



PHILIPPINE PHILATELIC NEWS

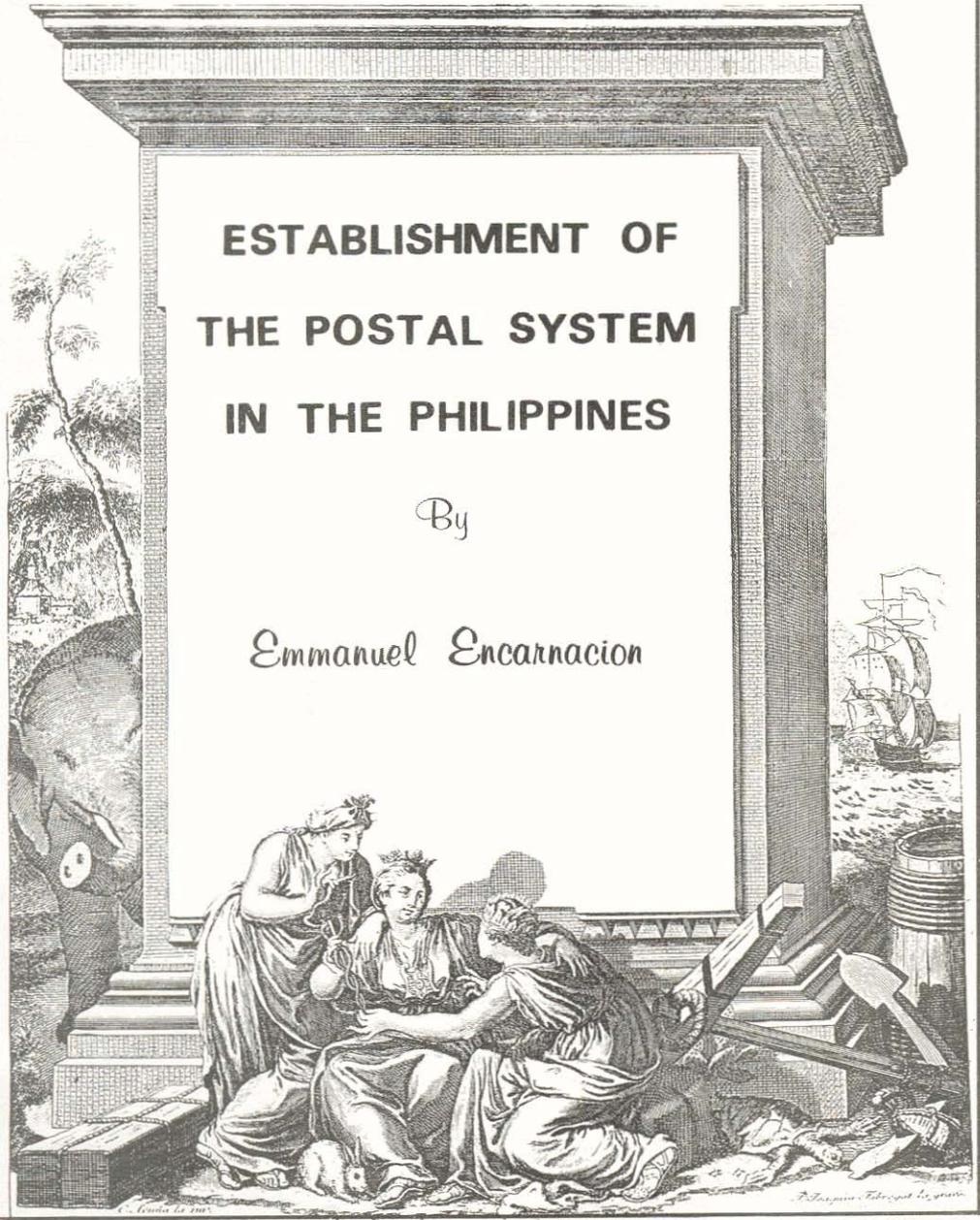
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ESTABLISHMENT OF THE POSTAL SYSTEM IN THE PHILIPPINES

By

Emmanuel Encarnacion





ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The discovery of rare documents at the Philippine National Archives was an accident while I was doing research on the topic of Philippine telegraph for my stamp collection. Such opportunity would not have been possible without the approval of Ms. Rosalina Concepcion, Chief of the Archives Division, who permitted the room use of the original manuscripts and the assistance of her staff Ms. Girlie Franco.

Additional information was provided by Ms. Linda Stanfield, who is also responsible for the publication of this study under the aegis of the International Philippine Philatelic Society.

As a serious philatelist who does not own a single stampless cover of this era, I was not discouraged from pursuing research work in this interesting field of study. This stems from the kindness of Mr. Mario Que, who unselfishly lent his stampless cover collection which are featured in the succeeding pages.

Two years of research would have been futile without the support of Mr. Francisco Lopez, a Professor of Spanish at the University of the Philippines in Los Baños. His endurance for translating the voluminous documents from the National Archives is deeply appreciated.

In the production side, editing was accomplished by Professor Melanio A. Gapud, with some assistance from Messrs. Pedro B. Bueno, Rodolfo A. Fernandez and Rafael Lapastora. Typing of the text was prepared by Ms. Liza Fraga and Cely Orbina. My sincere thanks to all of them.

Lastly, but certainly not the least, it was a stimulating experience to carry out this project because of the promotions extended by the following persons, even way ahead before the publication of this volume. They are: Mr. Rafael Anton, for introducing me to various Spaniards living in the Philippines today, and lending some old photographs which are reproduced here; Don Carlos Inductivo, President of Philippine Philatelic Auction Club, Inc., for proposing the stamp issuance to the Bureau of Posts; Dr. Serafin D. Quiason, Jr., Director of the National Historical Institute, for confirming this study with the Postmaster General; former Bureau of Posts Postmaster General J. Roilo S. Golez, for authorizing the issuance of a postal bicentennial stamp; Mr. Mandy Labayen, columnist of "Sunday Philatelist" of the Philippine Sunday Express, for covering in his column the events that led to the stamp issuance; members of the stamp advisory committee of the Bureau of Posts, for recommending the proposal; and, all of you fellow philatelists, for patiently waiting for this publication.

Emmanuel Encarnacion

PREFACE

There is a dearth of literature about the mail service before the issuance of postage stamps in the Philippines. But what was it really like when the Spanish colonizers first introduced the mail service to the local inhabitants?

Previous accounts mentioned that the service was restricted to high government and church officials. Surely, the colonial government must have opened the mailing system to the public, considering the enormous amount of business transactions taking place between Manila and Acapulco!

There are rare documents in the Philippine Archives on the establishment of the postal system in the West Indies as well as in the Philippine Islands. One of these documents even shows that Don Joseph Raon was already Governor-General of these Islands as early as September 27, 1764. Philippine history books including the National Archives publication indicate that he was Governor-General from 1765-1770.

The establishment of the Philippine postal system emanated from a series of proposals together with the Royal Order of 1766 from the Marquis of Grimalde in Spain. These were all sent to Raon. But it was only on October 31, 1783, when Governor-General Joseph Basco y Vargas formally organized the postal system in the Islands.

At that time, Governor-General Basco issued detailed instructions regarding the rules, rates, routes and the setting-up of various post offices in the Islands. Undoubtedly, he was emulated as the most farsighted and energetic among Philippine Governors-General. His ambitious programs for the improvement of agriculture, commerce and industry would not have been successful without an organized communication system such as the mails.

Highlights of the rare documents are shown on the following chronology of events:

August 24, 1764 — the Marquis of Grimalde established the maritime mail between Spain and the West Indies by issuing the following:

1. Provisional Rules of the Maritime Mail;
2. Instructions to Ship Captains of Mail Boats; and
3. Instructions to the Postal Administrator of the Port of Coruna, Spain.

September 27, 1764 — The Marquis submitted a report to the Governor-General of the Philippine Islands, Don Joseph Raon, regarding the existing conditions at that time of the mailing system in Manila. In closing his report, he proposed that a similar postal system, patterned after the West Indies, be established for the Philippine Islands.

April 28, 1765 — The Marquis issued a Royal Order to all administrator-general of the mails. He instructed them that the King would like the rule of equity be observed with regards to the rates of postage collected from mails sent from Spain and the colonies in the West Indies.

May 31, 1766 — In his Royal Order, the Marquis continued to press for his proposed postal system for the Philippine Islands, citing the important points of having the system organized not only as an essential obligation of the Spanish government but also for the benefit of both the royal and public services.

October 31, 1783 — As Governor-General of the Philippine Islands, Basco organized the postal system in the Philippine Islands in his letter to Archbishop Basilio Sancho de

Santo Justa y Rutina. He issued detailed instructions regarding the rules, rates, routes, and the setting-up of various post offices in the Islands on the basis of the Royal Order of 1766. At that time, he carried various titles, among which were: Most Illustrious Lord, Knight of the Order of Santiago, Brigadiere of the Royal Navy, Governor and Captain General of the Islands, President of the Royal Court, Superintendent General of the Royal Treasury and the Sale of Tobacco and Subdelegate of Posts in Manila.

November 5, 1783 – Archbishop Basilio Sancho replied to Governor-General Basco's letter to congratulate his act to organize a formal postal service in the Philippine Islands. He assured his cooperation together with the entire ecclesiastical ministry.

May 27, 1784 – Judge Ciriaco Gonzales Carvajal rendered his opinion that the establishment of the postal system in the Philippine Islands is valid from the point of view of the courts. He informed the Governor-General's office that he may issue the order to inquire from the eight nearby provinces on how they will establish their postal system.

May 28, 1784 – The office of the Governor-General sent the order to seven provinces on the basis of the Superior Decree establishing the postal system.

May 29, 1784 – Official compliance of the Province of Cavite.

