

GUATEMALA'S MASTER DESIGNER/ENGRAVER: ARNOLDO CHAVARRY ARRUE

This exhibit celebrates the philatelic achievements of the most prolific designer and engraver of the stamps of Guatemala: **J. Arnoldo Chavarry Arrue**.



1951 Self-portrait by Chavarry
From 1943 until his death in 1971, Chavarry designed or engraved more than 150 different postage stamps, approximately 10% of all Guatemala stamps that had been printed.

Chavarry was mentored at the government printing office, Taller de Grabados en Acero, by Carlos Marckwordt, Byron Zadik, Alfredo Galvez Suarez and Prudencio Davila, all prominent stamp designers.

WHAT YOU WILL SEE

This exhibit contains the largest known collection of Chavarry archival material. It displays the artist's pencil sketch essays, which were submitted in competition. Both accepted and rejected essays are presented. Die proofs and plate proofs abound. This exhibit only shows Chavarry's work during his "designer" phase, from 1941 to 1956. His later works, where he was the engraver and not the designer, are not included.

Chavarry's designs and engravings are easily recognized by the presence of the letters "CHY" (for "Chavarry") in the imprint at the bottom of each stamp.

GRABADOS EN ACERO GUATEMALA C.A. CHY

PHOTOGRAPHS AND PHOTO ESSAYS

One of the unusual elements in this exhibit, is the presence of photographs and photo essays. All photographs were used personally by Chavarry as design models. The photo essays are the actual submissions from the designer, including photo paste-ups.

DESIGNER OR ENGRAVER?

Chavarry was the designer, and sometimes engraver, from 1944-1956. After 1956, until his death in 1971 he only did the engraving. The sketches, essay and proofs are all from his designer period. No archival material has been seen for the stamps he engraved but did not design.

CHAVARRY'S DESIGN STYLE

His design style is often called "bottom right". Both Chavarry's painting and his Mayan Indian stamp are centered with the focus at the lower right.



EXHIBIT GUIDE

Non-italicized text is philatelic information.
Italicized text is for non-philatelic information, typically about the subject of the stamp.

THE LAST STAMP ENGRAVED BY CHAVARRY

In 1971 President Carlos Manuel Arana Osorio granted Chavarry the gift of engraving a stamp with his own portrait (at left) and that of Guatemala's best known stamp collector, Leon Bilak (at right). Chavarry got to see the first edition of these stamps, but a heart attack ended his life on October 21, 1971, the centenary of the use of postage stamps in Guatemala.



RARITIES

The degree of rarity of the archival material depends on the nature of the material. The stamps are highlighted with external colored boxes as follows:

- ☐ Artists sketches and essays - **UNIQUE (red)**
- ☐ Die proofs— No more than 10 exist **(purple)**
- ☐ Plate proofs—No more than a few sheets exist **(green)**

Errors and varieties use the above colors depending on rarity

Starting in 1944, Chavarry became both a designer and an engraver.

CHAVARRY'S FIRST STAMP DESIGN

The Police Building Airmail Stamp

Signatures on drawings and proofs indicate that Arnoldo Chavarry and Frederick Odin worked on the design, and Froilan Ceballos and Francusco Gutierrez on the engraving.



National Palace Commemorative

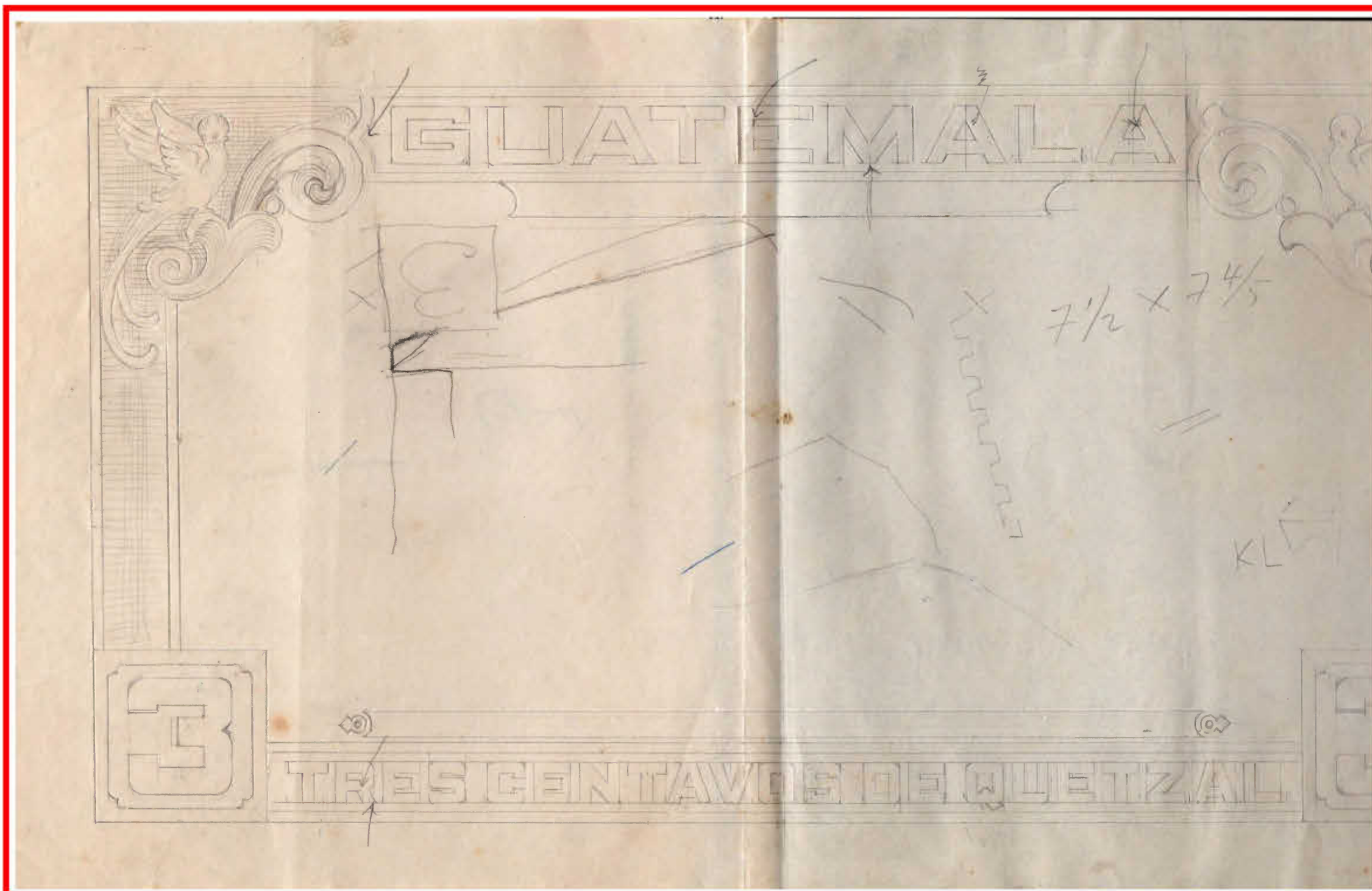
Designed by Arnaldo Chavarry and engraved by Froilan Ceballos. This is Chavarry's original pencil sketch of the accepted design.

Stamp as issued.



On November 10, 1943, the National Palace, the seat of the national government, was opened in Guatemala City. Construction had been started in 1937, and the building is considered one of the most handsome in Central America.

Ubico's interest in the post office and philately was part of his effort to reduce costs and increase the efficiency of the government. During his regime, contracts for the printing of stamps were shifted from British firms in London to the Johan Enschede en Zonen Company in the Netherlands. With the coming of World War II, Guatemala was cut off from foreign suppliers of stamps and developed its own engraving capacity at the Tipografia Nacional.



National Palace Commemorative

Chavarry was not the only competitor for the design of this stamp. This is a composite photographic paste-up of a rejected essay by Frederick Odin. The frame is pasted on top of a photo of the Palacio Nacional.



Photographic reproductions of rejected essays by Frederick Odin

“Three sketches of this design, reduced photographically to stamp size with the centers evidently actual photos of the palace, are mounted on a card (the backing card has been lost) with the penciled notation, in English, “Please return with the reply. F. Odin 1944.” On the rear of the card is written in ink in Spanish: “Note: The engraving of matrices of these designs was solicited in North America because of the incapacity of the so-called ‘Expert’ don Federico Odin.” But Sres. Chavarry and Caballos are officially credited with the design of the engraving.



Photographic reproduction of the paste-up above.



National Palace with Black Obliterator Bar

The basic blue stamp was printed at the same time as the bluish green Palace stamp of 1944, but before it could be put into circulation the revolution of that year had taken place. As November 10, 1943 was also the birthday of the deposed President Ubico, it was decided to obliterate this date from the stamp by overprinting it with a blue bar 1 mm. thick. The “25 de junio de 1944” was added to celebrate the revolution, and below was printed “PALACIO NACIONAL” to replace the words covered by the bar. This blue stamp was never placed in circulation without the overprint.

After 150,000 stamps were overprinted, it was noted that the 1 mm. bar did not always cover the offensive date, and the remaining copies were overprinted with a bar 1.5 mm. thick.

Imperforate plate proof from plate #9



Thin bar (as issued)



Thick bar as issued



Bottom of “PALACIO NACIONAL” missing. (Pos. 77). Perforated stamp with thick bar.



Defective overprint on perforated block.

