

VOLUME III, No. 1

JULY, 1955

THE AERO
PHILATELIST ANNALS

* * A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE ON AERO-PHILATELY * *

This Issue Features:

- COSTA RICA
1921 FLIGHT AIR STAMPS
- ZEPPELIN COVER
WITH UNUSUAL MIXED FRANKING
- UNITED STATES
1928 LINDBERGH BOOKLETS
- INDEX
VOL. II (1954-55)

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Henry M. Goodkind, Editor

137 East 94th St., New York 28, N. Y.

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COSTA RICA

1921 Semi-Official Air Mails

By STANLEY R. RICE

Introduction

My interest in the two Semi-Official air mail stamps issued by Costa Rica back in 1921 (Sanabria Nos. 501-2) started a few years ago, after I had purchased at auction a dirty, torn and battered cover (see Figs. 3 and 4 for front and back). I searched through all sorts of catalogs and stamp magazines for information, asked many experienced aerophilatelists, but found no one or no writings that could aid me in explaining the reasons for all the markings on my cover.

Then about two years ago I began to make some progress. With the help of friends, it was suggested that I write to some people in this country and in Latin America, who possibly might have some knowledge of these stamps, their circumstance of issue and use. My correspondence grew as time went on, which can be seen from all the acknowledgments given at the end of this article. At one point I believed that enough data was in my possession to record the story. But then further information came to light which caused me to pause, because much of the newer data completely contradicted previously held opinions, and could not be reconciled with the notes as given in the Sanabria catalog.

The time has now arrived when I feel reasonably safe in recording the data that follows. Its delayed appearance until 1955 has proven timely because of political develop-

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COSTA RICA

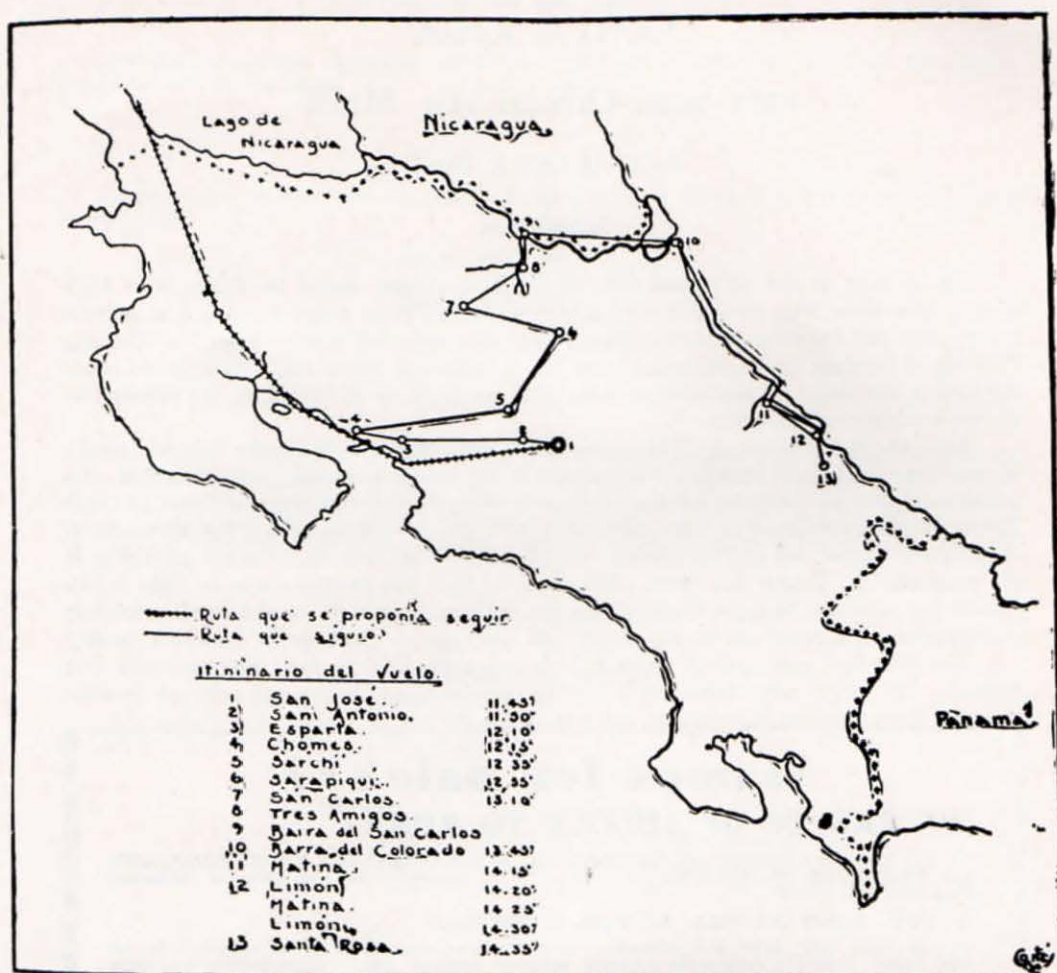


Fig. 1. Copy of the map originally shown in Mr. Noriega's Spanish article.

ments early this year between Costa Rica and Nicaragua. You see that these stamps were issued in 1921 for a trial flight between Costa Rica and Nicaragua. But while I wrote this, the strained relations between these two Central American countries made newspaper headlines.

Reason For Issue

It is fortunate for us to have two sources with first-hand knowledge, because both parties upon whom I shall rely for most of my information were in Costa Rica when these Semi-Officials were issued and used. The first is *Gamaliel Noriega*, now living in San José, Costa Rica as the Consul of the Colombian Republic, but back in 1921 the Director General of Posts in Costa Rica. Fortunately he has recorded his experiences and knowledge of this 1921 issue. The other is *Alvaro Bonilla Lara*, now a well-known philatelist in Chile, who also was in San José, Costa Rica in 1921 when he too had per-

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Fig. 2. A reproduction of the cover illustrated by Mr. Noriega in the "Costa Rica Filatelica" Jan. 1934, Vol. II, No. 5, page 8.

sonal experiences with these Flight stamps. Both of these gentlemen happen to be rather well-known philatelists in Latin America. This is very fortunate because they combine both philatelic knowledge and personal connections with the flight. Often a philatelist in seeking information can secure it from an official, but this can have its drawbacks because a former postal administrator may be completely ignorant of philately and the type of information a philatelist seeks to solve his problems. In this instance, our sources are so excellent, because they combine both knowledge of stamps with their on-the-spot experiences.

