The Santiago Surrender Tree Memorial is located in Santiago de Cuba near the San Juan Hill Historic Park.

**BACKGROUND**

On July 1, 1898 U.S. and Cuban troops fought to seize El Viso Fort, the town of El Caney and San Juan Heights, and San Juan Hill. These victories opened the way to Santiago de Cuba. Negotiations between the opposing forces led to the Spanish surrender under the Ceiba tree on July 17.

Nearly a century later, the original tree died. The Cuban government planted a new tree in 1998 during the centennial ceremonies.

The memorial area is surrounded by an iron fence, which is made up of barreled Spanish Mauser rifle actions. They are surmounted by cast reproduction triangular bayonets. The tree is flanked by large bronze plaques that resemble open books.

Four 18th century Spanish cannons interspersed with four siege mortars flank the walkway around the memorial.

The Santiago Surrender Tree Memorial was dedicated in mid February 1906. By an Act of Congress, it became the responsibility of ABMC on July 1, 1958.

The Surrender Tree on San Juan Hill as it appeared in 1901, before the memorial was built around it.

The brochure cover is a 1957 photo of the Surrender Tree within the memorial, showing it retained its distinctive shape.

For more information on this site and other ABMC commemorative sites, please visit www.abmc.gov

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"Time will not dim the glory of their deeds."
- General of the Armies John J. Pershing
Beginning in 1895, Cuban revolutionaries ("Mambises") resumed the fight for independence from Spain. American sentiment favored the Cubans.

February 15, 1898: The battleship USS Maine was sunk by an explosion in Havana harbor.

April 19: The U.S. Congress passed a resolution for war with Spain. Spain reciprocated. The nations were at war. President William McKinley ordered a naval blockade of Cuba. Spanish authorities ordered Admiral Pascual Cervera to sail his fleet to Santiago de Cuba.

May 19: Admiral Cervera’s fleet entered Santiago Bay.

May 27: Admiral William T. Sampson’s U.S. Navy fleet blocked Santiago Bay.

June 10: U.S. Marines landed at Guantánamo.

June 14-20: Major General William R. Shafter and 17,000 soldiers sailed from Tampa, Florida aboard scores of vessels. U.S. Navy ships escorted the convoy to Cuba.

June 22: General Shafter’s forces began landing at Daiquirí. Units moved westward toward Santiago de Cuba.

June 24: Brigadier General Joseph Wheeler’s U.S. forces defeated Spanish units at Las Guásimas.

June 25-26: More U.S. troops, plus 3,000 Cuban troops, landed at Siboney. The combined forces continued to the heights east of Santiago de Cuba.

July 1: General Shafter’s forces attacked three vital Spanish positions. Brigadier General Henry Lawton’s units seized El Viso Fort and El Caney. Brigadier General Wheeler’s dismounted cavalry seized Kettle Hill. Brigadier General Jacob Kent’s infantry charged up San Juan Hill.

July 2: Cuban General Calixto García’s forces attacked Spanish positions northwest of Santiago de Cuba.

July 3: Admiral Cervera’s fleet tried to leave Santiago Bay. The U.S. Navy squadron destroyed the Spanish ships. On land and sea, the Spanish faced complete defeat.

July 17: After several days of negotiations the Spanish capitulated. Spanish General José Toral made the formal surrender to General Shafter at 9:30 a.m. under the Ceiba tree.


JANUARY 1, 1899: Spanish forces left Cuba.

Results. Cuba received its independence. Spain ceded Puerto Rico and Guam to the U.S., and sold the Philippines to the U.S. for $20 million.