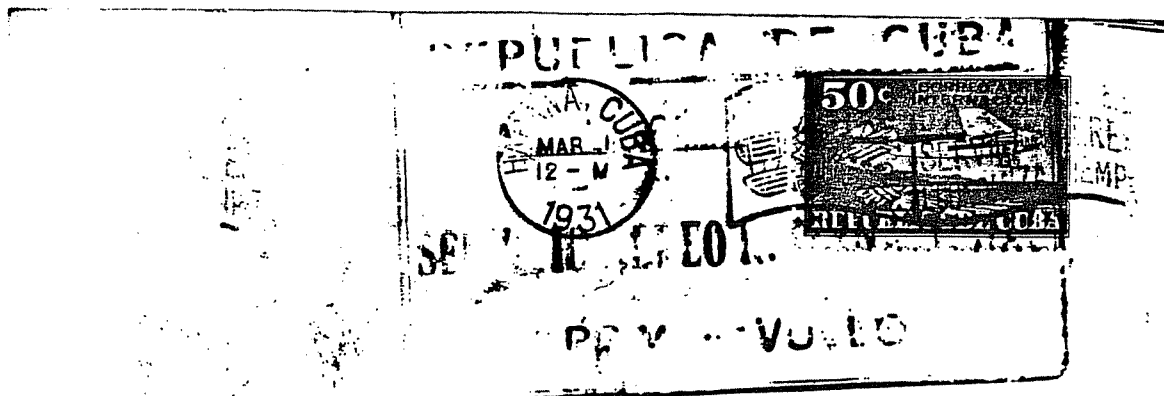
Dispatches also made to FAM 10, which was an extension of FAM 6.



To Fortaleza.

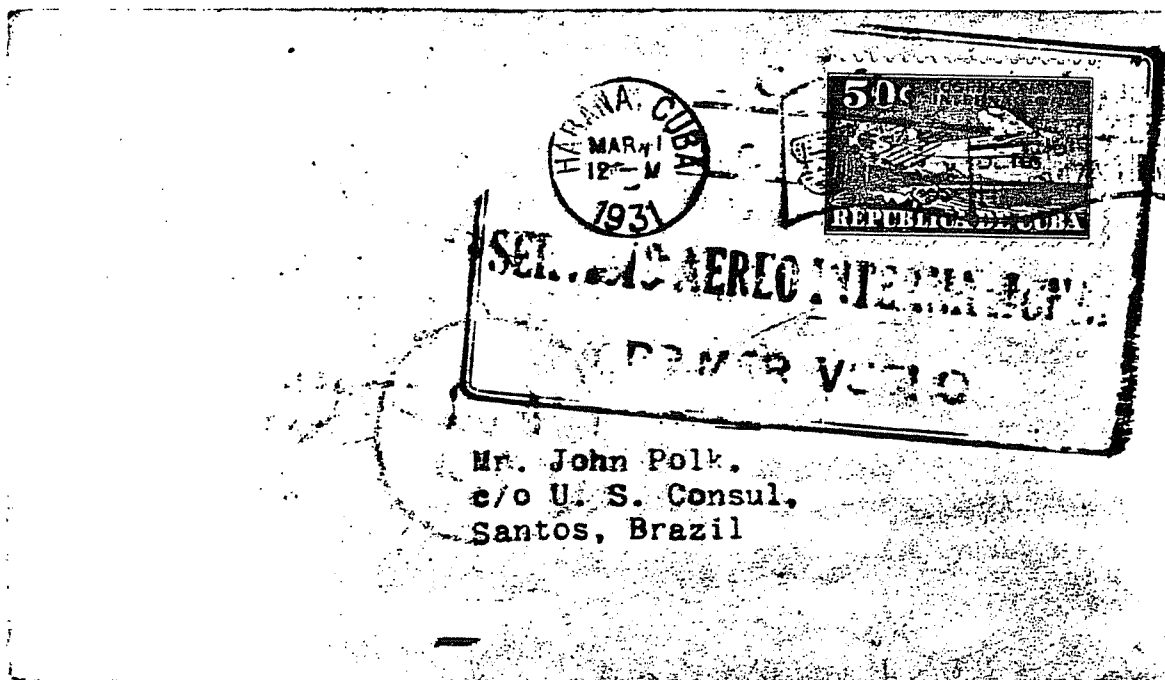


To Bahia.



Mr. Frank Cox.
c/o U. S. Consul.
Victoria, Brazil

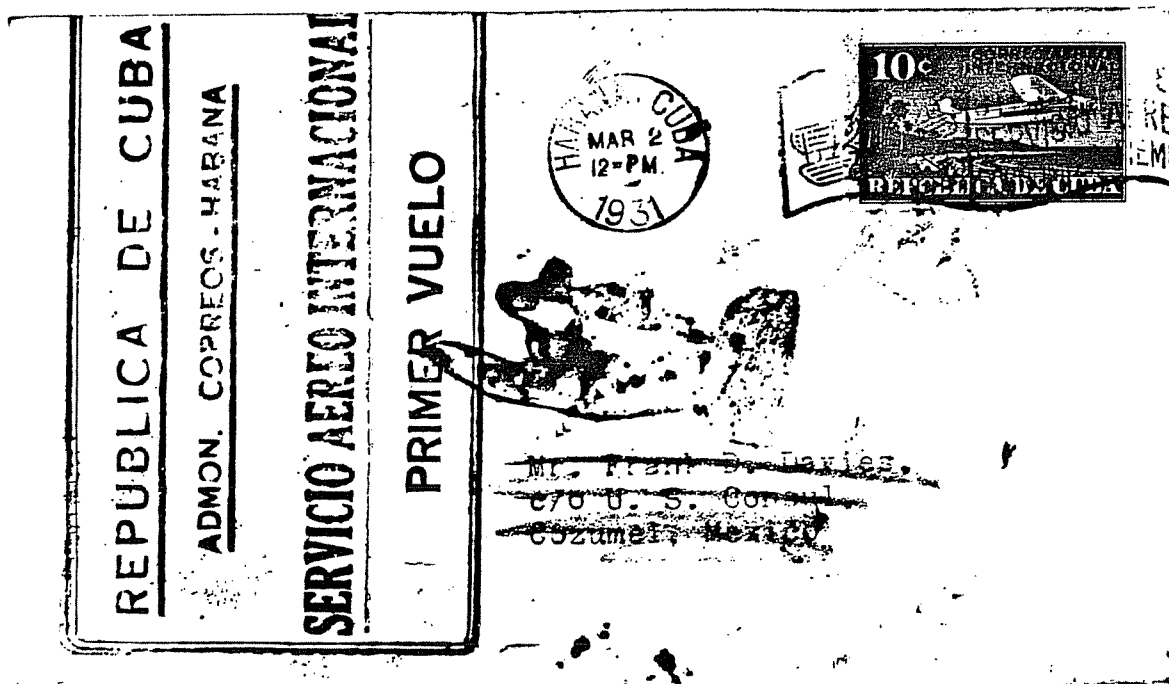
To Victoria.



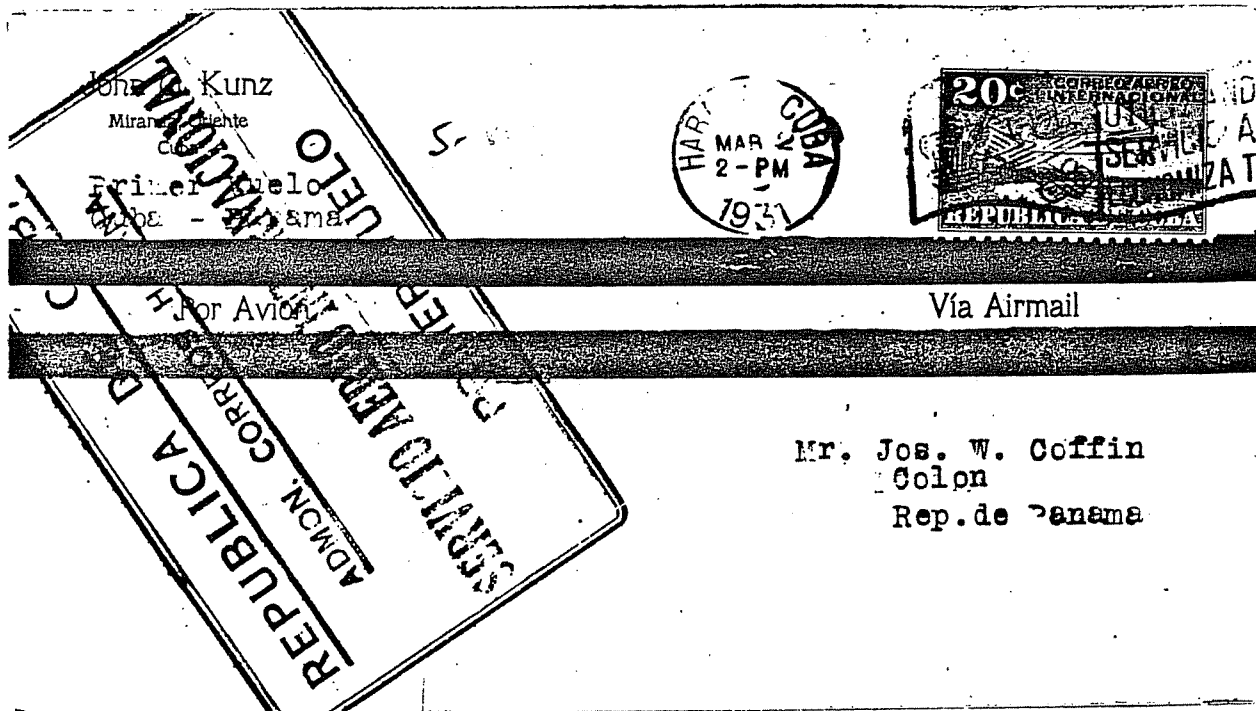
Mr. John Polk.
c/o U. S. Consul.
Santos, Brazil

To Santos.

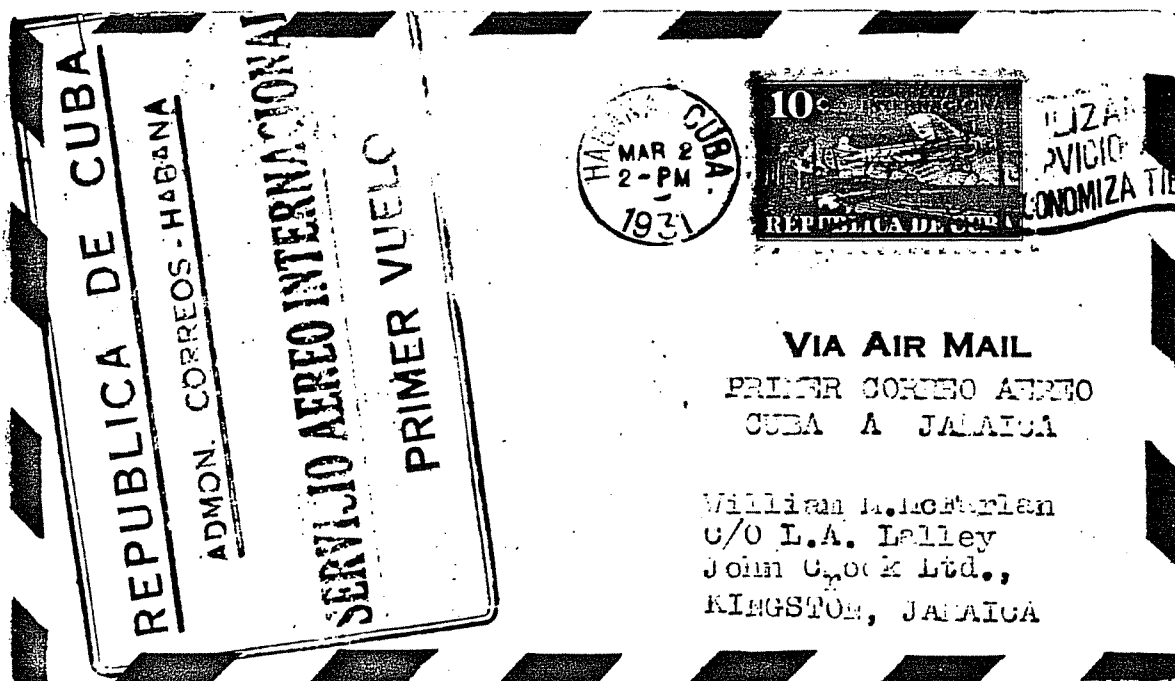
The same day, Havana dispatched to FAM 5 with connections to FAM 8 and 9.



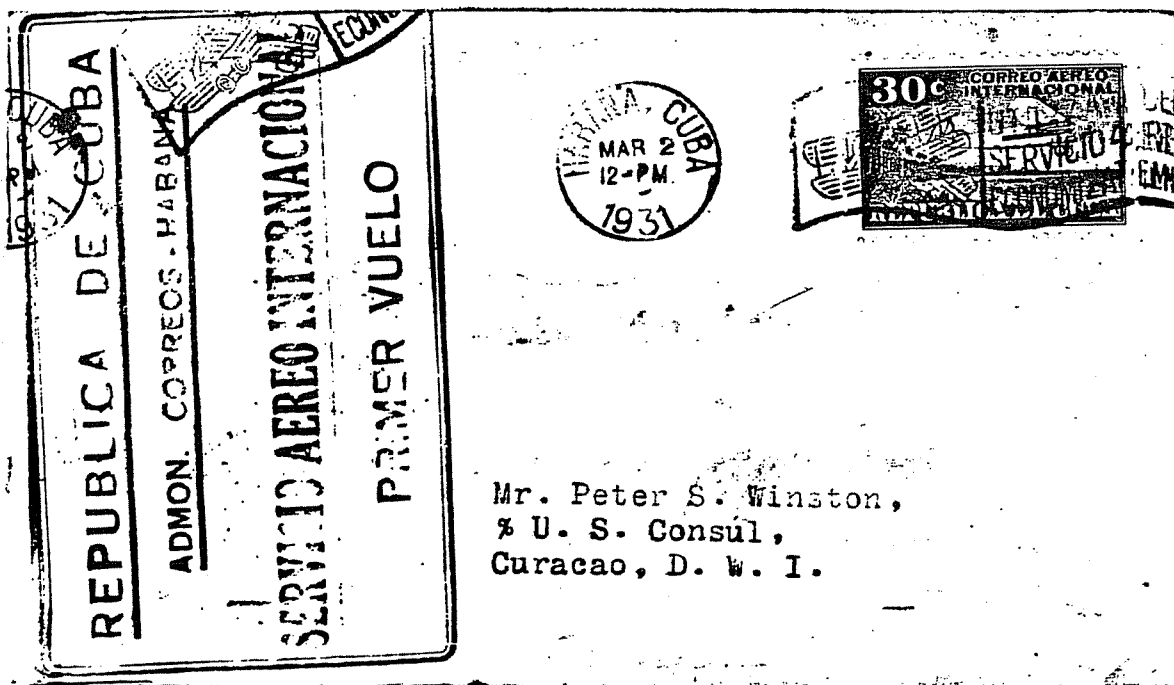
First dispatch to Cozumel, 36 covers.



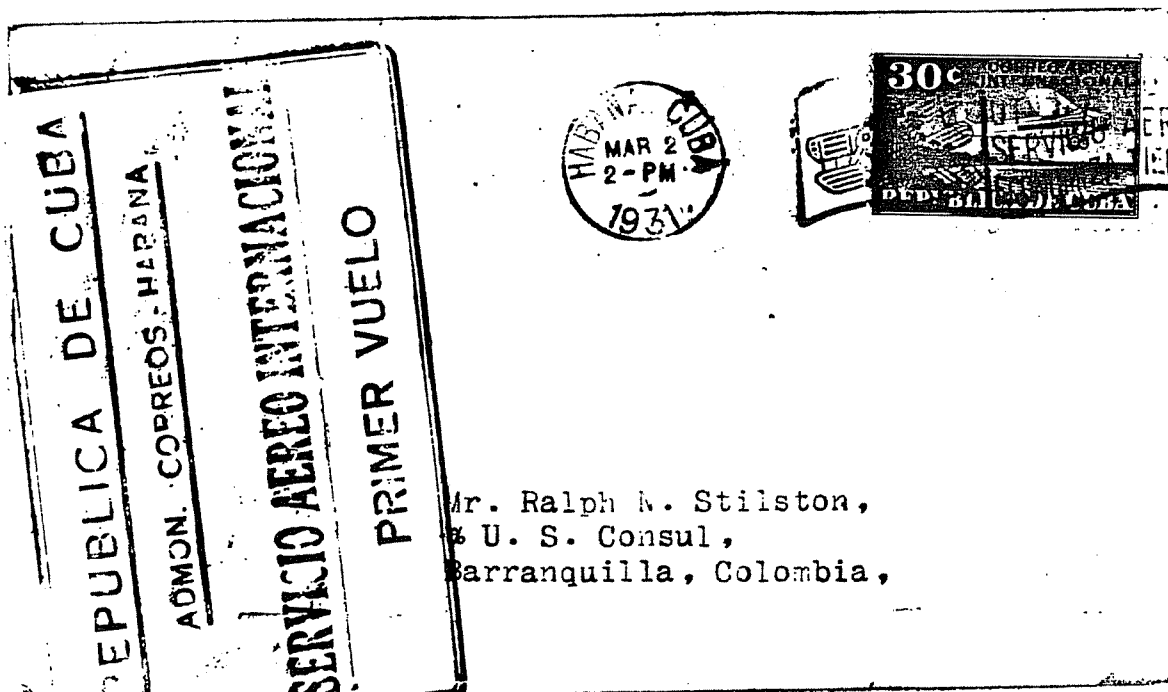
To Colon, 30 covers.



