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Telegraph stamps of the World

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Select currency. Default = GBP (1)
● GB £ ○ US $ ○ Can $ ○ Aus $
○ Euro ○ Other

Up a level

Argentina	Bolivia	Chile	Colombia	Costa Rica	Cuba	Dominican Rep.	Ecuador	El Salvador	Guatemala	Honduras

Up a level

Mexico	Morocco	Guinea	Nicaragua	Panama	Paraguay	Peru	Philippines	Puerto Rico	Uruguay	Venezuela

I have brought these prices up to date and added currency selection. I have now re-numbered, but in line with what I have done with other countries, I am using **RH** numbers (Revised Hiscocks) for my numbering and also showing the original Hiscocks numbers.

CheckList Setup

Shortcuts to different sections							
Correos y Telégrafos - 1	1892 Overprints	Correos y Telégrafos - 2	Loose Ends	1907	1910	1927	Telegram Seals

Costa Rica .

According to "Dirección General de Correos y Telégrafos" (PDF) :

"On March 23, 1868, during the administration of Jesús Jiménez Zamora, a contract was signed between the Ministry of Development and Lyman Reynolds, to establish telegraphic connections between Cartago, San José, Heredia, Alajuela and Puntarenas. This project was terminated by that government in 1869, because the contracting party quit."

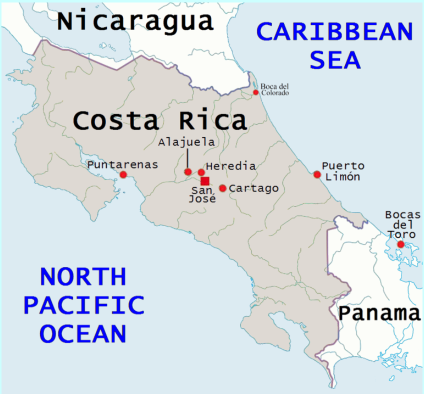
According to John Barefoot, this was completed but produced little traffic.

The Government persevered with telegraphy and by 1879 was connected to Mexico via the intervening countries.

A list of 1906 for wireless-Telegraph stations lists three in operation at Puerto Limón, at least two of which were owned by the United Fruit Co. One has the notes "With Bocas del Toro and for public service." and "10 cents gold a word." The other is noted as being 10 kw. Bocas del Toro refers to Isla Colón off the north coast of Panama.
A similar list of 1912 shows a commercial station in Puerto Limón and another in Boca del Colorado.

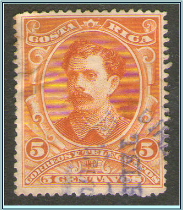
Telegraphy based on the Morse system disappeared from Costa Rica, approximately, at the end of 1970, being replaced by the teletype or telex system and, currently, computer networks.

Further information, together with later fiscal and other uses of overprinted telegraph stamps can be found in a catalogue of stamps of Costa Rica, produced by Dr. Hector R. Mena and available from the Socorico website.



For 1889, 1892 and 1901 issues of normal 'Correos y Telégrafos' stamps were used and can be recognised by their concentric circle cancels.
I understand that **after 1895 this cancel was also used as a postal cancellation**.

1889 Various frames featuring the head of President Soto Alfaro and 'UPU'. Scott says Perf. 14-16 & Compound. Michel says Perf. 14 or 15 x 14. Yvert says Perf. 14-15.



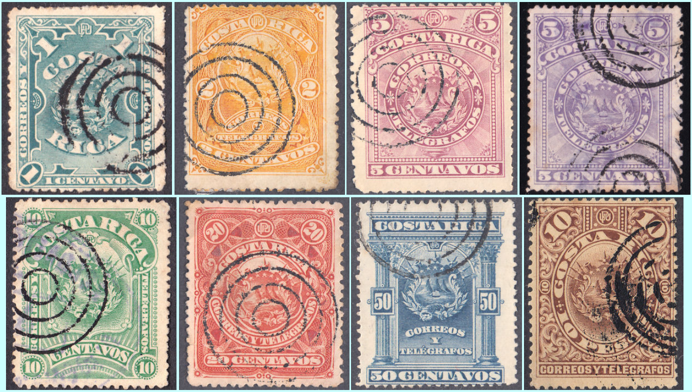
5c Postage stamp of 1889 series.

