

A Purchase of a Cheap Postcard Leads to a Discussion of the UPU, the PUAS, and More!

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The Beginning the Stamp Era



- 1840 Great Britain issues first stamp
- Revolutionizes mail – prepaid letters instead of trying to collect payment from recipient
- The issuance of stamps by government postal authorities spreads around the world

1847 – USA issues first stamp – but what about the rate to send a domestic letter?



1847 – 5 cents prepaid for less than 300 miles, per ½ ounce



1851 – 3 cents prepaid for up to 3,000 miles, per ½ ounce (effectively anywhere in the USA)

International Mail in the Early Stamp Era

- As the use of stamps spread the issue of how much to charge for delivery between nations became a challenge
- Initially, governments negotiated bilateral treaties between postal administrations, leading to a profusion of rates

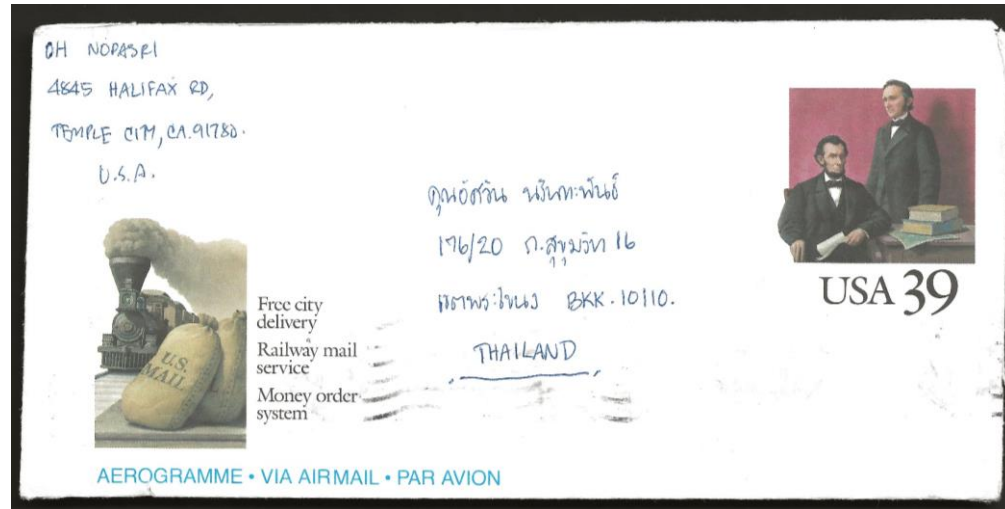


7 cents from USA to Wurttemberg
Rate went into effect October 1871

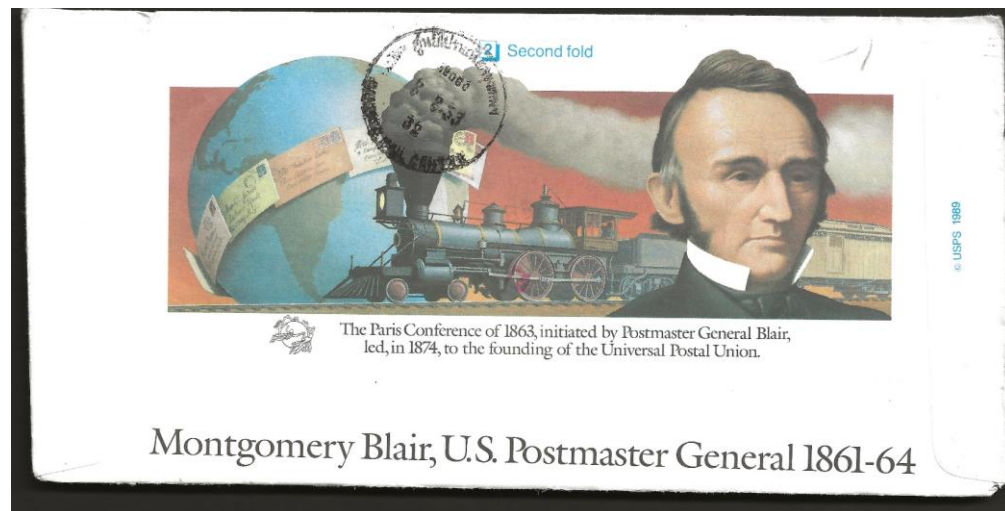
NOTES

- Cover sent from Sheffield, Illinois to Waiblingen, Wurttemberg in 1872
- Tied by fancy dashed X cancel
- Stamp is Scott No. 149, issued March 1871

