

(pre-stamp period contin.)

LEON :

about 1825 - 1830

color black

and a much smaller one from

CHINANDEGA :

on a cover to Washington D.C.

dated June 4, 1854

color black

PATRIOTIC POSTMARKS

ÆL.S.D.AGUST. I.º

This is the only patriotic postmark found so far on pre-stamp mail from Nicaragua. It was applied about 1821 to a "front" from the town Nicaragua, today RIVAS to San José, Costa Ri
Mr. Leo J. Harris writes in his article "THE PRESTAMP POSTAL MARKINGS OF NICARAGUA"
(Collectors Club "PHILATELIST" , 1982) : "This postmark was used in commemoration
of the accession of the Mexican Emperor Iturbide. No mechanically applied devices are know
from Nicaragua in honour of Fernando VII of Spain".

Eastern part of Nicaragua - MOSQUITO RESERVATION

NO PRE-STAMP postmarks from the eastern part of Nicaragua, i.e. the MOSQUITO COAST
exist, but letters to England from 1764 and 1783 show in handwriting:

Black River, Mosquito Shore March 1.º 1764
(RIO NEURO, situated in the "choquetia" of HONDURAS)

a n d

Castle Point Bluefields
Mosquito Shore
June 6.º 1783

N I C A R A G U A

1 8 5 4

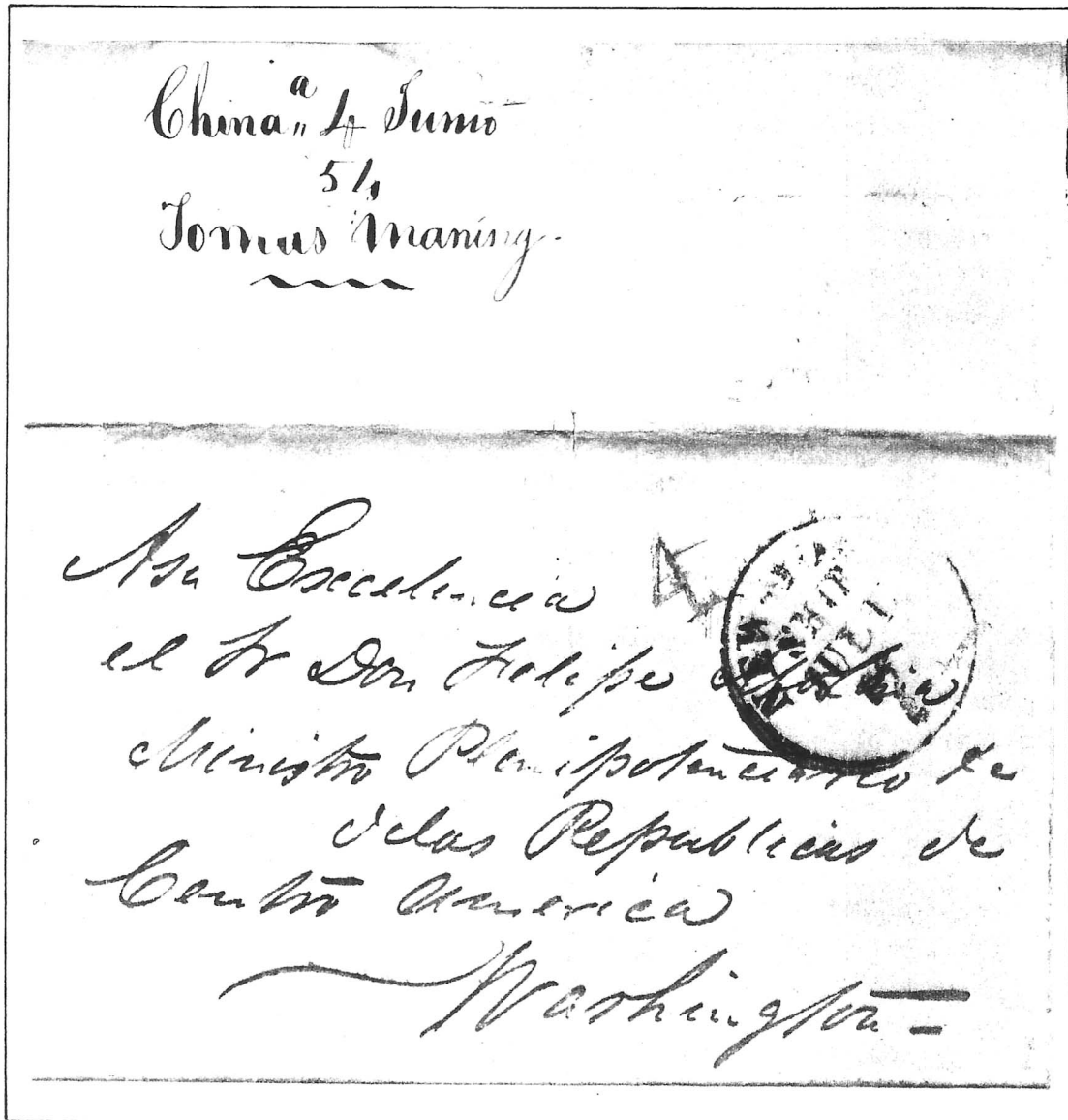
Internal Rating:

4

EARLY OFFICIAL MAIL - PRE-STAMP PERIOD

Cover addressed to the Ambassador of the
Central American Republics in Washington D.C.

Cover from Chinandega to Washington D.C.



Cover dated by handwriting Chinandega June 4, 1854

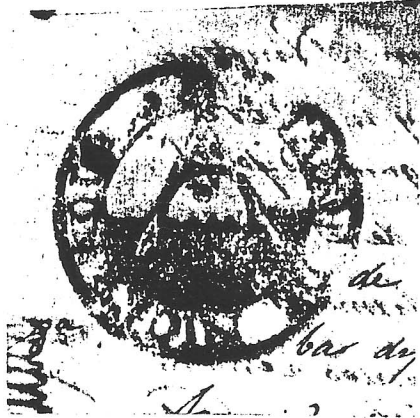
Internal postal rate handstamped in black: 4

Transit postmark NEW YORK / SHIP / JUL 1 / 7 cts



(pre-stamp period contin.)

Last but not least, an official seal on a piece of an early letter should be mentioned. It's a circular "woodcut" handstamp with an outer diameter of 41 mm (color black), reading ESTADO DE NICARAGUA and showing in the middle the national emblem of Nicaragua. This was probably the first "OFFICIAL SEAL" after Independence in 1823!



