



# PHILIPPINE PHILATELIC JOURNAL

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## BUDDY SYSTEM USED TO SHIP PARCELS TO AMERICA

by Bill Grimaud



Figure 2. A close-up example of a primary label pencil total of postage required to ship a given pair of packages to the United States. The postage, most commonly expressed in decimal form in the Manila area, is 9.36 pesos. This value also may be expressed as 9 pesos and 36 centavos, or 936 centavos.

Few events involving Philippines postage stamps are more shrouded in mystery than the Lambert Sales Company postage order of 1925. Lambert, a Manila businessman, originally requested permission from the Manila postal system to use a unique "L.S.C." perfin (perforated initials) cancellation to identify his company's postage for business use only. He made this request to control an increasingly costly problem: internal theft of the company's postage.

Lambert's request was denied on the basis that perfin cancellations defaced postage stamps; however, the director allowed Lambert's company to special order imperforate stamps as a means of controlling the postage theft. These stamps were printed at the Bureau of Engraving and Printing, in Washington, D.C., and were easily distinguishable from regular postage.

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### COVER

Sebastian Baldassarre has sent us the illustrated block of 20 from the upper left pane with plate number 131539 and the 027 "raised period" variety clearly in position 4. Another variety is in position 31, the bottom left stamp in the illustration: broken letter "N". This is one of the plates listed in *Sloane's Column* of December 4, 1937 as quite possibly including the variety, as well as "other minor imperfections."

The director of the Bureau of Posts set the minimum purchase commitment at 10,000 pesos. When Lambert placed his order (10,180 pesos); he knew the offer was available to other companies doing business in the Philippines. The 10,000 peso commitment, however, was not a small sum by any standards and, understandably, his company was the only enterprise to place such an order.

His company used this postage on its shipping labels for packages of embroidery goods being sent from the Philippines to the company's sales office in New York City. Its packages, subject to the gross weight limitation of fifty pounds, previously had been sent in large single parcels. This proved unsatisfactory because the weight of the material caused the packages to break open during transit.

To prevent the breakage, the company turned to shipping the material in smaller units. Once the weight of each package was determined, it was paired up by total weight combinations and identified, logged, and tracked by a unique sequence number. The packages then were delivered to the post office with the required postage already applied to the company's labels.

Two labels were used. The primary label, like the one illustrated in Figure 1 used the boxes on the left side to display unique point of origin, registry, and package sequence information. The required postage for the paired packages, in this example 9.36 pesos, was usually computed and penciled into the lower left corner of the address box (Figure 2). The penciled amount varied from label to label depending on the number of pounds being shipped, but appeared on all primary package labels.

A secondary label, similar to the one on the cover in Figure 3, was attached to the second parcel and was used to bring the postage up to the required amount.

An investigation by the Lambert study group, in which I participated, indicates a definite relationship existed between the two types of labels. For example, the primary label illustrated in Figure 1 shows a horizontal left-margin, half-arrow pair of the 26 centavo, a horizontal strip of three 2 peso denomination, and eight 2 centavo found in a vertical block of six and a horizontal pair. This label's postage totals 6.68 pesos. The secondary label in Figure 3 is dressed with horizontal pairs of values two through thirty centavos, totaling 2.68 pesos. It could have been used to frank the same set of travel-partner parcels. The combined postage used on both labels equals 9.36 pesos, the penciled amount on the primary label.

<p>FROM  <b>LAMBERT SALES CO.</b>          129 CALLE JUAN LUNA          MANILA P I</p>	<p>CERTIFICATE OF ORIGIN          NUMBER  <b>MANILA</b></p>	<p>MANILA REGISTRY          NUMBER</p>	<p>PACKAGE NO          310/362</p>	
				<p><b>LAMBERT SALES CO.,</b>          1225 BROADWAY,          NEW YORK, U. S. A.</p>

Figure 1. An example of a primary label exhibiting point of origin, registry, and package sequence information as well as total postage required, in pencil, to ship a given pair of packages to the United States



Figure 3. An exceptional example of a supplemental label used by the Lambert Sales Company to attach auxiliary postage to one of two parcels traveling together.

