

THE AERO PHILATELIST ANNALS



Vol. XVII, No. 4

April 1970

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Henry M. Goodkind, Editor
Philip Silver, Assistant Editor

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UNITED STATES

My 40 Years With The Graf Zeppelin Stamps

By Henry M. Goodkind

The date of issue of the United States Graf Zeppelin issue (Scott C13-15, Sanabria Nos. 15-17) was April 19, 1930. Thus, in this month of April 1970, this very popular set of United States stamps is marking its 40th anniversary. There will be no celebrations nor will the U.S. Post Office take any notice of this event.



Figure 1. A Goodkind cover showing my 40 years of collecting the 1930 Graf Zeppelin stamps. This cover was mailed by my late father to my cousin in Frankfurt, Germany. (Photo by Boutrelle)

In the April, 1968 number of this magazine (AERO PHILATELIST ANNALS, Vol. XV, No. 4, pages 85-93), I wrote about my fifty years with the first air mail stamp of the United States — the 24 cent red and blue of 1918. Although the Graf Zeppelin set of three is twelve years younger than the first air mail stamp, I believe that I have derived just as much pleasure from collecting the Graf Zeppelins as the first air mail stamp.

It is presumed that many collectors, speculators and stamp savers think that the main attraction with the Graf Zeppelin stamps has been their outstanding price increment. From an original face value of \$4.55 for the set of three when issued in 1930, the prices listed in the 1970 Scott Catalogue are \$600 mint and \$380 used. The remarkable part of this price increase is that it has been a slow but steady climb over the past 40 years.

In the AERO PHILATELIST ANNALS of October 1966 (Vol. XIV, No. 2, pages 35-45), I wrote an article "U. S. Graf Zeppelin Issue. Why So High." I showed that this set was a "depression baby" and very few could afford to lay out \$4.55 for the set in 1930. The U. S. Post Office Department kept the stamps on sale after the Graf Zeppelin flight in the hopes of selling more with little

success. Consequently, the unsold stocks were destroyed, making the total number of Graf Zeppelin sets sold a little over 60,000, which is exceptionally scarce for a United States issue.

For me, the price angle is not what attracted me to the Graf Zeppelin issue. If the set had gone from \$4.55 in 1930 to only \$10 in 1970, I still would have found many angles with the Graf Zeppelin stamps that can interest a philatelist. Incidentally, I have some non-philatelic friends who were advised by stamp dealers to buy the Graf Zeppelin issue in mint plate number blocks of six. They did well. They paid about \$3000 for the blocks and now can realize \$4500. But this is only money (cold cash) not the joy of collecting and studying stamps or what is called philately.

Aviation History

None denied that they were fascinated with seeing the German Zeppelins flying in the sky. They were much more interesting than an airplane. Today if you see a blimp flying over your neighborhood, it always commands attention, while no one pays any attention to a jet plane.

Years ago, if one saw a Zeppelin flying, it was a real thrill. In fact, back in the 1930s, it seemed assured that transatlantic flying would be done by Zeppelins, not by airplanes.

Fortunately, many Germans are ardent stamp collectors. Consequently, the Zeppelin Company "kept its eye on philately" by permitting collectors and stamp dealers to service many different flight covers from various points.

There seems to be no better way to afford the present-day philatelist a good conception of how the stamps were sold in this country and also to show all the different flights that one could prepare for the 1930 Graf Zeppelin Pan-American Flight than reading the entire April 3, 1930 Postal Notice of the U. S. Post Office Department.* It reads as follows:

"GRAF ZEPPELIN" AIR MAIL STAMPS

THIRD ASSISTANT POSTMASTER GENERAL

Washington, Apr. 3, 1930

Postmasters and employees of the Postal Service are advised that the Department is about to issue three special Zeppelin air mail stamps of 65-cent, \$1.30, and \$2.60 denominations, for use on mail matter carried on the *Graf Zeppelin* first Europe-Pan America round-trip flight, to be made early in May.

The stamps are the same shape and size as the current air mail stamps, 75/100 by 1 84/100 inches, and are described as follows:

The border design is the same for each stamp, with the necessary change of numerals representing the value. At the top of the stamp in a straight line are the words "Graf Zeppelin" with the words "Europe-Pan America Flight" directly beneath. At the bottom of the stamp in a dark panel appear the words "United States Postage" and within circles in both lower corners are the numerals showing the denomination.

The 65-cent stamp is printed in green and contains as the central design a representation of the *Graf Zeppelin* in flight across the Atlantic Ocean in an eastward direction.

In the \$1.30 stamp the airship is similarly shown sailing westward with a partial outline of the eastern and western continents on either side of the stamp. This stamp is printed in brown.

*Originally published in the *Collectors Club Philatelist* of July, 1932.

The design of the \$2.60 stamp shows the *Graf Zeppelin* emerging from the clouds, passing a globe representing the earth, and traveling toward the west. This stamp is printed in blue.

