## Printed matter rate

The classical era in France includes lots of numeral cancels on stamps, since every Algerian (and French) post office of the period had its own number assigned. The rules were that stamps received the numeral cancel and the cancel with the town name was applied next to the stamp.

All rules have exceptions, of course. In the case of the numeral cancels the exception applied to low values. In this case the town cancel was applied to the stamps rather than the numeral and not separately applied to the piece of mail.

This piece reflects the printed matter rate effective January 1,1866 to all overseas countries by commercial vessels departing from French ports. ${ }^{1}$ Hermann Hirschfeld of Alger has sent a duplicated circular (hand written) to a customer in Genoa, Italy. The paper is tissue quality and reflects the creases that occur when such lightweight paper runs through a machine. M. Hirschfeld offers a variety of agricultural products such as corn, beans, barley, oats and wool at various prices. His prices depended on quality and on place of origin, presumably to take into account shipping costs.

The piece has been carefully preserved by the recipient, with only slight damage where the band was glued to the circular. The band itself is intact and shows a Genoan receipt mark (partly illegible, but a date prior to December 20). Paying the eight centime rate with two four centime stamps was probably the easiest way to get the job done. The post office marked it with the red "PD" to indicate the postage was fully paid to destination.

As trite as it sounds, it's difficult to find four centime stamps used in Algeria. This rather boring piece is a good addition.


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[^0]:    ${ }^{1}$ Alexandre, J.-P., C. Barbey, J.-F. Brun, G. Desarnaud and Dr. R. Joany, Les Tarifs Postaux Français 1627-1969, Éditions Loisirs et Culture (1982).

