

History of the American Postal Service in Cuba

By GEORGE S. HILL.

Historical.

CUBA was discovered by Columbus on October 28, 1492. He called it Juana after Juan, son of Ferdinand and Isabella. After Ferdinand's death it was called Fernandia. Subsequently it became Santiago (Saint James) after the patron saint of Spain. Sant Iago and San Diego are all variations of the same name.

Still later Cuba was called Ave Maria. Finally it received its present name which is alleged to have been the one originally bestowed on it by the natives. It means "the place of gold". The first permanent settlement was made at Santiago de Cuba, on the southeastern coast, which was for a long time the capital of the colony. This was about 1511. San Cristobal de la Habana was founded in 1515 and before 1555 had twice been burnt to the ground by the French. In 1717 the first revolt against Spain broke out, followed by another in 1723. Havana was the scene of America's first adventure in Imperialism in 1762. A large number of Americans including Lawrence Washington and Israel Putnam accompanied Lord Albemarle's expedition to Cuba. Few of these ever returned home. Havana was captured but only held for six months. By the Treaty of Paris, England swapped Cuba for Florida.

Following the successful revolt of the Spanish colonies in South America at the beginning of the last century mobs of loyalists descended on Cuba from these places and made it their headquarters. The crown ordered that they be maintained at the expense of the islanders. This was the beginning of the real struggle for Cuban freedom. In the main the Cuban war for independence follows the classical model of the American Revolution. Like ours it was a struggle by the descendants of colonists from the home country for economic freedom from the motherland. From early times Spain imposed heavy restrictions on the islanders. All foreigners, and even Spaniards, not natives of Castile, were prohibited from trading with or settling in the island. Deprived of free markets the Cubans quickly took to smuggling; particularly with Jamaica after its conquest by England in 1655. By 1717 Spain had established a monopoly of the tobacco trade to the exclusion of the Cubans. The islanders then turned to shipbuilding in 1724. By 1747, 125 ships including ships-of-the-line were produced. But this also aroused the jealousy of Spain and the industry was destroyed. In 1829 the Black Eagle rebellion occurred, followed by a more serious one in 1844. At the end of this 700 islanders were executed, which so aroused the U. S. that President Polk offered Spain one hundred million dollars for the island. This fell through chiefly through the opposition of the North, which feared Cuba would be admitted as one or several slave states and thus upset the balance of power in Congress.

By this time the upper and middle classes in Cuba had become desperate. No longer a primitive country in the economic set up, they were being artificially held to that position by Spain. In 1848, Narciso Lopez, a former major-general in the Spanish army, although a native of Venezuela, headed another revolt. This was far more important than any that had preceded it. Although it was crushed, Lopez, with many of his followers reached New York, where the long campaign of propaganda to gain American aid was started. In 1851 he succeeded in leaving New Orleans with an expedition with W. S. Crittenden, a West Pointer from Kentucky as second in command. Lopez and Crittenden were captured and executed, which caused another wave of indignation to

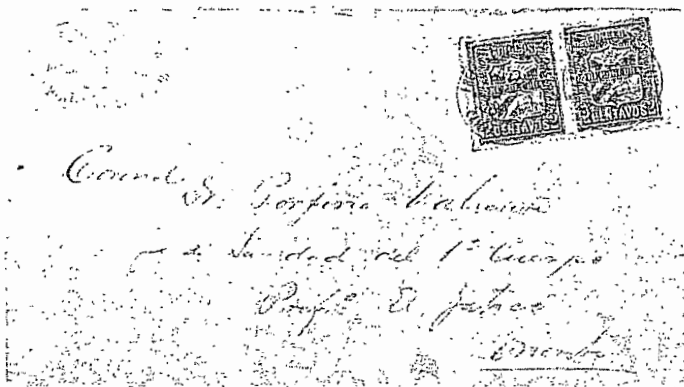
sweep the U. S. against Spain. In 1850 the American Steamer *Black Warrior* was fired on by a Spanish gunboat at Havana. Her cargo was confiscated and her master being unable to get any redress, hauled down his colors and left the vessel as a Spanish prize. After five years three hundred thousand dollars were paid to the owners but the incident didn't help the cause of Spain in the U. S.

In 1854 a conference was held at Ostend, Belgium by the United States ministers to London, Paris and Madrid, and resulted in the "Ostend Manifesto". This stated that the U. S. "ought if possible to purchase Cuba with as little delay as possible." Also, "The Union can never enjoy . . . securities as long as Cuba is not embraced within its boundaries." A hundred millions was again offered for the island to be used to build up a system of railroads for continental Spain. This also fell through.

By 1868 Spain was exacting twenty-six millions annually from Cuba, none of which was being used to the island's advantage. Even the rates of postage were outrageous. When a native Cuban received a letter at his door he was obliged to pay 37½¢ additional postage. In this year Queen Isabella was dethroned and forced to flee from Spain. Cuba thought the new government would better things for them. But they were mistaken. In October of the same year, a declaration of Cuban Independence was issued at Manzanillo by Carlos Manuel de Cespedes. This began the "Ten Years War". So serious was this revolt that the Cubans were accorded belligerent rights, which is just a shade under de facto recognition, by Bolivia, Chili, Colombia, Guatemala, Mexico and Peru. With varying fortunes the war dragged on until 1878 when, both sides being worn out, a compromise was effected. In October 1873 the American Filibustering Steamer *Virginius* was captured by a Spanish man-of-war and taken into Santiago. Here a third of her passengers and crew were executed. This almost resulted in war with the U. S.

In 1894 the last revolt against Spain began. This time the Cubans were led by able soldiers, most of whom had learned their trade in the "Ten Years War": Maximo Gomez, the Maceo brothers, Aranguren, Marti and Garcia. The Cubans soon possessed the province of Santioga de Cuba with the exception of a few fortresses held by Spain. To this land, at the eastern end of the island, was given the name "Cuba Libre". When the U. S. intervened Spain possessed in its entirety only the province of Pinar del Rio in the extreme western part of the island. The cities were all heavily garrisoned by the Spaniards and held throughout the island.

The sinking of the *Maine* and America's entry into the conflict is too well known to need repetition here. There was a great deal of real sympathy for Cuba among the people of the Atlantic seaboard, alongside which we must range other motives not so commendable. Such as the desire of Imperialists for control of the Caribbean down to more questionable interests among other people. The war was marked by an unusual period of amenity on the part of Great Britain.



"Rebel" Letter from "Cuba Libre."

The Military Postal Service.

Charles Emory Smith, Postmaster General, in Order 161 of April 26, 1898 directed that: "Pending continuance of hostilities between the United States and Spain no letter, package or other mail matter addressed to Spain or any post office, port or other place within the jurisdiction of Spain or any colony or dependency shall be dispatched from the U. S." but must be returned to the sender. In accordance with section 4021 of the Revised Statutes of the U. S. he also issued order No. 171 on May 3, 1898 directing that a mail agency be established either at Havana or Matanzas "or at such ports in Cuba at which U. S. mail steamers may be directed to touch."

