

ISSN 0269-5006

# The Journal of the France & Colonies Philatelic Society



'The Sealing of the Mail Bags in a Station Office' - an engraving by René Cottet  
from Mick Bister's collection of French Post Office engravings  
(much reduced in size)

Volume 54 ● Number 1  
March 2004  
Whole Number 231

# THE FRANCE & COLONIES PHILATELIC SOCIETY OF GREAT BRITAIN

## Officers

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.

## 2004 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

The Society's *Journal* is published in March, June, September and December.

It is printed by Direct Offset, 27c High Street, Glastonbury, Somerset BA6 9DD from the Editor's camera ready copy.

Distribution: D J Richardson and M S Tyler.

The price is included in members' subscriptions.

The contents are copyright.

## 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 54 Number 1**

**March 2004 ● Whole No 231**

## CONTENTS

Society Notes .....	2
Articles .....	2
New Members .....	2
Members Deceased .....	2
Vacancy for Auction Secretary .....	2
An Invitation to a Display .....	2
Exhibition Successes .....	2
Essential Philatelic Literature .....	2
Displays by Members .....	38
Philatelic Honours .....	38
Corrigenda .....	38
Congo (Brazzaville) - The 'Woman and Child' Definitives of 1996-8 (M Round) .....	3
List of Recently Published Articles (C W Spong) .....	6
Congo Français Provisionals (R I Johnson) .....	7
Some Early Machine Cancels - 5 (W G Mitchell) .....	10
The Siege of Agadez in 1916 - A By-Product of World War I in the Colony of Niger (P R A Kelly) .....	13
Postal Sector 390 (R E Reader) .....	15
World War II French Naval Post - More on the <i>Bâtiment de Ligne "Richelieu"</i> (W G Mitchell) .....	17
Amazing 1870-71 Wonder Stories - 82 (E M Cohn) .....	21
Shorter Items - including Questions and Answers .....	23
Italian Postal Stationery adapted for use in POW Camps in Kenya (G Barot) .....	23
<i>Œuvre du Pain</i> (M S Tyler) .....	25
Togo Overprints - the 1921 issue again! (E J Mayne) .....	26
De Gaulle in Britain (D J Hogarth) .....	26
<i>Après le Départ</i> marks used Overseas (E J Mayne, J Sacher, R I Johnson, C Palmer) .....	27
Monaco/Munich (M S Tyler) .....	29
<i>Île de France</i> Catapult Mail September 1928 & August 1929 (D J Hogarth) .....	30
Benin - the Early Years (J Sacher) .....	31
Czechs in the French Foreign Legion (B Day) .....	31
Military Initials in Indochina (D Taylor Smith) .....	31
Reports of Meetings .....	32
Main Society Meeting of 26 November 2003 - C S Holder: Tunisian Postal History (MST) .....	32
Southern Group Meeting of 10 January 2004 - The Largs at FCPS (CWS) .....	32
Northern Group Meeting of 24 January 2004 - S R Ellis: Fr Transatlantic Mail / A Goude: Dahomey (JPM) .....	33
Main Society Meeting of 28 January 2004 - R C Deakin: Morocco to 1956 (MST/RCD) .....	34
Bookshelf .....	39
Reviews (C W Spong) .....	39
Books Noted (M S Tyler) .....	40
Stop Press .....	40
Selected Auction Lots Illustrated (M L Bister) .....	cover pages iii, iv

## SOCIETY NOTES

### Articles

The Editor's stockpile of articles for publication has run very low, and he would be delighted to receive further material, of any length, in the near future. Please help!

If you have given, or are to give, a display on a relevant topic, perhaps you could consider adapting the material as an article, or even just submitting illustrations with a brief commentary, for publication as "Pages from my Collection." See the final Meeting Report in this Journal for an example of how a theme can be made attractive and interesting with comparatively little effort.

\* \* \*

### New Members

The Society is pleased to welcome the following:

1225 David Payne (Bristol), 1226 G B Morgan (Perth), 1227 Conor Davis (Republic of Ireland), Derek Brown (Leicester), 1229 Peter Chappell (West Yorkshire), 1230 D McCammon (Co. Armagh), 1231 Jonas Hollén (Sweden), 1232 R C Wilson (West Sussex).

\* \* \*

### Members Deceased

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

576 M E Penny, 1164 Norton Collier, 681 Eric Wilkerson.

\* \* \*

### Vacancy for Auction Secretary

Our current Auction Secretary, Mick Bister, has expressed his desire to stand down from the post at the end of the year and the Society is therefore seeking a successor. The post is an extremely important one as it provides a popular service to the membership and the funds it raises contribute considerably to keeping the annual subscription down.

The post offers a variety of activities including the production of the catalogue, the keeping of accounts and the packaging and dispatch of lots. Best of all is the handling of extremely diverse material which results in the acquisition of much philatelic knowledge outside one's own collecting interests.

The current auctions are 'computer generated' using Word for the catalogue and Excel for the accounts and for the issuing of invoices and statements. However, IT skills are not essential as the above tasks can be performed using a typewriter or word processor and simple accountancy stationery. Residency near London is preferable as lots need to be brought in for the room auctions.

This is an important and invaluable task for someone who has the time to spare and an enthusiasm for French philately. Anybody who feels they would like to undertake this rôle should contact the Secretary as soon as possible.

\* \* \*

### An Invitation to a Display

Our Past President, John Levett, is inviting any non-members of the Royal Philatelic Society to its Headquarters at 41 Devonshire Place (6 minutes from Baker Street or Regents Park stations), to view a display on "The Franco-Prussian War 1870-1871 and its Aftermath" on Saturday 22 May, at any time between 1.00 and 6.00 pm, with tea at 4.00. Requests to attend can be sent to J H Levett, c/o 41 Devonshire Place, London W1G 7JY, when you will receive by means of confirmation a ticket to gain admittance.

Some of the following items will be included: early ballooning material; the Sieges of Metz and Paris; military letters; POWs; Red Cross; Boules de Moulins; pigeon mail; *passeurs*; detoured mail. These will be followed by the stamps issued as a result of the War, and the Armistice period, leading into the Commune revolution.

This subject has never been displayed in depth at the Royal in its 135 years. The display will cover at least 15 frames, and it is hoped a complimentary booklet will be available for all who attend.

For those who wish to make a day of it, the London Eye or the Planetarium and Madame Tussaud's with Oxford Circus and Bond Street are all within 10 minutes' walk!

\* \* \*

### Exhibition Successes

At Bangkok 03 (October 2003) the following awards were made to members:

**Barrie Jay** received a Gold Medal for "Mail between Britain and Mainland Europe 1793-1815."

**Iain Stevenson** received a Silver Medal (with 83%) in the one-frame class for "GB Life Policy Revenues."

At the international philatelic literature exhibition Ternex 2003 (Buenos Aires, December 2003) our member **Bertrand Sinais** (together with two colleagues) was awarded a Gold Medal for their "Catalogue des entiers PAP de France et Monaco."

\* \* \*

### Essential Philatelic Literature

Following the proposal in the last Journal that members might consider submitting a list of philatelic books that members of this Society should perhaps try to acquire as a basic library for their hobby, only two members have so far found the time to send in their suggestions. In the hope that a few more might be able to follow their lead, the results of this survey will be left open until the next issue.

It is interesting to note that the two lists received coincide in only two of the titles!

\* \* \*

**Continued on page 38**

# Congo (Brazzaville) - The 'Woman and Child' Definitives of 1996-8

Michael Round

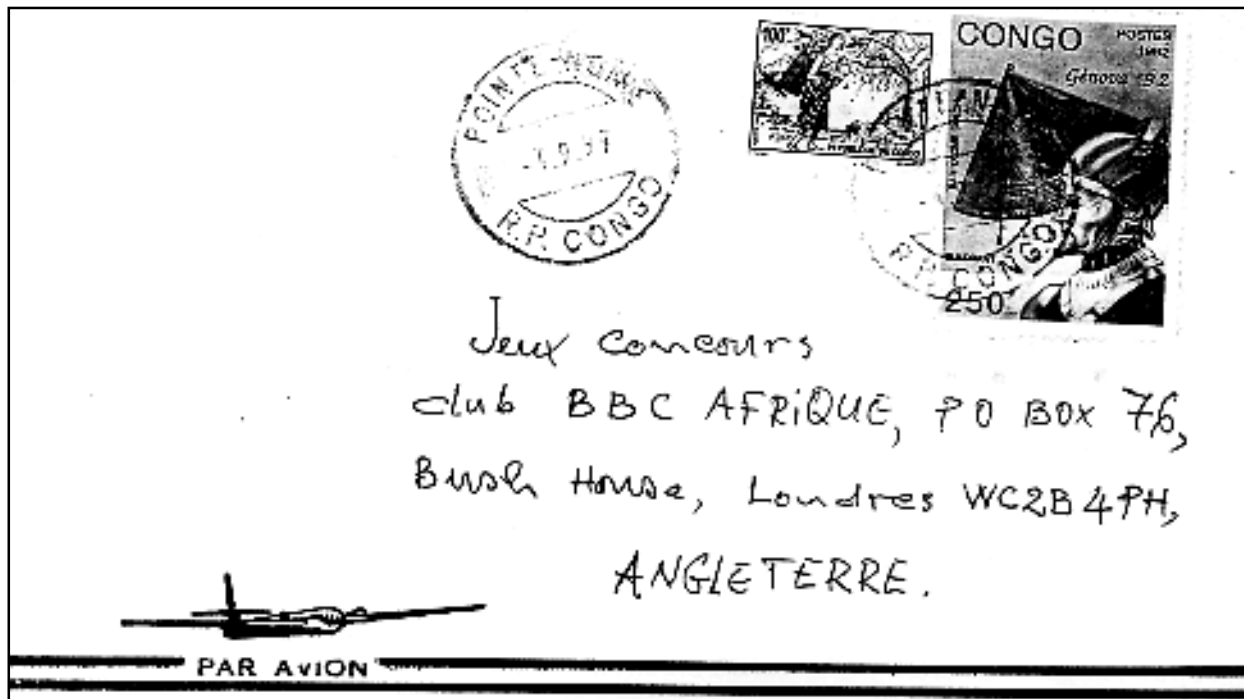


Figure 1 -  
Unoverprinted 100F, used in Pointe-Noire

Philatelists of long ago would acclaim the occasional commemorative issue as a relief from the potential boredom of definitives. Nowadays the reverse may well apply, and collectors satiated with the plethora of modern commemoratives, thematics and other pictorials might welcome the sobriety of the occasional definitive set. The former French colonies in Africa provide many such opportunities for a philatelic “de-tox”: they include this easily overlooked and incompletely catalogued issue from the former French Congo.

The ‘Woman and Child’ stamps form a set of six, in a horizontal design showing a woman at left, carrying a child before her and a pannier on her back; the right-hand portion of the design shows a tree and the design is dated 1996. They first came to collectors’ attention (and were reported in *Timbroscopie* magazine<sup>1</sup>) on commercial mail, but not - as might have been expected - in their original unoverprinted form. All reported copies bore an overprint: either the single word LÉGAL in small capitals, or with a continuously repeating overprint reading - again in capitals - AUTORISÉ (authorised). This prompted thoughts among collectors here of some kind of emergency postal-fiscal usage (the basic stamps being quite unknown at the time), while *Timbroscopie* itself divined some civil-unrest-related looting from post offices, with surviving stocks then being overprinted in order to distinguish them from those stolen. (There are countless philatelic precedents for this procedure, notably from South America.) Later *Timbroscopie* items<sup>2, 3</sup> rounded up subsequent collector findings and reported that of the two overprints, the AUTORISÉ was the commoner - this seems not to be the case, however, from my own sample of 40-plus covers examined here in Britain, which all bear the word LÉGAL.

The **unoverprinted stamps** were not reported used at all. They were not immediately catalogued by anyone, and were thought not to exist - certainly not to have been issued - without overprint. After several years, their story has begun to emerge, and different explanations are offered by three catalogues now listing the unoverprinted set. They do however agree on the date (1996), printing process (litho) and perforation (13). Their listings may be tabulated as follows; the colour descriptions are my own.

Yvert	Scott	Michel	
1012	1115	I	40F dull blue
1013	1116	II	50F brown-purple
1014	1117	III	90F orange
1015	1118	IV	100F blue-green
1016	1119	V	115F grey
1017	1120	VI	205F grey-brown

Yvert (*Tome 2, 2<sup>e</sup> Partie, 2002*) labels the set *Série courante. La femme à la hotte* (Definitive set. Woman with Pannier), and prices each stamp mint and used at the prevailing percentage of face value without further comment. Scott (*2003 Standard Catalogue, Volume 2 C-F*) has the caption Mother Carrying Baby; prices (similar to Yvert’s) are for mint only, used being unpriced, and an accompanying footnote reads “It has been stated that this set was not issued.” Michel (*Übersee-Katalog Band 6, Süd- und Zentralafrika 2002*) calls it *Landfrau mit Kind* (Country-woman with Child); its Roman numbering (falling between “regular” Nos 1473 and 1474) is reserved for irregular items such as “stamps prepared for use but not issued.” It prices the set, mint only, at 60 euros - a significant mark-up over face - and, importantly, its footnote translates as follows: “Michel Nos I-VI were not officially issued, for a



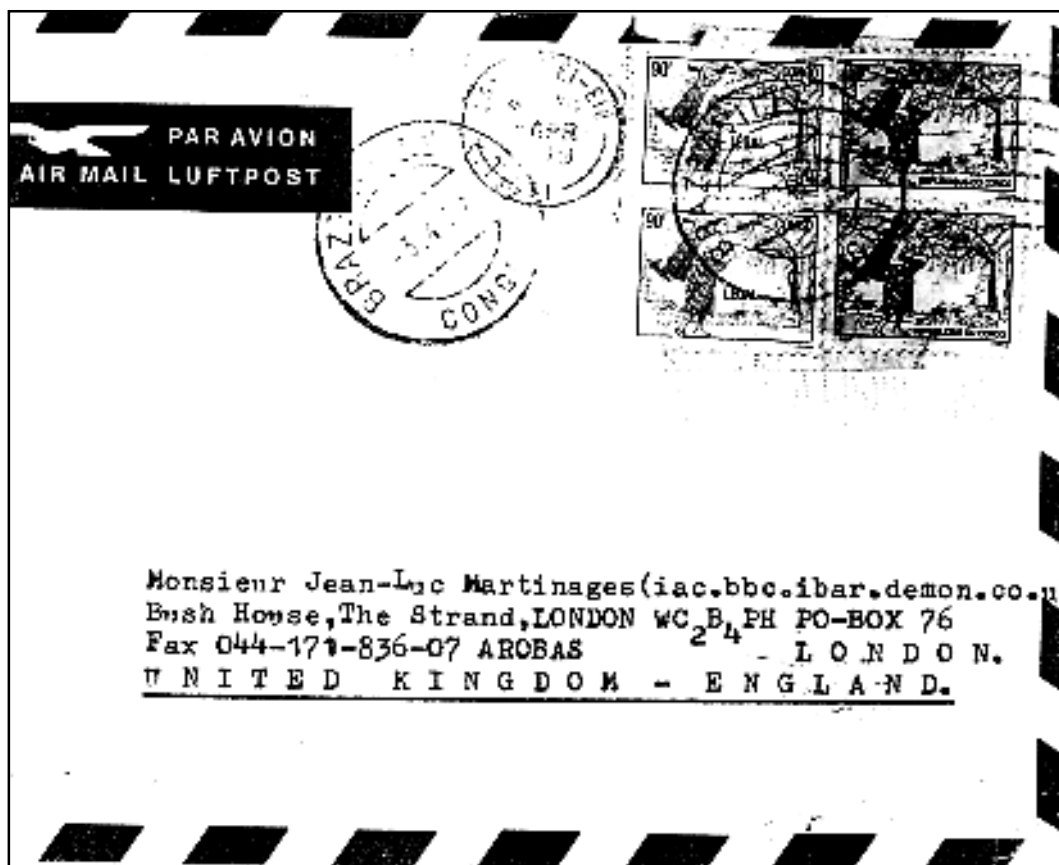


Figure 2 -  
Unoverprinted 50F and LÉGAL-overprinted 90F on same cover to UK  
(note faint LONDON E1-E18 postmark on arrival)

portion of the printing was lost between the printers and the Brazzaville Post Office. Some used copies are nevertheless known.”

Unoverprinted, these stamps appear to be scarce. I have seen none mint, and only four copies used. Some bear Brazzaville postmarks, as might be expected, but copies also exist used in Pointe-Noire (Fig 1). The **LÉGAL-overprinted** versions are – comparatively – much commoner, yet their catalogue listings are patchy. Yvert does not list them at all: Scott allots them numbers 1145-50, though its uncorrected (2003 edition) heading – “N<sup>os</sup> 1115-1117, 1120 Ovptd” – hints that the 100F and 115F values were discovered later than the others. Michel awards them “regular” numbers 1515-20; Scott and Michel agree on dating them 1998 and on refraining from pricing them, mint or used. I illustrate part of an intriguing cover bearing unoverprinted and LÉGAL-overprinted stamps side by side (Fig 2), the unoverprinted stamps being incidentally secured with sellotape.

The **AUTORISÉ overprints** were first mentioned in *Timbroscopie*<sup>2</sup>; later<sup>3</sup> the 100F and 115F values were listed and the 115F value illustrated (postmark illegible). Michel lists the same two values (N<sup>os</sup> 1525-6) while Scott recognises only the 100F (N<sup>o</sup> 1159).

For the next discovery I am indebted to colleague Michael Wright. I had noticed that the word LÉGAL appeared to vary in size and style between neat capitals, measuring overall 4.2 x 1.4mm, and irregular larger capitals averaging 6.6 x 1.4mm (Figs 3-5). But my preoccupation with the

overprints had led me to overlook a vital difference in the stamps themselves, which Michael was kind enough to point out to me. Quite simply, the basic stamps had been substantially redrawn. The unoverprinted originals (which could be called **Type I**) were inscribed REPUBLIQUE DU CONGO at lower right and POSTES 1996 at lower left, while many of the overprinted stamps were inscribed just CONGO at *upper* right and POSTES (without date) halfway up the left-hand margin: differences well worth calling **Type II**. Moreover, these differences turned out to be clearly visible in the Scott and Michel catalogue illustrations, making their accompanying descriptions “[Previous issue] overprinted” not entirely correct.

It may be safe to assume that Type I stamps were indeed “lost,” and the differences in the replacement Type II design were deliberately introduced as a security measure. This assumption is strongly supported by my next discovery – that while every neat small LÉGAL overprint fell on a Type II stamp, my irregular *larger-size* overprints were without exception found to be on Type I. This, plus an amateurish lack of alignment visible on blocks and other multiples, leads me to assume (I hope correctly) that we are here looking at nothing less than **postal forgeries**, the Type I stamps presumably having resurfaced clandestinely for fraudulent overprinting and re-use. I have found irregular overprints on the 50F, 90F and 205F values - and since the last (top) value would have offered the perpetrators the biggest financial return for their trouble, it was no surprise to me when stocktaking to discover that I had more “wrong” 205F overprints than “right” ones.



