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Fight Against FAKES

by Cristina Masip & Carles Prats

All kind of collectables are subject to be copied, faked and reprinted. This plague extends to all collectable fields, everywhere, and Spanish Civil War stamps and postal history are not the exception. In this section, we are going to give guides to allow collectors to avoid deceptive items.

FIRST RULE. Common sense.

If something smells bad, it's probably bad.

SECOND RULE. Bargains do not exist.

Except if someone does not know what they are selling, bargains are usually out of range.

THIRD RULE. If something does not resemble anything already known, probably it's an invention.

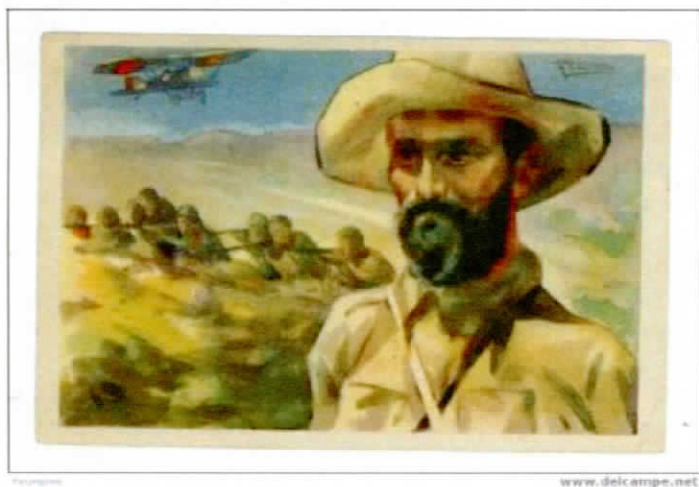
Have a look at some practical examples:

Type I, Manipulations. Dangerous if you do not have enough information. See this postcard, advertised on Delcampe.net (bottom left).

The postcard is an original item printed by the Red Cross during the Spanish Civil War in the Republican side, and the stamps and postmarks are original too. Where is the problem, then? Well, it mixes Republican and Nationalist issues. The 10c local from Ciudad Rodrigo is a Nationalist local from Salamanca province. It is impossible that someone had attached it on a postcard sent from and to Barcelona in 1938. More likely, someone with access to the cancel made this manipulation many years after the war. So the postmark is original, but it was not stamped on December 3, 1938, as it shows, but many years after. The seller is asking 50 € for this manipulation without noticing it is so.

He even probably does not know that it is a fake.

We have a piece with this "problem" listed in our store, noticing it is a manipulation, but in the contrary way: a Republican political label on a post war cover:



It came from a reputable Spanish auction house, and even more, from the collection of an expert.

Type II. Inventions. Not dangerous at all. If you buy them, you deserve to be scammed!

Ebay is full of these "nonsenses". Just a few examples: (opposite page).

They call them "necessity coupons", "ration coupons", "poster coupons", etc. They claim they were printed during the Spanish Civil War by both sides.



Unexplainably using identical designs, of course. THEY ARE ALL INVENTIONS. None of these items was printed during the war; they were printed during the 1970's only to deceive collectors. Especially non-Spanish collectors, who may be less familiar with original SCW items. Beware of these sheets or "coupons" as Ebay is full of them, with bids starting at a few dollars.

There is a variety of this, the so called "paper money stamps" or "carton coins". The Republican Government certainly issued round cartons with a stamp attached on them to avoid the currency shortness near the end of the war. In Spanish they are called "cartón moneda" (carton coin). See an original one (next page, top right).

Originals share all the same obverse design: the Republican coat of arms. They are not colourful, but austere. They were



not designed to be attractive, just because not enough coins were available. On the reverse there is a stamp attached, giving the carton its value, to be used as currency.

Now see some “inventions” based on these originals: (next page, bottom right).

They are the contrary of the originals: colourful, strange and attractive designs and mention of place of issue, as if they were locals. They are not! Just inventions that came out of the same print as the “necessity coupons” in the 1970’s to scam collectors. Beware of them too, as Ebay is also full of them.

This is the less dangerous group as it is obvious, even with any kind of knowledge about Spanish Civil War stamps, that they are spurious inventions. But it looks like this is not obvious enough to many people, as these items still have bids on Ebay. Someone fails to apply the First Rule of this article: common sense.

Type III. Reprints.

