



## FRANCE

### The Grille, The Paris Star, and other Cancellations, 1849-1876

By WILFRED BENTLEY (Preston and District P.S.)

(Figures 1 to 5 from left to right above)

IN a previous article, the postmarks of France of the "lozenge of dots" type have been dealt with by the present writer, who hopes in future articles to describe, first, the date-stamps which accompanied the "lozenge" and other cancellations, and, second, the more important of the numerous French postal markings which owed their existence to the chaos of the Franco-Prussian War, the Siege of Paris, and the Commune. Before embarking on these, however, it will be as well to deal with a number of other postmarks of varying degrees of importance, falling into none of the three categories mentioned above, which are essential to the general survey of French postmarks from 1849 to 1876 which the writer hopes to complete.

The most important of these are the *grille*, the general cancellation of France from 1849 to 1851 (more or less corresponding to the British Maltese Cross); and the "Paris star", the normal cancellation of the Central Post Office in Paris from 1852 to 1876, and (with a number added) of the Paris district offices from 1863 to 1876. Beside these, there are the temporary cancellations of January, 1849 (preceding the *grille*), the roller and "pepper-box" cancellations of Paris, a miscellaneous group (not all of which were used as cancellations except by accident), the Sardinian type postmarks of Savoy and Nice (1860), and a number of foreign postmarks to be found on French stamps. A few postmarks which are not date-stamps are left over for inclusion in the date-stamp article as a matter of convenience.

It may be remarked in passing that the "duplex" type of cancellation, familiar to the collector of British postmarks, was not used in France.

The books, etc., consulted for this article are the same as for the "lozenges", with the addition of the following:—

Raoul Lesgor and Meade Minnegerode, *The Cancellations on French Stamps of the Classic Issues, 1849-1876*. (New York: The Nassau Stamp Company, 1948.) This is the only book in English devoted to the subject that I have come across. Useful if treated with a certain amount of caution. Contains many interesting illustrations, which would gain in value by fuller (and, occasionally, more accurate) description. There is much in the book which I have not seen elsewhere, and an excellent chapter on the maritime posts by Robert G. Stone.

Carroll Chase, *The Early Postmarks of France*. (In the *Philatelic Journal of Great Britain*, October, 1936-December,

1937.) This admirable study is devoted chiefly to the postmarks of the pre-adhesive period, but the author throws light into many obscure corners after 1849.

O. G. Bowlby, *Maritime Movable Boxes*. (In the *Philatelist*, November, 1949.)

#### 1. The Cancellations of January, 1849

The first stamps of France were issued on January 1st, 1849, but the *grille* obliterators, with which it had been intended that the new stamps should be cancelled, were not yet ready. Postmasters were therefore instructed that, pending the arrival of the obliterators, the stamps should be cancelled with handstamps of wood and metal, with the date-stamps already in use, or with a pen—in the latter case diagonal lines were to be drawn across the stamp. All of these methods were used, and many clerks, to be on the safe side, used date-stamps and a pen on the same stamp.

A number of offices used hand-stamps specially made for the emergency, and these may be described first. Lille had two of these: one a circle, about 25 mm. in diameter, composed of ten horizontal bars (Fig. 1), the other an oblong of four bars, about 27 mm. × 13 mm. (Fig. 2). Crosses of different kinds were used at Autun (Fig. 3), Troyes (Fig. 4), La Rochelle (Fig. 5), and Paris, Bureau J (4 Place de la Bourse) (Fig. 6). The cross of La Rochelle, being struck in two operations, assumes many different shapes, and I think the same is true of the cross of Autun. Bureau J of Paris also used the rosette illustrated in Fig. 7. The provenance of the marks illustrated in Figs. 8, 9 and 10 is uncertain. Fig. 8 has been attributed to Paris, Bureau J; Fig. 10 (a curious foreshadowing of the lozenge postmarks) is attributed by Lesgor and Minnegerode to "St.-Amand". Langlois and Veneziani list seven post offices of this name, six of which were established by 1852, and I have no idea which of these is intended. A number of other varieties are listed and illustrated by Lesgor and Minnegerode (*op. cit.*, pp. 11-13). These specially-made cancellations, and any dated January 1, are the most sought-after of the January, 1849, postmarks.

(To be continued)

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Figs: 6

7

8

9

10



## FRANCE

The Grille, The Paris Star,  
and other 1849-1876  
Cancellations

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Fig. 11

The date-stamps used as cancellations during this period are of several types. First, there is the type introduced in 1830, consisting of a large double circle (diameter about 30 mm.), with the name of the town at the top, the number of the department (a word will be said about these department numbers when we come to treat of the date-stamps), normally in brackets, at the bottom, and the date in three lines in the centre. Sometimes there are ornaments in the outer circle (Fig. 11). Sometimes the inner circle is missing, but I do not know whether this type is known as a January, 1849 cancellation. This date-stamp was twice reduced in size, to 25 mm. and then to 21 mm. (Figs. 12 and 13). Ornaments are not found in the smaller types. All three (the large circle with and without ornaments) were used as cancellations in January, 1849, and are often found with an additional pen-cancellation. The small type (Fig. 13) is the least scarce, as by 1849 the other two existed only as survivals: the large type (Fig. 11) was, however, still being used in some large towns, such as Lille, as well as in the smaller places where one would expect to find obsolete postmarks still in use. All three types were occasionally used as cancellations later on, so that a legible date in January, 1849, is necessary to identify a specimen as definitely belonging to this group.



