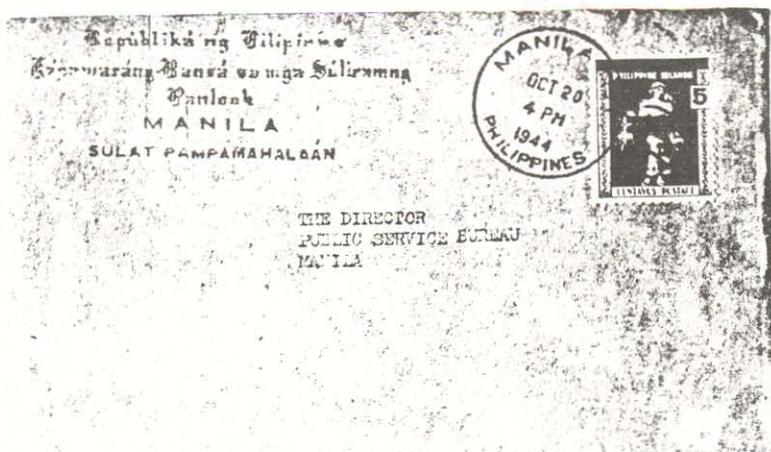




# PHILIPPINE PHILATELIC JOURNAL

Volume XXII, No. 2



Second Quarter, 2000

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*Philippine Philatelic Journal*

# MARIANA ISLANDS MAIL DURING THE SPANISH PHILIPPINE PERIOD, 1850s-1890s

by *Don Peterson*

## BACKGROUND

The Mariana Islands comprise 15 islands, including Guam (Agana, the primary port and residence of the Spanish Governor), and Saipan, which are located approximately 1,500 miles east and northeast of the Philippines. The Portuguese explorer, Ferdinand Magellan, sailing under the Spanish flag, discovered and landed on Guam on March 6, 1521. Originally named Ladrones (Thieves) Islands, by Magellan, they were renamed in 1668 after Mariana of Austria, then regent of Spain. The islands, however, were not occupied until 1668, when Spanish Jesuits arrived at Guam (Carano et al., 1948). That year, Spain ordered the establishment of a garrison on Guam to protect the Mexico-Philippines galleon trade route. Galleons frequently stopped at the Mariana Islands on their return voyage from Acapulco to Manila (Schurz, 1939). Beginning in 1855, regular monthly steamer service occurred between the Mariana Islands and Manila (Hanciau, 1905). Spain occupied the islands until June 20, 1898, when Spanish Guam surrendered to the U.S. Navy. Spain officially ceded Guam to the United States by the Treaty of Paris on December 10, 1898. The annexation of Guam resulted in the relocation of the local Spanish Marianas administration to Saipan, which became the Spanish seat of government under Colonel Eugenio Blanco. Spain maintained possession of Saipan and other Mariana Islands until November 17, 1899, when the remainder of the islands were sold to Germany (Diamond, 1963).

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The Mariana Islands were essentially a dependency of the Spanish Philippines, dependent upon their postal system, including the rates and procedures. For the most part, the interior and overseas rates for the Spanish Philippines applied to the Mariana Islands. Mail between these islands and the Philippines during the Spanish period was posted at the interior rate. However, we know of no surviving covers mailed within the Mariana Islands. During the Spanish period, the first post office in the Mariana Islands was opened in Agana, Guam, with a second post office opening later on Saipan (Smith, 1974).

### SPANISH MAIL, 1850s-1898

Prior to the 1880s, government cancels were used on official as well as commercial Mariana Islands mail. In some cases where such mail was addressed to or went via Manila, cancels were applied in Manila, rather than in the Mariana Islands. **FIGURE 1** is an 1859 Mariana Islands to Manila official (stampless) cover marked "S.N." (Servicio Nacional). It is the earliest known official cover from the Mariana Islands. Beginning in the 1880s and through the end of the Spanish period, the typical cancel on Mariana Islands mail was a double-lined circle with MARIANAS on top, date in the center, and a star on the bottom (**FIGURE 2**). An obliteration is also known, consisting of a dotted oval with a star in the center of the dots (**FIGURE 3**). Registered markings are known from the 1880s through the end of the Spanish period, comprised of a large rectangle with CERTIF in the center (Peterson, 1996 - Type 15) (**FIGURE 4**).

The earliest known stamped and registered cover from the Mariana Islands is an 1877 (September 28) registered cover from the Mariana Islands to Manila showing the rate of 25 centavos de peso (for registration), plus 12 1/2 centavos de peseta for the interior single-weight rate (**FIGURE 5**). A CERTIF handstamp (Peterson, 1996 - Type 1) and MANILA circular dated handstamp were applied upon arrival in Manila. This and two other covers of exactly the same date are known. **FIGURE 6** is an 1896 Mariana Islands to Manila registered cover showing the boxed CERTIF handstamp and the MARIANAS circular date stamp, both applied in the Mariana Islands. The cover is rated 19 centavos for a registered interior double-weight letter. **FIGURE 7** is an 1896 or 1897 Mariana Islands to Germany piece cut from a larger package marked MUESTRAS, indicating its contents were samples of medicine, which could be sent at the lower rate of one-centavos per 1/2 ounce. The 8 centavos on the piece indicates its weight was 8 times the single-weight rate.