Quite dangerous if you do not have proper information. Fortunately only a few issues have been reprinted, but catalogues note beware of them.

Type IV. Overprints.

Possibly, the most dangerous group, but avoidable if you know what you are handling. During the War the most common way to print surcharges was using typography, and for this reason a pressure mark must be seen on the obverse of the stamp with the same shape of the overprint of the front. This is the simplest rule to avoid being scammed with overprints, and the most effective.

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Annual S.P.S. Meeting *At Cleveland Show*

Took place on March 19-21, 2015

March Party Recap

The Garfield-Perry Stamp Club hosted its 125th annual March Party stamp exhibition and bourse on Thursday, March 19, through Saturday, March 21, 2015, at La Villa Conference and Banquet Center. This show included a 55-dealer bourse (sales area) and approximately 190 frames of exhibits, including approximately 10 one-frame exhibits.

The March Party accepted all classes of exhibits. Exhibitors were invited to a complimentary luncheon in addition to other show events. March Party is an American Philatelic Society World Series of Philately show, and the exhibitor who won the March Party grand award will qualify for the Champion of Champions competition at APS Stamp Show 2015, August 20-23 in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

The Spanish Philatelic Society and the Ohio Postal History Society conducted their annual meetings at the March Party. S.P.S. members who were able to attend found the Cleveland Show an ideal place to gather for an annual meeting. The Garfield-Perry Club provided a room

for our meeting, the 50+ dealers did their best to find Spanish "treasures" in their stocks and the exhibits were outstanding. There were also some great evening "Fiestas" at downtown Cleveland restaurants.

No exhibit at the show pleased attending members more than that of our own secretary, Larry Gardner. His "Spanish Post in Morocco, Pre-Adhesive to 1930" exhibit contains covers and postal markings that document a unique part of Spanish postal history. Larry gave S.P.S. members a special "tour" of his exhibit and later did a "slide show" on the subject during the annual meeting. His was given a vermeil award by the show judges.

Retiring auction chairman, Hal Shelton, was recognized for his outstanding work in our fundraising auction sales. He received two awards for his efforts including the highly coveted "S.P.S. Man-of-the-Year Award".

Thanks to all who attended and to Garfield-Perry for their hospitality.



Annual S.P.S. Meeting *At Cleveland Show*



(Top left) Hal Shelton (left) receives S.P.S. service award from Jerry Wells (right) during the annual meeting in Cleveland.



(Top right) #3 - Larry Gardner stands next to his award-winning exhibit on Spanish Morocco.



(Below center) S.P.S. officers gathering in the show exhibit area include (left to right) Bob Penn, Hal Shelton, Jerry Wells, Larry Gardner and President Brian Knight.



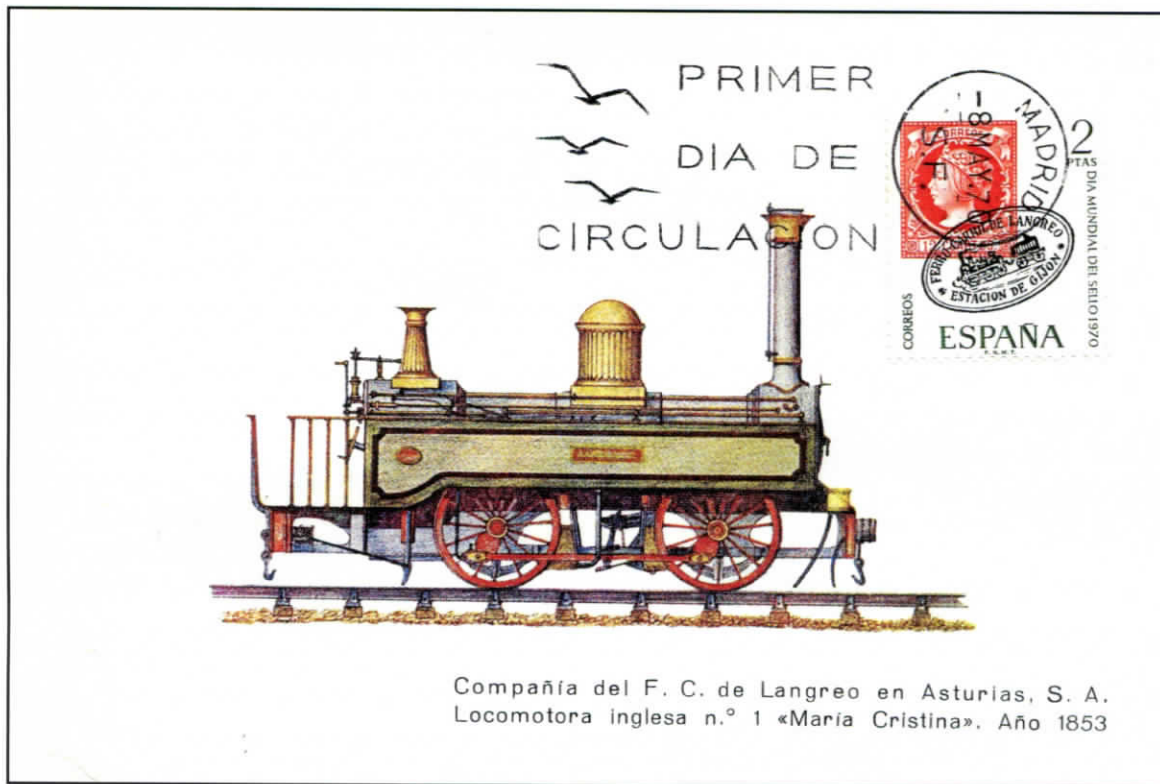
(Bottom) Exhibits at the show were some of the best seen in recent years.

