

The Journal of the France & Colonies Philatelic Society



Members attending the Philatelic Weekend in Charlecote
raise their glasses in celebration of the Society's 70th anniversary.
(See page 8 for more photos)

Volume 69 ● Number 1

April 2019

Whole Number 289

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

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The Society

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

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

2018-19 Annual Subscription Rates

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

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

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

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

The Journal

The Society's Journal is published in April, August and December.

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

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Contributions should be sent by email to Mick Bister at manager@fcps.org.uk.

Text must be submitted in Word and images attached separately as jpegs scanned at 300dpi.

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 N Broadhurst, 47 Bolton Gardens, Teddington TW11 9AX (Telephone 020 8977 9665).

Colonies: R Gent, 17 Malmaison Way, Beckenham BR3 6SA (Telephone 0208 650 7695).

The Magazine Circuit

The Society subscribes to two French philatelic magazines, and has circuits organised for those who wish to read them. For further details contact the circuit organiser:

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* * *

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The Journal of the France & Colonies Philatelic Society

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April 2019 ● Whole No 289

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SOCIETY NOTES

Editorial

This year we mark yet another major step in the life of our Society as we celebrate the 70th anniversary of its launching in 1949. Since our last celebrations ten years ago we have been fortunate in acquiring copies of the Society's early newsletters which record how the F&CPS came into being. I hope you will enjoy reading 'From Stamp Club to Philatelic Society' which can be found on pages 5-6.

Our longest standing member **George Nash** (N° 30) was invited to contribute to this anniversary edition and his reminiscences will be found on page 7. Our second longest standing member, **Bill Mitchell** (N° 50), has likewise contributed to the Journal with an article on a stamp from his beloved French West Africa which you will find on pages 9-11. Bill has served the Society for many years in his role as Auction Secretary and has been a regular contributor to the Journal and this has been recognised by being presented with the Long Service Award. Congratulations Bill.

The 'official' celebration of our platinum anniversary took place after the AGM held at Charlecote on 2 March as you will see from the photos on the cover and on page 8. If you were unable to attend the celebration please free feel to pour yourself a glass of champagne and toast the Society's health in your own armchair.

We hope that you will enjoy this edition. It contains three quite remarkable works which describe and illustrate rarely seen material and come from first time contributors. The first is from **Brigitte Abensur** who has followed the PowerPoint display she gave at Charlecote last year with an in-depth article on the intricate postal rates which existed from 1 July to 31 December 1875 entitled 'Just before France joined the GPU'. Secondly, **Jere Dutt** has written on the 'Palm Climber issue of Dahomey' and has vividly illustrated his article with rarely seen items – stamps, proofs and covers – from his own collection. Finally, **Winston Williams** shares with us his discovery of what could be the earliest recorded example of the Paris - Calais *estafette* service.

Please continue to send me your contributions no matter how long or short. Just remember that images must be sent separately as jpeg attachments at 300dpi.

Thank you

Mick Bister

* * *

New Members

The Society is pleased to welcome members: 1471 Jeffery Moysey, 1472 Michael Passé, 1473 Keith Smith, 1474 Edward Harris, 1475 Marden Blackledge and 1476 Dr D Gwynne Harries.

* * *

Resignations

Members 1019 Prue Henderson, 1066 John P Garton, 1184 Colin Armstrong, 1236 Nicholas Pertwee, 1350 Ian

Potterton and 1429 Eddie Rennison have advised us that, sadly, they will not be renewing their membership.

* * *

Members Deceased

It is with great sadness that we have to report the death of members 500 Patrick Reeves, 1182 Philip Beton and 1462 Raymond Hart. We offer our condolences to their families.

* * *

Future Events

Please do not forget to support your regional groups. All members are welcome to attend whether you bring material to display or not.

The **London Group** will be meeting on Saturday 11 May from 11.00am to 4.00pm at the Calthorpe Arms, 252 Grays Inn Road, London WC1X 8JR when **Michael Round** will be displaying '150 years of French Congo' in the morning. After lunch, members are invited to show their own material.

The **Northern Group** will be holding its next meeting on Saturday 13 July at Broom Methodist Church, 195 Broom Lane, Rotherham, S60 3NW from 10.30am to 4.30pm. The venue is only five minutes from Junction 33 on the M1. It will be the traditional Bastille Day meeting at which **Steve Ellis** will be displaying 'Insufficiently paid mail' with the afternoon being devoted to members' displays (any topic). Lunch will be at the local pub.

The **Wessex Group** will be holding its next meeting on Saturday 6 July at the Scout Hall, Lower Street, Harnham starting at 10.30am when **Ashley Lawrence** will be displaying 'Mandates of Syria and Lebanon WW1'. After lunch, the afternoon will be devoted to members' displays. On 26 October 2019 **Trevor Buckell** will be showing his collection of 'French Air Mails'. It would help if those planning to attend could let the convenor know by emailing colinkrfrench@gmail.com.

* * *

Displays by Members

On 9 November 2018 at the *Salon Philatélique d'Automne* our member **Jérôme Castanet** gave a presentation for the meeting of the *Académie de Philatélie* on 'Une lettre de Porto Rico pour la France'.

On 25 February 2019 the fifth *Rencontres Philatéliques de Rennes*, organised by our member **André Métayer**, was attended by nearly sixty participants. A highly successful event, the programme included several major displays including that of André himself on 'Les relations postales entre l'Angleterre et la France' and one by our member **Jean-François Gibot** on 'Le 10c «Présidence» dans le régime intérieur 1852-1854'.

* * *

Exhibition Successes

Congratulations to our member **Ed Grabowski** who won further honours at Chicagopex 2018 on 16-18 November 2018. He was awarded Large Gold and the Postal History Society Medal for 'The Era of the French Colonial Group Type: the French Pacific Colonies' and in Literature he won Large Vermeil for 'Philately and International Mail Order Fraud: the Success of the New York Institute of Science in Hungary'.

* * *

Journal Back Numbers

Peter Maybury who lives near York has an almost complete run of the Journal from N° 100 to N° 282 (ie from May/June 1967 to December 2016). Only 106, 109-111, 119 and 124 are missing. These are now surplus to requirement and Peter offers them free to a good home as long as the acquirer collects.

If you are interested in this generous offer please contact him at mayburyjp@gmail.com.

* * *

F&CPS Annual Philatelic Weekend 2020 - a new venue!

We are pleased to announce that the 2020 annual weekend of the France & Colonies Philatelic Society will be held from Friday 13 March 2020 to Sunday 15 March 2020 at the Abbey Hotel, Hither Green Lane, Dagnell End Road, Redditch B98 9BE. The cost will be £222 for single occupancy and £316 for double occupancy. This is for bed, breakfast and dinner for two nights and refreshments during the day. Lunches will be available payable by individuals as they wish.

Access is straightforward. By road it is some 20 minutes from Junction 2 of the M42. By rail one goes via Birmingham New Street. From the station at Redditch one would need to take a taxi, around a 20 minute journey costing around £10.

Further information about the weekend will be announced later in the year and more details about the hotel can be found by visiting www.theabbeyhotel.co.uk.

* * *



The grounds of the Abbey Hotel, Redditch

Philatelic Honours

As announced in our AGM Report on cover page iii two of our members, **Bill Mitchell** and **Alan Wood**, have recently been presented personally with the Society's long service award. Both have contributed considerably to the success of the Society, including Bill's former role as Auction Secretary and his production of major articles for the Journal, and Alan's work as Wessex Group Convenor and Room Auctioneer.

* * *

Alan Wood is presented with the Society's long service award by Colin French, the Wessex Group convenor, (centre) and fellow member Jeremy Martin (left)



Safeguarding the future of the Journal: an appeal for a new Manager/Editor

As you will have learned from my report given at this year's AGM I shall be stepping down from my post as Journal Manager with effect from March of next year.

I took on this post in 2015 but only in a temporary capacity as I had just completed fifteen years service as Auction Secretary. Since then and despite several appeals for a permanent replacement nobody has come forward but I am afraid this situation cannot continue indefinitely. Too few of us are taking on too many responsibilities and the Society needs more members to share the workload. We are therefore appealing yet again for someone to take on the responsibility of producing the Journal.

Producing the Journal is an extremely rewarding job especially for someone who enjoys creative work on the computer. Who amongst us does not experience satisfaction and a touch of pride upon the completion of an attractive page of writing-up on which our stamps and covers can then be mounted? Working with text and images to create the Journal and using the same skills as when writing up a page of stamps can be equally fulfilling but, of course, it will be on a larger scale.

We are looking therefore for someone who can commit themselves to producing three Journals a year. Currently the Journal is published using InDesign software but it could equally be produced using another desktop publishing programme or by someone with moderate Word skills; the choice would be that of the applicant based on a system with which he feels both familiar and confident. A broad awareness of French philately would be useful but in-depth knowledge is not essential. If there are problems concerning the specialised content of articles there are members who can be called upon to give assistance.

The Journal is the most important service that the Society offers. It unites our members, wherever they may live, like no other service we offer does. If the Journal is to continue we are now pleading for someone to take over the reins as otherwise the April 2020 edition will be the last one.

If you wish to volunteer or if you require any further details of what is involved please contact me at manager@fcps.org.uk. Thank you.

Mick Bister

* * *

2018 Christmas Quiz Results



The answers to the question "Which eight stamps of France issued between 1965 and 2015 feature the Union Jack?" are as follows (Yvert & Tellier numbers):

1450	1965	40c 20 ^e anniversaire de la Victoire
1709	1972	50c + 10c Personnages célèbres – Louis Blériot
2050	1979	1F20 Election de l'Assemblée des Communautés Européennes
2888	1994	4F30 50 ^e anniversaire du débarquement en Normandie
3196	1998	3F 80 ^e anniversaire de l'Armistice
3587	2003	0,50€ Championnats du monde d'athlétisme, Paris
3666	2004	0,50€ Élargissement de l'Union Européenne
4248	2008	0,55€ Grands projets européens, Erasmus
4954	2015	0,68€ 70 ^e anniversaire du 8 mai 1945

You will see that there are in fact nine, the additional one was spotted by one of our eagle-eyed contributors!

Miniature sheets featuring flags on the borders did not count as the question asked which stamps featured the flags.

Congratulations to the three winners who each got eight answers correct (nobody got all nine!) so they each win a copy of the recent *Marianne l'Engagée* miniature sheet:

David Hogarth from Scotland
Héloïse Mitchell from Ireland
David Parmley from Liverpool

Richard Broadhurst

Congratulations and thanks to Richard for organising this seasonal and topical competition (MLB)

* * *

From Stamp Club to Philatelic Society

Mick Bister

Since the celebration of our 60th anniversary back in 2009 the Society has gained access to copies of the Society's 'Newsletter' from the 1940s which were once owned by the late George Barker. Very few of these survive and

it has been a privilege to read their contents. It seems appropriate therefore to mark our 70th anniversary with a few facts drawn from these sources regarding the early days of our Society.



Figure 1

Newsletter heading (reduced) of the 'France & Colonies Stamp Club' from December 1948.

The foolscap Newsletter was printed on a duplicator, possibly a Roneo, which necessitated a freshly drawn heading for each edition.

Consequently the depiction of Cérès can range from sympathetic to grotesque according to the artist's dexterity.

The Society was launched under the name of the 'France & Colonies Stamp Club' sometime after WWII by a stamp dealer called Thomas South Mack, more often known as T.

South Mack, South Mack or simply Mack. It began as a commercial venture for his stamp business which he soon developed into a hugely successful club "conducted as a one-man-show devoting all his time and energy to the interests of his fellow collectors."¹ For an annual subscription of 3/- (15p in today's money) T South Mack was able to provide a new issue service to members, organise a successful exchange packet service, run a 'wants' service

and a catalogue and literature service as well as publish a regular Newsletter. I have never seen an example of the very first series of Newsletters and George Barker makes no reference to them in his 'Cumulative Index to Society Periodicals' published in 1998. His cataloguing commences with the six editions of the 'New Series' published shortly after T. South Mack's death (Figure 1) from which the information for this article was taken. The Society does possess though an example of the 1948 membership card (Figure 2) at a time when the club had 378 members (cf 270 today).

T. South Mack died on 25 June 1948 and the stamp club was suspended while his stock had to be sorted and a valuation prepared for probate. During this procedure it was discovered that the club had been running at a loss and that T. South Mack had been paying costs out of his own pocket (and from the profits of his new issue service). In the meantime, the two joint secretaries of the club, Major Gerald Wynne Rushton and Edward H. Spiro, were determined that the stamp club should not flounder and began a new series of Newsletters starting in November of the same year in which they proposed the forming of a new club but with a more realistic annual subscription of six shillings - "still less than the cost of two packets of cigarettes."² All the previous services would be retained, the Newsletter would be published ten times a year, a postal auction would be started and a free 'expert and advisory

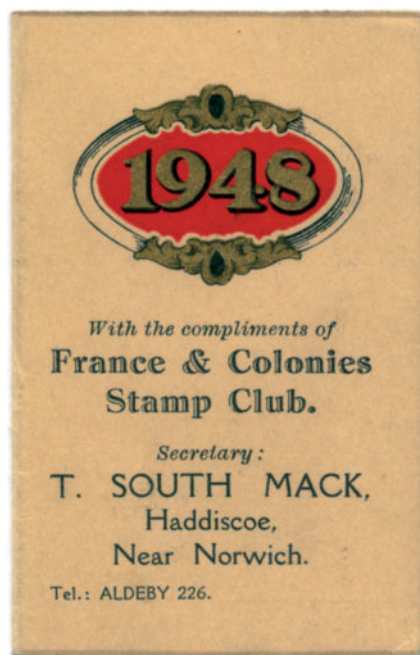


Figure 2

Membership card from 1948, the last year of the pioneering 'France & Colonies Stamp Club'

1 'France & Colonies Stamp Club' Newsletter N° 1 (New Series) November 1948 Page 1

2 'France & Colonies Stamp Club' Newsletter N° 1 (New Series'), November 1948 Page 1



Figure 3
Church House, Great Smith Street, Westminster
where the club was relaunched as the
'France & Colonies Philatelic Society of Great Britain'
at the Annual General Meeting on 21 May 1949

committee' would be introduced. Furthermore, regional groups were to be established in London, Manchester and Bristol. Already we can see the shape of the Society we know.

The second Newsletter published in December 1948 contained the first auction list which comprised just forty lots, mostly offered by the executors of T. South Mack's estate, including an unmounted mint copy of the 1936 50 franc airmail (Y&T PA14) for £6 and a mint 1937 Pexip sheet for 17/6. It is to be noted that both the articles in the Newsletters and lots in the auctions were very much stamp orientated with postal history playing very much a supporting role.

A general meeting, attended by forty six members, was held in London on 27 January 1949 in Committee Room N°3, Church House, Great Smith Street, Westminster (Figure 3) at which the new constitution was drafted and committee members elected. This was followed by the Annual General Meeting on 21 May, again at Church House, at which the constitution was adopted and the club's name changed

to the 'France and Colonies Philatelic Society of Great Britain'. Thereafter the Society's new title appeared as the heading of the Newsletters from the June/July edition of 1949 onwards (see enclosed facsimile). The Society that we are now members of was therefore appropriately founded in the centennial year of the first French postage stamp and is the date on which we mark the Society's anniversaries.

So, as we celebrate this year our 70th anniversary let us not forget the pioneers who in 1948 and 1949 regenerated, rebranded and relaunched the Society within twelve months of the death of its founder: an incredible achievement. Bound by a new constitution, promoted with a new name and led by a band of enthusiastic, dedicated and committed philatelists, the Society would 'in a spirit of friendship and goodwill achieve the ambitious aims set out in the new constitution' and become 'a real collectors' association second to none.'³

3 'France & Colonies Philatelic Society' Newsletter, June/July 1949
Page 1

Chairman:	Henry Jervis MA RPSL
Hon. Joint Secretaries:	Major Gerald Wynne Rushton and Edward H Spiro BPA
Newsletter Editor:	Edward H Spiro BPA
Treasurer:	Captain F G Davis OBE
Packet Superintendent:	Captain D W Manning
Committee Members:	H H Beaven, Squadron Leader J Noel Davis OBE, I D J Long RPSL and B S Townroe MA, JP

A member remembers

George Nash, our longest standing member (N° 30),
was invited to share his recollections of his early days in the Society. Here is his response.

I was delighted to receive your letter about my being the longest standing member of the Society. I did not realise it but I suppose that as I am now 85 and that as all the members were a lot older than myself when I joined it must be true.

I joined the Society in the 1950s whilst I was a member of the Ruislip Philatelic Society and Bill Mitchell was also there.

I remember that in my early days I was very much the junior member of the Society and was the only member to collect "modern" which in those days was the 1900s onwards. The meetings were at the Kingsway Hall in London and as I worked as a bank clerk in West Kensington and lived in Uxbridge, this was very handy. I recall that at the meetings frequent members attending were Capt. Davis, Lady Dunlop (who frequently told stories of her journey from occupied Paris to Marseille to get on a boat to England), Mr. Constantine (the stamp dealer) and Monsieur Berlemont the French restaurant owner.

My interest in collecting French stamps started in 1946 whilst at school when the pupils were invited to have a French pen pal. I was very lucky that my pen pal also collected stamps. One of my earliest purchases was 1 kilo of wartime French stamps and from that I obtained over one thousand of the 1F50 brown Pétain issue. From this I was able to build up a study of this issue and when the Society was invited to exhibit at the BPE in 1974 I was able to display a frame.

A few years earlier I was able to purchase a collection of covers and cards from a husband and wife who lived near Uxbridge and who both had previously lived in Paris and had both been made POWs.

This started my interest in postal history and this is my main interest now, from 1939 to 1945 with Red Cross covers,



George Nash in the 1950s

prisoner of war mail and Vichy correspondence to and from Paris. This I displayed along with other members at Chichester in 1973.

Kind regards,

George Nash

Wednesday, February 25, was "Members' Evening", and the following displays were given:-	
Paris Stars	Mrs. M.M.B. Graham.
Ship and Pre-Stamp Covers	H.S.H. Bidmead.
Modern Varieties, Proofs, and Essays	E.W. Bishop.
Merson Issues	Capt. F.G. Davis.
Study of P.D., P.P., and P.F. Strikes	R.G. Morris.
Second World War Mail	G.I. Nash.
Philatelic Congress Postmarks	A.A. Pawson.
Air Mail Stamps	L.C. Williams.
Also present was the Revd. J.C. Spokes.	

The above is an extract from the F&CPS Newsletter of March 1959
which records under 'News of the Society' on page 29
George's display of Second World War Mail given on 25 February.

