

The United States 1869 Issue on Packet Mail to France, 1869-1871

The United States postage stamps of 1869 were issued on March 19, 1869 (except for the 15¢ Type II, which was issued in April), and were superseded in March-April 1870 by the first Banknote Issue. Their short period of use makes them relatively hard to find on cover, particularly the 24¢, 30¢ and 90¢ values. The 90¢ value is not known on cover to France, so this exhibit displays all of the other ten values of the 1869 Issue on letters to France.

Postal relations between France and the United States were in great flux during 1869-1871. The 1857 U.S.-France postal treaty expired on December 31, 1869, and this initiated a non-treaty period with a variety of route and rate combinations. All of the ten possible combinations are shown in this exhibit:

Packet via England

15¢ rate, 3/69-12/69 (fully prepaid)
 4¢ rate, 1/70-10/71 (5 décimes due)
 12¢ rate, 1/70-6/70 (fully prepaid)
 10¢ rate, 7/70-7/74 (fully prepaid)

American direct packet

15¢ rate, 4/69-12/69 (fully prepaid)
 10¢ rate, 1/70-10/70 (8 décimes due)
 10¢ rate, 7/71-7/74 (5 décimes due)

French direct packet

15¢ rate, 3/69-12/69 (fully prepaid)
 10¢ rate, 1/70-6/71 (8 décimes due)
 10¢ rate, 7/71-7/74 (5 décimes due)

The exhibit is organized chronologically and, within each time period, by type of packet service, as indicated by different-colored icons at the top right. Rare frankings and markings are featured, including high values, large multiples and mixed frankings. Notable items are highlighted in bold type.

A quadruple rate cover with a pair of the 30¢ value is shown below.



Prepaid 60¢ quadruple rate on Dec. 4, 1869 at New York - only nine 30¢ pairs are known on cover
 Carried by the Inman steamer *City of Brussels* from New York on December 4
 Quadruple-weight 24¢ credit to France for packet service via England

American Direct Packet

April 13 to December 31, 1869



The April 1857 France-U.S. Convention introduced a fully-paid rate of 15¢ per ¼ oz., and an accounting system to distribute the postage to whichever country was transporting the mails.

On American direct packets, the U.S. credited 3¢ per ¼ oz. to France for its inland postage. On packets via England, the U.S. credited 6¢ (3¢ British transit plus 3¢ inland). On French direct packets, the U.S. credited 12¢ (9¢ packet postage plus 3¢ inland).



Prepaid double-weight 30¢ rate with 3¢ and 24¢ stamps on December 9, 1869 in New Orleans
Double 3¢ credit in December 14 New York transit postmark - dated for the departure of the steamship
HAPAG steamer *Allemania* stopped in Plymouth on December 24 - mail offloaded for Cherbourg
Blue December 25 “États-Unis 2 Cherbourg” French entry mark applied in Paris

