

The Journal of the France & Colonies Philatelic Society



Spectacular multiple franking on *Valeurs Recouvrées* envelope N°1494 returned on 3 February 1950 to the Le Mans office where it has been taxed with six copies of the 20F Saint-Bernard-de-Comminges issue for as many unpaid *Valeurs-à-Recouvrer* invoices.

(See Part 2 of Edwin Voerman's article on the Debt Collection Service on Pages 17-25)

Volume 66 ● Number 1

March 2016

Whole Number 279

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

Society Website: www.fcps.org.uk

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The Society

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

All inquiries about and applications for membership should be addressed to the 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

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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.

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* * *

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

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Volume 66 Number 1

March 2016 ● Whole No 279

CONTENTS

Society Notes	2
Editorial.....	2
New Members.....	2
Members Deceased	2
Members Resigned.....	2
Annual General Meeting.....	2
Future Events.....	2
Website Upgrade.....	2
Appeal for Webmaster.....	3
Appeal for Journal Manager	3
List of Recently Published Articles (C W Spong & M S Tyler)	3
Bookshelf	4
Books Noted (M S Tyleer)	4
“ <i>Timbres de France au Type Merson</i> ” by J Storch & R Françon tr G E Barker (review by M L Bister)	5
Monkey Business: Benin’s ‘Zin Kaka’ Quasi-Definitives of December 2003 (Part 2) (N Pertwee)	6
<i>Valeurs-à-Recouvrer</i> (Debt Collection Service) Part 2 (E Voerman)	17
Foreign rates for the Debt Collection service (C J Hitchen).....	26
A Family Visits the Universal Exhibition of Paris in August 1900 (P R A Kelly)	28
An unusual <i>articles d’argent</i> letter of 1779 (J P Maybury)	30
Early mail from French West Africa by German service (E J Mayne)	32
Shorter Items - including Questions and Answers.....	34
Monkeys Rampant (M Round)	34
A letter from Guadeloupe dated February 1818 (Mrs H Mitchell & P S Watkins)	35
New N’Gaoundéré Cameroun Datestamp (Dr M P Bratzel)	36
Reports of Meetings	iii
London Group Meeting of 6 February 2016: Ms B M K Priddy - French West African Aviation, Part 1 and Members’ Short Displays (MLB)	iii

SOCIETY NOTES

Editorial

It is essential for the health of the Society and for the benefit of its members that the Journal continues to publish articles on specialist subjects particularly when the content is based on original research. With this in mind you will find in this edition the continuation of two specialised articles. Firstly we have Part 2 of 'Monkey Business: Bénin's Zin Kaka Quasi-Definitives' by **Nicholas Pertwee** which analyses in detail the overprinted issues, and secondly Part 2 of the study of '*Valeurs-à-Recouvrer*' by **Edwin Voerman**. Furthermore, **Chris Hitchen** who worked closely with the latter while sub-editing the article has written a complementary piece on the foreign rates for the Debt Collection Service which we are delighted to include in this edition.

We want to maintain the high quality of the Journal as demonstrated by the articles above so please continue to send items, long or short, for publication to m.bister@btinternet.com.

David Hogarth's offer to take over the role as Honorary Secretary was announced in the September Journal (N° 277). His appointment is subject to ratification at the AGM but, in the meantime, his contact details are to be found on the inside front cover of the current Journal as well as on the Society's website. We welcome him warmly to his post.

* * *

New Members

The Society is pleased to welcome members 1446 Melvyn P Singer, 1447 Leonard J Yandell and 1448 Dominic Joyeux.

* * *

Members Deceased

It is with great sadness that we have to report the death of 406 David Taylor Smith. We offer our condolences to his family.

* * *

Members Resigned

The following members have advised us that, sadly, they will not be renewing their membership in 2016:

114 Arnold Berman, 1262 James Camak jr., 1352 M R Casswell, 691 R C Deakin, 1080 R T Gibson, 1161 M J Hammond, 1176 J G Harris, 800 D W James and 1222 Gilbert M Smith.

* * *

Annual General Meeting

Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of the Society will take place at the Calthorpe Arms, Gray's Inn Road, London WC1 at 11.30am on Saturday 7 May 2016.

Any member wishing to raise matters or put proposals to the AGM should submit them in writing to Peter Kelly,

(Secretary for the year ended 31.12.2015) at Malsy House, Church Road, Leigh Woods, Bristol BS8 3PG or to peterkelly35@btinternet.com to reach him at least one month prior to the date of the meeting.

The AGM will be followed by the Spring Room and Postal Auction starting at 2.00pm. Lots will be available for viewing both before and after the AGM.

Len Barnes points out that once again this meeting coincides with the Lord Mayor's Show and buses will be restricted, so the underground should be used if need be.

* * *

Future Events

The next meeting of the **Northern Group** will take place on Saturday 16 April 2016 from 2.00pm to 5.00pm at Broom Methodist Church, 195 Broom Lane, Rotherham S60 3NW. Members are invited to bring their own displays and are particularly encouraged to bring an item of some aspect of French philately or postal history which they would like to learn more about and we will attempt to shed light on it! For further details please contact Roger Clapham (tel. 01709 527673).

The next meeting of the **Wessex Group** will take place at the Scout Hall, Lower Street, Harnham at 10.30am on Saturday 2 July. Details of the invited speaker will be published later.

Steve Ellis is keen to organize a full day meeting in the south of England (with the option of an evening meal) on 8 September and a potential venue in Bournemouth has been identified. Further details will be published in the next Journal but if you are interested in attending please keep this date free.

* * *

Website Upgrade

The professional company that hosts our website, known as "1and1", has recently upgraded the script used to produce some of our web pages. This should not cause any problems at all unless you are still using Windows XP or earlier as your Operating System together with Internet Explorer as your web browser. In that case you will probably find that you are unable to view the images in our main picture gallery or in the auction gallery. This situation arises because Microsoft no longer supports XP.

What can you do about it if you are affected by the change? You could of course upgrade from XP to Windows 7, 8 or 10 (which is likely to be expensive and probably means a new computer). But a simpler, free solution is to install a different browser such as Mozilla Firefox (recommended - I use it) or Chrome, both of which, I believe, still support XP (and I have successfully used the latest version of Firefox for occasional use with my old XP desktop).

If this sounds too technical please contact me for further advice on maurice@fcps.org.uk.

Maurice Tyler

* * *

Appeal for Webmaster

At the same time I would like to point out that I am no longer finding the time to keep the website up to date as far as the content is concerned. We desperately need someone to take on this task if our website is to continue operating. The job does require basic computer skills, but training could be arranged for anyone willing to learn. I am far from expert myself and have just acquired the basic skills from practising. Please contact me by email if you think you may be able to help,

Maurice Tyler

* * *

Appeal for Journal Manager

I regret to say that after serving in this role for only four editions I am having to step back from being so involved with the Society and, very reluctantly, give up my role as Journal Manager. This is due to medical advice that I have been given as there is the threat of further deterioration of a problem I had nine years ago. It is a role that I have

thoroughly enjoyed and I have to say I have learnt a great deal in just a few months about publishing and editing to add to the skills of accountancy and using Excel spreadsheets that I picked up when Auction Secretary. One is never too old to learn new skills! However, I am obliged to retire and I invite someone else to take over the post and assist Maurice to ensure the continuation of the Journal. Most of the material for the June edition has been sub-edited but we need someone in place by July to ensure continuity with the publication of the September edition. It is essential therefore that this vacancy be filled with some urgency.

Such appeals are becoming worryingly frequent but they are inevitable if the running of the Society is solely reliant on the old brigade. We urge you to volunteer, particularly if you are a 'young' retiree, if you wish to see the Society remain in good health. Please contact me at m.bister@btinternet.com. Thank you

Mick Bister

* * *

LIST OF RECENTLY PUBLISHED ARTICLES

Compiled by Colin Spong and Maurice Tyler

Bulletin de la COL.FRA

N° 154 4^{ème} Trim 2015: L'Emission 1906 de La Réunion [cont] (Fontaine); Le Service des Colis Postaux dans La Principauté de Monaco (Flotte); Madagascar, Les Timbres Poste Aérienne «Île Rouge» (Richard); L'Insaissable Lieutenant Léon Chapel (Caraud); Nouvelle Calédonie, Millésimes et variétés (Bessaud).

Cameo

Vol 17 N° 1, Whole N° 97 Jan 2016: German Togo Avis de Réception Enveloppe 1910 (Mayne); London to Senegal via Bathurst 1942 (Wilson); Togo: Opened by Censor in 1916 (Mayne).

The Collectors Club Philatelist

Vol 94 N° 5. 2015: «Dear Doctor» Postcards from St Pierre-Miquelon (Taylor).

Documents Philatéliques

N° 226, 4^e Trim Oct 2015: Les boîtes de valeur déclarée (Bonney); Taxation dans le régime international des envois de timbres-poste au tarif des imprimés (Abensur); Desserte des États-Unis par la voie des bâtiments de commerce, Tarifs postaux américains [1845-1863] (Soulier); Le transfert du bureau de Huningue à Saint Louis et son retour entre 1815 et 1817. Le timbre d'entrée suisse par St Louis (Habé); Rétablissement du bureau français de Rhodes [1895-1896] (Abensur); Les relations franco-portugaises en marge des conventions de

poste franco-espagnoles entre 1849 et 1866. Errata au n° 225 (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° 1901 Dec 2015: Les incunables des antituberculeux (Grosse); L'homme au million d'illustrations – Nouvelle Calédonie – Jean-Jacques Mahuteau (Bastide-Bernardin); Solitude de l'hivernage - Terre Adélie (Venturini); Marie Marvingt, la Fiancée du Danger [soldier, nurse & pilot in 1915] (Albaret).

N° 1902 Jan 2016: L'Affranchissement en 2016: plus cher mais plus simple [New postal rates] (-); Le retour de la vie [Terre Adélie] (Venturini); Les GVC en Haute-Saône (Augustin).

N° 1903 Feb 2016: Joël Lemaine, artiste "Cap sur l'hyperréalisme" [Saint Pierre et Miquelon] (Bastide-Bernardin); Le début de la Campagne d'été 2014-2015 [Terre Adélie] (Venturini); Les prémices de la Saint-Barthélemy des Vins [January-April 1911] (Delmotte).

Gibbons Stamp Monthly

Vol 46 N° 7, December 2015: The Postmarks of Benin Part 2 (Pertwee).

Vol 46 N° 8, January 2016: The Postmarks of Benin Part 3 (Pertwee).

The Indo-China Philatelist

Vol 46 N° 1 (Whole N° 221) January 2016: More Revenue stamps from Quang Tri Province (Dykhouse); Printing error for Agrarian Reform Label (Bentley); Tien Giang Overprinted Revenues (Wiert); Indochinese censorship during World War I (Bentley); Postal Money Order Forms for the French state of Viet Nam (Daniel III); Postal History of Kouang-Tcheou-Wan during the Era of the French Colonial Group Type (Grabowski); Newly discovered varieties of Revalued Ho Chi Minh Stamp Varieties (Gebhardt).

The London Philatelist

Vol 124 N° 1431 Dec 2015: St Pierre & Miquelon 1891 'St Pierre M – on' Overprints (Taylor).

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° 173 Dec 2015: Jean Delpech, ethnographe du rêve (Nowacka); Comment collectionner les usages courants modernes? [2] Feuilles, roulettes, entiers (Rucklin); Ramon d'Areny-Plandolit, pionnier des cartes maximum d'Andorre (Louviau); Le bureau fantôme du Plan de Cuques! (de La Mettrie); Les timbres avion des colonies françaises [1922-1940] (Chauvin); Petite histoire de la TD-6 (Gomez); Marques de la Petite Poste de Lyon (Baudot); ...deux voies pour Tunis (Prugnon); Les timbres de Mong-Tzeu 1903-1907 (Singeot).

N° 174 Jan 2016: Comment collectionner les usages courants modernes? [3] Carnets: Marianne en combinaisons (Rucklin); Saveurs exotiques de plantations coloniales (Chauvin); Il y a cinquante ans, le Concorde faisait son entrée en philatélie (de Pelinec); De Cheik-Saïd

à Clipperton (Toulemonde); Un scrupule de directeur des postes (de La Mettrie); Sur les pas de l'Armée des Indes [3: Overland route] (Véglià); La formation des postiers: les ex-colonies aussi (Gomez); Dunkerque: de la Grande Pêche au carnaval [1] (de Kerdain); La petite musique des machines à coudre (Zeyons); Un délit de fraude en 1855 (Prugnon); Les timbres de la Réunion 1922-1927 (Singeot); Carnets de notes du collectionneur (Keledjian).

N° 175 Feb 2016: Les belles marques postales du Nord (Baudot); Dunkerque: de la Grande Pêche au carnaval [2] (de Kerdain); Les surchargés de Dunkerque-Coudekerque (de Pelinec); Comment collectionner les usages courants modernes? [4] Les caprices de Marianne [5] Dans la sacoche du facteur (Rucklin); RGR: les essais révèlent ce que l'on ne nous dit pas (Gomez); Vienne, mars 1918: naissance du premier service postal aérien international (Veglio); Meinhertzagen et Chevassu, deux variétés spectaculaires et rares (Marion); Elle n'ira pas via dal Borgo! (de La Mettrie); Les timbres au type «chiffres» d'Oudiné (Danan); Saint-Cyr: souvenirs de l'école (Zeyons); Carnet de notes du collectionneur (Keledjian); A la poursuite du destinataire (Prugnon); Les timbres de Rouad 1916-1920 (Singeot).

Les Feuilles Marcophiles

N° 363 (Dec 2015): Rectification réglementaire de timbre à date (Bonney); Les problématiques de la mise en place du service rural: l'acheminement et l'installation des boîtes aux lettres (Pinhas & Reynaud); La guerre franco-prussienne (1870-1871): exemples choisis de timbrage dans les territoires occupés et annexés (Martin); Histoire de la double relation postale du Principat d'ANDORRA - Chapitre I (3^e partie): La contribution de la ville espagnole de la Seo d'Urgell (Dupré); Timbres «RETOUR A L'ENVOYEUR» (1^{ère} partie) (Guillard & Abensur).

BOOKSHELF

Books Noted

Jérusalem et la Poste Française en Terre Sainte 1843-1914: John Scott points out that this is the correct title of the book originally noted in Journal 276 of June 2015 (page 34), and that it was not published by the Académie but is in fact obtainable from www.timbro.fr at 68€ including postage to UK.

Île de la Réunion, Émissions locales 1882-1905: II Les timbres mobiles pour colis postaux by Marie-Anick & Christian-Jacques Duvivier; 108pp A4; price 50€ + p&p; available from Ch-J Duvivier, 4 rue de la Garenne, 86160 Champagné-Saint-Hilaire. [Book noted in *L'Écho de la Timbrologie* by Colin Spong.]

Cours des carnets et des publictimbres 2016/2017 pub. ACCP (*Association des Collectionneurs de Carnets et de Publictimbres*); 110pp A4, spiral binding, coloured images;

price 30€ + p&p; available from ACCP, 21 rue du Hérion cendré, 95290 L'Isle Adam or www.accp-asso.com. [Latest priced catalogue for booklets and advertising stamps of France & Colonies.]

Mayer - Timbres de la Libération 2015, 11^e édition; 108pp A5 in colour; price 50€ + p&p; available from Mme Martine Mayer-Mottironi, rue de la Filature 42, 1227 Carouge, Switzerland. [Latest priced catalogue for Liberation stamps of France.]

L'Atlas historique du Philatéliste by Jean-Pierre Merceille; pub. Club Philatélique de Sarcelles et Environs; 120pp A4; price 20€ + p&p; available from CPSE, Résidence Fontaine St-Martin, Esc D2, 1 rue Jean Jaurès, 95350 Saint-Brice sous Forêt. [Volume I of historical and philatelic atlas devoted to Europe of last two centuries.]

