MOROCCO POSTAL HISTORY (1852-1925)

An overview of the Postal History of that fascinating country still philatelically unknown
SUMMARY

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A LITTLE HISTORY

• 1844 FRENCH MOROCCAN WAR
• 1860 SPANISH MOROCCAN WAR
• 1880 CONFERENCE OF MADRID
• 1906 CONFERENCE OF ALGESIRAS
• 1911 AGADIR CRISIS
• 1912 PARTITION OF MOROCCO INTO TWO ZONES : FRENCH AND SPANISH PROTECTORATES
• 1923-1958 THE INTERNATIONAL STATUTE OF THE CITY OF TANGIER
• 1956 MOROCCAN INDEPENDANCE
THE BEGINNING OF THE DIFFERENT P.O.
AND THEIR STARTING DATES

• 1852 FRENCH P.O. OF TANGIER
• 1857 BRITISH P.O. OF TANGIER
• 1870 SPANISH P.O.
• 1891 LOCAL POST
• 1892 CHERIFIAN POST
• 1899 GERMAN P.O.
CLOSURE DATES

- 1911 END OF THE LAST LOCAL POST COURIER SERVICE
- 1913 MERGER OF THE CHERIFIAN POST AND THE FRENCH P.O.
- 1914 GERMAN P.O. OF THE FRENCH ZONE OF PROTECTORATE AND TANGIER
- 1915 FRENCH AND SPANISH P.O. IN THE EACH OTHER’S ZONE
- 1919 GERMAN P.O. IN THE SPANISH ZONE OF PROTECTORATE
- 1938 BRITISH P.O. IN THE FRENCH ZONE OF PROTECTORATE
- 1957 BRITISH P.O. OF TETUAN (31/01) and TANGIER (30/04)
STAMPS USED BY THE FOUR FOREIGN P.O  
(French, British, Spanish and German)

• FRENCH P.O : French stamps until 1890, from 1891 French stamps overprinted in Spanish currency (centimos and pesetas)
• BRITISH P.O : GB stamps until 1886, Gibraltar stamps until 1898 and then overprinted Morocco Agencies
• SPANISH P.O : Spanish stamps until 1903, then overprinted Marruecos
• GERMAN P.O : German stamps overprinted in Spanish currency (centimos and pesetas)
CANCELLATIONS OF THE FOUR FOREIGN P.O : THE FRENCH P.O.

- 1852 TANGER *
- 1855 TANGER ALGERIE (bureau de distribution)
- 1884 TANGER MAROC
- 1887 (1/05) TANGER MAROC (bureau de recette)
- 1893 (23/04) TANGER MAROC (bureau de recette principale)
- Between 1893 and 1902 opening of 14 offices (distribution) all attached to Tangier: name of the office and MAROC
- Between 1852 and 1881: maritime (ambulant) TANGER ORAN
- Maritime entries: OUTRE-MER-MARSEILLE since 1856, MAROC MARSEILLE since 1878 and UNION MARSEILLE in 1883
TANGER * 29/10/1852
TANGER ALGERIE 14/04/1863
OUTRE-MER MARSEILLE 15/11/1873
cover from Tangier to Bordeaux 8/11/1873 cancelled 2240 at Marseille
TANGER ORAN 25/02/1876
MAROC MARSEILLE 9/12/1878
cover from Casablanca to Italy, second weight step, cancelled at Marseille on transit, strike Purifié Frioul
TANGER MAROC 24/03/1886 (bureau de distribution)
registered cover from Tangier to Lyon first weight step
TANGER MAROC 14/12/1888 (bureau de recette)
second weight step registered cover from Tangier to Germany
UNION MARSEILLE 27/10/1890
French stamps overprinted in Spanish currency (centimos and pesetas)  
Second weight step registered cover from Tetouan to Paris 9/12/1900

_The Général André was the War Minister at the time of the Dreyfus case_
CANCELATIONS OF THE FOUR FOREIGN P.O : THE BRITISH P.O.

• The mail was stamped A26, small then large, at Gibraltar
• 1872 TANGIER (with the inverted N)
• 1878 TANGIER A
• Between 1886 and 1907 opening of 8 offices all attached to Tangier: name of the office and MOROCCO; oval cancellation for the registered covers
The earliest known letter from Morocco handled by the British Postal Agency and sent via Gibraltar from Casablanca to London 3/10/1860
The Gibraltar Post Office issued 4 stamps on 26/09/2007 to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the Gibraltar P.O. and the first British Postal Agency in Morocco and the centenary of the end of their responsibility for this postal service after the handover to London: the previous shown cover illustrates the 1£ value.

On 1 January 1907, the Gibraltar Post Office ceased to have responsibility for the British postal service in Morocco, but Gibraltar stamps and postal stationery remained valid until 28 February 1907. This postcard from Fez was used on the last day of its validity.

