

The Journal of the France & Colonies Philatelic Society



After a long and successful record spanning more than twenty years,
the final 'Bastille Day' meeting has been held at Bradford.
Above, flanked by fellow members Paul Watkins (left) and Roger Chapman (right),
John Morton discusses a sheet from his display on the Sowers.

(See the full report of the Northern Group meeting on Page 111)

Photo by Steve Ellis

Volume 65 ● Number 3
September 2015
Whole Number 277

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

Society Website: www.fcps.org.uk

Officers

President 2015-2016: S R Ellis, 22 Burton Crescent, Sneyd Green, Stoke-on-Trent ST1 6BT (email: president@fcps.org.uk)
General Secretary 2014-2015: P R A Kelly, Malmsy House, Church Road, Leigh Woods, Bristol BS8 3PG
(email: secretary@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 General Secretary.

2015-16 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).

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.

Bank transfers to HSBC account name France & Colonies Philatelic Society sort code 40 07 31 account n° 71019325.

The Journal

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

It is printed and distributed by Joshua Horgan Print & Design, 246 Marston Road, Oxford OX3 0EL
from the Editor's PDF copy.

The price is included in members' subscriptions.

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Auction and Exchange Packet Sales

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

S R Ellis, 22 Burton Crescent, Sneyd Green, Stoke-on-Trent ST1 6BT (email: 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

The Society's substantial library, as detailed in the Library List (2004) originally distributed to all Members but now available in PDF format on the Society website, is being disposed of, with members having the first opportunity of acquiring certain items in an auction.

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:

R N Broadhurst, 47 Bolton Gardens, Teddington TW11 9AX (email: stock@fcps.org.uk); tel. 020 8977 9665.

Journal Correspondents

Paris: J M Simmons

Northern Group: S R Ellis

London Group: L H Barnes

Wessex Group: P R A Kelly / A J Wood

Publications Stockist

R N Broadhurst, 47 Bolton Gardens, Teddington TW11 9AX (email: stock@fcps.org.uk); tel. 020 8943 1421.

* * *

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

Journal Manager: Mick Bister, 7 The Slade, Wrestlingworth, Sandy SG19 2ES

Email: m.bister@btinternet.com

Editor-in-chief: Maurice Tyler, 56 Mortons Fork, Blue Bridge, Milton Keynes MK13 0LA

E-mail: editor@fcps.org.uk

Editorial Team: Peter Allan, Derek Atkins, Steve Ellis, Chris Hitchen, David Hogarth,

Barry Knox, Michael Round, Colin Spong, Arlene Sullivan, Paul Watkins

Society Website: www.fcps.org.uk

Volume 65 Number 3

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SOCIETY NOTES

Editorial

Thank you to those who have contacted us with complimentary comments about the last edition of the Journal. We shall strive to maintain both quality and diversity but that of course is dependent on the contributions we receive. Thanks to our regular contributors we currently hold sufficient material for two more editions but we must not be complacent so please continue to send items for publication to m.bister@btinternet.com. Contributions from new authors will be most welcome.

* * *

Members Deceased

It is with great sadness that we have to report the death of member 265 Charles K Karsten. We offer our condolences to his family.

* * *

Resignations

The following members have recently resigned:

438 C J Babb, 1018 A E Rideout and 1240 Trevor Buckell.

* * *

Future Events

A reminder that the **Northern Group** will meet in the Village Hall, Mill Lane, Adlington, Macclesfield, SK10 4LF on Saturday 10 October 2015 from 1.30 to 4.30pm. It is an 'All Show' afternoon for members to display and share their material with others. Refreshments will not be available so please bring your own or avail yourself of the facilities of the local hostelry, the Legh Arms. Further details can be obtained from John Morton on 01457 864610 or at morton1213@talktalk.net. John adds that there is a railway station close by - local trains from Manchester to Macclesfield run every hour. If you are driving, go south down the A6 from the M60 until you reach the Rising Sun in Hazel Grove at which point bear right onto the Macclesfield Road. You will shortly cross the Cheshire East boundary, go through Poynton with its penny farthing roundabouts and Adlington is the next place. Turn right at the lights and park.

The next **London Group** all-day meeting will be on Saturday 3 October from 11.00 am to 4.00 pm at the Calthorpe Arms, 252 Grays Inn Road, London WC1X 8JR. In the morning Chris Hitchen will be giving a display entitled 'Paris 1863 to 1878' and the afternoon will be available for members to show a selection of their own material.

The next meeting of the **Wessex Group** will take place at the Scout Hall, Lower Street, Harnham on Saturday 10 October. In the absence of an invited display, members are

asked to bring a display of two or more frames to show and it is intended that we see a wide variety of stamps and postal history of France and her colonies.

* * *

Appeal for Volunteers

The committee is delighted to report that David Hogarth has offered to fill the position of General Secretary when Peter Kelly retires next year. This is reassuring news as it ensures that the affairs of the Society will continue to be managed smoothly and without interruption. We are sure you will join us in thanking David for taking on such an essential role.

In the current edition of the Journal you will be able to read the full report of the Annual General Meeting held in May and you will see for yourselves the phenomenal amount of work that is being done by the officers and committee to provide the services that members have come to expect. If this high standard is to be maintained – and it is a standard envied by many other societies – it is essential that we have every position on the committee filled.

We have now been alerted by John West who has been operating the Colonies Packet for 20 years that he too, for personal reasons, is planning to step down although a specific date has yet to be determined. The packet circuit is, for many members, one of the most attractive reasons for joining our Society and losing such a popular and beneficial service through lack of volunteers is unthinkable.

We have also been informed by Bill Mitchell, one of our longest-standing members, that due to failing eyesight he is no longer able to compile the Annual Index of items published in the Journal. The index is compiled once a year and published in the December edition and provides an essential source of reference to researchers. Bill has undertaken this responsibility since 1989 but it is time now for him to let go of the job that he has executed so diligently and for someone else to take over this important contribution to the Journal.

Only a year ago, the very existence of the Journal was under threat but thanks to our appeals and the resolve of a small group of members the Journal has been saved and as a result you are still able to read this top quality publication today.

We need now to ensure that the other services we offer will not be under threat so we are asking for volunteers to step forward as soon as possible to ensure continuity. If you want further information about the nature of either the above positions please contact the appropriate person – John West (Packet Secretary for Colonies) at j.c.dick.west@hotmail.co.uk or Mick Bister (Index Compiler) at m.bister@btinternet.com. We shall be only too happy to answer your questions and should you wish to take on the role, provide you with all the help and guidance you need.

MLB

* * *

Philatelic Honours

Congratulations to the following members who have participated in recent international competitions:

European Thematic Philately Championships, Essen, Germany 7-9 May 2015			
Name	Award	Title	Class
Lesley Marley	Gold	A Whale's Tale	Champions
London 2015 Europhilex 13-16 May 2015			
Name	Award	Title	Class
Brigitte Abensur	Gold	<i>Les petites postes de France</i>	Postal History
Mick Bister	Large Vermeil	The postcode programmes of France; the experimental years, 1962-1977 *	Postal History
Graham Booth	Gold	Spoon cancellations of Great Britain	Postal History
Luca Lavagnino	Vermeil	<i>Le bureau de poste aux lettres de Coni pendant l'administration française</i>	Postal History
Claire Scott	Large Vermeil	The wounded soldier's story	Open Philately
Hans Smith	Large Vermeil	The Austrian post offices in the Levant	Literature
Richard Stock	Gold	Sudan: the development of postal services	Postal History
* Awarded Special Prize in the Postal History Class for 'Knowledge'			
Club de Monte-Carlo International Court of Honour			
Philip Mackey	Large Gold	Franco-Prussian War and Siege of Paris	<i>Hors Concours</i>
Francis Kiddle was President of the International Jury			



Europhilex medals awarded

OBITUARY

Michael de Normann Ensor

Personal tribute by John Mayne

Although Michael and I were in regular correspondence it was a shock to learn from Grosvenor's of his death some weeks after the event. We first met about 35 years ago at a F&CPS weekend held at the Regent Hotel in Leamington Spa.

Like many of his generation, he hid his light under a bushel and it was difficult to extract details of his life from him but he had a fund of stories. I believe he was a senior Colonial civil servant in the Gold Coast and, as stated by Peter Kelly, at one time responsible for resolving boundary issues with Togo. One of his two surviving sons was born whilst he was in Lomé.

His wife Mona, a charming lady, who made me welcome when I stayed overnight, predeceased Michael by some years. She told me she arrived in the Gold Coast via the perilous means of transfer from ship to shore in a basket suspended from a crane.

When the Gold Coast became independent Michael was responsible for organising matters. The Queen was represented at the ceremony by Princess Alexandra of Kent who insisted she bathe in the dangerous waters off Accra. Michael claimed he was helpless if she encountered difficulties as he had a broken wrist. He added that the swell was so fierce crews on board two ships of the line were seriously seasick and that they had to uplift anchor and head for calmer waters. I am uncertain if he was transferred immediately after the Independence to Kenya but he later served there.

To celebrate his 80th birthday his son took him to Ghana. Michael and I shared an interest in the town Ho, and he dutifully sent a cover from there so I would have a copy of the current postmark. Upon visiting the fort at Accra and taking photographs he came close to arrest as the building was now a high security prison and it was suspected he was planning a breakout! On visiting the museum he came across the King of Togo's throne and sent me a photograph of it knowing I have a hand-painted card of the first governor seated thereon being carried down the street by natives.

Michael's philatelic interests were understandably related to areas where he served. His main collecting interest was Gold Coast and he produced an excellent work 'The Postal Services of Gold Coast 1901-1957' published by the WASC in 1998. He also proof-read 'The Postal Services of Gold Coast to 1901' by John Sacher published by the RPSL in 2003.

He was of great assistance to me and full of encouragement. He always took delight in learning of my latest find and we often sat together at dealers' stands at London shows and invariably had lunch together. We last met in autumn 2014 when he insisted in climbing the stairs at the Business Design Centre. Shortly afterwards, as evidence that his knowledge remained undiminished when well into his 90s, we submitted a joint article to 'Cameo', the WASC journal, on Togo postmarks which was published prior to his death.

Michael never sought centre stage. When Colin Spong invited us to a joint display at Worthing we pooled resources but he insisted I lead and as expected from earlier experiences he was quick to correct any of my mispronunciations of West African townships!

There was never a competitive edge between us: we enjoyed sharing finds. He would be the first to admit his outlay was modest, yet he built a wonderful collection of postal stationery of West Africa. I knew little about his East Africa collection but suspect he will have a quiet smile if he learns he had a gem amongst his stamps, a German East Africa R1 value cancelled Dar-es-Salam 19 August 1915, sold by Grosvenor since his death and subsequently sold again by a leading German colonial auction house 21 March 2015 for close to 15,000 euro. On good authority I am told Michael paid 22/6 for it many years ago!

I shall sorely miss him.

LIST OF RECENTLY PUBLISHED ARTICLES

Compiled by Colin Spong and Maurice Tyler

Bulletin de la COL.FRA

N° 152 2^{ème} Trim 2015: Les cachets de Douane du Territoire de Memel (Pineau); Les Taxations Postales peu Courantes dans le Régime Colonial (Corê); Confins Algéro-Marocains, le Cas d'Aïn Ben Tili (Mercier); Décalages en Guadeloupe (Bessaud).

Cameo

Vol 17 N° 3 (Jun 2015): Kamerun CEF 4d. Quadruple Overprint (Bratzel); Kamerun CEF 1d Black Overprint (Bratzel); Camerouns CEF ½d Reply postal stationery card (Horlyck); Camerouns: Ndop skeleton canceller - yet another variant plus a postal stationery variant (Bratzel).

The Collectors Club Philatelist

Vol 94 N° 3 (May-June 2015): The Voyage of the SS *Ténériffe*: A 19th Century Magical Mystery Tour [Canary Is & West Africa] (Loew).

Documents Philatéliques

N° 224 2^e Trim (April 2015): «Postes Militaires Françaises» de l'armée d'Orient ouvertes au public. Les cas des gares du chemin de fer Smyrne-Cassaba et Prolongement (Galinos); Les premières extensions de la poste pneumatique hors de Paris [1902-1906] (Barbelin); Les bureaux de quartier de Paris de janvier 1852 à septembre 1863 [complément] (Platzer); Les étiquettes de fermeture [wafer seals] un phénomène transitoire de l'époque victorienne ou non? – Deuxième partie (Dutau).

N° 225 3^e Trim (July 2015): *L'Élise*: Un bateau à vapeur français est le premier au monde à traverser une mer en mars 1816 (Treviso); «*Décacheté au Lazaret le bâtiment étant infesté de peste*» Quand une mention manuscrite réapparaît (Dutau); Le Premier Cachet «Périodiques» (Hardy); Bureaux Français à l'Étranger l'apparition des recettes-distributions en 1895 (Abensur); Réduction du Tarif des Lettres en 1908 dans les Bureaux Français 'à l'Étranger' Quand la poste française prend demi-mesures! (Abensur); Les Relations Franco-Portugaises en Marge des Conventions de Poste Franco-Espagnoles entre 1849 et 1866 (Estel).

L'Écho de la Timbrologie

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

N° 1895 (May 2015): Bientôt les Quatre Jours de Marigny (Bastide-Bernardine); La donation Zao Wou-Ki à L'Adresse Musée de La Poste (-); 1925: l'exposition

philatélique internationale de Paris (Albaret); Des hommes confrontés à des conditions extrêmes (TAAF) (Barbet).

N° 1896 (June 2015): À Hermonville: Une école formait des Espions (Rocha et Douay); Trois escales, trois districts et trois dépêches postales [Crozet, Kerguelen et Amsterdam] (Venturini); Les frères Caudron, pionniers de l'aviation en Picardie (Sinai); Monuments en souvenir de la Grande Guerre (Grosse).

N° 1897 (Jul-Aug 2015): L'Adresse Musée de la Poste...en plein chantier (-); La Dernière rotation de 2014 [TAAF – visit by the *Marion-Dusfresne*] (Venturini); En visite au jardin du Luxembourg le CPF (-); Les stations Balnéaires [Arc-en-Ciel] (Grosse); Et Didier Daurat créa Air Bleu (Albaret).

France & Colonies Philatelist

Whole No 320 (Vol 71 No 2): The era of the French Colonial Group Type: French Oceania – waiting for Paraita (Grabowski); SS Pierre et Miquelon: Une variété Méconnue (Bratzel, Jr); Ebay, Delcampe and Abassi, Cameroun (Bratzel, Jr); Marianne, the Current Series (Rasmussen).

Whole N° 321 (Vol 71 N° 3): An Irish Cover from Algeria (Nilsestuen); Cameroun Français 27.8.40 – The 50 Centimes Stamp with Inverted Overprint (Bratzel, Jr); Les Amériques en 90 jours (Tillard); «T» Perforated Tunisian Stamps (Rasmussen).

The Indo-China Philatelist

Vol 45 N° 3 (Whole N° 218) May 2015: The North Vietnam Stamp Embargo in the United States, 1964-1994 (Miller); More on Handling of Underpaid Letters in Early North Vietnam (Gebhardt); Vichy Local Postage Due Stamps (Dykhouse); North Vietnam Scott N° 6: Plate varieties (Gebhardt); 21st Century Vietnamese Military Mail (Crenshaw).

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° 167 (May 2015): Pierre Munier [1889-1962] Paysages et portraits gravés (Nowacka); De la couleur de nos premiers timbres-poste (de La Mettrie); 1861: Une lettre de Papeete pour Valparaiso (Dutau); Les acteurs et actrices français de cinéma sur les timbres étrangers (PJM); Deux variétés spectaculaires et rares (Marion); Imprimé au départ, lettre à arriver (Prugnon).

Continued on page 76

BOOKSHELF

Compiled by Michael Round

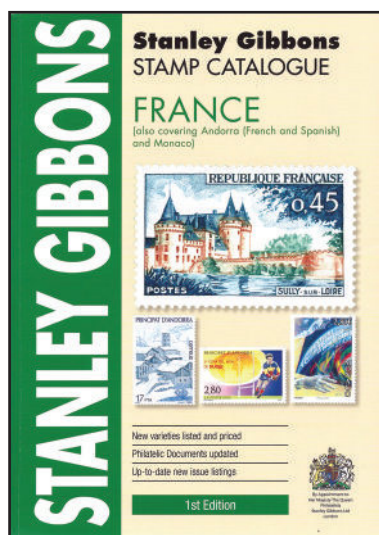
Book Review

by Richard Broadhurst

Stanley Gibbons FRANCE Stamp Catalogue (1st edition 2015)

ISBN-13 978-0-85259-938-9; ISBN-10 0-85259-938-2.