Fewer than ten 1869 Issue 24¢ covers to France are known

American Direct Packet

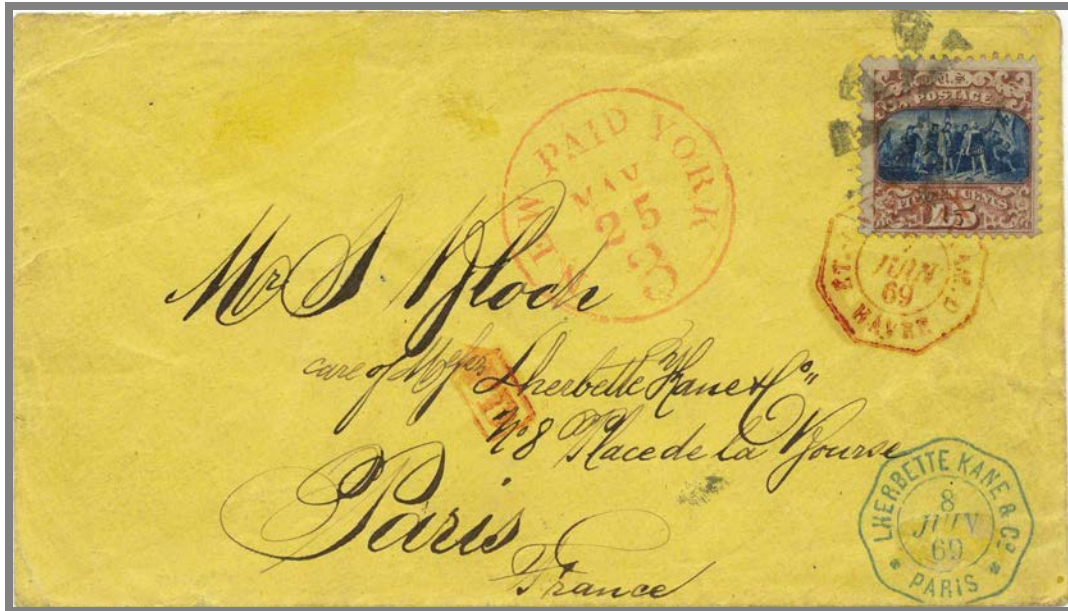
April 13 to December 31, 1869



Prepaid 13 times 15¢ in Fort Cummings, NM on September 23, 1869 - 14X 42¢ credit - HAPAG Hammonia II

American Direct Packet

April 13 to December 31, 1869



Prepaid 15¢ on May 25, 1869 in New York - **2 days after earliest known usage of 15¢ type II on cover**
HAPAG steamer *Hammonia II* - re-use of 1865-67 red "Et.-Unis Serv. Am. D. Havre" entry mark



Prepaid triple-weight 45¢ rate with 1869 15¢ type I and 30¢ stamps on June 9, 1869 in New Orleans
HAPAG steamer *Germania* - blue "États-Unis 2 Cherbourg" entry marking introduced on June 1

Only two covers are known with this franking combination

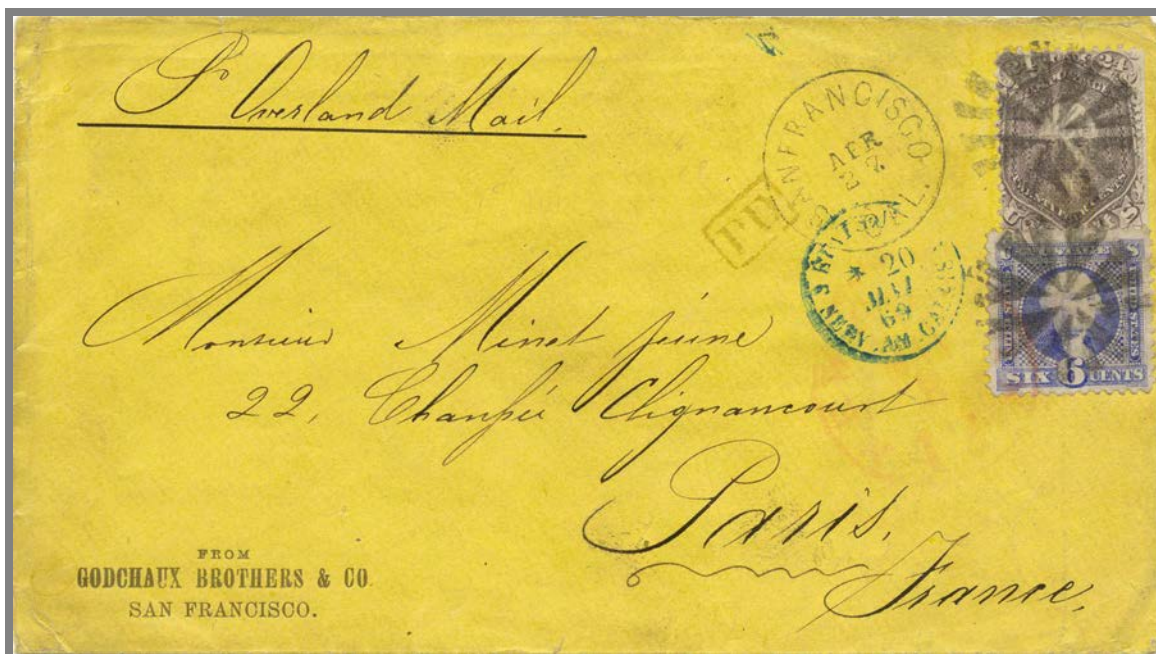
HAPAG Line resumed direct packet service from New York to Cherbourg on April 13, 1869

Packet via England

March 19 to December 31, 1869



Prepaid 15¢ by 2¢, 3¢ and 10¢ 1869 Issue stamps on November 6, 1869 in New Orleans
Pre-1868 12¢ credit for British packet - Cunard steamer *Cuba* left New York November 10



