THEY WERE, AND NO LONGER ARE…

National locations that served as post offices during the Classical Era (1856-1883), canceled stamps, and are now abandoned or nearly vanished sites

Zapuri

By: Magdalena García Ramírez

The town of Zapuri is located in the southwest of the state of Chihuahua; its name comes from the Rarámuri language and is derived from “sapú,” which means “hurried.” It is **situated** in the **ravine area** of the Sierra Tarahumara.

In García Cubas' Atlas (1856) the town of Zapuri **does not appear**, but in **Fig. 1** the area where it would be located on that map is highlighted with a red circle, and in his Geographical Dictionary (end of the 19th century) he mentions that Zapuri was a silver mine, belonging to the district of Andrés Del Río, located southeast of Batopilas, with an altitude above sea level of 1,847 meters and that it **was discovered in 1873.**



Fig. 1
Partial view of the map of the state of Chihuahua
Zapuri would location in highlighted red circle at the bottom left.
(Source: Atlas by Antonio García Cubas)

The **oldest official record** where Zapuri appears dates from **November 10, 1877**, when the 1880 Collection of Laws mentions in Law No. 22, Article 2, that the *Canton* of Andrés Del Río was made up of the municipalities of Batopilas and Zapuri. In **1887**, the canton of Andrés Del Río **became** a **District** due to a reform of the State's Territorial Division Law, and Zapuri continued to be part of that district; on November 20, **1893**, Zapuri is mentioned again as a municipality within the political district of Andrés del Río; with the creation of the Free Municipality Law and the subsequent promulgation of the country's Political Constitution in **1917**, Zapuri ceased to exist as a municipality, and became part of the municipality of Batopilas, later, when the municipality of Guachochi was created, by decree No. 84 of December 31, **1962**, Zapuri became part of Guachochi as one of the more than 1,300 localities that this municipality has.

In the **philatelic field**, it is Karl Schimmer who, in his work cited in the Bibliography, lists Zapuri as a sub-office of Chihuahua, which received shipments of the **Hidalgos series of 1874** and depended on Parral; in **Fig. 2** you can see the Zapuri postmark or cancel and in **Fig. 3** the partial map of the state of Chihuahua where the author locates the community of Zapuri.

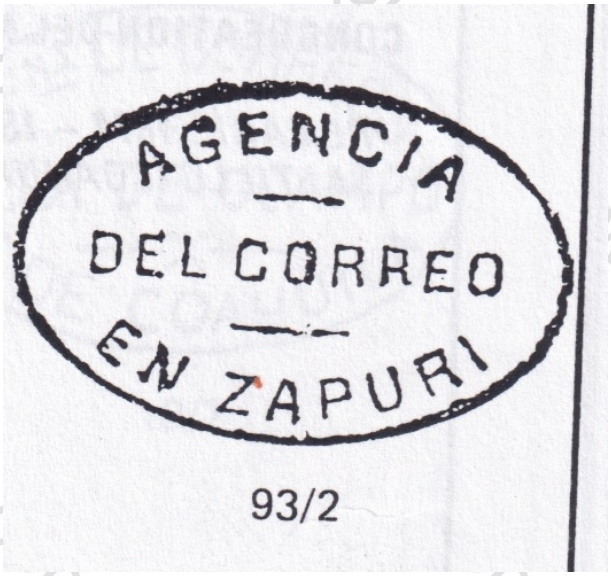

Fig. 2
Zapuri postmark, with the number assigned to it by Schimmer below
(Source: Karl Schimmer)



Fig. 3
Partial map of the state of Chihuahua,
Zapuri is highlighted in red circle at the bottom left
(Source: Karl Schimmer)

Fig. 4 shows a current map where Zapuri is marked with the "location" icon, and 3 locations highlighted with red circles, confirming the presented location; **Fig. 5** shows the satellite image of the old El Zapuri mine.