Figs.: 13



14



15

A different type of date-stamp (originally dating from the early 1820's), used in some small offices, consisted of the date alone in a circle, with or without an additional outer circle of dots (Figs. 14 and 15). The date-stamp shown in Fig. 16, used in Paris to indicate the hour of distribution of letters, was also used.

Pen-cancellations alone are infrequently met with—as objects of contempt to so many collectors, a lot of them must have been destroyed in the course of the years—and, unless on cover, are of course impossible to identify.

Another postmark called into service as a cancellation is that of the *bureaux de distribution* (the smaller post offices). This type dated from 1820 and consisted of the name of the office, in italics, in one or two lines, with the number of the department above (Fig. 17). Some of these postmarks had the name of the main office (*bureau de recette*) to which the *bureau de distribution* was attached, the name of the department (rarely), or "ALGERIE" in capitals below. A well-known specimen of the last, used in January, 1849, reads: "Mez-*el-Kébir*—ALGERIE".



Fig. 12



Fig. 18

A letter, or letters, sometimes with a number added, within a circle, are found as cancellations of this group (Fig. 18: cf. Figs. 48–51 below). These are mainly postmen's marks, used to denote a particular postal round or letter-box. (In the latter case, the handstamp was kept in the letter-box, and the postman, who carried an ink-pad round with him, postmarked the letters when he cleared the box.) One group, however, according to the Yvert Special Catalogue, belonged to the Paris district and branch post offices, according to the system of letters and numbers which has already been described in the article on the lozenge postmarks. This authority quotes the following as having been thus used: D, G, K, GS, and GS. It is possible that the "OR", "OL", "PP", "PD", and "PF" marks described later on (Figs. 38–43, below) were used as cancellations in January, 1849, though I have never seen any conclusive evidence for this.

These temporary cancellations will, of course, be found only on the 20c. and the 1f. vermilion of 1849. The colour is usually black. All are scarce: specimens in red or blue are rarities, bløn being slightly the rarer colour.

The grille obliterators began to be distributed to the post offices about January 15th, 1849. They did not come into use in all offices simultaneously, so that the temporary cancellations are found with dates up to about the end of the month. The round type of Lille bars, for example, was in use at least up to January 24th; and if this was the case in one of the largest towns in France, it is not impossible that some of the smaller offices may have continued to use temporary cancellations into February.



Figs.: 16

35  
Mezières  
en Brenne

17

(To be continued)

## World's First Postage Stamp Still on Sale

## LIBERIAN CLAIM

The Public Relations Officer of the Republic of Liberia states in a release dated September 11th, 1950, that his Government have again placed on sale the 2 cents purple stamp issued in 1828 (*Sic*). He states that a stock of these stamps has been recently issued from the Stores Department, where "they were doubtless overlooked previously". The stamps are in many cases discoloured as a result of their long period of storage (122 years) under tropical conditions. We have a feeling that this release should have been dated April 1st.



# FRANCE—The "Grille", The Paris Star, and other 1849-1876 Cancellations

By WILFRED BENTLEY (Preston and District P.S.)

(PART 2 continued from page 45)

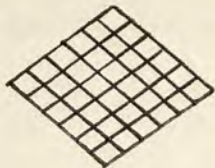


Fig. 19

## 2. The Grille

This, the definitive postmark for all French post offices from January, 1849 to December 31st, 1851, was a lozenge-shaped mark divided by crossed parallel lines into 36 smaller lozenges (Fig. 19).

There is little to be said about this cancellation during the period of its normal currency. Apart from a type with rounded corners, used at Paris, Lyons, and elsewhere, there are very few varieties such as may be found with the British Maltese Cross. Outside France, it was used in the post offices of Algeria, and by the French Army post offices attached to the Expeditionary Corps in Rome. These can, of course, only be distinguished when accompanied by the date-stamp. The *grille* was not used elsewhere abroad. The French post offices in Turkey and Egypt were not supplied with postage stamps until 1857, and the stamps of the first issue (and probably also of the Presidency) sent to Martinique, Guadeloupe, and a few other colonies were not cancelled until they arrived in France, where they generally received a roller cancellation, or the lozenge of the Paris-Calais *ambulant*. (Covers thus used, which command a fair premium, can be recognised by the colonial date-stamp, where present, or by the letter itself.)

The *grille* ceased to be the normal cancellation of France on January 1st, 1852, when it was replaced by the lozenge type or (in the Paris Central Post Office only) by the Paris star. Here and there, however, it continued in use in and after 1852.

