

The Journal of the France & Colonies Philatelic Society



1916 registered envelope from French Guiana to Switzerland
with octagonal Colon à St Nazaire date stamp and Lyon Censor 205
[one of the lots in the November Auction; see also the two back cover pages]



Volume 52 ● Number 3
September 2002
Whole Number 225

THE FRANCE & COLONIES PHILATELIC SOCIETY OF GREAT BRITAIN

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Vice-President, 2002-2003: M S Tyler

Programme Secretary, 2002-2003: A Lawrence

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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 and applications for membership should be addressed to the General Secretary.

2002 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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Auction and Exchange Packet Sales

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.

Librarian: G E Barker, 13 Rodney Way, Guildford GU1 2NY.

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.

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* * *

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.

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The Journal of the France & Colonies Philatelic Society

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SOCIETY NOTES

New Members

The Society is pleased to welcome the following:

1203 A Ketchell (Southampton), 1204 B Ferguson (London), 1205 Dr A Milford Ward (Sheffield), 1206 J H Watson (Isle of Wight), 1207 J H Thorpe (London).

* * *

Members Deceased

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

305 O E Gibson, 587 Capt C M Hughes.

* * *

Exhibition Successes

The following members of the Society are to be congratulated on their awards at the 75th Congress/Exhibition of the Fédération Française des Associations Philatéliques in Marseille (May 2002):

Bertrand Sinais - Gold Medal for "Les entiers postaux au type Pétain"

Robert Abensur - Large Vermeil Medal for "Alsace-Lorraine 1918-1920"

* * *

Main Society Meetings

		Venue*
2002		
Wed. 25 Sep.	Members : 12 sheets	CA
Sat. 26 Oct.	President's afternoon	RHH
Wed. 27 Nov.	B S Jay : <i>Cross-Channel mail</i>	CA
2003		
Wed. 29 Jan.	R C Deakin : <i>Morocco</i>	CA
Sat. 1 Mar.	P S Stockton : <i>Mail in Conflict</i>	RHH
Wed. 26 Mar.	J N Hammonds : <i>Air Mail pot-pourri</i>	CA
Wed. 23 Apr.	L F Rowe : <i>"A Philatelist's Day Out"</i>	CA
Sat. 3 May	AGM (11.30 am) Auction (2 p.m)	CA
Wed. 24 Sep.	Members : 12 sheets	CA

* CA denotes Calthorpe Arms PH, 252 Grays Inn Road, London WC1. Wednesday meetings commence at 6.30 p.m.

RHH denotes Royal Horticultural Halls, Greycoat Street, Westminster, London SW1. Meetings are 3-5 p.m.

* * *

Auction

Stan Luft, Editor of the F&C Philatelist, informs us that the bulk of Dick Benjamin's France will be auctioned in November or early December. This should, apparently, be primarily France, prestamp to pre-WWII, stamps and covers, cancels, plating, literature, etc., and most of it quality material.

Contact: Schuyler J Rumsey Philatelic Auctions, Inc., 1255 Post Street, Suite 1000, San Francisco, CA 94909, USA
Tel. 415-351-2124; Fax 415-351-2127;
e-mail: srumsey@rumseyauctions.com;
website: www.rumseyauctions.com

* * *

Display

Our member David Taylor Smith will be contributing two frames of Indo-Chinese and Viet-Nameese military items to the 50th Anniversary display by the Forces Postal History Society at the Royal Philatelic Society, London on Thursday 14 November 2002.

The display will include military covers of the late 19th and early 20th century from Indo-China, forces' concessionary rates of the '30s, WWII material and the British involvement afterwards, French mail to the mid-'50s, Indian material of the period 1954-1968, and the Viet-Nam War.

* * *

Corrigendum

In our report of the Leamington Weekend in the last issue (Journal 224) the account given of Peter Maybury's display of handstamps (page 80) gave the wrong date for the French Post Office's instructions concerning style and ink colour. This should have read 1832, of course, and not 1932. Our apologies, though perhaps the mistake was obvious from the context.

* * *

French Airmail Surtaxes to 1945

Readers of Derek Richardson's handbook on French Postal Rates 1849 to Date (F&CPS Brochure N° 7, 2nd Edition 1996) will know that in the section on foreign Airmail Supplements (B4, pp 55-60), for what he designates as Phase 1 (1919-1945) he prints only a sample of the supplements or surtaxes that were charged on airmail onwards from France. As he rightly says, "To tabulate these supplements on a global basis for this period would be beyond the scope of a brochure such as this, and has not been attempted."

The attempt has since been made and help is at hand for collectors of French airmails who need greater detail than is provided in Derek's sample. Bob Picirilli has published a comprehensive listing of the surtaxes imposed on airmail from France from the earliest days in 1919 — to Morocco and the UK — to the end of 1945, thus neatly filling the gap. It appears in Newsletter 13 of the Study Group for Airmail Rates in French Colonies, and Bob has kindly agreed that copies may be made available at cost to members of the Society. I will be pleased to send one to interested members in exchange for 10 mint Second Class GB stamps (with full gum, please). My address is 41, Graemesdyke Avenue, East Sheen, London SW14 7BH.

In case you are wondering why the Study Group should be recording postage rates from France, French as well as local airmail surtaxes were charged on mail routed through France which was intended to go by air all the way to its destination. For example, the cost of a letter sent by air from Cameroun to Germany was the sum of the foreign surface mail fee and the air surtaxes from Cameroun to France and from France to Germany.

Bill Mitchell

* * *

Interzone Mail (1940-1944) - Part 2

Roy Reader



Figure 12 -

Second type of family interzone card, introduced in May 1941. This one was sent from Bordeaux to Le Mas-d'Agenais in the Lot-et-Garonne. The sender has obediently kept to family matters. In keeping with regulations, the card was checked at Bordeaux by a French post office censor.

This he indicated by stamping it with his handstamp consisting of the number 31 in a circle.

The card has had to do a journey of over 500 miles via Paris, Moulins and Vichy to get to its destination situated only fifty miles from its point of departure!

Liberalisation (May 1941 - November 1942)

Now in May 1941 an improvement at long last came in the situation concerning interzone mail. It came as a result of military developments in far-away Iraq and Syria! On 2 May the British had been forced into action against the new anti-British regime in Iraq. The next day the Germans tried to persuade the French Government to supply the rebellious Iraqis with French arms held in Syria and also to make the air base at Aleppo available to German aircraft going to give the Iraqis support. On 6 May the French consented in return for certain concessions from the Germans. These concessions included the use of plain blank postcards for interzone correspondence. This concession was announced on 10 May but not immediately implemented.

Then, on 12 May, the expectant public found itself presented with new family interzone cards instead!

Admittedly these cards were an improvement on the earlier ones in that they had seven lines on the back allowing the sender to write any message provided it was of a family nature and did not exceed the seven lines in length (Figs 12 and 14). They cost 90c each like their predecessors. They came in various shades of 'cream'. Even some of these cards had to be returned to sender for non-adherence to the instructions (Fig 13). The old family interzone cards became invalid for use from 20 May after eight months in service.

Another concession given by the Germans in return for French co-operation in the Iraq affair was the granting of passes to people wishing to cross the demarcation line to visit very sick relatives in the opposite zone. The freer format of the new family interzone cards enabled doctors to use them to send a medical report about a seriously ill



Figure 13 -

Second type of family interzone card used here by a firm in Bordeaux to inform their correspondent at Auch in the Gers department that they would have to have recourse to his company if he did not pay his rent or a major part of it within the next few days.

French post office censor N° 12 at Bordeaux promptly crossed the message out and with arrows and boxes highlighted the instruction that the message was to be of a family nature and only seven lines in length. The firm was going to get its card back.

patient to a close member of the patient's family in the other zone so that this relative could use the card to seek permission to cross the demarcation line to visit the sick person. To show it to be a genuine report from a doctor, the doctor's signature had to be witnessed by the mayor or police inspector and a revenue stamp affixed (see Fig 18 for a later example). This revenue stamp was the only stamp or label ever officially allowed to be put on an

interzone card. In October this procedure would be extended to apply also to official confirmation of such things as births, marriages and deaths.

At last, on 2 June, came the day when it was announced that plain blank postcards could be used for interzone correspondence. Use had to be made of the postcards pre-printed with an 80c Iris stamp and already sold in post

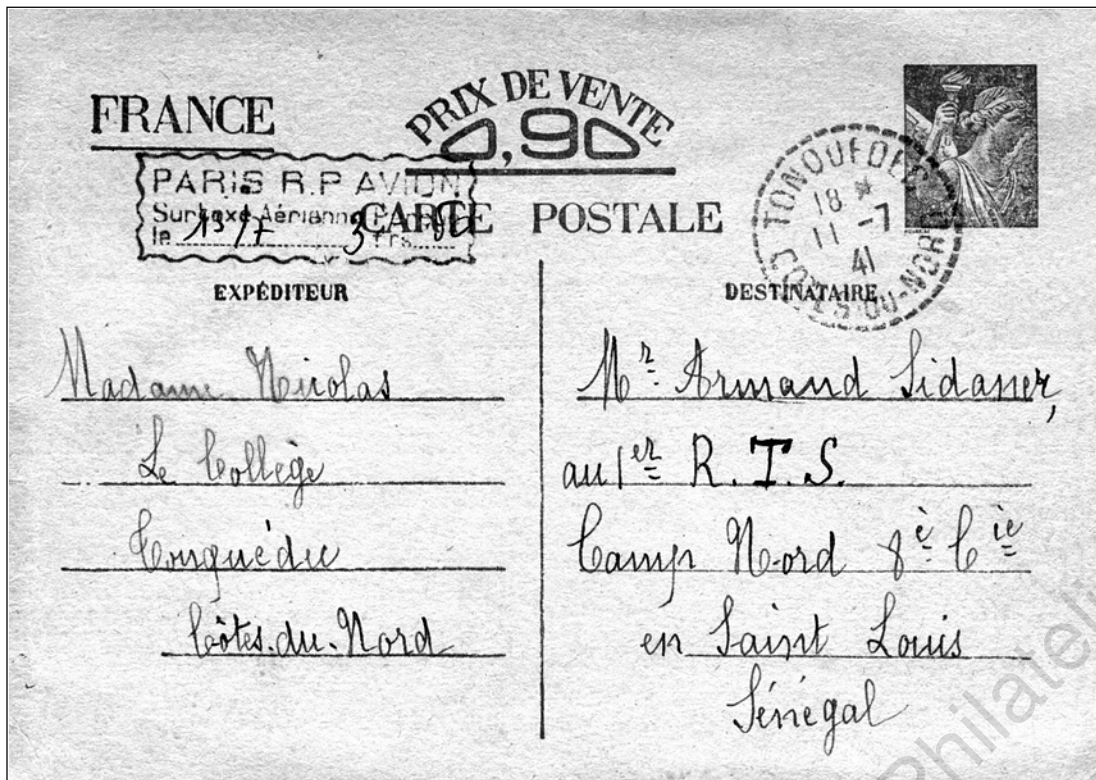


Figure 14 -
Second type of family interzone card here sent by airmail from an aunt in Tonquédec in the Côtes-du-Nord department in the northern zone to her nephew in the 1st Senegalese Rifle Regiment (Régiment de Tirailleurs Sénégalais) stationed at Saint-Louis in Senegal in French West Africa. The handstamp applied in Paris indicates that the 3F50 airmail supplement has been paid.

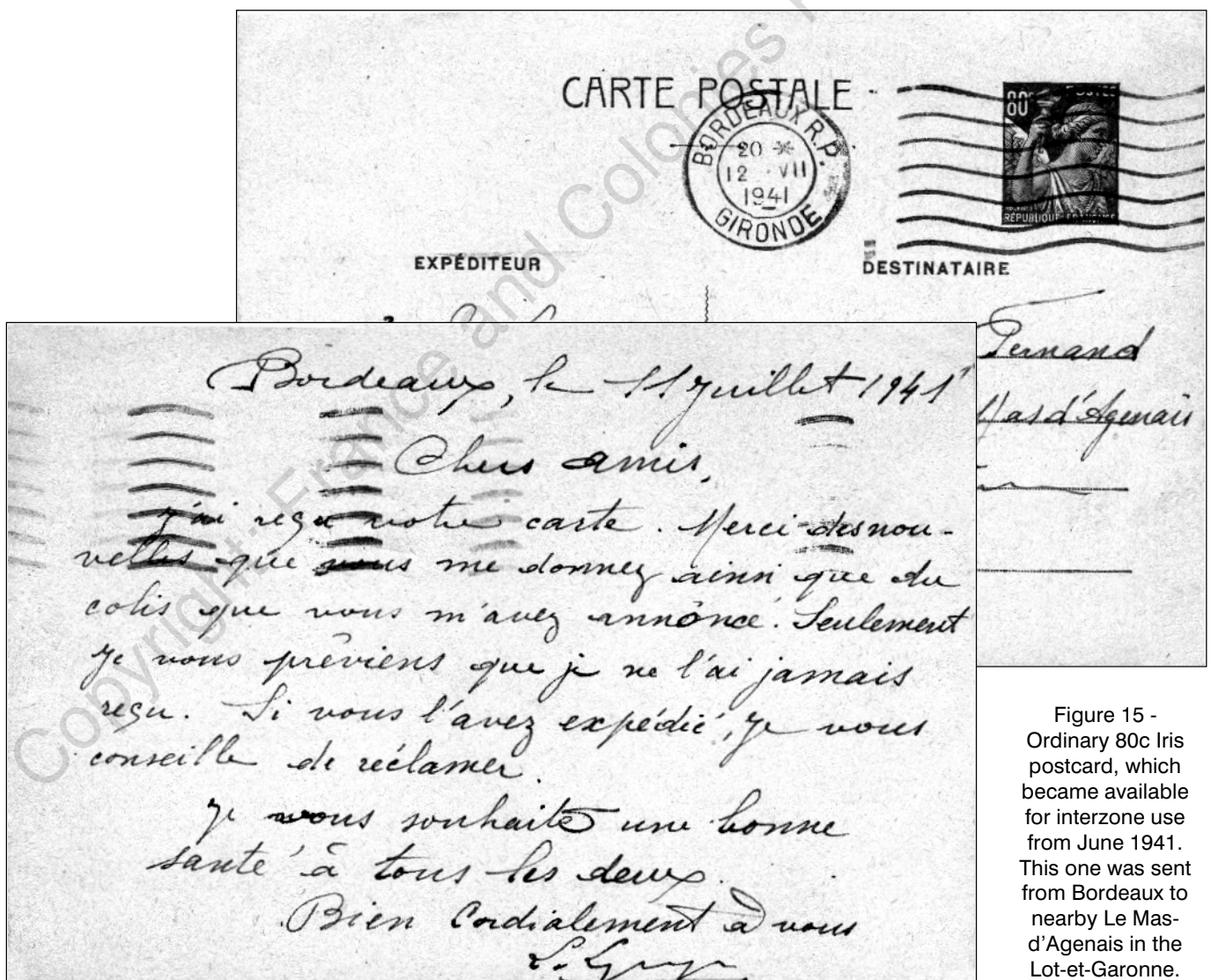


Figure 15 -
Ordinary 80c Iris postcard, which became available for interzone use from June 1941. This one was sent from Bordeaux to nearby Le Mas-d'Agenais in the Lot-et-Garonne. It did not have to do

the over 500 mile detour via Paris and Moulins to get there (see Fig 12). It travelled direct via the Langon crossing point just opened a few days earlier for interzone mail travelling between the departments in the south-west of France.

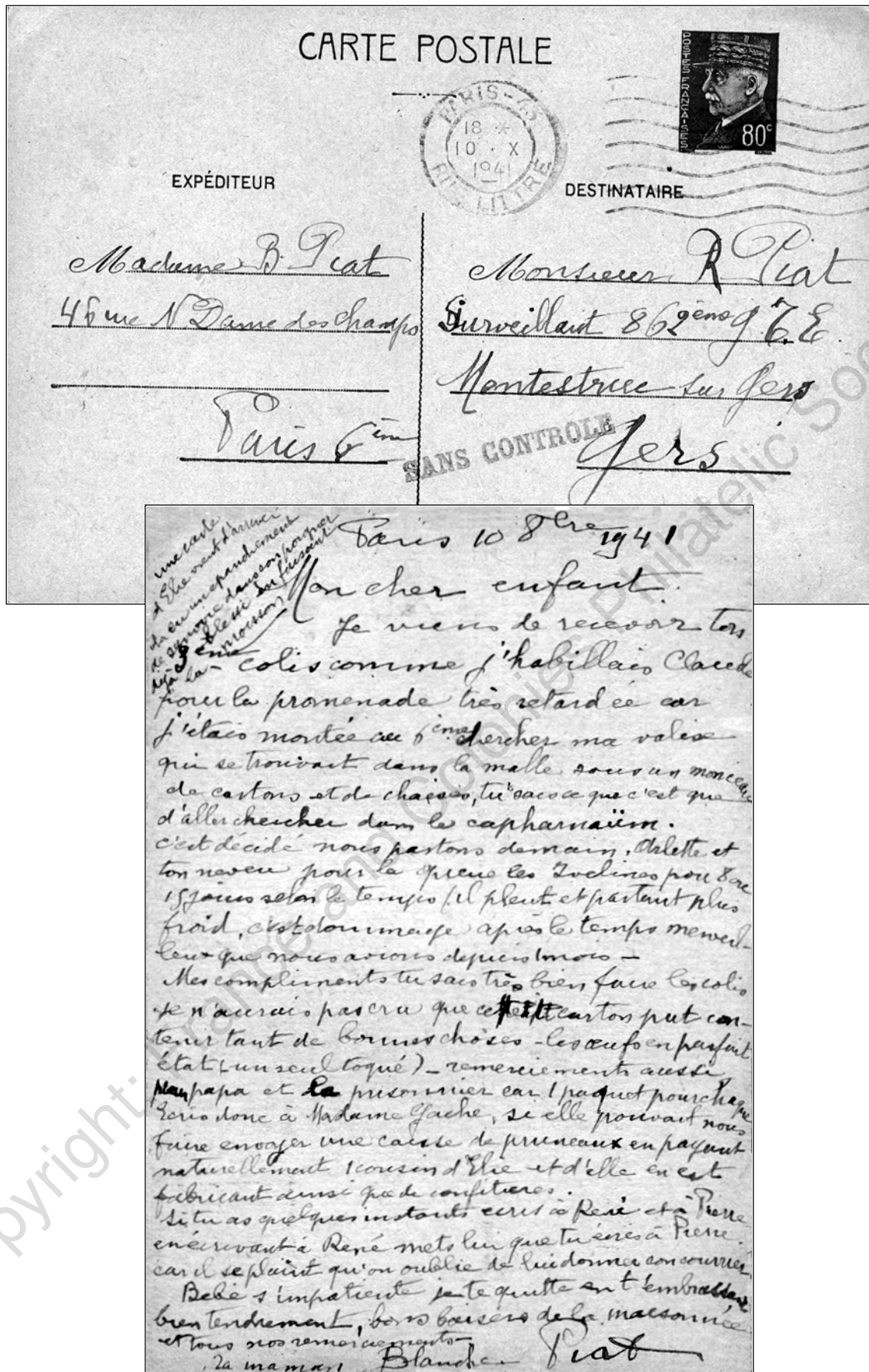


Figure 16 -



Ordinary 80c Pétain buff postcard that began taking over from the Iris postcard in August 1941.

This one was sent from a mother in Paris to her son working as a supervisor in Foreign Worker Group 862 at Montestruc-sur-Gers in the Gers department.