RH #	Description	Mint	Used	Postal/Telegraph used pricing
CT1	1c brown	0.35	0.45	postal
CT2	2c dark blue-green	0.35	0.45	postal
CT3	5c orange	0.45	0.35	postal
CT4	10c red-brown	0.40	0.35	postal
CT5	20c yellow-green	0.30	0.35	postal
CT6	50c rose-red	1.00	0.75	telegraph
CT7	1P blue (shades)	1.25	0.75	telegraph
CT8	2P dark violet (shades)	6.00	4.00	telegraph
CT9	5P olive-green	25.00	10.00	telegraph
CT10	10P black	100.00	60.00	telegraph

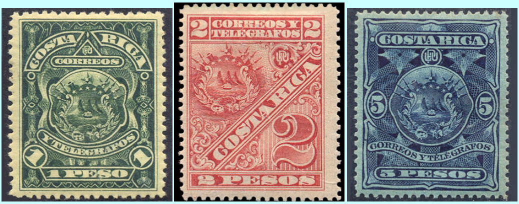
10 similar designs showing President Soto Alfaro. According to the Scott Catalog, the 5 highest values, **50c, 1p, 2p, 5p and 10p** "normally were used on telegrams and most copies were removed from the forms and sold by the government". Almost certainly they were sold to N. F. Seebeck who, as well as producing stamps for the Hamilton Bank Note Co., was also a stamp dealer and was in Costa Rica early in 1889 to obtain a contract to supply stamps. A possible essay is shown below.
I have seen several 5c with telegraphic cancels, but no others. Perhaps they were used on receipts.

These stamps are known overprinted "GUANACASTE" for use in that sparsely populated province in the North-West, but there appears to have been no telegraph stations there, at least prior to 1912.
However, if those high values of the 1889 series were mostly telegraphically used, then the same may be true of the following series, but mostly the low values are seen and Scott makes no mention of it.

1892 Various frames featuring the arms of Costa Rica and 'UPU'. Scott says Perf. 12-15 & Compound. Michel says Perf. 15, 16 , 15 x 14 or 15 x 14½. Yvert says Perf. 15.



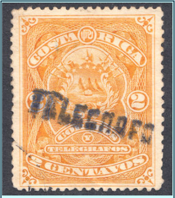
Correos y Telégrafos stamps of 1892 series (probably) used telegraphically. These stamps were used until 1901,
but the concentric circles cancellations started to be used postally from 1895.



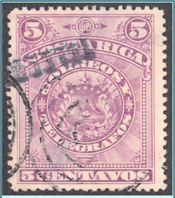
For the sake of completion, here are mint examples of the missing values courtesy of Rolf Lamprecht.

RH #	Description	Mint	Postally Used
CT11	1c light greenish blue	0.30	0.40
CT12	2c yellow	0.30	0.40
CT13	5c red lilac	0.30	0.25
CT13a	violet (SG34a)	60.00	0.30
CT14	10c light green	0.75	0.35
CT15	20c vermilion	12.00	0.20
CT16	50c light blue	4.25	4.00
CT17	1P dark green on yellow	1.00	1.00
CT18	2P red	3.00	1.00
CT19	5P dark blue on blue	2.00	1.00
CT20	10P brown on yellowish	8.00	5.00

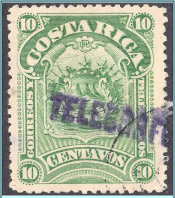
1892 'Correos y Telégrafos' stamps of 1892 (SG34a - 37) overprinted (by roller) 'TELEGRAFO' in blue-black.
Thick white wove paper. No watermark. Perf 15



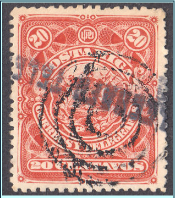
***RH1** - 2c.



