

# The Journal of the France & Colonies Philatelic Society



World War I propaganda card  
illustrating the different characteristics of the French and German nations  
as demonstrated in their postage stamps  
(displayed by Maurice Tyler at Bastille Day meeting - see page iii)

Volume 62 ● Number 3  
September 2012  
Whole Number 265

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

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

**Officers**

President 2012-2013: J C West, 5 Highbanks Road, Hatch End, Pinner, Middx HA5 4AR (email: [president@fcps.org.uk](mailto:president@fcps.org.uk))

General Secretary 2012-2013: P R A Kelly, Malmsy House, Church Road, Leigh Woods, Bristol BS8 3PG  
(email: [secretary@fcps.org.uk](mailto:secretary@fcps.org.uk)).

Membership Secretary 2012-2013: P S Watkins, Wardgate Cottage, Hulland Ward, Ashbourne DE6 3EE  
(email: [membership@fcps.org.uk](mailto:membership@fcps.org.uk)).

**The Society**

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

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

**2013 Annual Subscription Rates**

United Kingdom: £18.00, Europe: £26.00, Elsewhere: £30.00.

Treasurer: C J Hitchen, 36 Everton Road, Croydon CR0 6LA (email: [treasurer@fcps.org.uk](mailto:treasurer@fcps.org.uk)).

Sterling, Euro and US dollar bills are accepted but overseas cheques must be drawn in Sterling. The Society has a PayPal account for the use of overseas members, but please add 4% for bank charges, and email to [treasurer@fcps.org.uk](mailto:treasurer@fcps.org.uk).

**The Journal**

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

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

Distribution: D J Richardson and M S Tyler.

The price is included in members' subscriptions.

The contents are copyright.

**Auction and Exchange Packet Sales**

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

S R Ellis, 22 Burton Crescent, Sneyd Green, Stoke-on-Trent ST1 6BT (email: [auction@fcps.org.uk](mailto:auction@fcps.org.uk))

according to instructions

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

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

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

**The Library**

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

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

**Journal Correspondents**

Paris: J M Simmons

London Group: L H Barnes

Southern Group: C W Spong

Northern Group: C S Holder

Wessex Group: P R A Kelly / A J Wood

**Publications Stockist**

R N Broadhurst, PO Box 448, Teddington TW11 1AZ (email: [stock@fcps.org.uk](mailto:stock@fcps.org.uk)); tel. 020 8977 9665.

\* \* \*

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

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

# The Journal of the France & Colonies Philatelic Society

Editor: M S Tyler, 56 Mortons Fork, Blue Bridge, Milton Keynes MK13 0LA  
E-mail: editor@fcps.org.uk  
Society Website: www.fcps.org.uk

**Volume 62 Number 3**

**September 2012 ● Whole No 265**

## CONTENTS

Society Notes .....	74
New Members .....	74
Members Deceased .....	74
Resignations .....	74
Future Events .....	74
Displays by Members .....	74
Exhibition Successes .....	74
Autumn Stampex 18-21 September 2013 .....	75
Philatelic Honours .....	75
Corrigendum .....	75
National & International Exhibitions 2012-2016 .....	75
France & Colonies Philatelic Society of Great Britain: Rules .....	76
November 2012 Auction - A Few Selected Lots (S R Ellis) .....	77
List of Recently Published Articles (C W Spong & M S Tyler) .....	78
Bookshelf .....	79
"The Sower, a Common Little French Stamp" by Ashley Lawrence (review by M L Bister) .....	79
Books Noted (M S Tyler) .....	105
Motorised Transport of Mails across the Sahara: Part 1 (P R A Kelly) .....	80
Airmails from French India (J Brown) .....	85
Postal Relationships between Belgian Congo and French Congo: Part 2 (P Lindekens) .....	87
<i>Cameroun 27.8.40</i> - the Displaced Overprint from Mbanga (1) (M Collet) .....	91
<i>Cameroun 27.8.40</i> - the Displaced Overprint from Mbanga (2) (D R Cobb) .....	96
Shorter Items - including Questions and Answers .....	97
French Naval Forces in the Borneo Area (J D F Dickson) .....	97
French Post Office in Tunisia – correction and addition (J P Maybury) .....	98
ROC Codes (J M Simmons) .....	98
British Stamp used in France (J Patch) .....	99
German Date Stamp on French <i>Semeuse</i> Issue (A J Wood) .....	99
The 1871-1876 <i>Cérès</i> Issue, Imperforate (W G Mitchell) .....	100
Request for Exchange of Stamps (D Hubert) .....	100
Inaugural Seaplane Flight 1925 (A J Wood) .....	101
Red Cross Overprints on 10c Sower (A J Wood) .....	101
Interzone Cards and Postage Due (Ms B M K Priddy) .....	102
Philatelic Cover with Many Postmarked Stamps but No Address (H Fisher) .....	103
Togo Postcard with British and French Stamps (E J Mayne) .....	104
Green Leaves (J M Simmons) .....	105
Reports of Meetings .....	106
Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of 12 May 2012 (PRAK/MST) .....	106
Wessex Group Meeting of 30 June 2012 - J C West: French Red Cross; Members (PRAK/AJW) .....	112
Northern Group Meeting of 14 July 2012 - Bastille Day at Heaton Royds (CSH/MST) .....	i, iii, iv

## SOCIETY NOTES

### New Members

The Society is pleased to welcome the following:

1407 David Toft (Swansea).

\* \* \*

### Members Deceased

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

1390 A S Akers, 219 Ian Burgess, 1206 Patrick Watson.

\* \* \*

### Resignations

1308 P R Maycox, 1341 S R Sparrow, 1369 S Bassil, 1380 J Bald.

\* \* \*

### Future Events

The **London Group** will meet at the Calthorpe Arms, Grays Inn Road, London WC1 at 6.30pm on Wednesday 17 October 2012 when Len Barnes will display "Foreign Aviation in the 1920s and 1930s using French Airspace", and on Wednesday 21 November 2012 when Jon Aitchison will display "*Les Iles Chausey*".

The **Southern Group** will meet at 2.00pm on Saturday 27 October 2012 at the East Worthing Community Centre, Pages Lane, East Worthing, when Ian Booth will display "Hatay and Alexandrette".

The **Northern Group** will meet at 2.00pm on Saturday 13 October at Heaton Royds, Bradford, courtesy of Stephen & Judith Holder, when George Barker will display "The Cérès issue of 1871-1876".

The **Wessex Group** will meet at 10.30am on Saturday 6 October 2012 at the Scout Hall, Lower Street, Harnham, Salisbury, when Robert Johnson will display "Suspended Mail: the effects of war and civil commotion on mails to and from France".

\* \* \*

### Displays by Members

In May 2012 **Guy Dutau** displayed "*La Colombe de la Paix*" at the *Académie de Philatélie*

At the *Salon du Timbre 2012* in Paris (9-17 June 2012) the following members were invited by the *Académie de Philatélie* to give one frame displays on "*La philatélie, une invitation au voyage*":

**Robert Abensur**: "*Sur les mers, à toute vapeur (1840-1850)*"

**George Barker**: "*Courrier entre France et Grande-Bretagne*"

**Michèle Chauvet**: "*La Grèce que j'aime...*"

**Guy Dutau**: "*Voyage à Venise en voiture, en barque...*"

**Peter Kelly**: "*Aspects de l'histoire postale maritime autour de l'émission du Type Sage (1876-1900)*"

**Bertrand Sinais**: "*Saint-Exupéry*"

On 19 September 2012 **Rainer von Scharpen** displayed "Bavarian Perfins" at the Collectors Club, New York

\* \* \*

### Exhibition Successes

**Ed Grabowski** has gained yet further national awards - Gold for "The Era of the French Allegorical Group Type, Part II: Postal History from the Pacific Islands Colonies" and the APS Pre-1900 Medal of Excellence at Westpex 2012 (San Francisco, April 2012); Gold for "The Era of the French Allegorical Group Type, Part IV: Postal History from Senegal and Dependencies" and for "The Era of the French Allegorical Group Type, Part III: Postal History from Madagascar and Dependencies" at Philatelic Show 2012 (Boxborough, Massachusetts, May 2012); and two more Gold medals for the latter two exhibits at Nojex 2012 (Secaucus, New Jersey, May 2012)

**Stan Luft** gained Vermeil for "Alsace-Lorraine 1925-1948" and the APS 1940-1980 Medal of Excellence at the Rocky Mountain Stamp Show 2012 (Denver, Colorado, May 2012)

At the *Salon du Timbre 2012* in Paris (9-17 June 2012) the following members gained awards:

In the *Championnat de France* **Jean-Pierre Magne** was awarded Gold with felicitations of the jury and was nominated for the *Grand Prix* for "*Les relations postales de la Russie vers la France de 1858 à 1875*" (Postal History)

In the *Championnat International* **Robert Abensur** gained Large Vermeil for "*Lettres insuffisamment affranchies de l'étranger pour la France - des origines à 1907*" (Postal History)

**Mick Bister** gained Large Vermeil for "*Le 1F50 Pétain - Type Bersier*" (Traditional Philately)

**Graham Booth** gained Large Vermeil for "Spoon cancels of England and Ireland" (Postal History)

**Guy Dutau** gained Large Gold and felicitations of the jury for "*Les lettres purifiées françaises en métropole et dans les pays occupés*" (Postal History)

**Yacov Tsachor** gained Gold for "France 1871-1878 Perforated Cérès: Rates, routes and procedures" (Postal History)

Jury members included **Guy Dutau** and **Michel Letailleur** (*Championnat de France*) and **Francis Kiddle** (*Championnat International*)

\* \* \*



## Autumn Stampex 18-21 September 2013

As reported in the June edition of the Journal, the Society has accepted an invitation to be the 'keynote exhibitor' at Autumn Stampex 2013 to be held at the Business Design Centre in Islington. This will be a magnificent opportunity for us to showcase both our Society and its members' collections and hopefully the displays will entice visitors to join our ranks.

The committee has agreed to mount a display of 100 frames and is in the process of contacting members of the Society with an invitation to contribute up to four frames each. Regrettably, for logistical reasons, we can only invite UK members to display. In order to comply with insurance requirements, the Stampex organisers have offered to integrate the receipt and return of the displays into their own system.

A special edition of the Journal will be published in September or December next year containing details of all the displays exhibited. Pamphlets giving details of the Society and an application form will be available for distribution to the visitors.

On the Saturday of the exhibition, the Society will be organising a lunch at a restaurant near the Business Design Centre. Details of the venue and cost will be published in a later edition of the Journal and we hope many of you will join us whether you are displaying or not. Lunch will be followed by a Society meeting back at the exhibition with an invited speaker and it will be open to members and non-members alike.

We shall need to supervise our display at the exhibition with members who can answer questions about the Society. We will require ideally four members per day from Wednesday to Saturday, working in pairs in the morning and afternoon, and nearer the time we shall be seeking volunteers.

We will report back to you on our progress in the next edition of the Journal.

\* \* \*

## Philatelic Honours

Among the new FIP Commission Chairmen elected in Jakarta in June 2012 is our member **Francis Kiddle** (Revenue).

\* \* \*

## Corrigendum

I don't suppose anybody noticed but the List of Recently Published Articles (page 49) was inadvertently omitted from the list of Contents on page 37 of the last Journal. Apologies!

\* \* \*

## National & International Exhibitions 2012-2016

The ABPS Exhibitions Committee has published the following list of future exhibitions. The closing date for entry to some of these will have already passed, of course, but details are available on the ABPS website..

Perth ABPS and Congress Full National Exhibition with a Scandinavian flavour: 19 to 20 October 2012

International Philatelic Literature Exhibition: IPHLA 2012, Mainz, Germany, 2-4 November 2012

Nordia: Scandinavian countries with US and other exhibitors: Roskilde, Denmark, 2-4 November 2012

Spring Stampex 2013: ABPS Cinderella and Revenue, 200 Frames with supporting Seminars: 20-23 February 2013

World Philatelic Exhibition, Melbourne, Australia, 10-15 May 2013

Thailand Bangkok 2013: 2-14 August 2013

Autumn Stampex 2013: Full National Exhibition – **France and Colonies Philatelic Society**: 18 to 21 September 2013

World Stamp Exhibition, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 11-17 November 2013

Spring Stampex 2014: Pictorial Classes, Thematic, Open and Postcards 19-22 February 2014

Joint meeting of RPSL and *l'Académie de Philatélie de Belgique* 11-14 July 2014, Ypres. Display plus RDP ceremony: Provisional: Venue for British Philatelic Congress  
Philakorea FIP Exhibition: 7-12 August 2014 (No further details)

Autumn Stampex 2014: Full National Exhibition - Germany and Colonies 50th Anniversary and Centenary of the outbreak of World War One. Possible formal invitation to Bund Deutscher Philatelisten (BDPh) e.V 17-20 September 2014

Spring Stampex 2015: GBPS Limited exhibition, 200 Frames, Diamond Jubilee of the Great Britain Philatelic Society

London 2015: FIP and FEPA Exhibition 13-16 May 2015  
Singapore 2015 FIP Exhibition, 11-16 August 2015: 50 years independence, 2500 frames

Autumn Stampex 2015 Full National Exhibition - GB Overprints Society 45 Years

Spring Stampex 2016: ABPS Pictorial Classes, Thematic, Open and Postcards

World Stamp Show - NY 2016, Javits Convention Center New York City, 28 May to 4 June 2016

Autumn Stampex 2016, Full National Exhibition: Portuguese Philatelic Society or King George VI Philatelic Society

\* \* \*

# France & Colonies Philatelic Society of Great Britain

## RULES

*The Rules of our Society were last published in the Journal some years ago, and it is felt that they should now be notified to members again, particularly as there are many new members who will never have seen them. These rules can only be changed by agreement at an Annual General Meeting of the Society, after due notice has been given of any proposal to do so.*

1. The NAME of the Society shall be - FRANCE AND COLONIES PHILATELIC SOCIETY OF GREAT BRITAIN.
2. The OBJECT of the Society shall be to promote the study of the stamps and postal history of France, her colonies and dependencies and to provide facilities for this purpose. The Society may affiliate to or act jointly with any other society or organisation for the purpose of promoting or otherwise assisting these objects.
3. MANAGEMENT of the Society shall be vested in the duly appointed officers of the Society and a Committee.
4. The OFFICERS of the Society shall be:

The President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Packet Secretary, Auction Secretary, Editor, and Librarian.

If for a period of time it becomes necessary to divide the duties of a particular office, the Committee may appoint an additional officer to carry out such duties.