PHILATELIST. Vol. 88. No. 11. November 1974. State College, PA.

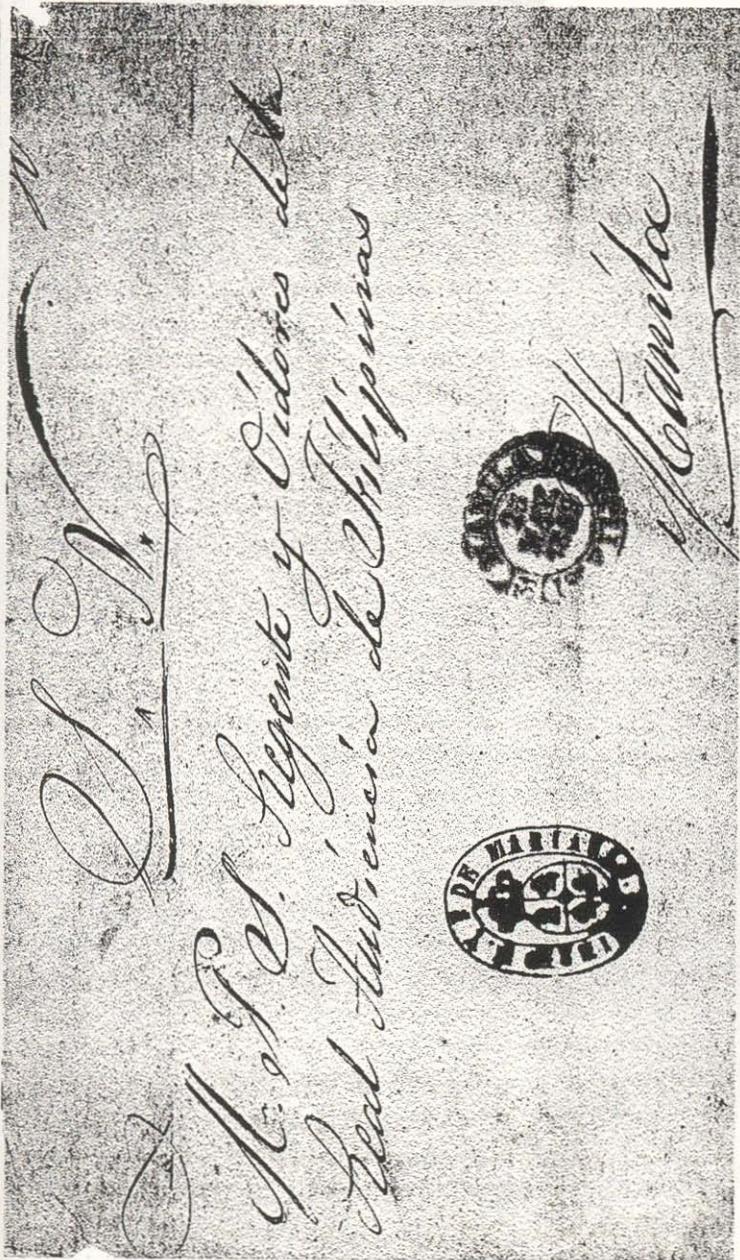


Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3



Figure 4



Figure 5 (Don Peterson Collection)