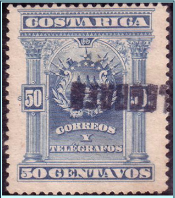
RH2 - 5c.



RH3 - 10c.



RH4 - 20c.



RH5 - 50c. Courtesy of Rolf Lamprecht.

RH #	Hisc.	Type	Description	Mint	Used
*RH1	-	**1**	2c yellow (shades)	-	20.00
RH2	-	**1**	5c red lilac(SG34 ?)	-	3.00
RH2a	H1		violet (SG34a)	-	7.00
RH3	H2	**2**	10c green (SG35)	-	4.00
RH4	H3	**3**	20c indian red (SG 36)	-	2.00
RH5	H4	**(4)**	50c blue (SG37)	-	50.00
RH6	-	**(4)**	1p green	-	-
RH7	-	**(4)**	2p brown	-	-
RH8	-	**(4)**	5p dark blue	-	-
RH9	-	**(4)**	10p brown	-	-

* I added the 2c value due to the example shown and another. There may
I have added **RH6-9** since the higher values are likely to have been used telegraphically, even though examples with this overprint are not reported.
There are two shades of the 5c, red-lilac and a scarcer violet.

Hiscocks added the following 3 notes:

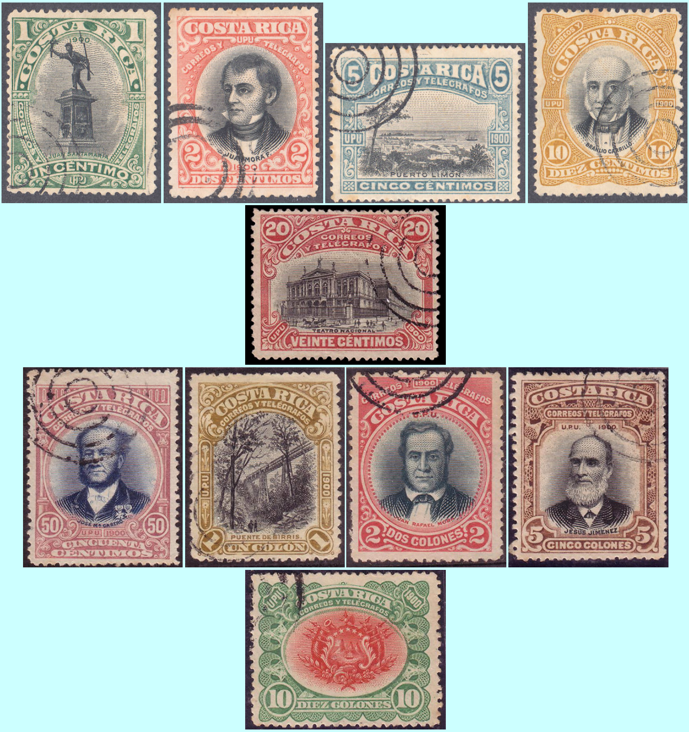
Note 1. The overprint was apparently applied manually with a roller. One therefore obtains specimens with the overprint at all conceivable orientations, doubles and, very commonly, beginnings or ends of the next 'TELEGRAFO' on the roller.
These have not been listed separately since they would seem to have little philatelic significance.

Note 2. Used copies of the above and all later issues up to 1927 are cancelled with a black 'target' of four concentric rings the largest of which is about 2cm in diameter.

Note 3. Mint copies do not seem to be known — I have certainly never seen an uncancelled copy with gum — and some authorities believe that the 'TELEGRAFO' is a cancellation rather than an overprint. The fact remains that the normal 'target' cancellation was also used which makes this explanation less likely. Confirmation one way or the other is needed.

