

# Evolution of Nicaragua 1924 León and Granada Commemorative Issue



## Treatment:

This three-frame traditional exhibit explores the production and use of the 1924 Nicaragua León and Granada Commemorative honoring Francisco Hernández de Córdoba's founding of the cities in 1524. The material includes pre-production, archival, and postal use. The use of the original issue along with overprints from 1928 and 1931 are within scope.

The exhibit opens with the **unique** request from Nicaragua for a new stamp issue picturing Francisco Hernández de Córdoba to commemorate his founding of the Nicaraguan cities of León & Granada in 1524. The document includes crude hand-drawn stamp essays from the National Telegraph Department of Nicaragua. The request for a set of four stamps also includes an example of a stamp printed by the American Bank Note Company (ABNCo) for Panama and overprinted in 1920 for use within the United States Panama Canal Zone.

This is followed by the models and proofs from the ABNCo archives with a progression to a final product. Postal use of each issue follows.

During the 1927-1933 civil war, Sandino guerilla fighters targeted post offices to steal postage stamps and sell them for cash to finance the guerilla efforts. To revalidate the remainder of the 10c brown issue, they were overprinted with "Correos 1928". **There are no known covers of this issue.** There were no overprints on the other stamp values.

On March 31, 1931, the Managua post office was destroyed by a major earthquake and fire that destroyed much of Managua. To meet postal demands, the post office recalled the 10c brown with 1928 overprint from the outlying post offices. The issue was overprinted a second time. The issue was surcharged 2c with 1928 obliterated with a bar and 1931 overprint. A

second surcharge was created for official use. The stamp was surcharged 5c with "OFICIAL" using the same overprint bar to obliterate 1928 and add 1931.

A variety of overprint errors occurred, including missing and inverted components. The exhibit provides copies of the errors listed in major catalogs (Scott and Maxwell) along with additional **unlisted errors**.

Covers from the 1931 overprints are generally philatelic, but the exhibit provides commercial uses of the overprints.

## Background:

The design proposed is very similar to the 1906 Hamilton Bank Note Company (HBNCo) and 1909 ABNCo Córdoba issues for Panama. I suspect the same vignette model was used for the ABNCo Panama and Nicaragua issues. This hypothesis appears to be confirmed by the die maker order that states "Portrait of Córdoba in Stock". The images look to be based on the drawing provided by Panama to the ANBCo in 1908 to create ABNCo vignette die C-312.

An intriguing difference between the Panama issue and the Nicaragua issue is the full name of Córdoba. The Panama issue is inscribed Fernandez de Córdoba. This issue celebrates Antonio Fernandez de Córdoba (? – April 8, 1673), a Spanish conquistador known for re-establishing Panama City in a new location following the raid by Morgan and his pirates in 1671 that destroyed the more coastal city. The Nicaragua issue honors Francisco Hernández de Córdoba (1475-1526), a Spanish conquistador known for founding León and Granada who was beheaded by Pedro Arias de Ávila the Spanish Governor of Panama as an insurrectionist and a traitor. Based on the limited number of images available through paintings and drawing it appears the ABNCo used the wrong Córdoba image for the Nicaragua issue.

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## Purpose and Scope:

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## Plan:

Page 1-9	Pre-Production/Archival
Page 10-16	Postal Use
Page 17-20	Postal Overprint
Page 21-23	Overprinted Officials
Page 24	Epilogue

## Background:

On September 19, 1923, Nicaragua requested a new stamp issue by the American Bank Note Company (ABNCo). The request was a set of four denominations honoring the 400th anniversary of the establishment of the cities of León and Granada by Francisco Hernández de Córdoba. The order was considered a rush order and design was left to the ABNCo., though a rough sketch was provided by Nicaraguan officials.



Nicaragua is a Central American country located between Honduras and Costa Rica



Request for stamp issue from Nicaragua to the ABNCo. Stamp to honor Francisco Hernández de Córdoba's founding of León and Granada in 1524.

Request provides suggested designs in pencil and pen along with example of an ABNCo issue from Panama overprinted for the Canal Zone.

Provides desired denominations of 1, 2, 5, and 10 centavos along with desired quantities of 200,000 for the 1c and 2c and 100,000 for the 5c and 10c. States colors per Universal Postal Union (UPU).

## UNIQUE ITEM



Access the synopsis and references at:



Items considered significant are noted in red frame.  
Magnifying glass denotes original discovery