

The Journal of the France & Colonies Philatelic Society



Pneumatic Post Service 1927 "Flood" Rate

In 1927 the telephone exchanges at Ségur and Vaugirard in the south of Paris were flooded and put out of action for 10 days.

Telephone subscribers on those two exchanges were permitted to send pneumatic letters for the concessionary rate of 30c (the cost of a local call) provided they clearly indicated their name and address and telephone number.

[See report of Iain Stevenson's display on page 126]

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December 2008
Whole Number 250

**THE FRANCE & COLONIES
PHILATELIC SOCIETY OF GREAT BRITAIN**

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The Society

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

All inquiries about and applications for membership should be addressed to the Membership Secretary, all other correspondence to the General Secretary.

2008 Annual Subscription Rates

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The Journal

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Auction and Exchange Packet Sales

Lots for sale through the Society auctions, held 2 or 3 times a year, should be sent to the appropriate Auction Secretary:

M L Bister, 7 The Slade, Wrestlingworth, Sandy, Beds. SG19 2ES (email: auction1@fcps.org.uk) or

J N Hammonds, 31 Wheatsheaf Close, Horsham, West Sussex RH12 5TH (email: auction2@fcps.org.uk)

according to instructions

Please send material for circulation in booklet form to the appropriate Exchange Packet Secretary, viz.

France: R G E Wood, 51 Longstomps Avenue, Chelmsford, Essex CM2 9BY (Telephone 01245 267949).

Colonies: J C West, 5 Highbanks Road, Hatch End, Pinner, Middlesex HA5 4AR (Telephone 0208 428 4741).

The Library

Members are invited to avail themselves of the services of the Society's substantial library, on terms set out in the Library List distributed to all Members.

Librarian: G E Barker, 520 Halifax Road, Bradford BD6 2LP.

The Magazine Circuit

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

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* * *

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The Journal of the France & Colonies Philatelic Society

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SOCIETY NOTES

New Members

The Society is pleased to welcome the following:

1329 Munich Philatelic Library (Germany), 1330 C A C Cowling (Cambridgeshire), 1331 D Burnett-Marsh (Oxfordshire).

* * *

Jerold Massler

We have not heard from longstanding member and Monaco specialist Jerry Massler for some months, and his Journals are now being returned to sender. Can anybody throw any light on his whereabouts, please?

* * *

Postal Scam

Colin Spong reports that members should be aware of a postal scam, confirmed by Royal Mail and the Trading Standards Office, that involves a card being posted through your door from a company called PDS (Parcel Delivery Service) suggesting that they were unable to deliver a parcel and that you need to call them on 09066 611911 (a premium rate number). You are advised NOT to call this number, as it is a mail scam from Belize.

If you call the number and you start to hear a recorded message, you will already have been billed £15 for the phone call. If you do receive a card with these details, please contact Royal Mail Fraud on 0207 239 6655 or ICSTIS (the premium number service regulator) at www.icstis.org.uk.

* * *

Future Events

The London Group will meet at the Calthorpe Arms, Grays inn Road, London WC1 at 6.30pm on Wednesday 21 January 2009, when Chris Hitchen will display Paris and the Second World War.

The same group will also meet at the Royal Horticultural Halls, Greycoat Street, Westminster, London SW1 at 3.00pm on Saturday 28 February 2009, when John West will display the French Red Cross. The meeting will be followed by a supper (for those wishing to participate) at 5.30 for 5.45pm at Il Posto Ristorante Italiano, 316A Vauxhall Bridge Road, London SW1V 1AA.

The Society Weekend Conference will take place at Charlecote, near Stratford-upon-Avon from Friday 13 to Sunday 15 March 2009.

And the London Group will meet again at the Calthorpe Arms at 6.30pm on Wednesday 18 March 2009, giving members the opportunity to display their latest projects and acquisitions.

The Southern Group will meet at the East Worthing Community Centre, Pages Lane, East Worthing at 2.00pm on Saturday 10 January 2009 for members' displays on Mail by Air, Rail, Road or Sea.

The Northern Group will meet at Leeds General Infirmary, Great George Street, Leeds LS1 3EX at 1.30pm on Saturday 14 February 2009, when Stephen Holder will display Three Centuries of Alsace-Lorraine.

The Wessex Group will meet at the Scout Hall, Lower Street, Harnham, Salisbury at 10.30am (with lunch at the Mill Inn) on Saturday 31 January 2009. A programme card with further details is being sent to all regular members.

The Scottish Group will meet in Room 1, Cross House, Linlithgow at 2.00pm on Saturday 27 March 2009, when Peter Brand will display Accountancy and Entry Marks, and David Hogarth will display WWII French Internment Camps.

* * *

Exhibition Successes

The following members gained awards at WIPA 2008 in Vienna (18-21 September 2008):

Lesley Marley: Gold for "A Whale's Tale" (Thematic)

Dr Alfred Bonnici: Large Vermeil with Special Prize for "Messageries Impériales 1853-1865 and Malta" (Postal History); and Silver Bronze for "Malta Philatelic Journal" (Literature)

Francis Kiddle: Large Vermeil (further details not known)

Dr Luca Lavagnino: Vermeil for "The Post Office in Cuneo during the French administration (1801-1814)" (One Frame)

* * *

Mowbrays Australia Auction

This auction house (formerly known as Stanley Gibbons Australia) has just sent me an advertisement - without offering any payment! - announcing the sale of a specialised France collection formed by William Holbeach, to be auctioned in Sydney in March 2009. As this may be of interest to our members, I will outline the information here.

The collection contains stamps and postal history from Cérès to Sage, including a *ballon monté* addressed to Australia, the Sage 1c black/Prussian blue, early proofs/essays, *tête-bêche* varieties, and Bordeaux issues with plate reconstructions.

I have been given no address or telephone number, but catalogues can be requested via email:

mowbraysaustralia@ozemail.com.au

* * *

Midpex 2009

Members are advised that we have taken a table at Midpex, Coventry at their two yearly show which takes place on 11 July 2009. Midpex will be held at the new purpose built Xcel Leisure Centre, Mitchell Avenue, Canley, Coventry CV4 8DY and will be open between 10am and 5pm. This venue is about 1 mile from the previous one. Details of the event are on the website www.midpex.co.uk

At the last Midpex our table was a focal point for many of our members and others interested in French philately. This year we will not be mounting original material which avoids the security issue but need members prepared to man the stand for short periods. Volunteers for this are asked to contact Peter Kelly, our General Secretary.

* * *

Displays by Members

The following displays were given by members at Marcophile XXXII in Souillac (Lot) 3-6 October 2008:

Guy Dutau: "Un à-côté de la philatélie: les cartes porcelaine"

Peter Kelly: "Type Sage - Fin de la période classique? Juin

1876 au 1^{er} mai 1878"

Jean-Pierre Magne: "Les conséquences de la loi du 20 mai 1854 sur le courrier territorial non affranchi - Sélection de lettres autour de juillet 1854"

Peter Maybury: "Algérie au 19^e siècle"

* * *

BOOKSHELF

Mauritius: Indian Ocean Study Circle Handbook N° 12; Maritime Mail 1815-1868 by J W B Ruffle; republished September 2008 by the IOSC; comb bound, with illustrated laminated covers; b/w illustrations, 78pp + appendix; price £16 + p&p [UK £2.00, World surface £3.50]; available from Mrs S Hopson, Field Acre, Hoe Benham, Newbury, RG20 8PD (UK).

That this important and enduring work on the Maritime Mail to Mauritius by the late James Ruffle is still the main source of reference for students of the postal history of this area of the Indian Ocean would have delighted the author. Originally published in *The Philatelist & PJGB* by Robson Lowe during 1980-1983, it was published in two parts by the Study Circle in 1987 & 1988 and finally republished as a single volume in 1990.

Now long out of print and difficult to find, even second-hand, the very many requests received from collectors all over the world has persuaded the Committee to produce this present edition. This meticulous well-researched handbook by a quiet unassuming scholarly student of postal

history, together with the appendix covering the shipping information supplied by James' colleagues, has stood the test of time.

I am certain that this edition will meet the requirement of all new and old collectors of the mail to Mauritius, with examples of handstamps and covers indicating the various rates. This publication covers correspondence between the island Governors, postmasters and their Colonial masters. The various contracts arranged for conveyance of the mail, and examination of the different routes, together with the history of the companies and their vessels, are contained within these pages. I gladly welcome this republication and recommend it to all collectors of Maritime Mail.

Colin Spong

Books Noted

Les plis de navires à Kerguelen de 1950 à 2007 by Gilles Troispoux & Serge Delsaux; 36 pp in colour & b/w; price unknown; available from Club de Philatélie polaire de France, 11 rue Jean-Perrin, 45100 Orléans. [Illustrated list of covers posted at Kerguelen with a ship's cachet, including dates, type of ship, and observations on nature of mission.]

Répertoire FrancK, 2e édition by Francis Kéledjian; pub. Dallay; 128 pp; price 19,90€ + p&p; available from Editions Dallay, 17 avenue Georges-V, 75008 Paris. [List of current postage stamp booklets in new francs and euros, well illustrated and documented, with an on-line research tool:

<http://ffnetmodedemploi.free.fr/FrancK/franck.php>

Catalogue des Vignettes expérimentales by Gérard Gomez; 38 A4 pp; price 25€ + p&p; details from the author at 13 rue Hardy, 78000 Versailles. [4th edition of 1998 original with many innovations, including use of colour, new information and discoveries, corrected errors, varieties, up to date values.]

Catalogue des bureaux temporaires de Moselle and *Répertoire des bureaux temporaires de Moselle* by Patrice Schaff; A4 format; limited edition; price 19€ + p&p for catalogue and 3€ + p&p for list; details from the author at 1 allée des Verdiers, 71210 Montchanin. [All kinds of temporary cachets used in this *département* from 1913 to date, illustrated and priced, whether on letter or philatelic souvenir; the separate list gives bare details with no illustrations.]

Maurice Tyler

REPORTS OF MEETINGS

LONDON GROUP MEETING OF 24 SEPTEMBER 2008

Members: 12 Sheets

Introduced by convenor Len Barnes, the following members gave short displays:

Derek Richardson: Stamp order cards 1942-1956.

Michael Ensor: Pre-independence Togo – postmarks of Lomé.

Chris Hitchen: Paris Exhibitions 1855-1900.

Michael Wright: Various Cameroun covers 1914-1917.

Maurice Tyler: Preview of a few pages from Ashley Lawrence's forthcoming book on the Sower.

Len Barnes: Anti-TB labels 1962-1991 and Red Cross booklets 1952-1967.

Members present: Len Barnes, Michael Ensor, Michael Fairhead, Chris Hitchen, Hugh Loudon, Barbara Priddy, Derek Richardson, Maurice Tyler, Michael Wright.

MST

SCOTTISH GROUP MEETING OF 27 SEPTEMBER 2008

Joint Meeting with Germany & Colonies Philatelic Society

This was the first meeting in the new venue and a little time was spent finding our way around and in deciding how to arrange the boards.

In his absence, George Burney brought **Archie Hunter's** display. The theme of the display was the German occupation of Alsace, Lorraine and Luxembourg during the 2nd World War. Archie's sheets showed the overprinted Hindenburg heads as the issued stamps, on cover and as postal stationery. In addition there were covers with commemorative German stamps and cancellations, with postcards to add to the interest of the period.

Mavis Pavey followed the theme of Alsace with a more light-hearted look at the Route du Vin.

She started with vignettes from the La Belle France series and travelled north showing postcards and covers from the towns and villages, indicating the birthplace of Dr Albert Schweitzer, a wine museum, a postal museum, a stork sanctuary and other places of tourist interest. Commemorative stamps and cancellations were included as well as 2 chocolate Ecus, gifts from the postal museum. The fact that members got no nearer to wine than the labels reproduced on the sheets was commented upon more than once!

MP

SOUTHERN GROUP MEETING OF 4 OCTOBER 2008

Lesley Marley: the Sabine and Liberty issues of France

Colin welcomed Lesley to Worthing and on behalf of all present congratulated her on being awarded a Gold medal for "A Whale's Tale" exhibit at Vienna/WIPA 08. He also welcomed Mrs Kath Nash

The first half of Lesley's display was on the The Sabine or 'Sabine Lady' issue designed by Pierre Gandon from a painting by Jean-Louis David entitled "*Les Sabines*" in the Musée du Louvre. At the commencement of a term of a newly elected President a new issue is prepared and M. Bequet was chosen for the beginning of Giscard d'Estaing's appointment.

The first two values, 80c and 1F, were issued on 17 December 1977, followed by 11 more on 31 March 1978, and with the change in postage rates a third issue in June 1978. A fourth series appeared in October 1979; a fifth in 1980; a sixth issue in January 1981; followed by a seventh and final issue in September 1981.

Philatelic documents and black prints together with the various types of paper and metropolitan and tropical gum, phosphor and non-phosphor issues, postal stationery and booklets were displayed.

There were examples of "holding and forwarding" cards,

together with many examples of postally used covers including a number posted on the TAAF *paquebot Marion Desfresne*.

CWS

The second half of Lesley's display consisted of an examination of the *Liberté de Gandon* issue.

This issue came into being on the election of President Mitterrand. The head of *Liberté* was taken from the painting by Delacroix entitled "*Liberté Guidant le Peuple*"

The first stamps were issued on 4 January 1982 in sheet format with one or two phosphor bands. They were also issued as coils, booklets and postal stationery.

Each time postage rates were increased (which seemed to be annually) new values were issued, until the issue was withdrawn in 1990 when it was replaced by the *Marianne du Bicentenaire* issue.

Of interest during the period of issue were the "A", "B" and "C" denominated stamps. The "A" stamp was issued in August 1986 when the postage rates were increased. It covered the postage for second class letters. The first class tariff was unchanged, likewise in 1987 when the "B" stamp

was issued. However in 1990 the “C” stamp was issued in green and red, when both first and second class postages were increased. UPU regulations require the denomination of stamps to be in numerals. These stamps were, therefore, not valid on international mail, although examples have got through untaxed.

Booklets issued with advertisements and for PhilexFrance in 1989 were shown together with much other collateral material. The correct use of the stamps on a selection of covers was also shown, being of particular interest to the postal historian. Lesley's display covered all aspects of this fascinating stamp and was thoroughly enjoyed by those present.

JNH

NORTHERN GROUP MEETING OF 11 OCTOBER 2008

North-West Area: Members' Choice

Members Present: G E Barker, A Goude, P Maybury, J Mercer, J Morton, P Rooke, A Shepherd, J Smith, P Stockton, P Watkins. Guest: David Anderson (Stockport P S).

Apologies: R J Barnes, J W Cowell, S Ellis, C Graham, R L High, K Howitt, S Holder, B Lucas, M Meadowcroft, J Sussex.

During convivial pre-meeting coffee and biscuits Peter Stockton introduced his guest David Anderson. All then being suitably refreshed, **Peter Maybury** opened the morning session with a 72 sheet presentation of trans-Atlantic mail, covering North America, Central America, the West Indies and the East and West Coast routes to and from South America. **Jim Mercer** followed with a display of the 1956–1962 issues of Tunisia on cover complemented by a most entertaining 1922 family correspondence between a serving Foreign Legionnaire and his wife.

John Morton produced some Franco-Italian mail. A “fun collection” was his description of an eclectic display of covers to and from the *départements conquis*, the Napoleonic Kingdom of Italy and Trieste. **John Smith** favoured us with a fine display of the early foreign post offices in Morocco from 1862 up until WWI. We were treated to a superb selection of cancellations, overprints, and varieties, concluding with a selection of *carte de visite* envelopes.

A break for a most pleasant buffet lunch with wine, with Janet Stockton once again providing the comestibles, created the opportunity for some deep debates and some light-hearted banter.

George Barker then posted some early aspects of the Siege of Paris with a selection of varieties and uses of the Cérès

issues. Examples of the 20c *tête-bêche*, *découpages*, printing errors, and essays were among the treats. **Alan Goude** had brought along stamps and covers of the Second World War period from his burgeoning collection of Saint-Pierre et Miquelon. The history of the Vichy régime and the Free French forces was well illustrated with selections of genuine and forged overprinted stamps, with the latter being directed at the philatelic market.

A two part presentation by **Paul Watkins** featured Bordeaux material from Corsini letters of 1570 to early 19C colonial incoming mail, interspersed with some fine *Petite Poste* and bulk mail distributors' letters. The second selection comprised recent acquisitions of cross-Channel mail with an 1801 Armistice rate letter, mixed frankings, and registered and express covers. **Peter Rooke's** presentation of Napoleonic letters relating to the casualties of war proved a fascinating insight into some of the more unpleasant aspects of empire building, with the latter part of the display concentrating on the postal service of the Kingdom of Italy.