5. The COMMITTEE shall consist of the Officers of the Society, the last retired President, not less than four nor more than eight other members appointed by the members in General Meeting. Within the permitted number a majority of the Committee for the time being may appoint additional members of the Society to the Committee to serve until the next General Meeting when they must retire but may offer themselves for re-election.
6. The President shall act as CHAIRMAN at meetings of the Committee and of the Society and in his absence the Vice-President, or any other Officer so appointed by those present, may act as Chairman.
7. The Officers of the Society and the Committee shall be elected annually by members of the Society present at the Annual General Meeting. Nominations for Officers and Members of the Committee must be submitted in writing signed by the proposer and a seconder and delivered to the Secretary or any member of the Committee before the commencement of the Annual General Meeting. Where insufficient nominations have been received the Chairman at the Annual General Meeting may in his discretion allow nominations duly seconded to be made at the meeting.
8. All members present at meetings of the Society and members of the Committee present at Committee meetings shall be entitled to one VOTE and VOTING shall be by show of hands. In the event of a tie the Chairman of the meeting shall have a casting vote. Nothing in these rules shall prevent the holding of a postal ballot if such a ballot is requested by a majority of the Committee or by a majority of members present at a meeting of the Society. Where a postal ballot is requested on a proposal before a meeting of the Society the request must be made before the proposal has been put to the meeting. Any member unable to be present at a meeting of the Society may appoint a member of the Society as a proxy to vote on his behalf. The appointment of a proxy may be in any form but must be in writing.
9. The Society's FINANCIAL YEAR shall be the calendar year.
10. SUBSCRIPTIONS shall be due and payable on 1st January each year. Where any member's subscription remains unpaid at the date of the Society's Annual General Meeting in that year that member may at the discretion of the Committee be removed from the roll of members. The amount of the annual subscription shall be determined at the Annual General Meeting and unless otherwise resolved shall be effective from the 1st January next following.
11. The ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the Society shall be held each year during April or May at a place and time to be determined by the Committee. At least fourteen days notice of the Annual General Meeting shall be given to every member and inclusion of the date, time and place of the meeting in the Annual Programme shall be valid notice.
12. The business of the Annual General Meeting shall be
  - (1) The consideration and if thought fit the adoption of reports and financial statements from the Officers of the Society for the time being, of the auditors, and of any other members with a report on any activity of the Society.
  - (2) The election of Officers and Members of the Committee.
  - (3) Consideration of the programme for the next ensuing year.
  - (4) Appointment of the auditor or auditors.
  - (5) Other business of which fourteen days notice has been given.

(6) Any other business (no binding vote may be taken under this item).

13. The Secretary shall convene an EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETING of the Society if directed to do so by the Committee or at the written request of any eight or more members of the Society stating the business for which the meeting is to be convened. Every member shall be entitled to fourteen days notice of an Extraordinary General Meeting stating the business of the meeting.

14. Notice shall be validly given if posted to a member's last known address or handed to him in person. The day of posting shall be included in the fourteen days notice but not the day of the meeting.

15. A QUORUM at meetings of the Committee shall be any five members of the Committee including at least three Officers of the Society. At General Meetings of the Society a quorum shall be any nine members including three officers of the Society.

16. The RULES of the Society may be amended at any General Meeting of the Society of which fourteen days notice has been given stating the amendment to be made.

17. The Society may be wound up by a resolution of the members at a General Meeting of the Society called for that purpose. Such a resolution shall require a 75% majority of members voting at the meeting and the resolution shall appoint some person to carry out the dissolution of the Society in accordance with the directions of the meeting.

18. Any DISPUTE arising between members of the Society which cannot be resolved in accordance with these rules shall be submitted for arbitration to a Fellow of the Institute of Actuaries whose decision shall be binding on all parties involved.

19. At no time should any member make mention, on external surfaces of any correspondence or exchange packet, of an official's title, or the name of the Society, or the nature of the contents.

20. The auctions organised by the Society shall be subject to the conditions known as the "Philatelic Auctioneers' Standard Terms and Conditions of Sale (1973 Revision)".

21. The Committee shall In their absolute discretion have the power to terminate the membership of any member, and such decision shall take effect from the date of despatch, by recorded post, to the member at his last known address, of their decision.

---

## November 2012 Auction - A Few Selected Lots

See also our website  
[www.fcps.org.uk/auctions.html](http://www.fcps.org.uk/auctions.html)



Lot 190

1929 Jeanne d'Arc proof from unadopted design  
 Reserve £40



Lot 28

1870 Bordeaux 4c (Yv 41B)  
 Reserve £25



Lot 252

1852 Napoleon 25c (Yv 10) ETOILE cancel  
 Reserve £50



Lot 339

1871 Alsace occupation cover sent via Dijon Bureau de Passe  
 Reserve £19



Lot 54

1898 Military mail from French Guyane  
 Reserve £100

# LIST OF RECENTLY PUBLISHED ARTICLES

Compiled by Colin Spong and Maurice Tyler

## Bulletin de la COL.FRA

N° 140 2<sup>ème</sup> Trim 2012: Le Manque de Timbres à Madagascar en 1904: Essai d'Etude Chronologique (Desnos); Réflexions et Compléments sur les Textes Parus [Sénégal] (Strobel); En complément de son livre: les surchargés de l'An 40 Cameroun (Cobb); En complément du Hors-Série 15.1 et 15.2 Mauritanie (Roussot); La convention de Caire et les Griffes Taxe Perçue de Madagascar (Hurpet); Un Courrier des deux côtés au Sud-Cameroun (Cobb); 976 Mayotte – Marcophilie Moderne (Lavenas); Au-delà du Catalogue...au Cameroun (Cobb).

## Cameo

Vol 13 N° 2 (Whole N° 86) 2012: Cameroun - The Double Overprint on the 35c Corps Expéditionnaire of 1915 (Collet); Cameroun 1914: French Cachet Forgery (Cobb); Used on both sides in Sud Kamerun (Cobb); Cameroun Harrison Airmail Stamps (May); Post Mortem Report on Napoleon Bonaparte (Kindly); Philatelic Research: A Basic Guide (Beech); Kamerun-Congo Border Delimitation Vignettes 1908 (Maddocks); Cameroon: 1F75 Forgeries (Cobb); Interesting 1937 Cover from Lagos to AEF (Yeomans).

## L'Écho de la Timbrologie

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

N° 1862 May 2012: Un usage courant à 2 milliards et demi d'exemplaires [Marianne et l'Europe] (Rabineau); 2011 – Hivernage de la TA 61 [Terre Adélie] (Venturini); L'histoire secrète d'un timbre commémoratif [Jeanne d'Arc] (Albaret); L'épopée johannique (Mozelle); Aux urnes, citoyens! [Courriers des élections législatives] (Hardy).

N° 1863 June 2012: Le CNES et les TAAF (Venturini); Une spécialité du CNES, l'Agence française de l'espace (-); Grosses têtes d'Hermès sur courrier international (Chauvet).

N° 1864 Jul-Aug 2012: Dis, Louis Boursier, l'artiste, dessine-moi le timbre de tes rêves... (-); Campagne d'été 2011-2012 [Terre Adélie] Venturini); Une philatélie à la carte...de pêche (Barthélémy, Morelle et Spano: rédacteurs du catalogue des timbres fiscaux); 1912: quand l'Aéropostale s'éveille en Lorraine (Albaret).

## France & Colonies Philatelist

Whole N° 309 (Vol 68 N° 3) July 2012: 1871 Commune of Paris Prisoners' Mail (Fiset); French Post Offices in Egypt: Part 1: The Postage Due Stamps of Alexandria (Herendeen); Incredible St Pierre 'Type Groupe' Itemised (Tillard); Cameroun - Mystery Postmarks (Bratzel Jr); Cameroun: 1F75 Forgeries (Cobb).

## Timbres Magazine

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

N° 135 Jun 2012: La Marianne de Cheffer: Une classique admise en lettres modernes [1] (Rucklin); La philatélie chauffée à Blanc [1] (Singeot); Filets ou faux filets? (de La Mettrie); La Ligne de l'Atlantique Nord (Chauvin); Colette, femme de lettres et de cartes postales (Zeyons); Imprimé ou carte postale? (Prugnon); Algérie: le service commun des colis postaux (Chauvin).

N° 136 Jul-Aug 2012; La philatélie chauffée à Blanc [2] (Singeot); Une collection originale, les timbres perforés (Disclair); La Marianne de Cheffer: Beauté sacrifiée [2] (Rucklin); Pour combattre la monotonie (de La Mettrie); Exquises Marquises (Beslu); La ligne bleue des Vosges (Zeyons); Trois lettres sous la loupe (Baudot); Le hasard fait bien les choses (Prugnon); Accident de mer à bord de la Malle des Indes (Chauvin); Claude Vallin, «La philatélie est un art à part entière» (Amiel).

## The London Philatelist

Vol 121 N° 1395. May 2012 : St Pierre and Miquelon Postal Markings 1854-1864 (Taylor).

## Documents Philatéliques

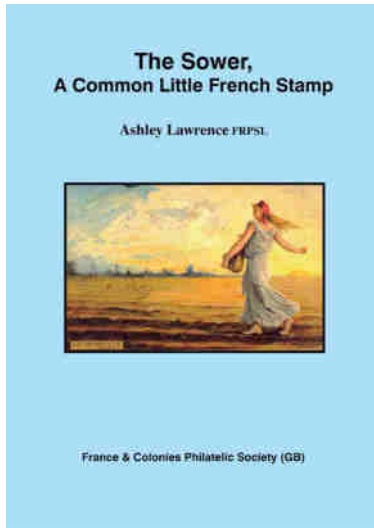
N° 213 3<sup>e</sup> trim 2012: Saïda-Marseille-Madrid: une lettre du Levant pour l'Espagne purifiée à Marseille pendant la Grande Peste! (Dutau); Cachet de fortune inconnu de Luang-Pra-Bang Laos sur un pli doublement accidenté (Marsanoux); Un cas particulier de réexpédition: Les lettres de convocation des greffiers des tribunaux de première instance (Bourgouin); Le projet de «poste atmosphérique» entre Paris et Versailles de A Crespín (Narjoux); Monsieur Luneau de Boisjermain, le Bureau de l'Abonnement Littéraire et l'envoi d'imprimés au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle (Hardy); Double port frontalier franco-italien? (Abensur); Les premières émissions d'entiers postaux du service pneumatique de Paris: informations données par «l'Annuaire statistique de la France» (Barbelin).



## BOOKSHELF

### The Sower, a Common Little French Stamp

by Ashley Lawrence FRPSL



Editing & layout by Maurice Tyler and published by the France & Colonies Philatelic Society of Great Britain, 2012; A4; iv + 252 pages; ISBN 0 9519601 8 0; perfect bound volume with laminated cover; obtainable from the Society's Publications Officer by e-mail to [stock@fcps.org.uk](mailto:stock@fcps.org.uk) or in writing to Mr R N Broadhurst, PO Box 448, Teddington TW11 1AZ; price £39.50 (postage & packing extra), but £35.00 (+p&p) to members if ordered by 31 December 2012.

The Sower stamp is one of the most popular collecting areas in French philately

and it is not difficult to understand why. It is a stamp which over the past hundred years has attracted admirers thanks to its emotive design, its extraordinary palette of colours and shades and its affordability. It is a stamp that can be collected at many levels and those who have been tempted by the young peasant girl into accumulating just her basic portrayals soon find themselves lured and tempted into a more specialised study of her attributes.

Numerous books have been written about her. The 'bible', *'Un essai sur les Semeuses'* by Louis Barrier was published in 1951, Pierre Marion published his *'Dictionnaire des Semeuses à types multiples'* in 1974 and, a few years later, Messrs Storch & Françon published their tomes entitled *'Les Timbres-Poste au type Semeuse Camée de 1907'*. The most recent publications have been the two Yvert & Tellier specialised catalogues on the Sower booklets published in 2005 and 2006.

It cannot be denied that all these books are excellent works but not one of them embraces the Sower in her entirety. The early publications, with their monochrome illustrations, have become dated. Others cover only certain aspects or periods of the issue. Moreover, they are all written in French. For decades, there has been a huge void in the library of philatelic literature - a study in English, printed in colour, and embracing all the aspects of this beautiful but common issue. But at last that void has been filled with the Society's publication of Ashley Lawrence's 'The Sower, a Common Little French Stamp'.

The author is synonymous with the Sower and when one reads his introduction one realises that he is also infatuated with her. He possesses the finest collection of Sower material in the country, has presented a paper to the RPSL of which he is a Fellow and published a series of articles on the issue in the philatelic press. His book is the culmination of a lifetime of research and collecting and he has left nothing to chance, even going as far as to correspond with the descendants of the designer Oscar Roty, in order to create

the ultimate homage to the Sower.

When one first opens the book the immediate impression is how lavishly it is illustrated. The book consists of 256 pages, divided into 22 chapters and five appendices and is illustrated with over 500 photos in full colour, many of which are of mouth-watering gems.

The book begins with an account of the origins of the design followed by details of the model, Charlotte Ragot, the designer, Oscar Roty and the engraver Louis-Eugène Mouchon. The ensuing chapters treat the issues from 1903 to 2003 in more or less chronological order rather than by value and all the chapters are structured in a similar fashion to aid ease of reference. Each value is introduced in its historical context and with reference to the postal rates operating at the time.

Occasional anecdotes add interest and a touch of levity. When appropriate, an explanation is given for the colour chosen accompanied in some chapters by a rainbow of colour trials. Printing dates are quoted and any changes in paper quality and ink shades are also noted. All the formats are studied - sheet, booklet, coil and stationery printings - and where this has resulted in different types, clear diagrams and explanatory notes are provided to assist identification.

But this is not all. There follow further chapters devoted to postal stationery, overprints, *porte-timbres*, *timbres-jetons*, French post offices abroad and Sower related collectables. This author has left no stone unturned! Finally a group of appendices include an index and catalogue identification tables, a highly informative account of the main printing processes and a glossary of technical terms.

This publication will be the first opportunity for English speaking collectors to read a book on the Sowers written in their own language. It is the fruit of the author's great knowledge and extraordinary passion and will fascinate not only beginners but also encourage others to progress further as well as meeting the rigorous demands of the specialist. This book is a joy to hold, to read and above all, to use and merits a place on everyone's bookshelf.

Mick Bister

Continued on page 105

# Motorised Transport of Mails across the Sahara

## Part 1

Peter Kelly

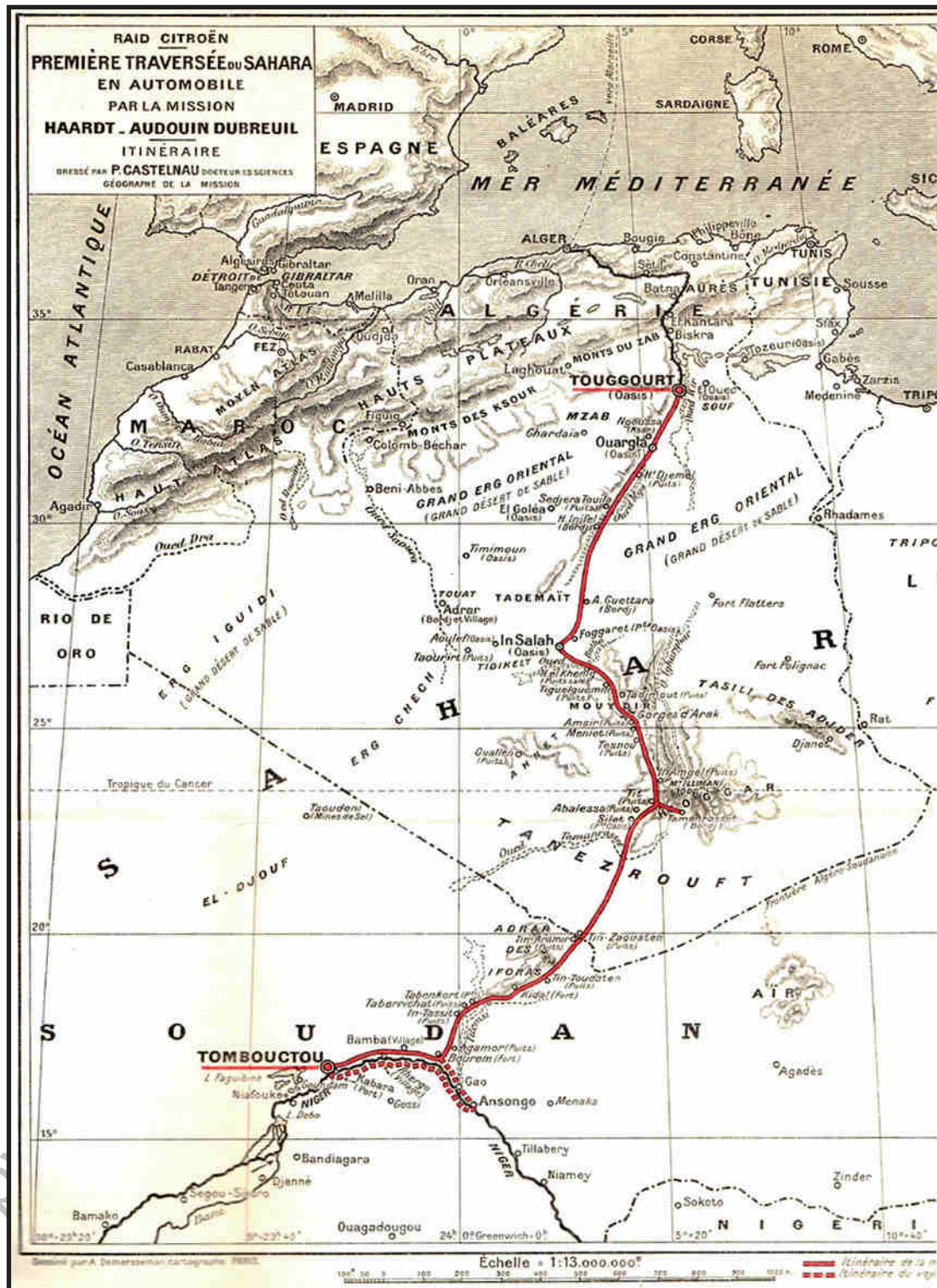


Figure 1

Itinerary of the expedition: Touggourt to Tombouctou 3500km  
 Dotted line is the trip by boat on the Niger

In a previous article we looked at the transport of mail by camel across the Sahara desert from Algeria to French Soudan and Niger. This continued intermittently until WWI. The war itself led to the transfer of European officers and west African troops to the Western Front and other theatres of war. With only token garrisons in the southern

desert areas alongside the Tripolitanian border the Turks put pressure on the Senoussi and encouraged them to create as much difficulty as possible in southern Algeria and some forts were lost. The murder of de Foucauld, the renowned warrior priest at Tamanrasset, led to strong reprisals. General Laperrine saw to it that order was restored and few





Figure 2  
In the Tanezrouft

knew the desert better than he. During this period there was little call for trans-Saharan mail services.

