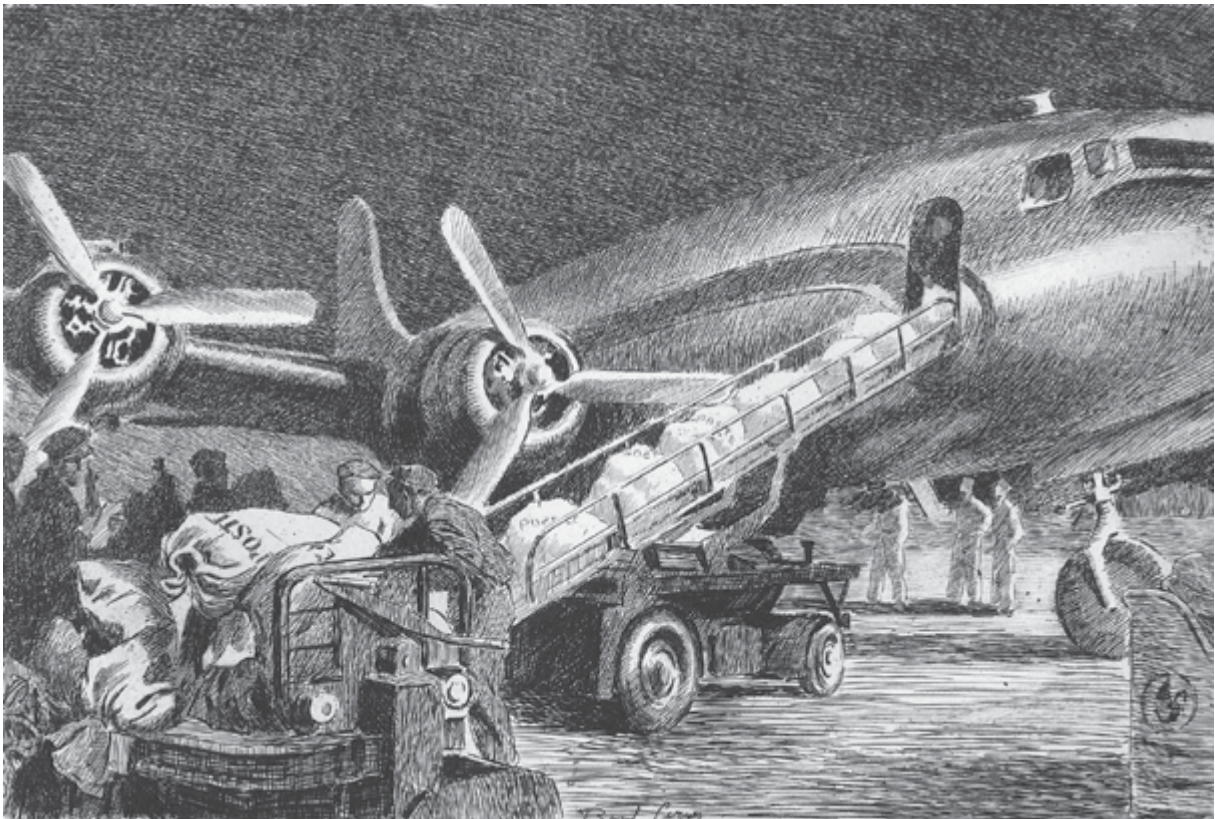


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The Journal of the France & Colonies Philatelic Society



'Air Transport' – an engraving by Raoul Serres
from Mick Bister's collection of French Post Office engravings
(much reduced in size)

Volume 55 ● Number 4
December 2005
Whole Number 238

THE FRANCE & COLONIES PHILATELIC SOCIETY OF GREAT BRITAIN

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President, 2005-2006: P R A Kelly, Malmsy House, Church Road, Leigh Woods, Bristol BS8 3PG
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Vice-President, 2005-2006: A Lawrence.

Programme Secretary, 2005-2006: A Lawrence.

General Secretary, 2005-2006: Dr R G Gethin, 5 Meriden Close, Bromley, Kent BR1 2UF (email: info@fcps.org.uk).

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 (email: treasurer@fcps.org.uk)..

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 Secretaries,
M L Bister, 7 The Slade, Wrestlingworth, Sandy, Beds. SG19 2ES, or

J N Hammonds, 31 Wheatsheaf Close, Horsham, West Sussex RH12 5TH, according to instructions.

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 (Telephone 01896 830120).

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:

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

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Paris: J M Simmons

Southern Group: C W Spong

Northern Group: J P Maybury

Wessex Group: P R A Kelly / A J Wood

Scottish Group: Mrs M Pavey

* * *

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

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

The Journal of the France & Colonies Philatelic Society

Editor: M S Tyler, 56 Mortons Fork, Blue Bridge, Milton Keynes MK13 0LA

E-mail: editor@fcps.org.uk

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SOCIETY NOTES

New Members

The Society is pleased to welcome the following:

1259 John Slingsby (Yorkshire), 1260 Albert Aldham (USA), 1261 Stephen C Toynbee (Lancashire), 1262 James N Camak Jr (USA), 1263 E G Richards (London), 1264 P J Lawrence (Dorset).

* * *

Members Deceased

We are saddened to hear of the death of the following members, and offer their families our sincere condolences:
97 G Bayfield, 575 B C Berkinshaw-Smith.

* * *

Wessex Group Programme

The meetings for 2006 will be held on the following Saturdays:

4 February, 1 July, 7 October

at the Scout Hall, Lower Street, Harnham, Salisbury, starting at 10.00 for 10.30, with a break for lunch at the Mill Inn and finishing no later than 17.00.

Please contact the convenors for further details:

Peter Kelly (0117 973 6296) or Alan Wood (01722 328474).

* * *

Exhibition Successes

The following member gained an award at Westpex 2005 (San Francisco, April 2005):

Peter Baker: Vermeil for "Censor Marks, Cachets and Postal Markings of the Free French 1940-1945".

The following members gained awards at Brno 2005 (May 2005):

Barrie Jay: Large Gold for "Mail between Britain and mainland Europe";

Tony Shepherd: Vermeil for "Guadeloupe 1769-1889";

Richard Wheatley: Vermeil for "Netherlands East Indies - the 19th century stamp issues";

Colin Spong: Silver for *Czechout* - Quarterly Journal of the Czechoslovak PS of GB (Literature);

Yvonne Wheatley: Silver Bronze for the Index to *Czechout*.

The following members gained awards at Autumn Stampex (London, September 2005):

Mick Bister: Silver for "The sending of visiting cards in France";

Steve Ellis: Silver for "French Transatlantic Mail 1857-69 and 1874-75";

Barrie Jay: Gold for "The last invasion of Britain";

Roy Reader: Silver for "Aleksander Stocki - Enigmatic Philatelist" (Literature);

David Stirrups: Large Vermeil for "To Portugal from UK - Rates on maritime mail by British packets 1814-59";

John Sussex: Large Vermeil for "Irish Free State overprints 1922-1932", Silver for "Malton, a Yorkshire market

town, and its connection with the Post", and Bronze for "Halfpenny Wilding Booklet Panes";

Francis Kiddle was invited to display "Copenhagen postal stationery - postcards".

And the following gained awards at C7NPLe - Canada's Seventh National Philatelic Literature Exhibition (Toronto, October 2005):

Jerry Massler: Silver-Bronze for "Vignettes de Monaco";

Derek Richardson: Silver-Bronze for "Subject Index to Four French Philatelic Magazines 1946-2000";

and your Editor **Maurice Tyler**, on behalf of the Society's contributors: Vermeil for the Journal of the F&CPS (Volume 54, 2004).

* * *

Displays by Members

The following members displayed at Marcophilex XXIX (Villeneuve-sur-Lot, 23-25 September 2005)

Robert Abensur: "Lettres pesantes du 18^{ème} siècle";

Chris Hitchen: "La Grande Poste à Paris jusqu'en 1848";

Peter Kelly: "Le type Sage dans le Levant (1876-1900)";

Peter Maybury: "La route de Rome au temps de l'Ancien Régime".

Peter Maybury also displayed "Algeria" to the Halifax PS on 24 October 2005, and will be giving the same display to the York PS on 10 January 2006.

Skanda Vaitilingam displayed "Guadeloupe, Martinique and Guyane (French Caribbean)" to Minehead & District PS on 11 October 2005 and to Tiverton Stamp Club on 2 November 2005, and "Germany - from Empire to World War II" to Bridgwater & District PS on 22 October 2005.

* * *

PayPal

For those with an email address, online subscription and auction payments may now be made to the Society using PayPal. PayPal charge for each transaction, so 4% will be added to all invoices settled by this means to cover bank charges. Please email the treasurer at treasurer@fcps.org.uk if you wish to use this facility for any payment.

This will primarily be of benefit to our overseas members faced with the high cost of bank drafts for small amounts.

* * *

Royal Philatelic Society Library

Richard Wheatley has informed us that, as the Royal Philatelic Society, London is now a registered charity, anyone engaged on personal research is welcome to call in there to consult the books in the Library — although it would be wise to telephone first (0207 468 1044).

* * *

Continued on page 132

OBITUARY



Bernard C Berkinshaw-Smith

1929 – 2005

A number of the members of the France & Colonies PS, the Society of Postal Historians and the Royal attended the Service of Thanksgiving for Bernard on 29 September.

We remember him essentially as a very private man whose personal life he kept to himself but who flowered, late in life, as a postal historian, enjoying the company of those sharing his interests and amassing one of the largest collections - if not THE largest collection - of French maritime mail.

Bernard was born in the UK but his mother was French and this formed the base for his great love of France and things French. He inherited a property in the Corrèze which he loved dearly and visited annually, and many of us shared with him, on many occasions, his love of good food and fine French wines.

In his earlier years he was drafted into intelligence during his National Service, and after graduating from university became a Chartered Accountant and a partner with a major firm. He took early retirement and it was around this time or somewhat before that he really began to concentrate on French maritime mail. He had inherited an interest in philately from his father but, for Bernard, it was the postal history side of our hobby that fascinated him.

In a relatively short time he amassed an enormous collection of French maritime mail, and in the course of this won gold medals at international levels for three entirely separate displays, of which his favourite was the Indian Ocean and Far East. Bernard also developed a formidable knowledge and interest in the subject matter, and many of us remember those late nights at the old Regent Hotel in Leamington when Bernard would open his briefcase and spill a substantial number of rare covers onto the table, his new acquisitions, which he wanted to explain and share with us.

Bernard had a reputation for being forthright and would never hesitate for a moment to speak his mind where he felt it necessary, but for his friends in the France & Colonies he will always be remembered as someone very special who encouraged us to develop our collections and knowledge. Undoubtedly he was one of our mentors.

Bernard had a great fund of affection for the France & Cols. He joined the Society in the early '80s and first came to a weekend at Boscombe in the spring of 1983, joining the Committee in September of that year. He became General Secretary in 1987 and President in 1991 for the normal two year period. Bernard remained an active and highly valued member of the Committee until ill health forced him to stand down. He was awarded the Distinguished Service Certificate in August 2004.

Bernard will be remembered particularly for organising the highly popular and successful Society weekends for many years. We can see him now, thumping the table with his shooting stick to bring the meeting to order.

He was also a keen member of the Union Marcophile and a regular attender at Marcophilex, a Fellow of the Society of Postal Historians and of the RPSL as well as a member of the Académie Européenne de Philatélie.

The philatelic world has lost a major player and ourselves, a good friend.

Peter Kelly & Chris Hitchen

Continued from page 130

Stock List

The Society's stock of Brochures and past Journals has recently been taken over by Peter Maybury, and orders for these should now be addressed to him. A flyer will be enclosed with this issue detailing a special offer to members on all these, and a further advertisement can be found on the back cover of this Journal. In addition you can check the Society website fcps.org.uk, where the list of Brochures still available is displayed on the Literature page.

Contact Peter by email - stock@fcps.org.uk - or by post: J P Maybury, 18 Courtneys, Wheldrake, York YO19 6BR.

* * *

ABPS News

The 88th Philatelic Congress of Great Britain will be held on 6-9 July 2006 at the Normandy Hotel, Renfrew. Details are available from the ABPS.

The 6th ABPS National Philatelic Exhibition will take place at the Riviera Centre, Torquay, on 24-25 November 2006. See the website www.torquay2006.org.uk for further details.

* * *

Stephen Holder

Our President Peter Kelly has written to Stephen Holder, who is now standing down as Chairman of the Northern Group, expressing our appreciation of his work for the Society. The Northern Group is in an excellent state of health, which is in no small measure due to the excellent contribution by Stephen.

Peter has taken the opportunity of thanking Stephen for the numerous services he has rendered to the Society over many years. His name has been inextricably linked with the good running of the Society for as long as or longer than most members can remember, and he has been a tower of strength certainly since well before the President joined in the late '60s or early '70s. And of course he is still helping in other ways, and also continuing to host the Bastille Day meeting which is a firm favourite with our members.

Peter adds that the example that Stephen has set with the Northern Group (and Colin with the Southern) has been very important, and is increasingly so now as the flight from London by many of the old timers has made it increasingly important to focus on the concept of regional groups. This is opening up the Society to members previously unable or unwilling to attend London meetings and is also leading to the recruitment of new members. The Society owes a considerable debt of thanks to Stephen and Colin for having developed this concept.

Stephen is to be sincerely thanked for his good stewardship of the group.

* * *

Washington 2006 Meeting

The decennial International Stamp Exhibition in Washington is taking place from 27 May to 3 June 2006, and provisional arrangements have been made by the France & Colonies Philatelic Society (USA) for a joint informal meeting with members of the France & Colonies Philatelic Society (GB) and of COL.FRA (France). This is scheduled for 1 June 2006 at 14.00 for 90-120 minutes. Please let our President, Peter Kelly, know if you are able to attend.

* * *

Title of the Journal

It has been suggested that for many outstanding reasons — such as easy recognition, the fact that "Journal of the France & Colonies Philatelic Society" is too long-winded, and in order to create an identity of its own — our Journal ought perhaps to be given a distinctive title. One that is proposed by the advocate of this idea, one that is said to be short, to the point and easily recognised as being philatelically French, is *The Sower*.

If you have any strong feelings either for or against this proposal, or if you support it but would like to suggest a more suitable title, please write to the Editor [who has no axe to grind, but would like to gauge the opinions of the membership!].

* * *

British Cameroon Stamps

John Simmons reports that a Frenchman who recently ordered Derek Richardson's Magazine Index has added a postscript to his letter asking for information that perhaps one of our members may be able to help with. Michel Collet of Eguilles (near Aix-en-Provence) says that he is seeking to obtain the series of stamps of Nigeria issued on the occasion of the independence and reunification of Cameroon, the series overprinted UKTT (Yv n^{os} 1-12, Cameroun Britannique). He adds that he cannot find the stamps in his region, and wonders whether anyone can suggest a dealer in France, or whether it is easy to obtain them in the UK. Any information should be sent to the Editor, please, for forwarding to M. Collet.

* * *

Forgeries Book

Members may be delighted to know that Geoff Gethin's new book on "*Fakes and Forgeries of Twentieth Century French Postage Stamps*" is now ready for publication. Final decisions have to be taken on the printing run, the price at which it will be offered, and the marketing strategy, but it is expected that it will be printed and put on sale early next year.

* * *

World's First Airmail Postcards

Ernst Cohn

A longstanding contributor to this Journal, Ernst Cohn died 12 months ago. This article, originally published in the "American Philatelist" of November 1998 and soon afterwards offered to this Society for reprinting, is reproduced here, minimally revised by Ernst himself in 1999 and slightly edited more recently (with spelling partly anglicised), as a tribute to him. It appears by kind permission of the American Philatelic Society. The article is an excellent example of Ernst's style and approach to a subject that enthralled him throughout his life.

The first airmail postcards authorised by the French Post Office were privately produced in besieged Paris during the Franco-German War of 1870-71. The first official Parisian unmanned balloon to carry the new airmail cards was shot down and the Germans took most of its load as booty. As a result, that balloon was the first and the last such airpost vehicle; however, the postcards continued to be used until the end of the siege.

For decades, collectors' interest in these cards concentrated upon the various imprints, all of which are private and have no postal significance. Of greater interest is the postal history of these cards. This article attempts to piece together the cards' less explored postal history and to set the record straight.

