

Camp Caffery near  
Covington La  
July 17 1898

My Dear Mother

I just finished your  
letter. Was very glad to hear from  
you. I got a letter from Frank  
a day or two ago & will answer it  
as soon as I have time  
in I am kept pretty busy just  
now, as we do nothing but drill, start  
at six in the morning & keep going  
pretty much all day so when night  
comes we are about played out.

For the first hour & a half in the  
mornings we have company drill  
& then after a half hour rest we  
have two hours of battalion drill  
that is till 10 a.m. Then we lay  
off till 1<sup>o</sup> p.m. but we are not  
idle during that time because  
there is always plenty to see  
after. After one o'clock we go



out marching + go any where  
from 5 to 12 miles after that  
is supper + retreat + then bed  
time. so you see there is very  
little time we can call our own

As you saw in the paper I  
have been appointed adjutant  
of my battalion + feel very proud  
of it as I heard Major Swain  
say that I was the only man in  
the battalion that could hold  
the job + he did not say it to  
me. We have been having  
plenty of rain during the last  
week <sup>in</sup> fact most too much  
to be comfortable for the men  
we up in the officers row are  
faring very nicely but the shelter  
tents are not very serviceable in  
a very hard rain

Oh, yes I forgot to tell you  
that I have a horse had to



get one when I was made  
 adjutant. gave a fellow \$75.00  
 for it. That is gave him my  
 note for 90 days. for that amount

The whole outfit will cost  
 about \$1000. Well I will have  
 three months to pay it, in so no  
 one will suffer. I tell you I've  
 found out that it costs something  
 to be an officer in the army.

Oh, well I will get \$123.00 per  
 month so I guess it will all come  
 out all right. I cant say when  
 we will leave, but every one  
 thinks about Thursday as the  
 transport that is to carry us left  
 New York on Friday morning &  
 will reach N. C. on Wednesday  
 I dont think we will stay



very long in N. A. no longer than  
it will take us to get aboard  
I will close as I want to  
write a few more letters to night

Love to all

Your affectionate son  
Ves Bell

P.S. Don't know what will be  
done with Adolph Mitchell. He  
will be tried by General Court  
March 1st & stands a very good  
chance of being shot. I am  
going to try & have my picture  
taken tomorrow

Good night



Mrs. M. J. Bell  
648 St. Charles St  
New Orleans  
La.





N. S. A.

Miss W. F. Bell  
6148 -  
New Orleans  
Louisiana





Headqrs. 2<sup>nd</sup> U. S. V. I.  
Santiago de Cuba  
Aug. 5<sup>th</sup> 1898

My dear Mother,

This is the first  
time I've had time to write  
since I arrived. We have been  
very busy. I have been, (and  
am still,) assistant Quartermaster  
& X my friend Christian lets  
me do all the work. Well I  
am at last in the much  
talked of Cuba, it seems to  
be a very nice country, but  
the people Oh! my, they are  
the hardest lot I ever saw  
dirty, hungry, shivering & dirty  
I think they are dirtier than  
anything else. The town  
of Santiago is very old town



The streets are about twenty feet wide sidewalks & all. ~~it~~ is built on the hills & some of the streets are straight up & down & I tell you that a horse is a very nice thing to have. I bought one the day after I came & got a very good pony for \$20<sup>00</sup>.

There are only two of the companies are here. The other two were sent to Guantanamo yesterday to guard 5000 Spanish prisoners they are going to have a small train. There are only 15000 of them here. but they are very good people much better than the Cubans who will steal anything they get their hands on.

Will close as I have to go to work. Will try & write



more in a few days  
Love & all.

Your affec<sup>t</sup> son  
W. B. Bell

Address

% Hood's Immune Regt.  
Sanctiago de Cuba  
Cuba.

No sickness in our camp  
at present.



Alameda Camp Santiago <sup>Chile</sup>  
Aug. 24<sup>th</sup> 1898

My Dear Mother,

It has been sometime since I last wrote, but I don't get much encouragement to write as we get no mails in this place. There have been several steamers in during the past two weeks but no mail for us.

The "Berlin" with Fran's luggage aboard arrived yesterday, but the mail she brought has not been delivered yet. I hope there is some for me. One of our lieutenants who was up in N.C. came on the "Berlin" he brought me a package of books I don't know who sent them but am very much obliged just the same. I am enjoying them just as if I knew who sent them.

Of course you have seen all the talk in the papers about our regt. being in



disgrace etc. Well now of it so  
as we have the reputation of  
being the most efficient Vol. organization  
in the service are considered so  
by, Genrs. Lanyon, Whaler, Woods &  
Shafter & they are the only ones  
who count in this game.

I am still holding down my  
job as adjutant.

Well I will have to close  
For goodness sake write try a  
letter by way of New York.

Love & all  
your affec<sup>t</sup> son  
W. D. C.



Return to

WAR DEPARTMENT ENT.

W. H. Bell

2nd W.S.D.

OFFICIAL BUSINESS

Postage? Extra

Penalty for postpaid



Mrs. W. H. Bell

674 1/2 St.

