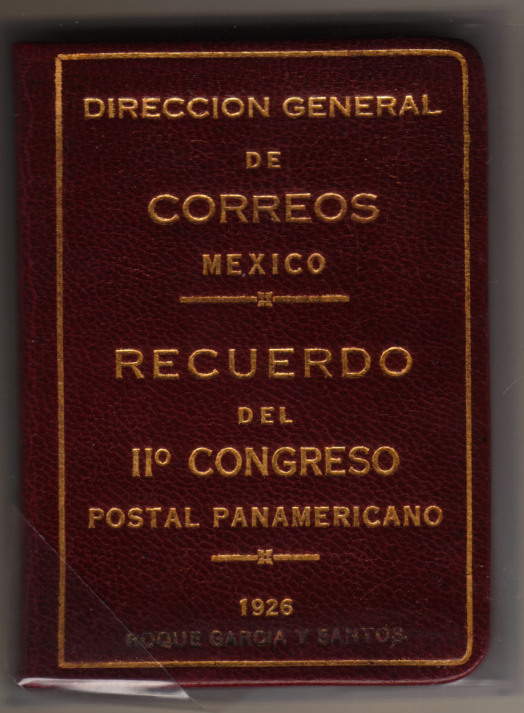
Overprinted 1929 Black Airmail Official Stamps of Mexico (Scott CO3-10)

A comprehensive study presented in 11 frames of the overprinted black HABILITADO/Servicio Oficial Aereo (RATIFIED/Official Air Mail Service) stamps issued late 1929.

The usual background begins with proof material. Following are the stamps as issued in 1926. These are followed by the unoverprinted [London UPU presentation stamps] black stamps (including cover uses). Overprinted stamps including variation come next. The exhibit continues with usages, examples of other contemporary official items using different types of stamps, and closes with a letter (including contents) which tells how one person was selected to receive this special item.



Presentation Folder for
1926 Stamp Release

The overprinted stamps are on 1929 reprints in black of the 8 value set issued for the 1926 2nd Pan American Postal Congress. The special black printing was intended for presentation to attendees of the 1929 London UPU Congress. Remainders from that group were overprinted for official airmail service. Distribution of these stamps was at the pleasure of postal officials to a select few. There is no record of unrestricted sales to the general public

These stamps were postally used and recognized as valid by the UPU for international franking. As they are "Official" stamps, all known usages of the overprinted stamps are from government sources (Director General of Posts and the Stamp Office). Several items bearing the unoverprinted stamps are known. Those stamps were probably obtained in Mexico as favors. They were not sold to the general public.

These stamps bring a fascinating chapter of Mexican philately to life. They were current with the exponential growth of air mail services which opened new horizons!

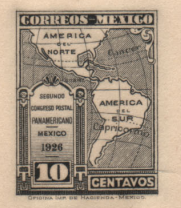

SEGUNDO CONGRESO POSTAL
CORREOS PANAMERICANOS MEXICO
1
UN PESO
PALACIO POSTAL MEXICANO
UN PESO
1


CORREOS MEXICO
SEGUNDO CONGRESO POSTAL PANAMERICANO 1926
40
CENTAVOS
40


ESTADOS UNIDOS MEXICANOS
CORREOS
SEGUNDO CONGRESO POSTAL PANAMERICANO MEXICO 1926
2
CENTAVOS
2


CORREOS MEXICO
SEGUNDO CONGRESO POSTAL PANAMERICANO MEXICO 1926
20
CENTAVOS
20


CORREOS MEXICO
AMERICA DEL NORTE
AMERICA DEL SUR
SEGUNDO CONGRESO POSTAL PANAMERICANO MEXICO 1926
24
CENTAVOS


CORREOS MEXICO
AMERICA DEL NORTE
AMERICA DEL SUR
SEGUNDO CONGRESO POSTAL PANAMERICANO MEXICO 1926
10
CENTAVOS


ESTADOS UNIDOS MEXICANOS
CORREOS
SEGUNDO CONGRESO POSTAL PANAMERICANO MEXICO 1926
5
CENTAVOS
5


CORREOS MEXICO
SEGUNDO CONGRESO POSTAL PANAMERICANO MEXICO 1926
30
CENTAVOS
30

Proofs

Die Proofs on card

















2 sets of proofs on card known; dates and circumstances of production not documented. Probably produced in 1926 for initial stamp issue.



