

General remarks: The task of describing the postmarks of NICARAGUA is not as easy as it might look at first sight. A sorrow description and illustration can only be made on the basis of strikes on cover, as those on loose stamps are rarely complete. But covers of Nicaragua are rather scarce items, specially the early ones, let us say up to 1900. But even from later dates some of the cancels are hard to be found on cover. In many cases used postal stationery is of great help. Specially postcards were more easily kept in business or family files and today they can be a wonderful source of information.

By the way, I never understood why so many - even serious philatelists - look at postal stationery as "quantité négligable". In my opinion any postal stationery, i.e. cards, envelopes and also wrappers, are as much a postal document as any loose stamp, in the contrary they constitute a complete postal document.

I. PERIOD

It is not only an old overtaken believe that the first two stamps of Nicaragua, issued under decree dated September 9, 1862, the 2 centavos blue and the 5 centavos black, both on yellowish paper, were supposed to be cancelled by ink but "expreso verbis" this kind of obliteration was commanded by the official decree of September 29, 1862. Also, a little further in this decree (page 2, art. 8) the Postmasters were authorized to use the postmarks they already were using. The spanish text reads: "Por ahora esta señal sobre las estampillas la haran los Administradores con el timbre que han estado usando".

PEN CANCELLATIONS: See figure 1.



Fig. 1

PEN CANCELLATIONS
 PEN AND INK CANCELLATIONS ARE FOUND ON
 THE LATER VOLCANO ISSUES AS WELL , FROM
 BOTH THE LARGE AND SMALLER POST OFFICES



NICARAGUA
(RIVAS)



MOMOTOMBO



POSTAL USE
PEN CANCELLED

PEN CANCELLATION WITH
'NUMERAL/LETTER' CANCELLATION



JALAPA

JALAPA

RIVAS

SAN RAFAEL

GRANADA



N I C A R A G U A

First issue of postage stamps. 1862

Thin hard, yellowish paper, engraved, perforated 12
Printed: American Bank Note Co., New York



P E N c a n c e l l e d "GRANADA"

Vale 20¢

J. W.

Juan E. Melgino.

Granada



"Home-made" interior cover to Granada

STRAIGHT LINE POSTMARK (from pre-sta-mp period): See figure 2.

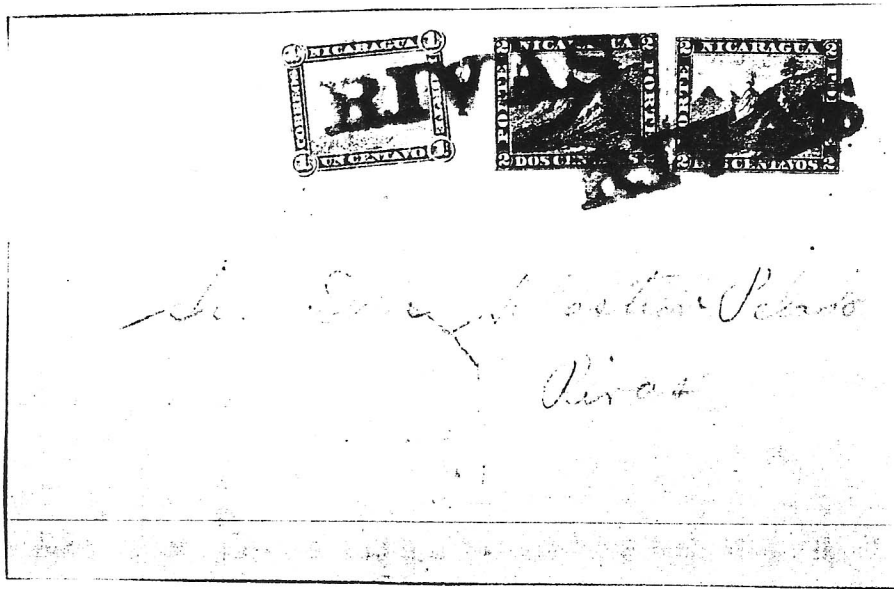


Fig. 2

Besides their straight line postmarks, the Postmasters used on these two stamps of the first issue, as well as on all denominations of the later Momotombo issues, the so-called POSTMASTER'S KILLERS which must have been authorized officially. So, for a certain period the Postmasters were free to cut their own cancels in wood or core and they copied mainly U.S. cancels of the same period.

It is however quite possible that some of these mute cancels or "killers" were sent to Nicaragua from the United States, may be even by the American Bank Note Co. together with their stamp deliveries.

A variety of such cancels is shown here under fig. 3.

