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DESPATCHES FROM UNITED STATES CONSULS IN HAVANA, 1783-1906

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Recd. Feb. 17/1852

Consulate of The United States
Havana January 17th 1852.

Sir

I have the honor to inform you
that, by permission of the Captain
General of the Island of Cuba, I have this
day intend upon the discharge of the duties
of Commercial Agent for the United States
at this Port. This I should have done
at an earlier day, but was desired to
wait until the Capt Genl should re-
ceive his dispatches from Washington,
which did not arrive until yesterday;

My Inventory will be
forwarded by the next steamer. I have
not found the books of the office in
such condition as I could have desired,
as, in several particulars, the instructions
have not been followed. It will be neces-
sary to procure and open a new set
of books, as those in the office are not
only of an inferior quality, but most
ly filled.

Your obedient servant

W. S. Hartley

Wm. H. Webster

Secretary of State
of the United States.

Memorandum.

{ Seal of the Government
of the Island of Cuba }

Political Secretary's office.

I have received the polite communication that Your Lordship addressed to me under date of yesterday, requesting me to furnish you copies of the precedents that exist in this Superior Government about Mr. Thrasher's domiciliary letter, for the purpose of transmitting them to the Department of State, from which your Lordship has received despatches claiming them.

I regret that it is not possible for me to accede to this request, as this class of documents always remain on record, and it is not customary to furnish, even to the interested party, any other datum, than the domiciliary letter, which shows the motives there were for issuing it, and the obligations which the person obtaining it binds himself to.

However, if the Hon^{ble} Mr. Webster

deems it of high importance to have
said copy in his possession he may
address His Excellency the Minister
of Her Catholic Majesty at Washing-
-ton, to whom belongs, by his diplomatic
character, to act upon this kind of
demands.

God preserve Your Lordship many
years - Havana 6th Feby 1852.

(signed) José de la Concha

To/
The Consul General of the United States

1103
Copy of Recd
Jan

Consulate of The United States
Newman, February 9 1852

Your dispatch of the 9th ult was received by the last steamer from New York. The affairs of William Bette's estate, in regard to which you ask information, are still in dispute in this office. A letter was received a few days ago from Messrs H & S Stark (creditors not given) who claim them as surviving partners of Bette. They say they have the books of partnership, and will exhibit them if necessary. The funds will be held subject to your orders.

Very [In obedience to your request that I should procure and transmit copies of the proceedings relating to the Home-education of Mr Thrasher, I had the honor to address a note to the Captain General on the subject, a copy of which is herewith forwarded. My regard was answered by the return of a translation of which I also forward, and with that the correspondence of course ended.]

I must inform you that considerable excitement seems to prevail here amongst a portion of the population on the subject of a seaman that another ^{is} ~~is~~ _{EXPEDI-}

There is being pulled out in the United States for the purpose of invading this Island, though I can give it only as a rumor, knowing not its origin. In view of the propriety of such an audit, and of the difficulties that would result from it, would it not be well to have an account kept in this matter? Indeed there are reasons why a report of that description should remain here, at least for some time to come, as it would give security to American Citizens and American Commerce, and I should feel gratified to have one here.)

My Exequatur reached here several days since, accompanied by a despatch from Mr Barringer in which he informs me it was granted with great promptness and cordiality. I regret to say that I am much disappointed in the office. It is exceedingly unpleasant, and far from being profitable.

I have the honor to be

With great respect

Your obt Serv^t

W. S. Markham

Hon. Edward Webster

Secretary of State

of the United States

Rec^d June 7^o

Consulate of The United States
Havana. May 28th 1852

No 8

Sir

As I left home somewhat in
haste, and without due preparation for
a protracted absence, it will be necessary,
I think, for me to return for a short time,
and I hope it will be agreeable to the
Government to grant me leave of absence
for two or three months during the summer.
After the first of August there will be but
little business of a routine character
to be done, and I believe public matters here
are in a tolerably good condition. True
there is a rumor in circulation that
another expedition is soon expected, but
I place no confidence in it, and have
endeavored to satisfy the people that it
could not be true, as a small expedition
would not come if it could, and a large
one cannot without the knowledge of our
Government, which will take the neces-
sary steps to prevent it. I can leave for
Madam Ege in the office, and his expe-
rience and high character will insure
a faithful discharge of his duties.

