

## Interlude

## Postage dues

On January 1, 1863 when France extended the ten centimes local (including intra-province mail) postage rate for letters weighing up to ten grams, the rate for unpaid letters became 1.5 times the basic rate. This required new postage due stamps to assess the 15 centimes rate.



Sidi-Bel-Abbès local  
use, January 4, 1865

Note that Sidi-Bel Abbès  
was a *recette*.

Typographed stamp issued  
January 1, 1863. Type I  
stamp has defective "à."

Commercial letter to an ironmonger regarding payment of a commission.

Aïn Beïda to  
Constantine,  
January 29,  
1865

Aïn Beïda was a  
*distribution* office.

Typographed  
stamp issued April  
1864. Type II has  
normal "à."

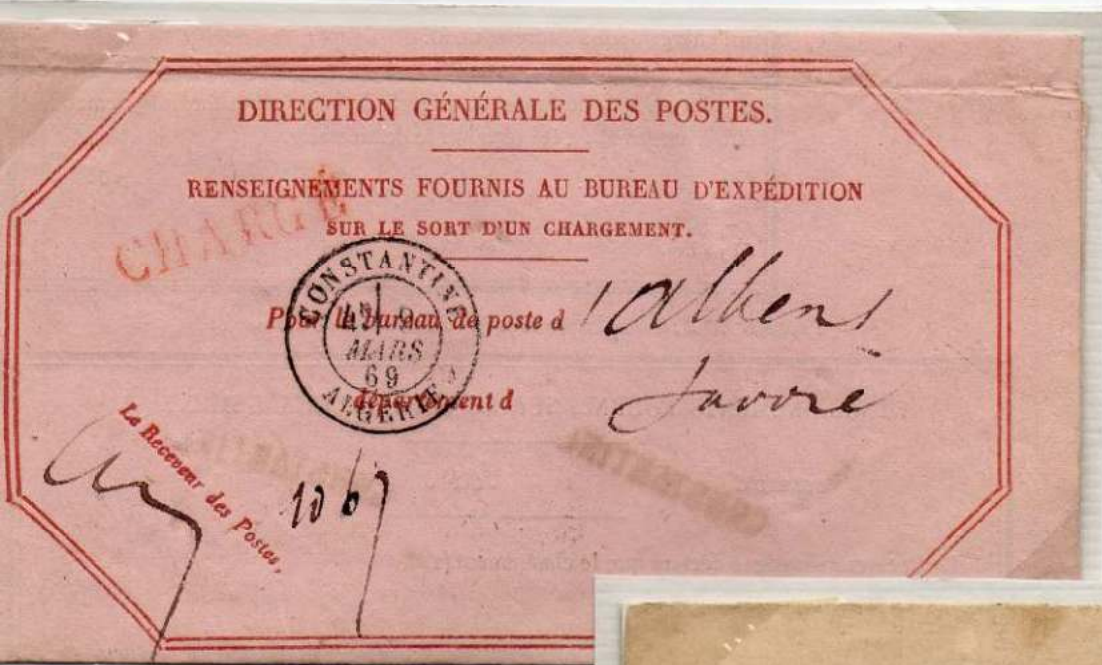


Letter written in Hebrew. Aïn-Beïda is probably the most common Algerian origin for letters with postage due stamps on them. This may be because the outpost had a very small stamp supply and Constantine had a large supply of postage due stamps.



## Large Numerals

In 1868 and 1869 the postal service replaced CDS town cancels with a new design. In addition to being larger in diameter, the top line in the center was now split into two fields. On the left was the *levée*, or mail pickup number of that day. On the right was the date. This new CDS design continued in use well beyond March 1876, the end of this exhibit.



Constantine to Albens,  
France, March 9, 1869

Four page mandatory receipt mailed from Albens to Constantine with a registered (CHARGÉ) letter. Mailed back to Albens with notation that letter delivered on March 8. Albens then applied a ten centimes stamp and mailed the form to the original sender.

Bône local use,  
August 20, 1869

Special 20 centimes  
CHARGÉ rate (June 1858)  
only for bankruptcy  
tribunal documents  
wrapped in paper strip.



Lambèse to Chateau-  
Thierry, France, July 18,  
1870

The new *distribution* mark  
retained the black pearl border.



## New Cancels

As before, letters with low rate postage, such as local delivery or printed matter, were not canceled with a numeral, without regard to the address.

## Printed matter rates

Alger to Genoa,  
Italy, December 12,  
1868

Early use of the new  
marking.

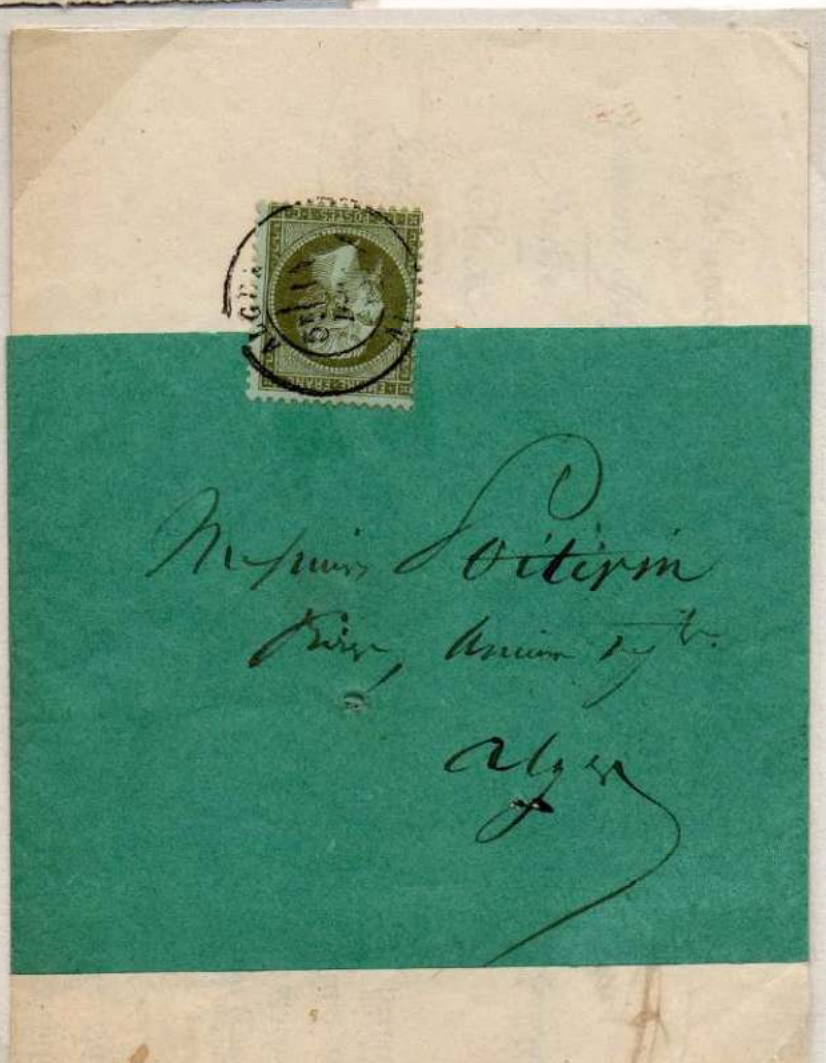
Mimeographed circular  
offering corn, barley,  
oats, beans and wool for  
sale. Eight centimes  
printed matter rate  
effective January 1,  
1866. Postage paid to  
destination.