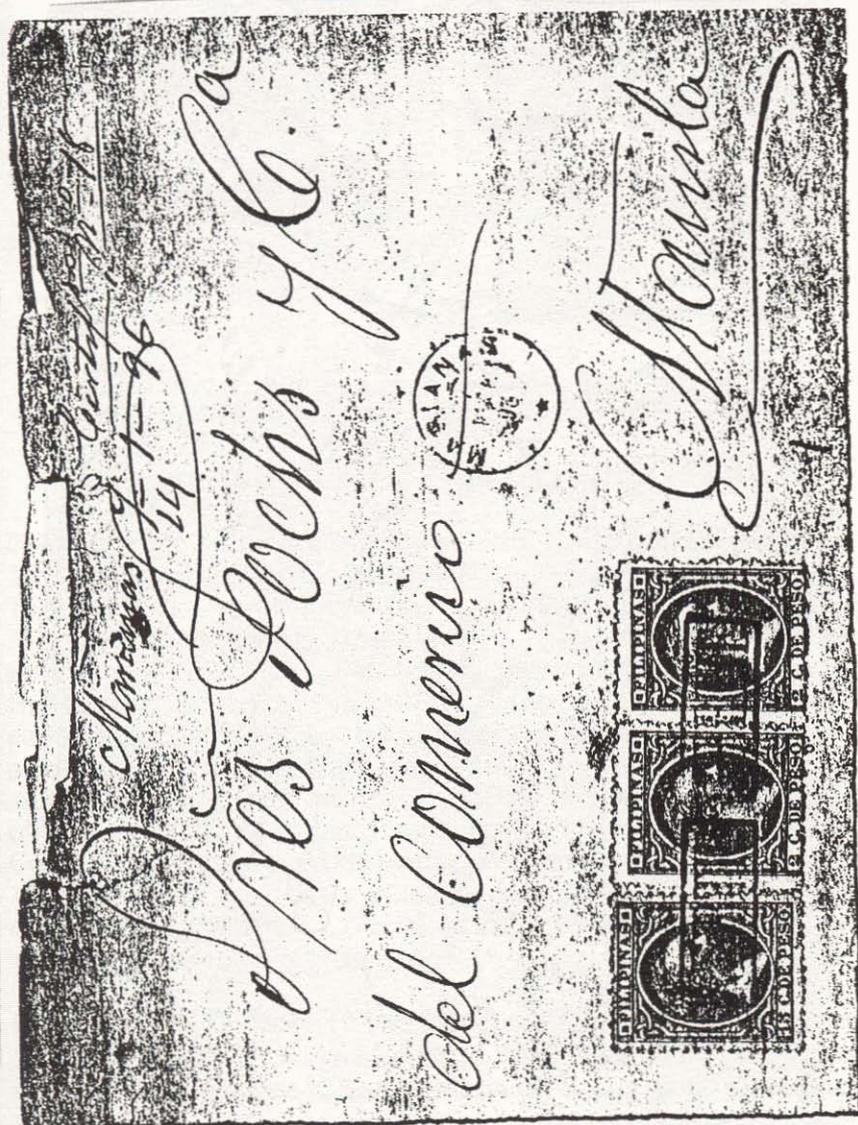


Figure 6  
(National Philatelic Museum)

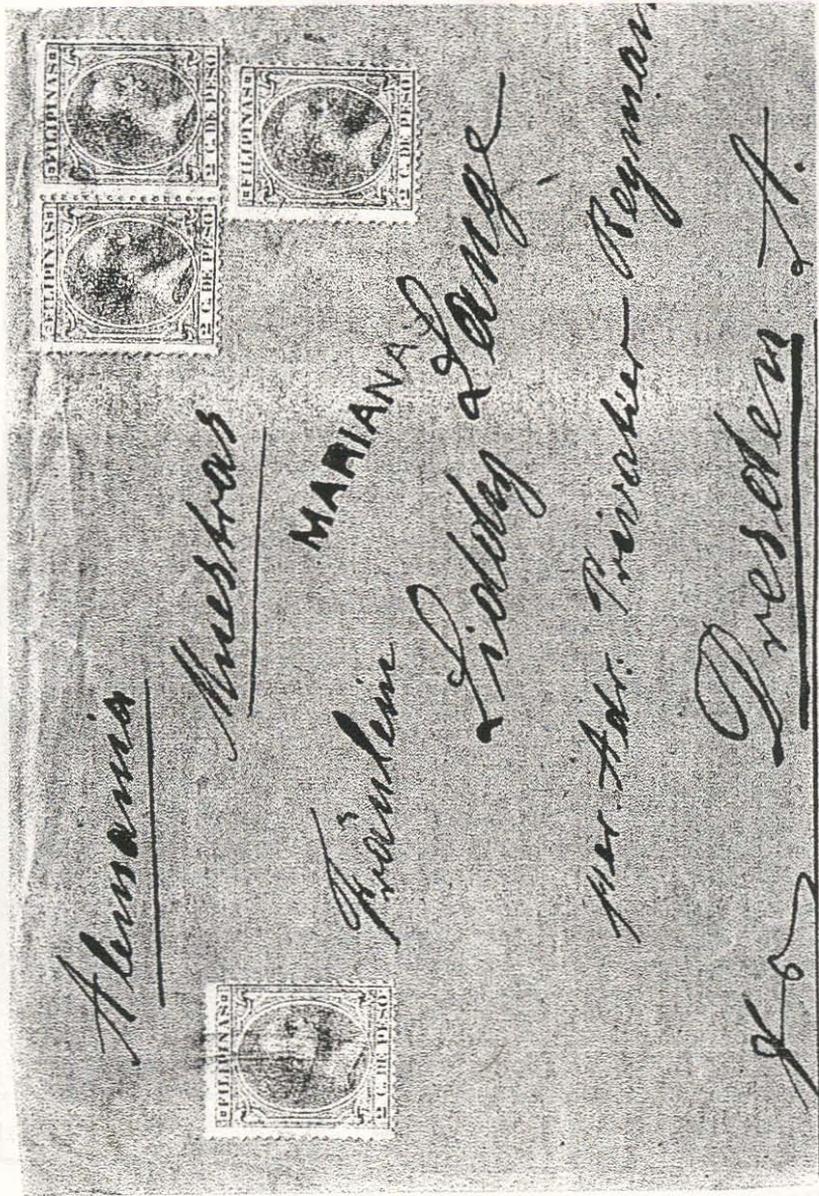


Figure 7  
(Geoffrey Lewis Collection)



FIGURE 8



FIGURE 9

### SPANISH MAIL DURING THE U.S. PERIOD, 1898 -1899

Following the surrender of Guam to the United States on June 20, 1898, and until the opening of the U.S. post office on Guam on August 15, 1899, an oval handstamp, GOBIERNO P.M. YSLAS MARIANAS (FIGURE 8) was used to cancel 1898 Spanish Philippine stamps on mail to the Philippines. This cancel originated and was first used in Saipan. Later in 1898, it was apparently used in Guam for canceling covers with Spanish Philippine stamps as a favor or convenience to the Spanish correspondents in Guam and Saipan. After August 15, 1899, with the opening of the U.S. post office in Guam, official use of this handstamp and Spanish Philippines stamps ceased. Covers from Guam with this handstamp on U.S. stamps after August 15, 1899 were prepared as philatelic "favors." However, legitimate use of the GOBIERNO... cancel on covers with Spanish Philippine stamps continued on Saipan.

