

The Journal of the France & Colonies Philatelic Society



Which stamp has the bogus overprint?

See page 155.

Volume 61 ● Number 4
December 2011
Whole Number 262

**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.

2011-12 Annual Subscription Rates

United Kingdom: £13.00, Europe: £17.00, Elsewhere: £20.00.

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The Journal

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

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

Distribution: D J Richardson and M S Tyler.

The price is included in members' subscriptions.

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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.

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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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The Journal of the France & Colonies Philatelic Society

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Volume 61 Number 4

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SOCIETY NOTES

New Members

The Society is pleased to welcome the following:

1393 Michel Collet (France), 1394 Tony Olckers (South Africa), 1395 Trevor George Smith (NE Lincolnshire), 1396 Howard Fisher (Nottingham), 1397 Stephen Roche (London).

* * *

Members Deceased

We are extremely saddened to hear of the death of the following member, and offer our sincere condolences to his family:

1203 Alan Ketchell.

* * *

Future Events

The **London Group** will meet at the Calthorpe Arms, Grays Inn Road, London WC1 at 6.30pm on Wednesday 15 February 2012 for members to display new projects and acquisitions. During Philatex there will be a display by Paul Watkins on France/Austria/Germany 1945-1955 starting at 3.00pm on Saturday 21 April 2012 at the New Royal Horticultural Halls, Greycoat Street, Westminster, London SW1, and this will be followed by a meal for any interested members at 5.45pm at Il Posto Ristorante Italiano, 316a Vauxhall Bridge Road, Victoria, London SW1V 1AA.

The **Southern Group** will meet at 2.00pm on Saturday 28 April 2012 at the East Worthing Community Centre, Pages Lane, East Worthing, when Mavis Pavey will display Philatelic Exhibitions and *Journée du Timbre* or French Naval Mail.

The **Northern Group** will meet at 1.30pm on Saturday 11 February 2012 in the Board Room, Leeds General Infirmary, Great George Street, Leeds LS1 3EX for a Members' Choice meeting; and at the same venue on Saturday 31 March 2012 when George Barker will display Classic France.

The **Wessex Group** will meet at 10.00am on Saturday 28 January 2012 at the Scout Hall, Lower Street, Harnham, Salisbury, when Peter Kelly will display the French Colonies - inland and maritime: the development of postal communications in landlocked Niger and maritime Reunion.

* * *

Displays by Members

The following members displayed at Marcophilex XXXV on 29-30 October 2011 at Annecy:

Robert Abensur: La convention postale de 1817 entre la France et les États-Sardes (1818-1838)

Chris Hitchen: Les bureaux bis de Paris jusqu'aux années 1940

Peter Maybury: Les relations maritimes entre la France et l'Amérique du Sud (1840-1900)

On 10 November 2011 **Dr Alfred Bonnici** was invited by the Royal Philatelic Society London to give a PowerPoint presentation of 42 items of Original Malta Grand Master Letters from La Cassiere 1572 up to GM Hornpesch 1798 in chronological order of their Letters, Bulls, Decrees in 7 frames. Several French Grand Masters were included in this period.

At the October meeting of the Académie de Philatélie **Guy Dutau** displayed "Les premières émissions d'Haïti 1881-1887."

* * *

Spring Stampex 2012

The National Competition will take place from 22 to 25 February 2012 at the Business Design Centre in London. For this Exhibition the theme will be "The Pictorial Classes": Thematic Philately, Postcard Class, and Open Philately (including what were previously the Open and Social Classes).

It is open to all exhibitors in the United Kingdom, and to exhibitors from other FIP affiliated countries. Please see the ABPS website www.abps.org.uk for entry forms, which must be returned by 16 January 2012.

There will be 3 Seminars at 11.00am: Thursday on "Collecting and exhibiting picture postcards" (free); Friday on "How to build up a thematic exhibit successfully" (free); and Saturday on "Exhibiting in the Open Philately Class: New rules and advice to exhibitors" (£10).

* * *

Exhibition Successes

Congratulations to the following members:

At Nojex 2011 (Secausus NJ, USA, 25-27 May) **Ed Grabowski** was awarded Gold for "Postal History of the French Colonial Allegorical Group Type"

At the ABPS Congress 2011 (Portsmouth 16-19 June) the top award in the one frame competition was won by **Lesley Marley** for her exhibit on "A Tale of Whales".

At Philanippon 2011 (Japan 28 July-2 August) the following members gained awards:

Alfred Bonnici: Gold for "Mail by Messageries Impériales to and via Malta 1863-66" and Silver for Malta P S Journal (Literature)

Steven Walske: Large Gold and Special Prize for "Heart of the West - San Francisco as a Postal Hub 1849-69"

Graham Booth: Gold for "London Numbers in Maltese Cross"

Gavin Fryer: Vermeil for "Blindman's Mail"

At Stampshow 2011 (Columbus OH, USA, 16-19 August) **Stan Luft** was awarded Vermeil for "France - the Railway Transfer Offices 1864-1882)

At Autumn Stampex 2011 (London 14-17 September) the following members gained awards:

Mick Bister: Gold and Felicitations for Research for "1F75 State Visit to France July 1938 - the Discovery of Types I and II" (Traditional Philately, one frame exhibit)

Philip Mackey: Large Vermeil for "The Classic Stamps of France 1849-1876" (Traditional Philately)

Francis Kiddle was Chairman of the Jury.

* * *

A new philatelic circle in France

Peter Kelly reports that five leading French philatelists have come together to found an organisation to be called the *Cercle International de Rencontres Philatéliques*, whose object is to arrange meetings at intervals in different parts of the country with invited non-competitive displays and presentations. The idea behind it is that the philately be serious but that the presenters should not take themselves too seriously notwithstanding the reciprocal respect and esteem due. Furthermore, philately should be enjoyable, information freely given and shared. The importance of a friendly atmosphere is stressed, without a backward glance or complexes, as well as time spent together around a good table.

This is not a society to join – there is no membership: simply the pleasure of participating. The founding and only members are Mme Michèle Chauvet, Jean-Pierre Magne (President), Jean-François Brun, Guy Dutau and Jean-François Gibot, of which four are members of our Society.

The first meeting has now taken place at Souillac on 16 and 17 September 2011, with 20 displays on show and two presentations. As one of those invited to display Peter reports that the event was a great success and achieved all of the objects mentioned above. It was expected that 50 would attend but by the end the footfall had exceeded 100. The breadth of the displays was considerable and there was a great exchange of information and general participation among the displayers and the visitors and some wonderful meals were enjoyed together.

The reason that he is reporting this in some detail is that a second meeting is planned next year and that this will take place in Boulogne-sur-Mer. Things are still at an early stage but the founders hope that British philatelists who feel in tune with the objects of the Circle will wish to participate and they will certainly receive a great welcome. The displays on show do not necessarily have to be of French material.

There is a fuller report of the Souillac meeting in a recent issue of the *Écho de la Timbrologie*. More information will follow.

* * *

Publications Stockist

The Society is pleased to announce that **Richard Broadhurst** has agreed to take over the organisation of its publications, which will include both stocking and selling all the Society's stock of Journals, brochures and books – with the one exception at the moment of the recent book by Bob Picirilli. From the end of 2011 **Peter Maybury** is relinquishing this role (though continuing as Membership Secretary); however he will continue to deal with orders for "Postal and Airmail Rates in France & Colonies 1920-1945" for the time being.

Richard's address is PO Box 448, Teddington TW11 1AZ (email: stock@fcps.org.uk); telephone 020 8977 9665. Peter's email address remains publications@fcps.org.uk.

* * *

OBITUARY

Alan Ketchell 1934-2011

'Big Al' (to his friends) has sadly died aged 77 years. After leaving school Alan started work for the Railway as a Signal Box Boy at Twickenham, moving up to a Signaller as he gained experience. Following National Service basic training, he was posted to signals operations in France, near Versailles, and this period influenced his future love of the country and everything to do with France, including learning the language and collecting its stamps and postal history.

After 'demob' he returned to the Railways and in 1958 married Irene whom he had known previously whilst a member of the Scouts. In 1960 Alan left the Railway and joined the Police Force, spending the next 30 years with Hampshire Constabulary, and moved to Park Gate in 1969.

Alan was a hive of activity. On a number of occasions he filled the roles of Secretary or Chairman of the local branch of the Lions Club; he attended and supported his church; he collected the stamps of the Pitcairn Islands; he was a member of the France and Colonies Philatelic Society (giving his last display there in January 2011); and until ill health reduced his considerable energy was Programme Secretary for the Southampton & District Philatelic Society. Other passions included his collection of orchids and singing in the Solent Choir.

There were probably 150 people attending his funeral at St Paul's Church, Sarisbury Green on Thursday 1 September, where many tributes were paid.

Our thoughts and sympathy are with his wife Irene and her family.

Colin Bayley

LIST OF RECENTLY PUBLISHED ARTICLES

Compiled by Colin Spong and Maurice Tyler

Bulletin de la COL.FRA

N° 137 3^{ème} Trim 2011: Inde: Réflexions sur les Timbres surchargés Croix Rouge (Hurpet); Guyane: Nouveauté sur l'Oblitération Tour de l'Île (Puech); Les variétés au Type Groupe à Mayotte (Bessaud); Hors-Série 16-4 Côte d'Ivoire, les vignettes pour colis postaux (Bouérat et Drye).

Cameo

Vol 12 N° 3 (Whole N° 84) 2011: The Committees & Delegations of Free France across the World (Sinai); Cameroun - Plating the Sterling Issue of 1961: the 5/- on 100F and the 10/- on 200F Type 1 stamp (Bratzel); WWII Air Mails from French Equatorial Africa - a correction (Priddy); Cameroun 1914-1916: Postmarks and Sailings (Cobb); Misset 27.1.26 DUALA - a Postmark: Determination of the Actual Date of Use (Bratzel); French Naval Posts in North & West Africa in WWII: the use of Algerian Stamps an unnoticed Airmail Fee (Mitchell); Northern Cameroons 1960-1961 - Ganye Agency (Maddocks); Christmas in Cameroon? Santa has arrived! (Maddocks); An Uncommon Bilingual Postal Service Handstamp found on Cameroon Mail (Maddocks).

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° 1854 Sept 2011: La saga des catalogues Yvert et Tellier (Hervé); Serge Marké, Dis, l'artiste, dessine-moi le timbre de tes rêves (-); Pourquoi connaître les tirages de la Marianne de Béquet (Renard); OP2011.1: des courriers via trois districts taafiens (Venturini); Les cours d'instruction pour les postiers (Emmène); Le constructeur de la tour de trois cents mètres (Krempper); Les Manœuvres de L'Est en 1911 (Augustin); Cartes précurseurs de 1873 (Storch).

N° 1855 Oct 2011: La Vache qui rit (R) (Cordina, SO.CA.TA); La dentelle et Calais: deux siècles d'histoire (Wils); Lettre d'information du CAM (Renard); Terre Adélie «TA 60» (Venturini); 1941-1943: les timbres Pétain (Emmène); Les machines de libre service affranchissement innovent (Héron et Gengembre); Des airs d'autrefois - Jacques Savre (-); Gustave Eiffel, après la tour (Krempper); Cartes précurseurs de 1873 (Storch).

N° 1856 Nov 2011: Hivernage 2010 - 60^e Mission en Terre Adélie (Barbet et Venturini); L'effigie laurée de Napoléon III (Emmène); Les particularités des LISA dernières-nées (Héron et Gengembre); La Ligne T au service de l'île de la Réunion (Kelly); Sur les traces d'Henri Mouhot (Drillien); Les cartes précurseurs (Storch); Le parcours d'un virtuose romantique (Vattepain).

France & Colonies Philatelist

Whole N° 309 (Vol 68 N° 3): Unraveling French Guiana's First Issue (Ward); Algeria: A Fraud Detected

(Nilsestuen); Mystery at Médine (Werner); Gleanings from the Group Type: the 15c Regional Registration Rate as seen in Sénégal and French Sudan (Grabowski); The Debut of a Fantasy Inini Overprint (Larsen); Direction des PTT Cameroun (Bratzel Jr).

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° 126 Sept 2011: Les deux vies du 20 c bleu [Empire issue] (de Pellinec); Paris-Madagascar: l'Odyssée des héros de l'aviation (Singeot); La poste militaire du Levant (Chauvin); Méprises révolutionnaires (Rucklin); Le bicentenaire des pompiers de Paris (Zeyons); Collectionnez les marques postales? Rien de plus simple! (Baudot); Un bordereau de vaguemestre (Prugnon); Thierry Saint-Hillier, Phosphorescence (Amiel).