I understand that **after 1895 this cancel was also used as a postal cancellation**.

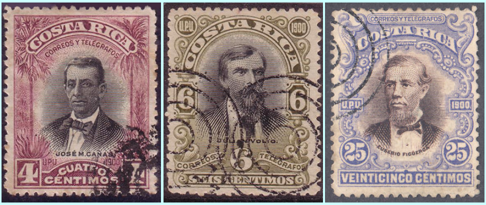
1901 (January) Various designs. Scott says Perf. 12-15½. Michel says Perf. 14, 15, 16 or 15 x 14. Yvert says Perf. 14-15.



'Correos y Telégrafos' stamps of 1901 with concentric-ring cancels, may have been used postally, but 50c and up are more likely to be telegraphic (20c and above, courtesy of Rolf Lamprecht).

RH #	Description	Mint	Postally Used
CT21	1c green and black	3.00	0.30
CT22	2c orange and black	1.25	0.30
CT23	5c light blueand black	3.00	0.30
CT24	10c ochre and black	3.00	0.35
CT25	20c lake and black	22.00	0.25
CT26	50c red-lilac and dark blue	5.50	1.00
CT27	1C olive-bistre and black	110.00	3.50
CT28	2C rose and black	17.00	3.00
CT29	5C brown and black	75.00	3.50
CT30	10C green and red	30.00	3.00

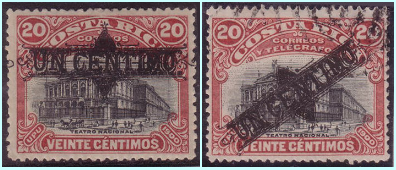
1903 (10 September) Various designs. Scott says Perf. 13½, 14, 15. Michel says Perf. 14 or 15. Yvert says Perf. 14-15.



'Correos y Telégrafos' stamps of 1903 with concentric-ring cancels, were probably mostly used postally (4c and 6c courtesy of Rolf Lamprecht).

RH #	Description	Mint	Postally Used
CT31	4c claret and black	1.80	0.75
CT32	6c olive-green and black	8.00	4.25
CT33	25c blue and dark brown	17.00	0.30

1905 CT25 as above surcharged 'UN CENTIMO'.

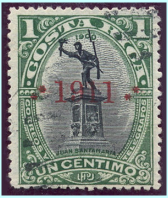


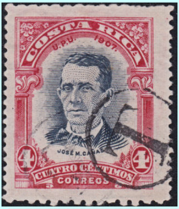
Images courtesy of Rolf Lamprecht.

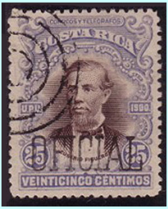
RH #	Description	Mint	Postally Used
CT34	1c on 20c lake and black	0.50	0.50
CT34a	overprint inverted	10.00	10.00
CT34b	overprint diagonal	0.50	0.50

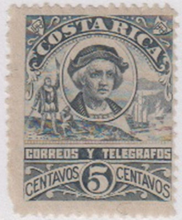
These were probably the last stamps of Costa Rica intended for both Telegraphic and Postal use.

Loose Ends.









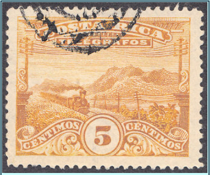
In **1911** CT21 was overprinted to re-validate it. However the intention was almost certainly to revalidate it for postal use only since there were telegraph stamps in 1911, with apparently no use for a 1c value. Courtesy of Rolf Lamprecht

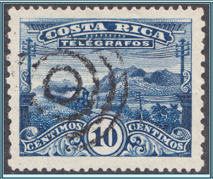
The **'T in circle'** that was described by vendor as being telegraphic, is not. As with many countries, it is likely that the 'T' stands for 'TAXE' meaning Postage Due. This was purely postal.

