



PHILIPPINE PHILATELIC JOURNAL

Volume XIV, No. 1



First Quarter, 1992

PHILIPPINE PHILATELIC JOURNAL

Official publication of

International Philippine Philatelic Society
Dedicated to the Study and Advancement of Philippines Philately

member of
American Philatelic Society Affiliate No. 54
American First Day Cover Society Chapter No. 24
Inter-Asia Philatelic Federation (FIAP)
International Federation of Philately (FIP)

Volume XIV No. 1

First Quarter, 1992

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Membership	Philippines	U.S.	Overseas
Regular	P100.00	US \$10.00	US \$16.00
Contributing	P150.00	US \$15.00	US \$20.00
Sustaining	P250.00	US \$25.00	US \$25.00

The Philippine Philatelic Journal is published quarterly by the International Philippine Philatelic Society. A non-profit, non-stock, educational organization, the IPPS was incorporated in the City of Manila on Sept. 24, 1978, as per SEC registration No. 58004. PPJ PURPOSE: "to publish, on a quarterly basis, original and reprinted material pertaining to the philately of the Philippines." Manuscripts and submissions should be typed and double spaced on one side of the page only. Illustrations should be black and white photographs or very clear photocopies. Send all material to the Editor.

Philippine Philatelic Journal

WATERMARKED QUEEN ISABELLA II STAMPS OF 1859

By Sofronio S. Agustin, Jr.

Early postal issues of the Philippines, prior to 1899, are virtually devoid of watermarks. During the Spanish era, the one real green and two reales carmine stamps (Scott Nos. 8 and 9), which circulated in the archipelago between 1856-66, have earned, until now, the distinction of being the first and the only Philippine stamps on watermarked paper. These adhesives were typographed at the Fabrica Nacional de Moneda y Timbre (FNMT) in Madrid on bluish paper with a characteristic "loop" watermark (Scott type 104). Originally intended for distribution in Cuba and Puerto Rico, these stamps were likewise shipped to the Philippines to be used on foreign mail in lieu of locally-printed stamps of similar denominations being sold in the Islands' post offices at that time. It is common knowledge among Philippine philatelists that there are no other stamps printed either locally or in Spain and issued between 1854-98 which bear watermarks.

In this article, I would like to announce the discovery of a watermarked variety of the five cuartos Queen Isabella stamps of 1859 (Scott No. 10). I came upon an anecdotal account of its existence; however, this has not been substantiated by factual or written evidence in the literature. Therefore, this report is the first one to document and describe this unknown variety.

While I was examining my collection of five cuartos stamps of 1859

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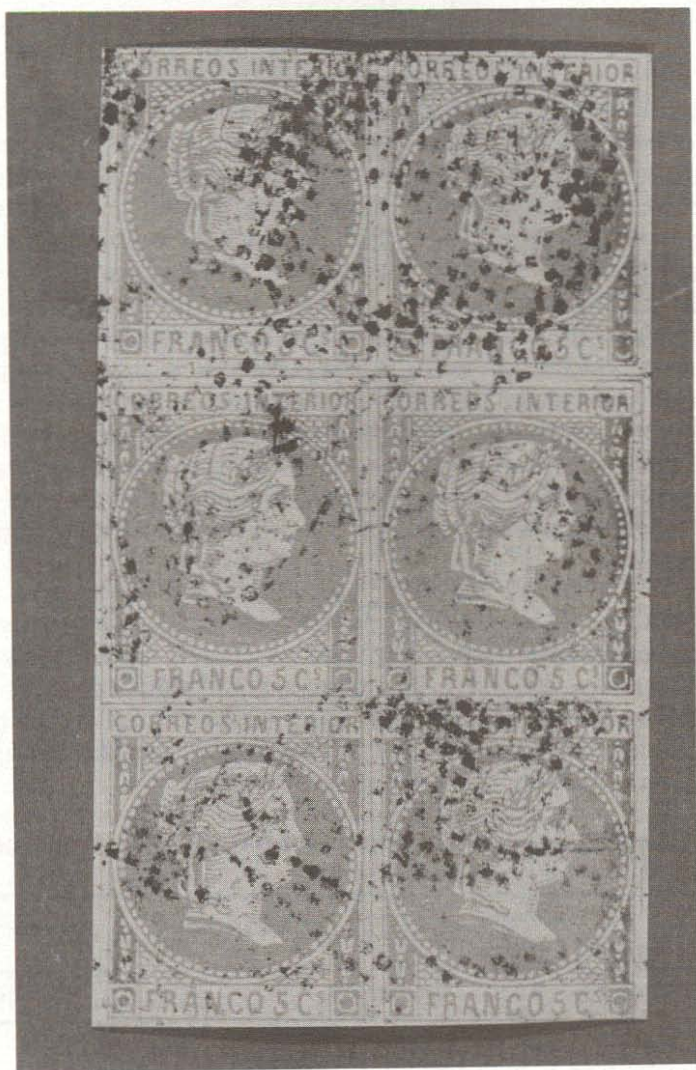


Figure 1. Obverse side of the watermarked variety 5 cuartos Isabella stamps of 1859. The letter A. falls on the middle left and F (P or B) near the edge of the lower left cliché. (Enlarged 1.5 x original size.)