AMBULANTES AND RAILWAY

MARKS OF SPAIN AND COLONIES

By **Natalio S. Nathan**

– Excerpts from his 1979 book –



SPANISH RAILROADS AND MAIL TRANSPORTATION

Four years before the opening of Spain's first railroad, Barcelona to Mataró in 1848, a commission of experts which included some of the top civil engineers in the land, was set up to investigate and recommend procedures, rules and regulations to govern the working and development of a railway system.

On November 2nd 1844, the commission finally published their report and addressed it to the "Director General of Roads, Canals & Ports".

Suggested regulations for the carrying of mail were dealt with in articles 28 to 32 of the report.

The whole report was approved by a Royal Order of December 31st 1844. Despite this and further publications such as an "Instruccion" on Oct. 10th

1845; another Royal Order of February 16th 1847; a "Law" on Feb. 20th 1850 and a Royal Decree on August 7th 1853, a general confusion reigned until the comprehensive "Ley General de Ferrocarriles" was published and promulgated on June 3rd 1855 from Aranjuez.

Of the original 1844 report, articles 28 to 30, dealing with mail were retained and on February 15th 1856, were reported as a Royal Decree for the benefit of the postal administrations.

Article 28 stated that all mail together with the agents necessary for its handling and conduction should be transported "free" on ordinary services on the total extension of the line. The rail companies to provide on every ordinary train a special section for mail carriage, the form and dimensions to be determined by the postal administration.

Article 29 was more explicit. It stated that in all journeys in either direction, by day or night,

the whole journey or part journey, those trains the included mail sections should have the times of departure and arrival at each station determined by the postal administration, who when requiring to alter times would give 15 days notice to the railway companies. The Post Office would have to supply the special “wagons” for mail and the railway companies responsible for their upkeep.

Article 30 fixed a procedure for “special” mail trains to be run outside of normal “ordinary” journeys when necessary, the expenses for these to be met by the postal administration.

MAIL WAGONS

The installation of “Estafetas Ambulantes” or Travelling Post Offices for the sorting and stamping of mail began with a Royal Order authorizing the construction of two wagons to serve as T.P.O’s for the “MEDITERRANEO” line which was from Madrid to Albacete. At the time of the order (Mar. 17th 1854) it had reached only to Tembleque, 9 stations from Madrid but would one day reach Alicante and Valencia (hence its name).

It was suggested that the wagons of the European lines be studied and the best wagons be improved upon. This important Royal Order of Mar. 17th 1854 was signed by the Director General of the Post Office, the Count of San Luis.

The creation of the first “Ambulancia de Correos” or Estafeta Ambulante was laid down in a Royal Order dated July 27th 1855 and the contract for its establishment was signed with the railway company on the following day. By now the Mediterraneo line had reached Albacete.