Plate Proof
on White Paper

Proof Sheet (preceeding page)

Watermarked buff paper

Discovery/Reference copy, illustrated in "Proofs, Essays, Sample, Specimen & Test Stamps of Mexico" by Frederick G. Ingham (MEPSI, 1979).

Issued Stamps



Set of 8 stamps issued in 1926 for the 2nd Pan American Postal Congress
Released in sheets of 50 (2 - 40c) or 25 ($1)

8 March 1927



30c Rate

(10c UPU single rate + 20c registry)

Black 1929 Presentation Stamps

Issued as Presentation Stamps for attendees of 1929 Universal Postal Union Congress (London)



Perf 12, Unwatermarked paper

20 sheets of each value produced (1000 each 2c-40c stamps, 500 $1.00 stamps) [Estimate]

9 March 1929



First Flight Postal Card

35c rate (25c air supp. +10c postage)

Few of these stamps are known used, mostly on philatelic items. They were not released for general sale.
Estimate: 5-7 items noted in the literature.

Black 1929 Presentation Stamps

(4, 5, and 10c Usages)

20 November
1929



20c Airmail rate to the United States (effective 17 October 1929) + 20c Registry = 40c total franking

4 December
1929



1929 Official Airmail Overprints





unused  e used  e

600 (2-40c) and 128 ($1.00) stamps overprinted with red
"**HABILITADO/Servicio Oficial Aereo**" (Revalidated/Official Airmail Service)
on unissued 'London' Black Presentation Stamps.

'Cent' value stamps were produced in sheets of 50 (5 rows of 10), 'Peso' value in sheets of 25 (5 x 5).
Overprint most likely set up as a unit of 5, and applied one row at a time.

Two overprint settings were used: vertical placement with 5 mm separation ('cent' values),
and horizontal placement with 12 mm separation ('peso' value stamps).

Assuming 20 sheets of each value were produced, there were 1000 of each 'cent' value and 500 'peso' value stamps produced. If slightly fewer then 400 sets were distributed in London, there would be roughly 600 'cent' value and 128 'peso' value black stamps available for overprinting. Allowing for some 'favor' distribution of 'cent' value stamps back in Mexico (see preceding pages), the reported overprinting of '600 'cent' and 128 'peso' value stamps seems accurate.

A census of this issue yields 2 sets of mint blocks of 4, 5 covers bearing the single $1.00 stamp (1 lost in Europe after WW II), 2 covers bearing complete sets of the 8 values, approx. 10 unused sets, and a few used stamps. Used stamps are very uncommon.

Doubled Overprint

Known only on 2c and 20c values





23 January 1930



Partial package wrapper with address label. 72c franking.

2c CO3 var
20c CO7 var
50c O175

One of 2 known usages to England, only known item using 'double overprint' variety stamps (MEPSI cert.).

Based on an overprint cliché of 5 units, there are either 5 or 10 'double overprint' stamps of each value. One source states that there were 8 examples produced. 3-4 sets of the 2 stamps are known.

The overprinted airmail official stamps were used as franking by the Stamp Office to a select few 'good customers' and friends (see other 'usage' pages). Though some were appropriately used , there was very limited use. These stamps were not available for sale to the general public.

Inverted Overprint



Normal overprint reads downward, inverted overprint reads upwards. Only on ‘cents’ values. 5 or 10 sets produced if overprint cliché of 5 used.