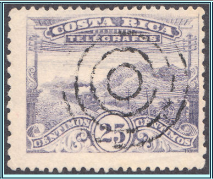
Correos y Telegrafos stamps of 1889 to 1903 were overprinted for **Official use**. Scott says of all these "normally were not cancelled when affixed to official mail." It looks like some were, but I have no idea whether such things were used to prepay telegrams. The highest values of these sets were not overprinted, suggesting they were not intended for telegraphic use. Image courtesy of Rolf Lamprecht

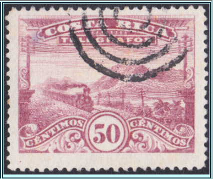
The last is a **bit of a puzzle**. It is not listed in any of the catalogues that I have. It is gummed, and unusually for Costa Rica is Perf. 12. My pet theory at the moment is that it was a Seebeck essay that got rejected. It is known that Seebeck was in Costa Rica early in 1889, but failed to get a contract signed there. It is possible that corruption was involved here. According to the Scott Catalog, the 5 highest values, **50c, 1p, 2p, 5p and 10p** of the 1889 postage stamps, "normally were used on telegrams and most copies were removed from the forms and sold by the government". Though the Hamilton contract may have been better for Costa Rica and the Hamilton Bank Note Co., selling the used stamps to N. F. Seebeck for re-sale to collectors may have been preferred by the individuals involved.
Anyone have any more information on it ? Image courtesy of Bob Bidner.

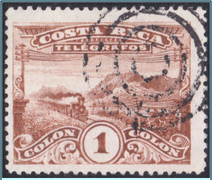
1907 (28 September). Telégrafos stamps engraved by Ronald A. Harrison of Waterlow Brothers & Layton in London on thin to medium white wove paper. Sheet watermark. Perf 14 x 11 or 14 as indicated. Panes of 100 stamps.

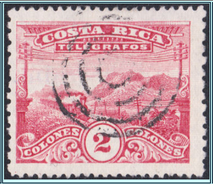

5c - **RH10**

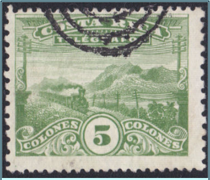

10c - **RH11b**

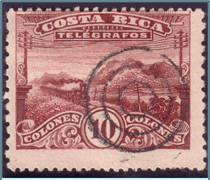

25c - **RH12b**


50c - **RH13**


1C - **RH14**


2C - **RH15a**


5C - **RH16a**


10C - **RH17a** - Courtesy of Rolf Lamprecht.

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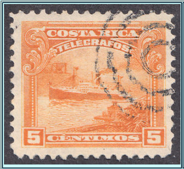
RH #	Hisc.	Type	Description	Mint	Used
RH10	H5	**5**	5c yellow-brown (perf. 14)	3.00	1.50
RH10a	H5a		brownish orange (perf. 14)	3.00	1.50
RH11	H6	**5**	10c deep blue (perf. 14)	7.50	2.00
RH11a	H6a		blue (perf. 14)	10.00	2.50
RH11b	H6b		deep blue (perf. 14 x 11)	3.80	1.20
RH12	H7	**5**	25c slate-violet (perf. 14)	15.00	3.50
RH12a	H7a		yellow brown (error) (perf. 14)	150.00	125.00
RH12b	H7b		slate-violet (perf. 14 x 11)	10.00	2.00
RH13	H8	**5**	50c carmine-red (perf. 14)	75.00	10.00
RH13a	H8a		perf. 14 x 11	4.00	3.50
RH14	H9	**5**	1C brown (perf. 14)	10.00	2.50
RH14a	H9a		perf. 14 x 11	40.00	15.00
RH15	H10	**5**	2C carmine (perf. 14)	10.00	1.50
RH15a	H10a		perf. 14 x 11	40.00	12.00
RH16	H11	**5**	5C green (perf. 14)	75.00	60.00
RH16a	H11a		perf. 14 x 11	35.00	2.50
*RH16b	-		perf. 11 (no gum)	-	-
RH17	H12	**5**	10C brown-lake (perf. 14)	100.00	75.00
RH17a	H12a		perf. 14 x 11	75.00	3.00

* I added this due to the H. R. Mena specialized catalogue.