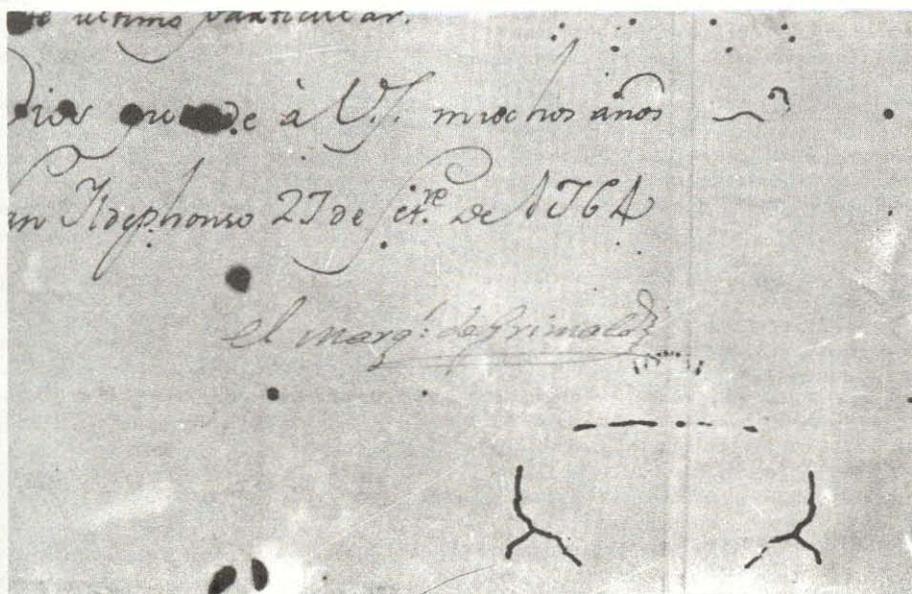
May 30, 1784 – Official compliance of the Province of Batangas.

June 2, 1784 – Official compliance of the Provinces of Bulacan and Tondo.

June 4, 1784 – Official compliance of the Province of Pampanga.

June 5, 1784 – Official compliance of the Province of Bataan.

June 11, 1784 – Official compliance of the Province of Laguna.



utimo pantum ar.
Dios guede a V. muchos años
en Nephonso 27 de set. de 1764
El marg: de Grimalde

The signature of the Marquis of Grimalde in 1764.

INTRODUCTION

Collectors of Philippine philately as well as historians agree that letters and other parcel materials were carried by ships during the early Spanish era. In the beginning, the Spanish colonizers communicated with the Kingdom of Spain from the Islands, and these were sent through ships either via the African route or through the Galleons that frequented Acapulco in Mexico.

However, what is subject to debate is when and how the Philippine postal system was organized and established. The Philippine Journal of Philately (PJP) serialized in 1949 a manuscript which was issued in 1853 for the arrangement of postal rates in these Islands. Erroneously, it was titled "Facsimile of the Original Manuscript which established during the Spanish Regime the first mails in the Philippines - 1853."

In February 1971, W. R. Wellsted wrote an article about "Philippine Postal History up to 1877" in *Philatelic Magazine* (PM) which contradicted the previous PJP statement. Of importance as it seems is his argument:

"In the early stages, mail was carried from Manila either via Mexico or Africa. It is impossible to differentiate which route was used, but the Bellini correspondence of 1776-1790 is useful as it shows the method of arrival of letters at Manila. It is clear that the regular service was the Acapulco Galleon but that occasional additional mails were carried by Spanish naval vessels via Africa.

At this time, letters from Manila were handstamped with the words "FILIPINAS" in black or red. This handstamp was applied on arrival in Spain and was used through until 1845."

These routes seem to be lacking. Teodoro A. Agoncillo has written a more detailed account of the various routes to Europe. Considering that these were the basis of Spanish foundations, colonization would have been extremely difficult without the trade routes that brought fresh supplies, people, technology and even communication.

Up to the 15th century, traders utilized three major routes connecting the East with Europe. The first was the northern overland route which started from northern China, passed through Central Asia by way of the cities of Bokhara and Samarkand, rounded the Caspian Sea and the Black Sea, and proceeded through Constantinople to the Mediterranean. The second or central route began at Malacca on the Malay Peninsula and sailed westward to the Indian Ocean and the Indian subcontinent, through the Persian Gulf to Baghdad, Constantinople, and other Mediterranean ports.

Starting at Malacca, the third or southern route likewise crossed oceans westward to the Indian Ocean and India, through the Red Sea, and finally to Cairo in Egypt.

Beginning the 16th century, several new routes were travelled. Foremost of these was the trans-Pacific route between Manila and Acapulco where the Galleon Trade passed. Then there was the long voyage from Manila to Spain via the Indian Ocean and circumnavigating the African Continent via the Cape of Good Hope. Notwithstanding the value of these routes, it should be understood that correspondences must have been brought by ships and even by merchants and traders.

As regards internal correspondences, Melecio A. Dalena gave a brief explanation of the early postal service in the Philippines in his PJP article in March-April 1949. He said that during the pre-stamp era, exchange of letters and communications was limited to government officials, dignitaries and priests of the Catholic church. These letters were carried by "badageros" who rendered free service to the colonial government.

Badageros either hiked or rode on horseback in dispatching the early postal matters from one town to another, including the provincial capital. Each delivery of the mails at the next tribunal required the recipient to sign a booklet acknowledging receipt or responsibility to forward the letters to the next station as the case may be. Like today's mailmen, these couriers were assigned certain areas. But instead of delivering the mail bags to their destinations directly, the postal system at that time was one of relay like telegraph operations owing to the lack of communication facilities.

This was the reason why letters changed hands many times before final delivery, depending on the number of towns between the points of origin and destination. This accounted for some delays in the transmission of messages. Since there were no labor costs necessary to maintain the badageros, the postal system was ill-equipped and inefficient. Nevertheless, it was quite evident that a postal service existed before postage stamps were issued in 1854. There was even a government position way back in 1791 for the administration of the postal service.

Vito D. Balangue reiterated the active participation of badageros in the delivery of letters, communications and documents during the pre-stamp era in his article "Once Upon a Mailbox" in the eighth volume of *Filipino Heritage*. Undoubtedly, he picked up this information from the Melecio A. Dalena article which had similar underpinnings. However, Balangue included his own interpretation as shown in the following quotation:

"The postal service began in 1791. In that year, the appointment of Felix Berenguer de Marquina gave him, among many other titles, that of Superintendente general subdelegado de la hacienda, y renta de correo. No expense was necessary to maintain this postal service, since bodegueros rendered their service free to the colonial government. For this reason, no stamp stamps were need.

As far as is known, the first mention of paid mail appeared in a Spanish decree dated June 6, 1803, which contained a reference to payment for franking the carriage of a letter from Spain to the Philippines. On November 7, 1838, a decree ordered "the concentration of the administration of the mails in Manila — and the receipt, direction and delivery of correspondence both for the interior and abroad." The cost then was the actual expense of handling the mail, which was fixed at two cuartos per letter, paid directly to the mail service appointed by the administration."

The growth of trade and industry during the reign of the Spanish Bourbon family could have triggered off communication reforms in favor of merchants and private banks. The succeeding pages will certainly clarify whether previous research referred to in this introduction are based on facts.

THE FIRST MAIL SERVICE

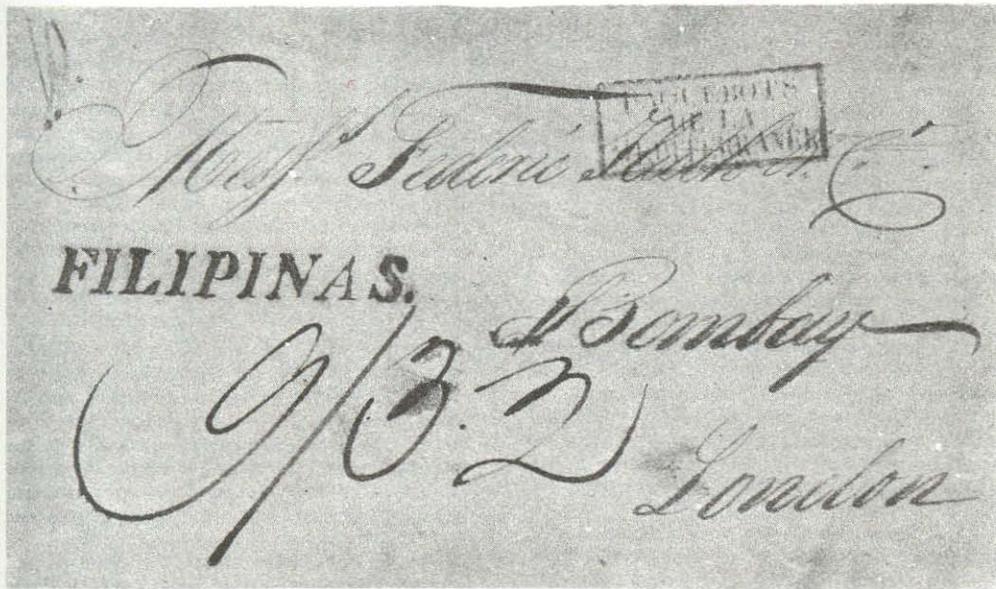
In 1764, King Charles III of Spain issued a Royal Decree establishing a regular maritime postal system between Spain and her colonies in the Indies. It was a time when trade and finance had developed substantial gains. In France, the Age of Enlightenment battled for new ideas and reforms which influenced the rest of Europe.

At that time, the Marquis of Grimalde held the important positions of first secretary of state and general superintendent of posts within and outside the Kingdom of Spain.

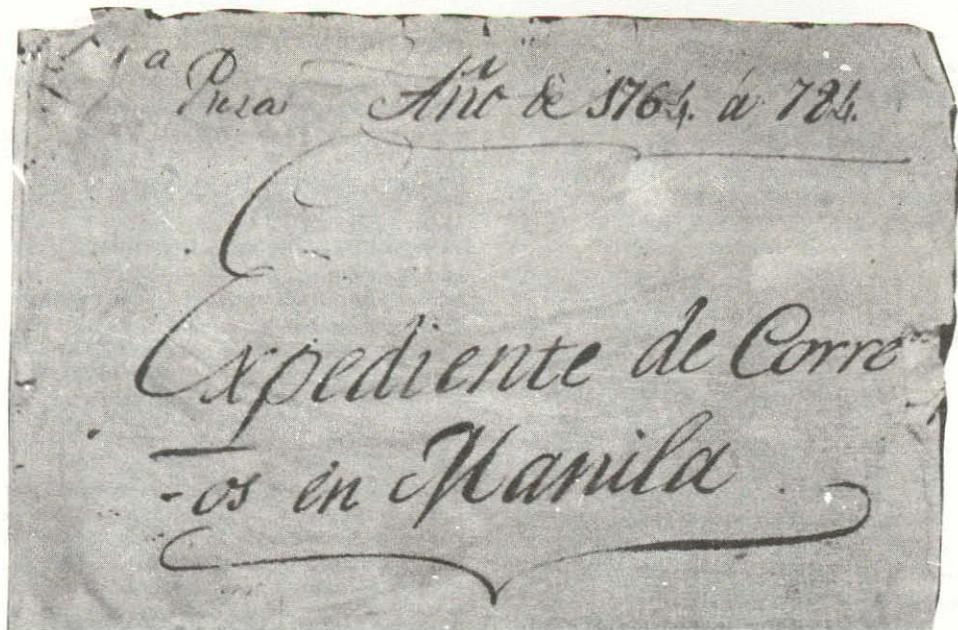
In his September 27, 1764 communication from San Ildefonso, to Don Joseph Raon, the incumbent Governor-General, the Marquis reported on the conditions of mail service in Manila existing at that time. Hereunder is an interpretation of his report.