5 January 1930



Only cover known

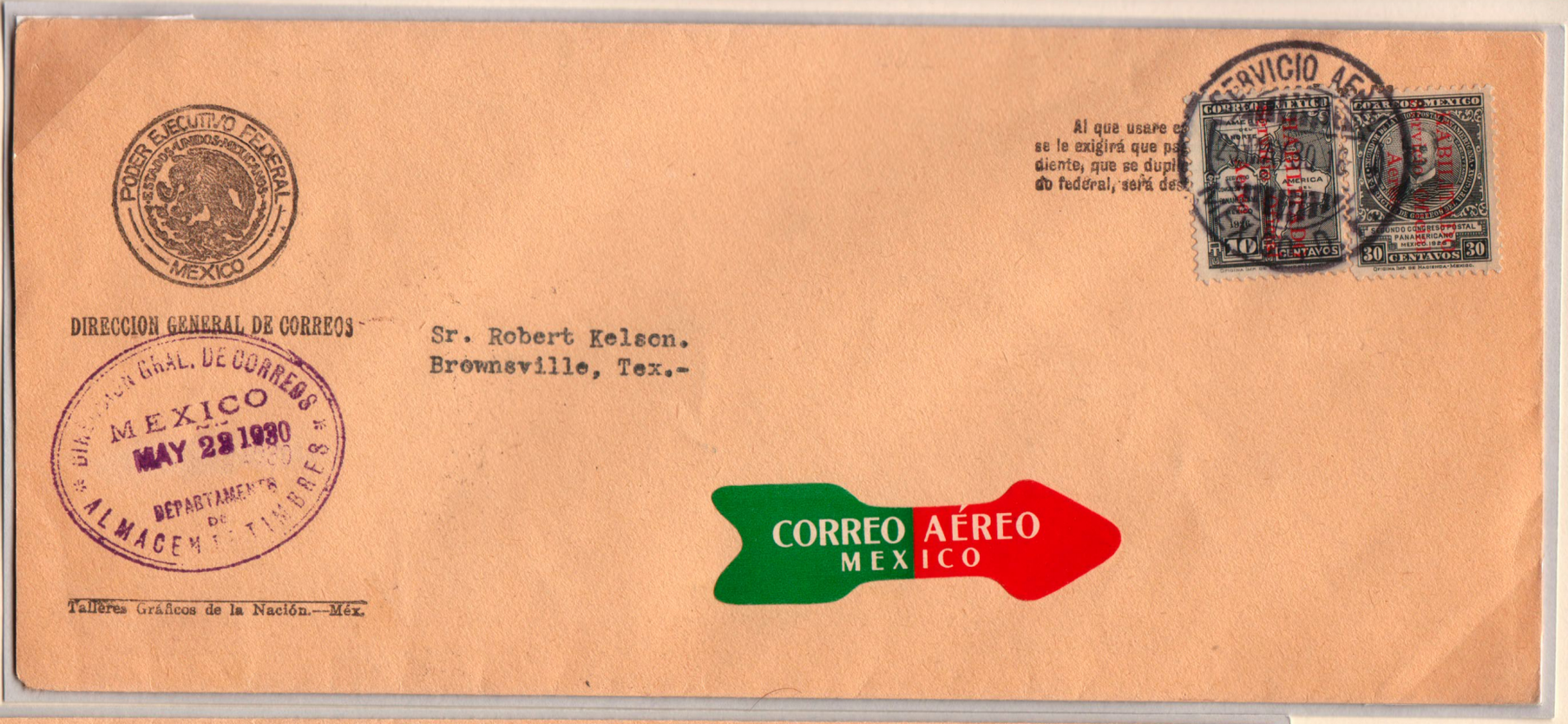
MEPSI Cert

Usages

23 May
1930

10 + 30c
= 40c rate
(>20/<40 gms)

Airmail to US:
20c/20 grams.





28 May
1930

40c Rate

Few covers survive.

Most usages between December 1929 and May 1930.



Usages

7 December
1929

Single $1..00 on cover

5 covers recorded
(1 unaccounted for)

Overfranked

Stamp Office franked items with these stamps as a special recognition or favor.