Very respectfully

Your Obedient Serv^t

W. S. Markham

Wm. Daniel Webster

Secretary of State

of The United States.

New Orleans Aug^t 14 1852

Sir

In your despatch granting me leave of absence, I was instructed to keep the Department advised of the place at which communications would reach me. I now have the honor to inform you that I arrived in this City by the last steamer from Havana and will remain during my absence from my Consulate, in the neighborhood of Vicksburg, Mississippi, at which place communications will reach me.

With very great respect

I am your Obedt Servt

W. S. Harris

Hon Charles Webster
Secretary of State
of the United States.

2.12 Sept 65

No. 11665

No 12.

Consulate of the United States.
Havana August 25th. 1852.

Sir.

Since the departure of Judge Sharkey, nothing of importance has occurred here, except the excitement caused by the seizure by this Government of a quantity of balls and cartridges with the people employed in making them, which has been followed by about one hundred persons being arrested on suspicion of being concerned in an intended revolt; But I do not hear of any that are prominent persons here among them; there are many exaggerated reports, but worthy of little or no credence.

The Government has also seized a printing press said to have been at the moment of seizure printing copies of a paper against the Government, called "La Voz del Pueblo" (the Voice of the People); all the persons then found in the building were arrested, and

are now subject to the action of the
Permanent Military Court.

The Island is now quite tranquil.
Many exaggerated and false reports
will no doubt reach the United States,
but the preceding is all that can be
depended upon at present.

With great respect

Your obedient servant.

M^o. Morland.

acting Consul.

To The Honorable
The Secretary of State
of the United States.
Washington City

P.S. Your despatch n^o. 16, dated 5th of July,
was received here on the 18th Inst.

Recd Sept 1st 1852

Mr. Abbott

Washington Aug^t 31. 1852.

Hon. Danl Webster

Secy of State

Sir, I would request from
the Department of State such infor-
mation as may not be incompatible with
the public interest in regard to instruc-
tions given to the Consul at Havana
in the question of domiciliation of
Amern Citizens there, based upon
information laid by me or others before
the Department.

Very respectfully

Yrs off. Serv^t

J. S. Proasher

New Orleans.

2 Lane Octo

looky whole Exposed

Mr Abbott Vicksburg Oct 11th 1852

Sir

Owing to my absence from Jackson, your Despatch of the 17th Ult. was not received until the 8th Inst. The condition of affairs in Cuba had attracted my attention, and I was using every exertion so to arrange matters as to be able to depart for the Island at an early day. In a few days I shall leave for New Orleans, and will take the first Steamer for Havana. [A new cause of difficulty has now occurred in consequence of the course pursued by the authorities of Havana, towards the Steamer Crescent City, this affair will doubtless command the attention of the Government, and, it is hoped, be adjusted without difficulty. Allow me to say that a new treaty with Spain might possibly be the best means of producing a permanent good understanding between the two Governments. I hope to be in Havana by the first of November at furthest, and will be happy to observe any instructions the Department may think proper to give.]

With great regard

I have the honor to be

Your Obedt Servant

W. S. Marking

Hon. C. M. Conrad

Acting Secretary of State

of The United States

Read to Mr. Now Mr. Forest.

Jackson Miss 24th Oct 1854

Hon. Daniel Webster

Secretary of State of the United States.