GENERAL REMARKS

I do not pretend that my listing of Nicaragua pre-stamp postmarks is final or complete. It is quite possible that postmarks from other towns will come to light in the future. In any case I would be ever so glad to get further information and if possible illustrations of other known strikes from fellow collectors. This very difficult field of early postal history of Nicaragua is still wide open for further research!

FORWARDING AGENTS :

Before starting to talk about the official postmarks used after the first issue of postage stamps in Nicaragua (1862), a few words should be said about the private postal markings of Forwarding Agents.

As well as in most other countries, Forwarding Agents also were actif in Nicaragua, carrying mail to, from and even through the country. However, such markings are rather scarce and little has been written so far about this subject.

Kenneth Rowe in his "Forwarding Agents" mentioned two Agents for Nicaragua. For San Juan del Sur the firm Body, White & Co. in an oval strike. As date he mentions 1852 but doesn't describe size and colour of the strike. Further, for San Juan del Norte he lists the name A.L. Belchier in manuscript and also an oval mark (41 x 15 mm), both for 1851. Up to now I have never seen these markings on Nicaragua mail.

The FORWARDING AGENT markings known to me are the following:

SAN JUAN DEL NORTE:

C. Mayorga Y H^o, S. JUAN



fig.1

on a letter from La Union (S.Salvador) Via Nicaragua (S.J. del Sur - S.J. del Norte) to New York. The letter is dated Jan 15, 1853. The colour of the strike is black and the ϕ is 20 mm (fig. 1)



fig.2

C.A.T. CO. (Central American Transit Company) with a circular steel handstamp (colour black, ϕ 26 mm) dated May 28, 1867. This letter arrived in New York on June 6, 1867 per SS "NEVADA". (fig.2)

Another steel marking of the same kind is struck on a letter from Granada, dated Nov 12, 1867. The marking of the C.A.T. CO. bears the date Dec 2, 1867. The letter addressed to New York arrived in this port on Dec 30, 1867 on bord SS "SAN FRANCISCO".

The C.A.T. CO. operated steamships in the Pacific and Atlantic to assure transportation of passengers and mail from the Westcoast to the Eastcoast of the United States and viceversa. For instance, the route from San Francisco/ Cal. to New York went through San Juan del Sur (Nic.), from there by coaches over a macadamized road to Virgin Bay, a small place on the Lake Nicaragua. From there a lake steamer carried passengers and mail to Fort San Carlos from where they followed on small boats down the River San Juan to San Juan del Norte (Greytown), the Atlantic port of Nicaragua.

Forwarding Agents, continued

This kind of transportation took of course also place the other way around.

In this connection the C.A.T. CO. also operated an office

VIRGIN BAY :



fig.3

with its own postal marking. There exists a letter from Granada, dated July 21, 1865, privately postmarked by C.A.T. Co. VIRGIN BAY July 26, 1865. The folded letter arrived in New York on August 15, 1865 on board SS "ERICSON" (fig.3)

Another VIRGIN BAY postmark of the C.A.T.CO. comes on a cover dated Jan ?, 1865, which arrived in New York on Feb 1 1865 on board of the SS "Golden Rule".

Both date-stamps are of the same type as the one used in San Juan del Norte.

As the C.A.T. CO. probably also operated an Office in San Juan del SUR, it is quite possible that they used there another date stamp of the same kind. However, as to my knowledge, so far no strike from the C.A.T. Co. San Juan del SUR came to light.

In connection with the C.A.T., CO., also see Chapter 8.

GRANADA :



fig.4

A folded letter from Granada, dated January 5, 1870 to New York arrived on Jan 26, 1870 and received the Forwarders oval handstamp (colour black, size 30 x 18 mm)
* C. DURAND NEW YORK. * (fig.4)



fig.5

Two folded letters from Granada to New York, one dated Nov 1872 arriving Dec 6, 1872 and one dated April 6, 1876 arrived May 8, 1876 received both the oval handstamp FORWARDED BY W.P. MAAL ASPINWALL. (Colour blue, size 33x16 (fig.5)

The Forwarding Agent W.P. MAAL of the "Panama Route" usually carried mail from Colombia, Peru and Panama. He operated from Aspinwall, a small port installed about 1848 to receive ships of the Atlantic run of the "Panama Route" and was named in honor of William H. Aspinwall, one of the 3 founders and he of the Pacific Mail Steamship Company. This port has since been renamed COLON.

LEON :

(fig.7) *Forwarded by Dr. J.W. Livingston*

A folded letter from Leon, dated April 14, 1861 and received in New York on May 14, 1861 has a manuscript remark: FORWARDED BY DR. J.W. LIVINGSTON (fig.7)