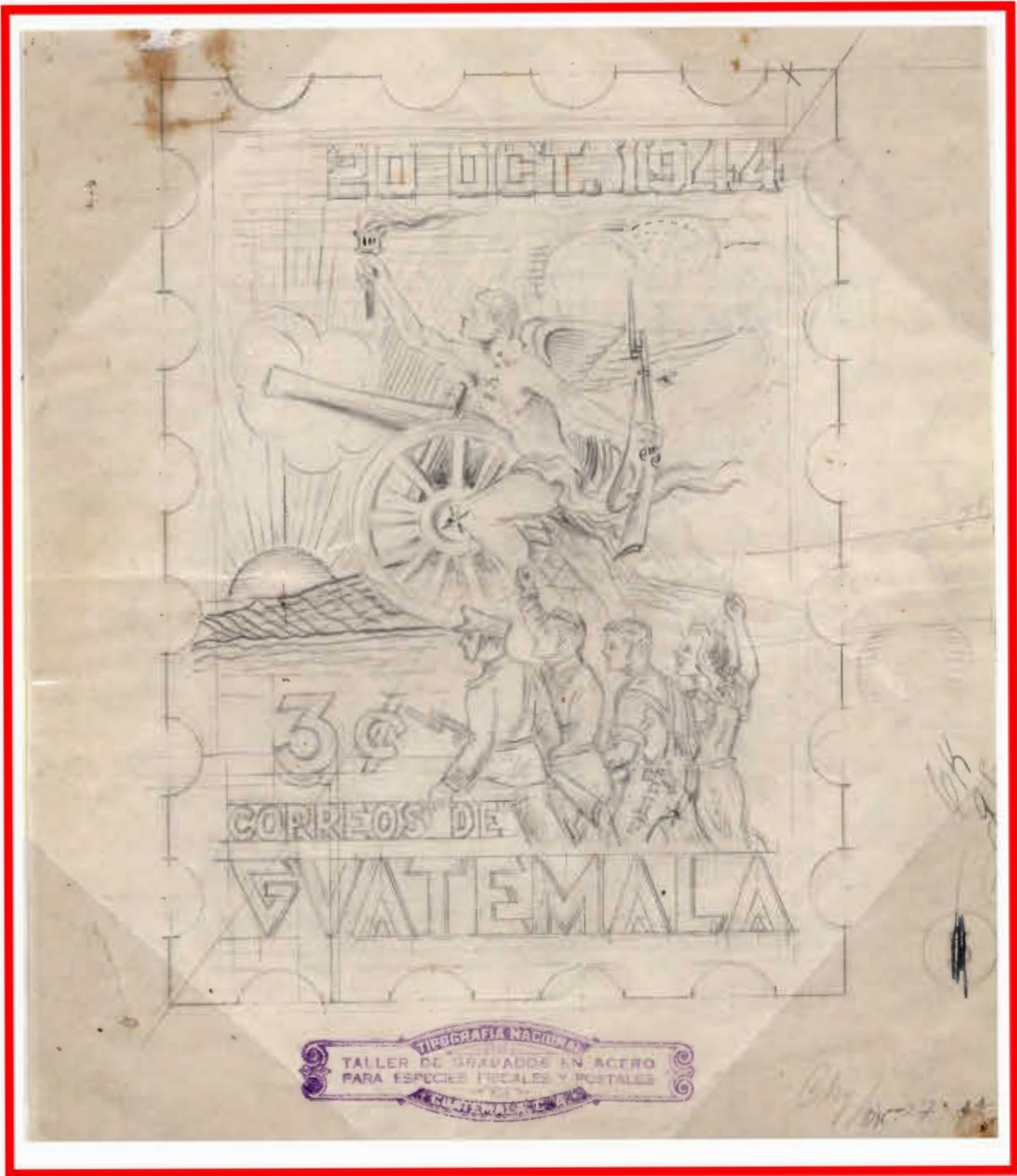
Liberation Issue

The design, an allegory of the revolution, shows Victory holding a torch and a rifle, with a cannon firing, the sun rising over a new day and the representative figures of the people who took part in the revolution (soldier, student, worker and woman).



The original artist's drawing of the stamp glorifying the October Revolution of 1944. This design was made by A. Chavarry on October 25th, five days after the breakout of the revolution and accepted by the triumvirate of Francisco J. Arana, Jacobo Arbenz Guzman, and Jorge Foriello. However, shortly thereafter it was disapproved. Drawing dated October 25, 1944 and marked "aprobado" (approved). Signed "CHY".

The original artist's drawing for the Revolution issue of 1945. This design was accepted on October 27th, 1944, and the stamp issued Feb. 20th, 1945. The central, allegorical part of the design is the same on the unissued and the issued stamp, but in mirror image. Drawing dated December 27, 1944. With Taller de Grabados stamp. Signed "CHY."



Liberation Issue (Cont'd)

Plate proof



Double Perforations



Double perforation at top. Plate 83.



Double perforation at bottom.

Overprinted National Palace Airmail

Stamp as issued



Essay with date “25 de junio de 1944” added
Largest known block



Normal overprint



Essay overprint with date added

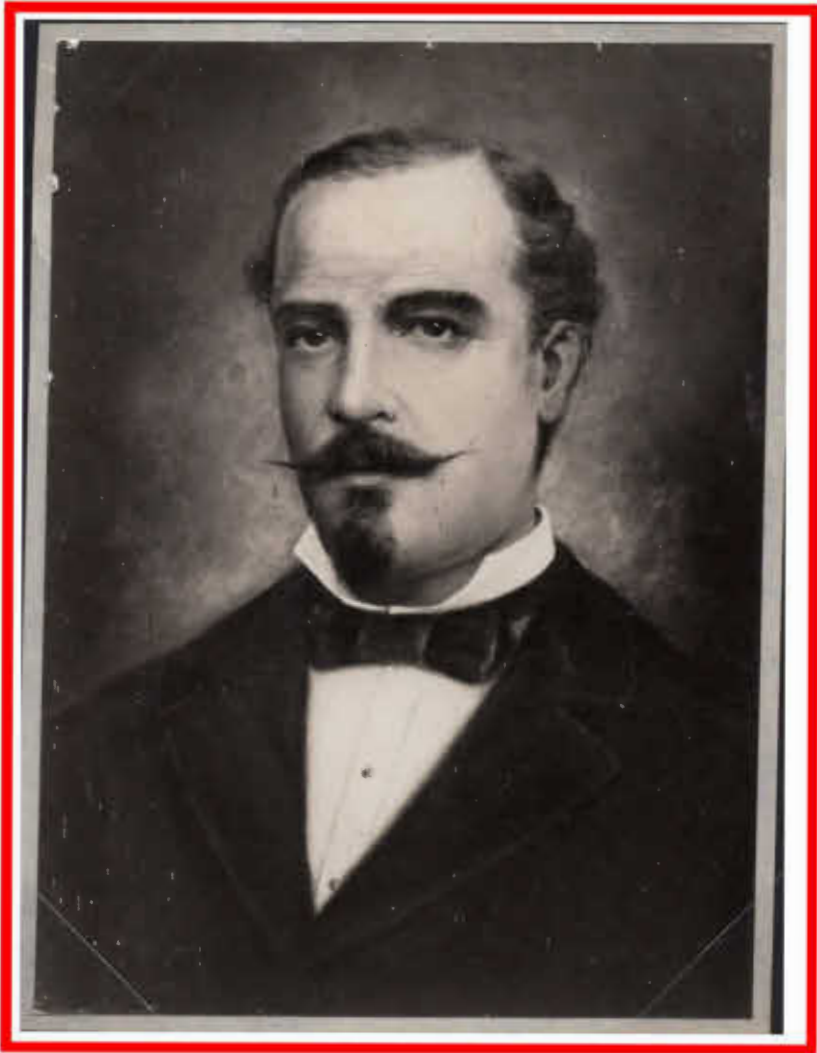


Jose Milla y Vidaurre Airmail Issue

Jose' Milla y Vidaurre (1822-1882) was one of the most distinguished Guatemala-born writers, known throughout the Spanish-speaking world as a poet, novelist, humorist and travel writer under his pen name of Salome Gil. The nickname "Chapin" came from his fictional character Juan Chapin. He also held various governmental positions.