On 1 January 1857, the Gibraltar Post Office was created through the amalgamation of the maritime Packet Agency and the Overland Post Office, to handle all Gibraltar’s mail. The P.O. initially used the last Gibraltar datestamp of the Packet Agency, shown here.

On 3 September 1857, British postage stamps were first placed on sale at the Gibraltar Post Office, to prepay letters. They were cancelled with a distinctive obliterator consisting of the letter “G” in a barred oval.

On 1 April 1857, the first British Postal Agency in Morocco was established in Tangier, and placed under Gibraltar’s control. The envelope shown is the earliest known letter from Morocco handled by the British Postal Agency and sent via Gibraltar.
Large A26
cover from Tangier to Lyon 3/08/1883
TANGIER (with the inverted N) and Small A26
cover from Tangier to Ireland 19/01/1873
TANGIER A
cover to Gibraltar 16/11/1882
Bermuda stamps overprinted GIBRALTAR in 1886
All the offices received datestamps and A26 handstamps
Cover from Tangier to USA 19/03/1886
GIBRALTAR STAMPS UNTIL 1898
second weight step registered cover from Tangier to Victoria (British Colombia)
6/12/1892
GIBRALTAR STAMPS UNTIL 1898

second weight step registered cover from Tangier to Buenos Aires 29/01/1896
Argentina was, for the UPU, a country of category B (40 cts first weight step instead 25 cts)
GIBRALTAR STAMPS OVERPRINTED MOROCCO AGENCIES FROM 1898
Cover from Mazagan to San Francisco 15/09/1898
GIBRALTAR STAMPS OVERPRINTED MOROCCO AGENCIES FROM 1898
Registered cover from Mazagan to USA 5/06/1905
CANCELATIONS OF THE FOUR FOREIGN P.O : THE SPANISH P.O.

- CORREO ESPAÑOL EN AFRICA with the name of the city
- C. ESPAÑOL EN MARRUECOS with the name of the city
- CORREO ESPAÑOL EN AFRICA or CORREO ESPAÑOL with the name of the city and with (or without) a full center losange of 84 points
- For the registered covers oval handstamp CORREO ESPAÑOL EN AFRICA CERTIFICADO or C. ESPAÑOL EN MARRUECOS CERTIFICADOS with the name of the office or rectangular of two different sizes
CORREO ESPAÑOL EN AFRICA CERTIFICADO

Registered cover from Alcazarquivir to Spain 1/10/1872
C. ESPAÑOL EN MARRUECOS
Second weight step cover from Tangier to London 8/02/1873
CORREO ESPAÑOL EN AFRICA
(with a full center losange of 84 points)
cover from Tangier to Lyon 9/09/1879
CORREO ESPAÑOL
cover from Tetuan to Lyon 13/10/1882
C. ESPAÑOL EN MARRUECOS CERTIFICADOS

Registered cover from Tangier to Casablanca 2/02/1890 (registration fees 75 cts)
Front from a registered parcel post from Mogador to Hamburg 22/11/1896
8th weight step, the highest franking recorded to date with Spanish stamps used in Morocco
Spanish stamps overprinted CORREO ESPAÑOL MARRUECOS
Registered cover from Tangier to Paris 13/04/1906
CANCELLATIONS OF THE FOUR FOREIGN P.O.: THE GERMAN P.O.

• 1890/1899 mail carried by the steamships of the German maritime companies: ATLAS Linie, O.P.D.R and Woermann, rectangular cancellations on German stamps AUS WEST AFRIKA or AUS WEST AFRIKA MIT HAMBURGER DAMPFER or oval of the Woermann Cy with DEUTSCHE SEEPOST LINIE HAMBURG WESTAFRIKA and the number of the line

• 20/12/1899 opening of 7 offices including Tangier the main agency

• 1910/1911 opening of 9 more agencies

• UPU rates until 15/11/1907, then German domestic rates for mail to Germany
AUS WESTAFRIKA

cover from Mogador to Hamburg 12/04/1893
AUS WESTAFRIKA MIT HAMBURGER DAMPFER

cover from Mazagan to Hamburg 24/06/1895
WOERMANN LINE
DEUTSCHE SEEPOST LINIE HAMBURG WESTAFRIKA
third weight step cover from Mogador to Hamburg 10/09/1899
First issue (20/12/1899 – 30/09/1900) : German stamps from 1899 overprinted MAROCCO and Spanish currency (centimos and pesetas)

