SEEBECK:
Hero or Villain?

DANILO A. MUESES
Second Edition
Edited, revised and enlarged by Michael Schreiber
Seebeck: Hero or Villain?
by Danilo A. Mueses

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HERO 
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by Michael Schreiber

including a synopsis
of the 1884-1899 Minute Books
of the Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Company

and a detailed chronology
of the life of Nicholas F. Seebeck

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Any person who has the digital version of this book may send
a free copy of the digital version to any other person.
There are few people who owe their fame, or indeed notoriety, to postage stamps. Nicholas Seebeck is one of those people. Much has been written about philately’s misfortunes as a result of commercial contracts that Seebeck realized with some Central American and South American countries for the supplying of postage stamps. But is this in fact true, or did the popularity of our hobby increase because of the ease of acquiring stamps at low cost that the contracts and Seebeck created? Danilo Mueses proposes an interesting thesis, but even more interesting is that which results from the vast amount of information that the author offers us on the subject, leaving us, the readers, with the last word. This book’s contribution to philately is twofold: first, published in Spanish, it is in the language of the countries with whom Seebeck realized his contracts but in which very little on this subject has been written. Secondly it offers historical information on Seebeck, which allows us to study and interpret why the events which occurred did occur. The Interamerican Federation of Philately – the FIAF – immediately recognized the importance of this work and from its inception gave it its unconditional support and is proud, now that it is published, to number among its patrons. We are sure that you will enjoy the work of Señor Mueses, written as it is in such a straightforward, light and easy-to-read form. I am delighted to write these short lines of introduction to the author, an old friend and philatelist of great standing, who for many years has been one of the key figures in the Dominican Republic Philatelic Society where his work as editor of the official organ, the magazine El Filipetico, has not passed unacclaimed. The concrete result of this work is that we no longer have excuses, when Seebeck is spoken of, for not expounding our views.

Dr. Roberto M. Rosende
1985
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In the medium of print, to write an investigative, historical book on philately is no easy task. The main problem one encounters is the lack of good libraries and consequently the need to depend upon friends and colleagues often separated by thousands of kilometers. Inevitably correspondence can be delayed by several weeks.

The acknowledgements part of the books I have written has always terrified me. I have that fear of leaving somebody out. This section is generally the last to be written. One does not always take the precaution of noting down along the way all those who have granted favors, be they large or small. As a result, thanks are given from memory.

Let me, however, make an effort not to leave anybody out. Beginning with the people at home in the Dominican Republic, I must acknowledge the invaluable help given to me by Don Eugenio von Boeck of Bolivia, Don Jairo Londoño of Colombia, Ing. Gunther Wiese of Honduras, and Charles Wiley, George C. Mayer, Erwin Herschkowitz, Fred Boughner, Leo J. Harris and Henry Madden of the United States, and Ricardo Alvarez and Richard A Washburn of Costa Rica, all of whom sent me most useful information to help fill the gaps, large and small, that I had to overcome en route to the successful completion of this work.

And finally, very special thanks to Dr. Roberto M. Rosende, who, in addition to reading the manuscript and making valuable suggestions that clearly improved the work, helped to put me in touch with other studies on the theme and, above all, promoted the publication by bringing it to the attention of the board of directors of the Interamerican Federation of Philately, or the FIAF, lending his strong support to the edition.

The help that these good friends have given me was invaluable, and I want to share with them the merits this book might have, but above all, the satisfaction of having completed it.

Thanks to everyone.

Danilo A. Mueses
1985
The book *Seebeck: Hero or Villain?* by Danilo A. Mueses summarized most of what was known in the mid-1980s about Nicholas Seebeck and the postal paper that he provided to governments by contract.

The contracts were noteworthy and controversial in that Seebeck provided annual new postage stamps, postal stationery, and other stamps for free in exchange for the right to any remainders and for the right to reprint obsolete stamps as needed. Seebeck sold the remainders and reprints to a stamp wholesaler, who resold them to retail dealers, who sold them to collectors. Seebeck assisted the operation by running advertisements that promoted the stamps.

Mueses gathered his information from his own reading and through mail correspondence with specialist collectors of most of the countries that Seebeck provided postal paper to: the Dominican Republic, the Colombian State of Bolívar, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Ecuador. Seebeck tried but failed to sign postage stamp contracts with Costa Rica and Bolivia. He also provided some revenue stamps to Colombia and Guatemala.

A strength of the Mueses book is its many quotations of previous writers and the comments of Mueses related to those quotations. In too many instances, however, the quoted text includes what is known today to be a misinterpretation or an error.

My purpose in producing this second edition is to offer collectors an up-to-date and accurate look at Seebeck and his era. Additions or revisions that I made to the text of the book are in brackets [ ]. These additions and revisions are numerous and sometimes lengthy. In other places, I eliminated entire paragraphs from the original text.

Another strength of the book is that it provides the texts of the three contracts Seebeck signed in 1889 with El Salvador, Honduras, and Nicaragua and the text of the contract Henry Etheridge signed with Ecuador in 1890. These contracts are the keystones for any discussion of Seebeck and his stamps and postal stationery.

The major sources not available to Mueses in the mid-1980s were the corporate Minute Books of the Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Company. Bill Welch located these historic documents and transcribed the minutes of the meetings of the company trustees and the annual meetings of the stockholders held from January 1884, when the company was founded, through early 1900. Seebeck died June 23, 1899.


Seebeck was one of the owners of the Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Company, but he was not among the founders. When he bought into the company in April 1884, he was providing needed cash to see the company through an economic crisis and the recession of 1883-1885. His fellow trustees soon hired him to be the new company’s general manager.

Mueses also provides valuable commentary on reprints, reserve stock, and originals. The chapters on Honduras and Ecuador present details of why and how those countries ended their Seebeck contracts early.

Mueses also examines what is known about the mysterious Manhattan Bank Note Company and the perhaps related Manhattan Engraving Company. Both appear to be related to engraver George W. Thurber, who was a generation older than Seebeck and a founder of both the 1884 Hamilton firm and the predecessor firm founded in 1881.
Chapter XI, titled "The Scandal and the Letter," explains the role of the North American branch of the crusading group named the Society for the Suppression of Speculative Stamps. The branch obtained a concession from Seebeck in 1896 that changed the upcoming stamps and postal stationery of Nicaragua and El Salvador, the two countries then still under contract. Dealer J. Walter Scott was the leader of the North American branch of the SSSS.

The concession from Seebeck affected the designs of the stamps and postal stationery issued in 1897-1899. The desire of Scott and other dealers in the group was to reduce the number of speculative stamps being issued and thereby to reprimand Seebeck.

Seebeck, however, outfoxed Scott and the others. Their seeming victory over Seebeck really achieved nothing because collectible varieties of design and color continued.

For the basic stamp design of 1897 for Nicaragua, Seebeck used the 1896 design but changed the year date in it, making the 1897 stamps new collectible varieties. The 1898 and 1899 designs also were similar, but the stamp vignettes changed.

For the basic stamp designs of 1897 for El Salvador, Seebeck used the 1896 printing plates with "1896" included in the designs, but he changed the hues of the various denominations, again making new collectible varieties, on both watermarked paper and unwatermarked paper, just as with the 1896 stamps.

In late March 2018, with help from James Mazepa of the Interamerican Federation of Philately, I contacted Danilo Mueses, in the Dominican Republic and told him of my desire to update and correct this book. I was a stranger to him, but he soon kindly agreed to this second edition.

The original Spanish-language edition of this book was published in 1986 by Publicacion Emilio Obregon of the Dominican Republic.

This second edition is a major reworking of the English translation published in 1988 by the collector group The Spanish Main and its Central America Study Group and with the support of the Interamerican Federation of Philately. The Spanish Main and the Central America Study Group no longer publish journals or operate. The last issue of The Mainsheet was dated August 2004.

The English translation published in the United Kingdom in 1988 was typed, printed, and produced by Michael P. Birks, editor of the Central America Study Group's Central American Newsletter, which ceased publication with the issue dated October 2000.

Birks kindly granted permission to base this second edition on the 1988 publication.

For insights, information, or images for this second edition, I thank Edgardo Alegria, Guillermo Federico Gallegos, Joseph D. Hahn, Nadine Kofman, Danilo Mueses, and Ross A. Towle.

The cover design is by Veronica Schreiber. The design pictures an 1890s view of the Sixth Avenue elevated railway in New York City.

Printing millions of bridge tickets and passenger tickets for the elevated railways in New York City was the major business of Nicholas Seebeck and the Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Company that also printed stamps and postal stationery for the Seebeck countries.

Michael Schreiber

2018
To speak of Seebeck the person is not easy. He seemingly always tried to stay out of the limelight. During the years 1889 to 1899 when his postage stamp activities were at their peak, the philatelic press dedicated rivers of disparaging ink to those stamps. Relatively little, however, was said about the man.

In later years, some authors wrote about him as a person, but mostly they repeated what was already known about him without bothering to undertake new investigations.

Nicholas Frederick Seebeck was born in Hanover, Germany, on February 19, 1857. In 1866, when he was age 9, he and his parents immigrated to the United States.

By the time he was 15 years old, Seebeck had established himself in New York City in the stationery business, a generic term in English-speaking countries for the sale of paper and other related articles. As a sideline to his stationery business, Seebeck sold foreign postage stamps to collectors.

Figure 2–1 shows a business card or advertising card that Seebeck used when he had his shop at 3 Vesey Street. From that address, he maintained correspondence with people around the world, including in El Salvador and the Dominican Republic.

The date of the business card is not certain, but it bears the manuscript notation “pr. 21 / 10 ’79 per? souv.” that could date the card to 1879. In spring 1880, Seebeck moved his business from 3 Vesey Street to 97 Wall Street.

From an early age, Seebeck was an exceptionally able individual and versatile character, “a young man with the rapacity to earn money,” according to Charles Wiley.

Thus we see that in 1876, having barely reached the age of 19, Seebeck published a Descriptive Price Catalogue of All Known Foreign Postage Stamps to Collectors.

Sometime in 1872, he set up his business in New York City at 3 Vesey Street, where he offered stationery and printing and had his retail stamp dealership.

Figure 2–1 shows a business card or advertising card that Seebeck used when he had his shop at 3 Vesey Street. From that address, he maintained correspondence with people around the world, including in El Salvador and the Dominican Republic.

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From an early age, Seebeck was an exceptionally able individual and versatile character, “a young man with the rapacity to earn money,” according to Charles Wiley.

Thus we see that in 1876, having barely reached the age of 19, Seebeck published a Descriptive Price Catalogue of All Known Foreign Postage Stamps to Collectors.
Postage Stamps of the United States and Foreign Countries. This 1876 catalog was a generic work of 42 pages produced so that other stamp dealers also could have their individual names and addresses printed on the front cover, as Seebeck did. The publisher of the generic catalog is not known, but it could possibly have been a creation of New York dealer William P. Brown.

Figure 2-2 pictures the front cover of the 1876 Seebeck sales catalog. By 1882, the sales catalog was in its fourth edition, with 216 pages and 1,900 illustrations. It gave quotations for stamps, new, used, and by the dozen. Little is known of Seebeck during the early 1880s apart from the stamp catalog published in 1882.

Figure 2-3 pictures a cover addressed to Seebeck at the P.O. Box 4926 address printed on the front of the 1876 catalog. The cover, from El Salvador, was postmarked at New York City on February 11, 1877, with 10 cents postage due. This cover is among the oldest documented items connected with Seebeck. [The stamp is canceled "FRANCO." The El Salvador postmark reads "ADMINISTRACION GENERAL DE CORREOS / SALVADOR" and "2 ENERO 1877," for January 2, 1877. El Salvador did not become a member of the Universal Postal Union until April 1, 1879. The El Salvador 4-cents stamp of 1874 was not valid on mail to the United States, which in 1877 had not yet issued its first postage due stamps.]

[Figure 10-2 in Chapter X pictures a cover sent to Seebeck from the Dominican Republic. This cover also is among the oldest documented items connected with Seebeck. It was postmarked February 18, 1880. The Dominican Republic did not join the UPU until October 1, 1880, so this cover also was charged postage due because the Dominican Republic stamp was not valid on mail to the United States.]

97 Wall Street

In spring 1880, Seebeck moved his business to 97 Wall Street. [A notice in one of the many stamp periodicals of the era announced this move. Shown in Figure 2-4, it is from the Stamp Collector’s Review, June 1880.]

Sebeck—Mr. N. F. Seebeck has removed to 97 Wall Street, where he is occasionally mistaken for a banker. This affords him as much pleasure as the fact that he is the only dealer of whom the Universal Stamp Albums can be obtained. An American edition has been published, which is a work that merits the attention of every collector.

Figure 2-4. Notice in the Stamp Collector’s Review, Davenport, Iowa, June 1880, announcing that Seebeck had moved his business to 97 Wall Street from 3 Vesey Street. In the same issue, Seebeck placed a large advertisement announcing the move.

It was some time in 1888 when he first consulted [with] me about his plan to supply the Central America and South America with free stamps, he wrote:

Trip to West Indies and South America

One of the least known episodes of Seebeck’s life and one also told by Schernikow was that “in 1884 or 1885” Seebeck made a journey to buy stamps in the West Indies and on the northern coast of South America for stamp dealer J. Walter Scott. Schernikow wrote: “... and it was some years after this, that the plan above referred to was matured.” [The plan to supply stamps for free with conditions]

[Schernikow’s vague statement thatSeebeck traveled in 1884 or 1885 to the West Indies and the northern coast of South America seems to be a year or two too early. The Minute Books of the Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Company, as transcribed by Bill Welch, reveal that there were no regular monthly meetings of the trustees and no special meetings from mid-January 1886 through mid-July 1886 and none from mid-January 1887 through mid-July 1887. Either period would have been enough time (six months) to make such a trip, and editor]
Michael Schreiber hypothesizes that the trip likely would have occurred in early 1886 or early 1887. In 15 years, mid-1884 through May 1899, Seebeck rarely missed a trustees meeting or a stockholders meeting. In all, he missed only four meetings: March 21, 1885, January 13, 1890, January 12, 1891, and February 9, 1891. In April 1884, Seebeck had become a trustee of Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Co. as well as its secretary and its general manager. He had recently sold his stamp business to Gustave B. Calman. Seebeck had his hands full with his new job, so it seems inconceivable that he would have made the trip between late April 1884 and mid-February 1885, even though there also were no official company meetings in 1884 between the meetings of April 21 and October 10. Leo John Harris (1981) wrote that Seebeck went to the West Indies in April 1884 between the meetings of April 21 and October 10. Leo John Harris (1981) wrote that Seebeck went to the West Indies in April 1884, three months after this new company had moved to 1 Broadway by April 1885. It now is known when Seebeck began to work for the Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Company. The front side lists in English the services of the Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Co., its address, and its three officers prior to October 10, 1884: President Alex R. Chisolm, Vice President Geo. W. Thurber, and Secretary and Business Manager Nicholas F. Seebeck. Figure 2–5 pictures the front of this card. Such cards were printed in 1884 after the new company was founded and organized. The named officers and the address “61 Broadway” date the card to April 1884 but not later than early October, when Edward P. Baker became the president. Welch showed that the company had moved to 1 Broadway by April 1885. Similar cards in English exist bearing five plate proofs of 1883, 1884, and 1885 stamps of the State of Bolívar. Figure 2–6 pictures the front of this Spanish-language card. The cards bearing stamps or designs of the 1880s seem to have been sample cards for Ecuador. A similar advertising card (salesman’s sample card) exists printed in Spanish, with some additional text. It bears five plate proofs of 1883, 1884, and 1885 stamps of the State of Bolivar. Figure 2–6 pictures the front of this Spanish-language card. The cards bearing stamps or designs of the 1880s seem to have been sample cards for Ecuador. A similar advertising card (salesman’s sample card) exists printed in Spanish, with some additional text. It bears five plate proofs of 1883, 1884, and 1885 stamps of the State of Bolivar. Figure 2–6 pictures the front of this Spanish-language card. The cards bearing stamps or designs of the 1880s seem to have been sample cards for Ecuador. A similar advertising card (salesman’s sample card) exists printed in Spanish, with some additional text. It bears five plate proofs of 1883, 1884, and 1885 stamps of the State of Bolivar. Figure 2–6 pictures the front of this Spanish-language card. The cards bearing stamps or designs of the 1880s seem to have been sample cards for Ecuador. A similar advertising card (salesman’s sample card) exists printed in Spanish, with some additional text. It bears five plate proofs of 1883, 1884, and 1885 stamps of the State of Bolivar. Figure 2–6 pictures the front of this Spanish-language card. The cards bearing stamps or designs of the 1880s seem to have been sample cards for Ecuador. A similar advertising card (salesman’s sample card) exists printed in Spanish, with some additional text. It bears five plate proofs of 1883, 1884, and 1885 stamps of the State of Bolivar.
Chapter III

MANHATTAN BANK NOTE COMPANY

HAMILTON BANK NOTE COMPANY (1881)

The Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Co. seems indissolubly bound to Seebeck, so much so that it has been pointed out that on one occasion or another he was its general manager, agent, secretary or president according to the needs of the moment. [Seebeck was at certain times also vice president or treasurer.] This paragraph, both in the original Spanish edition published in 1986 and in the English translation published in 1988, reads incorrectly “Hamilton Bank Note Co.”

The two Hamilton companies

Clarence W. Hennan* in his work on the issues of the Dominican Republic studied the origin of the first Hamilton firm, pointing out:

[with one date error here corrected]

The new series is shown to have been produced in New York by the Hamilton Bank Note Co. (referring to the series of 1880 of the Dominican Republic). With reference to the issue of 1879, in 1906 Phillips points out, ‘the authorization for this new issue was in New York and the contract was obtained by Mr. N.F. Seebeck.’ At the same time, Phillips lists the stamps of the issue of 1880 as ‘Printed in New York by the Hamilton Bank Note Co.’

However as recently as in 1922, Gibbons Catalogue lists the issue of 1880 as ‘Ithographed and printed by the Manhattan Bank Note Co. New York.’

The facts are that the Hamilton Bank Note Co. began its operations in [1881] at 61 Broadway and therefore could not have printed the issue of 1880 or that of 1879 of the Dominican Republic.

[Barbara Mueller, in the Essay-Proof Journal, Second Quarter 1988, 45:2, pictured the engraved advertising card shown in Figure 3–1, page 10, with the address “61 Broadway” and a nearly identical trade card with the address “88 and 90 Gold Street.” The 61 Broadway card is for the Hamilton Bank Note Co., the firm founded in 1881. Mueller believed that the Gold Street address followed the Broadway address, and it did. On January 16, 1884, when the old officers of the Hamilton Bank Note Co. founded the new Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Company, they met at 61 Broadway.]

In 1885, the Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Co. moved its offices to 1 Broadway. The first recorded meeting held at 1 Broadway was either the trustees meeting of April 15 or April 23, 1885, or the stockholders meeting of May 18. The Minute Books do not state an address for the trustees meetings held April 15 and April 23. Sometimes in late 1891, the firm moved to the building at the corner of Gold and Ferry streets. The lease contract was approved at the trustees meeting December 16, 1890.

The Manhattan Bank Note Company

Later, Hennan wrote about Seebeck [corrections and details added].

In 1885 he was ‘secretary’ at 1 Broadway, the address which from [April or May 1885] was also that of the Hamilton Bank Note [Engraving and Printing] Co. Between 1879 and 1883, the Manhattan Bank Note Co. does not appear [in the records], but in 1879 and not after 1880 in 542 Pearl Street was situated a Manhattan Photo Engraving Co.

After the stamps of 1880 in the Dominican Republic, two series of postcards [postal cards] were published. In [the Scott catalogs of] [1895 etc.] the year...
1881 is given as the date of issue of these cards which also was the date of the first envelopes with the printed stamps [ postal stationery – the early Scott catalogs listed postal stationery ]. On these latter, the stamps which were printed have the same design as the adhesive stamps; on the postcards [ postal cards ] the stamp is oval with the value at each side. One of the series of cards evidently was intended for home [ domestic ] use. The other series had inscriptions in Spanish and French which showed that these were intended for use within the UPU [ Universal Postal Union ]. Just below the lower border at the front these UPU stamps bear an imprint which reads "THE MANHATTAN BANK NOTE CO. NEW YORK." In the Collectors Club Philatelist of January 1946 (p. 31), Clarence W. Brazer mentions a Manhattan Engraving Co. [situated at 71 Broadway, New York, in 1867] which in 1881 produced postcards [ postal cards ] for the Dominican Republic and certain postage stamps [ incorrect: see next paragraph ]. In 1867 its treasurer was the well-known engraver George Thurber, who was later an official of the Hamilton Bank Note Co. and in 1884 a founder of the Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Co. The only banknote companies registered in 1880 in New York were the American, the Franklin, the Homer Lee and the Kendall. If the stamps of 1880 were printed by a "banknote" company of New York, it follows that it is one of these four unless they were made by a "Manhattan" Bank Note or (Photo) Engraving Co. There seems no connection between the "Manhattan" and the Hamilton Bank Note Co., were it not for the fact that Thurber was an official of the first [ Hamilton firm, 1881 ] before being a founder of the second [ Hamilton firm, 1884 ].

Figure 3–1. Advertising card circa 1881 of the Hamilton Bank Note Company, founded in 1881.

Figure 3–2. Dominican Republic postal card of 1881. The imprint reads "THE MANHATTAN BANK NOTE CO. NEW YORK."

Figure 3–3. Engraved advertising card from 1893 of the Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Co. On April 10, 1893, company trustees elected Charles E. Gray vice president and general manager. For six months, Gray replaced Seebeck as company general manager. Seebeck then replaced him.

Spanish and French which showed that these were intended for use within the UPU [ Universal Postal Union ]. Just below the lower border at the front these UPU stamps bear an imprint which reads "THE MANHATTAN BANK NOTE CO. NEW YORK.

So much for the quotation from Hennan. Chapter IX and Chapter X will take up this subject again. [ Hennan is correct that the Hamilton Bank Note Co. (1881) could not have created the 1879 and 1880 stamps of the Dominican Republic or its 1881 postal cards. George W. Thurber (1827-1908) is a
Note Engraving and Printing Co., as far as the quality of the printing is concerned, were of a high standard. It was this company that printed the stamps produced under Seebeck’s famous contracts.

On the salesmen’s sample cards pictured in Chapter II, the company announced itself as steel plate engravers, printers of banknotes, postage stamps, revenue stamps, railway tickets, bonds, stock exchange certificates, bills of exchange, deposit certificates, cheques, postal orders, diplomas, card headings, insurance policies, calendars, portraits, business cards, labels, bill headings, etc. Working with the large banknote companies in New York City were a cadre of engravers who had offices in Lower Manhattan. Many engravers were self-employed, but some were employees of the banknote companies. George W. Thurber was employed by Manhattan Engraving, American, and both Hamilton companies. Freelance engraver Rudolph P. Laubenheimer created the dies for various Seebeck postage stamps and Seebeck postal stationery of Nicaragua, El Salvador, Honduras, and Ecuador.9]

20th-century stamps
In the 20th century, I know of only four stamp sets produced by the Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Co.: two of the Dominican Republic, one of Panama, and one of Honduras. The first stamps of the new century printed for the Dominican Republic were the Mapita designs (Scott 111-117) issued in 1901. These stamps were plagued with intentional mistakes, such as the inscriptions “Atlantic Ocean” and “Caribbean Sea” being transposed, the map of the Dominican Republic being upside down, and the inscription “cinco” instead of “cinquenta” on the 50-centavo stamp.

The other 20th-century set of the Dominican Republic printed by the Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Co. was the issue commemorating the 400th anniversary of the founding of Santo Domingo (Scott 144-150), issued February 25, 1902. In this issue, six of the seven denominations exist with the center inverted, and all denominations come imperforate. The contract for printing both sets was negotiated with the Dominican Republic by José María Giordani, who at that time was acting as consul of Guatemala in the Dominican Republic.

The contract for printing the Santo Domingo set was clear-cut Seebeckian. The government of the Dominican Republic did not pay for the stamps and undertook to deliver to Giordani at the end of validity of the issue, which was only for three months, $5,000 face value of stamps and the balance that had not been sold by May 31, 1902. Postal activity in the country was low enough that in 1903 through advertisements published in L’Echo de la Timbrologie and other European publications, as many as 22,000 complete sets of the issue were offered for sale.

Giordani was without doubt such “a bird of evil spots” that finally on January 23, 1904, the president of the Dominican Republic, C. Morales Languasco, was obliged to cancel Giordani’s tour of office as consul to Guatemala and Costa Rica. And as for the so-called errors in these two issues, all are of a money-making kind, which shows that the people who managed the firm after the death of Seebeck had learned the lesson well.

Another set of stamps printed by the firm was one made for the government of Panama in 1906. The set comprised nine denominations, all of which appear with the center inverted and imperforate. Concerning the issue, the Scott catalog points out: “The values [denominations] of the issue for the most part appear with the center inverted and imperforate, but it is not known if these stamps were regularly issued.”

This set was manufactured four years after the 1902 inverted centers and imperforate stamps of the Dominican Republic. Yes, the truism holds: “A dog might lose his teeth but not his talents.”

The Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Co., however, continued producing postage stamps. I know of only one series after its 1906 venture in Panama: the 1946 Coats of Arms set printed for Honduras (Scott C155-C162), but this was in a more serious vein.

In 1951, Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Co. was acquired by the Security Bank Note Co. of Philadelphia, and the successor firm still operates today. In 2018, Ross A. Towle described the evolution since 1951:

In 1957, Security Bank Note merged with Columbia Bank Note Company to form Security-Columbian Bank Note Company.

The Security-Columbian firm changed its name in 1965 to United States Banknote Corporation, with its security printing done by a subsidiary called the Security-Columbian Division.

The company B.T. Babbitt Inc. took over a large block of ABNC stock in 1968 and acquired more stock over the years. In 1972, B.T. Babbitt Inc. completed a tender offer for the remaining ABNC stock and changed the Babbitt company name to International Banknote Corporation.

In 1990, the United States Banknote Corporation acquired the holding company International Banknote Corporation and changed the name of the surviving entity to American Banknote Corporation.

As of October 21, 2016, it is known as ABCorp.]

The Minute Books
[ A synopsis by Michael Schreiber of the corporate Minute Books of the Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Company, 1884-1899, appears on pages 129-144. Pages 125-127 list the company officers and provide some details about them and about three others who participated in the takeover of the company in 1893. In the late 1980s, Bill Welch located the Minute Books with successor firm United States Banknote Corp. of New York City. Welch received permission to transcribe the
The matter seemed both simple and innocent: a group of Latin American impoverished nations, unable to produce locally issues of postage stamps of an acceptable quality. They would be offered supplies of an annual issue of beautifully printed stamps at no cost on the condition that at the end of the issue the remainders (which the promoter would take responsibility for gathering) should be returned to the printer.

These remainders would be offered for sale to collectors at low prices. For those who preferred canceled stamps, they could be supplied in that condition.

Ultimately everyone would be a winner. The countries that signed contracts would receive their stamps at no cost. The promoter, for the sole cost of manufacturing and delivery, would acquire enormous quantities of legitimate stamps. And collectors would have the opportunity of acquiring at low prices the beautiful and colorful stamps so attractive to the young.

Whose idea was it? It has been attributed to Seebeck, but before him it seems there were forerunners. W.J. Hardy and F.D. Bacon in 1896 wrote:

Guatemala in 1886 accepted the offer of a certain Mr. Charles Parker, a civil engineer, to provide, at no cost, two million stamps of a new design, on the understanding that they would hand back the remainders of all the old issues. The cost of the new issue for the entrepreneur engineer must not have been significant, and [it] shows that there are great benefits in this type of transaction.

The stamps to which Hardy and Bacon refer are the Quetzal National Emblem issue, Scott 31-41, designed by Dr. E. León and printed by lithography by the American Bank Note Co. The American Bank Note Co. only fulfilled the order and had nothing to do with bringing the stamps into existence.

In 1889, a few years after his trip to the West Indies, Seebeck began his tour of Central America. For that journey, Ernest Schernikow gave him a series of letters of introduction to various officials of the governments he proposed to visit.

Seebeck set sail at the beginning of 1889, in January, and the first country he visited was Guatemala where he was unsuccessful. Then he made his way to El Salvador, where on March 27 he signed the first of his contracts for a 10-year period.

Then he went to Honduras where on April 20 he acquired another 10-year contract. From there he made his way to Costa Rica, but he was unable to sign a contract, so he set off for Nicaragua. The contract with Nicaragua was signed on May 4, 1889.

In the following chapters, I will present the contracts of the four Seebeck countries and briefly consider the stamps and postal stationery that resulted from those contracts. I will also take up the stamps of the Dominican Republic and the State of Bolivar.

With regard to the listings of the Seebeck stamps in the chapters that follow, the study of the stamps with their varieties of paper, hues, errors, different printings, and above all knowledge of the differences between the originals and the reprints, is so great that it is beyond the scope of this book.

This book is directed more toward the study of Nicholas F. Seebeck the man and the influence of the so-called Seebeck phenomenon on the philately of his era and on the stamp hobby over the long term.
Chapter V

EL SALVADOR

Seebeck’s first contract of 1889 was signed with El Salvador. El Salvador and Nicaragua were the only two among the three Central American nations and Ecuador to let their contracts run for the agreed 10 years.

The Seebeck contract

The contract was signed on March 27, 1889, and the following is from the English version that appeared in the Philatelic Magazine of February 14, 1932, complemented with corrections based on a Spanish version of the contract published in the Official Gazette of El Salvador in May 1889:

1 – Nicholas F. Seebeck as representative of the above named company [The Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Co.] promises to supply, without any cost to the postal services of El Salvador, the quantities of stamps which may be necessary for the postal services and which will be determined accordingly from now on, for a period of 10 successive years, beginning on the date of the present contract, in accordance with the design which the General Manager will provide on 1 April each year, on the understanding that the issue for each twelve month period will be so totally different from those in the preceding period, while the type adopted for each year’s series or issues should be uniform.

2 – The stamps will be engraved on steel plates in the most artistic form and in such a way that forgery will be impossible, in the following quantities which can be increased according to the needs of the postal services if it is necessary to do so.

1,500,000 stamps of 1c, 2c, 3c, 5c, 10c, 20c, 25c, and 50 centavos and $1.00 [1 peso]

10,000 postal cards of 2c, [3c,]
2c+2c, 3c+3c
25,000 envelopes with stamps of 5c, 10c, 11c, 20c and 22 centavos
10,000 newspaper wrappers of 3c, 6c, 12½c, and 25 centavos

3 – The postal issues must be handed over free of faults by the Company to the representative of El Salvador in New York, on 15 November each year which precedes that for which they are intended with the express condition that before the said delivery is effected, and immediately upon completion of the print run of the issues for which they have been used, the matrices [plates] of the issue sealed by the Salvadorian and Company representatives will be stored at the Safe Deposit Company, from whose safekeeping they cannot be removed except in fulfillment of the conditions stated hereafter.

4 – It is understood that the Company cannot make, of the issues which it prepares for the end of the year, greater quantities than those stated in the instructions received to such effect from the General Director with the authority of the Supreme Government, and that these quantities will conform with the nature of the said instructions in relation to the colors of each value and the design.

5 – The Government, for its part, agrees that the Director General of Posts will prepare the models and instructions necessary for the company to fulfill its commitments, committing to deliver both in the hands of the company in the month and on the day indicated in Article 1 of the year preceding that for which the new issue must be put into circulation.
6 - In compensation for the expenditure made by the company for engraving and supplying the said postal issues, the Supreme Government of El Salvador agrees to hand over to the company the stock, which at the end of each year, may be in its possession, once they have been declared null and void on the first of January whatever the quantity which remains, promising furthermore not to sell stamps or any of the other aforementioned issues, for less than their face value while in use.

7 - The stock will be handed over at no cost, by the Government of El Salvador to Mr. Seebeck’s representative in this capital on 1 February each year until the end of the present agreement.

8 - Once the representative of El Salvador has been informed by the Superior Government, that the issues of each successive year have been declared null and unacceptable for the payment of postage, and has given notice to that effect to the engraving company, the latter will be able to remove from its aforementioned safe deposit the plates for the postal issues, and break in the presence of the representative the said plates mentioned in Article 3, so that the plates can be used to make the reprints it deems necessary, to sell to collectors of stamps and other postal franking values.

9 - It is understood that the issues for each year will be placed in circulation in El Salvador 30 days after the official announcement by the Government.

10 - As an exception, the remainders left on 31 December of the present year of the 1 and 2 centavos value stamps recently ordered from the American Bank Note Company of New York will not pass into the hands of the Hamilton | Bank Note | Engraving | and Printing | Company, whatever the delivery date may be, until 31 December 1890, so that the issue that the Company will have ready by November, according to the terms of the contract, will include only for the present year a set of stamps of 3, 5, 10, 20, 25 and 50 centavos and $1.00 [1 peso], the other issues being printed in accordance with the quantity determined in Article 2 of the present agreement.

11 - In order to avoid as far as possible any differences that might arise between the contracting parties in relation to the terms of the preceding clauses, the company is obliged to interpret the same in favor of the interests of El Salvador.

12 - The agreement may be renewed by mutual consent of the Superior Government of El Salvador and the Hamilton | Bank Note | Engraving | and Printing | Company, but in the case of one or the other, if both contracting parties consider it convenient, it can be canceled one year before the end of its term, through the representative of El Salvador in New York and the Company’s representative in this city, in accordance to the instructions that the former will receive from the Superior Government of the Republic and the latter from the engraving company.

In testimony of which we sign two copies with the same content, in El Salvador on 27 March 1889.

Salvador Carazo
Director General of Postal Services, El Salvador

Hamilton Bank Note Engraving | and Printing | Company
N.F. Seebeck, Secretary

The contract was approved by Salvadorian President Francisco Menendez on May 1, 1889, and was published in the Diario Oficial on May 8, 1889.
5 – All the stock of stamps of the invalid previous issues, and those that are in the treasury offices, will be sent to N.F. Seebeck, Secretary of the Hamilton company of New York, in fulfillment of Articles VI and VII of the previous contract.

Validated by the President
(Signed) LARREYNAGA
Secretario

In effect, the stamps on hand in the country were collected and returned to Seebeck through his agent. The American Philatelist of July 10, 1890, included the following notice: “A correspondent writes to tell us that a house in San Salvador sent two boxes of stamps of El Salvador, newly obsolete, to N.F. Seebeck; the face value of the shipment amounted to $20,605.35.” [The returned stamps would have been the American Bank Note Co. stamps issued in 1889 and perhaps earlier.]

Issue of 1891

By January 1, 1891, as established in the contract, all the stamps of the previous issue were withdrawn from circulation and were sent later to the United States, and the Hamilton company made delivery of the new second Seebeck issue for El Salvador. The new stamps were of a smaller format than those of the previous issue. They picture the San Miguel volcano, a ship, and a locomotive, Figure 5-2. The central vignette is the same on the 10 denominations, but the borders are different. The stamps were printed by recess engraving and were perforated gauge 12.

The issue consists of the following denominations and hues:

1c vermilion orange 11c pale violet
2c yellow green 20c pale green
3c violet 25c dark green
5c carmine 50c dark blue
10c blue 1p yellow brown

This issue includes several types of reprints on thicker paper and darker gum. The reprints of the 1-peso stamp carry on the back control numbers printed in a pale greenish blue. According to Joseph B. Leavy, the control numbers were added because some dealers were refusing to maintain the 50¢ per set price that Seebeck had established. In an attempt to find out who was selling below the fixed price, Seebeck ordered the printing of the control numbers with the idea of discovering the guilty ones and then not accepting their subsequent orders.

By mid-1891, the 1c and 5c stamps were used up, and El Salvador postal authorities overprinted locally a supply of 2c and 3c stamps as, respectively, 1c and 5c stamps.

Issue of 1892

By January 1, 1892, the third Seebeck issue for El Salvador was delivered. The design marked the 400th anniversary of the discovery of America by Christopher Columbus. The stamps show Columbus landing on the island of San Salvador, Figure 5-3. The stamps were printed by recess line engraving and were perforated gauge 12. The issue consists of the following denominations and hues:

1c dark green 11c brown
2c orange brown 20c orange
3c ultramarine 25c brown
5c gray 50c yellow
10c vermilion 1p carmine lake

In October 1892, stamps of this issue denominated 5c, 20c, and 25c were overprinted “UN CENTAVO” when supplies of the 1c stamp of the issue were exhausted. About the 1c-on-5c stamps, the Philatelic Journal of America of November 1892 commented that 50,000 stamps denominated 5c had been overprinted because the 1c stamps had been used up, and then it said: This [need to issue overprints] is a comment on Seebeck, who supplies this country’s stamps and who did not send sufficient stamps for postal needs.

Although El Salvador has exhausted supplies of 1c stamps in the latter part of the year in which they were issued (1892), there is little doubt that Seebeck will have sufficient remainders to supply ‘sets’ to collectors and dealers who may require them.

Issue of 1893

During 1893, Seebeck made two deliveries of stamps. They are the fourth Seebeck issue for El Salvador. The first delivery, completed by January 1, 1893, consisted of 10 stamps of small format showing in their vignette Gen. Carlos Ezeta, Figure 5-4.

The January 1893 issue of the Philatelic Journal of America, commented: “The new issue carries the portrait of the New York policeman whose beat is from Gold Street to the Brooklyn Bridge.” [This comment was a backhanded slap at Seebeck and the Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Co., which then had its offices at 88 and 90 Gold Street in Manhattan.]

The portrait of General Ezeta shown nearby demonstrates that the stamps bear a realistic likeness, meaning that the comment by the Philatelic Journal of America was one of those cruel jokes so common in the philatelic press of those times, alluding to the helmet resembling a police helmet that the general wore in the portrait.

The second delivery comprised three additional denominations of 2 pesos, 5p, and 10p, Figure 5-5, page 22. They supposedly were issued July 1, but no official record has been found to confirm it. These three large stamps picture scenes related to the life of Christopher Columbus.

The three stamps were printed on paper quite different from that used for the low denominations of the issue.

The stamps were printed by recess line engraving and were perforated gauge 12. The denominations and hues are:

1c blue 25c dark olive grey
2c brown red 50c orange red
3c purple 1p black
5c dark brown 2p green
10c orange brown 5p violet
11c vermilion 10p orange
20c green

Figure 5-1. Issue of 1890.
10-centavo violet
Allegory of El Salvador

Figure 5-2. Issue of 1891.
1-peso yellow brown
San Miguel Volcano, Ship, and Locomotive

Figure 5-3. Issue of 1892.
20-centavo orange
Landing of Columbus

Figure 5-4. Issue of 1893.
1-centavo blue Gen. Carlos Ezeta
The Scott catalog notes that the 2-peso stamp is known on cover but that the 5-peso and 10-peso stamps are not known to have been used as postage. The Scott catalog does not value the stamps in used condition. Hahn and Sousa wrote that all covers they had seen bearing 2-peso stamps did not have arrival markings on the envelopes.

In an article in *Stamp Collector* in 1978, Clyde Gentle wrote: “The issue of stamps with a face value of up to 10 pesos for Nicaragua and in certain measure for El Salvador and Ecuador was justly criticized. This value represents a sum which far exceeds the postal needs of those countries.” His unsubstantiated argument, however, does not carry much weight, as Chapter XII will reveal.

A supply of 2c stamps was issued with the local overprint “UN CENTAVO.” No official record confirms an issue date of January 15, 1894. Seebeck sent to the country two shipments of different papers, one of which has been confused with a reprint.

The stamps were printed by recess line engraving and were perforated gauge 12. The issue consists of the following denominations and hues:

- 1c brown 2c blue
- 2c blue 5c black
- 3c brown 1p slate blue
- 5c orange brown 2p dark blue
- 10c violet 5p carmine
- 20c dark blue 10p dark brown

The three high denominations of this issue are not known for postal purposes, and the Scott catalog does not value them in used condition.

Also issued was a supply of 10c stamps overprinted locally with “1 Centavo.” No official record confirms an issue date as a December issue.

**First issue of 1896**

By January 1, 1896, Seebeck delivered the eighth issue for El Salvador. The vignette shows Gen. Antonio Ezeta, brother of President Carlos Ezeta.

It happened, however, that after the stamps had been printed, the president was unseated by a revolution headed by Rafael Gutiérrez. The new authorities refused to accept the stamps picturing the brother of the deposed president.