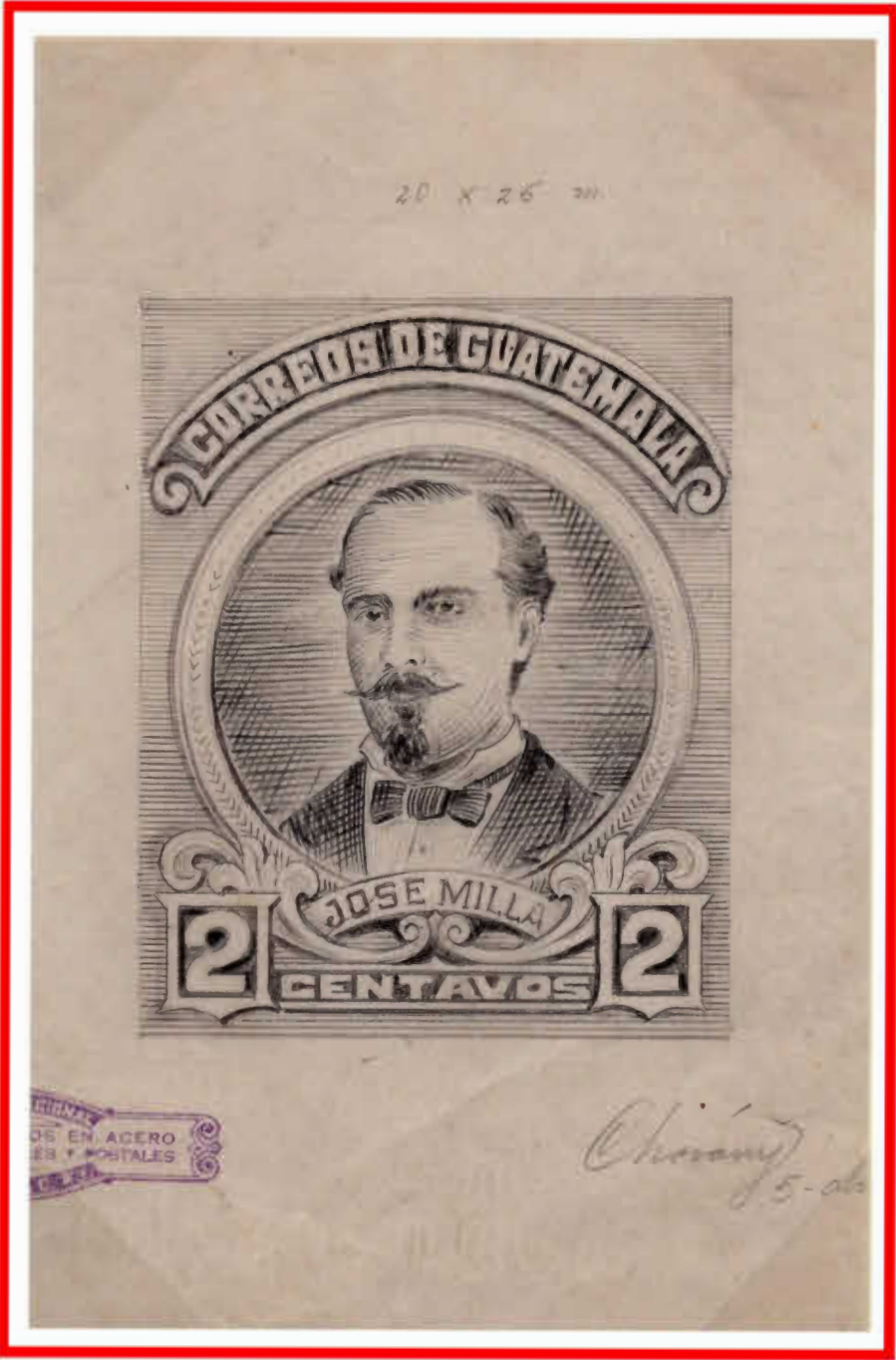


Original photograph for Vidaurre design



Rejected design #1 by Chavarry

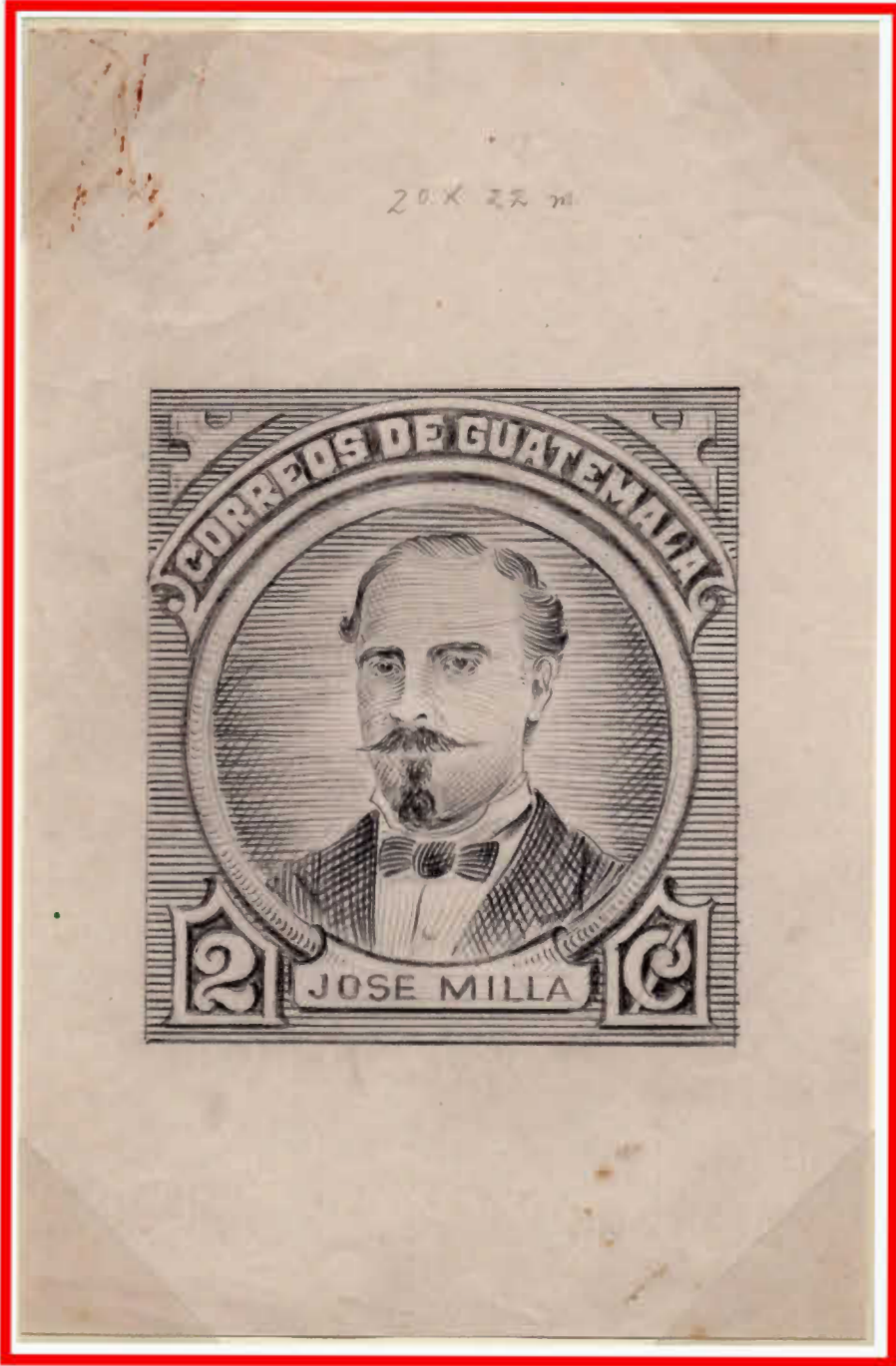
From the notations on the drawing, the stamp was designed to be 20 x 25 mm. It has the Taller de Grabados handstamp, and was signed "Chavarry" on April 5, 1945



Jose Milla y Vidaurre Airmail Issue (Cont'd)

Rejected design #2 by Chavarry

The stamp was designed to be 20 x 22 mm.



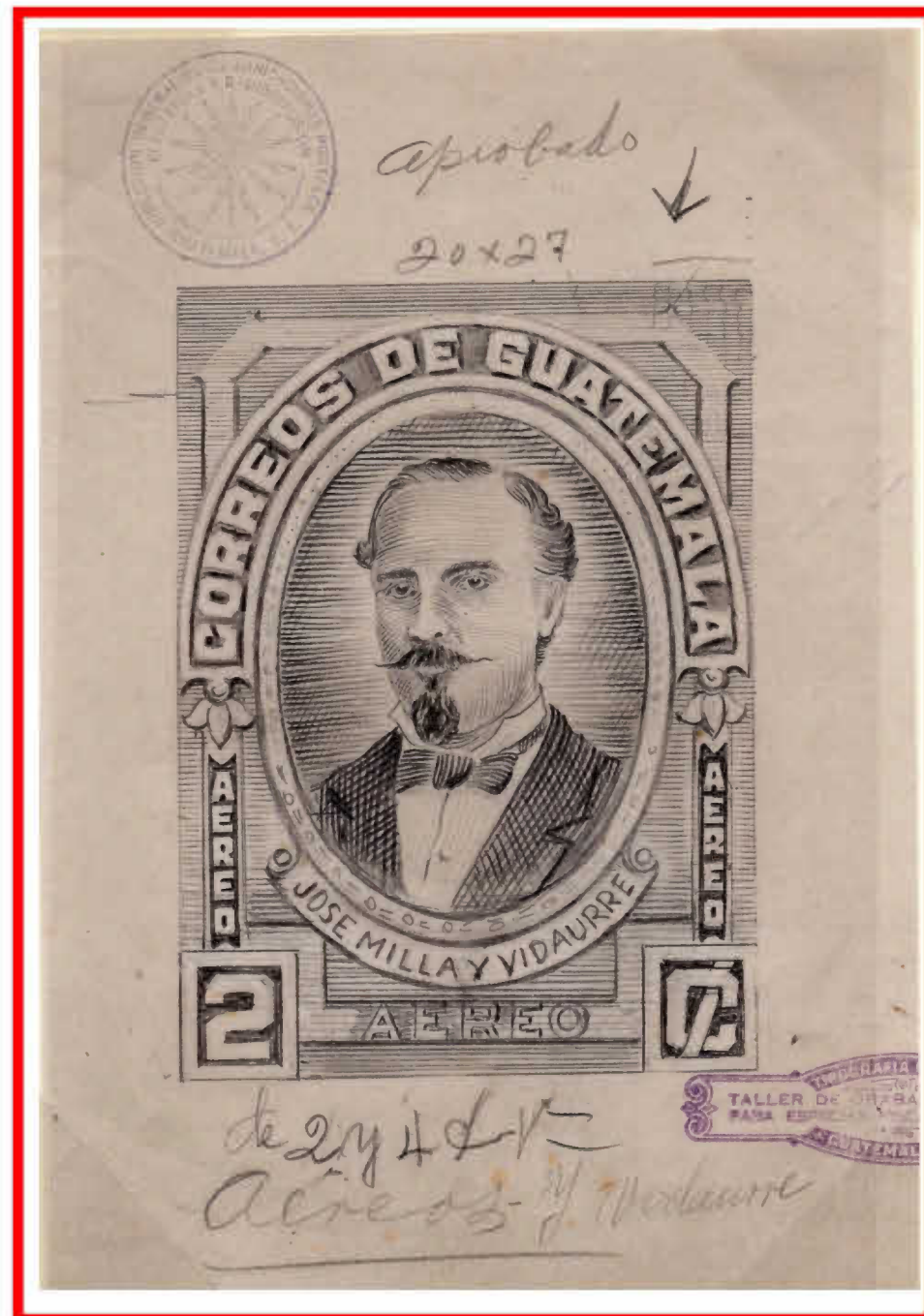
Frame essay of accepted design



Jose Milla y Vidaurre Airmail Issue (Cont'd)