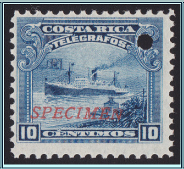
Hiscocks added the following 2 notes:

Note 1. No. 7 tends to discolour with exposure and take on a more reddish hue.	
Note 2. See also Nos. 20 to 25 which are of the same design.	

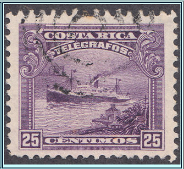
1910 (15 February). Engraved on white wove paper by the American Bank Note Co. No watermark. Perf 12. Panes of 100. These stamps were discontinued for telegraphic purposes on October 10, 1910. Remaining stocks of these and the 1907 issue, were overprinted for other uses.



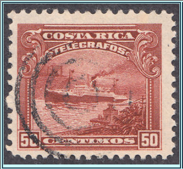
5c - **RH18**



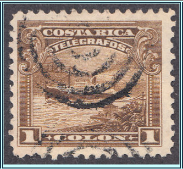
10c - **RH19 specimen**
Only 5c, 10c and 25c like this.



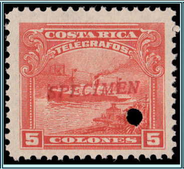
25c - **RH20**



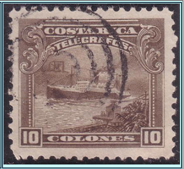
50c - **RH21**



1C - **RH22**

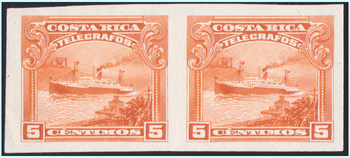


5C - **RH23 specimen**
All values except 10c like this.



10C - **RH24** - Courtesy of Rolf Lamprecht.

Specimens of the set were prepared overprinted in red and with a punch hole.
There were two formats of the specimens, one with the hole above 'SPECIMEN', known for the 5c, 10c and 25c, the other with the hole below, for all the rest except the 10c.
There are thus two types of 5c and 25c, but one type of each of the other values.



I also have a set of these imperf and another set of pairs imperf, all unused (no gum).
In each case, the low values up to 25c are on white, ungummed paper and the high values of 1p to 10p are on white ungummed card.
According to Dr. Hector R. Mena, the 5c, 10c and 25c also exist as horizontal gutter pairs.

RH #	Hisc.	Type	Description	Mint	Used
RH18	H13	**6**	5c orange (shades, 800,000)	3.80	2.00
RH19	H14	**6**	10c dark blue (300,000)	5.00	2.00
RH20	H15	**6**	25c deep lilac (1,000,000)	5.00	2.00
RH21	H16	**6**	50c brown lake (100,000)	10.00	10.00
RH22	H17	**6**	1C brown (50,000)	10.00	2.50
RH23	H18	**6**	5C scarlet (25,000)	25.00	3.00
RH24	H19	**6**	10C deep brown (25,000)	40.00	3.80

Hiscocks added the following note:

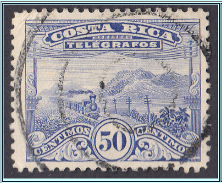
Note. Nos. 5, 6 and 8 to 19 were surcharged with new values and used as provisional postage stamps in 1911-12 (SG94-108). The use of these provisionals for telegraphic purposes is not known.

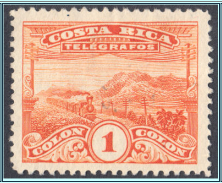
1927 (30 January). Design of 1907 engraved on white wove paper. No watermark. Perf 12½
Discontinued sometime before 1930.