Figure 3 -  
40F and 90F (Type II) with small overprint;  
205F (Type I) with large irregular overprint, on same cover

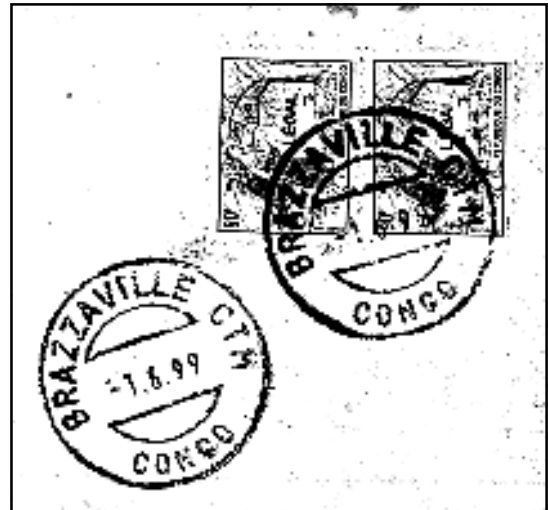


Figure 4 -  
Pair of 90F (Type I) with irregular overprints  
(notice broken second L in LÉGAL on RH stamp)

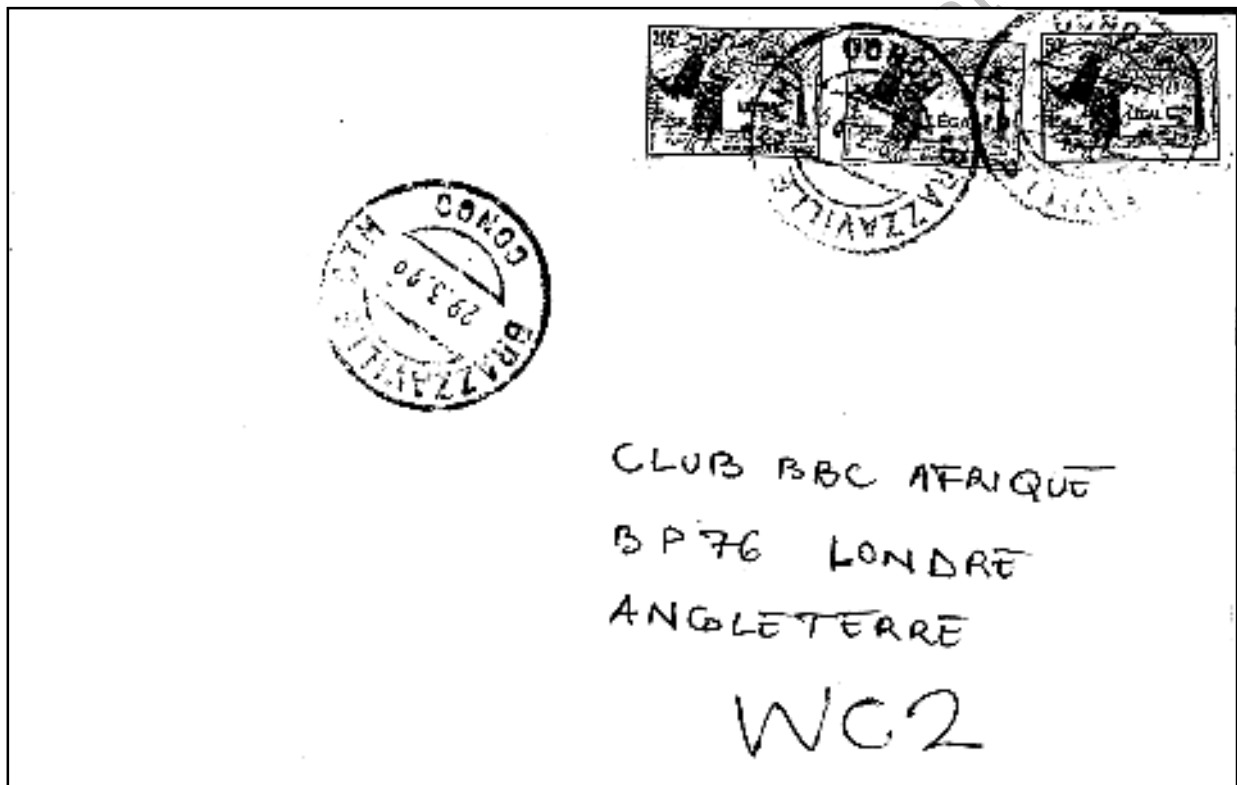


Figure 5 -  
50F (Type II) with small overprint, 90 and 205F (Type I) with large overprint, on same cover

Most interestingly, the sole *AUTORISÉ* overprint seen on this issue (as illustrated in *Timbroscopie*<sup>3</sup>) also falls on a Type I stamp. Any collectors lucky enough to have copies of this item should examine the basic stamp without delay and report their findings: an extra chapter lies waiting to be added to this story and further information is urgently required.

The story itself could run and run, since a few *LÉGAL* overprints on Woman-and-Child stamps continue to arrive on commercial mail. Running alongside is a parallel investigation – too long to summarise here – of the similar *LÉGAL/AUTORISÉ* overprints on other issues (pictorials and thematics). *Timbroscopie*<sup>3</sup> and the Scott/Michel

catalogues begin what may be an equally intriguing story: for instance, parts of one set ('Fruit' stamps with face values of 90, 205 and 300F) certainly include basic stamps in two versions and the *LÉGAL* overprint occasionally appears with lower-case components (i.e. *Légal*). Reports of unlisted varieties would be much appreciated.

#### References

- <sup>1</sup> *Timbroscopie* N° 161 (October 1998), 'Question de légalité,' p. 91
- <sup>2</sup> *Timbroscopie* N° 168 (May 1999), 'Question de légalité' [suite], p. 10
- <sup>3</sup> *Timbroscopie* N° 177 (March 2000), 'Les inconnus du catalogue,' pp. 30-32

# LIST OF RECENTLY PUBLISHED ARTICLES

Compiled by Colin Spong

## *Bulletin de la COL.FRA*

N° 106 4<sup>ème</sup> Trim 2003: Guinée: Les timbres à date mutilés de 1958 (Hurpet); Toutes Colonies: Taxe postale et taxe fiscale (Bonnefoy); Les émissions de l'état français [1940-1944] dans et pour l'empire colonial français [cont] (Drye); La «gomme coloniale», Les voies de communication en 1950 à SPM. Une Daguin à La Réunion. Nouvelle Calédonie Groupe surcharge 05/15c renversée (-); Établissements dans l'Inde. Essai de classification des oblitérations. Les émissions de l'état français [1940-1944] (-).

## *Documents Philatéliques*

N° 179 1<sup>er</sup> Trim 2004: Les troupes italiennes dans les batailles allemandes de 1813 (Ohnmeiss); Tarifs postaux des lettres dans les bureaux français établis en Turquie et en Egypte - 1864/1877 (Abensur); Une émission provisoire levantine [Constantinople 1923] (Parenti); Taxation dans le régime intérieur des imprimés sous forme de lettres insuffisamment affranchies en timbres-poste (Magne); Le préoblitéré d'Yssingeaux (Desarnaud); Conférences à l'Académie de Philatélie: Taxation en Algérie à partir du 4 juillet 1962 (Renaud); Utilisation de la Cérès d'après Barre [1938/1942] (Mayeur); Les timbres socio-postaux d'Alsace-Lorraine (Danan); La Cilicie (Parenti); Les relations postales entre la France et le Chili (Dutau).

## *France & Colonies Philatelist*

Whole N° 275 (Vol. 60, N° 1) Jan 2004: Quadrised and Bisected Stamps of Mayotte (Barracano); French Marcophily - Mail by Rail 3. Gares (Kinsley); Amazing 1870-1871 Stories - 81 (Cohn); Jean-Luc Trassaert [1934-2003] an Appreciation (Luft).

## *L'Écho de la Timbrologie*

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

N° 1768 Nov 2003: Dis l'artiste, dessine-moi le timbre de tes rêves : Pierre Marie Valat (-); L'actualité du prêt-à-poster avec des inédits (-); La conception des timbres (-); Paschal Scheller et l'élaboration des catalogues (Ben-Moha); L'année des Semeuses [7<sup>e</sup> partie] (Goudeau); Les autres joyaux de la collection La Fayette [Spink-Behr auction] (-); Une belle pagaille! (Gengembre et Héron); Redécouvrons les «Bulletins d'expédition» (Emmenegger).

N° 1769 Dec 2003: Florilège de PÀP (-); La conception des timbres-à-date (-); L'année des Semeuses [8<sup>e</sup> partie] (Goudeau); Décodage: Une réduction de taxe (Prugnon); Décryptage: Une double cursive bricolée (de la Mettrie); Quand l'Algérie «c'était la France»; Alger, capitale de la France [1943-1944] 1<sup>e</sup> partie (Danan); «L'Arlésienne» de Lisa (Werl); Enveloppes anglaises pour tabac français! (Riboulet); La première poste sous-marine au monde (Mangin).

N° 1770 Jan 2004: L'année des Semeuses [9<sup>e</sup> partie et fin] (Goudeau); Le timbre en papier recyclé en algue de Venise (-); Décodage: Un traitement à la carte! (Prugnon); Alger, capitale de la France [1943-1944] 2<sup>e</sup> partie (Danan); Découverte: Connaissez-vous les Libonis? (Storch); Histoire: Les premières années d'Air France [1933-1939] (Hella).

## *Timbres Magazine*

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

N° 41 Dec 2003: Classiques de France en Egypte 1<sup>ère</sup> partie (Désert); Carnets: «J'ai du bon tabac...» (PJM); Le 2,20F Liberté il a tout pour plaire (Barrett); Madagascar: Crise du timbre à Madagascar 2<sup>e</sup> partie: 1944-1945 (Baudot); Le PAP non émis de la Coupe du monde 2002 (Sinai); Le Nord (57) 1700-1876 1<sup>ère</sup> partie (Baudot); Cartes Postales: Entrez dans la ronde des gayants de Douai (Zeyons); Décryptage: Indochine 1947: l'affaire de Tourane (Chauvin).

N° 42 Jan 2004: Les difficiles premières dents des timbres français (Melot); Madagascar: Crise du timbre à Madagascar 3<sup>e</sup> partie: 1945-1947 (Baudot); Elles sont marquées «RETOUR» (Sanders); Classiques de France en Egypte 2<sup>ème</sup> partie (Désert); Carnets des colonies: 1. L'Indochine (PJM); Îles de la France d'Outre-Mer: Escale aux Comores, îles aux trésors philatéliques (Pellinec); Napoléon: Waterloo, l'impossible défaite (Michaud); Le Nord (57) 1700-1876 2<sup>ème</sup> partie (Baudot); Cartes Postales: Paroles et musique (Zeyons); Décryptage: Les échanges des cartes Indochine-France via la Sibérie (Chauvin).

N° 43 Feb 2004: Du bon usage de bleu dans vos albums 1<sup>re</sup> partie (Bernadet); Andorre: c'est le moment d'acheter! (Melot); Les difficiles premières dents des timbres français II (Melot); Des carnets bien habillés (PJM); Derniers temps de la censure postale en Algérie (Chauvin).

## *Collectors Club Philatelist*

Vol. 82 N° 6, Nov-Dec 2003: A Critical Guide to Balloon Mails - Facts and Fables about 1870 War Mails, Part I (Cohn).

## *The American Revenuer*

Vol. 57 N° 3, May-June 2003: The Cameroun emblem revenue stamps: issues since 1964 (Bratzel & Wright).

## *The American Philatelist*

Vol. 117 N° 7, July 2003: Cameroun: The Postage Meter Stamps (Bratzel & Stambaugh).



# Congo Français Provisionals

Robert Johnson

[This article is based on part of a display at the Annual Conference at Leamington Spa in March 2003]

Provisional surcharges abound in the French Colonies and Congo Français was no exception. The surcharges were normally effected in small numbers to cope with the lack of supply of the ordinary values which were most in use. The reason for the lack of supply was usually either a failure to

order the ordinary values in time or a delay in despatch from Paris. The French were not alone in having this problem as, for example, the Cape of Good Hope had cause to surcharge on several occasions [mostly due to changes in postal rates and not ordering the most use new values in time].

## First surcharges



Figure 1 -

This is a registered letter sent from Libreville on 13 June 1892 to France.

It is correctly franked with 50c for the 25c postage and 25c registration fee.

The surcharged stamps on the envelope are: middle stamp 'Congo français 5c' in horizontal format and right hand stamp 'Congo français 10c' [surcharge inverted i.e upside down] both in black ink on the 25c value.

Entry into France was via Bordeaux having been landed at Pauillac where the Congo steamers berthed.

These appeared between March 1891 and November 1892. The surcharge was 'Congo français' or 'Congo Français' followed by the surcharge, eg '5c,' underneath the words. The surcharges were in black or in red ink and were horizontal or vertical. The listing can be seen in a good catalogue and I will not set them out here.

What is of interest is the small numbers involved and the number destroyed when the ordinary values arrived. European populations in Gabon and Moyen Congo in the 1890s were small and the move north and east to Oubangui-Chari and Tchad did not produce any significant writing population.

One just has to read Albert Schweitzer's recollections of his first years in Lambaréné in 'On the Edge of the Primeval Forest' (first published in German in 1921) to understand how few traders and other persons such as missionaries

who could write letters there were in French Congo and what the travelling conditions [which affected the transport of the mails] were like on the rivers and through the jungle. Surcharges were authorised by 'arrêtés' signed by or on behalf of the Governor and as such were official documents.

The reader will notice the fact that with one exception the surcharges were for 5c and 10c values which would have been used for the most part locally. Humid conditions in Equatorial Africa would mean that the survival rate of local post [ie post not going out of Equatorial Africa] was pretty small.

In the 1890s 15c was the internal letter rate, 10c was the postcard rate [internal and abroad] and 5c the internal printed paper/unsealed envelope rate [all first step weights]. The value most surcharged was the 25c which was the first step UPU foreign rate for letters.

The stamps surcharged were the General issue of the Alphée Dubois type. The Group type was not available in French Congo until November 1892.

**24 March 1891** 1,500 15c values were surcharged 5c.

These stamps lasted until **22 April 1891** when another 1,500 15c values were surcharged 5c. This printing was only on sale at the post office counter where the stamps had to be put directly on to the postal packet concerned.

**2 September 1891** 3,000 1c values were surcharged 5c. 100 of the surcharges were in red ink and the rest were in black ink. Again these surcharged stamps had to be used immediately at the post office counter.

**4 December 1891** 2,000 25c values were surcharged 5c. This says something about the lack of use of the international rate stamp for the first weight step [including to France at this time as the policy of French Colonies paying internal French rates on mail to France did not come into effect until 1899].

**13 May 1892** 1,200 20c values were surcharged 5c and 1,000 40c values were surcharged 10c.

**5 July 1892** 2,500 25c values were surcharged 5c and 1,500 25c values were surcharged 10c.

**5 August 1892** 3,000 25c values were surcharged 15c, 2,500 25c values 10c and 2,000 25c values 5c.

**8 September 1892** 4,000 25c values were surcharged 15c, 2,750 1c values 10c and 3,000 25c values 5c.

**4 October 1892** 2,500 25c values were surcharged 15c, 2,000 25c values 5c and 2,500 values 5c

and finally on **9 November 1892** there was a surcharging of three values to provide postage due stamps.

The surcharging appears to have been done stamp by stamp by means of a handstamp, which has resulted in varieties and errors. Again these can be studied in a good catalogue.

Things then settled down between the authorities in Congo Français and Paris as the Colony took shape and extended its boundaries until April 1900.

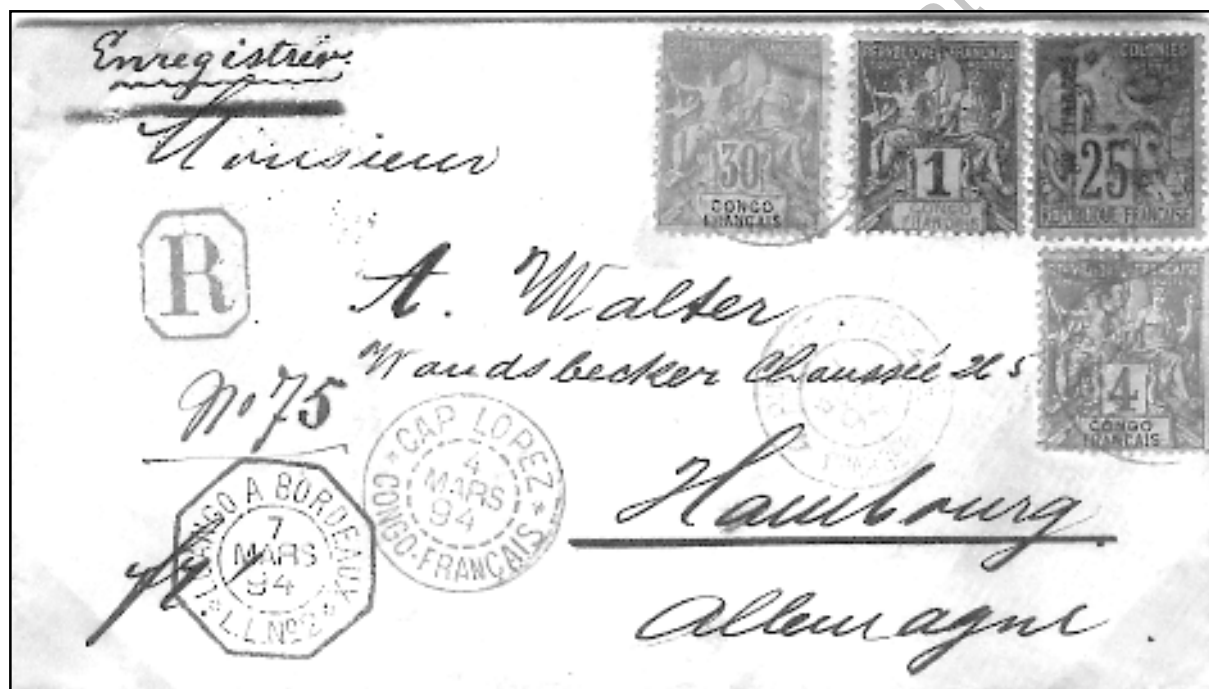


Figure 2-

This item was sent from Cap Lopez to Germany. It was registered.

The franking of 50c is made up of 25c for a 15g letter to a foreign destination and a registration fee of 25c.

The Colonies Générales 25c stamp has been surcharged 'Congo français 15c' in black ink sideways or vertical format.

Notice that a 5c stamp has not been used but a 1c and 4c used instead, as the 5c stamp was always in demand.

The item left Cap Lopez on 4 March 1894 and travelling via Bordeaux was in Hamburg on 2 April 1894.

A red cds of Paris-Etranger-Chargements also is struck on the front to the left of the 4c value.

## Second surcharges

On **29 April 1900** the Lieut. Governor signed an *arrêté* to the effect that because the normal demand for stamps to frank correspondence could not be met from supplies existing at Brazzaville there was to be authority for more surcharging.

All the surcharged stamps had to be used to frank correspondence at the post office counter.

The surcharging was on the Group type which had at last arrived in French Congo in November 1892: 300 20c values with 5c and 900 30c values with 15c.

Again these surcharges were applied by hand in Brazzaville. It appears that they were only sold for five days and those unsold were burnt officially.

## Third surcharges



Figure 3 -

This item was sent from Libreville to Bata in Rio Muni [Spanish Guinea] in August 1903, and shows the use of the 5c on 30c provisional.

The postcard rate to a foreign country was 10c [1 April 1879 to 31 March 1921].

Bata was very near to Gabon but it did not appear that there was a border rate.

The sender put "5" in the top right corner and the card is correctly noted as 10c double deficiency to pay.

These two features with the foxing and the addressee indicate that this was a genuine use at the time, although the stamp may have been obtained by privilege in official circles.

It was not sent at the *imprimé* rate of 5c, which is what may have been intended as "Carte-postale" was not altered.

In May 1900 the pictorial issue with the panther, the Bakalois woman and palm tree designs appeared. There were two surcharges on this issue. The 30c Bakalois woman was surcharged 5c and the 2F Palm tree was surcharged 10c.

The authority for this was in an *arrêté* of **13 July 1903**. The *arrêté* was to the effect that 4,000 of the 30c should be surcharged 5c and 4,000 of the 2F should be surcharged 10c, and that the stamps were only to be sold for immediate use at the post office counter.

It appears that 800 examples of each were sent to the UPU in Berne and that 1,585 of the 5c on 30c and 1,178 of the 10c on 2F were burnt. That left 1,615 of the 5c on 30c and 2,022 of the 10c on 2F that had actually been put to proper postal use.

This article is not intended to deal with Gabon surcharges or surcharges on Moyen Congo stamps overprinted Afrique Equatoriale Française, which are stories for another day.

