

France & Colonies Philatelist



Published bi-monthly by the France and Colonies Group
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↑ Centers in line with each other
↑ ↑ ↑ Wedge-shaped gutter between the stamps

Misalignment on Camel Type of African Colonies.

Printed in two colors, this type, of use in Upper Senegal and Niger and later surcharged to supply Upper Volta, as well as for the renaming of Upper Senegal and Niger as French Congo, has an interesting variation not hitherto noted.

The illustration of a pair of the 25c black and green of Upper Volta, owned and shown us by our member Robert S. Gordon, makes this clear.

The outer or frame plate has in this position -- left hand stamp of the pair-- the subject on a diagonal, causing a wedge-shaped gutter. But the center or picture plate is correctly aligned here. Thus the left hand stamp shows picture apparently printed crookedly.

This is clearly an accident of plate making. It is thus presumably a constant variety, which may well be found on the 25c in pristine state

and in its various surchargings both before and after change of color. Presumably in making up the assemblage of electrotype molds for this plate, this one was set in slightly askew.

The gutter is 7/10 mm. wider at bottom than at top. But the camel pictures align exactly.

The regularity of the perforations shows us that no paper flaw or supposed shrinkage is in the matter at all. As these stamps are known to have been printed from two electrotype plates, one for border and one for center, not from an assemblage of separate clichés, explanation has to be consistent with this fact to be valid.

If this variety had occurred on any stamp of Metropolitan France, it probably would long ago have been noticed and given high standing.



POSTES
TÉLÉGRAPHES
TÉLÉPHONES

MUSÉE POSTAL
4, RUE SAINT-ROMAIN, 2
PARIS-6.



Monsieur
47 East
NEW-

The
Dated
Postmark
of the
Postal
Museum
at Paris

Struck twice on a letter to President Baudry of this group, once below corner card as shown and once cancelling stamps, with date Dec. 23, 1955 to right of ship, this is a modern one of interest, beauty and apparently some scarcity.
Photo by Adrien Boutrelle.

MEMBERS' APPEALS

Want and exchange notices only; members only; one or two insertions only; no charge. Those who reply will please offer only what is asked.

Exchange: I have France B7 mint o.g., catalog \$4.00; B9 mint o.g. cat. \$12.50; B10 mint o.g. (thin spot) cat. 50.00. I wish to exchange for France C14 mint o.g. (cat. \$32.00; C15 mint o.g., cat. \$24. Allen P. Stearns, 240 Beale St., Wollaston, Mass.. (Member 614).

Wanted: Exchange France and Free French colonial odd values to complete sets; Scott basis. John Holmdahl, 2300 Dashwood Av. Oakland 5, Calif. (Member 260)

Wanted: Langlois & Bourselet's Les Obliterations des Bureaux de Poste des Colonies Françaises. Leo F. Goerth, P.O. Box 7, Avon Lake, Ohio. (Member 349)

Anything I advertised for in this column in the last year is still wanted, especially cover with Le Mans 1954 Auto Race pictorial postmark. S.G. Rich, Verona, N.J. (Member 2)

Will buy for Collectors Club Library, Brunel, 1928, Les Emissions de Timbres-Poste Français., also the 1949 revised edition of Maufy, Histoire des Timbres-Poste Français. The early edition of each is not needed. Editor, F & C. Phil.--adlet a courtesy to our meeting host.

Have you come in yet with your share as one of us, on the costs of the France & Colonies Group lounge at Fipex, the International Stamp Exhibition? See detailed request on page 8 of this number.

The British and French Post Offices of French India

By Robert G. Stone.

(In F. & C.P. No. 80, p. 8, appeared a reprint of a short note by Billington on "Cancellations of the British Offices in French India." Some years ago the writer had prepared an article on these same offices, never yet published. It adds some information to that of Mr. Billington. With recent revisions, the pertinent paragraphs follow.)

A singular situation long existed in French India:-- there were British or Indian post offices in each of the major towns of the colony, in the same places which have had French colonial post offices. There was no parallel to this in any other French colony---New Hebrides is a joint British-French protectorate.

