

1854

FRENCH MARITIME POSTAL HISTORY

FRANCE TO MEXICO, 1835-1862

During the period 1835-1862, France had no contract packets servicing her Mexican and Carribean needs. This was handled by the Royal Mail Steam Packet Co., which sailed out of Southampton on the 2nd and 17th of each month.



August 1, 1854. Rare Paris roller cancellation (Pothion 139) "Roulette de points" was used on letters destined for foreign parts.

French marked mail in red as "paid to destination" by 300 centimes in postage stamps.

Aug. 1, 1854. Ambulant mark transit at Calais.

This mark normally used as an entry mark.



August 2, 1854. British paid "tombstone" mark at London. Letter just made the packet at Southampton, which sailed on the 2nd.



August 28, 1854. Receipt mark at Vera-Cruz, Mexico.

1845

WEST INDIA MAIL PACKET SERVICE

Anglo-French Currency Stamps

COLONIES &c. ART. 12 Marks

Cuba to France

FORWARDING AGENT

WRIGHT, BROOKS & CO.

St. Jago de Cuba

The accountancy mark "COLONIES &c. ART 12" indicated to the British Foreign Branch at London that the letter should be listed in the French way-bill in the column headed "Article 12". This concerned mail handled by the British from French Colonies, British possessions, and "other overseas countries" to France. The French reimbursed the British at a bulk rate of 3 shillings 4 pence per 30 grams.



April 17, 1845.
Forwarding Agent, Wright Brooks & Co. at St. Jago de Cuba posted letter unpaid into British Consular post office where it received the dated stamp (R.L. P2) of the Consular office.



COLONIES &c. ART. 12

May 24, 1848.
Transit at London where accountancy mark (S.3003) was struck (see above).



May 26-28. Entry mark of Boulogne struck at Paris. Paris and Bordeaux back-stamps.

1854

PACKET LETTERS

WEST INDIA MAIL - PACKET SERVICE

Anglo-French Postal Convention of 1843

This convention arranged a workable situation to handle the accounting of French mail carried by the British. Mail addressed to France landed from ships at British ports travelled immediately to the Foreign Branch of the G.P.O. in London. With each bag was a way-bill listing the classified contents. The "ART 13" on the way-bill referred to French mail, and under the heading of "ARTICLE 13" were listed letters from "COLONIES, BRITISH POSSESSIONS, AND OTHER OVERSEAS COUNTRIES" for France, and the letters were so stamped.



Aug. 9, 1854.
Letter posted
LaGuayra, Ven-
ezuela to Bor-
deaux, handled
by British West
India mail pack-
et. Rate due
British was
3s. 4d.

COLONIES
& ART 13

London Foreign
Office mark.
(See above).

15

French mark
shows 15 decimes
due from recip-
ient.

British
and
French
transit
marks.



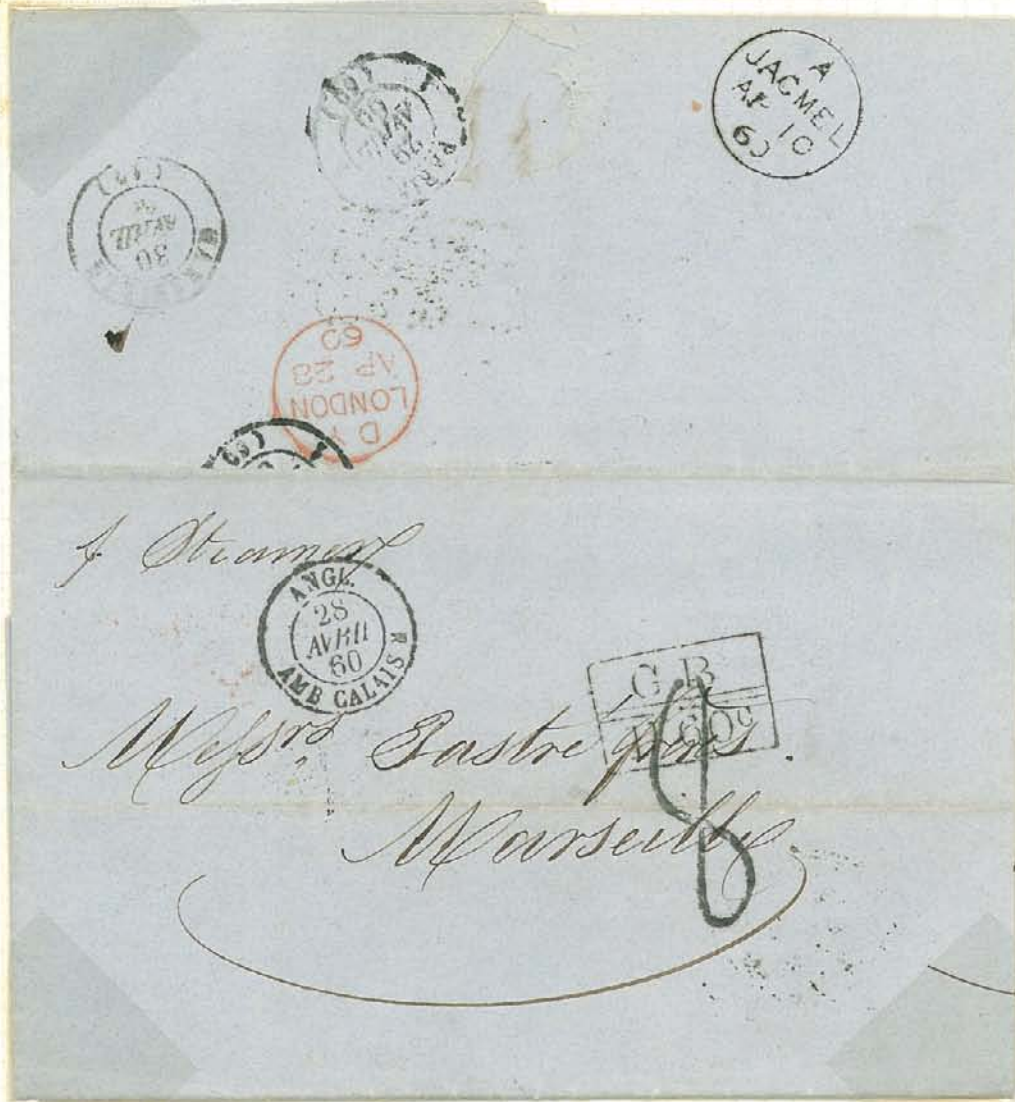
French mark
at Calais.

1860

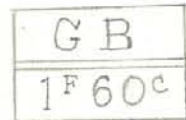
WEST INDIA MAIL-PACKET SERVICE
BRITISH POST OFFICES ABROAD - JACMEL HAITI

Franco-British Exchange Office Marks

On January 1, 1857 there was introduced a series of exchange marks indicating in francs and centimes the reimbursement to Britain by France for each 30 grams of mail carried.



April 10, 1860.
British Post Office
receipt mark at
Jacmel, Haiti.



Exchange office
mark showing
1 franc, 60 cent-
imes credit to
British.



