# **POSTAL STATIONERY**



USA Airmail Envelope overprinted "RF" See Article on Page 216

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### First Issue Stamped Envelopes of Peru

By Ross A. Towle

In 1874, Peru placed an order for stamped envelopes. The question is, which company received the order? According to Herbert Moll<sup>1</sup>, the American Bank Note Co. received the order. Also according to Carlos Nicoletti Gonzales<sup>2</sup>, the American Bank Note Co. received the order, except he confuses the

National Bank Note Co. with the American Bank Note Co. This article uses archival documents to show which company received the order and which company manufactured the envelopes.

In 1858, seven engraving companies united to form the American Bank Note Co. These companies were

- Danforth, Perkins & Co.
- Toppan, Carpenter & Co.
- Draper, Welsh & Co.
- Bald, Cousland & Co.
- Rawdon, Wright, Hatch & Edson
- John E. Gavit
- Wellstood, Hay & Whiting.

Members of Danforth, Perkins & Co. who did not join the American Bank Note Co. formed the National Bank Note Co. In February 1879, the firms of American Bank Note Co., National Bank Note Co., and Continental Bank Note Co. joined together to form the consolidated American Bank Note Co.

The Museum of American Finance (www.moaf.org) in New York City, holds a number of business records of the American Bank Note Co. and the National Bank Note Co. On page 14, Nicoletti reproduces an order of March 3, 1874, from the Director General of the Peruvian Post Office to "Compania Nacional de Billetes de Banco" which is Spanish for the National Bank Note Co. Using this date, I searched the 1874 American Bank Note Co. and National Bank Note Co. sales books. The sale was not listed in the American Bank Note Co. sales book. But the order was listed on April 5, 1874 (page 118), in the National Bank Note Co. sales book. In addition to stamped envelopes, the order included 2 centavos stamps.

The order called for engraving 2c, 5c, 10c, 20c, and 50c stamped envelope dies, and to furnish 100,000 2c envelopes (size # 4), 50,000 5c envelopes (size # 1), 50,000 10c envelopes (size #2), 50,000 10c envelopes (size # 2), 10,000 20c envelopes (size # 5), 10,000 20c

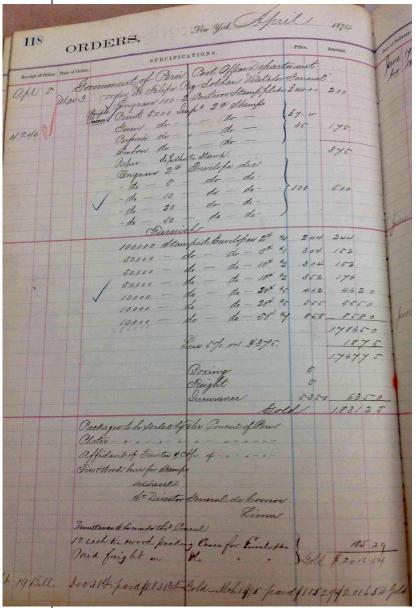
envelopes (size #5), and 10,000 50c envelopes (size #7). It is not clear what the difference is between the two 20c (size #5) listings. Paper quality? Paper color? On August 18, 1874, 12 cases containing the completed stamped envelopes were shipped from New York on the *City of Panama*.

A year later, on June 12, 1875, the National Bank Note Co.

received an April 30, 1875 order for additional stamped envelopes (page 218). The order called for furnishing:

- 150,000 5c envelopes (size #2, 3<sup>rd</sup> quality)
- 275,000 10c envelopes (size #3, 1st quality)
- 50,000 20c envelopes (size #5, 2<sup>nd</sup> quality)
- 25,000 50c envelopes (size #7).

An update was sent on June 5 that the size of the 50c envelopes was to be  $7-1/8 \times 8-7/8$  inch on linen paper. The order was shipped to Peru in 23 boxes on August 26, 1875, on the *Acapulco*.



Order book page for 1874 Peru Envelopes.