Maurice Tyler

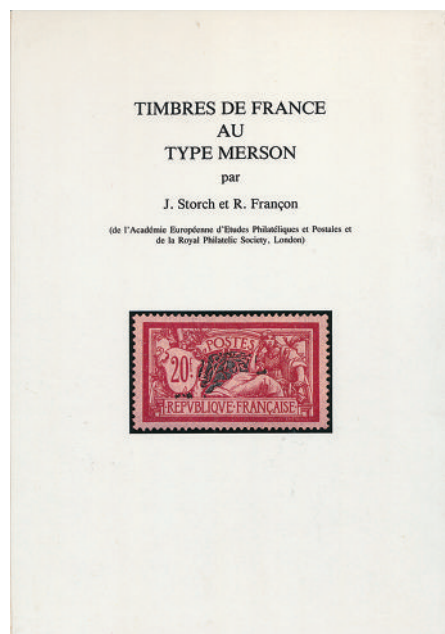
Book Review

by Mick Bister

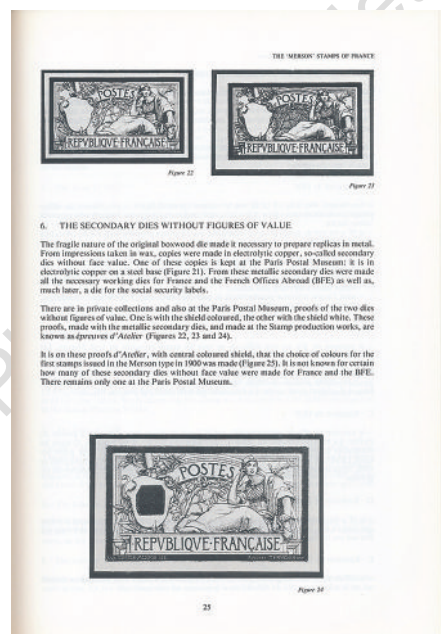
Timbres de France au Type Merson [The 'Merson' Issues of France]

by Dr J Storch and R Françon

ISBN 0-900631-22-8; written in French and in English (translator: G E Barker), published by the Royal Philatelic Society, London, 1990; A4, hardbound, coloured cover, 198 pages; £15 members only price (postage included for UK) available from Richard Broadhurst, F&CPS Publications Stockist, details Page ii.



CONTENTS	
Part One	
GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE 'MERSON' ISSUES	
1.	The Competition of 1894
2.	The Grasset project of 1895
3.	Luc-Olivier Merson (1846-1920)
4.	The Model of the stamp
5.	The Original Die
6.	The Secondary Dies without values
7.	The Secondary Dies with values
8.	Family characteristics of the Merson types
9.	The Printing Plates
10.	The Printing Sheets—the sheets for sale
11.	The Papers
12.	General History of the Merson type
13.	Postal Usage of the Merson-type stamps
14.	The Printings
15.	The Varieties
16.	The Engravers
17.	The Postal Stationery
18.	Various Miscellaneous
A	— The Post Office Training Schools
B	— The SPECIMEN overprint in colour
C	— The Serbian post at Carls 1916-18
D	— The Montenegro Postal Service at Bordeaux
E	— The Cacher ARMÉES ALLIÉES EN ORIENT/POSTE AÉRIENNE
F	— The Parcel Post of Alsace-Lorraine
G	— The Social Security labels
H	— The Forgeries
I	— The Quality of the Merson-type stamps.
Part Two	
A STUDY OF THE DIFFERENT ISSUES IN THE MERSON DESIGN	
1.	Issue of 1900
2.	Issue of 1906
3.	Issue of 1920
4.	Issue of 1922
5.	Issue of 1923
6.	Issue of 1925
7.	Issue of 1926
8.	Issue of 1927
9.	Issue of 1929
10.	Social Security Labels 1931-1935



We are delighted to be able to offer members of the Society copies of this important work which has remained unsurpassed in its field. The original cost of the publication was £36 plus postage and packing but the Society can now offer it to members at only £15 post free (UK only). Postage costs for overseas members will be provided upon request.

This book is a major source of information not only for established *Merson* collectors but also for those who have yet to decide in which direction to specialise and who might consider this noble issue as a possibility. The book was written by two of the most prolific and authoritative writers on 20th century philately and was translated into English by the late George Barker, eminent member of both the France and Colonies Philatelic Society and the RPSL.

Reproduced on the right is an extract from the original review written in 1991 by the late David Jennings-Bramly, specialist collector of *Mersons* and likewise member of both the F&CPS and the RPSL, and which was published in the *London Philatelist*¹.

¹ 'The London Philatelist' Volume 100, January-February 1991, Number 1177-78

"*Les Mersons sont arrivés*: The *Mersons* is no over-advertised, over-rated and over-priced *Beaufolais nouveau* but a mature, full-bodied product. It is one which no serious or a not-too-serious collector should be without. There is no comparable work on the French *Mersons*. Previous publications have little on the *Mersons*, and this is packed with previously unpublished information, and which is further enhanced by the number of items illustrated. This book covers only the *Mersons* issued in France and the *Merson*-type vignettes which appeared as Social Security stamps for pensions and sickness contributions between 1931 and 1935. The Social Security stamps are uncommon in Britain. The work under review is bilingual; the French text is on the left-hand pages and the English text on the right-hand pages. The work is liberally illustrated and the two languages result in sections or paragraphs not all starting on the same line face to face. I congratulate the indefatigable authors; MM Storch and Françon, their able translator and their collaborators have produced yet another *chef d'oeuvre*. D.J.B."

We only hold a small stock so if you want this excellent work on your bookshelf, please order soon. Details for ordering are given above.

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

Nicholas Pertwee

PART TWO

Part One of this article appeared in the F&CPS (GB) Journal Vol 65 N° 3 (September 2015)

THE REVALUED STAMPS

There are many examples of Benin having been particularly frugal in its stamp issuing policy since 2001, as seen in the large numbers of older stamps that have been brought back into use. Rehabilitation was made by altering the country name (from 'Dahomey') and/or the original face value where necessary.

This practice was followed with the Zin Kaka set too, though no change of country name was needed. All but two of its seven values, the 175F and 500F, were revalued by way of letterpress overprints to 175F, 200F and 1000F (Figures. 7a-i). The whole story is in fact told by the 175F overprint which was applied to all five of the stamps used for revaluation. 27 other new 175F stamps, so 32 in all including the Zin Kaka five, were made at this period though it is not intended to comment on all of them here. This points, however, not just to heavy demand for that

denomination but also shows why the 175F itself has so far not been seen overprinted. Why the 500F value was not used for revaluing is not clear as it has not been seen much used on letters; possibly stocks were exhausted earlier because of a lower number printed though no figures for quantities issued are available to support this idea.

The three 200F overprints, which are seen used after 2 January 2008, were to cater for the rise in the domestic rate from 175F to 200F from that date. This also accounts, incidentally, for the many different 25F provisionals (28, listed in Michel as 1467-1490 and 1517-1519 I & II) in the 104-stamp series of Dec 2008-2009 (Mi 1467-1570); they were intended as a make-up value for the difference between new and old rates.

The figures reproduced in Table 4 for Benin are taken from UPU statistics for letters sent at home and abroad, and show a consistent level of demand for domestic post – justifying



Figure 7a
175/50 Upper 'F' type C, lower Type B



Figure 7b
'F' Type B



Figure 7c
175/300 Upper 'F' Type C, lower type B



Figure 7d
175/400 'F' Type A

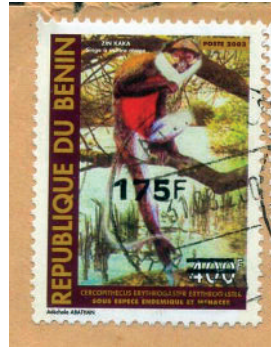


Figure 7da
175/400 'F' Type X, small 'F' thin
(Natitingou 31/8/07)



Figure 7db
175/400 'F' Type X, small 'F' thick
(Bohicon 3/8/07)



"Figure 7e"
"175/600 'F' Type B"



"Figure 7f"
"200/250 pair with 'F' Type A"



Figure 7fa
200/250 'F' Type A left, Type B right



Figure 7fb
200/250 'F' Type A left, Type C right



Figure 7fc
200/250 pair with both forms of '200'



Figure 7g
200/400 'F' Type A;
upper stamp has broken circular 'O'
alongside more angular 'O'



Figure 7h
200/600 pair with 'F' Type A



Figure 7i
"1000/300 '1' Type (a)
with short serif

[For details of the various types of surcharge, see [Tables 6 and 7](#) on pages 13 and 14.]

a large supply of 175F stamps. A slump in the middle of the period (and some apparent recovery towards its end in other forms of post) accounts for the lack of higher-value revaluations, except for a single 1000F whose purpose is something of a mystery. On its own it could have been used on letters up to 50g to West African countries other

than those bordering Benin. It is more likely, however, to have been a make-up value for higher-cost items: one example has been seen on a letter to England with an extra 300F stamp for the 1300F rate to Britain for letters up to 50g, while the cover illustrated in [Figure 8h](#) shows total postage of 2100F.

Table 4 BENIN	Number of letters sent 2004-2008				
Type	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Domestic letters	4,457,091	n/a	4,615,620	n/a	4,428,674
International letters	3,771,105	n/a	882,463	n/a	1,680,160
Domestic registered	95,888	n/a	55,768	46,487	77,048
International registered	40, 926	n/a	22,272	21,116	17,675
Source: UPU					

THE REVALUATION OVERPRINTS - PLACES USED AND DATE RANGE

The revaluation overprints on the Zin Kaka are listed by Michel under two series: (a) Mi 1373-1398, dated 2005/6 (for Mi 1373 & 1398) and (b) Mi 1401-1417, dated June 2007 (the balance). However, evidence seen so far from use on covers suggests that they were only available some-

what later for postage (Figures 8a-h and Table 5). The earliest dates seen so far are (a) 18 October 2006 and (b) 3 August 2007. Scott also has a listing, but only a partial one. In one sense though, Scott goes further than Michel, albeit where only one of the new values is concerned, the 200F/250F, in giving separate numbers to different styles of overprint (their #1358-1361). These differences all occur on the same sheet (see notes in Table 7).



Figure 8a

175F/50F Cover from POBE to the Netherlands dated 13/8/07. Used with the 300F value (Mi 1370) of the 1/2/05 set for the Centenary of Rotary International. 'F' Type X, here thin.



Figure 8b

175F/250F Cover from Cotonou Gbégaméy to England dated 31/1/08 with block of four showing 'F' Type A, top right & lower two, and Type B, top left.

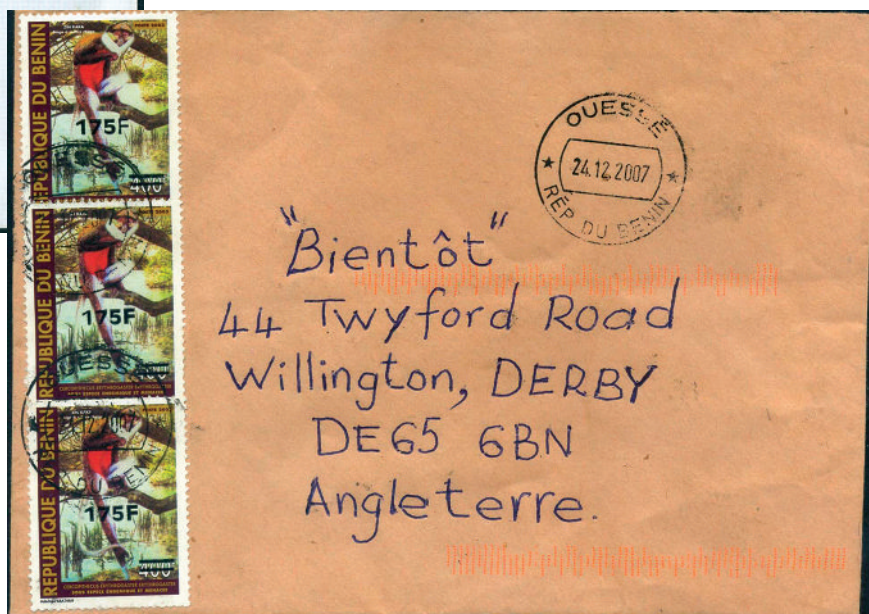


Figure 8c

175F/400F This revaluation is the one seen most often. Here, cover from OUESSE to England dated 24/12/07 using three separate single stamps. These show 'F' Type A (two lower stamps) and Type B (upper stamp).

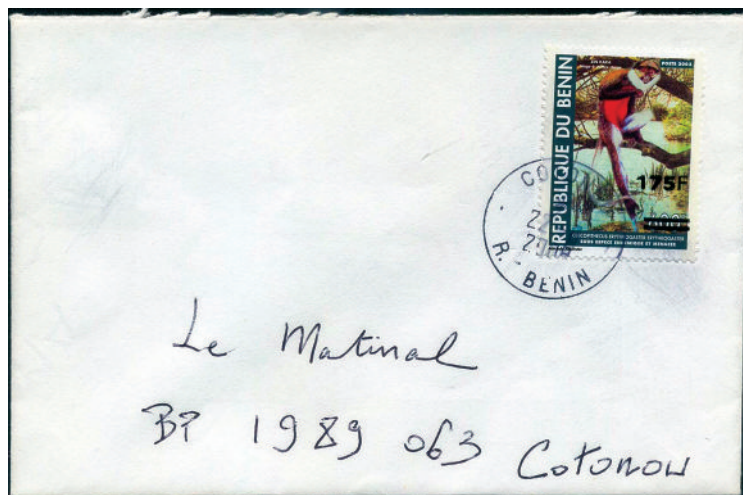


Figure 8d
175F/600F Used on local cover
within COTONOU on 22/8/08.
'F' Type B

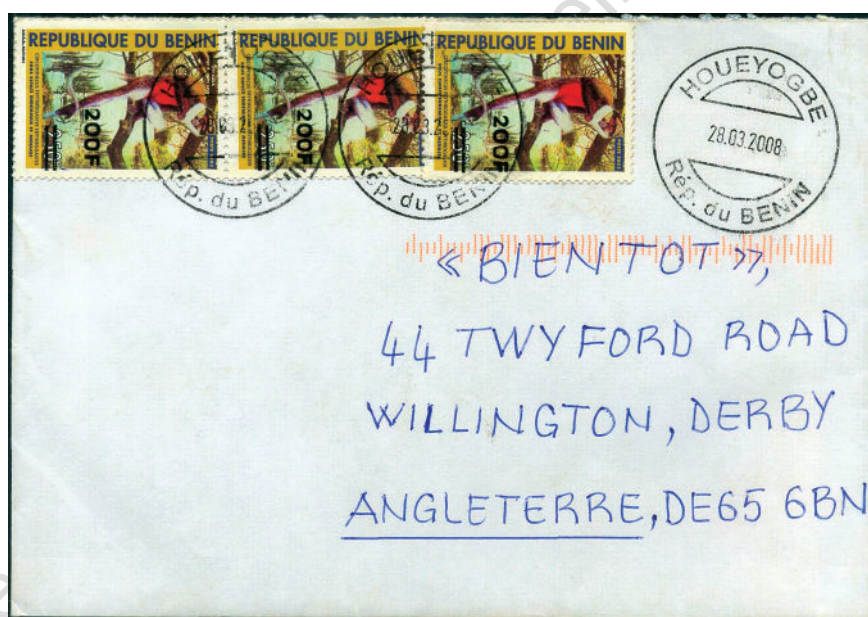


Figure 8e
200F/250F Vertical pair and detached
single used on cover from HOUYOGBE
to England dated 28/3/08.
All have 'F' Type A.



