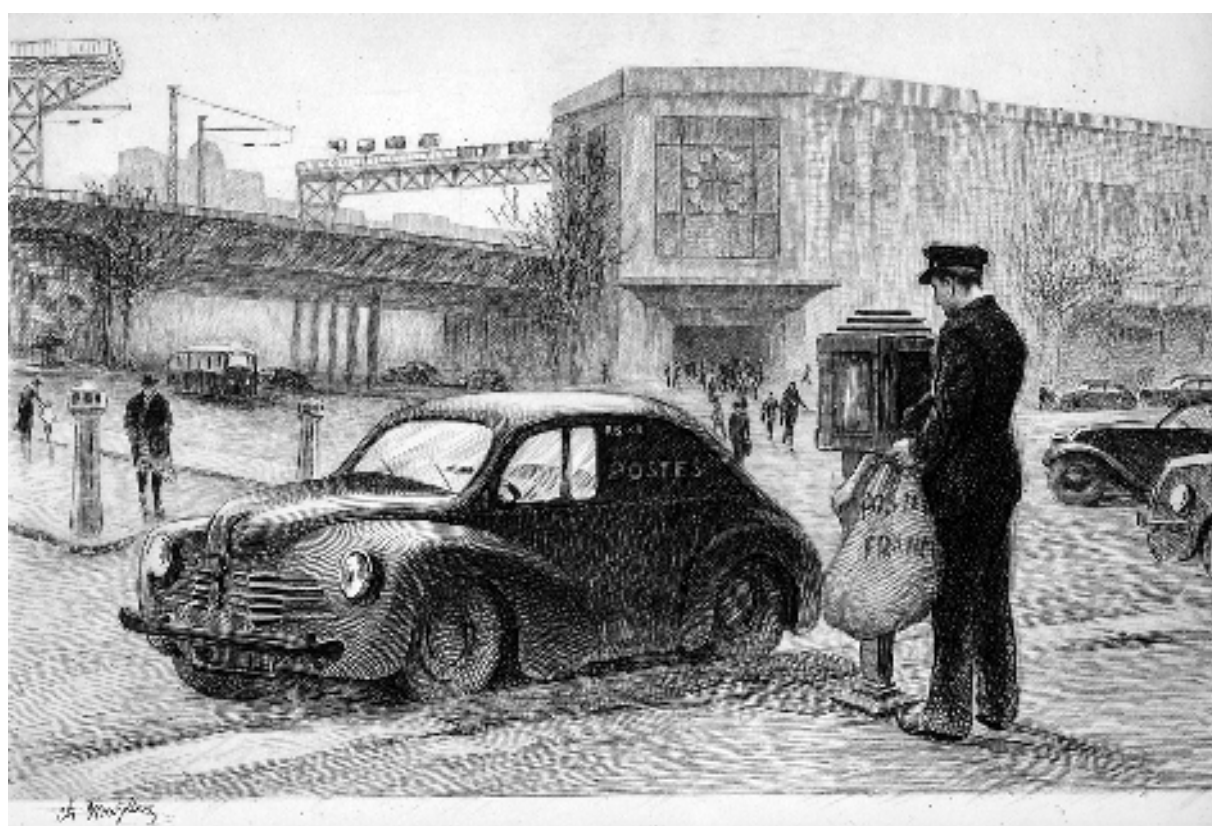


ISSN 0269-5006

# The Journal of the France & Colonies Philatelic Society



"The Postbox Collection" – an engraving by Charles Mazelin  
from Mick Bister's collection of French Post Office engravings  
as shown at the Leamington Weekend (*much reduced in size*)

**Volume 53 ● Number 2**  
**June 2003**  
**Whole Number 228**

# THE FRANCE & COLONIES PHILATELIC SOCIETY OF GREAT BRITAIN

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President, 2003-2004: M S Tyler, 56 Mortons Fork, Blue Bridge, Milton Keynes MK13 0LA.

Vice-President, 2003-2004: R G Gethin.

Programme Secretary, 2003-2004: A Lawrence.

General Secretary, 2003-2004: R G Gethin, 5 Meriden Close, Bromley, Kent BR1 2UF.

## 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, 520 Halifax Road, Bradford BD6 2LP.

## The Magazine Circuit

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

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

## Journal Correspondents

Paris: J M Simmons

Southern Group: C W Spong

Northern Group: J P Maybury

\* \* \*

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

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

# The Journal of the France & Colonies Philatelic Society

Editor: M S Tyler, 56 Mortons Fork, Blue Bridge, Milton Keynes MK13 0LA  
E-mail: maurice@romanpark.clara.co.uk

**Volume 53 Number 2**

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## SOCIETY NOTES

### New Members

The Society is pleased to welcome the following:

1214 O Fitzharris (Co. Durham), 1215 R J Read (Essex), 1216 P Barsdell (Australia), 1217 J I Milne (Fife), 1218 Jack Dykhous (USA), 1219 J P Hargrave (Herts.).

\* \* \*

### Members Deceased

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

706 F T Morgan, 738 I R Crowther, 1055 Neville Thompson.

\* \* \*

### Displays by Members

On 19 February 2003 **John Mayne** displayed "Stamps of the French Colonies - Pre-Independence" to the South Shropshire Philatelic Society.

On 25 March 2003 **Alan Wood** displayed "French Morocco to 1945" to Warminster Philatelic Society.

At the North East Philatelic Weekend in Gateshead 16-18 May 2003 **John Hammonds** displayed "French Aviation".

\* \* \*

### Society Literature Award

The F&CPS Literature Awards for 2002 are as follows:

1. **Roy Reader**: "Interzone Mail 1940-1944"
2. **Ashley Lawrence**: "A Message brought to Paris by Pigeon Post"
3. **Thomas Berger**: "Tariffs of Registered Letters sent abroad from France 1860-1880"

The judging panel this year comprised F E Goatcher, E G Leonard, R W Oakley, P Rooke and D J Worrollo, and was convened as usual by Colin Spong.

\* \* \*

### Southern Group Programme

The new programme for 2003-2004:

<b>2 August 2003</b>	Members' Queries, New Acquisitions etc Michael Round - The French in Africa
<b>25 October 2003</b>	Anthony Eastgate - New Caledonia
<b>10 January 2004</b>	The Largs at F&CPS
<b>3 April 2004</b>	Lesley Marley - The Town of Montargis Michael Annells - French Railways

The August meeting as usual will commence at 10.30am until Lunch and recommence at 14.00 until 16.30 hours. The other meetings will be from 14.00 until 17.00, all in the East Worthing Community Centre, Pages Lane, Worthing.

\* \* \*

### *'Marianne à la nef*

by Jean-Luc Trassaert

After publishing his study of the Marianne de Decaris issue in 2001, our member Jean-Luc Trassaert returns with an account of his research on the *Marianne à la Nef*.

Produced on a CD-ROM, he presents the story of this much maligned issue with 130 pages and over a hundred high quality illustrations. The disk is both PC and Mac compatible and the texts, tables and illustrations are easily accessible via the navigator in Acrobat Reader.

Thanks to the archives in the Musée de la Poste, a large number of hitherto unknown documents relating to the production of the stamp as well as to its designer André Regagnon, are reproduced for the first time.

The author examines the sheet printings including a special reference to Saturday printings, describes the coils and booklets and provides all the necessary data for the serious collector. Both the 25F and the 0,25 issues are covered and their postal usage is particularly well documented.

This study covers the period of change from the Old Franc to the New Franc and is an indispensable source of reference to all collectors interested in this period of philatelic and postal history.

The CD-ROM is available directly from the author for 20 euros including postage: Jean-Luc Trassaert, "Les Gauchers", 24230 Bonneville, France

\* \* \*

### Thai Philatelic Society

Mike Roberts, a member of our Society, is also the Auction Secretary for the TPS. He reports that postmarks are selling very well in their auctions currently, with the highest figure for a single stamp this year being £520. He has given a number of examples of high selling stamps and cancels (details available from the Editor to those interested), and adds that he would always be glad to receive items from F&CPS members, particularly Indo-China cancels on Thai stamps. For material such as this our own Auction Secretary has given his full blessing to such an arrangement.

\* \* \*

### Northern Group

The next gathering will be the annual BASTILLE DAY meeting at Heaton Royds, Bradford, on 12 July, chez Holder (a 17C rural edifice, which will be flying the tricolour for the occasion and is situated on the northern outskirts of the city). The popularity of this all day event is such that places have to be limited, non-regular participants are therefore advised to contact Judith Holder (01274 545221) a.s.a.p.

\* \* \*



**The *Le Monde des Philatélistes* Brochure  
Celebrates its Golden Jubilee**

**Mick Bister**

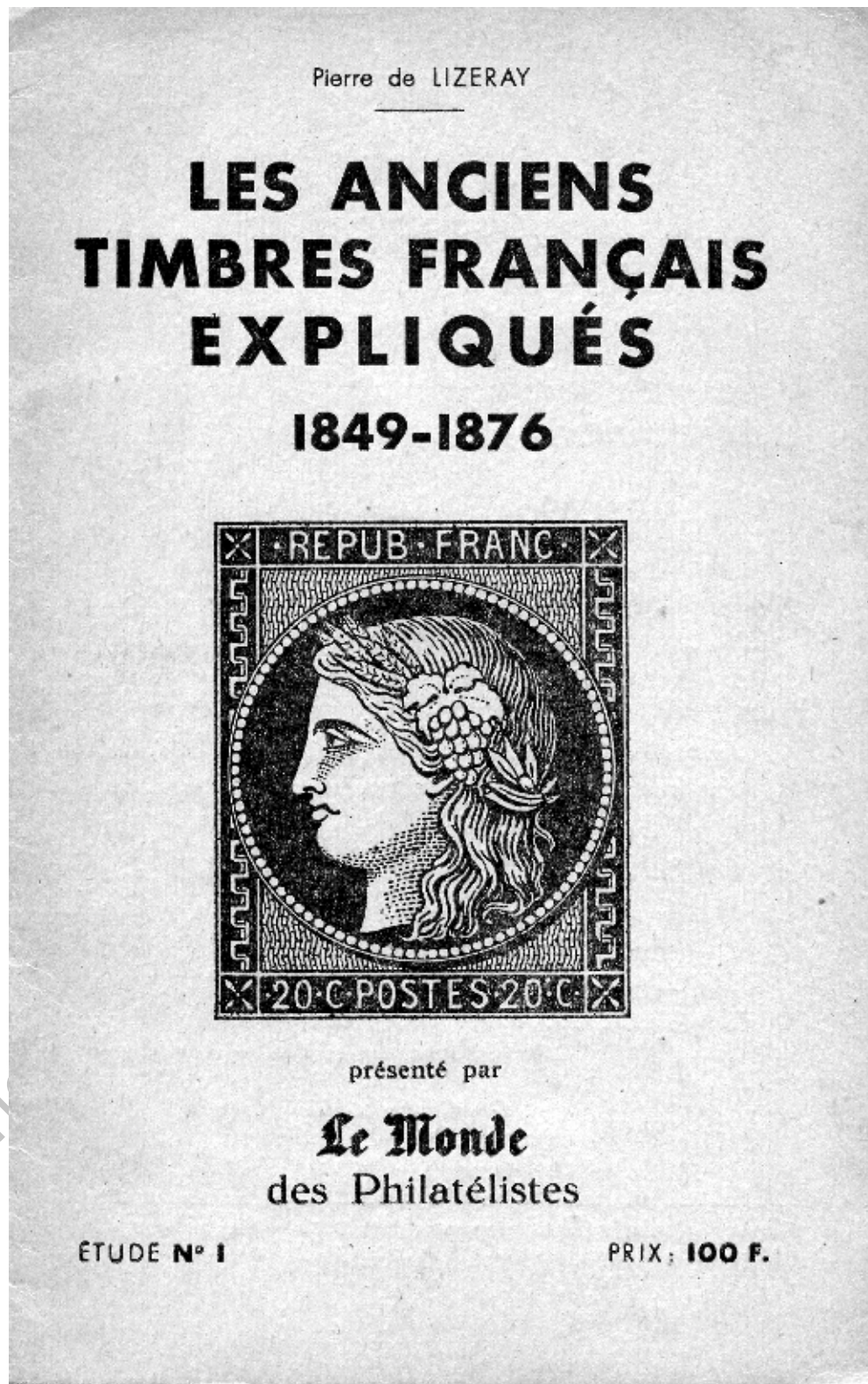


Figure 1:  
The first brochure published in April 1953,  
'Les Anciens Timbres Français Expliqués 1849-1876' by Pierre de Lizeray



Figure 2:  
'La Pelote à chistera' engraving by Raoul Serres offered with Etude N° 14  
'Ceux qui créent nos timbres Tome III' published in June 1956

In March 2000 readers of the French philatelic press witnessed the end of an era. *Le Monde des Philatélistes*, the brain-child of Adalbert Vitalyos and first published as a four page broadsheet in October 1951, passed away after nearly fifty years of faithful service. Its title, however, still survives in the form of an epitaph on the front page of *Timbres Magazine* created when *Le Monde des Philatélistes* ceased as an independent publication and merged with its rival *Timbroscopie*.

Members will remember with a certain amount of affection the early editions of *Le Monde des Philatélistes*. Printed off traditional flat bed newspaper presses until January 1962 and thereafter on rotary presses, the publishers nevertheless retained the traditional newspaper format for many years after. *Le Monde's* argument was that the loose-leaf format of a newspaper permitted the editor to insert news and bulletins at the last minute whereas the magazine format with its pages stapled into a cover prohibited such flexibility and spontaneity. And so, the *Le Monde des Philatélistes* would be dispatched to its readership who were waiting

with a paper knife at the ready to separate the uncut pages of what was undeniably a quintessential French literary publication.

Within the first two years of its existence, Adalbert Vitalyos had introduced his readers to such notable stamp designers as Decaris, Gandon, Piel and Mazelin. In 1952 he invited contributions from the Ministre des PTT, Roger Duchet, and in 1953 from his successor, Pierre Ferri. Furthermore, he had drawn together some of France's most erudite philatelic writers who each month shared their discoveries and expertise with his ever widening readership. Pierre Langlois, Pierre de Lizeray, Pierre Savelon and Bernard Mignon were amongst the first to contribute to the newspaper's pages and to thus establish *Le Monde des Philatélistes* as the leading philatelic publication of its time or, as it liked to call itself, '*l'officiel de la philatélie*'.

Only one year after the launch of *Le Monde des Philatélistes*, Adalbert Vitalyos was ready to propose another venture – the publication of '*des éditions annexes*', a series of brochures



or *études* to reproduce, consolidate or combine, articles which had previously appeared in the newspaper itself. His rationale was straightforward: the brochures would be published '*dans l'intention de rendre hommage aux personnes qui n'hésitent pas à mettre leurs connaissances au service de tous les philatélistes et de les récompenser*'.

It was appropriate that the illustrious and indefatigable writer Pierre de Lizeray should have the honour of being the author to associate his name with the launch of such a venture, and in April 1953 his '*Les Anciens Timbres Français Expliqués 1849-1876*' was published as Etude N° 1. The design of the publication was unpretentious, reflecting the austere years of postwar France. One thousand one hundred copies were printed of which one thousand were on 'ordinary' paper and a further hundred copies on 'superior' paper – a pattern that would be repeated for the majority of future brochures. The sixteen pages were stapled into a utility cover of coarse buff card and the brochure was sold at 100 old francs (Fig 1). One month later, a second brochure was published – Brun's '*Les Post Office de l'Île Maurice*'. This was one of the shortest runs printed by *Le Monde* consisting of just 500 copies of 8 pages each. The third brochure, '*Les Constances du 20c Empire Lauré Type II*' by Fontaine & Fromaigeat appeared in February 1954 with a similar run of 500 copies and in May of the same year appeared '*Les Mouchon et le Classement des Pasteur*' by Bentley and de Lizeray with a run of 550.

Publication of the brochures continued through the fifties with between two and eight titles each year. In November 1955 a tentative move away from the utility buff card cover was made with the publication of the first of the series '*Ceux qui créent nos timbres*' which was stapled in a white and blue cover. The series contained a compilation of interviews with stamp designers and engravers that had been previously published in *Le Monde des Philatélistes*. The bonus which accompanied the brochure was the inclusion of a print from an original engraving on copper by one of the artists featured in the interviews, and with Tome I came a delightful portrayal of *Cérès* engraved by Albert Decaris. The engraving, just like the brochure which it accompanied, was a limited numbered edition. Over the years four more brochures appeared in the series each with its complimentary engraving including, in June 1956, a fine interpretation of a *pelote* player by Raoul Serres (Fig 2) which featured simultaneously on his 40F *Pelote Basque* issue (Yvert 1073).

During the 1960s output began to increase significantly and in some years ten or eleven titles were being published. However, output did not peak until the following decade. In 1975 alone twenty-two different brochures were published and in five other years more brochures appeared than editions of *Le Monde des Philatélistes*. In 1971 the largest brochure was published, Arthur Lafon's Etude N° 131, '*Catalogue des Oblitérations Mécaniques à Flamme Illustrée ou Stylisée*' which contained a total of 664 pages of text and illustrations divided between two volumes. 3100 copies were printed with the warning that there would not be a reprint. During the 1970s several long series of brochures had become established, among which were the PTT's '*Les Timbres Français*' (21 titles between 1963 and 1979), Pierre de Lizeray's '*Timbres et Types*' (13 titles between 1960 and 1979), and Colonel Lebland's '*Emissions*

*de France*' (9 titles between 1961 and 1978). On the other hand some series were never completed. Only four titles appeared in the ambitious series '*Encyclopédie Philatélique Illustrée*' before the death of its author Paul Roullé. Similarly only four titles appeared in Louis Pommier's drawn out series '*Astrologie et Philatélie*' before it was axed in 1975. Five years had elapsed between the publication of the last two titles in the series, '*Gémeaux*' and '*Cancer*', and if that rate of publication had been allowed to continue, today's readers would still be awaiting the appearance of '*Verseau*' and '*Poissons*'. But of all the brochures published in the 1970s the most unusual must have been one written by Georges Chapier. More widely known for his earlier brochures on *colis postaux* he turned his hand to fiction and in November 1974 *Le Monde des Philatélistes* published his short novel entitled '*La Source des Dieux*' in time for Christmas.

The 1980s saw a dramatic fall in the number of brochures published with figures more reminiscent of the 1950s. The most prolific writer of the period was Jean-Luc Trassaert who between 1981 and 1985 contributed four titles: '*La Marianne de Decaris*', '*La Marianne de Cocteau*', '*la Marianne de Muller*' and '*La Marianne à la Nef*'. The first brochure was a major success and necessitated two further reprints; Trassaert's subsequent titles were embellished by the introduction of colour illustrations either in the text or on the covers and soon became accepted as the definitive works on the Marianne issues. However, despite the high quality of production and the scholarly content, '*La Marianne à la Nef*' was the brochures' swan song. It was this title, Etude N° 260, that marked both the peak and the demise of thirty-three years' publication of erudite philatelic research, which had always been delivered in an affordable and accessible format and which had established a loyal and committed readership.

The publication of one series of brochures has continued even though *Le Monde des Philatélistes* itself ceased publication in March 2000, followed shortly afterwards by the death of its founder Adalbert Vitalyos in May 2000. Since 1985, a supplement to Arthur Lafon's original work *Catalogue des Oblitérations Mécaniques à Flamme Illustrée ou Stylisée* has been published each year, and it continues today under the auspices of *Timbropresse* (i) which bought up *Le Monde des Philatélistes*. *Timbropresse* has retained the original number sequence of the *études*, but the latest brochure in the series, Etude N° 275 '*Les Oblitérations Mécaniques à Flammes, Supplément 1999*', published last year, now displays the name of its new owner..

Many of the *Le Monde* brochures have now become collectors' items and, in most cases, with only 500 or so copies of each in existence they are not always easy to find. The most common copies found are naturally those printed on '*papier ordinaire*' later referred to as '*papier satiné*'. Occasionally one encounters the limited *éditions de luxe* printed on '*papier supérieur*' or '*papier couché*' or even the *hors commerce* editions of which there were usually only twenty-five printed. Copies signed by the author are of course the ultimate acquisition (Fig 3).

