

# Guadeloupe Postal History Revisited

Edward Grabowski

First FCPS Virtual Meeting

August 25, 2020

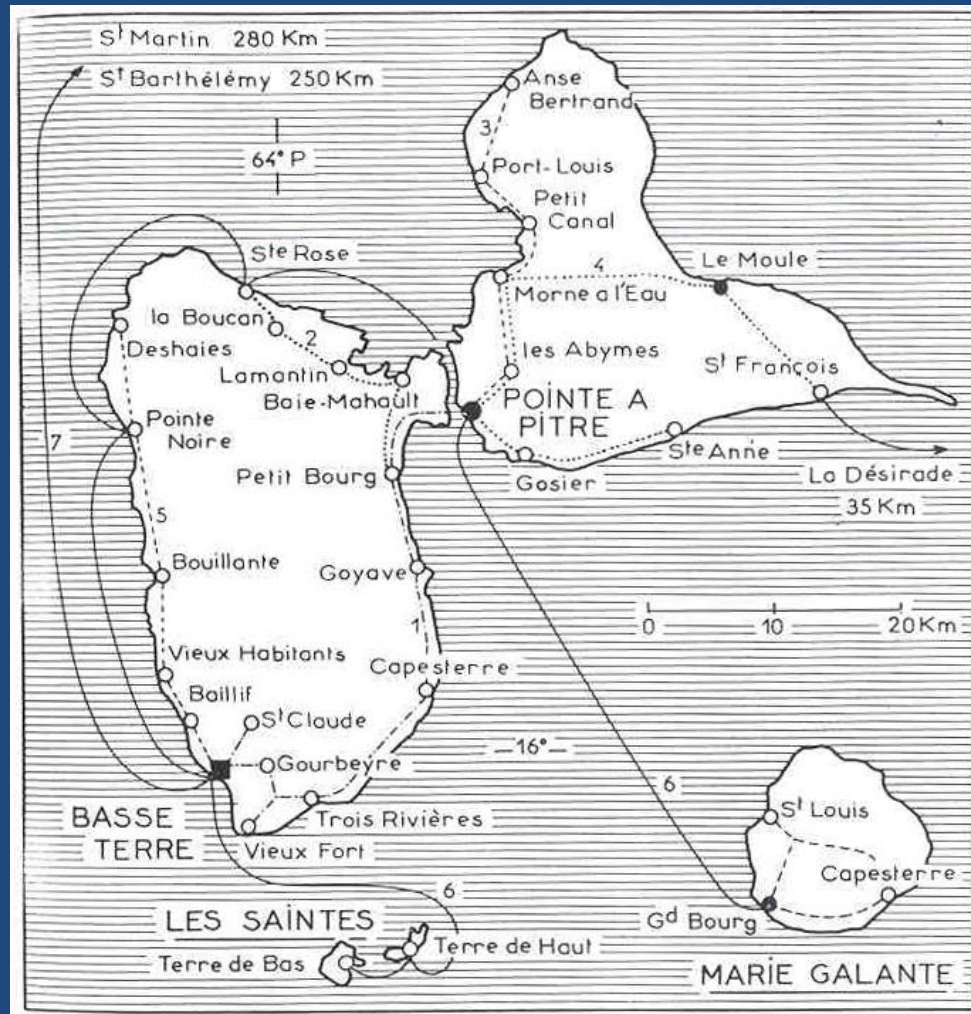
# Why Collect Guadeloupe?

- Guadeloupe was a major French Colony which offered the possibility of great depth in forming a postal history collection
- A major publication in French by Leon Dubus detailed the postal history of the colony from 1851 until 1892
- Significant colonial competition:
  - **Levett**: General Issues (Traditional, Grand Prix d'honneur 1984); **Stevens**: Martinique; **Pratt**: Saint Pierre & Miquelon; **Arctander**: Reunion; **Issacs**: Indochina; **Millet**: New Caledonia; **Gallagher**: French Oceania
- **Stone** had some good Guadeloupe items and had written extensively about the colony; **Levett** had a number of significant items from the colony

# History of the Collection

- First exhibited as a one frame exhibit in the 1978 Westfield Show – Silver Medal
- First national show was NOJEX 1979 – Silver Medal
- Two national Grand Awards: NOJEX and BALPEX
- Participated in two Champion of Champions competitions
  - Thrown out of the second one!
- Four International Large Gold Medals
- Grand Prix d'Honneur – Washington 2006
  - First single French Colony to win this award!
- Sold by Shreves-Spink in December 2007

# Guadeloupe & Dependencies





# Organization of the Exhibit

- 1. Use of the Stamps of France (1851 – 1853)
- 2. Interim Stampless Period (1853 – 1859)
- 3. Use of the General Issues
- 4. British Agency Mail
- 5. Universal Postal Union Mail
- 6. Military Correspondence
- 7. Local Mail
- 8. Printed Matter
- 9. Registered Letters
- 10. Small Village Offices
- 11. Group Type – The First Definitive of the Colony
- **12. Postage Due & Formula Mail**

**This exhibit was driven by Postal History USAGE,  
and not rates and routes as in a traditional postal history exhibit**

# Ending With a Boom!

- Normal single colony exhibits end with a showing of The Group Type followed by the first Pictorial Issue of the Colony
- They just seem to run out of steam!
- I dropped the Pictorial Issue and showed The Group Type as the penultimate section
- I ended with a frame on **postage due material and formula material** featuring two of the most famous covers of the colony in the center of the second row