Our erstwhile convenor **Peter Stockton** brought the displays to a close with a selection of military and naval covers from his French Morocco collection featuring F.M. registered airmail and express letters. He then produced a selection of perfins and under-printed stamps, explaining that France was by no means the most prolific of the producers of perfins and posing the question “why were they banned in 1955?”

A vote of thanks to Peter and Janet for their hard work, in once again ensuring a most enjoyable visit to the Cheshire outback, was unanimously agreed.

JPM

LONDON GROUP MEETING OF 15 OCTOBER 2008

John Hammonds: Air Orient

John Hammonds gave a comprehensive account of France's developments of air links from France to Indo-China, finishing at the point in 1941 when hostilities finally halted the service. The aim was always to improve postal links within the French Empire.

He began with a baggage label showing the route and continued with covers from the late 1920s illustrating the gradual development of this air traffic and the change in company names leading to the formation of Air Orient in 1930. These items included various first flights involving problems of organisation and a number of crashes.

The inauguration of the France - Indo-China route came in 1931, and the service was further extended until 1933 when Air Orient joined with other airlines to form Air France. We were shown covers giving examples of such items as circular cachets used in Saigon, a record flight between Hanoi and Paris, marks such as *Service Accéléré*, and *Lettre Transportée Exceptionnellement*, and the inevitable accidents.

In the later 1930s new routes continued to be opened to the Near and Far East, from Paris and Marseille, and these were illustrated in some detailed descriptions of the weekly services concerned. Items noted included a “Flight

Delayed" cachet, and cards sent at a reduced rate for a 5-word message.

On the outbreak of war Air France suspended all services for a time in September 1939; the last departures from Marseille and Saigon were in June 1940, from which time the mail to France went by various routes, via Lydda, Hong Kong or Singapore. This service finally ceased on the Japanese occupation of Hong Kong in December 1941.

To conclude the display John finished with some timeta-

bles and photographs related to the material displayed. He gave a most informative talk on how the routes and service developed, which was much appreciated by the audience.

The vote of thanks was given by Alan Barrett.

Members present: Len Barnes, Alan Barrett, Mick Bister, Michael Fairhead, John Hammonds, Chris Hitchen, Hugh Loudon, Bill Mitchell, Barbara Priddy, John Thorpe. Guest: Hugh's brother A Loudon.

CJH

WESSEX GROUP MEETING OF 18 OCTOBER 2008

Chris Hitchen: Paris in World War II

Members' Displays

13 members and 3 guests gathered for our third and last meeting of 2008.

Our invited display was given by Chris Hitchen who showed us "Paris in the Second World War". This was a splendid and wide ranging display covering the whole period of the War in depth from the declaration and phoney war, the outbreak of war and occupation of Paris, right through to the Liberation. The period of occupation, the different German military post offices and marks and the difficulties in communication inside and outside of the two zones were illustrated by a fine range of material. There was also a section on POW and censored mail.

The Liberation was marked by several stamp issues produced by France, the UK and USA, as well as use of the Algerian stamps. Chris particularly drew our attention to

the postal slogans used throughout the war.

After lunch at the Old Mill the following members displayed:

Ashley Lawrence: The story of a letter sent on the *Ville d'Orléans* during the Siege of Paris and a splendid detective story;

Peter Kelly: *Type Sage*, inland mail 1876-1/5/1878;

Ingrid Swinburn: The revolutionary calendar, revolutionary dates and mail of the period as well as *assignats*;

Peter Lawrence: Query on a taxed postcard;

Alan Ketchell: A trip down the Loire, Chapter 2 - from Nevers to Chenonceau;

Edwin Rideout: Postage due stamps of France, the *bande-rolle* issue, and of Tunisia.

George Nash: 1 franc brown Pétain.

PRAK

LONDON GROUP MEETING OF 1 NOVEMBER 2008

Iain Stevenson: Pneumatic Post

The programme secretary Len Barnes welcomed Professor Iain Stevenson to a well attended meeting at the Royal Horticultural Halls.

Iain introduced his display by stating he had divided it into three parts – firstly, the origins of the service and 19th century pneumatic post postal stationery; secondly, 20th century postal stationery; and thirdly, franked private stationery and office and instructional marks.

Iain began by explaining how the service operated with its system of tubes, pumps, sending, receiving and exchange stations, and gave a description of the all-important cylinder into which the mail was packed. This was followed by a brief history of the early days of pneumatic mail with examples of postal stationery used in Berlin, Vienna and Budapest, all of which predated the Paris system.

The rebuilding of Paris after the Siege provided the capital with the opportunity to introduce its own pneumatic post system. The service became operational in 1879 under the telegraph rather than the postal authorities, as the former

already had the infrastructure of messengers and bicycles.

Iain showed us the first postal stationery, the 50c postcard (*carte-télégramme*) and the 75c lettercard (*télégramme*) with the provisional Sage design. These were followed by examples of the Chaplain design, (runner up to the Sage issue in the 1875 competition) issued in 1880 and which continued to be intermittently used until 1984 making it France's longest running stamp design.

Iain explained the need for weight and size restrictions, the fluctuation in rates, the application of surcharges and the changing terminology used to describe the types of pneumatic postal stationery. Initially the service operated only within the *octroi* with items being delivered within two hours of dispatch, but over the years the service expanded to embrace the whole of Paris and beyond. Iain showed how the early stages in the expansion of the system were beautifully illustrated on the postal stationery of 1882 to 1885 with the last items being overprinted **VALABLE POUR TOUT PARIS**.

In 1884 the first reply-paid postcards appeared and we saw examples of the special Caisse d'Épargne issue which enabled bank customers to obtain rapid authorisation to withdraw funds. These were accompanied by the introduction of a reply-paid lettercard system consisting of an outgoing lettercard in pink with an attached coupon which was redeemable against a blue lettercard with which to reply. Examples of all these new variations were displayed, including the rare sight of lettercards with the coupon still attached. In 1885 the first envelopes were issued and in 1897 the changing status of the service was recognised by the replacement of **SERVICE TÉLÉGRAPHIQUE** by **POSTES ET TÉLÉGRAPHES**, and **TÉLÉGRAMME** by **PNEUMATIQUE**.

The second part of Iain's display examined the development of postal stationery in the 20th century and in particular the unexplained substitution in 1903 of the Chaplain design by the Sower design. By now only lettercards and envelopes were being printed, but the text changed frequently as new offices were opened and their names progressively appeared on the back of the stationery. The Chaplain design was reinstated in 1917 but envelopes were only issued until 1923; thereafter the service only issued lettercards.

In 1920 Marseille opened its pneumatic system with a limited number of offices and we were treated to some scarce material from this service (*see illustration below*).

The Paris system was now operating up to 30 kilometres from the centre of Paris, and in some cases so-called pneumatic mail was not carried by the tube system but transported by motorcycle dispatch riders who linked the outer offices. An example was shown of an item sent in 1933 from Nogent-sur-Marne to Bry-sur-Marne.

The Chaplain design was temporarily replaced again during

the Second World War when Pétain's portrait figured on the 3F Lettercard. The Chaplain design returned after the war and due to soaring inflation the rate steadily increased from 6F in 1946 to 125F in 1959. By the 1960s use of the pneumatic post had declined to an average of 5000 items a year and eventually, in 1984, the whole system was closed down.

Iain's final display focused on private stationery with adhesives attached by the sender. Private stationery had been permitted since only 1902 but an item of correspondence sent in 1898 by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, correctly franked with a 50c Sage and headed **PAR TUBE**, showed that such rulings could be ignored when the government was concerned.

Other unusual items shown included a cover from the temporary pneumatic post office at the 1946 Paris Peace Conference and mail displaying a wide variety of instructional markings including **ANNULÉ**, **TROUVÉ À LA BOÎTE**, **PLI URGENT**, **BANLIEUE** and **RETARDÉ FORTUITEMENT**.

The highlight of the final display was an item of mail dated 1927 (*see front cover of this Journal*). As a result of the Paris floods the Vaugirard and Ségur telephone exchanges had been knocked out and subscribers in Paris 14 were allowed, for a period of ten days, to send correspondence through the pneumatic mail system at the reduced rate of 30c – the price of a telephone call.

Mick Bister thanked Iain for giving the Society such an interesting and informative display and for offering its members the opportunity to see some extremely unusual and rare material.

A number of those present then retired to a local Italian restaurant to partake of a most convivial and satisfying meal.



Marseille lettercard of 1931 used with a 30c postage due attached to pay the *poste restante* fee.

Tracing Service Reply Labels

John West



Figure 1

Following the outbreak of the First World War, the International Committee of the Red Cross¹ was quick to recognise that they would have an important, and substantial, role to play. In accordance with a mandate, conferred upon it by an international Red Cross conference, held in Washington in 1912, a special notice was sent to all the national societies requesting information concerning the composition of their prisoner-of-war commissions. Despatched on 15 August 1914, the notice also proposed the establishment of one central office that should be the focal point of all enquiries concerning prisoners of war.

On 21 August 1914 the 'International Agency of Relief and Information for the Prisoners of the First World War' was opened. In its infancy it was manned by the committee of 8, plus its secretary and a student volunteer. By the end of the year their ranks had swollen to a staff of 1,200! Initially, this agency was based at 3, Athénée, Geneva. However, it quickly became evident that this address was insufficient to cater for the demands being placed upon it and on 12 October 1914 the municipal authorities placed the Rath Museum, situated at Place Neuve in Geneva, at their disposal.

On 27 August 1914 the then President of the ICRC, M. Gustave Ador, issued a circular to formally announce the establishment of this International Agency. His missive stated that not only would the Agency act as a receiving

bureau for information about prisoners, but that it would organise the distribution of gifts intended for them². As importantly, it also stated that this Agency would assume responsibility for recording and classifying all requests to trace missing soldiers and for sending copies to the National Societies of the countries enmeshed in the war, in order to try and determine where missing personnel were incarcerated.

Perhaps it is uncharitable to make the suggestion, but it is unlikely that one of the original committee, Dr. Frédéric Ferrière, would have endeared himself to his colleagues with his proposal that they should increase their workload by embracing the problem of civilian internees. However, he succeeded in generating support for the creation of a Special Section at the Agency, which would deal with non-combatants who were missing. Some had simply fled to escape the fighting, some had been deported, some interned and, of course, many were to be killed. Nevertheless, they posed a huge logistical problem.

The organising committee introduced a filing system that, whilst basic, proved to be effective and subsequently withstood the rigours of both time and quantity. Requests immediately began to pour in and it was soon receiving in excess of 5,000 appeals for help, daily. With the volume of requests reaching such mammoth proportions, the staff formulated a simple system of 'Reply Labels', which were designed to be affixed to correspondence they had engen-

¹ The correct title for this organisation is the "Comité International de la Croix Rouge", also known by the abbreviation of CICR. For the purpose of this article, and to avoid confusion, the English version is used throughout.

² This activity was, subsequently, taken over by the postal services of the neutral countries - such as Denmark, Sweden, Holland and Switzerland itself.

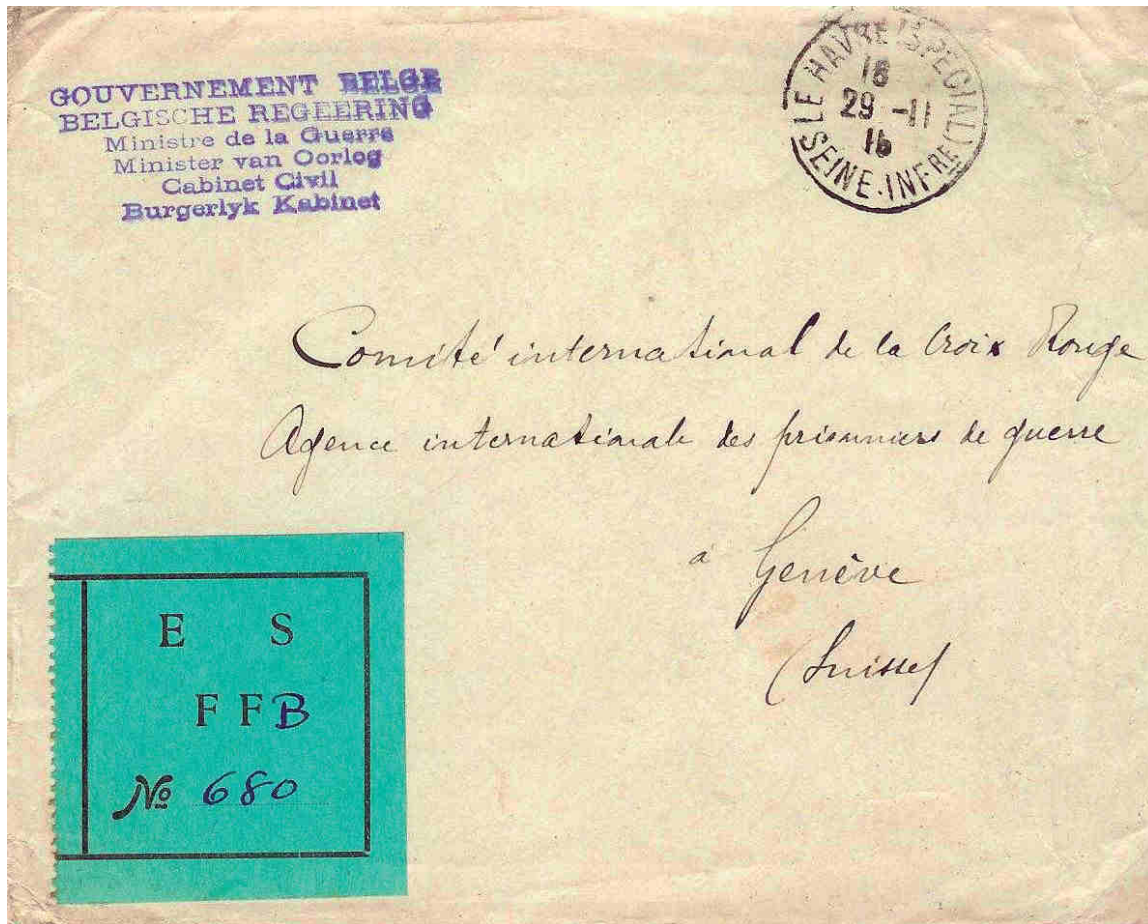


Figure 2

dered. To facilitate the expedient sorting of incoming mail, the labels were colour coded and contained a manuscript or, occasionally, a typescript filing reference number designed to identify the relevant section, or clerk, dealing with that enquiry.

The labels were all printed on coloured paper. Six separate colours are noted, although shades vary, and they are green, cerise, blue, buff, violet and scarlet. They were perforated in the centre (for the most part perf. 11.5) and on the left hand side (or part to be retained) of the se-tenant label the words "*Pour toute communication ultérieure prière de coller le timbre ci-joint sur l'enveloppe*" were printed in black on mail destined for France³. Versions in English and German were also available. The words were, invariably, printed inside a single line, black frame. On the standard sized labels this frame was square but the top and bottom lines extended by about 2mm towards the central perforation and, commonly, touched it.

Some labels were gummed and others - which were not - included the words "Please paste on answer" in English, German and French. It would appear to be the case that both types remained in use throughout the war, with the latest recorded use of an ungummed label being noted as 29 April 1919.

The right hand side of these se-tenant labels was expected

to be separated and attached to an envelope used to reply to any correspondence generated by the Agency. On this part of the label was another single line, black frame, identical in size and design to that on the opposite side of the perforation. Within that frame were printed the appropriate letters, or word, necessary to identify its purpose of use.

A second type of label, distinctly smaller in size, is noted as having been taken into use during the war. This was rectangular in shape with the printed framework lacking the extended lines of its predecessor. Additionally, in many instances, these labels did not have a central perforation. It is of interest to note that the large majority of the green labels that have been printed in the small format offer no evidence to suggest that they have been physically separated from another part. Oddly, many of the small blue (CIVILS) labels did have a perforation, although the 'teeth' were nothing like as distinct as its larger counterparts.

As previously mentioned, the labels can be found in six colours. Each colour had a significance that was emphasised by printed lettering inside the printed frame on the right hand side. On a green label, the letters **E S** would appear above the letters **F F**. In turn, and below these letters, would be the abbreviation, **No.**, where a file reference was added (Fig 1). In this instance the letters "**ESFF**" stand for "*Enquête Spéciale Fichier Français*" (Special Enquiry - French File). It should be noted that there are instances where these labels were adapted to cater for missing Belgians, by adding the letter **B**, in manuscript, after the letters **F F** (Fig 2). More rarely, this letter **B** can be found, rubber-

³ An alternative version, "En cas de réponse, prière de coller l'estampille ci-jointe sur votre enveloppe" is noted on some small "Civils" labels. Translated into English, this phrase indicates that the reader is urged to affix the adjoining label to the envelope used for a reply.

