

The Journal of the France & Colonies Philatelic Society



1914 Red Cross booklet containing 2 panes of 10 *Correspondance Militaire* vignettes.
The message on the cover reads: "Take care not to write anything that might give information to the enemy."
(from John West's collection)

Volume 54 ● Number 3
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Whole Number 233

THE FRANCE & COLONIES PHILATELIC SOCIETY OF GREAT BRITAIN

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The Society

The Society was founded in 1949 and is affiliated to the ABPS. Its affairs are managed by a Committee comprising President, Officers and Committee members, elected annually.

All inquiries 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

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Auction and Exchange Packet Sales

Lots for sale through the Society auctions, held 3 or 4 times a year, should be sent to the Acting 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. Telephone 0208 428 4741.

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:

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* * *

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

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

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SOCIETY NOTES

New Members

The Society is pleased to welcome the following:

1236 Nicholas Pertwee (Surrey), 1237 J L Allison (Worcestershire), 1238 George Baker (USA).

* * *

Date of AGM

It has recently been pointed out that next year's AGM has been arranged at the same time as the French National Exhibition in Nancy (5-8 May), which may well cause problems for some members who would like to attend both, and the Committee will therefore be considering an alternative date for the AGM and Auction, possibly 30 April or 14 May 2005. When confirmed, any new date will be announced in the Society Notes of the next issue of the Journal, to be published in December.

* * *

Northern Group Programme

18 September 2004	Members' Choice
6 November 2004	John Morton: Rural France & WWI
22 January 2005	Robert Barnes: French Indo-China
12 March 2005	Martyn Cusworth: Air France
16 July 2005	"Bastille Day" at Heaton Royds

Meetings are held in the Leeds General Infirmary, Great George Street, LS1 3EX at 1.30pm in the Committee Room.

The "Bastille Day" meeting will take place, courtesy of the Chairman, Stephen Holder, at his home at Heaton Royds, Bradford.

* * *

London Meetings

		Venue*
2004		
Wed. 29 Sept.	Members: 12 sheets	CA
Sat. 30 Oct.	President's afternoon	RHH
Sat. 6 Nov.	Auction (2pm, view from 12 noon)	CA
Wed. 24 Nov.	Barbara Priddy: Africa by Air	CA
2005		
Wed. 26 Jan.	The Largs at large: Monaco & France	CA
Sat. 26 Feb.	Peter Kelly: The 1900 Exhibition	RHH
Wed. 27 Apr.	Chris Hitchen: The Paris Post 1849-76	CA
Sat. 7 May#	AGM (11.30am) & Auction (2pm)	CA
Wed. 28 Sept.	Members: 12 sheets	CA
Sat. 29 Oct.	President's afternoon	RHH

See item above for possible change of date.

* **Venues:** CA denotes Calthorpe Arms PH, 252 Grays Inn Road, London WC1., where Wednesday meetings commence at 6.30pm.

RHH denotes Royal Horticultural Halls, Greycoat Street, Westminster, London SW1, where Saturday meetings are from 3 to 5pm.

* * *

Society Packets

In order to avoid the sort of problems that have occurred recently, members who receive the Society packets are asked to observe the accompanying regulations scrupulously, in particular checking carefully for any unsigned spaces on receipt and notifying the Packet Secretary if any are found; sending these items by normal (NOT Recorded or Special Delivery) postage but with a (free) Certificate of Posting; and if possible (though this is not yet included in the printed regulations) telephoning or e-mailing ahead to warn the next recipient that a packet is on its way, so that a missing packet can be traced more promptly. The Packet Secretaries will appreciate your cooperation and help in these matters.

* * *

Society Literature Award

The 2003 Literature Award was judged as follows:

1. **Ashley Lawrence:** "La Semeuse - the Early Years"
2. **John West:** "1914 - the 10c red Sower and the Red Cross"
3. **Peter Maybury:** "France - the Tariff of 1676"

The judging panel this year comprised Claire Angier, Roy Ferguson, Robert Johnson, Anthony Shepherd and John Yeomans, and was convened by Colin Spong.

* * *

Exhibition Successes

At España 2004 (Valencia, Spain, 22-30 May 2004) the following members are to be congratulated::

Ed Grabowski displayed "Guadeloupe Postal History" in the IPF Champions Class

Claire Angier was awarded a Gold in the Open Class for "Death by post"

Steven Walske was awarded a Gold in the Postal History Class for "Special postal routes across the lines during the American Civil War"

Thomas Berger [now resigned] was awarded a Large Vermeil in the Postal History Class for "Lettres recommandées et chargées en France 1871-1880"

John Scott was awarded a Vermeil in the Fiscal Philately Class for "Paper and parchment stamps of France 1673-1798"

and your **Editor**, on behalf of the Society, received a Large Silver for the Journal (2003 issues)

* * *

Displays by Members

Colin Spong displayed "Madagascar" to the Royal Tunbridge Wells PS on 12 August 2004

* * *

Continued on page 128

Visiting Cards

a brief history of rates, regulations and postal stationery

Mick Bister

Part 2: 1917 to the present day

In contrast to the frequent revision and reinterpretation of visiting card rates described in Part 1 of this article, a more structured form was established in the rates decreed on 30 December 1916. From 1 January 1917, three distinct categories of visiting card would be recognised, each according to the number of words in manuscript added by the sender, viz: a) no additional text, b) between 1 and 5 words (both of these categories of card had to be sent in an unsealed envelope) and c) more than five words (which could be sent in a sealed envelope). The rates were 5c, 10c and 15c respectively. Whether by accident or design these rates corresponded to the contemporary printed matter rate, the 5 word postcard rate and the letter rate.

Over the next nine years the visiting card rates were modified four times. Although the three separate categories were still identified in the published announcements, the rates did not always reflect the difference and on three occasions the same rate was applied to two of the three

categories. It was not until 9 August 1926 that the original 1917 differentiation was re-established and for the next four decades the rates for visiting cards continued to retain their equivalence with the printed matter rate (Fig 1), the 5 word postcard rate (Fig 2) and the letter rate (Fig 3).

The 19 May 1964 saw the end of the three-tier system when, by eliminating the 5 word category, the PTT reduced the sender's choice to two alternatives – either a card with no text added at all (other than a signature or date) to be franked at the printed matter rate, or a card with greetings or a message to be franked at the letter rate (Fig 4). Finally, on 13 January 1969 as part of the postal reform, the visiting card category was abolished. Instead, the sender could choose between the new first class (*lettres*) or second class (*plis non urgents*) services and in either case the envelope could be sealed. Full details of the rates which operated between 1917 and 1969 can be seen in the table at the end of this article.

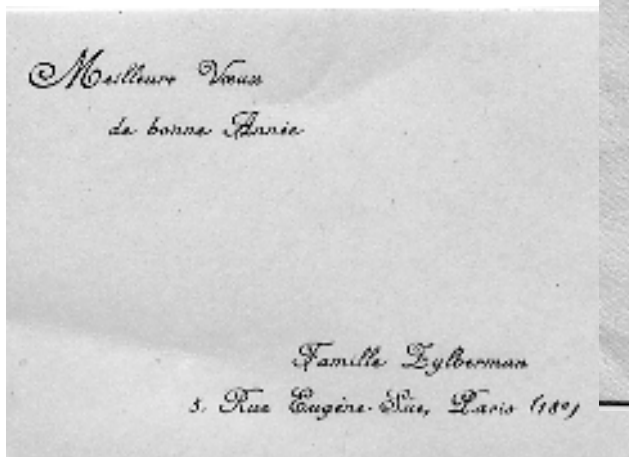
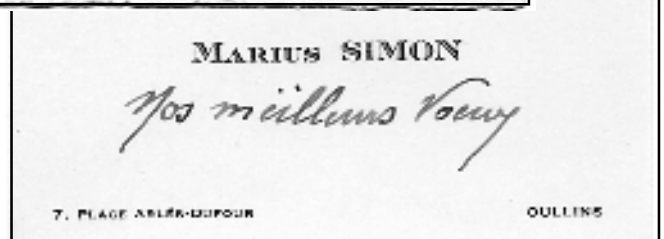
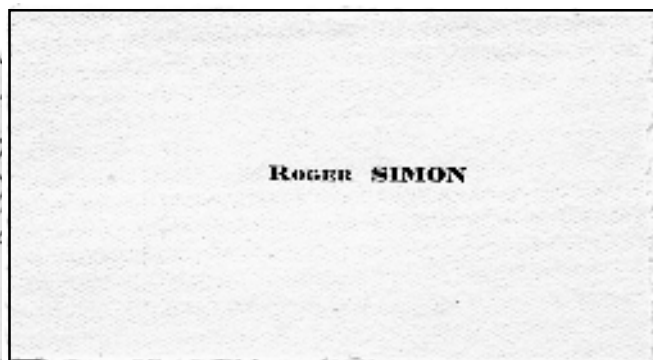


Figure 1 -
3F no added text rate
(21.09.48 - 5.01.49)



Figure 2 -
25c 1-5 words rate (9.08.26 - 11.07.37)
with text on one of two enclosed cards
as per the directive of 31 December 1852
and reiterated on 26 November 1909



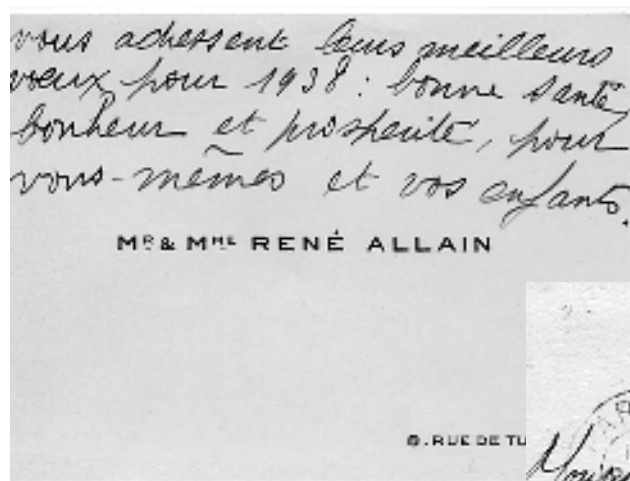


Figure 3 -
65c over 5 words rate
(12.07.37 - 16.11.38)

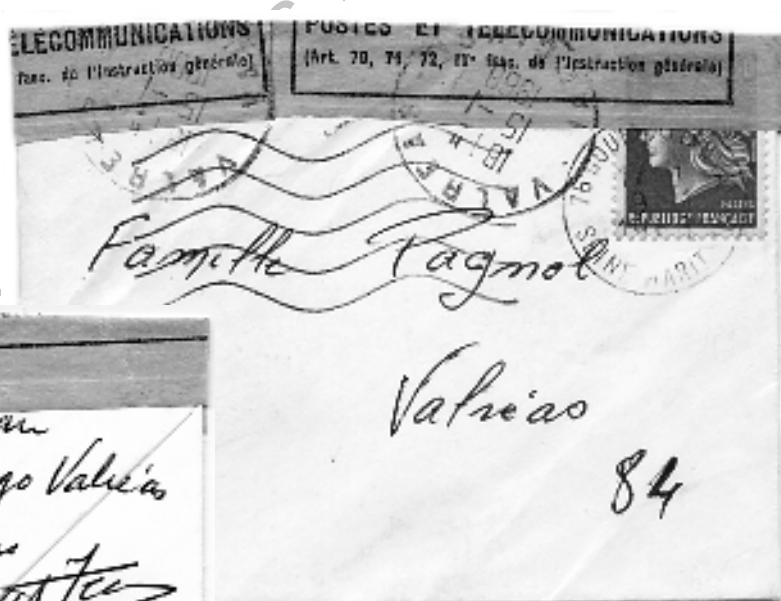
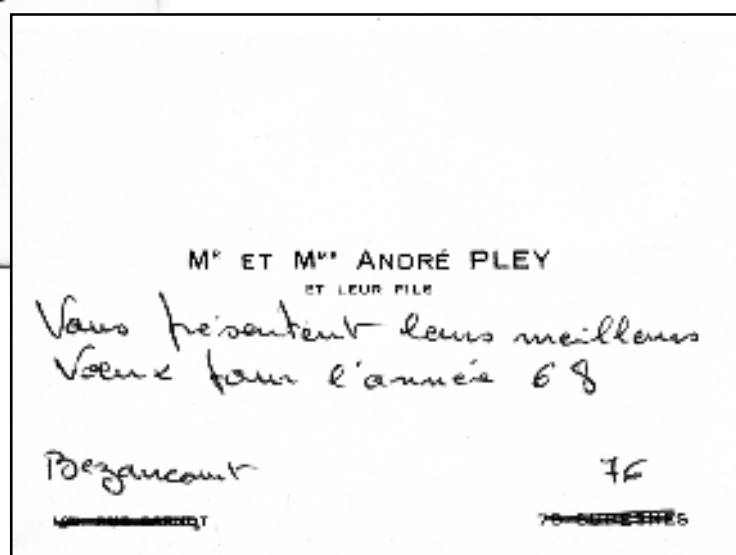


Figure 4 -
30c added text rate
(18.01.65 - 12.01.69)
undelivered and returned to sender



The abolition of the visiting card categories was not the only setback for the visiting card sender. From 1 July 1955 the PTT would not tolerate envelopes measuring less than 100 x 70 mm. This was not too much of a restriction as the standard size of a visiting card envelope was 107 x 70 mm and therefore within the limits; what the new ruling did reject though were the small fashionable envelopes measuring as little as 78 x 60 mm or 87 x 50 mm which could not be fed into machine cancellers and which were easily lost in the post. A postmark slogan campaign alerting the public to the new restrictions was run from 1955 to 1957. The *flamme*, in the form of an envelope, gave the following warning: **DEPUIS LE 1^{er} JUILLET 1955, DIMENSIONS MINIMA DES ENVELOPPES 10 x 7 ATTENTION AUX CARTES DE VISITES!** (Fig 5). On 1 July 1972, the minimum envelope size was increased again,

this time to 140 x 90 mm which was the format accepted by the coding desks and the new automatic facing, cancelling and sorting equipment. Items smaller than this size could not be turned properly during the facing process and often escaped cancellation. To prevent this, such items were intercepted and sent to a special sorting office at Libourne which deals with awkward or, in post office parlance, 'embarrassing' items such as damaged mail, letters to Father Christmas etc. Here, the envelope received a straight line mark **DIMENSIONS MINIMALES NON RESPECTÉES** and was cancelled by a special date stamp inscribed **C(entre)**. **RECHERCHES COURRIER 33 LIBOURNE** accompanied by the slogan **OBJET INADMISSIBLES DIMENSIONS MINIMALES AUTORISÉES 14 x 9 ACHÉMINÉ À TITRE EXCEPTIONNEL** before being sent on its way to the addressee (Fig 6).