Figure 8f
200F/400F Cover from COTONOU
HOUYIHO to England dated 4/7/08,
'F' Type B, used with the 500F/300F
Campaign against Child Trafficking
(Mi 1413).

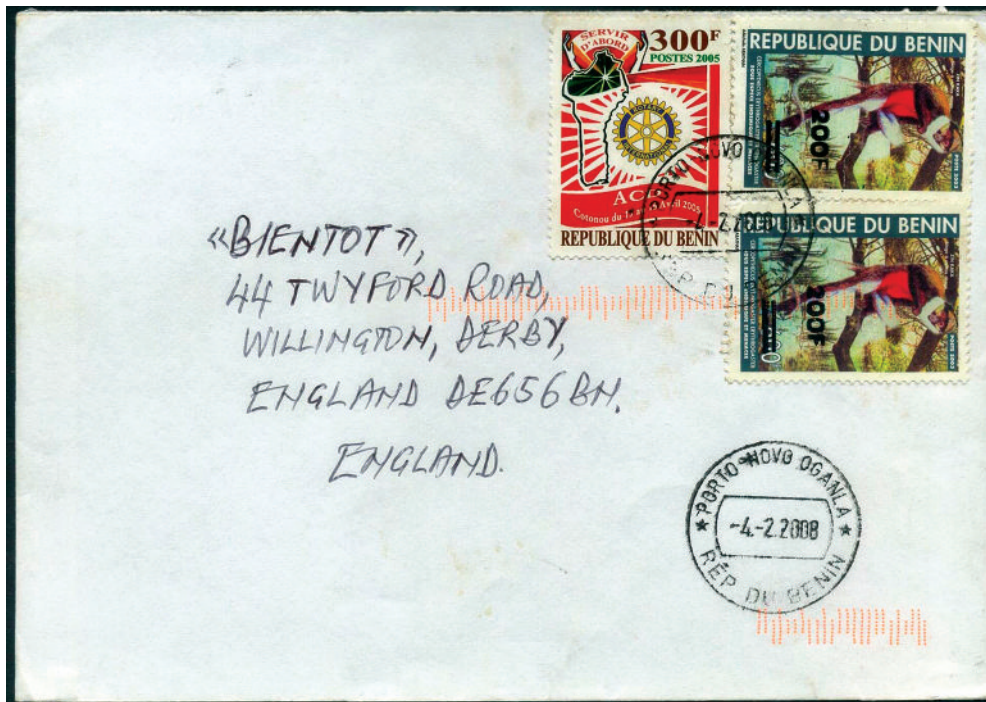


Figure 8g
200F/600F Unconnected pair
used on cover from
PORTO-NOVO OGANLA
to England dated 4/2/08
with 300F 2005 Centenary
of Rotary International (Mi 1370).
Upper stamp shows
short 'F', Type X, thin.



Figure 8h
1000F/300F Cover from COTONOU PK3 to the Netherlands dated 28/1/08
with 2 x 1000F/300F and 2 x unoverprinted 50Fs.
The '1' on each 1000F is Type (a), short serif.

Table 5 The Revalued Zin Kaka Stamps – Places Used and Date Range		
New Value	Places Used	Date Range
175F/50F Mi 1373 2005/6 Sc 1334	Klouékanmè; Pobé; Seme-Podji Seen used: 3	18/10/06 (Klouékanmè) – 13/8/07 (Pobé) <u>Later use:</u> 2010 (16/6 - Seme-Podji)
175F/250F Mi 1402 6/2007 Sc 1357	Aplahoué; Cotonou Gbgamey; Parakou; Porto Novo Seen used: 16	10/12/07 (Parakou) – 31/1/08 (Cotonou Gbgamey) <u>Later use:</u> 2011 (21/4 – Porto Novo)
175F/300F Mi 1398 2005/6 Sc 1356	N/A; only seen mint.	N/A
175F/400F Mi 1405 6/2007 Sc n/a	Abomey-Calavi; Bohicon; Bohicon-Zakpo, Dassa-Zoume; Klouékanmè; Natitingou; Nikki; Ouèssè; Pehunco; Seme-Podji Seen used: 22	3/8/07 (Bohicon) – 24/12/07 (Ouèssè) <u>Later use:</u> 2010 (5/2 - Dassa-Zoume, 16/6 - Seme-Podji), 2011 (15/4 - Abomey-Calavi)
175F/600F Mi 1406 6/2007 Sc n/a	Cotonou Seen used: 1	22/8/08 (Cotonou)
200F/250F Mi 1408 6/2007 Sc 1358-1361*	Cotonou Aeroport; Cotonou Cadjehoun; Cotonou S te Rita; Houéyogbé; Nikki Seen used: 12	15/1/08 (Cotonou Aeroport) – 3/6/08 (Nikki)
200F/400F Mi1411 6/2007 Sc n/a	Cotonou Houeyiho Seen used: 1	4/7/08 (Cotonou Houeyiho)
200F/600F Mi 1412 6/2007 Sc n/a	Porto-Novo Oganla Seen used: 2	4/2/08 (Porto-Novo Oganla)
1000F/300F Mi 1415 6/2007 Sc 1448	Cotonou PK3; Cotonou Ste Rita Seen used: 3	28/1/08 (Cotonou PK3) – 1/4/08 (Cotonou Ste Rita)
<p>♦ All overprints were made by letterpress.</p> <p>♦ <u>Sc 1358-1361*</u>: These numbers refer to the 200F/250F and to typeface differences which all occur on the same sheet. The same features can be seen in the part-sheets of 200F/400F and 200F/600F that have been examined. See Table 7.</p> <p>♦ Scott does not list the 175F/400F, 175F/600F, 200F/400F or 200F/600F.</p>		

POSITIONS AND FEATURES OF OVERPRINTS

Not all the revalued Zin Kaka stamps have been seen as complete sheets or large-enough multiples, mint or used, to allow comment on all 25 stamps. But where they have, typeface differences come to light (Tables 6 and 7). These mainly concern the currency symbol 'F'. This appears in four forms, three 'Tall' (3mm high) and one 'Short' (2½mm high - not to scale in the examples shown below). Some deviations from these 'standards' occur, but these are not

regarded as significant enough to invalidate the basic principles. The figures '175' are all consistent in style; the '200's are too, except at one position, R4/3. The '1000' however shows three different '1's and three different '0's, two different in shape and one larger.

Please note that in Table 6 the examples of the overprints are not to scale. Depictions of the typefaces used are taken from the font most nearly resembling the overprints and though not exact are reasonable representations.

Table 6

The Revalued Zin Kaka Stamps – Overprint Features

I – Currency Symbol: Tall F - equal in height to figures			
Type	Form	Features	Dimensions (mm)
A	F	Heavy sans-serif F with bars of equal length	3 high x 2 wide
B	F	Light sans-serif F with bars of equal length	3 x 2
C	F	Narrower, light sans-serif F with lower bar shorter than the upper one	3 x 1¼ upper bar, 1 lower bar
II – Currency Symbol: Short F - stops short of base of figures			
X	F	Sans-serif, lower bar shorter than upper	2½ x 1¼ upper bar, 1 lower bar
III – Figures of Value: 175 & 200			
175		Heavy 1 with straight upper serif (see also 1000 Type (c)). 7 and 5 are sans-serif. This is the case in all positions and on all values overprinted 175.	
200		The ‘default’ form of the 200 with thick, squat sans-serif 2 and slightly oval 0s with regular thick outline.	
200		Only occurs in one position (R4/3) on sheet. Slender sans-serif 2 and oval 0s with thin outline.	
IV – Figure of Value: 1000			
(a) 1000		Figure 1000 shows variety with 3 types of 1 and 2 differently-shaped 0s. Main source of data: 3 lower rows (R3-5/1-5) of sheet.	
(b) 1000		(a) 1 with short, straight, downward-sloping top serif accompanied by round 0s the same height as the 1. No bottom serif. At R3/1-5. Also occurs on single from top right-hand corner, R1/5.	
(c) 1000		(b) 1 with medium, curved, top serif, extending at right-angles accompanied by round 0s the same height as or larger than the 1. This occurs at R4/1 (where the 0s are out of alignment with the 1) and at R4/2 (where the 0s are taller). No bottom serif.	
		(c) 1 with long, straight downward-sloping top serif accompanied by squarer 0s the same height as the 1. No bottom serif. At R4/3-5, R5/1-5.	

Table 7 The Revalued Zin Kaka Stamps – Notes on Individual Values							
A	F	B	F	C	F	X	F / F
175F/50F		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Overprint at lower right; varying spaces between 175 and F. ◆ Vertical pair from top r/h corner of sheet shows Type C at R1/5 and Type B at R2/5. The 175F/300F shares these features. ◆ Block of 4 from bottom l/h corner of sheet (R4/1&2, R5/1&2) has Type X. ◆ Type X also seen on stamps used on cover; positions not identifiable. ◆ Masking bars 6mm. 					
175F/250F		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Overprint at lower right; narrow space between 175 and F. ◆ Complete sheet shows <u>Type A:</u> R1/1,3 R2/1-3, R3/1&2, R5/1,3 <u>Type B:</u> R1/2,5 R2/4&5, R3/4&5, R4/1-3, 5, R5/4&5 <u>Type C:</u> R1/4, R3/3, R4/4, R5/2 ◆ Position of 175F above original value varies, with F to left, right or above the 0 of 250F. ◆ Masking bars 8½-9mm in length; thickness varies. Examples: Thin upper/thick lower (R1/3), thick upper/thin lower (R1/5), bars equally thick (R1/4). ◆ Occurs with double overprint. 					
175F/ 300F		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ The only value not seen used on cover so far. ◆ Overprint at lower right; varying spaces between 175 and F. ◆ Vertical pair from top r/h corner of sheet shows Type C at R1/5, Type B at R2/5. ◆ Block of 4 from bottom-left corner of sheet shows Type X on all 4 stamps (R4/1&2, R5/1&2). ◆ Masking bars 6mm. 					
175F/400F		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Overprint in centre of stamp. ◆ Complete sheet shows <u>Type A:</u> R1/1-3; R2/1&2; R3/1&2; R4/1-3; R5/1-3. <u>Type B:</u> R1/5; R2/3&4; R3/3-5; R4/4; R5/4&5. <u>Type X:</u> R1/4; R2/5; R4/5. ◆ Block of 4 from bottom l/h corner of sheet bears out Type A at R4/1&2, R5/1&2. ◆ Type X also seen on stamps used on cover; positions not identifiable. Type X is normally light though a heavier version has been seen on a stamp on cover, but this is not consistent across the material examined. ◆ Masking bars particularly short, 6mm, with upper and lower bar equally thick. ◆ Occurs with double overprint, one inverted. 					
175F/600F		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Overprint at lower right. ◆ Bottom row shows <u>Type A:</u> R5/1,3 <u>Type B:</u> R5/4&5 <u>Type C:</u> R5/2 ◆ Mint single from top right-hand corner of sheet (R1/5) has Type B. ◆ Masking bars 8 ½ - 9mm 					
200F/250F		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Overprint at lower right; significant gaps between 200 and F only at R4/3-5. ◆ Complete sheet shows <u>Type A:</u> R1/1, R2/1-3, R3/1&2, R5/1&3 <u>Type B:</u> R1/2&3, 5, R2/4&5, R3/4&5, R4/1-3& 5, R5/4&5 <u>Type C:</u> R1/4, R3/3, R4/4, R5/2 ◆ Numerals consistent in style apart from just one position - R4/3. ◆ Masking bars 8½ - 9mm; variations in thickness between upper and lower, e.g. R1/5 upper thick, lower thin. 					

200F/400F	♦Overprint at lower right; significant gaps between 200 and F only at R4/3-5. ♦Vertical pair from top left-hand corner of sheet, R1/1, R2/1, has Type A. ♦Lower 3 rows (as for 200F/250F) have <u>Type A:</u> R3/1&2, R5/1&3 <u>Type B:</u> R3/4&5, R4/1-3&5, R5/4&5 <u>Type C:</u> R3/3, R4/4, R5/2 ♦Masking bars 8½ - 9mm
200F/600F	♦Overprint at lower right; significant gaps between 200 and F only at R4/3-5. ♦Vertical pair from top left-hand corner of sheet, R1/1, R2/1, has Type A ♦Lower 3 rows (as for 200F/250F & 200F/400F) have <u>Type A:</u> R3/1&2, R5/1 &3 <u>Type B:</u> R3/4&5, R4/1-3&5, R5/4&5 <u>Type C:</u> R3/3, R4/4, R5/2 ♦Masking bars 8½ - 9mm
1000F/300F	♦Overprint at lower centre; gap between 1000 and F. ♦Lower three rows have <u>Type A:</u> R3/1,3&4, R4/1&3, R5/1,4&5 <u>Type C:</u> R3/2&5, R4/5 <u>Type X:</u> R4/2&4, R5/2&3 ♦Single from top right-hand corner of sheet, R1/5, has Type X. ♦Masking bars 8½mm ♦Occurs with double overprint, one inverted

AFTERWORD

As is apparent from comparing **Table 2** (q.v. in Part One) and **Table 5**, the revalued Zin Kaka stamps are much scarcer on cover than the original unoverprinted stamps and all are worth looking out for in this form. Used copies with legible dates would also be useful and any information is to be welcomed that might assist in establishing first dates of use. This also applies to the roughly contemporary revaluations listed in Table 8 below.

Other uniform-design sets were issued around the time of the Zin Kaka, both before and after it. Some of their values were used for revaluation (**Figures 9a-c and Table 8**) though not in quite such variety - there are for instance no other examples of one value (175F) having been overprinted on as many as five different stamps.

The sets in question are for the da Silva Museum for Afro-Brazilian Culture, Campaign against Child Trafficking and Centenary of Rotary International. They were more sparingly used and the Rotary International revaluations marked the end of overprinting by letterpress. They can be the subject of discussion at a later date. Suffice it to say here that they show many of the overprint features, both for the currency sign and the figures of value, displayed on the Zin Kaka revaluations. There was then a final flurry of provisional definitives with overprints on two values of the large-format National Arms stamps of 2008 (as Mi 1462 and Mi 1635-1638) and nearly 170 former Dahomey stamps used in 2008/9 (Mi 1467-1570 and Mi 1571-1634), but these were all done by lithography. They too will reward further study at a later date.

Table 8

Provisonal Definitives from Other Sets contemporary with the Zin Kaka

Issue	New & Old Values / Michel Numbers
da Silva Museum for Afro-Brazilian Culture 10/11/03 Mi 1350-1355	Mi 1397 2005/6 175F/300F (Mi 1353) Mi 1401 6/2007 175F/250F (Mi 1352) Mi 1407 6/2007 200F/250F (Mi 1352)
Zin Kaka Red-bellied Monkey 19/12/03	2005/6, 6/2007

Campaign against Child Trafficking 31/8/04 Mi 1363-1366	Mi 1403 6/2007 175F/250F (Mi 1364) Mi 1409 6/2007 200F/250F (Mi 1364) Mi 1413 6/2007 500F/300F (Mi 1365) Mi 1416 6/2007 5000F/400F (Mi 1366)
Centenary of Rotary International 1/2/05 Mi 1367-1372	Mi 1404 6/2007 175F/250F (Mi 1369) Mi 1410 6/2007 200F/250F (Mi 1369) (Error: Mi 1414 715F/250F (Mi 1369)) Mi 1417 6/2007 5000F/400F (Mi 1371)

a variety of



Figure 9a
da Silva Museum
for Afro-Brazilian Culture:
175F/300F (Mi 1397);
Pair, upper 'F' ZK Type C,
lower Type B.