The *Graf Zeppelin* stamps will first be placed on sale at the post office, Washington, D. C., on Apr. 19, 1930, and for the benefit of collectors the stamps will be placed on sale the same date at the Philatelic Agency of the Department. The stamps will also be placed on sale at the following additional post offices on Apr. 21, 1930:

Alabama—Birmingham,
Arizona—Phoenix,
Arkansas—Little Rock,
California—Los Angeles, Oakland
and San Francisco,
Colorado—Denver,
Connecticut—Bridgeport, Hartford,
and New Haven,
Delaware—Wilmington,
Florida—Jacksonville, Miami, and
Tampa,
Georgia—Atlanta and Savannah,
Idaho—Boise,
Illinois—Chicago, Peoria, and Spring-
field,
Indiana—Fort Wayne, Indianapolis,
and South Bend,
Iowa—Cedar Rapids, Des Moines,
and Sioux City,

Kansas—Topeka, and Wichita,
Kentucky—Louisville,
Louisiana—New Orleans,
Maine—Portland,
Maryland—Baltimore,
Massachusetts—Boston, Springfield,
and Worcester,
Michigan—Detroit, Grand Rapids,
and Lansing,
Minnesota—Duluth, Minneapolis, and
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 and Nashville,
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 San Antonio,
 Utah—Salt Lake City,
 Vermont—Burlington
 Virginia—Norfolk and Richmond,
 Washington—Seattle and Spokane,
 West Virginia—Charleston and
 Wheeling,
 Wisconsin—Madison and Milwaukee,
 Wyoming—Cheyenne,

Postmasters at the above post offices will be sent a supply of the stamps without requisition, together with special instructions in regard to the sale and accounting.

This special issue will be limited to 1,000,000 stamps of each denomination, which will remain on sale at the above post offices until the departure of the *Graf Zeppelin* from Lakehurst, N. J., on the return flight. The stamps then remaining unsold will be recalled for destruction. As soon as the above quantities are printed the plates will be destroyed and no additional printing authorized.

The *Graf Zeppelin* stamps will be continued on sale at the Philatelic Agency of the Department until June 30, 1930, for the benefit of stamp collectors.

When these stamps are desired for collection purposes the remittance must include return postage and registry fee.

Orders for *Zeppelin* stamps sent to the Philatelic Agency will be filled more promptly if other varieties of stamps are omitted.

F. A. TILTON,
 Third Assistant Postmaster General.

“GRAF ZEPPELIN” EUROPE-PAN AMERICA ROUND FLIGHT SECOND ASSISTANT POSTMASTER GENERAL

Washington, Apr. 3, 1930.

In connection with the first Europe-Pan America round flight to be made by the *Graf Zeppelin*, starting on or after May 10, 1930, from Friedrichshafen, Germany, via Seville, Spain, and Pernambuco, Brazil, to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, thence back to Pernambuco, thence to Lakehurst and return to Friedrichshafen via Seville, arrangements have been made for sending by the flight mentioned, both from Friedrichshafen to Lakehurst and from Lakehurst to Friedrichshafen, ordinary letters (not exceeding 1 ounce in weight) and post cards mailed in this country and prepaid with United States stamps. A special cachet will be used on such letters and post cards by the *Graf Zeppelin* from both Friedrichshafen and Lakehurst.

The rates (postage plus fee for the air dispatch) applicable for dispatch from New York to Friedrichshafen by the ordinary means, thence by the *Graf Zeppelin* to Lakehurst, N. J. (via Seville-Pernambuco-Rio de Janeiro-Pernambuco) and from Lakehurst by the United States domestic air mail service, where



Figure 2. The Graf Zeppelin approaching its hangar in Lakehurst, N.J. while in the United States on its 1930 Pan-American Flight.

available, to the office of destination in this country are:

\$2.60 for each letter.

\$1.30 for each single post card.

Articles for this dispatch should be marked "Via Friedrichshafen and Graf Zeppelin to Lakehurst" and be sent under cover to the postmaster at New York (so as to reach New York not later than Apr. 30), after being properly prepaid. If the special issue Zeppelin stamps (see notice of the Third Assistant Postmaster General in the Bulletin in this connection) are not available at the office of mailing and are desired a money order, made payable to the postmaster at New York, to cover the rate applicable as above stated should be sent in the same cover.

The rates (postage plus fee for the air dispatch) applicable for dispatch by the *Graf Zeppelin* from Lakehurst to Seville or Friedrichshafen are:

\$1.30 for each letter.

65 cents for each single post card.

Articles for this dispatch may be addressed for delivery in this country or any European country and should be marked "Via Graf Zeppelin, care Post-

master, Lakehurst, N. J.' and be deposited in the mails in regular course in time to reach Lakehurst before the *Graf Zeppelin* departs for Europe. Further information as to the date of departure will be announced later. Such of these articles as are addressed for delivery in this country will be sent back from Germany by the next steamer and will be dispatched from New York by the United States domestic air service, when practicable, to the office of destination.

As in the case of articles for the dispatch mentioned first above, if the special issue Zeppelin stamps are desired and are not obtainable at the office of mailing, a money order, made payable to the postmaster at New York, to cover the rate applicable should be sent under special cover, with the article to be mailed to the postmaster at New York.