N° 127 Oct 2011: Indochine: la perle de l'Empire (Chauvin); 1943/1971: Francisque et Croix de Lorraine! (Guéno); 20c Empire dentelé, Hulot fait de la résistance aux pointillés tout comme les philatélistes! (de Pellinec); Les Steamers les omnibus du Pacifique (Beslu); Des «fonds de sûreté» chez nos anciens timbres (de La Mettrie); Un grand éditeur du Sud-Ouest Labouche frères (Zeyons); Tour et taxis (Prugnon); Les documents postaux [ils sont rares] (Baudot); Novembre 1940: le 1^{er} vol du Ville de Saint Pierre vers Madagascar (Chauvin); Jean-Paul Lecouvey, Entre mer et timbres (Amiel); Trois lettres sous la loupe (Baudot).

N° 128 Nov 2011: Les lignes maritimes de l'Afrique du Nord (Chauvin); Les 20c Sage: quand la couleur peut faire le Bonheur des collectionneurs (Delange); Voyage improbable au Lado (Maselis et Schoubrechts); Les timbres du Pacifique allemands: les Mariannes (PJM); Les fiscaux sont-ils devenus des valeurs de placement? (Danan); Des notes manuscrites à la place des cachets (de La Mettrie); La guerre des chapeaux (Zeyons); Collectionner les marques postales c'est facile! (Baudot); Une carte postale traitée comme lettre (Prugnon); Timbrage au verso: la rébellion des chambres de commerce (Chauvin); Dominique Dantant, il voulait revoir sa Normandie (Amiel); L'art de transformer les restes (Marziano).

Le Collectionneur Philatéliste et Marcophile

N° 161 Nov 2011: La poste automobile rurale: Les correspondants postaux dans le département de l'Ain (Villard); Le contrôle des banques dans les étapes du nord de la France pendant la première guerre mondiale (1) (Ludwig & Van Dooren); L'utilisation de la machine Daguin hors de la France métropolitaine - Première partie: les pays africains (Garaud); Taxe spécifique pour certains imprimés non périodiques (Wagner); En marge de l'affaire Finaly (suite) (Neimark).

Continued on page 165

French Naval Posts in North and West Africa in World War II - The Use of Algerian Stamps and an Unnoticed Airmail Fee

Bill Mitchell

In my Notes on French Naval Posts in the Two World Wars printed in Journal 258 for December 2010 I explained that one reason for the use of Algerian stamps in the *bureaux navals* was the fact that Algiers had assumed Paris's responsibilities in *La France Libre*.

I have since come across the official authority for this requirement. I've had occasion to consult "*La Naissance des Surcharges 'R.F.' de la Poste Navale Française (1943-1945)*" by Henry C Dupont. This is an undated 13-page monograph which internal evidence shows must have been published some time after 1963 but was called "*une étude mal connue*" when it was reprinted in the issue of *Les Feuilles Marcophiles* N° 176 for the second *trimestre* of 1969. On pages 2 and 3 of his study Dupont prints relevant extracts (Instructions 1 to 9) from General Directive N° 294 FMA 3 issued from Casablanca on 18 March 1943 by Vice-Admiral Michelier, the commander of the French Navy and Fleet Air Arm. It contained a long series of Instructions concerning *La Poste Navale* including –

"1. The *Poste Navale* in French Africa is reinstated.

"7. Throughout the period of hostilities, naval personnel entitled to postal franchise can use the airmail service on airlines operating a postal service. The applicable airmail fee is 1F50 per 5 grams with a weight limit of 5 grams.

"8. Algerian stamps must be used for all payment of postage in the *Bureaux Navals* of French Africa. Personnel on board ship will receive, free of charge, with their pay, four 1F50 stamps to be used for the airmail fee."

The numbering is Dupont's – from which we can extract the following points – and the translation, slightly amended in the introductory part, is by Mick Bister.

Although the Directive was issued from Casablanca in Morocco, its requirement that Algerian stamps be used clearly results from the fact that, as noted above, Algiers was now the administrative centre of the Free French world and had taken over Paris's responsibilities for such matters. Morocco, of course, was a Protectorate, not a Colony, but in the event the *Bureau Central Naval* was to be transferred from Casablanca to Algiers some six months later, from 15 September 1943, following the transfer there of the Navy Staff Headquarters a little earlier.

But, as so often, the solution to one problem draws attention to another. There is some curious drafting in the Directive. Instruction 7 is quite specific in saying that naval personnel entitled to free postage of surface mail (there was a weight limit, of 20 grams, and other restrictions) could send their letters by airmail for 1F50 provided the weight did not exceed 5 grams. Instruction 8 starts off by saying that all payment of postage must be by means of Algerian stamps and so does not apply only to mail within Instruction 7, but

it then confusingly reverts to this 1F50 charge as applied to personnel aboard ship, a provision which I would have thought belonged to Instruction 7.

Very little attention seems to have been given to this 1F50 airmail fee, and Dupont is no exception. He seems to be saying that it only applied to the personal mail dealt with in Instructions 7 and 8, but it was outside his remit⁽¹⁾ and it would be very interesting to know what he omitted from the Directive of 18 March 1943 as not being relevant to his theme – in particular, what it said about official and foreign mail. A recent article by François Chauvin⁽²⁾ tells us a little more. The 1F50 rate, the 5 grams steps and the 5 grams weight limit were the same as had been imposed by a *décret* of 6 September 1941 but the weight limit did not apply to official correspondence with *la métropole*⁽³⁾, as it apparently did in 1941. Apart from this reduced airmail fee, official correspondence presumably continued on normal lines with registration and other special services and all foreign postal charges having to be paid in full.

And there is another problem. Where did the prospective recipients of mail to be sent by air for a total of 1F50 live? Presumably the families and friends of most of the sailors lived in France. That would not have been a problem in 1941 when North and West Africa were still aligned with Vichy (at any rate, any problems would have been the same as those faced by ordinary mail addressed to a France divided into occupied and unoccupied zones), but in March 1943 such communication was not possible. Dupont believed that the 1F50 rate may have been used on correspondence between sailors and friends in the United States and Canada although no examples had been seen at the time he was writing. But this seems to overlook the fact that it applied to mail with free basic postage and, as noted in my "Notes" article in Journal 258 (page 135), this did not apply to letters sent to foreign destinations.

Chauvin is no doubt correct in saying that the rate also applied to official mail. His illustration, however, draws attention to the fact that Instruction 2 of the General Directive of 18 March 1943 extends the *Poste Navale* system to "a number of merchant vessels as well as to shipping company agents in French Africa." It shows an airmail cover sent by the Casablanca branch of the Compagnie de Navigation Paquet of Marseille to a 2° *mécanicien* on the "*Oued Fes, Poste Navale*". Dated 13 February 1945, by which time the charge had apparently been increased, it bears a 2F Algerian stamp. Examples of official or business use should not be as scarce as mail from individual sailors, and some may well be lurking unnoticed in members' collections. Can anyone send a scan of a cover franked at the 1F50 or 2F rates (or multiples) to the Editor for reproduction in the Journal?

To revert to the Dakar-Bathurst letter of 19 November 1944⁽⁴⁾, Bathurst was clearly not in *la métropole* so normal

foreign postage rates applied. Thanks to Bob Picirilli's new book on postage rates⁽⁵⁾ it is now possible to give a definitive analysis of the franking. This was – postage originally paid 8 francs and after posting a further 6 francs added – there can be no doubt about this – to meet the cost of airmail. French West Africa rates are dealt with in Chapter Thirteen – on 19 November 1943 they were as follows. Basic postage was 4 francs for the first 20 grams and registration was also 4 francs (tariff of 1 April 1942, Table 13.2 on page 144). The airmail fee from French West Africa to Gambia was 2 francs per 5 grams or part thereof under a tariff of unknown commencement date imposed by an *arrêté* of 26 September 1943 (Table 13.5 on page 148). The total franking of 14 francs shows that the letter weighed between 10 and 15 grams (4+4+3x2 francs).

Notes and References

(1) In the main, Dupont was writing about correspondence between sailors and their (girl-)friends in the United States and Canada, where many French warships had recently (that is, from about the summer of 1943) been

refitted. This correspondence was at an inclusive rate of 6 US cents (equal to 3 francs) per half ounce (14 grams, with a maximum of 20 grams) provided the letters were sent via the American Military Air Service. The US did not charge basic postage and airmail costs separately. It is unfortunate that Dupont did not print the whole of the General Directive of 18 March 1943.

(2) “1943-1945: La Reconstitution de la Poste Navale” (*Timbres Magazine* N° 120, February 2011, pages 92-93).

(3) *La métropole* normally means (metropolitan) France. In this wartime context, long before the Liberation, it seems clearly to mean French Africa.

(4) See the question by Stewart Duncan on page 152 of Journal 254 (December 2009) and the comments in that number and numbers 255 and 256 (March and June 2010).

(5) “Postal and Airmail Rates in France & Colonies 1920-1945” (France & Colonies Philatelic Society (GB), 2011).

BOOKSHELF

Books Noted

Catalogue SO.CO.TA des timbres personnalisés 2011; 224pp; price 34€; payment to SO.CO.TA; available from M. Alain Cordina, résidence Jean Zay, Bât A, 55 avenue du Général de Gaulle, 92160 Antony (email associationsocota@wanadoo.fr). [Lists new products such as “MontimbraMoi”, “IDTimbres” and “Collectors” with values for mint and used vignettes and those on cover, together with numerous illustrations in colour and explanatory texts.]

Letter Forwarding Agents of Great Britain handling Channel Islands letters 1673-1855 by David Gurney, pub. Stuart Rossiter Trust; 170pp A5 ring bound; price £9.50 + p&p; available from John Jackson, 17 Cambridge Avenue, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire LE13 0AA (email john.w.jackson@care4free.net). [Prior to the establishment of a regular packet service with the Channel Islands in 1794 letters had often been handed to Agents (usually merchants or ship owners) in the Channel Islands or some south coast ports in England. The forwarding agent's name was usually added in manuscript or by handstamp to endorse the letters, together with the additional charge to be levied. This book has an alphabetical listing of 140 Agents' names recorded over many years, with illustrations of actual letters, some endorsements and other aspects.]

La Poste Ferroviaire en Franche-Comté des origines à 1995 by Jean-Claude Chabod; 570pp 200 x 280mm; price 79€50; available from Jean-Claude Chabod, 23 avenue Plaine Fleurie, 38240 Meylan (email jc.chabod@yahoo.fr). [Illustrated by about 1000 reproductions of letters and cancellations, timetables and routes, administrative notes and postal material, photos and postcards, the book traces the history of the railway postal service in the *départements* of Haute-Saône, Territoire de Belfort, Doubs, Jura and the north-eastern part of Ain, though its tentacles stretch far beyond these; it covers 65 primary and secondary railway lines, involving 176 connections by ambulants and/or convoyeurs, as well as the production of 700 date stamps.]

Les carnets du 0,50 Marianne de Béquet by Jean Renard of the Club des Amis de Marianne; bound photocopies b/w and colour; price 15€; available from the author, 24 rue Gambetta, 17200 Royan (email jean.renard@club-internet.fr). [Includes short biography of Pierre Béquet (the designer and engraver), and deals with the manufacturers of the booklets, their types and varieties, the *viroles* identified by their electronic indicator marks, phosphorescent bars, the checking of the booklets and booklets used in the training schools.]

Maurice Tyler

Tables of French Postal Rates 1849 to 2011 (Fourth Edition) by Derek Richardson, edited by Maurice Tyler and published by the France & Colonies Philatelic Society of Great Britain, 2011; ISBN 0 9519601 7 2; A5; iv + 100 pages; perfect bound with card cover; obtainable from the Society's Publications Officer by e-mail to stock@fcps.org.uk or in writing to Mr R N Broadhurst, PO Box 448, Teddington TW11 1AZ. Price £10 (members) £12 (non-members) postage extra.

Many members will be familiar with Derek's celebrated and highly useful book on French postal rates which first appeared nearly twenty years ago in 1992. The first edition contained only 54 pages of tables - this, the fourth edition, is almost twice the size. The publication has been brought totally up to date and, as the author explains in his preamble, since the third edition published in 2006 five general postal tariff changes have come into force in France.

For those not familiar with the publication, the book covers the postal rates, charges and fees from 1849 (national) and from 1876 (international) to the present day. The first part of the book on National Rates covers Letters, Printed matter, Newspapers and periodicals, Local letters (1849-1878), Postcards, Postage due on delivery, Simple Tax, Election literature, Economy services, Registration and insurance, *Poste restante*, Bulk mailings and pre-cancellation, Advice of delivery, Visiting cards, Express fee and *taxe d'urgence*, Invoices and business papers, Late collection service, Stamp ordering fee, Charges for holding and forwarding mail, Postal services for the blind (*cécogrammes*), Debt collection (*recouvrements*), COD (*contre-remboursements*), *Mandats* and Postal Orders, Urgent postal packets and COLISSIMO, Domestic airmail supplements, French overseas destinations - "*DOM-TOM*", Paris pneumatic post and finally Merchants' samples (*échantillons*).