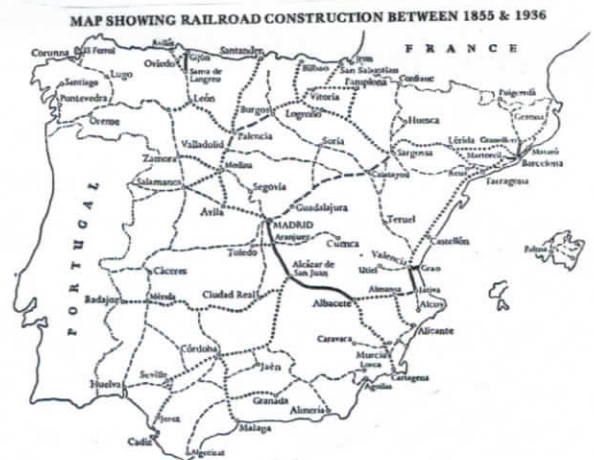
Just after, on September 10th, a communication was published by the Post Office stating the Estafeta Ambulante, after a trial run on September 12th would begin functioning on September 17th 1855. This communication was addressed to the Chief in charge of the exploitation of the Mediterraneo line for the carrying of mail and was signed by Angel Iznardi, who was now the Postmaster General.

On the same day as the “communication”, Sept. 10th, a circular was sent to all postal authorities explaining the terms ASCENDENTE and DESCENDENTE: as well as the rules and regulations to be followed by Estafetas Ambulantes.

All mail journeying to Albacete, FROM Madrid, would be DESCENDENTE and that travelling in the opposite directions, TO Madrid would be

ASCENDENTE. This rule being established, all further mail from T.P.O’s would be designated in the same manner. TO Madrid OR TO THE HEAD OF THE LINE when not Madrid – ascendente in whatever direction it travelled geographically.

After the establishment of this very first T.P.O in Spain a succession of Royal Orders authorizing other Estafetas Ambulantes on other lines quickly followed. On June 25th 1861 both the NORTE line and the ISABEL II line had the authorization by Royal Order for their first Estafetas Ambulantes: Sanchidrian to Burgos on the Norte line and Valladolid to Santander on the Isabel II line. December 12th 1861 saw the authorization for another Estafeta Ambulante on the Barcelona to Zaragoza line.



RAILWAY MAIL STAFF

The actual carrying of mail in mail wagons not used for the posting and stamping of correspondence was existent on many lines and a list of these will be given later.

By 1874, Estafetas Ambulantes were working on 23 lines with 31 different itineraries.

To a large extent, an organization had slowly grown and been formulated covering the workers employed by the Estafeta Ambulante service and their respective duties.

At the top of the Ambulante staff ladder was the Chief Inspector and Inspectors whose job it was to examine at least once a month all the documents, consignment notes (Vayas) etc. that was a feature

of the conduction of mail by train. The ambulante service had to run smoothly and he was responsible finally. At least 4 years experience at the main post office was the qualification for this job. Beneath the Inspectors were the Administrators who were in charge of the separate ambulante services. Qualifications, three years at the central office. Auxiliaries or assistants came next with a 2 year main office qualification for an assistant 1st class and 1 year for an ordinary assistant.

Four sources of mail passed into the hands of the Ambulante staff.

A) Mail which had been collected by the Administrator and the Assistants from the Main Post Office and which they had sorted there, at least that for the first few stations on the itinerary. The later stations on the route were to be sorted on the journey. **THIS MAIL HAD BEEN CANCELLED WITH NORMAL DATE STAMPS.**

B) Mail posted in the villages and towns along the route. These were bundled by the local post office staff **AND WERE CANCELLED WITH TOWN DATE STAMP** and taken to nearest railway station.

C) Mail posted in the railway station post-box. This was sorted by the visiting or resident postman, cancelled by them and bore **ESTACION** or similar postmarks. From around 1879.

D) Mail actually posted in the posting box at the side of the mail coach. **THESE LETTERS WOULD BE THOSE THAT BORE AMBULANTE POSTMARKS.**

All mail of the 4 classes or sources was sorted in the mail coach and distributed along the route as necessary. Later when the volume of mail increased, the mail arrived in sacks already sorted and labeled.

MAIL CLASSIFICATIONS AND ROUTES

The rules governing the administration of the "Ambulantes" by rail were laid down as 46 articles on December 4th 1866. Some of the more interesting articles were as follows:

Article 1: The "Administraciones Ambulantes" are Post Offices that function on the railway in wagons or compartments designed for this purpose. This service is for the reception of mail

of all classes its distribution and delivery in transit to other ambulantes or to those in charge waiting the arrival of the train at the respective stations.