Accepted design by Chavarry as issued

Instead of being designed for 20 x 25 mm in size, the accepted essay anticipated a stamp 20 x 27mm in size. The essay is marked "aprobado" (approved), also "Aereos y Vidaurre" (Vidaurre airmail.) It was handstamped by Taller De Grabados and also contains the handstamp of "Direccion General De Comunicaciones Postales / Electricias Y Radiodifusion / Guatemala, C.A."



1946 New Years souvenir card



The 7 ½ c was reproduced in turquoise on a New Year card from the postal chief to other government officials. Since it was made from the original die, many collectors cut out the stamp portion to display as a die proof. For this reason, intact cards are scarce.

The inscription on the card translates as follows:

"The Director General of Post and Telecommunications of the Republic of Guatemala and the functionaries of his services are pleased to wish to you and to the personnel of your Administration a very happy and prosperous New Year."

"1st of January 1946"

First Anniversary of Revolution Commemoratives



These stamps were issued to commemorate the first anniversary of the revolution of October 20, 1944. The design shows the torch of liberty shining brightly, flanked by two quetzals, with the numeral "1" in the middle.



Two rejected essays—Not even close to the issued stamps

These two 1945 essays, numbered "5" and "6", appear to be part of a series of at least nine essays. Number 9, which is not present, was the one selected for the two stamps above. The stamps suggested by the essays were designed to be either 20 x 27mm or 18 x 25 mm. The essays are signed "CHY 45" and "Chavarry" and bear the handstamp of Taller De Grabados.



Fray Payo Enriquez de Rivera Issue

Photograph used by Arnolando Chavarry for preparation of sketches



Fray Payo Enrique de Rivera



Fray Payo Enriquez de Rivera Issue (Cont'd)

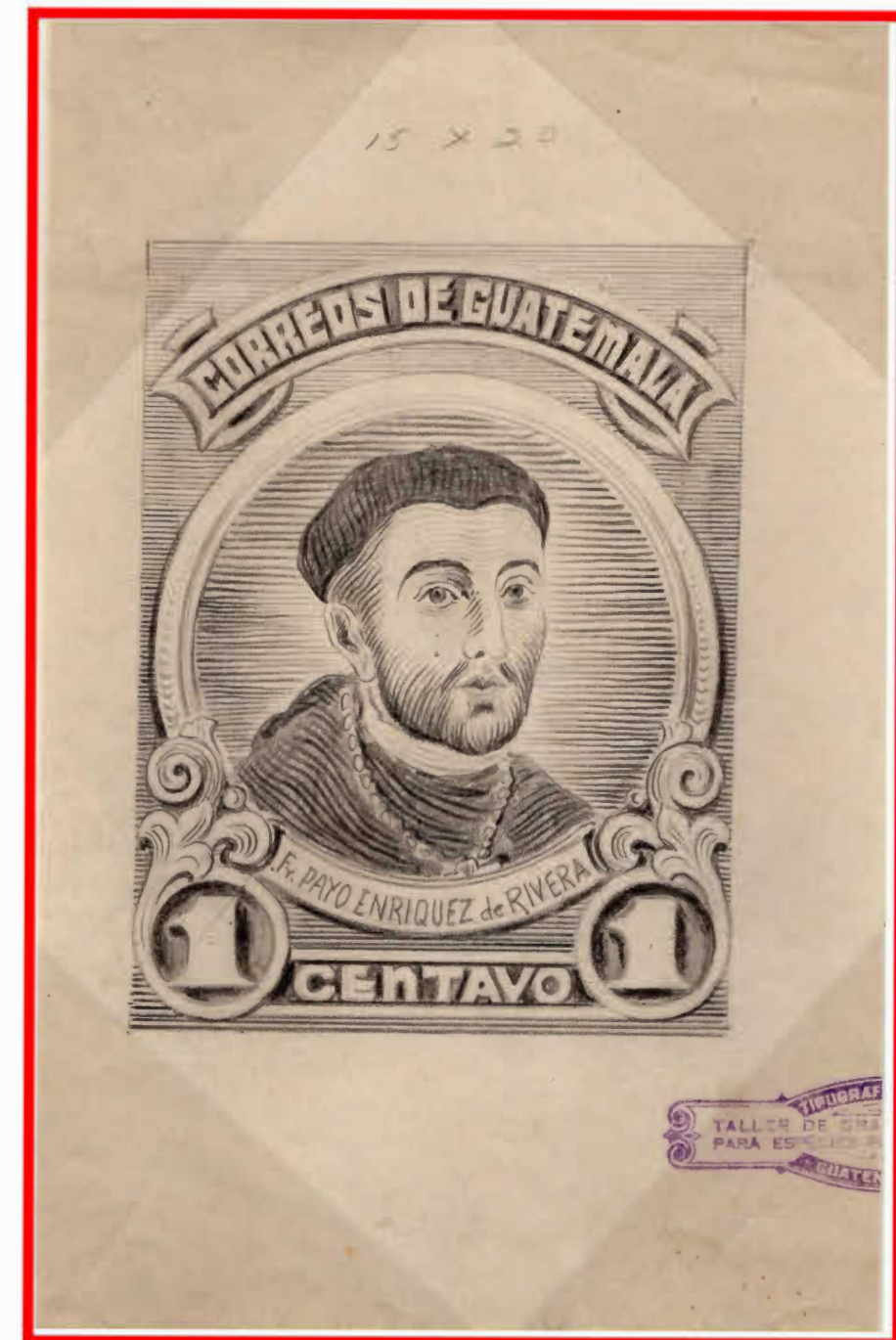
First rejected design by Chavarry

This essay was for a design intended to be 15 x 20 mm. It was handstamped by Teller De Grabados. It is dated April 5, 1945 and signed "Chavarry".



Second rejected design by Chavarry

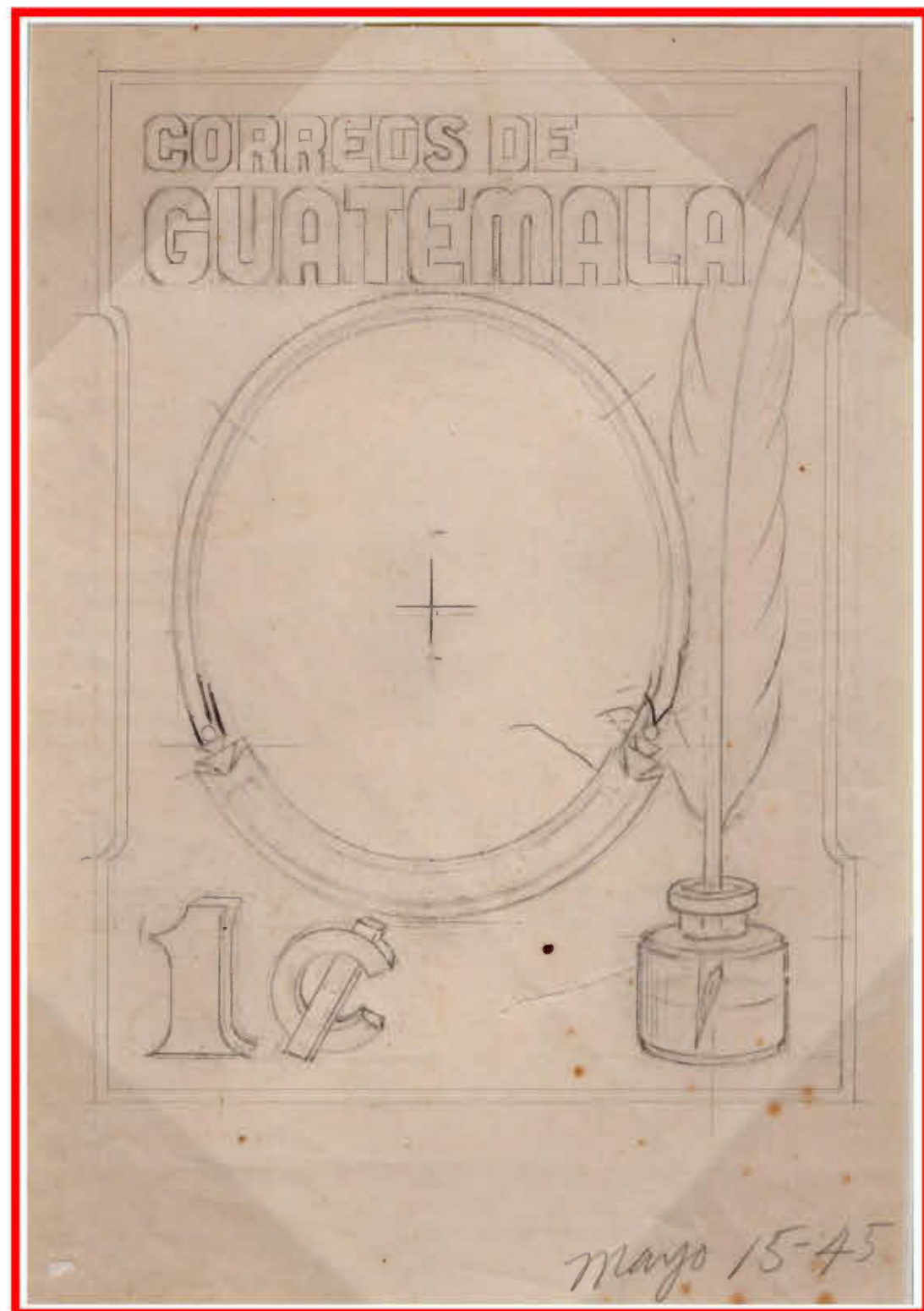
This essay was for a design intended to be 15 x 20 mm. It was handstamped by Teller De Grabados. It is undated and not signed.