The second part of the book deals with the International Rates and covers Letters and postcards (including documents and merchandise from 2009), Registration and insurance, Printed matter, Samples and Business papers, Airmail supplements, Aerogrammes, Small packets and postal packets, Express, Advice of Delivery fees, Postage due on underfranked items from abroad, *Cécogrammes*, Newspapers and finally Books, Brochures, Printed Maps and Music Scores.

The rates are tabulated in an easily accessible fashion and are accompanied by background information, explanatory notes, links to other publications and aids to calculation. The latter are particularly useful for the understanding of, for example, the Surface Area Printed Matter Rates from 1849 to 1856 or the Postage Due tax fraction system applied to underfranked mail from abroad. Strange neologisms such as *ECOPLI*, *COLIECO* and *POSTIMPACT* are explained and a useful family tree is included showing the evolution of the "rapid" and "economy" internal postal services.

This is a book which is invaluable to general and specialist collectors alike with every section explained with absolute thoroughness and clarity

Those who are familiar with the title will note several

changes, improvements and additions. One striking alteration is the categorisation of the rates as National and International thus replacing the former nomenclature of Internal and Foreign (which superseded earlier terms such as Domestic or Inland and Overseas). This change is in keeping with the terminology employed by *La Poste*. Two sections which appeared in previous editions have disappeared, namely the Postal Stationery prices and the International *Colis Postaux* service of 2005. These have been dropped not only because of their limited philatelic value and interest but also to make way for the considerable amount of extra information this edition has had to absorb as a result of the rate increases over the past five years.

The sections on Registration Fees and Insurance Fees have now been tabulated on separate pages and the Advice of Delivery fees reorganised to make easier reading. Similarly the layout of the Express Fees has been improved and like so many sections it contains nuggets of useful information such as when the *Exprès* service was renamed *Distribution par Porteur Spécial*.

The largest number of changes though can be found in the two sections devoted to Domestic Airmail Supplements and International Airmail Supplements. The Domestic Airmail section has been completely revised and includes details of the short-lived 1925 'extra tax' which for many years confounded collectors when attempting to reconcile the franking of covers, especially those to the Colonies. Similarly, the International Airmail section has been entirely re-written in the light of recent studies and has increased from 15 to 19 pages including a very helpful foreign and country name index to facilitate navigation around the tables.

Finally, the gremlin in the publishing programme that refused to accept the euro sign on some pages of the previous edition has now been eliminated. The abbreviation NF and € appear solely alongside the date of the currency change thereby keeping the tables uncluttered.

This is an essential publication for every collector who has covers in his or her collection and this means the general collector as well as the specialist postal historian.. Whether you are interested only in the basic letter and postcard rates or require an in-depth analysis of the pre-cancellation rates and airmail fees, this book is for you.

And do not fall into the trap of believing that you do not need it because you already own a copy of an earlier edition. There is so much revised and new material that it would be a folly not to have the latest edition. As a result you may find it necessary to re-write a few of your pages in the light of new discoveries made by the author, but it is a small price to pay for being secure in the knowledge that your collection will now be accurate and up to date.

Mick Bister

Proofs of Algerian Stamps 1936-1940

Gilbert Smith



20c green



45c blue



3F rose-magenta

Issued stamps engraved by Feltesse

I have amassed a series of proofs of the Algerian issues from 1936 to 1940, and these show an intriguing development in the designs that may be of interest to some of our members.

The first three sheets illustrated below are of the Moslem Cemetery, Tlemçem. The first of the three shows the rejected proof by Mignon, and it can be compared with the three issued stamps shown above, which were engraved by Feltesse.

As can be seen, the issued stamps have been altered. Thus, a tree is now placed in the left hand top corner and the main tree is more to the right; the arch has more light coming through; the group of four people has been moved further back towards the arch. The border has also been reworked and the wording enlarged.

The second and third sheets were proofs for the 45c value, but the colours were rejected.



Rejected proof engraved by Mignon



1936-40 Moslem Cemetery, Tlemçen
45c proof in unissued colour
Red cachet is official stamp of Postes et Télégraphes of Algeria



1936-40 Moslem Cemetery, Tlemçen
45c proof in unissued colour



3c green



90c scarlet



90c scarlet



2F lilac-brown

Issued stamps engraved by Cheffer

The 90c stamp on the right has figures of value in colour on white background

In this second example the first two proofs are named Tebessa - Roman Basilica, but this name was never used for the issued stamps. The accepted proof was by the same engraver, H Cheffer, from which was produced a set of four stamps that were renamed Lambèse - Triumphal Arch.

The proofs show a 90c value in green but the issued two 90c stamps were scarlet. One shows the 90c value in white on a scarlet background and the other has the 90c value

in scarlet on a white background, which is how they were issued. The original green proof colour was then used on the issued 3c stamp.

If any reader would like any assistance in establishing how their stamp grew from proof to its issued form, I have well over a hundred proofs as well as the related stamps and would be only too pleased to help. My contact details are given in the current Register of Members' Interests.



Lambèse - Triumphal Arch
90c proof engraved by Cheffer
printed in green though the issued stamp is in scarlet



Tebessa - Roman Basilica
The title on this proof was never used on the issued stamps
which were renamed *Tlemçen - Arc de Triomphe*



Another example of the original proof
named *Tlemçen - Basilique Romaine*

Mail carried by *estafette* between France and England (1829-1836)

André Métayer

Translated by Mick Bister



Figure 1
The *estafette* and mail coach route between Paris and Calais

With the development of his huge empire, Napoleon I needed to dispatch his urgent orders as quickly as possible. Rather than calling on the services of special couriers, he ordered the Comte de Lavalette to organise an *estafette* service to deal with the delivery of government dispatches. It was a question of using the present postal infrastructure: post houses, postmasters, riders and horses.

When a special courier was used he had to undertake the entire journey, whereas with the *estafette* service the rider and horse were changed at each post house. This saved a considerable amount of time.

Following a *Décret Impérial* dated 12 July 1807, the Comte de Lavalette published on 7 August 1807 regulations regarding the '*Estafettes Impériales*'. This document had to be displayed at all post houses. The terms contained would be modified and developed by the different *Instructions Générales de la Poste*.

The Comte de Lavalette was *Directeur des Postes* from 1804 to 1814 and again in 1815 prior to Napoleon's return from Elba. Following Napoleon's defeat at Waterloo he was condemned to death, but became famous after he succeeded in escaping from prison on the eve of his execution.

In 1818, an *estafette* service was created between Le Havre, Rouen and Paris.

The improvement in relations between England and France allowed for the creation of an *estafette* service established by the Act of 4 July 1829. It was planned to make use of the current postal system and to achieve a notable reduction in the time to deliver the mail. A circular dated 15 July 1829 gave details of its operation which began on 1 August 1829. To take advantage of the service, senders were required to write clearly on the letter the words '*par estafette*'. This express service cost a little more than the regular service since an additional *taxe d'estafette* was required.

Mail destined for Paris and London had to pass through Calais. From 7 October 1833, the *estafette* service became mandatory and therefore it was no longer necessary to write '*par estafette*' on the letter in order to take advantage of the accelerated service. Despite that, some letters continued to bear the words '*par estafette*'.

The *estafette* fee was abolished by the postal convention drawn up between the two countries on 30 March 1836 and which came into force on 15 July 1836.

First Period: The birth of the *estafette* service

The Act of 4 July 1829 and the enforcement circular of 15 July 1829 set the principles to be followed and its implementation with effect from 1 August 1829.

The Act of 4 July 1829 (Appendix 1)

Article 2 announced the creation of the *estafette* service between England and France.

“2 - Letters from France to England, Scotland and Ireland and vice versa carried by the special *estafette* service between Paris and Calais will be subject to a fee of three décimes per letter in addition to the current postage rates in operation.

“The weight steps for this extra fee will be the same as those fixed by Article 3 of the Act of 15 March 1827”

The enforcement circular of 15 July 1829

The circular gave details of how this optional service would operate. The postage was determined by the tariff of 1 January 1828 (Act of 15 March 1827) which fixed a rate in relation to the distance in a straight line between the two offices and to the weight of the letter.

Added to this rate was the *estafette* fee and, according to the direction, a shipping fee. A letter weighing up to 7½ grams crossing from Calais to Dover would be charged a 2 décimes shipping fee, but coming the other way from Dover to Calais it would be 6 décimes.

Therefore a letter weighing 7½ grams from London to Paris would be charged for the French section of the journey as follows:

- Shipping Fee from Dover to Calais: 6 décimes
- Postage from Calais to Paris: 6 décimes
- *Estafette* Fee: 3 décimes
- Total : 15 décimes

The same letter being carried from Paris to London would be charged as follows:

- Postage from Paris to Calais: 6 décimes
- Shipping Fee from Calais to Dover: 2 décimes
- *Estafette* Fee: 3 décimes
- Total : 11 décimes

For heavier letters, the *estafette* fee increased as follows :

- 0 – 7 ½ grams 3 décimes
- 7 ½ - 10 grams 5 décimes
- 10 – 15 grams 6 décimes
- 15 – 20 grams 8 décimes

All mail carried by *estafette* departed from or arrived at Paris. The *estafette* was required to follow the mail coach route from Paris to Calais, departing from the capital every Tuesday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday at 5 o'clock in the evening. The mail arrived two days later in London at 5 o'clock in the morning. In the opposite direction the *estafette* left Calais on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays, arriving at Paris two days later at 8 o'clock in the morning. Mail carried by *estafette* took only 36 hours to get from Paris to London in contrast to the 60 hours when carried by mail coach.

The post office clerks took some time in getting used to both the new mode of transport and the new fee, with the result that oversights were inevitable as is shown by the letter below (Fig 2). Initially charged 18 décimes it was uprated to 23 décimes once it had been realised that the sender had specified carriage by *estafette*. The second weight step (7½ - 10 grams) *estafette* fee was 5 décimes which explains the increase from 18 to 23 décimes.

	0-7½g	7½-10g	10-15g
Dover to Calais Shipping Fee	6	9	12
Postage from Calais to Paris	6	9	12
<i>Estafette</i> Fee	3	5	6
Total	15	23	30

Three different markings can be found on *estafette* mail going from France to England – **P.P. EST.**, **ESTAFETTE** and **ESTAF** which were all applied in Paris before departure. A single strike, **ANGL. EST** was applied in Paris to mail which had arrived from England.

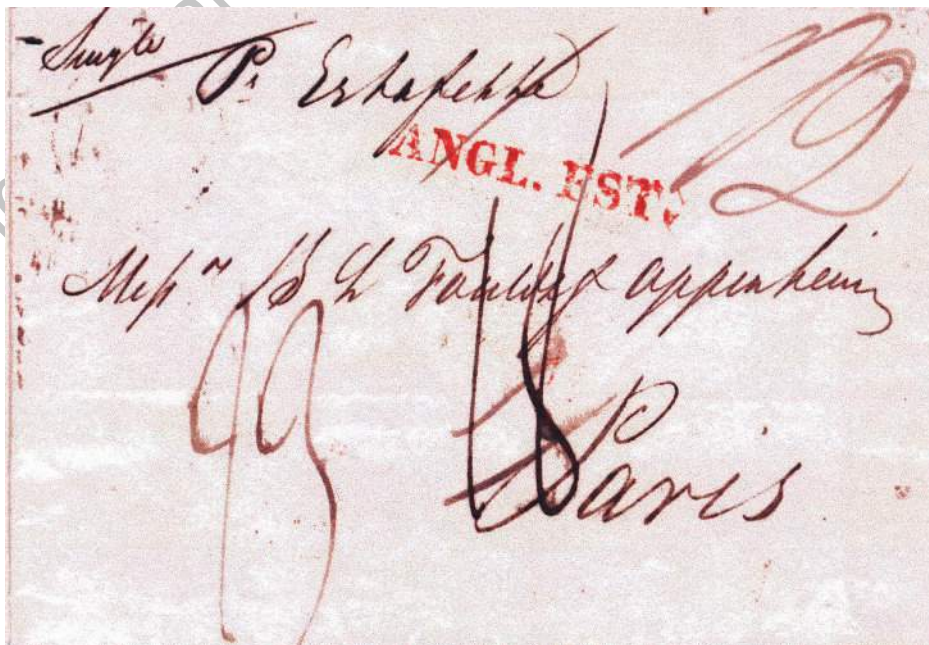


Figure 2

Letter from London to Paris dated 10 September 1829 and uprated from 18 to 23 décimes

60
P.P.
E

P.P. EST.

Monsieur

Monsieur N. M. Rothschild

18
APRIL
1854

Londres.

60s
Par L'Extralette
Hersbet & Co. Fredericsburgh
19 Londres

142

ESTAF.



Figure 5

Prepaid letter from Paris dated 31 December 1833 to London (and forwarded to Edinburgh) with 60 PP.J in black and estafette cachet in red.

Estafette markings on mail from England to France

Only one *estafette* cachet is known and it can be considered as an entry mark.