One can even look out for errors and varieties just as when collecting stamps. Two classic examples are Etude N° 43 '*Les Constances du 80c Napoléon lauré*' which displays the

Figure 3a -  
Signature of Pierre de Lizeray

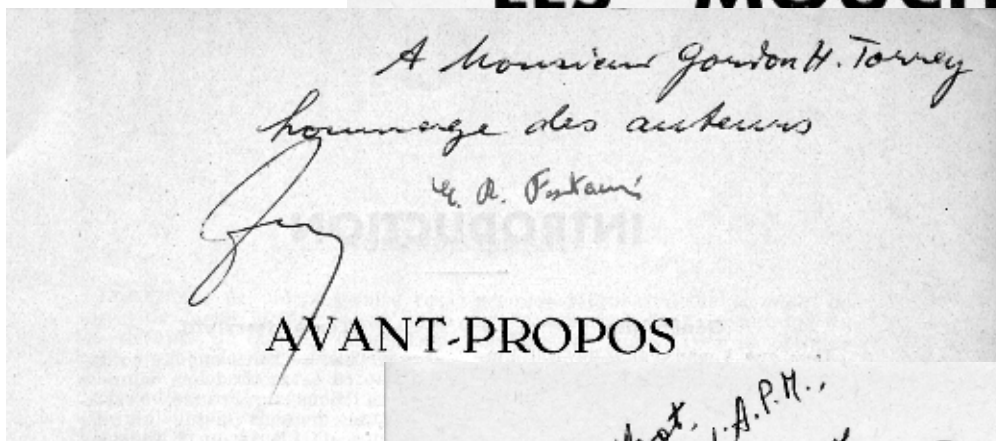
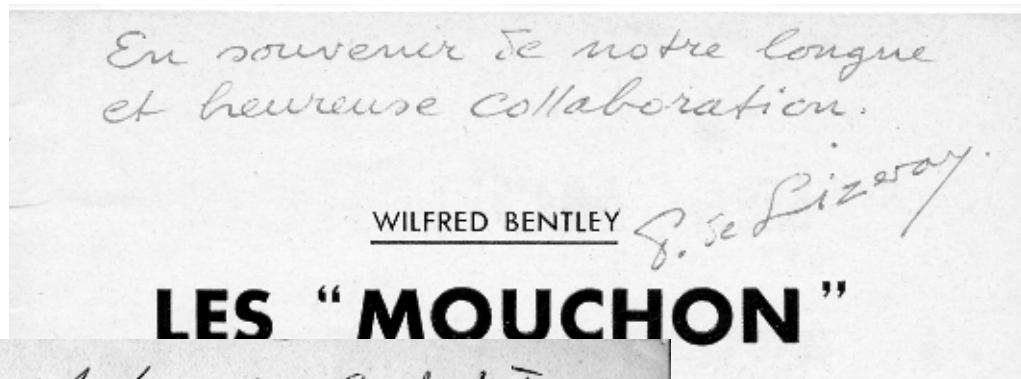


Figure 3b -  
Signatures of Dr. J Fromageat  
& E R Fontaine

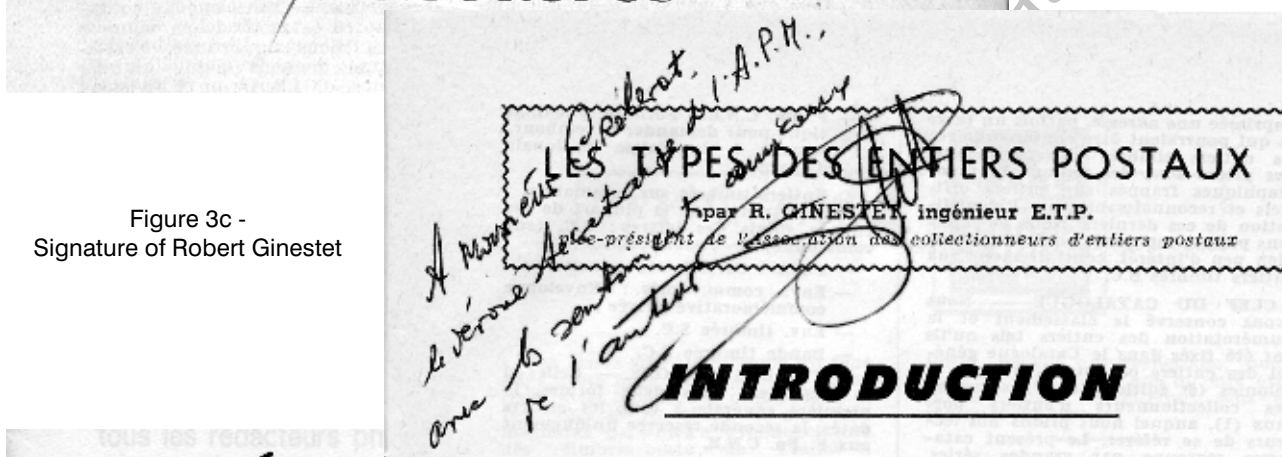


Figure 3c -  
Signature of Robert Ginestet

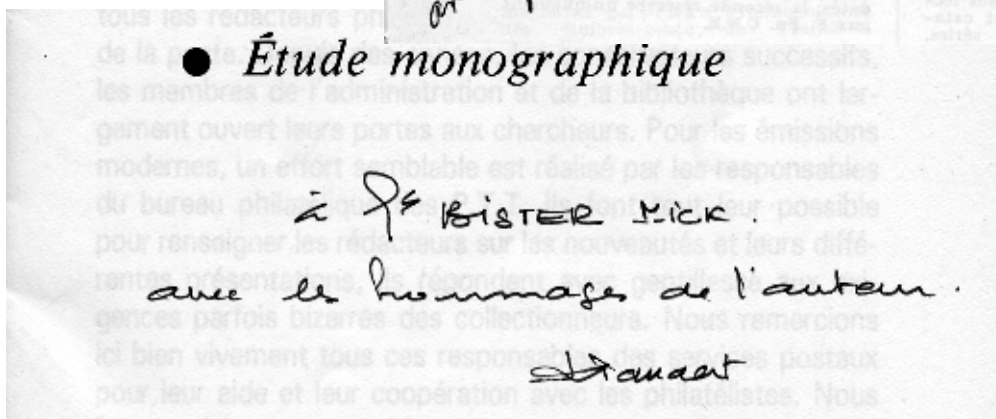


Figure 3d -  
Signature of  
Jean-Luc Trassaert

incorrect N° 34 on the cover and Etude N° 205 'La Marine Nationale Française' which seems to be the only brochure not printed by the *Le Monde* presses in Paris but instead by *Print 67* at Erstein in the Bas-Rhin.

Copies of the *Le Monde* brochures occasionally appear in the Society's auctions or on the Leamington Philatelic Weekend bookstall. Despite their relative scarcity, they rarely demand more than a few pounds. Titles also appear regularly in auctions held by HH Sales of Bradford (ii), and Philatélie Lyonnaise at Villeurbanne (iii) always have a special rubrique in their auction catalogue for *Le Monde* brochures with reserves starting at 12€. The *Le Monde* brochures have become an institution in French philatelic

literature and highly respected by all serious philatelists. Let us hope that the philatelic press acknowledges this and does not forget to celebrate, in April of this year, the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Adalbert Vitalyos' creation.

#### Notes

- (i) I am indebted to Carole Gerothwohl of the *Timbropresse* editorial team for details of the current *Le Monde* brochure situation. Further information may be obtained from Timbropresse, 6 rue du Sentier, 75080 Paris Cedex 02, but the sale of back numbers of the brochures has yet to be resumed since the takeover.
- (ii) HH Sales Ltd, The Barn, Heaton Royds, Shay Lane, Bradford, West Yorkshire, BD9 6SH
- (iii) Philatélie Lyonnaise, 10 rue de Venise, 69100 Villeurbanne, France



## Some Early Machine Cancels - 2

Bill Mitchell



Figure 1



Figure 2

All the cancels in this selection come from machines manufactured by the Krag Maskin Fabrik A/S of Oslo, which obtained a French patent in 1905. Unlike the “Flier” machines discussed in the last issue of the Journal, which struck single impressions, Krag machines applied continuous impressions. “Flier” machines were designed to cancel the stamp with parallel lines — or, later, a slogan — leaving the date stamp clear (thus meeting the requirement that the date of handling should be shown by a separate strike of the date stamp without the need for two distinct operations); with Krag machines there were also parallel lines or, later, a slogan — which of the two actually cancelled the stamp was a hit or miss affair, but the continuous impression system ensured that there was at least one strike of the date stamp clear of the adhesive on all but the very smallest items of mail (in theory, at any rate; in practice this did not always happen).

Hayhurst gives further details (my sources can be found on page 17 of Journal 227). He writes:

“A characteristic of continuous-impression machines is the die diameter, which dictates the separation between successive impressions; it is probable that on any one machine the change of a die from one diameter to another is no simple modification. . . . a Krag machine was fitted with only one of three diameters which correspond to impressions 80, 78 and 65 mm apart, so continued impressions with other separations do not come from Krag machines. On the other hand, it does not follow that all impressions of these separations come from Krag machines.”

There is a mystery here which needs clearing up. Nouazé gives quite different distances between separations. He says (page 55) that these “first generation” Krag machines were

*“des machines dont le périmètre du porte-timbres est égal à 156 mm, de sorte que les périodes des empreintes seront de 156 mm, 78 mm (l'immense majorité) et de 52 mm.”*

78 and 52 are, of course, one half and one third of 156, which makes some sort of sense to the uninitiated; on the other hand Hayhurst's authority (a letter, presumably to him, from the company dated 31 May 1978) would appear to be definitive. Since they agree on 78 mm in the “vast majority” of cases, one would think that for practical purposes this discrepancy doesn't matter very much, but I find the following measurements in my examples — Fig 1, 78 mm, Fig 2, 78 mm, Fig 3, 79 mm, Fig 5, 81 mm, Fig 6, 79 mm. In this last case, the right-hand date stamp is distorted; and one sometimes has to allow for the overinking of a strike. And to complicate the matter, there was a “second generation” of Krag machines, in use from 1921, which had a “périmètre” of 128 mm, giving separations of 64 (one half of 128) mm — the vast majority — and 128 mm (Nouazé, page 74). Informed comment on all this will be very welcome.

Yet another, “third generation” Krag type dating from 1926 was identified in 1980, but this is now known to have been manufactured by the Société Anonyme des Etablissements Delachanal under the trade name Savava — see Mick Bister's short but important article “Discovery of the Savava Cancelling Machine” in Journal 207 for March 1998. Unlike the Krag, these were single impression

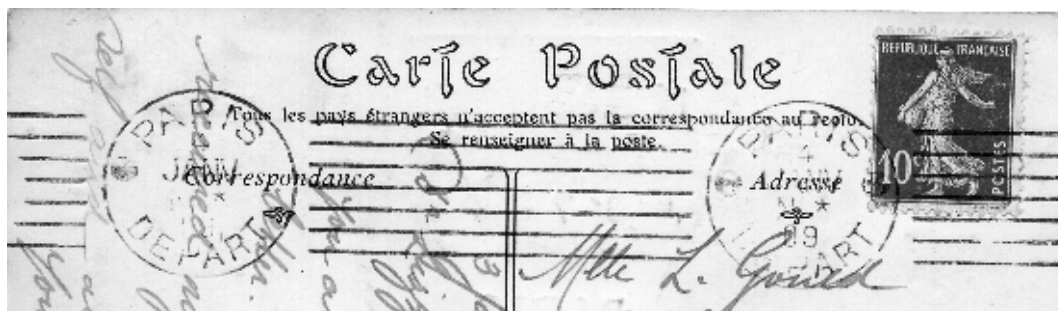


Figure 3



Figure 4

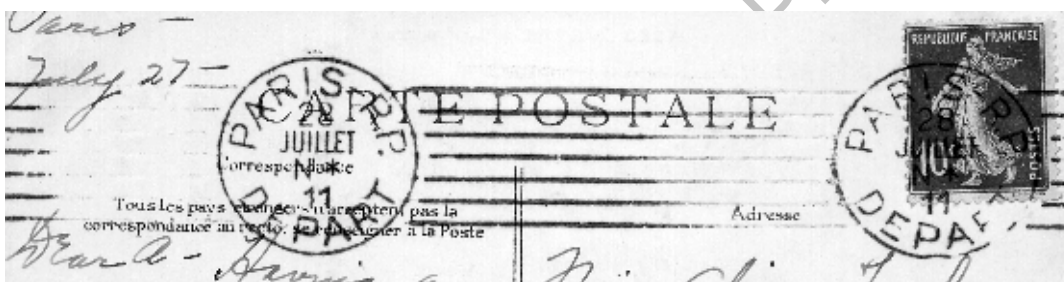


Figure 5

machines. Unfortunately I overlooked Mick's account in Part 1 of this article, where I said that apart from John Hayhurst's 1983 study very little about machine cancellations has been published in the Journal. My apologies!

To get back to my examples: I was attracted to the first Krag cancel (Fig 1) by the unusual (for France) "bridge" style date stamp with the date and time in one single line. Nouazé dates it to March 1906, a couple of years or so after the first of the "Flier" machines was brought into use. This is Dreyfuss A 00014; it appears from his and Nouazé's illustrations that broken lines on the "bridge" were a common feature of impressions of this cancel. It had a short life; it's only recorded as used in 1906. It will be noted that, unlike the "Flier" cancels, which at this time favoured wavy parallel lines, the Krag machines' lines were straight: "ondulés" came in with the "second generation" in 1921.

At about the same time, according to Nouazé, another cancel was brought into use in which the date is set out in the usual French three-line form, although it is not otherwise very much like what we are accustomed to (Fig 2, Dreyfuss A 00015). This, too, had a short life (1906-08). The flip-side of this postcard (shown at the end of this article as Fig 8) is particularly attractive: "Scènes Parisiennes — Aux Champs-Élysées: Les Nounous".

It was not long (December 1906) before the format of the date was changed again, this time to four lines. There are several different types; sometimes the time is set out in full ("4H" or "19<sup>15</sup>"), sometimes simply by "N" ("nuit"), and the straight lines may be of equal or unequal length — in the latter case they are arranged so as to enclose the date stamp. Here are a few examples.

Fig 3 is a type ascribed by Dreyfuss to 1908-09 (A 00017). It will be noted that alternate date stamps have one and two large black circles separating *PARIS* and *DEPART*; he lists also a type with "lignes inégales". Nouazé, on the other hand, lists these types with both date stamps showing the two circles, although so far as I can see from his illustration of an actual cover the type with "lignes égales" has only the one. This suggests that there were three date stamps on the cylinder, two with two circles and one with only one. The distance between impressions, it will be noted, is 79 mm. Comments, please. Look out for an error on the "lignes inégales" cancel — the year slug is inverted, reading "80" instead of "08".

Figs 4 and 5 are variants of the same cancel, the earlier reading "R.P" (no stop after "P") and the later "R.P." (with stop). These are Dreyfuss A 00101 (1908) and A 00102 (1909-12). Similar cancels were used at other offices; Fig 6 is a nice — rather late — example of a mixed Sage /





Figure 6

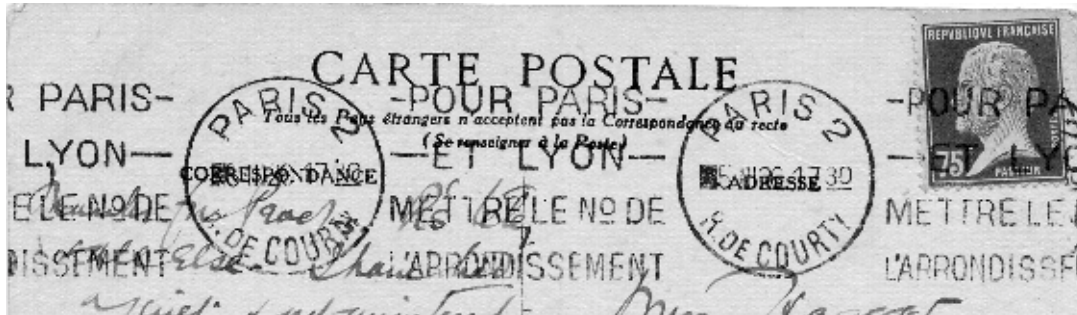


Figure 7

Lined Sower franking at the *PARIS 1 / PL. DE LA BOURSE* office (Dreyfuss B 001102, 1907-27).

Slogans on Krag machines seem to have come on the scene some years after they appeared on “Flier” cancels — the earliest that I’ve spotted on a quick look through some of Dreyfuss’ 101 pages on Paris both date from 1924, advertising the Paris Fair and the Olympic Games. My example (Fig 7) is rather later, from 1926. The date stamp has changed considerably over a period of 15 or more years — it has the same diameter (25 mm) but the date is now in one line and the month is in Roman numerals

instead of words, in this case the date being 5.III.26. Letter-writers are now asked to include the *arrondissement* number for Lyon as well as Paris (see Fig 6 in Journal 227, page 18). This is Dreyfuss B 002205, 1925-29. The impressions are 64 mm apart, so this was a “second generation” Krag machine. The card is of interest, too, as showing the short-lived (1 February to 31 July 1926) 75c foreign postcard rate.

It is possible that the second edition of Dreyfuss (which I don’t have) explains some of the points that have puzzled me in preparing this instalment. If anyone can shed light on any of them, do please write in.



Figure 8 -  
“Parisian Scenes – In the Champs-Élysées: the Nannies”



## Amazing 1870-71 Wonder Stories - 76

Ernst Cohn

Through the courtesy of Arnold Engel I received a copy of an old British price list for the USA market. Actually, it is a Price List and Guide to Collecting of Paris Siege Balloon Post 1870-71, an undated 8-page pamphlet, bound in a *carton* cover, issued by the "World's Leading Specialist", George H Bigsby, 9 Southampton Street, London WC1. Illustrations on the front of three medals — Luxembourg and Strasbourg (he left out the 'o' in both names) 1927 and Monaco 1928 — as well as the cheapest price of \$5.50 for a flown balloon cover indicate the approximate age of the leaflet.

Mr. Bigsby had some amazing information to convey to his philatelic clientele. His treatise, 'A Brief History of the Siege of Paris Balloon Post 1870-71, and Guide to Collecting Same', starts with this brief paragraph:

"Paris was invested by the Prussian Armies on the 21st September, 1870, by which time the French Government had moved to Bordeaux. So complete was the circle round the City, that not a living soul stood the ghost of a chance of penetrating either into or out of it."

The armies of Saxony, Bavaria, Württemberg, Baden, and Hesse also participated, making this the Franco-German War, of course, and not Franco-Prussian, as he and many others have called it. The siege of Paris started late on the 18th. The French Government stayed at Paris, but a Government Delegation moved to Tours, whence it transferred to Bordeaux in December. While penetrating the circle was very difficult without permission from both sides, it did happen occasionally. Known cases of smuggling by various means are covered in my book *Unusual Mail in Occupied France — 18 70/71*, published in 2000. Movement of mail by diplomatic means into and out of Paris was unknown or almost forgotten at that time.

According to Bigsby's story, the first manned siege balloon, the *Neptune*, carried 125 lbs (not kg) of official correspondence and landed after a flight of eleven(!) hours. The balloon decrees of 26 September provided for piloted balloons to carry passengers, letters, and newspapers (the first and last were never mentioned), while the unmanned ones were intended for postcards, etc. (where that 'etc.' is not specified). The cards salvaged by Frenchmen from the only unmanned balloon are thought to have been sent by the following controlled (= manned) balloon. Having picked out only the most obvious errors in this Brief History, I won't bother to correct all of them. It is worth noting, however, that the legend of the *Piper 1* having carried the salvaged cards was current when this pamphlet was printed; no wonder I am having such a tough time convincing people of the facts

The *Jacquard* is not mentioned at all, whereas the *Richard Wallace* is said to have come to grief off the English Coast,

yet pilot, passengers and mails were rescued (all untrue, of course, except that some mail was washed ashore in France on several dates).