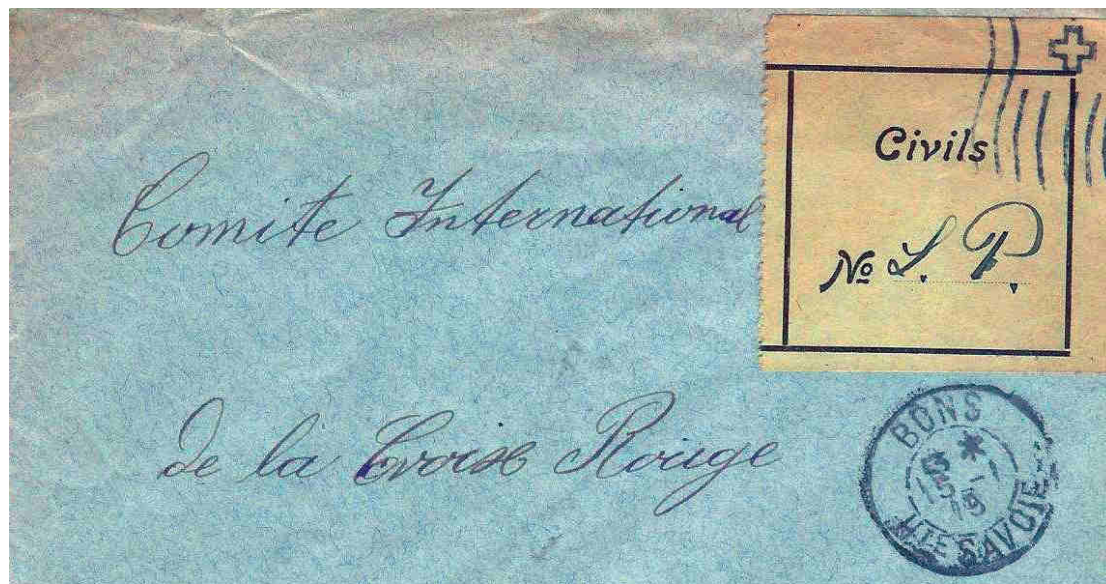


Figure 3



Figure 4

stamped, after the letters **FF**.

The green label is to be found in a variety of different shades. This may support the contention that there were a number of different printings but I also take the view that, after 90 years, some have been affected by exposure to daylight. One other variation has been noted, and this consists of the letters **s.P.** being added after the letters **FF**. Amongst the limited number of samples scrutinised, three instances have been sighted, each from France. One is in typescript on a 1917 cover from Limoges, with the others being handwritten - one on a cover from Tours and the other originating from the 'Chef du Bureau de Compte' of the 255th Artillery Regiment. Although no authoritative

confirmation has been obtained, it is assumed that the addition of these letters probably denotes a Polish interest.

The cerise label contained lettering that was very similar to the green label. In this instance, though, the letters read **E S** and **FA**. As these labels related to enquiries about German personnel, the letter **A** represented "Allemand". Readers should note that another cerise coloured label does exist, but this gives no visual indication that it relates to a German file. Further reference is made to this label later in the article.

For reasons unknown to the author, enquiries concerning civilians merited labels of two different colours, one buff and the other blue (Figs 3 & 4). Whilst identical in design,



Figure 5

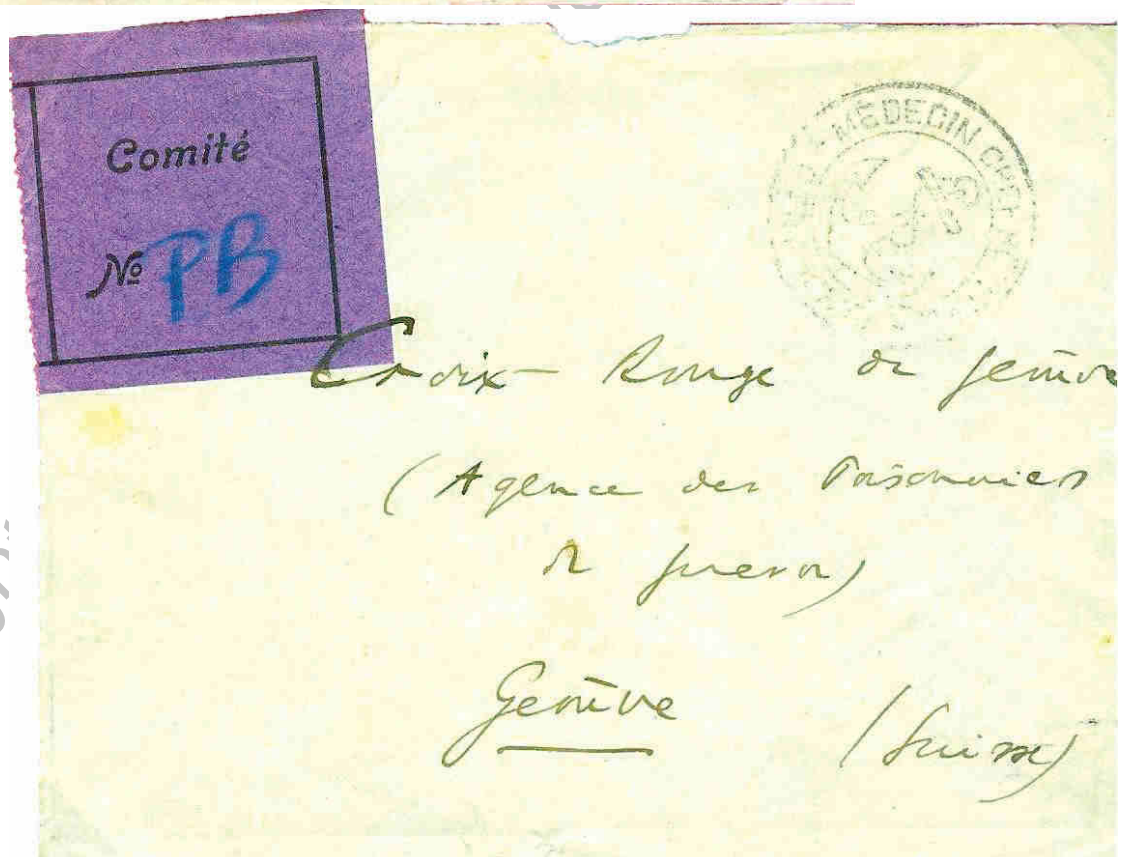


Figure 6

to the two previously described labels, the word **CIVILS** replaced the letters that signified a French or German enquiry. Scrutiny of the limited amount of material available provides evidence that suggests the majority of the blue labels were on mail originating from France, whilst most buff labels are on mail from Germany. It is emphasised that this should not be regarded by the reader as a hard

and fast rule, however, as neither label can be described as exclusive to either country!

By far the most scarce of these labels are those used, evidently by Agency Committee members, to denote that their correspondence related either to financial matters (a scarlet label with the word **TRÉSORERIE** printed ther-

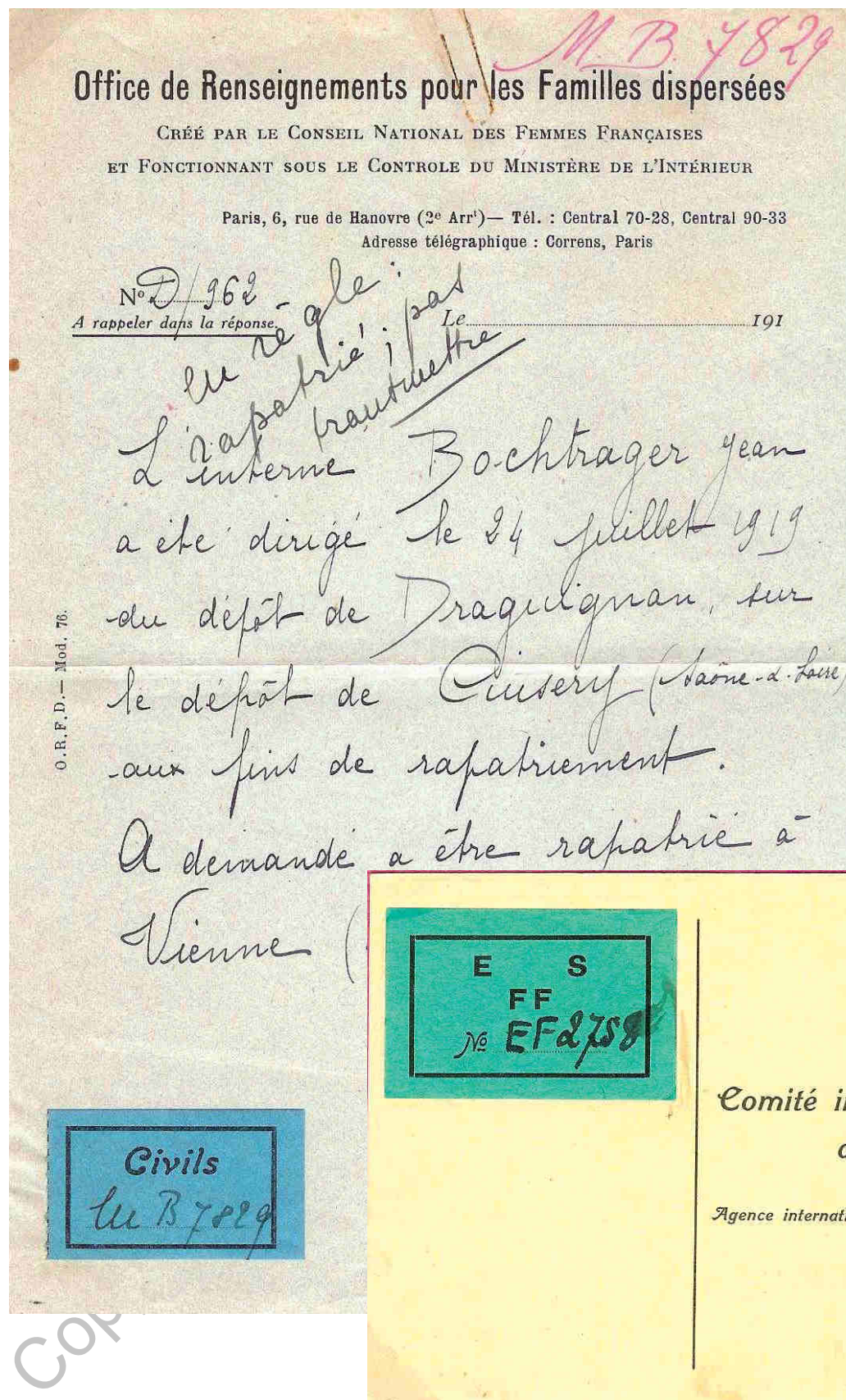


Figure 7

Figure 8 (below)

eon) or to general committee affairs, when a purple label with the word **COMITÉ** printed on it was utilised. (Figs 5 & 6).

It is not possible to specify an exact size of these labels as there is not sufficient consistency to provide the reader with an exact measurement. There were, however, two distinctly different sizes, which I have chosen to refer to as standard and small. As the availability of these labels, in their virgin

state, is minimal, I have referred to measurements of the part of the label affixed to the envelope. The standard size is approximately 47 x 47mm and the small label is approximately 46 x 30mm. From the small sample of complete labels seen by the author, it is possible to project these figures forward to assume an approximate full size of 94 x 47mm for the standard size label - and likewise for the small label. Examples of the small label have been noted



Figure 9
(Courtesy of Ian Gilchrist)

in green and blue (Figs 7 & 8) but the possibility of other colours having been produced in the smaller format cannot be excluded.

The actual reference numbers used continue to prove somewhat of a mystery to unravel. Or maybe there is no mystery? It is a fact, though, that there is relatively little information in the public domain concerning the letters used in the reference numbers that were provided. It does begin to seem unlikely that, after this passage of time, an easy answer will be found.

Such research as has been possible, utilising the limited amount of material presently available, does tend to indicate that many of the green labels - relating to a French soldier - contained a filing reference that commenced with the letter E and which was followed by a number containing up to 5 figures. There is no such correlation emerging from scrutiny of the cerise labels - concerning German soldiers. The reference numbers appear to have a haphazard and apparently unrelated combination of letters and numbers. On the other hand, labels attached to mail concerning civilian internees rarely contained more than just one or two letters - presumably initials of the particular filing clerk? It is quite evident, therefore, that different indexing styles were in operation in each of the sections. Maybe this was a deliberate policy, to avoid confusion between them. We will probably never know.

I can furnish no information, at this stage, concerning the number of these labels that were actually printed, or distributed, nor hazard a guess as to the percentage that

were actually used for the purpose they were designed for. No records seem to exist, even though it is known that the Agency made out a total of 4,805,000 index cards during the five years that it was in operation. Understandably, the bulk of the material that survives to this day is to be found on mail addressed to the ICRC at Geneva. Seemingly, a few staff realised the potential value of their incoming mail and preserved it!

The labels themselves had no postal value, of course, but it may be surmised that the sight of one at the Geneva Sorting Office would, doubtless, have helped the postal staff to instantly identify its destination. They would also have added credence to the sender's entitlement to free postage - even though examples have been seen where mail from France has been properly franked with stamps to the value of 25c.

One other mystery remains to be solved. I have yet to determine how the labels were printed in the first place. Were they printed individually? It is possible, but the lack of any uniform measurement - by width or breadth - seems to exclude the likelihood of any mechanised procedure. Had they been printed in booklets, somewhat like raffle tickets, then one would expect to find a serration on the edge that was detached from the book. No evidence of any such separation is to be found.

By a process of elimination, I have come to subscribe to the view that they may have been printed in sheets and, possibly, separated by guillotine.



Figure 10

It is uncommon, but not unheard of, to note more than one label on a cover. Instances are recorded of as many as three on one envelope (Fig 9). Maybe this is not quite as odd as it sounds when account is taken of the fact that a number of soldiers might well have been captured together and all detained at the same internment camp. Perhaps more unusual are instances of 'mixed multiples' - even though two separate examples were discovered (both on mail originating from Germany) in the fairly limited amount of material surveyed. In both of these examples, the green **ESFF** label and the buff **CIVILS** label were found on the same cover (Fig 10).

I have conducted a survey - albeit limited by the paucity of material available and, in truth, by my personal collecting preferences - which concentrates upon items with a French connection⁴. The results are shown as an appendix to this article. This survey has thrown up one final mystery. The most casual observer will hardly fail to notice that, where a date is available, all the mail appears to have originated during the period 1914-1916 and, that having been said, very little is recorded except in 1915.

Why, then, is there an apparent total lack of material from 1917 and 1918? Did the German authorities lack the charity to continue responding to the ICRC requests? It is surely unlikely that French hospital staff lacked the humanity to reply.

Is it more likely the case that the demands of space prevented staff at Geneva from collecting, and storing, the mass of envelopes that they, surely, continued to receive in

the latter years of the war?


Another problem of researching a subject that has not attracted a great deal of attention in the past is that the student is often astonished by fresh discoveries as he probes his subject. One presumes that there will always be one item that breaks the mould and I have discovered a couple of examples of a small cerise label that seems to defy the conventions previously described herein (Fig 11). The lettering, on five lines, is not boxed. The top line, on both sides, is for a reference number and likewise the second line has a space to insert a date. On the left hand side, below this, are the words "Please repeat" in German, French and English. On the right hand side are the words "Please paste on answer" again in German, French and, at the foot, English. This label has a printed, jagged, perforation - unlike all the others, which are straight lines. The examples I have seen suggest that this label was being used in 1919 - but, other than the colour, there is no clue as to what group of persons it related to.

In conclusion (although I hesitate to use the phrase when so many areas still require explanation) I feel that I should make reference to the existence of a much larger label than all of those that have previously been referred to within this article. I prefer to describe this item as an 'address label' - for this is surely the purpose for which it was designed - as anyone affixing this to a blank envelope could be assured of its safe delivery at Geneva.

It seems evident that these labels were introduced towards the end of the war. I have seen two, the first - originating in 1917 - from Zossen, in Germany, is green and includes the letters **ES**, **FF** and a manuscript reference number (E.45781), unlike the second. Although the second label

⁴ A number of the cerise ESFA labels exist on mail from Germany to Geneva. My survey was limited to mail concerning Germans, but which originated from France.

M.B. 7551



**Frl.Zw./Dl Nachrichtenstelle
für Verluste im Felde, Leipzig**
(Nachkunft über alle Angelegenheiten der im Felde Starbenden,
Nachrichten über Gefallene)
Helfen Sie uns in Kriegsgefangenen-Angelegenheiten mit persönlicher Beistand, wenn Sie selbst ausgetauscht
sind und den Deutschen „Kriegsgefangenen-Angelegenheiten“ nicht auf dem Leipziger Postamt erreicht
sich diese Personengruppe nicht.