Softback with xxiii+447 pages. £34.95.



The eagerly awaited new edition of the SG France catalogue was issued on the first day of the London 2015 Europhilex exhibition, at around the same time that long-serving Stanley Gibbons catalogue editor Hugh Jefferies received a much deserved MBE.

In a break from tradition the catalogue has been reduced in size from the former bulky A4 version to a much more manageable B4 size and in the process now comprises just France, Andorra and Monaco. French Colonies will have their own catalogue in due course. Perhaps it would have been an idea to take the opportunity to concentrate on France alone and leave out Andorra and Monaco, which could be moved to the forthcoming Colonies catalogue.

As it stands the catalogue has around 450 pages and is priced some £10 less than the previous edition published in 2010. Had a France-only catalogue been contemplated with 250 pages, the resulting saving in printing costs would have likely brought the price into line with the Yvert & Tellier Part 1 catalogue, where €21.90 gets you a most generous 1110 pages.

The reduced size, being similar to the Y & T catalogue, is a great improvement allowing the use of the two catalogues side by side. It is now much easier to cross-reference the details in English in the SG version.

One advantage of the SG listings is the provision of issue dates. For some inexplicable reason Yvert never prints these in the main listings. Admittedly, the dates for some stamps after 1936 can be found in the *Premier Jour* section,

but you have to find your way to page 991 to do so. Another advantage is that SG always quotes the issue value of all NVI stamps; this is very useful given the proliferation of self-adhesive booklet stamps, none of which carry any face value.

Notable price-rises in early issues reflect the market in top quality classics, as you would expect. A couple that stand out are the 1869 5F lilac-grey (SG 131, Y&T 33) which rises from £7,000 to £9,500, and the 1917 1st War Orphans set (SG 370-377, Y&T 148-155) from £2750 to £3500, both in mounted mint condition. It is perhaps a good moment to remind readers that all mint stamps listed by SG prior to 1939 are for mounted examples.

It would be hard to find any stamp that has not had a price increase, mostly modest until the end of the 20th century. After this date the majority of issues have been awarded more substantial rises with a doubling in price not being unusual.

A bone of contention with collectors of modern material is the low price quoted by Y&T for used commemoratives, which are just about impossible to find postally used. They will be delighted with SG who rightly afford these issues a very decent price. For example the majority of recent commemoratives and booklet stamps which Y&T price at around €0.60 are listed between £2.50 and £3.00 by SG. In general it appears that SG uses a multiplier of face value of a least six times for mint and four times for used for their quoted prices.

Other changes noted since the previous edition are an improved design index, the addition of 90 new varieties and a new six-page listing of the Vichy issues. Of less value, in my opinion, are the 27 pages of Philatelic Documents. I wonder just how many collectors of these there are?

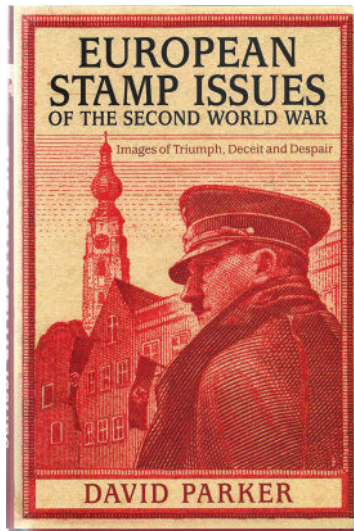
Since the last catalogue was printed in 2010, over a thousand new stamps have been added to the France listing alone, showing that the deluge of new issues has absolutely no sign of abating. It has taken 166 years to reach a total count of 5724 stamps, of which nearly 20% have been added in the last five years alone!

SG should be praised for a most attractive and improved catalogue in its new format. The Yvert version will always be the standard reference for serious France collectors but the new SG will be much appreciated by both the general and specialist collector in the UK.

Book Review

by Michael Round

European Stamp Issues of the Second World War by David Parker.
 ISBN 978-0-7509-5915-5. Published in 2015. Hardback with d/j, 256pp.
 The History Press, £25.00. www.thehistorypress.co.uk



You can occupy a country, hoist your own flag and rename all the streets. Get ousted, and your flag and street-signs will be torn down, leaving no evidence that you were ever there. But if you issued your own occupation stamps, then – provided they had some legitimacy at time of issue – stamp albums worldwide will provide a gratifyingly permanent record of your escapade.

Furthermore, if your time in occupation (or being occupied, for that matter) occurs while letter-writing is still the main means of communication, then where better than on stamps – stamp exhibitions, cachets and souvenir envelopes too – to proclaim your benevolence as occupier, your victories elsewhere, or your defiance as the occupied? The importance of these messages were not lost in the biggest of all such events, World War II, and David Parker devotes this handsome hardback to study – and personal interpretation – of the multitude of stamp designs issued in Europe during that time, underlining the point with the dramatic subtitle 'Images of Triumph, Deceit and Despair'.

Unlike those stamp magazine articles written by philatelists with a nod to history, former head teacher and university lecturer David Parker approaches firmly from the historian viewpoint, illustrating his comprehensive 22-country chronicle of the war with stamps. The chapters on Germany, France, Belgium and the Netherlands, for example, may confirm what specialists among us already knew, but are nevertheless a valuable and highly readable resource for new collectors in the field. And for specialists

and newcomers alike, it's refreshing to be reminded of the impact of the War on less familiar countries like Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria.

France, for instance, placed Marshal Pétain front centre. The multitude of designs appearing under his régime are read as promotions of countryside regeneration (e.g. the 1940 *Secours National* set, SG 668-71, Yvert 466-9), family life (not forgetting the '*Famille du Prisonnier*', SG 789-90, Yvert 585-6), regional identity (the Regional Costumes of 1943, SG 797-802, Yvert 593-8) – and of historical celebrities whose ideas could be taken – or stretched – to coincide with Vichyism: Mistral, Chabrier and La Perouse among many.

The five-stamp '*État Français*' strip (SG 780-4, Yvert 576-80) sums up Pétain's thinking, the three central images promoting '*Travail*,' '*Famille*' and '*Patrie*'. With typical thoroughness, David Parker suggests similar motivations for every other wartime design.

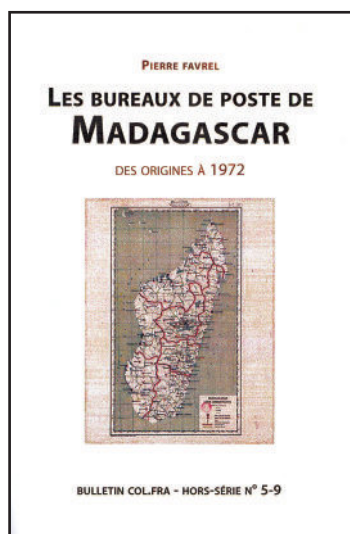
Certain areas of philatelic interest are outside the author's remit. There's nothing on postal forgeries, bogus propaganda issues ('*Futsches Reich*', the 'Spittler' stamp, the GB 1937 'Stalin' Coronation effort, and so on) nor the physical effect of shortages on the production of stamps themselves (like GB's paler colours). There are no SG or other catalogue numbers for issued stamps. More surprisingly perhaps, there's little on subversive messages worked into designs by defiant residents under occupation, although Jersey's hidden 'AA' and 'GR' motifs get a mention, tucked away with Guernsey into the chapter on France.

A philatelist first-and-foremost would have referred to 'surtaxed' rather than 'surcharged' stamps (not quite the same thing), and to SG catalogues as 'Parts' (2, 3, 7 and so on) rather than 'Nos'. (These and the Michel *Deutschland-Spezial* are the only philatelic – as distinct from historical – entries in the Bibliography.) But these are tiny points not detracting from the value of the book as a whole – very good value, too. Black-and-white illustrations appear in-situ but (presumably to save some production costs) coloured ones are lumped together in the middle of the book. You'll need a finger kept in the appropriate place while reading the relevant text. Paper quality, however, is luxurious – so much so, that this book tips over the 750-gram weight-step. A superb bargain all the same, and an absorbing read for the long winter months.

Book Review

by Colin Spong

Les Bureaux de Poste de Madagascar, Col.Fra *Hors-Série* N° 5-9



In the absence of any further volumes of Dr Jacques Desnos Madagascar Studies, Col.Fra publications has published an excellent monograph by M. Pierre Favrel covering all the

post offices of Madagascar in their various categories until 1972. This is issued in their *Hors-série*, N° 5-9, published in 2014.

It is obtainable from Alain Hurpet, 2 rue de Jardins, 10230 MAILLY le CAMP, France. E-mail; colfra-publications@orange.fr Price: 26 euros or for members of Col.Fra 20 euros.

It is perfect bound with laminated covers including a plastic front, 222 pages and an inserted coloured map, with outlined areas in black & white. of the island showing all the towns with postal arrangements.

The dates of opening and any closure are given together with a brief history of the place, and each office is illustrated with postmarks on stamps including many covers in black and white. My only quibble is that I couldn't find either Tananarive or Tamatave. Otherwise I must congratulate the author on a fine piece of research which will be of great help for those seeking information on either the post offices or their postal markings.

List of Recently Published Articles

Continued from page 73

Timbres Magazine

N° 168 (June 2015): Paul Lemagny. Du trait au portrait vers l'abstrait (Rucklin); La poste française à Jérusalem (Toulemonde); Comprendre les nuanciers de couleurs utilisés par l'Atelier du timbre-poste (Gomez); Trois aviateurs, un crocodile et l'*Oiseau-Canari*... [Assollant, Lefèvre et Loti] (Sinai); Les «suppléments» à la lettre-journal (de La Mettrie); Groschen ou kreuzer, puis pfennig (Prugnon); 1944 secteur VII à Commissaire aux Colonies: Doit-on conserver le contrôle postal intérieur? (Chauvin); Petites leçons d'autrefois (Baudot).

N° 169 (Jul-Aug 2015): Sous les arches du Pont du Gard (Singeot); La première liaison aéropostale officielle entre les Etats-Unis et la France (Toulemonde); Paul Lemagny: Les coulisses de la création [2] (Rucklin); Les surchargés de 1920 à 1928 et leurs variétés [îles Wallis et Futuna] (Rabillé); L'UPU s'invite dans votre boîte aux lettres (Maier); Quand la poste décide sans l'accord de l'expéditeur (de La Mettrie); Les confidences cartophiles du château de Fontainebleau (Zeyons); Le 10c bistre de 1850 (Prugnon); 1939: 1^{er} service postal aérien régulier France-Etats-Unis (Chauvin).

Les Feuilles Marcophiles

N° 361 (June 2015): L'évolution de La Poste à Uzès en 2015 (Ibert); Le Corps de la Gendarmerie de France de Louis XIV à Louis XVI (II) (Boueyguet); Histoire de la double relation postale du Principat d'ANDORRA, I - Quand l'Espagne prend l'avantage (Dupré); Vendée: projet de remplacement des lettres-timbres des boîtes rurales (Pinhas); Le couperet tombe...la lettre ne sera jamais remise! (Morel); Le fonctionnement de l'entrepouseur en gare d'Angers (1867-1876) (I) (Chouteau); À propos des GC «refaits» (Cornuéjols); Timbres «T» (taxe à payer) (I) (Guillard & Abensur).

Le Collectionneur Philatéliste et Marcophile

N° 172 (July 2015): Janka et Stanislas Goldstein (II) (Neimark); Courriers d'Oubangui-Chari (II) (Vialatte); Charles De Gaulle et la ville de Dinant - août 1914 (Bury); Étude sur l'évolution des marques d'arrivée d'initiative locale en Maine-et-Loire avant 1830 (II) (Beck); Introduction à l'histoire de la poste à Jérusalem (II) (Ezraty); Un courrier du 11 septembre 1914, envoyé de Géraudot à un militaire français à Sedan; Que penser de cette lettre? - Réponse [1870 Schirmeck to Sainte-Marie-aux-Mines] (Lasserre).

Monkey Business: Bénin's 'Zin Kaka' Quasi-Definitives of December 2003

Nicholas Pertwee

**'African philately becomes more and more exciting, in particular the local overprints.
It's very important to inform philatelists about these subjects' (Olivier Bergossi)**

PART ONE

FOREWORD

Since 2001 Bénin's stamp-issuing policy has been restrained with just one or two sets per year – though there have been many revaluations of older stamps – and all these have seen extensive use and functioned as quasi-definitives.

One such set was issued on 19 December 2003 showing a small, domestic cat-sized monkey with a long scientific name, *Cercopithecus erythrogaster erythrogaster*, the threatened Bénin sub-species of the animal most commonly known in English as the Red-bellied Monkey, but also as the White-throated or Red-bellied Guenon, and in French as *Singe à ventre rouge*. Locally it is known as Zin Kaka, thought to be in imitation of its call (Fig. 1).



Figure 1

This lithograph of the Red-bellied Monkey by the Dutch-born wildlife artist Joseph Smit (1836-1929) appeared in the Proceedings of the Zoological Society of London for 1866 and is the best depiction

I have come across of the animal.

Photographs of the creature in the wild are necessarily scarce due to its arboreal habits.

This illustration is used courtesy of the Biodiversity History Library and comes from a copy of the Proceedings held in the Natural History Museum. ⁽¹⁾

A name that brings in 'red' would seem to be appropriate, as a very striking feature (if not always the most conspicuous, due to its retiring habits) is the rich red fur on its belly, which has led to it being extensively hunted. Habitat degradation is another reason for the decline in its numbers which has put it into the category of 'Endangered' on the Red List of the IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature). However, the wide use of these stamps across Bénin (see Table 2) should have served to familiarise people with the animal and draw attention to its precarious situation.

This set deserves more than a passing look. My in-depth review of Bénin's 1999 issue for the 40th Anniversary of the Conseil de l'Entente ⁽²⁾ revealed numerous features that would not have been apparent from a casual inspection, and these Red-bellied Monkey stamps too have much to offer if studied carefully. It is worth noting that a number of recent Bénin sets, like this one, have the same design for each value: to my mind this is something that encourages the collector to look below the surface, for there is surprising variety in uniformity. Adding to their appeal is the fact that these seemingly repetitive sets have often been revalued in response to changing postal rates to produce a whole new group by way of overprints. This set is no exception.

Examples of Africa's major animals including elephant, hippopotamus, buffalo, lion and leopard can be found in Bénin, especially in the Pendjari National Park in the north-west of the country where most of the larger mammals live. Animals of the Pendjari can be seen in three sets, two of which were issued by what was then still Dahomey in 1968 (SG318-322) and 1969 (SG353-357) and the third by the People's Republic of Bénin in 1976 (SG635-638). Some values of the Dahomey sets were overprinted and revalued for use both in the *République Populaire* and *République* periods of Bénin (Fig. 2).

Sets featuring animals, some of which do occur in Bénin, also appeared during the Agency period from 1995-2001.



Figure 2

The 100F Hippopotamus (Mi 341) from Dahomey's first set showing animals of the Pendjari National Park (18 March 1968) was overprinted BÉNIN and revalued to 200F (Mi 1499, 12/2008-2009).

It is seen here used on 22 March 2011, almost exactly 43 years after the original stamp was issued, on cover from BANI KOARA to the Netherlands, with the 500F/200F National Arms definitive (Mi 1637, 11/09). ⁽³⁾

THE SUBJECT OF THE SET

In England, at any rate, the Red-bellied Monkey was first reported in the Proceedings of the Zoological Society for 27 March 1866 when Dr. J.E. Gray read a paper entitled 'Notice of a New West-African Monkey living in the Gardens of the Society'.

'Mr. Bartlett, a few days ago, brought to the British Museum a Monkey which he believed to be new'. This, Mr. Bartlett said, 'was obtained from Liverpool, having been imported by the lately arrived West African Mail'. The report was accompanied by an engraving by Joseph Smit which is arguably the best representation of the animal as photographs of it in the wild are often unsatisfactory, as are ones taken in captivity (Fig.1 above). Joseph Smit was born in Holland in 1836 but came to England in 1866 and became perhaps this country's leading illustrator of wildlife subjects. He died in England in 1929 having been able to see his son Peter (1863-1960) take up the same profession as him.