Order No. 219 of June 7, 1898 fixed domestic rates of postage for mails from and to the military, naval and marine forces in Cuba and Porto Rico. Civilian mails could neither be sent to nor dispatched from the islands.

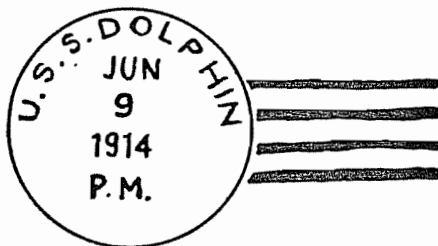
The Postmaster General then appointed Postal Agent Eben Brewer to take charge of all postal establishments in Cuba for the American armed forces. Brewer left for Tampa to arrange with the army and navy authorities for transportation to Cuba with the 5th Army Corps of Maj. Gen. W. R. Shafter. He left Port Tampa, Fla. for Cuba on June 14th, 1898 on the Transport *Olivette*. Arriving at Daiquiri he opened "U. S. Military Post Office No. 1" on June 23, 1898 in that town. Sergeant Claude I. Dawson of the 1st D. C. V. I. was detailed by the War Department to assist Brewer as clerk and stenographer. On June 9th Perry S. Heath, 1st Asst. Postmaster General, appointed Louis Kempner, an experienced money order and registry clerk of the New York City post office, to be Assistant Postal Agent for Cuba. Carrying a supply of stamps, postal stationery, money order blanks and registration equipment, Kempner left for Tampa, where he arrived two hours after the departure of Brewer. Being told that the next expeditionary steamer would not sail for ten days or two weeks he learned from Special Agent Gaitree of the P. M. G.'s office, who was on duty in Tampa, that the American Red Cross Steamer *State of Texas* was at Port Tampa awaiting only the arrival of Clara Barton from Washington to depart for Cuba with relief for the Cuban *reconcentrados*. Miss Barton arrived on June 15th and permitted Kempner to take passage on the *State of Texas* for Cuba. They arrived at Guantanamo Bay on June 25th, where Kempner was taken aboard the Tug *E. E. Simpson* and in a few hours landed at Daiquiri where he found tropical heat, humidity, mosquitoes and "yellow jack". He also found that Brewer had established the post office in one of a row of cottages used by the Spanish officers in command of the Daiquiri garrison before the arrival of the Americans. From Brewer he learned that the cottage had been occupied up until June 22nd by its former occupants; but upon the arrival of the expedition's transports the Spanish forces had taken to the "tall timbers", to avoid the bombardment that would, and did follow the arrival of the escorting naval vessels. Troops were still landing from the transports on the 25th. The Army began its march to Santiago soon afterwards, leaving behind only some heavy artillery, the quartermaster's department and the omnipresent military police.

On Kempner's arrival a discussion took place regarding the desirability of moving the post office nearer the firing line as against making Daiquiri the regular base post office. A visit to General Shafter, who had his headquarters on board the S. S. *Seguranca*, by Brewer gave no satisfaction. Upon his return they decided to stay at Daiquiri as the impression prevailed that Santiago would be taken in a day or two and they could then move the base post office to that city and begin operations on a metropolitan scale. "Alas, for the best laid plans of mice and men", it was to be a month before Kempner entered Santiago and Brewer was destined never to see it. Accordingly, Kempner unpacked his supplies and the sale of postage stamps and money orders commenced on this day—June 25th, 1898. The intelligence that a post office had been opened being communicated to the regiments at the front, the sale of stamps and money

— ?
Should
be June
24

orders immediately began to "flourish like the green bay tree". The total cash value was not great but the number of individual transactions were numerous. Most of the soldiers had provided themselves with postage stamps before leaving Tampa, apparently in accordance with instructions from the high command; but the tropical heat and moisture had wrecked havoc with them. They had all stuck together. The military, being wiser if not sadder, began to buy stamped envelopes. But Kempner instructed them to use caution in purchasing even these as they were also liable to spoilage, and therefore only to buy small quantities.

Brewer then arranged through Admiral Sampson that all naval vessels going north should call at Daiquiri and take on the mails for the States. The first northbound mail was dispatched on the U. S. S. *Dolphin* on June 26, 1898. This fine old vessel, a dispatch boat which formed part of the original White Squadron had left us some philatelic mementoes in the form of postmarks after the establishment of the Naval postal service in 1908.



Postmark of U. S. S. Dolphin.

The first mails from the States arrived at Daiquiri on June 29th and consisted of 298 pouches and sacks. Impressing part of the "banjo squad" that was unloading the transports, this load was transferred to the post office. It was a mountain of matter for a staff consisting of one experienced man, a postal agent who though no doubt highly versed in the theory of managing the postal service was probably not very skilled at actually handling it, and an amateur assistant. Even in that early day of the age of advertising it was already apparent that publicity was "hot stuff". More of the load of mail was addressed to Lt. Col. Theodore Roosevelt's "Rough Riders" (1st U. S. V. C.) than to any other regiment. These with the 71st N. Y. V. I. and 2nd Mass. V. I. accounted for fully half of the dispatch.

Postal Agent Brewer set his staff of two to work sorting the mail and called on the major in charge of the quartermaster's department at Daiquiri to arrange for transportation of this mail to the front. After listening to Brewer's request the major immediately became very "military" as the army expression has it. He stated that the transportation facilities of his department were for the exclusive use of the combatant forces and he had no time to bother with such civilian foibles as letters, post cards and advertising circulars. After Brewer's departure he no doubt ordered all spare army wagons and mules to load up with double orders of great coats, foot warmers and hot water bottles after the universal tradition of all services of supply. Disappointed but not dejected and doubtless consigning all dog robbing brass hats to other spheres Brewer found a patriotic horse trader who for the small sum of \$110 sold him a horse probably worth \$10. He also hired a Cuban who owned a pony to help him maintain the tradition of Herodotus. Then back to the office where the sorting of the mail was finally finished. A quantity sufficient to load the horse and pony was selected. Then an altercation broke out between Brewer and Kempner. Kempner, with his experience in city delivery systems, maintained that this was no way to deliver the mail. He realized more than Brewer the enormity of the task that faced them. But Brewer was adamant. He said: "This mail is needed at the front. It consists of official documents from Washington, besides family letters

that will be appreciated. The Post Office Department must not be charged with failure to deliver mail matter properly addressed." On the morning of June 30th he started out, accompanied by the Cuban. Through 18 miles of bog, morass and quagmire that passed for roads in Cuba, their way led to the firing line. Heat, humidity and mosquitoes contributed their mite. After delivering the mails Brewer helped to carry the dead and wounded off the field. At the hospitals he assisted the surgeons at their gory labors. He returned to Daiquiri on July 4th and Kempner states that he was not the same man after his return. As if he could be after four days on the firing line. Brewer found that their amateur assistant Sgt. Dawson had gone to the hospital with a tropical fever from which he subsequently recovered enough to stand the return journey to his home in Washington, D. C.