## GUADELOUPE POSTAL HISTORY

The French Colony of Guadeloupe, located in the Caribbean Sea, offers vast opportunities to study the complex postal history of a colony of a major European country. This colony, now an overseas Department of France, consists of two large adjoining islands (Grand Terre and Basse Terre), plus a number of smaller inhabited islands including St. Barthélemy, Marie Galante, Les Saintes, Désirade and St. Martin, thus giving the Colony its administrative title: **GUADELOUPE et DEPENDANCES**. This comprehensive exhibit begins in 1851 when the **Ceres Stamps of France** were used on a trial basis. Beginning in early 1860 the Colony employed the **French Colonies General Issues** (Eagles; Ceres, Napoleon and Sage Types of France issued imperforate for Colonial use; and the Dubois Type). In 1884 **Provisional Issues** were created locally by overprinting the General Issues. In 1892 the Colony received its first definitive issues, the **French Colonial Allegorical Group Type**, which are the last examined in this exhibit.

The Postal History of Guadeloupe is explored via twelve major sections in this exhibit. Included are: The use of the **Ceres Issues of France** from 1851 to 1853 on a trial basis; a **Stampless Period** from 1853 to 1860; the use of the **General Issues used on French and British Packet Mail** from the major commercial center of Pointe-à-Pitre and the capitol at Basse-Terre from 1860 until 1876; mail from the **British Agency at Basse-Terre** which provided access to non-European destinations; mail under the **Universal Postal Union** beginning in 1876; **Military Correspondence** mail; **Local** mail; **Printed Matter**; **Registered Mail**; mail from the various **Small Village Offices** in the Colony; **Postage Due** mail and **Formula Post Cards**. Each of the various sub-groupings are possibly the most comprehensive yet assembled for this Colony. Exceptional pieces are presented throughout the exhibit, some of which are highlighted by special color frames. Material from the collections of Dubus, Levett and Stone has been brought together in one exhibit for the first time.

### USE OF THE STAMPS OF FRANCE FROM GUADELOUPE

(Earliest recorded use from any of the Colonies – November 2, 1851)



Limited stocks of the French 10c, 25c and 1F Ceres issues were shipped to Guadeloupe, Martinique, French Guiana and Reunion in late 1851 for trial use in the prepayment of mail. Tristant records but 26 covers from Guadeloupe illustrating this usage between 1851 and 1853 when it was terminated, and considered generally unsuccessful. The basic rate was 1F50c per 7.5g, and the mail carried by the British Royal Mail Steam Packet Company to England under a special agreement. The stamps were applied in Guadeloupe and canceled upon arrival in France, as shown by the above example posted on Nov. 2, 1851 from Basse-Terre with the stamps tied by a French continuous grill. **This is the earliest recorded use of French stamps from any of the four Colonies.** The use of stamps was not mandatory, and unpaid letters traveled at the same basic rate. Undoubtedly, this contributed to the failure of the attempt at prepayment of letters.



# Guadeloupe Use of French Stamps

## November 2, 1851

### Earliest Recorded Use



# Guadeloupe Use of French Stamps

## Only Recorded Use to Foreign Country

- Eleven examples of the use of French stamps from Guadeloupe shown in this exhibit
- Significantly missing: Seventh weight level letter franked at 10.50f which resides in the Paris Postal Museum
- This example shows the only recorded use to a foreign country at a 2 x 1.70f rate







Mon<sup>ur</sup> Fr. Ignace chez M<sup>ur</sup> Dumontel fils  
Negotiant

Division de P<sup>o</sup>



Juin



Piemont

*[Signature]*



# The Arrival of the Eagles (1859)

Eng

- 

- 

- 

- 



40c

\$

ers

am!

# Le Timbre Couché

## 70c Rate to France via England







# Fifth-Weight Level (5 x 70c) Letter With Rare GPE Lozenge Cancel in Blue





# Special Local Rate of 25c via Sailing Ship to Basse-Terre in Lieu of Regular 20c Local Rate



# The British Agency at Basse-Terre

## PAID AT GUADELOUPE

- Mail to France and England was carried by regular French and British Packets from Basse-Terre
- Mail to Caribbean countries, North America and South America was carried under the British Agency whose ships called at Basse-Terre
- A separate rate structure and handstamps were required for this service
- **PAID AT GUADELOUPE**
- Mail via the British Agency is generally limited
- 17 different examples were shown in this section



**PAID AT GUADELOUPE** handstamp  
in black – very rare  
Rate: 1.85f = 1sh + 4p





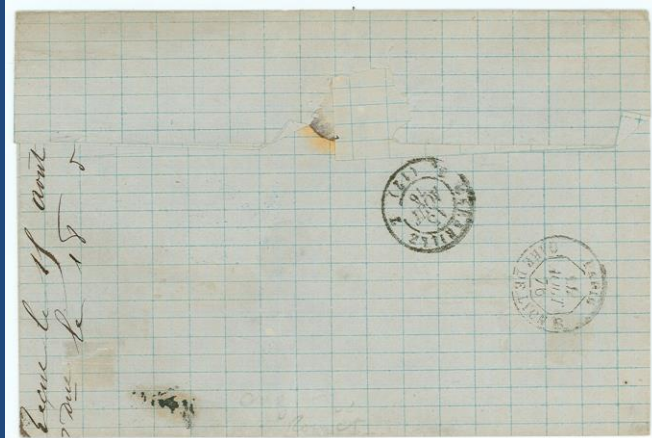


# UPU Rates

- July 1, 1876 – May 14, 1878 and beyond
  - 40c – Available
  - 35c – Rare
  - 25c - Available