New Haven

Connecticut

Pa. N. S. A.



Wm Bell  
No 2 and 4, S.V.B.  
San Francisco de Cuba  
Sofia de Cuba



Mrs. W. F. Bell  
614 5th St. Charles Ave  
New Orleans  
Louisiana  
U. S. A.



Wameda Post, Santiago de Cuba  
August 28<sup>th</sup> 1898

My Dear Mother,

This is about the "strength" letter I've written you but as yet have received no answer. Not only have I had no letter from you but I have not a line from the Station since we arrived. In fact only one or two of the boys have had any letters, We don't know what to make of it. Well if I can't get letters I can write them which is the next best thing. I took a trip to Morro Castle yesterday & also paid a visit to the Reina Mercedes. Morro Castle is well worth a trip. There are several old time mortars & two or three old fashion smooth bore cannon. I was in the cell that Hobson was kept in during his stay at Morro. The Castle is built on the top of a rocky hill at the mouth of the harbor. The lower part is hewn out of solid rock. There are two stories of hewn cells & underground chambers in which are stored ammunition of all kinds while above are several more stories, that were built; you should see the work, the brick



are about 8 in long 8 in wide + two in thick  
it must have taken years to build it; as  
all of the outside walls are four feet thick.  
On the top the walls come up about four feet  
above the roof + are made with places for  
the guns to be mounted. The two guns remaining  
on the top are copper + about 150 years old  
judging from their looks. Of course I scratched  
my name on one of them. From the top  
of the Castle to the water is about 500 ft.

The second cell from Hobson's is the one  
that a fifteen inch shell, from one of Uncle  
Sams warships went through, the hole in  
the wall is about 8 feet in diameter. I would  
not like to have been around when it came  
through. The top (ramparts I suppose)  
are torn all to pieces with shells. The old  
bricks could not stand the pressure of the  
big guns. The light house was shot half  
away. One side of it was torn out just as  
clean as if it had been done by hand instead  
of by cannons at 2000 yards.

After having seen all of Morris Castle here



was to be seen. I got a stiff + pulled over to the Reina Mercedes. She is lying about 100 yards from shore in the mouth of the harbor.

She is lying on her port-side with the water half way up her deck. We went aboard + took a swim off of the boat. He went down in hole + stood neck deep in water to get some wood as a souvenir. Everything has been taken off the Reina Mercedes that can be moved.

If you want anything now you have to take an axe + chop it off. There is nothing left but the wood work and all the movable stuff has been moved. Well I guess that's about all of Morro Castle + the Reina Mercedes except that I got a grape shot from Morro.

I expect we will be moving very shortly. The Col. went out on a tour of inspection + got back yesterday but I don't know where we will go. It seems that we no sooner get settled than we have to hit the quit. I will be very sorry as I am having a dead second time



You know I am post-Adjutant - Have a  
tent - all to myself besides an office with two  
clerks. + I guess if we move I will lose all  
that. We have had two deaths in the  
regiment - during the last week. Both of  
them died from the effects of rum. One of  
the men was in my company he died yes-  
terday + was buried this morning. I guess  
they will stop fighting booze for a while  
now. The drunkards keep our guard house  
full all the time. We have from 40 to 100  
in every day, but most of them are from  
other regiments.

Well I will have to close Love to  
all.

Your affectionate son  
W. B. Bell



WAR DEPARTMENT

*W. G. Bell*

*2nd Regt. U. S. I. L.*

*San Antonio & Co. Cuba*

OFFICIAL BUSINESS

Penalty for private use, \$300.



*Mrs. W. G. Bell*

*6145 St. Charles Ave*

*New Orleans*

*La, U. S. A.*

Alameda Post

Santiago de Cuba

Sept 4<sup>th</sup> 1898.

My Dear Mother,

The first letter I've received since I arrived was yours of Aug. 11<sup>th</sup> which came a day or two ago. I don't know what the matter with the mails, but none of the boys get any mail so I don't suppose I've got any sick to make. We are still in Santiago with very little prospect of moving.

There was a good deal of talk about our going somewhere but sometime ago we received orders that we were to remain here. I would like very well to go to Havana or Porto Rico but other than those two places I would not care to move. I have written a little home every week since I've been here the second letter was registered & contained a hundred dollar money order one was sent to Billy a few days after with a money order for '25 dollars.

I would like very much to know if they were received yours was sent on Aug. the 10<sup>th</sup> so you should have received it by this. I have paid



all my debts which amounted to about two hundred dollars so I feel pretty good on that score. I went down to Morro Castle since I wrote you last. Saw the cell that Hobson was in during his stay at the Castle went aboard the Reina Mercedes, a Spanish war vessel that is sunk in the mouth of the harbor. Got a few relics from both places. I don't know if I told you or not, but we've had two deaths since we arrived. Both were caused by too much rum, & if the men don't stop drinking it more of them are going to die. We sleep our guard house pretty full from 20 to 100 are in jail all the time. I have been sleeping very well. Don't find the climate any warmer than New Orleans.