During Brewer's absence Kempner had succeeded in "outranking" the major commanding the S. O. S. through the wire pulling of a friendly staff captain, and had obtained an army wagon to transport the mail. Two army clerks acquainted with the location of the various regiments at the front were assigned by the same obliging staff captain. They were to accompany the wagon to the front to see that the mails were properly distributed. The capacity of the vehicle was only 26 sacks but it was loaded so that each detachment received part of its mail. On the battle line the various regiments were getting impatient for their letters and regimental mail orderlies began to arrive with written orders for this and that regiment's mail and 130 sacks were soon on their way.

On July 6th the office was removed to Siboney. The remainder of the first mail together with some 200 additional bags received from a transport on that day were brought here. This matter was "worked" and on the night of July 8th all mail was called for by regimental runners and nothing remained but "nixies" returned from the lines. One of the mosquitoes that had bitten Brewer on his expedition to the front sent him to the hospital on July 9th. Then Kempner faced the encouraging situation of having responsibility for all the American postal service in Cuba with no assistance. On the 10th 120 sacks were received from the States with the welcome reinforcement of four experienced clerks from the Pittsburgh, Boston, New York and Brooklyn offices respectively. During the next two days all mail on hand was "worked" and placed in condition to be dispatched to the front. No sooner was this done than a detail of soldiers under Capt. Graves arrived with orders signed by the town major (no relation to the S. O. S. major) to burn the post office building and all its contents, on account of infection. Panic stricken, Kempner succeeded in persuading Graves to delay the execution of his order for a short time; and hurried to headquarters, where he was lucky enough to find the chief surgeon of the Army as well as the town major. After some argument he succeeded in convincing them that the mail should not be destroyed. They allowed him to have the incendiary detail remove the mail to tents; but all clothes and personal belongings of Kempner and his staff were consigned to the flames. A few days later a rumor went the rounds among the troops and newspaper correspondents about the town that the mails had been burned by the military authorities. This was flashed back home and given wide newspaper publicity and resulted in a minor scandle. As is usual, the truth never quite overtook the rumor.

To add to the troubles of Military Station No. 1 yellow fever spread rapidly in the town and naval vessels ceased to call at the port. The transports anchored so far off shore that the postal staff could not reach them. For one school of the period held that the fever was borne as a poisonous miasma wafted on the land breeze. At a conference between Kempner, the chief surgeon, the town major and the local doctor, a formula was cooked up with which to fumigate the mail bags. A surgeon was detailed to supervise the disinfecting. From July 10th to 20th while the epidemic was at its height no mail was received or dispatched. On the 20th Kempner left for Santiago to arrange for establishment of their office there. On the 23rd, Clerk Gallupe, whom he had left in

charge of the Siboney office loaded the accumulated mail on the S. S. *Concha* for the States.

In the meantime Postal Agent Eben Brewer died from the effects of his first foray to the firing line. A gallant gentleman who died, not only in line of duty; but as a result of performing more than his duty called for. He could quite honorably have stayed at his base and sent a subordinate to the firing line. Arrived at the firing line and his self assumed duty to the post performed he aided the stretcher bearers and surgeons; and doubtless weakened himself by his exertions and loss of sleep, so that he had no resistance to survive the fever that struck him down.

Postmarks at Daiquiri and Siboney.



Type 1.

"Général utility" postmark type 1 was probably used before removal of Mil. Sta. No. 1 to Santiago, since it has no town indication. Being dateless it cannot be absolutely fixed.

Santiago.

The investment of Santiago was begun by the Cubans under Garcia and the U. S. Navy before the arrival of the Army. Shafter's troops commenced their part with the engagement at Las Guasimas. On July 1-2 El Caney and San Juan were captured. On July 3rd the surrender of the city was demanded. A formal armistice existed from July 3rd to noon of July 10th, which was later extended to 4 P. M. Hostilities re-commenced at 5 P. M. On July 14th the actual surrender took place. The formal surrender took place on July 17, 1898. By the terms of the capitulation all Santiago province east of a line extending through Aserrados, Dos Palmas, Cantoabajo, Escondida, Tanamo and Aguilera was surrendered. According to General Garcia the line was through Aserrados, Palma Soriano and Sagua de Tanamo.

Following Brewer's death Assistant Postal Agent Kempner was promoted to full Postal Agent by the Postmaster General and assumed charge of the Cuban service. On July 21st he presented his credentials to Generals Shafter and Wood at Santiago and was formally placed in charge of the post office there. At an interview between the Generals, Spanish Civil Governor Ros, the Spanish Director of Posts and Telegraphs for Santiago, de Latores and Kempner it was arranged that de Latores and his 14 clerks remain at their posts and co-operate with Kempner. Taking charge, Kempner found that the remuneration of the Spanish staff would amount to the noble sum of \$10,860 annually for 14 clerks and a full "Administrador des Correos y Telegraphos". The sum seems very reasonable today. But it didn't seem so to Kempner. He had another interview with General Shafter and explained that most of the mails would be for the Fifth Army Corps, and since the knowledge of English possessed by the Spanish staff was negligible, he could not afford to take advantage of the bargain in marked down post office staffs. Shafter authorized him to organize the service as he thought best and promised to back up his actions. Kempner returned to the office and "fired" the director and ten of his clerks.

He retained three clerks at \$30 each per month. Dr. Domingo Ferrer, an American citizen who spoke both English and Spanish and was acquainted with all the local business people, was engaged as general assistant at \$75 per month.

Kempner found the Santiago Post Office in a highly unsanitary condition with a court yard in the center of the building being used by the horses of the patrons. The building was cleaned up and the horses were ordered to find another equine hotel. At the outbreak of hostilities the contents of the American consulate had been placed in the custody of the British consul, from whom Kempner now received them. The safe and American flag were useful acquisitions. The Spanish coat of arms was removed from the front of the building and sent to the Postmaster General by registered mail and is no doubt today some place in Washington, D. C. It was replaced by the American flag.

The Post Office was soon in good working order and although a mail usually consisted of not less than 150 bags, frequently more, it was always ready for delivery in 3 hours. As the bags were unloaded the "empties" were stacked in piles about the floor and not sent back to the States for fear of spreading contagion. This led to complaints filtering back home that the mail was not efficiently handled as the piles were mistaken for filled bags by patrons. On August 4th Kempner had a staff of 17 including army clerks.