Dr. John Edward Gray (1800-1875) was a Fellow of the Zoological Society of London (ZSL) and other learned societies, and published large numbers of papers on the taxonomy of animals. Significantly though, not only was he Keeper of Zoology at the British Museum from 1840 to 1874, he was also more than interested in stamps; indeed, one source calls him the world's first stamp collector as he bought several Penny Blacks on 1 May 1840 'with the intent to save them'. In his own words, in the introduction to his 1862 'A Hand Catalogue of Postage Stamps for the Use of Collectors', he 'began to collect postage stamps shortly after the system was established and before it had become a rage'. He adds there that 'I believe I was the first who proposed the system of a small uniform rate of postage to be pre-paid by stamps'.

The Mr. Bartlett referred to was Abraham Dee Bartlett (1812-1897), a well-known taxidermist but also a naturalist in his own right, who worked with Dr. Gray and other members of the ZSL and who corresponded among others with Charles Darwin. He was Superintendent of the London Zoological Gardens, the London Zoo in other words, from 1859 until shortly before his death.

In his article 'Vers une stratégie de préservation du singe à ventre rouge au Bénin' (Parcs et Réserves – Volume 58 #2, April-June 2003), Laurence Hanon, who is leading efforts in Bénin in collaboration with local zoologists to protect the last areas where the Red-bellied Monkey is to be found, finds it astonishing that despite this 1866 record it was only known to science from individuals captive in zoos or from skins and skeletons in museums, and was thought to be extinct in the wild until the mid-1990s when the primatologist J. Oates saw it in a small patch of remnant forest in the south of Bénin.

It is arboreal and lives mainly in damp tropical forest but sometimes in degraded woodland and on land once farmed. Recent research though has shown that its range is now largely restricted to sacred groves near villages, which affords it a degree of protection despite having to live close to people. 'Its diet includes fruit, insects, leaves and crops. Solitary males have been observed but usually the Red-bellied Monkey forages in small groups of up to 5 individuals, although groups of 30 or more probably occur' (Oates 1985).

The males are much larger than the females in all the members of this group of monkeys and the colouration and face patterns are also more pronounced in the males. The tail is as long again as the body. The females weigh between 4½ and 9lbs and the males from 7¾ to 10lbs. It belongs to the genus *Cercopithecus* of old-world monkeys of which there are 18 or 20 members depending on which authority one consults.

Relatives in neighbouring countries are the Diana Monkey and the Mona Monkey in Ghana to the west (and Ghana has issued stamps illustrating these – (Figs. 3a&b), and to Bénin's east there is another sub-species of the Red-bellied Monkey in the south-west of Nigeria . (Fig 3c)

The situation in Togo which lies between Bénin and Ghana is not clear, though it is thought that it might exist there too. Togo has issued stamps showing monkeys of the appropriate genus but of species that inhabit countries in Central, not West, Africa.

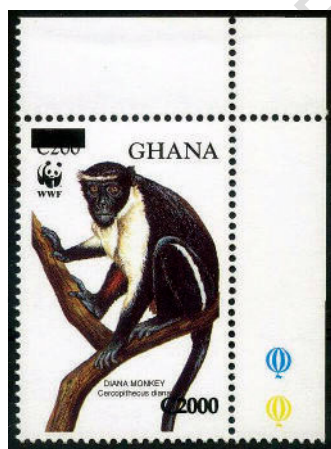


Figure 3a
Ghana (SG 3575)
Diana Monkey
(*Cercopithecus diana*)



Figure 3b
Ghana (SG 637)
Mona Monkey
(*Cercopithecus mona*)

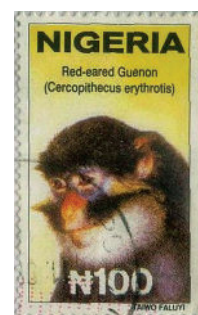


Figure 3c
Nigeria (SG 784)
Red-eared Guenon
(*Cercopithecus erythrotis*)

Figures 3a-c

Other Genus *Cercopithecus* types in neighbouring countries

THE ORIGINAL STAMPS

The stamps were issued on 19 December 2003 and printed in multicolour lithography by Cartor on paper with phosphor lines 6 mm wide between the stamps. These lines, which stop short of the top and bottom limits of the sheet, are easily visible to the naked eye as pale yellow. There are 7 values, 50F, 175F, 250F, 300F, 400F, 500F and 600F and a miniature sheet with one each of the 500F and 600F values (Mi. 1356-1362, MS59) (Figs 4a-i). The miniature sheet has the same 6 mm phosphor lines as the sheet-printed stamps. Perforation is $13\frac{1}{4} \times 13$ and sheet layout 5 x 5, the stamps being in portrait format. All are in the same design and, apart from the value, are distinguished by the different-coloured panels (a) vertical at the left with the country name REPUBLIQUE DU BÉNIN in prominent capital letters and (b) horizontal at the bottom with two lines

of wording, CERCOPITHECUS ERYTHROGASTER ERYTHROGASTER in slim capitals above and SOUS ESPECE ENDEMIQUE ET MENACEE in thicker, smaller capitals below.

The wording on these two panels obviously has to be in a different colour from the background to be visible but this raises a nice point where the small horizontal date panel at the top-right with the words POSTE 2003 is concerned. On the 50F, 500F and 600F the order of colouring is the same as that for the main country name and animal name panels – so, on the 600F for instance, POSTE 2003 is white on a blue background, the same as for the other features (Fig 5a). On the 175F, 250F, 300F and 400F, however, the situation is reversed. Thus, on the 300F, instead of white wording on green, we see green wording on white (Fig 5b).



Figure 4a



Figure 4b



Figure 4c

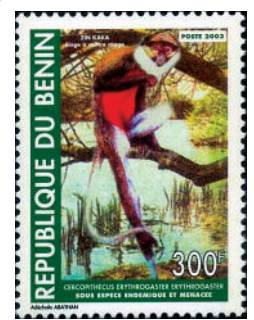


Figure 4d



Figure 4e



Figure 4f

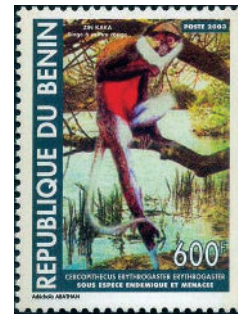


Figure 4g



Figure 4h
Miniature Sheet

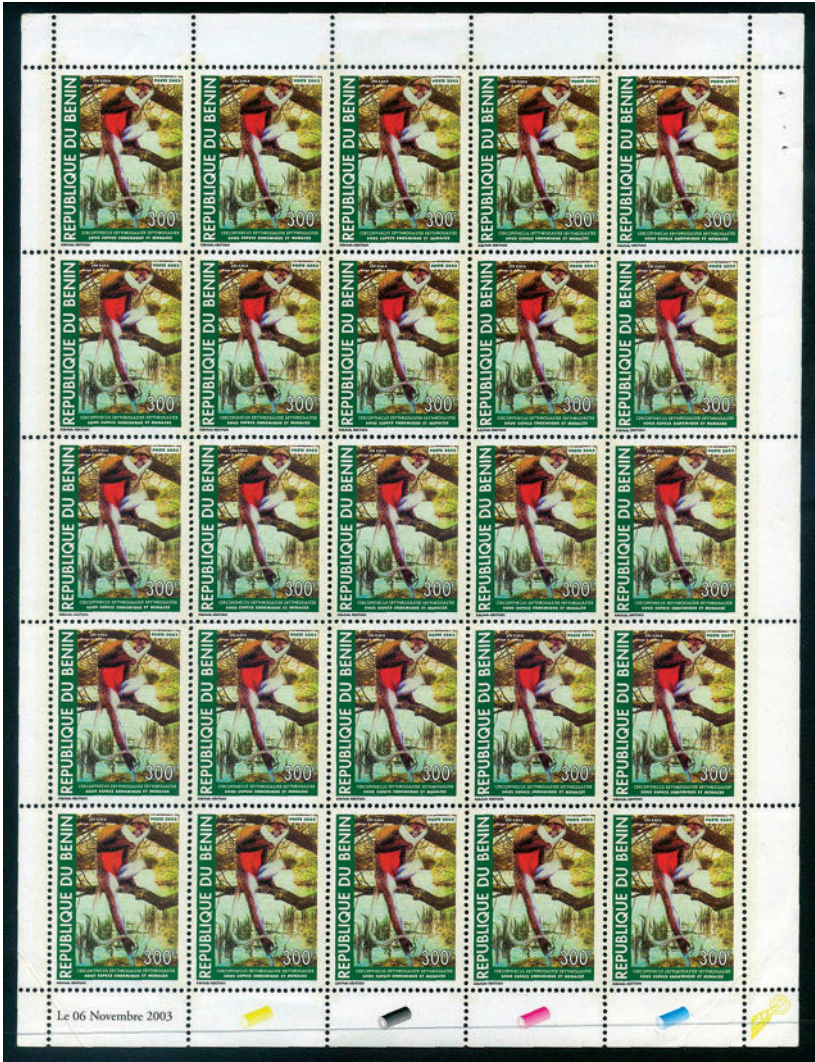


Figure 4i
300F complete sheet



Figure 5a
600F issue with white lettering
on colour background in both panels.



Figure 5b
300F issue with reversed colours
in right hand panel.

This leads to the following situation (Table 1).

Table 1: Colour Composition of Information Panels				
Value	Country Name (vertical, left) & Animal's Name (horizontal, bottom) Panels		POSTE 2003 panel	Postage value outline
	Background (a)	Wording (b)		
50F	Turquoise-Green	Deep Purple	b/a	b
175F	Deep Ultramarine	Bistre-Yellow	a/b	a
250F	Bistre-Yellow	Prussian Blue	a/b	b
300F	Deep Blue-Green	White	a/b	a
400F	Purple-Brown	Ochre	a/b	a
500F	Dull Red-Orange	Slate Lilac	b/a	b
600F	Deep Grey-Blue	White	b/a	a
➤ The miniature sheet contains the 500F and 600F values, differing slightly in colour from the sheet-printed stamps, with the 500F slightly brighter (red-orange) and the 600F slightly paler (grey-blue). Colour composition of the information panels is the same as on the regular 500F and 600F.				
➤ Colours are taken from the Stanley Gibbons Stamp Colour Key © Stanley Gibbons Ltd. 1970.				

The local and French names for the animal, ZIN KAKA (in capitals) and *Singe à ventre rouge* (in lower case) are written in inconspicuously small letters at the top-left; these are very easy to miss with *Singe à ventre rouge* really only visible with a magnifying glass. Only where lower-case letters are used are accents inserted; this is the case with all stamps printed by Cartor, where capital letters do not carry accents though properly they should.

The designer's name, Adéchola ABATHAN, appears in black at the bottom left of the stamp. The printer's name, normally at the bottom right, is absent but complete sheets show that Cartor's trade-mark cylinders are in the bottom selvedge, under R5/2-5, in yellow, black, red and blue respectively. The yellow cylinder is very faint, so faint in fact that it is easy to miss the PTT logo of *Poste Bénin* added in the furthest right-hand corner of the selvedge in the same colour. Though not phosphorised, this yellow shows up much better under UV light. The printing date, *Le 06 Novembre 2003*, appears under stamp R5/1 in black.

The animal itself appears in a relaxed attitude straddling a branch of a tree on a reedy lakeside, in a pose very like the Joseph Smit illustration, with its left leg bent and the right one stretched out, matching the tail in length, the tip of which is looped over its right foot. This central vignette is in the same colours across all the values.

COUNTRY-WIDE USAGE

Table 2 shows that these stamps were distributed for use throughout Bénin with examples having been found on cover from every one of the country's 12 administrative *départements*, i.e. ALIBORI (capital: Kandi), ATAKORA (Natitingou), ATLANTIQUE (Ouidah), BORGOU (Parakou), COLLINES (Savalou), DONGA (Djougou), KOUFFO (Aplahoué), LITTORAL (Cotonou), MONO (Lokossa), OUÉMÉ (Porto-Novo), PLATEAU (Pobé) and ZOU (Abomey). Stamps have been seen used from all these major towns except Pobé, but Kétou and Adja-Ouère from which they have been seen are also in the Plateau *département*, so that completes the line-up (Figs. 6a-g).

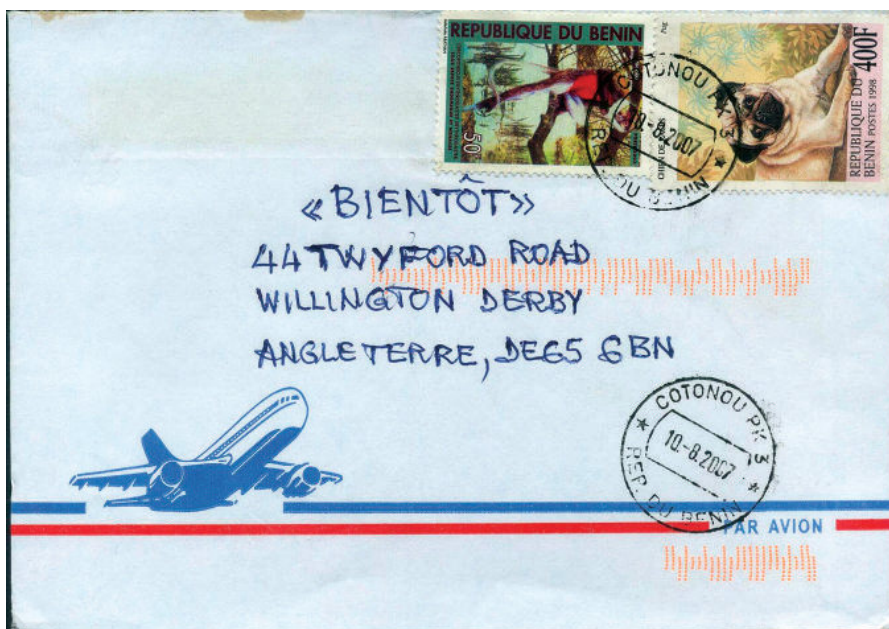


Figure 6a
50F from COTONOU PK3 to England
dated 10 August 2007.
Used with Mi. 1054, the 400F value
of the 6-stamp 1998 Pedigree Dogs set
of 31 July 1998.



Figure 6b
175F from SAVE to the Netherlands
dated 9 November 2004.
Used with Mi. 1179, the 200F value
of the 6-value Snakes set
of 18 July 1999.



Figure 6c
250F from ABOMEY-GOHO to England
dated 11 August 2008.
Used with Mi. 1438, the 250F African
Emerald Cuckoo definitive of Dahomey
(issued 20/1/67), overprinted DU BÉNIN
and re-issued as one of the 36-value set
listed by Michel as their #1418-1453
of 12/2007-1/2008.

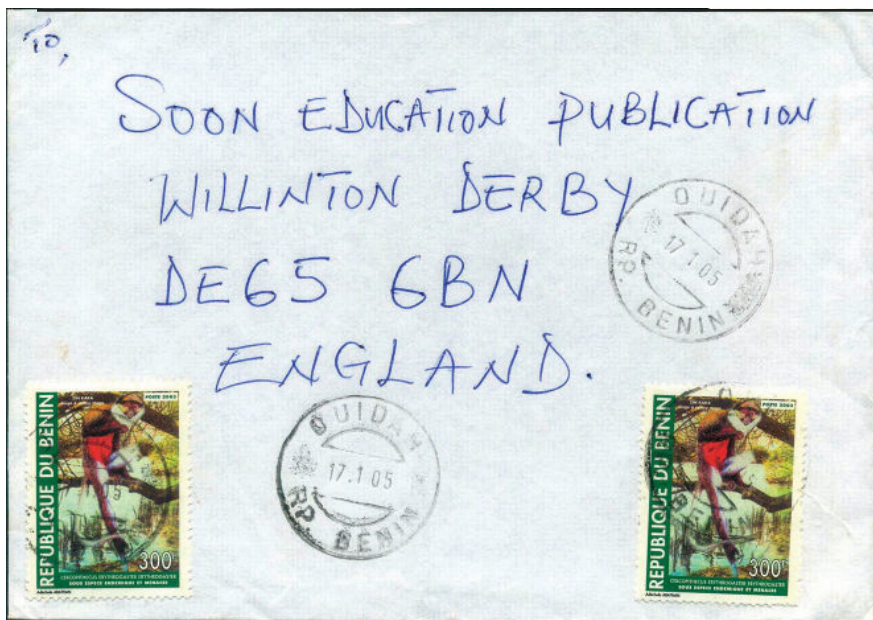


Figure 6d
300F 2 x 300F used
from OUIDAH to England
dated 17 January 2005.