Up to now it has been impossible to establish exactly which of these fancy cancels belongs to which town (mostly small places), as no complete covers came so far to light. Heinze states that the small "seal" - cancel (see the stamp marked XX on page fig. 3.) belongs to the small village of LA PAZ near León.

N I C A R A G U A

Postmaster "killers" on stamps of 1869-71 and 1878-80.

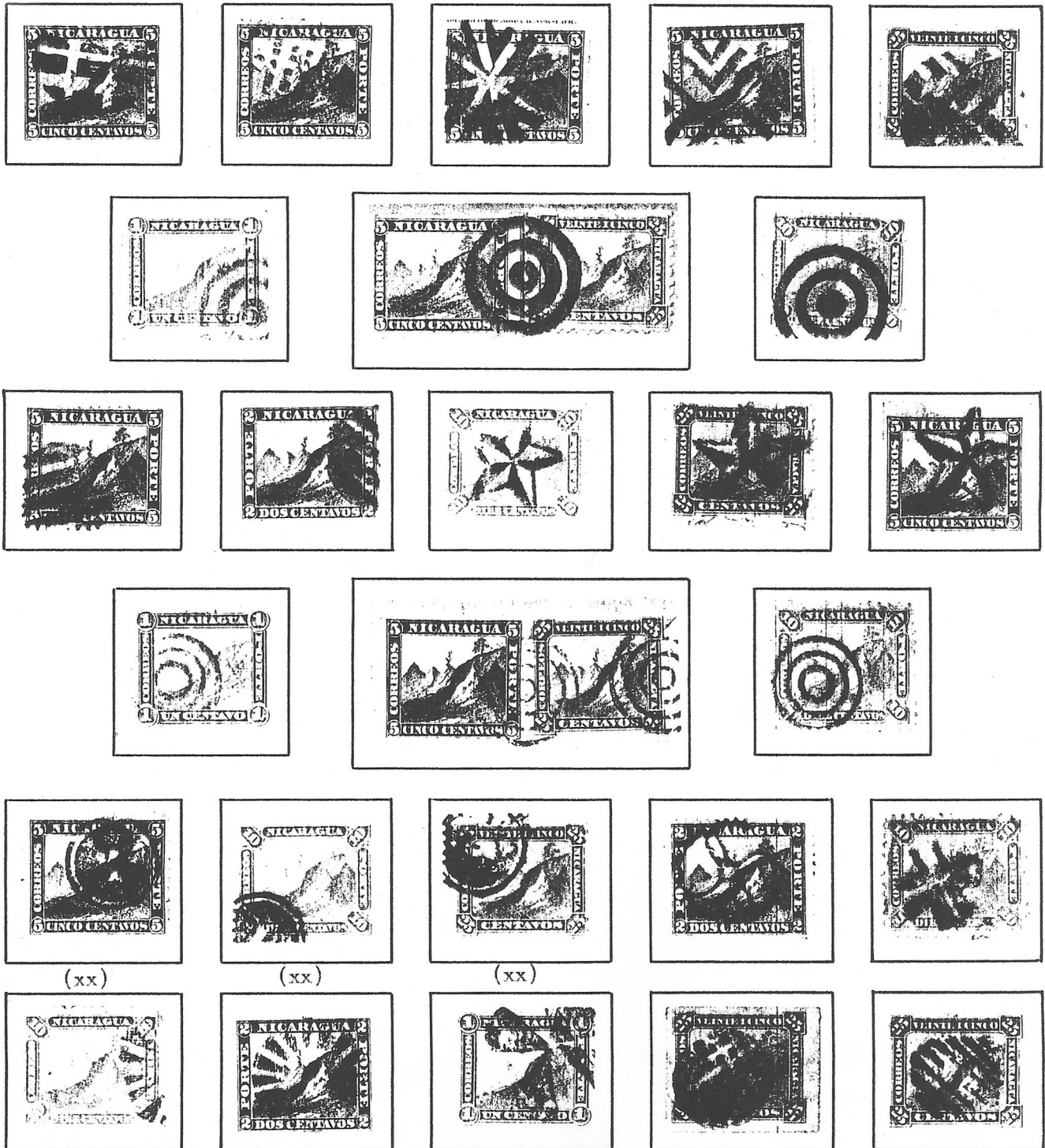


Fig. 3

Supposedly, together with the second issue of the Momotombo - type stamps, the Postal Administration had also cut proper dated cancels of the 3 types shown here:



fig. 4



fig. 4 a



fig. 5

The difference between the 3 types can easily be seen. In several towns and specially in León, two types were used at the same time. Both these cancels were also used together with the numerical town cancels, the latter being applied on the stamps and the dated cancel away from the stamps on the cover. Probably all 13 main Post Offices using the numerical town cancels had also one or both of the dated cancels fig. 4 and 4a.

