

Guatemalan Auxiliary Markings, 1898-1967



This exhibit introduces the range of auxiliary postal markings in use within Guatemala from 1898 to the nadir of the 36-year-long civil in 1967. It allows one to see a small country's social, political, and economic history reflected in these postal markings. Additionally, the exhibit seeks to spur others to explore Guatemalan marcophily, by demonstrating just how much remains to be learned and documented.

Period Studied

This exhibit focuses on the Golden Era of Guatemala's postal system, which commenced in 1898 under the 'liberal' rule of President José Estrada Cabrera, as the country began to develop a modern infrastructure. The era ended in January 1967, with the introduction of unrestricted State-sponsored terrorism six years into Guatemala's 36-year-long civil war, leading to the collapse of postal and other public services.

Key to Symbols

- ◆ Numerous markings displayed in this exhibit have not been specifically identified in the philatelic literature. A red diamond indicates each such cover.
- ⌘ Several other markings are displayed on covers which predate or postdate the period in which these markings previously were documented as having been in use. These covers are identified with a stylized red hourglass.
- Covers which warrant special note are matted in the light blue of the Guatemalan flag. Each matted cover is one of no more than a handful of extant item of its type.

Plan of the Exhibit

Accountability Markings

Buzónes	1:2 – 2:1
Carteros	2:2-9
Anomalies	2:10 – 3:3
Censorship	3:4-6
Registered Mail	3:7-15

Directional & Instructional Markings

Routing Markings	3:16 – 4:1
Special Delivery & Express Markings	4:2-6
Printed Matter	4:7
Parcels	4:8-11
Official Mail	4:12 – 5:5
Air Mail	5:6 – 6:2

Promotional Markings

Coffee	6:3
Local Fairs	6:4-8
Raffles and Lotteries	6:9-15
Foreign Tourism	6:16 – 7:2
Misuse of Promotional Markings	7:3-7
Patriotic Themes	7:8
Concluding Note: Provenance	7:9-14
	7:15

Afterword

7:16

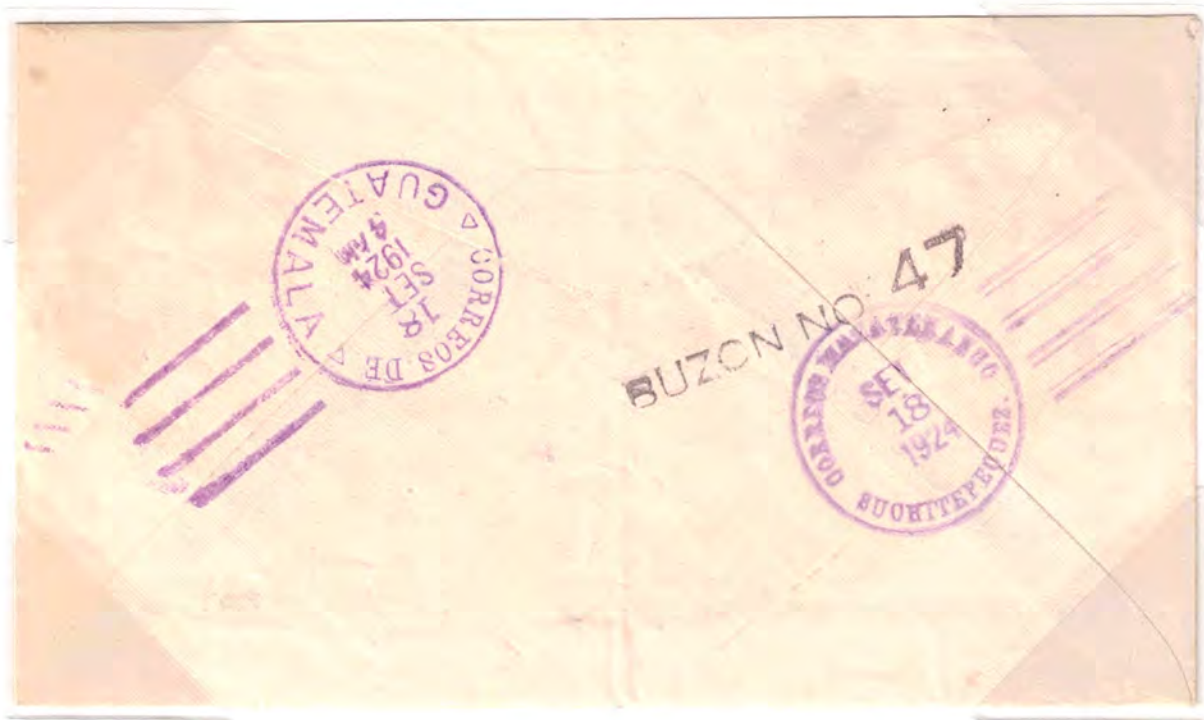
ACCOUNTABILITY MARKINGS

This Division of the exhibit offers an introduction to the variety of auxiliary markings created by the postal authorities to determine where a letter was deposited in the mail stream; who handled it; and how it may have come to be damaged, delayed, misdelivered, or mishandled.

BUZÓNES (COLLECTION BOXES)

Each of Guatemala City's *buzónes*, or postal collection boxes, was numbered. (*Buzon* is the singular form; *buzónes* is the plural.) An often abused rubber stamp was left in each box. It bore that box's assigned number, and the *buzonistas* (letter box mailmen) would mark letters left in the box with that stamp.

Buzon markings also were used in some of the larger provincial cities from about 1940; however, provincial *buzon* markings are far less frequently encountered on covers. Examples of these scarcer provincial markings are shown at the end of this Part of the exhibit.



BUZON NO 47

♦ The first *buzon* markings were introduced in 1923. Linear markings were used until 1933. An early, 1924 usage is displayed above. *Buzon* 47 is not among the 12 *buzónes* heretofore recorded as having been issued with a mark of this second type.

The first style of *buzon* hand stamp was produced only for *buzon* number 1, which was located at the main post office. That mark measured 37 x 16mm (excluding the numeral 1). The exhibitor is yet to find an example of that first mark. A second style of linear marks, measuring 34 x 4mm (excluding the numeral), and shown here, was introduced later that same year.



Usually, a *buzon* markings only served to identify a mailbox. The lone exception was this mark, used occasionally at a handful of Guatemala City collection boxes about 1930-'33. It also gave the date and hour when a letter was removed from the box by the *buzonista*.



The first of the circular *buzon* markings is illustrated above on a cover mailed in the summer of 1930 from the collection box at the main post office in Guatemala City. In all likelihood, it was retrieved from *buzon uno* at nine o'clock on the evening of July 7 (the hour shown in the duplex cancellation on the front of the cover), and not at eleven o'clock at night, as indicated on the *buzon*

marking, since it reached Jutiapa in time to receive a July 7 receiving mark. This *buzon* marking was designed to show the year along with the date, month, and hour. However, few surviving examples include the year.



← Left: A typical, wall-mounted, early twentieth century Guatemalan *buzon*, as photographed by the exhibitor in Guatemala City in February 2013.

This cover was flown on the first flight in the new air mail service between Guatemala City and Jutiapa.

The six centavo interior air mail rate published seven days earlier was paid with the 6c air mail stamp, Scott C7. The additional 3c in postage is attributable to the extra charge for *servicio nocturno* – processing after the last regular collection from the *buzon* at the main post office.



Examples of the most commonly encountered type of *buzon* mark are displayed on this page and the following page. Gruson reports that her "type 3" was in use from 1929 to 1960. Thirty-one different Guatemala City *buzones* have been recorded as having used this mark. Type 3's diameter varied between 22 and 23mm; no dashes or other characters separated the word *buzon* from the city; and the *buzon*'s assigned number is between 7mm and 9mm in height. Markings exist in both black and in purple ink.



The hand stamp of *buzon* 68, located inside the Palace Hotel, here applied on the reverse of the stationery of a major steamship line plying the U.S. - Guatemala route in the 1930s, suggests that the cover carried a foreign visitor's letter home.

At this time, an airmail letter to the United States of up to 10 grams required regular postage of three centavos, plus a 15 centavos airmail surcharge, plus a one centavo postal tax stamp. Thus this cover was properly franked.



The Gruson type 3 *buzon* marking here appears on covers of the 1933-'36 period. *Buzon* 1 (whose marking stamp appears in the window to the left) was located at the main post office. *Buzones* 28 and 10 were located on street corners in the capital city's central business district. Today, the area is Guatemala City's *centro histórico*.



♦ Left: An example of *buzon* number 10 of the "type 3" marking has not previously been recorded.

The hunt for unidentified markings. The rubber stamps used for *buzon* markings wore over time. Dimensions of imprints varied with the amount of pressure with which they were applied, and also with the angle at which the stamp struck the mail piece. Nonetheless, careful study allows the identification of previously uncataloged *buzon* markings.



♦ The *buzon* marking on this 1935 cover measures 24mm in diameter. Its *buzon* number, 1, is 11.6mm tall. The other lettering is 2.8mm tall. The letters comprising the word *buzon* are widely spaced. Finally, no typographic elements separate *buzon* from *Guatemala*. Thus, after making allowance for the dimensional instability of these markings noted above, **it is safe to conclude that this mark is distinct from the four types of *buzon* markings cataloged as being in use in Guatemala City in the period 1925 through 1945.**

The front side of the cover bears a typically crude striking of the marking commemorating the June 17, 1935 outward leg of the first air service between the capital and the town of La Tinta, in the Alta Verapaz. La Tinta had been a major site for transshipment of coffee from the Cobán rail line onto riverboats headed to the seaport at Livingston.



Servicio Interior markings: The Guatemala City post office experimented with at least five different markings denoting domestic air mail service in the 1930s. This five-line duplex cancellation was the only one to see anything even approximating common usage. It was in use for several months (at the most) in 1935.

These specific *buzon* markings have not previously been recorded. As with much of Gutemalan marcophily, *buzon* markings are yet to be fully explored and documented.



1934 internal cover.

♦ 23mm $\varnothing$; wider 3mm lettering above, narrower 2mm lettering below; 11mm numeral 1 of the collection box at the main post office.

1937 internal cover.

One needs to be cautious before concluding that one has discovered a new marking. This cover very likely has the same mark as displayed above, but made by a worn stamp. Variations of fractions of a millimeter most likely are due to wear of the rubber stamps.



♦ Distinguishing characteristics of newly identified mark: 24mm diameter marking, 3mm letters differently spaced above and below the numerals, no dashes or other characters separating the word *buzon* from the city name, and heavy 8mm-tall number 68.



For an extremely limited period of time, rectangular, secondary *buzon* markings were applied by *buzonistas*. Normally, when used, they were placed near the circular *buzon* marking.

These marks indicated at which collection of the day a cover was removed from the collection box. Only three such markings are known to have been used; very few examples survive.



Enlarged 3x.

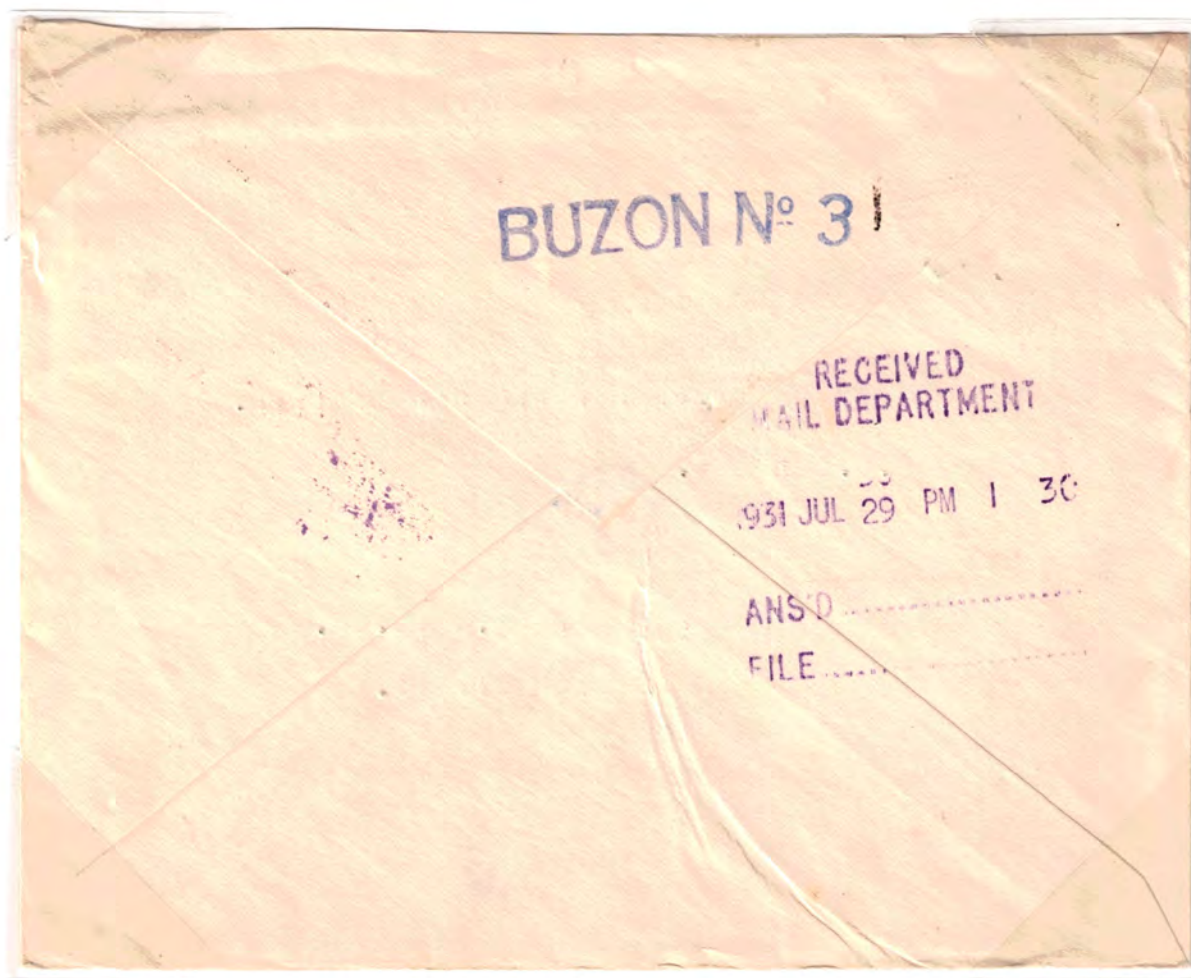


The marking reads 5ª, (*quinta*, or "fifth"). The letter therefore would have been retrieved from *buzon* 40 during the fifth collection of the day from that box. *Buzon* 40 was located two blocks southwest of the Presidential Palace.

Unfortunately, not enough of the promotional marking for *la feria* "Los Reyes" survives on the front of the cover to identify conclusively which of the several festivals of that name throughout the country it promoted.

Señor E. R. Wagner's dated return address stamp (above, across the back flap of the cover) was of a type commercially available, and in widespread use in Guatemala at this time. The exhibitor has seen exemplars used by the postal authorities themselves for different purposes.

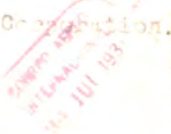
Buzon markings also were used in Quetzaltenango, Guatemala's second largest city. During the relevant time period Guatemala City had about five times as many people as did Quetzaltenango. However, the ratio of extant *buzon* markings from Guatemala City to those from Quetzaltenango is far greater than 5:1.



LAEISZ & CIA. - QUEZALTENANGO.



S-R- J. Henry Schröder Banking Corporation,
P.O. Box 115,



New York, N.Y.,

46 William Street,



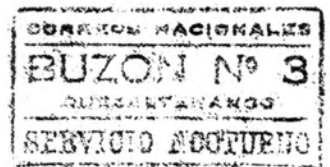
The Quetzaltenango *buzon* marking above (Gruson linear type 4) is of a type known to have been used on letters mailed from at least three different collection boxes in that city between 1925 and 1935.

As there is no consistency in style, size, or font between the *buzon* markings used in this period in Quetzaltenango and contemporaneous *buzon* markings in the capital, it is likely that the Quetzaltenango post office bought its hand stamps from local suppliers.

Left: The *receptoria postal* circular date stamp on the front side of this cover also is of a non-standard type.



The post office at Quetzaltenango designated its *buzon* number 3 for the deposit of mail requiring after-hours processing and dispatch, known as *servicio nocturno*. No other collection box in the country had a postal marking of this style, which suggests that it was made locally.



The early air mail surcharge calculation box in the upper left on the face of this cover is discussed in the air mail auxiliary markings portion of this Exhibit.



Although the *acuerdo gubernativo* establishing *servicio nocturno* has not been found and the service is not listed in the 1930s rate tables, the fee for domestic *servicio nocturno* apparently was double the basic postage. The *servicio nocturno* fee for overseas mail is uncertain; the postage on this letter suggests it was four centavos.

This cover is franked with 24c in postage (plus a 1c postal tax stamp.) Hence,
 postage to Europe: 5c
 air mail surcharge: 15c
 servicio nocturno: 4c

Other kinds of *buzon* markings also were unique to Quetzaltenango. From about 1934 through 1955, and again in the early 1970s, its *buzonistas* used special, double-circle, circular date stamps to cancel the stamps on letters which they removed from many of the City's letter boxes. They also applied a *buzon* marking which included no box number: the number was added by the *buzonista* in manuscript.



Buzon 23 apparently was located just outside the gate of Quetzaltenango's main prison for men. I have three examples of the *buzon* mark (reproduced below right), and all bear prison censorship markings, such as the one stamped onto the back side of this cover (below). Interestingly, the same *buzonista* served this route throughout this period of time: the 23 consistently is in the same scrawl, applied either in red or in green crayon.

While not postally applied marks, Guatemalan prison censorship markings comprise one of the most fascinating and challenging sub-specialties within Guatemalan marcophily. The marking on this cover reads, "Censored Mail, Men's Prison, Quetzaltenango."



Guatemalan philatelic literature reflects that Quetzaltenango's *Buzon 3* was designated for the deposit of mail destined for after-hours processing. This use predates the introduction of the unique *Buzon No 3 / Quetzaltenango/Servicio Nocturno* mark (displayed two page back).

(X The short lived Pan American Airways promotional machine duplex cancellation (applied here across the top of the back side as a Guatemala City receiving mark) represents an extremely early use. Full, crisp impression like this are uncommon.)



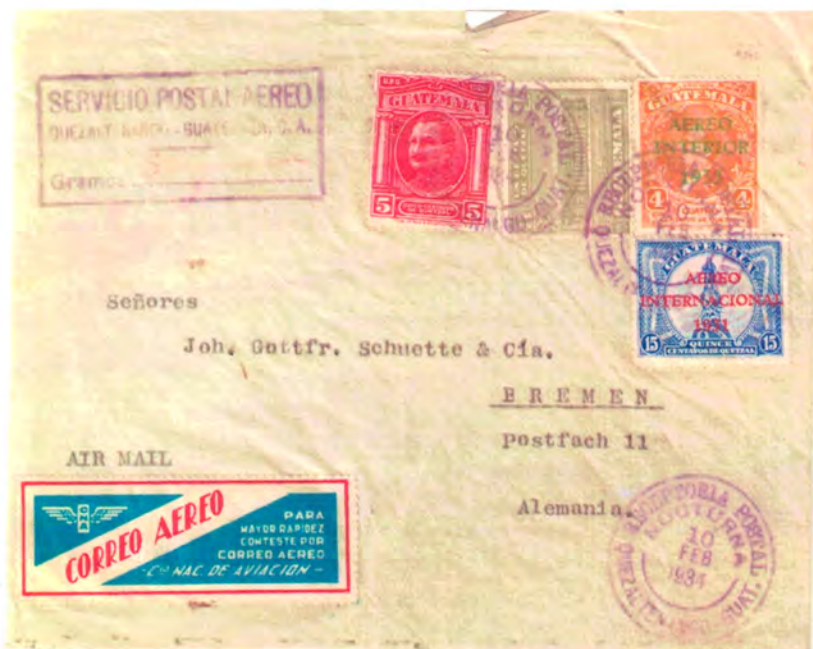
♦ The *Buzon No 3* mark above has not previously been recorded. Its style appears extremely similar to the first *buzon* mark used at Quetzaltenango, ca. 1925-31. However, no mark of that style had been noted heretofore for Quetzaltenango's *buzon tres*.

The markings in the lower right and upper left corners on the front of the cover indicate that the cover received after hours processing at Quetzaltenango, and that an air mail surcharge was assessed for an item of eight grams, respectively.

Postage was prepaid in the amount of 24c, plus the 1c postal tax. 5c paid the postage for an item of under 20 grams to a UPU member country beyond the Americas, and 15c paid the international air mail surcharge for an item of under 10 grams.

The remaining 4c appears to have paid the *servicio nocturno* fee and/or the internal air surcharge. We are uncertain as to *servicio nocturno* rates for different classes of mail items in this era. Nothing has been written about the total charge for *servicio nocturno* plus internal air carriage for a letter sent overseas.

Lower left: The proprietary air mail label of Compañía Nacional de Aviación, which would have transported the letter as far as Guatemala City, has been noted by Ramírez.



Provincial *Buzon* Markings

Buzon markings were not used in any of the departmental capitals until the 1940s, about 12 years after they came into widespread use in the two major cities. Their use always was decidedly less common in the provinces than it was in

Guatemala City, or even in Quetzaltenango. As this section of the exhibit demonstrates, our knowledge of provincial *buzon* markings is incomplete.