Figure 9b
Campaign against Child Trafficking:
200F/250F (Mi 1409);
Pair; both 'F' ZK Type B;
Top stamp has damaged second 0.



Figure 9c
Centenary of Rotary
International:
5000F/400F (Mi 1417); Cor-
ner, dated single;
'F' ZK Type B

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Olivier Bergossi, an authority on the overprints and surcharges of Benin and other francophone African countries, has kindly given me permission to quote from his research, and where my study material is lacking has shown me a number of multiples of these Zin Kaka stamps revalued as provisional definitives, enabling positions of the different typefaces used to be established. These were 175F/250F, 175F/400F (complete sheet), 200F/250F, 200F/400F, 200F/600F and 1000F/300F.

WORKS AND SOURCES CONSULTED

1. Ronald M Nowak, Walker's Mammals of the World

Vol. 1, 6th Edition, Baltimore & London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999. Pp. 573-575.

2. Professor David W. McDonald (Editor), The Encyclopaedia of Mammals, New Edition, Oxford University Press 2006. Pp. 352-354.

3. Numerous websites, including the Biodiversity Heritage Library (www.biodiversitylibrary.org), the IUCN Red Data Book (www.iucnredlist.org) and Save the Primates (www.save-the-primates.org.au/primates-guenon.htm)

4. Primate Info Net, Library & Information Service, National Primate Research Center, University of Wisconsin - Madison (<http://pin.primate.wisc.edu/factsheets/entry>)

Editor's Note: In Tables 6 and 7 a variety of different fonts has been used in certain instances in an attempt to replicate the varied shapes of the figures and of the letter F in the overprinted values. These should not be taken as an accurate representation of the appearance of the values, but as a rough approximation of the differences indicated in the article.

Valeurs-à-Recouvrer (Debt Collection Service)

Edwin Voerman

Part 2

Tariffs and Postage stamps used

We now have to make a clear distinction between the process of sending the amounts to be collected and the settling of these collected payments.

Procedures for the despatch of envelope 1488 with the amounts to be collected from the office of the claimant to the office of the debtor.

From 1 January 1917, it was mandatory to pay both the postage and the registration fee. Sometimes, a reduced registration rate was applied. Columns one and two of the rates table provide these where concerned. The postage payable initially was always made with normal postage stamps (Figure 8).

Procedures prior to settlement (envelope 1494 and form 1485)

When the legislation of 7 April 1879 came into effect the following June, no particular type of special postage stamp for this service was envisaged. This was logical since there was no initial payment due for either the envelope itself containing the amounts for collection or for the attempts to collect each payment due. The post office was content to simply receive a percentage on every payment successfully collected. Where collection could not be made the post office received nothing nor any of the postage incurred for the letters sent back and forth. This state of affairs was not satisfactory to the post office as they were acting as an intermediary with the possibility of no remuneration when

their prime aim was to satisfy users of the postal service. Whether collection of the payments due was successful or not the post office had still provided a service and required some payment for this. This was remedied on 1 April 1892 from which date a fee of 10 centimes had to be paid by the claimant for every item which the post office had been unable to collect (*un droit de présentation des valeurs impayées*). (Figure 9)

The return of the payment due and uncollected items to the sender was done with envelope 1494 and registration under post office franchise and was therefore free of charge. That also included the normal postage except for a brief period between 1 May 1926 and 21 April 1930 (see column 5 in the rates table) for non-CCP account holders only when normal postage was required. Apart from this period envelope 1494 was always returned *grat*is. Columns 3 to 6 in the rates tables show all rates involved.

In the event of inability to collect one or more payments due three scenarios were possible:

1 The amounts collected totalled more than the charges due to the post office. In that case the amounts due to the post office would be deducted from the total owed to the claimant and the postage due stamps for the non-collection fees affixed to the form (No 212 until 1883 and then 1485). That form would then be returned to the claimant with the balance due in the form of a money order (*mandat*) or later direct payment into a post office CCP account if required. (see Figure 6 in Part 1)

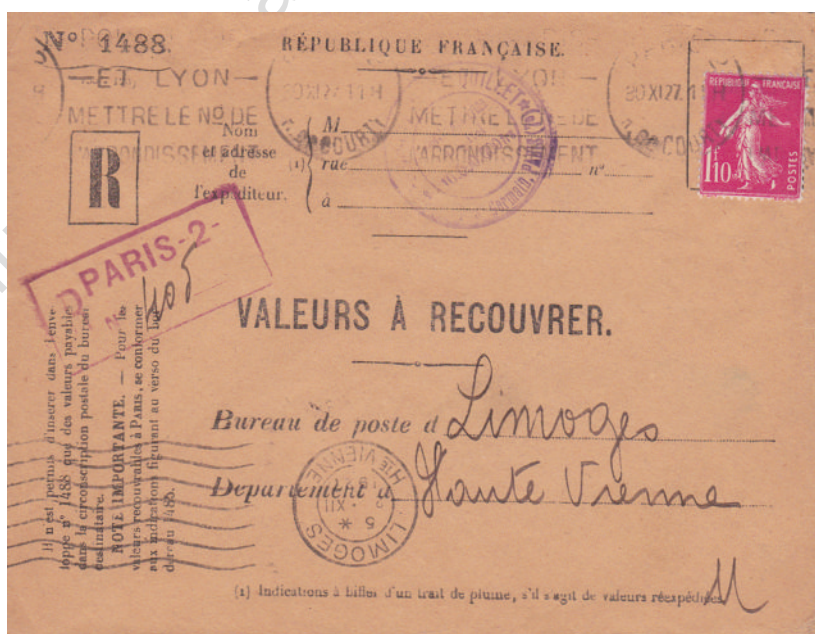


Figure 8

Service envelope 1488, has been sent on 30 November 1927 from Paris Office 2 Rue de Courty to Limoges in the *département* of Haute-Vienne.

The R hand stamp indicates registration. The postage of 1F10 has been paid with a standard Sower stamp and comprises 50c for an inland letter and 60c for the reduced registration.

Normal registration was 1 franc at this date but between 1 January 1917 and 18 July 1932 a reduced rate applied (*Objets à prix réduits*).



Figure 9

Service envelope 1494 for the settlement has been returned on 23 December 1914 from the Saint-Julien-de-Maurienne office dealing with the collection to Chambéry both in Savoy. Saint-Julien-de-Maurienne has marked postage due of 40c for 4 non-collected items and Chambéry has applied four 10 centimes VAR stamps due from the sender *Société Générale*.

These are from the first 1908 series which has the legend '*Recouvrements/Valeurs Impayées*' and cites the relevant article of law. From 1927 the wording simply read, '*Taxe à Percevoir*' (postage due).

2 Where no sum was recovered. The fee for non-collection was marked on the return envelope itself (No 214bis and then 1494 or sometimes a substitute envelope such as No 1417) which would be sent back to the sender's post office with the form 1485 (Figure 10). That office would then apply postage due stamps to the envelope itself and deliver it to the claimant. He would not be able to refuse this

envelope with postage dues applied as could be the case with other items where postage was due; any attempt to do so would lead to transfer to the post office legal section.

3 It sometimes happened that the fees due to the post office for non-collected items and other charges incurred were greater than the amount actually collected. If the total amount recovered was not sufficient after the deduction of



Figure 10

Generic service envelope 1417 (instead of a 1494) used for the settlement of a failed collection attempt on behalf of Paul Guignot. For a relatively short period between 1 May 1926 and 21 April 1930 not only the *droit de présentation* for the failed collection (60 centimes at this date) had to be paid but also reduced postage of 30c on the returned envelope, in all 90 centimes as shown by two VAR second series stamps of 1927 inscribed '*Taxe à Percevoir*'. It has been returned on 5 May 1929 and the number 32 on the left confirms registration which was not charged to the sender. That the VAR stamps have been applied to the envelope indicates that only one item was involved, otherwise the postage due stamps for non-collection would be on the form.

charges made in respect of the sums due to the postman and the receiver the amount available was shown on the form and postage due stamps applied on that form for the non-collection fees. The remaining balance still owed would be collected from the sender as postage due when the form was returned.

The stamps which were used for the settlement by the collection service can be regarded as special postage due stamps. Initially, normal postage due stamps were used for this purpose (Figure

11), but from 1908 special VAR stamps were used. After 1935, regular postage stamps were used instead (Figure 12). French catalogues regard VAR stamps as a special variety of postage due stamps. Regular stamps with a clear VAR mark could also be regarded as special postage due stamps. The wording on the special VAR stamps which have been in use since 1908 reads '*Recouvrements Valeurs Impayées*' ('Debt collection unpaid amounts') and later '*Taxe à Percevoir*' ('postage due to be collected') and are a clear indication that they are intended to collect monies.

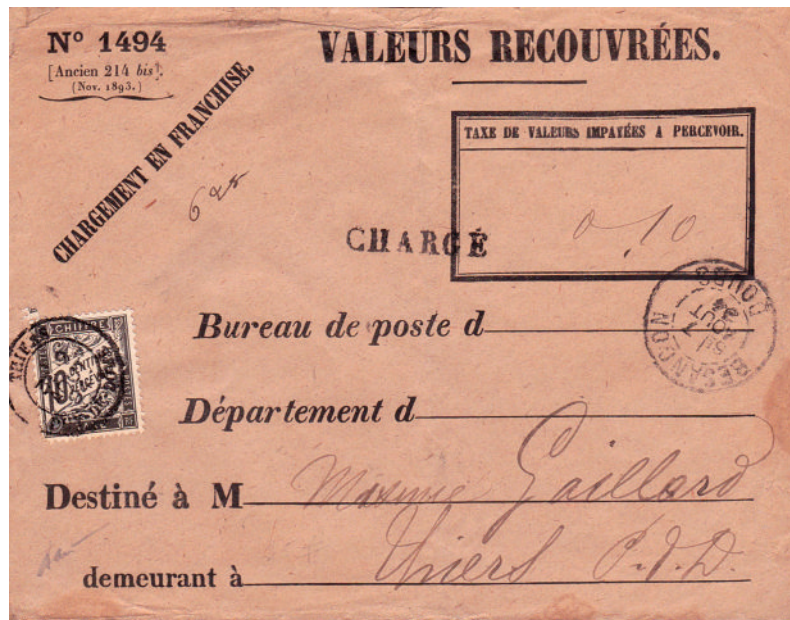


Figure 11

Service envelope 1494 sent on 7 Augustus 1894 to Thiers in the *département* of Puy-de-Dôme with a 10c fee for a non-collected item due from Maxime Gaillard in Thiers.

It was not until 1908 that the first specific VAR stamps were introduced.

Until then, the amount due in respect of the fees for non-collection, the *droit de présentation*, would be paid with normal postage due stamps. Everything returned to the sender, collected or not, went into a '*Valeurs Recouvrées*' envelope.

France did not use different envelopes for collected and non-collected items as did some other countries.

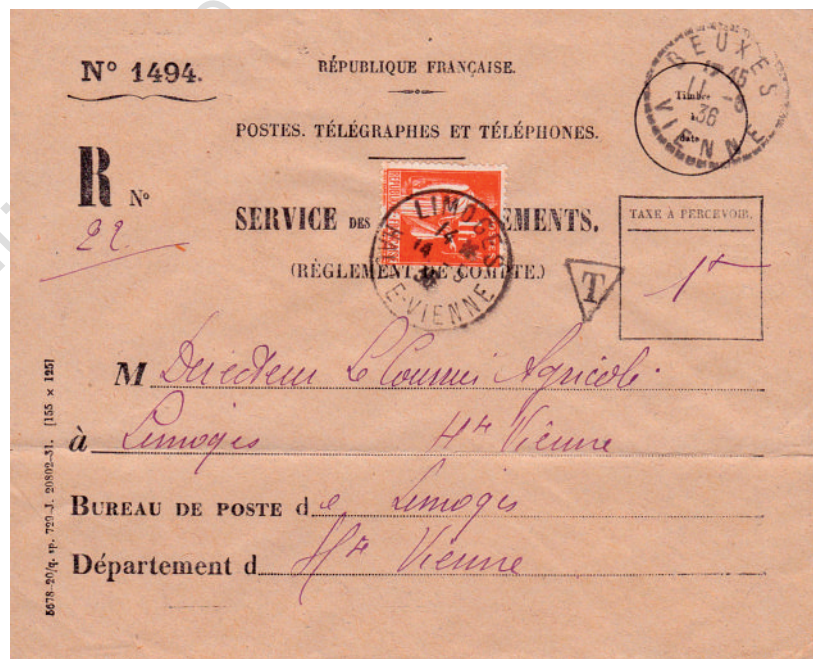


Figure 12

A returned service envelope 1494 dated 14 May 1936 with a non-collected item for the *Courrier Agricole* in Limoges in the *département* of Haute-Vienne.

From 1 December 1935, VAR stamps were no longer used and ordinary postage stamps used instead. Remaining VAR stamps were used as ordinary postage dues.

Postage due stamps

The postage due stamps used in the period between 1 February 1892 (the introduction of the 10 centimes charge per unpaid amount *droit de présentation*) and 1 October 1908 (when the special VAR stamps were introduced), can be regarded as forerunners of the 1908 issued VAR stamps (Figure 11).

Special Valeurs-à-Recouvrer stamps

The first two of these special stamps were issued on 1 October 1908 with values of 1 and 10 centimes. The 1 centime value may seem strange when a 10 centimes fee per unpaid amount was in force. However, suppose that less than 10 centimes was collected and the envelope in question contained some unpaid amounts which would cause the post office to account for payments to the very last centime!

Clearly anything with a 1 centime value should be regarded as rare given that multiples of 10 centimes would cover most payments due. Only France and Monaco had special postage dues for the VAR service: other countries used regular stamps.

The table below shows the changes to the fees for uncollected debts between 1892 and 1931:

Date	Fee per uncollected item
1 April 1892	10 centimes
30 December 1916	20 centimes
29 March 1920	30 centimes
13 July 1925	40 centimes
29 April 1926	50 centimes
5 August 1926	60 centimes
31 March 1931	1 franc

Postage stamps

From 1 December 1935 the amount due on unpaid items was settled with the use of ordinary postage stamps which thus acted as special postage due stamps (Figure 12).

Four periods

To summarise, four distinct periods can be identified in the *Service des Recouvrements* (following page).



Figure 13

A returned service envelope 1494 sent in 1932 to 'La Défense Automobile'. It shows the use of surcharged stamps, in this case a 1 franc on a 60 centimes stamp. The service envelope 1417 has been turned into a 1494 with a manuscript alteration perhaps due to a shortage of the correct ones in Le Mans at this time.

The inflation that followed and partly resulted from the First World War led to a continuous increase in postal rates from 1917 to 1931, including of course those for the VAR service. The Post Office had difficulty in keeping up with these continual changes which explains the many surcharges to be found on these stamps (Figure 13). As fast as new values were issued they were often already outdated as new rate changes came into effect. This was largely the reason for the withdrawal of VAR stamps in 1935. Any stocks that remained were used for regular postage due purposes.

Tariffs

As we have seen the rates for VAR items are determined by a number of factors. It is important to realise that post office officials are only human when making calculations and that they faced the same problems as we philatelists! Many errors can therefore be found when examining such material. It is therefore understandable that the post office employed officials specially trained for this type of work and able to handle its complexities. Such mail was kept quite separate from everything else and sent in a special

Period	Conditions
15 June 1879 until 1 February 1892	No fee due on unpaid amounts. Only where payment was collected did the post office receive remuneration
1 April 1892 until 1 October 1908	The <i>droit de présentation</i> , the right to be paid for debts not collected was set at 10 centimes and paid with regular postage due stamps. This fee now provided payment for the services of the post office in addition to the percentage due on successful collections (Figure 11).
1 October 1908 until 30 November 1935	The amounts due for use of the VAR service (provision on collected amounts and the fee for unpaid invoices) are paid by means of special VAR stamps (See Figures 5 & 6 in Part 1 and Figures 9, 10 and 13).
As of 1 December 1935	The amounts due for use of the VAR service (provision on collected amounts and a fee for unpaid invoices) are paid with regular postage stamps (Figure 12).