Background

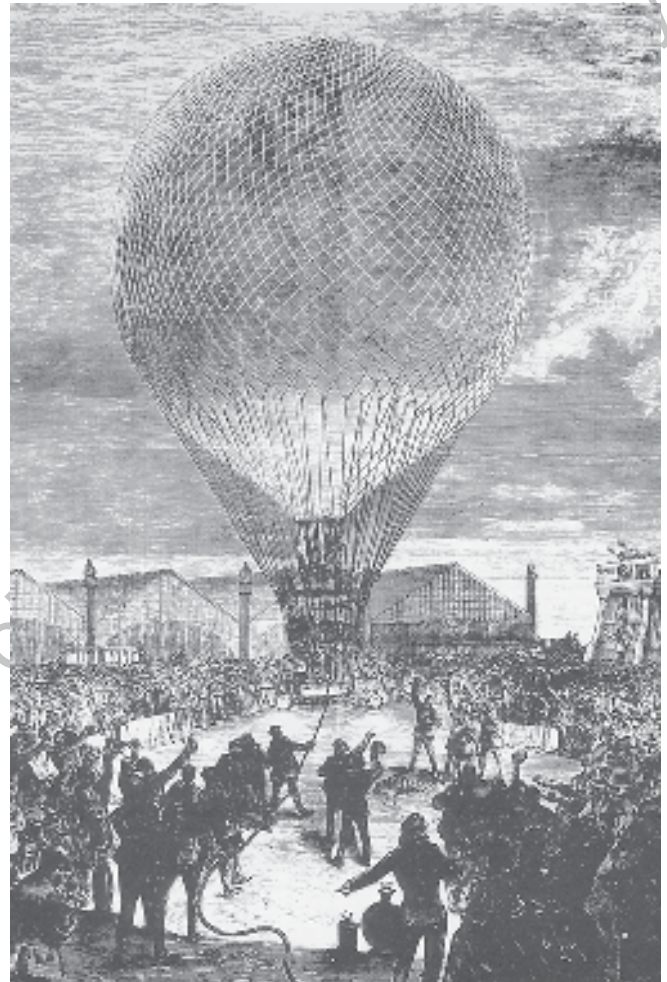
Postcards were introduced into the postal system by Austria on 1 October 1869. According to Patrick O'Reilly,¹ postcards were first defined for French philatelists by Doctor "Magnus".² During the Franco-German War occupied parts of France used German cards, including French language cards specially printed by the Germans for use in those occupied areas. Two other types of cards originated within France: those issued by the Red Cross and its precursors in various towns, and cards privately improvised or commercially printed by Parisians on or after 27 September 1870. Parisian *dépêche-réponse* cards were not mailable alone, only under cover.

Manned and unmanned balloon mail decrees were published in Paris by the *Journal Officiel* on 27 September 1870. Consequently, this is the earliest possible date that the phrases "*par ballon monté*" [by manned balloon] and "*par ballon non-monté*" [by unmanned balloon] could legitimately appear on letters and cards, as well as the earliest date for airmail cards.

Unmarked lightweight letters had been transported by manned balloons out of Paris before then, but no cards had been mailed.

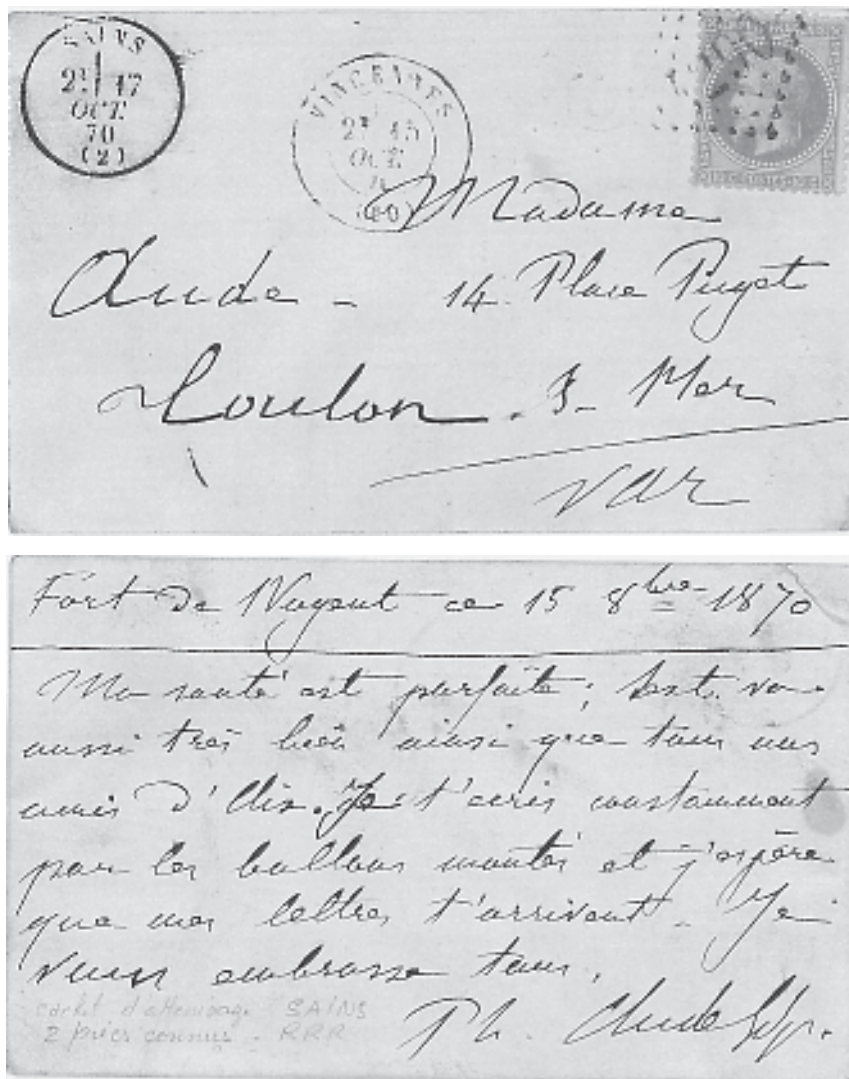
Some forgers have not considered this point and at least one expertizer has certified a folded letter as genuine even though it is imprinted "*par ballon monté*", hand-dated 23 September and supposedly postmarked outside Paris on the 24th. With the facts in hand, one does not need an expertizer to know that this can only be a counterfeit.

Before being cut off from the outside, Paris had just enough time to receive some *papillons de Metz*, small stampless slips of paper bearing messages that were bundled together; these were carried by the first balloon launched by the



Night-time departure of a postal balloon at the Gare du Nord, from an engraving published in the *Illustrated London News* of 31 December 1870.

garrison, which ran the second unmanned balloon service of Metz. Although that service was scheduled to start on 15 September, for reasons still unknown — the weather was fine — it did not begin until 16 September; the siege of Paris started two days later. *Papillons* were imitated at Paris and are known to have been sent by both troops (*Marins de Lorient*) and civilians, who apparently were advised by post office friends to use little slips in order to maximize chances of prompt official transport out of Paris, by either post office smuggler or postal balloon. When the official unmanned mail balloon rose from the Godard family's private Paris airfield "La Glacière" on 30 September, there was talk of the "Metz Post," in honour of the besieged who had first used "pilot balloons" in 1870.³ (The world's earliest unmanned balloon mail flew in 1793.)



A piece of valloon mail – a postcard – to a Madame Aude in Toulon-sur-Mer was mailed from Vincennes on 15 October 1870. After being thrown out by the pilot of *Jean Bart 2*, it was date stamped with a receiving postmark of Sains on 17 October.

The last regular mail train headed west out of Paris at 5pm on 18 September 1870. Thereafter mail started piling up. The Germans stopped most of the improvised smuggling service by mailmen in coaches and on foot; only a handful of men got through on foot during the first few days of the siege. Postmaster General Rampont quickly saw the futility of pursuing that approach. He released the following notices, in Paris:

**Expedition of Correspondence from Paris
to the Départements and Abroad
Limited to Letters Alone —
Notice to the Public.**

Paris, 19 September 1870.

The Postmaster General has the honour to inform the public that, as a result of the interruption of communications by rail, only ordinary letters can be

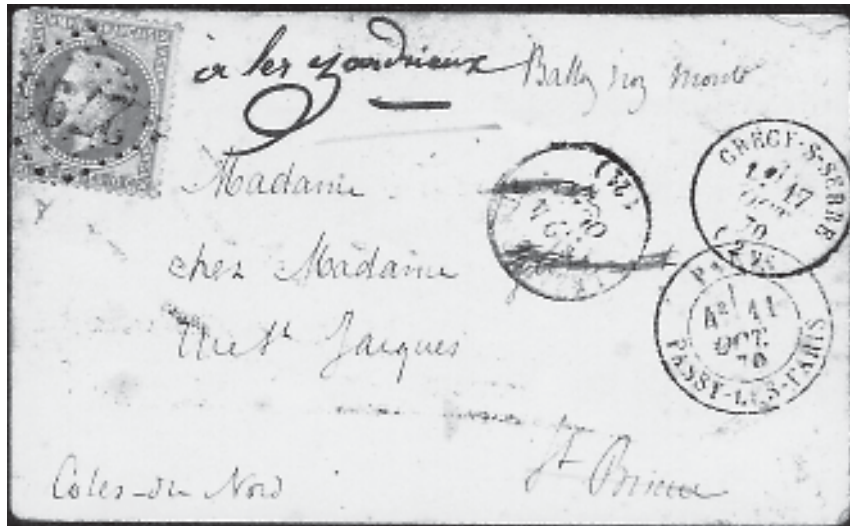
admitted by the service for the *départements* and abroad until further notice. The administration will make efforts to send them as fast as possible.

Registration, because of the risks run, journals, printed matter and samples, because of their volume, will be accepted only for the interior of Paris and for the detached forts. — *G. Rampont*

**Recommendations Concerning Letters
Sent from Paris. — Notice to the Public.**

Paris, 21 September 1870.

As a result of the difficulties in sending letters to the *départements* and abroad, the Postmaster General has the honour of asking the public to make use immediately of very thin paper and to fold each letter in such fashion as to make an envelope unnecessary. — *G. Rampont*



This card, mailed during the siege of Paris in 1870 and marked "*Ballon non monté*", was first postmarked at Paris on 11 October.

It was found at Cr cy-sur-Serre, where it had been thrown out as ballast by the pilot of the *Jean Bart 2*. The reverse side has another transit marking from St Brieuc, 23 October; the front, the arrival mark of 24 October at L zardrieux.

**Expedition of Correspondence from Paris
by Manned and Unmanned Balloons. —
Notice to the Public.**

Paris, 27 September 1870.

The Government of National Defence has rendered, under date of 26 September, two decrees with the following contents:

First Decree

Article 1. The Post Office is authorised to send by manned balloons ordinary letters addressed to France, Algeria, and abroad.

Article 2. The weight of letters sent by balloons shall not exceed 4 grams.

The fee to be charged for the transport of these letters remains fixed at 20 centimes. [Note that is the fee for domestic letters, not "abroad."]

Prepayment is obligatory

Article 3. The ministry of Finance is charged with the execution of this decree.

Second Decree

Article 1. The Post Office is authorized to send by free (untethered), unmanned balloons postcards carrying on one side the address and on the other the correspondence of the public.

Article 2. Postcards consist of cream coloured carton, weighing at most 3 grams, 11 x 7 cm.

Article 3. Prepayment of postcards is mandatory.

The fee is 10 centimes for France and Algeria.

The rate for ordinary letters is applicable to postcards sent abroad.

Article 4. The Government reserves the right to retain all postcards that contain information useful to the enemy.

Article 5. The Ministry of Finance is charged with the execution of this decree.

In carrying out the preceding decrees, the Postmaster General has the honour to inform the public that manned balloons ascend only at unpredictable times, and that unmanned balloons will be launched starting tomorrow, 28 September, if weather permits.

Correspondence that the public wishes to try to send by these means must be written on vellum carton weighing no more than 3 grams and not exceeding the dimensions of a normal envelope, viz., 11 cm long and 7 cm wide. This card will be sent open, i.e. without envelope, and one side will be used exclusively for the address.

Franking by postage stamps of these cards, fixed at 10 centimes for France and Algeria, will be obligatory; those addressed abroad will be franked according to ordinary letter fees.

The public will understand that unmanned balloons can carry only open correspondence, because of lack of security by this mode of transport and the risk balloons run of falling into the Prussian lines.

Sealed letters that the public reserves for mailing by manned balloons must carry, on the address side, the endorsement: *par ballon mont *. Their franking is also obligatory, according to the rates *currently in force*, for the interior as well as *for abroad*. The weight of these letters may not exceed 4 grams.

In case all letters that have been collected cannot be sent by the next manned balloon, preference will be given to the lightest letters.

— G. Rampont



A departure from the Place Saint-Pierre, from a contemporary lithograph.
The small tethered balloon is the *Strasbourg*.
Several types and sizes of balloons were used during the siege to transport mail.

The contents of these two decrees were also published at Tours on 1 October. The following observations were added at Tours:

Postmasters will inform the personnel (1) that *mounted* or *free* (unmanned) balloons, mentioned in the decrees, are launched exclusively from Paris, in the hope, fulfilled thus far, of their arrival beyond the enemy lines; (2) that the dispatches must be transported immediately from the spots where the balloons land to the nearest post office that is unoccupied by the enemy; (3) that the first duty of that office is to expedite the dispatches and correspondence brought by these balloons, with the aid of the authorities if necessary, and to advise the Administration at Tours on the spot, as well as the departmental Director; and (4) finally, that a reward can be given to the person, if he demands it, who has found and brought to the office the balloon dispatch.

Note: It is understood that the dispositions of the above decrees are applicable only to letters or postcards originating from Paris, transmitted by aerostatic means, and that reciprocity is not possible, the means having yet to be discovered of directing balloons to make them succeed in reaching a predetermined destination.

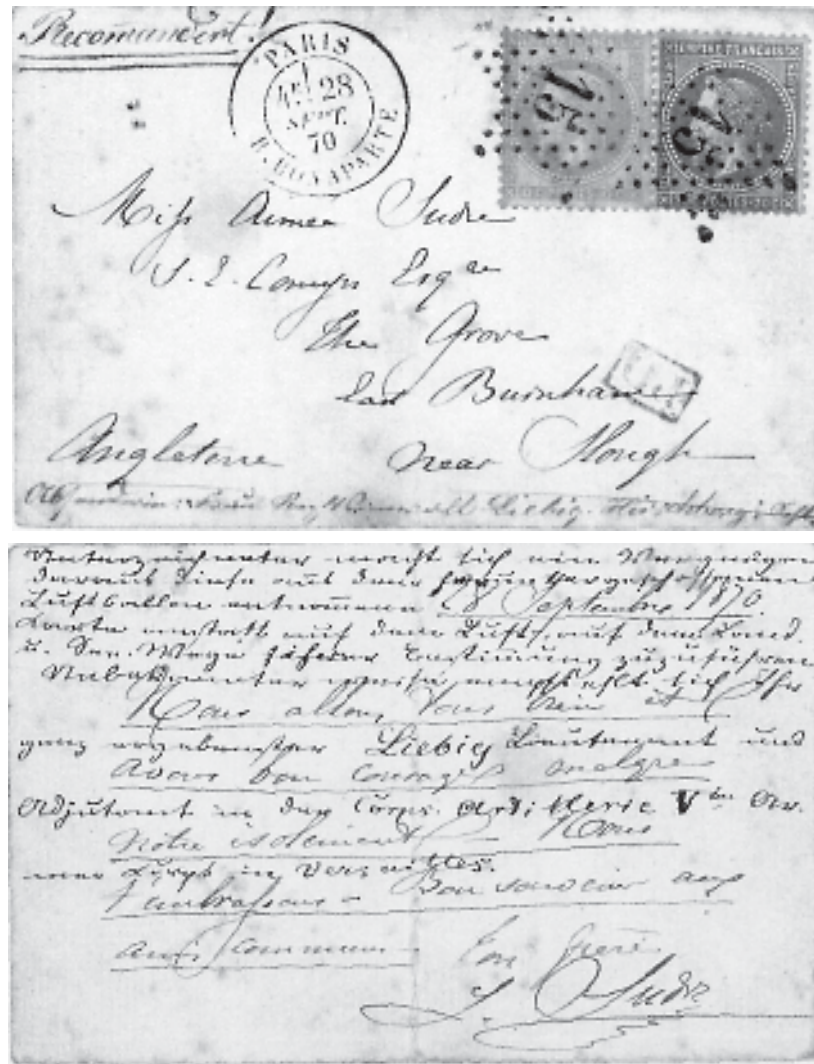
The delegated Administrator,
A.Libon

A Libon was the postmaster of the Government Delegation until the middle of October, when Steenackers, head of its Telegraph Office, also took over the Post Office.

Some Philatelic References

These notices were also published by Louis François; interested philatelists have had easy access to them since 1925.⁴ Other specialised 1870-71 works comment on the world's first airmail postcards. Léon Chamboissier, who published at least some of the aforementioned decrees, illustrates two different cards, using the Maury Catalogue's nomenclature.⁵ Not surprisingly, one is a bogus card printed for Arthur Maury – it never was available during the siege. He mentions that there were other (private) imprints as well.