## Charles Blomefield

Dealer in French Stamps and Philatelic Material  
Chipping Campden Gloucestershire GL55 6PP

Tel: 01386 841923 Fax: 01386 841937 e-mail: blomefield@aol.com

V.A.T. Reg. GB 771 8913 95

*Callers by appointment only; orders may be made by telephone, fax or e-mail*

*Special discounts for F.C.P.S. members*

I hold a very comprehensive stock of France with many rarer items, both used and mint. Please telephone or write for my full price list which covers all issues from 1849 to 2003.

The 2004 Yvert France catalogue in hardback is available at £15.00 post free.



## Some Early Machine Cancels – 5

Bill Mitchell



Figure 1  
By courtesy of DJ-B

Figure 2

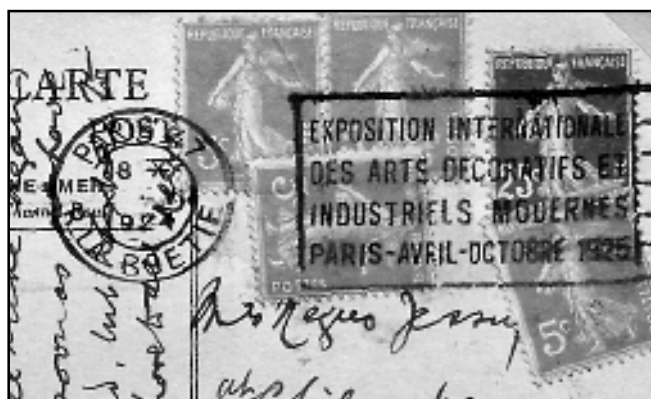
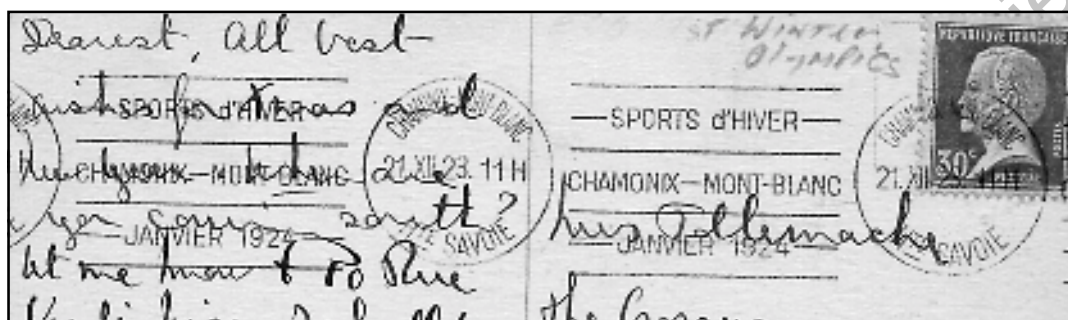


Figure 3  
By courtesy of DJ-B

Figure 4



So far (previous instalments of this article have appeared in each number of the Journal in 2003) slogans have only been mentioned in the course of a general summary of the early development of machine cancels. Yet, being much more interesting than parallel lines and, in recent years at any rate, generally very well struck, they are probably the aspect of machine cancels that comes most readily to mind. In a survey like this it is only possible to scratch the surface of the subject, but here is some idea of what to look out for.

In previous instalments I have mentioned that the extensive use of slogans began midway through World War I, in 1916, and were designed to encourage the public to help speed up handling of the mails; later (from 1918) they were used to promote the careful use of resources, and

later still (from the early 1920s) to draw attention to the attractions of airmail. It was also in the early 1920s that specially designed commemorative stamps first appeared in post offices, to mark the Olympic Games of 1924 and the International "Art Déco" Exhibition of 1925; both were preceded by slogans advertising these forthcoming attractions.

For the Olympics, Fig 1 is an early example of the Flier machine cancel of the PARIS 47 R. LA BOETIE office dated 15 January 1924; according to Dreyfuss, who numbers it B 047108, it was first used some time in 1923. The summer Olympics were preceded, apparently without much publicity, by the first ever Winter Games, at Chamonix-Mont-Blanc. These had no stamps, but the post office at Chamonix was supplied with a commemorative slogan (Fig

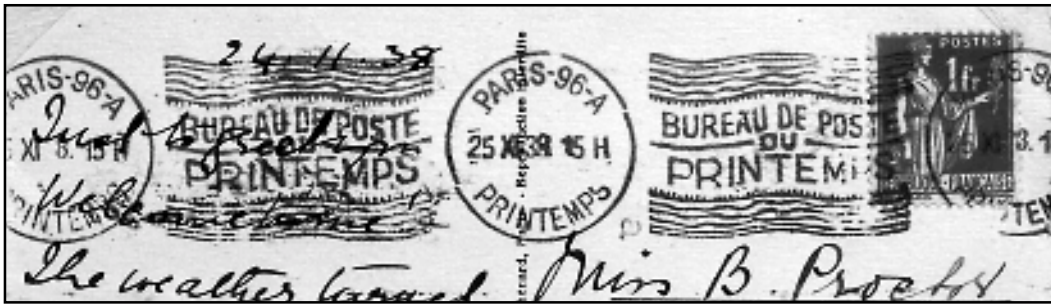


Figure 5  
By courtesy of DJ-B



Figure 6

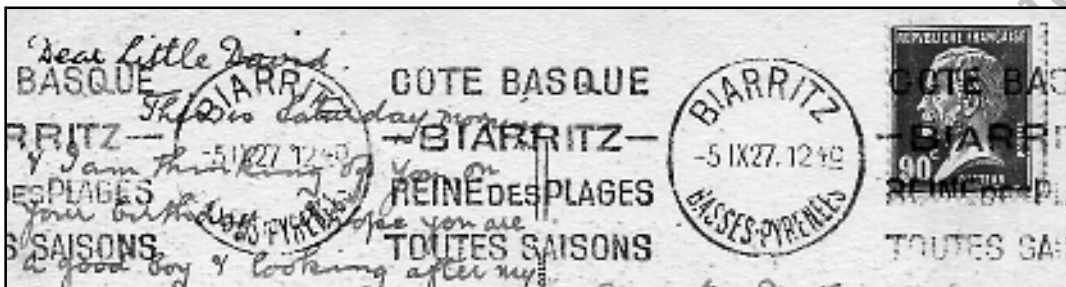


Figure 7

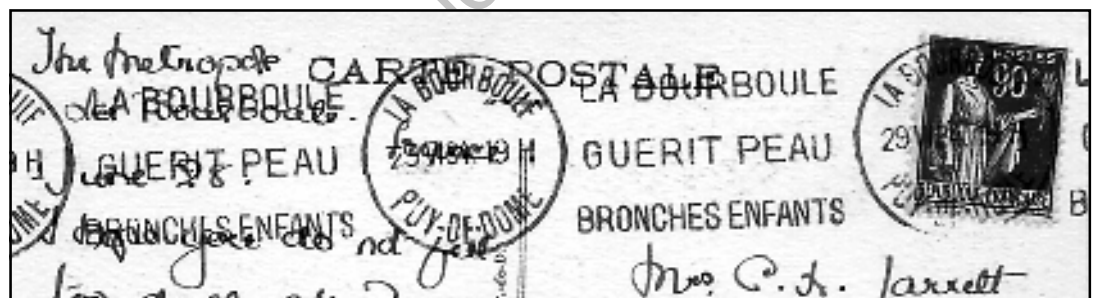


Figure 8

2) which, it will be noted, makes no mention of the Olympics. This time the machine was a second generation Krag which Dreyfuss attributes to 1924 only; my example is dated 21 December 1923. This cancel is Dreyfuss CHA 271.

At very much the same time, and well in advance, letters and postcards began to advertise the 1925 exhibition. David Jennings-Bramly's particularly fine strike of a Flier cancel, as with the Olympics from the PARIS 47 office, is dated 2 May 1924 (Fig 3), but Dreyfuss tells us that it is known from 1923. It is B 047107; the break at the left of the inner circle of the date stamp is listed separately from the "complete" version (B 047107C) and, to judge from his prices, the former is the norm. As with the Games, there was at least one Exhibition precursor. In 1922 there was a Colonial Exhibition at Marseille, complete with an appropriate slogan on a Flier machine (Fig 4, MAR 409).

Fig 5 is a fine late example (25 November 1938) of the slogan advertising the Paris department store Printemps from the sub-post-office (*Recette auxiliaire urbaine*) n° 96-A which was located there. It was a second generation Krag

machine and is known used from 1926 to 1939; it is Dreyfuss B 096701. Look out, too, for the cancel, also a second generation Krag, of the R.A.U. situated in the office of the *Petit Journal* newspaper (PARIS RUE LAFAYETTE 59-61) from 1923 to 1934 (Dreyfuss D211).

Slogans were very quickly seized on as a means of publicising the attractions of towns all over France and do, I think, add considerably to the interest of a collection of picture postcards. Thus addressees were recommended to visit cathedrals and enjoy riverside walks (Metz), beaches (Biarritz) or sports (Aix-les-Bains, Vittel), not to mention the rather more dubious pleasures of casinos (Vittel again). And health resorts were not slow to advertise themselves (La Bourboule, among others).

The METZ - R. LAFAYETTE cancel (Fig 6, Dreyfuss MET 322, 1931 only) comes from a Flier machine. The rest need rather more detailed comment. Figs 7, 8 and 9 all come from second generation Krag machines. The slogans may require three lines of text or they may need four; the message may be repeated as the cylinder rotates or (quite sensibly) double the attractions on offer. These are Dreyfuss



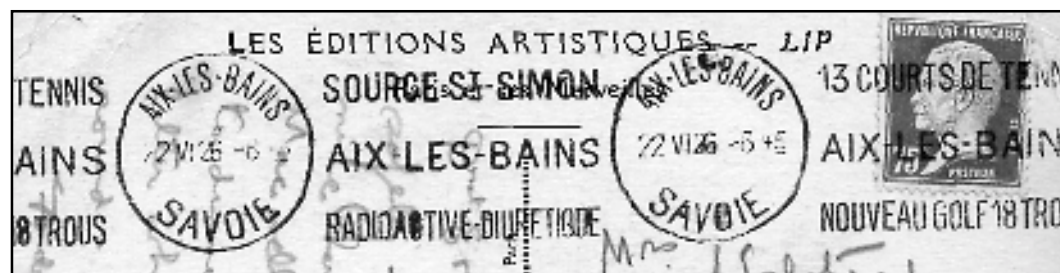


Figure 9

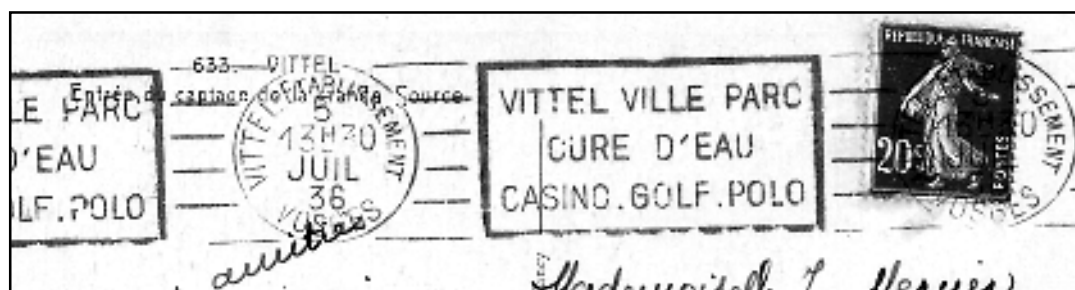


Figure 10

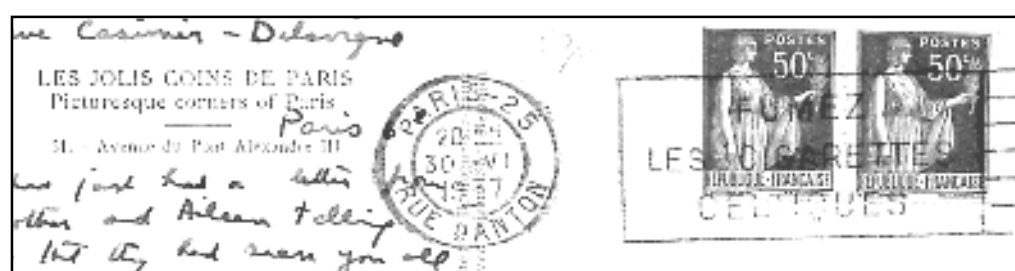


Figure 11



Figure 12  
By courtesy of DJ-B

BIA 107 (Biarritz, 1926-1933), LA-BO 203 (La Bourboule, 1929-1938) and AIX 303 (Aix-les-Bains, 1926-1928).

The VITTEL-ETABLISSEMENT cancel (Fig 10) brings in a manufacturer not previously mentioned in these notes – l’Outillage RBV, founded in 1916. Nouazé (pages 108-110) and Dreyfuss are in agreement on the essentials. The first cancel did not appear until early in 1932, a prototype used as an arrival mark in that year only at the PARIS VIII 49 R. DE LA BOETIE office. The date is set out in one line and there are seven straight parallel lines of equal length. It’s quite scarce, so check the backs of any appropriately addressed covers in your collection.

Later in that year 20 machines were placed in service, initially at offices in Paris (the total eventually reached “about 171”). The dater block was in four lines and at first there were six straight lines of unequal length, but from mid-1935 these were progressively replaced by five unequal wavy lines. Later still, in 1949, the date was reduced to three lines. Slogans were used from early days.

The Vittel-Etablissement office is described by Nouazé as an *Agence postale à gérance gratuite*, which I take to mean

that it was not run by PTT staff. The cancel is Dreyfuss  
VIT 423, period of use 1934-1939.

Many people today, I suppose, would regard the message on Fig 11, urging people to smoke (or, probably, to buy) Celtiques cigarettes, as irresponsible. Not so in 1937! This comes from a Flier machine; Dreyfuss (B 025306) records it as known only in 1938 and 1939.

Illustrated slogans were rare indeed before World War II. The very first, used at Nice from 1924, is illustrated in Part 1 of this article (March 2003). Fig 12 is another early example, one of four sponsored by *l'association "Sauvons les mères et les bébés."* They can be found on both first and second generation Krag machines from 1926 and 1928 respectively (Nouazé, pages 73 and 87). The illustration means that part of the text (on the left of this particular strike) is rather cramped – it reads *PROPAGANDE DE "SAUVONS LES MERES ET LES BEBES."* This cancel, from a second generation machine, is Dreyfuss B061103, known until 1935.

The final part of this article will deal with the Daguians and will include some comments on previous instalments. Any more will be welcome.

# The Siege of Agadez in 1916

## A By-Product of World War I in the Colony of Niger

Peter Kelly

On 21 December 1916 a mounted courier from the north arrived at Zinder bringing news of the siege of Agadez some 300 miles to the north by a strong force led by Kaossen, sometime chief of the Touareg Ikaskazane who had always refused French authority. They were armed with rapid fire rifles, machine guns and a piece of field artillery.

Shortly afterwards, further news came in of the massacre of officers and NCOs returning with the annual caravan from Tibesti and Bilma with the escort having been wiped out after a spirited resistance. This was followed by intelligence that Kaossen and the Senoussi chiefs were sending emissaries to the south, and even to Nigeria to preach the Holy War.

The background story to this insurgence starts in Tripolitania which had been a part of the Ottoman Empire. In 1909 the Ottoman Empire started to unravel and the outer parts began to be picked off by the European Powers. Italy attacked Tripoli and then Bengazi in 1911 and sent in a substantial army that easily overwhelmed Turkish resistance. The Peace Treaty signed in 1912 gave Tripolitania to Italy

The Senoussi had not been fond of the Turks and this sentiment persisted once the Italians took over. The Italian military presence was mainly in the populated coastal areas, and the desert areas were more sparsely garrisoned. There were a number of border incidents with Algeria who had benefited from the unrest by quietly extending its borders. The level of unrest grew as the Senoussi grew in power and influence.

It was the outbreak of the First World War that brought matters to a head. Both France and Italy withdrew support from their military colonies to meet the demands of war. The Senoussi took advantage of this, backed by the support and training provided by Turkey and Germany. They struck in 1915, attacking the Italian garrison at Ghat and forcing them to withdraw. This was a disaster because the Italians left behind an enormous supply of arms, ammunition and

food. The French Algerian outposts of Forts Polignac, Flatters and Motylinsky were now exposed to an enemy capable of fighting with them on level terms. Progressively, these forts were taken and destroyed with the loss of life of many of the garrisons. On 11 December 1916 the fort at Tamanrasset was attacked and Père de Foucauld, the White Marabout who had done so much for the pacification of the Hoggar, was killed in cold blood.

The story now moves back to Agadez, first attacked by Kaossen on 7 December with about 1000 tribesmen equipped with modern arms, including a 70mm field gun with plentiful ammunition. The decision was taken that the town was not to be abandoned even if the garrison could break out, because to lose the town would be to set the whole region of the Air, and further afield, on fire.

Back in Dakar the situation was considered so serious that the Commandant General called for help on the British in Nigeria. They responded immediately and a detachment was despatched from Sokoto to patrol and guard the Madaoua region. Troops were despatched from Senegal by boat to Lagos and then by rail, lorry and camel into Niger, this being the quickest way to reach the colony.

It took until 8 February to get a sufficient force together to move on Agadez. It was called the "*Colonne de l'Air*" and was commanded by Colonel Mourin and comprised 600 infantry (*tirailleurs*), 50 camel-mounted Méharistes, 150 mounted partisans, 2 sections of artillery and 3 of machine guns.

They met with the forward troops of Kaossen at the wells of Aderbissinat and this was followed by a violent confrontation some 15km south of Agadez. Shortly afterwards Agadez was relieved after a siege of 82 days, during which it had repelled 5 violent onslaughts preceded by heavy bombardment.

There followed a mopping up operation in the very difficult and mountainous region of the Air and it took until the following year for Kaossen to be driven off French territory and the dissident tribesmen with him.

—oooOOOooo—

The two letters that are illustrated were written to Colonel Mourin, at that time, officially, Commissaire du Gouvernement Général du Territoire Militaire, by a military colleague based at Zinder. They are chatty updates on the movement of officers in the region, the shortage of tobacco and life in the colony. One is written to him at Nguigmi, 6 days before the news of the siege was received at Zinder; and the second, warmly congratulating him on his success at Agadez, was addressed to him there on 13 March 1917.

The first letter was sent through the post office at Zinder and the second was carried privately by the military.

There was a postal agency at that time at Agadez but it is quite likely not to have been functioning at the time of the siege. In general, and due to the shortage of manpower, the post offices were often run by the military and are often recorded as having been closed for differing periods where necessary.

The chance discovery of these two letters brings to life the difficulties met with by Algeria, Soudan and Niger as an indirect consequence of World War I. The boundaries between the French Colonies and Tripolitania were not fixed definitely until 1921.



Letter of 15 December 1916 from Zinder to N'Guigmi  
Franchise **AFRIQUE OCCIDENTALE FRANÇAISE / TERRITOIRE MILITAIRE DU NIGER /**  
**LE COMMISSAIRE DU GOUVERNEMENT GENERAL**  
Cds **ZINDER / TERRITOIRE DU NIGER / 16 DEC 16**



Letter of 13 March 1917 from Zinder to Agadez, carried privately by the military  
Franchise **AFRIQUE OCC<sup>DLE</sup> FRANÇAISE / TERRITOIRE M<sup>RE</sup> DU NIGER / COMMANDANT du TERRITOIRE**



## Postal Sector 390

### Roy Reader

The June 1994 issue of the F&CPS Journal (Whole Number 192) included a short article I wrote about the use of Postal Sector 390 as the address to be used on all mail sent to French soldiers from abroad from the outbreak of World War II until the fall of France the following June. Any soldier breaking regulations by giving his correspondent abroad his real postal sector number as a return address could find any letter received in reply accompanied by a warning notice reminding him of the regulations.