A Royal Decree was sent to the Consul of the Indies on August 6, 1764 proposing that mail-boat service or surface mail be made available on the first of each month, starting November 1764, from the Port of Coruna to San Cristobal of Havana. The same ship was to return with the mail from said places back to the Port of Coruna. To facilitate the postal service, persons in the most frequented places in the Indies had to be designated to dispatch all correspondences.

Printed samples of of the provisional rules were sent out in order to give instructions to the captains of mail-boats and to the administrator of the



The straight line "FILIPINAS" cancellation, about 48.5 mm long, was applied in Spain for mails originating from the Philippines.



Cover page of the Marquis of Grimalde report to Governor-General Joseph Raon regarding the existing conditions at that time of the mailing system in Manila.

new mail service of the Indies in Coruna. This was important in attaining the objectives set for the establishment of the postal system not only for the Royal Service but also for the public whose business interests had not been served up to this time.

To promote correspondence delivery, mails should be sent not only by way of Acapulco but also either through the Cape of Good Hope or through the sea routes that touched Macao and other Chinese ports. This was in line with the King's interest to foster unity in the Philippines where news did not come as frequently as those in the Iberian peninsula. Messages which were coursed through Acapulco followed a more confidential or secure route for the promotion of defense and security of the Islands.

Ships left every September or October from the City of Manila for the China coasts and the ports of Amoy and Macao. It was proposed that the position of Administrator of Posts be established so that the public could send mails to Europe and even to America by this route. Of course, this assumed that Spanish employees should be careful in sending letters to the Indies by the mail-boat service of Coruna to their respective territories.

Since Swiss and Danish ships did not usually touch the ports of Spain on their return from the East Indies (Indonesia), it would be necessary for them to leave the mailbags at the Canary Islands. If only other nations could take such step and stop by this route, mail would be more efficiently exchanged and delivered.

With regards the use of foreign ships for the transport of mailbags, the Spanish government preferred French, Dutch, Danish and Swiss or English. Correspondences were sent, in the absence of Spanish vessels, through any available ship to send the mails from Manila to Europe.

Among foreign ships, the most reliable conference schedule for Philippine mail departed from Batavia (now Jakarta, capital of Indonesia) every May 25 of each year on ships that brought the accounts of the Dutch East Indies Company. These were merchant ships that normally carried parcel posts through many routes including those via caravans that proceeded to Constantinople. In such cases, Philippine mail had to be delivered using certain businessmen who resided in that capital, or through the courtesy of ambassadors such as the Minister of France in Naples.

The Muslims from Sumatra and the Red Sea who came to trade in these Islands could be asked to bring some letters through Constantinople. However, certain precautions had to be taken, especially when there was a war, in the absence of allied European or neutral dispatches. Persons to whom these messages were entrusted had to be investigated, since their honesty was required prior to formalizing such practice.

All these available routes for mails to and from the Philippine Islands required careful study. Inasmuch as mail services to the West Indies were already established in the Americas, the system could be adapted to meet local conditions in the Islands.

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11 5

REGLAMENTO PROVISIONAL,
que manda S. M. observar para el establecimiento del nuevo Correo mensual que ha de salir de España á las Indias-Occidentales.

1.

EN el primer dia de cada mes, siendo posible, ha de salir el Paquebot del Correo del Puerto de la *CORUÑA* con los Pliegos, y correspondencia para las Indias Occidentales, sin que en esto se le ponga el menor embarazo: cuidando de su despacho el Administrador particular, que para este efecto se ha destinado en la misma Ciudad. A fin de que todo el Reyno pueda escribir por dicho Paquebot, y los sucesivos se anunciará en la Gaceta el dia en que debe empezar á ponerse en práctica este establecimiento, que tiene por principal objeto facilitar la contratacion, y correspondencia de estos y aquellos Dominios.

2.

El Comandante General del Reyno de Galicia, que es, ó fuere, como Subdelegado de la Renta de Correos en él, dará el *Parte*, ó Pasaporte correspondiente al Patron, ó primer Piloto del Paquebot, y á continuacion de él anotará el Administrador la hora, y dia en que se entregan las balijas al Patron, con expresion del numero de ellas, su respectivo peso, y parage á que van destinadas; y el Patron deberá dexar firmado su *conocimiento*, en que se incluya lo demás que lleve de quienta de la Real Hacienda.

3.

A continuacion de este mismo *Parte* se debe anotar por el Administrador del Puerto de San *CHRISTOBAL* de la Habana, (adonde navegará en derechura el Paquebot mensual) el recibo de estas balijas, dia, y hora de su arribo,

A

THE WEST INDIES POSTAL SYSTEM

As the Marquis of Grimalde had indicated, the West Indies postal system was suggested for adoption in the Philippine Islands. It is important therefore, to cite the pertinent provisions before describing those that relate specifically to the Philippines.

In essence, maritime mail was established in 1764 when provisional rules were decreed for the purpose of organizing a system of schedules and routes. The rules also determined the positions involved which would deal with the attendant transfer of mailbags from the Port of Coruna in Spain to the colonies in the West Indies.

Every first day of each month, if it was possible, the mail-boat left the Port of Coruna with the parcel of letters and other correspondences for the West Indies. This function regularized delivery of mails to facilitate commerce and correspondence between dominions. As was the practice at that time, the installation of the mail service was announced in the Gazette for the convenience of the public.

The route of the mail-boat had been fixed to cross the Atlantic Ocean from the Port of Coruna, Spain, to its first destination, the Port of San Cristobal of Havana, Cuba. Then it would sail to Puerto Rico, then to the Island of Sto. Domingo and also to Ocoa in case the ship outran its schedule. From Monte Cristo, it would sail to Baracoa and continue through the Canal Vieja to Havana.

If there were northerly winds, it would divert its route from Sto. Domingo to Ocoa to leave some parcels in Cuba or Xagua. From there, it would sail to Havana through the Cape of San Antonio.

In all these islands and ports, mails and parcels were delivered as well as picked up. All dispatches would be placed in specially marked mailbags which indicated their final destinations. These were carefully checked at the City of San Cristobal, Havana, where the House of the General Management of Correspondence of Spain to the Indies was located.

For correspondences to New Spain, i.e., Mexico and California, the mail boat would drop anchor at Vera Cruz. Mail bags were transferred to three big sloops and sail boats that would bring them to their final destinations. All mails from New Spain, Tierra Firma and Peru were likewise routed from Mexico, Vera Cruz or Campache. All other correspondences whose destinations were out of the way were delivered by land.

In places where post offices were already established, postmasters were employed to collect the postage rates by land or by sea. These were:

Maritime mail between Spain and all ports of the Indies including the American continent:

Postage Rates in 1764

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| 1. simple letters up to half ounce | a. 4 reales de vellon in sterling silver in Spain |
|------------------------------------|---|

- | | |
|----------------------------|--|
| | b. 3 reales de plata fuerte in the Indies |
| 2. for 3/4 of an ounce | a. 12 reales de vellon in Spain |
| | b. 7 reales de plata fuerte in the Indies |
| 3. for thick packages | a. 15 reales de vellon for each ounce in Spain |
| | b. 10 reales de plata fuerte for each ounce in the Indies |
| 4. packages over 20 ounces | a. any weight in excess of 20 ounces would be given a discount on 2/3 parts of the weight in excess of 20 ounces |

Letters sent within the islands of Cuba, Sto. Domingo, Puerto Rico, Trinidad, Margarita, etc., in the Indies:

Postage Rates in 1764

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. for simple letters | 1/2 real de plata fuerte |
| 2. for long letters not exceeding 3/4 ounce | 1 real de plata fuerte |
| 3. for 3/4 of an ounce | 1 1/2 reales de plata fuerte |
| 4. for 1 ounce of package | 2 reales de plata fuerte with proportional reduction in rate for bulk mail |
| 5. packages exceeding 20 ounces | |

Correspondences between New Spain, Tierra Firma and Peru would be charged double that of the preceding rates of the islands due to bigger expenses in maintaining the operation from Vera Cruz to Cuba, and from Cuba to Cartagena:

Postage Rates in 1764

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| 1. for simple letters | 1 real de plata fuerte |
| 2. for long letters not exceeding 3/4 of an ounce | 2 reales de plata fuerte |
| 3. for 3/4 of an ounce | 3 reales de plata fuerte |
| 4. for 1 ounce of package | 4 reales de plata fuerte |

Printed matter over 12 ounces bound with paper with printed subscription notice to avoid fraud:

Postage Rates in 1764

- | | |
|------------------|--|
| 1. in Spain | 32 reales de vellon for the first 2 ounces, plus 20 reales de vellon for each pound above 2 ounces |
| 2. in the Indies | 16 reales de plata fuerte for the first 2 ounces, plus 8 reales de plata fuerte for each pound above 2 ounces. |

The real de plata (silver real), also called real fuerte (strong real), was a monetary unit of the Spanish colonies for more than 200 years. During the same period, the real de vellon was a monetary unit of Spain. Vellon was an alloy similar to the German silver.

The Law of the Indies governing Spanish colonies fixed the value of the real de plata as equal to 2½ reales de vellon. The real de vellon was equal to 8 cuartos. Therefore, the real de plata was equal to 20 cuartos.

The silver peso of the Spanish colonies was called a peso fuerte or strong peso to distinguish it from a peso of much lower value which circulated in Spain. Since the peso fuerte was equal to 8 reales de plata, it was sometimes called a piece of eight.