These British p.o.'s operated just as though they were in British territory. Other British Indian p.o.'s did not regard them, for purposes of determining postage rates, as being (by U.P. definition) as being in a "foreign country." Mail could be sent from French to British India either by French India mail at foreign rates or by British India mail at domestic rates. The latter was naturally cheaper and the more used. One could mail between French Indian towns by either the French or the British mails at the domestic rates.

This dual postal system persisted from 1815-17, when the final treaties establishing French India's status in the last century were signed, until India recently acquired these settlements from France. Even before 1817, East India Company p.o.'s of a sort existed in French towns when these were temporarily held by the British forces. Founded between 1673 and 1737, the French settlements passed back and forth many times between British and French hands. The treaty of 1815 allowed France to keep only a part of its original Indian lands. East India Company subjects could thenceforth remain in French places with privileges of trade; the Company's p. o.'s opened during British occupation could remain indefinitely to serve the British subjects. Also French Indian subjects were allowed to trade in East India.

The only telegraph service the colony ever had was that of the British Indian P.O. Dept.

Such extraterritorial rights were rather desirable, if not necessary, because of the peculiar geography of the French settlements.

French territory was not in a single block, but broken up into five larger areas, scattered from near Calcutta to the vicinities of Madras and Bombay, plus a large number of small plots, called loges, some only a few acres in size.

The small loges, isolated within Indian territory, were hopelessly impracticable for French administration; as a result they gave the British Indian government much trouble in matters of taxes, tariffs, communications, and crime. The population of the French areas is very mixed with races common to the respective surrounding parts of India predominating. A large proportion of the population of the French settlements was never of French citizenship.

The French towns, Pondicherry, Karikal, and Chandernagore, had both British and French p. o.'s perhaps since 1815, surely since before 1850. The East India Co. postmarks are known used at each of these places long before French ones. Robson Lowe, in his pamphlet "India Used Abroad" (London, 1940) states, not citing source (Cooper?, Renouf?) that the Company opened these offices in 1787, 1799 and 1809 respectively... prior to the Treaty of 1815. In 1858 the Company's lands and rule were taken over by the British Crown,

but its postal arrangements with the French were continued by the British India postal service.

The earliest East India postmarks for the three offices mentioned are reported from about 1840. For Karikal and Pondicherry they consist of rectangular boxes, name of town at top; PAID, at bottom; in some cases date in the middle. They are struck in red. They are not at all rare (See R. Lowe, Empire Encyclopedia, Vol. 3). Earlier dates and types may yet be found; we expect that they would be ovals with town name and " POST PAID."

In October 1951 1000 of 10c, 1500 of 25c, 3575 of 1f 1849 stamps were sent from France to the India offices for optional use in prepayment of letters to Europe via French vessels. They were theoretically available until 1853; but only few such covers are known. The stamps were always cancelled in France, on arrival. A letter from the Governor of the colony, dated Dec. 11, 1851, complained that French stamps were not wanted in French India, as merchants there could use the British mails as far as Alexandria without prepayment. This document plus the rarity of the letters franked with French stamps, indicate that up to the early 1850's the British P.O.'s handled most of the mails at the French towns. The same circumstance surely explains that no French postal markings are reported before the late 1850's, much later than the first British ones.

The most interesting early French Marking is a seal-type town mark reading "POSTE AUX LETTRES --KARIKAL", of which only one copy, on a letter of 1859, in François coll. is reported. (Cahier Phil. 1946, No. 2, p. 86). Another odd one is unique in style: double-lined circular town mark with date in manuscript in center, from Chandernagor, known from 1859. In the late '50's and up to 1864, Pondicherry was using the large double-circle postmark typical of all French colonies from the 1830's to 1864. This type ought also to exist from Karikal, Yanaon, Mahé and Chandernagore, since reason exist to think that the Eagle stamps had been issued to these when Pondicherry received them in 1860. None are reported, however.

The British Indian p.o. at Mahé was opened in 1865. The first evidence of a French p.o. at Mahé, earliest Eagles cover, appears around 1867. We might surmise that the French p.o. there was opened at the same time as the British, by mutual agreement. But Bouvet seemed to find no reason to believe it was not as early as 1860. The French p.o. at Yanaon (Yanam) existed in 1862, and perhaps earlier (1860?); and an Eagles cover is known from 1865. The British p.o. there was not existent in 1862; a regulation of that year states that the French postal agent there was to call daily 9 a.m. at the British office, nearby, of Nellypelly, to get the mails for Yanaon and to return to Nellypelly 4 p.m. with the outgoing mails.