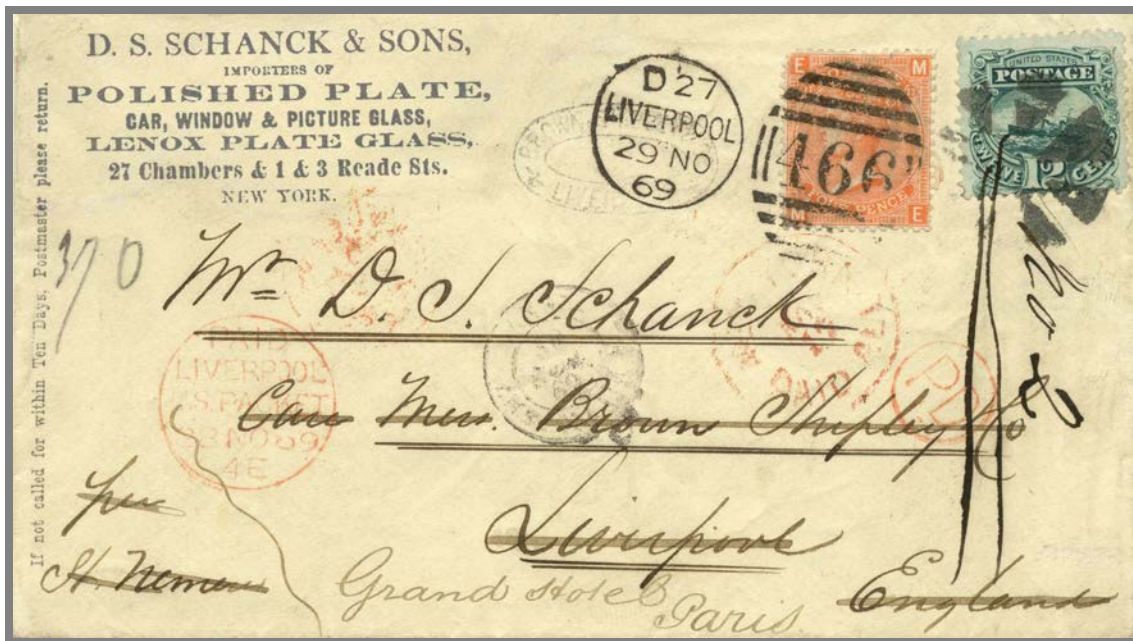
Prepaid double 15¢ rate on April 27, 1869 in San Francisco - NGL steamer *Bremen* left New York May 8
Double 6¢ credit to France - 6¢ stamp used one day later than earliest known use - 1868 24¢ 'F' grill stamp

Packet via England

March 19 to December 31, 1869



Prepaid with 15¢ type I stamp on July 17, 1869 in New York - Inman steamer *City of Boston*
6¢ credit to France - forwarded July 29 from Paris to Heidelberg with French 30 centimes stamp



Prepaid 12¢ rate to England on November 17, 1869 in New York - Cunard steamer *Nemesis*
Forwarded November 29 by Brown Shipley from Liverpool to Paris with British 1865 4d stamp

French Direct Packet

March 19 to December 31, 1869



Prepaid quadruple-rate 60¢ on November 12, 1869 in Providence, RI - Ligne H steamer *Ville de Paris*

Quadruple 48¢ credit to France - **largest known multiple of 1869 15¢ type II on cover**



Prepaid double-weight 30¢ on October 15, 1869 in Washington, D.C. - 1869 3¢, 12¢ and 15¢ Type I stamps

Ligne H steamer *Lafayette* left New York on October 16 and arrived in Brest on October 26

October 16 “États-Unis Paq. Fr. H No. 2” postmark applied in New York - double-weight 24¢ credit to France

Packet via England

January 1, 1870 to October 27, 1871



The 1857 France-U.S. Convention expired on December 31, 1869, leading to a four and a half year hiatus in postal relations between the two countries. Mail could either be sent direct or via England.

Mail via England was governed by the 1869 U.S.-G.B. open mail treaty and by the 1856 France-G.B. treaty. On direct packet mail, the U.S. and France each had to collect their share of the postage.



Underpaid double-weight letter posted April 13, 1870 in New York - franked by 1869 1¢ and 3¢ stamps

Per the 1869 U.S.-G.B. treaty, the 4¢ postage was ignored and the letter was rated as fully unpaid

Blue double-weight 8¢ US debit to G.B. - Guion steamship *Idaho* arrived April 24 in Queenstown

2 francs per 30 grams bulk unpaid mail debit to France (1 Fr 20c transit & sea per 1856 treaty plus 80c to U.S.)