# Bureau of Engraving & Printing Chart No. 1

## 1925 Philippines Imperforate Issues

Denomination	Color	Original 1925 Lambert Order*	Manila* Post Office Sale
2c	green	50,000	1,000
4c	carmine	25,000	500
6c	deep violet	5,000	200
8c	yellow brown	5,000	200
10c	deep blue	2,000	200
12c	reddish orange	2,000	200
16c	olive bister	2,000	200
20c	yellow	2,000	200
26c	blue green	2,000	200
30c	gray	2,000	200
1p	violet	2,000	100
2p	violet brown	500	100
4p	deep blue	200	100
10p	deep green	100	100
<b>Special Delivery Issue E-6</b>			
20c	violet blue	2,000	2,016p
<b>TOTAL PESO VALUE</b>		<b>10,180p</b>	

In addition to these numbers, 100 of each regular issue and 50 stamps of the special delivery were handstamped "SPECIMEN." The peso value of the "SPECIMEN" stamps would have been 1,844p.

\*Researched and extracted from Official Record Books at the Bureau of Engraving and Printing, Washington D.C., and provided courtesy of Joseph M. Napp, noted U.S. possessions plate and bureau specialist.

Further evidence to support the relationship between the two labels is the direction and stroke of the "Bar-B-Que Grill" cancellation markings. It's unusual to find two labels that match up this well. My study group discovered that if the total postage required to ship the pair was not found entirely on the primary label, then the amount required to reach the penciled figure had been affixed to one or more secondary labels. Originally, we assumed secondary labels, with or without additional postage, would have been used to identify the second package. The amount required to arrive at the pencil total equaled the postage found on virtually all of the known secondary labels: 60 centavos, 2.68 pesos, or a combination or multiple of these two values.



**Figure 4.** An example of the 60-centavos supplemental label used by the Lambert Sales Company to bring up the postage to the required amount. This is one of two supplemental labels used by the company.



## Bureau of Engraving & Printing Chart No. 2

### 1931 Philippines Imperforate Reissues\*

Denomination	Color	Original Printed	Withdrawn and Destroyed
2c	yellow green	100,000	(14)
4c	carmine rose	50,000	(145)
6c	violet	10,000	0
8c	brown	10,000	0
10c	blue	7,000	0
12c	deep orange	7,000	0
16c	olive green	7,000	0
20c	orange yellow	7,000	0
26c	green, pale green	7,000	0
30c	gray	7,000	0
1p	light violet	9,100	(2,705)
2p	brownish	7,600	(3,988)
4p	blue	4,500	(1,930)
10p	green	4,300	(2,092)
<b>Special Delivery Issue</b>			
20c	violet	6,500	0

\*Researched and extracted from Official Record Books at the Bureau of Engraving and Printing, Washington D.C., and provided courtesy of Joseph M. Napp, noted U.S. possessions plate and bureau specialist.

Assuming the inventory of 130 labels was a fairly representative sample, some interesting determinations could be made about their use. The evidence suggested:

- Approximately 8,000 pesos of the original 10,180 peso order were used by the Lambert Sales Company to ship packages from Manila to New York.
- The shipping period of its use only spanned a little over four months from the first shipping date on June 22, 1925, to the last known shipment on October 26, 1925.
- In this time period approximately 1,500 packages were shipped by the company. Virtually all were registered in pairs, with a single primary label providing registry information for the two packages.
- There were thirteen actual shipments and sixteen dates of postal cancellation for which we can account. On three occasions the company made a last-minute effort to get a few additional packages into a particular shipment.

## 1925 Philippines Imperforate Issues\*

## 1931 Reissues\*

Denomination	Color	Total Issue**	Plate Numbers	Color	Number Sold	Plate Numbers
2c	green	51,000	84678, 84679 <sup>1</sup>	yellow green	99,986	121068, 69, 70, 71
4c	carmine	25,500	44873, 44874	carmine rose	49,855	44873, 74, 75, 76
6c	deep violet	5,200	21972 <sup>1</sup>	violet	10,000	34789, 817, 820-21
8c	yellow brown	5,200	21973	brown	10,000	21973, 122343
10c	deep blue	2,200	34792	blue	7,000	34792, 34807
12c	reddish orange	2,200	21974	deep orange	7,000	21974, 122375
16c	olive bister	2,200	89998	olive green	7,000	89998, 113808, 09, 10
20c	yellow	2,200	21985	orange yellow	7,000	21985, 21999
26c	blue green	2,200	21991	green, pale green	7,000	21991, 122345
30c	gray	2,200	21993 <sup>1</sup>	gray	7,000	34790, 34796
1p	violet	2,100	21000	light violet	6,395	21000
2p	violet brown	600	21001	brownish	3,612	21001
4p	deep blue	300	21008	blue	2,570	21008
10p	deep green	200	21010	green	2,208	21010
<b>Special Delivery Issue</b>						
20c	violet blue	2,100	22620	violet	6,500	