The 'SANS CONTROLE' (NOT EXAMINED) censor marking was applied at the man's camp.

The length of the message, the size of the writing and the corner afterthought must have given the post office censor a strong preference for the seven-line family cards!

CARTE POSTALE

EXPÉDITEUR

M _____

39, Rue CALLEBOTIS MÉTALLIQUES

& VITRAGES SANS MASTIC

DESTINATAIRE

M **onsieur MAZET (VEMA)**

43, Boulevard Gambetta

Monsieur, - Veuillez trouver ci-dessous le duplicate de
v/décompte de commissions pour le 3ème TRIMESTRE 1941

N°s Cdes	clients	Montant	5%	4,5 %	3,5 %
	Cdes				
1505	S.E.P.	44.329,95	2216,50		
13007	LEBON & C°	2.308,45	115,40		
12978)	ENTREPRISE				
12991)	INDUSTRIELLE	17.858,--	892,90		
13026	Sté. ENTR. IMM.	1.717,20	85,90		
1515	DURALUMIN	35.284,60	1764,25		
13027	LONGATTE	584,05	29,20		
1520	DURALUMIN	6.915,15	345,75		
1521	S.E.P.	6.481,10	324,05		
13045	C; Gle. Constr.				
	Fours	3.093,20	154,65		
12.925	Raff. Berre	4.954,30		222,95	
13.018	Huguet, Tourn.	2.979,80			104,30
13.082	Gaz Lebon	222,20	11,10		
RECAPITULATION			5939,70	222,95	104,30
commissions = 6.266,95					
C.N. & Imp. = 228,--					
à toucher		6.038,95			

Règlement vous ayant été fait
par chèque postal - B. G. C.
sincères salutations
Directeur Général

Figure 17 -

Ordinary 80c Pétain postcard now on white instead of buff card.

This one was used by a metal-grating firm in Paris for commercial correspondence with a business in Grenoble.

offices for use within one zone (Fig 15). The cost of these cards was now raised from 80c to 90c to bring them in line with the interzone cards, no doubt much to the disgruntlement of people wishing to buy one of the cards for use within one zone.

At the same time, to the no doubt equal disgruntlement of the public, the Post Office also put up the price of all its other postal stationery by amounts proportionate to the original cost. No attempt was made to overprint the stationery with some indication of the extra charge.

On 11 August the 80c Iris postcard began to be supplanted by an 80c Pétain postcard first in buff (Fig 16) and then from about 9 September in white (Figs 17 and 18). This too must have been sold at 90c.

On the ordinary 80c Iris and Pétain cards, the message no longer had to be of a family nature, though it did have to be

written in French or German. It also had to be restricted to the back of the card. The sender had to include his own name and address on the front of the card in the section reserved for it. No adhesive stamp was to be added to the card. The card was to have no photograph or other illustration on it. Any card found by the French postal service to infringe any of these few simple instructions had to be returned to sender marked 'Inadmis'. The postcards travelled the same route between the two zones as the family interzone cards.

Some people seemed to think that the fact that the 80c Iris and Pétain cards could be used interzonally for any kind of message meant that the new family interzone cards could now be used in the same way too and therefore used them for commercial correspondence. Anyone doing this soon discovered his error when his card arrived back marked 'Inadmis' (Fig 13).



Figure 18 -

Ordinary 80c Pétain postcard on white card, used here by a doctor in Bourges to certify that a 79-year-old patient was completely crippled with chronic rheumatism and no longer able to rely on her ailing 83-year-old husband so that it was urgent that her son should come and take care of them both.

The mayor of Bourges witnessed the doctor's signature and the card had a revenue stamp stuck on it before being despatched to the son in Limoges.

The son would be able to show this card to the German authorities when asking for a pass to cross the demarcation line to go and attend to his parents.

The family and commercial interzone cards were now really superfluous to needs. The Post Office, however, recommended the use of the family interzone cards wherever possible as, so it claimed, they reached their destination faster, presumably as a result of the censor being able to read them faster. The commercial interzone cards, on the other hand, were withdrawn from use with effect from 1 July. The family interzone cards did not, however, outlive them by long. They ceased to be sold from 1 August and ceased to be accepted for use from 15 August, after only two and a half months in service.

Meanwhile, the situation regarding money matters was helped when the Germans on 11 July gave permission for

money orders in postcard form (*mandats-cartes*) to be sent from one zone to the other. This service is stated to have begun functioning on 25 July, but at least one such money order is known to have been cashed in Paris nine days earlier than that (Fig 19). No special money order cards were printed for interzone use.

In September, commercial interzone cards were re-introduced, this time blank on the back for any kind of business message (Fig 20). The intention was that they should be given priority over other interzone mail in transit. So that they would stand out from the other mail in the postal service, they were printed on green card. Unfortunately, it seems that in practice all this made little

Figure 19 (right) -

Money order card despatched from Hanoi in Indochina (an extension of the southern zone) in March 1941 before such cards were even allowed as interzone mail.

It arrived in France on (probably) 3 July, just in time to take advantage of the German acceptance of such cards as interzone mail eight days later.

It was cashed by a jeweller in Paris on 16 July.

Illustration reproduced by kind permission of "Timbres magazine"

N° 1408. J. 21772-35. RÉPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE.

MANDAT-CARTE

HANOI R.P.

TONKIN

3/10 1ER REG. SUPP.

MANDAT de la somme de : (Montant de la somme, francs en lettres.)

Cent quarante deux francs 35 centimes

PAYABLE

(Si le montant est destiné à une femme, mettre « Madame » ou « Mademoiselle » en toutes lettres.)

M. aison Maurice

Adresse 11 Rue Riannur Paris

SOMME EN CHIFFRES : Francs 142 Cent. 35

24 18-3-41

Cadre réservé aux rectifications ou à la désignation du bureau de Paris chargé du paiement. (Art. 75 et 85, I. G. fasc. 7.)

Figure 20 (below) -

The new commercial interzone card introduced in September 1941.

Sent from a firm in Paris to a firm in Lyon to ask for ten metres of black fashion velvet, it was given a transit mark on its way through the Paris Chamber of Commerce. The card involved the sender in a lot of bother first acquiring it from the chamber of commerce and then returning it to it,

but it had been stated that these cards would get to their destination faster than ordinary postcards now also usable for commercial correspondence.

CARTE POSTALE COMMERCIALE

Chambre de Commerce de Paris

Exclusivement réservée à la correspondance commerciale.

6 NOV. 1941 EXPÉDITEUR

DESTINATAIRE

Messieurs Carrabiy & Co

8 Rue Labat

Paris 5 Novembre 1941

Messieurs Carrabiy & Co

Lyon

Permettez nous envoyer par S^e rapide, dix mètres de velours noir comme celui fourni dernièrement.

In cette attente, recevez Messieurs, nos très sincères salutations.

P.S. Nous comptons recevoir bientôt notre premier envoi.

R. Jetté

difference to delivery time. The cards were, like their predecessors, available only from the chambers of commerce.

It was also in September, on the 12th, that the Germans made some more limited concessions. They authorised the sending of commercial samples, with seeds particularly in mind, between the two zones. They also authorised the sending of serums and vaccines. All these would be sent by letter or rather letter packets (*paquets-lettres*), packets up to 3 kilograms in weight sent as letters at letter rate and carried by the postal service as letters, not to be confused with ordinary parcels, which were the responsibility of the French railway company. Abuses of the new concessions were soon perpetrated and soon discovered. Counter clerks had accepted packages containing cotton wool or surgical instruments. They had even accepted packages containing non-medical items like the one labelled 'urgent serum' but containing a pound of butter. Disciplinary action was taken against the offenders. The head of the postal service warned against any recurrence of these incidents for fear the authorisation to send serums and vaccines would be withdrawn. The Germans themselves drew up a list of suppliers who alone would be allowed to send serums and vaccines between the two zones. Despite these precautions, abuses still continued.

While all this had been going on, there had been some developments in the transmission of the mail between the two zones. On 7 June it had been announced that the Germans were opening up a second point on the demarcation line for the exchange of interzone mail. It was at Langon, south-east of Bordeaux. All cards posted in the

Vendée, Deux-Sèvres, Vienne and Charente-Maritime departments and in the German occupied parts of the Charente, Gironde, Dordogne, Landes and Basses-Pyrénées departments and destined for the southern zone were no longer to be gathered at the Paris Main Post Office but at the Bordeaux Railway Station Office for despatch via Langon (Fig 15). Cards being sent by airmail to French overseas territories would be stamped at Bordeaux with a handstamp like the one hitherto used at Paris to indicate the airmail supplement had been paid, but this one's first line would read '*BORDEAUX GARE AVION*'. As for the cards posted in the southern zone for the above-listed departments and part departments in the northern zone, they were no longer to be gathered at the Vichy Post Office but at the Toulouse Railway Station Office, again for despatch via Langon. All this mail would now pass through the censor office that the Germans had just opened at Bordeaux on 3 June.

The above arrangement also applied to official letters, although these, of course, could not travel direct. They had to be routed through the Countersign Office at Vichy in the southern zone and through the Prefecture of the Gironde department at Bordeaux in the northern zone. Initially the number of letters permitted was 200 a day. On 2 December this would be raised to 2,000 a day at the same time as the number of letters between Paris and Vichy would be raised to 8,000 a day, this making the earlier-mentioned total of 10,000 official letters a day by the end of the year.

In September, to speed up the transmission of official interzone mail, the Germans gave permission for the

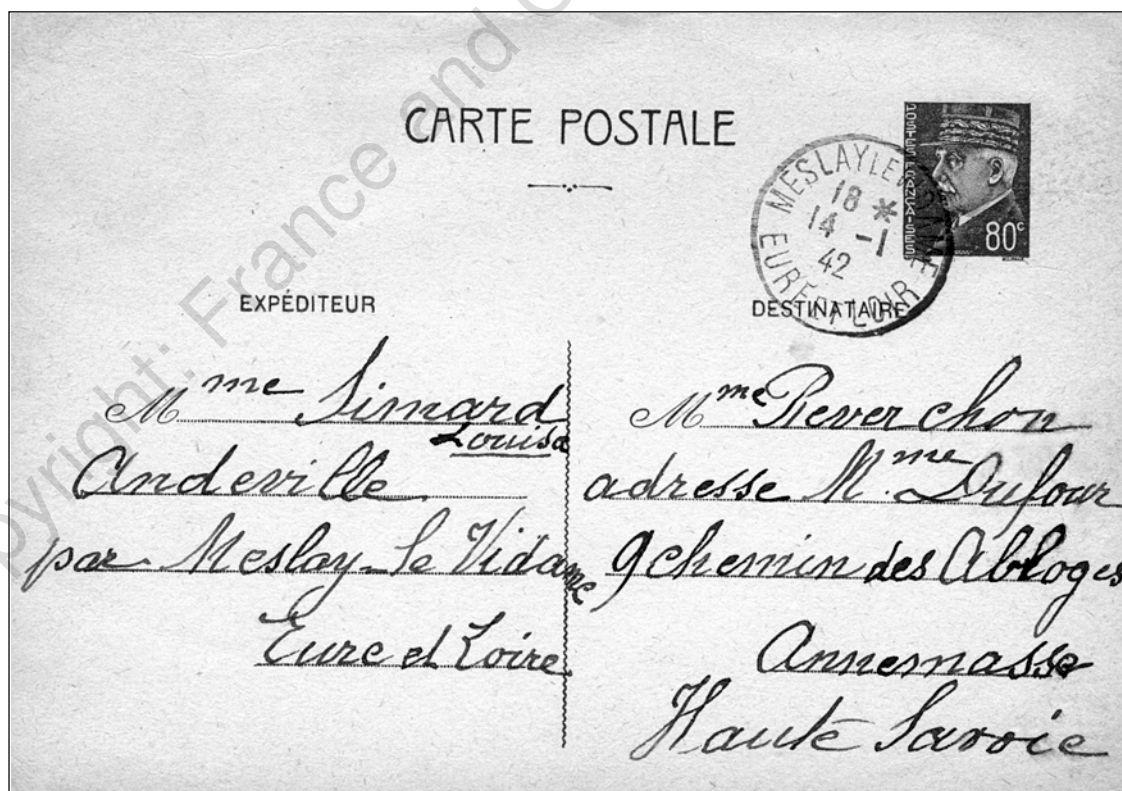


Figure 21 -

An ordinary 80c Pétain postcard still being accepted for interzone correspondence after the postcard rate had been raised to 1F20 a few days earlier on 5 January 1942. No 1F20 cards had yet been produced. It was being used by a busy 92-year-old grandmother at Meslay-le-Vidame in the Eure-et-Loire to wish her granddaughter at Annemasse in the Haute-Savoie a happy New Year.

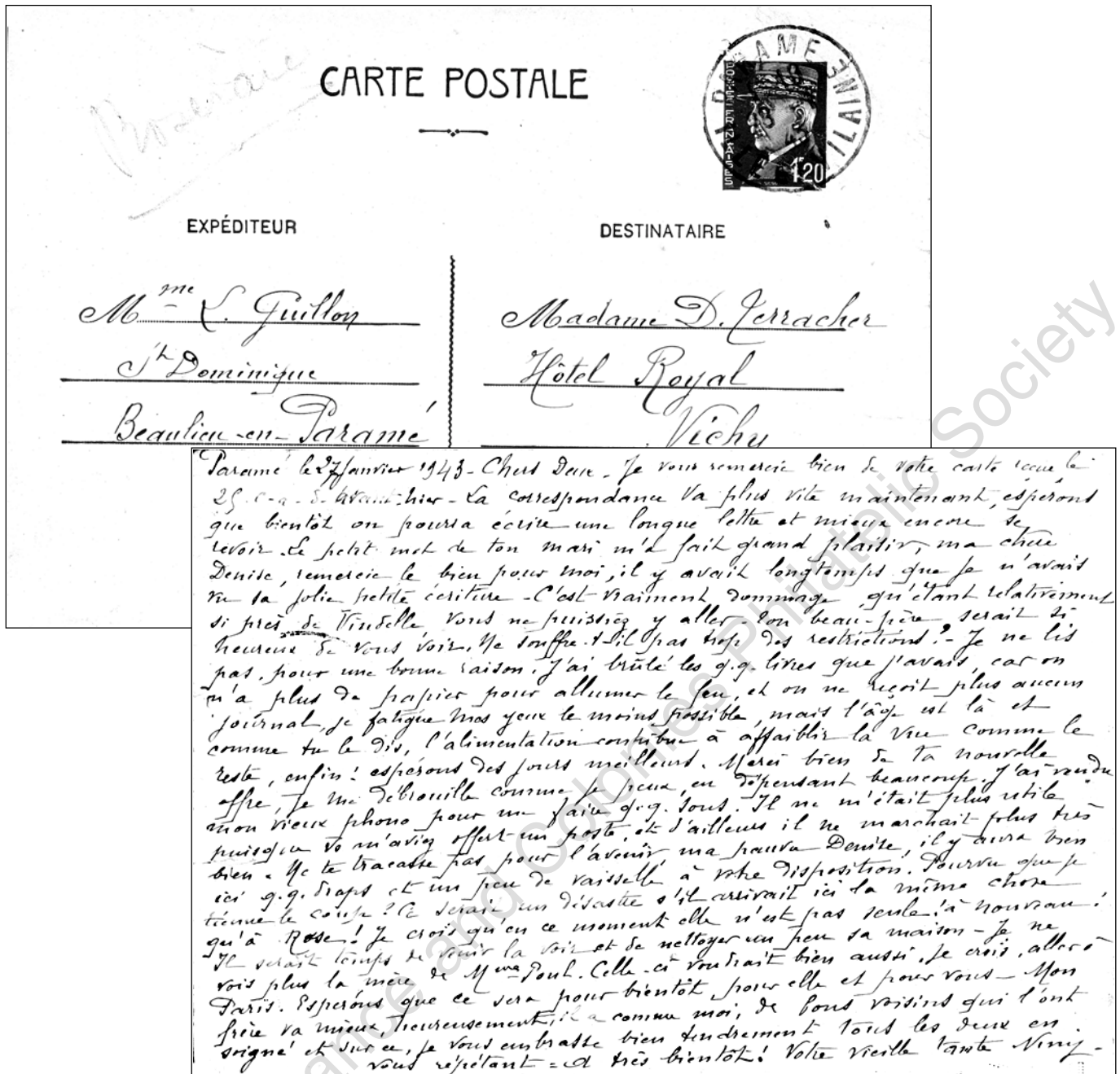


Figure 22 -

The ordinary 1F20 Pétain postcard sold from 1 March 1942

to cover the 1F20 postcard rate applicable to interzone mail from that date.

The card above was sent to a lady in Vichy by a friend in Paramé in the Ile-et-Vilaine.

The sender has managed to cram a great deal into the small space on the postcard and her message includes the information that she has used her few books to light the fire with for want of any other paper.

censoring to be carried out at up to ten of their garrison headquarters (*Kommandanturen*). There is no explanation as to how this fitted into the scheme of things. One can only assume that the mail censored at the garrison headquarters was able to pass through Paris or Bordeaux without further examination.

Come the new year and from 12 January a concession was made to facilitate official correspondence between the two parts of departments cut through by the demarcation line and also between some of the adjoining departments. The mail involved was called frontier correspondence. An exchange point for this mail was set up at Vierzon to serve the Indre-et-Loire, Loir-et-Cher, Cher and Indre departments; another at Moulins to serve the Allier and

Nièvre departments; another at Dijon to serve the Haute-Saône, Saône-et-Loire, Ain and Jura departments; and another at Angoulême to serve the Charente, Vienne and Haute-Vienne departments. The mail was checked at German censor offices operating in these four towns. The censor office at Bordeaux continued to deal with all mail, frontier and otherwise, from the Vendée, Charente-Maritime, Gironde, Landes and Basses-Pyrénées departments.

Meanwhile, on 5 January a problem had arisen with interzone mail when the postal rate for inland postcards rose from 80c to 1F20. No 1F20 postcards or commercial interzone cards had yet been printed. Unfortunately the extra 40c postage could not be made up by the addition of



Figure 23 -

The old ordinary 80c Pétain postcard issued from March or April 1942 with an overprint to indicate that extra postage had been charged to make it up to the 1F20 rate applicable to all interzone cards from 1 March. This card was sent to friends in Algeria by a man apparently able to write despite having his hands all blistered from having to do forestry work at Sexey-les-Bois in the Meurthe-et-Moselle as his reservist training.



Figure 24 -

The ordinary 1F20 commercial interzone card sold from March 1942 to cover the 1F20 postcard rate applicable to interzone mail from 1 March. This card was sent from a firm at La Courneuve, outside Paris, to the mayor of Annemasse in the Haute-Savoie to request payment of money owed. It was stamped at the chamber of commerce in Paris (very lightly) and at Annemasse town hall on arrival there five days later.

