

PHILIPPINES

After the United States declared war on Spain on 21 April 1898, an expeditionary force was assembled preparatory to the occupation of the Philippines. The destruction of the Spanish fleet in the Battle of Manila Bay on 1 May by the Americans under Commodore Dewey sealed the fate of the defenders, and an armistice was signed on 12 August. However, some of the Filipinos wanted independence, not merely the substitution of American rule for Spanish, and an insurrection led by Emilio Aguinaldo required the presence of a substantial American military force until it was finally put down on 16 April 1902.

Transport Post Office Forerunners

Hong Kong
26 July 1898
30 July 1898



A fleet of four troopships sailed from San Francisco on 15 June and arrived in Cavite Bay on 16 July 1898. The postal agent and two clerks remained on board the steamer *China*, where they operated a "transport post office," gathering outgoing mail for despatch to the U.S. One such mail shipment went out via Hong Kong.

PHILIPPINES
Luzon

Philippine Station
30 July 1898

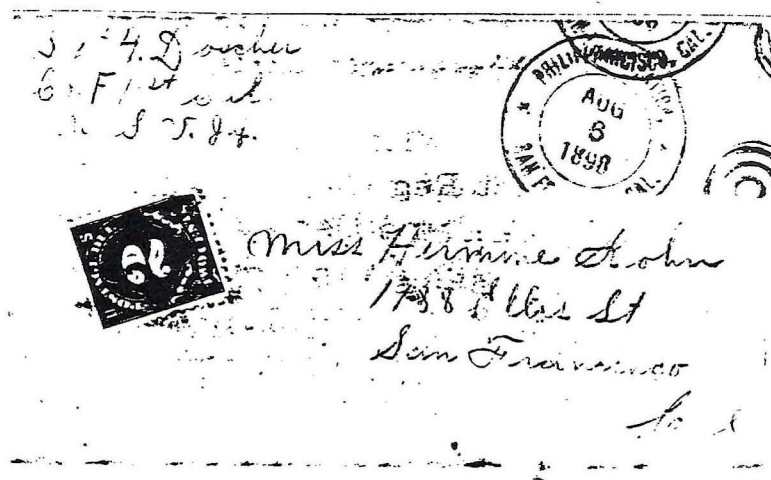
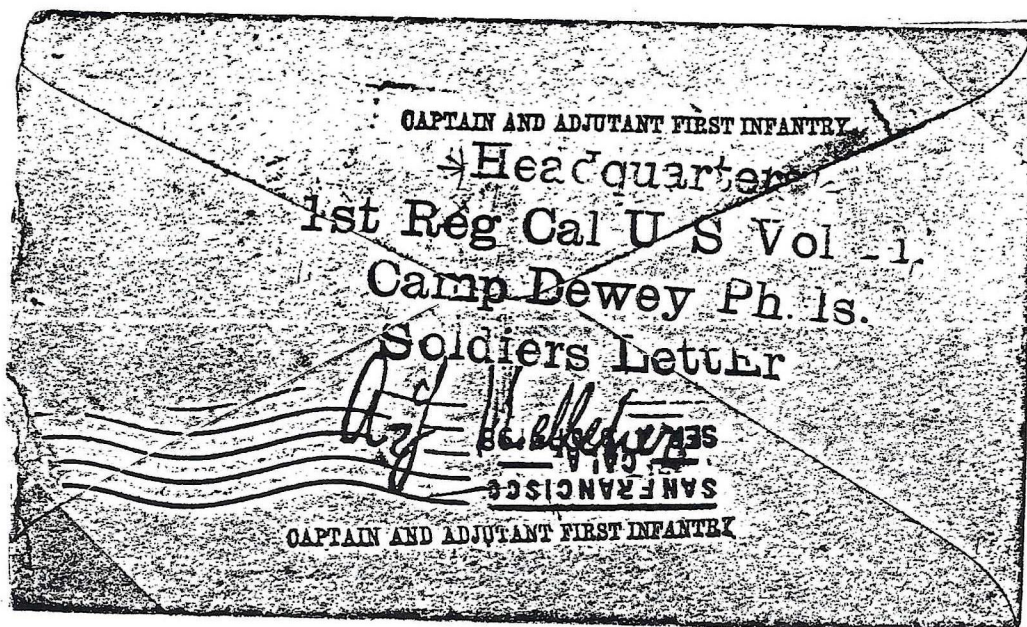
Opening Day of Cavite Post Office



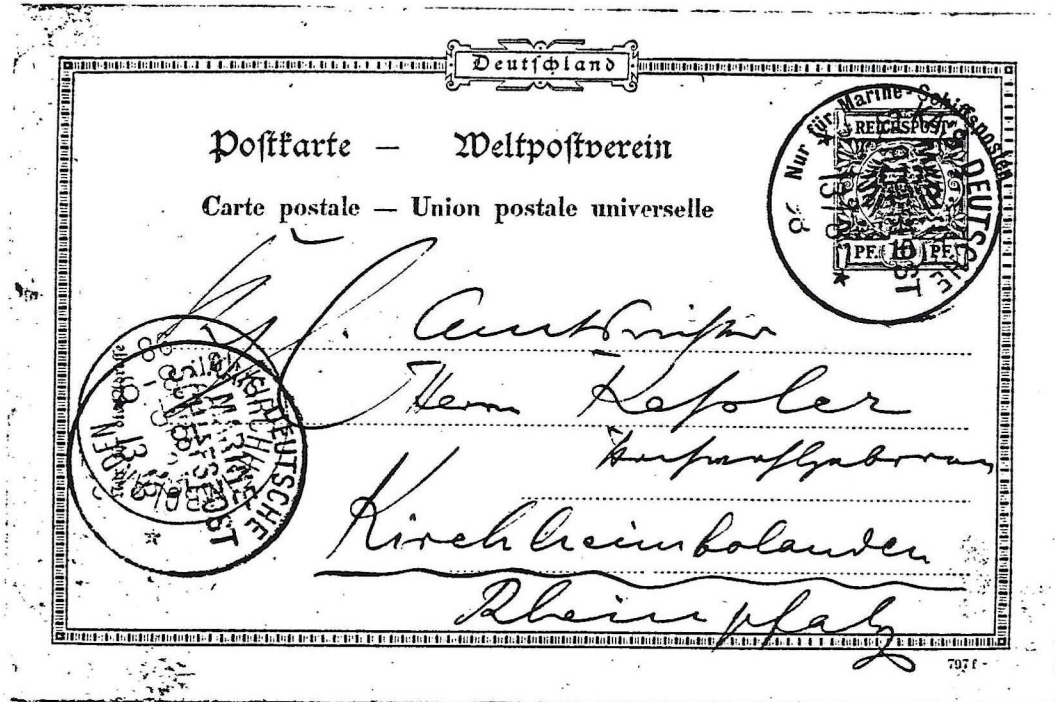
Eventually, the postal agent and the clerks, with their safe and other equipment, were unloaded and set up for business on 30 July 1898 at Cavite, about 10 miles southwest of Manila. This first U.S. post office in the Philippines was designated as the Philippine Station branch of San Francisco. Only four examples of this postmark are recorded on the opening date. The latest recorded date is 18 January 1899.