Alger local use,  
December 14, 1869

One centime printed matter  
rate effective August 1, 1856

Request for creditor to appear  
in court and prove claim  
against bankrupt debtor.





## New Cancels

## Foreign destinations



Tlemcen to Alexandria,  
Egypt, March 3, 1869

Large numeral 5039 assigned  
to Tlemcen.

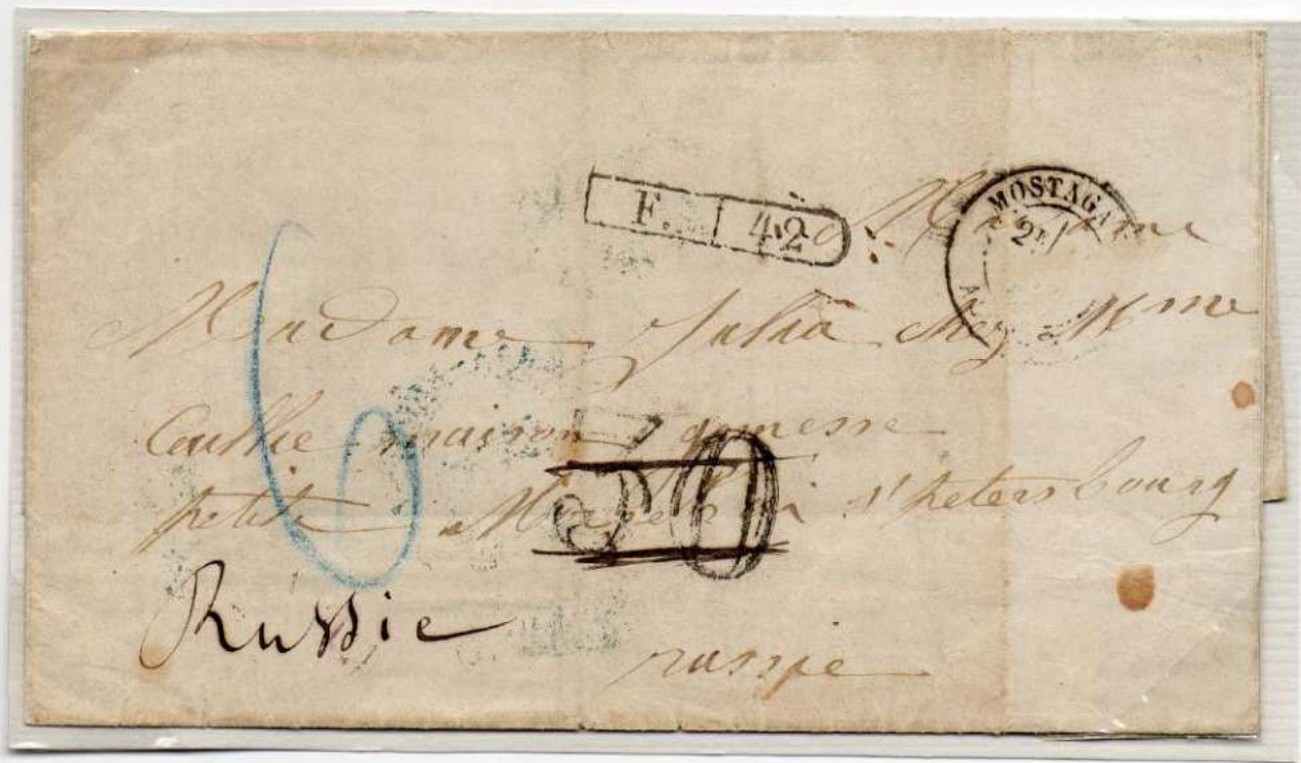
Tlemcen was an ancient Arab city, fourth largest in Algeria. The French occupied Tlemcen in 1842 and used it as a base for military actions against Abd-el-Kader. Letter written in Arabic.

Bône to Rome,  
Papal States,  
October 26, 1869

Fifty centimes letter rate  
effective September 1,  
1866 for letters to the  
Papal States weighing up  
to ten grams.







Mostaganem to St. Petersburg, Russia, January 1866

New CDS (early use) and hollow numeral “30” applied at Mostaganem  
“30” lined out, bolder “Russie” added, and accountancy mark “F. 42” applied at  
French exchange office according to Article 42 of the Franco-Prussian Letter Bill of  
January 1, 1866

M/s “6” silbergroschen applied at Aachen for French and Prussian portion

Reverse – Marseille to Lyon *ambulant*, blue “Aus Frankreich per Aachen” Prussian  
transit mark, m/s “32” kopecks in magenta rate mark and St. Petersburg receipt mark

Letter rate of 1fr 10 centimes to Russia effective January 1, 1866



Portion of reverse

	Currency		
	French	Prussian	Russian
French portion	27 centimes	2 sgr 3 pfg	8¼ kopecks
Prussian portion	45 centimes	3 sgr 9 pfg	13¾ kopecks
Russian portion	<u>38 centimes</u>	<u>2 sgr 9 pfg</u>	<u>10 kopecks</u>
Total	1fr 05 centimes	8 sgr 9 pfg	32 kopecks

“32” kopecks marked on reverse collected from addressee. Five centimes  
shortfall is rounding



**New Cancels**

**Franco-Prussian War**

On July 19, 1870 the French declared war against Prussia. Both sides expected to win easily, but the French lost a major battle at Sedan, France, including the surrender of Emperor Napoleon III. At the outset, civilian postal business continued as usual.