One of the positive things that came out of the War was the use of motorised vehicles. It had been shown that cars and trucks were capable of being used on difficult terrain. It was not long before the idea and challenge of trans-Saharan travel emerged. The purpose of this article is to look at how this idea was developed and the postal implications that followed.

Algeria had made a big effort to develop a basic unmetalled route structure and the link between Algiers and In-Salah was in place as early as 1916. These were not roads as we understand them now but tracks cleared of obstacles where possible and improved in places. Following the reduction in troops in the desert forts it was a military imperative to improve communications in case of need.

Similarly, there were aeroplanes and the first full squadron of these was based at Biskra. The focus was, however, on road vehicles because the planes lacked powerful engines and as a result could not carry a heavy load over a long distance with no refuelling capability in the desert. Wireless contact had not yet been perfected and location of a plane coming down in the desert was an immense problem.

It was in 1916 that the first serious attempts at desert travel by motor vehicle were undertaken and these were largely at the insistence of General Laperrine. Two vehicles attempted to drive the 750km from Ouargla to In-Salah. One took 20 days and the other had to be abandoned. This was replicated the following year with 5 vehicles this time and the first two made it in 6 days. In 1918 General Laperrine was driven some 300km south of In-Salah in the direction of the Hoggar.

The following year an experiment was successfully carried out for a convoy of vehicles to visit the south Algerian military posts, synchronised with three aircraft which linked in with them. The problems encountered were endless and included constant punctures, frequent breakdowns, broken parts, being bogged down in sand, freezing radiators at night and anything else imaginable. However, a major tragedy took place in 1920 with the death of General Laperrine when his aeroplane got lost in a sandstorm and made a crash landing. The plane was badly off course and it took

a long time to locate the wreckage — by which time the general had died.

Back in France André Citroën saw that the right kind of vehicle would be good for economic development and also for the prestige of his marque. After a number of experiments his factory came up with a 6 wheeled vehicle driven by a powerful 10hp engine and caterpillar tracks on the rear 4 wheels. The 'track' was made of a continuous band of flexible but hard wearing rubber. In the winter of 1921-2 a number of vehicles were brought out and tested, based at Touggourt under the direction of Louis Audouin-Dubreuil. After a number of modifications the vehicles were considered a success.

Thus the great expedition and adventure was set in motion. The Minister of War warned that over and above the problems that could arise from the vehicles themselves or the terrain they also had to run the risk of meeting up with dissident tribesmen who represented a real danger.

The next step was to decide on the exact route to be taken and, in advance, put in place supply dumps along the way. Lieutenant Georges Estienne of whom we shall hear much more later, dealt with the dumps in Algeria at Ouargla, Inifel and In-Salah. M. de Ceris set out from Tombouctou and put in place dumps at Bourem, Kidal and Tin Zouaten (900km from Tombouctou). This still left 1300km in the middle without any spares, fuel or water being available.

So, on to the great adventure. On 1 December 1922 the 5 Citroën vehicles left Touggourt under the joint leadership of Georges-Marie Haardt and Louis Audouin-Dubreuil. They had drivers and mechanics from the Citroën workshops in Paris, Lt Georges Estienne, an aviator and son of General Estienne, a geographer and recorder, a representative from the military and a small terrier. Each vehicle carried a mounted machine gun. Most important for the purpose of this article is the mail that they carried, for the object of the expedition was to test the viability of a regular service across the Sahara.

The route taken was almost directly south, passing through Ouargla, Inifel and In-Salah and it was from here that the journey began to get difficult. The vehicles were tested initially in crossing the sand desert and then through the mountainous section with many obstacles and narrow



Figure 3

Facsimile of the official statement recording the handing over of the first motorised transport of mail across the Sahara

gorges to contend with as they crossed the Mouydir section. Eventually they penetrated the Hoggar and reached the wells of Tit, only 40km from the mountain post of Tamanrasset. They still had the worst of the journey ahead of them and after a two day make and mend and a rest on 28 December the little convoy, accompanied by a military guide, set off into what was really a journey into the unknown – the crossing of the waterless and feared wastes of the Tanezrouft. (Fig 2). Sandstorms, burning heat and difficult terrain made the crossing a hard one.

On 31 December they approached the wells at Tin Zaouaten on the edge of the Adrar hills. Here they met up with de Ceris who had set up a supply dump. They had broken the back of the journey. Shortly after setting off again they crossed into French Soudan and by the 2 January 1923 reached the military post of Kidal. Two days later they arrived at night at Bourem and the next morning saw the Niger river shining in the sun. What an incredible achievement! — but there was still a bit to go as they followed the Niger upstream passing the post at Bamba and were finally met at the gates of Tombouctou by the Commandant of the region, all of the European military and administration of the district and an enormous crowd from the town.

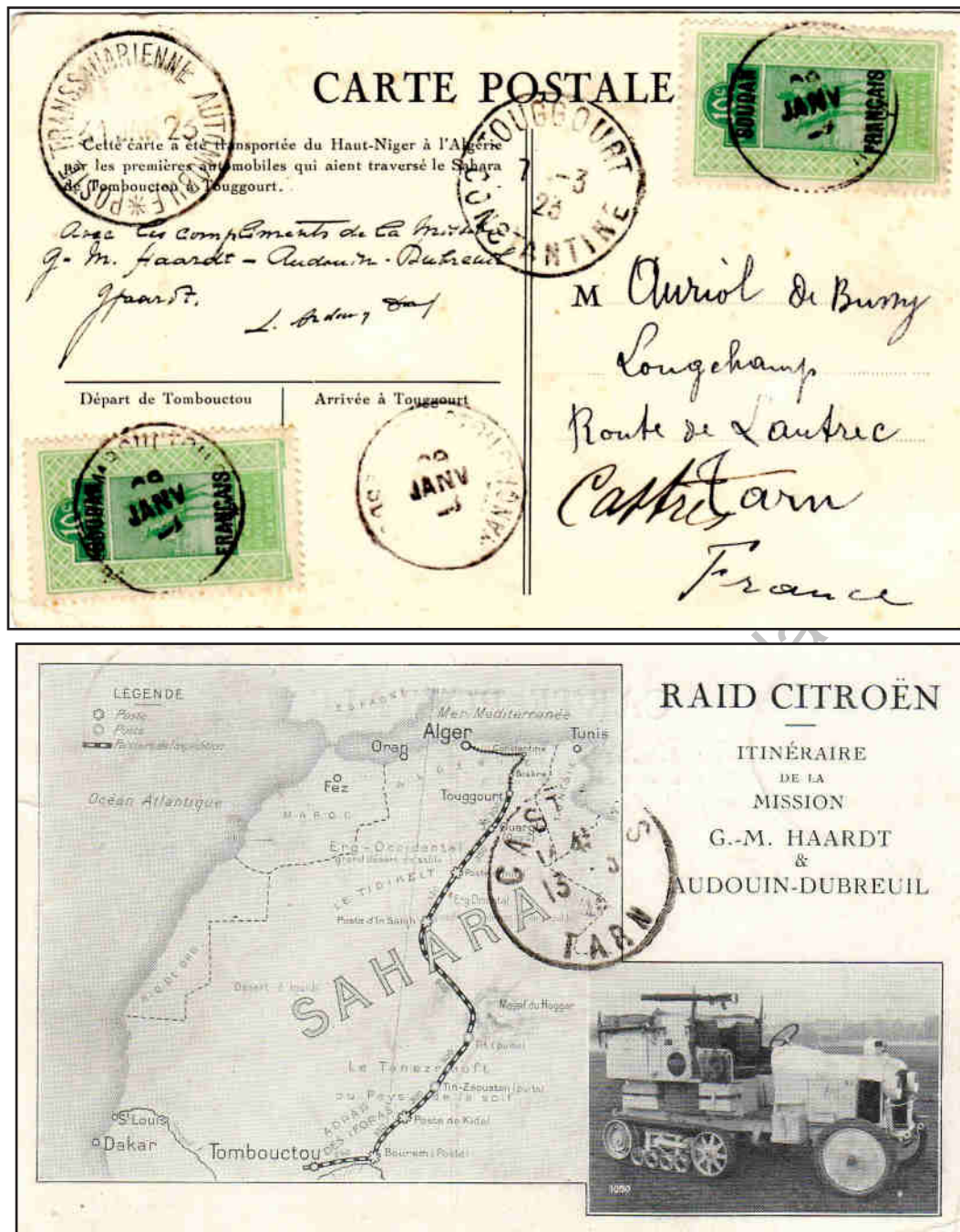
At this point the mails were formally handed over with the relevant *procès-verbal* recording the handing over of the first mails carried by a motor vehicle (Fig 3). This was a special moment for the team as they came to terms with what they had achieved – a 3500km journey completed in 20 days with 15 stages. The vehicles had been tested to the

limit and had not been found wanting considering the total distance covered and the severity of different types of terrain. They were only able to do this because of the impeccable and precise planning which had been a feature of the whole venture, that consisted of the siting of the supply dumps along the route with fuel, water and spare parts.

The party then left Tombouctou on a travel and hunting expedition on the river Niger heading downstream to Ansongo, returning to Bourem ready for departure back to Touggourt, Algeria on 10 February. Once again they carried mails with them; some of a philatelic nature (Figs 4 & 5) with the handstamp of the expedition and some privately generated mail (Figs 6 & 7) without the special handstamp but supported by the dates of departure and arrival. (Mail from this expedition is not easy to find; we have not seen recorded any specially designed cards for the outward journey.)

The return journey, following a slightly different route was completed without too much difficulty although it did take longer than anticipated. By 16 February they had passed Kidal and faced the Tanezrouft again, this time having an easier crossing, taking only two days. They also made a small detour to visit Tamanrasset, spiritual centre of the Hoggar where two of the great Saharans, Laperrine and de Foucauld are commemorated. By 26 February the expedition was back at In-Salah and on 6 March they finally completed the round trip as they reached Touggourt. The mails were passed to the post office there and transit marks applied on 7 March.





Figures 4 &amp; 5

Tombouctou to Castres (Tarn) 29 January 1923

Transit marks *Poste transsaharienne automobile* 31.1.23, *Touggourt Constantime* 7.3.23

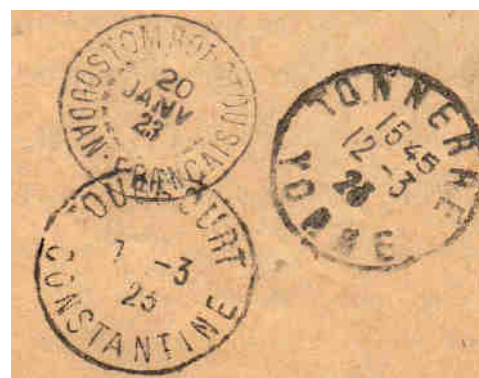
Received at Castres 13.3.23

The success of the Citroën expedition was followed by a period of intense competition to find the fastest and the best means by which the Sahara could be crossed and this gave renewed hope to those keen to develop the concept of the Trans-Saharan Railway. The emphasis was therefore on choice of route and the best mechanical means of exploiting this. A number of important expeditions followed quickly. None of these carried mail and, as such, are outside the scope of an article looking specifically at the transport of mails, but they remain of great interest as they were the forerunners of the regular bus services across the desert that did carry mails.

The expeditions of particular note were those of Gaston Gradis and, again, Haardt and Audouin-Dubreuil. This

was, effectively, a duel between Citroën and Renault at the initiative and with the encouragement of General Estienne, who foresaw the benefits that improved communications would bring both in military and economic terms.

While Citroën had been the undoubted leaders in the race, Renault now came strongly onto the scene. While the caterpillar tracks worked extremely well in sand, a great part of the desert was stony which was not so suitable for them. The Renault, designed specially for overall tough terrain, was based on a six double wheel chassis and a powerful engine. Overall, it coped better and was faster on flatter ground. The first Gradis expedition had some problems but the promise was there. Their second one was an enormous success. To the annoyance of Citroën the Estienne



Figures 6 & 7

Dire, Soudan to Tonnerre (Yonne) 18 January 1923  
Transit Tombouctou 20.1.23, Touggourt, Constantine 7.3.23  
Received at Tonnerre 12.3.23

*"To-day a little event in the monotonous life we live in Soudan. Mail will be leaving Tombouctou directly for Alger carried by the Citroën autos which have already made the outward journey."*

*"I am pleased to send you these few words by a route so rarely visited and the special cachet of the canceller will bring joy to collectors."(\*)*

(\*) Not applied in this case.

