



## The Prestamp Period of El Salvador (1525 – 1866)



# El Salvador: Historical Summary



During the Pre-Columbian era, present-day El Salvador was part of Mesoamerica.



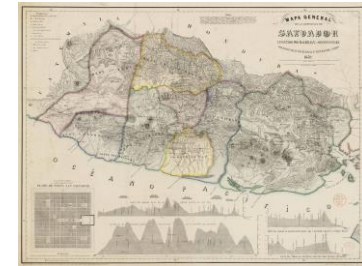
1609: First Captain General of Guatemala



1785: Creation of the Intendencia of San Salvador



1823 – 1839: Central American Federation



1859: Proclamation of the Republic of Salvador

1500

1600

1800

1850



1522 – 1534: Arrival of the first Spanish explorers and Conquest.

XVII-XVIII Centuries: *Alcaldías Mayores* of San Salvador & Sonsonate.



1821 – 1823: Independence from Spain and annexation to México.



1842: Proclamation of the Free and Independent State of Salvador



1867: Issue of first postage stamps



☐ The Early Colonial Period (1500s – 1763)

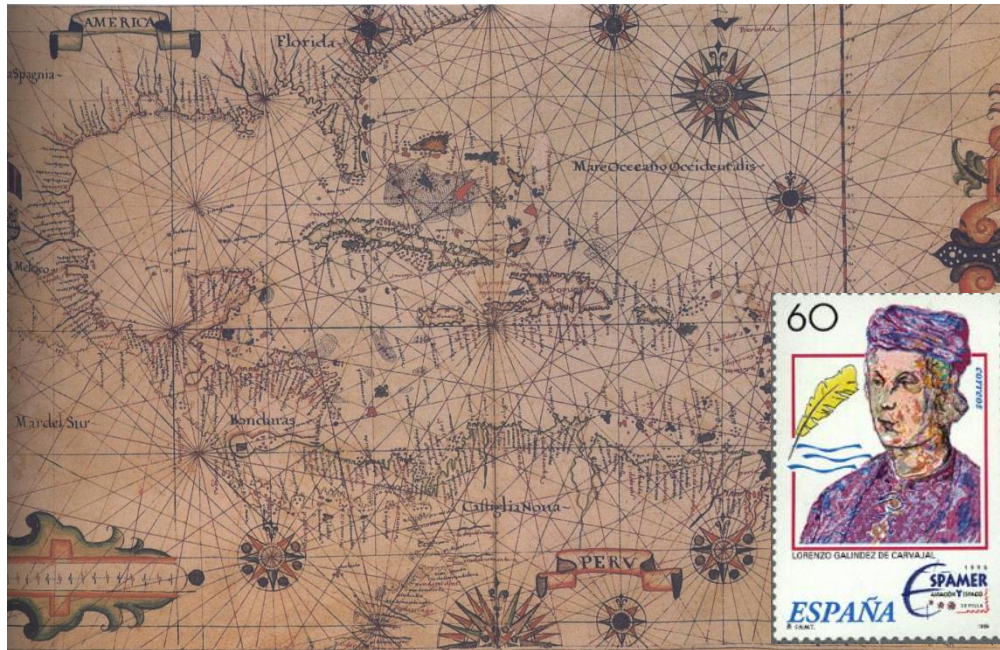
☐ The Bourbon Reforms (1764 – 1821)

☐ The Federation Period (1821 – 1839)

☐ The Republican Period (1839 – 1866)



# The efficient distribution of mail was one of the priorities for the Spanish authorities since the beginning of the Colonial Period



□ The first *Correo Mayor de las Indias*, Lorenzo Galíndez de Carvajal, was appointed in 1514.

□ The Crown defined the routes between Spain and its American Colonies for the shipments of goods & supplies, including mail.

□ The transportation of mail to and from Spain started in 1525 with the *navíos de aviso* that were later added to the fleets.

□ In both México and Peru, Viceroy Enrique de Almanza set up organized mail services during the 1570s and 1580s. The first *Correo Mayor de la Nueva España*, Martin de Olivares, was appointed in 1579.

□ In 1604, the *Correo Mayor* was auctioned for the first time in New Spain.