Mails arrived from the States irregularly. On July 25, 1898 the Asst. Secretary of War notified the P. O. D. that Key West had been abandoned as a base of supply for Santiago and that all transports would thereafter sail from Fernandia, Charleston, Newport News and New York. Early in August it was decided to send the Fifth Army Corps to Montauk Point, N. Y. to escape the fever. This caused New York to become the principal dispatching port for Cuba. As Tampa remained the *postal* dispatching office for Santiago this naturally resulted in mail piling up at Tampa for lack of transportation facilities. Mail *for* Porto Rico *from* Santiago had to go via New York as there was no direct dispatch. On August 22 Kempner was informed by the Supt. of R. M. S. that the War Dept. had agreed to send a steamer from New York every Wednesday over the route San Juan, P. R., Ponco, P. R. to Santiago. Between August 15th and September 4th mail accumulated at Tampa and it was not received in Cuba until the *Seneca* arrived on the 16th. Since most of the Fifty Army Corps had gone back to the States this consisted of only 132 pouches. The new routing of mail via Porto Rico resulted in another 5 to 6 days delay. As the steamers seem to have returned from Santiago direct to the States there was still no dispatch *to* Porto Rico. Naval vessels brought mail direct to Santiago only twice between July 6th and October 20th.

Back in the States the Railway Mail Service had the principal responsibility for mails from and to Cuba. On August 8th Supt. Terrell, R. M. S., was instructed to fumigate all mails from Santiago not marked "fumigated." On August 22nd he was instructed that all mail *for* the armed forces in Cuba be sent to Washington, D. C. instead of Tampa for onward dispatch. On Sept. 21st he was instructed that all civilian mail *for* Cuba be sent via Port Tampa and Havana. Combatant mail to continue being dispatched via Washington, D. C.

Postmarks.

In the earliest days of American occupation of the city the old Spanish postmarks seem to have been used. Type I seems to have been used late in July, 1898. Type II appears on two covers used in August. Type III, of standard American design, seems to have come into use in September. September 8th being the earliest date noted. The "general utility" type IV was probably placed in use about the same time. Being dateless it cannot be accurately fixed.

Postal Stations.

The military postal stations in Cuba were established as branches or "stations" of the New York City Post Office for administrative purposes. The



I



II



III



IV

earlier ones were at first stations of Mil. Sta. No. 1 Santiago and hence "sub-stations" of New York. Between October 20th and November 1, 1898 Nos. 2 to 8 were raised to full "stations." Those subsequently established had full "station" status immediately. For registry business the offices were considered to be stations (or sub-stations) of the Tampa, Florida Post Office until September 19, 1898, when their registry business became subsidiary to the New York office, thus making it uniform with all other services.

Money Orders.

On June 13, 1898 the Department announced the opening of money order service for the military postal service in the U. S. and Cuba. The business was conducted through the New York Post Office as "head-office" for Cuba.

The lowest private rate for transferring funds between Santiago and New York was one per cent. The money order charge of one-third that amount per \$100.00 proved a bargain for local merchants. During the first month (August) the sale of money orders was mostly to soldiers but as time went on more and more were sold to merchants. There had been no money order system under Spanish administration and the local people had to be introduced to it.

City Deliveries.

On September 15th four free daily deliveries were instituted (except Sundays) in the Santiago business district. Boxes were placed on all the principal streets and four collections (with one on Sundays) were made. Under the Spanish system letter carriers were employed in the large cities but were paid by the patrons and not by the post office. They collected from 3 to 5 centavos for each letter delivered. Kempner stopped this practice but did not extend the free delivery service further than the business district. It was carried on by two of the old Spanish carriers.

Steamer Service.

A weekly mail service was established between Santiago and Havana and intermediate seaports on the south coast line of steamers on August 31st. Beginning September 27th a mail was dispatched every ten days on the north

coast line of steamers. Mails to the States still depended on the military transports and as their sailings were irregular no definite schedule could be advertised. The Ward Line steamers were then calling at Santiago every fortnight and Kempner ascertained that they were willing to establish a weekly sailing if they could get the War Department contract to transport the Army supplies being carried in transports.

To offset the irregular mails from the U. S., Kempner received mail matter for residents and merchants regularly from Havana, Cienfuegos, Manzanillo, Guantanamo, Santo Domingo, Caracas, Port au Prince and Jamaica. Mails were also dispatched to these places at regular intervals. Advertising the departure of these and the railroad mails in Spanish in the native papers found favor with the residents and merchants of the city.

Stamps.

Under Spain the post office had had nothing to do with stamp sales. They were sold by storekeepers who obtained them from the Treasury Department for 99% of their face value, retaining the 1% balance as their profit. The following are the sales in Cuba by the military postal system for the fiscal year 1898:

From June 23 to August 31, 1898	\$3,119.12
September 1 to September 30	1,129.75

No sale in September was over \$2.00. As sales continued low Kempner called on several local business men at Santiago to find out the reason. He found that most of the merchants had left the city before the blockade began and did not return until after the surrender. During their absence they had found that U. S. stamps would be required in the future and fearing that they might not be able to obtain them after their return brought back considerable supplies purchased in the States. Until these were exhausted the sales continued low.

The stamps used until the establishment of the civil post on January 1st, 1899 were exclusively ordinary unoverprinted U. S. issues. Excepting in Puer to Principe where the well known provisionals were used, Overprinted stamps seem to have been ready for the opening of the civil system on January 1, 1899. No stamp of higher face value than 10c was overprinted and as the civil posts seems to have gotten along without any stamp of higher face value until 1907 I do not believe that any stamp above that denomination was sold by the military establishment. It is improbable that stamps of higher face value were brought back by the Santiago merchants from the States.

The following are the stamps probably issued in Cuba:

ORDINARY

Issue of 1895

Cat. No.

268	3c purple (Jackson)
269	4c dark brown (Lincoln)
271	6c dull brown (Garfield)
272	8c violet brown (Sherman)
273	10c dark green (Webster)

Issue of 1898

279	1c green (Franklin)
279b	2c carmine (Die III)
280	4c rose brown (Lincoln)
281	5c blue (Grant)
282	6c lake (Garfield)
282c	10c brown (Webster)

TRANS-MISSISSIPPI

285	1c dark yellow green
286	2c copper red
287	4c orange
288	5c dull blue
289	8c violet brown
290	10c gray violet

SPECIAL DELIVERY

Issue of 1895

1894	10c blue
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DUES STAMPS

Issue of 1895

2245	1c deep claret
2246	2c deep claret
2248	5c deep claret
2249	10c deep claret

ENVELOPES**Issue of 1879**

Cat. No.