On September 17, 1899, Colonel Eugenio Blanco in Saipan issued a decree authorizing the overprinting of Spanish Philippine postal issues for use in Saipan and other Mariana Islands. Soon after, stamps were released with a rectangular overprint containing the words, MARIANAS ESPANOLES (FIGURE 9). Six 1898 Spanish Philippine stamps (i.e., 2c, 3c, 5c, 6c, 8c, and 15c) were overprinted. These stamps were primarily applied on mail to the Philippines from late September through mid-December 1899, and were also canceled with

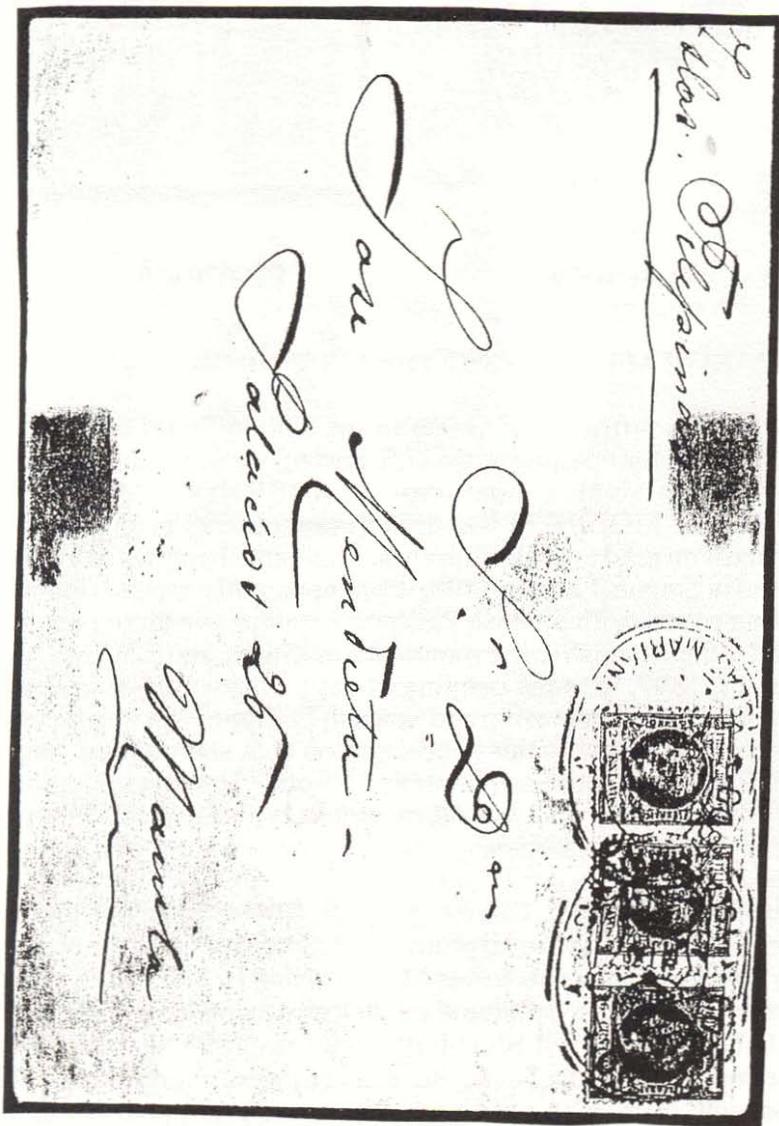


Figure 10

the large oval GOBIERNO P.M. YSLAS MARIANAS handstamp. Most covers were addressed to Manila. Use of the GOBIERNO... handstamp, the six overprinted stamps, and the use of other Spanish Philippine stamps officially ceased on Saipan on November 17, 1899, when Saipan was ceded (sold) to Germany. However, covers with Mariana handstamped Spanish Philippine stamps and the black GOBIERNO... cancel continued to be prepared as "favors" on Saipan until mid-December 1899 (Bostwick, 1999). FIGURE 10 is an 1899 Mariana Islands to Manila cover from Saipan, showing Spanish Philippine 1898 stamps handstamped MARIANAS ESPANOLAS (difficult to see). The cover is backstamped with U.S.-P.I. "Registered" and "Milt Sta. No. 1, MANILA" cancellations, dated December 11, 1899.

From the 1850s to the unofficial end of the use of Spanish period stamps and markings in mid December 1899, I estimate there are approximately 80-100 surviving covers of the Mariana Islands Spanish period.

If anyone has any additional information about the postal history of the Mariana Islands during the Spanish period, please contact IPPS, or Don Peterson, 7408 Alaska Ave., NW, Washington, DC.

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JAPANESE OCCUPATION  
OF THE  
PHILIPPINES 1942-1945

By Chalmer D. Hill



Front page of damaged copy of the Tribune,  
issued December 9, 1941.