The *Ville d'Orleans* is said to have traveled 1348 miles. It was really 1330 km or 826 miles, certainly the longest distance of the Paris balloons but even then not the farthest balloon flight.

The balloons carried not 840 passengers but 66 pilots and 100 passenger. However, since two men, Piper and Friedman, flew out of Paris twice, the total number of aeronauts was 164.

Whereas it might have been good business to state that 'the greater proportion of the mails was eventually destroyed,' perhaps closer to the truth is the old saying that 'of the 2½ million pieces of mail flown out of Paris, about 3 million are still extant.' Similarly, calling imprinted stationery 'official' sounds impressive, even if later studies revealed it to be either private or even mere totally worthless postwar souvenirs created by the well-known dealer Maury.

Bigsby confuses cancellations with postmarks and claims that the dotted star used together with Paris (60) had a numeral inside, but that may simply be a misprint, because he illustrates a mute star. Occasional red Paris cancels are mentioned, but neither the SC nor the RC cancels are named as such. The blue Paris Etranger is not cited at all, so perhaps it was unknown to Bigsby.

Aérostiers and Aéronautes markings are called pilot's cancellations, of which he seems to have known both, though the latter is not named as such.

His postal rates must be checked with care. He correctly cites Baden with 30 centimes, but all of Germany is given at 50 centimes; I think somewhere there is a 40 centimes rate in between as well. USA is given at 60 centimes, which is wrong: It used to be 80 centimes early that year, but then became 70 centimes, I believe before the war was declared. In any case, one sees 80 centimes on *ballons montés*, simply because rich Americans who still had stores of that stamp wanted to use it up. Incidentally, here is a prime example of overpayment of postage not for 'philatelic' reasons.

On the last (inside) page of the pamphlet, Bigsby gives his prices. I particularly noted that, for the Maury forms, either as letter sheets or as cards, in all colors of the rainbow, he quotes \$2.50 for the former and \$4 for the latter. Both types were printed AFTER the siege and are worthless merchandise. In the late 1960s, when I stopped in at Jamet (Paris) and picked up some real 1870 material, I was given a handful of those Maurarities free of charge. Nowadays, the prices quoted above *seem* to look cheap. I say 'seem', because the material is still as abundant and worthless as ever.

In general, except for errors, unused items — stamps, postal stationary, cards or letter sheets — are hardly ever

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# Airmail Cover – Bordeaux to Cameroun – 1940-41

Marty Bratzel



Figure 1a -

Front of airmail cover from France to Cameroun.  
Postmarked Bordeaux 12 June 1940,  
the cover finally reached the recipient in Cameroun in late August 1941.

## Background

The airmail cover shown in Figure 1 poses a number of interesting questions. First, the factual information. The cover, postmarked Bordeaux Gare St. Jean 12.VI.40 21<sup>10</sup>, is franked with a total of 16F30 in postage to cover airmail transport from France to Cameroun. The cover was opened, censored, and re-sealed in the Gold Coast. The negative *Contrôle Postal Commission A* mark was applied at Douala, and the cover was backstamped upon arrival at Kribi on 26 August 1941. However, the addressee, M. René Ryter, a Presbyterian missionary, had moved to the mission station at M'Balmayo. Upon forwarding, the cover received a transit postmark at Eseka on 29 August 1941.

The routing subsequent to arrival at Douala can be established, but how did the cover travel from Bordeaux to Cameroun, why 14 months in transit, and where did it languish during its journey? These questions were posed to Nick Carter, Michael Ensor, Jeremy Martin, and Peter Richards. Their combined wisdom is presented below, removing some of the mystery and providing probable answers. Perhaps others can pick up the threads and complete the story.

## Political and Military Developments

Consider first the events at the time the cover was posted. On 12 June General Weygand, the Allied commander-in-chief, advised the French government against further resistance. Paris was occupied on 14 June. The French government, then in session at Bordeaux, voted on 16 June to withdraw from the war, and the armistice was signed on 22 June. The Aéromaritime service was completely suspended on 23 June.<sup>1</sup>

## Transit from France to Africa

Nick and Peter describe the cover's departure from France, its intended route through Africa, and the possible sequence of events during transit. The cover, posted on 12 June, probably caught the Air France flight that left Toulouse on 16 June (*Ville de Montevideo*). This was the next-to-last flight to leave France bound for Africa and South America prior to the German occupation. The cover arrived at Dakar, most likely on the evening of 17 June, and then should have left on the weekly Aéromaritime flight along the coast with stops, *inter alia*, at Conakry, Freetown, Monrovia, Abidjan, Accra, Cotonou, Douala, Libreville,

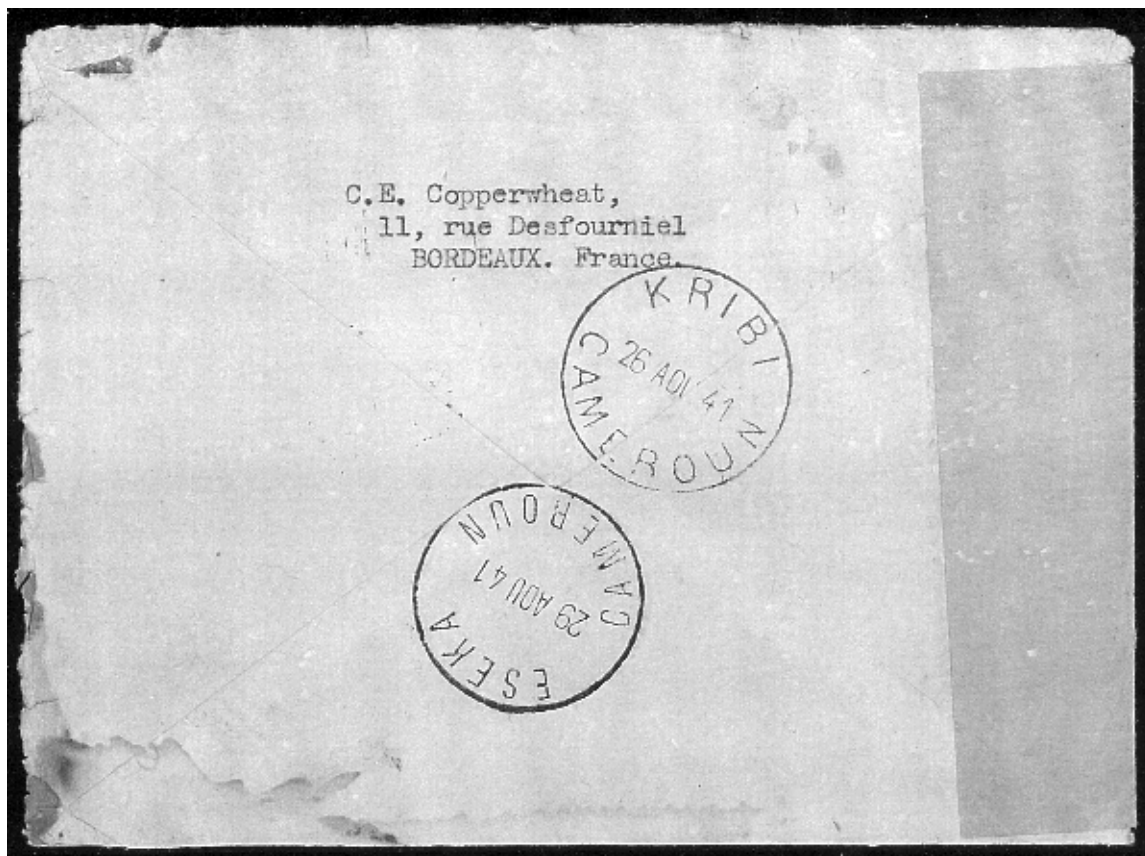


Figure 1b -  
Back of cover shown in Figure 1a.

and Pointe Noire.<sup>1</sup> The scheduled departure was most likely 18 June, meaning the flight would have arrived in Takoradi on the evening of 19 June, Accra on the morning of 20 June, and Cotonou later that day.

#### Termination of the Aéromaritime Flight

If the cover reached the Gold Coast by air from Abidjan, Ivory Coast, then one could reason that the Gold Coast authorities, aware of political and military developments in France, stopped the flight.

Alternatively, the French authorities, also aware of unfolding events in France, could have decided that the airplane was at risk of being seized by the British and stopped the flight, perhaps at Abidjan or even earlier. The situation was in all likelihood very confused. Even if the mail had departed from Dakar on 18 June as scheduled, considering all the stops, there could have been delays *en route*. Also, there had been a persistent problem of spares on the Aéromaritime route and it may well have been necessary to stop for repairs somewhere.

Recall that airplanes of those days were short range. The longest leg on the Aéromaritime route was Cotonou to Douala, and refueling in British territory would have been necessary. A plane going east of Abidjan would have run the risk of being stranded (and thus confiscated) in British territory.

Recognizing the potential asset of the airplane, its return to France from Abidjan would have been across largely French-controlled territory. If stranded further east in

Dahomey or Cameroun, return would have required crossing the Sahara.

Barbara Priddy, reporting on the dissolution of airmail services in West Africa,<sup>1</sup> notes that the last – westbound – Aéromaritime flight to call in British territories left on 19 June and that UK-bound mail from the Gold Coast was offloaded at Freetown. There is no mention as to when (or where) the eastbound flight was terminated. We know the fate of every airplane in the pre-war Imperial fleet. It stands to reason that French aerophiles have records of all their planes. Perhaps publication of this article will unearth that information.

#### Transport of Mail to the Gold Coast

As noted above, the mail could have reached the Gold Coast by air direct from Abidjan. However, if the flight had been terminated earlier, the offloaded mail would have been transferred to a ship, a less risky means of transport – and the only alternative. It is not unreasonable to assume that a French ship – with its cargo and mail – could have been intercepted and detained by British authorities in the Gold Coast.

A critical fact is that the cover was not censored in the Ivory Coast or elsewhere in AOF, but was in Accra. The absence of French censor marks suggests that it was not until the letter reached the Gold Coast that a “state of war” existed with neighbouring territories. This meant that the French authorities passed the bag, onward transmission was to friendly territory, but by the time of its arrival – by whatever means – in Accra, the Gold Coast





Figure 2 -  
HM Customs, Accra, Gold Coast.

authorities stopped it, as it was arriving from – and onward transmission would have been to – enemy territory.

This speculation depends on the exact dates of transport and on the dates and the effectiveness of the declarations of “enemy status” for each of the British and French colonies along the African coast.

From the available evidence, we can conclude that the letter was detained at Accra on or after 20 June. Although Cameroun declared for the Free French on 27 August – about 11 weeks after the letter was posted – the Gold Coast authorities probably had other priorities than accumulated mails. Possibly the Cameroun-bound mail was in a bag with Dahomey mail, onward from Accra. Dahomey was still considered non-friendly territory and remained Vichy, as did the rest of AOF until the invasion of French North Africa in November 1942.

As a further alternative, after arrival in Dakar the mail could have been sent overland through Bamako and Niamey, as opposed to the shore-line route via Conakry and Abidjan. However, this would have bypassed Accra altogether.

#### Censorship in the Gold Coast

Nick and Jeremy note that Gold Coast Censor 10 was definitely Accra, and that Censor 10 was usually (if not always) applied to overseas foreign mail. Censor 10 may have been a bilingual or multi-lingual person, or it may have been used by a specialist censor section that dealt with foreign-language mail.

The next question is, when was the letter censored? The censor tape and hexagon were in use between 1939 and 1942, so there is nothing *per se* about them to help narrow the time period.

The letter may or may not have been written in French. Although posted in France, the sender had an “English” name, Copperwheat. The addressee, René Ryter, was Swiss by birth. His wife was from the United States, from whence they undertook missionary duties for the Presbyterian church. René, we are certain, was fluent in both English and French.

Michael Ensor picks up the story, and his recollection contributes to the answer. In his words, Michael recalls and speculates ...

“I was posted to the Secretariat in Accra (as its most junior officer) in late August 1940 and, after the normal tour of duty, went on leave in March 1942. Sometime during that tour (I cannot exactly remember when) I was one of a number of people, officials and wives having a knowledge of French, who were called at short notice to Customs Headquarters [see Figure 2]. There we were faced with a pile of mailbags taken off a French ship (whose name I do not recall) that had been intercepted. Our job was to open all the envelopes and see if the contents contained anything helpful to our war effort. (I do not think that anything useful was discovered.) Just where the vessel was coming from and going to I do not think we were ever told.

So a conceivable explanation to the delay ... is that [the letter] was on board this ship and censored by our team. If so, it would initially have travelled to Dakar, rather than by the eastern airmail route ... and there found that there was no longer an airmail service to Cameroun. Then it would have waited in Dakar until an eastbound ship called (though I

cannot see how a ship would have been linking Vichy-attached Dakar with Free French Cameroun).<sup>2</sup> When, at last, a ship called it was intercepted off the Gold Coast and its mail put ashore. I do not think that the Gold Coast authorities would have deliberately delayed mail for Free French Cameroun, once it had been censored. But there was at that stage no direct link by which the mail could be forwarded.

Indeed I recall an important package that the Gold Coast Government wanted to send to Free French Headquarters which had to be passed to the Free French Liaison Officer in Lagos. So, I suggest that [the] letter was passed on to Lagos whence it travelled, perhaps by leisurely overland journey, to Cameroun."

Michael's recollections support maritime transport, or perhaps some airmail was also included in the mail to be opened and censored.

#### Completing the Journey

How the letter travelled from the Gold Coast to Douala remains unanswered, but it is possible to narrow down the date. The negative *Commission A* mark, applied at Douala, was known to have been used between 10 November 1940 and 16 October 1941. If the letter was not detained upon arrival in Douala, we can conclude that the letter arrived

there a day or two prior to its arrival in Kribi on 26 August 1941. If we assume a reasonable transit time of a week or two from the Gold Coast to Douala – by whatever route – and if we assume that the letter resumed its journey shortly after censorship, then we can infer that it was censored and left Accra in early August 1941.

#### Conclusion

The most likely scenario is that the cover, posted in Bordeaux on 12 June 1940, became stranded in Accra on or after 20 June, was censored and resumed its journey more than a year later, in early August 1941, and finally reached M. Ryter in late August 1941, 14 months after posting.

And perhaps Michael did, indeed, censor this letter. It would be nice to think so.

Further thoughts are most welcome. Heartfelt thanks are extended to Nick, Michael, P  ter, and Jeremy whose collective insights have contributed to a most fascinating story.

#### Reference and Footnote

- 1 Barbara Priddy: "The Ends of the Lines: Airmail Services at the End of WWII", *Cameo*, Vol. 3, N   4, July 1986, page 75.
- 2 Perhaps the ship sailed before Cameroun declared for the Free French.

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## Amazing 1870-71 Wonder Stories - 74

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worth buying, unless the objective is to have beautiful, clean examples to behold.

In contrast, his prices for genuinely used (flown) items, particularly those sent by special means or to unusual destinations, seem like real bargains today, even when condition is not like that of a recently issued first day cover. SC, RC, and Etranger postmarks, A  rostiers and A  ronautes endorsements are not priced at all, nor are they very rare, but not airmailed, smuggled or diplomatically moved items. Many rarities were simply unknown at that time, and accumulators willing to buy such 'mystery' items, to stash them away for the time when someone may find

out what they really were, would have done exceedingly well financially, as well as having exhibition items sure to create attention and result in major awards.

Anyone willing to invest time in researching a topic — philatelic or otherwise — will sooner or later amass enough knowledge to permit correcting errors in generally accepted 'facts', substituting real facts, recognizing the actual nature of things as well as rarity if and where it exists, thus also drawing conclusions concerning proper value where tangibles are concerned. Even the greatest absurdity, once properly recognized and evaluated, is useful to the connoisseur, who will thus be led to the proper answers.

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# BOOKSHELF

## Books Noted

**Nomenclature des timbres parafiscaux français de permis de chasse (1975-2003)**, by Danielle Jolly; pub. Société française de philatélie fiscale; 75 pp. A4 spiral bound, abundantly illustrated; price 28€ inc. p&p for members of SFPPF, 22 rue de Paris, 77400 Pomponne. [Completes the section on hunting/shooting licence vignettes in the Yvert & Tellier catalogue of fiscals.]

**Oblitérations manuelles du Var: Timbres à date à cercle discontinu (1853-1965)**, by Robert Gregnac-Daudemard; photocopy format 210 x 145 mm; price 9,50€ inc. p&p; available from the author, "Colline", boulevard des Arbousiers, 83120 Sainte-Maxime. [List of cancellations in the *département* of the Var 1853-1968, originally published 1977; 3 free updates per year.]

**Catalogue des papiers timbrés d'Alsace-Lorraine 1870-1944**, by Claude Munch; pub. Société française de philatélie fiscale; 78 pp. A4 b/w but many coloured illustrations, spiral bound; price 33€ to members of SFPPF, address as above. [List and valuation of all stamped papers (fiscal stationery) in Alsace-Lorraine during this period.]

**La France libre dans la philatélie de Saint-Pierre-et-Miquelon**, by Jean-Jacques Tillard & David Allen; 96 pp. in French and English, col. ill., 165 x 250 mm; price 28€ inc. p&p; available from Jean-Jacques Tillard, BP 764, 97500 St-Pierre-et-Miquelon. [History of the most famous Gaullist issues, with printings, varieties, unissued stamps, values and information about forged overprints; illustrated in colour with rare items and historic documents.]

**West African Airmails: The McCaig and Porter Collections**, ed. Barbara Priddy; pub. West Africa Study Circle; 168 pp. A4 hardbound; price £34 + p&p to non-members or £18 to WASC members; available from Richard Payne (address temporarily unavailable). [Reference publication on West African aerophilately, based on two collections, and offering guide to developments, research, and insights into conflicts arising from development of airmail services.]

**Marques postales et oblitérations du département de l'Aube des origines au type 19**; 150 pp. A4 illustrated, hardbound; price 30€ + p&p; available from the Société philatélique de l'Est, BP 6, 10001 Troyes Cedex. [Detailed study of postal markings of 72 post offices up to 1885, with known dates of use; the book is already sold out, but is being reprinted for the end of the year.]

**The Revenues of Viet-Nam**; catalogue on CD-ROM produced by Society of Indo-China Philatelists; price \$20 (US); available from Ron Bentley, 2600 N. 24th Street, Arlington, VA 22207, USA. [All known local and national fiscals listed and priced, with colour illustrations.]

**La Poste aux lettres dans le département du Var, tome IV: 1849-1876**, by Robert Gregnac-Daudemard; 74 pp. A5 b/w; price 10€ + p&p; available from the Musée régional du Timbre, Le Château, BP 51, 83340 Le Luc-en-Provence. [Another period in the postal history of this *département*,

covering all cancellations with dates of use and valuations, and dates of the appearance of the first stamps in each town, and including the September 1871 frankings and local letters with *port dû*.]

**La Poste ferroviaire en Corrèze, tome 1, étude VIII, chapitre 1**, by Jean-Claude Dubois & J Eloy; 52 pp. A4 b/w; price 11€ inc. p&p; available from Club philatélique argentanais, 24-26 avenue Foch, 19400 Argentat. [Full details of railway postmarks in this *département*, including *ambulants*, *convoyeurs*, *gare* and *entrepôt* cachets, straight line marks, and *boîtes mobiles*, with dates of use of numerous cancellations.]

**Les réexpéditions dans le régime intérieur des origines à 1878**, by Michèle Chauvet; 90 pp. A4 b/w ill.; price 25€ inc. p&p in France payable to the Académie de Philatélie; available from Vincent Pothion, "La Poste aux Lettres", 17 rue du Faubourg-Montmartre, 75009 Paris. [The latest volume from the Académie library, covering the redirection of letters, and including the explanation of official texts, procedures, the deciphering of mail badly addressed or not reaching the addressee, changes in taxes, etc.; includes *déboursés*, *rebutés*, *détaxés*.]