Perhaps the best-known example of this was by the Army post offices in Rome, which for some reason were not allotted lozenge cancellations during the first period of occupation, which ended in 1866. Instead of a lozenge of dots, the *grille* remained in use, with date-stamps reading "CORPS EXPEDITIONNAIRE D'ITALIE" at the top, and several different inscriptions at the bottom. Another date-stamp of the period read "BRIGADE FRANCAISE-ITALIE". This is perhaps the best place to mention another well-known cancellation found on French stamps from about 1851-1861: the *grille* of the Papal States. (Fig. 20: generally found in conjunction with the "BRIGADE FRANCAISE-ITALIE" date-stamp.) Certain correspondence going through the Papal post office at Civita Vecchia was prepaid in French stamps, and, having been cancelled at the Papal post office, was handed over to the French Army postal service for transmission, this being done for convenience sake owing to the route the letters would have to follow.

During the second period of French occupation, from 1867 to 1870, the "CER" lozenges were used as cancellations. (See STAMP COLLECTING, 27/5/50, p. 341.)

Another late use of the *grille* was in Paris in 1854-55, usually in company with the "PARIS POUR PARIS" date-stamp shown

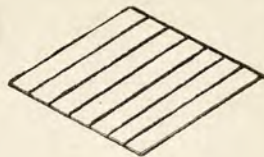


Fig. 20

in Fig. 21. (This date-stamp was for use on letters from one part of Paris to another.) The Paris *grille* of 1854-55 is known in blue. The *grille* was also used for a time at St. Mamert-du-Gard (Gard) in 1857; at Bayonne in 1860; and at Neuilly-sur-Seine (Seine) in 1861. Each of these examples was probably due to a temporary breakdown of the normal cancellation. The *grille* was used also, in 1862, in a newly-opened office at Cailly (Seine-Inférieure), before the lozenge obliterator arrived.

Detached stamps of 1852 or later with a *grille* postmark command a premium, but are of little real interest, as it is impossible to say where they were used or why they received the *grille*. It is probable that most such examples are from the Army post offices in Rome, this being the only use to which the *grille* was put otherwise than as an emergency measure.

## 3. The "Paris Star"

The Central Post Office in Paris, in the Rue Jean-Jacques Rousseau, was not allotted a lozenge postmark when these replaced the *grille* at the beginning of 1852. Instead, the cancellation used there, which continued in use until 1876 (when the date-stamp became universal), was a six-pointed star of dots (Fig. 22). This cancellation, normally struck in black, is found also in blue, especially about 1853-56. Red is rare, but not unknown: a cancellation of this type in red (described by some writers as a bright vermilion-red, quite different from the red sometimes used in ordinary post offices) was also used by the post offices used by the Emperor's household and court. (See STAMP COLLECTING, 3/6/50, p. 373.)

The Paris star does not become really interesting until 1863, when the postal system of Paris was reorganised. The post offices of the capital (other than the Central P.O.), which had hitherto been divided into District Offices and Branch Offices, each of the latter under a District Office, were all brought on to the same level of importance, and at the same time the lozenge postmarks hitherto used there were discontinued. In their place the offices were provided with cancellations of a similar shape and size to that of the Central P.O. (which continued in use there), but with a number in the centre. (Figs. 23 and 24.) This change took effect on July 1st, 1863, and the numbers then allotted to Paris post offices ran from 1 to 35. Four new offices, opened in 1866, received the numbers from 36 to 39. These postmarks continued in use until 1876, and although numbers in this series continued to be allotted to Paris post offices after that year, the stars were no more. The series is still in use for Paris post offices (the numbers are now well beyond 100), and the numbers are frequently shown in the postmarks—sometimes with the same address shown for the number in the list of 1863.

(To be continued)



Fig. 21



Fig. 22



Fig. 23

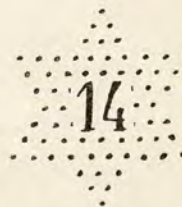


Fig. 24



# FRANCE—The "Grille", The Paris Star, and other 1849-1876 Cancellations

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(PART 2 continued from page 81)



Fig. 25



Fig. 26

Between 1863 and 1876 a number of changes took place in these offices, some being removed to new premises, and others undergoing a change of name. These variations can, of course, be distinguished only by the date-stamps, and the numbered Paris star postmarks are best collected on cover or on piece showing the date-stamp.

A list is given below of offices using the numbered Paris star, showing the alterations made, with the dates, up to 1876. In the date-stamps, the names of the offices are frequently abbreviated, and only rarely (except for one office) is the street number given. In the list below the names are given in full, and the street numbers supplied wherever possible. Variations in spelling or abbreviation in the date-stamps are not mentioned. Owing to the fondness of the French for re-naming and re-numbering streets, it is not always at all easy whether a given alteration was due to actual removal of an office or to a mere change of name. In the list below, cases where geographical considerations make it certain that an actual removal took place are indicated by a capital R. All the removals were simply to new premises in the same district, with the exception of that of No. 35 from the Salpêtrière to the *Ministère des Finances*. The Salpêtrière office was closed in 1865 and its number re-allotted in the following year to a new office at the *Ministère des Finances*, which was in a different part of Paris.