The notations in the order book provide additional detail. The verb "furnish" indicates that the envelopes were not manufactured by National Bank Note Co. The work was subcontracted to George H. Reay. George H. Reay was the manufacturer of U.S. stamped envelopes between 1870 and 1874. George Henry Reay was a former employee and assistant to George F. Nesbitt. Reay had invented and patented various machines to manufacture envelopes.

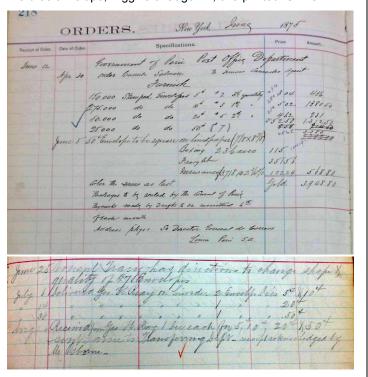
<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Herbert Moll. Postal Stationery of Peru. 1999

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Carlos Nicoletti Gonzales. Sobres Postales Usados En El Perú 1874-1902. 2005. Quarta Edición.

Gumming was performed by hand. The dies were engraved by Rudolph Laubenheimer<sup>3</sup>.



Peru 5c envelope, Higgins & Gage B2, overprinted SPECIMEN.



Order book page for 1875 Peru Envelopes.

Unfortunately, the National Bank Note Co. sales books after June 1875 are not at the Museum of American Finance, which would provide information for later orders as indicated by Nicoletti. Their location, if they still exist, is not known to the author.

The conclusion is the National Bank Note Co. (and not American Bank Note Co.) received the order for the first issue of stamped envelopes of Peru. The National Bank Note Co. subcontracted the actual manufacture of the envelopes to George H. Reay. The size of the 50c envelopes changed with the second order (1875).

I would like to thank Ms. Sarah Poole, Collections Manager, Museum of American Finance, for her assistance. And I thank the Museum of American Finance for being able to reproduce the pages from the National Bank Note Co. sales books.

#### Overprints and Surcharges on Post Office Postal Stationery Wrappers

By Dr John K. Courtis FRPSL

There are specialist philatelists who study all manner of overprints and surcharges on stamps and postal stationery, and there are dedicated societies and journals on this topic, especially devoted to issues of Great Britain and its overseas post offices. A survey of overprints and surcharges on worldwide post office postal stationery wrappers has not previously been attempted and it is the purpose of this paper to identify, classify and examine these various overprints. A search through the images of each post office type revealed that 52 countries and postal entities have issued wrappers with overprints of one kind or another.

A definition of terms can be a useful guide to the classification and discussion of these overprints. A simple definition of an overprint is that it is an additional layer of text or graphics which has been added to the face of a post office postal stationery wrapper, such as the name of a country overprinted on the wrapper of another. This would include both printing and hand stamping. Perforated wrappers might also be considered under this definition because the perforation could play the same role as an overprint. Perforated wrappers are not dealt with in this paper other than in passing.

A surcharge describes any type of overprint that changes the value of the prepaid postal denomination from that shown on the indicium. The surcharge raises or lowers the existing face value when postal rates have changed without leaving sufficient time for the production of a new issue, or in some cases as an economy measure to use up existing stock. Stamped-to-Order items are not included.

The analysis has been categorized into Overprints: entity name, denoting reason, precancels and specimen; and Surcharges. Indicia illustrated have been supplied by Kosniowski from his forthcoming catalogue. The reader will benefit from a copy of the Kosniowski catalogue by examining each of the identified listings of overprints and surcharges for paper varieties, wrapper sizes, watermarking, double and inverted overprints and font setting varieties. These varieties are explained in Kosniowski more comprehensively.

By contrast, the exposition in the present paper is relatively straight-forward identification. The Higgins & Gage catalogue "E" and "KE" numbers used for post office postal stationery wrappers have been used for convenience. All illustrations of indicia are at 110% size unless otherwise noted.

#### Overprints: (A) Change of Entity Name

There are 27 postal entities which have had their name overprinted on the wrapper(s) of another country. A listing of these overprinted entities is summarized in the following illustrations.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Clarence W. Brazer. "U.S. Envelope Stamp Engravers and Firms". The Essay Proof Journal. No. 33. January 1952. Pages 3-7.