Within the territory of Pondicherry a rural postal service was set up by the French on Nov. 26 1859, in conjunction with the British mails. The instructions stated that Indian stamps for postage would be stocked at each rural office, to frank letters going via the British post. On Jan. 1 1863 this service was discontinued.

A regulation existed around 1865-75, applying to the "secondary town" of French India, to the effect that at Chandernagor, Karikal, Yanaon and Mahé, letters posted as "Army correspondence" at reduced rate for military personnel, were not to be struck with the "Corr. d'Armées" postmarks, because these offices must send their mails via the British posts to the ports, Madras and Calcutta, where they were handed to the agent of the French Messageries Imperiales line. (The military

letter rate was valid only via French mail or merchant packets). The French Packets (Ligne O) called at Pondicherry for some years, 1864 to ?

Up to July 1876 the general issues for the French colonies were almost always cancelled by lozenge killers. The dated postmarks appeared elsewhere on the face of the cover. In French India the town marks were of the standard type with 23 mm circle and inner circle of dots. The killers were different at each p.o. in India--- at some of the offices more than one killer was used. See F. & C.P. Vol. 3, No. 4, May-June 1944.

Pondichery:--

- 9 x 9 round points, common 1860-75
- 10 x 10 rhomboid points, rare 1863-64
- 8 x 8 round points, very rare 1868-73?
- 8 x 8 round points with INDE inscribed, common 1863 (Nov. on), intermittent to 1877.

Chandernagore:--

- 11 x 11 points in a square frame, rare (another of similar type suspected)

Karikal:--

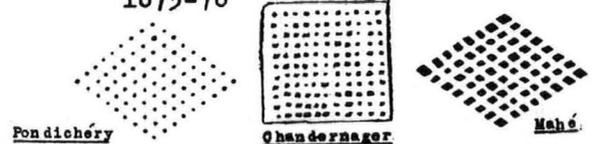
- 8 x 8 round points, very rare

Yanaon:--

- 8 x 8 rhomboid points, extremely rare

Mahé:--

- 8 x 8 rhomboid points, corner points larger than the rest, in red, rare 1875-78



East Indian adhesives, and later British Indian stamps, have been used at the British p.o.'s in French India since about 1864. The first types of East-India cancels for the stamps were killers, separate or attached to circle town marks (See F. & C.P. No. 80). From about 1885 on the town marks, in typical British India styles appear on the stamps; they are easy to read.

The earliest killers were diamonds of 8 x 8, 9 x 9, or 10 x 10 sharp rhomboid or round points. Lowe reports only 9 x 9 round points from Pondichery and 8 x 8 rhombic points from Mahé. There is a possibility that the British and the French killers could each have been used on stamps of the other service. (The Mahé killer attributed to the British p.o. was of a type that went out of general use in East Indian p.o.'s before the British Mahé office was opened). Next came various types of killers of dots and bars, enclosing numerals, or letters and numerals; some of these occur in duplex with the dated town-mark. The numerals and letters, different for each p.o., are:--



- Pondichery: 111, C111, B111, M-20/6
- Karikal (Karikal, Karrikal, Carrical): C147, M21/6
- Chandernagore: B86
- Yanaon (Yanam): M-5/4 (or M-4/5?)
- Mahé: A89

Only C111 and C147 are often seen on the old first issues of East India Co. The C111 of an other type, in circle, was also used at other places in British India during the 1870's and 1880's. The blind killers are very rare.

There is no likelihood of confusing any of the British with the French postmarks, as the

styles and even in some cases the spellings, are different. The French accent the e in Mahé and Pondichéry.

Now we come to some facts that do not seem to have their origin explicitly in the 1815 treaty, but rather in some later conventions.

Thus, we learn from Lowe that many smaller places of French India have had British Indian sub-post offices. Most of these places probably never had French p.o.'s. These offices are, with opening dates:

Chandernagore District:

Gondalpara, 1906
Lakshganji, 1909
Temata, 1891
Chandernagore R.S., ?

