

RIXHEIM in the 19TH CENTURY

Rixheim (Haut-Rhin Dept. / Upper Alsace / Elsass) is but one of many small towns in Alsace. Like all other towns in Alsace—large and small—it changed hands between France and Germany a total of five times between 1870 and 1945, resulting in five changes in postal administrations, postal issues, and postal markings. However and for the purpose of this one-frame exhibit, only the scarcer covers, those from the first two periods and the 19th Century, are being shown here.

Rixheim's sole post office opened 16 February 1843 while Alsace was French. Standard French stamps and markings were used from the 1850s until November 1870. Because of the 1870-71 Franco-German War, Prussian Occupation stamps followed (April-December 1871), then those of the German Empire (January 1872-December 1918, respectively). Between February 1871 and late May 1872, the German and French postal administrations agreed to ignore each other's prepaid postage, which resulted in "double franking", more precisely the French *double affranchissement*.

The exhibit shows all four possible French cancels of the period, namely 1) Type 15 without stamp; (2) Type 15 with killers showing small numerals (*petits chiffres*) **2685** and then (3) from 1863 with large numerals (*gros chiffres*) **3154**; finally (4) (Summer 1869-1870 only) Type 16 plus **3154**. These were followed by the sole German cancellation available for this small town, the basic single-circle date stamp. Though France first issued stamps on 1 January 1849, small Alsatian towns were not provisioned until the early 1850s. Occupation stamps had been printed even before the start of the Franco-German War, but were available in Rixheim only from May 1871, when the post office reopened. No letters were mailed directly from and to Rixheim between November 1870 and May 1871 due to nearby hostilities and to lack of Occupation stamps.

Nearly every page has items of special interest: (page 2): covers prior to formation of Rixheim P.O.; (page 3): money letter; (pages 4 and 8): turned covers; (pages 5, 6, 7, 10, 11, 13): to other European countries; (page 6): rural commune box; (page 7): Type 16 killer; (page 9): parcel card; (page 12): 3rd weight band letter; (page 13): "double franking"; (page 14): Registry; (page 16): 3154 on Ecuador cover.



To my knowledge nowhere else in the world, a Rixheim **3154** killer was shipped from France and postally used by a postal administration on the other side of the globe. This unique happenstance was a compelling reason for assembling this exhibit and showing its use (on final page) in Ecuador. Additionally, the **3154** killer was reissued in France as a *remplacement* for a newly created post office in the Calvados Dept. (also see final page). Thus, at times between 1870 and 1876 (killers were abandoned 31 March 1876 in France), there were three identical **3154** killers in use in various parts of the globe!

The more desirable, significant or difficult-to-obtain covers are shown within frame lines.

References

Kuenemann, Marcel, "*La Poste à Rixheim*"; Rixheim, 2002.

Luft, S. J. , "Rixheim in the 19th Century"; *Jour. of the France & Colonies Society [GB]*, Whole No. 263, March 2012.

[Also see the three references on use of the 3154 killer in Ecuador, on final page of exhibit].

Precursor Covers



93/ANVERS (Antwerp, in Napoleonic Conquered Dept. 93 of Belgium) to Zuber Co. in Rixheim, via Colmar, then the nearest major P.O.; forwarded without charge (**DEB. DE COLMAR**) 18 June 1809, to Mulhouse (then Mulhausen); taxed 7 décimes for distance of 400-500 km within France (Law of 24 April 1806) [probably hand carried from Mulhouse to Rixheim]



Rixheim, 30 Aug. 1833
posted at Habsheim village's secondary P.O., and conveyed to full-service Mulhausen P.O. (31 August departure); taxed 8 décimes (400-500 km. distance, 1 January 1828 Tariff) 4 September Rouen arrival

[Many covers in exhibit are from town's main industry, the Zuber Family wallpaper enterprise]

Unpaid mail from Rixheim's first Post Office

Opened 16 February 1843 at 1 rue Foch, on grounds of the Zuber wallpaper factory



*Rixheim, 29 May 1846 [fairly early date from 1st P.O.
to Lapoutroye*

backstamps: Colmar (same day); 30 May arrival

*taxed 3 décimes for < 7.5 gm letter and 40-80 km distance
(1 January 1828 Tariff)*

no penalty on unpaid mail until 1 July 1854

Post-1848 Unpaid Mail

Postage stamps issued 1 January 1849, but not available at Rixheim until early 1850s.
No penalty on unpaid letters prior to 1 July 1854.