Vive la F&CPS!

Following the AGM at the Charlecote Weekend members were invited to partake in a *vin d'honneur* to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the France and Colonies Philatelic Society. Mick Bister gave a brief account of the how the Society was created (see full article 'From Stamp Club to Philatelic Society' on Pages 5-6) and read out the list of the founding officers and committee members of 1949. Champagne having been poured, glasses were raised to toast the Society's founders and the Society's future.



Peter Kelly, Colin Pease and Maurice Tyler



Colin Spong



Bob Larg



André and Josselyne Métayer



Ashley Lawrence



Steve Ellis and David Parmley



Paul Watkins and Peter Stockton

(Photos by Mick Bister)

Mauritania - the 1F50 stamps of 1938 and 1947

Bill Mitchell

The article on the 1F50 brown-red¹ published in the *Bulletin Philatélique du Midi* and noted by Robert G Stone in the *France & Colonies Philatelist* and then by Michael Round in the *Journal* for December 2017, gives only a superficial account of one of the most interesting of the semi-modern stamps of the French colonies. A more detailed contemporary account was published anonymously in *L'Officiel de la Philatélie* N° 20 of 15 November 1947 (Figure 1) and reprinted by COL.FRA in its *Bulletin* N° 105 (3^{ème} trimestre 2003). The *L'Officiel* account is as follows²:

"In 1938 appeared a new series of stamps including a 1F50 violet (Figure 2) in the design called 'encampment' by Stanley Gibbons. In 1940³ there was an increase in postal charges which led to the withdrawal of the 1F50 stamp and a need for a 60 centimes value (Figure 3). This 60 centimes stamp was in the same type and colour as the 1F50 which was no longer needed. It was decided to leave the 1F50 on sale until stocks were exhausted as there remained a considerable stock on hand.

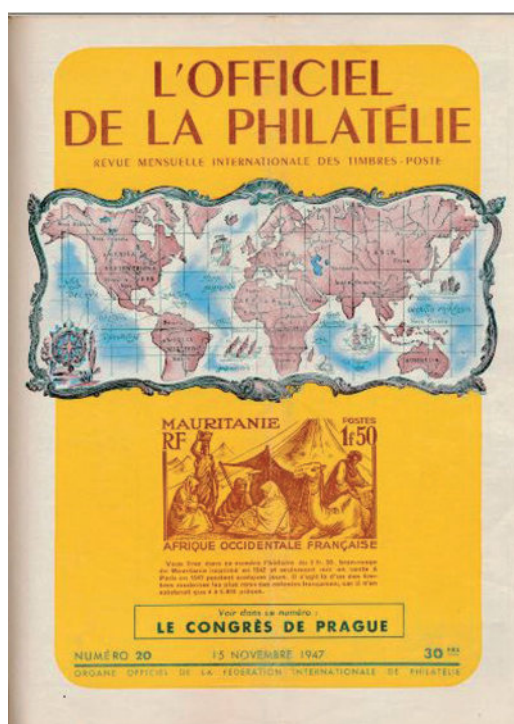


Figure 1

Front cover of *L'Officiel de la Philatélie* N° 20 of 15 November 1947 depicting the 1F50 Mauritania under discussion.

The magazine has since been incorporated into *Timbres Magazine*.



Figure 2

1F50 *Encampment* in violet (SG 100 / Y&T 88) issued 17 November 1938



Figure 3

60c *Encampment* in violet (SG 91 / Y&T 107) issued 26 March 1940

"In 1942 another increase in charges restored a 1F50 rate⁴ and a need for a stamp of that value. Although stocks of the violet stamp were still not exhausted the Ministry for the Colonies ordered a 1F50 stamp in the same design as before but printed in brown-red to avoid confusion with the 60 centimes violet in the same design. The brown-red stamp was delivered unannounced to the *Agence Comptable des Timbres-poste Coloniaux* which stored it unaware of its significance (Figure 4).



Figure 4

1F50 *Encampment* in brown-red (SG 100a / Y&T 112A) released 1947

"The need for the 1F50 stamp being small the violet stamp was still on sale in Paris at the beginning of 1947 when the first French-printed stamps for the Federation of French West Africa were put on sale. At that point it was decided to destroy the stocks of the stamps of the seven colonies of the Federation. So the withdrawal of the stamps of Mauritania was announced which led to a number of orders for complete sets, particularly by collectors. These sets included a 1F50 stamp. As the date for destruction approached, stocks of the violet stamp ran out and were replaced by the brown-red, apparently without anyone noticing the difference.

"When the sale of the old French West Africa colonies'

1 'Brown-red' is the shade attributed to the stamp in the Stanley Gibbons catalogue and is therefore accepted by collectors using British catalogues and lists. It is however a mistranslation of the French '*brun-rouge*' used in the French catalogues and in the original article in *L'Officiel de la Philatélie*. The correct translation should be 'red-brown' (in the French language, the second colour modifies the first) as used in the Scott catalogues and which ironically is the translation given by Stanley Gibbons in its own *Guide de Couleurs*.

2 Translated and edited by Bill Mitchell

3 1939 according to the author (see page 10)

4 To meet the internal letter rate applicable from 5 January 1942 (cf 1F50 Pétain *brun-rouge* issued in France)

stamps ceased all the stocks were incinerated and that was how the 1F50 brown-red held in the storerooms of the *Agence* went up in smoke. It was not until some months later that the existence of this stamp became known thanks to enquiries from collectors, who could not find it listed in new editions of their catalogues. We have found, by comparing the number printed with the records of the number destroyed that only some 4000 to 5000 were sold. It's worth mentioning that the complete sets sold were comprised of only single stamps."

So much for the *L'Officiel* article. It calls for some comment.

The anonymous author does not seem to have been particularly interested in the tariff changes and the reasons for a corresponding colour change. To fully understand the brown-red stamp it is necessary to give some consideration to its violet predecessor and the other stamp involved, the 60 centimes violet.

In 1938 (Gibbons says, on 17 November) a new set of definitive stamps for Mauritania was issued to replace one whose design had seen service for a quarter of a century. There were four designs; the one we are concerned with was designed and engraved by René Cottet and depicts, as noted above, an 'encampment'. The new set included a 1F50 stamp printed in violet which, at the time the issue was planned and put into production, met the registration fee under the French domestic tariff of 12 July 1937 (1 August in the colony). Ironically, on the very day the stamps were put on sale this (metropolitan) charge was raised to 1F60 and very soon afterwards, on 1 January 1939, French West Africa, including Mauritania, followed suit. So to all intents and purposes the 1F50 violet stamp became obsolescent almost as soon as it was issued and its use became minimal.

This November 1938/January 1939 tariff also included a 60 centimes rate for printed matter sent under wrapper or in unsealed envelopes weighing between 50 and 100 grams, and after a rather long delay a stamp of this value duly appeared (on 26 March 1940, according to Gibbons). Not only was it in the same design as the existing 1F50, for some reason it was also printed in a similar violet colour; nevertheless it was decided to keep on sale the considerable stock of the 1F50 which still remained – for which there was little demand.

It is quite clear that the date of the increase in postal charges noted by the anonymous author of the *L'Officiel* article was 1939 and not 1940 as he says.

Now for a complication which I would have thought would have interested the article's author but which he does not mention. There were indeed tariff changes in 1940, effective 1 January in both France and the colony, and these brought back into use the 1F50 violet, this time to meet the charge for a postcard to a foreign address (this was of course the start of a new rate, not the end of an old one). At the same time the domestic charge for printed matter weighing between 50 and 100 grams remained unchanged at 60 centimes so two almost identical stamps were required for two separate purposes at the same time, two years earlier than the author's article in *L'Officiel* suggests. The colour

of the 1F50 should have been changed to red at this point to comply with UPU requirements; no doubt the extensive stock of the violet stamp precluded this.

The 1F50 and 60 centimes rates continued for two years and were then re-allocated by the metropolitan tariff of 5 January 1942 (effective 21 February in the colony) when the former became the basic letter rate and the latter the '5-words' postcard and visiting cards rate. It was at this point, possibly because of the importance of the basic letter rate, that the decision to change the colour of the 1F50 from violet to brown-red was taken.

According to a COL.FRA note accompanying the reprint of the 1947 article, this new stamp was printed on 7 May 1942, the date on the *coin daté*, but for some reason it received no publicity and was simply put into stock together with its violet predecessor without receiving any special attention. And there it remained.

At this stage it was still possible to obtain supplies of stamps from France. The position was to change dramatically some six months later. In November 1942 the Allies invaded North Africa and shortly afterwards Mauritania, along with the rest of French West Africa, switched its allegiance from Vichy to de Gaulle's Free French movement. It then became impossible to obtain fresh supplies of stamps from France. This put a stop to the diminution of stocks of the 1F50 violet, another point that our author might have made.

Subsequent changes brought about the end of the French West Africa colonies as separate stamp-issuing countries and the first stamps of a unified French West Africa, at first surcharges on stamps of Senegal and Mauritania (1943-44) then the *Série de Londres* of 1945 and, on 24 March 1947 (according to Gibbons again) the first definitive stamps to be printed in France. The decision to incinerate may have been influenced by the fact that it was no longer thought appropriate to have on sale stamps of the former stamp-issuing countries.

I have noted that according to COL.FRA the date of printing of the 1F50 brown-red was 7 May 1942. This makes Gibbons' date of issue (5 March 1940) pure fantasy, and the question arises, what should replace it? Surely, when a postage stamp is issued it is placed on sale in post offices, and in this case we can be sure that this never happened – if it was "issued" at all it was to the philatelic market ("released" would be a better word). Obviously any "used" copy must be viewed with suspicion. To reflect the facts, the date of issue and the used price should be deleted from the catalogue and replaced by a footnote affirming its status as a stamp prepared for use but not issued. (I can confirm that in my Yvert & Tellier Colonies catalogue – the 2011 edition – the stamp description is indeed printed in italics and there is no used price, indicating as Michael Round says, an unissued item.)

Our anonymous *L'Officiel* author notes that quite early on collectors began enquiring about the absence of the 1F50 brown-red from their catalogues. It may be that it took many years for catalogue editors to decide on the status of this stamp – at any rate, it does not appear in Gibbons' 1968 edition.

And as a final comment on these two stamps, it would be interesting to know the projected use in 1938, both postal and philatelic, of the 1F50 violet. The Naval Intelligence Division handbook on French West Africa (Volume 2, 1944) gives on page 334 some details of the population of Mauritania at that time. A census of 1937 recorded the presence in the colony of 351 Europeans, mainly colonial civil servants or army officers together with a few traders, so the total postal use must have been quite modest. Commercially used registered covers bearing the 1F50 violet with the 65 centimes to defray the basic postage and dated between 17 November and 31 December 1938 must be very scarce if not rare.

Sources and acknowledgements

This article is a revision of one I published in January

2006 in the *France & Colonies Philatelist*, the magazine of our sister society in the United States. I am obliged to the editor of the *Philatelist* for permission to publish this improved version which contains much new material.

For Mauritania tariff changes I have consulted extracts from the *Journal Officiel de l'Afrique Occidentale Française* courtesy of Marty Bratzel and the *Journal Officiel de la Côte d'Ivoire* kindly provided by Bob Picirilli. Details of changes to French tariffs came from Derek Richardson's *Tables of French Postal Rates 1849 to 2011*, which is the fourth edition of the Society's Brochure N° 7 published in 2011.

I am grateful to Mick Bister for some helpful comments and suggestions and to Pat Spong, who has kindly typed my manuscript.

Riots in Réunion 1868 and a French Warship

Peter Kelly

A letter written by an officer on board the French warship *Belliqueuse* anchored off Réunion is the inspiration for this short article.



Figure 1

Letter from Saint Denis, Réunion to Brest, 19 December 1868
Franked 20c for the concessionary rate for Military and Navy present on the island

Background: the collapse of the sugar cane trade

The zenith of the cane sugar trade in Réunion lasted for only ten years and from a peak in the 1850s of about 90 francs per quintal¹ prices fell away as did production. The full effect of this was not felt in Réunion to begin with because of fiscal advantages that were available, but in 1863

prices fell again and, on top of that, the island was hit by three cyclones that cut production. Many other problems affected life on the island including a parasitic infection of the canes, more low rates and outbreaks of malaria. Many producers, financed on the back of the good old days, now faced ruin. All of this gave rise to an increasing level of poverty on the island and a general lack of support for the workforce that built up bitterness and exasperation. This finally boiled over in 1868 and in November there was a

¹ A quintal is a historic measure for 100 kilograms.

major insurrection with a number killed and a great many more wounded. Troops fired on the rioters and followed this up with a bayonet charge. The island was under siege. Help was required....

The French warship *Belliqueuse*

She was a wooden hulled armoured corvette, barque rigged with a single screw steam engine, built for the French Navy in the 1860s and designed as a cheap ironclad. She was the first French ironclad to sail around the world which she did between 1867 and May 1869, having spent the bulk of her career in the Pacific before returning to her base at Toulon

where she was used as a target in 1886. She was on her return journey to France out of Saigon when she received orders to divert to Réunion because of the troubles going on there.

The letter

This was written by L Gomez Garcia to a Madame Bourguen at Lambézellec near Brest (Figure 1). Despite the non-French sounding name, Garcia's handwriting and the excellent quality of his French suggests that he was an officer on the ship writing on the headed notepaper of the *Belliqueuse* with the 'océan pacifique' division of the Navy altered to read 'océan indien' (Figure 2).

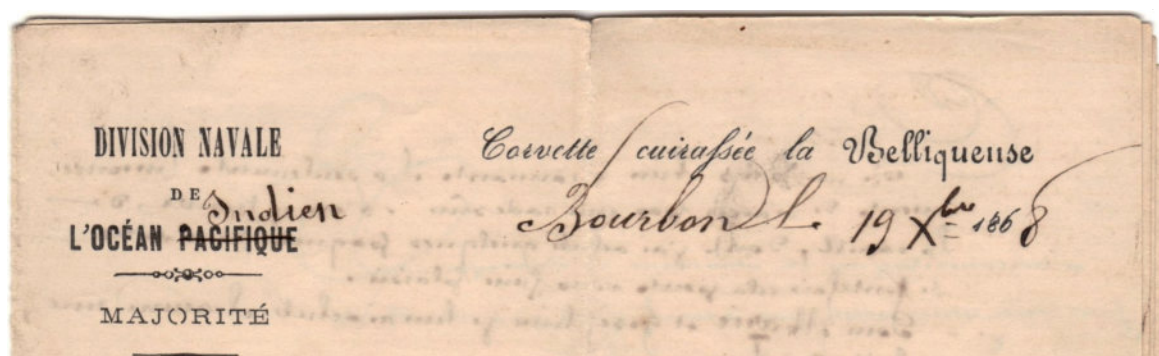


Figure 2
Letterhead of the French corvette *Belliqueuse*

The tone of the letter is extremely affectionate in parts but I give below a translation of what is relevant to this story.

"....I am now writing to you from Bourbon island (Réunion) where a revolt has started but our appearance had such a good effect that today perfect calm prevails, happily for us for otherwise we might have had to stay here longer. One can get vanilla here and I have bought several packets for you. We are leaving on the 21st (December) for Mayotte and

Zanzibar, near to Madagascar and then home via the Cape of Good Hope."

The letter was posted at Saint Denis on 19 December 1868, franked with the concessionary rate of a pair of 10c Eagles tied with the lozenge of Réunion and the circular date stamp 'Corr. D.Armées / St Denis'. The back is marked 'present on board the *Belliqueuse*' (in French) and signed by the Commandant (Figure 3).



Figure 3.
Manuscript confirmation that the sender is on board the *Belliqueuse*, anchored off Réunion

The letter sailed with the mails on the same day on Messageries Maritimes Line T mailboat *Erymanthe* reaching Suez on 7 January 1869.

The letter continued overland to Alexandria and by the mailboat *Moeris* from Alexandria on 9 January, reaching Marseille on 15 January.

The back shows transit marks 'Marseille à Lyon' night TPO dated the 15th reaching Paris on the 16th, then by train to Brest and on to Lambézellec the following day.

Footnote

The writer was a little over confident as to the perfect calm he mentioned as the difficulties and dissatisfaction rumbled on. The Franco-Prussian War of 1870 affected demand for sugar and further damage on the infrastructure resulted from several cyclonic storms. Stability started to return in 1881 and the new railway and port at Pointe des Galets boosted trade and morale. However, sugar production that had reached 70,000 tons annually in the 1860s amounted to only 20,000 tons in 1881.

The Paris-Calais *Estafette* – First Recorded Use

Winston Williams



Figure 1

Cover from London to Ste Marie d'Oléron with manuscript *par Estafette* and straight line ANGL. EST. received in Paris on 26 August 1829 and in Ste Marie d'Oléron on 28 August 1829.

As readers will know from the Journal article in 2011 by André Métayer¹, the Paris-Calais *estafette* was the optional quick mail service set up for mail between France and Britain from 1 August 1829. What amazes me is that this letter (Figure 1) from London on 20 August 1829 is the earliest recorded example – so far – by some three weeks.

The story began in 2017 when I saw the letter on eBay. fr. The headline description showed it was from London to France in 1829. Thus there was a clue that it could be within the *estafette* period, even if I then had to look further to see it had been sent by *estafette*. However the vendor's listings showed he only posted to France. Therefore I contacted the vendor with a message in French and found he was happy to post it to me in England. Thus I bought it as a nice early example, little knowing how difficult it would be to try and find other such early examples.

As a beginner in French postal history, I initially put my unsuccessful sporadic search for other early examples down to ignorance/poor searching/poor luck. A few months after I began my search, I retired and I was able to spend the time for more intensive research. My first definitive clue that any usage in 1829 was scarce came from an article by Pierre Langlois² published in 1960 where he wrote that one

only sees examples from 1830 onwards.

I have been able to track down two other published 1829 usage examples, both from London with the handstruck 'ANGL. EST' in red. There is the one in André Métayer's article that was illustrated as figure 2 on page 141. This is a letter from London to Paris dated 10 September 1829, received 12 September, uprated from 18 to 23 *décimes* for the *estafette* fee. Although André does not say it is very early Michèle Chauvet, who has made enquiries on my behalf, says that her contacts have told her that it is the earliest date they had previously seen, even though they were not specifically looking for early use. So my example is three weeks earlier. Michèle herself illustrates a very nice example written on 9 December 1829 from London to Cognac in one of her books.³

So what of the detail of my find? It is addressed to Ste Marie d'Oléron, Basses-Pyrénées (now Oléron-Sainte-Marie, Pyrénées-Atlantiques), a small town some 883km from Calais as the crow flies, around 820km from Paris by road and 50km short of the Spanish border. The letter is a single sheet, weighing 7 grams and the paper has the watermark 'BROCKLESBY & / MORBEY / 1829'.