There was no time to prepare new stamps, but as a compromise solution, it was ordered that the stamps be printed with the national coat of arms to obliterate the portrait, *Figure 5–7*. The coat of arms was printed in various hues: green, blue, brown, or vermilion. The stamps were printed by recess line engraving and perforated gauge 12. The issue consists of the following denominations and hues. The second hue is that of the Coat of Arms obliteration:

- 1c olive and green
- 2c olive green and blue
- 3c brown and brown
- 5c blue and brown
- 10c orange and brown
- 12c magenta and brown
- 15c vermilion and vermilion
- 20c yellow and brown
- 24c violet and brown
- 30c dark blue and blue
- 50c carmine and brown
- 1p black and brown

The 3c, 10c, and 30c stamps are known without the obliteration, but these belong to the reprints. The 2c stamp was reprinted in a dark yellow green on a thick paper.

**Second issue of 1895**

On a date unknown, a second series was issued picturing the national coat of arms within different frames, the seventh Seebeck issue for El Salvador, *Figure 5–8*. No official record confirms an issue date of January 15 or any issue date. The stamps were printed by recess line engraving and were perforated gauge 12.

This issue consists of the following denominations and hues:

- 1c olive 15c red
- 2c dark blue green 20c dark green
- 3c brown 24c violet
- 5c blue 30c dark blue
- 10c orange 50c carmine
- 12c claret 1p grey black

Reprints are known of all denominations of this issue. They are printed on paper thicker than the originals.

In December 1895, as the 1c, 2c, and 3c stamps of this issue were running short, the government overprinted locally the 12c, 20c, and 24c stamps with “UN CENTAVO,” the 20c stamp with “DOS centavos,” and the 30c stamp with “TRES centavos.”

**First issue of 1896**

By January 1, 1896, Seebeck delivered the eighth issue for El Salvador. The vignette shows an allegory of Peace, *Figure 5–9*.

The stamps were printed by recess line engraving and were perforated gauge 12.

The issue consists of the following denominations and hues:

- 1c blue 15c violet blue
- 2c dark brown 20c magenta
- 3c blue green 24c vermilion
- 5c olive brown 30c orange
- 10c yellow 50c brownish black
- 12c dark blue 1p rose lake
A 2c stamp was issued on watermarked paper. All denominations of this issue were reprinted in slightly different hues and on thicker paper. The 2c stamp was reprinted on watermarked paper. On the originals, the Liberty Cap watermark is upright (vertical). On the reprints it is sideways (horizontal). Sketches of watermarks are pictured on page 45.

Second issue of 1896
The ninth Seebeck issue for El Salvador, whose exact date of issue is not known, was issued in 1896 and consists of 24 stamps: 12 denominations printed on unwatermarked paper and the same 12 denominations printed on watermarked paper.

Figure 5–10. The stamps were printed by recess line engraving and were perforated gauge 12.
The 12 stamps have different vignettes. The denominations and hues are as follows:
1c emerald 15c blue green
2c lake 20c carmine pink
3c yellow brown 24c violet
5c dark blue 30c dark green
10c brown 50c orange
12c slate 100c dark blue
There are two sets of reprints. All denominations on watermarked paper were reprinted, and all denominations on unwatermarked paper were reprinted. The papers used for the reprints are thicker, and the reprint hues are slightly different.
The government overprinted locally “Quince centavos” on a supply of 24c stamps, some with watermark and some without watermark. There is no official record confirming this stamp was issued in November.

The 12 stamps picture three different coats of arms: Casa Blanca, San Miguel Volcano, a locomotive, an ocean steamship, and three different views of the fall of the Atchautuillas Falls, and Christopher Columbus.

First issue of 1897
By January 1, 1897, a new series was delivered, the 10th Seebeck issue for El Salvador. The designs were the same as with the previous issue, with “1896” in the designs, but the stamps were printed in different hues, Figure 5–11. This minor change of only the hues also can be traced to the agreement that Seebeck signed in June 1896 with the North American branch of the Society for the Suppression of Speculative Stamps. See Chapter XI.

As with the second issue of 1896, the 1897 stamps were printed on paper with watermark and on paper without watermark. The stamps were printed by recess line engraving and were perforated gauge 12.
The denominations and hues are:
1c red 15c black
2c yellow green 20c slate
3c yellow brown 24c yellow
5c orange 30c pink
10c green 50c violet
12c blue 100c lake brown
There are two sets of reprints. All denominations on watermarked paper were reprinted, and all denominations on unwatermarked paper were reprinted. For both, the paper used for the reprints is thicker than that of the originals.
In May 1897, the basic letter rate was reduced from 15c per 15 grams to 13c per 15 grams. There were no stamps denominated 13c, so the 24c, 30c, 50c, and 100c denominations were reprinted. The 24c, 30c, and 50c without watermark were overprinted locally with “TRECE centavos,” the new 13c denomination. The overprinting was in red for the 13c yellow stamp and in black for the others.

Second issue of 1897
Two multicolor Coat of Arms stamps were issued March 9 to commemorate the Central American Exhibition held in Guatemala during March, the 11th Seebeck issue for El Salvador, Figure 5–12. The stamps were valid only that month. The legend on the stamps reads “REPUBLICA MAYOR DE CENTRO AMERICA,” or “Greater Republic of Central America.” This was a union of El Salvador, Honduras, and Nicaragua, and it attempted to include Guatemala and Costa Rica. The republic had been ratified in September 1896. Its constitution came into effect November 1, 1898, and renamed the union as the United States of Central America. A coup d’etat November 21, 1898, in El Salvador ended the union. The vignette shows the union Coat of Arms.
The multicolor stamps were printed by lithography and were perforated gauge 12. The denominations and hues are as follows:
1c blue, rose, and green
2c rose, gold, blue, and green
Both stamps also were reprinted in different hues on thicker paper.

Issue of 1898
The 12th Seebeck issue for El Salvador went into circulation on February 1, 1898. It consists of 12 denominations of the 1897 design of an allegory of the unity of Central America but in single hues and engraved, Figure 5–13. The stamps were printed by recess line engraving on a thin watermarked paper and were perforated gauge 12. The denominations and hues are:
1c orange red 13c lake brown
2c pink 20c dark blue
3c pale green 24c ultramarine
5c bluish green 26c yellow brown
10c gray blue 50c orange
12c violet 1p yellow

Figure 5–9. Issue of 1896. 2-centavo dark brown Allegory of Peace
Figure 5–10. Issue of 1896. 100-centavo dark blue Christopher Columbus inscribed “1986”
Figure 5–11. Issue of 1897. 100-centavo brown lake Christopher Columbus
Figure 5–12. Issue of 1897. 1-centavo Coat of Arms of the Greater Republic of Central America in blue, gold, rose, and green
Figure 5–13. Second issue of 1897. 1-centavo Coat of Arms of the Greater Republic of Central America.
The stamps picture the goddess Ceres. They were printed by lithography and were perforated gauge 12. The Scott catalog states that these stamps “probably were not placed in use,” and it does not value them used.

But the stamps of this issue were overprinted locally with a so-called wheel design, Scott 210-223, and it was these stamps that were issued and used.

The stamps of 1898 also were overprinted locally with the so-called wheel design and were issued in 1899 and used. The 5c blue green stamp of 1898 was overprinted locally with “Tránsito Territorial” in black, violet, red, magenta, or yellow and was issued in 1899 and used.

Other stamps supplied by Seebeck

In addition to the stamps described in previous paragraphs, Seebeck printed for the government of El Salvador a series of Official stamps, postal cards, envelopes with imprinted stamps, wrapper bands for printed matter, parcel post stamps, and postage due stamps.

Some comments on these issues follow. Chapter XI summarizes the various issues produced by Seebeck for the Central American countries and Ecuador.

Official stamps

Seebeck also supplied El Salvador with Official stamps that were prepared by overprinting the ordinary stamps with two different designs. Figure 5-15 and Figure 5-17 picture stamps bearing the two types of overprints. Figure 5-16 pictures a stamp bearing a bogus handstamp.

The first overprint is a small oval with the inscription “FRANQUEO OFICIAL.”

The bogus handstamp includes the inscription “CORREOS DE EL SALVADOR / DE OFICIO” (Scott O37-O72, O103-O126, and O75-O76 of 1900).

The rather ornate second overprint reads “FRANQUEO OFICIAL.”

First Official stamps of 1896

The first Official stamps of 1896 were printed only for the collector market. They are found only on the known reprint papers. The printing is believed to have occurred after 1896, when the reprints of the ordinary issue were made. The set consists of 12 denominations of the 1896 Allegory of Liberty ordinary stamps with the oval overprint added by letterpress, Figure 5-15. Scott O1-O12.

Bogus second Official stamps of 1896

This supposed issue consists of the same denominations as the previous issue with the “CORREOS DE EL SALVADOR / DE OFICIO” handstamp added. The stamps are listed as Scott O37-O48, Figure 5-16.

Experts consider them to be bogus. Leavy noted in an article that this handstamp was used to differentiate mail between that carried by officials and that transported regularly by the government. This is contradicted, however, in an article by Hermann Focke published in the July 3, 1909, issue of Mekeel’s Weekly Stamp News. Focke wrote:

This very day have I received the following letter from an official of the El Salvador Post Office.

“The stamps of El Salvador with the [handstamp] in question, made with a rubber stamp which is still in existence, are the work of a subordinate employee of this office. These provisional stamps were never authorized by this Post Office as there has always been a plentiful supply of the regular Official stamps since 1896 and these are simply spurious stamps. I have not been able to identify the employee who has been circulating these stamps of this country with the said [handstamp], for had I been able to he would have been dismissed from this office.”

Focke here in 1909 established the spurious character of these stamps, but they continue to be listed in the catalogs. The listings note that the 1c reprint of the first Official issue and 1c and 2c reprints of the second Official issue exist on thick paper.
Third official stamps of 1896
This issue comprises the 12 denominations of the 1896 Pictorial ordinary stamps, on paper with watermark and on paper without watermark, with the letterpress oval overprint (24 stamps). There are two sets of reprints. All denominations on watermarked paper were reprinted, and all denominations on unwatermarked paper were reprinted. Scott O13-O36.

Bogus fourth official stamps of 1896
These are the 1896 Pictorial stamps, on paper with watermark and on paper without watermark, with the handstamp. Experts consider them to be bogus. Scott O49-O72.

First Official stamps of 1897
This issue comprises the Pictorial stamps in new hues, on paper with watermark and on paper without watermark, with the letterpress oval overprint (24 stamps). Figure 5–17. There are two sets of reprints. All denominations on watermarked paper were reprinted, and all denominations on unwatermarked paper were reprinted. Scott O79-O102.

Bogus second Official stamps of 1897
This set comprises the Pictorial stamps in new hues, on paper with watermark and on paper without watermark, with the handstamp. Experts consider them to be bogus. Watermarked 1c and 15c stamps and unwatermarked 12c, 30c, 50c, and 100c were reprinted on thick paper. Scott O103-O126.

Third Official stamps of 1897
This set includes the 5c dark green Numeral acknowledgement of receipt stamps on paper with watermark and on paper without watermark, with the letterpress oval overprint. The third Official stamps of 1897 were printed only for the collector market. They are found only on the known reprint papers.

Fourth Official stamps of 1897
The two 10c dark blue Gen. Rafael Antonio Gutierrez registration stamps on paper with watermark and on paper without watermark were issued with letterpress oval overprint in February 1897. They were reprinted on thick paper. Scott O127-O128 and note. The 10c stamp in brown lake with overprint is known only on reprint papers.

Bogus fifth Official stamps of 1897
This set includes the 10c dark blue Coat of Arms of the Republica de Centro America stamps with the handstamp, Scott O73-O74. Experts consider the fifth Official stamps of 1897 to be bogus.

Advice of receipt stamps
El Salvador supposedly issued two advice or acknowledgement of receipt stamps. No official records confirm February 1897 as the issue period or that the stamps were actually issued. The vignette consists of a numeral matching the denomination, with a background of fine engine turning. Figure 5–19. The stamps were printed by recess line engraving on thin paper and were perforated gauge 12. Both stamps are green and are denominated 5c. One is on watermarked paper, and the other is on unwatermarked paper. Reprints of the stamps were made on thick paper without watermark.

Postage due stamps of 1895
El Salvador issued eight postage due stamps with Numerals designs corresponding to the denominations. A supposed issue date of October 1 is not confirmed by official records. The stamps were printed in olive brown (olive green) by recess line engraving and were perforated gauge 12. The eight denominations are 1c, 2c, 3c, 5c, 10c, 15c, 25c, and 50c. All denominations were reprinted on thicker paper in hues that vary from the originals.

Postage due stamps of 1896
Seebeck delivered a new postage due issue for 1896, date not confirmed. The issue consists of 16 Numerals stamps, eight stamps on paper without watermark and eight on paper with watermark, the same denominations as 1895. Both have the same designs and hues and differ only in the watermark. The stamps were printed in red by recess line engraving and were perforated gauge 12 All stamps, with or without watermark, were reprinted on thicker paper and in a different shade of red.

Postage due stamps of 1897
Seebeck delivered new dark blue postage due stamps for 1897, date not confirmed. They differ from the previous issues only in...
hue. The stamps were printed only on paper without watermark. Reprints were made of all denominations in blue on thicker paper.

**Postage due stamps of 1898**

Seebeck supposedly delivered a fourth issue of postage due stamps for 1898, date not confirmed. The stamps have the same characteristics as the previous issues (denominations, engraving, perforations), except that the hue was changed to dark lavender (violet), Figure 5–20. The stamps are not believed to have been issued. Reprints on thicker paper were made of all denominations.

**Postage due stamps of 1899**

In 1899, El Salvador received new postage due stamps using the same vignette as previously but again with a change of hue, this time to orange.

The same eight denominations prepared in the four previous years were manufactured again on watermarked paper and on unwatermarked paper.

The stamps, however, were not issued, and the catalogs value them only mint. Also in 1899, the orange stamps were overprinted with a so-called wheel design that had been used on the ordinary and Official stamps issued earlier in the year. The Scott catalog lists them as an issue of 1900.

**Registration stamps**

Supposedly in February 1897, four 10c registration stamps were issued for use in payment of the fee on registered mail, Figure 5–21. The stamps are:

- 10c brown lake on watermarked paper
- 10c dark blue on watermarked paper
- 10c brown lake without watermark
- 10c dark blue without watermark

Reprints of all four are on thicker paper. Only the brown lake is known on original papers. The dark blue is known only on reprint papers.

**Parcel post stamps**

In 1895, El Salvador supposedly issued five stamps for use on parcels. The stamps, in the shape of a rhombus, picture Hermes, messenger to the gods, Figure 5–22. The stamps were printed by recess line engraving.

The set consists of the following denominations and hues:

- 5c orange brown
- 10c slate blue
- 15c red

The Scott catalog does not value the stamps in used condition.

**Money order stamps**

In 1895, the El Salvador contract produced nine Numeral stamps for use on money orders, Figure 5–23. The issue consists of the following denominations and hues:

- 1c green
- 2c olive brown
- 3c red
- 7c dark blue
- 10c orange
- 20c orange
- 50c green

**Envelopes, Wrappers, Postal Cards**

As part of his contract, Seebeck manufactured and handed over to the government of El Salvador envelopes with imprinted stamps, wrappers for printed matter, letter cards, and postal cards. The delivery of this postal paper is recorded in the publications of the time.

From 1890 through 1899, the following major varieties of postal stationery were issued, as listed in the Higgins & Gage World Postal Stationery Catalog (1978):
55 postal cards (major varieties)
61 envelopes (major varieties)
28 wrappers (major varieties)
6 letter cards

Postal cards issued in 1890 are denominated 2c, 3c, 2c+2c, 3c+3c. Single cards denominated 1c were issued each year, 1891-1899, along with 2c, 3c, 2c+2c, 3c+3c. Six letter cards were issued in 1895 denominated 2c, 3c, 5c, and 2c+2c, 3c+3c, and 5c+5c (message-reply letter cards).

The postal cards of 1890, 1891, 1892, and 1895 are imprinted “HAMILTON BANK NOTE COMPANY, NEW YORK,” but they were manufactured by the firm legally named Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Co. The 1892 imprints have no punctuation. Those of 1893 read “CO.” and have no end stop. The postal cards of 1894 have no imprint. The 1896, 1897, 1898, and 1899 imprints have the full legal name in upper-case-lowercase with “Co.” and no end stop.

Envelopes were issued in denominations of 1c, 2c, 3c, 5c, 10c, 11c, 12c, 15c, 20c, and 22c, but not every denomination was issued each year, 1890-1898. Some years had more than one issue. Figure 5-25 pictures an 1892 envelope.

Wrappers were issued for seven years: 1890-1895 and 1897. The denominations are 2c, 3c, 4c, 6c, 10c, 11c, 12½c, and 25c. Not every denomination was issued each year.

Figures 5-24 pictures an 1891 postal card.
Figure 5-25 pictures an 1892 postal card.

Six letter cards were issued in 1895 denominated 2c, 3c, 5c, and 2c+2c, 3c+3c, and 5c+5c (message-reply letter cards).

The postal cards of 1890, 1891, 1892, and 1895 are imprinted “HAMILTON BANK NOTE COMPANY, NEW YORK,” but they were manufactured by the firm legally named Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Co. The 1892 imprints have no punctuation. Those of 1893 read “CO.” and have no end stop. The postal cards of 1894 have no imprint. The 1896, 1897, 1898, and 1899 imprints have the full legal name in upper-case-lowercase with “Co.” and no end stop.

Figure 5-25. Issue of 1892. 22-centavo dark blue on salmon with embossing

Landing of Columbus envelope

Chapter VI
HONDURAS

After signing the contract with El Salvador on March 27, 1889, Seebeck went to Honduras where he and the government there signed a contract on April 20, 1889.

The Seebeck contract

The text of the contract was published in La Gaceta on April 29, 1889. It reads as follows:

Secretary of State in the Home Office
Tegucigalpa, 20th April 1889

The Government AGREES:

To approve the contract agreed between the Director General of Taxes and Sr. Nicholas F. Seebeck which says:

Roque Jacinto Muñoz, Director General of Republic Taxes, and Sr. Nicholas F. Seebeck as secretary of the Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Co. of New York, agree to the following contract:

1 – Sr. Seebeck, as representative of the above named company, promises to provide, at no cost to the Government of Honduras, the necessary kinds of stamps for the postal service for the franking of correspondence dispatched within or outside of the Republic. This agreement will last for ten consecutive years from this date. The quantities, classes, and denominations of the types will be determined by the Government and executed by the Company in accordance with the designs the former will deliver to the offices of the Company no later than April 1st each year.

2 – The Government of Honduras agrees to circulate during the ten year term, only those stamps supplied by the Company, undertaking to modify annually the designs so that the issues corresponding to each twelve month period are completely different to previous and successive ones, but the type to be adopted for each annual series must be uniform for the twelve month term.

3 – The stamps will be engraved by the Company on steel plates, with the necessary artistic attention, so that they cannot be forged. The quantities and types of each annual issue will be as follows:

Two million adhesive stamps,
Twelve thousand sealable envelopes,
Ten thousand postcards (postal cards),
Ten thousand stamped bands for newspapers.

4 – The examples must be handed over by the Company to the representative of the Honduras Government in New York, no later than November 15th of the year previous to their circulation. It is a required condition that before verifying the delivery of the stamps, the moulds or engraving plates must be deposited in the offices of the Safe Deposit Company of New York, under seal of the Consul of Honduras in New York, from whence the aforementioned plates may not be removed except under the conditions expressed hereafter.

5 – The Company is obliged not to issue a greater quantity of the types agreed with the Honduras Government than those which the instructions express which in effect free the Government from the specific, allowing the nature of the order to specify values, colors and distinguishing features of each of the issues.
6 – The Government for its part is obliged to send the necessary instructions, models, portraits, forms and photographs in order that the New York Company may fulfil its contract, arriving in New York on the month and day indicated, according to Article 1.

7 – To compensate the expenditure made by the Company in the printing and issuing of the postage stamps referred to in this contract, the Government of Honduras agrees to surrender to the named Company the stock of the same stamps that they have at the end of each of the years of this contract previous to the declaration nullifying the value of the said stocks by the Honduras Treasury at the beginning of the new tax year. The transfer stipulated here must take effect whatever the excess quantity of stamps justified by this contract less their nominal value during their time in legal circulation.

8 – The stocks will be handed over, without any cost to the Company, to the agent named in this principal to represent it to the Government. The said surrender will take place exactly thirty days after the end of the fiscal year for which the remittance contains the contract.

9 – It is the obligation of the Honduran Government to notify to its representative and to the printing company the decree which nullifies the value and circulation of stamps used during the previous year, so that the said Company may withdraw from deposit the plates and break the seals referred to in Section 4 of this contract, and the said Company may make the reprints it deems necessary to sell the issues and various franked items to collectors.

10 – The Government is obliged to declare the legal use and necessary circulation of the stamps hereby contracted, thirty days before they come into use in the postal service.

11 – The printing Company is obliged, first of all, to hand over on December 1st of each year, at the latest, to the Government representative in New York a complete issue of all the new stamps, postal cards, stamped envelopes, newspaper wrappers, in the quantities expressed in Section 3, of the various values indicated by the Government. The Government in exchange and without other expense, will hand over to the Company the stocks it still holds thirty days after the date of receipt of the new issue. If the quantity and value of the stock of actual postage stamps is not sufficient to reimburse the Company through the sales made to collectors, the Government will allow the printing of the necessary quantity for which the Consul to Honduras in New York will have the work done, at the expense of the printing Company in the case where the plates exist for the issue actually in use.

12 – The stamps, cards, envelopes and newspaper wrappers will carry the date of issue and will have a central design which will vary annually according to the instructions issued by the Government, and their color will vary according to the allotted denominations.

13 – This contract must be presented to the Honduran Consul in New York so that, as his Government’s representative, he may ensure the exactness and fulfillment of the obligations stipulated herein. As proof it is signed in Tegucigalpa, on April 20th 1889.


Hamilton Bank Note Engraving & Printing Co.

Nicholas F. Seebeck, Secretary
stamps, meaning that the number of stamps used during the year was only 388,229. To study the legal aspects of the Honduran issues, I will refer to the article by Irving I. Green and the translation by Gunther Wiese B.

Equally in both the English and Spanish versions transcribing Article 4 of a Decree of August 12, 1891, on stating that the Honduran consul would hand over to Seebeck “the part of the stock of the canceled issue in possession of the printing company [American Bank Note Company].”

This must be an error by Green or by La Gaceta, for it should have said in possession of the Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Co., which at that time was in possession of the remainders as printer of the stamps of the 1890 issue. The remainders were handed over to Seebeck’s representative in Tegucigalpa. George Bernhard who, as previously noted, was Seebeck’s representative in Tegucigalpa.

**Issue of 1891**

Unlike the stamps of El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Ecuador, which were delivered by January 1 each year and which are believed to have been issued on the next business day, the stamps of Honduras were generally issued in the middle of the year.

The second Seebeck issue for Honduras was issued July 1, 1891, or approximately one and a half years after the 1890 issue. The vignette of the stamps picture Gen. Luis Bográn, who at that time was president of Honduras, Figure 6-2. The stamps were printed in two different formats, the 2p, 5p, and 10-peso denominations being in a large size, with different designs, and in two hues. The issue consists of the following denominations and hues: 1c dark blue, 40c blue green; 2c yellowish brown, 50c blackish brown; 5c blue green, 75c purple; 10c vermillion, 1 peso brown; 20c brownish red, 2 pesos sepia and black; 25c magenta, 5 pesos purple and black; 30c slate, 10 pesos green and black.

The 2-peso and 10-peso stamps are known to be printed on paper with the watermark of Crane & Co., Dalton, Mass. The remainders of this issue returned to Seebeck “the remainders were so great? Green alludes to this in his interesting article. In those years, the majority of the population was illiterate, and the few who knew how to write had little confidence in the government. In general, the population made little use of the postal system.

Private companies preferred to use local private postal systems that carried their correspondence from one part of the country to another. This also explains why genuinely used covers are hard to find.

Possibly the greatest use of Seebeck stamps on mail sent to the United States was the New York and Honduras Rosario Mining Co. At that time, it was exploiting deposits of gold and silver found at San Juan cito, 40 kilometers northeast of Tegucigalpa.

**Issue of 1892**

On or about August 1, 1892, the third Seebeck issue for Honduras were issued. Their theme was the 400th anniversary of the discovery of America by Christopher Columbus, the same theme that year for the stamps of El Salvador and Nicaragua.

The vignette of the stamps shows the supposed images of Christopher Columbus and Martín Alonso Pinzón at the prow of their ship, looking toward the coast of Honduras, Figure 6-3. The design is merely a liberty taken by the artist, for Columbus did not sight the coast of what is now Honduras until August 14, 1502. This was during the fourth voyage when Columbus was not accompanied by Pinzón. The issue consists of the following denominations and hues: 1c slate, 30c ultramarine; 2c dark blue, 40c orange; 5c yellow green, 50c brown; 10c bluish green, 75c lake; 20c red, 1 peso purple; 25c orange brown.

There is no decree authorizing this issue, no official notice authorizing circulation from August 1 of a “new issue,” but it does not specify clearly what stamps it means.

**Issue of 1893**

It is believed that the 1893 Seebeck stamps, the fourth Seebeck issue for Honduras, were issued in August 1893. The vignette pictures Gen. Trinidad Cabanas, Figure 6-4. For all denominations, the central vignette is the same, but the frames are different. The issue consists of the following denominations and hues:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Denomination</th>
<th>Color</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1c green</td>
<td>30c reddish orange</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2c scarlet</td>
<td>40c black</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5c dark blue</td>
<td>50c olive brown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10c orange</td>
<td>75c purple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20c brownish red</td>
<td>1 peso dark orange</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25c dark blue</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

No decree is known authorizing this issue. This seems to indicate that at the time both the Honduran government and Seebeck probably were proceeding automatically, with Seebeck delivering his usual annual series and the government circulating it in August.

**Honduras rescinds its contract**

Shortly after receiving the 1893 issue, Honduras decided to install a new government printing press and to take charge of all government printing, including stamps.

<table>
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<tr>
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<td>50c olive brown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10c orange</td>
<td>75c purple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20c brownish red</td>
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</tr>
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**Honduras rescinds its contract**

Shortly after receiving the 1893 issue, Honduras decided to install a new government printing press and to take charge of all government printing, including stamps.
The printing press operated under the name Litografía Nacional. To operate it, Honduras employed Don Italo Ghizzoni of Italy. He was a lithographic expert who came to Honduras to direct the printing of stamps and to instruct personnel in the art of design, lithography, and engraving.

Ghizzoni urged vehemently the canceling of the contract with Seebeck, arguing that he would produce stamps of quality in Honduras in the new printing works.

The Seebeck issue delivered in August 1893 was supposed to last until mid-1894, so at the end of 1893 Ghizzoni gave assurances to the government that the issue picturing President Celio Arias, the first to be made at the new printing works and then in preparation, would be ready for August 1894.

In light of that notice, on October 26, 1893, President Domingo Vázquez issued the following decree:

The President of the Republic of Honduras to his citizens
Gives notice that the National Congress resolved the following: DECREE No. 46
The National Congress Decrees:
Sole article: It disapproves the resolution of executive power of 20th April 1889 approving the contract between the Director General of Finance, Sr. Roque J. Muñoz, and Sr. Nicholas F. Seebeck as Secretary of the Hamilton Bank Note Engraving & Printing Co. of New York with the objective of supplying stamps necessary for the postal service of the correspondence (national and international) of the Republic.
Given in Tegucigalpa October 19th 1893
P V Williams, D.P.
Joaquin Soto, D.S.
Sotero Barahona, D.S.
To the Executive power: – Therefore it must be executed.
Tegucigalpa, October 26th 1893

This decree was published in La Gaceta, the official organ of the government of the Republic of Honduras.

The news was received with displays of satisfaction by the philatelic press of the time. For example, the Philatelic Journal of America in its issue of December 1893 commented:

Finally one of Seebeck’s Central American republics is to free itself from the yoke. Carlos Ferrari de La Ceiba writes that in the Official Gazette a decree has been published indicating that the Hamilton Bank Note | Engraving and Printing | Co. has been prohibited from printing Honduras stamps.

From now on they will be printed in Honduras, according to our correspondent.

It seems, however, that Ghizzoni, the government, or both, overestimated the capacity of the human team charged with managing the new printing works. The printing of the stamps began to fall behind, for Ghizzoni was a perfectionist, extremely impatient, and intolerant of errors by his operators. As a result, the first stamps printed in Honduras could not be issued until January 1896. This forced Honduras to have to turn to Seebeck for a new issue, the fifth and last Seebeck issue for Honduras.

Issue of 1895
Seebeck was annoyed and angered by the news that his contract had been rescinded. He also was annoyed that he had not received the remainders of the 1893 Cabañas issue and that he was being left with the Allegory of Justice stamps already prepared. When Ghizzoni admitted that he could not deliver the Celio Arias stamps until the beginning of 1896, by means of the Decree of January 28, 1895, the government authorized the issuance of the Allegory of Justice stamps printed by Seebeck.

In February 1895, Honduras issued its last Seebeck stamps. Although the central Justice vignette is the same for all denominations, the stamps have different frames. The issue, inscribed “1894 1895,” consists of the following denominations and hues:

- 1c vermilion
- 2c dark blue
- 5c slate
- 10c brownish pink

Nothing is known about the reprints. It has been noted that Honduras, in violation of the terms of its contract, did not hand over to Seebeck the remainders.

J.B. Møns hypothesized that the Hamilton firm destroyed the plates, which could explain why no reprints exist.

Official stamps
In addition to ordinary stamps, Seebeck printed for Honduras two series of Official stamps, a total of 22 stamps. None of the Official stamps was ever used. Irving I. Green, a specialist collector and student of the stamps, indicated that he never saw or heard of a genuine cover franked with an Official stamp for postage. One would suppose that they could be a private product of Seebeck, for the printing orders for the stamps of 1890 and 1891 say nothing about them.

La Gaceta of July 11, 1891, published a resolution of the postal administration of Tegucigalpa to recognize the sum of $58.34 that had been spent on ordinary stamps to frank Official external correspondence. This appears to prove that Official stamps did not exist in Honduras during the Seebeck years.

Official stamps for 1890
The 1890 Official stamps carry the same Arms design as the ordinary stamps of 1890. The set consists of the same denominations as the ordinary issue, but all stamps are pale yellow in hue and bear the added inscription “OFFICIAL” printed by letterpress in red. They were printed as bicolors.

The stamps denominated 2c, 5c, 10c, 20c, 25c, 30c, 50c, and 1p are known without the inscription, and the stamps denominated 10c, 20c, 40c, and 50c are known with the inscription inverted.

Official stamps for 1891
The 1891 Official stamps use the same Bográn design as the ordinary stamps of 1891, but they are printed in yellow and bear the inscription “OFFICIAL” printed by letterpress in red, Figure 6–6. The Official stamps were printed as bicolors. The 20c stamp is known without the overprint.

Envelopes, wrappers, postal cards
In addition to ordinary stamps and Official stamps, Hamilton and Seebeck supplied to Honduras the following major varieties of postal stationery: 18 envelopes, 16 wrappers, and 20 postal cards.
There were four envelopes (major varieties) each year for 1890, 1891, 1892, and 1893, denominated 5c, 10c, 20c, and 25c, but only two envelopes for 1895: 5c and 10c. Figure 6–7 pictures an envelope of 1893.

The four wrappers issued in each year, 1890, 1891, 1892, 1893, were denominated 1c, 2c, 5c, and 10c.

There were four postal cards (major varieties) each year, 1890, 1891, 1892, 1893, and 1895, denominated 2c, 3c, 2c+2c, and 3c+3c. Figure 6–8 pictures a card of 1890. The imprints read “HAMILTON BANK NOTE COMPANY, NEW YORK,” an incorrect name for the manufacturer. The 1892 cards omit the comma and period. The 1895 cards are lowercase and read “Co.”

Chapter VII
NICARAGUA

After visiting Honduras, Seebeck went to Costa Rica, where he failed to sign a contract. Then he went to Nicaragua, where on May 4, 1889, he signed a contract with the director of postal affairs. The contract was published in the government gazette on June 22, 1889.

The Seebeck contract
The contract reads as follows:

Art. 1 – Sr. Seebeck assumes the responsibility as representative of the Hamilton Bank Note [ Engraving and Printing ] Co. to supply to the Government of Nicaragua, at no cost to the said Government, all the stamps required for the usages of the postal correspondence and telegraphs up to a total of 2,000,000 stamps, also 75,000 post cards [ postal cards ], 125,000 stamped envelopes, and 25,000 wrappers, for each year or each two years.

Art. 2 – The Government may, at its discretion, change the stamps each year or every two years, on the 1st January, and at the same time will invalidate those of the previous period. The design will be the same for all denominations of an issue, the only difference being in color. With each new issue, the design will be substantially different from the previous ones.

Art. 3 – Simultaneously with the signing of the contract, the Government orders from Sr. Seebeck, all the stamps necessary for the year 1890, submitting designs, size of the issue, color and quantity of each individual denomination. The Hamilton company must deliver the complete order at the latest by 15th November 1889 to a Government representative in New York.

In the future, the Government will order by May 1 every one or two years, from the Hamilton Bank Note [ Engraving and Printing ] Co., in the same way, a new emission which will be delivered at the latest by the 15th November of the corresponding year.

Art. 4 – The stamps must be engraved on steel by the highest quality artistic workmanship.

Art. 5 – As compensation for the free delivery of the first issue for 1890, the Government should deliver to the Hamilton Bank Note [ Engraving and Printing ] Co. all the stamps, envelopes and postcards of the present current issue of 1882, and of any previous issue of which there exists a stock on 31st December 1889.

In the same way the Government will hand over to the Hamilton company every year or biennial following all the stocks left over from the previous period that have been withdrawn in accordance with Art. 2 of the contract, handing over of which shall be effected in Managua at the latest during February of the following year.

Art. 6 – The Government shall permit the Hamilton Bank Note [ Engraving and Printing ] Co. to sell to collectors the stamps that have been received from the Government and authorizes the Hamilton company to reprint any denomination when the items received have been disposed of, in order to satisfy the demands of the collectors.

Art. 7 – The Government may not, under any consideration, sell the stamps of the current issue by giving a discount of more than 10 percent of the face value. The stamps used to furnish telegrams shall be destroyed along with the original ones [ telegram forms and affixed stamps – author’s note ].
Art. 8 – In the event the Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Co. fails per Art. 3 to deliver on time, it loses the rights to the final balances that remain and the Government has the right to cancel the Contract.

Art. 9 – In the event that the quantities ordered by the Government and supplied by the Hamilton company do not cover the demand, the Company is obliged, at the request of the Government, to supply up to one million additional items over and above the numbers stipulated in Art. 1.

Art. 10 – This Contract shall be valid for a period of ten years and can be canceled by mutual consent.¹

The contract with Nicaragua was the third to be signed and was honored by the government for 10 years, as was the contract Seebeck signed with El Salvador.

Seebeck made the first delivery by January 1, 1890, this being the same date as that for the delivery of the first El Salvador stamps. What follows are comments on the individual issues.

Issue of 1890

The Seebeck stamps of the 1890 issue were delivered by January 1, 1890. The design pictures a locomotive and Morse telegraph equipment, Figure 7–1. The design carries the inscription “CORREOS Y TELEGRAFOS,” indicating that the stamps were valid equally for postage on letters and cards, as well as for receiving payment of telegraph charges. The issue comprises the following denominations and hues:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Denomination</th>
<th>Hue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1c brownish yellow</td>
<td>50c purple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2c vermilion</td>
<td>1p brown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5c dark blue</td>
<td>2p dark green</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10c slate</td>
<td>5p carmine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20c red</td>
<td>10p orange</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All ordinary stamps for Nicaragua supplied by Seebeck for 1890-1898 were printed by recess line engraving. The 1899 ordinary issue, manufactured in tandem half plates with the 1899 stamps of El Salvador, were lithographed. All stamps 1890-1899 were perforated gauge 12.

No reprints were made of the 1890 issue.

Issue of 1891

By January 1, 1891, the second Seebeck issue for Nicaragua was issued and put into circulation. The vignette pictures a Goddess of Plenty allegory, Figure 7–2.

The stamps consist of the following denominations and hues:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Denomination</th>
<th>Hue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1c brownish yellow</td>
<td>50c purple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2c red</td>
<td>1p brownish black</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5c dark blue</td>
<td>2p dark green</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10c slate</td>
<td>5p carmine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20c plum</td>
<td>10p orange</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

No reprints were made of the 1891 issue.

Issue of 1892

By January 1, 1892, the third Seebeck issue for Nicaragua was issued. The design shows Columbus sighting land, Figure 7–3. This issue commemorated the 400th anniversary of the discovery of America by Columbus.

The issue comprises the following denominations and hues:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Denomination</th>
<th>Hue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1c brownish yellow</td>
<td>50c purple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2c red</td>
<td>1p brown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5c dark blue</td>
<td>2p greenish blue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10c slate</td>
<td>5p rose red</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20c dark red</td>
<td>10p orange</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The stamps of this issue also were printed in different hues and then the word “TELEGRAFOS” was added in black.

The 1c blue, 10c orange, 20c slate, 50c plum, and 2p vermilion are telegraph stamps that by accident or design do not have the TELEGRAFOS inscription. The Stanley Gibbons stamp catalog indicates that these stamps were used postally.

No reprints were made of the 1892 issue.

In general, the stamps of Nicaragua tended to maintain the same denominations and range of hues from year to year.

Issue of 1893

By January 1, 1893, the fourth Seebeck issue for Nicaragua was delivered. It consists of 10 denominations. The design is an allegory of Victory, Figure 7–4.

Figure 7–1. Issue of 1890.
10-peso orange
Locomotive and Telegraph Key

Figure 7–2. Issue of 1891.
5-peso brown red
Goddess of Plenty

Figure 7–3. Issue of 1892.
50-centavo purple
Columbus Sighting Land

Figure 7–4. Issue of 1893.
50-centavo violet
Volcanos

Figure 7–5. Issue of 1894.
2-peso green
Allegory of Victory

1c brownish yellow | 50c violet |
2c vermilion       | 1p dark brown |
5c dark blue       | 2p greenish blue |
10c slate          | 5p rose red |
20c dark red       | 10p orange |

No reprints were made of the 1893 issue. The 1c blue and 2c dark brown stamps correspond to stamps intended for telegraph use but that did not receive the black TELEGRAFOS inscription.

Issue of 1894

By January 1, 1894, the fifth Seebeck issue for Nicaragua was delivered. The design is an allegory of Victory, Figure 7–5.
In 1893, Gen. José Santos Zelaya revolted against President Roberto Sacasa. Zelaya won a military victory over the conservatives and took over governance of Nicaragua. 

The issue consists of the following denominations and hues:

1c brownish yellow  50c purple
2c vermilion        1p brown
5c dark blue        2p green
10c slate           5p red brown
20c lake red        10p orange

The Scott catalog notes that there were two printings in addition to the original printing. Scott values for mint stamp are for the third printing.

Stamps of the same design and denominations but of different hues are telegraph stamps lacking the telegraph inscription. A 25c greenish yellow stamp also is recorded. It is believed to have been intended as a telegraph stamp but was not also printed in black with TELEGRAFOS.

The majority of the original stamps of this issue with the exception of the 1c, 2c, and 50c are scarce.

The stamps of this issue (except the 25c) are known handstamped with the word "DIRECCION" in violet. They are specimen stamps that were affixed to cards sent by the director of posts as New Year messages. The same word was added to Official stamps.

"Mosquito Provisional." stamps

The Miskito peoples inhabited the greater part of the Atlantic Coast of Nicaragua. They had been granted autonomy, in accordance with the 1860 Treaty of Managua and with an 1881 arbitration ruling.

In 1893, General José Santos Zelaya led a revolt against the government of President Roberto Sacasa. When pursued by government forces, Sacasa attempted to seek refuge in the Mosquito Reserve, but Miskito Chief Robert Clarence would not allow him in.

In February 1894, Zelaya’s forces occupied the reserve. Clarence retreated for a time to Pearl Lagoon and after a brief council-revolt went into exile in Jamaica.

In July 1894, two stamps were handstamped locally in black or red and were used on mail, mostly to the United States. Rolando Kuehn, the port surgeon at Bluefields, prepared all documented envelopes. The stamps are handstamped “Mosquito / Provisional.” in two lines on 1c and 2c stamps of the 1894 issue. Stamps handstamped in red are rare. Those handstamped in black are scarce. [ See the article "Nicaragua: The ‘Mosquito / Provisional.’ Stamps of 1894," by Michael Schreiber, in Nicara, January 2016, Vol. 25, No. 1, pages 2-13 and 14. ]

Issue of 1895

By January 1, 1895, the sixth Seebeck issue for Nicaragua was delivered. The stamps picture the national coat of arms, Figure 7–6, but each denomination has a different border. The denominations and hues of the issue are as follows:

1c brownish yellow  50c dark violet
2c vermilion        1p dark brown
5c dark blue        2p dark green
10c slate           5p brownish red
20c claret          10p orange

A 50c stamp is known in greyish blue, but its purpose is not clear. Some say it is a reprint, but others think it is a proof. No reprints of this issue were made.

