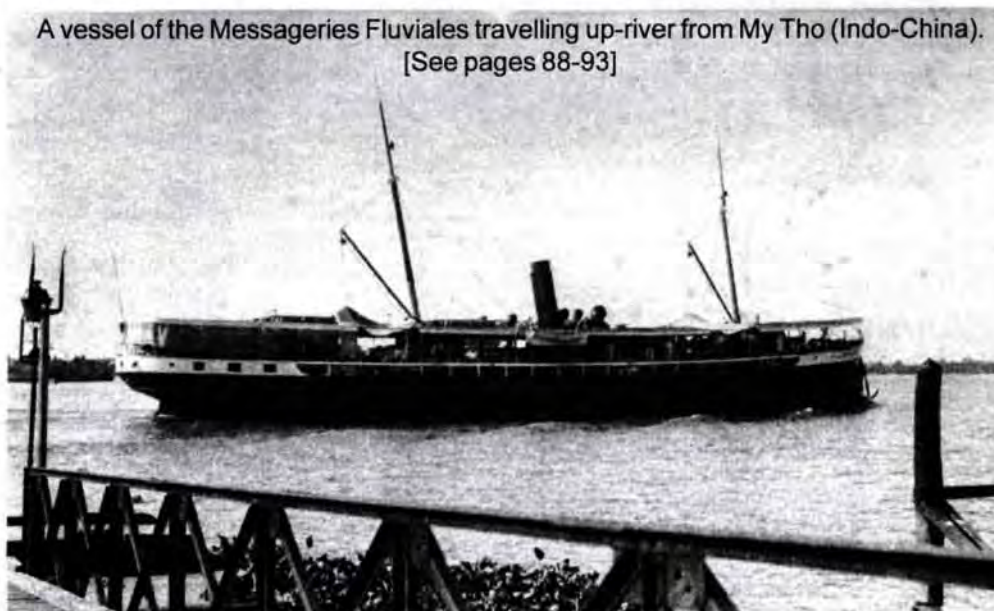


ISSN 0269-5006

The Journal of the France & Colonies Philatelic Society



A vessel of the Messageries Fluviales travelling up-river from My Tho (Indo-China).
[See pages 88-93]



MYTHO — *Départ d'un bateau pour l'Ouest*

Volume 50 ● Number 3
September 2000
Whole Number 217

**THE FRANCE & COLONIES
PHILATELIC SOCIETY OF GREAT BRITAIN**

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The Society

The Society was founded in 1949 and is affiliated to the ABPS. Its affairs are managed by a Committee comprising President, Officers and Committee members, elected annually. All inquiries of a general nature should be addressed to the Acting General Secretary.

2000 Subscription Rates

United Kingdom: £10.00, Europe: £12.00, Elsewhere: £15.00.

Treasurer: C J Hitchen, 36 Everton Road, Croydon CR0 6LA.

The Society's Girobank account number is 39 784 9001.

The Journal

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Lots for sale through the Society auctions, held 3 or 4 times a year, should be sent to the Auction Secretary, M L Bister, 7 The Slade, Wrestlingworth, Sandy, Beds. SG19 2ES.

Please send material for circulation in booklet form to the appropriate Exchange Packet Secretary, viz.

France: Mrs M Pavey, 15 St Ronan's Terrace, Innerleithen, Peeblesshire EH44 6RB;

Colonies: J West, 5 Highbanks Road, Hatch End, Pinner, Middlesex HA5 4AR.

The Library

Members are invited to avail themselves of the services of the Society's substantial library, on terms set out in the Library List distributed to all Members.

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The Magazine Circuit

The Society subscribes to two French philatelic magazines, and has circuits organised for those who wish to read them. For further details contact the circuit organiser:

D A Pashby, 148 Glengall Road, Woodford Green, Essex IG8 0DS.

Journal Correspondents

London: *situation vacant*

Paris: J M Simmons

Southern Group: C W Spong

Northern Group: R F Duncan

* * *

When writing to an officer of the Society, please do not mention the name of the Society in the address. Requests for information should be accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope.

Data Protection Act. Members are advised that their details are stored electronically, for use on Society business only, e.g address label printing.

The Journal of the France & Colonies Philatelic Society

Editor: M S Tyler, 56 Mortons Fork, Blue Bridge, Milton Keynes MK13 0LA
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Volume 50 Number 3
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Postcard issued for
the *Journée Française*
du *Secours National*
(supplied by
Geoff Gethin)

SOCIETY NOTES

New Members

The Society is pleased to welcome:

1158 Nichael Longdon (Kent), 1159 Paul Gosling (Hampshire), 1160 Robin Borwick (Buckinghamshire).

* * *

Members Deceased

We are very sorry to hear of the death of the following members, and offer our condolences to their families:

39 H S H Bidmead, 1010 Peter Gray.

* * *

Exhibition Successes

The following members of the Society are to be congratulated on winning awards at Stamp Show 2000 (Earls Court, 22-28 May):

Gavin Fryer - exhibited "Western Europe 1840-1871, a comparative study of postal rates and tariffs" in the FIP Championship Class (restricted to exhibits that have already been awarded 3 Large Gold Medals)

Ed Grabowski - Large Gold for "Guadeloupe, the development of stamps for regular postage" (Postal History Class)

Chris Hitchen - Gold for "The Post in Paris from its origins to 1876" (Postal History Class)

Ron Wood - Large Vermeil for "Soruth" (Indian State) (Traditional Class); and Vermeil for "Soruth" (Literature Class)

Iain Stevenson - Vermeil for "Great Britain Queen Victoria 'Penny Pink' Postal Stationery" (Postal Stationery Class)

John Mayne - Large Silver for "Anglo-French Occupation of Togo" (Postal History Class)

George Leguen de Lacroix - Bronze for "The Greeting Telegram Service of Great Britain" (Open Class)

Members of the Jury included John Levett (Jury President), Stephen Holder and Francis Kiddle.

And the following awards were made at WIPA 2000 (Vienna, 30 May - 4 June):

Bernard Berkinshaw-Smith - Gold for "French Mediterranean Maritime Mail" (Postal History Class)

Francis Kiddle - Vermeil for "Queensland stamp impressed duty" (Revenue Stamps Class)

Journal of the France & Colonies P S - Large Silver for Volume 49 (Literature Class)

One member of this Society has also won an award at Rompex 2000 (Denver, May):

Ed Grabowski - Gold and FCPS (USA) Grand Award for "The French Colonial Allegorical Group Type: Use, Misuse and Nonuse in Madagascar & Dependencies"

* * *

Northern Group

The provisional programme for this year, with meetings normally held at Leeds General Infirmary, Great George Street, Leeds:

9 September 2000: Members' Meeting - up to 25 sheets

25 November 2000: Bill Mitchell - French West Africa

(at Leeds PS Fair, Pudsey Civic Centre)

20 January 2001: Rod Unwin - Syria

10 March 2001: Peter Maybury - A French Maritime flavour

14 July 2001: All day meeting
(at Heaton Royds)

Further details from Bob Duncan (01274 220631) or Stephen Holder (01274 544446).

* * *

Southern Group

The programme for this year, with meetings held at East Worthing Community Centre:

19 August 2000: Members - Transport by Air/Road/Sea mail or stamp design etc: 10.30 until 16.30 hours

28 October 2000: Christopher Hitchen - Paris

27 January 2001: Derek Walker - French Maritime Mail from Ceylon

24 March 2001: Jeremy Martin - The Stamps & Postal History of Togo

* * *

Main Society Meetings

The programme for this year will be found at the end of the AGM Report on page 119.

* * *

SAFE Dual Hingeless Leaves

Member Don Loveridge reports that he has a number of surplus leaves, covering FRANCE Section 2034, 1938 to 1957, pages 1 to 49. They are available to any member for collecting or the price of postage, though they normally sell retail at about £60.

The address is J D Loveridge, Maimbray, 51 Hampton Fields, Oswestry, Shropshire SY11 1TL (Telephone 01691 656458; e-mail don@jdlloveridge.demon.co.uk).

* * *

[Continued on page 112]

The River Posts in Cambodia and Laos

John Garner

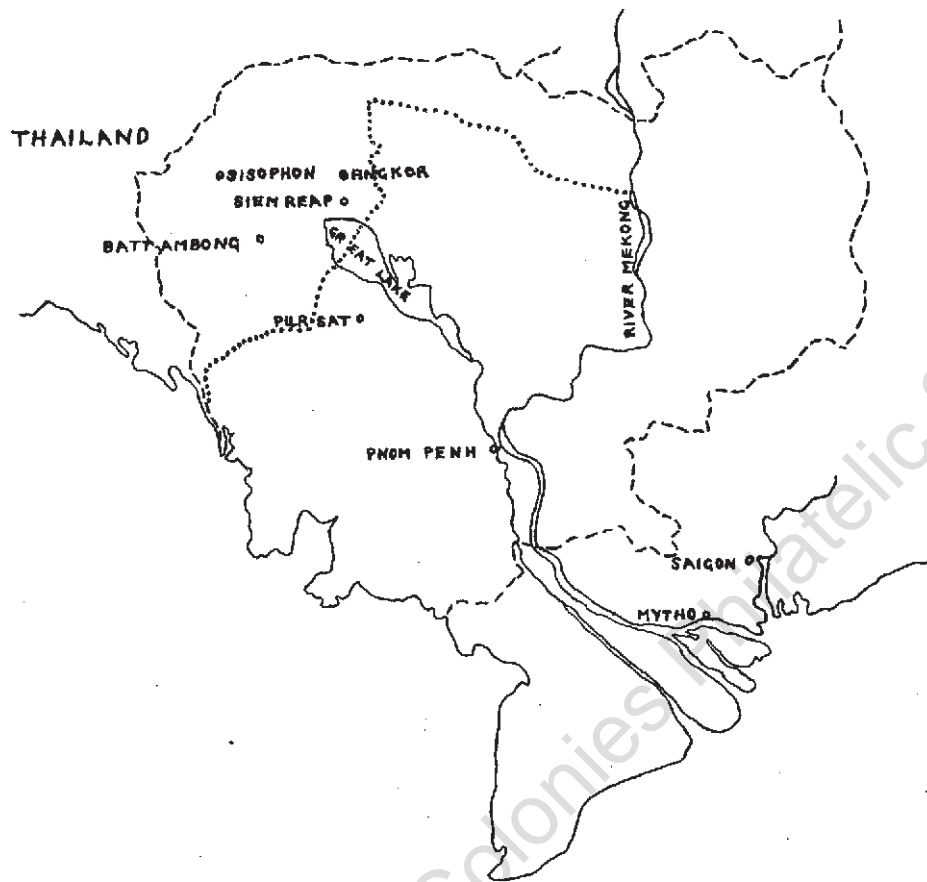


Figure 1 - Sketch map of Cambodia

When I joined the France and Colonies Society, it was with the vague intention of being led gently through the murkier undergrowth of the particular colonies I collect, by sages with all the wisdom of decades of philatelic knowledge behind them. I now know the sages have a great deal better things to do with their time than concern themselves with the philatelically minor countries of Cambodia and Laos. So, with the proviso that I may well raise more questions than answers, I shall have a go at a small portion of the postal history of these colonies myself.

I suppose it all started in 1860 when Henri Mouhot re-discovered and wrote about the great ruins of Angkor Wat and Angkor Thom in Cambodia. He died in Laos in 1861, but his book was not produced until 1864. It created a great flurry of excitement, and perhaps this was the spur that first caused the French Government to cast covetous eyes over the area known generally as Indo-China. They were partly anxious to create a counterweight to British influence in India and Burma and to the Dutch domination of the East Indies, but also the French saw the River Mekong as a great highway pouring all the riches of China in an immense flood to France.

From 1893 the Thais, who held a loose suzerainty over much of the area, were gradually forced into giving up

territory. In Laos they were pushed back to the Mekong, then twenty-five kilometres beyond it, and were forced to cede numerous small towns like Luang Prabang, Champassak, Paklai and Khong. Finally, in 1907, the Thais were forced to cede the richer western provinces of Cambodia to France. Not that Thai suzerainty was exactly onerous: according to the travel books it rarely amounted to more than a Thai flag and a couple of Commissioners appointed from Bangkok to look after the interests of the locals. After 1885, when the Thai external postal service began, there was usually also a small Thai post office in the town.

As France took over each area she set up military posts built of logs with earth embankments and, no doubt, quickly realised the problem with communications - there simply weren't any, unless you counted dusty, rutted earth tracks used only by bullock carts, which turned into quagmires in the rainy season. So, for that reason, and, of course, to further her ambitions to turn the Mekong into a super-highway, from about 1880 France started building a whole fleet of shallow-draught river steamers. Some, at least, of these steamers were built on the Clyde and by 1905 there were around twenty-eight of them, operating under the company name of the Messageries Fluviales de Cochinchine.

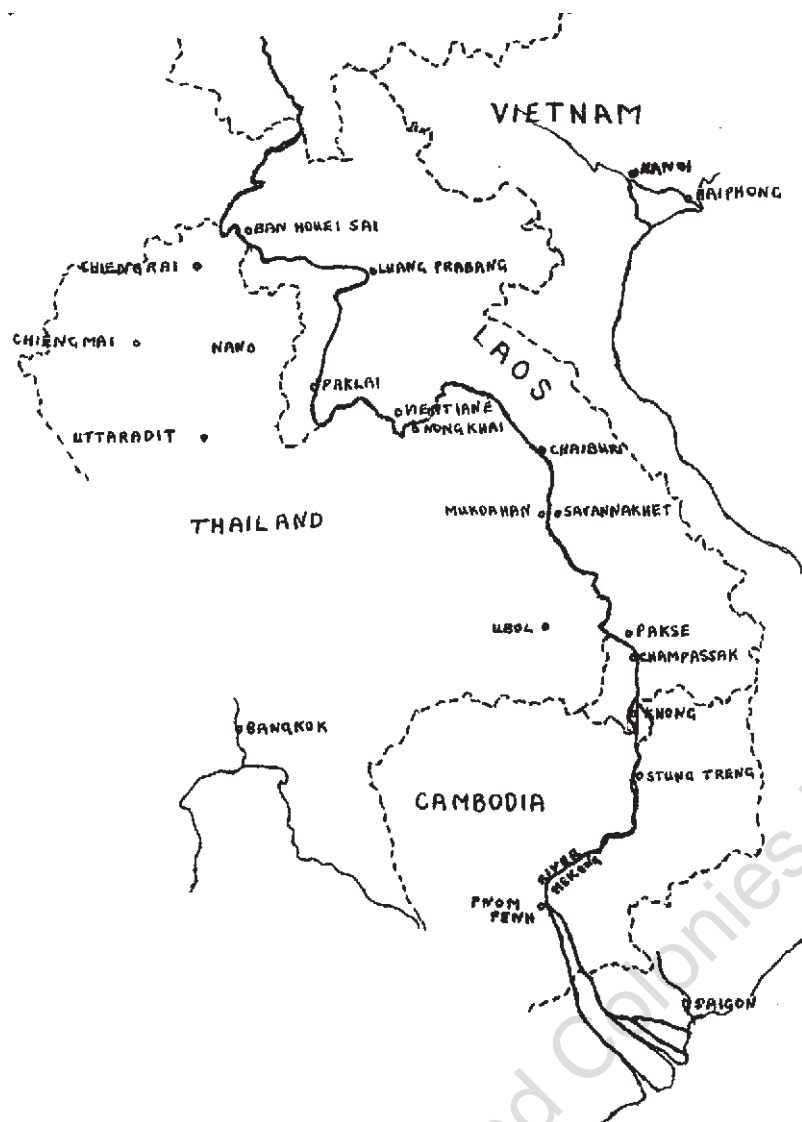


Figure 2 - Sketch map of Laos

These vessels started from Saigon, sailed all round the coasts and poked their bows into every inlet big enough to hold them. More importantly, three times a week they sailed up the Mekong as far as Pnom Penh and eventually as far as Luang Prabang during the high water season. Even more pertinently from the point of view of the mail in my possession, the steamers sailed from town to town round the Great Cambodian lake, again during the high water season from July to November or December. Of course, their sailing plans depended to some extent on the state of the monsoon and the cargoes available.

The boats also carried passengers and, most interesting of all, each vessel had a mail room for carrying bags of mail between the various post offices, Thai as well as French, and also carried a stock of French stamps for selling to passengers and others posting mail on board. It was normal practice on these vessels, as with many other French steamers, for each boat to carry a postal agent, whose only job it was to deal with the mail. In addition to the stamps, each agent carried a numbered 'Vapeur' handstamp for cancelling mail posted on board. Unfortunately, because each agent took the handstamp with him as he moved from ship to ship, it has never proved possible to match the numbers with the names of the ships. For what technical details there are, I refer you to Raymond

Salles' monumental work *La Poste Maritime Française, Tome V*.