The business letter (Figure 2) is written in French and is headed London 20 August 1829 (a Thursday). A bank payment to the writer has not been accepted and he wants the wrong corrected as soon as possible. This must be

1 Journal Number 262 of December 2011 of the France & Colonies Philatelic Society 'Mail carried by *estafette* between France and England (1829-1836)' by André Métayer

2 *Documents Philatéliques* N° 3 (January 1960) 'Les "estafettes" de la route Paris-Calais' pp 109-114, by Pierre Langlois. On page 112 "on ne les rencontre qu'à partir de 1830." (For a similar version by the same author but in English, see *France & Colonies Philatelic Society Journal* N°141/142,

pp16-22, Spring 1980).

3 "Introduction à l' Histoire Postale des origines à 1849" Volume 1: "Organisation et fonctionnement " by Michèle Chauvet, page 115.

why the writer wanted to use the *estafette* service. The writer has complied with the instructions required by the circular dated 15 July 1829 (mentioned in André's article) and endorsed it "*par Estafette*". Letters for France on Thursdays could be received up until 7pm at the General Post Office (that would move to brand new premises the following month). On the reverse is a typical Foreign Office handstamp applied in London for (18)29. It would have left London by the 8pm Foreign Mail Coach and travelled the 73 miles arriving at Dover at around sunrise and then across the Channel, by the British Post Office steam packet *Crusader*, to Calais, a three-hour journey even in the bad weather they were then experiencing. From there it would have travelled by the *estafette* that left Calais on Friday and arrived at Paris the next day⁴, Saturday 22 August at 8 o'clock in the morning. At the Paris central bureau the handstruck 'ANGL. EST.' was applied twice, once rather poorly and a second time clearly, both in a bright orange colour. From there it went on its long journey to Ste Marie d'Oléron, arriving on 26 August where the 26 August 1829 backstamp was applied.

The charge markings are 1/2 (1s/2d) in red, showing the mandatory prepayment rate in force since 1812 for a single letter from London to France. The French internal tariff was the one in force from 1 January 1828 for a straight line distance of between 750 and 900km. Therefore this letter weighing less than 7½ grams from London to Ste Marie d'Oléron was marked 20 for the French section of the journey as follows:

Shipping Fee from Dover to Calais:	6 <i>décimes</i>
Postage Calais to Ste Marie d'Oléron:	11 <i>décimes</i>
<i>Estafette</i> Fee:	3 <i>décimes</i>
Total:	20 <i>décimes</i>

With London and Paris being the capitals of the then two most important countries in the western world, surely there should be more examples in 1829? The long series of wars between the two countries had finished fourteen years earlier. Various suggestions could be put forward why 1829 usage is so scarce.

1. The new *estafette* service was unproven and people were reluctant for the extra *estafette* charge (three *décimes* for letters up to the first weight) to be incurred.
2. The *estafette* handstamps were not ready by the start of the service on 1 August 1829.
3. The handstruck marking was initially only applied to the top item of a bundle.

The suggestions are not mutually exclusive. The last suggestion has a precedent in British postal history, where it is thought only the top item of each mail bundle carried by the new trains from Liverpool to Manchester had a handstruck train number applied until 1840. But if that had occurred, then there should be examples where the letter

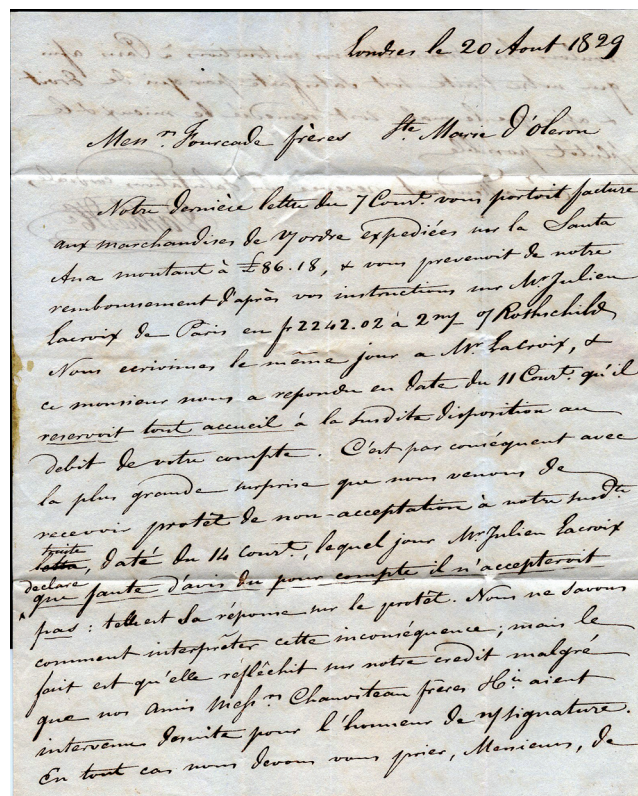


Figure 2
Contents dated 20 August 1829

was endorsed "*par Estafette*", with the *estafette* fee charged, but without the handstamp. I am not aware of any such examples. Personally I prefer the first suggestion. The second suggestion would explain a delay in their appearance, but not their apparent subsequent scarcity later in 1829. The 'ANGL. EST.' marking is not scarce in itself, being rated 3 (on a scale of 1 to 12 with 12 highest) by the James van der Linden catalogue supplement⁵, although the other markings (for the Paris-Calais direction) are less common.

My working proposition is that there will be a few other early examples lurking in people's collections. It is just that their scarcity has not been commented upon. So if you, as a postal historian, had acquired an example sent before the end of say September 1829, you might have thought at the time "quite early" and then forgot about it after putting it in your album.

So let me end with a challenge. Readers, look in your collections. You may be pleasantly surprised and find an example sent in August or September 1829. When you do so, tell Mick Bister as Journal manager. We can then give readers an update in a later edition of this Journal.

Acknowledgements

My special thanks to Mme Michèle Chauvet and to Chris Hitchen for their valuable assistance in providing data.

⁴ André Métayer's article says two days later for mail from Calais to Paris. I believe this to be a small mistranslation from the French between *surlendemain* and *lendemain*

⁵ 'Catalogue de marques de passage, 1^{er} supplément au catalogue de 1993' by James van der Linden, Soluphil, 1998

Just before France joined the General Postal Union 1 July - 31 December 1875

Brigitte Abensur

with background and explanatory tariff notes by Chris Hitchen

Under payments on foreign letters - the background

Before the advent of postage stamps it was the post office that calculated postage whether an item was prepaid or unpaid, that is to say, to be paid on delivery. Underpayment was not possible except for errors made by a post office official. Once senders could prepay with stamps the possibility of sender error and under franking became apparent. Existing conventions for foreign letters had mostly been drawn up before it had been possible to use this new innovation. If a letter was under paid it was usually treated simply as an unpaid one and the value of any postage paid ignored, at a loss to the sender.

On 1 January 1857 a new convention went into effect between France and the United Kingdom. For the first time if a letter was underpaid the deficiency would be calculated as the cost of an unpaid letter less the value of any postage stamps applied. Most, though not all, future conventions between France and other countries followed the same lines.

At the same time, or sometimes a little earlier, the rate for an unpaid letter was made greater than one that was prepaid. This encouraged the use of stamps for pre-payment but was also now fairer overall as it now took into account the value of whatever postage a sender had put on.

Between 1857 and 1878 most calculations start with what the correct unpaid rate should be and then deduct the value of any stamps used. This is true for most European countries but there are exceptions so one needs to be aware of the various conventions in force at a particular time.¹

The General Postal Union

It was in May 1863 that a Conference of Postal Administrations was organised (by the American Postmaster General) and took place in Paris. The Conference was attended by 15 nations who were probably responsible for more than

95% of the world's international correspondence.

The 1863 Paris Conference was successful, in that the member nations recognised that the major problems were the calculation and standardisation of weight bands and postal rates, and the need for simpler methods of accounting for the exchange and transit of foreign mails. The official Report of the Conference contained 31 Articles which established broad principles for subsequent Postal Conventions on the compulsory prepayment of certain classes of mail (including registered letters and printed matters), the suggestion of a standard unit of weight of 15g, and the charging of an additional "penalty" sum for unpaid or underpaid letters.

In 1868 Dr. Von Stephan, then Postmaster General of the North German Confederation, published a new scheme for an International Postal Union. Diplomatic negotiations for a Conference to discuss the proposals were interrupted in 1870 by the Franco-German War but were eventually revived. The Conference took place in Berne on the 1 July 1874. Twenty-two Governments sent representatives. The Conference was a success, and a Treaty was signed at Berne on 9 October 1874. It was scheduled to take effect on 1 July 1875 (except in France, which was granted a delay in implementation of the Treaty until 1 January 1876). The Treaty began with the statement that "*The countries between which the present treaty is concluded shall form, under the title of 'General Postal Union', a single postal territory for the reciprocal exchange of correspondence between their post offices.*"

The Position of France

France was not prepared to accept the potential loss of revenue of possibly 5,800,000F a year of which 3,600,000F on the direct exchange of mail because of the new lower tariff and the ending of accountancy agreements, 1,300,000F on mail in transit and 900,000F on inland letters (because of the new weight scale of 15g increments instead of 10g).

Consequently France obtained a delay of six months from 1 July to 31 December 1875 in order to prepare for her implementation of the convention.

¹ For those who wish to learn more a useful guide is '*Affranchissements insuffisants et taxes complémentaires dans les échanges de lettres ordinaires entre la France et les pays étrangers (1849/1875)*' by Guy Prugnon

The following items of mail illustrate how mail to and from France was treated during this six month period.

No change to and from France

(Figures 1-4)



Figure 1

August 1875. France to Malta: 40 centimes per 10 grams paid according to the tariff of 1 January 1870 with PD mark introduced by the Anglo-French Postal Convention of 1836 but dropped by the GPU.



Figure 2

August 1875. USA to France unpaid letter charged 75 centimes comprising 50 centimes per 10 grams plus a fixed penalty of 25 centimes according to the 1874 USA-France Convention



Figure 3

October 1875. The rates to Belgium were 30c paid and 50c unpaid up to 10 grams at the tariff of 1 January 1866.

This is a second weight step letter from France to Belgium prepaid 40c by the sender.

The unpaid rate should be $50c \times 2 = 1F$,

so the deficiency is 1 franc less the 40c postage applied that is 6 décimes (60c) to pay.

The Paris office has indicated the error with its *Affranchissement insuffisant* handstamp



Figure 4

October 1875. The rates to Switzerland at the tariff of 1 October 1865 were 30c paid and 50c unpaid up to 10 grams.

This is a second weight step letter to Switzerland prepaid 30c by the sender.

The unpaid rate should be $50c \times 2$, so the deficiency is 1 franc less the 30c postage applied that is 70 centimes to pay.

Again the Paris office has indicated the error with its *Affranchissement insuffisant* handstamp.

The Introduction of Postcards

(Figures 5 and 6)

GPU regulations demanded compulsory prepayment at half the rate of prepaid letters on standard format postcards in force in each country. Article 26 below describes the treatment of any infringements.

GPU Detailed Regulations for the execution of the treaty concerning the formation of a General Postal Union concluded at Berne, October 9, 1874

Article XXVI

Postcards which are not fully prepaid shall not be forwarded. Each Office shall have, moreover, the right not to forward or not to admit in its service postcards bearing any description of writing which may be forbidden by the statutory or administrative enactments in force in the country. The same shall be the case for letters and other articles which may bear externally any writing of the character referred to.



Figure 5
October 1875. A postcard from Switzerland to France correctly prepaid at 10 centimes (the Swiss GPU rate). Charged in France as an underpaid letter because France does not yet accept the reduced rate for international postcards.

The rate for an unpaid letter at the tariff of 1 October 1865 between France and Switzerland was 50 centimes. The deficiency is therefore 50c less the 10c prepayment = 4 décimes to pay

Figure 6
September 1875. A postcard from Italy to France prepaid 20 centesimi (the Italian GPU rate was 15c). Charged in France as an underpaid letter because France does not yet accept the reduced rate for international postcards.

The rate for an unpaid letter at the tariff of 1 October 1861 between France and Italy was 60 centimes. The deficiency is therefore 60c less the 20 centimes prepayment = 4 décimes to pay



The Introduction of the GPU tariff

In 'L'Union Postale' N° 3, 1875 (the Journal of the International Postal Office of Berne),
the table below (Figure 7) gives the rates for each GPU country.

Tableau indicatif								
des taxes adoptées, par chacune des Administrations composant l'Union Générale des Postes, pour les correspondances de toute nature à destination ou originaires des autres pays de l'Union.								
Noms des Pays	Taxes perçues							Observations
	Lettres affranchies	Lettres non affranchies	Cartes correspondance	Journaux	Autres imprimés, échantillons, papiers d'affaires	Droit fixe de recommandation	Avis de réception	
	Par 15 gr.	Par 15 gr.	Par pièce	Par 50 gr.	Par 50 gr.	Par objet	Par objet	
Allemagne	20 Pfennig	40 Pfennig	10 Pfennig	5 Pfennig	5 Pfennig	20 Pfennig	20 Pfennig	*) Le prix de port pour les lettres est perçu par chaque demi-once. *) La France n'appliquera ces taxes qu'à partir du 1 ^{er} janvier 1876. Il sera perçu dans ce pays, mais par rapport aux Etats-Unis d'Amérique seulement, un port maritime de 10 C ^{es} par 15 gr. pour les lettres affr. ou non affr.; de 5 C ^{es} . pour les cartes-correspondance; de 3 C ^{es} . par 50 gr. pour les autres objets. c) Surtaxe pour transport maritime de plus de 300 milles marins dans le ressort de l'Union. <div style="text-align: right;">lettres imprimées etc.</div> en Italie 10 C ^{es} . 3 C ^{es} . dans la Norwège 2 Skil. — dans la Turquie 30 Para 10 Para d) La Turquie applique aux objets recommandés le double du port ordinaire.
Autriche-Hongrie	10 Neukreuzer	20 Neukreuzer	5 Neukreuzer	3 Neukreuzer	3 Neukreuzer	10 Neukreuzer	10 Neukreuzer	
Belgique	25 C ^{es} .	50 C ^{es} .	10 C ^{es} .	5 C ^{es} .	5 C ^{es} .	20 C ^{es} .	10 C ^{es} .	
Danemark	20 Oere	40 Oere	10 Oere	6 Oere	6 Oere	16 Oere	8 Oere	
Egypte	1 1/2 Piastre	3 Piastre	—	20 Para	20 Para	1 Piastre	1 Piastre	
Espagne	25 C ^{es} .	50 C ^{es} .	10 C ^{es} .	10 C ^{es} .	10 C ^{es} .	50 C ^{es} .	10 C ^{es} .	
Etats-Unis d'Amérique	5 Cents *)	10 Cents *)	2 Cents	2 Cents par 4 onces	2 Cents par 2 onces	10 Cents	—	
France *)	30 C ^{es} .	60 C ^{es} .	15 C ^{es} .	5 C ^{es} .	5 C ^{es} .	50 C ^{es} p. let. 25 C ^{es} p. les aut. objets	20 C ^{es} .	
Grande-Bretagne	2 1/4 Pence*)	5 Pence *)	1 1/4 Pence	1 Penny par 4 onces	1 Penny par 2 onces	4 Pence	—	
Grèce	30 Lepta	60 Lepta	15 Lepta	5 Lepta	5 Lepta	20 Lepta	20 Lepta	
Italie c)	30 C ^{es} .	60 C ^{es} .	15 C ^{es} .	7 C ^{es} .	7 C ^{es} .	30 C ^{es} .	20 C ^{es} .	
Luxembourg	25 C ^{es} .	50 C ^{es} .	12 1/2 C ^{es} .	5 C ^{es} .	5 C ^{es} .	10 C ^{es} .	10 C ^{es} .	
Montenegro	10 Soldi	20 Soldi	5 Soldi	3 Soldi	3 Soldi	10 Soldi	10 Soldi	
Norwège c)	6 Skilling	12 Skilling	3 Skilling	2 Skilling	2 Skilling	4 Skilling	2 Skilling	
Pays-Bas	12 1/2 Cents	25 Cents	5 Cents	2 1/2 Cents	2 1/2 Cents	10 Cents	5 Cents	
Portugal	50 Reis	100 Reis	—	15 Reis	15 Reis	100 Reis	40 Reis	
Roumanie	25 Bani	50 Bani	10 Bani	10 Bani	10 Bani	30 Bani	10 Bani	
Russie	8 Kopeks	16 Kopeks	4 Kopeks	2 Kopeks	2 Kopeks	15 Kopeks	10 Kopeks	
Serbie	20 Para	40 Para	10 Para	5 Para	5 Para	20 Para	20 Para	
Suède	20 Oere	40 Oere	10 Oere	6 Oere	6 Oere	18 Oere	12 Oere	
Suisse	25 C ^{es} .	50 C ^{es} .	10 C ^{es} .	5 C ^{es} .	5 C ^{es} .	10 C ^{es} .	20 C ^{es} .	
Turquie c)	50 Para	100 Para	20 Para	20 Para	20 Para	d)	40 Para	

NB. Le pfennig allemand = 1 c. 25, le neukreuzer d'Autriche-Hongrie et le soldo de Montenegro = 2 c. 50, l'øre de Danemark et de Suède = 1 c. 3889, la piastre d'Egypte = 25 c. et vaut 40 para, le cent des Etats-Unis = 5 c., le penny ou denier britannique = 10 c., le lepton grec, le bani roumain et le para serbien = 1 c., le skilling de Norwège = 1 c. 629, le cent des Pays-Bas = 2 c. 11; 1000 reis portugais = fr. 5. 59, le kopek russe = 4 c., le para ture = 1/2 c.

Figure 7

Treaty concerning the formation of a General Postal Union concluded at Berne, October 9, 1874

Article III

The general Union rate of postage is fixed at 25 centimes for the single prepaid letter. Nevertheless, as a measure of conversion, the option is reserved to each country, in order to suit its monetary or other requirements, of levying a rate higher or lower than this charge, provided that it does not exceed 32 centimes or go below 20 centimes.

Every letter which does not exceed 15 grams in weight shall be considered as a single letter. The charge upon letters exceeding that weight shall be a single rate for every 15 grams or fraction of 15 grams¹. The charge on unpaid letters shall be double the rate levied in the country of destination on prepaid letters.