'chargé' envelope to the office dealing with the collection to be dealt with by specially trained employees. The bags with VAR mail were called '*Le Chargement des Spéciaux*'. There were therefore three classes of postal officials – delivery postmen, counter clerks and those with particular specialities such as VAR work. Similarly banks divided their work force according to responsibilities. Not everyone was suited to this detailed work so do not concentrate too much on apparent incorrect rates, human error will all too often be the reason....

The first step when looking at rates is to distinguish between service envelope 1488 ('*Valeurs à Recouvrer*') which contains the form and details of the amounts for collection and goes to the office which will carry out the collection work and service envelope 1494 used to remit payments to the claimant ('*Règlement de Compte*').

The rules are straightforward for sending the paperwork for collection and are set out in columns 1 and 2 of the rates table and combine the basic postage and the registration charge. (Figure 14).

There was a wider selection of service envelopes available to return uncollected items and payment details. In spite of the more commonly used service envelope 1494 (the successor of 214b) for settlements, we also observe the frequent use of more generic service envelopes 716, 819 and 1417 for the similar purpose of settling payments and dealing with uncollected items. Service envelopes which were originally not intended for use with the VAR service, can be identified and recognised as VAR envelopes by the type of stamps that have been added or other modifications. Sometimes the number 1494 was added or contrived with manuscript alterations (Figure 13).

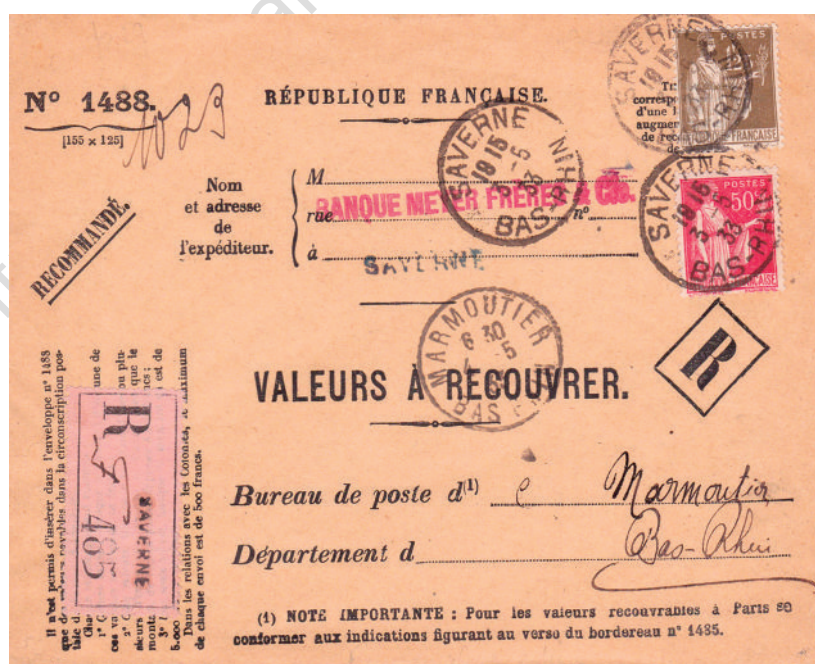


Figure 14

A service envelope 1488 sent on 3 May 1933 from Saverne in the *département* of Bas-Rhin to Marmoutier in the same *département*. Reduced registration no longer applied in 1933 so standard postage and registration has been applied (50c postage and 1F25 registration). The claimant is a bank '*Banque Meier Frères & Co^{ie}*' showing that in smaller towns banks used the extensive post office network for small debt collection.

Whenever the more generic service envelopes 716, 819 and 1817 were used for the settlement of VAR business, they were also stamped to show that the envelopes were sent registered under franchise. Sometimes a hand stamp 'R' was applied (See Figure 5 in Part 1). Until October 1909 these had been in regular use for registered mail and were then replaced with registration labels. However the handstamps were kept and sometimes used to modify service envelopes as appropriate to make them into a service envelope 1494 ('*Règlement de Compte*').

Inland rates

(1) The postage on service envelope 1488 to the debtor's post office (the successor of 212bis). Initially post free irrespective of weight but from 1917 onwards normal

postage was paid.

(2) A reduced registration fee applied to the '*Valeurs-à-Récouvrer*' service envelopes 1488 from 1 January 1917 until 18 July 1932 and as of 21 September 1948 until 1 July 1957.

(3) A fixed fee until 1 January 1917.

(4) The amount due for items where payment could not be collected (*droit de présentation*)

(5) For a short period a charge was made on return envelope 1494 containing a money order. The charge did not apply to those with post office CCP accounts.

(6) Charge per protested bill.

Date	Postage (1)	Registration fee (2)	Fixed fee (3)	Presenta- tion fee per unpaid invoice (4)	Postage on Return-envelopes for non-CCP account holders (5)	Charge per protested bill (6)
15 Jun 1879	gratis	gratis	25c	-	-	-
1 Apr 1892	gratis	gratis	25c	10c	-	-
1 Jan 1917	15c	15c	-	20c	-	-
1 Apr 1920	25c	25c	-	30c	-	-
25 Mar 1924	25c	40c	-	30c	-	-
16 Jul 1925	30c	50c	-	40c	-	-
1 May 1926	40c	60c	-	50c	30c	5F
9 Aug 1926	50c	60c	-	60c	30c	5F
21 Apr 1930	50c	1F	-	60c	-	5F
9 Apr 1931	50c	1F	-	1F	-	5F
18 Jul 1932	50c	1F25	-	1F	-	5F
12 Jul 1937	65c	1F50	-	1F	-	5F
17 Nov 1938	90c	1F60	-	1F	-	5F
1 Dec 1939	1F	2F	-	1F	-	5F
5 Jan 1942	1F50	3F	-	1F50	-	5F
1 Mar 1945	2F	4F	-	3F	-	10F
1 Jan 1946	3F	6F	-	5F	-	15F
1 Jan 1947	5F	10F	-	8F	-	25F
2 Jan 1947	4F50	9F50	-	7F50	-	24F
1 Mar 1947	4F50	9F	-	7F	-	20F
8 Jul 1947	6F	14F	-	10F	-	30F
21 Sep 1948	10F	20F	-	15F	-	50F
6 Jan 1949	15F	40F	-	20F	-	80F
1 Jul 1949	15F	25F	-	20F	-	80F
8 Dec 1951	15F	25F	-	25F	-	100F
1 Jul 1957	20F	45F	-	35F	-	150F
6 Jan 1959	25F	60F	-	35F	-	200F

Inland rates (continued)

Changes were made to the rate structure in this period. From 1 December 1966 all costs incurred in the collection process had to be paid in advance by affixing stamps or by machine franking as appropriate on service envelope 1488. That meant the end of the charges due where payment could not be collected.

(1) Postage. The basic letter rate for service envelope 1488.

(2) Registration fee for service envelope 1488. From 1 January 1960 this was no longer compulsory (Figure 15). From 1 August 1966 to 5 May 1978 a reduced registration fee applied. From 1977, R2 packet rate registration applied to VAR items. From 16 May 1977, the compensation for lost registered items can be divided into four categories. The same amount applied to both letters and packets, that is 50F (R1), 200F (R2), 400F (R3) and 600F (R4). The rate for packets was slightly lower, so customers had a choice.

Date	(1)	(2)	(3)	(7)	(8)	(6)
1 Jan 1960	25c	60c	90c	40c	15c	2F
1 Jan 1962	25c	60c	1F	45c	15c	2F50
1 Feb 1962	25c	70c	1F	45c	15c	2F50
19 May 1964	25c	1F	1F20	50c	20c	2F50
18 Jan 1965	30c	1F	1F20	50c	20c	2F50
1 Aug 1966	30c	1F	1F20	50c	20c	2F50
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(9)	(10)	(6)
22 Jan 1968	30c	1F	1F20	1F	2F	3F
13 Jan 1969	40c	1F30	1F20	1F	2F	3F
12 Jan 1970	40c	1F30	1F20	1F60	3F10	4F50
4 Jan 1971	50c	1F50	1F20	3F	5F	6F50
16 Sep 1974	80c	2F40	1F20	3F	5F	6F50
2 Aug 1976	1F	3F	2F	4F	7F	10F
15 May 1978	1F20	3F50	2F50	5F	8F	12F
15 Oct 1979	1F30	3F80	2F80	5F60	9F	13F50
1 Aug 1980	1F40	4F40	3F10	6F30	10F	15F50
1 Sep 1981	1F60	5F20	3F90	7F90	12F50	19F50
1 Jun 1982	1F80	5F90	4F40	9F	14F20	22F
1 Jun 1983	2F	6F40	4F80	9F70	15F30	24F
2 Jul 1984	2F10	7F20	5F20	10F40	16F60	26F
1 Aug 1985	2F20	7F50	5F40	10F90	17F30	27F
1 Aug 1986	2F20	7F90	5F70	11F40	18F20	28F40
1 Aug 1987	2F20	8F40	5F70	11F40	18F20	28F40
15 Nov 1987	2F20	8F40	6F10	12F	19F50	30F30
16 Aug 1988	2F20	8F50	6F70	13F20	21F40	31F20
11 Jan 1990	2F30	9F30	6F70	13F20	21F40	31F20
1 Feb 1990	2F30	9F30	7F40	14F50	23F50	34F30
19 Aug 1991	2F50	10F50	7F80	15F20	24F70	36F
10 Aug 1992	2F50	11F50	10F	24F	40F	70F
5 Jul 1993	2F80	12F	10F	24F	40F	70F
1 Aug 1993	2F80	12F	12F	30F	50F	80F
XX Sep 1995	2F80	12F	13F35	33F40	55F60	90F
18 Mar 1996	3F	14F	13F35	33F40	55F60	90F
1 Jan 2002	0,46	2 13				
1 Jun 2003	0,50	2 50				

(3) Fee per sending – successor to the former fixed fee of 1879 (Figure 16).

(6) Charge per protested bill.

(7) Fee per bill enclosed, whether it is paid or not

(8) Fiscal duty. Payable between 1960 and 1968.

(9) Fee per bill settled to a post office CCP account.

(10) Fee per bill settled with a *mandat-carte* (money order) which was the method used to pay non-CCP account holders.

The two tables differ in that from 1 January 1960 the franc was revalued with 100 old francs equal to 1 new franc. Stamps in old francs could of course still be used at one hundredth of their nominal value.

Foreign rates

The service was soon extended to foreign countries and in 1880 agreements were made with Belgium, Switzerland, Luxembourg, Germany, the Netherlands, Romania and

Sweden with the same procedures and the use of the same stamps, albeit with foreign rather than inland rates in some cases. At the Lisbon UPU Congress in 1885 a standard set of procedures was agreed based on French methods of working. At the Madrid UPU Congress in 1920 it was decided to make mandatory the fee for payments that could not be collected (*droit de présentation*) at a set rate of 20 gold centimes. Within 9 years this had been increased to 25 gold centimes at the London UPU Congress in 1929. The parity between currencies that had existed up to the First World War quickly broke down after the end of the war as inflation took hold at different times in different countries. The gold franc was intended to provide a common standard linked to gold and to which countries could set their own exchange rates as they deemed appropriate. It was adopted at the 7th UPU Congress in Madrid in 1920 to replace the French franc which had hitherto been used for calculations between different currencies. It was intended to be used from 1 January 1922 but a number of countries including France put it into effect earlier.



Figure 15

A service envelope 1488 sent on 9 June 1960 on behalf of a Paul Bruman from a sub-post office Aspremonts in the *département* of Alpes-Maritimes to a sub-post office Simiane-Collongue in the Bouches-du-Rhône.

Although the envelope is stamped R, from 1 January 1960 registration was optional and in this case only ordinary postage has been applied.

Figure 16

A service envelope 1494

from the more modern new franc era with the post office logo at the top left

and a bold title '*Règlement de Compte*' in the middle. The charging structure changed on 1 January 1960 (see the second rates table columns 3 and 7).

A fee per sending now applied, a successor to the fixed tax in force from 1879 to 1917 (column 3).

In addition a fee per bill enclosed was levied (column 7) regardless of whether the debt would eventually be collected or not.

From 1 December 1966

all charges were payable at the time of posting and the eventual outcome of the collection process no longer affected the amount charged for the services of the post office.



Until December 1886 domestic envelope 212bis (from 1883 numbered 1488) with a 25c stamp applied was used for those foreign countries to which the service was available. Then service envelope 1487 was introduced for sending the collection form and paperwork to foreign countries. At the same time the form for listing the debts was renumbered 1486 instead of 212. Both would be supplied free of charge. The foreign postal administration would then return form 1486 with any payment collected along with items that could not be collected. At first these envelopes were simply franked 25 centimes the same as those used for the inland service. Following the deliberations of the Lisbon UPU Congress, in 1886 the 25c postage which could be seen as a special reduced registration rate was only admissible for France, Belgium, Germany and Romania. Other countries using the service required standard postage at the usual registration and postage rates. The Washington UPU Congress in 1897 put an end to the different registration rates required for different destinations. From 1 January 1899 VAR service envelopes had to be stamped with the normal postage according to the weight of the item plus the usual foreign registration charge, which at this time was 25c per 15 grams plus 25c registration fee.

This change was not made clear by any specific instruction and was often overlooked leading to frequent complaints from foreign post offices regarding this under franking.

How to collect VAR items

The VAR service is an excellent reason to become involved in the collection of a wide variety of official envelopes and forms, different rates and the various postage stamps employed. Whilst the VAR stamps are not particularly attractive, they do provide a fascinating field of study. In 1936 Yvert & Tellier published a little 18 page book by Marcel Charvet, on VAR stamps. This book *‘Les Timbres de Recouvrement en France, aux Colonies et dans le Service International’* can occasionally be found in second hand

bookshops or on the internet. The stamps themselves and postmarks can only be attributed to the VAR service if there are clear indications that this service was involved. Finding all these items provides an interesting challenge.

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<http://jean-louis.bourgouin.pagesperso-orange.fr/Valeurs%20a%20recouvrer.htm>

‘Bulletin mensuel des postes et télégraphes’ <http://gallica.bnf.fr>

A SUMMARY OF THE SERVICE ENVELOPES AND FORMS USED

Inland				
Period	Envelope/ Form	Number	Title	Purpose
1879 -1883	Envelope	212bis	<i>Valeurs-à-Recouvrer</i>	Sending of items for collection
1879 -1883	Form	212	<i>Valeurs-à-Recouvrer</i>	Form listing the amounts to collect
From 1883	Envelope	1488 (Successor to 212bis)	<i>Valeurs-à-Recouvrer</i>	Sending of items for collection
From 1883	Form	1485 (Successor of 212)	<i>Valeurs-à-Recouvrer</i>	Form listing the amounts to collect
1879 -1883	Envelope	214bis	<i>Valeurs Recouvrées</i>	Contains payment for items collected and the debts not recovered
From 1883	Envelope	1494 (Successor to 214bis)	<i>Valeurs Recouvrées</i>	Contains payment for items collected and the debts not recovered
From the 1920s	Envelope	716, 819, 1417	Generic service envelopes, recognisable as VAR envelopes by manuscript or hand stamped alterations	Contains payment for items collected and the debts not recovered

Foreign rates for the Debt Collection service

Chris Hitchen

Edwin Voerman has provided us with an excellent account of a French post office service which is little understood. Over the years I have picked up odd items as one does but never systematically and this has now spurred me on to properly writing up those few covers and forms.