Maury's book shows four cards, including the bogus one.⁶ A genuine card, postmarked at Paris on 29 September, arrived at St. Jean de Luz on 23 October. Maury assumed that it flew on the official unmanned balloon, which is unprovable as well as unlikely. Yvert correctly points out that the cards probably travelled by manned balloon, based on the fact that most of the contents from the unmanned flight ended up as German booty, while the few that were saved were remailed later on a manned balloon.⁷ Another genuine card, imprinted "*CORRESPONDANCE AÉRIENNE*," was written on 6 October and arrived on 21 October. *Yvert Aérienne* fantasises about the departure of a manned (or perhaps unmanned) balloon on 4 October that carried this and other cards.⁸ This fable appears to be the source of later



This remarkable card includes two messages: one in French;
the second in German, indicating that this piece of balloon mail
was rescued by a German officer at Versailles.

(Courtesy of Prof Robert Jacquot)

misinformation about air postcards. The 1937(?) edition corrects this error, but the seed had already been sown for another misleading and unfounded tale.

In the past few years many of the more specialised auction catalogues have featured cards postmarked at Paris between the departure of the unmanned balloon on 30 September and that of the *Piper 1* on the afternoon of 7 October. The arrival markings range from mid- to late-October; some of the cards are water damaged. It has been claimed that these cards were taken on the *Piper 1* and brought back to Paris when the balloon landed between the lines, shortly after take-off. That concoction is based on a partly fictional report published in *Le Figaro*. It gave rise to the story about the (un)manned balloon that existed only in the imagination of the Yvert catalogue writer.

Except for republications of official Post Office notices, some philatelic accounts have suffered by considering seriously the fantasy Maury cards, printed after the war, and imagined accounts about how the cards were handled. This is particularly true for airmail cards postmarked at Paris after the launch of the unmanned balloon — sometimes even for cards post-marked earlier — and before the launch of *Piper 1*.

Piper, who had a contract to deliver food to the army outside Paris, got permission to buy a balloon for leaving town, the second private balloon to do so. After he, his friend and their pilot walked back into town, he had another balloon built for himself, his friend, and an attorney. Their second flight ended in dense fog, also not very far from Paris, but they escaped undetected. Because of lack of detailed information about these private balloons, the first in particular was subject to inventions by its passengers, a gullible reporter, and even a philatelic forger.

One must recall that, when *Piper 1* flew, the Post Office had not yet given up the idea of using unmanned balloons for domestic cards franked at a reduced rate. Letters were piling up because of insufficient lift power, and the public was bombarding the Post Office and newspapers with pleas and schemes for fair and equal treatment of letter mail.

As usual, postal historians who wish to get their history straight must try to think in terms of the conditions surrounding the events. Clearly it would have been unthinkable to load packages of 10 centime cards on *Piper 1*. This and the fact that the Paris postmarked mail was captured with the balloon show the philatelic stories about the *Piper 1*'s load to be pure fiction.

Cards on Manned Flights

Enough facts are still available to determine the actual fate of cards that did not fly on the unmanned balloon of 30 September 1870. It appears that cards addressed abroad and franked with normal letter postage were separated from domestic cards and not retained for loading on unmanned balloons. Of course, there may have been exceptions due to oversight, although no proven case is known thus far. Some domestic cards, with the full letter postage (or even more) paid, were also expedited as fast as possible on manned balloons.

Only a limited portion of the cards postmarked before 30 September could have been put aboard the unmanned balloon because of the craft's small size (generally given as 125 cubic feet) and limited lift capacity. Also, the balloon was filled with coal gas — not hydrogen. The excess card packages had to be stored with the expectation that they would go up on later unmanned balloons.

Where and for how long were such cards stored? E Stoullig, secretary of the Postmaster General, wrote a letter dated 3 October and published in *Le Temps* of 6 October. In the letter he discusses not only the mail in general, but also cards in particular: "Two Post Office employees are stationed at the Godard [balloon] factory to receive there the postcards sent from the main office and to supervise their transport as soon as the wind permits launching a free balloon." Obviously, then, the idea of using unmanned balloons was still very much alive on 3 October.

The earliest statement indicating a change of position that I have found is in a chronicle of the siege of Paris.⁹ On 21 October it was announced:

The administration of posts has renounced the system of unmanned balloons, too likely to get lost.

It has disposed almost entirely of its mail backlog, by successive aerial and pedestrian departures, and is presently current in its biweekly or triweekly mailings.

The Post Office found among its personnel some ten intrepid mailmen who undertook to breach the Prussian lines. Nevertheless, the delay in the reappearance of four or five of them, since their last attempt, causes worry about their fate.

One of the most capable and toughest, named Brard [*sic*], whose name has already been cited in the journal, is among them.

For the most part (except for the phrase "whose name ... journal"), the announcement appears to be official, perhaps even in spelling the name Brard, now usually found as Brare. In any case, 21 October is the very last date on which the postal personnel could have decided against the use of unmanned balloons for cards. The decision to move the accumulated cards was made earlier.

Evidence adduced from flown cards themselves leads to the conclusion that the packages of cards, stored at the Godard's balloon factory, were loaded aboard the *Jean Bart 2*, and launched by the Godards on 16 October. When the Germans shot at the balloon, some card packages were

used as ballast near Soissons. They fell near various villages — sometimes landing in mud — where they lay for days until found and brought to the nearest post offices. LePileur tells this story well in his second book on the 1870 balloons. However, in several tables he confused the flight of the *Jean Bart 2* and the *Jules Favre 1*, which was launched on the same date about two hours earlier.

LePileur lists cards that are more or less water damaged and bear postmarks ranging between 17 October and 7 November from Anizy-le-Château, Crécy-sur-Serre, Sains-Richaumont (but postmarked simply Sains), and Vic-sur-Aisne. Considering the relative unpopularity of cards, that was undoubtedly the largest such load to be transported on a single balloon. Nevertheless, all of these postmarks are difficult to find.

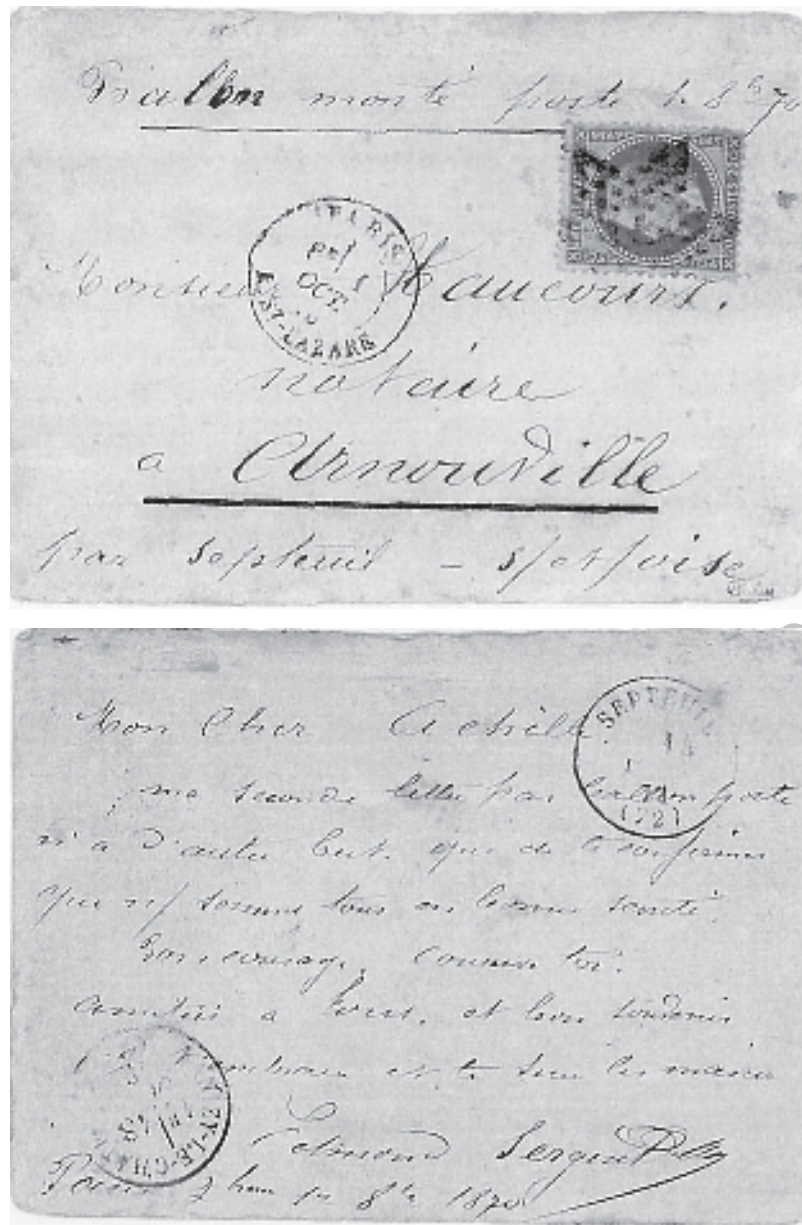
One Parisian, who wanted to be certain that his wife would get mail from him, frequently mailed messages by letters and cards, as well as by toy balloons released from his balcony. Madame Roseleur retained all the mail she received (most of this correspondence had been kept together until recently). For cards and letters mailed simultaneously between 2 and 17 October, Roseleur's correspondence via the Paris Post Office shows that, while the letters were moved as fast as possible, cards mailed together with letters were inevitably delayed. Evidently this was due to the fact that they were being held at the Gare d'Orléans, awaiting the next unmanned balloon.¹⁰

Delivery Delays for Pairs of Cards and Letters Mailed Simultaneously by Roseleur

Mailed at Paris on October	Letter Arrived at Aubusson	Card Arrived at Aubusson
2	16	22
4	16	21
16	22	24
17	22	25

Roseleur's first two letters must have left Paris before the 16th in order to arrive on that date, but it is not certain when the last two were flown out. All four cards must have left on or after the 16th. On the other hand, a card mailed at Vincennes on 2E/15 October and thrown out by the *Jean Bart 2*, was postmarked at Sains on 2E/17 October.¹¹ Hence it was mailed earlier than some Roseleur cards, a clear sign that cards were not being delayed any more as of 15 October and that mail was not handled in the order in which it was received.

The best evidence we have for cards mailed after 16 October comes from an example in the collection of Charles A Fricke.¹² Postmarked at Paris on "7E/18 Oct.," it was sorted early the next morning, 19 October, when the *République Universelle* (sometimes mistakenly called *Lafayette*) left Paris shortly after 9am. The recipient noted on the card that it was received at Granville on the 22nd at noon, and since the next balloon flew on that day just before noon, the card must have been carried by the balloon launched on 19 October, hence mailed without any delay. Perhaps other examples can establish an even earlier date for prompt mailing of cards.



Front and reverse of a postcard with 10c postage posted on 1 October 1870 at the rue St Lazare post office, and carried initially out of besieged Paris by the balloon *Piper 1* which fell within the siege lines at Courneuve.

The mail was recovered by the French and taken back into Paris.

It was then carried on the *Jean Bart 2*, which departed from Paris on 16 October and encountered enemy fire north-east of the city.

To escape the bullets, the aeronaut jettisoned some mail, which was recovered in the countryside below.

This cover was found near Anizy-le-Château on 18 October (postmark on reverse).

Since it was addressed to occupied France, it did not reach its destination until after the war, on 17 March 1871.

A rather eventful journey!

(Courtesy of Steven Walske)

Some Interesting Paris Airmail Cards

After examining more than thirty years' worth of tear sheets from three Paris auction houses, I found a number of Paris airmail cards that are worth mentioning. In general, cards sent abroad were handled quite promptly. For example, one postmarked at Rue St Lazare on 7 October must have flown on the *Armand-Barbès* that same day to have arrived in Amsterdam on the 9th. This is particularly remarkable in view of the fact that the *Armand-Barbès* carried only one N° 5 mailbag containing some ten kilograms of mail.

No less spectacular is a domestic card, hand-dated 1 October and given to a balloonist. Its earliest (outside) postmark is a train marking "Paris-Bâle" of 10 October. The card must have flown either on the *Armand-Barbès* or on the *Georges Sand*. Addressed to Essonnes in occupied France, it took almost half a year more until it finally arrived there on 29 March 1871.

Yet another exceptional card is one postmarked at Paris on 2 October, arriving at Besançon on 10 October. Note,

however, that it was franked with twenty centimes, the full postage for a letter, which explains its presence aboard the *Armand-Barbès*.

An overfranked card, bearing a 30 centime stamp intended for a domestic destination and postmarked 30 September, arrived at Vichy on 12 October. It does look as though the mailmen generally sorted cards carefully according to postage paid. In other words, there appear to be good reasons for Parisian postcards to domestic destinations with exceptionally early arrival, i.e. before the flight of the *Jean Bart* 2.

Most domestically addressed cards mailed before 16 October arrived in free France between 17 and 19 October, or later if they were used as ballast near Soissons. After that flight, cards became more and more scarce, further proof of their unpopularity. The last card from this period that I am aware of is dated 27 January 1871, and arrived at Lonlay on 2 February. It travelled on the last Paris balloon, the *Général Cambronne* on 28 January 1871.

Two Particularly Remarkable Cards

To me, the most fascinating French air postcard is one postmarked "4E/28 Sept." from Rue Bonaparte. It is franked with the correct thirty centimes, the stamps are cancelled by the Paris star "15," and the card is addressed to Slough, England. The only other postmark is a small framed PD, showing that it was paid to destination. It arrived even though it was captured. The top left of the address side bears the inscription "Recommandirt!" in handwriting different from that used for the address: Miss Aimée Sudre, S.E. Comyn Esq^{re}, The Grove, East Burnham, near Slough, Angleterre. The bottom line, in German script, reads: "Expeditress: Mrs. Lawyer Liebig, Hirschberg in Silesia". (The title "lawyer" was the husband's but was also used by wives in those days.)

The envelope, in which this card must have been forwarded, is missing. Based on the doubly underlined endorsement, it must have been sent registered. The date on the envelope might have helped to place the card with a specific balloon. The message side contains two notes, one in French and one in German script. The French message, dated 28 September, is from brother to sister: "We are all well and have good courage despite our isolation. We embrace you. All the best to our mutual friends. Your brother, L. Sudre."

The German message is of greater postal historical interest: "The undersigned takes pleasure in forwarding the card, taken from a shot down balloon, not by air but via land and sea more safely to its destination. Though unknown to you, I sign, Yours very truly, Liebig, lieutenant and adjutant of corps artillery Vth Army Corps at Versailles." The card evidently was sent by the lieutenant to Mrs Liebig, perhaps his wife or mother, who then forwarded it registered to England.

Since Hirschberg is in Silesia and Silesian troops shot down the unmanned, official Paris balloon on 30 September 1870, I hastily assumed that this was a card from that balloon. It just may be — but not necessarily.

As a fully paid card, it should not have been put on that unmanned balloon but rather on a manned one. The only manned balloon shot down during that period was the *Piper 1*, although when it landed again, its occupants had already left it. Mail from that balloon was taken to Versailles and read there. Perhaps this is the only piece of mail identified as surviving that balloon.¹³

Finally, the funniest of these cards is one offered, apparently in all seriousness, by Gärtner of Ludwigsburg (Germany). It is listed as lot 1719 and illustrated in the firm's September 1996 auction catalogue. That card, addressed to London, and bearing an authentic PAID ALL arrival marking, is one of Maury's colourful cards with massed flags and anti-war slogans in fine French and atrocious German. How could this card — printed after the war — have done actual postal duty?

The answer is really quite simple — the card was mailed from Tours railway station on 21 August 1876 with a then valid stamp paying the postage to London W. Someone had written at the bottom of the address side, in English, "LATE USAGE — RARE". That is undoubtedly true and the card certainly is not a counterfeit, but who wants to buy such rarities? The auctioneer seemed to think that it is worth about \$700. Regardless, the item's description was honest, if silly.

Endnotes

1. Patrick O'Reilly, *Histoire de la carte postale administrative en France (1871-1970)*, Bull. 238 of *Le Vieux Papier* (November 1970).
2. Dr Magnus (Dr A Legrand) in P Mahé's *Gazette des timbres* N° 8 (16 February 1873), pp 92 ff.
3. *Mobile Daily Register* (Mobile, Alabama), 25 October 1870, p 3.
4. Louis François, *Les Correspondances par Ballon monté* (Amiens: Yvert et Tellier, 1925), pp 105-8.
5. Léon Chamboissier, *La Poste à Paris pendant le Siège et sous la Commune (1870-71)*, Talks given to *Le Vieux Papier* (March and May 1914), sold by V Perron, Paris.
6. Arthur Maury, *Histoire des Timbres-Poste Français** (photocopies of pages from an unspecified edition).
7. *Yvert Aérienne*, 1925. The Maury bogus item is shown on page 357; a genuine one is on page 358.
8. *Ibid*, pp 358-59.
9. *Chronique du Siège de Paris* (published by *Paris-Journal*), p 135.
10. Ernst M Cohn, "La Correspondance Roseleur Pendant le Siège de Paris," *La Philatélie Française* 306 (December 1979), pp 448-50.
11. Card is from the collection of Steven C Walske.
12. Charles A Fricke, "Card Highlights Siege Anniversary," *The American Philatelist** (September 1995), pp 852-53.
13. Thanks are due to Professor Robert Jacquot for letting me have a photocopy of this remarkable piece.