Dear Sir,

I am informed by
despatch from Mr. Crittenden, Acting Secretary,
of State, that the President has been so kind as
to under me the place of Consul at Havana,
for which I return my profound thanks, and
accept the place with pleasure. I was ab-
sent from home when the despatch reached
him, and some delay has consequently oc-
curred in giving my answer. As I am taken
rather by surprise by this appointment, some
short time must elapse in making the necessary
disposition of my private affairs, but this
shall be no obstacle, as I will make it
convenient to go at any moment. As I
am about to enter upon a new theatre, I would
be pleased to receive as full information and
direction as it may be necessary to give. And
I would be pleased to know whether it will
be necessary to visit Washington previous to
my departure. I infer from the despatch that

To the Secretary of State, Mr. Crittenden, to be sent to Mr. Crittenden.

M. F.
Nov. 6. 54

that this Consulate is regarded by the President as being peculiarly important at the present time, and I am therefore free to confess that I shall feel somewhat embarrassed in the situation. All I can pledge is, that I will give all my energies to the discharge of the duties. If the proper documents can be forwarded, I could receive them either at New Orleans or this place.

Your Obedt Servant

W. L. Sharkey

1602 Nov 3rd

Mr. [unclear]

No 17 *copy*

Consulate of the United States
Havana Octr 27th 1852.

Sir.

I have had the honor to receive your despatch of the 11th Inst. by U. S. Steam Ship Powhatan, which arrived in this port on the 23^d. having on board the Minister to Mexico, and Commodore Newton. I now beg leave to reply to the several questions contained in your said despatch, by referring you to my communications nos 13. 14. 15. and 16. relative to the affair of the U. S. mail Steam Ship Crescent City.

As to the "El Dorado" steamer, the treatment whereof by the Authorities here, has been brought to the notice of the Department of State, I have to say, that the affair occurred when Mr Sharkey, the Consul was here. I learn however that she came here from Aspinwall on the 19th day of July last with 290 passengers

five having died on the passage, and three being sick with fever on arrival, but no cholera. This vessel was not allowed to have fuel, provisions, or water sent to her (of which she was in great need), but these articles were taken to her outside by the Empire City Steamer belonging to the same company. The "El Dorado" was allowed to make fast to a buoy, one mile outside of the Morro, until the Health officers had visited her, when the Captain General called a meeting of the Board of Health, which decreed that the ship must immediately leave the port, not permitting her to lay at anchor a moment longer, or to have communication of any kind with the shore. She therefore proceeded to Key West. These facts appear in the Records of this Consulate in a Protest entered by the Agent of the Company owning the "El Dorado".

The other complaints made by our Merchant ships are particularly the placing on board Police officers and

Soldiers on two or three of them
to prevent any obnoxious person
from landing, and also to prevent
such parties as are accused, of
being connected with the late sup-
posed attempt at revolt from
escaping out of this island. This
of course is annoying enough.

The custom has been more particularly
exercised in the case of American Steamers,
where so many passengers come
and go, that it is very easy for
parties to effect their escape, and
I have heard from good authority
that many have so escaped. A
police officer is placed on boards
of every merchant vessel that brings
passengers. it is an annoyance
no doubt, but I do not think
it is in any way prejudicial
to the interest of American Commerce.

I will now state in obedience
to your directions the details of
the late occurrence relative to the
Sark Cornelia, Capt Ward, of
New York, which appears to be

The most important case, excepting that of the Corrient City. That vessel had cleared and was proceeding to sea, when a Government boat went alongside to search for a suspected person and some despatches supposed to have been sent under his care from the disaffected here to certain people in the United States connected with them. The person was found on board, and although he had his passport, he was taken out of the Cornelia and brought ashore, and he has been in prison ever since. The officers likewise found a Mr Samuel Harme or Heartness, an American engineer, secreted on board as he had no passport. He was also brought on shore and imprisoned, but allowed his liberty in a few days at my request. The Captain of the Cornelia came to the Consulate and noted his protest but did not extend it. He stated to me that the Captain of the Port demanded the despatches.

which Curman (the other person alluded to) was supposed to have, and that he had answered that he could not swear whether he had received them or not, as he was in the habit of throwing into a drawer all letters sent on board, not in the letter bag. He spoke of abandoning his ship, but I told him that I would never do, and I question whether it was anything more than a mere threat without any serious intention to do so. He complained of the violent and insulting language which he asserted the Captain of the Port had used towards him on his denying a knowledge of the existence of the despatches sought after.