Montgomery Blair 1813-1883



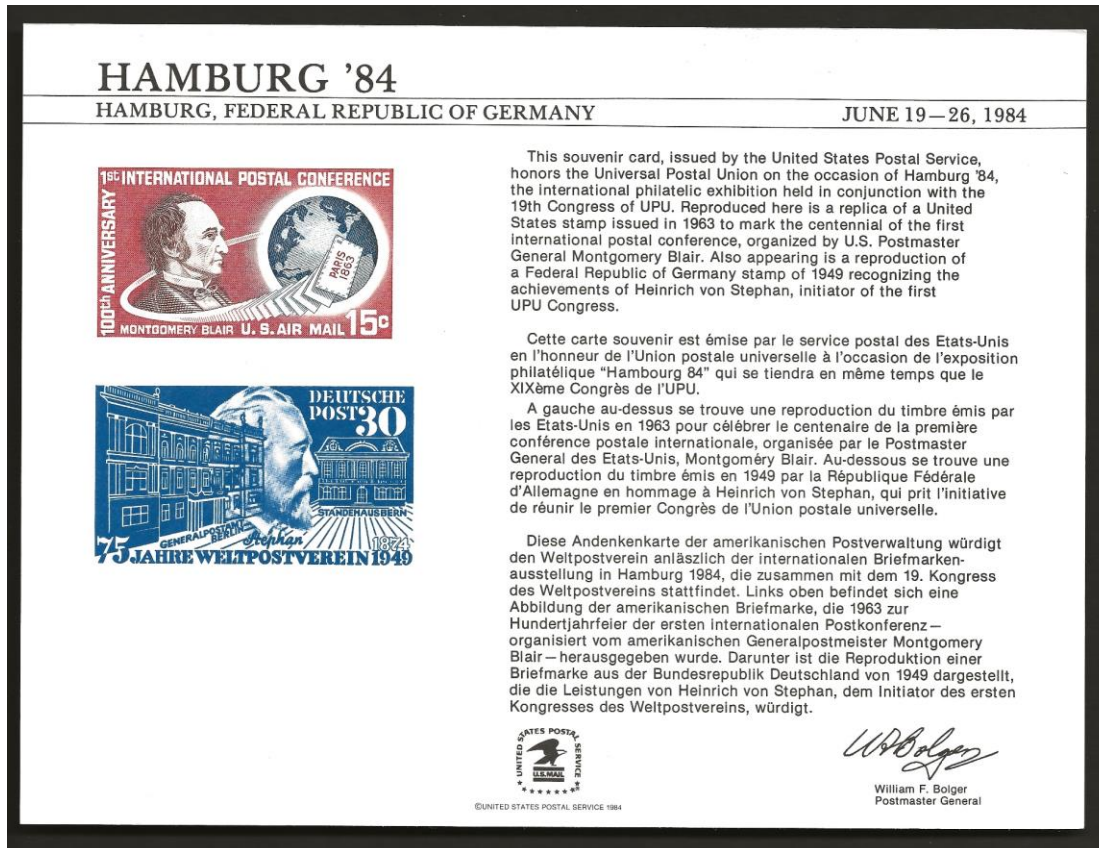
- Montgomery Blair served as Postmaster General during the first Lincoln Administration, 1861-1864
- Blair implemented numerous innovations including free city delivery, railway mail service, and the creation of the money order system
- To improve international mail delivery, Blair proposed a conference for nations to work on a uniform rate schema
- The conference was held in Paris in 1863, it led to the creation of the Universal Postal Union in 1874



NOTES

- Aerogramme (Air Letter) is a self folding enveloping with the sender's message written inside, sent at discounted rate from first class Airmail Letter
- 39 cent Blair Aerogramme, Scott UC62, issued November 20, 1989
- 39 cent rate in effect April 3, 1988 until February 3, 1991
- Sent in 1990 – 2533 in Thai calendar (add 543 to date)

Universal Postal Union (UPU)



- 1874 – 22 nations met in Berne, Switzerland to form a general postal union which created a single postal territory for the reciprocal exchange of correspondence between post offices.
- Rates applied to letters, postal cards, books, newspapers, and other printed papers, patterns of merchandise, and legal documents and commercial documents.
- Rates went into affect for participating nations on July 1, 1875.