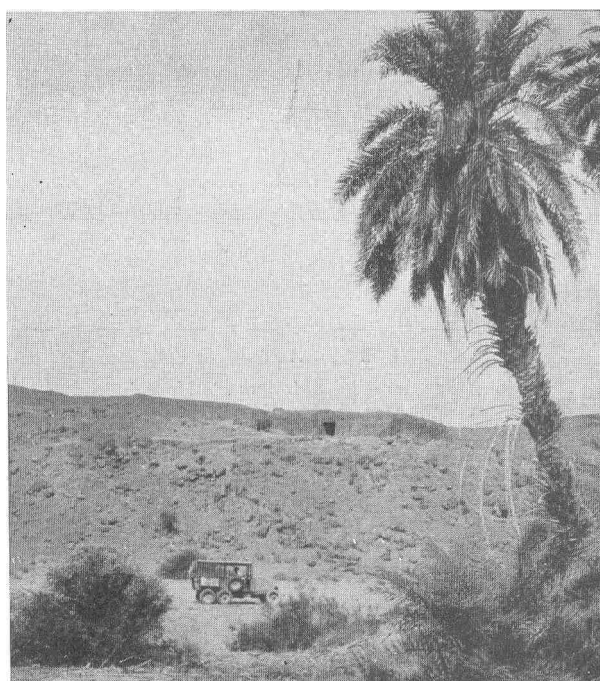


Figure 8

A Renault from the 2nd Gradis expedition at Tessalit having just crossed the Tanezrouft, with the old fort in the background

brothers were involved in the organisation. The expedition had the military backing of their father, General Estienne and, furthermore, the team included a Marshal of France – Franchet d'Espèrey. The route taken by the expedition was ambitious and successful, linking Algeria to the Atlantic at Cotonou, Dahomey. The route taken was to the east of that of the first Citroën expedition; starting from Colomb Béchar they crossed the Sahara via Adrar, Ouallen, the Tanezrouft, Tessalit (Fig 8), Tabenkort and Bourem. They continued through Niger via Niamey and Gaya and down through Dahomey to Cotonou.

The focus was changing. The links between air and land routes were being developed. It could be seen that if the

planes followed the roads and were able to refuel at stopping places along them, the carriage of passengers and goods became feasible. In emergencies, the planes would also be easy to find – bearing in mind there was no wireless contact available. Citroën had already started to develop tourism and hotels in Algeria and an increasing number of people were visiting the Sahara.

The next Citroën expedition, again led by Haardt and Audouin-Dubreuil, was a substantial and ambitious one. This time the decision was taken to travel from Colomb Béchar to Tanganyika on the east coast of Africa, by way of Niger, Equatorial Africa and Belgian Congo, and then by ship to Madagascar and the Cape of Good Hope, returning through central Africa to the Belgian Congo. This was a successful and well organised expedition and an extremely expensive one generating enormous publicity.

By this time travel by air had come to Africa as well and the first regular flights by the Latécoère/Aéromaritime service connected Dakar and Paris in 1925.

Africa was being opened up at a tremendous rate and the Sahara was no longer impenetrable although the dangers of travel were still there. In the next article we look at the regular bus services that evolved from these expeditions.

### Bibliography

There have been a number of books written on the expeditions which make fascinating reading. These include:

- Porch D – "The conquest of the Sahara", J Cape, London 1985
- Haardt G M & Audouin-Dubreuil L – "La première traversée du Sahara en automobile". Plon, Paris 1923
- De Kerillis H – "De l'Algérie au Dahomey en automobile", Plon, Paris 1925
- Haardt G M & Audouin-Dubreuil L – "La Croisière Noire" (Edition in English: "The Black Journey" G Bles, London 1928)



# Airmails from French India

Jeffrey Brown

As a member of the India Study Circle for Philately who knows next to nothing about the stamps of France or its Colonies, I feel somewhat diffident about writing an article for this Journal. So some explanation seems necessary.

I am a collector of Indian airmails and have recently completed for publication a CD-Rom entitled "Indian Air Mail Postage rates until 1956". My collection includes underpaid mail – to understand how the postage due is calculated, one needs to know something about the postage rates of both the sending and receiving country.

So I decided to start to put together a catalogue of air-mail rates FROM other countries TO India. Finding this information is proving difficult, but I was lucky enough to mention my project to Barbara Priddy, who kindly lent me Bob Picirilli's "Postage and Airmail Rates in France & Colonies 1920-1945". It is a wonderful book, very clearly laid out and with a huge amount of information. I thought that India was complicated, but this must have cost him

endless hours of work.

For obvious reasons, I turned first to French India. The book explains that, where mail has to be flown via France, the rates quoted "are OAT surtaxes from France to destination. For airmail all the way add the (unknown!) Surtax from French India to France".

I was intrigued by the word "unknown" (by which Bob meant that he did not find – in the official journal of French India – a listing of airmail surtaxes from French India to France that would apparently apply in 1936 to add to the published surtaxes from France onward). It has always been my understanding that French India stamps were not valid for postage by airmail, as the British enforced a protectionist policy that prevented airmail from being carried by airlines other than Imperial Airways, except where a foreign airline was the only carrier. The following paragraphs appeared in all the Post Office Guides from 1933 to 1940:

## The Dutch (KLM) and the French (Air Orient) Air Mail Services

Correspondence, both registered and unregistered, for Siam, the Malay States, the Strait Settlements and the Dutch East Indies, are accepted for transmission by the Dutch (KLM) air service.

Correspondence for Siam and French Colonies in Indo-China are also accepted for transmission by the French (Air Orient) air service.

In the above-mentioned cases, articles originating in India are carried by air from Calcutta. Articles originating in Burma are loaded at Akyab or Rangoon, whichever is found to be the nearest airport. In the event of there being an Indian internal air service which will expedite carriage to Calcutta, the articles will also be carried by that internal service.

Internal air mail within India and Burma is not carried by the KLM or Air Orient service. As an exception to this, only correspondence posted in Burma for transmission by air to countries west of India will be accepted for transmission by air from Rangoon or Akyab to Calcutta by the Dutch or French Air Service. Such correspondence will be carried also by air from Delhi to Karachi by the Indian internal air service, if and when this service offers an advantage, and from Karachi by Imperial Airways. The Dutch or the French air service is not used for despatch of air mails from India to countries west of Karachi except Persia. In the opposite direction the mails from Europe for India and Burma are dropped at Karachi. Mails from the east for Burma are unloaded at Rangoon or Akyab and for India at Calcutta

**Extract from page 56 of *India Post & Telegraph Guide for 1933*  
(British Museum, India Office Records V/25/760/38)**

One effect of this was that Air France was not allowed to carry airmail from India to France before World War II. My understanding is that airmail had to be franked with

British Indian stamps and posted at the local British Indian post office. The illustration on the next page is an example of such an item:



Cover from Pondicherry (French India) flown by Tata Sons Ltd from Madras to Karachi, by Imperial Airways to Paris  
 Postmarked Pondicherry 5 DEC.35 (the standard British Indian type) and Paris 16 DEC 35  
 Postage of 9½ annas comprises Ordinary (surface) postage of 3½ annas + air fee of 6 annas

The paragraphs quoted above do not specify that French India stamps were not valid for airmail, so one must turn to the cover evidence provided in the CD provided with Bob's

book "Postage and Airmail Rates in France & Colonies 1920-1945". Ignoring the Girier & Weiss flight, the following pre-War covers are listed:

Date	Sent from:	Sent to:	Postage	Route	Notes
290825	Yanaon	France	134ca (reg)	Karachi-London	
291126	Yanaon	France	132ca (reg)	Yanaon-Karachi-London cachet	"Philatelic contrivance"
301217	Chandernagor	Indochina	36ca		FFC - test flight
320314	Pondicherry	Sweden	50ca	Bombay-Karachi-Naples	+ 15.5a Br India postage
330822	Mahé	Brazil	72ca (reg)	Zeppelin	+ 6a Br India postage
330822	Mahé	Brazil	1R + 20c (reg)	Zeppelin	Old currency stamps
341206	Mahé	Switzerland	106ca (reg)		<i>affranchie par l'expéditeur</i>
350429	Karikal	France	20ca	Special flight (d'Estailleur-Chantereine)	No airmail surtax paid

Of these, only the two covers from Yanaon appear to be "ordinary" airmails (though the phrase "philatelic contrivance" used on the CD casts doubt even upon the second). Given the number of French nationals in the Establishments before the War and assuming that they would have wished to use French Indian stamps whenever possible, the

volume of mail sent must have been considerable. It seems to me highly likely therefore that French Indian stamps were not valid for airmail before World War II, thereby explaining why the Surtax was "unknown". Perhaps this article will precipitate further cover evidence to prove me wrong.

Jeffrey Brown is the author of two CD-Roms, "Indian Air Mails" and "Indian Air Mail Postage rates until 1956". Copies may be purchased from Jeffrey for £12.50 each, including P&P. All proceeds to the India Study Circle. Please contact him at [sedgewell@eclipse.co.uk](mailto:sedgewell@eclipse.co.uk)



# Postal Relationships between Belgian Congo and French Congo

## Part 2

Philippe Lindekens

[Reproduced in a slightly edited form by kind permission of the author, who is a member of the Belgian Congo Study Circle, and Stuart Smith, the Editor of the BCSC Bulletin, where it first appeared in 3 parts in 2010-2012.]

### Manuscript directed postal routes

#### France via Matadi and Antwerp



Figure 12

The cover illustrated above (Fig 12) was posted in Libreville on 9 October 1900 and identifies France as its final destination. It is manuscript directed "Via Matadi - Anvers" and there were two possibilities. The CMB (*Compagnie Maritime Belge*) paquebot 'Stanleyville' was scheduled to leave Matadi on 31 October 1900 and arrive in Antwerp

on 19 November. The French paquebot 'Ville de Maceio' was due to leave Matadi on 21 October and arrive in Bordeaux on 21 November. Franked correctly at 15c, the cover arrived at Plombières-les-Bains on 22 November, and with no Antwerp transit marks it is presumed it was conveyed on the French boat.

#### France via Matadi and Lisbon



Figure 13

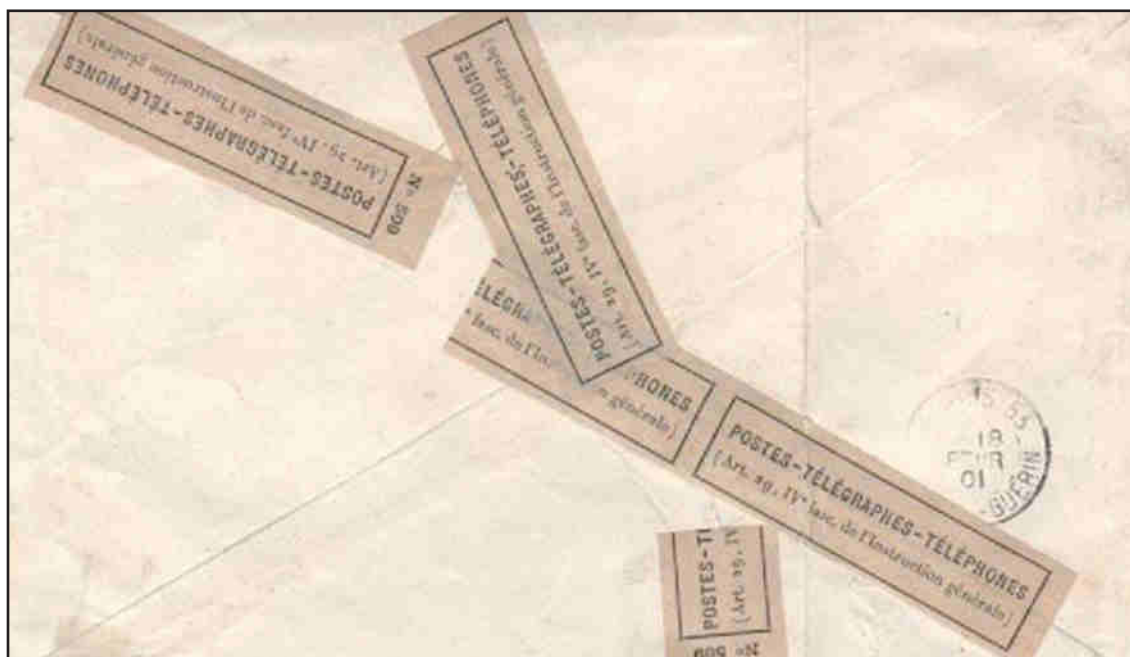


Figure 14 - Reverse of Figure 13

Here (Figs 13 and 14) we have a French colonial registered cover originating from Brazzaville on 19 January 1901 and directed “*Via Matadi Lisboa*”. It was franked 40c (15c postage + 25c registration) and arrived in Paris on 18 February. Once again there were two options available: use of the CMB *paquebot* ‘*Albertville*’ due to sail from Matadi on 28 January, or use of the next available Portuguese mailboat.

Interestingly a member of staff at the Brazzaville office

must have initially had doubts about the validity of the 25c registration fee if the letter was to be directed via a ‘foreign’ country. Apparently all was in order and the pen applied ‘crossed out strike’ of the registered stamp was reinstated by the application of a second boxed ‘R’ mark.

Furthermore it appears that the envelope seal either failed in transit or it was inappropriately opened. We will never know, but do know that it was resealed in Paris on 18 February.

#### Germany via Bordeaux



Figure 15

Figure 15 shows a postal stationery card written and posted in Matadi on 2 May 1897, addressed to Ottensen (Altona) in Germany where it arrived on 28 May.

Franked at 15c, it was directed “*via Bordeaux*” and on 6 May forwarded by a local coaster to Libreville to catch the

“*Ville de Maceio*” *paquebot* which sailed the following day (7 May) to Bordeaux where it arrived on 26 May.

It is worth noting that the first available Belgian ship was not due for Europe until the following month, 2 June!

Belgium via Bordeaux

Figure 16

Figure 16 is an illustrated card franked at the foreign rate of 15c and dated 31 August 1897 from Matadi to Schaerbeek (Brussels), Belgium, where it arrived in October (the exact date is illegible), passing through Boma on 1 September.

The writer requested/directed that it should travel "via Bordeaux" and the card would have been carried by a small local coaster to Libreville where it arrived on 6 September to connect with the French paquebot 'Ville de Pernambuco'. The ship sailed the following day and the correspondence

bears the 'Loango à Bordeaux LL N° 1' hexagonal cancel applied by the postal agent on board. It arrived at that destination on 30 September.

Along with most colonists, the writer would be familiar with sailing schedules and times, directing it by this route as the next Belgian paquebot 'Albertville' was not due to sail until 8 September. However the choice was not quite the best option as it would have travelled quicker with fewer ports of call on the 'Albertville'!



From Belgium via Bordeaux



Figure 17

Here (Fig 17) we have a double reply paid postal stationery card originating from Belgium and addressed to Matadi, unusually directed “via Bordeaux”.

It was sent from Bassins, Antwerp on 29 June 1893 to Matadi, passing through Banana (19 & 20 August) and Boma (22 August); but it didn’t arrive at its destination until 23

August (nearly 7 weeks later)

Why it was directed via Bordeaux is anyone’s guess. It was then conveyed by the *paquebot* ‘*Ville de Maranhao*’ of the ‘*Bordeaux à Loango*’ line and unloaded at Libreville on 14 August 1893 prior to onward forwarding by local coaster to Matadi.

*This article will be concluded in the next issue of the Journal.*



# **Cameroun 27.8.40 - the Displaced Overprint from Mbanga (1)**

Michel Collet



Figure 1

Cameroun 1940: displaced overprint "Cameroun Français 27.8.40" on blue 2F25 Elephants stamps, on cover – Positions 41, 42, 46, 47 (Bob Maddocks collection)

In Journal 261, Bob Maddocks showed a cover registered at Mbanga on 10 September 1941 and addressed to Postmaster Marcel Roblin, at Douala. It was (over)paid with a block of four 2F25 Elephants stamps, with the *Cameroun Français* 27.8.40 overprint markedly displaced to the right. Two of the four overprints run slightly onto the adjoining stamps (Figure 1).

As I had a similar registered cover addressed to Roblin, from Mbanga on the same date, with another displaced 2F25 overprint (Figure 2), a couple of questions arose: were the displaced overprints from the same sheet? How many of these clearly philatelic covers were registered at Mbanga?

