

# The Journal of the France & Colonies Philatelic Society



1943 *La Poste Aérienne* Exhibition postcard to Zagreb  
(Lot in May 2012 auction)

Volume 62 ● Number 1  
March 2012  
Whole Number 263

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

**Society Website: [www.fcps.org.uk](http://www.fcps.org.uk)**

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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**

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according to instructions

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

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

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

**The Library**

Members are invited to avail themselves of the services of the Society's substantial library, on terms set out in the Library List (2004) originally distributed to all Members but now available in PDF format on the Society website.

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

**The Magazine Circuit**

The Society subscribes to two French philatelic magazines, and has circuits organised for those who wish to read them.

For further details contact the circuit organiser:

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# The Journal of the France & Colonies Philatelic Society

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## SOCIETY NOTES

### Editorial

Your Editor is beginning to run short of articles to publish in the Journal. There are enough to fill one more issue, but shorter items in particular are in very short supply. It would be much appreciated if members could consider writing something of interest based on their collections, particularly when displays have been given. Please ask for advice if you need help in doing this.

I am grateful that several members have already promised to provide articles in the near future, and I shall be delighted to receive any of these before the end of this year. I should be even happier if somebody would offer to understudy my role as editor with a view to taking it over in due course!

\* \* \*

### New Members

The Society is pleased to welcome the following:

1046 (*renewal*) Hamish Clifton (Oxford), 1147 (*renewal*) R K Collard (Yorkshire), 1398 John Place (Yorkshire), 1399 Charles Coulam (New Zealand), 1400 Paul Grigg (Gloucestershire), 1401 Edwin Voerman (The Netherlands), 1402 Richard Akers (Northamptonshire), 1403 Eric R Carver (Somerset), 1404 Marden Blackledge (USA).

\* \* \*

### Members Deceased

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

931 Ian McQueen, 937 C M Wenborn, 1287 Bryan Wood.

\* \* \*

### Resignations

125 Dr T M C Lindsay, 695 T J L Browne, 1113 Roger High, 1245 Tom Green, 1326 Duleep Shahani, 1364 Irving Bloomfield.

\* \* \*

### Annual General Meeting

Members are reminded that the Society AGM will take place at the Calthorpe Arms, Grays Inn Road, London WC1 at 11.30am on Saturday 12 May 2012, and this will be followed at 2.00pm by the Auction.

Any member wishing to raise a matter which requires a decision to be taken at the AGM must give written notice to the General Secretary, Peter Kelly, no less than a month prior to the meeting. Any Officer or Committee member wishing to stand down or any member wishing to apply to join the Committee should also give written notice within the time limit specified above to the General Secretary, whose contact details are given on the inside front cover of this Journal.

\* \* \*

### Future Events

The **London Group** will meet during Philatex, when 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 31 March 2012 in the Board Room, Leeds General Infirmary, Great George Street, Leeds LS1 3EX when George Barker will display Classic France.

The **Wessex Group** will meet at 10.00am on Saturday 30 June 2012 at the Scout Hall, Lower Street, Harnham, Salisbury, when John West will display different aspects of the history and postal history of the Red Cross.

\* \* \*

### Displays by Members

On 16 May 2012 our member **Ed Grabowski** will display "The Postal History of the French Colonial Allegorical Group Type: Use from Senegal, French Sudan and Senegambia & Niger" to the Collectors Club, New York.

\* \* \*

### Philatelic Honours

Congratulations to our member **Francis Kiddle** who on 2 May 2012 will be presented with the Lichtenstein Memorial Award by the Collectors Club, New York.

\* \* \*

### Publications Stockist

Following our announcement in the last Journal, **Richard Broadhurst** has now taken over the sales of all our publications, including the recent book by Bob Picirilli. **Peter Maybury**, who has carried out this task so successfully in recent years, will continue as Membership Secretary.

Richard's address is PO Box 448, Teddington TW11 1AZ (email: stock@fcps.org.uk); telephone 020 8977 9665. Peter's new email address for the Society has now become membership@fcps.org.uk.

\* \* \*

### Wessex Group Programme 2012

30 June 2012 John West: Aspects of the History and Postal History of the Red Cross  
6 October 2012 Robert Johnson: Suspended Mail - The Effect of War and Civil Commotion on Mails to and from France

\* \* \*



## OBITUARIES

### Ian McQueen 1930-2011

Ian was an active member of the France & Colonies Philatelic Society for many years. I first met him at local stamp fairs. Ian would sit patiently examining trays of envelopes and chatting knowledgeably to the various dealers. With a shared interest in French philately and postal history, we quickly became friends.

We played bridge together. Ian was a fine player, analytical and decisive, and he applied the same forensic skills to postal history and to the law (he was a solicitor by profession, and a formidable advocate) as he displayed at the bridge table. He studied philatelic material with great care, carried out research and looked for corroboration of the facts, then wrote up the descriptions of the stamps or covers concisely and accurately. He was never afraid of challenging the received wisdom, he spoke and wrote with authority, and he gained the respect of his fellow philatelists in this country and abroad.

Ian was a Francophile through and through. He enjoyed French wine and food, he and his family spent many holidays exploring the French countryside in and around Nébian (Hérault), and (a bad habit, this) he persisted in smoking foul-smelling French cigarettes.

Ian contributed articles on a wide variety of subjects for the Society's Journal. He was a regular contributor to *Gibbons Stamp Monthly*, for whom he wrote a popular column "Philately for Fun" and reviewed books and journals, with his articles also appearing in many other publications. He had a special interest in aerophilately, and his books on "*Jusqu'à*" and other airmail postmarks are the definitive works on the subject and will become classics. Ian was a prominent supporter of the local philatelic societies in Bournemouth and Ferndown; he was a leading member of the British Air Mail Society, of the Channel Islands Society, and served as President of OPAL.

Among his other interests, Ian was an authority on Sherlock Holmes, had analysed his character and cases, and had written his own account of the great detective. He also wrote a fine history of St Peter's Church in Bournemouth.

As retired solicitors, both living in Bournemouth, bearded, and enjoying French philately and bridge, we had much in common. It went further than that, however. Ian's parents had been in the wine trade: so had mine. I used to work in one of our wine-shops during the school holidays, and I used to regale Ian with stories about my experiences of those days. He particularly liked my account of the dear old dear who bought a bottle of her favourite white Burgundy every week. "It's me again" she'd say as she came into the shop. "I've come for my bottle of 'Poorly Pussy'!" Readers can guess what she meant.

Ian was a good man through and through, a *bon viveur* and a great personality. His family and friends, members of F&CPS and philatelists world-wide will miss him greatly.

Ashley Lawrence

### Bryan Wood

Members will be sad to learn of the recent death of Bryan Wood, a long time member and supporter of our Society. Bryan was a chartered surveyor and estate agent and the meticulous attention to detail and quality which he brought to his career in that profession was replicated in his approach to his own collections of stamps and postal history.

Among his many other interests including sport and travel Bryan amassed an extraordinary collection of the first issues of postage stamps of the world. All of us who have been fortunate to see some of his displays or to visit that Aladdin's cave of wonders in his study were impressed by the superb quality of his material and his knowledge.

Bryan also had marvellous collections of postal history including many, many pieces of the greatest interest and highest quality. I will always remember his displays of transatlantic mail and, only shortly before his death, his Wells Fargo collection.

Many of us will remember Bryan for his other qualities. He was a gentleman of the highest integrity, generous, great company, and always full of good humour. Although Bryan was an eminent philatelist himself he never forgot that everyone has to start somewhere and the encouragement and support that he gave me and many others will always be important to us.

Peter Kelly

# LIST OF RECENTLY PUBLISHED ARTICLES

Compiled by Colin Spong and Maurice Tyler

## *Bulletin de la COL.FRA*

N° 138 4<sup>e</sup> Trim 2011: Les Oblitérations de la Fédération du Mali et de la République du Soudan (Venot); Cameroun: Série Surchargée « Corps Expéditionnaire » de 1915 La Variété « Double Surcharge » du 35c (Collet); Au-delà du Catalogue...au Cameroun (Cobb).

## **Cameo**

Vol 13 N° 1 (Whole N° 85) Jan 2012: Mis-set 27.1.26 Duala-a Postmark - Correction (Bratzel); Mis-set 27.1.26 Duala-a Postmark - the Letter's Journey (Cobb); Cameroun - Plating the Sterling Issue of 1961: the 5/- on 100 Franc and the 10/- on 200 Franc Type 3 Stamps (Bratzel); Cameroun's New Issue in 2009 (Hauschild); Cameroun Independence & Reunification Issues (Parren).

## *L'Écho de la Timbrologie*

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

N° 1857 Dec 2011: Campagne d'été 2010-2011 [adieu TA 60, bienvenue TA 61] (Venturini); Le nouveau tarif Lettre verte sur les Lisa (Héron & Gengembre); Lettres anciennes illustrées ou ornées ayant circulé (Dutau); Les lettres de Numa Grar (Dutau); Les meetings aériens de l'année 1911 (Albaret); Formation de la valeur et détermination des cotes (Danan); Les cartes précurseurs (Storch).

N° 1858 Jan 2012: Dis, Rino Golinelli, l'artiste, dessine moi le timbre de tes rêves... (-); L'ultime émission de Mayotte commune avec les TAAF (Krempper); Carnets: Des pages de publicité (Coutan et Reynaud).

N° 1859 Feb 2012: Dis, l'artiste, dessine moi le timbre de tes rêves... [Richard Seren] (-); Comment la Sabine a-t-elle été choisie? (Rabineau); TAAF: courrier de l'OP 2011-2 du *Marion Dufresne* (Venturini); Dans le sillage des rekkas (Haik); Le corps expéditionnaire français en Tunisie (Marsanoux); Histoire postale du Maroc de 1852 à 1925 (Hadida); La poste pneumatique de Paris (Storch).

## **France & Colonies Philatelist**

Whole N° 307 (Vol 68 N° 1) 2012: The French Colonial Exhibit Part 1: Constructing and Judging (Herendeen); Philately in Paris [interview with Mme. Michèle Chauvet] (Herendeen); Postal Clerking in Andorra (Landau); Cameroun Français '27.8.40' More on Trial B (Cobb); Direction des PTT Cameroun: Postmarks and Aviation accidents - Addendum (Bratzel).

## *Timbres Magazine*

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

N° 129 Dec 2011: La Compagnie générale transatlantique sur la ligne des Antilles [1] (Chauvin); Quand la France s'installe en Chine (Singeot); «Marengo» est, aussi, un département français (de La Mettrie); Cartes Postales: Les petits anges de Germaine Bouret (Zeyons); Une triple taxation spectaculaire (Prugnon); La coalition antinapoléonienne de 1815 (Baudot); L'art de transformer les restes [2] (Marziano); Marseille-Saint Charles (Chauvin); «La philatélie est une invitation au voyage» (Amiel).

N° 130 Jan 2012: Charles Paul Dufresne [1885-1956], graveur inspiré (Nowacka); Les couleurs de la jeunesse (Rucklin); La philatélie autour du monde! (PJM); Mayotte, 101<sup>e</sup> département français, 5<sup>e</sup> DOM (Krempper); Des marques «cursives» écrites «ROMAINES» (de La Mettrie); La Compagnie générale transatlantique sur la ligne des Antilles [2] (Chauvin); Une vague de trois milliards de timbres déferle sur la période classique le 5 centimes Sage (Singeot); Les facéties de la tour Eiffel (Zeyons); L'art de transformer les restes [3] (Marziano); La voie de Suez (Prugnon); Février 1941: le 2<sup>nd</sup> vol du *Ville de Saint-Pierre* vers l'océan Indien (Chauvin).

N° 131 Feb 2012: Des chefs d'œuvre au tarif (J & P-H Cotte); 2012, année bissextile (Loëdec); Les Lignes postales de la côte occidentale d'Afrique (Chauvin); Les petits Sage verts: faibles facials mais fortes cotes! (Singeot); Des papiers d'affaire avec marques pour les imprimés (de La Mettrie); Paris...vaut bien une messe! (Baudot); Un coup monté, longuement prémédité! (Prugnon); Toujours plus loin, toujours plus vite: 10 septembre 1936, le 1<sup>er</sup> courrier aérien France-Chine (Chauvin).

## *Documents Philatéliques*

N° 211 1<sup>er</sup> trim 2012: Le droit fixe de factage dans la convention franco-espagnole de 1859 (Estel); Les particularités de la convention de 1853 entre la France et le royaume des Deux-Siciles (Mentaschi); Limitation de la taxe des lettres insuffisamment affranchies à partir du 1<sup>er</sup> juillet 1892 (Abensur); La combinaison sur un même pli d'une cursive simple et d'une marque postale linéaire à numéro (Lissarrague); Le camp italien d'internés civils d'Embrun (Gérard).

## **The Indo-China Philatelist**

Vol 42 N° 1 (Whole N° 200) Jan 2012: Via the Trans-Siberian Railroad (Bentley); Details of Saigon City Coat of Arms (Aspnes); Postcard Vendors on Postcard (Montague); Advertising via Postcard (Bentley); More Varieties of Viet-Nam's 1952 Airmail Booklets (Dykhhouse); Reprinted Sports Club Envelopes (Bentley); Triply Censored World War II Cover (Bentley).

## **The Collectors Club Philatelist**

Vol 90 No 6 (Nov-Dec 2011): An American in Paris: Mail Handling in Paris by the American Express Co, from 1895 to 1941 (Steidley).

Continued on page 29

# The 'Défense de la France' forgery of the 1F50 Pétain (Reflections and Revelations)

Mick Bister



Figure 1  
Imperforate copies of the 'Défense de la France' forgery

Much has been written over the past sixty years on the 'Défense de la France' forgery (Fig 1), often referred to as the 'faux de Paris', but it has to be said that a great deal of what has been published in recent years is nothing more than the reworking of the first texts which appeared in the 1940s. This is not surprising as the first accounts were written in such detail that it seemed most unlikely that anything further could be discovered or written about.

The first official account of the forgery came in the form of a pamphlet published in December 1944 (Fig 2). By this time the remainder stock of forgeries had been handed over to the Musée de la Guerre by the perpetrators of the forgery, the *Défense de la France* Resistance group, who

were now free to reveal their identity. With Paris liberated and the end of the war in sight the stock was being sold off by the museum in aid of war charities. Purchasers of the forgeries received an accompanying four page pamphlet entitled 'Le faux timbre Pétain', published by the University of Paris, which not only summarised the history and background of the forgery but also illustrated some of the documents relating to the submission of the stock by the Resistance to the museum.

The definitive publication though has to be 'L'étude sur le timbre émis par la Résistance française' and subtitled '1.50 brun - Faux pour servir Type Pétain' (Fig 3). It is a small booklet consisting of 30 pages written jointly by W A Biemans



Figure 2  
'Le faux timbre Pétain'  
published in 1944



Figure 3  
'Étude sur le timbre émis par la Résistance française'  
published in 1946



and B E de Pelenkine, members of the Franco-Belgian Resistance, and printed and published in Belgium in April 1946. It provides a thorough study of the forgery treating the rationale behind its creation, the involvement of the *Défense de la France* Resistance group, the printing and perforation processes, its postal usage, an analysis of the plate varieties and a full account of the disposal of remainder stock. It is richly illustrated with photographs and diagrams.

The above two documents are indispensable as a source of information for any student of the forgery and, appearing so complete, they have encouraged little further research into the issue. For those who have mastered the French language, the most recent article on the forgery is the very thorough '*Les faux de Pétain de Défense de la France*' written by François Chauvin and published in the May 2002 edition of *Timbres Magazine*.