(Scott No. 10) for paper types and characteristics, I stumbled upon a used vertical block of six with a watermark consisting of a fancy double-lined A, a period, and a portion of a second letter that looks more like an F, or probably a P or a B (Figures 2 and 3). This five cuartos multiple is dull red orange in color and printed on thick ribbed paper (Figure 1). The watermark is so prominent that it easily shows when viewed against ordinary table lamp light, obviating the need for the use of watermark fluid and tray. Oriented vertically and reading downwards, the letter A and period are situated on the middle left stamp and half of the other letter, F (P or B), on the edge of the bottom left cliché. The letter A measures 15 mm x 15 mm from apex to base and base tips, respectively. One millimeter away from the right leg of letter A is a fancy period which appears as a little hollow circle with a diameter of two millimeters. The left fragment of the letter F (P or B) measures 15 mm high and 5 mm across. There is a distance of 15 mm from the period and the second letter. In this instance, the watermark can be considered to be of the **reversed sideways** type because the letters read normally, from left-to-right, when the block of these stamps is examined from their flip side and vertically in relation to the stamp design.

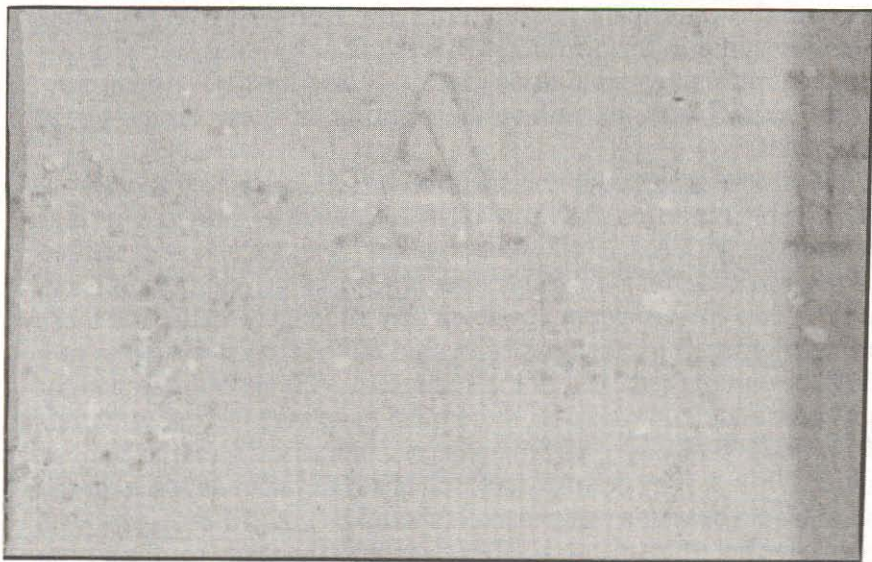


Figure 2. Unretouched photograph of the reverse side of the five cuartos Queen Isabella multiple showing the A. F (P or B) papermaker's watermark. (Enlarged 1.5 x original size.)

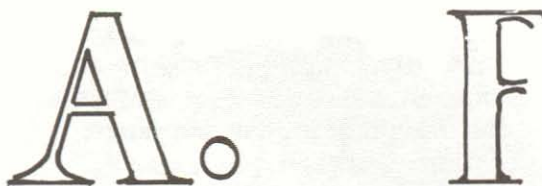


Figure 3. Slightly enlarged tracing of the letters comprising the watermark; horizontally positioned for easy viewing.

I believe the letters are a portion of the name of the manufacturer of the thick ribbed paper used in the printing of the Isabella issue in Manila. This may then be aptly classified as a **house or papermaker's watermark**. Such watermarks normally occur on the margin of the sheets and are usually not intended to show on the printed stamps. It can be surmised that in the printer's efforts to maximize the utilization of the sheets of paper supplied to him, even the edges were printed with stamps. To make matters even worse, the stamps were printed on the bad side since the watermarked side, the side with the watermark reading normally from left-to-right, is the good side suitable for printing. This is not surprising since locally printed stamps were often done carelessly and hastily. Apparently, quality control was lax during the printing of these issues in the Philippines.

