

The Journal of the France & Colonies Philatelic Society



Changes in exchange rates, currency, and overprints reflect the complex military and political situation in Syria after the Great War. All is explained in the second part of Ashley Lawrence's article 'French Mandates of Syria and Lebanon - The Post-War Military Occupation of Syria, 1919-1923' (See pages 126-133)

Volume 69 ● Number 3
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Whole Number 291

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

Society Website: www.fcps.org.uk

Officers

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

General Secretary: D J Hogarth, 12 Moyness Park Drive, Blairgowrie PH10 6LX (email: secretary@fcps.org.uk).

The Society

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

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

2019-20 Annual Subscription Rates

United Kingdom: £16.00, Europe: £23.00, Elsewhere: £27.00.

Overseas applicants may prefer to receive the Journal and other information in electronic format which would avoid expensive overseas postage. The reduced subscription rate would be £16.00

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The Journal

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

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D G Parmley, 40 Kenyons Lane, Lydiate, Liverpool L31 0BR (Telephone: 07464 926250)

according to instructions.

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

For further details contact the circuit organiser:

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

Group Convenors

London Group: C J Hitchen

Northern Group: S R Ellis

Wessex Group: C French

Publications Stockist

J Parmenter, 23 Jeffreys Road, London SW4 6QU (email: publications@fcps.org.uk; tel. 0207 622 4851).

Website Manager

Jan Gane (email: jan_g@iinet.net.au)

* * *

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The Journal of the France & Colonies Philatelic Society

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

Email: manager@fcps.org.uk

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

E-mail: editor@fcps.org.uk

Editorial Team: Peter Allan, Derek Atkins, Steve Ellis, John Hammonds, Chris Hitchen,
David Hogarth, Barry Knox, Michael Round, Colin Spong, Arlene Sullivan, Paul Watkins

Society Website: www.fcps.org.uk

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SOCIETY NOTES

Editorial

This is the last edition of the Journal to be produced by the current editorial team.

As many members will recall, from 1995 to 2015, our editor **Maurice Tyler** single-handedly produced the Journal. This meant that he took on every role in its production beginning with the vetting of the articles, the formatting of the text, transferring the Word documents into InDesign, shaping the layout ready for the printer and then doing the final proof-reading.

However, his decision to retire in 2015 was thwarted when the newly appointed editor had to withdraw for personal reasons and so was born the position of Journal Manager which I undertook and the creation of a sub-editorial team. Maurice returned as Editor-in-chief with a reduced workload processing the smaller articles and retaining the responsibility of shaping the Journal ready for the printer. Meanwhile, **Peter Allan**, being likewise proficient in InDesign, took over the processing of the main articles. Other members of the team assisted with formatting, proofreading and offering technical and philatelic advice.

From 1 January 2020, all this is going to change. Maurice is at last going to enjoy his long-awaited retirement. He has admitted that relinquishing his role as editor will be a wrench for him but looking after his health must come first. However, he will continue to make a contribution to the Journal in a different context. Peter Allan has also expressed a desire to retire due in particular to his other philatelic commitments. Peter is editor of the '*Courrier*', journal of the Tasmanian Philatelic Society, and has recently taken over the presidency of the Australian Philatelic Federation. All this with exhibition judging commitments too!

Finally we bid farewell to **Colin Spong** who informs us that he has been compiling the 'List of Recently Published Articles' column since the 1970s although it was then known as 'Current French Philatelic Journal Articles' changing its name to the present title in 1986 when it became a regular feature. However, the column will continue in the capable hands of Maurice. You can't keep a good philatelist down!

We owe Maurice, Peter and Colin a great debt of gratitude. They have selflessly committed a huge amount of time and effort for the benefit of the Society and deserve our heartfelt thanks. *Un grand merci à vous tous.*

So from next year **Jan Gane** will be taking over as Editor-in-Chief combining the roles undertaken by Peter and Maurice. I will stay in my post as Journal Manager for the time being but with fewer responsibilities as I need to reduce my workload too. The remaining members of the sub-editing team will be retained for the time being but Jan and I will see how the new management and organisation pans out before deciding any restructuring of it.

Thanks to Jan the continuation and future of the Journal is ensured so please do continue to send me your articles no matter how big or small. Your support is essential.

Mick Bister

* * *

We must not forget the tremendous amount of work undertaken since 2015 by **Mick Bister** when he took on the role of Journal Manager, vetting all the articles submitted and himself editing many of them, as well as keeping his editorial team under firm control, in what was intended to be a very temporary job. He has not yet fully relinquished the role and we should express our sincere gratitude to him for helping to keep the Journal going.

Maurice Tyler

* * *

New Members

The Society is pleased to welcome new members: 1480 Mrs Dahlia Harrison, 1481 Alan Mann, 1482 (*new number*) Carl Barna (USA), 1483 Ken Dyke and 1484 Alan King.

* * *

Members Deceased

It is with great sadness that we have to report the death of members: 1302 Gary Brown (Australia) and 1313 Stanley J Luft (USA).

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 15 February from 11.00am to 4.00pm at the Calthorpe Arms, 252 Grays Inn Road, London WC1X 8JR when **Paul Watkins** will be presenting 'Foreign mail 1580 to 1940'. After lunch, the afternoon will be devoted as usual to members' displays.

The **Northern Group** will be holding its next meeting on Saturday 4 April at Broom Methodist Church, 195 Broom Lane, Rotherham, S60 3NW from 10.30am to 4.30pm. The whole day will be devoted to members' displays on any topic and lunch will be taken at the local pub.

The **Wessex Group** will be holding its next meeting on Saturday 22 February at the Scout Hall, Lower Street, Harnham starting at 10.30am when **Claire Scott** will be displaying 'The Wounded Soldier'. After lunch, the afternoon will be devoted to members' displays. It would help if those planning to attend could let the convenor know by emailing colinkrfrench@gmail.com.

The sixth *Rencontres Philatéliques Rennaises*, organised by our member **André Métayer**, will take place at the Espace des deux Rives, 4 allée Georges Palante, 35000 Rennes on 25 January 2020 from 9.00am to 5.30pm. There are plenty of parking spaces and admission is free. The guest speaker will be **Francis Carcenac** who will be presenting his collection '*Autour de septembre 1871, le Port Local*'. Further information can be obtained by contacting André on 00 33 6 64 39 42 49 or at cabinet.metayer@wanadoo.fr.

* * *

2020 Annual Weekend

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. Further information and an application form are enclosed with this edition of the Journal.

* * *

Exhibition Successes

Congratulations are due to the following members who gained successes at Stockholmia 2019, 29 May - 2 June, Sweden.

Graham Booth: Large Gold in Postal History for '*The Rise and Fall of the American Merchant Marine as a Transatlantic Carrier 1800-1868*'

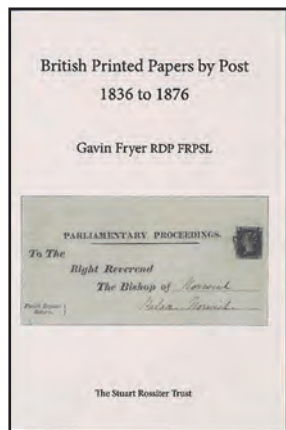
Graham Booth*: Large Gold in Postal History for '*Anglo-Australian Mail 1840-1860: The Transfer from Sail to Steam*'

Gavin Fryer: Gold in Literature for '*British Printed Papers by Post 1836 to 1876*' **

Leslie Marley: Large Gold in Thematic Philately for '*A Whale's Tale*'

* Further congratulations to **Graham Booth** for his exhibit entitled '*West Indies & South American Mail Carried by "Great Western"*' which earned him a third Gold Medal at Autumn Stampex 2019.

** '*British Printed Papers by Post 1836 to 1876*' by **Gavin Fryer** tells the story of how the GPO services developed



when handling mail separated from letters, postcards and parcels. This might include newspapers, books, parliamentary papers, voting papers, patterns and samples, prices current and market reports, election papers, ecclesiastical papers, and others. Members of the armed services also needed special arrangements. This story goes back to the mid 17th century to give readers the context in which very many changes to Britain's postal arrangements were made during

the period 1836 to 1876. The origins of the various postal services are described along with problems encountered by the Post Office and the steps taken to resolve those. The narrative includes extracts from official records and statutes and these are augmented by Tables of the rates of postage within Britain and from Britain to places overseas.

770 pages, hardback with dust jacket. Price £50 includes delivery in the UK; overseas delivery by arrangement. For further details or to make an order contact John Jackson: john.w.jackson@care4free.net

NB Will members who compete in national or international exhibitions please advise Mick Bister of their results so that they can be shared with members of the Society. Please do not be bashful!

* * *

Philatelic Honours (1)



Guy Dutau RDP

watched by his sponsor Jean-François Brun, signs the Roll of Distinguished Philatelists in Stockholm on 31 May

© Dr Seija-Riitta Laakso FRPSL, Editor, *The London Philatelist*

Congratulations to member **Guy Dutau** from Toulouse on his admission to the Roll of Distinguished Philatelists in recognition of his services to philatelic research and literature.

"Whilst best known on the international stage for collections relating to the disinfection and purification of mail, Guy Dutau has numerous other collecting interests having formed and exhibited collections on many subjects including France, Egypt, Chile, Peru and Haiti.

"Guy displays and exhibits his collections at local, national and international levels as well as serving on philatelic juries at a national and international level. His natural curiosity is applied to his many philatelic subjects and countries and his researches are willingly shared with others, both personally and through the publications that he has authored. Guy's most recent major work is '*La Désinfection des lettres en France et dans les pays occupés: Histoire, règlements, lazarets, pratiques*', published in 2017, which is a monument to his decades of research and brings together meticulous scientific, historical and philatelic information. Numerous articles in magazines of record cover a wide range of subjects and he is a regular and popular presenter on philatelic subjects. His contribution was recognised by his appointment as *Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres* in 2001."

(Source: American Philatelic Society)

* * *

OBITUARY

Stanley J Luft

1927 – 2019

Older members of our Society will be sad to learn of Stan's death in Colorado USA on 6 July. His life was an interesting one. He was born in Turin (Italy) and brought up in the US. He served as an infantry man in the Korean War and then obtained a university degree in the sciences, becoming a geologist. He set up the Geology Department for the university at Oriente, Cuba and fled penniless from there with his wife and children at the time of the crisis. Afterwards, he rejoined the Geological Survey in Denver, retiring in 1988 as a Fellow of the Geological Society of America.

Stan was an outstanding postal historian and a copious writer of articles and books, specialising in military postal history and also the *Type Sage* issue. Much of his writing was published in the journal of our sister society, the United States France & Colonies Philatelic Society, and included a number of brochures, in particular his 'Chronology of French Military Campaigns and Expeditions and their Postal Markings' and the 'Regular Issues (of France) according to their normal postal usage.' He was also a keen competitor and was awarded many medals and accolades over the years. His knowledge and experience were recognised by the *Académie de Philatélie* where he was an Associate Member and an Honorary Member of the *Académie Européenne de Philatélie*. For many years he was editor of the *France & Colonies Philatelist* and in this way he got to know quite a number of our members.

I first met Stan many, many years ago at one of the French Nationals and regularly exchanged notes and general views on life with him over the years. I know too that he also kept in touch with a number of our longer serving members for his interests were wide ranging and his enthusiasm infectious. Several of us became members of our sister society across the pond and wrote articles for their journal and this was largely inspired by our contact with Stan.

In 2018 Stan lost his wife after a long illness and, with his own health failing and problems with his eyesight, life became difficult for him but, true to form, he was still displaying and planning further ones until the end.

Stan was a great ambassador for French philately in the United States and a good friend to many of us and I will miss those friendly emails from America.

Peter R A Kelly

Philatelic Honours (2)

Left: The Roll of Distinguished Philatelists

on which can be seen the signatures of members

Stephen Holder (2016), Robert Abensur (2018) and Guy Dutau (2019)

© Dr Seija-Riitta Laakso FRPSL, Editor, *The London Philatelist*

The *Académie Européenne de Philatélie* has awarded prizes to two of our members: the *Prix du Parlement Européen* to **Henk Slabbinck** and the *Prix Européen de Littérature Philatélique* to **Guy Dutau**. We offer our congratulations to both of them.

The *Cercle de la Presse Philatélique* has awarded their *Grand Prix Littéraire* to our member **Steven Walske** for his work *Les Postes aux Armées de la Guerre franco-allemande de 1870-71* published by the *Académie de Philatélie*.

* * *

Displays by Members

On 18 May 2019 **Steve Ellis** gave a display on "The French *Ambulance*" to the Forces Postal History Society in London.

On 12 & 13 October 2019 two of our members contributed to the displays at Marcophilex XLIII in Montrond-les-Bains (France):

Chris Hitchen: Les bureaux de quartier de Paris 1884-1900;

Peter Kelly: La Réunion - île dans la tempête (1939-1945).

* * *

SOCIETY NOTES
continued on pages 135 and 139



Marianne and the Bear

Franco-Russian Relations 1891-1901

David Hogarth

Postal stationery does not usually excite collectors in the same way as postal history does but, when the two are combined, any reservations about the former may disappear. This happened when the author somehow acquired an illustrated postcard commemorating the visit of a Russian naval squadron to Toulon in 1893. This article starts from that find.

BACKGROUND

After the conclusion of the Franco-Prussian war in 1870, France remained in relative diplomatic isolation until the end of the 1880s, partly caused by the Prussian/German Chancellor Bismarck who feared that any shift in political alliances in Europe might enable France to seek to recover Alsace and Lorraine and upset the balance of power and the hegemony of the new German Empire. Bismarck however was forced to resign in 1890 and the new Kaiser Wilhelm II did not renew the treaty with Russia and Austria-Hungary which had allowed these three great powers to avoid the possibility of conflict. France meantime had sought to develop relationships with other European countries, including at various times Britain, Russia and Germany, both to protect itself and to advance its policy of developing its colonial empire. This was a time of active politics and diplomatic moves in Europe.

France however had a more pressing requirement, to restrain the power of Germany, and sought to do this by involvement with Russia, thereby ensuring that in the event of any future war between France and Germany, Germany might face a war on two fronts. Russia sought at the same time capital to industrialise, and found a source in France, with the first Russian loan raised in 1888. Political and economic reasons therefore justified closer links between the two countries, sealed by a number of military and state visits. The resurrection of the Triple Alliance between Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy in 1891, with the rumour that Britain might also join, laid the grounds for the conclusion of a political agreement between France

and Russia in the same year.

This agreement was initially unofficial, with an exchange of letters between ministers of both countries. It was followed by a secret military convention signed in August 1892 on behalf of the General Staff of both countries. The defensive Convention provided for Russian intervention against Germany if the latter attacked France, and for French intervention against Germany if Russia was attacked. The Convention was to remain in force for the duration of the Triple Alliance and the final clause declared that it was to be kept absolutely secret. The Convention was ratified by Russia in December 1893 and France in January 1894. (Its terms remained secret until 1918, though it was nullified by the Soviet government in 1917). Not everyone however



Figure 1

Cartoon from *Le Soleil* of 18 December 1893 depicting Marianne in the arms of the Russian bear

agreed with the growing links between republican France and imperial Russia, as a cartoon from 1893 illustrates (Figure 1).

THE NAVAL VISITS

The visit of a French naval squadron to Cronstadt in July 1891 enabled the original and fairly unofficial agreement to be entered into. A Russian naval squadron visited Toulon in October 1893. The latter visit was commemorated with the issue of a souvenir illustrated postcard (Figure 2) and other postal stationery (Figure 3). A considerable number

Figure 2

Souvenir illustrated postcard depicting the Russian naval squadron at Toulon on 13 October 1893. Tsar Alexander III appears in a cartouche on the right. The two imprinted 1c Sage stamps did not meet the postal rate for postcards, hence the warning at the top right and the addition of two adhesives making up the rate of 10c



of souvenir lettercards and newspaper bands followed. The lettercards mainly showed a framed image of Tsar Alexander III with the words *RUSSIE/CRONSTADT 1891/FRANCE/TOULON 1893* in the frame, *Cronstadt 1891 – Toulon 1893* printed on the card, and a depiction of the Russian eagle; they appeared printed in at least five different colours (Figure 4). The newspaper bands (Figure 5) were printed in four different colours and had framed images of President Carnot and Tsar Alexander III, with both frames having the same inscription as on the lettercards, and also the printed inscription *Cronstadt 1891/Toulon 1893*.

PRESIDENTS AND TSARS

During the decade between 1891 and 1901 Russia was ruled by two Tsars, while France had four Presidents.

They are shown on the postcard in Figure 6 (with the exception of the French President Jean Casimir-Perier who is known for the shortest presidential term, resigning on 16 January 1895 after only six months and 20 days in office, and who took little interest in foreign policy). The postcard commemorates the State Visit of Tsar Nicholas II to France in 1901 and shows the places visited. The persons shown are Tsar Alexander III (top), Tsar Nicholas II and the Tsarina Alexandra (middle row) and in the lower row (from left to right) Presidents Emile Loubet, Félix Faure and Marie-François Sadi Carnot.

Tsar Alexander III died from natural causes on 1 November 1894 after which France produced a mourning envelope (Figure 7). Tsar Nicholas II became Tsar on his death, remaining until he was forced to abdicate and was murdered along with his family in 1918. President

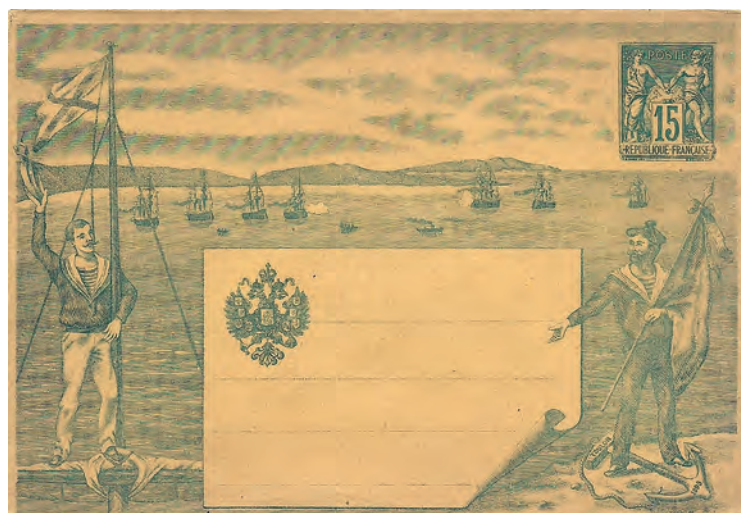


Figure 4
Example of a souvenir lettercard,
printed in blue



Figure 3
Souvenir envelope commemorating
the visit of the Russian naval squadron
with imprinted 15c Sage stamp



Figure 5
Example of a souvenir newspaper band

Carnot was president from 3 December 1887 until he was assassinated by an Italian anarchist on 25 June 1894: he was responsible for pursuing approaches to Russia. President Félix Faure served from 17 January 1895 to 16 February 1899, dying in office from apoplexy, allegedly *in flagrante*, as it was delicately put, with his mistress: he also favoured stronger ties with Russia as did President Emile Loubet, who served a full term of seven years from 18 February 1899 until 18 February 1906.