Fray Payo Enriquez de Rivera Issue (Cont'd)

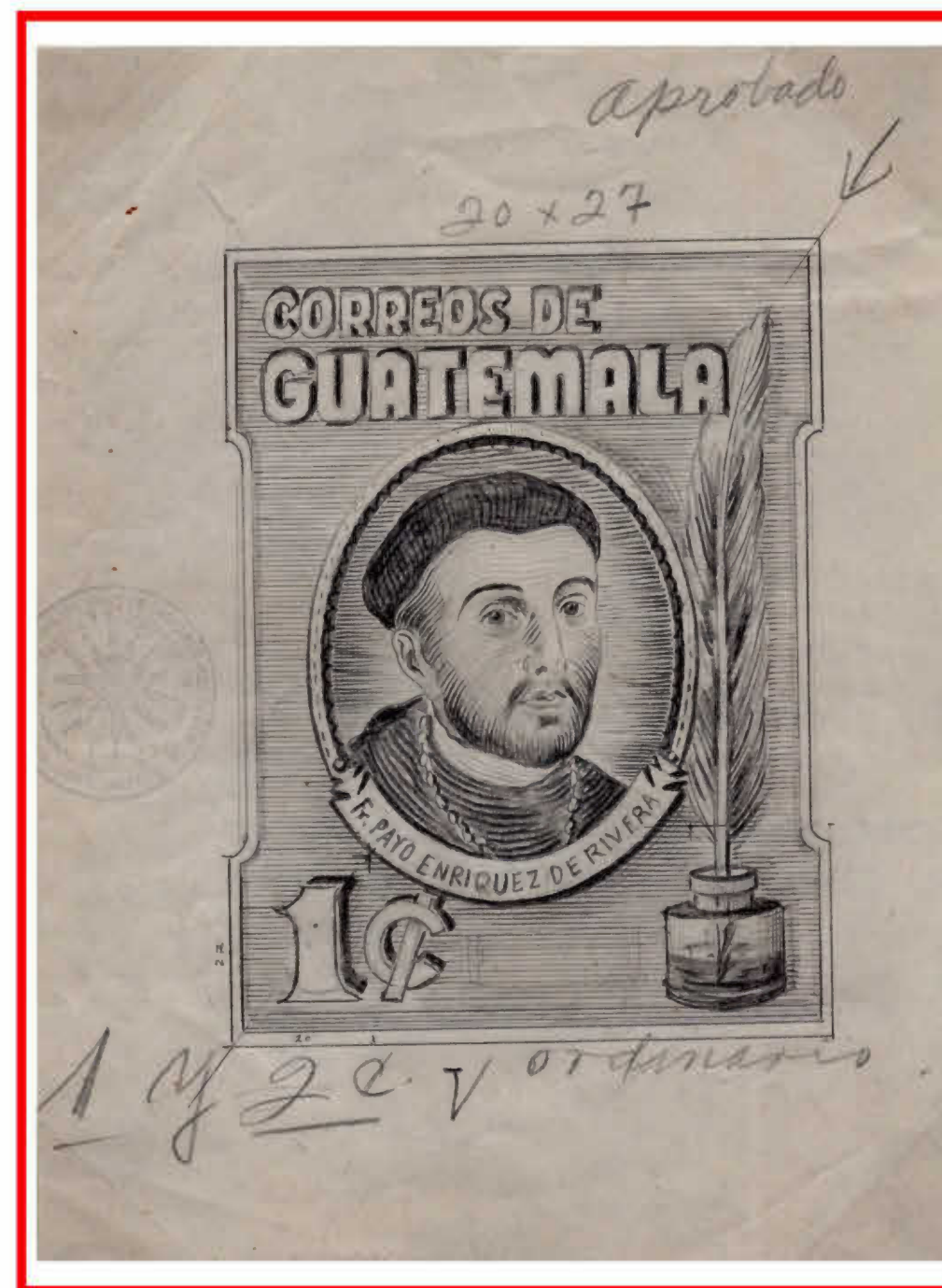
Original drawing of the frame of the accepted design by Chavarry

This frame essay is dated May 15, 1945.



Original Drawing of the Accepted Design by Chavarry

This essay was for a design now intended to be 20 x 27mm, instead of 15 x 20 mm like the rejected essays. The design was intended to be used for a 2 centavo value as well ("1 Y 2c V ordinario.") It is unsigned and undated. It is marked "aprobado" (approved) and has the handstamp of "Direccion General De Comunicaciones Postales / Electricas Y Radiodifusion / Guatemala, C.A."



Fray Payo Enriquez de Rivera Issue (Cont'd)

Sunken die color trial proofs



Plate proofs



Imperforate. Dark lilac.

The stamps were issued in perf 10.8 and perf 12.4



Perf. 10.8 Slate purple

Perf. 12.4 Dark lilac.

First Definitive Airmail Stamps of 1946

Partially imperf vertically

As issued

The design of the 5c is adopted from that of the 2c regular Fray Payo postage of 1945 with the addition of the word “AEREO”. Also, a period has been added after the “TIP” in the inscription at the foot of each stamp.



Vertically imperforate Normal

Only one imperf vertically sheet was issued

The 10c and 15c are adapted from the design of the 3c regular postage of 1944, with the addition of a panel reading “AEREO EXTERIOR”



Imperf plate proofs



Only one sheet of each was issued

Imperf horizontally

First Definitive Airmail Stamps of 1946 (Cont'd)

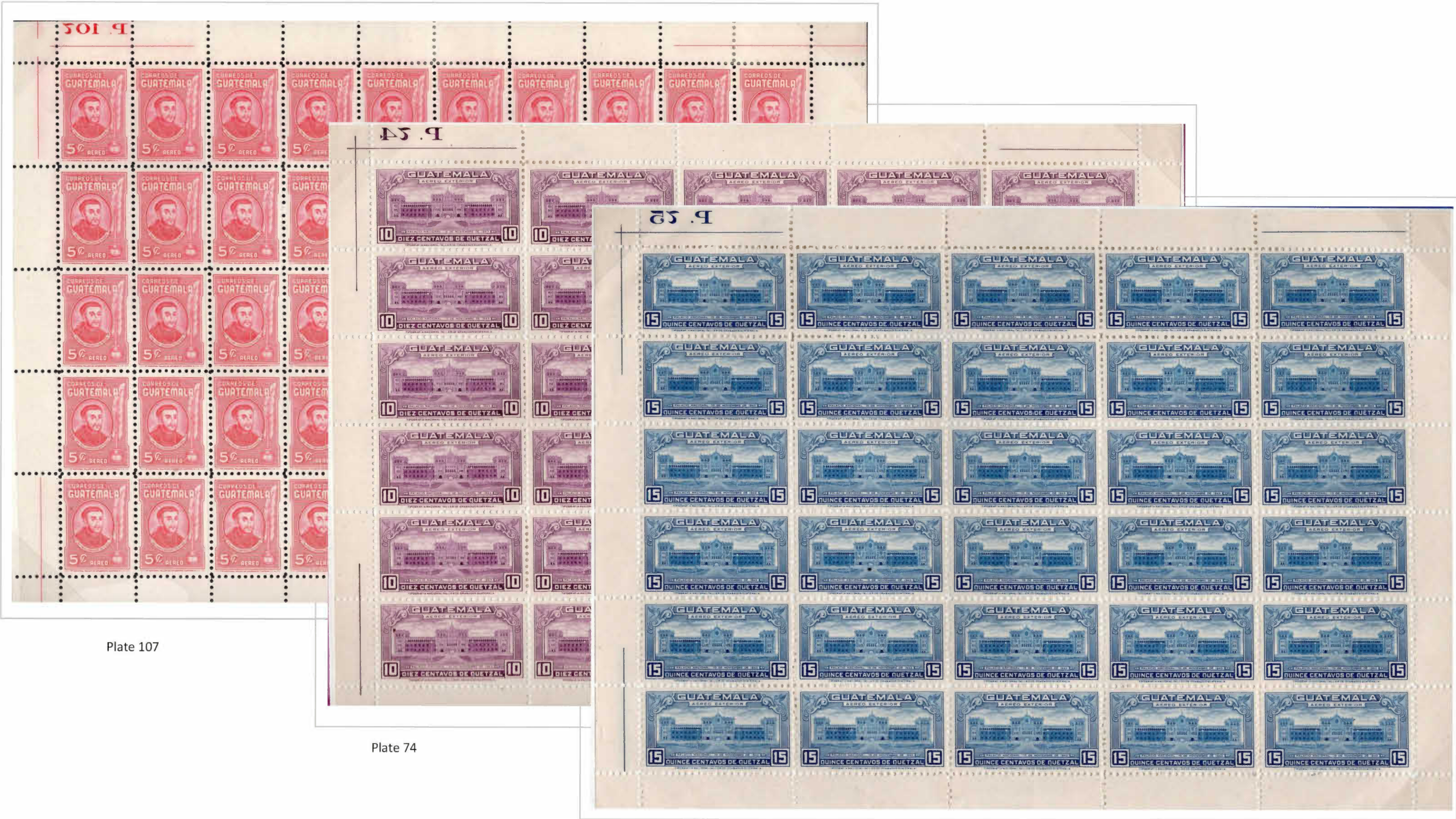


Plate 107

Plate 74

Plate 75

Montufar Regular Issues

Jose Batres Montufar, eminent poet
Photograph used by designer Chavarry for all Montufar designs