A number of writer-travellers sailed on these boats up to Pnom Penh and across the Great Lake, so descriptions exist both of their appearance and leisurely sailing abilities and of the little towns visited. One of the earlier descriptions was by H Warington Smyth, who crossed the lake from Battambang to Siem Reap:

"Hearing that the Messageries Fluviales steamer *Phockien* had arrived in the lower river, we obtained a three chau boat and descended the Sangke, or Battambang stream, to Pakpria (near Battambang), where she lay

The *Phockien* was a fine screw boat with a long promenade deck and every comfort. She drew about seven feet, and with less draft would be able to navigate the lake for many more months in the year than is now possible. The river had at this time nearly sixteen feet of water and was as wide as Henley Reach; the lake where we crossed it gave only ten feet, and was drying so fast that it was the steamer's last trip for the season. The commander was a Frenchman, and he had three French officers to assist him, and a large crew of Annamites. There

was one European passenger besides myself, and he was the agent of the company. There were a dozen native passengers.”

[H Warington Smyth, *Five Years in Siam*, published John Murray, 1898]

A few years later Pierre Loti visited the ruins at Angkor, travelling first from Saigon to My Tho by train and then by river boat. Writing in November 1901, still high water season, he says:

“The steam-boat gets under way as soon as I am on board, we begin to ascend the Mekong, keeping near to the banks, where the trees seem to stretch out a curtain intensely black, and the fireflies continue their sparkling dances.”

The boat took a day and a night crossing the lake to the Siem Reap river where Loti travelled on, first by sampan and then by ox-cart.

“At the end of about an hour we stop at Siem-Reap, almost a town, but quite Siamese in character, with its little houses raised always on piles, and its pagoda bristling with golden horns. It boasts a post office, however, quite a countryside post office, where one may frank letters with stamps bearing the likeness of King Chulalongkorn.”

[Pierre Loti, *Siam*, published T Werner Laurie, 1913]

Move on a few years and P A Thomson also visited the ruins:

“In two hours we arrived at Myt’ho and went on board a river steamer. Then, for a day and a night, we journeyed through a land of mist and fog - where the Mekong rolls its mighty flood - and so to Pnom Penh, the capital of Cambodia. Everywhere I noted the same orderliness in the towns, the white buildings, the pleasant shaded roads, and the palaces of the local residents In the rainy season the river steamer crosses the great lake to Battambang, stopping on the way off the mouth of the Siemrap River; but my journey was made at the end of April, the worst time of the whole year, and the steamer could go no farther than Pnom Penh. There I spent the night at the comfortable hotel, and the following day a small launch took me as far as Kampong Chneang.”

He went on by sampan to the Siem Reap river and then by bullock cart, reaching Siem Reap on the fifth day.

“Then we came to open paddy fields, and proceeded over sandy roads in suffocating clouds of dust to the pretty village of Siemrap, whose groves of cocoanut trees border the stream. The village straggles along the bank for two or three miles, but at length we reached a sala (government rest house) where we rested during the heat of the day.”

[P A Thomson, *Lotus Land*, published T Werner Laurie, 1906]

The final quote is from Harry L Foster, travelling much later, in the 1920s, but conditions hardly seem to have changed at all:

“I raced for the (Saigon) hotel and raced back to the steamer. It was still there - a slender little craft with a tiny cabin perched away up forward in the bow, and several tiny staterooms perched away back aft in the stern, so that its general form suggested the discarded rind of a melon, an illusion made realistic by the stale odor from two hundred Asiatic steerage passengers of every size, sort, sect, sex, and species, who huddled in a mass of humanity upon the deck.”

From Pnom Penh:

“Another river steamer - smaller and dirtier than the first - carried me up a swamp-lined stream which was narrower than the Mekong, and across the Great Lake of Cambodia, an immense shallow pool in the heart of the Indo-Chinese swamps, where no dry land could be seen on any side, and where palms grew up out of the water and whole villages or thatched houses floated upon rafts.”

[Harry L Foster, *A Beachcomber in the Orient*, published Cornwall Press, 1923]

Now for my material. The postcard in Figure 3 has a photograph of Angkor Wat on the reverse, and I like to think of some intrepid traveller visiting this ruined Wonder of the World and sending cards to all his friends. As we have seen, a surprising number of travellers had taken to visiting the ruins, so many that the Angkor Wat hotel was built at Siem Reap to accommodate them. The worst the sightseer had to contend with, apart from the heat and the flies, was French bureaucracy - the natives certainly seemed friendly enough. At the time the postcard was sent the Thais still held suzerainty over this part of Cambodia, but were shortly due to cede it to the French under the treaty made after the Paknam Incident.

The traveller appears to have posted the card on board the steamer rather than putting it in at the post office and the stamp was cancelled in blue with the *Vapeur* N° 2 mark on 3 December 1906. The vessel must have been near the end of its run because the card was re-cancelled in Pnom Penh post office the following day, ie 4 December 1906. Along, no doubt, with numerous others, it was taken down river in another steamer of the Messageries Fluviales to Saigon, where it was put on board a third vessel for the journey to France. This time the ship was a liner of the Messageries Maritimes, and courtesy of M Salles it is possible to say that it was the *Ernest Simons* of the *Ligne N*, leaving Saigon on 15 December 1906 and arriving at Marseille on 7 January 1907.



Figure 3

The next card (Fig 4) is much more difficult to say anything about. Again it was posted directly on board a river steamer and has the *Vapeur N° 4* mark in black of 1 October 1904, but as to where it was put on board - I wish I knew! Incidentally, in my experience the 'Vapeur' marks are most commonly met with in black, occasionally in blue and much more rarely in red, though I think this more a matter of available ink pads than any kind of policy.

One of the many river services reached as far up the Mekong as Khong during the high water season, otherwise it only went as far as Kratie, and there at Khong the French reached an insurmountable barrier - the falls. These were no ordinary waterfalls, instead they were a maze of interconnecting water channels, shoals, islands, tumbled water and giant boulders stretching miles, which formed a

total barrier to shipping, so the French built a short, five kilometre railway round the obstacle. This was the only railway there ever was in Laos, and indeed is still there, mouldering gently into the jungle; the Laotians never have taken to railways. By 1897 the river services reached along the Mekong as far as Luang Prabang in Laos, though again only during the high water season. In the absence of other information, I can only imagine the boats were transported in sections and re-assembled on the other side of the falls.

The postcard in Figure 5 is something of a mystery to me. It was posted on board a river steamer, probably on 2 June 1911, though the date is difficult to decipher. The mystery is, that this type of date stamp was supposedly only used between 1885 and 1898. The card was transhipped at My Tho on 4 June 1911 and arrived at Phnom

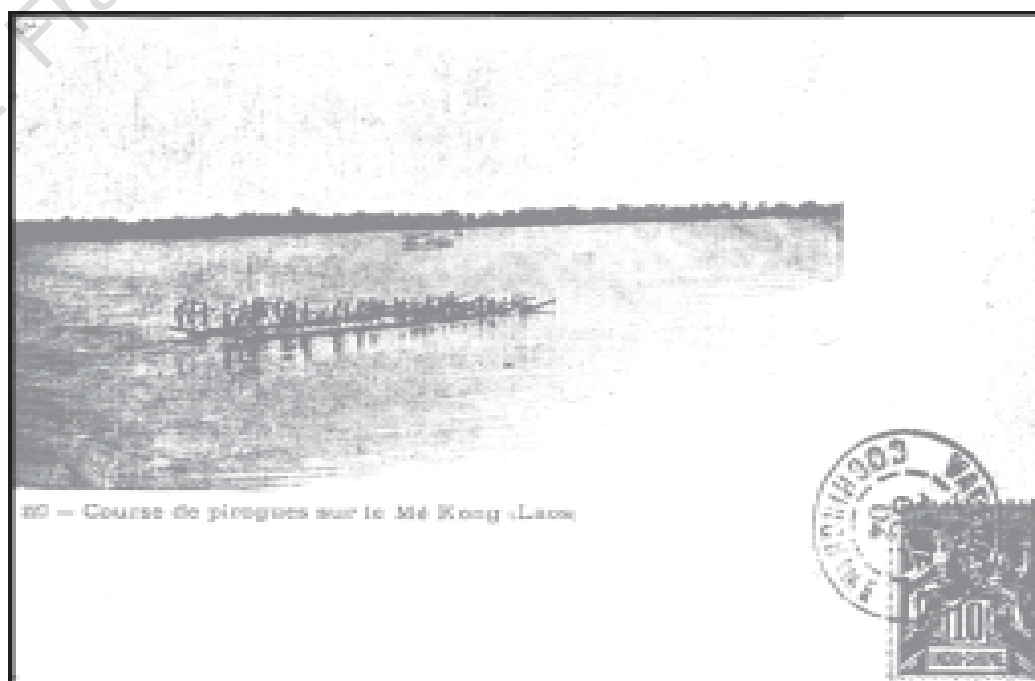


Figure 4



Figure 5

Penh on 5 June 1911. The card then presumably continued upriver as far as the falls and then on again by river, or overland, to Pakse in Laos. The remaining illustrations (Figs 6 - 10) are fully described in the captions.

What happened to the mail during the low water season when the river steamers couldn't operate? Well, it was carried in the traditional way by mail runner or bullock

cart, which depending on the state of the dirt tracks could take weeks rather than days.

Now that is about all I know, so if you happen to be an expert on the subject, how about getting in touch? I am indebted to the Thai Philatelic Society, particularly the editor Del Smith, for permission to re-use some of the material which has already appeared in print in *Thai Times*.

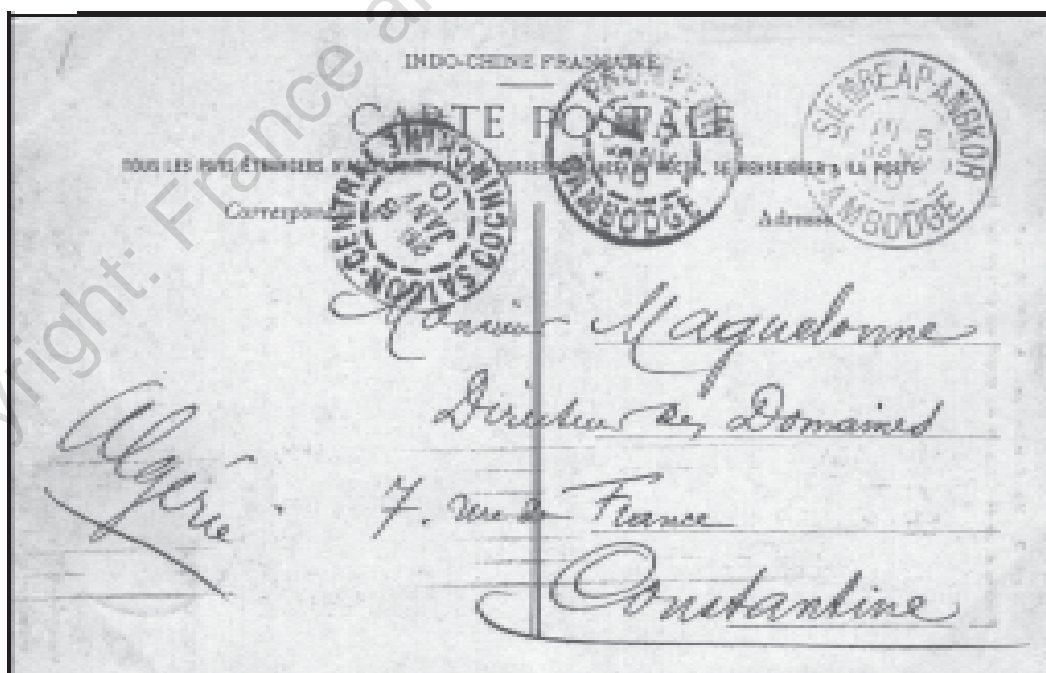


Figure 6 - A postcard with a photograph of Angkor Wat on the reverse, cancelled with the Siem Reap - Angkor mark in blue of 5 January 1910, the Phnom Penh mark of 7 January 1910 and the Saigon mark of 8 January 1910. To judge by the speed the card travelled, it may well have been sent by river boat.

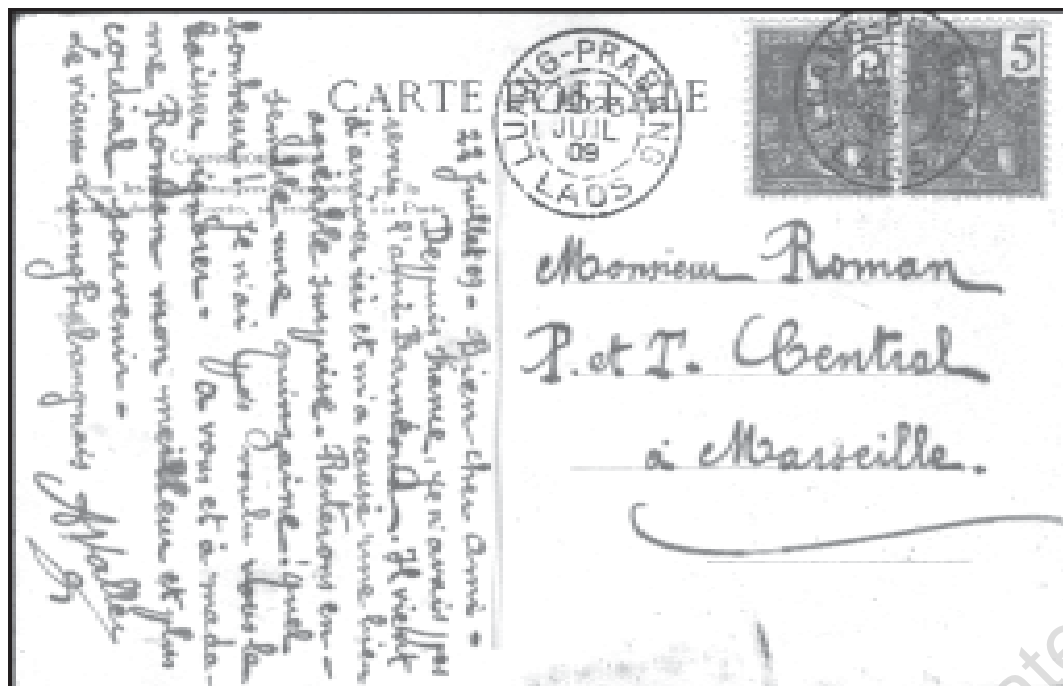


Figure 7 -
A postcard cancelled
Luang Prabang,
23 July 1909.
It is impossible to say
with any certainty
exactly how this
postcard reached its
destination of Marseille.

Figure 8 -
Two steamers of the
Messageries Fluviales
tied up at the Quais de
la Marine in Saigon.



Figure 9 -
The *Jules Rueff* of the
Messageries Fluviales
tied up at Pnom Penh
during the high-water
season.

[For Figure 10 see front cover]

Cameroun – A Tale of Three Covers

Bill Mitchell

Some years ago I published a short article describing three Cameroun covers which had been improvised at a time of paper shortage in World War 2 ⁽¹⁾. I have since acquired two similar covers which I hope will be of interest.

The earlier of the two (Fig 1a) is most unprepossessing at first sight. One of the stamps is torn and the Douala date stamp is very poor, the date being illegible. But closer inspection shows that these first impressions are misleading. The envelope has been made from part of an official report from the postmaster at Otele to his head office at Douala, bearing fair strikes of the *OTELE* linear *cachet de service* and single-ring circular date stamp dated 5 MAI 39. Unfortunately they cannot be reproduced here because they are, naturally enough, on the inside of the envelope, which has in general been very securely gummed down. The date stamp is, however, of the type shown as Fig 1b, taken with due acknowledgment from the standard catalogue of French Cameroun postmarks ⁽²⁾. The flap of the envelope, which was fortunately cut and not torn on opening, was less well secured and has become detached, which enables me to show the Douala postmaster's *DOUALA DIRECTION* date stamp (Fig 1c). This is not often seen and indeed is not catalogued, although it is recorded elsewhere ⁽³⁾.

The 1F50 franking shows that the letter was posted some time between 1 February 1944 and 31 March 1945. This rate was given effect by an *arrêté* of 19 January 1944. Although it was the same as the rate currently in force in France, where it had applied since 5 January 1942,

Cameroun had adhered to General de Gaulle as early as 27 August 1940 and changes imposed by the Vichy regime did not apply there. This presumably explains the period of two and a half years which elapsed before the Cameroun and French tariffs were brought (apparently) into line. The next Metropolitan increase, to 2F, of 1 March 1945 (by which time the liberation had been largely completed and the new French government was in effective control of its colonies) was closely followed by a similar increase in Cameroun by an *arrêté* of 30 March, effective from 1 April. This suggests that there was a definite attempt to bring the rates nominally into line at this stage even though the real values of the two currencies were drifting apart ⁽⁴⁾.