The death of Tsar Alexander III and the assassination of President Carnot in 1894 were commemorated with

an overprint on the newspaper wrappers issued on the occasion of the naval visits (Figure 8).

THE RUSSIAN STATE VISIT TO FRANCE 1896

The State Visit of Tsar Nicholas II and the Tsarina Alexandra Fedorovna to France took place between 5 and 9 October 1896. The Grand Duchess Olga travelled with them, though still a baby, and she apparently was very well received by the crowds! Having landed at Cherbourg, the visit encompassed Paris, Versailles and Châlons. As part of the visit, the Tsar laid the foundation stone for the

Figure 6
Postcard depicting Tsar Alexander III,
Tsar Nicholas II and the Tsarina,
and Presidents Loubet, Faure and Carnot
produced for the later Russian State Visit of 1901



Figure 7
Mourning envelope produced to commemorate
the death of Tsar Alexander III.
A similar envelope (not shown here) was
also produced following the assassination of
President Carnot with the inscription
HOMMAGE AU PRESIDENT MARTYR.

Figure 8
Newspaper band originally issued for the visit
of the Russian naval squadron to Toulon in 1893
but re-issued with a black mourning border in 1894
following the death of Tsar Alexander III and the
assassination of President Carnot in the same year.



Alexander III Bridge across the River Seine, paralleled during the French state visit to Russia in the following year when President Faure laid the foundation stone of the Trinity Bridge across the River Neva in St Petersburg. The Tsar and Tsarina (and the Grand Duchess) were received with great enthusiasm and this was reflected in the large number of souvenir postcards and envelopes produced, both officially and privately.

The most familiar postcard has framed images of Tsar Nicholas II and President Faure with, between them, the Russian and French flags with the Russian eagle and

the French *coq*, and under them the inscription *PARIS 6 OCTOBRE 1896* (Figure 9). The eagle and the *coq* appear in both monochrome and polychrome, though the coloured versions seem to have been issued after the French State Visit to Russia in 1897. From these developed lettercards (originally produced after the naval visits in 1891 and 1893) with pictures of the Tsar and Tsarina (Figure 10), a tremendous variety of souvenir envelopes with images of the Tsar and Tsarina or the Tsar or Tsarina separately (Figures 11 and 12), and various designs of souvenir postcards (Figures 13, 14, 15 and 16).



Figure 9
Postcard issued to commemorate
the 1896 State Visit to France:
the card shown is the polychrome version

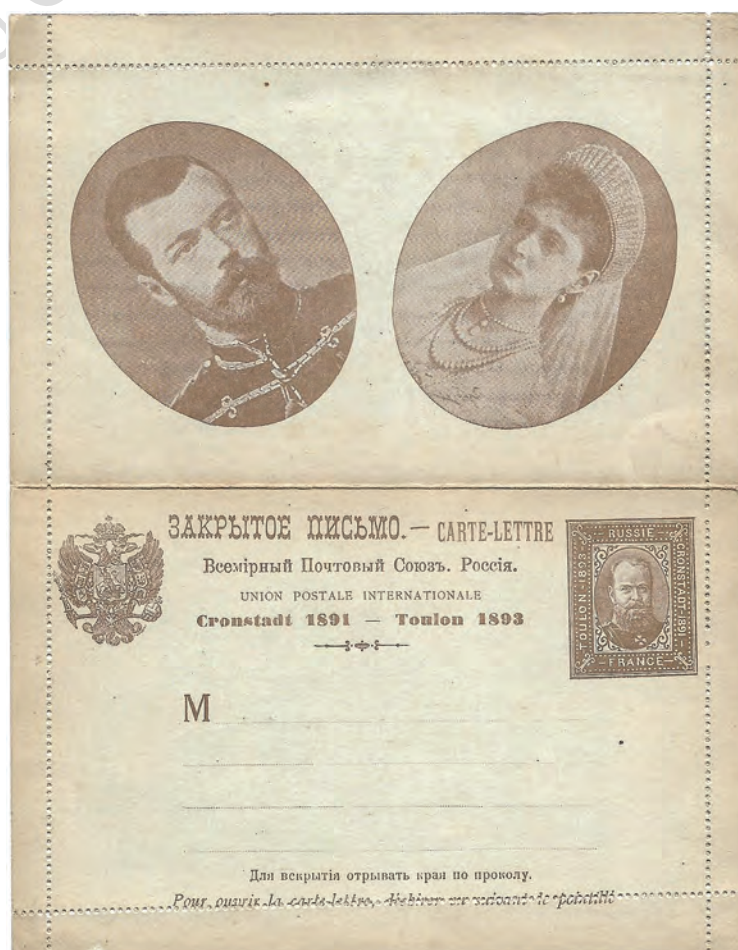


Figure 10
Lettercard produced to commemorate
the naval visits to Cronstadt and Toulon and with a
framed image of Tsar Alexander III,
but reprinted with oval images
of Tsar Nicholas II and the Tsarina on the reverse

Figure 11
Commemorative envelope
with an additional adhesive
depicts the Tsar and Tsarina
with the Russian imperial eagle



Figure 12
A smaller, less fragile, envelope
with the Tsar in a cartouche
and the Tsarina in a small frame with
RUSSIE/FRANCE/CHERBOURG 1896/PARIS 1896,
postmarked 14 January 1897.

Figure 13
The design of this postcard reflected the naval visits
to Cronstadt in 1891 and Toulon in 1893.
The postcards included a framed portrait
of either the Tsar or the Tsarina
and were printed on three different colours of card.
This postcard is printed on blue card.





Figure 14

A similar design to Figure 13, this postcard is printed on mauve card and shows the Tsarina.

The message reads
*I will expect you tomorrow evening at 7.30pm
to go to the Folies Bergères.*
Clearly the postal service was efficient!



Figure 15

Souvenir postcard depicting the Tsar and Tsarina dated and postmarked 10 October 1896



Figure 16

A different souvenir postcard showing the Tsar and Tsarina with the Grand Duchess Olga. The card is dated 23 November 1896 and reached Neuchâtel in Switzerland on the following day.



Figure 17

Postcard issued to commemorate the visit of President Faure to Russia in August 1897, overprinting the card issued on the occasion of the Russian visit to France in 1896.

THE FRENCH STATE VISIT TO RUSSIA 1897

President Faure visited Russia in August 1897. Again interest in France was substantial and many souvenir cards – not so many envelopes – were produced, ranging from the 'traditional' overprinted card (Figure 17) to many picture postcards. The President travelled on the battle cruiser *Amiral Pothuau* (Figure 18) which is shown in Figure 19

arriving in Cronstadt where part of the Russian fleet was moored. The accommodation in the Peterhof Palace where the President stayed also appeared on postcards (Figure 20) while a large number of photographic compilations on postcards appeared in France, though in some of these it is hard to see the relevance of some of the images! Two examples are shown in Figures 21 and 22.

Figure 18
The *Amiral Pothuau* on which
President Faure travelled to Russia

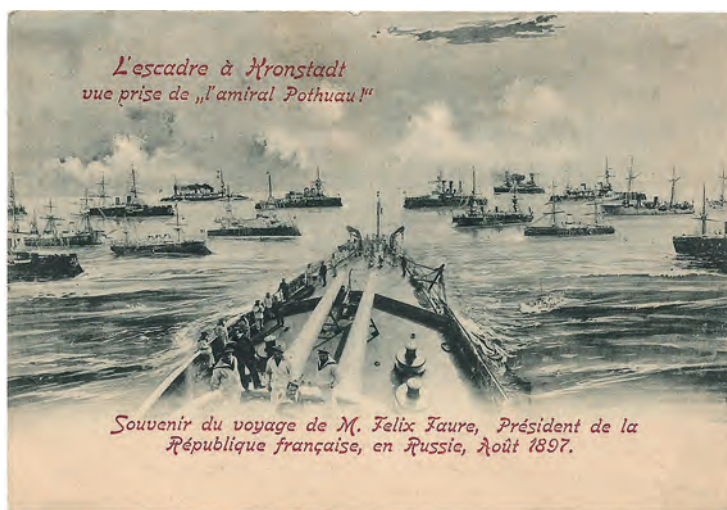
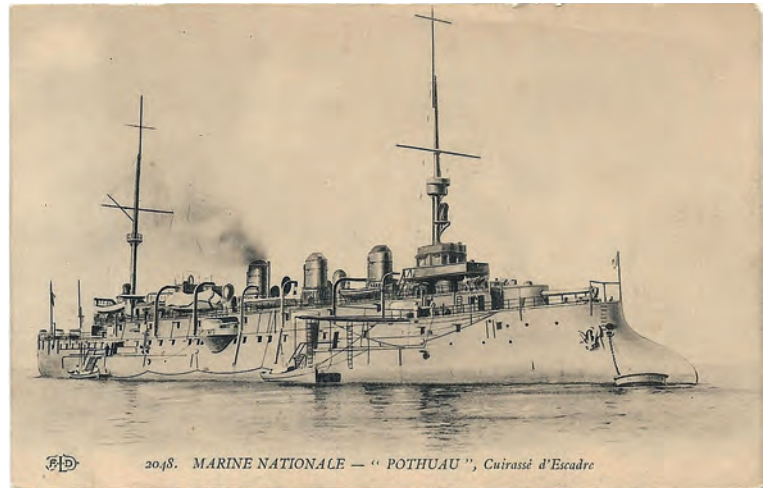


Figure 19
The arrival of the *Amiral Pothuau* in Cronstadt harbour
with a welcoming Russian naval squadron

Figure 20
The accommodation provided in the Peterhof Palace
for President Faure and his entourage,
one of a number of souvenir postcards issued



THE RUSSIAN STATE VISIT TO FRANCE 1901

Prior to this visit ministers of both countries agreed in 1899 to strengthen the alliance, with France agreeing to support Russia in the Balkans while Russia would support France in relation to the recovery of Alsace and Lorraine. September 1901 saw the second State Visit of Tsar Nicholas II to France. Again public enthusiasm was high during the four days of the visit from 18 to 21 September, starting with the Tsar landing at Dunkerque and visiting Reims and Compiègne. The usual souvenir postcards appeared:

Figure 23 shows the 'standard' card with a further overprint indicating the places visited during the two visits in 1896 and 1901. The postcard shown in Figure 6 on page 111 has images of the places visited and the Tsars and Presidents involved. The postcards shown in Figures 24 and 25 are from a series printed on different colours of card with imprinted stamps and depicting the Tsar and President Loubet and the places visited. Time was made for the Tsar to join the French army on manoeuvres where he is shown in Figure 26.



Figure 21
Card from the same series as above
with an image of Tsar Nicholas II

Figure 22
As above but with images of
President Faure and Tsar Nicholas II,
the Tsarina and the Grand Duchess Olga



Figure 23
Postcard listing the places visited
during the 1901 State Visit to France
and postmarked on first day of visit

AFTER THE DECADE – 1901 - 1914

By the time of the 1901 visit to France, French economic support for developing Russian infrastructure had increased to the point where it was said that over a third of personal savings in France was assisting the industrialisation and modernisation of Russia. Official visits between the two countries continued, particularly in 1902, 1909, 1912 and 1914. However with the new century the French foreign minister sought to develop closer ties with Britain, considering it both geographically and politically a more important ally against further German aggression. Notwithstanding the collision between the two countries' colonial empires, exemplified in the Fashoda incident in 1898 when a small French force had sought to gain control of Sudan but had been outmanoeuvred by a much larger British and Egyptian army, wiser counsels in both France and Britain followed the fairly amicable discussions between the soldiers at Fashoda. In spite of the cries of

nationalistic politicians on both sides of the Channel, an *Entente Cordiale* between the two countries was agreed in 1904. (This satisfied to a large extent the disputed colonial boundaries and aspirations of both countries). While this was extended to include Russia in 1907, becoming known as the Triple Entente, the disastrous outcome for Russia in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-05 led to France's diplomatic objectives being more closely aligned with Britain while continuing to provide military and technical support to Russia.

When World War 1 broke out, Russia mobilised against Austria-Hungary on 29 July 1914 and against Germany on the following day, 30 July. The provisions of the secret military Convention were implemented, and France declared a general mobilisation on 31 July 1914. Germany and its allies would face a war on two fronts. For France the developing relationship with Russia over the previous 25 years would be considered to have paid off.

Figure 24

The second State Visit of Tsar Nicholas II to France in 1901 generated many souvenir postcards and postal stationery, one set showing the places visited with appropriate designs. This postcard depicts Dunkerque and was postmarked there on 18 September 1901, the day the Tsar arrived.

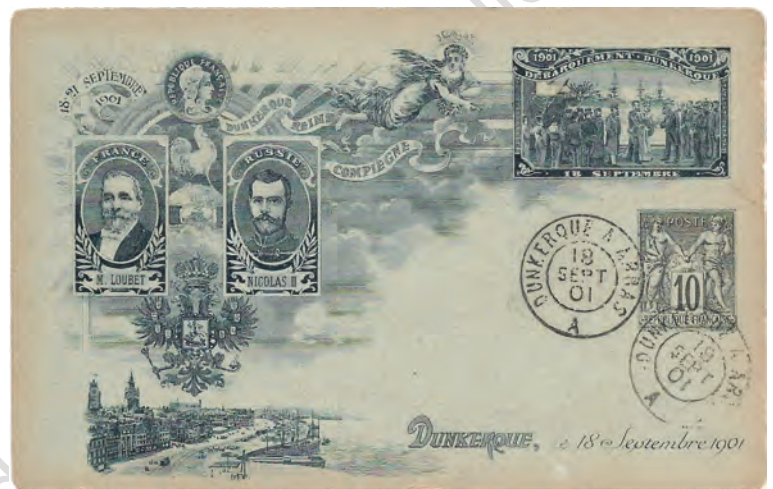


Figure 25

A similar card to that in Figure 24 this time from Compiègne, postmarked on 20 September 1901, the day of one of the Tsar's visits there



Figure 26

Postcard showing the Tsar attending the military manoeuvres near Reims during the State Visit. With a message of five words or less and *Imprimé* written on the card, it attracted a rate of only 5c rather than the usual postcard rate of 10c.



French WW2 POW mail from German prison camps addressed to France “c/o General Post Office via Grande Bretagne”

David Trapnell

If ever there was an unlikely postal procedure in WW2 this must surely be it! For a few months only, the mail of French POWs held in some German prison camps was addressed “c/o General Post Office / Via Grand Bretagne”. What would make the Germans be so helpful to their defeated foes, the French, and allow such cooperation with their arch-enemy, Great Britain? That mail from French POWs held in a

German camp to an address in France should be directed via the General Post office of the principal enemy country is surely extraordinary!

First, examples of such mail (Figures 1-8) and the facts. Then a discussion of their significance and whether, why, and how such an arrangement was achieved.

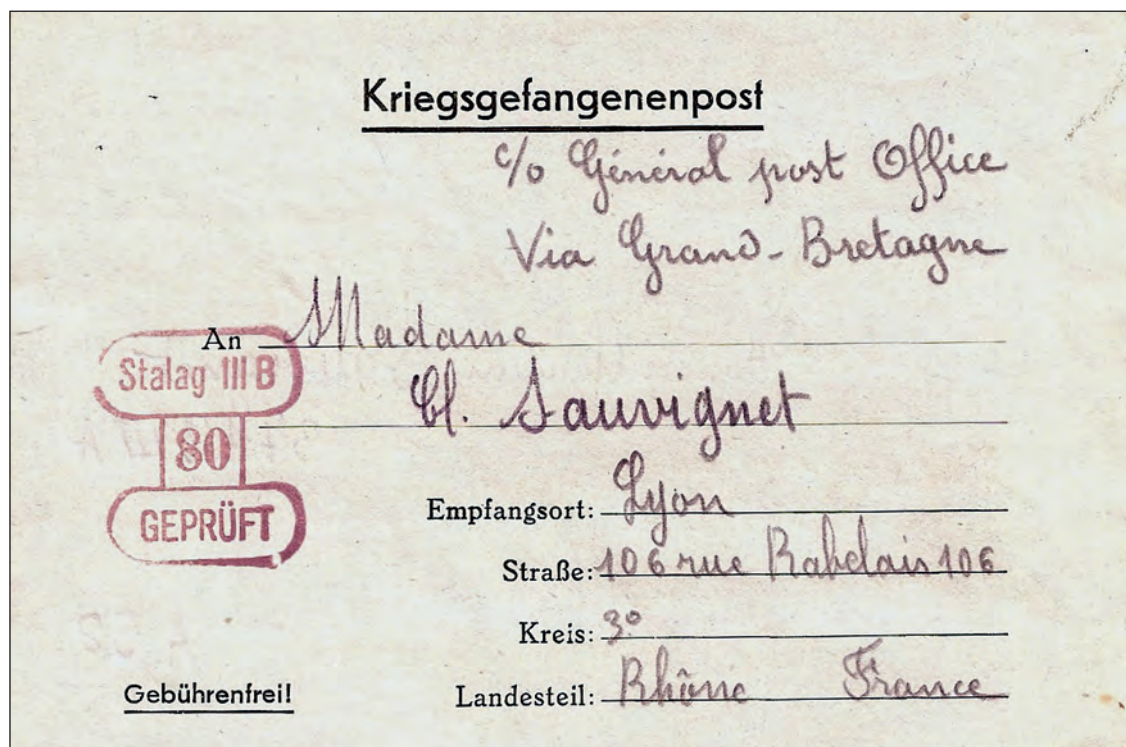


Figure 1a.

Stalag III B. The front of a folded letter-sheet with the manuscript endorsement c/o General post Office / Via Grand-Bretagne, as in the two cards (Figures 2a and 2c) from the same correspondence. The date was not added before posting. No postal marking

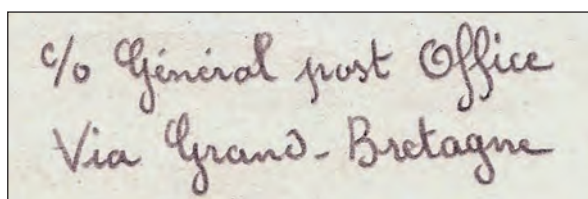


Figure 1b

In all three cases, an acute accent has been written above each letter “e” in General as in the French spelling, the “p” of Post is in lower case and the “e” is omitted from Grande

Hier abtrennen! Détacher le long du pointillé!