✗ Use of the most frequently encountered of the San Marcos markings before its first use previously recorded. (San Marcos is a small departmental capital near the Mexican border, 7900 feet above sea level.)

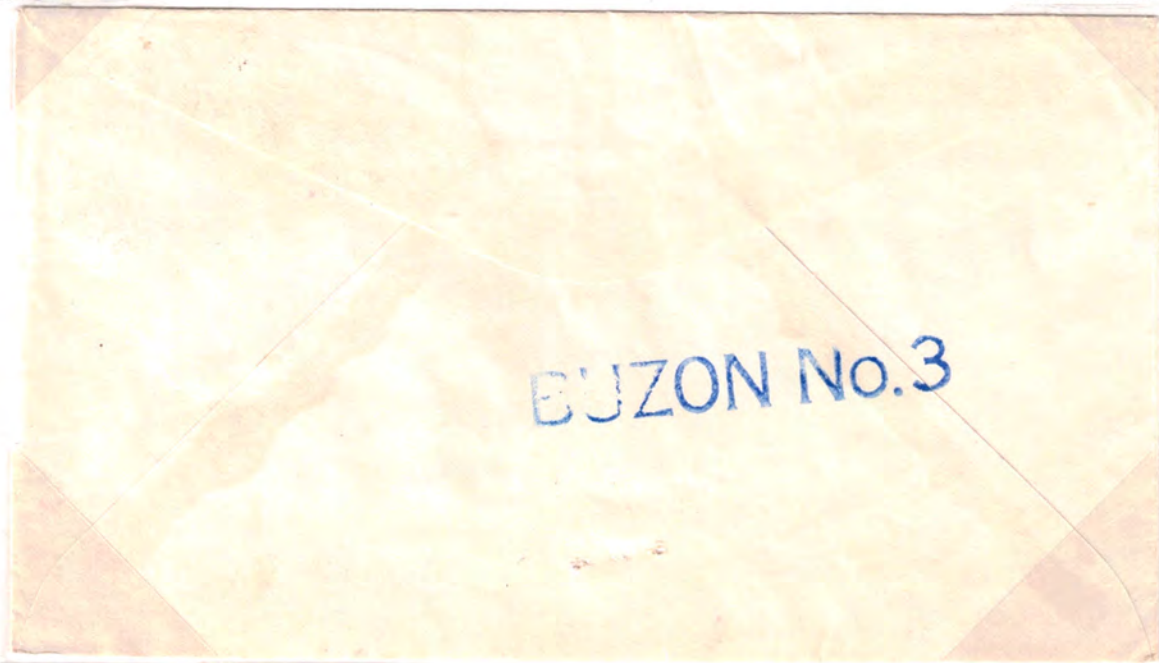


♦ Late 1960s San Marcos *buzon* mark. No *buzon* markings from San Marcos had been recorded heretofore between 1961 and 1973.

Although replaced by circular markings in the capital in the early 1930s, linear *buzon* markings continued in use in Mazatenango for a further 40 years.

✕ Right: This mark was known to have been in use from 1969; however this cover was mailed several years earlier.

♦ Immediately below: The 78 x 5½mm *buzon* marking on the reverse of this tiny 1947 mail piece has not previously been noted in our philatelic literature.



♦ The *buzon* marking on the 1954 cover (above) is 16mm ø with a 10mm numeral 1 – thus making it dissimilar from any of the three Chiquimula *buzon* markings cataloged in the standard reference work, Gruson's *Postal Markings of Guatemala*. (Chiquimula is a departmental capital southeast of Guatemala City.)

Establishing periods of use of provincial *buzon* markings: Many of the descriptions in our philatelic literature of mid-twentieth century *buzon* markings, and many of the estimates of the periods during which each marking was in use, are based upon just the one or two ex-

amples of each marking which were available to and examined by philatelic scholars. Especially with respect to the markings used outside of the capital (*i.e.*, in Quetzaltenango and in the provincial cities), much remains to be discovered and documented.

✗ This unique *buzon* mark from the departmental capital of Huehuetenango probably was locally designed and locally made. It is recorded in the literature as having been used only during 1943. This cover dates from the late 1940s.



✗ A distinctive, bottom-heavy *B* makes this Quetzaltenango *buzon* marking readily identifiable. Here, it's seen on an April 1938 cover – seven years beyond the marking's accepted date range of 1925-31.



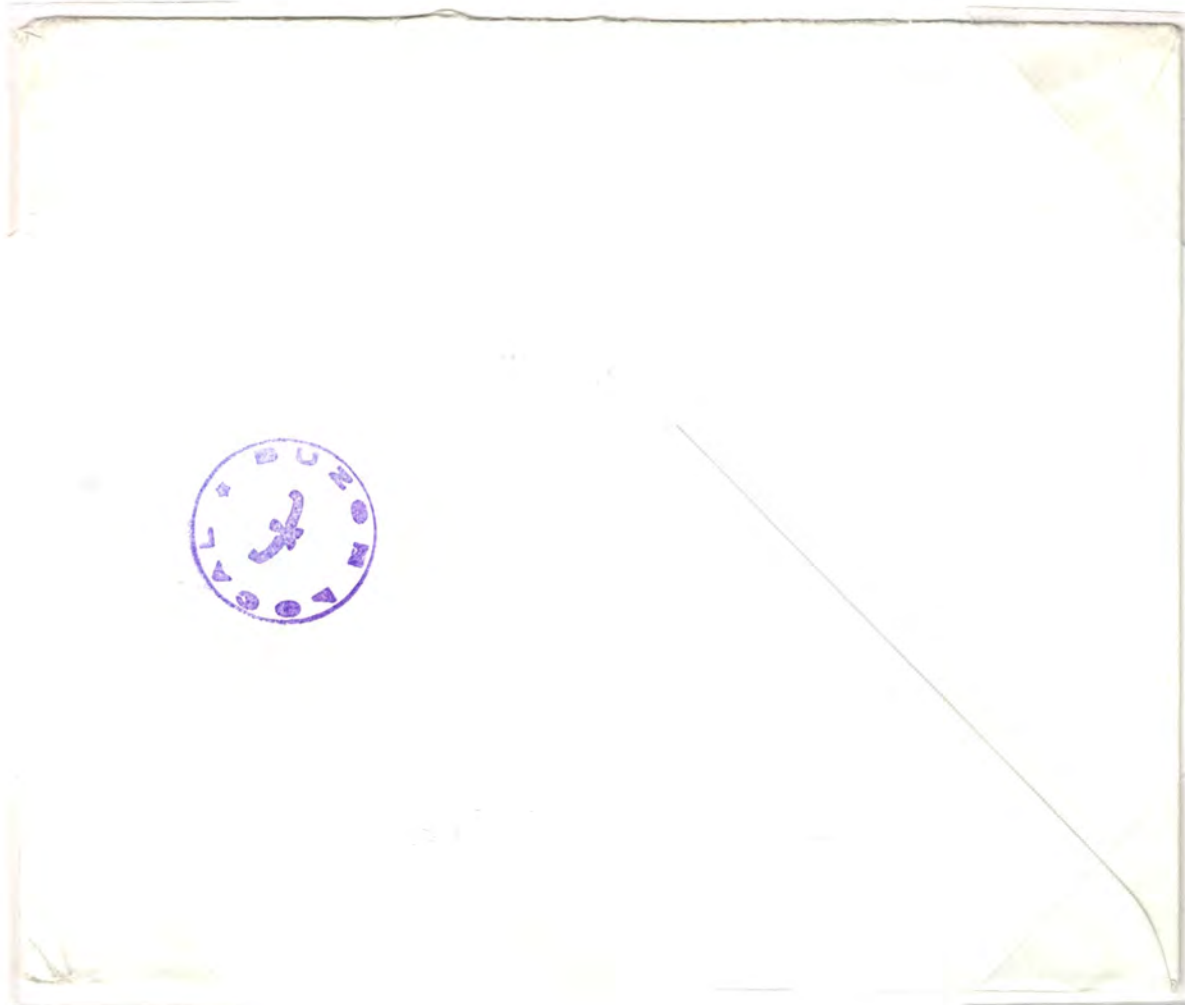


Quite distinctive *buzon* markings were used in two provincial locations in the mid-1960s.

Above: Mark applied to mail deposited in the collection box at the Flores Airport,

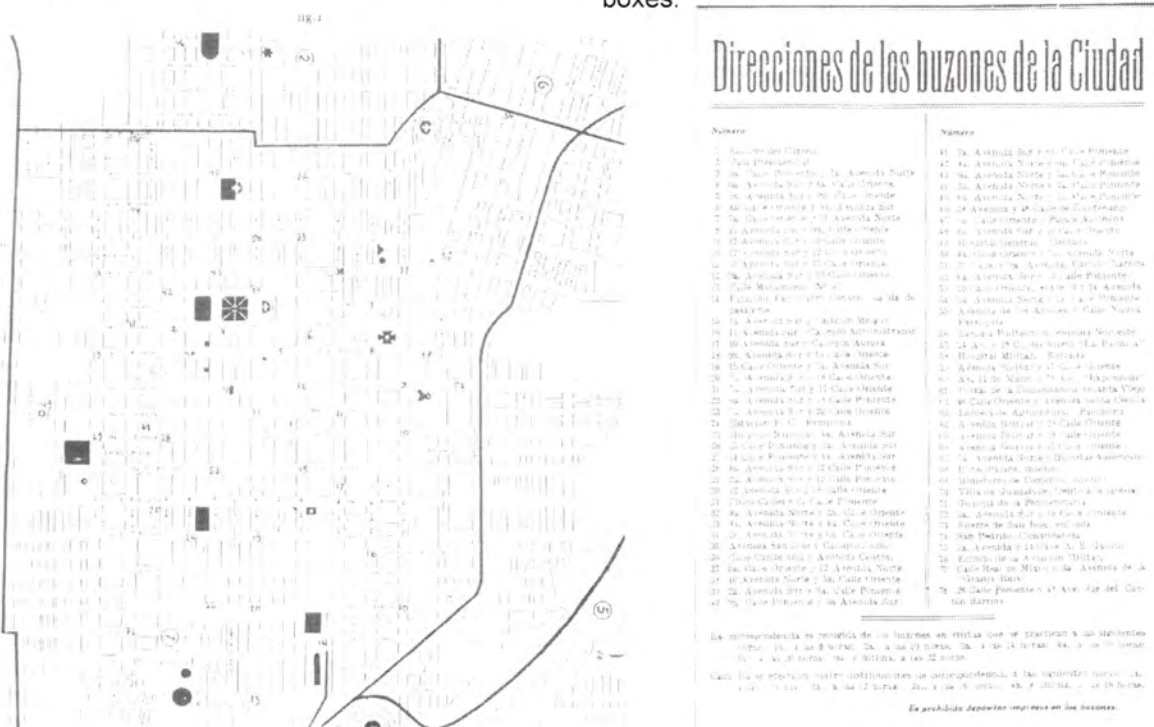
located in the in the adjacent town of Santa Elena, Petén Department.

Below: ♦ A unique, stylized *buzon* marking applied at Chiquimula, capital of the Department of the same name.



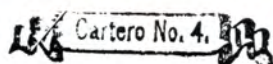
Dec 7th 11

Below: A map of the location of Guatemala City's *buzón*s in the mid-1950s with its map legend, "Locations of the City's collection boxes."



Carteros (letter carriers): *Buzonistas* emptied collection boxes and transported their contents to post offices. *Carteros* then received the mail at the post offices for their respective routes, sorted their mail, and delivered it to addressees. At certain times be-

tween 1898 and 1908, and again, intermittently, from 1927 to the early 1950s, *carteros* were instructed to backstamp the mail which they delivered for accountability purposes. The position of *cartero* was senior to that of *buzonista*.



This scroll marking (Gruson type 2) was the type of *cartero* marking which was most frequently applied to Guatemala City's mail around the turn of the twentieth century.

This cover was mailed to a Guatemala City bank from Escuintla, in the southeast of Guatemala. The sender appears to have taken the letter to the railway station at Escuintla and handed it to the *ambulante postal*, or traveling postman. (Note the distinctive "Type 'G'" *ambulante* circular date stamp.)

The cover reached the capital the same day on which it was mailed. Escuintla was about 15

miles from the cover's return address, in the town of Santa Lucia Cotzumalguapa. Preprinted "Gallusser" envelopes are fairly common. The manager of *Banco de Guatemala* (the predecessor of the bank which today trades in Guatemala as *Banco Agromercantile*) had modernized his bank's operation by requiring each branch manager to send a daily report to him at the Bank's headquarters in Guatemala City, using the most expeditious means available.



Early 20th century linear markings: This linear style *cartero* marking was introduced in 1903, and it remained in use in the capital's post office for two or three years. Examples of this type of *cartero* marking are less commonly found than are examples of the earlier style. The 1903 cover (displayed immediately below) challenges the assumption in the literature that this style of *cartero* mark was first introduced in 1904.

✕ Letter posted in the departmental center of Retalhuleu on 14 December 1903, one day before it was delivered in Guatemala City by the capital's *cartero Núm[ero]* 2.



Cartero Núm. 2

1905 local letter from one Guatemala City address to another, delivered by *cartero Núm[ero]* 11.



Cartero Núm. 11

Relatively little is known about the *cartero* markings and their use. The *cartero* markings in the period 1925-'42 were circular and 30 to 32mm in diameter (although the standard reference work gives the size as a consistent 30mm diameter). The letters were 4mm tall. This exhibitor's experience accords with Gruson's conclusion, that the hand stamps used after *cartero* marks were reintroduction in the late 1920s fell into two

general types: the earlier markings (ca. 1928-'30) had the *carteros*' designations in 11mm numerals, while the later markings (ca. 1930-'40) used 7 to 9½mm numerals.

This section of the exhibit shows examples of the more typical markings, followed by some previously unrecorded varieties.

Mark of *cartero* 4, June 1929.

Cartero markings are said to have been unique to the capital and to Amatitlán (a small, lake-side community on its outskirts). However, the final page in this part of the exhibit presents a provincial *cartero* marking.



The front of this cover bears the duplex cancellation device of *ambulante seis* (traveling postman number six), assigned to the main rail line between Ayutla, on the Mexican border, and Guatemala City.

The practice of assigning more or less fixed numbers to the *ambulantes postales* had begun in 1927. The Type R duplex markings, of which this is an example, were introduced at that time.

The numbers were assigned to individual employees, not to the railway mail routes.

The sub-types of the large circle style of *cartero* marking.



Two sub-types of the large, circular *cartero* marks were in general use in Guatemala City in the 1920's, 30's, and 40's. (Gruson describes them as 30mm in diameter; I find 32mm to be a more accurate average diameter of these marks – allowing for the variation in hand stamp imprints.)

larger (± 11 mm) type, as on the cover above, seem to have been in use earlier on. Those with smaller ($\pm 7\frac{1}{2}$ mm) type, as seen on the cover below, generally are found on somewhat later covers.

Marking devices with the carriers' numbers in

Little is known with certainty about the distribution and use of these markings. The subject is ripe for further study.



Gruson catalogs a smaller, 22mm diameter *cartero* marking as having been in use between 1938 and 1948. She describes it as existing both with and without dashes between the words *cartero* and *Guatemala*; and she notes that it has been found for *carteros* 4, 5, 7, 12,

17-19, and 30. Both the cover on this page and the two covers on the following page present impressions of this style of marking used by two uncatalogued Guatemala City *carteros* – numbers 2 and 14.



♦ 23mm $\varnothing$ marking, 2½mm letters without dashes between words, and 9mm 2 designating the *cartero* assigned the mark. This 1941 cover was mailed from Mexico City to the expatriate who then commanded Guatemala's national military academy, the *Escuela Politécnica*.





♦ 24mm marking with 2½mm letters and a 9mm 14. Applied to a 1939 internal cover.



♦ 23mm marking with 2mm letters and a 6½mm 17. Applied to a 1948 cover from Oklahoma.

Two characteristics distinguish this marking from the marks previously cataloged: dashes between the words *cartero* and *Guatemala*; and (b) shorter letters (2mm vs. 2½mm tall).

Even within the types of *cartero* markings which have been described and cataloged, previously unrecorded *cartero* numbers remain to be discovered.



♦ Above: Large (30mm $\varnothing$) *cartero* marking of the 1925-40 era. No example has been reported in the Guatemalan philatelic literature for *cartero* 17 – notwithstanding the fact that at the time this *servicio expreso y aereo* cover was mailed, *cartero* 17 served the U.S. Embassy in the heart of Guatemala City.

♦ Below: This cover left Cobán at 1:00 p.m. on New Years Day 1932, and it reached the capital that same day. A series of *cartero* markings of this size and type is known to have been in common usage in the capital from the mid-1930s to the late 1940s. However, no marking in this series had been recorded for *cartero* 14 – once again, notwithstanding the fact that *cartero* 14 delivered this letter to the busy Palace Hotel, in the heart of Guatemala City's business district.



The first known use of a *cartero* marking outside of Guatemala City:

The *cartero* marking on this 1940 cover from New York City was applied at the delivery post office in Escuintla (the capital of the department of the same name) located on the Pacific Slope an hour's drive south of Guatemala City. Extrapolating from censuses of 1921 and 1950, Escuintla's urban population then would have been about 20,000.



♦ The 31mm $\varnothing$ mark on the left reads *Servicio Local / ★ Cartero Nº 2 ★* surrounding *Escuintla, Guatemala, C.A.* The text is unique. However, the size, the typeface, and general design all are consistent with other date stamps in use in the late 1930s and early 1940s. Hence this *cartero*

marking probably was officially sanctioned and supplied through the post office system (rather than being an unsanctioned, locally made marking). This is the only known cover bearing a *cartero* marking applied outside of Guatemala Department.

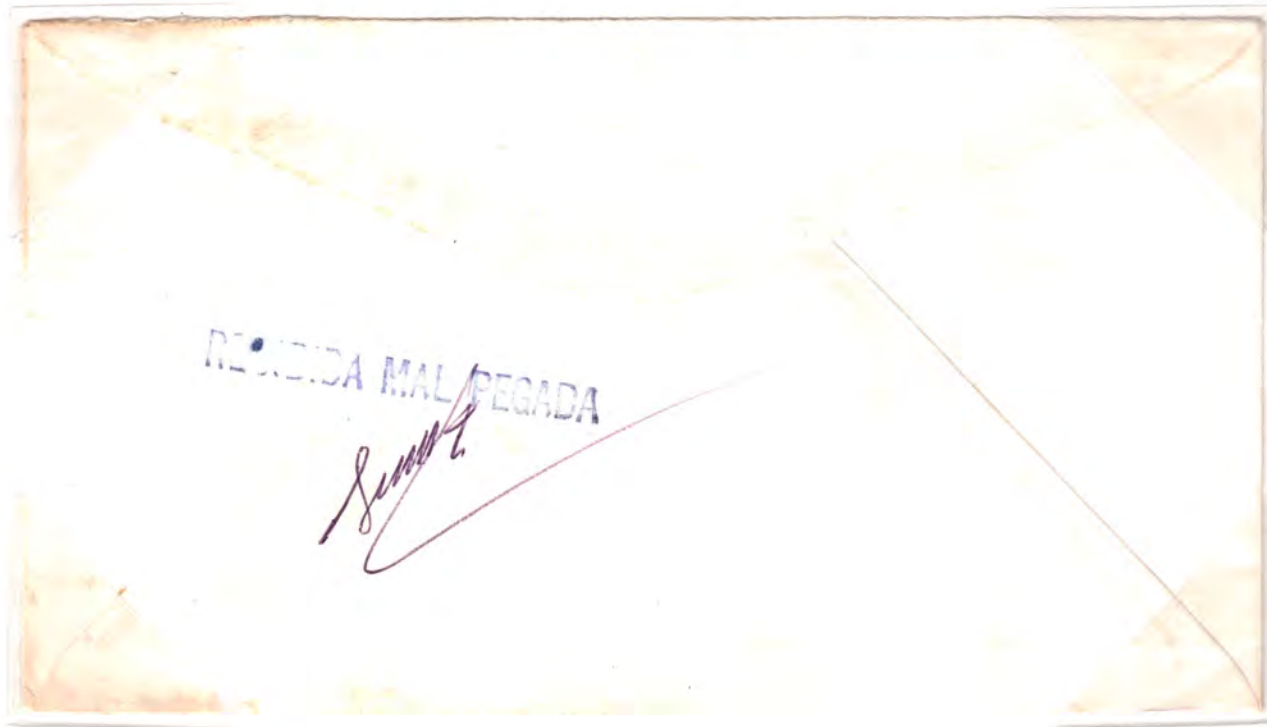


A wide range of auxiliary markings were applied to explain anomalies in the postal service, and to exonerate the postal authorities from blame for shortcomings in the transport and delivery of mail.

Damage to the mail: Various markings are noted in the literature as having been applied by Guatemala's postal authorities, in different locations and at different times, to disclaim liability for soiled, poorly sealed, or just ratty looking letters.

The blue mark reads *recibida con las pegaduras sucias*, "received with dirty sealing flaps". Its inking is consistent with the inking of the date stamp on the front, applied by the post office at the small highland village of Cantel. The mark matches Gruson's rough sketch (type 1 of her *sucias* markings).