Figure 5 -
Slogan promoting 1955 campaign

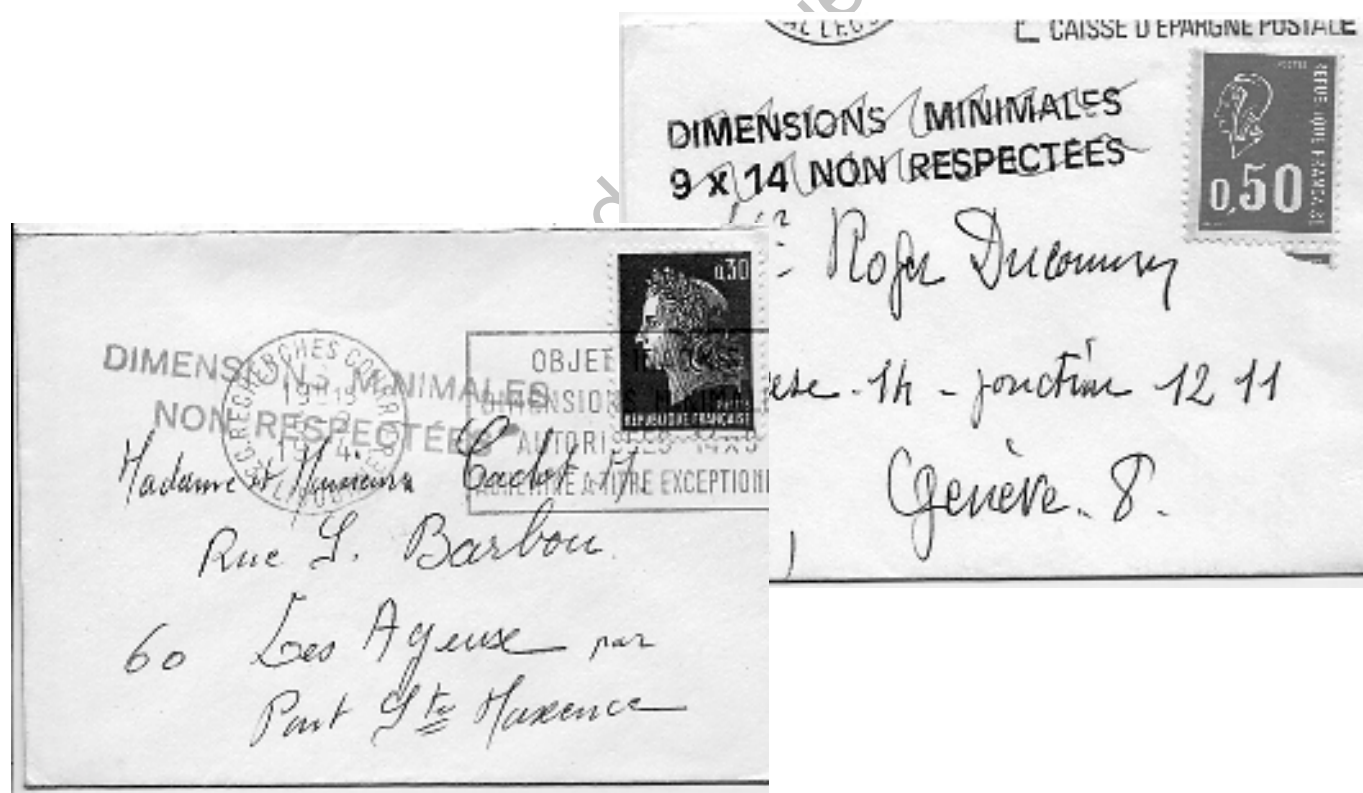


Figure 6 -
Instructional marks and slogan
enforcing the 1972 campaign

The PTT acted in a seemingly benevolent manner when handling undersize envelopes, as offending items do not appear to have been either taxed or returned to sender. On the other hand, the PTT maintained its vigilance with regards to underfranked mail, and if the number of written words on the card had been exceeded, the PTT was quick

to apply the appropriate tax. Up to 24 March 1924 the tax was simply twice the deficiency, but from the following day the calculation of the postage due changed. A minimum charge was established and thereafter either twice the deficiency was charged or the minimum charge, whichever was the greater (Fig 7)



Figure 7 -
Visiting Card sent at 30c rate for 1-5 words of added text (12.07.37 - 16.11.38)
instead of 65c for over 5 words;
taxed at 70c representing twice the deficiency

Although this article has focused on visiting cards sent internally, it must not be forgotten that it was not an uncommon practice to send visiting cards abroad. Despite the fact that there were no foreign rates formulated by the

PTT specifically for visiting cards, they were accepted either as printed matter, if without added text and left unsealed for inspection (Fig 8), or at the letter rate in which case they could be sealed.

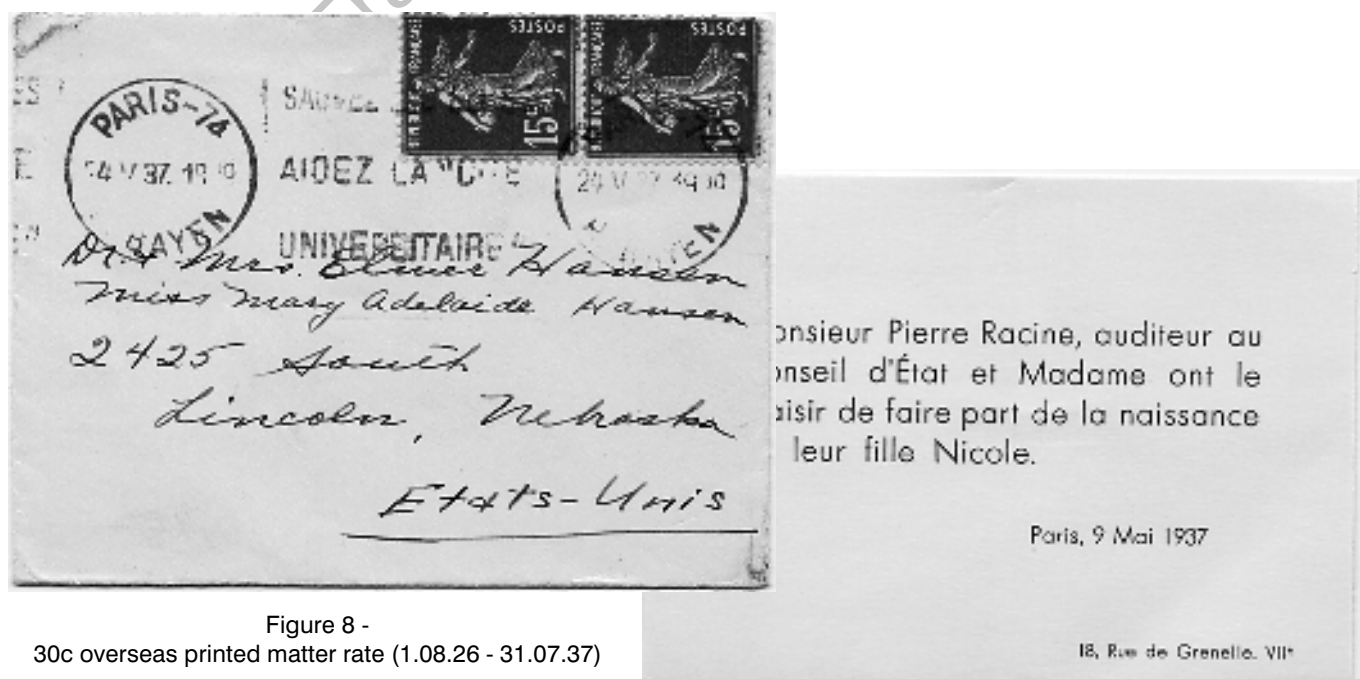


Figure 8 -
30c overseas printed matter rate (1.08.26 - 31.07.37)

Finally, one can always be on the lookout for something out of the ordinary. It is not every day that one sees a

visiting card sent under *franchise militaire* (Fig 9) or bearing a wartime propaganda issue (Fig 10).



Figure 9 (left) -
FM stamp paying the 15F over 5 words rate
(6.01.49 - 30.06.57)



Figure 10 (right) -
1943 Faux de Nice propaganda issue
depicting de Gaulle
used on local visiting card
in place of the 1F50 Pétain

Date of Application	Additional manuscript words		
	none	1-5	> 5
01.01.17	5c	10c	15c
14.07.22	5c	15c (10c)*	15c
25.03.24	5c	15c (10c)*	25c
16.07.25	10c	15c	30c
01.05.26	15c	40c (20c)*	40c
09.08.26	15c	25c	50c
12.07.37	20c	30c	65c
17.11.38	30c	40c	90c
01.12.39	30c	40c	1F
05.01.42	50c	60c	1F50
01.03.45	80c	1F	2F
01.01.46	1F	1F50	3F
01.01.47	1F50	3F	5F
02.01.47	1F40	2F80	4F50
01.03.47	1F30	2F50	4F50
08.07.47	2F	3F	6F
21.09.48	3F	5F	10F
06.01.49	5F	8F	15F
01.07.57	6F	12F	20F
06.01.59	10F	15F	25F
01.01.60	o,10	o,15	o,25
19.05.64	o,12	o,25	
18.01.65	o,12	o,30	
13.01.69	service abolished		

* tariff in brackets is that of 5 word postcard rate

Table of Visiting Card rates based on Section A14 of 'French Postal Rates 1849 to date' by Derek Richardson

Porte-Timbres Vignettes

Ashley Lawrence

Introduction

A *porte-timbre* vignette is a decorative border or frame for a postage stamp. The design may be printed on an envelope, around the space intended for the stamp, or it may be an adhesive mount for the stamp which will be affixed to the envelope. It carries advertising or other text.

Advertising by post has a long history. In England during the 1660s a hand-stamp was applied to letters to advertise postal services in Kent and Essex. The Mulready envelopes of 1840 carried advertisements. Between 1857 and 1893, companies such as W H Smith were permitted to place advertising rings around the embossed stamps on their postal stationery. The first adhesive label was used in 1845, by the Apollo candle factory of Vienna to advertise a trade exhibition. Local stamps issued by California City Letter Express Company in 1862 carried commercial advertising.

France

Porte-timbres vignettes made their appearance on the French scene early in the 20th Century. They were not the first form of advertising – *Type Sage* postal stationery had carried private advertisements – but they were popular, and quickly achieved widespread use. The vignettes appeared most frequently in the years 1906-10 and during the First World War. Thereafter, they gradually gave way to other forms of advertising.

Porte-timbres vignettes served a variety of purposes. These included :-

- the promotion of religious, political and social causes
- the commemoration of historic events
- the publicising of a town or region
- the advertising of products and services
- the call to patriotism and national pride

Le Collectionneur de Timbres-Poste of December 1907 reported that *Aiglon* and other companies were supplying their customers with booklets of postage stamps, mounted on *porte-timbres*, free of cost or at a discounted price. The vignettes advertised the company's products, or bore some other message, such as a warning against alcoholism. As these booklets contained 6 stamps, each having a face value of 10c, and were being given away or sold for only 50c, the public were naturally eager to acquire them. However, the magazine noted that this practice was resented by tobacconists and others who relied upon the sale of postage stamps for their trade, and that faced with growing hostility it was unlikely that the *porte-timbre* booklets could survive. Readers who wished to buy the booklets, whether out of curiosity or to benefit from the temporary reduction in price, were warned to do so without delay.

The Paris stamp dealer and postal historian Arthur Maury described a particular *porte-timbre*, a fantasy stamp which appeared in 1908. It was being produced in sheets, and circulated by supporters of the Orleanist claimant to the throne of France. The stamp bore the effigy of Philippe, Duke of Orleans (1869-1926), whom his followers called Philippe VIII.

Maury predicted that the supply of *porte-timbres* would soon be prohibited, and he was proved right. In October 1908, *Le Collectionneur de Timbres-Poste* reported that the postal authorities had issued a circular, announcing their intention to restrict the use of private advertising and the gift or sale of stamps at a discount. The magazine also pointed out that Germany and England regarded the use of *porte-timbres* as invalid, and their postal services would not accept such mail.

The PTT realised that the elaborate design of some *porte-timbres* might cause confusion, and hinder the easy identification of French stamps, thereby contravening UPU regulations (France had been a signatory to UPU since 1875). Concern was also growing at the use of stamp-surrounds for propaganda purposes. There were those who objected, for example, to the provocative use of the Breton language (the teaching of which had been banned in French schools) or to the campaign for the abolition of the republic and a return to monarchy under King Philippe VIII.

However, in spite of the opposition, and the restrictions imposed by the postal authorities, *porte-timbres* reappeared in a blaze of national flags and patriotic slogans, and brought much-needed colour to the grim correspondence of the Great War.

The use of *porte-timbres* diminished after 1918, and other forms of advertising took their place. *Porte-timbres* were the precursors to the slogan postmarks, the machine cancellations which were introduced in the early 1920s. That decade also saw the introduction of private advertising on stamp booklets: on the booklet covers from 1922, and on the stamp margins from 1925. *Porte-timbres* also heralded the pictorial postmarks, the *flammas illustrées*, which were used from 1950 onwards by towns and regions throughout France to publicise their industry and tourist attractions.

Booklets

Porte-timbres were first issued in the form of booklets, and later in printed sheets. The booklets were privately produced, and several were created and printed on behalf of clients by *Le Timbre Poste Économique* ("TPE") of 7 rue de la Bourse, Paris. Some booklets were numbered to identify the print-run or series, and some included a postcard by which the recipient could request a brochure, a sample or further information about the advertised product.

The Cérès Catalogue lists the following booklets:-

- **Aiglon** — Distributed free of charge by the refinery Aiglon of Aubervilliers (Seine). The booklet contained 8 stamps, and 16 pages of postal information and colourful publicity for the company's petroleum products. It was printed between May 1910 and 1914, and contained 5c Green Type Blanc (Yv 111) or 5c Green Sower (Yv 137) or 10c Red Sower stamps (Yv 135 or 138) on a white background.

- **Belle Jardinière** — Created by *TPE* in 1907 for the department store *La Belle Jardinière* of 2 rue du Pont-Neuf, Paris. The booklet took the form of a pink card folded into three, containing information about the store and illustrations of garments. It contained 6 x 10c Red Sower stamps (Yv 135 or 138) on green *porte-timbres*, and though the stamps had a face value of 60c, the booklet sold for 50c.

- **Bussang** — The booklet, created by the mineral-water company Bussang (Vosges) was distributed free of charge. It contained either 16 or 8 x 5c Green (Yv 137) or 8 x 10c Red Sower stamps (Yv 138), on a blue-black background, with different slogans in praise of *Eaux de Bussang et de Vichy*. The booklet stated that the stamps were usable for all manner of correspondence except for registered letters.

- **L. LaFleur of Château-Thierry** — This booklet was produced by an antique dealer at the end of the 1920s to advertise his shop. It contained 12 x 25c Brown-Yellow Sower stamps (Yv 235 CP2) on a pale green background.

- **Manchon Hella** — First created by *TPE* in 1906 for Manchon Hella of Paris, manufacturers of incandescent metallic gas lights. The three-page booklet of pink folded card, whose stamps had a face value of 60c, was sold for 50c (series A and B) or 55c (series C and D). It contained 6 x 10c Lined Sower stamps (Yv 129) or (from 1906) 6 x 10c Cameo Sower stamps (Yv 134, 135 or 138). The background *porte-timbres* were printed in blue, red or green.

- **Menthe Pastille** — Created by *TPE* in 1908 for the distiller Emile Giffard of Angers, to advertise the Menthe-Pastille liqueur. The booklets, of pale-green folded card, contained 6 or 12 x 10c Red Sower stamps (Yv 138) and sold for 50c or 1F, providing a discount on the face value of the stamps. The *porte-timbres* were green or red.

- **Mignon** — Created by *TPE* in 1906 for the Voisin-Mignon company of Marseillan (Hérault), producers of tonic wines. The three-page booklet of pink folded card, whose stamps had a face value of 60c, was sold for 55c. It contained 6 x 10c Lined Sower (Yv 129) or (from 1907) 6 x 10c Cameo Sower stamps (Yv 135 or 138) on a violet background.

- **Tisane du Laboureur** — Created by *TPE* for the pharmacist A. Dumayne of Perpignan to advertise purgative and other health products. The three-page booklet held stamps with a face value of 60c, and was sold for 50c. Only one such complete booklet is known. It contained 6 x 10c Red Sower stamps (Yv 138) on a green background.

As can be seen, the number of *porte-timbres* in each booklet might vary from as few as 6 (Manchon Hella) to as many as 16 stamps (Bussang); the Menthe Pastille booklet contained 6 or 12 stamps. Certain *porte-timbres* have the entwined letters STP on the reverse, standing for *Société du Timbre-Poste*, the firm which undertook the printing and supply of the booklets.

It is not easy to find complete booklets in good condition, and they command a high catalogue price. Some of the booklets are extremely rare.

Sheets and Stamps

With the restrictions on the issue of new booklets, *porte-timbres* were printed in sheets, in different sizes. It is much easier to find used stamps mounted on individual *porte-timbres* than a complete booklet or sheet. Some are fairly common, for example *Dieu Protège la France*, which appeared in green or red on thousands of covers and postcards before and during the Great War. Others are scarce, and rarely seen on cover or card, and this is reflected in their price.

As for the stamps to be found on *porte-timbres*, the 5c Green *Type Blanc* was the first such stamp to be used, in some of the early *Aiglon* booklets, as mentioned above. Other denominations of *Type Blanc* stamps were also used on *porte-timbres*, but all are scarce items. The Lined and Cameo Sowers are the stamps most frequently used on *porte-timbres*, and the most common values are 5c and 10c. The Red Cross Sowers (Yv 146 & 147) and Sowers of other denominations can also be found, as shown in the illustrations. Later *porte-timbres* may carry *Jeanne d'Arc* (Yv 257) and stamps from the various series issued during the 1930s, including *Type Paix* and *Type Iris*.

Variety of subject

Porte-timbres vignettes were used for many different purposes. The following table suggests various categories, and gives examples, some of which are illustrated. But be warned, the list is far from exhaustive!

- **Social themes, propaganda** — The battle against alcoholism; Esperanto.
- **Religion** — La France au Sacré-Coeur; Famille-Dieu-Patrie; Dieu protège la France.
- **Patriotism** — Flags and leaders of the Allied Nations, including King George V, Czar Nicholas II, Maréchal Joffre, President Poincaré; Ligue Maritime Française.
- **Historic events** — Millénaire de l'Abbaye de Cluny, 1910.
- **Historic characters** — Fête de Jeanne d'Arc, Fête de Jean de la Fontaine, Centenaire d'Alfred de Musset 1910.
- **Monarchy** — Support for the Orleanist claimant Philippe VIII.
- **Local culture** — Breton language eg. Breiz da Virviken.

• Towns — Louviers; Dieppe; Visit Anjou and drink the wine of Saumur.

• Aviation — Souvenirs of aviation meetings at Port-Aviation, Caen, Chalon-sur-Saône, Rouen.

• Shops, goods & services — Belle Jardinière clothing; Manchon Hella lubricants; Paris Revue; Aigloline oil-based products; Le Petit Marseillais perfumed soap; Paul Aillaud's hair products; Henri Blochgrains & seeds; J.Davignon, optical engineer; E. Marrot, writing materials.