*These items are available from the American Philatelic Research Library.

The 50c Jeanne d'Arc Stamp

Part II : An 1892 Precursor

Mick Bister

(in collaboration with Jean-Paul Fournier)



Figure 1
1895 Grasset essay for France
(MLB collection)

If we turn to the introduction of Storch & Françon's *'Monographie des Timbres au Type Blanc'* (i) we read a brief but informative account of the search for a successor to the Sage issue.

The *Type Sage*, representing commerce and industry, had been on sale since 1876 but by 1892 certain members of parliament accompanied by the press were vociferous in their desire to see the personification of the Republic featured once more on the nation's stamps. The following year the Chambre des Députés voted for a replacement and on 5 February 1894 a competition for finding a suitable successor to the Sage issue was launched. In response, six hundred proposed designs were submitted of which five were awarded a distinction but not one of them was

considered worthy enough to actually be adopted as a replacement for the Sage issue.

In 1895 the Ministre du Commerce et des Postes approached M. Grasset to produce a better design, but even his proposal was rejected (Fig 1). Eventually, in 1898, the Sous-Secrétaire d'État aux Postes decided that he would prefer three different designs for the lower, middle and higher values which would hopefully be ready in time for the 1900 Exposition Universelle in Paris. Messrs. Joseph Blanc, Louis Eugène Mouchon and Luc-Olivier Merson were commissioned to produce the designs but so much time was taken up in modifying the artwork and retouching the dies that the stamps were only issued on 4 December 1900, just before the end of the Exposition.



Figure 2
1892 Brizzon essay
(J-PF collection)

According to D.B. (D Buffier ?) in his article 'Célébrée de l'ex-Indochine aux Seychelles' (ii) Grasset's portrait is that of Jeanne d'Arc and this was the reason why his design was rejected. At that time both the Church and certain factions of the State were lobbying for the canonisation of Jeanne d'Arc and it was felt that her appearance on a stamp might be too controversial. However, Storch and Françon in their book 'Timbres au Type Merson' refer to the design as *la République de Grasset* and in their publication devoted to the Mouchon issue they call it *la Paix armée de Grasset*. Furthermore, Pierre de Lizeray in volume 2 of 'Timbres de France' quotes Arthur Maury referring to the design as *la République armée*. The presence of the Phrygian bonnet in the top right hand corner would certainly support these counter-theories. Whether the portrait represented Jeanne d'Arc or Peace or the Republic, its interpretation did not prevent Grasset's design from being adapted for issue in Indochina where it was issued in 1902 after a few modifications to some of the details and to the inscriptions.

However, the argument that Grasset's design was, or was not, the first proposal to feature the portrait of Jeanne d'Arc on a stamp is now totally irrelevant, as my French counterpart, Jean-Paul Fournier, has recently made a significant discovery in acquiring a genuine and indisputable precursor (Fig 2) to the 1929 issue.

This discovery is in the form of an essay in blue ink on a vertical band of brown paper. The frame measures 56 x 48mm and is surrounded by a simulated perforation. Above

the portrait of Jeanne d'Arc and inside the circle is the inscription Jeanne d'Arc 1412-1431 and the value tablet is inscribed 15c, representing the internal letter rate. The essay is headed 'À Monsieur Thomas Grimm' and, below the design, it is dated and signed '6 Novembre 1892 G Brizzon'. Beneath his signature Brizzon has added the following manuscript comment 'Dans les 3 blancs ménagés au centre des trois côtés du cadre on pourrait ajouter « Direction Générale des Postes et Télégraphes » en lettres minuscules mais encore lisibles cependant' (iii).

There are many unanswered questions about this essay. Was it an early proposal to replace the Sage issue?: the 15c value suggests it might have been. On the other hand, the proposed inscription implies it might have been intended for wider usage – a telegraph stamp or a fiscal maybe. Who were G Brizzon and Thomas Grimm? Perhaps other members may have answers or theories to share.

What is certain though is that Brizzon's essay pre-dates any other appearance, whether simply proposed or actually realised, of Jeanne d'Arc on a stamp.

Notes

- (i) Second Edition, 1977, pp 9-10
- (ii) *Le Monde des Philatélistes*, July 1998
- (iii) 'In the three blanks provided in the centre of the frames, the words 'Direction Générale des Postes et Télégraphes' could be inserted in very small, but nevertheless, legible letters.

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The Treatment of Insufficiently Paid Letters between Member Countries of the GPU and UPU 1875-1879

Robert Abensur with Peter Kelly.

In March 2005 (Journal 235) an article by Peter Kelly explored the use of the handstamp "3" in relation to partly paid mail, and in the following issue (Journal 236) he corrected an error in the definition of the method by which the tax was calculated on partly paid mail coming into France from abroad.

Robert Abensur has very kindly provided three covers from his collection together with supporting notes which bridge, as far as France is concerned, the immediate pre-General Postal Union position, the situation as at 1 January 1876 when France joined, and 1 April 1879 when the first changes into the Universal Postal Union took effect.

1. Background

From 1856 up to 1874 different postal conventions entered into by France with other countries provided, in most cases, for partly paid mail, taking into consideration the value of the postage stamps affixed. Prior to 1856 partly paid letters were considered as being fully unpaid.

The value of the postage stamps affixed on such mail is taken into consideration only by those countries directly bound by a Convention. In the case where open mail is transferred through a third party country, any partly paid mail was considered as being unpaid.

Partly paid letters were marked by the originating offices with their stamp "*Affranchissement insuffisant*" in the language of their country. The tax on such letters was generally calculated on the basis of the unpaid letter rate (as laid down by the relevant convention) less the value of the postage stamps affixed. The convention often provided a precise rate of exchange which would be applied. On incoming mail the tax would be marked on the front of the

envelope by the French exchange office and, where necessary, would be rounded up to the next décime.

2. The General Postal Union

The first International Postal Convention met at Berne, Switzerland in 1874 and created the GPU or Union Générale des Postes. In most of the European countries this took effect from 1 July 1875, but the operative date for France came later and did not become operative until 1 January 1876.

This Convention maintained the same principle of taxation as had been in place before and was covered by Article 5 of the Convention signed on 9 October 1874 which reads as follows (Author's translation): "In the case of part payment, ordinary* letters will be sent as unpaid and consequently taxed in the country of destination, allowing deduction of the value of the postage stamps."

(* The term "ordinary letters" excludes printed matter and journals etc.)

This meant that the ability to partly pay mail became possible throughout the territories of the member states. There was, however, an administrative change in that the "*Affranchissement insuffisant*" and "*PD*" (*payé à destination*) handstamps were withdrawn and the originating office had to apply the handstamp "*T*" and write in black ink, in French centimes, beside the postage stamps, the amount of the franking where this was necessary. The calculation in French centimes of the value of the foreign postage stamps was made according to equivalent tax tables which formed part of the Convention. (See note 1).

The originating office had also to mark in the upper left hand corner of the front of the envelope the number of weight steps upon which postage should be calculated.

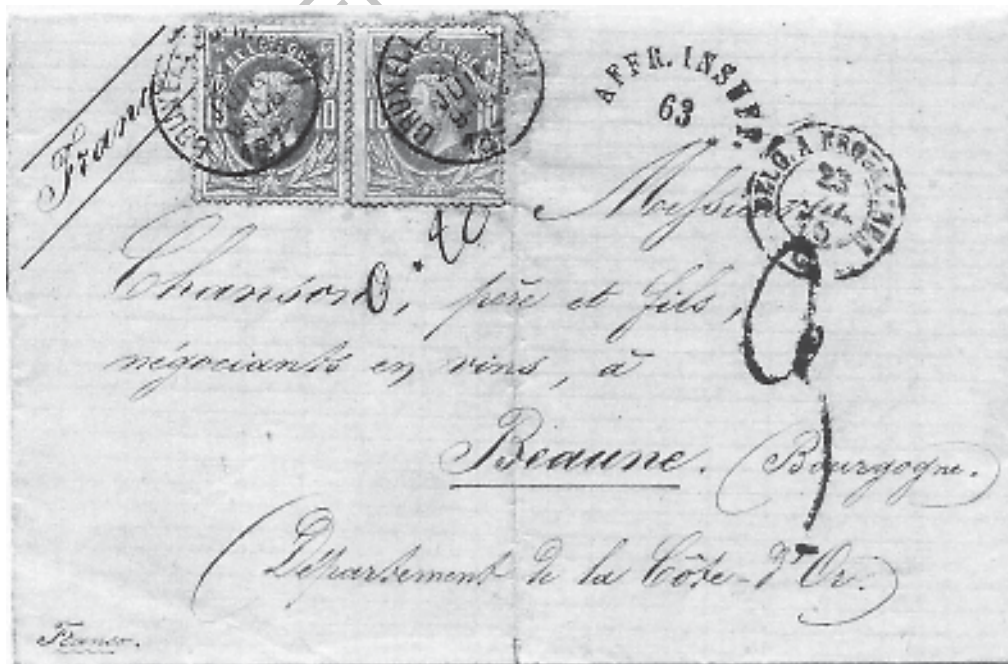


Figure 1
23 July 1875
Partly paid letter from Belgium to France immediately prior to the creation of the GPU. Franked 20c instead of 30c. Marked "*Affr. Insuff.*" and the value of the Belgian stamps is shown in French currency as 20 centimes. Taxed 3 décimes. Unpaid letter Belgium-France 50c (tariff of 1.1.1866) less 20c paid = 30c

The tax was written or stamped on the front of the envelope by the exchange office in the destination country. Where necessary taxes were rounded up to the next half décime (5c).

Note 1. These tables are reproduced in *Les Chiffres-Taxe au type Duval 1881-1900* by Jack Blanc (Académie de Philatélie 1996) which is very helpful and highly recommended for those interested in the taxation of letters.

3. The Paris International Convention of 1878

Following this meeting the Universal Postal Union was created with an operational date of 1 April 1879.

One of the consequences of this Convention was a change in the method of taxation of letters from one member state to another. From this date letters were taxed on the basis of double deficiency, clearly a less punitive solution.

This is covered in Article 5 which reads (Author's translation): "In the case of part payment, objects of correspondence of all kinds are liable for payment of tax by the addressee of double the amount of the deficiency." This represents a change in that it includes printed matter.

—ooo—

The three letters illustrated are examples of the above.



Figure 2

31 August 1876

Unusual franking in British and French stamps on a letter from the UK after France joined the UGP.

Leamington to Crépy en Valois; entered France by the Calais-Paris TPO. Franked 1d (British) plus 25c (French); "T" mark applied and value of British stamp marked in French currency as "10" centimes.

Taxed 25c.

Unpaid letter from UK = 60c (tariff of 1.1.1876) less 10c & 25c = 25c.



Figure 3

2 September 1882

Partly paid letter from GB taxed at double deficiency.

Devonport to Brest; franked 1d; "T" mark applied.

Entered France by the Calais-Paris TPO.

Taxed 3 décimes (last month of use of this stamp).

Postage rate = 2½d less 1d paid = 1½d = 15c x 2 = 30c.

Sources of Information

GPU Treaty of Berne 9 October 1874

UPU Congrès Postal signed 1 June 1878

Chiffres-Taxe au Type Duval 1881-1900, J Blanc (Académie de Philatélie 1996)

Annuaire des Postes 1875 & 1876

Les Lois Postales Universelles, C J Beelenkamp (La Haye, Mouton & C^{ie}, Rotterdam 1910)

BOOKSHELF

DALLAY Catalogue des DOM-TOM, Edition 2004-2005

Pub. Dallay S.A.R.L., 31 rue des Bourdonnais, 75001 Paris; 864 pp, ISBN 2-95 16689-7-X; available from Vera Trinder Ltd, £25.00.

Many members will have already heard of, or indeed examined, companion volumes to this title (France, £15.50, and Andorra-Monaco-TAAF, £15.00), but for others the title may need explaining. Dallay is a newcomer to the French catalogue field; DOM-TOM are, of course, the French *Départements et Territoires d'Outre-Mer*, a politically defined selection of former French Colonies comprising those in North and South America, plus Réunion, Comoros, and all the Francophone South Pacific territories except – collectors of this area please note – Vanuatu (not a DOM-TOM). Gibbons, Yvert, Cérès, Scott and Michel all cover these areas in more or less depth – what does this new Dallay offer, that they do not?

Format, layout and numbering

At 864 two-column A5 pages, on glossy paper, this is a bulky volume. Much of the bulk, obvious on the most casual inspection, is taken up with lavish full-colour illustrations – not just of varieties, but of the basic stamps themselves, every value of every set, pre-1958 issues being enlarged to boot. Even sets of little philatelic interest receive this treatment, French Guiana's 1945 Dulac *Série de Londres*, for instance, filling four columns. Other space is unarguably well used: 15 introductory pages include notes on condition, printing, sheet layout, expertisation markings, a brief glossary, and generalised notes on forgeries. A subsequent 8-page article describes 'The Rise and Fall of the First French Colonial Empire'. Each colony's listings are prefaced by a further page of historical background, plus a map of greater or lesser use depending on the available scale: Réunion (a single island) is good, but Polynesia's component islands are scattered over too wide an area for any small map to be meaningful. Some map place-names are modernised, startlingly to those of us accustomed to postmark spellings – Mohéli for Mohéli, Mata-Hutu for Mata-Utu, Cambustan for Cambuston. Sigave, main town on Futuna and a quite desirable cancellation, is either off the map altogether or is now respoiled Fikavi – can any member confirm?

Being arranged on a geographical rather than alphabetical basis, the DOM-TOMs themselves appear in the following order, momentarily confusing to browsers perhaps: General Colonies, then Saint-Pierre et Miquelon, Guadeloupe, Martinique and French Guiana/Inini, Réunion (including the CFA surcharges) and Comoros; New Caledonia, Tahiti-Oceania-Polynesia and finally Wallis and Futuna. Comoros are listed chronologically: Mayotte first (the 'Tablet' types), then the equivalent issues for Anjouan, Great Comoro and Mohéli before the combined Comoros issues from 1950 to 1975, then Mayotte again from 1997.

Dallay catalogue numbers are rarely interchangeable with Yvert's, or anyone else's. Chronological rethinking affects the ordering (and numbering) even of 19th century provisionals, here listed piecemeal (and numbered

accordingly) rather than grouped together with hindsight into sets. Colonial period airmails are listed among the basic postage stamps (like Gibbons and Michel but unlike Yvert, Cérès or Scott), but post-colonial Airmails, and Dues of all periods, are grouped separately (like everyone except Gibbons). Miniature sheets and combination proofs (*épreuves collectives*) are listed with the basic stamps they contain, while *Blocs Spéciaux* (those containing, for example, the first three Comoros airmails, or the four 1962-3 Polynesia Fish – unknown to many of us, I suspect, and usually expensive) are grouped separately, as are *millésimes*, parcel post and booklets. Scan listings carefully: something apparently missing may have been compartmentalised elsewhere; conversely (and usefully) a Dallay illustration may profitably draw your attention to a "sideline" item listed so discreetly in other catalogues that you may have overlooked it altogether.

Pricings

Dallay's minimum price is 0.20€, its expression as 0,2 quaintly recalling décimes. Differences (sometimes huge) between the same item mounted or unmounted mint should give vendors and buyers pause for thought. Prices for a stamp on cover (higher still for a stamp used alone on cover) will cheer up many owners while making others blink: any 45c Tablet stamp used alone on cover is a howling rarity, and most members would be more than happy to buy at "full Dallay".

Used (off cover) prices are more debatable. The Preface claims the catalogue norm to be a light postmark, or a heavier one showing correct usage in the period (i.e. not philatelically used up years after withdrawal date). Worse examples (wavy-line postmarks, and/or heavy and illegible postmarks) should be priced down, so that "in no circumstance can they be considered worth more than the same stamp(s) mounted mint," an exhortation frequently repeated throughout the listings. So far so good: but apart from the 1937 Expo miniature sheets, and (oddly, given their rarity whatever the colony) just the 1939 French Revolution set for St Pierre et Miquelon, no used stamp is actually catalogued more than mounted mint in any case, legible in-period postmark or no.

This pricing may be in keeping with the French market (a point that habitual sellers – and particularly buyers – at Gibbons' arguably inflated used prices might care to remember) but Dallay's argument remains slightly ambiguous, and genuine collectors of used might consider that for really scarce items (the 1944/5 *Entr'aide* commemoratives, or the 3F60 and sundry lower values of most 1947 sets and any contemporary postage dues) Dallay might have paid at least a token nod to Gibbons' way of thinking. Scope for over-pricing among collectors and dealers remains, nevertheless, and users should bear in mind the superb quality on which the French market is

based: no-one should necessarily buy or sell postmarks at “full Dallay” if the cancellation is recognisable but incomplete, faint or not upright.