The application of this marking at such a minor post office suggests that the marking stamp was made in quantity and distributed widely.



♦ *Recibida mal pegada*, "received poorly sealed". The dimensions of this marking (53 x 5mm) are inconsistent with any of the three *recibida mal pegada* markings previously reported by Guatemalan philatelists.

The marking advises that the cover was "found in letterbox 1 with dirty flaps." Although this marking is listed under *buzon* makings in the standard reference work, it wasn't a *buzon* marking at all. Rather, the mark was used to refute customers' claims for damage to their mail in the postal service. This marking is unique to Quetzaltenango.

The additional 2c of postage was added on the back side of the cover with Universal Postal

Frankers meter U-8, which was assigned to the Quetzaltenango post office between 1952 and 1966.

♦ The promotional marking located in the lower left on the front side reads in English translation, "Visit the Third Central American Independence [Day] Fair from Sept. 12-18". (All of the Central American republic attained independence from Spain on September 15, 1821.)



Encontrada en el buzón No. 1 con las pegaduras sucias

VISITE LA III FERIA CENTRO-AMERICANA
LA INDEPENDENCIA DEL 12 AL 18 DE SEPT.
QUEZALTENANGO

Thefts By *Ambulantes*. Thefts by *ambulantes* had reached alarming proportions by the late 1940s. *Ambulantes postales* were traveling postmen. They received and processed mail out of railway baggage cars on routes throughout the country. On occasion, *ambulantes* would accept money for postage, and then, once the train got underway, pocket the stamps and destroy the letters.

To combat this larceny, the postal authorities appointed a retired field grade army officer to serve as Guatemala's first (and only) *inspector postal ambulante*, or inspector of traveling postmen. These two markings were unique to Lt. Col. Pineda, who employed them as security markings during different time periods, and in the course of his work. He used these markings both as official seals and also to cancel stamps (and, possibly, as free franking indicia as well).



Wrong Class of Service: Guatemalan authorities applied various hand stamped auxiliary markings to two different types of "problem" international air mail items:

- outgoing letters marked for air mail, but lacking sufficient postage and therefore sent by ship (two of which are displayed below); and, conversely,
- incoming covers which were properly franked for air carriage, but reached Guatemala by surface mail (first of the two covers displayed on the next page).

♦ Left: The English-language legend *sent by regular mail for insufficient postage* has been noted; however, this specific marking is previously unrecorded. It appears to be distinct as to both dimensions and font from the lone marking reproduced in Gruson's work.

✕ Right: The Spanish-language marking reads in translation, "because of insufficient postage, routed by ordinary [mail]." This cover predates the example noted in the standard reference by some eight years.

SENT BY REGULAR MAIL FOR
INSUFFICIENT POSTAGE

POR DEFICIENCIA DE FRANQUEO
SE CURSA COMO ORDINARIO



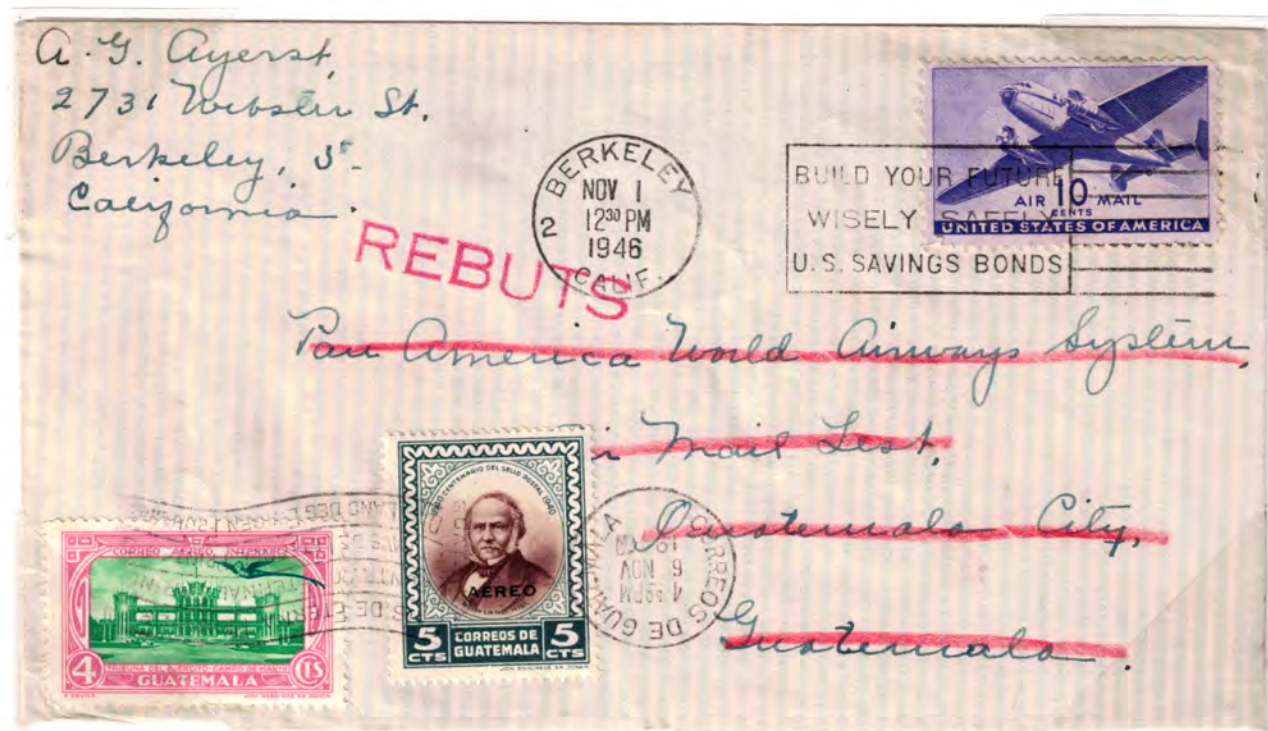


♦ Above: Markings reading "received by ordinary mail" were applied to letters which came by sea post, and which appeared to have been intended to be carried by air. The Guatemalan postal clerk may have failed to see that the sender crossed out the words *by air mail*.

Pan Am's Latin American offices, where local postage was applied and the covers returned to the senders at Pan Am's expense – this to demonstrate the benefits of air mail service to Latin America at the U.S. Post Office's newly reduced rate.

Below: The standard, French-language Guatemalan post office *Rebuts* ("rejected") marking on the cover below was applied as a part of Pan American Airways' air mail test program. Mail users in the U.S. were invited to mail letters on November 1, 1946 to

Collectors complained at the time about inadequate publicity prior to the November 1, the effective date of the new 10¢ air mail rate. For instance, the announcement did not make its way into the *New York Times*' weekly philatelic section.





♦ **Undeliverable and Redirected Mail:**
Above: The *no tiene direccion registrada* ("no such address recorded") marking explains why the letter had to be returned to the sender. Its return was directed by the second of the red ink markings it bears: the *rebut* along with a hand pointing to the left.

The overall style of this *rebut* mark is consistent with others used in Guatemala; however, neither of these two specific marks has been noted previously. (The mark in black ink may be Mexican; it probably was not applied by the Guatemalan postal authorities.)

♦ The heretofore undocumented *reexpedida* (literally, "resend") forwarding mark on the cover to the right also was applied in this era.

Neither the mail forwarding system in general, nor the forwarding markings themselves, have yet been analyzed by students of Guatemalan philately.



Dead Letter Markings



♦ Not surprisingly, the vague address of a kilometer post on the road to Mixco warranted the application of this previously unrecorded dead letter office marking, “return to sender, no such

address registered”. The shade of red is identical to the red on the circular red date stamp applied to the back side of this cover, showing the marking’s provenance to have been the Guatemala City dead letter office.



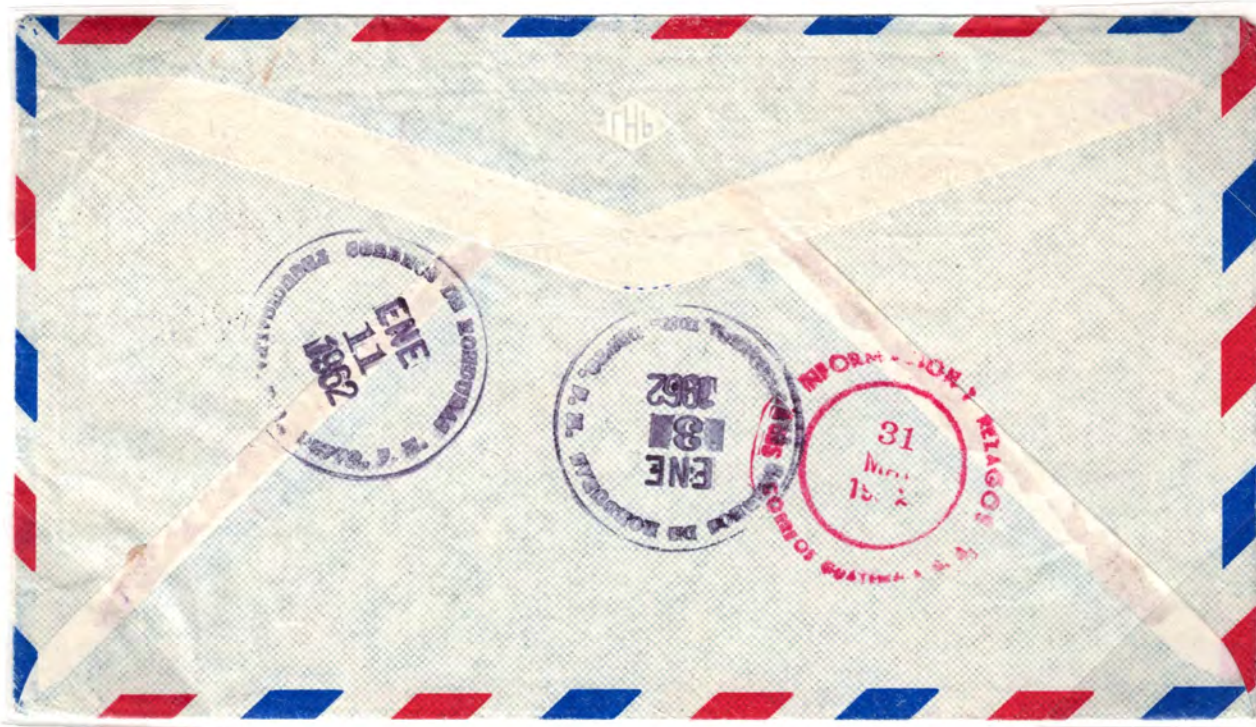
♦ This red circular date stamp fills a thirty year gap in the roster of recorded Guatemala City Dead Letter Office date stamps. The text of this marking most likely reads “Serv. Informacion y Rezagos / Correos Guatemala, C.A.,” which would be similar to that of the known 1970-era marking.

As noted above, the red circular date stamp was applied when this cover was found to have been inadequately addressed. Gruson catalogs five Dead Letter Office (*Oficina de Rezagos*) date stamps used between 1896 and “ca. 1970,” noting that they are all “scarce and dates of use indicated are from single copies of each type, . . .”

SE DEVUELVE AL REMITENTE
 Direccion _____ Retusada _____
 Desconocida _____ Fallecida _____
 Para que se mejore direccion _____
 Tambien desconocida, no dejó nueva direccion _____ Ausente _____

✗ Standardized, check-the-box markings like that to the left, which also was applied to the back side of this cover, began to be used on undeliverable mail throughout Guatemala in the late 1950s. This particular form of the marking remained in use in the capital into the 1990s. This is quite an early use of the marking.

When viewed along with the example reproduced in the blue bordered box on the previous page, this second striking of the 1960s era Guatemala City Dead Letter Office's date stamp affords a full image of the heretofore lost postal marking.



The front of this 1962 cover is reproduced below.

♦ The front bears a another previously un-recorded marking from the Guatemala City Dead Letter Office: the red *devuélvase al remitente* marking reproduced immediately below.

This 68 x 5mm "return to sender" handstamp well may have proven unwieldy, as it appears to have been replaced with a shorter 51mm handstamp bearing exactly the same legend in 1963.

DEVUELVESE AL REMITENTE



Postage Due Markings

In the overwhelming majority of cases, underpaid mail items bore only a simple, informal, non-standardized manuscript notation. More formalized markings relating to underfranked mail are quite scarce.

Various due markings were used in the early 20th century. (Guatemala never issued postage due stamps.) Even when a marking stamp was used, the sum due usually was added by hand, not stamped onto the cover as here.

♦ The boxed *T* on this cover has been noted previously; the numeral indicating an amount due of eight centavos has not.

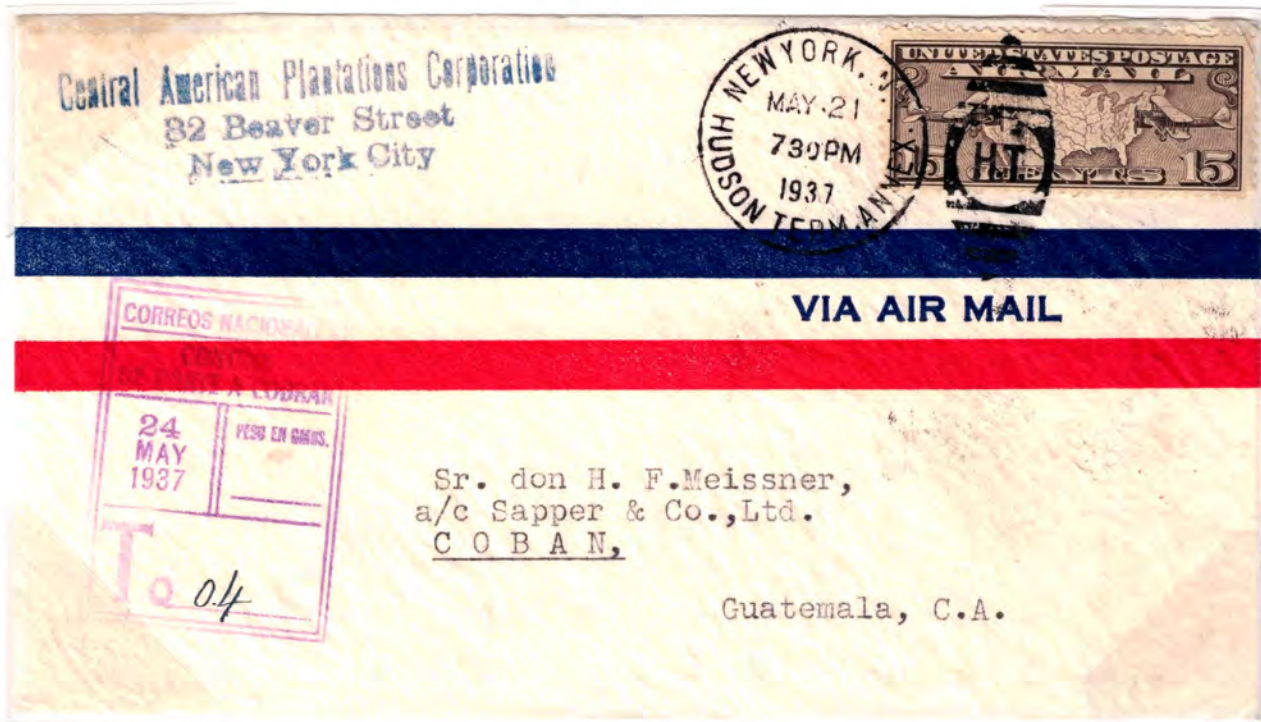
♦ The mark of *Cartero No 10* on the back side has not previously been recorded in a marking of this series. This style was used only during the years 1907-08.



Cartero No. 10

♦ This boxed postage due marking (not previously noted in the literature) assesses four centavos postage due. However, the letter bore sufficient postage when mailed in the U.S. The Guatemalan post office charged 4c extra for internal air mail service between Guatemala City and Cobán.

The letter was mailed from a German-owned firm in New York which owned numerous coffee *fincas* in Guatemala prior to World War II. It was sent to a German coffee wholesaler in the major city in Guatemala's Alta Verapaz coffee growing region.



Epilogue

In addition to creating a wide variety of auxiliary markings to help account for the various anomalies which occurred in the postal service, a unique promotional marking was used by the Guatemalan post office for a brief period in 1948, encouraging mail users to report the anomalies which they themselves encountered.



Colabore con el correo para beneficio suyo, reporte toda anomalía que observe en el servicio, "Collaborate with

the post office for your benefit, report any anomaly you find in the [mail] service."



Censorship

Wartime censorship: Guatemala did not engage in postal censorship during the First World War. A few examples of a lone Guatemalan military censorship marking in use very briefly during the Second World War have been noted; however, I am yet to see an example of it. The marking on the lower cover was applied in aid of U.S. censorship efforts on outgoing Guatemalan mail.



Above: The censorship marking appears on the back side of a letter from an inmate at the former main prison, addressed to a Guatemala City trial court judge.

Prison censorship: Most of Guatemala's prison censorship markings did not come into use until the worst of the Civil War years (*i.e.*, following the period of this study). However, several were in use in various locations prior to 1967.



♦ Below: Since this "Contents Written in English" marking has been affixed to covers from unrelated mailers, I suspect that it may well have been postally applied.

CONTENTS WRITTEN IN ENGLISH



Two further censorship markings appear on mail sent by inmates at the 75-year-old Central Prison during the 1950s. (The old Central Penitentiary was torn down during a 1960s urban renewal project and replaced with a decentralized system of prisons and prison farms.)



Right: The presence of the *ayudante* (literally, "helper") marking on the back side of the second cover is something of a mystery. Normally, these markings are seen only on mail which was damaged, or which was subject to special fees. It is possible that at some point this same division played a role in processing mail from the penitentiary.

SECCION "B"
AYUDANTE No. 1

No uniformity existed in the censorship markings in the 1950s as the prison service decentralized.



1954 cover from the main prison in Guatemala's second city, Quetzaltenango. Both of the other auxiliary markings on this cover are discussed elsewhere in this exhibit.

CENSURADA

♦ The simple *censurada* marking, together with Mr. Hernandez's return address at the prison in the Departmental capital of Chiquimula, confirm that the cover contained his censored communication with a correspondence school in Guatemala City. The Escuela Radio Postal served large numbers of students throughout Guatemala during the 1950s and 1960s.



In addition to the covers' postmarks, various auxiliary markings appeared on Guatemala's registered mail. Of all these markings, the registry box alone was ubiquitous. A separate exhibit would be required to show the great many varieties of registry boxes in use over the years. However, the general pattern of their evolution can be seen on the following covers.



Above: Registry boxes in use throughout the country into the 1920 most often included space for the "R No" of the mail piece only.

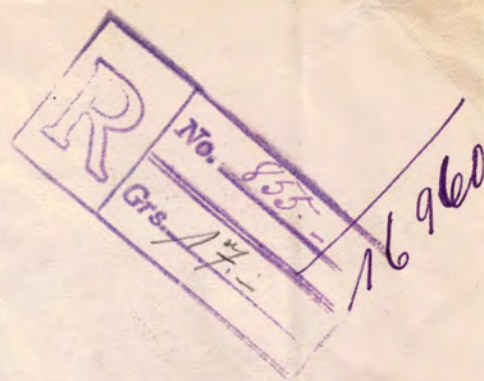
Below: Space for marking the weight first commonly appeared on registry boxes introduced later in that decade.

Similarly, oval registered mail date stamps were replaced by circular designs by about the early 1920s.



Registry Boxes – Continued

J. E. JUAREZ A.
"MYRIAM"
FLORES, C. C.
GUATEMALA, C. A.



Registry boxes began to evolve toward their modern configuration by the end of the 1920s. The cover beneath this legend dates from 1928. The second and third covers on this page bear registry boxes rather typical of those seen throughout the latter four decades of this study.

Also, as seen on the second and third covers on this page, duplex cancelling devices and receiving marks specific to the registered mail service evolved. A comprehensive study of Guatemalan registry boxes, dates stamps, and receiving marks should require a major exhibit in its own right.

VICE INSTITUTE, INC. DEPT. 22
Avenue, New York City
U. S. A.

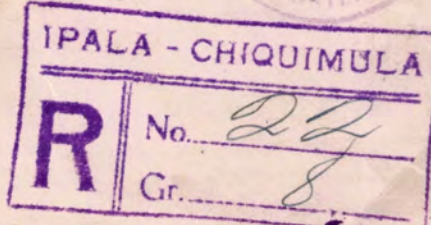
-0-



207- sur n: 22

apartado 278

Guatemala



Envios Con Valores (Insured Mail) Boxes

Although an insured mail service for transmission of currency and negotiable instruments had been provided by the Guatemalan Post Office since the late 1880s, marking stamps unique to the service were not introduced until 1928 (the philatelic literature gives the date as 1929).

The insurance fee was reduced in 1930 from 3% of contents' value to 1½%. The old marking devices continued to be used; clerks struck through 3% rate and wrote in 1½%. Unaltered 3% declared value boxes, used in the few months between their introduction and the rate change, are not frequently encountered.



◆ Previously unrecorded box, used in the principal city of the remote Petén region.

Escuintla's *Envios Con Valores* box is known to have been in service in that departmental capital for over 40 years.