PHILIPPINES
Luzon

Philippine Station
6 August 1898



A few days after the post office was opened at Cavite, a sub-station was opened at Camp Dewey nearby, the primary encampment for the U.S. forces (Goodale). No special marking was used on the Camp Dewey mail, which was delivered to Cavite for cancellation. However, the location was provided in a soldier's letter endorsement applied by the 1st Regiment of California Volunteers.



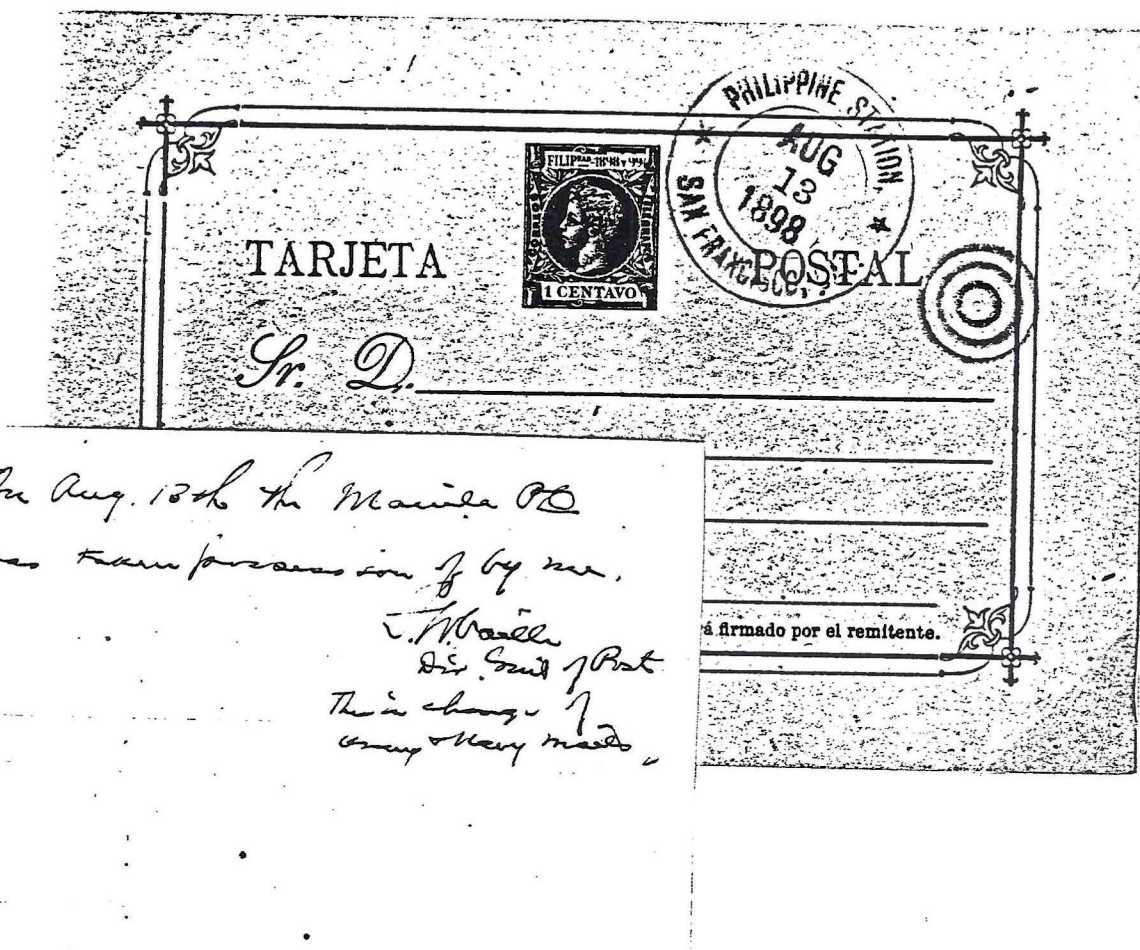
During the Spanish-American War, Germany sent warships into Philippine waters, ostensibly to protect German nationals. However, the American authorities were suspicious that the Kaiser had designs on any available parts of the disintegrating Spanish Empire. As a result, it was made clear that any intervention would not be tolerated.

The above card was sent by a sailor aboard the light cruiser *S.M.S. Prinzess Wilhelm* in Manila Harbor on the day that the city fell to the Americans. The message on the back reads in part, "Today at 9:30 the Americans attacked Manila from land and sea at the same time. One hour later the American flag flew over the powder magazine...More than 200 Germans have been taken on board already on Tuesday..."

