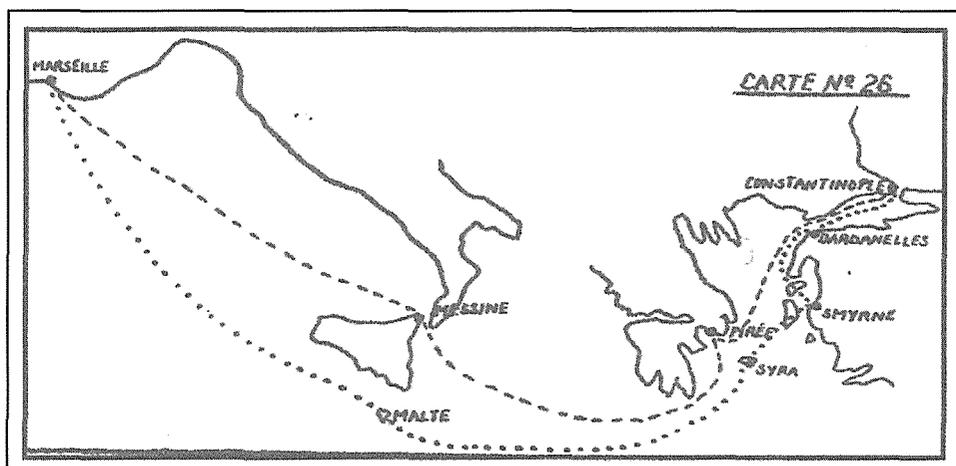


Messageries Imperiales and Malta

Levant Line (Ligne de Levant)

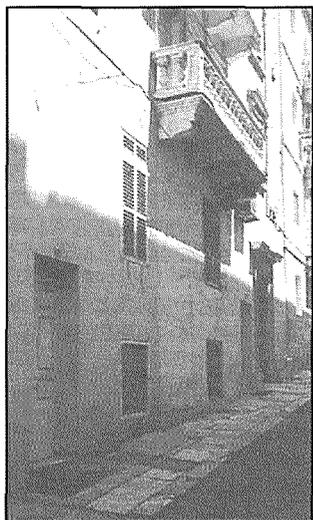
By Dr. A. Bonnici



The Messageries Imperiales – Levant Ligne, from Marseille to Constantinople was one of the Lines that the M.I. operated during the period 1851–1866, carrying passengers, freight and mail.

During these years, there were eight amendments to timetable and routes. (Neuvieme variante)

A Postal Agent was often on board these postal ships “Paquebot”, who endorsed the letters with a special hand stamp, bearing the name of the ship and date. Later when stamps were introduced, they were cancelled by an anchor in a lozenge of dots.



Malta being more or less half way between Marseille and Constantinople, featured prominently, and a Malta M. I. Office operated from, 39 Old Mint Street, Valletta.

One of the duties of the Malta Agent was to hand on departure an Official Document to the Malta Customs, “*Etat Nominatif des Passagers*” which included the name of the Ship, the ship’s Captain, Crew, Passengers, their Profession, Nationality, embarkation point and destination as well as the name of the Postal Agent.

The Captain on the other hand delivered on arrival,

a similar list to Customs and the Malta Agent.

The envelope was not yet invented in this early period, so the letters were folded, sealed and the address written on the front. Normally we find on them the rate in manuscript, the hand stamp of the sender or "Forwarding Agent" and the arrival Malta hand stamp.

These letters in Postal History language are called "entires".