Kriegsgefangenensendung

Envoi aux prisonniers de guerre

<p>An den Kriegsgefangenen Au prisonnier</p> <p style="font-size: 1.2em; margin-left: 40px;"><i>Honoré Claudius Sauvignat</i></p> <hr/> <p>Absender: Expéditeur:</p> <p>Vor- und Zuname: Nom et prénom</p> <hr/> <p>Ort: Lieu</p> <hr/> <p>Straße: Rue</p> <hr/> <p>Kreis: Département</p> <hr/>	<p>Gefangenenummer: No. du prisonnier</p> <p style="font-size: 1.2em; margin-left: 40px;"><i>37413 VII A</i></p> <p>Lager-Bezeichnung: Nom du camp</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;"><i>M.-Stammlager III B</i></p> <p style="font-size: 1.5em; margin-left: 40px;"><i>A-58</i></p> <p style="text-align: center; border-top: 1px solid black; margin-top: 10px;">Deutschland (Allemagne)</p>
--	--

Hier abtrennen! Détacher le long du pointillé!

Mettez un double de l'adresse à l'intérieur du colis!

**Instructions concernant l'expédition et l'emballage
des colis postaux.**

Les colis postaux et les petits paquets me seront distribués pourvu qu'ils soient munis de cette adresse imprimée. Tous les paquets dont l'adresse n'a pas été collée sur l'emballage ne me parviendront pas et le contenu sera distribué aux autres prisonniers de guerre. L'emballage doit être solide et résistant, autrement le colis se défait et son contenu se perd.

Figure 1c

The reverse of most sheets such as this (there were several different types) carried a printed address label for the POW to send to his family.

In the lower part of the reverse of this sheet senders were given instructions in French on packing and posting the parcel.

The violet-coloured panel at the top indicated that this part was for the return postage to the POW free of charge. The long tongue at the top of the sheet (cropped) was tucked into the slit at the bottom.

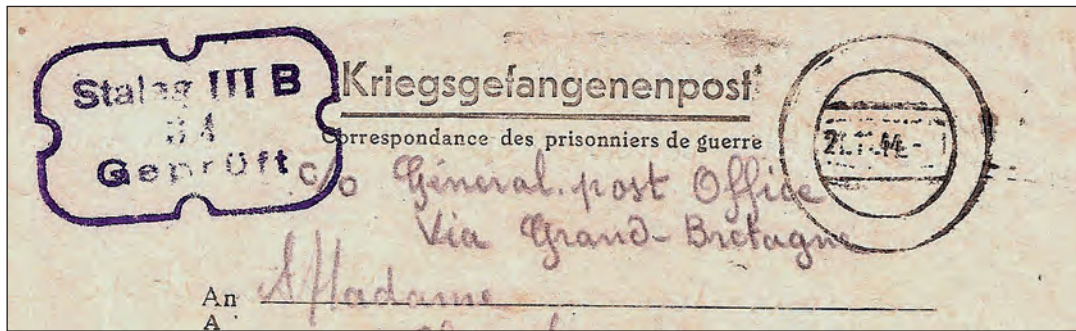


Figure 2a (cropped).
From the same correspondence as above. Postcard: date stamp 27.11.1944

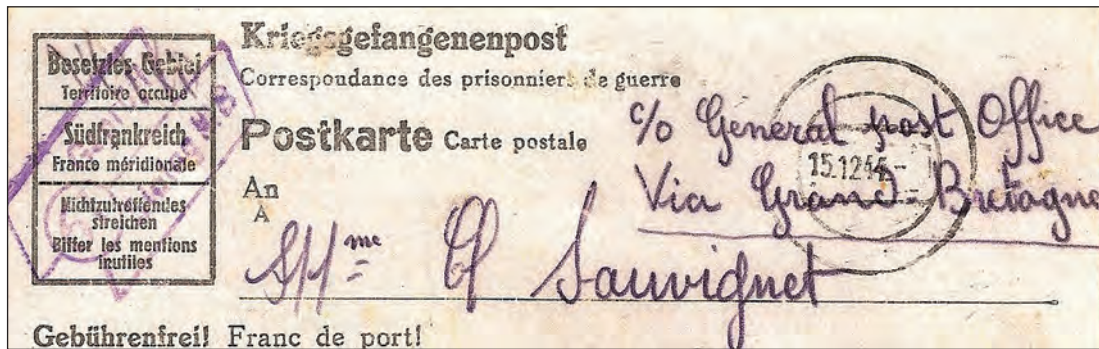


Figure 2b (cropped)
From the same correspondence as above. Postcard: date-stamp 15.12.1944.
Each of the three Stalag IIIB censor handstamps shown in Figures 1a, 2a and 2b is different.
Figure 3 below is also from this correspondence.

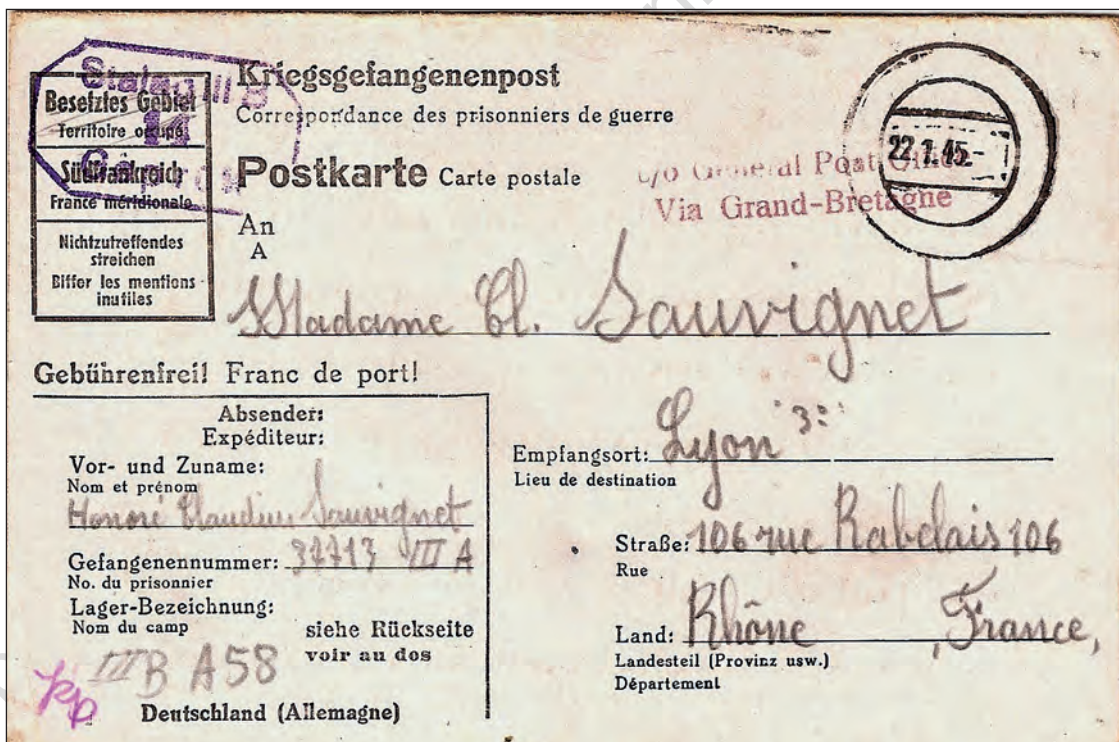


Figure 3a
Stalag IIIB. 22.1.1945. Reply-paid postcard.
A handstamp is now applied and the sender must have known that it was now in use because he did not endorse the card.

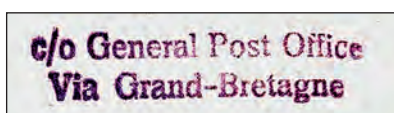


Figure 3b (Left)
The handstamp has the same spelling error as the previous manuscript addresses - the e of Grande is omitted.
There is a hyphen between Grand and Bretagne (as in the manuscript endorsements).
The V of Via is upper case

2 décembre

Kriegsgefangenenpost

C/O General Post-Office
via Grande Bretagne

An Mrs Morgan
Emilie

Empfangsort: a St Quentin

Besetztes Gebiet Territoire occupé	Südfrankreich France méridionale
Nichtzutreffendes streichen Biffer les mentions inutiles	

Gebührenfrei

Straße: Loyal

Kreis: Barrois et baronne

Landesteil: France

Figure 4a

Stalag number not shown. No date.

A parcel address form, sent by a POW to his family for the outside of a gift parcel to be sent to him.

The faint, boxed, inverted handstamp, top left, appears to be indicating free postage.

It is not a censor's handstamp

**C/O General Post-Office
via Grande Bretagne**

Figure 4b

Here the handstamp has "C/O" in upper case letters and there is a hyphen between Post and Office.

There is no hyphen between Grande and Bretagne.

The v of via is lower case.

c/o General Post Office
Via Grande-Bretagne

Kriegsgefangenenpost

Correspondance des prisonnier de guerre

An Madame Raymond LAFAY

Sannois

Besetztes Gebiet Territoire occupé	Südfrankreich France méridionale
Nichtzutreffendes streichen Biffer les mentions inutiles	

Gebührenfrei Franc de port!

Empfangsort: Sannois

Lieu de destination

Straße: 39 Bd Maurice Berteaux

Rue

Kreis: Sannois

Arrondissement

Landesteil: Seine et Oise

Dépt.

C/o G.P.O. via GReat Britain

Figure 5a

Stalag XIIA. 4.12.1944.. Manuscript "C/o G.P.O. via GReat Britain" (sic) underlined in red.

c/o General Post Office
Via Grande-Bretagne

.Figure 5b (Left)
Via Grande Bretagne handstamp
with a hyphen between Grande and Bretagne.
The V of Via is upper case

Besetztes Gebiet
Territoire occupé
Südfrankreich
France méridionale
Nichtzutreffendes streichen
Biffer les mentions inutiles

Kriegsgefangenenpost
Correspondance des prisonniers de guerre
Postkarte Carte postale

An
A

Geprüft & Stempel
Stempel 335 2111

Gebührenfrei! Franc de port!

Absender:
Expéditeur:
Vor- und Zuname:
Nom et prénom
L. Hoduff

Gefangenenummer:
No. du prisonnier
Lob

Lager-Bezeichnung:
Nom du camp
siehe Rückseite
voir au dos

Deutschland (Allemagne)

Empfangsort:
Lieu de destination
Arzac

Straße:
Rue

Land:
Landesteil (Provinz usw.)
Département
Puy de Dôme

Figure 6a

Stalag VIK. The datestamp reads 9.12.1944.

Like Figure 5a, the sender appears to have known that the *Via Grande Bretagne* handstamp would be applied because he deleted both the printed directional options, top left, for the occupied and unoccupied zones of France (Ref 1).

Figures 6b (Right)

In this handstamp the "c/o" is small, there is no hyphen and *Via* has an upper case V.

c/o General Post Office
Via Grande Bretagne

Besetztes Gebiet
Territoire occupé
Südfrankreich
France méridionale
Nichtzutreffendes streichen
Biffer les mentions inutiles

Kriegsgefangenenpost
Correspondance des prisonniers de guerre

Geprüft & Stempel
Stempel 335 2111

Gebührenfrei! Franc de port!

An
A

Empfangsort:
Lieu de destination
SOMAIN

Straße:
Rue
Boulevard Maginot

Kreis:
Arrondissement
DOUAI

Landesteil:
Dépt.
NORD (France)

Figure 7a

Stalag IIIA. Of all these, this is perhaps the most surprising.

Produced in Germany for use by Germans and addressed to the French, the handstamp is entirely in English. The sender has deleted the two printed directional options as thoroughly as he could, knowing that his mail was to go via Great Britain.

c/o General Post Office
via GREAT BRITAIN

Figure 7b (Left)
Text entirely in English

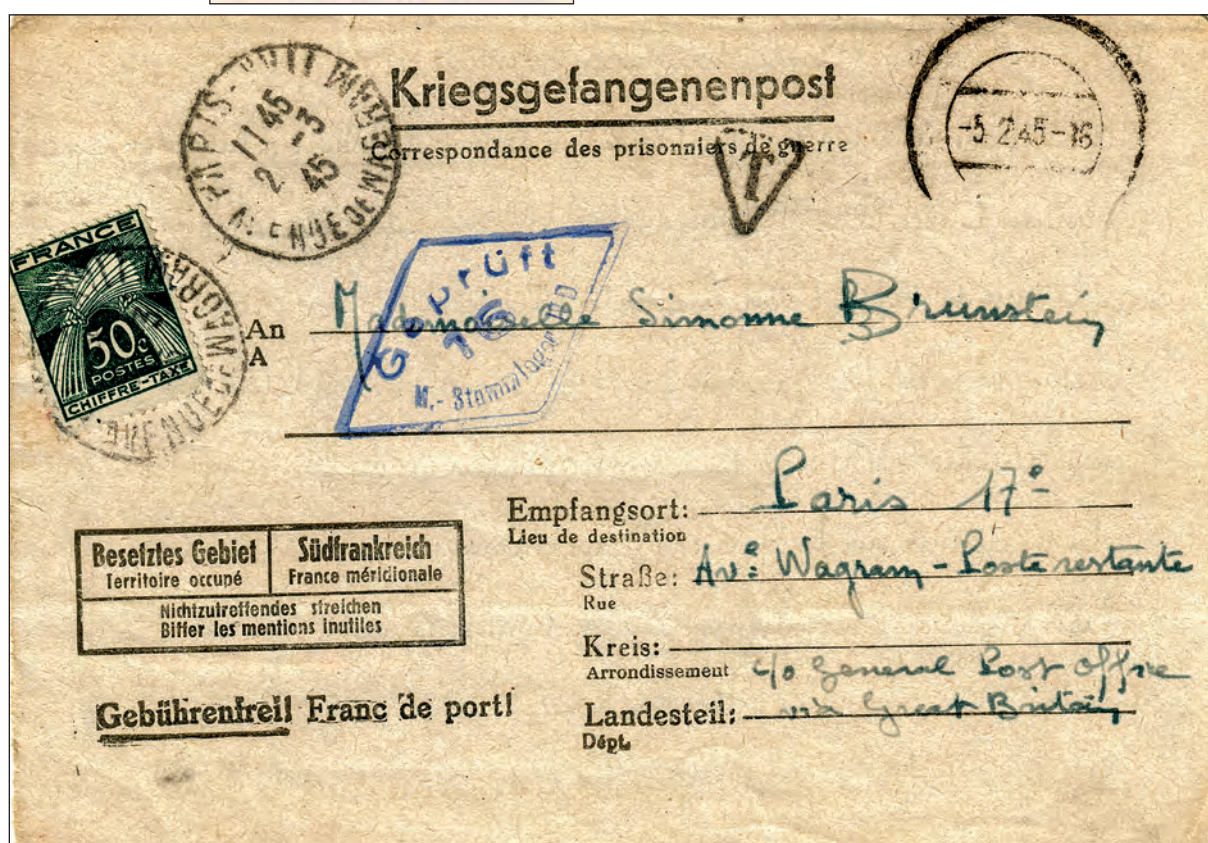


Figure 8

Stalag IVD. 5.2.1945. This card has no Via Great Britain handstamp but ends with the handwritten address "c/o General Post Office / via Great Britain" written below the Paris 17^e Poste Restante address.

The T in triangle (taxe) mark was applied upon receipt and the 50c Chiffre-Taxe represents the *poste restante* fee operating at the time.

The printed directional options, lower left, have been ignored. [André Métayer collection]

Figure 9

Table of examples of handstamps applied to French POW mail

Parcel label or Card	Date of writing	Date of Postmark	Stalag number	Stalag location	m/s or h/s	Figure No.	Notes
C = postcard; h/s = handstamp; LS = letter sheet; m/s = manuscript; PL = parcel label letter-sheet; nd = no date / not visible; xw = ex web							
PL	nd	nd	III B	Fürstenberg	m/s	1a	
C	15.10.44	27.10.44	III C	Alt Drewitz	m/s	-	
LS	22.10.44	27.11.4	III B	Fürstenberg	m/s	2a	
C	5.11.44	15.12.44	III B	Fürstenberg	m/s	2b	
C	6.1.45	22.1.45	III B	Fürstenberg	h/s	3	
PL	nd	2.12.44	nd		m/s + h/s	4	
PL	4.12.44	nd	XII A	Limburg	m/s + h/s	5	m/s "c/o G.P.O. via GReat Britain"
PL	nd	2.11.44	VI K	Forelkrug	m/s + h/s	-	h/s as in Figure 6b
C	29.11.44	9.12.44	VI K	Forelkrug	h/s	6	
PL	nd	3.1.45	X C	Nienburg	h/s	-	xw - see Ref 3
C	30.1.45	5.2.45	IV D	Torgau	m/s	7	To <i>Poste Restante</i> , Paris 17 ^e

Observations - matters of fact

1. Covers and letter-sheets such as these are not common. I had been studying French WW2 POW mail for some years before I stumbled on an example. Then I began a search for similar handstamps. In the course of doing this I found manuscript endorsements with the same wording, some even including the same orthographical errors (Figures 1 and 2). To find the items listed in the Table above (Figure 9) I had to search through more than three thousand items (online).

2. Although the handstamps and manuscript endorsements were applied by the Germans initially for their use, the text was a mix of English and French.

3. Handstamps are less common than manuscript endorsements and were applied to cards even if they were already carrying such an endorsement by the sender.

4. Each camp using such handstamps had a different one, in the same way that the censorship handstamps were specific to each camp (Ref 2). The differences between the various handstamps, while clear, were minor and of no practical significance.

5. The fact that a card can be sent *via Grande Bretagne* to a Paris *Poste Restante* (Figure 8) confirms the reality of this route. However it did so, the system must have worked.

6. Each of these items came from one of only seven camps.

7. The period of use was approximately the same for each of the camps but limited to a little more than three months (27 October 1944 - 5 February 1945).

8. Three of the handstamped items had, on the reverse, printed labels provided by the German authorities. These were sent by the POW to his family for application to gift parcels to be sent back to him. In this way the German authorities ensured a fair number of parcels was allowed for each POW and that the address on the parcel was correct. This was not pure altruism. Inadequately addressed parcels (and letters) clogged up the delivery system and wasted staff time.