After the Paris Commune of 1871, it was decided to remove the Legislature and Government Departments to Versailles. This fact explains the disappearance in that year of the date-stamps of the *Sénat* (No. 6), the *Corps Législatif* (No. 30), and the *Ministère des Finances* (No. 35), and their replacement by date-stamps with the address of the office. It may be remarked that these three offices were open to the public, and were not in any sense private post offices. It seems probable that after 1871 they carried on in the same premises and that the new date-stamps indicate no more than a change of name. In the same year we find No. 36 changed from the Boulevard du Prince Eugène to the Boulevard Voltaire. Here there is an obvious political motive, and we may feel fairly sure that it was the name of the Boulevard that was changed. At any rate I can find no trace of a Boulevard du Prince Eugène on later maps of Paris! In the majority of other cases (except No. 27, changed from the Rue St.-Dominique-Gros-Caillou to, simply, Gros-Caillou) a removal is the probable, but not certain, explanation.

Paris Star Number	Address of Office	Date of Allocation
1	4 Place de la Bourse .. ..	1863
2	5 Rue Bourdaloue (1) .. ..	1863
	Rue St.-Lazare .. ..	1863
	1 Rue Milton .. ..	1872
3	Place de la Madeleine .. ..	1863
4	2 Rue Ste.-Cécile(1) .. ..	1863
R	21 Rue d'Enghien .. ..	1863
5	6 Boulevard St.-Martin .. ..	1863
	Rue de Bondy .. ..	1865
R	Boulevard Magenta .. ..	1873
6	Sénat .. ..	1863
	Palais du Luxembourg .. ..	1871
7	4 Rue des Vieilles-Haudriettes .. ..	1863

8	19 Rue d'Antin .. ..	1863
9	75 Rue du Faubourg St.-Honoré .. ..	1863
	Rue Montagne .. ..	1867
10	5 Petite Rue du Bac .. ..	1863
	Rue Dupin(1) .. ..	1865
	Rue du Cherche-Midi .. ..	1865
11	3 Rue de l'Echelle .. ..	1863
	Rue St.-Honoré .. ..	1865
	Place du Théâtre Français .. ..	1873
12	Boulevard Beaumarchais .. ..	1863
13	Hotel de Ville(2) .. ..	1863
	Rue de la Tacherie .. ..	1871
14	160 Rue du Faubourg St.-Martin .. ..	1863
	Rue de Strasbourg .. ..	1866
15	12 Rue Mazarine(1) .. ..	1863
R	Rue Bonaparte .. ..	1863
16	4 Rue Neuve-Bourg-l'Abbé .. ..	1863
	Rue de Palestro .. ..	1865
	Rue de Turbigo .. ..	1874
17	1 Rue Tirechappe .. ..	1863
	Rue du Pont-Neuf .. ..	1867
18	30 Rue de Londres .. ..	1863
	19 Rue d'Amsterdam .. ..	1869
19	48 Rue d'Angoulême-du-Temple .. ..	1863
	Boulevard Richard-Lenoir .. ..	1868
20	56 Rue St.-Dominique-St.-Germain(3) .. ..	1863
21	170 Rue St.-Antoine .. ..	1863
22	8 Rue St.-Nicolas-d'Antin(1) .. ..	1863
	Rue du Helder .. ..	1863
	Rue Taitbout .. ..	1869
23	176 Rue du Faubourg St.-Antoine .. ..	1863
	Rue Aligre .. ..	1870
24	28 Rue de Cléry .. ..	1863
25	42 Rue de la Harpe .. ..	1863
R	Rue Serpente .. ..	1867
26	Gare du Nord .. ..	1863
27	148 Rue St.-Dominique-Gros-Caillou .. ..	1863
	Gros-Caillou .. ..	c.1869
28	22 Rue du Cardinal Lemoine .. ..	1863
29	173 Rue Mouffetard .. ..	1863
	Rue Pascal .. ..	1865
R	Rue Monge .. ..	1873
30	19 Boulevard Mazas .. ..	1863
31	Corps Législatif(4) .. ..	1863
	2 Rue de Bourgogne .. ..	1871
32	15 Rue de la Ste.-Chapelle .. ..	1863
	Quai des Orfèvres .. ..	1874
33	Gare d'Orléans .. ..	1863
	Boulevard de l'Hôpital(5) .. ..	1868

(Continued on page 153)

(1) Although these allocations are known to have been made, no specimens are known with these date-stamps, and it is probable that they were never used.

(2) The Hotel de Ville was destroyed during the Commune.  
(3) Why this office alone always included its street number in the postmark I do not know; varieties are known of some others in which it is included, but this office always did so.

(4) Chamber of Deputies.  
(5) See STAMP COLLECTING, 29/4/50, p. 177.



## France (Continued from page 145)

<i>Paris Star Number</i>	<i>Address of Office</i>	<i>Date of Allocation</i>
34	3 Rue de Chaillot . . . . .	1863
	29 Avenue Josephine . . . . .	1868
35	Salpêtrière (See above) . . . . .	1863
	Ministère des Finances . . . . .	1866
	Rue de Luxembourg . . . . .	1871
36	Boulevard du Prince Eugène . . . . .	1866
	Boulevard Voltaire . . . . .	1871
37	Boulevard Malesherbes . . . . .	1866
38	Rue des Feuillantines . . . . .	1866
39	Rue des Ecluses St.-Martin . . . . .	1866

The occasional use of lozange cancellations instead of stars at the offices in the Rue St. Dominique-St. Germain and the Rue de Cléry has been mentioned in the previous article. (STAMP COLLECTING, 29/4/50, p. 177.)