**The first reference of a letter sent from San Salvador appears in a document from the Guatemalan *Cabildo* in 1530**

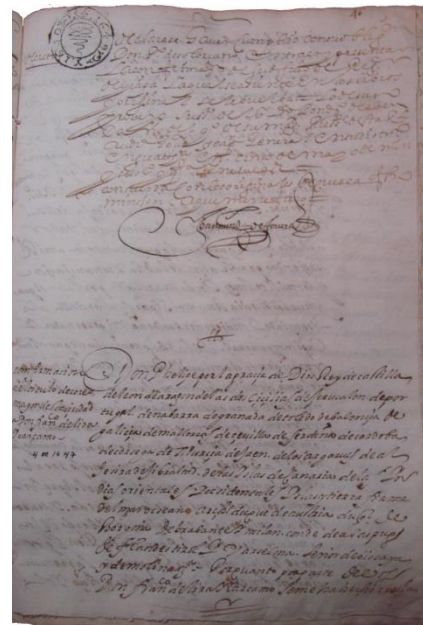
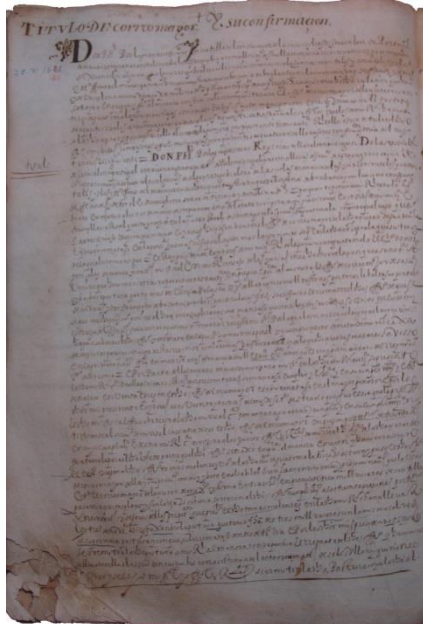
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**We have recorded 22 XVI-Century letters originating from the present-day territory of El Salvador.**

**Letter sent from the San Salvador *Cabildo* to Charles V in 1541.**



## The *Correo Mayor* period in Guatemala lasted from 1602 to 1766...



Confirmations of the appointment of *Correo Mayor* in favor of Pedro Crespo X Suarez (1621) and Francisco de Lira y Carcamo (1647).

□ In 1598, a Royal Decree stated that the *Correo Mayor* of New Spain had jurisdiction over the Kingdom of Guatemala.

□ Although during the first years the legal basis of the appointment was not clear, the position was formally auctioned in 1619 and the first *Correo Mayor*, Pedro Crespo X Suarez, was confirmed in 1620.

□ During most of this period, the communications both interior and exterior for Guatemala were done through extraordinary couriers or private messengers.

□ The first organized mail routes were created in the 1740s: Guatemala-Oaxaca (1748) and Guatemala-Leon (1749).

□ In 1766, Charles III decided to end the *Correos Mayores* and nationalized the postal service.

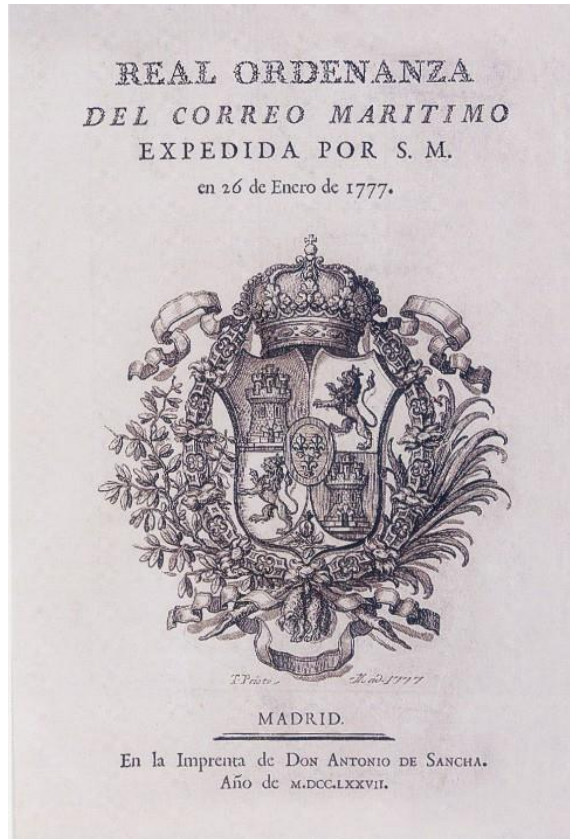
❑ The Early Colonial Period (1500s – 1763)

❑ The Bourbon Reforms (1764 – 1821)

❑ The Federation Period (1821 – 1839)

❑ The Republican Period (1839 – 1866)

## Charles III's reforms, including the creation of the *Correos Marítimos*, resulted in substantial changes in the postal regulations