PHILIPPINES
Luzon

Philippine Station
13 August 1898

Souvenir of Agent Vaille's first visit to the Manila post office



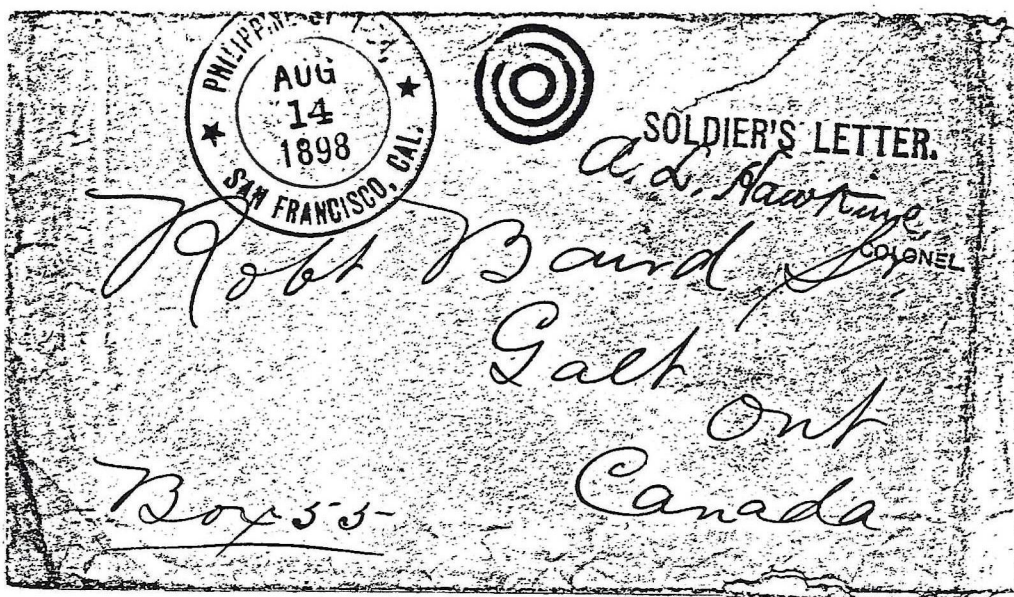
F. W. Vaille, postal agent for the Philippine Island Military Postal Service, embarked on a transport at Cavite on 13 August to witness the taking of Manila and arrange for the transfer of the postal activity to U.S. control. He reported, "...I was enabled to land and enter Manila an hour or more before any of our soldiers entered the city, and soon thereafter succeeded in finding the Manila post office. There I was courteously received and shown over the office."

Vaille also prepared souvenirs of his visit, cancelling Spanish Philippines postal cards with the "Philippine Station" postmark and endorsing them on the back to confirm his visit on the 13th.

PHILIPPINES
Luzon

Philippine Station
14 August 1898

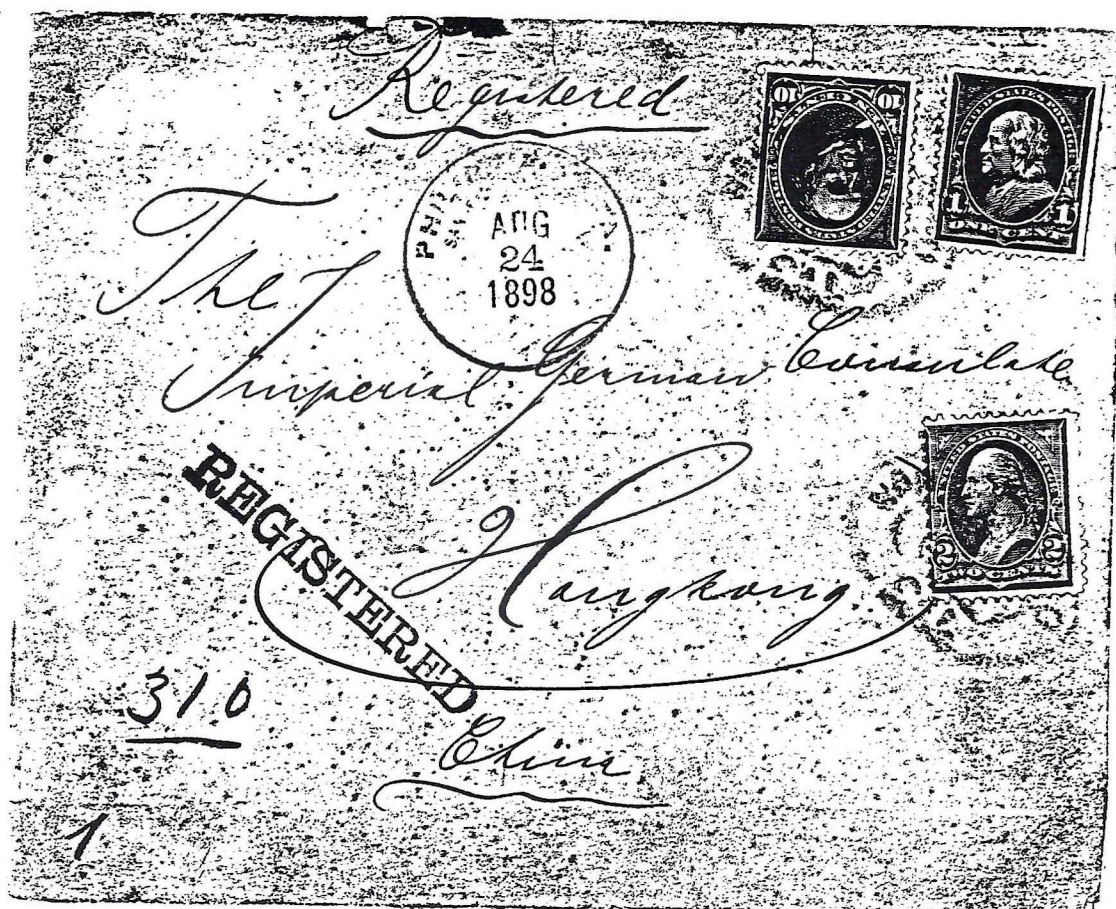
Opening Day of the Manila Post Office



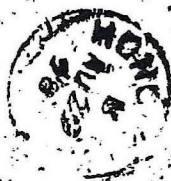
On the following day, 14 August, the Manila post office officially opened for business under American authority. Only five covers are recorded as being used on the first day.