It is hereby proposed that the 1859 five cuartos dull red orange imperforates with A. F (P or B) papermaker's watermark, as described herein be considered a separate collectible variety. Although it is not the intention of this paper to attach any monetary value for these watermarked stamps, the possibility that this variety is scarce or rare should be entertained. Out of the supposedly 5,000 copies issued for each color and denomination, there must have been very few stamps upon which this paper manufacturer's identifying marks can be found. While it may be true that each sheet of paper supplied to the printer would bear this watermark, it should be noted that these sheets would have been cut up into smaller sizes to fit the stone configuration of the stamps. Since the watermark is normally marginal in nature, the great majority of stamps on the sheets will show no watermark. These are just a few of the many extenuating circumstances that can add to the difficulty in finding these watermarked stamps. The mere fact that

there is no written account of the existence of a watermarked variety of this five cuartos stamp, from its printing in 1859 to date, is an indication of its scarcity. Finally, it may be argued that these indigenously printed stamps are the **first watermarked stamps produced in and specifically for the Philippines.**

The question that this phenomenon presents us is; how many of these watermarked stamps have survived the test of time: not to mention scorching tropical heat, floods, typhoons, the trash can and termites? With the help of the IPPS membership, hopefully, this question will be resolved soon. Readers are encouraged to examine their holdings of 1859 five cuartos Queen Isabella stamps (Scott No. 10) and report similar varieties to the author or the IPPS. It is hoped that other stamps will be found with similar watermarks. Eventually, we may be able to piece all the letters together, reconstruct the watermark, and reveal the identity of the manufacturer of the paper used in printing the stamp. ■

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Malden, MA 02148

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WARREN #825 CUSTOMS HANDSTAMP

by Douglas K. Lehmann

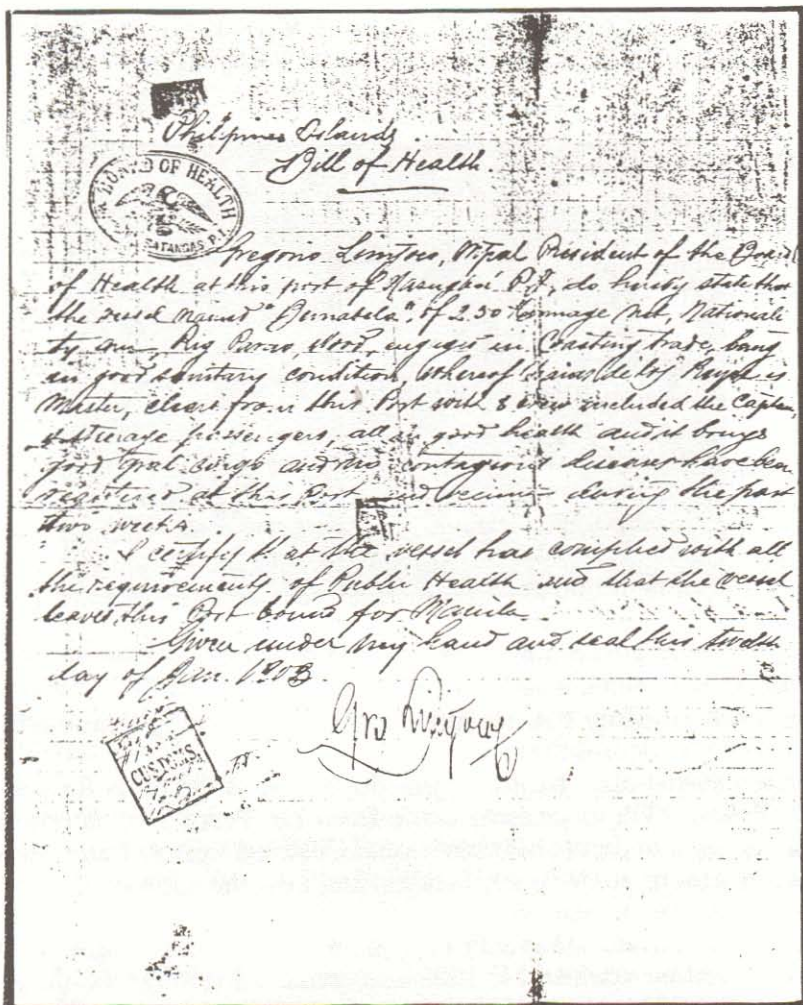
In the Third Quarter, 1991 Issue, Vol. XIII, No. 3, pp. 1-7, I described provisional customs stamps of 1902. These overprinted peso stamps paid dollar customs rates. I explained how this difficult situation remained from February 7, 1902 to January 1903. This situation was prevalent, however, only through July 1902. I based the use through January 1903 on Arnold H. Warren's listing of Customs 'stamp' W-825.

W-825 is a handstamp designed for use on an Internal Revenue or Sello fiscal stamp. The handstamp plus fiscal equal a customs use. W-825 represents a very unusual situation. First we had peso values stamps overprinted with customs handstamps. Sometimes we had peso value stamps, whole and bisects, with no handstamp. Last, we have W-825. W-825 is the handstamp without the fiscal stamp!