N I C A R A G U A

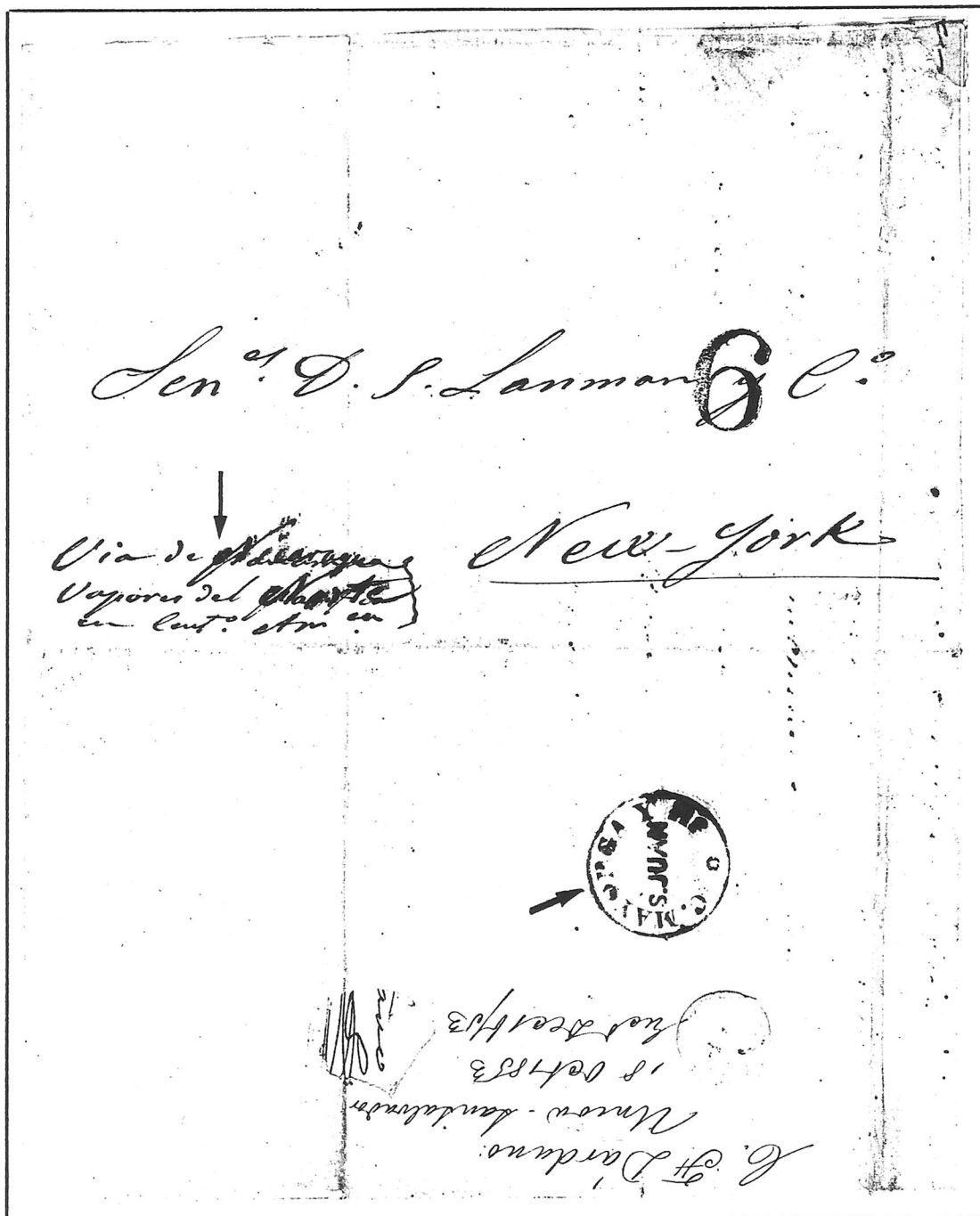
"Pre - stamp" period, 1853

Forwarding Agent:

C. MAYORGA Y H^o S. JUAN



Letter from Union, San Salvador to New York, "VIA DE NICARAGUA"



Letter dated Union October 18, 1853 and received in New York Dec 16, 1853

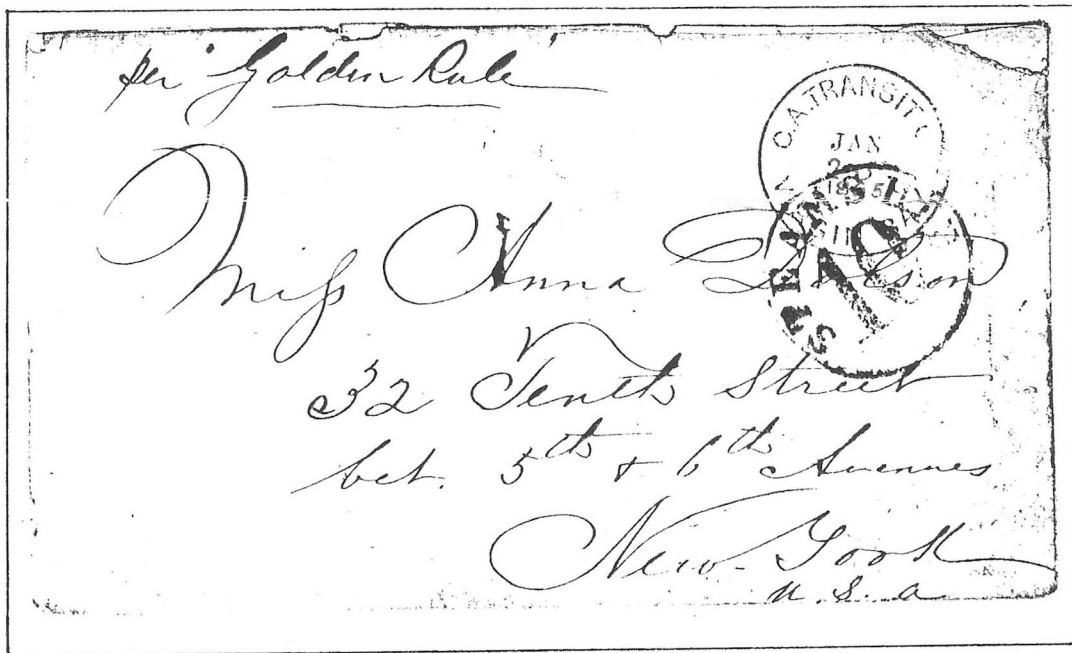
N I C A R A G U A

1 8 6 5

FORWARDING AGENT: C.A.T. TRANSIT CO. - VIRGIN BAY



Cover from Nicaragua to New York, N.Y.



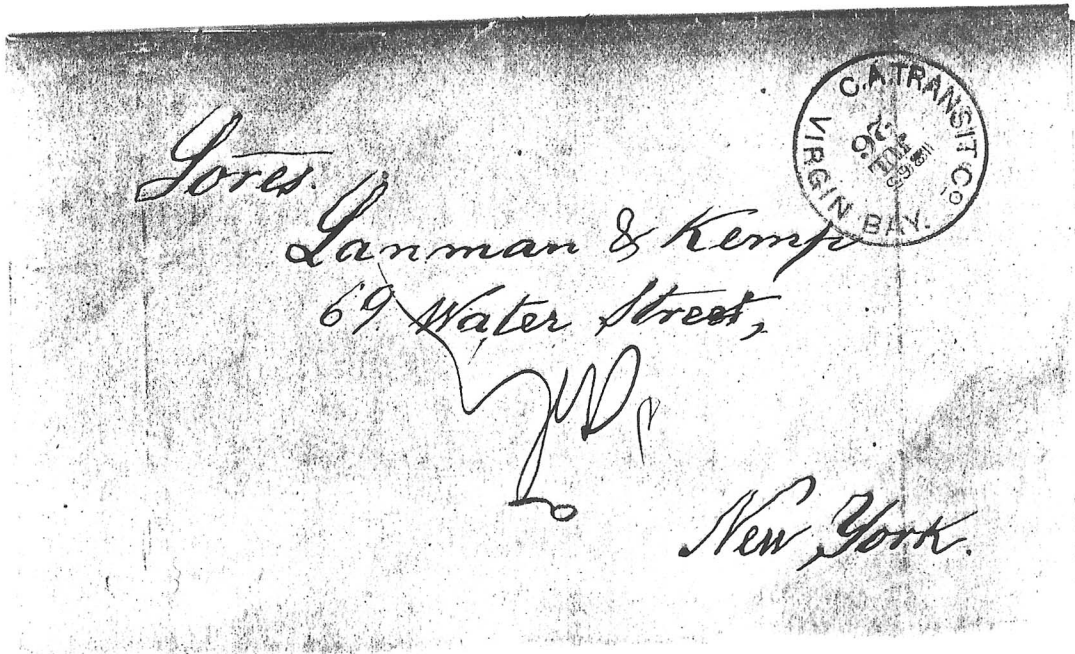
Cover privately postmarked by the CENTRAL AMERICAN TRANSIT COMPANY at VIRGIN BAY, Nicaragua on January 20, 1865.