By January 1, 1896, the seventh Seebeck issue for Nicaragua was delivered. The design pictures a map of Nicaragua, the national coat of arms, and the year “1896.” Beginning with this issue, the ordinary stamps were printed on paper with watermark and on paper without watermark. For the watermarked stamps, Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Co. used the same paper with the Cap of Liberty watermark it used for El Salvador and Ecuador.

The issue included no 10p stamp, probably at the request of the government. The issue, Figure 7–7, comprises the following denominations and hues:

1c violet          50c grayish blue
2c greenish blue  1p black
5c bright rose    2p claret
10c blue         5p light blue
20c brown bister

Used stamps of this issue denominated 20c or higher, both with watermark and without watermark, are scarce and some even rare. The stamps were not available to the philatelic market until 1900. Most watermarked stamps are scarce.

All denominations of this issue, both with and without watermark, were reprinted on a thicker paper. For the reprints, the watermark is sideways, Figure 7–8, and the hues differ slightly from those of the originals.

Issue of 1897

By January 1, 1897, the eighth Seebeck issue for Nicaragua was delivered. The issue employed the same design used in 1896, but the year in the design was changed to “1897,” Figure 7–9. As with the 1896 issue, the stamps were printed both on paper with watermark and on paper without watermark.

Used unwatermarked stamps of this issue denominated 10c or higher are scarce and some even rare. All denominations of used watermarked stamps are scarce to rare.

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Stamps of both watermarks were liberally reprinted. Collectors have identified five different reprints. The stamps of this issue were not supplied to collectors until 1899.

Once again, the issue included no 10p stamp. The issue comprises the following denominations and hues:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Denomination</th>
<th>Color</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1c violet</td>
<td>50c grayish blue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2c slate</td>
<td>50c yellow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4c brown</td>
<td>1p dark ultramarine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5c olive green</td>
<td>2p olive brown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10c violet</td>
<td>5p orange</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15c ultramarine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This issue introduced two new denominations, 4c and 15c. On the 4c stamp, the denomination tablet reads incorrectly "CUARTRO" instead of "CUATRO."

The paper used for the stamps without watermark is slightly thicker and more opaque than the paper used in previous printings, but the 5c and 10c denominations are known also on thin, semi-transparent paper.

Unused 5c, 10c, 20c, and higher denominations on watermarked paper are scarce. Similar used 50c and higher are scarce.

The stamps of this issue were reprinted on thick, porous paper, both with watermark and without watermark.

**Issue of 1898**

By January 1, 1898, the ninth Seebeck issue for Nicaragua was delivered. The design of the stamps highlighted the new political entity known as the Greater Republic of Central America and Nicaragua's membership in it, Figure 7–10.

The stamps employ a design quite similar to that used for the second 1897 issue of El Salvador, which also promoted the new political entity known as the Greater Republic of Central America and Nicaragua's member.

The stamps were printed, one plate per denomination, with so-called double plates: on one side a half plate for an 1899 stamp of Nicaragua (Scott 110-120) and on the other side a half plate for an 1899 stamp of El Salvador.

It is believed that the government of Nicaragua, possibly in reprisal, did not return to Seebeck the remaining balances of the 1898 issue, or perhaps it might have returned only part of the issue.

The 1898 stamps and postal stationery continued to be valid and were used through 1899 and into May 1900.

The 1898 stamps consist of the following denominations and hues:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Denomination</th>
<th>Color</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1c brown</td>
<td>20c blue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2c slate</td>
<td>50c yellow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4c brown</td>
<td>1p dark ultramarine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5c olive green</td>
<td>2p olive brown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10c violet</td>
<td>5p orange</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15c ultramarine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Stamps of this issue are known imperforate and in pairs imperforate between. They are not known to have been reprinted.

**Issue of 1899**

By January 1, 1899, the tenth Seebeck issue for Nicaragua was delivered. The design pictures an allegory of Justice, Figure 7–11. The stamps were lithographed.

The reason the stamps were printed by lithography is not clear. If Article 4 meant that the plate used to print the stamps had to be in recess, then the use of lithography was a violation of the contractual terms.

Some observers believe that by this time Seebeck was no longer interested in renewing the contract, so he printed the stamps by lithography, which was less costly than the recess method. The postal administration accepted the lithographed stamps for 1899.

The stamps were printed, one plate per denomination, with so-called double plates: on one side a half plate for an 1899 stamp of Nicaragua (Scott 110-120) and on the other side a half plate for an 1899 stamp of El Salvador.

The first Seebeck Official stamps were delivered by January 1, 1890. The stamps were printed in ultramarine from the same recess plates used to print the ordinary stamps. Then the “FRANQUEO OFICIAL” inscription was printed diagonally in red by letterpress on the 10 denominations, Figure 7–12.

All denominations of this issue are known without the red Official inscription or with it doubled or inverted. The stamps also are known imperforate. All such varieties are considered to be spurious.

**Official stamps of 1890**

The Official stamps bear the added inscription “FRANQUEO OFICIAL” in various styles of lettering and in a contrasting hue. The Seebeck-manufactured Official stamps were issued as bicolors: the inscriptions are not overprints that were added to previously issued stamps.

The reason the stamps were printed by lithography is not clear. If Article 4 meant that the plate used to print the stamps had to be in recess, then the use of lithography was a violation of the contractual terms.

Some observers believe that by this time Seebeck was no longer interested in renewing the contract, so he printed the stamps by lithography, which was less costly than the recess method. The postal administration accepted the lithographed stamps for 1899.

The stamps were printed, one plate per denomination, with so-called double plates: on one side a half plate for an 1899 stamp of Nicaragua (Scott 110-120) and on the other side a half plate for an 1899 stamp of El Salvador.

It is believed that the government of Nicaragua, possibly in reprisal, did not return to Seebeck the remaining balances of the 1898 issue, or perhaps it might have returned only part of the issue.

The 1898 stamps and postal stationery continued to be valid and were used through 1899 and into May 1900.

The 1899 stamps consist of the following denominations and hues:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Denomination</th>
<th>Color</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1c grayish green</td>
<td>20c dark green</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2c brown</td>
<td>50c carmine rose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4c dark red</td>
<td>1p red</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5c dark blue</td>
<td>2p violet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10c orange</td>
<td>5p bright blue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15c chocolate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Stamps of this issue are known imperforate and in pairs imperforate between. They are not known to have been reprinted.

**Other stamps**

In addition to manufacturing ordinary stamps for Nicaragua, Seebeck provided Official stamps, postal envelopes and wrappers, postal cards, postage due stamps, and telegraph stamps.

**Official stamps**

Seebeck supplied Nicaragua with a total of 129 Official stamps for the years 1890-1899, with two sets each for 1895, 1896, and 1897, although the second 1895 set is believed to exist only as a reprint. Ten other Official stamps were made locally.

The Official stamps bear the added inscription “FRANQUEO OFICIAL” in various styles of lettering and in a contrasting hue.

The Seebeck-manufactured Official stamps were issued as bicolors: the inscriptions are not overprints that were added to previously issued stamps.

**Official stamps of 1891**

The second Seebeck Official issue for Nicaragua was delivered by January 1, 1891. The stamps are the same denominations and...
the same design as the ordinary stamps of 1891, but the green of the Official stamps was printed by lithography. Figure 7–13. The red “FRANQUEO OFICIAL” inscription was also printed by lithography. It is oriented vertically and reads up.

The Scott catalog notes that many of the denominations exist as se-tenant pairs, Figure 7–14. The stamps were printed from two plates of 130 stamps each. One plate had 30 stamps of 1c and 25 each of the 20c, 50c, 2p, and 10p. The other plate had 30 stamps of 2c and 25 each of the 5c, 10c, 1p, and 5p. Each plate included five different denominations, which allowed for liberal varieties of se-tenant possibilities, vertically or horizontally. The Scott catalog records that all denominations except 2c and 5p are known without the red Official inscription. Some double inscriptions are known.

Official stamps of 1892

The third Seebeck Official stamps for Nicaragua were part of the issue delivered by January 1, 1892. The stamps were printed in recess in brownish yellow from the same plates used for the ordinary stamps, with the added inscription “FRANQUEO OFICIAL” printed in dark blue by letterpress. The words are arranged in a stylized arch, Figure 7–15.

The denominations are the same as those for the 1892 ordinary stamps. The 2c and 1p stamps are known without inscription, but they are considered to be spurious.

Official stamps of 1893

The fourth Seebeck Official stamps were supplied by January 1, 1893. The stamps were printed in recess in slate gray from the same plates used for the ordinary stamps, Figure 7–16, with the added inscription “FRANQUEO OFICIAL” printed in red by letterpress. The inscription reads horizontally and is smaller than the inscription added to the Official stamps of 1890 and 1891. The 2c, 5c, 10c, 20c, 25c, 50c, and 5p stamps are known without the red inscription. Also a 25c stamp in black exists, and there are various double or inverted inscriptions. It is believed that all of these varieties are of dubious origin and that none were authorized.

Official stamps of 1894

The fifth Seebeck Official stamps for Nicaragua were part of the issue delivered by January 1, 1894. The stamps were printed in orange yellow, with the added arched “FRANQUEO OFICIAL” inscription printed in black by lithography.

The official stamps were printed from the same recess plates used to print the ordinary stamps. The denominations are the same as the 1894 ordinary stamps. The Scott catalog notes that reprints were printed in yellow instead of orange, with added black inscription.

Official stamps of 1895

The sixth Seebeck Official stamps were part of the issue delivered by January 1, 1895. The stamps were printed from the same recess plates used to print the 1895 ordinary stamps, but the Official stamps were printed in green, with the added arched “FRANQUEO OFICIAL” inscription printed in blue by lithography.

The stamps were issued on both unwatermarked paper and on watermarked paper. The Scott catalog notes that the watermarked stamps likely exist only as reprints. The stamps first distributed in 1895 were on unwatermarked paper. At the end of the year, a new supply was printed on paper watermarked with the multiple Liberty Cap design. This was the first issue to use this watermarked paper that was commonly employed during the rest of the Seebeck contract for stamps of Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Ecuador.

For this issue, the only stamps considered to be genuine are those printed on unwatermarked paper and issued. It is believed that the stamps on watermarked paper printed near the end of 1895 probably were never sent to Nicaragua.

Official stamps of 1896

The seventh Seebeck Official stamps were part of the issue delivered by January 1, 1896, Figure 7–17. The stamps were printed from the same recess plates used to print the 1896 ordinary stamps, but the Official stamps were printed in green, with the added arched “FRANQUEO OFICIAL” inscription printed in blue by lithography.

The stamps were issued on both unwatermarked paper and on watermarked paper. The Scott catalog notes that the watermarked stamps likely exist only as reprints. The stamps first distributed in 1895 were on unwatermarked paper. At the end of the year, a new supply was printed on paper watermarked with the multiple Liberty Cap design. This was the first issue to use this watermarked paper that was commonly employed during the rest of the Seebeck contract for stamps of Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Ecuador.

For this issue, the only stamps considered to be genuine are those printed on unwatermarked paper and issued. It is believed that the stamps on watermarked paper printed near the end of 1895 probably were never sent to Nicaragua.
stamps were printed in light red, with added red “FRANQUEO OFICIAL” in an oval and printed by letterpress.

The stamps were printed on watermarked paper and on unwatermarked paper. The Scott catalog notes that postally used examples of the peso denominations are not documented.

Handstamped Officials of 1896
This issue was locally handstamped “Franqueo Oficial” in violet on 1c, 2c, 5c, 10c, and 20c orange postage due stamps of the 1896 Seebeck issue. Figure 7–18. The Scott catalog notes that the handstamps were applied as rows of five, with different handstamps being used. One included ordinary stamps, but the Official stamps were printed in light red, with the added red “FRANQUEO OFICIAL” in an oval and printed by letterpress.

The stamps were printed on watermarked paper and on unwatermarked paper. The Scott catalog notes that postally used examples of the peso denominations are not documented.

Handstamped Officials of 1896
This issue was locally handstamped “Franqueo Oficial” in violet on 1c, 2c, 5c, 10c, and 20c orange postage due stamps of the 1896 Seebeck issue. Figure 7–18. The Scott catalog notes that the handstamps were applied as rows of five, with different handstamps being used. One included ordinary stamps, but the Official stamps were printed in light red, with the added red “FRANQUEO OFICIAL” in an oval and printed by letterpress.

The stamps were printed on watermarked paper and on unwatermarked paper. The Scott catalog notes that postally used examples of the peso denominations are not documented.

Handstamped Officials of 1896
This issue was locally handstamped “Franqueo Oficial” in violet on 1c, 2c, 5c, 10c, and 20c orange postage due stamps of the 1896 Seebeck issue. Figure 7–18. The Scott catalog notes that the handstamps were applied as rows of five, with different handstamps being used. One included ordinary stamps, but the Official stamps were printed in light red, with the added red “FRANQUEO OFICIAL” in an oval and printed by letterpress.

The stamps were printed on watermarked paper and on unwatermarked paper. The Scott catalog notes that postally used examples of the peso denominations are not documented.

Handstamped Officials of 1896
This issue was locally handstamped “Franqueo Oficial” in violet on 1c, 2c, 5c, 10c, and 20c orange postage due stamps of the 1896 Seebeck issue. Figure 7–18. The Scott catalog notes that the handstamps were applied as rows of five, with different handstamps being used. One included ordinary stamps, but the Official stamps were printed in light red, with the added red “FRANQUEO OFICIAL” in an oval and printed by letterpress.

The stamps were printed on watermarked paper and on unwatermarked paper. The Scott catalog notes that postally used examples of the peso denominations are not documented.

Handstamped Officials of 1896
This issue was locally handstamped “Franqueo Oficial” in violet on 1c, 2c, 5c, 10c, and 20c orange postage due stamps of the 1896 Seebeck issue. Figure 7–18. The Scott catalog notes that the handstamps were applied as rows of five, with different handstamps being used. One included ordinary stamps, but the Official stamps were printed in light red, with the added red “FRANQUEO OFICIAL” in an oval and printed by letterpress.

The stamps were printed on watermarked paper and on unwatermarked paper. The Scott catalog notes that postally used examples of the peso denominations are not documented.
The 1890 stamps served as both postage stamps and telegraph stamps. They are inscribed "CORREOS Y / TELEGRAFOS." Beginning with 1891, the stamps use the same designs and denominations as the ordinary stamps but vary in their hues. A 25c denomination also was included each year, 1892-1895. The stamps bear an added inscription reading "TELEGRAFO," "TELEGRAFOS," or "Telegrafos" printed in a contrasting hue (black, violet, blue, magenta, or red) and in different type styles. Three different type styles were used for the 1891 issue.

[The 1894 issue includes 15c or 30c denominations on the 25c green stamps and a 20c denomination on the 2c red. The 1898 telegraph stamps sometimes were used as postage at Bluefields. The October 1994 issue of Nicaragua, Vol. 5, No. 1, added pages 1-8, includes a listing of telegraph stamps of the Seebeck era, compiled by John Evans, Donald L. Duston, and Clyde R. Maxwell.]

**Envelopes, wrappers, postal cards**

[For 1890-1899, Seebeck supplied to Nicaragua an annual issue of postal stationery comprising, through 1898, envelopes, postal cards, and wrappers for newspapers and circulars. Figure 7–23 pictures a postal card of 1891. Seebeck supplied no new envelopes or wrappers for 1899, and the two denominations of wrappers inscribed "1898" are not documented used and are not believed to have been issued.

New postal cards with modified designs were supplied to Nicaragua for 1897 and 1898 and were used, respectively, in 1897 and 1898-1900. Pages 89-91 show some of the modifications to the designs. The major varieties of postal stationery delivered by Seebeck to Nicaragua are the following, as listed in the Higgins & Gage World Postal Stationery Catalog (1978):

- 41 envelopes (major varieties)
- 26 wrappers (major varieties)
- 40 postal cards (major varieties)

So-called reprints of postal cards (actually new designs) that are not believed to have been sent to Nicaragua include those for the issues of 1891 (modified design), 1894 (revised imprints), 1896 (modified designs), and 1897 (modified designs). Pages 86-88 discuss these designs.

Reprints of envelopes not believed to have been sent to Nicaragua are abbreviated "ENG. & PTG." Some wrappers are believed to have been reprinted, but this needs further study.

The postal cards have a variety of imprints based on differences in capitalization, punctuation, or use of abbreviations. The cards of 1890, 1891, 1892, 1895, 1896, and 1897 have imprints that are not believed to have been issued. The 1893 cards have no imprints. Imprints in all capital letters are 1892, 1894, 1895, and the 2-centavo and 2+2c cards of 1896 and 1897, including the issued new designs and other new designs not documented used.


An inventory of used wrappers begins with the article by Michael Schreiber in Nicaragua in the issue for April 2011, 20:2, and continues with later updates.]

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**Figure 7–22. Issue of 1892.**

10-peso magenta and black telegraph stamp

**Figure 7–23. Issue of 1891.**

5-centavo blue on yellow Goddess of Plenty envelope

**Figure 7–24. Issue of 1891.**

2-centavo green and light green on pink Goddess of Plenty postal card
Reprints and paper varieties
In recent years [circa 1985 and through the present], there has been a resurgence of interest in the Seebeck issues. In part, this interest originates with studies made of the various printings, of the reprints, and of the varieties of paper. These are, however, specialized studies that mostly fall beyond the scope of this book. I will, however, return to this subject in more detail in Chapter XI.

For those interested in the many details of paper, printings, reprints and more, I recommend the article “Nicaragua: The Seebeck Issues,” by Albert Quast and Robert Willer, published in the Collectors Club Philatelist, November 1967, Vol. 46, No. 6, through July 1968, Vol. 47, No. 4. This is the most complete study made on the subject of Seebeck stamps and Nicaragua. Much of the information in the article about papers, reprints, and more remains valid in the study of the Seebeck stamps of other countries.

The Seebeck contract ends
Nicaragua and El Salvador, differing from Honduras and Ecuador, respected their contracts and did not terminate them before the agreed 10 years. Seebeck died June 23, 1899, probably of tuberculosis. The Nicaragua and El Salvador contracts simply ran out after 10 years and were not renewed.

[By not supplying envelopes and wrappers for 1899, Seebeck violated the contract with Nicaragua. In April and August 1893, Seebeck deliberately stepped aside from his responsibilities, respectively, as general manager and president of the Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Co., only to be pulled back in six months later as both general manager and vice president. It is known that 1893 was the year when Seebeck began to suffer noticeably from his illness.]*

The Asenjo contract
Even though its Seebeck stamp contract was viewed as discredited, Nicaragua took advantage of another offer to obtain its stamps for free, once the contract with Seebeck ended. The new contract was signed May 11, 1899, with Maximo Asenjo, who soon sold it to a party who has never been named.

[Authorized orders for stamps and postal stationery were placed by Rodolfo G. Barthold of New York City and later by George F. Nordenholt of Smithers, Nordenholt and Company of New York City.]*

American Bank Note Company was the contractor for the adhesive stamps and for the imperforate squares (Scott 133A-G) that are similar to the envelope and wrapper imprints. For the entire envelopes and wrappers, George F. Nesbitt and Co. was subcontractor to the American Bank Note Co. The first new stamps under the contract were issued in early 1900.*

The 1898 and 1899 Seebeck postage stamps and postal stationery continued to be used into May 1900.]*

* Ross A. Towle, manuscript in publication

Chapter VIII
Ecuador

More than a year passed between the signing of the contract by Seebeck with the government of Nicaragua and the signing of the contract by Henry N. Etheridge with the government of Ecuador. Why were the contracts with El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Honduras signed at short intervals of a few weeks of each other, and yet more than a year transpired before the signing of a new contract?

Why were the first contracts signed by Seebeck and the Ecuador contract signed by Etheridge? Who was Etheridge?

Henry N. Etheridge
Henry N. Etheridge, who arrived in Quito in 1890, was an English agent who worked for security printer Waterlow & Sons. He was, however, more of a carpetbagger, a kind of adventurer or freelancer. As we shall see from the text of the contract, he apparently appears to have personally negotiated with Ecuador based on his relationship with Waterlow & Sons. It is not clear, Etheridge being an agent for Waterlow & Sons, why the contract should have come into the hands of Seebeck.

John Fosbery, echoing Fred J. Melville, maintained in the Mainsheet, No. 7, March 1974, that Etheridge might only have offered the contract to Seebeck after Waterlow & Sons and the American Bank Note Co. had not shown any interest in it. Several publications of the period, however, affirm that Etheridge was a representative of Seebeck and that he negotiated the contract on behalf of Seebeck.

The Etheridge contract
The contract was signed on October 16, 1890, and was approved by the president of Ecuador on October 27, 1890. It reads:

CONTRACT WITH Mr. H.N. ETHERIDGE FOR THE PRINTING OF STAMPS

The Director General of Postal Affairs, who is specifically commissioned to represent the Government of Ecuador on the one hand, and for the other party Henry N. Etheridge, being a person of age and an English subject, having canvassed the following:

1 - The above mentioned Mr. Etheridge undertakes to supply, without cost whatever to the Government, all the items required for the postage of correspondence and telegraphs of the nation to the following amounts:

- Adhesive stamps of every denomination and value (two million); stamped envelopes (125,000); postcards (75,000); stamped wrappers (25,000).

2 - The Government will change on 1st January 1892 and therefrom every year or half-year, as it shall deem necessary, the series of postage stamps and telegraph stamps, declaring without use or value the items of the previous year or semester, and they will put into circulation the new issue for the corresponding year or semester, as provided for in the contract.

3 - The items of each year or semester shall all be equal insofar as the engraving and inscriptions are concerned, but they shall be different in color according to value (denomination), and they shall differ in some essential detail from the previous issues besides the year or semester.

4 - The stamps shall be engraved on steel plates. The artistic work and the materials used shall be of first-class quality.
5 - On signing the contract, the Government will deliver to Mr. Etheridge an order for all the items that will be required for the 1892 issue, indicating the numbers and colors of each, and the sizes, forms, designs, photographs, inscriptions or engravings that they shall have, at the Government’s wishes.

6 - On 1st November of the following year, at the latest, Mr. Etheridge will deliver to the Agent whom the Government will nominate abroad, the items indicated in the order, perfectly finished and ready for circulation, well packed and ready for shipment. Furthermore he will receive, on the Government’s behalf, who will guarantee its perfect conservation, the plates that have been used for the printing of the new issues, and the same agent will be allowed to inspect the issues during the course of the proceedings.

7 - In the succeeding years or semesters, the Government will send, before the 1st April to Mr. Etheridge, or his representative in Guayaquil, an order similar to that mentioned in Article 5 for the items required for the next period; and Mr. Etheridge will deliver them, as outlined in Article 6 before 1st November following; Mr. Etheridge should acknowledge receipt of this order before 1st August and in the event that the Government does not receive a reply, or that this is in the negative, the contract will be considered null and void.

8 - In exchange for the new issues that will be supplied by Mr. Etheridge, the issue for 1892, the Government will hand over to him all the stamps, stamped envelopes and postcards of the present issues old and new that remain in existence on the last day of December of the next coming year, and in the same way on each of the following periods, they will deliver to him the items that remain from the previous issues, and which in accord with Article 2 should have been taken out of circulation, and the issue canceled. The delivery will be made in Guayaquil to Mr. Etheridge or his representative without cost to him, at the end of February.

9 - The Government concedes to Mr. Etheridge the right to sell to collectors of stamps, the issues that will be delivered to him in accordance with Article 8, and if the case may be that during the current year they should have been terminated, in part or in total any of them, they shall concede to him the right to reprint the items required for the collectors and for this purpose they will return to him the printing plates of the canceled issues as required.

10 - The Government will not in any event sell the items mentioned in this contract, at a discount of more than four percent (4%) of its face value, and those that serve for the charges on Telegrams shall be destroyed together with the forms.

11 - If Mr. Etheridge should not fulfill the effects of this contract at any time in the supply of the items indicated in same, he shall ipso facto by the fact itself forfeit the rights of annulment that he had during the period previously indicated and the Government may declare void and without value this contract and Mr. Etheridge shall not have the right to claim costs of the items nor any indemnity thereto.

12 - Mr. Etheridge shall have the right to transfer the rights and obligations that appertain to him, and that are indicated in this contract, to some other person, society or company, but the engraving and printing of the issues shall be affected by a firm of distinction such as the American Bank Note Co.; Waterlow Ltd.; Homer Lee Bank Note Co.; Perkins, Bacon & Co.; Hamilton Bank Note Co. [Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Co.]; Bradbury, Wilkinson & Co.; and other similar responsible companies.

13 - If, during the year or semester of validity of each issue, any of the stamps should become out of stock, the Government will advise Mr. Etheridge, who will proceed with the provision of the items required even though the request exceeds up to the 50% of the limit of the two millions (2,000,000) fixed in accord with Article 1.

14 - The present contract shall be valid for ten years from the date, indicating however that if the Government wishes to rescind it previously, it may do so after two years and three months, counting from 1st January 1892, this being the date on which the first issue is circulated, but the Government is obliged to confirm, during this period, at least two issues or changes of items.

Signed in good faith by the Contractors, in duplicate in Quito, on the 16th October 1890.

Jose Maria Artea y A Henry N. Etheridge
The Treasury, Quito, 17th October 1890
Approved by His Excellency The President of the Republic
Gabriel Jesús Nuñez

Was the contract pre-arranged?
As I see it, this contract is similar to the three Seebeck contracts signed in 1889, although as indicated in Article 12, the stamps could be manufactured by any of a list of prestigious printing houses of the time. The listing of security printers by name would appear to indicate that Mr. Etheridge obtained this contract with the idea of later negotiating its execution by the best offer. It is also possible, however, that the listing could have been a smokescreen, and that the contract could have already been negotiated on behalf of Hamilton and Seebeck. This is something that probably will never be known.

In any case, even though Etheridge negotiated the contract personally, and perhaps could have endeavored to obtain a better offer, he did submit it to the Hamilton firm or to Seebeck, and the printing ended up in the hands of Hamilton and Seebeck, with all the clauses in the other Seebeck contracts that were signed a little more than a year before. The first issue of Ecuador, as established in the contract, was delivered in 1892, or 14 months after the signing.

Issue of 1892
By January 1, 1892, as detailed in the contract, the Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Co. delivered the first Seebeck stamps to Ecuador.

The stamps picture a portrait of President Juan José Flores that is based on a photograph, Figure 8-1. Flores was, at age 30 in
1830, the first president of Ecuador. He also was the father of Antonio Flores Jijón, who was the president of Ecuador at the time the 1892 stamps were issued.

The stamps were printed in sheets of 100 by recess line engraving and were perforated gauge 12. In this manner, Seebeck and the Hamilton company printed and finished all subsequent stamps for Ecuador, except for the 5c stamp of 1894 perforated gauge 14.

The 1892 issue consists of the following denominations and hues:

- 1c orange
- 2c dark brown
- 5c vermillion
- 10c green
- 20c reddish brown
- 50c brown
- 1 sucre blue
- 5 sucre violet
- 5c green
- 1 sucre carmine
- 10c vermillion
- 5 sucre dark blue

A 5-sucro stamp is known in bluish green instead of purple (violet), and various authorities have not been able to agree about it. The stamp catalogs indicate that the bluish green is a color trial, but some students, such as J.F. McGee, consider it to be an error. Some sheets of the 5-sucre denomination were printed incorrectly in the brown hue of the 5-centavo stamp.

The contract stipulated that new issues would be delivered each year or each semester any items should become exhausted, Etheridge was obliged to provide additional stamps up to a limit of 50 percent over and above the 2,000,000 established in Article 1.

The actual quantities of stamps supplied to Ecuador, and to the other Seebeck countries, will probably never be known. McGee indicated that Seebeck actually supplied the 50 percent extra indicated in the contract under Article 13, which would bring the total issue up to 3 million stamps for the 1892 issue.

The 1893 the Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Co. supplied Ecuador with telegraph stamps and Official stamps. It also prepared proofs for an ordinary postage issue. The stamps were engraved and perforated gauge 12, but the 5c stamp is known perforated gauge 14.

The 1893 issue consists of the same denominations as the previous issue but in different hues:

- 1c blue
- 2c yellowish brown
- 5c green
- 10c vermillion
- 1 sucre carmine
- 5 sucre dark blue

Joseph Kroeger, in his interesting studies about Seebeck, indicated that three different printings of this issue were made, and he gave complete details of the particular characteristics of each. An exception is the 5-centavo stamp: no reprint of it is known.

Issue of 1894

Seebeck supplied the second issue for Ecuador in early 1894, but the shipment arrived late. The first stamps entered the country at Guayaquil, a large city on the coast, and postal authorities appropriated the first deliveries and commenced to use them beginning January 19, 1894.

The 1895 phantom issue

The actual issue stamps that Seebeck was supposed to deliver for 1893 were never printed for some unknown reason. This is even stranger than it seems because during 1893 the President Vicente Rocafuerte stamp with “1894”.

The issue consists of the same denominations, but the 5c stamp is known perforated gauge 14.

Issue of 1895

Article 3 of the contract indicated that the stamps of each year or semester shall differ from the previous issue in some essential detail. It seems, however, that in the interpretation of this by Seebeck and his associates in the Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Co., the word “essential” was conveniently vague. For the new series for 1895, the essential change was limited to a change of the year to “1895” and the engraving of additional diagonal lines in the upper part of the frame.

There are slight differences in the shades of some of the denominations, but they are so slight that the catalogs do not list them, and in all other respects the stamps are the same as the previous issue. This minimal change of design was used again for the issues of 1896 and 1897 of El Salvador and Nicaragua. See also pages 88-90.

Three types of reprints of this issue are known. The first is on thick paper. The 20c stamp and the 5s stamp were reprinted on thin paper. A third reprint of the 20c stamp and the 5s stamp are in slightly different hues. The 5-centavo denomination of the 1895 issue was not reprinted.

This issue saw very limited use.

Ecuador rescinds its contract

On November 8, 1895, the president of the republic, José Eloy Alfaro, in Guayaquil, signed a decree rescinding the contract with Etheridge. The decree alludes to the reason.

The campaign opposing the Seebeck stamps mounted by the North American branch of the Society for the Suppression of Speculative Stamps could have been a catalyst, or been the reason or a reason. It also is possible that Seebeck might not have been sufficiently attentive to the wishes of the president of the republic insofar as the delivery of stamps was concerned.
The decree rescinding the contract stated:

First. – It is not in the Government’s interest to continue with the contract entered into in Quito of October 27th 1890, between the Postal Director and Mr. Henry L. Etheridge for the supply of postage stamps.

Second. – The Government cannot maintain active a contract for stamps that would discredit it as a speculator in the issue of postage stamps.

Third. – In accord with Clause 14 of the mentioned contract, circumstances have been fulfilled whereby the Government may cancel the said contract.

The Decree

First. – It is declared rescinded and in consequence the contract is canceled.

Second. – It is absolutely forbidden to sell the excess postage stamps and telegraph stamps outside of normal circulation, and any such excesses are to be destroyed when the Government shall decide on some change in design or other detail.

Third. – The Government will contract the engraving and printing of postage and telegraph stamps and other items with firms of known honorability and that can offer bona fide guarantees.

One of the immediate consequences of the breakdown of the contract was that Ecuador did not return to Seebeck the remainders of the issues for 1894 and 1895.

The remainders were overprinted locally with “1897 1898” or “1897 y 1898” in various shades and hues:

- 1c dark green
- 2c red
- 5c blue
- 10c bistre brown

Both the watermarked and the unwatermarked stamps were reprinted. Ecuador did not return to Seebeck the remaining balances of this issue because the contract had been rescinded. The government paid Hamilton for the stamps of this issue.

Once the 1896 issue was exhausted, Ecuador signed stamp contracts with German and English printers. When Ecuador later decided to return to using a manufacturer in the United States, it returned to the American Bank Note Co., which had been supplying stamps to Ecuador in the pre-Seebeck period.

On May 6, 1898, Ecuador issued a decree ordering that all outstanding Seebeck issues be burned, together with any plates used to overprint the stamps and the overprinted stamps. This was carried out in public on May 9, 1898. The ceremony included drums and cymbals and was more like a public execution of a criminal rather than a simple incineration of stamps and plates.

Other stamps

In addition to ordinary postage stamps, Seebeck supplied postage due stamps and postal stationery to Ecuador, as specified in the contract. It also supplied postal paper that was not specified in the contract: Official stamps, fiscal stamps, seals, and telegraph stamps. It should be assumed that the quantities delivered would have come within the 2 million stamps indicated in Article 1.

Official stamps of 1892

The first Seebeck Official stamps for Ecuador employed the Flores design of the first ordinary stamps, Figure 8–5. The Official stamps were delivered possibly by January 1, 1892. The seven stamps were printed in ultramarine, from the same plates used to print the ordinary stamps.

The denominations are 1c, 2c, 5c, 10c, 20c, 50c, and 1 sucre. The “FRANQUEO OFICIAL” inscription was printed by letterpress in carmine, the same inscription used on the Official stamps of Nicaragua. There was no 5-sucre Official stamp.

In 1893, Seebeck delivered a second supply of the same Official stamps.

Official stamps of 1894

Delivered for use in 1894, the second Seebeck Official stamps for Ecuador carry the same “FRANQUEO OFICIAL” inscription as the 1892 issue, but the design is a portrait of Pres. Vicente Rocafuerte, with “1894.”

The third Seebeck Official issue for Ecuador was delivered for use in 1895. The design pictures the portrait of President...
Rocafuerte with “1895,” printed in gray black, from the same plates used to print the ordinary stamps, with the added “FRANQUEO OFICIAL” inscription printed by letterpress in carmine. Figure 8-7. The denominations are 1c, 2c, 5c, 10c, 20c, 50c, and 1s. All denominations were reprinted.

Official stamps of 1896
The fourth Seebeck Official stamps for Ecuador were issued in 1896. The 1896 Coat of Arms design was printed in olive brown, using the same plates used to print the ordinary stamps, with the added oval “FRANQUEO OFICIAL” inscription printed by letterpress in carmine. Figure 8-8. The seven denominations are 1c, 2c, 5c, 10c, 20c, 50c, and 100c. Reprints are on thick paper with distinct watermark and vertical grain (stamps will curl side to side).

Fiscal stamps
Seebeck supplied Ecuador with two issues of fiscal stamps. The first are inscribed with the years “1893 1894,” and it is assumed that they were delivered and issued in 1893. The others are inscribed with the years “1895 1896.” The fiscal catalogs list them as being delivered and issued in 1895. The stamps are known bearing postal cancels, but it is believed that such examples are invalidated remainders or fakes.

Usage, varieties of paper, and reprints
Mc Gee wrote that the Seebeck stamps of Ecuador apparently were never demonetized, or if they were, that fact was forgotten or ignored by postal employees. McGee makes this assertion because thousands of reprints were sent to Ecuador and were freely circulated on correspondence. These reprints appear today with genuine cancellations and postmarks. The reprints were used for more than four years. McGee reported that he had in his collection the cover wrapping of a package, registered and sent to the United States, franked with four 5-sucre stamps of the 1896 issue. He wrote that the cover was canceled with the words “30th October 1935.”

A great variety of papers was used for the Seebeck stamps of Ecuador, for both the originals and the reprints. For example, the 1895 and 1896 issues used six different papers for the originals and five papers for the reprints. The different types of paper and their characteristics, and the earmarks used to distinguish the originals from the reprints, form the basis of a specialized study that examines thickness of paper, texture, gum, shades, and more. These details are outside the scope of this work.


Official seals
Seebeck and the Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Co. supplied in 1896 an adhesive printed in violet with the arms of Ecuador at one side. This adhesive was to be used as an envelope seal. It has no denomination.

Wrappers
The contract indicated that Etheridge or another person would deliver each year some 25,000 postal wrappers for newspapers. The literature for Ecuador records delivery of imprinted wrappers only for 1892, when Seebeck provided 1c yellowish brown and 2c dark brown Numeral imprints on blue paper. Cutouts from the wrappers are reported to have been used on correspondence as adhesive stamps.

Envelopes
The Etheridge contract stipulated that the holder would deliver each year 125,000 stamped envelopes, and Seebeck supplied issues for 1892, 1894, and 1896. In 1892, two envelopes were issued: denominated 5c, printed in carmine, and 10c, printed in deep green. They picture President Juan José Flores. In 1893, when the 5c envelopes were exhausted, a supply of 10c envelopes was overprinted locally with the inscriptions “5 CENTAVOS,” “5 Centavos,” or “CINCO CENTAVOS” in various colors. Envelopes denominated 5c in dark green
and 10c in carmine, both picturing President Vicente Rocafuerte, were issued in 1894, Figure 8–10. They were overprinted locally with “1895 y 1896” and issued in 1895. For 1896, Seebeck supplied two Numeral-design envelopes denominated 5c and 10c, both on grayish blue paper. The 5c was printed in dark blue and the 10c in brown.

Postal cards
The Etheridge contract specified a quantity of 75,000 postal cards per year.
Seebeck supplied for each year – 1892, 1894, and 1896 – two postal cards denominated 2c and 3c. Figure 8–11 pictures a card of the 1892 issue.
The postal cards of 1892 and 1896 are imprinted “HAMILTON BANK NOTE COMPANY, NEW YORK,” but they were manufactured by the firm legally named the Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Company.

Figure 8–11. Issue of 1892. 2-centavo light brown on light blue President Juan José Flores postal card

Telegraph stamps
Seebeck prepared for Ecuador several issues of telegraph stamps. These correspond to issues for 1892, 1893, and 1894.
The 1892 issue was made by overprinting the postage stamps of 1892 with the word “TELEGRAFOS.” The 1c and 10c denominations were overprinted in red. The other denominations were overprinted in black.
The 10c denomination also is recorded overprinted locally in black.
The 1893 issue pictures a design of a mountain scene and a telegraph operator. It consists of three denominations: 10c, 20c, and 40c.
For the 1894 issue of telegraph stamps, the ordinary stamp design bearing the portrait of Rocafuerte was modified around the frames by changing the inscription “CORREOS DE ECUADOR” to “TELEGRAFOS DE ECUADOR.”
The denominations are 10c, 20c, and 40c. Students of the telegraph stamps report that the three issues were used postally.

Chapter IX
COLOMBIAN STATE OF BOLIVAR and BOLIVIA
Not much is known about the role Nicholas F. Seebeck played in manufacturing postage stamps for the Colombian State of Bolivar and for the country Bolivia.
For the State of Bolivar, Seebeck provided stamps for 1879, 1880, and 1882 through 1885. For Bolivia, Seebeck made one attempt at acquiring a contract but failed.
The inclusion of the State of Bolivar and Bolivia in one chapter has been made for reasons of simplification, not because there is some relationship between the two countries. Seebeck’s connections with Colombia preceded his classic contracts with El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Ecuador, and his connection with Bolivia came after those contracts were signed.

Colombia
State of Bolivar
In 1862, the government of Tomás Cipriano Mosquera fell, and the new constitution of Colombia created the Estados Unidos de Colombia. The states were sovereign in their own right. They were Antioquia, Bolivar, Boyacá, Cauca, Cundinamarca, Santander, Cúcuta, Tolima, and Panamá.
On August 4, 1886, the National Council of Bogotá, comprising delegates from each state, adopted a new constitution and changed those states that until then had been sovereign into states dependent on the central government. The original nine states retained some of their former rights, including managing their own finances and issuing their own postage stamps, but little by little the states became more dependent on the central government.
As for the issuing of stamps, that continued until 1904.
An article published in the Philatelic Journal of America said:
The contract for stamp printing with the Department | State | of Bolivar of the United States of Colombia produced an annual dated series which went on from 1879 to 1885. Those with laid paper, imperforate and other varieties were carefully described in the catalog of the Scott Stamp & Coin Co. [ since December 1885, a company of the Calman brothers, who purchased it from J.W. Scott ]. The majority of those [ stamps ] that appeared in the trade bore fraudulent postal cancellations.
During 1879-1885, there were a total of six issues (no issue for 1881). According to the Scott stamp catalog, the issues comprise 37 ordinary stamps and eight stamps for registered letters (major varieties).
Seebeck’s role in the creating of or the printing of the stamps of the State of Bolivar is not clear. When the stamps of El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Ecuador started to appear as a result of his famous contracts, the philatelic press also recorded that Seebeck was involved in the printing of the stamps of Bolivar. During the years 1879-1885, however, no one attributed to him paternity for the Bolivar stamps.
The great Colombian collector Juan Santa María pointed out to me that when he investigated the historical archives of Antioquia, he found Seebeck’s original card offering his services to the State of Antioquia, but his services had not been accepted.
Although in his investigations Santa Maria never could find archival documents that connected Seebeck with the issues of Bolivar, it is recognized that undoubtedly Seebeck was in charge of the stamps issued from 1879 through 1885.
The name of the firm that printed the stamps, however, remains a mystery. The Minkus stamp catalog, when it was published, usually named the printer for each issue or set, but for Bolivar it provided no printer. The Scott catalog and the Yvert cata-
The stamps in the issue of 1879 picture a
portrait of Simón Bolívar used for the 1879 issue, but
1-peso stamps. The design is the same Simón
Bolívar portrait used for the 1882 series.
Again the stamps are on two distinct
papers: white, wove paper and bluish, laid paper. The stamps were printed by lithogra-
phy and were perforated gauge 12½.