Issue of 1887

PC 6 2c blue (foreign)

2c green

Issue of 1898**Issue of 1895**

PC16 2c black (foreign)

1c dark blue

5c blue

POSTAL CARDS**Issue of 1892****Issue of 1891**

PC50 & PC51 1c (reply)

PC11 1c blue (Grant) (library)

Issue of 1893**Issue of 1897**

PC52 & PC53 2c (foreign reply)

PC14 1c black (Jefferson) (regular)

Issue of 1898**Issue of 1898**

PC15 1c black (Adams) (regular)

PC54 & PC55 1c (reply)

It must be remembered that at that time there was no parcel post or air-mail service calling for the widespread use of high valued stamps as there is today. I have never seen a copy of the Columbian issue used in colonial parts during the Spanish-American period that didn't appear to have been "planted". I do not believe that any of these were issued to the military or civil establishments abroad. I firmly believe that all are "philatelic" importations. The Trans-Mississippi issue was current at the time and regularly issued to them. The newspaper stamps were also current but were hardly issued in Cuba. Since envelopes and postal cards tend to hang on longer than the corresponding adhesives we look for and find the earlier issues. The envelopes of 1899 were probably not issued here. The postal cards of 1898 may also not have been issued here, but I list them.

Post Routes.

Under Spain postal facilities were largely restricted to the seaports. At several points post riders were retained to serve the interior. They were not paid by the post office but received exorbitant prices from the addressees, sometimes charging as high as \$1 for a single letter. Merchants invariably sent private messengers into the interior and the old post office system seems to have been entirely mistrusted for interior service.

On August 20, 1898 Kempner established semi-weekly mail service on both the Songo and San Luis branches of the railroad from Santiago. On September 15th this was changed to a daily service.

Occupied Territory.

On October 20, 1898 Kempner wrote the Acting Postmaster General, Perry S. Heath; that American troops occupied only a portion of the province of Santiago de Cuba; together with Manzanillo on the south coast and Gibara and Holguin on the north coast. He recommended that Guantanamo, Baracoa, San Luis and Songo be made full stations; and that stations be established also at Manzanillo, Gibara and Holguin.

He also recommended that the names of post offices in Cuba be permitted to remain the same as under Spain, without designating them as numbered military stations; and that "United States Post Office" be prefixed to the old name if necessary.

He stated that the title "Military Station No. 1, Cuba" was misleading and caused difficulties. The absence of the word "postal" made confusion with the army establishments easy. Supplies, stamped envelopes and furniture when not enclosed in mail sacks were invariably delivered into the clutches of the mili-

tary when the transports were unloaded. This material could only be recovered after considerable delay. 50,000 stamped envelopes sent from New York on July 8th were not received at Santiago post office until September 24; and the one responsible for the delay could not be ascertained. On October 1st when the military depot quartermaster was moving into another building, he discovered amongst his loot, a case addressed to Military (Postal) Station No. 1; which had been dispatched on July 25 from the States. When they received this they knew why their 50,000 stamped envelopes had been held up; and who did it.

He also pointed out that special Congressional action should be taken to have the Cuban service divorced from the New York Post Office. He had been advised that an act of Congress was necessary to that end. He pointed out that when Havana was taken over it would have to be known postally as a sub-station of New York City, as it would be a branch of Santiago; which was itself only a station. He thought that Havana, at least, deserved the rating of a first class post office.

The Cuban-American civil postal system was established on Jan. 1, 1899, for which I have coined the name "Cubamer" to distinguish it from the military postal system.

Kempner applied for leave of absence to come to Washington to consult the P. M. G. in person about the Cuban service. He appointed Clerk Heydeman of the New York Post Office to take charge at Santiago and left on October 5th, 1898 to inspect the Spanish postal facilities on his way home.

Mil. Sta. No. 1—Daiquiri.

This town in south central Santiago de Cuba province was frequently mis-called Baiquiri. It is midway between Santiago and Guantanamo. The Marines landed here on June 6th, 1898 and formed a junction with the insurgents. The military landed on June 22. Mil. Sta. No. 1 was opened here on June 23, 1898. On July 6th the office was closed, when the station was moved to Siboney.

Mil. Sta. No. 2—Daiquiri.

After the capture of Santiago the Spanish-American Iron Co. made application for the re-establishment of a postal station here, where its mines were located. 1,500 miners were employed here and their families resided in the town. The company ordered one of its bookkeepers to take over the job of postmaster and assume charge of the post office; and on October 20th, Kempner recommended to the 1st Assistant P. M. G. that he be paid \$200.00 annually as a retainer. The mails between Daiquiri and Santiago were to be transported free on steamers owned by the company. Sometime between October 20 and November 1, 1898 this was made a full station of the New York Post Office as Mil. Sta. No. 2. It was closed February 27, 1899 by amalgamation with the Cubamer system.

Mil. Sta. No. 1—Siboney.

This town in south central Santiago de Cuba province was nearer Santiago than Daiquiri. Troops landed here June 23, 1898. Mil. Sta. No. 1 was moved here from Daiquiri on July 6, 1898. On July 20, 1898 Kempner left here for Santiago and placed Clerk G. S. Gallupe of the Pittsburgh Post Office in charge at Siboney. July 23, 1898 is the last official recorded date of any activity at this office. It was probably closed about that time.

Mil. Sta. No. 1—Santiago.

Military Sta. No. 1 was removed to this important city in south central Santiago de Cuba province on July 21, 1898 from Siboney. It was officially made

a full station of the New York Post Office sometime between July 1 and August 1, 1898. On October 5, 1898 Postal Agent Kempner placed Clerk Heydeman of the New York Post Office in charge here and departed for a tour of the Cuban postal system, ultimately going back to the States. The Military Station was discontinued February 18, 1899 by amalgamation with the Cubamer system.

Mil. Sta. No. 3—Guantanamo.



No. 3.

This place is in southeastern Santiago de Cuba province on Guantanamo Bay. The Marines landed here on June 10, 1898 from the Transport *Panther* and established Camp or Fort McCalla. The Military Station was opened on September 6, 1898 with Clerk W. E. Spicer of the Boston, Mass. Post Office in charge. On the same day Postal Agent Kempner at Santiago commissioned the Steamer *Thomas Brooks* as a mail packet to make semi-weekly trips between there and Guantanamo. Sailing from Santiago on Mondays and Thursdays. Sometime between Oct. 20 and Nov. 1, 1898 this office was made a full fledged station of the New York Post Office. Mails between this office and Santiago were regularly maintained and advertised in the vernacular newspapers.

Discontinued as a Military Station of the N. Y. P. O. February 22, 1899 by amalgamation with the Cubamer system.

Mil. Sta. No. 4—Baracoa.



No. 4A.



No. 4.



This port in extreme eastern Santiago de Cuba province was surrendered at the same time as Santiago. It was opened as a sub-station under the Santiago Office on September 28, 1898 with Clerk William Troensegaard in charge. Made a full station of the N. Y. P. O. between Oct. 20 and Nov. 1, 1898.

Discontinued as a military station February 27, 1899 by amalgamation with the Cubamer system. Type 4A is the old Spanish postmark.

Mil. Sta. No. 5—San Luis.