**Nachkunftstelle
vom Roten Kreuz
Leipzig**
Nachkunft über
Verwundete und Gefangene,
Verwundete und Kranke

Leipzig, am **15.5.19.**
(Kgl. Kreisverwaltungsamt Leipzig 11)

An das
**Internationale Comité vom Roten Kreuz,
Genf.**

Betr.: B r a z z a l e, Franz und Marie.
Adr.: Barcelo Troy, Vicenza Contro.
geh. 10.1.19.
Munichhausen

Frau Brazzale schrieb an ihre hier lebende
Mutter zuletzt im April 1918. Wir bitten höflich
Erkundigungen nach dem Befinden *derelben* einzuleiten und
wenn möglich, den beigefügten Brief an diese zu
vermitteln. Für Beibringung einer eigenhändig ge-
schriebenen Bestätigung, ob die Familie Brazzale
den Brief erhalten hat und Mitteilung wie es dieser
z.Zt. geht, würden wir dankbar sein.

Nachrichtenstelle für Verluste im Felde
vom Roten Kreuz Leipzig

Im Auftrag:
Junger

Namen, Vornamen, Truppendienst (Regt. u. Komp), unterhalten
regelmäßig, präzis, formell, militärisch (reg. et comp.)
et name, first name, military incorporation (reg. et comp.)

W. Form 101, 9. 12. 1918.

Figure 11
(Courtesy of Ian Gilchrist)

has the words “SECTION CIVILE AM” printed on it there is no indication that a reference number should be inserted. This label is cerise and measures 82mm x 42mm and I am grateful to Robin Pizer for providing me with evidence of its use (Fig 12). His cover, postmarked at Bad Dürkheim on 20 June 1919, bears the French censor cachet “Contrôle par l'Autorité Militaire”, with the number 158. This cachet is understood to have been used by the French occupation forces in Landau, in the Rhineland Palatinate.

Perhaps this article has asked more questions than it has

answered! Nevertheless, so little appears to have been written on the topic, the efforts of anyone who can add to the limited knowledge of the author, and many others, can only be of benefit to those who would wish to broaden their knowledge on this fascinating subject.

The Agency finally closed its doors on 31 December 1919 and there is no evidence of ‘genuine’ use of these labels after that date..... although with the commencement of the second World War a similar system would, once again, be adopted - but that’s another story!



Figure 12
Courtesy of Robin Pizer

Postscript

It was almost inevitable that, having completed this article, yet another variation would be unearthed! I have recently discovered a green label, in the small format, with the letters **o.O** added after **F F**. Such possibilities as Orient and Outremer have been considered but the most likely solution appears to be that this relates to an Austrian internee. This is by no means certain because, whilst Austria trans-

lates to Österreich in its own country, in France it is read as Autriche and, it will be noted, all the other Geneva Tracing Service references are in French.

I am grateful to fellow Society members who were kind enough to assist me at the Philatelic Weekend by pointing out that the letters **s.P.** almost certainly stood for Sud Pologne – South Poland – though Poland did not actually exist as an independent country at that time.

Acknowledgements

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Robert T Kingsley of the American Helvetia Philatelic Society

Appendix - LIST OF LABELS KNOWN TO THE AUTHOR

GERMAN								
Colour	Perf.	Letters	Size	Ref. No.	Date	Origin	Owner	Remarks / Cachets
Cerise	11.5	E S F A	47 x 46	YU ZE 491	2/4/1915	Clermont - Fd.	JW	Temp Hospital 82
Cerise	11.5	E S F A	47 x 47	BE XJ 288	7/23/1915	Blaye	JW	Army Commander, Place de Blaye
Cerise	11.5	E S F A	47 x 47.5	RO ZR 232	2/8/1915	Poitiers	JW	POW Depot, Poitiers
Cerise	11.5	E S F A	47 x 46	JN X 247	6/30/1915	Rochefort s/Mer	JW	Hôpital La Touche, Tréville
Cerise	11.5	E S F A	47 x 48	P.B.	5/5/1915	Mâcon	JW	Hospices de Mâcon
Cerise	11.5	E S F A	47 x 46	P.B.	5/18/1915		JW	UFF Hôpital Auxiliaire No. 10
Cerise	11.5	E S F A	48 x 48	Ch.S (typescript)	21/??/1914	Orléans	JW	Garrison Major, Orléans
Pink	11.5	E S F A	47 x 47	ZD 354	11/1/1915		JW	h/s of "Le Médecin Chef - Hôpital Aux ^{re} du Territoire No. with 'République Assise'
Cerise	N/K	E S F A	unknown	AJ XA 448	10/10/1915	Poitiers	IG	POW Depot, Poitiers (IG reference 33154)
Cerise	N/K	E S F A	unknown	AJ 'Service Passage'	12/6/1915	Castres	IG	h/s of "Dépôt Principal des Prisonniers de Guerre, Castres + Le Commandant" (IG reference 30979)
Cerise	N/K	E S F A	unknown	W	12/12/1915	Castillonnes Lot et Garonne	IG	Circ. "Commission Militaire Postale - Besançon" & "Détach ^t des Prisonniers de Castillonnes" (Ref. 30978)
Pink	N/K	E S F A	unknown	? 6AZ 714	7/8/1916	Nenderoth	IG	Two circ. double ring "Kaiserliches Post- amt" (IG reference 30976)
Pink	N/K	E S F A	unknown	6AA 936		Elbbach	IG	Printed stationery of "Bürgermeisteramt Elbbach" (IG reference 30975)
Cerise	11.5	E S F A	46 x 47	Z a 550	12/9/1914	St Brieuc, Côtes du Nord	RP	Médecin-Chef de la Place de St Brieuc
Cerise	11.5	E S F A	48 x 47	ZI 484 / 485	12/19/1914	Nantes RP Loire Inf ^{re}	RP	2 line Le Général Commandant du 44 ^e Région / G.O. l'Officier de ... gier; 2 ring 44 ^e Région / Etat Major
Cerise	11.5	E S F A	47 x 48	Ch.S X+69	5/6/1915	Saint-Lô, Manche	RP	12 ^e Corps d'Armée Hôpital Temporaire No. 26 St Lô Le Médecin Chef
Cerise	11.5	E S F A	47 x 45	P.B.	5/8/1915	Bergerac	RP	12 ^e Corps d'Armée Hôp. Temp. No. 18. Bergerac
Cerise	11.5	E S F A	47 x 46	P.B.	5/11/1915	La Courtine, Creuse	RP	2 ring : Camp de la Courtine * Le Médecin Chef * / XII ^e Corps
Cerise	11.5	E S F A	47 x 47	Y.U Xm 137	5/17/1915	Tréguier, Côtes du Nord	RP	Hôpital Compl.74 de Tréguier (C. du N.) 10 ^e Région / 17 Mai 1915
Cerise	11.5	E S F A	47 x 46	PB	6/10/1915	Bourges, Cher	RP	5 line : Service de Santé / 8 ^e Région / Place de Bourges / Hôpital Militaire / Annexe "Sacré Coeur"
Cerise	11.5	E S F A	47 x 48	Xm 382	7/26/1915	Romans, Drôme	RP	2 ring allegorical figure in middle : Place de Romans / Le Médecin-Chef
Cerise	11.5	E S F A	49 x 46	RB ZI 906	no pmk		RP	2 ring allegorical figure in middle : Hôpital M ^{re} d'Instruction des Genettes * Le Médecin Chef *
Cerise	11.5	E S F A	47 x 47	Y.U Xm 448	8/23/1915	Le Havre Ingouville	RP	2 ring oval : Administration Pénitentiaire / Maison d'Arrêt du Havre
Cerise	11.5	E S F A	47 x 47	Xa 427 M.U.B.	8/26/1915	Le Verdon à Bordeaux	RP	2 ring : Dépôt de Trompeloup / Le Commandant
Cerise		E S F A	47 x 46	ZF 490	4/22/1915	Le Havre	SE	Cachet of Adjutant General's Office at the Base / Prisoner of War / No. 964

F R E N C H								
Colour	Perf.	Letters	Size	Ref. No.	Date	Origin	Owner	Remarks / Cachets
Green	11.5	E S F F s P	46 x 46	2267	unknown		JW	255 th Artillery Regiment
Green	11.5	E S F F	47 x 48	E 2089	2/2/1915	Paris 18	JW	Machine cancellation
Green	11.5	E S F F	46 x 45	E 100	8/24/1915	Trier	JW	Various German markings
Green	11.5	E S F F	? X 48	E 76769	unknown	Hesdin	JW	Mourning cover. Oval A.D.F. cachet of Comité d'Hesdin.
Green	11.5	E S F F	46 x 46	14789	unknown		JW	Régiment d'Artillerie à Pied.
Green	11.5	E S F F	48 x ?	E 13981	9/24/1915	Tours	JW	Régiment d'Infanterie
Green	11.5	E S F F	47 x 48	E 8792	6/17/1915	Darmstadt	JW	s/l "Kriegsgefangenensendung"
Green	11.5	E S F F	46 x 31	EF 2758	unknown	Molson	JW	
Green	11.5	E S F F	46 x 30	obliterated	5/17/1915	Gustrow	JW	s/l "Kriegsgefangenensendung"
Green	11.5	E S F F(B)	46 x 47	290	unknown	Charleroi	JW	German Eagle handstamp & cachet of Charleroi Garrison
Green	11.5	E S F F(B)	47 x 48	680	11/29/1916	Le Havre	JW	Gouvernement Belge / Belgische Regeering / Ministère de la Guerre / Minister van Oorlog / Cabinet Civil / Burgerlyk Kabinet
Green	11.5	E S F F	47 x 46	EF 177	6/8/1915	Camp Lucy	JW	Oval h/s Strassburg & P.K. (IG reference 4560)
Green	11.5	E S F F	47 x 47	14627	6/12/1915	Lindau	JW	Printed "Bdm Referbelazarett Lindau I. B." & "Heeresache" No 1336a. (IG reference 4561)
Green	11.5	E S F F	46 x 46	E 16396	7/7/1915	Malakof	JW	Postal franking of 2 x 10c & 1 x 5c (IG reference 32041)
Green	11.5	E S F F	46 x 46	9593	7/21/1915	Konstanz	JW	Figure 9593 is in typescript. S/L 'Heeressache'
			48 x 47	E16739				Circ. "Reserve - Lazarett / Torkelban / Kostanz II
Green	11.5	E S F F(o.o)	45 x 31	367	12/7/1915	Lyon	JW	d/r CDS "Parc d'Artillerie de Place"
Green	N/K	E S F F(B)	standard	324	11/24/1916	Le Havre	IG	As above. (IG reference 32045)
Green	none	E S F F	small	E 100	6/11/1915	Virton (Belgium)	IG	Printed 'Franc de Port' envelope (IG reference 33167)
Green	N/K	E S F F	standard	EB	12/25/1914	Charleroi (Belgium)	IG	Printed "Administration des Hospices de Charleroi" (IG reference 32042)
Green	N/K	E S F F	standard	20520	10/1/1915	Charleroi (Belgium)	IG	Circ. Cachet of "Garnisonarzt Charleroi" & German eagle. (IG reference 32021)
Green	N/K	E S F F	standard	E100	3/31/1915	Arlon (Belgium)	IG	Printed stationery of Belgian Red Cross & h/s in red of 'Sous-Comité d'Arlon' (IG reference 32046)
Green	N/K	E S F F	standard	14637	6/9/1915	Mons (Belgium)	IG	Boxed "KriegsLazarett Mons No." and m/s 2867 (IG reference 32039)
Green	N/K	E S F F	standard	13223	6/16/1915	Konstanz	IG	Circ. "Reserve - Lazarett / Torkelban / Kostanz II S/L "Heeressache" (IG reference No. 32040)
Green	none	E S F F	small	E 100	12/21/1915	Konstanz	IG	Circ H/S as above. Boxed cachet of Armee Korps Freiburg XIV. (IG reference 32038)
Green	N/K	E S F F	standard	E1281 E1282 E1283	1/2/1915	Strasbourg	IG	Printed "Burgermeisteramt der Stadt Strassburg" (IG reference 28400)
Green	N/K	E S F F	standard	EF 501	6/11/1915	Niedarzewhren	IG	Circ. 'German Eagle' handstamp of the 'Kommandant Kriegsgefangenenlager - Cassel. (IG reference 21634)
Green	N/K	E S F F	standard	3766 3767	2/10/1915	Klein-Wittenberg (Elbe)	IG	M/s "No. 107" (IG reference 28401)
Green	N/K	E S F F	standard	E3066	1/24/1915	Rastatt	IG	Circular cachet "Gefangenenlager" (IG Reference 28402)

Colour	Perf.	Letters	Size	Ref. No.	Date	Origin	Owner	Remarks / Cachets
Green	none	E S F F	small	E 7197	unknown	Münster	IG	S/R circ. German Eagle handstamp s/l "Kriegsgefangenensendung"
Green	N/K	E S F F	standard	E 17007 (typescript)	7/30/1915	Münster	IG	s/l "Heeressache" & double ringed Briefstempel Abi. 6 Munster II"
(See also - under CIVILS)								
Green	N/K	E S F F	standard	E 16256	7/5/1915	Luchon (Hte Garonne)	IG	2 x 10c red & 1 x 5c green 'Sowers'. (IG reference 33326)
Green	N/K	E S F F	standard	5447	7/7/1915	Weissenburg	IG	Boxed "Gefangenen-Lager Wulzburg b. Weissenburg" & boxed 'Kriegsgefangenensendung'. (IG reference 9207)
Green	N/K	E S F F	standard	E 16838	5/6/1915	Göttingen	IG	Circular 'German Eagle' handstamp - Göttingen (IG reference - 9208)
Green	N/K	E S F F	standard	E14968	6/15/1915	Döberitz	IG	Boxed "Gefangenenlager" over "Doeberitz" (IG reference - 9209)
Green	N/K	E S F F	standard (3 copies)	EF 416 EF 539 EF 540	6/17/1915	Cassel	IG	s/l "Kriegsgefangenensendung" & German Eagle s/f handstamp (IG reference 33328)
Green	N/K	E S F F	standard	9747	4/17/1915	Klein-Wittenberg	IG	2 boxed cachets, including s/l "Kriegsgefangenensendung"
(See also - under CIVILS)								
Green	11.5	E S F F	46x46	CII 131	2/5/1915	Paris-96 R. Gluck	RP	
Green	11.5	E S F F	46x45	E11879	5/8/1915	Le Crottoy Somme	RP	
Green	11.5	E S F F	47x46	E8718	6/1/1915	Le Monastier s/ Gazeille, Hte Loire	RP	
Green	11.5	E S F F	47x47	E10596	6/7/1915	Provins, Seine et Marne	RP	
Green	none	E S F F	46x30	E 100	6/15/1915	Meschede	RP	d/r eagle Kriegsgefangenen-Lazarett * Meschede * s/l boxed Heeressache
Green	11.5	E S F F(B)	46x46	67 Mlle Lachenal	8/4/1915	Saint-Lô, Manche	RP	d/r : 10 ^e Corps d'Armée Hôpital Complém ^{re} No. 36 Agneaux * Le Médecin-Chef *, allegorical figure
Green	11.5	E S F F	47x48	Négatif 28914	8/11/1915	St Antoine du Rocher, Indre et Loire	RP	
Green	11.5	E S F F	45x46	18278	8/12/1915	Stuttgart (Berg)	RP	boxed 3 line F.a. / Geprüft / Kriegs-Gefangenenlager Stuttgart II
Green	11.5	E S F F(B)	46x47	V-43	9/16/1915	St Nazaire, Loire Inf ^{re}	RP	2 ring allegorical : 147 ^e Régiment d'Infanterie Le Conseil d'Admin
Bluish green	11.5	E S F F s P.	45x45	20.36.	11/1/1915	Tours, Indre et Loire	RP	2 ring : Le Chef du Bureau de Comptabilité 9 ^e Rég ^t / de / Cuirassiers
Green	11.5	E S F F	45x45	E 22124	11/6/1915	Gardelegen	RP	s/r eagle Kommandantur des Gefangenen-lagers Gardelegen , s/l "Heeressache"
Green	11.5	E S F F B	46x46	1GG 896	08/04/1916	Brussel 1	RP	numeral 36, d/r censor Auslandstelle Aachen * in centre Freigegeben
Grey	none	E S F F	47x31	Z.1365	8/4/1916	Landau (Pfalz) 2	RP	s/r with bridge Militär-Postprüfungsstelle Landau Pfalz, Geprüft und zu befördern
Green	11.5	E S F F	46x46	X / R	11/28/1916	La Boissière Seine et Oise	RP	red cachet Service Franco Anglo Belge / Genève / Agence Internationale / des Prisonniers / de Guerre
Green	roulette ?	E S F F	47x46	III 1576	1/28/1917	Port à Binson, Marne	RP	French censor label 'Contrôle Postal Militaire' oval cachet : Ouvert par l'Autorité Militaire 168