We shall commence this study of the stamps by reprinting their complete treatment in the current edition of "the Sanabria Air Post Catalogue":—

SEMI-OFFICIALS

"1921, Apr. 10. Used on experimental flight betw San Jose & Managua on April 15. The plane crashed near Puerto Limon and mail was forwarded by land. Litho. Ungummed. Serrate roulette 13½.

501	SO1	1C green & yellow	12.00	15.00
502	SO1	1C lilac & yellow	6.00	7.00
		Set of 2	15.00	

The information that follows will show the accuracy or errors in these notes. The Sanabria catalog had previously given the date of issue incorrectly as April 15th. The "American Air Mail Catalogue", 1947 edition, still carries this wrong date. The right day-of-issue is *April 10th*. This is important to know for distinguishing between genuinely flown covers and those faked.



Fig. 3. The front of the cover that the author bought in an American auction sale in 1948.

Now we follow with the published account of Gamaliel Noriega, whom as we had mentioned previously was the Director General of Posts in Costa Rica back in 1921. An English translation was published in "the Costa Rica Philatelist" June 1952 pp. 33-35 from the original Spanish published in 1934 in the "Costa Rica Filatelico". Mr. Noriega's account will not be quoted in the way he wrote, but we shall select certain passages from it for our own best uses in this study:—

In the month of December, 1920, the Italian aviator, Sr Luis Venditti, came to Costa Rica under contract to perform some aerial exhibitions in connection with the civic festival which is celebrated annually in this capital. When his contract had been concluded, Sr Venditti decided to establish his residence in San Jose.

In the month of March, 1921, Sr Venditti conceived the idea of making a trial flight to Nicaragua, and, with that purpose in mind he came to the undersigned, then the Director General of Posts, to inform him of the project and to obtain a permit from the Government to carry a sack of mail on the flight. In this interview, Sr Venditti revealed that he entertained the hope that, if the flight was accomplished successfully and favorably received by the public, he might submit to the governments

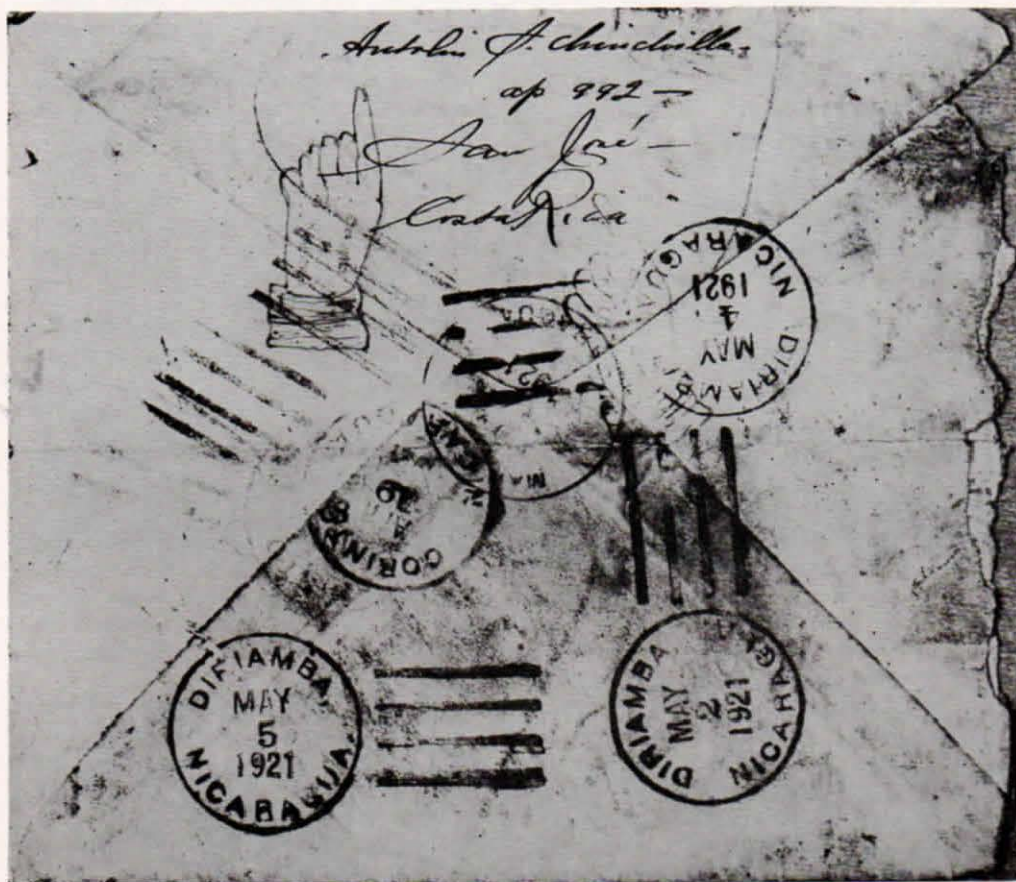


Fig. 4. The back of the author's cover.

concerned a plan for a regular airmail contract between the two countries. He also stated that he would request a modest fee which would permit him to cover the losses which such a service might suffer at the beginning. He added, besides, that he would make the first trip on his own account and at his own risk, but that, to finance it, he intended to collect an extra charge of 1 colon for each piece of correspondence that he carried. I accepted his gallant offer with pleasure and recommended it with all enthusiasm to my superior (The Minister of Government), who gave it his approval. When this had been communicated to Sr. Venditti, an issue of stamps was ordered for the collection of the surtax, which stamps were lithographed by the Litografía Minerva. The well known artist, Sr. Antolin Chincilla prepared the engraving.