As Issued

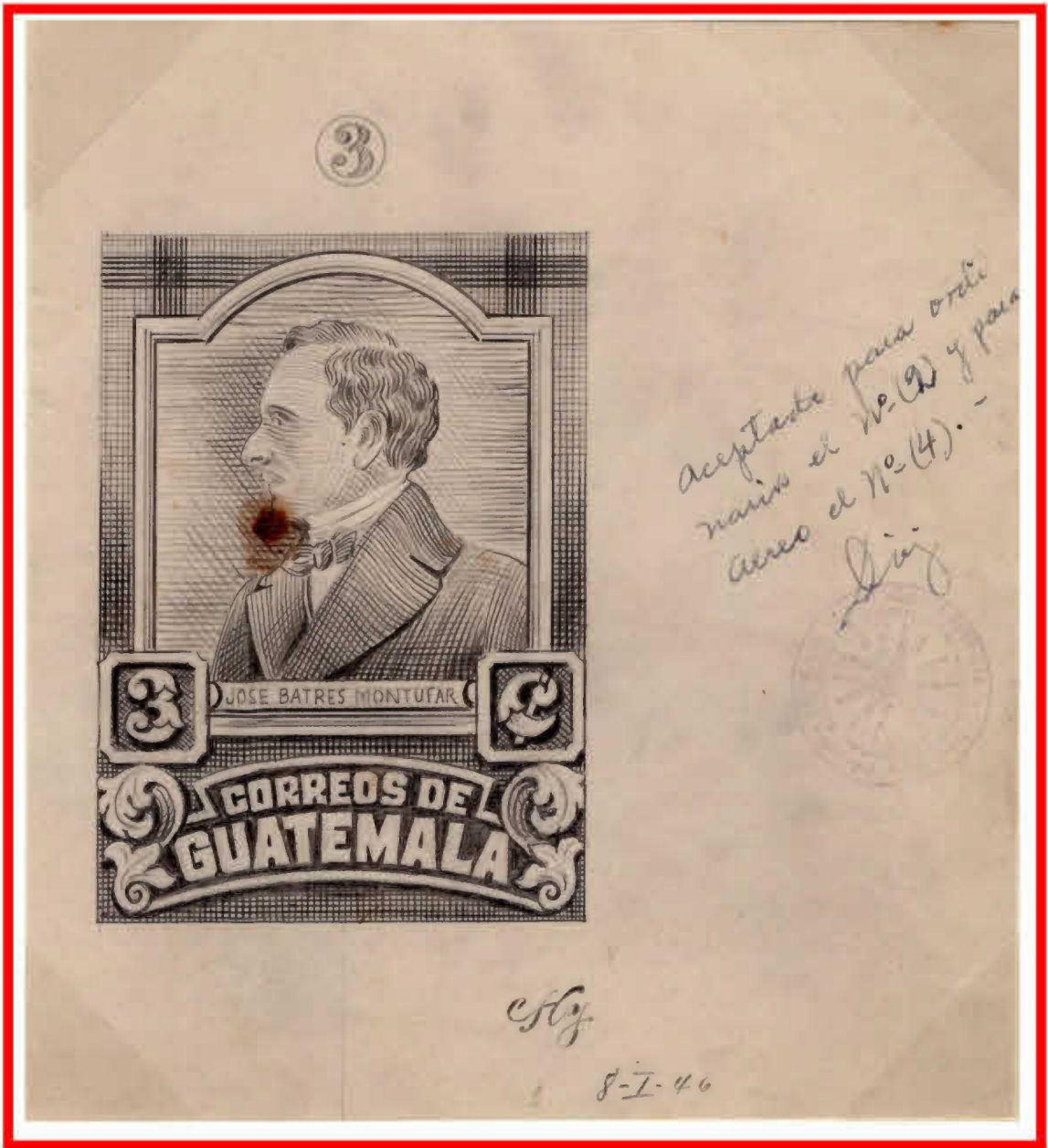


Imperf Plate Proof



It appears that this essay, by designer A. Chavarry, was accepted for the ordinary postage stamp and the airmail stamp, but was later rejected.

The notation of acceptance indicates that, at one time, it was accepted for both regular mail and airmail “aceptado para ordinario ed No (2) y para areo el No (4)”. It is dated January 8, 1946, signed “CHY” and bears the handstamp of “Direccion General De Comunicaciones Postales / Electricias Y Radiodifusion / Guatemala, C.A.”



Montufar Regular Airmail Stamp of 1946

Jose Batres y Montufar (1809-1844) was born in San Salvador when his parents, of old Guatemalan family, were in exile there. Fighting as a soldier for Guatemala, he began writing poetry while a war prisoner in San Salvador. His "San Juan," "Las Falsas Apariencias" and "Tradiciones de Guatemala" rank him as one of the greatest Central American writers.

As issued



Perf. 10.8



Perf. 12.6

Scarce unused

Imperf. plate proof



Full sheet, plate #112



Declaration of Independence Anniversary Issue

Stamps as issued

This issue commemorates the 125th anniversary of Central American independence from Spain, declared in Guatemala City on September 15, 1821. The design is from a 1921 painting by Rafael Beltranena. It shows Mariano de Beltranena, a member of the Provincial Delegation, offering a quill pen to Gavino Gainza, former Spanish governor of the Kingdom of Guatemala, who was to become head of the provisional government. Seated beside Gainza is Dr Jose Matias Delgado, and standing behind them are Manuel Antonio de Molina, Jose Antonio de Larrave, Pedro de Arroyave, and Isidro de Valle y Castriciones. Grouped around the table are Jose Cecilio del Valle (with Act in his hand), Lorenzo de Romana, Antonio de Cabezas, and Jose Domingo Dieguez. In the background are Dr. Jose Mariano Calderon and Miquel de Larreinaga.



Copy of painting that was photographed and used to make the black and white photo used by Chavarry



Photograph of painting that was used by Chavarry to design the Signing of the Declaration of Independence stamp



Declaration of Independence Anniversary Issue (Cont'd)

Rejected designs by A. Chavarry

These essays are dated July 1946 (no exact date) signed "CHY" and bear the handstamp of Taller De Grabados.



Declaration of Independence Anniversary Issue (Cont'd)

Rejected design by A. Chavarry

This essays is dated July 1946 (no exact date) signed "CHY" and bears the handstamp of Taller De Grabados.



Accepted frame design by A. Chavarry

This essays is dated July 15, 1946 and signed "CHY" .



Declaration of Independence Anniversary Issue (Cont'd)

Accepted design by A. Chavarry

This 20 centavos essay, unlike the rejected 5 centavos essays, was approved (aprobado). It was received on July 12, 1946, signed "CHY" by Chavarry on July 16, 1946. It is handstamped Taller De Grabados and has the handstamp of "Direccion General De Comunicaciones Postales / Electricas Y Radiodifusion / Guatemala, C.A." The final approval is by Diaz. A scroll feature containing the year "CXXV" seems to be OK'd separately.

Color trial die proofs on thin brownish gummed paper



Declaration of Independence Anniversary Issue (Cont'd)

Color trial die proofs on white medium thickness paper



Color trial die proofs on card stock



Declaration of Independence Anniversary Issue (Cont'd)

Plate proofs on white medium thickness paper



Declaration of Independence Anniversary Issue
1947 New Years souvenir card



The 5c was reproduced in red brown on a New Years card from the postal chief to other government officials.

The inscription on the card translates as follows:

“The Director General of Posts and Telecommunications of the Republic of Guatemala and the functionaries of his Services are pleased to wish you and to the personnel of your Administration a very happy and prosperous New Year.”

“1st of January 1947

Booklet Pane

Since the booklet panes were taken from existing sheets, the only way to distinguish booklet panes from the normal issue is by the presence and spacing of staple holes in the upper selvage.



Triple perforations at bottom



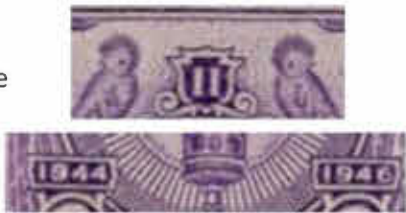
Airmails - Second Anniversary of the Revolution

The design is that of the 5c lilac rose airmail of 1945, except that the “I” at the top has been changed to “II” and the “1945” has been changed to “1946.”