SERVICES MARITIMES DES MESSAGERIES IMPERIALES						
DIRECTION DE L'EXPLOITATION						
Etat Nominatif des Passagers						
Paquebot à vapeur le <i>Genival</i> Capitaine <i>Cabeufine</i>						
Lieu d'Embarquement	Nombre de Passagers	Nom et Prénom	Profession	Nation	Destination	Observations
Malte	1	M ^r S. B. Karschel	drog ^{ist}	Russie	Russie	
	1	Joseph Battaglia	off.	Malte	"	
	1	M ^r Joseph Traud	"	Malte	Naples	
	3	M ^r Valentin Bissind	"	Malte	Russie	
	1	M ^r Jeanne Hoffmann	confesseur	Malte	Russie	
	1	M ^r P. P. P. P. P. P.	religieux	Rome	Naples	
	1	Federico Montanari	Mag ^{ist}	Suisse	Neuchâtel	
	1	M ^r L. V. L. V. L. V.	religieux	Naples	"	
	1	M ^r Luigi Deferani	hygienien	Sardaigne	Genes	
	2	M ^r Luigi Bonvicini	hygienien	Anglais	Russie	
		M ^r S. B. Karschel	"	"	"	
	1	M ^r Joseph Franco	drog ^{ist}	"	Genes	
	1	M ^r Emanuele Patti	off.	Malte	Russie	

Malta 8 Janvier 1859.

 L'AGENT


Official List of passengers (Etat Nominatif des Passagers) showing the signature of the M. I. Malta Agent Mr. KILMAN 8 Jan 1859, and the official M. I. Malta Agency hand stamp.

Extrait Du rôle du Paquetot le Vatican

Pelissot	Emile	cap ^{me}	Peyer	Denis	1 ^{er} chauffeur
George	isidore	second	Navier	Louis	chauffeur
Pelligrin	Joseph	Prékier	Didiot	Charles	"
Aubert	Louis	Docteur	Peyroulan	Blain	"
Bouvard	Charles	1 ^{er} m ^{me}	Sarcari	Antoine	"
Dreyse	Charles	3 ^e 8 ^e	Courlette	Joseph	"
Dreugis	André	m ^{me} d'ég	Pontonnier	Pierre	"
Pascal	Jean	Maletot	Peymier	Bernard	"
Hermite	Jules	"	Lejor	Antoine	"
Mourillon	Jacques	"	Loubert	Jean	Costumier
Duc	Joseph	"	Darbo	Joseph	1 ^{er} cuisinier
Cassin	Henri	"	Rever	Antoine	3 ^e 8 ^e
Pelligrino	Isidore	"	Sarrau	Léon	Cambardis
Novaro	Joséph	"	Desglio	Joseph	2 nd cuisinier
Stamenz	Antoine	"	Moty	Henri	m ^{me} d'hôtel
Stallier	Jules	"	Dosq	Antoine	3 ^e 8 ^e
Bridibender	Henri	"	Comery	Jacques	garçon
Poujol	Antoine	"	Pustella	Antoine	"
Maire	Antoine	"	Duglomo	Antoine	"
Philippe	Antoine	Arrière	Louvier	Auguste	"
Denot	Jean	"	Corrier	Antoine	1 ^{er} chambre
Abgeilho	Joseph	"			
Campiglia	Léon	Arrière	Ostima	agent des Postes	



Arrivé à Malte le 30 Mars 1859

L. Pustinaert
 H. Pelligrin

List of passengers and crew on the 30 March 1859 showing name of Captain of M.I. Vatican including the name of Postal Agent (Agent des Postes) OSTIMA which was handed to the Malta Customs.

no 44
Etat Nominal du Personnel du Vatican

Paquetot
de Vatican

Delisot Emile Cap^{ma}
Grange Maxime suod
Pellegrin Joseph S^e
Aubert Louis Dentier
Bouvard Charles mecum
Diezsi Charles mecum
Deugis Andre m^{le} S^e
Fubal Jean m^{le}
Herminie Jules "
Mouillon J^{ms} "
Garnier Etienne "
Duc Joseph "
Pellegrin Salomon "
Bisbender Henri "
Stallier Felix "
Hassonay Paulin "
Moral Antoine "
Nouvo Pascal "
Pouyet Pierre "
Philippe Victor "
Demost Pierre "
Orsellin Joseph "
Campy Louis Laurent

Loyer Deiret chauffeur
Aubin Louis "
Didiot Charles "
Peyroulan Blaise "
Morris Joseph "
Weynier Benard "
Courrette parrot "
Lacari Barthelmy "
Jafar Antoine "
Moety Jeanne J^{me}
Botz Alexandre "
Emery Daniel "
Pillastra Gaston "
Raghi mo Michel "
Lourain Eugene "
Orrier Etienne J. ch.
Joubert Jean restaurateur
Jauries Leon Cambrier
Dit-bec Louis Curmier
Wosa Eugene "
Desoglis Joseph "
~~Blanc~~
Du bourgnet agent de
Poste

Arrive' a Malte le 3 Fevrier 1859

J^h Pellegrin

45.