PHILIPPINES
Luzon

Philippine Station
24 August 1898



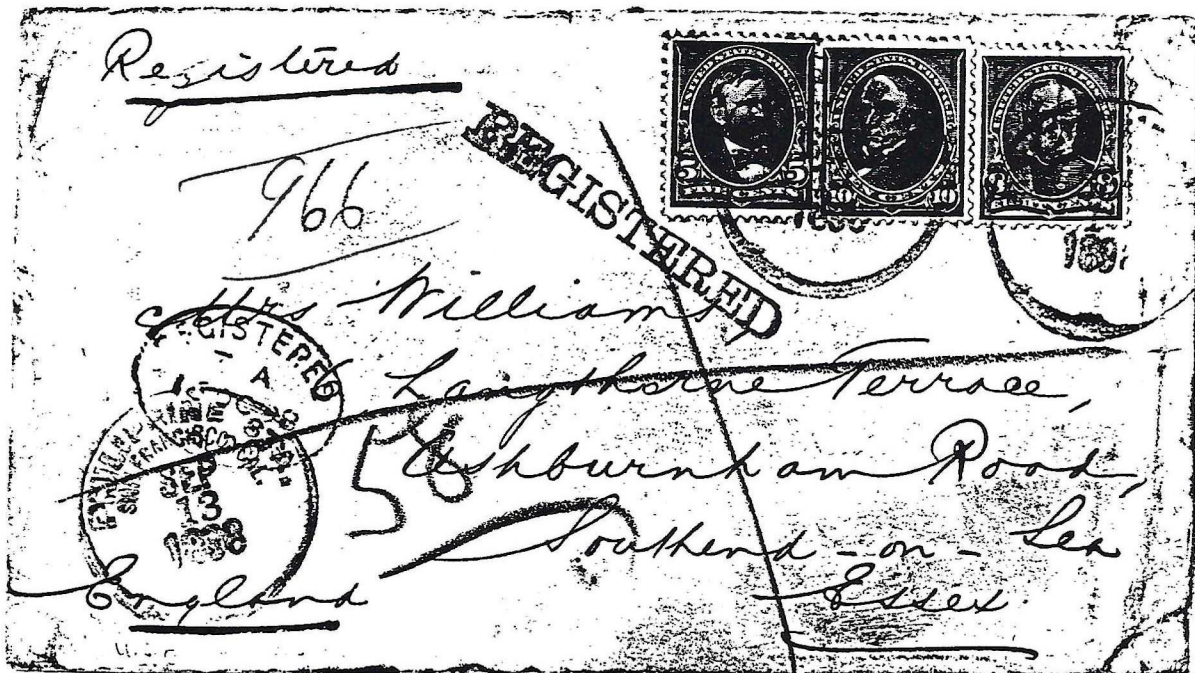
U.S. MILITARY P.O. STA.
San Francisco Cal. U.S.A.
No 1 Philippines



Single-ring rubber cds reads "Philippine Sta." The postage is cancelled with a double oval "San Francisco" killer. On the reverse is a previously unrecorded 3-line marking of the "U.S. Military P.O. Sta./ No.1 Philippines."

PHILIPPINES
Luzon

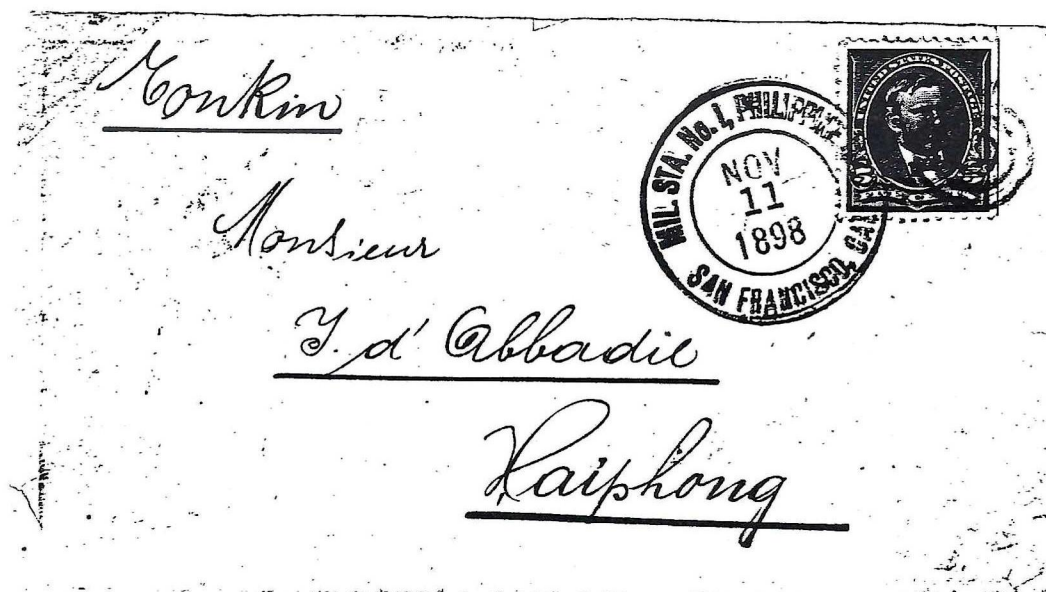
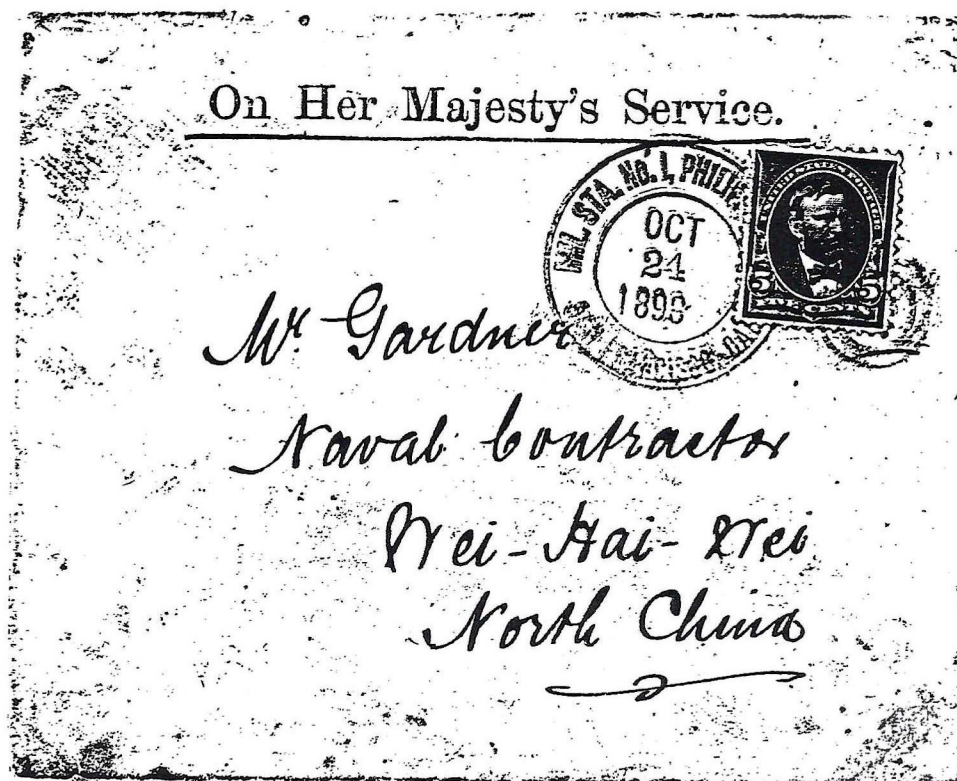
Philippine Station
13 September 1898
17 September 1898