One point that did strike me was the unusual failure of the French post office to make clear the rate to charge for foreign debt requests. The domestic arrangements made by other countries with a similar service varied in small ways and this led to a number of bilateral agreements with other countries setting out exactly how such exchanges would be made. The first was concluded with Switzerland on 6 January 1880. It was sanctioned by a law of 20 March 1880 and went into effect on 1 May 1880. The instructions stated that it would operate in much the same way as the inland service with the same envelopes 1488 and the same franking of 25c (the *Bulletin Mensuel* for April 1880 page 313, 1880/04 [N8])

The *Bulletin Mensuel* for December 1886 (1886/12 [N12]) included a detailed instruction N° 348 summarising all preceding guidance and referring to agreements made at the Lisbon UPU Congress of 1885 for foreign regulations. These stated that a fixed rate of 25 centimes would apply and such envelopes should be sent registered. However that concessionary rate should only have applied to countries with which France had a specific agreement. Other countries could still accept such requests but the rate would be the normal registered rate for a foreign letter which at this time was 25c postage and 25c registration fee. A new envelope N°1487 for foreign debt requests was issued in 1886. Unlike the inland N°1488, it was supplied

to customers with no stamp stuck on which does suggest that the post office did anticipate different frankings. That was rather contradicted by the wording in the top right corner which was exactly the same as on the envelope 1488 – ‘TIMBRE-POSTE de 25 centimes’. Not surprisingly perhaps that is exactly what most postal clerks did. I have one to Cairo in Egypt sent on 24 October 1890 with just a 25c stamp applied when it should really have been 50c. (Figure 1)

The UPU Congress in Vienna in 1891 brought many changes. The *Bulletin Mensuel* for May 1892 (1892/05 [Vol 15, N5]) sets these out in a 200 page supplement. On page 387 we find Article 5 ‘La taxe d’un envoi fait en conformité de l’article 4 précédent est celle d’une lettre recommandée du poids de cet envoi’.¹ This ended the need for bilateral agreements; from now on the UPU would set the regulations for the service and these would apply to all countries signatory to that particular UPU agreement – *Arrangement concernant le service de Recouvrements*. After the 1897 Washington UPU Congress a similar summary of the agreements was published in BM 11 (N 13 and N14) for November 1898. On page 459 is a very similar statement regarding the rate – ‘La taxe d’un envoi fait en conformité de l’article 4 précédent ne doit pas dépasser celle d’une lettre recommandée du poids de cet envoi’²

Article 4 simply advised that debt requests would be sent to the foreign collecting office in a registered envelope.

1 ‘The postage applied in accordance with the previous Article 4 is that of a registered letter of the same weight.’

2 ‘The postage applied in accordance with the previous Article 4 must not exceed that of a registered letter of the same weight.’

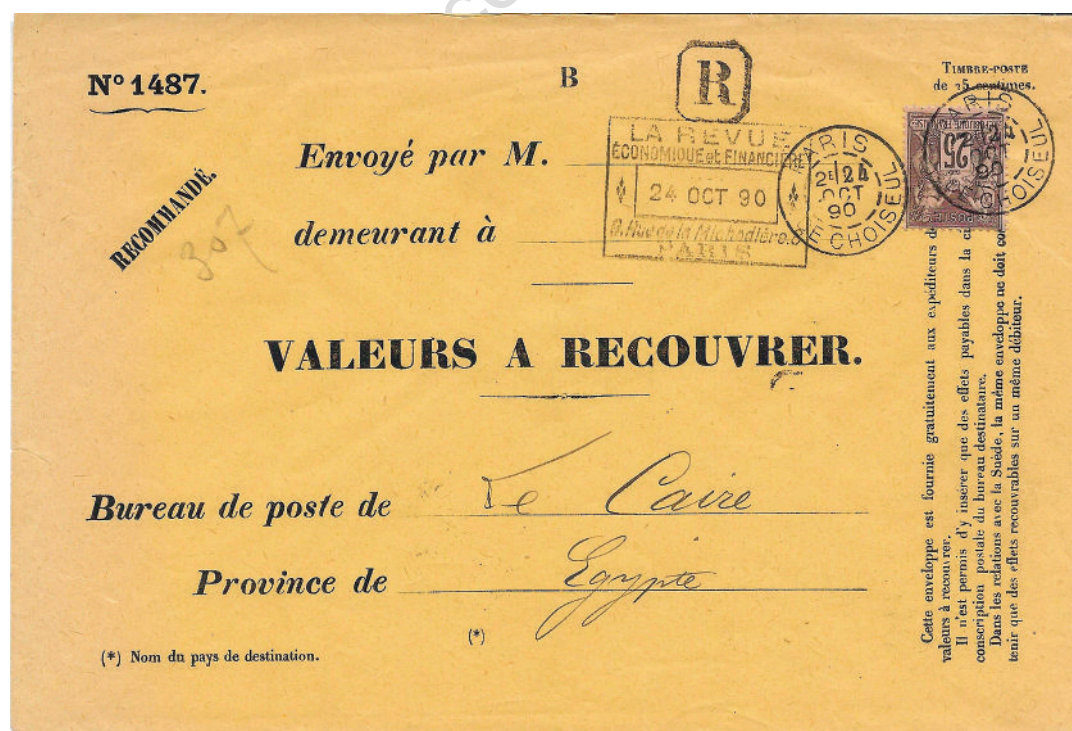


Figure 1
Envelope 1487
sent to Cairo, Egypt
on 24 October 1890.
There was no specific
agreement with Egypt
so the rate should be
25c postage
+ 25c registration

In practice these directives seemed to have had no effect. The bald statement on the envelope stating '25c postage stamp' continued to be followed in most cases. As Gérard Desnarnaud found in his article in *Documents Philatéliques* 151 the French post office was receiving complaints about under franking from foreign postal administrations. BM 1900/03 (N3 Vol 23) page 101 in March 1900 made the proper rate more explicit but even that overlooked its own previous guidance. It refers to the Washington UPU Congress agreements going into effect on 1 January 1899 as the ones to follow and seems to have forgotten that the Vienna UPU Congress some 6 years earlier had already

made the same direction. (Figure 2)

At some point not long after this the wording on envelope 1487 was changed to '*Timbre Poste d'affranchissement*'

The *Recouvrements* service with foreign countries had one other difference from the inland regime as there was a separate envelope numbered 214ter for the return of debts which could not be collected to the sender (Figure 3). The settlement money order for payments collected and those debts which could not be collected were of course all returned together in envelope 1494 in the domestic regime.

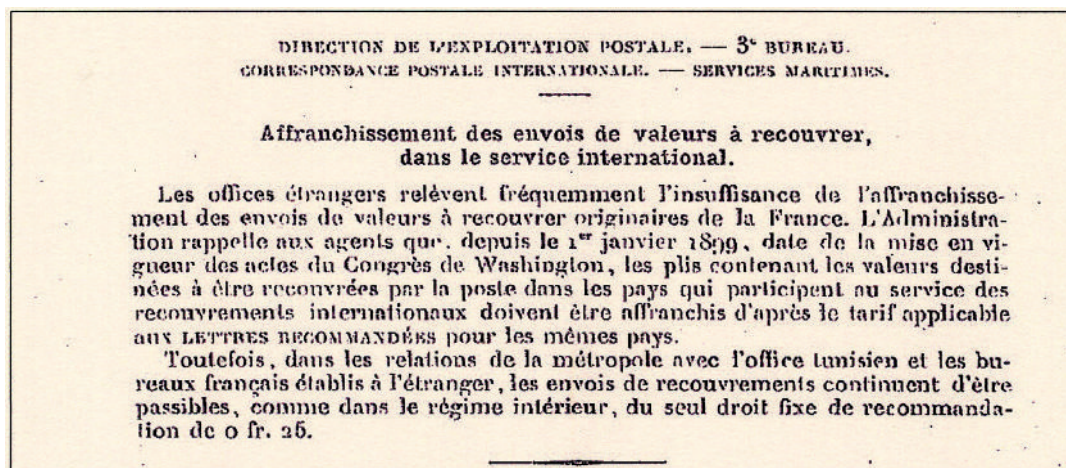


Figure 2

Bulletin Mensuel March 1900 a specific instruction that international *recouvrements* requests were to be charged as standard registered letters.

Franking of Debt Collection demands within the International Service

Post offices abroad are often charging for underpayment of postage on debt collection demands sent from France.

The Administration reminds its staff that, since 1 July 1899 when the Acts of the Congress of Washington came into force, items containing debt collection forms to be processed by countries participating in the international debt collecting service should be franked according to the registered letter rate applicable to those countries.

However, in the case of mail from France to Tunisia and French Post Offices Abroad, debt collection demands will continue to be liable, as in the domestic service, to the single fixed registration rate of 25 centimes.

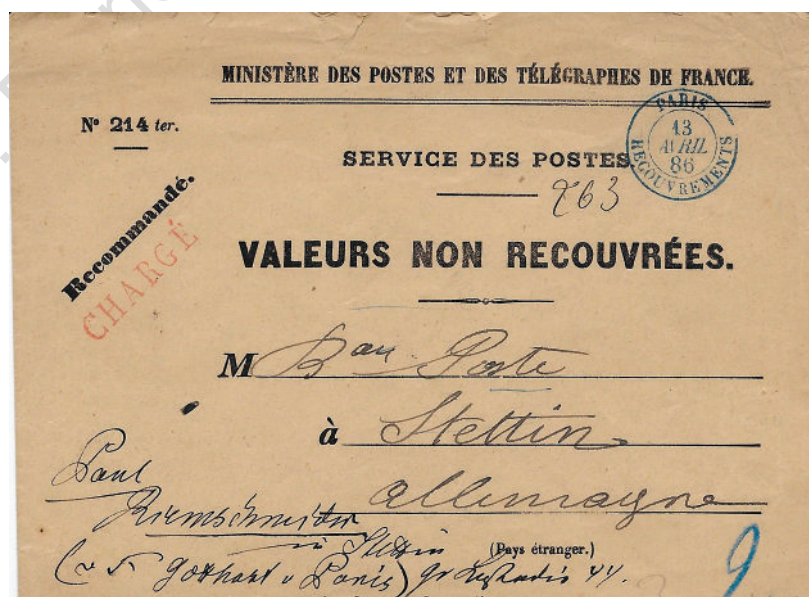


Figure 3

Envelope 214ter to return non collected debts to a foreign sender: 13 April 1886 to Stettin in Germany

A Family Visits the Universal Exhibition of Paris in August 1900

Peter Kelly

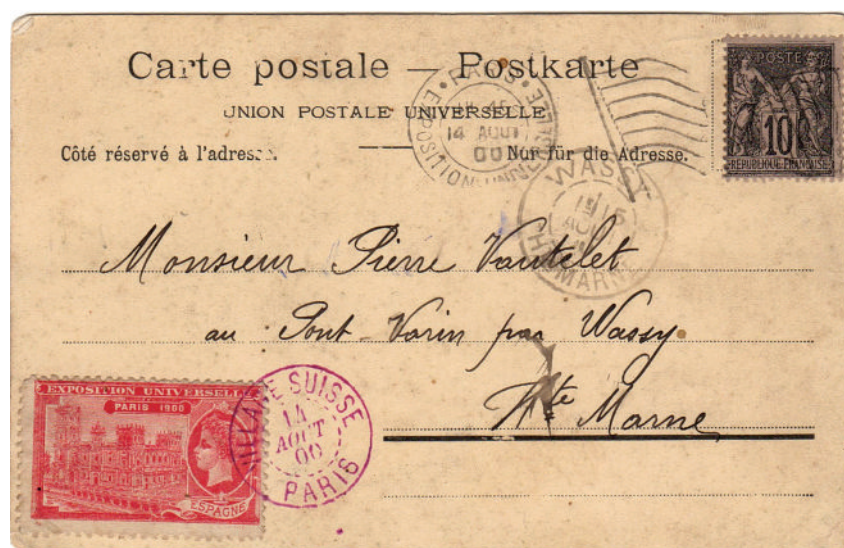


Figure 1
Alpenhorn postcard dated 14 August 1900 (front)

The Universal Exhibition of 1900 was the last, and by far the largest, international exhibition to take place in Paris and was intended as a gigantic international celebration of the whole of the previous century's achievements and progress in every branch of Arts and Science. It was designed deliberately to be a universal exhibition, without a specific theme. The site was enormous, covering both

banks of the Seine between the Alma bridge and Place de la Concorde, the Champ de Mars, Trocadéro, Esplanade des Invalides and Cours de la Reine, with a substantial annex at Vincennes for sporting events. The 'business' side of the Exhibition consisted of no fewer than 121 classes of product and activity divided into 18 main groups.

There was much more to it than this, since it was intended that the Exhibition should bring a happy conclusion to the troubled 1890s. It incorporated around 35 additional attractions, all of general interest and for the amusement of the visitors who, after a slowish start, flocked to it in tens and hundreds of thousands. It was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for people to come and enjoy all the sights and spectacles on offer.

This is encapsulated in a postcard (Figures 1 and 2) sent by a family to a friend from the Swiss Village section of the Exhibition, depicting a man blowing a long alpenhorn. On the front it has a 'label of the nations' (Spain) tied with the non-postal 'Village Suisse / Paris' handstamp. The 10c *type Sage* postage stamp is tied by the Exhibition flag duplex, which was from a trial machine canceller manufactured by the Bickerdyke company. (Other similar flag duplexes were used in Paris by the *Recette Principale* (*Départ, Distribution* and *Étranger*) and by Paris Office N° 5, rue de la République.)

The translated message, dated 14 August 1900 (see Figure 2), reads "We are in the Swiss Village and from there are going on a trip on the Great Wheel. The weather is superb. Yesterday we were on the moon and today in Switzerland." The family's visit had kept them in the Champ de Mars sector. The Swiss Village was at the foot of the Great Wheel and connected to the Exhibition by an elegant walkway. Bordering the Avenue Suffren and the Avenue de la Motte Picquet, the area of the village was substantial and it took more than a year to construct. Mountains were



Figure 2
Alpenhorn postcard of 14 August 1900 (back)



Figure 3
The Swiss Village, showing *La Poste*
and the *Maison de Wald* in the canton of Zurich



Figure 6
The Great Wheel



Figure 5
Palais de l'Optique
Signs of the Zodiac – Leo

Figure 4
Palais de l'Optique. Chevelure de Bérenice.
The name of Bérenice was given
to a constellation adjacent to Leo.
Bérenice was the wife of King Ptolemy of Egypt
and, when the king went to battle,
she entered the temple of Aphrodite
where she promised to cut off her long hair
if he returned safely).



created from reinforced concrete; verdant pastures and pine trees were added; and then a village of typical Swiss architecture (Figure 3) was built, containing copies of notable Swiss buildings, towers and clocks and animated with Swiss festivals and national costumes.

The family's visit of the previous day ("yesterday we were on the moon") refers to the *Palais de l'Optique* where, in a fine building decorated with the signs of the zodiac, a great telescope was located. Sixty metres long with an object lens of 1.25 metres in a viewing room that held 3,000 visitors at a time, the telescope gave the effect that the moon was only at a distance of 67 km. The attraction was known as "*la lune à un mètre*" no doubt inspired by the film of the same name produced in 1898 by Georges Méliès. There were also other projections and optical equipment on show. The postcards from here (Figures 4 and 5) are among the most attractive from the exhibition.