Colour	Perf.	Letters	Size	Ref. No.	Date	Origin	Owner	Remarks / Cachets
Bluish green	none	E S F F s P.	46x30	5441	5/1/1917	Limoges, Hte Vienne	RP	French censor label 'Contrôle Postal Militaire' oval cachet : Ouvert par l'Autorité Militaire 121 / 2 ring Allegorical : Dépôt Commun des 4 et 12 Dragons / Le Commandant, blue numeral 64
Green	roulette ?	E S F F	46x ?? cut down	CVII 1710	6/17/1917	Grandvilliers, Oise	RP	French censor label 'Contrôle Postal Militaire' oval cachet : Ouvert par l'Autorité Militaire 122
Green	11.5	E S F F	46x47	E 5362	6/14/1918 2 Juil 1918 (censor date 1/L red)	Montpellier, Hérault	RP	French censor label 'Contrôle Postal Militaire' oval cachet : Ouvert par l'Autorité Militaire 122
Green		E S F F	47 x 44		3/15/1915	Paris	SE	cancellation obliterates reference number
Green		E S F F	45 x 46	E20025	10/3/1915		SE	
			45 x 46	E20688				
CIVILIANS								
Colour	Perf.	Letters	Size	Ref. No.	Date	Origin	Owner	Remarks / Cachets
Blue	11.5	CIVILS	47 x 47	RB	1/26/1915	Angers	JW	"Préfecture de Maine et Loire" & s/l "Franc de Port"
Blue	11.5	CIVILS	47 x 47	H 6/2	2/12/1915	T. & P. 88	JW	
Blue	9	CIVILS	41 x 24	MB 7829	12/12/1919	? Paris	JW	On headed notepaper of "Office de Renseignements pour les Familles Dispersées"
Buff	11.5	CIVILS	48 x 47	LP	1/15/1915	Bons, H ^c Savoie	JW	
Buff	11.5	CIVILS	47 x 47	S	3/18/1915	Cassel	JW	s/l "Kriegsgefangenensendung"
Buff	11.5	CIVILS	47 x 47	S	3/2/1915	Zwickau	JW	Various German handstamps
Buff		CIVILS	standard	GL	7/30/1915	Münster	IG	s/l "Heeressache" & double ringed Briefstempel Abi. 6 Münster II"
(See also under E.S.F.F.)								
Buff		CIVILS	standard	GZ	4/17/1915	Klein-Wittenberg	IG	2 boxed cachets, including s/l "Kriegsgefangenensendung"
(See also under E.S.F.F.)								
Buff		CIVILS	standard	GZ	5/6/1915	Holzminden	IG	2 s/l cachets
Buff		CIVILS	standard	GZ		Grafenwuh	IG	1 s/l German handstamp
Buff (2 labels)		CIVILS	standard	GZ	7/16/1915	Holzminden	IG	2 s/l German handstamps
			standard	GZ				
Buff	Yes	CIVILS	standard	GZ	6/20/1915	Givet	IG	Boxed "Feldpostbrief" & M/s No. 376
Buff	Yes	CIVILS	standard	GZ	6/12/1915	Holzminden	IG	Label on reverse of envelope
Buff (2 labels)	Yes	CIVILS	standard	GZ	9/15/1915	Holzminden	IG	both labels on reverse of envelope Circular German Eagle handstamp
			standard	GZ				
Buff (3 labels)	Yes	CIVILS	standard	GZ	6/9/1915	Holzminden	IG	3 line "Kommandantur / des Gefangenen-lagers / Bei Holzminden" & s/l "Heeressache" (IG reference 30991)
				GZ				
				GZ				
Buff (2 labels)	Yes	CIVILS	standard	GZ	9/22/1915	Zerbst	IG	Typescript envelope
				GZ				
Buff		CIVILS	standard	GZ	9/16/1915	Holzminden	IG	Label on reverse of envelope
Buff		CIVILS	standard	GZ	5/14/1915	Erfurt	IG	Label on reverse of envelope 3 German handstamps
Blue		CIVILS	standard	GZ	6/20/1915	St. Vaastla	IG	Boxed "Place de la Hougue / Camp des Evacués / Austro-Allemands" (IG reference 28426)
Blue		CIVILS	small	SR / EP 11	4/8/1919	Poland	IG	On letter to Geneva
Colour	Perf.	Letters	Size	Ref. No.	Date	Origin	Owner	Remarks / Cachets

Blue	entire	CIVILS	small	SR / EP 23	1/23/1919	Geneva	IG	On letter re Case 11601 - apparently to Poland (IG reference - awaits)
Blue		CIVILS	small	MB 7783	12/12/1919	Paris	IG	On headed notepaper of "Office de Renseignements pour les Familles Dispersées"
Blue		CIVILS	small	MB 7578	8/16/1919	Port-au-Prince, Haiti	IG	on document from 'Légation de France
Buff	11.5	CIVILS	47x47	X	12/5/1914	Strassburg (Els) 1	RP	2 line boxed : Strassburg (Els.) 1 / P.K. / Geprüft und freigegeben
Bluish grey	11.5	CIVILS	46x47	H 6/2	2/13/1915	Trésor et Postes 43	RP	
Bluish grey	11.5	CIVILS	46x46	H 6/1	2/14/1915	Trésor et Postes 110	RP	
Bluish grey	11.5	CIVILS	46x47	H 6/1	2/15/1915	153 ^e Infanterie Dépôt	RP	
Bluish grey	11.5	CIVILS	46x47	H 6/2	2/16/1915	Trésor et Postes ??	RP	2 ring allegorical : 324 ^e Régiment d'Infanterie
Bluish grey	11.5	CIVILS	46x46		3/22/1915	Nantes R.P., Loire Inf ^{re}	RP	2 ring : Section de Mobilisation * Service Postal * / Le Vaguemestre
Buff	11.5	CIVILS	46x47	G.2	4/24/1915	Cassel	RP	1 ring eagle : Kommandantur Kriegsgefangenenlager Cassel / Postprüfungs- / Stelle
Bluish grey	11.5	CIVILS	47x47	II B	5/22/1915	Toulouse-Gare, H ^{re} Garonne	RP	Office départemental / de recherches / pour les Familles dispersées, Toulouse
Bluish grey	11.5	CIVILS	47x46	R.Daniel 31.5.15. 1.	7/1/1915	St Denis, Seine	RP	
Bluish grey	11.5	CIVILS	46x46		undated		RP	2 ring : 166 ^e Régiment d'Infanterie / Service Postal
Bluish grey	11.5	CIVILS	47x46	M.B.	10/6/1915	Marseille Pl St Ferréol, B ^{ches} du Rhône	RP	2 ring allegorical : Préfecture des Bouches-du-Rhône * Police *
Bluish grey	11.5	CIVILS	44x46	M.B.	10/8/1915	Le Puy-en-Velay, H ^{re} Loire	RP	2 ring : Colonie des Etrangers de la Charente / Le Commissaire Délégué
Blue		CIVILS	94 x 47 (se-tenant)	F.E.	undated	? Verdun	SE	Marianne cachet of Hôpital Temporaire.

OTHERS

Colour	Perf.	Letters	Size	Ref. No.	Date	Origin	Owner	Remarks / Cachets
Purple	11.5	COMITE	47 x 48	PB	undated	Chauvinerie	JW	
Red	11.5	TRE-SORERIE	46 x 47	16	3/12/1915	Poitiers	JW	cachet of Prisoners of War Depot, Poitiers
Red	11.5	TRE-SORERIE	45 x 45	7	4/?/1915	Martinice - Jilemn	JW	S/L boxed "Überprüft"
Red		TRE-SORERIE		7	? 7/1/1915	Ucciani / Corsica	SE	
Green	rou-lette?	E S F F	82 x 50	E. 45781	4/4/1917	Zossen	JW	S/L Postbuts / Weinbergslager. D/R CDS Zossen / Übungsplatz. S/L 'Heeressache'. Circ. Handstamp of Kommandant des Weinbergslagers / Briefstempel / Zossen
Red	rou-lette?	CIVILE AM	82x47		6/20/1919	Bad Dürkheim	RP	Address label : COMITE INTERNATIONAL DE LA CROIX-ROUGE, Agence internationale des Prisonniers de guerre, GENEVE, Suisse, SECTION CIVILE AM

SHORTER ITEMS - INCLUDING QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Booklet Publicity Tabs



Recently I acquired eleven fronts, all airmails from Bordeaux to Dakar from 1926 to 1935, addressed to the same person who served on board *Asie* and *Brazza*, both Chargeurs Réunis ships. During this period the addressee rose in rank from waiter to *maître d'hôtel*.

This illustration is of a front posted in 1934. You will see that it has a 50c *Paix* issue, but as so often the cancel makes the variety indiscernible. The publicity label attached to the stamp reads:

MOTEURS AGRICOLES
&
INDUSTRIES
CATALOGUE FRANCO

I have a copy of Dallay France Catalogue 2006/7, which is the only catalogue I have seen that lists these labels. I cannot see this one listed, however, and I would like to know whether Dallay lists ALL labels known, or just some of them.

John Mayne

SS Normandie Machine Cancel

I am trying to find out the serial number of the RBV cancelling machine that was on board the *SS Normandie*, and I wondered whether any of your members could help me. I

am Associate Postal Historian at the United States National Postal Museum, and I can be contacted either directly by email (rsmall003@comcast.net) or via the Editor.

Richard Small

WWII Airmail Rates from French Equatorial Africa

I am a long term member of the Belgian Study Circle, but have run into unknown territory with an August 1942 letter from AEF to Perpignan in Vichy France. It is franked with 2 x 6F50 stamps for a total of 13F and originated from Port-Gentil.

Could one of your members please either confirm this wartime rate or point me to a website where this information exists? Thank you in advance for any help. My postal address is Box 156, Balwyn 3103, Australia; telephone no. +613 9855 0999; and email nedrabm@bigpond.com

Michael Barden

Encore le Franc!

Recently a friend gave me two covers which had been sent to her (in Glasgow) from France. Both are postmarked “06 NICE ST BARTHELEMY CT / ALPES M^{MES}”:-

(a) 05.12.07 franked with 1F90 *Liberté* (coil) and 1F40 Teilhard de Chardin;

(b) 04.01.08 franked with 2F10 Marianne de Briat.

Assuming that stamps in francs have not been demon-

etised, the French Post Office must still have tables of the equivalent rates in euros. At the time of conversion 3F30 = c 50 cents and 2F10 = c 30 cents. Both covers have a label (in green) **ECONOMIQUE 2 / MARITIME**.

Are these covers at a special rate for printed matter sent out by the publisher – a category I thought was long discontinued – or an ordinary bulk rate tariff? It is nice to see the VOIE MARITIME survives!

Jim Moffat

Comment on FM Letter from Far East to Occupied Germany

This is just a quick, belated mini-bit of information in response to John Garner’s question in Journal 248 (June 2008) page 44.

Postal Sector N° 71134 (if it is indeed 71134 and not 71114) was used by a parachute unit, the Section de Livraison par Air de Seno, located (obviously) at Seno in Laos. Its military

post office was Boîte Postale Militaire N° 407A (Source: René Goin, ‘Les Troupes Aéroportées en Indochine’, in *Les Feuilles Marcophiles*, N° 194, 4th Quarter 1973, p 28).

BPM 407A is confirmed as being at Seno by Colonel Deloste in his *Histoire Postale et Militaire du XXe Siècle* (Échangiste Universel, Bischwiller, 1970), page 124.

Roy Reader

Unusual Cachet on Morocco Registered Airmail Cover



I would like to know the significance of the single circle with the notation “XV / 602” on this Moroccan registered airmail cover date stamped 30.5.1986 from Casablanca to Paris. I assume it is a postman’s delivery mark?

David Taylor Smith

New Caledonia Postage Stamps of the FNLC, Algiers, in WWII

In Journal 249 of September 2008 (page 106) John Mayne sought an explanation as to why the Dallay Catalogue gave two issues of these stamps for New Caledonia. I first thought that the second entry could be an oversight for New Hebrides, which colony/condominium is a notable absentee from its listing and would surely not have been covered by ‘Oceania’. This was a shot in the dark on my part as I’m sure such an error would have caused comment much earlier.

Then, in an exchange of correspondence, Bill Mitchell suggested that the smaller dispatch of stamps to New Caledonia was more likely to have been intended for Wallis

& Futuna Islands, which used overprinted New Caledonia stamps – and I fall in line with him on this. It does, of course, leave the question as to why the New Hebrides were left out but, given the Anglo-French Condominium status, the writ of the Free French in Algiers probably didn’t extend that far. I have not studied the position of the Condominium in World War II.

[I wrote to Dallay about this some months ago, but have received no reply. For a more detailed examination of the issue of these stamps see Bill Mitchell’s article starting on page 153 — Editor]

Bob Maddocks

Corrigendum: German Tax Marks

When I published John Mayne’s article on German *Taxe* marks on Togo mail in Journal 248 of June 2008 (page 41) I made one small error that should have been corrected in

the following Journal, but for various reasons this was not done. I therefore apologise for this, and make it clear that the mail carriers mentioned should read **Victor** & Co.

Maurice Tyler

Airmail Routes and Rates from Cameroun to the UK during World War II

Martin Bratzel and Bob Picirilli

The study group researching airmail rates used in French colonies up to the end of 1945 continues to make progress. We plan to publish a book with the results, perhaps as soon as 2009. Meanwhile, although there are 6,200 covers in our database at the time of writing, our need for photocopies of covers continues, and we include an appeal at the conclusion of this article.

This article begins with 1 September 1939. It reveals a problem and raises questions that we hope others will be able to help us with. And though the article is specific for French Cameroon (hereafter Cameroun), much of it applies equally to French Equatorial Africa. Unlike the rest of French Africa, including Madagascar and Reunion, these territories declared for de Gaulle's Free French government shortly after the Armistice of 22 June 1940 — all but Gabon in August and that colony in November — and were known, collectively, as "Free French Africa" (AFL = Afrique Française Libre).

As indicated in earlier articles, airmail letters from French areas prior to 1946 typically paid the basic letter rates (some call this "surface") — and registration, if desired — in addition to the airmail surtaxes required. Basic and registration rates differed, depending on whether the letter was destined for another part of the worldwide French community ("domestic basic") or for a place not a part of the French community ("foreign basic"). Thus one must know these first. Table 1 overleaf shows the foreign basic rates used in Cameroun (up to 100g) from 1939-45.¹

¹ See M P Bratzel, Jr., *The Postal Tariffs of Cameroun under French Administration — 1916-1959* (Windsor: MPB Canada, 2007).

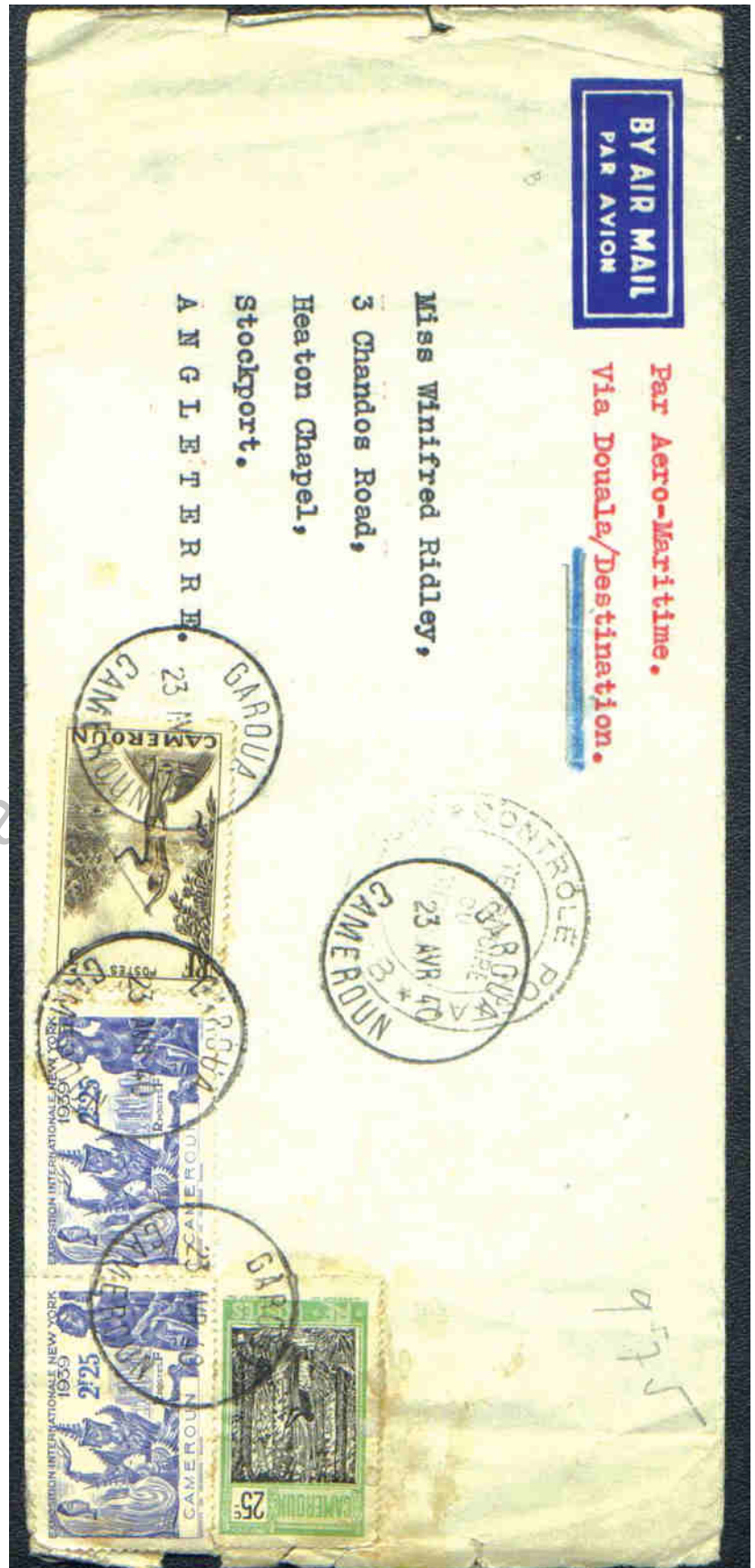


Figure 1

Envelope postmarked Garoua 23 Avr 40.