The government apparently issued the Port of Nasugbu, Batangas fiscal stamps and a Type C handstamp. They should have received these after April 17, 1902. Sometime after July, the Port probably received US value customs stamps. At this point, the Customs Inspector probably put the handstamp in the back of some drawer. However, sometime after these US value customs stamps were in use, the supply ran out. This happened before January 1903. I imagine, the supply of US value fiscal stamps lasted through all of 1902. The illustrated document shows a January 12, 1903 Bill of Health document as described by Warren. The document has a type C handstamp, shown enlarged, with notation. The notation reads "Stamps paid \$1.30 Mex/12 Jan 03/(signature)." The handstamp is in violet ink with the word CUSTOMS and a double-line box. The inner line dotted. The "Mex" stands for Mexican, the type peso.

The Board President wrote this document in blue ink upon a blank sheet of paper. The inspectors signature's follows with his handstamp "Inspector of Customs/Nasugbu, P.I." The Port's president wrote in good English, a very remarkable feat for that time. The document has the Board's blue oval stamp at top left and the President's signature at the bottom. The text reads:

I (name) President of the Board of Health at this port of Nasugbu P.I., do hereby state that the vessel named "Bernabela," of 2.50 tonnage net, Nationality ours, Rig Parao, wood, engaged in Coasting trade, being in good sanitary condition, whereof (name) is Master, clears from this Port



with 8 crew including the Captain, 4 steerage passengers, all in good health and it brings good gral. cargo and no contagious diseases have been registered at this Port and vicinity during the past two weeks.

I certify that the vessel has complied with all the requirements of Public Health and that the vessel leaves this Port bound for Manila.

Given under my hand and seal this twelfth day of Jan. 1903.

"Gral." is the only Spanish word I can translate, the abbreviation for general and the same English meaning. A "Rig, Parao" is a sailboat



with a schooner rig. I'm not sure of the word following "Nationality."

Warren specifically mentions this document as the basis for his W-825 listing. The document came from Dr. Perry's collection that Warren used to derive his provisional Customs listing. Later owners were Sheldon, Shellhamer, Jackson and now the author.

The exchange rate on January 12, 1903 was 2.60 pesos per dollar. This rate started November 23, 1902 and remained through January 24, 1903. The 50 cent Bill of Health rate would then require 1.30 pesos. When Warren examined this document he read the rate at 1.32 pesos. However, it is a loose "O" that appears to look like a "2". This Port produced these documents for at least one day and maybe a few weeks. However, while Nasugbu is small, it is only a short distance south of Manila. So in all probability this Port was without stamps for only a few days. Further proof of this is that Manila received a new supply of stamps October 31, 1902. Several other W-825 documents might exist. However, collectors saved few documents then, and even fewer without adhesive stamps. I believe this is the only surviving document. It IS the only reported one. If the only one, it represents a catalog number for but a single item; to my knowledge, the only Warren major catalog listing where only one example exists. ■

HISTORY OF FOUR MAJOR BUSINESS FIRMS AND THEIR MAIL FROM THE SPANISH PHILIPPINES

by *Don Peterson*

This four-part series provides an historical account of four major business firms, two American and two British, in the Spanish Philippines. The firms, presented in chronological order, are Peele, Hubbell and Company (1822-1887); Russell, Sturgis and Company (1827-1876); Ker and Company (1827-20th Century); and Smith, Bell and Company (1846-20th Century).

Peele, Hubbell and Company (American) 1822-1887

American and British business firms played an important role in the agricultural and economic development of the Philippine Islands and in its contribution to international trade in the 19th Century. Not surprisingly, their business activities generated important postal history from the Spanish colonial period.

The American firm of Peele, Hubbell and Company is believed to be the earliest foreign (non-Spanish and non-Asian) business house in Manila. Prior to establishing permanent residency on the Islands, the Hubbells made several visits, presumably to determine if a business house would be economically feasible. In 1817, Captain Ezekiel Hubbell of Bridgeport, Connecticut, went to Manila aboard the *Citizen*, representing the firm, Hoyt and Tom and Company. He did not stay, however, but returned to New York with a load of sugar and indigo valued at \$10,000. In 1819, he returned to Manila on the *Citizen* with his son, George William Hubbell, as supercargo (officer on the ship in charge of the cargo). Again, both returned to the United States. These trips convinced the family that a profitable trade could be established between Manila and the United States.

In March 1821, George William Hubbell married; and in April, sailed with his father, Ezekiel Hubbell, and brother, Henry Wilson Hubbell, aboard the *Ajax* to Manila, arriving in August 1821. The conclusion of the third trip to the Philippines resulted in the formation of the firm, George W. Hubbell and Company, in Manila the following year. George W. Hubbell was president and Henry W. Hubbell served as a clerk in his brother's firm. This firm, the progenitor of Peele, Hubbell and Company, commenced business and issued its first commercial circulars on January 1, 1822. The Hubbells have the distinction of being the first Americans to permanently reside on the Islands.

