

U.S. WARSHIPS IN CUBAN WATERS



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John Young, USCS #8219 (L)

In August 1933, political turmoil was occurring in the Republic of Cuba. The Navy ordered for the destroyers CLAXTON and TAYLOR to sail from Key West for Havana. CLAXTON stayed only 24 hours in Havana and TAYLOR sailed directly for Guantanamo Bay.

Fulgencio Batista led the "Sergeant's Revolt" on 4-5 September 1933 and forced then-Cuban dictator, General Gerardo Machado to flee Cuba. President Roosevelt sent thirty warships to protect our interests in Cuba. Due to a shortage of vessels on the east coast, the Navy requested that Coast Guard cutters assist in the patrols in Cuban waters.

York Briddell wrote in USCS Bulletin #24 (30 Sept 1933) that eleven ships constitute the inner cordon around the island (Cuba). They included USS MISSISSIPPI, the light cruiser, RICHMOND (CL 9), and the destroyers BAINBRIDGE (246), GOFF (247) at Havana, then at Cienfuegos (10 Oct 1933), OVERTON (239) at Cienfuegos, J. FRED TALBOTT (156) at Manzanillo, FAIRFAX (93) at Guantanamo Bay (10 OCT 33) and STUREVANT (240) at Santiago, then at Key West (10 OCT 1933).

The destroyer McFARLAND (237) was enroute Cardenas, Cuba and the Coast Guard cutters GRESHAM at Matanzas, YAMACRAW at Puerto Padre & UNALGA at Antilla, Cuba.

The USCS Bulletin #26 (20 OCT 33) lists four destroyers, BADGER, BABBITT, TATTNALL and TILLMAN enroute Cuban waters from NOB (Naval Operating Base), Norfolk, VA. Bulletin #32 (31 Jan 34) has that York Briddell received a BERNADOU (153) cover from Sam Stein (USCS #308) that informs collectors that the destroyer was leaving for Cuba.

A notice in Bulletin # 27 (15 NOV 33) has that David Rosenthal, president & cachet director of the Miami Philatelic Society that he will handle covers for collectors from naval vessels during the Cuban trouble.

During this period, Marine QM Sergeant R.L. Razzatte (USCS #149) produced a cachet "Welcome, U.S. Warships in Cuban Waters" that was applied to covers sent that was deployed during the period. He was transferred in February 1934.

Sgt. Razzette produced a printed Navy Day '33 cachet that exists in several colors (red, black & red-brown) and hectographed Welcome! USS RALEIGH (blue & purple) that were canceled with cruiser's type 6 cancel on 27 OCT 1933.

The publication "U.S.C.G. Record of Movements, 1790-1933" has the following vessels deployed with the Navy during the period September-November 1933. Last year, I got an original onion skin copy of Coast Guard vessels in Cuban waters and these dates and locations are listed below the names of the destroyers and cutters:

USS ABEL P. UPSHUR CG 15 (ex-DD 193) 7 SEP- 6 NOV 33
depart Miami for Nueva Gerona 30 Sept- depart for Miami 7 October 33

USS GEORGE E. BADGER, CG 16 (ex-DD 196) 9 SEP- 6 NOV 33
at Nueva Gerona 17 October, 31 October- 3 November

USS HERNDON, CG 17 (ex-DD 198) 9 SEP- 6 NOV 33
at Cardenas 22 September, at Havana 22 September, 25-27 September
at Matanzas 22-25 September, at Nueva Gerona 24-31 October

USS HUNT, CG 18 (ex-DD 194) 9 SEP- 6 NOV 33
at Manati 16 September, at Puerto Padre 16-20 September
at Matanzas 9-12 October, at Nipe Bay 26 October- 2 November

USS WELBORN C. WOOD, CG 19 (ex-DD 195) 9 SEP- 6 NOV 33
at Nueva Gerona 1-2 October, 17-24 October

USS SEMMES, CG 20 (ex-DD 189) 9 SEP- 6 NOV 33
at Havana 16-23 September, at Nipe Bay 21-22 October,
at Nueva Gerona ?