The article includes a considerable amount of extra information about the activities of the Resistance group *Défense de la France* but with regards to the stamp itself most of the references and quotations are borrowed from the above-mentioned texts. For those whose knowledge of the French language is limited, a translation by Capt A R Cooper of Biemans & de Pelenkine's work can be found in the July and August 1950 editions of 'Stamp

Collecting'<sup>(1)</sup>. Entitled 'Study of the Stamp Issued by the French Resistance' the translation is complete with the illustrations and diagrams reproduced from the original book. Herbert Friedman's article 'World War II forgeries of Pétain' in 'Stamp Weekly' (July 1969) is also based on the original texts but unfortunately factual accuracy has been lost in translation. In contrast, a condensed but very accurate account can be found in Geoff Gethin's excellent book 'Fakes and Forgeries of 20th Century French Postage Stamps' published by the F&CPS in 2006.

To a greater or lesser extent, the subsequent reworkings of the original texts have progressively regurgitated the same facts or, conversely, excluded them. However, if one reads Biemans & de Pelenkine's work afresh one realises that there are references that now need to be investigated further and yet have been either ignored by successive authors or, at best, dealt with superficially. So, more than sixty years after the publication of the definitive work, what can we add to it? What can we find out in particular about the following references in Biemans & de Pelenkine's book which have been apparently overlooked ever since?

(1) This article is available on loan from the Society's library, Ref N° 64

### The discovery of the forgery's existence

*Under the German occupation, the stamp was genuinely used from 25 January to 30 May 1944 and as a result can be catalogued as a postal forgery.....On 2 June we wanted to put our stock of stamps out of reach of any (police) searches and they were deposited on that date at the Musée de la Guerre, 102, rue du Bac, Paris' (B & de P page 7).*

On 27 May the *Défense de la France* premises had been searched by the police but the stamps had not been discovered. In order, therefore, to keep them safe until Paris was liberated they were entrusted, together with the printing plates, to the Musée de la Guerre. At the same time, the PTT had become aware of the forgeries being used on mail and had issued a notice alerting postmasters of the fact. The notice was formulated on 21 June and circulated in *Bulletin Officiel* N° 18 on 30 June (Fig 4).

The translation of this notice reads as follows:

*'The Administration has been made aware of a forgery of the 1F50 Type Bersier portraying Marshal Pétain.*

*'The general features of the forgery in comparison with the genuine are as follows:*

*'The paper used is of an inferior quality; it is a grubby white colour and with a rough texture which results in the stamp having a grainy appearance.*

*'The measurements of the forgery and the genuine are identical but the perforation is bigger (13 teeth down instead of 16 and 11 teeth across instead of 14)<sup>(2)</sup>*

*'Generally speaking, the printing is heavy and blurred. The upper part of the letters OSTE of the word POSTES is indistinct and merges into the red-brown colour of the medallion. The oak leaf decoration is*

*coarse, heavy and lacks any detail.<sup>(3)</sup>*

*'The frame of the stamp lacks sharpness; it appears to be formed not by a single heavy line repeated on the inside by a single thin line but instead, with the exception of the bottom frame, by just one heavy line.*

*'The figures indicating the value are squeezed with the middle white section barely visible.*

*'Basically, the forgery can be easily identified by just looking at it.*

*'Directors and section managers<sup>(4)</sup> are requested to make this information available to their offices and in particular to keep an eye on all bulk mailings.*

*'Should any forgeries be discovered, the suspect mail should be treated in accordance with the procedure set out in Article 38, Section IV and in Article 337, Section VI issued in the general instructions and the 5<sup>e</sup> Bureau of the Post Office<sup>(5)</sup> should be contacted immediately, firstly by telephone, and then in writing.*

*'It stands to reason that if there is any doubt about the fraudulent nature of any stamps seized, the greatest caution should be observed in consideration of the sender or the addressee and the envelopes or packaging should be forwarded without delay to the Administration.'*

(3) These features are not constant; such is the poor quality of the printing that the lack of detail is evident on most of the stamp and especially the portrait.

(4) The position of *chef de service* or section manager was created in 1941. The PTT Directors for each region, but not for each *département*, could appoint two section managers, one responsible for the mail, national savings and postal cheques services and one for the telegraph and telephone services.

(5) The 5<sup>e</sup> Bureau was the Postal Administration department in Paris responsible for the printing of postage stamps

(2) ie. Perf 11½ line instead of 14 x 13½ comb.



NOTE Po.5 du 21 juin 1944 relative à la contrefaçon du timbre-poste de 1 fr. 50 type Bersier.

(Recueil de références, fasc. III, p. 64.)

(Référence de classement : B. 131.)

L'Administration vient d'être saisie d'une affaire de contrefaçon du timbre de 1 fr. 50 type Bersier à l'effigie du Maréchal Pétain.

Les caractéristiques générales du timbre faux sont les suivantes par rapport au timbre authentique :

Le papier utilisé est de qualité inférieure, de teinte blanc sale et pelucheux ce qui donne à l'ensemble de la figurine un aspect granuleux.

Les dimensions du timbre faux sont identiques à celles du timbre authentique, mais les dentelures sont plus larges (13 dents en hauteur au lieu de 16 et 11 dents en largeur au lieu de 14).

Dans l'ensemble l'impression de la figurine est empâtée et floue.

La partie supérieure des lettres OSTE du mot Postes est estompée et se confond avec la teinte rouge brun du médaillon.

Le décor de feuilles de chêne est grossier, empâté, sans aucun détail.

L'encadrement de la figurine manque de netteté; il semble constitué non par un trait fort doublé à l'intérieur d'un trait fin, mais par un seul trait fort, sauf à la partie inférieure.

Les chiffres indiquant la valeur de la figurine sont écrasés, le trait blanc médian est peu visible.

Dans l'ensemble, la contrefaçon peut être aisément décelée par simple examen.

MM. les directeurs et chefs de service sont priés de vouloir bien porter ces renseignements à la connaissance des bureaux et faire surveiller particulièrement toutes les correspondances déposées en nombre.

Au cas où des figurines contrefaites viendraient à être découvertes, les correspondances litigieuses seraient traitées suivant la procédure fixée par l'art. 38, fasc. IV et par l'art. 337, fasc. VI de l'instruction générale et la direction de la poste 5<sup>e</sup> bureau saisie immédiatement, par téléphone d'abord, par rapport spécial sous le timbre de la présente correspondance ensuite.

Il va de soi que si un doute subsistait sur le caractère frauduleux des figurines saisies, la plus grande circonspection devrait être observée à l'égard de l'expéditeur ou du destinataire, et les enveloppes ou emballages litigieux seraient transmis d'urgence à l'Administration.

Figure 4

Extract from the *Bulletin Officiel* N° 18,  
30 June 1944



Figure 5

Cover from Paris VIII to Paris XVI  
franked with forgery and cancelled 4 April 1944

The number of known used copies is small. For obvious reasons much of the mail bearing the forgery was destroyed by the recipient and genuine usage of the forgery is difficult to find. Much of what is offered on the philatelic market looks too clean and tidy to be true even though the dates of the cancellations may fall within the accepted parameters (25 January to 30 May 1944). Even the cover illustrated in Biemans & de Pelenkine's book and dated 22 May 1944 appears to have been cancelled '*par complaisance*' despite being described as a '*pli ayant réellement servi*' for it is addressed to a certain Madame Rollin. Later, in December 1944 Monique Rollin's involvement with the Resistance group is recorded as being the *Directrice de l'Atelier*

*des Faux de Défense de la France.*

The cover in my collection (Fig 5) posted on 4 April 1944 appears to be less contrived. At least it gives the impression of having been through the post and the cancellations have not been applied with any consideration for aesthetic appeal as is the case with philatelic covers. The envelope bears the cachet of an earlier owner W CHORNAT PARIS together with an illegible signature and the pencilled annotation '*Enveloppe avec timbre de l'émission originale provenant du Musée de la Guerre*'. Unfortunately I am unable to substantiate the origin or authenticity of these markings but my feelings are that my cover is genuine.

### The printing plates



Figure 6  
Défense de la France zinc printing plate  
© L'Adresse Musée de la Poste

'The materials handed over (to the Musée de la Guerre) consisted of ten thousand sheets of stamps and of four zinc printing plates corresponding to the four panes of the complete sheet.'

'Later, on 18 December 1944, the Musée Postal received from the Musée de la Guerre two of the zinc plates and specimens of the stamps for exhibiting in the forgery section of the museum.' (B & de P page 7)

'Before the opening, the usher and justice of the peace (M. Boisrond) issued an affidavit verifying that only ten thousand sheets existed and that the zinc printing plates had been scored and rendered unusable.' (B & de P page 12)

The above extracts pose several questions that have not been addressed, as far as I know, by later contributors. There were originally four plates, two donated to the Musée de la Guerre and two to the Musée Postal. I have

not seen any photographs or illustrations of these plates either in the original works or in any of the later texts that I have read since. What has happened to these plates and where are they now? Furthermore, do we have proof that the plates were rendered unusable? There are lots of conspiracy stories that the forgery was reprinted after the war to satiate the demands of the philatelic market. Finally, what were these '*spécimen*' stamps that were given to the Musée Postal? The very words employed by the authors are '*des spécimens du timbre*' – not '*des exemplaires*', not '*une quantité de timbres*' and in the letter of acknowledgment from the Musée Postal dated 18 December 1944 the term '*spécimens du faux timbre-poste*' is repeated. Hence is a special printing being referred to here rather than the regular forgeries themselves?

We know from Biemans & de Pelenkine's book how the plates were made. A photograph was taken of a block of



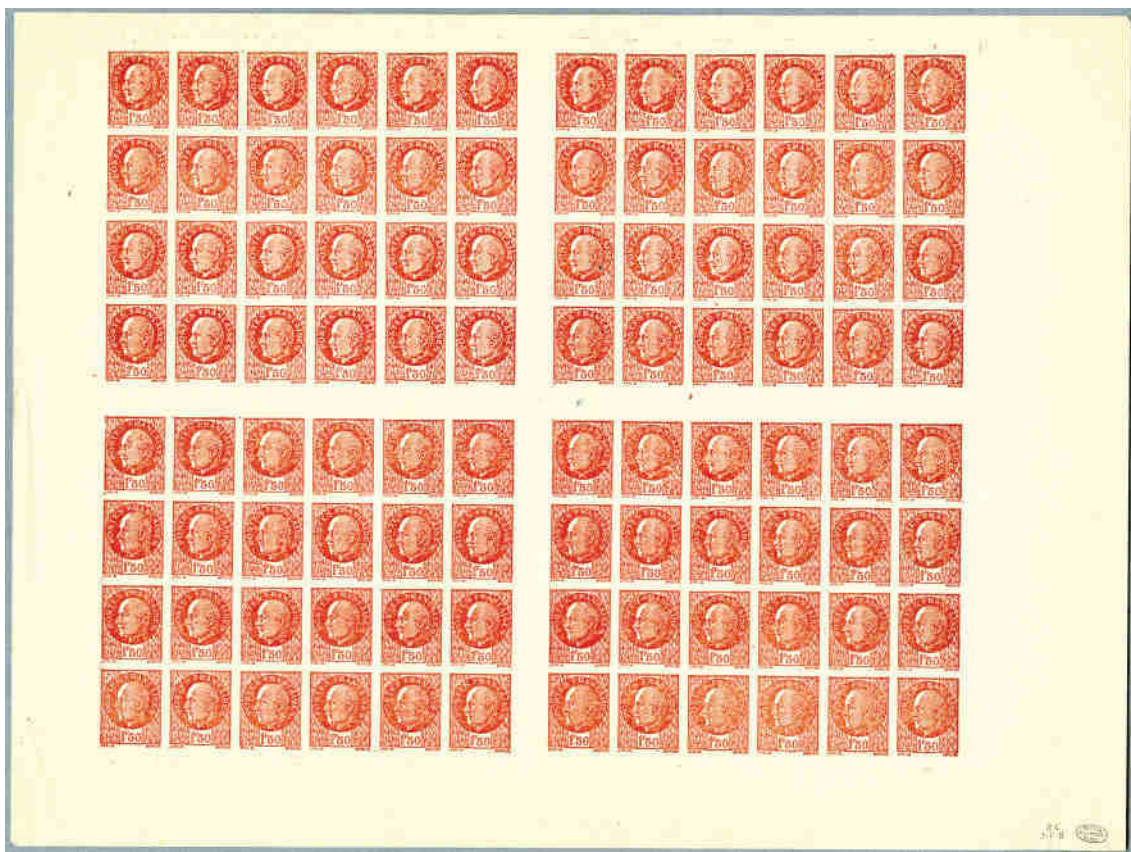


Figure 7  
Complete imperforate sheet of 96 forgeries (*reduced in size to fit the page*)  
© L'Adresse Musée de la Poste

four of the genuine stamp and then transferred six times on to a sensitised zinc plate. The 'engraving' was achieved by the application of nitric acid. The process was repeated to create four zinc plates of 24 thus providing the means to print a complete sheet of 96.

As I have already said, until recently I had never seen a photograph of the plates and the lack of reference to their whereabouts even in the most recent articles made me suspect that they had been somehow spirited away into private collections. It was during a visit to the archives of the Musée de la Poste<sup>(6)</sup> in Paris in November 2008 that my fortune changed. I had made an appointment to meet the *conservatrice-adjointe* Mme Marthe Bobik, in order to look at the materials and documentation related to another Pétain issue, the 1F50 blue with the SN + 50c surcharge. Along with the files of proofs, essays and printings, the folders of correspondence and notes and the selection of *de rigueur* white gloves that were awaiting me was a shallow nondescript cardboard box. I was handed the box and asked if I could identify its contents. On the lid was inscribed PETAIN / Bersier Yv 516 1F50, a clear reference to the official printing of the 1941 issue of the 1F50 Pétain rose. But would the contents match the inscription?

When I removed the lid and peered inside I could not believe my good fortune. Here, after years in oblivion and clearly with a mistaken identity, was one of the zinc

plates made by *Défense de la France*, a crude construction with patches of oxidisation and encrusted ink covering the twenty-four images (Fig 6). The perimeter of the plate was irregularly punctured by nail holes where it had once been secured to its base on the printing press. The fact that the forgeries were created from photographs of the originals was very evident; between each image was the etched perforation of the original stamps subsequently filed down, but not completely excised, in order that it would not appear on the *Défense de la France* printings.

My excitement at seeing, and above all handling, such an historic item was obvious to all and it was with great excitement and satisfaction that I was able to relate to Mme Bobik the events behind the existence of this plate. I asked if there was anything else in the files related to it. We examined everything that was available in the archives appertaining to the 1F50 Pétain, both Y&T 516 and 517, the rose and brown printings. One more item did turn up – a complete imperforate sheet of the forgery in pristine condition (Fig 7). We attempted to work out which of the four panes corresponded to the plate that we had before us. The imperforate sheet showed a few marks here and there where the nail heads had transferred ink to the paper but we were unable to make a convincing match.

I then recalled the reference in Biemans & de Pelenkine's book to the plates having been scored to prevent further use. Upon initial examination, the plate looked unscathed but when the it was held obliquely to the light the evidence became visible. Just one image, in the bottom right hand corner of the plate, had been scored with a cross – not a very deep incision but sufficient to prevent any possible reuse of the plate (Fig 8).

(6) The *Musée Postal* was renamed the '*Musée Postal – Maison de la Poste et de la Philatélie*' when it reopened in new premises in the boulevard de Vaugirard in 1973 but it later became known as simply the *Musée de la Poste* – until recently, when it adopted the strange title of *L'Adresse Musée de la Poste*.