Ouled-Mimoun to Tlemcen, September 5, 1870

Large numeral 5126 assigned to Ouled-Mimoun.

This little outpost, established in 1852, had about 200 people living there in 1870, mostly French. The letter is typical commercial correspondence. It arrived the date it was sent, and the recipient wrote a response the same day.

Duperré to Milianah, December 19, 1870

Postage due (typographed) applied and canceled at Milianah. Recette cancel is new design, no inner circle.

Fifteen centimes unpaid letter rate effective January 1, 1863 for letters weighing up to 10 grams.



Preprinted daily report of a train, distance traveled, times of departure and arrival, number of workers who unloaded cars, list of the personnel who operated the train, etc., on December 18.



## New Stamps

After the loss at Sedan, the French declared the Third Republic on September 28, 1870. While old stamps were used up, the post office printed 10, 20 and 40 centimes values from the 1848 Cérès plates. Because the war resulted in the Prussians besieging Paris, these three stamps earned the name Siège issue. Uses in Algeria before September 1871 are unusual.

## Franco-Prussian War



Oran local use, June 24, 1871

Double weight 20 centimes rate for prepaid local letters, rate effective January 1, 1863.

Oval "BM" indicates letters were deposited in a postal box that was removed from its post under seal, replaced with an empty box, and opened when it arrived at the post office. Oran was still using its Empire stamps, which was allowed by the republican government post office.

Oran to Marseille,  
France, July 19, 1871

Some time between June 24 and July 19 the post office at Oran depleted its Empire stamps and received the Siège issue.





## Free Franks

On July 24, 1870, less than a week after the declaration of war, the postal service authorized free franking for letters weighing up to ten grams to or from soldiers. These letters all received "P.P." markings to indicate that postage was not required.

## Franco-Prussian War



Mascara to Cérilly,  
France, October 26,  
1870

Note m/s "Garde Mobile"  
in upper right corner  
indicating soldier's letter.

Mascara was a large city  
(about 10,000 people, ¼  
French) that served as  
Abd-el-Kader's temporary  
capital during his 1830 to  
1847 resistance to the  
French invasion.

Bou-Saâda to  
Marseille, France,  
February 18, 1871



This soldier was in the 43rd  
Regiment of the militia.



Oued-el-Halleg to  
Lyon, France, April  
18, 1871

Non-military mail was still  
assessed postage due at  
1.5 times the letter rate.



## Franco-Prussian War

When the siege of Paris commenced the government moved to Bordeaux, outside of Prussian control. An old mint was reactivated and stamps ordered at the end of September 1870. By November the Bordeaux issues were available in unoccupied France and at least some values in Algeria. The stamps have been the subject of much study because each of several types, printings and positions is identifiable.

## Bordeaux stamps



Affreville to Blidah,  
November 30, 1870

"P.P." added at Affreville,  
stamp added and canceled  
at Milianah.

Numeral cancel not used at  
Affreville since there were  
no stamps, not used at  
Milianah since the numeral  
would not be correct for  
Affreville CDS.

Very early use – earliest reported use in France is November 20. Stamp is Type II, Report 1, Position 12.



Valmy-d'Algérie to  
Blamont-Doubs,  
France, April 25, 1871

Small numeral 5078  
assigned to Valmy-  
d'Algérie.

Stamp is Type III, Report 2, Position 5. Also, note differences in intensity and color of stamps.  
Valmy-d'Algérie is a small village south of Oran, about 250 French population.



## Franco-Prussian War

The first value that was actually released was the ten centimes. Because of shortages, ten centimes stamps were often used in multiples to pay higher rates.

## Bordeaux stamps



Médéah to Blidah,

Large numeral 5043  
assigned to Médéah.

Forty centimes second  
weight class (10 to 20  
grams) rate effective  
January 1, 1862.

Stamps are Report 2, Positions 11, 1, 6, 11 (right to left).

Sétif to  
Constantine,  
May 30, 1871



Large numeral  
5062 assigned  
to Sétif.



## Franco-Prussian War

Higher values were also issued, and Bordeaux stamps were also used to prepay postage on letters to foreign destinations.

## Bordeaux stamps



Mascara to Oran,  
April 12, 1871

Large numeral 5042  
assigned to Mascara.

Stamp is Position 15. Commercial letter describes deliveries and payments for esparto grass, a plant used for making rope and wicker.

Misserghin to Vienna,  
Austria, February 22,  
1871

Small numeral 5047  
assigned to Misserghin.

Red "PD" indicates  
postage paid to  
destination. M/s "18"  
neukreuzer applied by  
Austrian exchange office  
for debit to France.

Sixty centimes rate  
effective July 1, 1869 for  
letters to Austria weighing  
up to ten grams.



Stamps are Type III, Report 1, Positions 12, 13 & 14.



## September 1871

## New rates

After the war the French had to pay reparations to Prussia. In an effort to increase all government revenues, the postal administration raised the basic letter rate from 20 to 25 centimes effective on September 1, 1871. Patrons had some difficulty adapting.



Orléansville to  
Alger, September  
1, 1871

Large numeral 5052  
assigned to  
Orléansville.

Twenty centimes Siège  
stamp short paid the  
25 centimes rate.

Under- or unpaid  
letters charged 40  
centimes less credit for  
any stamps.

First day of rate. Only recorded use of "2" handstamp at Orleansville.

Jemmapes to  
Bourbon-les-Bains,  
France, September  
7, 1871

Large numeral 5035  
assigned to Jemmapes.

Five centimes Bordeaux  
issue added to 20  
centimes Siège to pay  
proper postage.





## New Rates

Bordeaux stamps disappeared from use over the next year as supplies were exhausted. In November 1871 to meet the need for five centimes stamps the government reprinted the 1862 Napoleon on bluish paper, as opposed to the greenish tint of the original issue.

## Bordeaux stamps

Tlemcen local use,  
January 27, 1872

Fifteen centimes local  
letter rate (up to 10  
grams) and fifty  
centimes *changement*  
fee both effective  
September 1, 1871.

The special rate  
formerly available to  
the bankruptcy court  
was rescinded.

Both Bordeaux stamps  
are Position 5.