• Drinks — Eau de Bussang; Eau d'Arquebus de l'Ermitage liqueur; Cointreau Triple-Sec liqueur; "Mignon" tonic wines & aperitif; Menthe Pastille; Vichy water; Zucco-Quina tonic wine; Brienne Bordeaux wines; Tisane du Laboureur purgative.

Conclusion

Porte-timbres vignettes are attractive and pleasing to the eye. Their colourful patterns and designs relate to a multitude of different causes. Some of these may now seem quaint: for example, the promotion of the French Maritime League. Created in 1899, the League campaigned for the strengthening of the French navy and merchant fleet, particularly in the Mediterranean, so that troops could be brought from North Africa in the event of war with Germany. Other causes are more familiar, and seem more relevant: for example, the use of the banned Breton language, akin to demands for the revival of Catalan or Gaelic in our day. *Dieu Protège la France* was originally used by the Catholic Church as a form of protest against the 1905 separation of church and state; this message became all the more meaningful as France endured the horrors of the First World War.

For the thematic collector, *porte-timbres* can provide a treasure trove: such is the variety of subject-matter that there are many gems to illustrate the chosen theme. The picture postcard collector can benefit too, as many of the vignettes were used in conjunction with postcards which illustrate, for example, the 1,000 year old Abbey at Cluny, or those magnificent men in their flying machines at an early aviation meeting. Whether displayed on or off cover, *porte-timbres* will enhance any collection or display of the stamps and postal history of France. Little wonder they are becoming increasingly sought after at stamp fairs, at auction and on the internet.

Further, the study of *porte-timbres* is intriguing and rewarding. The Orleanist campaign in favour of Philippe VIII, the celebration of the life of Joan of Arc, the publicity given to air shows, to towns and monuments and great events, the advertisements for car components, for hair lotions and cures for indigestion, these and another hundred or more topics and slogans give a fascinating insight into the social and commercial life of France in the early years of the 20th Century. The visitor from Mars might be amused to see that for every *porte-timbre* extolling the virtues of

French wines, there was another waging war against the Demon drink!

And it's odd to see how haphazardly the *porte-timbres* were affixed to mail – sometimes on the front, sometimes on the back, and rarely in the top right-hand corner. Especially when stuck upside-down, they display a nonchalance, a disregard for postal regulations, and an artistry which are typically French!

My favourite (so far) is the *porte-timbre* from Lyon which advertises "*Le Succès*", and which is printed on an envelope whose artwork forms a theatre stage. The design shows great humour and imagination.

Many discoveries have been made, and much has been learned about *porte-timbres vignettes* since the appearance of the first study, by Dr J Braun, in 1959. However, there is more to be uncovered, and this is a subject which merits further research, and promises to delight its students. I hope this article will stimulate readers' interest, and encourage others to share their knowledge and expertise. I shall be delighted to hear from anyone who can add to this brief account of a fascinating subject.

And for those who are curious about the wording on the *porte-timbre* which is written in Breton, the phrase "*Breiz da Virviken*" is used in some Breton patriotic songs, and means "Brittany for ever".

All items illustrated are from the author's collection.

Source references

1. My particular thanks to M. André Metayer of Amicale Rennaise Philatélique, who has made a special study of *porte-timbres*, and to David Jennings-Bramly, for their encouragement and help in the writing of this article.
2. The most detailed account of the booklets of *porte-timbres* is contained in Volume 1 of the specialised catalogue entitled *Carnets de France*, 2005 edition, which has just been published by Yvert & Tellier. This also contains full illustrations of the booklets, but does not cover the sheets.
3. The stamp catalogues published by Cérès, by Yvert & Tellier and by Dallay give basic information about the booklets of *porte-timbres*.
4. More detailed information is contained in *Catalogue des Publicitimbres (Pubs) des Carnets de France et des Colonies Françaises*, written by Dr J Braun. This was published by the Association of Collectors of Booklets and Publicity-stamps (ACCP) in 1959, with an update in the following year, and gives an alphabetical listing of almost 100 *porte-timbres* vignettes, but without illustrations.
5. Stanley Gibbons *Philatelic Terms Illustrated* by James Mackay.



Paul Aillaud hair products



Fête de Jeanne d'Arc



"Mignon" tonic wine



Philippe VIII



Nicholas II



Belle Jardinière clothes



National League Against Alcohol



Caen Aviation Week 1910



Aiglon



Scented soap, Marseille



Port-Aviation 1909



Allied flags



Maritime League

Avantages du Manchon "HELLA"

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excessive de gaz d'air
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Téléphone à la Compagnie
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Le Manchon "HELLA"
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à lumière intense

Maximum de lumière
Minimum de dépenses

Boîte à gaz et brûleur de Porcelaine à gaz et brûleur de Porcelaine	501,25
Boîte à gaz et brûleur de Porcelaine à gaz et brûleur de Porcelaine	501,25
Boîte à gaz et brûleur de Porcelaine à gaz et brûleur de Porcelaine	501,25
Boîte à gaz et brûleur de Porcelaine à gaz et brûleur de Porcelaine	501,25

TELEPHONE:
Boîte à gaz et brûleur de Porcelaine
à gaz et brûleur de Porcelaine

SOCIÉTÉ FRANÇAISE DES MANCHONS HELLA
PARIS

Photocopy (reduced in size) of the booklet which was printed privately for Le Manchon "Hella", and contained porte-timbres for 6 of the 10c Sower stamps





1909 *porte-timbre* with Breton message on cover from Vannes (Morbihan) to Paris



1910 illustrated envelope from Lyon, with *porte-timbre* advertising "Le Succès"
The artwork surrounding the window pane forms the stage of a theatre



1919 "Beware the Demon Drink" temperance campaign



1918 "Visit Anjou, Drink the Wines of Saumur"

The Money-Stamps of France

Ashley Lawrence



Figure 1 - *Pochettes* issued by *Au Printemps* and *Galeries Lafayette*

Introduction

Political or economic upheavals have sometimes made it necessary for people to use postage stamps in place of coins. This has happened in many countries at different times, and makes the use of such “money-stamps” of interest not only to philatelists and numismatists, but also to historians. Further, when money-stamps carry advertisements, these may not only be attractive in themselves: they may reveal valuable information about the social and commercial life of the period.

Postage stamps served as small change in many parts of Europe in the aftermath of the First World War. This article describes their use in France in the early 1920s.

The need for money-stamps

By 1921, precious metals were no longer used for coinage: the striking of gold coins had ceased in 1914, and minting of the silver 50 centimes, and one and two franc coins ended in 1920. As a result of the War, there was a shortage of other metals and alloys needed for the minting of coins – copper, nickel, zinc, tin, aluminium – and the supply of coins could not keep up with demand. In France, Chambers of Commerce became aware that this deficiency was causing problems for business, and issued various forms of token money for use by merchants. However, this measure was insufficient.

Pochettes

As the shortage of coins became more acute, shopkeepers and customers began to use mint postage stamps as ‘money-of-necessity’, to meet the need for small change. The money-stamps were used in small denominations, usually 5c, 10c or 25c, and this provided a short-term solution. However, postage stamps by their very nature are fragile, and when they were passed from hand to hand they were quickly damaged or spoiled. To give some form of protective cover, the stamps were placed in tiny sachets or envelopes (“*pochettes*”) in various sizes, made of translucent paper, silk or other suitable material. The envelopes were often sealed with a small label or *étiquette* which named the supplier, whose commercial cachet and the face value of the enclosed stamp or stamps might be written or printed on the outside.

Such *pochettes* were made available to their customers by various traders and department stores in Paris and other

major cities. Examples of the *pochettes* issued by *Au Printemps* and by *Galeries Lafayette* are shown in Figure 1.

Booklets

To give greater protection to the stamps, *Grands Magasins du Louvre*, *Au Printemps*, *Grands Magasins de la Samaritaine* and others, including the principal pharmacy in Paris, printed cardboard covers, with their name on the outside, into which they gummed or stapled strips or blocks of stamps. These privately produced booklets of money-stamps were issued to customers in place of coins, and could be spent within the store or used elsewhere. They contained between 4 and 20 stamps, of different denominations, and were issued at face value between one and five francs.

Booklets containing 20 or 40 postage stamps of the 5c or 10c Sower design had been issued by the postal administration ever since 1907. These contained postal information, but did not display any advertising or publicity material. The privately produced booklets of money-stamps which first appeared in Paris early in 1920, were the forerunner of the booklets with attractive advertisements on the covers and stamp margins which flourished from 1925 onwards.

Figure 2 shows a booklet of 4 x 25c stamps issued by *Grands Magasins du Louvre*.



Figure 2 -
Booklet issued by
Grands Magasins du Louvre

Jetons

In the spring of 1920, *pochettes* and booklets began to be supplemented by privately manufactured metal money-stamps, called *timbres-jetons* ("jetons") which gave better protection for the enclosed stamps. Money-stamps such as these had first been introduced during the American Civil War of 1861-65. John Gault, a Boston sewing-machine salesman, had filed a patent on 12 August 1862 for encasing a stamp in a copper capsule, sealed with a strip of mica. His firm Scovill & Co. then issued the encased stamps in various denominations up to a quarter-dollar, which were guaranteed by the state.

In France, Edouard Bouchaud-Praceiq lodged his own patent on 29 March 1920. The next day he assigned the licence and rights of exploitation to Robert Binds Shedler of Saint-Denis, who owned a company specialising in the stamping and impressing of tin. Bouchaud-Praceiq lived in Paris and Royan, hence the great number of money-stamps which were issued in the Bordeaux region.

Manufacture

A *jeton* was manufactured by inserting a mint postage stamp, face upwards, between a round metal blank base and a transparent cover of cellophane or mica, so that its denomination might be clearly seen. The stamp was placed on a piece of coloured background paper, which was usually red, blue, white or gold. The *jeton* was then pressed and sealed, to protect the stamp against damage or deterioration due to rough-handling or humidity. The blanks which formed the back of the *jetons* are usually 33mm in diameter, and are made of aluminium or tin. Aluminium was used

for the bases which were impressed, being approximately 25% of the total, and on these the name and details of the supplier appear in relief lettering. Tin was used for the bases which were imprinted in colour, often with advertising for a product or service, and these constitute the majority of the *jetons*, about 75% of the total. Red, black and gilt are the predominant colours, but green, cream and other colours were also applied to the tin base.

As well as protecting his patent, Bouchaud-Praceiq registered the trademark FYP (*Fallait y Penser*) in 1920, to guard against the counterfeiting of money-stamps. The inscription "*FYP*" Bté s.g.d.g. [*Breveté sans garantie du gouvernement* = patent without government guarantee (of quality)] 38, av.d'Eylau Paris (XVIe). *Counterfeiters will be prosecuted* appears in the centre of many of the *jetons*.

No records have been found regarding the total number of money-stamps which were manufactured under patent, nor are there detailed records of the numbers produced



Figure 3 -
Crédit Lyonnais jeton



Figure 4 - Examples of Jetons

for individual clients. It is known that the minimum order for manufacture was 1,000 *jetons*. The price (excluding the cost of the encased postage stamp) varied according to type. Impressed *jetons* cost 100 francs per 1,000 (10c each). The multi-coloured *jetons* were cheaper, 75 francs per 1,000 (7½c each), but this was still expensive, as the product had no intrinsic value apart from the postage stamp itself. However, customers were willing to pay for the advertising space on the back of these money-stamps, which gave scope for publicising their products and services.

Advertising financial services

The money-stamps produced for *Crédit Lyonnais*, advertising its 6% National Savings bonds of 1920, are those most commonly found. They were manufactured in large quantities during at least 12 separate pressings between 1920 and 1922. Figure 3 shows the front and back of a *Crédit Lyonnais jeton*, with encased 10c Sower.

Noting the widespread acceptance of the *Crédit Lyonnais* money-stamps, and the success of the publicity for the National Savings bonds, other privately owned banks, insurance companies and financial institutions decided to order and issue money-stamps to publicise their own products and services. Among these are the *Banque de Marseille*, *Comptoir d'Escompte de l'Ouest*, *Crédit Français* and *Société Générale*.

No money-stamps were issued by central government, by the *départements*, local councils, chambers of commerce or other official bodies. However, the privately manufactured *jetons* were generally accepted as common currency, and there is no record of any legal challenge against their validity, or claim that they did not constitute legal tender.

Advertising of other products

Other commercial enterprises, in Paris and in the provinces, soon joined the bandwagon, and furnished their customers with *jetons* which publicised their own products and services. The Broustine catalogue entitled "*Timbres-Monnaie*", first published in 1988, lists no fewer than 220 different *jetons*, and acknowledges that more may yet come to light.

The variety of advertisers and the range of goods and services is astonishing. They include suppliers of pharmaceutical and petroleum products, wine and spirit merchants, brewers, hotel proprietors, owners of *brasseries* and restaurants, chocolate manufacturers, dealers in oysters, manufacturers of footwear and auto accessories, suppliers of optical and photographic equipment, an oceanographic museum in Monaco, and many more.

Among my favourite *jetons* are the advertisements for *Cognac Meukow* (such a lovely name), for *Anisette Marie Brizard* and for *Gargantua* mackerel & herring. Delicious!

Some examples of *jetons* are illustrated in Figure 4.

Scarce money-stamps

Although most of the French money-stamps feature the graceful Sower, designed by Louis-Oscar Roty, two other

stamps were used. The 1c Slate-Grey *Type Blanc* (Yv 107A) was encased in some of the *jetons* issued by the manufacturer of metal objects Berlan Lederlin et Cie; and the 10c Green *Type Pasteur* (Yv 170) was enclosed in a *pochette* from the store "Ville de Madrid" in Bayonne. However these two money-stamps are rare.

The most commonly used denominations of Sower stamps were the 5c Green (Yv 137), 10c Red (Yv 138), and 25c Blue cameo Sower (Yv 140).

The 15c Green lined Sower (Yv 130) and the 5c Orange cameo Sower (Yv 158) were also used, but these are scarce. The 20c Brown-Red (Yv 139), 35c Violet (Yv 142), and 10c Green Sower (Yv 159) encased in *jetons* are extremely rare.

Duration

Money-stamps were produced in France between 1920 and 1923. The *Crédit Lyonnais jetons* were the first to be issued, in the spring of 1920, soon after the registration of the patent in March of that year. The final renewal of the patent was made in March 1923, by which time the manufacture of the *jetons* had almost ceased, though the catalogue mentions a couple of late issues. The Paris Mint recommenced the production of 5 centimes coins in 1923. Thereafter, money-stamps were no longer required; they had served their purpose.

Conclusion

Money-stamps provide an exciting new dimension to the study of postage stamps and coins. For the thematic collector, the advertisements on *jetons* are treasure-trove, whose gems can illuminate and enhance his subject. Historians will be interested in the political turmoil which gave rise to such money-of-necessity, and in the commercial factors which caused money-stamps to flourish briefly, then fall into disuse. Their colourful designs and variety present a charming and sparkling display, and are a source of fascination and delight. There is a great deal still to be discovered, and this is a subject worthy of further research.

Money-stamps exemplify the society in which they circulated, and offer insights from which we can all benefit. We may marvel, or simply give a wry smile, at advertisements for products which so tempted French men and women in the early 1920s, when the war to end all wars had ceased, and the age of Aspirin and Jazz was about to begin.

Sources

1. "*Timbres-Monnaie - France et Colonies*" by Dr Pierre Broustine, 1988
2. "*Stamps as Money*" by Stanley J Luft, published in *F&C Philatelist*, 1997
3. "*La Semeuse des Timbres-Monnaie*" by Annette Apaire & Bertrand Sinais, published in *Timbres Magazine* in March 2002
4. "*Les Timbres-Poste au Type Semeuse*" by J Storch & R Françon

BOOKSHELF

A Postal History of the POWs and Civilian Internees in East Asia during the Second World War, Volume 3: Burma, Thailand and Indochina by David Tett. [Price and further details to be announced]

You might well be surprised that I am recommending a book to the France and Colonies Society that is not about France. I have been privileged to see a draft copy of this work, which should be published in December, and I regard it as so admirable that it should be read by everybody who has the slightest interest in the World War II period or in the region. The reason for the recommendation is that the region includes Indo-China, still a French colony even though over-run by Japan.

If you have seen either of its two predecessors, on Malaya and the Dutch East Indies, you will know that physically the book is of very high quality: hardbacked with nearly 400 A4-sized pages of good quality paper, maps, illustrations and hundreds of examples of philatelic material, some of which is 'mouth-wateringly' rare. There are colour plates, appendices on POW nationalities, numbers and movements, such as A Force, D Force and H Force, a comprehensive bibliography of source material for further reading and, I am pleased to say, a really thorough index.