Comments

The key questions are -

1. Why did Germany allow manuscript, or apply handstamp, endorsements indicating that some POW mail should go to France via the General Post Office, London? That the Germans even contemplated such a procedure in wartime is, surely, astonishing.

2. Did the mail ever, in fact, go to its destination in France via Great Britain?

3. If it did, how and where did the double exchange of mail between Germany and Great Britain and then between Great Britain and France take place?

An internet summary of the WW2 military postal history of France (Ref 3) gives key information that, I will suggest, points toward an answer to question one, although the site does not draw that (or, on this matter, any) conclusion.

The French internet site suggests that, following the German surrender of Paris to the Allies, on 25 August 1944, toward the end of the year conditions in eastern France deteriorated. As the German forces continued to retreat they were constantly shelled and bombed by the Allies. There were some prison camps holding French POWs, particularly in the area around Metz.

With commendable loyalty to their professional duty to deliver mail from French POWs to their relatives in France, the Germans tried to find alternative routes to take the POW correspondence safely. Some mail was sent via the Bureau at Lyon Gare to the Red Cross in Switzerland and some was handstamped or manually endorsed "*c/o General Post Office / via Grande Bretagne*".

It is relevant at this stage to consider the significance of the Vichy Post Office notice shown in Figure 10. It records that "The British (Post) Office has reported that it is currently receiving in Great Britain mail addressed to French Prisoners of War in Germany". It is important to think carefully as to why this should have happened. I suggest that French families wanting to send mail and parcels to their men in Germany would not imagine for a moment

Figure 10

Extract from the Vichy Post Office administration dated 12 March 1945.

This makes clear that the British Post Office (in London) is receiving mail addressed to French POWs (as distinct from them).

The French official response (in the last paragraph) was to instruct staff to ignore all such *Via Grande Bretagne* endorsements on mail, whether by handstamp or in writing "on certain forms used by the families".

The middle paragraph of the Notice may be translated "The Administration urgently recalls the provisions of circular no. 87 of 6 October 1944 according to which the mail destined for prisoners of war in Germany, in all cases, must be directed to the 'Prisoners of War Bureau at Lyon station' for onward transmission through Switzerland."

NOTE-Po.4 du 12 mars 1945 relative à l'acheminement du courrier à destination des prisonniers de guerre en Allemagne.

L'office britannique a signalé qu'il est actuellement reçu en Grande-Bretagne des correspondances adressées de France à des prisonniers de guerre français en Allemagne.

L'administration rappelle instamment les dispositions de la circulaire n° 87 du 6 octobre 1944, aux termes de laquelle le courrier à destination des prisonniers de guerre français en Allemagne doit, dans tous les cas, être dirigé sur le bureau de « Lyon-gare prisonniers de guerre » aux fins de réexpédition par la voie de la Suisse.

Il ne doit donc être tenu aucun compte de la mention « *via Grande-Bretagne* » qui figure, imprimée ou manuscrite, sur certaines formules actuellement utilisées par les familles.

that it would help to send their letters via the enemy's capital city! Then why did they think of the idea? Because, I suggest, the German Post Office had initiated the sending of mail from POWs in Germany via Great Britain and that this had proved so successful that the families thought they would send their mail back to their relatives via the same route. If this theory is correct, not only did the mail from French POWs actually go to its French destination via the GPO London, but it did so very successfully.

Was there a Notice around 6 October 1944 describing the 'via GPO' route? I have asked the expert on such matters, Robin Pizer. He has kindly searched several possible sites for such notices and found none (Ref 4).

The Germans were very careful and efficient in their use of postal handstamps so the six examples in the Table of "c/o General Post Office / via Grande Bretagne" handstamps being applied to mail addressed to France by POWs held in German camps must be significant. If the scheme had proved to be a failure, they would have rapidly changed it. That it was not changed for more than four months surely must be highly significant.

The Webmaster of the French *Histoire et philatélie* website (Ref 5), in its *Militaires français prisonniers ou internés 1939-1945* section, made the following observations with regard to the significance of the "c/o General Post Office / via Grande Bretagne" handstamp.

"Many authors have stated that, in spite of this handstamp, the mail did not go via Great Britain but in practice was directed via Switzerland. But, to the webmaster's knowledge, no 'proof' has been brought to support this statement.... Nevertheless, a note of 12 March 1945 shows that all the mail of French prisoners of war should pass through Lyon and then Switzerland in spite of the 'via Great Britain' handstamps or similar."

Although I have been unable to find any mention of this "via Great Britain" handstamp in the English literature, it must be a topic well-known to the French if "many" authors have written about it. Even so the Webmaster has shown his intellectual integrity by pointing out that he was not aware of any proof that POW mail did not go via Great Britain to France.

With the help of local staff, I have made a thorough search for any reference to this scheme in British Post Office archives and in those of the British and International Red Cross Societies and National Archives, Kew, without finding any. Because the records that must have been in the British Post Office during the war did not concern British POWs, the documents were probably destroyed.

Summary of findings thus far

1 The eleven items listed in the Table each suggest that around the end of 1944 there was a system in operation by which mail from German POW camps reached its destination in France via Great Britain.

2 There is clear contemporary evidence that the GPO in London had received mail from France addressed to French POWs in Germany which had been sent by families via London on their own initiative.

3 While "many" French authors have been said to doubt whether the "via Great Britain" handstamps were ever effective, the fact that recipient families in France thought of sending mail back via Great Britain, indicates, I suggest, that mail did go by that route. It must have worked very efficiently, or they would never have dreamed of such a scheme.

4 That handstamps were made indicates that the German authorities thought it worth the effort and expense to do so. This was presumably because the manuscript endorsements (some none too clearly written) were insufficiently legible or too time consuming for the postal staff to apply or to read.

5 The fact that the handstamp-reliable German postal authorities did not cancel or withdraw the handstamps for more than three months also suggests that mail did go via Great Britain.

6 The destinations of the endorsed mail I have seen have been to various parts of France, both the "occupied" zone and the so-called "unoccupied" zone. So the destination of the mail in France was not the cause for the endorsement "via Great Britain".

7 The supposition that the prison camps using these endorsements were in France under bombardment by advancing Allied troops (as suggested in the French website) is not borne out by the facts. All of the POW camps listed in the Table were in widely-dispersed places in Germany; none was in France.

Conclusion

There are plausible reasons for asserting that the "via Great Britain" handstamps were effective, but no incontrovertible proof that the route really worked has yet been found.

Ideally, that evidence must come from London but none has been found. However, the fact that the British Post Office reported to the Vichy Post Office that mail was being sent from France to POWs in Germany via GPO London proves, I suggest, that the system must have worked - and done so very efficiently.

Acknowledgements

I am very grateful to Susannah Roster and Martin Deliverer, of The Postal Museum, London WC1, for guidance to key documents; to David Alford, a Trustee of the Stuart Rossiter Trust (SRT), for directing me to two French websites; and to Robin Pizer for searches in his archive of German Official notices of the period.

References

- 1 David Trapnell 'German directional handstamps on the mail of WWII French POWs'. *Journal of the F&CPS*, December 2018, N° 288. [This paper explains the use of directional handstamps and their printed equivalents on cards like this.]
- 2 See Ref 1
- 3 Jean Goanvic, Webmaster (2016).
http://www.histoire-et-philatelie.fr/pages/001_france_assujettie/08_militaires_prisonniers_ou_internes.html
- 4 2018 Personal correspondence
- 5 See Ref 3

French Mandates of Syria and Lebanon

Ashley Lawrence

Part 1 ended with the defeat of the Central Powers and Turkey, the Treaty of Versailles of 28 June 1919 and the subsequent Peace Treaties of 1919-23 which led to the setting up of the League of Nations, and the mandates and powers granted by the League to the United Kingdom and France for the administration of particular territories in the aftermath of the Great War.

Part 2 focuses on the Post-War Military Occupation of the territory of Syria, formerly part of the Turkish Ottoman Empire, in respect of which the League of Nations had appointed France as the Mandatory power.

Part 2: The Post-War Military Occupation of Syria 1919-1923



Figure 12

Examples of the *Type Semeuse* overprinted with the new currency (paras) in 1921-22, (Y&T Levant 30-32 & 34)

Of the French post offices in the Levant, only those in the Constantinople area (including the commercial quarter of Galata and the historic section of the city, Stamboul) reopened after the War, operating from August 1921 to July 1923. The political upheavals in the aftermath of the Great War led to changes in national boundaries and currencies.

A new currency was introduced in 1921 (40 paras = 1 piastre). A set of 10 French stamps comprising *Types Semeuse* and *Merson* issues (Figure 12) were overprinted to reflect these changes, for use in countries in the Levant under temporary French military occupation, and for use in territories that were administered by France. The French stamps so used were surcharged with values from 30 paras to 75 piastres.

The T.E.O. overprints in Syria

The first issues in Syria were ten French stamps overprinted by Gédéon Brothers in Beirut with a two line overprint

T.E.O. - *Territoires Ennemis Occupés* or Enemy Occupied Territories - plus the new value (Figure 13). They were issued on 21 November 1919. They consist of values from the 1c *Type Blanc* to the 1 franc *Type Merson*, and the T.E.O. overprints range from 1 millième to 10 piastres. Most stamps of this period were printed on inferior *papier de grande consommation* identified by the initials GC in the sheet margin.



Figure 13
2 piastres on
25c Semeuse
(Y&T Syrie 7)
from the first
T.E.O. printing

From 1 December 1919, stamps of the French Post Offices in the Turkish Empire (French types inscribed 'LEVANT') received a three-line overprint (Figure 14a), with the exception of the 25c *Mouchon* and the *Merson* issues (Figure 14b). The French Levant stamps range from the 1c *Type Blanc* to the 5 franc *Type Merson*, and the T.E.O. overprints range from 1 millième to 20 piastres.



Figure 14a

Examples of the second T.E.O. overprint with three lines (Y&T Syrie 11-12 & 14-15)



Figure 14b

Examples of the second T.E.O. overprint
with two lines (Y&T Syrie 16)
and with vertical T.E.O. (Yvert Syrie 17)



Figure 15
Map showing the mandated territories

The Turkish Empire after 1918

The defeat of Turkey by Allied forces at the end of the First World War gave rise to a complicated system of postal administration in the area between Turkey and Palestine. Mandates were founded by the League of Nations after the First World War and the partitioning of the Ottoman Empire (Figure 15). The League of Nations granted mandates to Britain and France over their respective territorial spheres of influence, and national boundaries were drawn and argued over as politicians and diplomats sought solutions to age-old disputes.

During 1918-1920, in accordance with the Sykes-Picot Treaty that had been secretly agreed between Britain and France in May 1916, the British held control of most of Ottoman Mesopotamia (modern Iraq) and the southern part of Ottoman Syria (Palestine and Jordan).

France was assigned the mandate of the rest of Ottoman Syria on 29 September 1923. This comprised modern Syria and included modern Lebanon and Alexandretta (Hatay) and other portions of south-eastern Turkey.

Once the mandates came into effect, military occupation gave way to civilian government.

French Mandated Territories - Syria

From 1516 to 1918, Syria was part of the Turkish Ottoman Empire. After the final British defeat of the Turks by the forces of General Allenby at Megiddo in Palestine in September 1918, Damascus, which had been entered by small Arab forces late on 30 September, was taken by an Australian Cavalry division and Allied forces early next day. French naval forces later landed at Beirut.

The Arab Kingdom of Syria

In 1919, for administrative purposes, Syria was divided into

- (a) a French zone of occupation comprising a coastal strip, with Beirut as chief town, and
- (b) the interior (including Damascus and Aleppo) which was proclaimed an independent Arab Kingdom under the rule of the Emir Faisal of Hejaz.

The Emir Faisal, son of Sharif Hussein of Mecca (Figure 16) who, with Colonel T E Lawrence, had led the Arab forces against the Turks, organised an Arab State in the interior of Syria, with Damascus as its capital. Faisal had hoped that the new Arab state would include all Arab lands stretching from Aleppo in northern Syria to Aden in southern Yemen. However, General Allenby, implementing the Sykes-Picot treaty, assigned to the Arab administration only the interior regions of Syria (the eastern

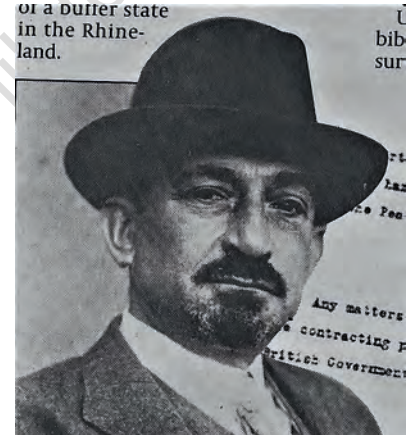
zone); Palestine (the southern zone) was reserved for the British, and on 8 October French troops disembarked in Beirut and occupied the Lebanese coastal region down to Naqoura (the western zone), replacing British troops. The French immediately dissolved the local Arab governments in the region. The French demanded full implementation of the Sykes-Picot treaty, and the placement of Syria under their influence. On 26 November 1919 the British withdrew from Damascus, to avoid confrontation with the French, leaving the Arab government face to face with the French.

Despite Faisal's attendance at the Paris Peace Conference, and enquiries by the American King-Crane commission which found Syrian nationalist opposition to any mandate and to the Balfour Declaration of November 1917, the commission's conclusions were rejected by France and ignored by Britain. Unrest erupted in Syria when Faisal accepted a compromise with Premier Clemenceau and with the Zionist leader Chaim Weizmann (Figure 17) over the issue of Jewish immigration to Palestine.



Figure 16 (left)
Emir Faisal,
third son of Hussein bin Ali,
the Grand Sharif of Mecca

Figure 17 (right)
Dr Chaim Weizmann,
President of the Zionist Organisation



The Faisal-Weizmann agreement, January 1919

On 4 January 1919, Emir Faisal and Dr Chaim Weizmann, President of the Zionist Organisation, signed an agreement for Arab-Jewish Cooperation, in which Faisal conditionally accepted the Balfour Declaration, Britain's promised support for the development of a Jewish homeland in Palestine. Faisal added a caveat: his acceptance was conditional on the fulfilment of British wartime promises to the Arabs for their independence in a vast part of the Ottoman Empire. That such an agreement could have been made seems hard to believe in the light of the later, persistent conflicts and the series of wars between the state of Israel (whose statehood was proclaimed in 1948) and her hostile neighbours which have dominated the politics of the Middle East and threatened to make Armageddon a reality throughout this century.

The hoped-for partnership between the Arab states and the Jewish homeland had little chance of success, and was a dead letter by late 1920.

Faisal had hoped that Zionist influence on British policy (from, he supposed, the USA) would be sufficient to forestall French designs on Syria, but he had completely

misjudged the situation. Zionist influence, if it existed at all, could never have competed with French interests. The French were determined that Syria was theirs, as agreed by Sykes-Picot. At the same time, Faisal failed to enlist significant sympathy among his Arab elite supporters for the very idea of a Jewish homeland in Palestine.

Muslim inhabitants around Mount Lebanon feared incorporation into a new, mainly Christian state of Greater Lebanon. In March 1920, the Syrian National Congress in Damascus rejected the Faisal - Clemenceau accords, declared the independence of Syria (including Palestine) and political and economic union with neighbouring Iraq (whose independence was also demanded).

The Treaty of Sèvres

The Treaty of Sèvres was signed on 10 August 1920 between the victorious Allied powers and representatives of the government of Ottoman Turkey after the end of the Great War. It abolished the Ottoman Empire and obliged Turkey to renounce all rights over Arab Asia and North Africa. The terms of the Treaty were harsh, and many in the Ottoman Empire were left angered and embittered by their treatment. Determined to resist foreign occupation, Ottoman officers



Figure 18

Cover from the Arab Kingdom of Syria:

This cover from Damascus, addressed to Aleppo, is date stamped 12 June 1920.

It is franked with a pair of the 5 mill Rose Turkish stamps issued in Damascus in March 1920 tied with DAMAS – 1 cds in black.

There is an Aleppo arrival mark on the reverse.

The framed bilingual “2” cachet in black is perhaps the postman’s number.

like Mustafa Kemal Atatürk reorganised the remnants of the Ottoman army and, after several years of desperate fighting, drove out the foreign armies seeking to enforce the Treaty’s terms. The result was the modern Republic of Turkey as we recognise it today, whose new borders were officially established in the 1923 Treaty of Lausanne.

In Damascus, capital of the Arab State in the interior regions of Syria, conflict erupted at Christmas 1919, with fighting between the supporters of Emir Faisal and the French, who aimed at control of all Syria. On 8 March 1920, a Syrian National Congress declared for complete independence, and on 11 March 1920 the Emir Faisal was proclaimed King of the so-called Arab Kingdom of Syria (Figure 18), but neither France nor Britain would recognise him.

French Mandated Territories - Syria and Lebanon

On 25 April 1920, and in the course of settling the terms of the Treaty of Sèvres, the Supreme Council of the Allies offered to France the Mandate to administer Syria (including Lebanon) under the League of Nations. The League of Nations approved the French mandate on 24 July 1922 and it became effective on 29 September 1923. Military occupation came to an end, and was followed by civil administration under the Mandate. The Supreme Council granted the UK the mandate of Palestine (including Transjordan) and Iraq.

Syrians reacted with violent demonstrations and formed a new government in May 1920 which decided to organise conscription and began financing an army. These decisions

provoked an adverse reaction by the French as well as by the Maronite patriarchate of Mount Lebanon. In Beirut, French troops were regarded as liberators, the Christian press expressed its hostility to the decisions of Faisal’s government in Damascus, and Christian nationalists proclaimed the independence of Lebanon.

General Gouraud, French High Commissioner in Syria-Cilicia, issued an ultimatum to Faisal, giving him the choice of submission or abdication. Faisal chose to cooperate once French troops defeated Syrian dissenters at the battle of Maysaloun in July 1920. On 25 July, French troops took Damascus, and Faisal was dethroned. In 1921 he was made King of Iraq.

However, it took France three years, from 1920 to 1923, to quell insurgencies in the Alaouite territories, Mount Druze and Aleppo, and to hold full control over Syria. This was to be a recurring problem in the Mandate territories. Various religious and civil groups – the Maronite Christians in Lebanon, the Kurds, the Druze, the Armenians, the Alaouites, had obtained varying degrees of autonomy under Ottoman rule. They were not about to relinquish their respective rights and privileges under the new regime, and in the light of Woodrow Wilson’s proclaimed doctrine of self-determination they fiercely opposed all attempts by the Mandated powers to change their status. This, together with the pressure for greater independence exerted by the Turkish nationalists, largely explains the many conflicts which faced France, and the several boundary changes which she was forced to introduce during her mandate of Syria and Lebanon.

