

MARSEILLE

MARITIME ENTRY MARKS

Up to the end of the XIXth century

The aim of this study is to show both the importance of Marseille as the entry port of the mail in the Méditerranéan Sea and the quality of the postal treatment thanks to many marks struck according to origin and/or destination.

The evolution of the Maritime Post marks has followed the mail service evolution by ship, since the "free" transport by a ship captain during the 17th and 18th centuries, with generally no mark, until the Steam Packets of the 19th century, and many marks.

It is important to emphasize that even if the mail was unloaded at Marseille, entry marks were not necessarily struck in Marseille. It is the case of the marks of the Travelling Post Office Marseille to Lyon, struck in the Travelling, and the 2d and 3d order marks generally struck in Paris.

Before 1869, date of the opening of the Suez Canal, for the mail coming from Asia or Oceany, including La Réunion and Mauritius, the transshipment was made by "overland" from Suez to Alexandria between the ships of the East and those of the Mediterranean Sea, essentially English or French.



1861. Letter from La Réunion to Bordeaux with handwritten mention "Via Suez". Franked at 1F, with a pair of the 10 c and one pair of the 40c Colonies, corresponding to the double postage according to the rate of January 1st 1857 by English ship. The letter has been transported by the P&O ship *Nepaul* from La Réunion to Suez, by the P&O ship *Vectis* from Alexandria to Marseille. Red circular entry mark COL.FRA.V.SUEZ AMB.C

MARSEILLE: MARITIME ENTRY MARKS

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3. Entries by Foreign Mail Ships

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3.1 From the Mediterranean Sea

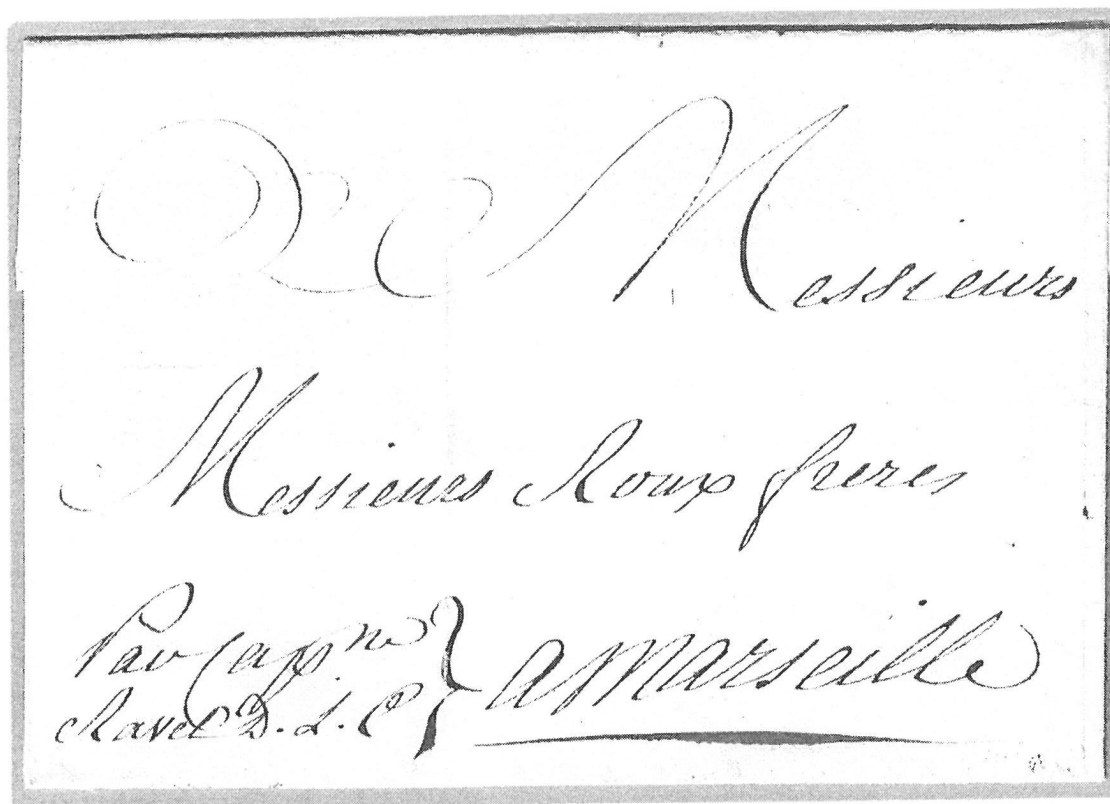
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3.2 From Colonies and Overseas Countries

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Epilogue

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1773. Purified letter from Smyrna to Marseille. Handwritten indication "Par Cap^m Clavel" D.L.C.
(Dieu Le Conduise) (God leads) reflecting the risks of navigation at this time.