MEPSI Cert.

9 January
1930

Complete set on cover

2 covers recorded

Overfranked

Some genuine usages, others philatelic.



Other Contemporary Official Usages

Air Mail Official to England

13 September 1929

35c Postage paid with current Airmail and Definitive stamps

Very few examples of Air Mail Official stamps known on cover.

(Air to New York, Steamer to England; Air Mail handstamp voided out after NY to confirm surface transit)





Air Mail Official To Guatamala

9 January 1930

Scott 25c CO2 (5000 copies) and 20c CO11 (16200 copies) = 45c rate to Central America

Favor Distribution

Stamp Office limited Distribution of the Air Mail Official Habilitados to a favorite few. Samuel Chapman considered Dean of early Mexican philately.

31 March 1930 memo (Contents of the envelope displayed on following page)

C. S.-3.

PODER EJECUTIVO FEDERAL
ESTADOS UNIDOS MEXICANOS
MEXICO

SECRETARIA
DE
COMUNICACIONES
Y OBRAS PUBLICAS

FORMA 468.-CH.

DEPENDENCIA:
DIRECCION GENERAL DE CORREOS
MEXICO. D. F.
DEPARTAMENTO ALMACEN DE TIMBRES
SECCION
NUMERO DEL OFICIO Exp. 10.
EXPEDIENTE

ASUNTO: Se le envía una estampilla de un pesos del Seg. Cong. postal ranamericano.

SR. S. Chapman Esq.
Stanley House.
Granville Road.
Sevenoaks KENT.
ENGLAND.

Por recomendación del señor Julio Fabián que reside en esta Capital, adherido al sobre que ampara el presente le envío una estampilla de un peso del Segundo Congreso Postal Panamericano "HABILITADO SERVICIO OFICIAL AEREO".

México, D. F., a 31 de marzo de 1930.
El Jefe del Departamento.

Manuel Alvarez.

TIENSE LOS
EL ANGULO

N. Rivadeneyra
Apartado Postal 2968
México, D. F.

Vía New York.-Aereo.

CORREO AEREO

S. CHAPMAN, ESQ.,
Stanley House,
Granville Road,
SEVENOAKS, KENT,
ENGLAND.

REPUBLIQUE MEXICAINE
U. P. U.
Núm. 7856
R

CERTIFICADO.



13 November 1929 Airmail Registered cover to Samuel Chapman, FRPSL. 35c Air + 20c Registry paid by separate stamps as Post Office requirement for separate accounting of services at the time.

Favor Distribution

Single $1.00 franking to England

5 single $1.00 frankings recorded,
2 Airmail Official Habilitado usages to England known

11 March
1930



Envelope and contents (previous page) addressed to Samuel Chapman, FRPSL; Dean of early Mexican philately

[Translation]
As per request of Sr. Julio Fabion of this Capital [*Mexico City*] we are sending you this envelope franked with the one peso 'Second Panamerican Postal Congress' "HABILITADO SERVICIO OFICIAL AEREO" [*Revalidated Airmail Official Service*] stamp.

Mexico, D.F. , 31 March 1930
Chief of [*Stamp*] Department
/s/
Manuel Alverez

The Overprinted 1929 Black Airmail Official Stamps of Mexico (Scott CO3-10) - Synopsis

Goal of Exhibit

A comprehensive study of the overprinted black 'airmail official' stamp issue by use of the issued 1926 stamps, proof material, unoverprinted and overprinted examples (including varieties), and usages with other contemporary items for comparison.

This is an appropriate subject for a 1 frame exhibit due to the very limited production, time frame, and survival of relevant material.

Background

From late 1929 through the late 1930's Mexico experienced severe economic contraction combined with an exponential growth in airmail services. Rates were in a constant state of flux. Domestic airmail services were inaugurated, revised, and/or eliminated as route structures evolved. International connections were in their infancy with many items traveling only part way by air, completing their journey by surface.