One or two other varieties of the Paris Star are of interest. Two of these came from the post office in the Rue d'Enghien (No. 4). The first is an obliterator which seems to have been made into a No. 4 from a No. 24; the figure "4" appears on the right, and to the left of it there are a few traces where the "2" has been removed. The other, rather scarcer, has the figure "4" in a space of the size usually provided in those obl iterators whose numbers ran to two figures. (Fig. 25: cf. Figs. 23 and 24.) At the office in the Rue des Vieilles-Haudriettes there was a variety with a small figure "7".

During 1864, the "blind" Paris star of the Central Post Office was in use in the office at 4 Place de la Bourse (normally Star No. 1).

A further Paris Star postmark, which belongs properly to the postmarks of the Franco-Prussian war period, may be mentioned here. For a time after the end of the war letters sent to France from Alsace-Lorraine or Germany had to be franked with French stamps as well as with those of Germany or with the occupation stamps in use in Alsace-Lorraine. The usual practice was for each postal authority to cancel its own stamps, and letters arriving in Paris thus franked, and not previously cancelled in a French office, were cancelled there with a Paris Star with vacant centre, in blue. (Fig. 26.)

(To be continued)



# FRANCE—The "Grille", The Paris Star, and other 1849-1876 Cancellations

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(continued from page 153)



Fig. 28

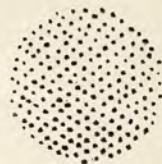


Fig. 34

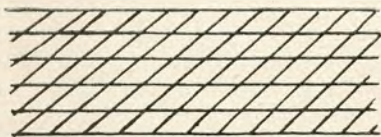


Fig. 27



Fig. 29

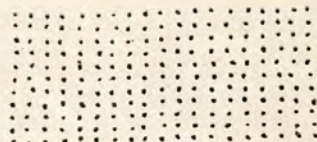


Fig. 30

#### 4. The Roller and "Pepper-Box" Cancellations of Paris

The roller cancellations, applied by means of a roller which would impress a continuous band in one design or another, were intended to facilitate the stamping of registered and foreign letters, which frequently bore two or more stamps. Their use was confined to Paris, generally at the Central Post Office. The first of them, introduced about the middle of 1850, took the form of a continuous *grille*. (Fig. 27.) This continued in use until about 1854, and may be found with the diagonal lines running either from S.W. to N.E. or from S.E. to N.W. The suggestion that this may have been due not to the existence of more than one roller but to the clerk's having applied the roller the other way round will not hold water, as a moment's reflection will show! In 1852, two other roller types made their appearance, each consisting of a series of large rectangular dots set at right angles, there being six dots in the width of the roller in each case. The two types may be distinguished, first, by their spacing lengthwise, there being ten dots to about 30 mm. in the one, and to about 40 mm. in the other; second by the fact that in the narrower spaced roller the dots are square, while in the wider they are oblong. (Figs. 28 and 29.) There are sub-types of the latter, differing in the size of the dots. The wider-spaced variety is the scarcer: the narrow one had the longest life of any of the roller cancellations, and ended its days in the Rue d'Enghien office (1874-76). This, I believe, is the only example of a roller cancellation used outside the Central Post Office. Its use seems to have been rather infrequent, and in spite of its long life it is not the commonest of the roller cancellations.

Two further types appeared in 1854, consisting of much smaller dots, set either at right angles or diagonally. (Figs. 30 and 31.) The diagonal type is slightly the commoner. There are one or two sub-types, differing in the number and spacing of the dots. These types remained in use for about ten years.

The scarcest of the roller cancellations are two varieties which appeared, according to the Special Catalogue and Meinertzhagen, in 1855. Blanc, however, states that they were

introduced during the currency of the stamps of the Presidency (1852-53). These were, first, a continuous series of Paris Stars (Fig. 32), and, second, a series of dots having a serrated edge, giving the impression of overlapping lozenges. (Fig. 33.)

The continuous *grille* and the large square dots rollers were used to cancel remainders of the first issue and of the 25c. and 1f. Empire.



Fig. 35



Fig. 36



Fig. 37

The "pepper-box" cancellations were used at the Paris Central Post Office, presumably as an experiment, between 1859 and 1862. They consisted of circles of dots, varying slightly in size and arrangement, from 20 mm. to 23 mm. in diameter. In 1859-60 there were three types in use: one with the dots diagonally or irregularly arranged, with a diameter of 20 mm. (Fig. 34), the other two with the dots at right angles and respective diameters of 21 and 23 mm. (Fig. 35 shows the 23 mm. type.) A fourth type, with larger and more widely-spaced dots, 22 mm. in diameter, was used in 1861-62. (Fig. 36.)

Along with these may be mentioned an experimental cancellation of September, 1863, the fruit of the Administration's preoccupation with the risk of stamps being cleaned and used a second time. This took the form of two small concentric circles, so designed that they would cut through the stamp and permanently deface it, within a double ring of large dots. (Fig. 37.) The experiment, fortunately for collectors, was not proceeded with, and this obliterater had but a short life.