¹ By article 24 of Detailed Regulations for carrying this Treaty into effect, any country which has not adopted the decimal metrical system of weight may substitute half an ounce for 15 grams

Underpaid letters

(Figures 8-13)

Upon identification of an underpaid item, the office of origin;

- indicates the insufficient postage by application of the T stamp
- marks in black ink, by the side of the postage stamps, their value in centimes
- marks the number of weight steps in the upper left hand corner

Upon receipt, the arrival office taxes the item as an unpaid letter less the amount paid.



Figure 8

December 1875. A letter correctly prepaid at 2½d (British GPU single rate) to France where it is charged as an underpaid letter.

At the tariff of 1 January 1870 an unpaid letter cost 60 centimes.

The deficiency is therefore 60 centimes less the 25 centimes prepayment (1d=10c) = 4 décimes to pay
(Rate rounded up to the next décime)



Figure 9

October 1875. A letter from Germany to France, prepaid at 20 pfennigs, the German GPU single rate, but in France it has been dealt with as an unpaid letter.

At the tariff of 25 April 1872 an unpaid letter cost 60 centimes.

The deficiency is therefore 60c less the 25c prepayment (1 pfennig=1.25 centimes) = 4 décimes to pay
(Rate rounded up to the next décime)

The manuscript 20 in red is the indication of the value of the postage stamp in pfennigs and not in centimes according to the 1872 Franco-Prussian Convention.

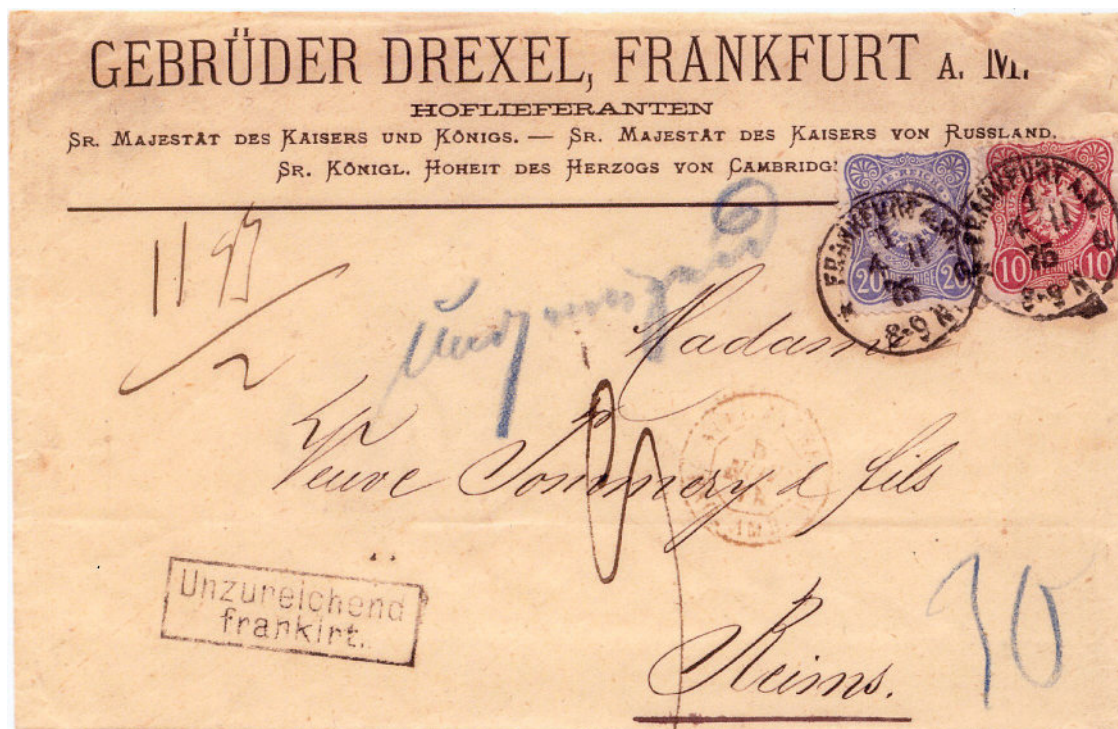


Figure 10

November 1875. A letter from Germany to France prepaid at the pre GPU rate of 30 pfennigs (1872 Convention France/Germany single rate).

Charged in France as a second weight step (10-20 grams) underpaid letter.

The charge is calculated at the unpaid letter rate of 120 centimes at the tariff of 25 April 1872 less the 37.5 centimes prepayment (1 pfennig = 1.25 centimes) = 9 décimes to pay

The manuscript 30 in blue is the indication of the value of the postage stamp in pfennigs.



Figure 11

11 July 1875. A letter from Belgium to France prepaid incorrectly by the sender at 20 centimes (the Belgian GPU single rate was 25 centimes).

At the tariff of 1 January 1866 the rate for an unpaid letter was 50 centimes.

The deficiency is therefore 50 centimes less the 20 centimes prepayment = 3 décimes to pay

The manuscript 0.20 in black is the indication of the value of the postage stamp in francs.

This was unusual in the Franco-Belgian exchange of mail before the GPU.



Figure 12

October 1875. A letter from Sweden to France prepaid 24 øre (the Swedish GPU single rate was 20 øre).

At the tariff of 1 February 1868 the rate for an unpaid letter was 80 centimes.

The deficiency is therefore 80 centimes less the 34 centimes prepayment (1 øre = 1.4 centimes) = 5 décimes to pay
(Rate rounded up to the next décime)

The manuscript 34 in black is the indication of the value of the postage stamp in centimes

Note the Sweden 'T' + AFFRANCHISSEMENT INSUFFISANT



Figure 13

October 1875. A letter from Russia to France prepaid at 8 kopecks (the Russian GPU single rate).

At the tariff of 1 April 1874 the rate for an unpaid letter was 70 centimes.

The deficiency is the unpaid letter rate of 70 centimes
less the 32 centimes prepayment (1 kopeck = 4 centimes) = 4 décimes to pay

The manuscript 32 in red is the indication of the value of the postage stamp in centimes
(usual on Russian foreign mail).

Note Russian framed insufficiently prepaid overstruck by GPU 'T'

Introduction of transit rates via France

(Figures 14 -19)

Because of the anomalous position of France which had not yet joined the GPU, other countries decided individually what to charge when their mails had to go via France.

- Germany, Switzerland, USA and Belgium introduced the GPU tariff for all destinations within GPU territories except France.
- Spain maintained the previous rates in force with Belgium, the Netherlands the United Kingdom and Switzerland.
- Greece maintained the previous rates in force with the United Kingdom and all the rates via French packets

Italy on 1 July 1871, as announced in the *Gazzetta ufficiale del Regno d'Italia*, set a uniform rate for all GPU countries: 30 centesimi per 15 grams for prepaid letters and 60 centesimi per 15 grams for unpaid letters, **except for** Great Britain, Portugal and Spain because of the transit through France. These were:

- To Great Britain: 40 centesimi per 15 grams (60c per 15g in 1871 additional convention)
- To Portugal: 60 centesimi per 15 grams for prepaid letters and 1.20 Lira per 15 grams for unpaid letters (same rate but per 10g in the 1871 convention between Italy and Portugal)
- To Spain: 50 centesimi per 15 grams for prepaid letters and 1 Lira per 15 grams for unpaid letters (same rate but per 10g in the 1867 convention between Italy and Spain)

From the United Kingdom the rate for letters via France were²:

- Portugal 6d, Spain 6d, Italy 4d, Greece 6½d, Turkey 6d and Malta 6d

2 From J and M. Moubray, 'British letter mail to overseas destinations 1840-1875', RPSL 1992

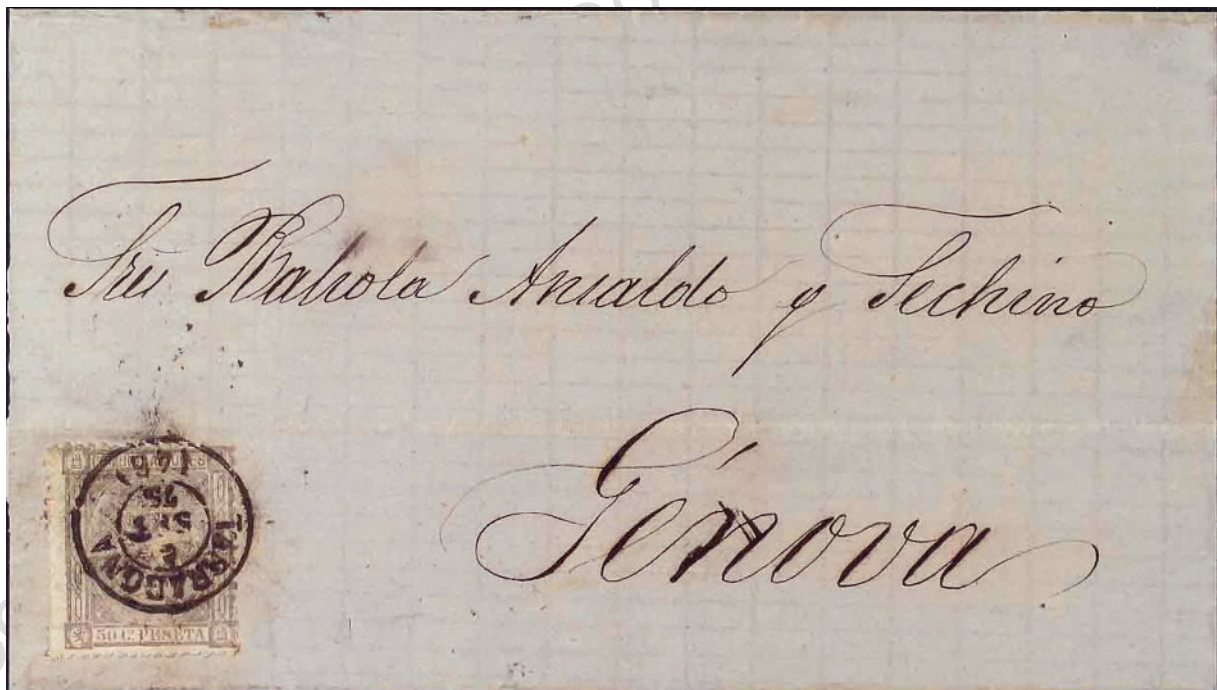


Figure 14
September 1875. A letter from Spain to Italy via France prepaid 50 centimos.
(The tariff for letters in transit via France)



Figure 15
March 1875 (before the GPU rates).
A letter from the UK to Greece via France prepaid 8d
(The single rate at the tariff of 25 May 1867 prior to GPU period)



Figure 16
November 1875 (during the GPU rates). A letter from the UK to Greece via France prepaid 6½d
(The tariff for letters in transit via France by the tariff of 1 July 1875, single rate)



Figure17

17 August 1875. This is an underpaid letter from France to Serbia franked 40c instead of 80c. As France has not yet joined the GPU this is treated as an unpaid letter via Austria under the 1866 additional Franco-Austrian convention.

The F/28 strike is applied in Paris and refers to the bulk rate which France is owed for unpaid letters to Austria that is 12.5 kreuzers per 7.5 grams. For the second weight step this is 25 kreuzers or 62½ centimes (1kr=2.5c).

The GPU had made provision from the outset for mail to and from GPU countries and those which had not yet joined the GPU and which reached their destination via another intermediate GPU country.

The total rate combined the standard GPU foreign rate to the intermediary GPU country and the pre GPU convention rates between that country and the non GPU country of destination.

Each country which had relations with non GPU countries created an appropriate Table C setting out these additional amounts and supplied these to other countries so that exchange offices could calculate the postage correctly.

25 kreuzers for 15 grams (1kr = 2.5c) = 62½ the amount in centimes to be paid by Serbia to Austria for mail via Austria from a non GPU country as listed in an Austrian Table C. That figure in blue is marked by the Vienna exchange office at the bottom left as stipulated.

The Serbian GPU rates are not shown correctly in the *Journal Union Postale* table, they should be 40 paras paid or 80 paras unpaid per 15 grams.

1 piaster or 40 paras = 25 centimes

T and a charge of 4 piasters 20 paras (2 piasters GPU Serbian unpaid rate + 2 piasters 20 paras for 62½c)

Preface to Figures 18 and 19 - 'Open Mail' and 'Closed Mail'

'Open mail' referred to letters routed by an exchange office to a foreign exchange office with whom it corresponded, which in turn, routed it to another office, and so on, until the letter reached its destination. This necessitated sorting of letters by each exchange office and was expensive and increased the time required in transit.

'Closed mail' was forwarded by an exchange office of origin in closed bags to an exchange office of distribution abroad. Such mail would pass in an unbroken state through the territory of one or more foreign countries to a distributing exchange office where it would be opened and sorted for the first time. (*History of letter post communication between*

the United States and Europe, 1845-1875 by George E Hargest, pub 1971).

As international mail grew in volume and an increasing number of conventions between countries were concluded so the use of closed mails steadily increased (more economical and quicker).

US to France mail bags would be untouched even if they went via England in British ships until they reached an exchange office in France, most probably Paris, after the 1857 US-France convention. Before, as open mail, London would open the bags and examine the contents.



Figure 18

November 1875. An unpaid letter from Funchal in Madeira to France.

Since 1836 under successive conventions between France and the United Kingdom mail to and from France could be carried by British ships to and from any destination in the world where British ships called. If there was no specific treaty between France and another country sent via England then a tariff for open mail to and from undesignated countries applied.

The cover displays a Portuguese T and GB 1F60c (the bulk rate of exchange between Great Britain and France per 30 grams [approximately 1 ounce]).

Open mail from undesignated overseas countries via GB 1856 convention UK/ France was charged 12 décimes per 10 grams from 1 July 1871, here charged 24 décimes for 2 weight steps.



Figure 19

September 1875. An unpaid letter from Galatz (Romania) to France with Romanian handstamps T in a circle and an A alongside.

Open mail via Austria under the 1857 convention between Austria and France and charged 8 décimes per 10 grams from 1 September 1869.

..... and an unusual item with which to finish (figure 20)



Figure 20

October 1875. A letter from Constantinople to the French office in Braila (Romania) prepaid 40 centimes to destination which, from 1 January 1866, was the single rate between French Levant offices.

However the Braila office had closed on 16 January 1875 therefore Romanian T has been applied and 50 bani charged as a GPU unpaid letter.

The 'Palm-Climber' issue of Dahomey

Jere Dutt

Further to the article written by Mick Bister on the Joseph de la Nézière issues of French West Africa, (Journal N° 286, April 2018), American member Jere Dutt shares with us major items from his specialist collection of the Dahomey 'Palm-Climber' issue.

A brief look through most collections will reveal many of the colourful and well engraved stamps of the French colonies. These were most assuredly a staple of the packets purchased by youngsters and beginners from mail order or over the counter at the local five and dime since the 1940s and containing beautiful bi-colours from faraway places such as Madagascar, New Caledonia, French India and Martinique, most of them mint. It seemed for a bit that

these great stamps were slid to the less than cool side of stamp collecting for a while, destined to live at the Kids' Corner at the local stamp show. However, as some of these stamps are reaching 100 years old and some attention is being paid to them it is becoming apparent that many of the designs carried a heavy load of the actual mail being moved in, out and around these countries.

The 'Palm-Climber' from Dahomey is one of these designs. While being interesting, printed in many different colour combinations and having a long print life, it was actually a workhorse for moving the mail. Designed by Joseph de la Nézière and engraved by Abel Mignon, the design was first issued in 1913 and last issued in 1941. The *maquettes* painted by Nézière were commissioned in 1908, finished, approved by the administration, and a preview published by Arthur Maury in 1909 (Figure 1).

The task of engraving then was handed over to Mignon. For several reasons associated with the French printing bureau and the multitude of pictorial issues being developed, there were many delays in production. The engravings and then printing of the first Dahomey stamps took four years. As with most engraving there were many essays prior to the final proofs. The preliminary engravings in bronze (Figure 2) appear with a clear cloud above the climber. However, in the subsequent engravings on wood a bird type figure had been placed in the cloud area (Figure 3). The *épreuve de décomposition* signed by Mignon and the final proof show the cloud area shaded in to blend in with the rest of the sky (Figures 4 and 5).

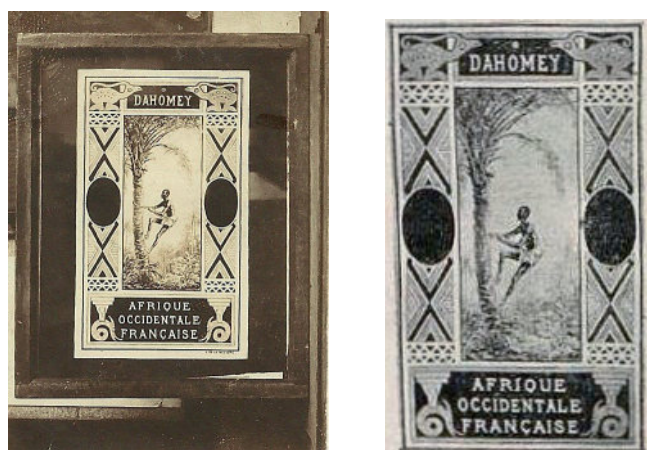


Figure 1

Left: Framed original artwork by Joseph de la Nézière (source unknown) and (right) same art work as illustrated in *Le Collectionneur de Timbres-Poste*, Arthur Maury, 1909 p145. Note the cloudless background to the palm-climber.

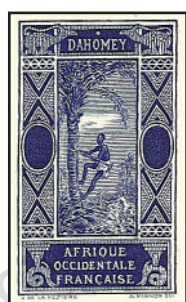


Figure 2 (above)
Preliminary intaglio die proof engraved on bronze with enlarged detail below showing 'cloud' in sky above the palm-climber

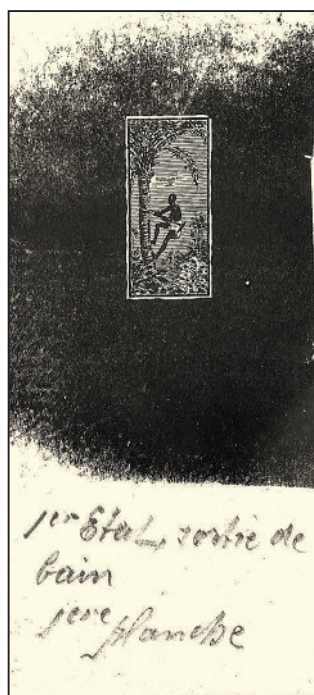


Figure 3 (left & above)
First state die proof engraved on wood (left) with enlarged detail (above) showing design with 'bird' in sky above the palm-climber.