Well I will close Love to all  
Your affectionate son  
V. G. Bell

Penalty for pr.

WAR DEPARTMENT.

*W. G. Bell*

*1011 2nd St. S.W.D.*

OFFICIAL BUSINESS. *Washington Cuba.*

# *531*

726

*Mrs. M. G. Bell*

*6445 St. Charles Ave*

*New Orleans*

*Louisiana*

*U. S. A.*



*3781*



REGISTERED  
SEP 14 1898  
Mailbox Station No. 1  
San Francisco, Cal.



Alameda Post  
Santiago de Cuba  
Sept. 18<sup>th</sup> 1898

My Dear Mother

Enclosed find New York exchange for fifty dollars. We were paid off today. I have a good deal of money coming to me that I hold out but the boys in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion have not been paid off yet so I have been unable to collect it, but as soon as I do I will send you fifty- or seventy-five more.

I sold both of my houses, one I paid \$11<sup>00</sup> for + sold it for \$8<sup>00</sup> the other one cost me \$25<sup>00</sup> + sold for \$35<sup>00</sup> So you see my first spec. in Cuba made me a few bones.

There is some talk of our being mustered out but I hope not as I don't know where I could get 125<sup>00</sup> a month with as little to do.

I guess I will come back here if we are mustered out



There seems to be a very good  
chance ~~to~~ for our Americans in  
this country. Well I will  
have to close as I have a  
good deal of work to do this  
p.m. O! yes I got a paper  
from you dated Aug 26<sup>th</sup>  
it came yesterday. Give  
my very best to Frank  
& tell her that I thought  
of her on her birthday  
but could not send  
her anything because  
everything costs too  
much. Good by

Your affectionate son  
V. S. Bell

Only one letter from  
you or any one since  
I've been here  
away



WAR DEPARTMENT

Lt. W. G. Bell

Co 2nd U.S.V.S.

OFFICIAL BUSINESS.

Permitting see below.

Mrs. Dr. J. Bell

6145 St. Charles St

New Orleans

Louisiana

U.S.A.



Penalty for private use, \$300



Sungo Camp.  
Sungo Cuba  
Sept. 17 1898

My Dear Mother

Only a line to let you know that your letters of the 19<sup>th</sup> & 24<sup>th</sup> came to hand yesterday also seven other letters dated from Aug. 12<sup>th</sup> to Sept. 14<sup>th</sup>. Was very glad to get some news from home, for while we have a very nice crowd of officers a fellow likes to know that his friends at home have not forgotten him. I got a letter from Louise dated Sept. 14<sup>th</sup> she said all on the Bayou was well & that she had just gotten back from a visit to Terre Bonne also said that Rosalie got the price of "Hobson's" Tree" that I sent her sometime ago.

You will see by the above heading that we have moved. We are about twenty miles north of Santiago. Got here to-day. I came on a head of the Battalion (only the 2<sup>nd</sup> are here) & picked out the best quarters we



town. The men are camped in a  
 Spanish hospital and the headquarters  
 (Major Swain and 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. V.S. Bell Adjutant)  
 have a six room house across the street  
 from them. I have two rooms one  
 my office and the other bedroom. The Major  
 has two + there is a dining + bath  
 room left so you see we are very  
 well fixed. The reason for our leaving  
 Santiago was not because we could  
 not control the men. for Gen Wood &  
 Gen Lawton both said that the 2<sup>nd</sup>  
 had done more towards keeping the  
 town straight than any other regiment  
 in the service, but Gen. Lawton said  
 that owing to the very hard work we  
 had done he thought that a few  
 weeks in the mountains to rest us up  
 would benefit the service as well  
 as the regiment.

There is a Lieut. Johnson of the 3<sup>rd</sup>  
 Immunes who wrote that our regiment  
 was made up of gutter rats bums +



drumheads + other such things. There are several  
of our officers who are talking of going gun-  
ning for the gentleman + I guess he will  
wish there was never such a thing as  
Hoods Immunes before we finish with  
him. Capt. Swain + I went to the 3<sup>rd</sup>  
the other day but Lieut. J. was at Swan  
Lanero so we did not get a chance to  
see him. Speaking of the other Immune  
regiments here, the 9<sup>th</sup> ("Cranes niggers")  
have 900 men sick + the fifth Immunes  
about 400. The fifth regulars 450 + Hoods  
Immortal Immunes about 75 sick +  
four dead. Oh! I don't know we ain't  
so warm. There are no streets named after  
us yet. It took four regiments to  
take any place in Santiago while we  
are having our vacation. It looks as  
if we were the banner regt. in the biz.  
don't it?

Major Boatman is well + in  
command of the Alameda Post which  
we left this A. M. He looks very bad.



is weak but will be all right in a few days. Tell Frank that his friend Richard (who she met at Coffey) has the yellow fever. Was taken to the detention camp after the fever had left him, if they had let him a lone a few days longer he would have been all right.

