

# Guatelows

A Historical Survey of the Topics of  
The Waterlow Definitive Issue of  
1902

And Other Incidental Stuff

Central Florida Stamp Club - July  
18, 2024





The Quetzal - National Emblem, on the Flag and more (Currency Denomination)

Mayan plumed serpent god - Very important to Mayan and Aztec culture

Would rather die of starvation than eat as a caged prisoner -

Map - coasts on both Caribbean, Puerto Barrios, by far the most important, and Pacific. Railroad connections, Pan Am Highway, Mountains, Highlands, Peten, No Railroads, Minor Keith, Museum, Guatemala City, Xela (Quetzaltenango), Antigua, Panajachel.





President Jose Reina Barrios, president from 1892 until his assassination in 1898. Rebuilt Guatemala City along Parisian lines - most of the edifices on Waterlow issue - Responsible for much progress, Central American Fair of 1897-which contributed to fiscal peril.





A Stamp at last - Barrios and 1897 Central America Fair stamp - Long and Expensive series - reminiscent of Columbian Exposition 1892 and Canada's Victorian Jubilee 1897.

Highest denomination was 500 Centavos. Ship and Train both shown.



The Series which is the major topic of discussion. Just to give an impression. Manuel Estrada Cabrera regime. 1902. Not pictured is the 2 Peso Indian Institute - I didn't own one at time picture was made. Classic, line engraving, stately, stable, not flashy, Semiotics.





President Manuel Estrada Cabrera, replaced Barrios after his assassination and ruled from 1898 until 1920 when he was deposed. Started his regime as the Harry Truman of Guatemalan politics -at time of his deposition, everyone knew who he was.



A Waterlow stamp celebrating his reelection in 1917. Note the Quetzal perched over his head.





GUATEMALA CITY

Photographs from W. G. Litchfield

1917-1918 Earthquake- over 70 days, almost totally destroyed Guatemala City and Antigua - which was the previous capital until it was destroyed by an earthquake, 3000 plus fatalities in capital, 200,000 left homeless; very, very slow recovery and tremendous source of popular discontent at lack of government success in restoring capital and services.



Cementerio General.

Bodies exiting graves as a result of the earthquake. Vast majority of people were superstitious or religious zealots or both - tremendous psychological toll on populace and eventually on the popular support of the government and President Cabrera Estrada - who was deposed by his cabinet in 1920.



Now, the Waterlow Series of 1903 - topics are divided into three classes. First the issues where the vignettes portray objects that DID NOT SURVIVE the Earthquakes of 1917-1918; then those stamps portraying buildings that SURVIVED BUT WE'RE REPURPOSED and finally, those stamps exhibiting venues SURVIVED and are still alive and well today. Naturally, the Quetzal is a SURVIVOR -





DEAD AND GONE - killed by the Earthquakes - The Indigenous Mayan Indian Institute - founded in 1896 by President Barrios to bring to the city and educate a small number of Mayan youth selected from the masses. Education for integration into society and increase productivity, Efforts continued and multiplied after destruction.



Also, DEAD AND GONE, Palacio de La Reforma - A gem of the capital constructed by President Barrios to rival the architectural jewels of European capitals. Built for both show and service - the building housed important govt offices and hosted prestigious national social and cultural events. A symbol of Guatemalan progress, sophistication and culture.



Also, DEAD AND GONE, The Colon Theatre - Built in 1857, it served as the premier cultural venue in the capital until its destruction and demolition in 1918. Unrivaled in the nation for its opera and symphony performances, it was the unquestioned centerpiece of the high culture scene for the nation's elite. Architectural landmark and cultural legacy.





**SURVIVED BUT REPURPOSED** - The Artillery Barracks were erected under President Barrios and severely damaged by the Earthquakes but rebuilt and remain in use today as a military facility and museum and other governmental functions. The Guatemala Military Academy was located there for many years but now, as the Escuela Politecnica, has been relocated to San Juan Sacatepequez.



**SURVIVED BUT REPURPOSED** - Temples of Minerva - housing a cult originated by President Estrada Cabrera. The Temple shown was constructed in Guatemala City in 1901 and dynamited to make room for a baseball stadium in 1953. Others, very similar, survive in the major cities of Guatemala. The Cult of Fiestas Minervalias.



ALIVE AND WELL The Cathedral of Guatemala City - Hurt but not mortally wounded, the Cathedral was repaired and still today is the hub of Catholic life in the Republic, witness to the tremendous changes in and to Catholicism in the last 150 years since the Liberal Reforms began in Guatemala.





## SURVIVING AFTER REPAIR - PRESIDENTE JUSTO RUFINO BARRIOS

Equestrian Statue was damaged by the Earthquakes but repaired and successfully re-erected at the Plaza Barrios across from the train station museum in central Guatemala City.



ALIVE AND WELL - Labelled as Lake Amatitlan, adjacent to Antigua, the lake depicted is in reality Lake Atitlan, the much larger lake in the Highlands, adjacent to Panajachel. Both lakes remain, now unaffected by Earthquakes.



ALIVE AND WELL - MAYBE - The statue of Columbus (Colon) erected in 1896 during the regime of Barrios. The statue was relocated to Avenida Reforma in the middle of the last century to highlight the Reforma. The statue may well remain upright - although I haven't personally seen it lately. On Columbus Day, October 12, 2021, a group of Mayan protestors stormed the statute and lassoed its head which was 30 feet up and unsuccessfully tried to pull it off. Columbus is not what he used to be.





Another victim of the 17-18 Earthquakes President ESTRADA CABRERA was deposed by his Cabinet in 1920, arrested, replaced and died in 1924.



And his National Post Office was destroyed by the Earthquakes as well. P.S. This magnificent building was confiscated from the church and became the “Correos”.



How the replacement National Post Office was funded. A 12 1/2 Centavo postal tax was levied on mail posted. Many millions were sold.





And an extra bonus for y'all - a 1919 Waterlow stamp issued after the Earthquakes  
- the first stamp in the whole world to depict a radio transmission tower!