Figure 8  
Enlargement of bottom right hand image  
scored with a cross over Pétain's portrait  
© L'Adresse Musée de la Poste

So, of the two plates originally donated to the Musée Postal only one was still in its possession. What had happened, I wondered, to the other and to the pair of plates retained by the Musée de la Guerre? The original Musée de la Guerre in the Rue du Bac has long since been closed and replaced by the Musée de l'Armée in the Hôtel National des Invalides and all documents and artefacts are now held by the BDIC (*Bibliothèque de Documentation Internationale Contemporaine*) in nearby Nanterre. I have sent a letter to the BDIC enquiring about the whereabouts of the two plates entrusted to them. I suspect though that it could be a long time before I receive the response that I am hoping for.

This has left me with one further query. What was meant by the '*spécimens du timbre*' that were recorded as having been presented to the Musée Postal at the same time

as the two plates? Could the records be referring to the imperforate sheet of forgeries that I had seen during my November visit? Or were the specimens something quite different?

Pierre Mayer, doyen of experts in the 1944 and 1945 forgeries and Liberation issues, has recently passed away leaving a considerable vacuum in this field of philately. He had indicated for some years in his catalogues the existence of the forgery overprinted SPECIMEN but it was only recently that I managed to secure a single copy and later a block of six (Fig 9). The stamps have been individually overprinted by hand with a diagonal strike in deep purple. Could these be the '*spécimens*' referred to by Biemans & de Pelenkine or are they, as a fellow collector has intimated to me, just philatelic concoctions?



Figure 9  
Forgeries overprinted 'SPECIMEN'

## Ink Shades

'The shades ..... extend from light brown (rare, 28,800 printed) to dark brown (normal) to blackish brown (very rare, 9,600 printed) and to red brown (extremely rare, 4,800 printed). We must not forget that it was very difficult to obtain covertly the inks required to match those of the normal issue.' (B & de P page 19)

Pierre Mayer in his catalogue identifies only three shades: *brun*, *brun foncé* and *brun-noir* in increasing order of scarcer-ness if the prices alongside are an indication. The shades of *brun clair* and *brun-rouge* have been omitted. Geoff Gethin states in his book that 'this forgery was printed in sheets of 96, composed of 24 stamps each of a slightly different shade of brown'<sup>(7)</sup>. This difference in shades becomes evident when one has the fortune to examine a complete sheet but the inconsistency, I feel, is more likely to be due to over- or underinking of the plate or to fluctuations in pressure being applied rather than the consequence of different coloured inks. However, this does not exclude the possibility that the ink applied to the plate in a single application may have contained an irregular distribution of pigments. One has to bear in mind too that the inconsistent

(7) 'Fakes and Forgeries of 20th Century French Postage Stamps' page 119

quality of the paper could influence the shade of the ink.

Over the years I have acquired a number of panes of 24 in an attempt to ascertain how many different shades can be defined. The shades of *brun clair*, *brun foncé* and *brun-noir* are very easy to detect as they are quite distinct from the normal *brun*, but the shade of *brun-rouge* is more evasive (Figs 10 and 11). I believe I have found an example but it is only slightly redder than what is regarded as the normal printing; but when one bears in mind that Geoff has detected different shades existing within a single sheet the *brun-rouge* I have could be just a variant.

In the case of the forgeries printed in extreme shades there is no way in which they could have been used on mail without arousing immediate suspicion amongst postal workers. Some dealers argue that the stamps were never intended for use by the forgers but were instead colour trials and it could well be that printings were indeed made to test the suitability of the different inks that were being clandestinely obtained. However, the question has to be asked why so many sheets were printed if they were just colour trials (from 50 sheets recorded of the *brun-rouge* to 300 sheets of the *brun clair*). As yet, I do not have an answer.



Light brown – *brun clair*



The normal '*brun*'  
of the 'issued' forgery



Dark brown – *brun foncé*



Blackish brown – *brun-noir*



Red brown – *brun-rouge*

Figure 10  
Principal shades encountered in the forgery printings



### The handstamp

*'On the back of each sheet there is a cachet with, in the centre, the Cross of Lorraine surrounded by the inscription DEFENSE DE LA FRANCE - DIRECTION Atelier des Faux.'* and *'.....the handstamp was defaced and destroyed.'* (B & de P pages 11 & 12)

In fact, on the back of each sheet there are four cachets, one in the centre of each pane. These were applied to the 10,000 sheets handed over to the Musée de la Guerre as a means of authentication. The remaining sheets in excess of the 10,000 were incinerated as witnessed by the Justice of the Peace, M. Boisrond.

Two distinct inks were used, a magenta and a violet (Fig 11), although slight variations in the shade of both inks can be encountered. The handstamp was applied only once to each pane and, depending on its precise position, between four and nine of the 24 stamps were marked. This means that blocks of stamps can appear on the market without evidence of the cachet on the back and this perhaps has fuelled the claim that such blocks originated from the sheets that were intended for incineration or that they were later reprints. If either of the latter do exist, we would need to see a complete pane of 24 without the cachet at all.



Figure 11  
Cachets of authentication in magenta and violet

ooooo00000ooooo

### Conclusion

I am sure that I have created as many questions about this issue as I have provided answers but I have shown that even after 60 years there are discoveries to be made and aspects of this issue that still require clarification. Perhaps other members have material or documents which will assist me in confirming or negating my theories. If so, I shall be delighted to hear from them.

### Acknowledgements

My sincere thanks to M. Pascal Rabier of the Musée de la Poste, Paris, who granted me access to material held in the museum's archives. Immeasurable thanks are due also to Mme Marthe Bobik, who not only offered me such valuable assistance while I was there but has responded so gracefully and enthusiastically to my subsequent demands for further information.



# French West Africa – *France Combattante: Aide à la Résistance* 11.11.1943

Bob Maddocks



Figure 1

'France Combattante' cover bearing 6 of the 7 provisional overprinted stamps of Mauritania and Senegal postmarked CONAKRY / GUINÉE FRANÇAISE / 11 NOV 43

The circumstances surrounding the issue of this intriguing 'France Combattante' cover (Fig 1) have been, and in part still are, somewhat perplexing. It has not been postally used – it has not been addressed and indeed there is insufficient space provided thereon for an address to be written – and it does not appear to be a purely philatelic commemorative creation such as to mark the first day of issue of the affixed postage stamps.

Whilst there are indications that it was intended for wartime fundraising purposes there is no mention of the organising body which would have been involved and no selling price is shown. Numbered 000106, the cover obviously came from a planned edition but of an unspecified quantity, yet there are no real clues as to its actual provenance. Only the centrally positioned diamond shaped cachet, struck in red and reading '11 Nov 1943 Aide à la Résistance' over a doubled letter V to complete the diamond enclosing the Cross of Lorraine, suggests the intention was for funding a charitable cause. The date has added significance, namely that it was the 25th Anniversary of the signing of the Armistice which ended WWI.

'France Combattante' had become the new designation

for the Free French Movement under General de Gaulle in July 1942 so as to include also the French Resistance fighters in Vichy controlled/German occupied France. In November 1942, following the successful Anglo-American invasion of North Africa, AOF ceased to support Vichy though the Federation did not in fact recognise the leadership of de Gaulle until the following June when the *Comité Français de la Libération*, headed jointly by Generals de Gaulle and Giraud, was formed in Algiers.

The envelope had been pre-printed, also in a 'V' pattern and either side of the aforementioned cachet, with seven rectangular boxed spaces. Of these, the top six were each filled with a postage stamp surcharged with different values from Mauritania (4) or Senegal (2). All were date stamped 'CONAKRY R.P. / GUINÉE FRANÇAISE / 11 NOV 43' which was also applied as a backstamp (Fig 2).

Several questions thus arise. What stamp was intended to fill the seventh box? Why was it not affixed? Why were stamps of Mauritania and Senegal only chosen and moreover why were they cancelled with a French Guinee postmark? Were similar covers prepared in the other AOF colonies?



Figure 2  
Backstamp on cover shown in Figure 1

Concerning the stamps themselves, I am indebted to our fellow member Bill Mitchell, who has kindly provided the background information on their issue. This was originally the subject of his in-depth research many years ago on the first stamps to be issued for AOF. His findings were published in Ref 1. Bill came to the conclusion, in support of what the late Alan Evans had first surmised in 1977 (Ref 2) that these six stamps plus one more as anon were a provisional set issued not in 1944 as catalogued by Yvert and also Gibbons, but in 1943. Furthermore, they were not for use in the individual colonies alone as captioned but were valid for postage throughout AOF – the first stamps for the Federation in fact. Unfortunately, for whatever reason, neither catalogue editor has yet acknowledged those findings. That the stamps were issued a year earlier than listed must surely now be confirmed by the postmark on this cover.

By *Arrêté* N° 2322 DT of 24 June 1943 the Governor General of AOF in Dakar had authorised the surcharging at Rufisque of stamps of 65c denomination of Mauritania and Senegal first issued in 1935 and 1938 respectively (Yvert N°s 126 and 85 / SG N°s 155 and 92). Accordingly seven stamps were overprinted in red with new values thus:

<u>Mauritania</u>	Yvert 133 / SG 125	3F50 on 65c green
	Yvert 134 / SG 126	4F on 65c green
	Yvert 135 / SG 127	5F on 65c green
	Yvert 136 / SG 128	10F on 65c green
<u>Senegal</u>	Yvert 190 / SG 220	1F50 on 65c violet
	Yvert 193 / SG 223	5F50 on 65c violet
	Yvert 195 / SG 225	50F on 65c violet

This was necessitated by a chronic shortage of stamps following the Allied invasion of North Africa and the subsequent change of allegiance by AOF after which it was no longer possible for the constituent colonies to obtain fresh stocks of stamps from France. The actual release date of these overprinted stamps remains unknown.

It is also noted that by an earlier *Arrêté*, N° 1223 DT of 24 March 1943, the Governor General had authorised the public use of postage stamps of the different colonies within the Federation whatever their origin throughout all of French West Africa – except for Togo which was not a colony.

Returning to my cover, it is almost certain that the remaining empty space was intended to accommodate the last of the above mentioned provisional stamps, namely the highest value, 50F on the 65c of Senegal. Its inclusion, however, would have likely necessitated far too great an outlay for the organisers to disburse in the first instance and subsequently recover from an uncertain number of sales. It would certainly have discouraged prospective buyers. Moreover, to this a substantial premium would have had to be added to cover costs and benefit whatever charitable cause was involved in the project. Hence, one surmises, the exclusion of this particular stamp from the cover, the exact purpose of which is still not clear.

It is, however, quite possible that somewhere covers bearing a full set of these seven provisional overprints, to include the 50F value, do exist. It is also possible, given the flimsiness of the covers, that they were sold with a stiffener identifying the organisers of this fundraising effort and the price or prices at which they were to be sold.

Is any reader aware of similar covers, particularly with a Dakar, Senegal or other AOF postal date stamp, and able to provide any additional information? The only other example of this cover identically ‘franked’ and postmarked and numbered 000287, which has since come to my attention, is illustrated without any relevant comment by Stephen Tucker in an article ‘The First Issue of *Afrique Occidentale Française*’ on pages 90-96 of the *France & Colonies Philatelist* for October 2009.

Many thanks again to Bill Mitchell for having originally unravelled and explained this intriguing provisional stamp issue and allowing me to draw on his own findings in seeking a solution to the provenance of the cover itself.

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- (2) F A Evans – Comment on the Surcharged Issues of 1943-4 of Senegal and Mauritania, in “Opinion” quoted and illustrated by Stephen Holder (*Journal of the France & Colonies PS* N° 135/136 of June 1977, pages 36-37)

# Rixheim in the 19th Century

Stan Luft



Figure 1

Rixheim (Haut-Rhin *Dép* N° 66) / Upper Alsace / *Elsass*) is but one of many small towns in Alsace. Like all small and large towns in Alsace, it changed hands between France and Germany a total of five times between 1870 and 1918, resulting in five changes in postal administrations, postal issues and postal markings. This article concentrates on only the first two and on the 19th Century aspects.

Rixheim's sole post office opened in February 1843 while Alsace was French. Standard French stamps and markings were used there until November 1870. Prussian Occupation stamps, then those of the German Occupation and Empire, followed in May - December 1871 and January 1872 - December 1918, respectively. Between February 1871 and late May 1872, the German and French postal authorities agreed to ignore each other's prepaid postage, which resulted in "double franking" or more correctly the French "*double affranchissement*".

I show here all four possible French cancels, namely (1) Type 15 date stamps (21mm diameter double-circle, day only at center top) without stamps; (2) Type 15 with killer showing small numerals (*petits chiffres*) 2685 on postage stamp - possible from 1849 but very unlikely inasmuch as postage stamps weren't available at such small post offices until some time later; (3) Type 15 with large numerals (*gros chiffres*) 3154, known from September 1863; and finally (4) Type 16 (21mm diameter single circle, with mail pick-up to left of day), possibly only in 1870 and prior to the occupation, and probably quite scarce.

On the other hand, only one German marking was available for this small town prior to the 20th Century, the basic and larger single circle dater. Whereas Occupation stamps had been printed very early in the Franco-German War (and possibly even before!), they were unavailable in Rixheim

prior to 5 May 1871, when its post office reopened<sup>(1)</sup>.

But why spend this time talking about a small Alsatian town whose basic industry was the Zuber Family wallpaper enterprise, and who today may be best known for its wallpaper museum? The answer is that Rixheim may be unique (in the entire world?) for a marcophilic reason.

At one time, it was postulated by some serious philatelists that, as the Germans advanced upon Rixheim, a patriotic postal employee went into self-imposed exile halfway across the globe, the town's 3154 killer in hand, and made some use of it in his new postal employment in, of all places, Ecuador! Unfortunately, this fascinating tale is no longer valid.

It is now known, without any doubt, that the 3154 killer was used in Ecuador as early as January 1865 (and as late as 1879)<sup>(2)</sup>, that is long before its alleged disappearance from Rixheim. It is now considered that a spare duplicate from the postal stocks in Paris was shipped to Ecuador before 1865 as part of a cooperative effort with France to modernize Ecuador's postal system. Mail bearing the 3154 killer was posted at first from Guayaquil, then mainly from Quito and its surroundings (Fig 1). The reader is referred as well to two publications predating d'Elia for additional information on possible origins of the 3154 killer in Ecuador, on the numerous falsifications of the killer and covers, and various other details.<sup>(3,4)</sup>

At the present time, only about 18 covers have been recorded<sup>(5)</sup> or are known, but not all of which are entirely proper and several of which lack Ecuadorian date stamps. Used off-cover copies are somewhat commonplace, cancelled in red as well as in black, but the vast majority of these are "essays" or favor cancels, if not outright forgeries.





Figure 2  
A Beuzeval gros chiffres 3154

Another replacement 3154 killer was given in 1875 to Beuzeval (Calvados) when its post office opened in 1875. Inasmuch as all French domestic killers were replaced at the end of March 1876 by a second date stamp, the Beuzeval 3154 (Fig 2) is quite rare. It is readily recognizable by being struck on French stamps that post-date the Franco-German War, as in this case a 25 centimes stamp of September 1871-1876 vintage.

Returning as we are to pre-May 1871 French covers, we first show two precursor Rixheim covers. Figure 3 is an 18 June 1809 cover from 93 / ANVERS (Antwerp, in the Napoleonic conquered *Département* 93 of Belgium) via Colmar, then the nearest major post office in Alsace, and forwarded without extra payment over the original 7 décimes tax to Mulhouse (then Mülhausen), and probably hand-carried to Rixheim and the Zuber company.