I nursed him a while & also one of the other boys who had it. The other fellow (Hicks) got well before they knew what was the matter with him. Oh! we've got a swell set of doctors I don't think. The chief surgeon of the general hospital asked Stewart when he got his commission wanted to know if he drew it in the lottery.

I call that pretty hard on a man who calls himself a first class surgeon.

My Captain (Willcox) has a bad case of the dead-beat-us. That's what the boys call it. Nothing in the world the matter with him except that he is so lazy he don't want to feed him self. Well I will



close as I have had a pretty hard  
day & want to get a good night's rest  
Give my love to all

Your affectionate son  
V. G. Bell

Co. Woods Immunes 2 U.S.V.I.  
Santiago de Cuba



Soldiers letter

WAR DEPARTMENT  
V. B. Williams  
Hogman letter

OFFICIAL BUSINESS.

W.S.A.

Mrs. W. J. Bell

614 3<sup>rd</sup> St Charles Ark

Miss Pickens

Linn Co



Penalty for post



N. A. Bell & P. 24, S. D. G.  
Largo, Louisiana Post.  
Cuba.



Mrs. M. J. Bell  
614 1/2 St. Charles Ave  
New Orleans  
Louisiana  
U. S. A.



Songo Post

Songo Cuba

Sept 25 98



My dear Mother

I thought

I would write you today  
as I am twenty-five summers

You did not know that you  
had a son who was a quarter  
of a century old. We are still  
up in the mountains, having  
a real easy time, don't know  
how long it will last, as  
I hear that as soon as  
the men get in better



hope we will be moved to  
Avana, but we have heard  
this old move racket so often  
it is getting very stale.  
I would not mind staying  
here for two or three months  
it is very pleasant up here,  
good deal better than in  
Santiago. Santiago is a very  
nice place, but very unhealthy.  
We have been very lucky  
ly lost five men since we  
organized. I think that is  
going very well. Two of the  
five who died were "H" Co

men, one died from drinking  
rum + the last one, who died a  
day or two ago, died of heart trouble.

We've got one or two in "H"  
who I think will die before  
long as they will fight this  
booze + it will kill the best  
of them. We have turned  
the men loose let them  
do pretty much as they please  
+ there is not half the army  
there was before. They seem  
to think that we don't care  
whether they get full or  
not + just quit. It makes



it a good deal ~~easy~~ easier for  
us.

Oh! yes you remember Lieut  
Rockwell, who got off in N.C.,  
well he was helping one of  
his men clear up some brush  
to pitch a tent & cut his foot  
with an axe. Cut the blade  
of his big toe & while it is not  
dangerous, he will not be able  
to use it for a month or  
more. The Capt of his company  
resigned & I guess Rock will  
be the next Capt of "M".  
There has been several resignations.



Capt. McCoy of A. Capt. Mathew of W  
Lieut. Allen of A. Lieut Trotter of K.

We don't know yet who is going to  
fill the vacancies, of course we all have  
a guess + everyone thinks his guess is right  
well it don't matter very much to me  
as I can't get two bars on my straps  
just yet a while, but the time may  
come. Hope you got the last check  
I sent you. The other one was long  
enough in reaching U.C.

Guess you will glad to hear that  
Maj. Boatman is all right again  
I tell you he had a pretty close  
call + if he had stayed under  
the doctors or this regiment, we would  
have another Major.

Oh! yes our "sly pilot" has come



He wandered all over the United States  
drawing 4 cts a mile or riding on a  
pass. He is strictly after the stuff.

Well I will say good by for this  
time Love to all

Your affectionate son  
W. S. Bell



Spain etc

Mrs. M. J. Bell

614 5th St Charles Sp

New Orleans

Louisiana  
USA





Songo Cuba Oct 9 1898

My dear mother

Well I don't know it  
does rain in Cuba & that's no joke.

Been raining for the past week & I  
don't think that it has stopped  
for five minutes during the last  
thirty six hours & it looks as if  
it was going to continue for some time.

It is just such weather as we some-  
times have during the winter at home  
only not cold. I've got a house to sleep  
in but I have to be out in the rain  
several times a day, so I generally take about  
12 grains of quinine every morning. I went  
down to Santiago the other day on official  
business & had a chill but am all  
right now. This old business of being  
on the staff ain't what it's cracked up  
to be there's too much work in it. I  
believe I would rather be battalion  
adjutant every day, but then I am



not asked what I want to be, but  
have to do as I am told. Of course  
I felt very good when Col Wood asked  
me if I would like to be commissary  
officer & then said that he guessed  
it did not make any difference if  
I liked it or not as I was the  
only man who was fit for the place  
but all the same I wish he had  
put someone else in the place.

I understand that they are not  
going to give any more discharges in  
this brigade (Gen. Ewers) or any more  
in the army in Cuba. I guess we  
will have a little trouble with the  
people. We have been giving them rations  
& those who are able to work don't  
get any & they are inclined to raise trouble.