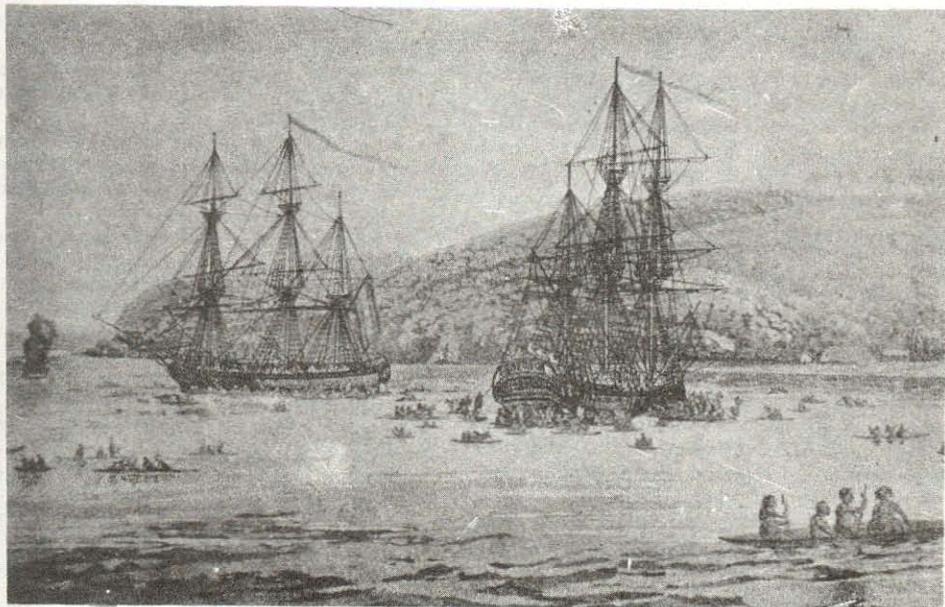
The silver peso eventually succeeded the silver real as the principal monetary unit of Mexico. Since the beginning of the Spanish regime in the Philippines, the silver coins of Mexico were the principal medium of exchange in the Islands. These silver coins continued to be the principal monetary unit of the Philippines long after Mexico had achieved its independence from Spain. By 1877, the Mexican silver peso had become so firmly established in the Philippines as the monetary medium for commerce that all attempts to replace it with the Spanish peso were futile.

The following conversion rates show the value of each monetary unit with respect to the peso or peso fuerte:

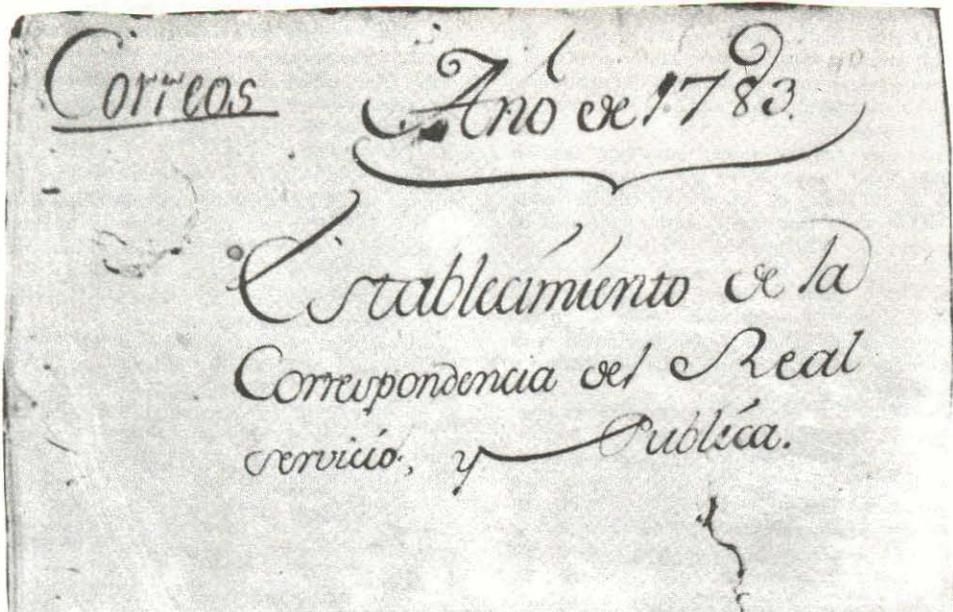
1 real de plata	=	0.125
1 cuartillo	=	0.03125
1 cuarto	=	0.00625
1 escudo	=	0.50
1 centimo de escudo	=	0.005
1 peseta	=	0.20
1 centimo de peseta	=	0.002
1 centimo de peso	=	0.01
1 milésima de peso	=	0.001

In order that the business of the mails would prosper, all government employees and officials were not granted free franking privileges except the president, fiscals and secretaries of the Council of the Indies. Ships were also prohibited to carry any mail which could not pay the regular rates so as to lessen frauds which prejudiced post offices. As a precautionary measure, all mails that passed through the regular route bore the stamp of the post office source, as for example, "ESPANA" or "INDIES."

To promote commerce, all Spanish ships including private vessels, were ordered and deputized to carry mails through these routes. All ship captains were instructed to deliver the mail-



The Spanish Galleon was the primary maritime carrier of the mails to foreign lands. It also served the inter-island domestic mail.



Cover page of the Establishment of the Postal System of the Philippine Islands on October 31, 1783.

bags and get receipts in consonance with the orderly fashion by which mails were routed and remitted. Carelessness or faulty delivery meant suspension plus a fine of 500 pesos, besides indemnifying the sender concerned.

In case the parcel or package contained dutiable goods, corresponding tariffs and custom duties were levied. Nonpayment meant outright confiscation and punishment for the delinquent shipper.

Monthly reports were required of all post offices. Any income derived from the mails had to be sent to Spain via the mail boats.

BASCO'S POSTAL SYSTEM

On October 31, 1783, Governor-General Basco sent a letter to the Metropolitan Archbishop of the Philippine Islands, Basilio Sancho, informing the church about his decree on the establishment of a postal system for the Philippine Islands. This consultation is very common during the Spanish times since there was a bond between the church and state. Power then was divided and it was necessary for the Governor-General to refer his decisions to the Metropolitan Archbishop in charge of these Islands.

The Governor-General's letter was positively received by the archbishop, a judge from the higher courts and the provincial mayors of the first

seven provinces which established the postal service. Chronologically arranged, these responses are interpreted in the following letters:

November 5, 1783 — Assurance of the cooperation of the church from Archbishop Basilio Sancho.

May 27, 1784 — Rendered the validity of Basco's action on the postal system from the point of view of the courts from Judge Ciriaco Gonzales Carvajal.

May 28, 1784 — The office of the Governor-General sent the order to seven provinces to establish their postal linkages on the basis of the Superior Decree establishing the postal system.

May 29, 1784 — Official compliance of the Province of Cavite.

May 30, 1784 — Official compliance of the Province of Batangas.

June 2, 1784 — Official compliance of the Provinces of Bulacan and Tondo.

June 4, 1784 — Official compliance of the Province of Pampanga.

June 5, 1784 — Official compliance of the Province of Bataan.

June 11, 1784 — Official compliance of the Province of Laguna.

A candid interpretation of the letter of Governor General Basco to Archbishop Sancho, together with his accompanying instructions, are shown in the following pages.

Instrucción que deberá observarse para el mayor
promocion de la correspondencia del Real Erario, y Publica,
hacida que se pueda formalizar el establecimiento de Correos
en estas Islas Philipinas.

El Defecto, que por falta de correo, se padece en la comunica-
cion mutua de esta Capital con las provincias de las Yslas, dis-
cuta los males, causa la confusión, hace inconvenciones los expedien-
tos, y priva de obrar a las providencias del Gobierno. Deben
pues de obrar en lo posible con, inconvenciones, facilitando, y argu-
rando la correspondencia de unas provincias con otras, y de todas
con la Capital, con decencia, como hasta aqui se usó, expuesta
à la casualidad, ò contingencia de que haya ^{alguna} ~~alguna~~ ocasion para
darse prisa à donde deben dirigirse; y teniendo presente lo que se
debe de que se establezca esta correspondencia interior, por
encomienda de V. Magestad Real, y muy particularmente por
la de Manila y uno de estuyo de mil ochocientos ochenta y tres co-
municada al presente Gobierno por el Comodoro D. Juan de Guzman,
en la qual para formar este establecimiento por parte de la liberali-
dad que es fuerte necesario hacer gastos para realizarlo se repelen
del producto de las correspondencias Ultramarinas, se estimada
convenientemente se establezcan Correlatos, ò Perceos en esta Ysla
de Luzon, que de pueblo en pueblo, y de provincia en provincia
conduzcan con seguridad, y prontitud los oficios, ordenes, y
cartas, tanto de este Superior Gobierno, y Capitanía General, como
de la Real Audiencia, Comandancia de Real Hacienda, Tribu-
nales de Virreyes, y Oidores, y aun las del Público, con lo qual
se conseguirá la pronta comunicacion en asuntos del Erario, y
la notable mutua correspondencia de los pueblos, hasta que
variando el sistema de las Yslas puedan instituirse correos
fijos, los quales no ha sido posible establecer hasta el presente
ni menor lo es por aora, à causa de no conduxerse pueda reunir
este mismo aun agregandon todo el producto del correo ultramarino
rino lo que sirve de importar sus cargas; y por lo que hace

Most Illustrious Don Basilio Sancho de Santo
Justa y Rutina, Metropolitan Archbishop
of these Islands, Most Illustrious Sir.

Most Respected Sir:

Communication between the capital and provinces of these Islands is necessary for the spiritual and temporal objectives of the government. What we have in operation up to now is a correspondence system that is based on chance mainly on irregular places where letters must be dispatched.

Your Majesty, aware of the importance of prompt and expeditious communication for these provinces, I have repeatedly recommended the establishment of a postal service. This proposal is in line with the May 31, 1766 Royal Order of His Excellency, the Marquis of Grimalde.

The establishment of a formal postal service had always been considered as impossible, and truly I was inclined to believe so. Yet, it does not seem now. In this regard, all that is necessary is to organize a good number of offices and employ many strong men who must be provided with good salaries. In that way, these men may support such a difficult job.

Evidently, such expenses cannot be covered by the small number of letters that are sent within the Philippines. But the establishment of postal communication is so indispensable at present that it should not be left to chance for a longer time. In the absence of a postal service, it has been modestly suggested to establish a moderate equivalent consisting of trails or chains. This way, communication in the Islands can be conducted through the practice of relaying mailbags from town to town.

With this task, I shall employ town officials who are free of heavy duties on the condition that those selected are trustworthy. The officials shall carry the mailbag from town to town in order to pass the letters and parcels to the next courier. This will assure each courier to be fresh so that delivery may be expedited. In return, they shall be paid because their work is not meager.

Enormous benefits can be derived from such a system, namely,

1. enhance communication for the administration of justice,
2. furnish a cheaper means among inhabitants of the Islands for writing each other, and
3. facilitate delivery of official letters for town officials who conduct letters of the Royal Service.