Mostaganem to Caussade,  
France, February 6, 1872

Letter rate	25 centimes
Declared value	50 centimes
Variable fee	<u>20 centimes</u>
Total postage	95 centimes

All rates effective September 1,  
1871





## Large numerals

After the Franco-Prussian War the post offices had a mix of new and old stamps. All were still valid to pay postage.

## Old stamps



*Monsieur*

*Alcy Entrepreneur Général des Postes*  
*Alger*

La Maison-Carrée to Alger, June 14, 1875

Large numeral 5040 assigned to La Maison-Carrée.

Forty centimes Siège stamp paid the third weight (20 to 50 grams) local letter rate.

La Maison-Carrée was elevated from a *distribution* to a *recette* in 1874. There were about 400 French in the village.

Alger to London,  
England, March 19,  
1872

Large numeral 5005  
assigned to Alger.

Thirty centimes 1863  
Napoleon stamp paid  
prepaid letter rate to  
Great Britain effective  
July 1, 1870 for letters  
weighing up to ten  
grams.





## Large Numerals

## New stamps

As the Third Republic recovered from the war, they continued issuing stamps with the original Cérès designs (some printed from original plates) to meet the new rates. The 25 centimes value was among the first in September 1871. Small but consistent design elements resulted in three types of the 25 centimes stamp.



Mers-el-Kébir to  
Grenoble, France,  
May 10, 1874

Large numeral 5044  
assigned to Mers-el-  
Kébir.

About 250 French in a village of 1,600 largely settled by other Europeans.

Téniet-el-Haâd to  
Brignoles, France,  
June 4, 1872

Large numeral 5073  
assigned to Téniet-el-  
Haâd.



Letter announces the writer's marriage on June 1, 1872. This village had about 400 French in it, nearly half of the total population of 966.

Both stamps are Type I, with no distinguishing marks.



**Large Numerals**

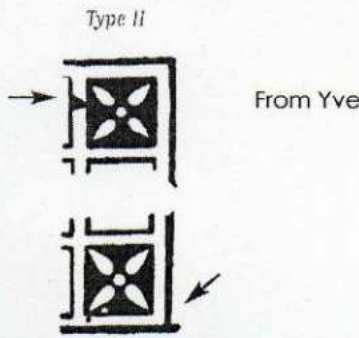
There were two more varieties of the 25 centimes stamp. Hulot, the engraver, prepared two plates, probably from an old essay for the 1858 or 1861 issues, that resulted in Type II, the least common. Type III resulted from a new die prepared for an additional printing. It was also used to repair the Type II plates.

**25c Types II and III**



Mascara to Paris,  
France, May 4,  
1874

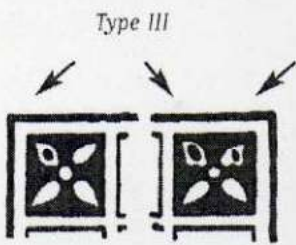
Large numeral 5042  
assigned to Mascara.



Type II has a triangular color spot at the upper right and a white spot at the lower right. The extended frame line at the lower right is also constant.

Bordj-Bou-Arreidj to  
Alger, August 13,  
1875

Large numeral 5125  
assigned to Bordj-Bou-  
Arreidj before 1873.



From Yvert



## Large Numerals

During the printing of the 25 centimes stamp a great plate crack (*la grand cassure*) occurred above the bottom row of stamps. It affected all ten stamps across the bottom row and several of the row above that. The most severely damaged position was stamp 146 of the 150 stamp sheet.

## La grand cassure

Alger to Tarare,  
France, February 9,  
1872



Position 146 of the 150 stamp half-plate. This is the first state of the crack, before it was repaired.

Alger to Rouen,  
France, September  
5, 1872

Large numeral 2240  
assigned to Marseille.  
Frames 9 & 10 explain  
these cancels.





## Large Numerals

In addition to 25 centimes stamps used for the basic letter rate, the post office printed additional five centimes stamps for the make-up rate to use with the remaining stock of 20 centimes Siège stamps. Because there had been no five centimes stamps since 1862, the printer re-used those plates, but printed on bluish paper instead of the greenish tint of the originals. A fifteen centimes stamp was also issued for the local rate.

## New stamps

Géryville to Poitiers,  
France, February 2,  
1872

Large numeral 5060  
assigned to Saïda.

Saïda transit mark on  
reverse.

Carte de visite rate  
effective August 1,  
1856 in unsealed  
envelopes.



Géryville was for many years the southernmost desert outpost, 120 miles south of Saïda. All known markings from there are blue. Less than 100 French lived at this military post.

Rouiba to Alger,  
September 4, 1873

Large numeral 5059  
assigned to Rouiba.