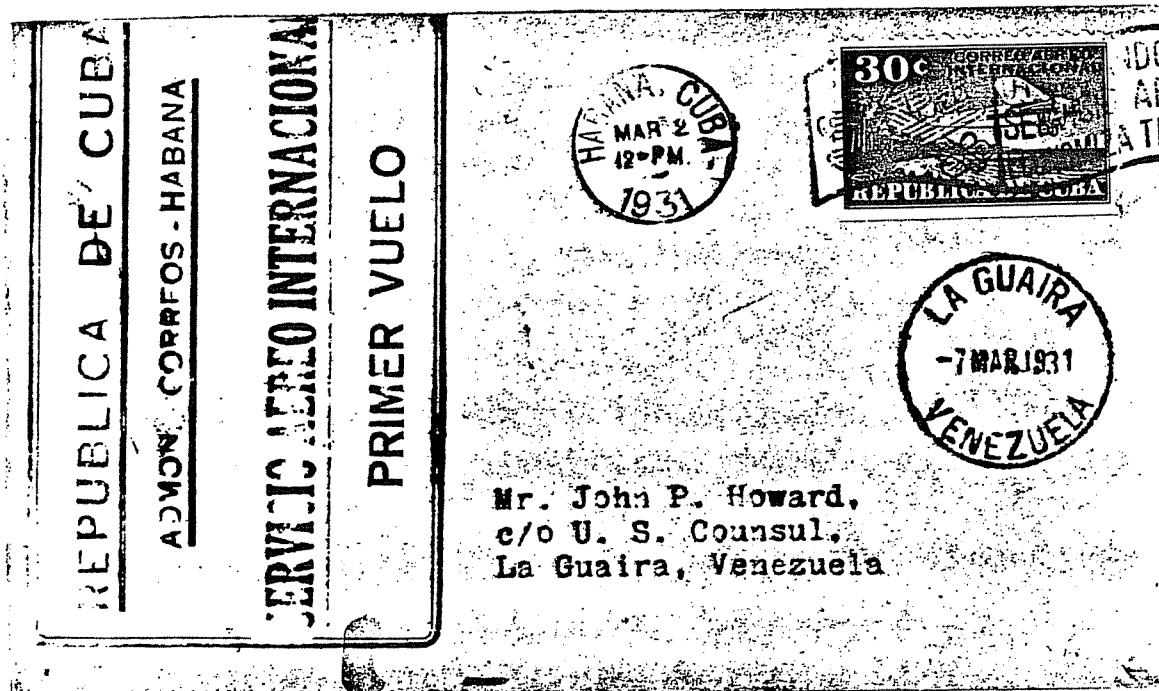
Cover to Kingston via Cienfuegos.



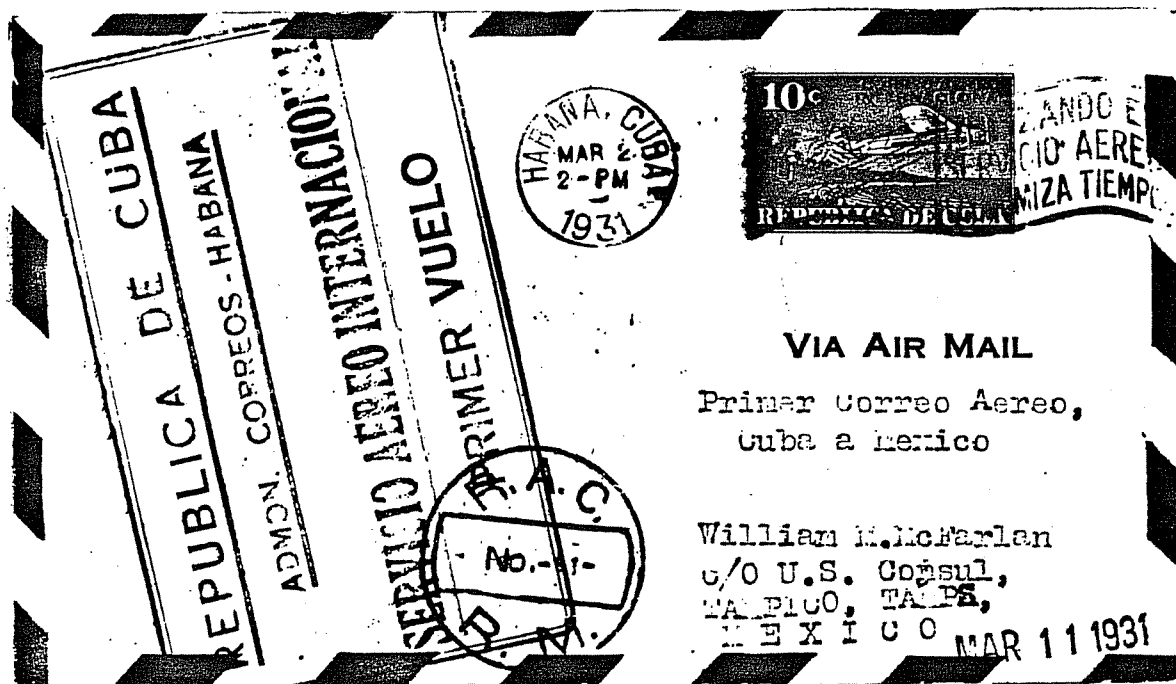
Cover to Curacao via Cristobal, C.Z.



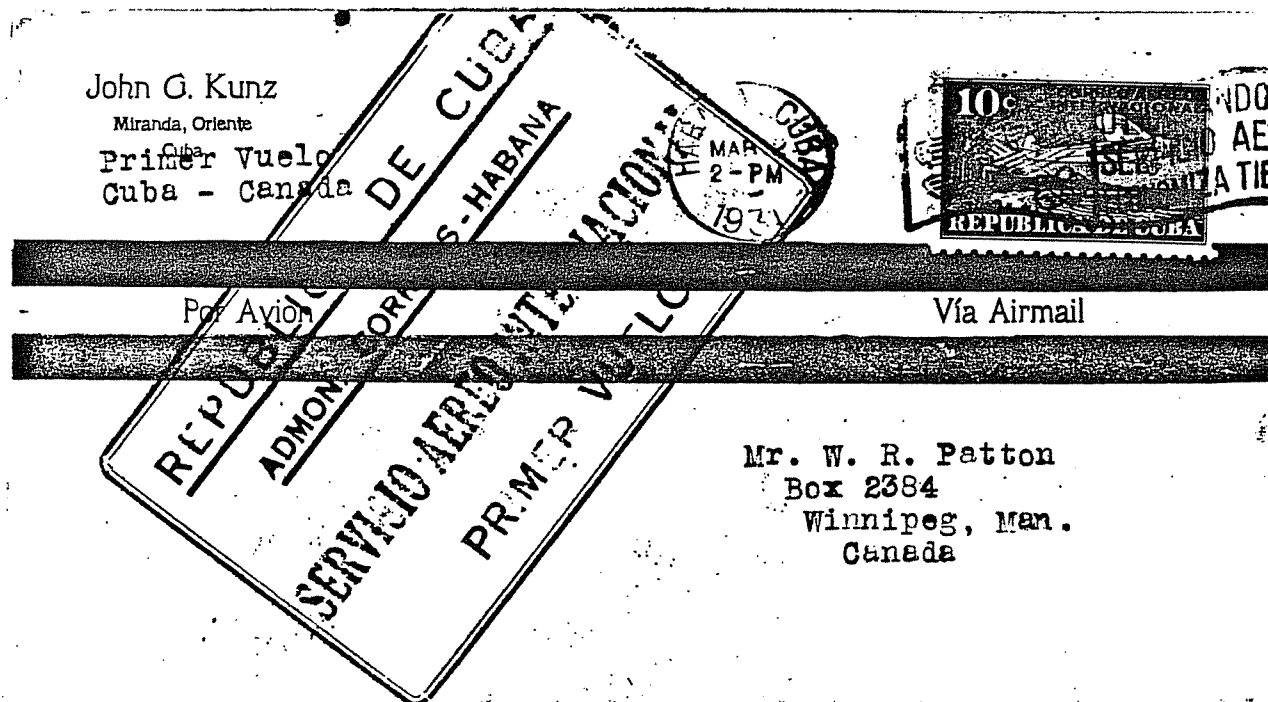
To Barranquilla, 44 covers.



To La Guaira, 44 covers.

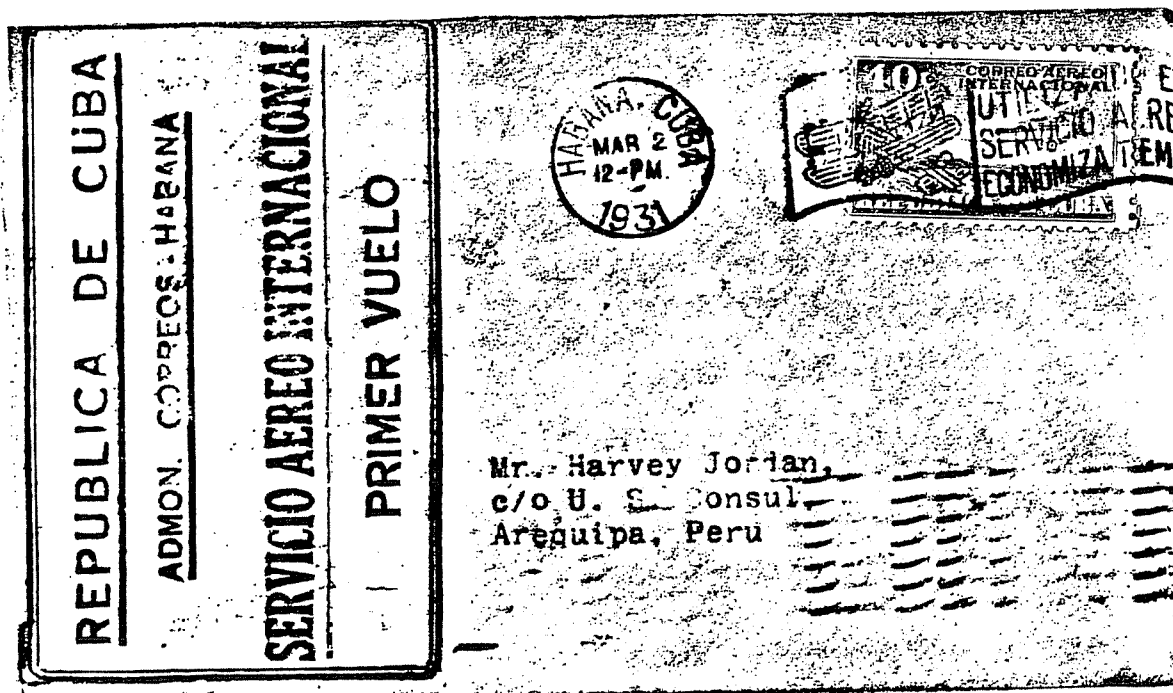


Cover to Tampico via route No. 1 from Mexico City.



Cover to Winnipeg via the U.S.

Dispatches also made to FAM 9, FAM 8, as extensions of FAM 5, and to north.



Cover to Arequipa, via Lima.

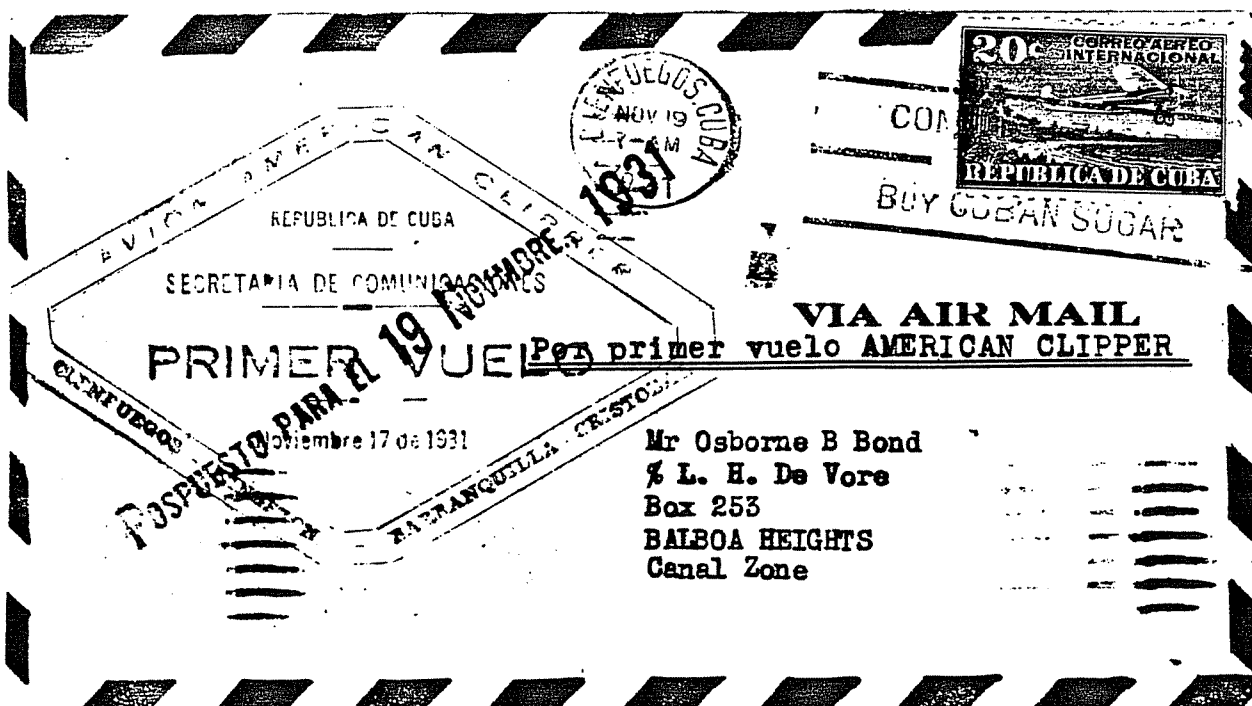


Registered cover to Cordoba via Buenos Aires.

First Flight of the American Clipper

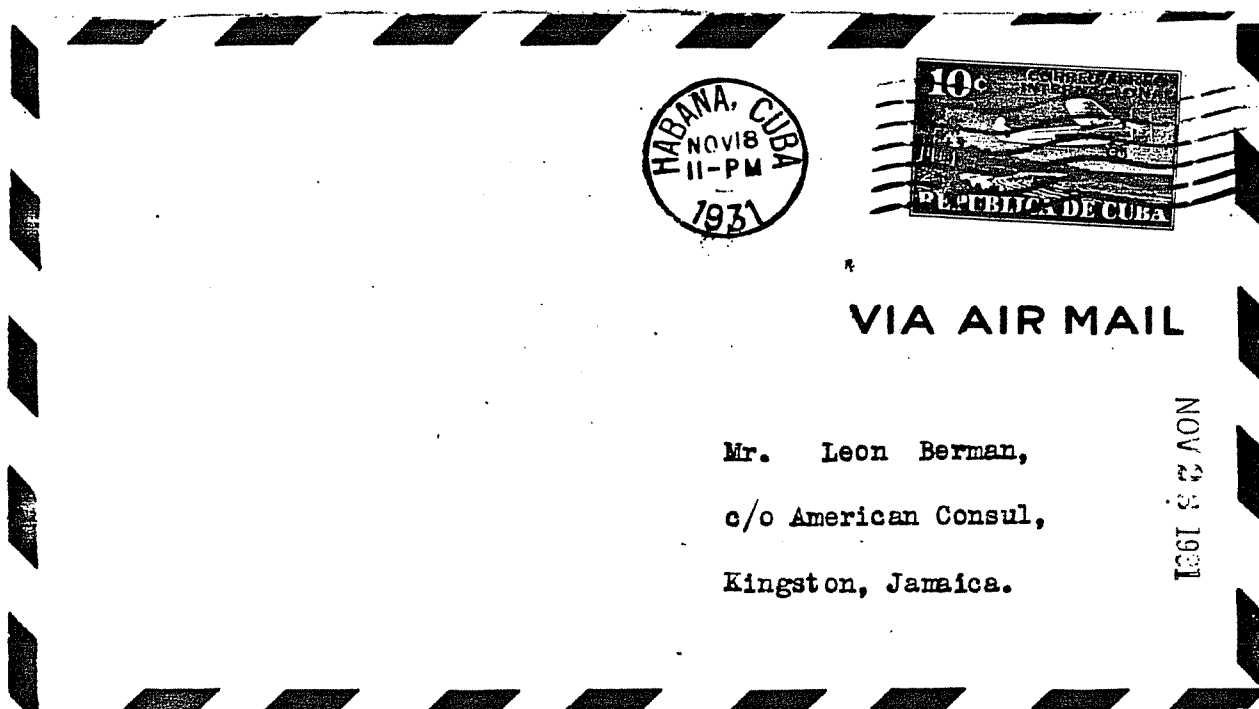


Cienfuegos applied its first flight cachet to southbound mail, noting the postponement of city's first dispatch of air mail from Nov 17 to Nov 19. However the flight from Miami did not arrive until 1:30 on the 20th, too late to arrive in Kingston before dark. Flight finally left on the 21st.