1777 Maritime Mail Regulation

- ❑ The Bourbon Reforms focused on two main aspects: The nationalization of Maritime Mail and the Correos Mayores and the definition of its attributes to improve the service.
- ❑ The *Reglamento Provisional del Correo Marítimo* was decreed in 1764, regulating the service to a level hitherto unknown.
- ❑ On February 22, 1768, a proclamation was issued requiring that all the mail should be stamped & initialized as evidence of payment of the required rate.
- ❑ The definitive regulation of the maritime postal service appeared in 1777 with the promulgation of the *Ordenanzas del Correo Marítimo*.
- ❑ In 1778, the Indies were split into nine demarcations with specific rates that considered the distance of each one from Spain. To ease the identification of the mail origin, linear postmarks were produced for each demarcation.
- ❑ In 1794, a Mail Ordinance regulating the service for both Spain and the Indies was issued to have a single directive for all aspects of the inland Mail Service.



## The Bourbon reforms in Guatemala provoked the expansion of the service with new *estafetas* and the creation of regular routes.

□ The number of *estafetas* was increased to 66 by the start of the XIX century.

□ During this period the *Carrera de Leon* was the main route in the territory, from which other *hijuelas* departed.

□ Routes varied according to the necessities and the available resources.

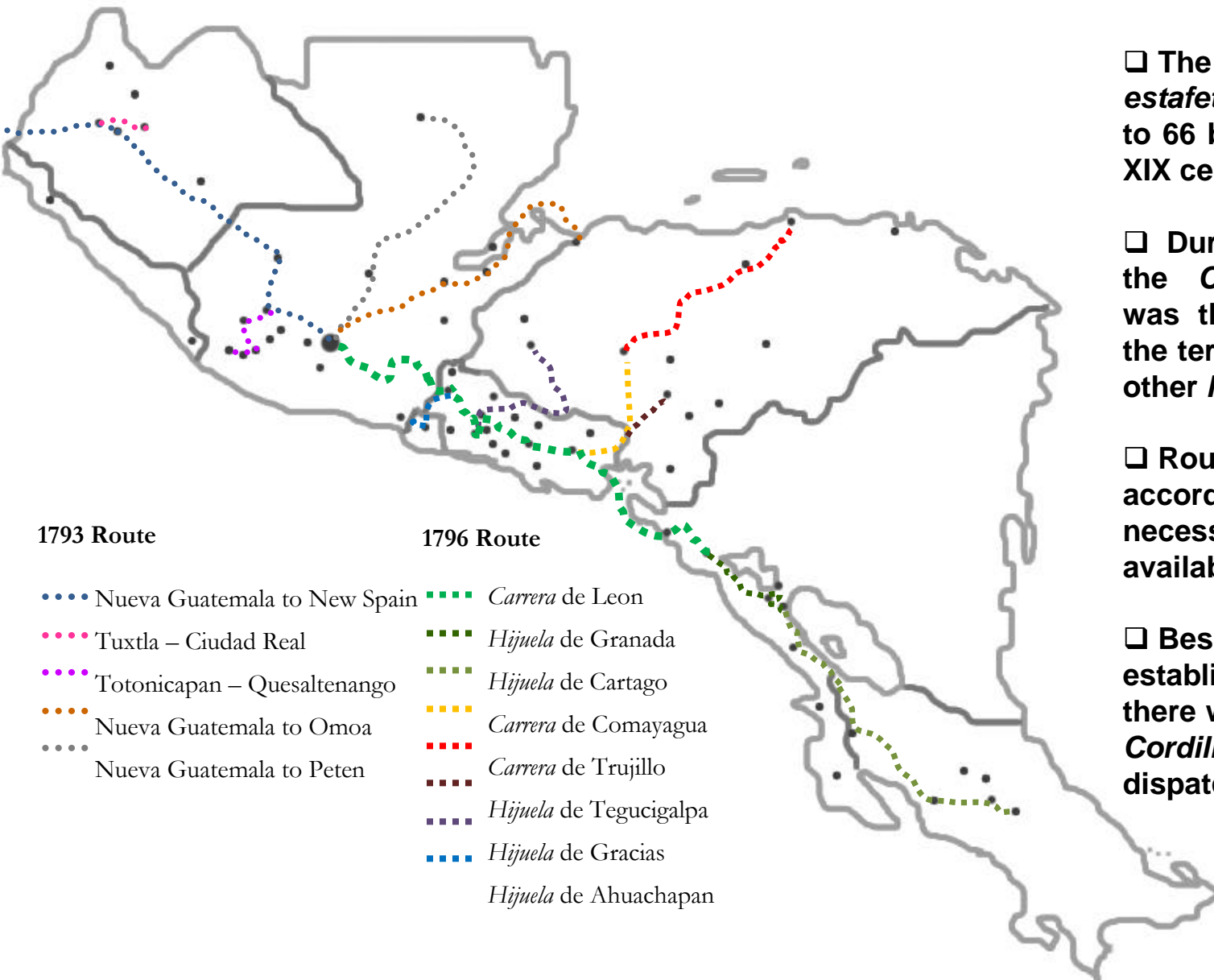
□ Besides the established routes, there was the *Correo de Cordillera* for urgent dispatches.