Scope

Examination of Dallay's General Colonies listing shows the catalogue's depth and strengths from the outset. Every basic stamp from 1859 to the closing (1893-1908) postage dues is listed and illustrated, enlarged and in full (and generally well-matched) colour; some varieties like the 1873 Cérès retouched '40's, the NE star on the 1872-6 25c blue, or the Sage 5c 'S without shading', are shown enlarged still further. (Others, like the Napoleon 1c “à la cigarette”, the 1872-6 Cérès 1c broken frameline and the 2c “à la barbiche”, are listed and priced but not illustrated.) Shades are copiously listed and wherever possible allocated to particular dated printings (no less than nine for the 10c Eagle, for instance); prices are for unmounted mint (from 1872), mounted mint, used, and singles on cover (alone or in combination), plus blocks of four (mint and used). “*Fiches techniques*” inserted beneath each stamp illustration advise (where known) of issue and withdrawal dates, printing quantities and purpose of issue – a priceless resource carried through the whole catalogue even though many blanks remain to be filled.

The General Colonies listing stops at 1908, the 1943 ‘*Aide aux Combattants*’, ‘*Résistants*’, ‘*Solidarité*’ and postage dues being buried among the Omnibus listings and priced there only in sets – but the true, and immense, value of the rest of the catalogue lies in the ‘General Issues used in the Colony’ pricings with which each territory's lists begin. With obvious exceptions (the Cérès 2c and 4c, used only in Cochinchina, and a few Napoleon and other Cérès issues), every General Colonies stamp is again listed – and priced used – in each territory. Listed, priced, and illustrated too – though this “reference collection to die for” (complete sets all bearing clearly legible cancels of St Pierre et Miquelon, Martinique, Mayotte or wherever) has actually been created via computer trickery, the game being given away by identical centring, imperf margins or odd short perfs on the same basic stamps recurring through each colony. No matter: the pictures forcefully remind us what to look for. Different types of cancellation are listed (described but not illustrated) and individually priced – cue for glee or despair, depending on whether you still have your duplicates or have unwittingly sold them off priced as normals. The same “*in situ*” listings are awarded to wartime General Colonies (like Pétain, PEIQI, and ‘*Combattants/ Résistants/ Solidarité*’) in those territories proved to have used them.

The General Colonies continue with *millésimes* (on the Dubois 5c and all the postage dues), priced unmounted and mounted. One of many helpful notes advises that *millésime* pairs mounted only on the intervening gutter may be considered as unmounted. The subsequent “*Grandes et Petites Séries Coloniales*” (omnibus) listings may spur collectors to enlarge their thematic or political sideline collections, for they include, as sets, individual colony overprints on Dubois (1891-3) and Sage overprinted for French POs (1894-1900). Oddly perhaps, the omnibus listing stops at de Gaulle, 1971, though many later contenders exist.

Individual colonies

Here too, coverage is more detailed than a first glance reveals. Current stamp-issuing territories are listed to around 2003. “*Fiche technique*” information matches that for General Colonies issues: yellow panels that describe pricing criteria are systematically repeated, as reminders to those collectors (not F&CPS members, I hasten to add!) who fail to read catalogue introductions! *Millésimes* are listed and priced throughout; there are a few proofs but no postal stationery. Many varieties are included, probably new (and nice surprises) to all except those lucky owners of the long-out-of-print Yvert Specialised of 1936.

Most valuable, and possibly the single feature that makes Dallay stand out from all competition, are *in situ* tables of local postmarks for various periods, with mark-ups for their occurrence on loose stamps or on cover. This is still “work in progress”: New Caledonia's listings, for instance, range from 1881 (35 post offices) to date (over 80); Guiana's cover 1892-1944, while Guadeloupe (34 offices) and Martinique (24) cover only 1905-29. Modern stamps are not neglected: post-1947 French stamps used in Guadeloupe or Martinique (towns unspecified) increase threefold in price whether loose or on cover; France used on Guiana covers increase x 6. Scope for treasure-hunting is considerable: any 1945-59 New Caledonia stamp cancelled ‘Olane’, for instance, increases its price by 12€ loose, or by 115€ (!) on cover. Find just one such (and then a buyer) and the whole catalogue is paid for.

Further examples from individual colonies will show the scope. St Pierre et Miquelon, although a highly-priced territory now, shows many typical features. The two 25 on 1F imperf Sage (Yv 2-3) add 23 varieties between them (compared to, say, Yvert's nine); the 05/SPM on 20c Dubois (Yv 11) is awarded postal status even when surcharged on the *interpanneau* gutter. The 1886 PD/5, 10 or 15 primitives are here; varieties on the 1892 ‘T/P’ overprints on postage dues (Yv 51-58) are described, given sheet positions and awarded blanket mark-ups. The 1892 Tablet types, here and for every territory, include – possibly for the first time in any catalogue – a few shades: four for the 1c, three for the 2c, two each for the 4c, 10c black, and 50c rose. Collectors will cheer, but will also know (a) that this is not all – striking shades also exist on both 5cs, the 20c, and the 10c red, (b) that Dallay's note about country-names' existence in red or rose is welcome, but could have extended to the blue, particularly on the 2c, which is easily found in any shade from light blue to navy - and (c) Dallay's listed shades cannot possibly exist for all colonies, since some of them relate to early printings while Mohéli's “1892” issue, for instance, did not appear until 1906. Never mind – some very collectable broken-letter varieties (like, here, the missing ‘E’ in “ET”) are mentioned, and marked up 100%.

The 1909 pictorials are prefaced by a blanket mark-up for British *Paquebot* cancellations. The basic stamps ignore all shades and thin-paper printings (collectable ones exist: check your duplicates, or the next Exchange Packet) but include essays, misplaced-centre varieties and several values mysteriously perfed 11: similar perf varieties recur for Martinique, Réunion and Comoros and their provenance is quite unknown to me or the Yvert Specialised. What are they, someone?

The well-known 1912 '05' and '10' wide-spacing varieties are listed, and illustrated – not so the thinner numerals, thickened tops to '5' or "half-wide" spacings known to exist. The 1926 P.P. 0.30 provisionals are priced, loose and on cover; the 1932 pictorials include imperfs but, again, no shades (common and collectable on oft-reprinted low values. 'F.N.F.L.' issues are lavishly treated; Dulac's 1945 *France Libre* sets are priced used on censored covers; modern issues include imperfs, *épreuves de luxe* and – hitherto totally unknown to me, and I suspect, many other members too – some 1955-62 issues with advertisements on the back (similar items appear for Polynesia too).

Guadeloupe shows tabulated sheet positions for those tiresome 1903 overprints; the 1905 pictorials add five shades (a good start, but many more exist), and 34 out-of-town postmarks are listed, with mark-ups from 3€ to 100€. The closing 1947 pictorials include imperfs and *de luxe* proofs; more interestingly, French *F.M.* stamps used in Guadeloupe are priced loose and on cover (a valuable listing carried through to other colonies too).

Martinique's 1924 surcharges include some "raised *fleuron*" varieties, and three varieties of inscription on the Eboué 2F. Guiana/Inini includes *T.A.G.* Airs and Cinderella labels for Counani and Amazonia, plus on-cover pricings for 1900s French stamps used there. Réunion N^{os} 1 and 2 are lavishly illustrated to show the four types of originals and the reprints; more accessibly to most of us, the 1922-27 surcharges include some "wide-spaced figures". The 1891 overprints on Dubois run to several varieties per stamp but still omit the very collectable wide and narrow Os. Madagascar used in Comoros are footnoted but their listing is presumably held over for the 'Africa' catalogue; combined Comoros listings stop with the unissued 1975 Dancers and the Mayotte quadrisepts. New Caledonia prices 1892-1919

mail from Chinese mineworkers and the little-known 1939 "1^{er} *Courier 100% aérien*" overprints on flown cover, but disappointingly, no shades on the 1905 pictorials (here or overprinted for Wallis and Futuna). Polynesia lists and illustrates the four printings of the 1979-92 1F 'Bora-Bora' pictorial but not the good shades on the very first low values, the 'Guitarist' of 1958. The existence of "narrow W and A" in the first Wallis and Futuna overprints will come as pleasant surprises to any collector deprived of the Yvert Specialised, particularly as they are clearly illustrated. Maddeningly, the equally collectable "narrow N and A (in 'Futuna')" are listed but not illustrated, and the "small S in Wallis", listed (though not illustrated) in the Specialised and of which I am sure I have several examples, is not here at all.

And so on, and so on. Experienced collectors, and discoverers of new varieties eagerly awaiting catalogue recognition may on rare occasions be disappointed – but for most of us there will be something new on nearly every page, and Dallay is to be congratulated whole-heartedly on adding so much to French Colonial knowledge. Buy without hesitation! Many hours of absorbing reading await us all.

Michael Round

PS. The 2006 *Yvert Independent Africa* has just been issued. If you already have the 2002, keep it; if you haven't, then track one down – for little improvement is evident in its replacement. This *Volume 2 Part 2* is now split into two volumes: the first (A-L, and all I've seen), despite its title, includes Cambodia and Laos – no bad thing, they have to go somewhere – but the format has reverted to two columns per page (fewer stamps at a view, and thicker on the shelf), and many not-so-new issues (including Bénin, and – unforgivably – Cameroun since 1995) are still not listed.

ooooooooooooo

Books Noted

For those who read French, the Comité pour l'histoire de La Poste has produced a number of publications containing some very useful information. The list of titles available includes:

Mémoire postale – Une vie de receveur by Jean Manac'h & Albert Vignau (price 7,62€)

Mémoire postale – Un postier parmi d'autres by Pierre Le Saux (price 13,72€)

Mémoire postale – Ma Poste, ombre et lumières by Louis Boulet (price 16€)

D'une Révolution à l'autre: Maîtres de Poste et réseau postal en Côte-d'or 1789-1830 by Gabrielle Quantin & Frédéric Desroches (price 6€)

Le rôle de la Poste au cours de la Première Guerre mondiale by Amandine Le Ber & Nadège Schepens (176 pp, 170 x 240mm, some tables but no illustrations; price 6€) [Detailed description of how the civilian and military postal services functioned in France during World War I.]

La vie à l'Hôtel des Postes de Paris 1801-1830 by Christophe Tretsch (126 pp, 170 x 240mm; price 6€) [Recreation of

the busy life of the early 19th century Post Office in Paris, through texts and reports.]

Guide de recherche sur l'histoire de la Poste en France des origines au Premier Empire (330 pp, 170 x 240mm; price 15€) [Sources of postal information referenced by theme and by type: postal museum archives and libraries, postal service historical library, magazines, public collections, departmental archives; together with relevant comments and a résumé of the postal history of this period.]

All the above are available from Comité pour l'histoire de La Poste, Case postale C 606, 44 boulevard de Vaugirard, 75757 Paris Cedex 15, and the price includes postage and packing.

The Comité has also sponsored the publication of these books, available in French bookshops:

Le receveur des Postes, entre l'État et l'usager by Odile Join-Lambert (Éditions Belin, 2001; price 19,67€)

Histoire de la Poste – de l'administration à l'entreprise ed. Muriel Le Roux (Éditions ENS rue d'Ulm, 2002; price 16€)

Continued on page 159

The Story of a Soul

Stephen Toynebee



Every stamp they say tells a story, and these two French stamps are part of my thematic collection on the history of the Carmelites.

Marie Françoise Thérèse Martin was born on 2 January 1873 in Alençon, Normandy. Her parents were Louis Martin, a watchmaker, and his wife Zélie. She was baptised on 4 January 1873 at the Church of Notre Dame in Alençon. Amazingly, the stamp (SG 1981; Yv 1737) was issued to commemorate the centenary of her birth, being released by the French Post Office on 6 January 1973. The stamp was designed by Pierrette Lambert and engraved by Georges Bétémps. A total of 8,350,000 were printed. The reason becomes clear as we continue the story.

At the age of 15 on 9 April 1888 Thérèse entered the little known Carmelite monastery in Lisieux. She made her Profession on 8 September 1890 and became known as Sister Thérèse of the Child Jesus and the Holy Face. She was asked to write her autobiography by the Prioress. The autobiography was published after her death under the title of *L'histoire d'une âme* — The Story of a Soul. Sister Thérèse died of tuberculosis on 30 September 1897.

The book was a sensational success. It had an instant appeal in every language into which it was translated; veneration of the unknown nun of Lisieux spread worldwide, and miracles and answers to prayers were attributed on all sides to her intercession in heaven.

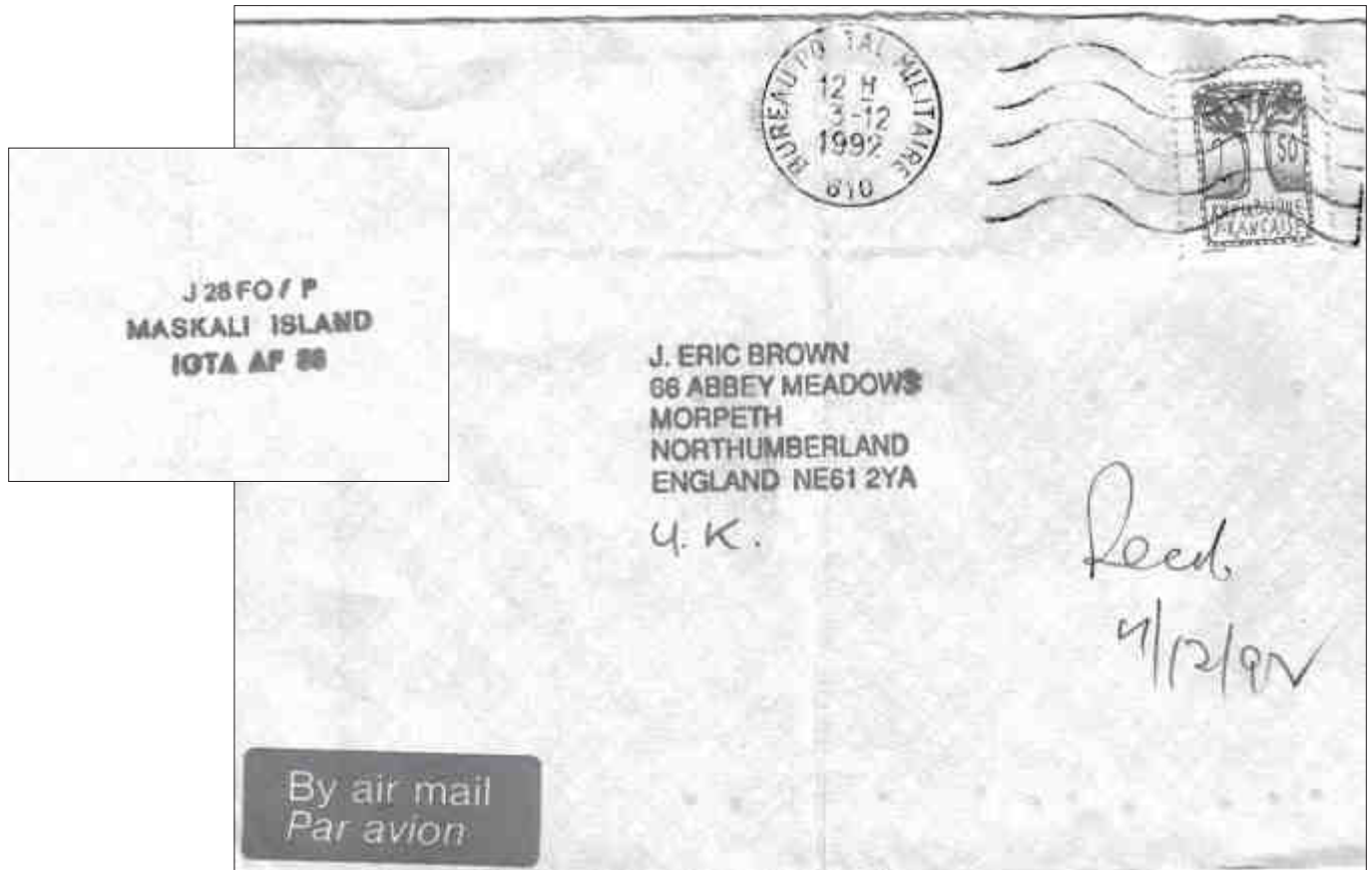
Sister Thérèse was beatified by Pope Pius XI on 29 April 1923 and she was canonized in Rome on 17 May 1925. Saint Thérèse of Lisieux was declared Patron Saint of Missionaries and of the Missions on 14 December 1927.