Issue of 1880
For 1880, Seebeck provided a second
issue for the State of Bolívar, adding 80c and 1-peso stamps. The design is the same Simón Bolívar portrait used for the 1879 issue, but the year tablet was changed to "1880."
Again the stamps are on two distinct papers: white, wove paper and bluish, laid paper. The stamps were printed by lithography and were perforated gauge 12½.

The issue consists of the following denom-
inations and hues:
White, wove paper Bluish, laid paper
5c blue 5c blue
10c violet 10c violet
20c red 20c red
80c green 1p orange

Two other stamps were printed, one 80c and one 1 peso, but they were not issued.

Issue of 1882
For 1882, Seebeck again used the same Simón Bolívar portrait for the five low denominations: 5c, 10c, 20c, 80c, and 1p, perforated gauge 12 or gauge 12 by 16. Each denomination, how-
ever, had a new frame and "1882" in the year
tablet, Figure 9–2.

New recess-engraved 5-peso and 10-peso
denominations in a larger format also were
issued with gauge 12 perforations. The 5p and 10p stamps picture Bolívar in a three-
quarter stylized view. They are bicolors.

The issue consists of the following denom-
inations and hues:
5c blue 80c green
10c lilac 1p orange
20c red
5p blue and rose
10p brown and blue

Issue of 1883
The 1883 issue supplied by Seebeck
included the same five low denominations and designs used for 1882 but with "1883" in the year tablet. The vignette is the same por-
trait of Bolívar used in the 1882 series.
The stamps were printed by lithography and perforated gauge 12 or gauge 16 by 12.

The issue consists of the following denom-
inations and hues:
5c blue 80c green
10c lilac 1p orange
20c red

Issue of 1884
The 1884 Seebeck issue comprises the
same denominations, designs, and hues
as the 1883 issue, but the year tablet was
changed to "1884."
As before, the stamps were printed by lithography and perforated gauge 12 or gauge 16 by 12.

Issue of 1885
The 1885 Seebeck issue comprises the
same denominations, designs, and hues
as the 1883 and 1884 issues, but the year tab-
let was changed to "1885," Figure 9–3.
As before, the stamps were printed by lithography and perforated gauge 12 or gauge 16 by 12.

Stamps for registered mail
In addition to the stamps for ordinary
mail, in the years 1879, 1880, 1882, 1883, 1884, and 1885, special 40-centavo stamps
were issued for registered mail.
For 1879 and 1880, two stamps were

The 1885 Seebeck issue comprises the
same denominations, designs, and hues
as the 1883 and 1884 issues, but the year tab-
let was changed to "1885," Figure 9–3.
As before, the stamps were printed by lithography and perforated gauge 12 or gauge 16 by 12.

Stamps for registered mail
In addition to the stamps for ordinary
mail, in the years 1879, 1880, 1882, 1883, 1884, and 1885, special 40-centavo stamps
were issued for registered mail.
For 1879 and 1880, two stamps were

The stamps were printed by lithography
and perforated gauge 12 or gauge 16 by 12.
issued each year, one on white, wove paper and one on bluish, laid paper. For the last four years, Seebeck supplied one stamp for each year, with the year tablet changed to 1882, 1883, 1884, or 1885, but with two perforations: gauge 12 or gauge 16 by 12.

For all registrations stamps, the same portrait of Simón Bolívar was used that had been used for the ordinary stamps. The canceling devices that were used fraudulently to mark the stamps of both countries. The stamps of the Dominican Republic that Seebeck gave to Calman were those of 1880 and 1882, and apparently while the stamps of Bolívar were being canceled, some stamps of the Dominican Republic also seem to have been slipped through and were canceled.

**Bogus cancels**

It has been roughly calculated that 99 percent of all used stamps of the State of Bolívar in the marketplace bear bogus cancels or fraudulent markings.

The most common of these markings is a circle 21 millimeters in diameter, with the word “CARTAJENA” in an arch above and in the center in condensed letters the straight-line word “FRANCA.” Nothing is in the bottom of the circle. Figure 9–4, Figure 9–5, and Figure 9–6 picture three such stamps.

This marking appears in various hues, including purple, red violet, and black. The CARTAJENA cancel intrigued both Clarence Hennan and Luis Guzman when they found it on a Dominican Republic stamp of 1880. The explanation is simple:

When in 1888 Seebeck sold his stock of the Dominican Republic and the State of Bolívar to Gustave Calman, he gave Calman the canceling devices that were used fraudulently to mark the stamps of both countries. The stamps of the Dominican Republic that Seebeck gave to Calman were those of 1880 and 1882, and apparently while the stamps of Bolívar were being canceled, some stamps of the Dominican Republic also seem to have been slipped through and were canceled.

**Gainsborg proposal**

From 1892 to 1896, the president of Bolivia was conservative Mariano Baptista Caserta (1832-1907). In 1892, the Gainsborgs, father Antonio and son Simón, presented to the government of Bolivia a proposal to provide at no charge every year the stamps the country would require for franking mail, provided that the plates used for the printing stayed in their control and that they would be allowed to make as many reprints as they wanted. The proposal was evidently inspired by the contracts of Seebeck, which in 1892 were at their peak.

The response of the postmaster general was unfavorable, and on the basis of his report, the treasury of Bolivia turned down the Gainsborg proposal.

**Seebeck proposal and die proofs**

Also in circa 1892, judging by the year dates that known essays bear, Seebeck presented a series of attractive sample stamps to the government of Bolivia.

The collection of E. Herschkowitz included four types of essays, all prepared by the Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Co. and proposed by Seebeck.

The types are:

1. An essay die proof, Figure 9-7, that pictures the coat of arms of Bolivia, not a complete stamp, and that is an imitation of the vignette used for the 1868 stamps the American Bank Note Co. manufactured for Bolivia. The proof is not dated, but Herschkowitz described it as from 1892.

2. An essay die proof of a complete stamp design showing in the vignette an allegorical figure of Justice. The denomination is 5c, and the design includes the year “1892.” Figure 9-8, left. This proof is found in orange, carmine, sepia, lilac, violet, blue, light green, dark green, yellow, light brown, dark brown, and coffee. Seebeck used the vignette of this essay for the 1899 stamps of Nicaragua, but the frame design for that issue was modified.

3. An essay die proof of a complete stamp design the same as No. 2 but with the year “1893,” Figure 9-8, right. It is found in light green, dark green, yellow, orange, carmine, light blue, and black.

4. The same essay die proof in light brown dated 1892 but mounted on a sales card next to eight more stamps of seven countries (Haiti, El Salvador, Bolivia, Honduras, Ecuador, Nicaragua, and
Guatemala). Herschkowitz dated the sales card as circa 1895. In his published work, Bonilla Lara also showed a model for a vignette that is said to have been presented together with the die proof of 1892 and that represents an allegorical figure of Liberty. This vignette was used for the 1894 issue of El Salvador.

Another illustration in the work of Bonilla Lara showed, mounted one beside the other, two models of vignettes. One is the same allegorical figure of Liberty, and the other is the goddess Ceres (allegorical figure for agriculture). The Ceres design is known in new hues: grey, blue, green blue, light sepia, sepia, green, orange red, red, and violet red.

It is a curious fact that this figure of Ceres, which was offered to Nicaragua, is an essay not adopted in 1895. The design, however, shows an astonishing vitality, finally reappearing as the vignette of the El Salvador stamps of 1899 that were manufactured by Seebeck and the Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Co. These are the stamps printed in dual plates along with the 1899 stamps of Nicaragua.

Seebeck proposal rejected

Seebeck was not successful in securing a stamp contract with the government of Bolivia. It is not known how many proposals Seebeck made, but in 1895 the government of Bolivia rejected one proposal in the following terms.

La Paz, 24th September 1895

Regarding the proposal presented by Mr. N.P. Seebeck in the name of the Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Co. for the issue of stamps, postcards and stamped envelopes for the postal service or the Republic, having considered the explanation of the same proposal made by Sr. Severino Campuzano, and the report of the Postmaster General,

Considering: The Government cannot, without loss of official dignity, authorize the speculation that forms the basis of this proposal, granting to one particular printer the right of National Sovereignty over the issuing of these values; the power of selling all the remaining stamps and the unlimited reprinting of the same, obliging the Government also to make annual variations, in order to increase and safeguard that particular exploitation on a grand scale, would not bring any benefit to the state since the advantages offered to the state income are reduced to the free issue of the aforementioned stamps, postcards and stamped envelopes, the inconveniences that it would bring with it, not compensated by that small profit, it is resolved: not to accept the aforementioned proposal.

Register and return.

Signed

BAPTISTA M.D. Medina

One point is obscure: In what year did Seebeck present this proposal? According to what I see in Herschkowitz's notes, the date of the first two samples is 1892, a third group is dated 1893, and finally there is the sales card of circa 1895, according to Herschkowitz.

The rebuff by the government of Bolivia is dated September 24, 1895. Were some designs presented over many years? Did the government's reply come late? Or does the date have no significance and was there only one proposal made in 1895? The first paragraph of the resolution of rejection, beginning "Regarding the proposal . . . ." implies that there might have been only one proposal.

Bonilla Lara in his article does not specify dates, but my hypothesis is that Seebeck made only one request. Seebeck in fact used the allegorical figure of Liberty for the design of the 1894 stamps of Salvador. This indicates that by then he would have given up the idea of selling the design to Bolivia.

I am going to reach even further and speculate as follows. It is possible that the slow reaction of Bolivia could be the echo of the scandal that boiled up in the mid-1890s with all its virulence in both Europe and the United States, as a consequence of the Seebeck reprints.

An article by P.V. Maltes published in the Pan American Philatelist, July 1956, suggests and implies that Bolivia refused the stamps proposed by Seebeck because up to that time all stamps of Bolivia had borne the coat of arms of the country and it would have been a difficult tradition to change.

I believe this idea does not have a solid basis. First, one of the samples submitted by Seebeck pictures the Bolivian national coat of arms. Second, the custom of picturing the coat of arms does not seem to have been a tradition so deep-rooted that it could not be changed, as in fact it was in 1897. Third, if the government of Bolivia had wanted a different design, it could have asked Seebeck and he certainly would have complied.

The matter apparently did not go further, but according to an article in the Philatelic Journal of India, May 1897, Seebeck again might have contacted the government of Bolivia offering to supply stamps free. As described in the article, the offer in no way differed from the contracts Seebeck had signed eight years before.

According to the 1897 article, the offer was not accepted, but the article does not report the reaction of the Bolivian government, if the supposed offer actually had been made. It is possible that the news had traveled slowly and that the gentleman of the Philatelic Journal of India might have been reporting events that had taken place two years earlier.
Chapter X

THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

The previous chapters concentrated on studying the stamps that in the last decade of the 19th century the Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Co. printed for three Central American countries and for Ecuador.

It is not known if Seebeck had a contract with the Dominican Republic. It is possible that there never was a contract in the sense that he had them with other countries, but it is evident that Seebeck had dealings with the country. The overriding question asked over many years is: What was the exact nature of his dealings with the Dominican Republic?

There is no definitive reply to this question. In this chapter, I am going to study this in view of what has been written about the dealings of Seebeck, and I will set about forming conclusions, my working hypothesis.

1879, 1880, 1881

The first comments about Seebeck in relation to the Dominican Republic were in the American Philatelist of July 1889:

Mr. Seebeck must be mentioned, he was the man who had charge of the [1879-1880 and 1882-1885] series made for Bolivar [a sovereign state and later a department of Colombia] and the sets of the Dominican Republic with [1879 and 1880] network and the surcharges [1883] with all the "errors" [so-called errors] that accompany them.

The September issue of the same publication, however, pointed out:

In our commentary on the new contract (of El Salvador) we inadvertently attributed to Mr. Seebeck the surcharges [1883] of the Dominican Republic. He had nothing to do with them and we regret the error.

The Philatelic Gazette of October 1889, apparently copying the American Philatelist (such journalism was common in those times), said:

It cannot fail to be interesting to stress the fact that Mr. Seebeck is the same person who made the dated series of Bolivar and the Dominican Republic with and without network.

And still within the year 1889 (month not recorded), the Philatelic Journal of America said of Seebeck and the Dominican Republic:

N.F. Seebeck, a dealer in stamps of olden times, is secretary of the Hamilton Bank Note Co. [Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Co.] and must know his business perfectly, prints all the stamps for the Dominican Republic and Bolivar. He is such an expert in postmarks as the numerous examples of stamps fraudulently canceled show, which today are encountered in the market and in the albums of incautious collectors.

It appears that by 1889 the philatelic press had established that there was a close relationship between Seebeck and the Dominican Republic stamps of 1879-1881. During the following decade, however, philatelic writers were so occupied with writing about his famous contracts that essentially no writers mentioned Seebeck again in connection with the Dominican Republic.

Errors by Charles J. Phillips

For any detailed study of the stamps of the Dominican Republic, an obligatory point of departure is the work titled "Notes on the Postage Stamps of the Dominican Republic," by Charles J. Phillips, published in the July, August, October, and November 1906 numbers of Stanley Gibbons Monthly Journal. Speaking of the Dominican Republic series issued in 1879, Phillips wrote, beginning with an unfounded speculation about printing:

Probably the difficulties of rapid production and the uniformity of paper and color were too much for the local printer, therefore the authorities sent to New York
and the contract was carried out by Mr. N.F. Seebeck.

Later on, speaking about the issue of 1880, Phillips returned to the theme and wrote incorrectly:

In October 1880 a new series of stamps was issued, printed by the Hamilton Bank Note Co., of New York; this well-known firm, seems to have been organized by Mr. N.F. Seebeck and I believe that up to his death he was their president.

Phillips had the facts wrong. Hamilton Bank Note Company was founded in 1881. It did not produce the 1880 issue of the Dominican Republic. Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Company, a reorganization of the old firm but a new legal entity, was founded in January 1884. Seebeck was not a founder of either firm. On April 8, 1884, Seebeck invested $5,000 in the new Hamilton company, buying control of 5,000 shares of a new total of 30,000 shares of capital stock. On April 21, the trustees elected Seebeck as a trustee of the company and as its secretary and business manager. Details are in the Minute Books of the Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Company, published in The Seebecker, 1987-1991 and summarized on pages 125-144.

The problems, as pointed out in Chapter III, which still remain to be resolved, are:

- What company printed the Dominican Republic stamps of 1879 and 1880.
- Did Seebeck participate in these issues?
- What company printed the Dominican Republic stamps of 1879 and 1880, and Did Seebeck negotiate the contract with the representative of the Dominican Republic in New York.

J. Majó-Tocabens, Origen de los Sellos y de sus Coleccionistas (Origin of Stamps and Their Collectors), Barcelona, 1950: “He (Seebeck) formed a friendship with a representative of the Dominican Republic, and in July 1879 he signed the first contract when he was only 22 years old, and a little more than a year later, there appears for the first time on the scene precisely in the month of October 1880, the name of the printing company called the Hamilton Bank Note Co. of which he was the representative.” [Majó-Tocabens misstated when the 1881 company began, and he erred in saying that Seebeck was its representative.] Paper of Dr. Luis F. Thomen to the Ing. Enrique J. Alfau, of November 3, 1955: “I would like to answer the question which Dr. Clarence Hennan raises. In reality, even now all the world accepts that the stamps of 1879 and 1880 were printed by Nicholas P. Seebeck. This ‘tiger’ of the early days of philately was associated with the Hamilton Bank Note and Engraving Co. [Engraving and Printing Co.], if the enterprise he has come to be president. Hennan doubts whether these stamps were printed by Seebeck since the Hamilton Bank Note Co. began its business in 1880. Seebeck appeared in New York in 1880 [Seebeck was in business there in 1872 at age 15 as a stationer, offering engraving, lithography, printing, and blank book manufacturing. He also then was beginning his stamp business. I believe that these conjectures of Hennan are unfounded. I do not favor one side or another, but I believe that there are grounds for denying that Seebeck made the stamps. It is possible to record that Seebeck started as a lively person with his own sort of initiative. He could have obtained the Dominican government’s contract and have printed the stamps as his own venture, beginning thus his career as a producer of stamps gratis for the government with the right to reproduce them for philatelic purposes.” [In late 1878 or early 1879, Seebeck traveled to the Dominican Republic. A U.S. 1-cent Liberty postal card with added 1-cent Franklin stamp, addressed to “Mr. Hillman,” postmarked New York City, February 11, 1879, and signed by F. Seebeck (Seebeck’s father), transmitted the message: “Because my son N.F. Seebeck has traveled to St. Domingo [Dominican Republic], I am unable to send out your order and ask you wait until March, when he is expected to be back.” Figure 10-1 pictures this card. The image is from Bill Welch, The Seebecker, January 1987, pages 2-3, with pictures of both sides of the card.] As for the principal stamp catalogs, the Minkus catalog and the Stanley Gibbons catalog attribute the 1879 and 1880 issues to Seebeck, although the old editions of Gibbons up to 1922 attribute them to the Manhattan Bank Note Co. Neither the Scott catalog nor the Yvert catalog say what company printed the 1879 or 1880 stamps. The point that persists, however, is that it seems that the only one who did any research to solve the problem was Hennan, and his conclusions tend to disjoin Seebeck from the printing of the issues of 1879 and 1880 of the Dominican Republic.

I share somewhat the opinion of Hennan, but one part must be considered. It is documented by Welch that N.F. Seebeck established himself as a bona fide merchant about 1872. By that time, he was established in City. There he set up as a stationer and began a stamp dealing business, and at this address he published in 1876 his first catalog of stamps, a generic catalog of unknown source with a specific cover for each dealer who offered the catalog. Welch confirmed that in spring 1880 Seebeck had moved to 97 Wall Street, as discussed on pages 2-3. Charles Wiley pointed out that cards exist mailed by Seebeck from
97 Wall Street to postmasters throughout the United States, offering to pay good prices for stamps that were used to pay postage for newspapers and other publications for which postage was paid in full. For these years, special stamps for periodicals up to denominations of $60 were fixed to postal memo-
randa, canceled on those documents, which then were kept by the post office. Seebeck was interested in obtaining the used high-
denomination stamps, fully aware that he had a market for them. He offered to pay up to $5 for each used stamp.

So it is clear that from 1872 through fall 1883 and beyond that Seebeck was a stamp merchant just like hundreds who were estab-
lished throughout the United States.

Two covers to Seebeck: 1880, 1884

The cover shown in Figure 10-2 is stamped with a Dominican Republic 1-real carmine Arms stamp of 1879, Scott 34, and is directed to Seebeck at 3 Vesey Street, New York, N.Y. The cover arrived in New York City on February 18, 1880.

At that time, the Dominican Republic was not a member of the Universal Postal Union. The Dominican Republic stamp was not allowed, and postage due was charged and paid, as signified by the affixed United States postage due stamp.

An offer of stamps that I received in June 1978 included a cover described thus:

“A very good cover of 1884 to New York (addressed to N.F. Seebeck) with a stamp [ Scott 59 or 60] of 25 centimes on 5 cents of 1883 blue, without network, with a small oval without date ‘SANTO DOMINGO / FRANCA’ with a circular datestamp.”

The 1880 cover does not seem to have an official character or to be sent, as might be said, by some correspondent who might be trading to acquire stamps of the Dominican Republic as his business. As for the 1884 cover, I do not know, because its price in 1978 (about U.S. $120) prevented me from acquiring it, but it could have been from the same correspondent. Unfortunately the sender or senders are not known.

As pointed out in a previous paragraph, Hennan disassociated Seebeck from the printing of the stamps of 1879 and 1880, and I agree partly with his opinion though for different reasons. There is no evidence that an order to print stamps would have given Seebeck the right to reprint the same.

Bogus cancels and postmarks

Alvin Harlow wrote, speaking of Seebeck: “The joke against the Dominican Republic refers to the fact that the issues of 1879-
80-82 [ 79-80-81 ] of that country were pro-
duced and canceled in the thousands in the state of New York without the stamps having ever been in their native land.”
Harlow is referring to the great quantity of stamps that exist with bogus cancels.

On this theme, the American Philatelist of June 1962 published an interesting arti-
cle by Capt. H.F. Rommel. In it, he points out that the majority of the stamps of the Dominican Republic of the issues of 1880 and 1881, which seem canceled, are falsely canceled.

In this article, he cites three types of false or bogus cancellations and postmarks:

a – circular postmarks with the month appearing above the day instead of day–
month-year, which was usual pattern for the Dominican Republic;

b – a grill cancel of seven thick lines and a similar one of nine fine lines;

c – the cancel “SANTO DOMINGO-
FRANCA" in an oval 19 mm in diameter instead of the 18 mm of the genuine ones.

The 1879 printing plates

It also is possible that someone in the 1880s obtained stamps of the Dominican Republic, and possibly the printing plates for the stamps, and produced material for collectors. I have reasons sufficiently well-founded to suspect that it was Seebeck. On this subject, I am going to transcribe a paragraph of an article by W. Ward (unfor-
tunately I do not know where it was published or when) about the Portuguese finan-
cier known as Baron de Almeida (Hermano José Braamcamp de Almeida Castelo Branco, 1775-1846).

Ward said: “Just at that time (1889) N.F. Seebeck of New York had completed his agreements for issuing various stamps during a certain period of time, with some Central American republics and with one South American one, and he kept in his control the plates of the stamps of Santo Domingo of 1879.” [ boldface added by Mueses ]

The Seebeck hypothesis

In consequence, my conclusion about the participation of Seebeck in the issues of the Dominican Republic is as follows:

A New York City printing house or houses somehow connected with Nicholas Seebeck manufactured according to a contract nego-
tiated by the agency of Mr. Bear the Dominican Republic stamps of 1879, 1880, and 1881, and the postal cards and enve-
lopes of 1881. This was a contract or con-
tracts for common, ordinary printing that in no way differed from those that other coun-
tries were signing in those years with other
printing houses. Seebeck as the probable sales agent in New York City could have been involved in the negotiations.

In the years after early 1884, Seebeck from his position in the Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Co. (this was the year he decided to work for it) used the plates for the 1879, 1880, and 1881 stamps to make reprints to sell to collectors. Used stamps being in fashion at that time (collectors believed that a canceled stamp would be a different and agrюery), Seebeck produced great quantities of postmarked or canceled stamps. This operation did not rely in any way on the approval of the government of the Dominican Republic.

It is possible that from the success achieved from the sale of the Dominican Republic stamps could have arisen the new
idea for the contracts Seebeck signed in 1889 with El Salvador, Honduras, and Nicaragua, and the contract that Henry Etheridge signed in 1890 with Ecuador. Well then, the stamps of the Dominican Republic were evidently reprinted (many more of the stamps of 1880 and 1881 than of 1879) because they are relatively abundant. Material still exists that has been made to pass at sales and auctions as proofs but that is evidently later than the issues and has been evaluated, according to Poole, as being “post-
humous printings” of a more or less capri-
cious nature.

The ghost of Seebeck continues therefore to prowl around the issues of the Dominican Republic of 1879, 1880, and 1881 and to affect their value. It applies especially to the issue of 1879, which in spite of being rel-
atively scarce has been permanently under-

Figure 10-2. A cover from the Dominican Republic addressed to N.F. Seebeck, Esquire. It arrived in New York City on February 18, 1880.
The stamps were perforated gauge 12½ by 13 and were printed by letterpress (typography) in sheets of 50 stamps.

Although the decree that ordered the printing mentioned that there would be 100,000, it did not indicate the quantities of the specific denominations.

The stamps on colored paper are somewhat scarcer than those printed on white paper.

The following are considered to be important varieties:

- a – all the stamps are found imperforate, b – the ½-real blue-gray stamp is known imperforate pairs, and c – the 1-real carmine stamp is known perforated gauges 13 by 13 and 12 by 12.

Other interesting varieties are uncataloged, and proofs and samples also are known.

In the stamp design is a shield with the inscriptions “DIOS, PATRIA, LIBERTAD” and “REPUBLICA DOMINICANA.”

Although there are different views about the reasons why the stamps are found on white paper as often as on colored papers, none has been properly documented.

One dubious explanation, suggested by J. Walter Scott, pointed out that stamps on colored paper were for internal use and those printed on white paper were for foreign use. If that were the intention, however, it was not complied with in practice because the stamps were used indiscriminately.

The stamps, although the order for their issue had not been published until September 1879, were issued about July 1879. The stamps were reported in the European press in September 1879.

Even though the 1879 stamps have low catalog values and market values, they have been largely forged. At least three forgeries are known, one of them by Fournier.

The stamps of this issue are common, and their catalog values have been adversely affected by the suspicion that Seebeck was involved in handing them.

The 1880 stamps were ordered by a decree published in the Official Gazette, No. 279, September 3, 1879. It may be said again, at the time when the Hamilton firm and Seebeck were capturing the contracts of Ecuador, Honduras, Nicaragua, and El Salvador, taking them from the American Bank Note Co., that the American Bank Note Co. ironically was fulfilling the contract for printing the Dominican Republic stamps of 1890 and before that the contract for the stamps of 1885.

The Dominican Republic stamps printed in New York City and attributed to Seebeck are the following:

**Issue of 1879**

The 1879 stamps were ordered by a decree published in the Official Gazette, No. 279, September 3, 1879. In total, 100,000 stamps were ordered. **Figure 10-3.**

The issue consists of the following denominations and hues:

- ½ real blue gray
- 1 real red or carmine
- ½ real blue gray on blue paper
- 1 real carmine on salmon paper

The issue of 1879 consisted of the following denominations and hues:

- 1c green
- 2c red
- 5c blue
- 10c pink
- 20c brown

The stamps were perforated gauge 12½ by 13 and were printed by letterpress (typography) in sheets of 50 stamps.

The 1880 stamps were ordered by a decree published in the Official Gazette, No. 336, November 20, 1880. The 1880 stamps would be put into circulation on November 14, 1880.

The stamps were printed by typography and were color-rotund. They were printed in sheets of 50 stamps composed of two panels of 25 stamps separated by a distance of between 12 mm and 25 mm.

The stamps are found in an ample variety of shades, and the catalogs as early as the beginning of the 20th century report them as such. More recently the catalogs have ignored these differences.

As important errors, the Scott catalog recognizes the 1c, 2c, 75c, and 1 peso stamps on laid paper, the 2c stamp on pelure paper, and the 1 peso stamp with a double impression. Other varieties and errors are listed in other catalogs or are not cataloged.

For the quantities issued, though both Genaro Martínez and Clarence Hennan have stated numbers, these lack any real basis, and it is not worthwhile to list them. It is evident that the stamps were abundantly reprinted, and on this subject James W. Smith wrote:

Some people have said that there were different printings of this series which were delivered to the government at different times. There may have been different printings but it is less likely that more than one batch was delivered to the government. It is possible that there was a second printing and that the stamps did not reach the Dominican Republic. We say so because of the numerous new stamps which exist and the numerous forged cancellations.

This matter of the forged cancellations had already been pointed out by Phillips in 1906 when he wrote:

The stamps of this issue authentically used have never been very common, but it is difficult to distinguish those authentically used from those postmarked in New York by a firm which ought to know better.

For many years, the stamps of this issue fetched low prices, but by the mid-1980s they had risen in value. It is clear, however, that there is no reason why they should increase much more in value because the stamps are plentiful and it is impossible to distinguish between the originals and the reprints.

Both J. Dorm and J. Smith reported that the 1-peso stamp of 1879 was forged.

**Issue of 1881**

The 1881 new issue employs the same Arms design but with a security network.

On the Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Co. advertising card discussed in Chapter III appears a mixture of Dominican Republic stamps with and without network. These stamps could have been added to the card at any later date. Or the printed side could have been printed on a blank side at any later date. A similar card exists bearing five 1882 stamps of the Colombian State of Bolivar.

On the advertising card, the juxtaposition of the network and non-network stamps could indicate that the printing house might have processed them at the same time. This would mean that articles written in the belief that the government ordered the network be...
applied to the stamps to show which stamps were coming from the United States and being used to defraud the treasury would be no more than a mistaken belief.

More likely is the story published in Weltpost in Vienna in 1881. This article noted that the security network was not listed when the first stamps were delivered.

Whatever might have been the reason, the fact is that one or two months after issuing the stamps without network, or it might have been at the beginning of 1881, a second series was issued that had the same hues and denominations as the former, differing only in that a security network in red hues and denominations as the former, differing only in that a security network in red

The 1883 surcharges

Seebeck denied ever making any overprinted stamps. In 1883, the stamps with and without the security network were overprinted in black with new denominations in centimos and francos. No one has ever been able to provide a satisfactory explanation for this measure, but it has been pointed out that unscrupulous people could have devoted themselves to the task of taking to the Dominican Republic from the United States themselves to the task of taking to the Dominican Republic.

When the Dominican Republic required new stamps and postal cards for 1885, it gave the order for their manufacture to the American Bank Note Co.

“The Seebeck Stamps and Postal Stationery”

In the 1880s, the American Bank Note Co. held the stamp printing contracts for Ecuador, Honduras, Nicaragua, and El Salvador. It could not be said that the stamps the company produced were unusual. They were always of a classic, traditional design, as was typical of that period, and generally they were bright and well-produced.

A Seebeck offer, although it did not signify great improvements in design, for those poor countries who accepted a contract, the stamps came to them as a gift from heaven. It was an opportunity to obtain stamps of a high quality without having to disburse a single centavo. But it is clear that the governments did not consider any effect on the philatelic world and collectors. The governments were interested only in obtaining the stamps they required for postal services, an action they could not turn away from but that, in the eyes of some, proved later to be a disaster for stamp collecting.

On the other hand, it is obvious that the governments, apart from having received the Seebeck stamps and postal stationery gratis, did not benefit directly by being able to sell many stamps to collectors and dealers, as they had previously done.

Quantities and designs

According to the table on this page, Seebeck provided to the four traditional countries some 1,195 items of postal paper during the period of their Seebeck contracts. This summary does not include fiscal stamps, provisional, and other items, so the collectable totals are higher for each country. Comparing the numbers in the table with the stamps outlined in the contracts, it is clear that Seebeck supplied a great number of stamps and other items that were not included in the contracts.

Among these extras are the postage due stamps for El Salvador, the Official stamps for Honduras, the Official seals for Ecuador, and many fiscal stamps. The Seebeck stamps fell within four basic design types that were maintained during

| Number of Stamps Printed by the Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Co. for El Salvador, Nicaragua, Honduras, and Ecuador (major varieties only) |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------|
| Type of stamp       | El Salvador | Nicaragua | Honduras | Ecuador | Total     |
| ordinary            |             |           |         |        |          |
| Official            | 165         | 129       | 55      | 40     | 389      |
| postage due         | 56          | 41        | –       | 14     | 111      |
| parcel post         | 5           | –         | –       | –      | 5        |
| advice of receipt   | 2           | –         | –       | –      | 2        |
| registered          | 3           | –         | –       | –      | 3        |
| telegraph           | –           | 62        | –       | 14     | 76       |
| envelope            | 61          | 41        | 16      | 6      | 124      |
| wrapper             | 28          | 26        | 16      | 2      | 72       |
| postal card         | 55          | 40        | 20      | 6      | 121      |
| letter card         | 6           | –         | –       | –      | 6        |
| Total               | 469         | 478       | 129     | 119    | 1,195    |

Figure 10-4. Issue of 1881. 5-centavo blue Coat of Arms with red network
the period of validity or the period of the contracts. They are coats of arms, allegories, the discovery of America by Christopher Columbus, and presidents.

The engraved designs, with one or two exceptions, were in general well done, and the printing was usually by the secure method with the plate images in recess. The designs had elaborate frames, vignettes, and a variety of inscriptions or tablets for text and numerals. The obvious exceptions to the pattern were the three high denominations in the El Salvador series for 1893 that picture Columbus. Those stamps, were, however, a precursor for later years.

For many stamps, Hamilton or Seebeck had no objection to copying barefaced the designs of the American Bank Note Co. This was the case for the 1896 Coat of Arms issue of Ecuador. It is a copy of the American design used for the 1881 issue of Ecuador. For the stamps of El Salvador for 1896, Seebeck made slight changes to the design that the American Bank Note Co. had prepared for El Salvador for 1888.

For other stamps, although sometimes not obvious, it is possible to see the influence of the American Bank Note Co. on designs. The three high denominations of the El Salvador issue of 1894 in honor of Columbus are notable for their similarity with the 1893 Columbian stamps of the United States. For the Columbus stamps, designers gave rein to imagination. For example, the Honduras stamps of 1892 picture Columbus and Martin Alfonso Pinozón viewing the Honduran coast. The fact is that Columbus sighted and explored the Honduran coast in 1502 during his fourth voyage. He was not then accompanied by Pinozón, who was his companion during the first voyage.

On the 5-peso stamp of El Salvador issued in 1894, Columbus appears to be defending hostage Indians against the mutinous crew, an event that never took place.

Catalog values of stamps

As I observed when presenting the various issues of individual countries, not all issues were reprinted. The reason was that in some instances the number of stamps was so great, or usage in the country was so minimal, that it was not necessary to reprint.

In the listing on the following page, I summarize 1978 Scott catalog values for used and unused Seebeck stamps by country and by year. Catalog values are for original stamps, not reprints.

For the second series for 1896, the value of mint stamps is greater than the values for all years of used stamps, except the first series for 1897 and those for 1899. In some cases, the catalog does not state a catalog value, which highlights the vague nature of the respective stamp as mint or used.

Reprints and reserves

The contracts authorized Seebeck to retain the printing plates and, if the remaining reserves returned to him at the end of each period did not cover the demand from the philatelic market, he could make as many reprints as necessary.

A great deal has been written about the famous reprints. Some say Seebeck ordered the reprints. Some say Gustave Calman ordered them. Others maintain that while Seebeck held the contracts he printed a sufficient number of stamps to satisfy requirements and that the reprints were printed only after his death in 1899. Leo John Harris (1981) stated that Gustave Calman in his advertisements offering Seebeck stamps indicated that the stamps offered were guaranteed as originals except those marked with an “R,” which were reprints. Harris added, however, that he had times the value of mint stamps. Among the stamps of Nicaragua, the value differences can range so widely that the value of a set in used condition can be nearly 70 times the value of the same set mint.

For the second series for 1896, the value of mint stamps is greater than the values for almost all issues [in the 1970s] is that used stamps carry a higher catalog value than unused ones. The 1978 Scott catalog included numerous exceptions to this general statement among the stamps of Nicaragua, 1896-1899, and some exceptions to it among the catalog values for other countries.

In examining the totals, country by country, I note that of the stamps of Ecuador, for the five series listed, three are worth more mint than used, but all mint stamps are valued more than used ones. This is the only Seebeck country where this occurs.

For the stamps of El Salvador, with 14 issues, only two are worth more mint than used. In the case when used stamps are valued higher than mint ones, the ratio of difference is between 3-to-1 and 4-to-1.

With Honduran stamps, used is valued more than mint, the ration being 4-to-1, or in general, used stamps are valued at four times the value of mint stamps.
never seen a stamp marked with an "R" and that he had not seen a stamp marked "R" in 14 of Calman's price lists.  

Joseph Kroeger advanced a third hypothesis that maintains there are originals, reserves, and reprints.

"Originals," according to Kroeger, are those stamps that were issued during the year (or half year) of validity of the issue and that were delivered as remainders to Seebeck at the end of the period of validity.

"Reserves" are the stamps that have not been definitely identified as "originals" or as "reprints" and which could be:

1. reprints made during the period of validity of the issue to cover supplementary orders received from the government,
2. reprints to replace reserves, or
3. reprints made immediately after the government returned remainders, to cover stock shortages.

"Reserves" also could refer to a supply of stamps from the original production that was held back and never delivered to the country representative in New York City.

It has been pointed out that Seebeck, to cover himself for any remainder shortages that could result as a consequence of an issue or denominations running out after the full issue had been delivered, retained the right to have a reserve of 200,000 short sets (low denominations only) per year of 100,000 complete sets. Those reserve stamps differ from the original issue in their hues and the quality of their papers, and they never came into the hands of collectors during the period of validity of the issue.

Most specialists who have studied in depth the Seebeck issues accept as valid the theory of the reserves, although not all agree on a definition of what stamps are reserves.

"Reprints" are stamps made from the plates, usually after the stamps had ceased to have postal validity.

Various writers are in accord with the idea that the Seebeck reprints were made after the death of Seebeck in 1899, but of course no one really knows.

In previous chapters covering the stamps of the specific countries, I indicated in each case those issues for which reprints had been made, although it is impossible to determine, using the language of Kroeger's hypothesis, whether the reprints fall into the category of "reserves" or "reprints."

When German dealers Richard Senf and Louis Senf were investigating Seebeck, the reprints were one of the points of concern. Through correspondence, they attempted to elucidate which stamps had been reprinted during the period of validity of the contracts and which were reprinted after the death of Seebeck, and by whom.

Joseph B. Leavy in his studies on the Seebeck stamps is credited with proving that the Hamilton firm did not begin to use thick, porous paper until 1899.

Joseph Kroeger, in his previously mentioned work on Seebeck, attempted to demonstrate that none of the reprints on thick, porous paper were made before 1899, and he indicated that the Hamilton firm did not begin to use this type of paper until 1899.

The question of reprints has been one of the most debated and studied subjects in philately. The first reference to the existence of reprints of Seebeck stamps is credited to Joseph B. Leavy. Leavy based his study on the investigation of the Senfs. Leavy began to study the matter of reprints in an attempt to establish clearly the difference between the original stamps and the reprints. Leavy, however, sinned on the side of simplicity when he considered as reprints only those printings on thick, porous papers, which were used the first time by Hamilton for the postage due stamps of El Salvador for 1899.

The Leavy study was published originally in Gibbons Stamp Weekly from July 1909 to April 1910. Despite its errors, it has been the focal point from which subsequent writings on reprints have been made.

Possibly the best study made on the subject of reprints was the work of Joseph D. Hahn and Joseph M. Sousa, titled "El Salvador: The Seebeck Stamps," published in the 1977 Congress Book and 1978 Congress Book. In the articles, although they deal exclusively with the stamps of El Salvador, the authors analyze the subject deeply and arrive at conclusive and interesting findings.

During the period 1893-1898, control of the Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Co. passed to New York financiers William Grace, Russell Sage, and others.

Hahn and Sousa indicate that in those years the company sent to the respective countries only minimal stamps over and above what had been decided upon as necessary for the particular countries. This was done with the view of fulfilling the contract at the lowest possible cost. [The United States then was in a prolonged depression, which followed the financial crisis known as the Panic of 1893. Costs would have been cut no matter who was running the company.]

Hahn and Sousa hypothesize that on the termination of the period of validity of each issue, Seebeck, on command from Gustave Calman, would have made the reprints Calman required. This practice, which would have been affected at the time when the respective countries were juggling with the remainders, would have ensured that Calman obtained his stamps under optimum conditions. Therefore, it would have been subject to the dangers entailed by two long sea voyages and land journeys coupled with the stamps sitting for a year in tropical countries that were politically unstable and were poorly organized administratively.

Hahn and Sousa believe that all reprints were made before the death of Seebeck and at the insistence of Calman. If this hypothesis is correct, it would explain why there are so few originals from the later years of the contracts with El Salvador and Nicaragua in contrast to the early years of those contracts.

It is outside the scope of this book to attempt to study the various papers and gums used for the originals and the reprints, but it can be noted in general terms that the reprints were made on thicker and more porous papers.

The majority of writers indicate that the variations in the hues of any particular issue are attributable to poor quality control of the papers and the inks.

Generally speaking, if a collector has only one example of a stamp, it is difficult to know if it is an original or a reprint. Stamps exist that even the experts have problems in identifying conclusively.

One of the most effective ways of identifying originals and reprints is by the grain of the paper (horizontal or vertical), but in some issues even this is not definite because in certain cases the grain in the paper is so
weak that it is difficult to determine its direction. The paper, however, was not always run through the press in the same grain direction, and a distinct issue can include both stamps with vertical grain and stamps with horizontal grain. [When exposed to the heat of a strong lamp, a stamp will usually curl toward the gum side, the turned-in edges being parallel to the grain of the paper.]

For those interested in pursuing this matter further, I suggest the articles by Hahn and Sousa and those by Quast and Willer.