No Declared Value Certification Markings

A compliance declaration was required on the back side of overseas registered mail, declaring that it contained neither money nor negotiable instruments.



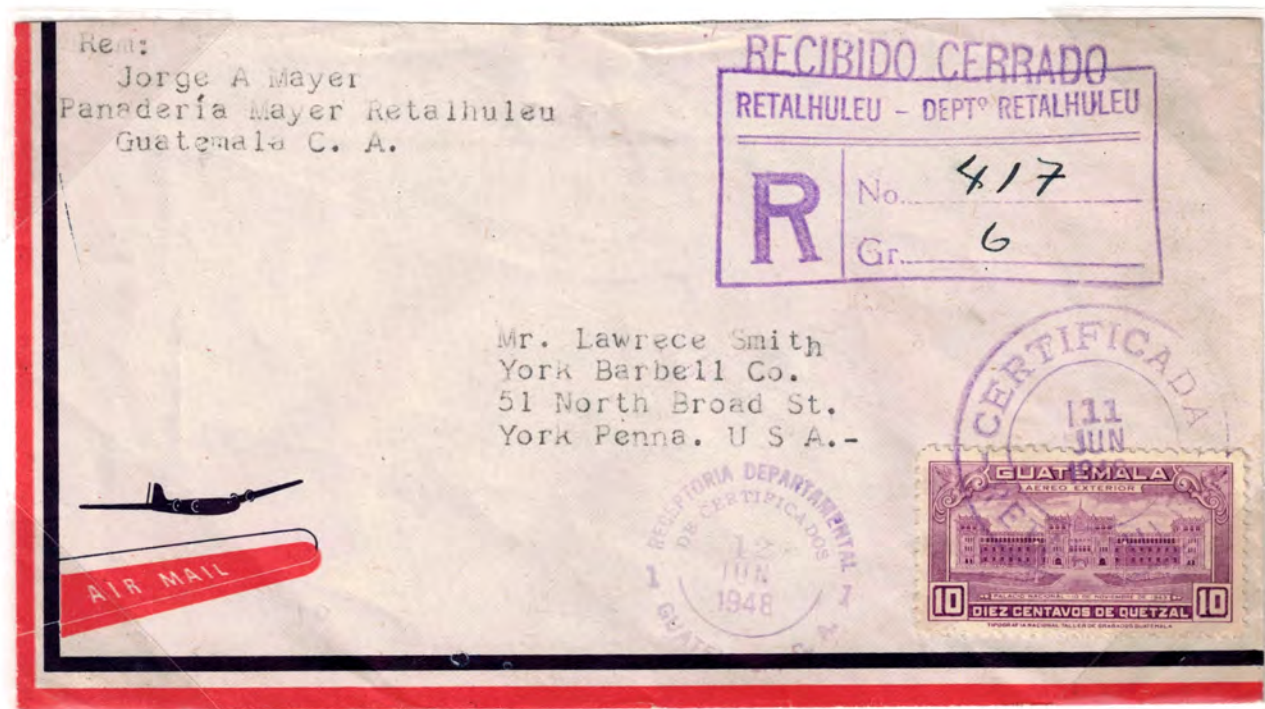
"In mailing this registered mail item, I declare that it contains neither money nor negotiables."

✘ The declaration marking here is used in 1929, a year before the first use date listed in the standard reference work. Note the intact seal of the German Legation in Guatemala.



*Recebido Cerrado, Cerrado Anti Mi,
Received Sealed, Sealed Before Me*

The Guatemalan Post Office attempted to assure that valuables were declared and that postal insurance fees were paid. Different series of markings were used to denote mail sealed in the presence of postal officials, and, conversely, mail which entered the mail stream pre-sealed.



The Cerrado Anti Mi and Recebido Cerrado markings have been studied and cataloged. ✕ The Guatemala City marking, above, has been noted in the literature as in use between

1959 and 1969. This example is from 1955.

✦ The Quetzaltenango marking, below, is not among those noted to date.



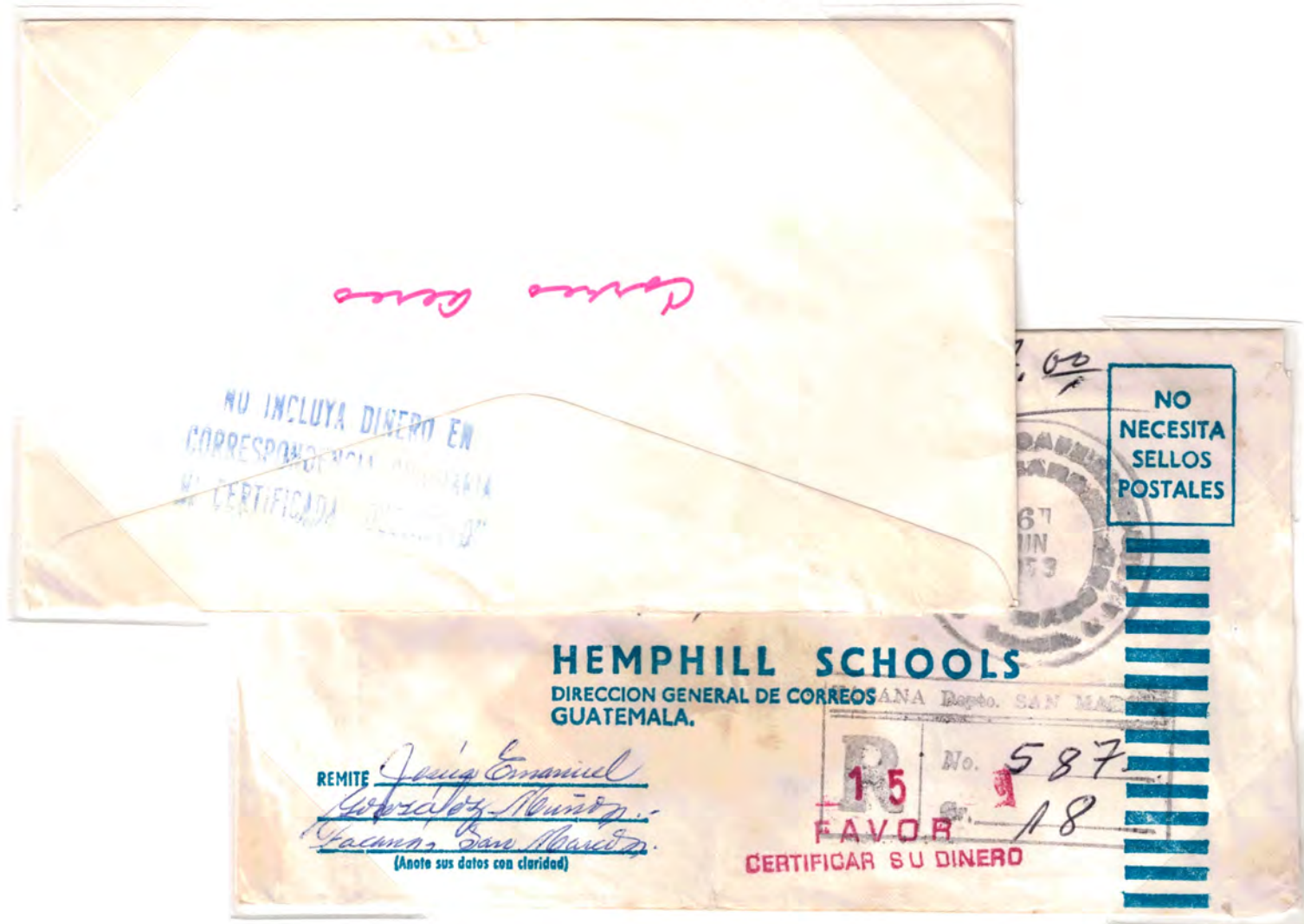
Other auxiliary markings pertaining to sealing and unsealing were used on registered mail. The bilingual marking on the tag immediately below (which apparently was affixed to a mail bag sent to England and containing multiple, sealed registered mail items) offered the items for inspection by British customs authorities. The markings on the two other items on this page urged postal patrons to use the insured mail service for their money and valuables.



♦ Neither the marking on this tag, nor any marking serving a similar function, has been noted in the Guatemalan philatelic literature heretofore.



♦ The marking on the first of the two covers below (mailed in Guatemala City) is one noted previously. The marking on the second cover (mailed in the small *municipio* of Tacaná in the far western department of San Marcos) is new.



Advice of Receipt

Covers bearing relevant markings are not often encountered.



The typical advice of receipt marking used at the Guatemala City post office in the 1925-40 era appears in the lower left corner of the cover above. This is an early use of that marking.

The international advice of receipt card below bears the marking of the same post office typical of 1960, its date of mailing.

This item below is of sentimental value to me. It was affixed to a cover mailed from an address one block up the street from the hotel in the old quarter of Guatemala City at which I stay every winter. Additionally, it was processed through the U.S. post office which served the New York City neighborhood in which I lived until I was 11 years of age.

Form 2865 (1-66) **AIR MAIL** C5

ADMINISTRACION DE CORREOS
Administration Des Postes

Sello de la Of. que envía el aviso.
Timbre du bureau renvoyant l'avis

Servicio de Correos
Service des Postes

(1)

AVISO DE RECEPCION
Avis de réception

(2) **YAT MING CAMPANG**
(Nombre o razón social) (Nom ou raison sociale)

6 AV. 14-29 Z 1
(Calle y número) (Rue et número)

GUATEMALA

a(d) Localidad localité País Pays

1 Si el presente aviso debe ser enviado por avión, revestirlo de la mención muy aparente "Devéjase por avión" y de la etiqueta o de una marca de color azul Por avión.
Si le présent avis doit être renvoyé par avion le revêtir de la mention très apparente "Renvoi par avion" et de l'étiquette ou de une empreinte de couleur bleue "Par avion"

1 A llenar por el remitente, quien indicará su dirección para el presente aviso.
A remplir par l'expéditeur qui indiquera son adresse pour le renvoi du présent avis.

A. DE R. **A. DE R.**

Citación
Registered Mail Delivery Attempt Notations

1^o CITACION



This specific *primera citación* ("first attempt"; or, literally, "first summons") marking has been noted previously as having been in use at the Guatemala City post office in 1941.

Like other Guatemalan philatelists, I have been unable to discover other, similar mark-

ings used prior to the 1990s. The practice later in the 1940s and throughout the 1950s with respect to marking registered items which proved undeliverable after the first attempt (and after succeeding attempts as well) remains something of a mystery, pending identification of additional, relevant covers.

Registry Boxes for Specific Classes of Mail:



Dedicated registry boxes were used both on outgoing overseas mail ("Servicio Exterior"), and also on mail for which an after hours processing surcharge had been paid ("Servicio Nocturno").

SERVICIO NOCTURNO	
GUATEMALA, C. A.	
R	No. 542.
	Gr. 22

DETROIT, MICH.,
U.S.A.

EXPORT DIVISION

SERVICIO NOCTURNO	
GUATEMALA, C. A.	
R	No. 542.
	Gr. 22

DIRECTIONAL AND INSTRUCTIONAL MARKINGS

ROUTING MARKINGS

Routing markings were applied to overseas mail in an era when, at least theoretically, letters could leave Guatemala through any of two Pacific ports (Chamerico and Puerto San José) or three Atlantic ports (Puerto Barrios — then the

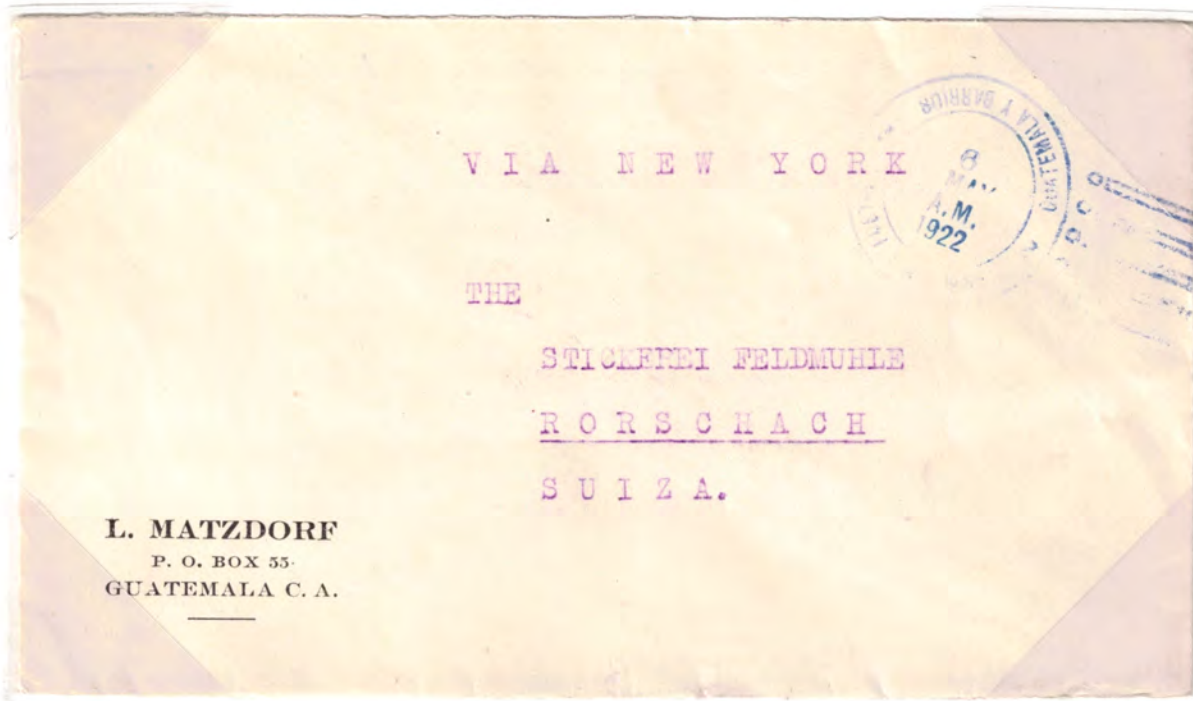
newest and busiest port, Santo Tomás de Castilla, and Livingston). Mailer's routing markings (below) were used quite commonly. Postally applied markings (like those displayed on the following page), were used less often.



Mailer Applied Routing Markings:

Most often, mailers applied routing markings themselves, by hand or typewriter, in the course of addressing a cover. A wide variety of mailer's hand stamps also were used.

This sender mailed two covers, which undoubtedly contained duplicates of the same letter, on the same day, from the same place, addressed identically — but with markings routing one cover through New Orleans and the second cover through New York.



The sender's need to speed his correspondence to Switzerland also is highlighted by the fact that he went out to the train station and handed the letters to the *ambulante postal* on the mail train leaving for Puerto Barrios.

Unfortunately, no U.S. or European transit markings appear on either cover to show which one arrived first. (I bought these two covers from different vendors in different countries.)

Post Office Applied Routing Markings: Comparison of markings on covers in my collection has allowed one to identify certain stamped routing markings as having been postally applied. Examples appear below.

The 1919 cover displayed immediately below shows the main Guatemala City Post Office's commonly applied routing marking stamp, *Via Puerto Barrios & New Orleans*. It is recognized in the literature as a postally applied marking.

♦ The specific, long-lived, rubber stamped *via Puerto Barrios & New York* marking seen on both the second and third covers was applied at the post office in the departmental capital of Mazatenango, in 1938 and in 1926, respectively.

Often, it is difficult to determine whether routing markings on covers from rural post offices were postally applied. In the case of this Mazatenango marking, I have seen sufficient examples on covers sent by different mailers to be confident that it indeed is a postally applied marking.



OPENED BY

The Guatemalan post office first offered *servicio expreso*, which was an urban special delivery service within Guatemala City, on a regular basis in 1896. Reported examples of the early marks are few. Rather little is known of the details of that service prior to the Second World War.

A distinct express mail service existed as well, but only at certain points in time. It linked some of the most remote of the departmental centers with Guatemala City. Provincial *expreso* markings are displayed at the end this section of the exhibit.



♦ *Servicio Expreso* date stamps were recorded in this era from the remote provincial cities which had express mail services to the Capital. Examples follow in this section of the exhibit. However, no marking heretofore recorded bore the word *Expreso* alone, and none has been recorded as having been in use in the national capital. This marking may have been reserved for official mail.

This peso-denominated postal stationery bears the blue indicium of the Audit Division of the Post Office. Other examples of this prestamped envelope were up-rated and re-denominated in Quetzal currency units, for international mail. The black legend at the top left is in a different ink, and likely was imprinted after the currency change, when a small batch of these now obsolescent envelopes were set aside for official use.

In the post-World War II era, Guatemala's *servicio expreso* was renamed *entrega inmediata*. Also, the service appears to have been harmonized with the special delivery services

of other UPU countries. Many of the markings used in the 1950s were bilingual, being rendered both in Spanish and in English. Examples are displayed on this page.



The range and variety of post-War special delivery markings begs for further study. Chapter 25 of *Postal Markings of Guatemala* began to catalog just those applied in Guatemala City.

and 1966, and all incorporating the same three-line slogan. The black marking adds an eighth three-line item to that list.

Above: ♦ Gruson records seven distinct marks which were used just between 1954

Below: ♦ This two-line mark predates any of the 13 two-line markings (all using the same slogan) there cataloged.



SPECIAL DELIVERY

POST. OFFICE OF GUATEMALA

Overseas special delivery mail began to receive English language markings in the 1950s.

✂ The later of the two markings (seen here on the № 10 cover) was short lived, perhaps due to embarrassment over the misspelling of *post office* as “post. office”. Bilingual Spanish-English markings came at a later date. This cover represents a rather early use of this marking.



Cover sent to Nassau Street dealer, 1954.

The remote Alta Verapaz thrived during the coffee boom of the 1920s and '30s. However, the region's continual, year-round rainfall made road construction and maintenance extremely difficult, and mail service frustratingly unreliable.

Between 1930 and the early 1940s, a series of premium-priced express mail services were implemented between the departmental capital of Cobán and Guatemala City, in some cases using motorcycle messengers and special passenger buses.

Efforts to improve the Alta Verapaz's links with Guatemala City may have been intended to thwart the efforts of German coffee exporting interests to revive the old port at Livingston. Coffee shipments via Livingston stood to circumvent the United Fruit Company's government-sponsored monopoly of Guatemala's ports and railroads.

The covers displayed here and on the following page bear marks associated with one or another of those express services. Each cover arrived in the national capital on the same day that it was mailed in Cobán.

SERVICIO
2 PM 15 MAY 1931
EXPRESO

♦ A series of *Servicio Expreso* markings, all generally like the one shown on this cover, were used at the Cobán post office in the period 1929-'33. This specific marking is not noted in the philatelic literature.

Air service to and from Cobán began ten months before this cover was posted. My reference collection establishes that the *Via Aerea* / *Air Mail* marking also was applied by the Cobán post office, and not by the sender. It, combined with the *Servicio Expreso* mark, may denote that the cover was to be carried by whichever service would get it to Guatemala City the soonest.

As the cover bears a 3:30 p.m. Guatemala City receiving mark on its back side, the mail plane must have flown on this day.

VIA AEREA
AIR MAIL



The Petén was Guatemala's most remote region. This northern third of the country comprised, in essence, a commercial colony (not a full-fledged department) until the 1860s. No all-weather road linked *El Petén* to the outside world until the late 1950s.

The cover displayed below shows an express mail marking applied at Flores, the Petenero capital, for expedited carriage to Guatemala City.



♦ This *Servicio Expreso* date and hour stamp on this June 1933 cover is about 10% larger than, but otherwise identical to, markings associated in this era with express mail dispatched to the capital from three other provincial cities. The cover was mailed in Flores on the 25th and endorsed for express service the following day.

The *servicio expreso* marking is applied in the same ink as used for the *Servicio Aereo / Flores - Peten* circular date stamp, which appear (very faintly) in the lower left corner on the reverse.

The Guatemala City receiving mark indicates that the cover traveled the 165 air miles to the capital in one hour. The 12c postage (plus the 1c postal tax) was correct for an internal air mail letter of up to 10 grams to the Petén, under the rate schedule specific just to that region, and known to have been promulgated in 1935.

This cover suggests that the rate actually was in effect, *de facto* at least, from some earlier date on which the service first became available.



A domestic printed matter rate is shown in the Guatemalan postal rate tables beginning in 1881. A rate was introduced for printed matter sent anywhere in Central America in

1905, and from 1922 for other foreign destinations. We await the first philatelic study of the associated markings.



Markings for overseas printed matter: The relatively rare overseas items bearing postage appropriate to the printed matter rate typically bore class of service markings (as on the two covers shown here). There is as of yet no published survey of the markings which were used.

One encounters domestic covers franked with a bisected 1c stamp fairly frequently, although stamps for the ½ centavo printed matter rate were issued periodically starting in 1928.



It appears to have been at least a *de facto* practice to permit printed matter to be mailed internally without any marking to indicate the class of service.

Parcel wrappers suffer a very low survival rate and often did not show legible impressions of postal markings. Hence few examples have survived of the markings which indicated that parcels (whether domestic or foreign) were franked at the applicable reduced rate. Our literature notes that many of the markings are known from only one or two surviving strikes.

Encomiendas (Domestic Parcels)

Previously unrecorded *encomienda* markings: Happily, the postal clerks in Quetzaltenango used two different *encomienda* markings unique to the second city on ordinary letters.