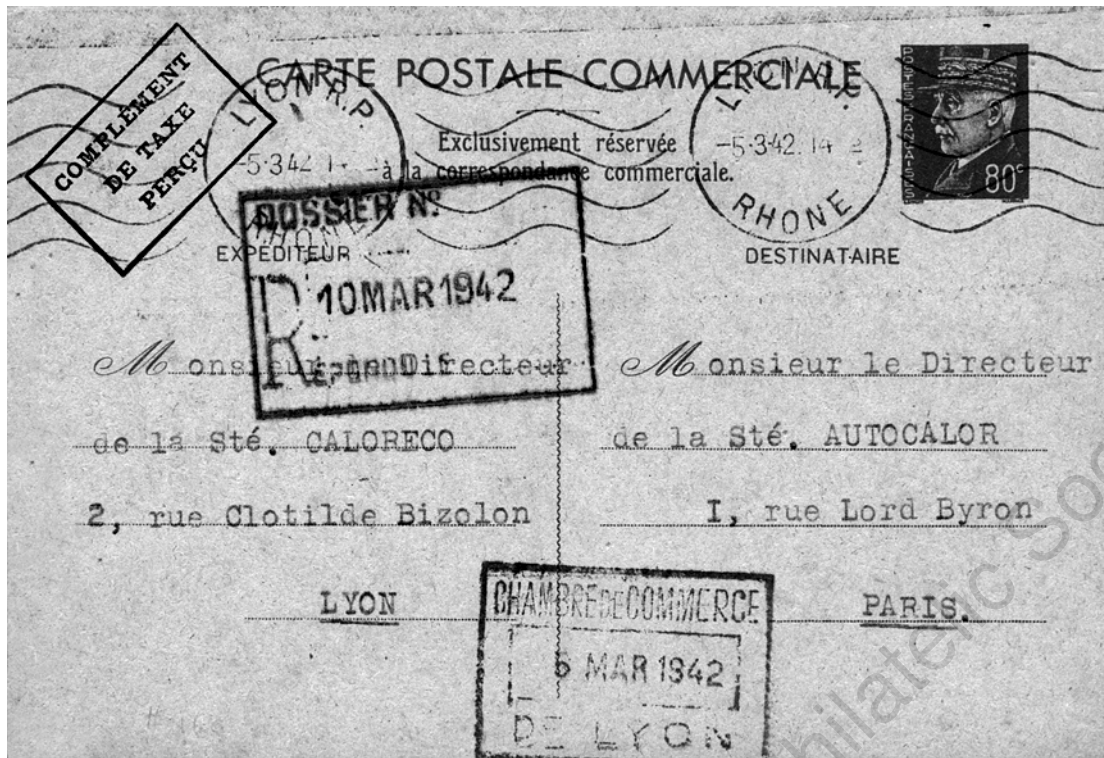


Figure 25 -

The old 80c commercial interzone card issued with an overprint to indicate that extra postage had been charged to make it up to the 1F20 rate applicable to interzone mail from 1 March 1942.

This card was sent from a firm in Lyon to a firm in Paris to request an amended invoice.

It was stamped at the Lyon chamber of commerce on despatch and by the receiving firm on arrival there five days later.

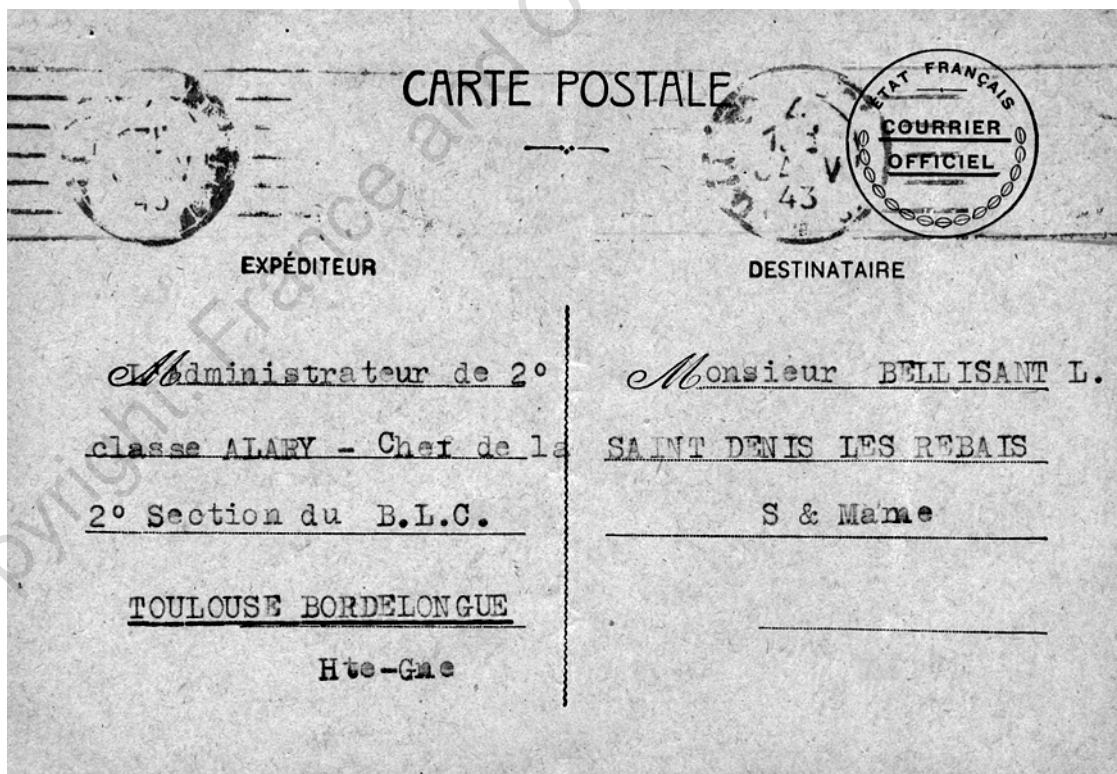


Figure 26 -

Official interzone card sent from the Central Official Files Office at Toulouse to a private individual at Saint-Denis-lès-Rebais in the Seine-et-Marne department to request signature and return of an earlier sent acknowledgement of discharge.



Figure 27 -

The 1F20 Pétain postcard stamped with a 1F50 airmail supplement handstamp at the Rouen Main Post Office in response to a request from a customer at the Le Havre Post Office.

The customer posted it still blank on the back to an address in Algeria on 22 January 1943, knowing full well that Algeria was by now in Allied hands so that there was no postal service to it. The card was marked 'INADMIS' and returned to sender.

one or more postage stamps to a card destined for a correspondent in the opposite zone, for, as already stated, the Germans had prohibited the use of postage stamps on all interzone mail. The Post Office therefore solved the problem simply by allowing interzone mail to continue to be sent at the 80c rate (Fig 21).

This lasted until 1 March. From that date, post offices sold new 1F20 Pétain postcards (Fig 22) and also, though seemingly only from a good month later, the old 80c Pétain postcards overprinted 'COMPLÉMENT DE TAXE PERÇU' (EXTRA POSTAGE PAID) so as to save paper at a time when it was in short supply (Fig 23). At the same time the chambers of commerce put out new 1F20 Pétain commercial interzone cards (Fig 24) as well as old 80c Pétain commercial interzone cards also overprinted 'COMPLÉMENT DE TAXE PERÇU' (Fig 25). All these cards cost, of course, 1F30 each. Anyone with either an old 80c postcard or an old 80c commercial interzone card left on his hands was, of course, able to stick a 40c stamp on it and use it for correspondence within his own zone without any problem. Only if he had a franking machine to bring the postage up to 1F20 could he use it for interzone correspondence without postage due being charged at the other end.

The 1F20 postcard also became available with a pre-printed request and an attached reply postcard to make it easier to request administrations in the opposite zone to send extracts from birth, marriage and death certificates.

On 1 May special postcards were printed for official correspondence between the two zones (Fig 26). They bore not a pre-printed Pétain stamp but simply a circle encompassing the words 'ETAT FRANÇAIS - COURRIER OFFICIEL' (FRENCH STATE - OFFICIAL MAIL). It is not clear whether they were issued free to public services or, more probably, sold to them for no more than 1F30 each, the cost of an ordinary postcard. Their arrival caused some confusion in the minds of some postal workers, and a reminder was issued that the cards were to be dealt with in the same way as other interzone postcards.

Now, it may have been while all this was going on that there was a further development in the transmission of commercial correspondence between the two zones. In an undated leaflet the Marseille Chamber of Commerce announced that, as a result of an agreement between the French and Germans, it had been 'authorised to transmit commercial mail to the occupied zone and, conversely, in the free zone to distribute the mail collected in the occupied zone by the Paris Chamber of Commerce'. This statement seems to suggest that the Marseille Chamber of Commerce had taken over the role of the Lyon Chamber of Commerce as the transit point for commercial mail travelling between the two zones - and this in fact seems to be confirmed by the existence of two of the Marseille leaflets sent out with what was called 'special commercial mail'. One of these leaflets accompanied mail being transmitted from a firm in Paris to a firm in Lyon and the other mail being transmitted

from a firm in Calais to a firm in Pont-Trambouze, like Lyon in the Rhône department. One would have expected the mail in both these cases to have been transmitted to the destination firms by the Lyon Chamber of Commerce if it were still functioning as an interzone transit centre at the time.

When the Marseille Chamber of Commerce took on its new role is unknown. The leaflet began its points of information with the statement 'It will be known that the regulations about interzone commercial mail have given rise to an agreement between the Secretary of State for Industrial Output and the occupying authorities'. This suggests that the agreement was recent at the time the leaflet was drafted. It is known that the leaflet could not have been produced before March 1942 as it gives the cost of commercial interzone cards as 1F30 each. It therefore seems likely that the Marseille Chamber of Commerce did not take on its new role until at least the spring of 1942 – though, of course, it could have been much later than that, even during the early part of the period after the German occupation of the southern zone. It is to be noted that transit marks on cards show that the Lyon Chamber of Commerce functioned as a transit point for interzone commercial mail until at least the end of January 1942.

And what was 'special commercial mail', such as mentioned above as being forwarded to Lyon and Pont-Trambouze? According to the leaflet put out by the Marseille Chamber of Commerce, it was commercial mail impossible to send in postcard form and consisting of such things as delivery slips, bills of lading, transportation documents, contracts, price lists and coupons of all sorts at this time of rationing. Items being sent as special commercial mail had to be handed in or sent to the Marseille Chamber of Commerce in the southern zone and no doubt to the Paris Chamber of Commerce in the northern zone. They had to be accompanied by the postage and a signed slip giving the name and address of sender and addressee and the number and nature of the items being sent. On receiving consignments of special mail forwarded to it by the Paris Chamber of Commerce, the Marseille Chamber of Commerce took the item or items destined for each addressee, pasted the signed slip, or a copy of it, on to one of its leaflets and then despatched leaflet and item or items to the destination address. It is not known if the Paris Chamber of Commerce followed the same procedure with consignments of special mail received from Marseille. It is not known either when the special commercial mail service between the two chambers of commerce came into effect.

In October the Germans once more voiced complaints about the number of irregularly completed interzone cards coming before their censors. Postal workers were reminded particularly to check that the cards were written clearly,

that they were written in French, German, Flemish, Italian or Spanish (the last three languages added in the previous December), that they had no stamps or labels stuck on them, that they were not to *poste restante* addresses and that the sender had put his address on the front of the card, an address that was in no circumstances to be that of a person residing outside of France.

On 2 November it was announced that measures were being taken to introduce an alternative system for dealing with postcards sent by airmail from the northern zone to French overseas territories. At the time there was a shortage of envelopes, and the system already in operation required each airmail card submitted to be accompanied by an envelope, as explained earlier. It had therefore been decided to sell ordinary 1F20 Pétain postcards pre-stamped with an indication of the airmail supplement paid, namely 1F20, 1F50, 3F50 or 17F. The public would be able to buy these for the cost of the card plus the airmail supplement and then post them in a letter box like any other normal mail, thereby dispensing with the need for envelopes.

The main post offices in forty-five departments were sent special handstamps to give the cards the necessary markings as they received requests for them either at their own office or at dependent offices. There was a minimum number of cards that could be requested: twenty of each of the 1F20, 1F50 and 3F50 and ten of the 17F. Fortunately for anyone wishing to send only one card, it would still be possible to use the old system using ordinary postcards.

As it turned out, the new cards did not become available until 17 November – by then somewhat pointlessly, as nine days earlier the Allies had invaded North Africa, thereby putting what was to be a permanent end to all air and airmail services operated by the French to their overseas territories. There were, of course, many philatelists and stamp dealers who nevertheless bought the cards and sent them to overseas addresses in the full knowledge that they would soon be getting them back stamped with some such mark as '*Inadmis*' or '*Relations postales suspendues*' (Fig 27).

What is more, these philatelists and stamp dealers would be able to finish up getting these souvenirs at no cost to themselves, for on 25 January 1943 it was announced that holders of returned cards could be reimbursed and even, should they want it, have their cards returned to them after inspection at head office to ensure they had been marked as reimbursed. Five of the main post offices, however, thwarted the activities of such philatelists and stamp dealers by refusing to stamp and sell any cards on the not unreasonable grounds that the cards could not be used for the purpose originally intended. Other offices seem to have continued to stamp and sell cards up to at least 1 February in one case.

This major article will be concluded in the next issue of the Journal with a much shorter section entitled "After the German Occupation of the Southern Zone (November 1942 - September 1944)" together with a full list of sources.

At the same time we intend to publish a companion WWII piece by Roy Reader on the "Hollow Star Cancellations on Pétain and other stamps", a fully researched and illustrated article on a topic originally raised by David Jennings-Bramly's query in Journal 208 of June 1998 (pages 92-93) and briefly answered by Roy in Journal 209 of September 1998 (page 158).

LIST OF RECENTLY PUBLISHED ARTICLES

Compiled by Colin Spong

Bulletin de la COL.FRA

N° 99 2^{ème} Trim 2002: Sénégal: les émissions de 1887 (Crombez); Indochine: Le receveur de Song Khône (Gonzalès); Madagascar: Surtaxes aériennes dans le service postal intérieur de son origine à 1958 (Desnos); Nouvelles-Hébrides: La Poste et les premiers timbres-poste du Condominium des N.H. (Mérot); Réflexions, modifications et compléments sur les articles précédemment parus: Les monnaies coloniales et d'outre-mer françaises (Drye); Publication des arrêtés: Réunion, Saint-Pierre et Miquelon, Congo, Inde, Indochine, Madagascar (-).

N° 100 Special issue on Diego-Suarez / Nossi-Bé.

France & Colonies Philatelist

Whole N° 269 (Vol 58, N° 3) Jul 2002: Airmail Letter Rates from French West Africa to the United States before World War II (Picirilli); Index to Subjects in Amazing 1870-1871 Wonder Stories (Cohn); Testimonials to Robert G Stone (-); Amazing 1870-1871 Wonder Stories - 69 (Cohn); Richard K Benjamin [1922-2002] (-); The Enigmatic MIRECOURT Handstamp of 1870 (Luft).

L'Écho de la Timbrologie

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

N° 1752 May 2002: Le tri automatique du courrier (-); Un pieux mensonge (de la Mettrie); Marianne de Luquet [cont.]: les variétés (Jamet); Taxe et surtaxe... (Prugnon); Présidentielle: De Louis N Bonaparte à J Chirac (-); Quatre-vingts ans de coins datés (Vacheron et Jamet); Trente ans de code postal [cont. & end] (Trassaert); Fiscaux de la guerre de 70 en Alsace-Lorraine (Danan).

N° 1753 Jun 2002: Dis, l'artiste, dessine-moi... le timbre de tes rêves: Aurélie Baras (-); L'hologramme (-); Quand le timbre aussi porte sa croix (de la Mettrie); Marianne de Luquet [3^e partie]: les variétés [cont.] (Jamet); Un cas de poste restante (Prugnon); Le lazaret de Trompeloup et Pauillac (Datau); Fiscaux de la guerre de 70 en Alsace-Lorraine [2^e partie] (Danan).

N° 1754 Jul-Aug 2002: Le lazaret de Trompeloup et Pauillac [cont.] (Datau); Du feu sous la cendre (de la Mettrie); Un juge de paix pénalisé (Prugnon); Colette intime, au musée de La Poste (Rémy-Bieth); Marianne de Luquet sur lettre [4^e partie] (Jamet); Fiscaux d'Alsace-Lorraine [3^e partie] (Danan).

Les Feuilles Marcophiles

N° 309 2^{ème} Trim 2002: Les crédits de ports-dûs (Sené); Découverte en marcophilie ancienne (Pottier); Des correspondances pas si exceptionnelles (Abensur);

Les piétons administratifs en 1829 (Lacassagne); Les cartes d'identité postales (Delwaulle); Les gâtés du bulletin mensuel (Abensur); Le courrier militaire et civil des Îles Normandes à destination de l'Europe occupée de 1940 à 1945 (Danan); SCCE, CCBE, CPCE: nouveau point (Frey); Les «départementalisations postales» de Paris (Charbonnier); La franchise postale du courrier en braille (Annet); À propos des boîtes urbaines et du service postal rural (Douron); Entre rigueur et indulgence (Rioust).

N° 310 3^{ème} Trim 2002: Quand le monopole postal était mis à mal! (de la Mettrie); La levée par les entreposeurs en gare des boîtes mobiles des courriers d'entreprise de la voie de terre 1867-1911 (Tanter); Une commission oubliée sélectionne les noms révolutionnaires (Balsenc); Mandat d'article d'argent des Messageries Maritimes (Sené); Un nouveau cachet-courrier-station d'Algérie (Carcenac); Les formations sanitaires du Tarn & Garonne pendant la guerre 1914/1918 (Gallicet et Espagnol); Les oblitérations géantes en France (Charbonnier); Taxations particulières de 1947, autour du minimum de perception (Rioust); Carte d'abonnement aux émissions de timbres-poste (Ablard); La fureur de lire du marcophile (Monnier); Agent embarqué à bord du «Jean Laborde» en septembre 1939 (Chauvet); Bureaux Postaux Militaires [BPM] en Afghanistan (Albaret); Téléimpression (Sené); Le passage à l'Euro (Sené).

Timbres Magazine

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

N° 25 Jun 2002: Le bureau français de Jérusalem créé par reason d'Etat (Melot); Des Bleus plein les timbres (Michaud); La publicité sur les carnets: «Blédine: la seconde maman» (PJM); L'histoire secrète des timbres de la LVF 2^e partie (Apaire et Sinais); Bonaparte: Les «deux batailles» Marengo: défaite et victoire dans la même journée (Michaud); Les affranchissements insuffisants (Baudot); Cartes postales: La mémoire d'Oradour-sur-Glane (Zeyons); Levant: courrier aérien chargé d'histoire (Chauvin).

N° 26 Jul-Aug 2002: La «Victoire de Samothrace» (Melot); Bonaparte: Orage sur Trafalgar, soleil sur Austerlitz (Michaud); Courriers maritimes dans les Établissements français de l'Océanie (Beslu); Coups de tampon à Constantinople (Melot); Le Paris de l'Orient (Aboucher et Ferry); Les marques les plus rares du XVIII^e siècle (Baudot); Cartes Postales: Jour de Fête le 14 juillet (Zeyons).

The Pre-War Sower *Épreuves de Luxe*

(Appearances Can Be Deceptive)

David Jennings-Bramly FRPSL

There are three *épreuve de luxe* sheets bearing Sowers. I feel one may reasonably assume that the stamps on these sheets are intended to be correct representations of the same stamps which were issued and sold to the public. Examination of the vignettes on the *épreuve* sheets shows that not all are printed using issued stamp dies.

All three of my sheets are imperforate and ungummed: the sheets have the Atelier imprint and have the control punch of a crescent between two diamonds applied in the lower margin, so one can be assured that they were passed as

correct – unless the control punch is only a sign that the printed image is to a certain standard of acceptability.

The first sheet (Fig 1) bears the 1c, 2c, 3c, 5c and 10c Sower. The 1c, 2c (Fig 2), 3c and 5c all appear to be from the original dies used to print the issued stamps; the 5c rose (Fig 3) is correctly from die III, which is particular to that stamp. However, the 10c ultramarine (Fig 4) seems to be from an improved or retouched die not used to print any issued 10c stamps: the most obvious difference is in the figures 10 of 10c.