Using ships and shipping connections of their father, Ezekiel Hubbell, this firm successfully traded Philippines goods to the United States and Europe. By 1823, the firm was already exporting sugar to South America, and doing increased business with the United States, particularly to firms in New York and Salem. Between 1825 and 1827, George W. Hubbell spent time in the United States promoting trade with Manila, resulting in increased trade with the Philippines.

George W. Hubbell died on May 3, 1831, at the age of 35. His brother, Henry W. Hubbell, then assumed control of the firm. Since Henry W. Hubbell was in Connecticut when his brother died, the business in Manila was directed by John McAuley, the senior staff member of the firm. Also, in 1831, Henry W. Hubbell formed a new partnership with J. W. Peele of Salem, Massachusetts. J. W. Peele arrived in Manila aboard the *Sapphire* in May 1832. On July 1, 1832, circulars were issued announcing the formation of the new firm, **Peele, Hubbell and Company**. Under the leadership of Henry W. Hubbell, an increased effort was made by this firm to improve trade between the Philippines with England and China.

J. W. Peele and John McAuley resided in Manila, while Henry W. Hubbell sailed about the world on ships owned and chartered by his father and other New England ship owners. In 1834, Henry W. Hubbell retired and was succeeded by Henry Lawrence of New York. In that same year, Ezekiel Hubbell died. J. W. Peele and Henry Lawrence retired in 1843. From then on, although the firm's name remained the same, the principal partners resided in Salem.

The earliest postal history of this firm is known by a forwarding agent handstamp. Rowe (1984) reports the use of a forwarding agent handstamp by Peele, Hubbell and Company in Manila on mail to, or from, or passing through Manila, between 1834 and 1841. The oval handstamp measures 40 by 17 millimeters, is either black or red, and contains the words, "Forwd' by Peele, Hubbell & Co. Manila." It is considered rare. My records show that this handstamp was in use as late as 1844.

Peele, Hubbell and Company in Manila acted as a forwarding agent for mail to and from other business firms and private individuals in the Far East at that time. 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."



Figure 1

Figure 1 is an 1834 (October 20) Salem, Massachusetts-Batavia (Dutch East Indies) letter showing the use of the handstamp. The letter was sent to Manila, where it was forwarded by Peele, Hubbell and Company to Batavia, via the private American ship *Monsoon*. The handstamp was applied to the letter by this firm in Manila. This letter is the earliest known use of the Peele, Hubbell and Company forwarding agent handstamp.

In the 1830s and 1840s, Peele, Hubbell and Company and Russell, Sturgis and Company were the only two American firms in Manila. Both firms were primarily involved in trading indigo, sugar, hemp, and tobacco. In 1842, these two firms monopolized the export of hemp from the Islands, which was sent primarily to the United States, where it was manufactured in factories in or near Boston. Most of the sugar was shipped to England to the British broker/shipping agent, Fred Huth and Company in London.

This firm also provided "official" American presence in the Philippines. From June 1822 until late 1831, George W. Hubbell served as the U.S. Consul in Manila.

Mail to and from this firm is known between 1834 and 1880. Undoubtedly, mail exists before and after these dates, since the firm

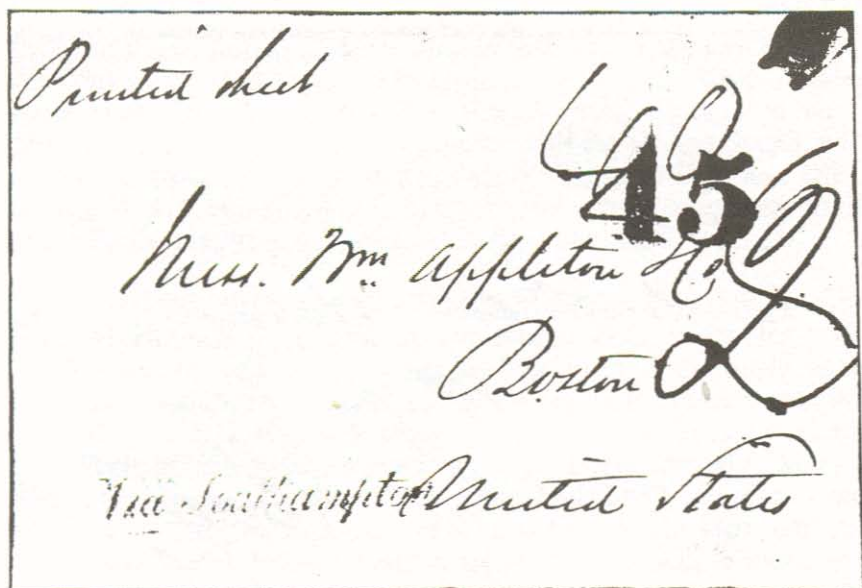


Figure 2

first opened in 1822 and closed in 1887. Figure 2 is an 1852 Manila-Boston letter containing a pre-printed "Manila Prices Current 17th May 1852" notice. The letter was carried to Hong Kong on a private vessel. According to Kirk (1982), the letter departed Hong Kong on May 23 aboard the British Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company (P&O) packet steamer *Malta* to Galle (Ceylon, now Sri Lanka), then aboard the P&O steamer *RIPON* to Southampton, England. There, the letter was transferred to the British packet steamer, *Niagara*, arriving at Boston on August 5, 1852. The "45" (U.S. cents) on the front of the letter indicates the rate for a letter weighing less than 1/2 ounce that was carried from the Far East to England via the Southampton route.