April 28, 1860.
London transit.

8



April 28. French entry mark, ambulant. April 29. Paris transit. April 30. Marseille receipt.

8 decimes due
from recipient.

1861

WEST INDIA MAIL-PACKET SERVICE
WESTERN COAST OF SOUTH AMERICA

The General Imperial Decree of 3 Dec. 1856 between England and France allowed for a credit to England for French mail carried on her packets as follows:

Letters: Article 36 - South American countries via Panama 2.87 5/10 francs per 30 grams.

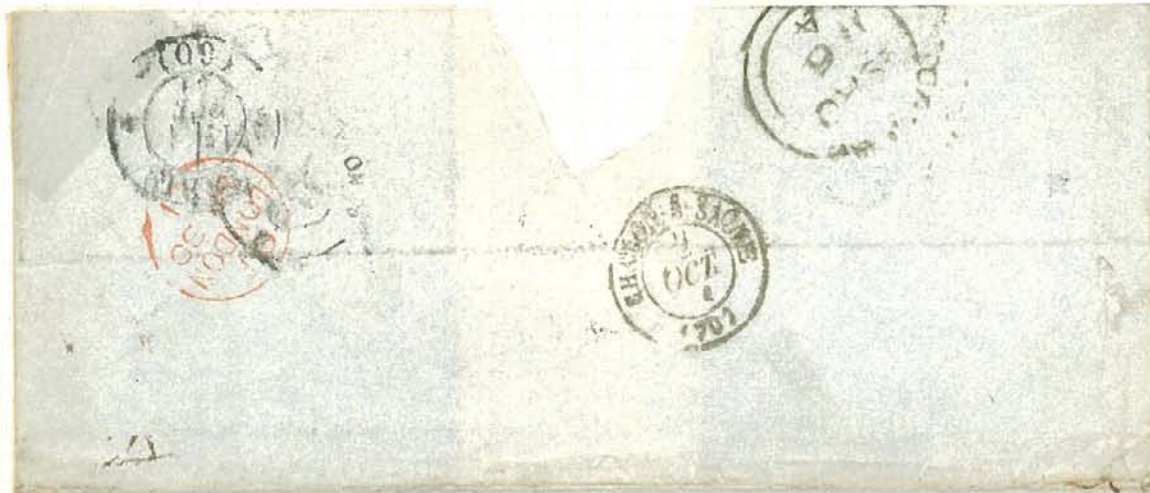


Aug. 29, 1861.
Letter posted at British Post Office, Callao, Peru for France (via Panama) "per W. India Mail".



Sept. 30, 1861
London transit mark.

French-Anglo accountancy mark (see above).



Sept. 30.
Calais RR transit.



Oct. 1.
Paris transit.



Oct. 2.
Chalons receipt handstamp.

W India Mail
Messieurs
M. P. P. P. P.
Chalons-sur-Saône
France

97

24 decimes due from recipient. (Reduced illust.)

1856

WEST INDIA MAIL PACKET SERVICE

Anglo-French Currency Stamps

Stage 3 - 1 January 1856 to 31 December 1856

Havana to Paris

These rates were in operation for one year, and few examples of the currency stamps have been recorded from any part of the world. The new stamps left out the word "Etc." and now read "COLONIES/ART.18".

HAVANA

RMSP Dec

Havana Feb 9-
St. T

RMS Parana

St. T Feb 17
So. ton Mar. 3

(Parana due to go
put into Madeira
fuel Jan. 28
Outbound to S)



way-bill under "Article 18", indicating letter from all the colonies to France. Rare COLONIES/ART 18 mark used.



March 6, 1856. French entry mark at Calais, Ambulant. 6 francs due from recipient.

1854-55

SOUTH AMERICAN & GENERAL STEAM NAVIGATION COMPANY

Branch Packet La Plata, Montevideo to Rio de Janeiro
S.S. Imperador, Rio de Janeiro to Liverpool

Because of a Memorial presented by the merchants of Liverpool to have an alternate monthly packet to the Brazils and the River Plate to augment the monthly sailings of the Royal Mail Steam Packet Co., the South American & General Steam Navigation Co. was organized. This gave fortnightly sailings from Liverpool and Buenos Ayres. Four steamers were utilized on this route, and only four round voyages were completed in 1854 and 1855. The Company collapsed after only five months of operation due principally to the lack of steamers, their steamers having been chartered as troop transports for the Crimean War.



November 15, 1854.
Unpaid letter posted at Montevideo, Uruguay, endorsed: Liverpool Steamer Pkt. The branch packet La Plata had departed from Buenos Ayres on Nov. 12, touched at Montevideo the 15th where this letter went on board.

December 1. Mails transferred to S.S. Imperador who touched at Bahia and Pernambuco on the 3rd of 4 return voyages of the Company.



January 4, 1855. Imperador arrived at Liverpool where the seldom seen SOUTH AMERICAN/PACKET arrival mark was struck. Only 3 of these date marks from this voyage have been recorded. Letter rated at 1/-; the Packet Letter rate.

January 5. Glasgow arrival backstamp.



To Mrs
 Philadelphia
 5 NOV 1854
 NEW YORK
 RECEIVED
 L. SERRA & TISSOT FILIIS
 PERANARI CO
 My dear Mrs
 I have just received
 your kind letter of the
 27th and am glad to hear
 that you are all well
 I am well at present
 and hope these few lines
 will find you all the same
 I am
 Yours affectionately
 J. M. Smith

1858

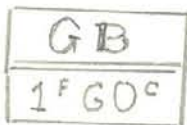
ROYAL MAIL STEAM PACKET COMPANY
R.M.S.P. Avon, Rio de Janeiro to Southampton

October 15, 1858. Letter posted at the British Consular Office at Pernambuco, Brazil. It is unpaid and endorsed: pr. Avon.

October 16. R.M.S.P. Avon, the main line steamer, departed from Rio de Janeiro on October 10, picked up the mails at Pernambuco on October 16.

November 4. Avon arrived at Southampton, same day transit backstamp at London. The London office struck the "tray" mark showing that France owed Britain one franc 60 centimes per 30 grams bulk for mail to France conveyed by British Packet from South America.

November 5. French entry mark at Calais. Ambulant (T.P.O.). Letter rated in France at the 8 decimes per $7\frac{1}{2}$ grams rate x 2 (letter weighing over $7\frac{1}{2}$ grams, not over 15 grams) = 16 decimes due, shown by the handstamp.



16

1863

ROYAL MAIL STEAM PACKET COMPANY

SS. Magdalena

2350 tons. 266' x 38' beam. Wooden paddle steamer, 1852-66.

The Magdalena was among an unfortunate group of five ships ordered to meet the 1850 mail contract. The Demerara stranded after launching in tow for the Clyde, Amazon burned on her maiden voyage, Orinoco prematurely scrapped on account of dry rot and Parana's forepart was found defective for the same reason. Magdalena's sides and bulkheads had been lined with zinc to reduce fire hazard, and she tended to be top-heavy. She carried troops to the Crimean war.