The Elephants stamps were in sheets of fifty, and overprinted with the same setting: all fifty overprint positions can be individually identified. My stamp was overprint position 30; Bob's were positions 41, 42, 46 and 47. All five came from the lower half of the setting (positions 26-50).

I began by using the computer to "extract" these twenty-five overprint positions from a half-sheet. With the five stamps to hand, I was then able to determine and verify the degree of lateral displacement. The result is shown in Figure 3.

Two more Mbanga covers, with stamps from positions 43

and 44 respectively, later tallied with this reconstitution (Figures 4 and 5). Dudley Cobb informed me that a pair (positions 26-27) reproduced in Jean-Xavier Goetz's memoir (Ref 1) matched as well.

So, for my first question, the reconstitution confirmed that all nine stamps came from the lower half of the same sheet – something that was by no means self-evident, from the individual stamps alone – and that six of these twenty-five overprints run onto the adjoining stamps and can be said to straddle: at positions 26, 27, 31, 36, 41 and 46.

As for the second question, Bob's cover has R n° 457, and mine n° 474 (see Figure 2). Both were posted on the same day, and surely together. It is reasonable to think that quite a number of similar envelopes were sent on 10 September 1941, to Roblin (or other addressees), with stamps from the lower half of the sheet. In order to preserve the "straddling pairs" while making up as many philatelic covers as he could, the sender may have broken up the half-sheet into enough blocks, pairs and single stamps to make at least eighteen covers!

Stamps from the top half of this sheet, no doubt including some more straddling overprints, have yet to be traced.

My thanks to Bob Maddocks for relaunching this subject, and Dudley Cobb for documentation and comments.



Figure 2  
Cameroun 1940: displaced overprint "Cameroun Français 27.8.40"  
on blue 2F25 Elephants stamp used on cover – Position 30  
(Michel Collet collection)

## References

(1) *Histoire et philatélie au Cameroun Français, de 1940 à 1945*, unpublished memoir held by the library of the Musée de la Poste, Paris under reference Quarto 2995. It refers,

among many other things, to the displaced overprint on the 2F25 stamps, and was summarised by Dudley Cobb in *COL.FRA Bulletin n° 128*, June 2008





Figure 3

Reconstitution of lower pane of stamps with displaced overprint, enlarged 20%, with background lightened for easier reading



Figure 4  
Cameroun 1940: displaced overprint "Cameroun Français 27.8.40"  
on blue 2F25 Elephants stamp used on cover – Position 43  
(Dudley Cobb collection)



Figure 4  
Cameroun 1940: displaced overprint "Cameroun Français 27.8.40"  
on blue 2F25 Elephants stamp used on cover – Position 44  
(Dudley Cobb collection)





Figure 6

Lower pane of stamps with normal overprint, enlarged 20%, with background lightened for easier reading

## Cameroun 27.8.40 - the Displaced Overprint from Mbanga (2)

Dudley Cobb

The full set of 31 stamps, shown in Bob Maddocks' amusing article<sup>(1)</sup>, makes a fine sight. There are various souvenir covers, unaddressed, with this Douala date. They seem to be private initiatives, as opposed to the Spitfire Drive items (*Pour le Spitfire*) of the same period, in which the Post Office was to an extent involved. Postmaster Roblin's registered letters from Mbanga are likewise private initiatives.

The library at the Musée de la Poste in Paris holds an unpublished memoir by J-X Goetz<sup>(2)</sup>, a *gendarme* who served in the territory's police force during the Second World War. The lengthy typescript contains lively descriptions, often diverting and occasionally wrong-headed, of political and philatelic life in Douala at the time. A short summary was published some four years ago<sup>(3)</sup>.

Goetz recounts how this displaced overprint came into circulation, on 14 December 1940 (the margin pair illustrated in his memoir has a Douala Deido strike of that date). An overprinted sheet of blue 2F25 Elephants stamps, with this anomaly, was being sold at the counter of Douala central post office. Several customers had already bought a few of these stamps with the displaced overprint and the anomaly was noticed by chance when a native declined the stamp proposed by the native clerk, on the grounds that "it wasn't the same as the one he had been given earlier". Senior staff, when informed, did not halt sale at the counter because "it had already begun". The remainder of the sheet was sold off in a few seconds. (I give Goetz's account in his own way, as far as feasible.)

Interesting light thus falls on Roblin's registered envelopes. The stamps were not, it would seem, discovered at Mbanga by a kindly postmaster who "originated this cover by favour" for his superior in Douala. Apparently they were sold at the counter of Roblin's own post office – and as much as half the sheet, perhaps, ended up on envelopes addressed to him: envelopes which he quite probably made up, and sent, himself. Sent may not be quite the word: carried, or conveyed? As often, Bratzel<sup>(4)</sup> may help: "From the 1920s to the early 1960s, coastal watercraft were used to transport mail in closed bags between Douala in French Cameroun and Victoria/Tiko in the British Cameroons. Alternatively, mail...was transported by rail to Mbanga, then transferred to Nigerian postal authorities at Mundame, on the border, and vice versa" (my emphasis).

Did Roblin, in September 1941, accompany one such transport to confer with a British colleague, or at least go "on tour" to Mbanga? Did he, at Mbanga post office, neatly register and date stamp his envelopes? I hope so. Otherwise the postmaster there, his subordinate, was responsible for accepting a considerable number of underfranked letters. Let us consult Bratzel again<sup>(5)</sup>. At the relevant time a letter (0-20g) was rated 1 franc, with an additional 2 francs fee for registration. So on each registered envelope with a single displaced overprint, the shortfall to the post office was 75 centimes. Real favour treatment! But quite feasibly Roblin conveyed his own mail, in a closed (*attaché*) bag of his own, by the down train at midday, and by dusk had completed

the formalities of backstamping and censorship!

[Two "first day" covers with the Spitfire overprints seen in recent Paris sales (Roumet and FCNP-Feldman) show similar enterprise. One is to M. Sautot – also a postal official – at Mbanga, the other to M. Roblin at Douala. Both have the Spitfire Day cachet and censor marks, necessarily done at Douala, and appropriate cancels and arrival marks, all for 8 December 1940. The Sautot cover is not registered, but the Roblin one is – meaning a 1 franc shortfall to the post office.]

In 2009, when dealing with what Goetz classes as really displaced overprints (*surcharges vraiment décalées*) I noted that the overprint on the 2F25 Elephants is indeed displaced but, on the actual examples I had seen, did not cross the perforation. On the pair that Goetz illustrated, part of the N of CAMEROUN is on the margin of the next stamp. In the event of displacement, the irregular spacing within this setting would lead to straddling at some positions and not at others. Collet has in his article (pages 91-95) demonstrated straddling (it is minimal, frankly) on six of the twenty-five stamps from the lower half of the sheet.

In 1997 I had commented on straddling, not "merely in passing" but for each setting, and pointed out clearcut cases – uncatalogued – with the 25c Waterfall and 50c Rubber Tapping designs<sup>(6)</sup>. Thanks partly to J-X Goetz, a *displaced and inverted overprint* was reported in Ref 3, on the 2F25 New York World's Fair stamp.

Varying degrees of displacement can in fact be found with all six settings. For instance, I have seen blocks of Lamido's Wife values with slanting displacements such that some straddling must have occurred elsewhere in the same rows, on stamps that had been removed. It can come as no surprise that catalogues fail to record such anomalies, when more obvious ones in this issue go unmentioned and the 2c and 4c overprint trials are still listed as colour varieties.

This particular displacement was spotted back in 1940, described by Goetz, and reported in 2009 and again in 2011. Whether it amounts to a variety, notable or otherwise, is for collectors to decide. Will Roblin's enthusiasm at last prove contagious?

### Endnotes

- (1) R J Maddocks – "Free French Cameroun Definitive Overprints of 27.8.40", *F&CPS Journal* 261, September 2011.
- (2) J-X Goetz – unpublished memoir held by the library of the Musée de la Poste, Paris under reference Quarto 2995.
- (3) D R Cobb – "Jean-Xavier Goetz – Un Gendarme Philatéliste au Cameroun", *COL.FRA Bulletin* 128, June 2009.
- (4) M P Bratzel – "Railroads of Cameroun and Associated Postal History", 2009, ISBN 978-0-9694026-6-4. See page 72.
- (5) M P Bratzel – "Postal Tariffs of Cameroun under French Administration, 1916-1959", 2007, ISBN 978-0-9694026-4-0. See under "Domestic Letters, Registration...", page 12.
- (6) D R Cobb – "Cameroun: The 1940 Overprints", 1997, ISBN 2-9511613-0-1. See page 20.



## SHORTER ITEMS - INCLUDING QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

### French Naval Forces in the Borneo Area



Picture postcard written from Sandakan 29.11.34 to Brest cancelled by French steamer *Croiseur Primauguet* with military cachet in blue of 'Forces Navales Extrême Orient / Franchise Militaire'.  
French Forces serving in French Military Campaign in China 1920s-1945 received Free Franchise 24 June 1927.  
Mail postmarked on French naval vessels or on arrival in France with French Sea Post.

In the last Journal (N° 264 of June 2012, page iii) I requested help in finding details of visits to British Borneo by French vessels in the inter-war period. Although I was unable to illustrate the mail described in that query, I have been given notes by another Sarawak Specialists Society member concerning the card shown above, that may help in the search for information. He says:

"In 'A Chronology of French Military Campaigns & Expeditions with their Postal markings 1815-1983 by W M Waugh & S J Luft (my copy published 1984) it states:

*"1920s-1945 China – French river patrols continue until WWII & small French garrisons remain until 1945. There is an incident on the Yangtze in 1924,*

*French & British help restore order and shoot students at Canton 1925. In 1930 incidents in Szechuan involve French naval patrol.*

*"After closure of French post offices in China in 1922, mail from French soldiers & sailors frequently sent via the Chinese post office. Total franchise was granted in 1927, with franchise mail postmarked on French Sea-post or naval vessels or on arrival in France.*

"I think my card was sent by someone either being sent to China or on some sort of leave and his ship stopped off at possibly Sandakan for supplies, whereupon he sent my card to a friend/relative at home via the next French vessel returning to France."

Jeremy Dickson



## French Post Office in Tunisia – correction and addition



Further to my Tunisia article in the last issue of the Journal (pages 59-64), the following changes should be noted:

The caption to Fig 2 (illustrated above left) should read: “2nd weight step letter (10-20g) to Marseille, posted at the Consular Agency on 30 September 1866. Franked at 80c (pair Yv 23) tariff of 1 January 1866 for the pre-paid office

to office rate.”

And Fig 4 (the date stamp which is illustrated above right and is not on the cover in Fig 2) should have had the following caption: “On the reverse: cds of the military post office staging post in Marseille.” The Editor apologises for this omission.

Peter Maybury

## ROC Codes



This EMA (*Empreinte de Machine à Affranchir* or machine cancel) has the town coded as “LA POSTE ROC 41974A”. It is the first EMA I have seen in this format and the first time that “ROC” has appeared on a cancel. “ROC” is of course the acronym of “Référentiel des Organisations du Courrier”. The number 41974A that appears here is that of the PIC (*Plateforme Industrielle Courrier*) of Bois d’Arcy.

I do not wish to plague members with too many scraps of information on ROC codes, but they may like to know that the “Here, There and Everywhere” postal history blog reported on 29.01.09 that ROC codes were not definitely attributed, but could be moved by La Poste from one mail centre to another. I wonder if this is true. I would hope not because the situation is complicated enough already.

John Simmons

## British Stamp used in France



I just wondered whether fellow members might be interested in this envelope I received recently.

It was posted in Biarritz in July and clearly bears one 1st Class GB 2010 Christmas stamp!

John Patch

## German Date Stamp on French *Semeuse* Issue



Further to the articles concerning German military postmarks on French stamps by Stephen Roche in Journal 263 of March 2012 (p 30) and by Bill Mitchell in Journal 264 of

June 2012 (p 71), I can show this letter-card bearing a 10c Sower with a postmark of the 19. Armeekorps and a purple cachet of that unit — again, probably a looted souvenir!

Alan Wood

## The 1871-1876 Cérès Issue, Imperforate



Pictured are the two versions (perforated for use in France and imperforate for use in the Colonies) of this stamp, both first issued in 1872.

The imperforate stamp was purchased many years ago as a curiosity. It is not, I think, a trimmed perforated stamp and it cannot be a cut-out because Cérès did not appear on postal stationery. It will be noted, though, that it was cancelled in France, probably on arrival because it had escaped cancelling at the place of origin. The 384-in-lozenge cancel was allocated to a small village, Beaumont-du-Gâtinais in the extreme south-west of the Seine-et-Marne *département*, and the now-lost letter could have been written by a villager serving overseas. But could it have been used by him while at home on leave?

I have been told that it is believed that it may have been possible to use Colonies stamps in France, although the reverse (French stamps in the Colonies) was not permitted. Can anyone tell us whether this is correct, and if possible refer us to a published authority? (French stamps were used in a few colonies prior to the issue of the "Eagles" in 1859. According to the specialised listing of the General Issues in the Yvert Colonies catalogue for 2011 they were French Guiana, Guadeloupe, Martinique and Reunion; French stamps were also used briefly in Saigon in 1862-63.)

I can however say with confidence that it is not a used copy of the imperforate variety of the metropolitan stamp. Readers who rely on the Gibbons catalogue, which does not list imperforate varieties of this 1871-76 issue (SG 185-210, Yvert 50-60), may be unaware of their existence; maybe they will find the following notes interesting.

Their status remains somewhat uncertain. The earliest reference to them that I can find is in Arthur Maury, "*Histoire des Timbres-Poste Français*", published in 1907; he writes (page 321) that "*On connaît quelques séries [values?]*

*non-dentelées*". Pre-War Yvert Specialised catalogues say that the varieties may be distinguished from the Colonies stamps by the shades, which are in general paler than the issued stamps. They suggest that the stamps were printed for use in the Colonies but were never sent out (in which case they should surely be listed, if at all, under the General Issues), although they point out that one value, the 10 centimes *brun sur rose* with thin figures of value (SG 194, Yvert 58) was not sent to the Colonies.

Alternatively, they suggest that the imperforate stamps may simply be reprints. This explanation appears in the editions for 1929 (page 31), 1932 (page 68), 1936 (page 88) and 1939 (page 88). By the time of the only really satisfactory post-War edition (1975, page 169), Yvert was content just to list the stamps without comment, and this remains their practice in their current general catalogues.

The following is the complete list in the 2003 and 2012 editions:-

- 1c *vert-olive* (n° 50c)
- 2c *rouge-brun* (n° 51c)
- 4c *gris* (n° 52b)
- 5c *vert-jaune sur azuré* (n° 53d)
- 30c *brun* (n° 56b)
- 80c *rose* (n° 57c)
- 10c *brun sur rose, petits chiffres* (n° 58b)
- 15c *bistre, petits chiffres* (n° 59c)

The 25c (n° 60Ae) seems to have fallen by the wayside since 1975; to compensate, the 15c has been added. These imperforate varieties are all priced unused only; it is very doubtful whether any of them ever reached a post office counter. Readers may well consider that SG are right not to catalogue them.