Figure 3 is an interesting letter from this firm's historical standpoint. It is an 1855 (January 1) Manila-San Francisco pre-printed folded letter announcing the admittance of two new American partners to the firm in Manila: Richard D. Tucker and Ogden E. Edwards. The letter shows a "SHIP 6" handstamp (in black) on the front, which was applied at the San Francisco Post Office to indicate the 6-cent paid rate (at San Francisco) for mail carried by foreign or private American ships to the United States. In 1883, Mr. Tucker was still known to be with the firm.

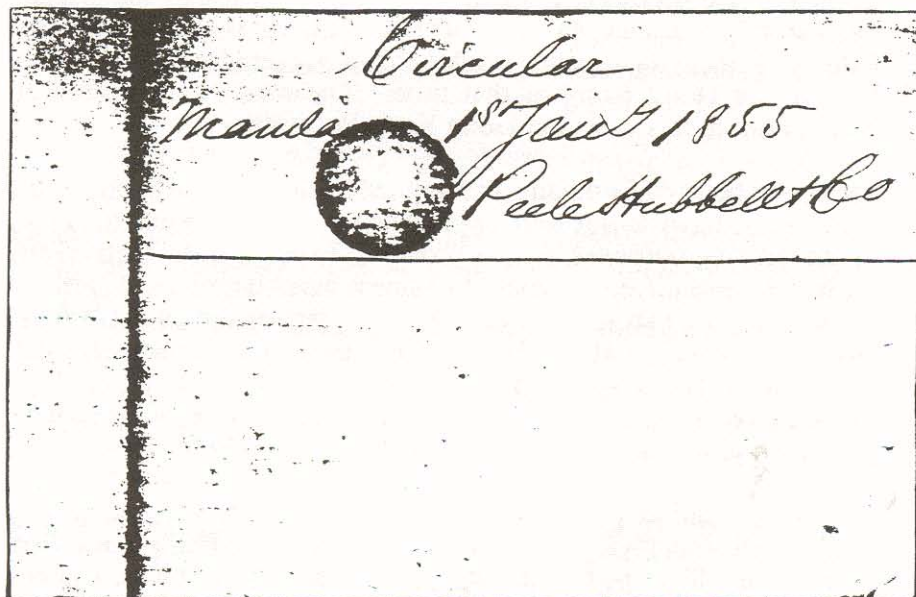
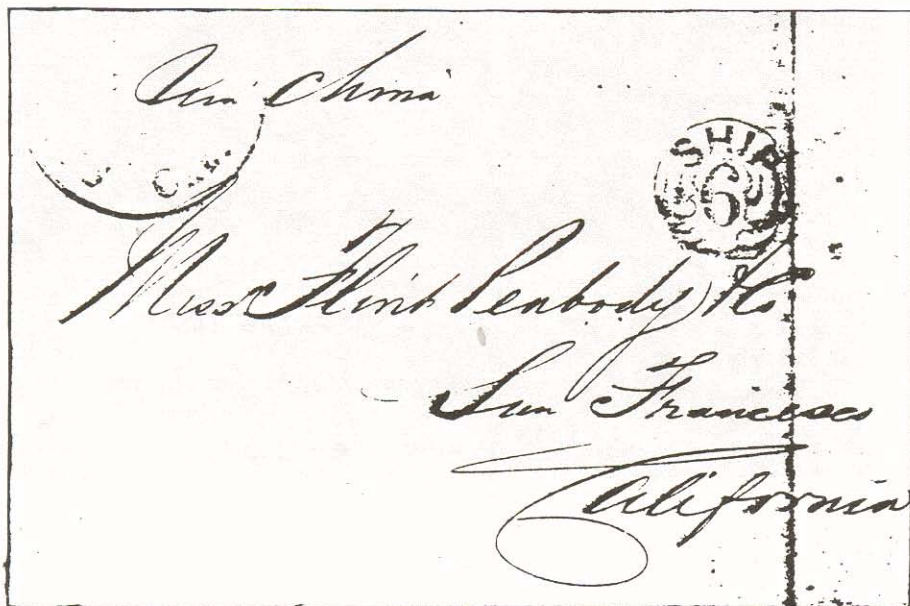