In 1896, Seebeck began to supply stamps printed on paper watermarked with the Liberty Cap design. For the original issues, the watermarks were embossed in the reprints it is horizontal. This difference of watermark is so simple that it indicates that it was never intended to pass off the reprints as originals.

Another notable difference with the reprints is the gum. A darker, sticky gum was used on the reprints. It had a great tendency to absorb humidity and at the least opportunity to stick fast to anything nearby. In such cases, the only remedy is to soak the stamps in water to separate them.

Among all the reprints arranged by Seebeck, two were totally out of context.

One group of reprints corresponds to the stamps of 1869-71 and 1878-80 for Nicaragua, the stamps originally printed by the American Bank Note Co. In 1891, the Nicaraguan government ordered the American Bank Note Co. to reprint 350,000 of these stamps and to deliver them to Seebeck. The hues of these reprints differ from the original stamps, and they are on white, wove paper with thick, yellowish gum. The gum of the original stamps is thin and white.

The second group of reprints are the Morazán stamps of Honduras that were mentioned in Chapter VI.

Nicaragua: printing from new plates

Seebeck supplied to Nicaragua during the respective year of validity new postal cards in 1897 and 1898 that were issued and used and a new 5-centavo envelope in 1897 that was issued and used. The new postal cards are not reprints. They are new designs printed from new lithographic bases (probably metal rather than stone).

The new carmine 5-centavo Numeral envelope of 1897 that was sent to Nicaragua and was used is on a paper different from that of the original envelope and is cut with a knife different from that used to cut the original envelope.

None of the new postal cards are reprints because their designs and plates were new. For the carmine 5-centavo envelope of 1897, the paper and knife were new, but it is not known if the plate used to print the new envelope was a new plate or a re-cut of an old one. In general, the new envelope in carmine can be called a reprint, but by its knife and paper it is a new envelope.

The following six sections, added by the editor, illustrate and explain the new printings of modified designs of Nicaragua postal cards and envelopes, or of new envelope knives, for the issues of 1891, 1894, 1895, 1896, 1897, and 1898.

As previously stated, the new printings of modified designs of the 1897 and 1898 postal cards and of the 1897 5c envelope in carmine were manufactured in their years of validity and were sent to Nicaragua and were used there. The 1891, 1894, 1895, and 1896 new printings are believed to have been created for the collector market and are not believed to have been sent to Nicaragua.]

New plates: issue of 1891

For Nicaragua, the 2c single postal card of 1891 and the 2c+2c message-reply postal card of 1891 were printed as new designs that were not sent to the country. No used examples are documented.

Since circa 1988, the editor had documented six 2c new cards and four 2c+2c new half cards. In spring 2018, a hoard of hundreds of such cards came onto the market on eBay as one lot, and the editor bought it.

The hoard included enough examples that the new-design cards could be platted by their small and minute flaws. The cards could be sorted as 16 plate positions for the new-design 2c single card and 14 plate positions for the new-design 2c+2c half card. The new design 2c+2c card is documented only as a half card, and the editor believes that is how it would have been manufactured.

The new-design cards are engraved. They were printed by lithography, however, as were the original cards sent to Nicaragua.

Figure 11-1 pictures the key details of the original card and the new card.

When the new printings were made is not known, but it likely would have been circa 1891 or 1892. The card stock and hues of the new cards closely match those of the original cards. It could be that the stock and inks essentially were the same as those of the original cards sent to Nicaragua.

New plates: issue of 1894

For Nicaragua, the 2c and 3c single postal cards and the 2c+2c and 3c+3c message-reply postal cards of 1894 were printed by lithography as new designs from new printing bases. When this occurred is not known. Because the printing bases or plates were new and because the designs were new, these cards are not reprints, even though for the 2c card not at least 50 years, perhaps a century, that is what they have been wrongly called.

The distinguishing characteristics of the new designs are their imprints, which read “HAMILTON BANK NOTE CO. NEW YORK,” an incorrect name for the company founded.
in 1884 but, it seems, a shorthand name that continued in use. It is difficult to examine the 2c and 2c+2c cards for other differences because of their unbelievably dark blue stock and vermillion (red orange) ink. The 3c and 3c+3c cards, however, easily show the imprints and modifications to letters of the word “CENTAVOS” in the imprinted stamps. The slug for “CENTAVOS” likely was a new element in the working die or in the locked-up form of the elements for the printed image of a card. One other difference is that the imprinted stamps of all new-design cards are in slightly different positions relative to the borders compared to the imprinted stamps of the original cards.

The imprints of the original single cards and double cards read “HAMILTON BANK NOTE ENG. & PTG. CO. NEW YORK,” which is a partially abbreviated version of the correct and legal name of the company. Examples of both imprints are shown in Figure 11-3. See the article by Michael Schreiber, “Postal Cards of 1894 Begin Period of Inferior Production Values,” Nicarao, October 2012, No. 82, 21-4, pages 12-17.

New envelopes: 1895, 1896, 1897

[ New quantities of the 5c, 10c, 20c, 30c, and 50c Arms envelopes of 1895 were manufactured with two distinct new envelope knives. These envelopes are believed to have been made for the collector market. They are not documented used, and it is believed that they were never sent to Nicaragua. It is not known if the new envelopes were printed with new plates or with the same plates used to print the original envelopes, but by tradition they are considered to be reprints, meaning from the original plates. The three high denominations can be distinguished from the originals by the shape of their knife and by their slightly larger size (about 2 mm wider and 2 mm taller than the original envelopes). The editor believes that they were manufactured in late 1897 or in 1898, at the time similar envelopes of 1896 and 1897 are believed to have been made.


New plates: issue of 1896

[ The 2c, 3c, 2c+2c, and 3c+3c postal cards of 1896 were manufactured with new plates to create supplies for the collector market. The new cards are not documented used and are believed not to have been sent to Nicaragua. Figure 11-4 shows a detail of the inner frameline of the 2c original card. A detail of the inner frameline of the 2c new design is pictured in Figure 11-5.

See the article by Michael Schreiber, “New Discovery: Three Designs for Postal Cards of 1897,” in Nicarao, April 2013, No. 85, pages 6-20. This article also discusses and illustrates the 1896 postal cards in detail.

Quantities of new 5c, 10c, and 20c envelopes of 1896 were manufactured, each cut with one of two distinct knives. These enve- lopes are not documented used and are believed not to have been sent to Nicaragua. It is not known if the new envelopes were printed with new plates or with the same plates used to print the original envelopes.

See the article by Michael Schreiber, “Nicaragua: Reprint for Each Denomination in 1896 Envelope Issue,” Nicarao, April 2017, No. 102, 26-2, pages 2-6.]

New plates: issue of 1897

[ The 2-centavo postal card of 1897 was resupplied to Nicaragua as a new design (modified design printed from a new plate) that was issued and used. The new card, with many distinguishing characteristics, is documented used only in the latter months of 1897. The earliest documented use is postmarked September 22, 1897, at Corinto. Figure 11-6 pictures a detail of the inner frameline of the original 2c card sent to Nicaragua and used there. See the article by Michael Schreiber, “New Discovery: Three Designs for Postal Cards of 1897,” in Nicarao, April 2013, No. 85, pages 6-20.

The third design mentioned in the title of the article refers to the cards (2c and 3c and 2c+2c and 3c+3c) that by tradition have been called “reprints” but that are not reprints. They are not reprints because they have modified designs that were printed with new plates. These cards also can be distinguished from the original cards and from the resupply with the new design.

Figure 11-7 shows the inner frameline of the 2c new-design card of 1897 that is not documented used and not believed to have been sent to Nicaragua. Its inner frameline matches that of the similar 1896 card, pictured in Figure 11-5.

Figure 11-8 pictures a detail of the inner frameline of the other new-design 2c card that was supplied to Nicaragua and was used. The 3-centavo postal card of 1897 also

Figure 11-4. Issue of 1896. 2-centavo postal card

Figure 11-5. Issue of 1896. 2-centavo postal card

Figure 11-6. Issue of 1897. 2-centavo postal card

Figure 11-7. Issue of 1897. 2-centavo postal card

Figure 11-8. Issue of 1897. 2-centavo postal card

Figure 11-3. Nicaragua issue of 1894. imprints of 3-centavo postal cards

top: original card sent to country

bottom: new design, not documented used
was resupplied to Nicaragua as a new design printed from a new plate. Differences in the borders distinguish the new design. Two uses are documented, postmarked November 1, 1897, at Managua, and December 18, 1897, at Granada.

The 2c+2c message-reply postal card of 1897 also was resupplied to Nicaragua as a new design printed from a new plate. Only one use of a half card is documented, postmarked October 18, 1897, at Granada.

The editor believes that 3c+3c message-reply postal card of 1897 also would have been resupplied to Nicaragua as a new design printed from a new plate. No unused or used example is recorded. Differences in the outer decorative borders would distinguish the new 3c+3c design.

Few examples of the 1897 new-design cards have been recognized because their existence was not documented until April 2013, when more collectors could begin looking for them after publication of the article on the 1897 cards in Nicarao.

The 5-centavo carmine Numeral envelope of 1897 was resupplied to Nicaragua as a new envelope, again in carmine but on a grayish paper that is slightly bluish and brighter than the paper of the original envelope. Its knife is different from that of the original envelope, and this knife is the distinguishing characteristic. It is not known if its imprinted stamp was printed with the same plate as the original envelope, so in general, it can be called a reprint, even though by its knife and imprint hue it is a new envelope. The article cited in the following paragraph calls it a reprint.

Quantities of new 10c and 20c envelopes of 1897 also were manufactured, each with a distinct knife. These envelopes are not documented and are believed not to have been sent to Nicaragua. It is not known if the new envelopes were printed with new plates or with the same plates used to print the original envelopes. See the article by Michael Schreiber, “Nicaraguan Reprints for Each Denomination in 1897 Numeral Issue” (the 1897 envelopes), Nicarao, October 2017, No. 104, 26-4, pages 6-11.]

New plates: issue of 1898

The 2-centavo postal card of 1898 was resupplied to Nicaragua as a new design (modified design) printed from a new plate, Figure 11-9. The new card, with a few distinguishing characteristics, is documented as early as December 1898. It was used throughout 1899 and into the early months of 1900. The earliest documented use is postmarked December 15, 1898, at Managua. The latest documented use is postmarked May 13, 1900, at Granada.

The 3-centavo postal card of 1898 also was resupplied to Nicaragua as a new design (modified design) printed from a new plate. Figure 11-10 and Figure 11-11 show the differences. Documented uses compiled by the editor are all in 1899, the earliest documented being April 15, 1899, at Corinto.

Another 1897 5c envelope exists with the imprinted stamp in a distinct rose hue. It is not documented used and is believed never to have been sent to Nicaragua. It is on the same paper used for the 5c resupply envelope and has the same knife as that envelope. Because it has the same paper and the same knife, it is believed to have been manufactured sometime in 1897 or in 1898. It is not known if its imprinted stamp was printed with the same plate as the original envelope, so in general, it can be called a reprint, even though by its knife and imprint hue it is a new envelope. The article cited in the following paragraph calls it a reprint.

Quantities of new 10c and 20c envelopes of 1898 also were manufactured, each with a distinct knife. These envelopes are not documented and are believed not to have been sent to Nicaragua. It is not known if the new envelopes were printed with new plates or with the same plates used to print the original envelopes. See the article by Michael Schreiber, “Nicaraguan Reprints for Each Denomination in 1897 Numeral Issue” (the 1897 envelopes), Nicarao, October 2017, No. 104, 26-4, pages 6-11.]

Postmarks and cancels

Although this book does not cover in depth the Seebeck stamps and their use, this section will briefly examine the postmarks and cancels used to invalidate them. During the period of validity of the Seebeck stamps, the principal users of the post in the four republics were foreign firms established in those countries or local firms that had commercial relations with outside concerns. Many of the firms, abroad and within Nicaragua, had the custom of keeping their correspondence. This has facilitated collectors and students being able study the correspondence and the markings used on it.

The study of postmarks and cancels, especially on covers, has been useful in determining which stamps are originals and which are reprints. Such study unfortunately is not always conclusive because many legiti
The practice of false cancellations was quite common and was used as much on original stamps as on reprints. For each country, the stamps most frequently found with false cancels or postmarks are the higher denominations. One should especially view with suspicion any postal markings on 1-peso, 2p, 5p, and 10p stamps.

An oval postmark of Rivas, Nicaragua, that appears to be genuine is known on 2p and 5p stamps. Some collectors insist that the markings were applied by favor. Others maintain that they were used as a form of adjustment of interdepartmental accounts.

Another group of cancellations were roughly executed for various merchants who dealt with Seebeck. These false markings should not prove to be a problem for anyone who has passed the first stages of studying this period.

The values listed in stamp catalogs for used stamps apply to stamps struck with legitimate postal markings. For the stamps of El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Ecuador, the Scott catalog says that used values "are for stamps with genuine cancellations applied while the stamps were valid."

It has been indicated that Seebeck canceled whole sheets of stamps quite willingly for various countries and for anybody who requested him to do so. He always had a large stock of stamps available.

Selling the stamps
To stimulate the sales of his stamps, Seebeck attempted to maintain good relations with the philatelic press. He kept the press well informed about his new issues, and he bought advertisements to promote them.

Seebeck published advertisements in the philatelic press as sales promotions for his stamps, although his advertisements were an invitation to purchase the stamps from stamp dealers, not directly from Seebeck.

Figure 11-13 pictures a Seebeck advertisement of early 1892 offering the 1891 stamps and postal stationery of El Salvador to "dealers only, not to collectors." The practice of false cancellations was quite common and was used as much on original stamps as on reprints. For each country, the stamps most frequently found with false cancels or postmarks are the higher denominations. One should especially view with suspicion any postal markings on 1-peso, 2p, 5p, and 10p stamps.

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Figure 11-14 shows an advertisement of the Scott Stamp & Coin Co. and an advertisement of C.H. Mekeel Stamp & Publishing Co. of St. Louis. Scott Stamp & Coin Co. was the renamed first J.W. Scott company owned by the Calman brothers and others since December 1885, when they agreed to purchase J.W. Scott and Co. from J. Walter Scott. Both advertisements offer the stamps, envelopes, postal cards, and wrappers of El Salvador and Nicaragua.

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Figure 11-14. Advertisements of Scott Stamp & Coin Co. and C.H. Mekeel from 1893, offering to collectors the 1892 stamps, envelopes, postal cards, and wrappers of El Salvador and Nicaragua.
Gus Calman, as he was universally known, was a wholesale dealer in stamps. **Figure 11-15** pictures one of his advertisements from the early 1890s when he was located at 299 Pearl Street in New York City. As noted, Gustave (1860-1898) and brother Henry L. Calman and others in December 1885 agreed to purchase from John Walter Scott the company named J.W. Scott and Co., the first formal stamp company of John Walter Scott that the Calmans renamed Scott Stamp & Coin Co. Ltd. Gustave was vice president. Henry ran it.

When Gustave Calman died on January 25, 1898, at age 37, he "was known among stamp collectors the world over as the greatest wholesale dealer in postage stamps" *(North Adams Transcript, North Adams, Mass., March 26, 1898).* He had begun stamp collecting as a boy.

In addition to his stamp businesses, Gustave Calman was a principal in a glue, paint, and varnish business named S. Isaacs & Co., along with Solomon Isaacs and Emil Calman (father of Gustave and Henry). The contract between the Calman, Seebeck, and J.W. Scott that is interesting because it is a precursor to the scandal that developed in 1895 as a consequence of the Seebeck contracts and the Seebeck stamps. Seebeck purchased the rights to the Seebeck postal stationery stock in 1902. In 1901, Henry Calman sold any of the Seebeck stock of adhesive stamps in 1901 when he sold Scott Stamp & Coin Co. It is not known if the 1901 buyer of that company or any subsequent buyer also bought any other Seebeck stamps. Henry Calman, who was born in 1863, lived until 1937. After purchasing the wholesale stamp stock of his deceased brother, he began to sell off the stamps over an uncertain period. In December 1895, when John Walter Scott sold to the Calmans his retail stamp company, Scott thought of dedicating himself to other commercial activities. Unfortunately he very soon lost his capital in several operations. Not having any other way to support himself, Scott returned to the philatelic field, and in spring 1889 he founded the firm named J.W. Scott & Co. Ltd.

As a condition of its sale in December 1885, the previous firm named J.W. Scott and Co. had been renamed by the Calmans as Scott Stamp & Coin Co., retaining use of the Scott name. Because of the new company that J.W. Scott established in 1889, Scott Stamp & Coin Co. (the Calmans) sued J.W. Scott Co. Ltd. that year, attempting to enjoin Scott from using the name Scott.

The lengthy judicial action between the Calmans and Scott ended in favor of J.W. Scott Co. Ltd. on November 5, 1890, in the Supreme Court of the City of New York. The decision asserted that no one was thereby his means to earn a living if he had no other way to work.

In the early 1890s after Gustave Calman had purchased the rights to the Seebeck stamps, J.W. Scott, still aggrieved over the Calman lawsuit against him, saw an opportunity to attack Gustave Calman through Seebeck. Scott joined the campaign against Seebeck that was being waged in the United States through the *Philatelic Journal of America*, the periodical of Charles Mekeel. In 1895, Scott became the leader of the North American branch of the Society for the Suppression of Speculative Stamps, and through the branch Scott joined in on the attacks against countries that issued too many stamps, unneeded high denominations, and unneeded surcharges or overprints.

In the United States, Scott specifically attacked Seebeck and the Seebeck stamps. In Europe, the SSSS attacked speculative stamps in a general sense. The *Stamp Collectors' Fortnightly*, the prestigious publication of English philately, said of Calman: "He and his brother, Henry L. Calman, are the soul of the Scott Stamp & Coin Co., the Gibbons of America." It noted that he had commercial interests dealing in lacquers, oils, resins, and varnishes. Even though he had his commercial interests, Calman’s great weakness was stamps. It was said that the profits he made in his other interests and commercial activities he invested in his stamps until he became the biggest purchaser of stamp remainders in the United States.

It was Gustave Calman who bought from Charles Parker, the engineer mentioned in Chapter IV, all the Quetzal stamps of Guatemala for the years 1871 to 1881 and the Barrios stamps of Guatemala of 1886. In general, Gus Calman bought everything that was offered to him in the way of stamp remainders.

**Dispersal of the Calman stock**


In the early 1890s, annual stamp sets of 10 retailed at 50 cents. Dealers paid $25 for 100 sets. By about 1912 to 1915, demand slackened, and wholesale prices had been reduced to $15 per 100 sets. Retail prices then were 15 cents to 25 cents per set.

From the beginning in his advertisements, Seebeck undertook to wholesale directly to the collector who acquired through his contracts. Sometime during 1890 or 1891, however, he signed a contract with Gustave Calman covering the sale of all stamps that Seebeck possessed of Ecuador, Honduras, Nicaragua and El Salvador. The contract stipulated that Calman would pay Seebeck $5,000 per year plus $1,000 extra for each additional issue [additional to the issues of the four countries]. The contract placed Calman in control of all rights that Seebeck held over the stamps and postal stationery issued by or manufactured in the names of the four contract countries.

**Gustave B. Calman**

In addition to his stamp businesses, Gustave Calman was a principal in a glue, paint, and varnish business named S. Isaacs & Co., along with Solomon Isaacs and Emil Calman (father of Gustave and Henry). The contract between the Calman, Seebeck, and J.W. Scott that is interesting because it is a precursor to the scandal that developed in 1895 as a consequence of the Seebeck contracts and the Seebeck stamps. Seebeck purchased the rights to the Seebeck postal stationery stock in 1902. In 1901, Henry Calman sold any of the Seebeck stock of adhesive stamps in 1901 when he sold Scott Stamp & Coin Co. It is not known if the 1901 buyer of that company or any subsequent buyer also bought any other Seebeck stamps. Henry Calman, who was born in 1863, lived until 1937. After purchasing the wholesale stamp stock of his deceased brother, he began to sell off the stamps over an uncertain period. In December 1895, when John Walter Scott sold to the Calmans his retail stamp company, Scott thought of dedicating himself to other commercial activities. Unfortunately he very soon lost his capital in several operations. Not having any other way to support himself, Scott returned to the philatelic field, and in spring 1889 he founded the firm named J.W. Scott & Co. Ltd.
Seebeck Central American stamps was for sale. The price being asked was $12,000, or about 10c per 100 stamps. Even at this price no buyer could be found.

Shortly before the end of World War I, the stock had been reduced to 55 million stamps. It was purchased circa 1917 by Bela Sekula (Béla Székula), a dealer then in Lucerne, Switzerland, for a sum that was not revealed. The seller was Henry Calman. 6

As the decades passed, the Seebeck stamps demonstrated astonishing vitality, for in 1943, Victor Kneitschel, an Argentine dealer, was offering to sell 7 million Seebeck stamps for about 20 Argentine pesos per 1,000 stamps (approximately $5 per 1,000 stamps, or a total of $35,000 for all of them).

**Printing plates destroyed: 1911**

Leaving aside the question of whether the adhesive stamp reprints were made during the lifetime of Seebeck or after his death, the fact remains that for most of the 1890s the ever-evolving stock was in the possession of Gustave Calman, as a result of his dealings with Seebeck, and later in the possession of Henry Calman. As noted, the estimate was that the stock eventually amounted to some 90 million Seebeck stamps.

Who would have decided to reprint the stamps? Was it Seebeck, Gustave Calman, or perhaps even the Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Co.? If we accept the hypothesis that the stamp reprints were made after Seebeck’s death, then who in the Hamilton company would have decided to reprint the stamps and later to commercialize the stocks? Who would have had the authority to use the printing plates?

By 1910, rumors had begun to circulate that there was a possibility that new reprints of the Seebeck stamps were to be made, meaning stamps from the original plates. As a result, the Hamilton firm decided to destroy the plates. The reason was stated by Ernest Schernikow, one of the protagonists for destruction. At that time, Schernikow was the president of the Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Co. He wrote:

> There was so much outcry against the existence of the plates with which the 1890-1899 issues were made, that in order to quiet it and make it impossible for them to be used again, Mr. Henry Calman suggested to me that it would be advisable to destroy all the existing plates. It is not the custom to do this, however, thinking carefully over the arguments in favor of doing so in this case, in order that all the world should stop complaining and so to quiet the outcries of those who did not understand the facts, I ordered the destruction of all the existing plates.

Destruction occurred on November 9, 1911, before a committee that included John N. Luff, John A. Klemann, and P.F. Brunner. In their report to Henry Calman, the committee declared the following, as told by Schernikow in his 1916 article:

> At your request, the undersigned Committee have this day visited the Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Co. in Brooklyn, N.Y., and have examined certain plates of the so-called Seebeck issues of Ecuador, Honduras, Nicaragua and Salvador. These plates were engraved in “Taille douce” (cut finely: the design was cut with a burin into a soft metal die). We certify that all the plates mentioned in the following list have been defaced by cuts made with a file, across each row of designs (usually both vertically and horizontally) that they could not be used for further printings.

A list of the plates followed, with the names of the four countries whose plates were examined. Some plates of El Salvador were not present. Agustín Vanegas P., director of the philatelic agency of the Nicaragua post office, had been working for three years to have the Nicaragua dies and rolls destroyed. Working with Vanegas, Security Bank Note Co. eventually ordered the destruction of the Nicaragua dies and transfer rolls used by Hamilton and Seebeck. This occurred December 11, 1951, at the Security Bank Note Co. plant in Philadelphia in the presence of various witnesses, including Vanegas and other functionaries from Nicaragua. The witnesses signed certificates attesting to the destruction and to a list the items destroyed.

Kehr’s article lists as destroyed 156 dies and rolls: 36 dies (most with multiple stamp designs of different denominations), 88 type cuts used for postal stationery, 10 designs of only numerals, and 22 transfer rolls (all with multiple stamp designs).

**Dies, transfer rolls destroyed: 1949**

The Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Co. continued to hold master dies, working dies, and the hardened transfer rolls used to pressure-roll a design into a soft plate. An article by journalist Ernest A. Kehr published in various periodicals, including the *London Philatelist* in 1952, explained that in November and December 1928, Kehr and George Field, who had been Hamilton president since 1918, inspected such dies and transfer rolls at 149 Adams Street in Brownsville, N.Y., where the Hamilton firm had moved. 7 Kehr then was working at the firm temporarily to learn about the security printing business.

In 1951, the Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Co. was acquired by the Security Bank Note Co., a Philadelphia firm. Agustín Vanegas P., director of the philatelic agency of the Nicaragua post office, had been working for three years to have the Nicaragua dies and rolls destroyed.

In these two accounts, while Schernikow wrote of plates of Nicaragua and El Salvador, Quast and Willer wrote of plates for Nicaragua and Honduras. The two accounts also differed in the years mentioned.

It is possible, however, that plates, whether they be of Nicaragua or of Nicaragua and El Salvador, might have been stolen. In *Stamps* magazine of March 13, 1938, George van den Berg (pen name of dealer Lowell Ragatz) wrote that, when he was in Paris in recent years, a person approached him and offered to sell him printing plates for Seebeck stamps. This person indicated that he had two plates of Nicaragua, Ecuador, and El Salvador. The seller finished by stating, “ . . . this in spite of the fact that these plates were destroyed some 25 years ago in the presence of the principal dealers of New York.” Van den Berg wrote that the plates were so corroded as to be almost unrecognizable. Whether this story is true or not likely will never be known.
In the 1870s, the philatelic activities of Nicholas F. Seebeck as a stamp dealer blended in with those of other stamp dealers in New York City. Late in the decade, he continued to dedicate his time and activity to stamps, but by late 1876 or early 1879, when he traveled to the Dominican Republic, Seebeck broadened his involvement from selling stamps to include creating them. Seebeck’s later reprints of some stamps of the Dominican Republic and the Colombian State of Bolivar did not alarm the established philatelic circles of the time. But the contracts he signed in 1889, and the 1890 contract with Ecuador, provoked some large stamp clubs of the metropolitan New York City area formally to condemn Seebeck.

From 1889 on, the stamp dealing establishment had Seebeck under observation. Some of his antagonists were more than observers. They attacked. It was a scandal, a calumny, a personal defamation.

When it became known that Seebeck had signed a stamp contract with El Salvador, the Philatelic Journal of America wrote with obvious sarcasm:

N.F. Seebeck, a dealer in stamps of olden times, is a secretary of the Hamilton Bank Note [ Engraving and Printing ] Co., and he should know his business in that he printed the stamps for the republics of Dominica [ sic ] and Bolivar. He is an expert in the cancellation of stamps, as he has proved on several occasions with the cancellations, fraudulently, of stamps which today appear on the market and in the albums of less cautious collectors. History repeats itself and so collectors will be awaiting the beautiful and grand series of stamps of El Salvador, in colors, with and without watermark, without perforations, perforated and rouletted, and even a good number of surcharges of the latest types . . . It is also possible that there are one or various ‘errors.’

The American Philatelist of July 1889 stated:

Mr. Seebeck should be recorded as being the gentleman who printed the dated series for Bolivar and the Dominican Republic both with and without the network or the surcharges, and their corresponding ‘errors.’ The printing company expected evidently to dispose of large quantities to dealers and collectors seeing that now the cost of the printing was not to be charged to the government. Our advice to collectors is to leave these matters alone, in other words boycott them and do not mention them at all either in catalogs or reviews. These [ stamps ] will not be reported in these columns.

After various other similar published remarks and some formal condemnations initially, the Seebeck stamps and Seebeck himself were criticized somewhat during the years 1890 to 1894, but it was a cold war. Philatelic journalists stated that the Seebeck stamps and postal stationery were speculative, but any orchestrated activity then against Seebeck unfolded at a slower tempo and a lower pitch. Then came 1895.

What did Seebeck do in 1895 that unleashed a torrent on both sides of the Atlantic and that resulted in all the world saying horrible things about him and everything connected with him?

He wrote a long letter, but first I must set the stage before taking up the letter. In several prominent publications of the period 1890-1894, there is barely a mention of Seebeck. The Stamp Collectors’ Fortnightly, for example, one of the publications that eventually attacked Seebeck most fiercely, commenced publication with its October 6, 1894, issue, but it mentioned Seebeck for the first time not until the issue of June 29, 1895. This was nine months after the periodical began publishing in London, England. During the following year, I found in it 14
Society for the Suppression of Speculative Stamps

The society began informally as the Anti-Gumpap League, “gumpap” being an abbreviation of “gummed papers,” the derogatory name by which the stamp speculators would become known. At the meeting of the London Philatelic Society on May 6, 1895, the Society for the Suppression of Speculative Stamps was founded. Its statutes of are long and are not transcribed here in full. What follows is an outline of some of the salient points.

Society for the Suppression of Speculative Stamps

**STATUTES**

Law No. 1 – The Society has been formed to:

a) Discount and forewarn the dealers and collectors of postage stamps and other postal items, created for either total or partially speculative reasons, of unnecessary legitimate postal issues.  
b) Decide and declare that stamps or other postal materials should be classified as speculative or unnecessary as has already been indicated.  
c) Ensure the exclusion from all catalogs, albums, periodicals, price lists or other philatelic publications of all these stamps or postal items such as have been mentioned before.  
d) Take the necessary measures to prevent the issue of stamps and other postal items as have already been mentioned.  
e) Publish and cause to be published every so often, all the decisions, acts and other information, in such form that assures the maximum publicity among the people and societies in the collection of stamps in all the world.  
f) Take whatever measures considered necessary, desirable and opportune for the realization of the objectives previously mentioned, or for whatever purpose in the interests of members of this society.

**MEMBERS**

Law No. 2 – All persons over 21 years of age are eligible for membership, if they are stamp collectors, dealers or importers, owners and editors of catalogs, albums or publications and the journalists or philatelic writers.

Law No. 3 – The candidates for membership shall be proposed and seconded by members of the Society and balloted in Committee session, immediately following on the one when the proposal was received. A 25 percent blackball result is sufficient to exclude an applicant. If a candidate cannot find a member to propose him as a second, then it will be sufficient to furnish satisfactory references in lieu of same.

Law No. 4 – When an accusation against the character or conduct of a member reaches the bosom of a session, he shall be interrogated and shall be given the opportunity to explain the charge or charges being made against him. If, in the opinion of the Committee the conduct or character of the member accused is inconsistent with or injurious to the interests of the Society or its members, the Committee may, having the majority of members present, expel the member, but he shall be allowed to appeal to the General Council of the Society, in which a majority of three quarters of those present will be necessary to overturn the expulsion.

The remaining laws are better described as articles. There were 14 in total. The others deal with the formation of the directorate, attributes of each member, quorums, and frequency of meetings.

Among the directorate appeared some illustrious names of that particular period, including stamp dealers and stamp writers E. Stanley Gibbons, J.B. Moens, Charles J. Phillips, E.B. Evans, R.B. Earee, and Whitfield King, to name a few.

**Anti-Seebeck Society**

The attitude of the Philatelic Record formed a widely held opinion, but the strident crusaders believed that the condemnation of the Seebecks should go much further. In England, the Anti-Seebeck Society was founded in spring or summer 1894, with Mr. E.L. Shove as president. This group did not last long, and by October 1895 it announced its termination, in that the SSSS was fulfilling the same purpose.

Although the public continued pressing for action, it is evident that the SSSS did not appear inclined to condemn Seebeck. I note the following in an article published in the
Philatelic Record, January 1896, titled “How to Manage the Seebecks”:

For me, one of the questions most pressing now in philatelic circles is, How to manage Seebecks? They are evidently the worst of all the speculative issues and they have not yet been vetoed by the SSSS. I am not sure that the good work done by the SSSS has not been neutralized by the specific silence of the Society with regards to the Seebecks. Before the establishment of the Society, collectors had started to separate themselves from the Seebecks, but now they are confused by the fact that a Society which was founded to indicate rubbish to collectors, maintains an absolute silence in the case of Seebeck, and in this respect the silence is equivalent to consent. Therefore, the SSSS is really reinforcing the Seebeck situation.

I do not say that the SSSS can reasonably condemn stamps which were genuinely put into circulation, but I think that a Committee of practical men should be capable of dealing with the avalanche of Seebecks. Their condemnation should be announced on these stamps in some form or another.

I admit that I am not able to suggest a way out of this difficulty; however, it is certain that some solution should be found; and it is equally true that the position of the SSSS is greatly weakened by its lack of instruction to collectors against these stamps, which are the worst of the annual products. Maybe there is a degree of contradiction in the criticism of the Society in that they have not had the courage in placing Seebeck on their list, but all this criticism is indicative of the thinking of the collectors who have not got problems to consider when thinking of the difficulties of the situation.

Attacks on Gustave B. Calman

In general, the reaction against Seebeck was stronger in Europe than in the United States. In the United States, the weight of the campaign was waged in the Philatelic Journal of America in the person of J. Walter Scott.

Scott organized in the United States a society similar in its objectives to those of the SSSS, although Scott was oriented specifically against Seebeck and Gustave Calman. The Philatelic Journal of America was the publication of Charles H. Mekel of St. Louis.

During the early 1890s, as previously noted, the matter of what were called speculative stamps was dealt with moderately. Most dealers offered for sale the new Seebeck stamps on a regular basis.

When the furious storm erupted in 1895, the floods of insults and indignities overflowed, and after dragging down Seebeck, the attackers turned on Gustave Calman and against anyone who was suspected of deriving any benefit from the Seebeck issues.

The prestigious philatelic house of Stanley Gibbons, whose proprietor, Charles J. Phillips, was the president of the SSSS, was strongly criticized for adopting an ambivalent attitude and hypocritical posture. On the one hand, Phillips through his position in the SSSS attacked Seebeck, and yet at the same time he offered to sell the stamps of El Salvador of 1894 at $6 per 100 sets.

The major gunfire was reserved, however, for Gustave Calman. When in the middle of 1895 he arrived in London, he was immediately interviewed by the philatelic press. In his declarations, Calman indicated that among other things, contrary to what people thought, the Seebecks represented less than 10 percent of his business in stamps.

And regarding the stamps themselves, Calman said that they were legitimate issues circulated during the period of validity covered by the postal requirements with regard to the respective countries and that they were used in the hundreds of thousands, and nobody could condemn them merely because, subsequently, someone was making undue use of them.

Calman said that Seebeck had refused more than one offer from other South American countries, in view of their postal requirements that were too stringent and too costly. Printing costs would have swallowed up any benefits that stamp sales to collectors would have produced.

Calman said, however, that if Seebeckism was bad, it would not be prolonged, and he promised that when the contracts expired in 1899, they would not be renewed.

He indicated that the alarm raised had been unjustified. When the Seebeck stamps were being issued, all the Seebecks issued during one year would have cost a collector only 10 shillings. What would be the cost of stamps issued by other countries, countries that did not have contracts to limit their issues to one per year? That would have been worse for collectors.

Calman finally said that he would be willing to pay $1,000 if the Seebeck contracts with the various South American and Central American countries could be terminated immediately.

The despicable attacks endured by Gustave Calman were almost comical. When he died on January 25, 1898, the Stamp Collectors’ Fortnightly, one of the publications that had attacked him most fiercely, loudly acclaimed him for his inexhaustible energy referring to him as “a good sort.” It indicated that his favorite stamps were the Cape of Good Hope triangulares, and stated that he had made a good deal with T.H. Thompson when he purchased his balances of Leeward Islands stamps. It did not mention his deals with Seebeck.

Despite the ardent defense of the Seebeck stamps by Gustave Calman, the attacks, far from relaxing, intensified.

Criticisms

The main criticisms of the Seebeck issues centered around the following:

1) The issues regularly included high denominations, such as the 2-peso, 5p, and 10p stamps of Honduras, Nicaragua, and El Salvador. At that time, these denominations values were equivalent to $1.80, $4.50, and $9.00, amounts said to be far above the postal needs of the countries. Quast and Willer in an article in the Collectors Club Philatelist indicated that these high denominations might have been used to balance interdepartmental accounts and were subsequently destroyed, but this has not been confirmed.

It was also suggested as a possibility that most of the high-denomination stamps were used for postage on parcels. What is obviously is that the necessity for these stamps in most countries was low. When the Seebeck contract with Nicaragua ended with the 1899 issue, the country signed a similar one with Maximo Asenjo. In this contract, the high denominations were limited to the following denominations and quantities:

- 20c: 25,000
- 50c: 15,000
- 1 peso: 5,000
- 5 pesos: 2,000

These numbers indicate that the major demand was for the lower denominations of an issue. The so-called problem of the high denominations, however, is not valid. From a collector’s point of view, according to my observations of the advertisements, the stamps sold at 50 cents or perhaps $1 per set (and even cheaper later). Retail prices did
not bear any relation to the equivalent face values. The countries did not benefit from the high denominations because they were returned to Seebeck at no cost. It took only the time to collect them and send them to postal headquarters.

b) Seebeck sold the stamps at prices below the equivalent face values.

c) The countries granted to Seebeck the right to reprint stamps and to produce canceled stamps with the cancels applied in New York City. This was the most serious criticism against the stamps.

It was suggested by some observers that the contracts might have been granted to Seebeck because bribes were paid to government representatives. There is no evidence this happened.

The majority of stamp societies at the time discussed the matter. Some arrived at the extreme conclusion of excluding Seebeck stamps from their exchange packet circuits. Some dealers declared that they would not handle stamps of the Seebeck type. The majority of collectors bought the stamps or were silent about them, but almost no one bothered to defend them.

One of the few articles published in defense of the Seebecks appeared in the American Journal of Philately [issue not stated]. The writer indicated that if the criticisms were of the annual series, then they should also include the annual series of Cuba, Puerto Rico, Spain, and Colombia. It was argued, however, that the remainders would be cheaper than the value of the stamps while they were valid for postage. Collectors could obtain them more cheaply than they could while valid for postage.

In the letter, Seebeck did not say much in defense of his stamps, but he rather vigorously defended his personal character from the attacks some philatelic writers had made. He finished by offering an olive branch.

The letter, one of the major documents in the whole of the Seebeck affair, stated:

New York, August 29, 1895

Dear Sir

I am not callous to the attacks made upon me as a manufacturer of what my over-zealous critics have chosen to call ‘Seebecked’ stamp issues. As a mere manufacturer, I could afford to disregard these attacks; I would simply adapt my methods in the future as I have adapted them in the past, to the needs and demands of my market. But I am not merely a manufacturer; I am, and for years have been, a loyal and ardent philatelist. Long before the grey hairs began to crop out on the top of my devoted cranium I became, and have ever since remained, an enthusiastic devotee of the science of philately, and it is as one of your fraternity, and because I want to retain the respect of my fellow philatelists, that I feel most keenly the injustice which has been done to me.

I do not think that the false imputations are inspired by malice. They are rather the result of misdirected and exagerated zeal in a crusade, the main end and purpose of which is laudable—a crusade against official abuse of postal administrative powers. With this crusade, as far as it attacks vicious administrative systems, I heartily sympathize, but I protest against the personal animus injected into it, and which singles out a mere individual engraver as its victim and scapegoat. I protest especially against the unfair, not to say libelous, abuse of my name as a trademark of everything that is unholy, and as if I were personally responsible for the acts of every government that chooses to employ me. Is it not plain that such a rule of responsibility is false, unfair and overstrained?

In the middle of all the shaming, Seebeck had maintained an absolute silence. In late summer 1895, however, as a result of the pressures to which he had been subjected, he sent a circular letter dated August 29 to the principal philatelic publications in the United States and Europe.

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against the making of similar contracts with my competitors. But if my fellow philatelists, in furtherance of their high ends, can secure from each one of the countries concerned a guarantee that no contract similar in spirit to those found objectionable will hereafter be made with any other bank note company, or other person, I am prepared to cancel every objectionable contract which I now hold, provided of course that the respective governments will join in such cancellation, and release me from obligations assumed. I do not know how I can more effectively evidence my sympathy with the demand for fair play.

And in the meantime I wish Godspeed to the crusade of honesty and integrity in philatelic affairs. Only let the crusade be one of principle and not one of personal animosity.

Yours respectfully
N.F. Seebeck

The letter was received in Europe with certain reservations, and several publications accepted the comments made by Seebeck. For example the Philatelic Record commented:

“What Mr. Seebeck states is probably quite true, but when collectors see series of stamps with values of 5 and 10 pesos, which values could scarcely have been issued for postal purposes, and which, at the end of the year they could secure them at a lower price, it is not strange that they should stand aside and shout against the system and blame Mr. Seebeck, who is the only body involved whom they can kick, seeing that the other bodies are parts of collective corporations whom they cannot reach.”

J. Walter Scott’s letter: 1895

In the United States, the reaction to the letter was cold. J. Walter Scott, then 49, maintained the campaign against Seebeck in all its virulence and continued to agitate.