The bulk of the book is about the POWs in Burma, those working on the Burma-Thailand railway and in Indo-China, but there are also sections on the civilian internees in Burma and Bangkok, and the civilian Burmese and Malay

workers on the railway. Mail from the Burmese 'sweat army' and the Malay Postal Agency set up by the Japanese is almost impossibly difficult to find, and David is to be congratulated on discovering so much of it to illustrate in his book.

The POWs included British, Dutch, Americans, Australians and Indians, who were in the most difficult position of all as 'race traitors'. There are many photographs of mail sent to the POWs and the variety of Japanese postcards used by them to send messages home.

I am pleased to say there are chapters of personal reminiscences: we must remember that this is not just a philatelic record of ancient events, but also an horrific part of our history which is still a sensitive and emotional topic for the survivors and their families. There is also a technical chapter on the censor and other markings used by the Japanese on their cards: what a very complex area this is, one dealt with admirably by David's systematic, logical approach.

I regard this as an absolutely super book. I am proud to own its two predecessors and this one will join them on my shelves as soon as it is published.

John Garner

Books Noted

Catalogue des Oblitérations Mécaniques de France sauf Secap à partir de 1960, 3^{ème} édition by Gérard Dreyfuss; 580 pp, 2000 illustrations; price 95€ inc. p&p; available from Éditions Nord Avril, 388 rue de la Lombarderie, 59870 Bouvignies. [Initially on subscription only; more than 16000 cancellations described and valued; study of all marks from cancelling machines before 1960, including experimental machines.]

Histoire Postale Marcophile d'un Bureau de Poste: Saint Marcellin (Isère) by Robert Faraboz; 176 pp in colour, A4; card cover; over 300 illustrations; price 31€ + p&p; available from the author, 54 cour Sainte Marie, Grande Rue, 38160 Saint Marcellin. [Letters, postmarks, stamps, prints, covering the postal history of this post office 1704-2004.]

Carnets de France, volume 1 pub. Éditions Yvert et Tellier; 592 pp in colour, 305 x 315 mm; price 95€ + p&p. [Specialised catalogue of booklets 1906-1926.]

Histoire postale de la Roche-sur-Yon: Marcophilie, cartophilie, numismatique by l'Amicale Philatélique Yonnaise; price 29€; available from APY, 49 rue du Dr Cullère, 85000 La Roche-sur-Yon. [Postmarks and cancellations since 1804, name changes, telegraph, WWI military hospitals, famous inhabitants, etc.]

Sabine de Gandon: Historique des Poinçons de Service ou Transferts by Jean-Jacques Rabineau; price 18€; available from the author, 7 rue d'Anjou, 03300 Cusset. [Detailed study of dies used in production of Sabines.]

Lettres Non Affranchies ou Insuffisamment Affranchies, study pub. Cercle d'Histoire Postale attached to Musée du Timbre et de la Philatélie de Luc-en-Provence; price 7,50€; available from Musée du Timbre "Le Château", BP 51, 83340 Le Luc.

Les Boîtes Rurales du Vaucluse; price 30€ + p&p; available from the Association Marcophile du Val de Durance, Centre d'Activités Socioculturelles et de Loisirs, 52 avenue de la Bourgade, 13610 Le Puy Sainte Réparate.

Catalogue de Cotations des Timbres des Dom-Tom 2004-2005 pub. Éditions Dallay; 862 pp in colour, 150 x 210 mm; price 34,90€; available from Dallay SARL, 31 rue des Bourdonnais, 75001 Paris. [Covers 'Colonies générales, Saint Pierre-et-Miquelon, Guadeloupe, Guyane, Inini, Réunion, Anjouan, Grande Comore, Nouvelle-Calédonie, Tahiti, Océanie, Polynésie, Wallis-et-Futuna'; each stamp valued, including used, on letter and according to type of cachet and importance of post office; covers printing figures, millésimes, engravers and designers, precise dates of issue, enlargements of varieties, postal usages, *essais*, booklets, miniature sheets, etc.]

Logiciel de Recherche et Identification avec Indice de Rareté des Petits Chiffres, Gros Chiffres et Petits Chiffres du Gros Chiffre des Bureaux de Poste de France, Algérie et Bureaux Français à l'Étranger by Charles Chrétien; software on CD-ROM; compatible with Access; price 50€ inc. p&p in France; available from the author, 1c rue du Dr Laennec, 42100 Saint Étienne.

Maurice Tyler

The Post Offices of French West Africa

Bill Mitchell and Lawrence Lambert

PART 3. MAURITANIA (conclusion)

[The introductory section of Part 3 (Mauritania) appeared in Journal 232]

Table 2 - Dates of Opening, Closure and Transfer

	Opened	Closed	Transferred in	Source
Adel-Bagrou (1)	1 January 1974			1
Aéré (2)				
Aguieurt	1 July 1906	1911		1
	1906	1911		3
		1911		4
	1906	?		6
	1 July 1906	1909		7, 8
Aïoun el Atrouss	16 August 1945			1
	1950s?			8
Akjoujt / Akjout	January 1931			1
	about 1934			6
	2 February 1931 (3)			7
	1908 (3)	1908		8
	(R) 1931			8
Aleg	1 July 1906			1, 7
	1907			3
	11 October 1913			6
	1906			8
Amourj	1 January 1966			1
Atâr	1906, 1912 (4)			1
	1906			6
	11 October 1913			7
	1909, 1913 (4)			8
Bababé	July 1963			1
Bagrou	1 January 1974			1
Baie du Lévrier (5)	?	?		1
Bassikounou	after 1960 (6)			1
Bîr-Moghreïn	1 June 1950			1
	1945?			8
Bogué	[February 1906]		1 July 1906 (from Senegal)	1
	1906			3, 6, 8
	1 July 1906			7
Boutilimit	July 1906			1
	1907			3
	11 October 1913			6
	1906			7, 8
Cansado (5)	[1905]		1 July 1906 (from Senegal)	1, 4
Chinguetti	1910 (7)			1
	1906			6
	11 October 1913			7
	late 1913			4
	1913			8
Fassala-Néré	1 January 1974			1
F Dérick	1 October 1969 (8)			1
Fort Gouraud	1 May 1934	1 October 1969 (8)		1
	about 1934			6
	1 May 1934 (9)			7
	1934			8
Fort Trinquet	? (10)			1
Gouraye	1 January 1974			1
Guérou	1 April 1971			1
Guimi	1 July 1906	21 December 1911		1
	1907	21 November 1911		3
	about 1913	?		6
	July 1906	December 1911		7
	1906	1911		8

	Opened	Closed	Transferred in	Source
Jider el Mohgen	1 January 1974			1
Kaédi	[1890]		1 July 1906 (from Senegal)	1
	[1890]			3
	[about 1890] (11)		1906 (from Senegal)	6
	[1890 or 1891]		1 July 1906 (from Senegal)	7
	[1890]		1906 (from Senegal)	8
Kankossa	1 January 1953			1
Khroufa	1 July 1906	February 1908		1
	1907	1910		3
	1906	?		6
	1906	2 November 1907 (12)		7
	1906	1907		8
Kiffa	[1 January 1910]		late 1913 (from Upper Senegal & Niger)	1
	11 October 1913			6
	[1 January 1910]	[late 1910]		7
	[(R) 1911]		13 April 1911 (13) (from Upper Senegal & Niger)	7
	[1910]	[1910]		8
	[(R) 1911]		1913 (14) (from Senegal)	8
Kronfa (15)				
Lexeidra (Lexeiba?) (16)	15 August 1975			1
Maghama	1 September 1940			1
	1950s			8
Makta-Lahjar	1 January 1966			1
Mal	1 July 1906	February 1908		1
	seen 1907	?		3 (17)
	1 July 1906	19 October 1907 (18)		6
	1906	1907		7
				8
Matam-Rao	1 January 1974			1
M'Bagne	15 February 1946			1
	1958?			8
M'Bout	1 July 1906	31 December 1932		1
	(R) 1 September 1948			1
	1906			3, 6
	1906	31 December 1932		7
	(R) 1941			7
	1906	1932		8
	(R) 1941			8
Mederdra	1909(?) (19)			1
	1911			3
	1906			6
	1909			7, 8
Mônguel or Môngueul	1961			1
Moudjéria	1 July 1906			1, 7
	1906			3, 6, 8
N'Diogo	1 January 1974			1
Néma	[1919]		1 January 1945 (from French Sudan)	1
	[1919]		1945 (from French Sudan)	5
	[After 1920 (20)]			6
	[1920s]		1958? (from French Sudan)	8
Nouâdhibou	1 January 1969 (21)			1

	Opened	Closed	Transferred in	Sources
Nouakchott	1 July 1906 (R) 1925 (R) August 1931 1906 1906 (R) about 1934 1906 (R) 25 September 1929 (22) 1906 (R) 1929	July 1912 1927 1912 1913 Mid-1912 1912		1 1 1 3 6 6 7 7 8 8
Nouakchott R.P.	1960 (23)			1
Nouakchott Chèques Postaux (24)				
Nouakchott Ksar	1962			1
Nouakchott 1 ^{er} Arrondissement	15 October 1974			1
Nouakchott 5 ^{ème} Arrondissement	15 October 1974			1
Oualâta (25)	1 November 1972 [1914] [(R) 1936] [1914] [(R)? - after 1920]	[1917-1920?] [? By 1920]	1945 (from French Sudan)	1 5 5 6 6
Ould Yandzé	1 January 1966	(26)		1
Ould Yengé	1 September 1969 (26)			1
Port-Etienne (27)	15 August 1907 [1905] 1908 1907/08 1907			1, 4 3 6 7 8
Poste du Lévrier	[1905 or 1906] 1906 July 1906 1906	15 August 1907 1907		1 6 7 (27) 6
Regba	1 July 1906 1906 July 1906 1906	February 1908 1910 2 November 1907 (28) 1907		1 3 7 8
R'Kîz	1 April 1971			1
Rosso (29)	[1920] [?] [1922] [about 1900?]		1926 (from Senegal) 1926 (from Senegal) 1 February 1926 (from Senegal) 1926 (from Senegal)	1 6 7 8
Saint-Louis (30)	1914	1942		8
Saint-Louis N'Dar Toute (31)	1925 16 June 1926 1926	December 1927 22 December 1927 1927		1 7 8
Saint Louis Transit (32)	(19 May 1961 illustrated) ?	?		2 8, 9
Sélibaby	1 July 1906 (R)? 1928 (33) (R) 1 July 1937 1906 1906 (R) 1 July 1937 ? 1906 (R) 1937	1922 ? 1930 (33) 1929 1929	1906 (from Senegal)	1 1 1 3, 6 7 7 8 (34) 8 (34) 8
Souet el Ma	1 July 1906 1906 1906 1906 1933 (36) (R) 1945 (36)	February 1908 1910 ? 2 November 1907 (35) 1934 (36)		1 3 6 7 8 8

	Opened	Closed	Transferred in	Sources
Tâmchakett	August 1927 (37) about 1930 February 1933 (R) 16 August 1945 1933 (R) 1945	late 1934 1934		1 6 7 7 8 8
Tekané	1 January 1974			1
Tichitt	1930 (R) 1 October 1970	after 1934		1 1
Tidjikdja or Tidjikja (38)	1 July 1906 1906 1 July 1906 (R) 1910 1906 (R) 1910	1909 1909		1 3, 6 7 7 8 8
Timbedra	[1934] 1950s?		1 January 1945 (from French Sudan)	1, 5 8
Tintâne	1 April 1971			1
Touil	1 April 1974			1
Zouérate	16 December 1961			1

(R) indicates a re-opening of the office concerned.

Dates in square brackets, as mentioned in the introductory section of this article (in the last paragraph on page 44 in Journal 232), represent pre-transfer details.

Sources

1. C Bouérat *et al*: “Mauritanie – Essai de Nomenclature des Bureaux de poste 1890 à 1975” (COL.FRA, *Bulletin Hors-série* 15-1, 1997) (“Bouérat I”). This consists of a listing of all offices open over this period, with details of the services provided and dates of opening and closing. Despite one or two apparent slips it is the definitive account edited by a former Principal Inspector with the PTT in the Ivory Coast. It is the only source to cover the entire period, and we have given it priority where (occasionally) another source gives an earlier date of opening.
2. C Bouérat *et al*: “Mauritanie – Essai de Nomenclature des Timbres à date 1890 à 1975” (COL.FRA *Bulletin Hors-série* 15-2, 1997) (“Bouérat II”).
3. C Bouérat: “Les Débuts du service des postes et des télégraphes en Mauritanie (1900-1920)” (Société Internationale d’Histoire Postale, Grenoble – *Bulletin* N° 14, 1969).
4. C Bouérat: Comments appended to the COL.FRA reprint of the 1914 *Annuaire* (*Bulletin Hors-série* N° 13, 1996).
5. R Crombez *et al*: “Essai de Nomenclature des Oblitérations du Soudan français” (COL.FRA, *Bulletin Hors-série* 10-1, 2000).
6. M Langlois and V Bourselet: “Les Oblitérations des Bureaux de Poste des Colonies et Possessions Françaises – Afrique Occidentale Française” (Editions du Graouli, Paris, 1937).
7. R S Gordon: “Post Offices of Mauritania, 1906-1941” (*France & Colonies Philatelist*, March 1965 – Whole N° 120). This study terminates with the formation of a single postal administration for the whole of French West Africa on 1 January 1942.
8. R G Stone: “Mauritanian Episodes I, II, III” (*France & Colonies Philatelist*, October 1983, January and April 1984 – Whole N°s 194-196).
9. G Venot: “Mauritanie – Nomenclature des cachets postaux 1904-1977” (COL.FRA *Bulletin* 5, September 1978) and unpublished catalogue of cancellations (undated).

Notes

- (1) Adel-Bagrou, Bagrou. See Table 1, Note 1.
- (2) Aéré. See Table 1, Note 2.
- (3) Akjoujt. Gordon (1965) says “Although a French military post existed here for a few months in 1908 ... no post office existed until February 2, 1931”. Stone III (1984) claims that there was a postal service of some kind in 1908 – it is possible that, as with Atâr (see Note 4), a *vaguemestre* was attached to the military post, but (unlike Atâr) this is not mentioned in Bouérat I. See also Table 1 Note 4.
- (4) Atâr. Bouérat I gives the date of opening as “1913” and notes “*Vaguemestre militaire* in 1909 – postal agency in 1912” (possibly a misprint for “1913”). These attributions were anticipated by Stone (Source 8), who cites “1909” in Part III and comments that the “regular P.O.” “did not officially open until 1913” in Part I.

- (5) Baie du Lévrier, Cansado. See Table 1 Note 6 and Note 27 below.
- (6) Bassikounou. "Seen in list of 1967".
- (7) Chinguetti. "*Vaguemestre militaire* in 1910, postal agency in 1913".
- (8) F Dérick, Fort Gouraud. The date of a name change so not strictly a closure and opening.
- (9) Fort Gouraud. Official date. "It is believed the actual opening took place some weeks later."
- (10) Fort Trinquet. Postal services were provided by a *vaguemestre* prior to the opening of an office under the new name of Bîr-Moghreïn.
- (11) Kaédi. This attribution appears in the chapter on Senegal.
- (12) Khroufa. The date on which the note of closing was published.
- (13) Kiffa. The date of the *décret* changing the boundary between Mauritania and Upper Senegal and Niger.
- (14) Kiffa. Apparently an error for Upper Senegal and Niger.
- (15) Kronfa. See Table 1 Note 10.
- (16) Lexeidra (Lexeiba?). See Table 1 Note 11.
- (17) Mal. No dates entered. Probably administered by a *vaguemestre* according to a footnote, but Bouérat I gives it postal agency status from the start.
- (18) Mal. The date on which the notice of closing was published.
- (19) Mederdra. This entry reads "1911" in the "opening" column and "seen in 1911, may have been a postal agency since 1909" under "remarks".
- (20) Néma. This office appears in the French Sudan/Upper Senegal and Niger chapter of Langlois and Bourselet. No date is recorded, there is just an entry (cancel types) in the column headed "French Sudan from 1920". The book was published long before the transfer to Mauritania.
- (21) Nouâdhibou. Name change from Port-Etienne. The date on which new postal markings were brought into use.
- (22) Nouakchott. The date of the order re-opening the postal agency.
- (23) Nouakchott R.P. New designation of Nouakchott.
- (24) Nouakchott Chèques Postaux. See Table 1 Note 16.
- (25) Oualâta. Confusion! In the introduction to Bouérat I this office is included among the three transferred from French Sudan on 1 January 1945. In the list which follows, however, they quote as the opening date, 1 November 1972, and (unlike the other two) make no mention of the pre-1945 position. The COL.FRA study of French Sudan postmarks (Source 5) follows Langlois and Bourselet with "open 1914, not seen in 1920" (a cancel of 16 October 1917 is illustrated) and continues "re-opened in 1936, Mauritania in 1945". So it was presumably closed in or some time after January 1945 and not re-opened until 1 November 1972.
- (26) Ould Yandzé, Ould Yengé. The date on which new postal markings were brought into use on the change of name. Unlike Fort Gouraud / F Dérick (see Note 8 above) no "closure" is noted.
- (27) Port-Etienne and Poste du Lévrier, 15 August 1907 was the date of the change of name from Poste du Lévrier (the postal agency of Cansado) (see Table 1 Notes 6 and 19). There was a further change, to Nouâdhibou (Note 21 above), in 1969.
- (28) Regba. The date of the order closing the postal agency; the actual date of closing may have been earlier as the military post was closed by order of 18 May 1907.
- (29) Rosso. See Table 1 Note 20.
- (30) Saint-Louis. See Table 1 Note 21.
- (31) Saint-Louis N'Dar Toute. See Table 1 Note 22.
- (32) Saint-Louis Transit. See Table 1 Note 23.
- (33) Sélibaby. "Also seen in 1928-1930".
- (34) Sélibaby. As already noted, Stone I is alone in saying that Sélibaby had an existing post office when the Mauritanian postal service was established in 1906. In his Part III, however, he makes no mention of this Senegal post office; he merely records as dates (for Mauritania) "1906-1929, 1937- ". We doubt whether this Senegal office ever existed.
- (35) Souet el Ma. The date of the order closing the postal agency.
- (36) Souet el Ma. An unnoticed error. As will be seen from the next entry, under Source 8, these are the dates for Tâmachakett.
- (37) Tâmachakett. Intermittent service to 1945.
- (38) Tidjikja. See Table 1 Notes 25 and 26.