On the Santiago railroad in south central Santiago de Cuba province, was surrendered with Santiago. Opened as a branch of Santiago about August 20th, 1898 when Postal Agent Kempner established semi-weekly service on the branch of the railroad running to San Luis. On September 15, 1898 this was

changed to a daily service. Made a full station of the N. Y. P. O. between Oct. 20 and Nov. 1, 1898.

Discontinued as a Mil. Pos. Sta. on February 24, 1899 by amalgamation with the Cubamer system.

Mil. Sta. No. 6—Manzanillo.



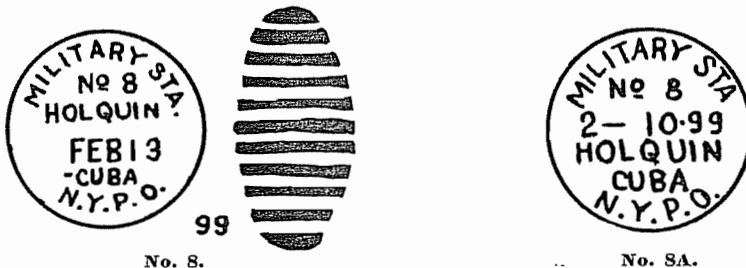
This important port in western Santiago de Cuba province is on the Bay of Guacanayabo. It was occupied by the 3rd U. S. V. I. under Colonel Ray, arriving on the S. S. *Riena de Los Angeles* on Oct. 5, 1898. Postal Agent Kempner arrived a few hours later and called at the Spanish Post Office. The postmaster, Nestor Alvarez, his assistant Electo Fernandez and a native carrier comprised the old post office staff. As the Spanish postmaster spoke English and had been fairly spoken of by several residents who had called at Santiago, Kempner retained him as postmaster under the military system. Colonel Ray appointed several men from the military detachment to assist in the local mail service. Made a full station of N. Y. P. O. between Oct. 20 and Nov. 1, 1898.

Discontinued as a military station on February 19, 1899 by amalgamation with the Cubamer system.

Mil. Sta. No. 7—Gibara.

Gibara or Jibara was occupied by the Cubans before July 29, 1898. Kempner recommended that a Mil. Pos. Sta. be established here in his report of Oct. 20, 1898. This town is on the north coast in the north western part of Santiago de Cuba province. Made a full station between Oct. 20 and Nov. 1, 1898. Discontinued as a Mil. Pos. Sta. February 29, 1899 by amalgamation with the Cubamer system.

Mil. Sta. No. 8—Holguin.



This inland town in north western Santiago de Cuba province had not been captured; by the time of the signing of the protocol suspending hostilities, on August 12th; by which Spain relinquished all claim to Cuba. Kempner recommended that a Mil. Pos. Sta. be established here on Oct. 20, 1898. Military Station established sometime between Oct. 20 and Nov. 1, 1898. Discontinued

as Mil. Pos. Sta. on Feb. 28, 1899 by amalgamation with the Cubamer system. Military postmarks give this as "Holquin."

Mil. Sta. No. 9—Sagua de Tanamo.

This town in the north eastern part of Santiago de Cuba province was surrendered with Santiago. A Mil. Pos. Sta. was established here between Nov. 1 and Dec. 1, 1898. Dis-established as a Mil. Pos. Sta. probably before Mar. 18, 1899 and amalgamated with the Cubamer system.

Mil. Sta. No. 10—Havana.



No. 10.



No. 10A.



No. 10B.



No. 10C.



Havana, the capital of Cuba, is in the northern part of La Habana province. It was under naval blockade at the suspension of hostilities. It was not formally surrendered to the Americans until January 1, 1899. The 2nd Illinois V. I. arrived in the harbor on Dec. 13th, 1898 and disembarked on the 15th, forming the vanguard of the American troops arriving for the occupation ceremony on New Year's Day. They marched through the city and went into quarters at Camp Columbia, in the suburbs. The Mil. Pos. Sta. was apparently established at the camp, sometime between Nov. 1 and Dec. 1, 1898. It was discontinued as a Mil. Pos. Sta. February 17, 1899 and amalgamated with the Cubamer system. On March 19, 1901 a postmark shows it to have been functioning as Camp Columbia Station of the Havana Post Office.

Mil. Sta. No. 11—Puerto Principe.



No. 11.



No. 11A.

This city is in the center of the province of the same name. Made a Mil. Pos. Sta. between Nov. 1 and Dec. 1, 1898.

Closed as Mil. Pos. Sta. Mar. 1, 1899 by amalgamation with the Cubamer system.

Mil. Sta. No. 12—Neuvinas.

This city is in north eastern part of Puerto Principe province. Made a Mil. Pos. Sta. between Nov. 1 and Dec. 1, 1898 under the name "Unevinas". This error was corrected on Jan. 21, 1899.

Closed as Mil. Pos. Sta. on Feb. 28, 1899 by fusion with the Cubamer system.

Mil. Sta. No. 13—Cienfuegos.



No. 13.

This city, more important as a commercial center than Santiago, is in south central Santa Clara province. Under Spain it was the best postally equipped office in Cuba. Antonio Giral with an assistant and 6 clerks composed the staff. Here, unlike any other Spanish office, the carriers worked as clerks before going out on their routes. But strangely enough, the clerk-carriers pay was derived entirely from the fees collected for the delivery of letters to addressees; which was 3 centavos here. It was the terminus of the Havana railroad as well as an important seaport. Good roads led to different points on the north coast, over which post riders supplied service. The Americans had a camp outside the city; but the city was not occupied until Jan. 1, 1899, when Capt. Barker, U. S. N., raised the flag over the Post Office.

This office was constituted a full military station under N. Y. P. O. between Nov. 1 and Dec. 1, 1898. On Feb. 16, 1899 according to the Postmaster General (Feb. 17, 1899 according to Rathbone) this office was closed by amalgamation with the Cubamer system.

Mil. Sta. No. 14—Songo.

This office, in south central Santiago de Cuba province was opened about August 20th, 1898, as a sub-station of Santiago, on which day Kempner established semi-weekly service on the branch of the Santiago Railroad running there. On Sept. 15, 1898 this was changed to a daily service. Made a full military station of the N. Y. P. O. between Jan. 1 and Jan. 21, 1899. Discontinued as a Mil. Pos. Sta. Feb. 23, 1899 by fusion with the Cubamer system.

Mil. Sta. No. 15—Pinar del Rio.

This office in the center of the province of the same name was opened as a Mil. Pos. Sta. between Jan. 1 and Jan. 21, 1899. Closed Feb. 23, 1899 by amalgamation with the Cubamer system.

Mil. Sta. No. 16—Guanajay.

This office in Pinar del Rio province was established between Jan. 1 and Jan. 21, 1899. Closed Feb. 26, 1899 by union with the Cubamer system.

Mil. Sta. No. 17—Mariel.