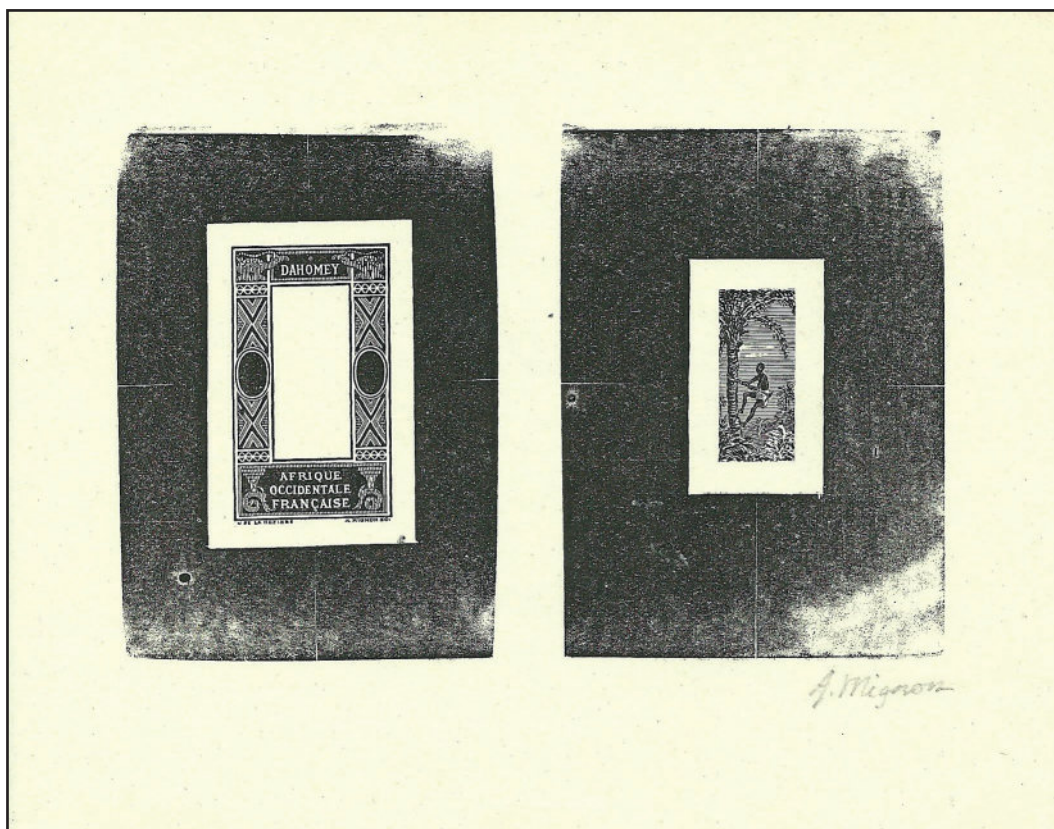


Figure 4
Epreuve de décomposition of the frame and vignette signed by Abel Mignon



Figure 5 (left)
Final proof combining the elements of **Figure 4**.
with enlarged detail showing that the 'cloud' has been modified further and is hence less intrusive.

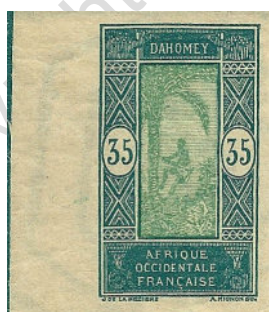


Figure 6
Imperforate 35c
blue-green and yellow green
issued 14 May 1938



Figure 7
1c violet and black of 1913
with displaced vignette



Figure 8
20F on 5F vermillion and green
issued 7 February 1927
with displaced vignette



Figure 9

UPU specimens of the 1 January 1922 issue supplied to the Mauritania Post Office for reference purposes. **Unique item.**

When first issued in October of 1913, there were sixteen denominations printed via typography. With typography the raised portion of the design plate carries the ink to the paper. While a less expensive way to print, it unfortunately does not allow for extremely fine detailing. Many of the engraving details get a bit lost with a smudgy feel. By the last release in 1941 sixty different issues had been produced. The frame and vignette separation allowed for the bi-colour stamps to be printed efficiently.

With the typography process there are some inconsistencies in the printing but there have yet to be identified any major subtypes. However, there were several denominations that were released imperforate (Figure 6). Also, due to the split frame and vignette there were several issued with misalignment errors (Figure 7 and Figure 8). Of course as with all new issues a specimen had to be sent to all UPU countries to have on file to confirm correct and legitimate postal usage (Figure 9).

Dahomey was a developing colony located on the Slave

Coast. It was not the hub of activity that Senegal was at the time; however, it did have plentiful resources and continued to play an important role in the region throughout the duration of the palm-climber issue. There is too much in that time line to cover here but several items and dates support the conclusion that these stamps did real postal service for a wide variety of purposes for a long period of time. It was put into use quickly in the colony. The issue can be encountered franked along with stamps from the previous series as in this cover sent to Germany (Figure 10).

In late 1920 the supply of the 1913 25c ultramarine and deep blue Dahomey palm-climber ran out in several cities. The shortage was created as a result of the domestic letter rate increase to 25 centimes on 4 January 4 1920. The domestic rate applied to internal mail as well as mail to France. The postal authorities approved the bi-secting of the 1913 50 centime chocolate and brown stamp (Figure 11) to fill the need until a new supply of 25c stamps could be provided.



Figure 10

4c and 50c palm-climber issued in October 1913 with two 5c overprints on the Navigation & Commerce issue mailed to Germany from Porto Novo on 29 January 1914. Assuming the franking represents the second step (20-40 grams) foreign registered letter rate of 1 May 1910 (40c + 25c = 65c) the item is underfranked by 1 centime yet untaxed.



Figure 11
50c bisected diagonally
to pay the 25c internal letter rate
introduced 1 April 1920
on cover to Bohicon
cancelled Porto-Novo,
21 October 1920

Figure 12
15c and 20c bisected diagonally
to pay the 25c franco-colonial letter rate
on cover to Dijon,
cancelled Bohicon, 24 December 1920

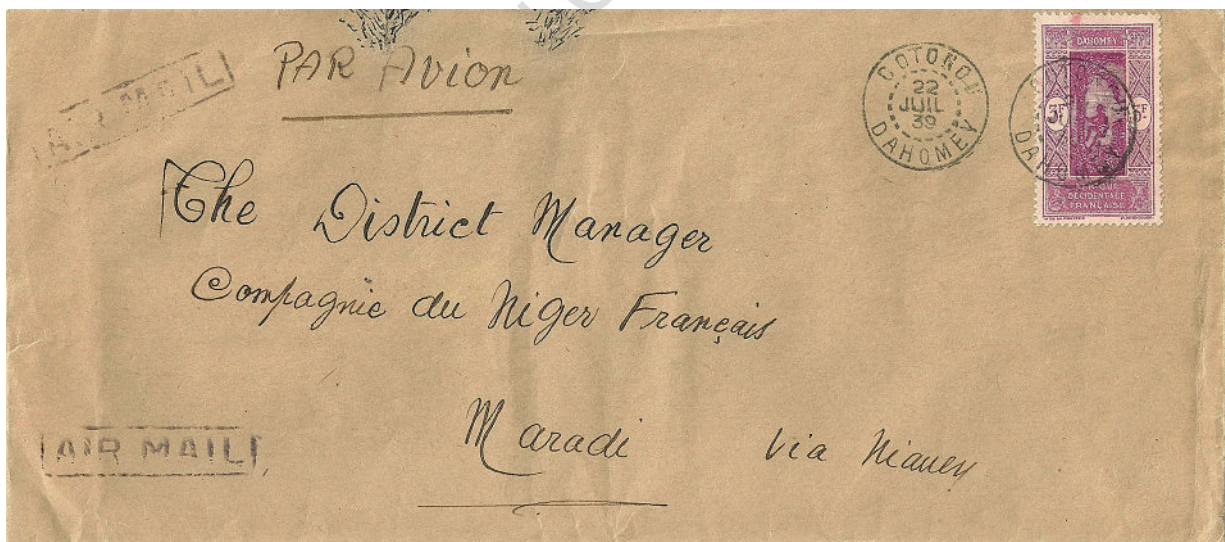


Figure 13
3F stamp issued on 5 May 1930 on airmail letter from Cotonou to Maradi in Niger cancelled 22 July 1939.
The internal AOF rate for the letter up to 20 grams was 90c (w.e.f. 1 January 1939)
and the airmail fee was 1F per 5 grams (w.e.f. 14 May 1937), total 1F90.
The letter is therefore overfranked by 10c

This authorisation extended from September to December 1920. The cities of Bohicon, Cotonou, and Porto-Novo were authorised to use the bisect method. The precise usage was not clear to users, however. Officially the 50c stamp should have been bisected horizontally or vertically. However, postally used examples are known with incorrect cutting

as well as examples of incorrect stamps being bisected with mixed usage (Figure 12).

As no special airmail stamps had been issued, the higher values of the palm-climber handled airmail duties as well (Figure 13).



Figure 14

5 franc issue of 1913 on airmail cover to Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, cancelled Cotonou 3 March 1942. In France the letter rate had been increased from 1F to 1F50 on 1 March (just four days before the posting of this letter) but here it appears that the 1F rate is still valid.

With the airmail fee of 4F for up to 10 grams the franking of 5 francs is correct.



Figure 15

First Issue of October 1916
overprinted TOGO
Occupation franco-anglaise



Figure 16

Second issue of July 1921
printed in new colours
overprinted TOGO

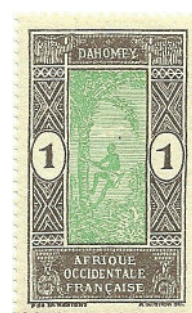


Figure 17

Stamp prepared in colours
for second issue
but with missing overprint

None of the issues was ever demonetised so there were legitimate usages of the earliest stamps many years later. A cover from 1942 shows the 5 franc stamp of 1913 correctly used (Figure 14). The high values were all printed and sent to the colonies but the rates were rather above the need. As time passed and rates increased, their usage was now more practical. So, some of these saw more usage well after, rather than near, their issue date.

In the aftermath of WWI, France occupied and administered a portion of the neighbouring country of Togo. The first series of stamps were an overprint on the regular palm-climber issues of Dahomey (Figure 15). For the second series the palm-climber design was issued in a totally different colour scheme and with a different overprint (Figure 16). The fact that the Togo stamps were printed in unique colour schemes allows this stamp (Figure 17) to



Figure 18

Vingt-cinq centimes overprint essays on 5F issue. Each essay is mounted on cream card.

be identified as a missing overprint rather than a standard Dahomey issue. Following a series of overprint design essays (Figure 18) the overprinted values were issued between 1922 and 1925 (Figure 19). These stamps of Togo of course also saw real postal usage (Figure 20).

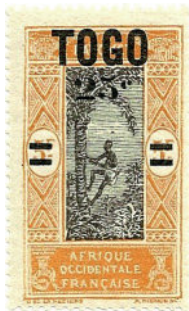


Figure 19
Adopted 25c
overprint on 5F
issued on 15 June 1924

Towards the end of the design's life it was pressed into service as a revenue. In 1939 many of the stamps were overprinted *Timbre/Fiscal* (Figure 21) (at bottom of page and on next page) and in 1946 any remaining stock of the revenues were to be destroyed.



Figure 20 (right)
Registered letter franked 1F
to Lagos, Nigeria
cancelled Atakpamé 7 June 1917.
Postage for a foreign letter
up to 80 grams was 70c
plus registration fee of 25c hence
the cover is overfranked by 5c.





Figure 21

The number of Revenue overprints issued varied from three figures (only 873 for the 45c on 80c value) to five figures (52,000 for the 4F on 35c value)

A well designed and executed stamp, the palm-climber is simply a solid, much used, definitive not just a pretty packet filler. While, yes, they were somewhat cheaply produced compared to other printing methods of the time they were pleasing to the eye, did the job, and also promoted our wonderful hobby at the same time.

Author's Note: I am developing an 'Earliest known' and

'Latest known use' census of these issues. I would greatly appreciate hearing from anyone else interested in the palm-climber design. If you have any studies or original information I would love to correspond. Any dates close to issue or very late after issue that you are in possession or aware of please let me know. I can be reached at 330-338-7639 or jere@duttenterprises.com

Beauty and the Beast – A Tale of Two Planes

David Hogarth



Figure 1

A Latécoère 631 plane in service with Air France (probably F-BANU)

Arguably one of the most beautiful airliners ever built was the Latécoère 631, a flying-boat designed for transatlantic service and the largest airliner of its time. The specification issued in 1936 called for a 40-passenger plane with a range of 2,500 miles. The order was placed in 1938, but the first prototype only flew in late 1942, being transferred to the Luftwaffe and then almost as quickly being destroyed by the RAF. The second aircraft, F-BANT, first flew in March 1945 and four were acquired by Air France (Figure 1) entering service on the transatlantic route from Biscarosse in France to Fort de France, Martinique in July 1947.

Then reality set in. The six-engined plane proved uneconomic to operate and was plagued by accidents and unreliability. After a number of incidents including a propeller shearing off in flight and killing passengers and the disappearance of two aircraft, Air France withdrew them from service in August 1948 although they continued to be flown by other airlines until, after a series of crashes, the last aircraft in service were finally withdrawn and scrapped in September 1955. The plane's designer, Latécoère, did appear on a stamp issued by *La Poste* in 2013 (YT 4794) (Figure 8 on page 38) though the plane itself was not commemorated other than by the *République du Tchad* in 1967 (SG 181) (Figure 2).

The Farman F60 Goliath could never however be called a beautiful aeroplane. Its name reflected the fact that, when the first prototypes – heavy night bombers – appeared in 1918, it was one of the largest planes built. While too late to see active service in World War 1, the prototypes were developed both as heavy bombers and as passenger and

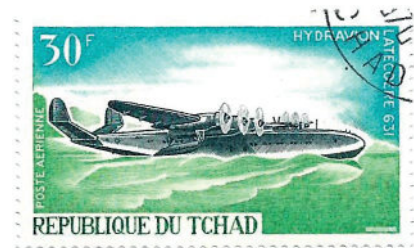


Figure 2

The Latécoère 631 on a *République du Tchad* stamp in 1967

transport aircraft and they played an important role in the development of European aviation until the early 1930s. There were a considerable number of variants.

The F60 passenger plane appeared on an airmail stamp issued by *La Poste* on 9 March 1984 (Yvert A57) shown in Figure 3. Figure 4 shows a passenger plane from the *Air Union* London-Paris service on the tarmac in Paris. Figure 5 shows the heavy night bomber variant, used by the French, Polish and Russian airforces until the 1930s as the result of its relative cheapness and durability. The transport version appears in Figure 6, while Figure 7 demonstrates the plane's versatility with a seaplane variant. The *Musée de l'Air et de l'Espace* at Le Bourget displayed the last fuselage of the passenger version with the pilot sitting in an open cockpit between the wings: it suggests the fragility of planes of that era.

For different reasons, these two planes represented the cutting-edge of aeronautic design in the 1920s and 1930s. In terms of success however, Beauty was outweighed by the Beast.

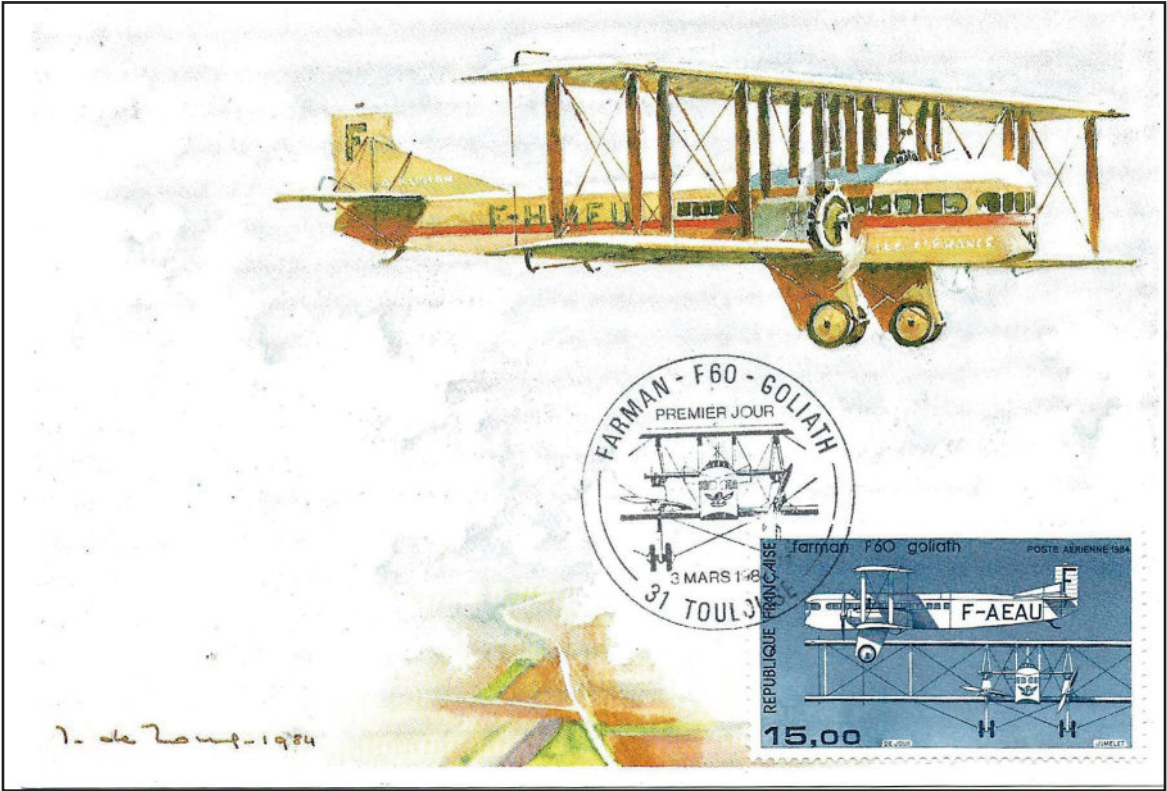


Figure 3
Maxicard showing the passenger version of the F60 Goliath
with the stamp cancelled on the first day of issue, 3 March 1984