Figure 6e
400F single used with 1 x 50F
from PORTO-NOVO to England
dated 2 February 2005.

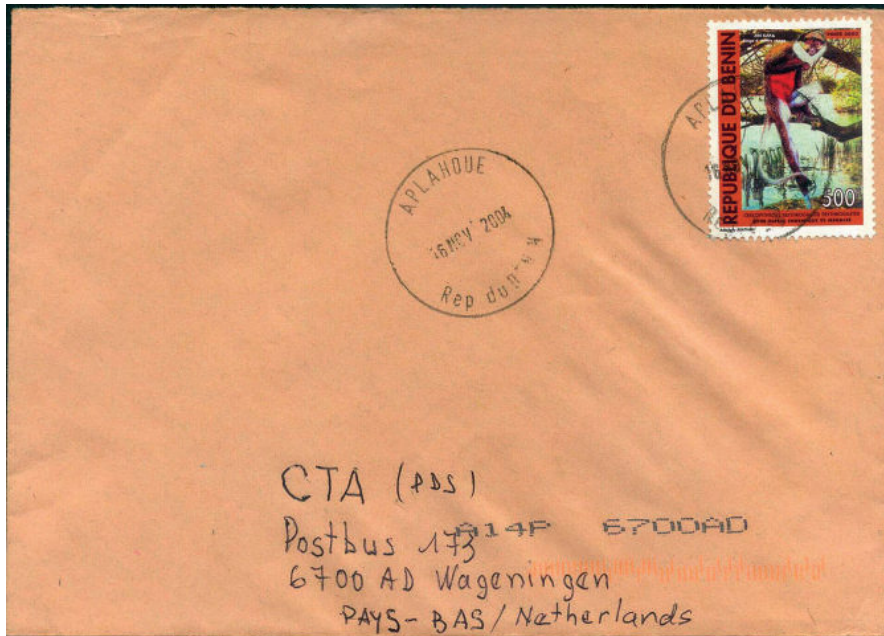


Figure 6f
500F single used
from APLAHOUE to the Netherlands
dated 16 November 2004.



Figure 6g
600F single used
from COTONOU JERICHO to England
dated 26 November 2010.
This value is seen less than the others in
the set and its use tends to fall into the
later part of the date range as a whole.

Table 2 The Original Stamps – Places Used and Date Range
Issued 19 December 2003

Value	Places Used	Date Range
50F Mi 1356 Sc 1308	Adja-Ouèrè; Akpro-Missérété; Allada; Avrankou; Banté; Bopa; Cotonou (Cadjehoun, Houeyiho, PK3, Poste-Commerce, RP, Saint Michel, Sainte Rita); Kétou; N'Dali; Ouidah; Parakou-Doparou; Porto-Novo; Tchaourou	17/5/04 (Porto-Novo) – 3/12/07 (Cotonou RP) Later use: 2008 (28/1 - Cotonou PK3, 14/3 - Ouidah), 2010 (7/1 - Cotonou Sainte Rita) Seen used: 50
175F Mi 1357 Sc 1309	Abomey (Calavi, Goho); Adjohoun; Aplahoué; Bimbèrèkè; Cotonou Jericho; Cové; Kétou; Natitingou; Nikki; Parakou; Parakou Doparou; Porto-Novo; Porto Novo Oganla; Savé	12/7/04 (Abomey-Goho) – 9/8/07 (Porto Novo Oganla) Seen used: 38
250F Mi 1358 Sc 1310	Abomey-Calavi; Abomey Goho; Akpro-Missérété; Azové; Comé; Cotonou (AM, Centre de Tri Postal, Jericho, PK3, Principal); Glazoué; Grand Popo; Houéyogbé; Kandi; Karimama; Kloué-kanmè; Kouandé; Lokossa; Natitingou; Ouidah; Porto Novo Gbokou; Tanguiéta; Tori Bossito	17/5/04 (Karimama) – 13/8/07 (Lokossa) Later use: 2008 (4/4 - Houéyogbé; 11/8 - Abomey-Goho), 2009 (9/1 - Cotonou Centre de Tri Postal) Seen used: 66
300F Mi 1359 Sc 1311	Abomey-Goho; Aplahoué; Cotonou (Centre de Tri Postal, PK3, RP, Sainte Rita); Djidja; Dogbo-Tota; Ouidah; Porto Novo Oganla; Savalou	8/4/04 (Cotonou Sainte Rita) – 4/7/07 (Dogbo-Tota) Later use: 2008 (7/4, 17/10, 12/12 - Dogbo-Tota; 25/11 - Cotonou RP); 2010 (17/5 – Djidja) Seen used: 33
400F Mi 1360 Sc 1312	Abomey; Allada; Cotonou; Cotonou (Cadjehoun, PK3, RP); Ouidah; Parakou-Doparou; Porto-Novo; Savalou	17/5/04 (Porto-Novo) – 24/8/07 (Ouidah) Later use: 2008 (25/11 - Cotonou RP); 2011 (23/2 – Savalou) Seen used: 19
500F Mi 1361 Sc 1313	Abomey; Abomey-Calavi; Aplahoué; Avrankou; Bohicon; Bohicon-Zakpo; Cotonou (Akpakpa, Principal, RP); Cové; Djougou; Glazoué; Kloué-kanmè; Parakou; Porto-Novo; Porto-Novo Kandeve; Sé	2/3/04 (Cotonou Principal) – 7/9/07 (Cotonou Akpakpa). Later use: 2008 (9/3 - Parakou), 2009 (30/12 - Cové) Seen used: 27
600F Mi 1362 Sc 1314	Bohicon; Cotonou (Centre de Tri Postal, Jericho); Ouidah; Parakou Centre	21/2/07 (Cotonou Centre de Tri Postal) Later use: 2010 (26/11 - Cotonou Jericho); 2011 (10/3 – Parakou Centre) Seen used: 6
➔ Despite reportedly having been issued on 19/12/03 actual use as seen so far from covers appears not to have started until, at the earliest, March 2004, at Cotonou.		

Letters on which these stamps have been used show a wide range of postal rates, sometimes not matching any figure in

La Poste du Bénin's tariff list, but the main use for which each individual value was intended can still be deduced.

Table 3 Applicability of Zin Kaka Values	
Value	Purpose
50F	Used with 400F to make up 450F rate to Zone 3 (Europe, Near East, East Africa) up to 10g.
175F	Domestic rate up to 20g.
250F	Zone 1 (neighbouring West Africa) up to 10g.
300F	Zone 2 (Central/North Africa, France) up to 10g.
400F	Zone 1 up to 20g.
500F	Internal up to 100g; Zone 4 (Americas) up to 10g.
600F	Zone 5 (Asia, Oceania) up to 10g.

Part 2 of this article entitled 'The revalued stamps' will be published in a future edition of the Journal.

References, notes and acknowledgements

(1) See: *BiodiversityHeritageLibrary* www.biodiversitylibrary.org

(2) *Gibbons Stamp Monthly*, April and May 2013.

(3) The Michel catalogue is the most reliable source for post-Independence issues, and its numbering is the one used here and elsewhere in the text; rival catalogues like Yvert and Gibbons offer only partial coverage in comparison, with many issues - despite copious on-cover evidence of genuine postal use - not listed in them at all (*Editor*).

A shorter version of this article appeared in *Gibbons Stamp Monthly* for August 2014. We are grateful to editor Dean Shepherd for permission to reproduce the full version here.

André Le Nôtre and the *Jardins de France* Series

David Hogarth

André Le Nôtre (1613-1700) is a name synonymous with the formal garden in France – *le Jardin à la française*. Perhaps best-known as the landscape architect and the principal gardener for Louis XIV, under whose patronage he designed the gardens at Versailles, he also designed many other formal gardens and parks. His first appearance on a stamp came in the 1959 *Célébrités* issue (Figure 1) and in 2001 the

gardens at Versailles featured on a stamp issued in tribute to him (Figure 2). However, while the châteaux and other great buildings of France have featured regularly on stamps particularly in the annual tourist issues, parks and gardens have usually only been shown incidentally, other than once in the 2007 tourism issue which included *Le Jardin de l'Evêché* in Castres, also designed by Le Nôtre (Figure 3).



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3



Figure 4

Later, an association with the annual *Salon du Timbre* was created and the precursors of the *Jardins de France* series came into being with two minisheets being issued showing the *Parc Floral de Paris* with rhododendrons in 1993 and the *Parc Floral de Paris* with dahlias in 1994 (Figure 4). It took another ten years before the current series of the *Jardins de France* issues first appeared. Conceived in the form of minisheets some 286 x 110mm in size, each contained two stamps in the

central portion with the left and the right-hand ends folded in which, when unfolded, gave the impression of gates – *le portail* – opening into a garden. The first issue to support the *Salon du Timbre* 2004 appeared in 2003 (Figure 5) showing the *Parc des Buttes-Chaumont* and the *Jardin du Luxembourg* in Paris, and this rather unwieldy format continued until 2008; it is perhaps unsurprising that the stamps in these minisheets are quite hard to find commercially used.



Figure 5



Figure 6



Figure 7

At the time, the practice of *La Poste* was that a minisheet would be issued the year before the particular *Salon du Timbre* – see [Figure 5](#) - with a second minisheet appearing at the time of the *Salon* and a larger sheet being issued at the *Salon* itself incorporating all four stamps which

had appeared in the two minisheets. In 2004 the second minisheet in the folding format depicted the *Jardin des Tuileries* and the *Parc Floral de Paris* ([Figure 6](#)), and the four stamps in the two issues were combined in a larger sheet ([Figure 7](#)).

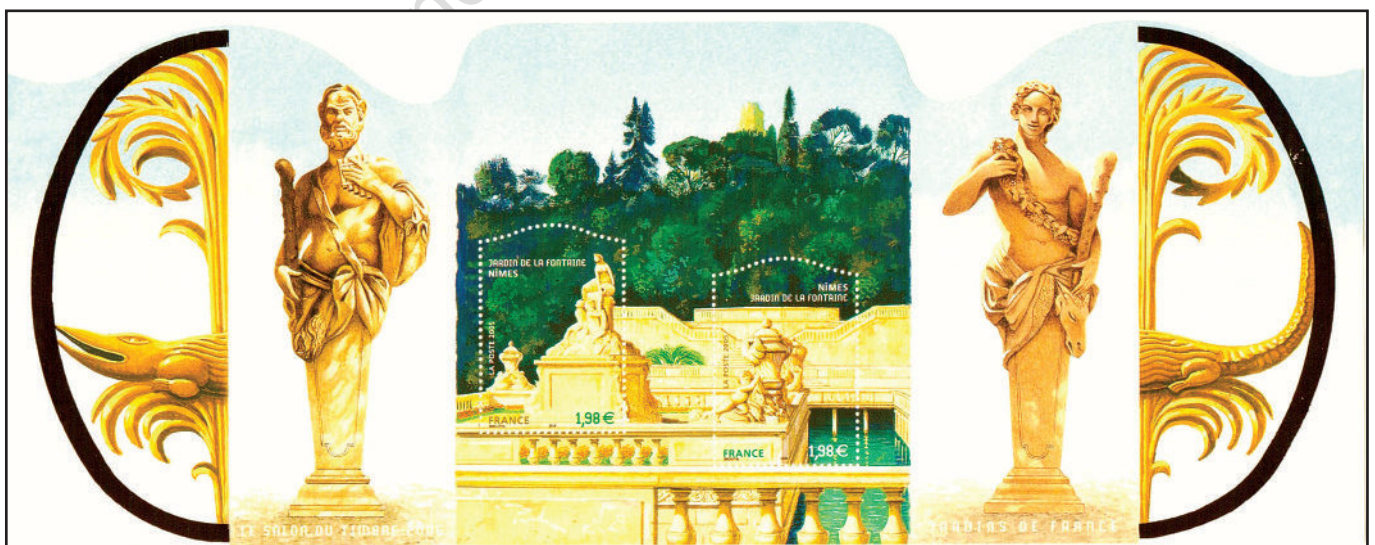


Figure 8



Figure 9

Two years further on and the *Salon du Timbre* 2006 was introduced in 2005 by a minisheet with two stamps showing aspects of the *Jardin de la Fontaine* in Nîmes (Figure 8) followed in 2006 by a similar minisheet showing two further

gardens, the *Parc de la Vallée-aux-Loups* at Châtenay-Malabry and the *Jardin Albert Kahn* at Boulogne-Billancourt, close to Paris (Figure 9), with the four stamps from these sheets being issued again in a further sheet (Figure 10).



Figure10

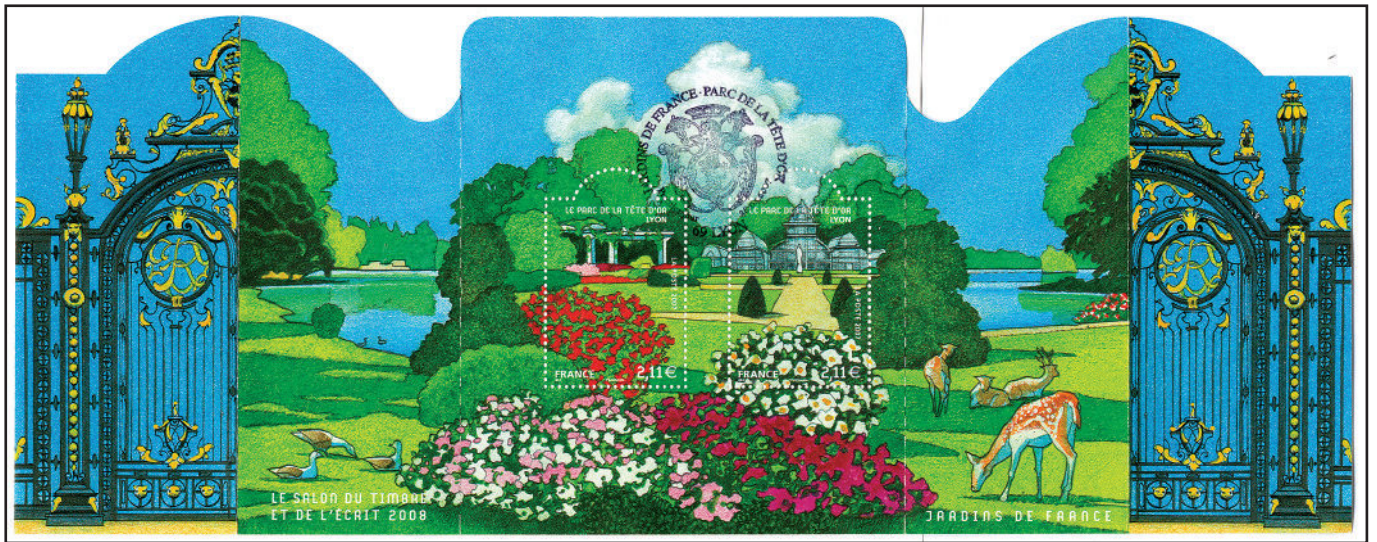


Figure 11

Three similar feuillets were issued for the *Salon du Timbre et de l'Écrit 2008* with a *Jardins de France* minisheet in 2007 showing the *Parc de la Tête d'Or* in Lyon (Figure 11), a second minisheet in the following year showing

the *Parc Longchamp* and the *Parc Borély* in Marseille (Figure 12) with the four stamps being incorporated into a *Salon du Timbre* sheet issued at the Salon in 2008 (Figure 13).