USS WAINWRIGHT, CG 24 (ex-DD 62) 9 SEP- 6 NOV 33
at Matanzas 2-9 October, at Havana 18-27 October

USS WILKES, CG 25 (ex-DD 67) 9 SEP- 6 NOV 33
at Matanzas 25 September- 2 October, at Havana 11-18 October

USS GRESHAM, CG (RSC 1)
at Matanzas 6 October, at Puerto Padre 7-13 October
at Nipe Bay 13-17 October

USS TUSCARORA, CG 6 SEP- 1 NOV 33
at Matanzas 15-22 September, at Havana 23-25 September

USS UNALGA, CG (CG 23) 7 SEP- 1 NOV 33
at Puerto Padre ?, at Antilla 18 September

USS YAMACRAW, CG (CG 21) 7 SEP- 1 NOV 33
at Havana 16-25 September, 9-17 October

A study of Razzette's "Welcome!" cachet reveals that it exists in two varieties that can be differentiated by the number of short lines in front of the plane (upper right) and the differences in the waves below the warship. One cachet (fig.1) has one line in front of the airplane, while the other cachet (fig.2) has two lines in front of the plane. Note the different waves below the ship in both cachets.



A checklist of naval covers canceled while they were in Cuban waters. The * after date are listed in Robert C. Thompson's column "Naval Cancellations" that appeared in Stamp & Cover Collecting magazine. Thompson (USCS #147) of Glen Allen, VA wrote the column (Nov 1933- Oct 1934).

CHECKLIST

USS FAIRFAX (93)

13 SEP 33* GUANTANAMO/ BAY CUBA, OSC #1
3 OCT 33* CIENFUEGO/ CUBA
15 OCT 33 GUANTANAMO/ BAY CUBA, OSC #2, signed R.L. Razzette
27 OCT 33* GUANTANAMO BAY/ NAVY DAY, (p) Navy Day (Razzette)
29 OCT 33 (no words)

USS BADGER (126)

27 OCT 33* GUANTANAMO/ CUBA, OSC #1
11 NOV 33* GUANTANAMO/ CUBA, OSC #1, SLK/ ARMISTICE DAY,
signed by R.L. Razzette
30 NOV 33* GUANTANAMO/ CUBA
20 DEC 33* NIPE BAY/ CUBA
25 DEC 33* NIPE BAY/ CUBA

USS BABBITT (128)

16 JAN 34 CUBAN/ WATERS (envelope cut)
14 FEB 34 CUBAN/ WATERS, (p) St. Valentine's Day (Byrd Powell)

USS TATTNALL (125)

27 OCT 33* GTMO BAY/ NAVY DAY, (p) Navy Day (Razzette)
30 NOV 33* THANKSGIVING/ DAY AT MIAMI
1 JAN 34* (no words), OSC #2,
SLK/ NAVAL PARITY,
SLK/ SEA-POST MAIL-To: U.S.A.

USS TILLMAN (135)

27 OCT 33* NAVY DAY/ GTMO BAY CUBA
9 NOV 33* SANTIAGO. CUBA
11 NOV 33* 15th ANNIVERSARY/ ARMISTICE
20 NOV 33* MIAMI/ FLA,
6LK/ via SEAPOST MAIL/ U.S. Warships in/ Cuban Waters/
U.S.S. TILLMAN
6 DEC 33* CUBAN/ WATERS
25 DEC 33* {CUBAN/ WATERS, signed by Irving Whitney, NMC
1 JAN 34* {
3 JAN 34 GUANTANAMO/ BAY CUBA, OSC #2,
SLK "SEA-POST MAIL"

USS BERNADOU (153)

1 OCT 33* {no slogan
16 OCT 33* (no words), OSC #1

USS MISSISSIPPI (BB 41) type 6 cancel

12 SEP 33* 2LK/ HAVANA, CUBA/ SHAKEDOWN CRUISE
27 SEP 33 3LK/ HAVANA CRUISE/ SHAKEDOWN CRUISE/
MODERNIZED SEPT 1, 1933
27 OCT 33 3LK/ "THE PIRATE SHIP"/ NAVY DAY/ ON THE HIGH SEAS
25 DEC 33 3LK/ THE PIRATE SHIP/ "WISHESYOU"/ A MERRY XMAS
Merry Christmas cachet "Santa exiting calendar" from Battle Force,
U.S. Fleet, U.S.S. California, Flagship
15 FEB 34 (p) St. Valentine's Day (Powell)
22 FEB 34 mimeograph "The Pirate Ship"... at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba
17 MAR 34 3LK/ BUCCANEERS/ SAINT PATRICK'S DAY/ PORT AUX
PRINCE, HAYTI