The French Mandate of Syria 1920-1942

In September 1920, following the San Remo conference and the defeat of Faisal's short-lived monarchy in Syria, General Gouraud subdivided the mandate of Syria into three autonomous states. These were the states of Damascus, Aleppo, and the Alaouites. These were subsequently followed by the creation of further autonomous states in 1921, Jabal Druze, and the autonomous Sanjak of Alexandretta (now Hatay) (Figure 19).

In July 1922, France established a loose federation between three of the states, Damascus, Aleppo and the Alaouites, under the name of the Syrian Federation. In December 1924, the Alaouite state seceded from the federation when the states of Aleppo and Damascus were united into the State of Syria. Syria, with Damascus as its capital, was declared a republic in May 1930.

A further administrative reorganisation was made in January 1925, when the mandated territory was divided into the state of Syria (consisting of the former states of Damascus and Aleppo) and the state of the Alaouites, and separate issues of stamps were made for each state.

The Lebanon, with its large Christian population, was first administered as part of Syria, but was soon given a separate status. The Lebanese cooperated with the French in drafting a constitution, which was adopted. In 1923, a separate government was established for the territory known as Greater Lebanon (*Grand Liban*) with Beirut as its capital, and the state of Greater Lebanon became the Lebanese Republic in May 1926.

The French mandate of Syria lasted until 1942, when two independent countries emerged from the mandate period, Syria and Lebanon (in addition to Hatay, which had joined Turkey in 1939). French troops finally left Syria and Lebanon in 1946.

Stamp Issues for the French mandated territories

Between 1919 and 1925, French stamps were overprinted in the French mandated territories of Syria and Lebanon to show French military occupation, followed by civil administration. The overprints reflected the complex political tensions and boundary changes, and these were further complicated by significant currency changes during these years.

In 1919, 40 paras = 10 millièmes = 1 piastre

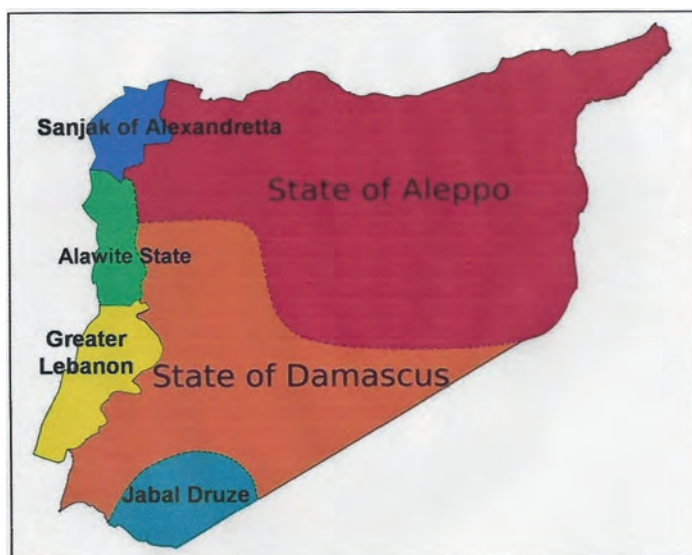


Figure 19
Map of the autonomous states

In 1920, 100 centimes (or centièmes) = 1 piastre

In 1919-21, 100 piastres = 1 Syrian pound = 5 French francs

In 1921, currency revaluation : 5 piastres = 1 French franc

Military Occupation

During February and March 1920, new occupation overprints were introduced, namely 'O.M.F. Syrie', in two lines, followed by their value in millièmes or piastres (Figure 20). The initials stand for *Occupation Militaire Française*, French Military Occupation. The overprinted stamps range in value from 1m to 20p.

There are numerous surcharge varieties, including double and inverted surcharges. It is no surprise that the printers, Gédéon Bros of Beirut, were unable to exercise proper quality control in the aftermath of the war, and the overprinting was later undertaken by the French High Commission in Beirut.

In May 1920, new overprints were introduced, first made by Gédéon Bros and later by the French High Commission in Beirut, which expressed the Syrian currency in centimes (and from July in centièmes) instead of millièmes (Figure 21). At this time 100 Syrian piastres = 5 French francs. Between May and July 1920 the new overprints were applied, from 25c on the 1c *Type Blanc*, through various values of the *Type Semeuse*, to 100p on the 5F *Type Merson*.



Figure 20
Stamps overprinted O.M.F. Syrie, *Occupation Militaire Française* in millièmes (Y&T Syrie 25-28)



Figure 21

Stamps overprinted O.M.F. Syrie, Occupation Militaire Française in black in centimes (Y&T Syrie 33), centièmes (Y&T Syrie 45) or piastres (Y&T Syrie 41)



Figure 22

25c Semeuse overprinted O.M.F. Syrie, Occupation Militaire Française with overprint in carmine (Y&T Syrie 37)

The registered cover above (Figure 22) from Beirut (then part of Syria rather than Lebanon) was addressed to Cairo and is date stamped 15 February 1921. The cover is franked with two 25c Sower stamps overprinted in carmine 'O.M.F. Syrie 2 Piastres' for a total of 4 piastres, the total charge for registration and postage. The adhesives are cancelled with a Turkish 14 / Beyrouth date stamp, and the cover bears the French registration 'R'. The French military occupation stamps were used in Syria and Lebanon between February 1920 and September 1923. The reverse is postmarked to show the letter's arrival in Cairo on 24 February 1921.

How fitting that correspondence from a tobacco merchant should be addressed to a cigarette company in Rue Faggala!

Postage Due (*Levant* and *Type Duval*) stamps (Figure 23) were also overprinted, at rates varying from 1p on 10c to 5p on 1F. Letters posted by air were handstamped with a boxed 'Poste par Avion' handstamp in violet at Beirut, and were franked 1p on 5c or 5p on the 15c *Type Semeuse*, or 10p on the 40c *Type Merson*. They were used on air services between Aleppo and Alexandria and between Aleppo and Deir-el-Zoor. The Catalogue warns that there are many forgeries.



Figure 23

Type Duval issue overprinted O.M.F. Syrie, Occupation Militaire Française (Y&T Syrie Taxe 7)

The Aleppo Rosette, 1920-21

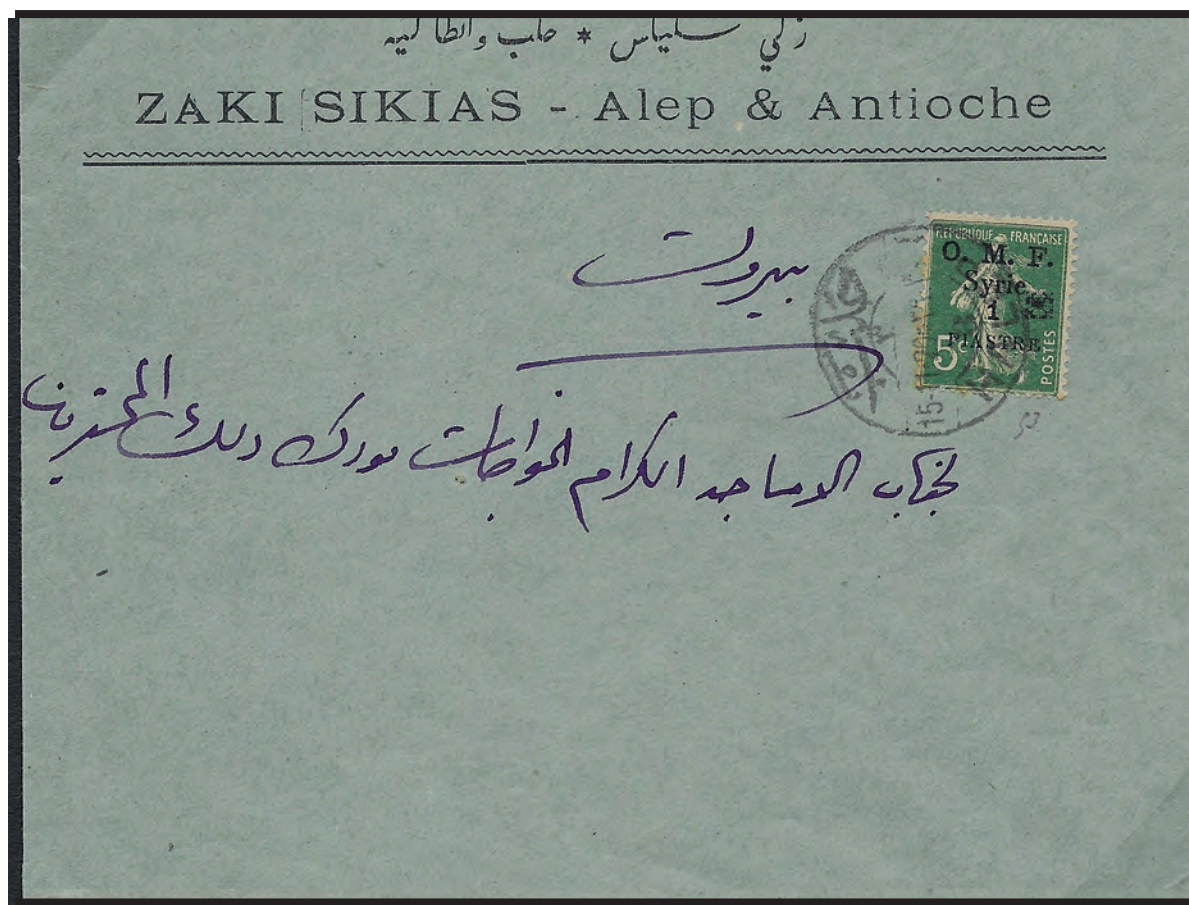


Figure 24

Cover with 5c *Semeuse* and Aleppo *fleuron*, or rosette, in black (Y&T Syrie 50A).
See front cover bottom left for example of 15c *Semeuse* with rosette in red (Y&T Syrie 52B)

The cover above (Figure 24) from a merchant in Aleppo, was addressed to Beirut and is postmarked Aleppo (HALEP) 15 – 11 – 20, 15 November 1920. Despite the French military occupation of Syria, the Turkish date stamps continued to be used. The 5c Sower stamp is overprinted 'O.M.F.Syrie 1 Piastre' and bears the tiny Aleppo rosette in black. The reverse (not illustrated) bears a French military censorship handstamp and the postmark showing the letter's arrival in Beirut on 19 November 1920.

The Rosette variety was brought about by uncertainty over the Syrian currency. From October 1920 to February 1921, stamps issued in the Aleppo *vilayet* (administrative district) were overprinted, at first with a black and later with a red rosette (*fleuron*). The rosette was affixed by postal clerks at the time of posting letters, and the stamps were not sold over the counter. The rosette overprint was applied by Gédéon Bros over several definitive stamps, *Types Blanc*, *Semeuse* and *Merson*, ranging from 25c on 1c to 100p on 5F. The rosette stamps were used in Aleppo to prevent speculation: the authorities were concerned that changes in the exchange rate of the piastre would enable speculators to buy stamps in Aleppo more cheaply than elsewhere in Syria. The use of the Aleppo rosette was discontinued in 1921, following the currency revaluation,

when the exchange rates stabilised.

Hitherto, the exchange rate had been 100 Syrian piastres = 5 French francs. The anticipated revaluation of the currency did take place in 1921, and the new rate was established : 5 Syrian piastres = 1 French franc.

In July 1921 the 'O.M.F.Syrie' overprints made by the French High Commission continued to give the lower values in centièmes. The overprinted stamps range from 25c on 5c green *Type Semeuse* to 25p on 5F *Type Merson* deep blue and buff (Figure 25). The cover shown is from the autonomous state of Alaouite.

In October 1921 the format changed again and the overprint on *Type Merson* stamps appeared on three lines instead of four (Figure 26).

From March 1922 the Capuchin Fathers took over the printing material from the French High Commission in Beirut, but it is difficult to distinguish their work apart from minor differences in spacing. There are numerous minor varieties. Most of the printings are on ordinary paper, but a few are on GC paper. The use of centièmes continues.



Figure 25

Strip of 6 x 10c Semeuse overprinted O.M.F. Syrie, Occupation Militaire Française with overprint in black (Y&T Syrie 58) on cover to England from Latakia, chief town of Alaouite.

Finally, in November 1922 and later in 1923, a set of 5 French stamps was overprinted by the Capuchin Fathers (Figure 27). They range from 10c on the 2c Type Blanc claret to 2.50p on the Type Semeuse 50c dark blue.



Figure 26

The three line overprint on Type Merson stamps (Y&T Syrie 69)



Figure 27

Examples from the November 1922 issues overprinted in black or carmine (Y&T Syrie 83-86)

To follow:

Part 3: French Mandated Territories – Syria & Greater Lebanon and Lebanon 1923-1925

SHORTER ITEMS - INCLUDING QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Fiscal Use of the Indochina Allegorical Group Type Stamps

On page 91 of the August 2019 issue of the Journal, member Marden Blackledge showed an example of the 30c Group Type of Indochina that was overprinted for use as a fiscal stamp. Member Ron Bentley correctly identified it as such, and noted that it is listed in the Duston Catalog of French Colonial Revenues.

I present below a court document created in Soctrang, Cochinchina in 1897 that shows proper use of the stamps in question. A local resident petitioned the court in Soctrang to undo the recent sale of some of his land. He claimed that

he was suffering from depression at the time of the sale, and made a mistake in deciding to sell the land. The filing fee for this document was 67 centimes. Payment of the fee was noted with a combination of regular fiscal stamps and two Group Type stamps overprinted for fiscal use.

The reader should note the second scan which shows a close-up of the five stamps employed on this document. Sadly for the petitioner, his claim was rejected by the court. Fiscal use of Group Type stamps is generally rare, and represents an excellent addition to any collection.





Edward Grabowski

SOCIETY NOTES

Continued from page 108

2020 Annual General Meeting

Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of the Society will take place at the Abbey Hotel, Redditch (during the Annual Philatelic Weekend) at 9.30am on Saturday 14 March 2020.

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

Secretary, David Hogarth, 12 Moyness Park Drive, Blairgowrie, Perthshire PH10 6LX or by email to secretary@fcps.org.uk at least one month prior to the AGM.

Members who may wish to put themselves forward to serve on the Committee or otherwise assist the Society are encouraged to contact the General Secretary.

* * *

SOCIETY NOTES

Continued on page 139

Monaco franking

I think we are all familiar with the controversial mixed frankings that appear on philatelic mail dropped through our letterbox. The use of pre-Euro issues is still tolerated by *La Poste* provided that the conversion from francs (and by that we mean the 'nouveau franc' of 1960) has been accurately calculated.

Over the years, the scurrilous use of the demonetised 'ancien franc' issues has manifested itself and understandably the French postman, under pressure to meet the latest time-and-motion demands as well as being unfamiliar with the plethora of current stamps

being issued in France, does not have the time to assess the validity of the franking.

But surely the item illustrated here, which is franked entirely with stamps from Monaco dating from the 1950s must have rung a bell or two. The stamps, totalling 38 francs, were on a package I received earlier this year from a Delcampe seller in Sète. Converted to euros the franking represents only 0,58€ although I had paid 1,40€ for shipping. The seller made a bit of a saving but being a half glass full person I may likewise make a bit of a profit when I put them in the packet.



Mick Bister

Fake or fortune?



An acquaintance of mine who is French and collects French stamps was recently looking through her collection and came across a used (and slightly damaged) copy of the 25c black-on-rose 'Peace and Commerce' design from 1886 (SG266; Yv97) with the names of both the designer (Sage) and the engraver (Mouchon) missing from the base of the stamp. She referred the stamp to me because she wondered whether it was a forgery or a rarity.

Fellow member Godfrey Bowden and I have discussed the stamp and looked at it in detail, examining not only the design but also the perforations and the partial 1888 postmark (perhaps St Angel in Corrèze, the owner suggests). Godfrey and I have not been able to come to a definite conclusion about the stamp but we can find nothing in the literature to hand that suggests such a version of the 25c was ever issued, even in error; nor can we imagine the process whereby the designer and engraver names could be omitted accidentally.

There is, of course, the whole matter of the broken master die which gave rise to the 'Type 1' and 'Type 2' versions for many of the issued values but, in their case, only the bottom left-hand corner of the master die was broken off and had to be reconstructed, and the right-hand corner of the image where the engraver's name appears was never altered. Dr Joany describes in his treatises from the 1950s on the Sage issues how, during the design and engraving process, there were prints from early *maquettes* but we cannot believe that these were ever developed fully into perforated stamps.

Would readers agree that this therefore has to be a forgery, albeit a very good one? Or is there another explanation?

Derek Atkins

Printing Quality of the 170th Anniversary of the First French Stamp Miniature Sheet

I recently purchased from *La Poste*, at separate times, two copies of the 170th Anniversary of the First French Postage Stamp Miniature Sheet (see the illustration in Journal 290 of August 2019, page 85). It wasn't until I came to mount them on sheets that I noticed there was a significant difference between the printing quality of the two sheets. The first example had very fine detail throughout but the second seemed to be less clear and much heavier in appearance

At first I wondered if it might be a double printing but on

reflection I came to the conclusion that it was probably due to the second copy being more heavily inked than the first with consequent loss of detail. The illustrations show the most obvious differences but there are plenty of others in the sheet. **Figure 1** shows the differences between the titles. The heavier type is evident throughout the lettering in the second example but most evident when you look closely at the dashes between the '9' and the '2'.

More obvious differences between the sheets are seen at the foot as shown in **Figures 2 and 3**.

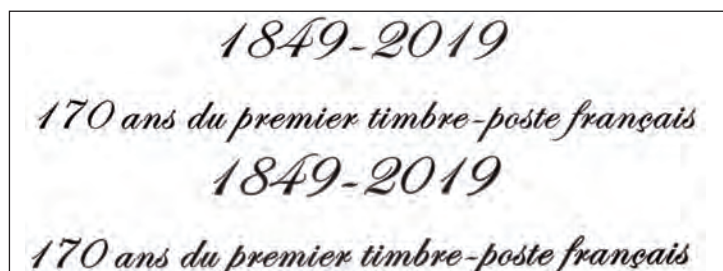


Figure 1
Comparison of the titles at the top of the sheets
and the dash between the '9' and the '2' in the dates



Figure 2
The bottom left corners



Figure 3
Bottom right hand corners of the sheets

Figure 2 shows the much heavier printing of the sheet identifier and also the almost complete loss of the ornaments on the left of the bottom left stamp in the right-hand sheet compared to the clear printing of the one on the left. There is also a distinct smudge of ink between the outer frame line and the left-hand corner ornament.