List & crew of M.I. Vatican on Messageries Imperiales note paper as of 3 February 1859, including the name of the Postal Agent; Ostima Du bourgnet (Agent des Postes)

LIGNE DU LEVANT via MALTA

M.I. ALEXANDRE (21 July 1853)



E. L. – 17 July 1853 – D’Amira – SMYRNE to Tagliafero in MALTA stating; “*La presente vi sara rimessa dalla mia Cara Consorte*”.

M.I. ALEXANDRE – SMYRNE (*Salles p 167*) arriving Malta on 21 July 1853, as per (*Malta Arrivals Customs Register Ms KL105, Vol 109, Folio 676*). Rate “5” pence and “3d n” (*nollegio*) M.I. ALEXANDRE: (1st Postal voyage, 1st November 1851, to Constantinople) LIGNE DU LEVANT: Deuxième variante, 2nd return Postal voyage from the Levant in 1853.

M.I. ALEXANDRE: (493tx) *Lieut Engel Gerond (F)*.
Built in 1843 at La Ciota, and launched 16 May, transferred to S A.M. 1 Oct 1853, and to M I on 28 Feb 1853. Broken up in 1864 at La Ciota.



At **Malta**, all letters had to be fumigated, so on the 21st the entire was handed by Mrs Amira, to the Postal Agent on board, who endorsed it with the M.I. ALEXANDRE 21 July 1853, (h/s), which explains why it was not endorsed on leaving SMYRNE on the 17 July 1853 (*S p 167*)

“MALTE PURIFIE AU LAZARET” & ‘*tong fumigation mark on the side*”

M.I. AMERIQUE

1st Postal voyage to Levant (24 November 1860)
LONDON 23/11 – MARSEILLE 24/11 – MALTA 28/11

E.L. – 23 Nov 1860 – Baring Bros – LONDON (UK) – to MALTA 28 Nov 60, c.d.s (v), endorsed in manuscript, “p french packet via Marseille” (24 Nov 1860)

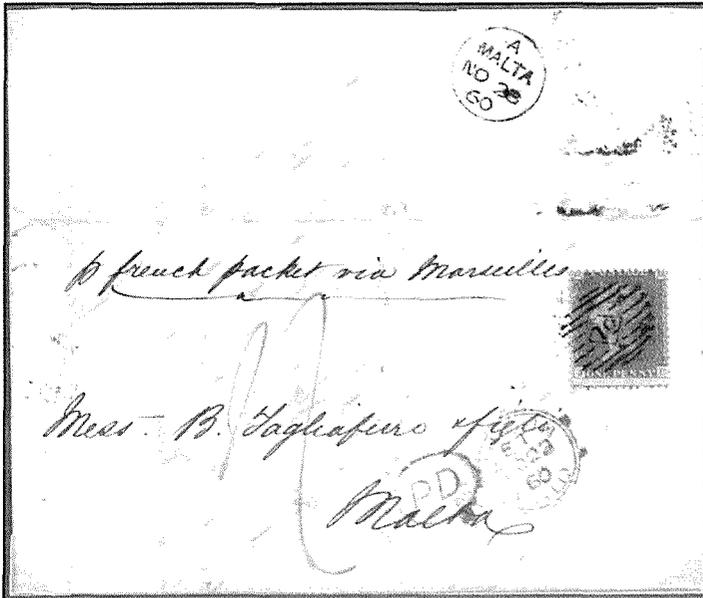
New Postal Rate – Q.V. 1d cancelled by No “51” in a *diamond*, and bars (*Billing p 267*) LONDON/ET/NO 23/60 PAID (20mm) in red, oval PD in red.