Although confirmation is unfortunately not available to me, the position in French Equatorial Africa was probably very much the same as it had also adhered to de Gaulle in 1940. (It was different in French West Africa, though. These colonies did not switch their allegiance from Vichy to de Gaulle until November 1942, and the French increase of 5 January 1942 was given effect there as from 1 March of that year by an *arrêté* of 4 February. As with Cameroun, the 2F rate followed on 1 April 1945 [*arrêté* of 20 March].) As I hope to show in a future article, these time lags were similar to the delays which had occurred before the War.

The covers described in my previous article also date from this 1944-45 period (27 and 31 December 1944) and are franked at the 1F50 basic letter rate or the 60c *carte de visite* rate for internal mails under the 1 February 1944 tariff referred to above.



Figure 1a



Figure 1b

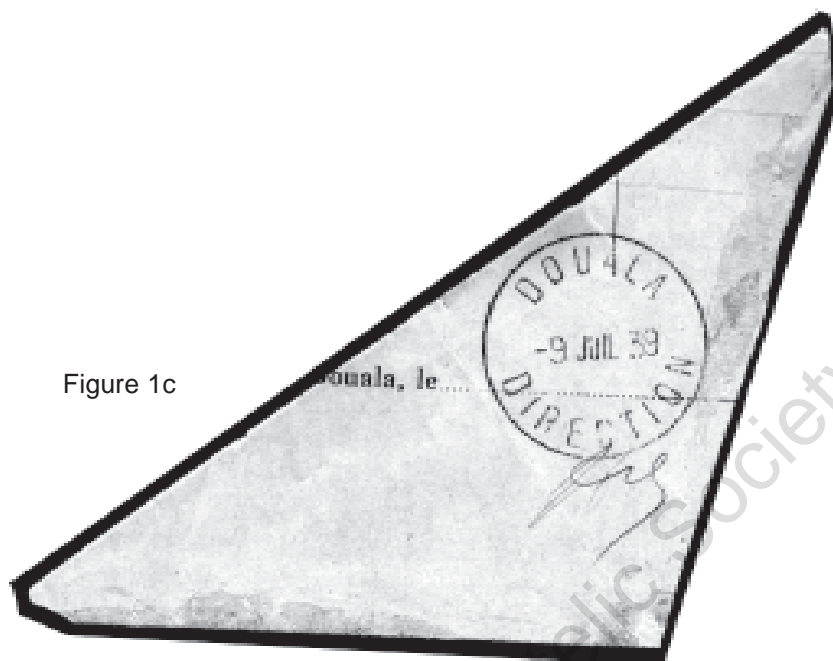


Figure 1c

Through the courtesy of Bob Maddocks, the well-known specialist in Cameroun postal history, I can show at this point the front of an interesting commercially produced envelope (Fig 2) which illustrates the period between the tariff increases in France early in 1942 and in Cameroun some two years later. Posted from Douala to London on 7 December 1943 (it presumably contained a New Year's greeting card; a faint MAIDA HILL backstamp is dated 29 February 1944!), it is franked at 50c. This was the foreign *imprimé* rate under the French tariff of 1 January 1940 which was given effect in Cameroun on 1 February of that year (*arrêté* of 20 January); in France it had been increased to 80c on 1 February 1942. As with the internal tariffs, this rate was not increased in Cameroun until 1944 – the effective date under the *arrêté* of 22 January was also 1 February, and the new rate was also 80c. Incidentally, the envelope, which was correctly sent unsealed, should have been marked “*Imprimé*.”

My second new cover (Fig 3a) shows that there was apparently still a paper shortage when this letter was sent registered from the small port of Kribi to Douala on 20 March 1948. This time the paper was an old circular, dated

14 December 1929, addressed from England to shippers in Liverpool, Hamburg, Bremen and Amsterdam, outlining forthcoming amendments to freight tariffs to ports in Nigeria (Fig 3b) (there was, I understand, a consensus or cartel - the West Africa Lines Conference - between the Wars and, indeed, after 1945⁽⁵⁾). The two stamps folded over are both 1F50 Dulacs, so the total franking is 9F CFA. This is the charge for a first step registered letter (3F postage, 6F registration) under the Cameroun tariff of 1 October 1947 (*arrêtés* of 29 August and 15 September 1947). At that time the CFA franc was equal to 1F70 Metropolitan⁽⁴⁾, so 9F in Cameroun was equal to 15F30 in France) where the rate was currently 20F (6F basic plus 14F registration) and so significantly more expensive. So far as I know, the question of the relationship between postage rates in France and the colonies using the CFA franc has not been raised before. It is hoped that an article on this subject will be published later on. If anyone has any relevant information or can offer helpful comments I will be very pleased to hear from you. Please write to me at 41 Graemesdyke Avenue, East Sheen, London SW14 7BH.

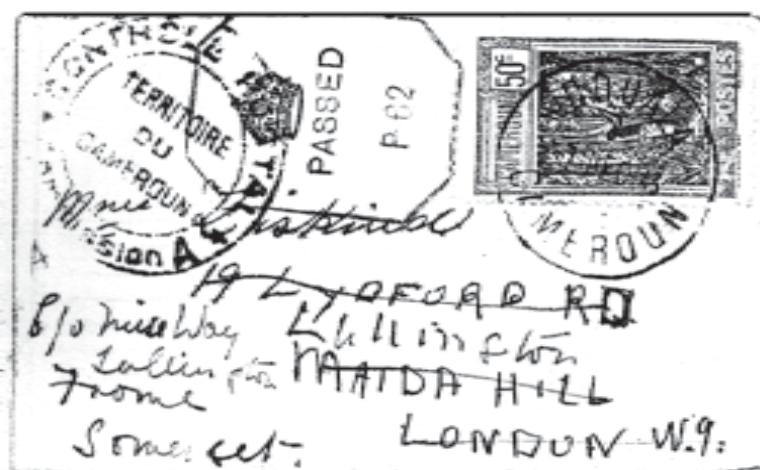


Figure 2



Figure 3a

A further point, of interest to the student of World War II postage rates and air mails, has been put by Bob Maddocks and might be mentioned here. There was no direct air mail service to France and occupied Europe during the period from August 1940, when Cameroun and French Equatorial Africa adhered to the Free French cause, and the liberation; most commercial mail from West Africa to elsewhere, particularly the UK and the USA, went via Nigeria in British and Allied planes (6). How did Cameroun and French Equatorial Africa link into these despatches, were their airmail rates aligned with those of British West Africa and, if so, how were they given effect? They do not seem to have been published in the *Journal Officiel*. Any comments may be sent to me.

Postscript to my 1989 article

I mentioned that one of the 1944-45 *Jour de l'An* greetings cards was home-made on good quality paper bearing part of an embossed manufacturer's mark "...RE ROB..." Bob Maddocks has pointed out that on pages 46 and 47 of his book on World War II censorship in Cameroun (7) he illustrated 20 different *CONTRÔLE POSTAL MILITAIRE* sealing tapes. Four of these (known period of use November 1941 to September 1944) bear an embossed imprint *REGISTRE ROBUK* between stylised leaves. With his permission this is illustrated here (Fig 4). Who, what or where "Robuk" is, unfortunately, is unknown - can anyone help?

Acknowledgments

The details of Cameroun postal tariffs have been extracted from *arrêtés* published in the *Journal Officiel du Cameroun français*, copies of which have very kindly been

sent to me by Marty Bratzel. These extracts also include official correspondence and deliberations regarding currency devaluation leading up to the establishment of fixed exchange rates in 1945 and revisions in 1948 between the French franc and the CFA franc (and also the CFP franc and the Indochinese piastre). Copies can be supplied to anyone who is interested in contributing to a study of the subject. I also have, courtesy of Bob Picirilli, a similar but less comprehensive set of extracts from the *Journal Officiel de la Côte d'Ivoire*. If anyone has a problem cover from Cameroun or any other French colony in Equatorial or West Africa I will be pleased to see whether these extracts can help to resolve it.

I am obliged to three experts on Cameroun - Dr Bratzel, Bob Maddocks and Dudley Cobb - for helpful comments on the first drafts of this article. Details of French tariffs have been taken from the second edition of Derek Richardson's F&CPS brochure.

References

- (1) "A War-time *Jour de l'An* in Cameroun" (Journal 174, December 1989, page 160).
- (2) M P Bratzel Jnr, H Kraja and R J Maddocks, "*Les Oblitérations du Cameroun 1914-1960*" (MPB Canada 1990).
- (3) R J Maddocks, "Marking Time 1887-1987, a Century of Postmarks and Cachets of an African Town Kamerun Douala" (House of Antiquity - Cockrill Series Booklet 62, no date but published in 1989), page 25.
- (4) See the articles by C Ortolí (trans R Stuckey) and V Thompson and H Adloff in Journals 204 (June 1997, page 73) and 208 (June 1998, page 87).
- (5) Private communication from R J Maddocks.

... ICE TO SHIPPERS
STEAM SHIP LINES BETWEEN
... KINGDOM THE CONTINENT

LIVERPOOL
HAMBURG
BREMEN
AMSTERDAM

14th. December 1929

With reference to the Notice to Shippers dated 26th. November 1929, a copy of the new Primage and Rebate Circular and Homeward Freight Tariff is enclosed herewith.

The Outward Freight Tariff is unchanged, except that the rates to Abonema, Ada, Akassa, Bakana, Buguma, Burutu, Degama, Okrika and Opobo will be increased by 25 per cent.

On both outward and homeward shipments (except on outward through shipments) primage of 20 per cent will be charged.

The conditions on which the primage will be returned (half immediately) are set out in the circular.

Shippers' attention is respectfully drawn to the advantageous terms on which the rebate will be granted as set out in the circular.

The tariff, primage, and rebate conditions come into force on shipments, by the undermentioned lines on 1st. January, 1930.

African Steamship Company
The British and African Steam Navigation Co., Limited

...
... Afrika Linie A.G.
... Ost Afrika Linie.
... (...).
... Afrika Linie, G.m.b.H.
... West Afrika Lijn

Figure 3b - deciphered by MPB

[partial transcription of the inside of the envelope; the ... indicates either where part of the envelope has been cut away or where the paper is folded over and glued, hence not legible]

(6) See the article "West African Airmails During World War II from the Gambia Perspective" in *Cameo* (the Journal of the West Africa Study Circle) for January 1997. This quotes correspondence between London and Bathurst, including a report of 10 March 1942 giving details of postal routes from Gambia to Vichy territories (Dakar only), Cameroun and French Equatorial Africa. There is also a note of air services and routes operational in Africa in 1941-42.

(7) "Facets of Cameroun in Wartime - the Cause and Effect of Postal Censorship 1939-1945" (Philip Cockrill, Cockrill Series Booklet 58, 1985).



Figure 4

The Year of Edmund Dulac

Colin Spong

In 1994, when we commemorated the fifty years since the stamps designed for France and its Colonies by this eminent naturalised Anglo-Frenchman, David Lamb gave a fascinating exposé of the 'Marianne de Dulac' both to the F&CPS Weekend, and in the September 1994 Journal. It was whilst speaking to him on this subject, that I mentioned the difficulty in obtaining any information concerning the colonial stamp issues, including printing details. David said that he had a copy of the philatelic material that was deposited from Harrison's archives into the National Postal Museum, London.

This greatly interested me, and I approached two previous curators of the British National Postal Museum. There was firstly the late Anthony G Righi de Righi who, in 1980, replied "I am sorry to tell you we have investigated in the past whether any archives remained (*unfortunately we both fell in the trap of ascribing these to De la Rue*) in the form of correspondence or otherwise relating to issues printed by DLR for France and its dependencies during the second World War; unfortunately nothing whatsoever has been found and I suspect that that particular volume

may well have been secret or confidential and was probably destroyed towards the end of the war. The only thing that survived, out of all of the work they did for the French, was the master artwork for the French "Marianne de Londres."

Secondly I contacted Raife Wellsted in 1981, in connection with the proposed Dulac Exhibition which was being combined with the Paris International Exhibition in 1982. He replied "With regard to the Free French stamps - yes these were printed by Harrison's, and if I come across anything I'll let you know. There are no records of these either at Harrison's or APS." (By this Wellsted was referring to the Army Postal Services at Mill Hill.) I felt that I would not discover anything further.

David has very kindly given me a copy of this list of Dulac philatelic material, which I feel should be recorded in our journal. I have added Catalogue numbers [Cérès/Yvert and Stanley Gibbons] and note that the first page has the letter "A" indicating Free French material, whilst page 2 begins with the letter "D" and New Caledonia. Is there another page somewhere?

LIST OF PHILATELIC MATERIAL FROM THE ARCHIVES OF HARRISON & SONS LIMITED DEPOSITED AT THE NATIONAL POSTAL MUSEUM ON 24 APRIL 1989

A: FREE FRENCH MATERIAL

1] French Indian Settlements

1942 airmail issue: Cérès - Yvert 1-6; SG 243-248.

4 fanams orange	imperforate sheet of 50 stamps
1 rupee red	" "
2 rupees purple-brown	" "
5 rupees black	" "
8 rupees blue	" "
10 rupees green	" "



[tear at bottom]



1942 ordinary mail issue: Cérès - Yvert 217-229; SG 229-242

De luxe proofs: one of each value as follows.

2 cash brown,	3 cash blue,	4 cash green,	6 cash orange,
12 cash slate,	16 cash purple,	20 cash brown,	1 fanam red,
1 fa. 18 ca. black,	6 fa.6 ca. blue,	1 rupee violet,	2 rupees bistre,
3 rupees brown,	5 rupees green.		



2] Madagascar

1943 airmail issue: Cérès Yvert 55-61; SG 268-274.

1 franc orange	imperforate sheet of 50 stamps marked 'OK Colour 1.10.43.'
1 franc 50 red	" " initialled & dated 30.9.43; creased and small tear right margin.
5 francs purple brown	" " initialled & dated 28.9.43.
10 francs black	" " initialled; black ink smudge bottom and right margins.
25 francs blue	" " initialled & dated 24.9.43; tear right margin.
50 francs green	" " initialled & dated 24.9.43.
100 francs magenta	" " initialled & dated 23.9.43; creased.with small tear right margin.

D: NEW CALEDONIA COLOUR RANGE (POSTAGE)

14 perforated stamps 5c to 20F. Two [30c, 40c] annotated with crosses.

E: MARIANNE HEAD BY DULAC

Three imperforate 1st proofs with 25c value, in green, blue, red. Three imperforate revised proofs with 25c value in green, blue, red.

F: ST PIERRE & MIQUELON POSTAGE COLOUR RANGE

14 perforated stamps 5c - 20c, some annotated with cross.



G: OCEANIA POSTAGE

14 perforated stamps 5c - 20F, some annotated with cross.

H: AIRMAIL COLOURS

Seven perforated Cameroun airmail stamps 1F - 100F. Very grubby.



I: SOWER & HEAD

Sower: 1st essay imperforate 2F50 blue [10.643]
2nd essay imperforate 2F50 blue, red, green
Essay imperforate 2F50 - 2F50 blue [3.843]

Head: Three essays imperforate 2F50 blue, 1F red, 25c green [14.7.43]
One essay imperforate 2F50 blue [23.9.43]

J: Two imperforate essays of blue airmail stamps, one with Réunion the others Djibouti [3.8.43]

K: 14 perforate stamps of Cameroun, 5c - 20F, some annotated with cross.

L: RÉUNION COLOUR ESSAYS (7.7.43)

16 imperforate essays without values in various colours. Card annotated. Accompanying note.

M: MADAGASCAR COLOUR ESSAYS AS SUBMITTED TO MR WARREN (28.10.42)

14 imperforate Madagascar essays 5c - 20F.

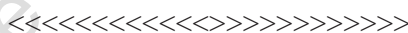
Five perforated St Pierre & Miquelon used for comparison. Various annotations.

N: MADAGASCAR -.REVISED ESSAYS AS SENT TO MR WARREN (10.11.42)

22 imperforate essays, 14 without values, 8 with values [4F, 5F, 10F, 25F each x 2]. Annotations.

0: DUPLICATE SET AIRMAIL COLOUR STANDARDS (29.4.42)

Seven imperforate stamps, four designated 'French Equatorial Africa' [orange, red, purple-brown, green]; three designated 'Oceania' [black, blue, magenta].



Literature

The only philatelic literature published in England that I have so far traced on this subject is the following:

“The Story of The Free French Colonial Stamps,” 16pp with a foreword by General Charles de Gaulle. Printed by Harrison & Sons, London. This describes the designs by Edmund Dulac, commissioned by the Free French London Committee to provide for new issues for those colonies which had declared for Free France.

The colonies covered in this booklet were Cameroons, French Equatorial Africa, French Establishments in India, Oceania, and New Caledonia, as well as the air-mail stamp common to all the territories.

The Keeper of the Department of Oriental Antiquities and Ethnography at the British Museum provided documents used in the composition of the Oceania and French Establishments in India designs. The Warburg Institute Library were approached with regard to the design for French Equatorial Africa.