NOTES

- Souvenir cards issued as souvenirs at philatelic and numismatic events by the USPS or BEP
- This card is trilingual – German for the nation hosting the event and English and French for the working languages of the UPU
- Heinrich von Stephen, 1831-1897, Postmaster General of the German Empire, organized 1874 Berne UPU conference

UPU Rates Began July 1, 1875

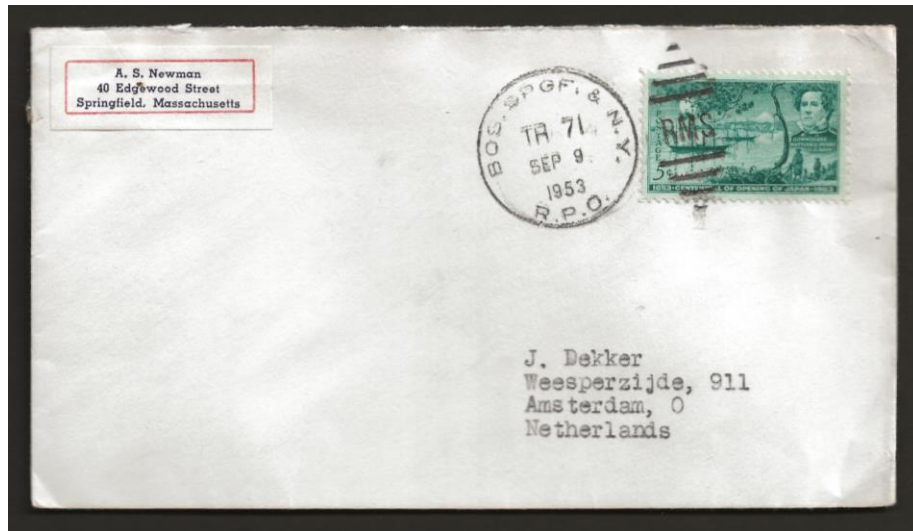


- 5 cent UPU rate from New York City to London in care of B.F. Stevens dispatch agent for sailor in USS Gettysburg; sent February 23, 1878
- 5 cent stamp is Scott 179

NOTES

- **Benjamin Franklin Stevens**, 1833-1902, born in Vermont, moved London in the 1840s
- Served as Dispatch Agent in London which meant he was in charge of mail for US naval vessels serving in the Atlantic and European stations
- The ship that became the **USS Gettysburg** was built in Scotland and purchased by the Confederacy as blockade runner in 1862, captured by the Union navy in 1863, it stayed in service until 1879 doing survey work in the Mediterranean 1876-1879.
- The recipient, **George Partridge Colvocoresses**, 1847-1932, went on to serve at the Battle of Manila Bay during the Spanish-American War in 1898 and then served as the Commandant of Cadets at the US Naval Academy, 1905-1907

5 Cent UPU Surface Rate

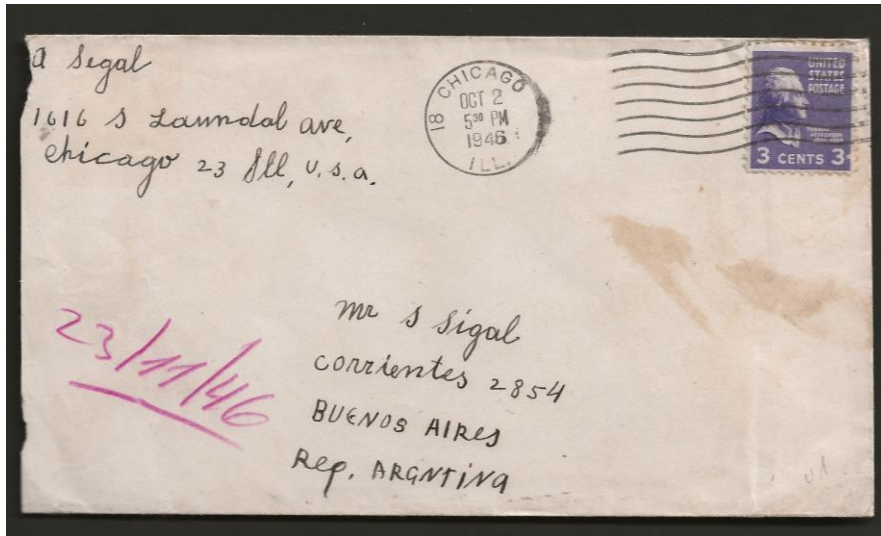


- 5 cent UPU surface rate to Netherlands, sent September 9, 1953
- Stamp is Scott No. 1021 Centennial of Opening of Japan