The *Graf Zeppelin* will also carry mail from Friedrichshafen, Seville, Pernambuco, and Rio de Janeiro, on which the rates as shown below must be prepaid with stamps issued by each country concerned:

Friedrichshafen to Seville, German stamps, reichsmark 2 (0.50)
Friedrichshafen to Pernambuco, German stamps, reichsmark 4 (\$1.)
Friedrichshafen to Rio de Janeiro, German stamps, reichsmark 4 (\$1.)
Friedrichshafen to Lakehurst, German stamps, reichsmark 10 (\$2.50)
Seville to Pernambuco, Spanish stamps, peseta 8 (\$1.)
Seville to Rio de Janeiro, Spanish stamps, peseta 8 (\$1.)
Seville to Lakehurst, Spanish stamps, peseta 20 (\$2.50)
Rio de Janeiro to Pernambuco, Brazilian stamps, milreis 5 (\$0.60)
Rio de Janeiro to Lakehurst, Brazilian stamps, milreis 10 (\$1.20)
Rio de Janeiro to Seville, Brazilian stamps, milreis 20 (\$2.40)

Letters and post cards for prepayment with foreign stamps at the rates shown in the preceding paragraph and for mailing and dispatch by the *Graf Zeppelin* from one of the foreign offices mentioned in that paragraph should be sent under cover to the special representative of the *Graf Zeppelin* in this country, F. W. Von Meister, 578 Madison Avenue, New York, N. Y. Such letters and post cards should bear the name and address of addressee and the return address of the sender and be marked in addition "Via *Graf Zeppelin* from ... (place of departure) to ... (place of arrival)."

With such articles sent to Mr. Von Meister should be sent a certified check or money order in United States currency to prepay the articles at the rate applicable.

Articles to be prepaid with German stamps for dispatch from Friedrichshafen, or with Spanish stamps for dispatch from Seville should be mailed in time for delivery to Mr. Von Meister not later than Apr. 28. Articles to be prepaid with Brazilian stamps for dispatch from Brazil should be mailed in time to reach Mr. Von Meister not later than Apr. 26. Such articles will be sent by Mr. Von Meister to the agents of the *Graf Zeppelin* at the different foreign offices named for the application of the proper stamps and delivery to the postal authorities.

The arrangements herein set forth have been made as a matter of convenience to stamp collectors. Dispatch by the *Graf Zeppelin* is not guaranteed.

Registered mail will not be accepted for this flight.

As noted in the official notice, these stamps remained on sale at various post offices until after the return flight, the remainders then being returned to Washington. On June 30, 1930, the sale of these stamps was discontinued at the Philatelic Agency and the remainders destroyed.

CHILE

1928-1936 Surcharged Air Mail Issues

By Joaquin Galvez*

In March 1928, international air mail services were established for the first time in Chile. The Post Office Administration ordered special stamps for these new services from the Government.

In order to save time, the surcharging of the 1912-1929 regular mail issues was authorized. This meant a quicker execution of the order for air mail stamps.

These surcharged stamps were in use for eight years. The surcharge, which never varied, consisted of the words "CORREO" and "AEREO" printed vertically, with an open-winged condor above them. Figure 1 illustrates the surcharge used for sheets of one hundred stamps with the centavos denominations.

The surcharge was uniform throughout the whole eight-years period. Type A was used for sheets of one hundred stamps with the centavos denominations. Type B was surcharged on sheets of fifty with the pesos stamps. Stamps bearing surcharges, types C and D, (both used for sheets of one hundred stamps) were in use in the post office for a mere eight weeks.

*Joaquin Galvez of Santiago, Chile has the finest collection of Chilean stamps, that have gained top awards when exhibited internationally. In addition, he is a student of the stamps and his recent book on the "Classic Issues of Chile" received worldwide acclaim as an outstanding work.

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Ten different printings were made with these four surcharges (types A-B-C-D) on ordinary postage stamps. The surcharged air mail stamps used through this 1928-1936 period, generally are catalogued into 33 different varieties. However, this should be increased to 38, because some postage stamps with papers of different thickness were surcharged. Also color differences in surcharges on the same printing exist and are easily identifiable. The total number of this issue of surcharged stamps, still referred to by many as a *provisional issue*, amounts to 44 different varieties that are identified and tabulated at the end of this article.

Two Different Printing Processes

To start with the identification of these stamps, and to determine the issue to which the surcharge on any one stamp belongs, (which we shall call Numbers 1-10), one must first distinguish two different forms of printing. Numbers 1 to 7 (the first seven issues) were overprinted by the typographic process, which means the surcharge is in relief on the face because of the excess of ink, and also in relief on the back of a stamp which still has its gum, due to the pressure of the typographic plate when printing.

The other three, Numbers 8-9-10, were printed by the offset process, with no relief on either side of the stamp.

Therefore, we may conclude that ten different plates were made to print these surcharges, but they did not have a special number or figure in the sheet margin to distinguish one from the other. For these reasons, as we have complete sheets of stamps surcharged in this way, we have looked for a special characteristic of the surcharge among the many varieties that appear on these sheets. Such varieties were easily located on the sheet. We have called that variety that is not repeated on other sheets in the same position as *characteristic variety* of that plate, referring to it with the initials "VC" and the number of the respective plate.

This *characteristic variety*, therefore, is intended to replace the number of the plate or other marginal indications.