The first design for New Caledonia was rejected because it depicted a rising sun, which was associated with Japanese aggression in the Pacific area. Finally the airmail stamp design was chosen from a model of a modern plane not yet under construction, after the Free French Air Force were invited to give advice and express any criticism.

Stamp Collecting of 4 October 1941 showed essays of the designs autographed by the artist and General de Gaulle, the issue for 11 October 1941 noted that Free French Stamps were under preparation and to be issued probably in November. The 20 December issue had an article on "Free French Finance" and made the statement that the Free French Oceanic Settlements was the last of the 'De Gaulle' territories to issue *France Libre* stamps.



In fact after 1943 there were to be two more - Madagascar and Réunion. An article commemorating Edmund Dulac appeared in the 27 March 1969 issue, which included an illustration of the design for Réunion. This paper written by Christopher M Martin, mentioned that a collection of drawings prepared by Dulac with various sketches of designs for the various Colonies were to be sold by H R Harmer at their Bond Street Auction Rooms on Monday 31 March 1969. Also to be sold were coloured sketches for the Marianne head design for France that were printed by De La Rue, whereas the colonies issues were printed by Harrison.

The Philatelic Magazine of 24 April 1942 published an article, "Origin of the Free French Colonial Designs," taken from the Harrison booklet, which was later re-published as a P M Reprint N° 4.

In the anniversary year of 1994 two French philatelic magazines published studies in March of the issue for France of "La Marianne de Dulac" - in *L'Écho de la Timbrologie* N° 1662 March 1994, and *Le Monde des Philatélistes* N° 483. *L'Écho* does show the Charity issue for the Colonies.

The two remaining colonies issues not mentioned in the above literature, no doubt because they were only printed after their occupation in 1942, are as follows:

MADAGASCAR 1943 DULAC POSTAGE ISSUE

This issue was printed by Harrison by photogravure, the method of printing used by Harrison for the definitive stamps of Great Britain, also designed by Edmund Dulac. They were perforated 14 x 14½ in sheets of 50. There are no details of the numbers printed. A number of small varieties occurred in this issue: notably on the 9th stamp a small dot appears at the right of the right hand ornament, and one before the word *Postes*. *Épreuves de luxe* and imperfs without value including 30c, 1F, 1F50 and 2F were issued for presentation purposes. The values are 5c, 10c, 25c, 30c, 40c, 80c, 1F, 1F50, 2F, 2F50, 4F, 5F, 10F and 20F.

There were two types of essays prepared, with profits going to the French Liberation Movement on this design depicting the Ravinala Tree. These were made at the Service Géographique de Tananarive:

- (1) 5 November 1943, 28 essays with the legend "*France Combattante + 25F*" and cross in red surcharging on the 5c value
- (2) 3 January 1944, 8 essays with the legend "*France Combattante + 50F*" in black and cross in red surcharging on the 5c value. Also a 10c with the same surcharge.

I have not seen either of these two types of overprints.

In 1944 two values were issued surcharged.

360 000 of the 5c value surcharged 1F50 in red and 200 000 of the 10c value surcharged in blue 1F50.

There are reversed surcharges on both values and a double surcharge on the 10c, as well as a variety appearing on the 28th stamp of both values: "a small dot under the 'f' and also to the right of the figure."

Once again in 1945 new values were needed with the 5c, 25c and 2F50 values being overprinted. There must have been a large printing of the 5c value? All values have the surcharge displaced!

5c surcharged 50c; 5c surcharged 60c; 5c surcharged 75c; 5c surcharged 1F20; 25c surcharged 2F40 with a number of varieties - deformed 2 on 9th stamp and a very deformed 2 on 43rd stamp, small dot on 3rd stamp and surcharge overlapping on some of the stamps. 25c surcharged 3F with varieties: surcharge in grey and a dot absent after the F on the 45th stamp. 25c surcharged 4F50 and 2F50 surcharged 15F.

MADAGASCAR 1943 DULAC AIRMAIL ISSUE

The airmail issue appeared in the common design to all the Free French colonial stamps by Edmund Dulac. It was issued in 1943, printed at Harrison's in sheets of 50 by photogravure, perforated 14 x 14½ with 63 *épreuves de luxe* and also imperfs without value [of the 25F colour] issued for presentation purposes. The values issued were 1F, 1F50, 5F, 10F, 25F, 50F and 100F.

Reference: *Timbres de Madagascar*, Tananarive 1972.

RÉUNION

A design depicting chief products appeared in December 1943 with the following postage values: 5c, 10c, 25c, 30c, 40c, 80c, 1F, 1F50, 2F, 2F50, 4F, 5F, 10F and 20F. They were printed at Harrison's by photogravure and perforated 14 x 14½. The airmail values once again in the Dulac design as used for the other colonies appeared in the following values: 1F, 1F50, 5F, 10F, 25F, 50F and 100F. These were issued in 1944 using the same printing methods and perforations, and one value [1F] was doubly printed..

In 1945 the postage values were surcharged with new values in red:

5c surcharged 50c, 5c surcharged 60c, 5c surcharged 70c, 5c surcharged 1F20, 25c surcharged 2F40, 25c surcharged 3F, 25c surcharged 4F50 and 2F50 surcharged 15F.

BOOKSHELF

Unusual Mail in Occupied France 1870-1871 (Little Known Activities of Smugglers, Censors, a Propagandist and Others), by Ernst M Cohn. Hardbound with dustcover, 225 x 235mm; 196 + xii pages (although 18 of these are blank), with just over 60 b/w illustrations; ISBN 9963 579 79 5; price £30 (\$50) plus postage; published by and available from James Bendon, PO Box 56484, 3307 Limassol, Cyprus(e-mail: jbendon@attglobal.net).

Readers of the *Journal* will be very aware of the specialised interests and particular style of our American member Ernst Cohn. This book is intended to be a companion volume to his *Ordinary Mail by Diplomatic Means during the Siege of Paris 1870-1871*, published in 1995, and it deals with various kinds of unusual mail that passed into, out of and within occupied France, although for the most part ignoring - because they have been covered extensively elsewhere - such subjects as the German mail system in occupied France, the double franking arrangements, *ballons montés*, pigeon mail and *boules de Moulin*.

The first chapters give details, both historical and - where known - postal, of a number of lesser publicised sieges in France during this period, such as those of Bitche, Phalsbourg, Thionville and Laon, as well as Metz and Strasbourg. Ernst's research has led him to trawl numerous contemporary newspaper reports and subsequent books, both French and German, and to seek relevant examples of items in auction catalogues and among fellow philatelists, and to present much fascinating information in an integrated summary of what attempts were made to move the mail across hostile lines. This approach tends to be anecdotal by nature, and sometimes results in some very confusing or even contradictory accounts of events, but the author maintains his customary scepticism concerning the accuracy of his quoted witnesses. The general picture is of towns that are supposedly restricted severely by German troops but in which the organisation of a siege is so lax that much free movement of individuals is allowed, enabling news to be passed in both directions without too much difficulty, whether by smuggling periodicals and letters, attempting to send bottle and bladder mail, or transmitting communications by flag of truce.

The middle section of the book, about 70 pages, confines itself to the capital, and makes the distinction between private, official, and commercial smuggling to and from Paris. Some of the individuals and agencies involved, with connections to places such as Rouen, Dijon and Amiens, are cited by name: we learn a great deal, for example, about Alexandre Barthé, who called himself a Government Courier, but who dealt in private mail smuggling as a sideline. A list of official mail smugglers for Paris is given for late September to early October 1870; and a list is published of the movements of the commercial smuggler Grimbert of Amiens for the period October to January. Successes and failures of all these agents are chronicled

where the facts are known; and some of the advertisements offering facilities to the general public are exposed for the confidence tricks they obviously were.

A few pages are then devoted to the sieges of Neuf-Brisach (where Ernst is able to point out a mistaken reference to free balloons in the Yvert Specialised Catalogue of 1975), Sélestat (which is unfortunately misspelt throughout the book, as is the word "activities" in the subtitle on the dustcover and the title page) and Belfort (which has a detailed list of siege traffic with the outside and a list of mail smuggled in January and February 1871). The peculiar cases of mail delayed by the depot of the Knights of St John at Pont-à-Mousson, a forgotten post office in the small village of Dornach in Alsace, and an enterprising trader in Givet who rented premises in the nearby Belgian enclave in order to receive mail from unoccupied France, are outlined very briefly. All these stories of clandestine mail are offered by the author as an encouragement to philatelists and postal historians to keep their eyes open for unusual markings and dates which indicate a possible instance of smuggling. Although many occurrences of such activities are described here, concrete examples of them in collections are rare indeed, and it requires vigilance and expert knowledge to identify such items.

The final two chapters of the book deal with French and German censorship procedures, the latter covering in more detail military censorship of POW and civilian mail, field censorship, political censorship, censorship in the occupied area, and post-armistice censorship at Versailles. In a short epilogue Ernst confesses that, despite his attempt to synthesise the information on all the topics covered in his book, "the subject is complex and still incompletely explored." There are many unanswered questions, and he appeals to future researchers to extend the boundaries of information in a more authoritative way. Notwithstanding a few irritating stylistic faults (occasionally clumsy continuity, which makes a few paragraphs more obscure than they should be; and some translations into English that are too literal and therefore rather stilted - eg "*Hôtel des Bains*" becomes "Hotel of the Baths" rather than "Spa Hotel"), the book in general stimulates readers to look more closely at the more unusual aspects of sending correspondence in a wartime situation, and to seek out further examples for themselves. With its extensive end notes and index, this book is made even more valuable to the specialist as well as intriguing and convincing to the general reader.

Maurice Tyler

Amazing 1870-71 Wonder Stories - 54

Ernst Cohn

A good many years ago, a *Neptune* cover came up in a German auction. It was described as one having been postmarked at Paris on 22 September and to have arrived on the 25th. It seemed like a good chance for me to get a document from the first manned balloon flight out of besieged Paris, so I put in what for that time was a generous bid. I got it, too, and it arrived in good time. The cover was in very fine condition and the description was correct in every way except for one point: The lotter had forgotten to mention that the name of the month was not visible on the arrival mark. There was not a single letter nor even part of one letter that one might have interpreted as being part of the *SEPT* that was to be expected. I turned the cover at different angles to the light, to see whether anything might show up in the spot where the month should have been struck, but there was nothing to be seen. Reluctantly I packed up my treasure and returned it to the auctioneer.

Though I did not know then what I know now, viz, that there apparently was no "first-class" mail on the *Neptune*, except for letters personally given to Pilot Duruof, I was well aware of the mail pile-up at Paris during the first month of the siege. Most of the mail postmarked at Paris from 18 September until about the end of that month arrived late in free France and neighboring countries, some right up to the end of October. Thus, when no portion of the month's name showed up, it would have been mere wishful thinking to accept the cover as having been delivered promptly rather than with the more probable delay of one month.

Not too long after I had returned the cover, both its former owner and the dealer who had bought it from him and then put it into the auction asked me to explain my reason for refusing it. I did that, also citing examples of delayed mail, which by then I had collected for a few years. Both accepted the reason, of which they had been unaware.

Today I would bid correspondingly more if I had the chance of getting such a cover, on which the month were legible in some way, not because it is a *Neptune* (which it still would not be) but because such covers document the very few successes of official mail smugglers, sent by the post office at Paris, in getting their mail through.

I was reminded of this episode recently when I reread an 1871 article in the *Deutsche Briefmarken-Zeitung's* volume 1, the twelve issues of which appeared between 15 October 1870 and 15 September 1871. Given the dates of its publication, it is no wonder that this slim volume is loaded with information about the mails of the Franco-German War. The April 1871 issue, eg, contains the article about the B. BALLON. P. E. bogus surcharges on *used* Bordeaux stamps that I have commented on elsewhere. That article by G S (Publisher G Schaubeck) also mentions the arrival

in Germany at that time of empty envelopes from Paris, offered as balloon mail but actually mailed after the armistice. The dates of the postmarks, both from Paris and from the place of arrival, had been made illegible or even cut off, with "*Par ballon monté*" added later and in some cases even with lithographed vignettes, such as were manufactured at Paris during its siege and were still being used afterwards. This last sentence clearly points to the "massed flags" emblem that recurred for years after the war on privately printed souvenirs.

The surreptitious removal of dates from postmarks was apparently possible a century ago already, so that my pseudo-*Neptune* may have been aged for decades before it finally stopped at my home briefly. But what if someone had added a believable *SEPT* where an actual *OCT* may have been removed?

On the page on which the above article ended are two more items worth noting:

"During the siege of Paris 54 balloons were launched that carried 2½ million letters weighing a total of 10,000 kilograms." The number of *mail* balloons is probably wrong, though there are still doubts today as to which of the 66 manned balloons did carry mail, and the total weight of *letters* is at least 50% too high, if not considerably more. It is also probable that the number of letters, written at Paris during the siege, was closer to 2 million, perhaps considerably fewer. In any case, it seems that, of the 2 million letters sent, almost 3 million still exist today!

The other item is quoted from the *Würzburger Zeitung*:

A keen local stamp collector tried to obtain some Paris balloon stamps and wrote to the Chancellor of the Confederation, Count von Bismarck, at Versailles, apparently considering this address to be the most suitable and best. Indeed, it was that, because soon thereafter he received from the Foreign Office at Berlin a large registered and well sealed letter containing a number of the desired stamps together with a polite letter sent on behalf of Count von Bismarck. This little token deserves full admiration! That Mr von Bismarck found enough time, aside from his affairs of state, to satisfy the desires of a young stamp collector, proves the affability of the statesman that is much talked about.

A pretty story, indeed, and one of a large number, told by newspapers on both sides and even in neutral countries, that must be taken with a grain of salt or two. Such stories might have been planted for political reasons, some are probably invented to improve lagging patriotism, and others may simply be chimeras to help sell papers or simply to fill them.

I remember one in which Parisians were told that homing pigeons had carried in the news of the fall of Orleans. Trouble was, the language was broken French, so the thing was clearly a German ruse. Now wasn't that a clever way of informing the public about a French defeat? Only, it turns out that General Blumenthal wrote after the war that

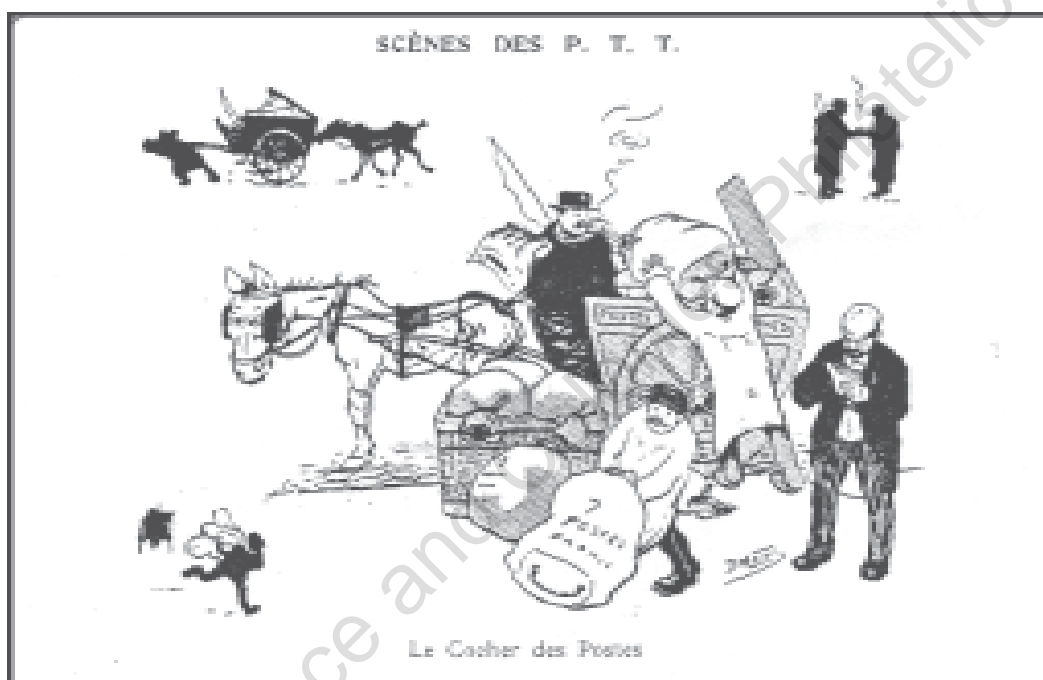
he had gotten hold of some captured homing pigeons and had sent these messages as a lark, later fearing that he would be found out and would have to apologize for his thoughtless action, but the rest of the Versailles headquarters couldn't have cared less. So you never can be sure who played which joke on whom, can you?