The stamps were sold at the Central Office (Main P. O., San Jose) to those interested, a total of about 600, more or less, being sold. At the same time, an announcement was posted on the large bulletin board to the effect that the mail for the flight would close at 10:00 P. M. on the 9th, as the aviator would leave the following day at 6:00 A. M. The stamps for the surtax which Sr. Venditti gave me to sell were of the well-known type in green with orange background. They were separated by a saw-tooth roulette.

COSTA RICA

The stamps in lilac with the same background, but imperforate, never passed through my hands, nor did I see any of the pieces carried on the plane franked with this variety. I became acquainted with the latter variety only years later when they were first listed in the *Champion* catalog with the result that philatelic interest in them was awakened.

The Flight

Mr. Noriega described the flight and showed its course with a map, which we have copied from his original Spanish article for illustrative purposes (Fig. 1). This is what he wrote about it:—

As I have already stated, the correspondence for the flight was accepted up to 10 o'clock of the night of April 9th. It was deposited in a mail-sack of the then current type which had displayed on it the Costa Rican flag and the following legend: "First Air Mail, Costa Rica - Nicaragua, April 10, 1921". I, personally, delivered the mail bag to the aviator at 5:45 on the morning of the 10th. However, due to continuous failures of the motor, the aviator was unable to take-off until 11:45 A. M. He estimated that the trip would require two hours for the 321 kilometers (about 200 miles) between San Jose and Managua.

The telegraph offices along the route had been instructed to report the passing of the plane over their respective localities. Those of San Antonio de Belen, Esparta and Chomes did this, however, those along the frontier did not. Due to the silence of the latter serious fears were entertained for the safety of the flyer since offices which were not along the route, such as Sarchi, Sarapiquí, San Carlos and others, had reported seeing him pass.

In the midst of this state of apprehension a telephone call was received from Limon at about 3 p. m., in which, without any kind of details, it was announced that the aviator, Venditti, had fallen near that port at a place called Santa Rosa. The Government immediately gave instructions to lend every type of aid. At 3:30 P. M. complete details of the accident and its causes were obtained.

That same afternoon an announcement was placed on the Post Office bulletin board which informed the public of the occurrence as follows:

"The aviator Venditti, surprised by a violent storm after two and a half hours of flying, and after having travelled 450 kilometers, was forced to land 23 kilometers south of Limon."

As a conclusion to these lines, I take the liberty of quoting the telegram which the aviator sent to the country's press, which said:

"Limon, April 10: after having crossed from the Pacific to the Atlantic, passing over part of Nicaragua, travelling 600 kilometers, being lost due to a completely cloudy sky, I landed Limon fortunately saving myself. Machine destroyed.—Luis Venditti"

In due time I made known the failure of the flight to the Director General of Communications of Nicaragua, and ordered the mail to be dispatched by sea on the steamer "San Juan" of the Pacific Mail Line.

At this point we wish to interrupt Mr. Noriega to quote from what Mr. Alvaro Bonilla Lara wrote in a letter:—

Mr. Noriega writes, and I can confirm this from personal knowledge as I was then living in San José, a youth of 18, that aviator Venditti turned up in his own aircraft in Costa Rica to give demonstration flights and acrobatics, in December 1920 and stayed on in that country. In April 1921 he proposed to make a trial mail flight to Nicaragua with the idea of establishing a direct and regular line between both

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Fig. 5. The front of a cover considered fake.

countries and to lengthen the service to the other Central American countries also, if possible. As the flight was to be made for Venditti's own account and risk, the P. O. Department had no objection to approving his plans, deliver the mail to him and authorize him to charge a special fee for his service. The fee was fixed at one colón and the corresponding stamps were lithographed at the Imprenta Minerva. Mr. Noriega states that the number of "letters" delivered to Venditti was somewhat under 600, they were only duly franked with the ordinary 5c. postage stamps and those of the additional airmail fee. An important detail is that Mr. Noriega states that the only stamps used were the green and orange ones. The lilac ones were not known then nor did he see them until years afterwards. This statement obviously detracts any value to stamp Sanabria No. 502. Mr. Noriega goes on to mention that none of the semi-official stamps of Venditti were cancelled with the postal cancellation and, therefore, those that appear with such a postmark are bogus.

Genuine Flown Covers

Mr. Noriega concluded his account with this statement:—

Authentic covers of this flight are very rare, since, as I stated previously, there were less than 600 carried.

In his original Spanish article, Mr. Noriega illustrated a cover, which we show again (Fig. 2). Now I illustrate the front (Fig. 3) and the back (Fig. 4) of the cover I purchased in an auction sale some years ago.

Now let us analyze these covers more minutely. Mr. Noriega's (Fig. 2) was sent by him, when the Director of Posts in Costa Rica, to the Director of Posts in Nicaragua. *The air mail stamp is not cancelled, as per regulations. The cover needed no postage stamp because this was official use.* This is how Mr. Noriega in his article explained the stamps and their cancelling:—

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Fig. 6. The back of the fake cover shown in Fig. 5.

The ordinary postage stamps which the pieces despatched on the flight carried were cancelled with ordinary postmark then currently in use at San Jose. I should state that all the covers were cancelled in my presence and that the extra-fee stamp was *not* cancelled. Consequently, the cancelled extra-fee stamps which frequently appear in the market are either cancelled by favor or bear a fraudulent cancellation.

Fake Covers

An example of a fake cover is shown by its front (Fig. 5) and the back (Fig. 6), which carried a block of four of San. No. 501. In my opinion, there is no evidence on this cover to show why it should require 4 Colons in air mail stamps. Furthermore a letter mailed registered should have a street address or a post office box number for delivery to the addressee or his agent. Although this cover (Fig. 5) bears a registration marking, nowhere on the front or the back (Fig. 6) is there any Nicaragua marking to show receipt.