A similar problem is clearly seen at the bottom right of the sheet (**Figure 3**) where the euro sign and dot have almost

been obliterated and the corner ornament is partly inked out.

Other small differences are found in the sheet but need not be described here.

It is perhaps surprising that in the modern age of highly sophisticated, computerised printing technology that these problems still exist and survive quality control, but it certainly makes collecting stamps still an interesting hobby!

Andrew Telfer-Brunton

Richard Broadhurst, author of the original article, replies: There was only one printing of these sheets and all are marked TVP609 and dated 11.02.19. It must just be a case

of some inking issue during the printing as you suggest. French printing techniques can often show up quite large differences between stamps.

The Relais Poste in Normandy

In September this year my wife and I spent the night prior to our return crossing in the Normandy village of Martin-L'Église near Dieppe. It was a Saturday night and we had made a reservation at the *Auberge du Clos Normand* which has a large restaurant, a pleasant lounge but no bar. Therefore, in the evening, guests who wanted an *apéritif* were invited by the reception to cross the road and go to the bar-brasserie, *Le Clos Henri IV*, which was just opposite the

hotel. As it was a wet and windy night we declined the offer which turned out with hindsight to be a decision I would regret. Next morning, upon leaving the hotel I looked across the road and, seeing the bar in daylight, realised I had missed a chance of a lifetime. The bar, in effect, served as one of the increasing number of *relais poste* springing up in rural France and I had denied myself the opportunity of having my *petit calva* served to me in the local post office!



Mick Bister

A Guadeloupe Puzzle



It's never helpful when postal markings fall on top of one another. Can anyone help with the course of events shown on this stampless item from Guadeloupe to the Netherlands? Even non-Guadeloupe experts may have the answer, for at the time of posting (1976) the island was one of France's *Départements d'Outre-Mer*, and whatever postal procedures this cover went through could be common to all of them.

As I understand them, this cover's postal markings were applied in this order. All markings except N° 2 are in black. Material in square brackets is conjectural; hyphens within square brackets indicate illegible letters.

1. Double-ring 42mm cachet. Outer inscription reads *SERVICE DE L'E[GLISE -]JEN / - GUADELOUPE -*

Central inscription reads *S[-----]on/Études & Travaux/Port de/Pointe-à-Pitre.*

2. MS paraph in blue, possibly applied by sender authorising cachet 1.

3. Unboxed two-line cachet *PLI DE SERVICE / CLOS PAR NECESSITE*

4. Slogan postmark: slogan reads 'Un peu de votre Sang/ pour sauver une Vie'; CDS reads *POINTE A PITRE PPAL* [unhyphenated]/*GUADELOUPE*//*13H30 6-1 1976*

5. 'T' *tampon*, for *Taxe* (postage apparently unpaid).

For privacy, some addressee's details have been deliberately masked. The reverse of the cover is blank.

Michael Round

SOCIETY NOTES

Continued from page 135

Appeal for articles yet again!!

I regret to report that I have had very little response to my last two appeals for articles and I am having to rely upon just a few regular contributors. Do please share your knowledge with other members and find something in your collection you could write about. Submit the text in Word and send images, scanned at 300dpi, as separate jpeg attachments to me at manager@fcps.org.uk. The success of the Journal depends on you.

Thank you.

Mick Bister

* * *

REPORTS OF MEETINGS

LONDON GROUP MEETING OF 3 AUGUST 2019

Mick Bister: Stamp Designers of the 1960s



Figure 1

'L'atelier de fabrication des timbres postes' an engraving by Albert Decaris
The engraving illustrates the two banks of six TD-3 presses

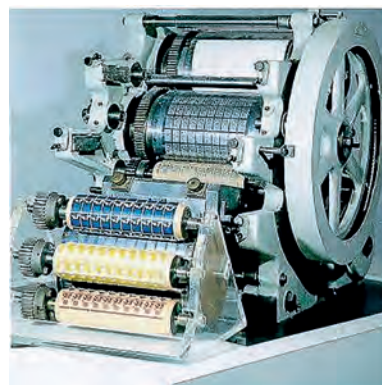


Figure 2

The TD-3 press showing, from top to bottom, the pressure cylinder, the printing cylinder and the three ink transfer rollers

Mick Bister prefaced his display with a brief account of his student days in France in 1962 when his letter writing introduced him to the wide range of stamps that were available for franking his mail. A letter sent home in October 1962 alongside his student card bearing an unrecognisable photo adorned his introductory page. The remainder of the frame showed a selection of stamps from the same year each represented by a mint copy and an example *seul sur lettre* at the correct rate.

Mick related how the stamp designers and engravers of the 1950s and 1960s were held in high esteem not only by philatelists but by the philatelic press and the PTT itself. In 1952 the *Musée Postal* published a limited edition of '*La poste en France au milieu du XX^e siècle*', a boxed set of twenty-four plates printed on vellum paper. Each plate depicted a contemporary scene of postal activity produced by the most prominent stamp designers and engravers of the period – Pierre Gandon, Albert Decaris, Jean Pheulpin, Paul Lemagny, Charles Mazelin, René Cottet *et al.* Mick showed several examples (Figure 1). In the same decade '*Le Monde des Philatélistes*' published a series of interviews with designers and engravers under the heading '*Ceux qui*

créent nos timbres'. These were re-published as '*études*' and Mick showed several copies with their much sought after '*hors texte*' engravings.

All the line-engraved stamps (aka recess, intaglio or *taille-douce*) of the 1960s were printed on either three colour rotary presses (TD-3) or on six colour rotary presses (TD-6). Mick explained how the application of inks was achieved in the TD-3 printings. Three transfer cylinders were created, each allocated to picking up one of the three inks and transferring them in succession to the designated part of the design on the printing cylinder (Figure 2). The three colours were then printed simultaneously onto the paper. Extra colours or shades could be created by superimposing two inks and Mick showed early examples of this method from the 1950s (Figure 3). Alternatively the ink reservoirs could be compartmentalised to increase the number of ink colours. The multicoloured 1964 Philatelic 'Interlude' sheet is an example of this process. The remainder of the first half of the display comprised three frames of stamps and '*seul sur lettre*' covers in alphabetical order from Pierre Béquet to Jules Piel including Mick's favourite designer, Claude Hertenberger (Figure 4).

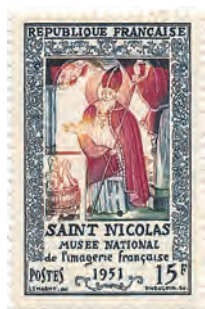


Figure 3

15F *Saint Nicolas* (left) designed by Paul Lemagny and engraved by Jean Pheulpin and issued in 1951 and 15F *Floralies Parisiennes* (right) designed and engraved by Pierre Gandon and issued in 1959.

Both stamps are described in the catalogues as four-coloured or multicoloured.

However, only the three primary colours of red, blue and yellow were used to achieve the various shades.



Figure 4
Portrait of Claude Hertenberger
drawn by fellow stamp designer, Jean Pheulpin,
and his 0,30 *Collège Sainte Barbe*
and 0,50 *Tricentaire des Gobelins* issues
which he designed and engraved
in 1960 and 1962 respectively

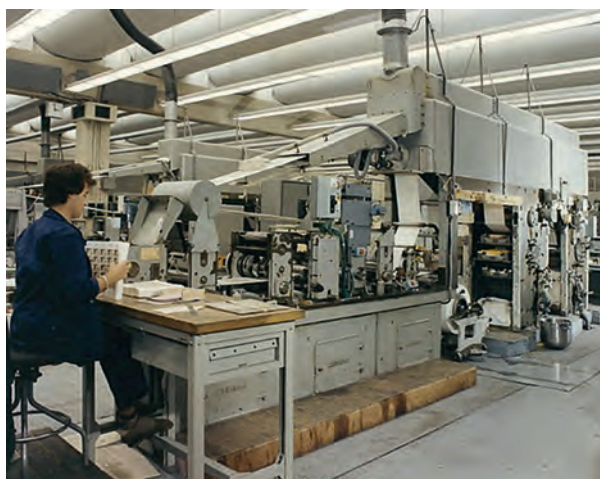


Figure 5
TD-6 press N° 1.
At the far end are the offset and direct printing
presses above which are the chambers and vents
for humidifying the paper and drying the ink.
In the foreground, the paper continues
through a series of units which add the printing data,
perforate the stamps and guillotine the sheets
which are finally checked by the technician.

The second half of the display focused on the six colour printings and with the aid of diagrams and photos Mick explained how the TD-6 press operated (Figure 5). The machine housed two three-cylinder presses. The printing cylinder on the first press applied the inks, not directly to the paper, but to an intermediary plastic cylinder which then transferred them to the paper. The impression was termed as '*taille-douce report*' or offset printing and was used to provide the background and infill colours of the design. The second press was identical to the TD-3 press and printed directly onto the paper (*taille-douce directe*) and superimposed the lines and more detailed parts of the design over the offset printing (Figure 6).

The master designer and engraver Pierre Gandon was commissioned to create the first stamps printed off the TD-6 presses; these were the bird issues of November and

December 1960 (Figure 7) and the first set of the large format 'Art on Stamps' issues (*le Musée imaginaire*) of November 1961. Mick showed photos of colour trials and a complete sheet of the 0,50 *Guêpier* plus a sheet of the 0,85 *Joueurs aux cartes* in its unique format of two vertical rows of five stamps. Then followed a full frame of the 'Art on Stamps' issues used alone on cover which, with their multicoloured subject matter, were the main beneficiaries of the TD-6 process (Figure 8).

In 1951, the *Grand Prix de l'Art Philatélique* was initiated at the *Salon d'Automne* under the auspices of the *Chambre Syndicale Française de la Philatélie*. The award was to be presented for the most attractive stamp issued during the previous twelve months (Figure 9). Mick showed on cover all the stamps of the 1960s which had received this award the designers of which were now household names - André



Figure 6

Extract from the 1966 *Document Philatélique* reproducing the TD-6 printing phases
of the 1 franc *Le Nouveau Né* by Georges de la Tour designed and engraved by Claude Durrens.
On the left is the offset printing in yellow, orange and red which provides the background and the highlights of the design.
In the middle is the direct printing which superimposes in black the details of the design onto the colours.
On the right is the final impression.



Figure 7

o,30 *Macareux*, designed and engraved by Pierre Gandon, paying the CCP 'Withdrawal on Demand' fee



Figure 8

1 franc *Crispin et Scapin* by Honoré Daumier, designed and engraved by Pierre Gandon, paying the France-Canada Concessionary Airmail Letter Rate (Second Step: 5-10 grams)



Figure 9

Claude Durrens was awarded the *Grand Prix de l'Art Philatélique* in 1961, 1965 and 1966 and shared it with Henry Cheffer in 1967. Left is his 1961 o,30 *Père Lacordaire* paying the French North Africa Letter Rate.

Spitz (1960), Claude Durrens (1961, 1965 and 1966), Pierre Gandon (1962, 1964), Jacques Combet (1963), Henry Cheffer (1967) and Robert Cami (1968, 1969). Surprisingly, the prolific Albert Decaris did not receive an award until 1978. Henry Cheffer's award winning design, '*La Nouvelle République*' better known as '*Marianne de Cheffer*', was the subject of the final part of Mick's display.

In 1955 Henry Cheffer had submitted a proposed stamp design to replace the *Marianne de Gandon* issue. However, it was rejected by the PTT in favour of Louis-Charles Muller's design. In 1967, ten years after his death, Cheffer's design was resurrected and replaced the *Marianne de Decaris* issue and Henry Cheffer was posthumously awarded, with Claude Durrens the stamp's engraver, the *Prix de l'Art Philatélique* for the same year.

Mick showed colour trials (Figure 10) and printings of the four values on both TD-3 and TD-6 presses. The TD-6 press in particular was fast and efficient and highly suitable for the high volume production of definitive stamps in a monochrome design. We also saw booklets and coils with trials and mock-ups using the Palissy vignette.

The early years of the *Marianne de Cheffer* issue witnessed several postal initiatives - the introduction of two tier mail with stamps printed in red and green, phosphor band printings, the transfer of presses from Paris to Périgueux and the creation of the postcode. Mick closed his display with material illustrating these initiatives as well as from events such as the postal strike of 1968 and the night-mail crash at Orly in 1969.



Figure 10

Marianne de Cheffer: imperf colour trials of the 1967 0,30 issue and of the 1969 0,40 issue

After lunch members showed material from their own collections. **Paul Miller** displayed items from Monaco starting with colourful dated corner blocks of the 1951 Radio Monte-Carlo designed by M Camia and engraved by Pierre Gandon. These were followed by albums of stamps presented to delegates attending UPU congresses at Stockholm in 1924, Paris in 1947 and Brussels in 1952. An unusual item was an album containing the 1950 Accession of Prince Rainier III of Monaco set designed and engraved by Raoul Serres which was given to delegates attending the *Congrès de l'Association Internationale de l'Hostellerie* (Figure 11).

Tom Waterman followed with a display of cross-Atlantic mail between the USA and France between 1876 and 1879. The display concentrated on unpaid and underpaid items with an explanation of rates and services of the period. Each sheet showed how the postage due was calculated

and charged. Several items led to intense discussion and the 1 cent USA Postal Stationery postcards were much admired (Figure 12).

Finally, **Chris Hitchen** showed us mail handled by the *Bureau Central Militaire* in Paris during the Great War. We saw an example of the date stamp with PARIS excised when the office moved to Bordeaux, material relating to the 1916 *Exposition de la Cité Reconstituée* (a programme for the reclamation and rebuilding of occupied towns and villages) and censored mail to European countries with explanatory leaflets. Particularly poignant was a cover with the ambiguous cachet '*Le destinataire n'a pas pu être atteint*' (Figure 13)

Members present: Maurice Alder, Mick Bister, Chris Hitchen, Paul Miller, Barbara Priddy, Tom Waterman and Marian Bister (guest).



Figure 11

The two airmail values of the 1950 Accession of Prince Rainier III of Monaco set



Figure 12

1 cent USA Stationery Postcard to Paris cancelled Sandusky, Ohio taxed as underpaid as overseas rate was 2 cents.

Taxe calculated as follows: deficiency of 1 cent = 5 centimes.

Postage due double the deficiency = 10c represented by 10c Type Duval

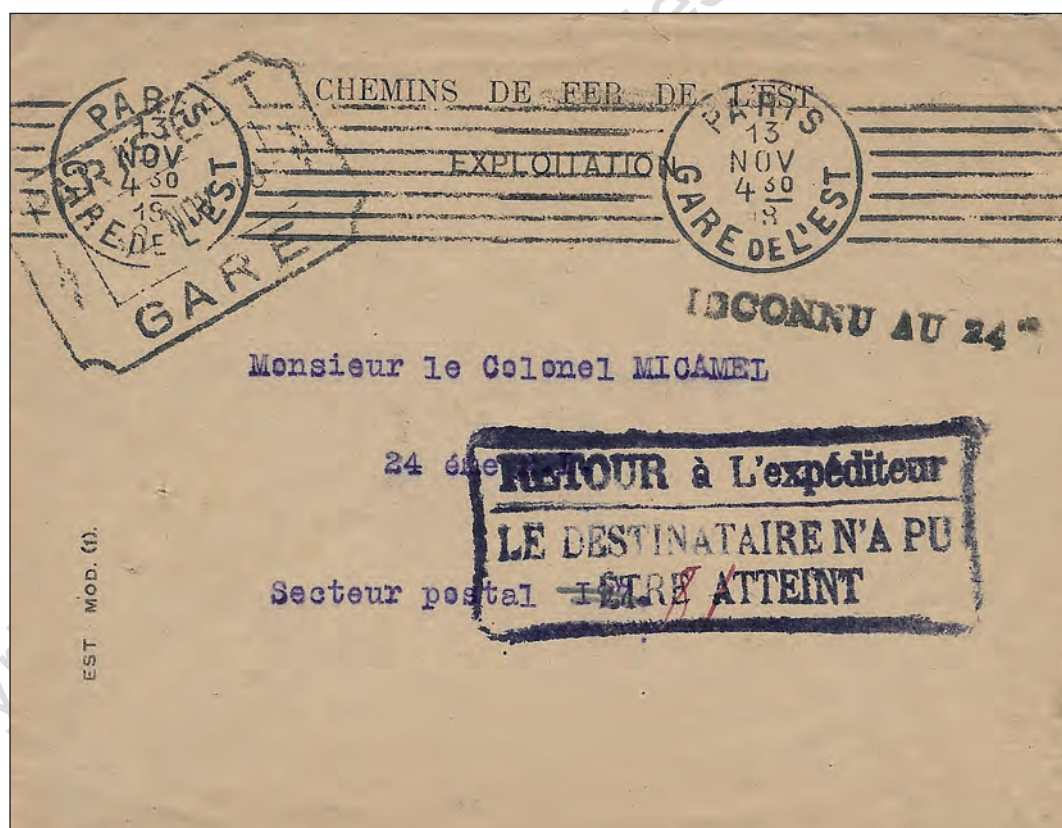


Figure 13

Most letters which could not be delivered to soldiers serving in the war were returned with a simple handstamp baldly stating that the addressee could not be reached.

This avoided being too specific about what might have happened.

That this also has a stamp 'Inconnu au 24' suggests that it might simply have been misdirected.

Through all the vicissitudes of the Great War the postal services made huge efforts to get letters to those engaged in the conflict.

Those that could not be delivered were carefully returned to the sender as tactfully as possible.

WESSEX GROUP MEETING OF 26 OCTOBER 2019



The very contented attendees of the Wessex Group meeting are, from left to right:
Paul Latham-Warde, Alan King, Chris Hitchen, George Nash,
Colin French, Peter Kelly and Tony Howgrave-Graham.

A good turnout of eight members and two guests met at the Scout Hut for our final meeting of the year.

The meeting started with what has now become a tradition, a glass of champagne. So far there have been no complaints and it is proposed to maintain the tradition.

We extended a warm welcome to Alan King attending his first meeting.

Unfortunately our guest speaker – Trevor Buckell - pulled out as he is not too well and is going in for an operation on Monday which we all trust will be successful and that Trevor can join us next year.

Chris Hitchen and **Peter Kelly** kindly stepped in at the last moment and filled the “guest speaker slot” with two excellent displays.