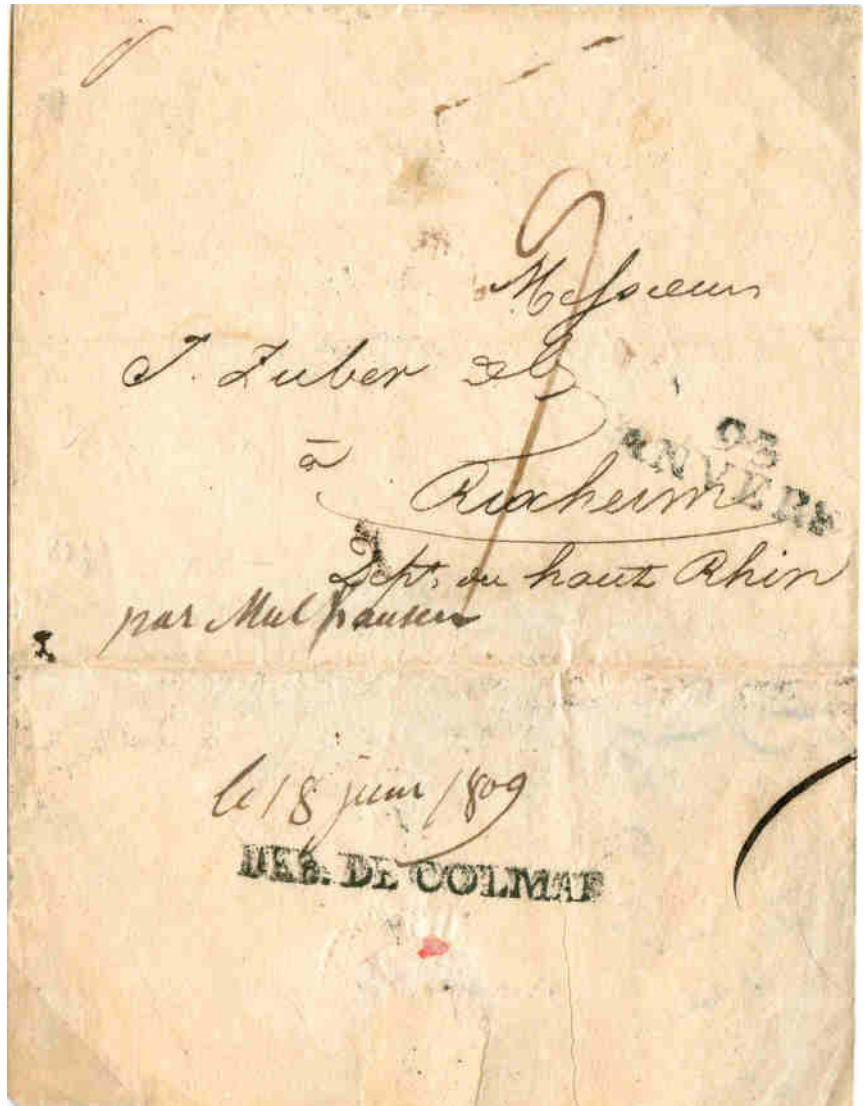


Figure 3

Figure 4 was datelined Rixheim, 30 August 1833 (ten years before it had a post office of its own), and posted from the 66 / Habsheim post office, which conveyed it to the full-service Mülhausen post office; leaving 31 August for Rouen and arriving 4 September; taxed 8 décimes for the distance of 400-500km (1 January 1828 tariff). Rixheim is roughly halfway between Mulhouse and Habsheim).

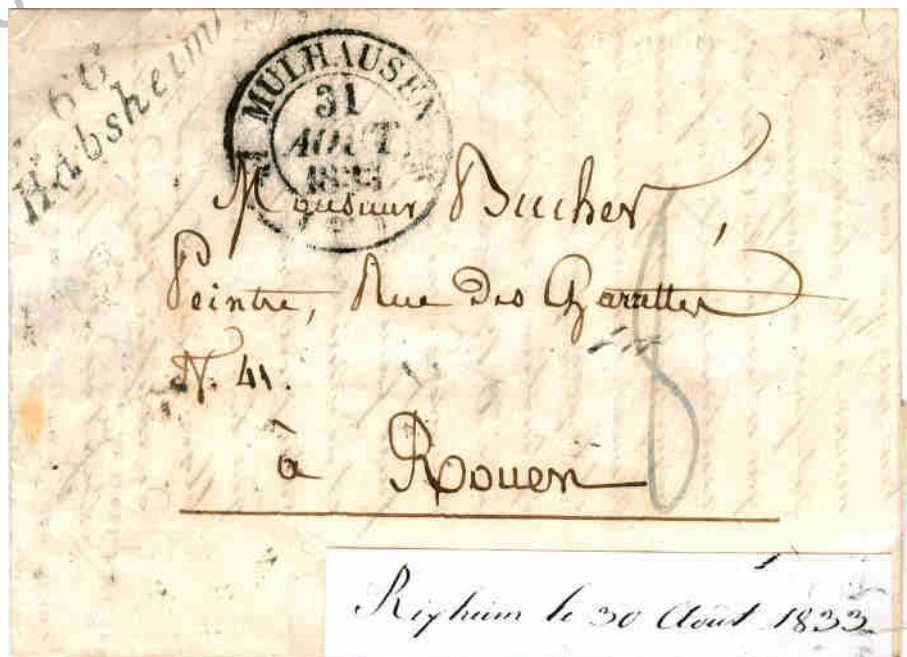


Figure 4

Figure 5 is an insured (*CHARGÉ*) 12g letter with correct prepaid 60c postage to Brives (Corrèze), forwarded to Marseille. The stamps bear the small numerals 2689 of the first French alphanumerical nomenclature. Marseille arrival (from back stamps) was only on 2 December (being held up at Brives).

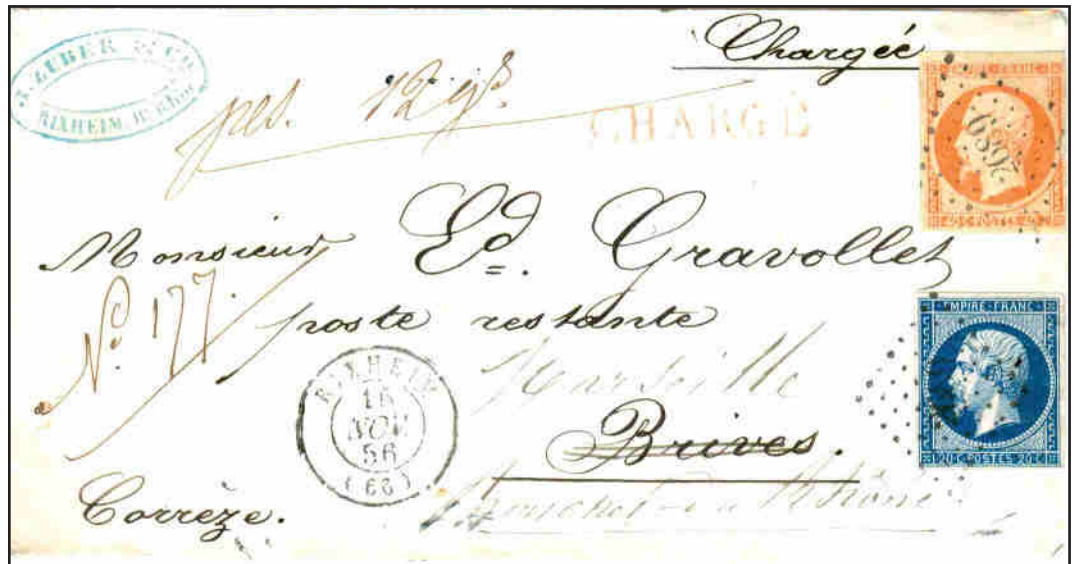


Figure 5

Figure 6 is a typical large numerals 2154 Zuber cover, dated 15 July 1865, 40c prepaid [*PD*] to Munich; back stamps show 15 July Strasbourg transit and 16 July Munich arrival.



Figure 6

Figure 7 is my only Type 16 cover. Dated 28 May 1870, it arrived at Corre (Haute Saône) the next day, via (on back) the Chaumont railway transfer office (978 within eccentric circle). I consider it a worthy late prewar cover from Rixheim.

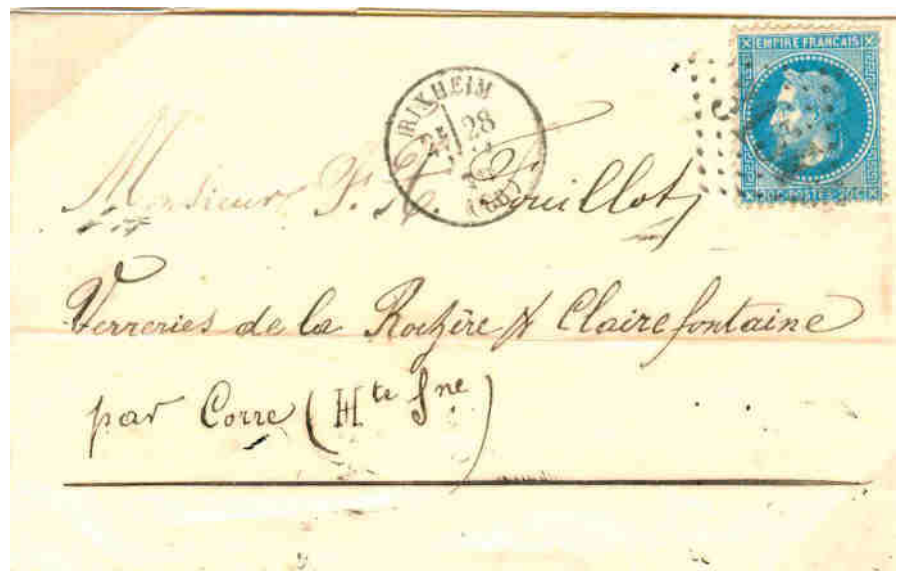


Figure 7



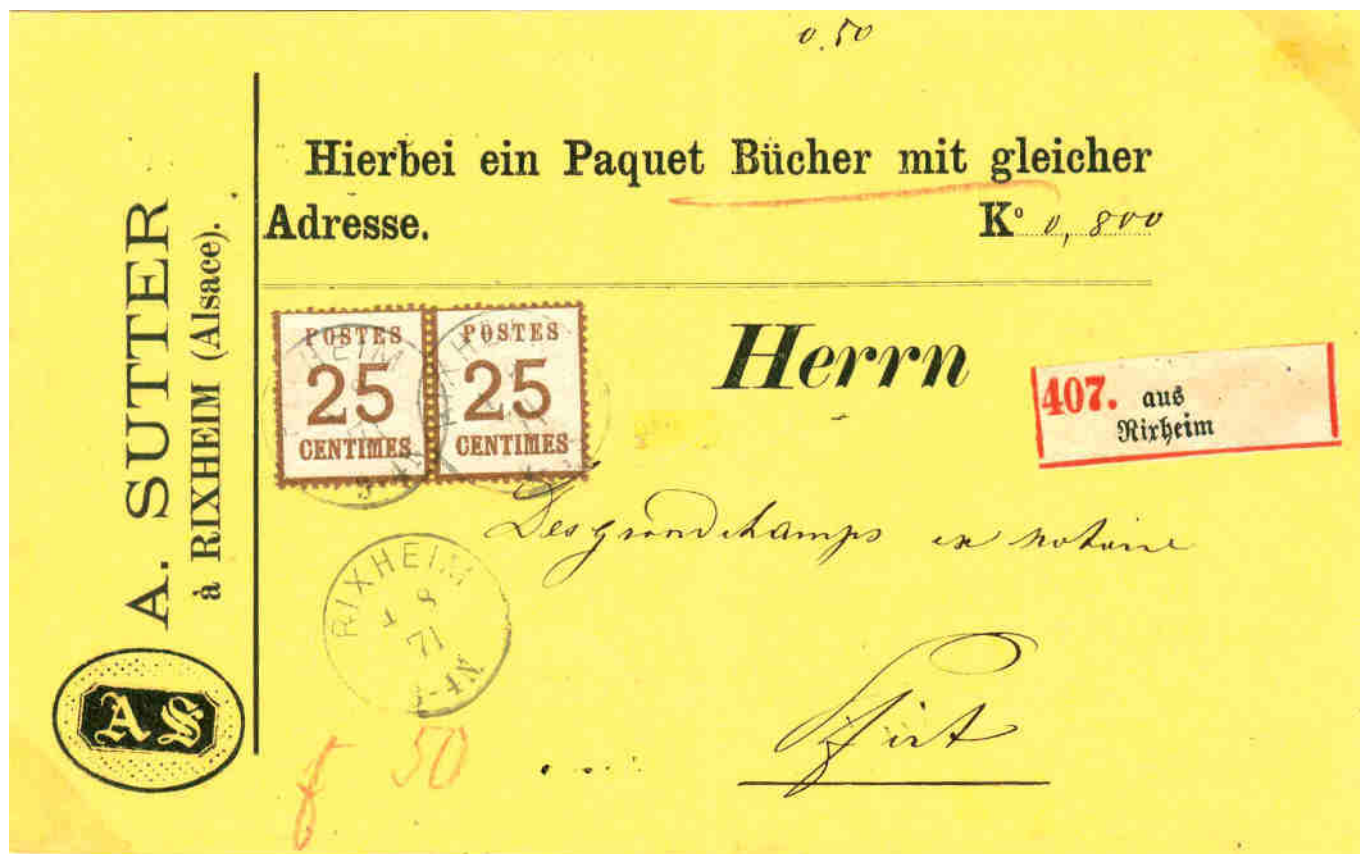


Figure 8

There's need to show only one cover with Occupation stamps and one from the German Empire as the date stamps remained basically unchanged for the rest of the century. Figure 8 is what I consider a great item (and a non-Zuber!) dated 4 August 1871 to Pfirt (previously Ferette, Haut-Rhin) on a privately printed parcel card for shipping 0.8kg of books. The rate was 10c per 500g plus 25c for a return receipt (5c overpayment); received at Pfirt on the 5th.

Finally, Figure 9 shows a 26 February 1872 cover, fully paid at 2Gr to Grenoble, but "double-franked" in France at the 25c letter rate.

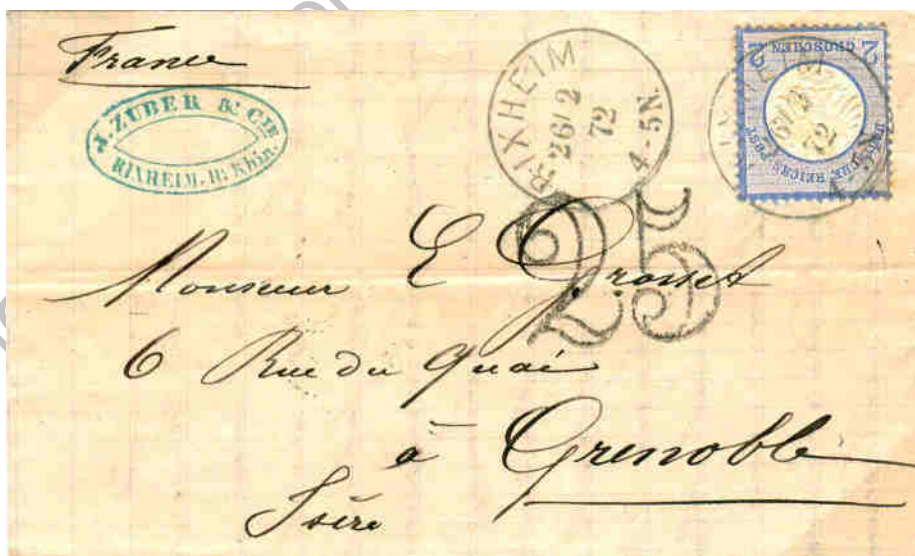


Figure 9

I hope that you will agree that collecting Rixheim can be an interesting sub-specialty, even if the Ecuadorian interlude had not been involved. Of course, it certainly does help! In fact, collecting most any town from most anywhere may turn up pleasant surprises worth writing about.

