

## **J. M. TUASON & COMPANY**



Don Jose Maria (J. M.) Tuason, one of the most prominent merchants, bankers, and real estate magnates of mid-19th century, established J.M. Tuason & Co., one of the earliest Filipino-owned merchant firms of the time. J. M. Tuason & Co competed against American and British trading houses operating in Manila, such as Ker & Co. and Russell & Sturgis, regularly publishing market reports in English for customers in foreign markets. The firm functioned as an import-export agent and was active in the sugar trade in the 1850s and lumber and jute exports to China in 1875. In its import activities it actively brought in textiles, playing cards and earrings, which it sold wholesale to local Chinese merchants. In addition to trading, the firm also opened a banking house in the 1860s, receiving deposits, as well as issuing bills on London and Madrid, as well as discounting commercial paper. In addition, Don Jose Maria Tuason was nominated as the first manager (gerente) of the Banco Español-Filipino de Isabel II (1853-1856), precursor of the Bank of the Philippine Islands. He was also elected director of the prestigious Real Sociedad Economica de Amigos del Pais (Royal Economic Society of the Friends of the Colony), a non-profit and philanthropic organization during the Spanish period which was independent from the Church

and its primary goal was to propagate the economic development of the Philippines. His varied activities were cut short by his untimely death in 1856.

The Tuasons are descended from an intermix of Chinese, Spanish and Filipino families. The great patriarch of the Tuasons was a Chinese immigrant from Fukien, Son Tua who settled in Binondo, Manila in the early 18th century. He came to Manila to engage in the galleon trade. Quickly amassing wealth because of his business acumen, he became possibly the richest man in the Philippines by the second half of the 18th century.

Considering his racial background, he had to reassure the colonialists of his loyalty to the Spanish crown. He thus organized and was named colonel of the Battalion of the Royal Prince, composed of 1,500 Chinese mestizos. They fought gallantly against the British forces which ransacked Manila and the surrounding provinces between 1762 and 1764. At the same time, he poured huge sums of money to the resistance movement against the Protestant invaders and after they had left, to the war against the Moros in the South.

As a reward for his loyalty and boundless generosity, King Carlos III of Spain exempted his family in 1775 from paying tributes for two generations. In addition, he was encouraged to hispanize his name. In that time it was the practice to reverse the syllabry of a Chinese name, so Son-tua was hispanized to Tua-son. From that time on he was called Don Antonio Tuason.

Eight years later, King Carlos III elevated them to the hidalguia (Spanish nobility), adorning them with a colourful coat-of-arms. Thus, the house of Tuason became the only Filipino family which was not of Spanish but of Chinese blood which ascended the Spanish nobility. Henceforth, they were removed from the roll of Chinese mestizos and became Spaniards by royal decree.

To defend and sustain the privileges which King Carlos III granted him, Don Antonio founded a mayorazgo (noble estate) on 25 February 1794 as a corollary to his last will. Its cardinal principle was that the succession was based on male primogeniture (first born or eldest son, which coincidentally was not only a Spanish policy but also a Chinese custom). For this purpose, after bequeathing two-thirds of his vast estate equally among his eight children, he set aside the remaining third as well as the balance of the fifth part (quinto) which he was free by law to dispose of in any manner he wished. King Carlos IV approved the mayorazgo in his decree of 20 August 1795.

By that time, Don Antonio had died and he had been succeeded by his first son, Don Vicente Dolores. He is considered the first lord. From this line came the Manila Tuasons. Don Vicente was succeeded by Don Mariano Tuason who married Maria Juana Fabie. Don Jose Maria Tuason was the third lord and he married Doña Maria Josefa Patiño y Tuason, his first cousin. Their first-born son Jose Severo Tuason (1833-1874) succeeded to the Tuason Mayorazgo, after Don Jose Maria died in 1856.

A notice was made in 1864 to dissolve the company by its shareholders, Josefa Patiño de Tuason, Mariano Tuason, and the fourth lord of the Tuason Mayorazgo, Jose Severo Tuason, although the company continued its activities until the turn of the 20th century.

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**J. M. TUASON & COMPANY**

**BH1: STRAIGHT-LINE HANDSTAMP IN TWO ROWS**

J. M. TUASON & C  
23 OCTUBRE 1880



Pre-Printed Cover from Manila to Tudela, Spain

125m (on reverse) Single Weight Overseas Rate tied with Parrilla Cancel  
and Business Handstamp (BH1) applied across stamp

24 October 1880 'Manila – Star' Departure CDS. 4 December 1880 Navarre Arrival Backstamp



# J. M. TUASON & COMPANY

## BUSINESS HANDSTAMPS

### BH1: STRAIGHT-LINE HANDSTAMP IN TWO ROWS

J. M. TUASON & C  
23 OCTUBRE 1880

J. M. TUASON & C on Top  
Date on Bottom



Scott #73  
(1879)



Scott #76  
(1880)



Scott #83  
(1880)



Giro Fiscal Stamp (W-103)  
(1880)



Giro Fiscal Stamp (W-104)  
(1880)



Giro Stamp (W-104)  
(1880)



Giro Stamp (W-104)  
(1880)



Giro Stamp (W-105)  
(1880)



Giro Stamp (W-107)  
(1880)



Giro Stamp (W-107)  
(1880)