Peter treated us to an in depth display of ‘The Algero-Moroccan Frontier’. Although an agreement was signed in the 1840s by the Sultan of Morocco the frontier between the two countries was never really defined (the same still exists today) because of the nomadism of the Arabs who live in the Atlas Mountains in the summer and move down to the desert in the winter. The Berbers didn’t like the French and it didn’t help matters by attacking camel trains and generally disrupting the French organisation. As such there isn’t much material available. However Peter had brought together an excellent display that was highlighted by some excellent covers and picture postcards of the area. Peter is working on a book of the subject so watch this space.

Chris put up a very comprehensive display of French Postal Rates from 1876 when change started with weight step changes with the rates revised. He explained that the cancellations prior to this were two handstamps, lozenge and date stamp, which was time consuming and after March 1876 the lozenge was dropped. The date stamp in use at this time was that known as the type 17. Between 1880 and 1885 various cancellation trials were carried out at the Place de la Bourse. Other trials of machine cancellations took place at the Head Post Office. In 1884 this led to the Daguin machine and a new postmark was introduced – the type 84. Pneumatic cards were shown and new services such as Express Mail and Cash on Delivery which began in 1892.

We had an excellent lunch at the Grasmere House Hotel and on return to the Scout Hut the following displays were presented during the afternoon:

Paul Latham-Warde: Forgeries, Fraud and Fraudsters plus Alsace-Lorraine postcards.

George Nash: Correspondence between a French Army Sergeant and his wife 1939-1945.

Ingrid Swinburn: West Africa, correspondence from the French Colonies

Alan King: Cérès issues with forgeries including Sperati

Tony Howgrave-Graham: French used abroad

Peter Kelly: Mail not delivered

Brian Weeks and Colin French also attended.

CF

LONDON GROUP MEETING OF 5 OCTOBER 2019

Barbara Priddy: French West African Airmails

Mick Bister: The Joseph de la Nézière issues of French West Africa

Barbara Priddy introduced the first frame of her display of West African airmail with the sub-title 'Covers that never made it all the way to France'. These were predominantly items of mail destined for western Europe including one to Portugal that was transferred to the *Aero Portuguesa* service at Tangiers and one to Spain dropped off at Barcelona. Other destinations included Switzerland and Italy. Barbara had created a table of the rates from 1925 to 1939 extracted from Derek Richardson's and Robert Picirilli's invaluable books and was delighted to report that she had managed to find covers illustrating virtually all the changes of rates but also a large number of covers that seem to have been franked at random. There were other problems too. For example, in the second frame, Barbara drew our attention to some covers from 1930 to 1933 which seem to show that the increase in the fee from 50c to 75c for onward air transmission of 1 June 1931 had not been applied in French West Africa until 1933 (Figure 1).

Frames 3 and 4 were devoted to mail to Europe. Before the creation of *Air France* in September 1933, the France-UK service was provided by *Air Union* established in 1923,

services to Central Europe were provided by the *Compagnie Internationale de Navigation Aérienne* established in 1920, and services to Northern Europe by the *Société Générale des Transports Aériens* established in 1919. All of these routes became part of *Air France*. The Central European routes ran Paris-Prague-Warsaw from which we were shown covers to Czechoslovakia and Poland and Paris-Prague-Vienna-Budapest-Bucharest. The latter route went on to Sofia and beyond. Barbara bemoaned the fact that she hadn't got covers to Bulgaria or Turkey – yet – but we saw covers to Austria, Hungary and Roumania. The Northern European routes ran, firstly, to Germany, Denmark and Sweden but the cover to Norway that we saw must have been carried by another airline, possibly *Deutsche Luft Hansa* or *Aktiebolaget Aerotransport*. Another route ran to Belgium and the Netherlands.

The final frames contained more 'exotic' destinations including India and Malaya (Figure 2) to the east and North and South America to the west and, even more difficult to find, mail to non-French countries in Africa including Gambia, Liberia, Gold Coast and Nigeria.



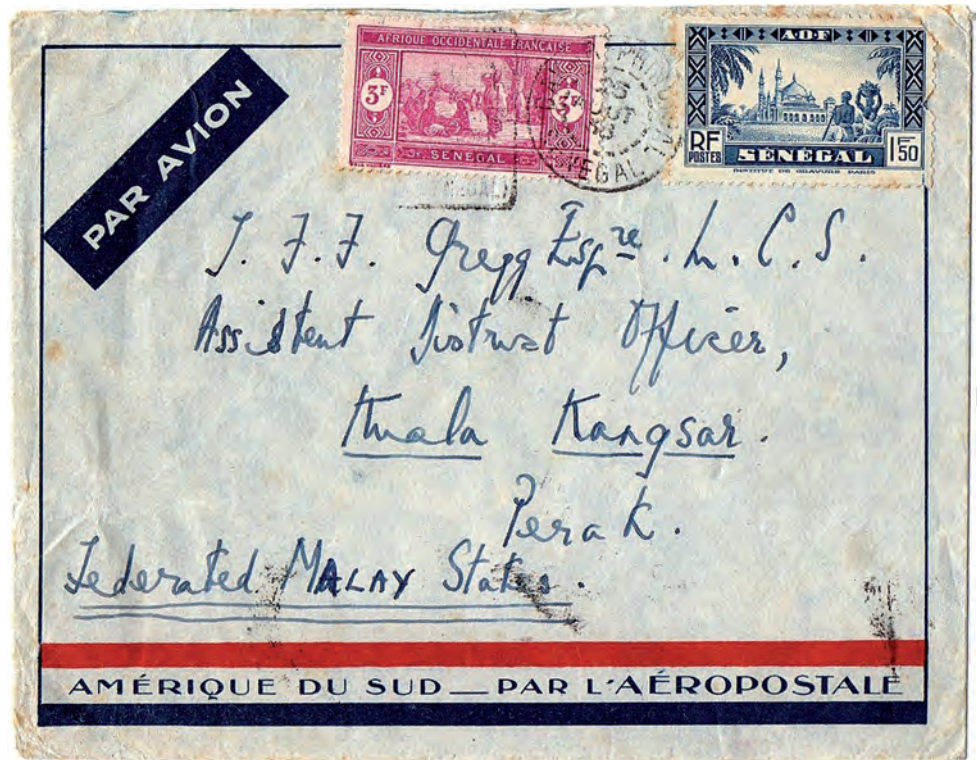
Figure 1

Cover from Kaolack, 26 June 1933, to Richmond, England, endorsed 'Par Avion à Toulouse et Destination' with explicatory 'Paris à Londres' added in red ink.

Rate: 1f50 foreign postage plus 3F airmail fee (under 10g) Dakar to Toulouse plus 50c airmail fee (under 20g) Paris - London = 5F.

The Paris-London airmail was increased to 75c per 20g on 1 June 1931, but this does not seem to have been changed at Dakar until late 1933.

Figure 2
Cover from Dakar
to Penang, Malaya,
25 August - 2 September 1936.
Rate: 1F50 foreign postage plus
3F airmail fee (under 10g)
Dakar-Paris = 4F50.
Although the sender did not pay
the onward airmail fee
of 3F50 to Malaya,
the cover was not taxed or
diverted to surface mail,
but forwarded to Amsterdam for
KNILM's Far Eastern service.



Mick Bister took over for the second half of the morning's display with extracts of his collection of the 'Joseph de la Nézière issues of French West Africa'. Mick explained de la Nézière's brief which was to create six designs symbolic of the six component colonies of French West Africa – Senegal, Upper Senegal and Niger, Mauritania, French Guinea, Ivory Coast and Dahomey. Drawing inspiration from his travels, de la Nézière selected typical scenes which Mick illustrated with a frame of enlarged images of postcards from the time. Members were struck by the

similarity between the postcards and the stamp designs particularly the market scene in Senegal and the fording of the Kitim in French Guinea. The second frame showed proofs of the Senegal and Dahomey issues as well as complete sheets of French Guinea and Ivory Coast printings. On the third frame Mick continued with a display of every issue of Ivory Coast from 1913 to 1935 including booklets, revenue overprints and *timbres-monnaie* which were stamps affixed to card and overprinted for use as small change.



Figure 3
1928 Debt Collection Service
Envelope N° 1494
containing payment
from Agboville, Ivory Coast,
to St Étienne franked 30c.

The fourth frame was devoted to covers from Senegal and concentrated on surface rates; these included a postcard to Estonia, a visiting card to Beyrouth, an internal registered postcard, printed matter to Austria, an internal registered parcel label (7th step) and a telegram to France. The fifth frame combined stamps and covers from Ivory Coast (Figure 3), Mauretania, Dahomey, Upper Senegal

and Niger and French Guinea, whereas the final frame concentrated on the post WWI territories of Togo, Niger, French Sudan and Upper Volta. Again unusual rates were shown including trans-Saharan mail from Niger, a *mandat-carte* from Upper Volta (Figure 4) and an overseas registered letter from French Soudan franked with four red cross issues.

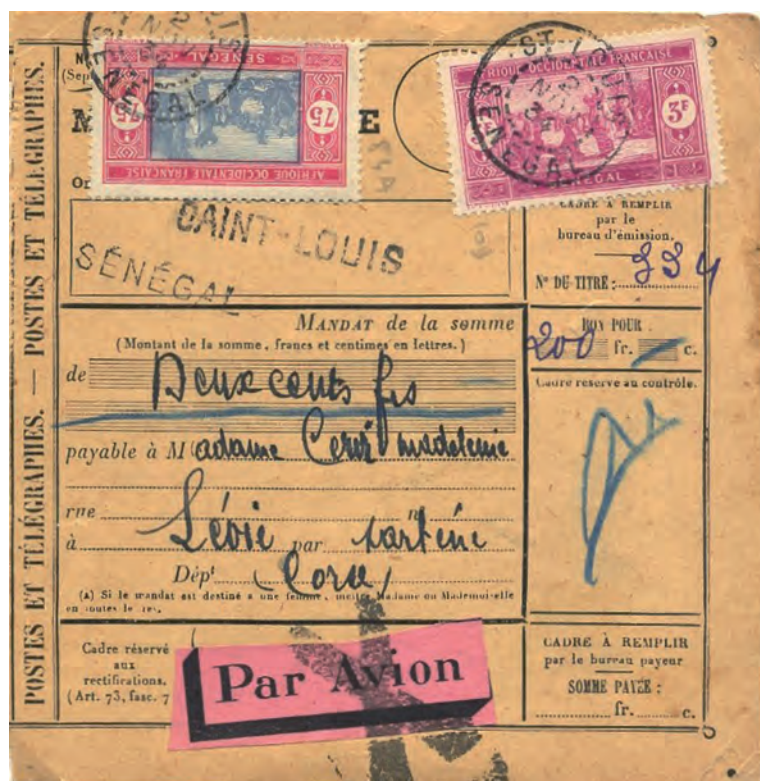


Figure 4
1934 flown *Mandat-Lettre*
from St Louis, Senegal, to Corsica
franked 3F75 representing
75c delivery charge
and 3F airmail fee as far as Marseille

After lunch members were invited to display their material. **Michael Round** showed 'Sidelights on Réunion', a selection from that territory focussing on items either barely catalogued or not catalogued at all. They ranged from reprints and forgeries (Figure 5) of the first issue (1852) through minor varieties of surcharge (1891), shades on the 1892 and 1907-17 definitives, through unissued

(yet CTO) Vichy-era airmails, to CFA surcharges on French stamps (where not even SG gives all the known dates of the first issue) and metropolitan (unsurcharged) French stamps used there. A mysterious selection of fiscals inscribed '*Taxe d'Engagement*' and '*À timbrer à l'extraordinaire*' generated lively discussion but no firm answers.

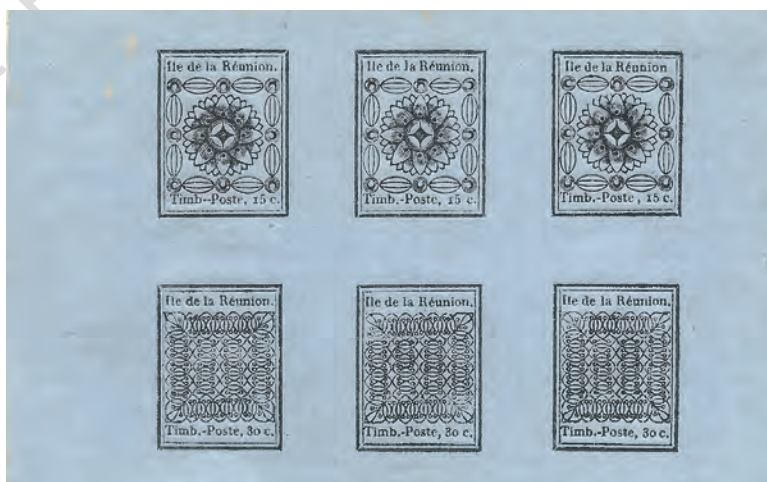


Figure 5
Reprints of the first Réunion issue of 1852.
The original plate contained eight units in two rows of four but units 1 and 5 could not be reprinted since that part of the plate had deteriorated in the meantime.

Len Barnes followed with a recent purchase of twenty first flight covers predominantly flown between France and her African colonies. A particularly fine item was a 1931 first

flight cover from Djibouti to Istres (**Figure 6**). Len was keen to find out which were the best items to keep but received as many different replies as there were covers.



Figure 6
Cover flown on first flight from Madagascar to France picking up mail in Djibouti on 4 December 1931.

The stamps are tied by the cachet
1' SERVICE AVION
France Madagascar
ALLER RETOUR
via Djibouti

.....

Chris Hitchen brought us more delights from his Paris collection, concentrating on rates of the late 19th century. We saw examples of the last usage of the 60c and 90c postage due handstamps representing the double rate and triple rate respectively. Then we were introduced to mail franked with the Sage issue, including registered and insured items which attracted

much attention (**Figure 7**). Arguably the highlight was an 1877 local letter franked at 45c representing the third weight step (30-50 grams) set on 1 January 1876 – a rare item indeed, being just one of two known. Finally we saw an underpaid printed matter wrapper taxed at the special three times deficiency rate and a reply-paid postcard from and to Luxembourg.



Figure 7
Black ink was normally used for post marks in Paris. Just four offices are recorded with the use of red ink between 1878 and 1884 after uniform postage had been introduced. Illustrated here is an example from the Paris 22 RUE TAITBOUT office cancelled in red on 7 March 1880.

The franking is calculated as follows:
first weight step
up to 15 grams: 15 centimes,
registration fee: 25 centimes.
Total postage: 40 centimes

Roger Niven presented us with a selection of slogan postmarks or '*flammes*' applied by a variety of cancelling machines including Daguin, Krag, and Secap. The display included a copy of the first '*flamme illustrée*' which set the slogan within a floral frame. Used on a Flier/International machine it was introduced in Nice in 1924 and continued until 1931 (Figure 8). Discussion took place on the merits

of slogans being positioned to the right or left of the date stamp but conclusions depended on whether you adopted the viewpoint of the philatelist or the advertiser. Finally we were taken on a cruise down the Loire from source to estuary with pages mapping out each stretch of the river, one *département* at a time, and illustrated by '*flammes*' promoting the towns and events to be seen *en route*.



Figure 8
France's first '*flamme illustrée*' on a 1924 cover from Nice to London franked with the 75c Pierre de Ronsard

Finally **Mick Bister** returned to show new additions to his *Poste Restante* collection. Items included a 1922 commercial traveller's 'season ticket' franked with two copies of the 5F Merson and a 1930 cover with a 30c Pasteur overprinted T serving as a provisional tax stamp to pay the *poste restante* fee.

Despite it being, yet again, a very small attendance, members were thoroughly entertained by the wide range of topics and material displayed.

Members present: Maurice Alder, Len Barnes, Mick Bister, Chris Hitchen, Roger Niven, Barbara Priddy and Michael Round. We were also delighted to welcome as a guest, Hakiim, a visitor from Algeria.

BMKP/MLB

NORTHERN GROUP MEETING OF 21 SEPTEMBER 2019

The Northern Group day meeting was held in Rotherham on 21 September and was attended by five members and guests.

As usual the meeting started with good Yorkshire hospitality. Tea or coffee was served from 10.00am onwards plus tasty titbits. The meeting proper started at 10.30am.

John Morton kicked off with a display of material from 1849 to 1876. He had earlier sold his collection covering that period and rather regretted no longer having it so had decided to rebuild it using only material on covers. The display showed the unity of paid and unpaid rates until the split in 1854 making the unpaid rates 50% more expensive than the paid.

Trevor Smith followed this up with a display of early Fourth Republic material in all its glory.

Then **Alan Goude** took us off to West Africa on a series of railway journeys including the *Chemin de fer Congo-Océan*, French Guinea and Cameroun. He displayed much knowledge regarding the *convoyeur* markings.

The last display that morning was that given by **Steve Ellis** with his collection of payment markings on cross-border mail.

Dinner at the pub followed and was enjoyed by all.

The afternoon was given over to Mauritania. **Stephen Holder** had earlier asked to be reminded to bring his material on Mauritania. It rather seems as though half the society did just that. The display was not the whole of Steven's material but just the first half so Part II will no doubt be shown sometime in the future. What he did bring was very interesting and well worth seeing.

JM

LIST OF RECENTLY PUBLISHED ARTICLES

Compiled by Colin Spong & Maurice Tyler

Bulletin de la COL.FRA

N° 168, 2^{ème} Trim 2019: Les stations climatiques en Indochine [cont. & end] (Ferrien); 1891 Quand Tour de l'Île devient Matoury et l'Île Cayenne Remire (Puech); Le Type Sage avec surcharge POSTE FRANÇAISE MADAGASCAR (Richard); Un entier intéressant de Saint-Barthélemy (Panozzo); Alphée Dubois fiscal sur bulletin de colis postaux en Guadeloupe en 1893 (Flotte); Les oblitérations de Centrafrique après l'Indépendance (Parren et Bohnstedt); Les Variétés de Grande Comore (Bessaud).

N° 169, 3^{ème} Trim 2019: Révolution Française, une énigme philatélique (Puech); Du Courrier peu banal de Guyane (Puech); Le type avec surcharges POSTE FRANÇAISE MADAGASCAR un éloge à Randi (Grabowski); Madagascar, La première série surchargée de 1902 (Richard); Les oblitérations de Centrafrique après l'indépendance [suite de l'article dans le bulletin 168] (Parren).

Cameo

Vol 20 N° 3 October 2019: Basel Missionshandlung, Cameroons SW Africa (Courtis); British West Africa and the French Air Mail Services: Part 2 The Trans-Saharan Service (Priddy); Togo PS Cards an Amazing Coincidence (Mayne).