Figure 3

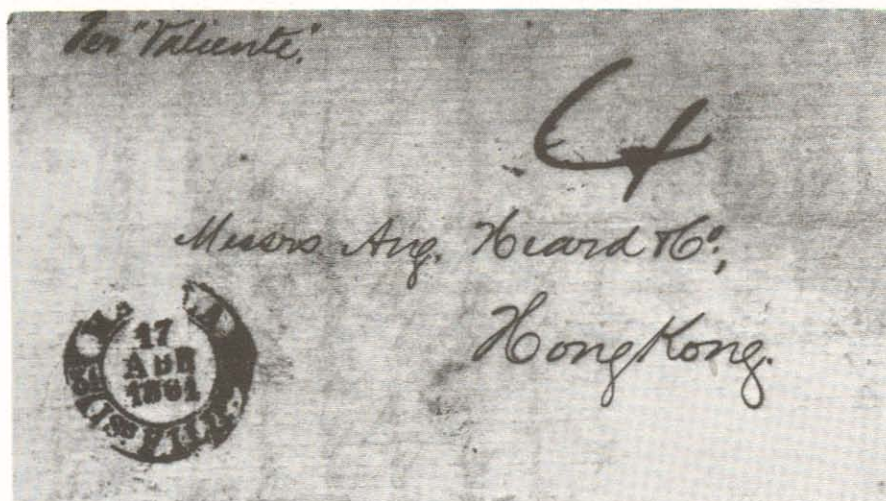


Figure 4

Finally, Figure 4 is an 1861 Manila-Hong Kong letter from this firm to Augustine Heard and Company. It discusses the current prices of hemp and rice (from Pangasinan). The letter, carried by the private Spanish ship, *Valiente*, shows a "4" in manuscript on the front of the letter, indicating the 4-pence private ship letter rate for mail between Manila and Hong Kong at that time. The rate was collected at destination; in this case, the Hong Kong Post Office.

Peele, Hubbell and Company also applied business handstamps on its mail. These handstamps were applied on the mail as a return address, for advertising purposes, or as a "control" to prevent the theft of the stamp. Several different types of business handstamps were used by this firm between 1834 and 1880. These handstamps occur in pale red, violet, and probably also in black. The handstamps are usually oval and contain the words, "Peele, Hubbell and Company" on top, "Manila" on the bottom and either the date or it is blank in the center. They are quite scarce.

As a broker and shipping agent, Peele, Hubbell and Company also represented other foreign firms doing business in the Philippines. For example, in 1875, the firm represented the Board of Marine Underwriters of San Francisco, Yangtze Insurance association of Shanghai, Queen Insurance Company of Liverpool and London, and the Union Insurance Society of Canton.

Beginning in the 1870s, the firm's success began to decline due to competition from British and other foreign firms in Manila and from two British banks in Manila (Chartered Bank of India, Australia, and China, and the Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation), which provided low interest loans to British (but not American) business firms there. These banks first opened in the Islands in 1872 and 1875, respectively.

In 1887, after 65 years of operation, Peele, Hubbell and Company closed its doors. The business was sold to the Anglo-American firm of Warner, Blodgett and Company, which continued to operate a brokerage/shipping firm in the Philippines into the 20th century. ■

(Editor's Note: All covers shown are from Don Peterson's personal collection.)

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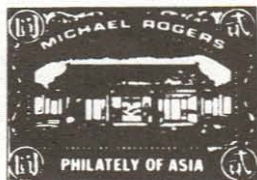
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A COMMONWEALTH FORGERY

by Rene A.N. Mercado

Another interesting forgery of a Commonwealth postage stamp was among material which I purchased from a local Manila auction sale (not IPPS) just this month.



Figure 1. Forgery



Figure 2. Genuine

This latest discovery is purported to be an error/variety of Scott No. 037, the 1941 2c apple green Rizal with small "O.B." overprint printed upside down (Figure 1), with normal 037 illustrated in Figure 2.

The forgery, purchased in block of six, displays the following characteristics which quickly brand it for what it is:

1. The letter "B" is sans-serif.
2. The periods are square instead of round.
3. The ink used has a luster compared with the flat tone of the genuine.
4. The very sharp impression of the overprint compared to the genuine.