These "steel" - cancels with an outer diameter of 30 mm are known from most mayor Post Offices of this time. These cancels were in use until about 1888 and were applied in blue, violet (2 shades) or in black cancelling ink.

Further existed a postmark of the General Postal Administration (ADMINISTRACION DE CORREOS) of GRANADA in an oval form (33x28 mm), fig. 5. This very rare cancel I have seen so far only once on a cover to Paris. (See illustration)

This cover is further of great importance as so far it is the only known "COMBINATION COVER" with a Nicaragua stamp and the GREYTOWN PAID POSTMARK IN RED, instead of the use of british stamps cancelled with the combined date + C 57 cancel in black.

It is quite possible that such oval postmarks existed also for the Postal Administrations of León and Managua.

However, at least one other type of early dated cancel existed. I have one 25 centavos stamp of the second issue with a date cancel in black from SAN JUAN DEL SUR (fig. 6). This cancel has a diameter of 21 mm.



fig. 6

May be other cancels of this same kind exist from other towns.

Besides, there exists also an "official" undated cancel (fig. 6a), actually with NEGATIVE letters, reading:

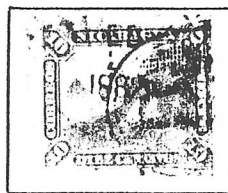


fig. 6 a

N I C A R A G U A

STEEL obliterations, in use from 1876 until about 1885

The strikes were applied in different colour shades of black, violet and blue and are shown here on the issues of 1869 - 1871 (perforated) and 1878 - 1880 (rouletted)



N I C A R A G U A

Postcard 1878

Postcard from Managua to Masaya, Nic.



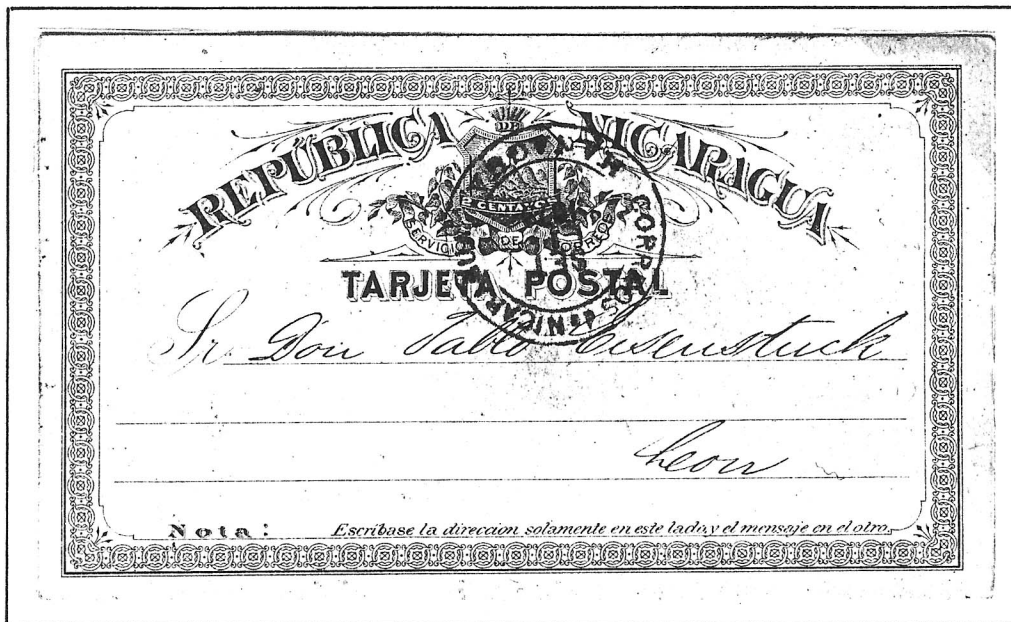
Arrival postmark (steel) Masaya April 21, 1878 (BLACK)