In spite of this at Marseille it was rated “1/-”, “11d” + 1d stamp = “1/-”



M.I. AMERIQUE, (1st Postal voyage to Constantinople),

(Salles p. 175),



M.I. AMERIQUE;
(1088tx), launched on
17 Jan 1857, built by
Forges et Chantiers de
la Mediterranee at La
Seyne.

In 1859 was converted
into a horse carrier for
the Italian campaign
and in July 1860
carried troops to Syria
and on the 24 Nov
1860 was placed on the
Levant mail service,
broken up in 1875 at
La Ciotat.

On this First Postal voyage to the Levant via Malta, there was no ship hand stamp on board, and on the return trip on the 24 Dec 1860, the hand stamp of PERICLES was used. (Salles p 119)

M.I. AMERIQUE

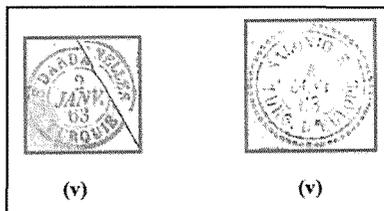
27 Dec 1862

E.L. – 27 December 1862, by Garissi Christodlo (h/s), (r), in **MARSEILLE**, endorsed “*Vap Amerique*” to Messrs Friandafillos in **SALONIQUE** via **MALTA**.

1st Postal voyage – 24 Nov 1860 to Constantinople

LIGNE DU LEVANT: Sixième variante, 2nd Postal voyage in 1862

Rate in manuscript (x) “3” (45c rate x 3 = 150c), franked by 10 + 20 + 40 + 80c = 150c, cancelled by anchor in lozenge of dots, via MALTA – DARDANELLES (2 JANV 63), (v) arriving in SALONIQUE TURQ D’EUROPE (4 JANV 63) (v)



M.I. AMERIQUE

6 June 1863

E.L. – 6 June 1863 by Messrs Spartalli in **MARSEILLE**, endorsed with their hand stamp, (r) and “*per Vapeur Poste*” in *manuscript*, to **MALTA**.

40c pale organe Napoleon III, perforation 14x13½, cancelled by anchor in lozenge of dots (r), endorsed by Postal agent on board by ship hand stamp, “**AMERIQUE / 6 JUIN 63**”, h.s. (r), (S. p 177), direct to **MALTA**, arriving on the 10 June 1863, c.d.s. (v). Small box **Black PD**



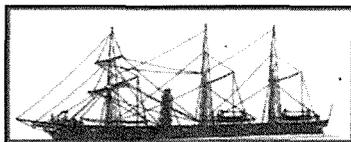
M.I. BORYSTHENE: Ship Hand Stamp

(16 April 1857)

E.L. – 16 April 1857 – F Zino – CONSTANTINOPLE, (h/s), to MALTA – 22 April 1857, at 2 am as per Malta arrival c.d.s, (v). & (M.A.C.R; Vol No 131, Folio 20). Rate x (3) = “1/6” (one shilling six pence) *in manuscript*.

M.I. BORYSTHENE: (1st Postal voyage 7 January 1856 to Constantinople)
LIGNE DU LEVANT: Cinquième Variante, 16 April 1857, (S p 172), 2nd Postal voyage in 1857

M.I. BORYSTHENE, (694 tx) Lieut Du Budon, sister of Hydaspe, Meandre Built by John Laird, Birkenhead, and launched 23 April 1853. Unused as a Crimea war transport. Was Lost 15 Dec 1865 on the Island of Plane bound Marseille – Oran.