Figure 1 -
Épreuve de luxe miniature sheet of 1c, 2c, 3c, 5c and 10c Sowers
(See next page for enlargements of the individual vignettes)



Figure 2 -
Enlargement of the 2c Sower
from the first *épreuve de luxe* sheet



Figure 3 -
Enlargement of the 5c Sower
from the first *épreuve de luxe* sheet

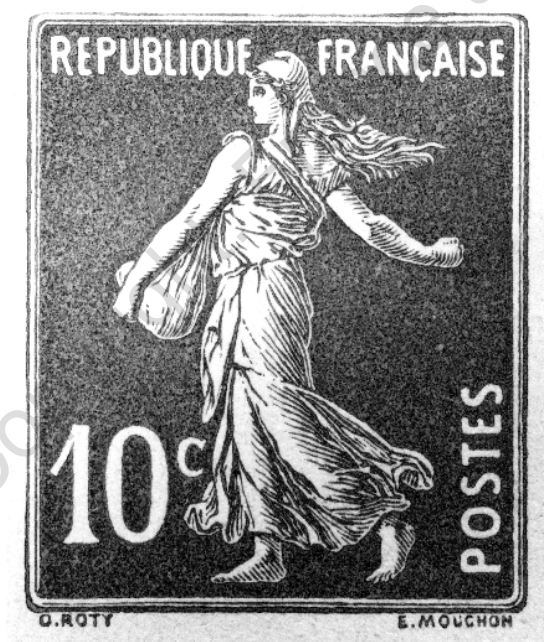


Figure 4 -
Enlargement of the 10c Sower
from the first *épreuve de luxe* sheet



Figure 6 -
Enlargement of the 30c Sower
from the second *épreuve de luxe* sheet

The second *épreuve* sheet (Fig 5) bears a 30c dull red Sower; beside it is a green 35c Sower, and centrally placed below them is a lined background 50c turquoise Sower.

The dull red 30c Sower (Fig 6) is printed using the die IIA, used for sheets of this stamp. A die III was used to print the stamps in the booklets of it. However, the shade on the proof sheet is one which I have yet to see amongst the issued stamps.

Approaching the green 35c Sower, Yvert 361, one expects to find it printed using a type II die. The type II die came

into use in 1926 to print, by rotary press, the violet 35c, Yvert 142b, a stamp with a very short life. But the die used to print the green 35c Sower on the second proof sheet (Fig 7) is that used in 1907 to print the first violet 35c Sowers - die I, Yvert 142, the first of the "gras" Sowers.

Yvert 362, the turquoise 50c Sower, third stamp on the sheet (Fig 8), also varies from the issued stamps, blue, green, red or turquoise, and has what seems to be a retouched legend etc., the size of the large "eyes" in the 'A's of FRANÇAISE being most noticeable.



Figure 5 -
Épreuve de luxe miniature sheet of 30c, 35c and 50c Sowers



Figure 7 -
Enlarged 35c Sower from the second *épreuve de luxe* sheet



Figure 8 -
Enlarged 50c Sower from the second *épreuve de luxe* sheet

The Atelier really excelled themselves on the third sheet (Fig 9). The stamp depicted is Yvert 476, the 35c green reduced in value to 30c by cancelling the value by overprinting 2 red bars upon the figures 35c and adding 30c, falling on the Sower's skirt, also in red. As I have said, the Atelier excelled their previous efforts by delving even further into the past by coming up with a *cliché* of Yvert 136 and using that.

Yvert 136a (type I) is the first *camée* Sower 35c of 1906 in violet, with thin figures and lettering (Fig 10). The "thin" or "*mince*" 10c and 35c, Yvert 135 and 136, were ordered

to be improved and very slight retouching was made, but to little effect. So re-engraving was ordered and resulted in the "*gras*" stamps of 1907.

The vignette on the third proof sheet (Fig 11) is printed using a 1906 improved die, Yvert 136 (type IIA), to which were added the bars and 30c!

I wish to suggest that members of our Society who have *épreuves* of later stamps, in particular definitives, examine them to find if they are from the dies of the issued stamps, and if there are differences, as in the Sower *épreuves*, that they regale us with their discoveries.

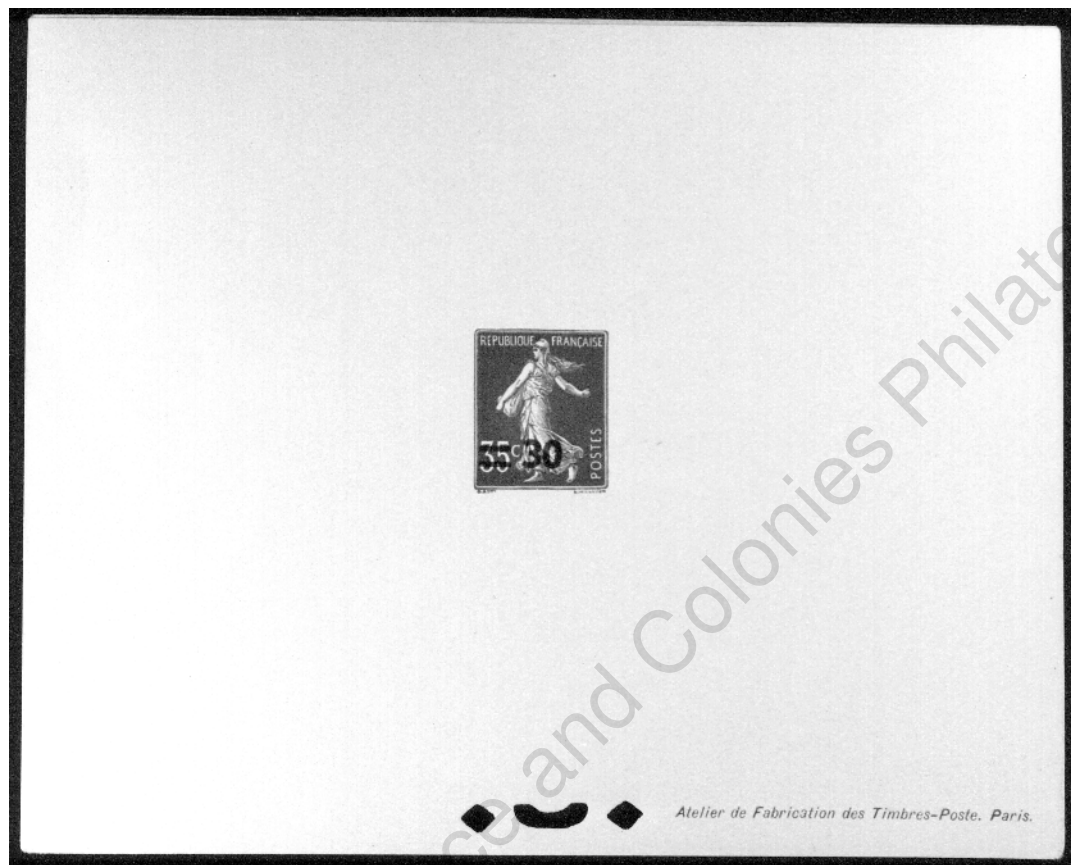


Figure 9 -
Épreuve de luxe
miniature sheet
of 30/35c Sower



Figure 10 -
Enlarged proof of 35c Sower (Yvert 136a) of 1906

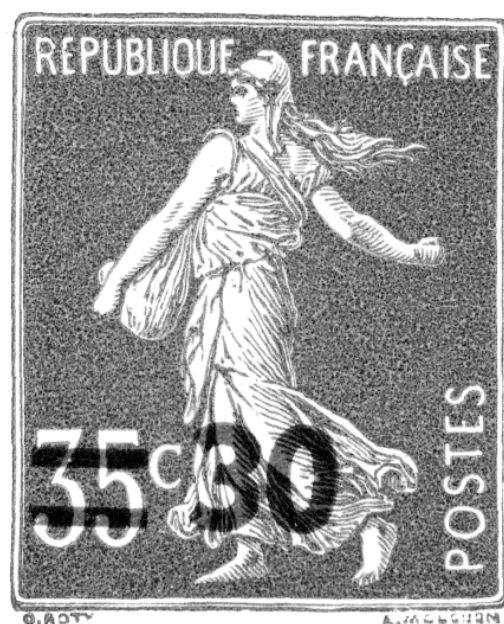


Figure 11 -
Enlarged 30/35c Sower
from third *épreuve de luxe* sheet

BOOKSHELF

Yvert et Tellier Catalogue 2002, Tome 2, 2^e partie (Independent Africa, Cambodia, Laos, Vanuatu and Viet-Nam); pub. Yvert et Tellier, 37 rue des Jacobins, 80036 Amiens Cedex 1; ISBN 2-86814-122-6; price £25.00.

Not so long ago, a single Yvert volume used to cater for all French Colonies collectors, even those persevering beyond independence. Lately, the sheer volume of new issues has forced a split into two: now the all-colour *Tome 2, 1^{re} partie* deals with the French colonial period plus DOM/TOMs (overseas departments and territories like St. Pierre et Miquelon, TAAF, Afars and New Caledonia), while this black-and-white sequel covers the "French Group" leftovers. Brush up your politics before seeking a particular item: most Part 2 listings predictably resume from the Independence rush of the 1950/60s (Togo from 1957, Madagascar from 1958) and Vanuatu (naturally) from 1980; Djibouti picks up from 1977 and the Comoros from 1975 - apart from Mayotte, which stays in Part 1. Viet-Nam is complete from the 1945 overprints on Indo-China.

Post-independence French Africa is a much neglected area. This volume, delayed pending the arrival of the euro, is Yvert's first since 1999, and will be eagerly seized by those collectors still attracted by the genuine philately to be found here amid the torrent of needless thematics. Coverage in other catalogues is disparate or fitful: Michel and Scott spread their listings among up to six volumes, while Gibbons-users have had no non-simplified catalogue now for over 20 years. The long-out-of-print Parts 12-14 (Africa since Independence A-E, F-M and N-Z) are unlikely ever to reappear, at least in book form, while Gibbons' new-issue updates (often the most accurate, detailed and conscientious of all) lie buried in monthly GSM supplements, largely inaccessible without benefit of cross-reference or index. Yvert is thus very timely, and most convenient for general collectors of the area.

Pricing in euros forces some fresh mental arithmetic onto us. No longer can we Brits make do with the easy approximation "10F = £1": we now have to struggle with division by 1.45 or thereabouts. But cross-catalogue price comparisons are now easier: Michel, of course, also quotes euros, and for Scott-users and other readers in the US a euro is not too far from a dollar, at least at present. (Cérès is temporarily out of synch, its next Colonies edition not due until 2003 and its post-independence coverage uncertain.) The new minimum of 15c equates roughly to the old 1F while the highest price in the whole book appears to be for Laos' 1952 Air miniature sheets (BF 27/27a), at 1200/1400€.

Regular Yvert users will spot some revisions. A few rare items hitherto known only through readers' queries in the philatelic press are now listed - like the withdrawn or unissued Presidential portraits of Cameroon (1967 - 25F 7th Anniversary of Independence), Congo (1960 - the three-quarter, not full-face, portraits of Fulbert Youlou) and the Niger 1975 close-up reported long ago by our own Leonard Stenning. They are not only listed, but handsomely priced - mint, anyway - as are North Viet-Nam's T.T-in-diamond Postage Dues of 1953 and - more modestly but

still higher than any genuine issue, despite their questionable provenance - the 1962 CECA/MIFERMA/Malaria overprints for Mauritania. Cheaper still, the Laotian Neutralist Government and Pathet Lao issues are now included. New and philatelically worthwhile varieties appear amid the more familiar issues, like the 1995/7 horizontal Benin Arms reprints, the Burkina Faso 1991 Hairstyles on different papers, and Tunisia's 1993 FRAMAS. Booklets and coils are extremely well listed throughout - see Ivory Coast 1976 for an example. Illustrations (now computer-scanned?) have been greatly improved despite the odd lapse (Ivory Coast 1980 Rotary), and many countries' omnibus issues are now illustrated *in situ* rather than cross-referenced. Prices are now given for sets of four.

Conversely, some items are inadequately treated. We are told of the different printers for Niger Dues (1962 Delrieu, 1993 Edila) but not those for Central African Republic Officials (1965 So Ge Im, 1971 Delrieu, 1978 Cartor) - and here the 1971 illustration is wrong. The triangular Ivory Coast Officials are not illustrated at all. Background information is incomplete: the alternative Malagasy currency, the ariary (1a = 5FMG) is not mentioned despite appearing on every stamp of the period, and those of us placing a premium on non-capital-city postmarks will be surprised to read that Porto-Novo, rather than Cotonou, is the capital of Dahomey. Some long-standing errors remain uncorrected, forgivably perhaps in little-consulted areas, but I note that the colours of Madagascar 468-9 should be transposed, and 556 is pale orange not red: these have been wrong since 1994 if not earlier. Comoros 113 is surcharged 30F, not 25F, and 118 should arguably be described as 35F on 35+10F. The basic stamps on which these (État Comorien) surcharges fall are identified by catalogue numbers - less helpful than captions, given that the stamps in question are now in the other volume. Incidentally, Yvert now lists and prices these stamps individually, mint only: Scott adds (cheaper) used prices, Michel lists them individually but prices them only as a set (mint), while Gibbons Part 12 relegated them to an Appendix and its (2000) *Stamps of the World* does not mention them at all.

Regular users will recognise - with resignation rather than pleasure - some long-standing editorial foibles. Only the year of issue is given, not the day or month; separate listings (pages apart) of airs, miniature sheets, officials and dues provoke much toing-and-froing in order to glean the complete issue picture. Some spectacular errors are listed, but not shades or reprints, even when well-known (e.g. Algeria 393, 470A, 528, 629 and 656; Morocco 1968 definitives) or well documented (Madagascar 1963-71 Arms, 1967 10F Building - Yv 433 - with blue or blue-black background; and the new colours and added surcharges notified in *Timbroscopie* for May 1994). Despite the helpful article in *L'Écho de la Timbrologie* for March 1999, many



Although dating from the 1990s, '80s or even '70s, not one of these postally-used stamps is featured in the latest (2002) Yvert. Many appear in other catalogues, though the two *Empire Centrafricain* items are not listed anywhere at all.

Benin surcharges remain as mere footnotes, and the numerous errors fail to appear at all.

Many current definitives (e.g. Algeria, Morocco) appear in instalments: Yvert's policy is to list them strictly in chronological order amid swathes of intervening commemoratives. This certainly avoids renumbering when adding later instalments to the first issue, SG-style, but it does slow down the location of single items: even with the given cross-references you can spend time looking in six different places for a particular small-format *Élégance Sénégalaise* definitive, or anywhere between 1969 and 1992 (19 pages) for a small Gabon Arms. Such items would ideally be corralled into an easy-reference checklist like

that for Tunisia (see Tome 2 Part 1, after N° 145). Seeking out particular surcharges among Benin and Comoros makes one long for Scott's and Michel's habit of cross-referencing them all under the listing for the basic stamp(s).

Some whimsies of catalogue production will particularly frustrate those of us who pencil-mark our copies. Yvert's switch from four- to three-column format (presumably dictated by conformity with other volumes) reduces the visible page-spread at a stroke and its increased page-count (1,152) makes for a chunky volume that lies flat only with reluctance. Printing almost reaches the centre margin, making two columns out of six hard to annotate or even consult - and forcing the book flat for closer inspection

may well damage the spine, though an improved assembly in sewn signatures rather than the old "perfect" binding at least reduces the risk of pages dropping out.

The preliminary omnibus-set list (starting with the 1958 Human Rights issue) is useful but patchy, and compares unfavourably with Scott's by continuing to omit many sets with unimpeachable *bona fides*, viz. the 1962 Abidjan Games, 1962-3 Telecom, 1963 Red Cross, 1966 DC8F Air Afrique, 1968 WHO and Human Rights. The 1964 Philatéc and 1966 Satellite D1 sets feature DOM/TOMs only and arguably belong to Part 1 rather than 2: in the event Satellite D1 appears in both volumes but Philatéc in neither. Within sets, some non-French Colonial components are omitted, despite being required by collectors for completeness: for example, Rwanda's (common-design) 1967 UAMPT or, for that matter, France's own 1964 Co-operation and (again) Satellite D1.

But it is in the new-issue listings that this volume is deeply disappointing. Innumerable items familiar from commercial mail (sometimes in considerable quantity, and stretching back some years) simply do not appear. Perversely, dubious and little-used agency-derived thematics appear in profusion: their accompanying press-releases presumably made them easy to list. In fairness, it must be acknowledged that much genuinely used material emerges from Africa without warning or adequate documentation, leaving cataloguers to deduce its pedigree from evidence *ad hoc*. The most striking example is Cameroon: there is still nothing listed beyond 1995. (This particular lacuna is common to SG too, reinforced there by a ministerial document shown to me by editor David Aggersberg categorically stating - in the face of copious on-cover evidence - that "no new issues have been made since 1995"!.) Many unlisted items, however, have surely been around for long enough for even the slowest cataloguer to record. Notable absentees are the Congo LÉGAL and AUTORISÉ overprints, most 1990s Madagascar surcharges, Togo's 1999 definitives, any Comoros between 1994 and 1998 or any Benin since 1997 - like the Rural Development issue reported by our own Peter Upson in this journal (N° 223, March 2002). One can understand the very latest issues taking time to register, but postally-used copies are known of many unlisted items stretching in some cases back to the 1970s (*see illustration*). Perhaps, like Gibbons, Yvert requires irrefutable evidence of proper issue before listing - but it has to be reported that the latest Scott (2003) and particularly Michel (2001-2) offer a more comprehensive and up-to-date service.

Belatedly, Yvert now recognises whole battalions of previously-omitted 1990s thematics. Renumbering of existing issues is not an Yvert house-style, so the new arrivals are slotted in-and-among by means of A numbers, albeit clumsily: there are 125 stamps between Madagascar n°s 1791 and 1792 alone, necessitating more than four runs through the alphabet and reaching a number 1791EF. Central African Republic runs it close, with for example 100 stamps between numbers 1618 and 1619. Our

thanks go to Yvert for gamely recording all this stuff: we only hope that there is a market somewhere for, say, the 1,864 postage stamps, 295 Airs and 204 miniature sheets of Guinea, or the 1,000 or so stamps (plus 66 miniature sheets) produced by Madagascar in the last ten years alone. Typically perhaps, Mali's last three sets feature Garfield, Betty Boop and *I Love Lucy*. Some listings are however arguably over-compressed: the Niger and Chad Fauna issues of 1998, for example, are lumped together in half-dozens, and it is only by counting captions that you can allocate an Yvert number to any particular one.

Prices must be affected by the sheer bulk of modern issues, which leave little time for anything beyond routine mark-ups over face plus inflation. Set prices are simple totals of individual components, with neither discount nor premium. Modern imperfs-by-favour are deeply unpopular outside France and few readers will regret their gradual disappearance from the listings: the tell-tale rectangle-in-heading now appears but rarely (e.g. no post-1963 Central African Republic, nor, thankfully, that printer's-waste market-saturating Chad 1000F Egret of 1971) and quoted prices for them are almost non-existent.