Essential references

R. SALLES : La Poste Maritime Française, tomes 1 to 8.

J. BERGIER, V. POTHION : France, Poste Maritime.

G. DUTAU : La désinfection du courrier en France et dans les pays occupés.

M. CHAUVET, J.F. BRUN : Introduction à l'Histoire Postale des origines à 1878.

R. KIRK : The Postal History of the P&O Services to the Peninsula.

R. KIRK : British Maritime Postal History

J.K.SIDEBOTTOM: The Overland Mail

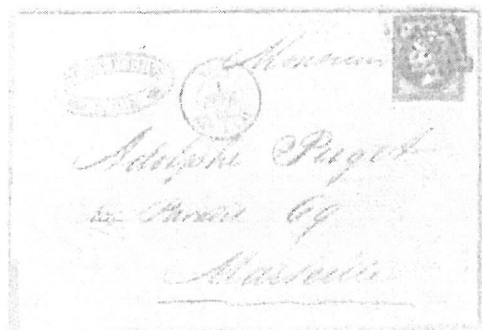
C (Certificate)

The blue texts relate to the scarcity of documents
shown, like the color of the frame too

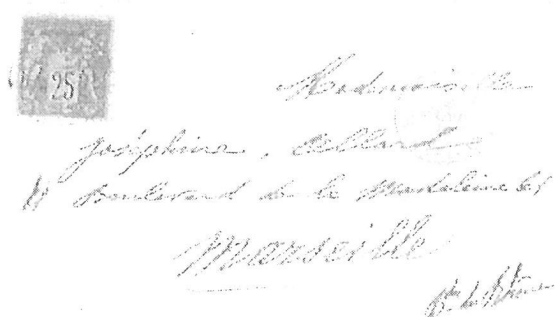
S (Signature)

The 4th frame continues to evoke the French Post Steamers from the former Italian States, Italy, Corsica and North Africa to lead to the famous « Steamers » stamps and finish with the English possessions (Malta). Note the rarest pieces :

- Stamp *Italie Marseille* in black or blue instead of red.



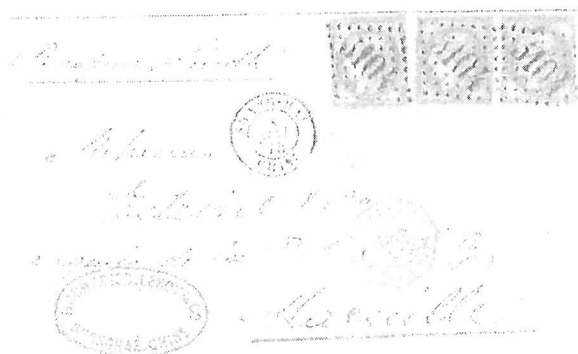
NICE BATA VAP Stamp



Very rare MAROC MARSEILLE Stamp

Frames 5 and 6 are mainly devoted to French Post Steamers for mail from overseas, either from French Colonies, or from foreign countries. The number of stamps put into service is significant and shows diversity of origins. All these letters are more or less rare, but some really are :

Stamp *BRESIL MARSEILLE*



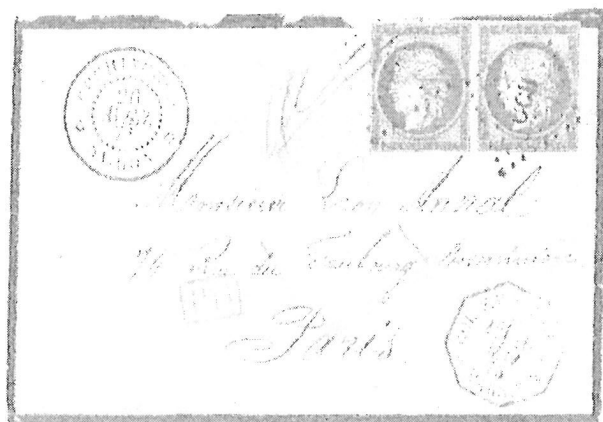
Mark COL. F. SUEZ PAQ. F. 1 MARS 1
With nice Shang-Hai date stamp



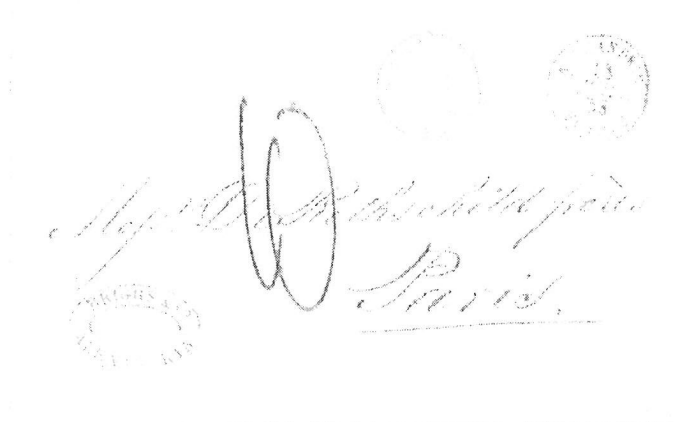
Mark COL. F. SUEZ PAQ. F. 3 MARS 3
Blue instead of red on letter from Cayenne

The 7th frame deals with Foreign Post Steamers, mainly English. PAQ. ANGL. precision does not appear on all entry stamps, and it is the date of arrival in Marseille that makes it possible to differentiate the nationality of the ship using its chart. From Malta to Melbourne we will meet many English Colonies, but not only ! None of these pieces are uncommon, but the most notable are :

- First letters seen with stamp struck in black instead of red.



Mark COL. F. SUEZ PAQ. A. 3 MARS 3
without inner ring. Only known piece to date



PAQ. ANGL. MARSEILLE*
New stamp seen for the first time, not reported by R. Salles