\*Researched and extracted from Official Records Books at the Bureau of Engraving & Printing, Washington, D.C. and provided courtesy of Joseph M. Napp, noted U.S. possessions plate and bureau specialist.

\*\*In addition to these numbers, 100 of each regular issue and 50 stamps of the special delivery issue were handstamped "SPECIMEN."

<sup>1</sup>The 2-, 6-, and 30-centavos plate numbers are unique to the 1925 issues. All the others were used in printing the 1931 issue but other plate numbers are known to exist.

- The primary label had the majority, if not all, of the required postage to ship the two packages. Evidently a nonpostage bearing secondary label was used simply as an address label for the second package if the postage on the primary label paid the full fee for the two packages.
  - Apparently many secondary labels were prepared in advance with fixed amounts of postage (either 60 centavos or 2.66 pesos) designed to use up the overabundance of the low values ordered by the Lambert Sales Company.
  - Approximately 750 primary labels were used with postage affixed to these packages.
  - Approximately 850 secondary labels were used on the second packages with postage affixed.
  - Approximately 200 secondary labels were used on the second packages without postage affixed.
- \* The surviving labels, partial or otherwise, number between 200 to 300.

## **THE AUTHOR**

Bill Grimaud combines his free-lance writing, photography, and original research and group study projects with collecting Philippines stamps and covers. He is a desktop publisher and marketing and planning consultant.

All this may seem like trivial pursuit in a philatelic sense, but when the labels were first inventoried, my study group had more questions than answers regarding the use of these stamps. We wanted to understand more about this interesting piece of postal history and felt it was time to start digging deeper for some meaningful answers. Difficult questions still exist, but I've found that sometimes the most satisfying part of philately can be gathered from working in organized groups to uncover previously undetermined information.

As more information is discovered, I plan to keep other collectors apprised of my group's progress through a series of articles on this subject. If you have an interest in this material and would like to participate in the information-gathering process, please write to the editor.

### **Acknowledgments**

The list of the conclusions from the label inventory was provided compliments of the Stamp Gallery in Walnut Creek, California. The labels photographed for use in this article were provided by Harold Halverson.

*Ed. Note: This article was first published in the American Philatelist May, 1991.*

# KER AND COMPANY - A BRITISH BUSINESS FIRM IN THE SPANISH PHILIPPINES: 1827-1898

by *Don Peterson*

This is the third of a four-part series on the history of four major business firms in the Spanish Philippines. This article addresses the British-owned firm of Ker and Company. The two previous articles addressed the American firms of Peele, Hubbell and Company (Peterson, 1992) and Russell, Sturgis and Company (Peterson, 1993).

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE FIRM

Ker and Company was a British-owned firm, founded in Glasgow, England, in 1823. In 1827, a branch of this firm was inaugurated by a Scotsman named Ker in Manila, and was first known as Ker, McMickling and Company. The firm was also well established in Singapore as early as 1831. In 1834, the Manila firm was known as Ker, Murray and Company. In 1848, another Scotsman by the name of Robert McMickling arrived in Manila and joined the firm. He was known to be present in Manila in 1850.

From 1827 through the 1840s, the Manila firm was referred to by a number of names, such as Ker, McMickling and Company or Ker, Murray and Company. The names undoubtedly reflected the particular business relationship at the time. However, beginning in the 1850s, the firm was commonly referred to as Ker and Company.

Initially, the firm was involved in the import of British goods into the Islands. Later, beginning in the 1870s, it developed a substantial export trade, primarily in hemp, sugar, and copra (dried coconut meat). Ker and Company exported these products primarily to England, and to a lesser extent to other countries, such as the United States. As an exporter, Ker and Company also served as a shipping agent.

