

JANUARY 1, 1898

UNITED STATES MILITARY STATIONS

On April 25, 1898, the Congress of the United States declared war on Spain. A United States naval squadron, under command of Commodore George W Dewey sailed the same day from Hong Kong for Manila Bay. On May 1, 1898 the United States naval forces won an extraordinary victory over the Spanish fleet. On May 3rd, they took possession of the Cavite Naval Station, which had been abandoned by the Spaniards. Under Order Number 201 (Mail for the United States Forces in the Philippines) issued on May 24, 1898, the 8th Army Corps, under the command of Major General Wesley Merritt, was ordered to support military operations in the Philippine Islands. They assembled at Camps Merritt and Merriam at San Francisco and were sent to the Philippines in several expeditions on chartered Army transports. The first army units landed at Cavite on June 30, 1898. A postal agent, F W Vaille, together with two clerks, accompanied the second expedition which arrived in Cavite on July 16, 1898. They were detailed to the Money Order, Registry and Stamp Division of US Military Station No. 1 in the Philippines to attend to the distribution and dispatch of the army and navy mails. There was a delay of about two weeks to set up adequate postal facilities in Cavite. In the interim, postal operations were conducted by sending mail on board steamers for dispatch to the United States. These arrangements commenced on July 16th and remained in place until July 30th.

The Philippine Station, established by Vaille to provide Military postal facilities, was opened at Cavite on July 30, 1898. This station was a branch office of the San Francisco Post Office. On August 13, 1898, Vaille embarked on a transport and arrived in Manila to witness the taking of Manila and to arrange for speedy transfer of Postal Operations from Cavite to Manila. Simultaneously with the capture of Manila, the Spanish General Post Office located at Escolta, Manila, was taken over and opened to the public the following day (Sunday, August 14, 1898). The safe and supplies from Cavite did not arrive in Manila until August 19th when the Money Order, Registry and Stamps Business was at once opened. Similar to Cavite, the Manila Post Office was established as a branch office of the San Francisco Post Office and remained as such until May 1, 1899 when it was made a separate entity, and the first Director of Posts (Vaille) under the military regime assumed office. Whilst the Military Postal Stations were established primarily for Army needs, they also handled mail for civilians. After May 1, 1899, Military Station postmarks no longer contained the words 'San Francisco'. Additional post offices were opened at various times as the occupation progressed. Remainder stamps under the Spanish Occupation as well as USA stamps were applied on covers and used to pay postage charges until the first overprinted Philippine issues were placed on sale in Manila on June 30, 1899.

'MIL. STA. NO. 1 / SAN FRANCISCO' DUPLEX CANCEL



1m Orange Brown (Pair)



1m and 2m Orange Brown (Pairs)