M.I. CAIRE: Ship Hand Stamp

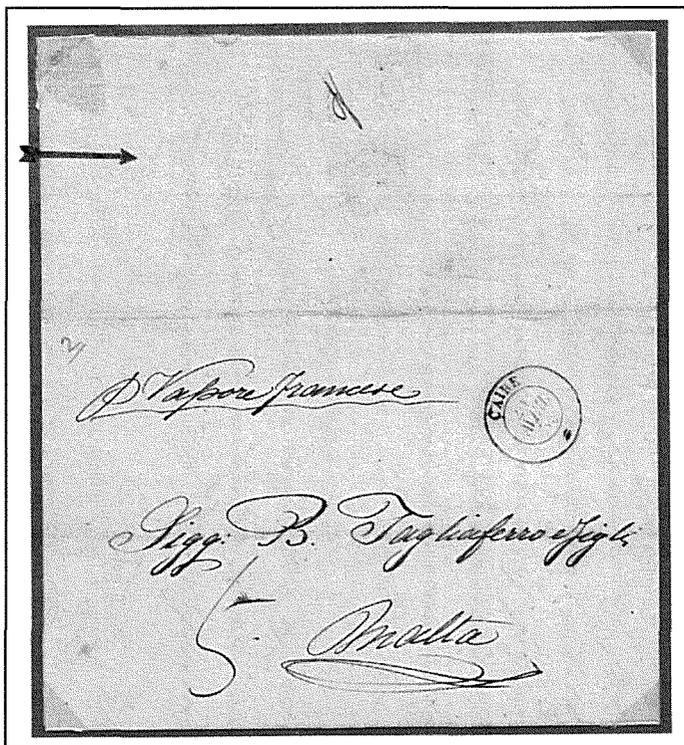
(20 April 1853)

E.L. – 19 April 1855 – Valsamachy Brothers / Ship Borkers, (h/s), (v), – endorsed “*P. Vapore Francese*”. – CONSTANTINOPE (20 April 1855) to MALTA – 25 April 1855, as per file entry and *Malta Arrival Customs Register Section KL. M S 114, Vol 118, F 10*

Rate 5d = 4d sea carriage + 1d Malta Rate = 5d.

M.I. CAIRE: (1st Postal voyage 23 October 1851 to Egypt), this being the 2nd LIGNE DE LEVANT: Quatrième variante, only two trips in 1855

M.I. CAIRE, (483 tx) Lieut Karaval (F); sister of *Osiris*.
Built in 1843 at the Naval Yard, La Ciotat, launched on 1 July 1843. In 1859 carried troops Marseille – Genoa during the Italian Campaign which followed the secret pact of *PIOMBIERES* by which Napoleon III backed Cavour militarily against Austria.



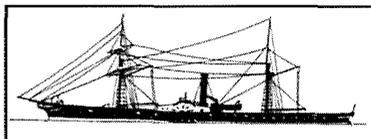
Salles p 170, says it left Constantiple on the 19, but hand stamp of Caire is 20 April 1855

M.I. CARMEL: No Ship Hand Stamp

(18 June 1857)

E.L. – 18 June 1857 – Zino – CONSTANTINOPLE 18/6 (h/s)r, to MALTA 24/6 (h/s)v Rate 2/6” two schillings and six pence, high rate.

M.I. CARMEL 18 June 1857 (Sp 172), arriving MALTA 24 June 1857 30 mm (h/s) (v) and A.C.R.Ms 127, V 1131 F 168



1st Postal voyage 18 January to Constantinople
4th return Postal voyage in 1857 via MALTA