♦ The 1944 example (first cover) displays a previously unrecorded marking which was intended for either of two reduced-rate services: *encomiendas* or *impresos* (domestic parcels or printed matter).

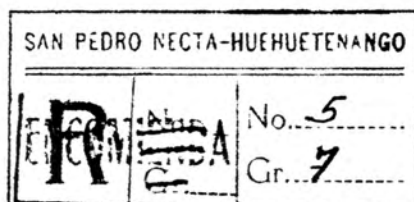
♦ The second cover's marking (also previously unrecorded) was intended for any of three services with concessionary rates: *encomiendas*, *muestras* (samples), or *impresos*.

The second cover also is noteworthy because it was mailed by an inmate of the women's prison (see return address); however, it received no censorship marking.



Encomienda Registry Boxes

Few impressions survive of the registry box markings unique to Guatemala's *encomienda* (domestic parcel) service. Published illustrations mostly are incomplete, having been reconstructed from portions of markings struck on loose postage stamps.

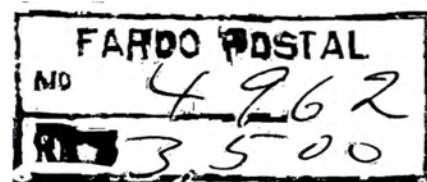
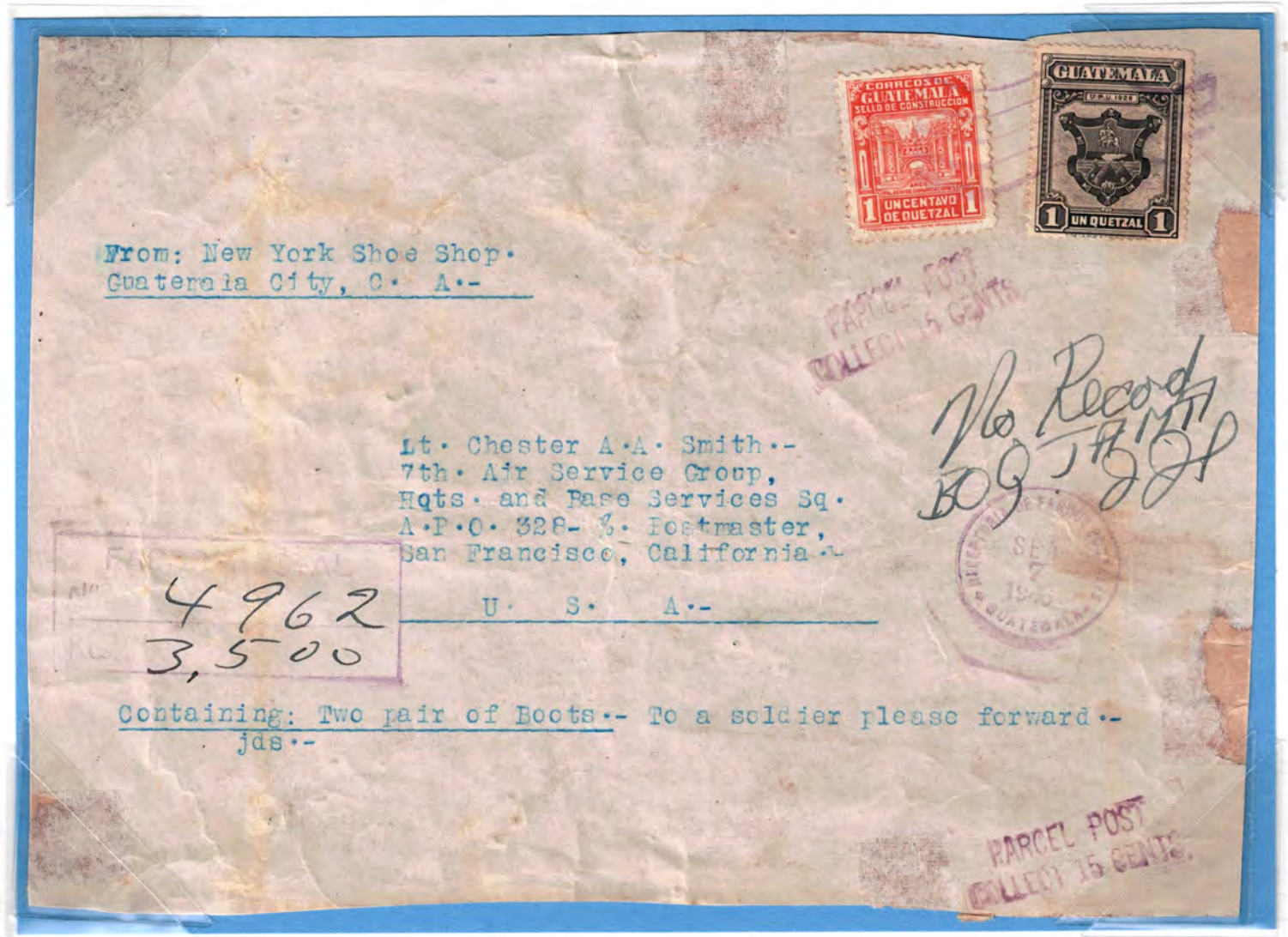


♦ No box of this style has been recorded heretofore in our philatelic literature. For some unknown reason, the post office at the tiny (and only recently established) *municipio* of San Pedro Necta, in Huehuetenango Department, used its *encomienda* registry box on a registered, declared value letter. Perhaps San Pedro's ordinary registry box marking stamp had been lost or damaged. Whatever the reason, we now have a rare, complete example of this marking.



Fardos Postales (Foreign Parcels)

No complete weight and value box has been found from the *encomienda* service. Examples illustrated in the literature have been reconstructed from fragments. This mail piece may display the only known surviving example of a weight and registration number box from the *fardo* service.



♦ The *fardo* circular date stamp is typical in size and layout to other circular date stamps in general use in Guatemala in the mid-1940s. Five different date stamps for this service had been recorded. None had been known heretofore for this time period.

♦ This is the first weight and registration number box for a *fardo postal* to be recorded in the Guatemala philatelic literature. Its design and size are generally similar to boxes then in use in the registered mail service. However, it was not patterned upon any specific registry box of that era.

Guardalmacen (Storekeeper) Marking

In the mid-1930s a unique marking appears to have been assigned to a *guardalmacen* (literally translated, a storekeeper) whose job it was to hold incoming recorded mail items pending payment of the required customs duty.

A slightly earlier *guardalmacen* marking has been recorded. It, however, appears to have been utilized for different purposes, such as a transit marking for registered mail passing through the county's main post office.



♦ The only examples of this 1935 era *guardalmacen* marking I have found appear on letter-size shipments of postage stamps from different foreign dealers to the Guatemala Stamp Company.

If the marking ordinarily was used on incoming, dutiable *fardos*, it is possible that the vast majority of examples of this mark vanished as the parcels' wrappers were ripped off and discarded.



Government department, and some quasi-governmental entities as well, enjoyed free mailing privileges. They placed unique indicia upon covers to indicate that they bore this free franking privilege. Official mail also commonly received postmarks, registry markings, and other auxiliary markings unique to this class of service.

Indicia

Some standardization existed with respect to free franking indicia during the period of this study. Circular indicia like those on the first two covers below were most common. However, a wide range of state entities used non-standardized (but usually circular) indicia.



Free franking privileges and other benefits of official mail status were afforded to a small number of non-governmental entities. Their franking indicia varied widely in both design and content.



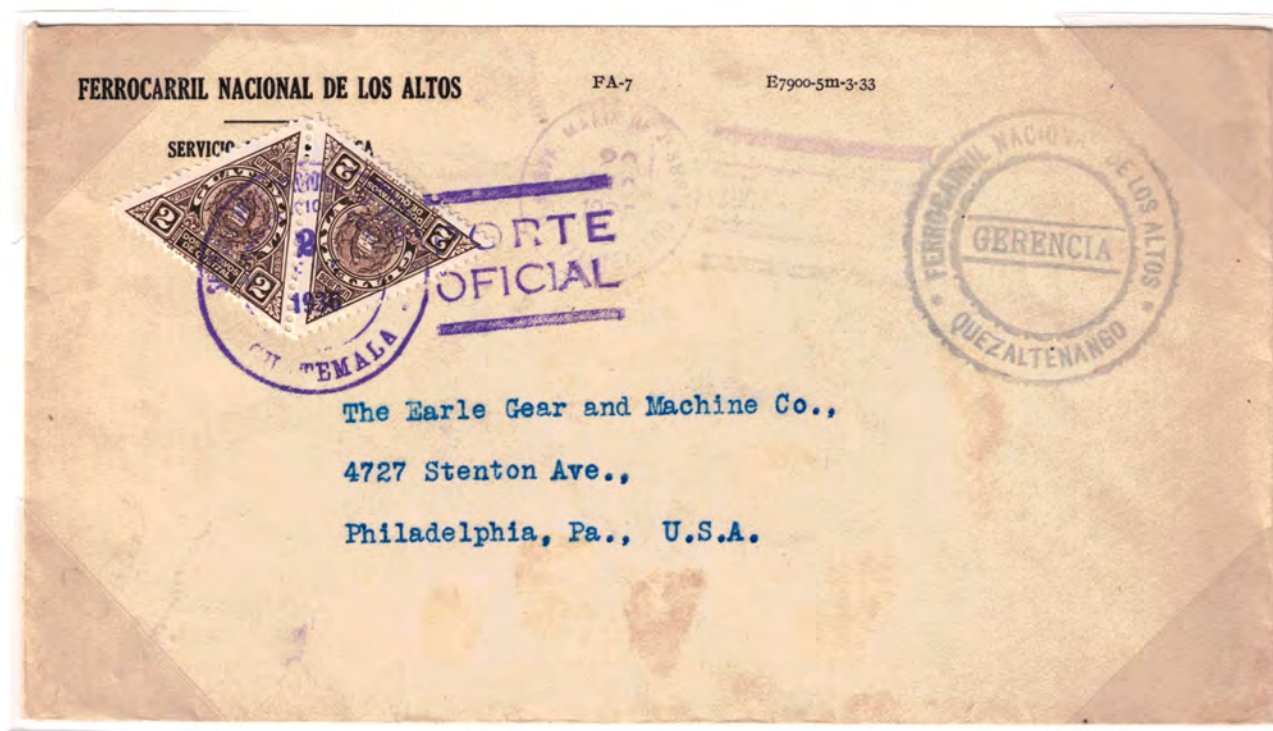
Two types of non-governmental entities received official mail privileges.

Above: These covers exemplify the grant of official mail privileges to about a half-dozen organizations deemed to provide inestimable community benefit. Shown are indicium of the Catholic Church and the Philatelic Society of Guatemala.

Below: Commercial entities which received highly lucrative, long-term franchises to operate major ports and railroads gained official mailing rights (as well as various other unique privileges) under their respective franchise agreements.



Free franking privileges also were extended at different times to corporations granted other special franchises, such as the entity which built and operated the country's first electric interurban railroad, and Guatemala's primary issuer of agricultural and construction loans.



The *Ferrocarril Nacional de los Altos*, or National Railroad of the Highlands cover (above) is especially noteworthy. Atypically, this institution here uses official stamps of the 1929 series, in addition to the indicium of its board of directors (*Gerencia*).

Also, the cover dates from 1936 – three years *after* much of the railroad's right of way was destroyed by a storm, and the remainder was dismantled by order of the central government (in the face of strong opposition on the part of the residents of *Los Altos*).



Official Date Stamps

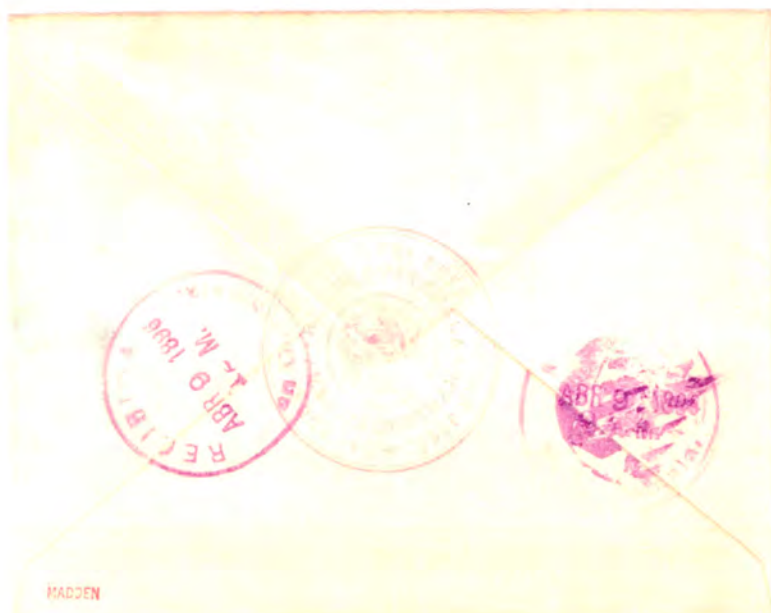
A date stamp of the late 19th century Waterlow type was distributed to selected post offices. Provincial examples are less commonly encountered than markings from Guatemala City. Its use continued only into the first few years of the period studied in this exhibit. No official date stamps then were in use for a period of almost three decades. Official duplex postmarks first were adopted in the early 1930s.



A perfect strike of the official date stamp of the post office at Puerto San José appears in blue. It remained in use into the period of this study. (3T (*tarde*) reflects the time: three o'clock in the afternoon.)

The larger red marking is the official mail free franking indicium of the Customs House at the now abandoned Port of San José.

The cover is addressed to the Manager of the Bank of Guatemala.



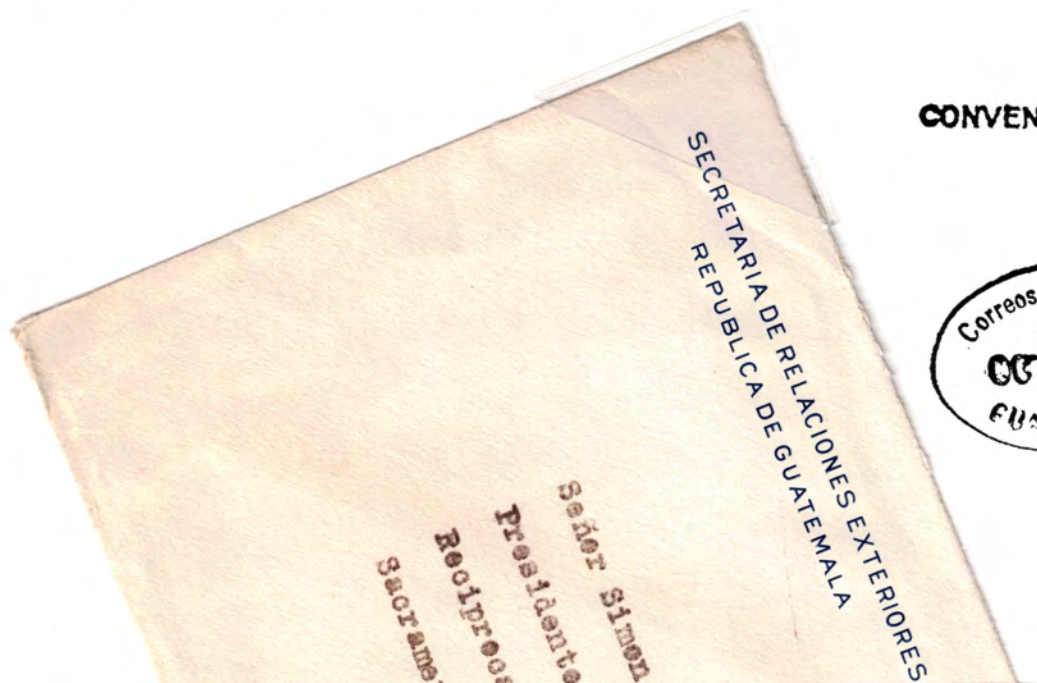


Consulado General
de los Estados Unidos de America
Correspondencia Oficial
Franquicia Postal Panamericana

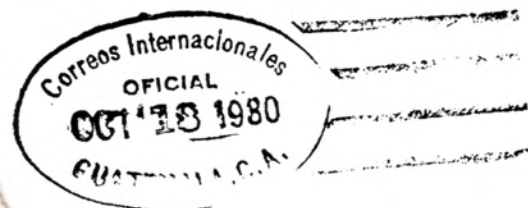
Both Guatemalan government departments, and also foreign diplomatic missions in Guatemala, enjoyed free franking privileges on international mail within the several countries of the Postal Union of the Americas, Spain and Portugal (commonly known as the Panamerican Postal

Union). Two of the more common forms of free franking legends are displayed on this and the preceding page. However, the full range of Postal Union markings used within Guatemala would itself fill a small philatelic exhibit.





ARTICULO 6
CONVENCION POSTAL PANAMERICANA
LIBRE DE PORTE.



When Guatemala reintroduced official date stamps in 1930, they were designed for, and intended for use on, international mail. Domestic official mail continued to travel with only the free franking indicium of the relevant ministry or government office. The first international

official mail duplex cancellation, seen on this cover, appears either with stamps of the triangular official issue of 1929, or (as here) with an explanation of the exemption from the new Universal Postal Union requirement for international mail to bear postage stamps.



Three major types of duplex devices were created for use exclusive on international official mail in the 1930s and 1940s. Each corresponded to the design of the duplex cancellation devices which were in general distribution within Guatemala at the time it was issued.



A tiny handful of purpose-made receiving marks and registry boxes were in use at the Guatemala City post office especially for registered internal official mail over the course of the 1930s and 1940s.

The Apostolic Nunciature (or Embassy of Vatican City) in Guatemala enjoyed free franking and official mailing privileges. Free franking included only basic postage. The extra fees for registration and air carriage still had to be paid in the ordinary way.



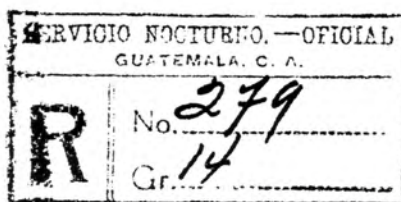
No dedicated official mail registry boxes are known to have been in use in the 1950s. Three such boxes are known to have been in use, however, between about 1960 and 1964. Each of the three incorporates a date element at the left, in place of the usual large R.

CERTIFICADOS OFICIALES	
1 OCT 1966	Nº 500089 Gr.
GUATEMALA, GUATEMALA, C. A.	



✕ This particular marking, the last in the series of three, is recorded in the philatelic literature as having only been in use during 1964.

After-hours processing service, *servicio nocturno*, was available at the country's main post office from 1893 until about the late 1960s. For most of this period the fee for this service was double the ordinary postage rate. One special registry box is known to have been used – briefly – for official mail items prepaid for both registered mail and after-hours processing.



❧ The marking is displayed above on a cover posted in February of 1944. This is four years beyond the period during which the standard reference work records it as having been in use.

Air mail service arrived in Guatemala in the late 1920s. Postal clerks soon had appropriate markings to indicate that the required air mail surcharge

had been prepaid. This division of the exhibit shows the evolution of those markings as air mail service developed.

The 37mm diameter double-circle *Correo Aereo* date stamp seen on the right side of this cover has been described as Guatemala's first marking prepared for air mail. As it was significantly larger than other date stamps then in use, it can be said to have served both as an instructional marking and as a date stamp.



♦ The new air mail service required postal clerks to calculate the proper air mail surcharge, based on an item's weight. The marking in the lower left corner of the cover (Illustration 1 below) was used for this purpose at the main post office in the capital.

A marking similar to this one, but worded for use at the Quetzaltenango post office, has been noted in the literature. This cover was mailed a year earlier than the earliest known usage of that Quetzaltenango mark. An example of the Quetzaltenango mark appears on a cover displayed elsewhere in this exhibit and is reproduced in Illustration 2.

The covers bearing this previously unrecorded marking in my reference collection suggest it was in use for a very tiny window of time: just between August 7 and August 11 of 1929.

♦ The French-language *deposée hors de temps* marking (illustration 3) is the real mystery on this cover. (French was the sole official language of the Universal Postal Union until 1994.) The marking is not recorded in the Guatemalan philatelic literature. Although *servicio nocturno* was introduced officially in 1928, Gruson felt that it and its special date stamp were reserved for registered items.

Sporadic after hours processing is known to have predated that marking. Thus, one possibility is that the *deposée hors de temps* marking denoted use of *servicio nocturno* on non-registered overseas mail.

Servicio nocturno markings are treated elsewhere in this exhibit.

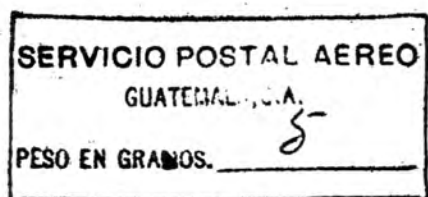


Illustration 1



Illustration 2

DEPOSÉE HORS DE TEMPS

Illustration 3



A second distinctively designed date stamp came into use on international air mail. It was applied to air mail items posted in the capital, or which passed through the main post office, between 1930 and 1932.

No other Guatemalan duplex postal marking featured a squared circle date element. The distinctive design of Guatemala's second air mail date stamp allowed it too to serve double duty as a directional marking for air mail items.