16 décimes collected in France for 15 gram letter - 1 franc to G.B. plus double-weight 60c inland postage

Packet via England

January 1, 1870 to October 27, 1871



The December 1869 U.S.-G.B. Treaty set 2¢ packet and 2¢ inland rates per ½ oz. G.B. charged France 40 centimes per 30 grams (10c per letter), and France collected 40c inland postage plus 10c for GB. This was replaced in October 1871 by the 10¢ fully-paid rate.



Prepaid 4¢ British open mail rate on January 4, 1870 in Boston - Guion steamship *Manhattan*
GB charged France 40 centimes bulk rate per “GB 40c” marking - double-weight 10 décimes due



Prepaid 10¢ direct rate January 12, 1870 in New York - Guion steamer *Minnesota* via England
Rated “PAID-ONLY TO ENGLAND” in London on January 24 - double-weight 10 décimes due

Packet via England

January 1 to June 30, 1870



The November 1868 U.S.-G.B. Treaty included a fully-paid 12¢ per ½ oz. rate to France. The U.S. credited G.B. 8¢ per 7.5 grams for the G.B.-to-France postage. Different weight progressions complicate the analysis of multiple-weight mail.

This 12¢ “phantom” rate was never announced by U.S. post office and was superseded by a reduced 10¢ “phantom” rate (with 6¢ credit marks) on July 1, 1870.



Prepaid obsolete 1857 15¢ rate on April 23, 1870 in New York - accepted for 12¢ fully prepaid rate

North German Lloyd steamship *Union* left on April 23 and arrived in Southampton on May 4

U.S. retained 4¢ (2¢ inland plus 2¢ packet) and credited G.B. 8¢ (2¢ G.B. transit plus 6¢ French inland)

Marked “PD” (paid to destination) in London on May 4 - no postage due in France

French Direct Packet

January 1, 1870 to June 30, 1871



The December 31, 1869 expiration of the 1857 Treaty meant that the U.S. and France each had to collect their share of the postage on mail carried directly between them.

The U.S. used the July 1864 Act, which included a 10¢ per ½ oz. rate for non-contract steamship service. The December 22, 1869 French Imperial Decree set collections on direct packet mail at 80 centimes per 10 grams, effective January 1, 1870.



Prepaid 10¢ direct rate on January 8, 1870 in New York by 1869 1¢ and 3¢ stamps
Ligne H's *St Laurent* left January 8 - first direct packet mail after expiration of the 1857 Treaty
January 8 "Etats-Unis Paq. Fr. No. 4" embarkation postmark - normally applied in red ink
Embarkation postmark was applied by postal agent on board the steamer in New York harbor
Arrived at Brest on January 18 - 8 décimes due in France

French Direct Packet

January 1, 1870 to June 30, 1871



The ability to prepay the French postage on eastbound direct packet mail was included in the December 22, 1869 Imperial Decree. By prepaying 60 centimes per 10 grams in French stamps, a U.S. sender could spare the recipient from the 80 centimes collections assessed on regular letters.



Franked 10¢ direct postage plus 60 centimes French postage on August 5, 1870 in Jersey City, NJ

Ligne H steamer *Ville de Paris* left New York on August 6 and arrived in Brest on August 16

Mixed franking fully prepaid the letter - “anchor” cancels were applied by steamship mail agent

Fewer than ten eastbound letters are known with the French postage prepaid

American Direct Packet

January 1 to October 5, 1870



Prepaid 10¢ direct rate on May 16, 1870 in Buffalo, West Virginia - HAPAG steamer *Allemania*
June 5 “Etats-Unis Cherbourg” entry mark - 8 décimes direct route postage due in France



Prepaid double 20¢ direct rate with 2¢ and 6¢ 1869 stamps on February 21, 1870 in New Orleans
Ocean Queen of **Ruger’s Line to Le Havre - first of only three contract sailings by the line**
Rare March 19 French entry mark “Et. Unis Serv. Fr. Havre” - triple-weight 24 décimes due

Franco-German War interrupted American direct service from October 1870 to June 1871