They talk among themselves about  
not getting anything to eat & what  
they are going to do about it. They  
were a couple of hundred in here  
yesterday & all of them armed. One  
tried to shoot an officer (Lt Bagwell)



but Beignell got his six shot out  
first + Mr. Cuban spent the night in  
jail.

I tried to have my picture taken  
while I was in Santiago but it  
was too cloudy. the ones I had taken  
were spoiled.

Another officer of our regiment has  
resigned + left for home. Lt. Trotti of  
Co. K. that makes two of "K's" officers  
gone. Capt McCoy + Trotti + leaves Pickard  
in charge. I guess he will be Captain  
of "K." I hear that Capt Loony is  
going to leave us on Nov. 1<sup>st</sup>. Our  
strength now is about 965 men. + only  
about 100 on the sick report. which  
is very few in comparison with the  
other regiments stationed here. Cairns  
"niggers" are all sick + the 8<sup>th</sup> Ill.  
also "nigs" are in pretty bad shape.

I wish they would move us  
to some other place as here there is  
only room for two companies indoors  
+ the rest have to stay out in tents



of course that would be all right if  
it would not rain. Speaking of grain  
I saw in one of the N.C. papers  
that the rainy season in Cuba was over.  
Will just tell your friends that the  
papers don't know. That the rainy  
season has just started is the natives  
say that it will last till the first of  
Dec. Well I will close as there  
is a lot of work to do. Give my  
love to all. Hope you got that  
check for \$35.00 I sent you last  
month. Tell Bill & Frank that  
I will write to them soon.

Your affectionate son  
Wm. B. Hill

Santiago Cuba  
Co 2nd U.S.V.I. (Hoods)



1843  
L. 2  
1843

Forwards, Customs

Mrs. W. H. Howard

6143 St. Charles Ave

New Orleans

Louisiana

U.S.A.





Songo Post Santiago Prov. Cuba  
October 12<sup>th</sup> 1898

My Dear Frank

Your letter + two from Mother of Sept. 23<sup>rd</sup> + 25<sup>th</sup> came to-day. Was very glad to get news from you all. I wrote to Mother + Billy a day or two ago so I thought you were about all. There is not very much excitement in this sort of life, it is not exactly what I expected when I enlisted, thought we would have a little fun any way, well it may come yet as we are expecting trouble with the Cuban soldiers. They are making hell kinds of talks. Say they won't lay down their arms till the U.S. Gov. gives them \$25<sup>00</sup> a month for every month they've been in the service + what's more they can't lay down a gun. Last night we were expecting a large time as the Cubans had been coming into town all day + were overheard saying what they were going to do to us. So all the men were ordered to sleep under



arms. About 12 o'clock last night, some of the officers, myself among them were sitting up, + we heard the long roll sound over in Col. Grubbs' camp, (which is about  $\frac{1}{4}$  of a mile from where we are) you can imagine what a stir there was, everyone grabbed a six shooter + belt of cartridges + rushed over to the barracks. The men turned out in two minutes + then we awaited developments which never came. Capt. Willcox was ordered by Maj. Swain to go over to the other camp + find out what the trouble was. (we could see lights moving all around the camp. Heard one officer give one or two commands.) Well Coxie (Capt. Willcox) came back + reported that one of the buglers had thought it would be a good joke to sound the alarm + the bugler who was on duty took it up, thinking he had been ordered to sound it. This morning Col. Grubbs told the same story, but somehow I think "~~Grubbs~~" had a hand in that deal his own dear self. After we found out what it



me all was everybody took a drink & went to  
sitting bed. I have a dead swell job  
over on my hands now. Am giving rations  
to the Cubans you should see the number  
of people in this little town. The first  
one day there were about fifteen, that was  
last Thursday, to-day we had about  
turned eight hundred. I think most of them  
tid came up from Santiago & Cristo, but  
is only forty-eight families got anything, the  
in rest we chased away.

it I heard some very bad news  
lights to-day, heard that most of us were  
one going to have to pay back a lot of  
well money to Uncle Sam. You see the  
did first pay day we had we drew money  
it from the date we went into camp, which  
the in my case was May 27. So by that I  
cutly owe the Government two hundred & sixteen  
dollars & fifty-two cents. Not so much when  
you say it quick, but still it counts.

but Well if I have to cough up I guess  
a try can make me do it; because they  
have the stuff & won't forget to hold  
it out. It will cut quite a hole



troubly new  
when the 15th  
of Sept. came  
Worked a good  
deal harder  
on that day  
than I had  
for a long  
time.  
I can't find  
my duty  
at a point  
I think mine  
but one day  
since we came  
George

in my plans, but then I got a raise  
of eight dollars a month + that will help  
some. Am getting along very well in  
my new job, while there is a good deal of  
work in it. I don't mind the work as  
I am getting some experience in  
commercial business by it. You see I  
handle all the grub that comes here  
order, receive + give it out + besides that  
I will have a Post Commissary + will  
have things for sale. There is a big re-  
sponsibility; well I guess I can hold  
them for a while.

Oh! I forgot to tell you I got a letter  
from Mary Smith today, they are in Virginia  
now have been spending the summer  
in Mass. somewhere.