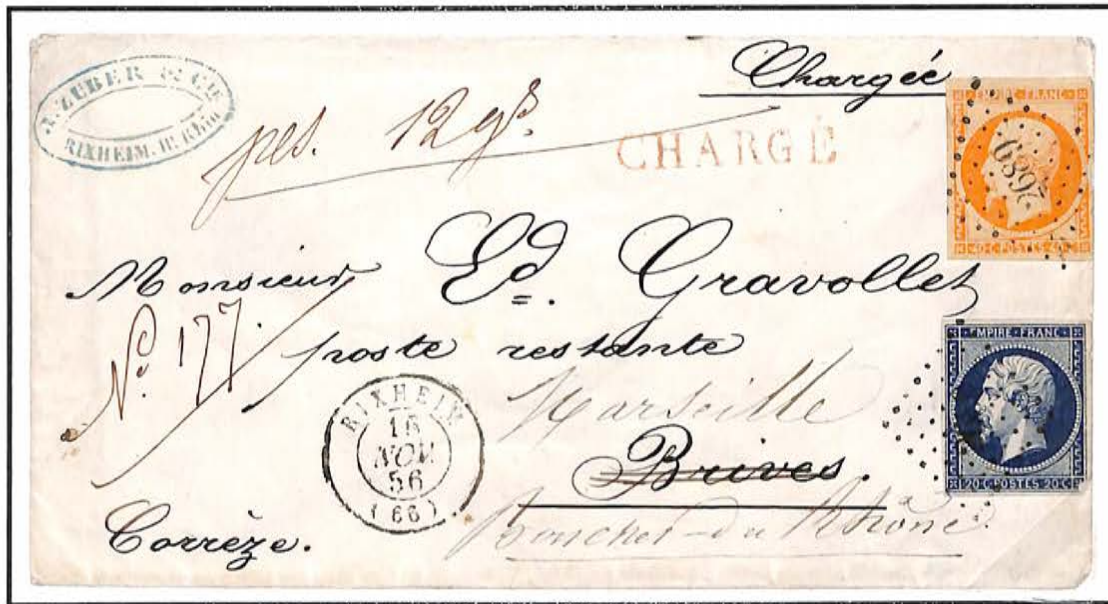
Rixheim, 28 Feb. 1850 unpaid 1x letter at 20c (taxed 2 décimes [red 2],
to Audincourt (Doubs Dept.)
backstamps: Mulhouse 1 March transit, Montbéliard (doubs) 21 March arrival



Rixheim, 7 Oct. 1851 to General Delivery at Cambrai (Nord Dept.);
taxed 5 décimes for 2x letter (7.5-15 gm (1 July 1850 Tariff);
Paris 9 October and Cambrai 10 October backstamps;
claimed at Mons, Belgium; tax changed to 8 décimes for 2x letters to near-border Belgian P.O.;
backstamps: Cambrai and Valenciennes, 23 November; Belgian transit and Mons arrival 24 Nov. 1851

Regular Issues Stamped Covers

Unpaid mail taxed at 1½x the deficiency



insured (CARGÉ) 12-gm money letter, Rixheim, 16 Nov. 1856, to Brives (Corrèze Dept.),
then forwarded to Marseille;

60c prepaid postage for 2x letter at 40c + 20c insurance fee (1 July 1854 Tariff).

Small # 2689 of 1st French alphanumerical nomenclature.

backstamps: Strasbourg-Paris 16 November night train; brives 19 November, Cahors transit
1 December, Marseille 2 Dec. 1856 arrival

20 March 18 to General Delivery
at Madrid;

Type 15 dater + small # 1727
(why?),

prepaid [red boxed PP] 1x letter
at 80c, bearing correct two 40c
imperf Empire
blue 2R[reales] Spanish rating.

backstamps: Madrid 24 March
arrival; Basel-Strasbourg 29
March non-delivery
via train



NÉCESSITÉ DE CLORE.

A Monsieur

le Maire de — Monsieur le Procureur impérial,

F. Hain

à Mulhouse



request for dossier on individual accused of vagrancy, from judiciary at Mulhouse, 14 Nov. 1854,
to mayor of Battenheim;

turned cover, sent to Battenheim (which had no P.O. of its own
being one of **Rixheim's three rural commune circuits** established after 1847.
Returned to Mulhouse through Rixheim rural carrier (**OR** in circle) and Rixheim P.O.