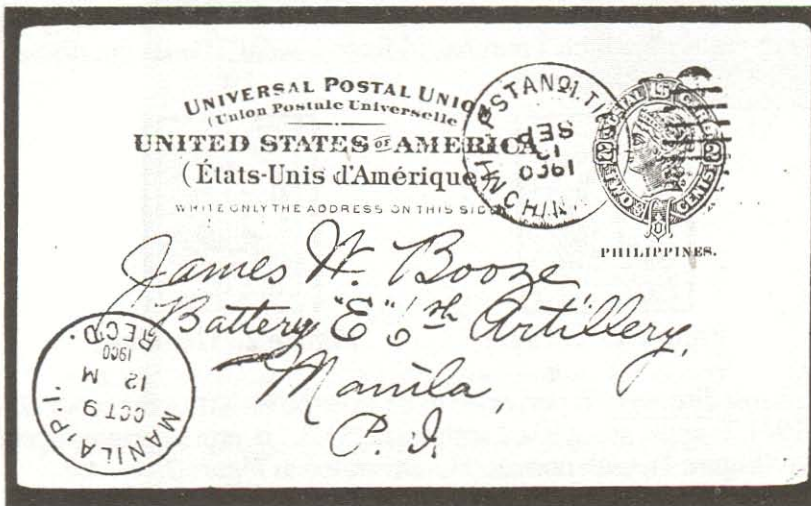
A veteran auctioneer who was with me at the auction remarked, "In my 35 years in this business, I've never encountered one like this." Indeed, a closer examination of the B/6 showed varieties such as a missing period after "O", after "B", and after both letters!

The succeeding lot in this auction, which I also got, featured a similar forgery, this one on Scott No. 044, the 1946 2c sepia Rizal, in B/4 with plate number 147688 and with varieties as on the 037.

I guess the forger was trying to tickle our excitable imaginations and "adding value" to cheap stamps by inverting the overprint and creating other varieties in blocks of 4 and 6.

Readers who specialize in the study of forgeries of the Commonwealth may write me for free samples, good while supply lasts. ■

Album Page...

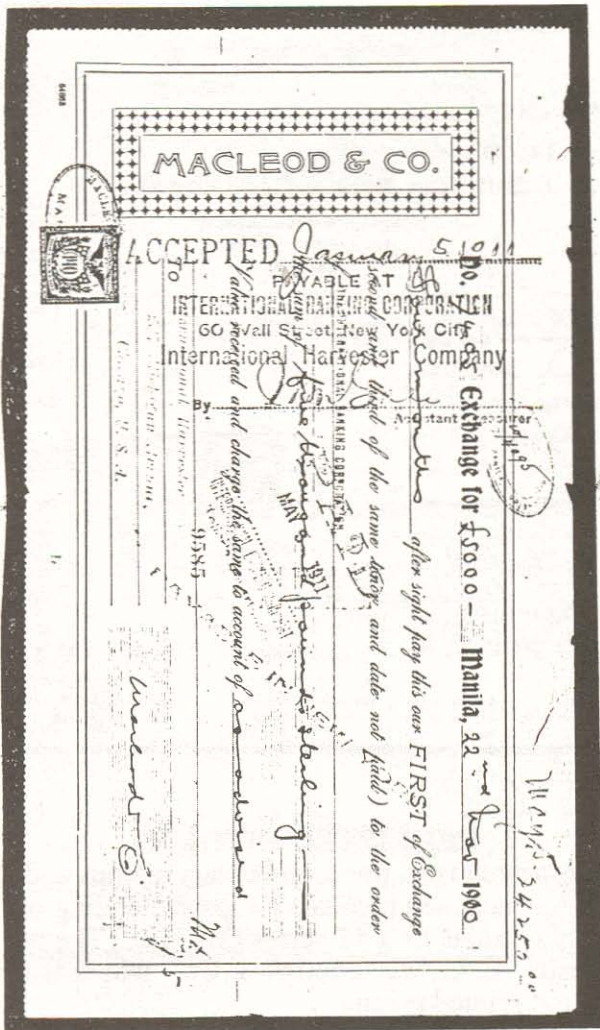


UX2 BOXER REBELLION

Postmarked September 18, 1900 Military Postal Station Number 1, Tientsin, China with receiving postmark at Manila October 9, 1900.

The US card design had over 14 million impressions starting in 1898; however, only 22,325 were overprinted for Philippine's UX2. This card was carried by one of 2,500 soldiers sent from the Philippines to form an 18,000 six-nation force to quell the Boxer Rebellion in China. Tientsin is near the coast not far from Peking.
(Former Collection of Charles E. Merit)

Album Page...



BILL OF EXCHANGE

Dated November 22, 1910 for 5000 pounds sterling payable 4 months later or as advised. The rate is one peso per 5000 pesos or fraction thereof. The pencil notation is the conversion from 5000 pounds to 24,250 dollars or 48,500 pesos. The ten peso documentary stamp is perforated 12 x 12, W-718 and tied with the MacLeod Company red handstamp. (Collection of Douglas Lehmann)

Album Page...

ESTABLISHED JANUARY, 1899

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E. C. McCullough

RECEIPTED INVOICE

This rate is not uncommon for documentary stamps and shows a 4-centavos rate for receipted invoices for goods totaling over 4 pesos. The stamp is the initial 12 x 12 series (W-712). The red company handstamp reads "E. C. McCullough & Co." which is the building contained on the printed receipt.

PHILA PA 191 PM 05/15/92 # 27

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