

## RUSSELL & STURGIS SOME MORE MARKINGS

*By Geoffrey Lewis*

Don Peterson is to be congratulated for his research on the American firm of Russell & Sturgis. (IPPS, Journal, Second Quarter, 1993) I have some further examples of markings associated with this firm.

**Figure 1** shows another oval hand stamp from this firm, inscribed **FORWARDED By RUSSELL & STURGIS MANILLA**. The cover has two strikes of this marking both in red. No other example of this marking has been recorded. Note the spelling of Manila, with two L's, is often found in 19th century correspondence especially by people from England. In fact some English stamp dealers still use this spelling today.

The letter is dated 25 January 1840. It was written by Juan B. Marcaida, who used the services of Russell & Sturgis as forwarding agents to convey this letter to the captain of a British ship. I also have a duplicate copy of this very same letter to Huth from Marcaida, dated 27 January 1840. The duplicate has no postal markings and no mention of Russell & Sturgis.

The cover in **Figure 1** is inscribed "Sultana" and this ship presumably carried it to Britain where it was landed at the port of Deal, and struck with the INDIA LETTER/DEAL handstamp. The letter has a London arrival date-stamp of 11 June 1840, and the manuscript "8" signifying a postal charge of 8 pence. From January 1840, Britain applied a uniform rate of 8 pence per half ounce on all incoming ship letters regardless of origin, and regardless of the distance from port to destination (Scamp). Since a different rate would have applied for a letter to London originally posted in Deal, it was necessary for the Deal Post Office to apply a SHIP LETTER or INDIA LETTER mark on mail arriving by ship.

**Figure 2** illustrates a cover with the **Overland via Marseilles Russell & Co.** marking in black. It is dated 10 February 1843, and arrived in London on 7 May 1843. I know of one other cover from Manila with this marking, dated 11 February 1843 (recorded by Webb.).

This marking is similar to that of Type 1 in Figure 5 of Peterson. In both cases "Overland" indicates via Suez and Alexandria. The faster mail to England went by steamer from Alexandria via Malta to *Marseilles*, and then was carried overland across France and then by