Mexico participated in several international conferences (most notably: the 2nd Pan American Postal Union [1926] and the 1929 UPU Congress in London) during this period. They also entered into expanded postal agreements with the United States concerning interconnections with it's expanding Airmail services.

Previously issued stamps were overprinted for several reasons: Many definitive airmail stamps of the time were overprinted due to the rapidly changing rate structure. This was more cost effective and much faster then issuing new designs. Some commemorative stamps were overprinted in order to make use of existing remainder stocks which were initially valid only for a specified period after issue by law. 'Sanctioned manipulation' was another reason for overprinting stamps. Mexico has a documented history of official involvement with stamp overprints for various reasons (i.e. some varieties during the 1915-17 revolutionary era).

This exhibit focuses on the 1929 overprinted 'Airmail Official' reissue in black of the 1926 2nd Pan Am Postal Congress commemorative stamp. Background, production information, and quantities concerning the 'black' reissue are the subject of conjecture. The proof material in this exhibit could have been prepared for either the regular 1926 and/or the 1929 reissues.

Quantities/Survival

It is known that the 'black' stamps were prepared for presentation to attendees of the 1929 London UPU Congress. The quantity of 20 sheets of each value printed (1000 of each 'cents' value, 500 'peso'stamps; 400 sets distributed) is an educated guess based on anecdotal information and a census of surviving overprinted and unoverprinted stamps.

The number of surviving covers has been well documented in the literature and sales catalogs. Assuming an overprint cliché of 5, 10 of each of the two major errors were produced. This quantity is supported by the literature, auction sales, and examination of dealer stock.

The accepted quantity of the overprinted stamps is 600 of each 'cents' value and 128 'peso' value stamps. One source states that there are only 78 'peso' value stamps which confirms sheet sizes of 50 (cent values) and 25 (peso value). There are few unoverprinted 'black' stamps known on cover.

'Favor' release in Mexico of a few of these stamps may explain the relative (approx. 25) excess of peso stamps compared with the cents values.

Usages

Very few Mexican 'airmail official' stamps of any type were generally used. The most common frankings were with current definitive airmail or regular 'official' stamps. Rates to the United States were either 35c or 20c per 20 grams (depending on date) with 20c additional for Registration. Rates to Great Britain were 50c/20 grams with Registration 20c additional. Several other Official and contemporary items are displayed in order to place the 'black' stamp usages into perspective.

These stamps were saw genuine though limited postal use. Distribution was at the pleasure of the Stamp Office (see letter enclosed in one cover in exhibit!). Only 2 items are known addressed to Great Britain, the rest being to the United States. With only 10 examples of each type of overprint error produced, known usages on piece/cover are limited to the items displayed.

Exhibit Layout/Key items

-Title Page including original 1926 leather Presentation Folder
-Proof sheet – reference item for proof/essay book. Date and circumstances of production uncertain.
-Die Proofs on card- 2 sets known; (?Sheet) proof on white paper
-Issued Stamps (for comparison with 'Black' sets)
-Unoverprinted 'Black' stamps (several sets known) with several usages on card or cover (7 known)
-Overprinted set (several unused sets known, 2 off cover used $1.00 examples known. (MEPSI cert)
-Doubled Overprint (only on 2c and 20c values): unused set and only known use on package fragment addressed to G.B. (only 2 known items to G.B., both in exhibit). (MEPSI cert.)
-Inverted overprint – unused set and only known set on cover (MEPSI cert.)
-Usages on cover – only 5 single $1.00 frankings known (MEPSI cert.) (2 in exhibit) and 2 complete sets on cover known by census.
-Comparison of different official usages using both 'regular' and airmail official (very uncommon) stamps.
-Contents of $1.00 cover explaining why recipient selected to receive it
-$1.00 Cover (to G.B.) with translation of previous memo.

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Cherrystone – various catalogs
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Sotheby's; 19 November 1980 [Sale # S-52]"*Weston Airpost* "
- 30/31 May 1995 [Sale # 6673] "*Koenig*" (Specialized Mexico)