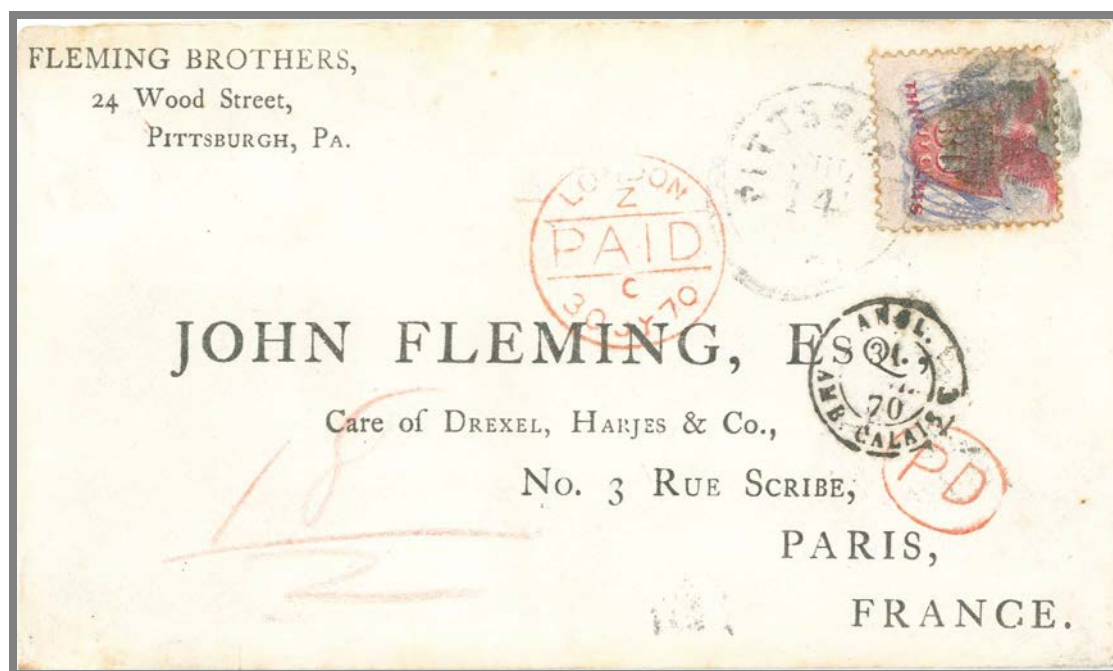
Packet via England July 1, 1870 to July 31, 1874



G.B.-France postage was reduced on July 1, 1870, so the 12¢ “phantom” rate was reduced to 10¢ per ½ oz. with 6¢ credits to G.B. This 10¢ “phantom” rate was published on October 28, 1871 and became the principal rate for mail to France.



Prepaid 10¢ “phantom” rate on November 5, 1870 in Maysville, KY - Inman liner *City of Paris* 6¢ credit to G.B. - **addressed to besieged Paris** - delivered after the siege on February 23, 1871



Prepaid by 1869 30¢ stamp on July 14, 1870 in Pittsburgh - HAPAG steamer *Silesia* left on July 19 Double-weight U.S. 8¢ postage plus triple-weight 18¢ credit (20-30 grams) to G.B. - **26¢ “phantom” rate** *Silesia* landed her mails at Scotland on July 29 - last sailing before Franco-German War interruption

American Direct Packet

July 1, 1871 to July 31, 1874



An April 21, 1871 French Law reduced the postage due on the direct routes to 5 décimes per 10 grams, effective July 1. This was done to increase the competitiveness of the French Line. U.S. prepayments stayed at 10¢ per the July 1864 Act.



Prepaid 10¢ on July 20, 1871 in Eureka, CA - HAPAG steamer *Westphalia* left NY on August 1

August 13 “Etats-Unis Cherbourg” entry marking - 6 décimes due instead of correct 5 décimes

From July to mid-August 1871, Cherbourg erroneously rated mail for 6 décimes due

Direct service to Cherbourg suspended until July 1871 due to Franco-German War

French Direct Packet

July 1, 1871 to July 31, 1874



Prepaid 10¢ direct rate on July 14, 1871 in Winnegance, ME - July 15 Ligne H embarkation postmark
Ligne H's *Lafayette* from New York to Brest on July 26 - 5 décimes due per April 1871 French Law



Prepaid expired 1857 treaty rate by 15¢ type II stamp on November 27, 1871 in New Orleans - 5 décimes due
Ligne H steamer *Ville de Paris* left New York on December 2 and arrived in Brest on December 12