USS NEW MEXICO (BB 40)

10 OCT 33* AT SEA/ OFF CUBA

USS RICHMOND (CL 9)

9 SEP 33* {
11 SEP 33* {
18 SEP 33* {FLAGSHIP/ HAVANA, CUBA, c/c and signed J.V. Terrio
23 SEP 33* {
25 SEP 33* {
1 OCT 33* U.S. WARSHIP/ HAVANA CUBA
7 OCT 33* U.S. WARSHIPS/ HAVANA, CUBA, OSC #2
19 OCT 33* U.S. WARSHIPS/ HAVANA, CUBA,
hectograph Naval Forces Cuba
27 OCT 33* NAVY DAY/ MIAMI FLA on postcard
(do) on printed Navy Day cachet & R.L. Razzette stamp
(do) hectograph OSC- 1933 Navy Day (Terrio)
2 NOV 33* FAREWELL/ MIAMI FLA
4 NOV 33* FLAGSHIP/ HAVANA CUBA
11 NOV 33* ARMISTICE DAY/ HAVANA, CUBA
22 NOV 33* NAVAL FORCES/ HAVANA, CUBA
30 NOV 33* GREETINGS/ HAVANA CUBA, hectograph Thanksgiving
1 DEC 33 {TO YOU FROM/ HAVANA
6 DEC 33* THE RAMBLER/ HAVANA CUBA
9 DEC 33* {TO YOU FROM/ HAVANA
19 DEC 33* ADIOS/ HAVANA CUBA, hectograph Last Mail- Depart for
Panama
5 JAN 34 GUANTANAMO/ BAY-CUBA
27 JAN 34* THE RAMBLER/ MIAMI FLA
30 JAN 34* GREETINGS TO/ OUR PRESIDENT (p) FDR's 52nd Birthday
31 JAN 34* FLAGSHIP/ HAVANA CUBA
31 JAN 34* FLAGSHIP/ HAVANA CUBA
15 FEB 34 RECORDEMOS/ HAVANA CUBA (p) Sinking of the Maine
10 MAR 34 MONITOR AND/ MERRIMAC-76

RICHMOND (con't)

17 MAR 34 ST. PATRICKS/ DAY IN CUBA
19 MAY 34 GUANTANAMO/ BAY CUBA
30 MAY 34 MEMORIAL/ HAVANA, CUBA
4 JUL 34 GUANTANAMO/ BAY-IN-CUBA (p) Independence Day
1 SEP 34 ADIOS/ HAVANA CUBA, On Our Way—Havana to Bremerton

Note: mail clerk, J.V. Terrio (USCS #246) used a process called hectograph (gelatin) for some of the cachets on his covers. This process of duplication transferred several colors in the cachet at the same time, while mimeograph only does one color.

USS WYOMING (AG 17)

15 OCT 33* GUANTANAMO/ BAY, CUBA, OSC #1
27 OCT 33* HAVANA CUBA/, OSC #1, SLK/ NAVY DAY
29 OCT 33 HAVANA CUBA/, printed naval envelope
11 NOV 33 CUBAN WATERS/
30 NOV 33* CUBAN WATERS/, OSC #1, SLK/ THANKSGIVING DAY
14 JAN 34 CUBAN WATERS/ , on commercial mail

USS RALEIGH (CL 7) type 6 cancel

27 OCT 33 OSC Welcome! U.S.S. Raleigh, signed R.L. Razzette

USS TAYLOR (94)

22 AUG 33 KEY WEST/ FLA
13 SEP 33* IN CUBAN/ WATERS, OSC #1
28 SEP 33*
11 OCT 33* GUANTANAMO/ CUBA

USS TWIGGS (127)

6 OCT 33* {GUANTANAMO/ BAY CUBA, OSC #1
7 OCT 33* {
27 OCT 33* NAVY DAY/ IN CUBA, Printed Navy Day (Razzette)
21 NOV 33* HAVANA/ CUBA
5 DEC 33 CANAL/ ZONE

USS JACOB JONES (130)

1 JAN 34 (no words) OSC #2
4 JAN 34 (no words) OSC #2

USS CLAXTON (140) [Sep '33- Jan '34]

