

Colombia

Colombia is an excellent example of a classic imperforate country where there can be at most two major collections at any moment in time. Indeed, if postal history is considered important, there can barely be one major collection, because of the scarcity of early covers bearing Colombian stamps. Until well after World War II, the major Colombia collections had very few covers, but instead concentrated on multiples, the rare tête-bêche and se-tenant errors, and cancellations on individual stamps.

Prior to World War II, Thomas William Hall, although better known for his Peru collection, had a substantial holding of Colombia, which formed the basis of the Saul Newbury collection. The Newbury collection was by far the finest Colombia collection up to the time of its sale in 1955 to a South American stamp dealer named Rachitoff, who sold it to the Luder family of Corinphila. Corinphila offered most of the Newbury collection at auction in 1956. They also sold parts of the Newbury collection to Jacobo Neuberger, which formed the basis of his Colombia collection.

The other major holding of Colombia in the 1940's and 1950's was the Federico Larsen collection, which was formed in Colombia and sold at auction by Corinphila in 1960. The Newbury and Larsen collections became the basis of all subsequent collections, including the most important, the "Gordon N. John" collection and the Hugo Goeggel collection. Aside from covers, which were not prevalent in the Newbury and Larsen collections, remarkably little has surfaced in the past fifty years. Most of the major Islander pieces can be traced back to these two collections, while the covers were acquired one at a time over thirty years. No other collection of 1859 First Issue covers has ever come close to the Islander collection.

The most comprehensive and accurate reference to the stamps and covers of Colombia is Dieter Bortfeldt's *Colombia Philatelic Handbook and Catalogue*, published by the Colombian Philatelic Research Society. We have referred to the Bortfeldt handbook throughout this sale catalogue. Page numbers refer to the hardbound edition.