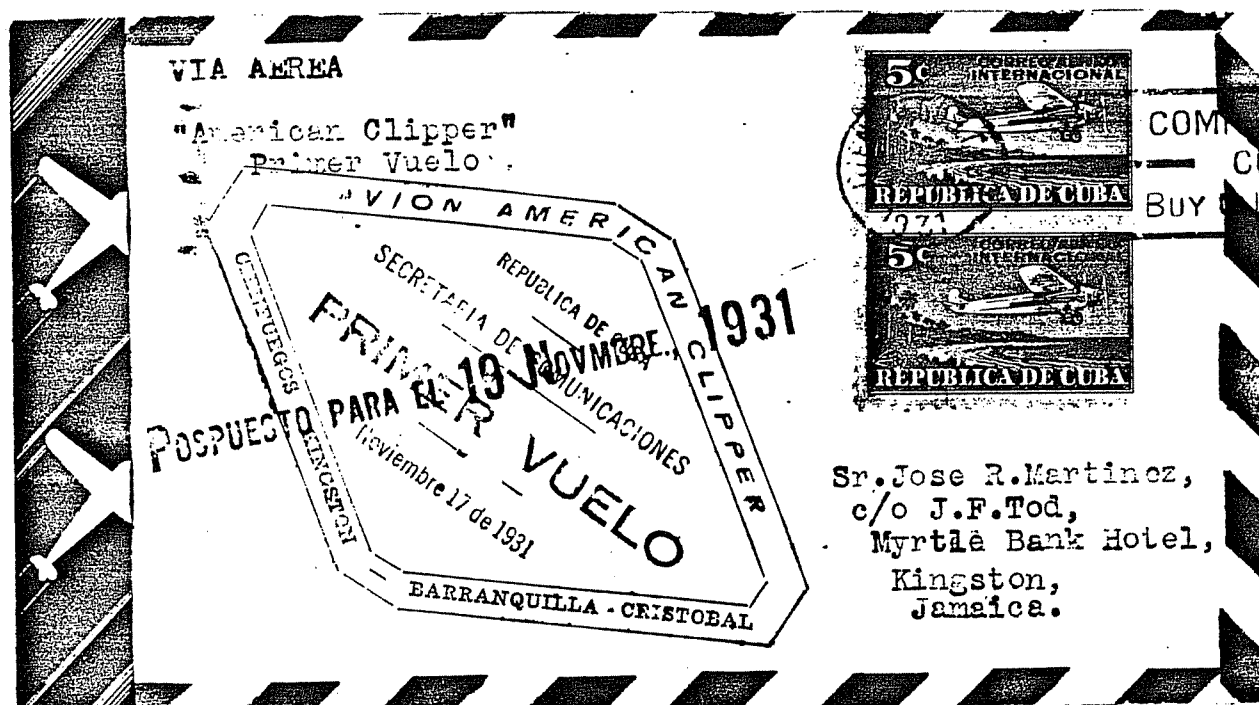


Black cachet cover to Canal Zone; Again only six of these covers in existence.

First Flight of the American Clipper

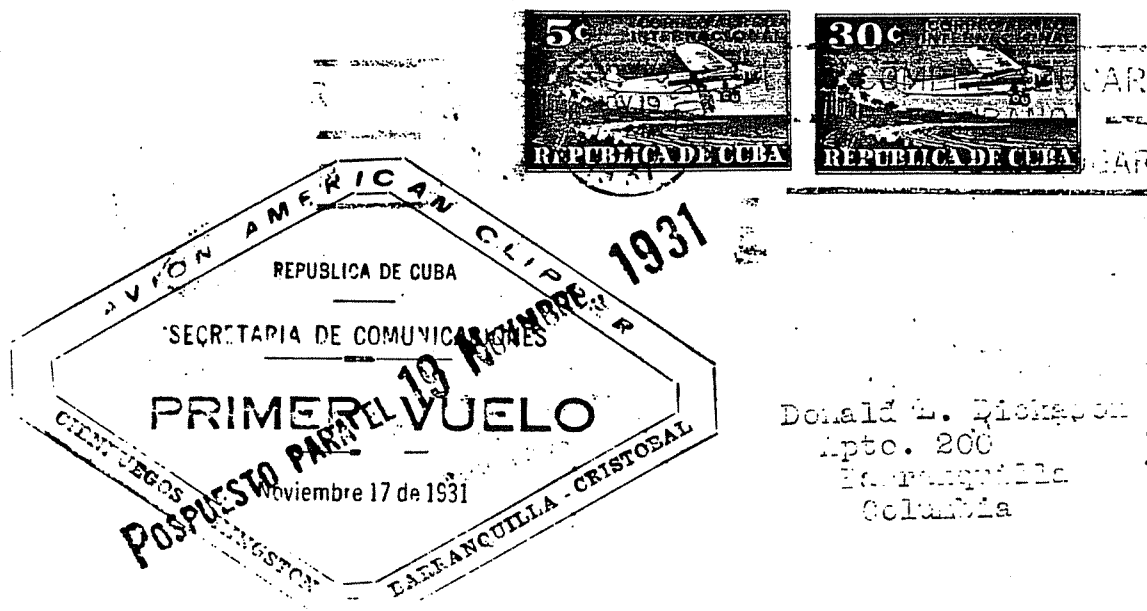


Cover posted in Havana then had adequate time to connect with Lindbergh flight. However, it must have reached Cienfuegos too late to be put through cacheting. Flight reached Kingston Sat, 21st and spent night. Cover delivered Mon, 23rd.



Another cover with correct 10 centavos postage to Kingston did receive cachet.

First Flight of the American Clipper

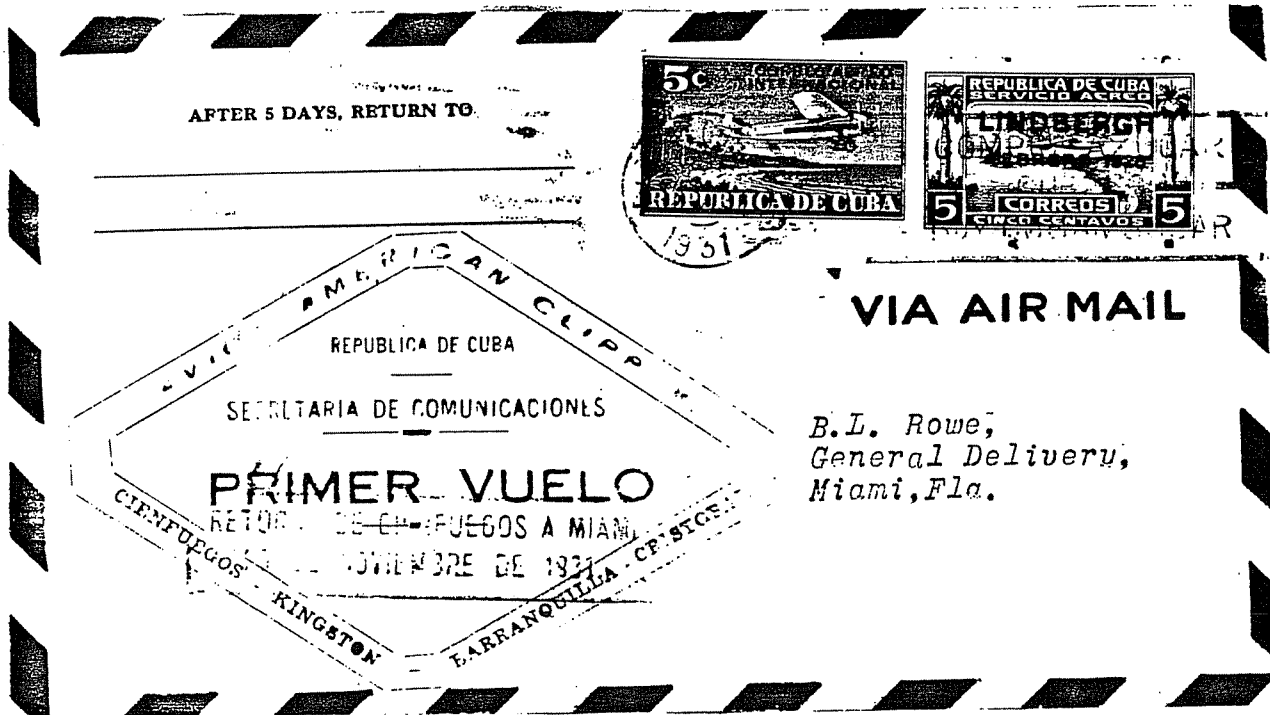


Only six covers with this black cachet were dispatched for Barranquilla.

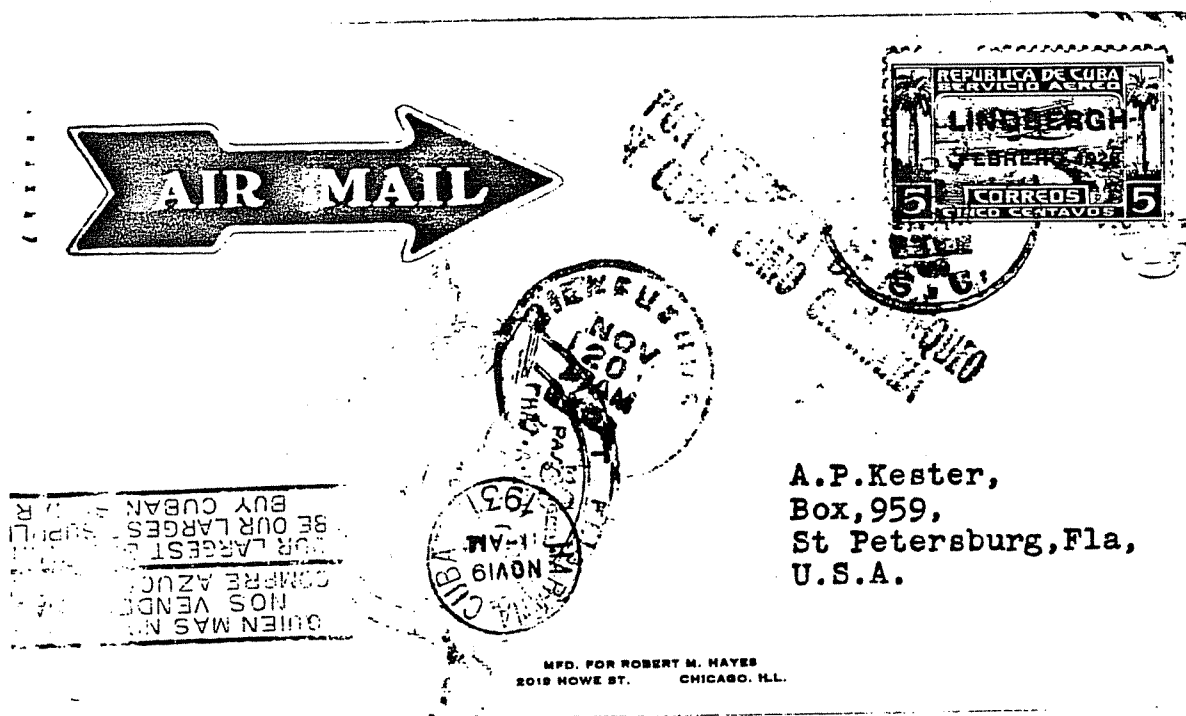


Registered cover with the regular violet cachet, forwarded from Barranquilla to Bogota. Special SCADTA stamps were no longer required for air mail forwarding.

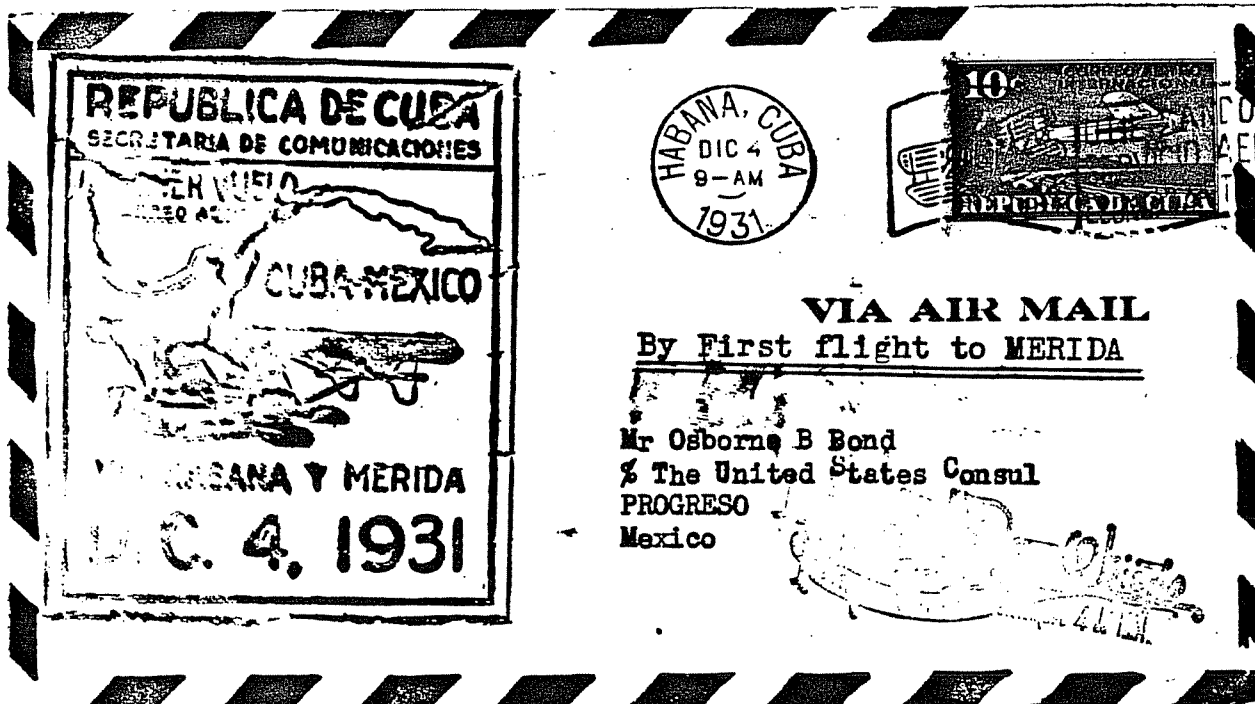
First Flight of the American Clipper



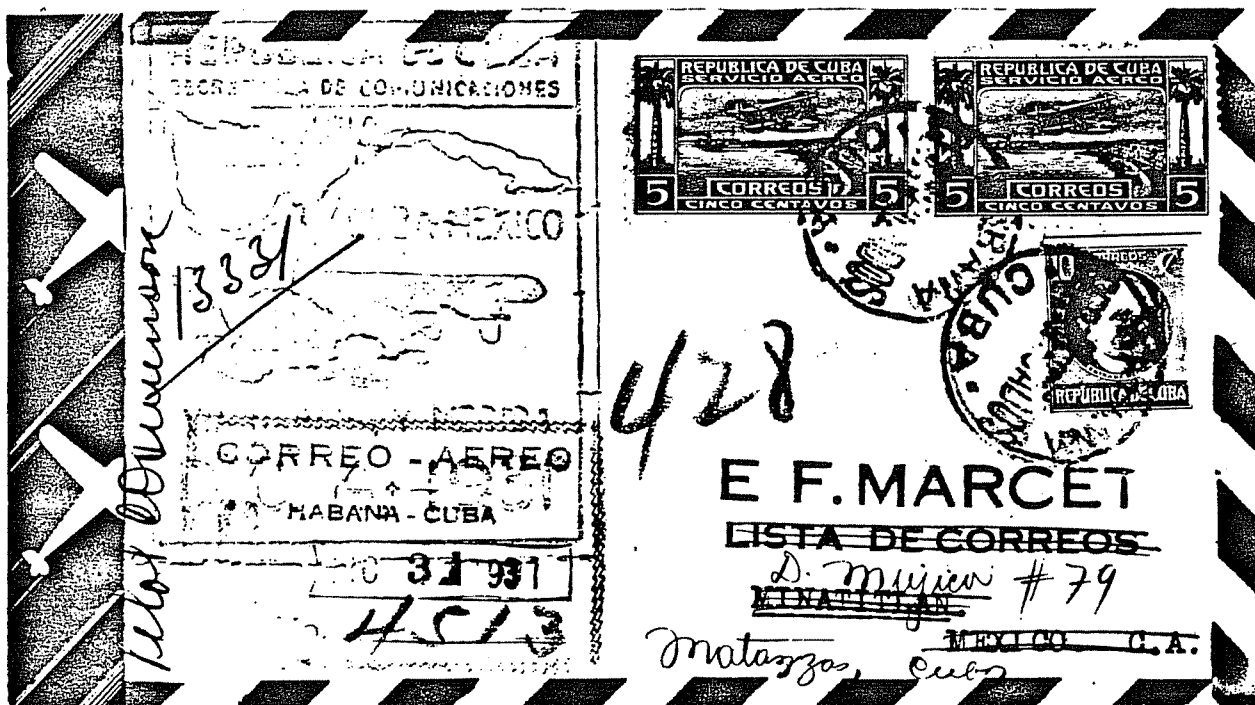
Cienfuegos northbound cachet did not list the date; added later with handstamp.



