

## SCADTA: From United States (EU) To Expedite Airmail Service Within Colombia

1920 to 1931



**Purpose:** To illustrate & tell the story of the development of SCADTA air mail service between the United States & Colombia. The story is a fascinating tale of the world's second oldest airline highlighting the use of the overprinted stamps (E.U. or EU) sold in the United States to facilitate the airmail service post arrival in Barranquilla, Colombia by ship from New York City.

**Scope:** Exhibit begins with the "forerunners" of the 1921 overprints & continues through to the conclusion of use of the EU overprinted airmail stamps by 1931. The overprints are generally referred to as the **Consular Overprints**.

**Organization:** Basically is by overprint type with the key items outlined in **red**. Original & important secondary research is highlighted by small magnifying glass icon. This icon ends each chapter:

**Plan of Presentation:** The plan is a simplified - nine frames presenting the varieties of the SCADTA airmail stamp uses with the U. S. Each overprint type could be considered a chapter. The EU story is told with covers from each segment as an historical account of the facts.

**Importance:** The process of overprinting its airmail & distributing said stamps to the Consulate in New York City makes for a "one-of a kind" story. The unusual & creative airmail concept in a limited time frame of roughly eleven years indicates the difficulty of acquisition. Regarding **Rarity:** numerous covers in this exhibit have less than five known & the census of those covers will be highlighted through-out.

**Background:** S.C.A.D.T.A. (a/k/a SCADTA) Sociedad Colombia - Alemana De Transportes Aereos initiated air service in Colombia in 1920 to expediate mails within Colombia & from numerous foreign countries once the mail arrived in country. Many cities/towns were remote & the use of airplanes expedited the delivery of mail, supplies, & passengers from weeks down to days then down to a few hours as Colombia only had river boats as the main mail transporting method & a few rail lines. @95% of the mail from NYC arrived in Barranquilla by ship, a distance of 2,054 nautical miles.

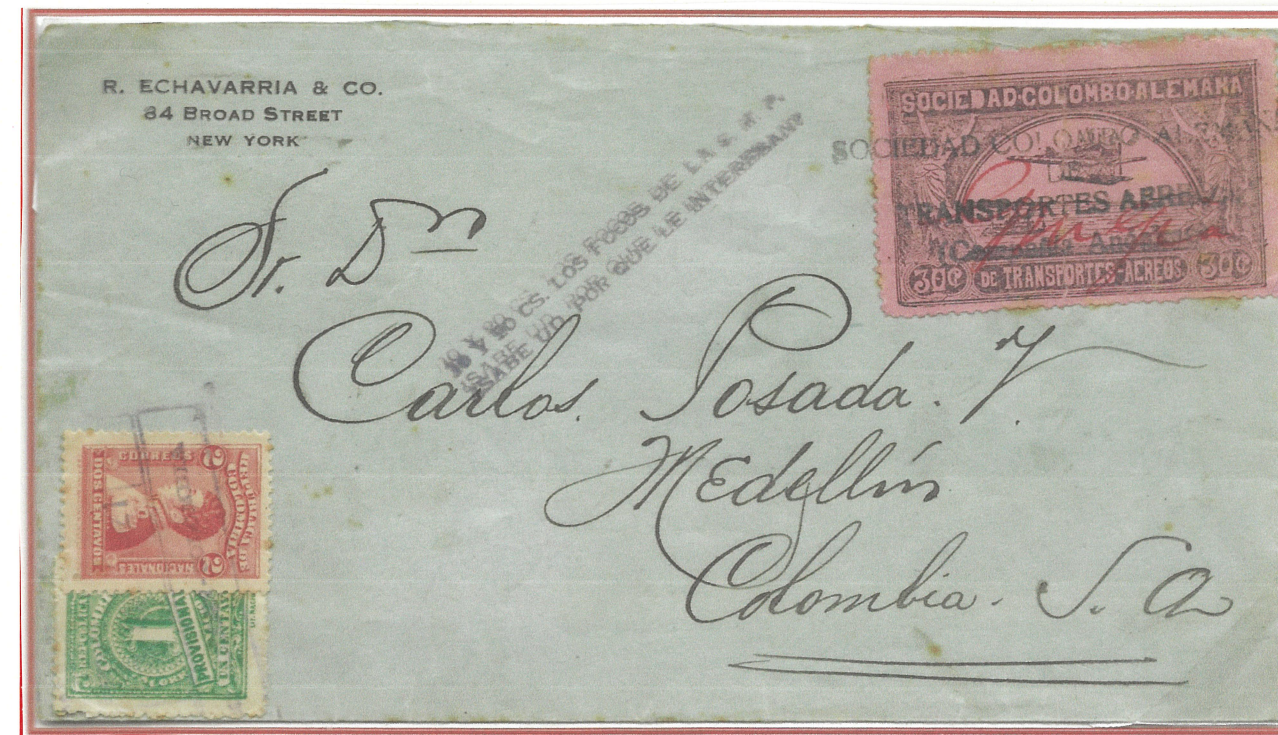
**History:** SCADTA was the 1st commercial airline in the western hemisphere. It began operations in Colombia on October 19, 1920. It was the product of German businessmen, war surplus airplanes & personnel from the World War I Luftwaffe along with Colombian investment capital. By the end of 1920 SCADTA had an exclusive airmail contract with the Colombian government. The contract, which lasted eleven years, included the right to print & sell their own SCADTA airmail stamps. The government required regular Colombian postage be affixed alongside the SCADTA stamps. Interestingly, it was SCADTA's aggressive expansion throughout South & Central America during the 1920s that led to an appropriation by the U. S. Congress to provide funds for the Post Office to subsidize domestic & foreign air transport expansion in 1925. This was the key Kelley Bill, the U. S. Air Mail Act of 1925.