Postal Humour

Supplied by Robert Johnson

Yet another example of the Morer cartoons on postcards from 1914:

"The Post Office Coachman"



FRANCE 1900 - 2000

FINE USED & MINT
STAMPS BOOKLETS BLOCKS ETC

COMPREHENSIVE PRICE LIST AVAILABLE
DISCOUNTS FOR F&CPS MEMBERS

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PAGES FROM MY COLLECTION

(12) World War I POW Camps in Morocco

Bob Deakin

During the First World War, Morocco being a French Protectorate, Prisoner of War camps were established throughout the country. Figures 1 to 7 show postcards with photos of POW camps and prisoners, and Figure 8 is a cover showing the Camp Censor handstamp at Casablanca.

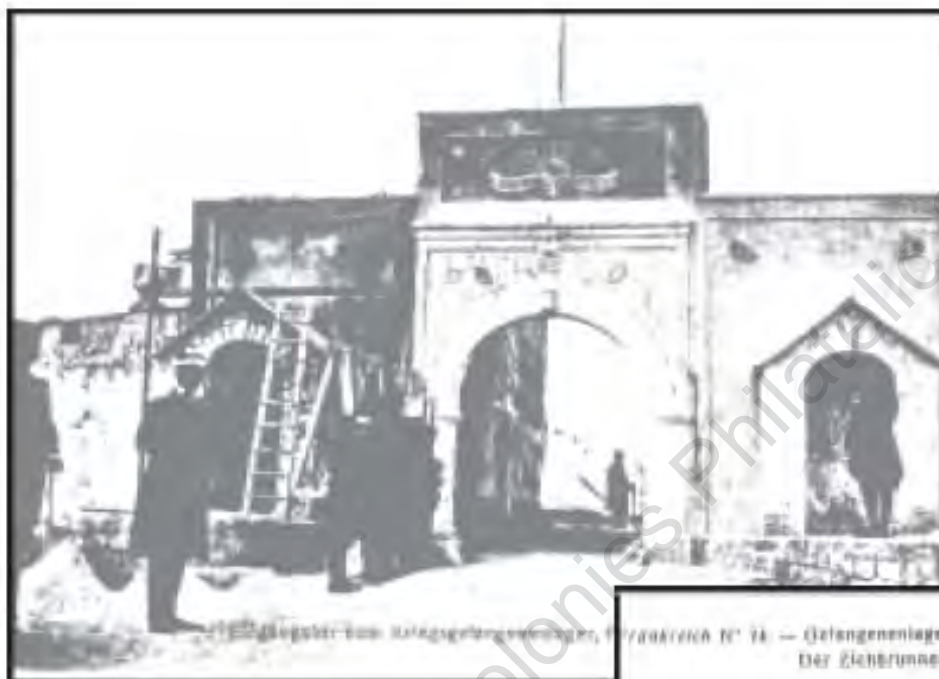


Figure 1 (top) - Entrance gate to POW camp, Fort Loubet Settati

Figure 2 (right) - Kenitra POW camp: the well

Figure 3 (above) - Ber-Rechid POW camp: garden and sick bay

Figure 4 -
Boulhaut POW Camp:
the coffee grinder

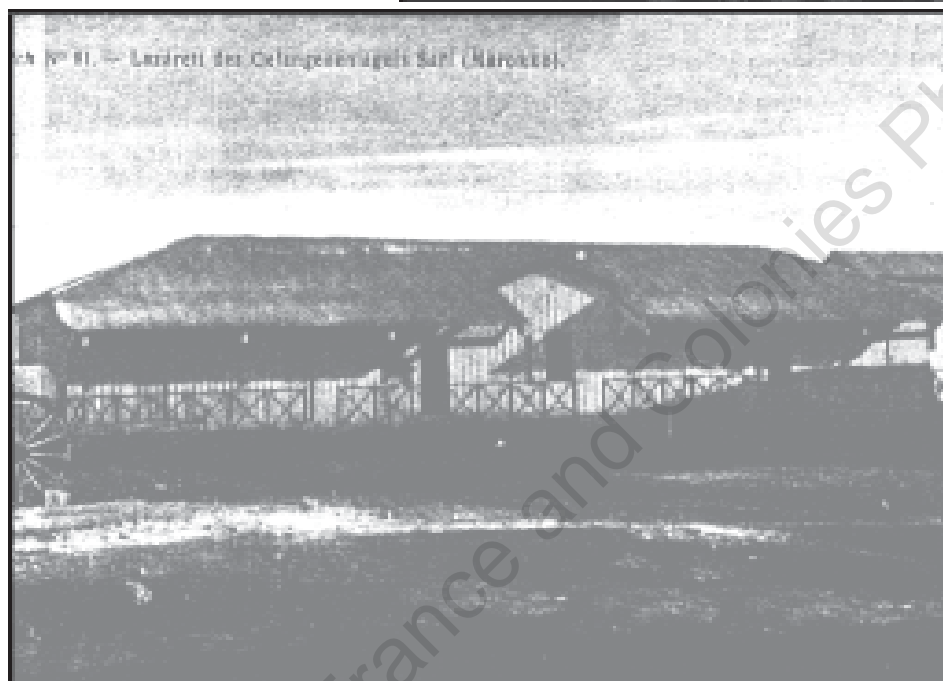


Figure 5 -
Safi POW Camp
sick bay

Figure 6 -
El Hank POW Camp:
labour gang on the beach



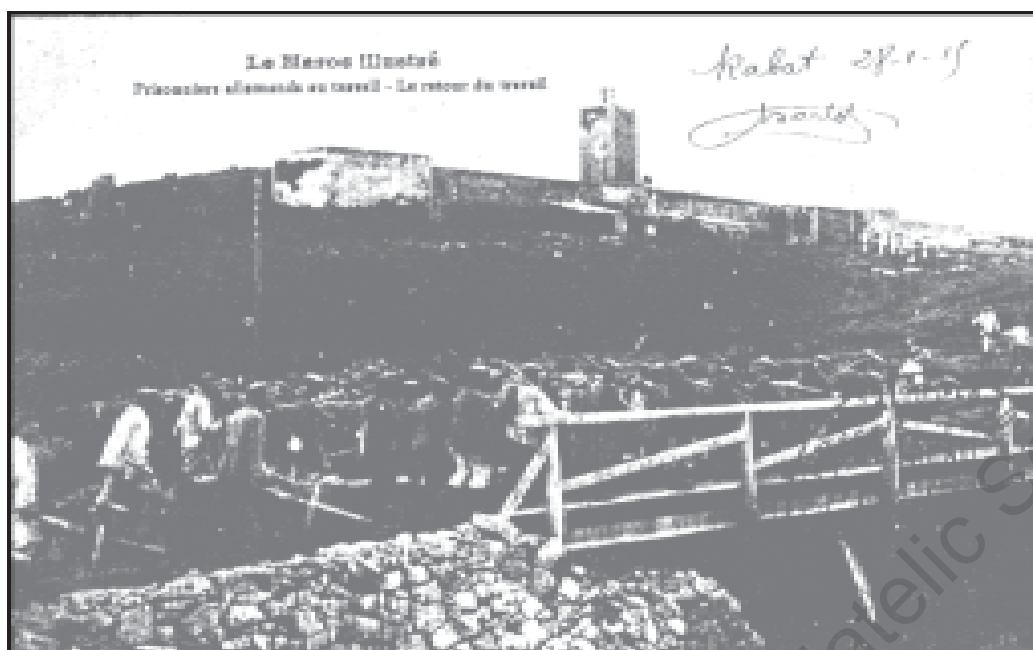


Figure 7 -
German prisoners returning from work

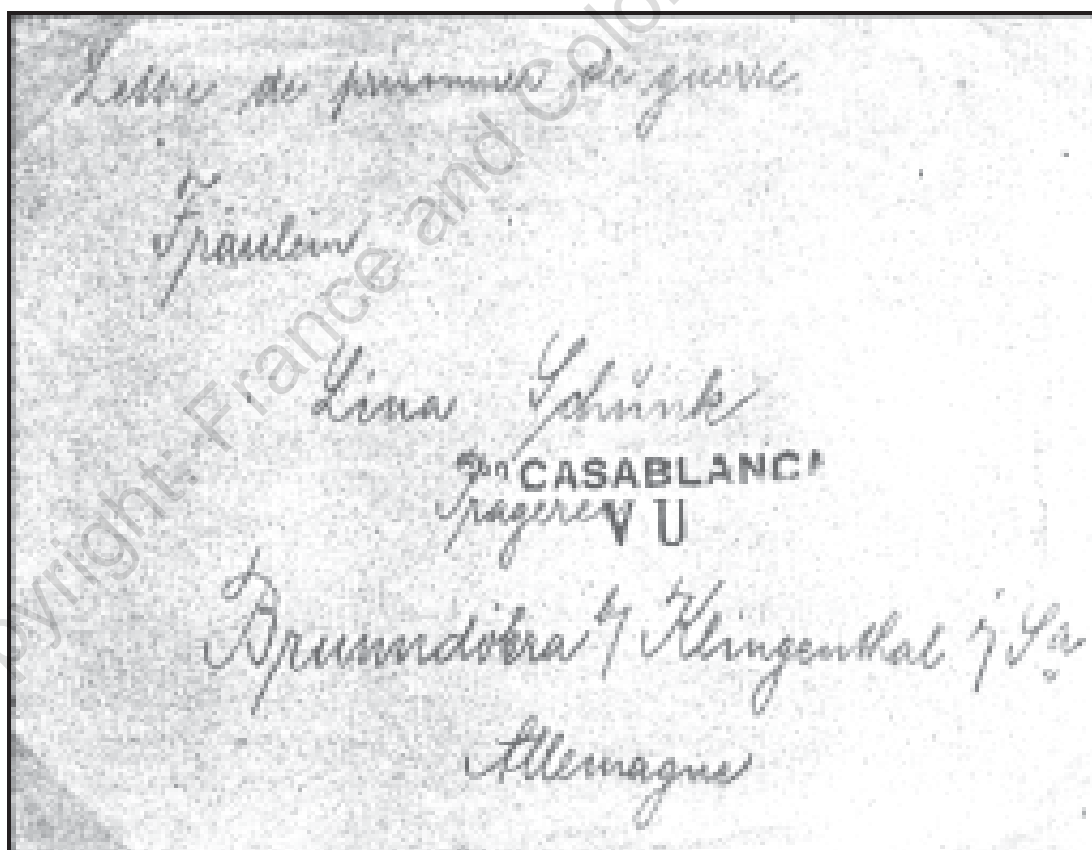


Figure 8 -
Cover from POW no 4151 Sprobach in Boulhaut Camp near Casablanca

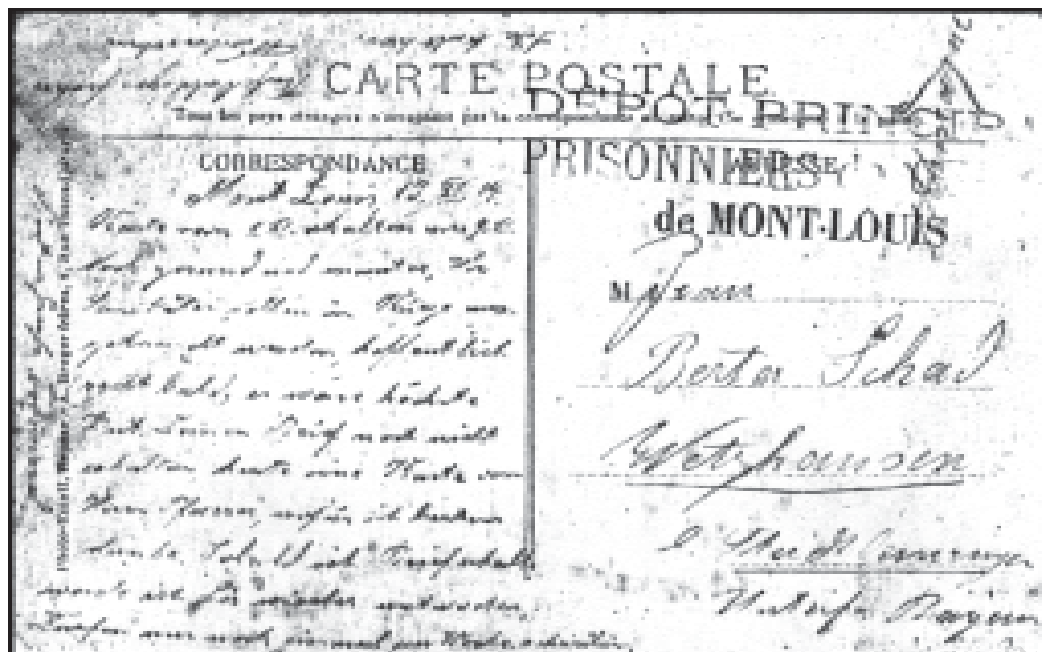


Figure 9 -
13 Nov 1913:
postcard of "environs de
Mont-Louis (Pyr.-Orient.)"
from the prison camp at
Mont-Louis to Germany



Figure 10 -
21 Dec 1914:
postcard of a street in
Mont-Louis with French
troops returning from
manoeuvres



Figure 11 -
Dec 1914:
postcard (received
25 Mar 1915) with photo
of the prisoner's family;
it was forwarded from
Mont-Louis to Morocco
and has been marked
with faint violet cachet
"Le Général
Commandant -
Subdivision de
Casablanca"

SHORTER ITEMS - INCLUDING QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

An Odd Thai Cover

I was very interested in the item on page 70 of Journal 216 from my friend John Garner (we are both Thailand Philatelic Society members). In it he states that "a Thailand collector may pay a few pounds for it."

Clean covers of this period start at about £100. With the added French mail boat and Brussels delivery marks you could say £150. Given the information unearthed by John and a room auction with two keen bidders (me and

A N Other!), this could rise to maybe around £250/£300. "A few pounds!"

John has since confirmed that apparently both he and another TPS member had lucky "buys" for "a few pounds." Why do they never come my way? I have just paid \$175 - delivered price to me - for what I would consider a comparable cover. We may as well get the rest of the world on the same wavelength!

Mike Roberts

Indo-China Cover

I have just received a catalogue in which there is an Indo-China cover with apparently no adhesives - though I have only seen the front so far - but in the place where the stamps go is a cachet from what sounds „like an insurance company (*Société Lainière du Tonkin / Haiphong / Société Anonyme au Capital*) [the last part of the word is covered by a censor strip] / *de 200 000 Piastres*). It went by airmail

(at least from Singapore) to Australia, and is dated 1940. It was censored in both Indo-China and Singapore. Any comments from members would be welcome.

David Taylor Smith

[Editor's note: The French cachet in fact indicates a wool merchant's set up as a limited company.]

The 50c Jeanne d'Arc Stamp - *erratum*

In my update on the 50c Jeanne d'Arc stamp (Journal 216 page 47) I devoted one column to the booklet printings in which I stated that the *feuille-témoin* held in the archives at the Musée de la Poste carried the printed information B 203 30 meaning that the sheet had been printed by operator B, on 20 March on Press 30. This interpretation is only partly accurate and, in fact, contradicts what I said in my original article published in September 1989 in which I correctly stated that the sheet was printed by operator B, on 2 March (ie 2 of 03 not 20 of 3) on Press 30.

The outcome of this is that the S 162 RP booklet which I went on to describe and which is dated B 803 30 was printed six days **after** the *feuille-témoin* and not twelve days before which certainly makes much more sense. However, the fact that the private *Bussang* booklet was printed on the same day as the *feuille-témoin* remains unaltered.

My grateful thanks to George Barker for pointing out this error.

Mick Bister

La Grande Cassure (Yv 60A - 25c type 1)

I have used copies of most types of this variety, but I cannot find a way of calculating the current value. The only indication I have is that in the Yvert & Tellier *Catalogue Spécialisé*, 1975 edition, which gives, I presume, the prices for used stamps - or are the figures factors for multiplying

the basic prices for mint and used? After 25 years they must be much out of date.

Can anyone help me by suggesting how to estimate today's values? Please write via the Editor.

Philip Palmer

Mail from French Occupied Togo to French Occupied Morocco

Mail from the French sector of Occupied Togo to countries in the French Empire other than to France and Dahomey is rarely seen, least of all to other occupied areas. The cover below was the only French Togo item purchased at the London Stamp Show 2000 where I spent an enjoyable four days.

Dahomey issues valid in Togo throughout the occupation are more commonly found between spring 1915 and spring 1916, ie after stocks of overprinted German Yacht issues had expired and prior to the introduction of Dahomey issues overprinted.