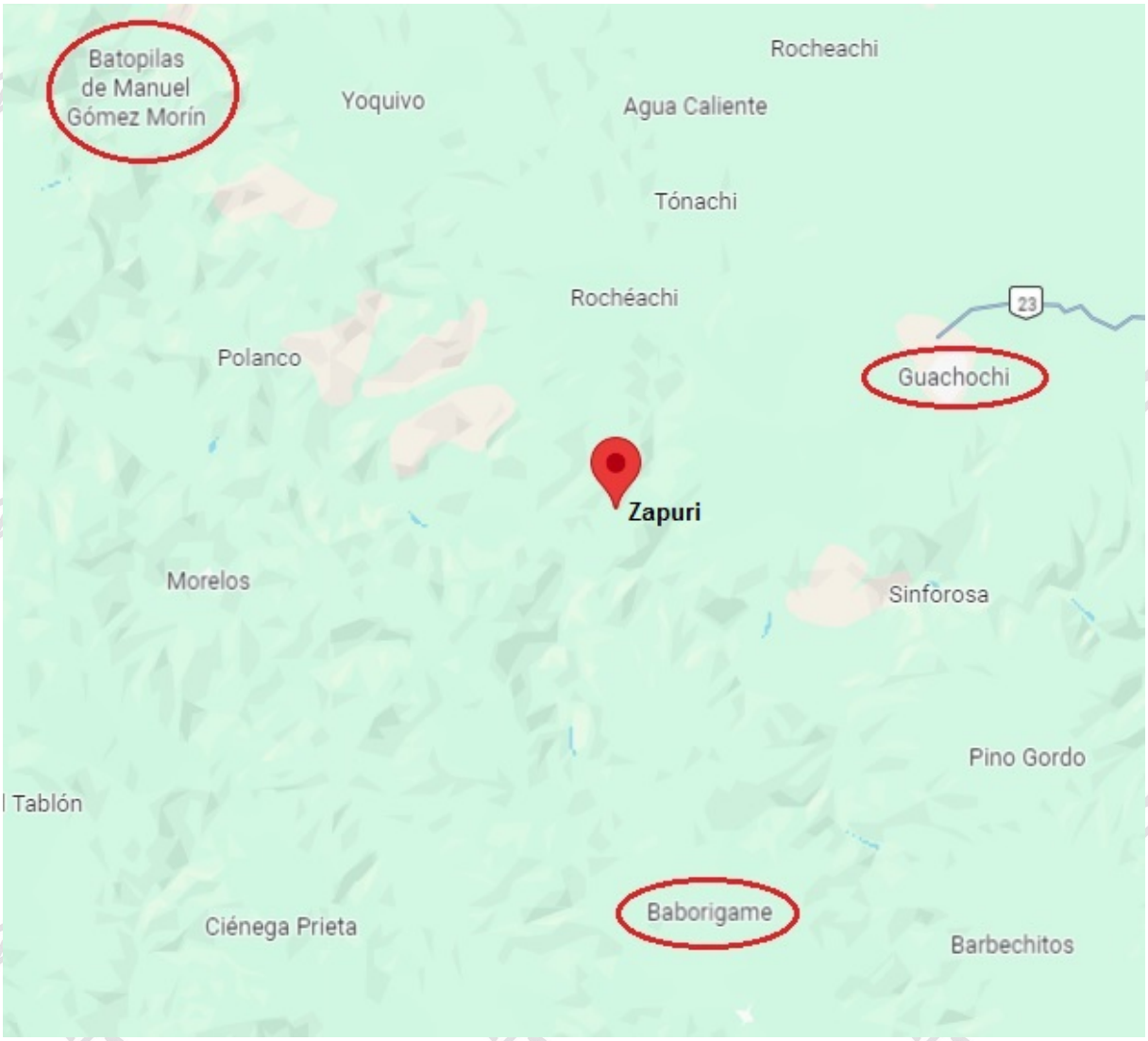

Fig. 4
(Source: Google Maps, current era)



Fig. 5
(Source: Google Maps, current era)

During a recent visit in **October 2026** to the town of El Zapuri, Mr. **Martín Solís Reyes**, a content creator and promoter of the natural beauty of the region he inhabits, published several videos (cited in the Bibliography) of the excursion he made to the place, and based on the information he provides, there are **oral testimonies** that describe El Zapuri as a very successful mine that led to the formation of an important town, which had everything necessary to meet the needs of its workers and their families, the company extracted gold and silver; current locals mention that they heard from their ancestors that the mine ceased operations around 1914, during the Mexican Civil War, when the arrival of the "Villistas" in the area expelled the company that operated it.

The mine had a processing hacienda, where the extracted ore was processed to separate the minerals and now it is completely destroyed; the mine shafts still exist; the mine was located about 3 kilometers uphill from the former hacienda, on a 300-meter slope; the ore was transported to the hacienda by donkeys along a footpath; the hacienda was situated on the banks of the Cajérachi River and had the machinery and mills necessary to separate the valuable minerals, which then climbed back up to get them out of the place. Currently, a community lives in El Zapori, though its exact number is not available, but in the year 2000, the INEGI (National Institute of Statistics, Geography and Informatics) estimated the population at 17 people. Locals report that although trained personnel recently inspected the mine, they did not find any significant veins that would justify reopening it.

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