

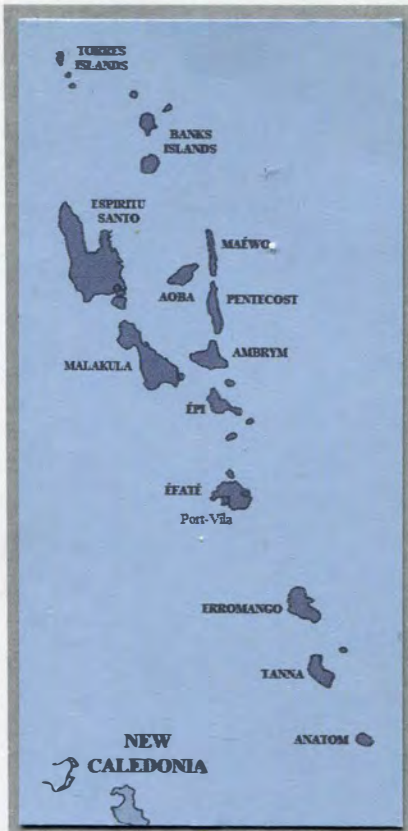
THE 1893 FRENCH MILITARY FRANCHISE ESSAYS OF THE NEW HEBRIDES



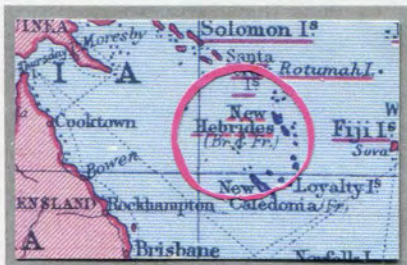
The French's grand plan

In the late 1800s, Britain and France were both reluctant to take ownership of the New Hebrides islands because of the tough climate and the savage inhabitants. However, their settlers looked to them to provide some sort of authority and stability.

In 1893, French military officers in New Caledonia came up with a plan whereby troops could be stationed on certain islands which could eventually be acquired for France.



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Enlargements are 50%, 100% or 200% larger than the original essays.

Different quadrant and mat colors represent each printing group.

All items are significant.

They would issue a Military Franchise stamp similar to that already issued for New Caledonia.



essay from 3rd printing group

To encourage the cooperation of the British, a bi-national design was chosen: President Sadi Carnot facing Queen Victoria.

Plan

Each chapter is set in a quadrant.

1. Definitions

The French's grand plan
A military officer as printer
Naming conventions
Essay characteristics
Printing features

3. 2nd printing group

Characteristics
Lettering on disk and background stones
Printing features, Forgery
Signs of previous printings

This traditional exhibit aims to present these colorful, rarely seen essays in order of printing group.

General characteristics of each group are shown first (**the big picture**).

Specific features that link printing groups or show printing order are then closely examined, by showing enlargements (**a closer look**).

Very few of these essays have survived. No definitive list of printings or printing order currently exists. This exhibit will analyse those reported and available for study, and draw conclusions based on evidence seen in the essays themselves.

The top shows the big picture.
The middle shows the essays.
The bottom takes a closer look.

2. 1st printing group

Characteristics
Lettering on background stone
The 5 different printings
Printing features
Signs of previous printings

4. 3rd printing group

Characteristics
Lettering on design stone
Printing features, Forgery
Signs of previous printings
The British's response

