April 7, 1900.

The Adjutant General, U. S. Army,

Washington, D. C.

Sir:-

On the 30th ultimo I cabled to the Secretary of War as follows:

"Five Puerto Ricans convicted of murder and robbery in "1898 most revolting circumstances have been sentenced the "capital penalty and all confirmed on appeal by Supreme Court "of Island. Execution will take place in accordance with "local law as soon as arrangements are perfected. There is "no question of guilt or the justice of the sentence. There "have been nearly a hundred homicides in this Island within "year."

I have now the honor to inform you that in conformity with the sentence of the Court the convicts therein referred to, namely, Carlos Pacheco, Hermogenes Pacheco, Rosali Santiago, Simon Rodriguez and Eugenio Rodriguez, were duly executed at Ponce at 9.45 a.m., today. As this is the first instance of capital punishment which has occurred in this Island since the American occupation, I deem it proper to submit for your information a brief statement of the case.

At the time of the commission of this crime the southern and western parts of the Island were infested with bandits who were committing all kinds of depredations, murdering the inhabitants, extorting money, burning plantations, etc. These five men proceeded in band to the plantation of Prudencio Mendez, a wealthy citizen residing near Yauco, and endeavored to extort 10,000 pesos

from him and subsequently murdered him on October 28th, 1898, under most revolting and atrocious circumstances. Four of these men were arrested by the Military authorities, and the fifth, Rosali Santiago, by the Chief of the Local Police of Yauco, and were held for trial by Military Commission. The trial was delayed for several months owing to the difficulty in securing the necessary evidence and the attendance of sufficient officers to form a Commission. Owing to this delay it was feared by the people of the southern part of the Island that they might be permitted to escape, and numerous petitions were received at these Headquarters urging their speedy trial and execution. The treaty of peace intervened before a Military trial could be had and their cases were then turned over to the Department of Justice for the action of the civil court. They were duly arraigned before the District Court of Ponce, and after a full and exhaustive trial according to the laws of the land, were all convicted and sentenced to death. Appeal was taken to the Supreme Court of the Island which confirmed the sentence of the lower court. These Judges were Puerto Ricans composing the District Court which adjudged these men guilty, and six Judges, also Puerto Ricans, composed the Supreme Court, to which the cases were appealed. Throughout their trial they were represented by counsel and every facility afforded them for defence according to the laws of the land. They were executed by the garrote, which is the legal method of capital punishment according to the laws in force in

this Island, and the execution was accomplished decently and quietly, and in strict conformity with the law.

No Army Officer or soldier had any connection with the trial or execution.

Very respectfully,

G. W. DAVIS

Brigadier General, U. S. Vols.,

Commanding.

Copy of letter of Capt. Lyons