**Catalogue des timbres fiscaux locaux et spéciaux de France et de Monaco 2003**; 200 pp. A4; price 53€ inc. p&p; available only to members of SFPPF from Henri Barbero, Secrétaire général de la SFPPF, address as at top of page. [Lists all those local fiscals not found in the Yvert & Tellier *Catalogue des timbres fiscaux généraux*, including vignettes for posters, customs taxes, cultural rights, playing cards, theatres, transport of meat, the medical association, exchange agents, the Compagnie des Wagons-lits, etc., as well as other figurines of local origin, and official fiscal cancellations, together with valuations in euros and a description of conditions of sale and usage; also included are forgeries for deceiving the fiscal administration, such as those of the Resistance, and training school vignettes.]

**Les "Luquet" en francs: Les tirages en feuilles, les tirages pour carnets**, pub. la Société des collectionneurs de coins datés et de millésimes; 45 pp. A5 b/w; price 6€ inc. p&p in France; available from Sococodami, Jean-Claude Gagné, 18 rue Danièle Casanova, 77330 Ozoir-la-Ferrière. [All issues of Marianne de Luquet in francs issued in sheets and booklets are described, analysed, put into context, and commented on.]

**Philatélie et aviation aux îles Wallis-et-Futuna**, by Francis Zammith (1999); 144 pp. b/w & col.; price 33,55€ inc. p&p for France or 36,60€ abroad; available from the author, B2 résidence des 3 Moulins, 13 chemin des 3 Moulins, 13100 Aix-en-Provence, or from Maison du livre aviation, 75 boulevard Malesherbes, 75008 Paris. [The aerophilatelic history of this region from 1947 to the 1980s, including that of the companies that served Wallis-et-Futuna, such as Trapas, UTA, TAI, Air France, as well as charter and experimental flights, and military liaison flights.]

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Compiled by Colin Spong

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*Supplement to No 5:* The Initial Organisation of Post Offices & Mail Runner Services in the British Sphere of Occupied Kamerun in 1916 (Maddocks):

## *Bulletin de la COL.FRA*

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N° 176 2<sup>ème</sup> Trim 2003: Hommage à Charles Bridoux; Taxation des plis recommandés insuffisamment affranchis (Abensur); Le contrôle des changes (Bonnefoy); 1970: Naissance de la Marianne de Béquet (Renard); Des initiatives privées pour aider la poste et l'usager (de la Mettrie); L'autorisation de réception des correspondances poste restante et télégramme restant sans surtaxe [cont.] (Coulon); Levée exceptionnelle maritime (Donnadieu).

## *France & Colonies Philatelist*

Whole N° 272 (Vol. 59, N° 2) Apr 2003: Detoured Alsace-Lorraine Mail -1870 and beyond (Luft); French Marcophily - Mail by Rail (Kinsley); Togo: The 1921 Mandate Issue Earliest Recorded Dates of Use - an Update (Mitchell); Amazing 1870-1871 Wonder Stories - 75 (Cohn); Periodic Update on French Military Post Offices (Luft); A Fabricated Cover (Luft); Paris District Office Datestamps - New, earlier and later dates on Sage period stamps (Wilson); Farewell to Raymond Pittier (Cohn).

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N° 1760 Feb 2003: Dis, l'artiste...: Raymond Moretti (-); Décès du graveur Claude Durrens (-); Le courrier posté en mer et la griffe «paquebot» (UPU); Tout sur la Foire de Paris [2<sup>e</sup> partie] (Trassaert); Marianne à la Nef: la République en galère (Jamet); Décryptage: Lorsque le compte n'y est pas (Dutau et Jimenez); Les origines du franc (Danan); Thématique: De Gaulle, français et fier de l'être (Connan); Polaire: Le mont d'Alsace (Joffre).

N° 1761 Mar 2003: La dentelure [1<sup>e</sup> partie] (-); Tout sur la Foire de Paris [3<sup>e</sup> partie] (Trassaert); Les usages non postaux des cachets postaux (de la Mettrie); Décodage: imprimé durement pénalisé (Prugnon); Emissions non dentelées de l'Empire (Magne); Tous les projets de la Marianne du 14 Juillet (Ben-Moha, Connan et Jamet).

N° 1762 Apr 2003: La dentelure [end] (-); Tout sur la Foire de Paris [4<sup>e</sup> partie] (Trassaert); La geste auguste de la Semeuse [1<sup>e</sup> partie] (Jamet); Décodage: Un imprimé durement pénalisé (Prugnon); Tous les projets de la Marianne du 14 juillet [2<sup>e</sup> partie] (Ben-Moha, Connan et Jamet); Les socio-postaux d'Alsace-Lorraine (SFPF).

## *La Philatélie Française*

Permanent features: Étude, Collection, Actualité, À lire, Événement,

N° 573 Dec 2002: Le service postal fluvial sur le Mékong (Guigues); Le plus vieux métier du monde (Deroy).

## *Timbres Magazine*

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

N° 29 Nov 2002: Les timbres de Marc Leguay, le peintre du Laos (Drillien); Les surchargés du «Richelieu» (Apaire et Sinais); Type «Sage» le dernier des classiques [1<sup>re</sup> partie] (de Pellinec); Napoléon: 5<sup>e</sup> partie: d'Iéna Friedland (Michaud); Air France au pays du Soleil-Levant (Abouchar et Ferry); Le département de la Sarthe (Baudot); Acheminement mixte (Chauvin).

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# Togo in World War I — The French Occupation Issues

Jeremy Martin and Bill Mitchell

In an article published in Journal 222 for December 2001 we described the background to the 1921 "Mandate" issue for the Territory of Togo (stamps of Dahomey printed in distinctive colours and overprinted *TOGO*). We went on to set out the earliest dates of use then recorded for this issue and asked for help in updating these details; thanks to assistance from collectors in the UK, the USA and France, a revised list was published in Journal 225 (September 2002).

This exercise was undertaken in connection with a forthcoming book by Jeremy Martin and Frank Walton on the stamps issued in Togo during and immediately after World War I which is to be published by the West Africa Study Circle as a companion volume to their "Togo Postal History 1914-1922" (1995), and in order that it may be as comprehensive and up-to-date as possible we are now asking for your help in extending the accompanying lists of currently noted earliest dates of use of the issues which preceded the "Mandate" series. But first, a brief historical note by way of background.

The small Territory of Togo became a German protectorate in 1885. On the outbreak of war at the beginning of August 1914 it was invaded by British and French troops, and by the end of the month the Germans had surrendered unconditionally. The Territory was divided between the two Allied powers, who initially overprinted captured stocks of stamps in the well-known German colonial "Yacht" designs. These soon became exhausted, and in May 1915 the British administration issued the current stamps of the Gold Coast overprinted *TOGO/Anglo-French/Occupation*. The French were not quite so quick off the mark in overprinting stamps of Dahomey *TOGO/Occupation/franco-anglaise*; these did not appear until 1916. Unoverprinted stamps of both colonies were also widely used from the beginning of the occupation; this exercise is confined to the issues of the French administration. At present the earliest recorded dates we have noted are as follows.

## 1. Unoverprinted postage stamps of Dahomey 1913-17.

Yvert/Cérès	S.G.	Value	Earliest date
43	42	1c	29 September 1914
44	43	2c	29 September 1914
45	44	4c	29 September 1914
46	45	5c	19 November 1914
47	46	10c	2 September 1914
48	47	15c	
49	48	20c	29 September 1914
50	49	25c	19 November 1914
51	50	30c	29 September 1914
52	51	35c	11 December 1916
53	52	40c	6 January 1917
54	53	45c	6 January 1917
55	54	50c	23 January 1917
56	55	75c	6 January 1917
57	56	1F	30 March 1915
58	57	2F	23 January 1917
59	58	5F	23 January 1917
60	59	10c + 5c (Red Cross)	18 November 1916

As is well-known, most values were printed on both ordinary and chalk-surfaced paper (the 15c, 25c and 35c on "chalky" only). Our notes do not distinguish between the two, but they do provide details of the earliest dates for some post offices, namely —

<u>Anécho</u>	19 November 1914 (1c, 5c, 25c)
	21 July 1915 (10c)
	20 August 1915 (4c)
	5 October 1915 (20c)
	18 November 1916 (Red Cross stamp)
	11 December 1916 (35c)
	6 January 1917 (40c, 45c, 75c, 1F)
	23 January 1917 (2c, 30c, 50c, 2F, 5F)

"Popo" 29 September 1914 for the 1c, 2c, 4c, 10c, 20c and 30c. (Petit Popo was a coastal town claimed by both France and Germany; the French claim was relinquished in 1885 and in 1905 Klein Popo became Anécho. Possibly because the Anécho cancel could not at first be traced the French excised the *GRAND* from their *GRAND POPO/DAHOMÉY ET DÉPENDANCES* cancel. This had a short life — the latest date recorded is 8 October 1914, and a note of any later date still will be appreciated.)

Atakpamé 12 January 1916 (10c, 25c)

Lomé 30 March 1915 (1c, 2c, 10c, 20c, 30c, 1F)  
17 March 1922 (25c)

Porto Seguro 1 January 1917 (Red Cross stamp)

Sansane-Mangu 2 September 1914 (10c)

Sokodé 30 January 1917 (5c)  
17 November ??? (20c)

2. Postage stamps of Dahomey overprinted *TOGO/Occupation/franco-anglaise*, 1916. With this issue the notes are divided between "chalky" and ordinary papers.

Yv/Cérès	S.G.	Value	Earliest date	
			Chalky	Ordinary
84	20	1c	5 April 1917	3 March 1917
85	21	2c	6 February 1918	2 February 1917
86	22	4c	29 November 1918	? ??? 1917
87	23	5c	29 November 1918	13 November 1916
88	24	10c	29 November 1918	21 November 1916
89	25	15c	26 December 1917	—
90	26	20c	2 April 1921	15 January 1917
91	27	25c	21 November 1916	—
92	28	30c		21 November 1916
93	29	35c	14 April 1917	—
94	30	40c		18 March 1917
95	31	45c		18 March 1917
96	32	50c	6 September 1918	21 August 1917
97	33	75c		28 February 1917
98	34	1F		19 April 1917
99	35	2F	26 February 1918	4 March 1917
100	36	5F	10 April 1922	2 February 1917

## 3. Postage due stamps

Unlike the French, who had used "*taxe*" stamps since very early days (1884 in the colonies), the Germans never collected unpaid (or under-paid) postal charges by means

of adhesives. Consequently, at the end of August 1914 no postage due stamps were available for overprinting by the French, who normally followed their domestic postal arrangements very closely in their colonies. So, while the demand cannot have been heavy, it's surprising that they did not overprint the Dahomey "taxe" stamps of 1914 until the "Mandate" issue of 1921. This being the case, one would have expected some record of the unoverprinted stamps with Togo postmarks, but so far none has turned up. The sole example of a Togo due recorded is the 10c of the earlier, 1906, issue (Yvert/Cérès T2, S.G. D34) used at Atakpamé on 27 August 1917, unfortunately off cover so it is impossible to say whether it was used correctly or cancelled by favour [see illustration]. Details of any other examples are especially sought.



That is all that is shown in the WASC records. Much more, no doubt, remains to be discovered, especially perhaps about the 1916 overprints — why are so few 1916 dates recorded? If your interests include this Territory, will you please go through your collection and send details of any earlier dates than those noted here to Bill at 41, Graemesdyke Avenue, East Sheen, London SW14 7BH. If practicable, photocopies would be appreciated. Thank you.

## Bookshelf

### Continued from page 59

*Le chemin de fer et la poste ferroviaire en Charente Inférieure, de l'origine à 1904*; pub. la Section Marcophile de l'Amicale Philatélique Aunisienne; 130 pp. A4, b/w & col., 6 maps; price 24€ inc. p&p payable to APA section Marcophile; available from J-P Darlet, 16 rue du Breuil Saint Jean, 17290 Landrais. [Covers the various railway companies as well as postal aspects such as *bureaux ambulants*, the *bureaux de passe* of Niort and Poitiers, *convoyeurs stations*, *convoyeurs lignes*, and *bureaux gares*.]

*Les timbres socio-postaux d'Alsace-Lorraine*, by Yves-Maxime Danan (2003); pub. Association des spécialistes en marques postales et oblitérations d'Alsace-Lorraine; 50 pp. A4 in colour; price 30€ + p&p; available from SPAL, André Lader, 52 rue de Monswiller, 67700 Saverne. [Covers the history of the vignettes used in this region for social security contributions, sold in post offices from 1891 to 1945 for sticking on social security cards.]

*Atlas und Lexikon zum Ersten Weltkrieg, 1: Karten*, by Andreas Birken & Hans-Henning Gerlach; 114 pp. A4 in colour; price 49€ + p&p; available from Philatek-Verlagsauslieferung, Mozartstrasse 67, 89548 Königsbrunn, Württemberg, Germany. [Maps (75 pp.) of the fronts and principal battles of WWI, including the names and positions of the different Austrian-German army corps; text in German.]

Maurice Tyler

*Australie, Continent Aéronautique*, by Bernard Abouchar & Vital Ferry; pub. Amicale Aérophilatélque d'Air France, Paris (2001); 170 pp. A4, printed on one side of paper only, card cover; ill. mainly in colour; price 45E + p&p; available from AADAF, 74 boulevard Blanqui, 75013 Paris. [Written in French, but covers airways and airmail operations serving Australia, from first flights to modern jet age.]

Ian McQueen

## List of Recently Published Articles

### Continued from page 60

N° 30 Dec 2002: Type «Sage» [2<sup>e</sup> partie] (de Pellinec); Les colis familiaux coloniaux (Chauvin); Paris, les marques de l'Ancien Régime (Baudot); Décryptage: Liquidation à Moissac (Chauvin).

N° 31 Jan 2003: Les séries Grands Hommes (Melot); «Un seul but: la victoire» (Chauvin); Philatélie Fiscale: Des papiers d'Etat dans votre collection? (Nakkachian); Des «Sage» de toutes les couleurs [3<sup>e</sup> partie] (de Pellinec); Napoléon: De l'Espagne à Wagram (Michaud); Les Bouches du Rhône [12] Marseille (Baudot); Décryptage: Hors sac (Chauvin).

N° 32 Feb 2003: La grande Histoire de petits timbres de France (Melot); Aérophilatélque: Icare en Eldorado (Abouchar); L'art postal d'Yves Cass (Jullien); Alger, capitale de la France en guerre (Chauvin); Canton, de l'opium, du thé et des timbres (de Pellinec); Recommandé de Nouvelle Calédonie [Paagoumène] (Chauvin).

N° 33 Mar 2003: Mermoz: des plis de légende (Apaire et Sinais); Les Trois Suisses en couverture (PJM); Le Laos fils du Mékong et père d'une marcophilie passionnate (de Pellinec).

N° 34 Apr 2003: La difficile naissance des timbres algériens (Melot); Timbres de propagande de Giraud à de Gaulle (Chauvin); Route du thé: Annam et Tonkin: terres de variétés (de Pellinec); Pub sur carnets: Eaux de minérales et quantité (PJM); Napoléon: Wagram, une victoire canon (Michaud); Le Panthéon: ses grands hommes (Cheval); Cartes Postales: Les chevaliers du Tour (Zeyons); Décryptage: Les cartes postales interzones avion affranchies en numéraire (Chauvin).

N° 35 May 2003: Les lettres de France à destination de l'étranger (de Pellinec); Timbres de l'Algérie française: 1954-1958 Chronique d'une disparition annoncée (Melot); Route du thé: Kouang-tcheou-wan (de Pellinec); Marques postales: Des guerres de Louis XIV à Louis XV (Baudot); Les Nouveaux Tarifs Postaux (SNTF); 1942: surtaxés coloniaux (Chauvin).



## PAGES FROM MY COLLECTION

### (19) An Interesting Guadeloupe Cover

John West



This cover from Guadeloupe to Berne, in Switzerland, started life as an enquiry to our Journal requesting assistance to trace what I originally took to be a railway line between Bordeaux and a town called Colon, in order to establish where the hexagonal TPO (see next page) had actually been handstamped. After some hours pouring over maps of the French railway system, I had discovered that there was a town called Coulon but could not understand why, presuming that the town name had changed slightly, (as they do sometimes!) this cover had travelled on this route when destined for Switzerland.

It was at this point that the awesome machinery of the France & Colonies Society began to turn its wheels. Our esteemed Journal editor started my reeducation by confirming that Colon does not exist in France and adding that the town of Coulon was out in the country and away from the main railway altogether. He offered the possible solution that this might not be a TPO at all but an entry mark indicating that it had arrived at Bordeaux from the Colonies. Maurice revised this view once he realised that no ship mail could have reached Bordeaux just four days after being posted at Pointe Noire on 17 September 1917 and he concluded - correctly as it was to transpire - that this had to be some kind of shipping mark.

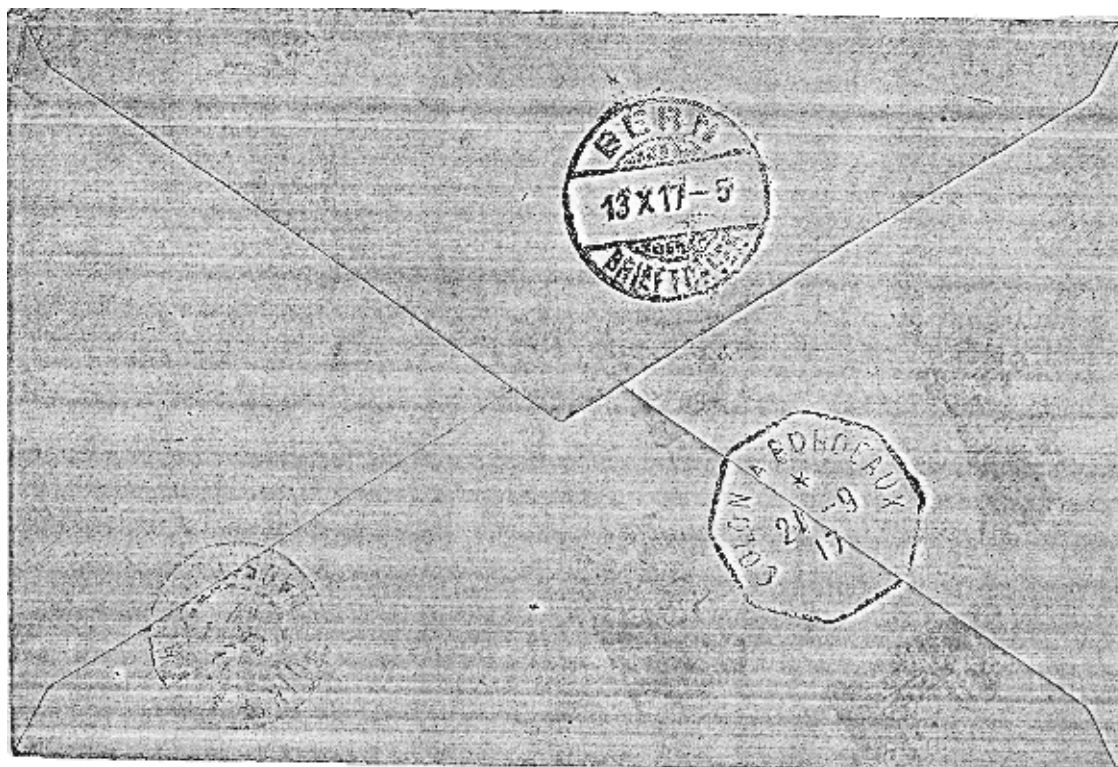
I mulled over this information but couldn't come to terms with the fact that the French would use an abbreviation of an English word, 'colonies', i.e. *colon*, as part of one of their cancellations [It is, of course, a French word as well - Ed.]. Consultation with Derek Richardson not only failed to clear up this point but now challenged the accuracy of

the postage used on the letter. Making the presumption that this letter would have been in the 0-20gm weight band, Derek noted that the postal rate between France and Guadeloupe (or any other colony) was equal to the metropolitan letter rate which, at that time, was 15c. With the addition of the registration fee of 25c this would make a total of 40c. The onward journey to Switzerland would have to have been at the foreign rate - namely 25c postage and a further 25c registration. Thus, he surmised, the correct postage could have been as high as 90c.