1. Definitions

the **big** picture

A military officer as printer

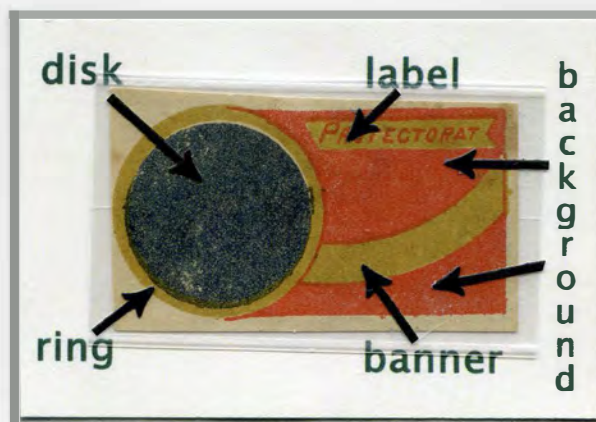
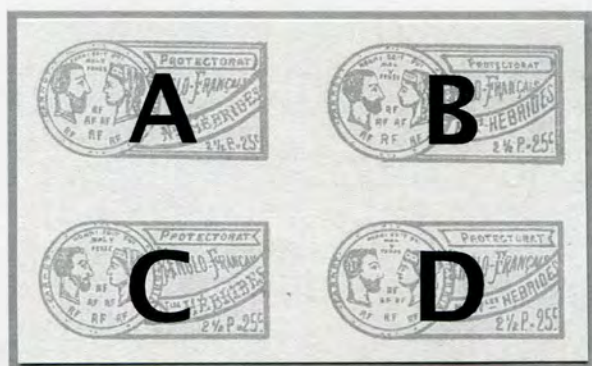
The essays were lithographed in sheets of four subjects with each drawn slightly differently. They are attributed to Lt Col Delauney, the Commander of the naval artillery squadron stationed in Noumea at the time, and who designed the New Caledonia military franchise stamps.

The concession for the military at that time was 15 centimes for personnel on station or part of an occupying force. The full concession rate of 25c was for those engaged in combat - their mail was sent for free.

Naming conventions

The letters **A**, **B**, **C** and **D** will be used to represent each of the four essays on a sheet.

The parts of each essay will be called the **disk**, **ring**, **label**, **banner** and **background**.



Essay Characteristics

Main constant characteristics of the essays

Disk

President Sadi Carnot facing Queen Victoria

The quote **HONNI SOIT QUI MAL Y PENSE**

RF lettering (6 items) below the two heads of state



Ring

CARNOT and **VICTORIA** lettering on the sides

Small dashes in 2 groups of 3 (top and bottom) and 8 singles at regular intervals around the ring



Background

ANGLO-FRANÇAIS lettering at top left

ANGLO is completely visible or partially obscured by the ring



2 1/2 P. = 25c. lettering.

The use of 25c may have been chosen over 15c as a move to gain free franking privileges.

2. 1st printing group

Characteristics

Labels

Lettering from the design stone (positions A and C)



Lettering in the background color (positions B and D)



(PROTECTORAT in background color)

Position C: Misspelled *PPROTECTORAT* appears in all three printing groups

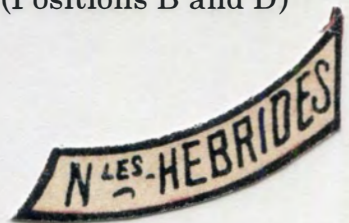
Essai in manuscript above position B - test printing

Banners

Lettering in the background color (positions A and C)



Lettering from the design stone (Positions B and D)



(NOUV^{LES} HEBRIDES in black)



1 - Ocher disk/gray ring printing

Position A single exists with unchanged banner frameline and large black mark in banner.



Position C



Position B

7 singles reported - positions A, B, C

the **big** picture

Lettering on background stone

The printer added lettering to the background stone in either a label or a banner for each position (**printing 1**).

When this was printed, part of the lettering in the banner in position A was obscured by the top frameline.

The printer scraped part of the top frameline away and reprinted using colors that made the lettering in the banner more legible (**printing 2**).

He prepared a combined disk and ring printing (**printing 3**) which lacked the stone for the labels and banners, to make it easier to see any traces of lettering in them.

He set up a print run using a lighter coverage of background ink (**printing 4**), and one with a lighter coverage of design ink (**printing 5**).

All the lettering on the design stone was quite neat up to this point. The new lettering on the background stone was still fairly presentable.

2 - Red disk / yellow ring printing

Position A single exists showing black mark partially removed



Position B

5 singles reported - positions A, B, C, D

3 - Yellow disk and ring printing

Position A in sheet shows almost complete removal of black mark



Position B

1 design sheet, 1 design single, 1 complete sheet, 3 singles reported - positions B, C