Table 3 – Alternative Spellings

Few of the following have any philatelic significance. Attention has been drawn in the Notes to Table 1 to recent simplification of some place-name spellings as reflected in cancels. Many other variations (from Stone's article in particular) seem to be unnoticed printers' errors. The problem of accents has already been mentioned. We have ignored the presence or absence of hyphens in names consisting of more than one word.

Aïoun el Atrouss	AIOUN ET ATROUSS (Stone III).
Bîr-Moghrein	BIR-BOGHREIN (COL.FRA <i>Nomenclature</i> ; correct in the cancels study!).
Boghé	BOGUÉ (Times Atlas 2000 edition).
F Dérick	F'DERICK (Venot 1978, COL.FRA cancels study; FDÉRIK (Times Atlas).
Kaédi	KAËDI (see Introductory note); KAYÉDI (Stone, source for 1892 in Table 1, and – without the accent – Gordon, Source 7 for Table 2, in each case as an alternative spelling).
Khroufa	KROUFA (Stone III).
Lexeidra	LEXEIBA (See Table 1 Note 11).
M'Bagne	MBAGNE (Times Atlas).
M'Bout	MBOUT (Times Atlas).
Mônguel	MÔNGUEUL (See Table 1 Note 13).
Nouackchott	NOUACKCHOT (See Table 1 Note 15).
Nouâdhibou	NOUADHEBOU (Stone I).
Ould-Yengé	OULD YENJÉ (Times Atlas).
R'Kiz	RKÎZ (Times Atlas).
Saint-Louis N'Dar Toute	SAINT-LOUIS N'DARTOUT (Gordon, Stone III).
Sélibaby	SÉLIBABI (Times Atlas).
Souet-el-Ma	SOUET-AL-MA (Stone I — III is correct).
Tâmchakett	TÂMCHEKET (Times Atlas).
Timbedra	TIMBEDGHA (Times Atlas).
Zouérate	ZOUÉRAT (Times Atlas).



Franking value 1F (15c x 2, 35c x 2); Port-Etienne to Paris, 8 April 1935.

Flown as far as Dakar only, received Paris 7 May [but the only legible letter in the back strike appears to be "V" - can this be NOV? - Ed.]

50c basic postage (French tariff of 9 August 1926);

air surtax Mauritania - Senegal and vice versa 50c per 10gm (*décret* of 22 February 1935).

Very philatelic, but correctly franked.

[The next part of this study will deal with French Guinea.]

LIST OF RECENTLY PUBLISHED ARTICLES

Compiled by Colin Spong

Cameo: Journal of the West Africa Study Circle

Vol 8 N° 3 (Whole N° 62) June 2004: Cameroun - Plating the Sterling Issue of 1961: the 1½d on 5 Franc and 3d on 15 Franc stamps (Bratzel, Lythgoe, May & Carter); Cameroun 1967 Essays (Maddocks); 1921 Stamp Shortage in Cameroun (Cobb); A Southern Cameroons Postal History Hoard (May); Mail Chauvinism? - The First Airmail Bathurst to Dakar (Maddocks); WWII POW Post from a German Resident of French Cameroun interned in Nigeria (Maddocks); Cameroun Stamps since 1995 - New Discoveries (Hauschild); Mail to the Coast from Upper Dahomey (Kelly).

France & Colonies Philatelist

Whole N° 276 (Vol 60 N° 2) Apr 2004: Discovery of another, more recent Scraped Date Stamp from Cochinchina (Tricot); Amazing 1870-1871 Wonder Stories - 83 (Cohn); Togo in World War I: The French Occupation Issues [your help please] (Mitchell); The Boxed Corr. des armées Marking (Luft); On distinguishing the Ceres-Head Issues of the Classic Period (Lievsey & Luft); Mers du Sud Revisited (Lopes); Some Aspects of Foreign Mails during the Franco-German War of 1870-1871 [2] (Johnson).

L'Écho de la Timbrologie

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

N° 1775 Jun 2004: Prêt-à-poster Florilège de PÂP (-); Passage des Panoramas (-); Les lettres de la Grande Armée (Jamet); 1940-1945: Prisonnier de guerre en Allemagne (Hella); Le triomphe de la publicité(-); Les 130 ans de l'Union Postale Universelle (Emmenegger); Naissance de la carte moderne 1878-1900 (Storch).

N° 1776 Jul-Aug 2004: Prêt-à-poster Florilège de PÂP (-); Une lettre recommandée via Internet (-); Le quartier Drouot (-); Une triple présentation [letter New Orleans-France] (Prugnon); Les lettres de la Grande Armée [end] (Jamet); Les 130 ans de l'Union Postale Universelle [cont. & end] (Emmenegger); Le fruit de mes entrailles (Storch).

Indo-China Philatelist

Vol. 34 N° 2 Mar 2004: Most Valuable Listed Lao Stamps; Viet Scouting 1926-1975; 1962 Malaria Issue Paper Varieties; Royal Lao Government Seal; Cambodia Central Post Office Renovation nears Completion.

Stamp Lover

Vol 96 N° 3 June 2004: Forgotten Countries: French Sudan (Towler).

Vol 96 N° 4 August 2004: Forgotten Countries: French Senegal (Towler).

Timbres Magazine

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

N° 47 Jun 2004: Concours Marianne: le jury d'Ile-de-France a délibéré (Jullien); A la découverte de la Polynésie Française (Michaud); L'éclatement de l'archipel [Comores pt 2] (Pellinec); Adieu Concorde (Aboucher); La «petite reine» (PJM); 28 Juin 1919: le traité de Versailles (Sanders); Des carnets TVP par 20 sinon rien! (Kéledjian); Behr: chasseurs de raretés (Pellinec); A.O.F. priorité au courrier aérien [1942-1947] (Chauvin); Les Pays conquis du Premier Empire [2° pt] (Baudet); Lettres accidentées pour cause de débarquement (Sinai); B.C.M.7: bureau postal de la France Libre à Londres (Chauvin).

N° 48 Jul-Aug 2004: L'étonnant parcours philatélique de la Guadeloupe (Pellinec); Les Carnets d'Andorre et de Monaco (PJM); L'Après Versailles: les timbres des plébiscites (Sanders); Behr: dans les coulisses des bâtisseurs de collections (Pellinec); Dans la Péninsule en guerre, tant bien que mal courrier circule...[Indochine] (Chauvin); Une Liberté «piquée à vif» (Bernadet); Introduction aux marques postales: Les Contreseings de l'administration des Postes [1791-1876] (Baudot); 1945 1^{er} service aérien Dakar-New York (Chauvin).

The Collectors Club Philatelist

Vol 83 N° 3 May-June 2004: Haiti's Postal Laws, Decrees and Circulars 1804-1844 (Boarino); A Critical Guide to Balloon Mails - Facts and Fables about 1870 War Mails, Part III (Cohn).

Vol 83 N° 4 July-Aug 2004: A Study and Plating Guide of Haiti's 10 Centimes Dumas Stamp of 1935, Part I (Jeannopoulos); A Critical Guide to Balloon Mails - Facts and Fables about 1870 War Mails, Errata (Cohn).

Documents Philatéliques

N° 181 3^{ème} Trim 2004: Une convention de Poste éphémère entre la France et la Lorraine en 1700 (Abensur); La Poste à Obock de 1884 à 1889, 1^{ère} partie (Guichenduc); La Tour Eiffel et le télégraphe (Mayeur); La Poste cantonale à Mirecourt (Vosges) (Pingard); Conférence de l'Académie de Philatélie - Les paquets familiaux en provenance des Colonies françaises (Bonnefoy).

La Philatélie Française

Permanent features: Étude, Collection, Actualité, à Lire, Événement.

N° 587 May 2004: L'élargissement de l'Union Européenne (Legay); Le «rouge-gorge» des vœux 2004 (Rabineau).

Amazing 1870-71 Wonder Stories - 86

Ernst Cohn

The mail sales catalogues of Lahitte & Marsanoux have at least one feature that differentiates them from all other sales catalogues I have seen: At the end, they have articles about French postal history. These are usually just a few pages long but full of meaty information. The one for 27 June 2003 is no exception. It contains an account of the unknown French Naval expeditions into the Baltic and North Seas during the 1870 War, *Les expéditions méconnues dans la Mer de la Baltique et dans la Mer du Nord durant la guerre de 1870*. The author, C Marsanoux, does not mention his sources but, as usual, they appear to be authoritative and packed with useful detail.

For reasons that will become obvious, I have long been interested in learning about the end of those French fleet operations. I now know that the Baltic venture ended with a return to Cherbourg on 29 September. The end of the North Sea venture is not stated as exactly, but it apparently ended around the middle of September. That means, of course, that no vessel of the French fleet was anywhere near the North and Baltic Seas when the balloon *La Ville d'Orléans* was on its way from Paris to Norway. And that is the reason for my interest in the French fleet.

In an article "A Letter From An American In Paris" (*Stamps*, 5 June 1965, p. 426), I mentioned reading that the aeronauts on that balloon heard a shot while flying over the sea, but they did not know whether that was an attack or a signal for helping them. The ship was soon out of sight in any case. Had it been a French or a German warship? I mentioned the brief incident again in my book *The Flight Of The "Ville d'Orléans"* (1978), hoping in vain one of its readers might know the answer and tell it to me.

Part of the answer has now emerged. The French navy had none of its ships in the path of the balloon. The Germans must have known that the French had pulled out of that area two months earlier, so they are unlikely to have had any of their warships in the North Sea, though this is only a very definite 'maybe'. In view of the fact that the war was being fought only on land, the shot was most likely a signal indicating an attempt to help the *Ville d'Orléans*, heard by the aeronauts who were out of sight much too fast to make use of the offer of help.

Once you have dug long enough and deep enough into some topic, including postal history, it is unlikely to let go of you. You remember the various loose ends and unanswered questions, to some of which you just might

find either direct answers or ways and means of working those out yourself by keeping your eyes open and living long enough. For postal historians, catalogues of sales and exhibitions are prime places to look for both problems and answers, especially when there are plenty of pictures. The Lahitte & Marsanoux catalogue is not only packed full of those, it also contains these excellent research essays.

* * * * *

At the same time I got the picture of a lot in a Paris auction catalogue by fax from a friend. It shows the front and back of a letter by a French prisoner of war held at Mainz. Much detail was lost, particularly from the back. The stampless front showed the obligatory oval handstamp of the governor (censorship) and, presumably in the same blue color as the governor's stamp, a small stamp 'POST FREI ..' showing that it needed no postage. There is a Mainz date stamp of 14 December 1870 and a small French framed PD. In handwriting, it shows 'Voie Suisse' (top left), 'France' (top right), the address starting with 'Madame [remainder illegible on copy], Châteaubriant, Loire inférieure', where the portion 'briant' is underlined three times and on the left is repeated 'Loire Inf^{re}', this time in larger letters.

My friend sent it because he knew I consider a somewhat similar letter by a French prisoner at Mainz to be faked by the addition of an occupation stamp and 'Via Suisse'. He thought that this letter was not faked, and in this case I agreed with him, but for a different reason than his. Whereas he thought that these letters both showed changes made at Mainz, I do not think that happened in either case.

This particular letter was sent on its way to France via Switzerland, as requested, and got to France. But there it was sent to some 'Château...', not located in the Loire Inférieure *département*. When it arrived there, the local postman realized that it had been missent, so he (1) underlined the '...briant' portion three times, to show that it was directed there, and then (2) added the 'Loire Inf^{re}' again, this time in larger lettering, to show that the letter had to be taken to another *département*.

The letter was, thus, not faked, it was simply missent and the address was elaborated to make sure it would go to the right place. Certainly, not every change on the front (or back) of an envelope or folded letter was made for faking purposes. It all depends!

France - The Red Cross: Part 1

John West

The origins of the Red Cross movement can be traced back to the Battle of Solferino, which took place on Friday 24 June 1859, when the Prussian army, under the generalship of Emperor Franz Joseph, clashed with the Franco-Italian army, led by Napoleon III.

It is estimated that there were 40,000 casualties during the fifteen hour long battle which took place on that day. Indeed, it was only the exhausted state of the armies that caused a cessation of hostilities and both armies withdrew, taking what casualties they could with them. In fact, it was to take a further three weeks to clear the battlefield of the dead and dying. Most of the wounded and dying were initially removed to the nearby town of Castiglione della Pieve – where they were laid out in churches, houses, barns, and even in the street. The scenes of suffering and deprivation were witnessed by “*a mere tourist with no part whatever in the great conflict.*”

This eye witness was Jean Henri⁽¹⁾ Dunant, the son of a Swiss banker, who had purchased land at Mons Djemila, in Algeria, for commercial purposes. In order to make his enterprise viable it was vital to him that he obtained the rights to neighbouring land which was owned by the French government. They had proved to be inordinately obstinate about selling this land and, driven by desperation, Dunant had travelled to Northern Italy in anticipation of meeting Napoleon III and finally resolving the matter.

Confronted by the horrific sights of mutilated bodies and dying soldiers that greeted him upon his arrival, Dunant cast aside all thoughts of himself or his business and spent the next five weeks tending to the wounded. He organised the local residents' efforts and persuaded them to treat friend and foe as equals in their hour of need. The numbers of injured gradually diminished as they either died or were transferred to hospitals in the larger towns.

Dunant returned to Geneva and, inspired by what he had seen, he wrote a booklet entitled “*A Memory of Solferino*”, and published this at his own expense in November 1862. In this booklet he provided an evocative account of the sights he had witnessed, and he concluded by proposing the formation of an organisation capable of providing for the needs of the war-wounded, irrespective of which side they were fighting on. His book was widely read and his suggestion was adopted by the Welfare Society of Geneva, who co-opted him onto a committee formed specifically to develop the idea.

Société de Secours aux Blessés Militaires

By 1863 the Welfare Society had, by dint of a great deal of hard work by Dunant, interested the governments of a number of European countries in the formation of such an organisation as had been advocated in his book. At a conference which was held on 26 October 1863, representatives of these governments formally agreed on the concept, and a year later, on 22 August 1864, the Convention of Geneva was drawn up and signed by 16

countries. As a direct result, the French Red Cross (in the form of the *Société de Secours aux Blessés Militaires*) was created in that same year.

The French Red Cross did not exist in the form that we know it in this day and age but, initially, it comprised a number of small associations or societies, all of whom worked towards a common end. At the outset the SSBM shouldered the responsibility of fulfilling the aims and objectives laid down by the Geneva Convention. The organisation was given official recognition by virtue of an Imperial Decree, dated 23 June 1866.

Its first president was General Duc de Fezensac, and the society remained the sole Red Cross organisation in France until 1879. It was to prove instrumental in providing medical facilities to soldiers who were injured during the Franco-Prussian war of 1870 and, through their benevolence, many ‘ambulances’ were provided and maintained during this conflict.

On 25 July 1870 the Swiss Federal Council granted a free postage facility to members of the Swiss armed forces and their families which, it was decreed, would remain valid for the duration of the hostilities which had broken out between the French empire and the German states. Three days later the Swiss postal administration formally notified its offices of the decision (*vide* Order N° 95), thereby constituting the first official recognition of the Red Cross by any postal authority.

An international agency, established at Basle, opened on 23 July 1870 in accordance with the directive of the Swiss Post Office, and it yields one of the earliest recorded Red Cross cachets (Fig 1). The agency was set up specifically to handle the transfer of mail from the war-wounded and the cachet was appended to comply with the requirement that the letters should bear “a special seal or stamp” (not necessarily within the philatelic meaning) to authenticate the free postage facility being claimed.