1793 Route

- Nueva Guatemala to New Spain
- Tuxtla – Ciudad Real
- Totonicapán – Quesaltenango
- Nueva Guatemala to Omoa
- Nueva Guatemala to Peten

1796 Route

- Carrera de Leon
- Hijuela de Granada
- Hijuela de Cartago
- Carrera de Comayagua
- Carrera de Trujillo
- Hijuela de Tegucigalpa
- Hijuela de Gracias
- Hijuela de Ahuachapán



The first *estafetas* in El Salvador were created in 1768: Santa Ana, Sonsonate, San Salvador, San Miguel & San Vicente.



□ In 1779 the postal administration at Madrid requested the manufacture in Nueva Guatemala of a set of 21 postal markings for its *estafetas*; they were distributed in November 1783.

□ The earliest postal marking known for El Salvador appears on a letter sent from Santa Ana to Guatemala on July 30, 1780.



14 *estafetas* are known with postal markings.



## 40 postal markings were used in El Salvador during the Colonial Period

### Ahuachapan

AHVACHAPA

FRANCO.

### Chalatenango

CHALATENANGO

*Chalatenango*

*Franqueado en  
Chalatenango.*

### Cojutepeque

COXVTE  
peque



*Franqueado en  
Cojutepeque.*

### Metapan

METAPAN

*Franco  
Metapam*

### San Miguel

SAN  
MIGUEL

S. MIGUEL

*Franqueado  
en S. Miguel*

*Franqueado en  
San Miguel*

### San Vicente

S. VICENTE

SAN  
VICENTE

*Franqueado  
en Sa<sup>n</sup> Vicente*

### Various

OLOCUILTA

*Sensun  
tepeque*

SUCHITOTO

# 40 postal markings were used in El Salvador during the Colonial Period

## San Salvador



Franqueado en  
San Salvador



FRANQUEADO:  
EN SAN SALVADOR



*S. Salvador.*

S.SALVADOR;

S.SALVADOR

FRANQUEADO:  
EN SAN SALVADOR

## Santa Ana

**SANTA ANA**



Franqueado  
en Santa Ana

SANTA  
ANA

SANTA  
ANA.



## Sonsonate



## Usulután

USULUTA'

Franqueado  
en Usulután

## Zacatecoluca



Franqueado en  
Zacatecoluca



## Colonial Maritime Mail to/from El Salvador



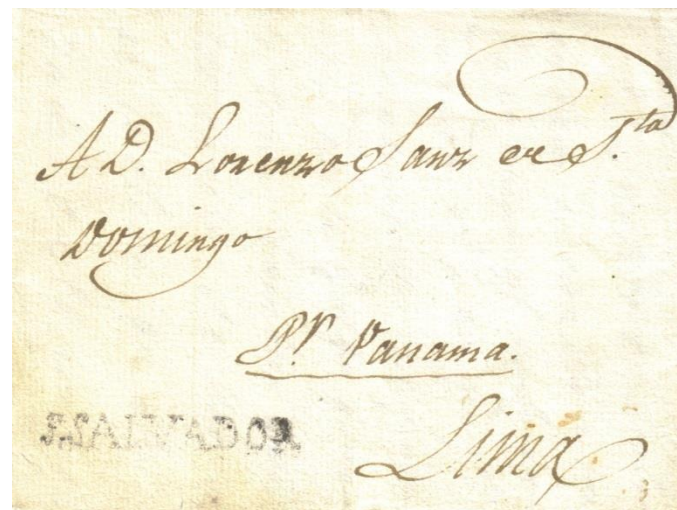
Letter from Cadiz to Sonsonate, probably the only known item sent by Maritime Mail from Spain to present-day El Salvador.