Although we know little about the people who established and ran the Manila office, more is known about the Iloilo office, due to the presence of a popular Englishman by the name of Nicholas Loney. When Iloilo was opened to foreign commerce in September 1855, the British Consul in Manila appointed Nicholas Loney as Vice-Consul for Great Britain in Iloilo. At that time, Mr. Loney was a clerk for Ker and Company, in Manila. He arrived in Iloilo to assume his consular duties on July 31, 1856. He returned to the export business in 1860, when he formed a business partnership with Ker and Company called Loney, Ker and Company, in Iloilo, becoming the first British commercial firm to be established in Iloilo.

Although sugar cane was growing on the Islands at the time of their discovery, it was Nicholas Loney, through his Iloilo firm, who was largely responsible for significantly expanding its development and export, particularly on the islands of Panay and Negros. He introduced sugar cane seed from Sumatra, financed sugar production, introduced 13 iron mills for processing sugar, and exported sugar to England and other foreign countries. He was also involved in other shipping-related business ventures. As a result of Loney's investments, the Island of Negros became the foremost sugar cane producing island in the Philippines. This firm was the largest firm outside of Manila in the 1860s-1870s.

Nicholas Loney died of typhoid fever on April 22, 1869, at the age of 41. In honor of Nicholas Loney, a large marble obelisk was erected at his grave in Iloilo which bears the inscription in four languages as a token of esteem and gratitude by the people of the Philippines. Thereafter, the Iloilo firm was known as Nicholas Loney and Company, and its connection with Ker and Company probably ceased.

In the mid 1870s, the firm's name, Ker and Company, was officially established throughout the Islands, which remained as such through 1898, and into the 20th century. Also in the 1870s, branch offices were opened in Iloilo (not associated with Nicholas Loney and Company), Cebu, and Calbayog (on the Island of Samar), to handle the expanding export trade of hemp, sugar, and copra.

In 1875, the firm was an agent for Union Marine and Insurance Company of Liverpool (Manila and Iloilo offices) and Sun Fire Company (Manila and Iloilo offices). It was also the first representative on the Islands of the most important British underwriter, Lloyds of London, specifically representing Lloyds Liverpool Underwriters Association - British and Foreign Marine Insurance Company (Manila office), and Merchant shipping and Underwriters Association of Melbourne Lloyd Anduluz.

In the 1870s, and probably earlier and later, this Manila firm was known to have owned several steamers involved in inter-island trade. These steamers also carried mail. One such steamer was the LEGASPI, which was known to have carried mail between Manila and other inter-island ports in 1875. In 1880, two businessmen, R. A. Ker and T. McMickling, were known in Manila. However, their relationship to this firm is not known.

One interesting financial note about this firm is that it and other 19th century British firms on the Islands continued into the 20th century

primarily due to the presence of several British-owned banks on the Islands. The British-owned Chartered Bank of India, Australia, and China; and Shanghai Banking Corporation, favored British firms in their loan practices, and not American firms, such as Peele, Hubbell and Company; and Russell, Sturgis and Company. As a result, British firms, such as Ker and Company, survived the worldwide drop of sugar prices in the 1870s, whereas many American firms, unable to obtain sufficient credit on the Islands, went bankrupt.

## POSTAL HISTORY OF THE FIRM

There is a considerable amount of surviving postal history of Ker and Company. In this article, its postal history is considered in four parts: covers (letters), forwarding agent handstamps, business handstamps, and other markings.

### Letters

Letters to and from Ker and Company in Manila are known from 1834 through 1898 and later, although earlier letters should exist, since the firm was founded in Manila in 1827. Letters from this firm in Iloilo are known from the 1890s, although earlier letters should exist, since the Iloilo office was in operation as early as 1860.

**FIGURE 1** is an 1854 (February 21) letter from Ker and Company in Manila to Canton, China, rated 4 pence, via the Spanish naval steamer *JORGE JUAN* (Don Peterson collection). The folded letter contains "prices current," a list of current prices of agricultural products exported by this Manila firm. It was a common practice at that time for Philippine firms to send monthly "prices current" to their overseas clients. This letter also has the distinction of being the only surviving letter known to have been carried on the first run of the newly-established Manila-Hong Kong packet service, which departed Manila on February 21, 1854 (Scamp, 1983).