Just two of the cities served in the 1930s by internal air mail had date stamps specific to that service. The first of the two air mail devices used at Flores, the main city in the isolate Petén region, appears on the reverse of this cover. Once again, it is a larger CDS than was common in the era, allowing it to serve double duty as a directional marking. (See full-size reproduction to the right.)



Postal Service Envelope: The Auxiliary Markings Club's definition of an auxiliary marking encompasses legends imprinted on postal service letters, in which individually postal items might travel during a part of their journey through the mail system.

Guatemala's first regularly scheduled air mail service to all of North America and the Caribbean, and much of Central America as well, was routed through Miami. Mail to most countries was bagged separately. However, the Guatemalan post office printed a special *Servicio Postal Aereo* service envelope for the few air mail items which might be traveling to Miami for transshipment to one of the less common air mail destinations.

Gruson at one point believed that she might have had the only surviving example. Reitsma's collection also includes an example. This service envelope was used for the seventh scheduled dispatch of international air mail from Guatemala City in January of 1930.

Just three surviving Guatemalan postal service envelopes may have survived. This would then be the earliest of them.

All extant Guatemalan air mail service envelopes were used for mail destined for the Dominican Republic. Postal clerks in Santo Domingo may have sold these out of the back door of the local post office.



Identifying Air Mail Markings As Postally Applied Markings – Not Mailers' Markings

A series of "air mail" hand stamps – some bilingual in Spanish and English, yet others unilingual in Spanish or in English – were applied at various cities in the early 1930s. When used on international air mail (as on the first and the third of the covers shown), it was assumed that air carriage would extend only as far as practical, given the absence of regular transoceanic air mail service.

The second of these covers was mailed in Cobán; the other two were mailed in Guatemala City. Using several examples of each

mark in my reference collection, I have determined each of these three air mail markings to have been postally applied.

Each cover displays an "air mail" auxiliary marking which I have seen on other covers mailed at the respective post offices by different mail users, and inked in a color and manner consistent with other postal markings on those covers. Thus, these markings would have been applied by postal clerks, and not by mail users themselves.



Jusqu'à Markings:

Exploratory and experimental air mail flights crossed the North Atlantic from the early 1930s. However, a regular transoceanic service was not established until Pan American Airways began a weekly flying boat service from New York to Europe, by way of Bermuda, in 1939. Markings were introduced in many countries to show that air mail service had been prepaid for only the first portion of a letter's journey to its overseas destination.

French-language auxiliary markings were put into service at the Guatemala City post office beginning in 1934 to denote that letters had been *affranchi par avion jusqu'à New York*: "paid by air as far as New York". The last of the Guatemala *jusqu'à* marking stamps were phased out once regular and affordable trans-Atlantic air mail was established in the post-World War II era.

**AFFRANCHI PAR AVION JUSQU'A
NEW YORK**

Three different *jusqu'à* markings were used at the main post office in Guatemala City during overlapping periods in the 1930s. This 45 x 6mm mark (Gruson type 3) here is used a year before its previously assumed date of introduction.

**AFFRANCHI PAR AVION JUSQU'A
NEW YORK**

A total of eight distinct markings were used by the Guatemalan post office. While all bore exactly the same legend, they are distinguishable from one another by their fonts and overall dimensions. Three of the eight markings, including this one (Gruson type 8) were introduced in 1941.

AFFRANCHI PAR AVION JUSQU'À
NEW YORK

Type 4

AFFRANCHI PAR AVION JUSQU'À
NEW YORK

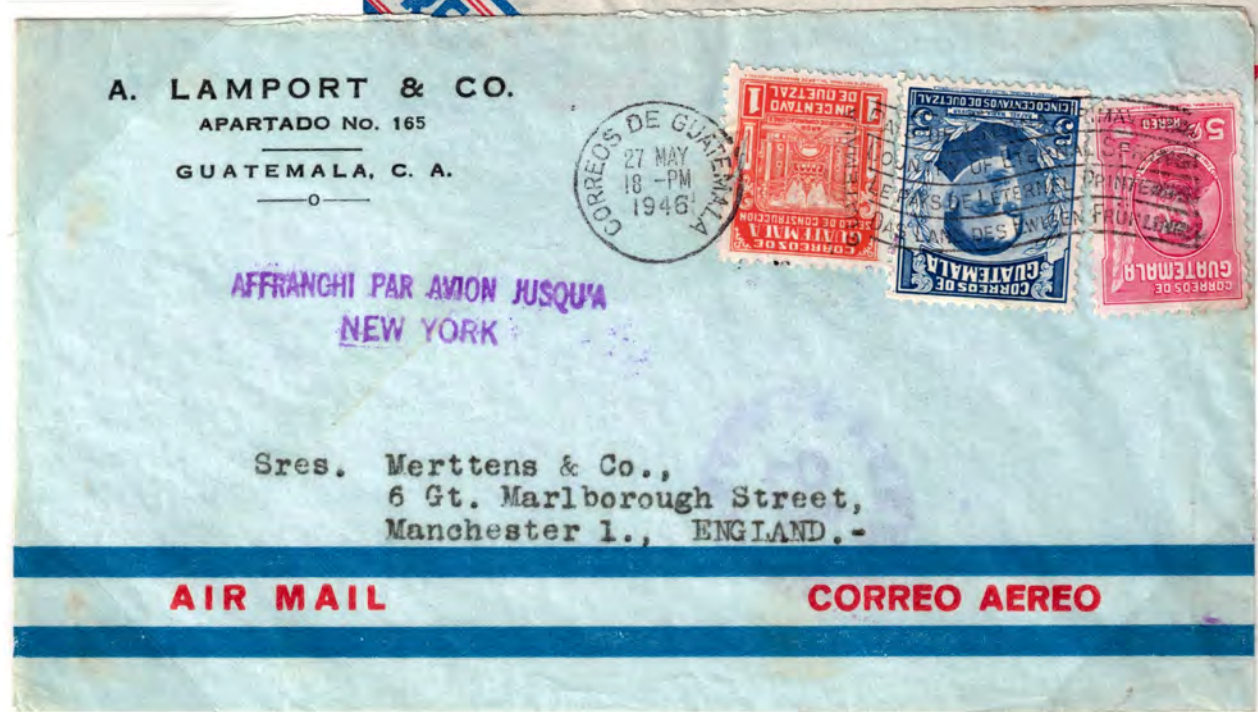
Type 6

AFFRANCHI PAR AVION JUSQU'À
NEW YORK

Type 7

In the years immediately following World War II, the increasing volume of trans-Atlantic mail prepaid for air carriage as far as New York created a need for additional *jusqu'à New York* markings. The various markings differed in font and in size.

The three covers on this page show Gruson type 4, 6, and 7 *Jusqu'à New York* instructional markings, respectively. Each cover was mailed at about the mid point of the years during which the particular marking was being applied to mail bound for Europe at the main post office in Guatemala City.



Jusqu'à San Francisco, California

A rarely used *affranchi par avion jusqu'à San Francisco, Cal.* marking was created, to denote trans-Pacific mail prepaid for air carriage only as far as the west coast of the United States. Gruson reported having seen just one cover bearing such a mark – being an incorrect use of it on a letter

mailed in 1934 from Guatemala to France. Cheung published an article recently in *El Quetzal* which includes a photograph of a cover sent to China and bearing the Guatemalan trans-Pacific *jusqu'à* marking. Cheung's cover was posted in January of 1939.



✂ The cover above and the QSL card on the following page are two of only four known items bearing a Guatemalan *affranchi par avion jusqu'à San Francisco, Cal.* marking. These two items are the only known surviving mail pieces sent to Australasia and bearing that auxiliary marking.

The marking on these two mail pieces appears to be identical in dimensions and font to the marking on the 1939 cover depicted in Cheung's March 2013 journal article. (Gruson did not offer a depiction of the marking she saw.)

This marking enjoyed a longer service life than did any of the far more frequently used *jusqu'à New York* markings. While eight distinct *affranchi par avion jusqu'à New York* marks are known, it appears that only one Guatemalan *jusqu'à San Francisco, Cal.* marking entered postal service.

Jusqu'à San Francisco, Cal.



Although the postmark date is not legible, the reverse of the QSL card (reproduced to the right at 75% of actual size) bears the legend "QSO Oct-17-1948." It indicates that shortly after midnight on that Sunday morning the sender, who was a amateur radio operator in Guatemala City, communicated with fellow ham operator VK5RX in Australia. The mail piece most likely was posted the following week.



Flying boats began to carry the mails from New York to Europe in May of 1939. The Guatemalan post office introduced markings for mail being sent to New York by air for onward carriage by this new service.

✦ The mailer had endorsed this cover for carriage on the Pan American Flying Clipper's more southerly New York to Lisbon route. Thus, the rubber stamped *Transatlantic Air Mail Service* marking most likely was postally applied. The mark's dimensions of 73 x 4mm set it apart from the postal markings with this legend which have been noted to date.

TRANSATLANTIC AIR MAIL SERVICE



Air carriage of correspondence to destinations beyond the Western Hemisphere remained something of a novelty throughout the immediate post-War years. The Guatemalan post office thus continued to

use its Transatlantic Air Mail markings. Only by the mid- to late 1950s did the novelty begin to wear off, and the instructional markings change accordingly.

TRANSATLANTIC AIR SERVICE

This 1946 cover to Palestine, an unusual destination for Guatemalan mail, displays a relatively small, black, 45 x 3mm marking. It was introduced at the Guatemalan City post office in 1946, and it remained in use for about five years.



♦ The large 73 x 4mm marking noted on the previous page here is seen still in use in the post-War years.



During this era a unique *Transatlantic Air Mail Service* marking may have been reserved for use on official mail only.



TRANSATLANTIC AIR MAIL SERVICE

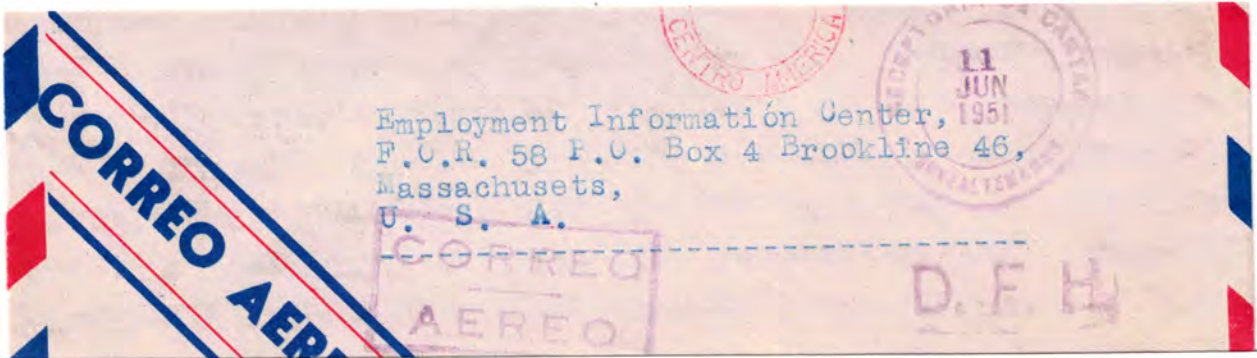
♦ The 162 x 4mm marking on this January 1950 cover is applied in the same ink as the duplex *porte oficial* (official carriage) duplex air mail postmark, and may have been applied by the official mail section of the main post office.

✂ This is a late use of the duplex official marking: the standard reference work attributes it to 1948 only.

The cover was mailed from the public relations department of the President's Office. A civilian, Juan José Arévalo, served as President of Guatemala from 1945-51.

President Arévalo's tenure saw the establishment of the country's first meaningful political parts, as well as the first steps toward the introduction of free labor unions in Guatemala.

The adoption of a more generic postally applied air mail marking occurred sooner in the post office at Quetzaltenango, Guatemala's second largest city. By 1951, this post office had adopted a simple, boxed marking for application to outgoing air mail, regardless of destination.



♦ Establishing a marking as having been postally applied: I have encountered this boxed 37 x 28mm *Correo Aereo* mark on mail sent by private individuals (as opposed to business houses, which might have purchased identical *air mail* mailer's markings from the same stationer or rubber stamp maker). Invariably, the inking matches that of other

postally applied markings on each cover. This establishes the *Correo Aereo* marking to have been a postally applied directional marking and not a private mailer's mark. Examples have not been found on mail originating elsewhere (except for letters mailed elsewhere in Quetzaltenango Department, which would have been sorted in the Departmental capital).

A great many non-standard, locally produced markings were in use by the post office at Xela in the 1930s through the 1950s.



♦ Provincial Air Mail Markings: The post office in at least one provincial city on the 1930s air mail system had its own *servicio aereo* device which it used to mark postal items intended to be conveyed to the capital by air. The Mazatenango post office was not issued with an air mail cancellation device for air mail items sent from that city, as were some other cities on the internal air mail system.

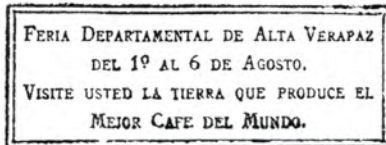
Under practices tolerated in the era, this instructional marking stamp may very well have been purchased by the Mazatenango post office from a local supplier. The *jusqu'à* marking (Gruson type 3) would have been affixed to the cover the next day, once it reached Guatemala City.

SERVICIO AEREO



Correos Nacionales, the Guatemalan Post Office, made extensive use of promotional markings during the first part of the twentieth century. Markings were applied by postal personnel to mail items to promote various causes, including internal travel to the annual festivals in the country's various regions, agrarian reform, the consumption of Guatemalan coffee in Europe and North America, foreign tourism, and other issues of national concern.

As they were postally applied and government sanctioned, Guatemalan philatelists traditionally regard these promotional markings as auxiliary postal markings.



♦ The cover displayed on this page features a previously unrecorded promotional marking which touted the annual departmental fair in the Department of Alta Verapaz, promoted local tourism, and boasted of growing world's best coffee is grown – all this within a 1½ square inch box.



The marking reads "Alta Verapaz Department Fair August 1st to 6th. Visit the land which produces the World's Best Coffee."

The cover contained correspondence between two German-owned *fincas*, or agricultural estates: one in Alta Verapaz Department, in the northern highlands; and the other in Suchi-

tepéquez Department, on the tropical Pacific slope in the south of Guatemala.

The two-line *Via Aerea / Air Mail* auxiliary marking (in the upper left) also has been determined to have been postally applied at Cobán. It is discussed elsewhere in this exhibit.

Guatemala went to great lengths to promote its coffee industry. Four different promotional markings were known to have been used to between 1923 and 1927.

A fifth, precursor coffee promotional mark now has been found. The only reported example is displayed below, matted.



The precursor mark appears on the cover above. The cover below displays the first in the recognized series of four coffee promotional markings of the period 1923-27.

♦ Above: The previously unreported precursor mark ties the postage stamp to this commercial cover. It is identical

to the upper, French-language portion of the "first" coffee promotional marking. Was this a partial proof, perhaps?

Or might the promotion's sponsors quickly have come to realize the advantage of withdrawing the initial design in favor of a bilingual English-French marking, so as better to promote their product abroad?

♦ Below: The "first" coffee promotional mark had only been reported to have been applied in black ink. This cover was mailed in the highlands town of Chichicastenango. However, consistencies in examples of the promotional marking from cover to cover, regardless of the point of mailing, suggest that the mark only was applied to covers in Guatemala City during processing.



GUATEMALAN COFFEE
IS THE BEST ALL OVER
THE WORLD
LE CAFÉ DE GUATEMALA
LA CAFE ET LE MEILLEUR
DU MONDE



The second of the four coffee promotional markings, seen here, is the least commonly encountered. Only red ink examples have been recorded; however, examples well may exist in other colors.

"Guatemalan coffee is the best all over the world. Le café de Guatemala c'est le meilleur du monde."

✗ This second mark appears here on a November 1924 cover, although it is noted in the literature as having been used only during 1925.

BANCO DE GUATEMALA
GUATEMALA, C. A.



via New Orleans

Señores

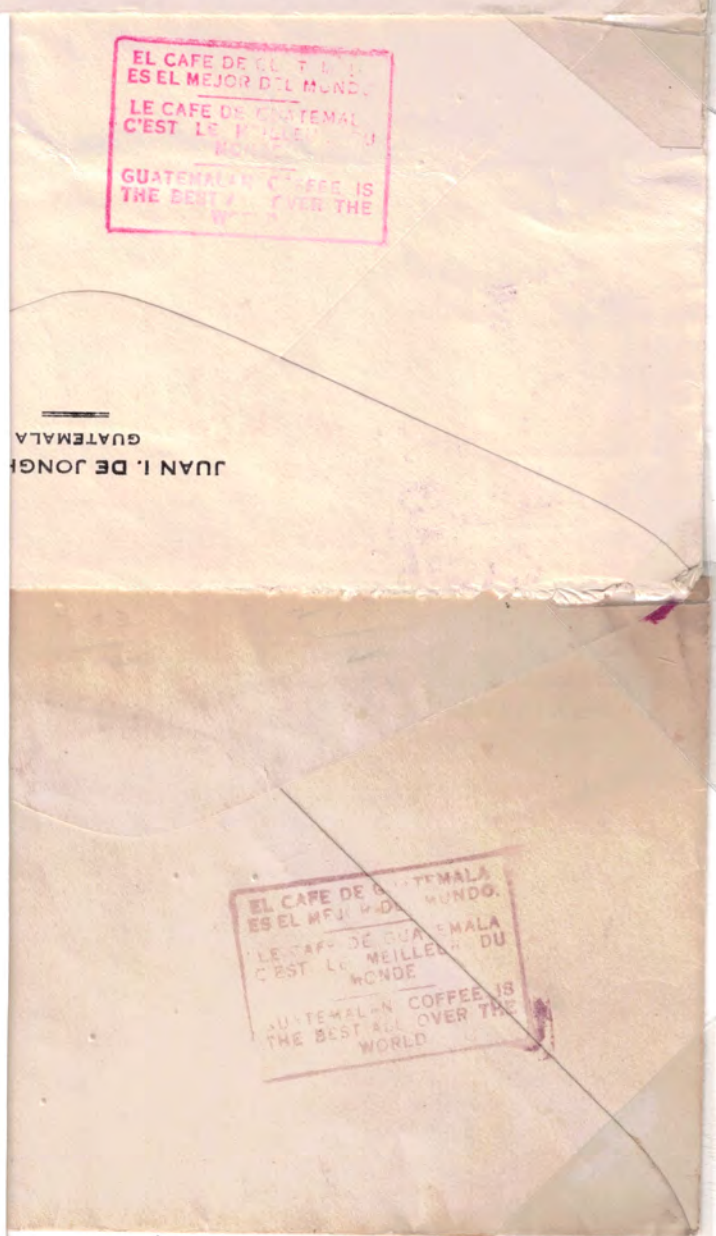
MARCEL PREVIER Sucs.

92, Rue Richelieu.

Paris, Francia.



The third of the coffee promotional markings was used in 1926. It is the most frequently encountered of the set of four markings in this export promotion program.

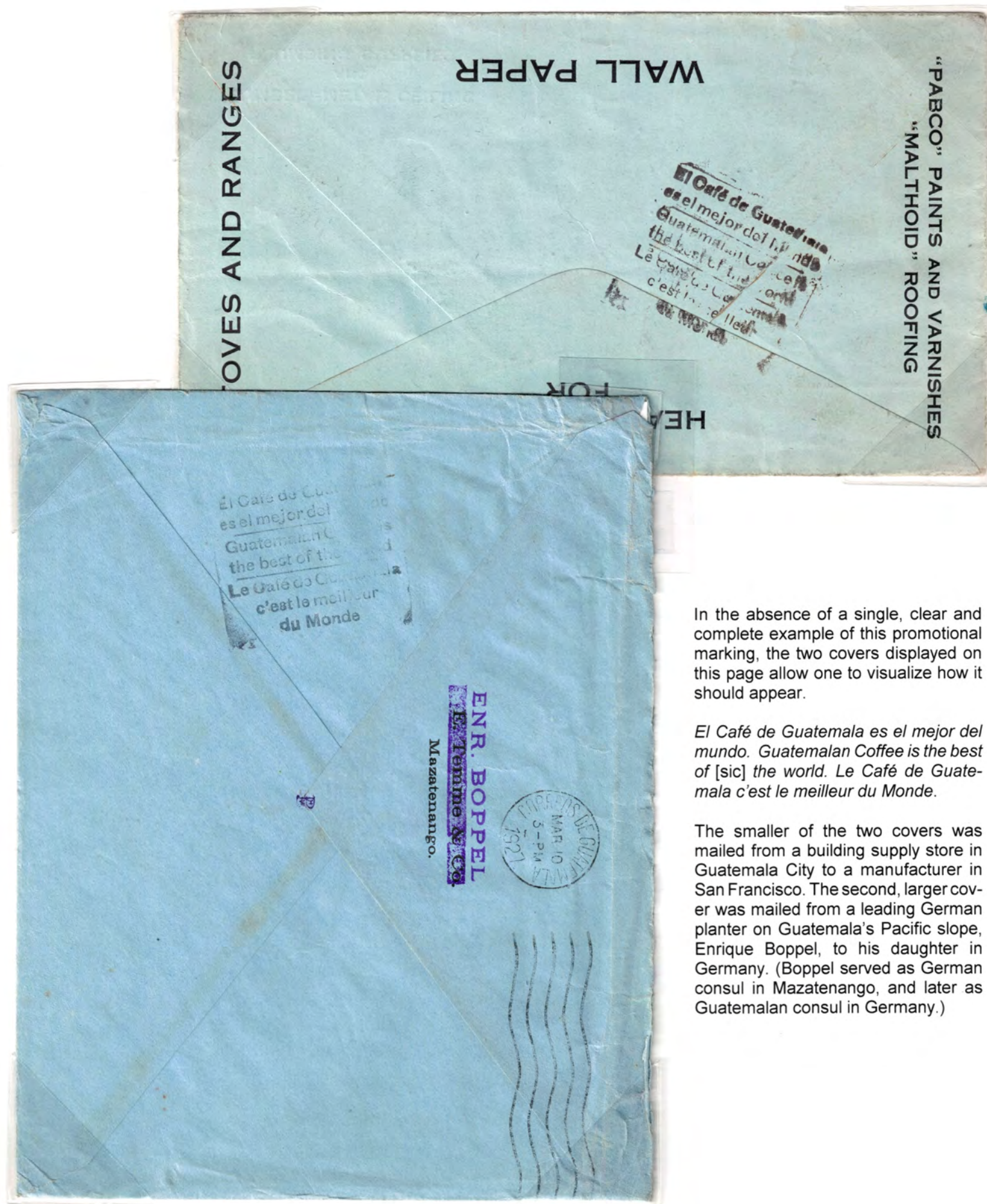


♦ *Postal Markings of Guatemala* indicates this mark to have been applied in purple ink, like the example shown above. However, the mark also is to be found in at least two other colors: red and black examples appear to the right.