The position of these "VC" varieties for printings plates 1, 5, 6 and 7 appears in Fig. 1, together with the position of the basic stamp with the variety. Fig. 3 shows each of these characteristics in detail. For the other surcharges,

MEETING NOTICES

Every month except July or August

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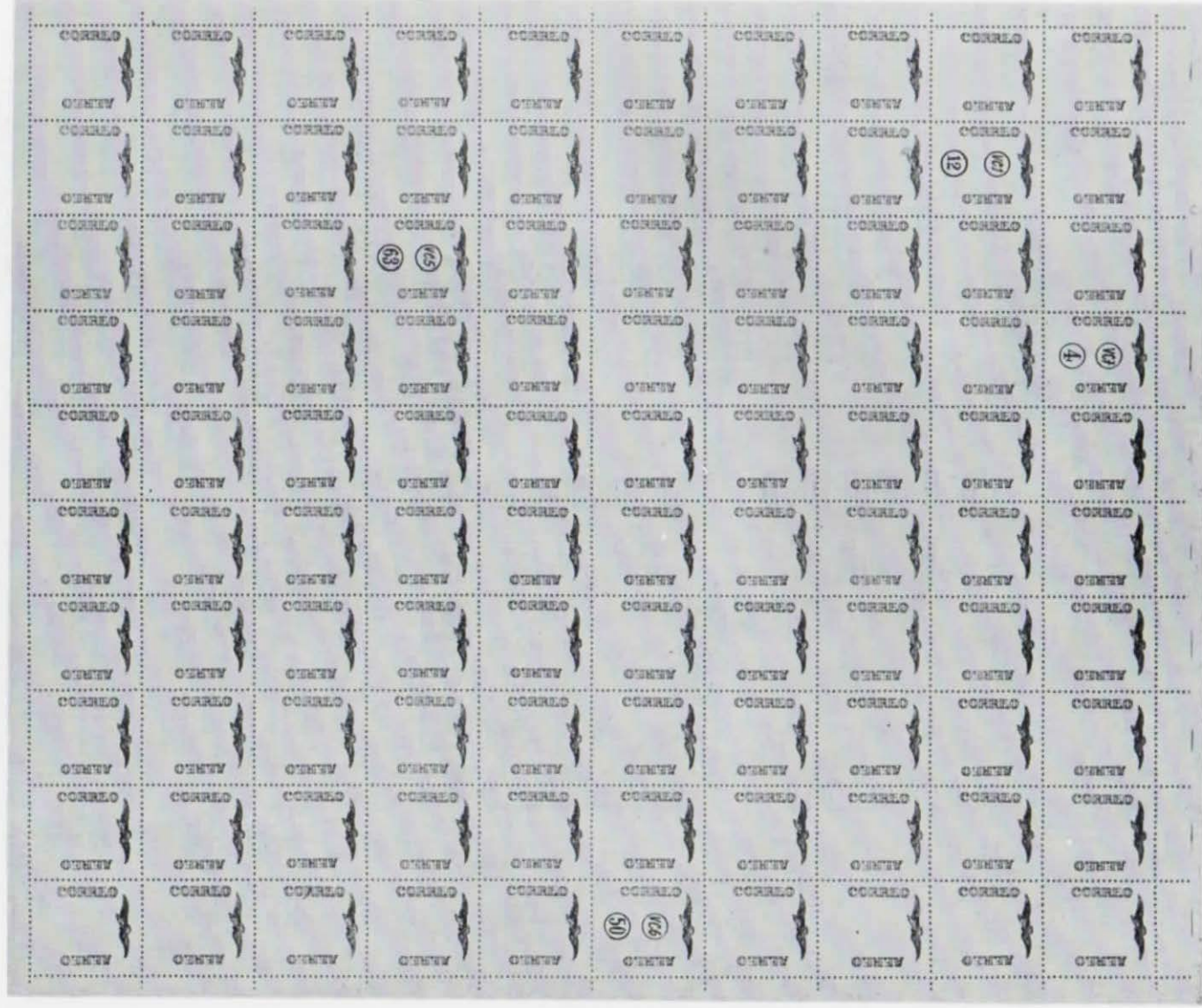
Meets second Thursday each month at 8:00 P. M. in the
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Figure 1.



it is not necessary to look for a *characteristic variety*, because the differences in type and printing are sufficient to identify the surcharges.

To determine to which printing the surcharge of any stamp belongs, the following list gives the surcharged stamp according to *Scott's Catalogue*. The color and other characteristics of the surcharge printing are also given, together with all the varieties and their position on the sheet. The numbers of the varieties are those we have drawn in on Figure 3.



Figure 2.

TYPOGRAPHED SURCHARGES

Printing No. 1. Type A surcharge. *Characteristic variety:* VC-1 = "A" of "AEREO" with a rounded point on position 12. Other varieties: V-2 (Condor with eyebrow) positions 4, 7, 9, 14, 22, 24, 28, 62, 74, 84 and 89.

Variety No.	Scott No.	Scott Design	Value	Surcharge characteristics	Date of Issue
6	134	A39	20c	glossy black, thick	July 1, 1928
7	167	A40	25c	bright red, thick	July 1, 1928
8	168	A41	30c	glossy black, thick	July 1, 1928
9	145	A55	40c	bright red, thick	July 1, 1928
10	169	A42	50c	bright red, thick	July 1, 1928

Printing No. 2. Type B surcharge. Single typographed plate on the pesos values. According to the numbers of varieties shown in Fig. 3, the following are to be found in the position indicated: V-1 (the "C" of "CORREO" is not rounded at the top) in positions 3, 19, 31, 40 and 49. V-2 (the first "O"