1813



San Miguel to Havana

1820



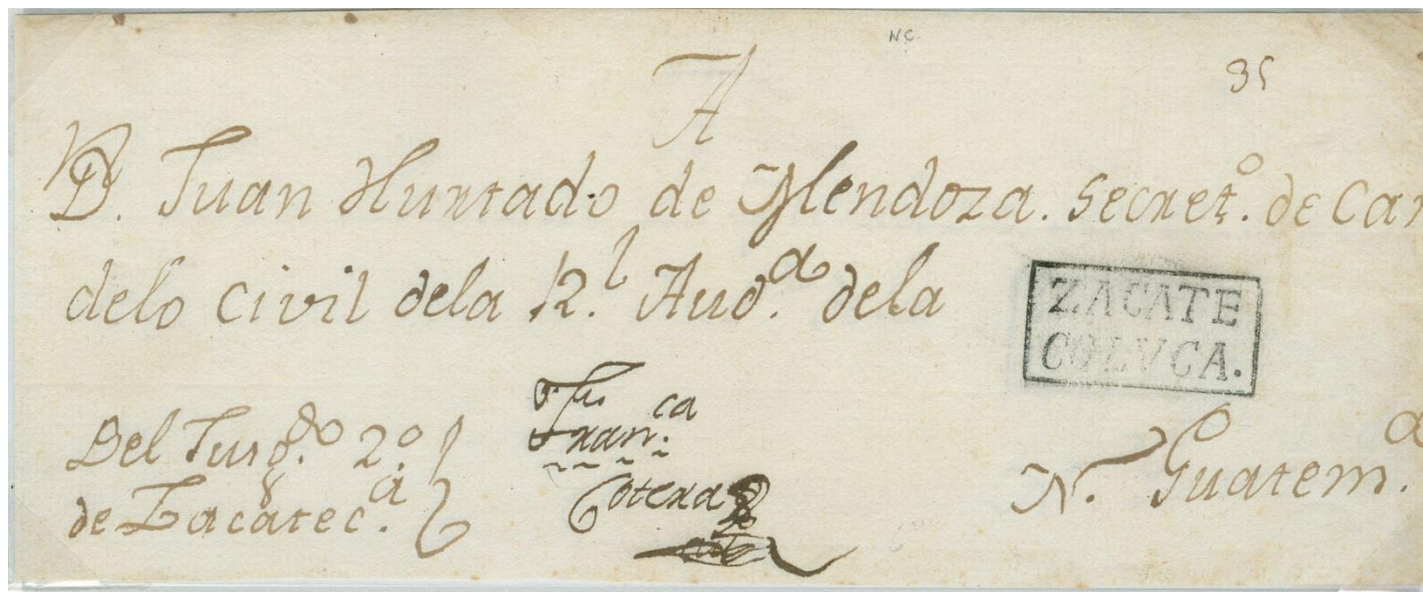
San Salvador to Lima via Panama

## Postmasters Markings from El Salvador.



**Franca** **Cuello**  
postmaster marking  
from Chalatenango (c  
1805)

**Franca** **Cotera**  
postmaster marking  
from Zacatecoluca (c  
1803)





## Parcel Post Mail.



C. 1800. San Salvador to the Tobacco Factory in Gracias. Front glued to an *arpillera* (type of sack). Note the inscription *Pesas de la Dirección General* and the very high rate of 305 reales.



## Colonial Period Mail.



Front sent from San Vicente (c. 1807 – 1810) to Nueva Guatemala. Interesting item because it was written on cloth. Because of this, its destination & its high tariff (168 reales), it is possible that the cloth is really a piece of a sack that probably contained tobacco.

Front sent from  
Suchitoto (c. 1810) to  
San Vicente.



❑ The Early Colonial Period (1500s – 1763)

❑ The Bourbon Reforms (1764 – 1821)

❑ The Federation Period (1821 – 1839)

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## No major changes happened to the postal system during the Annexation to the Mexican Empire (1822 – 1823).

- ❑ The Mexican Empire kept the 1794 Postal Ordinance without major changes.
- ❑ The only modification was the short-lived increase in frequency of the couriers from Guatemala to Oaxaca to three per month.



1822 letter sent from San Miguel to Tegucigalpa with two SM-01s, one of them overstriking a SM-03 to indicate that the letter was not prepaid.



1823 letter to General Vicente Filisola, Commander of the Mexican Expedition, when he was sieging San Salvador.