ANGL. EST



Figure 6

Letter to Cognac charged 2 shillings and 4 pence (London to Dover) and 19 décimes (Dover to Calais: 6, Calais to Cognac: 10, Estafette: 3)

This cachet is probably more frequently encountered because it is easier to find letters to France than those to England, Ireland or other countries.

During the first period from 1 August 1829 to the application of the 7 October 1833 Edict, the use of the *estafette* service was optional and indicated by the manuscript annotation '*par estafette*'. After this date the annotation survived as late as 1835 even though the *estafette* service had become compulsory and the *estafette* fee therefore obligatory.

Some letters encountered have come from far away like this letter of 13 August 1831 from Buenos-Aires to Bordeaux via London (Fig 7). It is unusual in that it has been

charged for the third weight step of 10–15 grams. It took 79 days to complete its journey.

The letter bears the manuscript annotation '*par estafette*' and the 38 décimes charge is explained as follows:

- Shipping Fee from Dover to Calais: 12 décimes
- Postage from Calais to Bordeaux: 20 décimes
- *Estafette* Fee: 6 décimes
- Total : **38 décimes**



Figure 7
1831 letter from Brazil to Bordeaux marked ANGL. EST

Two more letters that have covered long distances are shown below (Figs 8 & 9).



Figure 8
Letter dated 19 March 1833 from London to Constantinople via Paris and Venice and marked ANGL. EST in red.

Thanks to post office records it is possible to follow the stages taken by the letter from Calais to Constantinople,

which would have passed through Paris, Beinheim, Rads-tadt, Vienna, Belgrade, Budapest and Sofia.



Figure 9
Prepaid letter from Madrid
dated 25 April 1833
and London receiver
dated 6 May 1833
on the reverse.
The 1/2 indicates the fee
of 1 shilling and 2 pence
in payment of the stage
between Dover and London.

Second Period: The *estafette* service becomes compulsory (Appendix 2)

The King's Edict of 7 October 1833 established the reciprocal arrangements for carriage between Calais and Dover. In particular, it was stipulated that a regular service would be created for the transport of mail between Calais and Dover on at least six days a week. France would dispatch mail from Calais (weather permitting) on Sundays, Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. England would dispatch its mail from Dover on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays.

As well as the 3 décimes *estafette* fee, it was stipulated that all mail going either way between France and England (as well as to and from overseas countries with which the British post office had regular communications) would be

transported by means of the *estafette* service from Paris to Calais with the exception of mail from the north and north-west of the country which, in order to save time, would not go via Paris but directly to Calais. The *estafette* service therefore was now obligatory except for mail from areas close to Calais

A new category was created: the introduction of a newspaper and printed matter service by *estafette*. A fixed rate was established, irrespective of the size of the sheet of paper, of 5 décimes comprising 2 décimes postage and 3 décimes *estafette* fee.

When a letter was prepaid the amount was recorded on the back of the letter (Figs 10a and 10b).



Figure 10a
Letter dated 3 October 1835 from Neyrac to Navan in Ireland.

On the front, to the right, is the figure 4 corresponding to the rate for the 23 miles between Navan and Dublin and the Neyrac date stamp. On the left is the 2 shillings and 3 pence charge for the journey between Dover and London. Note that there is now no need to write '*par estafette*' as the service was obligatory. On the reverse (see next page) are

the calculations for the *estafette* service as follows;

- Postage from Neyrac to Calais: 11 décimes
- Shipping Fee from Calais to Dover: 2 décimes
- *Estafette* Fee: 3 décimes
- Total : 16 décimes

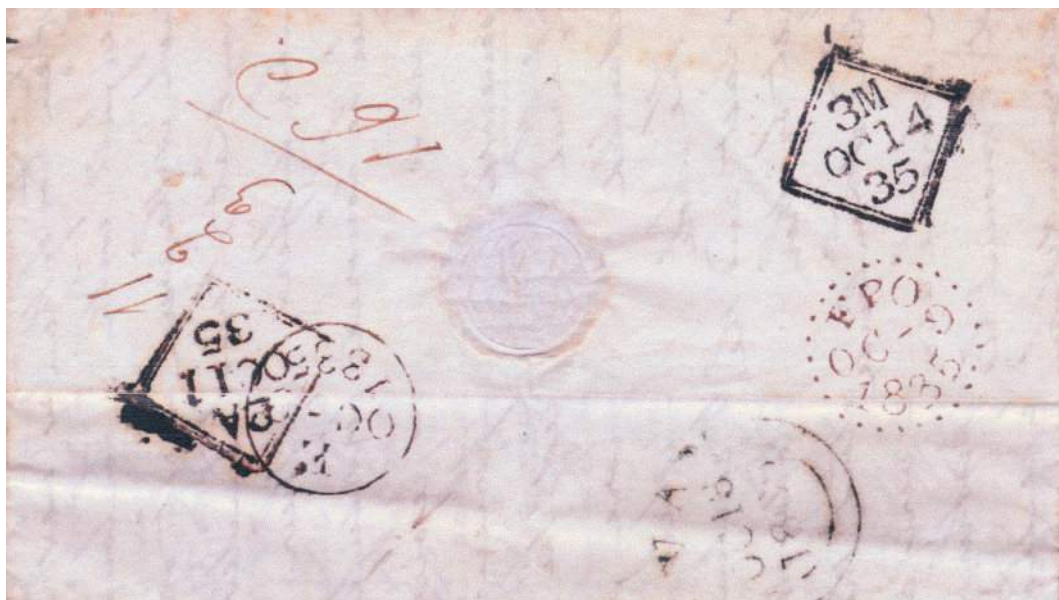


Figure 10b
Reverse of the letter

During this second period the annotation '*par estafette*', although no longer necessary, was often written by force of habit. An example can be seen on the letter below (Fig 11).

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------|
| • Shipping Fee from Dover to Calais: | 15 décimes |
| • Postage from Calais to Lyon: | 25 décimes |
| • <i>Estafette</i> Fee: | 8 décimes |
| • Total : | 48 décimes |



Figure 11
Letter (fourth weight step) from England to Lyon dated 23 December 1833
with ANGLETERRE PAR CALAIS entry mark in red
and redundant manuscript '*par estafette*'.

Third Period : The Boulogne Dispensation (Appendix 3)

There had been considerable competition between Calais and Boulogne. Boulogne wanted to benefit more from its links with England and was striving to do so but the *estafette* service was not interested in the port despite being only 44 kilometres from Calais. However, as a result of the 18 October 1833 Edict, the *estafette* could call at Boulogne for a fee of 1 décime for a basic letter.

Letters which have travelled by *estafette* between Calais and Boulogne remain extremely rare and all the more

so because it is difficult to identify them due to the absence of the annotation '*par estafette*'. It is only by studying the rate inscribed on the letter that they can be identified.

The two extraordinary letters below (Figs 12 and 13) sent from Aberdeen to a Mrs Margaret Jones demonstrate the application of this special fee for mail between Calais and Boulogne. The two items are also interesting with regard to their dead letter status, but that's a different story.



Figure 12

Letter dated 10 June 1835 from Aberdeen to Boulogne-sur-Mer

The 9 décimes charge is made up as follows:

- | | |
|---|------------------|
| • Shipping Fee from Dover to Calais: | 6 décimes |
| • Postage from Calais to Boulogne: | 2 décimes |
| • <i>Estafette</i> Fee from Calais to Boulogne: | 1 décime |
| • Total : | 9 décimes |

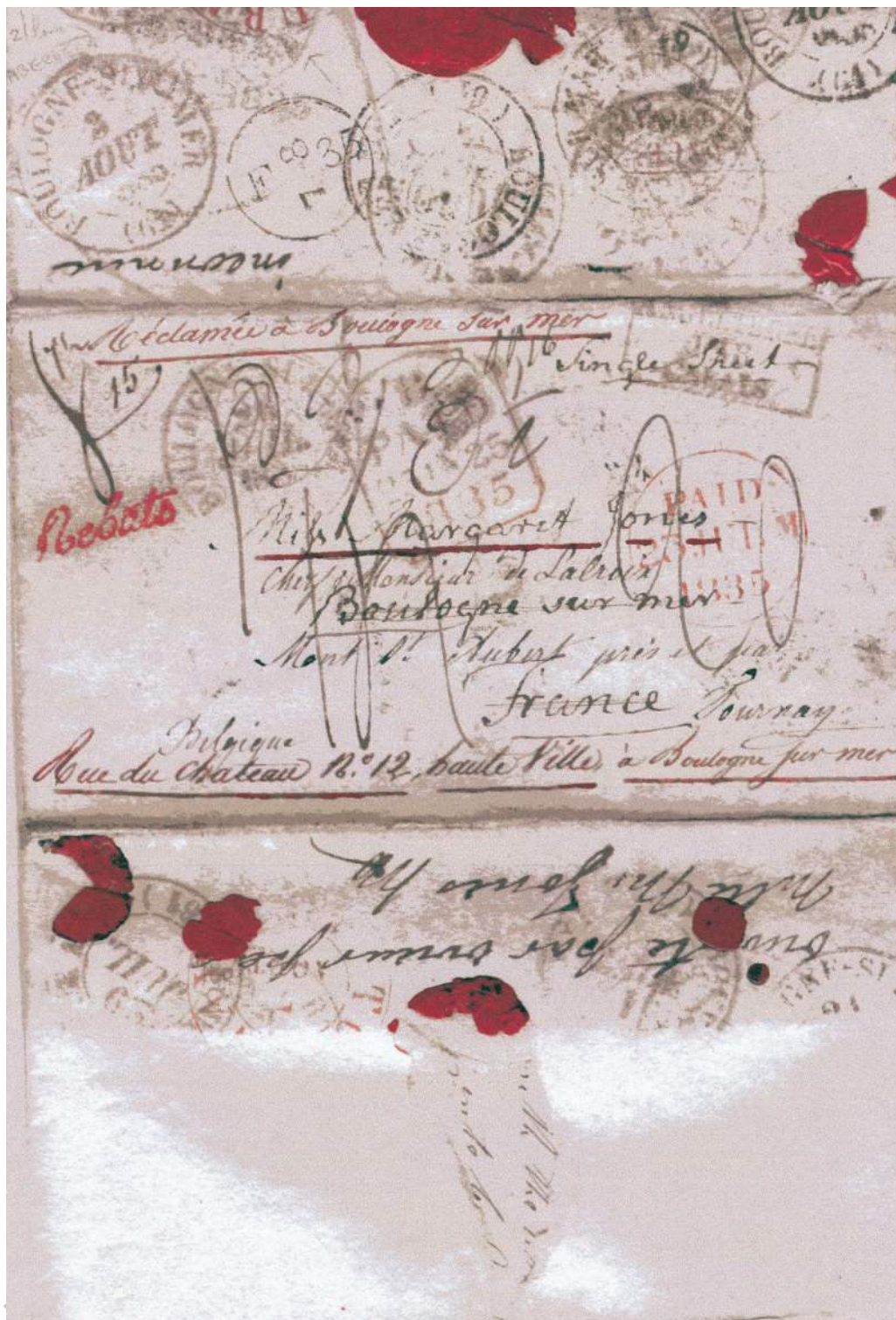


Figure 13

Letter dated 20 July 1835 from Aberdeen to Boulogne-sur-Mer

The 12 décimes charge is for a second weight step letter and is made up as follows:

- Shipping Fee from Dover to Calais: 9 décimes
- Postage from Calais to Boulogne: 3 décimes
- Estafette Fee from Calais to Boulogne: 2 décimes
- Total: 14 décimes

The end of the estafette era (Appendix 4)

Between 1 August 1829 and 15 July 1836, mail was carried by stagecoach but the railways were rapidly expanding and it was farewell to the estafette.

Appendix 1: The Act of 4 July 1829

La loi du 4 juillet 1829.

N.° 41.529 – Loi relative au Service des Postes par voie de mer.

Au château de Saint-Cloud, le 4 juillet 1829.

CHARLES, par la grâce de Dieu, ROI DE France ET DE NAVARRE, à tous présents et à venir, SALUT.

Nous avons proposé, les Chambres ont adopté, NOUS AVONS ORDONNÉ et ORDONNONS ce qui suit :

«

2. Les lettres de France pour l'Angleterre, l'Écosse et l'Irlande, et réciproquement, qui seront transportées au moyen d'un service extraordinaire par estafette entre Paris et Calais, paieront, en sus du port fixé par les tarifs en vigueur, une taxe de trois décimes par lettre simple.

La progression de cette taxe supplémentaire sera la même que celle qui est déterminée par l'article 3 de la loi du 15 mars 1827.

La présente loi, discutée, délibérée et adoptée par la Chambre des Paires, et par celui des députés, et sanctionnée par nous aujourd'hui, sera exécutée comme loi de l'État ; voulons, en conséquence, qu'elle soit gardée et observée dans tout notre royaume, terres et pays de notre obéissance.

.... Donné en notre château de Saint-Cloud, le 4ème jour du mois de Juillet, l'an de grâce 1829, et de notre règne le cinquième.