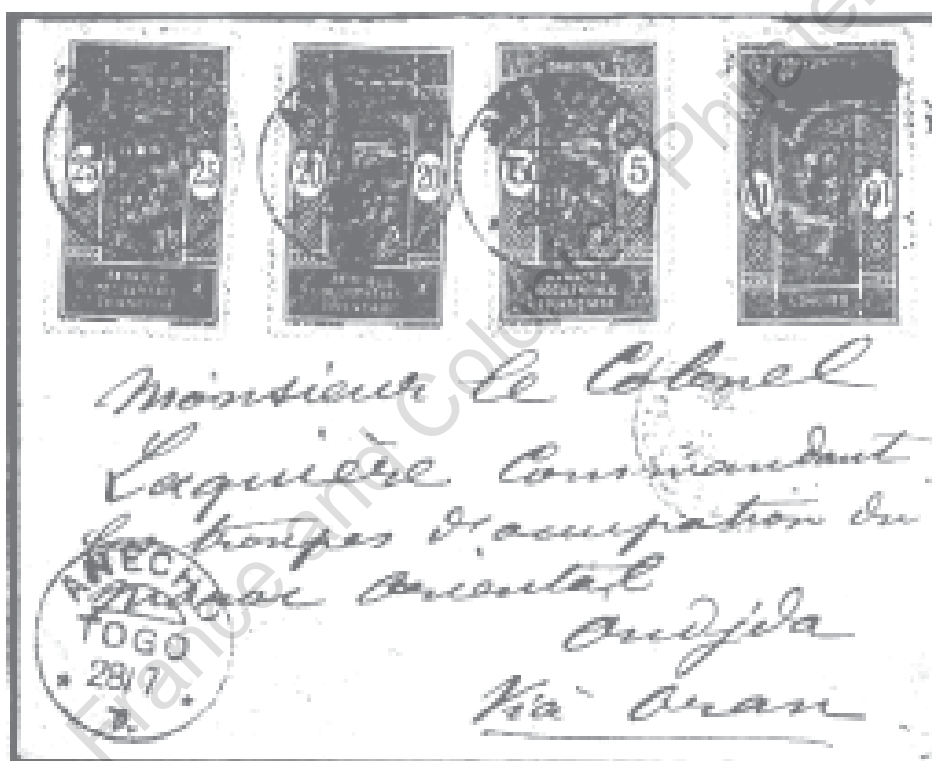
The German cancel for Anécho, the centre of the French sector, was used and in 1915 the year slug for '14' was crudely amended as no '15' year slug had reached Togo by the outbreak of hostilities in August 1914.

Standard postal rates applied to Togo mail, but evidence shows the French sector was not regarded as within the French Empire, and letters in my collection to neighbouring Dahomey attracted the **external** letter rate. This cover may have philatelic overtones.

The cover, addressed to Monsieur le Colonel Laquière Commandant les troupes d'occupation du Maroc Oriental, Oudjda (now Oujda? on the Algeria/Morocco border), via Oran (Algeria), is backstamped by the Trésor et Postes cachet No 211 issued to Oran and dated 23 August 1915 with a second but incomplete strike on the face.

With reference to recent articles in the Journal on censorship (numbers 214 page 283, 215 page 33, and 216 page 69), it is noted that this item passed uncensored.

John Mayne



Scarce example of mail from one occupied territory to another, though possibly philatelic.
50c postage met by Dahomey 5c, 10c, 20c and 25c values;
cancelled by German ANECHO date stamp of 28.07.1915, with '14' year slug amended.

The French Union - addendum

Michael Ensor has kindly commented on my article (in Journal 215, page 43), which he enjoyed, as follows:

French West Africa: This former colony which separated in 1958-59 issued one commemorative for use in Ivory Coast and Senegal only - 21 March 1959 Stamp Day, inscribed Dakar-Abidjan, 20F value. Michael has seen this used in Upper Volta

The Mali Federation: The stamp issued on 07 November 1959 as recorded by Stanley Gibbons for the Establishment of Mali Federation, 25F value. Michael points out that

the stamp has incorporated into the design a date of *12 Janvier 1959*. I do not possess a Cérès Overseas volume to check whether they have a different date of issue for this value.

The French Trust Territory of Togo: This became the first French Colony within the French Community from 16 April 1955 until declaration of Independence on 26 April 1960. Michael mentions that internal self-government came into being on 30 June 1956.

Colin Spong

Another "Unused" False Merson Emerges

Recently I was offered an "unused" copy of a false 1F Merson of Crete with the 4 piastres overprint, Yv 18, and my hands shook with excitement (this was not due to my antique state) as I snapped it up.

To my surprise the stamp has full gum! The gum is glossy, colourless, varying in thickness with, as a result, irregular cracking. There is the remainder of a stamp hinge on the gum. Careful examination shows that the gumming took place after printing and before perforation.

The stamp can only have been printed on ungummed paper or on machine-gummed paper. The gum on the back of this stamp has been applied by hand and not very skilfully, hence the irregularities in thickness which would have prevented the forger from printing the fine regular vignette, which he did in this instance and all others that I have seen. The gum extends to the ends of the teeth of the perforations, which are soft: the holes punched out by the pins of the line perforators are absolutely devoid of gum.

This discovery brings to five the copies recorded without cancellations: to date none of these forgeries has been found with a genuine postmark.

The five copies recorded without cancellations are:-

A) France	5 Francs	Yvert 123	2 copies
B) China	40c/1 Franc	Yvert 81	1 copy
C) Crete	4 Piastres/1 Franc	Yvert 18	1 copy
D) Levant	1 Franc	Yvert 26	1 copy

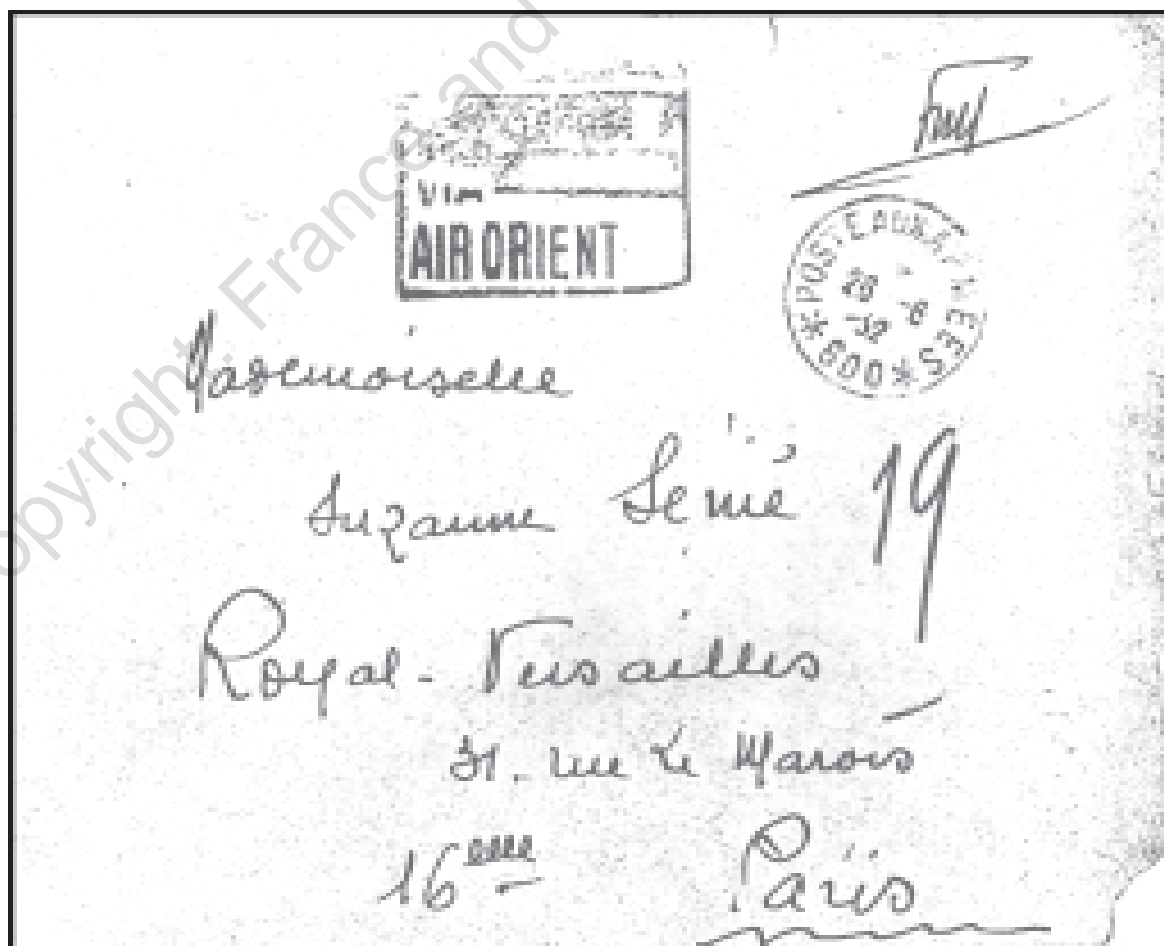
But why gum a stamp which is destined to receive a false postmark? Perhaps it was an aberration, who knows? Of the more than 1600 of these forgeries with false cancellations that I have examined, not one showed any trace whatsoever of having been gummed. This includes item B in my list above, which I also own.

Alexandria

At the same time as I acquired the "unused" Crete forgery I bought several more used Alexandria and Port Said Merson forgeries, and have only now noticed a peculiarity in the false large (25mm) Alexandria postmark. It is the 'X' of ALEXANDRIA, which in the genuine cancels is an X, but in the false cancels is composed of 4 dashes which do not meet by almost a millimetre: 'X'. This is most easily seen on the 1 Franc forgeries.

David Jennings-Bramly

Air Orient from Poste aux Armées 600



The handstamp shown here on the opposite page (taken from a very poor strike, in black, and the best I can manage as an illustration) comes from an unpaid 'FM' cover: *POSTE AUX ARMEES / 600*, dated 26 June 1932, addressed to Paris and backstamped *PARIS XVI / PL. CHOPIN* on 5 July.

Can someone please tell me [1] where the APO 600 was located at this time and [2] what the complete version of the AIR ORIENT marking looks like and where it was used?

Ian McQueen

An "affranchissement philatélique"

Although "philatelically franked" covers (Fig 1) are almost invariably perpetrated by stamp dealers and collectors, they are generally of no philatelic interest whatsoever. They do, however, provide inexpensive "practice" material for junior members of stamp clubs.

A few days ago I was preparing another batch of such items for the next meeting of my local philatelic society when I came across a cover (Fig 2) which, while definitely a philatelic dead loss, would have been of some interest to La Poste had the sorter been on his toes. It would almost certainly have acquired a little philatelic respectability too.

The cover, postmarked 06 NICE CENTRE DE TRI - ALPES MMS - 18.05.99, had been franked with Yvert 761, the 3F "Peace Conference" commemorative issued well over 50 years earlier on 29.07.46.

In 1946, as in 1999, the 20g domestic letter rate was 3 Francs. In 1960, however, the franc was devalued and the old 3 francs became 3 new centimes. The missive should clearly have been taxed: the amount of the underpayment (2F97) plus the handling charge (4F50). Owing to the laxity or ignorance of an employee La Poste lost 7F47, and myself another cover for my collection.

John Simmons



Figure 1

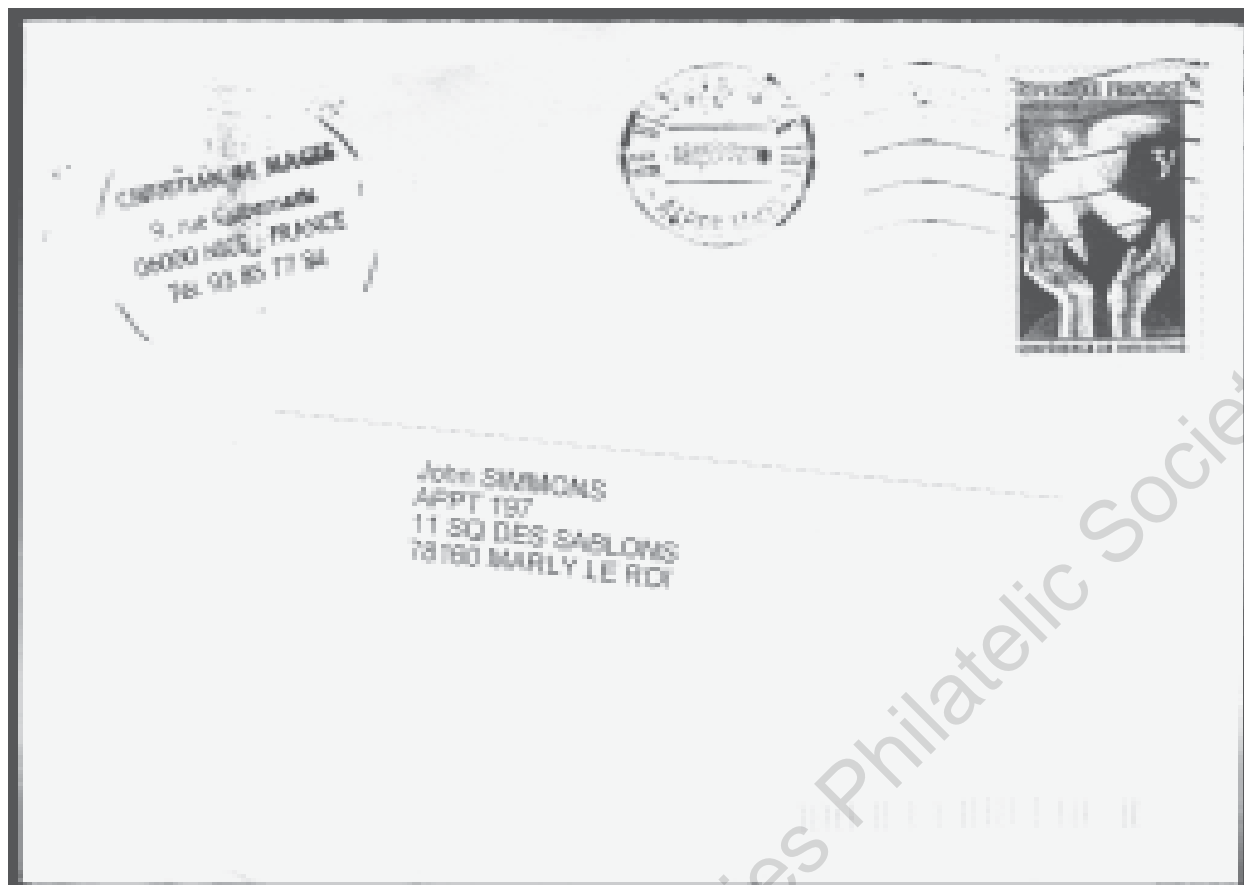


Figure 2

SOCIETY NOTES *[continued from page 86]*

Stamp Exchange

M Gaston Ravot has written from France offering to exchange French used stamps for British used stamps, with either Y&T or SG catalogues as a basis for valuation. If any member is interested, his address is 90 rue Jean Jaurès, 76770 Malaunay.

* * *

Family Connections

We note with great pleasure that we now have a membership of the Society spanning two generations of the same family, in the persons of new member n° 1142 Paul Gosling and his father, longstanding member n° 379, R E Gosling.

* * *

POSTAL HISTORY SALES

My postal sales lists offer wide selections of France & Colonies postal history material, including maritime, military, aviation and POW items.

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Send for your free list to:

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Thatchers Lane, Tansley, Matlock, Derbyshire DE4 5FD

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LIST OF RECENTLY PUBLISHED ARTICLES

Compiled by Colin Spong

Bulletin de la COL.FRA

N° 92 3^{ème} Trim 2000: Le Peuplement de Madagascar (Favrel); Nouvelle Calédonie: Parole d'enveloppe (Delpy); Nouvelles-Hébrides: Surcharges de 1977 - Apparition de faux (Mérot); Tahiti: Courrier Tahiti Allemagne 1894 (Gaetjens); Nouvelle Calédonie: Tour de Côtes (Ladiesse); Colonies Françaises: Cartes Familiales - Lettre d'information (-); Algérie: Rebellion Algérienne: Service du Courrier (Charbonnier); Compléments aux articles bulletins N°s 90 et 91 Syrie-Liban (Guillermain); Compléments aux articles bulletin N° 91 Guadeloupe (Bonnell); Vietnam: La Légende de Son Tinh/Thuy Tinh (Chapuis).

France & Colonies Philatelist

Whole N° 261 (Vol 56, N° 3) Jul 2000: If Algeria was a part of France, why were the Postal Cachets different? (Lambert); The Anglo-French Stamps (MacKay); Langlade, Saint Pierre & Miquelon: A Three Part Story (Grabowski); The First Airmail Dispatch between Addis Adaba and Djibouti (Morvay); The Cross of Lorraine on a French Africa Stamp (Kinsley); Amazing 1870-1871 Wonder Stories - 53 (Cohn); More on the Shortage of Stamps in Tahiti in 1884 (Luft); More Private Industry Postal Cards (Luft).

L'Écho de la Timbrologie

Permanent features: Dossier, Variétés, Flammes et Oblitérations, Livres, Maximaphilie, Thématique.