In September 1895, the North American branch of the SSSS sent a circular letter to the governments of Ecuador, Honduras, Nicaragua, and El Salvador requesting them to cancel their contracts with Seebeck and the Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Co. Here is a transcript of this interesting document:

In the name of a group of Stamp Dealers and Collectors, the undersigned, representatives of philatelists of all nationalities, respectfully present the following request for the discontinuance of the prevalent practice of frequent and unnecessary changes in the issue of postage stamps.

We have been informed that the governments who have adopted this practice have been under the belief that it was justified because it saved them money, resulting from their being able to make arrangements with the engravers or printers of the series whereby they would receive all the balances or surpluses as payment for their services as printers. We respectfully suggest that this conviction is in error. On the contrary, the governments would most certainly lose by this practice, and for two reasons:

1) because, if the governments retained in their hands the total control of their postal issues and kept the sale of them, the collectors would purchase large quantities directly from them at face value instead of going to the printers, and the profits gained on the government sales to dealers in stamps would greatly exceed any compensation which the printers could charge.

2) because the proliferation of this practice, which has converted the producer of the stamps into a speculator in them and has placed the governments in a false position as confederates and accomplices in the speculation, has provoked worldwide discontent and indignation among philatelists; so much so that hundreds of philatelic societies have decided to reject the speculative market in these stamps and have given these stamps a bad name as philatelic bastards. The results are, or soon will be, that the practice will defeat its objects in wishing to make the postage stamp into a salable commodity. But purely from the commercial point or side of the matter, we appeal to the governments that they discontinue the practice for the most elevated motives; for moral political reasons, or, in what we would for practical purposes call political convenience. There can be no doubt that the continuance of this practice can only lower the credit of the governments which uphold it.

The common conclusion derived from it is that the governments continue this practice solely because they are too poor to make payment in cash for the services of the producers. If, in reply to this statement, it is stated that those who deal with and purchase stamps are of an insignificant group too small to affect public opinion, we would respectfully indicate that this is not so, relating to the estimate of the number, character and influence of the philatelic fraternity. The dealers in stamps and the collectors are counted not in hundreds or thousands but in millions.

The devotees of philately are not confined to any one particular country but can be found in every civilized part of the globe. They are not insignificant in respect to character or influence; they are found naturally among the area of society which represent the educated and intelligent, because the same education cannot be intelligent collectors.

Not only the crowned heads, members of royalty and princes are numbered among the enthusiasts, but also the financial princes notably among whom are the Rothschilds.

Is it therefore a matter of indifference for the government what this class of philatelists, grand and influential, think of their financial situation? Can a nation be indifferent as to be considered so poor that they cannot pay the ordinary costs of their postal services?

The philatelic societies have declared war on what are known as Speculative Issues. They have declared these issues as being unworthy of a place in a stamp collection. They are inclined to refuse to allow a market for these issues and have considered them as practically unsalable except by direct sales by the governments. They have declared the practice of issues as illegal, illegitimate and immoral.

In view of this frank charge and this open declaration of war, what is the policy of the governments? Is it not a discontinuance once and for all of this objectionable practice?

One of the most prominent producers – we refer to Sr. N.F. Seebeck, of the Hamilton Bank Note [Engraving and Printing Co. – has already publicly proclaimed himself to be averse to the speculative issues, although he is probably the principal victim of their discontinuance. The tide of public opinion has been flowing too strongly against the practice for its resistance to continue. The philatelists have persuaded him to declare publicly, that if he could, with honor, cancel his obligations with the several governments, and receive assurances that they would not sign other contracts with other producers, he would willingly cancel any...
valid contracts which are objectionable in line with the above details. Naturally how-
however, such cancellation on his part should not be preceded by an application by the gov-
ernments who form the other party to such contracts.

We therefore respectfully and sincerely request your honorable government to give
this matter serious and immediate attention, and not only take the necessary steps to cancel the existing contracts for
the issue of speculative stamps, that is to say, stamps for which payment is made
by means of the handing over of balances to the printer, as compensation for the
printing of the issue, and also to establish laws and regulations (postal) such as will
render it impossible for a repetition of the practice to print stamps for the express
purposes other than legitimate postal

usages.

In any case, we assure you, in the name of the philatelic societies and the
great philatelic world that they represent, of our most respectful and sincere respects,
and we are confident that you will appreciate our friendly and cordial wishes which
have engendered this request.

The circular letter had almost immediate
effect, and at least the government of Ecuador, as related in Chapter IX, on
November 8, 1895, rescinded the contract with Seebeck. Honduras had terminated its contract on November 26, 1893 (although for
different reasons), leaving the Seebeck con-
tracts reduced to those with Nicaragua and
El Salvador.

Another letter from Seebeck

Interested parties continued to be anx-
ious, and the campaign continued. In
December 1895, Seebeck addressed a letter to the London Philatelist. Among other
topics, it addressed his honor:

I have discovered that my circular
letter which I sent out and in which I
expressed my willingness to cancel cer-
tain contracts which I had with various governments, if I could do so honorably, instead of being appreciated by collectors
as a sample of my goodwill and desire to help in the campaign against Speculative Issues, has not been accepted in the spirit
in which it was made, and I feel therefore, more or less dispript after trying to do
the best I could to further a good cause.

You undoubtedly understand very well the nature of contracts and know that the
stamps which I supply to the vari-
gous governments are not really specula-
tive issues, but that they are genuinely
used to cover the needs of the respec-
tive governments, and that I never, in the
six years that I have had these contracts with the different governments, permitted
an error or surcharge or in fact anything but stamps, etc. which have been genu-
inely required for the needs of the govern-
ments, to be shipped to these countries.

In a few cases, employees of the govern-
ments in some countries to which I have supplied stamps have surcharged the
issues with various values, creating vari-
ties etc. None of these have been created with my cognizance or consent.

In relation to this letter from Seebeck, the
Philatelic Record commented in the January
1896 issue as follows:

Mr. Seebeck feels very aggrieved by the criticisms of the last letter which he wrote. He is hurt that the olive branch which he extended has not been accepted as the
genuine article. Whatever the case may be,
we think that we can say herewith that with Mr. Seebeck personally we have no
dispute, on the contrary, we are happy to
know that he is a collector and therefore one of us. As an engraver he has fallen on
a path which has led him to bad results
for philately and the consensus or opinion
is undoubtedly against his system of help
to the countries plagued by poverty, sup-
plying them gratuitously with the means
to obtain money in payment for their
permission to traffic in their balances. If Mr. Seebeck could free himself from these
remaining, part of his contract, his exquis-
ite designs could raise him to a pinnacle of popularity for his engravings. But we
cannot separate his beautiful stamps from the
pernicious system which has en-
oped him, as a dry root, into philately. Only
these can achieve this.

The above statement, as I see it, smacks
of the impossible, for in Seebeck's plan the engraver, or manufacturer, was inseparable
from that of seller of the remains. The
countries of Central America and the one of
South America had given him their contracts only because he would supply them with
stamps, gratis, otherwise they would have
continued dealings with the American Bank
Note Co., a firm capable of producing designs
of an equal or perhaps better quality and
that had been supplying stamps for years to all of the Americas.

The 1896 agreement with Seebeck

Even though by the middle of 1896
Seebeck held contracts only with Nicaragua
and El Salvador, the North American branch
of the SSSS continued to pressure Seebeck.
After long negotiations, in June the group
arrived at an agreement with him, whereby,
although not terminating the contracts, the
parties compromised over regulating the
issuers for the remaining three years of the
contract, 1897-1899. This agreement essen-
tially ended matters with Seebeck.

This agreement stated:

In consideration that Mr. Seebeck
agrees to use his influence with certain
Central and South American governments
(with which he has contracts for the fur-
ishing of postage stamps for the years
1897, 1898 and 1899), to induce them to
accept, in lieu of a special issue for each
year, a three years' supply of the stamps
for 1897, also to place this issue in cir-
culation on 1 January 1897, and use it
exclusively for the prepayment of postal
matter for the term of at least three years.

The undersigned, dealers in for-

eign postage stamps, hereby agree that,
in any of the governments above referred
to should enter into any contract similar
to those entered into with Mr. Seebeck,
we will not purchase or sell the stamps
issued under such contracts, either
directly or indirectly, after they have
become obsolete and are rendered use-
less for the prepayment of postage in the
countries in which they have been issued.

The agreement was signed by the princi-
pal dealers in North America, including G.B.
Calman, J.W. Scott Co. Ltd., the Scott Stamp
& Coin Co. Ltd., W.F. Gregory, Geo. R. Tuttle,
Bogart & Durbin Co., the Walter S. Scott Co.
Ltd., Perrin & Co., Mr. Mead, J.B. Brevoort,
L.M. Homburger, C.H. Mekel Stamp &
Publishing Co., Nassau Stamp Co., Geo. F.
Crane, Henry Gremmel, Burger & Co., A.
Krasa, E.T. Parker, and J. Dieschbourg.

In the eyes of some observers, the agree-
ment was a great success, but for others it
was an empty victory in that it did not say
anything about the sale of remainders. For
many, the sale of remainders was the most
objectionable part of the Seebeck contracts.

The critics also stated that the agreement
did nothing more than ensure that in the future
there would be no new contracts that would compete with Seebeck and that there was no way to protect collectors.

Others indicated that the agreement
ensured for Seebeck a certain monopoly
in his trafficking in remainders, in that the
dealers compromised themselves not to buy remainders that might be offered in the mar-
ketplace in competition with those Seebeck
might have. They asked, "What are collec-
tors going to gain from this agreement?" They
even stated that it was a single-sided agree-
ment to whitewash the Seebeckized countries and to make the Seebeck system.

These reactions, however, came belat-
edly. Neither El Salvador nor Nicaragua nor
Seebeck respected the provision of only a sin-
gle issue for the three years.

By 1897, the SSSS had lost interest, and
little by little the vexing Seebeck problem was
fading away.

In 1898, it seemed that few appeared to
remember Seebeck or the SSSS, or if they
remembered, it was of no importance. When
Seebeck died June 23, 1899, the announce-
ment of his death passed almost unnoticed
by the world's philatelic press.2
Great Spirit, help me never to judge another until I have walked in his mocassins.
– prayer attributed to the Sioux and to others
– used in the 1895 poem “Judge Softly” by Mary Torrens Lathrap

To be able to judge Nicholas F. Seebeck and his postage stamps and postal stationery dispassionately, we have to transport ourselves to the era when the stamps and stationery were issued.

Collector demand for stamps

By the 1870s, stamp collecting or philately was established as a pastime with many thousands of followers throughout the world. To give service to these legions of collectors was a system of dealers who sold stamps, stamp albums, and all kinds of philatelic accessories. There were competing dealer stamp catalogs and hundreds of small stamp magazines or hobby magazines. Stamp clubs and stamp societies flourished, and there was an active exchange of stamps. Stamps were in demand.

Specialist collectors were few. Nearly all were embarked on the impossible task of forming a complete collection of all the countries of the world. There were not as now so-called popular countries and non-popular countries. The demand for stamps of Africa or Asia was almost as great as demand for stamps of the United States and the nations of Europe.

Stamp dealers then found themselves in many cases with the problem of satisfying an ever-increasing demand for stamps. For many countries or colonies, especially the smallest and underdeveloped, the need for stamps to cover the demands of collectors was much greater than the demand for stamps to cover postal requirements. In some countries, the need for stamps for mail was almost non-existent. Some traditions and cultures were oral and not literate, and their people did not use post offices to send mail.

W.F. Moore, in an 1889 article in the *New York Philatelist*, wrote of the first stamps of the Dominican Republic:

> These stamps, although it may seem strange to say it, were always easier to obtain abroad than in the country, a fact easily explained when we consider that the majority of the population only used the postal system when sending letters to foreign countries, without ever considering sending letters by post within the country, instead simply handing them over to any passerby who might undertake to take them.

The situation in the so-called Seebeck republics, as they sometimes were called, was no different. Irving I. Green described the situation in Honduras, pointing out that, for the second issue prepared by Seebeck for Honduras, of two million stamps delivered to the country, 1,771,943 were returned to Seebeck. In other words, total consumption of stamps in the whole year was hardly 228,000 stamps. The quantity of those used stamps that could have reached stamp dealers and from them to stamp collectors would have been negligible.

It was a certainty then that for each legitimately used stamp that reached the hands of a stamp dealer having completed its postal function, thousands of stamps of the same stamp were needed to fill the albums of the stamp collectors throughout the world.

The idea of the postage stamp, wrote Elias Silverstein, had reached the point where, in the small countries at least, the philatelic end-products were much more important financially than the legitimate postal reasons for the stamps.

It must be remembered that the coun-
tries that accepted Seebeck's contracts were mostly impoverished. Even small sums payable for the printing of stamps were important to them. The damage that might be caused to philately did not matter a great deal to them, if at all. Thus, when the Seebeck contract with Nicaragua lapsed in 1899, even though that contract brought criticism, Nicaragua embarked upon a similar contract with Maximo Azenjo.

None of the Seebeck countries acted to defraud collectors, because no collector in the United States or elsewhere, knowing that after year's end the stamps could be bought at a fraction of their face value, was going to buy them at a post office counter in country.

Collecting norms

As for the contracts themselves, it must be remembered that Seebeck signed them in a world ruled by rigid Victorian moral values and norms. Those norms established that a postage stamp served to frank correspondence. If having fulfilled its postal function and anyone wanted to collect it, that was allowed, but anything apart from this was heresy.

And the British, the inventors of the adhesive postage stamp, elected themselves as guardians of the good customs and practices. Anyone who might dare to stray at all from that narrow line that the British had traced risked thunder and lightning raining down. It also must be remembered that the British philatelic press at the time was implacable and even merciless.

Seebeck's greatest crime was that he signed his contracts with small countries. In the midst of the storm unleashed by his stamps, other large countries such as the United States, Canada, and Spain were issuing long and expensive series of a speculative nature without causing the avalanche of criticism that fell upon Seebeck's issues. Even the idea of manufacturing reprints to satisfy the demands of collectors was not Seebeck's idea, and in those years other countries, including Austria, were reprinting to meet the growing demand from the collector market and from dealers.

In the Seebeck years and in the following decades, his stamps were subject to wide debate. It was argued whether they should be reported in magazines, be cataloged, be commercialized, or be collected.

H.A. Slade in a commentary in the Stamp Collectors' Fortnightly wrote that Seebeck's stamps were collectable but only on a cover. He maintained that only in that form were they still a good investment.

V. Suppantshitsch wrote [source not stated] :

If philately is not to be reduced to a child’s game, it is necessary that the collection of stamps be placed chronologically and that it contain all postage stamps without excluding any. As the majority of Seebeck stamps have been issued legally in fact, and have served postal needs, they cannot be excluded from the collections without destroying integrity, even though they may have served incidentally to exploit collectors.

Seebeck’s practices

The negative character of some of Seebeck's practices is undeniable. Along these lines, I cite his manufacturing of stamps on paper with watermark and on paper without watermark. Two types of paper could not be justified from any standpoint. The same can be said of Official stamps, postage dues stamps and other stamps that were not authorized by contract and never were issued postally and put into circulation in country.

One of the strongest objections made against the Seebeck contracts was using the original plates to make as many reprints as might be required to meet the demands of collectors [or using new plates]. The matter of the reprints, which notably was hardly raised in Seebeck’s lifetime, has been the subject most debated, principally in the first quarter of the 20th century.

It is undeniable that the existence of reprints, by definition stamps made from the original plates, introduced for many nonspecialist collectors an element of confusion in the sense that unlike the majority of forgeries, the reprints affected common stamps and generally could not easily be recognized for the most part.

Writers Joseph B. Leavy, Richard and Louis Senf, Joseph Kroeger, and others have studied the reprints deeply. Ultimately Seebeck has been absolved, with their reaching conclusions that, although Seebeck had the right to make reprints, he made very limited use of that right and that the majority of stamps identified undoubtedly as reprints were printed after his death. But Hahn and Sousa, who also studied the reprints carefully, believe that they were printed before Seebeck’s death, whenever Gustave Calman requested more stamps.

It also has been pointed out that it is very probable that stamps of the Seebeck issues reached the market equally from the printing house or from Seebeck as from the very countries that were contractually obliged to return the remainders to Seebeck. Schernikow noted that when he was in El Salvador in 1896 he investigated the remnants of the previous issue that had not been returned to Seebeck. After various investigations, he was allowed to begin a search in the post office. He found such a quantity of stamps that he required about 30 boxes to send the stamps to Seebeck.

Seebeck the businessman

Seebeck must be recognized as an intelligent businessman, extremely able, whose ideas were brilliant. He showed himself to be an honorable man who always fulfilled scrupulously the conditions of his stamp contracts, even when the Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Co. and nearly all companies experienced financial problems in the recession of 1894-1898, following the financial Panic of 1893.

It was reported that one day Seebeck saw in the window of a shop a series of his stamps that had not yet been issued. Realizing that one of his employees had dealt in the stamps, he went into the shop, asked how many sets were available and bought them in order to maintain inviolate the terms of his contract.

It can be said that as a stamp collector himself Seebeck was respectful of the philatelic family, and his letter of 1895 to the various operators of the press shined with sincerity. When he was called to order, Seebeck recognized that his stamps could cause real harm to philately, and he seems to have submitted to the wishes of the philatelic community.

Seebeck felt proud of his work and the quality of his stamps. Regarding their design, engraving and printing, they can be compared with the best made before or after.

The campaign against Seebeck

As for the campaign launched against Seebeck and his stamps, although it sometimes had a character of collective hysteria, it is evident that its efforts were beneficial. In the 1890s, new issues were moving at such a fast pace that a brake was needed. The scandal and the boycott unleashed against Seebeck stamps and against other stamps caused other stamp projects of a speculative nature for other countries, either begun or in preparation, to be suspended.

Had the scandal not broken, no one knows how far the promoters would have gone, for the Seebeck issues showed that stamp collecting was an economic factor capable of generating a flow of money and that collectors were beginning to spend significant money on stamps.

Amid the bitter, interminable arguments unleashed in 1895-1896 in the campaign against Seebeck, J. Walter Scott was the standard bearer, as has been noted. Among the arguments of Scott was that the practice of issuing large annual series was a death-blow for philately.

Was it really harmful?

The reply, which Harlow quotes from
In recent decades, there has been renewed interest in collecting and studying the Seebeck issues. There are observers who defend Seebeck, affirming that with his delightful stamps, carefully manufactured with excellent colors, that could be acquired for a few cents, he attracted millions of new collectors to philately.

Perhaps, as Chauncey Hackett wrote, Seebeck will share the destiny of the pioneers in other fields who at first were violently attacked only to be recognized later as benefactors of mankind.

Undoubtedly he was a man who added a new dimension to philately. Although his methods were not always orthodox, by making his beautiful stamps accessible to young people not only of his era but also of several generations to come, he more than any other person took stamp collecting to the masses.

It is impossible to deny, however, that the countries involved in one way or another with Seebeck are among the least collected in the world. After nearly 120 years since the Seebeck era ended, they still have not been able to rid themselves totally of the stigma that the Seebeck association created.

Chapter II

NICHOLAS F. SEEBECK: THE MAN, THE LEGEND

1 Page 3. The 1870 United States Census places the Seebeck family at Crown Point, Centre Township, Lake County, Indiana, on the date of enumeration, June 2, 1870. The census lists Seebeck’s father, Frederick Seebeck, as a “Book Binder.” Young Seebeck would have moved to New York City sometime between the census date and early 1872, and at least his father also could have been living in New York City by February 1879 at the latest, based on a surviving postal card sent by the father.

2 Page 3. This address was located in the Astor House. It was a basement-level storefront below the hotel's elevated first floor. The Vesyé location faced St. Paul’s Chapel, near the corner of Vesyé and Broadway.

3 Page 3. Bill Welch found notice of the move to 97 Wall Street in the Stamp Collector’s Review, Davenport, Iowa, June 1880. Seebeck’s advertisement announcing the move was in the same issue. The Seebecker, June 1992, page 10, reproduced the advertisement and the notice in a column of the magazine.

4 Page 4. Stanley M. Bierman wrote that New York City stamp dealer William P. Brown (1841-1929) published three editions (1868, 1871, 1872) of his Descriptive Price Catalogue of Government Postage Stamps For Sale, the third edition of which was generic (Stanley M. Bierman, Collectors Club Philatelist, July-August 1995, page 229). The generic third edition could be the catalog that other dealers bought the rights to and had their own cover pages added, including Seebeck.

John Bailey, James Brennan, William Hussey, William P. Brown (New York City), and William Cogan (Philadelphia) are considered to be the first stamp dealers in the United States.

5 Page 5. Ernest Schernikow, “Salvador,” the Philatelic Gazette, August 1916, pages 234-239. This article is believed to be the source of the photograph of young Nicholas Seebeck that has been republished many times. Schernikow was vice counsel of El Salvador in New York. For less than three months in 1891, Schernikow was appointed consul of El Salvador in New York. On a date unknown, Seebeck married Anna (Annie) Aline Schernikow (born 1857, same year as Seebeck). The editor can find no record of this marriage or of a divorce, dissolution, or annulment. The marriage almost certainly did end because on September 27, 1887, in New York City, Nicholas F. Seebeck married, per FamilySearch.org, Therese Rosalie Petigny-Meurisse, age 18 (born April 19, 1869). Their son August C. Seebeck was born October 26, 1888.


7 Page 7. Seebeck was general manager of Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Co. from April 21, 1884, until April 10, 1893, and from October 16, 1893, until his death on June 23, 1899. He was treasurer from April 21, 1884, until April 10, 1893. He was secretary from April 21, 1884, until February 4, 1892. He was vice president from October 16, 1893, until probably January 10, 1899 (The pages for 1898 are missing from the company Minute Books). He was president from February 4, 1892, until August 23, 1893, and from January 10, 1899, until June 23, 1899. He held none of these offices from August 23, 1893, until October 16, 1893. All dates noted here are dates of election, as recorded in the company Minute Books.

8 Page 8. Note to the editor in May 2018 from collector and author Guillermo Federico Gallegos: “The advertisements printed on the back of El Salvador stamps are known on stamps that usually have the defacing line overprinted on the face of the stamps on each row, indicating that the stamps were defaced samples. My interpretation is that the advertisements were added sometime in the 1890s, most probably by Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Co. or by someone connected to...
Seebeck, hence the ads are in English. The idea never took off. Considering the scarcity of these sheets, especially of other Seebecks, material, I do not believe they were made to find an outlet for selling stamp remainders."

9 Page 8, Note to the editor in May 2018 from collector and author Joseph D. Hahn: "When I had my major collection of El Salvador, I had 12 or more sheets of the stamps with advertising. The advertisements were mostly on the 1895 issues, both on India paper proofs and on the stamp paper types. Remember that the contract for free stamps was transferred to Seebeck as an individual – one reason for small quantities of original 1896 issues – and so I posit that these advertising backprints might have been an attempt by advertising companies to reduce the expense of producing the stamps. This was the case with the advertising backprints on New Zealand stamps."

Chapter III

MANHATTAN BANK NOTE CO.
HAMILTON BANK NOTE CO.
HAMILTON BANK NOTE ENGRAVING AND PRINTING CO.

1 Page 9. See footnote 7 of Chapter II for the positions Seebeck held in the Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Co. and when he held them. See also page 125.


3 Page 9, Mueller, Barbara, "Hamilton Bank Note Co. Memorabilia," The Essay-Proof Journal, Second Quarter, 1988, Vol. 45, No. 2, Whole No. 178, reprinted in the Souvenir Card Journal, Fourth Quarter, 2004, Vol. 24, No. 4, pages 22-25. This important article pictures the advertising cards shown here in Figure 3-2 and Figure 3-3. In some of her discussion, Mueller wrongly treats the Hamilton Bank Note Co. (1881) and the Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Co. (1884) as one firm. They were distinct and separate incorporated businesses.

The one followed the other and had many of the same investors, but the events and locations of each need to be kept separate and not be conflated. Mueller gives incorrect possible dates of birth and death for George W. Thurber, a letter and ornamental engraver and in some years the vice president of each Hamilton company.

4 Page 9. Sometime in 1891, Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Co. moved to the building at the corner of Gold and Ferry streets in Manhattan. The lease contract was approved at the trustees meeting December 16, 1890. Ferry Street then was located where pedestrian Spruce Court is located today. The minutes of January 12, 1891, record 1 Broadway as the location for that meeting. The June 26, 1891, minutes and those of September 18, 1891, do not record their locations. Beginning with the stockholders meeting held January 12, 1892, the minutes record 88-90 Gold Street as the location, which was the office building at the southeast corner of Gold and Ferry streets.


7 Page 11. Elizabeth Hill, a researcher at the web site FamilySearch.org of The Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah, in April 2018 confirmed for the editor that the birth and death years of George W. Thurber are 1827-1908. She also found that the 1880 U.S. Census lists his occupation as "bank note eng." Thurber and Seebeck could have met in the early 1870s, when Seebeck was establishing his stationery business and Thurber was an established engraver. Thurber was 30 years older than Seebeck.

8 Page 12. Harris, Leo John, "The Hamilton Bank Note [Engraving and Printing] Company of New York: Some Collateral Collectibles," Collectors Club Philatelist, September 1981, pages 289-302. For the sake of simplicity, Harris wrote he used the 1881 company name throughout the article, but he also conflates locations and events that apply to one firm but not to the other. This article pictures important Seebeck artifacts: the back of a block of nine El Salvador stamps with advertisements, an 1895 cover from Nicaragua franked with Official stamps addressed to Seebeck at 88 and 90 Gold Street in New York, an 1884 cover to Danzig bearing a label with Seebeck's printed 3 Vesyey St. address and the handstamped 99 Wall St. address, a salesman's sample card bearing unadopted essays for stamps, and other items.


10 Page 13, ibid., page 3, Chapter V

EL SALVADOR

1 Page 18. In the Spanish-language version, Article 8 of the contract mentions specifically that the Hamilton firm could make reprints "for sale to collectors of stamps and other postal franking values." The Spanish text reads, "para venta a coleccionistas de estampilas y otros valores de franqueo." Collector and author Guillermo Federico Gallegos believes that "other postal franking values" refers to postal stationery and other items that also are collected. The editor agrees.

2 Page 23. Note to the editor in May 2018 from Guillermo Federico Gallegos: "There is no official record to confirm that the Coat of Arms issue was placed in circulation on 15 January 1895. If this were the case, then it would con- tradict the argument that there was no time to prepare new stamps when the Ezetas were overthrown. My opinion is that the designs for the Ezeta issue had already been made by June 1894, when the government was deposed. Seebeck simply convinced the new government to take the Ezetas, but he prepared another issue so he could have additional dif- ferent stamps to offer to collectors."
executive capacity. “What I mean by active is that he took an active part in the general business — well, in an independent way, more or less; previous to that he had been under my direction constantly. I conducted the negotiations for the purchase of the press in the latter part of 1892 from the Kidder Press Manufacturing Company.”

Chapter X
THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

1 Page 77, Mueses recalled in 2018 that he found the name “Mr. Baer” in the government archives in the Dominican Republic.

Chapter XI
THE SEEBECK STAMPS AND POSTAL STATIONERY

1 Page 81, chart. For information on telegraph stamps, see the web site http://gb-precan.cesta.org/Telegraphs/site-map.html

2 Page 84. The printed booklet titled “Ecuador Honduras Nicaragua Salvador. Central America. A Collection of 60 Seebeck cels” is crossed out in pencil and “90 Gold St” is written in. “Broadway / New York.” The street address is crossed out in pencil and “90 Gold St” is written in.

3 Page 84. The card uses the name “Hamilton Bank Note Company” and roulette perforation 125,000 each 1. 2. 5¢ [Scott 3-5] 50,000 each 10 & 25¢ [Scott 6-7] and roulette perforation 125,000 each 1. 2. 5¢ [Scott 8-10] 50,000 each 10 & 25¢ [Scott 11-12] “Please match colors exactly. if [sic] there should be difference in shade would prefer to see proofs “Need not be packed with wax paper but merely in one package for each value” “Respectfully N.F. Seebeck” Penciled next to the closing of the letter and Seebeck’s signature is “Also Gum” and “Krack.” This was a note from Charles E. Krack, who on February 9, 1891, had been appointed as acting secretary of the Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Company to help Seebeck, who was in ill health. Seebeck then was company secretary, treasurer, and general manager. Krack also was a company trustee.

4 Page 92. The 1935 Heinze monograph on postmarks has been translated into English at least twice. A PDF version is available from the Nicaragua Study Group. The monograph also includes important commentary on the Nicaragua stamps of 1900-1905.


6 Page 97. Some time after 1900, the Goodkind article also pictures the signed certification document for the destruction of two transfer rolls, six dies, and one type cut used in the manufacture of the 1893 issues. In all, Goodkind said that 296 pieces of metal were defaced that day and certified as defaced. The group began work around 11 a.m., with breaks for lunch and dinner. Goodkind did not say how long the group worked.

7 Page 97. Seebeck often referred to himself as an engraver, but there is no record that he himself might have engraved in metal. He meant that his company provided engraving services. The Seebeck business card pictured on page 3 names him as “Stationer” and “General Engraver, Lithographer and Printer, Blank Book Manufacturer.”

Chapter XII
THE SCANDAL AND THE LETTER

1 Page 105. Seebeck often referred to himself as an engraver, but there is no record that he himself might have engraved in metal. He meant that he company provided engraving services. The Seebeck business card pictured on page 3 names him as “Stationer” and “General Engraver, Lithographer and Printer, Blank Book Manufacturer.”

2 Page 109. Welch noted in The Seebecker, April 1988, that the American Journal of Philately, then edited by Henry L. Calman, published a favorable and forgiving obituary in the issue of July 1, 1899.
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and

APPENDICES

Henry L. Calman
1863-1937

William R. Grace
1832-1904

Ernest Schernikow
1860-1933

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Leavy, Joseph B., “The Stamps of Nicaragua,” Gibbons Stamp Weekly, 10:1, No. 235, pages 7-8,


*The Philatelic Journal of America*, St. Louis, 1885-1917, last issue is dated March 1917.


*The Stamp Collectors’ Fortnightly*, 1894-1958, especially 1895 and 1896. The last issue is No. 1639.

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1870 U.S. Census. Centre Township, Crown Point, Indiana, June 2, Seebeck family.

1880 U.S. Census. New York City, June 9, Schernikow family.


Also testifying for Hamilton were former treasurer Charles H. Denman, secretary Edward C. Osborn (spelled Osborne in the case), and printer Thomas White. The digitized text is located at https://play.google.com/books/reader?id=JODa-284bckCpmp=frontcover&output=reader&hl=en_p&gs_ia47.


saylor.org/site/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/HIST312-10.1-Panic-of-1893.pdf This article on the Panic of 1893 and the depression that followed is on the web site of the Saylor Academy, a nonprofit organization that provides free access to reading online course material. The site does not require registration or logging in, but access to exams and certificates of completion requires registration.

Schernikow, Ernest, "Salvador," The Philatelic Gazette, August 1916, pages 234-239. This article includes a photograph of Nicholas Seebeck that has appeared in many later articles about Seebeck.


Shorpy Historic Picture Archive, Huntsville, Alabama. Photograph of Astor House.

Sloane, George B., Stamps, December 24, 1949. This is the Vesey Street and Astor House reference found by Bill Welch and reported in The Seebecker, January 1991.

Staten Island Philatelic Society, minutes of July 17, 1889, The American Philatelist, August 1889, pages 322-323.

Towle, Ross A., and Stafford, Glen, "Rudolph P. Laubenheimer, the Hamilton company, and Nicaragua," Nicaragua, April 2018, Vol. 27, No. 2, pages 2-7. This article pictures 21 die proofs sold at auction in 2014 that were made for Nicaragua envelopes or wrappers of 1890-1893 and 1895. Laubenheimer also worked on die proofs for the Seebeck contract on El Salvador, Honduras, and Ecuador (contract from Henry Etheridge), on United States envelope dies, and others.

Welch, Bill (William, L.), "Inside Hamilton Bank Note Co.," The American Philatelist, March 1989, pages 234-246. This important article is about the Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Co. and Seebeck, as seen through the company Minute Books. As editor of the American Philatelist, Welch used “Bill Welch” as his byline. The article title uses the short company name that sometimes also was used by the Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Co. The short name made a good fit on the American Philatelist page. Throughout the article, Welch used the long name or merely “Hamilton” except in one instance in referring to the minutes of January 11, 1892. The article includes a long section of excerpts from personal letters of W.R. Grace concerning the Hamilton company’s bid in 1893 for the United States postage stamp contract. Hamilton was the high bidder. After litigation, the contract eventually was awarded to the Bureau of Engraving and Printing, which did not participate in the initial bidding.

Welch, William L., "The Life and Works of Nicholas F. Seebeck," The Collectors Club Philatelist, May-June 1995, pages 147-154. This article is based on a presentation to the members of the Collectors Club of New York, so its style is breezy. Many general statements are not supported by sources, details, or facts, but the article pictures important images.

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* pages glued together in Minute Books  ** pages missing
Baker, Edward P. – Baker formerly was vice president of Franklin Bank Note Company, according the Hamilton minutes of January 12, 1885. Baker previously was the agent for the Continental Bank Note Company in at least 1874, according to a court document; 1876, according to Mueller; and 1878, according to the Commercial and Financial Chronicle. Baker was a director of the Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Company from 1899 until 1905. The March 1909 Trow directory listed Baker as treasurer, with Schernikow president and Edward C. Osborn secretary, plus other Seebeck allies.

Chisolm, Alexander Robert (1834-1910) – Chisolm was a Southernler from South Carolina who was raised in New York City by an aunt and uncle. At age 18, he returned to his family’s Coosaw Plantation in Beaufort, called Chisolm’s Island, which he and his sister had inherited, as well as inheriting 250 slaves. He served as aide-de-camp to Gen. Pierre G.T. Beauregard. He became a Charleston shipping merchant after selling his plantation but moved to New York City in 1870. Airy Hall was his country residence in Morristown, N.J. His papers, 1861-1908, are held at the New-York Historical Society.

Denman, Charles H. – Denman served as Hamilton treasurer for only a few months in 1893. He left to become cashier at Standard Rope and Twine Co. He was a director of Hamilton and held 100 shares, according to his testimony in the lawsuit that began with the summons served August 9, 1894, plaintiff New York Bank Note Company, defendants Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Company of New York and Kidder Press Manufacturing Company of Boston. The case went to trial June 19, 1896. A Denman connection to Grace or Sage is not documented.


Gray, Charles E. – Gray was treasurer of the New York Bank Note Company before joining Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Company in 1892 as vice president, replacing James W. Johnson. Gray became a trustee and vice president at the meeting of July 8, 1892. He became general manager of the company on April 10, 1893. Gray resigned his general manager’s position at the meeting held October 16, 1893, effective immediately. Chairman Grace, according to the minutes, described the resignation as “a businesslike act for which Mr. Gray should be commended, it being in furtherance of what was believed to be for the interests of the company.” The minutes refer to a new contract for Gray that does not appear to have gone into effect. The last trustees meeting that Gray attended was November 11, 1893.

Johnston, James W. – Johnston resigned as Hamilton vice president at the meeting of July 8, 1892. He resigned as a trustee at the meeting of April 10, 1893. His death was reported at the January 9, 1894, stockholders meeting.

Krack, Charles E. (died 1902) – Krak’s resignation as a trustee was accepted at the meeting held June 26, 1891. It was not accepted at the meeting held July 8, 1892. Krak worked as manager of his family’s Knickerbocker Bathing Company, an operator of floating baths in the harbor of New York City. On June 26, 1899, three days after Seebeck died, the trustees appointed Krak to be general manager of the company. The trustees discharged him effective December 30, 1899, “to the best interest of the company,” words the minutes attribute to President Tonjes.

Osborn, Edward C. – Osborn became Hamilton secretary April 10, 1893. Osborn also testified in 1896 in the lawsuit brought in August 1894 by the New York Bank Note Co. against the Hamilton and Kidder firms. In his testimony, he said he owned 100 shares of Hamilton stock and that he worked as a clerk in the office of Russell Sage. Sage called him his “cashier.” Two questions asked during his cross-examination implied that Osborn could have been an agent of another shareholder, a puppet who could provide influence and cast another vote while he was trustee. Objections to the questions were sustained. Osborn became a Hamilton trustee April 10, 1893. He resigned as a trustee August 23, 1893, the day William R. Grace and cronies formally took over, but Osborn continued as Hamilton secretary through the entire Grace presidency.