RIO DE JANEIRO
OC 8
1863

Oct. 8, 1863.
British consular
postmark, back-
stamp.

LONDON. EC
NO 4
63

GB
1F60c

Nov. 4. Letter
cleared London
and was marked
with the "tray
mark" account-
ancy showing
Great Britain
was to receive
1 f 60 centimes
per 30 grams
from France for
handling the mails
from South America.



ANGL
5
NOV
63
AMB. CALAIS B

BORDEAUX
6
NOV
63
(32)

PARIS
5
NOV
63
(60)

Nov. 5-6. French entry
mark (S.1182) at Calais
showing mail entering from
England (Angleterre) and
Paris and Bordeaux transit
backstamps.

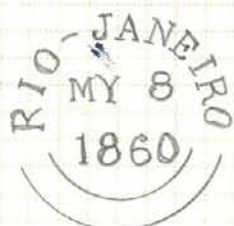
1860

ROYAL MAIL STEAM PACKET COMPANY

SS. Oneida

2300 tons, 307' x 39' beam. Iron. In service 1858-74.

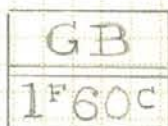
Oneida and Tasmanian, earliest Royal Mail screw ships, came from the European & Australian Royal Mail Company. The Royal Mail placed her on the South American route and in October 1865, she was diverted to the Rocas Reefs to embark 117 marooned persons from the wrecked sailing ship Duncan Dunbar. Sold British and reduced to sail.



May 8, 1860.
British Consular
date backstamp
at Rio de Janeiro.



June 2. All mail
to France by
British steamers
went directly to
the Foreign Section
at London.



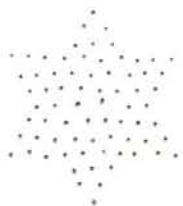
"Tray Mark" at London shows that under the Franco-British treaty France owed Great Britain 1 Franc 60 centimes per 30 grams of mail, bulk.



June 2-4, 1860. Entry mark at Calais, France, ambulant (RR), and Paris and Bordeaux transit backstamps.

1864

FRANCE TO BELIZE, HONDURAS BY BRITISH PACKET
 Royal Mail Steam Packet Co.: R.M.S. Shannon, Southampton to St. Thomas
R.M.S. Solent, St. Thomas to Kingston, Jamaica
R.M.S. Derwent, Jamaica to Belize



January 15, 1864. A double weight letter (7½-15 grams) posted at Paris and endorsed: Paquebot des Antilles, Voie de Southampton. The rate to Belize of January 1, 1857, by British Packet via Southampton was 80 centimes per 7½ grams. Here a letter over 7½, but not over 15 grams was paid 160 centimes by two copies of the 40 centimes orange on yellowish and the 80 cent. rose, both perf. 14 x 13½, Issue of 1862. Stamps are cancelled by the "dumb" Paris star.

January 16. Transit at London. Steamships of the Royal Mail Steam Packet Co. conveyed this letter as follows:

<u>R.M.S.P. Shannon</u>		<u>R.M.S.P. Solent</u>		<u>R.M.S.P. Derwent</u>	
Southampton	Jan. 18	St. Thomas	Feb. 2	Jamaica	Feb. 7
St. Thomas	Feb. 2	Kingston, Jam.	5	Belize	12.

1865

FRENCH MARITIME POSTAL HISTORY
BRITISH PACKET SERVICE - ROYAL MAIL STEAM PACKET CO.

French Entry Mark - Colonies Fra. V. Angl.



S. 1291

This double circle mark with fleuron was used during two distinct periods:

- 1st. Sept. 1853 to Dec. 1855
- 2nd. Jan. 1864 to Nov. 1867.

Unpaid covers via British Packets show a collect mark of 8 decimes (80 centimes) or 16 decimes (1F 60 c.).



April 10, 1865. Letter, single, posted unpaid at Pointe-a-Pitre. Fine rimless cds.



April 29, 1865.
COLONIES FRA(NCAISE)
V.(OIE) ANGL.(ETERRE)
mark (see illustration above)
struck on arrival at Paris.

Handstamp charge mark shows 8 decimes due.



April 29-30. Transit backstamps. Paris to Nantes night train, Brigade A handled the mail.

1863

ROYAL MAIL STEAM PACKET COMPANY

France to Arequipa, Peru via Southampton and Panama

R.M.S.P. Tasmanian



PP



August 15, 1863. Paid letter endorsed: Voie de Panama. It was paid as a double letter by a pair and a single copy of the 80 centimes Issue of 1862, perf. 14 x 13½, type I. These are cancelled by the lozenge "G" of the Bureaux de Quartiers.

The rate per 7½ grams via England and Panama was 120 centimes as of Jan. 1, 1857, whether prepaid or collect. Here 120 cent. x 2 = 240 cent. for a letter over 7½ grams, but not over 15 grams. 80 cent. adhesives x 3 = 240 centimes.

August 17. London Times. POSTAL SERVICE - SOUTHAMPTON, Aug. 16, 1863. The steamship Tasmanian, Capt. F.W. Sawyer, will sail hence on Monday (Aug.17) with the West India and Pacific mails.

Paid transit at London.

September 7. Mail had been forwarded on from St. Thomas by the station steamer to Aspinwall (Colon.) Letter went by the Panama Railroad Co. from Colon to Panama and received the transit stamp at Panama. The Pacific Steam Navigation Company carried the mail down the West Coast of South America.

September 24. Docket notes receipt at Arequipa. Letter stamped at the port city of Islay with the straight line handstamp in black. This is also found in red.

YSLAI

1865

ROYAL MAIL STEAM PACKET COMPANY

France to Arequipa, Peru via Southampton and Panama

R. M. S. P. Shannon



August 15, 1865. Paid letter endorsed, "Steamer Anglais Via Panama." It was paid by the 80 centimes and 40 cent. Issue of 1862, stamps cancelled by the Paris Star "15" of the Rue Bonaparte.

The rates per 7½ grams via England and Panama were 120 centimes as of Jan. 1, 1857, whether prepaid or collect. On Jan. 8, 1865, this same rate was continued whether the letter went by British or French packet.



August 16. Transit at London where the West Indies and Pacific mails were forwarded on to Southampton.

August 17. The Royal Mail Company's steamship Shannon, Capt. Wooley, sailed with the West Indies and Pacific mails via St. Thomas.



September 8. Mail had been forwarded on by station steamer to Aspinwall (Colon). Letter went by the Panama Railway Company from Colon to Panama and received the transit stamp at Panama. Pacific Steam Navigation Co. carried the mail down the West Coast of South America.



September 24. Docket notes receipt at Arequipa. Letter had been backstamped in transit at the port city of Islay where this clear strike of the little "YSLAI" in a circle of dots was impressed.

1864

ROYAL MAIL STEAM PACKET COMPANY

R.M.S.P. Seine

Taxe Rectifiée Mark

Guayaquil, Equador to France via Southampton



May 15, 1864. Unpaid letter posted at the British Consular office at Guayaquil, Equador, backstamp. Letter went by Pacific Mail Steam Navigation Co. steamer to Panama, where it arrived May 20, trans-isthmus to Colon for transit May 21, thence to St. Thomas for a May 29 transit.