The cover was carried from San Juan del Norte to New York City on board SS "GOLDEN RULE" and arrived on February 10, 1865

It was handed there to the U.S. Postoffice and received the current postmark for incoming mail:



FROM NICARAGUA
THE C.A.T. SYSTEM ALSO HAD A POST OFFICE AT VIRGIN BAY ON
LAKE NICARAGUA. 3 EXAMPLES OF THE MARK ARE KNOWN.



WRITTEN GRANADA JULY 21, 1865 AND ENTERED THE C.A.T.
SYSTEM ON JULY 26. ARRIVED N.Y. NEW YORK AUG. 15th
ON THE "ERICSSON"

N I C A R A G U A

*América Central. Rep^a de Nicaragua
San Juan del Norte. Enero 8 de 1867*

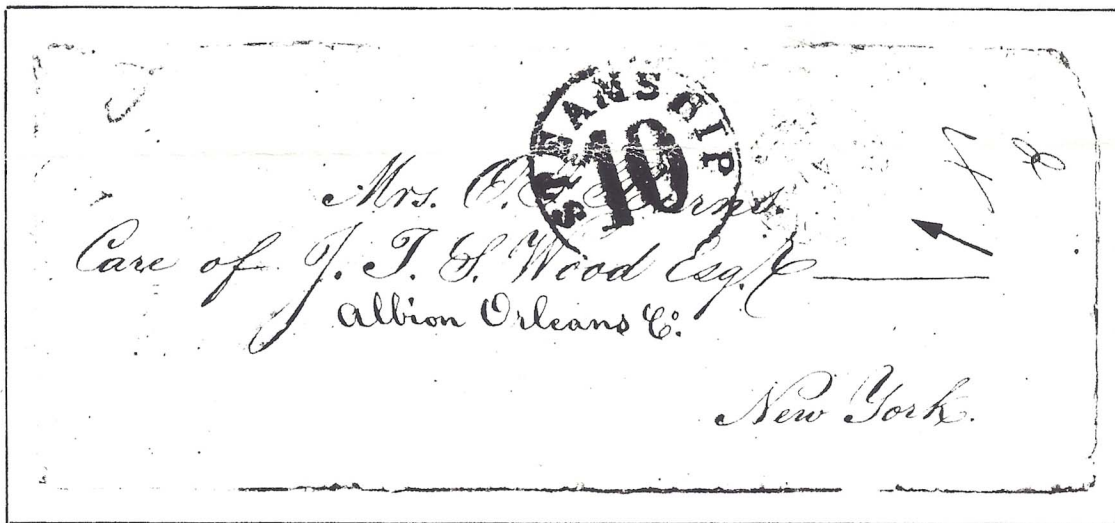
Foreign mail until 1882

British Consular Post GREYTOWN (San Juan del Norte)

Dated circular handstamp in RED reading GREYTOWN / PAID



Cover from San Juan del Norte (Greytown), Via Panama to New York



Cancelled Greytown January 16, 1867
Manuscript rating in red: 4 d (pence)
Backstamped in transit at Brit. Postoffice:
COLON January 18, 1867 (in black)
Arrival postmark with circular rate stamp
in black: STEAMSHIP 10



Cover contains very interesting original letter!

CENTRAL AMERICAN TRANSPORT CO.

THE NORTH AMERICAN STEAMSHIP CO. REORGANIZED THE "VIA NICARAGUA" ROUTE IN OCT. 1862 WITH REGULAR SERVICE AFTER AUG. 1864. THE C.A.T. WAS THE LOCAL COMPANY IN NICARAGUA. MAILBAGS WERE CARRIED FREE BUT THE COVERS HAD TO HAVE THE POSTAGE PAID BY STAMPS AS THE LETTER WERE PLACED DIRECTLY IN THE U.S. MAILES ON ARRIVAL. THE COMPANY HAD 2 POST OFFICES IN NICARAGUA, SAN JUAN de1 NORTE AND VIRGIN BAY, BUT THESE LETTERS WERE NOT CARRIED IN THE BAGS AND PAID THE 10c OF NORMAL SHIP LETTERS.

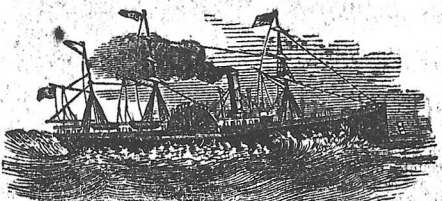
87

North American Steamship Co.

N.A.S.S.C.

OPPOSITION TO MONOPOLY.
THROUGH LINE TO

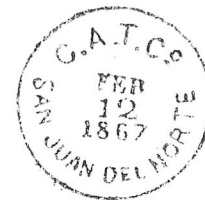
CALIFORNIA,
VIA PANAMA OR NICARAGUA.



SAILING AT NOON FROM
PIER 29 NORTH RIVER,
FOOT OF WARREN ST.,

ON THE FOLLOWING FIRST-CLASS
ON ATLANTIC OCEAN.
Santiago De Cuba,
San Francisco,
Dakota,
Arago,
Fulton,

Passage and Freight at
For further information
Company's Office, 177
D. N. CAR
WM. H. WEBB, President,
CHARLES DANA, Vice-President
54 Exchange Place, N