N° 1730 May 2000: Les blasons des villes: les carnets [8^e série] (Trassaert); Les demi-timbres coupés de 1942 (Sinai); Le catalogue Spécialisé Yvert et Tellier (Behr, Brun et Chauvet); La taxe: pour collectionner (Brisson); Les colis et la Poste [3^e partie] (Trassaert); Prémices d'un bureau français du Maroc (Hadida); Mail-art: l'art comme une lettre à la poste (- et Restany); Renato Manese, peintre sur télécartes (-).

N° 1731 Jun 2000: Les blasons des villes: 8^e série [1^{ère} partie] (Trassaert); Les colis et La Poste [ct'd & end] (Trassaert); Corse: retour des cendres de Pascal Paoli (Trassaert); Polaire: L'aventure des courriers parachutes (Mazières); Colonies: entiers postaux des possessions françaises (von Scharpen); Vignettes «parlementaires» LISA expérimentales (Werl).

N° 1732 Jul-Aug 2000: Les blasons des villes: les roulettes d'Auch (Trassaert); L'aventure des Pôles (Dreyfus); Colonies: entiers postaux des possessions françaises [ct'd] (von Scharpen).

Les Feuilles Marcophiles

N° 302 3^{ème} Trim 2000: Autopsie d'une enveloppe (de La Mettrie); Lettre «Chargée» en provenance d'une origine rurale (Fiandino et Pinhas); Atelier «Histoire de la poste en milieu rural» (Carnévalé-Mauzan et Douron); La guerre de 1870-71: Le «double port» franco-allemand: une particularité de l'histoire postale (Gauzit); Le timbre à date type 01 à Paris (Delwaulle); Le bureau de poste privé «PARIS 96 bis» de la Société Générale (Coulon); THANN Alsace (Levern); La correspondance commerciale interzone [octobre 1940 - février 1943] (Ablard); Les flammes «PAQUEBOT» de MARSEILLE-GARE D'AVANT 1939 (Pingard); Courrier «suivi» (Sené); Les nouveautés en matière de guichets-annexes (Delvaux).

La Philatélie Française

Permanent features: Événement, Multimédia, Fédération, Régions.

N° 546 Apr 2000: Philexjeunes Annecy 2000 (Mermin); La FFAP sur Internet (Albaret); Le Timbre et souvenirs NEVERS 2000 (La Poste); 73^e Congrès FFAP (Barbero, Baroukh et Veillault).

N° 547 May 2000: Les timbres à date neversois [1830-1876] (Pinhas); Le blason de Nevers (Trassaert).

N° 548 Jun 2000: Le canevas d'une collection traditionnelle (Vanhingeland); La classe ouverte: Champ libre à l'expression (Riboulet); Exposition: Pour une «classe ouverte»...ouverte (Jimenez).

Timbres magazine

Permanent features: Actus Andorre, Monaco et TOM, Cybermarché, Expertise, Les nouveautés de France, Les variétés, Manifestations, Marcophilie, Poste navale, Polaires.

N° 3 Jun 2000: La machine à affranchir «intelligente» est arrivée (Buffier); Un retour à l'expéditeur mouvementé (de La Mettrie); Le type «Blanc» 1900-2000 [3^e partie] (Melot); Les Ardennes de bois, mais aussi de fer, d'eau et de feu (Michaud); «Dame Anastasie» (Legay); France, Andorre et Monaco: Les émissions de poste aérienne (Granier).

N° 4 Jul-Aug 2000: Le type «Blanc» 1900-2000 [4^e partie] (Melot); Le bureau italien de Sousse [Tunisie] (Dutau);Castellorizo, l'île grecque la plus visitée par les collectionneurs français (Melot); L'Hérault, avec le carnet de notes (Michaud); Les secrets du numéro 2 de Saint-Pierre-et-Miquelon (Tillard); Les dix caractères d'une lettre (de la Mettrie).

REPORTS OF MEETINGS

MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF 6 MAY 2000

The President, Dr W I Stevenson, opened the meeting held at Marymount College, 22a Brownlow Mews, London WC1 at 11.30 hours in the presence of 27 members.

(1) Apologies for absence were received from Mrs M Pavey and Messrs O Gibson, C W Spong, A Swain, P R A Kelly and J N Hammonds.

(2) Minutes of the previous AGM of 8 May 1999 as published in Journal 213 were accepted as a true record of that meeting.

(3) President's Report – Iain Stevenson.

'Last year I looked back on a remarkable year. To mark our golden jubilee, we had just completed a very memorable programme of events and activities, culminating in our collective display to the Royal Philatelic Society which produced one of the best-attended and most-favourably commented upon shows in the Society's recent history. I wondered then as we entered our second half-century whether the second year of my presidential term would prove to be something of an anti-climax: I am delighted to say that the year just completed has been eventful, fulfilling and interesting in philatelic terms, and that all our activities have not only prospered but perhaps even exceeded our expectations.

1999/2000 proved to be a year of change in both expected and unexpected ways. We were obliged to leave at fairly short notice our long-established and familiar London home and take up new residence here at Marymount College where we quickly became acclimatised to the new location and facilities, and which on a pleasant day like today seems a quiet haven of peace from the bustle of the city. There is also a handy pub across the road, which has become a haven for many of us after Wednesday evening displays! We have settled well here and in the upcoming season will be experimenting with more Saturday meetings to test whether members prefer day or evening meetings in London. Elsewhere, after consulting the membership, we decided to change the format of the Journal to A4 format and break with our long-established "pocket-size" presentation. The new size enables better presentation of illustrations and more content and has been generally welcomed. Again, as I reported last year, we were obliged to change the venue of our philatelic weekend and the "new" hotel now seems as familiar as the old "Regent" and (dare I say it?) a better bargain.

Other changes have been less welcome. We lost sadly by death some of our most prominent and long-standing members, notably our airmail specialist Mr Gill-Carey and our old and much-loved friend Gaston Berlemont whose annual displays to London members were a cherished delight for many years. Gaston as the famous

landlord of the French pub in Soho was widely obituarised in the national press, but none of the tributes mentioned his philatelic interests. Our own obituary in the Journal made good that deficiency and recalled the ebullient personality of one of the last of the great stamp collectors. We lost other members by resignation and, although we see a steady trickle of new recruits, I would urge you to recommend the benefits of membership to any unaffiliated collectors of France and colonies that you come across. Although as a specialist society we are strong in numbers, I feel that a steady injection of new blood is necessary for us to continue to flourish.

1999 was also the Year of a French International Exhibition and many of us made the short journey to Paris to enrich our collections, see our old French friends, marvel at the unique Gallic approach to *la philatélie*, and above all to savour the remarkable collections that were on display. Despite the tropical weather, the lure of the exhibition hall was irresistible and as Michelin says "*vaut le voyage*." I'm delighted to report that many of our members won high medals in the competitive classes, including George Barker, Bernard Berkinshaw-Smith, Chris Hitchen, and Barrie Jay (my apologies to anyone I've forgotten!). In a few short days, our own International exhibition opens at Earls Court and we look forward to welcoming our friends from abroad here at our reception in the hall next door in exactly three weeks time, at which I hope we will have many more competitive successes to celebrate. Our display programmes in London, Leeds and Worthing have provided fascinating shows and we are indebted to John Hammonds, Robert Duncan and Colin Spong for organising such a varied menu, as well as Bernard Berkinshaw-Smith for his usual assured organisation of the philatelic weekend at Leamington Spa which goes from strength to strength.

The Society's other activities are also on excellent form. Mick Bister runs an extremely efficient auction that continues to include some very tasty items that suit all pockets and produce very healthy commissions for the Society as well as extremely happy vendors and purchasers. The packets, managed with great skill and no small commitment by Mavis Pavey and John West, contain extremely good and varied material. Maurice Tyler ably edits our excellent journal and oversaw both the format change and the introduction of colour illustration with great skill: I'm sure he would want me to say that he now has more room for even more articles and I would encourage you to continue to send him material. As a Society, we have not in recent years produced many other publications apart from George Barker's invaluable index to the Journal, but we have some plans for a major new publication soon about which we will be able to reveal details shortly. Watch this space. George is also our librarian and he carefully

tends what is surely the best collection of French philatelic books and journals outside France. Last but not least, David Pashby runs the magazine circuit with great efficiency and brio.

In closing, I want to thank and pay tribute to the officers and committee of the Society who work so hard on your behalf and who have made my two years as President so pleasant; to Mick Bister, my vice-president for deputising when I was away and his cheerful support and not least for his organisation of our reception in three weeks' time; to Derek Richardson for his hard secretarial work (and with the reminder that we are still on the look-out for a willing substitute to relieve him of the load!) and to Alec Swain who, although his health no longer enables him to come to as many meetings as he would like, still gives the Society immense support as membership secretary; to Chris Hitchen who has ably stewarded our finances for many years and ensures that we get superb value for our subscriptions; and to Geoff Gethin, Peter Kelly and Bernard Berkinshaw-Smith as committee members. However, this year, I want to pay especial tribute and thanks to David Jennings-Bramly. David, who has been on the Society committee for what historians call "time out of mind," certainly predating my membership of the Society, and has served the Society in very many ways over many years, has decided to bow out. David, many thanks for all you have done and we look forward to many years seeing you at meetings without any of the cares of office (and to resolving all our forgery problems!).

In short, I leave the Society as I found it: healthy, thriving and in good heart for the future. I am delighted to hand over such a strong and well-appointed organisation to Mick for the next two years.'

(4) General Secretary's and Membership Secretary's Reports – Derek Richardson and Alec Swain

'Attendance at London meetings of the Society in the season now ending has averaged 14.7, a decrease of 2 on the figure for the previous season. That might be due to the change of venue that took place or may simply be a continuation of a slight downward trend. Members who in last year's poll said Saturday afternoon meetings would be preferable to Wednesday evening ones will be pleased to know that their preferences have been noted; accordingly, two of next season's meetings will take place on Saturday afternoons at the Royal Horticultural Halls, Westminster in conjunction with Philatex.

Your Committee has met twice in the current season, the principal topics being a complete revision of the rules of the annual competitions and matters associated with Stamp Show 2000. Membership statistics for the calendar year 1999 were: members gained = 30; members lost = 24 (6 deceased + 10 resigned + 8 excluded); year-end total = 405 (353 UK + 52 non-UK).'

(5) Treasurer's report – Chris Hitchen

'Although the society made a loss on the year the finances are still in sound shape. Expenditure was boosted substantially by two exceptional items. The first was the production of the eagerly awaited Library Index by George Barker that has fully justified the anticipation with which it was awaited and will prove an invaluable research tool for many years to come. Secondly it was decided to use some of our reserves to experiment with the use of colour in the Journal. Again the results more than justified the decision and the recent journals produced by our editor Maurice Tyler show just what can be done. It may not always be possible to spend so much but our reserves are sufficient to allow judicious repetition of such productions from time to time when the material makes the expense worthwhile. It should also be noted that the cost of the journals is offset somewhat by the regular appearance of advertisements.

Other heads of expenditure remain similar to previous years although there was a slight increase in the cost of visiting speakers' expenses, which I do not expect to recur. Officers of the society are always very prudent and keep all costs to a minimum.

The income side remained very close to 1998 and we seem able to keep our membership reasonably steady and so maintain a fairly consistent subscription income. As always the income from the packets and auction was invaluable and it is most important to recognise the essential financial contribution that they make.

There will be considerable costs for the reception that will be held at the end of the month for Stamp Show 2000 and this will again create a financial loss on the current year. Nevertheless I would recommend leaving the current subscription at the present level whilst keeping a close eye on our expenditure.

The prime reason for a reception to coincide with the international is to enable our many overseas visitors and those in this country to meet each other at a time and place when many will be here for the other events being held. It should be remembered that our membership is very far flung and only a few are able to participate in those meetings that we do hold. It is something that only occurs once every ten years and my experience from those held in the past is that they are very worthwhile and most enjoyable. It is vital that the society uses what means it can to promote the interests of French philately and postal history in this country.

All debtors and creditors have now been settled.'

The acceptance of the Treasurer's Report and Accounts was proposed by Alan Wood, seconded by David Jennings-Bramly and carried unanimously.

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 DECEMBER 1999

CURRENT ASSETS

Cash at bank
Cash at building society
Sundry debtors

DEDUCT CURRENT LIABILITIES

Sundry creditors
Subscriptions in advance

_____	_____
-------	-------

TOTAL ASSETS

Represented by

MEMBERS' FUNDS

Uncommitted funds at 1.1.1998
Year loss (1998 surplus)

_____	_____
-------	-------

Plus decrease in property funds 1998

1998

INCOME & EXPENDITURE 1999

Expenditure

Accommodation
Journal 4 issues
Postage and expenses
Booklets for Royal display
Library index
Year loss

Income

Auction
Exchange Packet
Interest
Sale of publications
Subscriptions

(6) Auction Secretary's Report – Mick Bister

'1999 saw a further rise in the number of new vendors wishing to dispose of their material through the auction process and such was the volume of material received that it became necessary to increase the number of lots offered in the sales. In 1999 a total of 1741 lots was offered compared to the total of 1545 offered in 1998, an increase of nearly 13%.

Although the annual turnover improved as a result of the above, the overall profit fell slightly due to an increase in some areas of expenditure. For example, the cost of printing rose and this was for three reasons - firstly, the extra pages to accommodate the increase in lots, secondly, the flyer to announce the change in dates of the Summer Sale necessitated by the delay in publication of the June Journal, and thirdly, the increase in basic production costs demanded by the printers. I requested alternative quotations from local printers for comparison but the results only confirmed that we should remain with the status quo.

Postage costs have also soared, but although much is reimbursed by viewers and buyers, the cost of returning unsolds to the increasing number of vendors has taken its financial toll. Having already deducted 10% commission from the vendors' sales for the Society I am reluctant to charge them for return postage as well unless the items returned are particularly heavy. I feel this a financial burden we shall have to be prepared to bear as I do not want to

discourage vendors from supplying the rich variety of material that makes the auction so worthwhile.

Nothing was lost in the post this year although one item was damaged by being folded and forced through a letter box. The Post Office reimbursed the full amount and hence an insurance claim was not necessary. In addition, one overseas member did not pay for a lot despite being sent two reminders.

I am for ever grateful to George Henderson and Alan Wood who have shared the responsibility again of sitting in the auctioneer's chair. Thank you too to the vendors who provide me with so much material especially those who take such meticulous care with their listings, descriptions and packaging. These, I am delighted to say, are the majority but there is, unfortunately, a small but increasing minority who persist in sending just bundles of loose covers requesting that the lotting, descriptions and pricing be left to my discretion. I am, of course, only too happy to assist with some lotting when the vendor genuinely does not know the material but I am afraid that with the quantity that I now have to handle, recidivists will find their material being returned to them with a request for further information.

I look forward to continuing to serve as your auction secretary and hope that you will gain as much pleasure and satisfaction from selling and bidding as I do from being your intermediary and agent.'

AUCTION ACCOUNT 1999

EXPENDITURE		INCOME	
1998	1999	1998	1999
Payments to Vendors		Sale of Lots (including reimbursed p & p)	
Printing			
Other outgoings			
		Bank interest	
Totals			

(7) Report of Packet Secretary (France) – Mavis Pavey

‘The France packet profit for the calendar year 1999 was £xx. This compares with £xx for 1998 and £xx for 1997. The retirement or death of some regular

vendors has meant the supply of new material for sale has diminished. A journal appeal for more vendors has so far met with little response.’

PROFIT AND LOSS

	1999	1998	1999	1998
Commission on sales				
Postage recovered				
Insurance recovered				
Bank interest				

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

Balance b/f from 31 Dec	Gross payments to vendors
Receipts from mem	Stationery
Bank interest	Posts and telephones
Commission on sales	Profit 1998 paid to Treasurer
Insurance recovered	Bank balance
Postages recovered	Cash in hand

(8) Report of Packet Secretary (Colonies) - John West

‘I am still hamstrung with the same limitations as I reported last year, I am still frustrated by the same restrictions, I am still irritated by unnecessarily lengthy retentions of the packet - albeit by only a small number of members - and I am still constantly bemused by the failure of members to read and digest the simple set of rules which govern the circulation of the packet.

The calendar year saw me circulate a total of 34 packets, containing a total of 545 books. The total (insured) value of these books was £xx. The actual value would, of course, have been considerably higher but several members insure their material at 50% or less to allow me to try and reduce my backlog of material. The average

value of each packet works out at £xx - a juggling feat in itself to arrange material for each circuit to get as close to £xx as possible! Total sales reached £xx at an average of £xx per packet - which reflects an average return of 29% of sales. This, in turn yielded £xx in commission for the Society. Insurance, paid by vendors, totalled £xx.