Also one should be suspicious of the markings and cancels on the Fig. 5 cover. Attention must be called the genuine San Jose, Costa Rica cancellations as appearing on the covers shown in Figs. 2 and 3. Compare their size, shape, formation of the letters and all other characteristics with the fake cancels on Figs. 6, 7 and 8.

Proper Usage

Returning to a re-examination of my cover (Figs. 3 and 4), every time I looked at it again, I noticed something new to substantiate what Mr. Noriega had published. Furthermore, this is what Mr. A. Bonilla Lara wrote:—

The flight took place in the morning of April 10th, correspondence was received up until 10 o'clock at night of the previous day, April 9th; the mail was postmarked with the date of April 10th, which was the date of the flight. Mr. Noriega writes

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Fig. 7. A fake cover with the wrong date "April 11" instead of "April 10". Also the air mail stamp is cancelled in the upper righthand corner. (Courtesy of F. J. Field).

that he personally delivered the bag of mail to the aviator at 5.45 in the morning of the 10th, and that, due to engine trouble, the aircraft did not take off until almost midday.

The flight was not a success. The aviator did not know the route which at time was not to be wondered at, and he lost his way a little to the north of Puntarenas on the Pacific coast, he made a series of turns and finally, at about 3 o'clock in the afternoon, made an emergency landing to the south of Puerto Limón, on the Atlantic coast. If you take out your map of Costa Rica you will see what a serious navigational error Venditti made. Although the aircraft was destroyed when it landed, the correspondence was saved (as Venditti himself) and afterwards sent to Managua by sea.

With regard to your cover, it is difficult to express a definite opinion without seeing it, but it sounds like a legitimate one to me. The 5c. postage is correct, undoubtedly the stamp is Scott 72, which was the *only one* then on sale. The date stamp April 10th is the right one, and the others including that of Corinto of April 19th appear to be perfectly correct. If the mail was returned to San José the 11th, to be sent to Managua by steamer, it is very possible that some delay may have occurred before it was put on board in Puntarenas, and Corinto was the port of entry into Nicaragua by the Pacific route.

After reading that the air mail stamp could not be postmarked, I suspected that my cover was a fake. But then a friend, familiar with Nicaragua cancellations, pointed out to me that the marking on the stamp on my cover was *not* a San José, Costa Rica cancellation, but a Managua, Nicaragua receipt mark dated May 5th!!

Mr. Dana Mitchell of Washington, D. C., editor of "The Costa Rican Philatelist" in reply to my letter to him for information wrote this:—"Chinchilla, the engraver of the stamps, I am informed, is dead."

Long after receipt of Mr. Mitchell's letter, I made a further discovery about my cover (Fig. 3). The sender is A. S. Chinchilla, no doubt the engraver mentioned by Mr. Mitchell. The letter is addressed to the Chief of Investigation of Nicaragua. The corner

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card of the cover is partly torn, but from the portion remaining I believe that it read, "Dario de Costa Rica", the newspaper of San Jose.

Other things should be noticed about the front of my cover. Only the postage stamp is cancelled, the date being April 10, 1921. Observe the shape of this cancel, the letters, numbers and the stars. See how different all these are from the fake cancels applied to the covers of Fig. 7 and Fig. 8. My cover was addressed to Managua, Nicaragua. The addressee could not be found and the cover was forwarded to other places as marked. Now this can be followed also by examining all the markings on the back (Fig. 4). To understand all this, the following is stressed. The cover was cancelled San Jose, Costa Rica April 10th. The earliest date found after this is Corinto, Nicaragua April 19th, on the back. As Mr. Bonilla Lara explained in his letter, the mail was returned to San Jose, Costa Rica on April 11th, when it was sent by boat. Corinto is the port of entry to Nicaragua, this cover arriving there on April 19th and so backstamped. We can trace this cover's route by following the map of Mr. Noriega (Fig. 1). From Corinto, the cover went on to Managua as seen by the backstamp in the center of Fig. 4. Then it was forwarded to Diriamba reaching there May 2nd, as backstamped. There are two more Diriamba backstamps dated May 4th and 5th obviously showing further unsuccessful attempts to deliver this cover. Finally as shown by the pointer, the letter had to be returned to the sender.

Genuinely flown covers with this Semi-Official stamp seem to be extremely scarce. Of course, a genuine cover need not have all the markings that mine has. Most of them were due to the unsuccessful efforts to find the addressee. But a genuine cover should have the proper April 10th San Jose cancellation, *only on the postage stamp*, plus the Corinto April 19th marking and a Managua backstamp.

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Conclusion

As a result of these studies, some conclusions can be drawn from them as follows:—

1). The lilac and yellow stamp (Sanabria No. 502) is a BOGUS item. Several authoritative air mail catalogs including the 1937 "Champion Catalogue de la Poste Aerienne" so state. San. 502 is not known on genuine covers.

2). No catalog can properly price San. 501 (or the bogus 502) as a "used off cover" copy. The stamp was not permitted to be cancelled. So any copy removed from cover must be without a cancellation. Therefore, any cancelled copy is suspicious of having a fake cancel.

3). Any cover having either San. 501 or 502 with the stamp bearing a San Jose, Costa Rica cancellation is a fake. The cancel could only be applied to the postage stamp. And the date must be April 10, 1921. No doubt because some catalogs gave wrong dates, a faker copied from dates later than April 10th, such as April 15th.

4). Even up to the present time, unused remainders of both Sanabria 501 and 502 are known. I have a letter from a dealer in Costa Rica dated September 10, 1954 in which he mentions still having a stock, which he is slowly selling at \$5 per copy. He wrote me that the remaining unused copies are becoming flecked with brown spots, due no doubt to the climate. So even at this late date, some schemer can take an unused remainder, stick it on an envelope, fake an address to someone in Managua and apply a counterfeit cancel. Or perhaps better yet, he can bribe a post office worker to apply a favor cancellation. By this time, we all know all the trickery possible with faking cancellations.