No. Not issued until December.
Probably 1886. MS

N I C A R A G U A

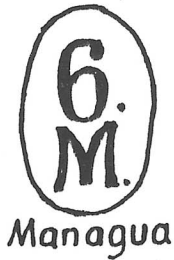
Postcard, 1 8 7 8

Postcard from Managua to Leon, Nic.
=====

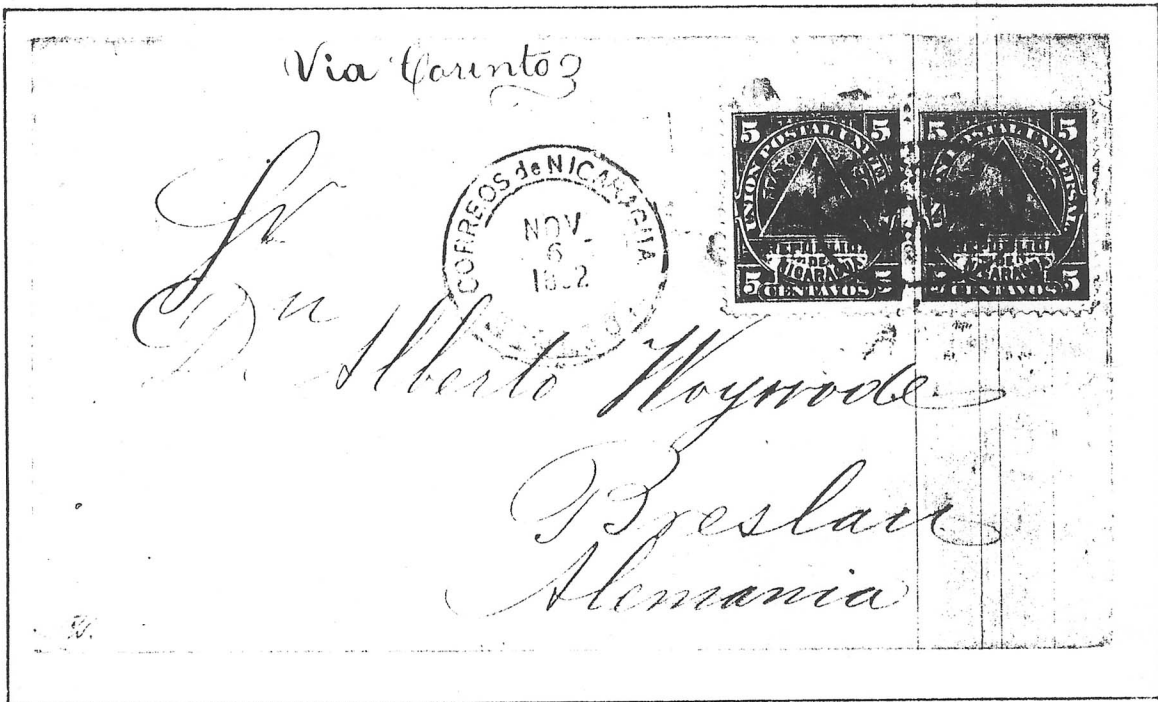


Obliterated with Managua steel cancel in **BLUE** : SET 1 , 1879

N I C A R A G U A



Cover from Managua to Breslau, Germany



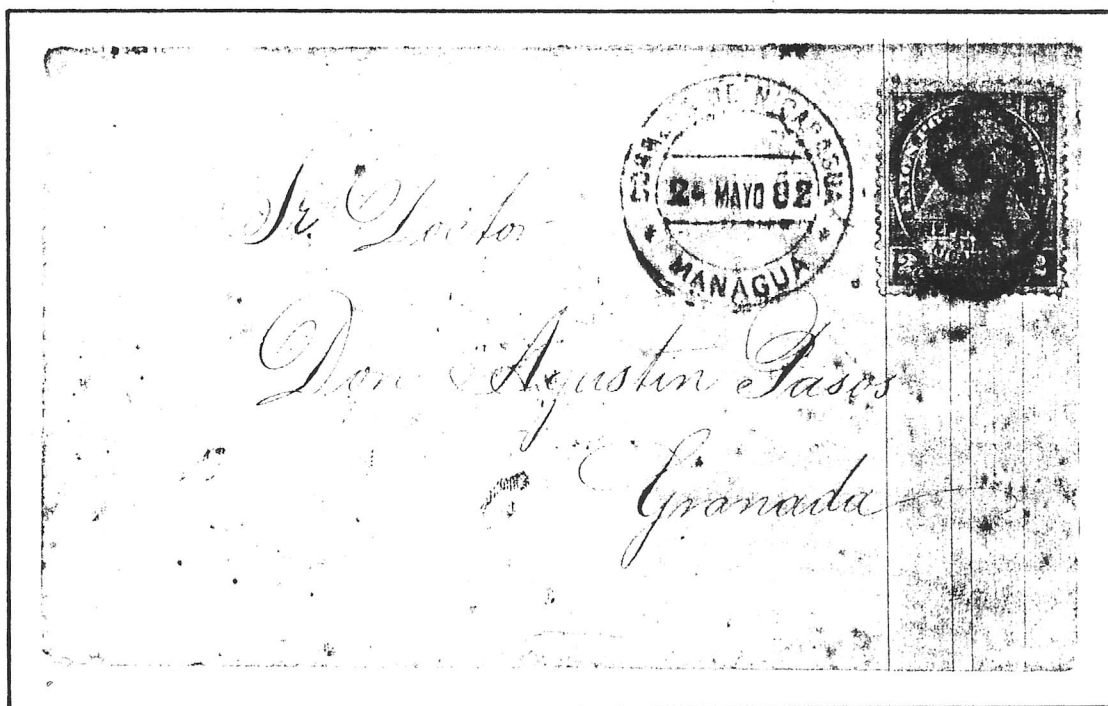
Cancelled Managua November 6, 1882
Arrival postmark Breslau Dec. 18, 1882