The single ring rubber cds for Registered mail is recorded used only from 22 August to 9 October 1898. Thus, it is quite uncommon, particularly to foreign destinations (as above to England and Italy).

PHILIPPINES
Luzon

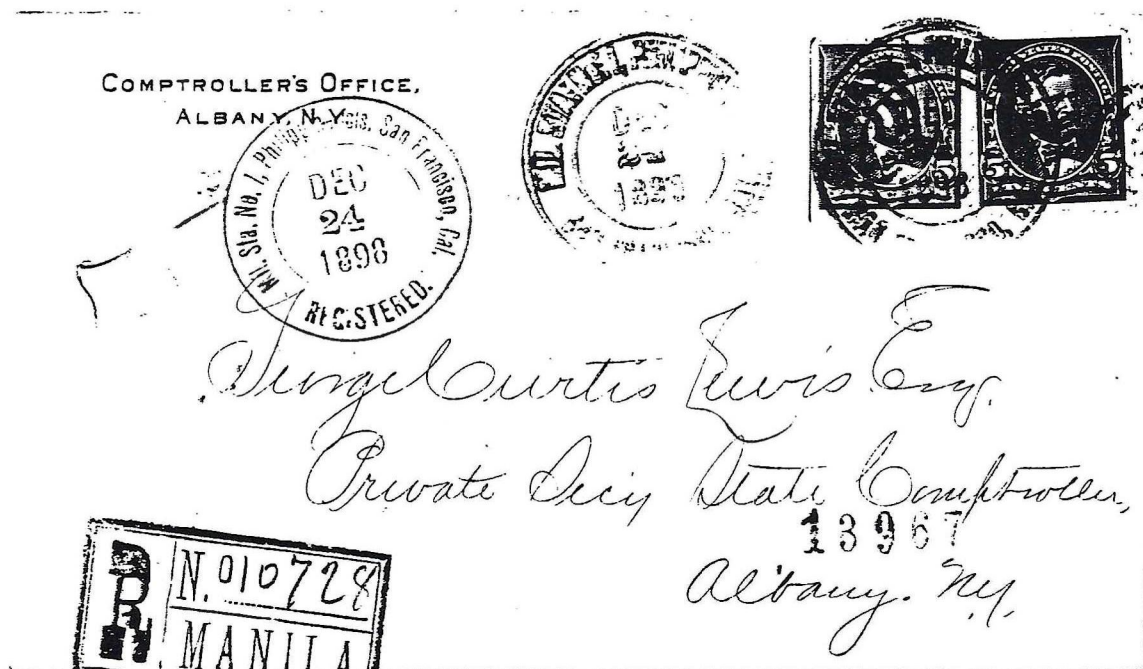
Mil. Sta. No. 1
24 October 1898
11 November 1898



Manila was the first of six numbered military stations opened in the Philippines. A new double-ring postmark reading "Mil. Sta. No. 1/San Francisco, Cal." is recorded used from 17 October 1898 to 14 March 1899. An extensively used postmark, but usage to foreign destinations (as above to China and Indochina) is very unusual.

PHILIPPINES
Luzon

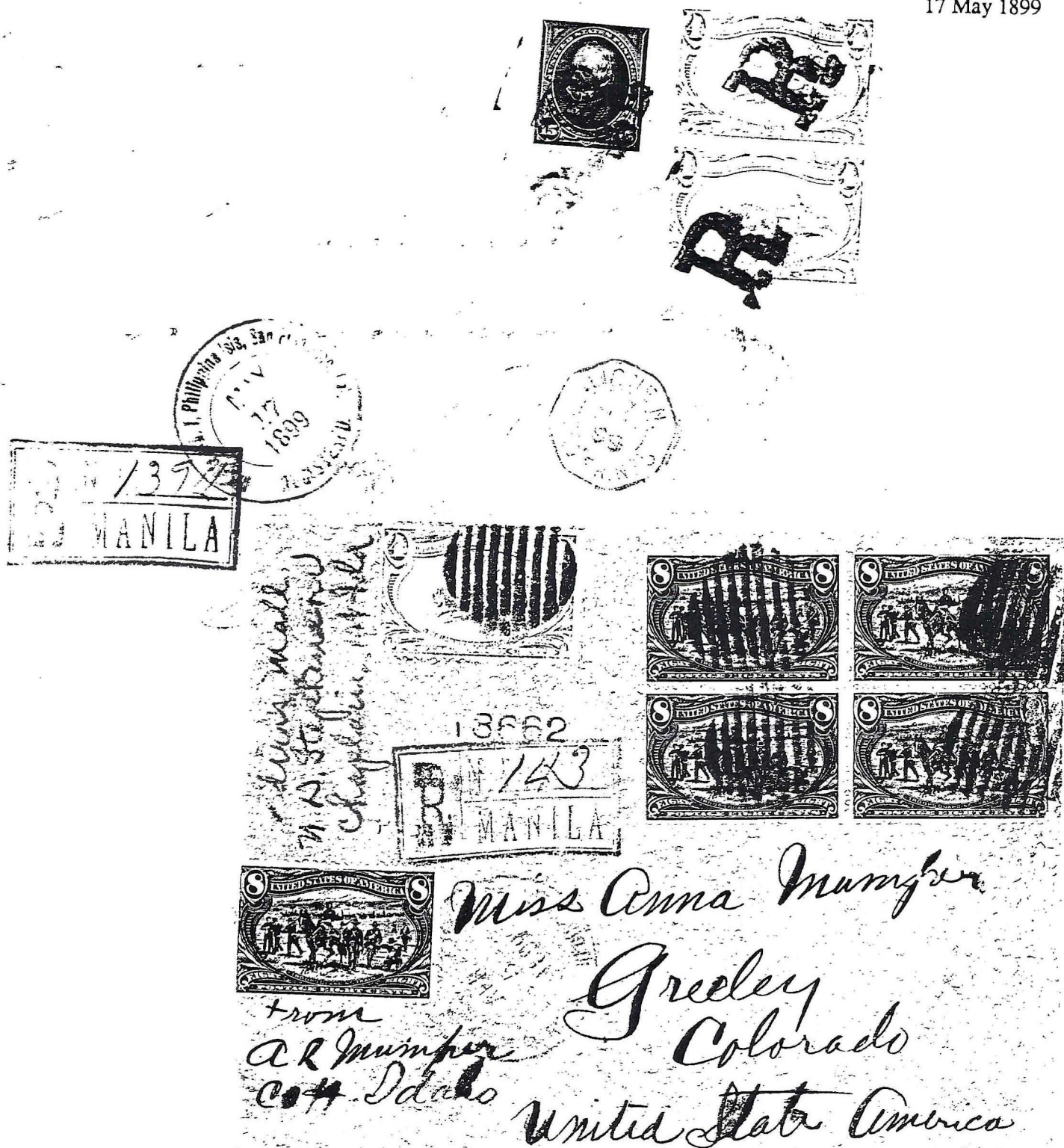
Mil. Sta. No. 1
24 December 1898
5 May 1899