Pondichery District:

Bahoor, 1885
Mudaliarpét, 1897
Ariyankuppam, 1904
Muthialpét, 1904
Pondichery Bazaar, 1902
Pondichery Railway Station, 1895
Olugarai, 1907
Vallinur, 1875

Karikal District:

Ambagarattur, 1904
Kottuchari, 1901
Nedungaon, 1903
Puraivar Road, 1901 (closed later)
Settur, 1905
Tirumalrayatapatnam, 1875
Tiramilur, 1898 (closed later)
(Tirunalar, in 1937?)

Stamps and covers from these are rather hard to find, specially from before 1900.

According to the Indian Postal Guide for 1939 the following types of British Indian p. o.'s were open in the five major towns of French India:

Chandernagore: a branch and two sub-p.o.'s (only one in 1937)
Karikal: a sub-p.o.
Pondichery: a head p.o.
Yanam: a sub-p.o.

However, these offices operated under somewhat varying rules as to what kinds of mails and services they handled. Only Chandernagore could accept articles to and from France.

Since 1901 postal packages from other French colonies could be forwarded through the British Indian territory to Pondichery without duty or inspection. French mail boats have gone only, and not regularly, to Pondichery. Mahé and Karikal are very minor ports. Chandernagore and Yanam could not be communicated with from the sea by river without going through "entry" of British India.

The British material is probably not at all scarcer than the French. Thus, an interesting, unusual collection, to show the British and the French postal uses, in French territory, side by side, could be put together.

What? Didn't you notice the real Bloop?

Not a major error, but wrong all the same a mistake in No. 84, page 29, was not caught by, or written in about by, even one member. It is on the matter of the financing of the perforatings by Susse.

The 2% commission was not "far less than" the cost of perforating, but far more.

Your editor pulled the boner on purpose, just to see if the members would catch it. Maybe it was not fair to do this; if so, his apologies.

As every other mention of this is correct, no harm was, we hope, done by the deliberate hoax.

* SECRETARY'S REPORT *
February 15 to March 15 1956

APPLICATIONS PENDING:

626 Zweifach, Ira 306 West 93rd Street,
New York 25, N.Y. (France).....
627 Hornberger, D.J. 186 Griswold Street,
Delaware, Ohio. (France & Algeria).....

REINSTATEMENT:

260 Holmdahl, John W. 2300 Dashwood, Oakland 5
California.....
349 Goerth, Leo. P.O.Box 7, Avon Lake, Ohio...

DECEASED:

457 Lt. H.D. Mitchell, March 23, 1956.....

CHANGE OF ADDRESS:

72 H.R. Harmer to 6 West 48th. Street,
New York 36, New York.....
507 Scott, A.M. to P.O. Box 54, Sullivan's --
Island, South Carolina.....
524 Moller, Harry to 501 Main St., Acton, Mass.
555 McKanna, A.G. to 41 Saybrook Avenue,
Toronto 18, Ontario, Canada.....

NOTICE: Dues for 1956 notices are in the mail, ..
send in early PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE ..

Respectfully Submitted
Charles Bretagne, Sec'y.

Official Notice
Annual Meeting

Notice is hereby given, as the by-laws require, that the Annual Meeting of the Group, to elect officers, receive annual reports, and handle any other business that may legitimately come before such a meeting, will be held on May 8th, 1956 (Tuesday) at 8 p.m. at the Collectors Club in New York, in conjunction with the regular exhibit meeting which is postponed from May 1st because of the Fipex Exhibition.

Charles Bretagne, Secretary;
Paul Baudry, President.



The Group's Lounge at the
Fipex Exhibition.



We have taken a Club Lounge at the big Fipex International Stamp Exhibition, April 28 to May 6, 1956, at the Columbus Coliseum, New York.

The cost is somewhat over \$200.00

Contributions received from members to date of going to press are about half the needed sum -- we solicit further voluntary aid, in however small instalments, from the membership. Please send to Miss Louise Clemenceon, 30 Monroe St., AI-2, New York 2, N.Y.

Please help on this, and soon. The largest single contribution thus far was \$10-- and we would like to have as many members as possible share in this project.

The Group treasury will meanwhile advance for needed payments any funds needed, but with the definite understanding that contributions will recoup it.

Paul Baudry, President.

Step Out with a
share in this project.