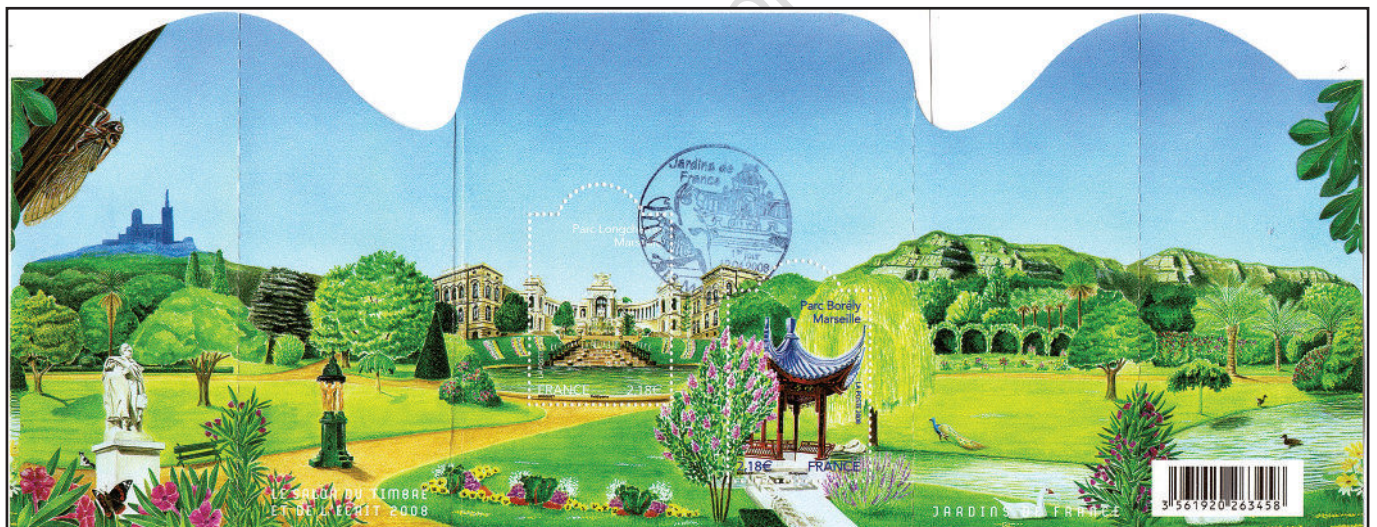


Figure 12



Figure 13



Figure 14



Figure 15



Figure 16

Perhaps by the following *Salon* it was realised that the format - providing a gate into the gardens depicted - had become too unwieldy (though still maintained for special issues such as the 2012 *Rétable d'Issenheim*), and the format for the stamps issued in the *Jardins de France* series for the *Salon du Timbre 2010* reverted to a more modest 95x110mm size, the first of the new small minisheets with

two stamps appearing on 21 September 2009 depicting the *Jardin des Plantes* in Paris (Figure 14). Moving from the formal garden setting, the second minisheet issued on 16 June 2010 showed a painting of the *Jardins de Giverny* by Claude Monet (Figure 15); the *Salon* issue of 2010 remained as a large sheet containing the four stamps as in previous years (Figure 16).



Figure 17

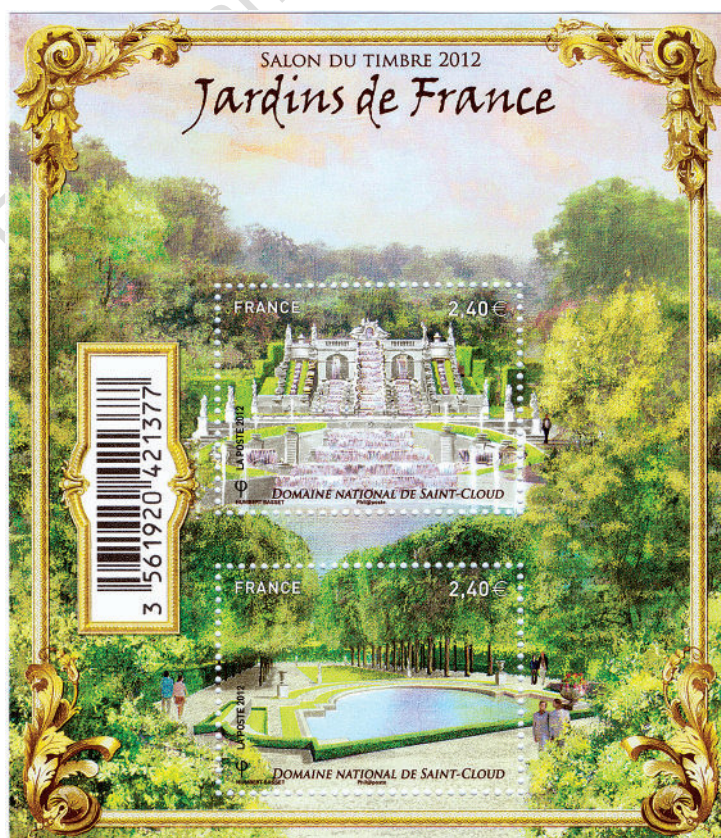


Figure 18



Figure 19

The 2012 *Salon du Timbre* was heralded by a minisheet issued on 19 September 2011 showing the gardens at Cheverny and Villandry (Figure 17), followed by a second issue on 18 June 2012 with two stamps depicting the *Domaine National de Saint-Cloud* (Figure 18) both being incorporated into a sheet issued at the *Salon* on 18 June 2012 (Figure 19).



Figure 20



Figure 21

The most recent *Jardins de France* issue appeared on 3 June 2013 showing the gardens at Versailles and Chantilly and commemorating André Le Nôtre (Figure 20) with whom the series started and which now appears to have been, at least temporarily, suspended.

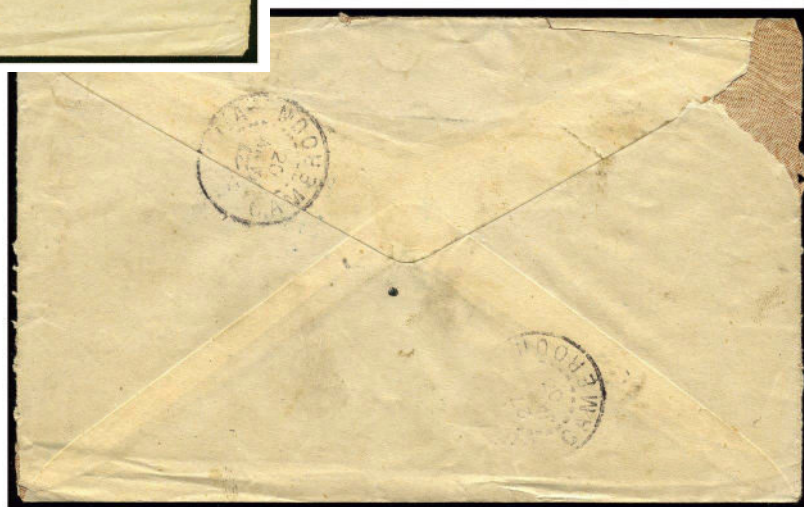
La Poste has apparently moved on to other series such as *Les chemins de Saint-Jacques-de-Compostelle*, and the *Salon du du Timbre* issues are now those of *Les grandes heures de l'histoire de France*. A LISA label (*Libre Service Affranchissement*) has been issued showing the *Jardin*

Massey in Tarbes – which also appeared without much garden shown in the Philatelic Congress issue of 2009.

No doubt *La Poste* will continue with more “gardens and parks” issues in the future, even though the *Jardins* minisheets in the original format have gone. Perhaps they see the future in Collectors’ issues – rather than purely postal issues – such as those which appeared in 2013 devoted to “open spaces” – *Les Parcs et Jardins de Paris* – on the *rive droite* and the *rive gauche* (Figure 21).

Cameroun – A Mute Cancel Identified as a Railroad Postmark

Marty Bratzel



Figures 1 & 2
Cover to England with
Mbanga CFN railroad station handstamp,
4 mute postmarks dated 27 January 1920
plus a Duala transit postmark
dated the same day.

The cover depicted in **Figures 1 (front)** and **2 (back)** is intriguing for several reasons. Addressed to a business establishment in England, the cover bears a handstamp, dated 21 January 1920, applied by the manager of the railroad station at Mbanga, on the *Chemin de Fer du Nord* (CFN). This is the first example I have seen of such a marking. Two 10 centimes postage stamps are cancelled with a mute circular date stamp dated six days later, on 27 January 1920. The cover is also backstamped Duala on the same day. In addition, a postage due marking – a T in a triangle – is present.

So much for the description. What can we deduce from these markings?

The handwriting on the cover looks English, not French, from which we can infer that the sender was English, more so because of the Huddersfield commercial destination. Mbanga is close to the border with that portion of the former German protectorate of Kamerun placed under British administration. Recognising the challenges in communications experienced in the British sphere during that time (**Ref. 1**), perhaps the sender, for faster dispatch, took his letter across the border. In 1920, there was no post office at Mbanga – a facility was only opened there on 28 November 1925 (**Ref. 2**) – but a railroad postal service on

the CFN had been established with effect from 1 September 1919 (**Ref. 3**). In 1920, up trains from Bonaberi (km 0) to Nkongsamba (km 160) operated Monday and Thursday and down trains on Wednesday and Saturday (**Ref. 4**). Mbanga was located at km 68. However, adherence to the schedule was another matter (**Ref. 1**).

In any event, the letter was handed over to the station master rather than being placed in a collection box to await pick-up by the train – or maybe collection boxes had not yet been installed. The date of the Mbanga CFN handstamp – 21 January 1920 – was a Wednesday, so the letter may have missed that day's down train.

It is unclear whether the two postage stamps were affixed to the envelope when turned in at Mbanga. If the sender were English, he may not have had any French Cameroun stamps, nor the station master, so the letter could have been completely unpaid, attracting the postage due mark when the cover was handed over to the African railroad postal agent. Alternatively, the letter could have had stamps affixed but had been short paid, again attracting postage due. However, there is no evidence that postage due was assessed or collected after arrival in England, so I am inclined to conclude that the letter was completely unpaid at the time of posting.



Figures 3 & 4
Domestic cover with mute postmark
dated 19 June 1920,
Duala transit 20 June,
and Lolodorf arrival 23 June.

In 1920, the cost to mail a letter weighing under 20 grams from French Cameroun to England was 25 centimes (Ref. 5). The cover should have been sent at the letter rate but, being addressed to a commercial establishment, it could have been sent at the rate for business papers, 10 centimes up to 100 grams, unusual to say the least. Postage due, collected at double the deficiency, would account for the 20 centimes on the envelope.

Or possibly the postage due marking was completely ignored.

The stamps are postmarked on Tuesday, 27 January 1920, six days after being received by the station master at Mbanga. A second strike of the postmark was added clear of the stamps. With trains supposed to operate twice a week in each direction, the delay could perhaps be explained by irregular service, as had been reported earlier, in 1916 (Ref. 1). The cover is also backstamped the same day at Douala, indicating that when the cover reached Bonaberi, on the north shore of the Wouri River, it promptly crossed the river by ferry to Douala, on the south shore, the port of arrival and departure for overseas mail.

When was the postage due assessed and how was it paid? Let us assume that the T in triangle was added and postage due assessed at the time the letter entered the postal stream, that is, turned over to the railroad postal agent sometime between 21 and 27 January. Quite likely, the African agent did not have postage due stamps, so he used postage stamps

when the requisite fee was collected. This was the practice at the time at various other locales in Cameroun.

Who paid the fee and when? One highly speculative possibility is that the station master turned the letter over to the railroad postal agent on the up journey of the train, the postage due mark applied, and perhaps the postage paid on the down journey, when the letter passed again through Mbanga, through some arrangement.

Postage and postage due notwithstanding, we turn now to the most intriguing aspect of the cover – the mute postmark. I have several other examples of this mute postmark and, through process of elimination discussed further below, I had concluded that the postmark was in some way associated with Bonaberi. I had assumed that the mute postmark was a poor strike of the Bonaberi handstamp, or that the Bonaberi device had experienced some problems. Those assumptions were not well supported, as I have earlier and later strikes that are perfectly fine, with no evidence that repairs had been made to the canceller.

With the cover discussed above, I can now conclude with reasonable confidence that the mute handstamp was supplied for use by the CFN postal agent, pending receipt of a permanent date stamp. The earliest *Bonaberi à N'Kong-Samba* railroad cancel confirmed by the author is dated 24 December 1920, although 27 June 1920 has been reported (Ref. 6). I have examples of the mute handstamp dated between 6 December 1919 and 19 June 1920.

Cancellers of this type had by 1919 been introduced at several towns in Cameroun. Strikes of some of those postmarks can be poor – for example, Edea, Eseka, Kribi, and Lolodorf – but usually some portion of the town and country lettering is visible, unlike the mute device where nothing is visible. I compared the mute postmarks with postmarks from other towns by superimposing examples atop a light box. In no case did the cancels align. The primary differences are the number and / or the relative positions of the dashes of the inner circle. Therefore I had ruled out the use of the mute device at other established post offices in Cameroun.

Like the cover discussed above, some other covers with the mute postmark also bear transit marks of Douala. For example, the cover depicted in **Figures 3 (front)** and **4 (back)** has a mute postmark dated 19 June 1920. The cover passed through Douala on 20 June, travelling east along the *Chemin de Fer du Centre* (CFC), then south to its destination, Lolodorf, arriving 23 June. Considering domestic mail routes at that time, this letter could only have arrived at Douala from the north, that is, via Bonaberi and points along the CFN. Other covers with a mute postmark support that conclusion. The Mbanga station master's handstamp on the cover in Figure 1 supports specific use of the mute handstamp on the CFN.

Provisional handstamps and markings have been recorded for other post offices in Cameroun, pending arrival of properly worded permanent date stamps, so use of a mute handstamp on the CFN is well within the realm of possibility. A railroad postal service was also inaugurated on 1 September 1919 on the CFC, which operated from Douala to Eseka. Did the CFC also have a mute handstamp or some other distinctive marking? The earliest confirmed *Douala à Eseka* postmark is dated 12 May 1921, although a

partial postmark with only the year 1920 has been reported (**Ref. 6**).

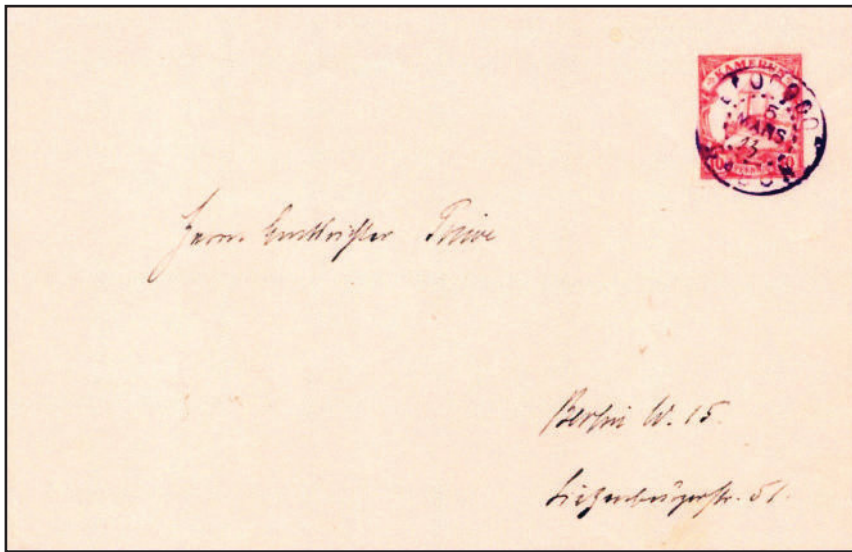
As always, readers' comments and insight are welcome, and particularly for these covers.

References

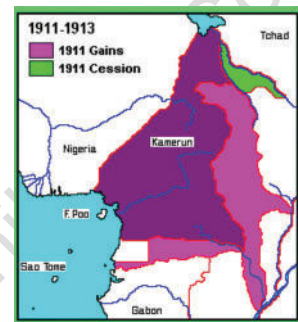
1. Maddocks, R.J. and M.P. Bratzel, Jr. *The Postmarks and Postal History of the Cameroons under British Administration 1916-1961 – Supplement*. MPB Canada, Windsor, Ontario, Canada, 2007. 115 pages. ISBN 978-0-9694026-5-7.
2. *Arrêté créant une agence postale à Mbanga*. Order dated 28 November 1925. *Journal officiel du Cameroun*, N° 135, 15 December 1925, page 545. Imprimerie du Gouvernement, Yaoundé.
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4. Bratzel, M.P. Jr. *The Railroads of Cameroun and Associated Postal History*. MPB Canada, Windsor, Ontario, Canada, 2009. 154 pages. ISBN 978-0-9694026-6-4.
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SHORTER ITEMS - INCLUDING QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Mail from Ekododo, Gabon



1913 Ekododo Gabon cancel on 10 pfennig Kamerun issue.
Note manuscript 13 year date.



This illustration shows an interesting cover from Kamerun offered in a Lugdunum auction.