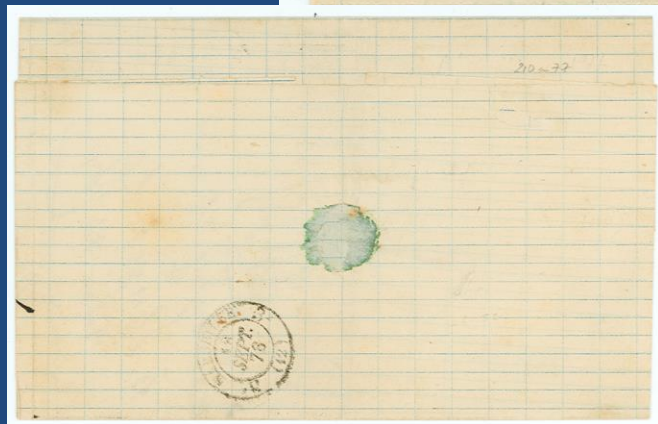


Pointe-a-Pitre, July 27, 1876  
40c UPU rate  
**PAQ FR**



Recut 4 variety





Pointe-a-Pitre, August 26, 1878  
35c UPU rate with 15c GC Ceres





Pointe-a-Pitre, February 9, 1884  
 25c UPU rate  
 Exceptional Ceres – Dubois combination  
 two recorded



# Military Concession Rates

- Members of the military were entitled to a reduced rate for mail to the French Community until January 1, 1899
- Validation of the rate was required via a manuscript endorsement and commander's signature or a unit cachet
- Special military datestamps were created for this service
- Three rates are recorded:
  - 20c; 25c; and 15c prepaid
  - More if unpaid
- This collection had the most comprehensive group of Guadeloupe military mail recorded ~40 letters





CORR.D.ARM BASSE-TERRE, 19 SEPT 71



Refused on arrival  
in Paris

Rate was 20c prepaid or 30c unpaid;  
Treated as double weight unpaid at  
a 60c rate and credited for 20c with  
40c to be collected.





**COR D ARMEES SAINT CLAUDE**  
 February 1, 1893  
**CORRESPONDANCE D'ARMEES**  
**CAMP JACOB**  
**COR D ARM LIG D PAQ N° 1**





**Printed Matter: Interim Stampless Period**  
**Mail Sent Prepaid in Cash or Postage Due**  
**Printed Matter 1857 Prepaid 13c Rate**  
**(30 Examples of Printed Matter Shown)**



# The 13c printed matter rate franked with Eagles. RRR –Rate became 12c



# The British Agency at Basse-Terre

- Printed matter 4c local postage to Basse-Terre and 1p due on arrival in British Guiana
- Two examples recorded at 4c (one in shreads); and two examples overpaid at 5c
- **GUADELOUPE MY 17 71**  
**DEMERRARA MAY 22 71**





*Steamer.*

*Princent.*



*Messrs N. & Smith & Co  
Demerara.*





# Printed Matter 12c Rate

## Earliest Recorded Use of GPE Lozenge Cancel



**Underpaid Letter to France**  
**Sent at 8c Printed Matter Rate**  
**Treated as 25c Rate, Due as 50c Unpaid**  
**Credited For 8c Postage and 42c Due**