On page 70 my article illustrated such a warning notice, as it appeared in Colonel Deloste's *Histoire Postale et Militaire de la Deuxième Guerre Mondiale*. Page 19 of this book described the warning notice as '*jointe aux plis en provenance*

*de l'étranger*' and then later made reference to a cover '*accompagné de la fiche "Avertissement"*'. All this I interpreted as meaning the notice was inserted inside the offending envelope – a misinterpretation, it seems, as Monsieur Roger Lafaye has now sent me copies of two covers with the warning slip not inserted into them but stuck on the back of them.

The warning notices on Monsieur Lafaye's two covers are not the same as the one illustrated in Colonel Deloste's book, though the one on his cover sent from Italy on 4(?) March 1940 (Figure 1) is close to it. Its wording is precisely the same, but it is spread over eight lines, instead of seven. Other differences are that the word '*interdit*' is spelt

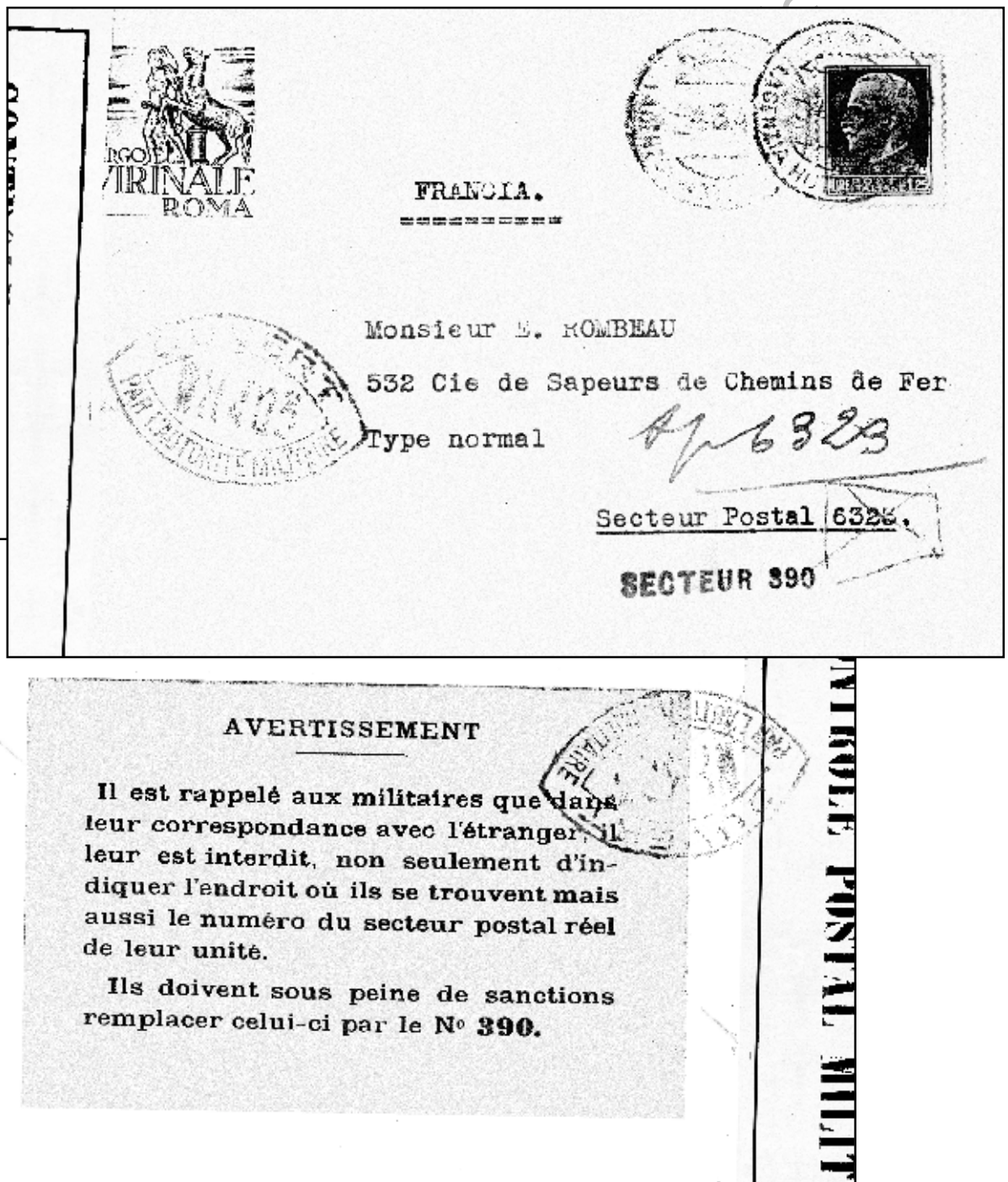


Figure 1 - Front and back

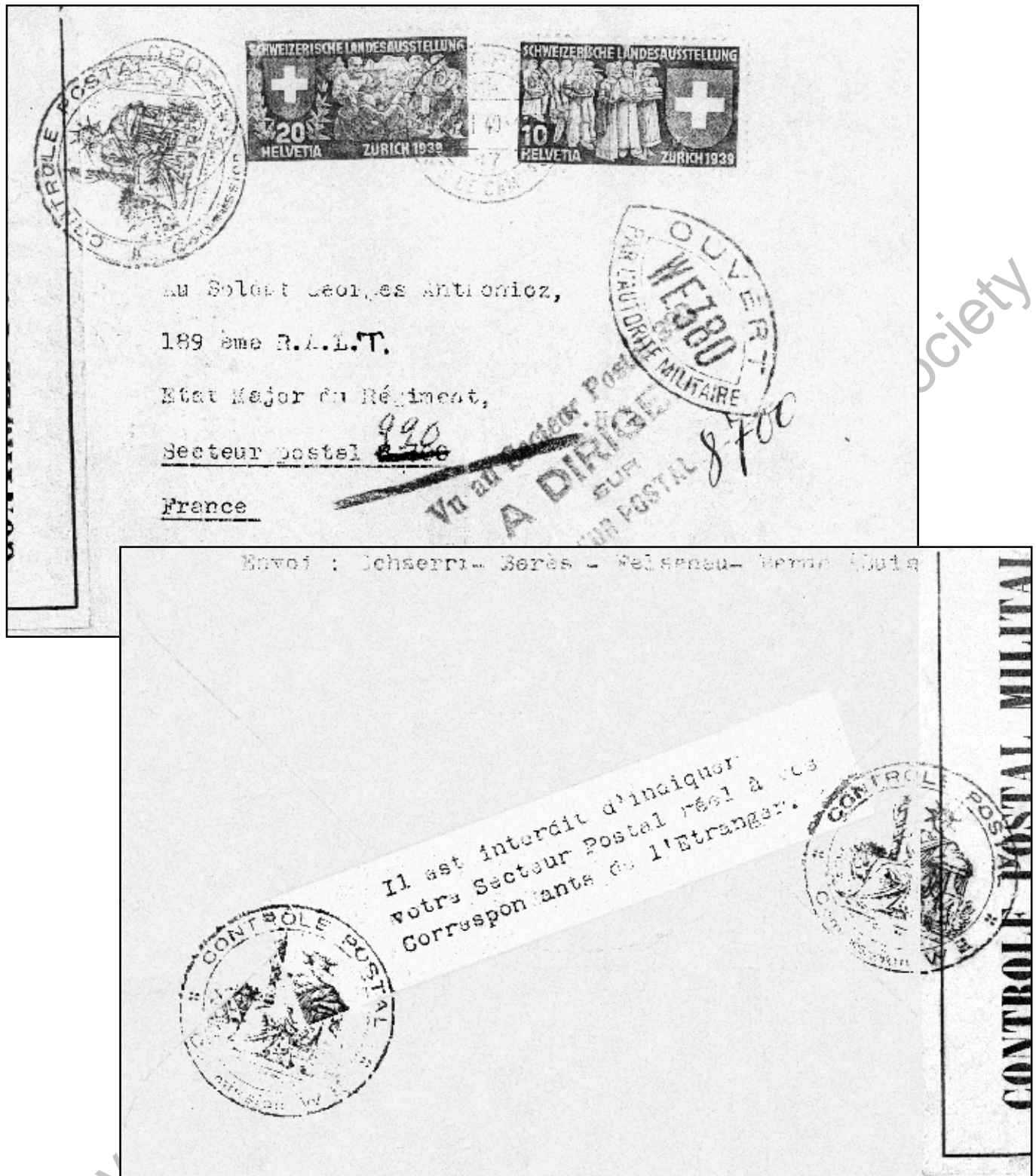


Figure 2 - Front and back

correctly, there is no line under 'N° 390' and there is no small letter 'A' in the bottom right-hand corner. The text is printed in black ink on pink paper, which may or may not be the same as in the case of Colonel Deloste's notice, which does not have its colour mentioned in the book.

The notice on Monsieur Lafaye's other cover, which was sent from Switzerland on 27 January 1940 (Figure 2), is very different. It is simply a plain piece of white paper bearing a typed (not printed) message of just fifteen words: 'Il est interdit d'indiquer votre Secteur Postal réel à vos Correspondants de l'Etranger' (It is forbidden to give your real Postal Sector to Correspondents Abroad).

It will be seen that both of Monsieur Lafaye's covers were opened by the French censor, the one from Italy at Censor Office WH at Lyon and the one from Switzerland at Censor Office WE also at Lyon. It will also be seen that in both cases the censor mark applied to the cover falls partly across the warning notice.

This indicates that in both cases the warning notice must have been stuck onto the cover at the censor office itself prior to the application of the censor mark. It was not stuck on, as I had thought might be the case, while the cover was later being dealt with at Central Army Office N° 1.



# World War II French Naval Post — More on the *Bâtiment de Ligne* “*Richelieu*”

Bill Mitchell



I wrote about the questionable philatelic activities centred on the *Richelieu* in 1942 and 1943 in Journal 226 (December 2002). Coincidentally, only the month before *Timbres magazine* had published an article, “Souvenirs d’une escale à Brooklyn – les timbres du *Richelieu*” by Annette Apaïre and Bertrand Sinais, which sheds further light on the matter but also raises more questions.

The article begins with a brief account of the building of the *Richelieu*, still unfinished at the outbreak of war on 3 September 1939, and records the opening of its postal agency on 1 January 1940. It goes on to explain a point which had puzzled me, namely why the majority of the bogus *PAR AVION* overprints were applied to the 1F50 Pétain de Bersier stamp, since this seems inadequate to meet an airmail surtax (the basic postage, of course, was free under the *franchise militaire* arrangements). As from 30 January 1940 naval personnel serving abroad (“*eaux lointaines*”) were entitled to send letters of 10 grams or less by air for a concessionary surtax of 1F50; as from 5 September 1941\* the 1F50 stamp became valid for letters of 5 grams only (“*la validité du timbre de 1,50F sera ramenée à 5 grammes*”). For those who are interested in French naval mail in World War II or the various stamp issues involved, the following 1F50 stamps are stated to have been supplied to the *Richelieu* – Peace (blue, Yv 288); Iris (orange, Yv 435); Pétain de Bersier (rose, Yv 516, and brown, Yv 517).

All this poses several questions. Where exactly were the “*eaux lointaines*”? In view of the UPU requirements referred to in my previous article they were, I imagine, confined to French territory. Did they have to rely on French airlines only, or were friendly or neutral services also available? What destinations were permitted? Since the *franchise militaire* arrangements did not apply to foreign destinations, the concessionary rate presumably only applied to mail addressed to places within the French empire. And as colonies joined de Gaulle communications with France were forbidden(1).

And here is another problem for the specialist in military/ naval posts during World War II. Lewis E Bussey(2) states that “Military posts, including the ‘*franchise militaire*’ (free frank) had been discontinued following the armistice.” Yet, as noted above, the concessionary air surtax rules were amended on 6 September 1941, over a year after the armistice. How can these two statements be reconciled?

\* This should read “6 September” - see J-P Alexandre et al, *Les Tarifs Postaux Français* (page 216 of the first, 1982, edition).

According to Bob Stone(3) there were both war-time and peace-time concessions available to service personnel. Is this relevant?

Whatever the explanation, there is no doubt that the *Richelieu* was stocked with the all-important 1F50 brown, issued on 14 February 1942<sup>#</sup>, and the Apaïre/Sinai article shows how it was possible to supply her with them. On the night of 17-18 June 1940 she was ordered to proceed to Dakar in Senegal, where she arrived on the 23rd – the day after the armistice which was to lead to the establishment of the Vichy regime. Senegal remained loyal to Vichy until shortly after the Allied landings in North Africa on 8 November 1942, and the *Richelieu* – damaged by British aircraft on 8 July 1940 – remained there until she sailed for Brooklyn for repairs and refitting on 30 January 1943. So she remained in – possibly rather erratic – contact with France for some months after the stamp was issued<sup>†</sup>.

As regards postal arrangements on the *Richelieu* after her arrival at Brooklyn, this latest article says that “The stock of stamps on board consisted of French 1F50 stamps, type Pétain de Bersier (Yv 517) and stamps of French West Africa [actually Senegal and Mauritania] which franked its mail until they were withdrawn and replaced by American stamps at the end of April 1943” (my – rather free – translation). As we are told that she arrived at Brooklyn as early as 18 February, here is yet another problem. As I pointed out in my December 2002 article, UPU regulations required the use of US stamps once she arrived in harbour (or dry dock). Or did war-time practice over-rule international obligations? The extract from the Bussey article already referred to(2) that I quoted suggests that they did not. Or did the US authorities simply adopt a relaxed attitude at first?

Accompanying the Apaïre/Sinai article are illustrations of several covers and cards, three of which deserve mention here. A registered cover to the United States is a close relative of the two discussed in my previous article. Like

<sup>#</sup> Dr R Joany et al, *Nomenclature des Timbres-poste de France*, Tome 6, page 30.

<sup>†</sup> By the time the *Richelieu* returned to Algeria in October 1943 the *Poste Navale* had been restored in French Africa. The relevant *Instruction Générale* dated 18 March 1943 was printed by Henry C Dupont in a pamphlet “*La Naissance des Surcharges ‘R.F.’ de la Poste Navale Française (1943-1945)*” published by *L’Échangiste Universel* in 1966. Both Morocco and Algeria had been liberated by now, but the whole of France was occupied by the Germans and communications had been suspended. While she was in Algeria, most of the *Richelieu*’s mail was probably sent to the United States under US, not French, auspices.

them it is addressed to Mr L Tankel in New York (although at a different address). Mr Tankel is stated to have been the dealer who arranged for the manufacture of the handstamp used for the overprinting. The date, the handwriting and the Algeria stamps, including the E.F.M. surcharge, are the same, the stamp with the *PAR AVION* overprint is a "rarity" (this time the 2F Mauritania, Yv 90) and the O.A.T. cachet is present. This last revived nagging doubts about the other two. If, as I understood to have been the case, the cachet was applied to the top cover in a bundle, presumably after censoring in the UK, how does it come to be present on all three covers? This is surely too much of a coincidence? Could the cachet have been forged at Algiers? If it was, what would the attitude of the censors in the UK have been? Since the covers reached their destination (I think we can assume that this third example did, too), did they simply shrug their shoulders, say "these philatelists!" and get on with something more important?

I put these points to Charles Entwistle, the dealer in wartime postal history and the proprietor of the Chavril Press, and he kindly replied as follows.

"I have recently seen a number of covers with the 'O.A.T.' cachet, more than I would expect if the mark was just applied to the top of the bundle. The covers, however, certainly appear genuine and are such that the 'O.A.T.' cachet has little or no effect on value. The first question is – When was the cachet applied? On arrival before censorship, after censorship or both before and after! If the latter then one would expect covers at both the top and bottom to be so marked. The second question is – What constituted a bundle? On the assumption that registered and normal mail was kept separate then the registered bundle could be relatively small. The third question is – How much registered mail was handled in a day? The answer to these three questions may be that there were only 2 items in the bundle!

"With regard to the censors' attitude to philatelic material – this varies considerably! I have seen a number of philatelic covers that have travelled through the post without a problem – on the other hand I have seen a number 'Condemned' simply because they were philatelic!"

Accepting his invitation to think further about this, I note that the *Richelieu* cancels on all three covers are dated 24 October 1943. Since they were all registered it is reasonable to assume that they arrived in the UK together. However, we know that they were seen by at least two different examiners (see my previous article). Unfortunately only the front of the third example is illustrated and the censor's P.C. 90 sealing strip has been applied in such a way that his number cannot be seen, but it is possible that three examiners were involved. And since we only have details of the back of one of the covers we cannot say whether all three arrived in New York at the same time or whether they were forwarded separately. But it is possible, as Mr Entwistle implies, that there were two bundles – or even three bundles of one! I think that the possibility that the O.A.T. cachets were forged can safely be discounted.

Before leaving the subject of these three covers, it will be noted from the extracts from Lewis Bussey's article in Appendix 1 that at the time they were posted the *Richelieu* was at Oran, not Algiers as I assumed in my previous article.

At first sight the second cover is more convincing since in addition to an "F.M." handstamp (looking suspiciously like the one illustrated in my previous article) it is franked only by the 1F50 Pétain overprint, cancelled by the *Richelieu*'s hexagon of 27 May 1943 (there are French and American censor cachets). So in a sense it is because even though the stamp bears a bogus overprint the franking at least is correct. But unfortunately it is addressed to M. Dejeune, Contrôleur des P.T.T. at Dakar, and as Maurice Tyler's original article in Journal 207 (March 1998) shows, it is one of several posted on different dates, which somewhat reduces its attractions. Furthermore, it was posted before the *Richelieu* left the United States for Oran (see Appendix 1), in which case, as indicated in my previous article, it should have been franked by US stamps. The presence of an American civil censor cachet (my thanks to Charles Entwistle for this) could indicate that the Dakar arrival date stamp may be genuine and not applied clandestinely as suggested in the Parlange article(4) quoted by Maurice. The letter, incidentally, took a long time to reach Dakar – the backstamp is dated 24 June

The third item is a postcard, also addressed to Tankel in New York, with another fancy franking – the *PAR AVION* overprint on the 1F75 Constantine Centenary stamp of Algeria (Yv 133), which has not been noted in these pages before, and a US 6 cents airmail stamp, both cancelled by the *Richelieu*'s hexagon of 22 September 1943 (there is no other airmail instruction). As will be seen from the extracts quoted in Appendix 1, the accounts of the *Richelieu*'s stay in the US differ, but it does seem that on 22 September she was still in US waters. The card was probably flown to New York for censoring (see note (c) in Appendix 1), so 6 cents would have sufficed, the Algeria stamp was totally unnecessary and one is forced to conclude that the intention was to deceive.

The article concludes in what I consider to be a rather unfortunate manner. Its final section is headed (rather tongue in cheek, I fancy) "*Vivent les surcharges!*" This includes a sardonic comment on the manufacture of rarities and varieties and acknowledges that the authenticity of the overprints was doubted in some quarters at the time, but then spoils it by ending with a summary of the history of their catalogue status and concluding

"Today they appear regularly in major auctions and fixed price sales... Even though there is still occasional criticism, here and there, nevertheless they are part of philately and of the story of the great ship whose name, flanked by two anchors, appears on them."

It is true that the authors mention the court-martial and acquittal of the *Richelieu*'s post clerk and the 1945 disavowal of these overprints by the Ministère de la Marine, but this is almost an after-thought coming as it does in the form of an epilogue after their signatures. So the final impression given by the article is that the authors have come down on the wrong side of the fence – doubly unfortunate since, as

recorded by Maurice way back in 1998, M. Sinais "cast dark shadows over the authenticity of these overprints" in articles in *L'Echo de la Timbrologie* in 1992.

One thing is quite certain. Bogus these overprints undoubtedly are, but no one, I think, can deny that they are extremely interesting. As I have shown, there are still unresolved problems about them (and I hope I haven't added to the confusion by misinterpreting what I've read about an unfamiliar subject). Perhaps one day they will be the subject of a definitive study.