Used prices are disputable, as always, and show some cross-territory discrepancies. Every single Vanuatu item is priced the same whether mint or used, usually a sign of editorial stalling pending sufficient market activity to pinpoint a trend. If sheer availability of material were any criterion, then used Vanuatu - along with Comoros, Khmer and (in Part 1) TAAF and Wallis ought to show sizeable mark-ups over mint, rather than the traditional mark-downs (Gibbons' arguable over-compensation in this area deserves a separate discussion). Even for those countries (Algeria, Ivory Coast, Cameroon, Morocco, Senegal) with enough used material to provide a realistic market picture - and for collectors to attempt completion - Yvert prices rarely reflect either the scarcity of used Officials, Dues and ultra-low value definitives (Morocco 1962 1c and 2c, Togo 1981 7F-9F, Tunisia 1962 1m-3m, etc. etc.) or, conversely, the comparative commonness of those middle values which happen to prepay the airmail rates from home to Europe. Quoted used prices must often relate to CTO - though, apart from those 1970s packet favourites Madagascar, Mali and Congo, where are the stocks?

The perfect catalogue has probably never been produced. Impartial buyers may consider looking elsewhere - rival catalogues all have strengths and weaknesses, worthy of a separate article - but this Yvert, despite some quibbles, is the obvious choice and an indispensable tool for collectors over-viewing the whole post-independence area. One final thought: as the relentless march of technology forces more and more information onto CD-ROM and other screen-only formats, any new hard-copy catalogue may well be its last-ever edition, to become in time a highly prized item in its own right. Buy two copies of this Yvert: one for pencil-marking and thumbing to extinction as you collect, the other to tuck away as - who knows? - possibly a better investment than almost anything listed in it!

Michael Round

Books Noted

Occupazioni ed Annessioni Italiane nella Seconda Guerra Mondiale (Albania, Francia, Grecia, Jugoslavia): 1939-1943 La Posta Civile (Annullamenti e storia postale) by Valter Astolfi, 1996; 637pp, many illustrations of maps, covers and postmarks in b/w, in Italian; price (on publication) L120,000; purchased here at £52.50. [The section on Italian-occupied France covers 99pp; includes territorial and administrative arrangements, postage stamps and stationery, postal services, tariffs, post offices, postmarks, censor marks and bibliography.]

Bernard Sharp

Les Relations de la France avec l'Espagne de 1660 à 1849 (La Poste Internationale Tome 2) by Michèle Chauvet; pub. Brun & Fils; 286 pp, A4; b&w; price 55€ (+6,25€ p&p); details from *Écho de la Timbrologie*, 37 rue des Jacobins, 80036 Amiens Cedex 1; also available (at 60€ inc. p&p) from Librairie Service, *Timbropresse*, 6 rue du Sentier, 75080 Paris Cedex 02. [History of postal relations between France and Spain, in both directions and in transit to other European countries, and covering various conflicts - Revolution, Empire, Restoration; all postal rates applied by both administrations, with numerous illustrations of letters with their postmarks and their meaning, synthetic tables, and the full reproduction of Franco-Spanish conventions.]

La poste aérienne française, tome III (Icare, revue de l'aviation française, no 179); 161 pp, 340 x 220mm; price 22,10€ inc. p&p abroad; available from *Icare*, tour Essor 93, 14-16 rue de Scandicci, 93508 Pantin Cedex. [Aerophilately of France 1919-1939; fully illustrated with photos and documents.]

L'Annuaire de la collection 2002-2003; 356 pp, 170 x 240mm; price 15€ + 5€ p&p; details from Mose'Edizioni, Via Bosco, 4-31010 Masera, Italy. [Information on European philatelic associations, Internet sites, magazines devoted to collecting, and other practical details.]

Argus des Timbres de France 2002; 116 pp, A4; all illustrations in colour; price 8€; pub. Argus des Timbres de France, 47 rue du Faubourg, Montmartre, 75009 Paris. [All French stamps listed with values in euros, but limited information (dates of issue and withdrawal, and printing figures).]

Un siècle de transports (Le Siècle au fil du timbre, volume 5): price 19,67€. [See Journal 224 page 69 for other details.]

Catalogue FDC Cérès Éditions - Supplément 2002; pub. Éditions Philatéliques de Paris, 23 rue du Louvre, 75001 Paris; 16 pp. in colour; price 5,50€. [Supplement to First Day Cover catalogue, giving values of all items issued in 2001 in France, Andorra and Monaco; special thematic section on transport on French FDCs since 1951.]

Fakes, Forgeries Experts (No 5); 196 pp. in colour, 230 x 297mm; price 40€ (+ p&p); details from FFE Paolo Vollmeier, PO Box 108, 6976 Castagnola, Switzerland. [Philatelic articles and postal history concerning fakes and forgeries; contains index to articles that have appeared so far in FFE, listed by subject and author, as well as a list of the members of AIEP (Association Internationale des Experts en Philatélie).]

Maurice Tyler

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French Equatorial Africa

Down to the sea and the mystery of a post office without a proper name

Robert Johnson



This little article concerns the Congo - Ocean railway.

The main feature of the cover illustrated above is the six sided postmark (called by the late Robert Stone in *The Diverse World of Postal markings of Gabon/Congo/AEF* as an 'odd type').

It was used at the Postal Agency on the railway line linking Brazzaville to the sea at Pointe Noire at Kilometre 102. The trains between Brazzaville and Pointe Noire and vice versa (*aller et retour*) carried a TPO, and the two TPO marks (taken from Stone) are illustrated below. They are rare and I do not have either of them on cover.



The rating on the cover, posted in July 1938, falls into two parts: the postage paid and the postage due. The postage paid of 2F65 paid the surface rate of 65c for 20 grams (in force 12 July 1937 to 16 November 1938) and an air fee of 2F for 5 grams (in force 1 September 1935 to 12 August 1938).

This was not enough for the air fee as the cover has been marked '5gr5' and 'T4f'. This implies a weight of 5 to 10 grams and an air fee of 4F. The deficiency of 2F times two is 4F as marked.

So why was a 3F postage due stamp put on in France (probably at Marseille Gare Avion where the letter was postmarked on arrival — 8 days in transit)? There are no indications front or back of a 1F postage due adhesive coming off or having been stuck on. There was sufficient space by the side of the 3F stamp anyway.

For many years the French and other traders in AEF had to use the railway on the Belgian Congo side of the River Congo to get exports out to and imports in from the coast (Stanley Pool to the sea).

Pointe Noire was the obvious site for a harbour facility on the Atlantic. The route to Brazzaville was very difficult and was first surveyed for railway purposes in 1911. All was ready to proceed in 1914 but the First World war intervened. Another survey was done in 1921 and work started in that year. The work was not finished until 1934 — which shows how difficult it was to build.

Now back to Kilometre 102. Where was it? The answer is in Table 1 in the Chapter on Signal Communications at page 485 in the Geographical Handbook Series on French Equatorial Africa published in 1942 (my copy was originally

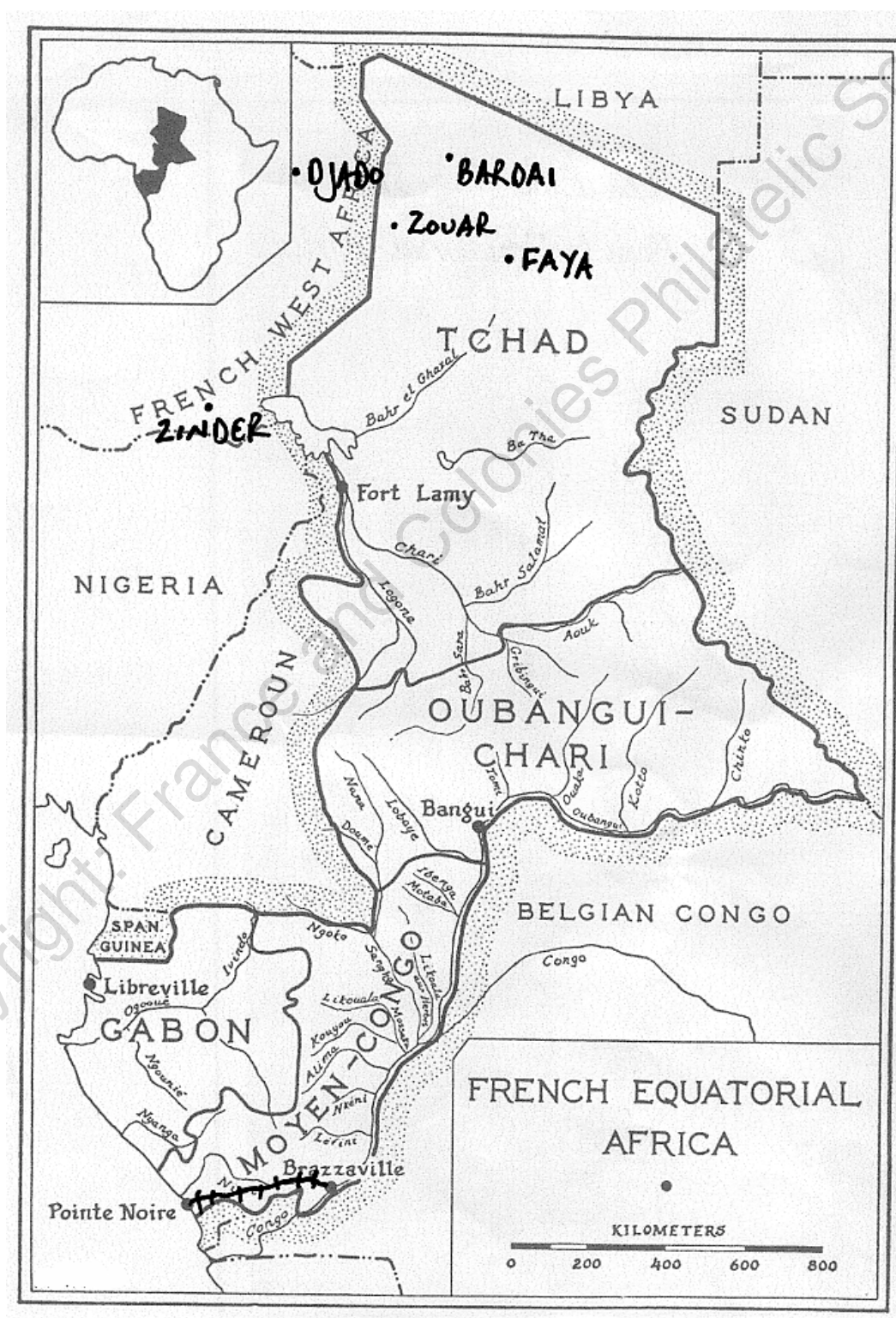
in the R A Officers' Mess at the Palace barracks at Holyrood by Edinburgh!)

The kilometres were measured from the Central Station at Pointe Noire (not Brazzaville). Kilometre 102 was between Les Saras and Girard. These places are not even on a reasonably large scale map. So what happened at Kilometre 102 to demand a Postal Agency (dates open and closed not clear) or indeed anything at all?.

There was a shunting loop and a reversing triangle there. The answer, after consultation of the gradient section

diagrams, may be that Kilometre 102 was just before a long climb into the mountains at M'Vouti so that refuelling was a possibility with the time to do other things. Suggestions please – other than going there to find out myself.

The total length of the Congo - Ocean railway was 511 kilometres and there were 35 stations or halts on the line. There were 80 main bridges and viaducts, 82 smaller bridges, 618 culverts and 12 tunnels including one of 1700 metres at Mount Bamba (5544 feet high). At the time of construction this was the longest tunnel in Africa.



Chad

A remote post office which has a name — Faya



I am now setting a competition the object of which is to find a cover from the most remote part of Africa with a post office. The Editor shall be the judge (unless he puts in an entry, in which case I shall be the judge!). I have not decided on what the small prize will be.

Faya, now known as Largeau, is in the middle of nowhere in the Sahara desert. It is to the south of the Tibesti and Borkou mountain ranges. It is about 18N 19E.

Its significance was probably military and related to the military administration of Chad at the start of the twentieth century. It is on a winding road from Fort Lamy (now N'Djamena) through Laya to Djado in Niger and then on to Djanet in southern Algeria. It is indicated on the map illustrated above.

In terms of countries this part of Chad was bordered by Niger, Libya and the Sudan (not French Sudan).

The letter (from a French Army officer stationed at Bardai) was endorsed to go via Cotonou in Niger and Zinder in Dahomey (AOF). This is understandable because the route

through AEF by way of Fort Lamy, Bangui and Brazzaville was longer and would take more time over difficult territory.

To get to Zinder the journey over roads even now marked in the desert with dotted red lines would have been pretty long and difficult, but we must assume that an Army officer knew his territories and chose practically.

Bardai is right in the north of Chad (even more remote where it was written) and one has to guess that the officer was in Faya to post the letter as it could have been posted at Zouar on the north west border of Chad which is on the road to Djado in Niger above Faya. All these are marked on the map.

The airmail service by Air Afrique was not available at this time (five years off in 1935) so the letter went by surface routes at French internal rates applicable in the Colonies: 50c for 20 grams (in force 9 August 1926 to 11 July 1937) and a registration fee of 1F (in force 1 May 1926 to 17 July 1932). Pretty good value for the journey.

I wait for your entries which should be sent to the Editor.

SHORTER ITEMS - INCLUDING QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Czech-French Query on Palissy Label

The vignette depicting Bernard Palissy is in fact a testing label and was used by the PTT from 1954 to 1975 in booklet and coil trials. Further details about the vignette can be found in the article 'The Testing Labels of the Atelier du Timbre' by Jean-Luc Traessart published in Journal 199 pages 4-7.

There is however a secondary use of these labels, ie the 'franking' of mail used in the demonstration of postal mechanisation equipment (coding desks, facing machines, optical readers etc) at philatelic exhibitions and industrial fairs. The first known covers bearing a Palissy label are those from demonstrations conducted at Philatex in Paris in 1964.

The item illustrated in Journal 223 (page 30) is from the Foire Internationale in Brno which was held from 10 to 19 September 1967. Here the P&T had a stand where they demonstrated a prototype coding desk using the Austerlitz I language: although not visible in the illustration the cover should therefore have the yellow bar code printed in the bottom right hand corner. The label is cancelled by a SECAP (Société d'Études et de Construction d'Appareils de Précision) cancelling machine.

Such demonstrations continued well into the 1980s but, with a preference for meter frankings, the Palissy label was used only on rare occasions. Illustrated here are two more such covers:



Figure 1 -

Blue Palissy label on *Jeu du Code Postal* card,
'cancelled' by a SATAS (Société des Appareils à Timbrer et à Affranchir système Sanglier) franking machine.
The card was available at the Exposition Internationale sur les Systèmes de Communications
held in Moscow from 22 May to 5 June 1975
and was used to demonstrate a production model of a coding desk using the La Source 2 language.



Figure 2 -

Grey Palissy label on P&T envelope N° 716,
cancelled by a SECAP machine at the Exposition Technique et Scientifique Française at Caracas
which was held from 12 to 22 February 1976.

The date stamp also includes the acronym SOMEPOST
for the Société Mixte pour l'Étude et le Développement des Centres de Tri Mécanisés.
The same coding desk (PIS N° 3) was used as at Moscow.

Both the above items bear the red bar code of the La Source programme in the bottom right hand corner.

Mick Bister

Indo-China TPOs

I have several examples of the double circle type of TPO postmark on Indo-Chinese covers, even different varieties

on the same route on the same cover. Any information about these from members would be very welcome.

David Taylor Smith

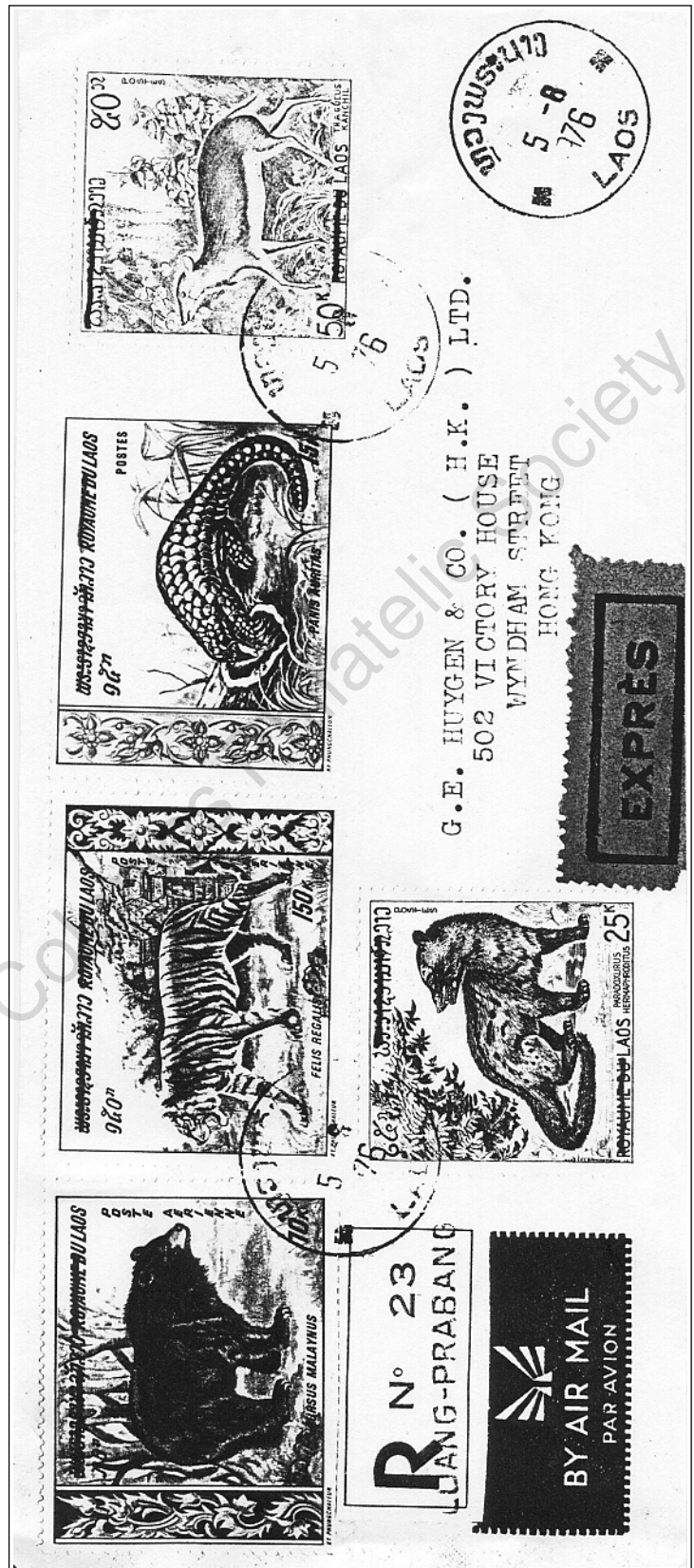
Laos Stamps with Obliterated Legend

I asked about these in Journal 214 (December 1999, page 282). Through the kindness of fellow-member David Taylor Smith I can now show a registered cover bearing five adhesives each with the "Royaume du..." legend similarly crossed out.

Yvert makes no mention of the practice, but an explanation is given in Gibbons Part 21 (South-East Asia). Briefly, following the abdication of King Savang Vatthana the People's Democratic Republic of Laos was proclaimed on 2 December 1975, and during 1976 Kingdom of Laos stamps were used with appropriate defacements, made in crayon or ink - presumably as a stopgap pending the first Republican stamp issue (the 1976 Arms or Pagodas: catalogues disagree on which came first). In theory, mixed frankings might exist, but they must be very rare.

I should have found the story out before posing the original question. It has taught me not to rely too much on just one catalogue!