### Forwarding Agent Handstamps

Forwarding agent handstamps are known from Ker and Company in Manila from 1871 through 1879. According to Rowe (1984), a forwarding agent is a "person or firm, who undertakes to see that the goods or correspondence of another are transported without himself acting as the carrier." Correspondence carried in this manner was usually marked by a handstamp, referred to as a forwarding agent handstamp. Forwarding agent handstamps usually contain the words "forwarded by".

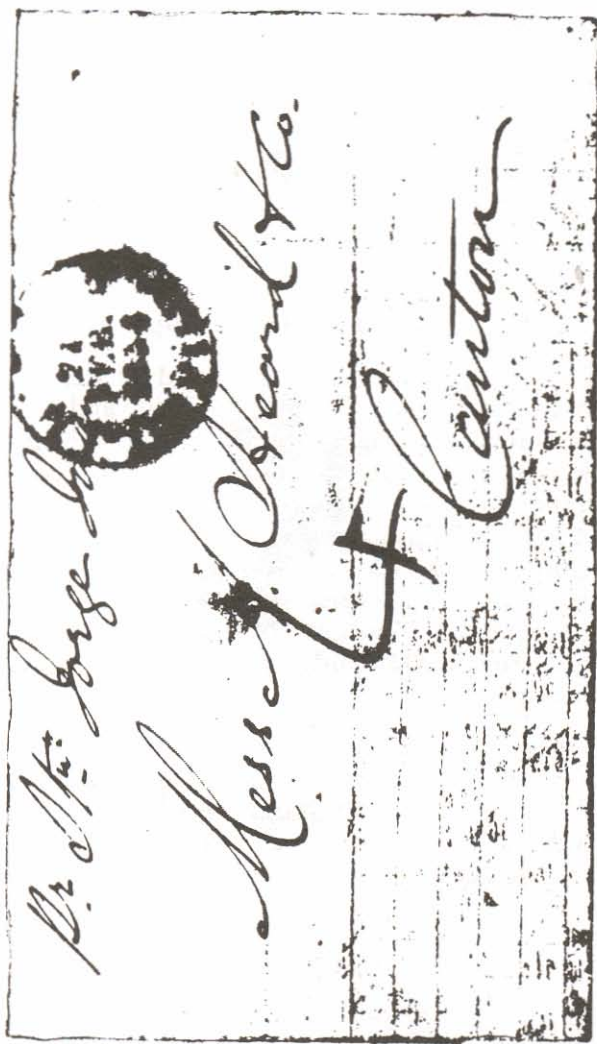


FIGURE 1. 1854 Manila-Canton, China, letter, containing "prices current" from Ker and Company. The letter, rated 4 pence, was carried via the Spanish naval steamer JORGE JUAN (Don Peterson collection).

Two different forwarding agent handstamps are known to have been used by Ker and Company in Manila. They are described as follows.

<u>Type</u>	<u>Size</u>	<u>Color</u>	<u>Period of Use</u>
1. Oval	30mm by 16mm	Black	1871
2. 3 Unframed Straight Lines	20mm	Red	1872

Type 1 was also used as a business handstamp, when applied by Ker and Company on its own mail, from 1865 through 1879 (see Business Handstamps below).

### **Business Handstamps**

Business handstamps were commonly used by Ker and Company's Manila office on mail from 1865 through 1898; and to a lesser extent, by the Iloilo branch, from the 1890s. Business handstamps were used as a return address, for advertising purposes, or as a "control" to prevent the theft of the stamp (when applied directly over the stamp). Although business handstamps from Philippine firms can appear on either the front or back of letters, Ker and Company usually applied these handstamps to the reverse side. Occasionally, the handstamp was applied to postal, newspaper, or fiscal stamps affixed to a letter or revenue document. Many different types of business handstamps of this firm exist.