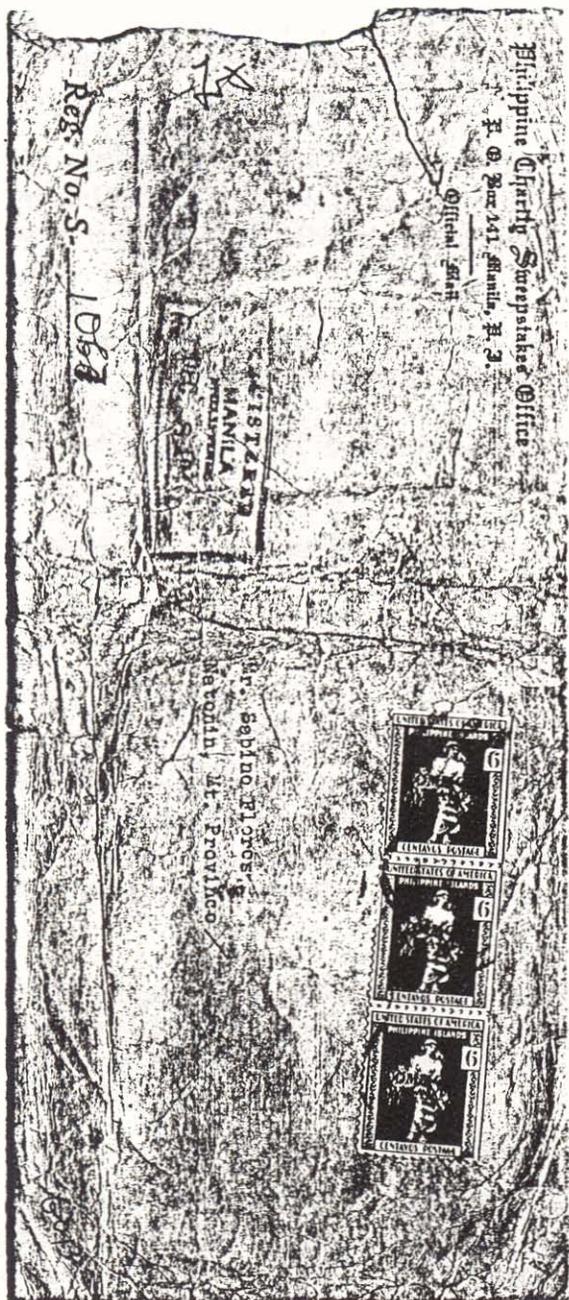


Figure 1

## FIGURE 1

From the bulge in the envelope, it is apparent that the envelope contained sweepstake tickets. There is no backstamp verifying delivery to Mr. Sabino Floros, Natonin, Mt. Province.

December 8, 1941 (Philippine time) was the day that President Franklin D. Roosevelt chose to call "The Day of Infamy, The same day that the Japanese bombed the Philippines in seven different places.

The stamp on this envelope was to play an important part in the early provisional stamps used during the occupation.

Business continued as usual until January 2, 1942 when the Japanese took over Manila.

This cover is a reminder of the beginning of Japanese Occupation Philately in the Philippines."

## FIGURE 2

Effective September 1, 1942 the first postal rate was raised to 5 centavos from the original 2 centavos, the established rate at the time the Japanese reopened the Manila post office on March 2, 1942. This first class postal rate was maintained throughout the rest of the Japanese occupation.

Pablo Esperidion, a noted Filipino philatelist, mailed a letter with a 1 centavo stamp cancelled December 8, 1944 when he knew that the postal rate to be 5 centavos. The post office returned the envelope to the sender "RETURN TO SENDER FOR ADDITIONAL POSTAGE \_\_\_\_\_ COVS."

Esperidion returned to the post office and paid the additional centavos. The postal clerk, upon receiving the 4 centavos hand stamped "POSTAGE SUBSEQUENTLY PAID," initialed the hand stamping in pencil as noted over the "P" in postage, and cancelled the 4 centavo stamp January 2, 1945.