I am particularly indebted to Stan Luft, the editor of the *France & Colonies Philatelist*, for sending me a copy of the letter printed in Appendix 2 and giving me permission to publish it.

In addition to the helpful comments of Charles Entwistle already referred to I have, as so often, to acknowledge the help given by Mick Bister with some of the subtleties (to me, at any rate) of the French language.

References will be found after the Appendices.

## Appendix 1

The movements of the *Richelieu*  
(arranged in order of publication)

Michel Parlange (1973) (ref 4) (see note (a))

"The surcharged 1F50 Pétain stamps were distributed in North Africa after the *Richelieu* had come to Algiers (never to Dakar again) in July 1943 before going to the British naval base at Scapa Flow."

D M Giangreco (1987) (ref 5) (see note (b))

"French personnel were also able to post letters to North America in the U.S. military postal system after issuance of the January 8, 1943 directive granting the 'extension of [the] 6 cent airmail rate to addresses in the United States and Canada... to members of the Allied forces' in French North Africa."

"Once the *Richelieu* passed into the control of the Allies, it was sent to the Brooklyn Naval Yard and a dry dock in New Jersey so its construction could be completed and its armament brought up to certain standards. After a lengthy stay in the U.S.... it joined the British Home Fleet in November 1943..."

Lewis E. Bussey (1990) (ref 2) (see note (c))

"*Richelieu* arrived in New York City 11 February 1943. Although arriving 'hush-hush', she was too tall to proceed beyond the Brooklyn bridge to the Navy yards. For two days her height was pared down in full view of the city (so much for secrecy). In the navy yards by 18 February, she had on board a less than full complement. Some of the crew still had Vichy sympathies, and refusing to serve, they were permanently removed to Halifax, Nova Scotia. The remainder of the crew was housed along with U.S. navy personnel on shore in New York."

### Notes

(a) Parlange is in error in saying that the *Richelieu* arrived at Algiers in July 1943 (no doubt his authority was at fault). The detailed itinerary in Bussey's article quoted above makes this quite clear.

(b) Another error. The armed forces' concessionary airmail rate was extended to Allied personnel on 21 October 1942 (see Appendix 2), not 8 January 1943. I have been unable to trace a reference to the later date in either Goodkind (6) or Davis (7). There was no limitation on the location of the Allied forces, as Giangreco implies. It has to be said, though, that he was writing specifically about North Africa at this point.

"In late August 1943, the completely repaired *Richelieu* steamed down the east coast to Norfolk. Test firings and artillery exercises in Chesapeake Bay occupied the time from 26 August to 2 October."

"*Richelieu* was in Boston from 4 to 14 October, 1943, loading munitions, shells, powder charges, and topping off consumables. Leaving Boston and the U.S. she traversed the Atlantic in six days, met an escort and steamed into the Mediterranean."

"The battleship docked at Mers-el-Kebir, the Free French naval base facility near Oran, Algeria, on 21 October 1943 staying for seven days, then steamed over to Alger."

"*Richelieu* returned to Oran on 8 November."

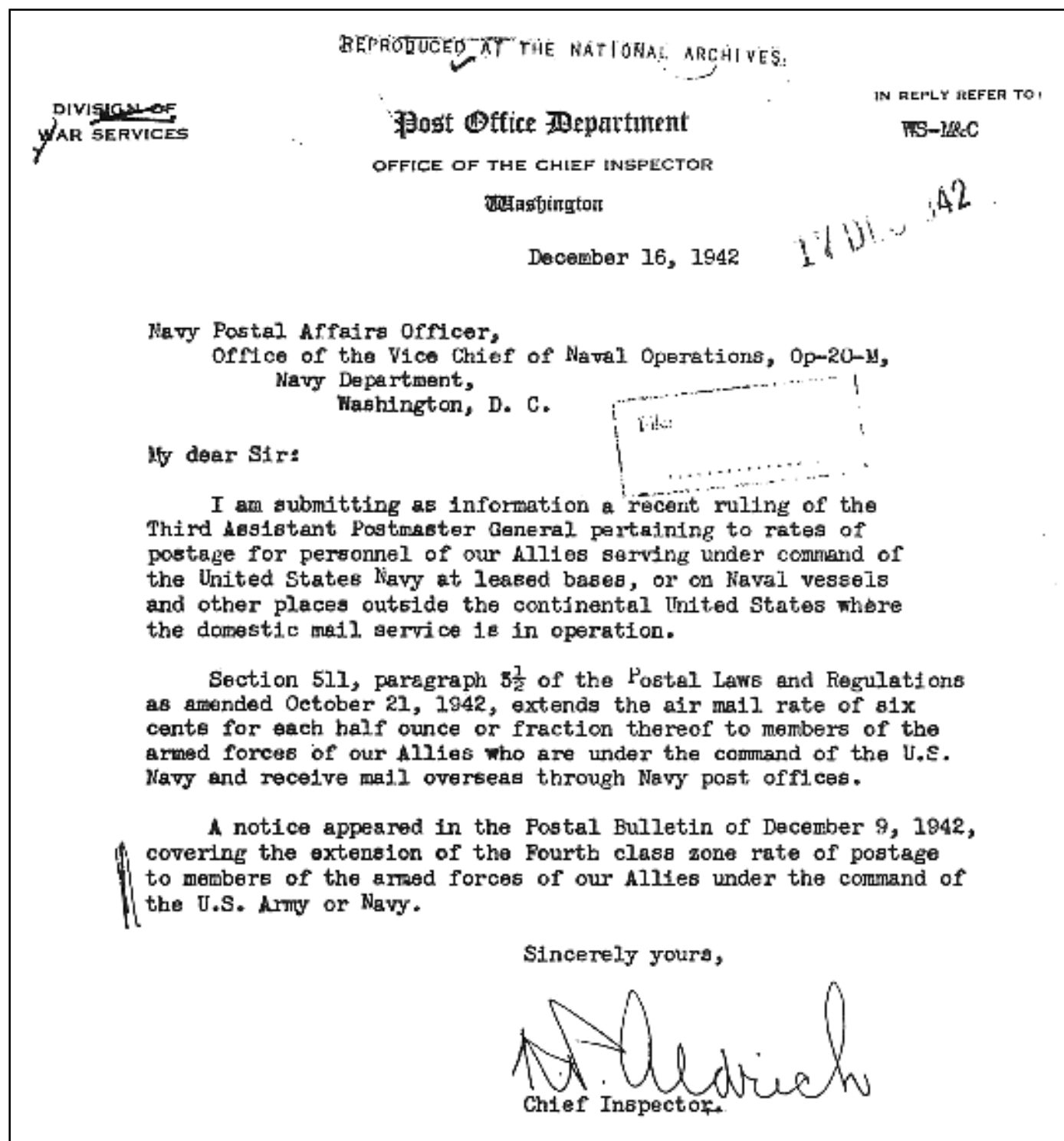
"...the battleship was then assigned to the British Home Fleet. The ship left for Scapa Flow, Scotland on 14 November 1943 and arrived there six days later..."

Apaire and Sinais (2002) (my translation again)

"On 18 February [1943] the *Richelieu* received an enthusiastic welcome on entering the unsavoury and ice-studded waters of the East River. It was saluted by ships' sirens and motor-horns, and packets of cigarettes and chewing-gum were thrown onto her decks. She entered dock 5 of the Brooklyn Naval Yard and work began immediately. It was not until 14 October 1943, after trials in Chesapeake Bay and re-provisioning, that the *Richelieu* set sail from Boston. 'We are sailing for Gibraltar,' the Captain told the crew."

(c) This account has to be definitive. Bussey also provides some interesting details of the censorship arrangements which explain why some of the *Richelieu*'s mail, including the 22 September 1943 postcard referred to above, was sent by air within the United States. If I have understood him correctly, correspondence was censored by the district postal censor for wherever the *Richelieu* happened to be at any particular time, whereas philatelic mail was dealt with by a philatelic civil censor in New York. As will be seen from the *Richelieu*'s itinerary quoted above, from late August to mid-October she was at several hundred miles' distance from New York, where most of the addressees lived, and French sailors frequently chose to frank their letters at the (civilian) airmail rate of 6 cents per ounce.

## Appendix 2



It will be noted that the concession did not apply to personnel serving in continental United States, where the domestic mail service applied. This tallies with the article by Lewis Bussey. Referring to the crew of the

Richelieu while she was in Brooklyn, he says – “Since the sailors were not U.S. military, civilian postal rates prevailed: domestic surface letters [within the US] at 3 cents per ounce.”

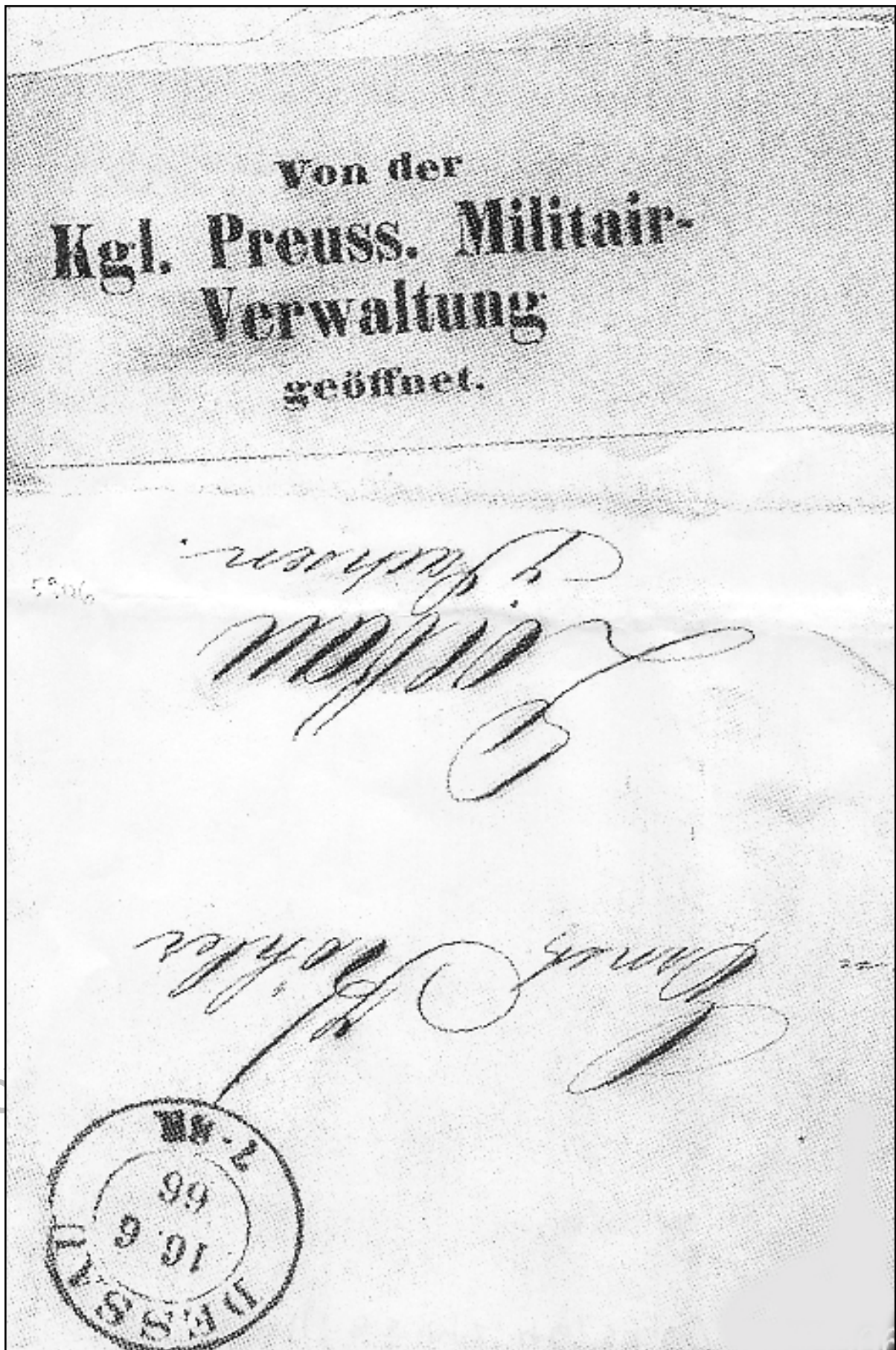
## References

- (1) Boyle, Thomas H — “Airmail Operations During World War II” (American Air Mail Society, Mineola, N.Y., 1998), page 423.
- (2) Bussey, Lewis E — “Battleship Richelieu, Part 1” (War Cover Club Bulletin, Vol 29 No 2, 1990), pages 9 to 15.
- (3) Stone, Robert G — “Military-related Mail from the French Colonies” (*France & Colonies Philatelist*, Vol 37 No 3, July 1981), page 117.
- (4) Parlange, Michel — 1973 article in *L'Echo de la Timbrologie*, translated by R G Stone and M S Tyler (*France & Colonies Philatelist*, Vol 29 No 4, October 1973, page 77, and *Journal*, Vol 48 No 1, March 1998, pages 41 to 45).
- (5) Giangreco, D M — “Roosevelt, de Gaulle and the Posts” (Joseph V Bush Inc, Bonita, California, 1987), pages 49 and 59.
- (6) Goodkind, Henry M — “United States RF (République Française) Overprints on Air Mail Stamps and Stationery (1944-45)” (The Collectors' Club, New York, 1958).
- (7) Davis, G H — “The Transports” (Bureau Issues Association Inc, Reston, Virginia, 1999).



## Amazing 1870-71 Wonder Stories - 82

Ernst Cohn





By pure coincidence I was made aware that 'our' war may have been the first one in which purely private mail was officially censored for the first time. That happened some months after publication by James Bendon of my book *Unusual Mail in Occupied France 1870-1871* in 2000. Having owned the 2-volume work by K K Wolter on censorship, I should have been aware of it, because in Volume 1 he never mentioned 1870 and in Volume 2 only briefly and incompletely. In any case, I covered both French and German censorship procedures in as much detail as possible, the latter having included this early – if not first – open censorship of purely private mail. Let me first define that term, so there will be no confusion:

Purely private mail means mail from a private source to a private recipient, i.e., no military personnel is involved, whether soldier or prisoner of war. Open censorship means that the mail so treated is marked by written endorsement, handstamp, label or a combination of such to show to the recipient that the piece of mail had been either deliberately delayed or been opened and presumably read.

Whereas mail to and from military personnel had been subject to censorship much earlier, private mail does not appear to have been openly censored before 1870. Furthermore, secret methods of censorship, the so-called *cabinet noir*, are likely to have preceded open censorship of private mail by decades or even centuries, because such covert methods were used even in peacetime, and that for a number of reasons. French 1870-war censorship of civilian mail, if and when it existed, was only of that type.

Various reasons and methods for Prussian censoring of private mail are described in detail on pages 149-169. Though that chapter is headed German Censorship Procedures, only Prussia exercised them. The sole case of Baden censorship that I had seen years ago turned out to be faked. None of the other German states are known to have had open censorship of civilian mail in that war. But was that really the earliest such case?

Some time after the appearance of *Unusual Mail* I was told that Prussia also had open censorship of civilian mail in the so-called German War of 1866, and soon afterwards I was shown one of three known such labels on letters from that war. Their inscription, in clear, large lettering, reads

Von der  
Kgl. Preuss. Militair-  
Verwaltung  
geöffnet.

["Opened by the Royal Prussian Military Administration"]

in much larger lettering than even the largest imprints that ever appeared around the end of the Franco-German War.

Leaving aside the balloon-mail censorship of October 1870, which consisted of elaborate blue handstamps of the Foreign Office of the North German Confederation (either in French or in German), on the fronts of balloon letters addressed to German or German-controlled areas, the military handstamps on mail of occupied France were (1) quite small and easily overlooked as well as (2) always applied on the back rather than on the front of envelopes.

In other words, this so-called 1866 label is much more elegant and farther developed than any censorship labels ever used in the 1870 war. That, to me, was the give-away that this label is bogus. It is something like a self-adhesive stamp with imitation perforations having preceded the penny black by four years.

I informed the editor of *FFE* of my findings in a brief article submitted for publication. That caused strong opposition from people involved in producing a book on the postal history of Prussia, as I was told by the editor. Yet none of that group had ever looked at my book, as I had recommended they do.

Meanwhile I obtained information from the best-informed person about the postal history of Prussia, telling me that there was such an organization as the Royal Prussian Military Administration, which had many tasks (of which he has a listing), but censorship of mail was not included.

The argumentation of the opposition runs along the lines that (1) three examples are known and (2) they have been known for decades. As for the first argument, I know of five examples of the C.IX 'cancel' on Paris Commune letters, all bogus; and for the second, I shall cite Kurt Karl Doberer's statement: "The older they get, the more authentic they become," which applies perfectly in this case. Or as a friend of mine says, "don't let ugly facts spoil a beautiful theory."

That does not mean that I shall defend at all costs the idea that the Prussians were the first with open censorship in the Franco-German War. I have started to look for *genuine* earlier traces. As concerns the US Civil War (1861-65), civilians of one side were not allowed to correspond with those of the other side. While there was no such mail permitted, it did, of course, exist, but either it was captured and destroyed or else it got through the blockade uncensored. Any ideas about the Crimean War?

## POSTAL HISTORY SALES

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

**All lots are well described, with a free photocopy service on request.**

**Send for your free list to:**

**M D PIGGIN**

**Thatchers Lane, Tansley, Matlock, Derbyshire DE4 5FD**

**Tel. & Fax: (01629) 56293**

**E-mail: michael@mdpiggin.fsnet.co.uk**

**Website: www.mdpiggin.fsnet.co.uk**

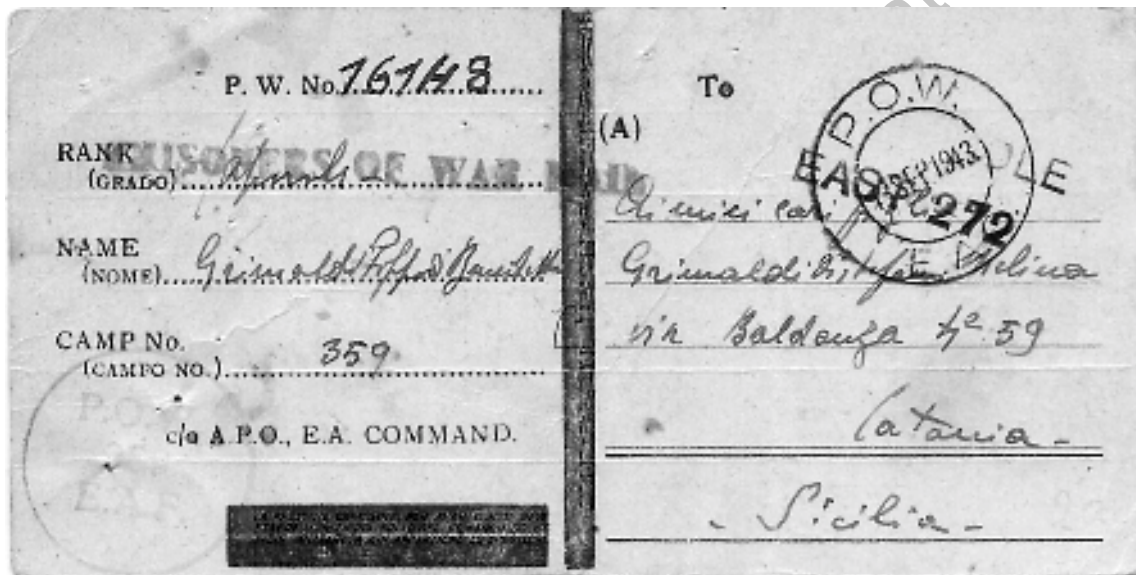
## SHORTER ITEMS - INCLUDING QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

### Italian Postal Stationery adapted for use in POW Camps in Kenya

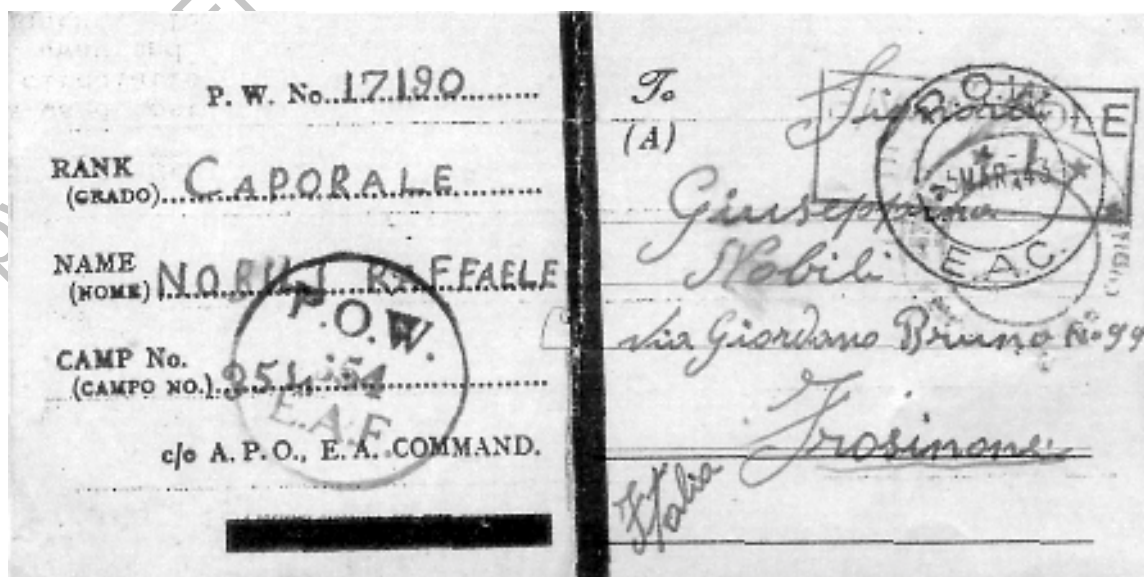
Following the discussion in recent Journals (numbers 220, 221, 224, 226 and 229) about POW Camps 358 and 365 [not 265 as erroneously reported on page 107 of Journal 229] in Kenya, I have come across further examples (from other camps) of the cards used by Italian POWs that were modified from slightly larger postal stationery. The original cards were previously in circulation in the Italian colonies and, as illustrated and described on page 72 of Journal 224, were cut down in size to remove the fascist arms and stamp, and had the original Italian text overprinted, so that they could be used by Italian prisoners of the British.