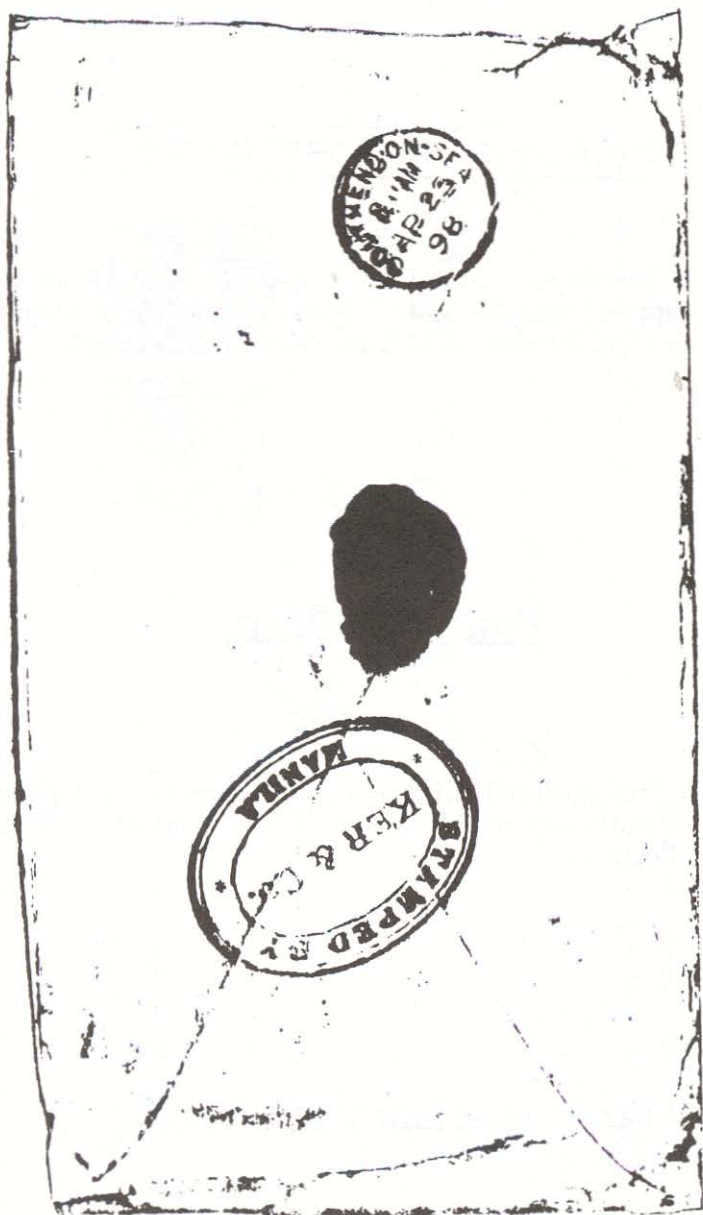
**ATTACHMENT A** describes and illustrates 9 known business handstamp types found on stamps, letters, and documents of Ker and Company (Peterson, 1996). **FIGURE 2** is the reverse side of the 1898 Manila-Southend, England, letter (**FIGURE 6**) from Ker and Company, showing business handstamp Type 4 in blue-green (Don Peterson collection).

### **Other Markings**

Several other postal-related markings are known. They are described as follows.

1. Several types of red wax seals are known from this firm used to seal letters in the 1890s. The name **KER & Co. MANILA** was pressed into the wax. **FIGURE 2** shows an example of a wax seal from this firm.
2. A red rectangular-boxed, 67mm long, **OVERLAND AT MARSEILLES** handstamp was applied by Ker and Company on mail





**FIGURE 2.** Reverse side of 1898 Manila-Southend, England, letter (FIGURE 6), from Ker and Company, showing business handstamp Type 4 in blue-green and a red wax seal (Don Peterson collection).

**OVERLAND AT MARSEILLES**

**FIGURE 3.** Rectangular-boxed OVERLAND AT MARSEILLES handstamp applied by KER and Company on mail from Manila to Europe from 1855 through 1857 (Don Peterson collection).

**PER FIRST MAIL**

**FIGURE 4.** Straight-lined PER FIRST MAIL handstamp applied by Ker and Company on its mail from the late 1880s through 1898 (Don Peterson collection).

**VIA SINGAPORE Y MARSELLA**

**FIGURE 5.** Straight-lined VIA SINGAPORE Y MARSELLA handstamp applied by Ker and Company on its mail from the late 1880s through 1898 (Don Peterson collection).