Figure 4
A passenger plane at Le Bourget airport, Paris



Figure 5
The F60 heavy night bomber

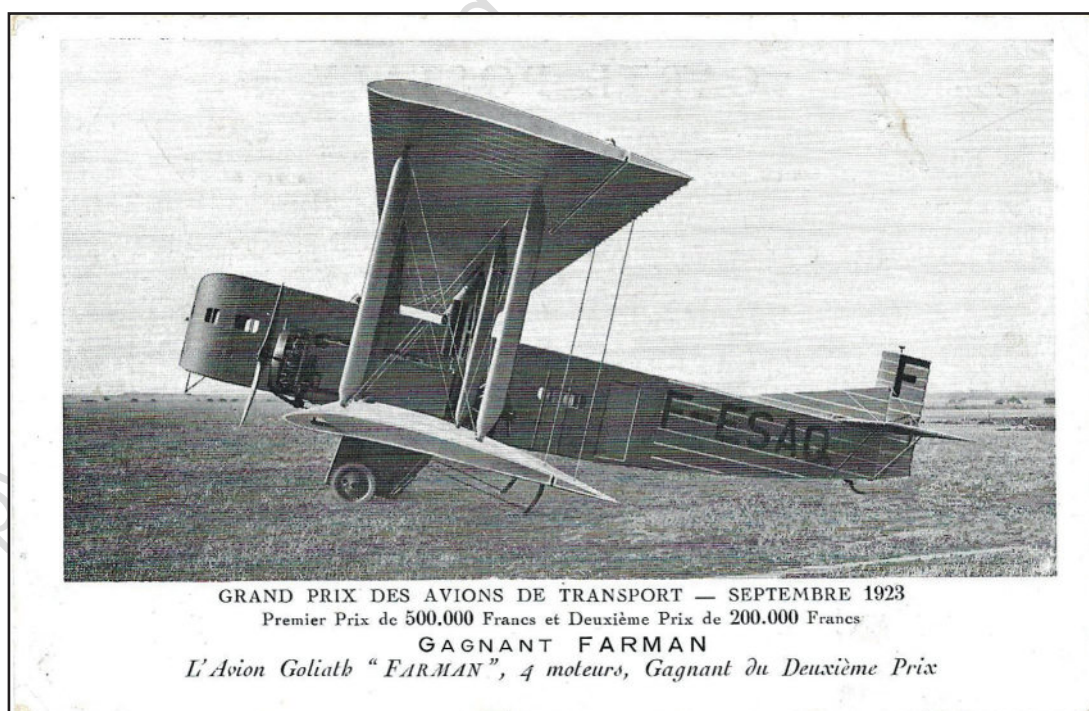


Figure 6
The F60 heavy transport version

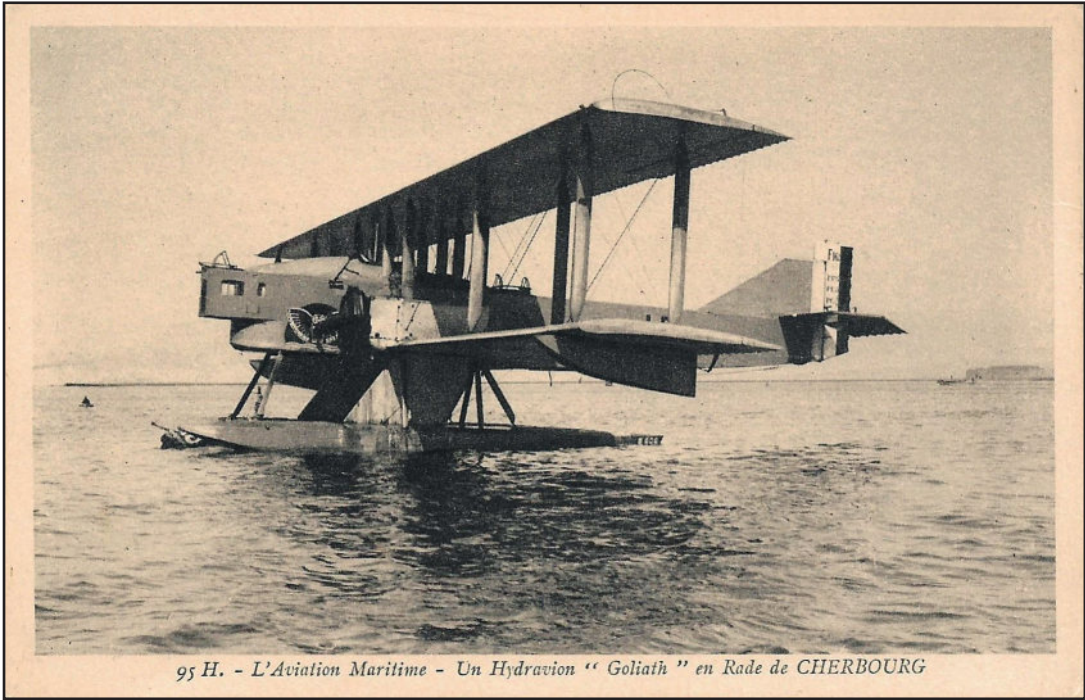
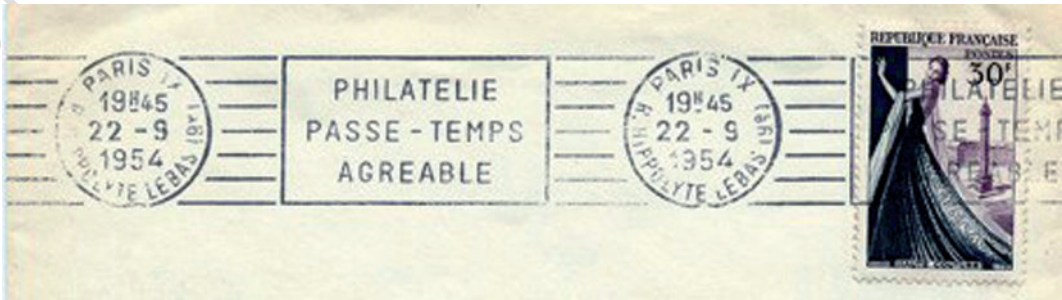


Figure 7
F60 seaplane version



Figure 8
Pierre-Georges Latécoère, aircraft designer
and founder of the aeronautical industry in Toulouse

Un passe-temps agréable!



... and so say all of us!

Michael Round

SHORTER ITEMS - INCLUDING QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Comoro Islands: Two Mysterious Face Values



Those of us of a certain age will have fond memories of the post-war definitive pictorial sets issued practically throughout the French Empire. They started with Cameroun and Madagascar in 1946; most other colonies followed suit in 1947-8, and the lowest values of each set became familiar items in beginner collectors' packets for many years thereafter.

At this time, the Comoro Islands were counted as part of Madagascar, and used that colony's stamps on its mail. But by 1950 the islands had gained political autonomy and issued pictorials of their own, the last contributors to what French collectors consider as an "omnibus" set.

Surface-mail postage rates seem to have been consistent throughout sub-Saharan Africa. So were the definitive face-values: 19 in all, ranging from 10c to 25F. The Comoros' set was an exception: although it contained only 11 values, not 19, it included two – 7F and 11F – not paralleled by any other colony. I am indebted to (non-F&CPS) colleague Peter Mellor for the explanation.

The simple answer is that between 1947 and 1950 the postage rates went up! In 1946/7, when the bulk of these definitives were issued, overseas surface rates from sub-Saharan Africa were 6F for letters, 3F60 for postcards and 1F20 for printed matter. Stamps for each rate duly appeared: the 3F60 rate is noteworthy in dispelling a long-held belief that this particular stamp had no postal use, and was included purely to round up the total value of the postage set (i.e. excluding airmails) to a neat 100F – which in fact it does, with the curious exception of Togo, which

omitted the 40c and 80c values but added a 2F50.

Around 1948 surface rates increased to 11F for letters, 7F for postcards and 2F for printed matter. The 2F face value already existed, but no effort was made to add the other two values to existing definitive sets. Senders had instead to add more stamps to make up the new rates. The Comoros, however, sensibly included 7F and 11F values from the outset. Covers bearing them are scarce, and not just because of the islands' tiny populations: by this time most correspondence of any sort – whether letter, postcard or printed matter – was going by air rather than surface. (This "neglect" of surface mail also explains the scarcity of used 1F20 and 3F60 values in general.)

A further reason for the scarcity of Comoros mail rated 7F and 11F is that the respective rates rose again in 1951 – a bare year after issue – to 17F, 10F and 4F. The Comoros in their turn, while having a 10F value now useful for postcards, had themselves to use make-up values for surface-mail letters – and printed matter too, for among the face values they never had was a 4F.

Peter Mellor offers an interesting footnote related to UPU colour-coding, a scheme shortly to be abandoned but still in force – or at least recommended – at the time. It's well known that stamps for overseas surface letters were to be blue, those for postcards red and those for printed matter green. Most colonies – including the Comoros – stuck to the scheme: the sole exception seems to be French Equatorial Africa's 1F20 value. This was printed not in green but in claret: another mystery now awaiting a solution!

Michael Round

Marianne l'engagée update



Figure 1

One of the two panes containing the 'maxi' stamps of 1,60€ (Second step *Lettre Verte*, 21-100 grams) and 1,90€ (Second step *Lettre Prioritaire*, 21 -100 grams) applicable until 31 December 2018

At the Paris *Salon d'automne* in November 2018 two new mixed value *carnets* were issued.

The first, containing gummed stamps printed in *taille-douce*, has two panes - one of six *se-tenant* pairs of *Lettre Prioritaire* and *Lettre Verte* stamps and the other with two large format 'maxi' stamps (four times the size of standard definitives) at 1,60€ and 1,90€ (Figure 1).

The second *carnet* (Figure 2) of self-adhesive stamps printed by *héliogravure* has two panes of three pairs of LP and LV stamps and one pane of a 'maxi' stamp in black at 3,20€. Unusually for a definitive issue this stamp is dated (2018).

A miniature sheet for the French Red Cross featuring three surcharged stamps of a design including the new *Marianne LP* (Figure 3) was issued on 29 October 2018. New postage rates came into force on 1 January 2019, with 20 gram letters within France now being charged 1,05€, 0,88€ and 0,78€ for LP, LV and *Ecopli* respectively.

At the same time the previous foreign rate datamatrix stamps, *Europe* (YT 5257) and *Monde* (YT 5258), were withdrawn after a very short life of less than six months in favour of a single International Zone rate at 1,30€ (Figure 4). To mark the end of these two previous and longstanding zones *La Poste* overprinted 6000 of each stamp with the dates of the last rates which operated: '20-7-2018 – 31-12-2018' in red on the *Europe* value and in blue on the *Monde* value (Figure 5). Uniquely these were only available to order in sheets of 60 of each using a special *La Poste* telephone number until stocks were exhausted. With such low quantities produced these two values will be much sought after, especially postally used on cover dated prior to 1 January 2019.

Postscript: This is the second occasion recently that definitive stamps have been overprinted. The 0,10€ and *Lettre Verte* values from the previous issue, *Marianne et la Jeunesse*, received the overprint of '2015/2018' on the withdrawal of the issue in July (Figure 6). They were only available in sheets of 100 of each value from *La Poste*. Quantities issued were 1.25 million of the 0,10€ and 250,000 of the LV.



Figure 2

Booklet of the *héliogravure* issue



Figure 3
French Red Cross miniature sheet issued 29 October 2018



Figure 4
The new 1,30€ *International Zone* stamp (left gummed and perforated, right self-adhesive and rouletted) replacing the previous *Europe* and *Monde* zones. Issued: 1 January 2019



Figure 5
Obsolete *Europe* and *Monde* zone issues overprinted '20-7-2018 – 31-12-2018'



Figure 6
Marianne et la Jeunesse issues overprinted '2013-2018'

A Labour of Love



Picture postcard of the Eiffel Tower with vignette and cachet posted 2 August 1949

For some years, as part of my collection, I have collected postcards of *La Tour Eiffel*; for some reason it just fascinates me - it's an amazing feat of engineering. I prefer these cards if they have been through the postal system and I now have a cancelled postcard for nearly every year of its existence.

As my collection has grown, I have also taken it upon myself to see if I could find a Paris postmark for each day of the year. Not any particular year, just all three hundred and sixty five/six days. I am now thirty-three days from completion. But then, with the phasing out of the older traditional style postmarks, and the coming of what I

call dot matrix type, I started thinking that I'd ask for the postcards that I sent back to myself on trips to Paris to be handstamped if possible. Most *bureaux de poste* have been and continue to be very helpful and very understanding.

I have been lucky enough to have 'won' the handbook '*Les Bureaux de Poste de Paris*' in one of our auctions, but this only goes up to 1977, so from it I have listed by *arrondissement* all the *bureaux de poste* that have been open during the life time of *la Grande Dame*.

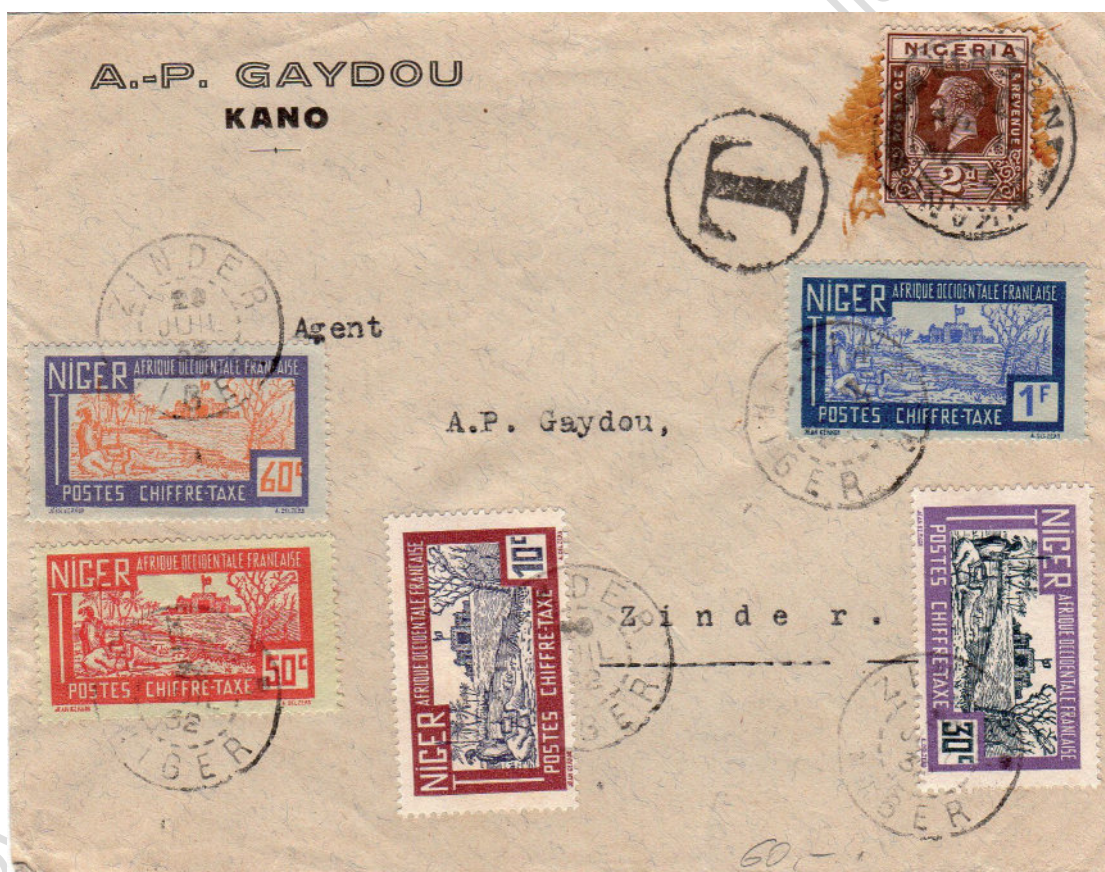
To find the more modern offices I have used a Michelin Paris Atlas which has them marked on the plan (but not listed) so I went through the street plan page by page, cross

So the closing down of any *bureau de poste* is a great sadness to me, the passing of an era. I fully understand Aurélia's sentiments expressed in Chris Hitchen's article. *Le Relais Poste Urbain* handstamps do not carry their location, only 'La Poste France' and the date. Such is the world of today. Oh well.

After reading Chris Hitchen's article about *Le Relais Poste Urbain* in the last edition of the Journal, member David Prendy contacted us to share his interest in Paris postmarks and in all things Parisian.

Do we have any more members in our Society who have a unique passion or an unusual approach to French philately? If you do, please share it with us.

A taxing cover from Nigeria to Niger



Cover from Kano in Nigeria to Zinder in Niger franked 2d and cancelled 18(?) July 1932 and taxed 2F20 on arrival with *chiffre-tax* values cancelled 20(?) July 1932

The cover above has been taxing the minds of a number of the members of our Study Group. I think it should have been charged at the foreign letter rate of 3d per ounce and

1½d per additional oz. (1922-36 rates). Would any F&CPS member who has a particular interest in Niger like to offer their comments on the calculation of the tax charge?

Journal Editor of the Postage Due Mail Study Group

LIST OF RECENTLY PUBLISHED ARTICLES

Compiled by Colin Spong & Maurice Tyler

Bulletin de la COL.FRA

N° 166 4^{ème} Trim 2018: Les Stations Climatiques en Indochine (Ferrien); Le Parcours peu courant d'une lettre d'Amitcheou (Ferrien); Les Fac-similés de Fournier des Type Groupe des Bureaux Français en Chine (Ferrien); Collectionner le 1 Centime au Type Groupe (Richard); Les Timbres à date Échoppés du Sénégal et des Rivières du Sud (Strobel); Les Millésimes de la Série Golfe de Bénin (Bessaud).

The Collectors Club Philatelist

Vol 98 N° 1 Jan-Feb 2019: Stickney Rotary Press Stamp Listing (Goldberg); The era of the French Colonial Allegorical Group Type: The French Pacific Colonies - a display given by Ed Grabowski on 5.12.18.

Documents Philatéliques

N° 238 4^e Trim 15 Oct 2018: La magnifique Tour de Bélem et le contrôle des épidémies (Frazão); Terre Adélie la France de l'extrême (Kahn); Neu-Birasch: le point sur le siège de 1870 et le courrier sorti pendant ces événements (Walter); Affranchissement insuffisant pour la France au départ des agences postales et des lignes maritimes françaises en Amérique (1860-1865) - Un tarif insolite (Abensur).

N° 239 1^{er} Trim 15 Jan 2019: Courrier des États-Unis transporté par la Compagnie Générale Transatlantique Ligne du Havre à New York: timbres d'entrée; Ligne H: timbre de sortie (Treviso); Courrier des États-Unis transporté par la Compagnie Générale Transatlantique lettres acheminées par la Ligne H (Treviso); La fraude du receveur des postes de Marseille Cours-du-Chapitre en 1871-1872 (Chabrolin); La création de la poste pneumatique de Marseille (Barbelin); Les surtaxes pour la poste aérienne en France métropolitaine entre 1919 et 1939 (Estel).