All mail being transferred from France to Germany was handled by this agency for the remainder of 1870. In the beginning the agency insisted that all mail should be addressed to itself, and this was emphasised on 10 August 1870 when it circulated an explanatory leaflet on its workings. The International Red Cross Committee at Geneva contacted the prefects of every French *département* on 6 October 1870, requesting that more publicity be given to the public about the facilities that were now being provided. The Agency rapidly expanded and became linked with a *Bureau de Secours*.

On 23 September 1870, the Swiss Postal authorities issued a new order (N° 124) which extended free postage to correspondence and parcels addressed to, or despatched by, the relief committee for the city of Strasbourg, which had been under siege since 27 August. The order stated that:-

“Despatches for Strasbourg sent by the relief committees should bear a stamp or a note authenticating their title.”

⁽¹⁾ Henri appears on his birth certificate although he always signed ‘Henry’

In August 1870 the Supreme Post Office Headquarters at Berlin issued an order (N° 24) stating that they, too, were offering a postal franchise to all foreign members of the armed forces taken prisoner in Germany. Without actually recognising the existence of the Geneva Convention, it was decreed that all their letters should be marked “*Portofrei laut Verfügung vom 7. August 1870*” to qualify for the facility. At the same time, the French also extended the Geneva Convention of 1864 to their own mail for wounded soldiers, prisoners of war and their families.

Early Red Cross Stationery

The SSBM was built up of numerous regional and local ‘*comités*’, a number of which produced printed postcards which identified themselves with both the national society and the issuing authority. These were designed to expedite their enquiries and give them official status when they sought information regarding the condition of injured troops. The most commonly seen are the postcards of the “*Comité Auxiliaire de Strasbourg*” (Figure 2) but instances are recorded⁽²⁾ of similar cards being produced by, or on behalf of, local committees at Dijon, Le Mans, Nantes, Besançon, La Gironde, Haguenau, Mulhouse, Lyon and Bischwiller (see also the much later envelope in Fig 3). Additionally, the “*Ambulance du Midi*” and the “*Ambulances Rouennaises*” produced their own printed stationery. Doubtless other examples exist, but nothing is known of them.

Cards are also known to exist bearing the text “*Comité Auxiliaire de*” and have been found bearing a manuscript insertion of “*des Andelys (Eure)*”. A number of items of printed stationery are also known to originate from the “*Palais de l’Industrie (Champs-Élysées) Porte N° IV*”, where it is known the SSBM had offices. This stationery bore the printed heading of the SSBM, which incorporated a red cross on a white flag in the centre.

Strangely, the French ‘*comités*’ only appear to have benefited from the free postage facility occasionally. Cards originating from the various *comités* are regularly found with the postage paid and stamps cancelled. In the absence of stamps they often received the postal markings of “*P.D.*” or “*Affranchissement insuffisant*”.

The Prussians, however, did permit the passage of these cards – provided that their content was limited to details of health. At Strasbourg non-delivery of this mail could not be blamed on the invading army. With the town besieged, one man was given authority to transport Red Cross mail through the siege line but, for reasons known only to himself, he shirked this responsibility and, when the siege was lifted, most of the mail was found at his house. It seems unlikely that many of the Strasbourg cards were actually delivered to the intended destination during the period of the siege. The sheer volume of these items to be delivered, once the siege was raised, probably explains the scarcity of postal markings on much of this mail that does still exist.

The Green Cross

The original objective of the Red Cross was to provide aid for the wounded members of the armed forces, but it soon became apparent that the provision of assistance to

prisoners was taking up as much time and effort as the primary consideration. The *Agence Internationale*, set up at Basle, reproduced a letter from the Commandant of Marienbourg Fortress, highlighting the needs of his detainees, wherein he suggested that an aid committee should be set up specifically to cater for prisoners of war.

On 31 October 1870 Dr Christ-Socin, an assistant at the Basle agency, proposed that an international committee for assistance to prisoners should be set up in the town. On 22 November 1870 the Geneva committee approved the idea but stipulated that it should not be confused with the existing committee for relief to the wounded. The fledgling organisation was advised to find a way of distinguishing itself as a separate entity and adopted the suggestion that they might use a green cross as their symbol. A similar organisation, utilising the same motif, was founded at Lausanne. Importantly, this committee extended its relief to the civilian population who were victims of the war – an enterprise which was not adopted as one of the official tasks of the Red Cross until many years later.

To complicate matters, though, a vignette of the Relief Committee for Strasbourg - Lausanne actually placed assistance to civilian war victims under the sign of the Red Cross. Meanwhile the “*Comité de Secours*” of Saint-Dié became the only known agency to produce printed stationery headed with both crosses. Certain places, notably in Belgium and Luxembourg, elected to use a blue cross (see Fig 4 for an example from Angers) instead of a green cross, and the anomaly was to remain unresolved until Article 79 of the Convention of Geneva, held on 27 July 1929, eventually ensured that the welfare of POWs was transferred to the Red Cross organisation (see also Figs 5 and 6).

Whilst it is right to acknowledge that the Green Cross did appear at Trieste (in 1877), Lourenço-Marques (1900), Belgrade (1912) and even in Geneva itself (1914), it is true to say that, in general, the various Red Cross organisations routinely included the care of prisoners of war amongst all the other work they undertook.

Before passing from this topic, the reader is reminded not to confuse the ‘blue cross’ cachets with the blue cross insignia used, to this day, by veterinary organisations, and which have often appeared on stationery used by them throughout the century.

Association des Dames Françaises

The idea of forming the “*Association des Dames Françaises*” was the brainchild of Doctor Duchaussoy, and this society was created in 1879 when, following an internal rift amongst members of the SSBM, a number of the female members broke away from the parent organisation to form their own benevolent society (Fig 7). Not surprisingly they adopted this name and their new society achieved official recognition as a public body in 1883. At the outset of the First World War the ADF had prepared over 100 auxiliary hospitals to a state of readiness to receive wounded soldiers. It also undertook to supply provisions to every hospital train arriving in Paris with injured men and, furthermore, made a team of specialists available to the military authorities who required this expertise to assist in treating casualties in the ‘*ambulances*’ and the trains near the front line.

⁽²⁾ *Le Monde des Philatélistes*, December 1977



Figure 1 (left) - This cover, with the **AGENCE INTERNATIONALE BÂLE** cachet, is part of a known correspondence to a Captain Duval, who was a POW in Magdeburg. The letters were probably sent in bundles, of which only the top cover was date stamped. Despite the figure '6' (décimes?) top left, the envelope would have been sent *en franchise* under the German law of August 1870 allowing free postage to POWs.

Figure 2 (right) - Red Cross card from besieged Strasbourg in the Franco-German War bearing the SSBM cachet. Sadly the majority of these cards were not delivered until after the siege was lifted.



Figure 3 (left) - A 44mm d/r handstamp of the Comité des Landes with a manuscript endorsement and an interesting array of markings added by filing clerks at the CICR in Geneva; date stamped 12.12.14 at Mont-de-Marsan (Landes)



Figure 4 -
Example of the printed stationery used by the French Committee of the 'Blue Cross' organisation, based at Angers (Maine-et-Loire)



Figure 5 -
Cachet of 'La Croix Jaune' ('The Yellow Cross'), an agency set up in Paris to trace missing soldiers. This letter, rather early for the American troops, may relate to an enquiry about a missing civilian volunteer.



Figure 6 - Other organisations founded POW agencies but realised their resources were too limited and eventually amalgamated with the Red Cross to ensure successful results. This card from "Les Nouvelles du Soldat" is dated 24.4.15 and has an acknowledgement of the addressee's letter of enquiry on the reverse.



Figure 7 - Association des Dames Françaises cachet on a postcard sent from Fécamp (Seine-Inférieure) in November 1908

Union des Femmes de France

It seems odd to imagine that charitable, caring persons, who were devoting their time and efforts to raising funds for the provision of aid facilities to the casualties of war, should continually be in conflict with each other. Remarkably, this proved to be the case for, just two years after the *Association des Dames Françaises* was founded, and following a division between their members, a third alliance came into being. The *Union des Femmes de France* (see Figs 8 & 9) was formed in 1881 and, by July 1914, it had assumed responsibility for the running and maintenance of 175 hospitals, with a personnel of 8,000 qualified nurses.

The UFF worked closely with the Minister of the Interior in setting up "*Stations Sanitaires*", which were to play such a vital part in the treatment of military personnel suffering from tuberculosis, and teams of nurses were sent to Serbia, Greece and Egypt. Additionally, the UFF worked hand in hand with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to ensure communication was maintained with the *départements* which had been occupied, obtaining details of soldiers who had been injured, who were being held in captivity, or who had simply just 'disappeared', providing accurate and up-to-date information for their families.

Various Conventions, signed between 1889 and 1929, gave these aid societies and their committees the right to use



Figure 8 -
Printed stationery of
the Union des
Femmes de France /
Comité de Lyon
which is running the
Hôpital Auxiliaire
N° 101 in the
École Vétérinaire

Figure 9 -
Printed stationery
with handstamp
of the Union des
Femmes de France /
Comité de Besançon
that is managing
Hôpital Auxiliaire
N° 102.
The foreign postage
rate of 25c
has been paid
for sending to
Switzerland.



the Red Cross insignia. In 1907, the three French organisations integrated to form “Le Comité Central de la Croix Rouge Française” but, notwithstanding their membership of this newly founded central committee, each of the three societies zealously maintained their independence and they continued so to do, co-existing peacefully and successfully, until 1940 when they finally amalgamated to become the “Croix Rouge Française”.

Ambulances

The name “ambulance” was first used to describe just about any place used to treat the ill or injured and it would probably be more accurate to describe many of the so-called ‘ambulances’ as temporary hospitals. Of course, they bore no resemblance whatsoever to the modern day perception of an ambulance. The equipment was primitive and the mobility, that the very word ‘ambulance’ suggests



to the reader, would only have been provided by a cart or, later, a lorry.

The *ambulance* teams initially presented a problem to the military authorities because, for the first time, they were expected to co-operate with an outside agency and actually work in conjunction with a civilian body. Happily, initial distrust speedily evaporated and rapidly changed to mutual respect. The early criticisms of their many imperfections were forgotten as the Red Cross societies succeeded in persuading the military authorities that they were not rivals but merely there to supplement the facilities already in existence.

Many of the *ambulances* used a cachet to authenticate, and expedite, mail being sent home by injured soldiers. The cachet most commonly seen is the 38mm circular “*Marianne*” or “*Déesse Assise*” type, which is to be found in blue, black and red ink. One nearly always sees this cachet without any indication of the *ambulance* number, and those which do show this number are relatively scarce. Invariably, these cachets were produced by the handstamp of “*Le Médecin-Chef*” (see Fig 10).

After the outbreak of war the SSBM organised a certain number of field ambulances. These were designed to follow the troops into the theatre of war – where they could function during and after the battles. They were financed by the SSBM and maintained at their expense. An *'ambulance de campagne'* comprised 15 surgeons at most, one leading surgeon, several assistants, a catholic priest, a protestant minister and about 30 nurses. Details of 19 such *ambulances* are known – including four, numbered 13 to 16, supplied by Switzerland, Holland, a joint Anglo-American group and the city of Turin, respectively.

The “mobile ambulances” were organised and maintained by either the Red Cross committees of the *départements* or



Figure 12 -

The circular cachet of a *Poste de Secours* (first aid post) at the railway station in Mâcon is uncommon. Although the card itself celebrates the “*Journée du Poilu*” (Day of the Soldier) in December 1915, the type of censor mark suggests that it was postally used after October 1917 and before February 1920.

by smaller – and lesser known – committees made up of civic dignitaries and other local people with wealth sufficient to enable them to finance the provision of an *ambulance* at their own expense (see Fig 11). The ‘*ambulances volantes*’ all carried sufficient provisions to allow them to last for three days and, in addition, carried substantial first aid equipment to allow them to tend to the men they found in the trenches, forests, or even isolated homes, where they might have taken refuge. Details are recorded of 15 such *ambulances*.

Ambulances de Gare

Initially, the ‘*ambulances de gare*’ were established at the main line stations in Paris, to provide fresh dressings and medical treatment for wounded soldiers returning from the front. Soon, this objective was extended with the intention of including every railway station where troops were likely to stop. Although that aim proved impossible to achieve, the principal stations on every major line certainly provided medical facilities and staff to cater for the needs of the transient survivors of each battle.

Ambulances Fixes

Many of the small, private ‘*ambulances fixes*’ were actually attached to a hospital, and in Paris alone no fewer than 1,319 are recorded. Some consisted of a private flat and had just one bed. They are too numerous to list and many did not have a cachet of their own anyway. There were fewer of these *ambulances* in the *départements* but they are still to be counted in hundreds.

Ambulances Chirurgicales Automobiles

Commonly known as the “*autochirs*”, these units effectively comprised mobile operating theatres. They could move to places in close proximity to the theatre of war and

specialised in undertaking major surgery needed by the critically injured. They were able to provide limited facilities for the gravely wounded who could not be moved and who required constant attention.

Because of the space they took up, the *autochirs* were often established in the grandiose setting of a château, or in a factory, which was situated near to the front line. They carried substantial quantities of bedding, dressings and medicaments and they were staffed by a minimum of 6 doctors, one of whom, at least, was an army doctor.

The creation of the first *autochir*, in 1914, was attributed to Dr Marcille, a surgeon at the ‘*Hôpital de Paris*’, and what became known as ‘*Ambulance Chirurgicale N° 1*’ was contained in three lorries and a trailer! Having determined where the unit would be based, it could be installed within three hours. In its early days this operating centre would consist of three wooden huts, two of which would be used as operating theatres and the third as a sterile recovery room. These huts measured approximately 14 metres by 5 metres. Their success was such that, by the end of the war, there were 40 in existence.

With the exception of the *autochirs*, the *ambulances* did not provide any form of accommodation. They would assist in the evacuation of troops to either their own army corps or an ‘*hôpital d’évacuation*’, or to a main hospital away from the enemy lines. Inevitably, they were required to work in situations where shells and gunfire posed a constant danger to their staff who were expected to remain at their positions until the last wounded soldier had been attended to. Because of their close proximity to the front the *ambulances* worked in close liaison with the “*Postes de Secours*” (first aid posts) with whom they shared out the needy (see Fig 12).

SHORTER ITEMS - INCLUDING QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Avis de Réception in the Former French Colonies



Readers of Bill Mitchell's review of the book on AR by Professor David Handelman in the last issue of the Journal (Journal 232 page 65) may be interested in this 1976 example from Laos. The "A.R." handstamp is quite unlike anything so far recorded in these pages – it is very much larger (the letters are 18 mm high whereas the letters on French cachets of an earlier period have typically been only 9 or even 6 mm), and it is unboxed.

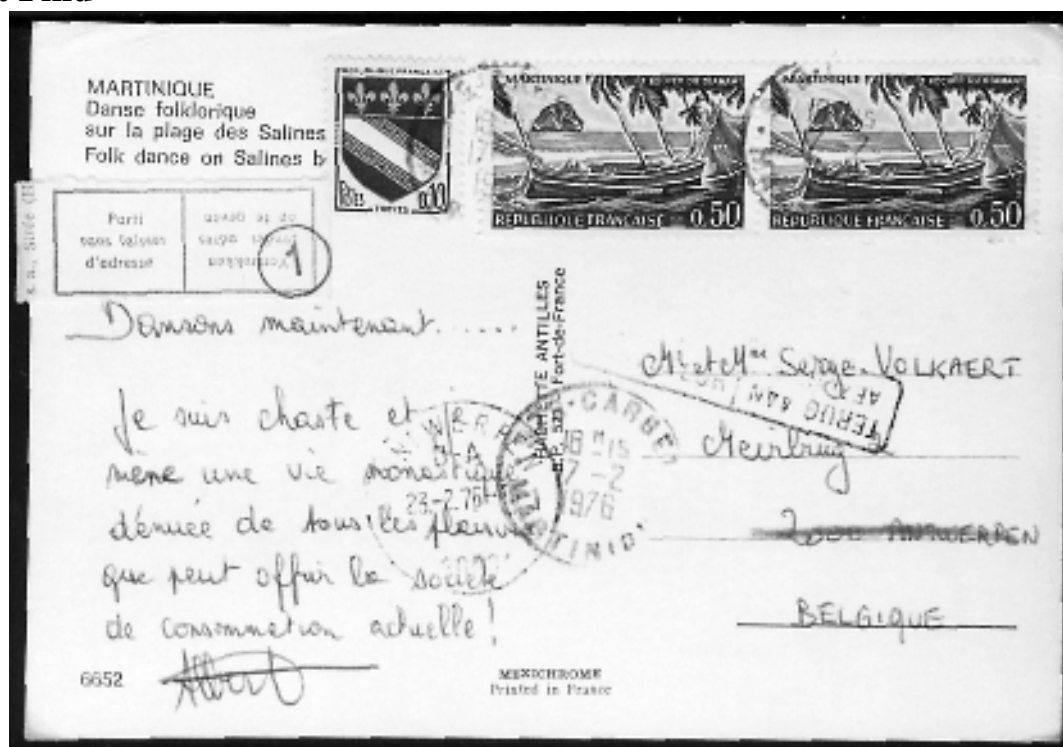
The manuscript endorsement "10 gr – 520" apparently refers to the 520 kip airmail postage plus registration fee to the USA, so the cover gives no clue to the AR fee.