NOTES

- The 5 cent UPU surface rate holds the record for **longest continuous use of any US postal rate July 1, 1875 until November 1, 1953**, when the rate was increased to 8 cents
- Surface rate used to denote mail not sent by airmail
- This letter was sent/postmarked from a Railway Post Office (RPO)

Postal Union of the Americas and Spain (PUAS)



- 3 cent PUAS rate to Argentina
- Sent October 2, 1946
- 3 cents was the prevailing first-class rate

NOTES

- **Regional postal unions** are organizations for counties that cooperate on mail service. Currently there are 18 in existence
- The Postal Union of the Americas and Spain (PUAS) was created in 1920
- Mail could be sent between member nations at domestic letter rates
- The PUAS domestic letter rate ended on November 1, 1953; rates reverted to the UPU surface rate.

PUAS Conference - Bogota, Colombia

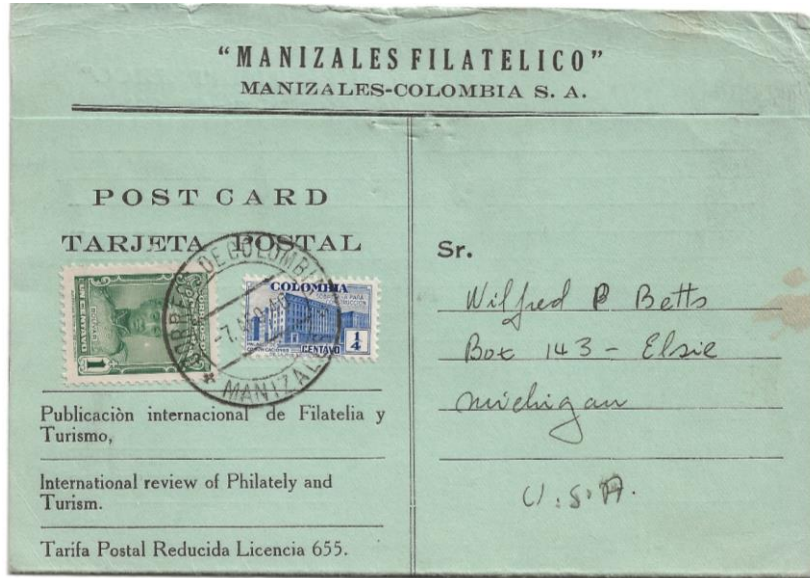


Colombia Scott Nos. 640-642 & C275-C280

NOTES

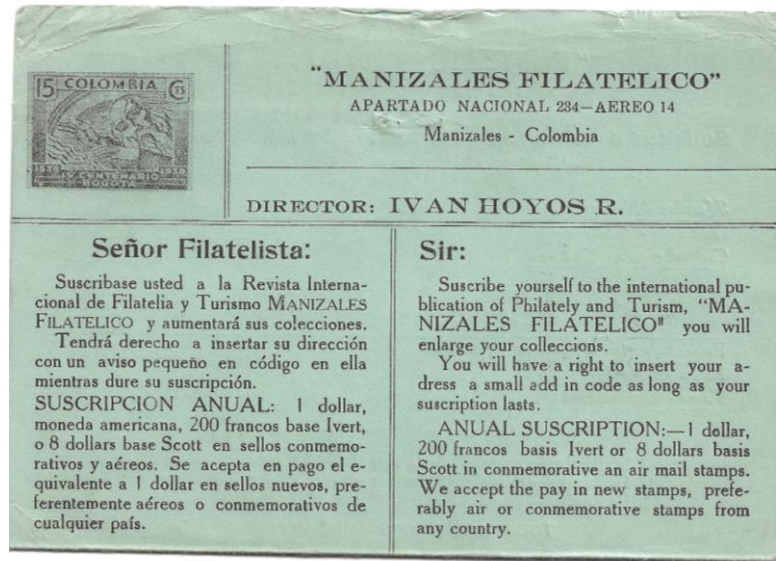
- A PUAS Conference was held in Bogota, Colombia October 12 – November 9, 1955
- A series of nine commemorative stamps were issued
- The stamps depicted indigenous leaders, Ferdinand and Isabella, explorers, and “Las Libertadoras” (the Liberators)

Colombia Post Card – What Rate?