Apparently, this is the only means that could establish efficient communication until experience and time show us a better way. The ideas and all its parts are explained clearly in detail, in the attached paper. These instructions I propose, since I have been charged by the previously mentioned Royal Order to proceed with the establishment of an internal postal system. Certainly, the proposed organization takes into consideration the general welfare and public good that satisfies Your Majesty.

May I therefore request that Your Majesty meditate on the matter seriously, and to let me know your objections. In this way, I may be guided to render a better service to the King and these people.

It is appropriate at this point to call your attention of our observance of the proposed postal rates as suggested by the last paragraph of the Royal Order. This means that overland postage fees should be reduced at about 1/3 those passing by sea. Since seaborne letters would cost 3 reales per simple letter, overland correspondences should be priced at only 1 real.

However, I am setting the price at one-half real for the postage of simple letters. The remaining categories shall be set proportionately with the postage rates established in the islands of Cuba, Santo Domingo, Puerto Rico, Trinidad and the other adjacent islands in the Indies.

The proposed postage rates are conveniently desirable at the beginning of the establishment. Encouragement is quite necessary for the continued mutual exchange of correspondence from the public standpoint because higher rates could jeopardize the extent of postal usage.

Outside of the land mail, sea mail will be more expensive by 1/3 as prescribed by the Royal Order. It is understood however that discipline must be observed always with respect to charging of postage fees in proportion to distances. This would make us contented at present until some simpler and more concise arrangements can be instituted to serve as the cornerstone of this foundation.

May God Keep Your Superior Supervisor,
Manila, October 31, 1783.

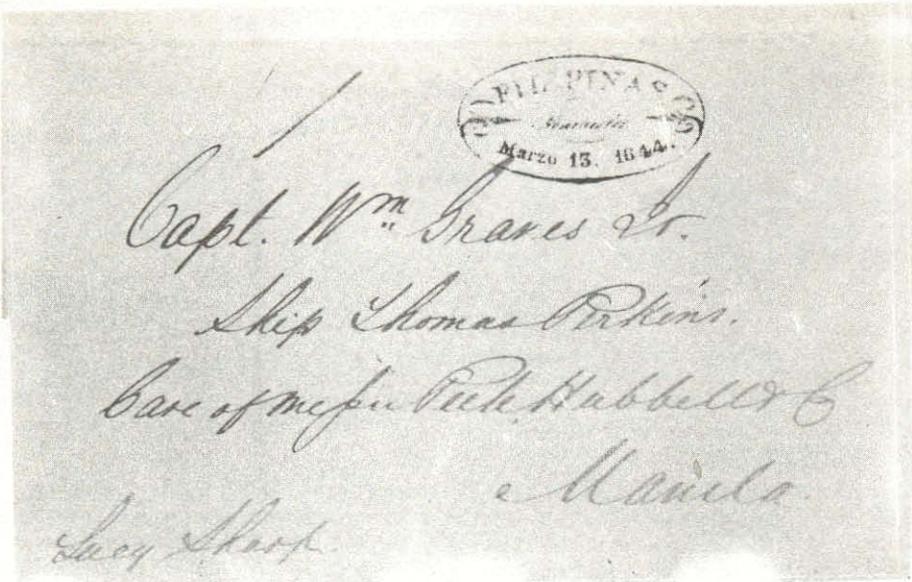
Illustrious Lord:

Most respectfully

Your Superior Supervisor, at your service
(Sgd.) Joseph Basco Y Vargas

Instructions for a faster Royal and Public Postal Service for the Philippine Islands

It is truly difficult to be without a postal service that could facilitate reciprocal communications between the capital and the provinces of the Philippine Islands. Resources stagnate, justice is delayed, dispatches wait a long line and the providence of government meet frequent obstacles. Therefore, I decided to obviate these inconveniences by facilitating and assuring the correspondence of some provinces with others, and with the capital through the establishment of an internal postal system.



Early pre-stamp oval cancellation: "MANNANILA-FILIPINAS" used less than a year due to misspelling.

This move is certainly in line with the proposal of His Excellency, the Marquis of Grimalde in several Royal Orders, and particularly that of May 31, 1766. To encourage the organization of a Philippine postal system, the Marquis even pledged to support financially the initial expenses needed for its establishment. All other recurring expenses could be borne by the fees to be collected from correspondences.

In order to realize these objectives, it would be convenient to establish chains and routes in the Island of Luzon, emphasizing from which town to town and province to province mail service will safely pass. Prompt communication and sociable mutual correspondence of the Government, the church and the people could be assured if a formal postal system is instituted.

The proposed postal system was not possible before because the office of the Governor-General of the Philippine Islands could not provide the service. At that time, overseas mail even had to be paid abroad and the government had to import the charges.

For chains to be established in the islands, the following provisions will be observed:

Article 1

On the first and fifteenth of every month, two chains will leave this capital, i.e., one that will bring mail and parcels to the provinces of Bulacan, Pampanga, Bataan, Playahonda, Pangasinan, Ilocos and Cagayan; and another destined

for the provinces of Laguna, Tayabas, Camarines, Sorsogon, and even Samar and Leyte. In addition, other chains will be dispatched provided there are urgencies that need it.

Article 2

Towards this end, two officials, preferably ministers of justice of Manila and Tondo would serve as local postal administrators for the service of the chains. If they do not deserve the position, they will be replaced immediately by others upon the recommendation of the provincial mayor. However, no native mayor or mestizo may assume this position.

In addition to the officials assigned to the two chains, there will also be a post similar to the local postal administrator whose function would be to handle all official mails and parcels of the Superior Government and the rest of the tribunals.

Article 3

Each town mayor to whom the chain passes, except those who govern capitals, will be assigned a minister of justice who will receive parcels and/or mailbags at anytime it may arrive by day or night, and dispatch the remainders due for the subsequent towns.

Article 4

All parcels originating from the Superior Government, Royal Court, and the rest of the tribu-

SELO QUINTO
AÑO DE MIL SETECIENTOS
OCHEENTA Y OCHO
Para Despacho de 1784

21 Cavite

M. S.

Comunicando con la Superioridad de P. N. y
veniente y esco de que expresa que en este año se
con toda veneracion y respeto alud in d. nar. que
los despidieron que seme han ocurrido hacia a los
Superior D. N. como a los de mas P. N. de
de esta, son de d. N. por medio de los d. N. de
de los d. N. que están de este d. N. d. N.
para esta Ciudad alordiendo su d. N. a
preparacion de los d. N. con d. N. d. N. d. N.
quero, por costumbre, y practica que mas antes
d. N. han d. N. y en el despacho de d. N.
gravedad, e importancia, se coluro bajo el d. N.
y conduta de en d. N. de d. N. de d. N. de
Un d. N. Las incomodidades, y gravámenes
que causan a d. N. d. N. d. N. d. N. que
se emplean en las d. N. de los d. N. a d. N.
d. N. y de recaudacion con d. N. d. N. d. N.
mandado de d. N. remita a los d. N. d. N.
de a la Real Audiencia, y d. N. d. N. d. N.
d. N. de los, se emplean en los, y d. N. d. N.
se emplean en pagar el d. N. de d. N. por
no tener de d. N. d. N. d. N. d. N. d. N.
que en caso d. N. quando se remita d. N.

Official compliance of the Province of Cavite on May 29, 1784.

nals, courts and other government offices shall be coursed to the Administrator of Posts, who shall be responsible in sending them to their destination. In addition, letters and parcels sent by the public including the lowest cost among the natives shall be sent through this office.

Article 5

Letters and parcels shall be sorted and placed in mailbags. Each mailbag will be inscribed the name of the chief mayor nearest the transit along the chain. An example of the inscription reads:

"Parcels of the Royal Service, and public correspondence that the Administrator of Posts forwards to chief mayor of the Province of Bulacan from the capital of Manila on the first day of December 1783 at 9:00 a.m., Manila. — Signature of the Administrator"

Parcels received should be properly acknowledged by the consignee, specifying the day and the time it is submitted to the official of justice to whom it must be delivered to. Upon receipt by the designated minister of justice, he shall immediately send it to the next town, leading to the direction of its ultimate destination. All justices and officials will receive and dispatch the mailbag promptly in a relay manner until it arrives in the hands of the chief mayor to whom it is addressed to.

Article 6

Together with each mailbag will go information that states the day and time it is dispatched and to whom it is inscribed. This shall be signed by the Administrator of Posts and the conductor carrying it.

Article 7

This information must always accompany the mailbag until it reaches the hands of the chief mayor to whom it is sent. Each time the mailbag passes each town along the chain, the day, time and signature of the official or minister receiving and dispatching it should be noted down.

Article 8

For purposes of uniformity and clarity in record keeping and to avoid delays, printed samples of the information and receipt shall be provided every town and province.

Article 9

Anytime the mailbag arrives, the chief mayor to whom it is sent should open it immediately. Letters must be sorted to separate those under his jurisdiction. Then the mailbag can be closed and sent without delay to the next town or province along the chain it has to pass.

This requires the mayor to inscribe the name of the chief mayor in the next town or province and putting on the mailbag cover the day and time he sends it with his signature. The minister of

justice then takes charge of it and forwards the mailbag to the next stop without delay. Each time, the old label of the mailbag is retained by the consignor, and a new one is placed to identify the next consignee. Nevertheless, the point of origin, date, time and sender is inscribed on the new label.

Article 10

The mailbag will proceed from town to town and province to province based on the foregoing until it reaches the most remote destination.

Article 11

The following notes are also included by the chief mayor on the information that accompanies the mailbag:

1. the speed or slowness with which transfer was conducted;
2. towns along the chain that has been omitted or neglected;
3. corresponding charges, provided that tardiness does not exceed the hour by a league; and
4. possible steps to be taken to correct problems caused by omissions of towns.

Article 12

Due to the importance of the Royal Service mailbags, transport must not be entrusted to persons other than officials of justice. These officials will serve alternately for this purpose. Thus every time a designated official leaves to deliver a mailbag, another official will substitute his place to wait for a one week period of delivery. Each one must serve for a week even if he does not have the opportunity to pass through the chain.

The mayor of natives and mestizos of every town shall manage this service, seeing to it that all designated officials perform equally and squarely. It must be understood that all mailbags must not be delayed and should continue without lagging behind schedule whether by day or night, and the official receiving it continuing the way.

Article 13

For security reasons, the town mayor may ask another official or some appointed individual to accompany the bearer. This can be done if the carrier travels at night or along dangerous places to avoid mail interruptions.

Article 14

If there are not enough officials along the towns where the chain passes, the provincial mayor may request the Superior Government to increase these carriers. This proposal takes into consideration the distance carriers must walk, and the frequency of delivery within the chain. The government will agree to such manpower increase so that the designated officials may not become so tired as to cause trouble to the performance of their other domestic obligations or to cause the least delay in the transmittal of letters.