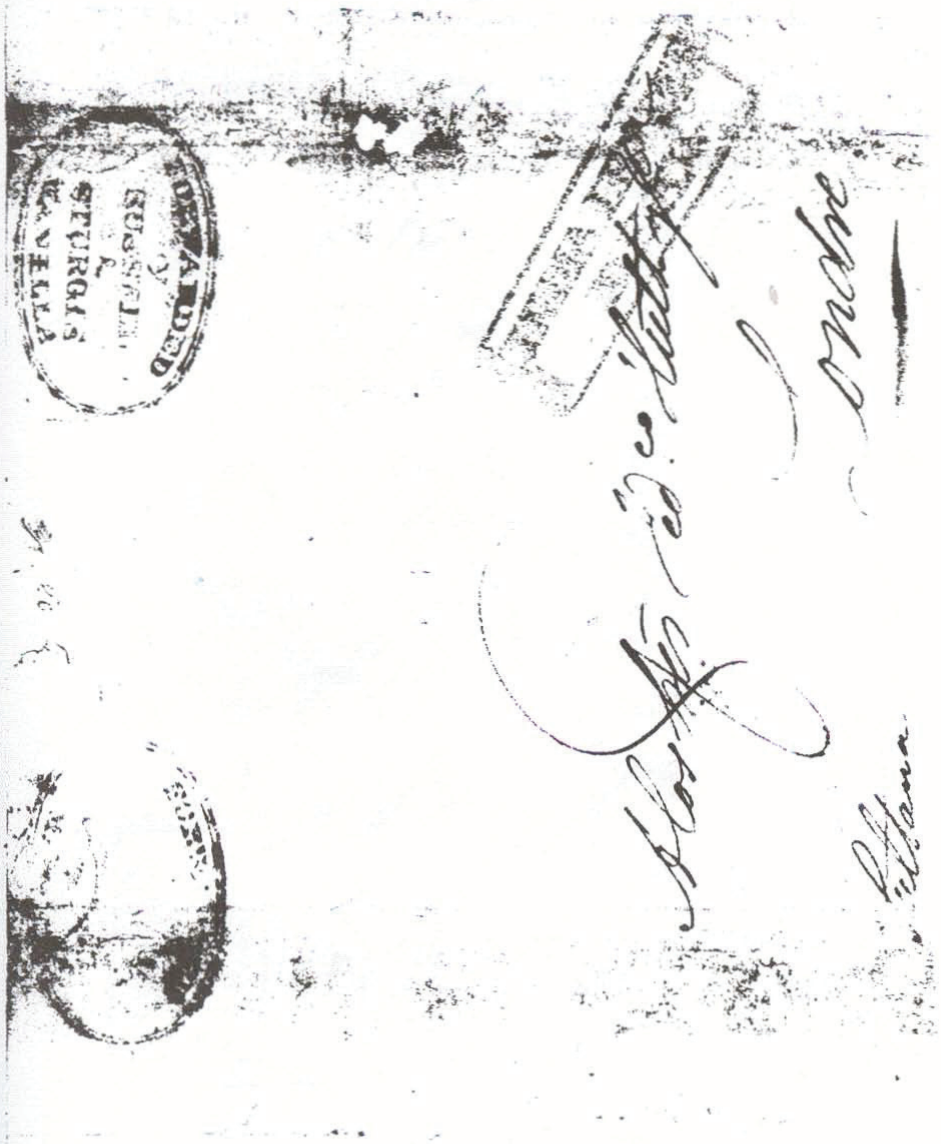


Figure 1

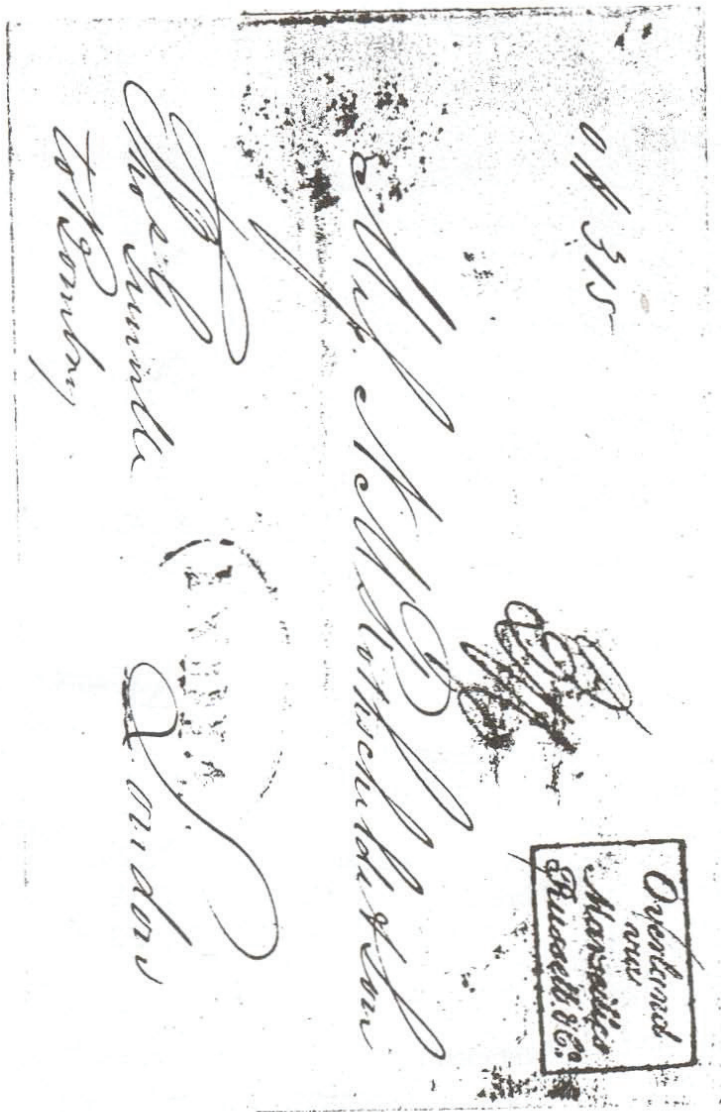


Figure 2

*ms* *Manuscript* *40* *21* *MS*  
Messrs William Appleton & Co  
Boston  
United States of America

Figure 3.

steamer across the English Channel. The slower mail was carried by a P&O steamer from Alexandria via Malta and Gibraltar to the P&O's home port of *Falmouth* in South-West England and then by coach to London. The rate explanation of 3 shillings 6 pence for a letter weighing more than one quarter of an ounce, but up to half an ounce, arriving in England before 1 June 1843, is given by Peterson in discussion of his Figure 3.

**Figure 3** illustrates another marking from Russell & Sturgis. The letters "R&S" are surrounded by a circle made of dots, and it is stamped in red. This letter is dated Manila 23 December 1858, and has a Hong Kong backstamp of 27 December. This marking is also known on one other cover, an 1859 letter to England.

This letter travelled by the P&O steamer "Chusan" on the branch line between Manila and Hong Kong. From there it went to Suez, then overland to Alexandria, by P&O steamer to Marseilles, by rail and ferry to London, by rail to Liverpool, and then by the British Cunard steamer "Canada" to Boston. The receiver paid 45 cents for a letter between quarter and half an ounce, sent via Marseilles. The manuscript "40", near the "45", indicates an accountancy charge of 40 cents due to England from U.S. for carriage of this letter.

All covers shown are from the author's collection.

#### References.

- Peterson, D. "History of Major Business Firms and their Mail from the Spanish Philippines." *Philippine Philatelic Journal*. Vol. XVI No. 2, Second Quarter 1993. Eden, New York.
- Scamp, L.C. *Postal Rate History of China and Hong Kong*. 1986. Houston, Texas.
- Webb, F.W. *The Philatelic and Postal History of Hong Kong*. 1961. London. ■