London Times, Monday, June 13. THE WEST INDIA AND PACIFIC MAILS. The Royal Mail Company's steamship Seine, Capt. R. Revett, arrived at Southampton yesterday at 11 a.m. with the mails of the following dates in charge of Osmond Brook, R.N., Naval mail agent: ...Guayaquil (Equador) May 13; Panama 20; Colon 21;...St. Thomas 29...



London transit backstamp, June 13. London marked with the tray mark debiting France for 2 francs 87 5/10 centimes per 30 grams.

June 13. French entry mark Ambulant (RR) via Calais. Same day arrival backstamp at Paris.

Letter rated at 12 decimes per 7½ grams, rate of Jan. 1, 1857 per British Packet via Panama. It was reweighed and found to be over 7½ grams so the double rate of 24 decimes due was shown in manuscript after deleting the "24". The correction was shown by the seldom seen hand-stamp TAXE RECIFIÉE = DUE CHARGES CORRECTED (Pothion 1356).



TAXE RECTIFIÉE
R 11



19

1863

LA COMPAGNIE GENERAL TRANSATLANTIQUE
Vera Cruz to St. Nazaire Ligne Postale du Mexique
Paquebot Floride

This was the earliest French paquebot line to Mexico, the first steamer Louisiane departing from St. Nazaire on April 14, 1862. Routing was via Fort de France and Cuba to Vera Cruz.



July 28, 1863. An unpaid letter to Paris posted at St. Pierre, Martinique. It is endorsed: pr Floride. This refers to the paquebot Floride of the Ligne Postale du Mexique which was on her return voyage from Mexico. Her dates were:

Vera Cruz	July 16, 1863
Cuba	23
Fort de France, Martinique	28
St. Nazaire	Aug. 12

This letter went aboard at Fort de France.

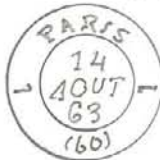
August 14. Arrival mark at Paris showing French Packet mail arriving at St. Nazaire (August 12). There are three nearly identical marks for this line, the only difference being the small numerals which identify the office handling the mail.

1. St. Nazaire
2. Nantes
3. Paris (as here).

Letter was rated by French Packets, effective July 1, 1862, at 6 decimes per 7½ grams, here a triple letter at 6 dec. x 3 = 18 decimes due.



9.1352



1865

FRENCH MARITIME POSTAL HISTORY
BRITISH PACKET SERVICE - ROYAL MAIL STEAM PACKET CO.
French Entry Mark - Colonies Fra. V. Angl.



Effective 1 September 1853, in accordance with Circular No. 101 (17 August 1853) correspondence from the provinces of Martinique, Guadeloup and French Guyane (Guiana). were to be struck in red with a dated stamp mentioning "COLONIES FRA(NCAISE) V.(OIE) ANGL. (ETERRE)". This was done to incoming mail at Paris.



Sept. 26, 1865.
70 Centimes in French Colonial General Issue stamps prepay the correct rate via British Packet in effect 1 Jan. 1864 - 1 July 1876 (Stone, Col. Club handbook 11, Pg. 36), Martinique to France. "MQE" lozenge of Martinique obliterates the stamps.



Oct. 14, 1865. COLONIES FRA. transit at Paris (see above) and Paris RR transit (Gare de Lyon - night train) back-stamp en route to Marseille.

1870

FRENCH POSTAL HISTORY
COLONIAL INLAND RATES, 1860-92

Rates were as follows:

1860-78	10 centimes per	7.5 grams to 1864
		per 10 grams 1864-75
		per 15 grams thereafter.
1878-86	15 centimes per	15 grams.
1886-92	20 centimes per	15 grams.



August 29, 1870. Cover rated at 10 centimes per 10 grams. Noted in mms. (U.L.), "Prepaid, advance paid-20 centimes" as letter weighed over 10 grams, but not 20 grams, it was double rated, paid by a pair of the 10 centimes "Eagles" and cancelled with the "MQE" lozenge of dots at Petit Bourg, Martinique.

August 29, 1870. Fort-de-France receipt backstamp. Stone (Collectors Club Handbook No. 11) rates inland colonial covers of Martinique up to 1878 as "very rare" single, and notes double-weight letters are much scarcer.

1868

WEST INDIA MAIL - STEAM PACKET SERVICE
ROYAL MAIL STEAM PACKET COMPANY
PACIFIC STEAM NAVIGATION COMPANY

After 1860 the Royal Mail line served Central America and the West Indies, made the trip to St. Thomas twice a month, and branches fanned out to various ports in the Caribbean. The Royal Mail also had the route to the east coast of South America. The Pacific Steam continued to serve the west coast, taking the mails at Panama that came across the Isthmus by railway. The postal subsidy of the Pacific Steam was £25,000, of the Royal Mail £270,000.



June 13, 1868. 532 "Gross Chiffres" French obliterator cancels 100 centimes rate. Transit "Boite Mobile", or Mobile Box shows letter posted aboard railway car. Letter noted "Voie de Panama" indicating it was to go by Royal Mail Steamer packet, over the isthmus and thence by Pacific Steam Packet to Lima, Peru.



June 13-14. Railway transit backstamps Bordeaux-Paris-Calais where mail was transhipped to Dover and on to Southampton to meet the Royal Mail.

July 18, 1868. Lima, Peru receipt backstamp.

1877

ROYAL MAIL STEAM PACKET COMPANY

R.M.S.P. Nile

France to Danish West Indies via Southampton



August 30, 1877. Letter paid 100 centimes (1 franc) at Bordeaux to Christiansted, St. Croix, Danish West Indies (an uncommon destination.) It was originally marked T (= Taxe, or postage due,) but this was deleted as 1 franc paid the overseas rate per 10 grams to any country via England.

August 31. Transit backstamp at Paris, Foreign Section.

August 31. Transit backstamp, London.



London Times, Tuesday, Sept. 4, 1877. The Royal Mail Company's steamship Nile, Captain R. Revett, sailed from Southampton yesterday with the West India, Pacific and Mexican mails.

Feeder steamers from St. Thomas forwarded the mail onward to the Caribbean Islands.

1870

FRANCE TO VERA CRUZ, MEXICO VIA COLON AND CAMPECHE
LIGNE A - Saint-Nazaire à Colon, Panama
Paquebot Louisiane



1760

P.P.

July 2, 1870. Letter paid at the 80 centimes rate to Vera Cruz by a pair of the 40 c. Napoleon Issue of 1868 (Scott 35a) cancelled by the gross chiffres "1760", office number of Le Havre. The writer directionally endorsed it "Par Campeche", indicating he wanted it to go to Colon, then by local steamer

Colon-Campeche on the Yucatan Peninsula -Vera Cruz rather than direct to Vera Cruz as Louisiane of Ligne A was to depart from St. Nazaire July 8.

The next direct paquebot to Vera Cruz was the Ligne B's Guadeloupe due to depart from St. Nazaire July 16. The red Porte Payee indicates "paid to the port", i.e. paid to dockside at Colon. This is a scarce routing.