Derek went on to qualify this assertion by suggesting that the absence of a French entry mark afforded the possibility of a special arrangement being in existence for dealing with mail to Switzerland. He theorised that a Swiss agent at the port of arrival might collect all mail addressed to Switzerland off the arriving *paquebots* and put it directly on the next train to Geneva. He added that, if this had actually occurred, the 50c postage used would have been correct!

Fellow member John Mayne was next to shed a little light on what had become, by now, quite an interesting problem. John confirmed that the hexagonal mark was indeed a ship mark. He explained that these strikes were introduced on the West African routes in April 1908. Furthermore he had found a stamp with a single strike from a town called Colon, in the Panama area and offered the possible explanation that the mail might have been taken to Panama for collection by a French mail boat.

With all these unanswered questions and possibilities swirling round it was time for a knight in shining armour to



Back strikes on the Guadeloupe cover  
(reproduced from an indistinct photocopy)

enter the fray. No-one has armour more shiny than John Whiteside, who explained everything! He outlined the entry of France into the General Postal Union on 1 January 1876. At that time there were, evidently, two tariffs – an “A” and a “B” (which was higher and essentially for the Americas). On 1 July 1876 all the French colonies entered the GPU – using the “B” tariff. On 1 April 1879 the organisation was renamed the Universal Postal Union and the “B” tariff was abolished. All that remained now was one tariff for member states and another for non-members.

By 1917 almost every country in the world was a member of the UPU, and the cost of letter postage was the same to almost anywhere outside France. Whether it travelled to Japan or Switzerland, the postage would have cost 25c for mail weighing up to 20gms and, as Derek Richardson had pointed out, allied to a 25c registration fee, this would have constituted the correct postage. He added that the 15c internal postage rate could only have applied if the letter had been addressed to Metropolitan France (or to another French Colony).

John was now able to confirm that the *Colon à Bordeaux* hexagonal mark was a TPO strike, but affixed on a ship and not a train. Interestingly, he veered from the suggestion that the mail found its way to Panama and offered the more realistic proposal that it had been collected by a French mail boat travelling from Colon, in the Panama Canal Zone, and which had made a stop at an intermediate port of call in the Caribbean. He offered the likely point of collection as being St. Thomas. In the circumstances he had described, he added, he was not surprised to find no French port of entry mark.

One aspect did leave room for discussion however. John Whiteside noted the absence of any indication of censorship

on its transit from France to Switzerland. The cover was neither opened and re-sealed nor passed unopened. As much of the border area was a militarised zone, items passing through were censored, based, he thought, on Pontarlier. Is it possible that the situation had been relaxed by 1917 and that mail was travelling in closed bags by then, uncensored? To tie up the loose ends, I am also grateful to those who clarified that what I originally took to be a boxed figure “11” was simply a poorly inked “R” for registered mail and the manuscript figure ‘141’ underlined in the top left hand corner was the registered number of the item.

The patriotic label, which is just tied to the cover by both the Guadeloupe cancellation and the manuscript *Recommandée* is one of a series printed by “S. Farges” at Lyon. This *timbre-cachet de l’Alliance* was printed in sheets of 25 in 1915. The basic design of this series remained unaltered throughout, but was altered by virtue of the addition (or substitution) either of the words “*Ils Vaincront*” or “*Franchise Militaire*” or of the letters “F. M.” in the lower margin. More information is available from the Michel Bonneau WWI Vignette Catalogue at page n° 34 - reference number 126.

Having acquired all this information, one thing remains to be determined. Who can help me identify the French mail boat that would have carried this cover and which travelled between Panama and Bordeaux on or about 20 September 1917? Does anyone have access to the relevant *Salles* (French Maritime) book for the West Indies for the relevant date?

My thanks are due to Maurice Tyler, John Mayne, Derek Richardson, John Whiteside and Charles Kiddie, amongst others, for their enthusiastic assistance and their kind help in helping me find most of the answers that I set out to find.

# Fournier's Facsimiles

Alan Wood

François Fournier, an ex-soldier from the Franco-German War of 1870-71, created a thriving business trading in facsimiles of world-wide postage stamps. His business premises were in Geneva where by 1910 he was advertising in his own magazine "*Le Fac Simile*". In 1914 his 64-page price list offered 3671 different reproductions. During World War I censorship of mail severely disrupted the predominantly postal business.

Following the death of Fournier in 1917 the facsimiles continued to be sold for a while by one of his former employees, E Hirschburger, but when he too died in 1927 the Philatelic Union of Geneva stepped in and purchased the entire business and its stock. Printing equipment and tools used to manufacture the wares went to a Geneva museum. The reproductions were mainly marked either *FAUX* on the front or *FACSIMILE* on the reverse. Students from the Geneva School of Arts and Crafts were employed

to mount the facsimiles in a total of 480 specially printed albums dated 1928, which were numbered and sold to reputable dealers and philatelic societies. Apart from a reference collection retained for its library by L'Union Philatélique de Genève, the balance of the stock was incinerated.

As time went by many of these collections were broken up into single country selections which were of great interest to relevant collectors, so that many fewer complete collections are now in existence. One that has survived in its entirety (N° 206) was offered for sale by auction in Paris in April 2003. The album contained about 2750 pieces in addition to reproductions of cancellations.

Of interest to members of the France and Colonies PS will be a listing of the French and Colonial items included in this volume:

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## FRANCE

**1849-52 Cérès** 15c green  
40c red orange  
25c deep blue *tête-bêche* pair  
1F orange vermillion " "  
1F carmine " "

All the above are used copies with grill cancellations

**1853-61 Nap.** 1F carmine used with lozenge of dots  
" M *tête-bêche* pair

**1871-76 Cérès** 10c bistre M with large figures of value

## Franchise Militaire

Faked FM overprints on genuine stamps

Mouchon 15c orange  
Mouchon redrawn 15c pale red  
Sower 10c rose carmine  
Sower 15c slate green

**1859 Postage Due** 10c black used cds  
**1863** 15c " " cds  
**1881** 50c " imperf pair M  
3c " imperf M  
40c " imperf on 3 sides, perf 14 at base M

50c black on pink, perf, used cds  
1F reddish brown, perf, used cds

**1868 Telegraph stamps** 25c carmine pink imperf, pair M  
2F mauve " " "  
2F " used cds

**1868 Newspaper stamps** 2c blue imperf (2) used typographically  
2c mauve " (5) " "  
2c rose " (2) " "

**Page of cancellations** (a) 28 cds  
6 grills or lozenges  
(b) 2 stars  
5 lozenges  
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## COLONIES

**Tunisia** Paper perforated T for postage due stamps

## Anjouan

**1892** 4c M  
1F M  
10c used  
10c on 45c  
Cancellation octagonal date stamp 13 Juin 04

**Alexandria** *ALEXANDRIE* overprint for 1875-1900 issues

**Annam et Tonkin** surcharges (15) for 1881 issues  
Tonkin cds (3)

**Alsace Lorraine** 2c M  
4c M  
5c M  
1c used  
10c used  
20c used  
25c used  
Cancellations (13)  
1 Horseshoe 1 undated 11 dated

## French Colonies - General Issues

**1856-65** Eagle Proofs of 1c strip of 3  
" 20c " " "

**1881** Commerce Proof of 25c block of 12

**1892** Tablet type composite proof  
imperf sheet of 30  
1F values 29 different colonies, Sudan duplicated  
4c Sultanat d'Anjouan M  
5c Reunion M  
10c Établissements de l'Inde M  
25c Côte d'Ivoire  
35c St Pierre et Miquelon  
40c Côte d'Ivoire  
50c Indo-Chine  
10c Guyane used cds

## General Issues - Commerce

15c imperf block of 12  
20c “ “ “ “  
4c M  
25c M block of 6  
35c M “ “  
75c imperf block of 12 M  
1F imperf strip of 4 M

## General Issues - postage due

1c M  
2c M  
5c M  
1F (2) M  
2F M  
5F (2)M

## French Colonies

### 1892 Tablet type

10c Établissements de l'Inde M  
20c “ “ “ M  
1F Guinée Française M  
50c Côte d'Ivoire M  
5c St Pierre et Miquelon M  
10c on 45c Sultanat d'Anjouan used cds  
5c on 15c Côte d'Ivoire used cds  
20c ovpt *NLLE/CALEDONIE* used cds  
10c France P&C ovpt *PORT SAID/VINGT/CINQ*  
used cds

Sheet of 24 colonial circular cancellations

## French Congo

1891 Parcel Post 10c sheet of 20 including 1 inverted

## Somali Coast

Overprints *DJ 0.05 0.40*  
Circular date stamp for Djibouti

## Diego-Suarez

1890 Composite proof of 4 values in block of 8

## Reunion

1852 15c used, red lozenge of dots  
30c used, cds  
30c M

1889 Postage due, composite proof of 5 values  
“ “ set of 5 values used, cds

## Gabon

15c black/pink single and block of 6 used, cds  
25c black/green single used, cds  
“ “ “ M block of 6  
2 cds cancellations  
3 overprints

## Guadeloupe

Postage due 1876 Composite proof  
2x15c + 2x40c on blue 2x30c on white  
2x25c + 2x30c + 2x40c on white  
Overprints for 1891-1903 issues (6)  
Cancellations, cds (3)

1892 75c M

1912 05 on 4c M

## Monaco

1885 1F block of 4 M  
40c M  
75c M  
5F pair M  
Cancellations, cds (7)

## Cochin China

Cancellations, cds (5)  
Surcharges (2)

## General Colonies

Cancellations, cds (31)

## Tunisia

Cancellations, cds (2)

## OVERPRINTS

New Caledonia (7)

St Pierre et Miquelon (14)

Nossi-Bé (31)

French Levant (3)

Sudan (2)

Guyana (4)

Ivory Coast (3)

Port Said (5)

Madagascar (12)

French Congo (9)

Senegal (14)

Reunion (12)

Benin (5)

Diego Suarez (5)

Martinique (16)

Indo China (10)

Tahiti (7)

Obock (8)

Tunis (2)

Cavalle

Port Lagos

Vathy (2)

Dedeagh

Canton (3)

Yunnan Fou

Hoi Hao (2)

Mongtze

Packhoi (3)

Tchongking

## References

*The Postage Stamp - its history and recognition*, by L N and M Williams (Penguin Books, London 1956).

*Philatelic Forgers, their Lives and Works*, by V E Tyler (R Lowe Ltd, London 1976).

Auction catalogue, Sale 172, lot 1390 (J Robineau, Paris 2003).



# The Exchange of Commercial Mail between Switzerland and Occupied France & *vice versa* 1942-44

Notes by Erik Menne Larsen

based on the works of Reinhard Stutz (Winterthur, Switzerland)



Front of commercial cover from Occupied France to Switzerland in 1944, which is closed with a label from the Bordeaux censor office (index y) then at Nancy, and sealed with a rather flimsy censor mark in black - possibly of the Nancy office. Note the censor signature on the reverse of the cover (see illustration on next page),

When I read Roy Reader's interesting article about the commercial mail between Switzerland and France and *vice versa* during WWII, I remembered having seen an article by Reinhard Stutz on the same problem [Reinhard Stutz: *Schweiz-Frankreich-Schweiz Auslandspostverkehr 1939-1945, Anlage 1 zum AGZ-Rundbrief 101 / 2002*].

Mr. Stutz analyses the problem in great details and prints summaries of the Swiss postal gazette, *Post, Telegraphen- und Telefonen-Amtsblatt* (PTA), as well as relevant information from the *Handelsamtsblatt* of the Swiss Chamber of Commerce (SCC). Perhaps the following summary of Mr. Stutz's article is of interest to readers.

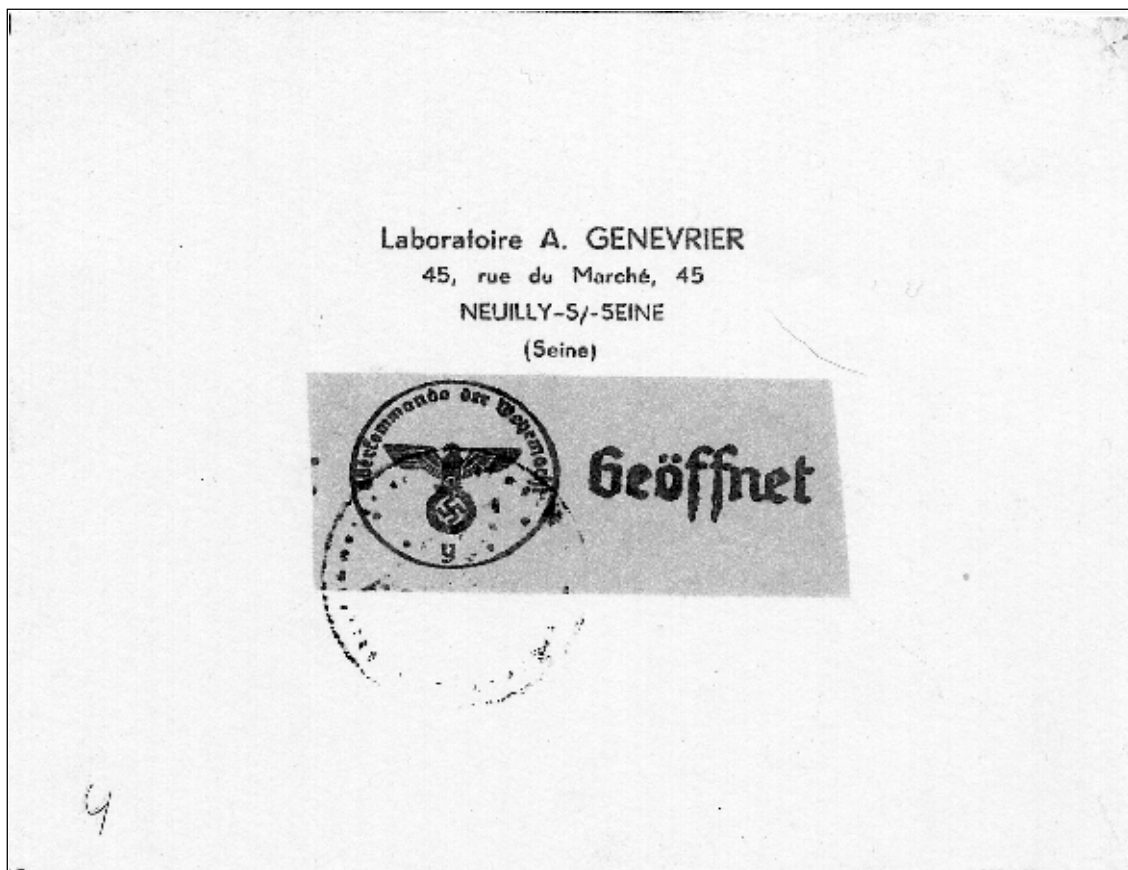
On 19 March 1942 the PTA n° 45 announced it was now possible to exchange important commercial mail between Switzerland and Occupied France (including the *départements* of Pas de Calais and Nord) via Geneva and Lyon. Registered mail was accepted, but only at the risk of the sender. (The registered mail was discontinued in July 1942.) The Swiss Chamber of Commerce in France would monitor the letters with special reference to the importance of the correspondence.

The Swiss *Handelsamtsblatt* n° 89 of 20.4.42 brought further details about the arrangement. It would be carried out through the good offices of the Swiss Chamber of Commerce in France on the following conditions:

The mail had to be addressed to the "Korrespondenz" section at the "Schweizerischen Handelskammer in Frankreich", Lyon 6, and all letters were to be accompanied by an addressed envelope in which the Chamber would forward the letters to the addressee in the Occupied Zone. Furthermore the sender had to enclose one (or more) IRC to pay for the French postage. The following conditions (and others) should be met:

Only correspondence in French or German on commercial matters of real practical interest to both parties was allowed. A letter with a copy and enclosures (of minor size) were allowed.

In a letter of 17 June the Swiss PO informed Lyon that the bundles with commercial mail from Switzerland to Occupied France would be addressed in the following way: "Lyon Gare / correspondances commerciales / pour la France



Reverse of the cover illustrated on the previous page

*occupée*". Lyon Gare now handed these bags to the SCC, which opened the covers, checked the content of the letters etc. and placed the papers in the enclosed envelope, which it franked and forwarded open to a German monitoring body in Lyon. (Mr. Stutz does not go into details about this monitoring). This body would send the still *open letters* in *closed bags* via the French postal system to Moulins where the German *Feldpost* took over all mail from the Vichy Zone. The commercial mail was then brought to the German *Wirtschaftskontrollstelle* in Paris (*Centre en France des Organisations Economiques Allemandes*, rue de Pressbourg, Paris). The *Wirtschaftskontrollstelle* would in turn forward the letters to the *Briefprüfstelle* (censor office) in Paris (index letter "x") which would examine, close and stamp them. The French PO could then deliver them to the addressees.

Apparently the service, announced in April 1942, did not function without problems until well into June 1942.

On 24 June the *Handelsamtsblatt* n° 143 mentions that information had been received from the French Post Office that a regular service had now been secured. On 6 July the same paper (n° 157) announced that the procedure had been simplified. A second cover was not necessary in future. One could now send the mail from Switzerland addressed *directly to the recipient in Occupied France*. The French Post in Lyon would forward such mail to the SCC at Lyon as usual: cf. PTA n° 106 of 22.6.42. The already mentioned details about the character of the correspondence were still valid - but on 10 July the Swiss Post Office made known that registered mail was no longer allowed. PTA n°

126 (17.7.42) stated that commercial mail should show the inscription "*Correspondance commerciale importante*".

The German occupation of Vichy France on 11 November 1942 at first brought the exchange of mail, including commercial mail, between Switzerland and Vichy France / Occupied France, respectively, to a halt. The Vichy zone sent the first mail to Switzerland on 22 December 1942, but I have no further information on the censorship or the route of these early mails.

On 21 January 1943 Switzerland resumed the exchange of mail with the newly occupied Vichy France and of commercial mail with the previously occupied zone of France. *This mail and all future mails between Switzerland and France followed the route Basel - Müllheim - Mulhouse - Belfort - Paris - Moulins to Lyon.*

According to Mr. Stutz the mail Switzerland-France (and *vice versa*) was from the same time censored by a temporary office in Paris, and from the middle of February by the ABP Paris (index "x"). From 26 February all censorship Switzerland-France and *vice versa* was transferred to the newly opened censorship office at Lyon (index "l") where it remained until this office was evacuated to Nancy 8-10 August 1944. The Lyon office appears to have reused its censor stamps etc. in Nancy. The German forces left Lyon on 3 September.

At the same time the SCC had transferred its inspection office from Lyon to Basel. The mails were often 3-4 weeks in transit, but Swiss complaints to the German *Armee-feldpostmeister* in Paris were fruitless. This change also

meant that the former routine with an addressed envelope enclosed was restored. Mail addressed directly to the addressees in the former Occupied Zone was returned to sender.

The Chamber of Commerce in Basel 2 would now send the open mail in a bag to the *Centre en France des Organisations Economiques Allemandes* in Paris. This would (from 26 February 1943) forward it – still open – to the German censor office at Lyon which was now the only responsible censor office for the exchange of mail between France and Switzerland. It would close the letters and stamp the envelope with a censor mark showing the index letter “I”. The mail was sent across the Demarcation Line and delivered through the French Post Office to the addressees.

Similar provisions and routines were valid in the direction Occupied France - Switzerland.

1) (May 1942 - November 1942) The commercial mail from the Occupied Zone was sent to the *Chambre de Commerce Suisse en France* in Paris 1, which after verification of the commercial importance would hand the letter in the open cover to the earlier mentioned German economic organisation (*Centre en France.....*) which in turn would hand them over to the censor office in Paris (“x”). After examining the mail the censor office closed the covers and stamped them with a censor mark. The German *Feldpost* would take the mail to Moulins. The French PO in the Vichy Zone then carried the bag by train to Lyon which in turn forwarded it to Geneva. (The route it followed from Lyon is unknown to me.)