The Basilica at Lisieux, (SG 1485; Yv 1268) dedicated to her was inaugurated and solemnly blessed by Cardinal Pacelli (future Pope Pius XII) on 11 July 1937. A total of 4,795,000 stamps were printed and were released by the French Post Office on 24 September 1960. On the stamp a statue of Saint Thérèse is in the foreground with the basilica behind her. Other stamps of Saint Thérèse and the basilica have been printed by the Central African Republic (SG 354), French Polynesia (SG 165), Dahomey (SG 494-495), Cameroon (SG 667-668), and Gabon (SG 507-508) — all of which I have in my collection. There have been a few other stamps printed by non-French countries, all of which tell a little more of the Story of a Soul.



One of the Islands On The Air

Richard Wheatley



The modern cover illustrated here gave me considerable pleasure in sorting out the various aspects.

What caught my eye first of all was the machine cancel:

BUREAU POSTAL MILITAIRE 610 / 3-12-1992

This ties the 2F50 French stamp. According to M. Sinais' book on military matters, BPM 610 was located at Djibouti. My geography knowledge was now being put to the test, for I could only place Djibouti somewhere in Africa - so I guess I failed that test! It is in fact in the Gulf of Aden, being a coastal enclave in Ethiopia at the southern end of the Red Sea. Over the years the territory has been called various names: Obock, Djibouti, French Somali Coast, French Territory of Afars and Issas. However today it is named the Republic of Djibouti and it still has close links with France.

In looking at Derek Richardson's invaluable rates booklet, we find that 2F50 was the French inland letter rate for up to 20 grams from 10 August 1992 to 4 July 1993. But why was this letter from Djibouti to England franked at this rate? For the answer I had to turn to page 59 of Derek's book. There he states that in 1990 a major reorganisation took place. This resulted in the letter rate between 1990 and 1993 between Djibouti (and other French territories) to France being the same as the French internal letter rate and there was no airmail supplement. Furthermore, during this short period, there was no airmail supplement from France to another EU country. So this letter was carried all that way for the French internal letter rate and, according to the annotated arrival date, in four days too!

Turning the cover over (see next page) we find the following text printed in red:

J28FO/P
MASKALI ISLAND
IOTA AF53

This had me completely baffled. So for a start I looked in my bumper atlas; but no joy there; so then I asked Google where Maskali Island is. Within a couple of mouse clicks up came the answer:

Latitude 11 degrees 42 minutes 53 North
Longitude 43 degrees 9 minutes 30 East
Situating just in front of Djibouti city
with its sister island Moucha.

Google also provided the meaning of the other letters and numerals:

J2 - are operators of amateur radio stations
J28FO/P - would be their call sign
IOTA - Islands On The Air
AF53 - refers to the Moucha group of islands
which includes Maskali.

Other Islands On The Air are:

AF51 Los Island
AF52 Juba Island
AF54 Mafia Island

But don't ask me where they are, I am just a ham at geography!

A Tax Anomaly

Derek Richardson



The cover illustrated, postmarked Barking Essex 1 Dec 1950, plus its contents, weighed 25 grams, and therefore, since 1 ounce equals 28.35 grams, the postage payable was at the “up to 1 ounce” rate.

The UPU letter rates in Great Britain in December, 1950, were:

1st and 2nd weight steps, up to	1 ounce	2 ounce
UPU Rate (tariff of 1 Oct. 1950)	4 pence	6½ pence

and as this letter was franked at 2½ pence, there was an underpayment of 1½ pence. The postage due from the addressee was double the underpayment, i.e. 3 pence, converted to the currency of the country of destination. This conversion took place in 2 stages. Stage 1 was the conversion of the postage due into “gold centimes”. The conversion factor in December 1950 was 5, so the postage due was 15 “gold centimes”. However, the post office official in London stamped the front of the letter with a hexagonal mark with the letter T and the number 7c instead of 15c. This was the first mistake; the official had obviously failed to double the underpayment.

At the French destination office, Stage 2 of the procedure should have been to convert the 7 “gold centimes” to French francs. The conversion factor in December 1950 was 100, so the tax payable was 7 French francs. This, however, is when the second mistake happened. An official

who was accustomed to UPU letter rates progressing in 20 gram weight steps evidently treated this letter which weighed 25 grams as chargeable at the double letter rate, namely 6½ pence, making the underpayment not 1½ pence but 4 pence. This increased the tax by the ratio (4 divided by 1½), a factor of 2.67 which, when applied to 7 French francs, gives 18.67, obviously rounded up to 19 French francs. There is a handwritten “19” on the envelope and tax stamps to that value were affixed.

The “anomaly” of the title was the inequality in the size of the first weight step in France and Great Britain – 20 and 28.35 grams respectively – which continued until Great Britain adopted metric weight steps on 29 September 1975.

The period during which the UPU employed the “gold franc” as the standard when converting currencies lasted from 1921 to 1965. Unfortunately, the procedures were often misunderstood and consequently incorrect postage dues charged. My collection of taxed covers/postcards posted from Great Britain to France between 1921 and 1965 is quite small and I would like to increase the size of my database. I would be very pleased to receive from anyone reading this note scanned copies of such items, sent by e-mail to djr@fairfordave.fsnet.co.uk.

Reference:

British Postal Rates 1937 to 2000 by Robert Johnson and Gordon Peet (2000)

SHORTER ITEMS - INCLUDING QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Vapeur Mail Service in Senegal



In an earlier article (Journal 235, page 36) I mentioned I had seen no evidence of the *vapeur* mail service in Senegal, but no sooner had the article been submitted than I came

across an interesting postcard sent from Dakar to Paris, date stamped 19.07.1906 and franked at the *imprimé* rate, showing the *vapeur* from Gorée docking at Dakar.

John Mayne

Togo 1922 Issues



Several earlier articles (See Journal 237 page 112) confirm that these issues are not readily found before 20 July 1922, let alone on cover. Internal mail for the occupation period is invariably difficult.

The above card, showing the crane on the pier at Lomé in use in 1922, was posted at Lomé on 27.02.1922 and, whilst 1c underpaid, is sent internally.

John Mayne

Jacobin Calendar

I have recently stumbled across a website which may be of use to members with an interest in preadhesive mail.

The page www.calendarhome.com/converter allows conversion from (and to) the Jacobin calendar of the Revolutionary period to (or from) our more usual Gregorian calendar, and indeed to or from any other calendar you may

choose. It appears to make correct allowance for the variable year start with movement, albeit limited, of the autumn equinox, and the additional days at year end.

In a linked page there is a brief description, somewhat transatlantic in flavour, of the history of the calendar, its introduction and termination.

Anthony Milford Ward

An Air Cancel Handstamp of Saigon?

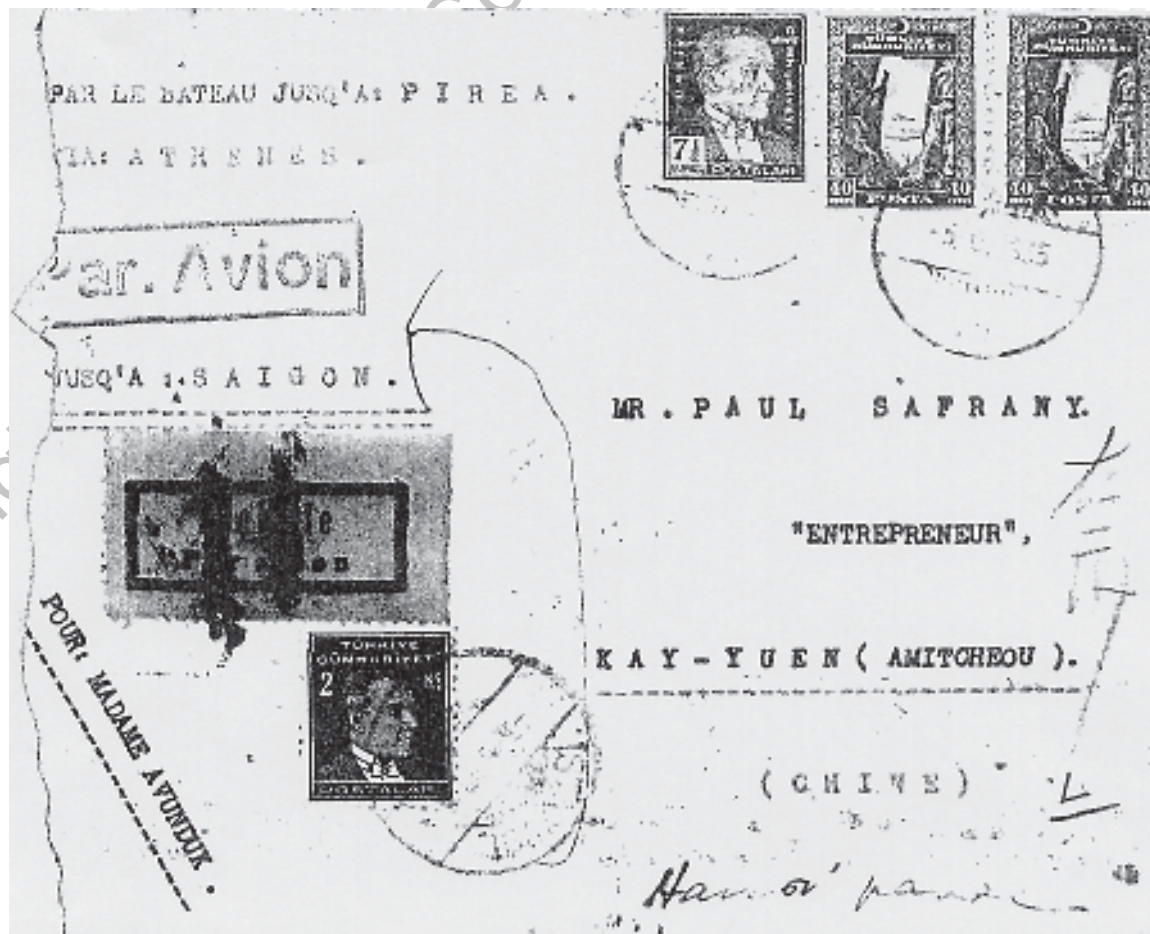
Bill Robertson of Edinburgh, an old friend who was my successor as president of OPAL, has sent me a piece from a recent newsletter of the Edinburgh Philatelic Society about a 1935 cover from Istanbul to Kai-Yuen (Amichow) in China. This specified a routing by ship to Greece and thence by air as far as Saigon. It appears to have duly reached its destination, and the Turkish airmail etiquette has been cancelled by two parallel bars, struck in black (see illustration) which are unfamiliar to me. The cover is date stamped Saigon on 20 June 1935 and Hanoi on 23 June.

Presumably the air cancel was applied at Saigon, according to the sender's direction, and the letter sent on to Hanoi by train, provided that journey could be achieved in three days in 1935; if not, there is the possibility that the air cancel handstamp was used at Hanoi and not at Saigon.

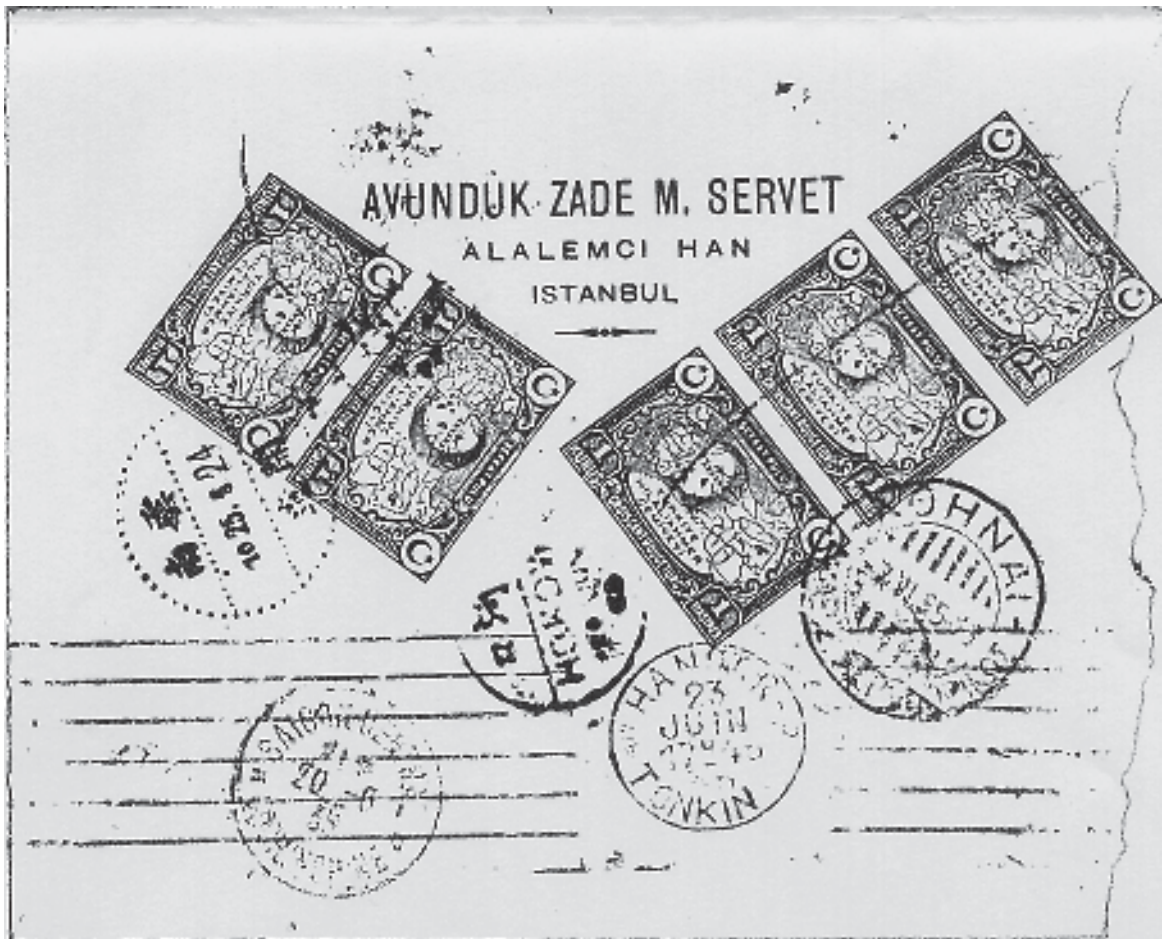
Dennis Collins, another old friend of mine who lives in Dundee, was consulted about the routing to and within China, and he felt that there probably was enough time for the letter to have been carried by rail from Saigon to Hanoi. However, he could not be absolutely certain, so I feel obliged to keep an open mind about the actual place where the air cancel was applied.

So please, can one of our members provide the answer. Was there a train service running which would have taken the letter to Hanoi in time, and has anyone seen another example of air cancel bars of this pattern and size used during the 1930s at either Saigon or Hanoi? And Bill would probably be grateful, too, if one of our members can identify the aircraft which carried the letter from Athens to Indo-China.

Ian McQueen



Front of cover, with parallel bars repeated at side



Reverse of cover

Rates: France to Jersey 1936/7

Regarding the two taxed letters from France to Jersey, 1936/7, illustrated on page 118 of Journal 237 (September 2005), I cannot tell Philip Mackey and Gerald Marriner anything about routes but I can tell them how the 3½d postage due was arrived at.

Between 1921 and 1966 the UPU adopted the “gold franc” as the standard when converting currencies. The UPU rate for a letter weighing up to 20 grams was 0.25 gold francs. In 1936 the French rate had, because of inflation, risen by a factor of 6 to 1F50. The illustrated letters each bore only a 50c stamp and so were each underfranked by 1 franc. The postage due at that time was set at twice the

underpayment, converted to gold francs, i.e. 2. divided by 6 = 0.333 gold francs.

In the UK the foreign letter rate in 1936/7 was 2½d per ounce and so the conversion factor was 10d per gold franc. Thus, the 0.333 postage due was converted to 3.33d, rounded up to 3½d. (The fact that one ounce equals 28.35 grams, not 20 grams, is not taken account of.)

That is the theory. In practice, in both the French and the UK offices, employees responsible for handling underfranked items would not have done the calculations in the way I have described, but would have been provided with look-up tables to yield the required answers.

Derek Richardson

Bibliography of Philatelic Literature

Concerning the President’s query on pages 95-96 of Journal 237 (September 2005) about Bob Stone’s Bibliography of *A Philatelic Literature on the French Colonies, Protectorates, and Overseas Territories*, I can tell Peter that he will find section W on pages 16-18 of *Philatelic Literature Review* Vol 33 N° 1, 1st quarter 1984; and Z appears on page 34 of Vol 34 N° 1, 1st quarter 1985.

Bob had said to me that the American Philatelic Research Library hoped to produce Volume 2, but when Ed Grabowski approached them after Bob’s death, the American Philatelic Society no longer had the type set up at the printers, so all was lost. As Peter indicated in his article, the *Philatelic Literature Review* can be found in the France & Colonies Philatelic Society (GB) Library.

