

# Lima 1821–1879

## Republican Postal History Before Joining the UPU

### Purpose

To show the development of the postal system in the capital city of Peru, Lima, during the first 6 decades after independence in 1821 until joining the UPU in 1879.

### Why just the city of Lima?

Being the center of all political and economic activities in Peru, the postal history of Lima represents the way mail activities evolved in the country during this period. At the same time the focus on a single city challenges the exhibit, as it requires the inclusion of certain items with unrecorded origin from the city of Lima, but significant to provide an entire historical view of the period in study.

### Scope

Approximately the first 60 years after independence are illustrated in these frames, all areas and postal services available in Lima during this period are represented here.

### Methodology

This exhibit is arranged chronologically presenting the evolution of the postal system during the period in study. Tables with the rates in effect at different time periods, denote subdivisions within the exhibit to pinpoint what went into effect during that time. For instance, during the first half of the period in study here, Peru Post was not involved in the carrying of mail outside the country. This and other circumstances around it are noted in the exhibit within the specific time spans.

### Research

Original research is evidenced by the identification of earliest / latest usages, new colors, census and relatively scarcity information of the items. This information plus a number of covers shown here have been used as documentary evidence on related bibliography of the period.

### Historical Context

Founded on January 18, 1535 by conquistador Francisco Pizarro, Lima flourished during Spanish occupation of South America as the center of political power in this part of the world. After independence in 1821, Limeños transitioning from colonial life suffered of economic stagnation and political turmoil that brought urban development to a halt. Many public services were reduced in scope, for instance the mail system was internal only, since Peru Post was not longer able to use the Spanish mail service to overseas destinations.

By the early 1850s increased revenue from guano and other exports led to a rapid commercial grow in the city, demanding faster means of communications to sustain the economic boom. Many postal treaties were signed between 1840s and 1870s. The Pacific Steam Navigation Company started operations in the Pacific coast of South America as well as the British Consular Mail, they were pivotal in supporting the economic grow in the city.

On April 1, 1879, Peru was among the signatories of the UPU agreement, but was able to fulfill all requirements by mid June when it became a full member of the union.

## Evolution of Peru Post During the Period in Study

and significant historical events in the same timeframe

1821- 1851

Linear Markings

1851 – 1857

Numeric, Circular,  
Oval and other  
markings

1857 – 1858

P.S.N.C. Dec-Mar  
3 months trial period

1858 – 1879

Countrywide pre-paid with stamps system



June 1879

Peru joins  
the UPU

Peru Post involvement was domestic mail only

Domestic and Overseas mail

1821: July 28, Peru declared independence  
1824: December 9, Battle of Ayacucho, end of Spanish ruling in America  
1828: War with Gran Colombia over northern Peruvian territories of Tumbes, Jaen and Maynas  
1836: Peru-Bolivia Confederacy started, ended in 1839  
1845: Start of the Guano boom era

1851: May 17, Lima – Callao train the first one in South America  
1858: Ecuador – Peru war over northern and Amazonian territories  
1866: Chincha Island War between Spain against Peru, Ecuador, Chile and Bolivia  
1870: End of Guano boom era, sources were depleted, Peru entered a decade of crisis and change

1879: April 5, Chile declares war to Peru  
June 12, a notification from UPU office in Switzerland informs all member countries that Peru was accepted as new member of the union