Article 15

Governors, Mayors and Chief Mayors will decide the detailed route of the itinerary and the list of officials who will receive and conduct the mailbag in accordance with what has been arranged earlier.

Article 16

The province of Bulacan will have two distinct routes, i.e., (1) from the town where mailbags from the province of Tondo leave up to the last keeper at the capital of the province of Pampanga; and (2) from the capital of Bulacan, passing through the missions at San Rafael up to Cagayan.

The Pampanga route will have one chain from the last town of the province of Bulacan up to the capital of Pampanga. From this capital, the chain will be divided into two branches, one that will go to Balanga and the other to Lingayen. The upper towns will have to be covered to provide a way for the other chain of Cagayan to pass from San Miguel to Santor.

The province of Bataan will have its chain starting from the last town where the Pampanga chain ends, up to its capital in Balanga. Pangasinan will also have its chain from where the Pampanga chain ends, up to Lingayen. This will extend from Lingayen to the last town of the province of Pangasinan up to the boundary of Ilocos. Another chain will be linked from Lingayen to the boundary of Zambales.

The province of Ilocos will also have its chain from the first town bordering Pangasinan, up to its capital in Vigan. On the other side of the Cordillera mountains, Cagayan will have its chain relayed by the missions, from the first town bordering Pampanga up to the capital in Lallo.

Article 17

Another chain will run across the province of Laguna starting from the province of Tondo up to the town of Pagsanjan. From Pagsanjan, there will be two chains: one that will lead to the province of Tayabas and another to Camarines, which will reach up to the first town of Tayabas.

Tayabas will have two chains: one that will connect its capital with that of Laguna; and, another without touching the capital, will run across up to Laguna from the parcel of Camarines up to the first town of this province. These two chains will also take care of parcels destined for Iloilo, Capiz, Romblon and the island of Marinduque utilizing the first available ships that make such crossings. If parcels carry some notes that indicate urgency, a chief mayor may decide to hire smaller ships for this purpose.

The chief mayor of Tayabas, Mindoro and Capiz will devise the most adaptable means to facilitate communication between Tayabas and Capiz. This is important because the postal system could influence news and decisions between the capital and the Visayas provinces. If what is agreed upon by the three chief mayors exceeds their



Horses and carriages were the main transport vehicles during the pre-stamp era.

VALLE CUARTO
SEÑOR DE LOS REYNOYAS
GENERAL Y QUATRO
Paras el poble de Dofelo

tendo

M. Y S.

El Corregidor de esta Provincia de Tondo, con
sherto con el Superior Oficio de P. de venida y c.
ho ex Mayo proximo pasado, en que se le hizo
voto, informo brevemente con sus diligencias, y bre-
za, que me dio ha obvenido con el Superior Oficio
hace a ese Superior Oficio, como a los demas Tri-
bunales de esta Capital; esto es: que por lo que en
estos desahos, quanto es lo que se les da en el
por su inicio, y ex. de los de; y ultimamente con
apello que al Informante le precede conducente
informan para el pexico concurrencia que se desea
tener de las incomodidades y orramenra por esto
votos suvos a los Aduales, dice: que en pa-
to a los desahos que se hacen a ese Superior Oficio
no, como a los demas Tribunales de esta Capital: y en
esta parte se desahos con medio de los desahos

Official compliance of the Province of Tondo on June 2, 1784.

from Manbulao up to its capital, and from there up to the first town of Sorsogon. Delivery will be made by land or water depending on their respective destinations or stations.

Sorsogon will establish a chain from Albay up to the port of embarkation to continue the process of delivery for Samar. In addition, there will be a chain between the islands of Samar and Leyte.

Article 18

Parcels for Cavite will be dispatched daily by the captains of sailboats that will leave for that port.

Article 19

Letters for Batangas and the island of Mindoro will be sent to Cavite, and from Cavite through the Batangas chain.

Article 20

Batangas will have a chain that is connected with Cavite under the jurisdiction of its governor. Letters for dispatch to Mindoro will be facilitated by the Batangas governor through ships that will be used to send them.

Article 21

Below is the itinerary of the provincial routes.

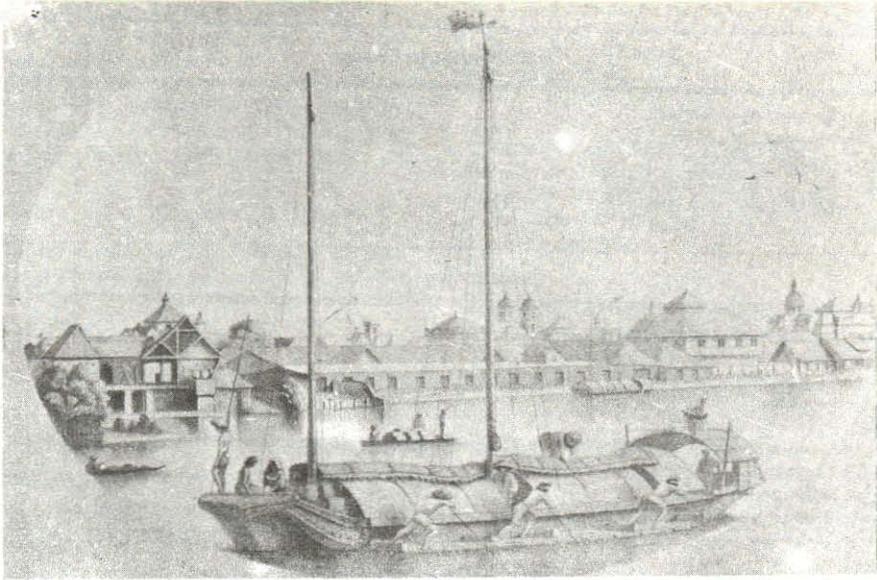
The Chains or Routes of the Provinces in the North

From Manila to Bulacan			
<u>Dry Season</u>	hours	<u>Rainy Season</u>	hours
From Manila to Meycawayan by land	4	From Manila to Bulacan by water	6
From Meycawayan to Bulacan by land	4		
From Bulacan to Lallo, Capital of Cagayan			
From Bulacan to San Rafael			5
From San Rafael to San Miguel			4
From San Miguel to Gapan			3
From Gapan to Santor			6
From Santor to Pantabangan			6
From Pantabangan to Caranglan			3
From Caranglan to Dupax in transit through the Caraballo mountains where the courier with escort must pass			8
From Dupax to Bayombon			4
From Bayombon to Bagabag			3
From Bagabag to Carig			8
From Carig to Angadanan			4
From Angadanan to Cabayan			3
From Cabayan to Gamu			4
From Gamu to Tumabini			5
From Bulacan to Bacolor			
<u>Dry Season</u>		<u>Rainy Season</u>	hours
From Bulacan to Calumpit	4	From Bulacan to Calumpit by water	6
From Calumpit to Macabebe	2		
From Macabebe to Sto. Tomas or Bacolor	3	From Calumpit to Bacolor by water	6
From Sto. Tomas to Bacolor	2		
From Bacolor to Balanga			
From Bacolor to Llana Hermosa			7
From Llana Hermosa to Balanga			2

From Bacolor to Lingayen	
From Bacolor to Magalan	4
From Magalan to Tarlac	6
From Tarlac to Paniqui	3
From Paniqui to Bayamban	6
From Bayamban to Atalasia	4
From Atalasia to Lingayen	4
From Lingayen to Iba	
From Lingayen to Balincaguin, by land	6
From Balincaguin to Santa Cruz, by land	6
From Santa Cruz to Masinloc, by land	4
From Masinloc to Palabi, by water	3
From Palabi to Iba, by land	3
If the magistrate of Zambales lives in Bolinao, another route will be taken	
From Lingayen to Balincaguin, by land	6
From Balincaguin to Bani	4
From Bani to Bolinao	4
From Lingayen to Vigan	
From Lingayen to Dagupan	3
From Dagupan to San Fabian	3
From San Fabian to Agoo	3
From Agoo to Bauan	4
From Bauan to San Fernando	2
From San Fernando to Bacnotan	3
From Bacnotan to Namacpacan	4
From Namacpacan to Tagudin	2
From Tagudin to Sta. Cruz	3
From Sta. Cruz to Candon	2
From Candon to Sta. Maria	3
From Sta. Maria to Narbacan	2
From Narbacan to Vigan	3

Itinerary of the Chains or Routes of the Provinces of the East

From Manila to Pagsanjan	
From Manila to Sta. Cruz, Laguna, aboard a casco weekly to the fair or "tianguil" market, giving the pilot or the courier a corresponding remuneration	x
From Sta. Cruz to Pagsanjan	1
From Pagsanjan to Tayabas	
From Pagsanjan to Majayjay	4
From Majayjay to Lucban	3
From Lucban to Tayabas	3



The casco is a flatboat used mainly for cargo but also carried passengers. Its operators were ordered to carry mailbags from port of origin to its destination.