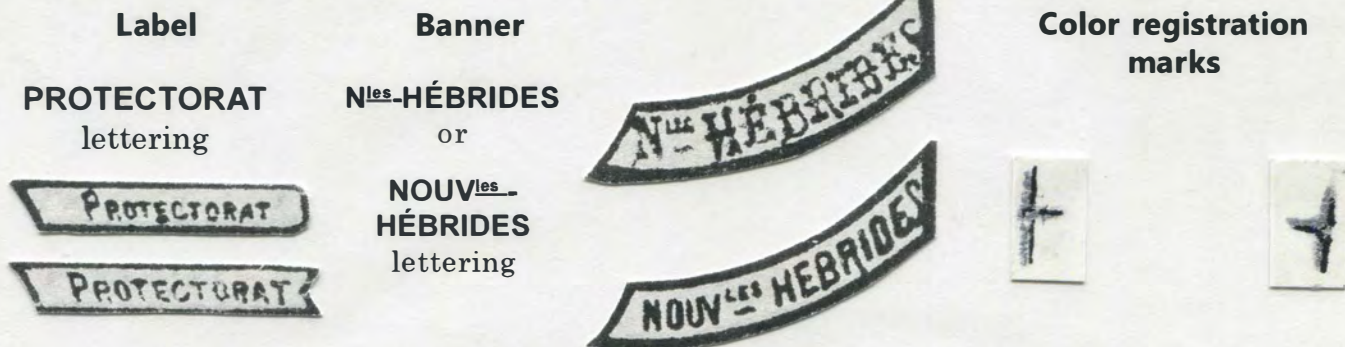
debris to right of O in **ANGLO** (doughnut hickey)

Registration marks of design sheet and complete sheet are **15.3cm** apart.

1. Definitions

Printing features

Main characteristics that changed between printings



Characteristics for each position

The most important feature for determining printing order is a series of **retouches** of the top and left **framelines** of the banner in position A.

Sample essays shown are from 3rd printing group.

left leg of A of ANGLO
extends into disk in ring color

Position

A



Lettering of N^{les}-HÉBRIDES
deliberately changed
between printings

differs between
printings



framelines at left and
bottom of banner
scratched away

frameline at
top of banner
redrawn

break in top
of 2 in 25

Position

C



lettering of N^{les}-HÉBRIDES
deliberately changed
between printings

4 or 5 dots
in ring color

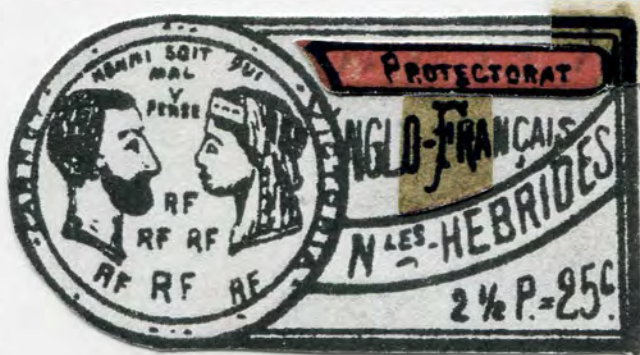
frameline at bottom of
banner redrawn thicker

Characteristics which help to order the printings

- Flaws:** Areas of a stone which show imperfections. They may deteriorate over time.
- Retouches:** Areas of a stone which have been deliberately altered or repaired
- Palimpsests:** Areas of a stone which bear traces of previous printings.
- Registration marks:** There is at least one set of registration marks for each group of printings. They show which stones were used (with one exception) and can shed light on printing order.

Lettering of **PROTECTORAT**
in background color as well
as in design color

Lettering of **PROTECTORAT** deliberately
changed between printings



vertical spur in
background
color

thick top of F,
short top of R

Position

B

Lettering of **PROTECTORAT**
in background color as well
as in design color

Lettering of **PROTECTORAT** deliberately
changed between printings



thick top of F
top right tip of banner
shows in background
area to the left of
frameline



differs
between
printings

Position

D

2. 1st printing group

4 - Light pink ring, label, banner printing

traces of PROTECTORAT
in background color



doubling caused
by paper moving
during printing



Position A

2 singles reported - positions A, C

Printing features

Flaws and retouches

**Position A Printing 4
Example**



left leg of A of
ANGLO extends into
disk in ring color



frameline scraped lightly
on top to allow N of N^{les}
to be more visible



break in top of
2 of 25

**Printing 3
Example**

Position B



F in FRANÇAIS
tall with small top



vertical spur in
background color

**Position C Printing 1
Example**



4 or 5 dots in
ring color



no thickening of
frameline at bottom
left of banner

Position D

(F in FRANÇAIS
tall with small top)

(top right tip of
banner shows in
background area to
the left of frameline)

Registration marks: Printing 3 exists as a complete sheet and a design sheet, as registration marks correspond (design, disk and ring, background).