Cienfuegos cover with Miami cachet on back had a Lindbergh overprint stamp and address for return flight. A handstamp shows postage insufficient for flight.



Black Cuban cachet on first Cuban dispatch to Progreso through Merida, Mexico.



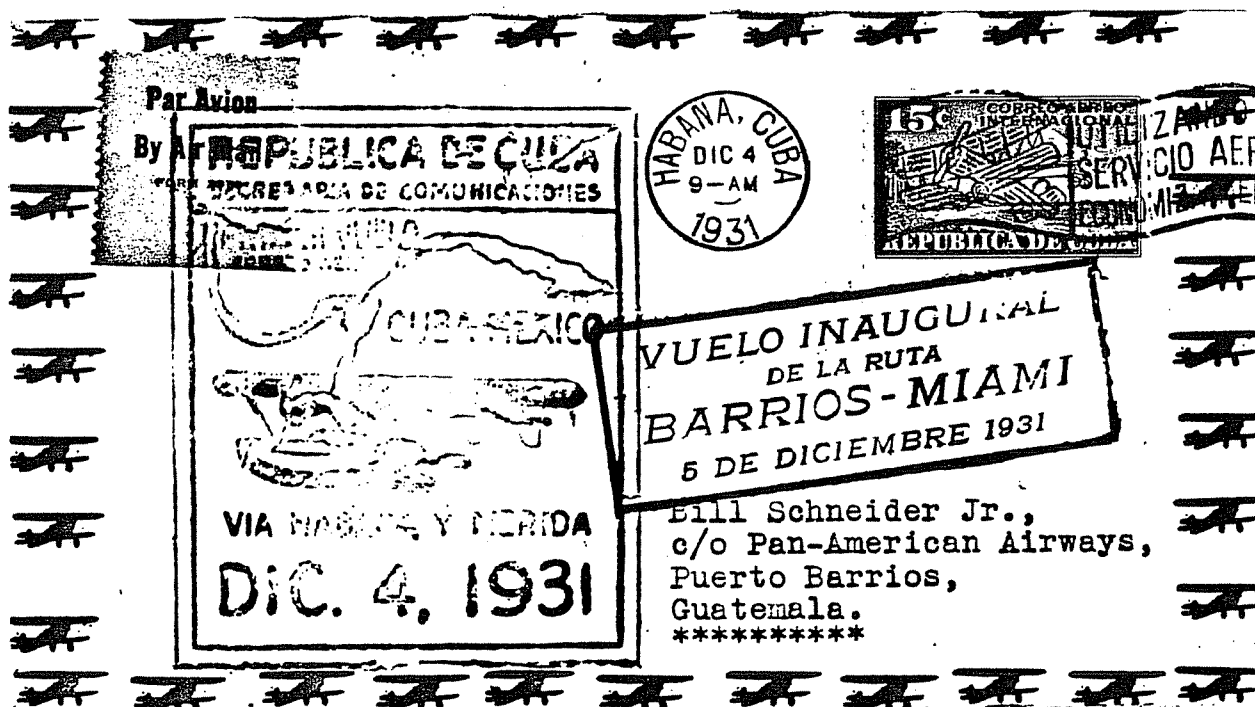
Registered cover to Minatitlan, Dec 7, routed via Merida and Vera Cruz, Dec 6.

ROYCE A. WIGHT
CAMBRIDGE, MASS.

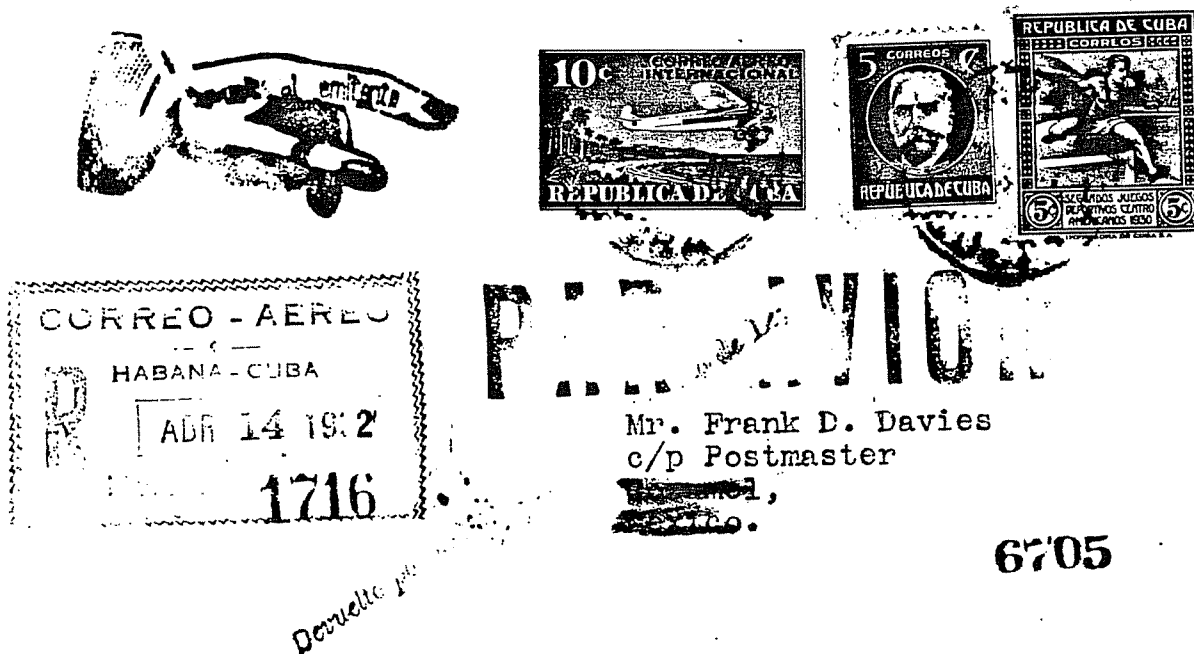


ROYCE A. WIGHT
c/o AEROP. EL CORRAL
PUERTO BARRIOS
GUATEMALA

Black Cuban and Guatemalan cachets on first Cuban dispatch to Puerto Barrios.

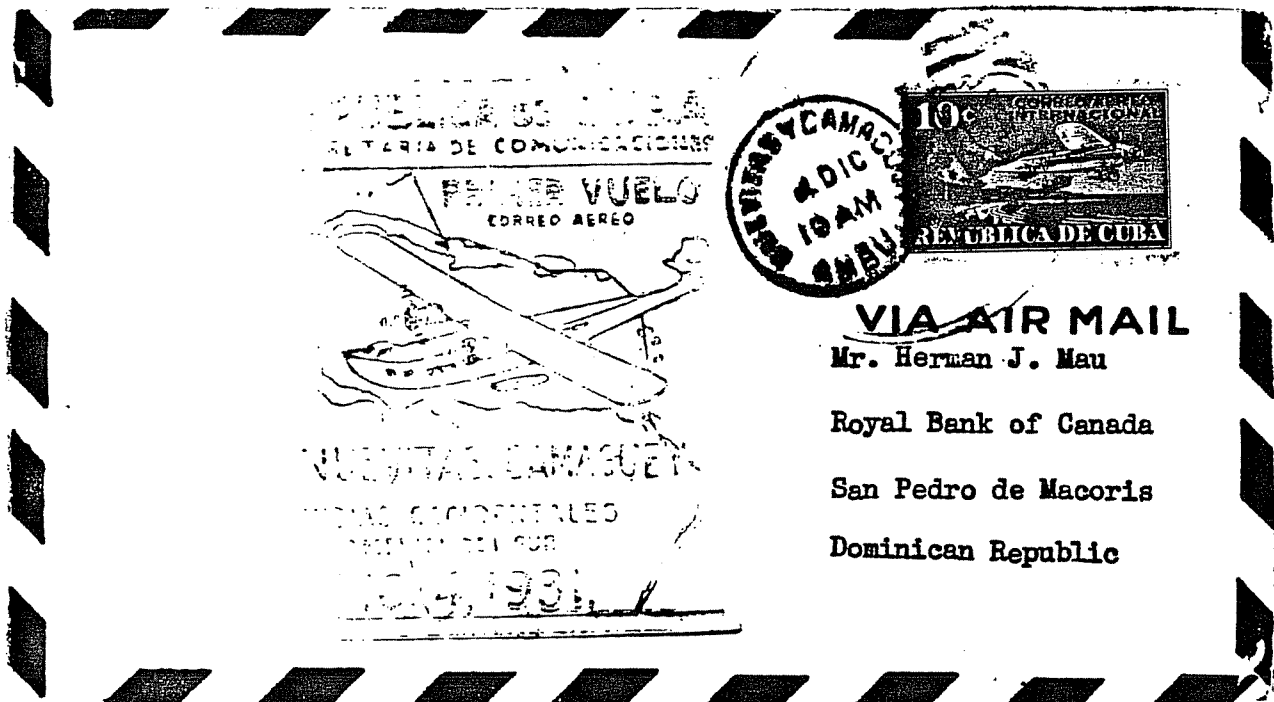


Blue-green Cuban cachet on similar cover was received in Puerto Barrios Dec 5.



No special cachet on registered first Havana dispatch, one of only 44 carried.

Nuevitas, near Camaguey had an excellent harbor for Pan Am's FAM 6 Commodores.



Cover postmarked on the Nuevitas and Camaguey RPO flown to new Dominican stop.



Similar cover to Haiti was received in poor condition and officially sealed.

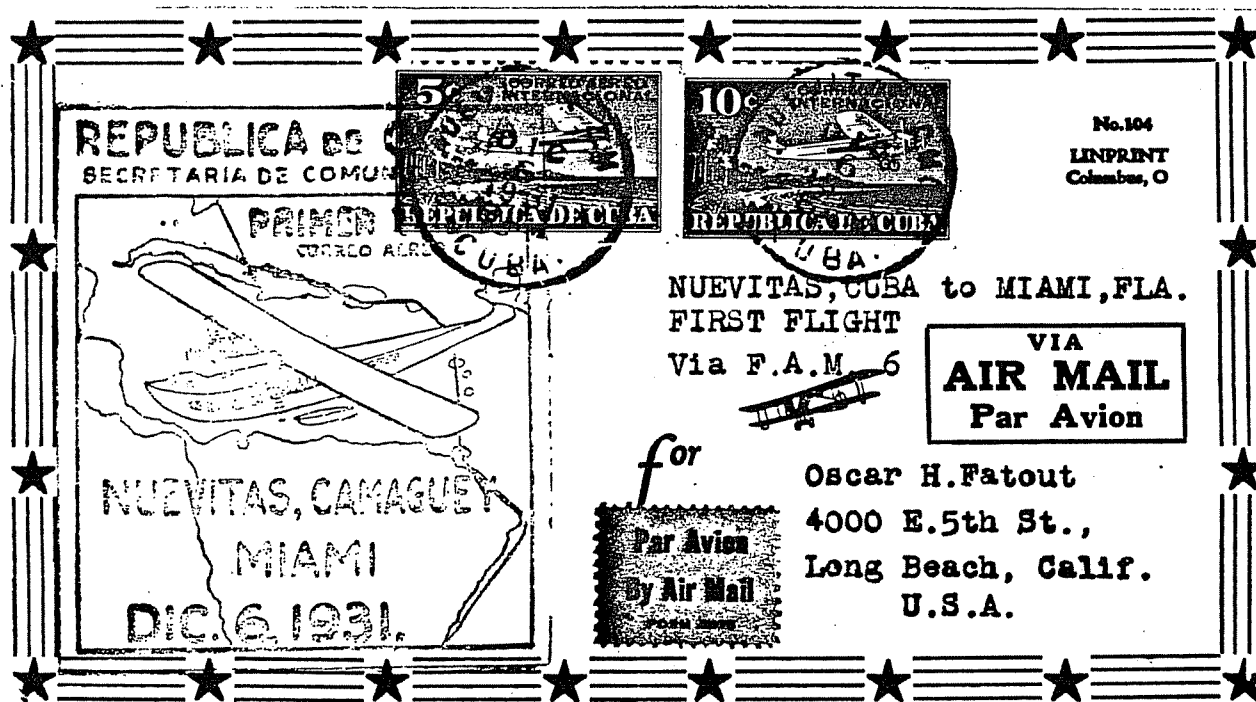


Maoske, Ohio.

Mr. Henry C. Menster
c/o Postmaster
Paramaribo,
Du. Guiana.

*Return to Berkshire Exch
incorporated*

Cover to Paramaribo received a black cachet for flight to South America.



No. 104
LINPRINT
Columbus, O

NUEVITAS, CUBA to MIAMI, FLA.
FIRST FLIGHT
Via F.A.M. 6

VIA
AIR MAIL
Par Avion

for

Par Avion
By Air Mail

Oscar H. Fatout
4000 E. 5th St.,
Long Beach, Calif.
U.S.A.

Another cover to U.S. overpaid by 5 cents for Miami flight, has purple cachet.

With international service on FAM 5 or 6, FAM 4 had outlived its first purpose.

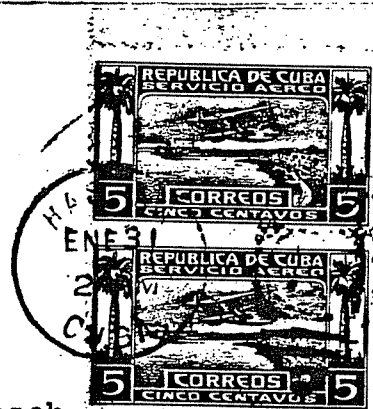


In 1932, FAM 4 could celebrate the fifth anniversary of its inaugural flights.

Last trip on F.A.M.# 4
January 31.1933

H.E.Radasch
Gladwyne,Pa. Via Miami

H. Dewey



Then, in January, 1933, FAM 4 ended service with last flight piloted by Dewey.

INTERNATIONAL SKY TRAIN



Cuba's official air train project gave them an opportunity to test a concept that would permit air mail delivery to a number of destinations with pinpoint landing near the post office rather than at a remote air field. A large aircraft towing several gliders could drop each one off at its intended destination and continue on, without stopping, to the next release point.