Article 2: The Administrations are divided into those of First Class (Líneas Generales) or Second Class (Líneas Transversales). For the time being these lines are:

FIRST CLASS (MAIN LINES)

NORTE

MEDITERRANEO

(Valencia

(Alicante

(Cartagena

ANDALUCIA

ARAGON & CATALUÑA

EXTREMANDURA

VALENCIA to BARCELONA



SECOND CLASS (TRANSVERSE LINES)

ISABEL II (Valladolid to Santander)

BILBAO to CASTEJON

ZARAGOZA to ALSASUA

CORDOBA to MALAGA

On July 22nd 1869, a Circular was issued ordering that a small bell be fitted to each wagon ambulante. It seems that trains had been leaving the station

before the mail had been exchanged and the orders were now that the train could not leave until the bell in the mail coach had been rung announcing that the mail from that station had been collected and delivered.

On August 18th 1870, the “Ambulante” rules and regulations of 1866 were repeated with some minor modifications and refinements.

The only major change was with the division of the lines, which in those 4 years had increased as follows:

MAIN LINES: (LINEAS GENERALES)

Madrid to Irun

Madrid to Valencia

Madrid to Cadiz

Madrid to Barcelona

Madrid to Badajoz

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE ESTAFETA AMBULANTE SERVICE

The pace of the conduction of mail by rail depended upon the speed of railroad construction and as the latter was not in the hands of the Government but of private enterprise, in the long run the delivery of mail at a reasonable promptness was indirectly controlled by private estimates of the possible financial gains of each line. No concessions were sought for lines where the terrain was difficult and thereby costly, and the state run postal service was obliged to continue with its Carteria and Peaton services without help from the ferrocarril in isolated or mountainous areas.

The eagerness displayed by the Postal Administration to utilize whatever railroad section was being built is shown by the dates of the Royal Orders authorizing the conduction of mail by rail on each section or route quite some time before the section began to function. At the time of functioning or at the inauguration of each line, the mail organization existed and the mail was ready.

The opening of the “Estafeta Ambulante” or mail sorting wagon came some time after from about 2 months to a year later.

It was in these latter Estafetas Ambulantes that the mark known to philatelists as the “Ambulante” or T.P.O. (Traveling Post Office) mark or the

R.P.O. (Railroad Post Office) mark originated.

It was not until 1878 that the “ambulantes” with their itineraries were officially listed together in the first “Anuario Oficial de Correos De España” although information was sparsely sprinkled in various guides before that year. In the first “Anuario” the number of ambulantes was only 33 and this was 40 years after the appearance of the first railroad in Spain. The Anuarios continued for four editions only to 1881/1882 by which time the number of Ambulantes had grown to 46.

It is not possible to list all the ambulantes from their inception to the present day, as will be appreciated, so the year 1882 was chosen as a suitable year to end tables and statistics about the ambulante service. The last true ambulante mark, the Octagonal Ambulante, comes within the year selected and the final ambulante type postmark and cancellation being the circular “Tren Postal” seems to spell the beginning of the end of this interesting section of Spanish Postal History, appearing around the 1970’s.

The ambulante service was gradually falling into disuse, the buzones or post-boxes at the sides of the “wagon-correos” mostly showing signs of rust.

THE UNOFFICIAL RAILWAY MARKS

CATALONIA:

Although the very first railroad inaugurated in Spain was that of Barcelona to Mataró (1848), mail was not carried on that route until after December 10th 1853, the date of the Royal Order authorizing its conveyance by that rail line. In 1860, another authorization covered the extension to Tordera and further to Gerona in March 1862.

These Orders referred to the “conveyance” of mail and the first “Estafeta Ambulante” or T.P.O. over purely Catalan territory was on the Barcelona/La Junquera projected route (Which never went to La Junquera but to Port Bou) in 1872.

The Zaragoza/Barcelona line which covers a small area of Catalonia did institute an Estafeta Ambulante in late December 1861.

The public, aware of the existence of a T.P.O. on the Madrid “Mediterráneo” line wanted one for busy industrialized Catalonia.

VISA Y CASANOVAS:



Before the advent of the railroad in Spain, goods were transported by road or by sea. The business of Transport Agents, usually combined with Customs Agents was a thriving and flourishing one. As each line of “ferrocarril” opened, it was a great advantage to become associated with that company as the sole agency for the transport of goods by their rail. Co-operation with the railroads was a proud boast.