# J. M. TUASON & COMPANY

## BUSINESS HANDSTAMPS

### BH2: STRAIGHT-LINE HANDSTAMP IN ONE ROW

J. M. TUASON Y CA

J. M. TUASON Y CA in One Line



Scott #64  
(1878)



Scott #64  
(1878)



Scott #85  
(1882)



Scott #85  
(1882)



Scott #81  
(1882)



Scott #81  
(1882)



Scott #81  
(1882)



Unlisted in Scott  
1897 Surch in Red on Sc #81



Giro Fiscal Stamp (W-104)  
(1880)



Giro Fiscal Stamp (W-104)  
(1880)



Giro Fiscal Stamp (W-105)  
(1880)



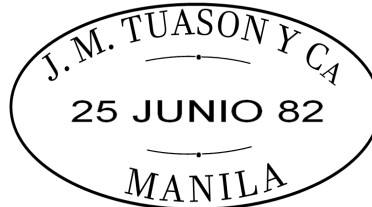
Giro Fiscal Stamp (W-105)  
(1880)



## J. M. TUASON & COMPANY

### BUSINESS HANDSTAMPS

#### BH3: SINGLE OUTER LINED OVAL HANDSTAMP



**J. M. TUASON Y CA on Top**  
**Date in Middle, With Small Scroll Lines Above and Below**  
**MANILA on Bottom**



Scott #92  
(1883)



Giro Fiscal Stamp (W-104)  
(1880)



Scott #92  
(1883)



Giro Fiscal Stamps (W-103)  
(1880)

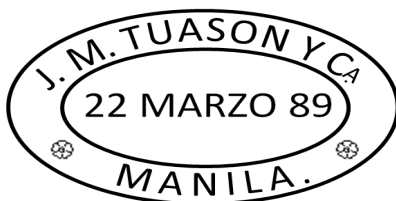


Recibos y Cuentas Fiscal Stamps (W-253)  
(1879)

## J. M. TUASON & COMPANY

### BUSINESS HANDSTAMPS

#### BH4: TWO SINGLED LINED OVAL HANDSTAMP



J. M. TUASON Y CA on Top  
Date in Middle  
MANILA on Bottom



Scott #81  
(1882)



Scott #81  
(1882)



Scott #91  
(1887)



Scott #86  
(1882)



Scott #86  
(1882)



Scott #86  
(1881)



Giro Fiscal Stamps (W-105)  
(1880)



## **J. M. TUASON & COMPANY**

### **BUSINESS HANDSTAMPS**

#### **BH5: TWO SINGLED LINED OVAL HANDSTAMP**



**J. M. TUASON Y CA on Top  
Date in Middle, Inside Rectangular Box  
MANILA on Bottom**



Scott #164  
(1891)

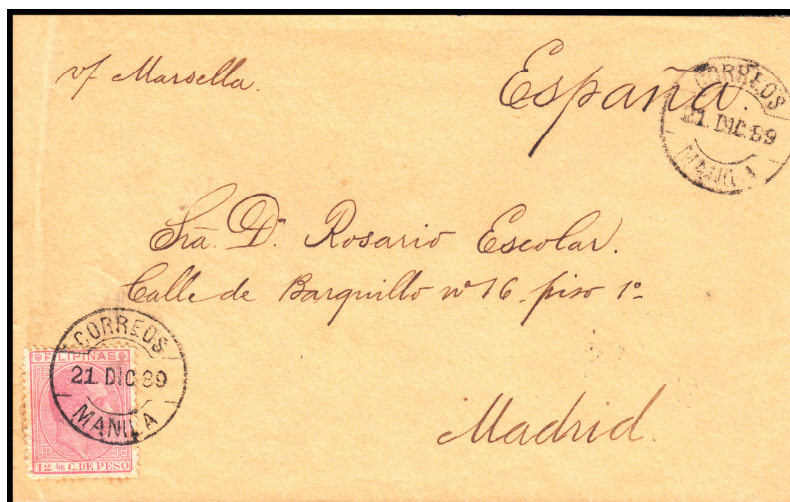


Giro Fiscal Stamp (W-135)  
(1888)

## J. M. TUASON & COMPANY

### EMBOSSSED COMPANY INITIALS ON BACK OF COVER

#### RA1: J M T & Co



Cover from Manila to Madrid, Spain with 21 December 1889 'Correos - Manila' Departure CDS

12-4/8c Stamp Paying Single Weight Overseas Postal Rate to Spain

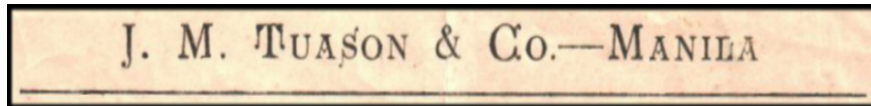
With 'J M T & Co' Embossed Initials on Reverse and 25 January 1890 Cateria and Madrid Receiving Backstamps



## J. M. TUASON & COMPANY

### PRIVATELY PRINTED COVERS

### PPC1: J. M. TUASON & CO - MANILA



J. M. TUASON & Co. – MANILA in Single Line

### US PERIOD COVER



Cover Front from Manila to Prague, Czech Republic

5c US Period Overprinted Regular Issue Tied with Manila – 29 September 1902 Duplex Cancel

Cover addressed to the President of the Handels und Gewerbekammer  
(Chamber of Commerce and Industry)