

INTRODUCTION

REGISTRATION COVERS: ISTHMUS OF PANAMA: 1881 to 1904

Prior to Independence on November 3 1903, the cities of Panama and Colon received separate deliveries of stamps from Bogota. Colon then sent stamps to Bocas del Toro. With Independence, each of the three cities chose separate overprints to acknowledge Independence using the stamps that each city had in stock. Each city also chose different techniques to acknowledge fee changes in mid-April 1902 and again in mid-December 1903. It was not until after August 1 1904 that all three cities had a supply of the same Registration and Acknowledgment of Receipt stamps.

The technique which allowed research on Registration stamps to be meaningful was to study Registration covers from each of the three cities from which foreign registration could be sent: Panama, Colon, and Bocas del Toro. Each was recorded separately on yearly graphs showing the dates, Registration numbers, Registration stamps, overprint measurements and inks, surcharge types and measurements, measurements of machine Registration numbers, cancellations, and the regular postage stamps on each cover. This technique has been used as the basis for this presentation.

Most of the information concerning individual Registration stamps is included in a separate study of the stamps themselves. To complete this, the Registration covers had to be researched first.

To facilitate easier reference from one cover to another, Scott catalogue numbers have been used; when "unlisted" is used, it refers to this catalogue. The covers have been arranged, and are referred to, by dates.

When statements such as "earliest," "only," or other equivalents have been made they result from opinions made by the late Mr. Gustavo Schay between 1930 and 1961 and my opinions since. From 1961 until 1965 Mr. Schay and I conducted joint research on the stamps of Panama.

All of the covers will show genuine contemporary Registration. They include many unlisted examples, overprint varieties, errors, and Registration cancellations as well as Provisional Registration adaptations which are uncatalogued, unreported, or have been unknown previously.

The Registration covers of the State of Panama and the Republic of Panama should be considered as three different chronological histories from Panama, Colon, and Bocas del Toro and the covers to follow support this concept.