From Tayabas to the Island of Panay	
From Tayabas to Marinduque	x
From Marinduque to Romblon	x
From Romblon to Capiz	x
<p>The courier will embark on these crossings on the first ship that leaves; if the parcels are urgent they will be dispatched aboard a ship furnished at possible economy.</p>	
From Pagsanjan to Naga	
From Pagsanjan to Majayjay	3
From Majayjay to Lucban	3
From Lucban to Mauban	4
<p>NOTE: From Mauban the mailbag will proceed on the first ship that will make the crossing. The owners or pilots shall take charge of the mailbag under receipt from the officials of the towns who will pay the freight. It may happen that in Mauban there is no ship that will leave for Mambulao, and at the same time some may decide to leave from the town of Atimonan or Gumaca, where the mayors of the natives of these towns also frequently cross. They announce this, so that, if due to lack of ships, they will forward the mailbag using their own conductor or town official who will be paid for this round trip passage. Customarily the pilot will also be paid for making the trip although he does not carry the mailbag to the authorized official of Mambulao and proceed to the following stations:</p>	
From Mambulao to Paracale by land	x
From Paracale to Indan by land	x
From Indan to Daet	x
From Daet to Cabusao — 2 days	
From Cabusao to Naga by water	5

From Naga to Albay			
Dry Season		Rainy Season	
From Naga to Minalabag	1	From Polangui to Guinobatan	3
From Minalabag to Bula, by water	5	From Guinobatan to Albay	3
From Bula to Bato, by water	5		
From Bato to Polangui, by water	2½		
From Polangui to Ligao	1		
From Ligao to Guinobatan	2		
From Guinobatan to Cagsaua	2		
From Cagsaua to Albay	1		
From Albay to Samar			
From Albay to Manito, by water			2
From Manito to Bacon, by land			3
From Bacon to Gubat			2½
From Gubat to Bulusan, by land			5
From Bulusan to Capul, by crossing the mouth of the channel			x
From Capul to Calbayog, by sea			12
From Calbayog to Catbalogan, by sea			10
NOTE: The crossing from Bulusan to Capul shall be done on the first private ship that may be present but if there is none, small (barotos) sailboats shall be used and paid by the mail service for the transport of the parcels.			
From Samar to Leyte			
From Catbalogan to Buat, by sea			x
From Buat to Carigara, by sea			12
NOTE: The letters shall proceed from Catbalogan to Carigara in private ships and if there are none, small sailboats shall be hired to bring them in the same way that they will be delivered from Carigara to Catbalogan.			
From Manila to Cavite			
The letters of Cavite will be dispatched daily either through the Royal Service or private individual aboard the first and last "parao" that leaves every day from this dock for that port. Toward this end, the captains of these "paraos" will present themselves to the Administrator General of Posts who instructs them to bring the parcels of proportionate remuneration.			
From Cavite to Batangas			
From Cavite to Indang			5
From Indang to Taal			8
From Taal to Batangas			8
From Batangas to Calapan			
From Batangas to Calapan, the parcels will be dispatched aboard the first ship that will make the crossing and if there would be a parcel of the Royal Service that is urgent and not booked on a ship that can bring it immediately, a small ship will be hired on the account of the mail service to transport it.			

X means that the number of hours could no longer be described from the original documents due to wear and tear.

Bulacan

REPUBLICA DE LAS FILIPINAS
GOBIERNO GENERAL
OFICINA DE ASISTENTE
SECRETARIO DE JUSTICIA

M. J. S.

1

Alc. mal. de la Provincia de Bu-
lacan; en obediencia de la sup. orden de
V. E. con fecha de 26 de pasado mes
Mayo, en que le ordena informe con cla-
ridad y distincion q. gentes se ocupan
en los Decretos que se hacen en su
provincia, y de sus tribunales; la
expone a V. E. que segun le ha in-
formado el Alc. de esta de esta de esta
ta Cab. y lo ha experimentado en el
poco tpo que obino se le enoles de ill
ca de mal. de esta de esta de esta
de la orden de V. E. recibida en
esta de esta de esta de esta de esta
y pagan la gente que son mal. de esta
nom. en esta de esta de esta de esta
avocan lura costa, agueren para sig.
en solitud de esta de esta de esta de esta
de esta de esta que se ocupan en esta de esta.

Official compliance of the Province of Bulacan on June 2, 1784.

Article 22

It may be necessary to use water transport between the following stations: from this capital to Bulacan, from Bulacan to Bacolor, from Bacolor to Balanga, and from Bacolor to Lingayen, from Lingayen to Iba, and from Naga to Albay. If the chief mayors should consider using smaller ships to deliver the mail in lakes and rivers, they may either decide to hire or buy such vessels using the money from the proceeds of mail income. Either way, they should protect the ships from the elements to serve future service.

Article 23

The official who will continue delivery through any of the chains or express ways shall perform his duty punctually and completely. Individuals who accompany official couriers, for security reasons, shall collect the customary payment from each transit province where the fixed itinerary passes. In effect, the chief mayors of these provinces and towns where the chain passes will have to contribute to cover some expenses.

Article 24

There are several aims for establishing the chains, namely,

1. assurance of prompt communication of decisions of the Superior Government, the tribunals that deal with judicial affairs and the Royal Treasury;

2. share with local inhabitants the convenience of communicating reciprocally between towns and provinces;
3. so that letters and parcels could be exchanged and delivered without discrimination, whether public or private, ecclesiastical or secular, or even by Spaniards, Indians or mestizos.

Town mayors along the chains will also welcome the escorts besides the couriers accompanying the parcels provided they deliver correspondences to the towns assigned along the way. These mayors will receive only those parcels which are due them including the next towns which they need to bring through the relay system.

Article 25

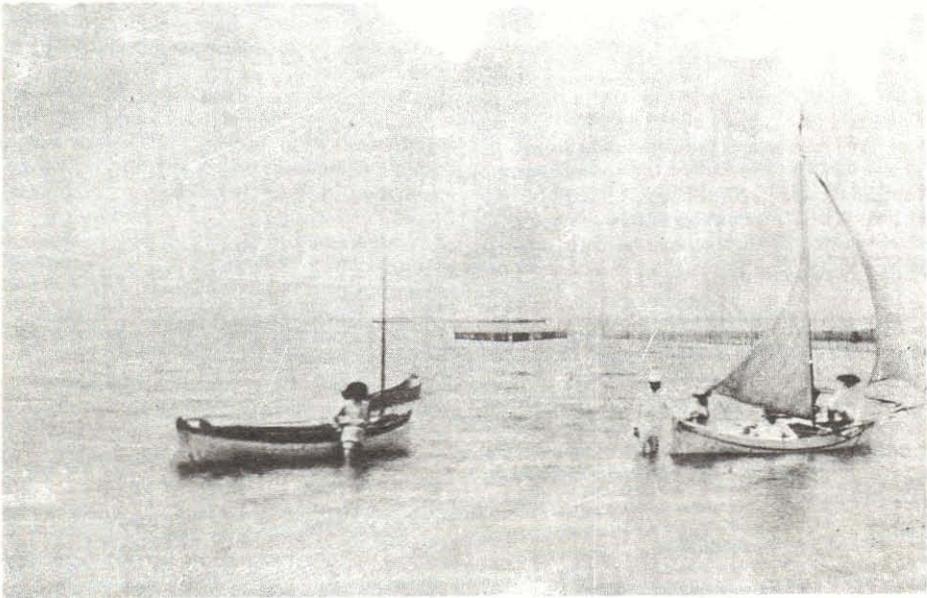
The chief mayors of provinces will dispose letters and parcels to their addresses within their areas of operation. For easier management and clarity, they may dispose of, if the number of letters require it, by making a list that will be shown where the public can read it.

When receiving letters from the public, they shall collect moderate costs that will be explained later as their tariff.

Article 26

The provisions under article 26 to 28 shall be observed within the chain that returns mail from the provinces to the capital in Manila.

In general, all provinces may establish chains between their respective areas and the capital or even with remote provinces as long as there is a



The parao or small boat was utilized for delivery of mails in short trips between Manila and the provinces of Bulacan and Pampanga.

need and urgency. If they could not institute such facility, they can wait for the chief mayors of intermediate provinces who shall pass their way.

Totally remote provinces where no chain passes except its own will collect letters and parcels for the service of the people and dispatch them as these are prudently required. The same may be done by intermediate provinces if bottlenecks are foreseen, in order not to delay the correspondences of the service and the public which are left to the decisions of chief mayors.

Article 27

When dispatching a chain, each chief mayor will pack all his letters and those of the public in a mailbag. Before closing it, he should inscribe it with a note on the envelope regarding the day and time he sends it with his signature as explained in previous articles. Then he submits the mailbag to a justice official under receipt accompanied by the information.

The mailbag will be sent from town to town and receipted at every stop using the same formalities already mentioned. This goes on until the mailbag reaches the mayor for whom it is inscribed.

At each stopover, the mayor will separate the parcels and letters that correspond to his province, include those that are to be sent to other provinces and close the mailbag ready for the next delivery. Throughout the chain, the chief mayor of the next province will inscribe and dispatch it in the same manner. Each time, new information will be given to the conductor specifying the remainder of the trip until its final destination at the capital in Manila.

Article 28

As soon as the mailbag arrives at the Administrator of Posts, the parcels and letters will be delivered to their addresses. Correspondences will be sent to the various government offices such as the Superior Government, the Royal Court, and the rest of the tribunals according to tariff. Those that are addressed to the public shall be listed so that people may claim their letters from the post office.

Article 29

Public faith on the postal system is sacred which nobody must dare to break. Those who intercept letters will be punished immediately with 10 years in the galleys, if he is a common person, or 10 years in the fortress, if a nobleman. The duration of the sentence may be more depending on the circumstances.

Article 30

The only exception to article 29 refers to the opening of letters in court, if said letters are needed as evidence to prosecute criminals. In cases of robberies or other serious crimes, some justices may ask the surrender of letters of the accused. The letters may be opened and read in court upon

the request and discretion of the judge if they are relevant to the case in question.

Article 31

The provisions under article 31 to 36 shall be observed for correspondences of overseas provinces of this archipelago.

Ships that leave Manila Bay for overseas provinces are required to carry letters and parcels by virtue of the license granted by the Superior Government. Before departure, ship captains are also obliged to announce through posters for the benefit of the public and other administrators who might send parcels destined for places where their ships are intended to sail.

Article 32

Letters and parcels should be packed in separate mailbags for each province where ships dock. However, ships should carry at the earliest possible time, all the mailbags which they can deliver along the routes of their voyage.

Ships going to Iloilo will bring the mailbags destined for Iloilo, Capiz, Antique, Zamboanga, the Island of Negros and Cebu. Mailbags that have to be sent elsewhere will be brought from Iloilo to Capiz by overland, and from Capiz to their final destination in the ships that go in search for rice.

The mail of Caraga, Leyte and Samar will also be sent from Iloilo to Capiz, from there to Cebu, then to their final destination.

Those destined for Calamianes will be sent from Iloilo to Capiz, and from there to a more direct route. For Misamis, mail will be sent from Iloilo either directly to their final destination or through Capiz and Cebu.

Ships going to Zamboanga will stop at Iloilo and carry whatever mailbags are due for delivery to Mindanao. Ships leaving for Antique should also bring the mailbags which are destined for Iloilo so that these may be forwarded in the best possible way.

Ships going to Capiz will follow the same procedure above. They will also carry letters and parcels of Cebu, Misamis, Caraga, Leyte, Samar and Iloilo. Nevertheless, those destined for Iloilo will be sent from Cebu to Capiz if there is no direct route, or from Antique to Iloilo.