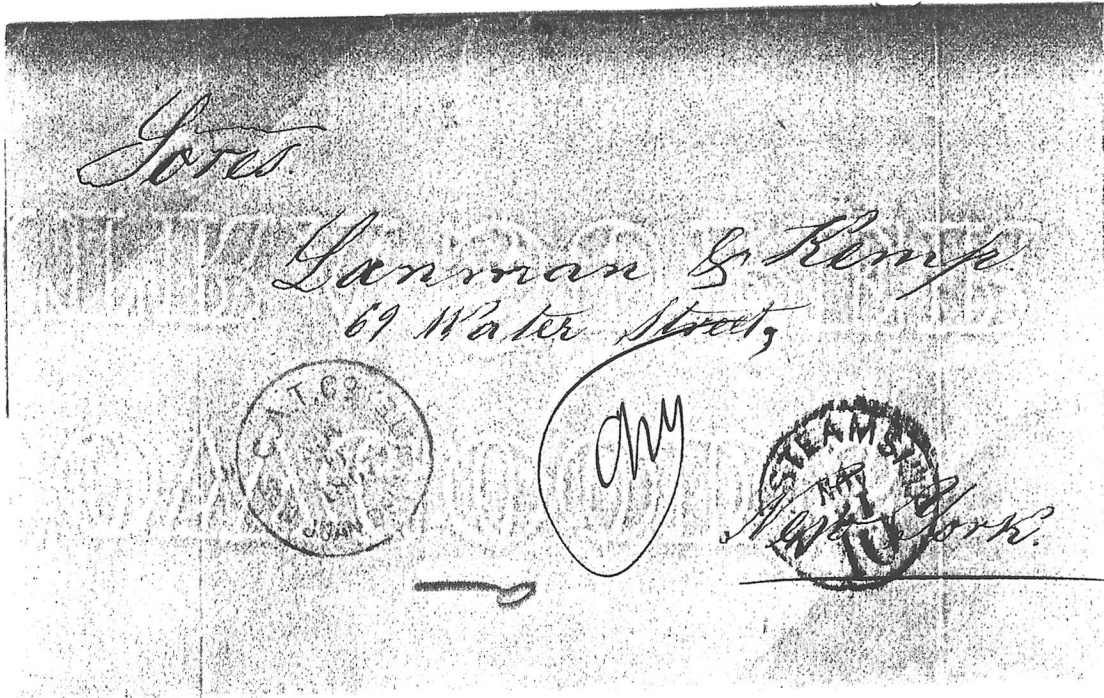
Due

Mrs G. L. Lyon
Rossville Staten Island
N.Y.

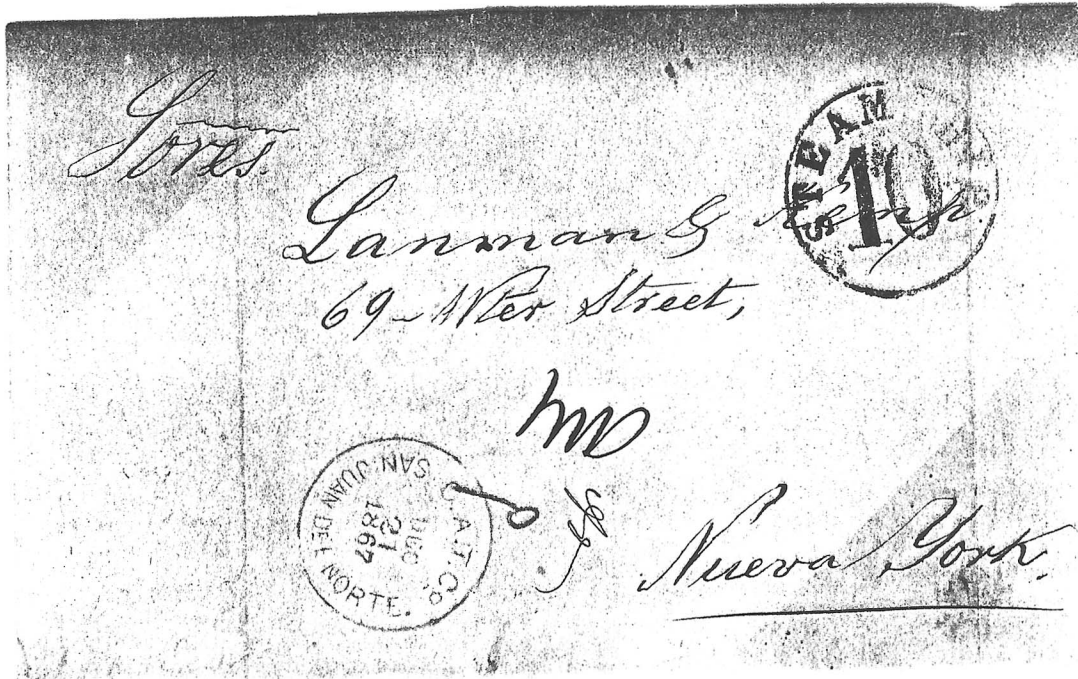
FEB. 12 1867 IN SAN JUAN de1 NORTE ARRIVING N.Y. FEB. 21 ON THE "SAN FRANCISCO". LETTER HAS CORRECT POSTAGE IF MAILED IN N.Y. BUT WAS CARRIED LOOSE AND CORRECTLY ASSESSED THE STEAMSHIP RATE FOR LETTER FROM NICARAGUA AND THUS THE DUES MARK



FROM NICARAGUA



WRITTEN GRANADA OCT. 31, 1867 AND WAS MARKED BY THE C.A.T. POST OFFICE IN SAN JUAN del NORTH ON NOV. 9. ARRIVED IN NEW YORK ON NOV. 20th ON THE "SAN FRANCISCO"



WRITTEN GRANADA ON NOV. 12, 1867 BUT NOT MARKED BY THE C.A.T. POST OFFICE IN SAN JUAN del NORTH UNTIL DEC. 21. ARRIVED NEW YORK ON DEC. 30 ON "SAN FRANCISCO" WITH COMPANY ARRIVAL NOTE NEXT DAY.

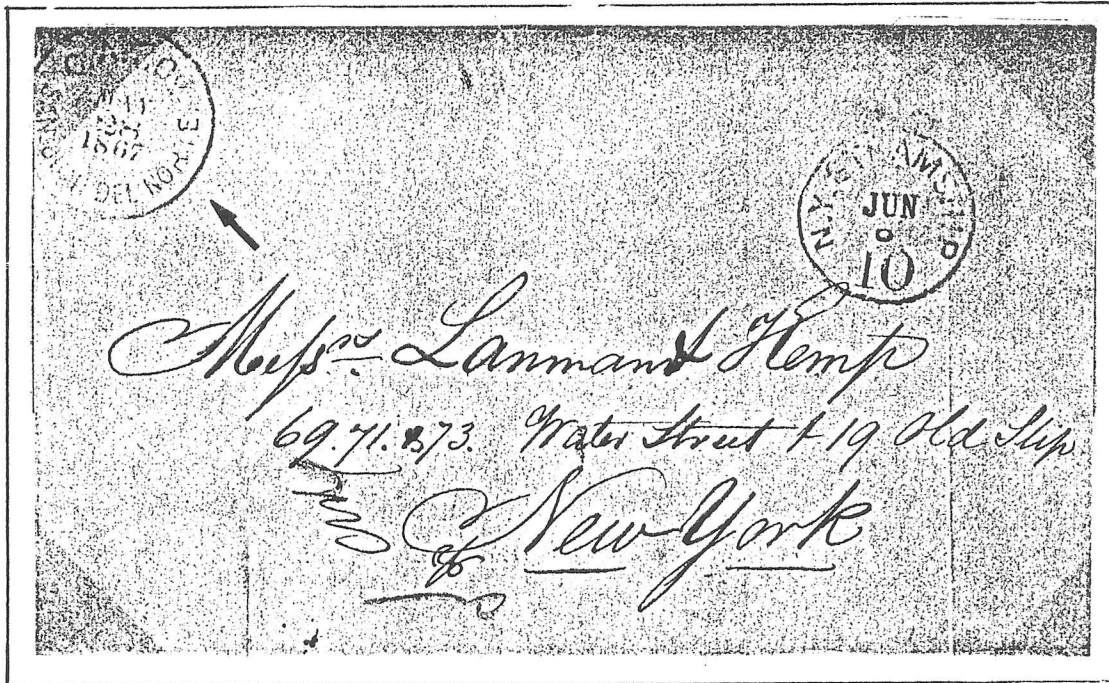
N I C A R A G U A

1 8 6 7

FORWARDING AGENT: "C.A.T." SAN JUAN DEL NORTE
(CENTRAL AMERICAN TRANSIT COMPANY)