Well by by must have to close  
it's bed time  
Lots of love to you  
all  
Your loving brother  
George Beech

Don't forget to give my best to  
Mr. Remond. Am smoking that pipe of his now!



Número.....

RESTAURANT  
**LA VÉNU.S.**

	Pesos	Cents.
<i>1 potato</i>		<i>50</i>
<i>1 potato</i>		<i>40</i>
<i>1 potato</i>		<i>30</i>
<i>1 potato</i>		<i>20</i>
<i>1/2 potato</i>		<i>15</i>
<i>1/2 potato</i>		<i>20</i>
<i>1/2 potato</i>		<i>05</i>
<i>Read the above</i>		
TOTAL.....\$		<i>1.20</i>



Ms. B. 1. 2. 1829  
Huntington, Cuba,

Mrs. M. J. Bell

by U.S. A. Charles Cook

—New Orleans

La., U.S.A.





G. Gibora Cuba

Oct. 27 1898

My Dear Mother

you see by the heading we have left Santiago.

Got here to Gibora yesterday evening but did not get undressed in fact we just started. Hope to

get everything off to day as the ship

"Rosina" aka "Los Angeles" is very small

+ we have 400 men on board.

We had a very pleasant trip (for some of us) there were a good many sick as

the ship rolled a good deal whether we

came through the Windward Passage.

We are now on the north coast of Cuba about 400 miles East of

Havana. Goodness knows how

long we will stay here. About



two ~~regiments~~ ~~of~~ ~~all~~ we can  
have. We are the first American  
soldiers that have been here &  
I guess we will have a hot  
time. Only part of the regiment  
came this trip the rest will come  
in about two or three weeks.

I hope we will be able to  
stay here sometime as the  
place looks very nice from the  
ship. I am waiting for the  
lighter to come back (it  
has made one trip) & then  
I will go ashore.

Well I hear her coming  
so I will have to close



as I have to load her.

Good by till next time.

Don't know how often the  
snails will come in or out  
but hope often.

Give my love to all  
your affection

Yrs, Bill

address

Sanctiago  
Cuba

---



Gibara Nov. 19 1898

My Dear Mother,

It has been some time since I wrote you & a much longer time since I heard from you in fact I have not received a letter from you since I've been in Gibara, but a letter from Billy dated the 21<sup>st</sup> Oct. & a paper of about that date came a few days ago. I sent you a letter on the Manilla several days ago & don't know how long it will reach you as she is not telling when she will go. She left here for the States but is going to run along the coast to Havana & then to Key West. We had a very swell ball last night at headquarters given by the officers of this command. The Cubans have been giving us a number of blow outs so we had to get back at them. I tell you we did ours up in great shape. Af.



course I was there & had a very nice time  
There are several very pretty girls & a number  
of good dancers, we had good music &  
therefore had a very nice time. The room  
was a little crowded but that could  
not be helped. I enclose you an address  
card & also a program. I hear that  
the Cubans are going to give us another  
dance in a few days.

I have moved into (just here I  
was interrupted for two hours, had to issue  
rations to the Cubans. So you see how  
hard it is for me to do anything.

That's the way it is all the time,  
whenever I start to do anything for  
myself someone comes in & wants  
something & I have to leave.) as I  
started to say I have just moved  
into new quarters, caused by the  
receipt of 65,000 Cuban rations, my  
old warehouse was not big enough  
to hold them. Well the change was  
for the better as I now have a big  
room about 20x20 ft. & fronts the



in bay. I don't show myself in  
such a big place. Besides my room  
I have another larger one for my  
office & then my two clerks sleep in  
a room like mine on the other side  
of the office. I think I would like  
to put in the rest of my enlistment  
in right here.

Now having a good deal of work  
to do just now, with all this freight  
coming in & the regiment & about 5000  
Cubans to feed but I don't mind  
it very much & as long as I sleep  
well & a person will hardly get  
sick with this delightful sea breeze  
blowing all the time.

I sent you a couple of pictures  
I had taken in Santiago. They are  
not very good. That is I don't think  
my so. Well I will have to say  
a good by as someone else wants  
was something. Will keep this open  
& write some more before I send  
it off. Love you



November 22<sup>nd</sup> 1898

This is the first time I've had time to write and now that I've started I don't know what to say. Oh yes yesterday we had a meeting of the officers to pay the bills contracted by the different committees at the ball.

It reminded me a good deal more of a sewing circle than a lot of men. Two of the officers, Capps Wilcox & Smith said that they would only pay ten dollars apiece. Well there were \$150<sup>00</sup> worth of bills & of that amount Major Swain paid \$45<sup>00</sup> & Lt. Cunningham (he was put under arrest that night for relieving some guards) paid five, that left a balance of \$106<sup>00</sup> & our share was \$13,301.