The illustrations show the address side of three of these cards, from Camps 353, 354 and 359, with the message side of the first of these revealing part of the stamp that has not been completely removed. As a rule the cards bear 3 cachets, including a two-line censor mark P/W MIDDLE EAST, a circular or box cachet of the camp with its number, and a second circular POW mark with the letters EAC (EAST AFRICA COMMAND). The final illustration shows the original card, as depicted in the Italian catalogue *Filigrano: Interi Postali*, 1997. Do members know of any other camps where these cards have been used?

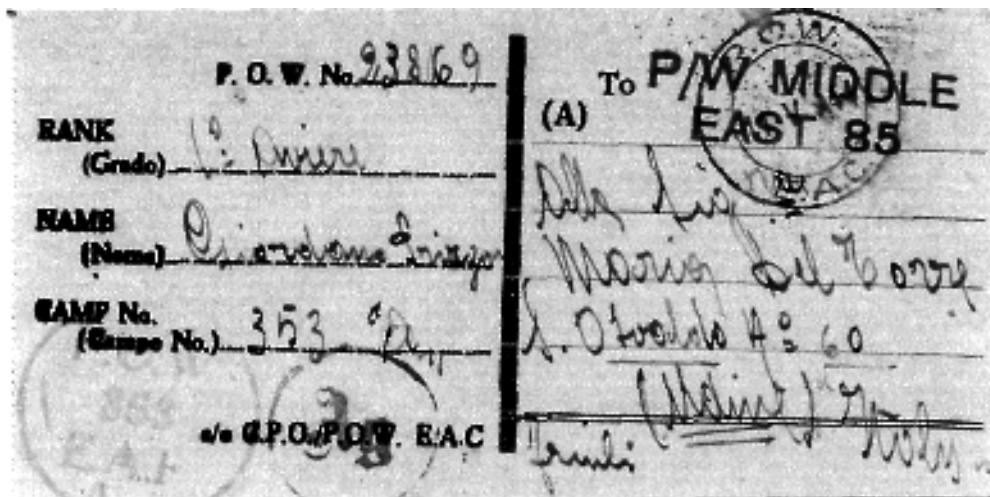
Georges Barot



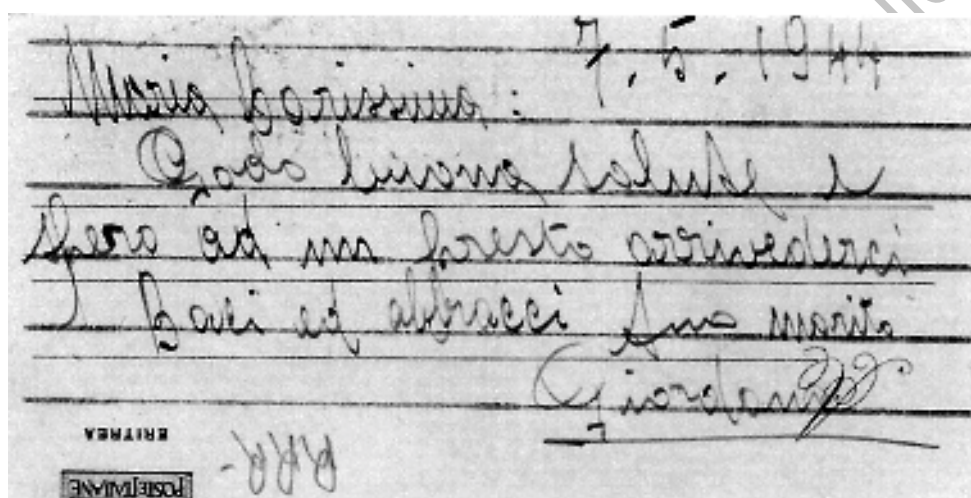
POW card from Camp 359 dated 13.9.1943, made from Italian East Africa ps card of 1937



1943 card (modified ps card) from Italian prisoner in Kenya POW Camp 354 (Nanyuki)



Address side of similar Italian POW card dated 7.5.1944 from Camp 353, with perforations along left-hand side indicating that it perhaps comes from a booklet



Message side of the same card, with the bottom portion of an original postal stationery printed stamp still showing at the bottom of the card after it has been trimmed



An original 1937 postal stationery card from Italian East Africa before trimming and overprinting





## Togo Overprints - the 1921 issue again!

I report the discovery of Cérés/Yvert 113, SG 49, 50c cancelled by Lomé British Timed cancel (Martin & Walton 008.04) on -7 May 1922.

Also found were Cérés/Yvert 104/5, SG 40/41, with German Noepe cancel (M & W 009.01), unfortunately not showing the date. This is a scarce cancel.

At Philatex in November 2003 I found a cover (illustrated below) from Porto Seguro with a German cancel (M & W 012.1) on Cérés/Yvert 108, SG 44, the 25c value which met the rate to Whydah (Ouidah), Dahomey. Cancelled 02.03.1922, it passed via Anécho, backstamped by a German

cancel (M & W 003.02) that day, on to Grand-Popo where it was backstamped 03.03.1922. An indistinct Ouidah arrival cancel was added, probably 03.03.1922 as mail passed the same day along this stretch of coastline.

It was sent to Joseph M Mensah c/o F & A Swanzy Ltd, major West African merchants with London offices and branches across West Africa.

With few examples of 1921 Dahomey overprints found used before 20 June 1922, the day France took sole responsibility for Togo, this may be the first cover noted with the issue used within that timescale.

John Mayne



---

## De Gaulle in Britain

I have been asked by a fellow member of the ACTL (Association des Collectionneurs des Timbres de la Libération et de la Seconde Guerre Mondiale) for information as to whether there were any stamp issues or special cancellations in the UK covering General de Gaulle's time in the UK during World War II. I cannot find any information about this, and I wonder if any member of the Society could help. *[I have passed on a copy of a relevant article, entitled "De Gaulle, de Londres à Paris," from the May 1989 issue of Timbroscopie - Ed.]*

The French association mentioned above publishes regular journals and *Cahiers Philatéliques* covering the WWII period. My interest started when I was seeking information about interzonal postcards and the internment camps in SW France, and I have found those members with whom I have corresponded very helpful. The most recent publication which appeared towards the end of last year is a well illustrated study of the *Histoire de la Croix de Lorraine*, running to 33 A4 pages, which I am happy to lend to members or from which I can let them have copy extracts.

David Hogarth



*Après le Départ* marks used Overseas

According to the article by Colin Spong in Journal 230 (pages 147-150), it appears the *Après le Départ* strike is not often seen on Colonial mail. The schedule and covers illustrated suggest it is only found on covers from the colony of posting.

Some time ago I bought a postcard from Klein-Popo, Togo dated 19.02.1901 to Germany. The writer did not endorse it 'Via Cotonou' or 'Via Accra,' two of three routes available, probably expecting it to be collected by a Woermann ship (these called intermittently). However, with none expected for a few days, Klein-Popo post office sent it via Cotonou for collection by a French ship.

Also in Journal 230 (page 159) Bill Mitchell describes how mail passed from Grand-Popo to Cotonou and on to Lagos.

Togo mail to Dahomey went down this route from early September 1889. My item may have been delayed *en route*, which could explain how the *APRÈS LE DÉPART* strike (black ink; size 44mm x 4mm) was added before it passed to the *Ville Maranhao* of Chargeurs Réunis which docked at Bordeaux 24.03.1901. The card reached Altona 26 March; though had it been collected in Togo by the *Helene Woermann* which called at Lomé 7 March, it would have reached Hamburg 27 March, and Altona on the 28th, just two days later than it took down the French route!

This is the only Togo item seen with the strike. None of the items in Colin's schedule appears to be through mail, and this may be a rare example of a scarce French strike used in the colonial period on a German colonial item.

John Mayne

oooooooooooooooo

I can offer some additional information for Colin Spong's article "*Après le Départ* Marks used Overseas" in Journal 230. The first cover illustrated (to the right) shows the unusual mark *APRÈS LE DÉPART* (possibly produced locally) in blue (21 x 12.5mm) used at St Louis in 1863, and the second (on the next page) bears the standard *APRÈS LE DÉPART* in black (20 x 11mm) used at Rufisque in 1883 on a cover sent to Japan and returned.

The first cover also bears a pair of 10c General Colonial issues cancelled by a dotted lozenge, with a double ring *ST LOUIS (SÉNÉGAL) / 15 JUIL 63* date stamp in blue. Despite being marked *PD* the cover has also been struck *AFFRANCHISSEMENT INSUFFISANT* (both in red). The letter travelled to Toulon via Paris and Lyon before being forwarded to Brest and Rochefort; it was charged an extra 4 décimes.





The second cover is from Rufisque to Tokyo and Yokohama, and returned, 1883. It was sent by *M(?) Gorgerat, Rufisque, Senegal* and addressed to *P(?) Gorgerat, Agent Consulaire, Tokio/Fedo, Japan (via Bordeaux and Suez)*. It is franked with a pair of French General Colonial 25c issues cancelled *SENEGAL ET DEP RUFISQUE / 10 AOUT 83* with *R*, both in blue, *APRÈS LE DÉPART* in black, and *Via COL FR PAQJ N°2 / 26 AOUT 83*. Various Japanese instructions have been stuck on.

**On reverse:** Handstamp – Tokyo 16.10.19 (October 19 1883).

First flag - “Addressee was former member of French legation, resident there (Suita quarter) but has left service. Current whereabouts neither known in legation nor section. Later lived at Lingsawa family. Try there. 1<sup>st</sup> district, 4<sup>th</sup> sub district. Mailman (name).”

Second flag – “Rechecked at French legation bldg. Suitacho. Said to have moved to Kojimuchi district. Try there: Kojimuchi district Fukudu – Eivakucho.”

Third small printed flag – “Addressee has moved/return, try again. (Red seal) – “Kujimuchi P.O.”

Handstamp – Yokohama 16.10 19.

**On front:** Faint violet octagon – Registered Yokohama 16(?) October 1883, plus blue “29971” and the same in red Japanese numerals for domestic re-registration.

Right flag – “To French legation for checking by staff in charge” (signed) - Lidal(?) with handstamp – 16.10 20 (October 20 1883).

Flags on left – “To Suitacho – French legation building”. “Return to sender” – lists three possibilities checked. “Not in Uoshigayacho. Return to sender – 10<sup>th</sup> month 28<sup>th</sup> day.”

Final Japanese return date – “10.28” (28 October 1883).

Then marked in purple manuscript – “*Inconnu à Yokohama*”. Via “*RECLAMATIONS 31 MARS 84*” in blue and “*PARIS 11 CHARGEMENTS 1 AVRIL 84*” in red.

Finally “*RETOUR A L’ENVOYEUR RÉCLAMATIONS*” in blue with “*Rufisque Senegal*” and a box added in purple manuscript.

**John Sacher**

oooooOooooOooooo

Here (next page) is an Oubangui-Chari *Après le Départ* mark of May 1916 to supplement Colin Spong’s list. It is the only one I have seen for any of the AEF countries. It is not mentioned or illustrated in Robert Stone’s “The Diverse World of Postal Markings of Gabon/Congo/AEF.”

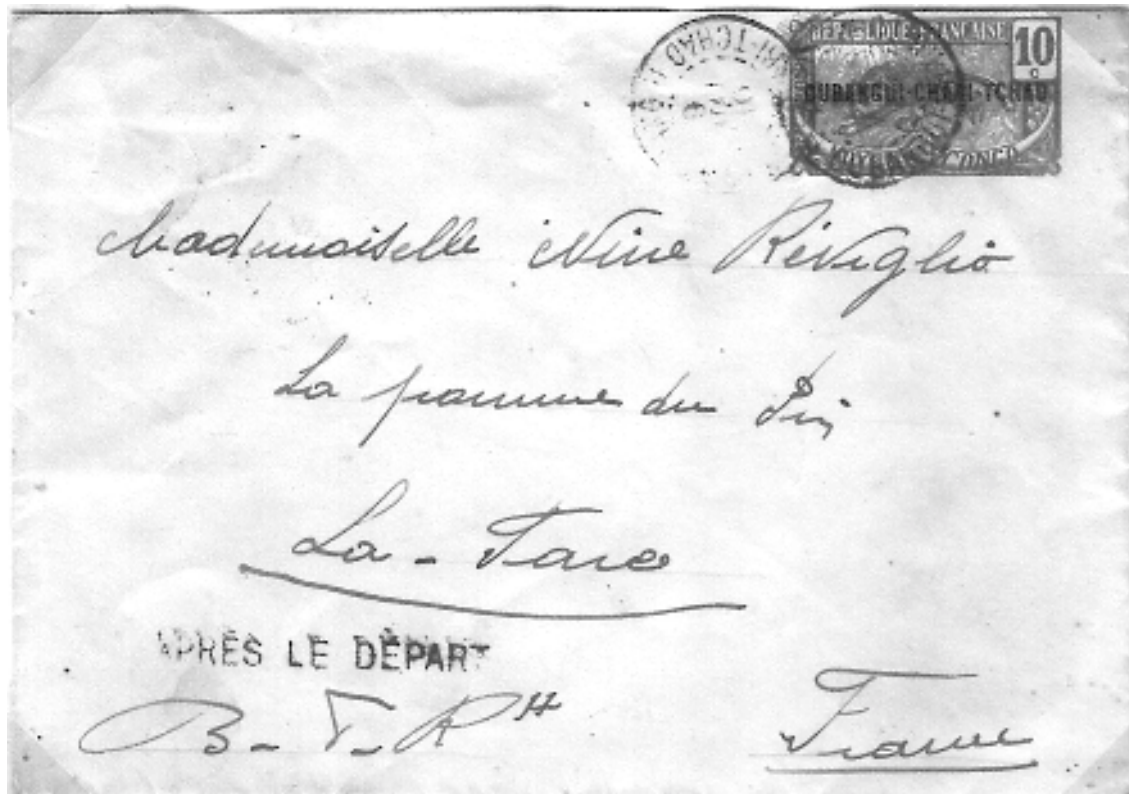
French domestic rates applied for mail to France, and this letter rate up to 20 grams was in force between 1 May 1910 and 31 December 1916. The use of Moyen Congo postal

stationery for use in Oubangui-Chari or Tchad is very limited.

Even more limited is the use of the Too Late mark (*Après le Départ*) which would probably have been applied in Brazzaville after the mail for the next mailboat to France had been made up. It was probably used only on the day of and the day after departure of the mailboat.

**Robert Johnson**





oooooOooooo

I have just read Colin Spong's article on *Après le Départ* from my collection to add to his list. It is a cover used from marks in Journal 230, and would like to offer this item Saigon in June 1900 with a boxed marking.

Chris Palmer



## Monaco/Munich

Two members have written to query the siting of "Monaco" in what was described as a "slightly distorted Italian map" on page 139 of Journal 230, wondering whether the map was even more distorted by placing the principality so far north-east in Europe. In fact, "Monaco" is the Italian

translation of the town we call Munich (and the Germans call München). The two places are distinguished in Italian, when this needs to be clarified, by using the phrases "*il principato di Monaco*" and "*Monaco di Baviera*."

Maurice Tyler

## Île de France Catapult Mail September 1928 & August 1929

I have two covers with endorsements indicating that they were carried on the *Île de France* and were despatched by catapult seaplane to New York. They are not special covers, and do not appear in Silombra's *Histoire de l'Aérostation et de l'Aviation Française à travers le Monde de 1783 à 1930*. It appears possible that they are what they appear to be: certainly the dates match sailings of the *Île de France* which I have established from the *New York Times* of the period (*Shippings and Mails* column and news items). However, there still remains a lingering doubt! If any member can help I would be grateful.

Both covers are shown below. The first is sent from Camden Town on 14 September 1928 to Winnipeg, Canada. The backstamps suggest its receipt in New York on 25 September 1928 and in Winnipeg on 27 September 1928. The postal rate of 3s and 7½d appears to be correct, including a registration fee of 3d, empire postage of 1½d, a catapult fee of 2s 6d and a fee to Canada of 9d per ½ ounce. The *Île de France* did leave Le Havre on 14 September 1928 and reached New York via Plymouth on

25 September 1928. The note stating *Catapult Airmail / per SS 'Île de France' / via Plymouth* could have been added at any time. On the face of it, this cover appears to be genuine, but I would welcome any comments about it.

The second cover was posted in Le Havre on 21 August 1929 to New York. The endorsement *Par Avion Catapulte / de l'Île de France* is in the same handwriting as the address. It is correctly stamped at 11F50, including a catapult fee of 10F. The *NYT* contains news items on 3 and 4 September 1929 indicating that a seaplane was expected to leave the *Île de France* on 2 September and that the liner had docked on 3 September. The backstamp shows its receipt at Rockville Center, N.Y. on 7 September 1929, taking more than 3 days to travel a short distance from New York. The cover is clean. Again it appears to be genuine from the dates and the postage.

I have written to the BAF's *Air Mail News* seeking information about these covers; it only occurred to me later that perhaps the F&CPS Journal might be equally appropriate.

David Hogarth





## Benin - the Early Years



I read with interest in Journal 230 Bill Mitchell and Laurence Lambert's article "French West Africa: Benin - the Early Years."

While I have seen nothing as early as 1886 from Benin, I do have (illustrated above) an item dating from June 1888

that bears a 25c Commerce stamp cancelled 'PROTECTORAT FRANÇAIS DU GOLFE DE BÉNIN / AGHWEY ET GRAND POPO / LE RÉSIDENT' in purple.

The cover is then handstamped 'UNION / MARSEILLE / 23 JUIN 88' *en route* to Paris.