Signé
CHARLES
Par le Roi

Vu et scellé du grand sceau

Le garde des sceaux de France, Ministre
des finances
Secrétaire d'état du département de justice
Signé BOURDEAU

Le Ministre d'état au département

Signé ROY

B. n° 260. (397)

Vu la loi du 14 floréal an x (article 4) ;

Sur le rapport de notre ministre secrétaire d'état des finances,

NOUS AVONS ORDONNÉ et ORDONNONS ce qui suit :

ART. 1^{er}. Toutes les lettres de France pour l'Angleterre et d'Angleterre pour la France seront transportées par la voie de l'estafette, de Paris à Calais, à l'exception de celles de la partie du nord et nord-ouest qui, pouvant être transmises avec plus d'accélération par des communications directes avec Calais, ne passent pas par Paris.

2. Les lettres transportées par estafette supporteront la surtaxe de trois décimes par lettre simple, établie par la loi du 4 juillet 1829.

3. Les lettres que des particuliers voudraient envoyer aux colonies et pays d'outre-mer avec lesquels l'office des postes anglais entretient des communications régulières, seront reçues à l'affranchissement dans tous les bureaux des postes de France.

Le transport de ces lettres, indépendamment du port ordinaire des lettres de la France pour l'Angleterre, sera assujéti au droit du *transit*, à travers l'Angleterre, établi conformément aux tarifs des postes anglaises ci-annexés.

4. Les lettres des pays avec lesquels l'office des postes anglais entretient des communications régulières, lorsqu'elles seront à la destination de la France, payeront à leur arrivée en France le même droit de *transit* à travers l'Angleterre, et la taxe française perçue proportionnellement au poids des lettres et à la distance parcourue en France.

5. Notre ministre secrétaire d'état des finances est chargé de l'exécution de la présente ordonnance.

Signé LOUIS-PHILIPPE.

Par le Roi : le Ministre Secrétaire d'état des finances,

Signé HUMANN.

Appendix 2

The Royal Edict of 7 October 1833

B. n° 264. (439)

N° 5038. — ORDONNANCE DU ROI portant fixation de la Taxe supplémentaire à percevoir sur la Correspondance de Boulogne-sur-mer avec l'Angleterre pour le Transport par estafette entre ladite ville et Calais.

A Paris, le 18 Octobre 1833.

LOUIS-PHILIPPE, ROI DES FRANÇAIS ;

Vu la proposition de faire jouir la ville de Boulogne-sur-mer, pour sa correspondance avec Londres, de l'accélération obtenue par l'estafette entre Paris et Calais ;

Vu l'article 2 de la loi du 4 juillet 1829 ;

Vu notre ordonnance du 7 octobre courant (1), qui étend à toutes les correspondances de la France pour l'Angleterre et de l'Angleterre pour la France, qui sont transportées par estafette, la perception de la taxe supplémentaire de trois décimes pour le parcours entre Paris et Calais ;

Considérant que cette taxe de trois décimes, en ce qui touche les lettres de Boulogne-sur-mer, est hors de proportion avec la distance parcourue par l'estafette entre Boulogne et Calais ;

Sur le rapport de notre ministre secrétaire d'état des finances, NOUS AVONS ORDONNÉ et ORDONNONS ce qui suit :

ART. 1^{er}. La taxe supplémentaire d'estafette pour le parcours entre Boulogne et Calais est fixée à un décime par lettre simple, c'est-à-dire, pesant moins de sept demi-grammes. Cette taxe s'élèvera selon la pesanteur de la lettre, conformément aux progressions établies par la loi du 15 mars 1827.

2. La taxe d'un décime pour transport par estafette est indépendante de la taxe ordinaire établie par les lois.

3. Notre ministre secrétaire d'état des finances est chargé de l'exécution de la présente ordonnance.

Signé LOUIS-PHILIPPE.

Par le Roi : le Ministre Secrétaire d'état des finances,
Signé HUMANN.

Appendix 3

The Royal Edict of 18 October 1833

Appendix 4: The Royal Edict of 26 June 1836

N° 6355. — *ORDONNANCE DU ROI pour l'exécution de la Convention postale conclue, le 30 Mars 1836, entre la France et la Grande-Bretagne.*

Au palais de Neuilly, le 26 Juin 1836.

LOUIS-PHILIPPE, ROI DES FRANÇAIS;

Vu, 1^o la convention postale conclue et signée, le 30 mars 1836 (1), entre la France et la Grande-Bretagne;

2^o La loi du 14 floréal an x [4 mai 1802];

3^o La loi du 15 mars 1827;

Sur le rapport de notre ministre secrétaire d'état au département des finances,

NOUS AVONS ORDONNÉ et ORDONNONS ce qui suit :

ART. 1^{er}. A dater du 15 juillet prochain, les personnes qui voudront adresser des lettres pour le Royaume-Uni de la Grande-Bretagne et d'Irlande et les colonies ou possessions anglaises où l'administration des postes de la Grande-Bretagne entretient des bureaux de poste, auront le choix : premièrement, de laisser le port entier de ces lettres à la charge des destinataires; secondement, de payer le port d'avance jusqu'au lieu de destination; troisièmement, de n'acquitter ce port que jusqu'à la frontière du territoire français : le tout par réciprocité de la même faculté accordée aux régnicoles de la Grande-Bretagne et d'Irlande, pour les lettres à envoyer par eux en France.

2. Le mode d'affranchissement libre ou facultatif, établi

(1) Bull. 436, n° 6345.

B. n° 438. (393)

par l'article précédent en faveur des lettres ordinaires, sera applicable aux lettres et paquets renfermant des échantillons de marchandises.

3. Les lettres et paquets renfermant des échantillons de marchandises qui seront envoyés, affranchis ou non affranchis, de France pour la Grande-Bretagne, l'Irlande et les colonies ou possessions anglaises où l'administration des postes de la Grande-Bretagne entretient des bureaux de poste, jouiront des modérations de port qui sont accordées à ces objets par les lois et règlements de la France et de la Grande-Bretagne.

4. Le public pourra envoyer des lettres dites *chargées* à destination de la Grande-Bretagne et de l'Irlande. Le port de ces lettres sera établi d'après les tarifs combinés des deux pays; il devra toujours être acquitté d'avance.

5. La taxe au profit du trésor, à appliquer aux lettres envoyées de France pour le Royaume-Uni de la Grande-Bretagne et d'Irlande, les colonies ou possessions anglaises et autres pays d'outre-mer, ainsi qu'aux lettres pour la France, venant du Royaume-Uni de la Grande-Bretagne et d'Irlande, des colonies ou possessions anglaises et autres pays d'outre-mer, sera réglée, à raison de leur parcours en France, d'après la distance en ligne droite existant entre le bureau-frontière français et le lieu d'origine ou de destination en France, et conformément au tarif ci-après :

Pour les lettres simples, jusqu'à 25 kilomètres, inclusive-	ment.....	4 décimes.
Au-dessus de 25 kilomètres jusqu'à 50.....	5	
Au-dessus de 50 <i>idem.</i> jusqu'à 80.....	6	
Au-dessus de 80 <i>idem.</i> jusqu'à 115.....	7	
Au-dessus de 115 <i>idem.</i> jusqu'à 160.....	8	
Au-dessus de 160 <i>idem.</i> jusqu'à 220.....	9	
Au-dessus de 220 <i>idem.</i> jusqu'à 300.....	10	
Au-dessus de 300 <i>idem.</i> jusqu'à 400.....	11	
Au-dessus de 400 <i>idem.</i> jusqu'à 500.....	12	
Au-dessus de 500 <i>idem.</i> jusqu'à 600.....	13	
Au-dessus de 600 <i>idem.</i> jusqu'à 750.....	14	
Au-dessus de 750 <i>idem.</i> jusqu'à 900.....	15	
Au-dessus de 900 <i>idem.</i>	16	

(394)

6. La taxe des lettres de Calais pour la Grande-Bretagne et l'Irlande est fixée à trois décimes par lettre simple.

7. Les lettres du Havre pour Southampton et de Dieppe pour Brighton, ainsi que de tous autres points du littoral de la France pour la Grande-Bretagne, qui seront transportées directement, soit par des bâtiments de commerce, soit par des paquebots réguliers de l'office des postes de la Grande-Bretagne, supporteront la taxe fixée par l'article précédent pour les lettres de Calais.

8. La progression des taxes établies dans les trois articles précédents sera la même que celle qui est déterminée par l'article 3 de la loi du 15 mars 1827.

9. Lorsqu'il y aura lieu d'ajouter à l'une des taxes réglées par la présente ordonnance le port revenant à l'office des postes de la Grande-Bretagne, ce port sera perçu sur les envoyeurs et sur les destinataires des lettres en France, conformément au tarif en usage dans le Royaume-Uni.

10. Les journaux anglais envoyés en France ne supporteront, pour le parcours sur le territoire français, qu'une taxe de quatre centimes par feuille, laquelle sera payable par le destinataire.

Quant aux journaux français destinés pour le Royaume-Uni de la Grande-Bretagne et d'Irlande, ils seront soumis à la taxe de quatre centimes par feuille d'impression de trente décimètres carrés et au-dessus, suivant la progression établie par le second paragraphe de l'article 8 de la loi du 15 mars 1827. Cette taxe sera acquittée par l'envoyeur.

Toutefois, les journaux anglais destinés pour la France, ainsi que les journaux français destinés pour la Grande-Bretagne, ne seront admis que moyennant qu'ils seront imprimés dans la langue du pays où ils auront été publiés, et qu'il aura été satisfait, à leur égard, aux lois et arrêtés qui règlent, dans les deux pays, les conditions de leur publication et de leur circulation.

B. n° 438. (395)

11. Notre ministre secrétaire d'état des finances est chargé de l'exécution de la présente ordonnance, qui sera insérée au Bulletin des lois.

Signé LOUIS-PHILIPPE.

Par le Roi : le Pair de France Ministre Secrétaire d'état des finances,

Signé C^{te} d'ARNOU.

Bibliography

Act Enforcement Circulars: N° 20 (15 July 1829) and N° 18 (17 August 1833)

Documents Philatéliques N° 3 (January 1960) 'Les estafettes de la route Paris-Calais' by Pierre Langlois pp 110-114

Cameroons Expeditionary Force 1914-16 – Two Further Covers from Capt F L N Giles

Bob Maddocks

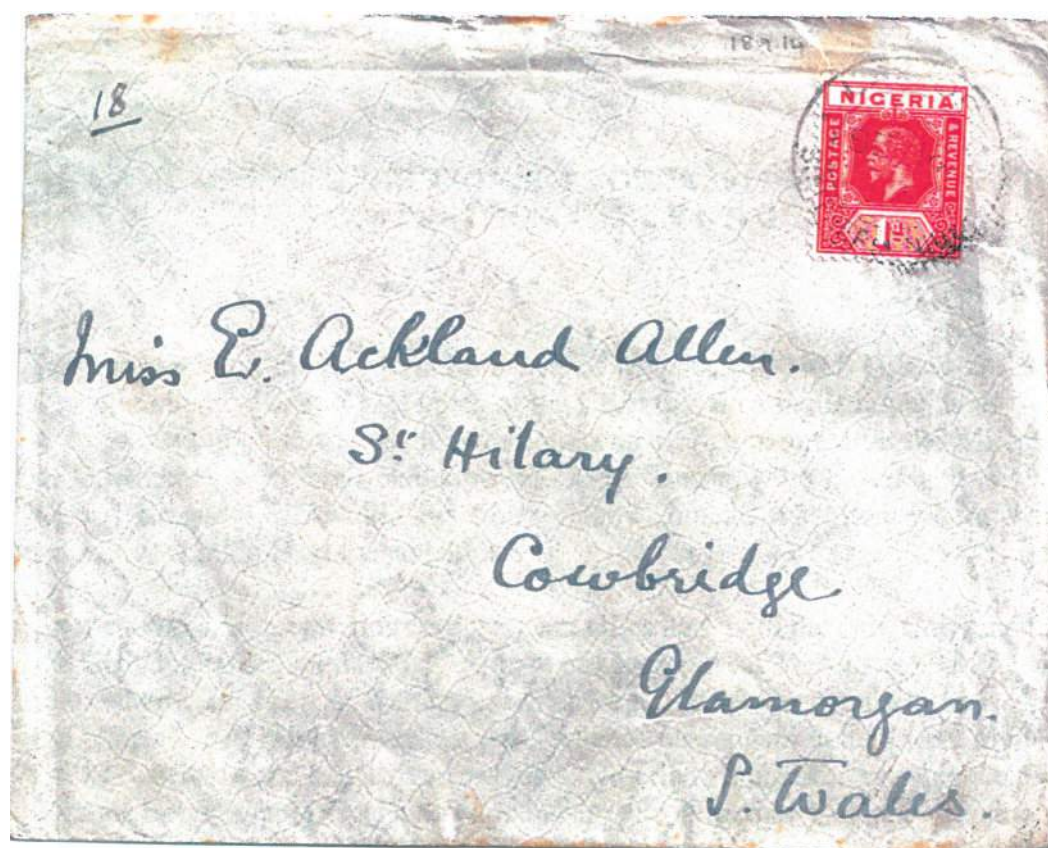


Figure 1
1914 Cover from Capt F L N Giles to Glamorgan.
Franked Nigeria Geo V 1d postmarked 18.9.1914 Lagos, Southern Nigeria.