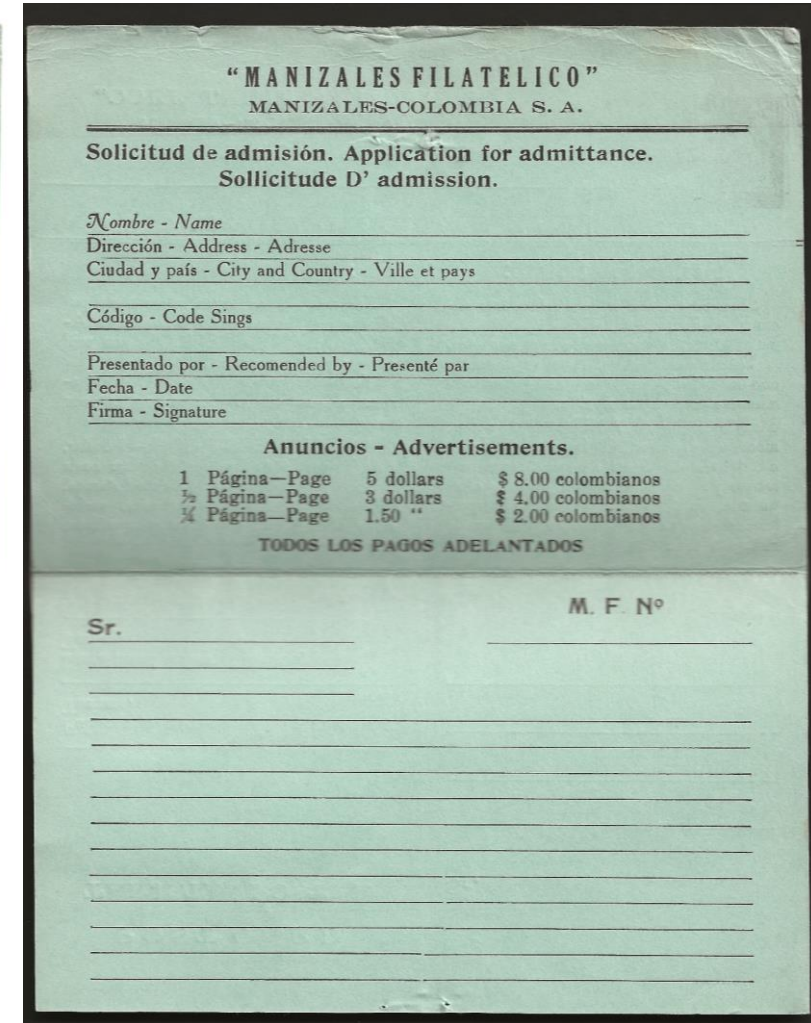
Address side

Sent August 7, 1940



Message side

The reason I bought this is the reproduction of the 15 centavo commemorative for the 400th anniversary of Bogota, Scott No. 461



Inside

Rating a Cover

Rating a Cover:

- Look at the date in the cancellation
- Check for any transit or arrival marking (front and back of envelope)
- Check for any auxiliary markings (registered, special delivery etc.)
- With the above information, check a rate table

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Incoming, Foreign Surface Mail Rates, 1879-1950

Table showing rates/fees charged in foreign countries on surface mail to United States, 1879-1950

Shaded area = above

Countries of the UPU	Date of new country curr. rate	Letter Rate for first weight unit	For each additional unit	Single Post Cards, each	Other Articles, per 50 gr (2 oz)
		Curr. of country/cent.	Currency of country	Currency of country/cent.	Curr. of country/cent.
Colombia	Jan. 1882 PG	7 centavos/35	7 centavos	2 centavos/10	1 centavo/5
Colombia	Jan. 1883 PG	10 centavos/50	10 centavos	2 centavos/50	1 centavo/5
Colombia	Jan. 1903 PG	20 centavos/50	20 centavos	5 centavos/12 1/2	4 centavo/10
Colombia	Jan. 1905 PG	5 centavos/25	5 centavos	2 centavos/10	2 centavo/5
Colombia	Feb. 1922 PG	3 centavos/15	3 centavos	2 centavos/10	1 centavo/5
Colombia	July 1926 PG	4 centavos/20	4 centavos	2 centavos/10	1 centavo/5
Colombia	May 18, 1928	4 centavos/20	4 centavos	2 centavos/10	1 centavo/5
Colombia	Apr. 6, 1931	5 centavos/20	5 centavos	3 centavos/10	1 centavo/5
Colombia	July 1936 PG	5 centavos/20	5 centavos	2 centavos/10	variable
Colombia	July 1938 PG	5 centavos/20	5 centavos	2 centavos/10	variable