After their visit to the Swiss Village, our visitors were set to try out the Great Wheel (Figure 6), the equivalent of our London Eye. This was actually on the outer edge of the Exhibition area and had already been in operation for two years prior to the opening. It could carry, in 40 carriages each of up to 30 persons, 1,200 people at a time to a height of 100 metres, giving them spectacular views over Paris and the Seine.

Further information

Information on the Universal Exhibition can be found in a number of guidebooks (for example, the *Bon Marché* one is particularly recommended). These, and great deal of interesting information can be found on the internet. More than 3,000 different postcards from the exhibition have been identified and these can form the basis of a very interesting collection.

An unusual *articles d'argent* letter of 1779

Peter Maybury

History

The term *articles d'argent* referred to monies deposited with the post office, or a private messenger service, for delivery to a nominated third party.

The earliest reference to *articles d'argent* is to be found in the postal tariff of 1627 which prescribed a maximum sum to be transferred of 100 *livres*. (Interestingly this limit is not re-iterated in any of the subsequent tariffs). Each transaction was to be recorded in a register, with a "reasonable" charge, proportionate to the distance involved, levied for the service.

The tariff of 1644 established a rate of 1 *sol* per *livre* irrespective of the sum involved or the distance to be carried, i.e. a fixed rate of 5%, payable by either the sender or designated recipient.

A directive of 20 August 1757 stipulated:

1. The recipient of an *article d'argent* should receive a letter requesting his presence at the receiving office to collect and sign for his monies. This notification to be sent under franchise, providing it was endorsed *article* and was not sealed.
2. The *directeurs des postes* had no authority to vary the commission rate of 5%.
3. Monies sent via the post must not be enclosed in an envelope, but should be in a bag to be attached to the advice note relative to the transaction.

All commissions were deemed to be for the benefit of the *directeur* of the paying office but under certain circumstances could be shared with his/her counterpart at the office of despatch.



Figure 1

5% remained the rate for unsecured funds carried by the postal authorities until 1st January 1849.

The service was not available for transmissions to foreign destinations.

The letter

Dated 5 July 1779 it was sent by a *procureur*¹ with a recovered debt of 177 livres from NIMES (handstamp Lenain 9, used from 1777 to 1791) to a lawyer representing *la comtesse de St. Belin Malain*², in VITTEAUX in Burgundy (Figure 1). Sent unpaid and most probably routed via the *Bureau de Passe* at Lyon, it thus attracted a double *taxe* of 15 sols (tariff of 1 August 1759) being Nimes to Lyon 7 sols plus Lyon to Vitteaux 7 sols + 1 sol extra for a small enclosure, probably the post office acknowledgement for the sum involved in the transaction.

On the reverse (Figure 2) is the post clerk's calculation of the net amount to be paid i.e. 168 livres and 3 sols.



Figure 2

In the letter (Figure 3) and extract (Figure 4) the writer states that he has given 177 livres to the courier and this, together with the 5% commission, indicates it was entrusted to the post and not to a messenger service (*les messageries*) which although less expensive would have effected a less speedy delivery.

Finally the letter is endorsed (Figure 5) with the receipt of Madame la Comtesse for the appropriate sum, which she received on 16 July 1779.

References and acknowledgements

Eugène VAILLÉ, *Histoire générale des postes françaises*. Presses Universitaires de France 6 vols. 1947-1955.

Michèle CHAUVET, *Introduction à l'histoire postale des origines à 1849*. Ed. Brun. Paris 2000.

¹ At this period an official appointed to manage the financial affairs of an individual or estate.

² Marguerite Hortense de Saint Belin Malain, born 1756, deceased 1827.

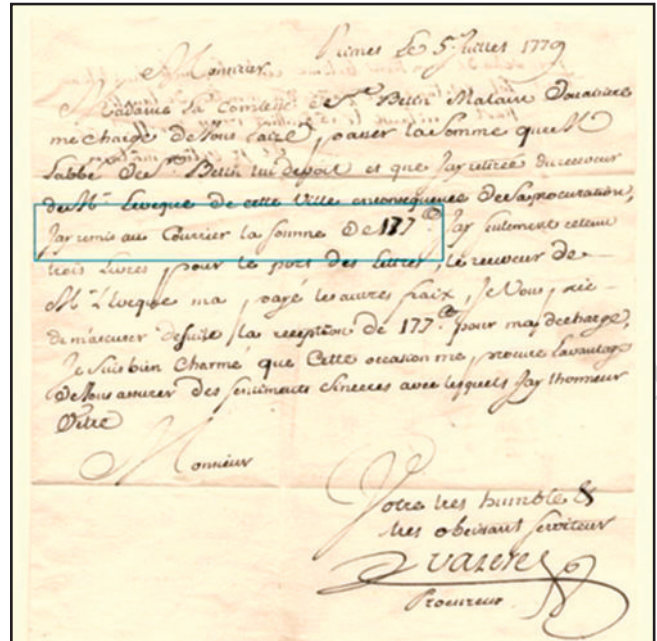


Figure 3

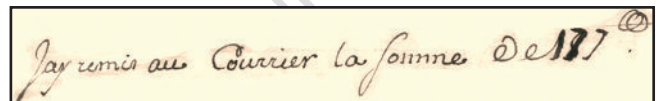


Figure 4

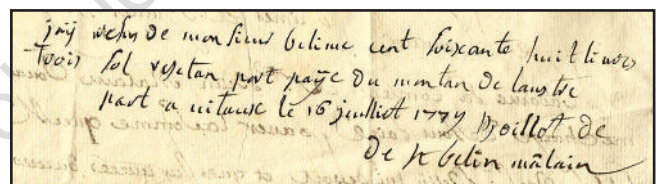


Figure 5

Louis LENAIN, *La Poste de l'ancienne France des origines à 1791*. Arles 1965.

Vincent POTHION, L. Lenain. 6th supplement. Paris 1993.

I wish to express my gratitude to Mme. Michèle CHAUVET and M. Robert ABENSUR for their help and encouragement.

N.B. This is an updated version of an article originally published in the *France and Colonies Philatelist of America* in September 2009.

Early mail from French West Africa by German service

John Mayne

Raymond Salles records the first sailing on the West Africa route made by the '*Ville Maranhao*' of the *Chargeurs Réunis* as departing from Bordeaux on 10 July 1889. The ship was scheduled to call at Tenerife on 15 July, Dakar on 21st, Conakry on 24th, Freetown on 25th, Grand-Bassam on 29th, Cotonou on 2 August and Libreville on 5 August. Unfortunately Salles is short on detail and offers little more than a reproduction of shipping schedules. It implies that French ships stuck rigidly to the schedules which would have been an unlikely occurrence in view of the problems experienced in these difficult waters.

In contrast Woermann ships of Hamburg had commenced an extensive service seven years earlier when the line was appointed official German mail carriers on 10 August 1882.

The Woermann Line separated shipping and trading interests on the coast when appointed official mail carriers and received a subsidy from the government. Their ships were aggressive and prepared to call anywhere for business: they became a major threat to Liverpool companies who were the major players at this time. German merchants, of which there were many along the coast, were encouraged to use Woermann ships when possible and were notorious for using German stamps even when mail was from non-German areas. Records show that the Gold Coast complained of this being a regular feature of their mail from 1889 to 1891. Merchants either held German stamps or simply handed their mail to Woermann ships leaving pursers to add postage.

The following covers may be interesting to those members with an interest in West Africa.

Figure 1 is a cover from Hansa Factory, Grand Popo, Benin, endorsed to show it was collected there on 19 September 1886 by the PD (*Postdampfer*) '*Adolph Woermann*' at a time when there was no post office in the town. Note the current German 20Pf value to meet current postage rate. It was sent to Bielefeld, arriving on 23 October 1885, but dropped ahead of Hamburg, probably in Flushing as it is backstamped by a Verviers railway cancel the same day. Although dropped ahead of Hamburg it received the three line boxed strike *Aus West Afrika mit Hamburger Dampfer*. Leading German shipping authorities Gottspenn and Grimmer, (the former previously assisted the prolific maritime mail researcher Philip Cockrill), record thirteen covers from West Africa in 1886; this one is not listed.

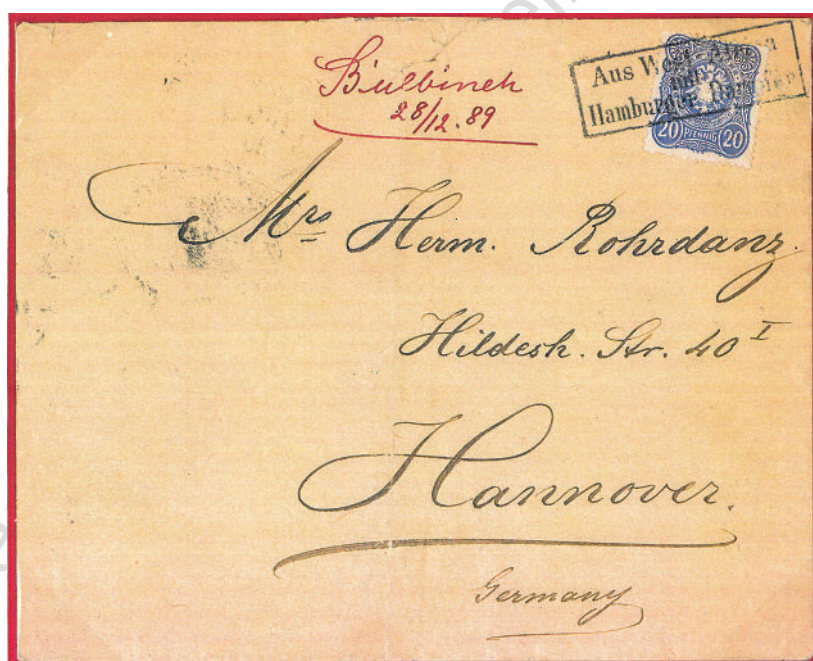


Figure 1 (below)

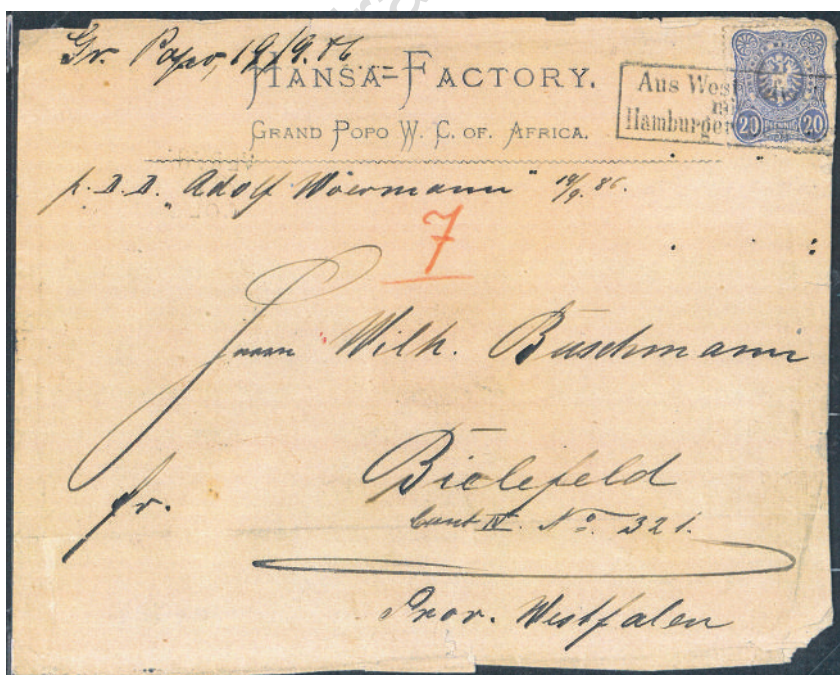


Figure 2 (above)

The second cover (Figure 2) is endorsed on the reverse flap by H. Rohrdanz who was with the Bulbineh branch of C Goedelt, which had branches across West Africa, and is addressed to his wife at Hannover. Again we have 20Pf postage with the same stamp and strike; it too was routed via the Verviers-Coln railway on 15 January 1890 to shorten the journey by a day. The cover is endorsed in red ink '*Bulbineh 28.12.1889*', a very small port near Conakry, with no post office listed by Dallay. It is likewise not among the seven covers recorded in 1889, nor is there a record of any mail from this port.

The third cover (Figure 3) was collected at Whydah (Ouidah), Benin on 29 March 1891 by the 'Hedwig Woermann'; again there was no post office here. It is from the local Goedelt branch and is addressed to Camstadt Württemberg but has no back stamp. By now the two lined boxed *AUS / WESTAFRIKA* strike was being used at Hamburg. Perhaps the cover contained monthly returns for the branch with postage of 50Pf being paid for a letter weighing up to 30g.

The last item (Figure 4) is one where comments are welcome please. This is endorsed on the reverse flap as being collected at Little Popo, ceded to Germany on Boxing Day 1885. It is endorsed *Voie anglaise* for sending on the English route but with English boats not calling at Little Popo it was intended for the service either via Lagos to the east or Gold Coast to the west. However it was collected by a German boat and routed



Figure 3



Figure 4

via Hamburg where it received the two line boxed strike introduced a year earlier. Gottspenn and Grimmer recorded seven items only from West Africa 1887; this is amongst them. It is annotated to show that no stamps were available at source and so, on arrival at Nantes on 11 August 1887, it attracted 50c postage due. Note the German boxed T' tax mark applied at Hamburg, the second of two items with this mark.

Of greater interest is the addressee, Madame Caillé. Being aware of the contribution to French West Africa made by René Caillé whose 100th anniversary of his death was marked in 1939 by a special issue of three values for each French West African country, I wonder if this item was to a family member. To date I have had no joy finding a connection, but perhaps another member knows more! Thank you.

SHORTER ITEMS - INCLUDING QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Monkeys Rampant

As an addendum to Nicholas Pertwee's article on the Benin Zin Kaka stamps (pages 6-16), I think members may be interested to see no fewer than 55 of them used on the same document, a parcel post receipt dated 17 May 2006. As is customary in African countries at times of high inflation,

the stamps have been carefully overlapped to save space, and leave little more than the face value showing. Even so, in order to make up the total charge of 33,075 CFA they fill two pages of the form. Endangered these monkeys may be in the wild, but there's certainly no shortage of them here!

[illegible]

INSTRUCTIONS A DONNER PAR L'EXPEDITEUR

en cas de
dans l'
Les
Dans
obligé
Adressé

REPUBLIQUE DU BENIN REPUBLIQUE DU BENIN REPUBLIQUE DU BENIN REPUBLIQUE DU BENIN REPUBLIQUE DU BENIN

009 009 009 009 009

Signature de l'expéditeur:

RÉCÉPISSE DU DESTINATAIRE

Le soussigné déclare avoir reçu le(s) colis désigné(s) au recto de ce bulletin.

Cotonou le 17/05 19

(1) Indiquer le nom et l'adresse d'une tierce personne dans le pays de destination,
(2) Biffer ce qui ne convient pas.
(3) Indiquer le nom et l'adresse du nouveau destinataire et mentionner éventuellement si le colis doit être livré sans perception du montant du remboursement ou contre paiement d'une somme inférieure à la somme primitive.