No transit marks.

Commission B (Yaoundé) postal control mark.

Typed "Par Aero-Maritime / Via Douala / Destination".

Postage paid – 9F75 = 2F50 basic
+ double 3F (5-10g) air to France
+ 1F25 air France to England.
(Illustration courtesy Owen Scott)



Figure 2

Envelope postmarked Douala 29 Mai 41. Transit Lagos 30 MY 41 on back.
Commission A (Douala) postal control marks and Passed by Censor / 12 / Nigeria (Lagos) mark.
Inscribed "Par Avion". Postage paid – 9F25 = 2F50 basic + 2F50 registry, leaving 4f25 for air mail.
(Illustration courtesy Michael Pigginn)

Table 1: Foreign Basic in Cameroun, 1939-45			
Date	0-20g	+ per 20g over	+ Registration
1 Jan 1939	2F25	+ 1F25	+ 2F50
1 Feb 1940	2F50	+ 1F50	+ 2F50
1 Feb 1944	4F	+ 2F40	+ 4F

But when it comes to determining the airmail surtaxes to be added to these basic rates, the matter is not so simple. One reason is that the official *Journal of Cameroun* (*Journal officiel du Cameroun*, hereafter *JO Cameroun*), during this period, did not publish the airmail surtaxes to the UK or any other foreign destinations, only to France and part of French Africa. Perhaps the wartime constraints and frequently changing circumstances contributed to that. Regardless, this leaves us for the most part dependent on cover evidence as a means of determining the surtaxes involved. The discussion that follows deals with this evidence, and with other related information available, according to defined periods of time.

Airmail Routes during World War II

Prior to June 1940, airmail destined for the UK was generally routed — by airlines under contract to the French — from Cameroun via France², but the Armistice left northern France occupied by Germany and the southern part under

a puppet government at Vichy. Though Air France ceased operations, the Vichy government established Régie Air France to fly the old routes into Africa. As noted above, however, Cameroun and AEF declared for de Gaulle's Free French, and Vichy flights to Cameroun and AEF never became a reality.

Air services through Douala were re-established in October 1940 when Sabena, by arrangement with BOAC, inaugurated a service connecting Takoradi (Gold Coast) through Lagos (Nigeria) to Douala and on to Cairo. Although there was some shifting of schedules, by the end of October 1941 the Free French had established a regular route from the French Levant to the French Congo in nearby AEF; by mid 1943 there was a circuit from Pointe Noire-Libreville-Douala-Lagos-Accra-Kano-Fort Lamy and return. By November 1943 the old Aéromaritime route (now under LAM) from Dakar to Lagos was extended to Douala and Pointe Noire.³

September 1939 to June 1940

During this period, as noted, the usual way for airmail to go from Cameroun to the UK was via France. Connections

2 Alternatively, airmail could be sent via Imperial Airways, which served British West Africa, but the higher surtax made that route less desirable.

3 See R J Maddocks, "West African Airmails Carried by the French Aeromarine Service," *Cameo*, vol 5, n° 2 (July 1995), pp. 63-66; Henri Truc, "Etude retrospective résumée sur la Poste Aérienne de juin-juillet 1939 à fin 1945," *L'Aviette Postale*, Jan-Feb, Mar-May, Sep-Oct, Nov-Dec 1946 (N°s 147-48, 149-51, 155-56, 157-58); "Les lignes aériennes françaises," *Les Cahiers Français* N° 45 (1 Jul 1943), pp. 29-32.



Figure 3

Envelope postmarked Nkongsamba 8 Nov 42. No transit marks.

Commission A (Douala) postal control mark plus resealing tape tied with eye-shaped Ouvert / par / l'Autorite Militaire mark. Triangular postal control mark reportedly applied at Lagos. Handstamped "Par Avion."

Postage paid – 8F50 = 2F50 basic + 6F airmail.

between Paris or Marseille and Cameroun remained open, as did those between Paris and London. A person sending airmail by this route could pay only the surtax between Cameroun and France, if desired (and this was often the case), or add to it the surtax between France and the UK (often referred to as OAT, for onward air transmission). The surtaxes involved were:

3F / 5g air to France; + 1F25 / 20g air France to the UK

At this point we have photocopies of just three covers that made the trip during this period:

- 16 Jan 1940 @ 6F = 2F25 basic + 3F air to France + 75c overpay?⁴
- 15 Mar 1940 @ 5F50 = 2F50 basic + 3F air as far as France.
- 23 Apr 1940 @ 9F75 = 2F50 basic + double 3F (5-10g) air to France + 1F25 OAT to destination (Fig 1).

June 1940 to February 1941

From late June to September 1940 Cameroun enjoyed no air service.⁵ As noted above, Sabena included Douala on its African route in October 1940, but this went westbound

only as far as Takoradi. But this was apparently the only airline touching Cameroun during this period. We have no photocopies of covers from Cameroun to the UK between 23 April 1940 (above) and 21 February 1941 (below).

February 1941 to the end of 1941

We have photocopies of five airmail covers to the UK during this period:

- 21 Feb 1941 @ 6F = 2F50 basic, leaving 3F50 for airmail.
- 29 May 1941 @ 9F25, registered = 2F50 basic + 2F50 registry, leaving 4F25 for airmail (Fig 2).
- 6 Jun 1941 @ 9F = 2F50 basic, leaving 6F50 for airmail.
- 10 Sep 1941 @ 5F50 = 2F50 basic, leaving 3F for airmail.
- ? Nov 1941 @ 3F75 = 2F50 basic, leaving 1F25 for airmail.

There is no pattern, here, that enables us to determine the airmail surtaxes involved. Perhaps more covers would reveal a pattern.

What about the route? How were these covers flown to the UK — if they were? We have only the markings on the covers, especially the censorship markings, to help us. Four of the five passed through Lagos, Nigeria, as evidenced either by a transit stamp or a censor's marking. Otherwise they have nothing in common except for censorship in Camer-

4 It is possible that the sender or postal clerk was unaware that the OAT surtax from France to the UK had changed from 75c / 20g to 1F25 / 20g as of late November 1939.

5 Given the political uncertainties, it is doubtful that any airmail would have been carried via non-French services, such as Britain's Imperial Airways (note 2), during this period.

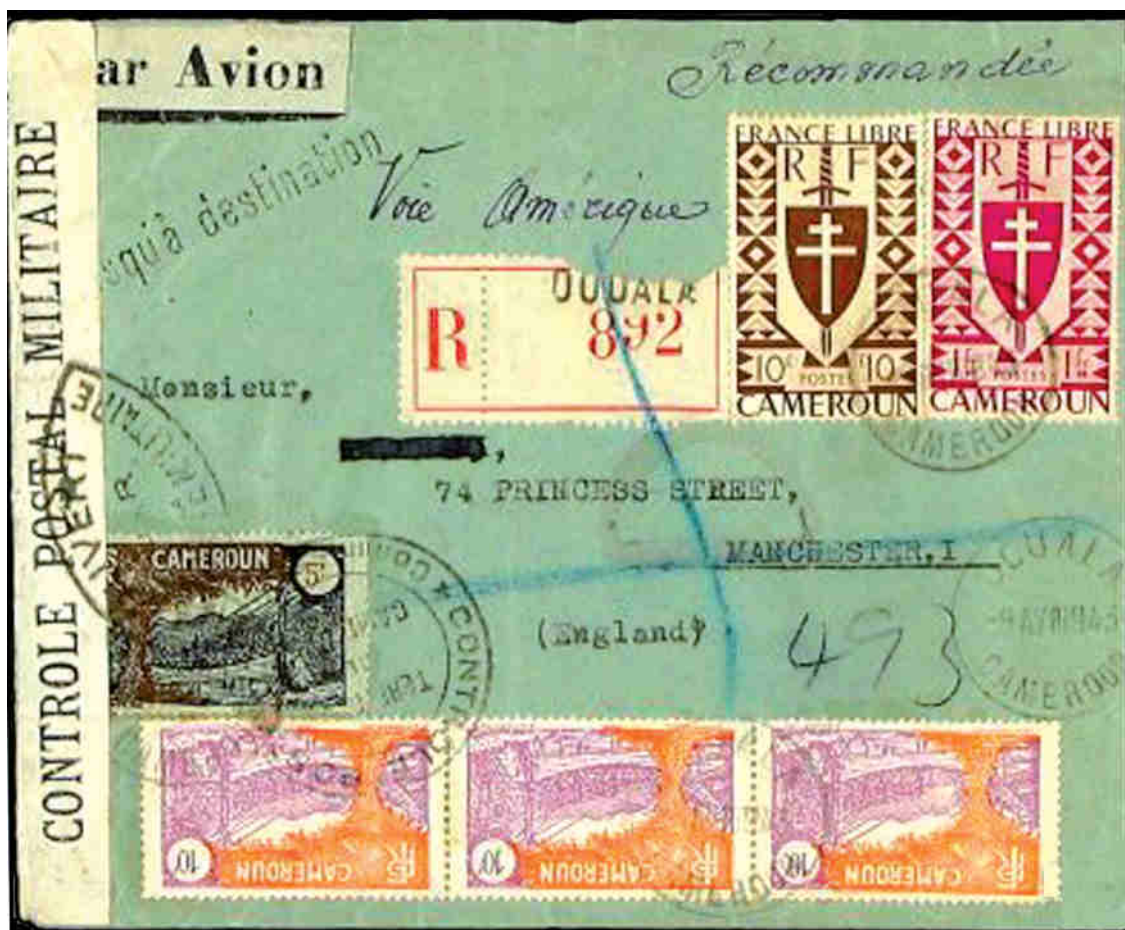


Figure 4

Envelope postmarked Douala 9 Avr 1943.

Commission A (Douala) postal control mark plus resealing tape tied with eye-shaped mark.

Handstamped "jusqu'a destination" and manuscript "Voie Amériq".

Postage paid – 46F = 2F50 basic + 2F50 registration + 41F (probably double 20F50 for 5-10g) airmail.

(Cover offered on eBay)

oun itself. It is possible that these covers were flown only within Africa, perhaps from Cameroun to Lagos, and went from there to the UK by surface. Even for the British colonies in West Africa there was apparently no civilian airmail to the UK during this period; see further below.

1942-43

Some of the 1942-43 covers begin to show a recognizable pattern: namely, an airmail surtax of 6F / 5g. The evidence for this is as follows:

- Five @ 8F50 (23 Feb, 8 and 9 Nov 1942; 26 Mar, 31 Dec 1943) = 2F50 basic + 6F airmail (Fig 3).
- Three @ 14F50 (31 Mar, 19 Sep, 5 Dec 1942) = 2F50 basic + double 6F airmail (5-10g).
- Two @ 17F, registered (22 Aug 1942; 17 May 1943) = 2F50 basic + 2F50 registration + double 6F airmail.
- One @ 20F50 (2 May 1942) = 2F50 basic + triple 6F airmail (10-15g).
- One @ 26F50 (29 Sep 1942) = 2F50 basic + four x 6F airmail (15-20g).
- One @ 42F50, registered (15 Jul 1943) = 4F basic (20-40g) + 2F50 registration + six x 6F airmail (25-30g).⁶

To be fair, these thirteen represent just half of the covers in our database during 1942-43; the others do not fit this pattern. However, seven of the others are marked to fly via the USA, which meant twice across the Atlantic via Pan American (FAM 22 westward, then FAM 18) — a slow and sometimes unreliable service:

- One, a registered letter canceled 26 Mar 1942 in Lolo-dorf, made transit in Lagos (2 Apr), Miami (13 Apr), and NY (14 Apr), thus making time that was unusually good for FAM 22 mail at the time. But it paid only 6F40: 2F50 basic + 2F50 registration, leaving just 1F40 for airmail, an impossible amount!
- Three (1 May, 19 Dec 1942; 21 Aug 1943) @ 23F = 2F50 basic, leaving 20F50 for airmail — a much more realistic amount. Being unregistered, there are no transit markings to confirm the route.⁷
- One (9 Apr 1943) @ 46F, registered = 2F50 basic + 2F50 registration, leaving 41F for airmail (possibly double 20F50 or double 20F with overpayment) (Fig 4).

⁶ Unlike the rest in this list, this cover has a censor tape (n° 552) that might have been applied in Bermuda, indicating that it (like those to follow) might have been flown via the US. In that case, the analysis would be 2F50 basic + 2F50 registration, leaving 37F for the unknown airmail surtax.

⁷ From the official journal of AEF we know that the airmail surtax from AEF to the UK for the double Atlantic crossing, as of 15 Aug 1943, was 22F / 5g. There is a little evidence among AEF covers that it was 20F / 5g before 1943, as early as October 1942. Given the nearly identical situation of Cameroun and AEF during this period, it is possible that these covers were paying about the correct amount (perhaps 50c overpaid for convenience?).

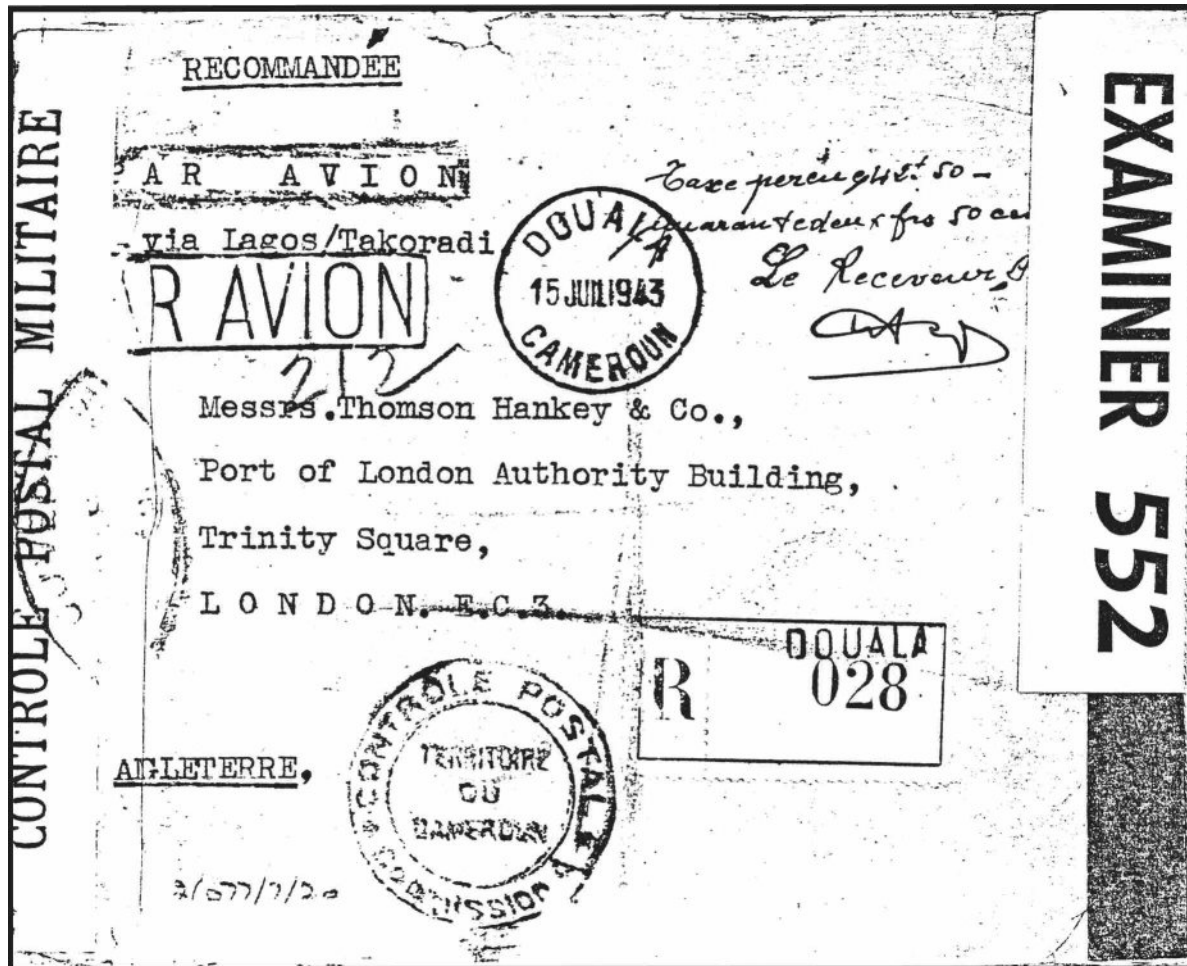


Figure 5

Envelope postmarked Douala 15 Jul 1943.