July 8. Louisiane, designated Ligne A, No. 1, departed from St. Nazaire.

Aug. 1. Louisiane arrived at Colon.

Aug. 18. Docketed arrival at Vera Cruz. Letter by local steamer Colon-Campeche-Vera Cruz was subject to a 2 peso collect for Mexican postage.

2

1871

WEST INDIES MAIL SERVICE
FRANCE TO LIMA, PERU VIA FRENCH PACKET
LIGNE A - Saint-Nazaire à Colon, Panama

532



July 6, 1871.
Letter posted at
Bordeaux and pre-
paid 100 centimes
cancelled by the
"Gros Chiffre"
532 of Bordeaux.



July 7, 1871.
Transit at St.
Nazaire terminal
of Ligne A.
Writer had direct-
ed letter "via
St. Nazaire".



July 8, 1871. Mail stamped aboard Ligne A vessel No. 3, the Louisiane, which left St. Nazaire July 7, arrived Colon Aug. 1, 1871. Red "P.P." signifies Port Payee, and 100 centimes prepaid carried letter only to Colon. Cover shows no postage due, as this was probably collected on an account basis in bulk from the recipient.

August 9, 1871.
Lima, Peru
receipt
backstamp.

1877

ROYAL WEST INDIA MAIL PACKET COMPANY

CURACAO TO FRANCE via British Mail.

"Possessions Néerlandaise" - Entry mark, Ambulant Calais.



T

March 7, 1877. Letter posted unpaid at Curacao, Dutch West Indies. Mail here was handled by the Royal Mail steamers, which made two departures each month, the 7th and 22 or 23rd.

Letter marked "T" = Taxe, indicating unpaid, and postage due.



S1638

19



March 31, 1877. "Dutch Possession" (Neerlandaise) transit mark at Calais, ambulant. One finds Brigades A, B, C, D, E, and G. This is a very scarce mark.

March 31. Letters incoming were taxed at 13, 26 or 39 decimes (here 13) after July 1871. Receipt backstamp at Paris.RC=Rayon Central (Central Zone).

1882

WEST INDIES MAIL SERVICES

FRENCH PACKETS

Line "A"- St. Nazaire to Colon, Panama

This Colombian card was cancelled at Savanalla, Colombia aboard the French Packet "Washington", which left Colon on Mar. 2, 1882 and arrived at St. Nazaire on March 24.



March 4, 1882. French Packet mark of Line A, Packet No. 2 (Washington).

March 27, 1882. London transit. Letter readdressed and forwarded, no forwarding markings.

1874

WEST INDIES MAIL

FRENCH PACKETS - LIGNE A - St. Nazaire to Colon.
Steamer Guadeloupe - No. 1



May 10, 1874.
Letter posted
at St. Pierre,
Martinique. It
went overland
to Fort-de-
France, port of
call for Ligne
A ships.



Monsieur A. Sengeret
Bordeaux
Paquebot



May 10, 1874.
Letter picked
up by the
Guadeloupe
which had left
Colon on May 1,
arrived at
Fort-de-France
on May 10 and
St. Nazaire
May 27, 1874.



May 28, 1874.
Bordeaux receipt
Six decimes
(mms.) due from
recipient.

1882

WEST INDIES MAIL SERVICE
FRENCH PACKETS - LIGNE B - Vera Cruz à St. Nazaire
Steamer Ville de Bordeaux

2670 tons, screw steamer, built at Bordeaux in 1869-70.
After serving one voyage to Valparaiso she was assigned to
Ligne B and made 36 voyages between 1875 and 1886.



May 23, 1882. French Colonies Alphee Dubois stamp cancelled by St. Pierre, Martinique cds. Ligne B steamer Ville de Bordeaux left Vera Cruz May 24 on her homeward journey.



June 1, 1882. Ville de Bordeaux cleared St. Thomas this date and this transit mark applied aboard ship.

She was designated PAQ. FR. No. 2.

S. 1447 (Rouge)



June 16. Paris Etranger (Foreign) transit mark. Ville de Bordeaux arrived St. Nazaire this date.



June 17. Transit backstamps. Note express (Rapide) RR marking, Lyon to Marseille. Circular center indicates night train.



1883

WEST INDIES MAIL SERVICE
FRENCH PACKETS - LIGNE A - Colon a St. Nazaire
Steamer Ville de Paris

3000 tons, screw steamer, constructed at Glasgow in 1865.
In service on the New York Line from 1866. Made 13 voyages
for Lignes A, B and D between 1874 and 1885.



Feb. 10, 1883. 25 centimes Alphee Dubois Issue stamp is cancelled by the cds at Pointe-a-Pitre, Guadeloupe noting PAQ. FR. = Paquebot Francaise. Had letter gone via Southampton, similar stamp would have been used except with PAQ. ANGL. at top.



S.1424 (Rouge)

Feb. 12, 1883. The Ville de Paris, designated PAQ. FR. No.1, left Colon Feb. 1 and was in the Antilles Feb. 9-12 where this mark was struck aboard ship Feb. 12 at Pointe-a-Pitre. The steamer Washington, designated PAQ. FR. No. 2, had the identical schedule. COL.FR. = COLONIES Francaise.



Feb. 26-27. Transit back-stamps. The Ville de Paris had arrived at St. Nazaire Feb. 25.

1907

WEST INDIES MAIL

FRENCH PACKETS: LIGNE A, De Saint Nazaire a Colon
Steamer La Normandie

February 18, 1907. La Normandie departed from St. Nazaire Feb. 11, 1907, and this card was posted aboard her on the outbound trip, going aboard at Savanilla. Postage was paid by two one centavo Columbian stamps.



S. 1407/2
Aller

March 3. La Normandie departed from Colon, Panama, and arrived back at St. Nazaire March 22.



1913

WEST INDIES MAIL

FRENCH PACKETS: LIGNE A - Colon A St. Nazaire



Oct. 28, 1913. Letter posted at Cayenne, French Guiana, registered.

November 1, 1913. Letter postmarked aboard the La Navarre, Ship No. 2 of Ligne A. She had left Colon Oct. 25, and arrived St. Nazaire on Nov. 13.

1926

WEST INDIES MAIL

FRENCH PACKETS: LIGNE A - St. Nazaire A Colon
S.S. Macoris



January 12, 1926. This post card was written aboard the S.S. Macoris which had departed from St. Nazaire on Dec. 24, 1925, and was designated A.1 of Ligne A. The card notes in its message "en route to Panama...visited Caracas in Venezuela and in Colombia", both ports of call of Ligne A.

The S.S. Macoris arrived at Colon Jan. 15, 1926, where this card was forwarded through the Panama Canal onward to Hanoi on the Tonkin Gulf, French Indochina. The Macoris returned to France from Colon, arriving at St. Nazaire Feb. 6, 1926.