2) (January 1943 - end of July 1944) I do not have adequate information on the handling of the mail in the period 21 January - 25 February 1943. The procedure was essentially

the same as earlier, but the Paris based “*Centre en France...*” would from 26 February via the German *Feldpost* send the open mail to Lyon for censoring. After censoring the French Post Office would send the now closed mail from Lyon Gare to Basel via Paris-Belfort-Mulhouse.

3) (End of July - middle of August 1944) The mail was forwarded from the SCC in Paris by German *Feldpost* to Nancy where a German censor office had been opened. [According to Mr. Stutz the Nancy office was originally transferred from Bordeaux on 15 November 1943. It served as reception office for the evacuated censor offices from Lyon and Paris as well as for the economic inspection office, *Centre en France des Organisations Economiques Allemandes*.]

4) (Middle of August 1944 - end) The mail was sent from SCC in Paris by courier to Nancy, where it was censored. The mail was then forwarded to the *Auslandsleitstelle* of the *Bahnpostamt 19* (i.e. the foreign sorting section of the Railway PO) in Frankfurt-am-Main which cancelled the stamps with a *Nachträglich | entwertet | Ffm.BA 19 | AL* postmark and forwarded it to Basel.

Street fighting began in Paris about 20 August. The capital was liberated on 25 August. The Nancy censor office left Nancy about 1 September for Haslach/Hornberg in Germany. The town was liberated on 15 September.

#### Sources

Reinhard Stutz: *Schweiz-Frankreich-Schweiz Auslands-postverkehr 1939-1945, Anlage 1 zum AGZ-Rundbrief 101 / 2002.*

idem: *Frankreich II. Weltkrieg: Die deutschen Auslands-briefprüfstellen (ABP) und Frankreich, in bezug auf die Schweiz.*

[See also page 74 for comments by Roy Reader on the hollow star cancellations in connection with this topic.]

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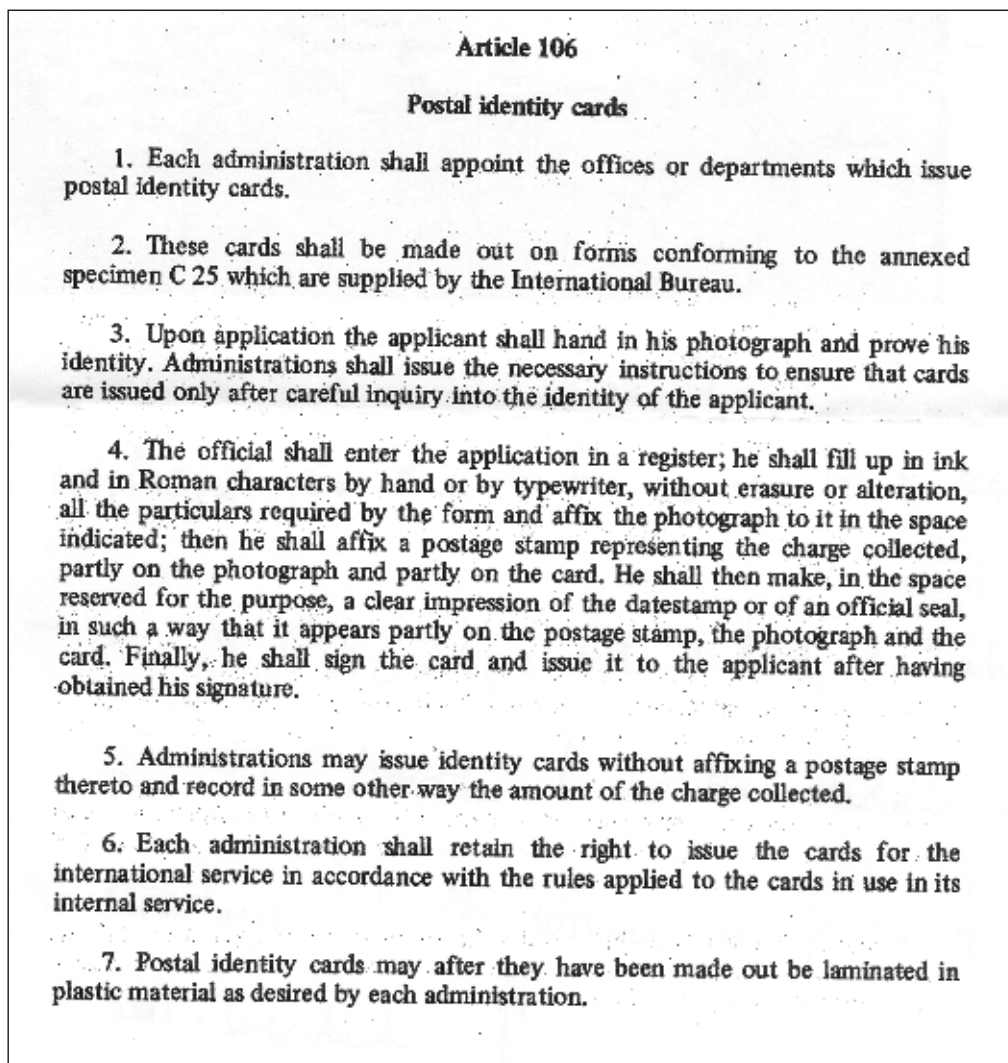
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## SHORTER ITEMS - INCLUDING QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

### Powers of Attorney to deal with Postal Matters

The UPU regulations provided that members of the UPU could issue postal identity cards. Regulation 106 of the Tokyo 1969 detailed regulations provided:



France, Germany, Italy, and the Netherlands certainly issued them. Scandinavian countries had an identity card valid in Sweden, Norway and Denmark for postal and other official purposes. The cards are not common but can be found.

The point of this note is to draw attention to a related service — the ability to get a third party to deal with a person's postal business. Illustrated on the next 2 pages are the front and back of Form 776, which is a Power of Attorney.

It was issued at N'Guigmi in Niger, and the AOF 10 franc fiscal stamp is cancelled with the *Colonie du Niger / Territoire de N'Guigmi* administrative handstamp. It was dated 6 January 1946.

The person receiving the Power of Attorney (or Authority to carry out postal, telegraph and telephone operations) lived in the Gironde in France.

The extent of the authority is set out in the text on the form. Particular items could be deleted according to the second note on the front page. The fiscal stamp did not have to be used if the transaction only concerned the National Savings Bank.

So it is interesting to see a fiscal stamp on a post office form rather than a postage stamp. A postage stamp would have been put or printed on the UPU identity cards.

**Robert Johnson**

2. N° 776 (nouveau).  
620-J. 20153-59.)

18

Antiens modèles n° 774  
du service général  
et n° 15 C. N. E.)

POSTES, TÉLÉGRAPHES  
ET TÉLÉPHONES.

RÉPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE.

Apposer ci-dessous un timbre  
de dimension de 3 fr. 50 (1).

TIMBRE FISCAL

10 Fcs

AFRIQUE OCCIDENTALE FRANÇAISE

PROCURATION

POUR

AUTORISER À EFFECTUER LES OPÉRATIONS POSTALES,  
TÉLÉGRAPHIQUES ET TÉLÉPHONIQUES.

Je, soussigné,

Nom : Patrouilleau

Prénoms : Pierre

Profession ou qualité : Adjudant d'Infanterie Coloniale

Domicile : St Guirni - Alger - AOF

DONNE POUVOIR À M.

Nom : Patrouilleau

Prénoms : André

Profession ou qualité : Cultivateur

Domicile : Hostens - Gironde - France

dont la signature est apposée ci-dessous, à effectuer en mes lieu et place les  
opérations suivantes (2) :

Recevoir à mon domicile ou retirer au bureau de poste de  
les objets chargés ou recommandés ;

Toucher les mandats-poste et les mandats télégraphiques ;

(1) Le timbre de dimension n'est pas exigé lorsqu'il s'agit d'une procuration concernant exclusivement des  
opérations intéressant la Caisse nationale d'épargne.

(2) Dans le cas de procuration partielle, biffer les indications inutiles.

The front of a Power of Attorney, with a fiscal stamp cancelled by an administrative cachet



Effectuer toutes opérations concernant le Service des comptes courants postaux ;

Effectuer toutes opérations relatives aux abonnements au téléphone ;

Retirer de la Caisse nationale d'épargne, en une ou plusieurs fois, la totalité de l'avoir du livret n° 47 . 195.415

Faire les opérations de toute nature avec la Caisse nationale d'épargne ;

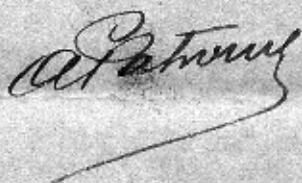
Faire en général toutes opérations postales, télégraphiques et téléphoniques ;

Donner toutes décharges, signer toutes quittances, registres et documents.

Fait à N. Guignol le 5 janvier 1945

Signature du fondé de pouvoir :

Signature du mandant :



Je, soussigné,  
certifie véritable la signature de M. (1) Ratrouilleau Pierre apposée  
ci-dessus.

A N. Guignol

timbre  
ou  
cachet

le 5 janvier 1945

Le Maire,

ou Le Commissaire de police,

Le Commandant de Cercle



(1) Nom et prénom du mandant.

The back of the Power of Attorney



## An Interesting Registered Express Airmail Cover



I am seeking information on this registered express airmail cover, posted 28.2.41 and destined for New York, of which the front and back are both illustrated above.

On the front in pencil is the phrase in manuscript "C 64 W / stamp enclosed". It travelled via Bermuda, with the back strike "HAMILTON / -3FEB50c", to New York, with the

arrival stamp of "FEB / 10 / 1950". It also carries a two line cachet "Released by / Prize Court" and the manuscript "*Contenu vérifié*", together with "1599" in red.

Can any members explain the long delay? What was the function of the Prize Court, and where was this Court based – Bermuda or New York? Any information would be welcome.

Len Rowe

## Hollow Star Cancellations

In my article on the hollow star cancellation in Journal 226 (page 137), I stated that the use of the cancellation probably did not start until after early 1943, when the German censor office at Lyon came into existence, as no mail cancelled with the hollow star had yet been recorded with other than the censor markings of that office.

Mr Duncan Colville has now contacted me to say that he is in possession of a cover cancelled with the hollow star but stamped by the German censor office in Paris and not Lyon, while Mr Menne Larsen has sent me an article by Reinhard Stutz from Newsletter N° 101 of the German Arbeitsgemeinschaft Zensurpost illustrating a similar cover.

The latter article gives the earliest known use of the hollow star cancellation as on an item of mail with a sender's dispatch mark dated 26 July 1943.

The article also refers to the existence of four types of hollow star cancellation: one with a small hollow in the middle used from about the end of July 1943, one with a large hollow in the middle used from about the end of July 1944, one with a straight line cut right through it used from an unknown date, and a small black hexagon with a patchy centre used from about February 1944.

[See also the summary by Mr Menne Larsen of Mr Stutz's article in this issue of the Journal, on page 67.]

Roy Reader

## Airmail Postage Paid Marking from Algiers 1940



One sometimes finds on French North African mail during the early World War Two period (generally from Morocco, at places like Casablanca or Rabat) handstamps to show how much *surtaxe aérienne* had been paid; and I have also

seen, for later periods, rather similar types with *affranchissement perçu*, for entering in manuscript the entire airmail postage.

However, I recently came across a fairly early and rather attractive type from Algiers in a very different style. It was struck in blue on an unaddressed official envelope of the Governor-General of Algeria, with his cachet, an airmail label and an ALGER R.P. date stamp for 7 March 1940, presumably a souvenir of or for the Governor. However, I have never seen it used, and should like to know whether members are aware of any actual usages for ordinary airmail postage.

Ian McQueen

## Interesting Overprinted Items

These enlarged photocopies are of items for which I have no answer. I should be grateful if a learned member or two can solve the problems and, if possible, give an approximation of value.



The first is Algeria n° 178 in Yvert and Cérès and n° 184 in SG, the 1F50 *rouge-carminé* Arms of Algiers with black *LIBRE* overprint and uprated, also in black, to 18.50 – which is not listed.



The second is a Blanc 5c *vert jaune* with Martinique added in black – again, not listed.



The third is a Sage 5c *vert* imperf that appears to be printed twice, the second time inverted. Could this be printers' waste or a trial of some sort? Could it be the colonial issue misprinted?

John Mayne



## Mail Addressed to French India

Having collected stamps and postal history from French India for the past 15 years, I have decided to branch out and collect mail going into the colony. I have just obtained

the two covers below for which I have three queries. No doubt one or two of the readers will be able to answer them or point me in the right direction for research.



On the first cover, what is the double-circled R over M, and what does the manuscript addition beginning with 5 and ending with an underlined 201, just under the straight line *CHATILLON SUR SEINE / COTE D'OR* mean?



On the second cover, what is the purple boxed G over 22?

Neither of the two cachets enquired about is Indian, as far as I know. Both covers were censored at the DHD/5 Madras office. It is possible the G over 22 is the actual censor's

personal mark, but I have not come across it before from Madras. I will welcome any information regarding the above. Answers to the Editor will be forwarded.

Ron Wood



## WWII Censorship and Cancelled Airmail Marks

I can offer the following response to John Sears's question in the last issue of the Journal (N° 227, page 27) about his 1942 cover from the southern zone of France to England with the 'Par Avion' marking annulled.

A mail service between the southern zone of France and the United Kingdom continued after the French signed the armistice with Germany in June 1940. Now, however, the mail had to be routed through neutral Lisbon, the route taken by John Sears's cover. A great deal of mail was exchanged. The service had to be discontinued after the Germans occupied the southern zone of France in November 1942.

Six francs was the correct franking for an ordinary airmail letter to Europe in 1942. It was made up of 4 francs for postage and 2 francs for the airmail supplement.

Although no airmail service to the United Kingdom was in operation at the time John Sears's letter was dispatched in April 1942, an airmail service did come into operation some time later in that year. In my own collection the earliest item carried as airmail was a postcard cancelled at Juan-les-Pins on 20 July 1942 and backstamped at Lisbon Central four days later [illustrated below]. The last leg of the journey from Lisbon to the United Kingdom was no doubt covered on board a BOAC aircraft, but it is not clear how the mail got from France to Lisbon in the first place. The Vichy Government was not allowed to operate any air services out of France except to its own overseas territories.

The only foreign airline that was allowed to touch down in France was Deutsche Lufthansa, which operated a service from Stuttgart to Lisbon with stops at Lyon and Marseille. However, when speaking about the period up to December 1941, Thomas H Boyle in his *Airmail Operations in World War II* says on page 418 that, from the best evidence available, Deutsche Lufthansa received no outgoing mail to take to Lisbon during its stops at Lyon and Marseille. He does not indicate any change to this policy when he later goes on to talk about the period after December 1941. It may be that the mail was flown from Marseille to Perpignan on a flight of the domestic Réseau Aérienne Française and then simply put on a train to travel to Lisbon by rail.

Mail sent from France to the United Kingdom was more often than not allowed to leave the country without undergoing examination by a French censor. John Sears's cover was, however, opened at a censor office, the one at Marseille, as indicated by the code 'WK2' on the handstamp. The sealing strip used by this office bore the word 'Contrôle' (Examined) set between inverted commas. The double-circle handstamp bearing the letters 'AC' was simply the identity mark of the censor having examined the letter. The handstamps used at Marseille bore either a single letter or, as in this case, a letter preceded by the letter 'A'. The 'AC' on the cover did not, therefore, stand for 'Autorités de Contrôle'.

Roy Reader



Postcard sent airmail from Juan-les-Pins to Slough on 20 July 1942.

The manuscript *par avion* marking has not been deleted to indicate non-availability of an airmail service.

Over-franked by 1F80 (perhaps as the sender did not have stamps to the value of 3F20 to bring the 1F20 postcard up to the airmail rate for postcards to European addresses).

Stamped *TROUVÉ À LA BOÎTE* (FOUND IN LETTER BOX).

Date stamped while in transit at Lisbon Central on 24 July.

Unchecked by the French censor, but checked and stamped (lightly only) by the British censor.

## REPORTS OF MEETINGS

### MAIN SOCIETY MEETING OF 1 MARCH 2003

#### Peter Stockton: Mail in Conflict

Introduced by President Mick Bister, Peter explained that his display of military mail would be divided into three sections; it was open-ended, but contained some surprises.

The first section covered the Colonies, but also extended to the Armée d'Orient and the occupation of the Rhine and Ruhr. Thus we saw mail under franchise at different times from the 1890s' colonial period, including West Africa, French garrison marks in China from the period after the Boxer Rebellion, and various maritime marks. A map of Serbia acted as an introduction to the Salonika campaign, which took place from 1915 onwards after the fall of Serbia, when Bulgaria joined the Central Powers and the Serbs were exiled in Corfu (once described as Europe's greatest internment camp). Illustrations of this event included some British involvement, the Lemnos staging post, *Secteur Postal* marks from 500 upwards, administrative cachets, and descriptions of certain locations. When Greece lost her neutrality in 1917, the subsequent censorship marks included a small outpost, civilian mail, and the N.O. mark possibly indicating *non ouvert*. This first section ended on a series of postcards portraying the great fire of Salonika in August 1917, and a relevant block of 4 commemoratives from 1968.

In the second section we moved on to some disparate items from World War II. These included the charity issue from late 1939, franchise material from the *Drôle de Guerre*, items from the Fall of France (Châteaudun), interzonal cards, *Frontstalag* camps, leaflets dropped by the RAF, an invitation to a Free French Forces event in Stoke-on-

Trent, mail to French citizens interned in Switzerland with different camps and labels, an American French War Relief parcel receipt, *colis postaux* documentation, a customs declaration, an inquiry to Italy from the Italian Red Cross in France, 1943 Corsica censored mail, *Feldpost* and Italian military post from forces in France, one example of a collection of letters to a family in Marseille with a due stamp, a census form for deported Frenchmen, and mail from a German POW in Strasbourg 1946-8.

The third and final section of Peter's display dealt with the Madagascar Uprising of 1947, which was put down with some degree of severity. The French had had a presence on the island from 1893, and there were also Madagascar troops in France from the beginning of World War II. We were therefore shown various types of postal markings, leaflets, cachets of administrative units, postage due items, letters registered internally, a few philatelic items, civilian mail handled by the military post office, covers to foreign destinations, and several post-insurrection odds and ends.

Vice-President Maurice Tyler commented in his vote of thanks that Peter had admitted to having amassed "some modest stuff," but his obvious knowledge of history as well as postal history had led to a fascinating display. Background details such as those of the Boxer Rebellion and of the Greek royal family, in addition to the wide variety of material on show such as cards, covers, documents, newspaper extracts and leaflets, had contributed a great deal of interest to an exhibition that extended from India to Madagascar and from the USA to Stoke-on-Trent.

MST

### MAIN SOCIETY MEETING OF 26 MARCH 2003

#### John Hammonds: Airmail *Pot-Pourri*

When introduced by the President, John explained that his main interest was in the history of aviation in France and her Colonies, and that we were therefore going to see a large number of first flight covers, and that nearly all the airmails would involve the Colonies in one form or another.

The first half of his show began with Algeria, and in the first instance some early air meetings of 1909-12. We learned that there was an intermittent service Algiers to Biskra 1922-3, and that Latécoère opened the line Alicante-Oran, before experimental flights in 1926 (with special labels, some overprinted *Garros*) led to a regular service being established between Marseille and Algiers in 1928. There was a crash in the sea off Alicante in 1933, when the mail was picked up and sent on by ship. Regular services were being gradually developed during the 1930s by the Société des Lignes Nord-Africaines, Air Afrique, SABENA, Aéromaritime, Pan-American and OAT, and John gave examples of many of these. Another crash in 1942 on a

flight to Senegal indicated further the dangers and difficulties of these comparatively still early years.

John then moved on to the rest of Africa, where his items included a crash at Niamey in 1925, some misprinted varieties of labels commemorating the record flight Étampes to Dakar (1925), some experimental flights such as those in 1934 between Brazzaville and Algiers, and the last flight of the Compagnie Générale Transsaharienne before being taken over by Air Afrique (1935). We saw examples of the large cachet *Voie Transsaharienne* and of *Transporté Exceptionnellement Par Avion* and other promotional slogans; the 1936 flight Paris to Niamey with an extra 50c postage applied for redirection to Porto Novo; and two covers sent by different routes from Tombouctou to France (1936-7).