1945 Issue



1947 Issue



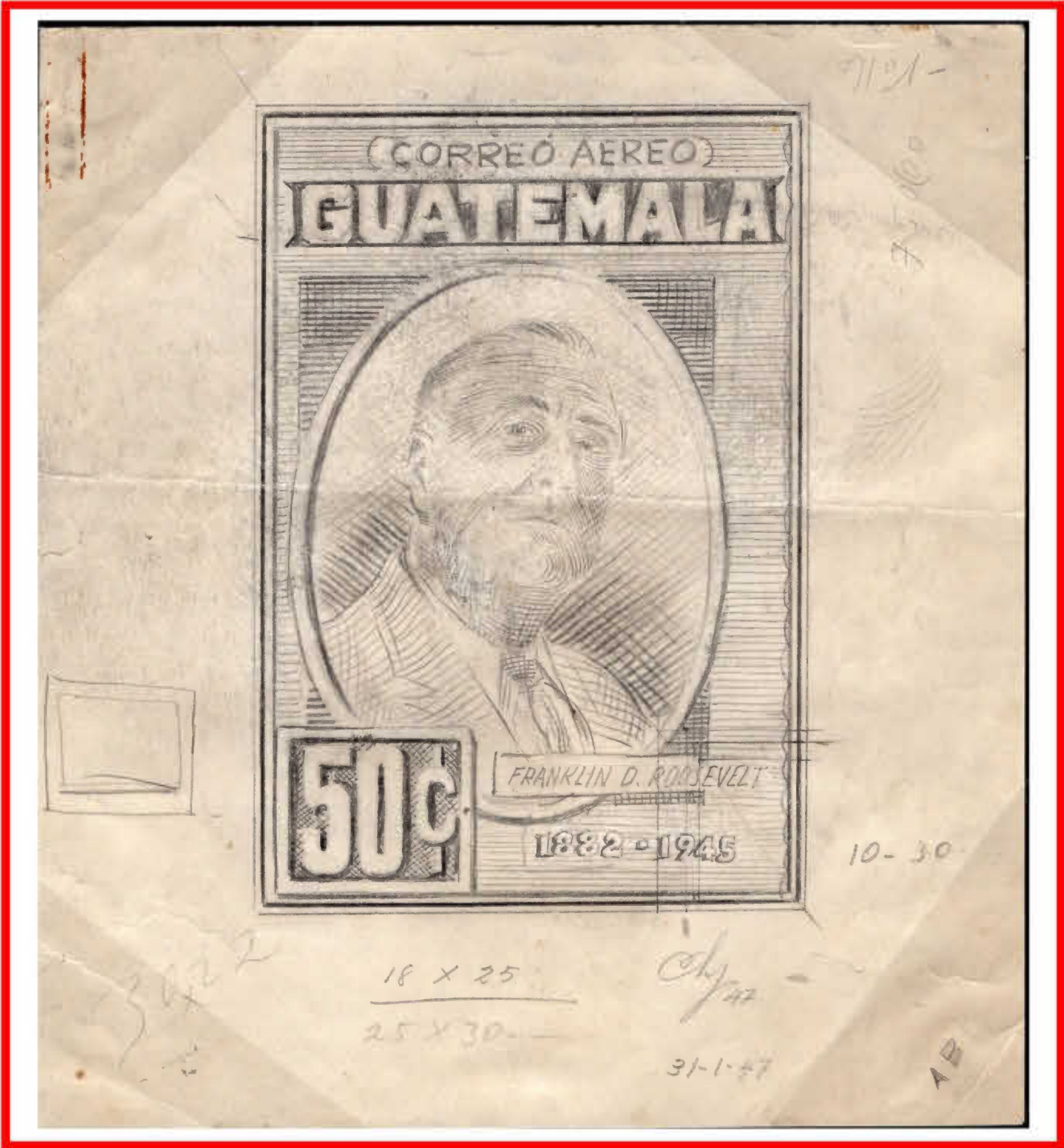
We know that this essay was approved for the final design since it matches the stamps themselves. However, there is no approval stamp. The size was intended to be either 18 x 25 mm, or 25 x 30 mm.. The stamps themselves are close to the 25 x 30 mm size. The essay is dated January 1, 1947 and signed “CHY”.



Franklin D. Roosevelt Memorial Airmails



Sr. Chavarry’s original approved sketch of the design



Franklin D. Roosevelt Memorial Airmails (Cont'd)

Plate proofs on toned paper



Only one or two sheets of each are said to have escaped from the archives.

UPU Specimens Overprinted "MUESTRA"

Overprinted "MUESTRA" in black, measuring 10.5 by 1 mm., and applied to the right side of the stamp, reading down. Rodrigo von de Goltz reported that several sheets were overprinted "MUESTRA" by the Tipografia Nacional to send to the UPU. At least two sheets each of the 50c and 1Q reached philatelic hands.



This series marked the death of U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt on April 12, 1945. It was Mr. Roosevelt's second appearance on Guatemalan stamps. The portrait is said to have been taken from a photograph in which Mr. Roosevelt had a cigarette holder in his mouth, cocked upward. The engraver, it is said, copied this faithfully but omitted the holder.

Regular Issue of 1946 to 1947

A reissue of the 1946 in a new color

Imperf plate proofs



As issued



Perf. 10.8

Perf. 12.4

The 1947 5c National Palace Airmail Stamp



Double perforation in bottom margin

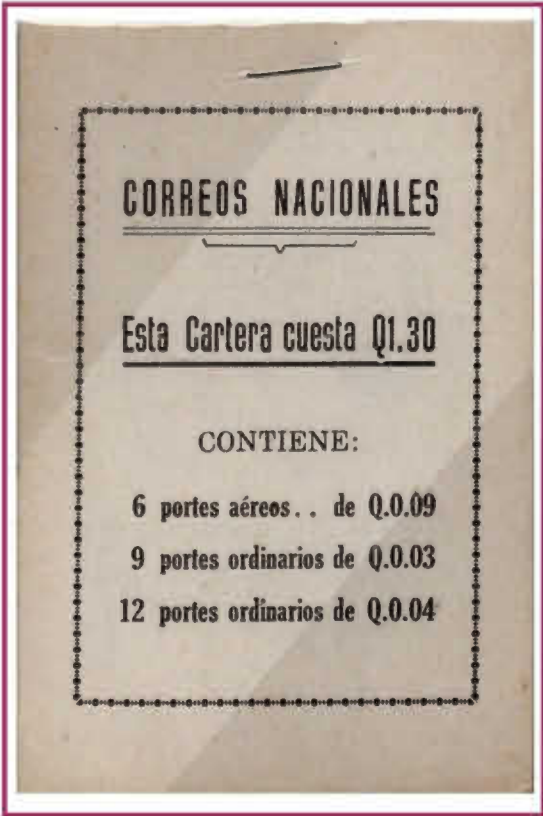
Stamp Booklets

Type II, for regular and airmail postage, contains one pane of six of the 5c carmine rose Declaration of Independence issue, three panes of the 3c slate blue Montufar issue, and two panes of the red orange postal tax issue of 1945

Guatemala made one effort to sell stamps in booklets. A white-coated gray cardboard was cut and folded to make front and back covers measuring 79.5 mm X 115 mm., and panes of six or nine stamps were torn from standard sheets. The panes were interleaved with lightweight waxed paper, Sheet margins were left on the panes, and the booklets were fastened together by staples 12.5 mm. wide (usually one, occasionally two) just past the fold, which is along the narrow dimension.

The booklets were sold at 1 centavo over face value. They are reported to have sold poorly, and are said to have been withdrawn soon after being offered, and the remainders broken up and returned to regular stock.

Intact booklets are rare.



Labor Law Commemorative Issue

This set was issued to commemorate the first anniversary of Guatemala’s first labor code, dated May 1, 1947, which is celebrated as Labor Day by both radical political parties and conservative trade unions in most countries of the world. The design shows a worker with various tools holding a book inscribed “Codigo de Trabajo,” and the date of this code of laws.



1949 New Years souvenir card



The 5c was reproduced in the issued color on a New Year’s card from the postal chief to other government officials.

The Inscription on the card translates as follows:

“The Director General of Posts and Telecommunications of the Republic of Guatemala and the functionaries of his services are pleased to wish you and to the personnel of your Administration a very happy and prosperous New Year.”

“1st of January 1949.”