John Sacher

## Czechs in the French Foreign Legion

I'm really very pleased to have the information kindly supplied by Bill Mitchell (*see Journal 229 page 113 for the original query and Journal 230 page 154 for Bill's response*), and with the help of Bertrand Sinais' book I have now been able to write up my covers. I very much appreciate the Society's help in doing this.

BPM number 409 is on one of my other covers, which I missed out on because I didn't see the weak POSTE AUX ARMÉES cancel when making the original enquiry. So having found number 409, on Sinais page 180, as located at NHA TRANG in Indochina, I am very happy. SP 71174 remains a mystery, however.

Brian Day  
(Czech PS)

## Military Initials in Indochina

I am trying to understand the various military covers I have of Indochina, but am having some difficulty with the initials used and hope one of our members might be able to help with these: 2/22 R.I.C., 2e B.I.C., C.C.B. (something to do with motorised transport), and BMTS27 OD.

David Taylor Smith

### [Editor's Note:

In the First World War R.I.C. = Régiment d'Infanterie Coloniale and B.I.C. = Bataillon Indo-Chinois, but I can find no trace of the others, except (in a French source) BMTS = Basic Military Training School!]

## REPORTS OF MEETINGS

### MAIN SOCIETY MEETING OF 26 NOVEMBER 2003

#### Stephen Holder: Tunisian Postal History

Introduced by Prsident Maurice Tyler, Stephen described his display as items from a subsidiary collection that he had once sold and then repurchased in instalments. It represented a classical history of Tunisia until the Régence of 1888, beginning with some Turkish Barbary Protectorate covers from the early 18th century, including some disinfected mail. During this period Italian and British ships were used as well as French ones, and a service to Malta was established for a short time.

A French office was instituted in 1848, originally set up as an *agence postale simple* in the French Consular Office, i.e. as a *bureau annexe* to the *recette postale* of Bône. The first marks were TUNIS PAR BÔNE and a Type 15 cds with *pointillé* or *perlé* cachets from 1855, seven years before Tunis was made a *bureau de distribution*. Several examples of each stage of this development were shown in the selection from Stephen's comprehensive collection.

Stamps appeared from 1864-65, and rate increases over the next 12 years, partly caused by the Franco-German War, were fully illustrated. Thus we saw a number of covers franked at 30c (20c inland rate plus 10c *droit de mer*, with the GC 5115 on items sent to Bône for cancellation); the increase to 40c for French post offices in Egypt, Turkey, Tangiers and Tunis in 1866, with the Tunis GC of 5107, and incoming mail bearing Bordeaux issues; the unusual 80c rate from France to Egypt and Tunis in 1871; the change to 60c if sent via Algeria, and 80c if sent via Italy (1872-73); and a reduction to 30c in 1876.

In 1875 Tunis was made a *bureau de recette*, and the *pointillé* cds became a double circle Type 18. The Type Sage was not available before 1877, and the Cérès issues continued in use as a result. Various interesting miscellaneous items were shown to complete the first half of the display, including an 80c stamp used alone, a boat timetable, a waybill, a GB cover sent to Tunis (with 1d late fee), and a Carthage mail packet boat ppc.

The second half continued with a rise in the use of Type Sage, particularly on envelopes and postal stationery, and with the Tunis cds used as a canceller. Further rate changes took place after 1876, now in a downward direction in conformity with GPU and then UPU rates. Thus we saw

examples of the rate for incoming French mail at 30c (from 1876), 25c (from 1878), and there was even 15c on an item sent to France (1879). After 1880 some offices were gradually opened in smaller towns (to add to those of Tunis and La Goulette), and we were shown some unusual marks and three picture postcards illustrating these. The 1881 French Military Campaign and the 1881-88 Occupation were not illustrated, but this period ended with the Régence issues of 1888.

The final part of Stephen's display dealt with the Italian presence in Tunis. As early as 1852 the Sardinian Consular Office had a post office here, and Sardinian stamps were occasionally used. After the unification of Italy this became the Italian Post Office (1861), and Italian stamps were used on a regular basis from 1864, with the numeral cancel 235 in a rectangle of dots from 1866. In the period 1871-76 Italian rates were cheaper than the French ones and mail to France by Italian boat cost 40c instead of 50c.

From the beginning of 1874 the Estero issues were used, with special (modified Italian) designs, but still cancelled 235 in a lozenge; and a maritime handstamp was applied on arrival or in transit at Italian ports. Again the GPU caused the rate to many countries to be reduced from 40c to 30c in 1876; in 1879 the basic rate to Italy was reduced from 30c to 20c; and in 1880 the UPU foreign rate was reduced to 25c.

A new canceller 235 in a circle of 11 horizontal bars and a new large single ring *sans serif* cds were introduced in 1877; La Goletta opened in 1879 with cancel n° 3336; and in 1888 Susa opened with cancel n° 3364. In 1890 the Estero issues were withdrawn, and thereafter ordinary Italian stamps and postal stationery were used until the office closed in 1897, when all mail was henceforth handled by the Régence Tunis Post Office.

In his vote of thanks, Maurice commented that despite Stephen's throwaway remarks at the beginning of his talk, he had lived up to his reputation by showing us some remarkable material, often described as "not easy to find," enlivened by an erudite commentary on the political background to the philately and postal history so comprehensively illustrated.

MST

---

### SOUTHERN GROUP MEETING OF 10 JANUARY 2004

#### The Largs at FCPS

The Organiser opened the proceedings on a sunny afternoon [although this turned to heavy rain later in the evening!] welcoming members to the first meeting of the New Year.. **Yvonne Larg** commenced with a comprehensive display of Monaco, giving the background to the principality, the royal family and its casino - motto "I came, I saw, I lost!" The display commenced with a cover

dated 23.11.1893 to Paris, the 1895 issue and postal stationery including a newspaper wrapper of 1891. Then followed reply postcards and 1904 Royal Hotel advertising cards to Paris, ending with the Monaco Air Rally of 1914 postcard to London. The second display continued with the 1926-31 issue; amongst other items noted were a registered cover to St Denis with hexagonal MONACO

CONDAMINE A date stamp, a 1927 cover to Hawaii, a 1935 Advertising cover for Hotel Hermitage with slogan pmk, 1945 War Dead and Deported Workers issue, 1949 Proof of Prince Albert signed by Mazelin, various brochures, Red Cross funds and a presentation pack from the Royal Palace.

**Bob Larg** began with a display of French definitive stamps, particularly the 1916-19 issue with GC paper, a mobile box cancellation Dieppe to London [LON MB 18 Sep 21], 1923 Bordeaux Philatelic Congress, various Aviation meetings at Rouen, and 1925 pneumatic mail. Bob then showed 1927 Strasbourg Philatelic Exhibition, and also mail from the International Labour Office, Paris, the Pontarlier Aviation meeting, 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Blériot flight, concluding with registered repayment cards.

On behalf of the members the Organiser thanked Bob and Yvonne for an entertaining and interesting programme of French and Monaco mail..

Members present: Michael Annells, Betty Blincow, Michael Berry, Colin Clarkson, Roy Ferguson, John Hammonds, Bob & Yvonne Larg, Bob Small, Colin Spong, John Yeoman; and Guests Frank Blincow and Pat Spong who looked after the refreshments.

Apologies from Geoff Gethin, Bill Mitchell, Barbara Priddy, John Thorpe and Michael Wilson.

The next meeting was arranged for Saturday 3 April 2004: The Town of Montargis by Mrs Lesley Marley, and French Railways by Michael Annells.

CWS

## NORTHERN GROUP MEETING OF 24 JANUARY 2004

**Steve Ellis: French Transatlantic Mail**

**Alan Goude: Dahomey to 1945**

Present: Stephen Holder (Chairman), Robert Barnes, Steve Ellis, Alan Goude, Judith Holder, Bernard Lucas, Peter Maybury, John Moreton, Michael Meadowcroft, Tony Shepherd, John Whiteside, and Richard and Yvonne Wheatley (guests).

Apologies were received from George Barker, Peter Stockton and Paul Watkins

The Chairman extended a warm welcome to member John Moreton, who was attending for the first time, and to guests Richard and Yvonne Wheatley, stalwarts of the Bradford Society.

The Secretary updated the meeting on a number of points of interest, which in hindsight were probably not of much interest, but that is what secretaries are for.....

The interesting bit: Our Leader introduced the two speakers, members **Steve Ellis** and **Alan Goude** who were to provide the entertainment for this double header meeting.

First off was Steve with "French Transatlantic Mail" who commenced by explaining the development of the collection, and in so doing firmly placed the blame on John Whiteside for infecting him with RRV (the routes and rates virus).

The initial part of the display was devoted to the period prior to the Franco-US Postal Convention of 1857 and traced the development of the routes and charges. Examples of early mail carried by British ships to and from the US, the use of Forwarding Agents, entry and transit marks and the application of the *voie de mer* charges were then forthcoming, with examples of the indirect lines (via England), and the direct line, to Le Havre. An 1843 letter to Boston (Mass.) caught the eye as a superb example of mail handled by two forwarding agents - Le Havre and London. A profusion of letters travelling in both directions showing the effects of the 1843 Convention and its modifications, and an example of the short-lived, i.e. January - March 1857, direct US contract, closed the first half.

Steve then informed us that the second half, which covered the 1857 Franco-US Convention was less complicated, and he had broken this down into four routes and the associated rates. Examples were shown of the 1863 depreciated currency rates, German steamships contracted to the US Post Office, plus a letter from San Francisco carried overland to the east coast and then by the Inman Line to La Rochelle which was outstanding. However the *pièce de résistance* was an 1866 overweight, "shortpaid" letter from Boston to Paris franked with a 10 cents and a 5 cents cancelled by a "star" handstamp.

Alan then took up the running with Dahomey to 1945. Why Dahomey? he asked. Answer: not many folk collected it and the stamps were pretty and colourful! A brief look at the background history of the colony which included trade cards and maps from the period 1930 to 1950 was followed by examples of the stamps.

The Benin and "Tablet" issues up to 1899 were followed by the 1899, 1900 and 1901-05 Dahomey "Tablet" series, and the 1913-1939 "Palm Tree" issues were shown in a representative selection. Alan then turned to covers with a fine example of an 1893 French Guinea postal stationery card used internally in Dahomey, Line M maritime mail to France, and a mixed franking Benin 4c and Dahomey 1c to France dated 1904, which preceded a nice selection of postal stationery used internally and internationally.

A lovely *Art Nouveau* advertising envelope franked with a 5c on 2c + 5c on 10c of the 1912 surcharged "Tablet" issue used internally was followed by examples of registered and WWI military mail. Single stamp correct usage, delays in the implementation of new rates, destinations and railway markings preceded fine examples of the 1920-1921 period of stamp shortages, when many ingenious methods were used to provide the correct postage rates, e.g. postage dues, and bisects of the stamps and postage dues.

A selection of censored and military franchise letters from WWII then followed. Finally came airmails, and Alan



explained the development of the routes and produced a list of the rates to France from AOF with covers to tie into the listings for Dahomey. Interestingly the eastern route operated by Sabena was cheaper for mail weighing up to 5gms destined for the UK, Denmark and the USA.

Chairman Holder congratulated both speakers on the quality of their material and the depth of knowledge contained in the presentations, and remarked how two such contrasting subjects had complemented one another to produce a most interesting and pleasurable afternoon.

JPM

## MAIN SOCIETY MEETING OF 28 JANUARY 2004

### Bob Deakin: Morocco to 1956

President Maurice Tyler introduced Bob Deakin to an audience very much reduced by severe weather conditions, but keen to see this display that had had to be postponed last year.

pounce as they knew the other cats would attack it. A large map of Morocco was displayed together with a coloured brochure of 1921 inviting travel to the country (Fig 1).

The display proper started with some early postcards of Morocco and some early letters (one disinfected) from European traders in 1753-54. There being no postal system, from 1891 Europeans set up private and local posts for the service between specified towns (Fig 2). These are rare items seldom seen. In 1892 the Sultan introduced his own internal postal system using octagonal coloured handstamps (Fig 3). Examples were shown of dual franked covers using additional French PO stamps for mail overseas (Fig 4). Chérifien (Government) stamps and covers of 1913 were shown (Fig 5), although this service disappeared during WWI. A lot of interest was shown in a cover of 1895 from the US Consulate in Tangier to Jacmel, Haiti, bearing a "Fort de France à Haiti" ship letter mark (Fig 6).

We saw a letter of 1916 to France with the scarce cancel of FEZ-MELLAH (Fig 7) – the word Mellah coming from the Arabic Mehl meaning salt. Jews lived in the areas known as Mellahs because they were employed to salt heads of executed men that would be hung above the town's large gates for all to see, and to remind the populace of the penalty for crimes. Then came a postcard of the visit by the Kaiser in 1905 to offer support for Morocco. Having landed by rowing boat in rough seas at Tangier, he was so ill on the ride to the German Legation he did not make a speech and quickly returned to his ship (see Journal 214 page 278).

The diplomatic shenanigans between the Europeans led to the Algeciras Conference of 1906, for which some large vignettes and a cover from the French diplomatic mission were shown (see Journal 214 page 279). The slaughter of some Europeans at a quarry near Casablanca in 1907 brought about the shelling of the town by the cruiser *Galilée*, and then the establishment of a bridgehead, leading to the Chaouia Campaign that developed into long hard fighting to take control of the warring tribes

of Morocco, lasting until 1934. An amazing card pictured some large horses being loaded onto rowing boats (see Journal 215 page 15), an exercise that had been practised by the French in Algeria. Other items were WWI cards of the Foreign Legion in Morocco, including a letter from a Russian to Switzerland, and some WWI mail from German

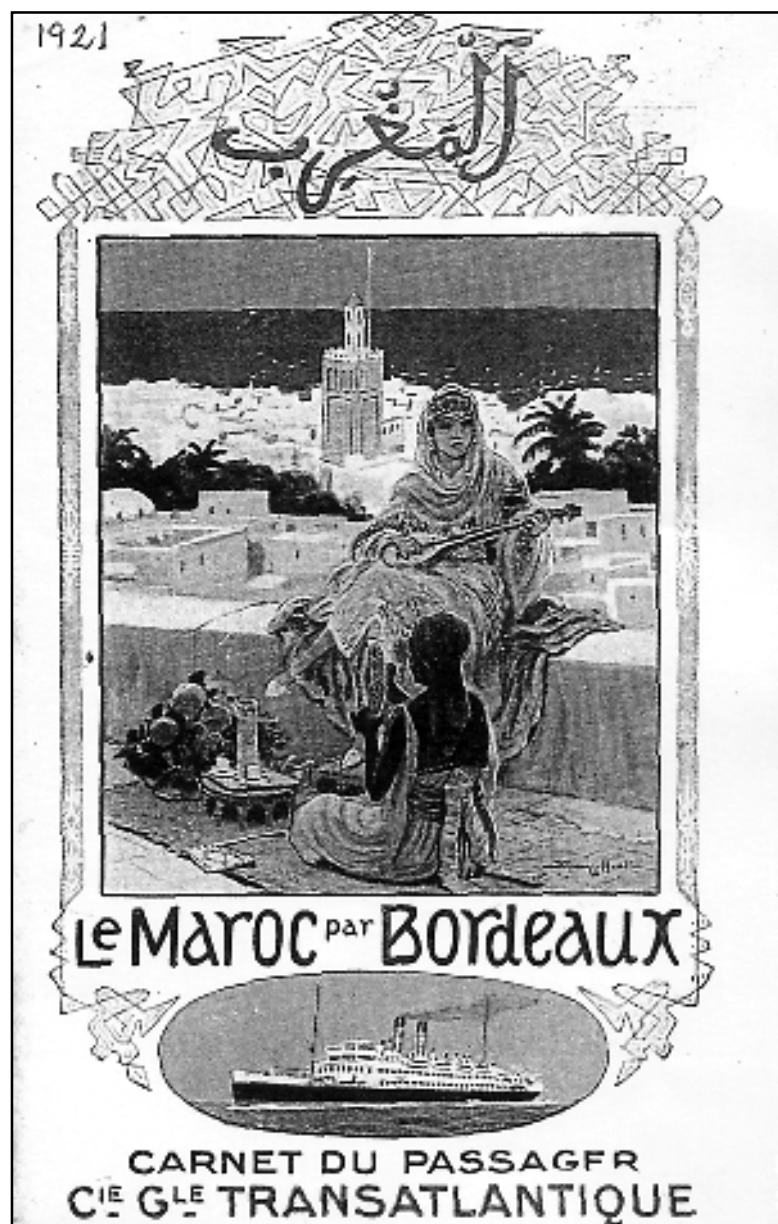


Figure 1

Bob described Morocco as "an appalling, wild and shocking place" in the 18th, 19th and early 20th centuries, with no roads or infrastructure. Although the closest country to Europe, it remained independent, the situation being that of a small mouse surrounded by big cats, but no cat would

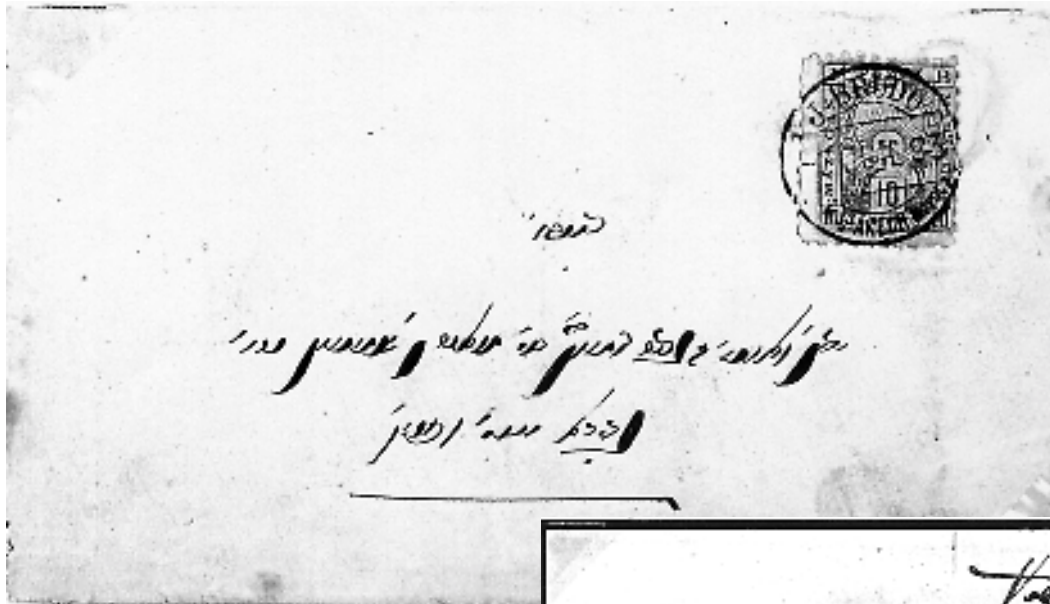


Figure 2 (*left*) -  
1893 Marrakesh to  
Mazagan by private  
French courier  
Isaac Brudo;  
the cover is addressed  
in Hebrew

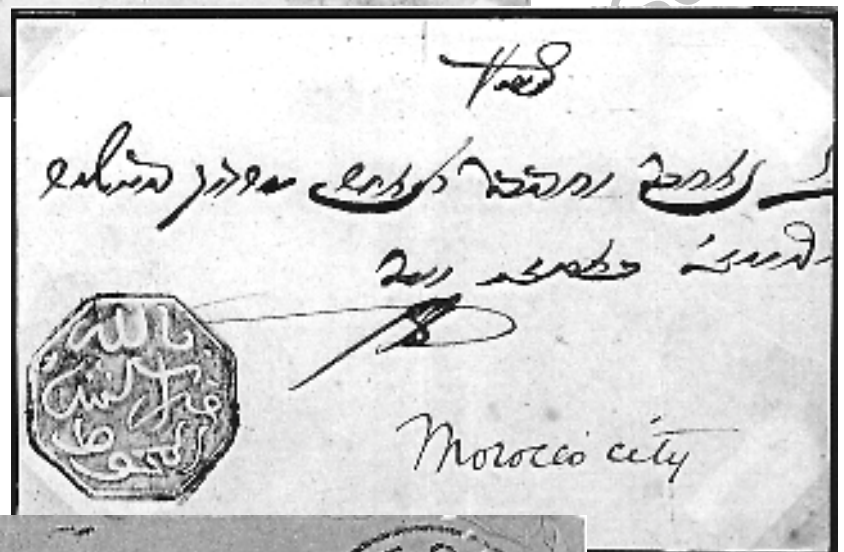


Figure 3 (right) - Sultan's handstamps



Figure 4 (left) -  
1913 Chérifien Posts  
(with straight line  
backstamp  
POSTES  
CHÉRIFIENNES)