# Special 3c Printed Matter Rate For Marriage Announcements



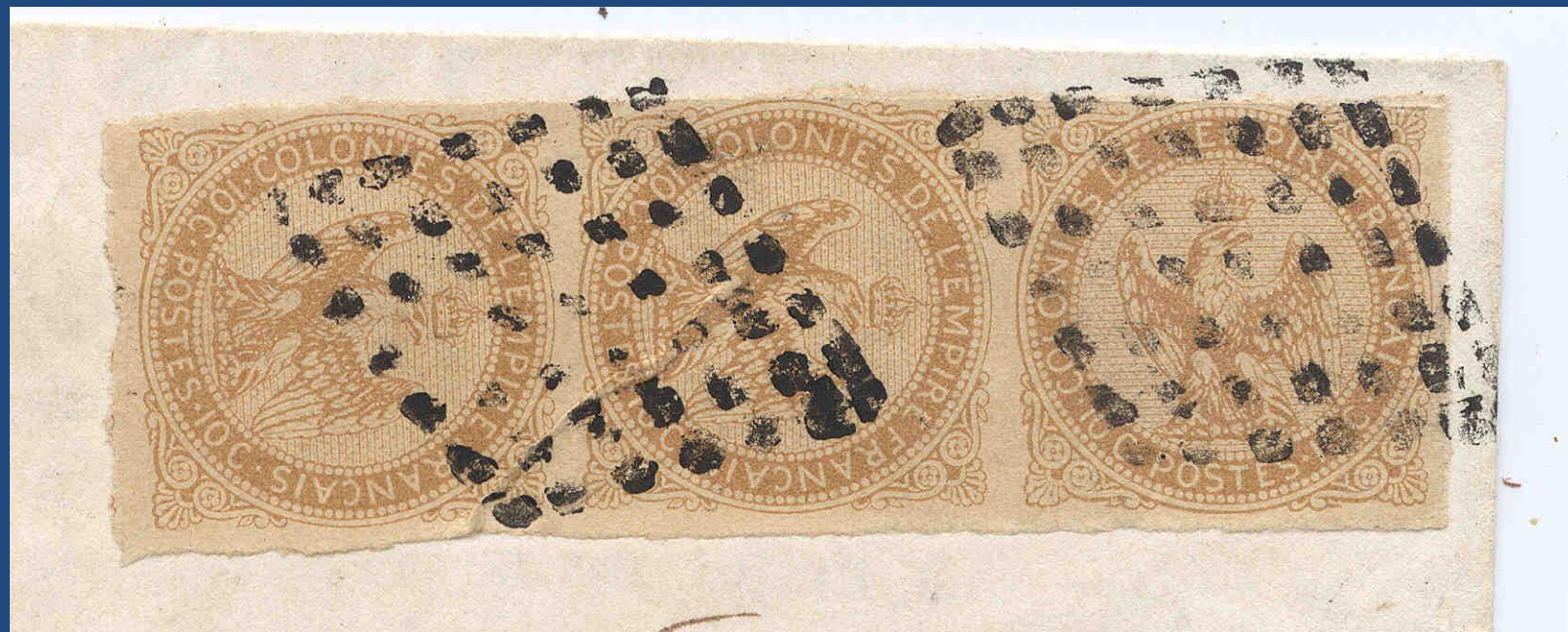
# Registered Mail: Le Timbre Couché

## Local 30c Registered Judicial Rate

### 20c Postage + 10c Registration







# Registered Mail

- Rare registered rate of 85c with use of 75c Type Sage
- Posted June 8, 1878
- Rate: 2 x 25c postage plus 35c registration = 85c





Mon Freres Francois,

N° 533



Mourrai Joseph Talboom

A l'adresse Nationale de

St  
provis  
L.



# Small Village Mail

- Guadeloupe had about two dozen small villages plus the dependencies in this category
- Examples of mail from these villages is very challenging
- This collection contained the largest grouping of Guadeloupe small village material ever assembled – about 120 examples
- Not all were shown in the exhibit



# Only Recorded Example of a Guadeloupe Turned Cover Pointe-a-Pitre to **Trois Rivières** to Pointe-a-Pitre

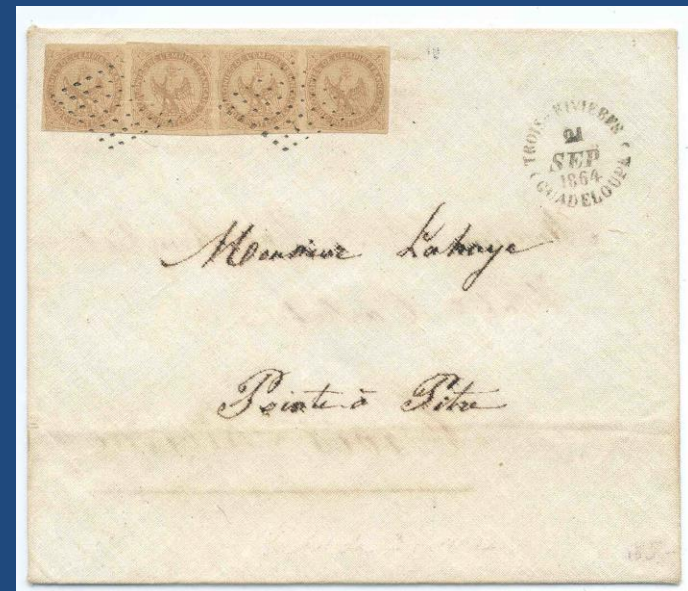
## Pointe-a-Pitre to Trois Rivières

- Franked at a quadruple local rate of 80c with two 40c Eagles



## Trois Rivières to Pointe-a-Pitre

- Franked at a double local rate of 40c with four 10c Eagles





Monsieur H. de Couchembert  
Hab<sup>on</sup> Carbet



Croix Rivière.