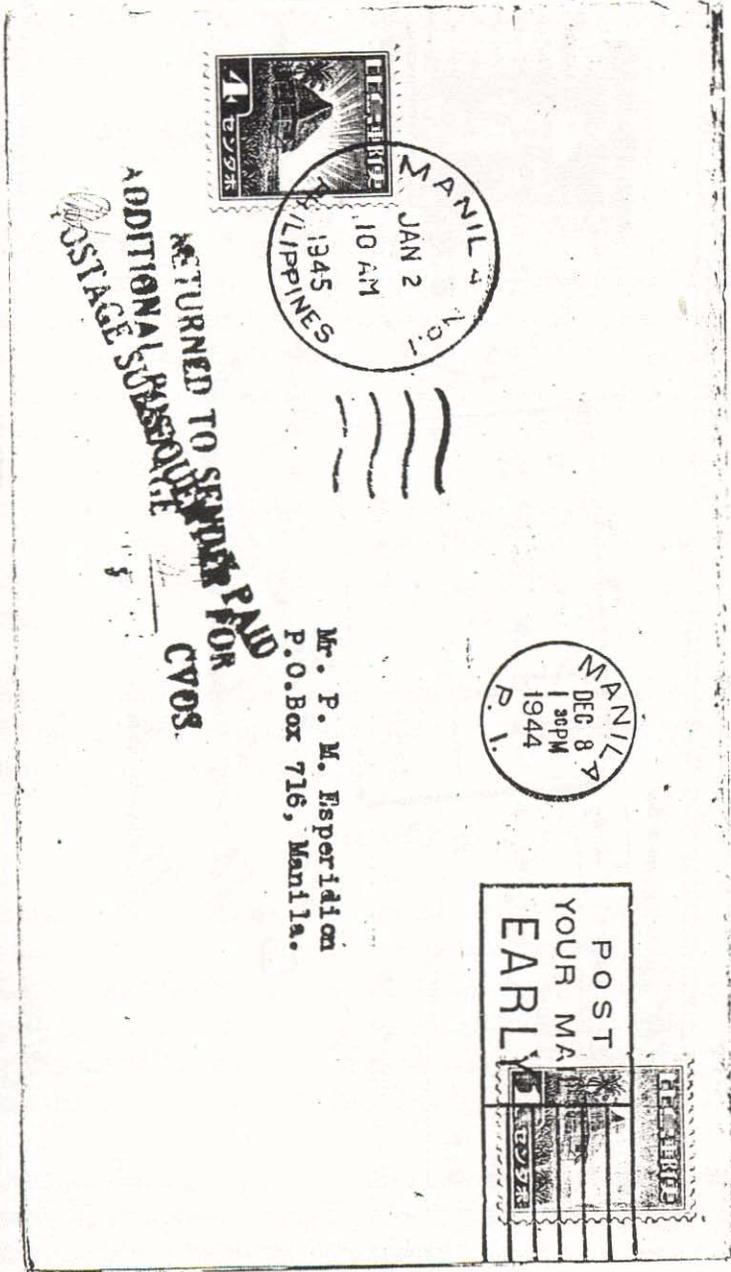


Figure 2

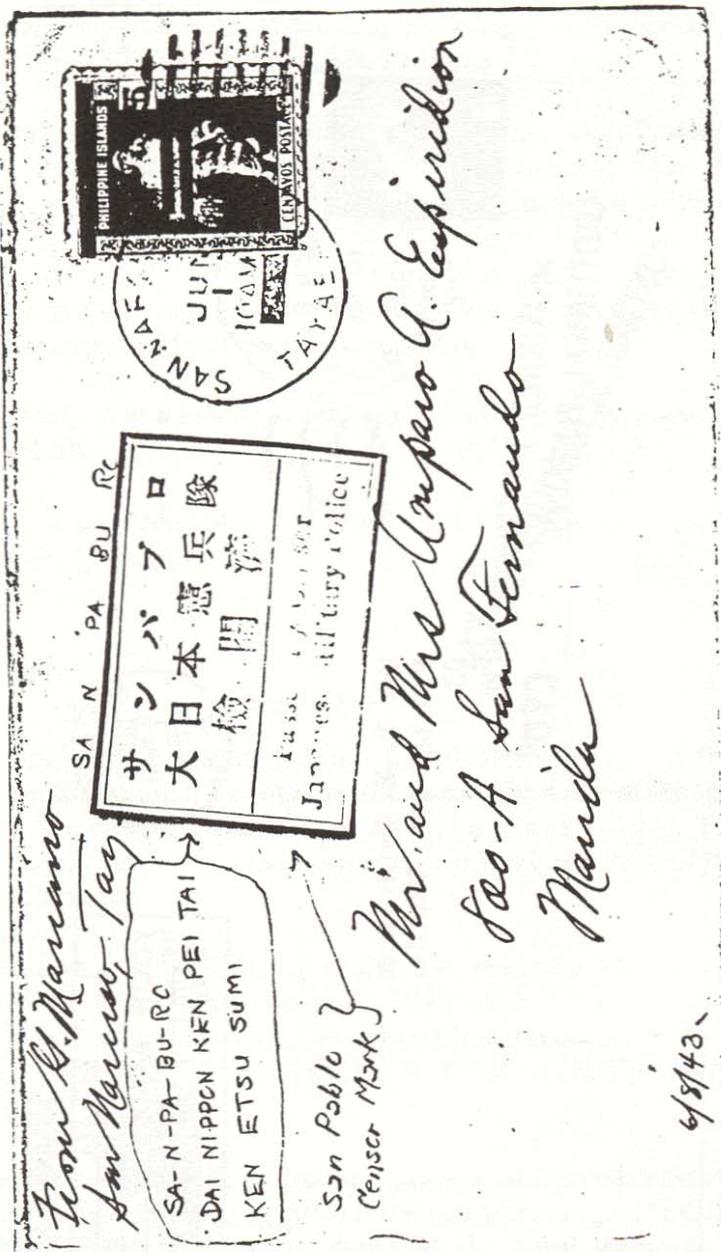


Figure 3

### FIGURE 3

G. Marcano apparently had no other envelope. Using a pre-war postal stationery envelope, the writer carefully affixing the required 5¢ postage and sending it on its way.

The Post Office at San Nariso, Tayabas was reopened December 22, 1942.

The San Pablo City, Laguna Post Office (which was reopened, June 16, 1942) was designated a "Post Office of Censorship," and all mail matters posted in the Provinces of Batangas, Laguna and Tayabas were routed through the San Pablo City Post Office for censorship. The earliest reported use of the censor's hand-stamp was December 5, 1942.

The first line of the Japanese character is in "Katakana" meaning "San Paburo" or "San Pablo." The second line "Die Nippon Kepeitai" or "Great Japan Military Police." The third line "Kenelsu Zanu" or "Censored."

The rubber hand-stamp canceller with the mine killer was used by the San Narciso Post Office before the war, and was in continual use during the Japanese Occupation.