1876

WEST INDIES MAIL

FRENCH PACKETS: LIGNE B, St. Nazaire a la Vera Cruz
Paquebot Ville de Brest

The packet rate of July 18, 1863, from Britain by French Packet, sailing out of St. Nazaire, to Cuba and Mexico became one shilling per ½-oz., which became the same as the April 1, 1863, rate by British Packet. Starting in 1872, the French packets left St. Nazaire on the 20th, then on the 21st (May of 1877) of each month for Vera Cruz via St. Thomas.



D.162



August 18, 1876. A letter to Vera Cruz paid at the one shilling rate to Mexico via French Packet by the Issue of 1873, plate 12. The cover is endorsed: p French Packet. This was so routed as the R.M.S.P. Nile had departed from Southampton for St. Thomas via Barbadoes on August 17. The next British Packet would be the R.M.S.P. Don to sail from Southampton on Sept.

2. To expedite the letter, the sender paid a one penny Late Fee by the Issue of 1864, plate 187. Cancellation is by the London Inland Branch Late Fee obliterator with the octagonal date stamp.

August 20. Paquebot Ville de Brest of Ligne B departed from St. Nazaire for Vera Cruz.

September 12. Docket notes receipt at Vera-Cruz.

1878

WEST INDIES MAIL SERVICE

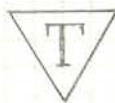
FRENCH PACKETS: LIGNE B - Vera Cruz to St. Nazaire



Letter originally posted at Venezulean Post Office at Puerto Cabello.



Feb. 18, 1878. Transit stamp of French Vice Consul. French Consular offices acted as Post Offices in the Caribbean area from 1862-1881.



Letter then went by local ship to St. Thomas, Porto Rico, where it was picked up on Mar. 3, 1878 by French Packet No. 2 of "Line B", the Bordeaux, which had left Vera-Cruz on Feb. 19, and arrived at St. Nazaire on March 17.

Letters forwarded to a regular port of call were marked with this small triangle and "T" after Jan. 1, 1876. T = Taxe, i.e. Postage Due.

Mar. 18, 1878. Bordeaux receipt backstamp.

Handwritten initials

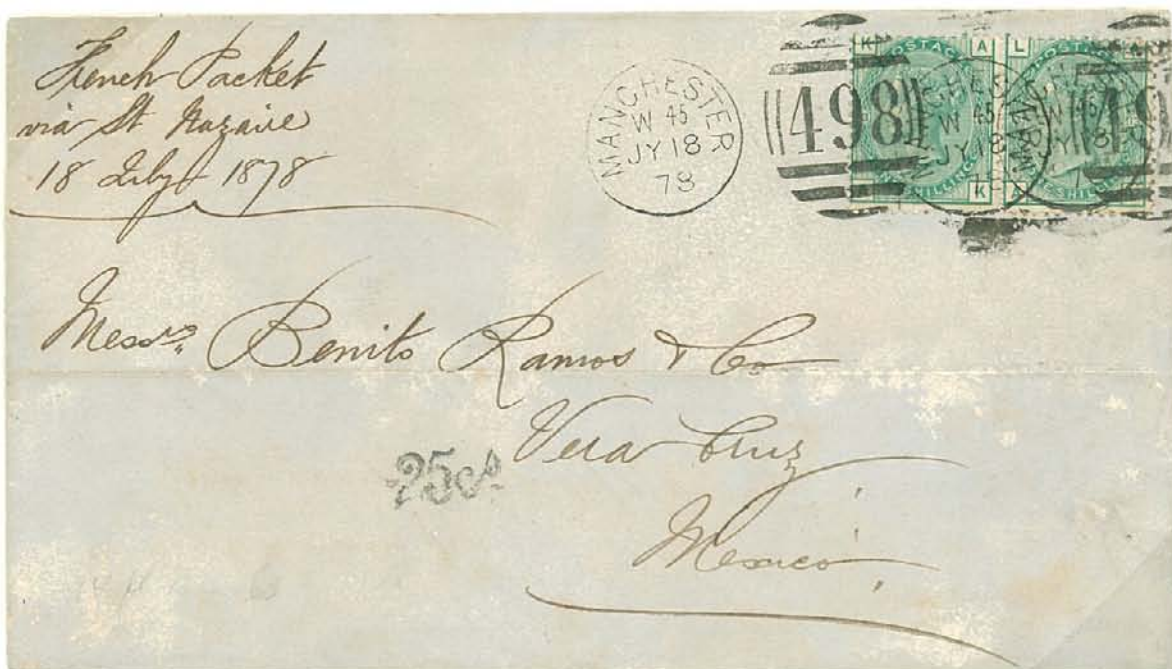
24 decimes (in French medieval script) due.

(Reduced illustration)

1878

ENGLAND TO MEXICO BY FRENCH PACKET
LIGNE B, DE SAINT-NAZAIRE A LA VERA CRUZ
Paquebot Ville de Brest

The packet rate of July 18, 1863 from Britain by French Packet to Cuba and Mexico became one shilling per $\frac{1}{2}$ -oz., which became the same as the April 1, 1863 rate by British Packet. Starting in 1872, the French Packets left St. Nazaire on the 20th, then on the 21st (May of 1877) of each month for Vera Cruz via St. Thomas.



July 18, 1878. A prepaid letter posted at Manchester, England. Double rate of 1/- x 2, paid by a pair of the one shilling Issue of 1873, pale green, Plate 13.

July 21. Paquebot Ville de Brest departed from St. Nazaire on the regular monthly sailing of Ligne B.

25c

August 14. Docket notes receipt at Vera Cruz. Letter subject to a Mexican inland charge of 25 centavos.

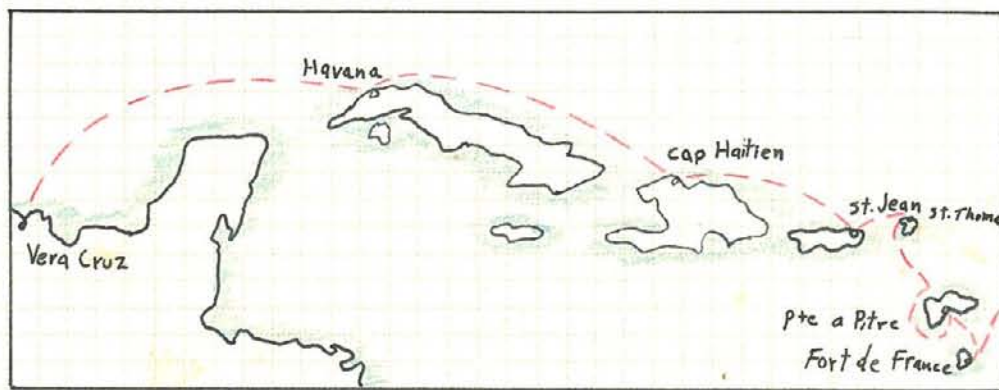
1881

WEST INDIES MAIL SERVICE

FRENCH PACKETS: LIGNE B - Vera-Cruz a la Saint Nazaire

"COL. FR." Marks.

Steamer Ville de St. Nazaire - No. 2.



Sept. 23, 1881. Letter posted at Pointe-a-Pitre, Guadeloupe. Town marking indicating mail was to be handled by a "Paquebot Francaises" obliterates 24 centimes rate.