Colin Spong

illustration of a 1F50 Victory stamp. The text below it states "The illustrated copy of Algeria, Michel N^{os} 197 (*sic*), the so called 'Victory Issue' with swastika handstamp in violet is fraudulent; the overprint was applied on genuine stamps to defraud collectors." I hope that you were not defrauded by too much John! Well at least we now know that the swastika cancellation was applied in red as well as violet.

Middle Congo *Paquebot* Cancel

postal administration applied its own cds on the letter on arrival [as it did]. Presumably it made up the mark from loose type sent in the box with the date stamp. Holts (to which firm the cover was addressed) from memory were West African traders operating out of Liverpool, but I have not checked this.

Robert Johnson

Re-use of the Boxed Registration Handstamp

to have had its own difficulties and, instead of using the old R mark, produced a special imperforate R label with black printing on a brownish red paper (see illustration). It turned out to be the only one I had, so the question is: does anyone know of it and is it in the same category of use as Colin's R marks? The R on the label is like Colin's R marks, but then the R on the red and white labels is similar also. The cover is not a bad one in its own right anyway!



The cover shows the “SO” or *Service Officiel* endorsement, which meant no basic rate postage had to be paid. The 5F paid represented 3F for the registration fee and 2F for the 5g airmail fee from an AEF country to an AOF country. Official mail still had to pay these two charges.

Robert Johnson

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Following the publication in Journal 237 (September 2005) of my article on the re-use of the 1892 boxed R handstamp in the French colonies during World War II, two of our

members (Skanda Vaitilingam and Paul Wood) have produced between them six covers from the islands of St Pierre & Miquelon as below.

Colin Spong



Figure 1 -

St Pierre & Miquelon surface mail;

St Pierre dated 20.02.1942 to Mr Robert Furn, 4105 Chemin de la Côte des Neiges, Montreal, Que (Canada).

R(egistered) No 418. [This R is not boxed, however]

(Skanda Vaitilingam collection)



Figure 2 -

St Pierre & Miquelon airmail;

St Pierre dated 17.01.1946 to M. R Lehuard, 16 rue du Parc, Vaires sur Marne, Seine & Marne (France).

R(egistered) No 400.

(Paul Wood collection)



Figure 3 -
 St Pierre & Miquelon airmail;
 St Pierre dated 08.03.1946 to Mr Benjamin Dworetzky, 2115 Avenue J, Brooklyn, NY, USA.
 R(egistered) No 767.
 (Paul Wood collection)



Figure 4 -
St Pierre & Miquelon airmail;
St Pierre dated 02.04.1947 to Mr G S Macfarland, Jr, 23 Meadowbrook Village, Plainfield, New Jersey, USA.
R(egistered) No 847.
(Paul Wood collection)



Figure 5 -
St Pierre & Miquelon airmail;
St Pierre dated 31.08.48 to Mr Frank D Correl, 226 Livingstone Avenue, New Brunswick, New Jersey, USA.
R(egistered) No 939.
(Paul Wood collection)



Figure 6 -
St Pierre & Miquelon airmail;
St Pierre dated 31.08.1948 to Monsieur R Furn, 4105 côte des Neiges, Montreal, Canada [as in Fig 1].
R(egistered) No 1756..
(Paul Wood collection)

For the octagonal boxed R type of griffe the earliest and latest recorded dates of use in St Pierre & Miquelon now become:

Colony	Earliest Recorded Date	Latest Recorded Date	Colour	From
St Pierre & Miquelon	30.04.42	31.08.48	Black Black	St Pierre to New York, USA St Pierre to Montreal, Canada

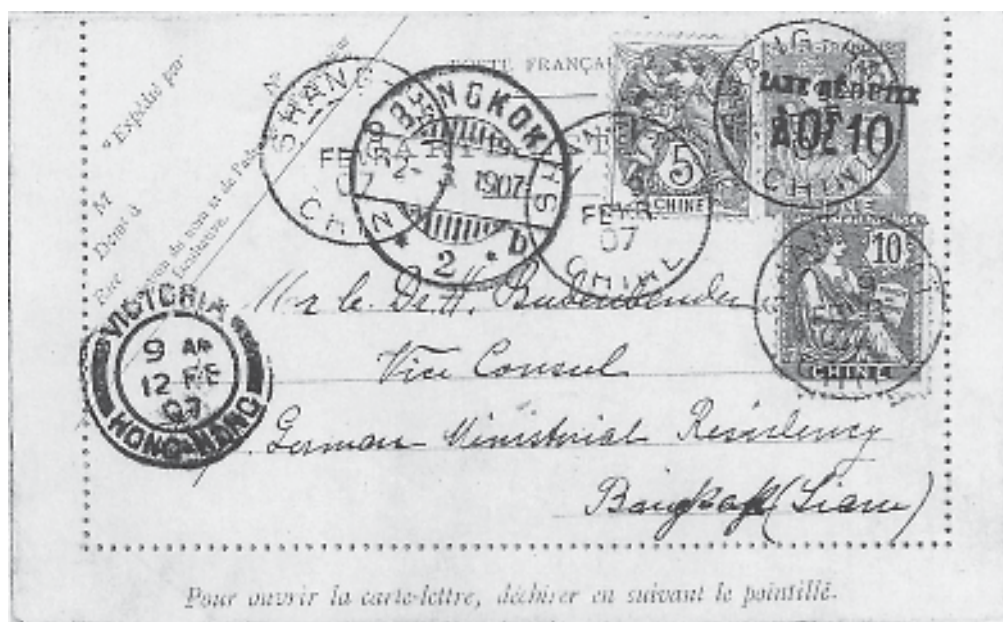
It does appear from photocopies received that the majority of these handstamps were in use in St Pierre & Miquelon during WWII and afterwards. This agrees with the article by M.

Jean-Claude Dubois in *Col.Fra Bulletin* N° 25 on page 4, where he records these for the period of 1887 to 1948, although he mentions August 1948 without the day of usage.

References

Dubois, Jean-Claude, "Marques et Étiquettes de Recommandation", *Col.Fra Bulletin* N°s 20, pp 3-16, 1982; 25, pp 2-8, 1984

French PO in Shanghai



A couple of years ago (in Journal 227, page 28) I raised a query concerning a French Shanghai postmark that did not feature in the Riddell list of postmarks, upon which I rely for the French section of my Foreign POs in Shanghai.

Another oddity (to me, anyway) has just joined my Shanghai collection, as shown on the photocopy illustrated here.

Can any members enlighten me on the two points that are puzzling me?

- (1) What is the reason for the “taxe réduite” and “ÀO ?? 10” mark?
- (2) The Shanghai cds appears to be Riddell type 8 (shown as Figure 10 in my copy), which shows that it should have the month line in italic. I can find no reference to its use in Roman, and none that I have previously seen appear to be in Roman.

I would appreciate any information on these points.

Malcolm Givans

Books Noted

Continued from page 147

La plume et la toile: Pouvoirs et réseaux de correspondance dans l'Europe des Lumières ed. Pierre-Yves Beaurepaire (Artois Presses Université, 2002; price 20€)

Les facteurs et leurs tournées, un service public au quotidien by Marie Cartier (Éditions La Découverte, 2003; price 25€)

Books noted elsewhere:

La Poste dans le département du Var – La poste rurale 1830-1911 by Robert Gregnac-Daudemard & Alain Trinquier; 62 pp, A4, b/w; price 7,50€ + p&p; available from Musée du Timbre, Le Château, BP 51, 83340 Le Luc. [The communes in this département are identified by their date

stamp combined with the letter in a circle rural mark, and are listed by dates of their establishment, changes to the post offices' periods of opening, and indications of rarity.]

Atlas und Lexikon zum Ersten Weltkrieg, II: Grafiken und Sachlexikon by Andreas Birken & Hans-Henning Gerlach; pub. Philathek-Verlag, 2004; 112 pp, A4, text in German; price 49€ + p&p; available from Philathek-Verlagsauslieferung, Mozartstrasse 67, 89548 Königsbrunn, Germany. (www.philathek.de) [Companion volume to the earlier one containing maps, this time presenting tables giving the composition of the German Army in WWI with a lexicon of military terms and places.]

Maurice Tyler

Unrecorded Middle Congo Date Stamp

Another article in Journal 237 that came to mind during the trawl through my collection was that by Peter Kelly on Robert Stone's *A Bibliography of Philatelic Literature on the French Colonies, Protectorates, and Overseas Territories* (pages 95-96).

I found this cover on which the cds bottom left is not recorded in Stone, although it is similar in type to Figures 70, 86a and 96a in Stone's *The Diverse World of Postal Markings of Gabon/Congo/AEF*. The cds ties in with the Official origin mark top left.



French Equatorial Africa – Middle Congo – Brazzaville to the Ivory Coast, December 1944.

For mail to other French colonies French rates applied.

The air fee along the West African coast appears to have been 4F for 5g.

There was no basic postage as the letter was sent under franchise, the government department in this case being the Post Office in AEF itself.

Robert Johnson

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The 'ANDORRE' Overprints

Mick Bister



The UPU Congress held in London in 1929 accorded France permission to establish a French post office in the state of Andorra. The French postal service would operate alongside the Spanish post office which had been functioning since 1 January 1928.

In preparation for the opening of the French post office on 16 June 1931, twenty-three contemporary French stamps were overprinted *ANDORRE* and supplied to the Andorra office. The set of stamps consisted of six *Blanc* values, seven *Semeuse Camée*, five *Semeuse Lignée* and five *Merson*.

The Sower stamps receiving the *ANDORRE* overprint, whether *Lignée* or *Camée*, fall into three categories.

1) The 20c, 25c, 45c, 65c, 75c and 1F values were all issues which were on sale in France during the period prior to the opening of the Andorra office and those overprinted were sheets extracted from stock printed in 1929 or 1930.

Value	Cylinder	Date of Printing
20c	G + H	5 July 1929
25c	J + K	3 & 4 March 1930
45c	B + C	18 & 21 May 1929
65c	A + B	11 & 12 February 1929
75c	E + F	17 & 23 May 1929
1F	A + F	13 & 17 June 1930

2) Three stamps, the 30c, 90c and 1F50 Sower, did not exist at that time in France, the values being represented instead by the 30c Pasteur, 90c Berthelot and 1F50 *Avion survolant Marseille* (superseded by the 1F50 *Femme Fachi* by the time the office opened). Presumably, the PTT considered these designs inappropriate for service in Andorra and hence special printings of the values in a Sower design had to be made specifically to receive the *ANDORRE* overprint.

Value	Cylinder	Date of Printing
30c	A + B	18 October 1930
90c	A + B	25 October 1930
1F50	A + B	17 September 1930

3) Finally, the printing of three values, the 15c, 40c and 50c Sower, had been suspended in France (on 31 October, 21 October and 13 November 1930 respectively) in order that the presses could be temporarily diverted to print the 15c, 40c and 50c *Femme Fachi*. These quasi-commemoratives replaced the Sowers prior to and during the 1931 Paris Colonial Exhibition. The sheets of Sowers selected for overprinting were therefore extracted from 'remainder' stocks which were being held awaiting their reissue after the close of the exhibition.

Value	Cylinder	Date of Printing
15c	A + L & A + M	23 & 21 May 1930
40c	N + U	18 April 1930
50c	AU + AV	30 September 1930

Unfortunately when a flat plate overprint is added to a rotary printed stamp, as in the case of the *ANDORRE* issue, there is no evidence of the date of overprinting. It is possible that it could have taken place shortly after the special printings of the 30c, 90c and 1F50 values in the autumn of 1930. However, some Andorra specialists believe that the overprinting may have been postponed until as late as May or June 1931, ie. just before the opening of the French post office in Andorra.

Dated corner blocks of the above issues are not easy to find but that is not surprising when the small printing of each value is taken into consideration, but they do make a beautiful addition to any Sower collection.

LIST OF RECENTLY PUBLISHED ARTICLES

Compiled by Colin Spong

Cameo: Journal of the West Africa Study Circle

Vol 9 N° 2 Whole N° 66 October 2005: Another 'Vapeur' Le Faadji (Mayne); French 19C Coastal Shipping service (Sacher); Lomé à Atakpamé Convoyeur Postmark (Mayne); Cameroun 1961 Sterling Surcharges - ½d value (May); Togo Mail from Tokpli (Mayne); Togo Telegrams (Mayne).

Bulletin de la COL.FRA

N° 113 3^{ème} Trim 2005: Memel 1920-23: Les émissions de timbres par l'administration française Jusserand); Millésimes des colonies françaises (Peter); Compléments aux hors-séries N° 14 Dahomey (Rousseau); No 28-1 AEF (Drye); Compléments aux articles parus: Laos-Vignette Guynemer et Vol Militaire de 1925 (Tallet); Le Saviez-vous? Carte franchise des îles & pénitencier de Poulo-Condore Viet-nam (Hurpet).

Collectors Club Philatelist

Vol 84 N° 5 Sep-Oct 2005: Gleanings from the French Colonies: Guadeloupe - Two elusive 25c Local Rates during the 1870s (Grabowski).

Documents Philatéliques

N° 185 4^{ème} Trim 2005: Les envois de timbres-poste pendant la première guerre mondiale (Bourguignat); Le naufrage du steamer *Illimani* (Dutau); Un port-payé et un port-dû sur la même lettre: Les affranchissements partiels du régime intérieur français de la fin du XVII^e siècle (Abensur & Tixier); Des voyages extraordinaires du type Sage (Kelly); Les chiffres-taxe préoblitérés de Lyon, surchargés 25 en septembre 1871 (Couve); Création et fabrication du timbre au type Alphée Dubois (Beaussant).

France & Colonies Philatelist

Whole N° 281 (Vol 61, N° 3) Jul 2005: Algeria to Collioure – an Enigma (Nilsesteun); New Caledonia in 1876 and the Creation of Special Postal Devices (Luft/Ladiesse); Postal Issues of the 1925 Paris Decorative Arts Exposition – III "Le Pot de Fleurs" (Broadhead); Madagascar Taxe Perçue Handstamps, 1944-46 (McQueen); Dunant's own Red Cross Cachet (Cohn).

L'Écho de la Timbrologie

Permanent features: Actualités, Prêt-à-poster Florilège de PAP, Variétés, Anomalies, Cartes postales, Comment ça marche?, Flammes, Livres, Maximaphilie, Thématique.

N° 1788 Sep 2005: L'histoire du premier timbre de la Libération (Hella); découverte: Les multiples charmes des réclames marginales (Jamet); L'arbre à travers toutes ses ramifications (Roche); Le rêve de Napoléon (Monaud); 1995-2005, dix ans de Prêts-à-poster (Sinai); Le mariage d'un prince et d'une étoile [cont & end] (Storch et Cortay); Cartes postales: Lyautey, le maréchal scout (-).

N° 1789 Oct 2005: A la (re)découverte des Bordeaux (Jamet); Le TPA Ouest (Benhamou); Le fil de la honte

(Danan); Variétés en publicité [Type Sower] (Jamet); Le rêve de Napoléon [cont & end] (Monaud); L'UNESCO fête ses 60 ans (Emmenegger).

The Indo-China Philatelist

Vol 35. N° 4, Sep 2005: Native Women on Picture Postcard (Bentley); More on Cambodian Censor Markings from 1970 to 1975 (Shaw); Fake Viet Cong 'P.B.V./T.N.' Cover (Crenshaw); "New" Saigon-to-Singapore Air Vietnam First Flight (Aspnes); Cambodia Affirms Love of the Apsara Dance (Shaw); Imperforate Year of the Chicken Stamps (Cartafalsa); Textile Samples of No Value (Bentley); Lost Stamps of South Viet-Nam (Dykhouse).

Vol 35 N° 5, Nov 2005: Pétain Forgeries on Cover (Bentley); Philatelic Traces of the Republic of Cochinchine (Aspnes); Characteristics of the Pétain Forgeries (Bentley & Dykhouse).

Stamp Lover

Vol 97 N° 5, Oct 2005: The French Hospital, Iceland (-).

Timbres Magazine

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

N° 60 Sep 2005: Conversation avec... Jean-Paul Cousin (Decaux); Les cartes à jouer sortent le grand jeu (Garrigue); Maxifrance 2005 (Dreyfuss); Se souvenir des Halles centrales (Dupré); Six ans d'avance! (de la Mettrie); Tachkent, le château de Pierre (Aboucher); 62 ans après: Le timbre «Jean de Vienne» livre ses secrets (Lecouvey); Les marques de port payé du XVIII^e siècle (Baudot); Surcharges et démonétisations (Prugnon); 1942: pas de cycliste pour Aflao... (Chauvin).

N° 61 Oct 2005: Expéditions en Afrique: Les timbres des pays traversés par la Mission Marchand (de Pellinec); 1996: Marianne de Briat: de la taille-douce traditionnelle à la taille-douce numérique (Robineau); îles de la France d'Outre-Mer [Les îles Éparses] (Couesnos); Le charme discret de Jean-Baptiste Greuze (Dupré); Marques Postales: Quand la franchise s'applique à la confiance (de la Mettrie) Introduction aux marques postales: Paris au XVIII^e: les marques Port Payé (Baudot); A propos d'un pneumatique taxé (Prugnon); 1940: Djibouti, La voie italienne (Chauvin).