Letter from San Juan del Norte to New York, N.Y.



Letter cancelled "C.A.T.Co." SAN JUAN DEL NORTE May 28, 1867

Arrival postmark New York STEAMSHIP June 6 (10 cents)

Letter carried by S.S. "SIERRA NEVADA"



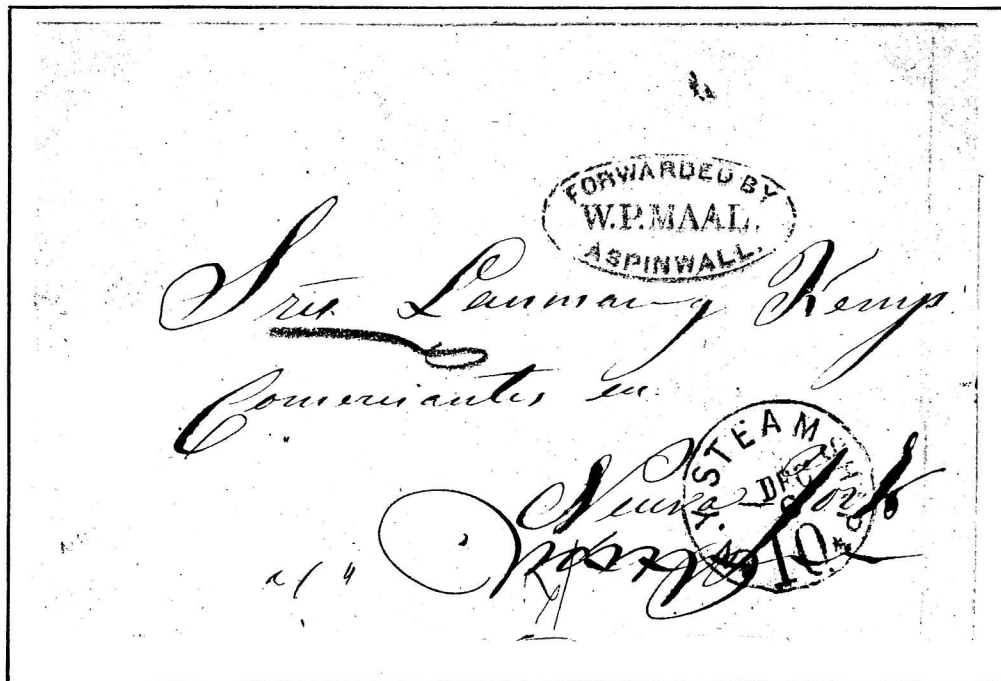
N I C A R A G U A

1 8 7 2

Mail carried by FORWARDING AGENT



Letter from GRANADA to New York, N.Y.



Letter dated Granada November 8, 1872
Forwarders cachet W.P. MAAL, Aspinwall
Arrival postmark New York Dec.6 (1872)
N.Y. STEAMSHIP * 10 *



Only very few "FORWARDED" letters from Nicaragua are known to still exist. This Forwarding Agent W.P. MAAL of the "Panama Route" usually carried mail from Colombia, Peru and Panama. He was installed in Aspinwall, a small port installed about 1848 to receive ships of the Atlantic run of the "Panama Route" and was named in honor of William H. Aspinwall, one of the 3 founders and head of the Pacific Mail Steamship Company. This port has since been renamed C O L O N .

GRANADA:

Wines & Co's Express

WINES & CO'S EXPRESS

on a cover to New York,
about 1850

LEON :

EM. CHESNAY & C^{ie}
LEON

EM. CHESNAY & C^a
LEON

on folded letter from Leon
to New York, Oct. 13, 1855

There exist also letters handled by Forwarding Agents which did not receive any private handstamp indicating the name of the agent. Sometimes the agent can be traced, his name being mentioned in the letter itself.

In this connection I must also mention the so-called S H I P L E T T E R S : They should also be considered as FORWARDED. These letters were handed directly to the Captain or Purser of a ship and only received the normal official postmark for incoming sea-mail from the postal authorities at the ports of reception. It would go to far to describe here all - specially the U.S. - postmarks and rating marks that can be found on mail from Nicaragua.

This listing of FORWARDING AGENTS on Nicaragua mail, as well as mail going through Nicaragua is by no means to be considered as complete and final. I would be very grateful if collectors, being the happy owners of other Forwarding Agents marks on mail from, through or to Nicaragua would be so kind to give me further information.