---





Monsieur Labaye

Pointe à Pitre



# Le Desirade



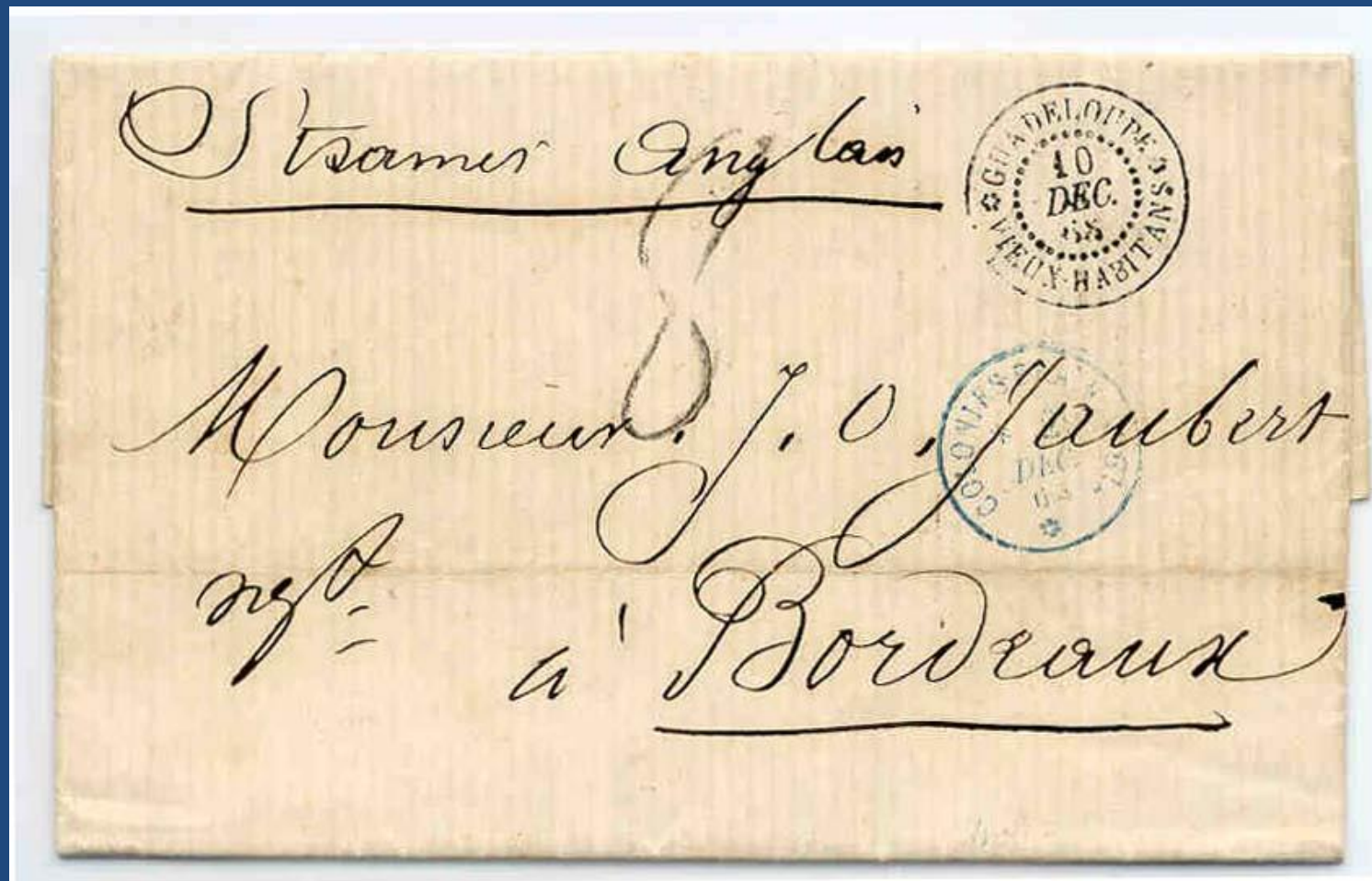
Only recorded Eagles Cover from Desirade  
Paid 7000f; Offered 10,000f two weeks later



# Saint François



# Vieux Habitants – Earliest Recorded Cover 80c Rate Unpaid in Lieu of 70c Paid

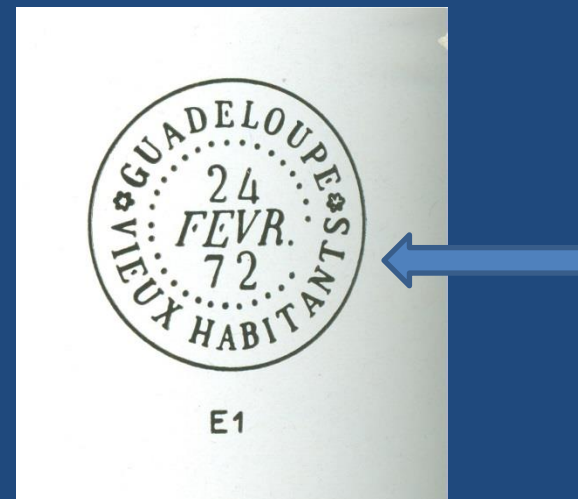


Posted December 10, 1868



# This Cover Resulted in the Discovery of a New Vieux Habitants Datestamp

- The previous cover shows an unrecorded **Vieux Habitants** spelling (no second **t**) in the datestamp of December 10, 1868
- Debus records the earliest datestamp for this village from 1872 with the spelling **Vieux Habitants**



# Sainte Rose

- Extremely rare double weight Eagles cover from Saint Rose
- Purchased from Boule in early 2005
- Sent to Nancy Poli for conservation with promise to return by May 2006
- Returned in December 2006











POINTE-À-PITRE  
FEV  
1865  
GUADELOUPE





# Vive le Type Groupe!



Double weight, registered letter (2 x 25c + 25c = 75c)  
from Saint Claude to Honolulu October 23, 1899