Rixheim, 3 Nov. 1855
 2x letter at 40c (1 July 1854 Tariff)
 to Toulouse
 small # 2689 of first alphanumerical
 nomenclature
 four backstamps (indirect routing)
 Toulouse, 6 November arrival



25 Sept. 1857, to Basel; small # 2689;
 20c prepaid 1x <30 km cross-border rate letter
 (1 July 1850 Tariff);
 backstamps: French P.O. at Basel (red)
 and Basel Distribution,
 both of 25 September

17 April 1860, 1x letter to Paris;
 small # 2689
 via Basel-Paris train D,
 17 April backstamp





15 July 1865 40c prepaid [PD]
 1x letter to Munich
 (rate in effect from 1 August 1849)
 Type 15 date stamp and large # 3154
 of 2nd (September 1863)
 alphanumerical nomenclature

backstamps: Strasbourg 15 July
 transit, München 16 July arrival

Rixheim, 18 June 1866 to Colmar
 picked-up unpaid at rural commune box
 (A in circle = Sausheim)
 taxed 1½x the 20c prepaid rate = 30 centimes
 ! July 1854 Tariff)



24 Feb. 1866 to Haute-Saône Dept.
 large # 3154 killer

backstamps: indistinct Mulhouse
 24 February RR transfer office;
 Corre, 25 February arrival

NÉCESSITÉ DE FERMER.

St. Basile, Bixheim

L. Zuber

Monsieur

Monsieur le Juge d'instruction

à MULHOUSE

(Haut-Rhin).



↑ 3 May 1867 **turned cover** from Judiciary at Mulhouse; returned 4 May from Rixheim; blue Rixheim town-hall cachet, for the franchise.

→
Turckheim (Haut-Rhin), near Rixheim, on the Strasbourg-Basel [ST BALE] trunk line, stopping only at Colmar and Mulhouse (27 Feb. 1869); Basel arrival on the 28th

Trains did not stop at Rixheim, Turckheim, etc. Mail was picked up and dropped off on small stations via "Mail Catchers" and "catcher arms" on mail cranes located alongside the tracks.