# Most of the postal regulations of the Central American Federation were issued between 1824 and 1826

**TARIFA QUE DEBE OBSERVARSE EN LA**  
*Administración general de correos de las provincias unidas de centro América*  
*para el cobro de los portes de la correspondencia terrestre y marítima; aprobada*  
*por la Asamblea nacional constituyente.*

	Cartas sencillas de menos de una onza.	Id. dobles de media onza.	Id. triples de tres cuartos on- za.	Valor en cada una de las onzas
<b>NÚMERO 1.º</b>				
Estados unidos de centro América.	2,,	4,,	6,,	8,,
Provincia de Chiapa. . . . .				
República Mexicana. . . . .				
Id. de Colombia. . . . .				
Id. del Perú. . . . .				
Id. de Chile. . . . .				
Id. de Buenos-ayres. . . . .	2,,	4,,	6,,	8,,
Islas del continente. . . . .				
<b>NÚMERO 2.</b>				
España è Islas adyacentes. . . . .	4,,	6,,	8,,	12,,
Islas Filipinas. . . . .				
Estados Unidos del norte. . . . .				
Los demás países extranjeros. . . . .				

**P**OR cada onza de las excedentes à las tres primeras, en los pliegos que circulen en las provincias y estados que se comprehenden bajo el n.º 1. se cobrarán à 3 reales, cobradas las tres primeras à 8.

Por cada onza de las excedentes à las tres primeras de los pliegos comprehendidos en el número 2. se cobrarán à 4. reales, y las tres primeras à 12.

**Certificados.**

**P**OR el derecho del certificado en las piezas que circulen en los puntos del número 1.º se cobrará à razon de 8 reales, no llegando à una onza y si pasare se cobrará à 12. reales, debiendose franquear sea de la clase que fuere todo certificado.

Por todo certificado comprehendido bajo el número 2.º, no llegando à onza se cobrará à razon de 12 reales, y si pasare à 16,

Guatemala abril 24 de 1824. José Domingo Estrada Secretario, Toribio Arguello Secretario.

❑ On April 1824 the Federal Congress issued a new Postal Ordinance substituting all prior regulations but maintaining a significant part of the 1794 Ordinance.

❑ New tariffs were announced as part of this Ordinance. They were valid until the end of the Federation.

❑ The Ordinance was further modified in 1825 and 1826.

❑ The Federation maintained two couriers per month to Oaxaca and three to Leon.

❑ By the 1830s, political turmoil had severely affected the postal system and reduced the *Carrera de Leon* to one courier per month.





During the 1830s, El Salvador had 11 *estafetas* that mostly used the Colonial markings

San Salvador

S.SALVADOR;

FRANQUEADO:  
EN SAN SALVADOR

FRANQUEADO:  
EN SAN SALVADOR

S.SALVADOR

FRANQUEADO  
EN S. SALVADOR

Various

METAPAN

SONSONATE

FRANCO

UNION.

ZACATE  
COLVCA

San Miguel

SAN  
MIGUEL

*Franqueado  
en S. Miguel*

S.MIGUEL.

San Vicente

SAN  
VICENTE

*Franqueado  
en Sa<sup>n</sup> Vicente*

S.VICENTE

Santa Ana

SANTA  
ANA

*Franqueado  
en Santa Ana*

Cojutepeque

COJUTE  
PEQUE

*Franqueado en  
Cojutepeque.*

□ Of the 11 *estafetas* known to exist during this period, prephilatelic items have been registered for 9 of them. The other two are Ahuachapan and Suchitoto.

□ 6 markings were first used during these years.



# Mail during the Federation Period

1820s

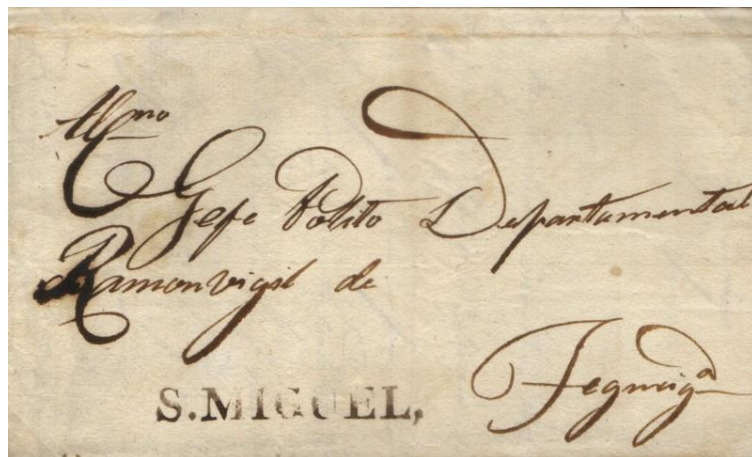


Santa Ana to San Salvador



San Vicente to San Salvador

1830s



San Miguel to Tegucigalpa



San Salvador to Santa Ana

## Mail during the Federation Period (1830s)



1838 letter from Sonsonate to Denmark. Prepaid in Sonsonate up to Izabal, and then transferred to Portsmouth via Belize. In Europe the letter was sent from London to Copenhagen via Hamburg. Probably the only known cover sent from El Salvador through the Izabal route.