One other aspect of the cover is of interest. As Michael Round points out in a note published in Journal 225 (September 2002), according to the Stanley Gibbons South-East Asia catalogue, the King of Laos abdicated on 2 December 1975 and the country became the Democratic Republic of Laos ("RDPL" as on the typed endorsement on this AR cover). Until the first "Republic" stamps appeared in December 1976 the inscription "ROYAUME DE" was obliterated by hand – yet there is no sign of this disfigurement on the stamps on my cover! Perhaps it was left to the whim of the individual postal clerk.

A photocopy of the cover has been sent to Professor Handelman.

David Taylor Smith

A Recent Find



This postcard from Martinique to Belgium bears a '1' in an 11 mm circle, struck on the Belgian 'LEFT WITH NO FORWARDING ADDRESS' label, but it was applied by

which office, Belgian or French? And why does it also bear a Belgian RETURN TO SENDER handstamp, since there is no sender's address to return it to in Martinique?

David Jennings-Bramly

A Treble Abus de Confiance



The first confidence trick was the attempt to use a postal stationery cut-out.

The second was to try to use in 1909 an item postmarked 4 JANV 86.

And the third was played on the woman who bought the card in Chamonix.

The message reads (in English): "July 15th. 09. Chamonix. A souvenir of the place we did not get to! I am spending three weeks in Geneva - Prospect of a fine day tempted me to make another effort to take our belated excursion - This time very successful. How I wish you were here! Mt Blanc is magnificent & the glaciers & all of it! Yours, Margaret."

David Jennings-Bramly

Benin Mail Collected by German Mail Boat 1888

HBA of Hamburg in their May 2004 clearance sale included at a starting price of 100€ a cover addressed to Germany with postage met by German 20Pfg Michel DR 42. It was endorsed by the sender for collection by P.D. (*Postdampfer*) Carl Woermann, with a second endorsement in red, probably by the ship's purser, when collected at Grand Popo 5.7.1888, ahead of the issue of Benin stamps. The stamp was cancelled on arrival at Hamburg by the 3-line boxed *Aus West Afrika / mit / Hamburger Dampfer*, and the

cover was endorsed to show it had been dropped ahead of the ship docking at Hamburg at the Channel port of Verviers Cöln. The arrival date was not given, but I note that whilst Gottspenn and Grimmer do not record this item amongst eight items noted for 1888 with the 3-line strike, they do record other mail carried by Carl Woermann on this voyage, which passed through Verviers Cöln on 9 August. The item realised 230€ exclusive of charges and taxes.

John Mayne

New £5 Coin



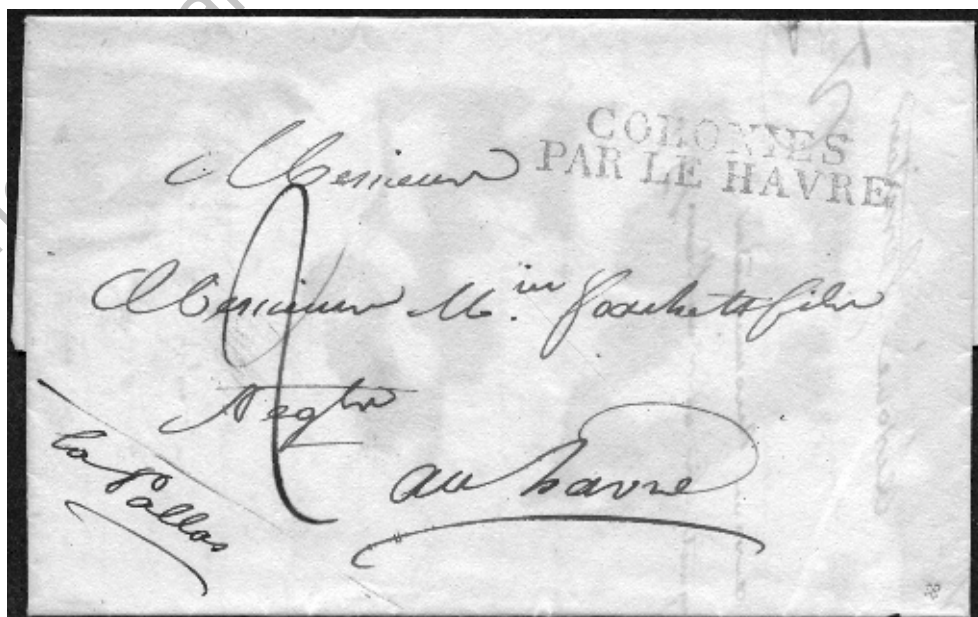
How many members have seen or handled the new Entente Cordiale Commemorative £5 coin, issued by the Royal Mint on 15 March 2004? The obverse, with the Queen's head, was designed by Ian Rank-Broadley, and the reverse of the coin, designed by David Gentleman, bears the

portrait of a conjoined Britannia and Sower [described in the publicity as "Marianne"], female icons intended to represent the unique qualities of each country. The diameter of the cupro-nickel coin is 38.61 mm [this illustration is not accurate as to size] and its weight is 28.28 gms.

David Jennings-Bramly

November 2004 Auction - Selected Lots

(See also back cover pages iii and iv)



1827 EL from Guadeloupe with COLONIES PAR LE HAVRE in red

REPORTS OF MEETINGS

MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF 1 MAY 2004

The President, Mr M S Tyler, opened the meeting held at the Calthorpe Arms public house, 252 Gray's Inn Road, London WC1, at 11.30 hours in the presence of 20 members.

(1) Apologies for absence were received from Mrs M Pavey and Messrs B C Berkinshaw-Smith, R Broadhurst, J N Hammonds, P R A Kelly, A Lawrence, D Pashby, M Round, J M Simmonds, C W Spong, J West, and A J Wood.

(2) Minutes of the previous AGM of 3 May 2003, published in Journal 229, were accepted as a true record of that meeting.

(3) President's Report - Maurice Tyler

"My period as President began on a very distressing note, with the deaths of some very prominent members of the Society, including George Henderson (who had only fairly recently joined the Committee), Arthur Dent and Jean-Luc Trassaert. Their memory, however, will remain with us for a very long while.

"Meetings have continued on a regular basis in London (at the Calthorpe Arms and at Philatex), in Leeds and in Worthing; packets of material have been sent out to those members requesting them; and the auctions have proved as popular and as profitable as always. The Annual Weekend, despite an enforced move from the traditional hotel in Leamington Spa, was considered by those attending the new venue at Charlecote to be among the most enjoyable and successful events ever. This was due in no small measure to the preliminary work undertaken by Peter Kelly and Chris Hitchen, as well as the collaborative efforts of those displaying, or entering or judging the competitions.

"Without mentioning every name individually, my thanks go out to all the officers of the Society and members of the Committee, and to all those additional organisers such as Colin Spong, Stephen Holder and Peter Maybury, whose hard work in the background ensures the continuing success of the Society and its activities. We are grateful to Len Barnes and Paul Runacres for being willing to join the Committee last year, and to all the unsung heroes who have contributed to displays, written articles, organised activities, and even completed humdrum tasks like room arranging. This Society relies upon co-operation among its members, and achieves this to a high degree.

"New initiatives over the past year have included an updated Library List produced by George Barker, who has now adapted his new home in Bradford to house our extensive collection of books and periodicals, and an Index to the four main French philatelic magazines for the years 1946-2000, compiled by Derek Richardson and now available from Len Barnes who has offered to distribute it. Peter Kelly and Alan Wood have recently made plans to inaugurate a new Society group for the South-West of England, and the first meeting will take place in August in Salisbury. This is also the moment to announce that the Society website, long awaited and still needing development to give it a more professional appearance, is finally available

on-line. This actually led to Chris Hitchen confessing that for the first time ever he had had to make out a cheque to a Pink Frog (the name of the company hosting the site). For those members who are computer literate, the name to enter in your browser is www.fcps.org.uk.

"Medals have continued to be gained by members at exhibitions, both national and international, as detailed in the Journal; and news comes in regularly about members who have displayed to other societies. The proportion of our members who are included in the Register of Interests continues to rise, and has now reached 48%.

"Despite the very healthy condition of the Society, we do, however, need to plan very carefully for the future. Mick Bister has announced his intending retirement from the post of Auction Secretary, and we therefore need to find a volunteer to take on this time-consuming but very rewarding work for us as soon as possible. Geoff Gethin has reluctantly announced that, for reasons of ill health, he feels he is no longer able to act as Vice-President, although he is keen to carry on as General Secretary and to complete his monumental work on 20th century French forgeries, which will hopefully go on sale within the next 12 months.

"Falling numbers of those attending the London meetings mean that we need to investigate ways of attracting more people. And finally, the new Committee will be considering ways of becoming more national in composition, rather than London-based, which may involve tweaks to our rule book, allowing consultations to be made and some decisions to be arrived at electronically rather than at a physical meeting. This latter possibility is for a future AGM, however, and for the moment we need, if possible, more members willing to serve on the Committee.

"To conclude, the future of this Society remains bright, but there is a need for more volunteers to undertake the practical tasks that will ensure its smooth running; and my hope is that members will respond to this plea."

(4) General Secretary's Report - Geoff Gethin

"Of the eight London meetings this season, five were held on Wednesday evenings, and three on Saturday afternoons. The five Wednesday evening meetings attracted between 10 and 14 members with the average attendance being 12.14. The three Saturday afternoons attracted 13, 19, and 20 members, the average attendance being 17.3.

"The Society's membership at the end of the calendar year 2003 was 392, a decrease of 7 from the 2002 total. We lost 23 members, 12 of these through death. There were 16 new members and 1 reinstatement. This keeps us close to the 400 mark, which has been the case for at least the last eight years.

"With the launch of the website, and the publication of Brochure N° 8, we now have something substantial to announce in the philatelic press. Hopefully this will lead to an increase in the membership.

"Finally I would like to thank both Derek Richardson for continuing to maintain the membership database, and my wife, Liz, who actually does most of my work."

(5) Treasurer's Report - Chris Hitchen

"Once again expenditure this year was broadly similar to that of previous years and again a reasonable surplus resulted. The indexing of French stamp magazines has now been completed and the final production shortly will entail expenditure on the initial printing costs. Much of this will, of course, be recouped in due course through sales of the publication itself. Geoff Gethin's book on forgeries approaches completion and the funding of the launch of that will be taken from the reserves. That too will be sold through the Society.

"The Auction had a better year this time, although unfortunately the revenue from packets dropped slightly. Both of course depend on members providing sufficient

suitable material for their success. Membership has remained approximately the same and so therefore has the subscription income.

"Purchase of the new frames that I mentioned last year has now been completed. The cost will however fall into next year - 2004. Twenty frames were purchased at a cost of £500, and had their first successful outing at the annual weekend. Ten have been stored in the North and are available for the use of the Northern Group if they so wish. The balance are in the West and all are available for the use of any regional groups who may wish to hold a meeting.

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

The acceptance of the Treasurer's Report and accounts was proposed by David Jennings-Bramly, seconded by Iain Stevenson, and carried unanimously.

BALANCE SHEET AT 31 DECEMBER 2003

CURRENT ASSETS

Cash at bank
Cash at building society
Sundry debtors

DEDUCT CURRENT LIABILITIES

Sundry creditors
Subscriptions in advance

TOTAL ASSETS

Represented by
MEMBERS FUNDS

Uncommitted funds at 1.1.2002
Year surplus

2002

INCOME & EXPENDITURE 2003

Expenditure

Accommodation
Journal 4 issues
Postage and expenses
Year surplus

Income

Auction
Exchange packet
Interest
Sale of publications
Subscriptions

2002

2003

2002

2003

(6) Auction Secretary's Report - Mick Bister

"You may remember that last year's report ended on rather a pessimistic note. As a result of the depletion of material received from members and the subsequent fall in profits, threats were being made about the possible increase in commission charges and in vendors' contributions to postage.

"I am pleased to report that neither of these threats had to be carried out as members rallied to the call and supplied me with enough material to run four full sales, each offering a twelve page catalogue and, more significantly, enabling

me to provide a good selection of material for the re-instated November Room Auction.

"A total of 1928 lots was offered in 2003 compared to 1720 in 2002. The percentage of members who partook in the auctions remained at an average of just over 22% but the number of lots sold fell slightly to between 48% and 58% per auction. However, with there being an increase in the total of lots offered and a higher proportion of better quality material, profits increased in 2003 and I am delighted to report that at the end of the year I was able to hand over

£ to the Treasurer. Hopefully, this will help to keep the subscription fees unchanged for a little while longer.

"I still hold the remnants of collections from the estates of two deceased members but these will provide only the basis of this year's auctions. I still want much more material from our membership if I am to repeat last year's success and run four auctions. At the moment I can only offer an eight page catalogue for the August sale and I am desperate for material for November. I have plenty of stamps; what I urgently need are covers from all periods. The auctions are only as good as the material received so please send me what you have.

"I have to say that over the past seven years I have thoroughly enjoyed running the auctions. I have learnt much more about French philately, I have acquired new skills and I have made many new friends. However, I thoroughly enjoy visiting France too and now wish to spend more of my time doing so with my wife. (At this point, I wish to deny rumours that I am looking for a *pied à terre* in

the Rue Drouot!) I regret to say therefore that I shall be relinquishing my post as Auction Secretary at the end of this year and I take this opportunity to invite anyone with a similar passion for the hobby to take my place. If anyone is interested in taking over the gavel please contact the General Secretary or, if they want to know any more information about the post, I shall be more than happy to discuss it with them.

"Finally, may I thank all those who have given me advice and help with the auctions. There are always a few lots which neither the vendor nor I can identify and in these cases the Register of Members' Interests comes into its own. Thank you to all those who help at the room auctions, especially to Alan Wood for his assistance at front of house and to dear George Henderson who often stepped in at the last minute to assist and who, I trust, will be looking down on me sympathetically as I attempt to emulate his skills later this afternoon. I am grateful to you all."

AUCTION ACCOUNT 2003				
EXPENDITURE		INCOME		
2002	2003	2002	2003	
PAYMENTS TO VENDORS		SALE OF LOTS (including reimbursed Postage & Packing)		
	February		February	
	May		May	
	July/August		July/August	
_____	November	_____	November	_____
PRINTING		2002 includes from Leamington Bookstall		
	February	2003 includes from Leamington Bookstall		
	May			
	July/August			
_____	November			
POSTAGE				
	February			
	May			
	July/August			
_____	November			
OTHER OUTGOINGS				
	Sec. Expenses			
	Bank Charges		Bank Interest &	
_____	Profit to Society	_____	Errors in Society's favour	
_____		_____		
_____		_____		

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

"The France Packet profit for the calendar year 2003 was £. This compares with £ for 2002 and £ for 2001.

"The poor result is the follow-up to last year's lack of material supplied to me. Having less material to circulate, there was less to return to vendors and hence less profit to

the Society. Bank interest is well down because of the lower interest rates. Stationery costs will always fluctuate a bit, and in 2002 I had a good supply. Postages, as always, go up!

"I am optimistic that things will be better in this coming year, as new material is already coming in, but as always, I can never get enough."

ACCOUNTS FOR FRANCE PACKET 2003					
INCOME			EXPENDITURE		
	2003	2002		2003	2002
	£	£		£	£
Balance b/f from 31 Dec 2002			Gross payments to vendors		
Receipts from members			Stationery		
Bank interest			Postage & telephone		
Commission on sales			Previous profit paid to Treasurer		
Insurance recovered			Balance in bank		
Postage recovered	_____	_____	Cash in hand	<u>0.00</u>	_____
	_____	_____		_____	_____
PROFIT AND LOSS					
	2003	2002		2003	2002
	£	£		£	£
Commission on sales			Postage and telephone		
Postage recovered			Stationery		
Insurance recovered			Profit for year	_____	_____
Bank interest	_____	_____		_____	_____

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

"The Colonies Packet section is able to report a successful calendar year to 31 December 2003. Receipts amounted to £ (made up of £ in commission on sales plus £ insurance paid by vendors), while expenses amounted to £ (made up of £ in postage and £ in stationery and telephone charges). I was able therefore to pay the Society the sum of £. This was lower than the corresponding figure for 2002 (£). Full financial details of all the packets have been sent to the Editor, and may be seen by any member on request to him.

"The year was, regrettably, not without incident. One book disappeared from a packet whilst in circulation on Circuit C – to mysteriously re-appear some months later when it was returned to me in an unmarked envelope, posted in Hull (where no member on that circuit lives) without any word of explanation or apology. Most, if not all, members would share my disappointment at the failure of the person concerned to say that it was their fault. It left a cloud hanging over the members to whom responsibility for the loss had been narrowed down. It did, however, serve as a reminder to everyone, who had failed to notice the book was missing, to check the content of the packet when received.