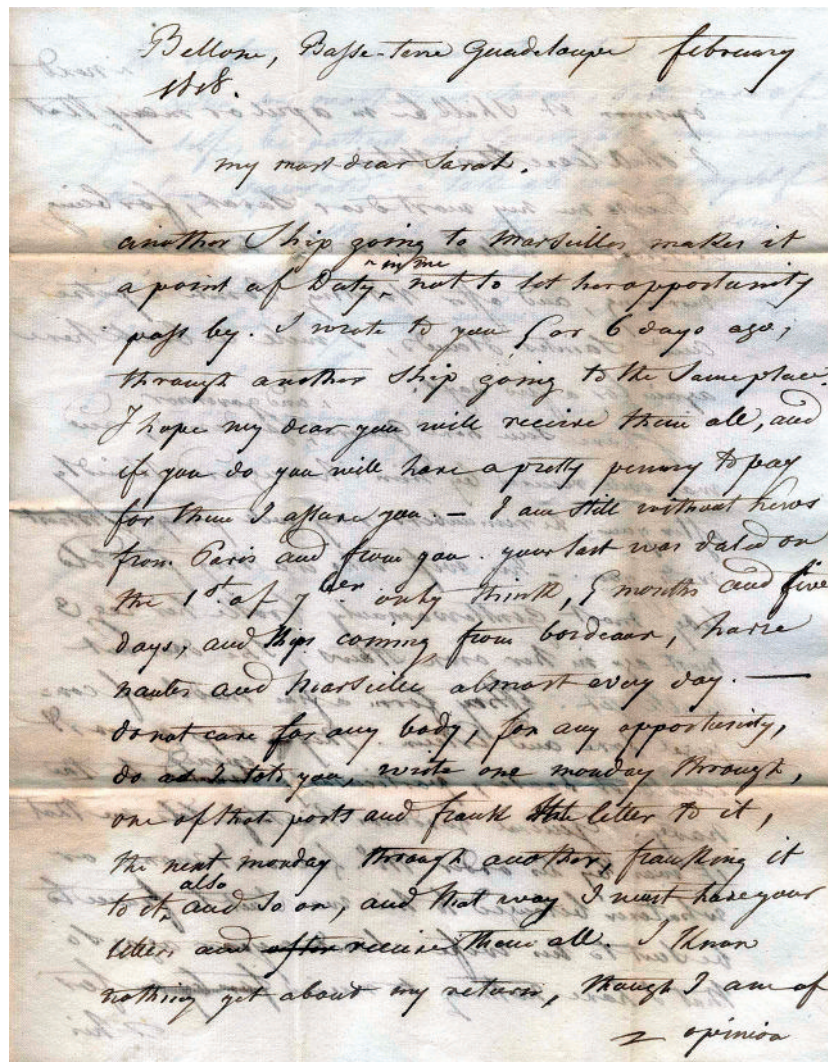
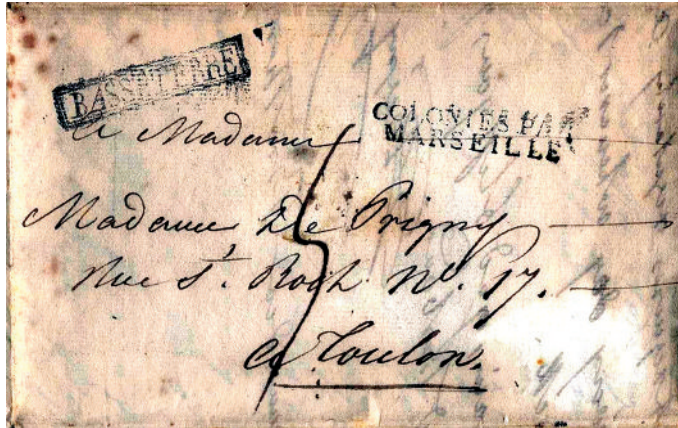
Michael Round

A letter from Guadeloupe dated February 1818

Background

This 1818 letter from Guadeloupe was written on board the 'Bellone' off Basse Terre; the island of Guadeloupe, latterly occupied by British naval forces, was returned to French hands in 1816 when the veteran General de Lardenoy was installed as Governor – he and his wife are

mentioned in the letter. The writer – M. de Prigny – was presumably a French naval officer, possibly a returned Royalist exile from England which might explain his writing in English to his English(?) wife during his tour of duty in the Caribbean.



February 1818 Basse Terre in Guadeloupe to Toulon
with mark of origin BASSETERRE in rectangular frame
'à double filet' (in use from 1817).

Entry mark **COLONIES PAR / MARSEILLE** (in use 1802-1827) and ms 5.

Text of letter of February 1818

"My most dear Sarah,

Another ship going to Marseille makes it a point of duty in me not to let the opportunity pass by. I wrote to you 5 or 6 days ago, through another ship going to the same place. I hope my dear you will receive them all, and if you do you will have a pretty penny to pay for them I assure you. - I am still without news from Paris and from you. Your last was dated on the 1st of September. Only think, 5 months and five days, and ships coming from Bordeaux, Havre, Nantes and Marseille almost every day. Do not care for anybody, for any opportunity, do as I told you, write one Monday through one of these ports and frank the letter to it, the next Monday through another, franking it to it also and so on, and that way I must have your letters and receive them all. I know nothing yet about my return, though I am of opinion it shall be in April or May next that I shall leave this station.

Excuse me my most dear Sarah, for being so short. I will be under sail tomorrow morning, and after visiting Pointe-à-Pitre and Saintes Islands, I will be back here again for a few days.

I have seen here General and Governor Lardenoy, and was well received by him. He enquired kindly after you. He remembers very well playing whist with you. - his wife who is a very fine old lady most gentlewomanly broke her leg 3 months ago in her own stairs, she does not walk yet. They form a fine model of conjugal love and esteem. They keep a most excellent house, particularly opened to the navy. General Lardenoy himself told me that it was by his order Mr Lacroix's money or whatever belonged to him was sent to France to be sent to his wife about a year ago; so that I have nothing to receive for his wife. I will write so to her.

Adieu my most dear Sarah, take care of yourself, be patient and spiritfull, we cannot be long separated. I take all cares of myself to keep my health which thank God is very good now, but requires regularity and attention. I am in bed every day whenever I can at ½ past 8 o'clock. Adieu again, God bless you, your best friend and husband. Remind me to your dear Brother".

Héloïse Mitchell
(with background notes supplied by Paul Watkins)

New N'Gaoundéré Cameroun Datestamp



Figure 1
Cover postmarked N'GAOUNDERE 6 MARS 29.



Figure 2
30 centimes postage stamp cancelled
N'GAOUNDERE AGENCE SPECIALE 18 DEC,
probably in 1921 or 1922.
The only recorded example of this datestamp.

The standard postmark depicted on the cover in [Figure 1](#) is recorded used at N'Gaoundéré from 3 November 1917 to 4 November 1932 and, later, from 31 March 1947 to 2 September 1949 (Ref. 1). The postage stamp depicted in [Figure 2](#) is cancelled with an N'Gaoundéré datestamp which has a collar at the bottom. The date is 18 December; the year is absent. The wording in the collar – *AGENCE SPECIALE* – indicates that it was used by the *agent spécial*, an official of the *Trésorier-Payeur des Territoires du Cameroun*, and not by the PTT. The cancel was usually applied, for example, to official documents and to revenue stamps upon payment of various fees.

We offer a plausible explanation for the use of a non-postal datestamp on a postage stamp.

A postal agency was opened at N'Gaoundéré in November 1916 ([Refs. 2, 3](#)). The postal agency was subsequently converted to a post office on 1 April 1923 ([Ref. 4](#)). The postal agent at N'Gaoundéré could handle incoming and outgoing mail, including registered letters, and incoming parcel post. Other financial transactions, such as money orders, had to be handled by the *agent spécial* ([Refs. 3, 5](#)). Quite possibly, then, the stamp in [Figure 2](#) was originally affixed to a money order or some other document requiring payment of a fee. After N'Gaoundéré became a post office, money orders could also be purchased there.

The stamp was issued in 1921. Therefore, the year for the *AGENCE SPECIALE* cancel was probably 1921 or 1922.

Other explanations are possible. As always, readers' comments and insight are welcome.

Orthographical PS: N'Gaoundéré may be spelt with or without acute accents, and for that matter with or without

the apostrophe.

References

1. Bratzel, M P Jr, H Kraja, and R J Maddocks, *Les oblitérations du Cameroun 1914-1960*, MPB Canada, Windsor, Ontario, Canada 1990 (83 pages, ISBN 0-9694026-0-0. Supplemented by more recently recorded information).
2. Bouvet, P, "Les bureaux de poste du Cameroun sous mandat français," *L'Echo de la Timbrologie*, Jan 1935, pp 68-69.
3. "Rapport au ministre des colonies sur l'administration des territoires occupés du Cameroun de la conquête au 1^{er} juillet 1921," *Journal officiel de la République Française, annexe*, 7 Sept 1921, Paris, Imprimerie des journaux officiels, quai Voltaire, 31, pp 415ff. The report is unclear as to the responsibilities of the postal agent at N'Gaoundéré. One section indicates that *le service des mandats locaux* was the responsibility of *l'agent spécial*, another section that the postal agent could handle *mandats intérieurs seulement*. In any event, one can conclude that money orders sent to France and other destinations outside of Cameroun were the responsibility of *l'agent spécial*.
4. "Arrêté ouvrant un bureau postal et télégraphique à N'Gaoundéré," dated 24 March 1923 and effective 1 April 1923, *Journal officiel des territoires du Cameroun*, Imprimerie du Gouvernement, Yaoundé, 1923, p 122. The post office was also authorised to handle parcel post.
5. Bratzel, M P Jr, *The Postal Tariffs of Cameroun under French Administration – 1916-1959*, MPB Canada, Windsor, Ontario, Canada, 2007. (215+vi pp + Appendix on CD. ISBN 978-0-9694026-4-0.)

Marty Bratzel

REPORTS OF MEETINGS

LONDON GROUP MEETING OF 6 FEBRUARY 2016

Barbara Priddy: French West African Aviation - Part 1 Members' Displays

Mick Bister opened the meeting by welcoming two new attendees Paul Miller and Dominic Joyeux before introducing the morning's speaker, **Barbara Priddy**.

Barbara explained that her display was designed to capture the *jeu d'esprit* of aerophilately by combining serious postal history with lighter aspects of the subject such as the issue of commemorative stamps and exhibition covers.

Indeed the first part of the display opened with material from the 1930 *Exposition Internationale de la Poste Aérienne* in Marseille. This was followed by a mouth watering 1870 *ballon monté* entire to Senegal which Barbara then admitted was just a photocopy. Then came a selection of postcards illustrating the first planes delivered to Senegal: these were confirmed to be genuine!



Barbara Priddy explains one of her aerophilately items to fellow member Hugh Loudon

We were shown early examples of airmail to and from Senegal including a 1923 first flight cover from Dakar to Toulouse with its mayoral cachet. Then followed Latécoère material in the familiar red envelopes and a 1935 share certificate issued by the *Compagnie Générale Aéropostale*. Flight covers of the period were shown together with covers celebrating the company's anniversaries.

Next we saw examples of crash mail, mail to South America and postcards depicting various models of biplanes and seaplanes. Material relating to Jean Mermoz was shown including stamps and covers from 1937, 1946 and 1956 issued to commemorate his fatal crash. The life and disappearance of Antoine de Saint-Exupéry in 1944 was also recorded in a display of banknotes, stamps and *aérogrammes*. Other pilots and planes were celebrated on stamps issued in various countries between 1925 and 1936.

Barbara closed the first half of her display with a selection of charity labels including *Les grandes figures de l'aviation française* and series published by the *Comité Jean Mermoz* and the *Ligue Aéronautique de France*.

The second part of the display was devoted to the application of postage rates and airmail fees. A suitable subtitle, according to Barbara, should be '*la section migraine*' due

to the stress and effort demanded to interpret the tables and to reconcile the frankings with the published rates. Barbara paid tribute to the rates books written by Derek Richardson and Bob Picirilli without which her research could not have been achieved.¹



Maurice Tyler admires Barbara Priddy's airmail material

Problems of interpretation were exacerbated when the changes in rates for postage, registration and airmail were not synchronised or were not implemented on the prescribed day. Furthermore, senders would affix any stamps they had available irrespective of the correct postage. Clerks too were liable to human error in their calculations and interpretation of the rates.

The display comprised covers, mostly from Senegal, between 1925 and 1939. Each item was accompanied by a full explanation of how the total postage had been calculated and with the operating dates of each element. Some rates were quite obscure, a good example being the 1937-38 Christmas and New Year airmail postcard rate which was calculated by taking the tariff for a postcard with up to 5 words of text and adding one fifth of the *autres objets* airmail fee.

What was outstanding though was the visual impact of the material. The covers displayed a huge variety of stamps, mostly in multiple frankings in magnificent colour and design combinations, showing how rich French Colonial philately was during that period.

After a most enjoyable lunch members reassembled for an afternoon session of members' displays. **Godfrey Bowden** stepped forward first with a selection from his Algeria collection from 1945 to independence. We saw the post-war issues leading up to the final 6F *Alger* of 1958 in the form of a scarce dated corner block. This was followed by the metropolitan issues, the complex EA (*État Algérien*) overprints on and off cover, *Colis Postaux* issues and leaflets air-dropped during the Algerian crisis.

¹ *Tables of French Postal Rates 1849 to 2011* Brochure N° 7 (4th Ed) by Derek Richardson, and *Postal and Airmail Rates in France and Colonies 1920-1945* by Robert E Picirilli, both published 2011 by F&CPS.



A good lunch is enjoyed by all at the Calthorpe Arms

Paul Miller had brought with him three items of considerable interest. Firstly, a collective proof of the 1949 *Congrès international de Télégraphie et Téléphonie* set including the beautiful 100F *Pont Alexandre III* airmail, a 1944 cover to Italy bearing a number of the *Bordeaux Base Navale Italienne* issues and a magnificent 1962 dated corner block of the 30c Arcachon with all four stamps displaying the missing *Postes* variety.

Mick Bister displayed part of his *Marianne de Muller* collection with emphasis on the 15F value. He showed examples of proofs together with artwork held in the Paris postal museum

John Parmenter explained the adoption of the CFA franc in Madagascar and other African colonies and gave us examples of the exchange rate with the French franc. Airmail covers were shown illustrating the iniquitous airmail rates of the period when a letter to France weighing up to 5 grams would be charged just 7F50 whereas one between 15-20 grams a massive 79F.

Maurice Tyler showed us auction lots he had received the previous day and hence had not had the time to write up. All World War I items, they included the reply half of a privately printed Flag RP/PC, an APO 3 strike postdating the closure of the office, a parcel post receipt, two cards addressed to Guernsey and a wonderful example of a boxed IMPROPERLY POSTED/DELAYED strike.



Dominic Joyeux, Maurice Tyler and John Parmenter are engrossed in Len Barnes' display of the Saar territory

and indicated the common features in the designs proposed by Muller for his *Courrier Officiel*, *Marianne/République de l'Espérance* and *Paysanne/moissonneuse* designs. The display continued with examples of sheet printings, coils, booklets and rates.



Len Barnes, our convenor, opens his display on the French Occupation Zone and the Saar territory

Maurice Alder showed us a cover franked with a block of four of the Gaiffe essays in blue cancelled by a seemingly genuine 3 PARIS 3 (DISTRIBUTION) postmark dated 29 March 1892 and which had passed through the post unchallenged.

The afternoon closed with a magnificent display by **Len Barnes** of the post-WWII *Zone Française* issues concentrating in particular on those of the Saar which covered the philatelic history of the territory from the 1920s to the 1934 plebiscite and from the French occupation issues of 1945 to its reunification with Germany.

Mick Bister closed the meeting with a vote of thanks to Barbara for her enthralling display of French West African aerophilately presented to the members with more than a sprinkle of *jeu d'esprit* and *joie de vivre*. Mick commented that the afternoon's displays by members might well have been termed a '*stampfest*' such was the emphasis on the quantity and quality of stamps displayed. In all, a most entertaining and informative day.

Members present: Maurice Alder, Len Barnes, Mick Bister, Godfrey Bowden, Dominic Joyeux, Hugh Loudon, Paul Miller, John Parmenter, Barbara Priddy and Maurice Tyler.