Bill Mitchell

---

## Request for Exchange of Stamps

I have collected stamps of France and the world for many years. Now I am retired this hobby has become my main activity but my financial means do not allow me to invest in all the stamps that I would like to acquire. Despite email and machine cancellations, I think one needs to receive occasional mail with stamped envelopes. I would be grateful if it is possible to send me any of these stamps

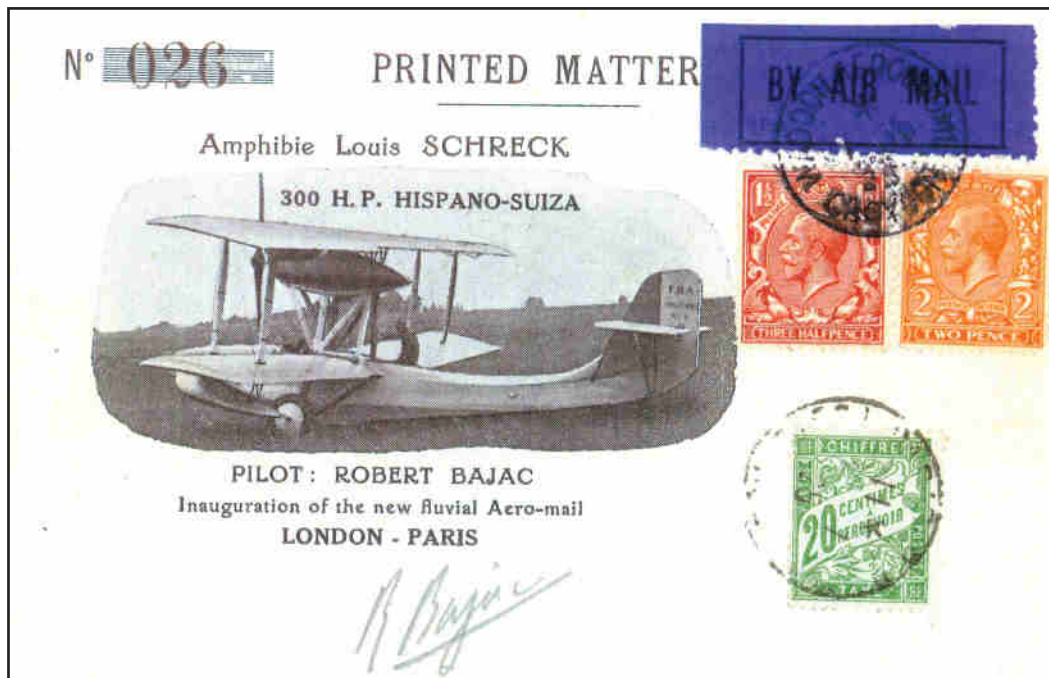
or stamped envelopes, whatever the country, slowly to add to my collection. However, if you are yourself a collector or if you know someone who is, I am quite willing to make exchanges by post because I have many stamps in multiple copies. Thanking you in advance: my address is:

16 rue du Bois, 78370 Plaisir, France.  
Email: hubertdaniel@neuf.fr

Daniel Hubert



## Inaugural Seaplane Flight 1925



This card was sent as printed matter on 1 July 1925 from London to Paris on an inaugural seaplane flight. The aircraft used was a 300 HP Hispano-Suiza biplane with floats as well as wheels. Bearing a blue airmail etiquette, the postage paid of 2d + 1½d showed a deficiency of 1d on the UPU rate (1 April 1924 - 16 July 1925) of 45c. Postage due of 25c was charged. The card was addressed to a Mr R Bajac, *Poste Restante*, Paris.

A circular date stamp of 1 July 1925 from the *Distribution* section at Paris is supplemented by another of 2 July from the *Poste Restante* section. Thanks to Ashley Lawrence I find that on p 322 of “*100 Ans de Poste Aérienne en France 1870-1969*” by Saulgrain, Ed. Roumet, there is an entry for 30 June 1925 – “Paris - London piloted by R Bajac” – noting that of 215 covers 40 were signed by the pilot. It seems that here he was sending himself a souvenir of the historic flight!

Alan Wood

## Red Cross Overprints on 10c Sower



SG 228 (thin figures)



SG 333 (thick figures)  
with 1913 date stamp

In a recent acquisition of a world-wide collection were 24 copies of what appeared to be SG 351 used. When these were displayed at the Wessex Group meeting it was noted that not all the Red Cross overprints were on the 1907 10c Sower but some (3 out of the 24) were on the 1906 issue. Ashley Lawrence assures me that this issue was not used for this purpose.

On further examination it was found that one stamp has a dated postmark of 1913! As the charity stamp was not

issued until 11 August 1914 this must be a fake unless the date stamp was incorrect.

In his work on “*Fakes and Forgeries of 20th Century French Postage Stamps*” Dr Geoff Gethin refers to the fantasies of inverted, double and misplaced overprints on the 10c Sower but does not draw attention to simple fakes produced by adding the overprint to common used 10c Sowers to produce items catalogued by SG as SG 351 at £6.50 used.

Alan Wood

## Interzone Cards and Postage Due

Figure 1

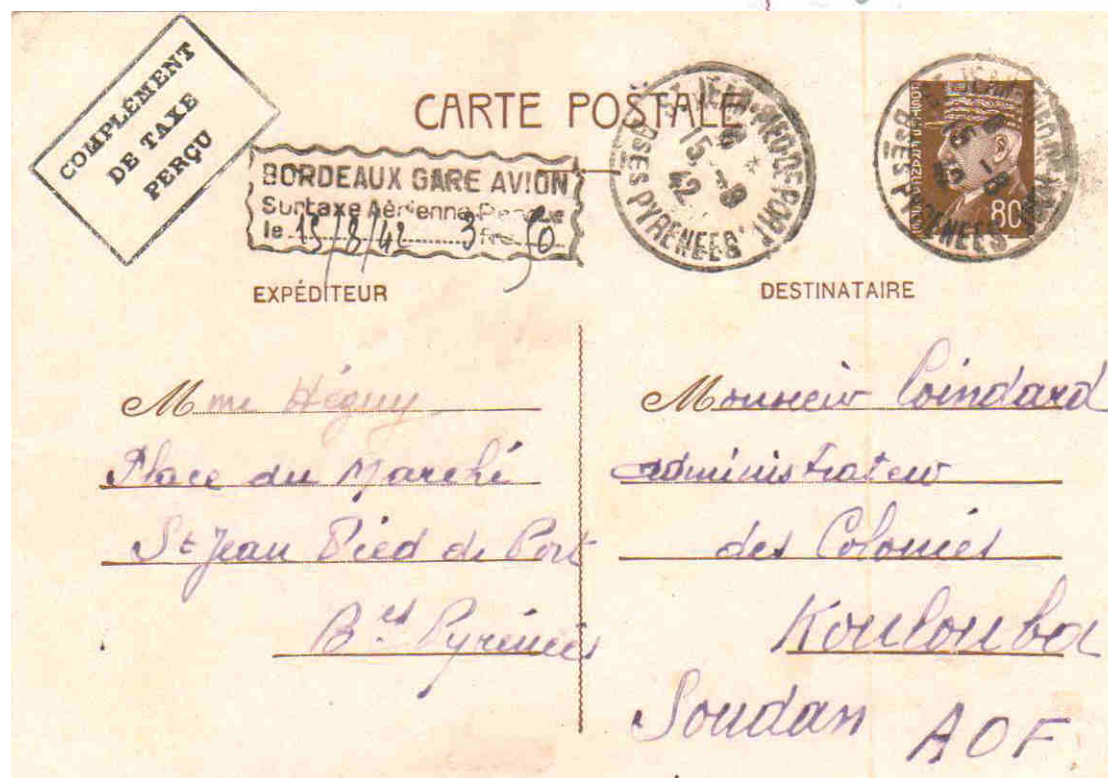
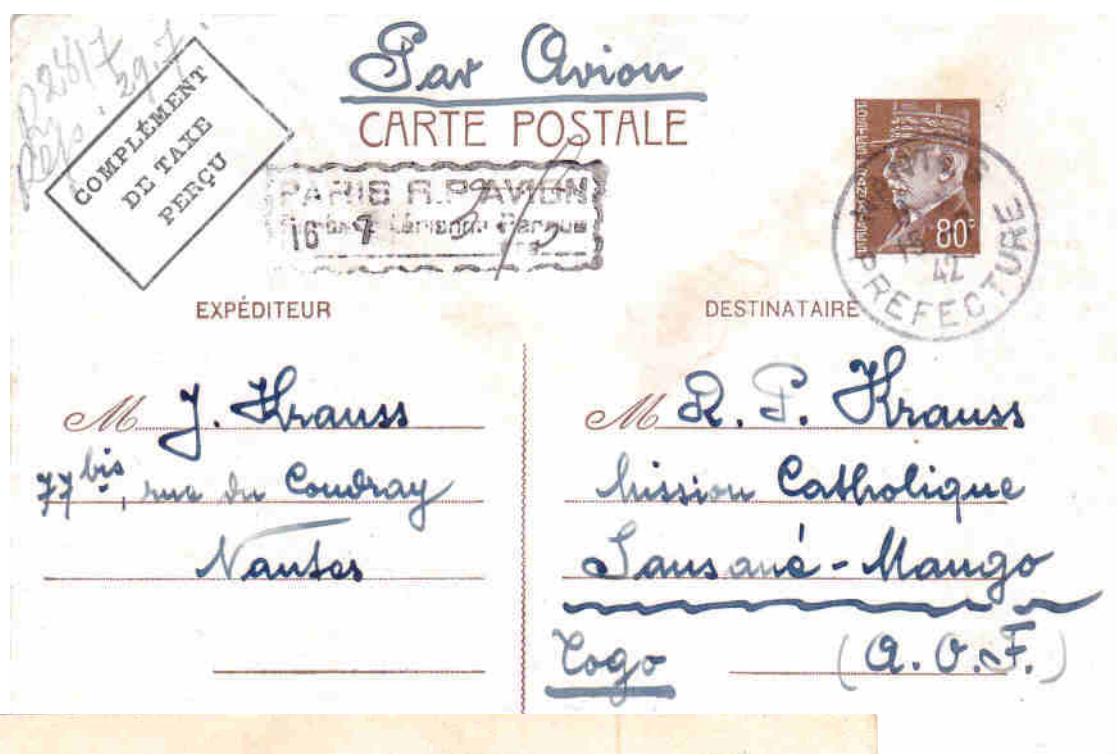


Figure 2

Following on from Roy Reader's article in Journal 264 (pages 70-71), it appears that even after interzone cards at the new rate of 1F20 were made available (the first I have seen are from June 1942), there were still stocks of 80c cards to be used up. The French Post Office appears to have solved this problem by overprinting them (or applying a cachet, I can't tell which) 'COMPLÈMENT DE TAXE PERÇUE' and, presumably, selling them at 1F20. This can be seen on Fig 1, a card from Nantes to Sansanne Mango in Togo, cancelled 16 July 1942, and Fig 2, a card from St Jean Pied-de-Port in Basse-Pyrénées to Koulouba in French Sudan, cancelled 15 August 1942.

Or possibly the cachet was applied after the written postcard had entered the postal system: both of these cards had to be taken to the post office so that the airmail fee could be paid. Fig. 1 was also registered, and the payment for this was acknowledged in pencil in the top left-hand corner. The payment of the airmail fee was not acknowledged at the office of posting, but at the central clearing office for interzone cards – Paris for the northern region and Bordeaux for the Atlantic region (Ref 1) – with a cachet with handwritten date and amount, so possibly the acknowledgement that the balance of the postage had been paid was also applied there.



Presumably all the interzone cards were sent together with documents from the office of posting detailing the amounts paid. If anyone has any documents or references detailing the exact procedures, I should be most interested.

**Ref 1:** Pierre Salanne & Bertrand Sinais, "Les Cartes Inter-Zones", in Sinais' Auction Catalogue N° 64, 19 October 2007, pp 178 - 183. My thanks are due to Peter Richards for permission to illustrate his card, Fig 1.

Barbara Priddy

### Philatelic Cover with Many Postmarked Stamps but No Address



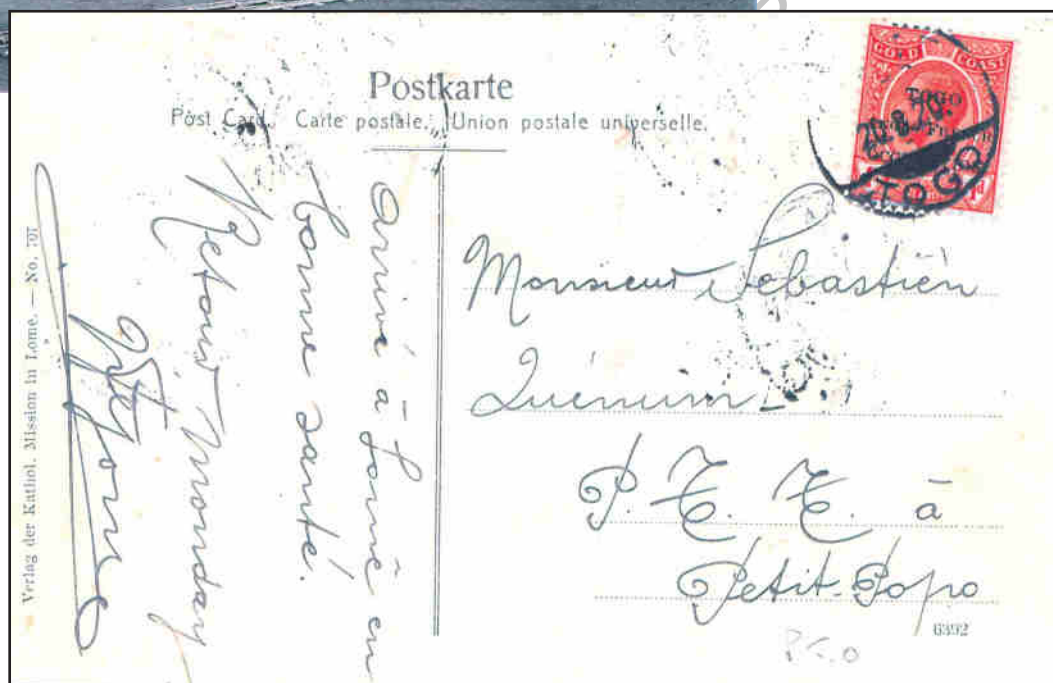
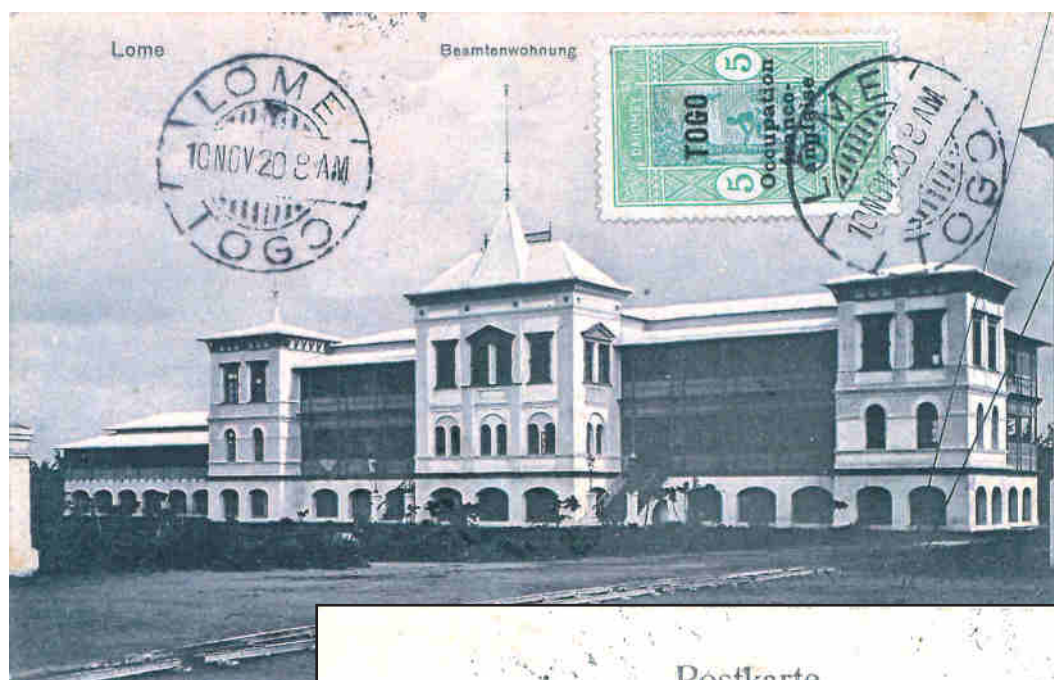
The front of this cover is virtually covered in stamps as you see and the back has two rows of stamps. There is no apparent room for an address on the front and no indication of an address anywhere. The stamps are cancelled, rather crudely, with an Alger cancellation dated 14 -2 24.