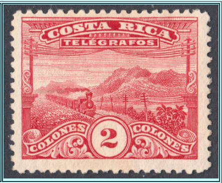
5c - **RH25** - Courtesy of Rolf Lamprecht.

10c - **RH26**

40c - **RH27**


COSTA RICA
TELEGRAFOS
CENTIMOS 50 CENTIMOS
50c - **RH28**


COSTA RICA
TELEGRAFOS
COLON 1 COLON
1C - **RH29**

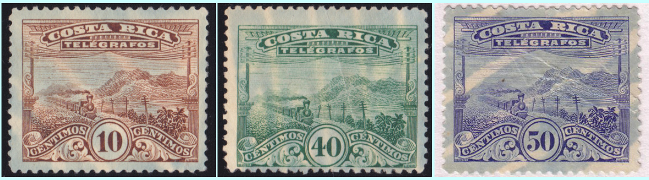

COSTA RICA
TELEGRAFOS
COLONES 2 COLONES
2C - **RH30**

RH #	Hisc.	Type	Description	Mint	Used
RH25	H20	**5**	5c brown-lilac (500,000)	5.00	2.50
RH26	H21	**5**	10c dark brown (1,000,000)	2.50	1.50
RH27	H22	**5**	40c green (3,000,000)	3.80	2.00
RH28	H23	**5**	50c blue (1,000,000)	3.80	3.80
RH29	H24	**5**	1C orange (500,000)	7.50	7.50
RH30	H25	**5**	2C carmine (500,000)	15.00	15.00

Hiscocks added the following note:

Note. Nos. 21 to 24 were overprinted 'CORREO AERO' and used for airmail postage in 1930-32 and again in 1945-46 (SG 182-5, 193, 402-4).

Sometime in the lifespan of this series a new cancel started to be used:

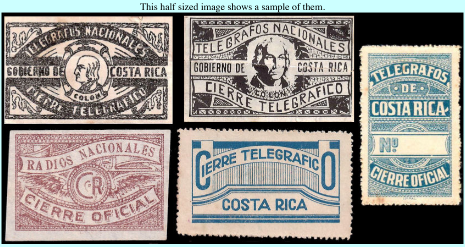

COSTA RICA
TELEGRAFOS
CENTIMOS 10 CENTIMOS
COSTA RICA
TELEGRAFOS
CENTIMOS 40 CENTIMOS
COSTA RICA
TELEGRAFOS
CENTIMOS 50 CENTIMOS
The cancel takes the form of pale dull-green streaks across the stamp which are not always very visible.
These stamps were discontinued for telegraphic purposes around 1930 and many were overprinted for other purposes such as Air Post.
Perhaps these were also used for some other purpose without overprinting. Parcel Post for example. (50c courtesy of Ralph Lamprecht)
Anyone know the purpose of this style of cancel ?

For The Telegrams used, see the section on Telegram Seals.

Telegram Seals.

A range of different seals were used on telegrams of Costa Rica.

This half sized image shows a sample of them.


TELEGRAFOS NACIONALES
GOBIERNO DE COSTA RICA
COLON
CIERRE TELEGRAFICO
TELEGRAFOS NACIONALES
GOBIERNO DE COSTA RICA
COLON
CIERRE TELEGRAFICO
TELEGRAFOS DE COSTA RICA
Nº
CIERRE OFICIAL
RADIOS NACIONALES
CR
CIERRE OFICIAL
CIERRE TELEGRAFICO
COSTA RICA

Steve Hiscocks made a start on cataloguing seals of the world in a book he published in 2007.
It was his hope to update it later, but unfortunately that was not to be.
His original book can be viewed at Telegraph Seals: A World Catalogue. There are links from the pages to my updates.

Alternatively you can view the latest page for Cost Rica.

Comments, criticisms, information or suggestions are always welcome.

Contact: Steve@gb-precancels.org

Please include the word 'Telegraphs' in the subject.

Last updated 27th. April 2020

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