The first session ended with Madagascar, including a 1930 crash on the journey from Tananarive to Paris in which the

crew were eaten by cannibals in the Belgian Congo but the mail survived; the inauguration of a weekly service to France; a 1939 *pli urgent officiel* from Tamatave to Hong Kong; and a 1944 cover from Diego Suarez to Calcutta probably flown via Tanganyika and Cairo.

After the break John started with Indo-China, and a crash in Burma on a 1929 flight to Saigon in which the mail was rescued from a swamp by local villagers and sent on partly by train. A number of trial flights to and from Saigon and Hanoi eventually led to a regular service, and to the first through flight Saigon to Marseille by Air Orient in 1931. In 1930 the still unfinished railway line between Saigon and Hanoi meant that the *service accéléré* involved the mail being carried between the two terminuses by hourly bus instead of the usual lorry. In 1931 there was another crash in Burma as a result of a storm; and we saw examples from 1932 of red *Marseille-Saigon* labels and boxed cachets, as well as others in black including scrip-type cachets. Further items of particular interest were a cover with 15 stamps making up the correct rate, a boxed *Hanoi-Marseille* cachet,

a blue *Contrôle Affr<sup>ts</sup> Avion* cachet, a *Par Avion Jusqu'à Marseille* cachet, and mail to France in 1941 routed either via Hong Kong or via Singapore.

New Caledonia was next illustrated by an early internal experimental flight (1931), a first flight Paris to Noumea in 1932, one in the return direction (1935) in which mail travelled partly by sea, and various Pan-American routes across the Pacific in the 1940s. The display continued with different islands of the West Indies, including some prepared mail that did not return to Paris by Flying Boat after a hurricane had sunk it in Florida, although the mail came back by sea (1936) and received the erroneous cachet *Avion Accidenté*. The final few covers were from France to the USA and Canada (1941, 1945, 1954).

Barbara Priddy gave the vote of thanks, and admitted she had a similar interest to John's but said that his was much wider. He had shown a wonderful range of items, especially of commercial and wartime covers, of which the vast majority were new to her and aroused her envy.

MST

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## SOCIETY'S 27th ANNUAL PHILATELIC WEEKEND 28-30 MARCH 2003

44 members together with their guests attended the Society's annual weekend at the Manor Hotel, Leamington Spa.

### Friday

After dinner on Friday, Peter Kelly, joint organiser of the weekend with Chris Hitchen, invited members as usual to show a few sheets in an impromptu display. **Peter Kelly** himself started proceedings with a miscellany of items, and was followed by **Mavis Pavey** who had 10 sheets of postcards illustrating custom points on France's borders. **Bob Larg** showed some WWI military cards, a wreck cover from the *Dragon d'Annam*, and 4 sheets of catapult mail from the *Île de France*. **Godfrey Bowden** followed with Type Sage and Tunisia, and **Maurice Tyler** had brought some French banknotes from the Third Republic onwards. **Bernard Berkinshaw-Smith** displayed mail with China and Far East connections, and **Robert Johnson** had some suspended mail service covers and foreign mail with French connections.

**Paul Watkins** showed some of his new acquisitions, and **Mavis Pavey** returned with a query on the 30c red Mercury types I and II. **Derek Richardson** displayed his anti-malaria cards from WWI, and **Maurice Tyler** concluded his showing of banknotes with the higher values. **David Lamb** had some essays and die proofs and *épreuves de luxe* from Andorra. **Peter Maybury** displayed some comparatively recent acquisitions from the *Ancien Régime* (*Petite Poste* and others). **Mick Bister** showed a series of engravings purchased at an antique market in Nice, depicting everyday scenes in the post office service by some well known designers and engravers of stamps. **Robert Paterson** had brought some new acquisitions, **Ron Wood** produced some queries on French India, and the evening finished with some more queries from **Prue Henderson**.

### Saturday

On Saturday morning the main displays began with **Bernard Berkinshaw-Smith** and aspects of French maritime mail, covering mail carried to and from the East by French mailboats. He explained the 3 types of cachet - line, provenance and military - used by the ships themselves, and dealt in particular with the trunk line N and its feeder lines, including the special fast line between Marseille and Alexandria 1869-1870. Feeder lines O, P, R and S were explained in detail, along with line M and the *Ligne d'Indochine*, involving a wide variety of ports and some very rare marks. A major part of the display dealt with the use of foreign ports for mail from China going abroad and the subsequent mixed frankings, again including some rare covers such as that from Pagoda Arsenal handled by the French PO in Amoy. This mail was divided into 3 sections, Shanghai, Hong Kong and Saigon, in each of which the mail was picked up by French boats. The display ended with examples of the Customs (later incorporated into the Imperial Chinese Post Office) carrying mail from inland China to the ports, with their various cachets or "chops" indicating their right to free internal mail.

**John West** then displayed the Red Cross in the French Colonies, allowing members the opportunity to see a comprehensive selection of material from each French colony which issued stamps during the First World War, surcharged for the benefit of the Red Cross. Examples of the local surcharges, which were subject to a great deal of profiteering, were shown, together with the 'Paris' surcharged material which was released to reduce the abuse of these issues by the local postal authorities. A number of examples of genuine postal usage were noted, together with the occasional double surcharges, inverted surcharges and other unrecorded flaws. Amongst items of particular



interest was the registered cover from St. Louis in Senegal, sent to Aube in France and bearing the 'sinking hospital ship' Red Cross issue of France alongside Senegal stamps — a mixture prohibited by the postal authorities. Also noted was an example of the unaddressed covers, sent through the diplomatic bag from Pondicherry to Cochinchina which featured in a Journal article last year. There were unique items from Reunion, including an 'archive specimen' cancellation used by the *Directeur des Postes* in Madagascar on UPU distributed specimen stamps, and a stunning example of postal use of the 5c black surcharge (posted and delivered in St. Pierre ) alongside a similar item but with the surcharge inverted. The display was concluded with a small range of more recent material featuring a complete selection of the Red Cross surcharged material which appeared between 1962 and 1974 whilst the Reunion stamps were simply French stamps bearing the CFA overprint.

**Bernard Lucas** showed examples of precancelled stamps, including the 1893 Sage issues and the 1920-22 Sowers, to illustrate the rates for which they were issued. Some dated corner blocks and some flaws of the overprint were also shown. The use of the stamps on cover was displayed, with some examples of the stamps cancelled to prevent re-use when the items were undelivered and returned to sender.

**Geoff Gethin** followed this with some pages from his book in production on 20th century forgeries of French stamps. He thus illustrated forgeries of the *POSTES FRANCE* and *POSTES PARIS* and circular *AFFRANCH<sup>TS</sup> POSTES* precancels, as well as the Poste Aérienne PA1 and PA2 overprints in which the colour, the shape of the aeroplane and the legend were all important indicators. He explained that for his book he had tried to follow the advice to illustrate stamps at the same sizes, to characterise the genuine stamps as well as the forgeries, and to have a good bibliography.

After the coffee break **Colin Spong** showed Madagascar airmails, commencing with the early pioneers seeking a route to the island either by seaplane or landplane. Although only a little amount of mail was carried on these flights, nevertheless they were the beginning of routes for the carrying of mail. We saw examples of covers from journeys made by Commandant Dagnaux in 1926, Captain Goulette in 1929, the Rous, Caillol and Dodement crash in the Congo in 1930, and finally the commercial mail link up with Imperial Airways at Nairobi or Broken Hill and the Belgian Sabena at Elisabethville in 1934-1935.

**Peter Stockton** displayed aspects of WWI, concentrating on the French supply route to the Eastern Front, the French presence in Northern Italy, and naval mail in the Mediterranean. Thus we saw marks of the Armée d'Orient after the fall of Serbia, and evidence of the supply route from Marseille by rail to avoid the U-boats; administrative cachets from Italy and the use of mail by French troops in Italy 1917-18; and cachets from the bases around the Mediterranean showing the different types of establishment, along with three postcards showing naval vessels and a troopship.

**John Whiteside** explained and illustrated railway connections from Paris to Montargis and beyond, to Nevers

[see Figure 1]. He told us that the Réseau P.L.M. was the last of the great French main line railway companies to be created, the line to Dijon being opened in stages between 1849 and 1851, and later extended to Auxerre in 1855. The important town of Nevers was connected to Paris by the neighbouring Réseau P.O., the first section from Paris to Corbeil being opened very early, in 1838, though this line was later transferred to the P.L.M. A more direct line to Nevers via Montargis was opened from Moret, 41½ miles from the capital on the Dijon line during 1860 and 1861.

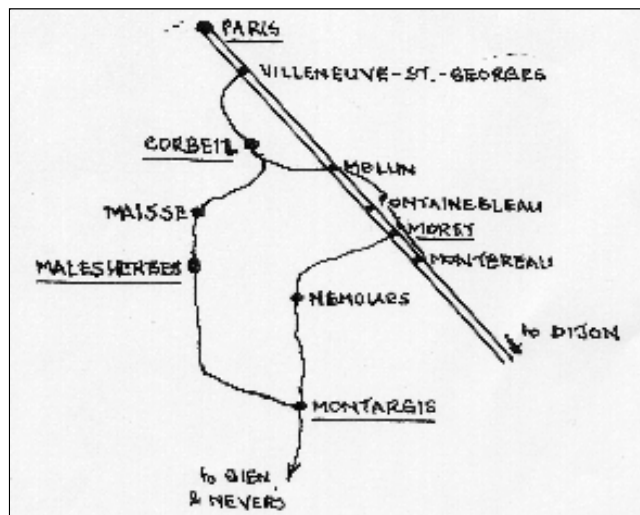


Figure 1 -  
The Paris-Moret-Montargis railway lines

The final Montargis connection was the extension of the Corbeil line via Maisse and Malesherbes from 1865 to 1867, and this became the standard route to Paris for many years. A day TPO had operated from Paris and back from 1864, originally via Moret but later via Malesherbes and Corbeil. An experimental *courrier-convoyeur* operated to and from Maisse in 1866, and this new line soon made use of the *convoyeur-station* marks, being replaced eventually in the late 1870s by the *convoyeur-ligne* marks. Mail can sometimes be traced to its place of origin from pictures on postcards or printed trade addresses, and items from Nemours, lying between Moret and Montargis, became especially evident. It appears that most Montargis-Paris *convoyeurs* began to travel on the Moret line as the 20th century progressed, as covers or cards from places on the line via Malesherbes become much less frequent.

Before the lunch break **Alan Wood** showed a series of Tunisian proofs from 1926 to 1952, among which was a die proof in black, without figures of value, of the Arab woman design of 1926. A composite of the 1931-33 issues surcharged in aid of postal workers' dependants and children was issued in 1938 to mark the 50th anniversary of Tunisian Postal Services..

During the lunch period the judges started their work on appraising the competition entries, of which there were 11, including such topics as the Postal Reform in France, French money stamps and advertising stamps, Post Office services, the Dahomey-Togo mail route 1884-1900, French *bureaux ambulants*, the post from Vichy France to the UK 1941-2, the Belgian Army in exile and refugees in France 1940, and the French occupation of Togo 1914-22. However, the winners were:



Figure 2 -

French Congo, January 1910 (See report on Robert Johnson's display on next page)

The use of definitives with a T in a triangle as postage due stamps in Mongoumba:  
two other covers addressed to the same place are known treated in this way.

The use of the cds *Moyen Congo / Congo Français* is scarce.

The letter was addressed to an Inspector of the SC Sanga Oubangui at Mongoumba,  
and this may be why the endorsement "A taxer l'agent postal" appears on the front.

Mongoumba is in the north-east of Moyen Congo near the borders of the Belgian Congo and Oubangui-Chari.

It is not known where this item was posted.

The charge is calculated on a third step rate of 30c for 30 to 45gm.

Levett Trophy (philately): no entries.

Alvey Cup (postal history): "French mail sent through the  
British Indian postal system" by **Ron Wood**.

Filmer Shield (adhesives): "France - the specimen  
overprints" by **George Barker**.

Jubilee Salver (miscellaneous): "Visiting cards" by **Mick Bister**.

The Literature Competition had been judged previously  
by a different panel, but the winner was announced:

**Roy Reader** for "Interzone Mail 1940-1944" [See page 46  
for full details of the Literature Awards].

The President also took this opportunity to present the  
trophy for the best entry in the periodicals section  
of the Chester 2002 Literature Competition to your  
editor **Maurice Tyler**.

The afternoon continued with **Peter Kelly** and "the amazing  
travels of Type Sage." Peter illustrated a very wide variety  
of destinations for covers bearing this stamp, in an  
approximately alphabetical listing, with times, dates and  
full details of changes in rates and routes given for each  
one, including one with an entry mark used as a cancel.  
Thus we saw letters going to such places as Barbarie (Libya),  
Macao (China), Burma (with a range of markings), Vera  
Cruz (Mexico), the French Congo (*Mission des Troupes du  
Haut Oubangui*), the Portuguese Congo (Angola), Gabon,  
New Caledonia, Algeria, Tahiti (Océanie), St. Helena (from  
a Boer War POW), Suakin (Sudan), and Eritrea.

**Chris Hitchen** displayed the district offices in Paris from  
1852 to 1863. In 1852 all French post offices were issued  
with identifiable cancellers to replace the anonymous grills.  
The provincial offices received the familiar small figure  
lozenges and Paris ones with their office letter in large  
serif characters. At this date there were 10 principal district  
offices and a number of secondary and supplementary  
offices, which eventually made a total of 35 for the city. A  
map showing the location of all these accompanied the  
display. However by January 1852 the processing of all  
normal letters had been transferred to the Bureau Central  
and only exceptional items were actually handled in the  
district offices. This state of affairs lasted until March 1856  
for the main offices and March 1860 for the secondary and  
supplementary ones. The regular use in the latter therefore  
was for only some 3½ years. In 1855 a second series of  
lozenges was issued with smaller block letters and both  
types remained in use together. This was neatly  
demonstrated by an item from Office M with both lozenges  
on the same cover. The items dealt with in the offices in  
the first period included all mail that had to be handed  
over the counter: registered, franchise, printed matter and  
foreign mail, and letters for the special railway service. A  
selection of all these was shown, including the first recorded  
use of a lozenge at Office E on 25 January 1852. A selection  
from each office followed which included a wide range of  
destinations and rates.

**Tony Shepherd** showed Lebanon wartime mails 1939-1945, giving us a brief insight into the French postal censorship service carried out by the military during the Second World War. The display illustrated the various types of censorship handstamps applied to the mail, together with the labels used when letters had been opened and the contents examined. Thus we saw mail to and from the Lebanon during the period of the French administration from September 1939 to the fall of France in June 1940, during the Vichy period, and then in the Free French period up to the end of the conflict.

**Robert Johnson** showed three frames of the French Congo on cover. The issue chosen was the 1892 *Groupe* type with all values up to 75c. Robert commented that, as always, the small European population able to write and send letters out of the colony had to be taken into account in forming a collection. To make his point he showed as well two covers with the Dubois general issue surcharged *Congo français* and a value, namely 5c on 25c, used on the same cover with 10c on 25c where the surcharge was inverted, together with the addition of an unsurcharged 35c, in June 1892, and an 1894 cover with the 15c on 25c together with three *Groupe* type stamps to Germany. A cover with the *Groupe* type 10c and a 1900 *Femme bakaloise* 50c both with a T in a triangle to cover 60c postage due was shown, and that cover is illustrated opposite in Figure 2.

**George Henderson** then displayed items illustrating Franco-Russian military cooperation in World War I. He commented that very few people today know about the Russian soldiers who served in France at that time; disbelief prompted jokes about men being seen in various places 'with snow on their boots'. The story begins in the 1890s, when the two nations negotiated a military alliance, and the associated events generated large quantities of commemorative postcards and pseudo-philatelic memorabilia. Russian troops did come to France and their bravery in the field was recognised by the French high command. Their heavy losses are still recognised today in the care with which the French maintain their cemetery at Saint Hilaire-le-Grand. Their efforts were however almost nullified when the Revolution in Russia led to open mutiny, a problem which the French solved in characteristic manner: loyal soldiers continued to fight in a smaller formation, *la Légion Russe*. Postal service for the Russians was provided by *Secteur 189*, whose date stamp is the first clue for finding covers and postcards. Mail used by Russians within France is relatively easy to find; mail sent home to Russia is more difficult; and mail from Russia to the men at the front is virtually impossible. Many questions remain unanswered, however: the official history mentions only two brigades whereas other sources mention further arrivals; some writers insist that the first arrivals came via Archangel, whereas the route via the Far East is incontestable; Deloste offers his readers only 16 relevant cachets or postmarks, whereas George says he has 22 and a recent American catalogue offered about 40.

After the tea break **Ron Wood** showed 7 frames of the stamps of French India on cover, showing their postal use and rates for the period 1892-1954. From 1892 until 1940 the postal rates for the most part presented no problem,

given sufficient material to work from. From 1940 until about 1945 there is a dearth of commercial material. Most items during this period were philatelic, and the rates shown were purely to obtain fine used material. After 1945 commercial mail increased, but the rates shown were inconsistent and did not mirror British Indian, French or Indochinese rates. From observation of the display it can be seen that much work still has to be done in the period from 1940 to 1954, although French India, of course, is not the only colony to suffer from this problem. Ron was hoping for assistance regarding this, but received only commiseration.

**Peter Maybury** offered an illustrated postal history of Algeria to 1962. He explained that the earliest known handstamps were applied by the Spanish Postal Authorities to mail destined for the towns of Algiers and Oran, in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Following the 1830 expedition to Algiers the French military established post offices at Algiers - offices designated A and from 20.7.1830 to 21.9.1830 B, plus D & F; at Bône - office B; at Bougie - office C; and at Oran - office E. French internal rates were applied from the port of entry, with a surcharge of 1 décime 'voie de mer'. The occupation was restricted to the coastal towns, infrastructure being almost non-existent, and so mail was carried by armed navy vessels (*avisos*) from port to port along the coast. The stamps of France were used until 1924 when they were overprinted *ALGERIE* (four distinct varieties of typeface being listed). In 1926 dedicated stamps were printed and issued, both metropolitan and local issues being authorised for use. Following the result of the 1958 referendum the Algeria issues were withdrawn and the *colons* celebrated with slogan postmarks proclaiming their true loyalty. The establishment of the short lived independent state in July 1962 occasioned the official and unofficial overprinting of French stamps, while still retaining the metropolitan tariffs and the use of French stamps, as did the authorities of the fledgling Democratic Republic which followed in September 1962. The many items of interest accompanying this account included a 1789 *double port* letter from a man held to ransom by the *dey* of Algiers, an 1832 disinfected letter, an envelope rescued from a wreck in 1909, FM mail, a *paquebot* marking, *recouvrements*, *AR* and *remboursement* marks, machine cancels, and a 1961 official letter captured by the FLN.

After an excellent dinner, further impromptu displays were presented. **John Whiteside** showed variations in the *Bureau de Passe* 99 at Angers; **Skanda Vaitilingam** had a *pot-pourri*, or what he described by a local term unknown to most of us as "stukkies and brokkies"; **Graham Lenton** had brought a *ballon monté* sent to Bristol; **Colin Spong** produced a 1926 Madagascar first flight; **Peter Kelly** had some French letters from the Boer War; **Paul Watkins** showed hotel trade cards of c1820 and some cigarette and chocolate cards; **Alan Wood** showed a diplomatic label complete with cord and waxed seal for attachment to the diplomatic bag addressed to the Minister for Foreign Affairs in Paris, from the French Ambassador to Petrograd, in 1902; **Mavis Pavey** had brought an illustrated list of the Kings of France; **Tony Shepherd** showed Caribbean postal censorship; and **Leslie Marley** produced a miscellany of items including some queries.