### FIGURE 4

The date of the postmark, October 20, 1944 was the landing date of the return of General Douglas Mac Arthur and the Liberation Forces at Leyte. The literal translation of the hand-stamped (black inked) corner card reads as follows: "Republic of the Philippines - National Department of Internal Problems - Manila - Official Letter." We must admit that the landing created an "internal problem to the Japanese."

G. Marcano apparently had no other envelope. or was just testing the censors for sharpness. Using a pre-war postal stationery envelope, the writer carefully affixing the required 5¢ postage and sent it on its way.

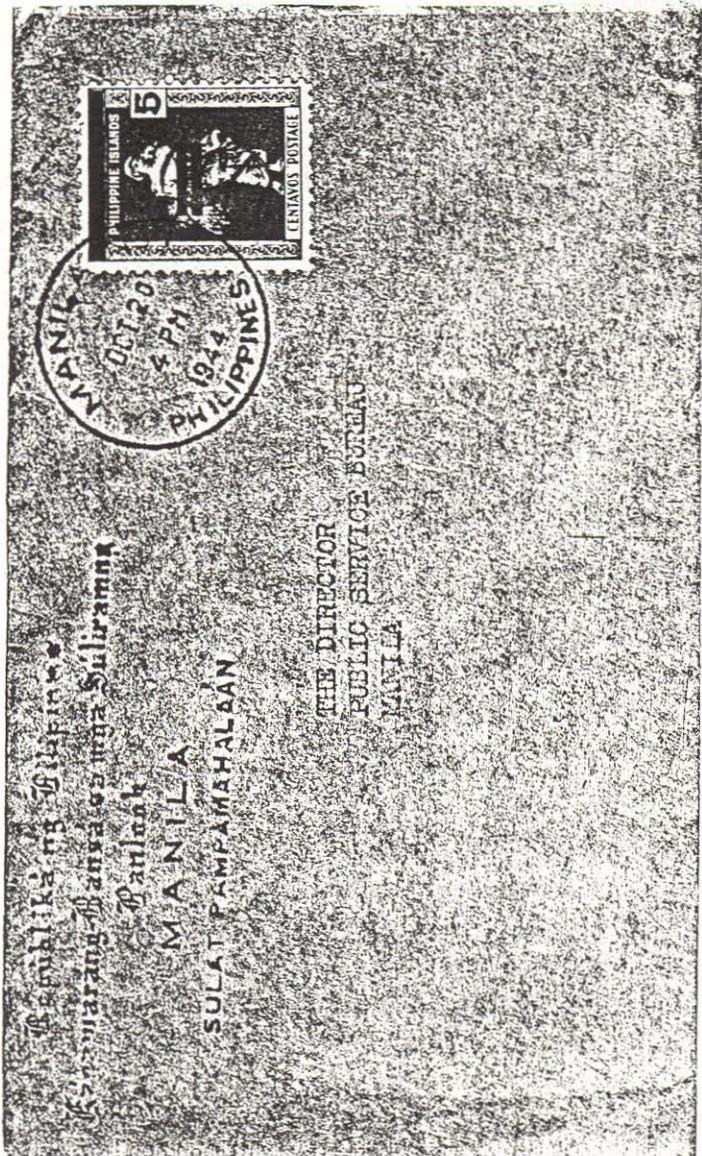


Figure 4

## NON-FISCAL LETTER HOME

by Douglas K. Lehmann



Captain Brady G. Ruttencutter needed some paper to write home to his mother in West Virginia. Writing paper was difficult to find in Bacolod. However, since he was in charge of the Judicial Courts of Pampanga Province, an easy solution existed. He purchased for 2 cents a 5 centavos 2-page fiscal sheet designed for fiscal use. **Figure 1** shows the top of page 3 of this double folded sheet with the 1894-95 Class- 12 black Sello stamp embossed with the Spanish coat of arms within the white oval. To the left is a blue boxed rectangular handstamp validating the paper for the U.S. Administration. The handstamp reads in three lines U.S. MILITARY GOVERNMENT/ - 1900-/ INTERNAL REVENUE. To the right is handstamped in blue COURT OF FIRST INSTANCE, PROVINCE OF PAMPANGA.

The numbers are red and consecutively numbered comprising two serial numbers on this sheet. Page I of the double sheet has the same fiscal stamp with handstamps. The following is the full transcript of his handwritten letter home (*italics added by author*):



Figure 1

"Bacolod, P.I.  
October 1, 1900

My Dear Mother:

I just received two letters and some papers from you yesterday and was very glad to get same. My 2nd Lieutenant is from West Virginia and enjoys the papers very much. I see the politicians are having quite a fight on there hands. But the opinion of all the Officers is that (*President William*) McKinley will be elected. Every Officer that I have talked to wants McKinley to be elected and is opposed to giving up the Islands after we have once run up our flag. The natives are expecting great things of (*William Jennings*) Bryan and are of the opinion that he will be elected and they will gain there independence.

The trouble is not all over by a long shot as we are having trouble every day but you don't see it in the papers. You must not publish anything I write you in regard to the situation over here, as we Officers are not permitted to express our views on the subject.

Now, if the Republican party will just provide for a larger regular Army, we will all be satisfied, and will be able to hold our possession alright. I am sure we will have to retain quite a number of troops over here for sometime until this trouble blows over.

I am very busy now, as I have a native prison on my hands, that holds about 300 natives.

