



Puerto Principe

1898-1899

Thanks to the dedication and exhaustive research realized by two of the greatest Cuban philatelic pioneers, Drs. Antonio Barreras and Buenaventura Cruz Planas, this study has been made possible and a deserved recognition to their memories is hereby acknowledged.



When on November 24, 1898, the American army occupied the city of Puerto Principe, actually named Camaguey and capital of the province of same name, a surcharge on the current Spanish stamps then in use was authorized by the Military Governor of the province, General L. H. Carpenter by petition of the Postmaster Mr. Lope Picio Loimax. These surcharged stamps were sold at the post offices of Puerto Principe, Nuevitas, Minus and Santa Cruz del Sur, together with the military stations of the American troops in the province, from December 19, 1898 up to January 20, 1899 when the American stamps surcharged Cuba were available.

This issue is known as "Puerto Principe" and the surcharging was done to horizontal strips of five stamps, so vertical pairs and blocks do not exist. Five types are used in each setting and five printings were made in a local printing shop; the first setting on December 19, 1898 and the fifth and last one on January 11, 1899. In each setting the five positions are perfectly identified by some printing defects and different characteristics of the types of letters and numbers used, all of which makes a very interesting study of this issue.

It is of great importance to take into consideration the chemical composition of the inks used in the surcharge, the pressure of the printing of the process of surcharging and the alignment or position of the word "Habilitado" with the numeral of the corresponding value and with the word "Cent or Cents", which is possible drawing perpendicular lines of verification.



Stamp cancelled the day in which the city was occupied by the American troops.