## Sunday

Sunday morning began with **Ashley Lawrence** presenting *La Semeuse* - the early years [See Journal 227 page 3 for Ashley's detailed article on this topic]. His display took the form of items from his collection of Sowers, which he fondly calls this common little stamp. Illustrations of the original sketch, medallion and coins designed by Louis-Oscar Roty were shown, together with the die engraved by Louis-Eugène Mouchon, essays, colour trials and proofs. Other goodies included a first day cover dated 2 April 1903, a strip of three of the 15c green type VI coil stamps, and a *millésime* block of the 10c scarlet Sower of November 1907. As the beginning of April marks the centenary of the first appearance of *La Semeuse* on French stamps, Ashley hoped all members would join him in celebrating this milestone in French philately by singing Happy Birthday!

**Barrie Jay** followed with cross-Channel mail 1793-1815, covering France and territories occupied by France in the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars [See Journal 227 page 43 for a fuller description of this display]. The first period of 1793-1801 included letters sent by neutral ships or smuggled, and one with a revolutionary message was returned to sender in Marseille. A commercial cover to London that arrived in Switzerland bore the *Armée du Rhin* mark. In the second period of 1803-1814 when war started again, the post was much more organised, and there was an agreement with Thurn and Taxis for mail to travel via Hamburg. Items of interest included the RN4 and R4 handstamps in different sizes, letters carried by Mme Récamier, letters that went from France to Britain via Spain, mail from the 100 Day War, and a selection of POW mail.

**John Hammonds** displayed the Paris 1937 International Exhibition [See Journal 193 page 103 for a fuller description of this display]. He explained that this was the last of a series of large international exhibitions held since 1855 in Paris, and was officially called *Arts Décoratifs et Industries Modernes*. The City of Paris had to provide most of the finance, and held lotteries and issued bonds to cover expenses. 142 pavilions of France and her colonies were erected, and 42 other nations were also represented; major works included the Palais de Chaillot and the Palais de Tokyo (now the Museum of Modern Art). One small pavilion showing the organisation and work of the Zionist Movement in Palestine provided the first mention of Israel 11 years before the official foundation of the state. The exhibition was not fully completed in time for the official opening, but 34 million people attended at the price of entry of 6 francs. Special stamps were issued to publicise the occasion, but these were not well received and were soon withdrawn. Slogan cancellations were also used for publicity, including one in Esperanto; and various post offices were established on the site that had special cachets and a variety of machine cancels. Other items produced specifically for the exhibition included vignettes and labels, postcards, posters, tickets and matchbox labels; and two outstanding works of art were first shown here: Picasso's *Guernica* and Dufy's *La Fée Électricité*.

After the coffee break **Godfrey Bowden** showed the different values of the Sage stamp used in France and (imperfectorate) in the Colonies during the period 1876-1900, arranged in long rows chronologically according to the dates indicated by the postmarks [See Journal 223 page 33 for a fuller description of this display]. This arrangement enabled the changes in colour and the subtle changes in shade (some comparatively rare) to be observed more clearly, as well as indicating the periods of use of each stamp. Among the comments that arose as a result of this method of viewing the issues, Godfrey wondered why the 1c, 2c, 4c, 5c and 10c had all been produced first in green; why the 3c had not appeared until 1878; and why type I had lasted only a very short time. It also became obvious that the longest living Sage stamps were the 5c and the 30c.

**Mavis Pavey** gave a 3 frame display on the Kings and Queens of France from a series of black and white postcards. Although it was impossible to show the complete series within these constraints, the display started with the Capetian Charles IV, and continued with the Valois from Philippe VI to Henri IV. The Bourbons extended from Louis XIII to Louis XVI and the uncrowned Louis XVII. A 4 sheet interval of Bonapartes led back to the Bourbons and Louis XVIII, concluding with Napoleon III.

**Yvonne Larg** gave a display of 15 sheets of advertising covers from Monaco hotels (1904-58) incorporating replies to enquiries concerning their history and prominent clients. This was followed by a collection of French stamps (1888-1904) and postal stationery overprinted Zanzibar, two postcards of the Monaco Air Rally (1914), and in conclusion a 1925-1940 selection of French tuberculosis seals, labels and seals on cover.

The final display, by **Skanda Vaitilingam**, was on the colony of French Guiana, which is only a small part of the territory on the north coast of South America. Most of it consists of Inini, a French dependency which issued its own stamps between 1932 and 1940 (Guiana stamps overprinted). Guiana's first stamps were (a) variously surcharged French colonials and (b) Tablet keytypes, between 1888 and 1892. Pictorial sets followed in 1904, 1929 and 1947, featuring people, wildlife, etc. The 1904 series was used for over 20 years, varied by colour and value changes, provisional surcharges and a Red Cross stamp. Various omnibus issues, a West Indies Tercentenary set and Vichy stamps were followed by a Free French series in 1945. In 1947 Guiana achieved Overseas *Département* (DOM) status, and since then has used French stamps.

In the concluding session of the weekend it was agreed by all those present that **Peter Kelly** and **Chris Hitchen**, with the cooperation of other members, had made a great success of organising the event, which had proved extremely enjoyable, very punctual, and had produced some wonderful material. **Mick Bister** expressed thanks to all participants for the special blend of camaraderie that had been in evidence, the wide diversity of the items shown, and the excellent presentations that had varied from the pithy to the poetic and the erudite. In particular he thanked **Bernard Berkinshaw-Smith**, the former organiser of the weekend,

for his efforts over so many years that had built up and maintained the outstanding success of the event, and pointed out that it now needed two people to do the task that he had fulfilled so efficiently.

He commented that mention of one award had been omitted in the earlier presentations, but needed to be highlighted, and that was the Rowland Hill Award for journalistic excellence, given by the Royal Mail to **Ashley Lawrence** in 2002 for his article on the Pigeon Post. More recently, Ashley's major article on the Sower had been translated into French for publishing on the website of the Musée de la Poste.

In conclusion Mick reported that the Manor Hotel was due to be sold for redevelopment, but because of the uncertainty of the situation a provisional booking would be made with the hotel for 26-28 March 2004 in the hope that we could hold the event here again. In the meantime other suitable venues would be sought, and a final decision would be made later this year.

The following is a list of members who attended part or all of the weekend:

Michael Annells  
George Barker  
Bernard Berkinshaw-Smith  
Mick Bister  
Godfrey Bowden  
Rodney Dean  
Peter Denning  
Geoff Gethin  
John Hammonds  
John Harris  
George Henderson  
Prue Henderson  
Chris Hitchen  
Barrie Jay  
Robert Johnson  
Peter Kelly  
David Lamb  
Bob Larg  
Yvonne Larg  
Ashley Lawrence  
Graham Lenton  
Bernard Lucas

Lesley Marley  
Peter Maybury  
John Mayne  
Bill Mitchell  
John Parmenter  
Robert Paterson  
Mavis Pavey  
Barbara Priddy  
Derek Richardson  
Tony Shepherd  
Colin Spong  
Iain Stevenson  
Peter Stockton  
John Thorpe  
Maurice Tyler  
Skanda Vaitilingam  
Paul Watkins  
John West  
John Whiteside  
Gareth Williams  
Alan Wood  
Ron Wood

MST

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## SOUTHERN GROUP MEETING OF 12 APRIL 2003

### French West Africa by Peter Kelly

The Organiser welcomed Peter to the Southern Group again, but this was a meeting that nearly did not happen! This was due to us being locked out of the Community Centre because of a lack of communication by the previous booking who finished early and did not inform anyone, hence the doors were locked and there was no response to any phone calls! However, Bob and Yvonne Larg came to the rescue and some fourteen of us crowded into their Dining Room to enjoy a wonderful and fascinating display from Peter.

Peter outlined the historical events that led France to acquire colonies in West Africa, as well as the chronological order in which the various colonies changed their names and amalgamated and eventually formed the Federation, before becoming independent. The display covered the postal history of this Federation and in particular French Soudan and Niger from the 1880s until the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War in 1945.

Although we were unable to provide the usual display frames on this occasion, because we had to pass the sheets

from member to member, with a shorter display on the dining table, it did provide us with the opportunity of examining the sheets more closely and also ask questions as they went along. The variety of material and usage of the stamps which for many people with long memories were always found in the packet, together with postcards, illustrating the different modes of transport in carrying the mail in these territories will be something we shall remember for many a day.

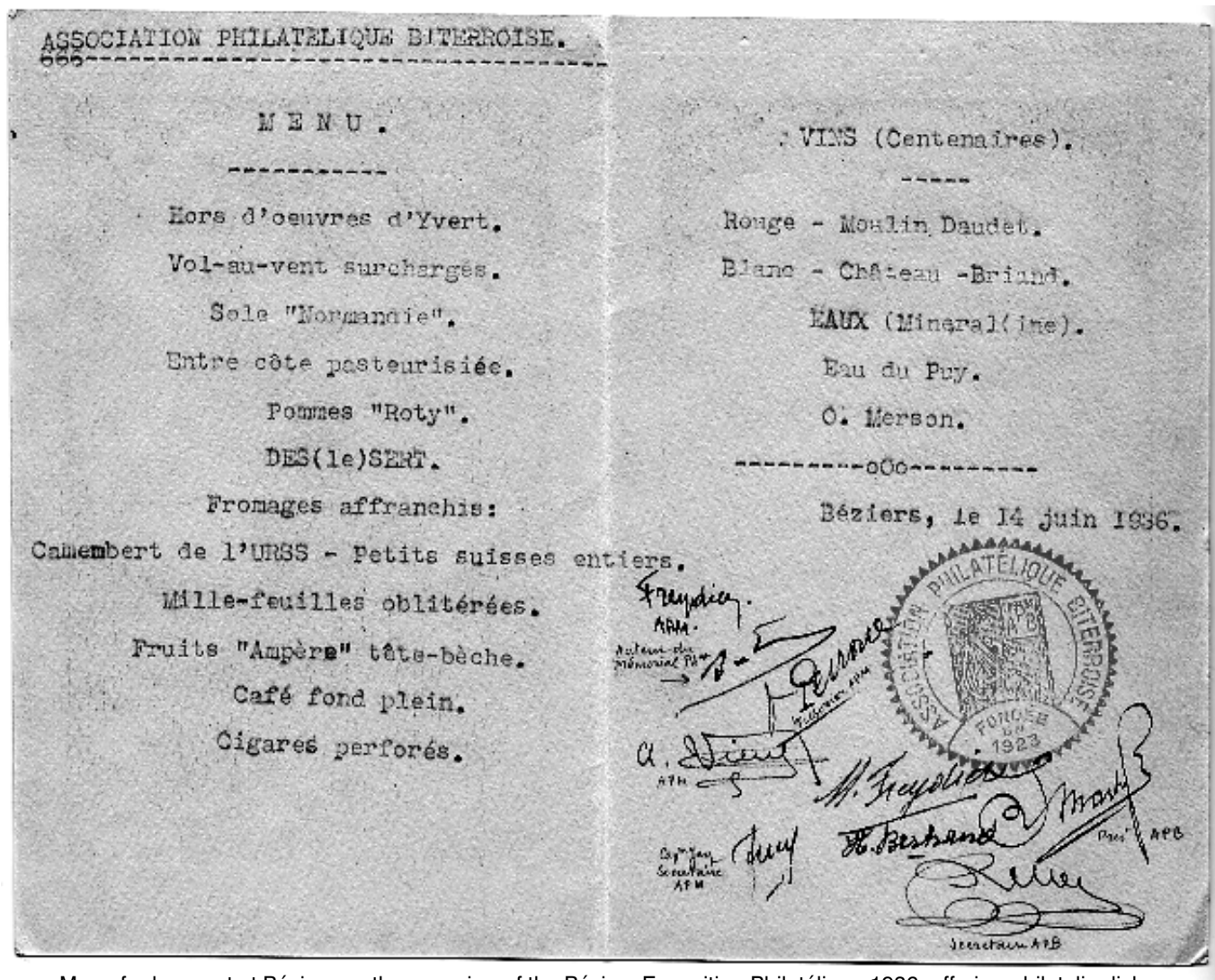
Bill Mitchell gave the vote of thanks on behalf of members and guests and Colin Spong thanked the "Largs" for providing us with room and board! Finally, Peter presented everyone with a five-page brochure including maps, outlining what we had seen during the afternoon.

Members present: Betty Blincow, Roy Ferguson, Geoff Gethin, John Hammonds, Bob Larg, Yvonne Larg, Bill Mitchell, Bob Small, Colin Spong, John Thorpe, Michael Wilson; and Guests: Frank Blincow and Pat Spong. Apologies from Michael Annells, Michael Berry, Colin Clarkson and Barbara Priddy.

CWS

## MAIN SOCIETY MEETING OF 24 APRIL 2002

### Len Rowe: A Philatelist's Day Out - French Philatelic Exhibitions



Menu for banquet at Béziers on the occasion of the Béziers Exposition Philatélique 1936, offering philatelic dishes (slightly reduced in size)

Len Rowe was introduced by President Mick Bister who explained that he had known the speaker for some years in his capacity as Auction Secretary. Len began his display by showing a selection of material produced to promote philatelic exhibitions throughout Europe between 1897 and 1936 and which included items from Germany, Austria, Brazil, Ecuador and Australia. Within this context Len proceeded to display what France had been doing during the same years.

The early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century did not witness many philatelic exhibitions or, at least, not those which produced publicity material. Exceptions were the 1900 Paris Exhibition and the first Congrès Philatélique in 1913, both represented by vignettes. The 1923 Congrès Philatélique de Bordeaux was represented by a mint example of the classic Merson overprint, which was also to be seen on a magnificent registered cover with a registration label, complete with its sheet margins bearing the PTT stationery reference N° 512.

Then followed a rich display of material from the 1920s and early 1930s when philatelic exhibitions at local, regional and at national level were accompanied by a plethora of

publicity and souvenir material, much of which was in the distinctive and collectable art deco style. We saw entrance tickets, tombola tickets and bus tickets, postcards showing venues and postcards showing stereotype stamp collectors, examples of programmes, invitations and banquet menus; we even saw a souvenir sweet wrapper. The inventiveness and creative imagination of the promoters were at the same time awe inspiring and bewildering. Vignettes were seen both perf and imperf, with inverted frames and displaced centres, in *se tenant* panes and *tête-bêche* pairs, in colour trials and essays, and invariably cancelled in a multitude of coloured inks. Souvenir postcards recorded first days and first flights. Banquet menus, one of which (illustrated above) featured philatelic delicacies such as *Sole "Normandie"* and *Pommes Roty*, were adorned with signatures, exhibition vignettes and multiple cachets. 'Would M'sieur like a black coffee or would he prefer a red cancel?'

The beautiful 5F Sage issued for the 1925 Exposition Philatélique Internationale de Paris was shown both as a complete miniature sheet and as a used single on cover, and we saw the first Journée Philatélique cover of 1927 from Montpellier. The 1927 Strasbourg triptych was also



noted and it became apparent during the proceedings that the concept of the French tricolour was to be frequently repeated at other exhibitions either within the design of souvenir items or by the appropriate positioning of red and blue stamps on souvenir covers.

The 1929 Le Havre Exhibition was represented by both the Merson overprint and the 50c Jeanne d'Arc booklet, and all five vignettes were seen on an attractive set of envelopes tied by the exhibition cancel and franked by the War Orphans issues. Then followed the EIPA perfin on the 1F50 blue, on and off cover, and postcards from the 1930 Centenaire de l'Algérie exhibition in Algiers accompanied by the special stamp issue with both the 11½ and 12 perforations.

The 1931 Nice exhibition provided further insight into the production of souvenir material, and Len showed us photographic essays of the postcard design and of the vignettes together with trial strikes of the exhibition cachet. Nice was a popular venue for philatelic exhibitions, and when it hosted the 1935 exhibition vignettes were overprinted 'Bourse aux Timbres' for which the overprint proofs were on display.

Len commented that during the 1930s the quality of design deteriorated. Nevertheless, we were treated to the delights of the 1931 Lyon and the 1932 Nancy Exhibitions, the 1936 Bourges Exhibition and the splendid material associated with 1937 Exposition Philatélique de Paris (PEXIP). The 1939 exhibition at Rodez honoured the founding of the Amicale Philatélique de Rodez with a perforated miniature sheet comprising four Mercury issues on *porte-timbres*.

Len closed his display with a photograph taken of the St Quentin philatelic society of 1935 assembled outside a local restaurant prior to sampling its delights. The group consisted almost entirely of men, mostly middle aged or elderly and mostly looking like retired professionals. Amongst them were a lone lady philatelist and one young boy. *Plus ça change .....*!

In giving the vote of thanks, Chris Hitchen applauded the speaker on the huge quantity of material that he had been able to show us in one evening and on the humorous way in which the display had been presented. The members had been both informed and entertained, a most fitting way in which to end the season.

MLB

## Leamington Weekend 2003

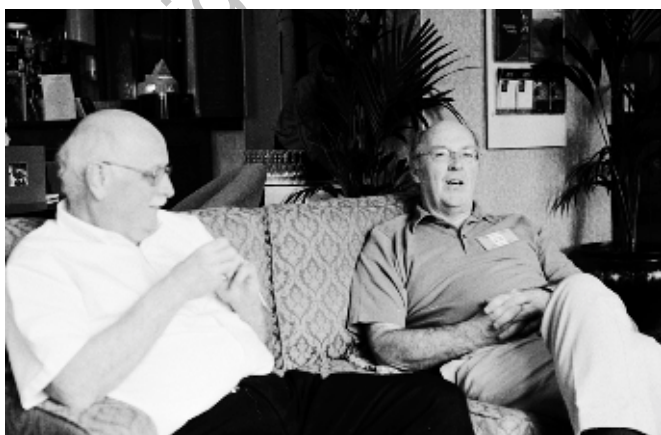
Photos by Godfrey Bowden and Maurice Tyler



A brace of Johns (Mayne and West) in discussion



The serious side of the weekend - the displays



Peter Maybury and Mick Bister  
in relaxed mood during one of the breaks



Colin Spong, David Lamb and Tony Shepherd  
disputing a matter of detail

## August 2003 Auction Lots

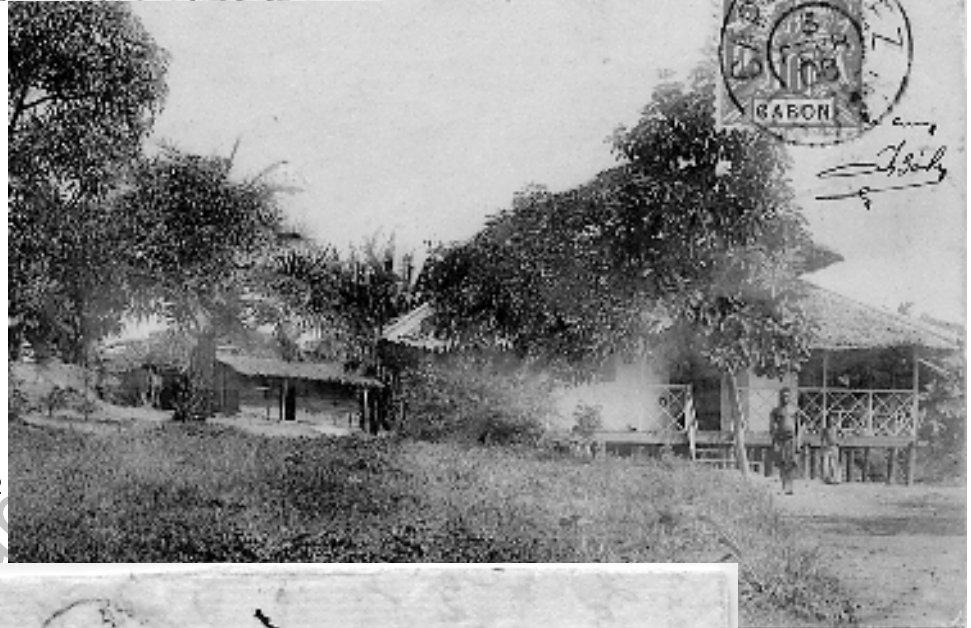


(Above) 2c blue imperf *Journaux* on piece

(Left) ex collection of French 'Home Guard' covers



(Above)  
10c Sower with Minéraline pub



(Right) 1902 French Congo  
showing post office at Kango in 1902



1779 D'AB entry mark (d'Angleterre Bruxelles) in blue