(To be continued)

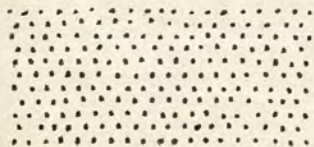


Fig. 31

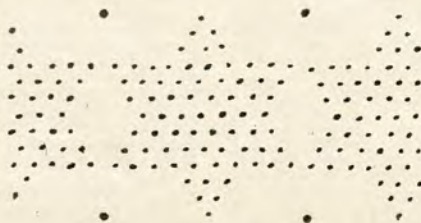


Fig. 32

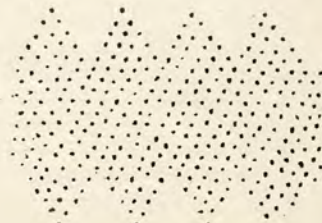


Fig. 33



# FRANCE—The "Grille", The Paris Star, and other 1849-1876 Cancellations

By WILFRED BENTLEY (Preston and District P.S.)

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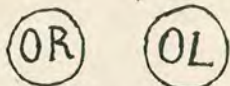


Fig. 38, 39

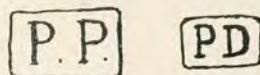


Fig. 40, 42

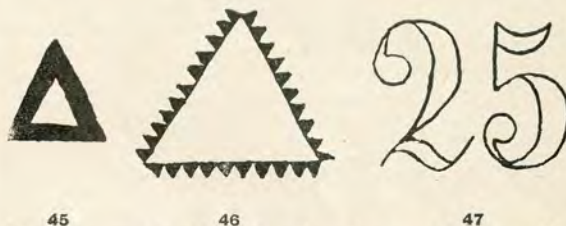
## 5. Miscellaneous

Often in country districts, rather less often in towns, letters were handed to the postman for delivery to addresses which he would reach later in his round, so that they did not pass through a post office at all. The postage rate on local letters (outside Paris) was 10c., and until the issue of the first 10c. stamp (September 12, 1850), such letters, when prepaid, had to be prepaid in cash: letters handed to the postman for delivery received the postmark "OR" (*origine rurale*) in the country, or "OL" (*origine locale*) in the towns. These marks dated from 1830, and were usually in a dotted or continuous circle. (Figs. 38 and 39.) The dotted circle is the scarcer. With the issue of the 10c. stamp it was ordered that the postmen should use the "OR" and "OL" marks to cancel the stamps on letters handed to them. Only the types in a circle were so used, the others by then being obsolete. The rule was that the postmark should be impressed twice on each stamp, at diagonally opposite corners, but stamps may be found with anything from one to five of these marks. They are scarce on the 20c., and rare on any higher value. From about 1870 the "OR" and "OL" cancellations are usually found struck only once, in the centre of the stamp. I am not certain how long they remained in use: the "OR" mark is known on stamps of the Peace and Commerce type. Both "OR" and "OL" are frequently found on the early Postage Due stamps, whose use was at first confined to local unpaid letters.

In pre-adhesive days, prepaid letters were stamped with the words "Port Payé" (postage paid), or variations or abbreviations of this. From about 1830 these marks became standardised as small rectangles containing the letters "PP", "PD", or "PF". "PP" (*port payé*) was used on inland letters, "PD" (*payé a destination*) for foreign letters prepaid all the way, and "PF" (*payé a frontiere*) for foreign letters prepaid to the port or frontier only. These marks continued in use after 1849 on letters prepaid in cash or on prepaid letters going abroad: on foreign letters "PD" and "PF" seem to have been interchangeable, and both are common. "PP", on the contrary, is scarce. Examples are shown in Figs. 40-43. They may be found occasionally used as cancellations: their possible use thus in January, 1849, has already been mentioned, and later examples, except perhaps in some districts in 1870-71, were probably merely fortuitous.

operation had special date-stamps for such letters, which will be noticed in another article. (These *boites mobiles* should not be confused with those used on certain mail-boats, whose function was entirely different.)

The triangular cancellations illustrated in Figs. 45 and 46 were used on Postage Due stamps from some time in the 1870's onwards. They are not, so far as I know, known as cancellations on postage stamps.



45

46

47

Mention may also be made of certain postage due markings reading "Timbre Poste insuffisant", "Affranchissement insuffisant", etc., sometimes abbreviated, with or without frame; also of the large double-lined figures used to indicate postage due charges. (Fig. 47.) Postmarks reading "APRES LE DEPART" in capitals, in a rectangular frame, sometimes with the office number inside or outside the frame, were used on letters posted too late for the evening despatch. Postmarks of this class are not unknown as cancellations, but can only be regarded as freaks. In the same category are a number of postmarks consisting of letters and/or figures in frames of various shapes, denoting postal rounds, etc. The use of some of these as cancellations in January, 1849, has been mentioned. A few examples are shown in Figs. 48-51. (See also Fig. 18.) It is possible that the disorganisation of 1870-71 may have provided a real reason for the use as cancellations of some of the postmarks mentioned in this paragraph.