Capt. Ward proceeded to sea on the next morning with his letter bag, there is no doubt but the letter bag, which had been taken out of the ship by the officers, was examined, and some packages directed to suspicious persons abstracted,

as the Captain General gave notice through the newspapers for the persons who may have written those letters, giving the address of each, to call at the Palace, and witness the opening of the said letters; and some did go, but how many I know not, and as mere reports are less to be trusted here than any where I have ever been, I shall not venture to give any. Under these circumstances when the laws were violated on the one hand, and the Government was protecting itself on the other, I did not deem it a case in which I had a right to interfere; therefore, I made no official report of it to the Department.

And the Barb Childs Harold arrived here from New York about the time of the Cornelius's affair. The Authorities having received information that there were arms on board in boxes; which afterwards turned out to contain Castings, ordered her to be discharged under the superintendence of Government officers. As no arms were found

The ship was given up to the Captain,
without injury or detriment to the
interest of her owners.

All this information has been
communicated to Commodore Newton,
who had advised me that he
had instructions from the Navy
Department to obtain it.

I have the honor to be, Sir

With great respect

Yr most obt servt.

Wm. H. Wood acting Consul

Honble. C. M. Conrad
actg Secretary of State
of the United States.
Washington.

Rec^d Nov 25th

Ms. A. 6. 4

Consulate of the United States
Havana October 30th 1852.

Sir.

I have the honor to inform
you that I have just arrived
in this City, and shall immediately
resume the duties of my office.

With great respect

Your obt. serv^t

W. L. Maskey

Hon^{ble} Secretary of State
of the United States.
Washington City.

Recd 18. Nov.

Edm

No 19.

Consulate of The United States
Havana. Nov^r 8th 1852.

Sir

Having my absence Mr Mor-
land kept you advised of the condition
of our relations with this Island. Having
no dispatches to reply to, I can only in-
form you what has occurred since my
return ~~on the 30th ult.~~ on the 30th ult., which was duly
announced to you. On my arrival Mr
Morland informed me that Judge Porte-
lin, our Minister to Mexico, had called
him on the business of the difficulty
with the Steamer Crescent City, and that
a temporary arrangement had been en-
tered into between the Judge and the
Captain General, by which that vessel
should be permitted to land her mails
and passengers, and receive others, but
that neither Capt Poston nor Person Smith
should be permitted to land. This arrange-
ment however was understood to be but a
suspension of the prohibition which had
existed towards that vessel. The Cres-
cent City arrived in this harbor on the
2^d Inst, with Person Smith on board,

under the command of H. H. Llanos, port
Ege, and was permitted to land her mails
and passengers. Soon after her arrival
I had the honor of an interview with
the Captain General, in which His Ex-
cellency stated to me the purport of the
agreement with Judge Coublin, but said
it only extended to the present visit of
the ship, and that as Person Smith
was still on board, she could not be
allowed a similar privilege on her re-
turn from New Orleans, unless he could
be ascertained that Smith should not be
on her. His Excellency expressed much
surprise that the person was still retain-
ed after the assurances given by the
Secretary of State to the Spanish Min-
ister at Washington. He stated to me
that he had received a communication
from the Spanish Minister to that effect;
that the Secretary of State had af-
firmed the Minister in the most positive
terms that Smith should not return on
the vessel, and authorized the Minister
to make that statement known to
the Captain General. This letter was

is stated, and that portion of it trans-
lated by my secretary. Deeming this
fact one of importance, I forwarded
a statement by the Crescent City to
be communicated to you by telegraph
from New Orleans. I was not prepared
to reply to this intelligence, and could
only suggest to His Excellency that prob-
ably Smith was not an officer of the
Government, and therefore not subject to
its control, which I afterwards learned
to be true, as he was there by contract
with the owner of the vessel. I informed
Captain Harcourt of what had oc-
curred, and stated to him what might
be expected on his return. I cannot
be positively certain whether His Excel-
lency said the ship should not enter
the harbor, or only that she should
not have communication with the shore.
My secretary is under the impression
that he only intended to instruct com-
munication with the shore. The differ-
ence, however, seems to be of little con-
sequence. This affair has produced
a very unpleasant state of things

and I have only to hope that the Govern-
ment will give it prompt attention.