# Guadeloupe: Shortage of Low Value Group Type Stamps: Dec-Jan 1900-01

15 Examples Shown

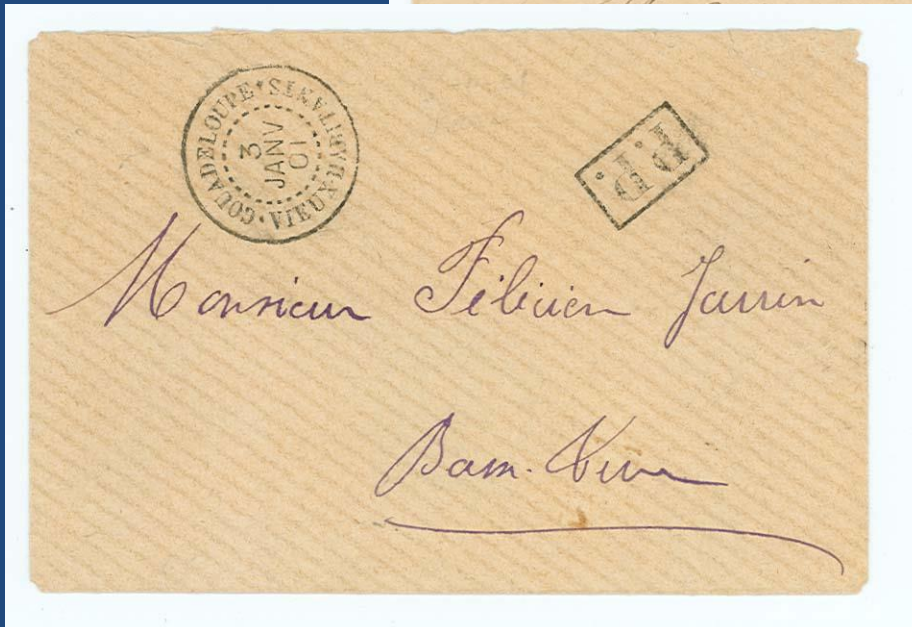
Sainte Rose La Boucan



Saint Martin



Vieux Habitants





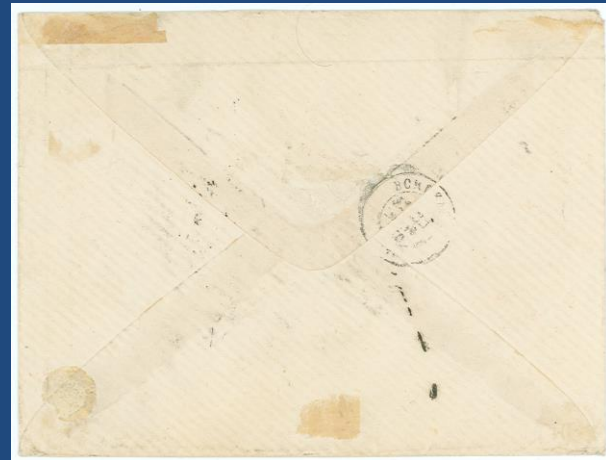


# Postage Due Letters & Miscellaneous Forms

# BOOM!

# Basse-Terre - Underpaid

- Posted Basse-Terre on January 6, 1870 to France
- Prepaid at 50c for the first level French Packet rate, but was double weight
- Treated as unpaid and charged 1f20c, credited for 50c and charged 7 decimes due
- **Markings in red – only two letters recorded**





Voie Saint Sazaire.

V



Messieurs *[illegible]* Frères

AFRANCHISSEMENT  
INSUFFISANT

Bordeaux



# Augsburg, Germany to Pointe-a-Pitre - Unpaid

- Posted Augsburg on October 27, 1893 at unpaid double 40 pf rate
- Received at Basse-Terre at 1F due (double 25c rate doubled)
- Addressee was unknown
- Returned to Germany at 80 pf due





**Zurück**

Mr

T.

Paul Carnot  
architecte

Voir au dos.