Commission A (Douala) postal control mark plus resealing tape tied with eye-shaped mark.

British resealing tape imprinted "Examiner 552" overlays dark resealing tape.

Handstamped "Par Avion" and typed "Par Avion / via Lagos / Takoradi".

Postage paid in cash – 42F50 = 4F basic (20-40g) + 2F50 registration + six times 6F airmail (25-30g).

(Illustration courtesy Michael Wright)

- One (7 Sep 1943) @ 66F, registered = 2F50 basic + 2F50 registration, leaving 61F for airmail (possibly triple 20F / 5g with overpayment or triple 20F50 with underpayment). Not marked to go via the US, but with transit stamps in Miami (29 Sep) and NY (1 Oct) — and a P.C. 90 censor tape (n° 552) that might have been applied in Bermuda.
- One (27 Nov 1943) @ 28F50 = 2F50 basic, leaving 26F for airmail.

(The other covers not analyzed here fit no pattern — some are marked postage due — and offer no help in determining the route or surtax involved or the extent that air service was provided.)

The operative question, then, is whether there was any alternative, during 1942-43, for an airmail letter to be flown from West Africa to the UK, other than going twice across the Atlantic via the US; and whether the 6F / 5g surtax (evidenced by the covers above) was intended to cover air transport all the way to the UK?

Even from the British West African colonies this was an issue. Barbara Priddy and Rob May have established that (with few exceptions, especially from Bathurst in The Gambia) civilian airmail was not carried directly from West

Africa to the UK after June 1940 until some allotments were allowed on BOAC flights (UK bound only) beginning in May/June 1942 — after which most airmail went that way rather than via the US.⁸

How much airmail from French colonies — Cameroun and AEF — might have been included in this is not clear, however. Given the Free French alliance with the UK, perhaps some was included on a space available basis.⁹ Essentially all of the covers listed above, for 1942-43, made transit in Lagos, again evidenced either by censor or transit stamps, whether marked to go by the US or not. Though most cov-

8 Barbara Priddy, "Introduction," *West African Airmails: The McCaig and Porter Collections* (Dronfield: West Africa Study Circle, 2002), p. 262; also her chapter four in Michael Ensor, ed., *The Postal Services of the Gold Coast 1901-1957* (Dronfield: West Africa Study Circle, 1998), pp. 162-163. Rob May, "West African Airmail links with Europe after June 1940," *The London Philatelist*, December 2006, p. 115, has cited official evidence. That most covers went (by surface or BOAC) directly to the UK does not mean that all of them did; some still went via the US, as did also some from AEF.

9 François Chauvin, "1942: de l'A.E.F. à Londres via Sabena et B.O.A.C.," *Timbres magazine*, Jan 2005, pp. 129-31, describes a July 1942 cover as flown from Libreville to Lagos via Sabena or BOAC, and from there by a BOAC seaplane, skirting French West Africa, to Lisbon "where it caught a connection to Britain."

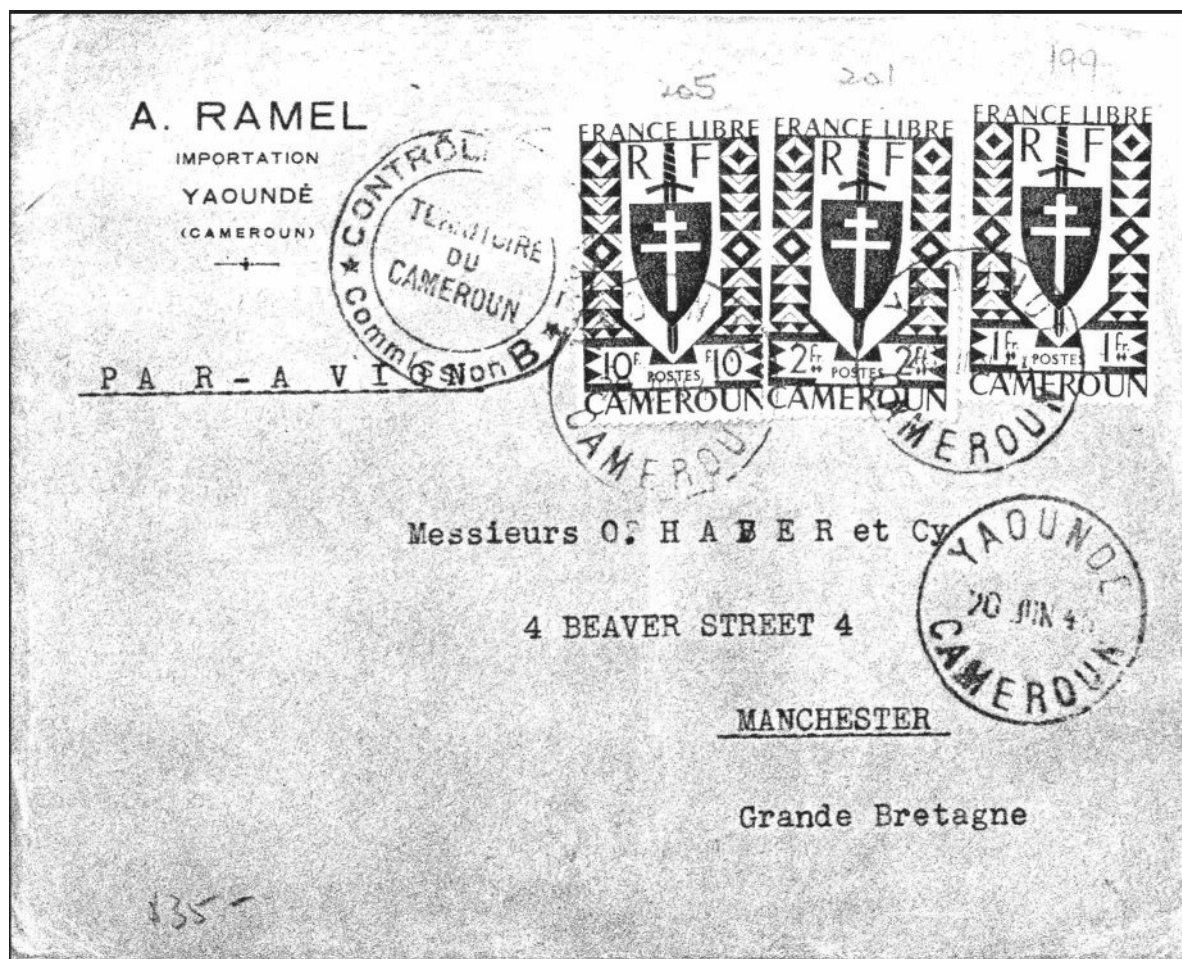


Figure 6

Envelope postmarked Yaoundé 20 Jun 45. Commission B (Yaoundé) postal control mark.

Typed "Par-Avion". Postage paid – 13F = 4F basic + 9F airmail.

(Illustration courtesy Peter Singer)

ers of the period were not backstamped on arrival in London, one of the 6F / 5g covers, mailed 22 August 1942, has a manuscript arrival note dated 1 September placed beside the addressee's business logo. If this is accurate, then, and it seems credible, it would appear that the letter went faster than by surface mail from West Africa to the UK, and that it did not go via the US. This may count, then, as evidence that at least some letters from French colonies were flown by BOAC to London. (Many of the letters were also apparently censored in the UK: several have the well-known P.C. 90 tapes, "OPENED BY EXAMINER xxx." I have checked the numbers used against those known used in Bermuda and Trinidad, and only two of them (as noted above, one of which clearly went via the US) might have been applied there. These tapes, therefore, provide no real help in determining the route travelled.)

February 1944 to end of 1945

As of 1 February 1944, foreign basic changed from 2F50 to 4F (up to 20g; see Table 1 above). From this point until the end of 1945 we have photocopies of sixteen airmail covers from Cameroun to the UK. Some patterns may identify the airmail surtaxes involved.

First, there are three covers posted in February and March

1944. Two of these are franked at 16F and one at 23F. The first two appear to express the same 6F / 5g airmail surtax as seen above: 4F basic + double 6F airmail. If this was the correct surtax at the time, then 23F may represent a 1F convenience overpayment (or error) for 4F basic + triple 6F airmail.

The other thirteen covers range from November 1944 to November 1945, and two fairly well-defined patterns emerge. First, six of them support a 9F airmail surtax (possibly double 4F50), ranging from 2 Nov 1944 to 15 Oct 1945:

- Two @ 13F = 4F basic + 9F airmail (Fig 6).
- Four @ 17F, registered = 4F basic + 4F registration + 9F airmail (Fig 7).

But five support a 13F airmail surtax (possibly double 6F50), ranging from 20 Feb 1945 to 26 Nov 1945:

- Five @ 21F, registered = 4F basic + 4F registration + 13F airmail.

The problem is that these two rates are intermingled rather than representing two different periods of time. The resolution of this apparent difficulty may be that different routings were involved, but if so there is no indication of this on

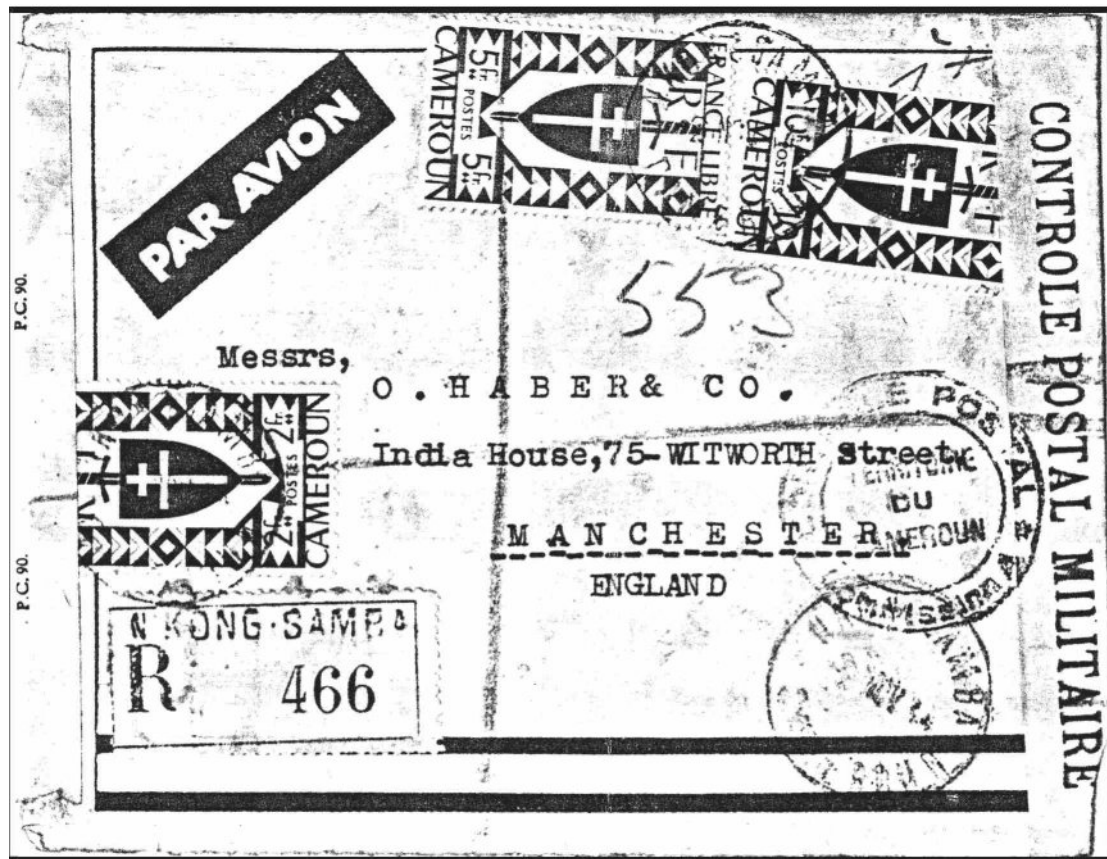


Figure 7

Envelope postmarked Nkongsamba 2 Nov 44. Transit Douala 2 Nov 44 on back.

Commission A (Douala) postal control mark plus resealing tape.

British resealing tape imprinted "P.C.90" and (on back side of envelope) "Opened by / Examiner / 1963" surmounted by crown.

Imprinted "Par Avion". Postage paid – 17F = 4F basic + 4F registration + 9F airmail.

(Illustration courtesy Michael Piggin)

the covers themselves.¹⁰

Concluding Appeal and Thanks

The reader can see that there is much to be gained from having many covers for comparison. Our work, thus far, has benefited greatly from the generous sharing of covers for our database. Any collector with airmail covers dated earlier than 1946, from any French colony (not France itself) to any destination, is urged to send photocopies (front and back, please) to Bob Picirilli, who will respond with an analysis of the franking on the covers. In connection with this article, in particular, we will benefit greatly from having many more covers from Cameroun to the UK (and not just during World War II); these might well lead to further determination of the airmail surtaxes involved, enabling us to include yet more rates in our finished work.

The address is 301 Greenway Avenue, Nashville, TN 37205

¹⁰ In 1944-45 there were alternative routes; BOAC went from Lagos via Rabat (Fr. Morocco) and Lisbon, while Sabena went from the Congo to Lisbon and London; there were even connections via Cairo. See Henri Truc, "Etude rétrospective résumée sur la Poste Aérienne de juin-juillet 1939 à fin 1945," *L'Aviette Postale*, part 4 (n° 155-56, Sep-Oct 1945), p. 114. It is also possible that a letter might go via France, as before the war, paying one or both of the two surtaxes. But we know those surtaxes (6F / 5g Cameroun to France; 2F / 10g France to the UK) and these amounts do not fit them; nor is there any sign that the letters passed through France.

(USA); email picirillir@bellsouth.net.

Thanks are extended to Bill Mitchell for kindly reviewing a draft of this article and, as usual, providing numerous corrections and helpful insight.

Note: for related articles in this effort (all by Robert E. Picirilli), see:

- "Airmail Letter Rates from French West Africa to France to 1945," in *France & Colonies Philatelist* (hereafter *F&CP*) N° 257 (55:3), July 1999; or in *The Journal of the France & Colonies Philatelic Society* (hereafter *JFCPS*) N° 212 (49:2), June 1999.
- "Airmail Letter Rates from FWA to the UK and other European Countries before WWII," in *JFCPS* N° 223 (52:1), March 2002.
- "Airmail Letter Rates from French West Africa to the United States before World War II" in *F&CP* N° 269 (58:3), July 2002.
- "Airmail Rates from French Indochina to France Prior to World War II" in *The Indo-China Philatelist* N° 159 (33:4), September 2003.
- "Airmail Letter Rates from French Equatorial Africa to France 1930-1945," in *JFCPS* N° 235 (55:1), March 2005; or in *F&CP* N° 279, 280 (61:1, 2), January and April 2005.
- "Airmail Letter Rates from French Equatorial Africa to the United States to 1945," in *F&CP* N° 285 (62:3), July 2006.
- "Airmail Routes and Rates from French Indochina to France, 1940-41," in *The Indo-China Philatelist* N° 183 (38:3), May 2008.
- "Airmail Rates From French Guiana To The U.S., 1930-1945" in *Airpost Journal* N° 941 (79:11), November 2008, pp. 449-454.
- "Confusing New Caledonia Airmail Rates" in *F&CP* No 294 (64:4), October 2008, pp. 79-85.

LIST OF RECENTLY PUBLISHED ARTICLES

Compiled by Colin Spong and Maurice Tyler

Bulletin de la COL.FRA

N° 125-3^{ème} Trim 2008: Le Chaînon manquant: quelques détails nouveaux sur la préparation de la troisième et dernière série de Poste Aérienne du Territoire de Memel (Jusserand); Les timbres des Colonies Générales – Sélection d'Oblitérations vues (Puech); La Poste aux Armées pendant la Campagne de Tunisie (Rojon); 2F90 Réunion (Chandanson); L'actualité postale: La Poste Centrale de Saïgon (Hurpet); Le Service Postal unique de janvier 1942 en AOF et la position du Togo (Mitchell); Haute Volta: bulletins d'expédition des Colis Postaux (Kelly).