Michael Round



Postage Due: Chiffres-Taxe Carrés

I have a few comments to make on Figure 2, page 84 of Journal 224, illustrating a cover displayed by Stephen Holder at the Main Society Meeting in April. This shows a cover franked by a 10c Empire Lauré with a tax paid by a 15c *chiffre-taxe carré* as well as a manuscript 5c. It is interpreted as an inland letter insufficiently franked, and therefore taxed at 30c less the 10c stamp paid.

However, at that time there existed three tariffs: the inland rate between two post offices, the local rate for letters circulating within one postal district, and the rate from Paris to Paris. As for the example in Figure 2, it is not a 'territorial' letter, but rather a local letter of the second weight step (10 to 20g) insufficiently franked. Thus 30c is due according to the tariff of 1 January 1863, less the 10c paid for the stamp.

This letter comes from the rural district (OR) of Revigny (Meuse) and is addressed to Laheycourt. This village, situated 5km to the north of Revigny, is served by the same office, as indicated in the *Dictionnaire des Postes* of 1868. The reduced local tariff is therefore put into operation between Revigny and Laheycourt. Moreover, until 1882 the usage of *chiffres-taxe carrés* is - allowing for exceptions or errors - reserved for local letters (except in Paris). These exceptions are certain correspondence deposited in movable boxes at stations, in those of private firms or of *courriers-convoyeurs* - which is not the case here. 'Territorial' letters are taxed by means of a pen or a handstamp.

And lastly, the regulations in principle require the whole of the amount due to be represented by *chiffres-taxe carrés*, and this letter, although it is a local one, should strictly have had the total amount of tax applied by pen. However,

mixed taxes like this one are known. Here are two illustrations of similar taxation at the same tariff, taken from my wife's collection of local rates and showing both methods of taxation.

The first letter (Fig 1) from the *distribution* at Le Gua to Marennes is very similar to the one that has been shown. Note the precut perforation known as "Marennes" of the *chiffre-taxe*.

The second letter (Fig 2), from Auxerre to Auxerre, shows the 20c (2 décimes) tax completely handwritten. The mention of 14g weight confirms the reason for the tax.

To go more deeply into this subject it would be useful to consult *Les chiffres-taxe carrés 1859-1882* by G Noël, J Blanc and J-C Delvaule (Bibliothèque de l'Académie de Philatélie, 1996).

Robert Abensur
tr Maurice Tyler



Figure 1

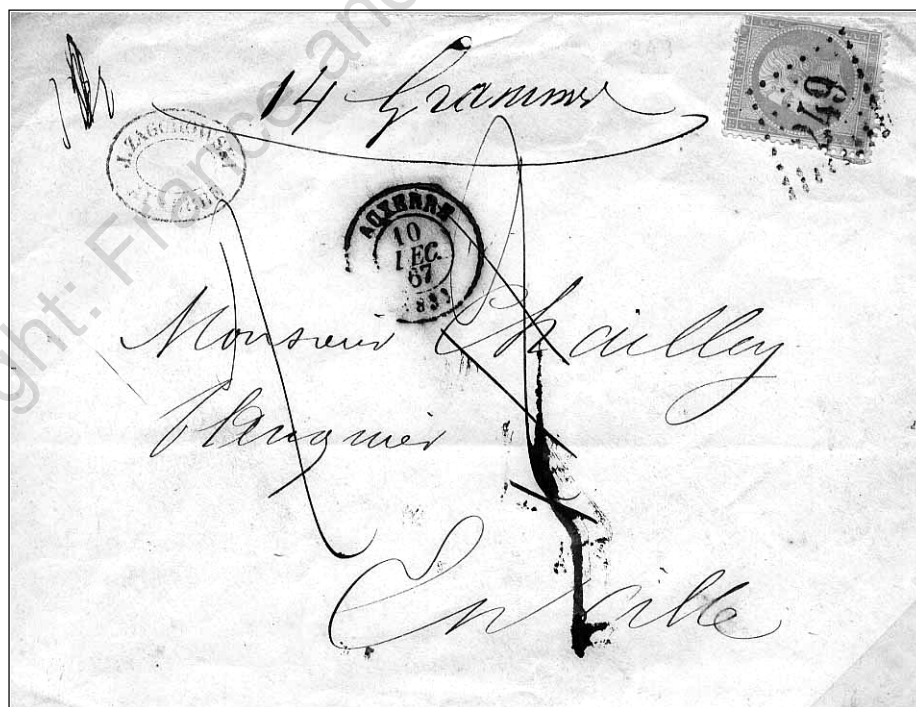


Figure 2

[**Editor's Note.** It should be noted by those of you who have not already spotted the mistake that references to Figures 1 and 2 in the **text** of the report on Stephen's Alsace-Lorraine display (Journal 224 pages 83-84) were inadvertently transposed. Apologies!]

Togo – the 1921 “Mandate” Issue (Earliest Recorded Dates of Use – an Update)

In a joint article published in Journal 222 (December 2001) Jeremy Martin and I described briefly the background to this issue, ascribed by the catalogues to various dates between “1921” and “1922-25”, and listed the earliest recorded dates of use.

Readers were invited to assist with the preparation of an updated list in connection with the forthcoming book on the stamps of the Anglo-French Occupation of Togo, 1914-1922, which is to be published by the West Africa Study Circle.

Thanks to the co-operation of fellow collectors of this territory I can now provide the following updated list of earliest recorded dates (revisions are marked with an asterisk).

	Yvert/Cérès	SG	Value	Earliest date
<u>Postage</u>	101	37	1c	5 October 1922
	102	38	2c	19 August 1922
	103	39	4c	6 July 1922*
	104	40	5c	3 February 1922
	105	41	10c	27 July 1921
	106	42	15c	29 April 1922
	107	43	20c	6 September 1922*
	108	44	25c	24 January 1922
	109	45	30c	5 October 1921*
	110	46	35c	28 April 1923*
	111	47	40c	2 September 1923*
	112	48	45c	? ??? 1921*
	113	49	50c	24? July 1922*
	114	57	60c/75c	18 July 1922*
	115	50	75c	12 January 1923*
	116	51	1F	? October 1921*
	117	52	2F	16 January 1923*
	118	53	5F	13 February 1923*

	Yvert/Cérès	SG	Value	Earliest date
<u>Dues</u>	Taxe 1	D54	5c	6 August 1923
	2	D55	10c	29 August 1922
	3	D56	15c	6 August 1923
	4	D57	20c	29 December 1922*
	5	D58	30c	? ??? 1922*
	6	D59	50c	? ??? 1923
	7	D60	60c	6 August 1923
	8	D61	1F	13 January 1926 (CTO)

Similar requests have been made in the United States and France; Jeremy and I are grateful to the following collectors for responding to this enquiry — Barbara Priddy and Messrs Paul Blanchard, Greg Cykman, Hervé Drye, Jean-Marie Dupas, Michael Ensor, Henri Guillermain, John Mayne and Michael Round..

In our previous article we commented on the fact that only one value (the 10c) of the postage set, and none of the dues, had been recorded as used in 1921, the official year of issue of all but the 60/75c. Even now, after more than 80 years this number has only been extended to four of the postage set; the earliest recorded use of a due stamp remains 12 April 1922, over a year after the probable date of release in Paris as recorded by Stanley Gibbons — and, as we pointed out, there was no previous issue to be replaced.

In drafting my contribution to the article, I noted that although the stamps (apart from the 60/75c) were put on sale in Paris, probably on 15 July 1921, the earliest recorded use covered a lengthy period of some 4½ years (27 July 1921 to 13 January 1926). This led me to conclude that stocks were held in Paris until required locally because of diminishing stocks of the previous “Occupation franco-anglaise” issue. Following correspondence with Michael Ensor, who has considerable personal experience of the Gold Coast/Togo border region, I am now inclined to think that notwithstanding the humidity the whole printing was probably sent out to Togo shortly after printing and stored there, at Lomé.

Bill Mitchell

WWI Postcard of Aeroplane and Eiffel Tower

I have just acquired a German postcard illustrating an aerial machine gun attack on the Eiffel Tower which may be of interest to members.

Does any member know the story behind the card? 20th century history is a pet subject of mine but, offhand, I cannot recall any mention of such an event.

The text on both sides of the card is in Hungarian and the card is postmarked Budapest 22 October 1915.

Dr László Takács, Consul-General at the Hungarian Embassy in London, has kindly translated the message for me, and the relevant part of his letter reads as follows:

“The post card was addressed to ‘Helénke Negru’ who lived in Hátszeg, which was in Hunyad county. The settlement and the whole area belong to the territory of Romania today.

The text of the back page is the following:

‘Dear Helén *Date: 21 (or 11) October 1915*

I was delighted to receive your kind (post)card. We also write, but epigrams in school, and we enjoy it very much. Nowadays I don’t study very hard, but I make needlework because on 1st November we are going to move to the address of 2 Mészáros Street where I will have -



Continued on the picture side

a separate room, a white one, and I need the works there. Now, do you study? I kiss your mother's hands. Waiting for your reply - I kiss you - Manyi
You can tell Ella that I have seen Irmuska (her sister)

Manyi'

On the picture side there is a caption with small white letters in German. It says: 'A German airplane over Paris'.

It can be seen that the text on the picture side is a continuation of the message on the back and not, as I had hoped, a reference to what was happening to the Eiffel Tower. One can only suppose that German patriotic postcards were available in Hungary.

I look forward to finding out if any of our members have any information on the incident.

Gerald Gosling

Zanzibar Postmark on Sage Stamps



I have recently come across a block of four 25c Sage stamps cancelled by a Zanzibar postmark, shown in this enlargement. Was this normal practice or just passed through the post by chance?

Stewart Gardiner

French West Africa: Benin/Dahomey

The excellent article by Bill Mitchell and Laurence Lambert in Journal 215 issued March 2000 (page 4) states: 'The most appropriate starting point for our purpose is **late 1886** when a rudimentary postal service (**the availability of stamps**) began.'

This conflicts with Yvert and Cérès catalogues who list 1892 for the date of the first issues, Colonial Dubois issues overprinted BENIN in black or red, these the current colonial issues in 1886 having been released for general use in the colonies in 1882. The specialised catalogue of the stamps of France by Yvert & Tellier in 1975 does not list any issues of France used in West Africa, and logically only colonial issues were used.

The earliest Benin cancel in my stamp collection is Grand Popo dated 22 October 1889, with the next earliest being from Cotonou on 14 June 1892; the former is on Colonies Yvert 53, the latter on Yvert 55. The former confirms Colonial Dubois issues were in Benin before their first issues of 1892. Unfortunately none of the Yvert 1 to 13 issues for Benin in my collection have a sufficiently clear postmark to confirm their usage in 1892

Journal 216 of June 2000 (page 56) illustrated a cover from a German merchant in Grand Popo which carried current Togo issues cancelled at Klein-Popo on 12 August 1896 before being collected by the German steamer *Hedwig Woermann*. Although the ship is listed at Cotonou a few days earlier there is no evidence the cover was collected in Benin and the Klein-Popo cancel suggests it was collected there and consequently French postage avoided.

Since June 2000 I have acquired three earlier items all from the Hansa Factory at Grand Popo and all addressed

to Germany and posted before Klein-Popo post office opened 1 March 1888. The earliest (Fig 1) is a German 5Pfg 1882 postal stationery card carrying the company's hand stamp at bottom left, albeit faint in violet ink and scarcely visible in this reproduction, correctly uprated by an 1880 German 5Pfg value, both cancelled by the scarce boxed three line *Aus West Afrika / mit / Hamburger Dampfer* strike applied on arrival at the post office in Hamburg handling maritime mail. The card was evidently one of a series, being number iv on the reverse. Addressed to Hamburg it received the main Hamburg Post Office arrival cancel on 21.11.1885, probably carried by *Ella Woermann* (see next paragraph).

I do not know when the Hansa Factory commenced operations in Benin. Togo became a German protectorate in June 1884, but the second item (Fig 2) is a pre-printed Hansa-Factory cover endorsed for collection by *Ella Woermann*. On this occasion a pair of 1880 German 20Pfg values met the postage which apparently was above standard letter weight, these also cancelled by the same three line boxed cancel. This cover was backstamped at Hamburg 21.11.1885.

The third item (Fig 3) is a damaged pre-printed cover from the same source with a single 1882 German 20Pfg value also with the three line cancel. This was acquired because it carries the scarce Verviers Coeln Railway sorting office backstamp dated 23.10.III which was applied to mail dropped off by *Woermann* ship ahead of arrival at Hamburg and led to a quicker mail service. The cover was addressed to Bielefeld and backstamped there 23.10.1886. What is interesting in the context of Bill's article is that this was



Figure 1

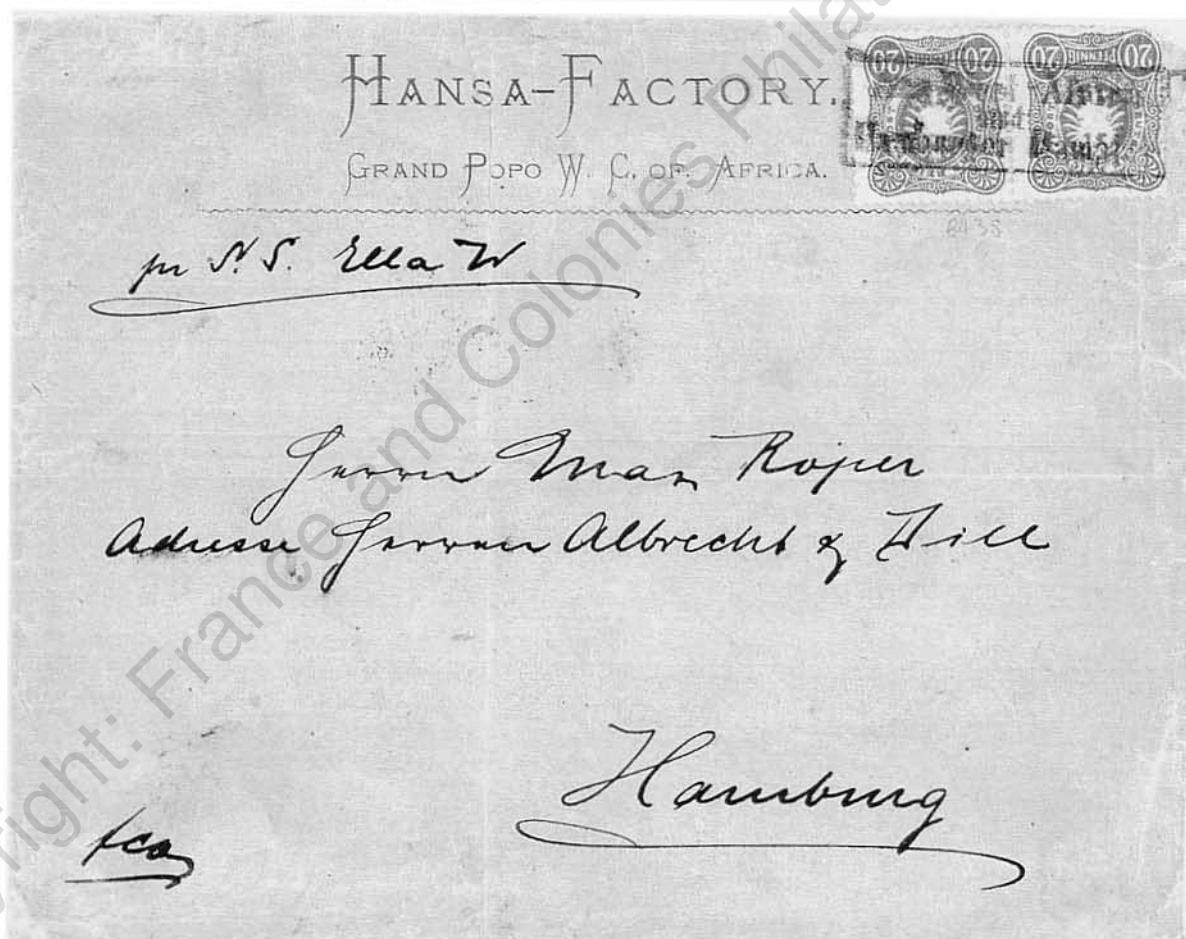


Figure 2

endorsed 'Grand-Popo 19.09.1886' for collection there by the *Adolf Woermann* and annotated as collected the same day.

In my earlier article I highlighted the avoidance of local postage and the use of German stamps by German merchants in the Gold Coast and suggested German merchants in Benin followed a similar practice. Whilst I still hold to that view as evidenced by the cover of 1896, these three earlier covers, certainly the latter, would suggest that in 1885 and 1886 the only issues available to German merchants in Benin were those of Germany and the first issues available in the French colony were not to hand until 1892.

The three items are not listed by Gottspenn and Grimmer in *Die Deutsche Westafrika Schiffpost 1885-1956*. To indicate the scarcity of early mail from this area, Togo in particular, they record one item for 1884, nine for 1885 (three from Liberia, one from the Gold Coast and one from the Hansa Factory at Grand Popo and two from its sister operation at Petit Popo, i.e. Klein-Popo), and twelve during 1886 – which items include mail from Kamerun and Madeira. All these items were cancelled on arrival at Hamburg by the three line cancel.