13 SEP 33* WE DO/ OUR PART, OSC #1
27 OCT 33 WE DO/ OUR PART, OSC #4
24 NOV 33* WE DO/ OUR PART, OSC #4
30 NOV 33* WE DO/ OUR PART, OSC #1, SLK/ THANKSGIVING DAY,
signed by R.L. Razzette
28 JAN 34 WE DO/ OUR PART, penciled "In Cuban Waters"

USS HAMILTON (141)

? SEP 33* CUBAN/ WATERS
 13 SEP 33* GUANTANAMO/ CUBA, OSC #1
 17 SEP 33 MANZANILLO/ CUBA, OSC #1
 20 SEP 33* CUBAN/ WATERS
 20 OCT 33* CUBAN/ WATERS

USS INDIANAPOLIS

8 SEP 33* HAVANA/ CUBA

USS DUPONT (152) [Sep '33- Feb '34]

10 SEP 33 PERRY'S/ VICTORY Ditzel (p) 120th Anniversary
 9 OCT 33 GUANTANAMO/ BAY, CUBA
 15 OCT 33* GUANTANAMO/ BAY, CUBA, OSC #1
 27 OCT 33* NAVY DAY/ GTMO BAY, (p) Navy Day,
 type 9v on loor envelope with 8 cents postage
 27 OCT 33 NAVY DAY/ GTMO BAY, (p) Navy Day cachet (Razzette)
 27 OCT 33 NAVY DAY/ GTMO BAY, (p) Navy Day cachet (Hesse)
 11 NOV 33 (no words), (p) Armistice Day
 7 DEC 33* GTMO BAY/ CUBA
 23 DEC 33* CHRISTMAS/ GREETINGS
 25 DEC 33 CHRISTMAS/ GREETINGS, OSC #1, 6LK "Peace on Earth"
 1 JAN 34* NEW YEARS/GREETINGS

USS ELLIS (154) [Sep '33- Feb '34]

18 SEP 33 OFF DRY/ TORTUGA, OSC #2
 19 SEP 33 BAHIA HUNDA/ CUBA, OSC #2
 19 SEP 33* HAVANA/ CUBA
 22 SEP 33* ANTILLA/ CUBA
 26 SEP 33* GUANTANAMO/ CUBA
 8 OCT 33 GTMO BAY/ CUBA
 20 NOV 33* no slogan
 25 DEC 33* XMAS DAY/ GTMO BAY, OSC #1,
 6LK "Peace on Earth/ Good Will to Men/ U.S. warships in Cuban Waters"
 1 JAN 34* GTMO CUBA/ HAPPY NEW YEAR, signed R.L. Razzette

USS COLE (155)

13 SEP 33 HABANA/ CUBA, loor envelope, signed by C.B. Gilbert, NMC
 24 SEP 33 { GUANTANAMO/ CUBA
 26 SEP 33* {
 27 OCT 33 PUERTO BANES/ CUBA, signed C.B. Gilbert
 11 NOV 33* CUBAN/ WATERS, OSC #1, SLK/ ARMISTICE DAY
 30 NOV 33* CUBAN WATERS, OSC #1, SLK/ THANKSGIVING DAY,
 signed R.L. Razzette
 25 DEC 33* XMAS DAY/ IN CUBA, OSC #1, 6LK "Peace on Earth"
 1 JAN 34* NEW YEARS/ GTMO CUBA

USS J.FRED TALBOT (156)

9 SEP 33 {MANZANILLA/ CUBA, OSC #2
13 SEP 33* {
13 SEP 33* SANTIAGO/ CUBA
14 SEP 33 GUANTANAMO/ CUBA, OSC #2
3 OCT 33* HAVANA/ CUBA, (p) Ioor envelope, signed by MNC (reverse)
17 NOV 33 {HAVANA/ CUBA, OSC #2
20 NOV 33* {
23 NOV 33* {
25 NOV 33* {
23 DEC 33 HAVANA/ CUBA, OSC #2
1 JAN 34* IN CUBAN WATERS

USS REUBEN JAMES (245) [Sep '33- JAN '34]