Las Casas Issue

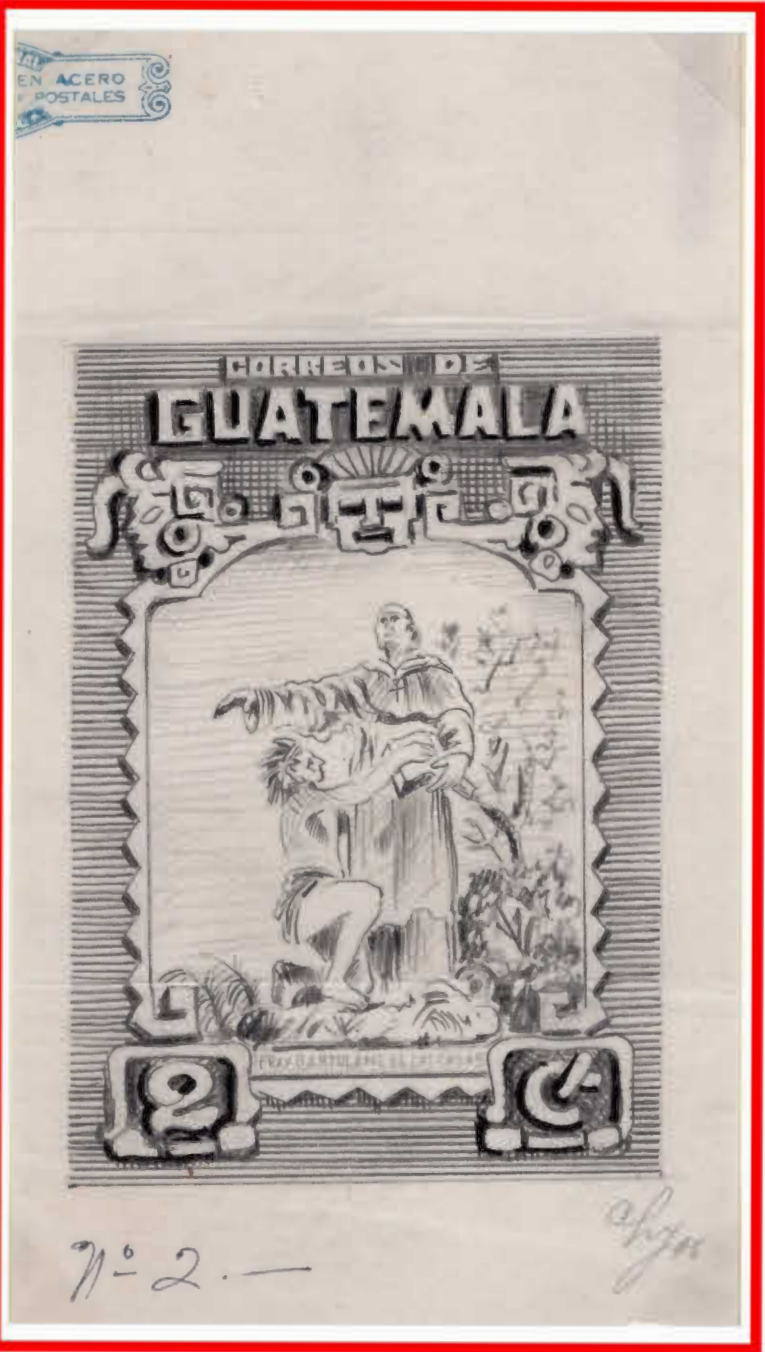
Original photograph of Las Casas statue in Guatemala City used for Chavarry’s essays



Las Casas Issue (Cont'd)

Rejected essay by Chavarry

This rejected essay is undated and was signed "CHY." It received a handstamp from Taller De Grabados



Accepted essay by Chavarry

This accepted essay is dated December 20, 1948 and was signed "CHY." It received a handstamp from Taller De Grabados. The red script is illegible.



Color trial die proofs of the 3 centavos stamp



Las Casas Issue (Cont'd)

Plate proofs in issued colors



Perforated 3 centavos color trial plate proofs on thick paper



Imperf vertically



UPU Souvenir Sheet

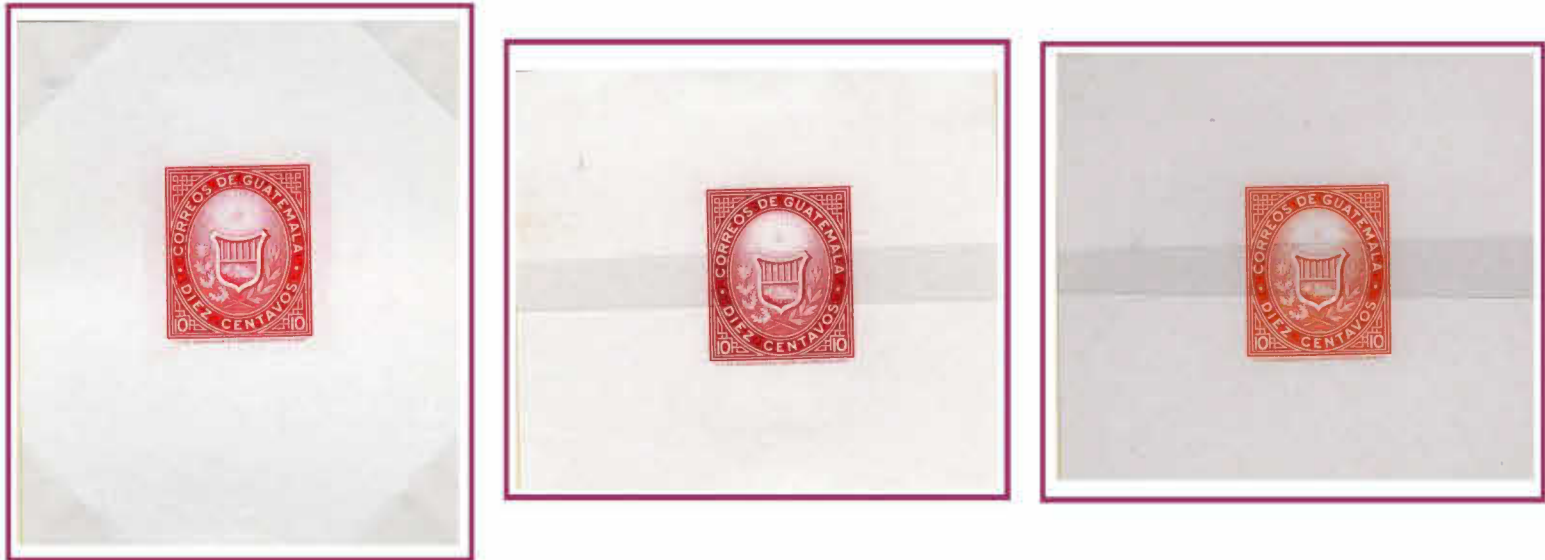
This souvenir sheet was issued to commemorate the 75th anniversary in 1949 of the formation of the Universal Postal Union. The delay in issuance was caused by the engraving plant, and led to pointed comments in Guatemalan publications at the time.

Chavarry had long since designed the quetzal stamp, but this is the first appearance of the oft-used shield stamp.



Broken frame line above "HOMENAJE A LA UNION POSTAL UNIVERSAL"

Color trial die proofs of the 10 centavos UPU souvenir sheet stamp on thick card



Color trial perforated plate proofs of the 10 centavos stamp



Original color transparency of the proofs in the official collection of the Taller de Grabados en Acero government printers, taken in the fall of 1950 by Mr. A. Robinson, who also supplied the two plate proofs on the left.

Fray Payo Reissue

Plate number blocks as issued

The 1945 design re-engraved with the dates "1660-1951" added in a tablet below the portrait.



It was in 1660 that Bishop Enriquez de Rivera brought the first printing press and printer to Guatemala. In 1663, he printed the first book published in the kingdom, written, fittingly, by himself.



1/2 centavo color trial die proofs

Multiple color proofs were made for each value



Fray Payo Reissue (Cont'd)

1 centavo color trial die proofs



Fray Payo Reissue (Cont'd)

4 centavos color trial die proofs



Army of Liberation Airmail Issue



The design is of an early Mayan warrior attired in a feathered head-dress and a breech cloth. In the background are Lake Atitlan and a volcano. The words in the upper right say "Homage to the National Army of the Revolution." President Ubico was overthrown almost without a shot being fired, so the army commemorated here did little fighting in that revolt. It in turn showed little desire to defend the Communist-tinged regime of President Arbenz, which was overthrown in less than three months in the revolution led by Co. Carlos Castillo Armas.

1954 Quetzal Regular Issue

The Sociedad Filatelica de Guatemala had long been urging issuance of stamps similar in design to the attractive bicolored stamps of 1879 and 1881 showing a quetzal on top of an iconic column. Finally, such a stamp was incorporated in the 1951 souvenir sheet, and then, with this issue, and continuing through 1963, the design was used for a number of stamps for regular postage.



Soccer Anniversary Issue



This issue commemorates the 50th anniversary of the first game of soccer played in Guatemala. The game took place in 1902, and the stamps bear the 1902-1952 dates. The usual delay at the Bureau of Engraving resulted in their issuance three years late. Mario Caposeco Lopez shown on the 4c was considered the greatest soccer player in Guatemala. He was captain of great Guatemalan teams that defeated many countries in international matches. He died in a plane crash while celebrating a victory in 1951. Carlos Aguirre Matheu, whose picture appears on the 10c value, is credited with starting the game in Guatemala.

Liberation Issue

Regular postage

Chavarry engraved the stamps for regular postage but not the airmail issues.



Dagger-cross, the symbol of the liberation movement

Map showing planned roads under President Armas

Scenes of oil production

This issue commemorated the liberation of Guatemala from a Communistic regime which was climaxed by the resignation of President Jacobo Arbenz Guzman on June 27, 1954. The 1/2c shows the dagger-cross that was the official insignia of the liberation movement. On the sides are the words "Truth, justice, Work, God, Fatherland, Liberty." The 1c shows a map of the country with 2,000 kilometers of roads planned under the regime of President Carlos Castillo Armas. The 3c shows scenes of the oil production which was hoped for under the law which opened the Departments of Peten and Izabal to petroleum exploration by foreign companies.

Liberation Issue (Cont'd)

Die proofs, engraved by Chavarry, for the Bureau in 1955, but not adopted for a stamp



Chavarry continued to engrave stamps until 1971, but never again designed them.