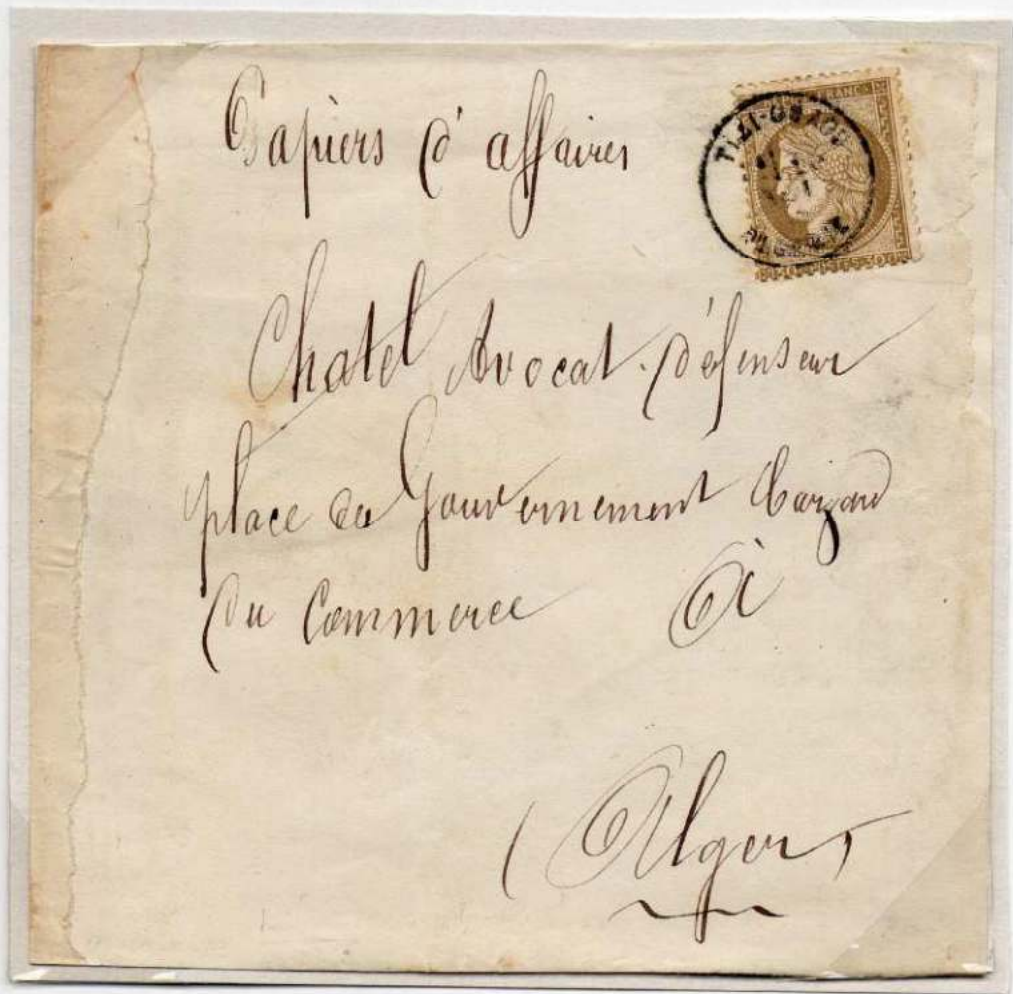




**Large Numerals**

More new stamps in the Cérès design were issued in 1873. The low values copied the Bordeaux designs, although the quality was much better. The five centimes replaced the Napoleon stamp reprinted in December 1871. In response to comments from users, the new designs enlarged the values at the bottom of the 15c, 30c and 80c stamps.

**New stamps**



Tizi-Ouzou to Alger,  
November 13, 1873

*Papiers d'affaires* rate effective September 1, 1871 for commercial papers up to 50 grams either banded, in unsealed envelopes, or in open bundles.

Repaired.

Commercial papers rate was only available if prepaid and a reference to the rate clearly marked on the wrapper or envelope.

Alger to Blidah,  
June 15, 1874

Formula cards were authorized as of January 15, 1873. Cards were only to be sold with appropriate postage affixed. Fifteen centimes rate, underpayment tripled.





## Large Numerals

In January 1873 the post office printed a new ten centimes stamp on rose paper in anticipation of the local post card rate. As the stocks of the 1871 15 centimes stamps were used, the postal service changed the design to make the numerals larger. In 1875 the last printing of the five centimes was on white paper instead of bluish.

## New stamps



Constantine to  
Rouen, France, June  
11, 1873

Two small numeral  
stamps used to make up  
the 25 centimes letter  
rate.

Commercial letter explaining what has happened to some goods handled by M. Moatti, the proprietor of a transportation business.

Bordj-Bouïra to  
Nîmes, France,  
March 11, 1876

Large numeral 5169  
assigned to Bordj-  
Bouïra in 1876.

Larger "15" stamp  
issued in January  
1873. White paper  
five centimes stamps  
printed in 1875.



Post office opened in 1876, penultimate large numeral assigned in Algeria. M. Fontaine's



## Large Numerals

**Numeral 5030**

Governor-General Randon established Fort Napoleon in 1857. After the fall of the empire, it was renamed Fort National. However, the new canceller didn't arrive until at least 1872.



Fort Napoleon to  
Algiers, February  
7, 1868

Although upgraded to a *recette* in December 1867, the only old-style CDS known from Fort Napoleon is this *distribution* marking.

Fort-National to St.-  
Claude-sur-Bienne,  
France, March 21,  
1876



Only the last page survives of a personal letter expressing great distress that the writer has not heard from friends and family at home. Fort National had fewer than 200 French dwellers in a population that never exceeded 275 people. Letter mailed just 10 days before large numerals were retired.



## Large Numerals

## Numeral 5056

Large numeral 5056 was at first assigned to Pont-de-l'Oued-Djer, a small oasis south of El-Affroun (see next page). In June 1871 the post office closed, and the numeral was transferred to Bou-Medfa, a little further south. Both offices were *distributions*, and both had French populations of about 250.



Pont-de-l'Oued-Djer to Marseille, France, March 23, 1864

Reverse – Transit mark through Blidah, Marseille receipt marking.

Letter written at Bou-Medfa requesting a shipment of absinthe and cognac.

Bou-Medfa to  
Milianah,  
November 6, 1875

Reverse – Milianah  
receipt marking.



Addressed to a justice of the peace, as per text.



## Large Numerals

## Numeral 5131

There has been substantial confusion over the years about the numeral 5131. According to official documents, 5131 was assigned to El Affroun and 5132 to Bou-Saâda. However, there are no known 5132 cancels, on or off cover. All together, there are only two or three known envelopes with 5131 and El Affroun cancels, and less than a dozen from Bou-Saâda.



Bou-Saâda to  
Algier, February  
18, 1872

Transit mark  
through Sétif.

Marked as *papiers  
d'affaires* rate, but  
"necessary to seal"  
the envelope.  
Postage paid at  
second weight class  
letter rate.

El-Affroun to St.  
Emilion, France,  
December 28, 1874



Both Bou-Saâda and El Affroun were small villages. The El Affroun post office was closed once



## Large Numerals

The original large numeral assignments included a number of *distributions*. The 25 centimes Cérès stamp remained the workhorse for these years.

## Distribution offices



Lalla-Maghrnia to  
Toulouse, France,  
November 12, 1872

Large numeral 5038  
assigned to Lalla-  
Maghrnia.

Double numeral "40" improperly used to cancel the stamp – these handstamps were only used to indicate postage due. Letter expresses sympathy for the recipient's illness.

El-Arrouch to Nîmes,  
France, July 31, 1873

Large numeral 5007  
assigned to El-Arrouch.



Dra-el-Mizan to  
Alger, June 17, 1874

Large numeral 5028  
assigned to Dra-el-  
Mizan.





## Large Numerals

The French continued to encourage Algeria as an alternative to emigrating to the United States. As the European population (still largely French) increased in Algeria, more villages operated French *distribution* offices. The postal service assigned more than 60 numerals to these offices between 1863 and March 31, 1876.