The cover is evidence that the cessation of part of north Gabon (including Ekododo) to German Kamerun in 1911 in exchange for Germany giving up its claim to Agadir can result in complicated philatelic marriages.

The Dallay catalogue informs us that the Ekododo post office was not ceded by France to Germany until 2 October 1912. In mid-November the office changed its name to Cocobeach and then in February 1913 to Ukoko. (However, is not Cocobeach just the English translation of Ukoko?) The office closed on 24 August 1914, presumably

just before the Battle of Ukoko on 21 September which led to the defeat of the Germans and their retreat to Spanish Rio Muni.

According to the catalogue published by ARGE, the German Colonies Society, the French Gabon cancel for Ekododo continued to be used until 4 April 1913 to cancel German Kamerun stamps. The cover above, dated 5 March 1913, falls into this period. It is interesting to note that it displays a manuscript year date due to the lack of a new French year slug.

The Gabon handstamp was replaced by a German Kamerun cancel on 5 April 1913.

John Mayne / Mick Bister

Further information on the 1938 airmail rate to Tanganyika

In response to Mick Bister's enquiry in Journal 276 of June 2015 (page 59) I can confirm that the rate on the cover is even more inexplicable than it seems. On 1 March 1938 Egypt implemented the Empire All-up Scheme and from then on covers to many Empire destinations including Tanganyika could be sent by Imperial Airways services without incurring an airmail fee (John Sears, *Airmails of Egypt*, 1990, page 73). However, I have been unable to find out what the rules were regarding mail from ships. I would be inclined to agree that the second 1F75 was applied 'just in case'.

Whatever the Egyptian post office made of the rate, the cover was certainly forwarded by air. The journey from Port Saïd to Cairo or Alexandria was by rail and took the

best part of a day, so the cover, backstamped in transit at Port Saïd at 6.45 am, would have reached either city that evening. The next flight south was DS 131, on 29 September, which reached Dar-es-Salaam (via which the cover is endorsed) on 1 October, where the cover would have been transferred to the railway running directly 780 miles from Dar-es-Salaam to Kigoma on Lake Tanganyika. Without knowing the timetable, an arrival date of 6 October seems perfectly in accordance.

The all-up rate at this time from Egypt to Tanganyika was 15 mills for a letter up to 15 grams. How that relates to 1F75 for a letter up to 20 grams I am totally unable to say. If it's any help, the all-up rate from GB to Tanganyika at this time was three-ha'pence per half ounce.

Barbara Priddy

Recommandé d'Office

In 2006, Peter Kelly wrote a most interesting article on the subject of the development of the *Chargement d'office* service for the *France & Colonies Philatelist* (U.S.A.) and, as a follow up, I shared a letter which I had acquired in 2007. As it is the only example of an eighteenth century letter bearing the instruction *recommandé d'office* that I have come across during some fifty plus years of the collecting and study of the French postal system during the period of the *ancien régime*, I thought it would be of interest to members of this society.

To recap, *recommandé d'office* was a free service taken at the initiative of the postal authorities (as indicated by the mention *d'office* i.e. not at the request of the sender) where it was perceived that a letter was addressed to a person of importance (the king, a minister etc.) or that its contents appeared to be valuable. This is clearly stated in the *Instruction pour les contrôleurs des Postes* of 1757 and confirmed by Article VI of the *Instruction générale* of 1792.

The letter shown is dated 3 November 1788 (Fig 1). It was written at RAON in Lorraine, and addressed to VERONA in the Venetian Republic. The post clerk at Raon applied the origin handstamp (Lenain 2), weighed the letter, endorsed it on the reverse for a pre-payment of 42 sols, (Fig.2) and added *franche* to confirm the pre-payment, on the front. The *taxe* was calculated at the 1759 tariff single rate (weight not exceeding $\frac{1}{4}$ once or 2 gros) at 8 sols to Paris plus 20 sols from Paris to Verona (via Aix, Antibes and Genoa), multiplied by $1\frac{1}{2}$ for a weight of 3 gros. On arrival in Paris all of this was confirmed by the application of the transit handstamp P.P.P.P (*Port Payé Passe Paris*) in red. At this point it must have been realised that the letter contained another piece of paper, possibly of value, or perhaps Signore Bertolini was a personage of some importance, and so it was endorsed *recommandé d'office*, the details entered in the appropriate ledger and also on the advice note that would accompany the mail to ensure a safer and speedier delivery.

One enigma is the meaning of the manuscript black ink endorsement below the word *franche*. Is it perhaps the initials of the postmaster who approved the registration or an Italian charge mark? To date, no one I have consulted has been able to enlighten me.

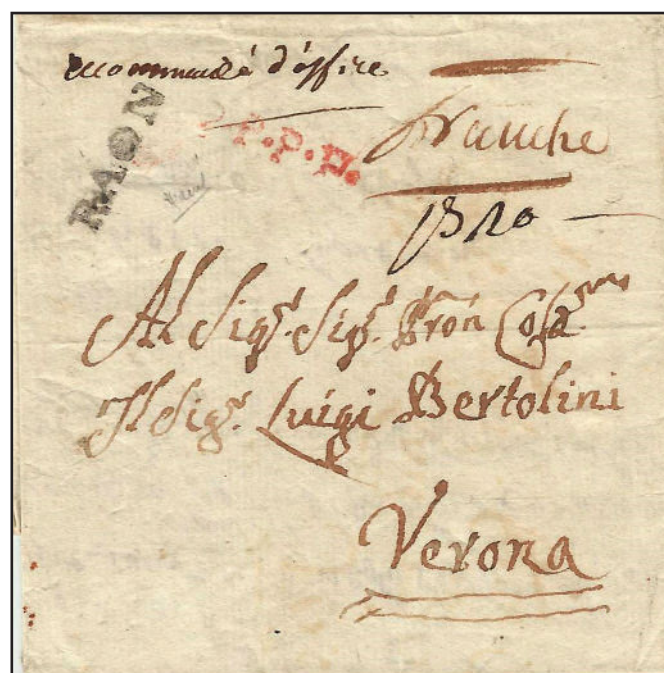


Figure 1
1788 *recommandé d'office* letter.



Figure 2
42 sols
endorsement

Acknowledgement

My thanks, once again, to M. Robert Abensur, for his invaluable help.

References

1. Kelly, P.R.A., "Chargement d'office," *France and Colonies Philatelist*, USA, July 2006, pp. 55- 57.
2. Lenain, L., *La Poste de l'Ancienne France*, Arles, 1965.
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Peter Maybury

Disturbing Mail



This postcard was sent by someone in Bordeaux who does not give his or her name. It was sent on 11 June 1942, when Bordeaux was under German occupation, and the card is in fact addressed to a German officer, Hauptmann (Captain) Blume, at 11 Rue Thiac, also in Bordeaux.

The captain had to pay postage due in order to have his card as it was an old 80c one that did not cover the 1F20 postcard rate that had been introduced as long as six months earlier. The Post Office informed him by its postmark

that the French Empire wanted a strong ever-ready navy, something that would become a definite impossibility with the scuttling of the French fleet at Toulon four months later.

And what message did the officer find? It was written in German. 'Don't let go!! It's definitely the scoundrel K. We know! Proof follows.' A collaborator at work! Was the handwriting genuinely poor or the result of an attempt to disguise it? A somewhat sickening item of mail!

Roy Reader

Oval V.P.M. Handstamp

I feel I should bring to the attention of readers that in the précis of Héloïse Mitchell's display at Charlecote (reported in Journal 276 of June 2015, page 66) the oval handstamp V.P.M. (presumably in red) is not French. It was applied

to mail entering Livorno, by sea, carried by foreign non-postal vessels, and is an abbreviation of "Via Particolare Maritima". It was used from 1851 to 1853 and is recorded as Salles 667 and Delbianco 130.

Peter Maybury

Special Mailing - Cameroun to France November 1944



Figure 1.

Stampless special mailing cover from Cameroun postmarked *Bureau du Courrier Officiel* Paris 22 November 1944 - front.

The attractive stampless cover in **Figure 1 (front)** and **Figure 2 (back)** is neatly postmarked *Bureau du Courrier Officiel* Paris 22 November 1944. The postmark is accompanied by a circular administrative cachet of the *Secrétariat d'Etat aux Colonies* and a two-line handstamp, applied in red, reading *Le Ministre des Colonies*. The *Lyon Gare* arrival postmark on the back is dated one day later, 23 November 1944. Of particular interest is the sender's address – N'Kongsamba, Cameroun. Therein lies an interesting story.

Paris had been liberated on 25 August 1944 and plans were under way to reopen postal services between Cameroun and France. In a Public Notice (**Ref. 1**) published 1 November 1944, residents of Cameroun were advised that, pending the reestablishment of regular postal service, special arrangements were being made for Cameroun residents to send letters to their immediate families in France. The Director of the Civil Cabinet was responsible for this special mailing. Letters were to be forwarded under official cover, first to Alger, the centralization point for such mail from within Africa, then to Paris and onward to their final destination. The notice is depicted in **Figure 3**.

Each resident was permitted to send three letters weighing not more than five grams each. The sender had to include his name and address on the envelope. The Public Notice makes no mention as to how the letters were to be sent to the Civil Cabinet or the postage required. Whether the Civil Cabinet was only responsible for organization or exercised a degree of postal control or censorship is unknown. The cover contains no stamps or any postal or other markings that can be definitely attributed to Cameroun.

It is unclear where the cachets other than the postmark were applied. Maddocks illustrated a similar cover with identical markings, including the time of day in the Paris postmark (**Ref. 2**). He expressed the opinion that the circular administrative cachet was added in Alger and that the two-line red handstamp was applied in Douala by the Director as a means of identifying such mail. The Public Notice had advised that such mail would be marked in some way to facilitate handling.



Figure 2.

Special mailing cover - back.

The author would be interested to know about mail sent by this special arrangement from other French African territories to France and especially what markings were applied to those covers. Your comments are most welcome.

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2. Maddocks, R.J. *Facets of Cameroun in Wartime*. Cockrill Series Booklet N° 58, Hampstead Norreys, Newbury, Berkshire, United Kingdom, 1985. In addition to the markings illustrated on the cover in Figure 1, Maddocks' cover (on page 58) has seven Cameroun postage stamps, all cancelled by a straight-line *Courrier Officiel - Paris* handstamp. Judging from the cover in Figure 1, postage was not, however, required.

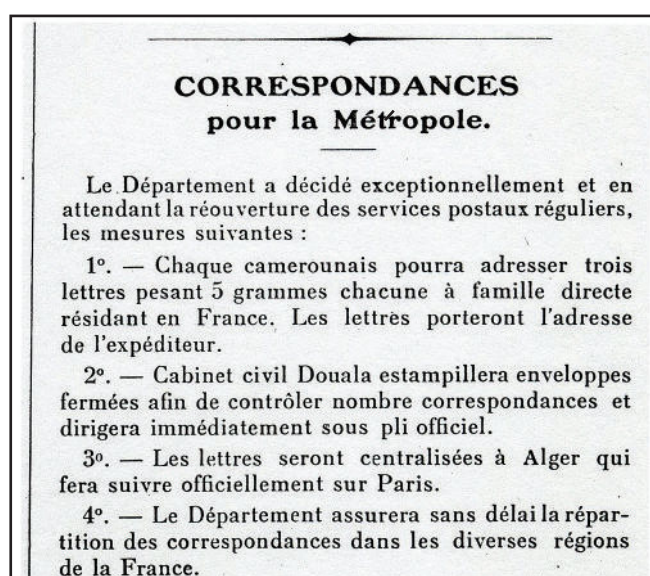


Figure 3

Public Notice about special mail service to France, 1 November 1944

Marty Bratzel

Stamps on lottery tickets



As an avid collector of France Cinderella material, I was delighted to find this lottery ticket at a recent postcard fair and I wonder if members can shed any light on the beautiful engraved adhesive stamp attached to it?

The stamp which is dated 1968 measures 45mm by 30mm, larger than the standard commemorative issues of the period. The stamp shows a portrait of the explorer Louis Antoine de Bougainville holding a parrot. A stamp (Yvert 2521) commemorating him was issued as part of the 1988 *Personnages Célèbres* booklet of six (Yvert BC2523). Incidentally, the date given for the death of Bougainville on the lottery stamp as 1814 is incorrect.

He actually died in 1811 which is correctly noted on the commemorative stamp referred to above. A glance at the France eBay site shows hundreds of these tickets with stamps attached all for sale around the 5 Euro mark. They seem to date from the 1950s to 1970s.

What I would be interested to know is who were the designers, engravers and printers and if there are any lists or catalogues of these most interesting stamps. I would also like to know what the procedure was for issuing these tickets. Did the *Tabac* owner stick the stamps individually onto the tickets at the time of purchase? I would like to hear from anyone who has a collection of these items; any details gratefully received.

Richard Broadhurst

Réunion facsimiles

It is now over 60 years since I started to collect colonial issues and in that time I have bought many collections of varying value. However, I have never seen until attending my local monthly fair examples of the items illustrated which are un-cancelled, imperforate and without gum.

They are 10c and 20c values but logically there may be other values in other colours? The values are in French currency, but the inscription Reunion Jsle (not Isle) seems unusual.

All comments welcomed.

John Mayne



The 15c value, above right, was offered in the F&CPS Auction of May 2011. It was from Geoff Gethin's collection but didn't sell and nor did it find a buyer at Charlecote. It was then offered on the Delcampe internet auction site and it went for 4 euros.

Mick Bister

Cheap postage, or what?

A colleague at work handed me the franking illustrated on the next page, salvaged from an incoming parcel of books. Each self-adhesive label bears two stamps, together making 5 francs worth of postage (charity surtaxes being carefully ignored). A query to the sender (a business, rather than an individual) – despite starting diplomatically with thanks for using pictorials for postage before going on to enquire as to their source – brought no reply.

A recent story on Stampboards.com, an Australia-based

internet discussion forum, featured similar-looking frankings (mounted on self-adhesive labels) from the Netherlands. But there, unlike the French franking under discussion, the component stamps were mostly fakes, and had apparently been bought cheaply on-line.

Has any other member received, seen or even used similar French frankings? Are they being sold by dealers to use up surplus mint stocks? Obviously, even after thirteen years of the euro issues, the "New Franc" stamps are still valid for postage.

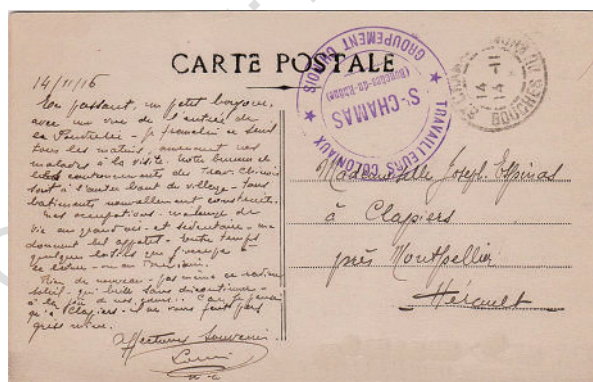


Michael Round

Les Travailleurs

Further to the article '*Les travailleurs* who helped win World War 1' by David Trapnell published in Journal 276

of June 2015 (page 45), here are illustrations of two further examples of the 'Chinois' cachets.



1914 postcard to Montpellier with cachet of
TROUPEMENTS COLONIAUX / GROUPEMENT CHINOIS
ST CHAMAS



1918 Cover cancelled Gare d'Oissons
to Neufchâtel-en-Bray with boxed
GROUPEMENT DE TRAVAILLEURS CHINOIS.

Colonies, 1871?



The stamp, left, (10 centime from a Circuit Book) raises many more questions than I have answers. Because of a large thin, there is little cash value to the stamp, no matter what it is. Excluding Bordeaux (it doesn't look lithographed and the shading under the eye does not match the shading lines on the Bordeaux issue), there seem to be four options:

Is it a France 1850?