Further to my article in Journal 255 of March 2010 (Ref 1) here are two more covers mailed by Capt F L N Giles of the CEF; this time mailed outside of Cameroon at Lagos, Nigeria. Posted some two months apart, before and after the Allies' capture of Duala, they were both mailed to his likely fiancée, Miss E Ackland Allen, in the United Kingdom. Devoid, this time, of any content, the interest here lies in the respective frankings on the envelopes.

As mentioned in my previous article, Capt Giles had, with the core Command Staff of the CEF, embarked on the *RMS Appam* at Liverpool on 31 August 1914 destined for the seaborne invasion of Kamerun, which began in late September 1914. *En route*, the '*Appam*' had called at various ports whence passengers' letters were mailed home. On 17 September 1914 she had arrived at Lagos, Nigeria to embark troops and technical and administrative support staff seconded from the Nigerian Colonial Service.

Here, Giles mailed his letter marked number 18 (Fig 1) to

Miss Allen. It was franked as normal at the Empire rate of 1d with a Nigerian George V definitive stamp, and postmarked 'Lagos / Southern Nigeria / Se 18 / 1914'. At this stage of its existence the embryonic CEF was not on active wartime service; thus its members were not entitled to any free frank concessions.

The second cover (Fig 2), also to Miss Allen and numbered 24, was mailed some two months later after Duala had been captured by the CEF on 27 September 1914 and whilst fighting in the Kamerun hinterland was ongoing. It was postmarked 'Lagos / Southern Nigeria / No 30 / 1914' and superscribed 'On Active Service. No Stamps Available' and initialled by Giles. It was also struck in violet ink by a large 36mm double ring cachet 'Southern Provinces Post and Telegraphs'.

Because the impression is weak and uneven it cannot be determined whether it included also the name of an office – such as Lagos? – or a department therein.

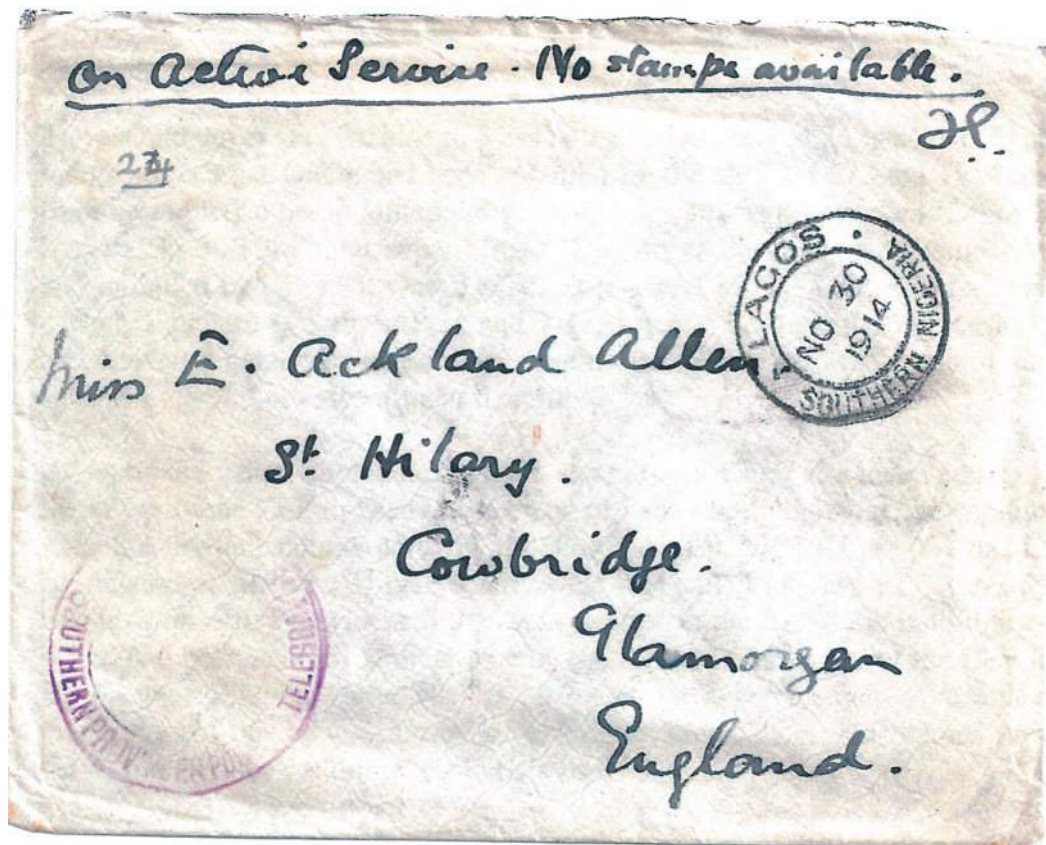


Figure 2
1914 Stampless cover from Capt F L N Giles to Glamorgan.
Superscribed 'On Active Service. No Stamps Available' and initialled by sender.
Postmarked Lagos, Southern Nigeria 30.11.1914.
Also violet cachet 'Southern Provinces Posts & Telegraphs'.

It is probable that Capt Giles, in his capacity as Chief Engineer and Director of Signals with the CEF in Duala, was on an official visit to the Nigerian capital to liaise with his civilian counterparts in the Posts & Telegraphs Department on technical and administration matters. Unlike when on his first call at Lagos on 17 August 1914, he was now on active service and thus was entitled to the free frank mailing concession which had been authorised meantime by the Allied Commander of the CEF in Duala. By General Routine Order N° 16 of 3 Oct 1914 servicemen were able to avail themselves of this concession by superscribing their letters 'No Stamps Available - On Active Service', adding their initials (Ref 2).

Whilst this concession primarily applied to mail posted within Occupied Kamerun and through the CEF's own Field postal service (which was quite independent of Nigeria's P&T service) it was not unusual for it also to

be honoured without any surcharge, when, on occasion, a serviceman's letter was posted at or fed into a Nigerian Post Office. After all, the bulk of the troops on active service with the CEF had been provided by Nigeria which was also independently directly engaged in fighting the Germans in Northern Kamerun. Its troops there also were entitled to the free frank concession on mail entering the Nigerian postal system at such as Yola, Ibi and Maidugari.

References

- (1) "The Alpha & Omega of Field Service Correspondence from the Cameroons Campaign 1914-1916" – Bob Maddocks (F&CPS Journal N° 255 March 2010).
- (2) "The Postal Arrangements of the Anglo-French Cameroons Expeditionary Force 1914-1916" – R J Maddocks (1996). ISBN 0 9529487 02.

SHORTER ITEMS - INCLUDING QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1869 5F Louis Napoleon in Red



400% enlargement

It is always nice to see “interesting” material which surfaces from time to time – of which this is one such. Mr Harris Rosenberg, who queried the provenance of this vignette in Journal 261 (page 107), sent me the original for a comparison to be made with the genuine 5F 1869 Louis Napoleon III in light grey-blue.

First the evidence:

This item is not recorded in any of the standard works of reference, or Maury's notes in his 1909 tome. We can conclude it was not an Official Essay, or one of M. Hulot's foreigners!

This stamp is 22.22% larger on depth and 26.67% larger on width, than the definitive.

The definitive is perforated 29 x 14.5; whereas this item is 23 x 14.5. The perforation “combs” are well aligned on both axes.

The design has been enlarged 400% and examined by a digital microscope up to 126x magnification. Whilst the 64 pearls are present in the oriol, the circular surround and frame to the background design and impressions are not consistent with the quality of the typographed originals. The missing cedilla is also a key issue indicating, with the

above, that this reproduction was by any of the master forgers – Sperati, Fournier, Paul, or the Geneva or Toulouse forgers – whose work has been compared.

The paper is thin but very coarsely wove and one which must have been expensive to produce, and maybe there is a clue there somewhere!

The gum is consistent with stamps of the Louis Napoleon III Era, and has been applied with a coarse brush – which is not consistent, although it may have been regummed, although I consider this unlikely.

The forehead and nose profiles are reminiscent of the work of Paul, but this printing was certainly not typo – possibly wooden block litho.

Then the interpretive bit:

Fernando Serrane refers in the “Manual of the Specialist Expert in European Stamps” to “an old lithographed forgery on wove paper”. I suppose if this was intended to be a serious forgery, it would have been cancelled with the Paris lozenge anchor.

All the above suggests a “fantasy” issue probably prepared for some stamp exhibition in the late Victorian or early Edwardian Era.

Philip Mackey

Dahomey – A Bogus 1915 Red Cross Overprint “Error”



Enlargement of genuine overprint



Enlargement of bogus overprint



Enlargement of genuine overprint

I read with considerable interest the recent articles on forged Senegal Red Cross overprint “varieties” in the Journals for September and December 2010 (pages 93 and 145-6) and March 2011 (page 25) as for many years my French West Africa collection has included this bogus/forged “error”, the French Guinea overprint on Dahomey. The two genuine stamps are also illustrated for comparison.

I do not have the equipment needed to determine whether the overprint on the Dahomey stamp is under or over the postmark, which appears to be dated 10 JUIN 21 (according to the Dallay catalogue all these French West Africa Red Cross stamps were demonetised on 1 April of that year). The bogus overprint looks quite convincing to the

naked eye, but as the enlargement shows it is actually far from perfect – the cross is particularly crude and the figure “5” is too thin and likewise crudely executed. It would be interesting to see how it compares with enlargements of the Senegal items already illustrated in the Journal (are they from the same stable?).

At least the forger has had the good sense to manufacture an “error” which is not impossible. In theory, a sheet of Dahomey stamps could have been inserted among the French Guinea stamps being overprinted, but I cannot see any way in which a sheet of stamps could be inserted in the press twice to produce the truly spectacular item in Jim Moffat’s collection (March 2011 Journal). Forgers really should know where to draw the line!

Bill Mitchell

1940 French Red Cross Stamps: item sought

Does any member possess a cover featuring the 1940 French Red Cross pair (Yvert 459-460) which he/she is willing to offer for sale or exchange? A first day of issue cover will

be extremely acceptable but not imperative. Anyone with such a cover is asked to contact me by telephone: 0208 428 4741.

John West

Napoleon Poster Stamps

We are at the moment especially concerned with poster stamps, such as the 17 illustrated below, each about 1½ x 2½ inches, and all purchased from Veikkos in Germany. What we should particularly like to know is the the source of each picture and the museum where the original might

be found. We are aware this is difficult, so any general help members of the France & Colonies P S can give on poster stamps of Napoleon chiefly produced to commemorate the Battle of Leipzig in 1913 would be much appreciated.



Images reduced in size

There is something else which we should like help with, please. Would any members of the France & Colonies P S have, or know of, the poster stamps illustrated below, issued in France to commemorate Napoleon's death in

1821? They were in two designs and at least three colours, sepia, red and blue. We have funds available for purchase, or an exchange is a possibility. Any assistance readers can give us would be most definitely appreciated.



Roger Finlay

Any responses should be passed on via the Editor, please.

Barlow Moor Books

Morocco 1942 Postage Due with Triangular Label



I have recently acquired a French Moroccan cover dated 1942 bearing an unusual triangular label on the front and a

customs label on the reverse side. I wonder if any readers can shed light on the true purpose of the triangular label.

John Smith

Croix Rouge Française – Delegation Bayreuth

REPUBLICQUE FRANÇAISE
CROIX-ROUGE FRANÇAISE
COMITÉ INTERNATIONAL DE LA CROIX-ROUGE
Delegation Bayreuth
= 28 MAR 46
DEMANDEUR ~~ANDRÉ~~ ESTELLER - ENQUIRER

AXE PERCE
C
+
D
T

nom - Name *Elfride Mendles*
Prénom - Christian name - Vorname *Elfride*
Rue - Street - Strasse *63 Hr. Hauhin - Faure 63*
Localité - Locality - Ortschaft *Valence*
Département - County - Provinz *Drôme*
Message à transmettre — Mitteilung — Message
(25 mots au maxim., nouvelles de caractère strictement personnel ou familial)
(nicht über 25 Worte, nur persönliche Familiennachrichten)
(not over 25 words, family news of strictly personal character)
*Seit einem Jahr ohne jegliche
Nachricht von Euch, in großer Sorge,
was nach Heinzelmännchen, Person
alles Hägische, nur mir zu schreiben.
Date - Datum *24.10.45* *Eure Kind**

DESTINATAIRE - EMPFANGER - ADDRESSEE
Nom - Name *MENDLES*
Prénom - Christian name - Vorname *Hans*
Rue - Street - Strasse *16 Hufelandstr. 16*
Localité - Locality - Ortschaft *Berlin W. O. 55.*
Province - County - Provinz *Prusse*
Pays - Country - Land *Allemagne*

ANTWORT UMSEITIG REPONDRE AU VERSO REPLY ON REVERSE
Bitte sehr deutlich schreiben - Prière d'écrire très lisiblement - Please write very clearly
10 NOV 1945

In correspondence which I have recently acquired there are a number of Red Cross enquiry forms sent by a French resident and former internee to her parents in Berlin. Two of these, from Valence to an address in Berlin, are dated between November 1945 and April 1946 (with the replies taking months to be returned, no doubt reflecting the chaotic conditions in Berlin at this time – though both requests were answered).