(To be continued)



Fig. 48



Fig. 49



Fig. 50



Fig. 51



Fig. 41



Fig. 43



Fig. 44

Postmarks consisting of the letters "BM", often in a rectangular or oval frame, may be found on covers and occasionally on the stamp. (Fig. 44 shows an example.) These initials stand for "Boite Mobile" (movable box), and the postmarks, according to Lesgor and Minnegerode, were applied to letters collected in small villages, etc., by a sort of travelling letter-box (road-borne), and delivered by it to a post office, where the cachet was applied. These marks were apparently used only by the smaller offices: larger ones where the system was in

## Recent Discoveries

(Incorporating "Varieties Uncatalogued")

G.B. The "Imperial Reply Coupon" has recently undergone a slight but distinct change, and no record that we can find has previously been made of it. The old one, in use at least until July last, read in the bottom right corner "This coupon may be exchanged in any part of the British Empire for a postage stamp or stamps representing the postage on a single rate letter to a destination within the Empire. Exceptionally, the exchange value in India is 2½ annas". The new one, which we have seen dated August, 1950 (by courtesy of Mr. L. F. Goerth of Cincinnati) is exactly similar except that the last sentence has the additional words "AND PAKISTAN" inserted after the word "India".



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Fig. 52

## 6. Sardinian Postmarks of Savoy and Nice, 1860

The cession of the Province of Savoy and the County of Nice to France by Sardinia (or Piedmont) in 1860 has been mentioned in the previous article, where a brief reference was made to the temporary use there of the Sardinian type of postmark as a cancellation on French stamps. When this territory became French, it was of course possible to supply its post offices with French stamps at once, but the obliterations (lozenge type) and date-stamps naturally took a little longer to provide. Consequently, from June to October, 1860, the post offices of Savoy and Nice cancelled French stamps (Napoleon III, imperforate) with the Sardinian postmarks already in use. With a few exceptions, these were all date-stamps, very similar to some French types. (Fig. 52: a few examples are found in which the letter "C" or "D" replaces the ornament at the bottom.) It may be noted about these postmarks that those of Savoy had the names and dates in French, and those of the County of Nice in Italian. A different type of date-stamp, used at Annecy, Chambéry, and Nice (Nizza Marittima), is shown in Fig. 53. Fig. 54 shows the Sardinian form of obliterator, introduced with the first issue of Sardinian stamps in 1851, and more or less obsolete by 1860, the rule then being to cancel the stamps with the date-stamp. This obliterator had, however, survived at Chambéry, and was used there to cancel French stamps. Chambéry and Marignier (both in Saxony) also used postmarks consisting simply of the name of the place in a straight line. That of Marignier is the only type known for this place. As previously remarked, none of these postmarks is common and of some no specimens are yet known.

Sardinian stamps remained valid in Savoy and Nice for some time after the annexation, and may be found with the French lozenge cancellation (small figures, 4194-4306).



Fig. 53



Fig. 54

## 7. Other Foreign Postmarks on French Stamps

The majority of cases in which French stamps are found with a postmark of another country are due to one of two causes: either the stamp has accidentally escaped cancellation at the French offices through which the letter has passed, and has been cancelled on arrival—in which case the foreign postmark is of little interest—or the letter has been posted on board a ship without facilities for cancelling mail, and the stamp has been cancelled at the port of arrival.

When the presence of such a cancellation is the result of a definite agreement, or of particular circumstances which may be investigated and described—the Sardinian postmarks of Section 6 are a notable example—it is of much greater interest. The following are a few well-known cases.

A Postal Convention of Sept. 24th, 1856, between Great Britain and France made a number of provisions regarding the

carriage of mails between the two countries. Two subsidised lines were to run between Dover and Calais, and private companies were to run vessels between other ports. Permission was given for movable letter boxes to be carried on the mail-boats (subject to the consent of the two post offices concerned), in which letters could be posted up to the time of sailing, the boxes to be taken to the post office at the port of arrival, and there emptied. Payment was to be made, by the post office receiving the letters, to the owners of the ships at the rate of ten centimes or one penny for each letter. This arrangement was to be supplementary to the ordinary mail services.

These movable boxes had already existed since at least the early 'forties with some sort of official sanction. The British Post Office had issued postmarks for movable box letters in 1843 (known used at London, Dover, Brighton, and Southampton) and 1845 (Folkestone), consisting of the letters "M.B." in an octagonal frame (1843) or "M-B" in a rectangular frame (1845). These are known on covers with dates ranging from 1844 to 1850. Whether, before 1856, French stamps were accepted by the British post office as prepayment of such letters seems to me doubtful.

The postmarks in use after the Convention of 1856, both in France and in England and the Channel Islands, were more detailed. In England and the Channel Islands, the first set was allotted in March, 1857, and took the form of an octagonal mark reading "(Name of port)—FRANCE—MB" and date. (Fig. 55.) These marks were supposed to be struck in red but in fact are usually found in black. It is interesting to note that the shape and colour of the postmarks (octagonal and red, on each side of the Channel), and the inscription "FRANCE—MB" or "ANGL.—BM", were laid down in the Convention. These postmarks were usually impressed on the cover, the stamps being cancelled with the ordinary English type of numbered obliterator. (Fig. 56 shows one of the Southampton types.) The octagonal postmarks were originally allocated to London, Dover, Folkestone (spelled "Folkstone"), Newhaven, Southampton, Jersey, and Guernsey. Of these, only Folkestone, Southampton, and Jersey are known to exist, Jersey being scarce, and Folkestone extremely rare. In 1858 similar marks, but smaller, with the year indicated by the last two figures only, were supplied to London and Weymouth; no specimen of either is known to have survived. The octagonal marks of Southampton and London were later superseded by circular ones, but this was after 1876. The circular London mark is without the word "FRANCE".