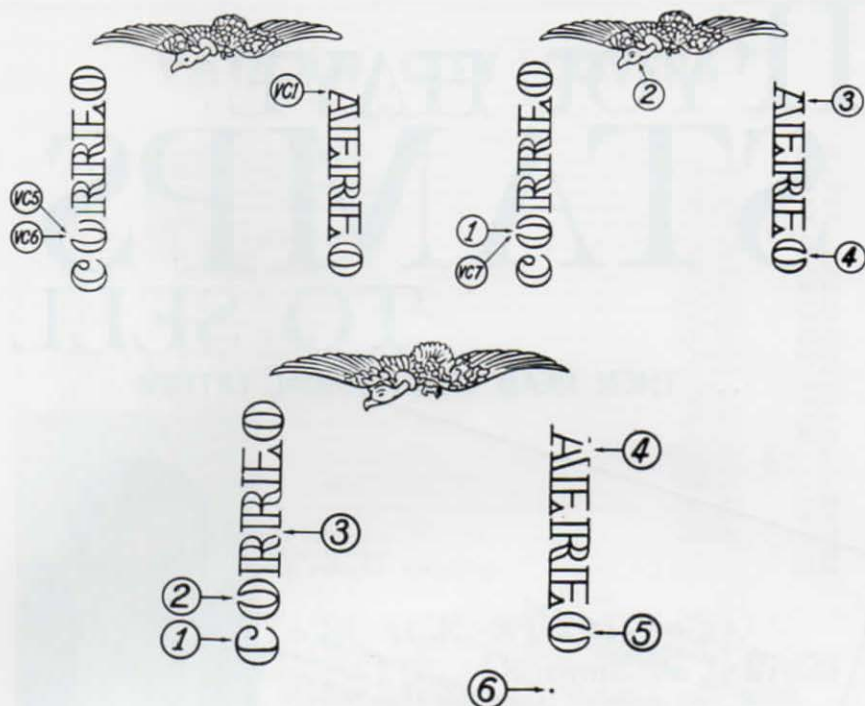


Figure 3.

of "CORREO" is open at the top) in position 7. V-4 (the "A" of "AEREO" is open at the top) in position 4. V-5 (the "O" of "AEREO" is open at the top) in position 32.

11	138	A43	1p dark blue, thick	July 1, 1928
11a	138	A43	1p gray blue, thin	?
12	139	A44	2p dark blue, thick	July 1, 1928
13	140	A45	5p dark blue, thick	July 1, 1928
14	141	A46	10p dark blue, thick	July 1, 1928
14a	141	A46	10p glossy black, thick	Sept. 1928

Printing No. 3. Type C surcharge. Single plate.

15	155	A52	3p/5c bright red, thick	July 1, 1928
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On August 28th, 1928, this issue was withdrawn from circulation, because of the discovery of a postal forgery of the surcharge. Up to that date, only 2,782 of these stamps had been sold.

Printing No. 4. Type D surcharge. Single plate.

16	116	A50	6p/10c bright red, thick	July 1, 1928
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Just as with the 3 pesos, postal forgeries of the 6 pesos also were found. Only 948 of the 6 pesos had been sold. (See *Aero Philatelist's News*, Vol. II, No. 23, and Vol. III No. 1).

Printing No. 5. Type A surcharge. Characteristic variety: VC-5 (the first "O" of "CORREO" is open) in position 63. Other varieties: V-1 (CURREO)

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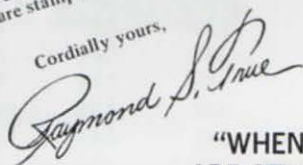
Thank you for your check in the amount of \$4,485.00, in payment for my entire shipment of U. S. plate blocks. I was quite pleased with your offer and the speed with which you performed your appraisal.

For several months I had been talking to a number of dealers regarding my large holding of U. S. plate blocks. Most were interested in purchasing parts of my collection but they did not need the more common varieties. Your offer not only covered everything I had to sell, but it was also eminently fair.

Our relationship has been most cordial. You certainly have proven to me that when there are stamps to sell, H. E. Harris is the place to go.

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in position 93. V-2 (Condor without eyebrow) in positions 17, 18, 25, 26, 67, 75, 92, 96 and 98. V-3 (the "A" of "AEREO" is open at the top) in positions 13, 20, 28, 35, 36, 62, 75, 83 and 93.

17(I)*	166	A39	20c deep black, thin	July 1, 1929
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Printing No. 6. Type A surcharge. *Characteristic variety:* VC-5 (the first "O" of "CORREO" is open) in position 50. Other varieties: V-2 (Condor without eyebrow) in positions 7, 17, 24, 30, 31, 47, 56 and 78. V-3 (the "A" of "AEREO" is open at the top) in positions 2, 8, 13, 38, 52, 60, 63, 64, 69, 70, 77, 80, 86 and 96. V-4 (AEREU) in position 1, and the "CO" of "CORREO" are open at the top in position 95.