Third weight step registered cover from Tangier to Greece 18/05/1900
Second issue (1/10/1900 – 30/09/1905) : German stamps from 1900 (Reichpost) overprinted MAROCCO and Spanish currency (centimos and pesetas) 
Fourth weight step registered cover from Fez to Germany 9/12/1904
Third issue (1/10/1905 – 1911) : German stamps from 1905 (Deutsches Reich) overprinted MAROCCO (gothic) and Spanish currency (centimos and pesetas)
Registered cover with AR from Mazagan to Tangier 14/11/1907
PARCEL POST FROM CASABLANCA TO GERMANY 17/03/1906
EARLIEST DATE KNOWN TO DATE
Fourth issue (1911) : German stamps from 1905 (Deutsches Reich) overprinted MAROKKO (gothic) and Spanish currency (centimos and pesetas)

MONEY ORDERS FROM ALKAßAR 27/04/1913 and CASABLANCA 19/05/1913 TO FEZ

The frankings correspond to a rate of 1% of the total amount of the money order
AGADIR CRISIS (1/07/1911 – 15/11/1911)
KAISER DEUTSCHES MARINE SCHIFFSPOST N°80 (SMS PANTHER)
Cover from Agadir to Germany 27/09/1911 Printed Matter Rate
WW I : Cover from Larache to Danmark 11/10/1915

reminder: at the beginning of the WW I all the German offices in the French Zone of Protectorate and Tangier were closed on 4/08/1914, the four offices in the Spanish Zone of Protectorate remained open until 16/06/1919 when they were closed after the treaty of Versailles. The four offices were Alcazar, Arsila, Larache and Tetuan. No item from Alcazar and Arsila are known to date; less then 10 items known to date from Larache and Tetuan.
• The first initiative was taken by Mr. Brudo in Mazagan
• 20 private couriers from town to town were created between 1891 and 1906
• Some of them generated several stamps issues including due stamps for both of them
• With the exception of the couriers of Brudo (1891/1900), Abudarham (1894/1901) and Marx (1893/1911) their lifespan was short (2 to 4 years) and even very short (4 to 15 months)
THE MIXED FRANKINGS

• Morocco was not part of the UPU; so, the mail to overseas or a city of Morocco not served by a private courier line and franked by the local posts stamps had to be remitted to one of the four foreign P.O. who completed the franking with their stamps: these are the mixed frankings.

• Mixed frankings are generally scarce; those where the local post provided the final leg of the route, are doubly so.
MAP OF THE 20 LOCAL COURIER POSTS AND NATIONALITIES OF THEIR ENTREPRENEURS
THE FIRST LOCAL POST : ISAAC BRUDO FROM MAZAGAN TO MARRAKECH

January 1891 – July 1900

Registered cover from Mazagan to Marrakech 19/08/1892 franked with the first two issues
Cover from Marrakech to Algiers 21/02/1894
Mixed franking with French P.O. franked with the third issue (*rising sun type*)
Cover from Marrakech to Italy 5/02/1900
Mixed franking with French P.O. franked with the fourth issue (gazelle hunting type)
Cover from Lyon to Marrakech 22/01/1900
Mixed franking with Local Post providing the final leg of the route franked with the due stamps issue
THE BRITISH AND ITALIAN CONSULATES LOCAL POST SERVICE:
CARLO MORTEO AND SPINNEY FROM MAZAGAN TO MARRAKECH (April 1897–July 1900)
Registered cover from Marrakech to Tangier 1/08/1897
Mixed franking with British P.O.
Mr. M. BENSIMON FROM FEZ TO MEQUINEZ
(January 1897 – May 1901)
Cover from Mequinez to USA 10/07/1898
Mixed franking with British P.O.
THE CHERIFIAN POST

• 1892 creation of the Cherifian Post by H.M the King of Morocco, mail carried by the rekkas (intrepid and tireless foot-postmen)
• 13 offices opened in 13 cities, each one had two handstamps: one octagonal and one circular; these are the CACHETS MAGHZEN
• 6 colours: violet, black, blue, red, green and orange (in increasing order of rarity)
• In total there exist 156 strikes (78 octagonal and 78 circular)
• Handstamps replaced in 1912 by stamps
• 1913 (1/10) merger with the French P.O. to create the Cherifian Office of Posts
• Same rules as the Local Posts/UPU (see mixed frankings slide 48)
THE REKKAS
INTREPID AND TIRELESS FOOT-POSTMEN
FORERUNNER MARRAKECH 1310 (1892)
THE 13 OCTAGONAL HANDSTAMPS
OCTAGONALS : THE 6 COLOURS
CIRCULARS : THE 6 COLOURS
Registered cover from Agouraï by Meknes to Oran 16/12/1912
Mixed franking with French P.O.
Cover from Fez to Reims 13/07/1912
Mixed franking with French P.O.
• GUILLEN Pierre: L’Allemagne et le Maroc de 1870 à 1905, PUF 1967.
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THANK YOU VERY MUCH