Basse-Terre



re

# Provisional Use of 30c Group Type as Postage Due Stamp (Unique)



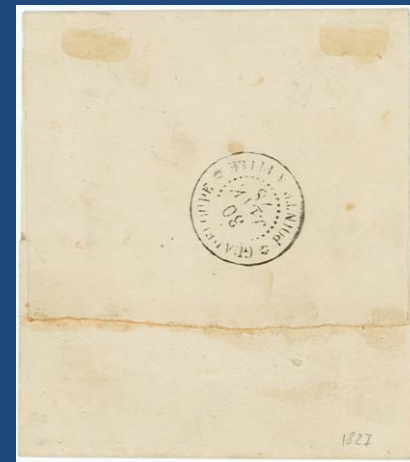


# Guadeloupe Typeset Postage Due Stamps

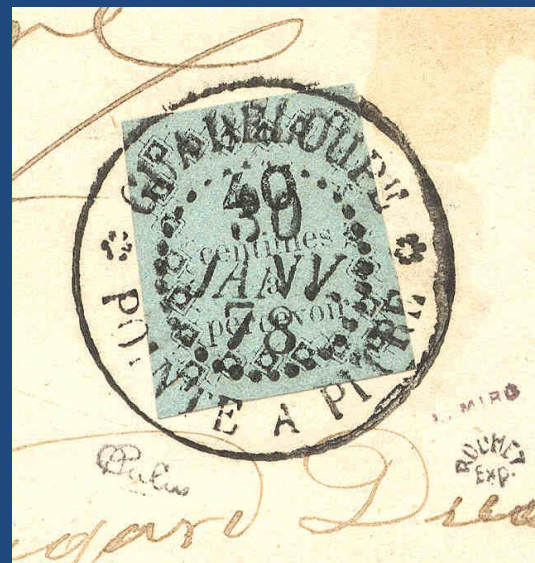
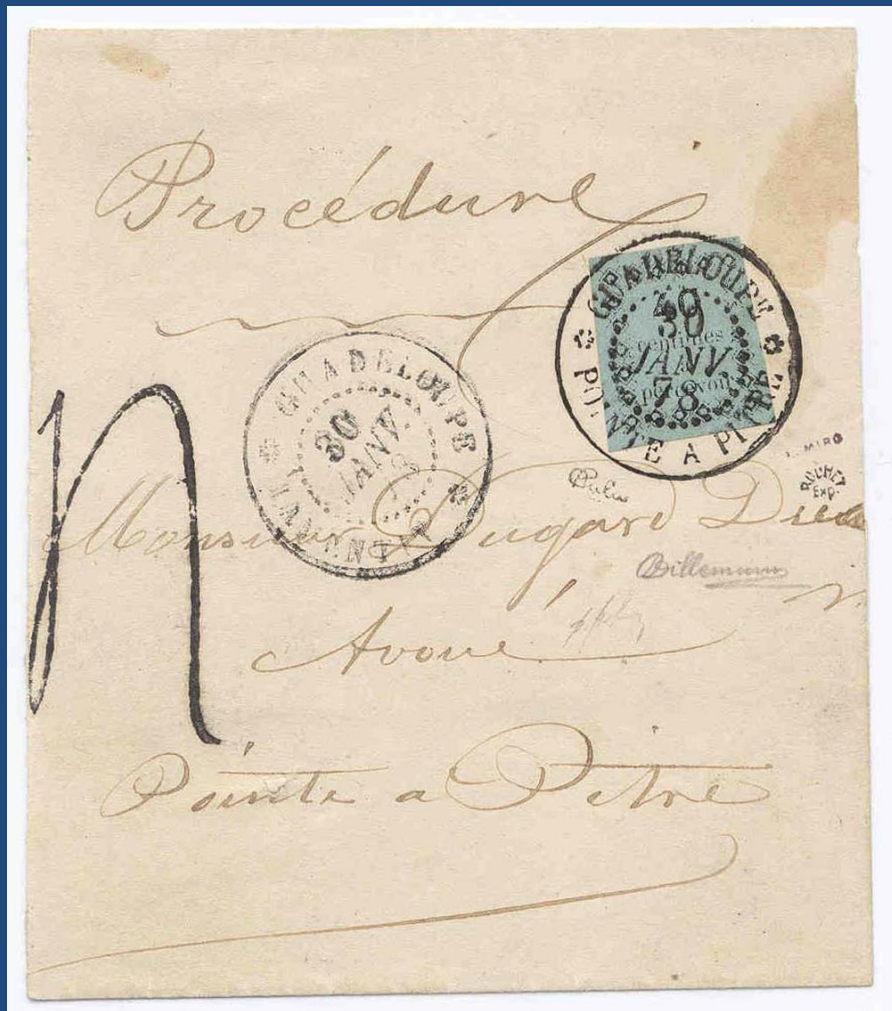
- Beginning in 1879 Guadeloupe prepared a series of local typeset postage due stamps for local use
- These were crudely done at a local print shop with simple design elements that were readily available
- They are very rare properly used
- The 40c stamp on blue paper is one of the most important rarities in all postage due collecting

# 40c Black on Blue Issue

- Posted Lamentin on January 30, 1878 to Pointe-a-Pitre
- Single weight unpaid legal papers wrapper
- 40c due
- Received on January 30, 1878
- Dallay catalog value of this stamp on cover is 72,500 euros

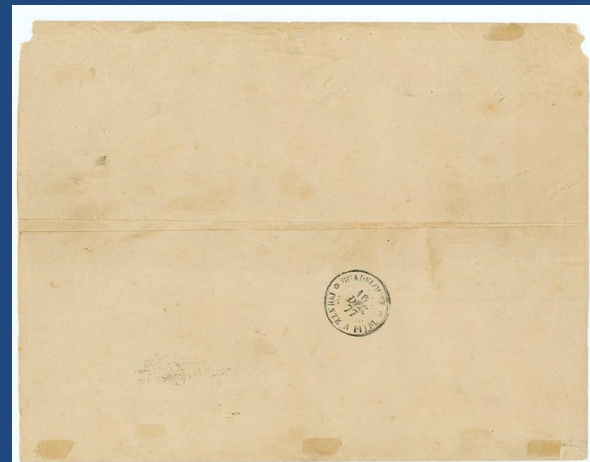
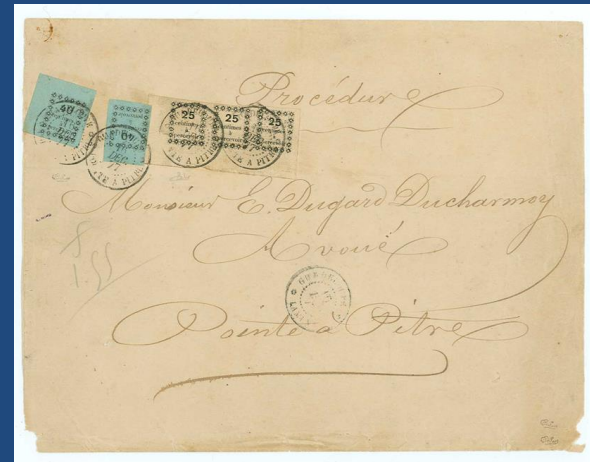






# 40c Black on Blue Issue

- Locally fabricated stamps (20 of the 40c blue prepared) on letter posted Lamentin on December 15, 1877
- Third weight legal papers wrapper (100 – 150g) unpaid and due 1f55c
- 3 x 25c + 2 x 40c
- Received at Pointe-a-Pitre December 16, 1877
- Key piece in postage due collecting
- Ex Boker









# Large Format Typeset Dues



Rate = 3c per  
5-10g local; charged  
5c due on arrival

Failed 2c printed matter rate to Grand-Bourg  
on the island of Marie Galant charged 5c due  
on arrival. Only example of 5c recorded.