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- (4) Dr George Maier, "Ecuador – The lozenge type cancels", pp 66-72 in *Journal of the F&CPS* N° 180, June 1991 (first published in *The Mainsheet*, Vol 10, N° 37, April 1985)
- (5) Published and unpublished censuses, including ones by the writer. Figure 1 is Item 5 in Luft, 1984.



# Some Handstamps applied to Mail between the Channel Islands and France 1773-1843

Richard Flemming

*This article, by a member of the Channel Islands Specialists' Society, is based on his display at the Competitions Meeting of that society on 12 February 2011, an entry that was awarded the Sussex Cup for Postal History, as judged by John Sussex RDP. It was also awarded a Gold Medal at the ABPS national competition held at Sheffield in May 2011. It is published in our Journal by kind permission of the author and of the CISS.*



Figure 1

This particular handstamp was known used on mail between 1773 and 1779

Prior to the 1843 Anglo-French Postal Convention the majority of letters were carried privately between the Channel Islands and France. Letters were handed to agents on either side of the Channel for onward transmission. For this service there was a fee of 3d sea postage to pay (or 3 décimes *voie de mer*).

This article shows examples of some of the handstamps applied to letters arriving in France from the Channel Islands from 1773 until 1843 when the Anglo-French Postal Convention provided for official exchange of mail between the various British and French ports and saw an end to the majority of mail between the Channel Islands and France carried by private ship.

The first item shown above (Fig 1) is an entire dated 22 April 1776 from Guernsey to Nantes. This letter was carried privately to St Malo where it received a **SMALO** handstamp to indicate the port of arrival. The letter has been charged at 6 sols, the rate for 20-40 *lieues* (approximately 80-160km) as per the 1759 French postal tariffs.

Some forwarding agents annotated the mail with their details as is shown in the next entire (Fig 2, right) dated 24 March 1789 and sent from Guernsey to Nantes via St Malo. Upon arrival it received a **ST MALO** handstamp and was annotated in manuscript "*Acheminée par votre très humble Serviteur Blaize de Maisonneuve*" (Forwarded by your very humble Servant Blaize de Maisonneuve).

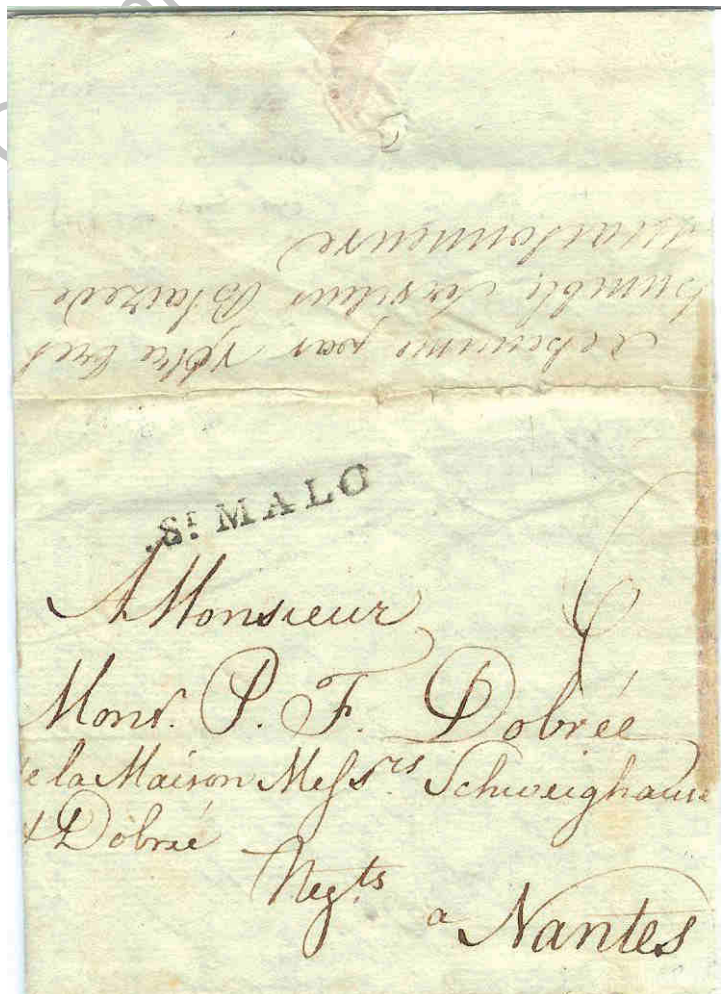


Figure 2

Postage due is 6 sols  
(rate for 20-40 *lieues* as per 1759 postal tariffs)



Figure 3  
Postage due is 8 décimes  
(2 décimes sea postage Guernsey - Cherbourg  
and 6 décimes Cherbourg - Nantes  
according to the rate for 300-400km per the 1806 postage tariff)

From January 1815 until March 1823 most letters from the Channel Islands to France were charged 2 décimes sea post (*voie de mer*) plus the internal French postage. A few letters were treated as “colonial letters” and only charged 1 décime sea postage. These letters were either stamped **COL. PAR** or **COLONIES PAR** along with the name of the French post office of arrival.

Above is an example of the **COL. PAR CHERBOURG** handstamp. This particular handstamp is usually only seen on French colonial mail between 1814 and 1818, but only during 1815 on Channel Island mail. It has been described as “one of the rarest French pre-adhesive markings (Newport 1972:90) and “exceptionally rare on Channel Island mail.

This letter (Fig 3), dated 6 February 1815, was charged at 2 décimes sea postage instead of the 1 décime as would be expected bearing the COL. PAR CHERBOURG handstamp. The post office in Cherbourg probably realised that Guernsey was not a French colony.

The **COLONIES PAR / ST MALO** handstamp is known used from 1815 until 1823. The wrapper shown below (Fig 4) dates from 19 May 1816 and is sent from Guernsey to St Malo. Postage due is 2 décimes (1 décime sea postage and 1 décime for local delivery within St Malo). Unlike the previous entire, this letter was charged at the 1 décime sea postage rate as it bears a **COLONIES PAR / ST MALO** handstamp.



Figure 4  
Postage due is 9 décimes  
(2 décimes sea postage plus 7 décimes Granville to Bordeaux mileage as per the 1806 tariffs)

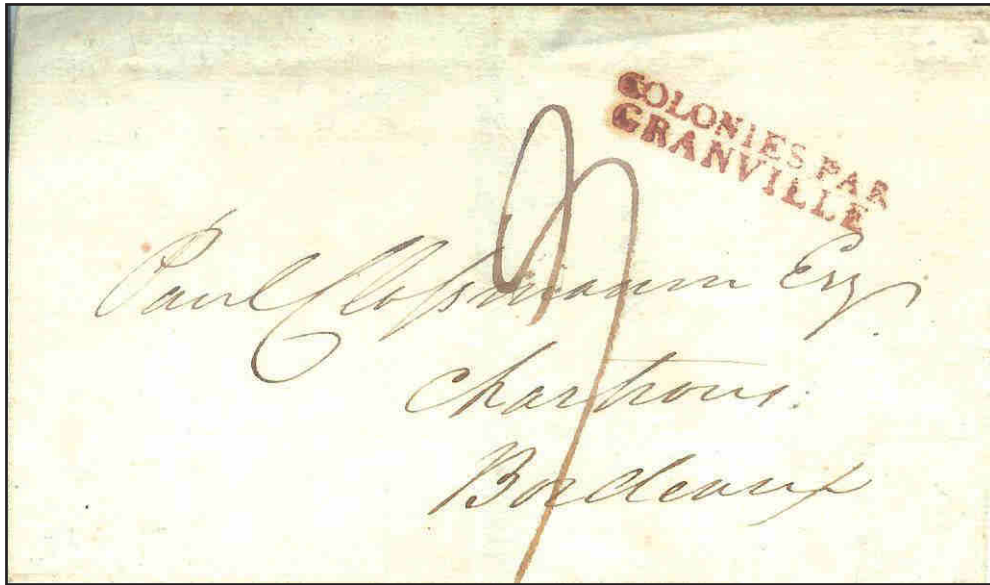


Figure 5

There are only three known examples of this particular handstamp struck in red

The **COLONIES PAR / GRANVILLE** handstamp is also known used from 1815 until 1823. This wrapper (Fig 5), dated 11 December 1821, is from Jersey to Bordeaux.

Postage due is 9 décimes (2 décimes sea postage plus 7 décimes Granville to Bordeaux mileage as per the 1806 tariffs).

The **COLONIES PAR / CHERBOURG** is known used from 1818 until 1827. The entire shown below (Fig 6), dated 4 June 1828, is from Guernsey to Caen. The postage due for this letter is 5 décimes (1 décime sea postage Guernsey to Cherbourg and 4 décimes mileage Cherbourg to Caen as per the French Ordinance of 15 March 1827 for inland rates).

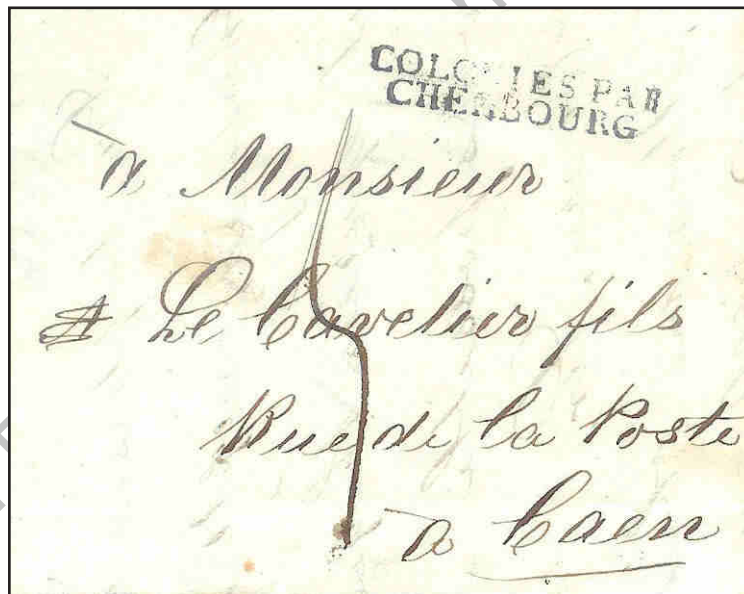


Figure 6

This is one of the rare letters that has been treated at the withdrawn **COLONIES PAR / CHERBOURG** 1 décime sea post rate rather than having the new **PAYS D'OUTREMER** plus town handstamp applied on arrival at Cherbourg.





Figure 7  
There is only one other known example of the combined manuscript **Colonies Par** and **34 / ST SERVAN** handstamp, on a letter from Sark, also dated 1815

Occasionally letters arrived at a port that was outside the agreed Anglo-French Postal Convention ports — these

ports being St Malo, Granville and Cherbourg. The above (Fig 7) is an example of a letter arriving at St Servan, a small port adjacent to St Malo.

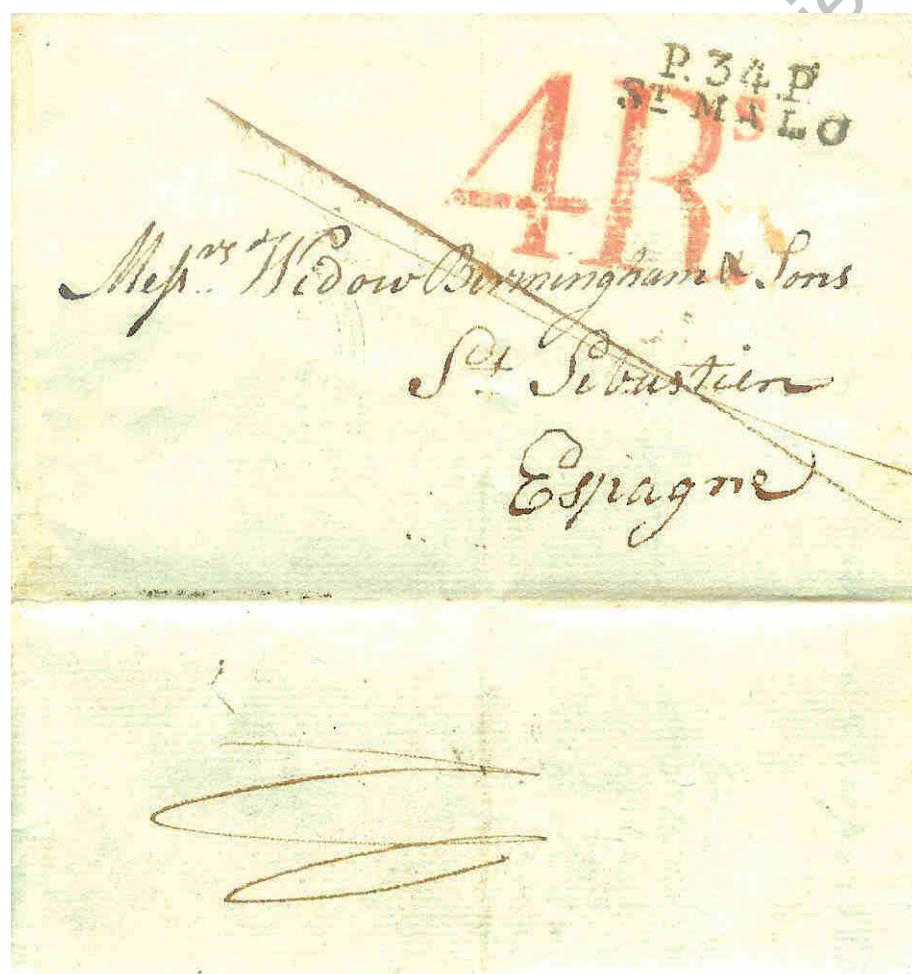


Figure 8  
An entire from Jersey to Spain sent via St Malo

This letter was carried privately to St Servan. The use of this port to land mail is exceptionally rare, hence the need for the Postmaster/mistress to improvise an appropriate “handstamp” by applying *Colonies Par* in manuscript above the usual **34 / ST SERVAN** handstamp.

Postage due is 6 décimes (2 décimes sea postage plus 4 décimes for St Servan - Nantes mileage as per the 1806 tariff).

The following entire (Fig 8), clearly dated 28 February 1818, from Jersey to San Sebastian, Spain was carried privately to St Malo. It was not declared as a ship letter and was thus posted at St Malo where a **P.34.P / ST MALO** handstamp was applied. Dates given for the use of this handstamp are 1828-31. This letter pre-dates those dates by some 10 years.

It was prepaid 10 décimes at St Malo (8 décimes St Malo to St Jean-de-Luz (as per 1806 tariff) plus 2 décimes St Jean-de-Luz to San Sebastian). The letter is charged 4 reals upon arrival in Spain (Spanish tax on letters from France as per 1816 tariff).



Figure 9

From 1 January 1823 the postal designations COL PAR and COLONIES PAR were dropped and letters to or from the Channel Islands were treated in one of two ways:

1. Like an English letter, receiving the **GRANDE BRETAGNE / PAR.....** handstamp and charged 6 décimes sea postage plus the French internal postage; or —
2. Like a colonial letter, receiving the rectangular **PAYS D'OUTREMER** plus the port of arrival handstamp, and charged 1 décime sea postage plus the French inland postage.

Again, mail was to be landed at one of three ports: St Malo, Granville or Cherbourg.

The entire shown above (Fig 9), dated 16 January 1824, is from Jersey to Marseille sent via St Malo where a **GRANDE BRETAGNE / PAR ST MALO** handstamp was applied (known used 1823-1834). It was treated as type 1 above and thus postage due is 20 décimes (6 décimes sea postage and 14 décimes St Malo to Marseille).

The entire shown below (Fig 10), dated 25 August 1828, is from Guernsey to Cherbourg. As this letter has been treated as option 1 too, a **GRANDE BRETAGNE / PAR CHERBOURG** handstamp has been applied (known used 1823-1832). Postage due is 6 décimes for sea postage. There is a single ring arrival date stamp 27 / AOUT / 1828 on the obverse.