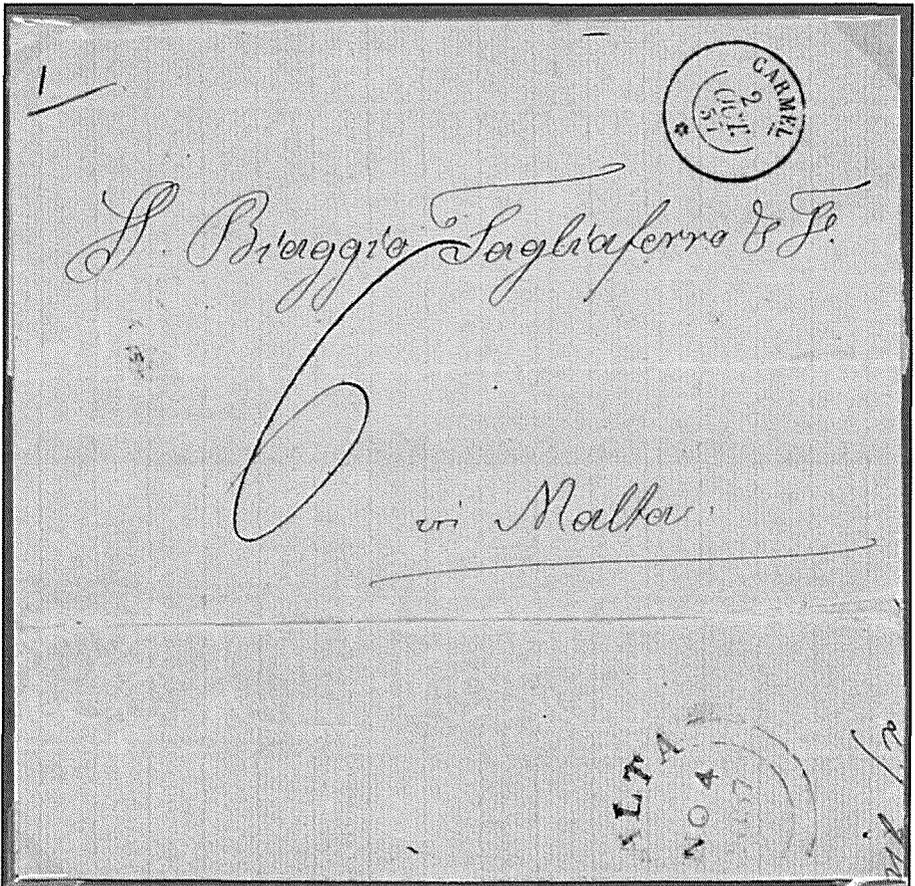


Ligne Du Levant,
from Syrie to Marseille via Malta
Constantinople (28 October 1857 – Malta 4 November 1857)
M.I. Carmel: Ship Hand Stamp (2(8) October 1857)

E.L. – Rodocanacchi in ODESSA – 12 October 1857, going first to **CONSTANTINOPLE**, (28 October 1857) to **MALTA** – 4 November 1858 as per c.d.s, (v)

Rated “6” pence = 5d sea carriage + 1d Malta Inland Rate

M.I. CARMEL: (1st Postal voyage 18 January 1855 to Constantinople, 6th return Postal voyage in 1857, 28 October (*Salles p 173*). Slug 8 missing from date (28) hand stamp.



M.I. CYDNUS: Ship Hand Stamp

(20 March 1861)

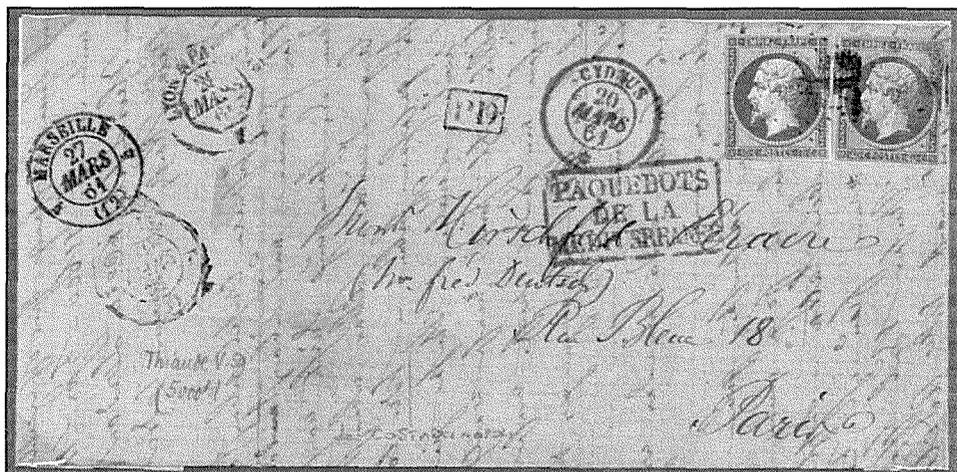
E.L. – 20 March 1861 – A. Seyer – CONSTANTINOPLE – MARSEILLE –
PARIS via MALTA

M. I. CYDNUS: 20 MARS 61, blue/grey (h/s) (r), (S. p 175), & P.D.

Imperforate Louis Napoleon 10 + 40 cancelled by anchor in lozenge of dots.