Sept. 23, 1881. French packet mark applied aboard the SS Ville de St. Nazaire, which had left Vera Cruz on Sept. 19, cleared Forte de France Sept. 26, and arrived St. Nazaire Oct. 12.

Oct. 12. Nantes arrival back-stamp.

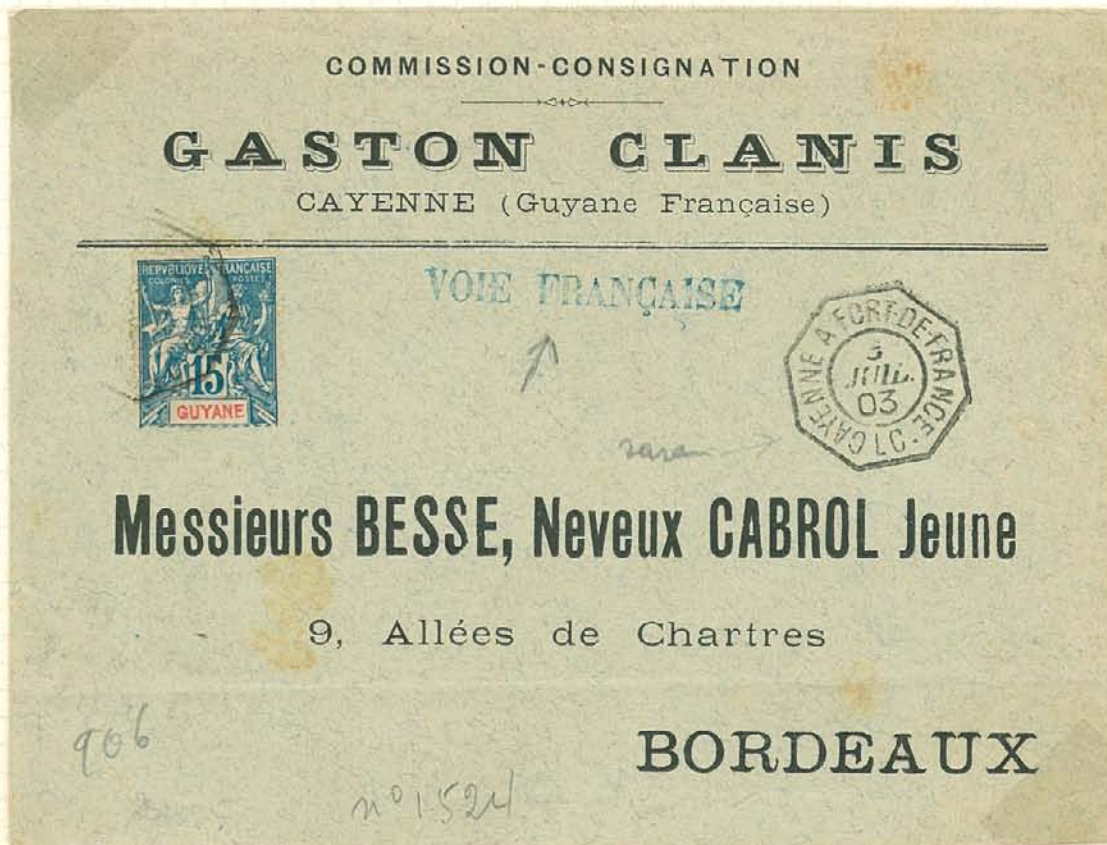
1903

FRENCH MARITIME POSTAL HISTORY

LIGNE C : DE FORT-DE-FRANCE A CAYENNE, 1865-1940

Steamers operated from Fort-de-France to Cayenne on a regular schedule, the French steamers departing Cayenne on the 3rd of the month, British steamers on the 17th of the month.

During the major time of this service, connections were made at Fort-de-France with Ligne A steamers for transmission to Sainte-Nazaire.



July 3, 1903. Octagonal "Cachet du Ligne" of Ligne C. Sender noted letter "VOIE FRANCAISE" to catch the 3rd of the month sailing of the Ligne C vessel.



July 21, 1903. Backstamp. Letter received at Bordeaux.

1906

LIGNE C: DE FORT-DE-FRANCE A CAYENNE, 1865-1940
PARAMARIBO TO PORT OF SPAIN, TRINIDAD
S.S. Maraval, Trinidad to New York



S. 1525

July 4, 1906. Letter endorsed "per Fr. mail" posted at Paramaribo, Surinam at 17½ cent (an additional 5 cent stamp is on the reverse.) A steamer of the Ligne C picked up the letter July 5 at Paramaribo where the octagonal mark was struck aboard the ship. Steamers left Cayenne on the 3rd of the month en route to Fort de France.

Between 1897 and 1912 the following steamships made this run: Manoubia, Ville de Tanger, Salvador and Saint-Domingue.



July 9. The Ligne C steamer trans-shipped the U.S. mails at Trinidad and proceeded on to Fort de France.

July 13. S.S. Maraval called at Port of Spain and carried the mails on to New York.

July 26. Thursday, arrived at N.Y. from Port of Spain, July 13, Maraval (N.Y. Times.)

1882

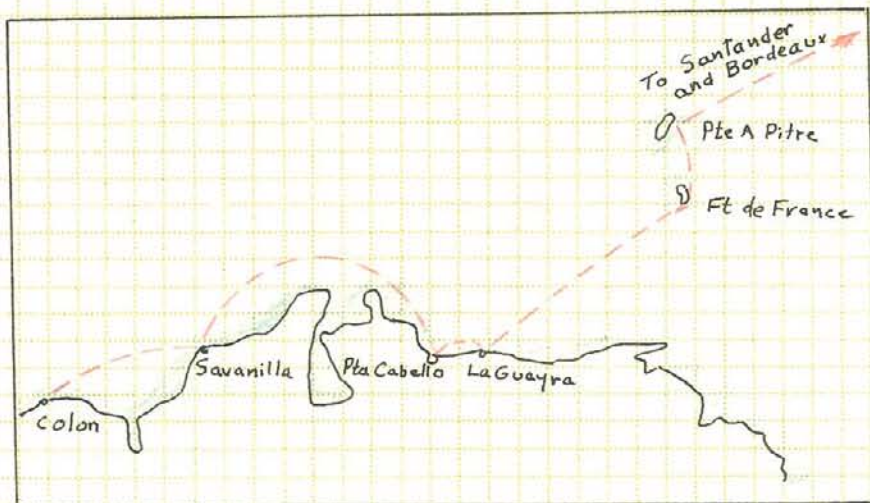
WEST INDIES MAIL

FRENCH PACKETS - LIGNE D de Bordeaux à Colon

2nd Variant: Via Venezuela and the French Antilles

S.S. St-Simon

The new principal Ligne D from Bordeaux to Colon was originally started in 1875 and went by way of the Grand Antilles. In 1879 the 2nd variant was introduced by way of Venezuela and the French Antilles (see map below.)