Figure 5 (right) -  
1897 Brudo local post  
(overfranked by 15c)  
to France





Figure 6 (left) - 1895 registered cover from US Consulate to Jacmel, Haiti



Figure 7 (above) - 1916 Fez-Mellah date stamp



Figure 8 (right) - 1915 POW card from French POW in Germany to Morocco



Figure 10 (left) - 1923 trial flight Casablanca-Dakar



Figure 9 (right) -  
1922 AVION  
handstamp  
from Fedala  
(Fedhala)

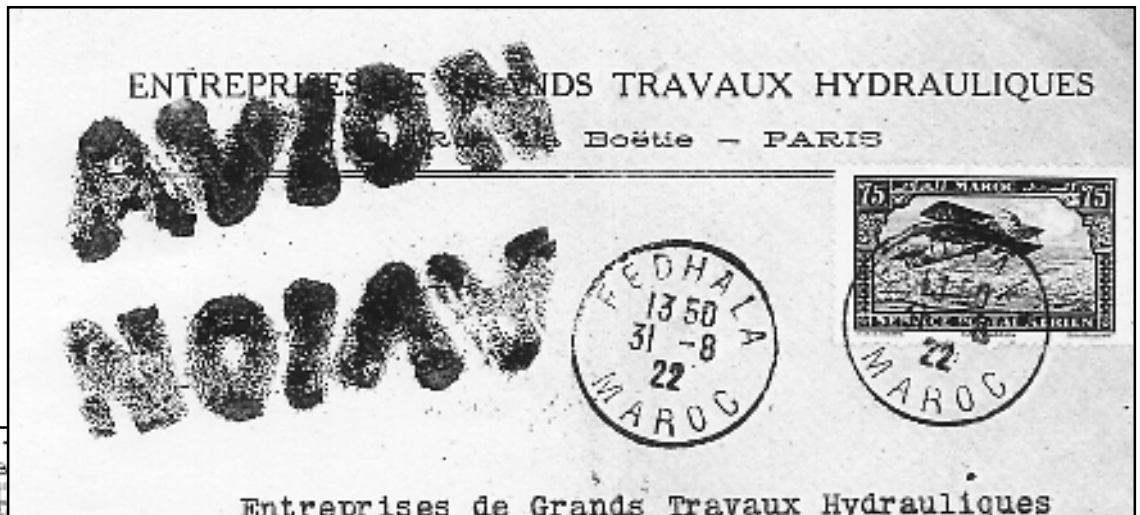


Figure 12  
(left) -  
1933  
*Jusqu'à*  
marking  
applied  
in  
Marseille

Figure 11 (right) -  
Maritime disaster mail



POWs in Morocco, together with a card from a Moroccan POW in Germany (Fig 8, and see Journal 217 page 105).

These were followed by some marks from French post offices in the 1891-1900 period, some overprinted Red Cross stamps and rare poster stamps. A wide selection of stamps from the French Protectorate era (1914 onwards) included the one book of stamps that had been issued before WWII, some beautiful definitives including coil stamps, parcel stamps and postage dues. This section ended with independence in 1956.

The second half of the display concentrated on airmail items from 1911 on, dealing with stamps, routes, rates, special cachets, and unusual items of particular interest. Among the material shown by Bob we noted examples of Latécoère airmail covers from 1920 and first flights through to the 1930s; a special AVION handstamp used only at

Fedala (Fig 9); the trial flight from Casablanca to Dakar in 1923 which became a weekly service in 1925 (Fig 10); and an interesting Zeppelin 'dropped mail' at Larache of 1935, as well as crash mail and a bogus crash mail. The years during WWII saw Operation Sword (1942), mail from Americans in Morocco, a letter from an Italian POW, the opening flight in 1946 to Chile, a maritime disaster (in which 45,000 bunches of bananas were lost) (Fig 11), some hotel covers, and a *Jusqu'à* handstamp on cover from Tangier to Zurich via Marseille (Fig 12)..

In his vote of thanks Maurice referred to the number of times that Bob had described items as "not often found" and even "incredibly rare," and pointed out that we had been privileged to see such a wide variety of unusual material, supported by a fascinating account of the historical background.

MST/RCD

## SOCIETY NOTES

### Continued from page 2

#### Displays by Members

In recent months several of our members have given displays to other societies:

**Peter Baker** showed "Free French Forces" to the Basildon PS on 21 October 2003.

**Bob Larg** showed Australia, France, Germany and New Zealand to the Goring by Sea PS on 6 November 2003, France to Worthing PS on 15 January 2004, and New Zealand to Chichester PS on 9 February 2004.

**Yvonne Larg** showed "Owls" to Goring by Sea PS on 2 October 2003, Zanzibar to Worthing PS on 15 January 2004, and Nepal to Chichester PS on 9 February 2004.

**Barrie Jay** showed "Campaign Covers 1440-1815" to the Forces Postal History Society on 14 February 2004.

**John Levett** showed covers illustrating Anglo-French cross-Channel connections from Napoleonic War naval letters to Movable Box mail as part of a Woking Philatelic Society display to the Kingston upon Thames and District Philatelic Society on 21 November 2003.

\* \* \*

#### Philatelic Honours

We are pleased to report that our member (and Past President) Iain Stevenson has recently been appointed one of the new Associate Trustees of the British Philatelic Trust.

\* \* \*

#### Corrigenda

A late minor change in the pagination of Journal 230 resulted in two page numbers being wrongly given in the Index to Volume 53.


On page 166 the page number for "Benin – Benin: the early years" should read "159" (and not 161); and the last page number for "Franco-German War – Amazing 1870-71 Wonder Stories" should read "128" (and not 127). Apologies!

\* \* \*

Over Fifty Years of Philatelic Expertise

## France & Colonies Stamps and Postal History

feature regularly in our public auctions at Derby!





Our 22<sup>nd</sup> & 23<sup>rd</sup> April Sale will continue to offer interesting selections of French area material including the second part of the late Arthur Dent's collection and a fine lot of modern 'missing colour' varieties etc. As for the stamp on the right – it's the rare unissued brown version!

Request a sample catalogue from our Derby office.


Can we help you build – or sell – your Collection?

Contact: Paul Watkins  
(FRCPs member since 1988)





**CAVENDISH HOUSE**  
153-157 LONDON ROAD  
DERBY DE1 2SY ENGLAND  
Tel: 01332 250970 (4 lines, 24 hrs)  
Fax: 01332 294440  
E-mail: stamps@cavendishphilauc.demon.co.uk  
www.Cavendish-Auctions.com



## BOOKSHELF

### Peacemakers

by Margaret Macmillan, paperback and illustrated cover, 528pp., published 2001 [pb edition 2002] by John Murray Ltd, 50 Albemarle Street, London W1S 4BD; ISBN 0-7195-6233-3; price £16.99.

This prize-winning book appears now in paperback form. Margaret Macmillan brings to life the Paris Peace Conference of 1919, and the many diverse problems encountered as they attempted to re-map Europe, the Middle East and other occupied areas following the Great War. The many personalities are given flesh with their good intentions, intrigues and broken promises. In conclusion this book covers briefly the proposed setting up

of the League of Nations which was doomed to failure and the problems, political and otherwise, that have still not been settled, some of which were the cause of World War II and its aftermath. Of interest to our readers are Chapters 25-29, dealing with the breaking-up of the Ottoman Empire, particularly Lebanon and Syria and other at present topical Middle Eastern countries. Strongly recommended.

Colin Spong

### The Postal History of the Railway on the Island of Réunion

by Peter R A Kelly; in Volume N° 4 in the yearly series published by the Stuart Rossiter Trust Fund, 2003; 83 pages, perfect binding with laminated covers; price £10. Available from the Stuart Rossiter Trust Fund, c/o Robert Johnson, 65 Manor Park, Redlands, Bristol BS6 7HW.

This excellent series by the Rossiter Trust, which I have not previously seen before, covers a number of serious studies of postal history that have not been large enough for a volume on their own. N° 4 contains three studies; **The Post between Great Britain and Russia via Prussia 1852-1875** [19pp] by Charles Leonard; **The Postal History of the Railway on the Island of Réunion** [31pp] by Peter Kelly and **Early Seychelles Air Mails 1926-1971** [27pp] by Keith Fitton.

There are not too many articles written in English apart from those on early maritime mail on Réunion, a former French colony, and now an overseas *département* in the Indian Ocean. Therefore it is with pleasure that I welcome Peter Kelly's introduction to the former railways on the island. [Peter states that it is a working study.] As far as I know there has only been one previous article on Réunion Railways, Peter Ibbotson's "Réunion Railway Cancellations," published in *Stamp Collecting*, 24 June 1976.

Peter has developed his researches in co-operation with three French collectors: Messieurs F Feuga, Paul Loubet and Maurice Durrieu, examining many letters and documents. The opening chapters give an outline of the main features of the island, its commercial development and economic ups and downs followed by the construction of the railway, a wonderful achievement of engineering considering the volcanic and mountainous areas of the island.

This is followed by the history of the two lines: *Ligne du vent* and *Ligne sous le vent* which were constructed on a one metre narrow gauge line, the types of engines used, the number of services per day and passengers carried until the lines ceased operating in 1956. The postal history chapter is well researched and describes the beginning of the arrival of European mails at Pointe des Galets that was carried by rail to St Denis. This chapter also includes the types of cancellations used on outgoing mail that is divided up into three periods 1882-1902, 1902-1929 and 1929-1956. These are all illustrated and clearly described in a most readable text.

The final chapter is concerned with Moveable Boxes (*Boîtes Mobiles*), a subject that the author is researching on another former French colony - Madagascar. There is a scarcity of documentation and very little is known amongst collectors even in France, and Peter is to be congratulated on what he has assembled for Réunion, especially as the material is not very easy to find.

There are four annexes covering the usage of the date stamps, the BMs, an Advice of Goods and a bibliography, some excellent maps, and the illustrations of covers and postcards are carefully chosen and well produced. This is a splendid study which I recommend to all interested in French colonies, particularly where there are railways waiting to be researched.

Colin Spong

### A Chronological Look at the History of France

by Jean-Charles Volkmann; English edition translated by Angela Moyon; published by Editions Jean-Paul Gusserot, 10 rue Gracieuse, 75005 Paris; 2001; 125pp., paperback with laminated illustrated cover; price €5.10.

This excellent summary of the history of France by a highly-qualified historian was discovered in the bookshop of the Château de Blois, whilst Pat and I were on holiday in the Loire region last year.

It gives all the basic information one needs about the various rulers, governments, or events for any particular year. As the publishers' blurb states, it is just the sort of book to keep at hand at all times.

Colin Spong



## FRANCE: The Darkness Years 1940-1944

by Julian Jackson; published by Oxford University Press, 2001; hardback edition ISBN 0-19-829706-9, paperback edition ISBN 0-19-925457-1, 2003; 660 pp. with laminated illustrated cover; price £12.99; obtainable from all good bookshops.

Now that the wartime events of German occupation during that dark period of years in the history of France is some seventy years ago, a number of books are now beginning to appear with background to the various events that then took place.

As the author states in his preface this book is inspired by the fact that time is ripe for a new history of France during the German Occupation. The last general history of this subject, by the French historian Jean-Pierre Azéma,

appeared in 1973, but in the twenty-seven years since then a huge amount of research has taken place. Numerous French historians have been making important studies of the period, and so at last we have a publication in English and we are delighted that Julian Jackson was encouraged by Tom Morris formerly of OUP to take up this immense task.

For anyone who collects this period of French philately and postal history this book will be an excellent *aide-mémoire*.

Colin Spong

## Books Noted

*Les Relations de la France avec la Suisse, Première partie: Genève de 1660 à 1849* by Michèle Chauvet; 310 pp., A4, limited edition; price 45€ inc. p&p; available from Brun & Fils, 85 galerie Beaujolais, Palais Royal, 75001 Paris. [Sources consulted in Musée de la Poste, Archives, Swiss documents, etc., leading to numerous illustrations and summarising tables, 100 letters reproduced and commented on, 15 maps or plans, as well as official texts, tariffs and agreements fully reproduced.]

*Un jour en Eure-et-Loir, Agenda historique* by Jean-Francis Ressort; pub. Éditions du Cherche-Midi; price 18€ + p&p; details from J-F Ressort, 13 avenue Neigre, 28000 Chartres. [The history of this *département* according to the day, with authenticated anecdotes and philatelic illustrations.]

*Impressions Expressions* pub. La Poste; 196 pp., 258 x 243mm; price 60€; available from the Service philatélique de La Poste, 28 rue de la Redoute, 92266 Fontenay-aux-Roses Cedex. [The process of manufacturing French stamps, including the various printing techniques, and the cutting tools for different shapes, with simple comments and illustrations of 51 stamps.]

*Poste rurale Var: Arrondissements ruraux* by Robert Gregnac-Daudemard; details and price not indicated; available from the author at "Colline," boulevard des Arbousiers, 83120 Sainte-Maxime. [Rural post offices and rural post boxes of this *département*, with dates of use when known.]

*L'Occupation Italienne de Menton (1940-1943)* by Gianpaolo Guzzi; 90pp. with 110 illustrations; price 25€; available from the author at Via A Agnelli 24, 21013 Gallarate (VA), Italy. [Brochure in Italian and French relating the postal history of this locality under Italian occupation, divided into 3 main periods (September 1940 to September 1941, September 1941 to July 1943, July 1943 to September 1943), with illustrations of the different date stamps.]

*Inland Routing Markings of Japan in the 1870s* by Matsumoto Junichi; supplement to *Japanese Philately* vol. 56 n° 2 published as Monograph 15 by the International Society for Japanese Philately Inc.; 40pp. 8½" x 11" with illustrations; price \$12 (US) postpaid worldwide + \$5 airmail; available from above society at 815 Springingsguth Road, Schaumburg, IL 61093-3329, USA. [Detailed study of mail handling and of postal and Japanese-language inland markings from and to the French military missions in 19th century Japan, and from and to other French and foreign residents.]

*Il y a 200 ans ... Napoléon, le Camp de Boulogne et la Légion d'Honneur* by J Chochois and Michel Poultier; 250 pp.; price 24€; available in April 2004 from M Poultier, 132 rue de Beaurepaire, 62200 Boulogne-sur-Mer. [History of the Napoleonic Camp de Boulogne and the Légion d'Honneur, illustrated by documents, rare unpublished military letters and autographs from the authors' collections.]

Maurice Tyler

## STOP PRESS

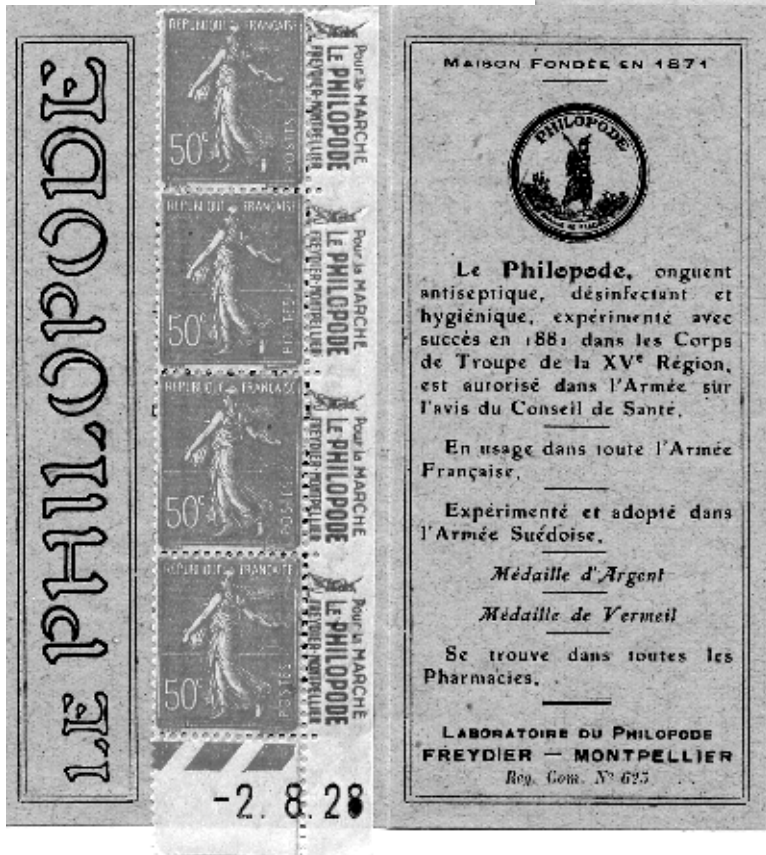
**Subject Index to Four French Philatelic Magazines 1946 to 2000** compiled by Derek Richardson. This publication, **Brochure N° 8** for the France & Colonies Philatelic Society of Great Britain, has now been completed, apart from a cover design and a decision on pricing (which is likely to be modest).

It consists of 52 A4 pages and covers the philatelic articles dealing with France and her Colonies in the magazines *Le Monde des Philatélistes*, *La Philatélie Française*, *Timbroscopie*, and *L'Écho de la Timbrologie* for the years stated, all of which are available in the Society Library. The articles have been subject-indexed by a dozen members of the Society and amalgamated and checked by Derek Richardson. Two pages

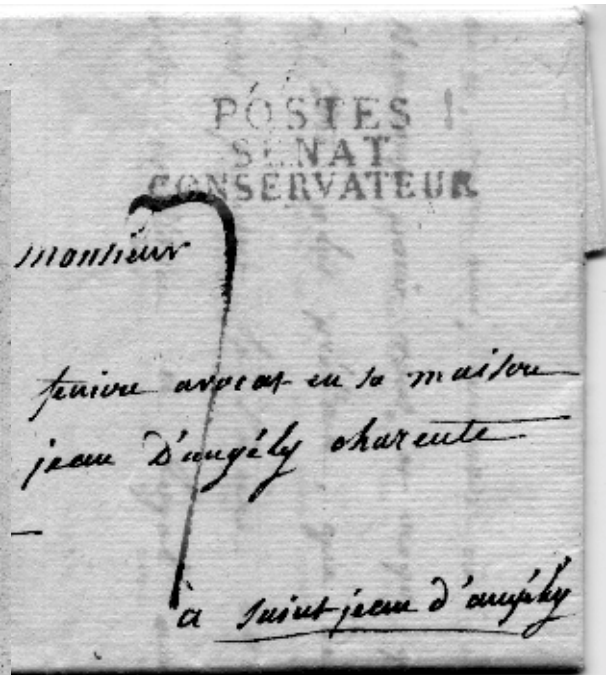
of subject headings are followed by the Index itself, and the brochure is completed by a list of *Études* published by *Le Monde*, a numbered and dated list of the four magazines concerned, and an introduction in French to complement the one in English at the beginning.

A proof copy of the text will be available for viewing and ordering at the Society Weekend in Charlecote, and the finished product should be available for purchase soon afterwards. Any requests for further details should initially be addressed either to the Journal Editor or the General Secretary, but arrangements for purchase will be circulated to all members in due course.

## May 2004 Auction - Selected Lots



50c Sower Philopode



1805 POSTES SENAT CONSERVATEUR



50F Gandon



## May 2004 Auction - Selected Lots



(above) 5c Sage



10F75 AEF



Dulac



(right) 1969 Montgeron