The need to send mail “urgently” and cheaply had always been satisfactorily fulfilled by Transport Agents and public demand forced them to once again take up this service. Mail travelling outside the jurisdiction of the post office in the direction of Mataró/Arenys was taken to the agency for this line which traded under the name of VISA Y CASANOVAS, the latter named gentleman being a native of Barcelona. This “Agencia del Ferro-Carril de Barcelona/Arenys” was situated in the Plaza del Palacio No. 15 on the corner of Isabel II street. Letters taken to them at their Barcelona Office or given to their agent in Mataró (It is possible that they had other agents along the line) would receive a commercial handstamp. If the letter bore a postage stamp, the commercial handstamp was used to cancel the postage stamp. Although there was no need to affix a postage stamp, many of the public were not aware of this or had intended to catch the “Buzón” or posting box open but were unsuccessful. The letter would be included in the “VAYA” or consignment note of all the “encargos” being sent that day and would be handed down with other encargos at the destinationary station where the “arriero” working for Visa y Casanovas would collect and deliver. It is possible that letters being carried by train were never listed at all.

The Carril Handstamps

For many years, students of Spanish Postal History

and Philately were puzzled by certain cancellations appearing on letters and stamps from 1858 to 1872. This “mysterious” cancellation was found on mail only from and within Catalonia and as the first covers bearing this mark came from Calella, it was commonly known as the “Carril de Calella” the “Carril” being the affectionate name given to the railway from Barcelona which passed through the coastal station of Calella. Later, the name was changed to a simple “Carril” because small archives were being found from other towns bearing this mark.

As stated earlier, the pressing need for a rapid, cheap, mail service from Barcelona to other Catalan areas and vice-versa was making itself felt and the difficulties of sending mail by the orthodox postal method with its scarcity of posting boxes and collections, combined with the inconvenience of the posting boxes being portable and the posting times impracticable, led to the investigation of other methods of sending mail.

It was not long before the obvious answer was to send it by rail. Mail, especially urgent mail, was taken to the Railway Station and handed either to the ticket office (the obvious place for members of the general public) or to the goods office (more normal for business people).

It was at the ticket offices where letters received the Carril mark. This was most often the same hand stamp used on tickets or packages by the railway agent.

The Langreo Railway



During the same epoch that Catalanian ticket offices at the railroad stations were busily hand-stamping letters brought in by private individuals the same thing was happening at the go-ahead little railroad in the Asturias known as the Gijón/Sama line of the Ferrocarril de Langreo.

This almost narrow gauge railroad of 1/34 m. width was principally constructed to carry coal from the mines in that area and as such was of considerable importance. It was one of the earlier railways to be

built in Spain.

Letters brought to the three stations (at least) were hand stamped with the very beautiful company hand stamp which has made them so much sought after items by postal historians and advanced philatelists be they on stamp or on cover.

On cover, they are very rare indeed, the SAMA

station mark being the rarest of the three.

Despite the unofficial nature of the cancellation, Spain issued a 2 peseta stamp for the World Stamp Day-May 8th 1970 showing a 12 cuartos stamp of 1869 cancelled with the Gijón "Langreo" cancel. Both First Day Covers and Maximun cards for this issue illustrate the Langreo cancel.



(Top) Cover commemorating the 100th Anniversary of the Spanish Railroad.

(Bottom) Cover showing special cancel for the railroad anniversary.

EARLY RAILWAY CANCELS



"Circles of Madrid"



Various Ambulante marks



After Departure



Standard Ambulantes



Special Ambulantes



RR Station



Small town railroad cancels



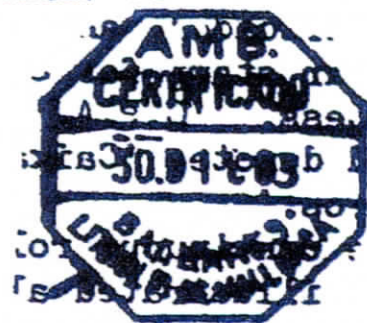
"Alcance"



