

PURSUING THE VARIANT

Plating the “Dropped N” Variety on Chile’s Second Airmail Etiquette

Variant (noun) - a form or version of something that differs in some respect from other forms of the same thing or from a standard.

Purpose: This exhibit presents **new personal study** of the “Dropped N” variety on Chile’s second governmental airmail etiquette. Pane formats are described and the variety’s placement within them is indicated. Constant printing flaws are identified and noted enabling concise position plating of each example. All 11 position-identified “Dropped N” etiquettes are shown and described used on cover.

Appearing in 1931, Chile’s second airmail etiquette includes a variety I’m calling the “Dropped N” displaying a 1 mm obvious typographical downwards shift of the N at the end of the first line. The etiquette was produced in panes of 50 consisting of five columns and ten rows. Two configurations of the pane are known with different incidences of the variety. POR AVION and PAR AVION are Spanish and French for “By Airplane.”

ON



The original study here presented allows us to confirm that the Dropped N etiquettes in this multiple and on the cover are from Pane 2 and Position #4.

May 28, 1931 - Valparaiso to London, England	
UPU Single rate	\$0.70 ≤ 20g.
Airmail Surcharge	\$9.60 (\$3.20 per 5g x3)
Total	\$10.30

Key to Abbreviations:

UPU = Union Postale Universelle (Universal Postal Union)
Established in 1874 with Chile joining in April of 1881.

UPAEP = Union Postal de las Américas, España y Portugal
(Postal Union of the Americas, Spain and Portugal)

Established in 1911 with Chile ratifying membership in January of 1912.



Treatment and Importance: As airmail was becoming more commonplace, etiquettes and markings were an integral part in facilitating the rates and routing. Albeit unusual, this exhibit presents a unique yet traditional study of Chile’s Dropped N etiquette.

Knowledge and Research: Although the variety was known, the discovery of multiple panes, placement of the variety within those panes, and printing flaws and characteristics enabling plating is all based on original study on the part of the exhibitor. This study was published in *Chile Filatélico* magazine #307 in April 2025. Although focus is on the etiquettes, rates on the covers have been studied and described.

Condition and Rarity: An indication of how many examples are known on cover is provided in red on the pages showing uses. This is based on a census maintained over decades by the exhibitor. Condition is excellent taking into account the thin and fragile airmail envelopes of the period.

References:

Mair, Günter – *Airmail Labels of the World* 1991

Towle, Ross – *Postal Rates of Chile 1766 – 1959* Published by ChileCollector 2003