March 8, 1882. Columbian postal card datelined at Bogota.
March 21. Card in transit at the National Postal Agency, Baranquilla, Columbia.



s.1505/2

Mar. 27. The French packet St.-Simon departed from Colon, Panama Mar. 24, and picked up the mails at Savanilla on the 27th where this mark was struck. This Salles 1505 is of the type B.21 Graouli with the large "D". St.-Simon was at the Antilles April 3-6 and arrived at Bordeaux April 21.



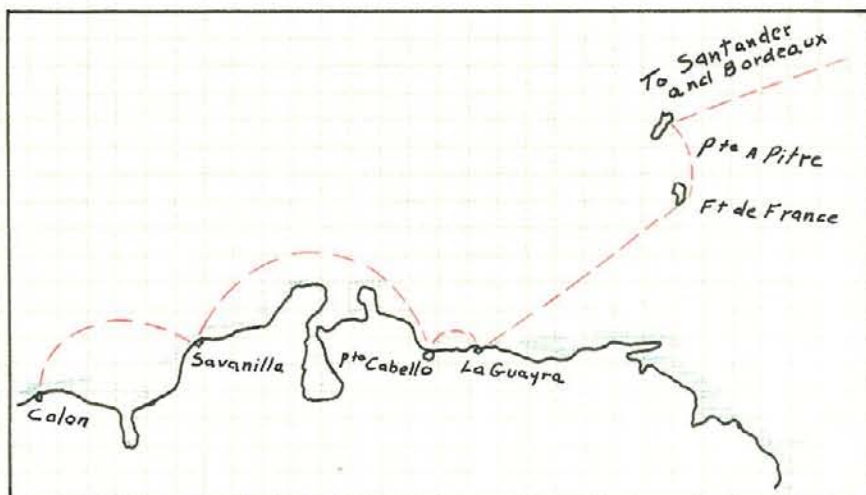
April 23. Arrival postmark at Bern, Switzerland.

1887

WEST INDIES MAIL SERVICE

FRENCH PACKETS: LIGNE D de Bordeaux à Colon.

2^e Variante: Par Le Venezuela et Les Antilles Françaises.



June 26, 1887.
 Letter prepaid
 by 25 centimos
 in Venezuelan
 stamps
 (Scott # 69
 and 74) U.P.U.
 rate to Hamburg
 from Caracas.



June 27. Letter handed to
 French packet at LaGuayra,
 Ligne D, No. 3, the V. MAR
SEILLE, which arrived Bor-
 Bordeaux July 21, 1887.

July 23, 1887. Letter back-
 stamped on arrival at Hamburg. Per-
 haps the recipient, Herr Tellschoppe,
 tore off the corner card for
 future reference!!

1893

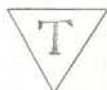
WEST INDIES MAIL
FRENCH PACKETS - LIGNE D - BORDEAUX TO COLON
Steamer Canada - No. 1



Feb. 1, 1893. Stamped envelope, 25 centimes, posted at St. Pierre. Letter travelled to Fort-de-France.



Feb. 2, 1893. Letter picked up at port of call of steamer Canada which left Colon on Jan. 22, and arrived at Bordeaux Feb. 16.



Letter under-paid by 60 centimes (mms. U.L.).
T = Taxe, postage due.



Feb. 17, 1893. Paris "Foreign" transit backstamp.



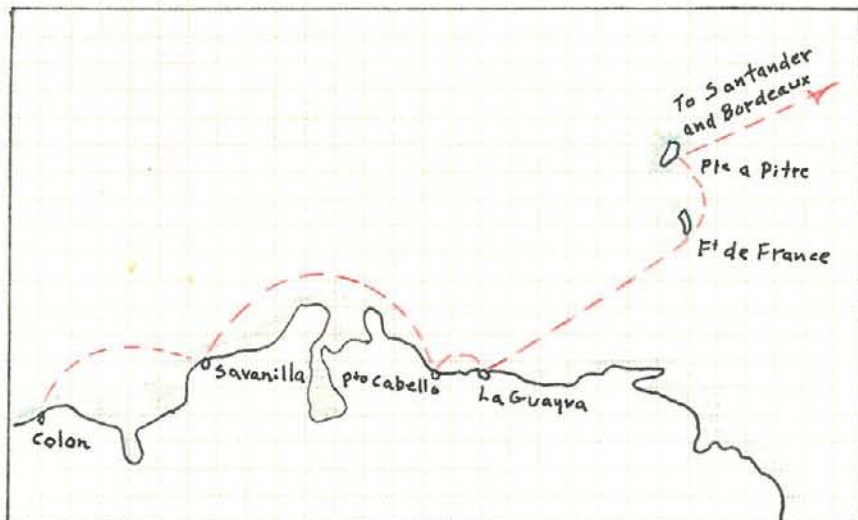
Feb. 19. Vienna receipt backstamp.

1893

WEST INDIES MAIL

FRENCH PACKETS - LIGNE D : Bordeaux à Colon

2nd Variant - Par le Venezuela et les Antilles Françaises.



March 16, 1893.
 Letter posted upstream on the Magdalena River in Columbia and handled downstream by the "Servicio Postal Fluvial".
 Backstamped in green in transit at Barranquilla (Savanilla).



March 24, 1893. Letter picked up by the SS St. Laurent at Savanilla, she had left Colon on March 22, and cleared Bordeaux April 15, 1893.

April 17, 1893.
 York, England receipt backstamp.

1894

FRENCH PACKETS - LIGNE D de Colon à Bordeaux
2nd Variant: Via Venezuela and the French Antilles
S.S. Labrador, Baranquilla to Puerto Cabello
ATLANTIC & CARIBBEAN STEAM NAVIGATION CO., Red "D" Line
S.S. Venezuela, Puerto Cabello, Venezuela to New York

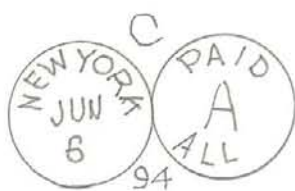
LEOCADIO M.^a ARANGO & HIJOS
MEDELLIN.

Messrs.

Wheeler & Wilson Mfg. Co.

BRIDGEPORT, CONN.

U. S. A.



May 4, 1894. Letter posted in the mountain town of Medellin, Colombia, paid at the U.P.U. rate of 10 centavos, Issue of 1892, bistre brown on rose.

May 21. Transit backstamp at the port city of Baranquilla, over 2 weeks after posting at Medellin.

May 22. S.S. Labrador of the French Ligne D, designated as No. 2 on this voyage, left Colon, arrived at Baranquilla (Savanilla) May 24 where this letter went aboard, thence on to Puerto Cabello, Venezuela where this letter was transferred to a U.S. bound ship. Labarador was in the French Antilles June 1 and 2, arrived at Bordeaux June 15.

May 26. S.S. Venezuela of the Red "D" Line left Puerto Cabello.

N.Y. Times. Arrived June 6, SS VENEZUELA, Hopkins, Puerto Cabello May 26 via La Guayra to Boulton, Bliss & Dallett. Arrived at the Bar at 1 A.M. June 6. Bridgeport arrival backstamp.