These items bear the cachet “Delegation Bayreuth,” presumably applied by the French Red Cross. I have been unable to find any reference to the *Delegation Bayreuth* on the Internet, possibly through looking in the wrong places,

and I wonder if any member can shed light on this cachet and on the *Delegation*? Any information would be gratefully received.

[It should be noted however that the word *Delegation* is German rather than French – the French word would contain the accents in *Délégation*. The message on the complete form is also written in German and reads (in translation):

“A year since any news from you, am very worried what Heinzelmännchen is doing. Try everything possible to write to me. Your child.”

— Editor]



David Hogarth

Recently Deceased Members

I thank Mick, Bill & John and Bernard for their excellent obituaries of our late and much missed members David Lamb, David Jennings-Bramly and John Whiteside.

I always looked forward to meeting David Lamb at our society weekends: as Mick has written, he was indeed “a charming man and a gentleman.” David helped me a great deal, especially with the Dulac colonial issues, and we corresponded.

David J-B loved coming to the Southern Group and sharing a bottle of wine in the summer. He certainly had a most interesting life and had a fund of stories. He will be

remembered for his researches into the Merson issue and I can see him pouring over journals in the RPSL Library.

Incidentally, I hope my friend Bill will not mind my correcting one item: Alec Swain worked with me in the expert room of the Royal, whilst Bertram Mendelsohn and Stan Bidmead were also on the Library team.

John Whiteside will be greatly missed, especially amongst postal historians. We enjoyed a friendship over a great number of years and I had been introduced to his father in his chemist shop whilst visiting friends in Bridlington during my National Service years.

Colin Spong

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I read with interest Mick Bister's obituary of David Lamb in Journal 261 (page 87) and would like to add my own appreciation of him.

I first met David in the early 1980s when I joined the Leamington & Warwick Philatelic Society – he was the member who came forward at the first meeting and made the ‘new boy’ feel welcome in his inimitably charming manner.

He quickly found that I had a budding interest in France (among a range of other collections) and encouraged me to veer in that direction, feeding my interest with information, magazine articles and advice. He became a good friend. We lived reasonably close and spent many enjoyable evenings at each other's houses, sharing the excitement of new acquisitions and putting them in context – and getting

to know each other's family. He always had time to talk to my children, as they were growing up – and had a particular attachment to our pet cat. When I left Leamington in 2000 we kept in touch by letter and telephone – David held out against the Internet – exchanging information and ideas.

A philatelist *par excellence*, he was puzzled at first by my developing fascination with cancellations and then postal history, but was happy to share my enthusiasm and always interested to learn the odd thing from me in return. It was he who suggested I join the F&CPS, who encouraged me to attend the annual weekends and who made France, French philately, the F&CPS and the Leamington PS such important facets of my life and for which I will remember him with affection.

Paul Watkins

REPORTS OF MEETINGS

SOUTHERN GROUP MEETING OF 27 AUGUST 2011

Members: 16 Sheets; Michael Slamo: St Pierre et Miquelon

The Organiser welcomed members to the all-day August meeting and especially Bill Sells who was attending his first meeting. After coffee the following members gave displays

Alf Taylor: International Air Flights & International Stamp Exhibitions

Bob Larg: French Military Postcards

Michael Annells: French Airmails

Graham Booth: French West Indies Mail carried by Royal Mail Steam Packet

Colin Spong: Madagascar 1939-1942

Following Lunch at the Alexandra members gathered for the afternoon display by **Michael Slamo** of Hove, President of the Association of Sussex Philatelic Societies.

Mike Slamo said that his main interest was Canada; however this had led him to become interested in the islands off the southern coast of Newfoundland, near the Grand Banks. The territory consists of eight islands of which two are inhabited, St Pierre and Miquelon-Langlade, two islands connected by the Dune de Langlade, and the formerly inhabited Isle-aux-Marins. They were discovered on 21 October 1520 by the Portuguese Jose Alvares Fangendes and were made a French possession by Jacques Cartier on behalf of the King of France. Today they are collectively a self-governing Overseas Territory of France.

The various stamp issues of the French General Colonies were displayed, including some of the overprints on the 1885 Commerce and Peace & Commerce stamps with various varieties being illustrated. Then came the 1891 issue and overprints, many of the surcharges being made due to stocks of the stamp being exhausted. The first definitives depicting fishermen, glaucous gulls and the fishing brigantine designed by C J Housez appeared in 1909. Once again in 1912 due to shortage of the 5c and 25c values, surcharges were made. Postage dues and some of the 1892 stationery were also on display, followed by the 1932 and 1938 issues. The wartime Free French overprints of 1941 and 1942 definitive stamps concluded the first session.

After tea the remainder of the display comprised a fine collection of covers showing the usage and rates of the definitives together with usage of commemorative stamps and many airmails to various destinations including a 1931 item from Sydney, Australia to Nova Scotia, Canada via St Pierre. Finally we saw some covers with *France Libre / FNFL* overprints censored at Halifax, Canada, Bermuda or Trinidad. The vote of thanks was given by Bob Larg.

Members present: Michael Annells, Graham Booth, John Hammonds, Bob Larg, Bill Sells, Colin Spong, Alf Taylor and John Yeomans. Refreshments were looked after by Christine Annells, Jean Hammonds and Pat Spong.

Apologies were received from Michael Berry, Colin Clarkson, Roy Ferguson, George & Kath Nash.

CWS

LONDON GROUP MEETING OF 21 SEPTEMBER 2011

Members: 12 Sheets

The following members contributed short displays:

Mick Bister: 1 Franc Le Touquet Paris Plage with a detailed account of the printing processes with stamps and blocks to illustrate various points and examples on cover.

Derek Richardson: *Poste Restante* including some rare bulk business uses.

Michael Ensor: Items franked by the sender or philatelically inspired.

Godfrey Bowden: Classic issues 1849-71 including interesting forgeries.

Michael Wright: Reply Paid coupons from the French colonies and some from ex-colonies after independence.

Len Barnes: Airmail etiquettes.

Members attending: Len Barnes, Alan Barrett, Mick Bister, Godfrey Bowden, Michael Ensor, Michael Fairhead, John Hammonds, Chris Hitchen, Derek Richardson, Michael Wright.

Guest: Janet Richardson.

Apologies: Maurice Tyler

CJH

LONDON GROUP MEETING OF 19 OCTOBER 2011

Michael Round: Comoro Islands

Michael Round's Comoro Islands display was an update to that previously shown to the Wimbledon & District P S (see Journal N° 245 of September 2007, page 90, for further details. His own summary follows.

The Comoro Islands (or Comoros, but never 'Comoros Islands', a linguistic *faux pas* comparable to 'The Canaries Islands') are little known even among philatelists, and would probably be unheard of by non-collectors were it not



Front and reverse of Registered letter from Moroni (Grande Comore) to France, using Madagascar stamps (1912-49). (The registration label's missing 'I' in 'Moroni' is perhaps unfortunate!) Franked mostly with 1c and 2c stamps. Most postmarks read 'Moroni 4 Jan 38' though one on the back reads 'Fomboni 5 Jan 38' implying transit – for some reason – through Mohéli.



for the discovery in 1938 of a live specimen of the coelacanth, a fish predating the dinosaurs and long thought to be extinct. Further catches have been made, and the fish itself – now something of a national emblem – features on Comoros stamps, coins and banknotes. The four main islands – Grande Comore, Anjouan, Mayotte and Mohéli – are all volcanic. In size they compare, respectively, to Hong Kong, the Isle of Man, the Isle of Wight, and Tobago. Mayotte has by far the best facilities, partly since, as the oldest island geologically, it has had time to accumulate topsoil and fresh water, and partly since its irregular outline – unlike the other islands – allows for natural harbours, an obvious commercial advantage.

Strategically placed between Mozambique and the northern tip of Madagascar, the Comoros were visited periodically from about the 5th century: the least welcome visitors were slave-raiders, against whom the local sultans appealed to France for protection. Protectorate status was followed by colonial: postmarks inscribed '*Mayotte et Dépendances*' reveal the importance of that island within the group. (The dependencies fleetingly included Nossi-Bé and Diégo-Suarez.) Pre-1892 material is exceedingly rare, save for isolated General Colonies issues CTO in Dzaoudzi (main town on Mayotte, former capital of the whole group and a persistent producer of CTOs).

The 1892 'Tablet' issue, one set for each island, is well known to any catalogue user: the accompanying postal stationery, as with other colonies, is common mint but less so used (NB: Mohéli, whose '1892' set did not appear until 1906, had none). Anjouan's distinctive octagonal postmark was later copied onto Fournier forgeries.

Political changes on Comoros are reflected in its philately, though not always promptly. From 1912 the islands became administratively part of Madagascar (postmarks were reworded accordingly), and stocks of the contemporary 05/10 surcharges (plus the preceding higher values unoverprinted) were sent over to Madagascar itself to be used up. Thereafter Madagascar's stamps in turn were used back on the Comoros, off-cover usage there being identifiable only by postmark town names.

The Comoros regained some autonomy in 1947: stamps followed in 1950 but postmarks did not change their Madagascar appellation until some years afterwards. In the early 1960s, as part of pan-African pro-independence agitation, the capital was moved from Dzaoudzi (on pro-France Mayotte) to Moroni (on pro-independence Grande Comore) despite the poorer facilities there. Referenda on independence were held from 1974: Mayotte opted for continued connection to France while the other three voted for independence, this being finally recognized by France in 1976.

Inter-island pique resulted in Mayotte running out of stamps in the meantime (stocks were held in Moroni and pro-independence officials refused to send them over): the few remaining items held on Mayotte were bisected and even quadrisectioned to pay postage. Between 1,000 and 3,000

items of mail (sources disagree) were so franked. Stocks on the other islands were overprinted '*Etat Comorien*', forming a 52-value set omitted from SG Stamps of the World and only patchily catalogued elsewhere. This territory designation has changed four times since, generally in response to various of the *coups d'état* (more than 20 since independence) that have plagued the three independent islands ever since. Active among these *coups* was mercenary soldier Captain Bob Denard, already notorious in Katanga, Angola and Bénin and the inspiration for the anti-hero of Frederick Forsyth's '*The Dogs of War*'. (Forsyth's fictitious country of Zangaro was, however, based not on the Comoros but on Equatorial Guinea.)

The independent islands had few facilities, and issued hundreds of thematics to attract philatelic revenue. Common CTO, they are scarce postally used, though covers can be found. The '*Etat Comorien*' period lasted from 1975-77 and produced around 117 stamps (besides the overprints) plus 105 (!) miniature sheets. Then followed a short-lived '*République des Comores*' spell (1977-78, 93 stamps + 49 MSS), a longer '*République Fédérale Islamique des Comores*' era (from 1978 – over 1,000 stamps plus 219 MSS – to 1998, which is as far as most catalogues go), a short time designated '*République Fédérale des Comores*', without the word '*Islamique*' (c.1998: stamps not yet catalogued, unless perhaps in Michel's latest *Übersee Band 4, Nord- und Ostafrika*) and – from 2000 and still currently, at least at the time of writing – '*Union des Comores*'.

Statements from Moroni periodically disclaim quantities of further (but totally unauthorised) labels called, in FIP parlance, "illegals". Genuine issues since 2002 are, thankfully, far fewer: they are listed and illustrated on the World New Issues Register website (www.wnsstamps.ch/en/stamps) but other catalogues lag far behind. Comoros postmarks do not always match current designations: recent ones still read simply [Town] / Comores or [Town] / R F I Comores.

Mayotte went its own way, being designated a 'Territorial Collective' in 1976 – not quite a *Département d'Outre-Mer* but gaining many of the advantages of being one, and with its own postcode (976). Its emblem is the seahorse, the outline of the island resembling an inverted one. Thirteen post offices currently operate there (as opposed to only two in 1977). Mayotte used French stamps before resuming its own issues in 1997: some were overprints on Marianne definitives, others were pictorials mostly relevant to the island. These were all scheduled to stop at the end of 2011, at which point Mayotte became a full *Département* (France's 101st) and – just like Guadeloupe, Martinique, Guyane and Réunion – used French stamps once again.