Opened between Jan. 1 and Jan. 21, 1899.
Closed Feb. 27, 1899, when it was merged in the Cubamer system.

Mil. Sta. No. 18—Trinidad.

In south central Santa Clara province. Opened between Jan. 1 and Jan. 21, 1899. Amalgamated with Cubamer system probably before Mar. 18, 1899.

Mil. Sta. No. 19—Las Tunas.

Tunas de Zaza, Santa Clara Province.

Port in south eastern Santa Clara province. Opened between Jan. 1 and Jan. 21, 1899. Closed by fusion with the Cubamer system on Feb. 16, 1899. There was also the town of Tunas in west central Santiago de Cuba province supplied by Manzanillo post office over the post route to Bayamo. Also Victoria de las Tunas in western Santiago province. But the Mil. Pos. Sta. was in Santa Clara province.

Mil. Sta. No. 20—Sancti Spiritus (Holy Ghost).

This office in eastern central Santa Clara province was opened between Jan. 1 and Jan. 21, 1899. Closed and taken over by the Cubamer system on Feb. 20, 1899.

Mil. Sta. No. 21—Cardenas.

Important port in north central Matanzas province. Office opened between Jan. 1 and Jan. 21, 1899. Closed and merged with Cubamer system probably before Mar. 18, 1899.

Mil. Sta. No. 22—Bayamo.

This town in west central Santiago de Cuba province was the terminus of the post road from Manzanillo. It was occupied by the Cuban insurgent forces and Sr. Rafael Gonyonnet appointed postmaster by General Garcia. On October 5th or 6th Kempner met Gonyonnet at Manzanillo and apparently confirmed the appointment of Garcia. Mail facilities were by post rider to Manzanillo. It is interesting to note the difference with which the Cuban Insurgents were recognized as compared to the ignoring of the Filipino Insurrectos. The Cuban Junta in America had a big lobby with many real sympathizers; while the Filipinos had comparatively none. The American public looked upon the former as fondly as they regarded the Belgian refugees of two decades ago. This office was made a full Mil. Pos. Sta. of N. Y. P. O. between Jan. 1 and Jan. 21, 1899. The post road to Manzanillo also supplied the inland towns of Jignani, Veginte, Canto, Embocadero and Tunas. Discontinued as a Mil. Pos. Sta. on Feb. 20, 1899 by combining with the Cubamer system.

Mil. Sta. No. 23—Mayari.

In north central Santiago province. Opened between Jan. 1 and Jan. 21, 1899. Closed Feb. 23, 1899 by fusion with the Cubamer system.

Mil. Sta. No. 24—Palma Soriano.

This town in south central Santiago de Cuba province was surrendered at the same time as Santiago. Opened as Mil. Pos. Sta. between Jan. 1 and Jan. 21, 1899. Closed Feb. 23, 1899 by amalgamation with the Cubamer system.

Mil. Sta. No. 25—Cristo.

In Santiago de Cuba province. Opened between Jan. 1 and Jan. 21, 1899. Closed by fusion with the Cubamer system probably before Mar. 18, 1899.

Mil. Sta. No. 26—Buena Vista.

No. 26.

In La Habana province. Opened between Jan. 1 and Jan. 21, 1899. Closed by union with the Cubamer system Feb. 20, 1899.

Mil. Sta. No. 27—Matanzas.

This city, second port of the island, is in north western Matanzas province. Mil. Pos. Sta. opened between Jan. 1 and Jan. 21, 1899 under name "Matarizas." Closed Feb. 26, 1899 when taken over by the Cubamer system.

Mil. Sta. No. 28—Santa Clara.

Important city in central Santa Clara province. Opened between Jan. 1 and Jan. 21, 1899. Closed Feb. 22, 1899 by amalgamation with the Cubamer system.

Mil. Sta. No. 29—Placentas.

In Santa Clara province. Opened between Jan. 21 and Jan. 31, 1899. Closed Feb. 26, 1899 when fused with the Cubamer system.

Mil. Sta. No. 30—Santa Cruz.

Port in south central Puerto Principe province. Opened between Jan. 21 and Jan. 31, 1899. Closed Feb. 17, 1899 when it was united with the Cubamer system.

Mil. Sta. No. 31—Santo Domingo.

Opened between Jan. 21 and Jan. 31, 1899. Closed by being taken into the Cubamer system Feb. 11, 1899.

Mil. Sta. No. 32—Jucaro.

On his tour of the Spanish post offices Kempner called here in west central Puerto Principe province about Oct. 7, 1898. Jose Navarro Diaz was postmaster with Miguel de Quesada as assistant. The postmaster wanted to return to Spain but Quesada having been in the service at Jucaro for 20 years was anxious to be retained. Kempner found that no records had been kept in the office since 1895 and didn't appear to be any too well pleased with the Spanish staff. He found the town supplying San Fernando to the north, via Ciego de Avila and Moron, by means of a short railroad. This office became a full Mil. Pos. Sta. between Jan. 21 and Jan. 31, 1899. On Feb. 17, 1899 it was discontinued by amalgamation with the Cubamer system.

Mil. Sta. No. 33—Sagua la Grande.

In north western Santa Clara province. Opened between Jan. 21 and Jan. 31, 1899. Closed by fusion with the Cubamer system Feb. 27, 1899.

Mil. Sta. No. 34—Caibarien.

In north eastern Santa Clara province. Opened between Jan. 21 and Jan. 31, 1899. Closed by union with the Cubamer system Feb. 27, 1899.

Mil. Sta. No. 35—Batabano.

At this port, in south central La Habana province, a train awaited the arrival of the steamer from Santiago to take passengers and mail overland to Havana. Kempner arrived here about Oct. 8, 1898. Mil. Pos. Sta. was opened between Jan. 21 and Jan. 31, 1899. The time of discontinuance and fusion with the Cubamer system was about Feb. 17, 1899.

Mil. Sta. No. 36—Colon.

In eastern central Matanzas province. Opened between Jan. 21 and Jan. 31, 1899. Closed by amalgamation with the Cubamer system probably before Mar. 18, 1899.

Mil. Sta. No. 37—Surgidero de Batabano.

In south central La Habana province. Opened between Jan. 21 and Jan. 31, 1899. Closed by being united to the Cubamer system Feb. 26, 1899.

Mil. Sta. No. 38—Guines.

In eastern central La Habana province. Opened as "Grimes" between Jan. 21 and Jan. 31, 1899. Closed probably before Mar. 18, 1899 by fusion with the Cubamer system.

Mil. Sta. No. 39—Union de Reyes.

In Matanzas province. Opened between Jan. 21 and Jan. 31, 1899. Closed by union with the Cubamer system probably before Mar. 18, 1899.

POSTAL RATES AND REGULATIONS.

—1.—

Order No. 161 of April 26, 1898 by Ch. Emory Smith, P. M. G., ordered suspension of mail service between the U. S. and Spain and all its colonies and dependencies.