L'Écho de la Timbrologie

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

N° 1934 Dec 2018: 1918, de l'aéronautique militaire à l'Armée de l'air (Albaret); Les tarifs des imprimés sous bandes du 1^{er} septembre 1871 au 30 avril 1878 (Lavigne); En Terre Adélie, fin de la campagne d'été 2015-2016 (Venturini).

N° 1935 Jan 2019: New Postal Tariffs for 2019 (Phil@poste Service Clients); Les cartes-remboursement des chèques postaux (Lavigne).

N° 1936 Feb 2018: 9 Le calendrier du *Marion Dufresne* (Venturini); Taffe des TAAF, taf des TAAF (-); Oijha, polaire et solaire (Bastide-Bernardin); Saint-Pierre-et-Miquelon: les cachets manuels «PP» de 1926 [29 mars-12 juillet] (Tillard); Les cartes-remboursement des chèques postaux (Lavigne); L'OP2-2018 [1/2] TAAF (Venturini).

France & Colonies Philatelist

Whole N° 335 (Vol 75 N° 1) Jan 2019: My secrets of writing for Linn's [and why it is good for French philately in the U.S.] (Rosenblum); Dahomey Palm climber bisects of 1920 (Dutt III); The St Pierre-Miquelon migratory bird airmail series (Taylor); Internal Algerian underpaid postcard (Rasmussen).

Gibbons Stamp Monthly

Vol 49 N° 9 Feb 2019: The Rise & Fall of an Empire of Charles-Louis Napoléon III, 1852-70 (Wishart).

The Indo-China Philatelist

Vol XLIX N° 1 (Whole N° 236) Jan 2019: Series O Number 8 Official Label (Bentley); Pay Your Dues! (Wiat); Similarities between the Philatelic Study of Civil War in America and Vietnam (Telep); More on Provisional Government of South Vietnam (Dykhouse).

Vol XLIX N° 2 (Whole N° 237) March 2019: Vietnamese Workers' Camp in World War I (Bentley); Engraved in Paris and printed in London (Dykhouse); Supplementary Information on Earlier Variety Reports (Düring); The Unknown Tobacco Bands (Wiat); Fifth Anniversary of the Proclamation of the Republic of South Vietnam (Gebhardt); Native Women Booklets (Bentley); Korean Soldiers Mail from Vietnam (Spanjetsberg); Unusual Military Letter of 1940 (Bentley).

Timbres Magazine

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

N° 206 Dec 2018: Le Congrès de l'Union Postale Universelle de 1947 (Singeot); Petits varia autour des déboursés manuscrits (de La Mettrie); Les timbres modernes du continent africain (Busch); En 1948, Paris accueillait l'Assemblée générale des Nations Unies (Emmenegger); Les carnets modernes: l'ère des carnets ouverts (Gomez); La perception de l'impôt sur le revenu par voie de timbres (Danan et Vincent); Une si jolie Marianne (Zeyons); Modalités de taxation (Prugnon)

N° 207 Jan 2019: Michel Bez, hommage au Maître [artiste] (Nowacka); Petites surprises sur lettres taxées (de La Mettrie); Automation dans les PTT: Quand le matériel s'expose à l'étranger (Gomez); Les Comores: une philatélie moderne à la portée du collectionneur (Bergossi); Vente Hermione, un marqueur positif (de Pellinec); Une si jolie Marianne (Zeyons).

N° 208 Feb 2019: Graveurs de timbres: les épreuves d'admission (Gomez et Debrie); Gustave Lambert - Une ambition pour le pôle Nord (Kahn); Concierges des prisons de la Révolution (de La Mettrie); Le Congrès de la Légion américaine 1947 (Singeot); Le familistère de Guise (Zeyons).

Continued on page 46

BOOKSHELF

Compiled by Michael Round

A listing in this column does not preclude the possibility of a full review later.

Those of us not marooned on Mars for the last fifty years will surely be very familiar with *Marianne de Decaris*, that small-format definitive of 1960 typographed in two colours (SG 1949, Yvert 1263). Assemble just a handful of duplicates of this (not difficult to do – this stamp is seriously common) and shades and varieties will leap out at you unbidden. If you can't obtain Jean-Luc Trassaert's 'Le Monde' brochure devoted to it (*Étude N° 243*), track down instead *Bulletin N° 30* (December 2018) put out by *l'Association philatélique et numismatique carcassonnaise* (Halle aux Sports Nicole Abar, salle J. Delteil, avenue des Berges de l'Aude, Carcassonne). It contains a substantial feature on this very issue.

You'll also get, for good measure, items on Harry Potter and the 1 franc vermilion – that's two separate articles, I hasten to add, not a new J K Rowling novel!

CATALOGUE WARS: A NEW HOPE

(with apologies to Luke Skywalker et al)

Colonies collectors among us endlessly seeking new non-simplified catalogues of post-independent Africa should raise a cheer for the following new (and rival) titles, two of which I have just acquired. (I flagged Yvert Volume 1 last time but repeat the details here for convenience.)

Timbres d'Afrique francophone Volume 1 (de Afars et Issas à Haute-Volta) 2018; Volume 2 (de Madagascar à Zanzibar) 2019. Yvert et Tellier, 2 rue de l'Étoile, 80094 Amiens Cedex 3, France. Card-backed, 224x270mm, 665 and 648pp, illus throughout in colour. Price 44,90€ (± £44.90 from Prinz/Vera Trinder) each.

Westafrika 2019 (A-G), Übersee Band 5.1; (H-Z), Übersee Band 5.2. Michel Schwaneberger Verlag GMBH, Ohmstr. 1, 85716 Unterschleißheim. Hard-backed, 160x230mm, 788 and 806 pp, illustrated practically throughout in colour.

Price 89,00€ (± £89.00 from Prinz/Vera Trinder) each.

Details of coloured illustrations are based on the respective Volume 1's (all I've seen so far, but I imagine the Volume 2's will match). Importantly, both Yvert and Michel cover pre- and post-independence issues in the same volume.

These cry out for, and will get in due course, a full review. At first glance, the Yvert colonial listings seem simply to repeat those in the previous 'Colonies' volumes, but I am reliably informed that a specialised Yvert French Colonies catalogue is being prepared for publication in November – an enticing prospect if true. One-country collectors contemplating just one Michel volume should double-check German spellings – Volume 1 (A-G) does not include Congo, Cameroun or Comoros (all under 'K' in Volume 2) but does include Ivory Coast – not under I for Ivory nor C for Côte d'Ivoire, but – unexpectedly to newcomers perhaps – under E for 'Elfenbeinküste'. The other Francophone territories in Michel Vol 1 are Bénin/Dahomey, Burkina Faso/Upper Volta, French West Africa and Guinea. Meanwhile, Yvert's 'Afrique' volumes do include (besides the usual north and sub-Saharan nations) Alexandria, Port-Saïd and similar French POs.

Timbres d'Asie francophone (de Cambodge à Vietnam) 2019. Yvert et Tellier, 2, rue de l'Étoile, 80094 Amiens Cedex 3, France. Card-backed, 224x270mm, 360pp. Price 39,90€ (± £39.90 from Prinz/Vera Trinder).

Yvert's 'Afrique francophone', of course, excludes the Indo-China group. This is catered for in a separate volume devoted to Asia (details above). I haven't seen this, but can safely assume that it includes not just post-1951 Cambodia, Laos and Viet-Nam but the whole Indo-China period too, complete with the relevant French and Indo-Chinese Post Offices like Canton and the rest.

More – possibly much more – next time.

Michael Round

NEW BOOK RECEIVED

Dakar to Tombouctou: Communications and Postal History in French Soudan. Peter R A Kelly FRPSL. Card cover, 96pp, A4 format, fully illustrated in colour. Published by the author with the support of the Stuart Rossiter Trust. Available from the author: peterkelly35@btinternet.com. Price: £14.00 or 16€ plus postage and packing (UK £4.00; Europe 8,50€, USA \$8.50). Payment by sterling cheque, euro cheque or via PayPal.

This important new book was briefly noticed in the last F&CPS Journal (ref. 1); fellow member Peter's own full-page flyer alongside (ref. 2) added further information. To recap, briefly: the text, in six monographs, tells the story of communications in French Sudan (gateway to the Sahara, as it were), mostly during the pre-airmail period (1900-40)

when the pioneering element was strong, the actual process difficult and the sheer mileage daunting. The total picture is an eye-opening reminder of the routine courage, stamina and ingenuity shown by a handful of men in a vast area mastering unfamiliar conditions, restrictions and climate.

Mail was transported by a mixture of boats and trains, the boat part crucially dependent on seasonal fluctuations on the Niger River, which have Monograph 1 to themselves. Monograph 2 explains that postal services effectively arose, so to speak, on the back of the telegraph service (c. 1880); Monograph 3 describes the TPO (*convoyeur*) service between Kayès and Koulikoro. Monograph 4 stresses the role of the Niger River itself in the process – which, when it ran smoothly, connected outgoing mail with the fortnightly

mailboat from Dakar. Just one hiccup anywhere along the route would effectively delay mail by a further fortnight if not more. Monograph 5 describes to-and-fro services in 1906, while Monograph 6 covers the introduction of airmail and subsequent related activities up to 1940.

The illustrations are luxurious. I counted 11 maps and over 60 different postcards. They remind us how grateful we are (are should be) for the official custom of repeating a postmark alongside the stamps, rather than just cancelling them. Many of those illustrated here are joyously legible, and even those that aren't at least give us two goes at deciphering Stage 1 of any journey. Contemporary postal regulations have been clearly scanned practically *in toto*: those whose originals were unscannable have been carefully copied into the text. The complex political changes of the period – all that bewildering *Haut-Sénégal-et-Niger* and *Sénégal-et-Niger* business – are diagrammatically presented for maximum clarity. Like *Gabon-Congo* elsewhere on the continent and (more pertinently) the later *République Soudanaise*, the political period *Haut Sénégal et*

Moyen Niger (1899-1902) produced no stamps so inscribed (though three postmarks), and the earliest items of mail used *Sénégal* stamps. A helpful Appendix spells all this out for the easily confused among us, and may inspire straight stamp collectors to re-examine their postmarks.

A flint-eyed professional copy-editor might have revised some punctuation, excised a few repetitions, and split many very long sentences. Readers in no need of such spoon-feeding, however, will find this a scrupulously researched archive, destined to become the go-to reference for years to come, its illustrations an irresistible magnet to would-be postcard collectors and the whole publication an inspiration to other serious collectors to record their findings for the benefit of all.

References

1. *Journal of the France & Colonies Philatelic Society*, Vol 68 N° 3, December 2018, p. 139.
2. *ibid*, p. 138.

Michael Round

LIST OF RECENTLY PUBLISHED ARTICLES

Continued from Page 44

Les Feuilles Marcophiles

N° 375 (Dec 2018): Timbres à date manuels horaires télégraphiques et horodateurs (Guillard & Bonnefoy); Lettres remises à un bureau ambulant et application de tarifs frontaliers (Chouteau); Quand une compagnie aérienne transporte des colosses! (Flotte); Courrier diplomatique de Charles IX roi de France à Sébastien 1^{er} roi du Portugal (Paris le 25 mai 1568) – Quand l'étude des courriers diplomatiques nous éclaire (un peu) sur la découverte du nouveau monde (Barrère); Les ateliers et centres de tri en France – Étude des timbres à date modernes 1950-2018 (Complément au n° Hors-Série 2015-02) (Lavenas).

N° 376 (Mar 2019): Les premiers essais de timbres à date en matière plastique (1950-1951) (Guillard &

Bonnefoy); À propos de Bordeaux-la-Bastide, rive droite ou rive gauche? (3^{ème} partie) (Rey); Un chef de gare et les services postaux en 1861-1865 (3^{ème} partie) (Douron); Quand le matériel postal était payé par le privé (Bonnefoy); À la recherche du timbre à date de courrier-convoyeur de la station de Trélazé (Chouteau); À Pont-l'Évêque (Calvados) fin août-début septembre 1944, petite histoire vécue (Maurin); Comment économiser 25 centimes en 1844 quand on est officier? (Trinquier); Histoire de la double relation postale du Principat d'ANDORRA, chap 3 (2^{ème} partie) - Les années passant... des améliorations sont étudiées, par la France, pour tenter de rendre son service postal plus efficient dans un environnement inhospitalier (Dupré); Les ateliers et centres de tri en France – Étude des timbres à date modernes 1950-2018 (Complément au n° Hors-Série 2015-02) (suite) (Lavenas).

REPORTS OF MEETINGS

WESSEX GROUP MEETING OF 2 FEBRUARY 2019

Tony Howgrave-Graham: The French Colonies



Paul Latham-Warde, Tony Howgrave-Graham
and Jeremy Martin
viewing Tony's display of French Colonies

The weather preceding the meeting was snow and freezing temperatures which resulted in many people unable to attend.

Unfortunately this included our guest speaker, Trevor Buckell, who was unable to get out of his local road and also John and Claire Scott who were snowed in as was Michael Berry.

Alan Wood sent his apologies having only been discharged from hospital on Thursday after a six week stay. I'm sure he would welcome a letter or card from his friends at this time

The meeting started with a glass of champagne (to reflect the French connection, as if we needed an excuse!) for the three members: Colin French, Jeremy Martin and Tony Howgrave-Graham and guest - Paul Latham-Warde. We were later joined by Ashley Lawrence who is to be

congratulated having made the journey from Bournemouth by bus!

At very short notice **Tony Howgrave-Graham** stood in as guest speaker and produced an excellent display of French Colonies which took us up to lunch time.

Lunch was taken as usual at the Old Mill and on return to the Scout Hut the following displays were presented:

Paul Latham-Warde: Alsace-Lorraine Parcel Cards.

Jeremy Martin: Council of Europe, Inauguration material, Europa 1986, and French Postcards, a series showing the post in various countries of the world.

Ashley Lawrence: French and other foreign Post Offices in the Ottoman Empire during WWI and the delight of Postal History - the story of Patré Frères.

Colin French: *Courrier-convoyeur* cancellations.

CF

LONDON GROUP MEETING OF 9 FEBRUARY 2019

Len Barnes: Zeppelin Mail



Len Barnes presents his collection of Zeppelin mail

Chris Hitchen opened the meeting with a welcome to two first time attendees and one guest and then introduced the speaker, **Len Barnes**.

Len gave us a two part display on the cross-Atlantic Zeppelin services operating from 1928 to 1937. He explained that Germany wanted to be world leaders in long distance flights and had opted for the development of rigid airships. France, however, had preferred to develop flying boats although it did enter into a contract with Germany for the acceptance of mail on Zeppelin flights between 1929 and 1932.

Len continued with a brief biography of Graf von Zeppelin and entertained us with various stories about airship construction, pilots and passengers. We saw

some fascinating illustrative material including plans and cross-sections of the airship, photographs of the stages of construction and photos of the facilities for passengers and of the celebrity passengers themselves.

We were treated to a magnificent array of over one hundred and forty flight covers with an embarrassment of colourful frankings and cachets. Inevitably the ones which attracted the most attention were those originating from France especially the registered cover franked with the 10F La Rochelle and the 30c Pasteur (see below).

Chris congratulated Len on his informative and interesting display before inviting everyone to reassemble in the bar for lunch.



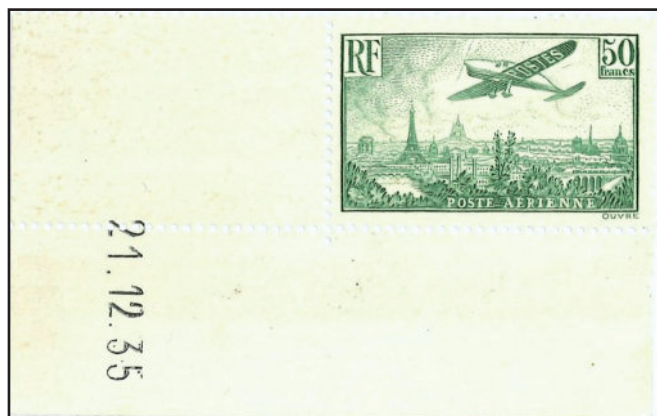
Third South American Flight, 27 April 1932.

Postcard with 10F La Rochelle and 30c Pasteur to pay registration fee accepted at Paris 74 on 16 April 1932.
Flown from Friedrichshafen to Recife and struck with Pernambuco receiver.

After an excellent meal, members reassembled in the afternoon to put up their own material.

Robert Campbell stepped up first to give a thematic display entitled 'French Agriculture on stamps 1849-1999'. Topics included wine production, 'from plough to platter', the seasons and nature's abundance. Definitives were featured such as the Cérès and the Sower issues as well as commemoratives.

Paul Miller followed with an exposé of stamps designed and engraved between 1934 and 1951 by Achille Ouvre, of which many were presented in dated corner blocks. One of the many mouth watering items was a dated corner of the 50F *Avion survolant Paris*. Paul commented on Ouvre's preference for static subjects and portraits.



The 50F *Avion survolant Paris*,
one of the highlights
of Paul Miller's display

Roger Niven gave us a thematic and anecdotal description of his 'Saunter down the Seine' which took us downstream from source to estuary. The highlights were the scenes of Paris depicted on the 500F *Ile de la Cité*, the 100F *Grand Palais et Pont Alexandre*, the 1000F *Vue de Paris* and the famous 50F 'Banknote'.

Richard Broadhurst updated us further with the latest issues in the *Marianne l'engagée* design. We saw miniature sheets, matrix stamps, mixed *carnets*, the new 'international' value and a whole sheet of the 1c yellow with marginal inscriptions. Further details can be found in Richard's article '*Marianne l'engagée* update' on page 39.

Mick Bister showed the engraved values of the iconic *Marianne de Gandon* issue. Each value was displayed as a dated corner block accompanied by an example of single usage on cover. Then followed examples of the 6F, 12F and 25F *Marianne de Muller* values which comprised proofs,

testing labels and printings of innovative coil and booklet formats.

Michael Round gave us a display of early postcards from Dahomey. Their monotone and uninspiring subject matter was more than compensated for by the colourful range of 1912 'Tablet' overprints which had been affixed.

Chris Hitchen closed the afternoon session with the postal history of the Montrouge post office in Paris. Starting with a cover from 1794 the material tracked the office's changing status and location as recorded by its PC and GC numbers and the Paris 69 and Paris XIV cancellations. Two fascinating items were a cover posted into a *boîte mobile* aboard a light railway and a 1937 cover from Bolivia taxed with fourteen copies of the 3F *Banderole*.



Members crowd round Chris Hitchen's display

Members commented that this had been one of the most successful meetings in recent times not only because of the variety and quality of the material on display but also because of the presence of so many new faces.