## Distribution offices



Duzerville to St. Vaury,  
France, September 24,  
1873

Large numeral 5112  
assigned to Duzerville in an  
1868 supplementary decree.

Lamoricière to  
Tlemcen, October  
27, 1874

Large numeral 5126  
assigned to Ouled-  
Mimoun in 1867.

Village renamed  
Lamoricière in 1874.



Oued-el-Halleg to  
Montluel, France,  
December 25, 1871

Large numeral 5130  
assigned to Oued-el-  
Halleg in 1867 when  
post office became a  
*distribution*.





## Large Numerals

## Distribution offices



Sidi-Ali-Ben-Youb to  
Oran, November 21,  
1871

Large numeral 5137  
assigned to Sidi-Ali-Ben-  
Youb in April 1869.

This desert village was about 20 miles southwest of Sidi-Bel-Abbès, the home of the French Foreign Legion. The letter discusses settlement of a flour sale and prices for wheat at Sidi-Bel-Abbès.

Affreville to Paris,  
France, December  
3, 1872

Large numeral 5140  
assigned to Affreville in  
October 1869.



Khenchela to Mèze,  
France, December  
3, 1873

Large numeral 5144  
assigned to Khenchela in  
June 1873.



Affreville was a large town in the northern part of Algeria. Khenchela was an ancient Roman



Large numerals

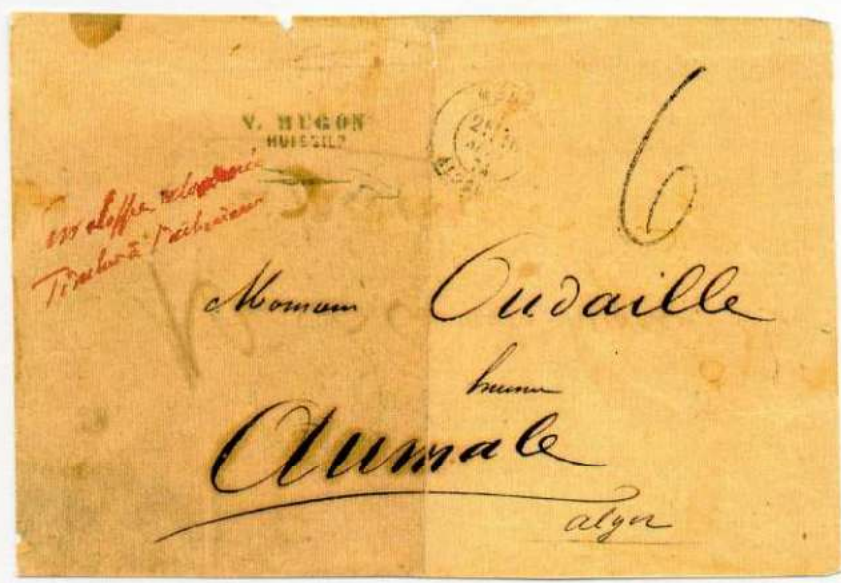
Turned cover



Boghari to Médéah, September 7, 1874  
Turned & re-sent from Médéah to Aumale, September 16, 1874

Large numeral 5142 assigned to Boghari in June 1873 when post office elevated to *distribution*.  
Three 25 centimes stamps (Type I) overpaid 65 centimes intra-province rate for letters weighing 50 to 100 grams.

Re-use: Metal handstamp "6"  
décimes, intra-province due rate  
for letters from 20 to 50 grams.



Inside

M. Hugon was a sheriff's officer at Médéah. About 140 French lived at Boghari, a desert depot and



## Large Numerals

These three were among the last *distributions* to receive large numeral assignments.



Oued-Athménia to  
Magnoac, France,  
October 6, 1873

Large numeral 5150 assigned  
to Oued-Athménia.

Elevated from a *distribution*  
entrepot to *distribution* in July  
1873. One of fewer than five  
known covers with large  
numeral cancel.

Birkadem to Nogent-sur-  
Marne, France, February  
25, 1875

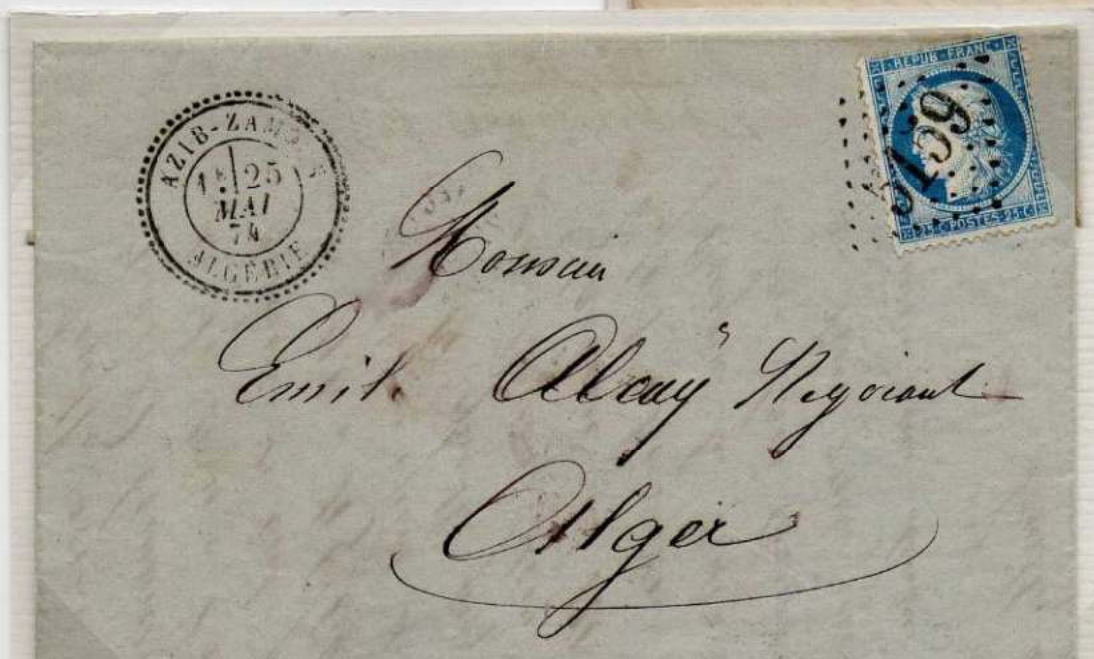
Large numeral 5151 assigned  
to Birkadem in July 1873.