You are doubtless aware
that considerable excitement exists in this
Island. The signs of revolution seem to be grow-
ing more and more decided in character, and
aid from the people of the United States is
looked for. I think it is confidently expected
here, amongst all parties, that expeditions are
being organized in the United States, and that
they may be expected here during the winter
or spring. It is thought here by some that
the coming in of the new administration,
when the energies of the Government will
probably be somewhat relaxed, will afford
a favorable opportunity for such enterprises.
Present appearances would seem to indi-
cate that it would be well for our Govern-
ment to give some attention to the probable
condition of its citizens here, in such an
emergency. I have heretofore alluded to
the propriety of keeping a naval force
stationed here, but as the suggestion seemed
to meet with little favor, do not feel at lib-
erty to repeat it. Probably with such a
policy all this difficulty might have been

avoided. (It seems to be difficult to induce
either the authorities or the people here to be-
lieve that our Government does not lend its
countenance to expeditions against the Island,
although I have again and again assured
them to the contrary. I must inform you
that we are not allowed to receive newspapers
from the United States through the Post Office,
nor is any one allowed to bring them on the
shore, two or three papers being excepted as
I understand, and it may be that other
communications are suppressed. This condi-
tion, to say the least, is humiliating, espe-
cially to me.)

I herewith forward a copy of
a letter from Mr. Morrison to the Comman-
der of the Crescent City, and one from Mr. Mor-
rison to me, together with a note from the
Captain General. I had not time to pre-
pare this despatch to be forwarded via
Hoboken by the Crescent City, ~~but~~ avail
myself of the earliest opportunity, which
will be afforded by the Black Warrior

I have the honor to be
To the Hon^{ble} Secretary of State,
of the United States,
Your Obedient Servant
W. L. Garrison

Recd. Nov-19 0

M: Abbott & M: Marlow

New Lisbon 14th Nov. 1852

Secy. of State
Washington

Sr,
Sir,

Can your Department inform me, whether the name of David Browne is included in the list of those persons executed near Haranua, for participating in the Lopez expedition, his Parents reside here and it has been stated that their son was a member of that unfortunate affair. They have only just heard the report, and are consequently very uneasy.

Any information will be properly appreciated

Respectfully &c.

R. Whitacre

See list in Republic of Aug. 21

& Journal of Commerce Aug. 22. 1851

24 Nov. 1852 John W. Ashmead

do.

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" WILMINGTON.....Glazier's Building, Corner of Third and Market Streets.
" BALTIMORE.....Sun Iron Building, Corner of Baltimore and South Streets.

BY TELEGRAPH,

Dated Philadelphia Nov 24th 1852

Rec'd, Washington, Nov 24th 1852 1 o'clock 49 min. P.M.

To Hon Edward Everett.
Secretary of State

I have been asked today by a person known to Judge Kane and myself whether he can be compensated if he gives information which will lead to the seizure of Arms and Ammunition designed to be used in Cuba. I understand that they are to be taken from this city on Friday which makes it too late to communicate with you by letter. The person who has given me the information is to see me tomorrow morning

at nine O'clock. Will you telegraph
me what I shall say to him?

He is a person in whom Judge
Kane and myself have confidence

John W. Ashmead
Dist Attorney

155 Walnut St

109306 Pg 4 m

L x

Answer immediately by telegraph

Answered by Telegraph as follows:

You may promise a reasonable reward; the amount to be fixed by the Collector, Judge Kame, & yourself. Proceed according to Law.

Edward Everett.