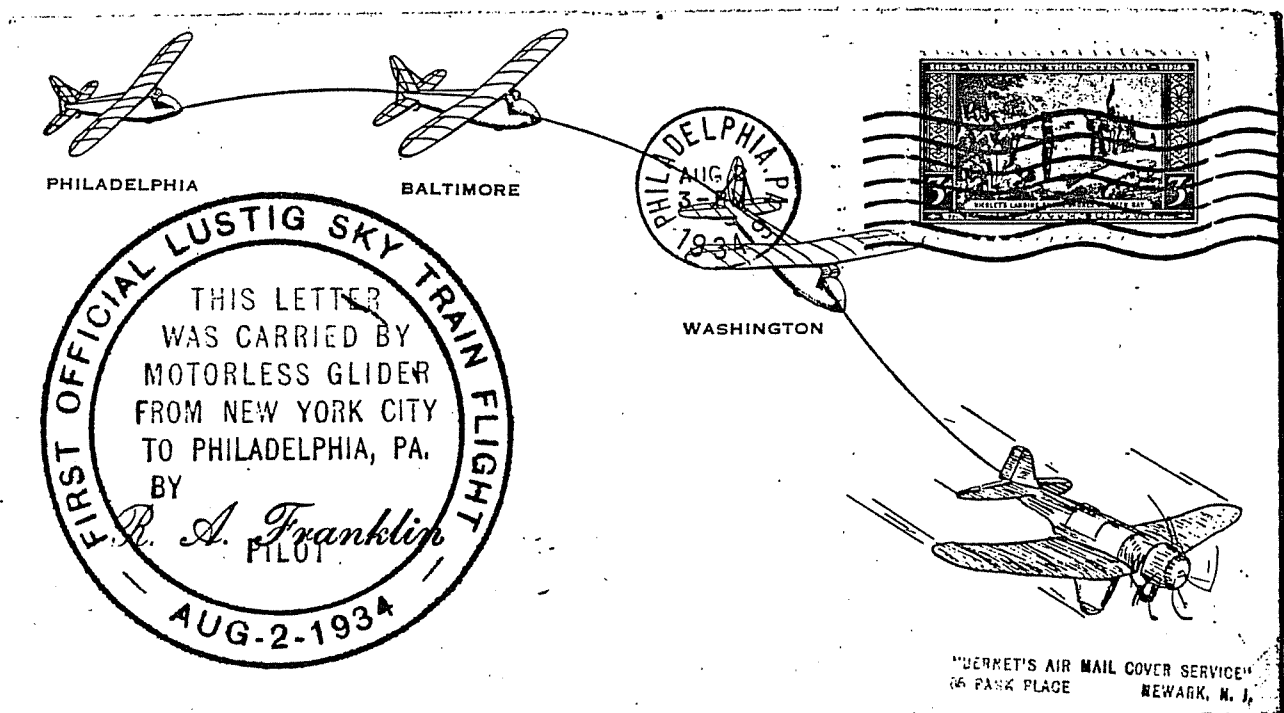
The concept was being promoted in the U.S. by Elias Lustig, who sponsored a demonstration the year before. In it, a three glider tow from New York dropped off gliders in Philadelphia, Baltimore and Washington. These were to be the first international flights.

However, the U.S. Post Office Dept. chose not to participate in the U.S.-Cuba part of the project. Therefore, the first flight, from Miami to Havana, was unofficial. It began with a DC-2 air liner towing two Franklin PS-2 gliders via Key West to downtown Havana. The loaded gliders, after some aerobatics to demonstrate their airworthiness, landed on the Prado directly in front of the Capitol building.

The afternoon before the return flight the Cuban P.O. announced that it would issue special stamps for the flight at 8 AM the next morning. In one riotous hour after the stamp window opened, they sold all of the stamps. The lucky buyers then made up covers for the official flight, which went well without incident.

Precursor Flight in U.S.

Flight not sanctioned by the U.S.P.O., but it left New York at 10:44 AM, Aug 2.



Glider carrying this cover disconnected and landed at Philadelphia to mail it. Special 60 mm cachet has pilot's name error (middle name initial was E not A).

*I hereby certify that this cover
was carried by the Glider Air Train
which left Floyd Bennett Air Field,
10:44 A. M., Aug. 2, 1934, and
was dropped off at Philadelphia.*

C. E. Bennett

Postmark and this box on reverse certify flight.

International Flight from Miami to Havana

120 covers with 2 cents franking mailed at 5:45 PM to box 1574 for this flight.

DOUGLAS P. BALL
408-10 Seybold Bldg.
MIAMI, FLORIDA



Box 1574,
Miami,
Florida.

One of 9 covers that stuck to another and was not postmarked, but made flight.

DOUGLAS P. BALL
408-10 Seybold Bldg.
MIAMI, FLORIDA

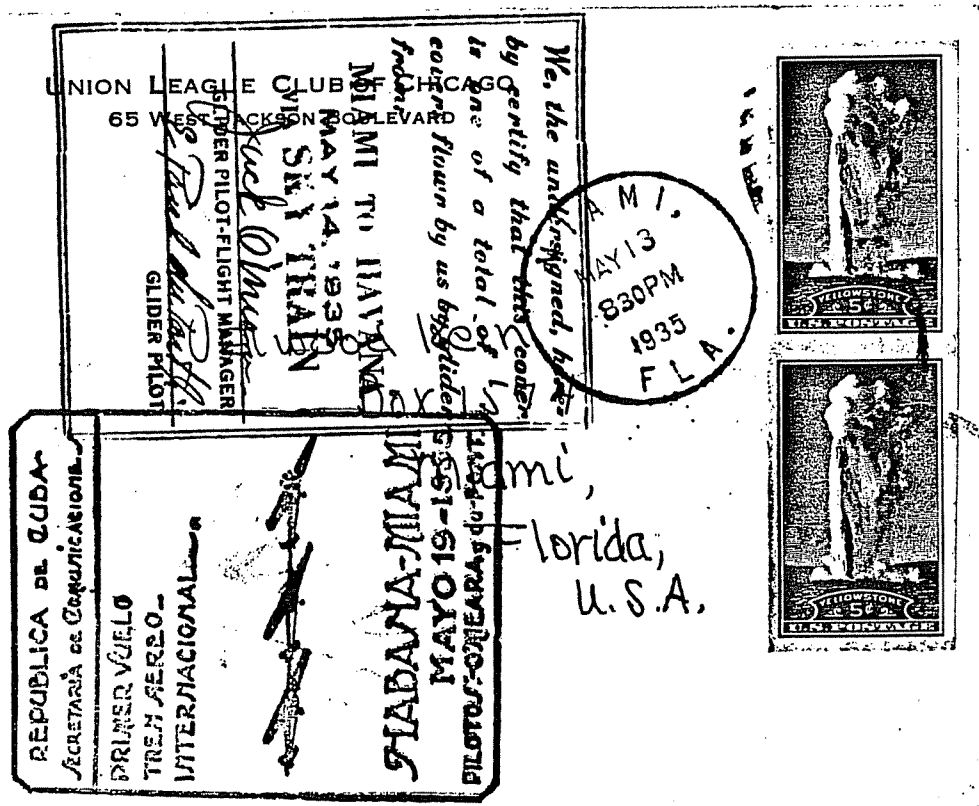


Box 1574,
Miami,
Florida.

All except this were delivered to box by 11 PM on 13th. This, although it was cancelled 13th, got to the box the next morning, still in time for the flight.

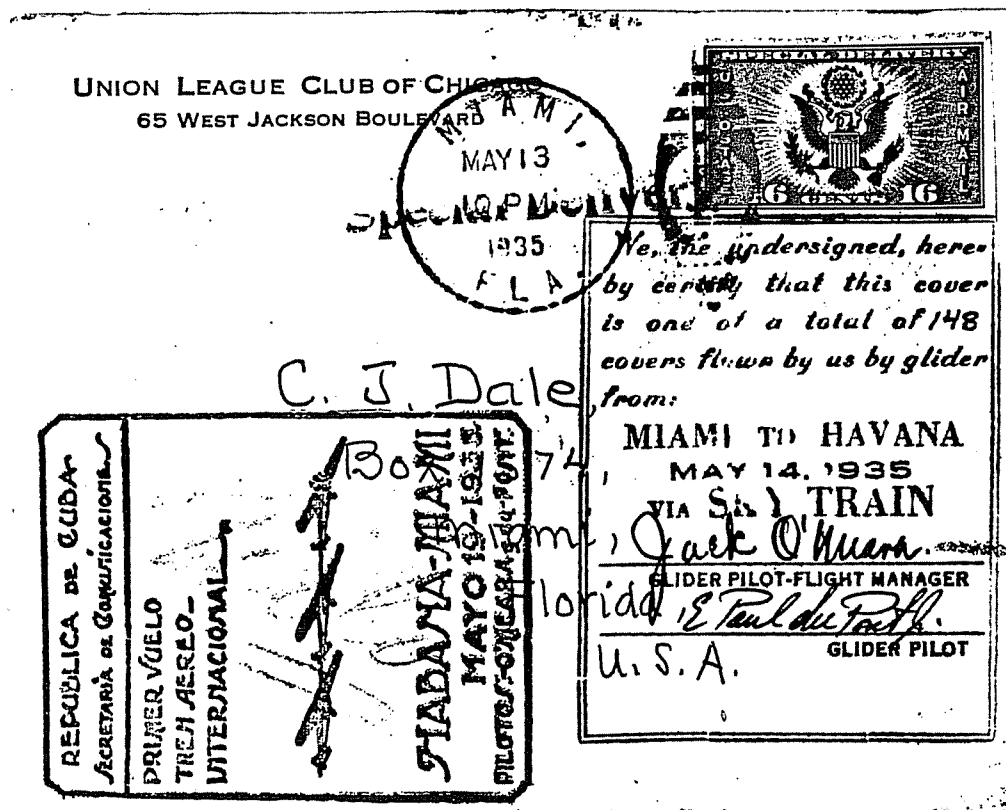
International Flight from Miami to Havana

In addition, 22 special covers made for crew and 10 for U.S. officials, however unable to get U.S.P.O. sanction for trip.



Special cover for pilot Kein did not get Cuban P.O. clearance for round trip at the last minute. Cuban cachet marked Nulo.

International Flight from Miami to Havana



Special cover with 10 PM postmark, A M special delivery stamp.

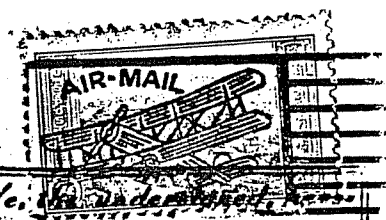


10 PM Miami backstamp shows immediate delivery to box.

International Flight from Miami to Havana

DOUGLAS P. BALL
408-10 Seybold Bldg.
MIAMI, FLORIDA

C. J. DALE
P. O. BOX 714
HAVANA, CUBA



Box 1574,
Miami,
Florida.

We, the undersigned, hereby
certify that this cover
is one of a total of
covers flown by us by glider
from:

MIAMI TO HAVANA
MAY 14, 1935
VIA SKY TRAIN

Jack O'Hara
GLIDER PILOT-FLIGHT MANAGER
Paul du Pont
GLIDER PILOT

Typical rejected cover had Cuban stamp cut out for reuse on official flight cover.

International Flight from Havana to Miami



perforated



imperforated

Cuban P.O. issued specially overprinted stamps for the flight on short notice in the previous afternoon's paper. By 9 AM next morning, all stamps were sold out.



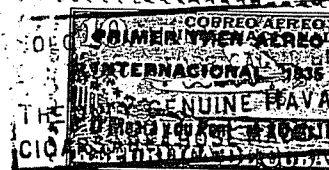
Only major variety is double overprint (200 stamps).

International Flight from Havana to Miami

C. J. DALE

P. O. BOX 714

HAVANA, CUBA

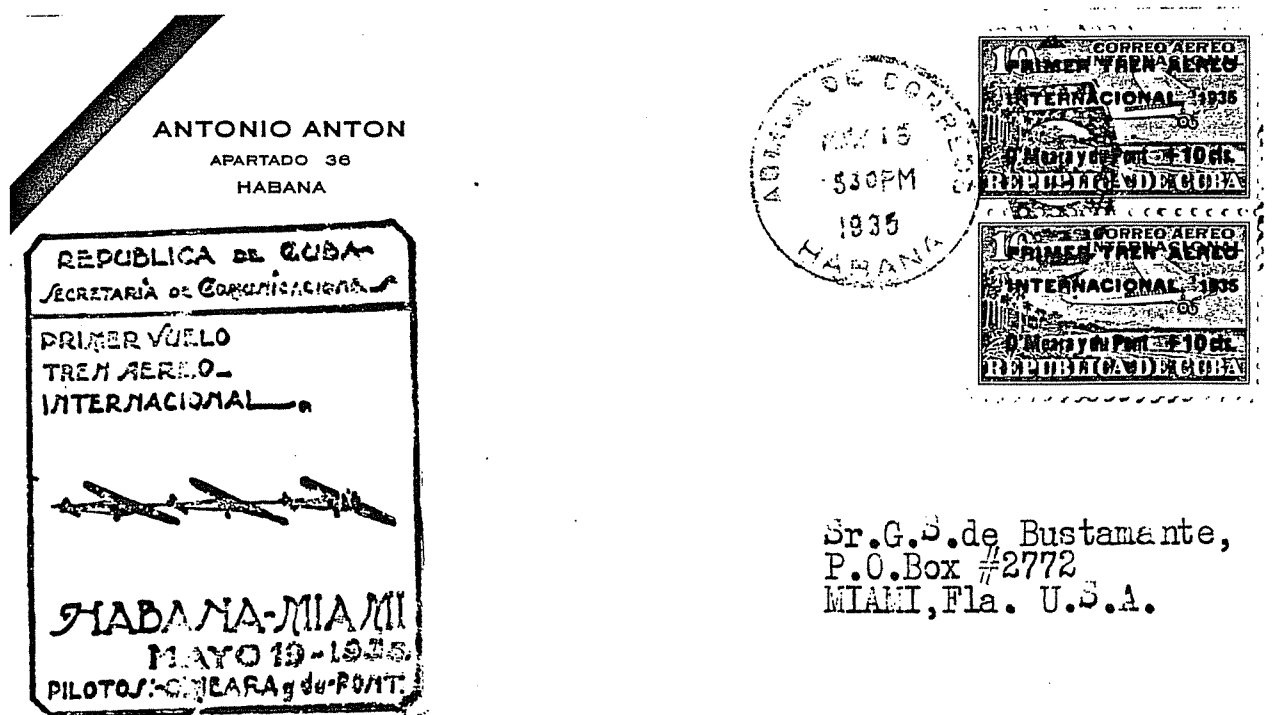


Mr Daniel O. True,
Box 1574,
MIAMI, Fla.,
U. S. A.

Jack O'Neara.
Paul du Pont.
Elwood Kern.

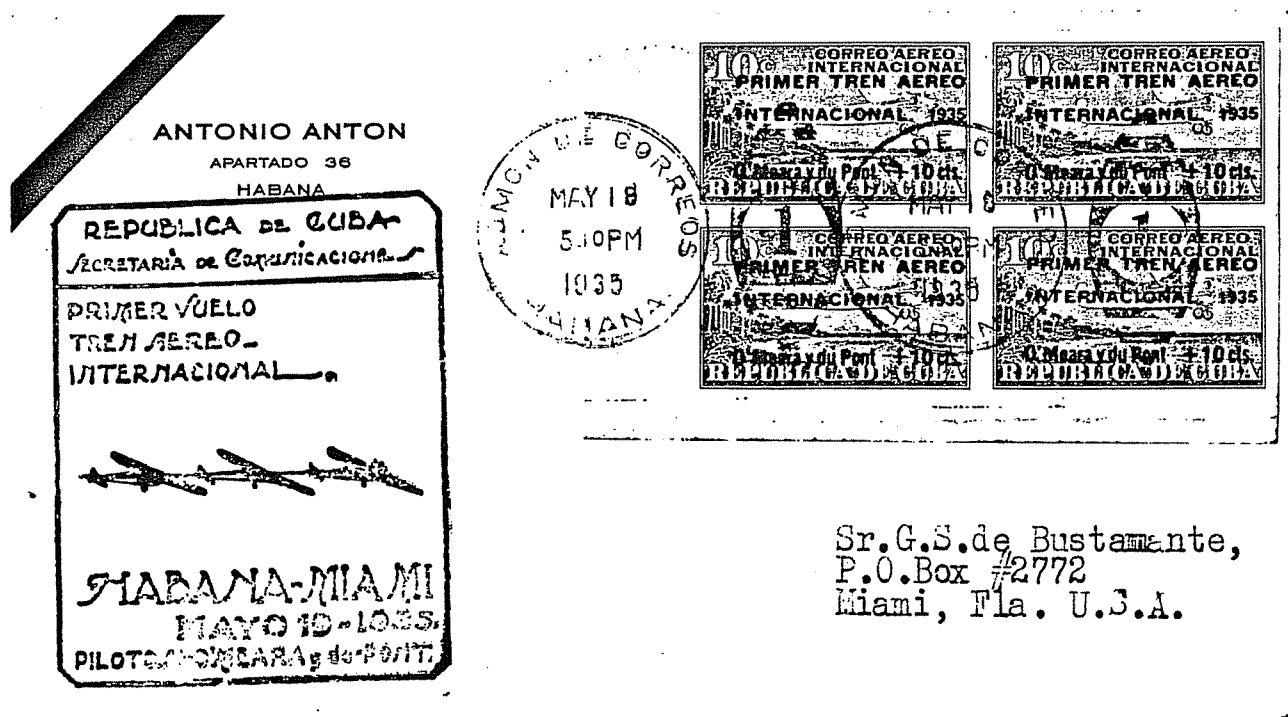
Typical of the many Miami addressed covers, sent to promoters' box number with pilots' signatures also official Cuban cachet. 4023 Miami dispatches counted.