Fig. 55

To be concluded

This will be republished  
in book form in the  
Spring. Have you ordered  
your copy yet?



Fig. 56



FRANCIA  
VIA DI MARE

Fig. 57

FRANCE—The "Grille", The Paris Star,  
and other 1849-1876 Cancellations

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In theory, it should be possible to find French stamps cancelled with the numbered obliterators of any of these ports. The numbers are: Dover 258, Folkestone 303, Guernsey 324, Jersey 409, Newhaven 452, Southampton 723, Weymouth 873. In London, it is likely that these letters were delivered to the Chief Office, whose cancellation was a number (1 to 107, with gaps), in a diamond frame surrounded by bars.

The octagonal postmarks used at French ports on letters carried in the movable boxes will be described in another article. A postmark approximating to one of the English types (shape and date not mentioned) is said to have been used at le Havre on letters from England, but if it was it must have had a very short life. It seems more likely that this report is the result of an inadequate description of the normal French type.

A similar movable box postmark, but smaller, reading "MALTA—MB", and date, was used at Malta between 1858 and 1873. (The dates are those given in the Robson Lowe Encyclopaedia.) It is not unknown as a cancellation on French stamps, but the "A 25" obliterator was the normal.

I wish to express my thanks to Mr. William Newport for assistance with the above section on the movable boxes and their postmarks.

Several different Italian postmarks may be found on French stamps from ship letters delivered uncanceled at Italian ports. Figs. 57 and 58 are interesting as representing a class of cancellation intended specially for French mail. Fig. 57 was used at Genoa in the 60's, having been preceded by a postmark reading "Da Marsiglia—VIA DI MARE" (from Marseilles—by Sea). At other ports, e.g. Naples, we find cancellations similar to that shown in Fig. 58, or reading "coi Postali Francesi", "BASTIMENTI MERCANTILI—ESTERO" (merchant vessel—foreign), "VIA DI MARE—E", etc., used in the same way.

An agreement between France and Spain, dated August 5, 1859, provided that letters from French mail-boats addressed to Spain should be sent ashore uncanceled, and an additional fee paid by the Spanish post office to the ship, and collected by them from the addressee. (I have not had the opportunity of reading the text of this agreement, and am not very clear about the details of the fee. There seems somewhere to be a difference of opinion on the matter.) Fig. 59 shows the type of postmark applied to letters carried under this agreement. A change in Spanish currency later brought about an alteration in the amount of the fee from "3 Ctos" (cuartos) to "0 09" or "0 10" (9 or 10 centimos). In the early days of the agreement, the "ADMN. DE CAMBIO" postmark was stamped on the letter, and was rarely used as a cancellation, the stamps

being cancelled with marks such as those in Figs. 60 and 61—that illustrated in Fig. 60 being interesting as obviously being used specially for these letters. Later on, however, the use of the "ADMN. DE CAMBIO" postmark as a cancellation became quite normal. Other Spanish postmarks found on ship letters from France and elsewhere read "ESTRANGERO" followed by the name of the port.

During the French campaign in Italy in 1859-60, the post offices of Sardinia and Parma, with the object of helping their French allies in every way possible, accepted and forwarded all correspondence from the French army which came into their hands, irrespective of whether it was franked with French, Sardinian, or Parmesan stamps, or even of whether the postage paid was sufficient. French stamps on such letters were cancelled by them, and the arrangement continued in areas of Austrian Italy under Franco-Italian occupation. Consequently a considerable variety of Italian cancellations may be found on French stamps of this period, one type of which is shown in Fig. 62. Amongst others may be found the Sardinian types shown in Figs. 52 and 53: the date and place will serve to distinguish these from the later temporary postmarks of Savoy and Nice. The grille of the Papal States used on French stamps has already been described.

Fig. 61  
(left) and  
62

THE END

K.G. VI Study Circle Paper  
LEEWARDS CURRENT £1 VALUE

SIR,—This stamp still has "MCS" watermark and the inference is that it is printed on remnants of the old stock manufactured before the introduction of the Script Watermark. As there were no colour variations in the George V issues, is it not highly probable that the variations now noted are merely changelings due to prolonged storage?

Moreover, in view of the differences of opinion about the dates of issue of various shades, is it not also possible that the change of colour occurred at the edge of the sheets? The paper-makers' sheets would be larger than the sheets of stamps as issued, so any one printing might well consist of some sheets of stamps of uniform colour whilst others would be of a different shade at the edge.

Has anyone seen a complete sheet of any of the rare shades?  
G. R. TURNER.

Twickenham.

(Editor's Note.—This applies equally to the £1 value of Bermuda and the 1938 Nyasaland stamp. What does the Club think?)



Fig. 59

VAPOR  
DE  
FRANCIA

Fig. 60