The mark reads, *El café de Guatemala es el mejor del mundo. Le café de Guatemala c'est le meilleur du monde. Guatemalan coffee is the best all over the world.*

The three commercial covers displayed on this page were mailed to businesses in Detroit, New York, and St. Louis, respectively.

Fourth (and final) coffee promotional mark, used in 1927.



In the absence of a single, clear and complete example of this promotional marking, the two covers displayed on this page allow one to visualize how it should appear.

El Café de Guatemala es el mejor del mundo. Guatemalan Coffee is the best of [sic] the world. Le Café de Guatemala c'est le meilleur du Monde.

The smaller of the two covers was mailed from a building supply store in Guatemala City to a manufacturer in San Francisco. The second, larger cover was mailed from a leading German planter on Guatemala's Pacific slope, Enrique Boppel, to his daughter in Germany. (Boppel served as German consul in Mazatenango, and later as Guatemalan consul in Germany.)

♦ The Guatemalan philatelic literature records neither unilingual German-language markings promoting the country's coffee, nor does it record any markings which promote the coffee of just one of Guatemala's several coffee growing regions. The promotional marking on this 1933 cover, mailed to Germany from the city of Cobán, in the Department of Alta Verapaz, therefore is exceptional.



TRINKEN SIE
"VERAPAZ - KAFFEE"
AUS DEM HOCHLAND VON
GUATEMALA
ER IST DER BESTE!!

"Think of 'Verapaz coffee' from
the highlands of Guatemala. It's
the best!!"

A unilingual German-language promotional marking for coffee from the Verapaz makes good sense, viewed in the context of early 20th century Guatemalan economic history:

German commercial interests had developed a thriving coffee industry in the Alta Verapaz during the decades preceding World War II. Production was oriented toward the German market. Indeed, the growers financed a railroad from the region toward the coast to move coffee to the old, shallow water port at Livingston. (It was built to circumvent the artificially high freight rates imposed by U.S. interests,

which controlled both the existing rail network and the modern port on the Atlantic coast at Puerto Barrios.) German steamships called at Livingston specifically to load the coffee. Therefore it is not at all surprising to discover that a unilingual German-language marking was applied at Cobán to German-bound mail, so as to promote the consumption of coffee from the Verapaz within Germany.

Promotional markings were supplied by local organizations which wished to promote their communities' annual festivals. Often, such events occurred around the feast day of the community's patron saint. The marks were applied free of charge by local postal clerks, typically during the weeks immediately preceding the event.



Cover from the Municipality of Chicacao in Suchitepéquez Department (which then a large German community) sent to the Netherlands, and properly franked for up to 20 grams.

♦ The promotional mark has been applied in a shade of ink slightly different from that of the Chicacao duplex cancellation, leading one to infer that it was applied during sorting at Mazatenango, which is the departmental capital of Suchitepéquez and the closest city to Chicacao.

The marking reads, *Mazatenango lo espera a su gran feria departamental de "el carnaval" que se celebrara del 20 de febrero al 6 de marzo, próximos*, "Mazatenango invites you to

its principal fair for the whole Department, "Carnaval," which will be celebrated this coming February 20th through March 6th."

The only marking noted heretofore in the philatelic literature promoting Suchitepéquez's annual Carnaval at Mazatenango was applied in 1997.

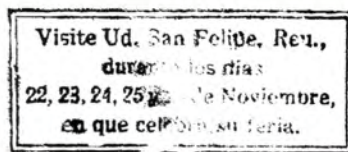
Post offices throughout Guatemala continued to apply markings to promote local fairs during the middle decades of the twentieth century.



VISITE LA FERIA DE CHICHICASTENANGO, DEPARTAMENTO DEL QUICHE, DEL 14 AL 21 DE DICIEMBRE, DE RECONOCIDA IMPORTANCIA COMERCIAL Y TRADICIONES AUTOCTONAS.

"Visit the Chichicastenango Fair, Department of Quiché, from 14 to 21 Dec.; discover its commercial significance and its indigenous traditions."

The marking is reflective of the fact that in this city, with a majority indigenous population, the traditional *cofradías* (Mayan religious brotherhoods) still organized the community's *fiesta*. The tradition continues today.



◆ Previously unrecorded marking, *Visite San Felipe, Reu., durante los días 22, 23, 24, 25 y 26 de Noviembre, en que celebra su feria.* "Visit San Felipe, Reu. [Retalhuleu Department] during the period 22-26 November as it holds its fair." San Felipe is the seat of local government of a *municipalidad* (the smallest unit of Guatemalan local government) located on the Pacific Slope.



◆ Unique duplex *despachada* marking: Simple circular date stamps with *despachada* legends were common, following their introduction in 1941 to supplant dates stamps with the town's name alone. Duplex cancellations of the general type seen in the lower left corner of this

cover (including a 23mm ϕ date circle) also were common in the period 1934-42. However, this marking, which is a duplex of that type, but with a *despachada* imprint, appears to be unique to the small *municipio* of San Felipe.

Promotional marking hand stamps for local events often were obtained from stationers in or near the towns in which each was applied. There was no uniformity in typography, design, or wording.



♦ Two previously unrecorded markings, applied at post offices in large and small communities.

Above: "Attend the great fair of Carnaval this year in the City of Mazatenango, Department of Suchitepéquez." Many Guatemalan towns and cities have major fairs or public celebrations on two occasions: on the day of the community's patron saint; and also during Carnaval, the period immediately before Lent.

Below: Cover promoting the annual fair of the Virgin of Concepción in the tiny *municipio* of Asunción Mita, on the Salvadoran border. "Visit Asunción Mita during its major fair from December 6th through 12th."



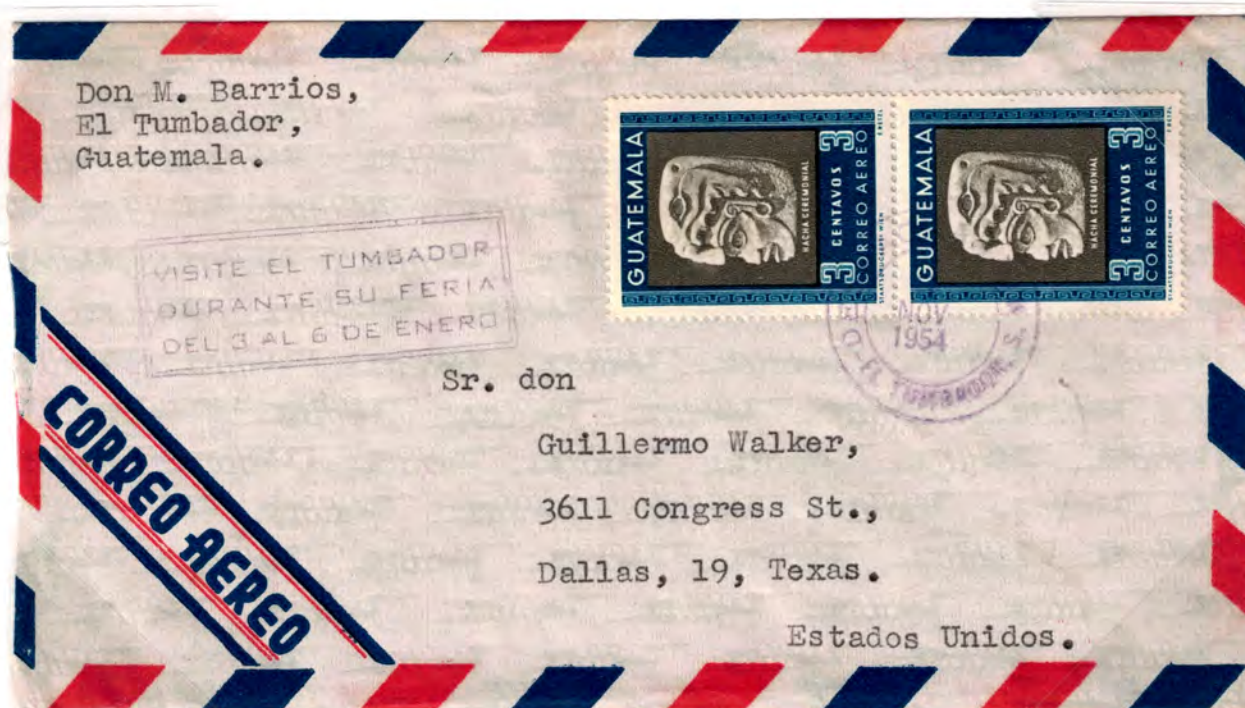
CONGURNA Ud. a la gran Fiesta de
"San Miguel," que se celebra en Po-
chuta, Dep. de Chimaltenango, del
27 al 30 de Septiembre en curso.

VISITE EL TUMBADOR
DURANTE SU FERIA
DEL 3 AL 6 DE ENERO



♦ No promotional markings had been recorded from Pochuta. "Join in the great fiesta of Saint Michael, which is held in Pochuta, Dept. of Chimaltenango, from the 27th to the 30th of Sep-

tember this year." Saint Michael the Archangel is the patron saint of the tiny *municipio* of Pochuta. (A *municipio* is the principal town in the smallest unit of local government in Guatemala.)



"Visit El Tumbador during its fair from the 3rd to the 6th of January." In 1954 El Tumbador was a cattle and coffee producing town of about 20,000 people in the Department of San Marcos. Most of its population were (and still are) ethnic Mam.

El Tumbador's annual fair coincides with the feast of its patron saints: the Magi (who, in the Gospel of Matthew, are said to have visited Jesus shortly after his birth).

The covers on this page date from the mid-1950s. The first two covers bear previously undocumented markings promoting local fairs. The third promotional marking is recorded in the Guatemalan philatelic literature. However, its sole recorded use was 29 years later, in 1985.



♦ 1st cover, "Visit Santa Lucía Utatlán, Sololá [Department], during its signature fiesta from 11 to 15 December. Fabulous amusements."

♦ 2nd cover, "Come to the Alta Verapaz Departmental Fair which is held in the City of Cobán, from

the 1st to the 6th of August this year."

✱ 3rd cover, "San Lucas Tolimán! Sololá Department, invites tourists, merchants and the public to its signature fiesta held annually from October 15 to 20."



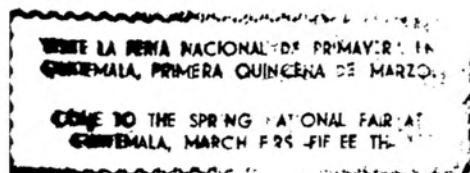
Above: ♦ Cover displaying two previously unrecorded markings, both promoting the same fiesta. The markings read, "Visite the City of Tecpán Guatemala during its festival from the 1st to the 8th of October" and "Visite Tecpán Guatemala during its big October Saint Francis of Assisi festival." (Tecpán, founded in 15424 was the first seat of Spanish rule in Central America.)

Below: ♦ Previously unrecorded promotion marking from Jalapa, a significant departmental capital in the lowlands, located between the national capital and the borders of El Salvador and Honduras. The mark reads, "Industrial and crafts exhibition at the industrial park — visit it."



Although styled a national fair, the capital's fair, which was held in the second half of March during the 1950s, served as the local fair of Guatemala Department.

♦ The bilingual promotional marking reads, "Come to the Spring National Fair at Guatemala, March first to fifteenth."



Under high magnification the second digit of the year in the meter imprint most closely resembles an 8. Guatemalan postal records reflect that the firm of Granai y Townson received authorization to use Universal Postal Frankers meter number U-48 in 1957.





This promotional marking was the subject of a *What have I stumbled upon?* letter to the editor of the specialist philatelic magazine *El Quetzal*. It reads, *Ayude a Las Casas del Niños, Comprando billetes de su Rifa Anual*, "Help The Children's Homes, buy tickets for their annual raffle." The letter drew the following response: "[Guatemala City philatelist Romeo Routhier] tells me that the slogan hand stamped across the second illustrated cover was added at the postoffice [sic] at the request of the Casa[s] del Niño which is an orphanage. The slogan gave free publicity and helped the sale of lottery tickets. The interested party furnishes the rubber stamp, and even today this custom goes on." Dixon, "Examples of Philatelic Cooperation," *El Quetzal*, vol. 32, No 232, pp. 3, 30 (1981).

AYUDE A LAS CASAS DEL NIÑO
Comprando billetes de su Rifa Anual.

If one wishes to digress briefly, other postal markings on the cover also are of interest:

The scan to the right depicts the back side of the cover, inverted. Its 25mm ϕ Guatemala City *cartero* (letter carrier) mark encircling 10mm 16 is of a type discussed elsewhere in this exhibit.

✂ Internal air mail service connected Guatemala City with several provincial cities in the 1930s. A major route flew between the capital and Cobán. Cobán alone had a special duplex postmark (of the general style common in the era) for this internal air mail service. This represents quite an early use of that marking.

Finally, the 27mm x 10mm bilingual "air mail" instructional marking (in the upper left corner of the face side of the cover) was one commonly applied by clerks at the post office in Cobán in the era, as described elsewhere in this exhibit.





♦ Previously unrecorded promotional mark reading "Guatemalan National Lottery, magnificent prizes in [all of] its drawings. May you be a winner!" The front side of the cover is reproduced below.

Two factors *suggest* that the promotional mark was applied during processing in Guatemala City, rather than in Huehuetenango, where the cover was mailed.

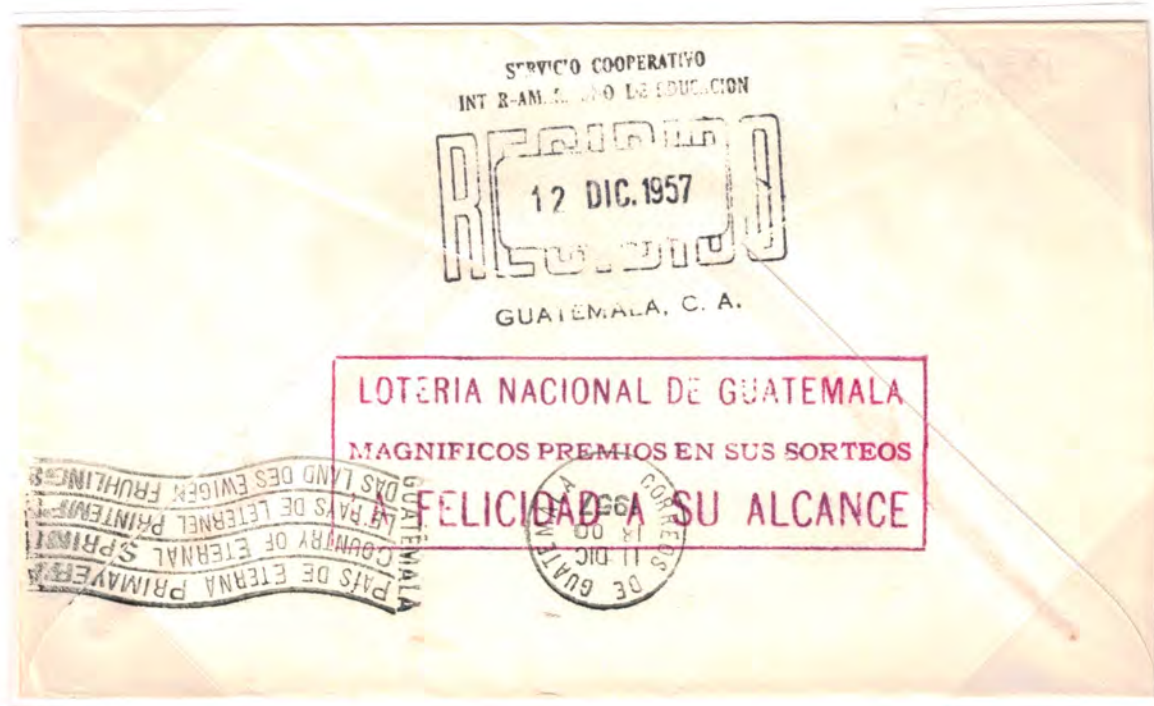
- The Huehuetenango post office applied its date stamp to the cover in a black ink, and not with the red ink used to apply the promotional marking;

- the marking promotes a national rather than a regional institution.

The same marking was applied to the cover on the next page at a far smaller post office in a distant city, suggesting that the marking stamps were made in quantity and that they were given a wide geographic distribution.

More examples of the marking will have to be found before one can safely reach any firm conclusions about the marking's distribution and use.





This cover was imprinted with a marking stamp identical to that used on the cover displayed on the previous page. This second example of the marking was applied six weeks later.

In the case of this cover, one can conclude to a high degree of certainty that the promotional marking was applied at the Flores post office, located in what was then the extremely remote Department of Petén. Here, the marking was applied in the same shade of carmine ink as was used on both of the markings applied to the front of the cover (reproduced below). I cannot recall encountering any other carmine postal mark-

ings from this era, in over six years of collecting and studying early and mid-twentieth century Guatemalan postal history.

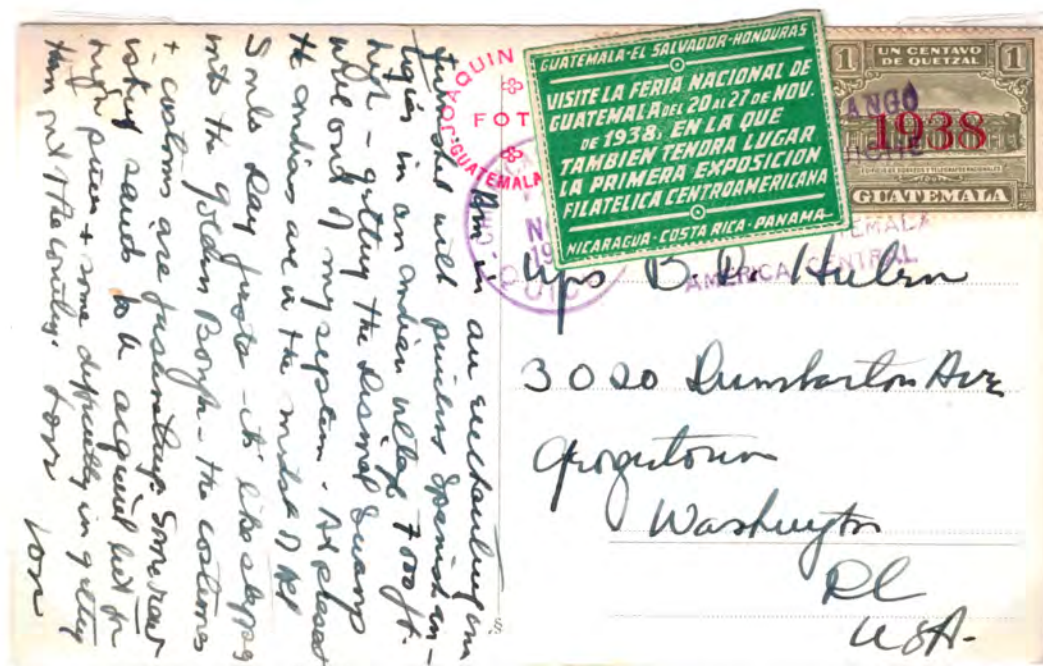
The marking in the upper left corner on the cover's front side reads as follows (translated idiomatically): "Petén Departmental Fair, to be celebrated in the City of Flores from the 12th to 15th of January. Join in and enjoy!"

✕ The philatelic literature notes the use of this marking promoting the Petén Fair just once – in 1972, 15 years after the date of this cover.



Numerous auxiliary markings were used to promote local festivals from the mid-1930s onward. Markings promoting the country as a whole, or promoting events of broader significance which might entice foreigners to visit Guatemala, were far less common than those promoting local fairs and fiestas.