26 SEP 33* CUBAN/ WATER
29 SEP 33* {
11 OCT 33 CUBAN/ WATERS
27 OCT 33* CUBAN WATERS/ NAVY DAY, (p) Navy Day (Razzette),
SLK/ U.S.S. REUBEN JAMES (245)
30 NOV 33 THANKSGIVING/ DAY IN CUBA, signed Ralph Cote, NMC
SLK/ USS REUBEN JAMES (245)

USS McFARLAND (237)

9 SEP 33 (p) Ioor envelope
12 SEP 33* CUBAN/ WATERS
20 SEP 33* PUERTO PADRE/ CUBA, OSC #1
25 SEP 33* no slogan
28 SEP 33 GUANTANAMO/ CUBA, OSC #1
19 OCT 33 BANES BAY/ CUBA, OSC #2
27 OCT 33 BANES BAY/ CUBA
13 NOV 33 NIPES BAY/ CUBA on postcard
16 NOV 33* HAVANA/ CUBA
27 NOV 33* (no slogan)
30 NOV 33* THANKSGIVING/ DAY IN CUBA
10 JAN 34 GUANTANAMO/ CUBA, OSC #2
17 JAN 34 BEN FRANKLIN/ BORN 1706, OSC #2

USS OVERTON (239)

P.M. SEP 33 IN CUBAN/ WATERS, OSC #1
17 SEP 33* IN CUBAN/ WATERS, OSC #1
30 SEP 33* HAVANA/ CUBA, signed by NMC
9 OCT 33 HAVANA/ CUBA, (p) "The Eyes of the Fleet"

USS STURTEVANT (240)

16 AUG 33* SPERON, GTMO/ BAY, CUBA, OSC #3
31 AUG 33 SPERON, GTMO/ BAY CUBA, OSC #3
11 SEP 33 {SANTIAGO/ CUBA, (p) "Navy Department" seal
12 SEP 33* {
18 SEP 33* ANTILLA/ CUBA
19 SEP 33* NUEVITAS/ CUBA, OSC #1 on #10 penalty envelope
20 SEP 33* CARDENAS/ CUBA, OSC #1
22 SEP 33 {HAVANA/ CUBA
23 SEP 33* {
27 OCT 33 IN CUBAN/ WATERS, mimeograph OSC Navy Day cachet, by
James E. Porter, NMC

USS BAINBRIDGE (246)

10 SEP 33* HAVANA/ CUBA, OSC #1
11 SEP 33* PUERTO PADRE, CUBA
13 SEP 33* PUERTO/ PADRE CUBA, OSC #1
15 SEP 33* GUANTANAMO/ BAY, CUBA
27 SEP 33 GUANTANAMO/ BAY CUBA, Chapter No. 2 (John Paul Jones)
27 OCT 33 NAVY DAY/ CUBA
21 NOV 33* CUBAN WATERS
5 DEC 33 CUBAN/ WATERS
5 JAN 34* CUBAN WATERS
15 JAN 34 CUBAN WATERS, OSC #2

USS GOFF (247)

12 SEP 33* HAVANA CUBA/,
reverse pmk. 9/19/33 U.S. Naval Station, Guantanamo, Cuba
20 SEP 33* GUANTANAMO/ CUBA
3 OCT 33* CIENFUEGOS/ CUBA
27 OCT 33* NAVY DAY/ GNTMO' CUBA
27 OCT 33 NAVY DAY/ GNTMO' CUBA, (p) Navy Day (Razzette)
printed in magenta, black
5 JAN 34 GUANT'MO BAY/ CUBAN WATERS,
(p) Stephen Decatur Birthday
17 JAN 34 CUBAN WATERS, signed R.L. Razzette

USS ANTARES (AG 10)

8 DEC 33* GUANTANAMO BAY/ CUBA
11 DEC 33* HAVANA/ CUBA

USS HENDERSON (AP 1)

26 NOV 33* NORFOLK/ VA

USS NECHES (AO 5)

26 SEP 33* GUANTANAMO/ CUBA

30 SEP 33* HAVANA/ CUBA

USS NITRO (AE 2)

25 SEP 33* GUANTANAMO/ CUBA

25 SEP 33* HAVANA/ CUBA

USS VEGA (AK 17)

15 OCT 33* GUANTANAMO/CUBA

USS WOODCOCK (AM 14)

29 DEC 33* PORT AU PRINCE/ HAITI

USS KALMIA (AT 23)

17 MAR 34* F (K-1) note: no post office aboard (Razzette)