13 March 1869 1x letter
to Clermont-Ferrand
backstamps: 13-14 March transit
and 15 March arrival



3 Nov. 1869 1x prepaid letter at 40c
to Radcliff, England
(rate in effect from 1 January 1866)

5 November Manchester transit and Radcliff
arrival backstamps
[rapid delivery from Rixheim]

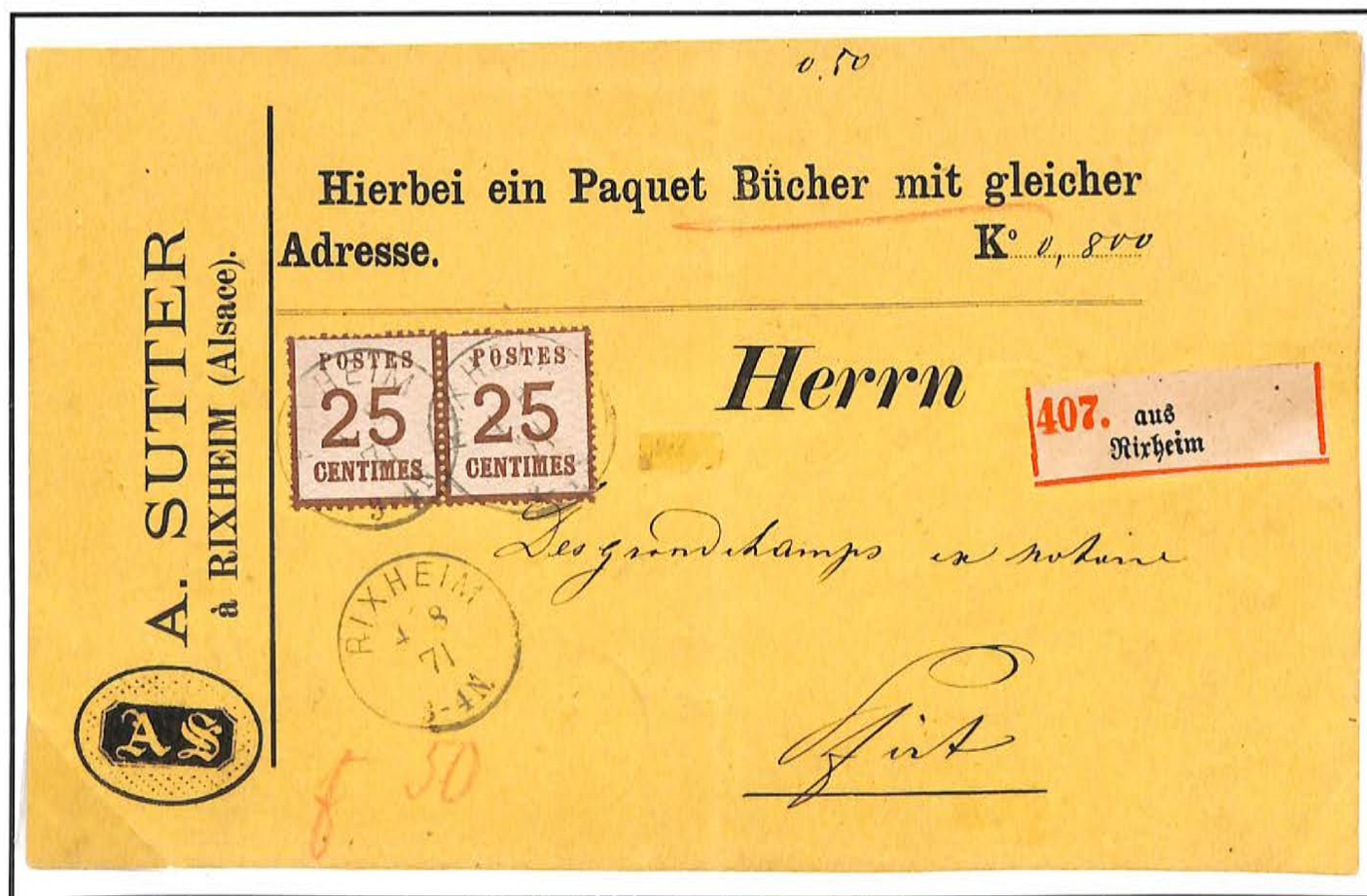


27 July 1869, short-lived type 16 + # 3154
[Summer 1869 to early in War]
prepaid to Basel at 20c cross-border rate, same day Basel backstamp



28 May 1870, type 16 + # 3154
backstamps: 28 and 29 transit, including
RR exchange office # 978 (Chaumont);
Corre 29 May arrival

FIRST GERMAN ADMINISTRATION



4 Aug.. 1871 to Firt (ex-Ferette, Jaut-Rhin), with pair of 25c Occupation stamps

on privately-printed parcel card for 0.8 kg of books

single-circle datestamp

Parcel-post fee service established 10 May 1841 at 10c/500 gm = 20c + return receipt of 25c

[overpaid 5c, 5 August Pfirt backstamp



20c stamp, for France, but as a short-paid value

Rixheim, 24 June 1871
20c Type II, 1x letter to Besançon
(February 1871 Convention)

back stamps: Belfort (25 June),
Besançon arrival (25 and 26th)

2 (décimes) tax applied at
restituted Belfort



Rixheim, 19 Sept. 1871 to Paris
20c Type I
no back stamps

double line 25[c] tax applied
in Paris



Rixheim, 6 Nov. 1871 to Paris

25^c due applied at Belfort

back stamp: Marseille-Paris
7 November day train D



15 rue Drouot - 75009
Tél: +33 (1).40.16.0
contact@roumeth

La société R
ph
Càd RIXHEIM
TB / SUP.++-

Certificat n° 28842



15 rue Drouot - 75009 PARIS
Tél: +33 (1).40.16.02.42
contact@roumethp.fr

Certificat n° 28845
Paris le 27 janvier 2016

*La société R S P (Roumet Scheiff Pagnoux) atteste avoir examiné la pièce
photographiée ci-dessous. Cette pièce est authentique.*
Càd RIXHEIM / Alsace N° 6 sur lettre pour paris, taxe 25 DT bleue 1871. - TB /
SUP.+++++



SARL 1

Molsheim, 14 Dec. 1870 to Rixheim
 10c state II, for 1x letter within A-L
 Sender thought Rixheim as being,
 in Habsheim Canton, and lacking
 a post office!



Rixheim, 21 July 1871
 1x letter to Switzerland
 no back stamps

Rixheim, 28 July 1871
 1x letter to Belgium
 Brussels, 30 July arrival back stamp



Though these two letters were mailed only a week apart, their daters are dissimilar, and show that more than one dater were in simultaneous use at Rixheim's sole post office.