Birkadem, close to Alger, was  
used as a prisoner camp early  
in the French occupation.



Azib-Zamoun to Alger,  
May 25, 1874

Large numeral 5159  
assigned to Azib-Mazoun  
in March 1874.



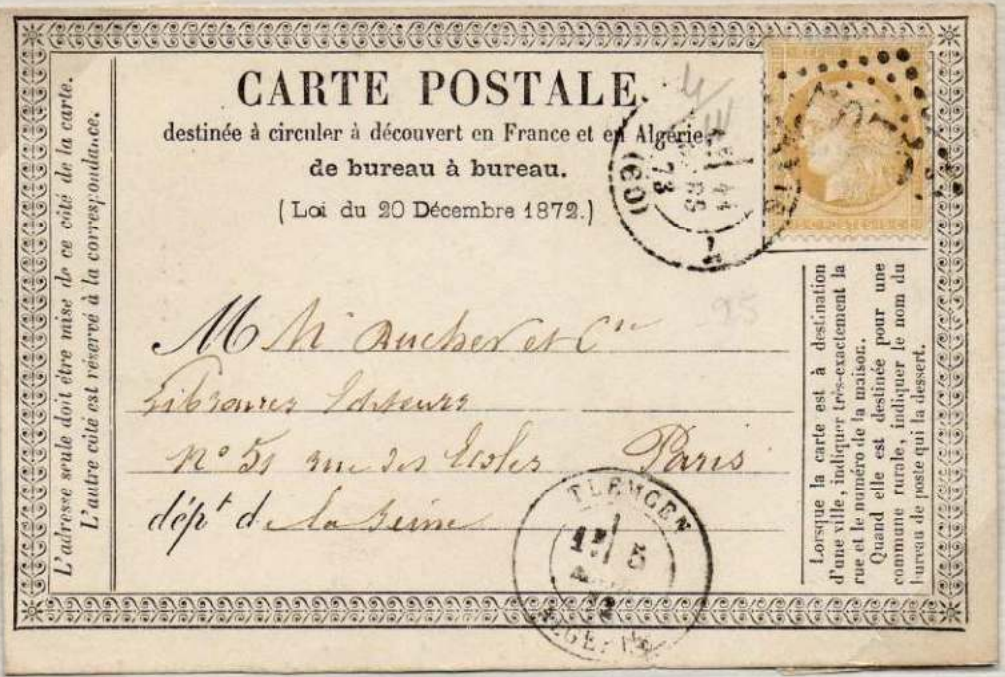
Azib-Zamoun was a village  
founded by displaced  
Alsations, who emigrated  
rather than living under  
German rule after the



Large Numerals

As mentioned earlier, the French authorized postal cards by a decree dated December 20, 1872 effective January 15, 1873. This was the result of a successful experiment with the cards in Paris. Cards were to be printed for the government and sold at post offices with stamps affixed. The inter-provincial rate was set at 15 centimes. The front was reserved for the address and the reverse for the message.

Postal cards



Tlemcen to Paris, France,  
March 5, 1873

Large numeral 5075 assigned to  
Tlemcen.

Early use – less than two months  
after authorization. Card is 1872  
printing, the first for use outside of  
Paris.

St. Denis-du-Sig to Oran,  
April 4, 1873

Large numeral 5070 assigned to  
St. Denis-du-Sig.  
Boxed "B.M." indicates card was  
deposited in one of the movable  
boxes.

First 1873 printing. Fifteen centimes  
rate is printed under the stamp.



Milianah to Alger,  
forwarded to Blidah, April  
12, 1875

Large numeral 5046 assigned to  
Milianah.

Card is later 1873 printing with rate  
information added to the legend





## Large Numerals

## ■ Auxiliary post offices

Auxiliary post offices offered very limited services, generally mail collection and delivery but no *chargement* or similar services. These offices had special cancels, usually a straight line town name. Two auxiliary post offices used negative cancels, Pont-de-l'Isère and Bir Rabalou. Both villages were too small to be included in censuses. Pont-de-l'Isère had a straight line marking, but Bir-Rabalou used only its round cancel. The round cancels were apparently fashioned from wax.



Pont-de-l'Isère to Oran,  
August 23, 1871

Bordeaux stamp is Type III, Report 2, Position 14. Fewer than five reported markings. Letter written in Arabic.

Bir Rabalou to  
Navarrenx, France,  
March 1875

Mail posted in movable  
box at Bir Rabalou,  
perhaps opened at Alger,  
where stamp was  
canceled.



Fewer than five reported markings.



## Large Numerals

As mentioned, not all villages and towns required first or second class mail service. In some cases the stamp was applied at the auxiliary post office and canceled, other times the auxiliary marking was applied to the envelope and postage canceled at the nearest *distribution* or *recette*.

## ■ Auxiliary post offices



Ouled-Rhamoun to  
Castelnau-Magnoac,  
France, June 7, 1870

Mail posted in movable box at  
Ouled-Rhamoun. Box may have  
been opened there or taken to  
Constantine.

Earliest known postmark from Ouled-Rhamoun, less than five known.

Boghari to Alger,  
May 3, 1871

Straight line cancel  
applied to stamp. Large  
numeral and CDS applied  
in transit at Médéah.



Bordeaux stamp is Type III, Report 2, Position 9. Fewer than five reported straight-line cancels from  
Boghari.



**Large Numerals**

These last three were all small outposts in the dry areas of the country, probably with less than 100 Europeans living there.

**Auxiliary post offices**



M'Sila to Bordeaux,  
France, September 25,  
1874

Routed through Bordj-Bou-Arreridj, which itself had only 250 or so French living in it.

Earliest of four known markings from M'Sila.

Saint-Donat to Emilia,  
Italy, September 16, 1875

Forty centimes letter rate to  
Italy effective October 1,  
1861. Faded red PD – paid to  
destination.



No more than three markings known.



El-Hacaïba to Grenoble,  
France, March 22, 1876

Nine days before the large  
numeral cancels were retired.



## Large Numerals

Registered mail service had been combined with *changement* since July 1, 1854. On February 1, 1873 registered mail was re-established at a fixed fee of 50 centimes plus the letter rate. The 1858 special rate allowed to bankruptcy tribunals was also superseded.