John Mayne

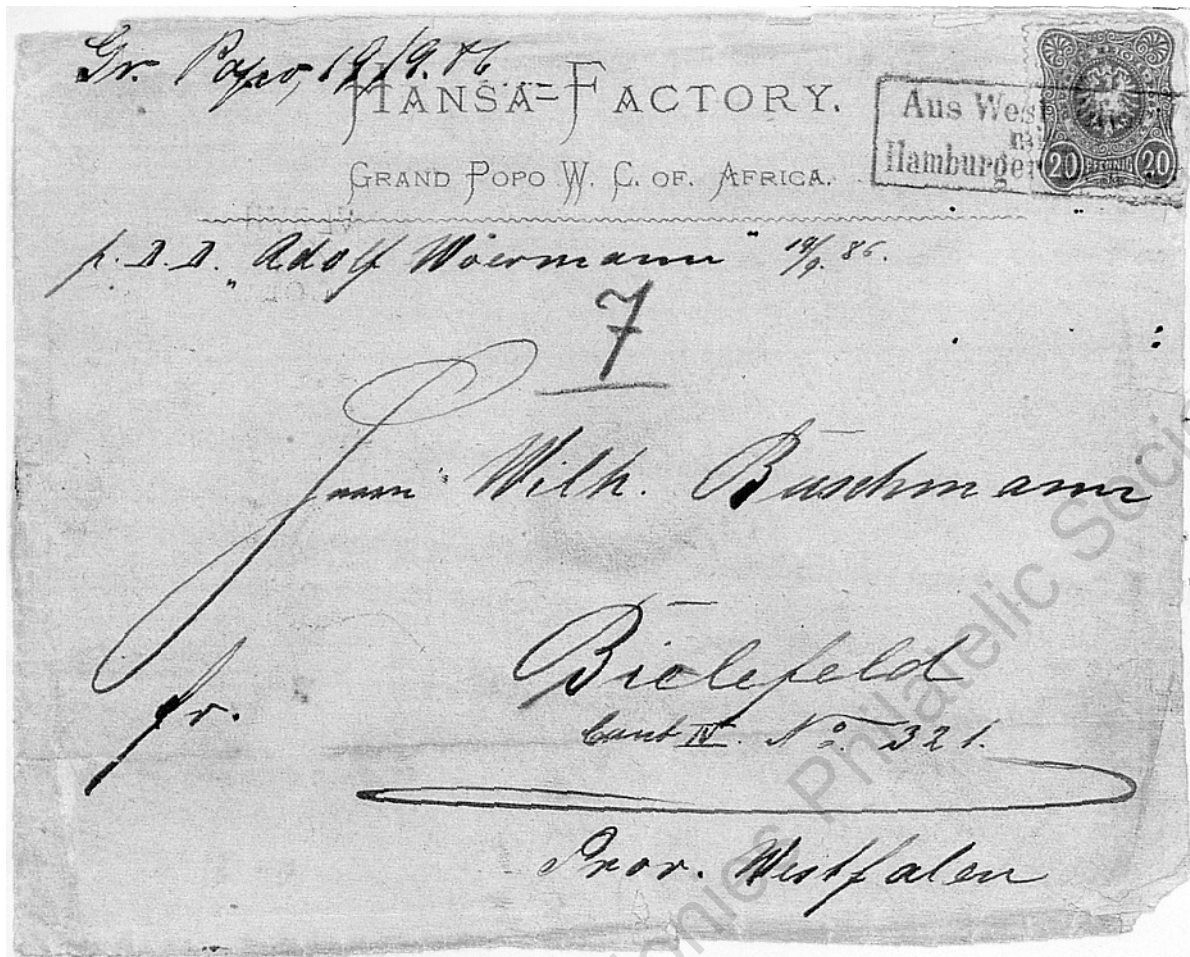


Figure 3

France & Colonies Philatelic Society of Great Britain

RULES

1. The NAME of the Society shall be - FRANCE AND COLONIES PHILATELIC SOCIETY OF GREAT BRITAIN.
2. The OBJECT of the Society shall be to promote the study of the stamps and postal history of France, her colonies and dependencies and to provide facilities for this purpose. The Society may affiliate to or act jointly with any other society or organisation for the purpose of promoting or otherwise assisting these objects.
3. MANAGEMENT of the Society shall be vested in the duly appointed officers of the Society and a Committee.
4. The OFFICERS of the Society shall be:
The President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Packet Secretary, Auction Secretary, Editor, and Librarian.
If for a period of time it becomes necessary to divide the duties of a particular office, the Committee may appoint an additional officer to carry out such duties.
5. The COMMITTEE shall consist of the Officers of the Society, the last retired President, not less than four nor more than eight other members appointed by the members in General Meeting. Within the permitted number a majority of the Committee for the time being may appoint additional members of the Society to the Committee to serve until the next General Meeting when they must retire but may offer themselves for re-election.
6. The President shall act as CHAIRMAN at meetings of the Committee and of the Society and in his absence the Vice-President, or any other Officer so appointed by those present, may act as Chairman.
7. The Officers of the Society and the Committee shall be elected annually by members of the Society present at the Annual General Meeting. Nominations for Officers and Members of the Committee must be submitted in writing signed by the proposer and a seconder and delivered to the Secretary or any member of the Committee before the commencement of the Annual General Meeting. Where insufficient nominations have been received the Chairman at the Annual General Meeting may in his discretion allow nominations duly seconded to be made at the meeting.

8. All members present at meetings of the Society and members of the Committee present at Committee meetings shall be entitled to one VOTE and VOTING shall be by show of hands. In the event of a tie the Chairman of the meeting shall have a casting vote. Nothing in these rules shall prevent the holding of a postal ballot if such a ballot is requested by a majority of the Committee or by a majority of members present at a meeting of the Society. Where a postal ballot is requested on a proposal before a meeting of the Society the request must be made before the proposal has been put to the meeting. Any member unable to be present at a meeting of the Society may appoint a member of the Society as a proxy to vote on his behalf. The appointment of a proxy may be in any form but must be in writing.
9. The Society's FINANCIAL YEAR shall be the calendar year.
10. SUBSCRIPTIONS shall be due and payable on 1st January each year. Where any member's subscription remains unpaid at the date of the Society's Annual General Meeting in that year that member may at the discretion of the Committee be removed from the roll of members. The amount of the annual subscription shall be determined at the Annual General Meeting and unless otherwise resolved shall be effective from the 1st January next following.
11. The ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the Society shall be held each year during April or May at a place and time to be determined by the Committee. At least fourteen days notice of the Annual General Meeting shall be given to every member and inclusion of the date, time and place of the meeting in the Annual Programme shall be valid notice.
12. The business of the Annual General Meeting shall be
 - (1) The consideration and if thought fit the adoption of reports and financial statements from the Officers of the Society for the time being, of the auditors, and of any other members with a report on any activity of the Society.
 - (2) The election of Officers and Members of the Committee.
 - (3) Consideration of the programme for the next ensuing year.
 - (4) Appointment of the auditor or auditors.
 - (5) Other business of which fourteen days notice has been given.
 - (6) Any other business (no binding vote may be taken under this item).
13. The Secretary shall convene an EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETING of the Society if directed to do so by the Committee or at the written request of any eight or more members of the Society stating the business for which the meeting is to be convened. Every member shall be entitled to fourteen days notice of an Extraordinary General Meeting stating the business of the meeting.
14. Notice shall be validly given if posted to a member's last known address or handed to him in person. The day of posting shall be included in the fourteen days notice but not the day of the meeting.
15. A QUORUM at meetings of the Committee shall be any five members of the Committee including at least three Officers of the Society. At General Meetings of the Society a quorum shall be any nine members including three officers of the Society.
16. The RULES of the Society may be amended at any General Meeting of the Society of which fourteen days notice has been given stating the amendment to be made.
17. The Society may be wound up by a resolution of the members at a General Meeting of the Society called for that purpose. Such a resolution shall require a 75% majority of members voting at the meeting and the resolution shall appoint some person to carry out the dissolution of the Society in accordance with the directions of the meeting.
18. Any DISPUTE arising between members of the Society which cannot be resolved in accordance with these rules shall be submitted for arbitration to a Fellow of the Institute of Actuaries whose decision shall be binding on all parties involved.
19. At no time should any member make mention, on external surfaces of any correspondence or exchange packet, of an official's title, or the name of the Society, or the nature of the contents.
20. The auctions organised by the Society shall be subject to the conditions known as the "Philatelic Auctioneers' Standard Terms and Conditions of Sale (1973 Revision)".
21. The Committee shall in their absolute discretion have the power to terminate the membership of any member, and such decision shall take effect from the date of despatch, by recorded post, to the member at his last known address, of their decision.

(The Society Rules were previously published in Journal 199 of September 1996. No rule changes have occurred since then.)

Published September 2002 in Journal 225 of The France & Colonies Philatelic Society (G.B.)

REPORTS OF MEETINGS

REPORT OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF 4 MAY 2002

The President, Mr M L Bister, opened the meeting held at The Calthorpe Arms PH, 252 Grays Inn Road, London WC1 at 11.30 hours in the presence of 22 members.

(1) **Apologies for absence** were received from Mrs M Pavey and Messrs R Broadhurst, L Drummond Boyce, O Gibson, J N Hammonds, D A Pashby, C W Spong, A Swain and J West.

(2) **Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of 5 May 2001** (as published in Journal 221) were accepted as a true record.

(3) **President's Report – Mick Bister**

First of all may I welcome you to our new and unexpected location for this year's AGM and Auction. It is only eight weeks since we were notified of the unilateral termination of our bookings at Marymount College but we are indebted to our General Secretary whose knowledge of local hostelrys enabled us to quickly locate alternative premises.

We have enjoyed a full programme of displays in London with members coming from the South, the West Country and the North to provide us with the pleasure of seeing their collections. Thanks are due in particular to Colin Spong who at very short notice displayed his Madagascar at the Philatex meeting in March. The Southern and Northern groups continue to prosper, attracting on some occasions more members to their meetings than we do in London. The fluctuation in attendance at the London meetings is something which we hope to address in the near future. Thanks are due too to George Barker who represented the Society when showing at Dorking, to Iain Stevenson and Barbara Priddy for their displays at Leytonstone and Wanstead, and to John Hammonds at the National Philatelic Society.

The annual weekend at Leamington was a resounding success. Although one or two members were not too happy with their accommodation, the facilities provided by the hotel for the displays, the quality of the material and accompanying commentaries and the unrivalled bonhomie made it an occasion to remember. Congratulations again to Bernard Berkinshaw-Smith on his indefatigable energy and organisational skills.

The Members' Register of Interests has attracted further participation and now lists 37% of the membership compared to only 28% last year. This is still only a small proportion of the membership and although there are some members who do not wish to be included for sound personal reasons there must be many who, whether they be specialist or general collectors, could still profit from being included.

Accolades have been bountiful in 2001. Members have been awarded exhibition medals at Nashville and San Francisco, at Stampex and Thematica, at Masevaux and Tours, in Poland and at Belgica. In the case of the latter, a total of six members exhibited and we must congratulate ourselves and our editor in particular for the Large Silver Medal that was awarded to our Journal. Further honours

bestowed on our members included the Tilleard Medal awarded to Barrie Jay by the RPSL and the election of Robert Abensur to the Académie de Philatélie. Congratulations to both of them.

I could not possibly close this report without acknowledging the contribution made by my fellow officers and committee members who work tirelessly and without remuneration to provide nothing less than a first class service to the Society's members. I offer my thanks to them all but on this occasion three officers in particular must be cited for their long and distinguished service and who are this year bowing out. I refer to Derek Richardson who since 1986 has served as Journal Editor, Vice-President, President and General Secretary, to Alec Swain who from 1980 to 1984 and again from 1989 has served as General Secretary or Membership Secretary, and to John Hammonds who since 1977 has taken on the mantle of Auction Secretary, Exchange Packet Organiser, Vice-President, President and Programme Secretary. These stalwarts of our Society have between them contributed a total of 67 years' service as officers, sometimes wearing two hats at a time, and this total does not take into account their periods of service as ordinary committee members. On behalf of the membership I congratulate them all on their tenacity, endurance and commitment and thank them for the service and support they have given to the Society, and wish them a very long and happy second retirement.

(4) **Secretary's Report – Derek Richardson**

The number of members attending the nine Society meetings held in London this season averaged 17, the same as last year. This figure is smaller than it used to be a decade ago, probably because of travel difficulties. We had good service from the staff at our Marymount College meeting place and we were surprised to be told at very short notice that the rooms there would no longer be available to us for hire after the end of April 2002. I hope you find the new Calthorpe Arms venue congenial.

The Society's membership at the end of the calendar year 2001 was 393, a drop of 8 compared with 2000. This drop is typical of the year-to-year variation that this Society experiences and I do not view it as cause for concern.

This is my last report as Secretary. I thank the President for his generous words concerning my retirement. It is proposed, subject to his election, that the job shall pass into the capable hands of Geoff Gethin and I now look forward to having more time to pursue other philatelic projects.

(5) **Treasurer's Report 2001 – Chris Hitchen**

There were no exceptional items of expenditure this year and so a reasonable surplus resulted.

The auction again had a very successful year and both packets increased their income by around £xxx each. Mavis Pavey had a better year with the France packet but, as always, is in need of new material. John West has more than enough material at present on the Colonial packet,

but that of course could always change. Subscription income continues to remain steady and will do so for as long as we can maintain our membership figures. Other expenditure is much in line with previous years.

The financing of a new book under the society's aegis has been agreed and should take place later this year. Some of our reserves will then be committed to its production.

All debtors and creditors have now been cleared and I would recommend leaving the subscription at its current level.

The acceptance of the Treasurer's Report and Accounts (with Balance Sheet shown below) was proposed by Alan Wood, seconded by Bernard Berkinshaw-Smith and carried unanimously.

**FRANCE & COLONIES PHILATELIC SOCIETY
BALANCE SHEET AT 31 DECEMBER 2001**

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 1.1.2001
Year surplus (2000 loss)

2000

INCOME & EXPENDITURE 2001

Expenditure

Accommodation
Journal 4 issues
Postage and expenses
Stampshow 2000
Library
Year surplus (2000 loss)

Income

Auction
Exchange packet
Interest
Sale of publications
Subscriptions

2000

2001

2000

2001

(6) Auction Secretary's Report – Mick Bister

I am pleased to report that the auctions maintained the momentum of the year 2000 with once again four twelve page catalogues being circulated offering a total of 1890 lots. This represented an average of 472 lots per auction a rise of 22 over those offered in the previous year. However, despite the increase in material being offered, it didn't attract as much bidding as before and therefore profits to the Society fell by £xxx to £xxx. Nevertheless it is encouraging that I can still offer a four-figure profit.

The percentage of the membership who bid in the auction varies from 20 to 24% and between 60 and 65% of the material offered is purchased. Now that I am more or less computerised I am able to send out the realisations within days of the auction closing to members who have bid, and the take up of unsolds has certainly justified the introduction of this practice. In fact the outcome of the

November Sale for which only 11 members turned up to bid in the room would have been even more disappointing had it not been for the subsequent sale of unsolds to the value of £x.

Expenditure was very much as expected although the low and unexplained printing bill for the November catalogue was a very pleasant surprise. Secretarial expenses went up largely due to the purchase of computer supplies. Although using computer technology may be more efficient it is not cheap and one can easily use up a printing cartridge with each auction.

During the year I was asked by one member if I had considered putting the auction catalogue on the web together with illustrations of all the lots. Whereas I can see the advantages of such a venture, it would only be of value

to members who are on line, and printed copies would still have to be distributed. However, members with an e-mail address can request JPEG scans of any lots which they wish to view and this service, introduced last year, has proven to be popular and particularly useful to overseas members. Another initiative has been the illustration of a selection of lots in the Society's Journal.

The large collections I received two years ago are now virtually exhausted. I am therefore in need of more material if we are to continue the auctions at the current rate and with similar content and I hope all members will try and

find me something that I can sell on their behalf. I anticipate continuing with four auctions a year although it has been agreed henceforth to replace the November Room Sale with a postal one.

Finally may I offer my thanks to all the vendors who have provided me with material over the past twelve months; the auctions could not proceed without their support. Thank you also to all the members who have assisted in one way or another in operating the room sale, and particularly Alan Wood who never fails to squeeze the last penny out of the room bidders.

AUCTION ACCOUNT 2001					
EXPENDITURE			INCOME		
2000		2001	2000		2001
PAYMENTS TO VENDORS			SALE OF LOTS (including reimbursed Postage & Packing)		
	February			February	
	May			May	
	July/August			July/August	
_____	November	_____	_____	November	_____
	PRINTING		2000 included	from Leamington Bookstall	
	February		2001 includes	from Leamington Bookstall	
	May			and Autumn Bourse	
	July/August				
_____	November	_____			
	POSTAGE				
	February				
	May				
	July/August				
_____	November	_____			
	OTHER OUTGOINGS				
	Sec. Expenses				
	Bank Charges			Bank Interest	
	Profit to Society				
_____		_____			
=====		=====	=====		=====
=====		=====	=====		=====

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

The France packet profit for the calendar year 2001 was £xx. This compares with £x for 2000 and £x for 1999.

During the year, I did manage to send five packets round most circuits compared with the usual four. Stationery costs are up on the previous year.

	2000	2001	PROFIT AND LOSS	2000	2001
Commission on sales			Postage and telephone		
Postage recovered			Stationery		
Insurance recovered			Profit for year to		
Bank interest	_____	_____	31 December 2000	_____	_____
	=====	=====		=====	=====
			INCOME AND EXPENDITURE		
Balance b/f from 31 Dec 2000			Gross payments to vendors		
Receipts from members			Stationery		
Bank interest			Posts and telephones		
Commission on sales			Profit 2000 paid to Treasurer		
Insurance recovered			Bank balance		
Postages recovered	_____	_____	Cash in hand	_____	_____
	=====	=====		=====	=====

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

The Colonies Packet Section is able to report a successful calendar year to 31 December 2001. Receipts amounted to £xxx (made up of £xxx in commission on sales plus £xx insurance paid by vendors), while expenses amounted to £xxx (made up of £xxx in postage and £xx in stationery and telephone charges). I was able therefore to pay the Society the sum of £x. This was higher than the corresponding figure of £xx for the year ended 31 December 2000.

For those who enjoy their statistics, the year ended 31 December 2001 saw a total of 47 packets circulating, 7 of which had been sent out in 2000 and 11 of which were in circulation into 2002. In total, 36 packets were received back during the year. The total of the books placed into circulation came to 707 with an average of 15 books per packet. The total insured value of the material circulated amounted to £xxx, with the average packet (insured) value of contents being £xxx. The total sales (including 'unsigned spaces') reached £xxx, with sales per packet averaging £xxx.

Some notes of mine on the operation of the Colonies packets appeared on page 36 of Journal 223.

(9) Editor's Report – Maurice Tyler

I am delighted to be able to report that the flow of new articles has enabled me to continue to fill the Journal with significant material on a regular basis. The importance of these contributions by members and others can be assessed by noting the second Large Silver Medal awarded to the Journal in an International Competition, this time at Belgica 2001 in Brussels. I see my task as attempting to present the work of others in an attractive and accurate way, thereby encouraging even more members to publish their research, comments, queries or news, to the benefit of all of us; and I hope that in this I am showing some success.

Last year's Volume 51 consisted of the normal four issues, with a total of 172 pages in the now established A4 size (an increase of 16 pages over the previous year). A computerised word count revealed that the average number of words per issue was 22,000 – compared with 18,000 previously. This situation is certainly very encouraging, but I am once again reaching the point where more articles are needed in order to maintain this position. Even if a long piece of original research is not immediately available, short "fillers" and illustrations of "pages from my collection" are always welcome.

In the immediate future, two tasks not directly part of, but nevertheless closely connected with, my main duties as editor will be occupying my time. The first is editing and typesetting Geoff Gethin's massive work (massive in respect of the time and effort spent by Geoff in producing it) on 20th century forgeries of France; and the second is something that was first mooted a few years ago, but has not yet found the time needed to bring it about, the development of a web site for the Society, on which our details and activities can be advertised and displayed to members and non-members alike.

I am optimistic about the future in these areas, but I am always happy to receive constructive comments that aim to improve them even further.

(9) Librarian's Report – George Barker

The past year has been relatively quiet, with rather fewer loans than in 2000 (52 instead of 58), while in the year to date the modest decline has continued (20 instead of 37).

A prominent feature of the past year has been a further increase in new acquisitions, and I hope to get a listing prepared soon for submission to the Journal. There have also been most welcome donations, in particular of historical works on postal stationery, etc, from Bill Mitchell, and a collection of valuable articles on Madagascar from Colin Spong.

(11) Magazine Circuit Organiser's Report

Owing to David Pashby's indisposition, no report by him was available. It was assumed that "no news is good news".

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

Firstly, my apologies for not being with you today. 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. Once again I am delighted to report that it has been a successful and happy year with an average attendance (including guests) of 13, and I would like to thank those who have given displays during the season and members who travel distances to be with us. Finally, a note of appreciation to my wife, Pat, who comes along to provide us with tea or coffee in the canteen.

The Programme for 2002-2003 was published in the Society Notes on page 42 of Journal 224 (June 2002).

(12) Election of Officers and Committee Members

It was proposed by Bill Mitchell and seconded by Alan Wood, and agreed unanimously, that the following members, having indicated their willingness, if elected or re-elected, to serve for the 2002-2003 season, be elected *en bloc*.

President:	Mr M L Bister
Vice-President:	Mr M S Tyler
Secretary:	Dr R G Gethin
Programme Secretary:	Mr A Lawrence
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
Committee Members:	Dr W I Stevenson
	Mr B C Berkinshaw-Smith
	Mr P R A Kelly
	Mr G P Henderson
	Mr J Parmenter.

On behalf of the membership, Alan Wood voiced thanks for the work of the officers who had served the Society during the past year.

(13) Programme of forthcoming Society Meetings in London

The programme of Main Society Meetings is reproduced in Society Notes on page 86 of this Journal.