5 - Light design printing



Position B

3 singles reported - positions B, C, D

Signs of previous printings

Palimpsests reveal remnants of design printed in background color.

Printing 4

Position A **PROTECTORAT** lettering in background color, especially under **P**, **E** and **A**, visible beside lettering from design stone

No conclusive findings for this group of printings

Position B



Printings 2, 3, 4

Position C Examples exist with **PROTECTORAT** lettering in background color visible beside lettering from design stone

No conclusive findings for this group of printings

Position D

Previous printing:

Design

Current printing:

Background - one label or banner for each position

Background Stone

3. 2nd printing group

Characteristics

Labels

Lettering from the design stone
(Positions A and C)



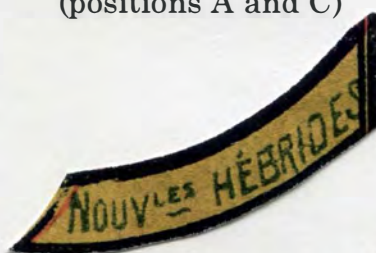
Lettering in the background color
(positions B and D)



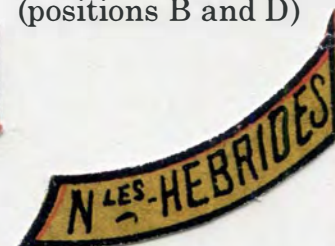
Essai exists in manuscript above position B - test printing

Banners

Lettering in the disk stone color
(positions A and C)



Lettering from the design stone
(positions B and D)



8 complete sheets reported, more expected to exist

Registration marks 15.3cm apart, no design registration mark

the **big** picture

Lettering on the disk stone and background stone

The lettering in the banners for positions A and C were printing in the frameline. The printer had scratched out some of the frameline from the design, but it still wasn't sufficient.

He ground down an old design stone and etched disks for all positions and added lettering **NOUVELLES HÉBRIDES** for positions A and C. To get the lettering to stand out, he used blue ink for the new disk stone.

The background was redrawn, more finely than the previous version. The rings, labels and banners were similarly redrawn.

He made print runs of the color stones, and retouched the disk stone between runs, to remove traces of design. All the lettering on the design stone was still quite neat up to this point.

A more transparent ink was used for the complete printing to enable the design detail in the disk to show more clearly.

Essai exists in manuscript
below position D - test printing

Position C

parts of
design
framelines
visible in
banner in
disk stone
color



8 color sheets reported, more expected to exist

Registration marks **15.3 cm** apart

4. 3rd printing group

Characteristics

Labels

Lettering from the design stone
(all positions)



type définitif (above position B) or *définitif* (below position D) reported in manuscript on two complete sheets and one design only sheet - accepted final printing

Serif typeface used for banner change.

New lettering is quite roughly drawn.

Banners

Lettering from the design stone
(all positions)



traces of
PROTECTORAT
in background
color

traces of
PROTECTORAT
in background
color

13 complete sheets reported, more expected to exist

Registration marks of design sheet and complete sheet are 16.2 cm apart - 9mm wider

the **big** picture

Lettering on the design stone

The printer decided to put all the lettering for the labels and banners on the design stone, so as to make it readable regardless of colors used.

He used a serif typeface for the banners. This and the lettering used in the labels and banners was quite untidy.

The first design printings appear to have been printed on whatever paper came to hand!

Dark non-absorbent paper and both sides of an embossed deep violet paper (wallpaper?) were used as he cleaned up the design.

He made color print runs to remove traces of design from the background stone.

