

## Juan Bruno ZAYAS Alfonso, MD

By: Marcos A. Iglesias  
Mississauga, Canada.

Dr. Juan Bruno Zayas was born in Havana, Cuba, on June 8, 1867<sup>1</sup>. His father was José María Zayas Jiménez, lawyer and writer. His older brother, Alfredo Zayas became president of Cuba for the period 1921-1925. Juan Bruno Zayas attended the university of Havana where he received the degree of Doctor in Medicine and Surgery on June 23, 1891<sup>2</sup>. Upon graduation he practised his profession in Cifuentes and later on in Vega Alta, both places in Las Villas, a former Cuban province.

Dr. Zayas is one of the great personalities in the Cuban War of Independence from Spain (1895–1898). As soon as the war started, he joined the Cuban Liberation Army, forming the “Villareña Calvary”



“Plaza Vieja”, renamed “Plaza Juan B. Zayas”, located in Old Havana.

on April 25, 1895 that later on became the First Calvary Regiment in the vanguard of Maceo’s army, participating in the invasion that led the Cuban armed forces from Mangos de Baraguá in the province of Oriente (East of Cuba) to the city of Mantua, in the most western part of Cuba. This extraordinary event was carried on a three-month period. He marched with the vanguard holding the rank of Colonel.

During the war he acted not only as a physician of the army, but as a soldier as well

He reached the rank of Brigadier General of the Liberator Army, by his merits in combat. He was killed in war action, in a battle against the Spanish army a *La Jaima* farm, in Güiro de Boñigal, Quivicán, in the province of Havana on July 30, 1896.

He was first buried in the local cemetery, in Quivicán; then his remains were transferred to the Columbus’s Cemetery, in Havana, on July 22, 1922.



Stamp issued on May 20, 1933. It shows, from left to right: Gen. Antonio Maceo, Gen. Máximo Gómez and Gen. Juan B. Zayas.



Normal and inverted stamps issued on February 1, 1910.



### Philatelic Information:

Dr. Juan B. Zayas was the first Cuban medical doctor to be shown on a Cuban stamp. It was a Special Delivery stamp, 10 c orange & blue, issued on February 1, 1910. The stamp forms part of a postal issue honoring several Cuban patriots. This stamp was also printed in error, showing Dr. Zayas’s portrait inverted. The inverted stamp is quite rare. See reproductions

on this page.

<sup>1</sup> Francisco Jiménez, I.A. shows the date of birth as July 8, 1867.

<sup>2</sup> Francisco Jiménez shows this date as year 1892.

On May 20, 1933, Dr. Zayas's picture was also included on a 13 c red stamp together with Gen. Máximo Gómez and Gen. Antonio Maceo.

A third stamp was issued on July 30, 1996 as part of a triptych depicting several Cuban Generals killed in war action.

A stamp was issued showing the "Plaza Vieja" (Old Square) in the Old Havana section of the city (1999). The square has been renamed "Plaza Juan B. Zayas."

Finally, an aerogramme was also issued in 1999, showing the preceding stamp and another picture of the square.