Lieut. Woodlief got up & roasted Smith & Wilcox. He said that some people were so small as to want to go out & enjoy themselves & let others



pay the bills, & that the rest of the officers  
 were willing to pay their share regardless  
 of what it was. <sup>2nd</sup> They were not only  
 paying for the ball but were also  
 buying experience & that experience  
 bought that way was not easily  
 forgotten & when there was anything  
 else given we would know who  
 to invite & who to leave out. Willcox  
 & Smith tried to pass the whole thing  
 off as a joke but the joke did not  
 go. I always thought Smith's "Cory"  
 were the shortest man I ever had  
 any dealings with & that little  
 affair yesterday proved that I was  
 right. This evening I have to get  
 back to work on my Cubans.

Fed about 500 families & then took  
 a rest. Guess they have eaten up  
 all the rations I gave them & want  
 more, so this afternoon I will give



out tickets for 75 families. I tell you  
it's a big job. The first thing to  
be done is canvass the town & see the  
people who need rations (those who are  
in want.) & then take a trip every  
day till all those people have been  
fed. When we give out rations I  
have six or seven clerks & they are kept  
busy all the time. A Cuban ration  
consists of, flour, meal, bacon, sugar  
coffee, salt, pepper, hard tack, & soap. So  
you see they do not fare so badly. I don't  
see why the U. S. Gov. wants to keep on  
feeding them, for as long as they do the  
Cubans are not going to work. Now in  
Santiago the Government has been  
feeding Cubans ever since Aug. 1st & I  
don't think any of them will do a days  
work for less than three dollars (gold)  
before that they say a person could  
get all the help he wanted for 30  
to 40 cts. a day.

I am trying to buy some land  
up in Port au Prince Province. Am



on a deal with a party for about a  
to thousand acres. If I can buy it for  
the \$50000 I think I will invest. Port au  
all Principe is one of the richest provinces  
on the Island. They raise coffee, sugar  
oats, wheat, bananas & all the tropical  
I fruits; But few fruits of all kind  
grow anywhere. I declare I never saw  
to see anything like the way vegetation grows  
at here, the people (natives) won't work  
to a crop. They simply plant it & wait  
about a few months & then go out & gather it.

There is a party in the next province  
to this (~~San~~ ~~Diego~~) (Santiago) who has  
in 4000 acres that he is trying to sell me  
but he wants \$160000 for it; I tell  
I you if a person had about \$5000  
days in this country he could be well  
to off in a few years. Well Mother I  
am going to be well off without  
30 the five thousand.

The two Gregory boys of our regiment  
are going into the tobacco & coffee business  
and want me to go in with them



I guess that will be the best way for me to do. You see his father has a good deal of money & also runs a cigar factory at Key West, Fla.

It takes about three years for coffee to make anything, but after that its easy. Of course a person would have to work pretty hard & live pretty hard but I think I've done both in the Nation, so it would be easy for me. Well I'll say good by for to day.

Gwyn  
Nov, 23, 1898

I have just been informed that the mail closes in about fifteen minutes and as I want this to go guess I'll say good by. With lots of love for the folks & yourself

Dear

Your affectionate son  
Gwyn Bell



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*Warrent*

OFFICIAL BUSINESS.

Mrs. W. J. Bell  
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Louisiana



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Gibara Jan 1 1899

Dear Mother

A Happy New Year to you all. Have only time to write you a few lines. The rest of the regiment arrived on the Sr. Reina de los Angeles yesterday & left for Holguin this A.M. Hear that we are to follow in a few days. Well I will be sorry enough to leave Gibara as it is a very nice little town.

I will have to go to Holguin in the morning to see about receiving some substance stores shipped me at that place & also to feed the troops that went up this A.M. you see in a way I am the bread & meat of this push.

Have not heard from you since I last wrote but guess I'll get a letter by the next mail.

Have been hard at work



since Thomas getting my papers  
in shape & will finish in a few  
days. Good by its getting  
late (11 o'clock p.m.) & I have to get  
up very early to-morrow Love & well  
Your affectionate son  
V. Bell

Will return from Holguin on  
Tuesday & will write when I get  
back

Gwyn



Holguin Cuba  
January 18<sup>th</sup> 1899

My Dear Mother

Yours of Jan. 1<sup>st</sup> reached me to day, it is the first letter I've had from you since before Xmas. Don't know what's the matter with the mails. They were doing very well while we were in Gibara.

Work! Oh no I have not had much work to do. I'll tell you C. Grubbs keeps the whole push on the top. Of course I like Col. Hood, but as a commander he ain't one, two, six with Grubbs. I am having a good deal of trouble getting fresh beef for the regiment. You see this is only three days a week from Gibara + although this (Holguin) is a large town they can only give us two hundred lbs every other day, so on the days that the train comes up I get 600 lbs from Gibara, it only takes



500<sup>#</sup> per day to run us + its impossible to get it. They seem to have forgotten that the 2<sup>nd</sup> U.S.O.D. are on the Island.

I've had a requisition in Santiago for supplies since Dec 15<sup>th</sup> + have not heard from it yet. Guess we will have to live on Red Cross stuff when the present stock runs out.

I hear (but it is only rumor) that we are going to Havana in about six weeks - hope so, would like to go there before we leave the Island.