Members present: Maurice Alder, Len Barnes, Mick Bister, Richard Broadhurst, Rodney Gent, Chris Hitchen, Paul Miller, Roger Niven, Barbara Priddy, Michael Round and Robert Campbell (guest).

MLB

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF 2 MARCH 2019

The President **Chris Hitchen** opened the meeting at the Charlecote Pheasant Hotel, Charlecote, Stratford upon Avon, Warwickshire, CV35 9EW at 9.25am in the presence of 26 members.

(1) Members Present: Maurice Alder, John Allison, Len Barnes, Mick Bister, Godfrey Bowden, Richard Broadhurst, Mark Brookes, Steve Ellis, John Hammonds, Chris Hitchen, Peter Kelly, Bob Larg, Ashley Lawrence, André Métayer, Héloïse Mitchell, John Parmenter, David Parmley, Michael Passé, Colin Pease, Gerald Small, Hans Smith, Colin Spong, Peter Stockton, David Trapnell, Maurice Tyler, Paul Watkins.

Guests: Marian Bister, Jean Hammonds, Josselyne Métayer, Annette Tyler

Apologies: David Hogarth, Stephen Holder, Peter Maybury, Barbara Priddy, Henk Slabbinck, Alan Wood

(2) Minutes of the previous AGM of 10 March 2018, published in Journal 286, April 2018, were accepted unanimously as a true record of that meeting.

(3) Matters arising from these minutes. No issues were raised.

(4) President's Report - Chris Hitchen

"There was one unfortunate setback this year when it proved impossible to maintain the Colonies packet circuit. That does rather highlight our vulnerability with so few members actively engaged in doing the work required to run the Society's operations. The good news is that Rodney Gent has agreed to take on the task of secretary for the Colonies Packet. The gap in service to members who receive that packet and the hold-ups in circulating the packets of vendors who have supplied material are much regretted.

"All other functions continued to run reasonably smoothly and my sincere thanks to those who manage the website, our packets and auction and our Journal. Attendance at meetings has been a little mixed but the intention is to continue with those we have at least for the next year. Alan Wood has had to step down as convenor of the Wessex group for health reasons. However one of our newer members, Colin French, has come forward and taken over the role of convenor. There is still a vacancy as convenor for the London meetings.

"Peter Kelly and I will continue to arrange a weekend meeting next year but it will almost certainly be in a different venue. The Charlecote Pheasant Hotel is now concentrating on weddings and the meeting room which has cost us around £600 for the weekend would now be a minimum of £2,000 in March or April. A weekend in February is not considered viable due to vulnerability to weather conditions. One disappointment this year was the rather poor offer of displays. Without these the meetings are not really viable. It is not fair to expect organisers to chase members to provide material to show.

"Mick Bister will give us his report on the Journal but all members should be aware that after April next year there is no one prepared to produce further Journals. Maurice

Tyler brought the Journal to a very high level with his Desk Top Publishing skills and as Journal Manager Mick Bister has maintained that standard with the help of our Australian member Peter Allan and Maurice who is still involved. In order to make the role more accessible to those with moderate Word skills ways of producing a Journal without the use of Desk Top Publishing programs are under consideration.

"For 2020 the services that can probably be maintained for the moment are the Website, regional meetings, a weekend meeting, the packets, the magazine circuits and the auction. Much will be dependent on the use of the internet and whilst we appreciate that this is a disadvantage for those who do not use emails there is no other practical way of being able to run things in the future.

"Dependent on the wish of this meeting I am prepared to serve one more term as President. Whilst traditionally the post was occupied for a two year term, it has recently been stretched to three years. I have enjoyed it and will be happy to continue for one more year. A fourth term of office would not be proper so a new President will be required next year.

"At next year's AGM in March 2020 the following posts could well be vacant – President, Vice President, Journal Editor.

"Despite our problems I trust that 2019 will prove to be a worthwhile year for our members."

(5) General Secretary's Report - David Hogarth

"The Society's membership continued to decline in 2018 mainly through members aging, though at the end of the year there was a small flurry of new members, and 2019 began with the return of a member who had resigned previously. There is hope for the future! However the figures from Mick Bister's end-of-year statement do not overall make for happy reading: in 2017 the overall net membership reduced from 307 to 292 and in 2018 from 292 to 274 (as shown in the table below).

	UK members	Non-UK members	Total
On 1 Jan 2018	236	56	292
Resigned	-14	-4	-18
Suspended	-3	0	-3
Died	-6	-1	-7
Transfers	0	0	0
New members	+7	+3	+10
On 1 Jan 2019	220	54	274

"The services provided to members by the Society have also in some cases been in difficulty: the Journal, which given the geographical spread of members is for many the main link between them and the Society, is still, after many intimations that assistance is needed, looking for a Journal Manager; and the Colonies packet is currently suspended

for the same reason. The France packet and the auctions are running well, as are the magazine circuits. The Society acknowledges and thanks the members who operate and have operated these facilities for members, for without them, there would probably be no Society. That brings me to the recurrent theme of most societies these days: with members reluctant, it seems, to take on responsibility for the various facilities which the Society offers, inevitably these may be reduced. Taking a positive view, I am sure that there are members who could and would be able to help, and I ask them to offer that help: just contact any of the officers whose details are found in the Journal. I would thank all those involved for their work throughout the year: the Secretary's job in comparison is relatively easy!"

(6) Treasurer's Report and Presentation of Accounts - Chris Hitchen

"Since 2012 the Society has enjoyed steady surpluses largely thanks to the work done by the packet and auction secretaries and sale of the library. Our reserves have risen from some £000.00 in 2012 to £000.00 today. Whilst we would not wish to use those reserves they are available should we ever need them.

"2018 was a fairly routine year with healthy income earned by the France packet, publications and auction of just over £00.00. That gave us around £00.00 in total income, whilst expenditure at some £00.00 was close to that in 2017. As the Colonies packet is in the process of winding up no monies have been transferred from that to the main account. Once finalised any surplus will be taken into income in future years.

"For 2019 I would anticipate subscription income of some £00.00 with the packets and auction providing a further £00.00 giving a total of £00.00. With similar expenditure to 2018 at £00.00 plus a small amount of about £000 that we will need to spend on maintenance and upgrading of the website, total outgoings in 2019 will be some £00.00. Little has been spent on the website in recent years, apart from routine hosting costs. Some of the software is now a little out of date and some small improvements require implementing.

"That means that I would anticipate a deficit of around £00.00 for the current year. To forecast a budget for future years is almost impossible. Mick Bister steps down as Journal Manager at the next AGM and just one Journal is planned for 2020. This setback would certainly lead to resignations in 2021. In view of these uncertainties I would recommend leaving subscriptions at the same level as 2018. There is no point in tinkering around with changes when we do not know the level of services we can provide.

"I would therefore propose keeping 2020 subscriptions at a maximum of £16 UK, £23 Europe and £27 overseas."

See next page for Balance Sheet and Income & Expenditure Account.

The report by the examiner to the accounts:

"I have examined the Income and Expenditure Account for the year ended December 31st 2018 and the Balance Sheet at that date and I certify that they are in accordance with the books and records of the society. I have not carried out an

audit.

D G PARMLEY CHARTERED ACCOUNTANT

Liverpool February 15 2019"

Acceptance of the accounts and the 2020 subscription was proposed by Colin Spong, seconded by Bob Larg and carried unanimously.

(7) Auction Secretary's Report - Steve Ellis

"After the various one-off factors of previous years, 2018 reverted to being a more "normal" year. The three auctions and sales at Charlecote resulted in a surplus of £000.00 being earned for the Society. The auctions of 2018 and first of 2019 have been quite full (400 to 500 lots) and have contained some quite high value stamps, but overall it is still the French postal history sections which have the highest percentage of sales (except 20th century material). The number of bidders has declined slightly: the summer auction (now held in June) sales were particularly low and there are no "live" bidders now that it is purely postal. Unsold lot numbers are always posted on the website within a week of the auction ending, but post-auction sales are low in number."

(8) Packet Secretary's Report (France) - Richard Broadhurst

"2018 was another successful year for the France Packet. Purchases of some £000.00 were made resulting in payments to vendors of £000.00. After expenses the Society benefited from a commission payment of £000.00

"There are approximately sixty recipients of the packet from Scotland to Cornwall and Northern Ireland. It is a very useful way for many members, some of which live in the more remote parts of the UK and who do not have the benefit of local stamp fairs to obtain good competitively priced France material.

"We had only one loss of a packet in the post during the year. Whilst unfortunate, it is remarkable that considering there are over 500 movements of packets in the post between members that this figure is not higher. The loss was covered by our comprehensive insurance.

"Other than minor day to day mistakes made by participants which could be eliminated with a little more care, the operation of the packet continues with remarkably few problems. In general each member receives at least one packet per month.

"Currently we are able to accommodate new members who would like to receive the packets and we would also be delighted to receive more material to sell, especially anything unusual! For those who have not participated before it is an excellent and enjoyable way of both buying and selling stamps. Further details are available from the Secretary."

(9) Journal Manager's Report - Mick Bister

"In 2017 the number of pages in each edition was erratic and at last year's AGM I vowed to maintain each edition at 44 or 48 pages and not to fall into the 30s as it had done in that year. In fact in 2018 we surpassed this aspiration with the three editions totalling 148 pages at a cost of £00.00 which is identical to the number of pages printed in four Journals in 2016 at a cost of £00.00. Thus, a saving of £000.

**FRANCE & COLONIES PHILATELIC SOCIETY
BALANCE SHEET AT 31 DECEMBER 2018**

CURRENT ASSETS20182017

Cash at bank
Sundry debtors

DEDUCT CURRENT LIABILITIES

Sundry creditors
Subscriptions in advance
Magazine circuit float

TOTAL ASSETS

Represented by

MEMBERS FUNDS

Uncommitted funds at 1.1.2018
Year surplus

INCOME & EXPENDITURE 2018Expenditure20182017Income20182017

Meetings

Auction

Journal 3 issues

Exchange packet

Postage and expenses

Sale of publications

Insurance (packets and
auction)

Donations

Year surplus

Subscriptions

"I am pleased to report that I have been receiving an increase in articles on stamps both France and Colonies. This has helped to address the balance with postal history which on some occasions has been dominating the contents page. The April Journal will be another packed edition and I have enough material for August and December too. However, I welcome material for 2020.

"There has been a shift in how I call upon the assistance of members of the editorial team over the past year. Most of our regular contributors, now familiar with editorial requirement, need less editing/formatting of their texts so there have been fewer items to send out to the team. On the other hand there has been an increase in technical problems of various sorts e.g. colour management, complicated tables (cells inside cells!), texts where English is not the first language of the author and highly specialised subjects which have required clarification. I am especially grateful to Peter Allan, Derek Atkins, Chris Hitchen and Maurice

Tyler for their assistance in resolving these matters.

"I am now starting my fifth year in this post which was meant to be a temporary one. With 15 years before that as Auction Secretary I have decided that after 20 years of service I really must step down, and come what may, I shall be resigning as Journal Manager with effect from the AGM in 2020. I shall ensure though the completion of the April 2020 edition of the Journal."

(10) Website Manager's Report - Jan Gane

"Back issues of 14 Journals have now been uploaded to the Website; each page is copyrighted and all financial information has been removed. I have indicated that paid-up members may contact me if they wish to receive a full and unmarked copy. I intend for the website to be fully searchable when the site is upgraded within the next week or so. I believe more Journals are forthcoming and look forward to uploading them to the site as and when I

receive them.

“From each current Journal I receive I upload approx. 20 images to entice members and passers-by, and each Auction also has the catalogue and approx. 20 images uploaded to give members an idea of the current lots. This last year I modernised the site somewhat by highlighting items taken from the current Journal and again I intend to do more when the site is upgraded. I have also added to the Links page with forthcoming exhibitions and larger Stamp Shows.

“According to the web statistics we have had almost 4,000 impressions/visitors to the site during 2018 and although this doesn't take into consideration how many individuals there are, it gives us an approximation of how many stop by and have a look around.

“We have 39 users for the Forum, this year we announced that non-members could use it and we had two people take up the offer - one of whom became a member. It is a pity more members do not use it as it is an excellent way to communicate with fellow members, such as offering a lift to others to meetings.

“I have enjoyed this year's challenges and have been very grateful for the help from Maurice and Chis particularly, and the interaction with other members of the Committee and the occasional member. I am willing to continue on the Committee in 2019 as Webmaster.”

(11a) Publications Officer's Report - John Parmenter

“I can but report that sales are slow.”

(11b) Magazine Circuit Officer's Report - Richard Broadhurst

“The Magazine circuit once again operated smoothly. We subscribe to two French stamp magazines: *L'Echo de la Timbrologie* and *Timbres*. The number of subscribers was similar to the previous year and once again we were able to maintain subscriptions at the previous rate of £8 per copy annually. This represents very good value and we are able to accommodate any new members who may wish to join the circuits.”

(12) Reports on Group Meetings

These are as published in the Journal Volume 68, Numbers 286-288.

(13) Election of Officers and Committee Members

The list of those willing to serve as officers and committee members had been published in the Agenda and their election *en bloc* with the addition of Mr Peter Kelly was proposed by John Hammonds, seconded by Godfrey Bowden and carried unanimously.

President	Mr C J Hitchen
Vice-President	<i>Vacant</i>
General Secretary	Mr D J Hogarth
Treasurer	Mr C J Hitchen
Editor-in-Chief	Mr M S Tyler
Journal Manager	Mr M L Bister

Auction Secretary	Mr S R Ellis
Packet Secretary (France)	Mr R N Broadhurst
Packet Secretary (Colonies)	Mr R Gent
Magazine Circuit	Mr R N Broadhurst
Publications Stockist	Mr J Parmenter
Webmaster	Mrs J Gane
Committee Members	Mr P R A Kelly
	Mr A J Lawrence
	Mr C W Spong
	Mr P S Watkins
	Mr J C West
For information: Group Convenors	Mr C J Hitchen (London)
	Mr S R Ellis (Northern)
	Mr C French (Wessex)

(14) Appointment of an Examiner of the Society's Accounts

The retention of Mr D G Parmley Chartered Accountant, as examiner of the Society's Accounts was proposed by Steve Ellis seconded by Ashley Lawrence and carried unanimously.

(15) Any other business

1) Mick Bister announced that the committee had agreed to award the Society's long service award to Alan Wood for his work as Wessex Group convenor and Room Auctioneer and to Bill Mitchell for his Journal contributions and his role as Auction Secretary.

2) Peter Kelly explained that due to increasing hire charges of the Hamilton Suite at the Charlecote Pheasant an alternative venue was being sought for the 2020 Philatelic Weekend. Preliminary investigations had been made regarding the suitability of the Abbey Hotel at Redditch which had been recommended by other philatelic societies. The proposed date would be the second weekend in March but this would be confirmed later. Members were asked if they would support such a change and the large majority was in favour.*

3) Chris Hitchen updated members on the forthcoming move by the RPSL to new premises and the launching of an appeal by the Royal to assist with the refurbishing of facilities within the new building. Chris reminded members that, as a registered charity, the library and research facilities would be freely available to non-members of the RPSL and that, with the decline of local philatelic societies, the Royal's position needed to be safeguarded for the sake of the future of philately. The committee had therefore agreed that the F&CPS should donate £2000 to the appeal.

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 10.02am.

MLB & MBB

* For up-to-date details refer to page 3 in Society Notes

The Association of British Philatelic Societies

“What does the ABPS do for me?”

- The ABPS provides a platform for communication within UK philately through its publications: information leaflets; ABPS News (issued four times a year) which publicises the work of affiliated societies and reports on developments within philately. This includes free or reduced cost adverts for philatelic related events; the Executive Bulletin keeping societies up to date; the Handbook & Directory which provides useful information for society secretaries and allows any potential member to find society details and includes a listing of philatelic lecturers and displays to help societies to find speakers. We also distribute a range of free information leaflets offering advice on many aspects of philately.
- ABPS supports the growth of stamp collecting among the young by sponsoring and encouraging youth philately, for example through Kidstamps, Stamp Active Network and Planet Stamp.
- The ABPS has a Small Grants Scheme that assists Federations, Clubs, Societies or individuals to fund projects or events that otherwise they would not be able to carry out and in particular those promoting philately.
- Our website www.abps.org.uk carries a huge amount of information about news and events relating to affiliated societies and in the philatelic world including links to affiliated clubs. This is currently being improved to provide even more information for philatelists.
- The ABPS officially links UK philately with the wider philatelic world through the *Fédération Internationale de Philatélie* and the *Federation of European Philatelic Associations*. As such, it is the voice of UK philately in the national and international arena.
- Provides advice on matters related to the hobby such as Data Protection and Card Surcharges.
- ABPS organises the annual Philatelic Congress of Great Britain, recognising those who have achieved international recognition for their outstanding studies and research in the philatelic sphere, demonstrated through their own collections and in their writings.
- The ABPS can provide a free web site and free advertising in ABPS News.
- Nominations for an Award of Merit can be accepted from Federations, Affiliated Specialist Societies and Affiliated Local Societies and specifically in respect of service to those respected bodies and philately.
- The ABPS impacts on most UK philatelists by initiating major annual events at various locations around the country e.g. STAMPEX. These give an opportunity for individual collectors to access a wide range of philatelic dealers as a means of finding new material. These events also provide a focus for individuals to exhibit their material and see what others are doing. To support exhibiting the ABPS has recently given away hundreds of exhibition frames to Federations, clubs and Societies. The philatelic shows are sometimes organised locally by one of the Federations affiliated to the ABPS, which will have access to ABPS expertise and the financial backing of the ABPS. Annually the ABPS organises national competitions at STAMPEX. To make these events a success requires collaboration between the world of collectors and the world of dealers. The ABPS provides this by working with the Philatelic Traders Society and other dealers for the common good.
- The ABPS provides the organisation which enables UK philatelists to exhibit and compete internationally (the cost of international exhibiting is borne by those exhibiting). This is a large and complicated operation which is frequently overlooked.
- ABPS runs workshops across the country on all aspects of the hobby. Recent workshops included judging seminars and exhibitors workshops.

The ABPS relies heavily on the support and goodwill of all the UK's philatelic clubs, societies and federations, and many individuals too. Without the support of all philatelists the opportunities for all this country's collectors would be drastically reduced and the future of our hobby threatened further. The ABPS is very cost conscious (all the officers of the ABPS are unpaid volunteers) and attempt to give UK philately the best service for the minimum cost. The current annual affiliation fee for a club or society is still only £1.25 per UK member.

September 2018