International Flight from Havana to Miami

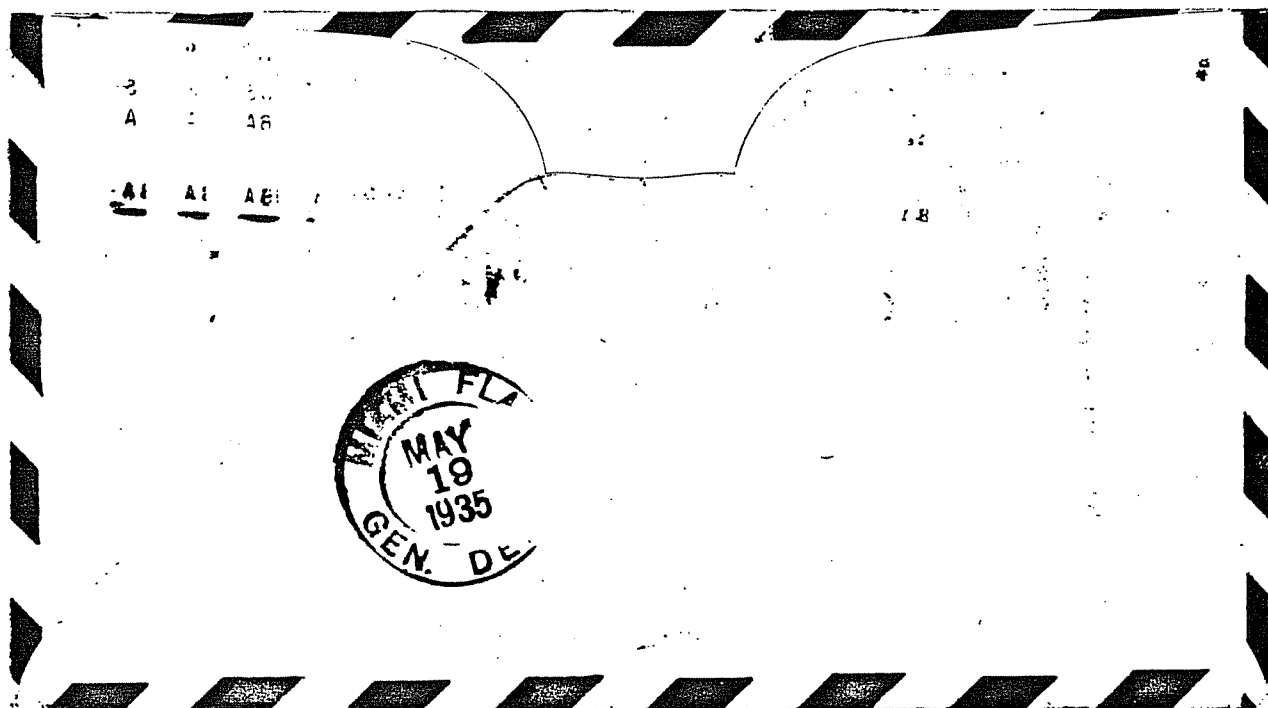


Another Miami dispatch with hand cancel and more frequently seen 5:30 PM time.

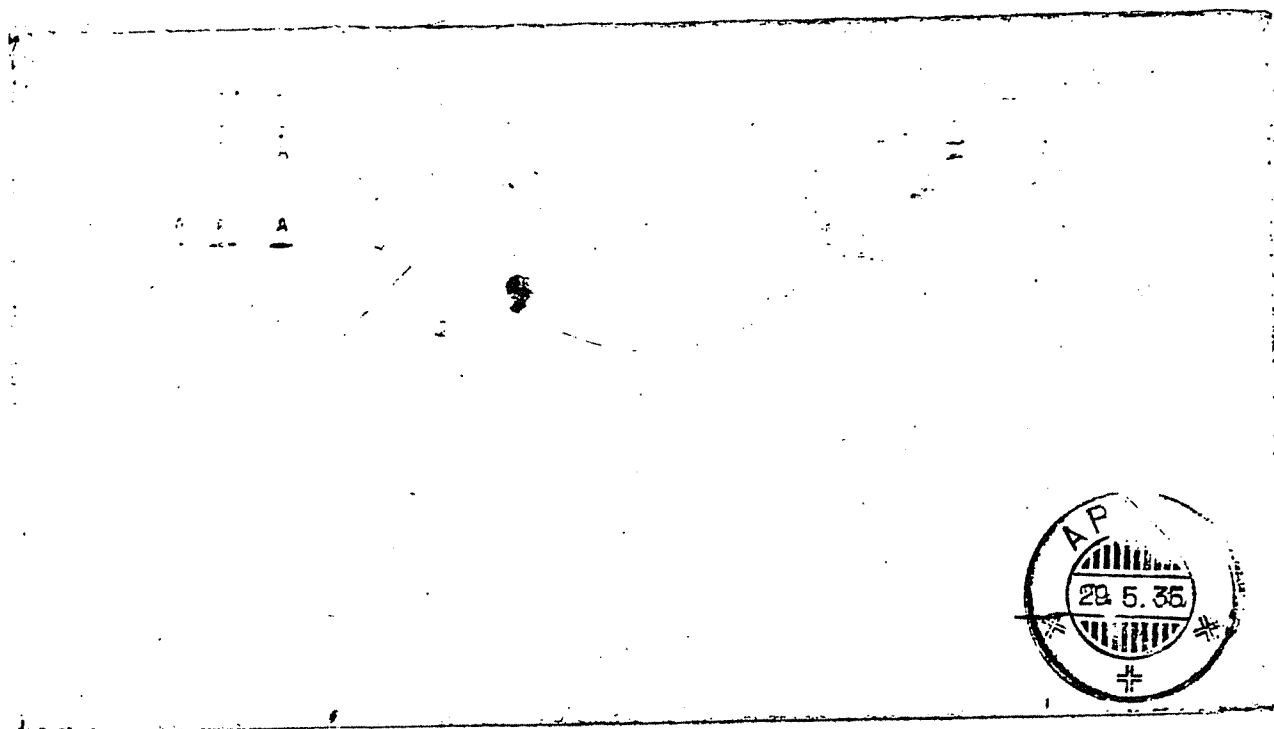
International Flight from Havana to Miami



Another Bustamante cover is franked with a block of four imperforated stamps.

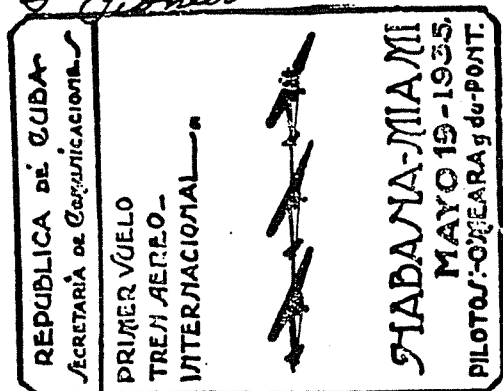
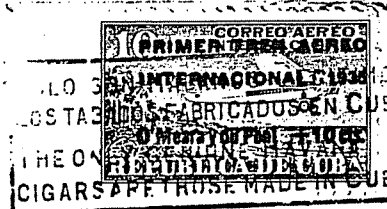


Miami forwarded covers without backstamps, but this received a Miami backstamp.



No other covers were addressed and forwarded to Aruba, according to P.O. count.

Jack O'Meara
E Paul du Pont
Agustin Parla
Pioneer Cuban Aviator

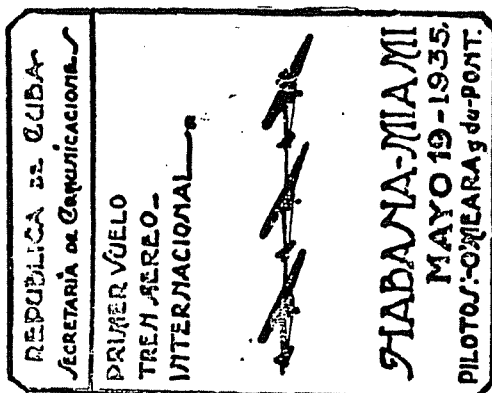
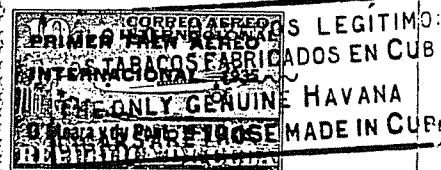
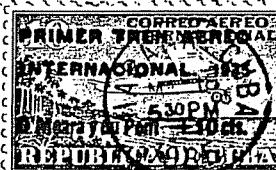


Major Augustus Post
Pres. American Soaring Ass. Inc.
625 Park Ave.
New York City
U.S.A.

One of 373 covers to New York, this is signed by glider pilots and Augustin Parla, first to fly Key West to Cuba, and in whose honor flight was made. He flew as copilot of tow plane.

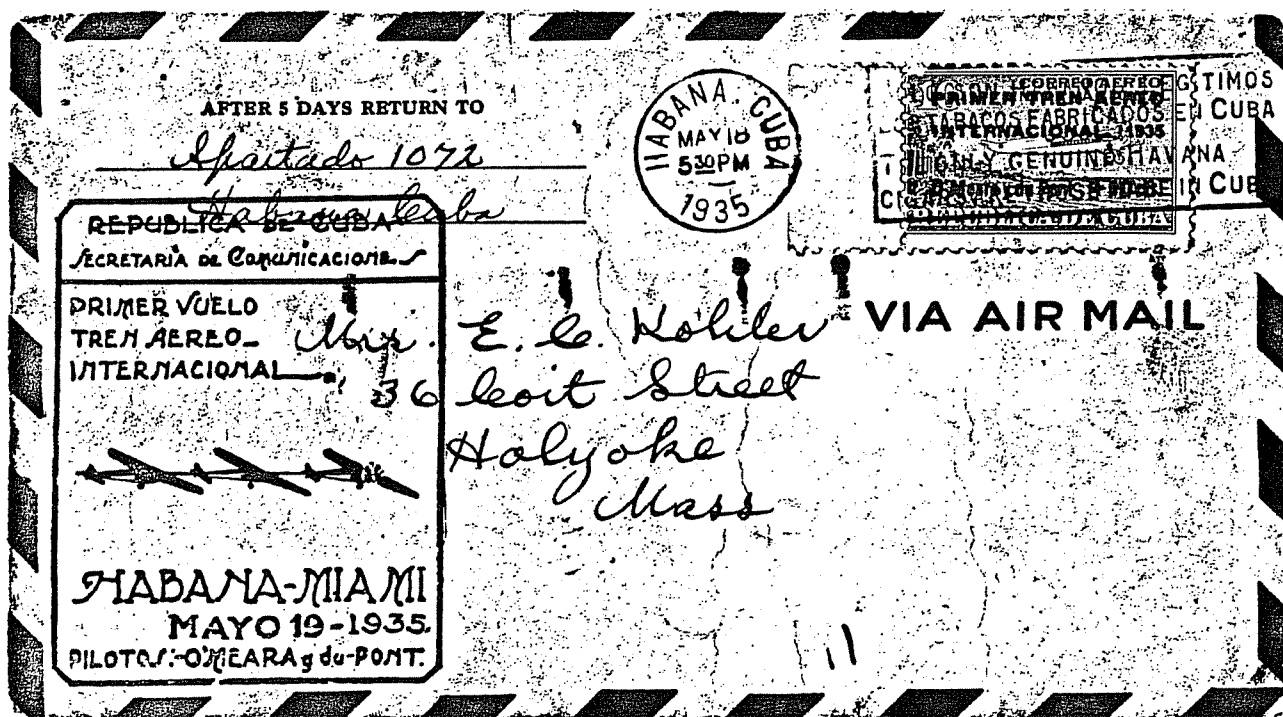
International Flight from Havana to Miami

H. L. LEWIS
PRESIDENTE ZAYAS (ANTES O'REILLY) 2
TELEFONO A-2203
HABANA, CUBA



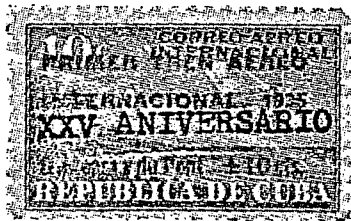
Mrs. W. B. Pryor,
1454 Rhode Island Ave.,
Washington, D. C.

One of 38 Washington, D.C. covers, and both perforated and imperforated stamps.



Only 5 of these Tren Aereo covers were sent to all Massachusetts destinations.

International Flight from Havana to Miami



Flight will long be remembered in Cuba, as 25th anniversary was honored by this.

CUBA'S OFFICIAL POSTAL ROCKET

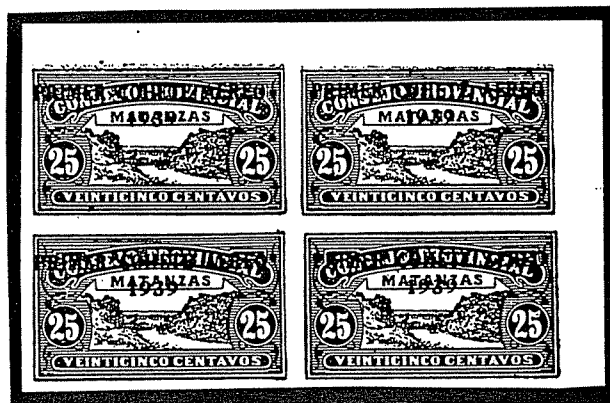


Cuba's postal rocket program stands out ahead of all of the other early rocket programs of the world because it was the only one to be endorsed and backed by a national postal system. It was established to examine the feasibility of a rocket system that could send postal rockets from Havana to any other regional post office in Cuba.

This collection focuses on experiments carried out in early October, 1939 when the characteristics and performance of the pictured rocket were studied during three pre-test launches to specify the best configuration for an official test vehicle. The president of the rocket commission, Dr. Tomas Terry, is pictured holding the C-1 rocket. Business aspects of the project were a responsibility of Cesar Carvallo of the Cuban postal system. Technical matters were left to pyrotechnics expert, A. V. Funes. American representation in this project was provided by a well known rocket philatelist, Fred W. Kessler and his wife.

Covers actually flown on the three pre-test launches are the key items in this exhibit, because only a small number flew on each: respectively 60, 21, and 15 or 16. For the official launch, 3000 covers and cards were prepared. Next, a sample of only 200 was launched and then mixed back with the others to prevent their identification. Various stamps, varieties of stamps, cachets, souvenir sheets and cancellations were used both privately and officially by the postal service. They appear on covers and cards for the rocket launches and its many anniversaries as well as on regular mail.

First Pre-Test Launch



First test planned as a flight between provinces of Matanzas and Havana. 1903 Matanzas tax stamp was overprinted, used as franking on specially made covers. Launch actually made on army's Miramar firing range, however, rocket exploded.

C.F.C. PRIMER COHETE POSTAL AEREO

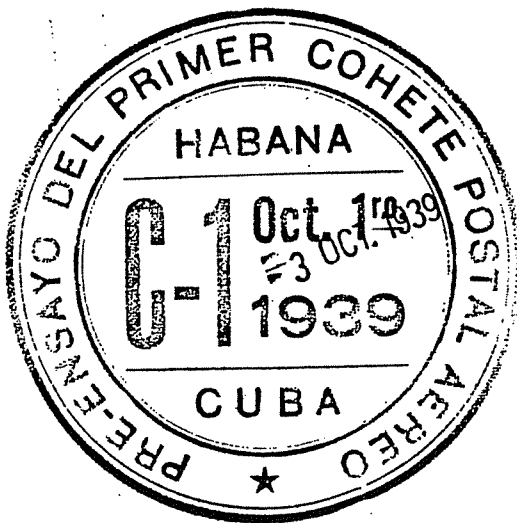


DR. TOMAS A. TERRY. PRESIDENTE DE LA
COMISION PRO-PRIMER COHETE POSTAL.
APARTADO 1222
HABANA

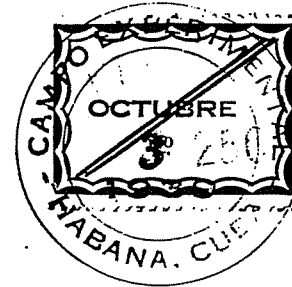
70 of these covers loaded but 10 damaged and only 60 remain. All addressed to Dr. Terry and had a cachet saying, pre-test of the first aerial postal rocket.

