

Serafín Sánchez, loyalty to Martí



Serafín Sánchez and José Martí

By: Arelys García Acosta, Radio Habana Cuba correspondent in Sancti Spíritus

On the 128th anniversary of the death in battle of the hero of the three wars for Cuba's independence, Sancti Spiritus pays tribute to José Martí's faithful friend.

About the illustrious son of Sancti Spíritus, the unconditional friend of José Martí in his emigration to Cayo Hueso, the faithful ally to whom the Apostle entrusted important missions, Juan Gualberto Gómez, another great figure of Cuban history, said: "Serafin Sanchez was one of the most active, persevering and determined defenders of patriotic independence; he never despaired of victory; his faith in the justice of our cause always overcame the discouragement that the partial failures of

the redeeming ideal could inspire".

Serafin was certainly a brave man. On 6 February 1869, the paladin of the three wars took up arms at Los Hondones, at the head of 45 men, and from then on, he carried out a series of heroic deeds that would culminate in the rank of major general, conferred on him on 12 December 1879 from New York by Major General Calixto García Íñiguez, the main organizer of the Chiquita War.

With this decision, García Íñiguez recognized Serafin's integrity and his concrete contributions to the cause of independence against Spanish colonialism.

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On 24 July 1895, together with Carlos Roloff and José María Rodríguez, he led the disembarkation at Punta Caney, Tayabacoa, an expedition that brought hundreds of weapons and 150 men to the island, giving a remarkable boost to the region's fighting activity.

The hero of the three Cuban wars of independence felt, like other patriots, the pain of the absence of those who died on the battlefields, he felt, like others, the hardship of thirst and hunger, of ragged clothes and half-naked feet; this was the price of the freedom so often longed for.

It is not surprising, then, that in 1893 José Martí commissioned General Serafín Sánchez to write a book of the poetry recited on the battlefields and the biographies of some of his comrades who had fallen in the 1868 war.

Héroes humildes (1894) is the story of six fighters told by Serafín himself and a biography of him written by Gonzalo de Quesada.

With this decision, García Íñiguez recognized Serafin's integrity and concrete contributions to the cause of independence against Spanish colonialism, and without any desire to stand out in the ranks of the liberation army, Serafin was gradually promoted.

Nothing should be lost from those times. This is a book of the heart that will be much loved".

In a letter to Eduardo Hidalgo Gato, the National Hero would write about this sincere and just man, the patriot of Espiritu: Of solid merit and pure heart (...), the brave and reasonable Cuban Serafin Sanchez. As a soldier, he has been all over Cuba, earning just and great glory. He is a man of discretion and treatment of men, of absolute honesty and reserve, and as you can see, his backbone is as big as his stature".



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