5). Genuinely flown covers with Costa Rica San. No. 501 are exceedingly scarce. My search for them produced not one outside of mine. All others loaned to me for study proved doubtful, if not fake. The only other genuine cover I know of is the one illus-



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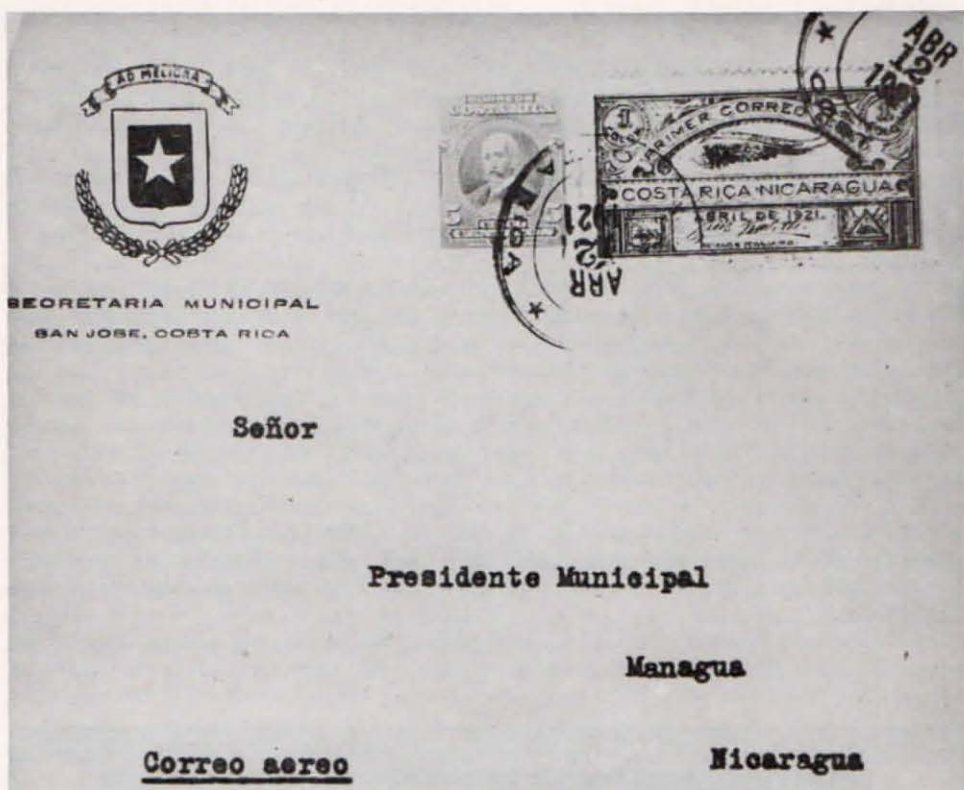


Fig. 8. Another type of fake cover with the wrong date.

Photos by Boutrelle

trated by Mr. Noriega (Fig. 2), and I do not know if he still owns it or if it is now another's property. Not only air mail collectors and the most important dealers, but Costa Rica specialists do not seem to have genuinely flown covers. Are they as scarce as a Newfoundland "Hawker"? From my experience over these past three years, they seem scarcer. I would appreciate if anyone reading this article, who owns Costa Rica, San. 501, on cover, would please send it to me for loan and study.

Acknowledgements

My very sincere thanks to the many who assisted me in corraling the information that made this article possible. Every appeal of mine received both a prompt and courteous answer. This is a tribute to both philatelists and to philately. I shall try to remember everyone who helped. In case some name has skipped my memory, I beg their pardon. So my appreciation to Senor Alvara Bonilla Lara of Chile; Mr. Francis J. Field of England; Mr. Julian A. Weston of San Jose, Costa Rica and Mr. H. D. Mitchell of Washington, D. C. The following members of *Aero Philatelists* were helpful:—Richard N. Cone, H. D. S. Haverbeck, Sam Rodvien and Ira Seebacher. Also I should mention the interest that Mr. A. Boutrelle took with his photographic work. And finally, this article never would have been written or published if it were not for the tireless efforts and remarkable philatelic knowledge of our editor, Henry M. Goodkind.

UNITED STATES

10 Cents Lindbergh Booklet of 1928



Fig. 2. A First Day Cover. From the Author's Collection. Photo by Boutrelle.

The stamp newspaper, "Western Stamp Collector", of May 7, 1955 reported the following which is quoted for the most part:

"A booklet pane of the 10c Lindbergh air mail commemorative of 1927 (Scott's No. C10a) on a first day cover realized \$8.25 in a recent auction. It was the highest price paid for a single item in the sale.

"The booklet pane variety of the 10c Lindbergh air mail commemorative wasn't released for nearly a year after the stamp was issued June 18, 1927. The booklets were placed on sale May 26, 1928 at Washington, D. C. and the Midwestern Philatelic Exhibition in Cleveland. No available catalog places a valuation on a pane of the Lindbergh commemorative on a first day cover, but the bidding at the sale indicates not only that the item is scarce and is also in demand. It is interesting to note that none of the stamp papers of the period report the number of covers of the Lindbergh booklet pane cancelled at either Washington or Cleveland. At that time postal authorities didn't report statistics on first day sales.

There has been some information in our files on this booklet stamp, which will supplement the above information.

It should be stressed that *this is the first air mail stamp of the United States to be issued in booklets*. We have a copy of the original U. S. Post Office Department announcement which is quoted in full:

BOOKS OF AIR-MAIL STAMPS

U. S. LINDBERGH BOOKLET

THIRD ASSISTANT POSTMASTER GENERAL,
Washington, May 14, 1928.

Owing to the enormous demand for air-mail stamps in book form, the department has decided to issue the Lindbergh air-mail stamps in books containing six stamps, arranged in two sheets of three stamps each and interleaved with paraffin paper.