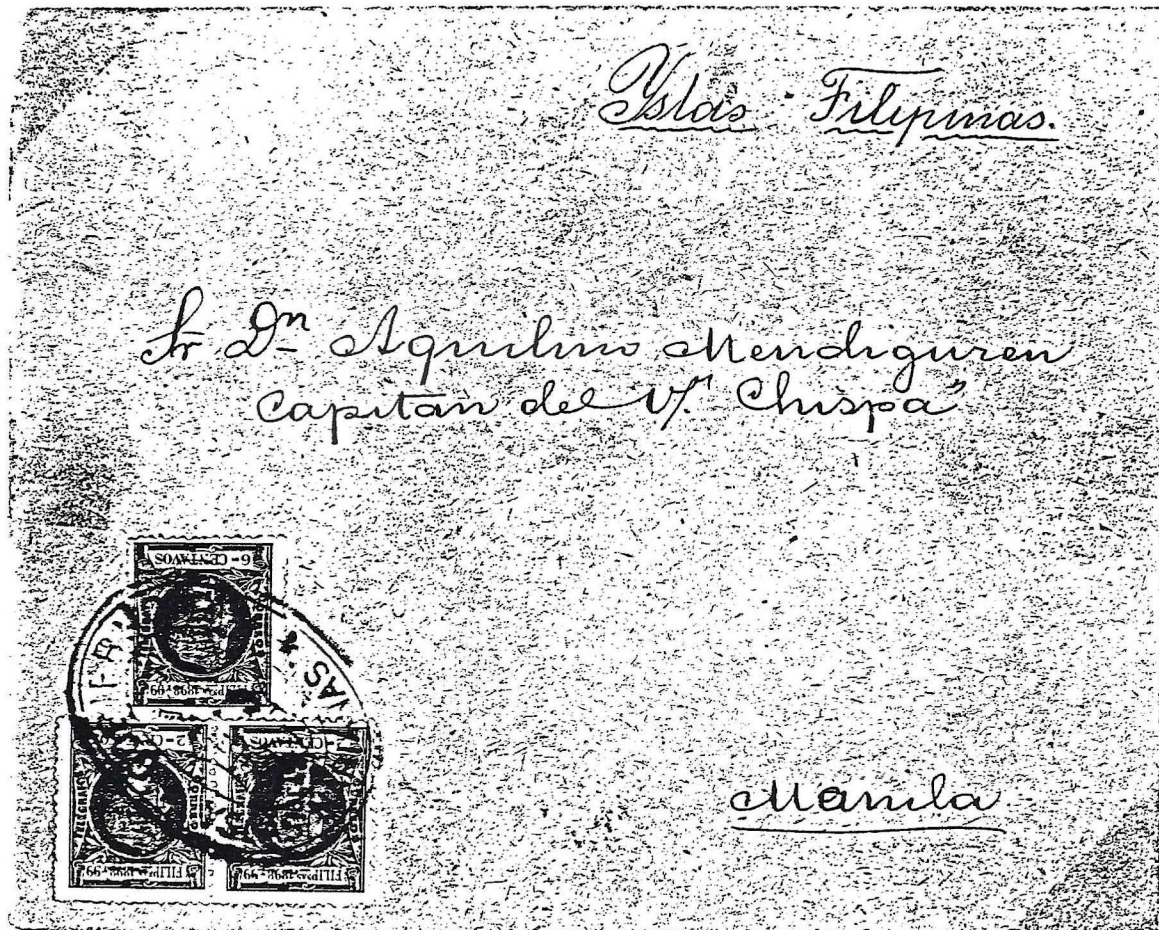
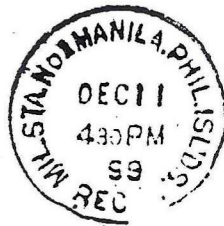
For Registered mail during this period, a double ring cds was introduced, including the station number and San Francisco. This marking is recorded used between 26 October 1898 and 15 June 1899.

PHILIPPINES
Luzon

Mil. Sta. No. 1
5 April 1899
17 May 1899



For registered mail, a double ring cds was introduced, including the station number and "San Francisco." Above usages show part of the wrapping from a registered parcel and an unusually franked, triple-weight registered cover to Switzerland with large, unframed "R" killer used to cancel the 23 cents postage.