Thick design printing embossed paper (color side)



strokes before
and above
PROTECTORAT
removed

short F in
FRANÇAIS

Position D

2 color side singles reported - positions C, D
1 cream reverse side single reported - position B

Thick design printing dark non-absorbent paper



Position D

vertical strokes
before and above
PROTECTORAT

This is the only reported sheet, 3 singles reported - positions C, D

Registration marks trimmed from sheet

3. 2nd printing group

Colors only printing
opaque blue



Position C

Complete printing
translucent blue



Position C

Printing features

Flaws and retouches

Position A



frameline scraped at left
to allow N of **NOU**^{les} to
be more visible



background
spike protrudes



break in top
of 2 of 25

Position B



F in **FRANÇAIS**
tall with small top

Position C

(no relevant flaws or
retouches)

Position D



F in **FRANÇAIS**
tall with small top



bannerspike
protrudes

Registration marks:



Only color registration marks exist.
No design registration marks.



Forgery of the 2nd printing group

Characteristics



This forgery is modeled on position A of the 2nd printing group, but has the following differences:

Dashes scattered around the ring (7 at top left and 9 at bottom right), not in groups of three as per the genuine

No vestige of the **A** for **ANGLO** exists

Lettering of **PROTECTORAT** slightly smaller

Rubber stamped in black on orange paper

Signs of previous printings

The color print runs show a varying degree of a previous printing of the design on the disk stone in all positions, particularly on the banner frameline (positions A and C) and the ring (positions B and D).

**Position
A**



**Position
C**



**Position
B**



**Position
D**



Previous printing:

Design

Current printing:

Disk + lettering in Position A, C

Disk Stone

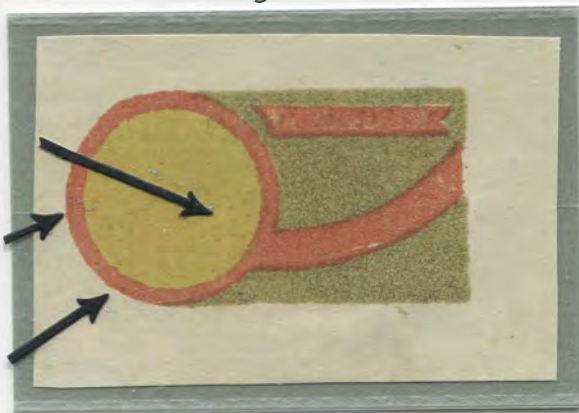
4. 3rd printing group

Colors only printing

traces of **PROTECTORAT**
in background color

traces of
design in
disk color

traces of
design in
back-
ground
color



Position D

5 singles reported - positions A, C, D

Design only printing



Position B

3 sheets, 3 singles reported -
positions B, C, D

thick top on F in
FRANÇAIS
thin top of R in
FRANÇAIS

doubling caused
by paper moving
during printing

Printing features

Flaws and retouches

Position A



left leg of A of
ANGLO extends into
disk in ring color



framelines at left and bottom of
banner scratched away, frameline
at top of banner redrawn



break in top
of 2 in 25

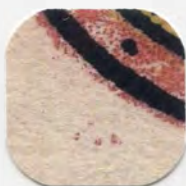


thick top on F in
FRANÇAIS
thin top of R in
FRANÇAIS



Vertical spur in
background color

Position C



4 or 5 dots in
ring color



thickened frameline at
bottom left of banner

Position D



short F in
FRANÇAIS



top right tip of banner shows
in background area to the
left of frameline

Registration marks:



Design sheet shows multiple
pin holes as part of the design
registration marks.



Forgery of the 3rd printing group

Characteristics



Photocopy of position D of the thick design printing before the stone was cleaned up.

Colored in with highlighting pens in modern colors.

Signs of previous printings

Palimpsests exist in the color print run and the completed essays.

Position A	Example exists with N^{les}-HÉBRIDES lettering in background color visible in banner, and design artwork on disk in ring color.	PROTECTORAT lettering in background color beside design stone lettering	Position B
Position C	Example exists with traces of design artwork on disk in ring color	PROTECTORAT lettering in background color in label; Design artwork in disk in ring and background colors	Position D

Prior printing:	Design	
Previous printing:	Background - one label or banner per position - same as 1st printing group	Design
Current printing:	Background - no labels or banners	Ring Label Banner - same as 1st printing group
	Background Stone	Ring Label Banner Stone

The British's response

The British saw through the French's plan. They objected to the use of military forces stationed in the islands, and rejected the stamps. Thus they were never issued.

This was an important victory for the British in the political jockeying that took place between the two countries, and foreshadowed joint government of the New Hebrides as a Condominium in 1906.