1830s correspondence from San Salvador to Matina, Costa Rica with Ministerio de Hacienda marking.

- ❑ The Early Colonial Period (1500s – 1763)
- ❑ The Bourbon Reforms (1764 – 1821)
- ❑ The Federation Period (1821 – 1839)
- ❑ The Republican Period (1839 – 1866)



## Once the Federation was dissolved, El Salvador slowly assumed the responsibilities of running a stand-alone postal system...

□ During the 1840s, there was a general breakdown of the postal system and communications between the Central American countries and even within El Salvador was irregular.

□ It was not until 19 November 1849 that a separate administration was created to manage the postal system.

□ That same year, a provisional postal regulation was issued, which became the forerunner of the 1851 Postal Ordinance.

□ During the 1850s the postal routes within El Salvador were reestablished and regular couriers were exchanged between the Central American countries.

Sr. ADMINISTRADOR DE CORREOS DE *Comagagua* *N.º 10*

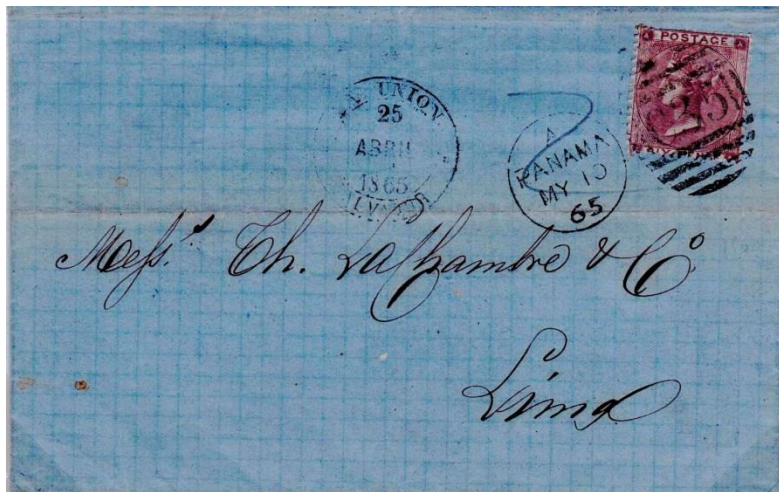
Con el del día dirijo á U. la correspondencia y encomiendas siguientes.

CERTIFICADOS.	CORRESPONDENCIAS.	Sencillas.	Dobles.	Triples.	Pliegos.	Valor.	Total en rs.
De esta estafeta para esa		★					
De estafetas del interior.							
De otras estafetas.....							
Ultramarinas.....							
Piezas francas.....							
Idem para U.....							
Impresos.....							

ENCOMIENDAS.—Administracion de Correos de *TEJUTLA* *Huila* de 1855

*Viente Duanos*

## The Gold Rush provoked an increase in maritime traffic in the region



Letter from La Union to Lima, handled by the British Postal Agency in Panama.



Letter from Acajutla to New York via Panama.



Letter from San Miguel to New York, sent via Nicaragua and delivered at arrival by G.H. Wines & Co.

- ❑ On 22 April 1858 the Government contracted with the Panama Railroad Company (Pacific Mail Steamship Company) the establishment of a regular maritime mail service.

## 14 estafetas used postal markings during the Republican Period (35 different markings)

\* San Salvador

\* S.SALVADOR

\* FRANQUEADO  
EN S. SALVADOR

FRANQUEADO:  
EN SAN SALVADOR

Admon. jral. de Corr. de Est.  
FEBRERO 7 DE 1851  
SAN SALVADOR

SAN SALVADOR  
12  
SETIEMBRE  
1863  
SALVADOR

Santa Ana

\* Franqueado  
en Santa Ana

\* SANTA  
ANA

FRANQUEADO EN  
SANTA ANA.

FRANQUEADO  
—  
ENSANTAANA

SANTA ANA  
1  
JUNIO  
1863  
SALVADOR

Sonsonate

\* SONSONATE

\* FRANCO

SONSONATE  
18  
MARZO  
1866  
SALVADOR

Cojutepeque

\* Franqueado en  
Cojutepeque.

COJUTEPEQUE

COJUTEPEQUE

San Miguel

\* S.MIGUEL.