## Registered mail



Constantine to Lyon,  
France, returned to  
Constantine, April 8, 1874

Three Type I stamps paid 25  
centimes letter rate plus 50  
centimes *recommandation* fee.

Note registration number 243  
annotated at upper left of  
wrapper.

Bankruptcy notice mailed in a wrapper at normal *recommandation* rate. Large numeral assignments (2145 here) appeared in return-to-sender markings long after the cancels themselves were retired.

Blidah to Alger,  
October 21, 1875

Same rate paid with  
three Type III stamps.

Annotated registration  
number 231 at left.





## Large Numerals

As part of the stamp issues in the 1870s the postal service issued an 80 centimes Cérès stamp with the larger numerals at the bottom of the design. These are often found on declared value mail.

## Declared value mail

Alger to Montpellier,  
France, December 4, 1874

*Cachet descriptif* on face indicates weight was over 11 grams. This style of the marking included the date, registered number (at top), etc.

Letter rate	40c
Declared value fixed fee	50c
Proportional fee	2f60c
Total postage	3f50c



Proportional fee was 20 centimes per 100 francs declared value. Sender declared 1,300 francs.

Relizane to Alger,  
February 25, 1875

Large numeral 5058 assigned to Relizane.

Letter rate	25c
Chargement fee	50c
Proportional fee	4f00c
Total postage	4f75c
Declared value	2,000 francs.





**Large Numerals**

**Foreign destinations**

With the northern part of the country pacified and well colonized with French and other European expatriates, mail to foreign destinations was now almost exclusively personal and commercial mail, with very little foreign mail to or from soldiers.



Alger to  
Mulhouse,  
Germany, July 5,  
1873

Forty centimes letter  
rate effective May 25,  
1872.

Alsace was ceded to Germany at the end of the Franco-Prussian War. Many Alsatians emigrated to Algeria to avoid living under German rule.

Philippeville to  
Drulingen, Germany,  
January 27, 1874

Recommandation service  
required the same fixed fee  
as *chargement*.

Letter rate	40c
Recommandation fee	50c
Total postage	90c



The 1870 Siège issue was still the current 40 centimes stamp.



## Large Numerals

Mail to foreign locations was not always fully paid. Generally, the letter bills required a penalty for due letters. While early Italian (and other) postal rates sometimes varied depending on the route, by 1873 the rates were standard without regard to the means or route traveled.

## Foreign destinations

Alger to Rome, Italy,  
December 28, 1875

Sixty centimes letter rate for underpaid letters effective October 1, 1861.

Centesimi and centimes were equal, so 3-½ décimes became 35 centesimi postage due.



Stamp value noted at left (0 25) and credit allowed by Italian post office. Boxed red "AFFRANCHISEMENT INSUFFISANT" added at Alger. Note m/s routing "faire suisse" at upper right.

La Calle to Ancona,  
Italy, March 14, 1876

Large numeral 5019  
assigned to La Calle.

Universal "T" due marking  
applied by French post  
office.

Short paid 5-½ décimes,  
converted to 55 centesimi.



Stamp value again noted at left, 0.f 05g. Sender may have intended printed matter rate (which was ten centimes at the time).



## Large Numerals

## Foreign destinations



La Chiffa to Habay-La-Nueve, Belgium, January 6, 1876

Large numeral 5147 assigned to La Chiffa.

Thirty centimes prepaid letter rate effective January 1, 1876 as part of the first Union Générale des Postes agreement reached in October 1875.

Just over 100 non-French Europeans in La Chiffa.



Oran to Pontarlier, France, forwarded to Couvet, Switzerland, August 19, 1874

Large numeral 5051 assigned to Oran.

Complementary five centimes stamp added at Pontarlier, canceled with large numeral 2964 and boxed PD.

Thirty centimes prepaid letter rate effective October 1, 1865.

Broken frame line at right (some damage at top and bottom, too) is constant plate variety on 25 centimes stamp.



## Large Numerals

Despite the Swiss rate set at 30 centimes by an agreement dated 1865, short paid letters still went through the postal system. Usually the letters were rated in Marseille or Paris as they were routed to their Swiss destination.

## Foreign destinations

Bône to Couvet,  
Switzerland,  
September 5, 1872

Large numeral 5015 assigned to Bône. This numeral cancel was one of very few repaired handstamps.

Short paid letter rate was 50 centimes with credit given for partial prepayment. Up rated to 30 Swiss centimes in blue crayon.



Bankruptcy notice from Bône tribunal, official marking at lower right on face of letter.

Biskra to Geneva,  
Switzerland, February  
25, 1875

Large numeral 5012 assigned to Biskra.

Same rate as above envelope.



Biskra was an ancient Roman village, a desert oasis marking the furthest south the French penetrated in the eastern part of Algeria. About 300 French and other Europeans lived there in 1875.



## Large Numerals

## Foreign destinations

There was very little correspondence between Algeria and the US. European families may have emigrated to different continents after the Franco-Prussian War, but there was very little commercial activity between the United States and Algeria.



Constantine to Towanda, Pennsylvania, May 7, 1873

Large numeral 5023 assigned to Constantine.

Routed through Marseille to Paris.

Prepaid 50 centimes rate to port of departure, overpaid by four 15 centimes stamps.

Boxed "P.P." indicated postage paid as far as it could be prepaid. Rate effective July 1, 1871.

"N.Y. Steamship / May 29 / 10" applied at New York to all incoming letters from France. Ten cents collected from recipient for U.S. transit.

There was no postal agreement between the U.S. and France from January 1, 1870 to August 1, 1874.

It was not possible to prepay full postage on letters sent directly between the two countries. The original 60 centimes partial prepayment was reduced to 50 centimes on July 1, 1871.



## Interlude

France still allowed franking privileges for some mail. The governor-general and, occasionally, soldiers serving in active military zones received franking privileges.

## Free franks

Alger local use,  
1872

Franchise  
handstamp used by  
Admiral de  
Gueydon, military  
officer serving as  
Governor General of  
Algeria in 1872.

*Le Gouverneur Général et civil  
de l'Algérie*  
Monsieur Maillard  
Directeur du Crédit foncier  
Rue de la Lyre 41  
Alger

Tébessa to Caen,  
France, December  
19, 1871

The undulated circle  
indicates this was a  
telegraph cancel. Only a  
handful of these are  
known from two Algerian  
towns.

M/s "Loi du 20 Mai 71"  
refers to the decree  
granting franking  
privilege.