The price of the new books will be 61 cents each and they will be first placed on sale at Washington, D. C., on May 26, 1928. Furthermore, on account of the Mid-western Philatelic Exhibition at Cleveland, Ohio, it has been decided to include the sale of these books at Cleveland on May 26, which is the last day of the exhibition.

Direct and central accounting postmasters having need for air-mail stamps in books may draw requisition on Form 3201, using the blank line provided under the heading "Books of stamps." These requisitions will be filled in the order of their receipt as promptly as production will permit.

R. S. REGAR,
Third Assistant Postmaster General.

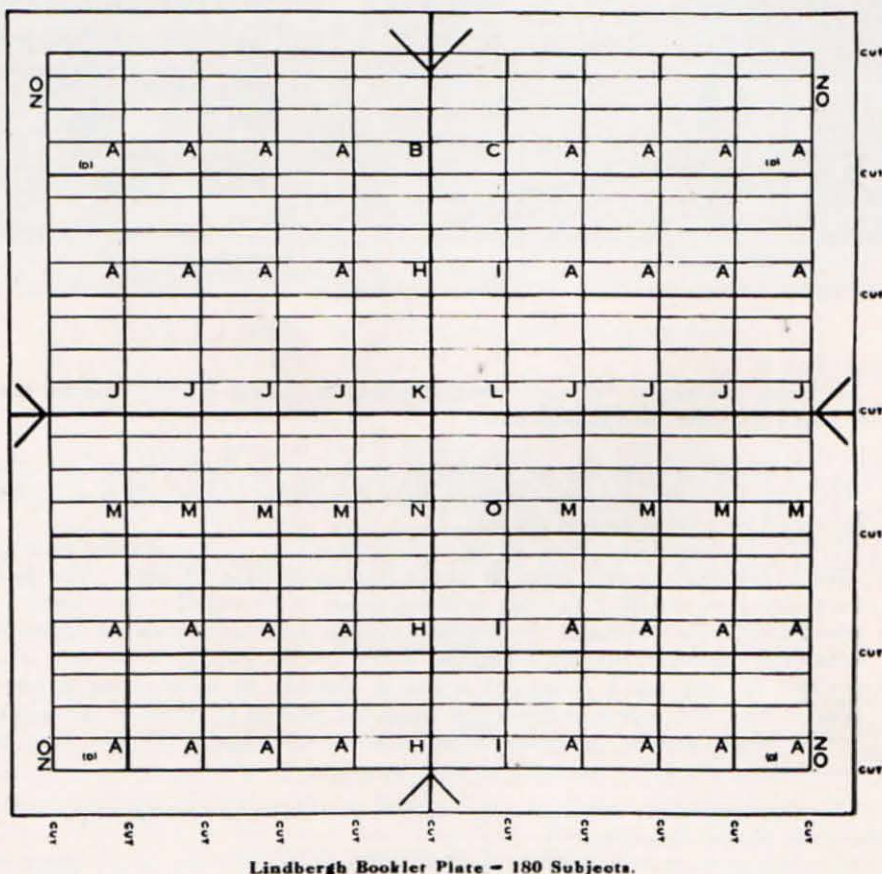


Fig. 1. The plate layout as shown in "The Scott U. S. Stamp Catalogue Specialized."

U. S. LINDBERGH BOOKLET

The "Scott U. S. Stamp Catalogue Specialized" has the following text notes:

FLAT PLATE PRINTING.

1928 Perf. 11

C10a 10c dark blue, pane of three, May 26, 1928 6.50 5.00

No. C10a was printed from specially designed 180-subject plates arranged exactly as a 360-subject plate—each pane of three occupying the relative position of a pane of six in a 360-subject plate. Plate numbers appear at the sides, therefore Position D does not exist except partially on panes which have been trimmed off center. All other plate positions common to a 360-subject plate are known.

Furthermore, the plate layout is illustrated in the Scott Catalogue. We include it (Fig. 1) in this article for the record.

Also illustrated (Fig. 2) is one of the First Day Covers. This is from Cleveland, Ohio to Philadelphia, Pa. The cancellation is the special hand-stamped type, and was hit in green, an unusual color for modern U. S. cancellations. The pane of three stamps from the booklet comes from the strip to the right of the top arrow (Position C as shown in Fig. 1).

Air mail collectors have for sometime regarded the Lindbergh booklet stamps, both unused and on covers, as items scarcer than most of the general collectors seem to realize.

Thus the account in "Western Stamp Collector" by editor, W. W. Wylie, was very timely and newsworthy. (H. M. G.)

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THE AIRMAIL BAG

(Under this heading a regular feature will be run with correspondence from Members. Names in full will be used unless a contrary request is specified when a correspondent will be identified by initials only. Nothing unsigned will be used.)

Thanks for your letter of the sixteenth granting the Helvetia Society permission to reprint Maurice Tripet's article on "Switzerland Air Mail Varieties" from the January, 1955 AERO PHILATELIST ANNALS. Many thanks to you and Aero Philatelists for your cooperation.

Edith M. Faulstich, Editor
Helvetia Society for Collectors of
Switzerland

This is not the first time that another philatelic Specialty Society has requested permission to reprint an article from our Quarterly Magazine or other publications. According to our files, since our inception back in 1946, two such requests at least have come every year.

In reference to the interesting article on the Portuguese 1923 set in the May 1955 AERO PHILATELIST ANNALS, I enclose a contemporary postcard with compliments. I was lucky to get a number of these soon after the set was issued.

Francis J. Field
Sutton Coldfield, England.

This special picture post card is so interesting that it is being illustrated. Unfortunately a black and white reproduction cannot show the colorful aspects of this piece. Nevertheless, collectors interested in this 1923 set of Portugal will enjoy this historical item as collateral material for an album page with these stamps. It is not known if Mr. Field still has a few remaining for sale, but a written inquiry to him may be effective if one cares to have this post card.