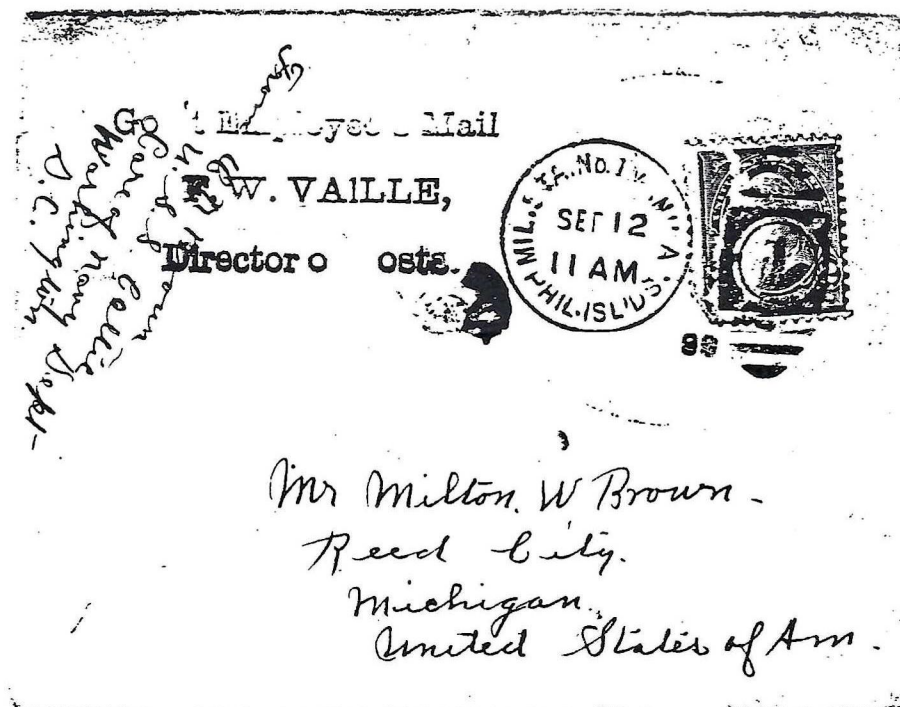
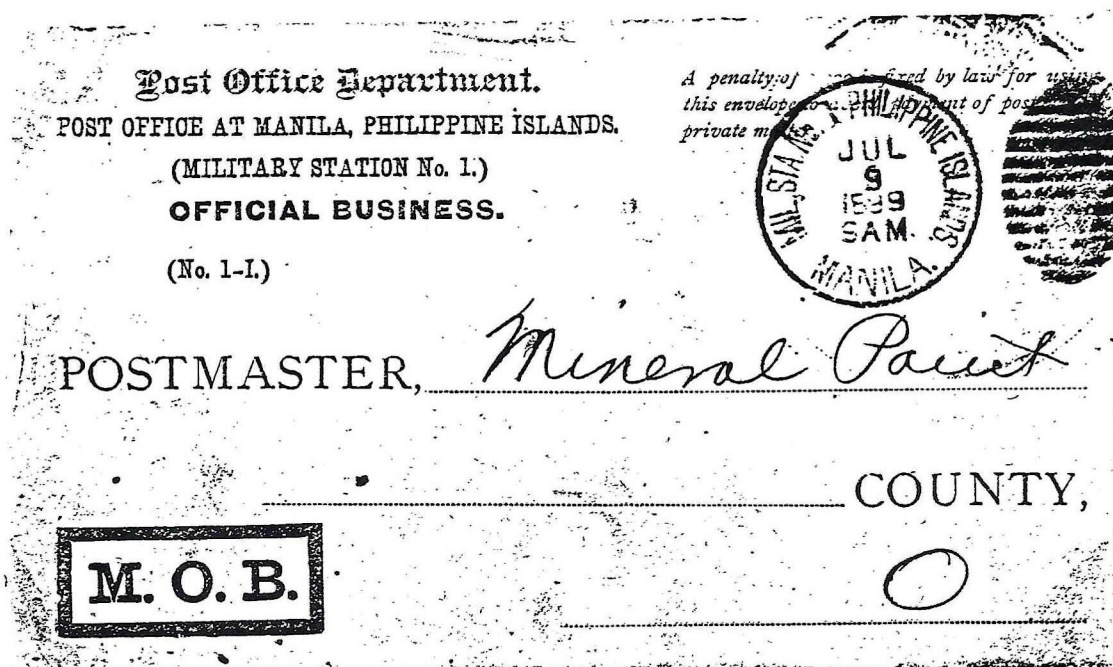


As a result of the American occupation of Spain's principal Pacific possessions -- the Philippines and Guam -- the Northern Marianas were cut off from the homeland. Therefore, they were sold to Germany on 8 February 1899. However, the Germans did not formally take possession until late that year, and stamps of the Spanish Philippines continued in use in the interim. However, a substantial quantity of these stamps had been stolen during the unrest in Manila, causing the authorities to fear for the postal revenues. As a result, the overprinting of stamps in the Saipan post office with a boxed "Marianas Espanolas" was ordered. The quantities produced were very small, including only 50 copies of the 6 centavo value, shown on the above cover with a pair of the 2 centavos.

These stamps were only used on a single mail dispatch, on the steamer *Uranus* which was bound for Manila on 29 November 1899. Upon arrival, the mail arriving from the Spanish Marianas was backstamped on 11 December, thus providing the most exotic usage of Manila receiving markings of all.

PHILIPPINES
Luzon

Mil. Sta. No. 1 Manila
9 July 1899
12 September 1899



Two types of steel duplex devices were provided in 1899. The first, somewhat larger in size and with the town name at the bottom, is recorded used from 20 March 1899 to 22 August 1900 at MPS No.1. The second, smaller version has "Phil. Isl'ds." at the bottom and is recorded used from 5 December 1898 to 25 August 1900.

PHILIPPINES
Luzon

Mil. Sta. No. 1
19 July 1899

Post Office Department.
POST OFFICE AT SAN FRANCISCO, CAL.
OFFICIAL BUSINESS.