Is it a Colonies general issue of 1871?

Is it a France 1870 Siege issue with perforations trimmed off?

Is it a fake?

Let us examine the evidence:

Trimmed perforations: an unscientific but useful exercise was placing the unknown stamp over a copy of the 1870 Siege 10 centime. The result was that no perforations were visible at top or bottom, and about half of the depth of the perforations were visible on only one side. This seems to make a trimmed France 1870 unlikely. Those who are more expert than I am in fakery might know how this could be done, so I don't conclusively rule out trimming.

Colour: The Dallay catalogues give four colours for the 1850 stamp: yellow-bistre, brown-bistre, greenish bistre, and deep-greenish bistre. Two colours are listed for the 1870 Siege stamp: bistre and brown-bistre. Dallay gives only bistre for the Colonies 1871.

The stamp clearly is not brown-bistre, greenish bistre, or deep-greenish bistre. I don't think it is yellow-bistre. Thus if the stamp is genuine and the colour has not been

chemically altered, it would be a France 1870 with trimmed perforations or a Colonies 1871.

Cancellation: the stamp was bought (for approximately £1) in dim light without a magnifying glass as an 1871 Colonies item. At first glance, the cancellation looked like MQE, which would fit with an 1871 Colonies stamp. Closer study in good light makes the MQE dubious, but not impossible. The general impression is of a lozenge-of-dots cancel, which would be consistent with any of the four choices.

The dent: the upper end of the left frame line has a distinct dent. Barat et Suarnet's book *'Le nouveau "Bleus de France"'* lists a variety of the 1850 stamp as *'filet gauche déformé'*, which I translate as "left frame line deformed." Barat et Suarnet do not illustrate where the dent is or what it looks like. There is another characteristic mentioned in front of the words quoted above: *'Coin gauche inférieur brisé et . . .'* There is no break apparent in the lower left corner, but that corner is stained enough to make firm decisions difficult. If the dent is in the proper place, would that make the stamp a France 1850, despite the colour?

Barat et Suarnet does list a *'cassure Fig. a'* with an illustration for the 1870 Siege stamp. Fig. a shows a dent at the lower end of the left frame line, and a short frame break just below the dent. Were the same plates reused for the 1850, 1870, and 1871 stamps?

And the E: the "E" of "REPUB" has a bottom bar that slopes up and seems to curve up at the end. Barat et Suarnet makes no mention of this as a variety, and the "E" of "POSTES" is not similarly misshapen. The deformed E might mean poor design work on a fake stamp. Are the dent and the deformed E both characteristics of a known fake?

Summary: once again, lots of questions and few answers. What are your thoughts? Any help would be deeply appreciated.

"Napoléon"

REPORTS OF MEETINGS

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF 9 MAY 2015

The General Secretary Peter Kelly opened the meeting at the Calthorpe Arms public house, 252 Gray's Inn Road, London WC1 at 11.30 am in the presence of 14 members.

(1) Members Present: Maurice Alder, Len Barnes, Mick Bister, Richard Broadhurst, Steve Ellis, Chris Hitchen, Bob Larg, Hugh Loudon, Peter Kelly, John Morton, Robert Small, Maurice Tyler, Alan Wood, Bob Wood

Guests: Marian Bister, Annette Tyler

Apologies: Roy Ferguson, John Hammonds, Mike Kemp, Ashley Lawrence, Jeremy Martin, Bill Mitchell, Colin Spong, John West

(2) Minutes of the previous AGM of 10 May 2014, published in Journal 273 were accepted unanimously as a true record of that meeting.

(3) President's Report - Steve Ellis

"Little did I appreciate when I joined this Society many years ago that I would one day become its President, an honour which I do not take lightly. It is indeed a privilege to serve at the helm of a strong, vibrant and well respected society.

"As members are currently aware, factors outside the Society's control have resulted in a busy year – initially causing great concern but overcome through the dedication and hard work of a small group of officers. For personal reasons our Journal Editor resigned and Maurice Tyler (our former editor) stepped into the breach to continue its production. Appreciating the importance to members of the information supplied through our Journal, strenuous efforts were made to ensure its continuation, which I am pleased to say have borne fruit. With assistance from a small group of members (from as far afield as Australia) under the capable leadership of Mick Bister, a strategy is in place to continue our award-winning Journal.

"Secondly, due to the sad loss of the Society's librarian, George Barker and the inability of any member due to lack of space to continue the role, we had to determine what to do with our vast accumulation of books, journals and periodicals. After discussion it was decided to offer them to members in the form of an auction. So with the assistance of Stephen Holder and Richard Broadhurst and under the direction of Chris Hitchen, the huge task of checking, valuing and moving the library began. The auction of 478 titles (with some more still to come) took place and 55 members were successful with their bids, providing valuable information which will no doubt enable them to enhance their collections.

"Thankfully, it was business as normal with regard to the Society's other activities; the circulating packets of French and Colonial material (capably managed by Bob Wood and John West) enabling members both to sell surplus material and to acquire new material), plus four auctions during the year and the sale of publications.

"For many members the opportunity to meet together, display parts of their collections and view others' displays

is a benefit. However declining attendance at meetings, mainly as a consequence of increasing age and decreasing mobility, and the lack of an organiser has led to the loss of the Southern group meetings and the re-organisation of the London group meetings. Nevertheless the spring Charlecote philatelic weekend, in the capable hands of Chris Hitchen and Peter Kelly, continues to be successful and an inaugural autumn day meeting was held in Stoke-on-Trent. Thank you to those who attended; it is to be repeated in a future year, though not in 2015 due to other groups already having arranged meetings during October.

"Despite falling membership, due almost wholly to death or infirmity, your society remains strong, due in part to the tireless efforts of a small group of people (who I know would be happy to be augmented by other members) to whom I offer my sincere thanks for all their efforts throughout 2014."

(4) General Secretary's report - Peter Kelly

"At 31 December 2014 our total membership stood at 334, a drop of 34 over the course of the year. This has been of concern to us but is not wholly unexpected. The simple truth is that the membership of your society is ageing and we lost 11 members and a further 27 resigned or were suspended for non-payment explained mainly by age or infirmity. Despite our efforts, recruitment was, again, disappointing with only 4 new members. It is likely that membership will continue to fall in the future and, while this is sad, it should not, at least at present have any serious financial repercussions. Our finances remain very sound thanks to the careful management of costs by our Treasurer and our principal fixed cost, that of the Journal, has been reduced considerably following the change of printer. With the fall in membership, the print run has been reduced accordingly.

"The meetings of the London and regional groups are a cause of concern to the committee. We have seen the closure of the Scottish and Southern groups in previous years and attendance at London meetings has been patchy. The Wessex group continues but has lost older members and the Northern group is at present considering its future. The General Committee have made it clear that while the Society is able to help with costs of meetings etc. all decisions are purely in the hands of the local convenors but they will have no future without the support of the members.

"The France and French colonies packets continue to be well supported and a key service provided by the Society under the fine management of John West and Bob Wood. It cannot be expected that they will continue indefinitely on the grounds of both age and other overriding commitments. I would like to make an appeal for members, perhaps already involved with the packets to consider whether they could become assistants to our two officers in charge, and perhaps, one day to take over from them. This is not an immediate problem, but circumstances can often change quickly or unexpectedly and as things stand now, without

them, the service would close. Please give careful thought to this and if you feel you can help here, please contact John or Bob.

“Under our new auction secretary, our members have been provided with a number of good opportunities to buy and sell and, as ever we are grateful to those who have provided and especially those who have donated material.

“Members will be pleased to know that the immediate crisis facing publication of our journal has now passed. While the future is in no way assured, the current plan put together by Mick Bister and Maurice Tyler supported by a number of volunteer sub-editors and a new member, Peter Allan in Australia who is formatting the journal, appears to be working well. The Committee particularly appreciates the appearance of volunteers that has made this possible. Mick will be giving more information on this in his report and we are very grateful for his help in this, and to Maurice who is still doing as much as he can.

“A word now about the library. Normally my report would cover the period to year end but given the particular circumstances this does extend into the current year. At the AGM last year we outlined our plans for the dispersal of the library and magazines. Thanks to the enormous efforts put into this by Stephen Holder (acting for George Barker's estate and all of the Society's material stored in his home), Chris Hitchen and Richard Broadhurst, this has been largely and very successfully accomplished. The magazines have been donated totally to the Royal Philatelic Society London. This will allow them to have complete runs of the titles and to replace existing poor quality copies with better ones. This decision follows the committee's view that it is imperative that this information, previously held by us, would remain available to members and the general public in this country. It is thus available to members of the Royal and to non-members who apply to their Secretary for permission to view them or items in their library. We have also now had, in the current year, the auction sale of the books and many of you will have taken advantage of this. Of the unsolds we have retained some books ourselves and a list of these will be available on the website in due course, and have sold a substantial amount to the Royal to help in building up their library. A certain number remain that will be dealt with as and when. I would also make the point that the books and magazines were fully amortised financially on purchase and the only impact on the society will be the funds received from their sale.

“On a personal note, the years are speeding by and I have made the decision that I wish to spend more time on my own collections and research and am giving notice now that I will be resigning as secretary and committee member in a year's time, thus allowing my colleagues plenty of time to replace me. I will certainly continue to support our society as much as possible but from the back benches.”

(5) Treasurer's Report - Chris Hitchen

“We made a modest surplus of £xx in 2014.

“The auction and packets both had good years contributing

substantially to the Society's income whilst publications continue to provided a modest amount of income. However our drop in membership is causing a reduction in subscriptions. I would expect this trend to continue which must be a cause for concern for the future.

“The disposal of the library is proceeding steadily and this will provide a certain amount of extra income as sales of books progress.

“On the expenditure side our meeting costs increased slightly. However the anticipated savings expected from our change of printer have been fulfilled. The printing of the Journal is around £xx less and there is also a drop in our distribution costs which is reflected in the decrease on postage and expenses.

“One of our Australian members asked if the Journal and other productions could be sent electronically in the form of a pdf rather than printed copies. That would provide a significant saving for overseas members with postage costs being so high. On the downside it would increase the amount of administration for those few who are already heavily engaged in running the Society. I would suggest that we offer this service in 2016 for overseas members only and set the rate at the same as the UK subscription at £18. For those taking up this offer it would mean the Journal, auction lists, flyers and so on all being sent as email attachments or in a format which could be accessed electronically. Nothing would be sent to those members by conventional post.

“The level of uncertainty about our future as mentioned in my report last year makes it very difficult to estimate future income and expenditure. For that reason I am proposing a change in rule 10 relating to subscriptions to allow for flexibility if needed in the light of the position towards the year end. At the moment the May AGM sets the amount for the following year and that assumes stability which we no longer enjoy. The maximum will now be set at the AGM but if the situation deteriorates after that then a lower figure could be set by the committee later in the year if it transpired that our usual services could no longer be provided.

“Once the rule is changed I would propose leaving the maximum subscription levels as they are for 2016.”

See balance sheet on next page,

Rule Change in respect of subscriptions

“Subscriptions shall be due and payable on 1 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 maximum amount of the annual subscription shall be determined at the Annual General meeting and shall be effective from the 1 January next unless in the light of the services that the Society will be able to provide the committee later decides that a lesser amount is appropriate.”

The rule change was proposed by Chris Hitchen and accepted unanimously

FRANCE & COLONIES PHILATELIC SOCIETY

BALANCE SHEET AT 31 DECEMBER 2014

CURRENT ASSETS

Cash at bank
Sundry debtors

2014

2013

DEDUCT CURRENT LIABILITIES

Sundry creditors
Subscriptions in advance
Magazine circuit float

TOTAL ASSETS

Represented by
MEMBERS FUNDS
Uncommitted funds at 1.1.2013
Year surplus

INCOME & EXPENDITURE 2014Expenditure20142013Income20142013

Meetings			Auction		
Journal 4 issues			Exchange packet		
Postage and expenses			Interest		
Stampex 2013			Sale of publications		
Insurance			Donations		
Year surplus			Subscriptions		

Acceptance of the Accounts was proposed by Alan Wood, seconded by Maurice Taylor and carried unanimously.

(6) Auction Secretary's Report - Steve Ellis

"Three normal auctions, plus an additional auction of George Barker's collection (operated by John Hammonds) together with the proceeds from the bookstall and bourse at Charlecote yielded a surplus for the Society of £xx, £xx up on the previous year. Two strong auctions in February and May were followed by a smaller auction in November, a consequence of less material being offered for sale.

"For the three main auctions, 42% of the lots were sold with the value of sales being greater than in 2013, an indication of the better material offered for sale.

"The success of the Society's auction in the future depends in large part on the offer of sufficient material for sale by members: long may that continue!"

(7) Report of the Packet Secretary (France) - Bob Wood

"The number of members receiving the 'France' packet was again lower this year (71 in the final circulation of the year, compared to 82 at its beginning), but the rapidity and frequency of circulation was maintained, with most members seeing 10 packets of 9 to 12 books during the year. The number of members contributing material to the packet was also reduced (from 22 to 18) with 147 new books being received during the year. 214 books completed their circulation among the 10 circuits. Once again there was a preponderance of recently-issued items, while 19th century material – though limited in quantity – remained popular. Vignettes or poster stamps have proved attractive to a relatively small number of purchasers: take-up seems to be heavily dependent on the particular themes represented. The relatively highly-priced items mentioned in last year's report achieved mostly good sales figures.

"The disappointing losses and damage reported last year were fortunately not repeated: there were signs that losses of individual items might be caused by insecure hinging or careless handling – the items concerned were often from the top or bottom of the page. The successful operation of the packet depends on the active co-operation of everyone who handles it, from checking the condition of contents when first received, to ensuring that it is securely packed before it is forwarded. Recently there have been several examples of stamps mounted near the spine of the book being folded over when the book is closed – a particular danger when the book's contents are closely-packed.

"On the whole, however, members repay the trust placed in them by the care with which they handle vendors' property, and the whole Society benefits."

(8) Report of the Packet Secretary (Colonies) - John West

"Just like the Gilbert & Sullivan policeman, the packet secretary's lot is rarely a happy one but at least 2014 proved worthy of a watery smile! We went a whole year without losing a packet – some small cause, at least, for celebration? I was able to underpin your subscriptions by contributing a cheque for £xxx, payable to the Society as the fruit of my labours. Although this annual figure fluctuates

commensurate with the number of packets circulating at the year end and, of course, the value of the material sold, this figure represented an increase of about 10% on the 2013 payment – even though, sadly, we still continue to haemorrhage members on the circuits.

"We learned of the demise of Barrington Smith, of Leicester, who printed the blank booklets used by members to sell their material and the consequence was that several members confronted adversity by manufacturing their own booklets. "Nothing wrong with that", I hear you say, and of course there isn't but I must emphasise the importance of ensuring that these 'homemade' books are identical in size to the standard ones. Failing to comply with this, results in the books rapidly becoming dog eared and the content is damaged when members wrap them up tightly. That is not in anyone's interests.

"In another year's time I will have been doing this job for 20 years and, with my wife's health failing, I will have to consider carefully how much longer I can continue. I mention this now to avoid suddenly springing it on you in another 12 months and in the, probably forlorn, hope that should somebody be waiting in the wings, we will have plenty of time to make a seamless transition. If anyone wishes to discuss what the role requires, please feel free to call me and we can have a chat concerning what it entails.

(9) Editor's Report - (a) Maurice Tyler

"As I reported last year, when we lost our new editor for 'compelling personal reasons' after a single but very successful edition in March, I agreed as a temporary measure to take back the reins for another year while we looked for solutions to the problem.

"So during 2014 the Journal appeared 4 times as usual, with a total of 168 pages (plus the 16 cover pages) all in colour. (The previous 2 years saw 154 and 176 inside pages respectively.) I concentrated largely on publishing most of the articles I held in my stockpile, some dating back at least a year, hoping to clear the decks for what might prove to be a difficult period with no Journal.

"However, discussions among committee members and appeals to members have resulted in a very gratifying response, with generous offers of help from quite a number of members. This has enabled Mick Bister to undertake the management of an editorial team who will during the rest of this year take on the majority of the tasks that have traditionally been fulfilled by a single editor. I would retain overall responsibility for shaping the Journal ready for the printers, but the preparatory work would lighten the load considerably.

