

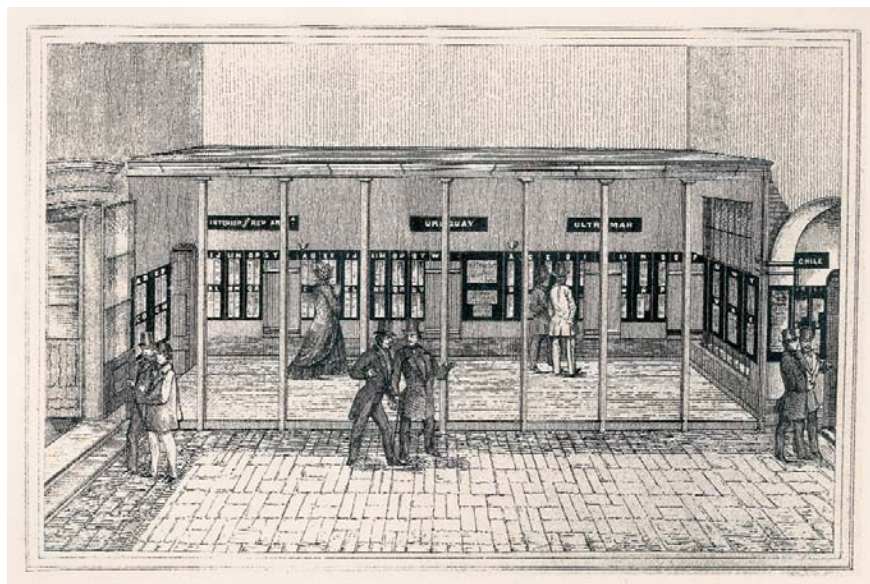
Buenos Aires

The postage stamps of Buenos Aires are listed erroneously in the stamp catalogues as provincial issues, like Corrientes, which they are not. Corrientes was one province in the Argentine Confederation, which used its own stamps in its local postal system and the confederation stamps in the completely separate national postal system.

On the other hand, Buenos Aires was an independent country in 1858, not part of Argentina. If there had been a United Nations in 1858, Buenos Aires would have been a separate member which issued its own stamps. The early stamp catalogues recognized this distinction and listed the stamps under Buenos Aires in the B's, not under Argentina. After winning the persistent civil war, Buenos Aires joined the provinces of the Argentine Confederation in the Republic of Argentina and issued the *Escuditos* stamps.

The *Barquitos* stamps of Buenos Aires, named after the image of a steamship ("Little Ship"), are one of the rarest regularly-issued series in classic imperforate philately, immediately after the "Post Office" Mauritius, Hawaiian Missionaries and British Guiana Cotton Reels. In fact, in the first Scott postage stamp catalogue, the *Barquitos* have the highest listed prices.

Multiples and covers of the *Barquitos* are so rare that it is barely possible to form one major collection of Buenos Aires. Single stamps are the overwhelming majority of the existing *Barquitos*. These stamps were collected primarily by the great general classic imperforate collectors, particularly Alfred H. Caspary and Alfred F. Lichtenstein. When these collections were sold at auction in the 1958 Caspary and 1970 Dale-Lichtenstein sales, the *Barquitos* were acquired by Joseph Schatzkes, who was forming the major collection of Argentina at the time, and by John R. Boker Jr., who recognized the extreme philatelic importance of the *Barquitos*. When Stanley Gibbons broke up the Schatzkes collection, Boker added the primary items to his collection, which was sold at auction in 1979 by the German firm of Mohrmann. The most important material passed either directly or indirectly into the Islander collection, where it has resided up to this moment.



The post office in Buenos Aires (reproduced from the Peplow book)