I have more to do than all the other Captains put together. Besides the prison, **I have two courts of the Province to look after, as all there work comes through my hands.**

I suppose you know that I am in General (*Frederick D.*) Grant's Brigade, he has visited me several times and always takes lunch. I like him very much.

I received a letter from Fred (*brother*) the other day and he is enjoying the best of health, but would like to be home. I think. He wouldn't listen to me before he enlisted, so now let him learn from experience and it will do him good. The soldiers are not killing themselves over here, but, of course, at times have some hard work to do.

The 27th (*U.S. Infantry Regiment*) has had some hard work to do. I will admit, but they are not the only ones on the Islands that have been working. We haven't had any fighting to do, but have had considerable civil work on our hands, which I consider of more importance at this time.

Well, I must close for this time. Hoping to hear from you all soon. And that everybody is enjoying the best of health.

I remain with love to all,  
B(*radly*). D. Ruttencutter"

He mentions Brigadier General Grant with respect. This General Grant was the son of General and President Ulysses S. Grant. General Grant commanded the 3rd Brigade of the 1st Division. The 27nd Infantry Regiment was a regular Army unit assigned to the brigade. Portions of that unit arrived in Manila October 1899 and departed February 1901. However, Captain Ruttencutter was a volunteer assigned to the 41st Volunteer Regiment Infantry of West Virginia. His Army record shows he was at sea to Manila December 1899 and back in San Francisco July 1901.

From experience, Brady knows what his brother Fred will be facing. Brady had seven months of service as a Private before his current assignment. Captain Ruttencutter is a graduate of the Mount State Business College, WV, probably after he was a Private and before he reenlisted as an officer. He was born in Pleasants County and his parents resided in Parersburg, both of West Virginia. Brady was age 21 when he mustered-in as a 2nd Lieutenant on May 14, 1898 and was promoted to 1st Lieutenant soon afterwards. He was promoted to Captain November 13, 1899, just before he left for the Philippines. His civilian occupation was listed as a wholesaler of produce based on one year's experience. Brady was single, with red hair, about 6 feet tall, weighed 160 pounds, and in good physical condition. While in the Philippines, he commanded Company K.

He writes about a native prison, but on January 20, 1900 he was made officer in charge of a U.S. military Prison in Bacolod. This was his primary duty while in the Philippines with a few days off to go back to Manila. The records show him in a Manila hospital (Nov-Dec 1900), visiting another prison (July 1900), as a witness (February 1901), and on a Court Martial (April 1901). He also had a few days of special duty in Angeles (May 1900) and Hermosa (September 1900).

Some may speculate he just took the document rather than pay 2 1/2 cents but I doubt that. His pay was about \$20 a month with little living expenses (The Army sent money by telegraph to pay the soldiers on time for the Philippine Insurrection). He wrote his letter on all four pages.

I like this letter since it reflects attitudes and opinions that have virtually remained unchanged for 100 years. The political discussion about Republicans versus Democrats reflects today's presidential race. A son boasting to his mother that he is overworked compared to his peers is priceless and modern. The statement about remaining silent on military activities is also current despite the presence of the press today (in places like Bosnia and Kosovo where U.S. troops are today).

In closing, this document pays no fee required of any fiscal regulation. However, it a collectable sample of documentary stamped paper available and used at that time.

**REVISION:  
FIRST AND SECOND PRINTINGS OF THE  
10c PALE CLARET POSTAL ISSUE (SCOTT #164)**

*by Don Peterson*

New information has surfaced regarding the first and second printings of Scott # 164, which supercede the discussion of this stamp previously described in the Philippine Philatelic Journal, Third Quarter, 1999. The vast majority of stamps fitting the description of Scott #164 are from the second printing. Of several hundred copies of # 164 in my collection and extra stock, I was able to positively identify only two stamps that fit the description of the first printing (the primary characteristics being a combination of thinner paper and a Type C-like gum).

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**SCOTT #164 - 10c PALE CLARET**

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	<u>First Printing</u>	<u>Second Printing</u>
Issued:	April 20, 1891	January 1, 1892
Quantity:	30,000	880,000
Cliche Type:	I	I. Although Bartels et al. (1904) states that both I and II types are present, I have never seen Type II, and do not believe it exists on this stamp.
Sheet Inscription:	COMMUNICACIONES	COMMUNICACIONES
Mencarini:	#178 - pale red	#192 - dark red. I believe Mencarini (1896) was incorrect, and that the color should have been pale red.
Bartels et al.:	#202 - lilac-rose	#216 - pale lake
Other:	Palmer (1912) indicated that the 1891 printing was on thinner paper, and had white, thin, evenly-distributed gum, like Type C. <u>Very scarce.</u>	Palmer (1912) indicated that the 1892 printing was on thicker paper. Type A gum. <u>Common.</u>

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Finally, you should be aware that there are scarce color variations of the 10c claret (Scott #165) that could be confused with the 10c pale claret (Scott #164). However, all Scott #165s have Type B gum (easily observable on mint stamps and occasionally on used stamps), whereas all Scott #164s have either Type A or C-like gums.

If anyone has any additional information about the two printings of Scott #164, please contact Don Peterson, 7408 Alaska Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20012.

# International Philippine Philatelic Society

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*(A non-profit, non-stock, educational organization incorporated in the  
City of Manila, Philippines, on September 24, 1974 as per  
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