Say the last paper I ~~remember~~ saw was Dec 7<sup>th</sup> over a month old.

Well there is one thing I'm glad of + that is I have my papers right up to date.

We've at last killed out about all the small-fox in this part of the country. This evening all the patients in the S.-P. hospital were discharged + the building burned down with all the bedding, cots, + cloths that the patients owned.



They were issued new out-fits & left  
happy & well.

I think we have a right to be  
proud of our regiment as we have  
been on the Island longer than any  
American troops ever stayed, have  
been exposed to all the diseases of the  
country (yellow-fever - small pox & every  
thing else) have had only 19 deaths  
(two killed) & can show a better health  
record than any troops that have  
ever been here - not so bad?

Guess when we get back we'll  
be immune from any old thing.

Gen. Wood & Ewers say we are  
the best Volunteers in the Army.

I don't believe I told you, but  
I've got a camera (pocket Kodak) took  
twelve pictures, & now have no more  
films. However I expect some  
from New York on the next boat.

Say this town is on the same  
bottom place I've seen, except  
Santiago. Guess it would be



Pan-American  
Express Co,  
Hope you  
got the m.c.  
anyway

Will try &  
write of time  
in the future  
but have been  
so busy that  
I hadn't  
time to write

a very nice town if it was for  
the people.

We left Capt Richard & Lt. "Smiley"  
Hammer, with C. K. in Gibaud,  
Hammer was up today & I mentioned  
that I had a letter from you &  
he said, "Well Bell give my regards  
to your mother, I don't know her  
or your sister but I heard so much  
about them while in N.O. that they  
seem like old friends." and then  
he proceeded to touch me for \$3.00  
which he got. ~~What~~ it had  
been made because "Smiley" is good  
for \$100.00 pay day.

Tell Billy I'll write him in  
a few days. Give my love to all  
Your affection son  
J. B. Bell

Can't you mail the cloths in ~~two~~  
two bundles or send them by the



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FEB 24 1899

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My Dear Mother

Yours last, of Jan. 16<sup>th</sup> received to-day. You will see by the above that I am in Gibara, came down this morning on the train & will leave this evening on a mule. A boat came in this A.M. & I got sham the P.M. to go through the mail & get mine out.

The uniform has not come yet nor have the Xmas presents. I had a letter from Godchaux advising me of the shipment of the uniform. Things are about the same as usual here. We lost one officer by death in the States (2<sup>nd</sup> Lieut. Lobdell of Co. I.) and one by resignation (2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Nichols of Co. G.) the latter was asked to resign, got drunk on duty & left camp without the commanding officers consent & Col. Smiths asked him to resign. Col. G. told him that if he



# Post Office, New York, N. Y.

Third Division, City Delivery.

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did not hand in his papers, there would  
be General Court Martial charges preferred  
so Nichols resigned. It's a good riddance  
as he was one of the bumpiest officers in  
the Regt. Capt. Morris C. G. just got

back from a three month leave & Lt. &  
Adj. Gamble left on a two month leave.

Yours truly put in for a 60 day leave  
& had it turned down. Col. Hood said  
that I did not need a leave at the present  
stage of the game.

Don't know what they will do with  
the man who killed Staff Xmas eve.

He had a trial but it did not go  
as Gen. Ewers who convinced the court  
did not have the power to do so & the  
proceedings were made void, the man  
is still in jail in Solgwin.

Tell Lewis that I have been  
pretty busy of late but will write to



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be in a day or two. I am running a  
butcher shop, barber shop & corner grocery  
so you see I have my hands full.

It is not like running store things  
for ones self for then there would be  
no one to kick if things did not come  
their way but as it is, it is only long  
continuous sick Oh. well I am getting used  
to that. Will say good by as I have  
a long 35 mile ride ahead of me,  
before night & it is now 2 P.M.  
Love to all

Your affectionate son  
V. Bell

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NEW YORK CITY.

Camp near Holguin Cuba

April 2<sup>nd</sup> 1899

My dear mother

No letter from you for over a week. What is the matter? There have been four mails during the last week, but none of them brought me anything but a letter from Torington. You speak of sending me two papers a week, well somebody is getting a lot of good reading at my expense as I haven't received a paper in over a month Feb. 8<sup>th</sup> I think <sup>was</sup> the date of the last. Guess you had better discontinue sending any more.

A telegram from the boys in Santiago says that Troop "N" has left for Holguin fully equipped. They should get here in about four



Ms A 92 2 1119

Botquino Cuba  
P.O. Central  
Chaplain



99



Mrs. M. J. Bell

646 St Charles Ave  
New Orleans  
Louisiana  
W.F.W.



Holguin 4/5/1899

Dear Mother

Only a few  
lines to say that I leave  
in the morning on a  
scout which may  
last twenty days  
Expect to leave for home  
when we get back.

If you don't hear from  
me for some time don't  
worry for I don't know  
when I will be able to  
mail another letter

Love to all

Your affectionate son  
W. J. Bell







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