18(I)	166	A39	20c deep black, thin	Jan. 1930
19(II)	166	A39	20c deep black, thin	July 1930
19a(II)	166	A39	20c greenish black, thin	March 1931
20(II)	167	A40	25c deep red, thick	March 1930
21	168	A41	30c deep black, thin	March 1930
21a	168	A41	30c gray, thin	April 1930
22	156	A55	40c deep red, thick	April 1930
22a	156	A55	40c carmine, thin	?
23(I)	169	A42	50c carmine, thin	April 1930
24(II)	169	A42	50c deep red, thick	Oct. 1930
24a(II)	169	A42	30c carmine, thin	Oct. 1930

Printing No. 7. Type A surcharge. *Characteristic variety:* VC-7 (the first "O" of "CORREO" is open) in position 4. Other varieties: V-2 (Condor without eyebrow) in position 40. V-3 (the "A" of "AEREO" is open at the top) in position 40. V-4 (AEREU) in position 3. "CO" of "CORREO" are open at the top in position 95.

25(II)	166	A39	20c black, thin	July, 1933
25a(II)	166	A39	20c greenish, gray, very thin	Feb. 1935
26	167	A40	25c carmine, thin	Aug. 1933
27	168	A41	30c violet black	May 1934
27x	168	A41	30c as above, but with double surcharge, one inverted.	1931?
27a	168	A41	30c violet black, very thin	July 1934
28(III)	169	A42	50c carmine, thin	?

Lithographed (Offset) Surcharges

Printing No. 8. Type B surcharge. This is different from the other plate of pesos values as it has a point after "AEREO" = V-6. Other varieties: V-3 ("RR" of "CORREO" are separated) in position 11.

29(I)	158	A43	1p glossy dark blue, thin	Nov. 1929
30(II)	158	A43	1p dark blue	July 1930
31	139	A44	2p blue	March 1930
31a	139a	A44	2p light blue, thin	Oct. 1932
32	139a	A44	2p blue (on vermillion)	June 1931
33	140	A45	5p blue	April 1930
34(I)	161	A46	10p deep black	Jan. 1931
35(II)	161	A46	10p black	July 1931

*Roman numerals indicate differences in paper.

Printing No. 9. Type B surcharge. Variety of this lithographic plate V-6: No point after "AEREO" throughout the plate. There are no other varieties.

36(III)	158	A43	1p deep black	Aug. 1932
37(II)	158	A43	1p glossy black, thin	May 1933
38	159	A44	2p glossy dark blue, thin	Sept. 1931
39	160	A45	5p dark blue	Dec. 1932
40(I)	161	A46	10p black	?
41(II)	161	A46	10p deep black	?

Printing No. 10. Type A surcharge. Single lithographic plate for centavos values. There are no varieties.

42	168	A41	30c deep black, thin	Jan. 1933
42a	168	A41	30c dark gray, very thin	Nov. 1933
43(III)	158	A55	40c carmine, thin	July 1934
44(III)	169	A42	50c red, thin	Feb. 1934



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COLOMBIA

Some Varieties on SCADTA Covers

By Jean Gravelat

The first air mail issues of Colombia are for aero-philatelists, who have a special interest in them, both a source of great pleasure and in addition, offer those who study the issues agreeable surprises. Unfortunately, much of the material is scarce and at present it is very difficult to find very much being offered for sale to add to one's collection.

Many interesting past articles have been written on these early air mail issues of Colombia. Among them the eminent specialist, Mr. Eugenio Gebauer of Caracas, Venezuela who compiled a handbook* a few years ago that set forth all the information that he gathered over many years of specializing. My purpose now is only to append a few bits of information that he did not include. (Those not too familiar with these Colombian stamps may not understand the information because one requires a profound knowledge of these issues. Without the illustrations one would be entirely lost with the information being offered).



Figure 1.

Covers Without Stamps

An inadequate stock of stamps sent by the SCADTA Company to certain of its agencies gave rise to the application of scarce provisional surcharges on new values. Also, some stamps were bisected in order to prepay the proper

*"The Air Posts of Colombia" by Eugenio Gebauer (1963). See AERO PHILATELIST ANNALS Vol. XII, No. 1.



Figure 2.

postal rate because the regular stamps were no longer in stock.

Covers without any stamps seem to be little known.

Mr. Gebauer in his book observed that in November 1923, the SCADTA postal agency in Medellin ran short of 30 centavos stamps. Letters, therefore, were dispatched without stamps but bearing the manuscript notation "Pago 0.30." Such a cover is illustrated by Figure 1.

But also I have found another postal agency that came up against the same situation on March 25, 1924, this one in Puerto-Barrios. The Figure 2 cover bears a manuscript inscription that is somewhat similar to the one written on the Figure 1 cover from Medellin. In Spanish, it reads:

"Pago \$0.30 os postes / No hay estampillas / and on the third line is a signature."

This in English means that \$0.30 in postage was prepaid because there were no 30 centavos stamps in stock.

I have often exhibited my collection of air mails and also have attended many international philatelic exhibitions. But in all this time, I have never seen Colombian air mail covers like these exhibited, nor have I ever found them offered for sale. Without doubt, these covers were made for two reasons. The first one was due to the lack of stamps in the SCADTA Company postal agency. It also is possible that because the covers lacked stamps, they attracted little attention.

Manuscript Surcharges

On page 53 of his book, Mr. Gebauer states that the surcharge "R" for "Registration" was written without exception with a pen marking on the 20 centavos stamps. Figure 3 shows a cover sent via registered mail on October 5, 1927, franked with stamps of the SCADTA Company issue of 1923. This Figure 3 cover shows an exceptional use. One of the 20 centavos stamps bears the manuscript "R" marking. It was written with black ink from Medellin. It seems to resemble the type III surcharge. But it seems rather futile to try to classify different types of surcharges with these manuscript markings.