**Note:** Initial SCADTA intent of 1921/23 issues was to use only these issues. But since prior issues were so widely available it was impossible to maintain the original intent. All issues w/ or w/o EU hand stamp or machine overprints were valid airmail postage within Colombia. Covers arriving from U.S. could have combinations of 1921/23 issues w/ or w/o EU hand stamps or machine overprints. Also 1929 Gold Dollar issue or 1929 internal issue were valid for internal airmail usages.



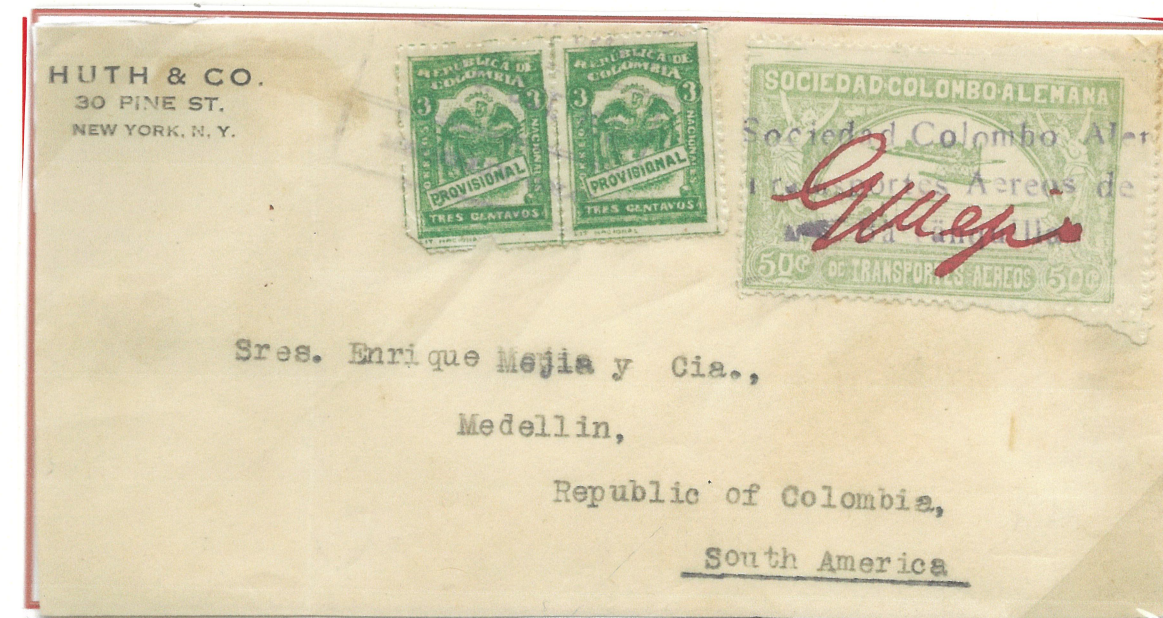
1st issue of SCADTA stamps was printed on 4 October 1920 by C. Valiente. Sheets were printed containing 48 stamps per sheet. This comprised two stamps, a regular 30¢ black-on-rose design (25,000 issued) & 50¢ dull green (15,000 issued) issues. As history was to show, the 30¢ black-on-rose issue was quickly exhausted. >>

### 1st Forerunners of the Consular Overprints - 1920



*New York City to Barranquilla (via ship) to Medellin by air*

Above is **one of less than 5 recorded** of 30¢ black-on-rose (printing of 25,000) on cover from NYC. A set of two, the 30¢ & 50¢ (below) are the **first overprints by SCADTA**; issued in November, 1920. SCADTA established a New York City office & the SCADTA Company sold these two stamps bearing the agent's signature, **G. Meija** (Gonzolo Meija) in **red** ink designating use from United States.



*New York City to Barranquilla (via ship) to Medellin by air*

50¢ dull green signed by Meija - overprint airmail stamp is one of **only 2 known** (to date). Flown October 26, 1920 (printing of 15,000)

Colombia postage adhesives are affixed to both covers for the local delivery 50¢ stamps appeared with the "famous" bird/colibri humming-bird surcharge