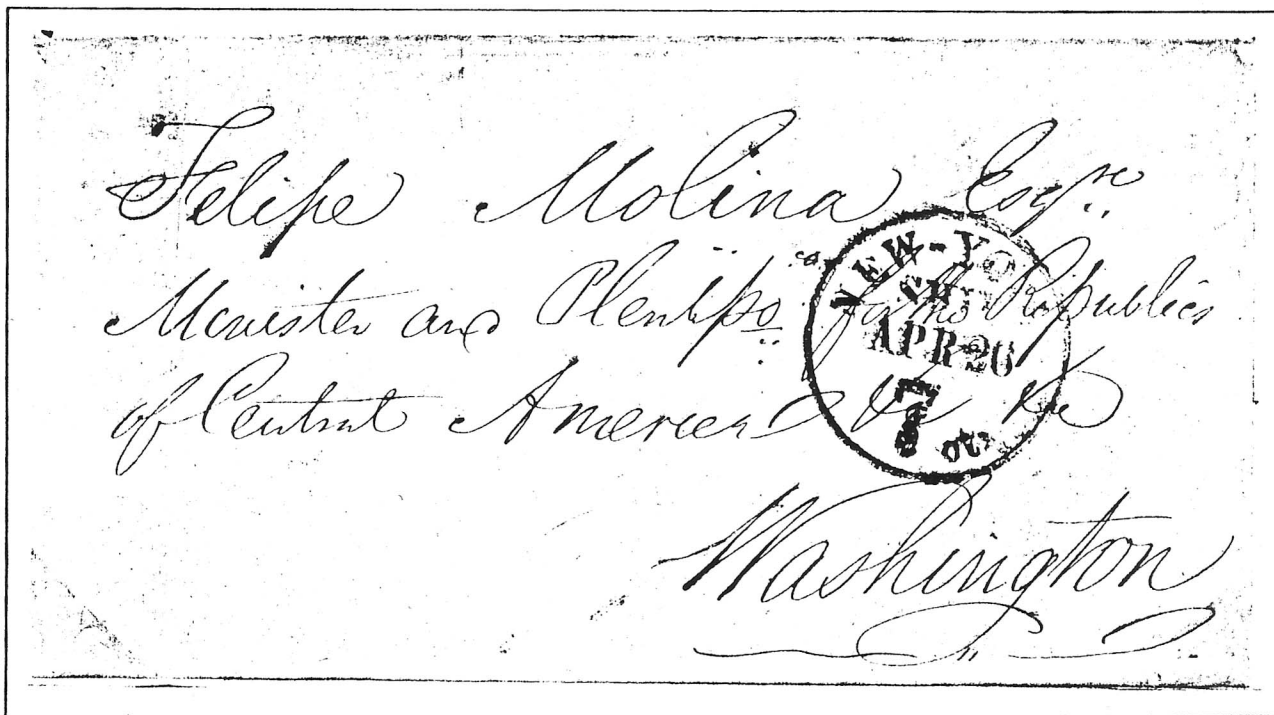
N I C A R A G U A

Ship Letter

Leon de Nie^{ls}
10th April 1854



Letter from Leon to Washington D.C.



Letter dated Leon April 6, 1854
Arrival postmark NEW YORK SHIP, APR 26 7cts.

This letter, addressed to the "MINISTRO PLENIPOTENCIARIO (Ambassador) of the "REPUBLIC OF CENTRAL AMERICA" at Washington, arrived at New York on April 25, 1854 on board of the SS "NORTHERN LIGHT".

N I C A R A G U A

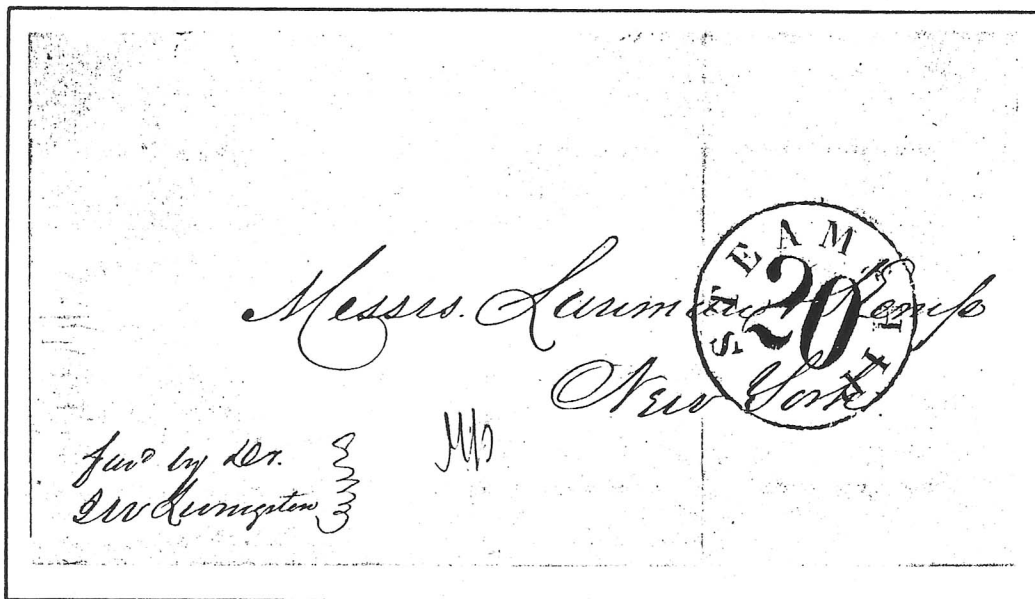
1861

P R E S T A M P P E R I O D



Ship Letter

Letter from Leon to New York / N.Y.



Letter dated Leon April 14, 1861
Handwritten: Forwarded by Dr. J.W. Livingston
US postmark upon arrival: S T E A M E R 20
Handwritten: Received May 4th (1861)

N I C A R A G U A

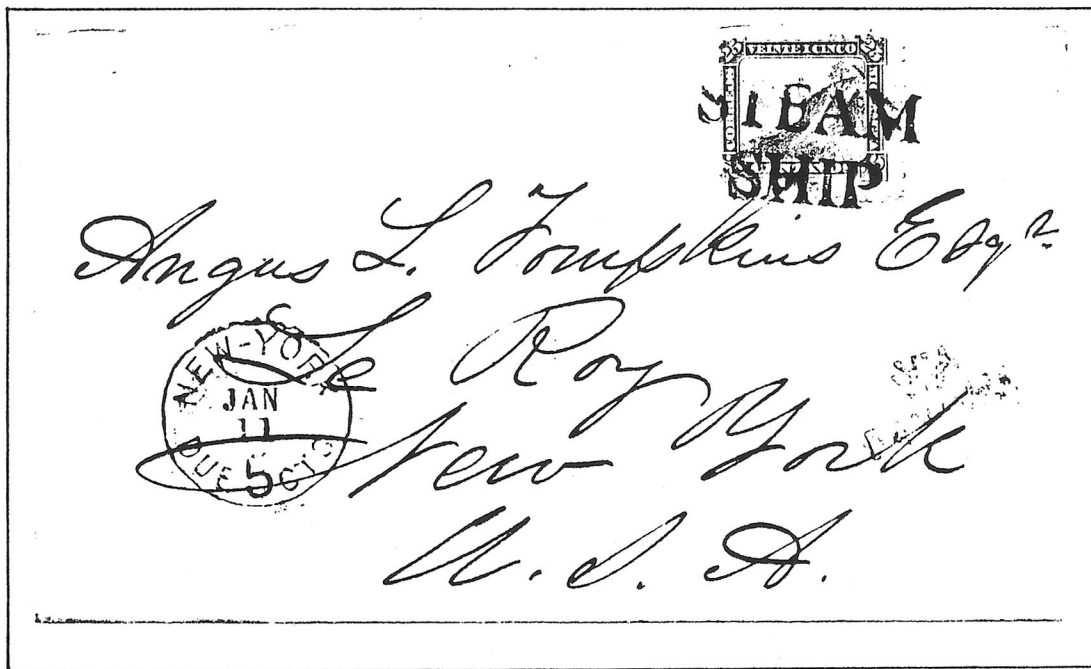
Second issue of postage stamps. 1869 - 1871

Thin hard, white paper, thin yellowish gum,
engraved, perforated 12.