"Worse was to come, when I suffered the first loss of a whole packet since taking over in 1997. The loss was entirely the fault of the postal authorities but it did serve to illustrate the value of communication between members. If a member is unaware that a packet is on its way to him / her, the member can hardly be expected to report its non-arrival. This means that the trail is invariably cold when the discovery is made and a search can start. The Society does not insist upon members ringing the intended recipient of a packet but it is very helpful if you can. Please note,

however, that this does not mean that anyone should go away for several days without making every effort to ensure that they are not likely to receive a packet.

"Unsigned spaces continue to be a vexing problem, costing me time and energy contacting members to determine whether they might have made the purchase unless the amounts were minimal – when they just had to be written off. All members are urged to mark the space they remove a stamp from, when they remove the stamp, and not go through the pages once they have finished making acquisitions. I am convinced that this is not an issue of dishonesty but simply of carelessness.

"A number of new vendors surfaced, providing a plethora of different and good quality material – some of which was valued quite highly. This has two effects. Doubtless it pleases certain members who rail about the cost of postage, because I am forced to reduce the size of the packet in order to meet the financial constraints placed upon me by the insurers. On the down side, though, it exacerbates the problems I have in reducing the backlog of material I am holding. This, in turn, delays the return of books (and, more importantly, the accompanying cheques).

"So, to conclude, the Colonies Packet section continues to provide a valuable source of income for the Society. It also continues to provide a large number of the participating members with a great deal of pleasure – which makes my efforts worthwhile. To those (relatively few) of you who have found things to whinge about, I offer my apologies that everything isn't always entirely as you would like it and I leave my offer open – that if you think you can do it better please contact me and I'll be delighted to let you do so!"

(9) Editor's Report - Maurice Tyler

"Thanks to the willing collaboration of a number of contributors, we were able to start last year with a special Sower Centenary Issue of the Journal, packed with articles on different aspects of the Sower stamps and including Ashley Lawrence's 8-page insert on the Chronology and Postal Usage of the Sower. This insert and 8 other pages were printed in full colour, adding to the attractiveness of our periodical and increasing its effectiveness as a medium for disseminating ideas and information. Cost precludes the use of colour in every issue, but we were able to increase the overall number of pages for the four issues of the year from the previous year's 172 to 176, with 16 colour pages in total rather than 4, at a total increase in costs of only £.

"We achieved a good variety of articles on both stamps and postal history, covering France and her Colonies, to a total of 82,000 words (84,000 the previous year), with a good number of illustrations of continuing good quality. As reported last year, however, I no longer hold a stockpile of articles on which to draw, and I sincerely hope that many more members will consider turning sheets that they have displayed, at Charlecote or elsewhere, into short articles or illustrated notes for the "Pages from my Collection" series.

"As mentioned in more detail earlier, I have been involved in a small way in the final production of other Society publications such as the Library List, the "Index to Four French Philatelic Magazines 1946-2000," the pages for Geoff Gethin's forthcoming book on forgeries, and to a greater extent in the development of the Society website. There never seems to be enough time to attain anything

like perfection in any of these areas, but I hope to continue to do my best as far as is physically possible."

(10) Librarian's Report - George Barker

The Librarian elaborated on last year's report on the relocation of the library by describing how it now has its own house, with accommodation for visitors. The new Library List (edited by M S Tyler) had been published, but the Librarian emphasised that new material was coming in all the time, and that there was an element of duplication with recent magazine issues.

(11) Magazine Circuit Organiser's Report - David Pashby

"Fourteen people subscribe to both magazines, 17 to one only, mostly to *Timbres*. There have been four resignations this year, some enquiries, but no new subscribers. 'Receipts' are down because there is less carried forward than in 2003. I am trying to reduce the embarrassingly large surplus that has accumulated over the years, so I won't be asking for an increase in subs for yet awhile. There are two figures for 'postages'; the first (£) is for the normal posting costs. The second figure ('Parcels - £1') is for backnumbers of magazines on the circuit that ended up with me. I am posting these bit by bit to the Library, where I hope they will be more useful than they are by occupying space in my cluttered office. There are several more lots to be sent off. I altered the circuit in January this year, so that the last person on the list posts it directly to the Library.

"I think the agents that post *Timbres* for the publishers have at last got the message that the flimsy packaging they were using cannot withstand the rigours of passage through the French and/or British postal systems. Magazines are arriving regularly now (but touch wood)."

ACCOUNTS FOR THE MAGAZINE SCHEME FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2004**RECEIPTS**

Carried forward from previous year

Subs @

Subs @

Interest on deposit account for year

Sub overpaid

TOTAL**2003-4****2002-3****EXPENDITURE**Sub to *Timbres Magazine* (2 copies, March 2004: 105€)Sub to *l'Écho de la Timbrologie* (2 copies, March 2004: 120€)

Postages & incidental expenses

Parcels

TOTAL**2003-4****2002-3**

RECEIPTS

less EXPENDITURE

CARRY FORWARD**(12) Regional Group Reports****Report of the Northern Group - Peter Maybury**

"During the year four meetings were scheduled, but owing to a lack of support because of conflicting meetings of other societies, the March gathering had to be cancelled at short notice. Compared to the previous year, the number of attendees remained fairly constant for the other meetings. We had a good variety of displays, all by members

of the group, and detailed reports of these have appeared in the Journal. The highlight was, as has become the norm, the all day Bastille Day meeting held at our leader's home in Heaton Royds, with a record attendance yet again enjoying the sunshine and the displays. Our thanks go once more to Stephen and Judith Holder."

The Northern Group programme for 2004-2005 is published on page 86 of this Journal.

Report of the Southern Group - Colin Spong

"Four quarterly meetings have been held during the past year and details of these have been published in the Journal. Once again I am pleased to report that we have enjoyed some good displays, with an average attendance of 14 members and guests. I would like to thank those who have given displays, and also the members who travel considerable distances to be with us. We are a friendly group and invite those who have not yet been to a meeting to come along. Finally I thank my wife Pat who looks after the refreshments for us."

The Southern Group programme for 2004-2005 was published on page 42 of Journal 232.

(13) Election of Officers and Committee Members

Those members listed on the AGM agenda as having indicated their willingness, if elected, to serve for the 2004-2005 season were elected *en bloc* after a proposal to this effect was made by Bill Mitchell, seconded by John Thorpe, and carried unanimously.

It was proposed by Alan Barrett and seconded by David Worrollo that Mick Bister should continue as acting Auction Secretary until a replacement could be found. This was carried unanimously. Mick would, in any case, as past President, continue to be a Committee member.

The Committee for 2004-2005 is therefore:

President and Editor:	Mr M S Tyler
Vice-President:	Mr A D Barrett
General Secretary:	Dr R G Gethin
Programme Secretary:	Mr A Lawrence
Treasurer:	Mr C J Hitchen
Librarian:	Mr G E Barker
Acting Auction Secretary:	Mr M L Bister
Packet Secretary (France):	Mrs M Pavey
Packet Secretary (Colonies):	Mr J West
Committee Members:	Dr W I Stevenson
	Mr P R A Kelly
	Mr L H Barnes
	Mr J Parmenter
	Mr P Runacres

(14) The Programme of Society Meetings in London

This is reproduced in the Society Notes on page 86 of this Journal.

(15) Any Other Business

Members expressed their appreciation of the work undertaken by Society Officers.

In conclusion the President announced that the Society's Dedicated Service Award would be presented to Bernard Berkinshaw-Smith in recognition of his 18 years of service as Convenor of the Annual Philatelic Weekend.

The President then closed the meeting at 12.30 hours.

EGG

SOUTHERN GROUP MEETING OF 7 AUGUST 2004

Members: Censorship Mail

Christopher Miller {Secretary Civil Censorship Study Circle) : Civil Censorship

The Organiser welcomed 13 members and guests, a group which by the afternoon totalled 18, to the annual all-day meeting on a warm sunny day. Colin then introduced the speaker for the afternoon, Chris Miller. Chris said that he was looking forward to seeing the material that members had brought along with them. Colin also announced that lunch would take place at the Half-Brick pub, as they once more had a chef!

The following members displayed:

George Nash: WW2 France including civilian mail to and from the UK, BEF mail, and French mail to other countries. Of interest was a double-circle with the letter "F" inserted.

Bob Larg: an interesting couple of items including another double-circle with the letters "AQ".

Bob Small: showed two or three items from WW1 France & WW2 Belgium.

Betty Blincow: "bits & pieces" obtained from visiting the recent Paris Exhibition, with a nice Eiffel Tower item and some posters from the Seine stalls.

Colin Spong: WW2 Madagascar depicting French, British censorship and other censors en route. Amongst covers seen were the boxed "K", "L", "O", "P" and "R" still not properly identified although the K and L are listed as Madagascar. Also the double-circle.

Barbara Priddy: who completed the morning with a fine display of West African airmails with various types of censorship.

After Lunch **Chris Miller** gave his presentation on Civil Censorship that, although it was mainly devoted to British Empire devices, nevertheless did contain some material from France and French Colonies. Chris began by illustrating the purpose and meaning of censorship, together with the various offices abroad based in Gibraltar, Bermuda, Trinidad etc., as well as in the UK. He then showed a vast collection of covers illustrating the many areas and different types of censorship seen. Chris answered questions raised and also showed a number of double circle cancellations with letters inserted in the middle. A number of these had been seen in the morning, but no-one was able to identify them. There had been rumours that there was a British Censor based in Lisbon, who obviously being in a neutral country could not use the standard cancels and tapes. However, this had not been proved, and to date nothing had been discovered in the civil censorship files at Kew, but one wonders what information may be found in the American Congress Archives.

Colin Spong gave the vote of thanks. The next SG meeting was arranged for Saturday 16 October when Chris Hitchen would be coming with a display incorporating Postal Rates.

Members present: Michael Annells Michael Berry, Betty Blincow, Colin Clarkson, Roy Ferguson, Geoff Gethin, John Hammonds, Bob Larg, Yvonne Larg, Bill Mitchell, George Nash, Barbara Priddy, Bob Small, Colin Spong, John Thorpe. Apologies from Pat Spong, Michael Wilson, David Worrollo, John Yeoman. Guests: Christine Annells, Frank Blincow and Christopher Miller

CWS

NORTHERN GROUP MEETING OF 20 MARCH 2004

George Barker: Speaker's Choice

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

Apologies were received from Peter Maybury.

George prefaced his display by explaining to the assembled multitude that he likes stamps whose dies and/or designs were used for more than one issue, e.g. imperf / perf / colonies. Then followed a selection of the 1849 issue commencing with a study of the 20c black, with platings and several striking multiples, 1F carmine, 40c orange – of note being an example of the wide 4 *retouché* purchased from the club packet, 10c, 15c and 25c, all shown with a variety of cancellations on and off cover plus the *réimpressions*, and a superb 25c *tête-bêche* on cover. The 1852 *Présidence* issue was next followed by the 1853 *non Lauré* which provided a wonderful opportunity to

demonstrate the theme of the collection. Of note: an extremely rare cover franked with 3 x 5c 1862 perf issue to make the special rate to POWs in Switzerland during the Franco-Prussian War. A compact selection of the *Bordeaux* issues was followed by a pair of covers with the 5c perf. on 1c blue paper.

The Laureated issues of 1863-1871 were well represented by colour trials in blocks of 4, 10c on 10c mint and used by favour in 1894, and some *ballons montés*. The Siege 10c, 20c and 40c issues appeared with fine examples of *tête-bêche*, multiples and covers and Granet reprints. The final selection was of the 1871-1876 *Cérès* issue illustrating the comparisons with the Colonies printings, and a study of all the values with the cancellations on and off cover, plus more examples of *tête-bêche* again on and off cover.

The meeting closed with Alan Goude expressing the thanks and appreciation of those present in a vote of thanks to George.

CSH/JPM

SOCIETY NOTES

Continued from page 86

Stuart Rossiter Trust Lecture

Our member **Ian McQueen** will give this lecture at 5pm on 29 October 2004 at the Royal Philatelic Society, London. His topic will be "The Philatelic Writer – Some Personal Experiences and Opinions". Entry is free but by ticket only, available from the Stuart Rossiter Trust Fund, c/o D F Tett, PO Box 34, Wheathampstead, Herts. AL4 8JY if an s.a.e. is enclosed.

* * *

Auction Secretary

Members are reminded that, as reported in Journal 231 and reiterated in the AGM Report in this Journal, we are urgently in need of a volunteer to take on the task of Auction Secretary. Anybody who might be able to spare the time, or who needs further details of what is involved, is asked to contact our General Secretary or the Acting Auction Secretary a.s.a.p. (addresses on inside front cover).

* * *

Presentations

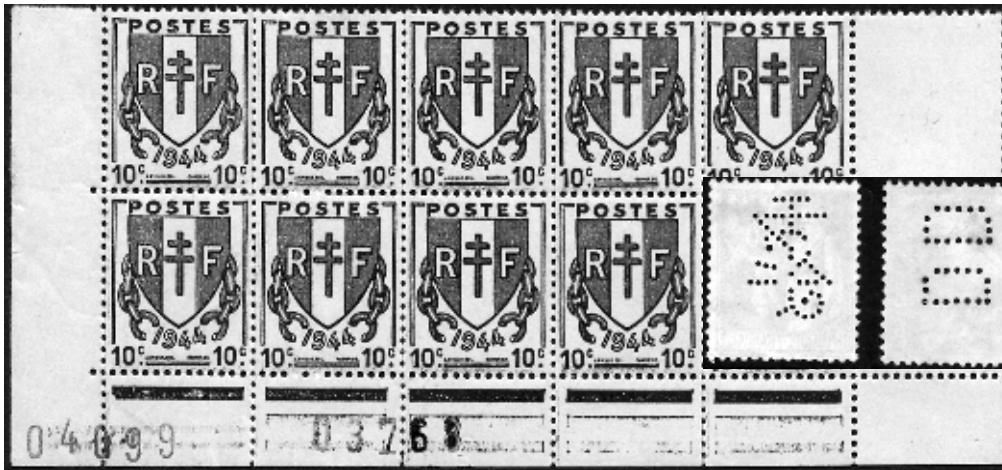


On 10 August 2004 in Bournemouth the President presented Ashley Lawrence with the Society Literature Trophy for winning the 2003 competition for his article on the early years of the Sower.



And on 24 August 2004 in New Malden Bernard Berkinshaw-Smith received from the President, accompanied by the General Secretary and the Treasurer, his Dedicated Service Certificate, announced at the AGM.

November 2004 Auction - Selected Lots

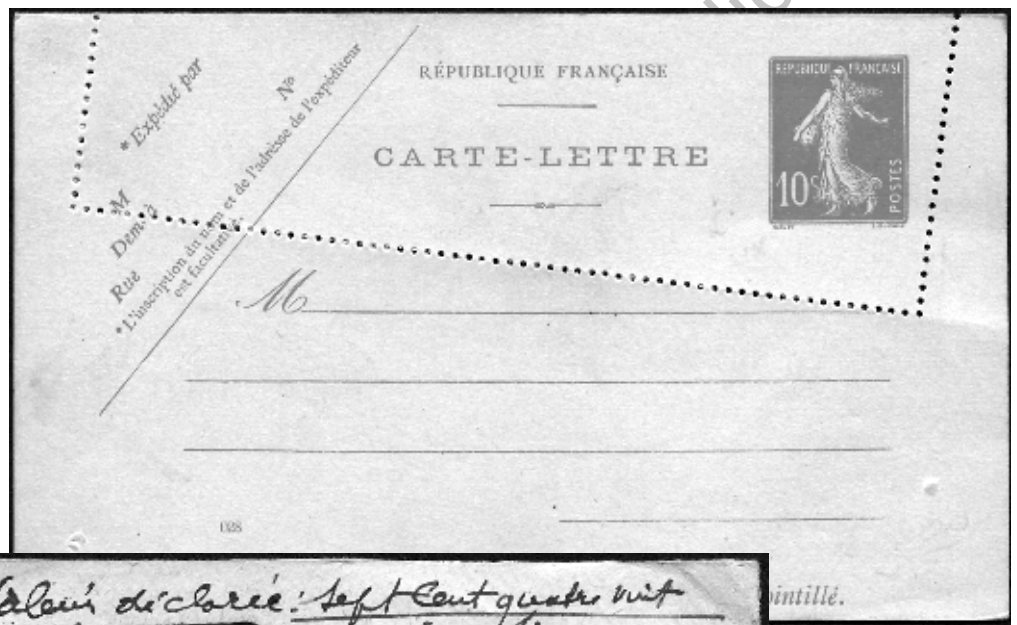


10c Chaînes Brisées
'feuille de remplacement'

Selection of perfin
from large collection



1932 unissued
50c Poincaré



10c Sower
mis-perforated letter card



1925 Chargé from
Porquerelles
(off-shore
Mediterranean
island)

November 2004 Auction - Selected Lots

1781 EL with D'AB in green



1947 UPU Congress,
set of small format
épreuves de luxe

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

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