A ZEPPELIN COVER

With Stamps From Three Different Countries

Illustrated is a most unusual cover, the property of Sam Rodvien. It bears stamps from THREE different countries, namely:—UNITED STATES, BRAZIL and GERMANY. Besides each country has TWO different stamps represented like this:—
a). United States, the 5c blue postage and the \$1.30 brown Graf Zeppelin stamp;
b). Brazil, the 500 reis postage and the 10,000 reis carmine Condor Co. Graf Zeppelin stamp;
c). Germany, the 2 M. and 4 M. South American Graf Zeppelin Flight stamps, making a total of SIX different stamps.

When and how were all these stamps affixed to this cover? Without being an eye-witness, one can only surmise based upon a knowledge gleaned of Zeppelin mail from much that has been recorded. The sender probably had made arrangements with one who would be aboard the Graf Zeppelin on her 1930 South American trip. The addressee, Herr Kurt Schoenherr, is not known to us. He may have been a member of the crew, with the personnel of the Zeppelin Co. or a passenger. But the stamps were affixed in stages as the dirigible made its stops on the trip.



This cover is explained by the numbers as found in the text. The bottom portion shows the three markings applied to the back of this cover. Photo by Boutrelle.

ZEPPELIN COVER

To properly understand this cover, follow the numbers shown on the illustration accompanying this article, as you read:—

1. This cover started from New York, N. Y. on April 14, 1930. It was mailed to Germany via steamer requiring only the 5c. international letter rate.

2. In Germany, it was placed on board the Graf Zeppelin and franked with the 2 Mark South American Flight stamp (Germany, San. 43). It was cancelled "on board" May 19, 1930. Notice this cancellation. Sometimes, Zeppelin mail was not cancelled on board, but with a town cancellation such as Friedrichshafen.

3. After leaving Germany, the first stop was Spain. This was backstamped Sevilla, Spain, May 19, 1930.

4. The Graf Zeppelin started out for South America, leaving Spain on May 22, 1930. The 4 Mark German South America Flight stamp (San. 44) was affixed and cancelled "on board" on May 22nd.

5. The Graf Zeppelin arrived at Pernambuco, Brazil on May 23, 1930, and all mail was so backstamped.

6. The mail was prepared for the Brazil-United States leg so this cover was marked with the large, special, circular Brazil Condor Company Graf Zeppelin cancellation upon its arrival at Recife, Brazil.

7. The 10,000 reis Brazil Condor Company Zeppelin stamp (San. C12) was affixed and cancelled with the smaller, circular Condor Co. cancellation at Recife, Brazil on May 28, 1930.

8. On May 28, 1930 the regular 500 reis Brazil postage stamp was also affixed. Notice that this received the larger, special circular cancellation for this special Graf Zeppelin Flight, and not the smaller Condor Co. cancel shown under No. 7. It should be remarked, however, that neither of these two Brazilian cancellations are those of the government.

9. This cover reached Lakehurst, N. J. on May 31, 1930, being backstamped (somewhat smudged) with the special U. S. Graf Zeppelin marking, which was applied with green ink.

10. The cover was flown back to Germany on June 2, 1930. The U. S. \$1.30 brown Graf Zeppelin stamp (San. 16) was put on and then cancelled.

11. Also on June 2, 1930, the U. S. diamond-shaped cachet in violet was struck on this cover. Observe the dotted line in the center which indicates the route from Lakehurst to Friedrichshafen, which all letters with the \$1.30 brown stamp or post cards with the 65c green Zeppelin stamp posted in the U. S. A. bear.

12. The cover completed the round trip on June 6, 1930 arriving back in Friedrichshafen, Germany where it received this final cancellation.

13. This is a scarce Graf Zeppelin cachet which few understand. Hit in purple ink, this circular marking reads:—

This article made the Complete Round Trip.

One must stress the word "complete". There was "the complete round trip" and "the round trip". The U. S. \$2.60 blue Graf Zeppelin stamp was for use on a letter making "the round trip" (the \$1.30 brown stamp would carry a post card). The U. S. diamond-shaped cachet (shown in No. 11) would have the dotted line in the center showing the route connecting Lakehurst-Friedrichshafen-Pernambuco. But more postage was required for THE COMPLETE ROUND TRIP. The U. S. cachet would also have an unbroken line between Lakehurst and Friedrichshafen, showing that the mail went U. S. A.—GERMANY—BRAZIL—U. S. A.—GERMANY. It has been estimated that very few letters or cards originating in the United States were sent upon the COMPLETE round trip, thus making this small circular purple marking rather scarce. After all, it was expensive to pay the postal fees for the complete round trip. And one must not forget that 1930 was "a depression year".

(Concluded on Page 23)

High Denominations

One familiar with commercial air mail, as received by American businesses or banks from foreign countries, is aware of one fact. Multiple rate air mailings come here daily franked with many high denominations. Yet the collectors of stamps, judging by frequent statements read or remarks heard, seem to have the false idea that most all of the high value air mail stamps are issued solely for philatelic revenue. How wrong!

Currently the highest United States air mail stamp is 80 cents. In practice, our own country could have a \$5 or even a \$10 air mail stamp. Heavy mailings fly across or out of the United States often requiring many dollars in stamps. Every collector knows that, as a consequence, the current \$5 postage stamp can be bought cancelled at a small fraction of its face value. And the same is true with the highest denominations from foreign countries.

One regularly finds large envelopes airmailed here pasted with high value air mail stamps all over the front and back. This shows that many of the current high denominations are not high enough to conveniently cover postage requirements. Of course, quite often the top value may not be used on such a heavy mailing. The rate is prepaid by using a number of some of the lower denominations. Yet the total postage requirement exceeds the face value of the highest denomination of a current air post stamp.

Look up your catalog pricings to substantiate this. You will find most all the recent high denomination air stamps priced used at a figure far below the face value, signifying their wide use upon mail.