Figure 10

To date only three examples are known to exist of this particular handstamp



Figure 11

Overall postage due was 7 décimes (6 décimes sea postage and 1 décime for local delivery)

The above item (Fig 11), an entire dated 30 April 1831, is from Jersey to Granville. As with the previous two items, it too has been treated as type 1 and charged the 6 décimes sea postage. A **GRANDE BRETAGNE / PAR GRANVILLE** handstamp has been applied (known usage 1823-1832), along with a handstruck **6**; used to indicate the 6 décimes sea postage due. This particular handstamp was known used 1830-1846.

The postal designation COLONIES was dropped in favour of PAYS D'OUTREMER along with the name of the port. These were in use until 1831, although none has been found

on Channel Islands mail. During August 1931 the name of the port was deleted and a large circular datestamp was used alongside the PAYS D'OUTREMER. Letters were treated like colonial letters and charged 1 décime sea postage plus the internal French postage (as per the French statute of 15 March 1827).

The following entire (Fig 12, below), dated 8 May 1837, is from Jersey and destined for Nantes. It bears a boxed **PAYS D'OUTREMER** handstamp and **ST MALO** circular date stamp for **11 MAI 1837**. This was used from 1834 to 1838.



Figure 12

Postage due for this letter is 6 décimes

(1 décime sea postage and 5 décimes St Malo to Nantes for 150-220km as per 1827 rates)



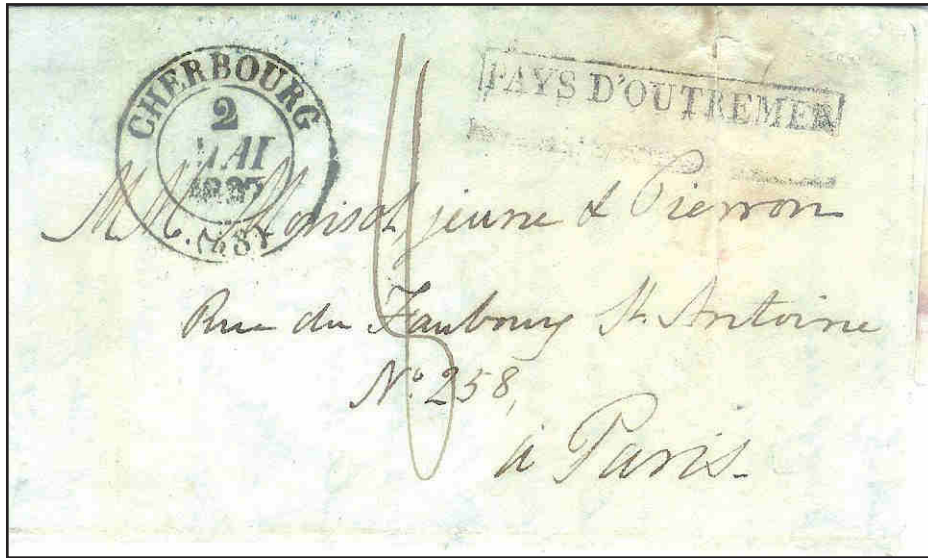


Figure 13  
Rare on Channel Islands mail

The above item (Fig 13) is an entire dated 24 April 1837 from Guernsey to Paris and bears a **PAYS D'OUTREMER** with a **CHERBOURG** date stamp for **2 MAI 1837**. Known usage is 1834 -1839 though no dates are listed as to CI usage in either Stanley Gibbons "Channel Islands Postal History Catalogue" (1992) or Salles "*La Poste Maritime Française: Tome I*" (1992). Postage due is 8 décimes (1 décime sea postage and 7 décimes French inland postage Cherbourg to Paris).

The entire shown below (Fig 14) is dated 27 August 1838 from Guernsey to Nantes via Granville, and bears a **PAYS D'OUTREMER** with a **GRANVILLE** circular date stamp. Postage due is 6 décimes (1 décime sea postage and 5 décimes for French inland postage). It also bears a Granville arrival date stamp of **28 AOUT 1838**, and has followed the route: Guernsey, Granville, Avranches, Rennes and Paris.

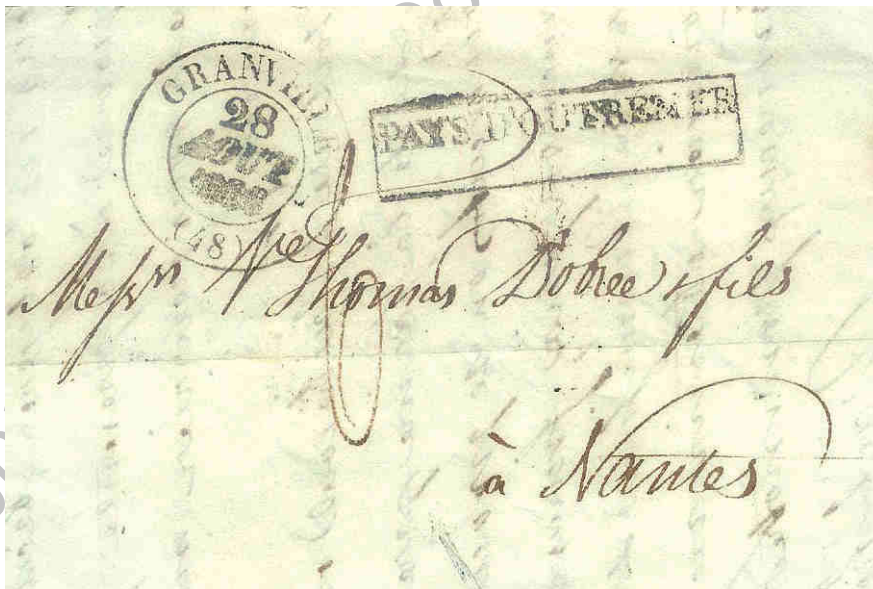


Figure 14  
Guernsey to Granville is a rare routing

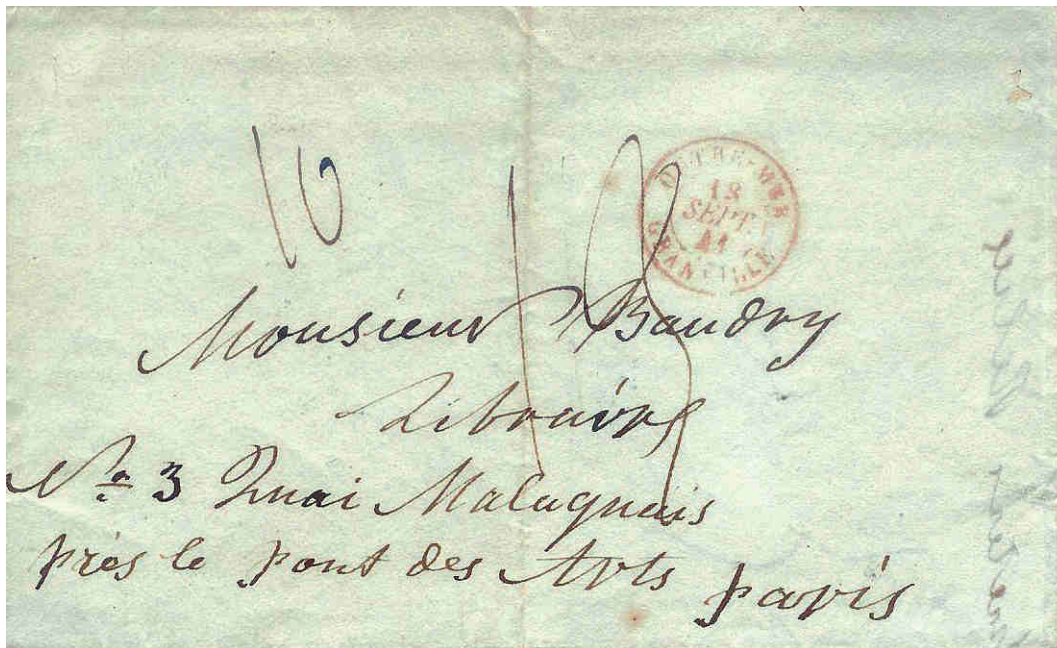


Figure 15  
OUTRE-MER GRANVILLE

In March 1839 the PAYS D'OUTREMER handstamp was withdrawn and replaced by a 20mm diameter double ring OUTRE-MER..... date stamp which contained the name of the French port of arrival at the bottom. For the Channel Islands these ports remained St Malo, Granville and Cherbourg. They were struck either in black or red ink.

The above entire (Fig 15) is dated September 18, 1841 and is from Jersey to Paris. The front bears an **OUTRE-MER GRANVILLE / 18/SEPT. / 41** date stamp in red. This date stamp was used from 1839 to 1842.

The postage due is 13 décimes for a 10g letter (1 décime sea postage and 2 x 6 décimes French postage as deemed a double letter).

The final item (Fig 16, below) is an entire dated 24 January 1843 from Guernsey to Pau. The front bears a double ring **OUTRE-MER S<sup>t</sup> MALO / 26 / JANV. / 43** date stamp in black. This handstamp was used from 1839 until 1843. Postage due is 16 décimes for a 7½ - 10g letter (1 décime sea postage and 10 décimes x 1½ French inland postage St Malo to Pau for 600 – 750km as per 1827 French postage rates).

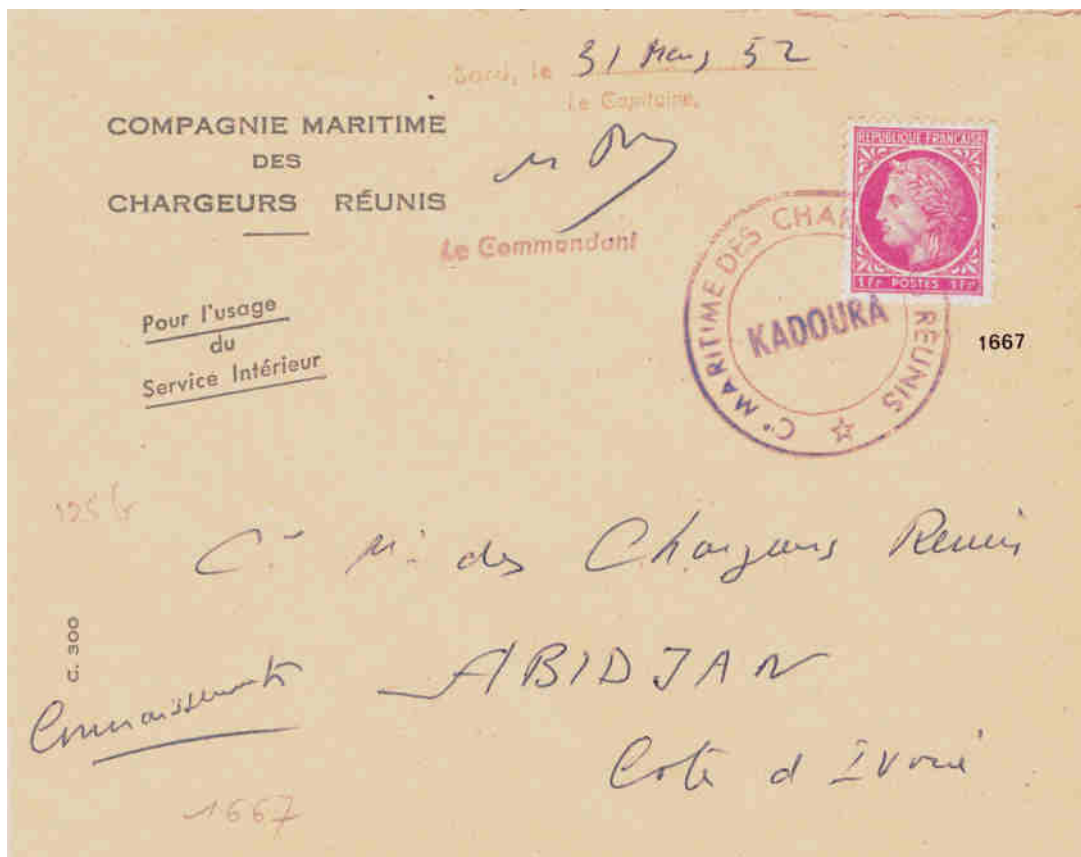


Figure 16  
OUTRE-MER S<sup>t</sup> MALO



# The 1 Franc *Cérès de Mazelin* of 1945 - A 1952 Maritime Mail Puzzle Cover

Bill Mitchell



The most obviously interesting feature of this cover, addressed to the Chargeurs Réunis shipping company at Abidjan, the then capital of the Ivory Coast, is the administrative cachet of the company's vessel *Kadoura*, used on board to cancel the stamp. The cachet is undated, but the cover is endorsed to show that it was handled on 31 March 1952.

But the stamp used to frank the letter is in its way equally interesting. Both Stanley Gibbons and Dallay (the 2005-2006 edition) record that the 1 franc *Cérès de Mazelin* (SG 909, Dallay 686, Yvert 676) was issued on 1 February 1945; Dallay adds that it was issued to meet the postcard rate which was to come into effect one month later. Reference to Derek Richardson's *Tables of French Postal Rates 1849 to 2005* shows that this was in fact the "5 words" rate; on 1 January 1946 this was increased again, to 1.50 franc, but at the same time the rate for printed matter became 1 franc for the first 20 grams.<sup>(1)</sup> Thus the stamp continued to be in demand until the end of that year (there were further tariff increases on 1 January 1947). Dallay also notes that the stamp was withdrawn from sale on 3 May 1947 (it remained valid for postage). So why its use *seul sur lettre* almost five years later?

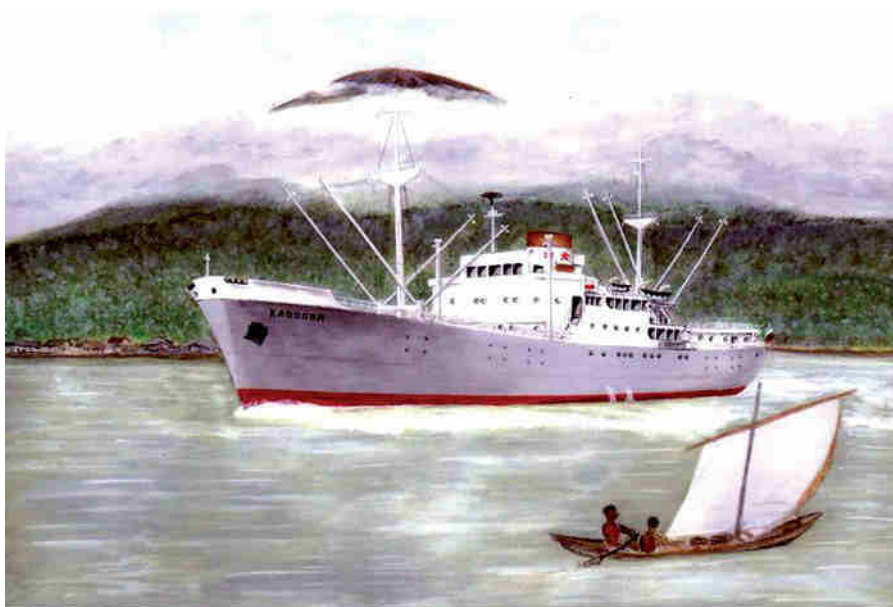
The envelope is endorsed "*Connaissements*" (bills of lading), and so far as I know there has never been a postal serv-

ice/rate for mail of this kind – certainly, none is recorded by Richardson or by Alexandre *et al.*<sup>(2)</sup> I even searched through Marty Bratzel's book on Cameroun postal tariffs<sup>(3)</sup> to see whether there was a local service/rate for *Connaissements* in the sub-Saharan colonies and was not particularly surprised to find that there wasn't. So we are left with the *imprimé* (printed matter) service, the charge for which in March 1952 was 5 francs for the first 20 grams.<sup>(4)</sup> But the envelope was sealed, so the letter rate, then 15 francs,<sup>(5)</sup> would have been appropriate. There is no evidence that the letter was taxed.