Second Pre-Test Launch

Instability of first test explosion was corrected by arranging 6 rocket motors around middle of rocket. Resulted in a successful second flight of 500 meters.



2do Pre-Ensayo
Oct. 3-1939.



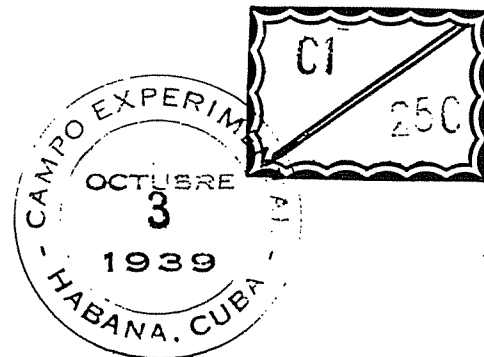
Dr. Tomas A. Terry

Habana.

For this flight, special stamps were made from gummed labels hand stamped with C1, the rocket designation, and a price, 25C. Two colors of labels were used.



2d pre Ensayo
Oct. 3-1939.



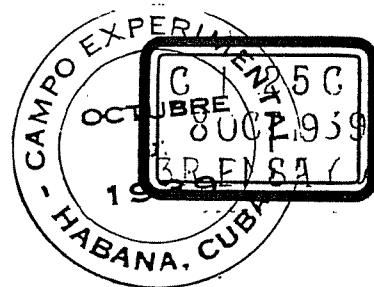
Dr. Tomas A. Terry

Habana.

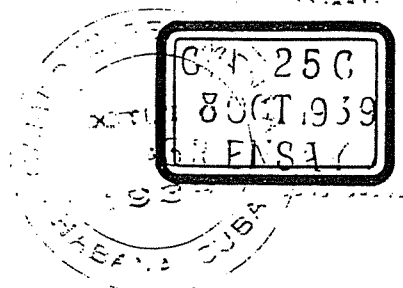
The original cachet was used again with the date over stamped for the October 3 flight date. A large 3 obliterated original day, 1ro, better than date stamp.

Third Pre-Test Launch

Another successful launch occurred this flight. However, at altitude, strong contrary winds caught rocket and blew it over open sea, where it chuted down.

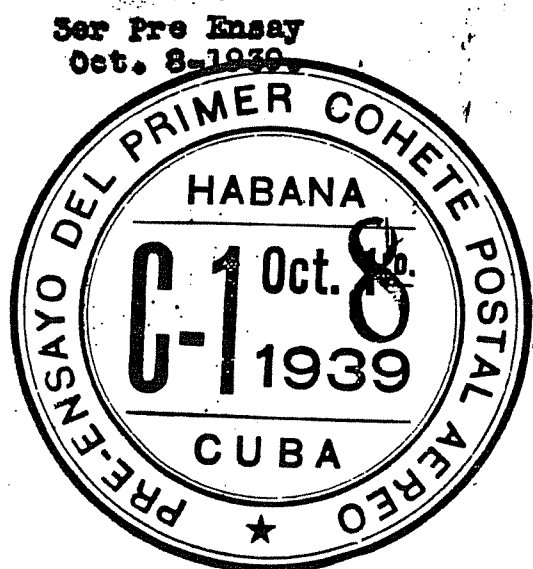


Different special stamps were used for this flight. Basic labels have smooth borders with rounded corners and three lines of print. Again two colors used.



Most of these covers were unaddressed. This one backstamped Havana on Oct. 8.

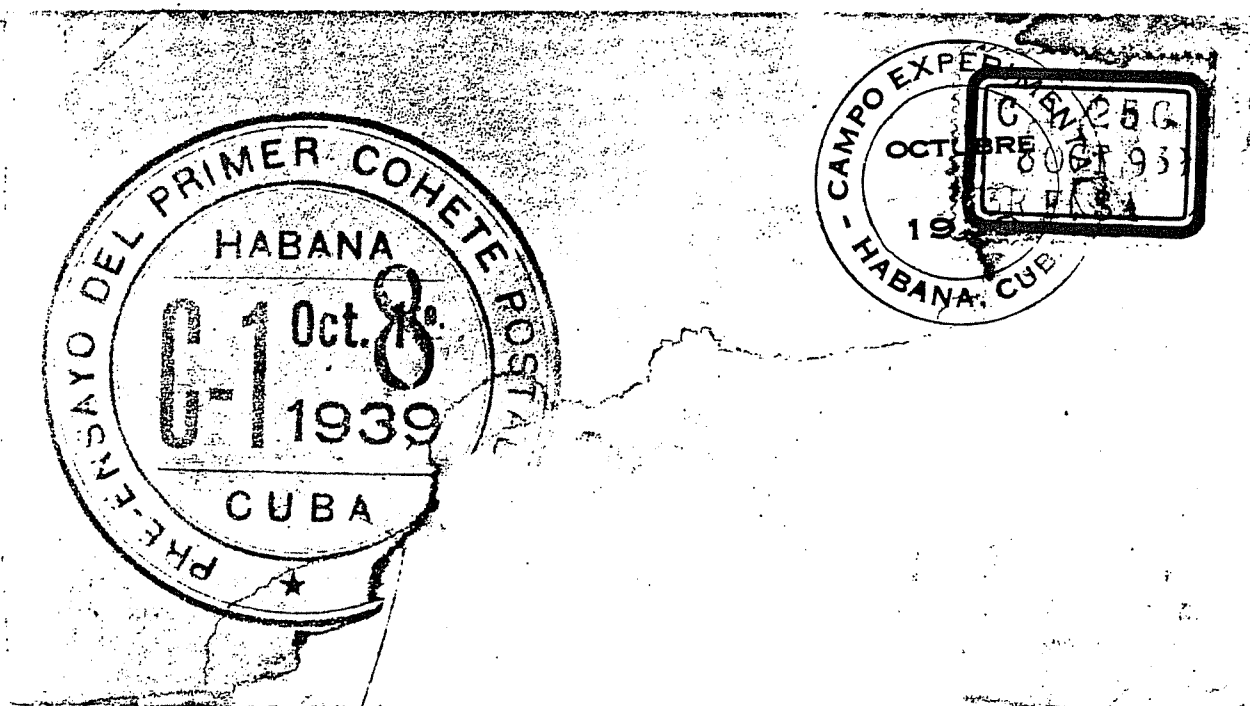
Third Pre-Test Launch



Dr. Tomas A. Terry

Habana.

Third trial cover has hybrid stamp with same label as second trial, but with a handstamped three lines of print, matching third trial, and no diagonal lines.

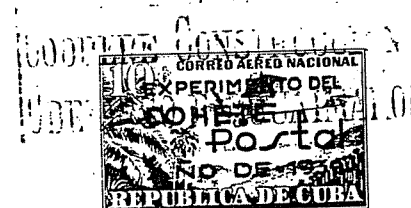
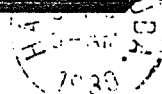


Reports differ on whether 15 or 16 covers were carried. This water damaged cover may be the reason for the difference. Others do not show any damage.



The first officially issued rocket stamp was printed by the Cuban Post Office, using an overprint, "Experiment of the - - Postal - - Rocket - - Year of 1939" added to 200,000 especially printed 10 centavo green national air mail stamps.

C. F. C. PRIMER COHETE POSTAL AEREO



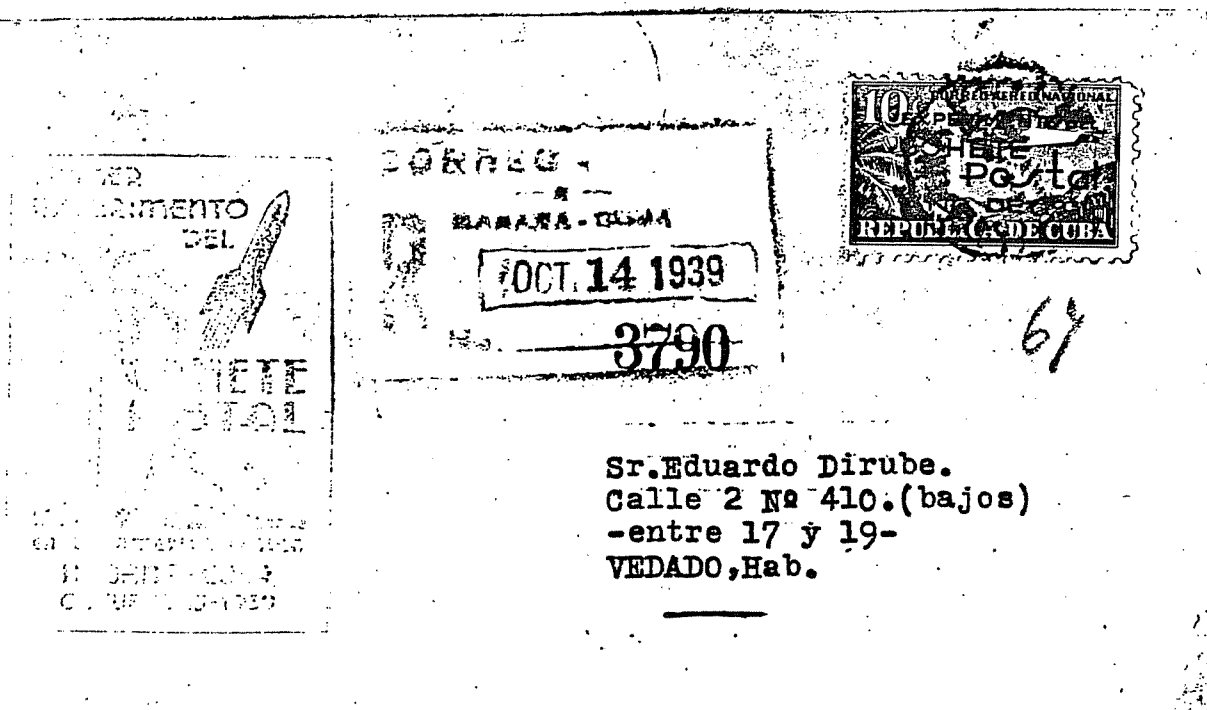
DR. TOMAS A. TERRY, PRESIDENTE DE LA
COMISION PRO-PRIMER COHETE POSTAL.
APARTADO 1222
HABANA

Although 3000 cards and covers were prepared for the flight, only 200 of them, were placed in a packet to be carried. Those 200 are not distinguishable from the others, so any one may have been carried. Special cachet was used on most.

The launch had a renewal of the stability problem as the rocket nosedived into the ground on a twisting path that covered only 15 meters. Although skeptics considered this a disaster, much technology had been learned from experiments.



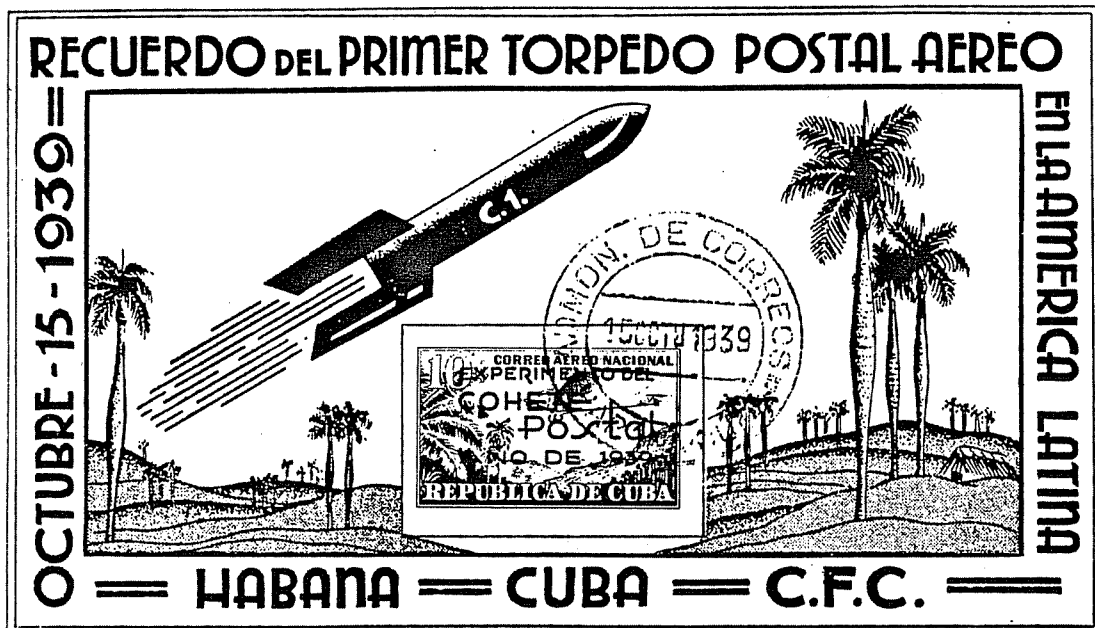
Of the total posting, there were also 50 registered covers and 500 cards. All were given cachets designed by Alicia Kessler, wife of U.S. rocket enthusiast.



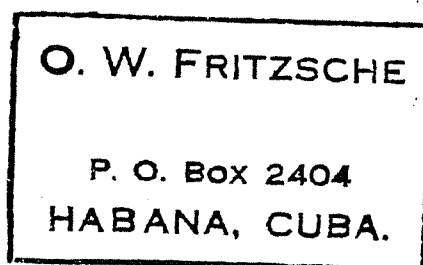
Another registered cover has handstamps in red.

Official Test Launch

Special commemorative cards designed by Mrs. Kessler were prepared for test.

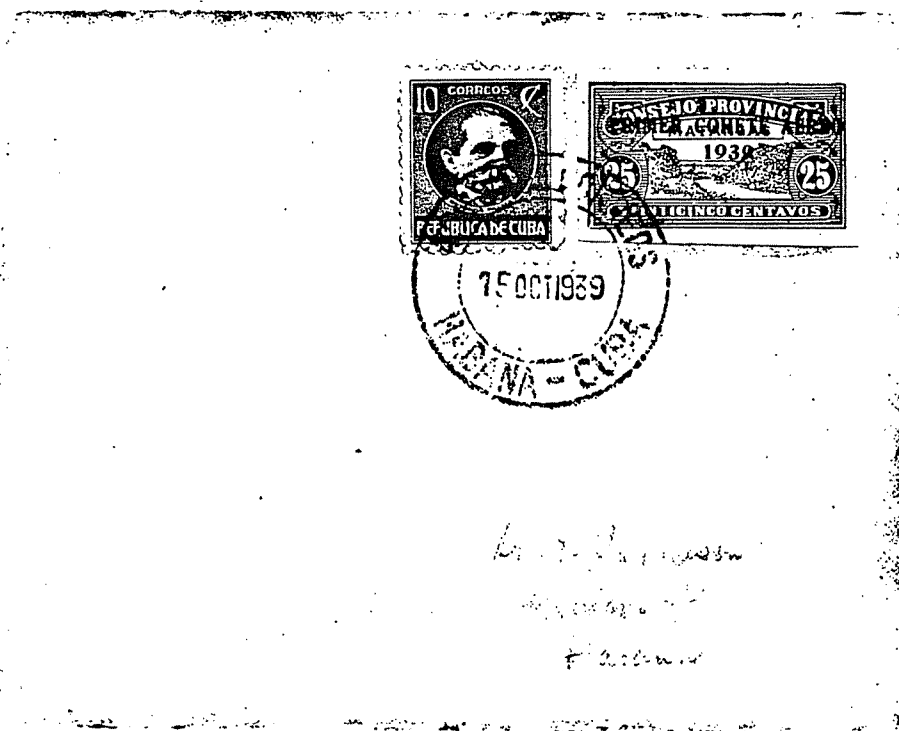


Handstamp instead of machine was used for the official cancellation on cards.