Figure 3.

In conclusion, I would say that with all the Colombian specialists and all the wealth of information they recorded in the past on early Colombia air mails, there is missing definitive information on some Colombian air mail covers that show exceptional use, out of the ordinary. We lack details, illustrations and reproductions of all the cachets on the covers.

I wish to thank my very good friend, Henry M. Goodkind, who not only translated this from French into English but also prepared my article for publication in this quarterly magazine.

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UNITED STATES

Mystery Covers of June-July 1918

By William H. Miller, Jr.

Several years ago, I acquired the cover pictured in Figure 1, bearing the first United States air mail stamp (Scott No. C3, Sanabria No. 1). Not knowing of any air mail service in existence on July 3, 1918 from Chicago, Ill. to St. Louis, Mo. I was particularly interested in the sender's instructions, "Via Aero Mail, First Trip," as handwritten in the lower lefthand corner.

I had not given this cover too much thought, believing it to be some sort of a freak or misunderstanding, when about a year later, a very similar cover was shown to me. This cover was dated June 28, 1918, and also was franked with the first United States air mail stamp. It, too, was sent from Chicago to St. Louis, although in this case there was no marking with reference to a first trip. Both the sender and the addressee on this cover were different than those on mine.

Unfortunately, I was unable to obtain this second cover. Once again, I temporarily put the matter to rest and awaited some future date for possible exploration and explanation.

It was not until a third cover was shown to me by Mr. Philip Silver, whose articles have so frequently appeared in this magazine, that I decided to pursue the matter in earnest.

The third cover (Figure 2), dated June 21, 1918, is again sent from Chicago, Ill. to St. Louis, Mo. The cover is backstamped in St. Louis on June 22. Both

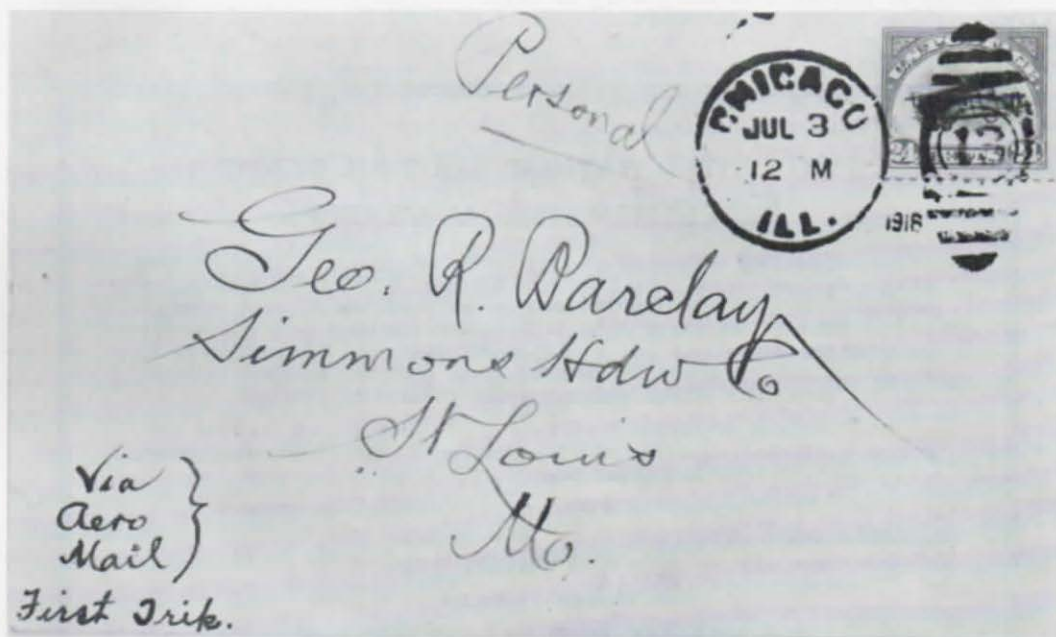


Figure 1. (Photos by Boutrelle)

the sender and addressee differ from those on the two prior covers seen. It is, however, the enclosure in this third cover that was of true significance in arousing my curiosity.

A Letter Enclosed

The first paragraph of this enclosed letter, written in St. Louis and dated June 19, reads as follows:

"I am fixing up a scheme for you to get a letter off the first aerial mail-ship that comes to St. Louis from Chicago. I am sending this note to my sister in Chicago to mail back to you, and when you get it you will have one more trophy for your collection."

Thus, we have the evidence from a third source mentioning a possible first air mail trip from Chicago to St. Louis in 1918.

The problem at hand is why were these covers prepared and for what event? Before I go further, I must unfortunately state here at the beginning that I have been unable to uncover any concrete evidence that satisfies me on either point.

The closest that I have been able to come to locating a reference, and my sole thin thread, is a statement in the June 1, 1918 issue of *Mekeel's Weekly Stamp News* as follows: "We have heard that it has been proposed to start an aerial line between Chicago and St. Louis." No source of information is given, nor date listed.

Other than this one small reference, I have been unable to locate any further evidence to have prompted the preparation and sending of these covers from Chicago in late June or early July of 1918.