Very few aero-philatelist realize how drastically the stamps they collect have revolutionized world trade. As a consequence of air mail, the whole pace has accelerated. Letters from remote parts of the world that before air post took almost a month to reach their destination now come by plane in a few days time. This time-saving is an essential factor for commerce. When a business transaction involves large sums of money, the expenditure of \$20 or \$30 for postage is incidental. Heavy mailing come by air mail without hesitation about the cost of the postage. Samples of merchandise, legal contracts with duplicates, periodic business statements are speeded across the world for quick action.

When collectors complain about the issuance of high value air mail stamps, they overlook another factor, the devaluation of most world currencies since the end of the last War. 20 Pesos, for instance, in many American countries now is worth less than half of its pre-War value. This results in the use of more high denominations to meet the current air mail rate.

If one examines the stamps used on international commercial correspondence, one frequently finds the multiple use of a single high denomination. Often one sees 20, 30 or even 40 of such stamps affixed to a foreign mailing. Recently we saw an air mail sending from Paris, France to one of New York's most high-class ladies dressmakers, who had obtained an exclusive on some of the latest Parisian fashions. The dresses were air mailed here. The postage required was 38,000 francs which the sender met by using 38 of the current 1000 francs French air mail stamp. The large manila envelope was pasted with these stamps. And such a mailing is not too exceptional.

Therefore, one conversant with the current needs and use of air mail stamps on commercial international mail comes to the logical conclusion that the present high denomination air stamps are not always sufficient for the public's convenience. Yet were air stamps of still higher value to be issued, one could anticipate a hue and cry from collectors thinking that this step would represent nothing but a raid on their stamp budgets.

With such manifestations and in view of actual postal needs, one would not be unfair in accusing stamp collectors of being a rather self-centered group because they think of every stamp only from the philatelic side and never take postal requirements into consideration. Actually one with a bent for statistics could easily show the fallacy of such

EDITORIALS

thinking by taking the annual total sales of all United States postage stamps along with the known sales to collectors. The comparative figures would show that in this country philatelic sales represent a minute percentage.

Then a collector may say that large countries like ours are not good examples. They object to the stamp-issuing of small countries where few are literate, so that the volume of mail must be small. One collector cited pre-war New Guinea to us as a good example of philatelic exploitation with its £2 and £5 air stamps. But not only *Aero Philatelist's* publications, but most every other stamp paper has at sometime written about these New Guinea air mails and their important postal duty to the gold fields in the inaccessible interior. The world is beset with the pressing problem of underdeveloped countries. Inaccessibility is one of the main causes for a lack of action. Air mail is the one means possible to overcome this. The stamps that we collect are causing an economic revolution. And let's be honest with ourselves. Most of us are sticking these little bits of paper in our albums, completely oblivious to their significance.

Perhaps it is too much to ask, but we wish to see an end to these complaints about the issuance of air mail stamps being a "racket". After all, philately is first and foremost a means of enjoyment and mental stimulation. If we have to read of continual complaints, most of which are not justified, it is very difficult to enjoy something that becomes blanketed with discontent. We think that some people just write these complaints, knowing very well they are not justified, but just to start something like a circulation booster. The consequential harm is that the lesser-informed are perhaps misled. They above all others should be taught the charm of philately. Certainly we know that our hobby has its sordid side. But it represents a minority, a very slight portion at that. But judging by the publicity it receives, one cannot help but draw a distorted picture believing that every new issue of air mail with high denominations must be tailored solely for philatelic revenue. To show these malcontents wrong, let them look at the general run of international commercial air mail.

A Big Year Coming Up

Every member of AERO PHILATELIST'S should mark with a red circle on his calendar the coming year 1956. Our organization was founded in 1946. So next year will mark our 10th Anniversary. (The Postmaster General has not yet announced the program for the 1956 U. S. commemoratives, but this event most likely will not be included). To some a decade is a long time; to others they cannot believe that ten years has passed so quickly. Nevertheless, this organization now approaches its second decade, usually the period when man develops his greatest maturity.

Then again our 10th anniversary will be timed in a most propitious manner. In the spring of 1956 American philately expects to stage one of the greatest international exhibitions ever held. The tie-up between the 1956 FIPEX and AERO PHILATELIST'S is remarkable. First of all, FIPEX will open New York City's great new Coliseum at Columbus Circle. This new hall incidentally is only about a block away from 1860 Broadway, AERO PHILATELIST'S headquarters since our commencement. Secondly, most of the brains, guts and sweat staging FIPEX stems from those dynamic AERO PHILATELIST'S who burst upon the scene at the 1947 CIPEX, leaving all philately breathless with its accomplishments for *all* philately. Many of our founding members have gone on to serve philately in some of its most responsible and respected positions. If one believes that such jobs are mostly positions of glory, let him step into one of them and get a taste of burdens, both mental and physical.

And finally we hope for an outstanding AERO PHILATELIST'S banquet to mark our 10th anniversary. Obviously the timing is perfect during FIPEX, which is now scheduled for May 1956. We could wax most enthusiastic about the prospects of such an affair. Everything points to an event of exceptional note.

EDITORIALS

Since this is less than a year away, let's start getting our plans underway. The only successful things are those planned far in advance. These last-minute stamp affairs thrown together like hash are the kind that leave so much dissatisfaction in their wake. Come on, every member, get busy for 1956! Especially if you are a non-New Yorker or a Philadelphian, plan to be in New York in May 1956. It will be a real "Barnum & Bailey" event, one that you will not want to miss, nor that you will forget for a long time. As for our "busy bees in the big city", your services are needed, so sign up before you are a forced laborer as usual.

Each succeeding number of this quarterly magazine up to the time of FIPEX will have more about the big year ahead with our 10th birthday and America's Fifth International Philatelic Exhibition. (H. M. G.)

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ZEPPELIN COVER (Continued From Page 20)

14. This is the special red circular German cachet used for the 1930 South American Flight.

Philatelists, who seek mixed frankings or unusual covers, will find few pieces with a variety like on this Zeppelin cover. One with stamps of two different countries are generally considered scarce. So a cover like this with the stamps of United States, Brazil and Germany must be most unusual. (H. M. G.)

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