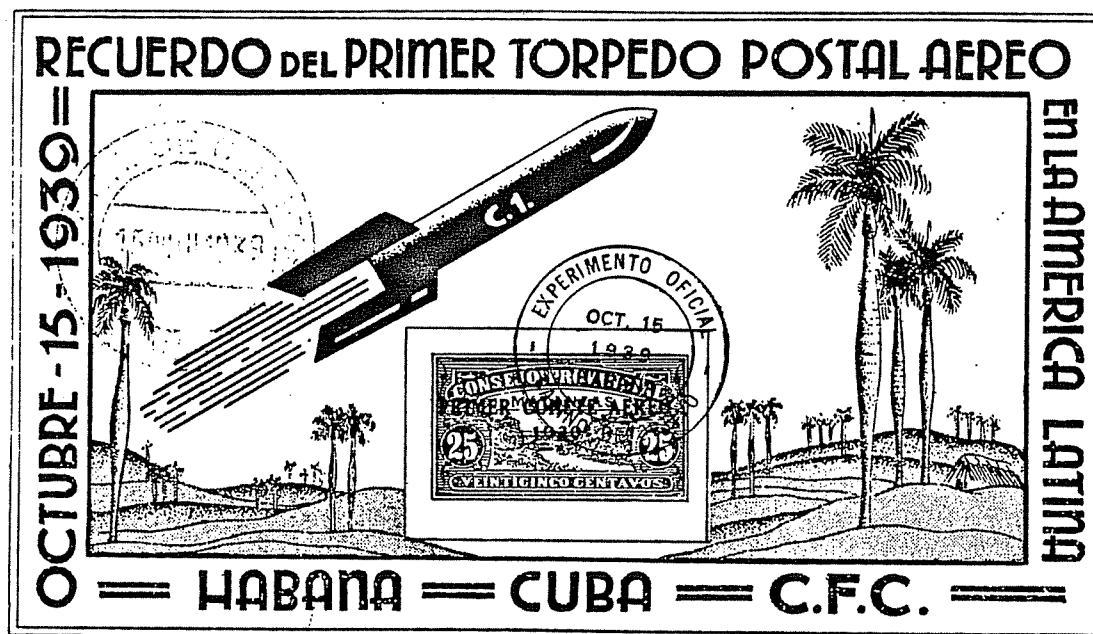


Official cachet was applied to the reverse of the cards for better appearance.

Although not official, left over Matanzas overprints were brought out once more for official and unofficial covers.



This one was used in combination with a regular stamp for meeting air mail rate, even though transmitted to Havana.



Another was used on this card which was cancelled unofficially with a "CASINO DEPORTIVO" handstamp. An official cancellation was also applied to the front and the official cachet, blue rather than black, applied to the reverse side.

PRIMER COHETE POSTAL
C - 1.

PREMIER FUSEE POSTALE



FIRST MAIL ROCKET

VALOR 20 C.

A souvenir sheet, based on Mrs. Kessler's cachet and selling for 20 centavos, was printed and sold by the rocket commission for more money to aid the project.

CORREO AEREO  VIA AIR MAIL

VIA AIRMAIL



The Star Drilling Machine Co.,

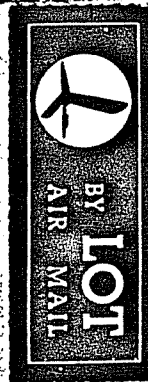
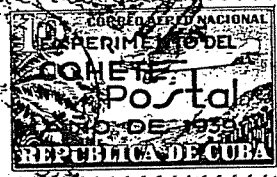
Akron, Ohio,

U. S. A.

Att: Mr. J. H. Nelson.

LATVIJA--VIA SCANDINAVIA--LATVIJA--VIA SCANDINAVIA--LATVIJA

BY AIR MAIL-CORREO AEREO-PAR AVION-FLYVEPOST-LUCHT-
POST--GAISA PASTS--BY AIR MAIL



Sr. Don Jakob A D L E R

R I G A--LATVIJA

Marstalu ielā 30, dz. 3.

LATVIJA.

--L A T V I J A--

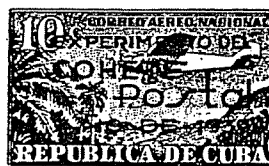
Some of the official stamps were later used on regular air mail letters.

First Anniversary of Test Launch

First anniversary of official flight was again time for covers.

OCTBRE 15 - 1939

CLUB FILATELICO DE LA
REPUBLICA DE CUBA

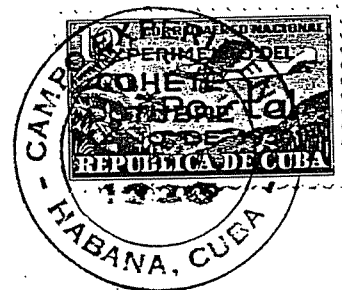


OCTBRE 15 - 1940

PRIMER ANIVERSARIO DEL
COHETE POSTAL AEREO

A special souvenir sheet picturing the official stamp was used on this cover and official cancellation applied at Havana P.O.

Rafael R. Garcia,
Apartado 129,
Habana, Cuba.



Ralph Brombach,
34 E. Willow Grove Ave.,
Chestnut Hill,
Phila., Pa., U. S. A.

Official stamp used on anniversary cover with two cachets, one preprinted and attached, the other a handstamp. Cancellation, Campo Experimental handstamp.

CLUB FILATELICO DE LA
REPUBLICA DE CUBA

OCTUBRE 15 DE 1939



OCTUBRE 15 DE 1940

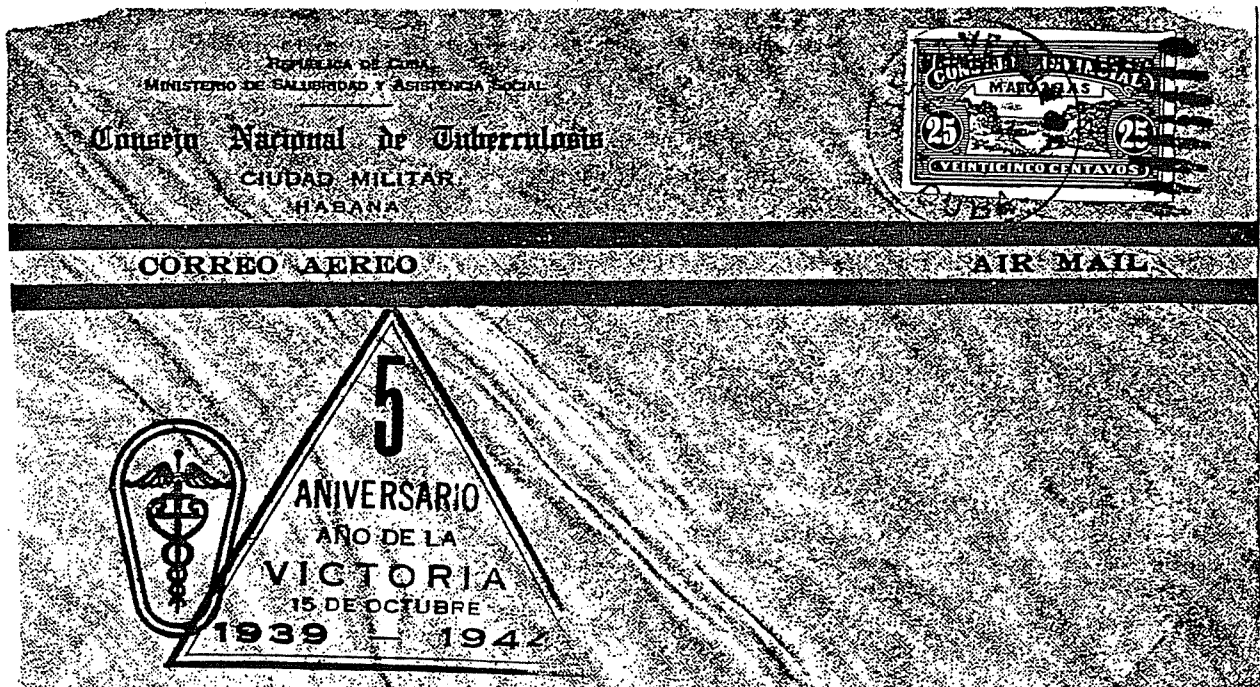
PRIMER ANIVERSARIO DEL
COHETE POSTAL AEREO

VALOR 20c.

Another similar souvenir sheet was printed and sold
for the first anniversary for the same 20 centavos.

Fifth Anniversary of Test Launch

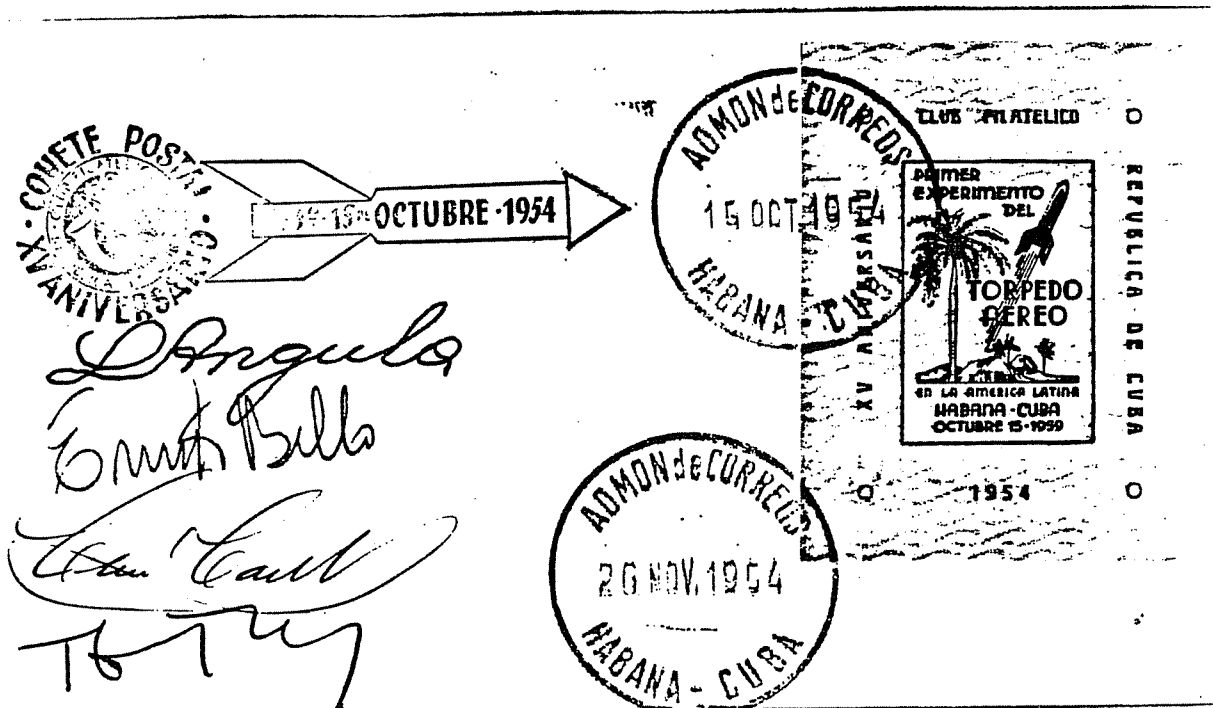
A Matanzas stamp was again used for the fifth anniversary, probably by Ernesto Bello, director for TB stamp programs and member of postal rocket commission.



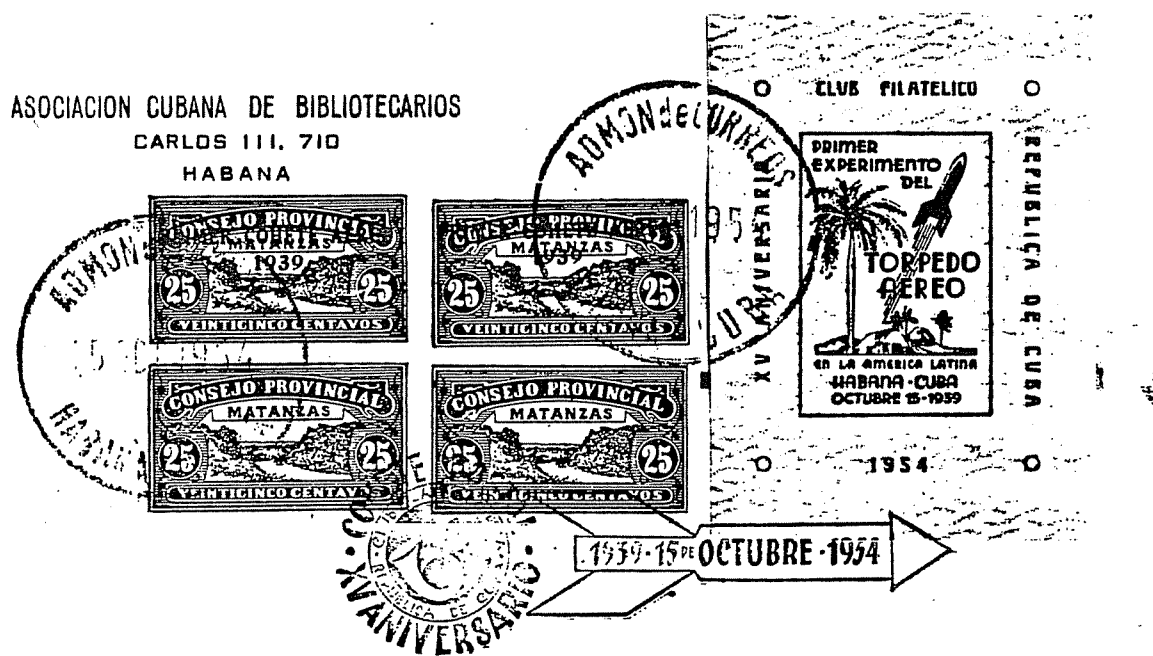
Medical and postal rocket cachets as well as Matanzas overprint, cancelled in Vieja Bermeja, Matanzas province, near Havana border site originally planned.

XV Anniversary of Test Launch

This was an occasion for a new souvenir sheet featuring the Kessler cachet and this special hand stamp rocket cachet, both provided by the "Club Filatelico."

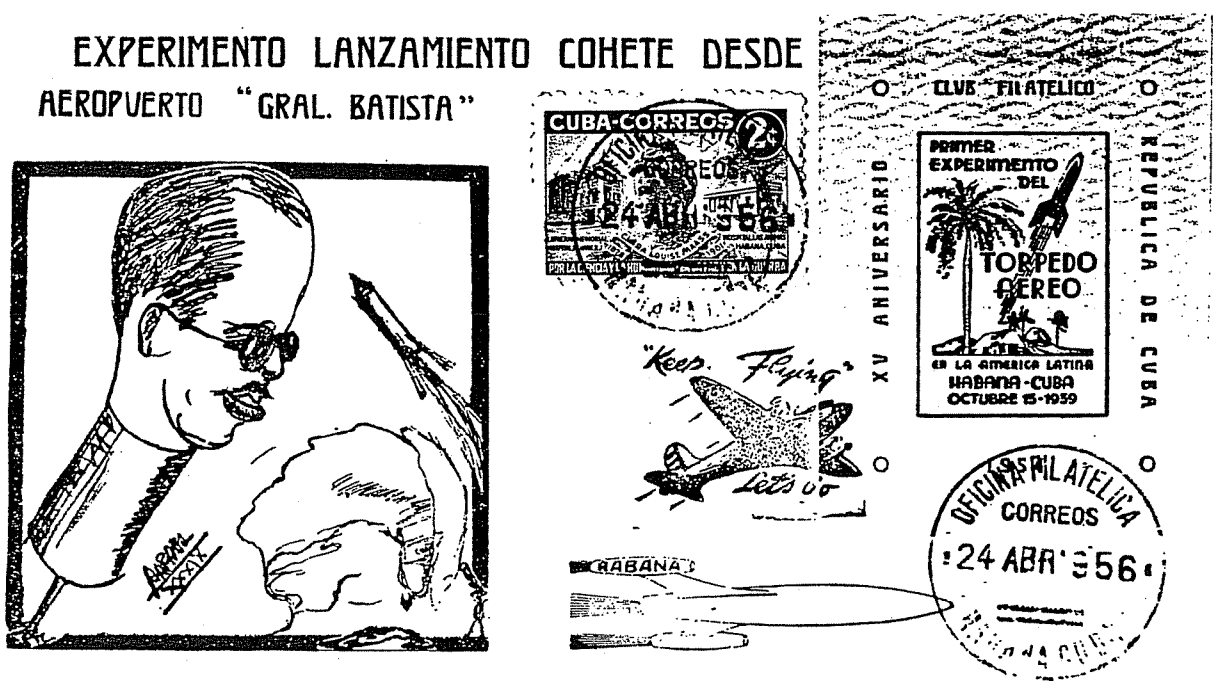


Postal service cancelled cover has signatures of Luis Angulo, president of the club; Ernesto Bello; Cesar Carvallo, chief of the postal service department of international service; and Tomas Terry, as president of the rocket commission.



Block of Matanzas stamps shows the dividing line in the overprinted sheets. The first four rows were overprinted, the last two not. This block has two of each.

The XV anniversary postal rocket cachet was used again on the occasion of the launching of a rocket from a jet airplane at Cuba's General Batista airport.



Franking was provided by a Clara Maass commemorative stamp on this cover, which also features the caricature of Dr. Tomas Terry and the postal rocket in 1939.