14 Any Other Business

Bill Mitchell asked what progress had been made on the proposed "Cumulative Index to French Philatelic Magazines" for which a call for 25 volunteers appeared in Journal 222. Derek Richardson replied that all the preparatory work such as the organisation of the computer software had been done but unfortunately the required

number of helpers had not yet come forward and so practical work had not actually started. Steps will be taken to find the required number of people, so that it can.

The President closed the meeting at 1250 hours.

DJR

SOUTHERN GROUP MEETING OF 18 AUGUST 2001

10.30 Members Displays

14.00 Alan Barrett: The French Islands

Michael Berry gave the morning's display and showed ten sheets of postal history from his second home the Île de Ré. This involved correspondence dating from 1811 to approximately 15 July 1872 from the chief town St. Martin to Mirebeau sur Bez, Paris and La Rochelle, also from Ars and La Flotte. Examples were seen of the various handstamps including the two-line S. Martin de Ré type H3 of 1803 and the circular date stamp type H13. Michael ended with a query on an entire from France to Denmark: 1.5.1852 S. Martin de Ré via Thurn & Taxis PO and Danish PO in Hamburg, charged 9sk on delivery.

Geoff Gethin showed two sheets, the first a Ballon Monté Le Jules-Favre N° 2 together with an artist's impression of its landing on Belle Île en Mer. He concluded with some examples of the Goya painting on labels inscribed Île Barbe and an Owl on Île Roy.

The Organiser welcomed **Alan Barrett** and his wife Dorothy on a return visit to the Southern Group. Colin mentioned that whilst this display had been recently seen at the London Society meeting, a number of members had missed this opportunity and, together with those who were unable to go to London, he said that they were delighted Alan had

agreed to come to Worthing and were looking forward to seeing this material.

Alan reiterated what he had said on 27 March, that the French Islands were but an illustration of his interest in the many small islands off the north and west coast of France. There had been very few collectors of this material before 1981, when Bill Newport and Tim Whitney wrote a book on the subject. [For a full description of this display see pages 82-83 of Journal 224.]

Michael Berry said it gave him great pleasure to give the vote of thanks as an enthusiast of French Islands on behalf of members and guests, for a delightful variety of material we had all enjoyed seeing. He also felt that with Alan's researches an updating was needed for the Newport & Whitney book.

Members present: Michael Annells, Michael Berry, Colin Clarkson, Roy Ferguson, Geoff Gethin, John Hammonds, Bob Larg, Yvonne Larg, Bill Mitchell, Bob Small, Colin Spong, and Michael Wilson.

Guests: Christine Annells, Daphne Barrett, John Thorpe and Pat Spong.

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TARIFFS

Translation by MST of another table provided by Colin Spong and originally published in *Bulletin Col.Fra* n° 94, reproduced by permission. The author of the French text is Hervé Drye.

Postal Rates for mail leaving the French Colonies

from the time of their joining the Union Générale des Postes on 1 July 1876 until 1960

Initiation

We will limit this initiation:

— To a presentation of the rates for letters, postcards and registration fees.

— To mail exchanged with the metropolis, other colonies and the countries belonging to the Union Générale des Postes (UGP) which will adopt in 1878 the name of Union Postale Universelle (UPU).

We will not be considering the postage rates for mail exchanged with countries that do not belong to either the UGP or the UPU, rates resulting from conventions signed

with each of these different countries, and thus too diverse to be quoted in this short initiation.

The dates given below for these tariffs are the dates of application of the decrees announced by the French ministers concerned and sent to each colony by means of dispatches or circulars. On arrival in the Colony, the decree was promulgated either by order of the governor or by its publication in the official journal or bulletin of the Colony. The new tariffs therefore came into effect generally on a later date than the date of application indicated in the decree.

Dates		Tariff for UGP/UPU	Letter under 15g	Postcard	Registration fee		Notes
Decree	Application				Letter	Postcard	
4.5.1876	1.7.1876	Tariff for USA	40c (70c)	20c	50c	25c	<i>cf</i> note (1)
16.4.1878	1.5.1878	Tariff n° 2 (1878)	35c (60c)	20c	50c	25c	<i>cf</i> note (2)
3.1.1879	16.1.1879				25c	25c	
4.2.1879	16.2.1879	Tariff n° 1 (1878) to France	25c (60c)	15c	25c	25c	
27.3.1879	1.4.1879	Tariff n° 1 (1879) to France	25c (50c)	10c			<i>cf</i> note (2)
		Tariff no 2 (1879) to other colonies and UPU countries	35c (60c)	15c			
17.6.1880	1.7.1880	Tariff no 1 (1879) to other colonies	25c (50c)	10c			
7.9.1881	1.10.1881	Tariff no 1 (1879) to UPU countries	25c (50c)	10c			<i>cf</i> note (3)
26.10.1898	1.1.1899	To France and other colonies	15c	10c	25c	25c	Metropolitan inland rate Single UPU rate 1898
		To UPU countries	25c	10c	25c	25c	Single UPU rate 1898
6.3.1906 (law)	16.4.1906	To France and other colonies	10c (20c)				Metropolitan inland rate
28.8.1907	1.10.1907	Complete application of the French inland rate to France and other colonies					<i>cf</i> note (4)
<p>Note: From 1.7.1876 to 31.12.1888 the franking of letters was not compulsory; the rate for unfranked letters is indicated in brackets in the table.</p> <p>Reference: <i>Bulletins mensuels des Postes et Télégraphes</i> (Post Office Monthly Bulletins).</p>							

(1) Exception:

Correspondence exchanged between two French colonies or between French India and British India and which will not give rise to maritime transport over a distance of more than 300 nautical miles will be subject to the tariff applicable in France to correspondence destined for Europe.

(2) Exception:

Correspondence not giving rise to maritime transport of over 300 nautical miles and which will be exchanged either between two French colonies or between a French colony and a foreign colony

belonging to the Union Générale des Postes will be subject to tariff n° 1.

(3) Corresponds to the withdrawal of all maritime surcharges, leading henceforth to a single tariff within the UPU (replacing the two tariff zones of the Union).

(4) Thus, from 1.10.1907 and until 1960:

— The Franco-colonial tariff will be the French inland one.

— The tariff from colonies to a foreign country will be identical to that from France to a foreign country.

Continued on page 128

Amazing 1870-71 Wonder Stories - 70

Ernst Cohn



Enlargement of the German and French versions of the North German Confederation cachet mentioned in the second paragraph of the text

In February 1999 Roumet had his 455th mail auction sale that contained a number of 1870 lots of more than ordinary interest. We shall discuss them here 'by the numbers' to see why they are worth studying and what they can teach.

Lot 2814 is somewhat similar to lot 2017 in his 447th sale, which was the subject of number 58 of this series. Many details of the German political censorship mark are given there. This particular lot had not come to my attention before. It was posted at Place de la Bourse at 4E/16 Oct and addressed to occupied Ste. Marie aux Mines in Alsace. There seems to be a PP or a PD framed strike on the front, but that is not clearly visible on the photograph. The North German Confederation's foreign department's stamp with *French* text is struck on the back, as usual very clear and in blue. A partial strike and a full strike of a train marking, Paris à Besançon of 18 November is also on the back. A blue crayon due marking "30" was put on the front in the occupied area. As in other such cases, no arrival marking; but the transit and due markings both support the opinion that this cover got to its destination. It also fits into the brief period when such mail was censored and delivered. – So now we have recorded a total of 12 political censor's markings, 4 in French and 8 in German, still not a very large number.

* * * * *

The second remarkable item in that sale is lot 2825 that the lotter ascribed to the balloon *Normandie*, a common error used in lieu of the real name, *La Bretagne* (though you would be justified to call it *Le Bretagne* if you think of it more as the balloon rather than the territory after which it is named). This folded letter, written on 10 October, contains the phrase "the present will reach you by another route." The stamp is tied and canceled by the cds of Fresnes-en-Voëvre, ?E/29 Oct 1870. The letter arrived at Alençon at 4E/9 Nov, presumably struck on the back.

The problem with mail postmarked at Fresnes on that date has been described in some detail on pp. 69-71 of *New Studies of the Transport of Mails in Wartime France 1870-71*, Brown *et al.*, Vaurie Memorial Fund Publication N° 6, 1986, F&CPS, Inc. In brief, anything postmarked at Paris

as well as anything not postmarked there but struck by the *Aérostiers* cachet and then at Fresnes on 29 October is clearly mail taken by the *Vauban*. Any other mail NOT postmarked at Paris might have been on either of these two balloons.

However, the text in this case gives a clear answer. (1) A date of 10 October is unlikely for a letter taken by the aeronauts of the *Vauban*, though that possibility cannot be eliminated entirely. (2) That the letter "will reach you by *another* route" is, however, clear indication that it was intended not for a balloon but to be taken by a smuggler. From the date it seems clear that it was most likely the smuggler of the *Figaro/Itasse* scheme — the first publicly advertised mail smuggling scheme — details of which were published in my article in *Cursores* (and repeated in my book *Unusual Mail in Occupied France 1870-1871*, pp. 69-80). In brief, about 10 October, architect Itasse took over the smuggling task started by de Villemessant, owner/editor of *Figaro*; and about 26 October the man he had hired to do the smuggling returned, saying he had been held captive for some days and could not break through the lines.

The smuggler's load of letters may have been returned to the people who handed them in; or perhaps Itasse looked for another way of getting the letters out of Paris. We do not know precisely what happened, except that a letter written by a certain Pierret, first handed to Itasse, also went via *Bretagne* and Fresnes-en-Voëvre. This other cover carries the blue oval cachet of one Besson who handled weighing instruments (scales, balances), so there was at least no obvious relationship between him and Pierret of the telegraph office. If, as, and when other Itasse/*Bretagne* letters should turn up, perhaps that little mystery can be cleared up.

* * * * *

Even more mysterious is lot 2838, with a hand-written date of 12 November. Its stamp was washed off, but traces of the red SC cds are still visible. All SC-struck covers from between 12 and 18 November should show the Luzarches transit mark of 1E/20 November 70. This cover does not

carry a Luzarches cds. Its earliest transit marking is from Beauvais, 21 November, then a train mark of the 22nd and an arrival mark of the 25th. Two possible explanations offer themselves: (1) the Luzarches marking was omitted in error; (2) this cover did not go through Luzarches, in contrast to all other *Général Uhrich* SC covers seen up to now. No other waterdamaged *Général Uhrich* covers having become known thus far, the second explanation, though more unlikely, might be the better one, indicating that another bag with special mail, including the SC mail, fell into water somewhere. Again, we are left with an unanswered question.

* * * * *

Lastly, we have lot 2844, a folded letter with a red Paris SC postmark of 23 November 1870. The arrival marking, not visible on the color photo, is 10 December at Arcachon. Thus, departure and arrival postmarks clearly prove that the cover was on the balloon *Ville d'Orleans*. That reminded me of an unsolved mystery of fairly long standing.

In extensive studies of that balloon, its occupants, its loads, and its adventures, I found that almost all the SC mail, which should have included dates from 21 to 24 December, consisted of mail from the 24th only. The *earlier* dates that survive were almost all sent on the *subsequent* balloon, the *Jacquard*. Written and oral discussions with interested philatelists have confirmed the fact but offered no explanation. As for ordinary mail, postmarked at Paris, some covers marked on 23 and 24 November went on the former and some on the latter balloon, as one can tell from the arrival dates.

It is known that Paris planned a military break-out within a few days after the *Jacquard* had left, and one might think that mail was purposely delayed for that reason. But the

peculiarity of some mail being held up and other mail going through speaks against this hypothesis. There simply is no good explanation available. Any bright ideas would be most welcome.

* * * * *

For anyone deeply involved in any phase of postal history, little mysteries, as exemplified by a cover or covers that fall into his area of interest, are of much greater importance than the bulk of the usual material. If we wish to get ideas for research, we might try to fill holes in a story, resolve violations of rules, or unravel seeming contradictions in fact presented by extraordinary covers. Occasionally, solutions to problems will actually be found.

Sometimes, too, we will come across solutions to problems we had not even imagined. That happened to me with one of Brian Birch's tear sheets, where a Frenchman explained that his father had translated Maury's phrases from French into German — a problem I had never considered to be one, though admittedly it was fun to find the solution to it quite unexpectedly.

Short of going to stamp stores and shows, where one can actually paw one's way through covers looking for enigmas, sales lists and auction catalogs are the nearest thing to rummaging through such material. The printed matter has the advantage that one can stop where one pleases, think, consult other sources and then put everything together at leisure, to see whether the new ensemble yields novel insight that was not available before. Its disadvantage is that one is limited to what the seller wishes to show or thinks is important. Of course, if the listing is received early enough, there is always the possibility of asking for a photocopy of the other side of a letter or — if worse comes to worst — to put in a bid for the attractive item!

Continued from page 126

Knowledge of French postage rates involves *ipso facto* that of the rates for mail leaving the French colonies (except air surcharges).

In the colonies where CFA or CFP francs, created in 1945, are introduced, the postage rates will entail the conversion into these francs of the metropolitan postage rates.

For a more detailed study of these rates, refer to the *Bulletins mensuels* cited as a reference under the table.

In conclusion, a final remark:

This initiation concerns only the mail leaving the French colonies. As for the tariff for mail within a colony, that was subject to local orders by the governor. A whole mine of research to be undertaken!

NB For postage rates for mail exchanged with countries not belonging to the UPU see:

Bulletins mensuels des Postes et Télégraphes

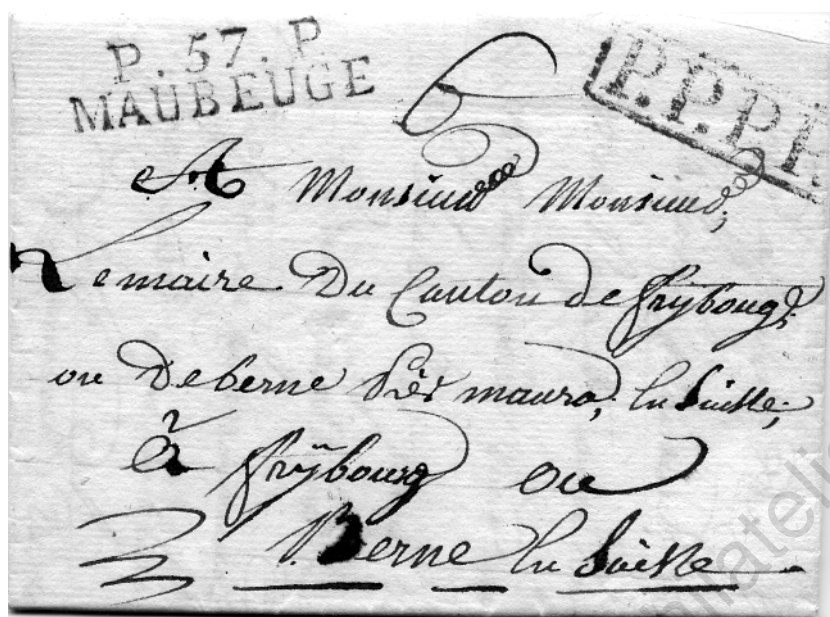
Tarifs postaux français 1627-1968 by J-P Alexandre, C

Barbey, J-F Brun & G Desarnaud (Éd. Brun et fils,

2^{ème} édition, 1989).

November Auction Lots

[See also front and back cover pages.]



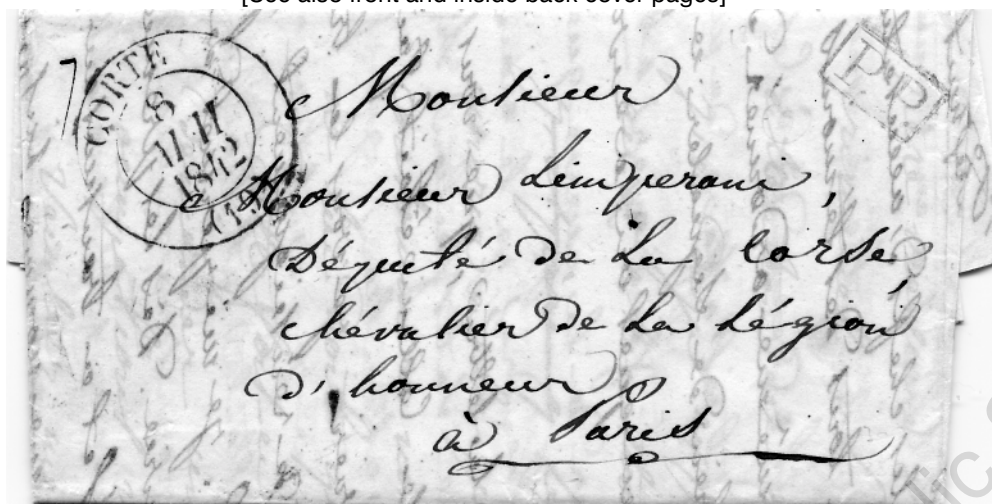
1821 EL to Berne with P57P Maubeuge and boxed PPPP



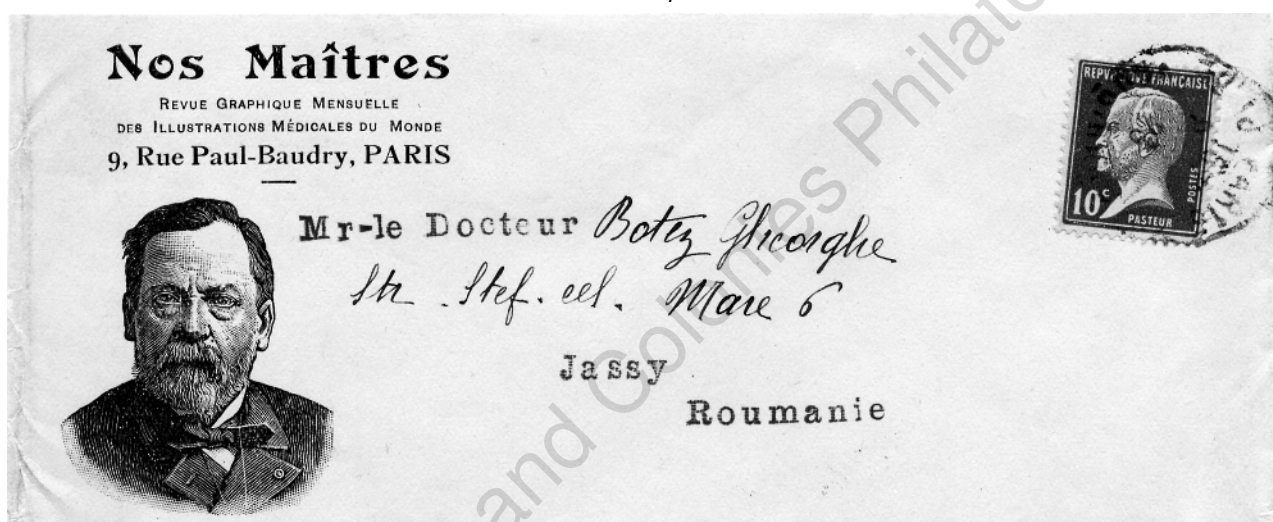
Bottom of sheet of Palissy vignettes with *coin daté* and press number

November Auction Lots

[See also front and inside back cover pages]



1842 EL from Corte to the *Député de la Corse* in Paris



1923 newspaper wrapper to Romania with portrait of Pasteur and franked with 10c Pasteur



1934 postcard cancelled Marseille Gare Départ and with arrival cds of St Cyr L'École Banlieue Ouest (part of large collection of *Banlieue strikes*)