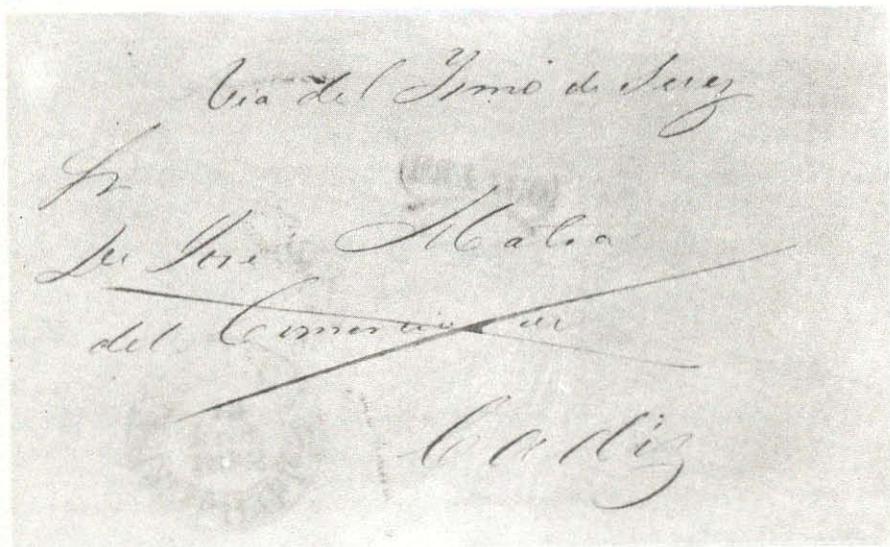
All these simply means that mailbags would be carried using the most direct route. In Iloilo where most letters and parcels are sorted and rerouted, the chief mayor of Oton shall decide and arrange their respective routes and chains.

Ships destined for Samar will bring the mailbags of Samar, Leyte, Cebu and the Island of Negros. Those for Negros will be sent to Cebu, and from there to their destination using the best possible route.

In the absence of a better alternative, ship destined for Samar may also bring the mail of Iloilo, since these may be brought through Cebu by other ships plying this route.



Above are two cancellations: a circular dated "MANILA - ISL. FILIPs." which can be found in various sizes, ranging from 27 to 29 mm diameter, and "FRANCO" mark which was applied from 1847 onwards for prepaid outbound mail.



Circular dated "MANILA - ISLs. FILIPs." about 30 mm diameter.

29 Laguna

SEÑOR DON FRANCISCO DE CALATAYUD
GOBIERNO DE LA CIUDAD DE MADRID
Para el Despacho de Negocios



M. D. C. C. L. X. V.

Cumpliendo con la superior Causa orden de 15 de
veinte y ocho del presente en la que se me previene que
con toda claridad y pureza exponga el método y la he
obtenido en los Despachos á esta superioridad como en
los demas memoriales de esta Capital Dico Informar á V.
que desde que como en esta Causa no se ha hecho ningun Despacho
que se le haia pagado á los naves conductores ó con sus puer
tos quando se han ofrecido se lo recusa desde con Causa
ra al M. E. de C. y una que y era los entrecogidos. Mas
en el los Causas y seguian para esta Capital el Dico In
fo. y si falta de estos en los Causas de V. y si
que orden de esta Otra Causa en. y como no faltan en mas
nada nueva; y por lo que resta para las cosas que se van
en á esta. V. de oficio y para que se en. y para
sin costo alguno. E. no haues fondo. y. y. y. y.

Official compliance of the Province of Laguna on June 11, 1784.

Article 33

All governors, magistrates and mayors who receive mailbags that belong to other provinces should pack, inscribe and send these without delay to the chief mayors of those provinces. If there is no direct route, then the mail can be forwarded to the next province where it can be delivered using the most accessible means.

The aim of the postal system is to establish an efficient postal communication. Chief mayors of provinces can do a lot in this direction if they could make sure that letters and parcels arrive at the least possible time at their destinations. Therefore, the Superior Government expects everyone will contribute their best efforts to achieve this important objective.

Article 34

Overseas provinces who would like to communicate with Iloilo may dispatch the mailbag to the chief mayor of Tayabas, who will send it to Marinduque, from there to Romblon, and from Romblon to Capiz. This last resort may only be used if there is no direct route available or expected soon.

Article 35

The chief mayors of Capiz, Mindoro and Tayabas should agree beforehand to facilitate a process that would speed-up the transfer of mailbags at the shortest possible means. If based on their dispositions, they could not act accordingly because the intention exceeds their authority, then they may consult with the Superior Government.

Article 36

Any chief mayor of the concerned provinces herein who considers a better way of sending letters, which is shorter and safer than the present maritime itinerary, should present his proposal to the Superior Government so that appropriate measures can be taken.

Article 37

The chief mayors of the provinces of Luzon should prepare to receive letters of the public for inclusion in the mailbag in an equitable and prescribed manner based on the methods lined-up for the chains of Luzon. In like manner, letters destined for overseas provinces shall be treated equally and with fairness, and should be received in the standard way.

Article 38

The following fees shall apply now to be charged against the sender in this capital as well as in the provinces, until new decisions arise for the postage of letters in relation to distance.

Postage Rates in 1783

1. For simple letter 1/2 real de plata fuerte
2. For double letter 1 real de plata fuerte
3. For 3/4 ounces 1-1/2 reales de plata fuerte
4. For 1 to 2 ounces 2 reales de plata fuerte of package
5. For every ounce in excess of 20 ounces — a third or 11 silver marevediz (about 1/5 of a cent)

Printed matter weighing more than 20 ounces which will be sent with escort service to avoid fraud, 2 reales de plata fuerte per pound over 20 ounces will be charged, provided that the first 2 pounds shall be charged the same rate of 2 reales.

Article 39

The postal service in the capital as well as in the provinces shall use the proceeds derived from postage in the administration of carriers as well as other expenses for shipping of mailbags. If however, the money coming from said proceeds is not enough to cover expenses, the balance may be supplied through a Royal Grant upon request. This should maintain a standard of quality necessary to operate the postal system and satisfy the Administrator General of Posts at the capital.

Article 40

All chief mayors shall account and verify all receipts and expenses during the year. At year end, a financial statement shall be prepared to be certified by the minister of the capital together with the provincial governor.

These notarized financial documents shall be sent to the Administrator General of Posts, together with any income derived from the previous years' postal operation. If however, losses are incurred, the authorized representative of the provincial governor may request and collect the amount from the capital in Manila.

Article 41

The Administrator General of Posts shall account all proceeds and expenses coming from the operation of all provinces in order to determine whether the domestic postal service derived any income. In case expenses exceed all incomes, he may deduct any losses from income derived from overseas correspondences.

The Administrator General is also tasked with aggregating the incomes generated from both domestic services as well as foreign correspondences, after which he should render his official seal on the consolidated financial statement.

SEÑOR DON FRANCISCO
DE MENDOZA Y LEON
GOBIERNO Y OVATRO
Batangas, 30 de Mayo de 1784

M. S.

En cumplimiento de la Superior ^{en} de P. S. en que se
tiene ordenado, informo con toda claridad, y puse en el
metodo que he observado en los diez pueblitos que hago al
Superior Gobierno, que salian de este de p. su trabajo,
y de donde salen, y ultimamente lo que me parecia con-
ducirme informar para el presente conocimiento que se
debe tener de la incomodidad que p. en un Correo
se causa a los Naturales = digo, que quando entran en
la Provincia, entran por practica que a los Indios q
se destinan para este Servicio, se les dava segun el
Arancel de ella p. su trabajo dos pesos uno p. el hom-
bre, y otro p. el Cavallo, de manera que el dho Correo
va a pie no gana mas que un peso, y esto desde la Ca-
verera de esta Ciudad, que siendo desde otro Pueblo
mas inmediato, se le paga a correspondencia de la di-
stancia, y sobre el conocimiento de los dos pesos p. lo
mas largo, ^{lo sacado de mi bolsillo} en dinero, aunque lo que se saca de

Official compliance of the Province of Batangas on May 30, 1784.

CONCLUSION

There are many new discoveries as a result of this research. Foremost in importance is the setting of the date when postal service was instituted in the Philippines and that was on October 31, 1783. The others may well be enumerated in order to show the comparison between previous beliefs and what the documents from the Philippine National Archives state:

	Past Research	This Study
1. Date of establishment of postal service in the Philippines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Bartels, et. al. (1904): Spanish Decree of June 16, 1803. b. Palmer (1912): first postal decree in the Philippines dated November 7, 1838. c. PJP article (1949): established 1853. d. Dalena (1949): the postal service existed before postage stamps were issued in 1854. e. Bantug (1954): the first private letter was sent by sea mail from Cebu in the Philippines to Spain in 1565 by Legaspi; in 1602, periodic communication began between Mexico and the Philippines; and weekly postal services were instituted in Ilocos Norte and Camarines Sur after 1783. f. Wellsted (1971): Bellini correspondences were transmitted from 1736 to 1790 between the Philippines and Europe. g. Agoncillo (1975): traders brought communication as early as 15th century between Europe and the Islands. h. Balague (1978): the postal service began in 1791 upon appointment of Berenguer as sub-delegate of posts. 	<p>Governor-General Basco established the Philippine postal service on October 31, 1783.</p>
2. When the fees were charged against letters and correspondences and postal rates were established.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Bartels, et. al. (1904): in 1803. b. Palmer (1912): in 1838. c. PJP article (1949): in 1853. d. Balague (1978): in 1803. 	<p>In 1783, the fees were set by Blanco in his decree</p>
3. Who brought the mail within the Philippine Islands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Bartels, et. al. (1904): through mail carriers appointed by the Administration. b. Palmer (1912): each town employed its own carrier. c. Dalena (1949): through bodegeros or couriers. d. Balague (1978): through bodegeros who rendered free service to the colonial government. 	<p>In the beginning, only justice officials could carry Service mailbags due to its importance. These official couriers were paid by the town mayors who employed them.</p>

4. Where and when were the first post offices established.

Unknown

Metropolitan capital of Manila in 1783 and the provinces of Cavite, Batangas, Bulacan, Tondo, Pampanga, Bataan and Laguna in 1784.

5. Who was the first Postmaster General of the Philippine Islands

Dalena (1949) and Balangue (1978): Felix Berenguer de Marquina carried the title superintendente general subdelegado de la real hacienda, y renta de correo in 1791 aside from being the Governor-General.

Joseph Basco y Vargas, when he assumed the position of Governor-General, also took the position of subdelegado de correo in 1783. Felix Berenguer de Marquina succeeded Basco as the next Governor-General and Postmaster in 1787

This research work was confirmed by Dr. Serafin D. Quiazon, Chairman of the National Historical Institute, when he advised Postmaster General J. Roilo Golez about the merits of the study. In his own words, he said that "research has been well done," thus allowing for the issuance of a postage stamp to honor Philippine-Postal System Bicentennial in 1983.



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