Printed: American Bank Note Co., New York

**STEAM
SHIP
VIA
PANAMA**

Cover from Nicaragua to New York, U.S.A.



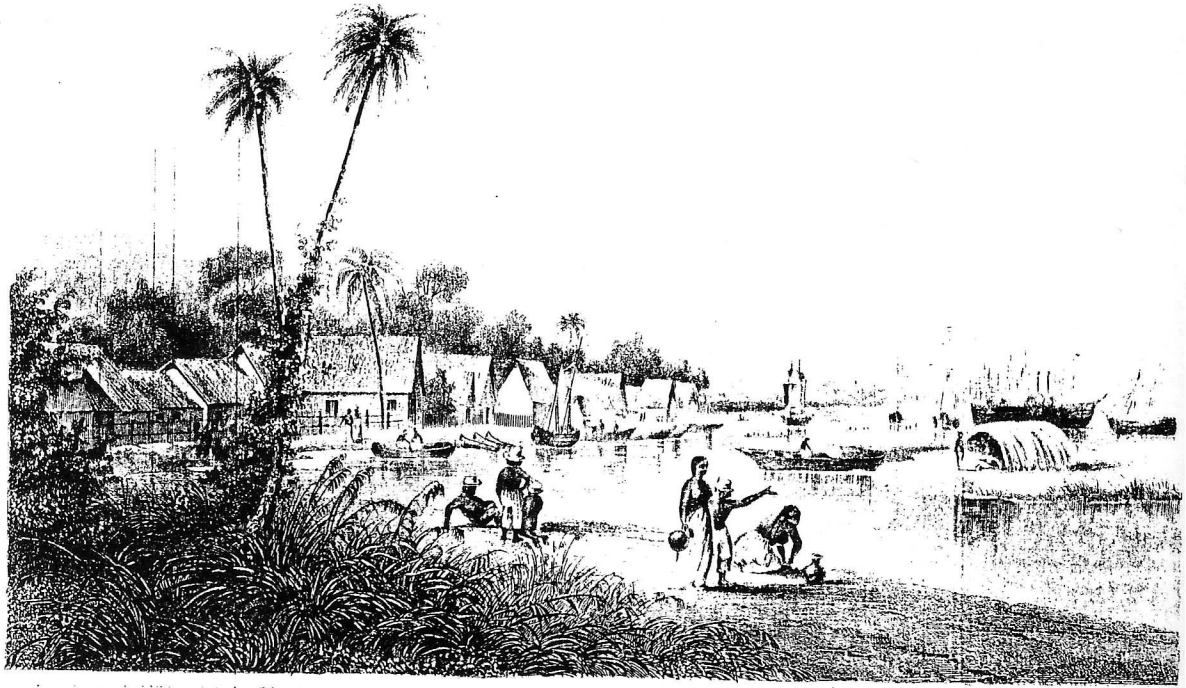
This letter left Nicaragua between 1871 and 1881

Transit postmark: VIA
PANAMA

Cover cancelled upon arrival in New York with a
double straight line postmark: S T E A M
S H I P

Arrival postmark New York JAN 11 (no year) DUE 5 CTS



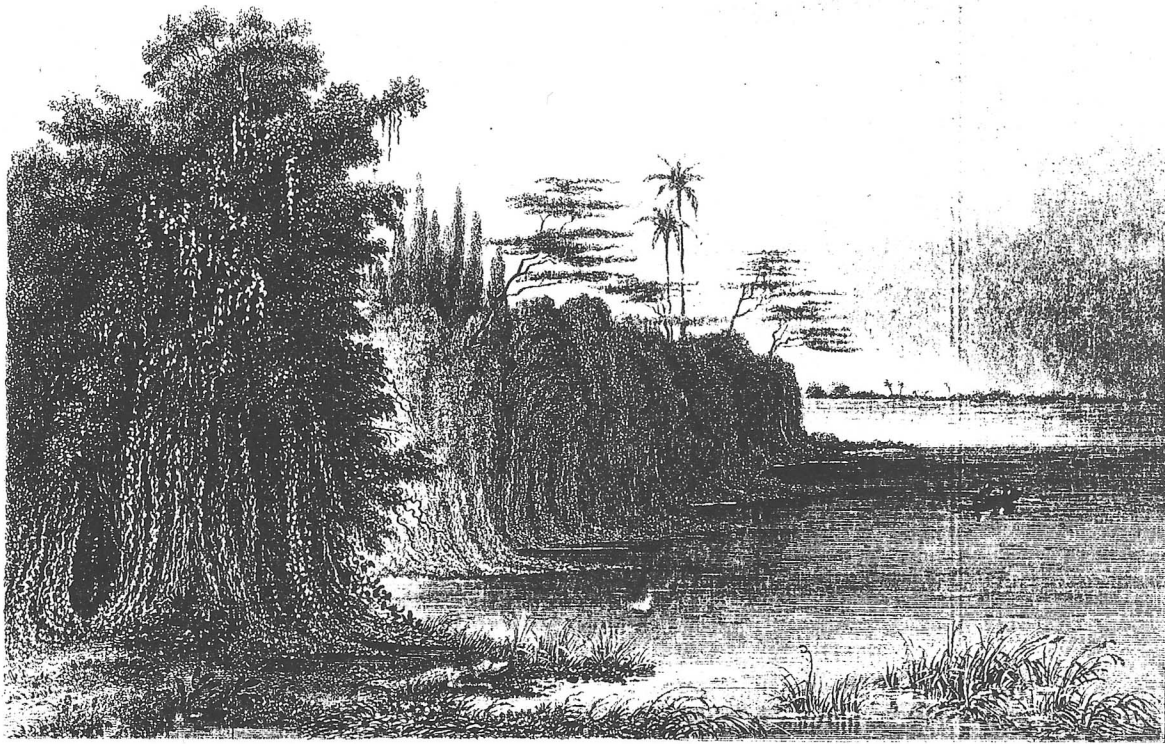


SAN JUAN DEL NORTE

View of San Juan del Norte

Engraving by G. B. S. P.

View of SAN JUAN DEL NORTE (Engraving about 1859)



SZIENTERDEI and de la SANCHEZ
CENTRAL-AMERICA.

Scenery on the SAN JUAN RIVER (Nicaragua), (Engraving abt. 1859)