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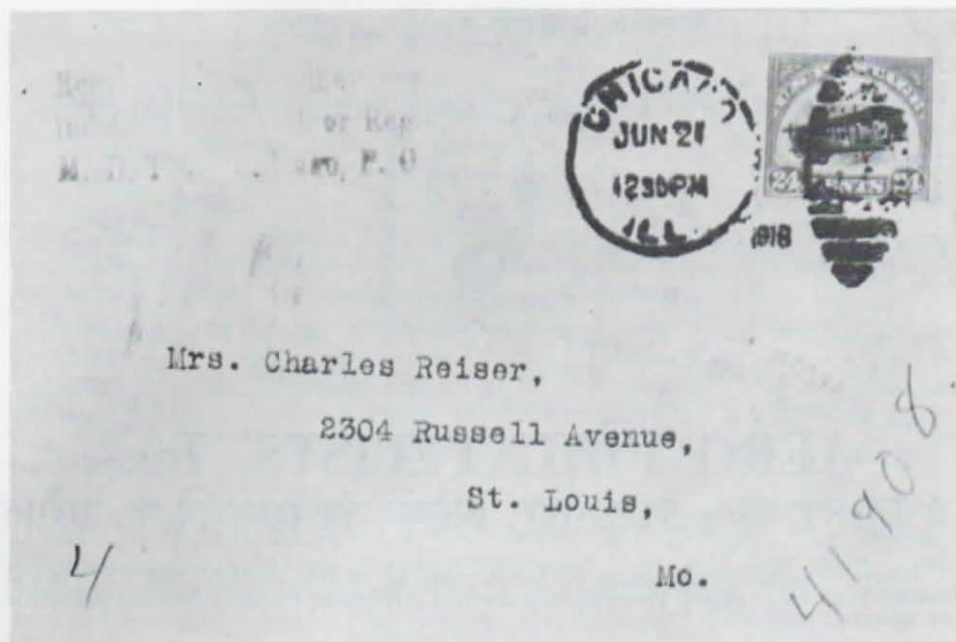


Figure 2.

No Press Notices

Nothing has come to light in either the philatelic or public press. *The Chicago Daily Tribune* for this period (Volumes 77-78) contains no references to such a flight. Nor is there any evidence in the *Congressional Record of the 65th Congress, 2nd Session, of 1918*, (Volume 56, Parts 4, 6 and 7). It is here at pages 4101, 6206, 6431, et seq. that the discussion of the establishment of an air mail route between Washington and New York is reported. Routes for Alaska and Boston are mentioned in addition, but not Chicago or St. Louis.

It is known that in March of 1918 the St. Louis postmaster went to Washington, D. C. to urge officials of the Post Office Department to institute an air mail service between Chicago and St. Louis, when the then contemplated Washington to New York route was established. To the best of my knowledge, nothing pertinent to our problem came of these discussions. It was not until August of 1920 that a service to Chicago actually commenced. (*Twentieth American Philatelic Congress Book, 1954*, p. 148). Thus, no really helpful light can be shed on our covers here.

In conclusion, I think we must unfortunately say that the origin of these unusual covers has yet to become apparent. They were not flown. Yet, they, and others like them, undoubtedly were prepared upon some perfectly valid but mistaken assumption that I have been unable to track down. Certainly the establishment of an air route, or even a single flight to St. Louis was far from imminent in the summer of 1918.

I shall be only too glad to stand corrected on this point, and to hear of any new information that can contribute to the reasons for the preparation of these mystery covers.

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BRAZIL

VARIG Company Stamps With Punched Holes

By Boris B. Joffe

Recently I purchased a lot of Brazil's Varig Company covers (Sanabria Nos. V1 to V54) all of them flown on June 29, 1934, the day before the air post service furnished by this Brazilian airline was discontinued.

Two covers in the lot (Figures 1 and 2) were of great interest because they both were franked with a pair of Varig Company air post stamps, the righthand copy having a large hole punched in the center. This magazine had published a very informative article on these punched hole varieties by Editor Henry M. Goodkind (see *AERO PHILATELIST ANNALS* Vol. I, No. 4 April 1954, pages 117-121).

One matter about these two covers that intrigued me was the statement in your April 1954 article when you quoted the well-known Mr. Theodore Champion and his "Poste Aérienne Catalogue." It said that the punched hole varieties on the Special Delivery and Registration Varig Company stamps were not sold to the public. But Figures 1 and 2 shows their use on cover*.

*These two covers are addressed to Milton J. Harris, a well-known air mail stamp collector in the 1930s and 1940s. He had formed one of the most extensive air post collections. Most likely, these covers were philatelic use. Probably Mr. Harris had the stamps with the punched holes and prepared these covers as seen in Figures 1 and 2. (H. M. G.)



Figure 1. A pair of the Varig Company 100 Rs. Registration stamps, the one on the right as indicated by the arrow has the large hole punched in the center. (Photos by Boutrelle)



Figure 2. A pair of the 1000 Rs. Special Delivery stamps with the black arrow showing the copy with the punched hole.

Secondly, the use of these punched holes also confirms a statement made in the 1954 article that such stamps had no franking power. The normal stamp on the left paid the postage.

Finally, both covers bear the postmark "M.P." This marking is explained in the AERO PHILATELIST ANNALS Vol. III, No. 3, page 73 as follows:

"Many VARIG letters bear the cancel "M.P." denoting 'mao propria' (by hand): this means that such letters were given to private individuals or the airline by the post office, after proper payment of postage had been verified."

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