# Guadeloupe Formula Card Saint Barthelemy to Stockholm





# Avis de Réception

RENSEIGNEMENTS FOURNIS A L'EXPÉDITEUR SUR LE SORT D'UN OBJET  
CHARGÉ OU RECOMMANDÉ.

M (\*) *Biache*

rue *B/teue*

département d *Guadeloupe*



iteur de l'objet est invité à s'adresser au Directeur des Postes de son  
pour les réclamations ou les demandes de renseignements supplé-  
il pourrait avoir à former après la réception du présent avis.



DIRECTION GÉNÉRALE  
DES POSTES.

DEMANDE DE RENSEIGNEMENTS SUR LE SORT  
D'UN OBJET CHARGÉ OU RECOMMANDÉ.

N° d'inscription de  
l'objet au registre n° 18.

N° *112*

Pour le bureau de poste *Boston*

département d *Mass*

*70818*

*564*

*East Miss*

Le Receveur des Postes



# Bulletin d'Expédition

- Form accompanying packages in the parcel post
- Normally retained by the post office
- Rate of 10c
- Posted Pointe-a-Pitre on January 10, 1893
- Only copy recorded

**COUPON**  
du  
BULLETIN D'EXPÉDITION.

**BULLETIN D'EXPÉDITION.**

Ci-joint un colis portant l'adresse ci-dessous.  
Nombre de déclarations en douane:

M. Adam *Colini J. Bithère*  
17, Rue marcadieu, 17  
6 orbes.

(A) *Le auts - Pjrinis*

(B) *Voir de S. Kasani*

(A) Lieu de destination.  
(B) Acheminement.

*Lesher*  
*montes & B.*

Pointe-a-Pitre  
M<sup>lle</sup> Chini  
Canat

Pointe-a-Pitre  
modèles

38

96. 1178  
POINTE-A-PITRE.

3.21

5

5

5 JAN 31 1893

COUPON  
du  
BULLETIN D'EXPÉDITION.

Timbre du bureau d'origine



NOM ET DOMICILE  
de  
L'EXPÉDITEUR.

M<sup>lle</sup> Chérie  
Canaf

# BULLETIN D'EXPÉDITION.

Ci-joint un colis portant l'adresse ci-dessous.

Nombre de déclarations en douane :

M. adam Cilinie J. Potbère  
17, Place maraichère, 17  
C arbes.

(A) C auts - Pyrénées

Timbre-poste ou indication  
de la taxe perçue.

3.29

N<sup>o</sup> 1170  
POINTE-A-PITRE.



S<sup>r</sup> Mariani



Carbes  
nantes & B



# Did This Collection Deserve the Grand Prix d'Honneur?

- Andy Warhol said that if you are lucky in life you get 15 minutes of fame
- I now believe that the stars were aligned in my favor in June 2006
- There were about two dozen exhibits in the Championship Class at Washington 2006
- However, many of the big hitters had already gotten a GPH in earlier international shows or that they had timed out (10 years after the last LG) and were no longer in competition
- Also, many of the big hitters such as Walske, Kramer, Gross and Hackmey were still trying to get their third Large Golds in Washington 2006 to qualify their exhibits for Championship Class
- And along came Grabowski and his Guadeloupe Postal History

# Did This Collection Deserve the Grand Prix d'Honneur?

- The stars remained in alignment for my good fortune
- How are the Championship Contenders picked?
  - The panel of International Judges determines what they believe to be the best 5 exhibits in the Championship class: Guadeloupe Postal History was picked as one of the five exhibits
  - Each exhibit is assigned a Presenter who must present and defend the exhibit before the entire panel
    - Patricia Stilwell-Walker was assigned as the presenter for my exhibit
    - Those present informed me privately that she ACED the presentation!
    - She told me that my Synopsis (2½ pages) was of great help in preparing her presentation



# Winning the Grand Prix Award

- In my professional career, I was an organic chemist who worked for a Big Pharma Company for 39 years
  - At the time of the Washington 2006 Show, I had been waiting patiently for more than twenty years for an invitation to speak at a chemistry meeting **in France** sponsored by the French American Chemical Society
    - Needless to say, I received the desired invitation in late 2005, and the FACS meeting was scheduled to start on the Saturday that Washington 2006 closed.
    - I happily accepted, but it meant that I had to leave the show on the Friday of the 2006 Banquet, and I would not attend the awards ceremony
    - Not important, as I never expected to win the Grand Prix
- At the time of the Washington 2006 Banquet, I was on a United flight to Paris, arriving in Paris early Saturday morning
- The Exhibit Committee was unable to reach me in Paris!
- That afternoon, I went to a meeting of the French Philatelic Academy and my exhibit at Washington 2006 was noted
- However, the awards for the show had not been posted as of that meeting, so no one knew about the award
- I finally found out that I had won the Grand Prix at about 10 a.m. on Sunday morning, when I called Alain Millet in Paris to arrange a dinner for later that week
  - It was the first thing he told me.....

# Winning the Grand Prix Award





# Celebrating the Grand Prix Award



Steve Rod leading a toast to Ed's award  
at the Westfield Stamp Club  
meeting of June 2006

# Adieu Guadeloupe