—2.—

The Act of March 3, 1879 specified: "The P. M. G. may . . . provide by regulation, for transmitting unpaid and duly certified letters of soldiers, sailors and marines in the service of the U. S. to their destination, to be paid on delivery." On May 28, 1898 this was called to the attention of postmasters by the 1st Asst. P. M. G. but he doesn't seem to have been very specific about the necessity for the letters being "duly certified."

—3.—

Order No. 219 of June 7, 1898 fixed domestic rates and conditions for "mail matter for or from persons connected with the United States forces at and near the islands of Cuba and Porto Rico. . . ."

Military, Naval and Marine Mail—

Domestic.

1st class 2c/1 oz.
2nd class 1c/4 oz.
3rd class 1c/2 oz.
4th class 1c/1 oz.
Special Del'y 10c

Drop letters 2c/1 oz.
Country drop letters 1c/1 oz.
Postal cards 1c each, double 2c each
Private mailing cards 1c each
Registration 8c

Designated Tampa, Fla. as office of dispatch for Cuba.

—4.—

Order of July 21, 1898 of President McKinley specified:

"In view of the occupation of Santiago de Cuba by the forces of the U. S., it is ordered that postal communication between the U. S. and that port, which has been suspended since the opening of hostilities with Spain, be resumed, subject to such military regulations as may be deemed necessary."

"As other portions of the enemy's territory come into the possession of the land and naval forces of the U. S. postal communication may be opened under the same conditions."

"The domestic postal service within the territory thus occupied may be continued on the same principles already indicated for the continuance of the local municipal and judicial administration, and it may be extended as the local requirements may justify under the supervision of the military commanders."

"The revenues derived from such service are to be applied to the expenses of conducting it, and U. S. postage stamps are therefore to be used."

"The Postmaster-General is charged with the execution of this order in cooperation with the military commander, to whom the Secretary of War will issue the necessary directions." (Signed) "William McKinley."

—5.—

Order No. 296 of July 21, 1898 by Ch. Emory Smith, P. M. G., ordered No. 4 into effect for the Post Office Department. It relaxed the prohibition against

Spanish mails insofar as Santiago de Cuba was concerned and extended the following rates to civilians of that territory. This was the first order allowing the Cuban civil population to make use of the military postal system.

Civil Mail.

Domestic.

1st class 5c/½ oz.

2nd & 3rd class 1c/2 oz.

4th class 1c/1 oz.

Registration 8c

Postal Cards 2c each, double 4c each

Mexico and Canada were presumably included in "Domestic" mail. Only U. S. stamps were recognized by this order. Prepayment was optional but double the deficiency was collected on unpaid matter.

Foreign.

Universal Postal Union rates and conditions to apply to all foreign countries.

1st class 5c/½ oz.

Printed Matter 1c/2 oz.

Registration 8c

Postcards 2c single, 4c double

Mails from U. S. to Santiago to be addressed to U. S. Postal Agent at Santiago and could be withheld as the military or naval authorities desired.

—6.—

Order No. 395 of Sept. 19, 1898 by Perry S. Heath, Acting P. M. G., authorized Military Station No. 1, Santiago, to make registered dispatch via the New York Postmaster.

—7.—

Order No. 351 of August 19, 1898 ordered No. 161 prohibiting the forwarding of Spanish mails suspended as hostilities had ceased.

—8.—

Order 514 effective in Cuba and Porto Rico on December 20, 1898 directed that: "Mail sent to the U. S. by persons connected with the U. S. forces at or near Cuba (or) Porto Rico . . . to be entitled to the domestic rates of postage . . . must be endorsed 'Soldier's Letter,' 'Sailor's Letter,' 'Marine's Letter,' or such other branch of service to which the writer belongs, and be signed thereunder with his name and official designation by a field or staff officer, post or detachment commander to whose command the soldier belongs, or by a surgeon or chaplain at a hospital where he may be; in the navy or marine (corps) service by the officer in command of the vessel, or surgeon on board or officer commanding naval hospital or detachment on shore."

—9.—

Order of Jan. 3, 1899 to take immediate effect provided that all matter entitled to be carried "free" in the U. S. mails was also to be carried free in the Cuban mails.

—10.—

Order No. 63 of Feb. 23, 1899 amended Order No. 514 by authorizing postmasters, at military stations, to countersign combatant's mail in lieu of officers, surgeons, chaplains, etc.; but this only applied to letters *to* the U. S. *from* Cuba and only to postmasters at the post office of mailing.

—11.—

Order of Mar. 24, 1899 by John A. Merritt, 3rd Asst. P. M. G., reaffirmed necessity for counterstamping of combatant's mail to receive domestic rate; and also reaffirmed the optional prepayment clause. On prepaid matter, however, it specified that *only* the special overprinted stamps for Cuba could be used. This order also specified that the special stamps for Porto Rico and Hawaii *must* be used in these places respectively. It stated that ordinary U. S. unoverprinted stamps were only to remain valid in the Philippine Islands.

This order continued the rates for civilians' mail given in Order 296 of July 21, 1898.

Chronology.

- April 26, 1898—Mails from and to Cuba suspended.
 May 23, 1898—Privilege of the armed forces to send their mail "collect" called to the attention of postmasters.
 May 3, 1898—Mail agency ordered established in Cuba.
 May 4, 1898—First military post office established at Camp Black, New York.
 June 7, 1898—Domestic rates extended to armed forces in Cuba. Tampa made dispatch office for Cuba.
 June 23, 1898—Mil. Sta. No. 1 established at Daiquiri.
 July 6, 1898—Mil. Sta. No. 1 moved to Siboney.
 July 21, 1898—Mil. Sta. No. 1 removed to Santiago.
 July 21, 1898—Prohibition against Cuban mail relaxed insofar as the surrendered territory around Santiago is concerned. Service extended to civilians at rates differing from those of the armed forces.
 August 19, 1898—Restrictions against Cuban mails lifted for the entire island.
 September 19, 1898—Santiago allowed to make registered dispatch direct to New York, instead of via Tampa.
 December 20, 1898—Letters from the armed forces must be countersigned by an officer to receive domestic rate.
 January 1, 1899—Cuba surrendered to the Americans.
 January 1, 1899—Semi-independent civil postal system established dealing direct with Post Office Dept. at Washington, D. C. I have called this the Cubamer system.
 January 3, 1899—"Free" mail extended to Cuba.
 February 10, 1899—The Military Postal Stations which were still under N. Y. P. O. ordered to merge with Cubamer system.
 February 16, 1899 to March 18, 1899—Military Postal Stations merged with Cubamer system.
 February 23, 1899—Military postmasters allowed to countersign mail from the armed forces to receive domestic privilege.
 March 24, 1899—Use of "Cuba" overprinted stamps made compulsory.

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