"One very thin edition of the Journal has so far appeared this year (before the new system was fully implemented) and the situation will be reviewed at the end of the year to see whether it can continue or whether new arrangements will have to be considered. Mick would like to add a few details to clarify the plan that is now in operation."

(b) Mick Bister

"I am delighted to report that in response to our recent appeals for sub-editors we have been able to create a team that will ensure the continuity of our Journal.

"The technical side of the Journal's production is now in the hands of Peter Allan while Maurice Tyler has retained his position as editor-in-chief with the responsibility of 'putting it to bed' and liaising with the printers. Supporting them with the responsibility for content is a team of sub-editors who will vet, proof-read, edit and undertake basic formatting of all contributions submitted by members for publication. The members of the team, in addition to myself, are Derek Atkins, Steve Ellis, Chris Hitchen, David Hogarth, Barry Knox, Michael Round, Arlene Sullivan, and Paul Watkins. The first Journal that the new team will publish will be the June edition. Maurice has issued comprehensive guidelines on how to edit the articles and the team has been given the additional advice to refer to previous publications to check on the house style.

"An announcement was published in the March edition regarding the procedures to be followed when submitting contributions emphasising that all copy must be sent to me and, without exception, electronically.

"I am sure you are all relieved that our great Journal will continue in its present format and the team will endeavour to keep it at the same high standard that you have grown accustomed to."

**(10) Library, Magazine Circuit and Publications
Stockist's Report - Richard Broadhurst**

"The surplus from the sale of the Society's publications in 2014 at £xx was considerably down on the previous year at £xx. This was totally predictable as 2013 had been a bumper year with a number of publications being available including the Picirilli Rates, The Sower and Derek Richardson's France Rates. Other than a small stock of Derek's book the others all sold out during the year. Currently we only have two new publications by David Trapnell which were published in relatively small quantities and consequently have produced steady but modest results. Sales from older publications and back journals are now miniscule and unless the Society publishes any new material the returns from the publications will be insignificant in future.

"During the year I took over the two Magazine Circuits from David Pashby who retired to Australia and had run these for decades. Helped by the weak Euro we were able to reduce the cost of the magazines to only £8 a year each (just 70p a month) but despite advertising in the Journal only one new recruit took up the offer! This must surely be one of the best offers of the Society; anyone wishing to take up a subscription should contact me for details.

"Following the sad passing of George Barker early in the year, the fate of the Society library was in significant doubt. There seemed little choice other than to put the substantial quantity of books into storage. As I already

kept all the publications and journals at my house, I set about clearing out my garage and eventually received some 700 books from Stephen Holder who had spent a great deal of time collating and packing them. By doing this the society was saved from the considerable expense of what turned out to be around nine months of storage. All the books were catalogued and priced with the help of Chris Hitchen who put in a considerable effort to produce a most comprehensive auction list.

"Finally, working closely with Steve Ellis who did a magnificent job running the auction, I sent out over fifty packages to UK and overseas addresses."

(11) Reports on Group Meetings

These are as published in the Journal, Numbers 272-275

{12} Election of Officers and Committee members

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 Len Barnes and passed unanimously.

President	Mr S R Ellis
Vice-President	<i>Post vacant</i>
General Secretary	Mr P R A Kelly
Treasurer	Mr C J Hitchen
Editor	Mr M S Tyler assisted by Mr M L Bister
Auction Secretary	Mr S R Ellis
Packet Secretary (France)	Mr R G E Wood
Packet Secretary (Colonies)	Mr J C West
Librarian, Publications and Magazine Circuit	Mr R N Broadhurst
Committee Members	Mr A J Lawrence Mr J Parmenter Mr C W Spong Mr P S Watkins

For information: Group Convenors are:

Mr L H Barnes (London)
Position vacant (Northern)
Mr P R A Kelly
and Mr A J Wood (Wessex)

(13) Any other business

John Morton updated us on the situation regarding the future of the Northern Group and informed us that an announcement would be made later in the year regarding the convenor vacancy.

There being no further business the meeting was closed and members adjourned to lunch.

NORTHERN GROUP 'BASTILLE DAY' MEETING OF 11 JULY 2015

Members' Displays

Members Present: Roger Clapham, Steve Ellis, Alan Goude, Stephen Holder, John Morton, John Place, Peter Stockton, Paul Watkins.

Fine weather once again welcomed members to Bradford for the annual 'Bastille Day' meeting of the Northern Group.

The meeting opened with two displays given by the Society's President and maritime mail enthusiast, **Steve Ellis**. He began with a study of French commercial maritime mail and that of privately owned lines showing examples of company stationery and entry marks. This was followed by a collection of contract mail from Marseille to North Africa and further maritime mail from Marseille to East of Suez.

Peter Stockton stepped up next with a display of French Indo-China Military Mail from the end of WW2 up to the loss of Indo-China at Dien Bien Phu. Peter was followed by **Paul Watkins** with examples of Anglo-French mail during the Napoleonic period of 1791-1815.

A switch from postal history to philately was made by **John Morton** who presented his collection of the 10c Sower. The display included varieties, errors and different printings in both sheet and booklet formats. **Alan Goude** followed with a display of Martinique beginning with the General Colonies issues and ending in 1947 when Martinique became an overseas *département*.

Steve Ellis then returned with a display focusing on Paris railway stations illustrated by covers and picture postcards. The afternoon closed with **Alan Goude** complementing his earlier display with a range of covers from Martinique dated between 1855 and 1947.

Steve Ellis thanked **Stephen and Judith Holder** for the many memorable events held at Heaton Royds over the years, where such good company, fine displays of stamps and postal history and excellent refreshments had been enjoyed. They were presented with a bottle of French wine and flowers.

Sadly, this meeting marked the end of a long tradition of Bastille Day meetings held in the historic 'Barn' in the picturesque location of Heaton Royds.

When Stephen and Judith moved up to Bradford in 1992 they immediately became involved in the activities of the Society's Northern Group. In Journal 186 (December 1992) the report of the group's September meeting recorded that 'new member Stephen Holder had brought his very fine collection on the postal history of Alsace-Lorraine and to complete the afternoon's entertainment, Mrs Holder showed her collection of postcards of the Eiffel Tower'.

The following year Stephen and Judith opened their house to the Northern Group for a full day meeting. Such was its success that it was turned into an annual event which thereafter became known as the Bastille Day meeting to be held on the Saturday closest to 14 July. Unfortunately reports were not published in the Journal for 1993 or 1994 but a full account of the 1995 meeting appeared in Journal 198 (December 1995). By now the meeting had become a major event in the Society's philatelic calendar and to which members would be drawn, not only from the Northern Group, but also from other local and national societies.

The weather was invariably good, permitting early arrivals who had travelled from the south, the west and from Scotland, to enjoy coffee and biscuits in the sun. Above, the tricolour would flutter from the window of Stephen's study.

The morning and afternoon displays were managed by Stephen in a ruthless and military fashion. Each member was permitted a fixed time within which to speak and over the years Stephen employed a variety of time keeping devices and bells to ensure that the speakers adhered to his schedule.

Lunch was always taken *al fresco*, at least by those who availed themselves of the outside seats first. A wonderful spread prepared by Judith awaited everyone - pâtés and French cheeses, quiches (Lorraine naturally) and charcuterie, salads and baguettes and, of course, a glass or two of wine.

But that was not all. There was always the opportunity both during the day and at its close to browse through the HH.stock of philatelic literature and to rummage through the tomato boxes of 50p and £1 covers which had been specially brought in for the occasion. As Stephen reported back in 1995: 'This concluded the business of the day save tea time refreshments in the garden and further light philately for the hard core of those who could not close matters or who were staying overnight in Bradford.' A final dinner was sometimes held later in the evening typically a light curried dish, fresh raspberries from Stephen and Judith's garden and a glass of *vin d'Alsace*.

There is no doubt that this year's final meeting marked the end of an era for the F&CPS and for the Northern Group and Stephen in particular. The Society is indebted to Stephen and to Judith for all the time, enthusiasm and effort which they committed to organising the Bastille Day meetings. For more than two decades, they were unique occasions providing a special blend of philately, hospitality and conviviality. They will be remembered with great fondness by all those who had the fortune to attend them.

MLB

WESSEX GROUP MEETING OF 27 JUNE 2015

Alan Wood & Peter Kelly: Morocco and Sub-Saharan Algeria

The morning invited display dealing with the postal history of North Africa was divided into two parts.

In the first part **Alan Wood** showed unusual material from Morocco including a wide range of the private posts that covered the hinterland as well as mail for overseas destinations and Latécoère flights. Also shown was mail from the French post offices established in various parts of the country.

The second part was presented by **Peter Kelly** who outlined a project he is studying concerning the development of French postal services in and across the Sahara. His display covered mail from offices in the southern Saharan part of Algeria and outlined the difficulties arising from the geography of the area and physical opposition from the tribal groups.

After our usual lunch at the Old Mill the afternoon session resumed with displays by members. **Graham Lenton** showed missent mail to Thailand incorporating a letter that clearly followed a very strange route. Our new member, **Chris Griffiths** showed a good selection of early trials and unofficial issues of 1853, 1863, 1869 and 1896. **Jeremy Martin** followed with a display of mail to and from France including cross-channel routes. **Chris Hitchen** displayed Paris postal history in the 18th century focusing on the post under Louvois and up to the Revolution. This included the first undated postmarks in Paris, post roads and franchise mail including the special dispensation for the Carmelite Order. **Ingrid Swinburn** closed with an interesting display of the philately associated with the Eiffel Tower, gateway to the 1889 Universal Exhibition.

PRAK/AJW

LONDON GROUP MEETING OF 1 AUGUST 2015

Len Barnes: French Aviation 1869-1936

Ray Downing: *Marianne de Dulac* and Proofs

Bob Larg: Philatelic Exhibitions and anti-TB vignettes

Mick Bister opened the meeting by welcoming both members and speakers to the first all-day Saturday meeting which, it was hoped, would be more convenient for members to attend than the traditional Wednesday evening meeting that it replaced.

The morning session was devoted to a display of French Aviation material given in three parts by **Len Barnes**. The first part consisted predominantly of reproduction posters from the 1900s to the 1920s each with an aeronautical theme. Many were publicising *les grandes semaines d'aviation* air meetings but others promoted airlines such as Farman and Latécoère, aircraft manufacturers such as *Aéroplanes Blériot* and even accessories such as Meyrowitz goggles. All were evocative of the period and designed to captivate the drama, excitement and speed of the event even if the artists had occasionally created fantasised designs of the flying machines. Len also included examples of souvenir mail, postcards and vignettes from the meetings being publicised on the posters.

The second part of Len's display traced the development of flight from 1870 to 1929 starting with several fine balloon mail covers from the Siege of Paris and examples of microfilm pellicules carried by the Pigeon Post. These were followed by postcards displaying airships and early aircraft, often achieved by the printer superimposing the image of the machine onto a standard view card. Further material from air meetings was shown including rarely seen ephemera including a collection of armbands worn by the press, stewards, maintenance staff etc. Early commercial

air mail was represented by 1923 covers to London and Nicaragua and a 1926 cover to Persia. We were also privileged to see two examples of ship-to-shore catapult mail from the '*Ile de France*' Le Havre-New York service in 1929.



Len closed his display with material flown by Air France and the development of international routes in the 1930s. We saw a cover from the flight piloted by Mermoz from Toulouse to Argentina in 1930, a cover signed by Noguès and carried on his flight to Saigon in the following year and a 1932 cover to Australia. The mid-1930s were represented by examples of the short-lived Air Bleu service and the thwarted 1935 cross-channel rocket mail experiment pioneered by Charles Roberti. Finally we were amused by

material from the 1936 inauguration of the fluvial airmail service from Paris to London which was doomed to fail because of the Thames being tidal.

An excellent lunch was partaken in the bar of the Calthorpe Arms before the meeting was resumed for the afternoon session.



Ray Downing offered us two displays, the first being part of his collection of the *Marianne de Dulac* issue designed and engraved by the London based Edmond Dulac. The first frame contained fine examples of the unissued 1942 photogravure printings by Harrison and Sons. Both types were represented, with and without FRANCE in the upper frame. There followed an example of the 1948 *sans valeur* design engraved by Charles Mazelin and printed in Paris; the stamp was not intended for postal usage but for printing trials. The main body of the display was comprised of covers bearing the issued recess printed design printed by Thomas de la Rue and written up to illustrate the postage rates of the time. Examples were seen of single usage, including the much sought after 2F40 value paying the foreign postcard rate and mixed usage with other definitives of the period. Multiple usage was well represented starting with 2 x 3F on a 1945 censored cover to Germany with a rare COUPON RÉPONSE cachet and ending with 10 copies of the 4F50 on a splendid 1950 airmail cover to the USA. A very unusual item was a 1945 unaddressed parcel label franked at 19F and bearing a splendid cachet of North African origin which showed evidence of having been sewn to a larger item.

The second part of Ray's display consisted of proofs from the 1940s and 1950s. Ray showed us a fine range of *épreuves de luxe* of the *Marianne de Gandon* design which

had replaced the *Marianne de Dulac* issue. Then came progressive proofs and artists' proofs, some of which were signed, of the 1955 *Inventeurs célèbres* and the 1958 *Villes reconstruites* series as well as examples of colour trials and imperforate printings. It was fascinating to see traces of the guidelines used by the engraver on some of the die proofs.



The meeting closed with a display given by **Bob Larg** who began with a selection of material from his collection of Philatelic Exhibitions and Fairs. First to come was a fine *bloc* of the 1925 5F Sage *Exposition philatélique internationale de Paris* accompanied by usage of the stamp on registered airmail postcards to Great Britain and Switzerland. This was followed by an example on cover of the 1929 *Exposition philatélique du Havre* overprint on the 2F Merson and copies of the 1F50 *Avion survolant Marseille* sold at the *Exposition internationale de la poste aérienne* in Paris including an example of an inverted EIPA30 perfin on cover. Further covers, cachets and vignettes were shown terminating with the *Foire de Paris* in 1955. Bob closed his display with a selection of anti-TB material including booklets, vignettes, covers and window posters.

Mick Bister expressed his gratitude to the convenor Len Barnes for organising the first of what is hoped will become a successful programme of all-day Saturday meetings. Mick also thanked the three speakers who, between them, had covered many facets of philately and postal history and had thereby ensured a most enjoyable philatelic experience for those present.

Members present: Maurice Alder, Len Barnes, Mick Bister, Ray Downing, Chris Hitchen, Bob Larg, Hugh Loudon, Barbara Priddy, Colin Spang and Michael Wright

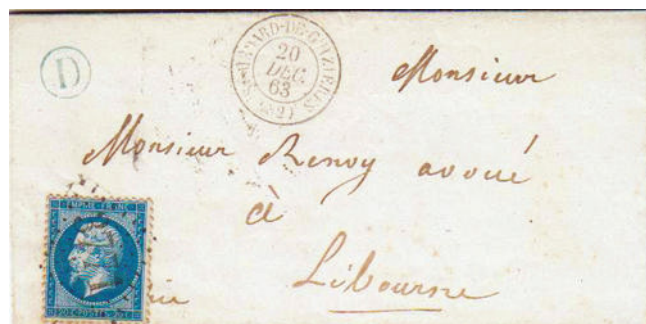
MLB

SELECTED LOTS FROM NOVEMBER 2015 AUCTION

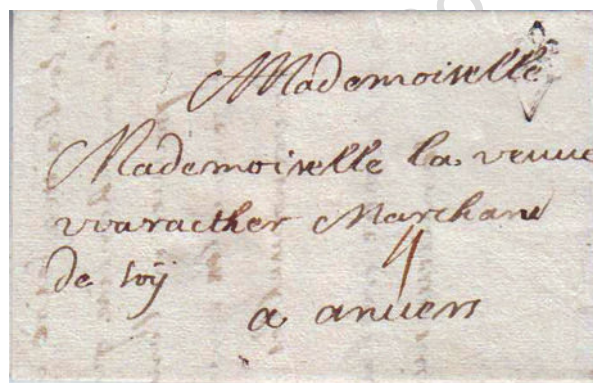
(reduced in size to 70%)



Lot 130



Lot 397



Lot 411



Lot 46



Lot 174



Lot 169



Lot 82



Lot 161

Scans by Steve Ellis