*This envelope can
be used by the
Officer of the Uni.
of the Governmen-
ment of postage on
punishable by a fine*

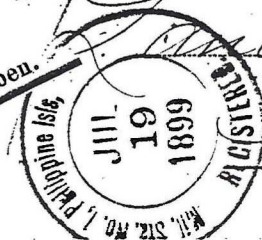


*From P. H. Vaille
(No. 1-A.)
Director of Posts, Manila, P.I.*

Dr. Polmann

*Landau, Pfalz
Germany*

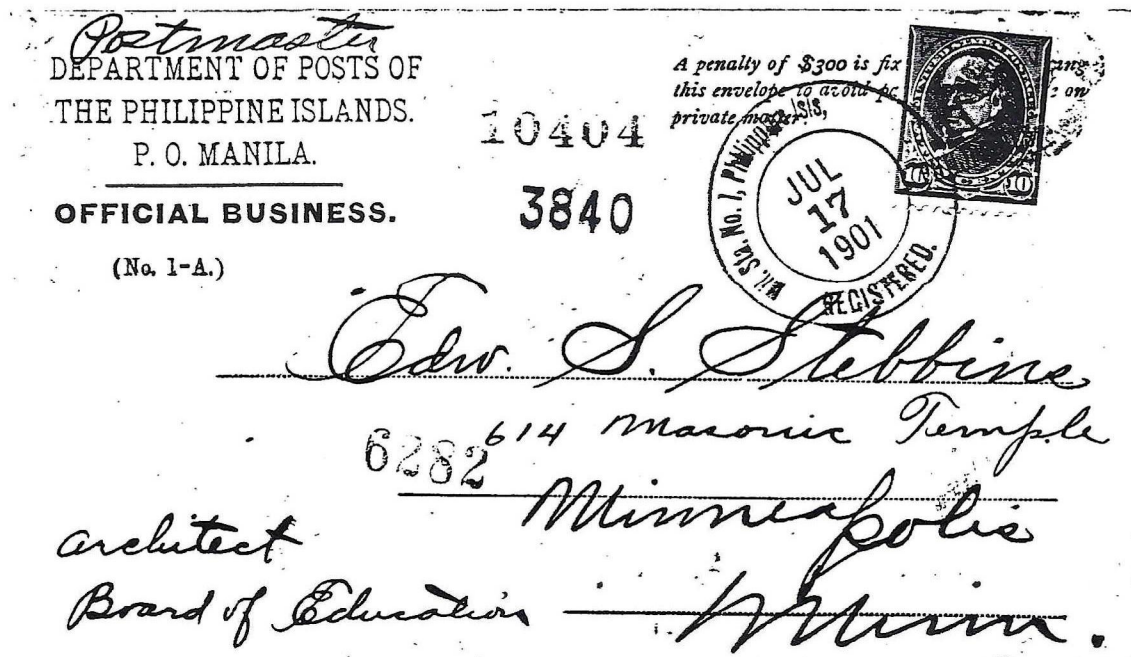
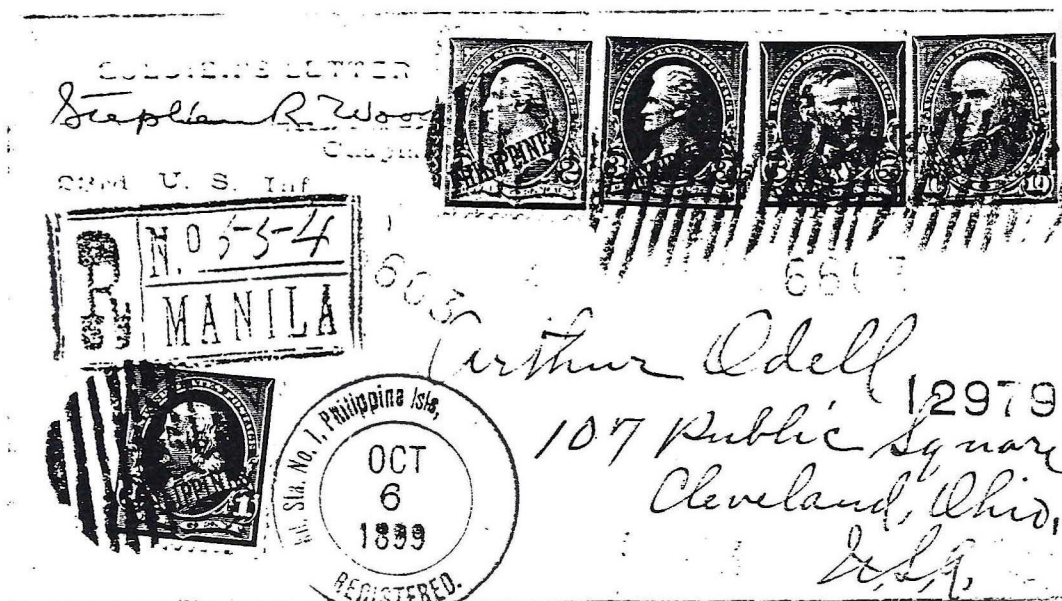
**Vom Auslande
über Altmünster-
Walhausen (Els.)
Eingeschrieben.**



Official registered international mail from military stations is very unusual. This cover was sent by Director of Posts Vaille in Manila to Germany. Hong Kong transit marking of 27 July and Landau receiving mark of 30 August 1899 are on reverse.

PHILIPPINES
Luzon

Mil. Sta. No. 1
6 October 1899
17 July 1901



The Philippine postal service remained subsidiary to the San Francisco office until 1 May 1899, when it became an independent entity. This event was most clearly indicated by the excising of the S.F. reference from the Registry cancellation. The altered marking is recorded used from 15 May 1899 to 18 December 1901.

PHILIPPINES
Luzon

Mil. Sta. No. 1 Manila
5 September 1899
25 July 1900



The inbound registered cover from the Spanish Marianas (date in postmark illegible) shows previously unrecorded "Undeliverable" marking of Military Station No. 1, along with Dead Letter Office docketing. Lower cover shows manuscript "opened by mistake," which was remedied with an official P.O. seal; its supplemental markings include "Advertised at Manila," "Please have your mail properly addressed" and, on the reverse, "Dead Letter Bureau/Dept. of Posts, P.I."