So it has to be assumed, I think, that the *Kadoura* was issued with a generous supply of 1 franc stamps when it was first brought into service, presumably some time in 1945 or 1946, and that successive captains cheerfully ignored successive tariff increases and other postal requirements. Either that or the envelope and its contents were not put into the post at all but were taken to the Chargeurs Réunis office in Abidjan by hand – no doubt ships' captains were required to report on their vessels' progress at each port of call.

Let us now return to the ship's cachet. If UPU rules for the franking of mail posted on board ship were complied with in full (which, I fear, is by no means certain), when the envelope and its contents were handled the *Kadoura* was





The banana transporter *Kadoura* on the River Wouri-Douri at Douala in Cameroun  
(Internet reference [www.marine-marchande.net](http://www.marine-marchande.net))

on the high seas approaching the Ivory Coast but not yet in its territorial waters.\* But to which port was she heading? Grand Bassam, 21 miles south-east of Abidjan but 31 miles away by road,<sup>(6)</sup> comes most readily to mind. Before World War II it was the port of call for vessels on the West African coastal service,<sup>(7)</sup> but it had a rival. Port Bouet, “no more than a wharf and a roadstead” but only seven miles from Adidjan and the terminus of the only railway in the colony, was opened in 1932 and thereafter was regularly used by mail steamers.<sup>(8)</sup> There is nothing in Salles, whose study ends in 1939, to suggest that by then it had replaced Grand Bassam as the port of call in the Ivory Coast for Chargeurs Réunis vessels, but in the chapter dealing with ships’ administrative cachets I did see (page 204), under Compagnie Fabre-Fraissinet, “*Grand-Bassam ou Port-Bouet*”. Furthermore, the Naval Intelligence handbook states (page 285) that Chargeurs Réunis was one of ten lines named as calling there. After the War it will have received a boost with the opening of the Vridi Canal, giving Abidjan direct access to the sea, in 1950 (my thanks to Michael Ensor for this information). So it seems virtually certain that the *Kadoura* was heading for Port Bouet and not Grand Bassam, although the latter cannot be ruled out entirely. (Salles, incidentally, does not include the *Kadoura* among the vessels operated by the Chargeurs Réunis company before the War.)

So, was the letter actually posted? Frankly, I rather doubt it. Grand Bassam, certainly, had had a post office for many years but is an unlikely starting point for the journey to

Abidjan. Port Bouet had no post office until 1956,<sup>(9)</sup> but it had road and rail connections with Abidjan only seven miles away. If the letter could only be posted at Abidjan and the captain or one of his officers had to report to the company’s office there, why post it when it could just as easily be delivered by hand? I suspect that either the captain or the company’s agent was philatelically minded and produced this souvenir – and possibly others.

There is one final point of interest. The date was marked up by *Le Capitaine*, but the signature was that of *Le Commandant*. Was this perhaps a counter-signature by the official in charge of the harbour?

An interesting cover, but possibly not quite as important as I assumed when I began work on this article.

## References

- (1) France & Colonies P S of Great Britain Brochure N° 7 (third edition, 2006), pages 16 and 8.
- (2) J-P Alexandre, C Barbey, J-F Brun and G Desarnaud, with Dr R Joany, *Les Tarifs Postaux Français 1627-1969* (Editions Loisirs et Culture, 1982).
- (3) *The Postal Tariffs of Cameroun under French Administration 1916-1959* (MPB Canada, 2007).
- (4) Richardson, page 8.
- (5) Richardson, page 4.
- (6) *Naval Intelligence Handbook of French West Africa, Vol II, the Colonies* (HMSO, 1944), pages 287 and 285.
- (7) Raymond Salles, *La Poste Maritime Française, Tome III - Les Paquebots de l’Atlantique Sud, Brésil-Plata, Côte Occidentale d’Afrique* (Paris 1963) – see the map on page 176.
- (8) *Naval Intelligence Handbook*, page 286.
- (9) Bill Mitchell and Laurence Lambert, “The Post Offices of French West Africa, Part 2 – Ivory Coast” (*France & Colonies P S Journal*, September 2001) at pages 96 and 98.

\* The principles are set out in the Introduction to Roger Hosking’s *Paquebot Cancellations of the World*, third edition (Cavendish Philatelic Auctions Ltd, Derby, 2000) – “It was in 1891 that the UPU decreed that mail posted on the high seas might be prepaid ‘by means of the postage stamps and according to the tariff of the country to which the vessel belongs, or by which it is maintained.’ If the mailing took place in territorial waters or in port, then the stamps and tariff of the territory would apply.” It should be noted that since a French stamp was affixed to the envelope, the tariff details noted in this article are those of metropolitan France, not French West Africa.

P.S. Knowing his interest in the *Cérès de Mazelin* issue I sent a copy of the draft of this article to Mick Bister, who very kindly traced, via the Internet, the accompanying photograph of the *Kadoura* on the River Wouri at Douala in Cameroun.

He also found some interesting facts about the *Kadoura* which make it highly likely that this cover, and any others like it, was indeed no more than a souvenir. In March 1952 she was a very new vessel, having been built in the UK in the Samuel White & Co shipyard at Cowes IOW

and launched as recently as July 1951. She was described as a banana transporter and could accommodate 12 passengers; she also had a sister ship, the *Koufra*. So it cannot be assumed, as suggested above, that the *Kadoura* was supplied with a plentiful supply of 1 franc Cérès stamps, these having been withdrawn from sale on 3 May 1947, four years before she was launched.

I am also grateful to Mick for some helpful comments which have enabled me to improve the original draft of this article.

## LIST OF RECENTLY PUBLISHED ARTICLES

Continued from page 4

### *Les Feuilles Marcophiles*

N° 347 (4<sup>e</sup> trim 2011): La Recette Auxiliaire Urbaine d'Épernay (Melin); Pneumatiques Particuliers «Non Entiers» (Mucheron); Cachets Privés (?) de Propagande Touristique (Cabayé); Le Courrier du Détachement d'Armée de Belgique 1914-1915 (Van Dooren); Une Lettre du Camp de Tournoux (de La Mettrie);

AHPMR - Distribution Locale par un Facteur Rural Avant l'Heure? (Lebecque); Les mentions de «RETOUR À L'ENVOYEUR» et leurs évolutions de 1792 à nos jours (Peyrachon); Atelier Acheminement des Correspondances Postales Métropole et Algérie (ACP) - Un Nouvel Atelier au Sein de l'Union Marcophile (Lapasset, Pinhas, Reynaud, Douron)

## SHORTER ITEMS - INCLUDING QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

### German *Feldpost* Date Stamps on French Blanc Issue

I only recently joined the Society and I wonder if I could submit to the Journal this scan of a pair of the Blanc issue that I have with what appears to be German military post-

marks. I would like to know what conflict these are likely to have come from, and would be pleased to receive any information that members can help with.

Stephen Roche



Enlargement of Blanc stamps

This is a typical German World War I military postmark:

**K.D. FELD-POST-EXPEDITION / 13. INF. DIV.**

(which translates as Imperial German Field Post Office

Despatch / 13th Infantry Division). At the bottom of the circular handstamp is the number of the Field Post Office, which looks to be possibly 179. This particular number was in use between August 1914 and February 1917.

Maurice Tyler

### Soudan – Two Mysteries

One can always rely on something interesting and exciting from Michael Ensor and his queries in Journal 261 (page 112) were no exception. This was a real Higgs Boson moment for me as I faced up to what was reported to be a 15c surcharge on the 1F Alphée Dubois. Despite a great number of forgeries of this surcharge a 15c surcharge in place of the 25c on the 1F is unknown.

A close look at the image in the Journal shows that Michael has taken the “1” of 1F as part of the surcharge. Careful inspection shows that the “2” of the 25c surcharge is placed over the “1F”. It is faint but quite clear.

The surcharged stamp is of such rarity as to merit certification, given the number of forgeries, and if Michael wishes to do this I will be happy to tell him whom he can approach for this. The signature to which Michael refers could be that of M. Brun père.

The two provisional postage stamps of 15c on 75c rose and 25c on 1F olive were issued following the *Arrêté* of 12.4.1894 signed by the civilian Governor, M. Grodet,

because of the lack of stamps of those values (basic inland and foreign rate). The new replacement stamps of the *Type Groupe* issue had not arrived from France and the mail-boat was awaited. Only 950 of the 1F postage stamps were surcharged and, allegedly, they were applied directly to letters by the post office and were not sold unused.

We also need to consider the date stamp. This was applied by the Bafoulabé office on 24 May 1894 and this date fits in. The question arises as to whether these postage stamps were precancelled by the Bafoulabé office and if so, this would explain the presence of the three cancellations. If not, then the possibility of a philatelic element emerges. This is again something that the certifier can advise on.

The second item, the postcard with the 1904 Line M date stamp, is, alas, a fabrication. Careful inspection shows that the 5c Méhariste postage stamp does not belong and has been neatly fitted in to the cancellation. This is visible to the naked eye. As Michael has said,, such a combination is not possible.

Peter Kelly

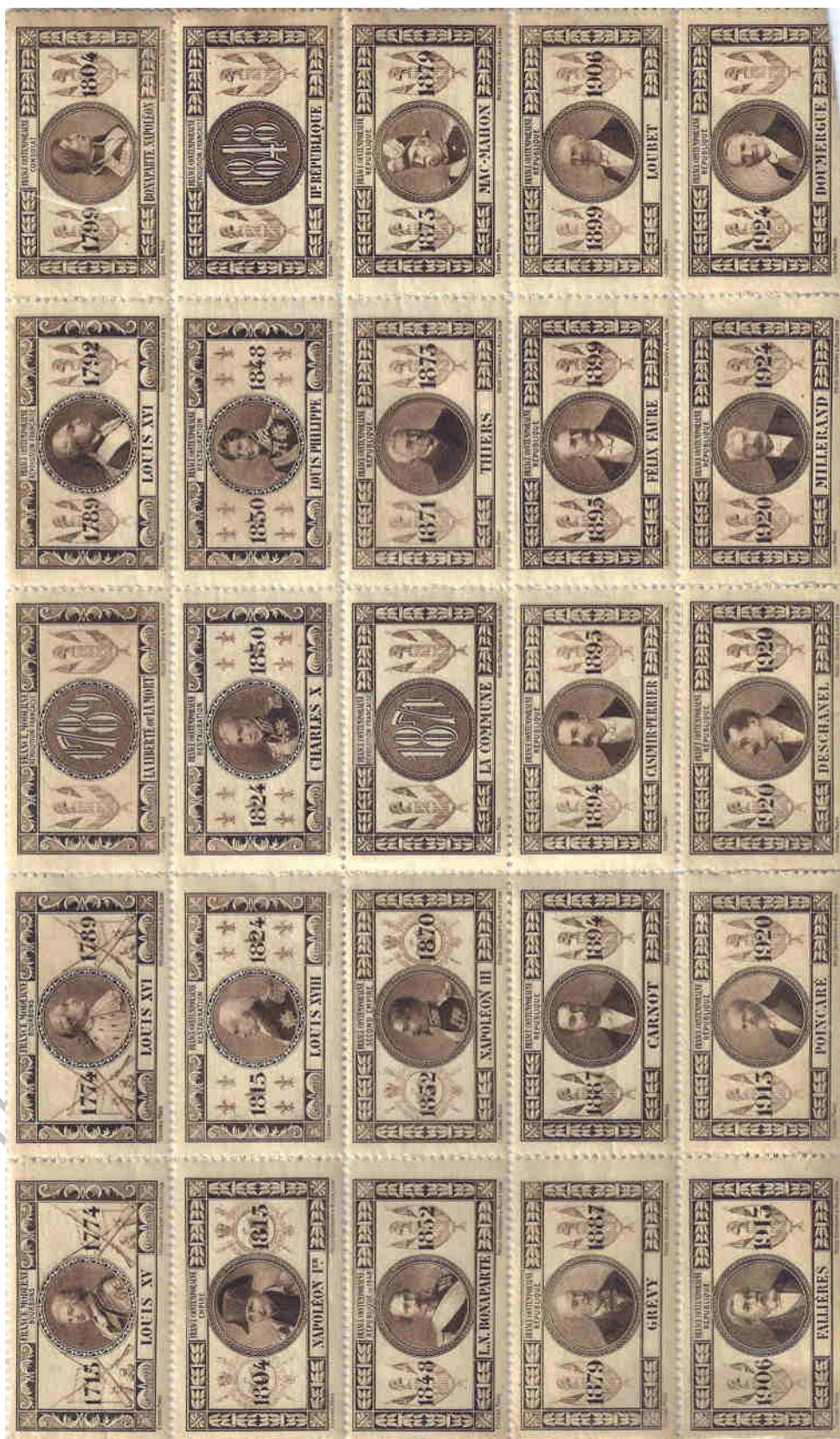


## Napoleon Poster Stamps

I do not know if this will help. There is a similarity in the cinderellas inquired about (Journal 262, page 156) with these. The two sheets I have of 25 stamps of kings, emperors and

presidents of France were probably a single sheet at one stage. They are entitled Edition Mars - Hélios Goutagny à Alex Lyon.

Harris Rosenberg



Reduced in size to fit the page

## Rates from France to the Saar in 1952



I have come upon a cover addressed to Saarbrücken from the Moselle on 3 June 1952. The cover has a French 15F blue stamp appropriate at the time to the internal rate in France.

After World War II the Saar came under the administrative control of the French, establishing a customs union

that lasted until July 1959, although at the beginning of 1957 the territory became officially the state of Saarland in the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany).

The question arises as to the exact dates and rates for letters between France and the Saar. Can any members provide enlightenment?

**John Dickson**

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## Business Continuity

*[This piece first appeared in the France and Colonies Philatelist N° 307 of January 2012 and is reproduced here by kind permission of the author who is also the Editor of that (US) journal.]*

One of the difficult things for most stamp organizations to understand is how to run like a business. This includes both societies, like ours, and exhibitions.

One of the saddest events I can remember is the dissolution of the original Florex stamp show held annually in Orlando, FL for many decades. The board of the show, which had been in place for many years, asked for some younger people to step forward to help run it. This was simply a necessity as the current board was aging and could no longer perform to the standard they demanded of themselves.

What happened? No one stepped forward. Florex ended with a flourish — we had surf and turf at the last banquet! A number of years later, Florex was resurrected by a group of dealers who realized its commercial importance. But, what a shame to have interrupted such a great show!

So, what's the point? One of the most important aspects of running a business is a continuity or succession plan. This year, we saw the passing of Steve Jobs. As important a visionary as he was, the markets did not lose faith in Apple as a company. The same thing happened when Bill Gates passed control of Microsoft to the next group of leaders.

These enterprises had excellent plans in place to smooth out any organizational transitions necessary.

Do our stamp groups have such plans? Very few. Does the FCPS? No. Imagine if any of the major officers (president and treasurer) or the editor gets hit by a bus. What happens then? What happens is a real mess.

The treasury is off in some city where no one but the treasurer lived. Bills may come due. How are they paid?

The president may have made agreements with other vendors. Will his successor know what they are? Where the documentation is?

The editor has all of the working templates for the FCP. He may have a backlog of articles and other contributions. Where is everything? Where does it get sent and by whom? Who picks up the editorship so that there is reasonable publications continuity of the FCP?

Few, if any, of these questions can be answered. They are obviously crucial to the smooth operation of the organization. We must do something about this as soon as it is practicable.