- Rate table indicates 2 centavos for postcard to USA
- Only 1 centavo in postage
- What is going on?

Rating the Colombian Post Card

- Sometimes you need to dig deeper to correctly rate a cover
- In this case checking a specialized rate book – Historia Postal De Las Tarifas de los Correos en Colombia

	Febrero de 1935 Decreto 327-1935 D. Of. 22842			Julio de 1936 Decreto 1630-1936 D. Of. 23624	Febrero de 1938 Decreto 196 de 1938 D. Of. 23710	Mayo de 1941 Decreto 901 de 1941 D. Of. 24663		
	A	B	C	B	A	B	C	B
Cartas los primeros 20 Gr. Fracción	\$ 0.05	\$ 0.12	\$ 0.05	\$ 0.15	\$ 0.05	\$ 0.15	\$ 0.02	\$ 0.15
Cada 20 grs Excedente	\$ 0.05	\$ 0.08	\$ 0.05	\$ 0.10	\$ 0.05	\$ 0.10	\$ 0.02	\$ 0.09
Tarjeta postales sencillas	\$ 0.02	\$ 0.07	\$ 0.02	\$ 0.10	\$ 0.02	\$ 0.08	\$ 0.01	\$ 0.09
Tarjetas postales dobles	\$ 0.04	\$ 0.14	\$ 0.04	\$ 0.20	\$ 0.04	\$ 0.16		\$ 0.18
Papeles de negocio primeros 200 grs	\$ 0.04	\$ 0.12	\$ 0.04		\$ 0.05	\$ 0.15		\$ 0.15
Papeles de negocio programas excedente	\$ 0.04	\$ 0.04	\$ 0.01		\$ 0.01			
Impresos por cada 50 grs.	\$ 0.01	\$ 0.04	\$ 0.01		\$ 0.01	\$ 0.04	\$ 0.01	\$ 0.03
Impresos en relieve P Ciegos c / 1000 gr	\$ 0.03	\$ 0.03	\$ 0.03					\$ 0.02
Muestras los primeros 10 grs.		\$ 0.08			\$ 0.02	\$ 0.06		\$ 0.05
Muestras los primeros 200 grs.	\$ 0.04		\$ 0.04					
Por cada 50 gr. De excedente	\$ 0.01	\$ 0.04	\$ 0.01					
Derechos de certificación	\$ 0.10	\$ 0.12	\$ 0.10		\$ 0.10	\$ 0.20		\$ 0.20
A.R. Solicitado a la introducción	\$ 0.10	\$ 0.12	\$ 0.10		\$ 0.10	\$ 0.10		\$ 0.15
A.R. Solicitado posteriormente	\$ 0.20	\$ 0.24	\$ 0.20		\$ 0.20	\$ 0.20		\$ 0.20
Tarjeta de Identidad	\$ 0.20							
Cupones respuesta	\$ 0.20							

A) Servicio interior y con los países de la Unión Postal de las Américas y España

A saber: Argentina, Bolivia, Brasil, Canadá, Costa Rica, Cuba, Chile, Dominicana, Ecuador, El Salvador, España y Colonias, estados Unidos, Guatemala, Haití, Honduras, México, Nicaragua, Panamá, Paraguay, Uruguay, Perú y Venezuela

B) Los demás países de la U.P.U. No incluidos en la lista anterior

C) Servicio Urbano.



- 1 centavo printed matter rate for postcards up to 50 grams
- What is ¼ centavo stamp?

Postal Tax

- **Postal tax** is a surcharge added to mail in addition to the existing postal rate
- ¼ centavo is postal tax for postcards beginning in 1939
- A flat rate applied to all postcards to cover constructions costs for new Ministry of Posts and Telegraphs in Bogota



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