An adhesive label was printed to be affixed at the main post office in the weeks prior to Guatemala's first major philatelic exhibition. "Visit the Guatemalan National Fair from Nov. 20 to 27, 1938, which will take place at the same time as the First Central American Philatelic Exhibition."

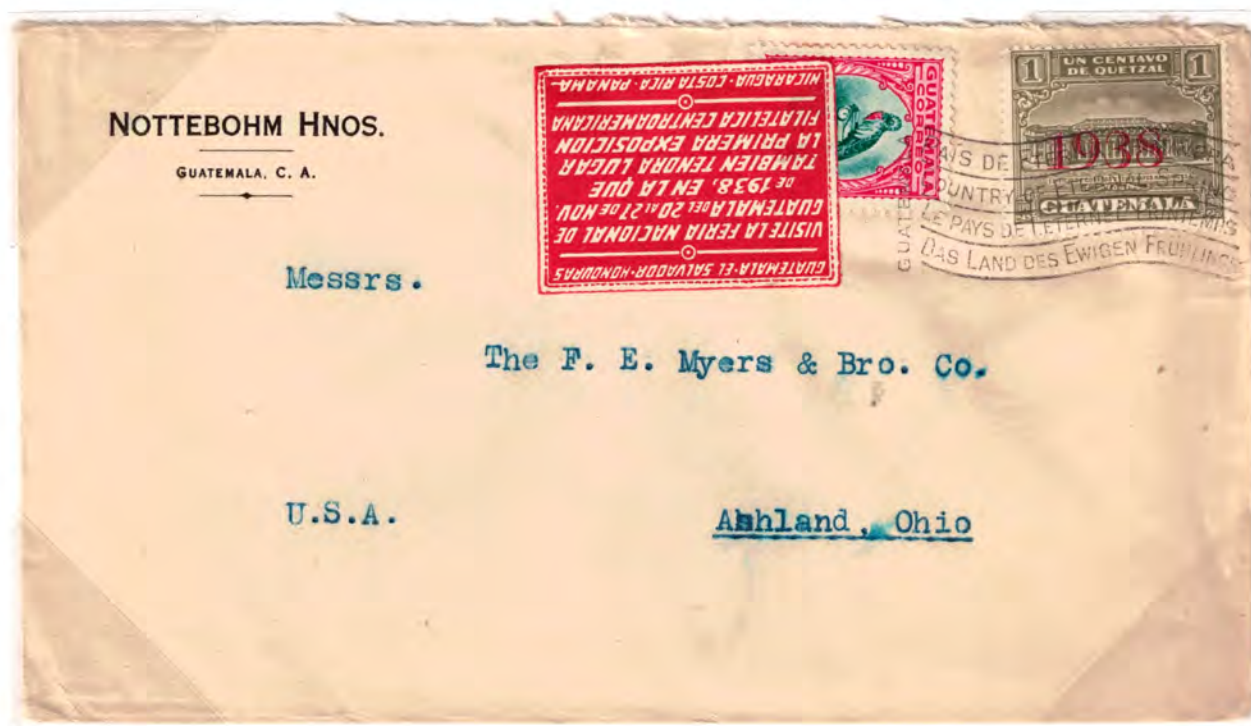


This promotional mark was the only one affixed by the post office in the form of a label. It was printed in at least two different colors.

Above: ♦ The white on green variety is seen on this November 2, 1938 picture postcard sent home by an American tourist. The postal clerk thoughtfully moistened

the gum only on the extreme left edge of the label, attaching it to the postcard itself and not to the postage stamp and postage tax stamp underneath the label.

Below: ♦ The white on red variety is affixed to a commercial cover. Nottebohm Hermanos (Brothers) was a major German-owned coffee brokerage firm in Guatemala City circa 1905-40.



Hotel house marks: The Palace Hotel and the San Carlos Gran Hotel were the primary resting places and watering holes for well-to-do foreign visitors to Guatemala City in the 1930s and early 1940s. Each adopted the practice of back-stamping guests' correspondence left with hotel staff for mailing with its own promotional house mark. The covers on this page and the following two pages are believed to exhibit the only promotional markings shown in this exhibit which were not postally applied. House marks generally were far more carefully applied than were the postal markings of the period.



The Palace Hotel's promotional marking appropriated the English-language version of the quadrilingual slogan on the Guatemala City machine duplex cancellation device which was introduced in 1933, "Guatemala Country of Eternal Spring." It also paraphrased the slogan on the prior (1930-35) quadrilingual duplex cancellation, "Guatemala Produces the Best Coffee in the World".

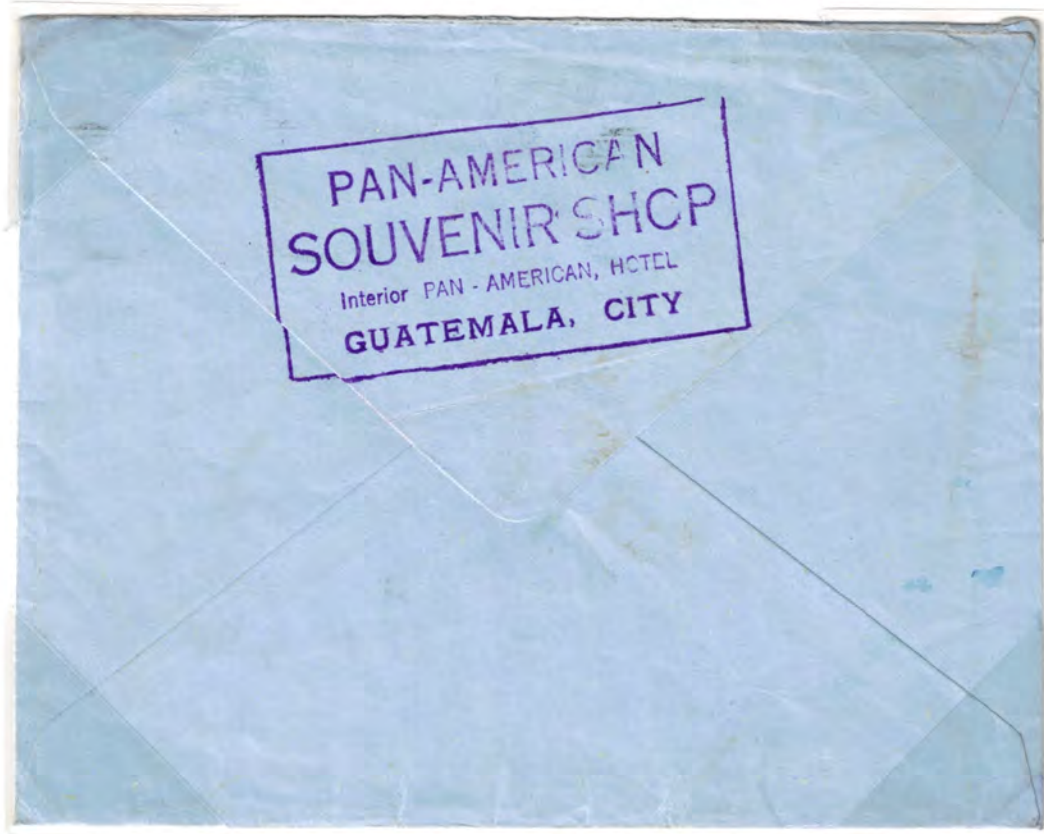
The auxiliary marking immediately above indicates that the cover was deposited in *buzon* (letterbox) number 68, which resided, quite conveniently, in the lobby of the Palace Hotel.

As the generic censorship tape hints, this cover was mailed to the United States four months after America's entry into World War II. The San Carlos Gran Hotel continued to try to woo American visitors, despite the institution of wartime travel restrictions.



At least one other Guatemala City hostelry, Rittscher's Gran Hotel, used a copycat promotional marking. The smaller, Rittscher's cover was mailed in April 1941 by a U.S. Army Air Corps major to his wife in the Canal Zone.

The major Guatemala City hotels did not revive their pre-War house markings after World War II. The marking on this cover offers the nearest approximation.



This boxed 2½ inch x 1¼ inch marking no doubt would have functioned to get this cover returned to the Pan American Hotel, had it been misaddressed. However, the marking's primary function clearly was to promote the hotel.

The 1920s vintage Hotel Astoria was purchased and renamed by Pan American Airlines at the outbreak of World War II. During the war it housed U.S. Army officers arriving in the region. The 44th Bombardment Squadron, based at the Guatemala City Airport, flew

medium bombers on long range patrols, over both the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans, in defense of the Panama Canal. In the immediate post-War years the Pan American was the City's premier hostelry. It still accepts guests today. (A considered personal recommendation: Don't stay there. But do stop at *El Barcito* off the lobby for a drink and a meal.)

The cover was mailed on March 11, 1950, the day immediately before the opening day of the Sixth Central American and Caribbean Games. It is franked with the stamps issued to commemorate those games. (See the discussion on the next page.)



The Central American and Caribbean Games came to Guatemala for the first time in 1950. With just under 2,000 participants, the Games offered a major opportunity to attract overseas visitors to the country.

VENGA A GUATEMALA



SEXTOS JUEGOS DEPORTIVOS

Centroamericanos y del Caribe

Febrero-Marzo - 1950.



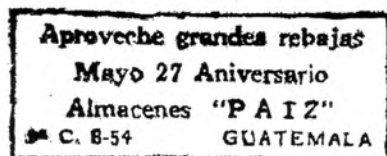
✗ Even the best philatelic reference works contain errors. In compiling chapter 37, "Promotional Hand Stamps," of her encyclopedic *Postal Markings of Guatemala*, the late Cécile Gruson appears only to have had a tracing of this promotional mark to work from. The tracing renders the upper part of the mark accurately. However, the philatelist who contributed the tracing appears to have filled in voids at the bottom of the mark incorrectly, rendering the year erroneously as 1953.

The Sixth CACG indeed were held in 1950, as the impression on this cover shows.

✗ The front side of the cover (below) includes a very late use of the Quetzaltenango machine duplex cancellation, which was in common usage between 1930 and 1935. The Quetzaltenango *Receptoría* CDS does not appear in the standard reference volume. Finally, the air mail directional marking in the lower left corner is the same, early, standardized marking discussed previously.



One private institution somehow gained the right of have its promotional marking applied by the postal authorities. During a period of about six weeks in the spring of 1955, a Guatemala City store's marking, promoting its bargain prices, was applied to postal items during sorting in the capital city's main post office.



♦ "Get great savings in May during the 27th Anniversary at PAIZ stores, 8th Street, Guatemala City." How just this one commercial establishment secured the right to have postal clerks affix its promotional marking is not known.

The marking appears both on covers mailed in Guatemala City (1st item below); as well as on covers mailed between provincial centers, which would have passed through the Guatemala City main post office while in transit (2nd item). It is most likely that all examples of this mark were affixed at the main post office.



Promotional auxiliary markings *per se* only date to the early 1930s. However, at least one duplex cancellation from the prior decade featured a promotional slogan with the date circle.



Los CAMINOS son
Base de Progreso.
Ayudar a construir-
los y conservarlos es
deber de todo ciu-
dadano

The mid-1920 saw a rare period of significant progress and development under a classical liberal regime. The marking in the killer element of the blue duplex cancellation recites, "Roads are the foundation of progress. Help to build and conserve them; it's the duty of every citizen."

Slogan cancellations other than the ubiquitous *Land of Eternal Spring* are not commonly encountered in Guatemalan philately.

The face of this 1925 cover is reproduced to the right. It was sent from a German-owned business house in Guatemala City to a town in the Hamburg region, the German district from which much of the capital invested in Guatemala in the era originated. The same promotional duplex cancellation appears in the upper right.



International Air Mail Week

**SEMANA DEL CORREO AEREO
INTERNACIONAL
¡APRESURE SUS NEGOCIOS!**

The Post Office applied markings to promote the use of modern communications; specifically, the use of international air mail, during a designated week late in each of three successive years.

✂ "International Air Mail Week. Speed Up Your Business! This marking (seen here on a 1933 cover) has been found on covers from 1931. A different mark was applied in 1932. Hence we learn that the 1931 marking was reused for the 1933 promotion.



The Ten Years of Spring (1944-'54) saw Guatemala's first experience of democratically elected government since the dissolution of the Central American Federation in 1840. Major accomplishments of the period included agrarian reform, and the creation of meaningful protections for freedom of thought and of expression – both of which are reflected in promotional postal markings of the era. The Ten Years of Spring ended with a CIA-sponsored *coup d'état*.

UNA PATRIA MEJOR CON
LA REFORMA AGRARIA



♦ The promotional marking (lower left, above the *correo aereo* marking) reads, "A better country through agrarian reform."

The 1952 land reform law, brought forward by President Jacob Árbenz following his election the previous year, nationalized about 40% of the United Fruit Company's vast land holdings, compensated the company, and distributed

the 1,500,000 acres of land among 100,000 formerly landless rural families.

The effect was to free these *campesinos* from the need to work for United Fruit at artificially low wages. These reforms lead to the end of United Fruit's dominion over Guatemalan agriculture. Agriculture production was the largest sector of the national economy.



♦ The promotional marking reads *Inauguracion de la Facultad de Humanidades, 17 de Septiembre de 1945, Día de la Cultura*, "Establishment of the School of Humanities, September 17, 1945, Day of Culture". Each of the few examples I have come across is on a cover posted in the week preceding or in the week following September 17th.

Students and professors at Guatemala's three hundred year old national university, *La Universidad de San Carlos de Guatemala*, played a major role in the overthrow of military rule in 1944. Decree № 12 of the temporary revolutionary *junta* strengthened the University community's rights of academic freedom through a reorganization plan, which led to the creation of six major *facultades*, or schools.

The establishment of the new *Facultad de Humanidades* was marked by the proclamation of September 17th as a national *Día de la Cultura Universitaria*. No similar honor attended the establishment of any of the other five *facultades*.

♦ In late 1953, nearing the end of the Ten Years of Spring, not all elements of rural Guatemalan society supported the government's social policies. Land reform was perhaps the most contentious of the civilian government's policies. The promotional patriotic marking stamp used on this cover promotes a land reform program of the era.

Despite nine years of effort at land redistribution, the most productive agricultural lands remained under the control of a mere handful of extended families.

The cover was mailed in Chiquimula, the capital of the Department of the same name. Chiquimula was the major center in Guatemala's tobacco growing region.

The meter imprint: Post office records compiled a few months after the date of this cover reflect the distribution of the postage meters in private use in Guatemala. Pitney Bowes Desk Model meter number 24, which was used on this cover, was indeed assigned to Alfonso Liu in Chiquimula. DM № 24 was one of just four privately owned meters in use outside of Guatemala City.



Accountability markings are explored elsewhere in this Exhibit. In particular, *buzon* markings, receive detailed treatment.

♦ One previously unrecorded *buzon* marking from Chiquimula is displayed toward the end of that section. The *buzon* mark on the back side of this cover also has not appeared heretofore in the philatelic literature.

The *buzon* mark is reproduced above, right-side-up and full-size. Its overall diameter (25mm), as well as the size and the placing of its elements (10mm-tall, narrow 1; 2mm tall letters, and the minuscule dashes separating upper and lower text) set it apart from the previously recorded Chiquimula *buzon* markings.



Guatemala entered a period of military rule in 1954, which was destined to last for some 32 years. An extreme nationalism and jingoism prevailed in Guatemalan society under the presidency of a series of army officers. These themes are reflected in the promotional markings which were applied by the post office during the years immediately before unrestricted civil war consumed the country.

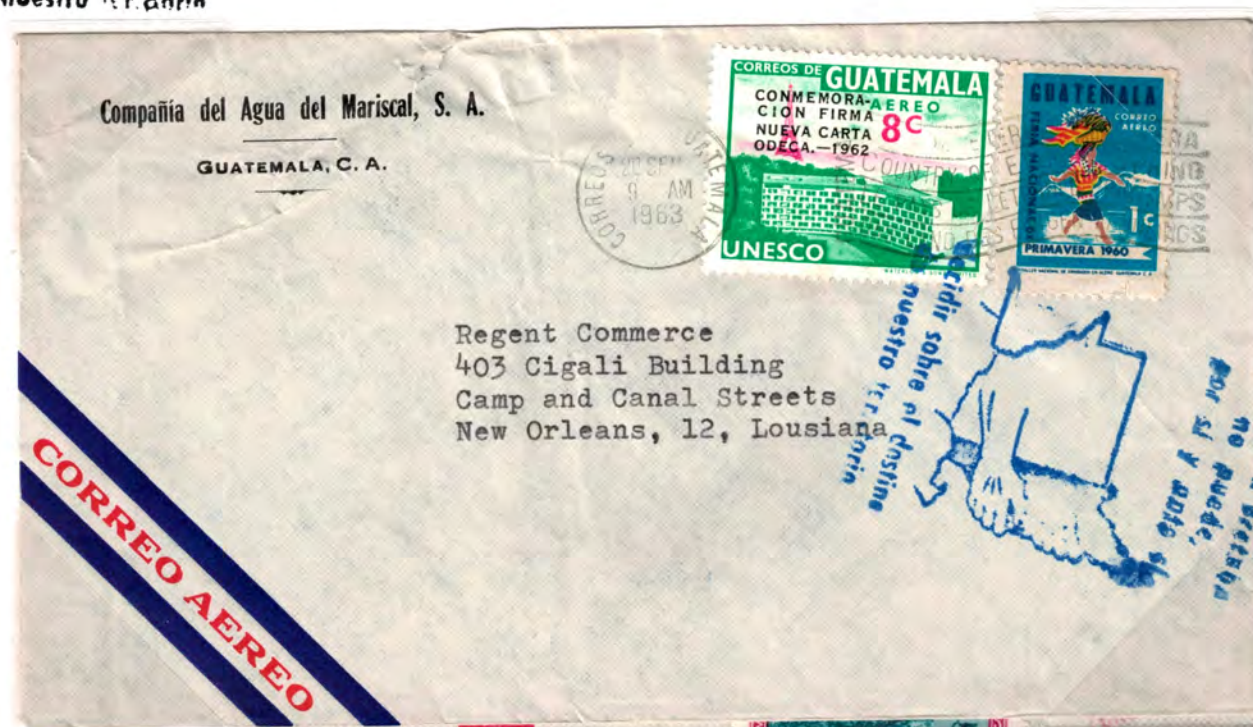


Guatemala claimed the territory of Belize (then British Honduras) as its own, on the theory that it succeeded to the land rights of the Spanish crown in Central America. The claim delayed Belizean independence for 20 years, until 1981.

The text surrounding the depiction of Guatemala grasping hold of Belize reads (colloquially translated) "Great Britain cannot unilaterally

control our territorial destiny." Guatemala still claims much of the land area of Belize; however, it has since adopted a different historical theory as the basis for its claim.

The promotional marking on the second cover proclaims, "September, Month of the Fatherland."



Whereas in other countries promotional markings were privately applied, this was not so in Guatemala (as is explained earlier in this exhibit). Promotional markings continued to be supplied by approved community groups for application by Guatemalan postal clerks up to and beyond the terminal date of this study. Hence Guatemalan specialists traditionally regard the country's promotional markings as philatelic markings.

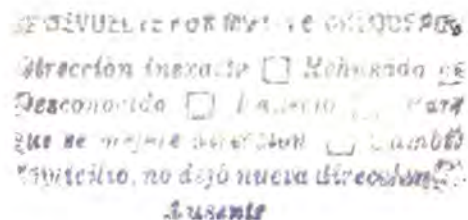
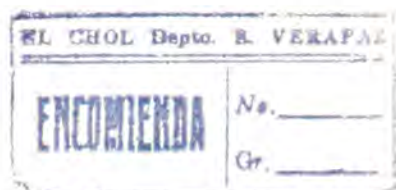


During the decade following the term of this study, an American visitor to the post office at the town of El Chól (near Salamá, the capital of Baja Verapaz Department) mailed a cover to himself. The stiffener (above) inside the cover bears the array of that small post office's marking stamps.

♦ Above, upper right: The promotional marking for El Chól's annual fiesta is included among those markings. "Come to the annual fiesta and fair of The Conception which we celebrate each year from the 4th to the 9th of December, Santa Cruz El Chól, Baja Verapaz."

El Chól's *encomienda* registry box marking and its dead letter form marking are the only marks imprinted on the back side of the stiffener. Both are reproduced below, full-size.

The *encomienda* registry box (below, left) is of a form known to have been rather widely used from the 1930s onward. The fact that it was still in use in El Chól after four decades helps to explain the acute scarcity of *encomienda* markings in contemporary collections. The dead letter marking form (below, right) is of style known to have been used elsewhere in Baja Verapaz into the 1990s.



AFTERWORD

This exhibit has sought to provide an introduction to the range of auxiliary postal markings in use within Guatemala from 1898, to the nadir of the 36-year-long civil in 1967. However, the use of auxiliary markings did not end in the mid-1960s. Opportunities remain for the study of the country's more modern auxiliary markings.



Buzon markings applied to the reverse of covers sent to a non-governmental aid organization based in Finland and mailed from the small departmental capital of Jalapa, in eastern Guatemala, in May and July of 1972, respectively. Markings of this type appear to have been unique to Jalapa's *buzónes*, and they may have been in use only during the year 1972.

♦ The *Buzon* 3 marking on the cover below has not previously been recorded.