Omnibus

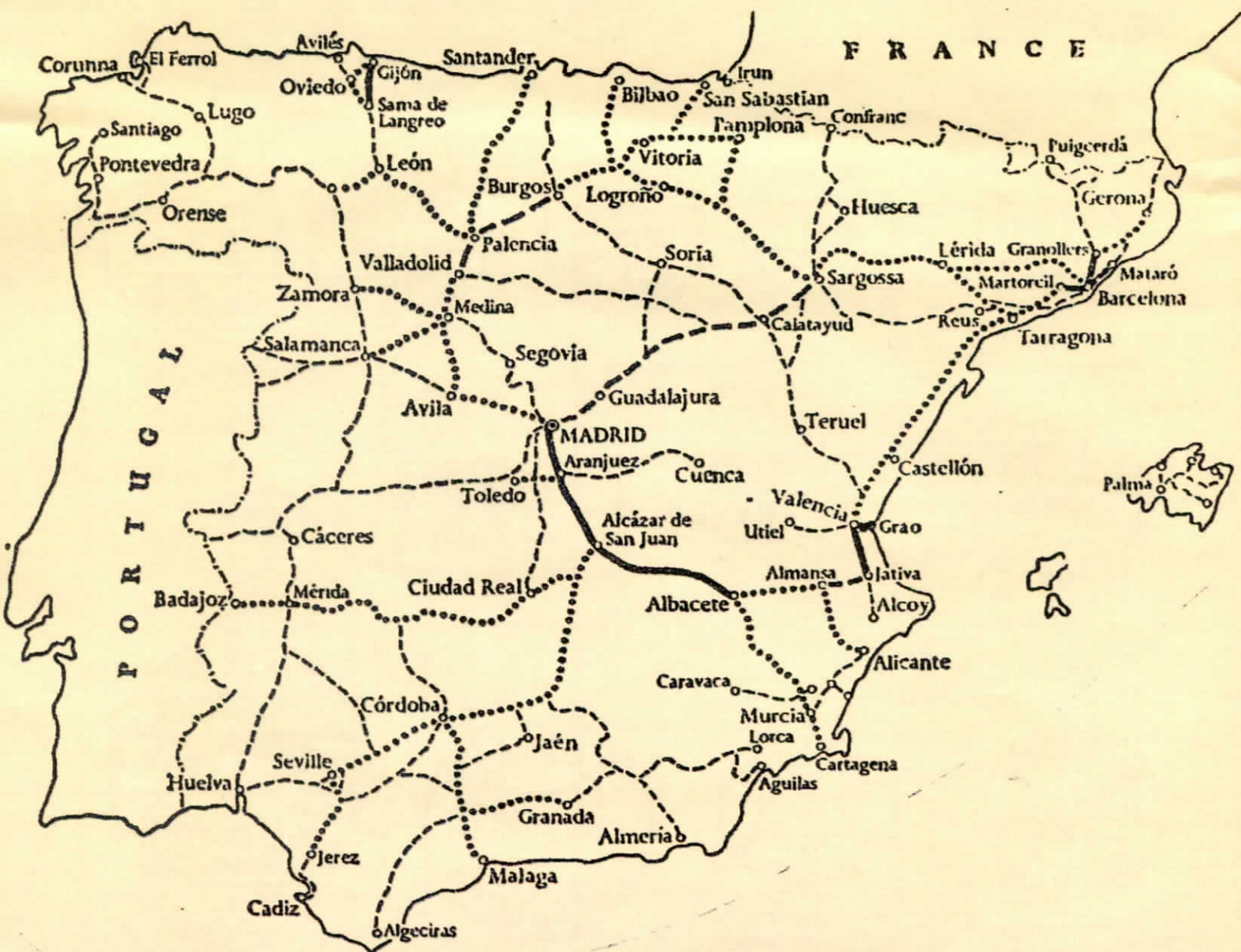
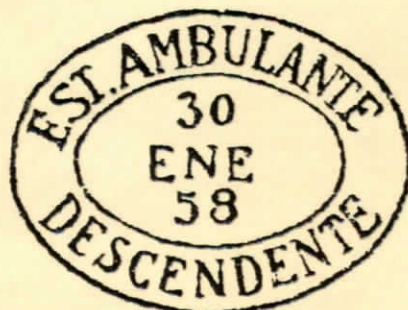
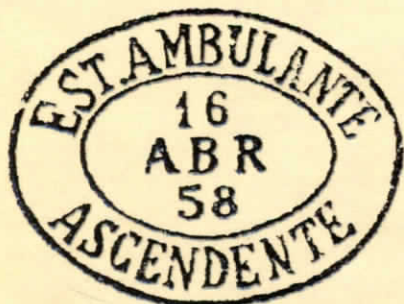