VIA SINGAPORE

THE EAST



Mr. S. P. Williams,

6 Langthorne Terrace,

Arbuckleham Road,

Southend

Essex

England

Figure 6

from Manila to Europe from 1855 through 1857 to indicate routing (FIGURE 3).

3. From the late 1880s through 1898, the straight-lined handstamps PER FIRST MAIL (FIGURE 4) and VIA SINGAPORE Y MARSELLA (FIGURE 5) were applied together, or separately, on letters, and occasionally, on the affixed stamps on such letters, from the Manila and Iloilo offices of this firm. The handstamps were blue-green, purple, or blue. The VIA SINGAPORE Y MARSELLA handstamp was 66mm long, and the PER FIRST MAIL handstamp was 42mm long. It is believed that the PER FIRST MAIL handstamp was applied to mail to indicate that the letter had first priority on the next departing ship out of Manila. During this period, most of the mail with this marking was addressed to England, via Singapore.

FIGURE 6 is an 1898 Manila-Southend, England, letter, from Ker and Company, showing the 16-centavos double-weight rate and the blue-green handstamps, VIA SINGAPORE Y MARSELLA and PER FIRST MAIL (Don Peterson collection).

#### ATTACHMENT A

#### BUSINESS HANDSTAMPS TYPES OF KER AND COMPANY, MANILA AND ILOILO, 1865-1898

**TYPE 1** Single-lined oval with STAMPED BY on top, KER & Co. in the center, and MANILA on the bottom. Size: 30mm by 16mm. Color: black. See discussion under Forwarding Agent Handstamps in text. Known on covers dated from 1865 through 1879. Rare.



**TYPE 2** Double-lined oval in two single lines with STAMPED By on top, KER & Co in the center, and MANILA on the bottom. Lower case y in By. KER is 3mm high. Right side of inner oval is broken. Size: 38mm by 27mm. Color: blue. Known on covers dated 1893 through 1894. Scarce.



**TYPE 3** Same as TYPE 2, except KER is 4mm high and right side of inner oval is complete (not broken). Size: 40mm by 28mm. Known on covers dated from 1894 through 1895. Scarce.



**TYPE 4** Double-lined oval with double outer line. Same inscriptions as TYPE 2 and 3, except Y of BY is in upper case. An asterisk is on each side of oval. Fine or blurred lettering. Size: 39mm by 29mm. Color: blue, blue-green, or violet. Known on covers dated from 1895 through 1898, and into the 20th century. Scarce.



**TYPE 5** Double-lined oval with double outer line. STAMPED BY on top and MANILA in the center. Although not determined, we assume KER & Co is on the bottom. An asterisk is on each side of the oval. Size: not determined. Color: blue. Known on 1890s covers. Rare.



**TYPE 6** Double-lined oval with double outer line. KER & Coy on top, blank in the center, and ILOILO on the bottom. Diamond on each side of the oval. Size: 38mm by 23mm. Color: black. Known in covers and revenue documents dated from 1892 through 1895. Scarce.



**TYPE 7** Double-lined oval with double outer line. KER Y C.o. on top, blank in the center, and ILOILO on the bottom. Smaller oval than previous types. No diamond on each end of oval. Size: not determined. Color: blue or black. Known on covers from the 1890s. Rare.



**TYPE 8** Double-lined oval with double outer line. ESTACION on top, KER in the center, and MANILA on the bottom. Size: not determined. Color: blue-green. Known on revenue documents from the 1890s. Rare.

No illustration available.

**TYPE 9** Double-lined oval in two single lines with STAMPED BY on top, KER & CA. in the center, and MANILA on the bottom. Asterix on each side of the oval. Size: 34.5mm by 21.5mm. Color: blue. Known on revenue stamps/documents of the 1890s. Rare.

No  
Illustration  
Available

My thanks to Dr. Goeffrey Lewis for reviewing the article and for his helpful suggestions. If anyone has any additional information about this firm and its postal history, contact Don Peterson, 7408 Alaska Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20012. The fourth part of this series on major business firms of the Spanish Philippines will feature the British-owned Smith, Bell and Company, and will be published in an upcoming issue of PPJ.

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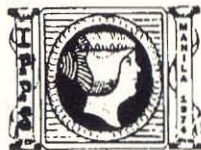
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