Mayotte uses the euro. The other islands use Comoro francs (CF – or, in the international three-letter code analogous to GBP, USD, FRF and so on, KMF). This currency is separate from, and slightly stronger than, the CFA franc, and was quoted in mid-September 2011 at 563.7 to the pound sterling, compared to the CFA's 751.6.

Members present: Len Barnes, Alan Barrett, Mick Bister,

Michael Fairhead, Chris Hitchen, Hugh Loudon, Barbara Priddy, Michael Round, Maurice Tyler, David Worrollo, Michael Wright. Guest: E Shepherd.

Apologies: Godfrey Bowden, Derek Richardson, Colin Spong. The vote of thanks for a fascinating display on a little known area was given by Mick Bister.

MR

See back cover for further illustrations in colour of items from this display.

WESSEX GROUP MEETING OF 1 OCTOBER 2011

John Hammonds: French Aviation; Members' Displays

The morning section was given over to **John Hammonds** who gave us a detailed and multi-faceted outline of the development of air services. Starting with South America we learned about the dangers of early travel across the Sahara and the Atlantic and were shown some of the early Mermoz flights with the postal stationery and rates that were involved. John then moved on to Vichy France during WWII and a look at mail sent via Lisbon.

In the second part John looked at Algeria, starting with the first flight in 1909 and then the development of Algeria as a hub with connections to Tunisia and Morocco and with the sub-Saharan AOF countries. He finished with a selection of covers used on the Air Afrique and Sabena French Congo section, the development of the coastal Aëromaritime service and the wartime LAM operation.

The quality of the covers shown and John's knowledge and ability to put the subject across in such an interesting way made this a splendid display.

After our usual lunch at the Old Mill the following members displayed:

Chris Hitchen: Paris, *Bureaux bis*

Lesley Marley: Maritime cards sent through the Suez Canal and elsewhere

Edwin Rideout: 20th Century French covers up to 2010 with *franchise militaire* mail

Bob Paterson: Help wanted with Sower colour trials (given by Ashley) and Napoleonic forgeries

Ingrid Swinburn: Undercover mail in WWII

Ashley Lawrence: mail sent under military franchise

Peter Lawrence: Shade variations on post-WWII definitives

Brian Weeks: Greek cards written in French and dated using both Julian and Gregorian calendars

Alan Wood: Pre-stamp Haiti coloured and art handstamps

Also present: Peter Kelly and visitor Tony Swinburn.

Meetings in 2012 will take place on 28 January, 30 June and 6 October. The programme details will be announced in the next Journal.

AJW/PRAK

SOUTHERN GROUP MEETING OF 8 OCTOBER 2011

Ian Booth: Niger

Whilst the change in date by the Association of Sussex Philatelic Societies had drawn a number of members away, six members gathered for a very fine display, by our member **Ian Booth**, on this former French colony.

Ian said that apart from when he showed some censored mail in January 2009, it was the first time he had given a display of Niger for many years. He mentioned that Niger was a landlocked country in West Africa bordered by Nigeria, Chad, Algeria and Mali. It has small border areas with Burkina Faso, Benin and Libya. In the 1890s the French signed treaties with the rulers of Say, Gaya and Dosso states. On 23 July 1900 the Niger Military Territory was formed and in 1904 was incorporated into French West Africa, but Niger did not become a French colony within French West Africa until 1922. In 1962 it gained its

independence.

The display began with stamps of Upper Senegal & Niger issued in 1921, overprinted *Territoire du Niger*, including a variety on the 5c surcharge omitted, together with the postage due set with surcharges and a further series on the 1921 issues with a variety on the 85c. The French colonial definitives appeared in 1925 depicting various aspects of the colony. Ian showed a complete pane of the 1c value and a die proof of the 25c.

The various colonial omnibus commemoratives issued between 1931 and 1939 were admired for their printing and design, particularly the 150th Anniversary of the French Revolution series. Ian also included a number of covers depicting their usage of rates and routes.

Following tea, the remainder of the display showed various airmail stamps and covers, including a 1933 wrapper from Fort Zinder sent via the Trans-Sahara bus to connect with a flight to Europe and on to Lausanne, Switzerland. The Vichy wartime issues concluded a very fine display.

The vote of appreciation was given by Colin with acclaim by members present. The Organiser then informed those present that after some thirty-two years he felt it was time to hand over to a successor. He had prepared the programme for 2012 and trusted that someone would be willing to carry on running the Southern Group.

Members present: Michael Annells, Michael Berry, Ian Booth, Colin Clarkson, Robert Small, Colin Spong, Refreshments were looked after by Christine Annells and Pat Spong.

Apologies received from Graham Booth, Roy Ferguson, John Hammonds, Bob Larg, George & Kath Nash, Alf Taylor, John Yeomans.

The next meeting will be on Saturday 28 April 2012 when member Mavis Pavey of the Scottish Group will be coming to display her Philatelic Exhibitions and *Journée du Timbre* or French Naval Mail.

CWS

NORTHERN GROUP MEETING OF 15 OCTOBER 2011

Members' Choice

Present: George Barker, Steve Ellis, Alan Goude, Bernard Lucas, Peter Maybury, Mike Rego, Peter Rooke, Peter Stockton.

Apologies: Messrs. Graham, High, Holder, Meadowcroft, Watkins.

Alan Goude commenced proceedings with a display of French Post Offices in Crete, featuring the overprinted issues of the Turkish offices followed by the 1902 Mouchon and Merson issues. This was followed by a study of the *France Libre* overprinted stamps and the 1942 Dulac issues of St Pierre et Miquelon.

Bernard Lucas provided yet another unusual selection of fiscals, this time relating to traffic fines, identity cards and casino tickets, all accompanied by the appropriate Lucas-esque commentary.

Peter Rooke produced another facet of his passion for the Revolutionary and Napoleonic periods, with a selection of material covering the development of the postal system, commencing with a 1685 letter to Livorno bearing no postal markings, then emphasising the subsequent variety of handstamps, with examples of the enforced name changes, decrees and a letter signed by Robespierre and the Committee for Public Safety.

Steve Ellis did not leave us all at sea with his erudite discourse, and display, of the workings of the *Ligne A* from St Nazaire to Colon, with examples of precursor ports of call, consular and military mail plus mail carried by the *Lignes Annexes L* and *C* and competing foreign lines.

George Barker followed with more of his burgeoning collection of postal history, this time relative to the postal markings of *département* 15, Charente, (now n° 16), from the 18th century to date. Of particular note were examples of the Type 16 handstamp used in conjunction with the 309 pc du gc cancel of Barbezieux in 1871 and 1877.

Mike Rego showed us two frames of *Recommandé*, *Chargé* and *Chargé d'Office* letters and official documents dating from 1873, and also posed several questions concerning the rules relating to the use and extent of the system. The majority of these queries were discussed and hopefully answered.

Peter Stockton brought the meeting to a close with his miscellany of Algerian military covers and cards. This ranged from the early days of the capture of the southern oases, through WWII censored letters, the Vichy period and Allied invasion of 1942 – Operation Torch. The display concluded with material from the various Allied forces sent through FPOs during and after 1942.

JPM

LONDON GROUP MEETING OF 5 NOVEMBER 2011

Brian Brookes: Martinique Post Offices and Manuscript Marks 1680-1890

Brian's own summary of his display follows.

The island was settled by the French in 1635; in February 1762 the English captured the island and held it until the Treaty of Paris in July 1763 handed it back to the French. In March 1766 a post was established in Saint-Pierre, with three main offices opened in Fort-Royal, La Trinité and Le Marin and twenty three sub-offices in all the parishes.

This service continued until 1831 with Saint-Pierre distributing mail to the north of the island, Fort-Royal covering the south-west, Le Marin the south-east and La Trinité the west of the island.

The first frame showed the early covers from 1680 until 1762 prior to the establishment of the Post Office, including four manuscript "*Martinique*" written in different styles.

A Post Office was opened in March 1776 and Frame 2 showed covers to and from sub-offices prior to the British Occupation in 1794, including the first manuscript “*Trinité*” dated June 1769 (the earliest from a sub-office).

The next four sheets included a letter from Le Lamentin with a manuscript “*Martinique*” dated 1787 and a letter from Major Irving stationed at Le Marin during the British Occupation in 1794. The next five covers were carried on the Northern Route, Box N° 1 containing letters for Basse Pointe, Macouba, La Grande Anse, Le Marigot, Sainte Marie and La Trinité.

Frame 4 commenced with covers from two small villages under Saint-Pierre, covers to and from Fort-Royal and five covers carried on the Southern Route which opened in 1831, all being sent to Fort-Royal where they were split into three boxes numbered 3, 4 and 5. The last four covers were in Box N° 3 which contained letters for Gros Morne, La Trinité, Le Robert, Le Lamentin, Le François, Le Vauclin and Le Marin.

Frame 5 consisted of covers sent in Box N° 4 route which covered the villages of Le Lamentin, Le Trou au Chat, Saint-Esprit, Rivière-Pilote, Rivière-Salée, Le Marin and Sainte-Anne. Box N° 5 covered the villages of Les Trois-Islets, Les Anses-d’Arlets, Le Diamant, Sainte-Luce and Rivière-Salée.

Frame 6 consisted of covers from very small offices within the vicinity of Saint-Pierre and included manuscript marks from Le Prêcheur with stamps being cancelled with either

single or double crosses in ink. Frames 7 and 8 also had covers from small offices or sub-offices, mainly showing manuscript marks and stamps cancelled with ink crosses.

Frames 9 to 12 showed the three new principal offices which were created on 1 November 1849, commencing with L’Ajoupa-Bouillon which served Macouba, Basse Pointe, Le Marigot and La Grande Anse, although the first two covers from La Trinité are endorsed “*Voie du Nord*” and also show the Ajoupa-Bouillon transit mark. The other four offices were all shown, including a double rate cover paid with French stamps from La Grande Anse to France which were cancelled on arrival in France. Gros Morne served Sainte Marie, La Trinité, Le Robert, and Le Lamentin, and we saw a cover with a manuscript Gros Morne mark apparently applied by the sender of the letter himself. Petit-Bourg served Le Trou au Chat, Le François, Saint-Esprit, Le Vauclin, Rivière-Pilote, Le Marin, Sainte-Anne, Sainte-Luce, Les Trois-Islets, Les Anses-d’Arlets and Le Diamant.

Mick Bister thanked Brian for displaying his amazing collection of rare marks, only partly seen previously at Charlecote.

Members present: Maurice Alder, Len Barnes, Mick Bister, Brian Brookes, John Corderoy, Michael Fairhead, Chris Hitchen, Hugh Loudon, Lesley Marley, Roy Reader, Maurice Tyler. Guest: Linda Lee.

Apologies: Barbara Priddy, Derek Richardson.

BAB

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(*indicates an illustrated report)

Annual General Meeting

7 May 2011	At the Calthorpe Arms in London	121
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Annual Philatelic Weekend

18-20 March 2011	*Society's 35th Annual Philatelic Weekend	81
(Note - some items in this report are included under Philatelic items)		

London Group Meetings

19 January 2011	Meeting Postponed (M S Tyler)	4
26 February 2011	G E Barker: French Classics 1870-1876-1876 (M S Tyler)	47
16 March 2011	J N Hammonds: Aspects of French Aviation (C J Hitchen)	47
20 April 2011	C S & Mrs J Holder: French Postcards 1870-1914 (M S Tyler)	48
21 September 2011	Members: 12 sheets (6 short displays) (C J Hitchen)	160
19 October 2011	*M Round: Comoro Islands (M Round)	161, Nº 4 iv
5 November 2011	B A Brookes: Martinique Post Offices and Manuscript Marks 1680-1890 (B A Brookes)	164

Northern Group Meetings

12 February 2011	A Shepherd: French Guiana (J P Maybury)	4
9 April 2011	Members' Choice (9 short displays) (J P Maybury)	80
9 July 2011	*Bastille Day (22 short displays) (C S Holder)	Nº 3 iii
15 October 2011	Members' Choice (7 short displays) (J P Maybury)	164

Scottish Group Meeting

26 March 2011	R Walker: French Aviation (Mrs M Pavey)	49
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Southern Group Meetings

9 April 2011	P G Mackey: Louis Napoleon Issues (J Yeomans)	49
27 August 2011	Members' Choice (5 short displays); M Slamo: St Pierre et Miquelon (C W Spong)	160
8 October 2011	I L Booth: Niger (C W Spong)	163

Wessex Group Meetings

29 January 2011	C J Hitchen: Paris 1863-1876; (+ 10 short displays) (P R A Kelly & A J Wood)	4
2 July 2011	P R A Kelly: Paris Universal Exhibition of 1900; (+ 7 short displays) (P R A Kelly)	Nº 3 iii
1 October 2011	J N Hammonds: French Aviation (+ short displays) (P R A Kelly & A J Wood)	163