Schaefer, J. Louis (1867-1927) – Schaefer was part of the takeover of Hamilton by W.R. Grace and cronies. Schaefer was elected treasurer at the meeting held August 23, 1893. He was not elected to be a trustee until the meeting of October 13, 1893. Schaefer served as treasurer un-
SYNOPSIS OF THE MINUTE BOOKS OF THE HAMILTON BANK NOTE ENGRAVING AND PRINTING COMPANY

1884-1899

1884

1884 Jan 16 at 61 Broadway 1:3 pages 1-2 * founders: Chisolm Thurber Wagner
elected Chisolm as president
elected Thurber as treasurer
elected Wagner as secretary
approved purchase of presses, tools, dies, and more
from Thomas Jordan [25,000 shares issued to Jordan, according to minutes of January 10, 1885, 5,000 of which Jordan transferred to Chisolm ]

1884 Feb 11 at 61 Broadway 1:3 2 trustees: Chisolm Thurber Wagner
set stockholders meeting for March 5 to increase
increased capital stock to $100,000 and to advertise
the note in Mining Record and notify stockholders

1884 Mar 4 Tuesday at 61 Broadway 1:3 2-4, 6 trustees: Chisolm Thurber Wagner
minutes of Feb 11 approved
bylaws read by Wagner [and approved 1:4 6]
authorized Chisolm to vote at any stockholders meeting on 5,000 shares

1884 Mar 5 Wednesday at 61 Broadway 1:4 6-7 stockholders: Chisolm Thurber Wagner, Van Alst, Oliver
incurred capital stock to $100,000 and officers to take necessary steps therefore
appointed Thurber, Wagner, and Johnston to solicit subscriptions to stock [Minutes of January 12, 1885, said company was "without a dollar of working capital." And: "It was found impossible at that time to get any subscriptions to the increased stock."]
adjourned to March 31

1884 Apr 8 Tuesday at 61 Broadway 1:4 8-11 trustees: Chisolm Thurber Wagner
read and approved lengthy contract of 14 sections between the firm and Seebeck: Hamilton bought Seebeck’s engraving, lithographing, and stationery business at 95 Wall Street for 5,000 shares of Hamilton; Seebeck agreed to lease the Hamilton equipment and to pay rent [Minutes of January 12, 1885, date the contract arrangement with Seebeck to May 1]

1884 Apr 21 Monday at 61 Broadway 1:4 12 trustees: Chisolm Thurber Wagner
approved minutes of March 4 and April 8
approved stockholders minutes of March 5 and 31
increased board of trustees from 3 to 5
elected Seebeck as trustee
accepted resignation of Wagner as secretary
elected Seebeck as secretary and business manager
accepted resignation of Thurber as treasurer
elected Thurber as vice president
appointed Seebeck as treasurer pro tem

1884 Oct 10 at 61 Broadway 2:1 1-2 trustees: Chisolm Thurber Wagner Seebeck
minutes of April 21 approved
approved resignation of Chisolm as president
elected Edward P. Baker as trustee and president

1884 Dec 29 Monday at 61 Broadway 2:1 2-3 trustees: Thurber Chisolm Wagner Seebeck
Thurber acted as chairman pro tem
approved minutes of October 10
approved immediate efforts to obtain subscriptions to capital stock of not less than $25,000 [company badly needs cash to operate]
approved installment share certificates
approved bill presented by Thurber for expenses prior to May 1, 1884
ordered president to create paperwork to make the issue of 70,000 shares legal

1885

1885 Jan 8 Thursday at 61 Broadway 2:1 3 trustees: Baker Thurber Wagner Seebeck
approved minutes of "previous meeting"
increased board of trustees from 5 to 7 and attorney to file the necessary papers
reconsidered and laid over installment certificates

1885 Jan 9 Friday at 61 Broadway 2:1 3 trustees: Baker Thurber Wagner Seebeck
minutes of "previous meeting" approved
installment certificates removed from table for action

1885 Jan 10 Saturday at 61 Broadway 2:1 3-4 trustees: Baker Thurber Wagner Seebeck

* The Seebecker, volume, number, pages.
approved minutes of “previous meeting” elected Thos. Jordan as trustee elected John R. Price as trustee

**1885 Jan 12 at 61 Broadway 2:1 6-7**

stockholders read long letter on transactions of past year; it refers to 1884 being a depressing year (the Panic of 1884 during the depression of 1882-1885), to a contract to print banknotes for Bolivar, and to the willingness of the holder of the assignment of the chattel mortgage and notes to accept 5,000 Hamilton shares in settlement once 25,000 shares are subscribed for elected seven trustees: Baker, Chisolm, Thurber, W.C. Findlay, Wagner, Jordan, Seebeck

**1885 Feb 6 Friday at 61 Broadway 2:1 7-8**

trustees: Baker Thurber Chisolm Wagner Seebeck dispensied with reading of previous minutes cast one ballot for officers for 1885. Baker president, Thurber vice president, Seebeck secretary, manager, and treasurer appointed Thurber Baker Seebeck as committee to examine advisability of purchasing from Chas. W. Girsch plates, dies, rolls, and bedpieces of vignettes and titles in exchange for Hamilton stock

**1885 Mar 21 at 61 Broadway 2:1 8**

trustees: Baker Thurber Chisolm Wagner [ Findlay ] Findlay served as secretary pro tem

**1885 Mar 23 at 61 Broadway 2:1 8-10**

trustees: Thurber Findlay Wagner Seebeck Thurber chaired the meeting until Baker arrived discussion only, no business transacted

**1885 Mar 24 at 61 Broadway 2:1 10**

trustees: Baker Thurber Chisolm Wagner Seebeck authorized the leasing of suitable rooms for the use of the company in the Washington Building, No. 1 Broadway, for three years

**1885 Apr 15 Tuesday [ place not recorded ] 2:1 10**

trustees: Baker Seebeck Thurber Chisolm Findlay approved minutes of January 10, February 6, March 21, March 23, and March 24 approved purchase dated February 10 from Girsch and issued to him 1,500 shares accepted resignation of Jordan as trustee elected John E. Bughbee as trustee

| There is no record of approval of the minutes for April 15, 1885, |
| 1885 Apr 23 | place not recorded | 2:1 11 |

trustees: Thurber Seebeck Baker Thurber chaired meeting called for stockholders meeting on May 18 to reduce company capital stock to $75,000 called for publication of meeting notice for three weeks in Mining Record and for notices to be sent to shareholders of record

| There is no record of approval of the minutes for April 23, 1885, |
| 1885 May 18 Monday at No. 1 Broadway 2:1 12-13 |

stockholders: Baker, Thurber, A.R. Chisolm, Wagner, Seebeck, Jordan, and Chas. Skinner, T.A. Bradley, C.W. Girsch, A.L. Helm, A. Chisolm [ duplicate name ] J. Goodwin, J.R. Price, G.E. Gibbons by proxy to Chisolm, W.J. Johnston by proxy to Thurber, and H. Osborn reduced capital stock to $75,000 by vote of stockholders according to number of shares – of the 25,176 shares voted, Seebeck cast 9,000 and A.R. Chisolm 5,000; Price, Girsch, and Thurber had the next highest numbers of shares changed by vote of shares the par value of a share to $25 from $1

| There is no record of approval of the minutes for May 18, 1885, |
| 1885 June 29 Monday at No. 1 Broadway 2:1 13-14 |

trustees: Baker Thurber Seebeck Chisolm Wagner and later Findlay read and approved by resolution Seebeck’s letter of June 25 – in the letter he offered to cancel his agreement of April 8, 1884, and the renewal of March 19, 1885, and turn over to Hamilton all contracts obtained during the agreement, plates, rolls, dies, machinery, paper, and the plant in general, and all outstanding assets, for the sum of $29,500 approved three-year lease for company offices for premises at No. 1 Broadway [ the Washington Building, constructed 1882-1885 ] approved with conditions new certificate for 55 shares for T.M. Worthington for lost No. 43

**1885 Sep 10 at 61 Broadway 2:1 14-15**

trustees: Baker Thurber Findlay Seebeck approved minutes of "previous meeting" fixed salary for E.P. Baker as president at $3,000 per year as of May 1, 1885 fixed salary of N.F. Seebeck as secretary, treasurer, and manager at $3,000 per year as of May 1, 1885

| fixed salary of George W. Thurber $30 per week from May 1, 1885, to November 1, 1885, for services as superintendent of engraving, transferring, and plate printing departments and as engraver, not as vice president |

appointed committee of Baker and Thurber to negotiate with Girsch over his desired release from agreement with Hamilton

**1885 Sep 21 Monday at office of company 2:1 15-16**

trustees: Baker Chisolm Findlay Th [ urber ] Seebeck designated Third National Bank as company depository appointed a committee of three (sic, Chisolm, Seebeck, Findlay, Baker) to look into assets (plates, rolls, dies, paper, inks, furniture) of the Hamilton Bank Note Company or of any individual that “it is desirable shall become the property of this company and if so what are the best means to obtain possession of such articles.” This refers to the Hamilton company founded in 1881. approved cancellation and settlement of contract with Girsch made February 10, 1885

**1885 Oct 16 Friday at No. 1 Broadway 2:1 16-17**

trustees: Baker Thurber Findlay Seebeck authorized the purchase of plates, dies, etc. of the Hamilton Bank Note Company [ 1881 company ] but not to exceed $800, the amount of indebtedness “now represented to this company to be about $800.”

**1885 Nov 10 Tuesday at No. 1 Broadway 2:1 17**

trustees: Chisolm Baker Thurber Wagner Findlay Seebeck approved minutes of June 29, September 11 [ sic, 10 ], September 21, October 16 approved committee of Baker, Findlay and Seebeck to look into “the matter of the El. R.R. [ Elevated Rail Road ] contract” heard report of settlement with Girsch heard report of officers of consummation of purchase of old plates, etc. from Hamilton Bank Note Co. [ The minutes are not signed. ]

**1886 Jan 11 at the office of the company 2:2 8**

trustees: Baker Thurber Chisolm Wagner Seebeck heard and approved reports of president and treasurer to shareholders

**1886 Jan 11 Monday at No. 1 Broadway 2:2 9-10**

shareholders rescinded the authorization to change par value of Hamilton stock from $1 to $25 read and approved reports of president and treasurer elected as trustees Baker Seebeck Chisolm Tonjes |

| sic, Tonjes | Findlay C.B. Thurston Thurber: also receiving votes was Geo. W. Robertson |

**1886 July 22 at No. 1 Broadway 2:2 10**

trustees: Baker Thurber Chisolm Seebeck general discussion heard resignations of Thurber and Findlay [ The minutes are not signed. ]

**1886 Aug 30 at No. 1 Broadway 2:2 10**

trustees: Thurston Chisolm Baker Seebeck approved minutes of November 10, 1885, January 11, 1886, and July 22, 1886 elected Baker as president at salary of $3,000 per year elected Seebeck as secretary and treasurer at salary of $3,000 per year accepted resignations of Thurber and Findlay as trustees elected A. Reasoner as trustee approved because of an “increase in business” the ordering of an additional ticket printing press at about $2,500 approved bonus of $100 for employee Thomas White approved transfer by treasurer of company funds to U.S. National Bank from Third National Bank

**1886 Nov 9 Tuesday at No. 1 Broadway 2:2 11**

trustees: Baker Seebeck Chisolm Thurston Reasoner approved minutes of August 30, 1886 general discussion

**1886 Dec 14 Tuesday at No. 1 Broadway 2:2 11**

trustees: Thurston Reasoner Baker Seebeck approved minutes of November 9, 1886

**1887 Jan 10 Monday at No. 1 Broadway 2:2 11-12**

stockholders read and accepted treasurer’s report elected as trustees were Baker Seebeck Chisolm, S. Jacoby, F.C. Valentine, H.F.W. Poggenburg, and C.B. Thurston

**1887 Jan 11 Tuesday at No. 1 Broadway 2:2 12**

trustees: no quorum present

**1887 Feb 8 Tuesday at No. 1 Broadway 2:2 12**

trustees: no quorum present

**1887 Mar 8 Tuesday at No. 1 Broadway 2:2 13**

trustees: no quorum present

**1887 Apr 12 Tuesday at No. 1 Broadway 2:2 13**

trustees: no quorum present

130 M U E S E S – S E E B E C K

131 M U E S E S – S E E B E C K
1887 May 10 Tuesday at No. 1 Broadway 2:2 13 trustees: no quorum present

1887 June 14 Tuesday at No. 1 Broadway 2:2 13 trustees: no quorum present

1887 July 12 Tuesday at No. 1 Broadway 2:2 13 trustees: no quorum present

1887 July 20 Wednesday at No. 1 Broadway 2:2 13 trustees: Chisolm Baker Valentine Seebeck approved minutes of December 14, 1886 laid over until next meeting the matter of procuring new bondsman on Elevated RR contract authorized treasurer to raise money to pay demand notes falling due on debt, but no money to be paid for procuring new bond until Baldwin debt is paid approved request to Baldwin to allow his name to continue on the bond of the company to the Elevated RR contract elected P.C. Valentine as vice president without salary

1887 July 27 Wednesday at No. 1 Broadway 2:2 13-14 trustees; Thurston Chisolm Valentine Seebeck Valentine chaired meeting approved minutes of July 20, 1887 elected Chisolm as president without salary elected Seebeck as secretary, treasurer, and manager

1887 Aug 31 Wednesday at No. 1 Broadway 2:2 14 trustees; Chisolm Valentine Thurston Seebeck approved salary of $3,000 per year for Seebeck as secretary, treasurer, and manager approved no salaries for those holding offices of president and vice president

1888

1888 Jan 9 Monday at No. 1 Broadway 2:3 4 stockholders approved minutes of “last meeting” referred treasurer’s report to committee of three including Robertson here the transcription breaks off because, Welch recompiled, pages 77–78 were glued together. Are those back-to-back pages?

1888. The date of the following actions is not certain, but they all occurred in 1888 at the same meeting: 2:3, pages 4-5 elected Valentine as vice president without salary elected Seebeck as secretary, treasurer, and manager at an annual salary of $3,000 approved issuing of 200 shares of stock to R.M. Jordan, 250 shares of stock to D. Calman, 200 shares of stock to W.H. English for value received and services rendered, said shares now in name of Seebeck [Calman is believed to be David Calman, born 1858, a lawyer and older brother of Gustave and Henry, made various changes to bylaws adopted annual report and ordered it published ordered that report of stock fully paid be recorded and filed

1889

1889 Jan 14 Monday at No. 1 Broadway 2:3 5-6 stockholders approved minutes of “last meeting” referred treasurer’s report to committee of Thurber and Hermann Cohen [Thurber’s resignation as trustee was accepted at the meeting of August 30, 1886, but he remained a shareholder.] accepted treasurer’s report for 1887 filed unnotated communication from Baker elected as trustees Chisolm Reasoner Cohen Valentine Johnston Krack Seebeck

1889 Sep 19 Thursday at No. 1 Broadway 2:3 6 trustees; Chisolm Cohen Krack Seebeck approved minutes of “last meeting” elected Chisolm as president without salary elected Valentine as vice president without salary elected Seebeck as secretary, treasurer, and manager at $3,000 per year heard and filed report of treasurer

1890

1890 Jan 13 Monday at No. 1 Broadway 2:3 6-8 stockholders approved minutes of “last annual meeting” approved committee of two to audit treasurer’s report and president so appointed Cohen and Skinner approved treasurer’s report for 1888 elected as trustees Chisolm Cohen Johnston Knack English Calman Seebeck approved payment of cash dividend of 2½ percent for six months as soon as the cash on hand warrants approved the taking of steps to have company’s stock accepted on the Stock Exchange approved payment of $5 per meeting for each trustee and that meetings be held at least once in three months and that the directors so amend the bylaws

1890 Jan 13 Monday at No. 1 Broadway 2:3 9 trustees; Chisolm English Krack Calvin Cohen elected Chisolm as president without salary elected Seebeck as treasurer, secretary, and manager at $3,000 per year deferred election of vice president for 30 days [election occurred December 16, 1890.] elected Knack as secretary [pro tem.] of directors [trustees] at meeting [Seebeck absent]

1890 May 8 Thursday at No. 1 Broadway 2:3 9 trustees; Johnston Chisolm Cohen English Krack Seebeck approved minutes of “last meeting” filed approximate account of treasurer for April appointed committee of three to look into leasing new premises

1890 June 24 Tuesday [at No. 1 Broadway] 2:3 9-10 trustees; Chisolm Johnston Knack Seebeck and later English appointed Knack secretary pro tem even though Seebeck was present approved committee of two to examine treasurer’s report for 1889 and Johnston and Cohen appointed approved accepting of letter from Seebeck about his payment to the Hamilton firm for engraving bills etc. for San Salvador [sic], Nicaragua, and Honduras for the term of 10 years for his contract with Hamilton dated June 20, 1890 accepted approximate account of treasurer for May authorized treasurer to transfer bank account from U.S. National Bank to “Seventh National and Washington National Bank”

1890 Dec 16 Tuesday [at No. 1 Broadway] 2:3 10 trustees; Johnston Cohen English Krack Seebeck appointed Knack secretary pro tem even though Seebeck was present approved minutes of “last meeting” elected Johnston as vice president approved five-year lease at Gold and Ferry streets at $5,000 per year

1891

1891 Jan 12 Monday at No. 1 Broadway 3:1 6-8 stockholders; Schernikow Chisolm Johnston Cohen Thurston Krack Kendall approved minutes of “last annual meeting” approved treasurer’s report elected as trustees Chisolm Johnston Jacoby Seebeck Schernikow Cohen – also receiving votes was F.G. Taylor filed president’s report deferred approval of election of vice president for 30 days [election occurred December 16, 1890.] elected Knack as secretary [pro tem.] of directors [trustees] at meeting [Seebeck absent]

1891 May 8 Thursday at No. 1 Broadway 2:3 9 trustees; Johnston Chisolm Cohen English Krack Seebeck approved minutes of “last meeting” filed approximate account of treasurer for April appointed committee of three to look into leasing new premises

1891 June 24 Tuesday [at No. 1 Broadway] 2:3 10-11 trustees; Chisolm Johnston Schernikow Cohen Jacoby Knack approved Knack secretary of meeting [Seebeck absent] elected Chisolm as president elected Johnston as vice president elected Seebeck as secretary, treasurer, and general manager at a salary of $3,000 per year appointed Knack acting secretary of company] in addition to the duties he now performs but without any additional increase of salary tabled a resolution to pay the president a salary until next board meeting resolved that the company should be in actual possession of all its contracts, papers and other property referring to the business of this operation and that a copy of this resolution be sent to Mr. N.F. Seebeck with request to speedily carry out its intent pasted in here is the company annual report, a few paragraphs dated January 7, 1891, noting: $75,000 of capital stock all paid and issued for cash or property, and indebtedness not exceeding $8,000

1891 June 26 [probably at No. 1 Broadway] 3:1 10 trustees; Chisolm Jacoby Johnston Seebeck Schernikow approved minutes of “previous meetings” resolved to keep company’s papers in Safe Deposit Co. in name of secretary and treasurer canceled certificate No. 55 and reimbursed Chisolm $10 for buying up the certificate referred a bill against A.R. Chisolm & Co. to a committee of Jacoby, Cohen, and Seebeck accepted the resignation of Knack as trustee elected F.G. Taylor as treasurer

1891 Sep 18 [probably at No. 1 Broadway] 3:1 11 trustees; Seebeck Taylor Chisolm Jacoby Schernikow Johnston Cohen approved minutes of “previous meeting”
Manhattan Railway Company

The Manhattan Railway Company of financiers Jay Gould, Cyrus Field, and Russell Sage dominated ground transportation in pre-subway Manhattan and the Bronx in the 1880s and 1890s. The company was responsible for millions of passenger tickets, buying them from New York Bank Note Co. for five years beginning in April 1888 and from Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Co. for 10 years beginning in April 1893.

Manhattan Railway Co. was founded in 1875. In beginning May 1879, it leased the Metropolitan Elevated Railway (Sixth Avenue line and eventually the Second Avenue line) and the New York Elevated Railroad (Third Avenue and Ninth Avenue lines). In July 1891, it added a lease of the Suburban Rapid Transit Company line in the Bronx.

The company was known as the Elevated, Manhattan Elevated, and the EL in 1886. Gould gained control of both Metropolitan and New York Elevated. By 1887, Gould and Sage forced Field to sell his interests in both companies. Gould died December 2, 1892, leaving to his son his many companies, many of them under the direction of Russell Sage.

### 1892


- **Feb 4** Thursday at 88-90 Gold Street 3:12-13: trustees: Jacoby Chisolm Taylor Johnston Schernikow Seebeck Krack Seebeck acted as proxy pro tem of meeting approved minutes of “previous meeting” elected Seebeck as president, treasurer, and manager at an annual salary of $3,000 for all offices or either elected Johnston as vice president without salary elected Schernikow as secretary without salary referred to committee of Johnston and Taylor a bill for printing done by the company for the governments of Nicaragua, Honduras, El Salvador, and Ecuador, the bill to be assumed by and paid by N.F. Seebeck

- **April 1, 1893**
  - approved statement by Seebeck showing financial condition of the company: assets of $35,312.90, liabilities of $29,782.82 [sic], balance of $5,531.08, and “addition to plant for El. tickets,” $3,898.93
  - approved ratification of Seebeck's resignation of Krack as trustee
  - approved resignation of Johnston as vice president
  - approved resignation of Johnston as vice president
  - approved resignation of Krack as trustee
  - approved resignation of Gray as trustee
  - approved resignation of Schernikow as company secretary
  - approved resignation of Schernikow as secretary
  - approved resignation of Krack as trustee
  - approved resignation of Jacoby as trustee

- **July 8** at 88-90 Gold Street 3:13-14: trustees: John Chisolm Taylor Schernikow Seebeck Seebeck approved minutes of meeting held June 28, 1892 and accepted and filed the report of president that the contract with Gray was concluded but modified to exclude profit on work being fulfilled or already contracted for to and leave to the board the determination of his employment for balance of contract: Seebeck was ill, probably with tuberculosis, and Gray was being brought in from New York Bank Note Co. to help Seebeck and possibly to replace him as manager, which did happen on April 10, 1893.

### 1893

- **Jan 9** Monday at 88-90 Gold Street 3:15-16: stockholders approved minutes of “last annual meeting” filed treasurer’s report, copy to shareholders as desired elected as trustees Chisolm Jacoby Johnston Taylor Schernikow Gray Seebeck

- **Apr 10** Monday at 88-90 Gold Street 3:16-20: trustees: Seebeck Gray Taylor Johnston Schernikow Gray presided, not Seebeck

- **March 24, 1904**
  - Ingersoll-Granger Drill Company and Rand Drill Company merged in May 1905 to become Ingrisoll Rand. Saunders became its first president in 1906.
  - accepted resignation of Jacoby as trustee (letter dated April 4, 1893)

### 1894

- **May 25** Thursday at 88-90 Gold Street 3:2-5: trustees: Seebeck Saunders Dennis Osborn, [Ac noted, Saunders was a cronie of W.R. Grace, Osborn worked for Sage, Dennis uncertain. dispensed with reading of minutes of previous meeting amended bylaws in two sections to read “general manager” instead of only “manager” sanctioned action of the vice president and treasurer (continued on page 137)
SECRET AGREEMENT MADE APRIL 4, 1893, BY NICHOLAS F. SEEBECK WITH W.R. GRACE AND RUSSELL SAGE

Does the following 1896 court testimony explain the nature of the secret agreement?

The company minutes of January 9, 1899, mention the secret agreement.

Edward P. Lyon, attorney for plaintiff New York Bank Note Company

William L. Turner, attorney for defendant Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Company

George H. Kendall, president of plaintiff New York Bank Note Company of West Virginia and previously treasurer, general manager or president of New York Bank Note Company of New Jersey

GEORGE H. KENDALL, recalled, in answer to MR. LYON[,] testified:

“I remember having a conversation with Mr. Seebeck at the Brevoort House in or about August, 1893, wherein reference was made to the use of the Kidder Perfecting Press by the Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Company.”

Q. “I want you to state briefly and simply as you can that conversation, using the exact language when you can.”

Objected to by Mr. Turner as incompetent, immaterial and irrelevant. Objection overruled. Excepted.

A. “I can use the exact language very closely. I was at the Brevoort House in August, 1893, in New York City, with Mr. Seebeck, and Mr. Seebeck said that Mr. Gray had consented to go out; that he would probably not want to buy the stock of the company because all the money they had got out of him was all gone. And I said to Mr. Seebeck: ‘that will not prevent sometime my getting my redress in this matter.’ ”

He said: “It doesn’t make any difference to me; I have a contract with Sage and Grace; the contract provides that my stock shall be turned back to me at the end of five years; that the company shall have no more debts at that time than it had at the time when I made the contract with them, and if you get a judgment against this company they will be obliged to make the loss good to me.”

“Under the contract between Seebeck and Sage and Grace; that Grace and Sage will be obliged to make good any loss that I sustain through a judgment against yours against the Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Company, and I don’t care. Because of this, he said further: ‘I have had this contract drawn up by the best lawyers in this city, and not content with that I have taken it to my lawyers, and I have had it reviewed by another law firm, and it binds Sage and Grace firmly, and it is by me deposited in the safe deposit vault, and no man can ever come to me or my interest in it in the Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Company on account of anything that you do by reason of our getting hold of this press through Gray.’ ”

COURT.

Q. “Have you stated all the whole conversation?”

(Witness:) “No; he said, ‘Gray has made the biggest fool of himself that ever was; that he has lost all this money in the bank note end of the business, and now Gray has not got it; Sage and Grace are down on him, and as a matter of fact his — the friends that were his — are now mine, and the friends that were yours are now mine; Sage and Grace who used to be our directors you have lost; I have got them, and I have got your press, and I have got the Manhattan contract, and, further than that. I have got it back with Sage and Grace’s agreement, and, if I am not on top, I don’t know.”

NICHOLAS F. SEEBECK recalled.

By Mr. Turner: Q. “You have heard Mr. Kendall’s testimony as to conversations which he said he had with you at the Brevoort House, did you have any such conversation?”

A. “I did not.”

This testimony comprises Section Nos. 1463-1470 by the New York Bank Note Co. case documents, pages 367-369.
accepted resignation of Seebeck as president with thanks for his faithful service—Sage added that the Manhattan Railroad Company would not object elected Grace as president of the company
Gray resigned the chair in favor of Grace
accepted resolution of Gray that he receive 10 per cent of net profits of pending and future business

1893 Oct 13

Broadway 3:2 13-14

trustees: Grace Sage Gray Seebeck Taylor

resolved original countersigning language to bylaws, Article 4, Section 1 and Section 4, that was changed June 22, 1893

1893 Oct 16 Monday at office of Russell Sage, 71

Broadway 3:2 14-15

trustees: Grace Sage Gray Seebeck Taylor Schaefer

dispensed with reading of minutes

read and filed report of committee on treasurer's report

filed with thanks report prepared by Seebeck on the accounts of the company

accepted resignation of Gray immediately as vice president and general manager, and the chairman thanked Gray for his "business-like act for which Mr. Gray should be commended, it being in furtherance of what was believed to be for the interests of the company"

elected Seebeck as vice president

elected Seebeck as general manager

discussed financial status of company and heard Seebeck announce he "is willing to allow the amounts due him from the company to stand" and willing to do his part "to carry the financial burdens of the company"

stated that it was understood that management of company was in the hands of the general manager

planned for special meeting to amend bylaws to create office of second vice president

1893 Oct 23 Monday at office of Russell Sage, 71

Broadway 3:2 15-16

trustees: Grace Sage Seebeck Taylor Gray Schaefer

approved minutes of meetings held October 12, October 13, and October 16, and the trustees special meeting held October 13

authorized vice president to sign checks along with the treasurer, the same as the president

referred suit of E.B. Camacho against the company to the company's attorney, Mr. Turner

referred suit of Edgar Fray against the company for $10,000 to the company’s attorney

referred proposed contract of Gray, resolution of August 23, to vice president and treasurer

heard of proposed railroad ticket order from Webbe approved that settlement of F.G. Miller’s claim be left to president

referred claim of A.H. Ward to vice president, treasurer, and Gray for settlement

referred claim of C.W. Dickinson & Sons to vice president and treasurer for more information

1893 Nov 11 Saturday at Lincoln National Bank 3:2

16-17

trustees: Grace Sage Seebeck Taylor Gray

dispensed with reading of minutes

Grace announced that no new contract was made with Gray

discussed with Seebeck and Sage a possible commission-only contract with Gray for only four months, with decision left open until November 13

agreed to have president and vice president write agreement as proposed by Seebeck for him to keep company solvent and out of debt, as long as he remains manager and with other conditions as proposed by Seebeck

agreed that the matter of bidding for the U.S. Government postage stamp contract be left with the president and vice president

1893 Nov 13 Monday at Lincoln National Bank 3:2

17-18

trustees: Grace Sage Seebeck Webb Taylor

heard of receipt of letter from Gray accepting notice that his contract with company was terminated

discussed another possible restricted commission contract for Gray

the agreement with Seebeck was not ready, and Seebeck repeated his guarantee to keep the company from a loss contingent on loan from trustees

selected Seebeck and Webb as bondsmen on the preliminary bond that must accompany the bid for the U.S. postage stamp contract

left to officers the matter of bidding for the Brooklyn Bridge ticket contract, advocated by Seebeck

1894

1894 Jan 8 Monday at 88-90 Gold Street 3:3 5-6

stockholders

approved minutes of meeting held January 9, 1993

expressed regrets over death of James W. Johnston

approved resolution of Grace and Gray for settlement

approved contract for paper for Manhattan Railway Company tickets for one year with option to renew for two years at 2½¢ per pound, 30 days less 4 percent set salary of vice president and general manager at $6,000 per year beginning April 1, 1894

1894 July 25 Wednesday at office of Russell Sage, 71

Broadway 3:3 7-8

trustees: Grace Sage Seebeck Taylor Schaefer

approved minutes of meetings held Oct 23, 1893, Nov 11, 1893, Nov 13, 1893, Jan 17, 1894

heard statement from George W. Dodd concerning claim against company by C.W. Dickinson & Sons referred claim of F.G. Miller to the vice president and treasurer for settlement at a reasonable sum discussed converting debt of trustees to stock in connection with desired listing on Stock Exchange

heard report of vice president and general manager on condition of company

authorized contract for paper for Manhattan Railroad Company tickets for one year with option to renew for two years at 2½¢ per pound, 30 days less 4 percent set salary of vice president and general manager at $6,000 per year beginning April 1, 1894

[On August 9, 1894, the original summons and complaint by New York Bank Note Company were filed against Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Company and against Kidder Press Manufacturing Company. The issue was the violation of an 1891 contract between New York Bank Note Company and Kidder Press Manufacturing Company. The available pages of the Hamilton Minute Books mention Kidder only in the minutes of June 15, 1893, and October 6, 1897. They mention New York Bank Note only in the same minutes and in those for July 13, 1899. It is interesting, but not necessarily relevant, that the missing pages in the Minute Books cover the five months after the lawsuit began. The sidebar on page 140 explains the highlights of the lawsuit.]

1895

[Pages 150-151 are missing from Minute Books]

[The following meeting is by extrapolation from a fragment of minutes on page 152]

1895 Jan 14 Monday location unknown but probably company offices 3:3 8

stockholders

[elected as trustees: Grace Sage Seebeck Taylor Schaefer – others elected are not named in minutes of the following meeting – see January 31, 1895]
New York Bank Note Company sues the Hamilton and Kidder companies

The lawsuit concerned the contract New York Bank Note Company signed October 12, 1891, with Kidder Press Manufacturing Company to purchase a second Kidder strip-ticket perfecting press for $4,500. This type of press, in one operation for multiple rolls of tickets, printed two colors on one side, printed one color on the reverse, numbered the tickets, and perforated them.

As part of the contract to purchase the press from Kidder, New York Bank Note negotiated a 20-year monopoly with Kidder over what companies also might purchase such a press.

New York Bank Note had a five-year contract to furnish tickets to the Manhattan Railway Company, signed August 18, 1887, and effective April 1, 1888.

In 1892, Hamilton acquired the next five-year contract for strip tickets with Manhattan Railway Company, the Hamilton trustees approving it at the meeting held December 8, 1892. On June 15, 1893, the Hamilton trustees in attendance (Seebeck, Gray, Denman, Osborn) approved the purchase of a strip-ticket printing press "similar to the press now in use by the New York Bank Note Company." Kidder built and delivered this press to the Hamilton firm.

Hamilton previously had purchased a Kidder strip-ticket press, but it required two runs to print both sides. Hamilton had Kidder modify this press so it also would perform all printing and finishing operations in one press run.

New York Bank Note brought suit on August 9, 1894. An interlocutory judgment in favor of New York Bank Note was made on November 17, 1894. All three companies appealed the terms, with various amended complaints and supplements.

The trial before Appellate Judge Frederick Smyth of the New York Supreme Court began June 19, 1896. Seebeck was among those deposed. Decisions in favor of New York Bank Note were made September 13, 1895, and in October 4, 1897. The interlocutory judgment was entered June 8, 1898. The three companies filed appeals in May 1904 over a perpetual injunction granted to New York Bank Note and over the amount of damages awarded to New York Bank Note, $60,564.95, a reduction from a referred amount of $105,248.38, and over the computation of interest.

Among the arguments for defendants Hamilton and Kidder was that New York Bank Note had been chartered in New Jersey but on or about January 1, 1893, had been reorganized in West Virginia and that the terms of the 1891 contract with Kidder would not transfer to the company chartered in 1893 in West Virginia. The court did not agree with the defendants.

1896

1896 Jan 9 Thursday at office of Russell Sage, 71 Broadway 3:3 9-10

Trustees: Grace Sage Seebeck Taylor Schaefer elected as trustees not known – minutes of the following meeting on January 16 name the old board but do not name the new board that immediately convened after the old board adjourned 

1896 Jan 13 Thursday at office of Russell Sage, 71 Broadway 3:3 10

Elected as trustees: Grace Sage Jacoby Schaefer Schernikow approved minutes of meeting held January 9, 1896 assigned to vice president and general manager the power to renew lease for one year or two years voted $500 as compensation to treasurer for services during year voted $100 as compensation to secretary for services during year confirmed that Seebeck accepted a reduced salary of $5,000 per year as of April 1, 1896 confirmed that payment of salary to Seebeck up to April 1, 1896, was at rate of $6,000 per year [The new board of trustees then immediately convened to elect officers. ]

Jacoby presided

elected Grace as president

elected Seebeck as vice president and general manager

elected J. Louis Schaefer as treasurer

elected Osborn as secretary

Referred bill from W.L. Turner to vice president and treasurer, with opinion that it was excessive authorized general manager to accept from Mr. Sprague a bond order at a cost of $1,000, bonds to be listed on Stock Exchange - $1,000 a cost a concern approved $5 for trustees and secretary for each meeting attended

1897

1897 Jan 14 Thursday at office of Russell Sage, 71 Broadway 3:3 13

Elected as president: Grace Sage Jacoby Seebeck Schaefer Schernikow approved minutes of meeting held January 14, 1896 heard from Seebeck that lease for offices was renewed for two years filed report of president and general manager filed report of treasurer old board adjourned, and the new board of trustees then immediately convened to elect officers

1897 March 8 Monday at office of Russell Sage, 71 Broadway 3:3 14

Elected Grace as president, elected Seebeck as vice president and general manager, elected J. Louis Schaefer as treasurer, elected Osborn as secretary

Authorized execution and signing contract by vice president and secretary “in case the proposed contract be modified by omitting the clause in regard to Mr. Seebeck”

1897 March 10 Wednesday at office of Russell Sage, 71 Broadway 3:3 14-17

Elected: Sage Jacoby Schernikow Schaefer Seebeck

Approved minutes of meetings held January 14, 1897, and March 8, 1897

Approved a bond indemnify Sage, Seebeck, and Grace regarding the Hamilton contract to supply tickets to the Manhattan Railway Company, contract guaranteed by the three, with $25,000 liquidated

1895

1895 Jan 31 Thursday at office of Russell Sage, 71 Broadway 3:3 14-17

Elected Grace as president

Elected Seebeck as vice president

Elected J. Louis Schaefer as treasurer

Elected Seebeck as general manager

Elected Osborn as secretary

Heard report dated Jan 31 handed in by Seebeck

Heard report of Seebeck on progress on contract for paper for Manhattan Railway Company tickets

Heard report of Schaefer that board would not entertain the claim of Dickinson & Sons and that claims of Miller and Ward were settled

1896

1896 Jan 9 Thursday at office of Russell Sage, 71 Broadway 3:3 9-10

Trustees: Grace Sage Seebeck Taylor Schaefer approved minutes of meeting held January 31, 1895

Heard report of Seebeck that contract for purchase of paper for Manhattan Railway Company tickets had been placed with Reynolds Card Co. for two years with option to terminate on three-month notice

Heard report by vice president and general manager on operations for the past year

Report by Seebeck on assets and liabilities held over for comment by treasurer

Left open the ratification of payments of salary to vice president and general manager since April 1, 1895 requested Seebeck to renegotiate lease of premises for one year with options for additional years and for floor below, or lease for two years plus conditions

Notice of stockholders meeting January 13, 1896, is pasted over part of minutes of that meeting, [Page 156 is missing from the Minute Books]

The following heading is by extrapolation from notice and meeting held January 16

1897

1897 Jan 11 Monday at 88-90 Gold Street 3:3 12-13

Stockholders

Pasted notice of meeting obscures a few lines of text of the minutes

Elected as trustees Grace Sage Depew Webb Fitzgerald Seebeck Schernikow Schaefer in the voting, Seebeck delegated authority to Grace to vote 38,000 shares by proxy for Seebeck

Heard report of vice president and general manager the minutes note that the total capital stock of the company was 75,000 shares and that each elected trustee received 57,337 shares voted notarized statements of election inspectors pasted in
During 1885-1891, the Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Co. leased offices in the Washington Building at No. 1 Broadway in New York City. This circa 1890 view looking northwest from the Washington Building shows the junction of the Ninth Avenue and Sixth Avenue elevated railways of the Manhattan Railway Co. and a sign of rival American Bank Note Co. The Hamilton company fulfilled contracts to supply passenger strip tickets to the Manhattan Railway Co. during 1885-1888, 1889-1897, 1897-1899, and 1899-1902.

1897 Oct 6 Wednesday at office of Russell Sage, 31 Nassau Street 3:3 17-20

During 1885-1891, the Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Co. leased offices in the Washington Building at No. 1 Broadway in New York City. This circa 1890 view looking northwest from the Washington Building shows the junction of the Ninth Avenue and Sixth Avenue elevated railways of the Manhattan Railway Co. and a sign of rival American Bank Note Co. The Hamilton company fulfilled contracts to supply passenger strip tickets to the Manhattan Railway Co. during 1885-1888, 1889-1897, 1897-1899, and 1899-1902.

1897 Oct 6 Wednesday at office of Russell Sage, 31 Nassau Street 3:3 17-20

trustees: Sage Seebeck Jacoby Schaefer Schernikow

Seebbeck preceded

approved minutes of meeting held March 10, 1897

approved the vice president and secretary to execute a bond of indemnity to Russell Sage and W.R. Grace for any sum they may be compelled to pay, pending an appeal from the decision of the Supreme Court [of the State of New York], Special Term, Part 6, in the case of New York Bank Note Company against the Hamilton firm and the Kidder Press Manufacturing Company - $50,000 entered as marginal note

text of signed, sealed, and notarized bonding instrument is in the minutes – signed on October 6, 1897, by Seebeck and Osborn

1898

1898 Jan 10 Monday at 88-90 Gold Street 3:3 20-21 (notice) and 3:4 6 stockholders

[Transcriber Bill Welch wrote that he did not have pages 178 through 181 of the Minute Books.]

1898 date unknown

approved, on an unknown date, that an unnamed person "temporarily act as manager of the company without compensation," as Seebeck proposed

1898 June 1 Wednesday at 88-90 Gold Street 3:4 6-7 trustees: Grace Sage Seebeck Jacoby Schaefer Osborn [It appears that Osborn was elected as trustee at the January 10 meeting or a following meeting.]

omitted the reading of the minutes

approved a bill submitted against Seebeck for $2,743.04 [probably for engraving and printing]

referred bill of Turner amounting to $3,010 for legal services to vice president and treasurer with instructions to negotiate a reduction

1899

1899 Jan 9 Monday at 88-90 Gold Street 3:4 7-8 stockholders: Chisolm Thurber Seebeck Schernikow Osborn Schaefer

Seebeck called meeting to order

Chisolm chosen to preside

approved minutes of meeting held January 10, 1898

heard protest of Seebeck concerning 19,000 shares that he said he endorsed and delivered to Grace and Sage subject to an agreement he made with them dated April 4, 1893

heard report of vice president and general manager

heard report of treasurer

elected as trustees Jacoby Chisolm Seebeck Schernikow Thurber Cohen Valentine Reasoner and J.G. Steenken – Grace Sage Depew Osborn and Schaefer also received votes but were not elected

1899 Jan 10 Tuesday at 18 Broadway 3:4 8-9 trustees: Seebeck Jacoby Cohen Thurber Schernikow

read minutes of meeting held June 1, 1898

heard secretary read names of trustees elected the day before, January 9

heard letter of resignation of Steenken as trustee

Jacoby chaired election of officers

elected Seebeck as president and general manager

elected Schernikow as secretary and treasurer

Seebeck took the chair

heard notice of Schernikow that he would propose an amendment at the next meeting

referred renewal of lease on present premises to president and treasurer

approved $5 for trustees for attendance at every meeting

1899 Feb 10 Friday at 18 Broadway 3:4 9-10 trustees: Seebeck Chisolm Jacoby Reasoner Thurber Schernikow

approved minutes of meeting held Jan 10, 1899

accepted resignation of Steenken as trustee

referred to the officers the bill of Turner as counsel

authorized the officers to enter into a contract with the Manhattan Railway Company, or any other railroad company, for the printing of tickets, etc.

referred to the president and to Jacoby the matter of the Notes of the company and all other matters relating to Grace and Sage

approved contract that Seebeck entered into with Crocker & Company of San Francisco to print banknotes

authorized president and officers to order all machinery necessary for Crocker contract

elected John Tonjes as trustee

referred to Thurber the bill against Seebeck for printing done for Seebeck in 1898 amounting to about $3,000, charged to him at 50 percent above actual cost of engraving and printing

confirmed salary of vice president and general manager [Seebeck] for 1898 at rate of $5,000 per year

referred bill of Turner amounting to $3,000, charged to him at 50 percent above actual cost of engraving and printing

confirmed salary of vice president and general manager [Seebeck] for 1898 at rate of $5,000 per year

1899 Apr 11 Tuesday at 18 Broadway 3:4 10-11 trustees: Seebeck Cohen Thurber Schernikow [not a quorum – there still are nine trustees]

approved minutes of meeting held February 10, 1899

approved contract with Manhattan Railway Company to supply it with tickets for three years and approved required bond of $25,000 at a cost of $125

approved note for $14,000 that Hamilton borrowed from Manhattan Railway Company according to the contract signed April 1, 1899, at 6 percent annual interest [changed to $18,000 at next meeting]

authorized secretary to attach seal to all necessary papers and documents

accepted resignation of Thurber as trustee

1899 May 8 Monday at 18 Broadway 3:4 11-12 trustees: Seebeck Chisolm Cohen Jacoby Tonjes Reasoner Schernikow

approved minutes of meeting held April 11, 1899

heard report of Seebeck that Manhattan Railway Company had agreed to lend Hamilton $18,000 instead of $14,000 and deemed best to accept approved note for $18,000 that Hamilton borrowed from Manhattan Railway Company according to the contract signed April 1, 1899, at 6 percent interest payable semiannually - text of note is in minutes

[Seebeck died June 23, 1899.]

1899 June 26 Tuesday at 18 Broadway 3:4 12 trustees special meeting: Cohen Chisolm Jacoby Tonjes Schernikow

Chisolm chosen to preside

elected Tonjes as president, without salary instructed secretary to notify N.Y. Produce Exchange Bank of the change

appointed Knack as general manager without an increase in salary and subject to further orders

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MUESES - SEEBECK

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Nicholas F. Seebeck
Nicholas Frederick Seebeck was born February 19, 1857, in Hanover, Germany. His father was Frederick Aug. (August) Seebeck. His mother was Henrietta D. Steffens. The 1870 U.S. Census states his birthplace. It places the Seebeck family at Crown Point, Indiana, with the father working as a bookbinder. FamilySearch.org shows the census page, dated June 2, 1870.

On December 19, 1890, at New York City, Nicholas F. Seebeck applied for a U.S. passport for himself, his wife, and his son August (passport issued December 20). In the application, he stated that he was born February 19, 1857, in Germany and that he immigrated to the United States, sailing from Bremen June 10, 1866. FamilySearch.org has an image of the passport application.

Seebeck at 3 Vesey Street
Young Seebeck would have moved to New York City sometime after the U.S. Census of June 2, 1870. Sometime in the early 1870s, in 1872 according to Bill Welch, Seebeck opened a stationery store at 3 Vesey Street in Manhattan, where he offered engraving, lithography, printing, and blank book manufacturing. This was a basement-level store with a sidewalk entrance, in the Astor House, William L. Welch, "The Life and Works of Nicholas F. Seebeck," Collectors Club Philatelist, May-June 1995, page 148.