N I C A R A G U A



Cover from Managua to Granada



Postmarked Managua with numerical town cancel + cancel dated May 2, 1882

Arrival postmark Granada May 2, 1882



On envelope-flap embossed seal with COAT OF ARMS and reading:

DIRECCION GENERAL DE CORREOS Y TELEGRAFOS NICARAGUA

N I C A R A G U A

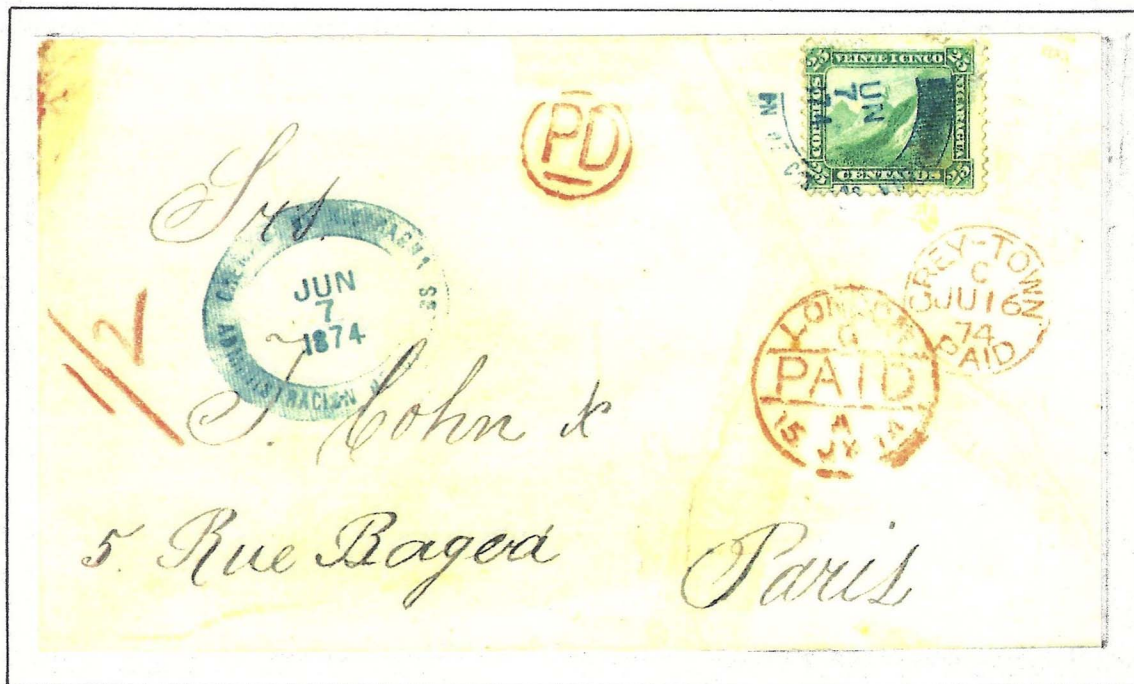
Second issue of postage stamps, 1869 - 1871

Printed: American Bank Note Co., New York

OVAL CANCEL OF THE POSTAL ADMINISTRATION OF GRANADA



Cover from Granada to Paris, France



Cancelled Granada June 7, 1874

Transit postmark of the British Consular Postoffice in San Juan del Norte:

GREYTOWN PAID - June 16, 1874

Manuscript in red: 1/2 (one shilling 2 pence)

Red PD in circle (Paid to Destination)

Transit postmark in red: LONDON PAID / July 15, 1874

Arrival postmark Paris July 15, 1874