Red (1.7 x 3.1mm), PAQUEBOTS/DE LA /MEDITERANEE

MARSEILLE (27 MARS 61), LYON-PARIS (28 MARS 61), PARIS (29
MARS 1861)

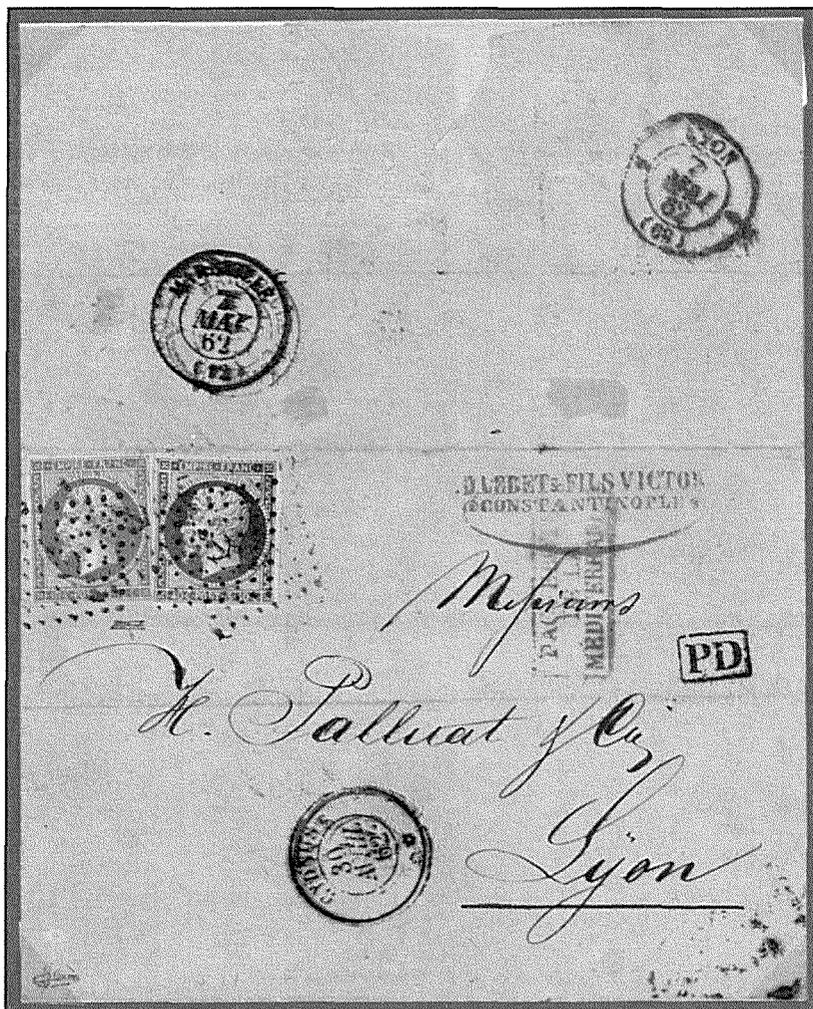


M.I. CYDNUS: Ship Hand Stamp

(30 April 1862)

E. L. – 30 April 1862 – D. L. & Fils, Victor – CONSTANTINOPLE (h/s), to MARSEILLE via MALTA

Imperforate 10c & 40c Louis Napoleon, cancelled with anchor in lozenge of dots and ship hand stamp, CYDNUS/30/AVRIL/62, (S. p 176) small box PAQUEBOTS / DE LA/ MEDITERRANEE in red, arriving in MARSEILLE & LYON on the 7 May 1862, c.d.s, (h/s) (v)



M.I. DANUBE: Ship Hand Stamp

(12 Feb (57) is missing)

E. L. – 12 Febraury 1857 – S. G. Pederomito in CONSTANTINOPLE to MALTA, (20 Feb 1857) via SMYRNE, (*Salles p 172-179*)

Rate "6" *pence in manuscript = 5d sea carriage 1d Malta Inland Rate*

M.I. DANUBE (1st Postal voyage 3 December 1855 to Constantinople)

LIGNE DU LEVANT: Cinquième Variante, 1st Postal voyage from the Levant in 1857