Unfortunately the envelope has been folded although not through any of the stamps. Has any member any idea what this could be? I wonder if it is a purely philatelic item but, if so, why has it not received rather more care than folding it in half?

Howard Fisher



## Togo Postcard with British and French Stamps



At first glance this Togo picture postcard seemed of little interest but proved otherwise.

The message, in French, reads 'Arrived at Lomé safe and sound, return Monday' (the day in English), and is undated but signed. The number of words is over five. Lomé was in the British sector on 20 August 1920 and it is addressed to Petit Popo in the French sector.

Postage of 1d is paid, the card being treated as mail to a foreign country, although it could be argued that postage of ½d is due with both Lomé and Petit Popo in Togo, the former in the British sector at this time and Petit Popo in the French. However, the situation changed with effect from 1 October 1920 when both towns were under French control.

The card has a Togo French Occupation 5c value on the face. The French internal postcard rate in 1920 was 15c for a message over five words. On 10 November 1920, the

date of the second cancel, 15c was payable. The French adhesive is cancelled by the Lomé cancel introduced by the British, incorporating the time of posting — a cancel not often seen on this issue.

I conclude that someone realised 15c was payable, and treated the 1d Gold Coast overprint as the equivalent of 10c (which it was approximately) and, with the card delayed in the post office system, took the view that postage was correctly paid in August 1920, but as delivery had not been made simply added an additional 5c to meet the current correct rate, the post office paying the extra.

Comments from members will be welcomed, particularly thoughts as to full details of the addressee, not previously seen by me. Who were PEE, or is this a government body? Many thanks.

[I think the initials in the address are in fact an elaborate manuscript version of PTT or the Post Office. — Editor.]

John Mayne

## Green Leaves

Readers will have noted that the current 20g ECOPLI definitive is no longer green but grey. The change is due to one of La Poste's recent inventions, a new ECOLOGY tariff, effective from 01.10.2011 and served by 4 GREEN TVPs.

The GREEN letter travels by road and/or rail but definitely not by air with the exception of mail to Corsica and Andorra. Hence, compared with the PRIORITY letter the new GREEN service is both slower and cheaper, whereas it is quicker and more expensive than the ECOPLI:-

ECOPLI 01.07.2011			
20g	50g	100g	250g
0,55€	0,78€	1,00€	1,80€

Delivery: 4 days minimum

GREEN 01.10.2011			
20g	50g	100g	250g
0,57€	0,95€	1,40€	2,30€

Except for the 20g weight step the tariff is that of PRIORITY letter 01.07.2010

Delivery: 2 days maximum

PRIORITY 01.07.2011			
20g	50g	100g	250g
0,60€	1,00€	1,45€	2,40€

Delivery: Following day

John Simmons

## BOOKSHELF

Continued from page 79

### Books Noted

*Catalogue des timbres fiscaux et vignettes fédérales de pêche, un siècle de cartes de pêche* by Jean-Jacques Barthélémy, Daniel Spano & Yves Morelle; pub. SFPF; 200pp A4, 200 illustrations in colour; price 68€ (inc p&p for France); available from Daniel Spano, SFPF, 11 rue de la Sablière, Domaine de l'Épine, 91760 Itteville. [Complete view of fiscal stamps and federal vignettes of fishing, and fishing licences and cards in use since 1911, with relevant history and values.]

*Histoire postale du Tarn* by J H Boussac & G Cabayé; price 30€ (inc p&p for France); available from J H Boussac, chemin de Montplaisir, 81100 Castres; . [About 100pp covering all aspects of the postal history of this département.]

*Timbres à date du département de l'Aube de 1884 à nos jours* by Daniel Collot, Gabriel Dutripon, Jean-Jacques Fricot, Alain Hurpét & Jean Rovéa; 280pp A4, partly illustrated in colour; price 68€ +p&p; available from Société Phi-

latélique de l'Est, BP 80006, 10001 Troyes Cedex; . [Full details of date stamps of this département and offices that used them.]

*Les Campagnes du timbre antituberculeux français du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle Vol 2 (1945-1969)* by Lucien Coutan & Philippe Steff; richly illustrated; price 49€90; available from Yvert & Tellier, 2 rue de l'Étoile, 80094 Amiens Cedex 3. [Detailed catalogue of anti-TB stamps from this period.]

*Répertoire des oblitérations des bases aériennes (1955-2012)* by Capitaine (cr) Alain Devornique of the Association nationale des officiers de Réserve de l'Armée de l'Air; b&w photos; details from the author, ANDRA secteur 640 Ain Rhône Loire, Cercle de garnison, Quartier général Frère, 22 avenue Leclerc, 69363 Lyon Cedex 07. [Listing of the cancellations and illustrated temporary postal cachets of the French Air Force postal agencies during this period.]

Maurice Tyler

## REPORTS OF MEETINGS

### MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF 12 MAY 2012

The President, John West, opened the meeting held at the Calthorpe Arms public house, 252 Gray's Inn Road, London WC1, at 11.30am in the presence of 22 members.

**(1) Members present:** Maurice Alder, Len Barnes, Mick Bister, Godfrey Bowden, Richard Broadhurst, D J Chalcraft, Steve Ellis, Michael Ensor, Michael Fairhead, R Ferguson, John Hammonds, Tom Harrison, Chris Hitchen, Peter Kelly, Tony Merson, Derek Richardson, Michael Round, Colin Spong, Maurice Tyler, John West, Alan Wood, Bob Wood.

**Guests:** Marian Bister, Annette Tyler.

**Apologies for absence:** Philip Mackey, Bill Mitchell, Robert Small, Iain Stevenson, John Thorpe.

**(2) Minutes of the previous AGM** of 7 May 2011, published in Journal 261, were accepted unanimously as a true record of that meeting. This was proposed by Mick Bister and seconded by Len Barnes.

#### **(3) President's Report - John West**

"As your incoming President, I had the daunting task of following in the footsteps of Mick Bister. For some, who may feel it is necessary to leave a 'legacy', change is the imperative. For me, a great believer that "If it ain't broke don't try and fix it", I shall be content to see our great Society sail smoothly forwards without any interference from myself. To a mere stamp collecting mortal like myself this would have been an extremely intimidating role to undertake had it not been for the support of a dedicated and knowledgeable committee who have assisted me to make the transition into this position. I am also heartened by the evidence of (relatively) younger members who have volunteered to take on important roles for the Society. Steve Ellis (auction) and Richard Broadhurst (publications) are just two notable examples.

"The Society continues to go from strength to strength by publishing works of international importance in recent years. Not only does this increase the status of the Society in the philatelic community but it is providing us with income that assists to keep our subscriptions at a moderate level. I can tell our members that we are optimistic that yet another blockbuster is poised to burst onto our Christmas list later this year.

"On the inevitable sad note, the space taken up in our excellent Journal by obituaries appears to have increased during the past year. We bade farewell to such luminaries as Dr Ian McQueen, David Lamb, David Jennings-Bramley (who introduced me to the Society 35 years ago!), Bryan Wood, Alan Ketchell and, on a personal note, Ken Pye and Colin Wenborn. I am certain to have omitted one or two and for that I apologise.

"Our annual convention was, once again, a resounding success. Surely Messrs Kelly and Hitchen cannot improve upon the quality of this year's displays in 2013? The popularity of this event is reflected in the increase in numbers attending year on year and my thanks go to Peter and Chris

for their – not insignificant – efforts to ensure the smooth running of this event.

"The improvements in printing technology and, notably, advances in colour printing have ensured that our splendid Journal remains at the forefront in this field. I am certain that we all appreciate the time and hard work that Maurice devotes to these productions, ensuring that the Society members are regularly provided with high quality works of reference. Auction sales have been sustained – should I say underpinned? – by material originating from the estate of Messrs Levett, Gethin and Whitelock in recent months but I must take this opportunity to pay my own debt of thanks to Mike Bister for the inordinate amount of work he has put in on our behalf to make the auctions the success that they are. In so saying I am not ignoring the help and assistance provided by John Hammonds in recent times. On behalf of the Society, may I thank you both? It would also be remiss of me to conclude without acknowledging the work of yet another unsung hero, Bob Wood, who stepped in to take over the France packet section and has ensured that our members will still benefit from the opportunity to examine top quality material in the comfort of their own homes. Thanks Bob.

"So, as I take my faltering first steps into the second year of my Presidency, my instincts tell me that little requires to be changed and to outward appearances anyway, the F&CPS is flourishing and can confidently look forward to the future. I thank everyone for their support and hope that you all continue to find that elusive philatelic item that you have been seeking for so long!"

#### **(4) General Secretary's Report - Peter Kelly**

"This year the Membership Secretary's and the General Secretary's reports are combined.

"Firstly, membership. During 2011, sadly, we lost 10 members, some of whom, as the obituaries have shown, have made a considerable contribution to the Society over the years. A further 11 resignations and 5 suspensions for non-payment of subscriptions were offset by 20 new members. Total membership has fallen by 6 to 382. This comprises 314 UK members and 68 non-UK. Once again, thanks are due to Derek Richardson for his work in maintaining our database.

"Moving on to the Society's year, 2011 has been an active and successful one. The four members' groups, London, Southern, Northern and Wessex have met regularly and their activities have been recorded in the Journal. Our philatelic weekend at Charlecote was well attended and we saw some brilliant displays. Stephen Holder's Bastille Day meeting has also been reported and was, once again, a great success.

"All of the services offered to members have operated smoothly during the year. The two packets in the capable hands of our President John West and of Bob Wood and our regular auctions run by Mick Bister, ably assisted by John Hammonds have provided a valuable service to both



vendors and buyers. We should not forget that we have benefited considerably from donations of material from past members as has been mentioned in previous reports.

"George Barker reports slightly better use of the library during the year and has confirmed that he will continue as librarian for the time being. More recently he has advised us of his intention to produce a new library list that will be accessible on the website in due course.

"David Pashby continues to run the magazine circuit and there is no better way of learning about France and French philately than reading *Timbres* and *Echo* on a regular basis through the circuit.

"The sales of brochures and publications have been very strong during the year with a higher demand for Bob Picirilli's airmails book than we had forecast, to the extent that we have had to have two reprints. Towards the end of the year, Derek Richardson's latest edition of his rates book was published and the proceeds of this will largely fall into next year's accounts. We have to thank Derek for his great generosity in donating all of the sale proceeds to the Society. Peter Maybury has worked hard on these projects and we thank him for his efforts. He has now resigned from this post and has been replaced by Richard Broadhurst.

"The Treasurer's report shows a small loss for the year ending 31.12.2011 but we remain in a strong financial position. The draconian increase in postage rates, one of our principal expenses, will require us to make additional provision for this as will be outlined by Chris Hitchen in his report.

"Overall, then, the picture of the Society is one of robust health, but we do need to look to the future with a degree of caution. Of particular concern is the future of the Journal. Maurice Tyler, our editor has, as has been reported, trouble with his eyesight and he does need to have a helper NOW to train up for the future. It is unrealistic to consider that he can continue for ever!

"Our President has already referred to new arrivals on and assisting the Committee and we are grateful to Steve Ellis, Richard Broadhurst and Paul Watkins for stepping up. There are many ways in which members can play a part in running our Society and if you have a little time to spare and believe in what the Society is trying to achieve, do have a word with one of our Officers. One of the areas where help is needed is in running an expanded and more interesting web site."

#### **(5) Treasurer's Report - Chris Hitchen**

"I must start with an apology. It was only recently when putting together the figures for 2011 that I realised that I made a silly slip a year or so ago and misallocated some subscriptions to the wrong year. Subscriptions due in January begin to arrive in December and some £xxx received on 23 December 2010 should have gone into 2011 not 2010. That does not alter the underlying finances but bear it in mind when comparing 2011 and 2010.

"This year we made a small loss. The latest edition of Derek Richardson's rates book was published towards the year end and the cost taken into 2011. Sales have been far better than anyone had dared hope and the good income

from that will fall into 2012. The other significant change in expenditure was the increase in our postage bill which went up by some £xxx.

"The auction again produced a very good performance and the packets continued their excellent record. Sales of our publications carried on steadily and produced a healthy income. Subscriptions maintained the levels of previous years, after allowing for my mistake.

"The change in postage rates recently announced by Royal Mail gives us considerable problems because we have no alternative to distributing the Journal except by post. UK increases are high but the foreign ones are quite eye watering with some European ones going up by more than half. To put matters in context the cost of the Journal and its distribution to UK members was between £15 and £16 per issue in 2011 so we do unfortunately need to make increases in 2013. For comparison most specialist societies in the UK have subscriptions around the £20 mark at the moment and that will probably change once they have considered these postage increases. I would recommend that the subscription rates for 2013 should be set at:

UK	£18.00
Europe	£26.00
Rest of World	£30.00

"I appreciate that these are quite high increases but do feel that they are necessary for us to maintain our current standards. The society will still remain very good value for the services provided to members."

*[See the balance sheet on the next page.]*

Acceptance of the accounts as presented, including the increase in subscriptions to the amounts mentioned, was proposed by John Hammonds and seconded by Richard Broadhurst. There was a unanimous vote in favour of these proposals.

#### **(6) Auction Secretary's Report - Mick Bister**

"Despite the fact that John Hammonds and I managed to run only three auctions instead of four as in the previous year we can be justifiably pleased with the financial outcome. In 2010 the four auctions and the Charlecote bourse created a surplus of £xxx. This year's three auctions and the bourse created a surplus of £xxx which proportionately is a much better result. However, the decline in the number of participants continues.

"Although the quality of material received for the auctions has been generally very high the number of vendors has dropped yet again. In the May auction for example only twelve members contributed to the 492 lots of which 55% came from the collections of late members John Levett, Ray Whitelock and Geoff Gethin. It is rather sad that we have to rely so heavily on such sources.

"The number of members participating in the auction likewise remains low varying between only 15% and 20% of the membership. Similarly, the quantity of lots purchased is gradually falling with between 55% and 61% of the lots being sold. One item, the 50F Plane over Paris fetched £xxx in the May auction, which although the highest price for a lot for some years it was still a bargain for its lucky buyer. Fortunately, lots fetching prices like this compensate for the reduced number of bidders.

**FRANCE & COLONIES PHILATELIC SOCIETY  
BALANCE SHEET AT 31 DECEMBER 2011**

CURRENT ASSETS

Cash at bank  
Cash at building society  
Sundry debtors

**2011****2010**DEDUCT CURRENT LIABILITIES

Sundry creditors  
Subscriptions in advance

TOTAL ASSETS

Represented by

MEMBERS FUNDS

Uncommitted funds at 1.1.2012  
Year loss (2010 surplus)

**INCOME & EXPENDITURE 2011**Expenditure**2011****2010**

Meetings  
Journal 4 issues  
Postage and expenses  
Insurance  
Library  
Year loss (2010 surplus)

Income**2011****2010**

Auction  
Exchange packet  
Interest  
Sale of publications  
Donations  
Subscriptions

"The Bookstall and Bourse at Charlecote remain a popular diversion at the Annual Weekend. Although in 2011 the profits were lower than usual, the stall provides a useful means of disposing of unwanted material and finding bargains. It has become an integral part of the weekend's events and we should not put the profits gained above the pleasure it gives to the attending members. Thank you again to the Charlecote ladies for the time and effort they devote to running the stall. I am sure they would much prefer listening to the speakers and discussing the finer points of the displays!