N° 62 Nov 2005: L'art et la manière de Pierre Béquet (Decaux); L'Algérie depuis l'indépendance (-); Des carnets déjà difficiles à trouver! (PJM); 3F Cathédrale de Reims: la rencontre du 3^e type (Michaud); Marques postales: Il y a le timbre mais aussi tout le reste (de la Mettrie); Cartes Postales: Le rêve éveillé de Ferdinand Cheval (Zeyons); Les marques de port payé du XVIII^e siècle (Baudot); La surtaxe de poste restante a mis fin à une longue période de gratuité (Prugnon); Messages familiaux de l'Afrique française libre (Chauvin).

REPORTS OF MEETINGS

WESSEX GROUP MEETING OF 2 JULY 2005

John Hammonds: Aerophilately Members' Displays

14 members and 1 guest attended the third meeting of the group on a fine summer's day. In the morning our invited speaker **John Hammonds** presented aerophilately. In the first half we were shown a superb display of Air Orient, tracing the Ligne Noguès from its inception up to and beyond WWII. This detailed approach to the development of airmail services to Indochina and the Far East included precursor covers, stories of the many crashes that took place, and was illustrated by the delightful postal stationery that was used and the postage stamps of the period from countries along the route.

The second half comprised a *pot pourri* of interesting items from the beginnings of ballooning, with wonderful examples of headed notepaper, *Gazettes des Absents* from the Siege

period, Air Meetings and the consequent development of air services and airships.

After an enjoyable meal served at the Old Mill it was back to the Scout Hall for members' displays. The afternoon was taken up by the following displays.

Chris Hitchen: Paris newspapers; **Gavin Fryer**: Inward mail into France from European countries 1850-1860; **Edwin Rideout**: French postage dues; **Trevor Buckell**: The Cérés issue of 1871; **Peter Adams**: My favourite covers; **Skanda Vaitilingam**: Fezzan / Ghadames and Comores postage stamps; **Alan Wood**: Material from the Paris Commune; **John Lea** (guest): Disaster mail; **Peter Kelly**: *Type Sage*, French post offices in the Levant.

PRAK

NORTHERN GROUP MEETING OF 17 SEPTEMBER 2005

Members' Choice

Present: Alan Goude, Ken Howitt, Bernard Lucas, Peter Maybury, John Morton, Tony Shepherd, Paul Watkins, Richard & Yvonne Wheatley.

Apologies: G E Barker, R Barnes, S Ellis, S & J Holder, N J Martin, M Meadowcroft, P Stockton, J Whiteside, A Wood.

Alan Goude was first out of the traps with a *pot pourri* of rates, routes and postal stationery emanating from Dahomey, Chad and French Guinea, followed by **Paul Watkins'** range of covers and cards from Bordeaux and environs, and then a most comprehensive and unexpected

display of the *type Sage* issues from **Bernard Lucas**. **Richard Wheatley** produced a 1992 *Poste Militaire* 610 cover from Djibouti with an IOTA cachet and a couple of photocopies of 1802 & 1803 covers described by an auction house as from Batavia - Dutch East Indies, when in fact originating from the Revolutionary Batavian Republic of Holland. **Tony Shepherd** then entertained with more of his ever growing collection of Guadeloupe postal history, **John Morton** presented photographs he had taken of mail boxes in the Lozère region, some of which *La Poste* was not aware still existed. Last to cross the line was **Peter Maybury** with a selection of *type Sage* postal stationery.

JPM

LONDON MEETING OF 28 SEPTEMBER 2005

Members: 12 Sheets

A rather disappointing turnout of only 8 members attended the opening London meeting of the new season, which consisted of the usual 12 sheet displays.

Len Barnes started proceedings with various aspects of aviation, including queries on rocket post and catapult mail. **Godfrey Bowden** showed Tunisian postage dues, with underpaid mail to and from Tunis. **Michael Ensor** sought information on such topics as Paris marks with no place of origin mentioned, the difference between OL and OR marks, the late collection fee, a letter indicating that there was an *Ambassade d'Angleterre* at Angers, censorship marks, an unusual *pneumatique*, a *chargement* mark, and a Pétain bisect.

Iain Stevenson had brought some French telegrams that had not been included in his display to the RPSL, and gave some detailed information about the early Chappe and

electric telegraphs, the Baudot patent, and *radiodiffusion* stamps that were used to pay a subscription for weekly news on the radio programmes and were intended to be stuck on the radio sets. **Peter Grech** illustrated the evolution of the French Post Office in Constantinople. **Derek Richardson** showed so-called semi-official airmail stamps from 1910 to 1938, used on cover for the journey from air meetings to the nearest post office.

Chris Hitchen produced a final 36 sheets on the General Post in Paris until 1849, including paid marks from 1703 onwards and a range of unpaid mail, registered and a selection from the Dead Letter Office. And **Maurice Tyler** rounded off the evening by making available for inspection the proof pages from Geoff Gethin's book on French 20th century forgeries, to be published early next year.

MST

SCOTTISH GROUP MEETING OF 1 OCTOBER 2005

Inaugural Meeting: 10 Sheet Displays

The inaugural meeting was attended by 7 members and 3 visitors, with apologies from 2 members. It was decided that initially 3 meetings a year would be held, in October, March and May. It was also agreed that Mavis Pavey would organise the first year of these and that any changes to the format of meetings could be discussed as the need arises. The President, Peter Kelly, would be asked to give one of the displays when the March and May dates have been finalised, the other to be a joint display by Jim Moffat on Colonies and David Hogarth on France. These dates will be arranged so that they do not clash with other events.

The following members then gave 10 sheet displays: **Peter Brand**: The AEF in Europe, World War I; **David Hogarth**: 1939-42 Internment Camp Mail and 1940-43 Interzonal Cards; **James Burney**: Postal History of Nice, Monaco and French Post Offices in Crete and Port Said; **Jim Moffat**: Stamps of Port Said and Alexandria, French Post Office in Port Said; **Jim Milne**: a selection of covers with queries; **Mavis Pavey**: Car Post cancellations 1937-68.

The meeting was held in the Burgh Hall, Linlithgow. Anyone wishing to attend future meetings will be welcomed, Saturdays 2-5pm. Contact Mavis Pavey 01896 830120.

MP

WESSEX GROUP MEETING OF 8 OCTOBER 2005

Peter Kelly: The Amazing Travels of Type Sage 1876-1900 Members' Displays

Seventeen members and two guests attended our third meeting at Harnham.

The principal display was given by our President, **Peter Kelly** who showed "The amazing travels of *Type Sage* 1876-1900". The evolution of routes and rates along with the growing sophistication of postal services following France's entry into the GPU / UPU in 1876 formed the background to the display. A wide variety of destinations was shown as well as a number of exceptional journeys undertaken by letters as world wide postal authorities sought to find the addressees.

After an agreeable lunch at the Old Mill, the afternoon was taken up by individual members' displays which aroused considerable interest. The displays were as follows:-

Jeremy Martin: WWII miscellany; **Colin Spong**: Early railroad postcards and handstamps of Madagascar; **Peter**

Lawrence (visitor who has now joined): *Liberté* issue; **George Nash**: Illustrated postcards with military connections; **Ingrid Swinburn**: Manuscript tax marks; **Ashley Lawrence**: *La franchise*; **Trevor Buckell**: French commemoratives and a pictorially illustrated method of displaying a stamp collection; **Edwin Rideout**: Military mail in WWI; **Bob Paterson**: Miscellany; **Skanda Vaitilingam**: Stamps of St Pierre & Miquelon; **Ian McQueen**: Aéropostale and Air France letters from South America; **Chris Hitchen**: General post in Paris up to 1848; **Alan Wood**: Illustrated Sage miscellany.

The next meeting of the group will take place on 4 February 2006 at the Scout Hall, Harnham. The invited display will be given by Colin Spong and the subject will be aspects of the postal history of Madagascar. This display promises to be of considerable interest given the quality of Colin's collection and his great knowledge and enthusiasm for the subject.

PRAK.

SOUTHERN GROUP MEETING OF 15 OCTOBER 2005

John Yeomans: Maritime Mail of French Mauritius / French India

On a sunny autumn afternoon in October, 12 members and guests gathered in Worthing to savour the delights of John Yeomans' display.

John started the first round by saying that the Napoleonic Wars in Europe and the blockade of the French and Spanish ports by the British Navy had a severe impact on the delivery of mails to France during the early part of the 19th century, and the early mail from Mauritius travelled via the Cape.

The first covers shown were one from Mauritius on 25 June to Bordeaux with Santander in Spain the entry port, and a further cover thus sent. Later covers went via the

Cape to London and then onto Bordeaux, with other covers to Cork Cove in Ireland, Bristol and even one via Torquay, then overland etc to France.

Later covers shown included one in 1845 from Mauritius to Marseille using the overland route to Suez, Alexandria and Malta. Other covers were carried as packet letters between 1848 and 1852 and some by the P&O Contract Service from 1865. Many routes and rates were described on all the covers displayed.

The second round continued with Mauritius mails carried by the service of Messageries Maritimes, with a wide selection of covers, three lovely items carried by the *Ligne*

de Suez à la Réunion et Maurice in 1865, an 1866 cover by *Ligne N* from Mauritius to Saigon, and a cover dated 11.2.70 addressed to Paris was the first to be carried to Aden and through the newly opened Suez Canal to Marseille.

Covers were displayed which were carried on *Ligne N*, *Ligne V* and *Ligne U* and included a Registered Telegraph Envelope from the Eastern Telegraph Company in Aden addressed to the Governor of Mauritius dated 21.2.1889, arriving in Mauritius on 13 February 1889.

The third round moved onto mail to and from French India among which was a letter dated 1 March 1770 from Chandernagor to France, one dated 1776 from Pondicherry to Rome via Paris, and one dated 1883 from Mahé to Bordeaux. Also included were five covers dated between 1855 and 1861 carried in private sealed bags through the British postal system to Marseille. Two further nice items were an 1867 prepaid Ship Letter to Mauritius from the French PO in Pondicherry and a three centimes rated newspaper cancelled 11.6.1874, it being the PONDICHÉRY COCANADER MAZULIPTAVAN GAZETTE.

In the final round John showed covers up to and after the UPU rates, with rates of 40c, 35c and 25c all correctly rated at time of use, with covers to France, Mauritius, Indo-China, Saigon and London plus some interesting re-directed mail. The covers included a wonderful and wide variety of Post Office markings, strikes, labels and rates to make an interesting and informative display.

Colin Spong gave a succinct Vote of Thanks to John and the audience showed their appreciation in the time honoured manner.

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

The next meeting was arranged for Saturday 7 January 2006: Members' Displays/New Acquisitions

RDL

NORTHERN GROUP: NORTH-WEST AREA MEETING OF 22 OCTOBER 2005

Members' Choice

As far as anyone can remember this was the first Northern Group venture away from the traditional venues in West Yorkshire: the meeting was held in the Village Hall, Adlington, Cheshire. The day was organised by Peter Stockton, was very successful and will hopefully be repeated next year. Our thanks go also to Peter's wife, Janet, for providing the catering, not forgetting her friend Pam for her help in the kitchen.

Present: George Barker, Steve Ellis, Alan Goude, Richard High, Stephen & Judith Holder, Ed Leonard, Brian Lythgoe, Peter Maybury, Peter Rooke, Tony Shepherd, Peter Stockton, Richard & Yvonne Wheatley.

Apologies: K Howitt, M Meadowcroft, J Morton, A Wood.

Tony Shepherd opened the morning session with a display of Guadeloupe Airmails, which he described as a new venture and outlined the history of the service from the first flight to Miami in 1930. **George Barker** followed with stamps and postal usage of the "Laureated Issue" showing essays, proofs, shades, papers, reprints and much more. Napoleonic letters of the 1796 and 1800 campaigns in the *départements conquis* of Piedmont were then shown by **Peter Rooke**, who described the bureaucracy and social history contained in the contents. **Brian Lythgoe** then produced a display of the Sterling Overprints on Cameroun stamps, showing both types of printing, proofs, and

commercially used covers, **Richard Wheatley** again excelled with a compact 4½ sheet display of French Sudan military mail, consisting of four covers from 1889 to 1901 plus a map to make up the "half", explaining that this was in fact the embryo of a new collection. The morning session closed with **Judith Holder's** fascinating display of early postcards of the Eiffel Tower dating from 1890 to 1900, and in honour of Trafalgar Day a selection of cards commemorating Nelson and his victory.

An excellent lunch with a glass or two of wine and much conversation then followed, with the afternoon session commencing, a little later than scheduled, with an overview of the WWI Balkan and Macedonia campaigns illustrated by some fine material from **Peter Stockton**. French Equatorial Africa was the choice of **Alan Goude**, who once more produced some rarely seen covers from the Ubangi-Shari region. **Steve Ellis** re-visited Guadeloupe with "This Isn't a Display", consisting of a residual accumulation of now unloved material, including 1st issue stamps, maritime and military (a Camp Jacob cachet) items plus sub-offices and 1st flight covers. **Stephen Holder** then showed us 36 sheets from his collection - 36 complete sheets of French Colonial stamps. The final display of the day was The Route to Rome by **Peter Maybury**, a study of the routes and rates for letters passing between France and Italy during the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries.

JPM

LONDON MEETING OF 29 OCTOBER 2005

Mick Bister: The 5c Type Blanc, and the First Euro Stamp Chris Hitchen: Paris in World War II (1941-1943)

Fourteen people attended the Society meeting in the Royal Horticultural Halls. After John Levett had offered for sale some remaining copies of his brochure and some photographic pages from the record of his display to the RPSL last year, Mick Bister explained that the advertised "President's Afternoon" would not take place as intended because of an unfortunate misunderstanding over the proposed new arrangements for the 2005-6 season. Two members (originally three, but one had been incapacitated at the last minute) had therefore agreed to step into the breach as an emergency measure.

Mick Bister himself gave two short displays to illustrate the first and last definitives of the 20th century. The first was devoted to the 5c *Type Blanc*, the issue of which was intended to coincide with the opening of the 1900 Paris Exhibition, though it did not appear until December 1900. It is therefore rarely found with an exhibition cancel. We were shown the flat plate printings consisting of *millésime* pairs with changes in shades, the first booklet printing in France, postal stationery including visiting card envelopes and the colonial printings with a redrawn design. Then followed the rotary printings comprising dated corner blocks, precancels, coil printings including a horizontal strip of 7 stamps from an uncut coil sheet, and the overprints for Algeria and Andorra.

The second half of Mick's contribution was on the first dual value Franc/Euro stamp issued in January 1999. The display started however with a precursor, a 1988 dual value issue overprinted in ECU, where the 2F20 value was expressed as 0,31.. ECU – the last two decimal places not being specified as the exchange rate changed every day. 55 million of these stamps were issued, one for each head of population. Before the Euro stamp was issued in 1999, publicity for the issue showed the 3F equivalence as 0,00€ or ?,??€ because of uncertainty about the eventual fixed exchange rate. The design represented the Franc sinking under the weight of the Euro. We saw examples of the

sheet printing where, for technical reasons, the stamps were printed upside down, booklets (including the error with the stamps printed on the cover), examples of postal usage, postal stationery (with codes on the back revealing the company that had printed the items), and some modern junk mail with pseudo-Euro stamps obtained from the Delcampe auction website.

After viewing, and during the interlude when displays were being changed, **John Levett** illustrated the case of a cover that had apparently had its value dramatically increased at auction over many years by having stamps added to it on more than one occasion.

Then **Chris Hitchen** displayed Paris during World War II, from the period 1941-1943. We were told that in the area of Europe controlled by the Germans there was a certain degree of normality in everyday life, and we saw examples of foreign mail that was censored by the Germans though not always by other countries. One item showed where the Germans had tried to appropriate the V for Victory sign in 1941; and interzonal cards were returned to sender if a stamp was added for an increased postal rate. The Vichy regime tried to turn the clock back by invoking a vision of an agrarian, less industrialised country. Propaganda exhibitions were held to promote this concept, such as the *France Européenne Poste Rurale* exhibition. Items shown also included correspondence to forced workers, service suspended covers, mail to or from internees, a gas bill that could not be forwarded for payment when the addressee moved into the "free" zone, the New European Order (against bolshevism), German censorship, official mail, a Paris post office (no. 100) that had been bombed by the RAF, methods of dealing with a shortage of material for envelopes or postcards, and a selection of letters sent abroad.

A great deal of interest was shown in these fairly hastily produced exhibits, which contributed to a very enjoyable afternoon's session.

MST

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wish all members and their families
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and a Prosperous New Year.
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