It should be emphasised that these figures relate to the material put into circulation between 1 January 1999 and 31 December 1999. They do not dovetail with the figures prepared for the treasurer, because they reflect all income in the year ended 31st December 1999, ie including income from packets circulated during the last 3 months of 1998

which were returned after 1 January 1999 and exclude income received after 1 January 2000, although the packet was sent out in 1999.

I received a further 153 booklets for circulation during 1999. Despite one or two entreaties to reduce the size of the packet, I have succeeded in reducing the backlog of material but only slightly. Books are still taking up to two years to circulate and this is not satisfactory for the vendors. Fortunately most are happy to accept this situation uncomplainingly and, for that, I am most grateful. A number of new vendors also meant a wider range of material for our members to view.

To those who are less than happy about the postal costs I say two things - (1) try and enrol one or two local philatelists to whom you can pass by hand, and (2) work out how much most of you would pay to travel to a local stamp fair in the (forlorn?) hope that you might be able to acquire some of the material you find circulating in the packet. The packet allows you to examine material in your own time and does not involve waiting for buses or trains to the nearest town where there might be a fair. On average postage costs about £2.50.

(9) Editor's Report - Maurice Tyler

'As a special celebration of our 50th anniversary year, it was decided to publish an expanded edition of our Journal, and, rather than just one double size issue similar to the one produced 25 years ago, I thought it might be more appropriate to increase the size of all four issues during the year. Consequently Volume 49 amounted to 320 pages of text and illustrations, an increase of 88 pages over the previous year, and an average of 80 rather than the usual 56 or 60 pages. I am very grateful to all those contributors who made this possible.

An innovation which seems to have met with universal approval was the introduction of a few pages in colour in two of those issues. I hope that we can repeat this from time to time, but restraints of cost mean that this is likely to be a rare occurrence, as we are reluctant to push up the cost of members' subscriptions unnecessarily. And one new feature I have tried out with apparent success is "Pages from my Collection," in which members can illustrate and describe topics that are of interest without having to compose a full article.

(10) Librarian's Report - George Barker

'The past year of 1999 has seen a fairly stable level of loans at 66 (1998: 69) but the first four months of 2000 (indeed up to today, as I deliver a loan here!) have shown a sharp increase with 28 (14) loans for the year.

There has been a marked rise in the demand for periodicals, so it is often difficult to decide how many pages constitute

The Post Office still continues to try my patience - with horror stories of packets left lying on doorsteps. However, I forecast this problem when we allowed our insurers to dictate to us how we would send our material, so that is no surprise. Despite one or two scares, we have indeed been fortunate over the past two years and no material has been lost, although one or two packets have been badly ripped and more care needs to be taken with the packaging by some. Most now adopt the sensible measure of wrapping the books in polythene to afford a measure of protection from the elements in the event of the outer covering being damaged.

I offer my grateful thanks to all our vendors for their support and their patience with me. For the majority of the members on the 'Colonies' circuits, I offer my thanks for dealing with the packets expediently (even though many have trouble adding up!) and for your letters of encouragement.

To the few who retain the packet for too long I can only urge you to make a special effort to try and avoid bringing the whole system to a grinding halt - as you do, to everyone's annoyance!

The other major change that has taken place from the beginning of this year is the increase in size of the Journal to A4 pages. I have already received well over a dozen letters and e-mails from members expressing their appreciation of the possibilities offered by this change, and I hope that even those who had their doubts beforehand will accept that the new format allows us a more professional image, without losing the traditional scholarly content. Nearly all illustrations can now be reproduced full size, and there is much more flexibility in the setting out of articles, as well as the ability to use pages more economically.

In recent months I have managed to acquire the equipment and computer programs that enable me to complete much of the work the printer would normally be expected to do, with the result that this also saves us money in the production of the Journal. I hope that in the new millennium we can continue to make improvements to the benefit of members, but, as always, I can print only what they send me, and the Journal will always be a co-operative effort.'

"one loan." I have included one enquiry, which gave a more-than-equivalent amount of work, but no loan, as one!

We have enlarged the library considerably by the acquisition of many books from Stan and Mavis Bidmead, and the slow growth of the library continues, by natural processes.'

(11A) Magazine Circuit Organiser's Report – David Pashby

This year has seen turmoil in the French philatelic press. It started with three magazines, then in April 2000, *Le Monde des Philatélistes* and *Timbroscopie* merged with *Timbroloisirs* to form a new magazine called '*Timbres*'. Then, on 11 April, the offices of Yvert and Tellier, publishers of *L'Echo de la Timbrologie* suffered a fire and were burnt out. In a statement printed in the May issue of *Timbres*, the editor of *L'Echo* states that the magazine should appear as normal, but so far I have seen neither the April nor the May issue.

La Philatélie Française having ceased publication in 1998, the number of French philatelic magazines I circulate has fallen in seventeen months from four to two - or perhaps it is only one. Most of the subscribers who took both the merged titles are willing (where they have notified me at all) to give the new *Timbres* a try, and in this case they will be credited with £3 towards next year's sub. In just

one instance, a subscriber asked for a refund, which has been given.

As proposed, I took out two subscriptions to *Timbroscopie* this year, instead of one. This reduced each circulation list to twelve members, and each magazine obviously completed its circuit faster. For the moment, I will keep two circuits for *Timbres*. Resignations or loss of members by death have again been balanced by new subscribers. This year I took out a two-year subscription to *L'Echo*, paying 570 FF instead of 300 FF for a single year's subscription. It seemed like a good idea at the time.

Three magazines went missing; Royal Mail has repaid postage on one, but of course the magazine could not be replaced. Then, in April, I received the cardboard stiffeners - but not the new *Timbres*. When the May issue arrived, it had been re-wrapped by Royal Mail. *Timbres* clearly has a problem.'

(11B) Report of the F&CPS Southern Group – Colin Spong

'Firstly, my apologies once again for being absent from the AGM. The four quarterly meetings have been held in the East Worthing Community Centre and details of the meetings and those attending have been published in the Society journal. It has been a particularly good and happy year with an average attendance of 12, and in fact the August and April meetings have seen 15 people coming to view or take part in the displays. The August meeting when we meet from 10.30 until 16.30 was much appreciated and I would like to thank those who have given a display

during our season. Mr John Hobbs FRPSL in his capacity as Chairman of the ECWA until this year looked after the refreshments for us but has had to discontinue doing this for health reasons. I am delighted that my wife, Pat, kindly offered to come, and took this over in January. John Hobbs continues to provide local press reports on our behalf, for which we thank him.'

The Programme for 2000-2001 is given in Society Notes on page 86.

(12) Election of Officers and Committee Members

The following having indicated their willingness, if elected, to serve for the 2000-2001 season, and there being no other nominations, it was proposed by George Henderson,

seconded by David Jennings-Bramly and agreed unanimously that those named below be elected/re-elected *en bloc*.

President:	Mr M L Bister	Vice-President:	Mr M S Tyler
General Secretary:	Mr D J Richardson	Membership Secretary	Mr A Swain
Treasurer:	Mr C J Hitchen	Librarian:	Mr G E Barker
Editor:	Mr M S Tyler	Auction Secretary:	Mr M L Bister
Packet Secretary (France):	Mrs M Pavey	Packet Secretary (Colonies):	Mr J West
Programme Secretary:	Mr J N Hammonds		
Committee Members:	Dr W I Stevenson, Mr B C Berkinshaw-Smith, Mr R G Gethin and Mr P R A Kelly		

(13) Main Society Meetings Programme for 2000-2001 Season.

	2000	Venue*	2001	Venue*
Wed 27 Sep:	Members - 9 sheets	MC	Wed 31 Jan: D Jennings-Bramly - <i>Stamp discoveries</i>	MC
Sat 28 Oct:	President's afternoon	RHH	Sat 3 Mar: G. Collot - <i>France to the Far East by Air</i>	RHH
Sat 4 Nov:	Bourse (11am) & Auction (2pm)	MC	Wed 28 Mar: D Pashby - <i>French Antarctica</i> (TAAF)	MC
Wed 29 Nov:	C Kiddle - <i>Paris 1900 Exhibn.</i>	MC	Wed 25 Apr: M Ensor - <i>French West Africa</i>	MC
Wed 13 Dec:	Members - Short Displays	MC	Sat 5 May: AGM (11.30am) & Auction (2pm)	MC
			Wed 26 Sep: Members - 9 sheets	MC

* Venue: MC denotes Marymount College, 22a Brownlow Mews London WC1. Wednesday meetings commence at 6.30pm.
RHH denotes Royal Horticultural Halls, Greycoat Street, Westminster, London SW1. Meetings are from 3 to 5 pm.

(14) Any Other Business: There being no other business, the President closed the meeting at 1230 hours.

DJR

NORTHERN GROUP MEETING OF 15 JULY 2000

The annual all day meeting to celebrate the Fête Nationale – only one day late this year – took place as usual at Heaton Royds, Bradford, with about 20 members and guests in attendance. Proceedings got under way (after an introductory coffee) at 10.30 when our host Stephen Holder introduced the Society's new President in impressive French. The morning displays were as follows:

Mick Bister: Cérès de Mazelin (including corner blocks and rates, and particularly noted were some 50% concessionary rates for newspapers and periodicals to certain countries).

George Barker: Specimen Overprints (starting with colour photocopies of 1862 stamps, but including 1922 Orphans, Pasteur training school stamps and Madagascar stock, Sower and Ronsard stamps sent to Bechuanaland, and Pasteur stamps sent to Portuguese colonies).

Arthur Dent: Paris Postal Districts showing the Revolutionary Calendar as compared with the Gregorian one.

Peter Maybury: Locally made handstamp charge marks.

Richard Wheatley: Czech Army in France in World War I (with much POW mail).

Bernard Lucas: Internal Parcel Cards (used when collecting a parcel from the station or for ordering home delivery, and showing new tariffs by the letters E and F in 1941 and 1943).

John Whiteside: Railway postmarks (including TPO, *courrier convoyeur*, and *gare* marks) on the Paris to Dijon line as far as Laroche, with its branch lines.

Peter Maybury (again!): Postal markings of military expeditions and occupations in the Colonies (including Algeria, Tunisia, Senegal, Madagascar, Indo-China).

Mavis Pavey: French Naval Mail (from the Boxer Rebellion to modern times).

At this point a very good lunch, consisting mainly of French bread, cheese, pâté, fruit and wine, was provided by Judith Holder; and there was an opportunity of viewing and/or purchasing material (mainly modern, but full of interesting items to discover) in an almost limitless number of boxes sent by a local dealer (of which Stephen claimed to have gone through only seven) and several shelves of books unsold in the HH Sales auctions.

The displays resumed in the afternoon with the following:

Chris Hitchen: Paris Stars (which occurred when in 1863 the offices were renumbered 1-35 according to the importance of their receipts).

John Hammonds: Covers flown to various countries from France (including Greece, Laos, Argentina, India, Japan, New Caledonia, Congo, Venezuela), and particularly airmails during World War II up to the end of 1941.

Steve Ellis: Steamer Line between Le Havre and New York (including CGT *ligne* markings and arrival cancellations, octagonal markings of the second phase and ship cancellations, catapult mail, and machine cancellations).

Alan Goude: Martinique, showing rates (which were usually the same as from France, although airmail rates are much less certain).

Stephen Holder: Rates during the Siege of Paris, showing some of the more unusual items (many of which were shown at a main London meeting earlier in the year).

The final display consisted of POW queries, provided by Peter Maybury and Stephen Holder.

The session was brought to an official close by Mick Bister, who thanked Stephen and Judith for their welcome and hospitality, enabling us to see so much fascinating material in such a pleasant setting.

Tea and cakes were then provided before departures began at about 4.45.

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May 2000 Auction Realisations

Lot	£	Lot	£	Lot	£	Lot	£	Lot	£	Lot	£
1	32.00	75	15.00	154	4.00	227	7.00	306	10.00	380	32.00
2	36.00	76	26.00	156	11.00	228	36.00	307	4.50	381	12.00
3	26.00	77	10.00	157	80.00	229	13.00	309	6.00	382	20.00
4	25.00	78	5.50	158	70.00	230	25.00	309	7.00	383	5.00
5	85.00	79	10.00	159	15.00	232	4.00	310	5.50	384	5.00
6	44.00	81	5.00	160	26.00	233	10.00	311	9.50	385	8.00
7	45.00	82	55.00	161	13.00	234	15.00	312	23.00	386	7.00
8	42.00	83	55.00	164	5.00	235	4.00	313	5.50	387	15.00
9	60.00	84	80.00	165	8.00	236	8.00	314	8.50	388	7.00
10	7.50	85	30.00	168	10.00	238	25.00	315	9.00	389	7.00
11	6.00	86	13.00	170	8.00	241	8.00	316	4.00	390	21.00
12	18.00	87	5.00	171	5.00	243	6.00	320	8.00	391	26.00
13	5.00	89	9.00	173	46.00	245	16.00	321	11.00	392	7.00
14	7.50	90	20.00	174	7.00	247	6.00	322	9.00	393	16.00
18	46.00	91	30.00	176	5.50	248	5.00	323	5.00	394	9.50
19	32.00	92	26.00	177	11.00	249	6.00	324	4.00	396	9.00
20	25.00	94	10.00	178	13.00	250	30.00	325	5.00	398	18.00
21	10.00	95	5.50	180	20.00	251	5.00	326	3.00	399	7.00
22	14.00	96	5.50	183	10.00	252	10.00	327	5.00	400	6.00
23	8.50	97	5.00	184	20.00	253	1.50	328	7.00	403	15.00
24	8.00	100	175.00	185	3.50	254	5.00	329	4.00	404	15.00
25	15.00	101	46.00	187	10.00	257	18.00	330	6.50	405	14.00
26	21.00	103	30.00	188	110.00	258	10.00	331	5.50	406	10.00
27	5.00	104	28.00	189	95.00	259	4.50	332	4.50	408	15.00
28	95.00	106	21.00	190	60.00	260	10.00	333	10.00	409	23.00
29	10.00	107	7.50	191	80.00	261	17.00	334	8.00	410	15.00
30	52.00	108	5.50	192	80.00	262	13.00	335	26.00	411	30.00
32	6.00	109	9.50	193	18.00	263	52.00	336	5.00	412	15.00
33	<i>withdrawn</i>	110	5.00	194	21.00	264	9.00	337	15.00	413	15.00
34	58.00	111	8.00	195	24.00	265	15.00	338	8.00	414	10.00
36	7.50	112	14.00	196	10.00	267	9.00	339	7.00	415	17.00
37	4.50	113	24.00	197	12.00	268	13.00	340	8.00	416	11.00
38	6.00	114	6.00	198	44.00	269	16.00	341	18.00	417	4.00
39	5.50	115	19.00	199	11.00	270	5.00	342	6.00	418	16.00
40	4.00	116	14.00	200	4.00	272	11.00	343	4.00	419	9.00
46	7.50	117	6.50	201	8.00	273	23.00	345	6.00	421	20.00
47	3.50	119	10.00	202	8.00	274	21.00	346	2.00	422	16.00
48	6.00	121	10.00	203	6.50	275	26.00	347	2.00	423	15.00
50	5.00	122	12.00	204	8.00	276	7.00	348	14.00	424	20.00
51	4.50	123	14.00	205	8.50	277	15.00	349	9.00	425	10.00
52	9.00	124	5.00	206	8.50	278	14.00	350	3.50	426	10.00
53	6.00	126	22.00	207	4.00	279	10.00	351	3.00	427	50.00
54	16.00	128	34.00	208	4.00	281	7.00	352	5.50	428	30.00
56	11.00	130	4.00	209	8.00	283	10.00	354	20.00	429	36.00
58	20.00	131	6.00	210	5.50	284	7.50	355	31.00	430	23.00
59	5.00	133	11.00	211	6.50	285	5.50	356	18.00	431	58.00
60	4.00	134	6.00	212	8.00	287	11.00	357	25.00	432	2.50
61	2.50	135	10.00	213	12.00	288	19.00	358	4.00	433	3.00
62	7.00	136	7.50	214	4.50	290	3.50	359	80.00	434	5.50
63	16.00	137	4.50	215	9.00	291	7.00	360	65.00	435	5.50
64	18.00	141	5.00	216	16.00	292	4.50	361	16.00	436	7.50
65	4.00	144	21.00	217	3.00	294	8.00	362	210.00	437	5.50
67	2.50	145	15.00	218	13.00	295	13.00	363	2.50	438	5.50
68	4.00	146	25.00	220	12.00	296	4.00	368	5.00	439	6.00
69	4.00	147	14.00	222	27.00	297	19.00	372	3.00	440	6.00
71	12.00	148	75.00	223	36.00	298	7.00	376	8.50	441	8.00
72	8.00	149	13.00	224	33.00	299	4.00	377	75.00	442	8.00
73	15.00	150	40.00	225	13.00	301	6.00	378	4.00	E&OE	
74	25.00	152	58.00	226	5.00	302	13.00	379	5.50		

The Bastille Day Meeting at Heaton Royds - Lunchtime