MS found a high-resolution photograph of the Astor House on the Internet in 2015 that shows the location circa 1900 (Shorpy Historic Picture Archive, Huntsville, Alabama). The office appears to have been located in a walk-down basement a few feet below street level and below the hotel's elevated first floor. The Vesey location faced St. Paul's Chapel, near the corner of Vesey and Broadway. It is not known if 3 Vesey was Seebeck’s first business address.

The 3 Vesey address was “a basement store in the old Astor House,” per George Sloane (Stamps, December 24, 1949), and The Seebecker, January 1991, 3:3, page 21. The Astor House was located immediately north of St. Paul’s Chapel, at the intersection of Vesey Street, Broadway, and Barclay Street. The Astor House was a five-story hotel that opened in 1836. The south section was demolished in 1913 and was replaced by the Astor House Building. The north section was demolished in 1926.

From 3 Vesey Street, Seebeck also offered foreign postage stamps and stamp albums, according to a Seebeck business card (Leo John Harris, “The Hamilton Bank Note [Engraving and Printing] Company of New York: Some Collateral Collectibles,” Collectors Club Philatelist, September 1981, page 292). Danilo A. Mueses dated the same business card to 1876 and attributed his image of the card to the Kilian E. Nathan collection (Danilo A. Mueses, Seebeck: Hero or Villain?, English translation, The Spanish Main, 1988, page 4, original Spanish edition circa 1986). This second edition notes only that the business card bears an 1879 manuscript date.

Circa 1872, unsigned reprints of the 1845 New Haven, Connecticut, postmaster provisional envelope’s imprinted stamps were made for Seebeck and for others (Scott Specialized Catalogue of United States Stamps and Covers). Signed reprints were made in other years for other dealers.


CHRONOLOGY OF THE LIFE OF NICHOLAS F. SEEBECK
1857-1899
Michael Schreiber

1899 July 13 Thursday at 18 Broadway 3:4 12-13 trustees; Tonjes Chisolm Cohen Jacoby Schernikow approved minutes of meetings held May 8, 1899, and June 26, 1899 approved paying bill of stenographer T.F. Daniels for services in New York Bank Note Co. lawsuit approved bill of W.L. Turner for $409.85 for legal services rendered in Camacho suit approved president and treasurer to settle bill of W.L. Turner for $3,100 for legal services rendered in New York Bank Note Co. suit

1899 Sep 19 Thursday at 18 Broadway 3:4 13-14 trustees; Tonjes Chisolm Cohen Jacoby Schernikow approved minutes of meetings held July 13, 1899 heard that W.L. Turner’s bill for $3,100 was settled for monthly payments of $300 authorized the president to contract for a one-year supply of paper for Manhattan Railway Company tickets at a price not to exceed present one heard report of secretary about supplying H.S. Crocker & Company of San Francisco with Guate-
offered for sale, Welch noting [page 238], “He began in the stamp business the previous year.” Welch added in footnote No. 26 (page 246): “... several of Seebeck’s pricelists from the 1870s proclaim ‘Established 1872, ...’ although the earliest pricelist Welch had seen was the Holiday Circular of 1873.

The earliest documented item addressed to Seebeck from a United States 1-cent Liberty postal card postmarked March 10, 1875, at New Orleans, addressed to Seebeck at P.O. Box 1698 in New York City. The message concerned postage stamps, envelopes, and United States and Confederate States local stamps [Welch, Collectors Club Philatelist, May-June 1995, page 147, and Welch, The Seebecker, January 1987, pages 2-3, with pictures of both sides].

Mueses pictured a cover addressed to Seebeck at P.O. Box 4926, New York City, from El Salvador, postmarked there January 2, 1877, and postmarked February 11, 1877, at New York City (page 4). Mueses attributed the image of this 1877 cover to the Kilian E. Nathan collection.

The 1985 Roger Koerber sale of the Herbert J. Bloch philatelic reference library and properties of other consignors listed in lot No. 1495 the Descriptive Price Catalogue of All Known Postage Stamps of the United States and Foreign Countries., with “N. F. Seebeck / P. O. Box 4926, NEW YORK.” below the title. It is described as “1876” and an octavo with a height of 8½ inches and pages (2) plus 42. The lot also included a Bechtel edition of the same pricelist with appendix pages 43-46. Leo John Harris writing in Stamp Collector, June 10, 1996, page 12, stated that the same catalog was published under the names of other dealers, “including J.T. Handford, C.H. Bechtel, J.E. Dickert of New York City, and C.C. De Puy of Syracuse.” It is not known who created the Descriptive Price Catalogue. It could have been, MS believes, dealer William P. Brown, who published three editions (1868, 1871, 1872) of his Descriptive Price Catalogue of Government Postage Stamps For Sale, the third edition of which was generic (Stanley M. Bierman, Collectors Club Philatelist, July-August 1995, page 229).

Seebeck and the Dominican Republic

In late 1878 or early 1879, Seebeck traveled to the Dominican Republic. A U.S. 1-cent Liberty postal card with added 1-cent Franklin stamp, addressed to “Mr. Hillman,” postmarked New York City February 11, 1879, and signed by F. Seebeck (Seebeck’s father), transmitted the message: “Because my son has traveled to Santo Domingo, I am unable to transmit your order and I request that you wait until March, when he is expected back.” (Welch, The Seebecker, January 1987, pages 2-3, with pictures of both sides of card).

Seebeck printed the 1879 adhesive stamps of the Dominican Republic and the Colombian State of Bolivar (William L. Welch, Collectors Club Philatelist, May-June 1995, page 148). It is not known if he secured these contracts himself or if he fulfilled them for someone else. See Mueses, pages 65-68, for a discussion of the 1879-1885 stamps of the Dominican State of Bolivar. See Mueses, pages 65-66 and pages 9-12, for a discussion of the purported involvement of Seebeck in the postal paper of the Dominican Republic. Welch in “Inside Hamilton” wrote that Seebeck “printed most of the stamps of the Colombian state of Bolivar from 1879 to 1881.”

Two lots in the Kelleher auction held October 25-26, 2014, sale No. 660, included proofs of the 1880 Dominican Republic postage stamp issue from the personal archive of engraver Rudolph P. Laubenheimer: one lot of eight proofs and another of eight proofs and seven later stamps mounted on a stamp album page.

MS believes Seebeck almost certainly was responsible for the 1881 postal cards and envelopes of the Dominican Republic. The postal cards are inscribed “The Manhattan Bank Note Company New York.” MS believes George Thurber also could have been involved. See Mueses, pages 9-12 and page 66, for a discussion of the Manhattan Bank Note Company, the Manhattan Engraving Company, and Dominican Republic stamps and postal cards. Mueses quoted from the writing of Clarence W. Hennan on the stamps of the Dominican Republic (Collectors Club Philatelist, April 1946 and October 1946). Barbara Mueller wrote that George Thurber “became treasurer of the new Manhattan Engraving Co.” in 1867, that he became chief of engraving under G.F.C. Smillie at American Bank Note Company, and that he “helped establish Hamilton” with the help of A.R. Chisolm of Morristown, N.J. Chisolm and Thurber were two of the founders and officers of Hamilton Bank Note Company (1881). Thurber was a lettering engraver and an ornamental engraver. See The Essay-Proof Journal, Second Quarter, 1988, Vol. 45, No. 2, Whole No. 178.

Mueses (page 66) noted the inclusion of the name “Manhattan Bank Note Co.” within the Stanley Gibbons catalog listing (1952) for the Colombian Department [State] of Bolivar issue of 1882.

Mueses (page 76) pictured a cover from the Dominican Republic to Seebeck in New York City at 3 Vesey Street bearing an arrival postmark of February 18, 1880, and a stamp of the 1879 issue.

Mueses (page 78) wrote that the 1879 stamps of the Dominican Republic were issued “about July” because the European press in September 1879 included notices of them. He wrote that the order for the issue was not published in the Dominican Republic until September 1879.

Harris pictured a memorandum written in German and dated March 28, 1880, from Seebeck to a customer (Collectors Club Philatelist, September 1981, page 293).

Seebeck at 97 Wall Street

In spring 1880, Seebeck moved his business from 3 Vesey Street to 97 Wall Street. Welch pictured (The Seebecker, June 1992, 4:1, page 10) a notice from the Stamp Collector’s Review, Davenport, Iowa, June 1880, that announced the move. Welch also pictured Seebeck’s advertisement in the same issue of the Stamp Collector’s Review. A related Seebeck address is 95 Wall Street.

In 1880, Seebeck supplied two types of the brown Hussey’s Express Messenger stamp for Hussey’s Post of New York City, plus ultramarine and red stamps, perforated gauge 12, Scott 87L73, 87L73a, 87L74, and 87L75. Two gauge 16 stamps were issued in 1882, 87L76 and 87L77. The imprint at the bottom of the stamp design reads “N.F. Seebeck, 97 Wall St. N.Y.” (Scott Specialized Catalogue of United States Stamps and Covers and William L. Welch, “The Life and Works of Nicholas F. Seebeck,” Collectors Club Philatelist, May-June 1995, page 148).

Ernest Schernikow

In 1981, Leo John Harris wrote: “In the early 1880s, Seebeck conceived the idea of supplying postage stamps to countries free of charge . . . .” (Harris, Collectors Club Philatelist, September 1981, page 291). Harris appears to have it too early. Ernest Schernikow (1860-1933) writing in The Philatelic Gazette in 1916 said that Seebeck consulted with Schernikow on his plan “some time in 1888.” The 1988 English translation of Mueses had this date incorrectly as “1880.”

Seebeck apparently married Schernikow’s sister Anna Aline Schernikow (born 1857, the same year Seebeck was born). This marriage occurred sometime after the 1880 U.S. Census (June 9), which listed “Anne Schernikow” as still living at home with the two parents and three other siblings, including Ernest, then 19 years old. MS has found no record of this marriage of Seebeck to
In 

Selling his stamp business

In fall 1883, Seebeck sold his stamp business to stamp dealer Gustave B. Calman (Welch, Collectors Club Philatelist, May-June 1995, page 148, source unknown). This was a revision to his earlier article “Inside Hamilton Bank Note Co.” (American Philatelist, March 1989), in which Welch wrote that Seebeck sold his stamp business to Calman in early 1884 (The Weekly Philatelic Era, March 19, 1898, XII 25, cited in “Inside Hamilton Bank Note Co.,” footnote No. 1). Leo John Harris (page 292) pictured the back of an 1884 cover bearing a small N.F. Seebeck seal with “97 WALL ST.” stamped over the printed “3 VESEY ST.” The cover is postmarked November 2, 1884. The label adds “BOOKSELLER” to Seebeck’s business activities.

Harris connected this 1884 cover with the move to 97 Wall Street, but Welch showed that the move occurred in spring 1880.

Joins the Hamilton firm

Leo John Harris also wrote: “Seeking to have the printing facilities for his plan, Seebeck [in April 1884] became secretary and general manager of the then Hamilton Bank Note | Engraving and Printing | Company” (page 291). This statement is correct regarding Seebeck’s initial formal connection with Hamilton. It is not certain, however, if Seebeck might have invested in Hamilton because of a plan to print stamps for free for the countries he eventually contracted with.

Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Company was a newly founded (January 16, 1884) New York City firm when Nicholas F. Seebeck provided it with an infusion of cash in spring 1884 and became one of its trustees. Seebeck’s one-year agreement with Hamilton was dated April 8, 1884. The terms: For $5,000 in shares of Hamilton, Hamilton purchased Seebeck’s engraving and printing business at 95 Wall Street [also 97 Wall Street]; Hamilton leased to Seebeck for 15 percent of net profits its equipment and premises for the fulfillment of its contracts. Welch in “Inside Hamilton Bank Note Co.” provided more details on pages 234-235. On April 21, 1884, at a special meeting, the trustees elected Seebeck trustee, secretary and general manager (The Seebecker, December 1887, 1-4, page 12).

The United States was then in the financial depression of 1882-1885, including the Panic of 1884, and the new Hamilton firm was a reorganization of a previous New York firm named Hamilton Bank Note Company. On January 16, 1884, the new firm purchased from Thomas Jordan the plantation of the former company, including machinery, dies, and rolls.

The previous firm had been established in 1881, with A.R. Chisolm as president, G.W. Thurfur as vice president and manager, A.D. Wagner as treasurer, and Augustine L. Helm as designer. It was located at 61 Broadway. The information in this paragraph is from Barbara Mueller, The Essay-Proof Journal, Second Quarter, 1888, Vol. 45, No. 2, Whole No. 178, which was reprinted in the Souvenir Card Journal, Fourth Quarter, 2004, Vol. 24, No. 4, pages 22-25. Mueller indicated that Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Co. was a continuation of Hamilton Bank Note Co. The new firm did buy assets of the previous firm, and Chisolm, Thurfur, and Wagner were the founding trustees of the new firm, but on January 16, 1884, Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Co. was founded as a newly constituted corporation.

On October 21, 1884, Nicholas F. Seebeck of 556 Greenwich Street was naturalized at U.S. District Court, New York, N.Y. Henry W. Gennerich of 243 E. 84th was the witness. Family Search.org has an image of the record.


At their meeting February 6, 1885, the Hamilton trustees renewed the contract with Seebeck, with the new document effective April 1, 1885. On March 21, the trustees authorized Seebeck to purchase new equipment for the elevated railroad ticket contract and to lease new premises (Welch “Inside Hamilton Bank Note Co.,” page 236, and The Seebecker, April 1888, 2-1, pages 7-8). A June 25 letter from Seebeck entered into the June 29 minutes, page 14, said that his contract was renewed March 19.

In a letter dated June 25, 1885, Seebeck proposed to cancel his contract and to transfer all assets to Hamilton, which the trustees accepted at their meeting June 29. The assets included the contracts for tickets for the New York Elevated Rail Road and the New York and Brooklyn Bridge and other companies. Welch, “Inside Hamilton,” page 236, The Seebecker, April 1888, 2-1, pages 13-14.

At their meeting held September 10, 1885, the trustees voted to establish salaries for Seebeck and Edward F. Baker retroactive to May 1. Beginning May 1, 1885, Seebeck’s salary as secretary, treasurer, and general manager was $3,000 per year. Baker’s salary as president also was $3,000. George Thurfur was paid $30 per week as superintendent of the engraving, transferring, and plate printing departments and as an engraver, until he resigned in summer 1886 (Welch “Inside Hamilton,” pages 236-237, and The Seebecker, April 1888, 2-1, pages 14-15).


The trustees or stockholders of the Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Company met at 61 Broadway during 1884-1885, at 1 Broadway during 1885-1891 (first meeting of shareholders there was May 18, 1885, and first meeting of trustees there was June 29, 1885), at the Lincoln National Bank during 1893, at 71 Broadway (office of Russell Sage) during 1893-1897, at 31 Nassau Street (Sage) in 1897-1898, at 18 Broadway in 1899, at 88 and 90 Gold Street in 1892-1893 and 1898-1900 (The Seebecker, various issues, 1887-1991).

**Trip to West Indies and South America**

When did the trip really happen? – 1884, 1885, 1886 or 1887? Was it really a buying trip for Scott? Harris: In *1886*, Seebeck went on a stamp buying trip to the West Indies and South America “to acquaint himself with his prospective Latin American customers” (Harris, *Collectors Club Philatelist*, September 1981, page 291). Scheminow wrote in April 1916 in the *Philatelic Gazette* that in *1884 or 1885* Seebeck “made a collecting trip to the West Indies and the northern coast of South America for Mr. J.W. Scott.” The 1886 English translation of Muses (page 6) paraphrased the quote.

The Hamilton Minute Books record a trustees meeting and a stockholders meeting on January 11, 1886, but no other meetings until July 22, 1886. The Minute Books also record a stockholders regular meeting on January 10, 1887, but they record no trustees meetings during the first half of 1887 (January 11 through July 12), so MS thinks it is possible that Seebeck could have made his trip to the West Indies and South America in 1886 or 1887 (*The Seebecker*, September 1988, 2-2, pages 11-13). There also were no meetings between April 21, 1884, and October 10, 1884, but Seebeck then was new to the company and to his general manager position. It is unlikely that he would have made a major trip then.


On September 27, 1887, in New York City, Nicholas F. Seebeck married, per *FamilySearch.org*, Rosalie Petigny-Meurisse, age 18 (born 1869). Another online listing gives her name as Therese R. Petigny, age 19. Their son August C. Seebeck was born October 26, 1888.

When did Seebeck make his deal or deals with Gustave Calman? In *1888*, Seebeck “arranged for Gustave B. Calman, a wholesale stamp dealer who handled stamp remainders, to be his agent for all the reprints and remainders resulting from his scheme” (Harris, *Collectors Club Philatelist*, September 1981, page 291). Mueses wrote (page 68) that in 1888 Seebeck sold his stock of Dominican Republic and the State of Bolivar to Gustave Calman and “gave him the canceling devices that were used fraudulently to mark [post mark] the stamps of both countries.

The 1888 deal with Gustave Calman was for the remainders of the Dominican Republic and the Colombian State of Bolivar. It was too early for the countries that signed contracts in 1889.

Gustave B. Calman (1860-1898) was the second oldest Calman brother. Brother Henry (1863-1937) worked with him. David Calman, a lawyer, was born in 1858.


**Trip to Central America**


Seebeck failed to secure postage stamp contracts from Guatemala (Schernikow, *The Philatelic Gazette*, 1916) and Costa Rica, but he was successful in signing them with El Salvador (March *27, 1889*), Honduras (*April 20, 1889*), and Nicaragua (*May 4, 1889*). The El Salvador and Honduras contracts stipulated annual issues. The Nicaragua contract stipulated issues every year or two years. Mueses quoted the contracts.

In the *June 1889 issue of the Philatelic Journal of America*, published in St. Louis, Charles H. Mekeel broke the news of the El Salvador postage stamp and postal stationery contract with Seebeck (Welch, *Inside Hamilton,* page 235).

The stamp contracts

Not long after the contract with El Salvador became news, personal attacks on Seebeck began. Mueses (page 99) quoted one in the *Philatelic Journal of America*. The minutes of the *July 10, 1889* meeting of the National Philatetical Society (American *Journal of Philately*, August 1889, page 319) recorded that C.B. Corwin, the society’s stamp exchange secretary, moved that the society condemn Seebeck and that the society do everything in its power “to defeat Mr. Seebeck’s unworthy object.” Seebeck, John Walter Scott, and the Calmans were among the 17 attendees recorded. A motion to table the resolution failed, and when the resolution was voted on, it failed 8 to 5.

Corwin persisted. At the *July 17, 1889* meeting of the Staten Island Philatelic Society, with seven members recorded including J.W. Scott, Corwin introduced a similar resolution, and it passed unanimously (American *Journal of Philately*, August 1889, pages 322-323).

Corwin moved his resolution again at the *August 13, 1889* meeting of the National Philatetical Society, with 26 members present. This time it passed 12 to 9. Scott and the Calmans were among the members present (American *Journal of Philately*, September 1889, page 357).

Mueses wrote (page 99) that the campaign against Seebeck continued “at a slower tempo and a lower pitch” during 1890-1894.

In *January 1890*, the Seebeck stamps and postal stationery of El Salvador, Honduras, and Nicaragua were issued. Two lots in the Kelleher auction held October 25-26, 2014, sale No. 660, included proofs of the 1892 envelope imprint of Honduras and proofs of the 1890, 1891, 1892, 1893 unadopted designs, and 1895 envelope and wrapper imprints of Nicaragua, all from the personal archive of engraver Rudolph P. Laubenheimer. Two other lots comprised envelope imprint proofs for the 1889, 1890, and 1891 issues of El Salvador.

Hamilton board minutes of *June 24, 1890*, refer to the approval of a 10-year contract dated June 20 between Seebeck and Hamilton for engraving and other work for El Salvador, Honduras, and Nicaragua that Hamilton would do for him (*The Seebecker*, March 1899, pages 9-10).

Someone in Ecuador sent an Official cover overstamped New York Paid All *July 24, 1890* to Seebeck at Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Co. “Cable Address Mirific” is written below the mailing address (*The Seebecker*, June 1992, page 9).

On *October 16, 1890*, Henry L. Etheridge signed a contract with Ecuador for the printing of postal paper. Seebeck and Hamilton fulfilled it beginning with the 1892 issue. The president of Ecuador signed the contract on October 27. The contract stipulated an issue every year or half year.
Seebeck was not recorded as attending the Hamilton "directors meeting" of January 13, 1890. Seebeck attended the trustees meetings of May 8, June 24, and December 16, 1890, but at the latter two meetings C.E. Krack acted as secretary pro tem. Seebeck missed the stockholders and trustees meetings of January 12, 1891, and the trustees meeting of February 9, 1891, but Ernst Schernikow was at all three (The Seebecker, March 1989, 2:3, pages 7-10, and January 1990, 3:1, pages 6-10). Welch in "Inside Hamilton," page 237, speculated that in this period Seebeck could have been beginning to suffer from the tuberculosis that is believed to have eventually killed him.

On December 9, 1890, at New York City, Nicholas F. Seebeck applied for a U.S. passport for himself, his wife, and his son [passport issued December 20]. C.E. Krack, a Hamilton trustee, signed the passport application as witness. In 2017 using FamilySearch.org, MS found no other passport application records for Seebeck. FamilySearch.org has an image of the 1890 application. The image includes no picture.

Mueses wrote (page 94) that "... during the first years of the 1890s [Seebeck] signed a contract with Gustave Bernhard Calman covering the sale of all the stamps that he possessed of Ecuador, Honduras, Nicaragua and El Salvador. The contract stipulated that Calman would pay [Seebeck] $5000 per annum plus $1000 extra for each additional issue." Mueses gave no source for this information, but it appears that it would have been in 1890 or 1891 that Seebeck contracted with Gustave Calman for the remainders of Ecuador, Honduras, Nicaragua and El Salvador. See on page 159 the May 1893 Gustave Calman postal card to dealer Adolph Lohmeyer referring to Calman's offer covering the sale of all the stamps (Mueses, page 20, as paraphrased from Joseph B. Leavy).

In August 1891, the government of Nicaragua ordered the American Bank Note Co. to reprint 175,000 sets of the 1869-71 and 1878-80 issues for delivery to Seebeck, a total of 350,000 stamps Joseph B. Leavy, "The Stamps of Nicaragua," Gibbons Stamp Weekly, 10:1, No. 235, pages 7-8, reprinted in Nicaragua, September 1990, 1:1, pages 8-9, have mentioned this total. Leavy wrote "to a combination of speculators," but Seebeck himself placed the order on September 28, 1891.

In January 1892, Ecuador issued its first two official stamps and postal stationery. The stamp designs picture President Juan José Flores. The wrappers bear numeral designs. One lot in the Kelleher auction held October 25-26, 2014, sale No. 660, included proofs of the two wrapper imprints from the personal archive of engraver Rudolph F. Laubenheimer.

At the February 4, 1892, meeting of the Hamilton board, on motion of Schernikow, Seebeck was elected president, treasurer, and general manager, again at $3,000 per year. Ernest Schernikow, on motion of Seebeck, was elected secretary. At the July 8, 1892, meeting of the trustees, Charles E. Gray became vice president (The Seebecker, January 1990, 3:1, pages 12-14).

On or about August 1, 1892, it is believed, Honduras issued its third-issue Seebeck stamps (Mueses, page 37). At their meeting December 8, 1892, the Hamilton trustees approved a five-year contract for passenger tickets with the Manhattan Railway Company (called Manhattan Elevated Railroad Company in the 1894 lawsuit) (The Seebecker, January 1990, 3:1, pages 14-15).

The financial Panic of 1893 began in February. The Philadelphia and Reading Railroad declared bankruptcy on February 23, 1893. National Cordage Company failed. Silver and silver-based currency dropped in value. Banks failed. The Northern Pacific Railway, the Union Pacific Railroad, and the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railroad failed. It is estimated that 15,000 companies and 500 banks failed. Approximately 17 percent to 19 percent of the workforce was unemployed at the panic’s peak. The ensuing recession lasted until 1898.


From the period of the Panic of 1893 and the recession that followed, Welch dated what he called "rare essays for Bolivia, Ecuador, Guatemala, Haiti, and the Colombian State of Magdalena." These items were produced by Hamilton to solicit new business but were not successful (William L. Welch, "The Life and Works of Nicholas F. Seebeck," Collectors Club Philatelist, May-June 1995, page 150).

Ecuador issued no new Seebeck postage stamps in 1893. Mueses mentioned telegraphic official stamps (pages 58 and 64) and a second delivery of 1892 official stamps in 1893 (page 61).

William R. Grace

Seebeck made an unspecified agreement on April 4, 1893, with William R. Grace and Russell Sage (Minute Books, stockholders meeting of January 9, 1899) concerning 19,000 shares of stock endorsed and delivered to Grace and Sage.

At the January 9, 1899, stockholders meeting, Seebeck complained that Grace and Sage had not complied with the agreement (The Seebecker, October 1991, 3:4, pages 7-8).

At the April 10, 1893, meeting of the Hamilton board, presided over by Gray, Seebeck again was elected president and treasurer, but a resolution was read noting that he planned to retire from active management of the firm. Three trustees also resigned and were replaced. Gray was elected vice president and became general manager. Seebeck resigned as treasurer. E.C. Osborn was elected a trustee and then secretary. The trustees also approved and ratified a paid bill to Seebeck for work Hamilton performed for him for the Honduras, Nicaragua and Salvador contracts in 1889, 1890, 1891, and 1892.

The trustees also authorized the signing of a five-year contract with Seebeck at $6,000 per year payable annually in advance for him to act as the representative of this company for the next five years in such countries as he may deem best for interests of the company . . . " (The Seebecker, January 1990, 3:1, pages 16-20).

Gray presided over the June 7, June 15, and June 22, 1893, meetings that Seebeck also attended (The Seebecker, September 1990, 3:2, pages 6-10).

Gray also presided over the historic August 23, 1893, trustees meeting, held at 71 Broadway, the office of Russell Sage. Four trustees resigned and were replaced by William R. Grace,Chauncey M. Depew, Russell Sage, and H. Walter Webb. Seebeck resigned as president. On a motion by Seebeck, Grace was elected president. Special contracts were authorized for Gray and for Sage and Grace. J. Louis Schaefer was elected treasurer, but he was not made a trustee until the October 13, 1893, meeting (The Seebecker, September 1990, 3:2, pages 10-11).

Grace was a former mayor of New York (1880-1888) and a merchant and banker who after the War of the Pacific had assumed in 1890 the national debt of Peru in exchange for rights to oil, minerals, silver mining, and guano deposits.

Sage was a railroad speculator and money lender and a former U.S. congressman.
Depew was president of the New York Central and Hudson River Railroad and a former New York assemblyman.

Webb was in finance and railroads.

Welch documented (W.R. Grace Papers, Columbia University, letters of August 7, September 7, September 15, September 18, and November 3, 1893) how Grace discussed Hamilton as a competitor for the next U.S. postage stamp contract and discussed personnel at the Bureau of Engraving and Printing, including Bureau job offers to Hamilton engravers (Welch, “Inside Hamilton,” pages 240-242).

In August 1893, it is believed, Honduras issued its fourth-issue Seebeck stamps (Mueses, page 37).

At the September 6, 1893, trustees meeting, Seebeck discussed a postage stamp contract with Ecuador that he could offer, but no action was taken (The Seebecker, September 1990, 3-2, pages 11-12).

At the October 16, 1893, trustees meeting, Gray resigned as vice president and general manager, effective immediately, but he remained a trustee. Seebeck was elected vice president and general manager. His report on the accounts of the company was received and filed (The Seebecker, September 1990, 3-2, pages 14-15).

Hamilton was on the verge of insolvency, and at the November 11, 1893, trustees meeting, Seebeck guaranteed to keep the company solvent if the trustees would provide $21,000 for current obligations and $5,000 more for working capital. This was not written into a contract until sometime after the November 13, 1893, meeting.

At the November 11 meeting, Sage moved that the matter of bidding for the U.S. stamp contract be left to the president and vice president (Grace and Seebeck). This was repeated at the November 13 meeting, at which Sage and Webb were selected as bondsmen for the U.S. stamp contract bid (The Seebecker, September 1990, 3-2, pages 16-18).

Honduras disapproves its contract

In mid-1893, Honduras decided to establish a government printer to print all government paper, including postage stamps. The National Congress decreed on October 19, 1893, that the 1889 resolution approving the contract with Seebeck be disapproved, and the president decreed it on November 26, 1893. The government printer failed to produce a stamp issue for 1894. In early 1895, however, Honduras issued the Seebeck Allegory of Justice stamps and postal stationery that Seebeck had had in preparation, the country’s fifth Seebeck issue (Mueses, January 25, page 38).

At the January 17, 1894, Hamilton trustees meeting, Grace, Seebeck, Schaefer, and Osborn were reelected. Seebeck was elected general manager (The Seebecker, January 1991, 3-3, pages 6-7).

Three private printers submitted bids in response to the request in October 1893 by the U.S. Post Office Department for proposals to print U.S. postage stamps: American Bank Note Company, Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Company, and Charles Steele. Steele was the low bidder. Hamilton was the high bidder. After the three bids were made public, the Bureau of Engraving and Printing also submitted a bid. The private companies protested, but on February 21, 1894, the Post Office Department awarded the stamp contract to the Bureau. The U.S. Department of Justice had ruled that there was no legal reason to bar the Bureau from fulfilling the postage stamp contract.

On January 19, 1894, Ecuador began using the 1894 Seebeck stamps at Guayaquil. By the end of March, all denominations were available at Quito (Mueses, page 58). The same basic design was used in 1895.

Attacks on Seebeck and Calman

The Philatelic Journal of America for July 1894 on page 6 reported that an Anti-Seebeck Society was being organized. According to Mueses (page 101), the Anti-Seebeck Society started in England, but by October 1895 its termination had been announced.

The Society for the Suppression of Speculative Stamps began in England informally as the Anti-Gumpap League. The Society for the Suppression of Speculative Stamps was founded at the May 6, 1895, meeting of the London Philatelic Society. Mueses attributed its founding to the worldwide wave of recent commemorative issues, expensive sets that included high-denomination stamps. Among the directorate of the SSSS, Mueses listed E. Stanley Gibbons, J.B. Moens, C.J. Phillips, E.B. Evans, R.B. Earre, and Whitfield King. There were others.

The London SSSS never specifically condemned the Seebeck stamps, but Mueses acknowledged (page 101) that “they were in part what determined the movement and helped give the [SSSS] its origins.”

Beginning in 1895, both in the United States and in England, Seebeck and Gustave Calman were criticized regularly (Mueses, pages 102-104). J.W. Scott, head of the North American branch of the SSSS, led the attacks on Seebeck and Calman.

Advertisements in English printed on blocks of nine stamps believed to be from the center of blocks of 25 exist on the backs of these issues: 1894 stamps of Nicaragua, 1894-1896 stamps of El Salvador, and 1895 stamps of Honduras. The advertisements are believed to have been printed by Seebeck or for him (Central American Newsletter, March 1983, No. 11, pages 6-7; Mueses, page 8). The idea had been used on the 1881-1892 stamps of New Zealand.

On August 9, 1894, New York Bank Note Company filed an action against the Hamilton Bank Note Engraving and Printing Company and the Kidder Press Manufacturing Company of Boston over two presses that Kidder supplied to Hamilton, one later refitted with attachments for strip ticket printing and one sold with the attachments. New York Bank Note alleged that the sales were in violation of its exclusive contract with Kidder. New York Bank Note won the suit, with the New York County Supreme Court bench judgment signed October 2, 1897. Seebeck’s testimony is on pages 356-366 and 369 of Court of Appeals of the State of New York. New York Bank Note also won the appeal judgment entered June 8, 1898, and the Appellate Division final judgment entered March 24, 1904.

On January 28, 1895, Honduras authorized the acceptance of the Allegory of Justice issue (Mueses, pages 38). In February 1895, Honduras issued the Allegory of Justice stamps and postal stationery that Seebeck had prepared.

At the January 31, 1895, Hamilton trustees meeting, Grace, Seebeck, Schaefer, and Osborn were reelected. Seebeck was reelected general manager (The Seebecker, January 1991, 3-3, pages 7-8).

Seebeck defends his character

In September 1895, Seebeck sent to the philatelic press a letter dated August 31 as a general circular defending his character and offering to cancel his stamp contracts if “my fellow philatelists” can secure from the countries a guarantee that no similar contract would be signed with another banknote company or with an individual and if the countries also would cancel the contracts. In his letter, Seebeck agreed “with the spirit of the crusade against the indiscriminate issue of speculative stamps.” Mueses, pages 104-106, quoted the entire letter from Seebeck.

J.W. Scott continued to attack Seebeck, and in September 1895, the North American branch of the SSSS sent a letter to the gov-
Ecuador rescinds its contract

On November 8, 1895, President José Eloy Alfaro of Ecuador rescinded the contract with Etheridge (Mueses, pages 59-60), but Ecuador still accepted the 1896 Seebeck issue manufactured by Hamilton.

At the January 16, 1896, Hamilton trustees meeting, Seebeck agreed to reduce his annual salary to $5,000 per year effective April 1. Grace, Seebeck, Schaefer, and Osborn were reelected (The Seebecker, January 1991, 3:3, pages 10-11).

The 1897 Seebeck issues

In June 1896, the Seebecker noted that Seebeck’s 1898 issue resulted in the founding resident stockholders of the Collectors Club of New York. William W. Wylie’s informal history of the club, on the CCNY web site, lists the 100 founders, but it does not list the members who met October 5 and adopted a constitution and bylaws.

The 1897 issues of El Salvador and Nicaragua used the same basic designs as those of 1896 (for El Salvador, its second issue of 1896), but the designs are collectedly different from those of 1896.

At the January 14, 1897, Hamilton trustees meeting, Grace, Seebeck, Schaefer, and Osborn were reelected. Pages in the Minute Books are missing for most of early 1898, but the June 1, 1898, meeting minutes indicate that the same men were named as officers (The Seebecker, January 1991, 3:3, pages 13-14, October 1991, 3:4, pages 6-7).

In 1898, Hamilton prepared the 1899 issue of stamps and postal cards for El Salvador and Nicaragua, but it supplied no new envelopes or wrappers.


On May 6, 1898, in Ecuador, the outstanding Seebeck issues and plates used for local overprints were burned in a public ceremony (Mueses, page 61). At their June 1, 1898, meeting, the Hamilton trustees approved a Hamilton bill to Seebeck dated May 21 for $2,743.04. This was the last company meeting attended by Grace and Sage (The Seebecker, October 1991, 3:4, pages 6-7).

In early 1899, the last Seebeck stamps and postal stationery of El Salvador and Nicaragua were issued.

Seebeck regains control of Hamilton

At the January 9, 1899, Hamilton stockholders meeting, after a protest by Seebeck over the number of shares he was permitted to vote according to his agreement with Grace and Sage dated April 4, 1893, Grace, Sage, Depew, Osborn, and Schaefer failed to receive enough votes to remain trustees (The Seebecker, October 1991, 3:4, pages 7-8).

At the January 10, 1899, Hamilton trustees meeting, Seebeck was unanimously elected president and general manager, and Schernikow was unanimously elected secretary and treasurer (The Seebecker, October 1991, 3:4, pages 8-9).

At their February 10, 1899, meeting, the Hamilton trustees referred to George Thurber a Hamilton bill to Seebeck “for about $3,000” for printing done for him in 1898 (The Seebecker, October 1991, 3:4, pages 9-10).

Seebeck died of tuberculosis, it is believed, on June 23, 1899, in New York City at his home, 314 West 102nd Street (Welch, “Inside Hamilton Bank Note Co.,” page 244 and footnote No. 23). One obituary noted “a complication of diseases” and memberships in the American Geographical Society, the Collectors Club, and the Liederkranz. The Metropolitan Philatelist, published by rival J.W. Scott, did not mention the death of Seebeck. Welch, “Inside Hamilton Bank Note Co.,” footnote Nos. 23 and 24.

Epilogue

At a special meeting June 26, 1899, the Hamilton trustees elected John Tonjes as president. C.E. Krack became manager pro tem, but he was discharged as of December 30, 1899 (The Seebecker, October 1991, 3:4, pages 12, 14).

Mueses noted (page 95) that Henry L. Calman took charge of brother Gustave Calman’s wholesale stock after Gustave Calman died January 25, 1898. From Henry Calman in 1902, dealer J.E. Handshaw purchased the Seebeck postal stationery stock, according to Handshaw’s memoirs. Henry Calman continued to operate the G.B. Calman firm as he disposed of its assets.

Sometime before the end of World War I, dealer Béla Sekula (1881-1966), then in Switzerland, purchased from Henry Calman the stock of the Seebeck stamp remainders, said to be approximately 55 million stamps.

At the Hamilton stockholders meeting January 11, 1909, son August C. Seebeck was appointed to be a teller for the election of company trustees (The Seebecker, October 1991, 3:4, page 15).

At the stockholders meeting January 10, 1910, August C. Seebeck was elected a Hamilton trustee. Also present was Herman C. Seebeck, relationship unknown. August C. Seebeck eventually became Hamilton vice president. On September 11, 1944, he resigned as vice president (The Seebecker, October 1991, 3:4, pages 15-16).

In 1901, widow Therese R. Seebeck became the wife of Wilfred J. Taupier, a 1901 emigrant from Cuba and the owner of a restaurant. They were married March 14, 1901, in Manhattan. August C. Seebeck, born in 1888 and described as a partner in printing and engraving, became Taupier’s stepson. The family lived in Hempstead, Nassau County, with Grace Avery as their employed servant. According to the 1930 U.S. Census, Elizabeth Seebeck, age 8, was a daughter of August. According to the 1940 U.S. census, August was a widower. FamilySearch.org

On November 9, 1911, plates for Seebeck stamps in the vault of the Hamilton Bank Note [Engraving and Printing] Company, 149 Adams Street, Brooklyn, N.Y., were defaced in front of John N. Luff, John A. Klemann, and P.F. Brunner. Missing from the group defaced were those for the 1890-
through 1892 issues of Honduras and Nicaragua (Ernest Kehr, *London Philatelist*, February 1952). Schernikow’s version of the story said that plates for certain 1899 denominations of El Salvador and Nicaragua were missing (Mueses, page 96).

Mueses (page 97) wrote that in the March 13, 1938, issue of *Stamps*, George van den Berg (pseudonym of dealer Lowell Ragatz) wrote that someone in Paris in circa 1936 offered to sell him two plates used to print Seebeck stamps. This story has never been confirmed.

On December 11, 1951, at Security Banknote Company, 55th and Sansom streets, Philadelphia, Pa., 156 dies, transfer rolls, and cuts for postal stationery used to manufacture Nicaragua stamps and postal stationery were destroyed by grinding the surfaces until they were rendered unusable. (Ernest Kehr, *London Philatelist*, February 1952).

Mueses (English translation, 1988, page 74) wrote that “a total of 150 pieces of steel and copper which had been used in the printing of the stamps of Nicaragua” were destroyed.

In the *Collectors Club Philatelist*, issue of November 1967, pages 339-344, the account of Henry M. Goodkind, titled “The 1951 Destruction of Nicaragua’s Plates, Dies and Rolls,” said that 296 items were destroyed. Many of the 156 dies or transfers counted by Kehr included multiple different denominations. No plates were destroyed in 1951.

In this book, see also footnote No. 6 on page 118 in Notes to Chapters.

The crossed-out printed message on this 1893 postal card to Adolph Lohmeyer from Gustave B. Calman refers to the 1891 and 1892 stamps of Nicaragua. Calman was the wholesaler for the Seebeck stamps. It reads: “On or about May 1st I shall send you a supply of the Nicaragua Stamps of the 1892 issue at the same prices and under the same conditions at which I sold you the 1891 issue.”

Gustave B. Calman died in 1898. For a few years, brother Henry L. Calman operated the G.B. Calman firm while he sold off its assets. This envelope from the firm is addressed to Willard O. Wylie, the publisher of *Mekeel’s Weekly Stamp News*, and is postmarked January 7, 1903.

Cover postmarked September 1, 1877, at San Salvador to Mr. N.F. Seebeck, P.O. Box 4926, New York City. The New York post office did not allow the stamps. El Salvador did not become a member of the Universal Postal Union until April 1, 1879.
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Circa 1872 reprint of the imprint of the New Haven, Connecticut, provisional envelope, said to have been printed for Nicholas Seebeck and other dealers.

1880 Hussey’s Express stamp manufactured by Nicholas F. Seebeck. His name and “97 Wall St.” address are in the imprint.

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