Rixheim, 20 May 1871, on pair 10c
(network **points down**)
to unoccupied Jura Dept. via (backstamps)
Belfort (21 May), Dijon (22 May),
and 22 May arrival

taxed 2 (décimes) at restituted Belfort

Rixheim, 23 Dec. 1871, to Basel
10c Occupation stamp
for the <30 km distance
cross-border rate;
received same day



26 Feb. 1872 to Grenoble; 1x letter to France
at 2gr (small shield);
Alsace in German Empire; since 1 Jan. 1872
25c double-franking tax applied 27 February
at Belfort;

backstamps: RR exchange office # 1307 (Dijon),
27 February;
Grenoble 28 February arrival



Nancy, 3 March 1872, to Rixheim;
 fully prepaid at Nancy for "double-franking" Convention between France and German Alsace;
 transit via Avricourt-Strassburg [i.Elsass] oval ambulant, 4 March;
 4 March Rixheim arrival



Rixheim, 25 April 1873, to Florence, Italy
 1x letter at 3 gr (large shield)
 illegible arrival backstamp

Three in-house covers to Paris from the Zuber firm:



1x letter: 7 March 1872; blue Paris foreign mail of the 8th; blue double-line 25 (c.)
due for non-payment of the double-franking

2x letter: 1 Feb. 1872, at 4 gr.; 4 décimes due for same reason

3x letter: 31 May 1872, at 6 gr. Fully-paid letter as Germany
abolished the double affranchissement on 15 May;
red PD Paid to Destination;
blue entry into France via Belfort

correct French taxation at Delle

*Rixheim, 13 May 1872, to Delle
(no longer in the Haut-Rhin
Dept.),*

*via Belfort, 13 May; back stamp:
French type 16, 13 May arrival,
where taxed with double-line
25[c] for short-paid international
postage*

*Delle remained French as part of
Territory of Belfort,
and short-paid mail
arriving from Alsace-Lorraine was
now subject to taxation
upon arrival from German
Alsace-Lorraine*



Rixheim, 1 March 1876, from Zuber firm, to Vesoul (Upper Rhone Dept.)

faint orange-red 2 March arrival, much more readable on verso

40 pf postage [3x-color franking] 2x letter

Registered Mail

18 Oct. 1879 to Paris,
40 pf. potage (1x letter
at 20 pf + 20 pf registry fee);
1 July 1875 Tariff;
red 18 October entry into
France via Belfort;

backstamps: Belfort-Paris
ambulant C, 19 October;
Paris 6 Distribution 6
and 6 Paris 6, 20 October



11 Feb. 1889 to Switzerland; 1 Mk postage (45-60 gm letter at 80 pf + 20 pf registry fee
(1 July 1875 Tariff))
12 February transit and arrival backstamps



21 Jan. 1886 10 pf. UPU card rate, to Lyon
1 July 1875 Tariff



the second Rixheim post office, c. 1900
[opened October 1894 at 9, rue de la Gare]

ECUADORIAN INTERLUDE

Between January 1865 (R.A D'Elia, *The American Philatelist* N°1177, February 1999) and early 1879, a very few examples of a properly used 3154 killer (obviously a spare duplicate from the postal stocks in Paris) appeared on mail posted in Ecuador (Guayaquil at first, then mostly from Quito). How this came about is a puzzle, whose resolution has been attempted by a number of earlier philatelists. Among the more recent are **this exhibitor**, in *The American Philatelist* N°1000, May 1984, and Dr. George Maier in *The Mainsheet* v. 10, N°36, January 1985—whose views sometimes differ markedly. The intriguing earlier belief that a Rixheim postal employee took his killer to self-imposed exile in Ecuador, rather than leaving it in German hands, no longer applies.

25-30 covers recorded or known, not all of which may be entirely proper or lack Ecuadorian date stamps.



*Quito, 23 July 1872, to La Esperanza [item 5 in Luft (1984)]
large # 3154 on ½-real prepaid domestic letter*

(ex-L.J Harris)



GENUINE



FAKE



Rixheim having been lost to France, a substitute 3154 killer was issued to the small Beuzeval P.O. in Calvados when it opened in 1875

original 3154 killer



replacement 3154 killer
on the type III 25c Cérés
issued late March 1874