FRANQUEADO  
EN S. MIGUEL

SAN MIGUEL  
9  
FEBRERO  
1863  
SALVADOR



# 14 estafetas used postal markings during the Republican Period (35 different markings)

## La Union



## La Libertad



## Santa Tecla



## \* Acajutla



## Suchitoto

SUCHITOTO

## Metapan



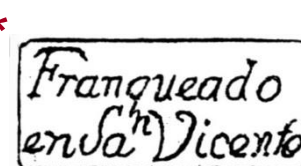
## Tejutla

TEJUTLA

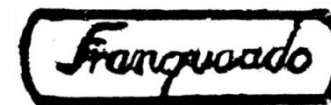
## Ahuachapan

FRANCO EN  
AHUACHAPAN

## San Vicente



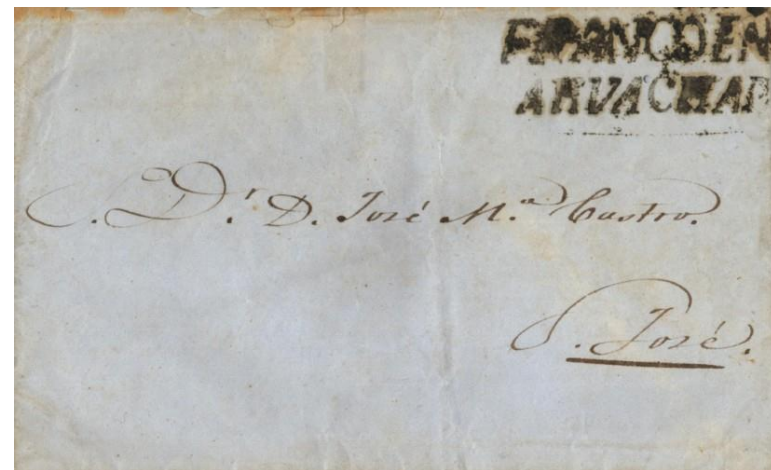
## Various



## Mail during the Republican Period (1850s)



1854 San Miguel to Cedros with Tegucigalpa & Comayagua transit marks



1857 Ahuachapan to San Jose



1859 Santa Ana to San Salvador with green marking



1852 San Salvador to Washington



## Mail during the Republican Period (1860s)



1861 Acajutla to Peru



1861 Sonsonate to Liverpool



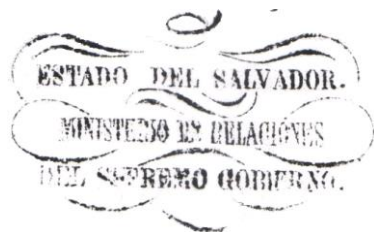
1861 La Union to New York



1862 San Miguel to New York



## Several Official Markings were also in use to justify the free franking privileges



1848 San Salvador to Santa Ana

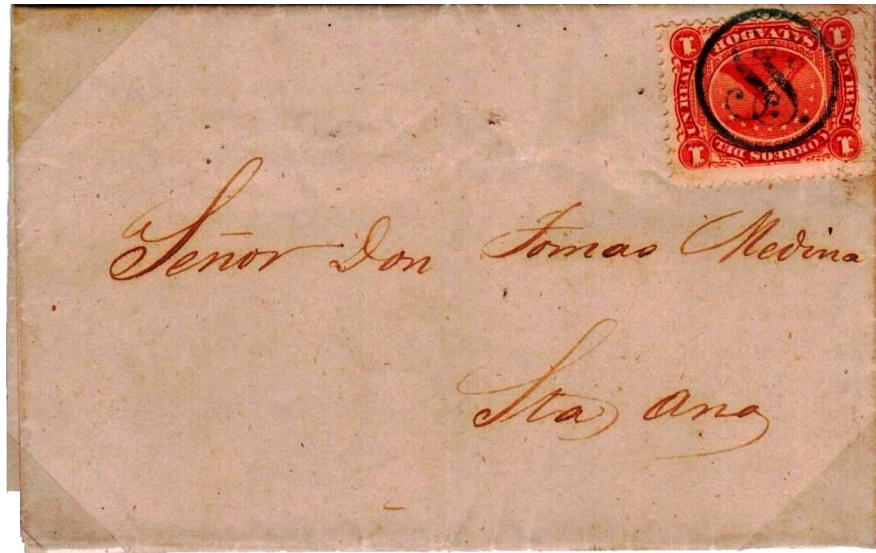


1864 San Salvador to New York



1852 Sonsonate to Santa Ana

## The 1867 Postal Ordinance established the use of postage stamps in El Salvador



Earliest known letter with postage stamps (11 March 1867)