Streetcar



"Litoral"

Map Showing Railroad Construction Between 1855 & 1936



Q&A with Richard Ascaso, incoming Auction Chairman

1. What are your Spanish Philately specialty collecting areas?

I enjoy collecting a wide range of Spanish Philately. My initial focus was on the regular issues starting in 1850 up to the most recent issues. Haven't checked lately but I'm sure I must have it 90% complete. As time went on, I added Spanish Morocco and the other Spanish colonies in Africa. Then I discovered the whole SCW area and have been collecting in that area as well as Telegraphs, Perfins, Cinderellas and Charity issues. I have tried to build up a good reference library which in itself requires a good bit of patience and doing. I have stayed away from some of the pricier issues and have some conspicuous empty pages in my albums as a result. I have a few covers in my collection and really see that as my main area of endeavor going forward.

1(a). What is the most unusual/coolest/greatest find/etc. in your collection?

I have a small group of "Pro-Huerfanos" which were issued to raise money for various orphanage related causes. One is a "Pro-Huerfanos Del-Aire" which I purchased very inexpensively and have yet to see for sale on Ebay. I'm sure it's not an expensive issue but I really like it! If anyone has more information on these issues please contact me I would love to find out more. (scan attached)

3. Tell us about your new e-Bay stamp dealership business? What areas are you covering? how is it going? what are you learning about that market? What areas of Spanish Philately do you see as strong and which are areas of less demand?

Well, it's simply off to a slow start. The main culprit has been lack of time dedicated to sourcing and listing material. I thought I would have more time available but have been doing some selling/buying of real estate as a result of changes in investment strategy resulting in no time for the stamp business. I do see this changing and will be working hard on getting some material listed for sale.

I will share my thoughts which will not be surprising to anyone following the stamp business. It appears to me that sellers are not happy with any of the internet based marketplaces. Seems like either the fees are too high and policies do not protect the seller or the traffic to the site does not support adequate sales. An alternative would be to set up a standalone website and drive traffic to one's own site. So the mechanics of the marketplace has its own challenges.

The stamp market itself continues on the same trend that

it has been going for quite some time. Specifically in the Spanish stamp market a vast swath of material has no market, here I am talking about inexpensive issues from 1958-2000. Very few buyers and those buying on Ebay expect even very inexpensive issues to be discounted heavily from Catalog values. Euro issues as part of a year set or collection do better price wise but sales are slow due to the limited demand. Spanish stamps issued from 1900 to 1950 are the best sellers on Ebay and although they still need to be priced right they will sell. I have been speaking about Spanish stamps but I think the same holds true for many other areas. Overall, as the number of buyers decline, only rarer items in good condition retain any kind of marketability. It's sad in a way that most dealers are buying collections, removing high value sets and singles for their own inventory and selling of the remainder of the collection at fire sale pricing. I don't have personal experience on the high end of the market but what I read I think that is doing fine.

4. Are there any areas of the SPS auction process you are thinking of improving?

I have been an active bidder/buyer and have nothing but praise on how well the SPS auctions have been run. I would like to hear from our membership on any ideas they would like to see considered for future auctions. I want to encourage our membership if they have material they have been thinking about selling now is the time to forward it on for upcoming auctions.

5. Anything you would like to share about your professional background, schooling and/or family?

I worked for various State of California agencies in the Occupational Health and Safety field in consultation as well as regulatory compliance capacities. I spent most of my career in the field but did spend several years in a Management role. I am very happily married to my wife Nicole, we will be celebrating our 25th year anniversary this year. My daughter Sophie just graduated from Washington State University (WSU) and will be starting next year on her Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degree. My son Eliot will be a Junior at WSU studying Computer Science. Go Cougs!

Both my parents were natives of Spain and grew up during the SCW period, they shared their experiences with me and taught me to speak and read Spanish. As a result, I am quite the Hispanophile and love cooking Spanish dishes, reading Spanish literature, and on and on. I have traveled to Spain several times but am way overdue as my last trip was in 2000.



Lot 40



Lot 138



Lot 41



Lot 154



Lot 44



Lot 45

Lot 47

S.P.S. AUCTION #57
Great Stuff!
Closing Date, June 13th
Don't Miss Out!

Long Live The King!