"Once again, I wish to thank Alan Wood who has been wielding the gavel in the room sales since I became auction secretary in 1996. His speed of execution can be breathtaking and I am sure it will be no exception this afternoon as he persuades us to share between us the entire 511 lots on offer. Synchronise your stop watches now! I am equally grateful to John Hammonds who since 2006 has taken on the responsibility of the first sale of each year. His proficiency in Works and Excel leaves me in awe. I could not have coped without the support of these two stalwarts of our Society.

"I cannot believe that when I took over fifteen years ago I regularly ran four auctions a year single-handedly supported

by technology no more advanced than a type-writer and a carbon invoice book, and a trip into town was needed each time a photocopy was required. Efficiency was certainly improved by my acceptance of IT but I nevertheless realised that if I were to avoid turning Marian into a divorce-seeking stamp-widow I would have to reduce the number of sales. There are other reasons though for having only two or three sales a year. Firstly, with the number of vendors falling, the quantity of material is no longer available to fill four catalogues. Secondly, members have only so much to spend on their collections and their budgets often cannot stretch to more than a couple of sales a year in addition to commercial auction houses that they have access to. Thirdly, there are increasing opportunities on the internet for our members to sell and buy. I think we have to accept that fewer sales will become the norm.

"At last year's AGM it was announced that Steve Ellis had volunteered to take over from me this year. In the hope that this report has not dissuaded him from doing so I ask that you give your full support in electing him to this office and I wish him as much enjoyment and satisfaction as I have gained in the post of Auction Secretary. As I said last year, I can retire in the knowledge that the auction will be in safe hands."





“As usual I have been able to publish a satisfying number of articles by both members and non-members. My stockpile is shrinking, however, and I am actively seeking new ones to fill the pages, particularly from a few members who have promised but not yet delivered. I am nevertheless very grateful to those who have already come up with enough material to serve our needs for most of this year. Articles on stamps would be specially welcome, but I am happy to consider any suitable topic.

### France and Colonies Colonial Packet accounts 1 January to 31 December 2011

#### Income

Balance b/f from 31 Dec 2010

Receipts from members

2011

Commission on sales

Insurance recovered

Postages recovered

Balance due to vendors \_\_\_\_\_

Total receipts 2011

Bank interest

#### Expenditure

Payments to vendors

Expenses

Surplus 2011 paid to Treasurer

Creditors:

Money received for  
booklets not brought  
to account

Retained interest

Surplus 2011 due to Treasurer

"During 2011 the Journal appeared four times as usual and amounted to a total of 168 pages (160 last year) of which 124 inside pages were in full colour (102 last year). The total cost of producing it, including expenses, but not those of distribution (i.e. postage and packing), has just begun to creep over £xxx. I am delighted to report that the quality of articles submitted has remained at a high level.

"I continue to keep the website up to date to the best of my limited ability, but I am still hoping that a member will come forward with the willingness to take this task on."

"My eyesight has unfortunately not improved and, as reported last year, I may have to relinquish the post of editor within the next couple of years for this reason. In the meantime I will continue to do what I can, but at a slower pace. Once again I would like to appeal to any member who feels he or she might like to consider the possibility of taking over this role to contact me as soon as possible. As I have already indicated, it needs someone with moderate computing skills, but I can make the appropriate software available and offer full training in using it to any volunteer who is willing to experiment with this task."

#### (10) Librarian's Report - George Barker

"I am pleased to report that the Library has been in much greater demand in this last year, with, in particular, considerable interest by some of the newer members of the Society. Loans totalled 47 (2010: 16) though photocopies were little in demand 4(8). I also received a visit from a relatively local member, which provided a pleasant occasion. I remind members that they can always come here to Bradford if they can conveniently reach me, and overnight accommodation is also available.

"I have [at last!] begun work on the updated Library List, and propose to prepare this as a Microsoft 'Word' docu-

ment, that can be placed (for access) on the Society's website, and can also be printed out as required, for those who do not have Internet access. I suggested this to Maurice, as it would relieve him of the task of preparing it for publication, but I have not had any communication from the Committee regarding this suggestion. Kindly discuss!"

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

"A rising deficit forced me to raise the subscriptions to £x per magazine when they fell due in December. I crossed my fingers that not too many people would drop out because it was becoming too expensive (making it even harder to balance the accounts). Nobody did, but one subscriber has given notice that he is not going to renew next year.

"So this year I have paid the publishers and the post office and have reduced the deficit from £x to £x. Satisfactory, but now I am waiting to learn what each magazine is going to cost to post as from 30 April. At the time of writing, it costs £xx per magazine, but from next Monday?..."

"There has been one death on the circuits this year, and one new subscriber. There are just eight or nine people on each circuit. When I took over these circuits in 1976, there were 18 or 19. So new members are always welcome. Don't remember much French from schooldays? Well, perusal of these magazines can help enormously, even technical language can become familiar.

"I only had to write to the publishers once this year, to request a replacement for one number that didn't arrive. So I got a bit of practice in writing French too. The other subscribers to these magazines are not called upon to do likewise. Reading, learning from them, and enjoying them is all that is asked for."

*[The accounts for the Magazine Circuit appear on the next page.]*

**FRANCE & COLONIES - MAGAZINES**  
**Accounts for year ending 31 March 2012**

**RECEIPTS****2012****2011**

12 Subs @ )

6 Subs @ )

1 Sub @)

**Total**

Less loss carried from previous year

**TOTAL****EXPENDITURE**Sub to *Tiinbres* (2 copies) 1 Feb 2012:Sub to *l'Echo* (2 copies) 15 Mar 2012:

Postages

**TOTAL****ASSETS AND RECEIPTS**less **EXPENDITURE****LOSS to carry to following year**

**Business Deposit Account: This contains £ not included in the above.**  
**£ are a float deposited by the Organiser**

**13) Election of Officers and Committee**

The list of those willing to serve as Officers and Committee Members had been published in the Agenda and their election *en bloc* was proposed by Alan Wood, seconded by John Hammonds and passed unanimously:

President:	Mr J C West
General Secretary:	Mr P R A Kelly
Membership Secretary:	Mr P S Watkins
Treasurer:	Mr C J Hitchen
Librarian:	Mr G E Barker
Editor:	Mr M S Tyler
Auction Secretary:	Mr S R Ellis
Packet Secretary (France):	Mr R G E Wood
Packet Secretary (Colonies):	Mr J C West

**Committee Members:**

Mr L H Barnes  
 Mr M L Bister  
 Mr R N Broadhurst  
 Mr A J Lawrence  
 Mr J Parmenter  
 Mr C W Spong

The position of Vice-President remained a vacancy and would be considered by the Committee at a later date.

For information: Group Convenors are Mr L H Barnes (London), Mr C W Spong (Southern), Mr C S Holder (Northern), Mr P R A Kelly & Mr A J Wood (Wessex).

**(14) Any Other Business**

None.

**PRAK / MST**


---

## **WESSEX GROUP MEETING OF 30 JUNE 2012**

### **John West: French Red Cross Members' Choice**

We were honoured by a visit of our President **John West** and his wife Chris. John provided the main morning display when he showed aspects of the history and postal history of the Red Cross in France. He started by giving a background to the foundation of the Red Cross following Henry Dunant's experiences at the battle of Solferino. John then followed this by an outline of the different French bodies who worked separately but in parallel that constituted the Red Cross. All of these elements were evident in the wide-ranging and beautifully presented display covering all the Red Cross issues, ancillary documentation, correspondence with the central Red Cross agency, labels, Delandre items and much more. The presentation was not only of great interest but also visually superb.

After our usual excellent lunch at the Old Mill we returned to the Scout Hut for members' displays:

**George Nash:** Mail from France to the Red Cross in London and an enquiry reply form;

**Peter Kelly:** The *Passe Partout* postcards of the Universal Paris Exhibition of 1900, comprising a set of postcards with a ticket attached which could be used to visit various events at a reduced price;

**Chris Hitchen:** Various French postal products which he had obtained at the French National at Vincennes this year;

**Ingrid Swinburn:** A selection of WWII military mail and other items including suspended mail, POW, surcharged and returned mails, occupation of Germany after the war;



**Alan Wood:** New acquisitions including some pre-stamp mail, a 1925 sea plane cover from Paris to London and Pétain forgeries and specimen stamps;

**John Scott:** Engraved stationery;

**Claire Scott:** A selection from her Stampex exhibition, the Wounded Soldier;

**Bob Paterson:** 1938 Cérès, concentrating on WWII material;

**Brian Weeks:** East African airmails during WWII, covering the blockade of Djibouti, Madagascar and Réunion.

Our next meeting will be on 6 October when our member Robert Johnson will show "Suspended mail – The effect of War and civil commotion on mails to and from France."

PRAK / AJW

---

## NORTHERN GROUP MEETING OF 14 JULY 2012

### "Bastille Day"

Members were welcomed to Heaton Royds by Stephen and Judith Holder for the 21st and what they have decided will be the very last Bastille Day meeting in its traditional all-day format. A good variety of material was on display, starting with this morning session:

**Mike Rego** opened the day with a selection of stamps and covers illustrating the many Paris District offices and some of the changes which took place in their names and locations.

**John Smith** displayed 'Flying down to Buenos Aires,' detailing the philatelic aspects of an airmail service from France via Morocco to South America by Latécoère, Aéro-postale and Air France.

**John Hammonds** showed the Lyon Aviation Meeting at Bron in May 1910, whose 16 entrants included Maurice Noguès, the founder of Air Orient.

**Mavis Pavey** displayed examples of *poste restante* mail to France from various countries as well as France itself, beginning with 2 items from England in 1833 and 1857 and a formula card with a *Paris Poste Restante* date stamp of 1876, and including various items from France, Hungary, Netherlands and Czechoslovakia, showing the fees charged as well as other marks on the earlier mail.

**Maurice Tyler** showed a variety of privately printed FM postcards of WWI that were intended for advertising products or for propaganda.

**Richard Wheatley** (former member and visitor from Bradford PS) displayed French WWI censor marks on mail to and from the Dutch East Indies, including the oval "Ouvret" cachets for Marseille (on mail to Switzerland), Dieppe (on mail to Holland) and Pontarlier (mail destined for Switzerland). One British soldier with the BEF even found time to write to a relative in Batavia, but a letter in the other direction to a translator with the BEF in France could not be delivered – one could guess why!

**Steve Ellis** showed a study of all aspects of French railway postal history taken from the Besançon to Bourg-en-Bresse branch line, including illustrations of the station buildings.

**Mick Bister** showed the Joseph de la Nézière issues of Senegal, explaining the significance of the designs, the association between the issues and the postal rates and examples of postal usage.

**George Barker** showed a display of interesting mail between France & GB which he had shown by invitation in the Académie display at the recent French exhibition.

**Charles Grainger** (guest from the German & Cols Society who claims only to collect and show 'rubbish') displayed, with typically wry comments, charity labels, bogus issues, fakes and frauds to deceive collectors and the public, poster stamps, political propaganda and non-postal stamp-like material of all kinds, first covering anti-German propaganda labels of WWI.

**Yvonne Wheatley** (former member and visitor from Bradford PS) showed the different types of French Railway markings as an introduction to the subject, and part of her railway mail of the world collection.

**John Smith** returned with the French Post Office in Morocco to WWI, noting the opening of a post office in the consulate in Tangier under the control of Oran in 1852, where unoverprinted stamps of France were used until the first overprinted series was issued in 1891. In 1912 the French Protectorate was declared, and the commencement of the Great War saw Morocco overprint the first colonial series of Red Cross stamps. The display concluded with examples of both postal stationery and postage due usage.

**Steve Ellis** came back with north African maritime mail. From the earliest days of the 1830s up to the 20th century, the display gave examples of varying shipping companies' regular services from France to north Africa, both under contract to the government and, less commonly seen, operated commercially. All aspects of maritime postal history cancellations were shown.

**Mavis Pavey** also returned with French naval mail, starting with a cover from the *Corps d'Occupation Tonkin*, 1895, and followed by the *Corps d'Occupation de Madagascar* 1897, the *Corps Expéditionnaire de Chine* 1901 & 1903, the *Corps Expéditionnaire de Crète* 1907, a hospital ship 1910 Tunis, cards from Egypt 1915 & 1916, Venice 1916 and *Méditerranée* cancellations 1917 & 1918.

**John Hammonds** returned to complete the morning session with a display on Edouard Berck, a stamp dealer of 6 Place de la Madeleine Paris who used a facsimile of the 50F Banknote (Yv A15) as advertising. The labels were printed in sheets of 25 with a dated corner of 13.4.45. Printed envelopes with the label imprinted were also issued.

After lunch, in the preparation of which Judith Holder was ably assisted by Marian Bister, Annette Tyler, Jean Hammonds and Alison Grainger, came the afternoon session.

**Mavis Pavey** showed examples of *blocs* from 1975 to 2001 to demonstrate how prolific and banal the whole issuing system has become.

**George Barker** gave his second show which was a new display he had been working on showing all the different double lined tax handstamps of the 19th century, the rates and sometimes penalties which caused them, including some of the more difficult ones such as the elusive 75 (centimes) handstamp.

**Peter Stockton** displayed WWII mail predominantly from the *Drôle de Guerre* period, showing the 4 basic types of circular date stamp used on military FM mail, in effect from 26 August 1939 for simple letters and cards within France and to and from French territories. Variations of each type were shown including *heure* cancellations incorporating the time of collection, and concluding with *laissez-passer* documents issued in both occupied and non-occupied cities giving the bearer permission to pass the demarcation line for either single or repeat journeys.

**Charles Grainger** showed some more ‘rubbish’, first covering propaganda material of the Vichy regime and then post-WWII Liberation issues.

**Alan Goude** displayed the stamps and covers of French Cameroun, involving the study of postal rates and airmail covers.

As this was almost certainly the last time that there would be a full Bastille Day meeting, **Stephen Holder** reserved the last display for himself, and showed some early covers from Mauritania, including three very rare military covers two of which are possibly the only copies known of the

military marks concerned. Early Mauritania is of course 1906-1910!

His final frame was a selection of the most unusual War of 1870 covers he could find, several of which were probably that dangerous word ‘unique’, such as an envelope from Crown Prince Frederick, with his Headquarters date stamp, to his mother-in-law Queen Victoria at Osborne IOW; a bright red envelope of the type reserved for despatches to a newspaper office, thought to be the origin of the expression ‘a red letter day’ when such a letter arrived at the newspaper editorial office (again with the German Army Headquarters date stamp); a *ballon monté Gazette des Absents* appropriately to Bradford (unfortunately not to his address!!); and a letter from Germany addressed into Paris just after the Siege ended but blocked entry with a German postal label stating mail had to be unsealed at that time (the first 14 days after the siege), recently discovered and thought to be the only one of its kind.

Stephen added that as he had bored people with the Franco-Prussian War for 40 years he didn’t think members would have thought it right if he had not done so in the final display at Heaton Royds!

Members expressed their gratitude to Stephen and Judith for hosting this event over so many years and making their guests feel so at home. Summer meetings will never be quite the same again.



Alan Goude



George Barker



Stephen Holder



Peter Stockton