L'Écho de la Timbrologie

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

N° 1821 Sep 2008: Elena Zaïka, Dis, l'artiste, dessine-moi le timbre de tes rêves (-); Terre d'Afars et des Somalis (-); 1878: l'UGP devient l'Union postale Universelle (Hella); Duxin, le magicien: 800 pièces inconnues [12] (Storch); Émissions pour les cours d'Instruction en Outre-Mer (Dorcier); Les 120 ans de l'Institut Pasteur (Limage).

N° 1822 Oct 2008: Jamel Zeddami, Dis, l'artiste, dessine-moi le timbre de tes rêves (-); La fin programmée du Service postal interarmée (Dorcier); Boîtes aux lettres novatrices et facteurs en grève (Hella); Duxin, le magicien: 800 pièces inconnues [13] (Storch); Cherchez le pont! [2] (Krempper);

N° 1823 Nov 2008: Christelle Guénot, Dis l'artiste, dessine-moi le timbre de tes rêves (-); La naissance du premier timbre-poste français (1/2) (Hella); Mistler et compagnie: Des collectionneurs extraordinaires (14) (Storch); Les fiscaux locaux (Danan); Tout sur les pèse-lettre (-).

Timbres Magazine

Permanent features: Actualités, Courrier des lecteurs, Club des clubs, Manifestations, Marcophilie, Les nouveautés de France, actus Andorre, Monaco et les TOM, Pâp, Expertise, Les variétés, Le Journal des nouveautés, Bibliothèque, Mon marché du mois.

N° 93 Sep 2008: Conversation avec Huguette Sainson, artiste (Decaux); Une série qui concilie l'or...et l'argent (Michaud); Les carnets de vignettes français pour la poste aérienne (PJM); Le timbre média d'entreprise (Julien); Une mauvaise mise en boîte! (de La Mettrie); 1881-1893 L'âge d'or de la philatélie ivoirienne (Melot); Cartes Postales: Un grand éditeur Ernest Le Deley [ELD] (Zeyons); La restauration sarde du Comté de Nice [1814-1860] (Baudot); Pour un minimum de surtaxe (Prugnon); Paris 1931: avis de réception à l'exposition coloniale (Chauvin).

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France & Colonies Philatelist

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Cameo: Journal of the West Africa Study Circle

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The Indo-China Philatelist

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The Collectors Club Philatelist

Vol 87 N° 5 Sep-Oct 2008: Professor A Victor Segno and the French Colonial Allegorical Group Type (Grabowski).

The Postage Stamps of the French National Liberation Committee, Algiers, in WWII

Bill Mitchell

These notes are intended to supplement the articles under this title by Bob Maddocks, Colin Spong and John Mayne published in the Journal for June 2007, June 2008 and September 2008 (Whole N^{os} 244, 248 and 249 respectively).

In his account of the provisions of the various *arrêtés* authorising the issue of the stamps inscribed **COMITÉ FRANÇAISE DE LA LIBÉRATION NATIONALE** (Yvert Colonies General Issues 60-65) Bob worked, he has told me, from notes taken from the Cameroun *Journal Officiel* (JO) many years ago; he did not take copies of the *arrêtés* themselves. These I now have, courtesy of Marty Bratzel; they are reprinted here and I hope they will shed some light on Bob's notes. Some of the detail is repeated here for convenience. My JO extracts do not include any information about the stamps inscribed **SOLIDARITÉ FRANÇAISE** (Yvert 66 and PA 1) which Bob was also unable to trace in the files he consulted.

It should be noted that all the relevant *arrêtés* originated in Algiers, which was the seat of the Free French Government from 3 June 1943 to 9 August 1944¹, and the documents in my possession suggest that they were formally adopted and published in the various colonies in accordance with normal French practice. Before the War, of course, legislation came from Paris.

As Bob says, 300,000 copies of the first five stamps, inscribed **AIDE AUX COMBATTANTS ET PATRIOTES** (the 1F50 + 98F50 value for **AIDE AUX RÉSISTANTS** was not included) were authorised by an *arrêté* of 26 October 1943; it was published in Cameroun some little time later, in the JO of 15 December (Fig 1). By this time this *arrêté* had been repealed and replaced by one of 16 November which appeared, after a similar interval, in the JO of 1 February 1944 (Fig 2); it made some changes, notably the omission of the quantity to be printed and the inclusion of the top value with the monstrous surtax. The original withdrawal date of six weeks from the date of issue (in each colony, apparently) was also changed to a uniform 31 January 1944. This was the day before publication in Cameroun, but once again there had been a change — the period of sale had been extended, to 31 March 1944, by an *arrêté* of 25 January which was not published in Cameroun until the JO of 15 March (Fig 3).

Fig 4 is an extract from the JO of French Equatorial Africa dated 15 January 1944 which is of interest as showing how the Algiers legislation was given effect in other territories. For some reason the corresponding local *arrêté* was not published in the Cameroun JO. So, to answer Colin's query as to whether the stamps were mentioned in the colonies' JOs, I think we may safely assume that they were, in some cases no doubt after quite a long delay.

It will be noted from John's Table of the numbers distributed of the COMBATTANTS set, as recorded by Dallay

1 Van Dam, Theo - A Century of War Dates and More! 1859-1959 (Postal Covers, Anaheim, California, 1996), pages 65-66.

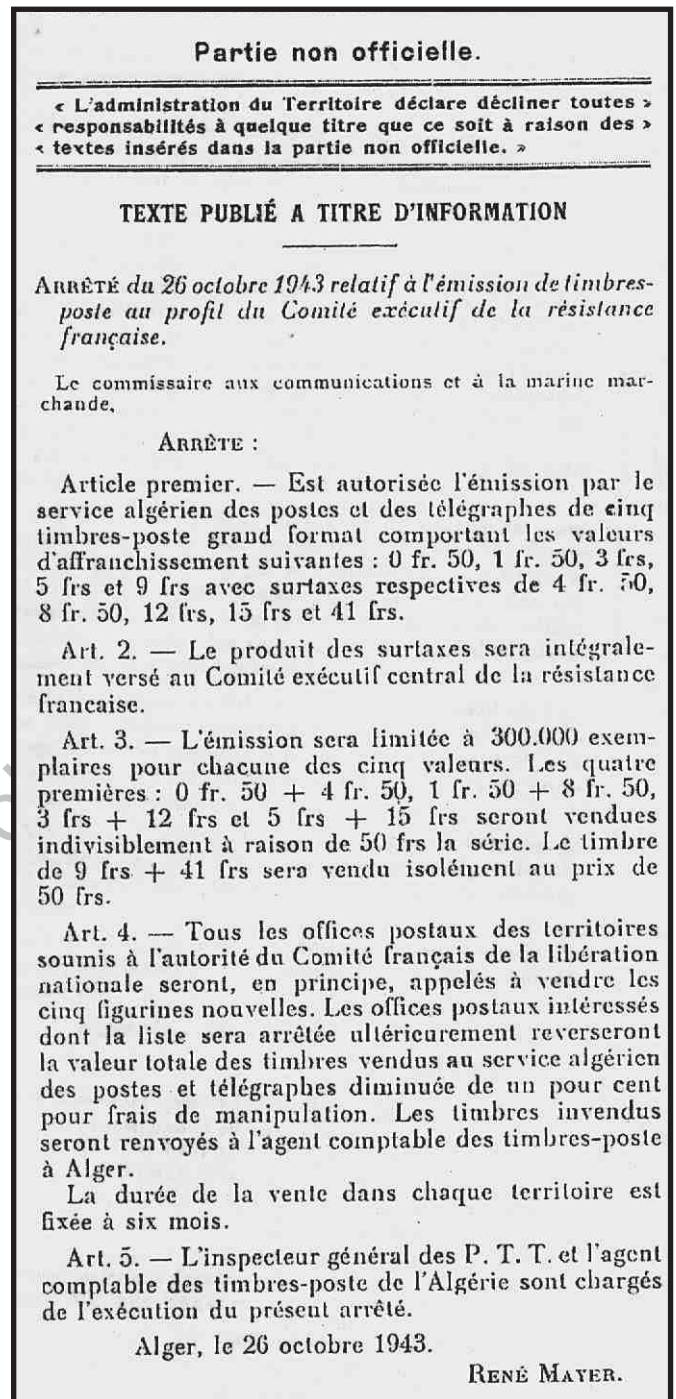


Figure 1

(the France volume – mine is the 2005-2006 edition; John's of 2006-2007 is identical), that the overall total amounts to 298,500 sets, which is 1500 sets less than the numbers authorised on 26 October. The catalogue adds that the stamps were dispatched to the colonies listed on 18 October, eight days before they were officially authorised, so they must have been printed and distributed in advance in the confident anticipation that this would be a formality. The date of issue is said to have been "sans doute" 26 October. This was the date of the formal authority for the issue of the stamps, which were no doubt already in post

ARRÊTÉ modifiant l'arrêté du 26 octobre 1943 relatif à l'émission de timbres-poste au profit de la résistance française.

LE COMMISSAIRE AUX COMMUNICATIONS ET A LA MARINE MARCHANDE,

ARRÊTE :

Article premier. — L'arrêté du 26 octobre 1943 relatif à l'émission de timbres-poste au profit du comité exécutif de la résistance française est annulé et remplacé par les dispositions suivantes :

Art. 2. — Est autorisée l'émission par le service algérien des postes et des télégraphes de six timbres-poste grand format comportant les valeurs d'affranchissement suivantes : 0 fr. 50, 1 fr. 50, 3 fr., 5 fr., 9 fr. et 1 fr. 50 avec surtaxes respectives de 4 fr. 50, 8 fr. 50, 12 fr., 15 fr., 41 fr. et 98 fr. 50.

Art. 3. — Le produit des surtaxes sera intégralement versé au comité exécutif de la résistance française.

Art. 4. — Les quatre premières valeurs : 0 fr. 50 + 4 fr. 50, 1 fr. 50 + 8 fr. 50, 3 fr. + 12 fr. et 5 fr. + 15 fr. seront vendues indivisiblement à raison de 50 fr. la série. Les timbres de 9 fr. + 41 fr. et 1 fr. 50 + 98 fr. 50 seront vendus isolément aux prix respectifs de 50 fr. et 100 francs.

Art. 5. — Tous les offices postaux des territoires soumis à l'autorité du Comité français de la libération nationale seront, en principe, appelés à vendre les six figurines nouvelles qui auront dans ces territoires le même pouvoir d'affranchissement qu'en Algérie. Les offices postaux intéressés dont la liste sera arrêtée ultérieurement reverseront l'intégralité du montant des surtaxes au service algérien des postes et des télégraphes et conserveront le montant de la valeur d'affranchissement.

Ces timbres seront également vendus à Londres.

Les vignettes invendues seront renvoyées à l'agent comptable des timbres-poste à Alger.

La vente sera close le 31 janvier 1944.

Art. 6. — L'inspecteur général des postes et des télégraphes et l'agent comptable des timbres-poste de l'Algérie sont chargés de l'exécution du présent arrêté.

Alger, le 16 novembre 1943.

RENÉ MAYER.

Figure 2

ARRÊTÉ modifiant l'arrêté du 16 novembre 1943, relatif à la vente des timbres-poste émis au profit de la résistance française.

LE COMMISSAIRE AUX COMMUNICATIONS ET A LA MARINE MARCHANDE,

ARRÊTE :

Article premier. — L'article 5 de l'arrêté du 16 novembre 1943 est modifié comme suit, en ce qui concerne la durée de la vente des timbres émis au profit du Comité exécutif de la résistance française.

« La vente sera close le 31 mars 1944 ».

Art. 2. — L'inspecteur général des postes et des télégraphes et l'agent comptable des timbres-poste de l'Algérie sont chargés de l'exécution du présent arrêté qui sera publié au *Journal officiel* de la République française.

Alger, le 25 janvier 1944.

Le commissaire aux communications
et à la marine marchande p. i.,
ANDRÉ LE TROQUER.

Figure 3

ARRÊTÉ promulguant l'arrêté en date du 16 novembre 1943, relatif à l'émission de timbres-poste au profit du Comité exécutif de la Résistance française.

LE GOUVERNEUR GÉNÉRAL DE L'AFRIQUE ÉQUATORIALE FRANÇAISE, OFFICIER DE LA LÉGION D'HONNEUR,

Vu le décret du 15 janvier 1910, portant création du Gouvernement général de l'A. E. F. ;

Vu le décret du 27 février 1941, portant réorganisation administrative de l'A. E. F.,

ARRÊTE :

Art. 1^{er}. — Est promulgué en A. E. F. l'arrêté en date du 16 novembre 1943, relatif à l'émission de timbres-poste au profit du Comité exécutif de la Résistance française.

Art. 2. — Le présent arrêté sera enregistré, inséré au *Journal officiel* de la colonie et communiqué partout où besoin sera.

Brazzaville, le 13 janvier 1944.

F. EBOUÉ.

Arrêté du 16 novembre 1943, relatif à l'émission de timbres-poste au profit du Comité exécutif de la Résistance française.

LE COMMISSAIRE AUX COMMUNICATIONS ET A LA MARINE MARCHANDE,

ARRÊTE :

Art. 1^{er}. — L'arrêté du 26 octobre 1943, relatif à l'émission de timbres-poste au profit du Comité exécutif de la Résistance française, est annulé et remplacé par les dispositions suivantes :

Art. 2. — Est autorisée l'émission, par le Service algérien des Postes et des Télégraphes, de six timbres-poste grand format comportant les valeurs d'affranchissement suivantes : 0 fr. 50, 1 fr. 50, 3 fr., 5 fr., 9 fr. et 1 fr. 50, avec surtaxes respectives de 4 fr. 50, 8 fr. 50, 12 fr., 15 fr., 41 fr. et 98 fr. 50.

Figure 4

offices (in Algiers, at any rate). Dallay adds that the authorised printing was increased to 400,000 sets on 18 December 1943 but gives no details of where the extras were sent (mainland France?). It's curious, too, that the editors don't comment on the discrepancy between the printing authorised in October and the number actually distributed. The number printed of the 1F50 + 98F50 RÉSISTANTS stamp was 100,000, which is the same as the total distributed as set out in the Table. The date of issue is said to have been "sans doute" between 16 and 26 November — that is, on or shortly after the date of the *arrêté* authorising its issue. 20,000 copies were *fautés*, which presumably means found to be unusable on arrival and returned to Algiers. I have been unable to trace any alternative authority for either the additional 100,000 sets of the COMBATTANTS set or the numbers printed and *fautés* of the RÉSISTANTS stamp. There are no comparable details on the Solidarité Française stamps in Dallay. Another point not covered in any way is, what was the counter price of these stamps, priced in francs, in territories which didn't use French currency? As is shown in the

Continued on page iii (inside back cover)

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Postage Stamps of the French National Liberation Committee, Algiers, in WWII

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Table, they were sent to Syria, Lebanon and French India, but the catalogue is silent on this point. No doubt their *JOs*, if they could be traced, would make this clear — if, indeed, they were actually placed on sale.

All but three colonies or territories are listed in the Table. One, Indo-China, was still under Japanese occupation and so could not be supplied with the stamps (it was another colony which did not use French currency). I believe that the small additional supply sent to New Caledonia, to which John has drawn attention, may have been intended for the Wallis & Futuna Islands, although why they are not specifically mentioned is something of a mystery. The third missing colony is Inini, the territory carved out of French

Guiana from 1930 to 1947.

Some years ago Greg Cykman, one of our American members, sent me a copy of a registered cover bearing the initial five CFLN stamps cancelled at St Élie, the chief town of Inini, on 12 October 1944 and addressed to Edmond Queyroy, the dealer who supplied the cover. Although not marked for airmail, it reached New York only five days later, on the 17th! Greg still has the invoice, on which Queyroy states that only 20 (possibly 25) sets were sent to Inini, which may well be true — the territory consisted of the interior of French Guiana and was very remote and sparsely populated. The 20 (or 25) sets may have been forwarded from Cayenne — or sent out by Queyroy himself.

NORTHERN GROUP PICTURE GALLERY



Peter Stockton at Bastille Day Meeting 12/7/08
(picture by MST)



John Smith at Bastille Day Meeting 12/7/08
(picture by MST)



Peter Rooke with his *santon*
at Bastille Day Meeting 12/7/08
(picture by MST)



Mick Bister in discussion with Tony Shepherd
at Bastille Day Meeting 12/7/08
(picture by JPM)



John Smith in discussion with Alan Goude
at Adlington All Day Meeting 11/10/08
(picture by JPM)



View from the back, listening to Peter Stockton
at Adlington All Day Meeting 11/10/08
(picture by JPM)

**The President and Committee wish all members and their families
a Happy Christmas and a Prosperous New Year.**



Joyeux Noël et Bonne Année!