**David Herendeen**



## May 2012 Auction - Selected Lots

See also the front and back covers; all lots here reduced in size by 50% and printed before lot numbers are known



10c Sower lettercard with displaced perforation



25c Sower lettercard



1914 5Pf stationery postcard from Alsace to Shang-hai



1935 Roberti rocket mail trial



1894 entire Paris to Guernsey



90c Paix reply-paid postcard to Paris cancelled Moscow 1937



ex 1925 Paris exhibition imperf vignettes in three colours

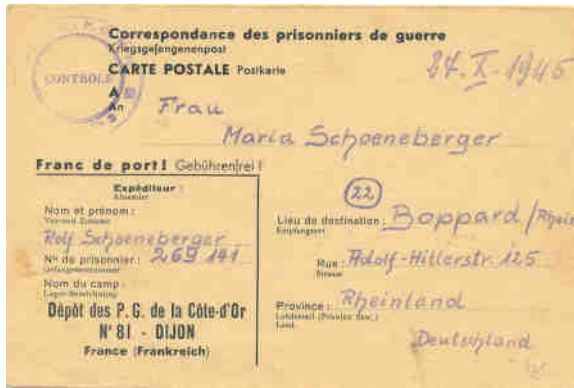


1931 Hanoi to Nantes by SERVICE ACCÉLÉRÉ



1965 FM cover Chad to USA





1945 German POW card from Dijon to Rhineland



1839 Toulon - Algiers with ALGER POSS D'AFR date stamp



1774 entire with circular ISLE DOLLERON



1775 entire with straight line DOLERON



Monaco 1955 Albert Schweizer set



1786 entire with straight line SEURRE



1787 entire with circular P.P. DE REIMS



c. 1775 entire with circular PORT PAYE A DIJON



1769 entire with straight line B.AUBE



1901 part wrapper with bisected 25c Obock



ex Selection of post-WWI Chambre de Commerce banknotes



1942 twice censored letter to Capetown

## BOOKSHELF

**French Military Post and Railways 1914 -1918: The Authorising Handstamps** by David Trapnell; special edition published by the Forces Postal History Society 2011; 40pp, paper covered, stapled, in full colour; price £10; available from Peter High, 94 Winkworth Road, Banstead, Surrey SM7 2QR (cheques payable to Peter High or by PayPal to peter.high94@hotmail.co.uk).

This monograph describes the use of a wide variety of handstamps associated with military mail in France during World War I that has used the railway system. Starting with a useful diagram (ex Strowski) the author outlines the passage taken by mail addressed to and by the armed forces at the front. He traces mails passing through the 'gares de rassemblement'; to the 'Bureau Central Militaire'. From there it is forwarded to the 'bureaux frontières' (translated as boundary military post offices) and on to the 'gares de ravitaillement' (these are the railway stations serving particular sectors of the front) and finally to the 'secteurs postaux' where the mail could be distributed. The study shows and explains mails introduced into the postal system at different points along the line and is accompanied by photographs of the period and many covers illustrated in full colour.

The next section provides information on the use of handstamps authorising the free use of mail (*franchise militaire*) and gives details about the 'gares régulatrices' (railway control commissions) and the role and duties of the military commissioner ('*commissaire militaire de gare*'). It is followed by short tables of stations recognised by the author

as having a military commissioner or the installation of a military commission.

The study ends with notes on the role and postal usages of the Red Cross and other voluntary welfare organisations at railway stations and this covers, broadly, railway hospitals, hospital trains, field hospitals and authorising handstamps for use where military vehicles, ambulances etc were concerned.

There are a few small glitches but this is, perhaps, the only work produced in English in this form. Reference is made to the publications by Strowski and Sinais and the author has commented that there seem to be few other books on the subject. While this may be true, it is certain that there have been many detailed articles produced on a host of different aspects of the war published in a number of different philatelic journals over a very long period. The fact remains that some of these are hard to locate.

This is a massive subject and, clearly, not one that can be covered in 40 pages,. I would, however, recommend it highly as an extremely useful introduction to the study of WWI mails written by a very experienced postal historian.

### Books Noted

**Catalogue 2012 France & Monaco: Les timbres fiscaux et socio-postaux** by Société française de philatélie fiscale; pub. Éditions Yvert et Tellier; 225pp 148 x 210mm; price 29€90 + p&p; available from publishers or from Bibliothèque de l'Écho de la Timbrologie. [Latest edition since 2004 with improvements and new valuations of about 6000 items from 1860 to present, presented in colour and accompanied by description of usage; includes new supplement on fiscal cancellations.]

**Carnets de France: Catalogue Spécialisé, Volume 3** by Patrick Reynaud & Lucien Coutan; pub.Éditions Yvert et Tellier; 395pp 214 x 275mm; price 95€ + p&p; available from publishers or from Bibliothèque de l'Écho de la Timbrologie. [Type Paix booklets 1932-1939 comprising 3 values: 50c rose-red, 65c ultramarine and 90c ultramarine; 32 covers printed by Carlos Caumont and 68 by Delrieu; information on presses used, printing dates and main varieties.]

**Lettres des Internés du Camp des Milles** pub. Association Philatélique du Pays d'Aix (APPA) under direction of its President, Yvon Romero; paperback in A4 format, over 200pp in colour and over 250 illustrations; price 20€ + p&p until 30 May 2012, then 30€ + p&p; available from APPA, BP 266, 13608 Aix-en-Provence cedex 1. [Study of postmarks and postal history of this camp near Aix-en-Provence that from 1939 to 1942 held people of German origin (among them members of the intelligentsia who had fled the Nazis in 1933), became a transit camp

for foreigners in the unoccupied zone hoping to emigrate, and in the last months of its existence served as an antechamber to Drancy and then Auschwitz; the book shows over 90 letters, cards and envelopes accompanied by an explanation of their postmarks and biographical notes on 11 of their principal writers; it covers information on the historical and political context, the specialisation of the camps, the transfer of the Camp des Milles to Lambesc, the functioning of the *compagnies de travailleurs étrangers*, the role of charities and religious bodies, the workings of post offices at the Camp des Milles and at Lambesc, postal relations between the camp and the Red Cross at Geneva, etc.]

**La Grande Pêche** by Robert Marquet & André Métayer, pub. L'Amicale Rennaise Philatélique; details from Alain Milone, 6 rue des Écoles, 53410 Port-Brillet (email aenolim@aol.com). [Special number devoted to the fishing grounds of Newfoundland and Iceland seen through stamps and philatelic documents, with particular interest in the postal history of the French Shore.]

**Les Étiquettes précurseurs – les chiffres-taxe carrés 1825-1882: Collection Joseph Hackmey**, text by Jack Blanc; 260pp, illustrations in colour; price 90€ + p&p; available from Boule, rue de la Grange-Batelière, 75009 Paris. [A specialised collector of classic French stamps shows us the most beautiful items among his postage due stamps, superbly illustrated to present all facets of them including unusual usage.]



*Catalogue spécialisé des enveloppes PAP d'usage courant* by Jean Marbach; 387pp, illustrations in b/w; price 29€ + p&p; available from author at 1 rue des Jardins, 68720

Zillisheim. [Full details of commercial *Prêt-A-Poster* envelopes issued by La Poste since 1990s, allowing accurate identification.]

Maurice Tyler

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## REPORTS OF MEETINGS

### LONDON GROUP MEETING OF 30 NOVEMBER 2011

#### Stuart Henderson: French Cinderellas - a new approach

**Stuart Henderson** introduced himself as a man who collects anything that is not in the Stanley Gibbons catalogue, a criterion that was amply illustrated in the displays to follow.

Stuart explained how in the early part of the 20th century the collecting of poster stamps was as popular if not more popular than the collecting of postage stamps. The huge appetite for material was fed by a plethora of printings. Special catalogues and albums were published and collectors' societies were founded. Almost all the societies have since disappeared and albums are very rarely seen but the poster stamps remain as very collectable items. It is easy to understand why poster stamps were so popular – they were cheap to buy, sometimes given away free, and they were undeniably more colourful and appealing than their contemporary postage issues.

The first part of the display began with the 1900 Paris Exhibition vignettes and concentrated on material produced during the golden age up to the Second World War. Thereafter popularity and production both waned but examples of later material were also shown. Much of the earlier material had a patriotic theme with vignettes being produced to raise funds for the Red Cross and various war efforts. Patriotism and education were combined in the magnificent *La Belle France* series portraying landscapes, buildings and other cultural and historic themes. Printed by Hélios-Vaugirard in a multiplicity of designs, colours and booklet covers, the total output of the company remains incalculable. A wide range of the infamous Delandre vignettes was shown together with some proofs and Stuart provided us with a full account of the printer's somewhat dubious deals and contracts. Other material shown included vignettes illustrating Foch and Joffre, German atrocities, Napoleon and a superb booklet entitled *La Somme Devastée*. The first part closed with an attractive selection of window poster stamps promoting the sale of anti-TB booklets.

The second part of the display featured material related to air meetings, air shows and airmail. We were shown a fine range of vignettes promoting Air Meetings from 1910 to 1937, including covers from Nantes 1910, Montpellier 1923,

Lyon 1931 and Tunis 1932. A fine *Ailes Brisées* booklet was seen as were Air France postcards and airmail etiquettes. A very fine collection of Air France timetables from 1937 to 1939 containing information regarding the collection and delivery of airmail attracted a lot of attention. These were followed by a display of 1935 test flight rocket mail covers each bearing a special *Par Fusée* etiquette produced by Karl Roberti who attempted to launch mail across the Channel – but for obvious safety reasons the tests were cancelled. The second display closed with a selection of airmail covers including a 1925 cover from Casablanca to Austria bearing the beautifully multicoloured Latécoère etiquette.

The third and final display was given by Stuart's friend and former F&CPS member **Jon Aitchison** who specialises in material from the French off-shore islands in the English Channel. The display began with material from Mont St Michel illustrating the diversity of cachets used on the island. A fascinating item was an advertising card for Mme Poulard's Hotel and Restaurant, printed in the format of a 'pneu' and hence described as a '*Pneuréclame*' and which featured a 'stamp' depicting the Archangel Michael cancelled by a Veuve Poulard double ring date stamp.

The display continued with cachets on postal items recording the chequered career of the Ile de Cézembre which has been a quarantine centre, a POW camp, a detention centre and finally, despite its barren landscape due to heavy bombardments during the Second World War and the discovery of unexploded mines, a restricted tourist attraction. The display closed with a selection of items from the Ilot du Grand Bé bearing cachets relating to the tomb of the writer Chateaubriand.

Chris Hitchin thanked the speakers for giving the members the opportunity to see unfamiliar and fascinating material presented in an entertaining and informative way.

Members present: Len Barnes, Alan Barrett, Mick Bister, Godfrey Bowden, Michael Fairhead, Chris Hitchen, Barbara Priddy, David Worrollo.

Guest: Jon Aitchison

Apologies: Maurice Tyler

MLB



## WESSEX GROUP MEETING OF 28 JANUARY 2012

### Peter Kelly: Réunion and Niger

The main display was given by co-convenor **Peter Kelly** who showed the difficulties in writing home through the experience of two very different French Colonies, Réunion and Niger. Starting with Réunion Peter traced the development of the maritime possibilities from the mid-1700s to 1900. Apart from the short lived Royal mailboats all mail was carried privately or by naval vessel occasionally until the 1840s when the first colonial packets operated from Mauritius. Letters shown included an 1805 blockade runner, the British post office during the time of occupation and carriage by private vessels around the Cape and via India and the overland route. Examples of the development of packet mails through the colonial service via Ceylon and the P&O, the short lived General Screw and Compagnie Française de la Mer des Indes were shown, followed by the direct P&O service and then the various routes used by the Messageries Maritimes Lines T, U and V and links with Line N where appropriate.

Moving on to Niger, Peter outlined the difficulties facing a country deep in the interior and far from the coast. The main routes through Soudan Français and Dahomey were explained as well as the lesser used routes across the Sahara into Algeria and south through Kano in Nigeria. The importance of the development of a railway system in Senegal, Soudan and Dahomey was discussed as well as the use of motor vehicles and camels and the advent of the various air services. The period covered ran from around 1900 to 1945.

After an excellent lunch at the Old Mill, fully refreshed, the following members displayed.

**Jeffrey Bunting** (visitor): A selection from his collection of French stamps;

**Chris Hitchen**: Paris, Bureau B – 1760-1863;

**Edwin Rideout**: WW I mail including postal stationery, and Red Cross;

**Tony Howgrave-Graham**: A splendid display of early franked letters from Guadeloupe, Martinique and Réunion;

**David Worrollo**: A selection of Cérès stamps and associated letters;

**Ashley Lawrence**: Siege of Paris, further additions to the Brown archive — mail carried by Mr Kidder when he left Paris;

**Richard Stupples**: A selection of stamps and letters of the Sower issues;

**Jeremy Martin**: Some letters from the Corsini archives mainly concerning Lyon;

**Peter Kelly**: Use of a facsimile Boulanger stamp tied to a letter sent to Austria a month after his death and a letter to Russia with a Paul Déroulède label, souvenirs of the Boulanger affair;

**Alan Wood**: A fine selection of *timbres-taxe*, postage due stamps from inception to 1940.

Bob Paterson, Brian Weeks and Peter Lawrence also attended together with two visitors making 14 in all.

Our next meeting will take place at Harnham on Saturday 30 June when our President, John West, will show aspects of his Red Cross collection.

PRAK/AJW

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## LONDON GROUP MEETING OF 15 FEBRUARY 2012

### Members: New Projects and Acquisitions

The following members produced short displays:

**David Worrollo**: Monaco — sets of stamps from the 1960s and 1970s;

**Barbara Priddy**: Crash airmail covers 1940-1951

**Godfrey Bowden**: Legion of French Volunteers 1941-1944, including 2 suspect covers; and Palissy labels as trials;

**Chris Hitchen**: Pneumatics in Paris — Bernard Lucas' original study of the 12th *arrondissement*;

**Len Barnes**: 20th century French forces mail.

Also present: Alan Barrett, Graham Beresford, Hugh Loudon, Maurice Tyler.

Apologies: Mick Bister.

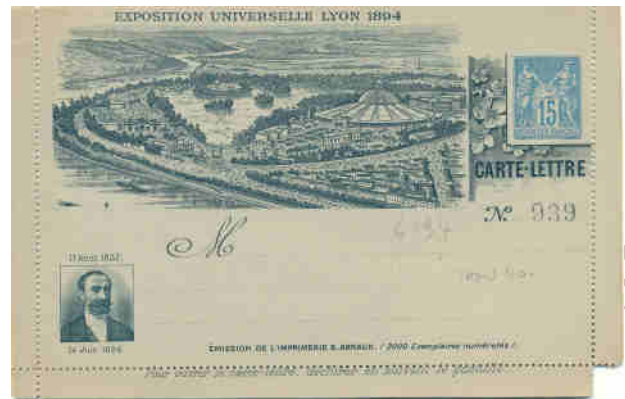
MST

## May 2012 Auction - Selected Lots

See also pages 33-34 and front cover; all lots except the last 6 reduced by 50% and all printed before lot numbers are known



1916 Morocco with *Troupes du Maroc Occidental* cachets



1894 15c Sage lettercard homage to President Carnot



1816 entire with *P. ROME P. JUSQU'À DOUVRES*



30c Sower Marseille *pneu* lettercard



1944 100F Marianne de Dulac banknote issued only in Corsica



ex Four complete sheets of 2010 Boulazac 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary printing



Sage issues cancelled GC 5104 Shang-hai



Poincaré and Estienne testing labels



o,50 La Bourboule imperf colour trial



1F50 Recensement with missing '7' on Corsica



1937 Musée du Louvre pair