The Collectors Club Philatelist

Vol 98 N° 5 Sept-Oct 2019: The First and Rarest Classics of St Pierre & Miquelon issued in the first quarter of 1875 (Tillard).

Documents Philatéliques

N° 241 3^e Trim 15 July 2019: Il était une fois... une princesse qui collectionnait (Chauvet); Courriers transatlantiques intermédiaires et achemineurs (Soulier); Le transport des imprimés par corbillards (Hardy); Le courrier témoin de l'épuration 1943-1953 (Goanvic).

N° 242 4^e Trim 15 October 2019: Une seconde valeur cotée (Bonney); L'affranchissement gratuit des correspondances officielles pour l'étranger dans le régime U.P.O. (Desnaud); Le courrier témoin de l'épuration 1943-1953 (Goanvic); La prison révolutionnaire du Palais du Luxembourg [1793-1795] (Sullin).

L'Écho de la Timbrologie

N° 1942 Sept 2019: Curiosités philatéliques du Sénat (-); Gastone Rizzo, le Maître des Timbres (Bogni); L'affranchissement des cartes postales illustrées avant novembre 1899 (Lavigne); Campagne d'été 2016-2017 Antarctica (Venturini).

N° 1943 Oct 2019: Le Patrimoine en fête au Carré Marigny (-); Trucage pas royal pour timbre impérial (Béchin); Nouveautés et exclusivités Yvert et Tellier (Bastide-Bernardin); La Révolution s'affiche inaugurée

en philatélie (-); Numéroté ou pas, telle est la question (Bastide-Bernardin); Les Encres de la Libération – l'exposition de la rentrée (-); L'affranchissement des cartes postales illustrées, de novembre 1899 jusqu'au 30 novembre 1903 (Lavigne); Campagne d'été 2016-2017 – TAAF [cont] (Venturini).

N° 1944 Nov 2019: Deux Bordeaux de trop, bonjour les dégâts (Béchin); La diversité méconnue des timbres de taxes communales (Danan); Les cartes postales illustrées au tarif des imprimés à 5c (Lavigne); Fin de la campagne d'été 2016-2017 (Venturini).

France & Colonies Philatelist

Whole N° 337 (Vol 75 N° 3) July 2019: Philately of the British Royal State Visit to France 1938 (Taylor); French Postcard to a DP Camp (McDermott); What's a Jamboree? (McDermott); St Pierre-Miquelon: 1939 Short paid cover with *taxe* franking (Taylor); Censorship of Algerian Mail to Geneva in WWII (Rasmussen); Paris Pneumatic Post moved mail for over a Century (Rosenblum); Recipe for Cod Stew (Taylor); Collecting St Pierre & Miquelon (Taylor).

Whole N° 338 (Vol 74 N° 4) Oct 2019: *Au revoir Type Groupe* – Farewell to the Group Type (Grabowski).

Gibbons Stamp Monthly

Vol 50 N° 3 August 2019: The First issue of Monaco 1885 (Wishart).

The Indo-China Philatelist

Vol XLIX N° 4 (Whole N° 239) September 2019: Use of World Health Organisation Label on Cover (Bentley); Lang-Son Revenue Stamp (Bentley); Special Post Offices on Early North Vietnamese Service Covers (Düring); North Vietnam Mail Survey (Gebhardt & Shaw); Local VietMinh Stamps from the First Indochina War (Gebhardt).

Vol XLIX N° 5 (Whole N° 240) November 2019: Cognac advertisement (Bentley); Thirtieth Anniversary of Movie Industry (Gebhardt); Provisional Overprint International Day of the Child 1989 (Gebhardt); More on Walthausen (Dykhouse); Design sources for Native Women Stamps (Bentley); What are these philatelic items? (Dykhouse).

Timbres Magazine

N° 214 Sept 2019: Les Faux Modernes (Bernadet); Les essais de marques postales (Singent); 24 août 1944: les anarchistes espagnols de Leclerc entrent dans Paris (Sinai); Seconde Guerre de l'opium le courrier pour le Corps expéditionnaire français (Veglio); Lettre pliée ou sous enveloppe (de La Mettrie); Des oubliés marocains (Gomez); Avec l'électricité et les routes, l'Andorre s'ouvre sur le monde (Louviou); Les cartes de la drôle de guerre (Zeyons); Répertoire des Daguin des bureaux: Variétés françaises V. Les Hautes Alpes (Hervé).

Continued on page 160

BOOKSHELF

Compiled by Michael Round

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

‘Essai sur le timbre au Type Blanc de France’ by Gilles Toussaint

Reviewed by Mick Bister

A4 with card cover, perfect bound, in two volumes, ‘Tome 1: l’impression à plat’, 155 pages, 2017, ISBN: 978-2-36329-098-4 and ‘Tome 2: l’impression par rotative, les timbres préoblitérés’, 178 pages, 2019, ISBN: 978-2-36329-118-9

Price 80€ for the two volumes, postage included. Contact Gilles Toussaint at 29, rue de la Roseraie, 67700 Saverne, France or at gilles-toussaint@orange.fr.

Published in two volumes (‘Tome 1: l’impression à plat’ and ‘Tome 2: l’impression par rotative, les timbres préoblitérés’) this opus is a labour of love and the culmination of years of devotion and study of the charming *Type Blanc* issue. Gilles Toussaint accepts that there exist numerous articles and books that have been previously published on this humble stamp but in these two volumes all the essential knowledge has now been encapsulated into a single source and beautifully enhanced with high quality colour photos. Furthermore, not being satisfied by the dismissive comment - *il existe de nombreuses variétés* - found in certain other publications, the author acquired a hoard of 40,000 *Type Blanc* stamps and set about to record and illustrate the varieties that he discovered.

The illustrations, diagrams and tables far outweigh the amount of text and thanks to the clear, large font and well-organised lay-out even readers with a limited knowledge of French will find the information easily accessible.



The introduction and the first part of Volume 1 cover the historical background of the *Type Blanc*, the postage rates during the life of the issue and the various processes in its flat plate production - engraving, printing, gumming, guillotining, perforating etc. Here we see some of the gems in the *Musée de la Poste* including, what is for me the first time, the dies with the engraved values photographed in colour. Part two is devoted to a methodical and logical progression through the six Type 1 values that were printed *à plat* - the 1c, 2c, 3c, 4c, 5c and ½ on 1c. If we look at just the 1c value we will see how well structured each chapter is. The author explains how to distinguish the Type 1 flat plate printing from the Type 2 rotary printing which is treated in Volume 2. Excellent photos show us the range of grey shades and clear precise drawings help us to identify the sub-types 1A and 1B. Diagrams and photos explain the occurrence of isolated sub-types, for example, the Type 1A appearing in position 46 in a pane of Type 1B. A reference to *millésime* pairs and GC paper follows. Finally we see the fruits of Gilles Toussaint's research into the varieties that can be discovered in printings of the 1c *Type Blanc*. At first we meet the so-called ‘*incident technique*’ varieties, that is to say, those which are the result of an accident in one of the production processes such as ‘*impression recto-verso*’, imperfs and misplaced perforations. The author moves on to varieties within the design of the stamp and illustrates the listed ‘figure 1 touching frame’ in position 127 and ‘deity without navel’ in position 143 before revealing over twenty unlisted varieties; all are superbly supported by high definition enlargements for ease of identification. Finally we are regaled with illustrations of postal usage - both *seul sur lettre* and multiple or mixed frankings. My favourite item has to be the pair from 1923 paying the 2c second step Printed Matter rate under wrapper.

And so the study continues with the 1c Slate and the other six values. The same logical sequence is repeated with each stamp benefiting from the author's methodical application and attention to detail. His treatment of the retouched 3c Type 1B and its subsequent ‘*états*’ reveals a phenomenal depth of study which leads him to question the possibility of a similar episode in the printing of the 4c value. The 5c value, arguably the most collectable of the series and certainly a favourite of mine, has a special section devoted to the booklet issue which will satisfy the most demanding researcher.

Ce timbre se collectionne par carnet, ½ carnet ou paire verticale. La présence des marges supérieure et inférieure est alors garante d'authenticité. Il est toujours de teinte verte.



On peut bien évidemment le collectionner également à l'unité, neuf ou oblitéré ; toutefois, n'ayant plus le garde fou des marges, il faut alors bien identifier chaque caractéristique pour le distinguer du type IA. Le **bout de la plume supérieure gauche pointu et axé sur l'angle supérieur gauche**, ainsi que le **pli du bonnet marqué par une barre horizontale qui se prolonge verticalement par un trait épais** sont, comme nous l'avons déjà énoncé p.110, les deux critères de reconnaissance généralement retenus. Correspondent-ils toujours à la réalité ? Sont-ils les seuls ? Messieurs Storch et Françon ajoutent qu'il existe **dans l'extrémité de la deuxième plume de gauche un trait parasite** qui, pour eux, << ...est le meilleur signe de distinction du type IB >>, signe que l'on trouve également sous la forme d'un point.



Tenant compte de ces caractéristiques, tout particulièrement de la troisième que je trouve effectivement infallible, je pense avoir trouvé 107 type IB dans le lot des 13000 timbres examinés.

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1c

Bien que le **premier tirage** du 1c type II ait eu lieu le **17 novembre 1926** il est, dans les catalogues courants, répertorié sous le **n°107** conjointement avec le type I. Il a été émis en une seule teinte officielle, **ardoise**. On ne lui connaît **pas de sous-types**.

1) – On distingue quatre nuances :



2) – Les tirages :



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Volume 2, which is devoted to the Type 2 rotary printings and precancelled issues, repeats the successful format of its predecessor starting with a detailed and well illustrated explanation of the rotary printing process. For each value (including the new 10c issue which was only printed on rotary presses) the printing dates are provided and shades, types and sub-types, varieties and postal usage are thoroughly explored. A new element is the printing of coils which is treated first of all in the chapter on the 5c value and later in the chapter on the precancelled 4c issue. Full details are given on the printing process and how to identify stamps from sheet printings and coil printings.

The closing chapter examines the precancelled overprints applied to both the flat plate Type 1 and rotary Type 2 printings from 1923 to 1932. The history of the 'timbres

préoblitérés' trials on the Sage issues in 1893 and on the Sower issues from 1920 to 1922 is covered briefly but is more than adequate as an introduction to the definitive overprint applied to the *Type Blanc* from 1923 onwards. In the process we encounter yet another new value, the 7½c, which was only issued with the precancellation. The rate it served only lasted from 1 May to 8 August 1926 so examples of its use on cover are not common yet the author is able to display several examples of single and multiple usage.

Gilles Toussaint's two books will appeal to specialists who already collect this issue and, hopefully and more importantly, will inspire beginners to make a start. Well written and profusely illustrated they should be on the bookshelf of any collector of modern France.

Books Noted (1)

Éléments d'Histoire Postale en Alsace et Moselle (1919-1940) by Laurent Bonnefoy

130pp A4 mostly in colour; 350 illustrations; price 20€ + 7€ p&p; pub. SPAL; available M. Gilles Feutren, 31 rue du Belvédère, 68100 Mulhouse; email gifeu@hotmail.fr

Le Service Sanitaire Militaire à Rennes durant la Grande Guerre 1914-1919 by Robert Marquet, Didier Andrivon, Gérard Melot & Patrick Gilles

80pp A4 in colour; price 15€ + p&p; pub. ARP; available D Andrivon, 12 rue du Grand Champ, 35310 Bréal-sous-Montfort; email didier.andrivon@wanadoo.fr

La première série au type Iris – une mise en place compliquée by Yvon Nouazé (2nd edition corrected and augmented)

288pp A4 in colour; price 37€ + p&p; available Yvon Nouazé, 1 rue Henri Manhès, 81000 Albi; email yvon.nouaze@sfr.fr

Île de la Réunion – Émissions locales – 1875 – Tome 1bis: Les cartes postales provisoires et autres cartes postales précurseurs by Marie-Anick & Christian-Jacques Duvivier

Price 40€ inc p&p in France; available C-J Duvivier, 4 rue de la Garenne, 86160 Champagné-Saint-Hilaire; email cjduvivier@gmail.com

Maurice Tyler

Yvert & Tellier Catalogue 'Timbres de France', Tome 1, 2020

Reviewed by Richard Broadhurst

1500pp, 150 x 215mm format, in French, illustrated in colour.

Published by Editions Yvert & Tellier, 2 rue de l'Etoile, 80094 Amiens, Cedex 3, France

Price: 25€90 plus carriage.

Also available from Richard Broadhurst; price and carriage details upon application to stock@fcps.org.uk



Published in September 2019 the new edition contains 1500 pages, an increase of 176 from the previous year. It lists stamps to June 2019 with an additional 91 gummed stamps, 147 *autoadhésifs* and 16 *blocs* (miniature sheets) including France's first circular example (Y&T F5325) 'Sport, couleur, passion'. There are fewer new sections as most areas of collect-

ing have been covered by additions over recent years. There has, however, been a great deal of reworking of the earlier issues.

Every classic stamp up to *Type Sage* (Y&T 1-60) now has its own dedicated page featuring prices for covers, varieties, *blocs*, bands and specific cancellations.

The section on *Bureaux Français à l'Étranger* has been greatly expanded from two to 29 pages. There is an extensive overhaul of the *Ballons Montés* section, now covering over 80 pages, with an illustrated cover for each of the 67 balloons involved. *Les boules de Moulins* section has also been reworked with much additional information and many new illustrations.

The philatelic glossary at the front of the book has been expanded from six to an impressive twenty-eight pages; this is a most useful section especially for new collectors of France, as is the table of definitive stamp types at the rear of the catalogue. For some odd reason this year it has become truncated and now begins at *Type Iris* rather than starting at *Type Merson* as in previous years.

For the majority of collectors who buy the catalogue annually, the most important factors are the listing of new material and price changes which indicate the current health of the France stamp market. Once again this year I am pleased to report that they will not be disappointed. It was in fact difficult to spot any significant price reductions throughout the entire catalogue.

There is little change in prices prior to the 21st century with the exception of a handful of increases to the more elusive mint classic issues and an increase of 110€ to 9260€ for the most expensive of all sets, the 1917-18 1st Orphans (Y&T 148-155) in unmounted mint condition. This set also benefits from a 25% boost for perfect centring.

In the semi-modern period some *millésime* pairs show spectacular increases notably the 2F *Sage bistre* (Y&T 105) up 100% to 1250€ and the 10c *Mouchon rose* (Y&T 116) also doubling to 400€. *Timbres de bienfaisance* received their first listing last year; these are most attractive engraved charity labels issued by the PTT. Since their appearance there must have been a great deal of interest in them resulting in every stamp rising by at least 25%. Although they have relatively low catalogue prices some are very difficult to find even in France. If they can be found even at full catalogue value I would recommend snapping them up!

As to be expected the vast majority of increases favour 21st century issues with most mint stamps from the last few years receiving a price boost. In addition all TVP stamps (*timbres à validité permanente*), first released in 1993, increase in line with annual postage rate rises, and this can have a substantial upward effect especially on *cartes* which contain a number of these stamps. A couple of pleasant surprises concern *Timbres de Service* where many recent stamps have risen, some doubling in price, and modern *coins datés* where increases of two and threefold are not uncommon.

Many collectors of modern France concentrate solely on *blocs* and these benefit once again from an across the board increase from 2000 onwards. The series reproducing classic stamps are once more the prime movers: the 2014 1€ Cérès orange (Y&T F4871) up 20€ to 160€; the 2015 70th Anniversary of the Liberation (Y&T F4986) up 30€ to 150€ (this *bloc* is the only source of the much sought after 4€ reproduction of the 1945 Liberation stamp (Y&T 739) now catalogued at 42€ alone) and the 2016 Sage (Y&T F5094) up 20€ to 80€. These *blocs*, issued in limited quantities at the Paris *Salon du Timbre* each had a face value of 20€ and represent an excellent return for those who managed to put a few aside!

Other notable increases in *blocs* include the 2014 3€ *Saint-Valentin: Cœur de Baccarat* (Y&T F4883) up 35€ to 175€ (face 15€); the 2016 Euro Football (Y&T BF137) up 40€ to 140€ (face 5€!); the 2018 Orphans (Y&T F5226) up 20€ to 80€; the 2018 Ryder Cup (Y&T BF142) increases from 15€ to 55€ (face 5€20) and the 2018 Vuillard (Y&T F5237A) nearly doubling in price to 48€. In my review of previous editions I have mentioned the unique 2012 *bloc: Le retable d'Issenheim* (Y&T F4675), face value 5€, as being one to watch. I am pleased to say that this again has shown an increase from 48€ to 55€. 2019 saw the release of the two Cérès 170th anniversary stamps, the *bloc* of twenty 88c stamps catalogued at 50€ and the special *bloc* of 150 20c stamps at 180€. Both these *blocs* contain a single *tête-bêche* and I am sure these will see substantial price increases in the coming months.

New sections added this year include *La Lettre Suivie* (see below), an overlooked area which is the only source of a number of unique imperforate self-adhesive stamps that collectors of *Marianne* seek out for a complete collection and a first time listing for *Pochettes Souvenirs Emissions Communes*.

This catalogue is an essential guide to the buying and selling of the stamps of France with realistic up to date prices that accurately reflect the current market. It will please both classic and modern collectors and remains the premier publication in its field.

Footnote

From 2020, the Spink/Maury France catalogue will only be published bi-annually and only stamps up to 1960 will be listed. Last year the catalogue was produced in two sections, hardback to 1960 and soft cover for later issues. This was a most awkward arrangement and coupled with the fiasco over the pricing of modern material, the editors have decided in future to concentrate on earlier issues with which they are more familiar. Just what the market is for a catalogue that stops at 1960 will remain to be seen.



The *Marianne de Ciappa Kawena* and the *Marianne l'engagée* pre-stamped *Lettre Suivie* labels were available from post offices in packets of 5

Books Noted (2)

Les timbres perforés de France

10€ (including postage within France) from secretaire-arp@free.fr

This issue of *La Lettre de l'A.R.P.* (bulletin of the *Amicale Rennaise Philatélique*) is devoted to French perfins, and describes their origins, manufacture and usages. It demonstrates how these items throw informative sidelights onto French social and philatelic history. Check online, or email secretaire-arp@free.fr for a list of 36 other A.R.P. publications.

Jérusalem et la Poste française en Terre Sainte 1843-1948 by Raphaël Livnat

2 vols, A4 format, pp543. Price 100€ (+ 10€ postage within France)

Potential purchasers outside France with Paypal accounts may order by emailing livnat@hotmail.fr

For other queries, contact the author direct: R Livnat, 14 rue Paul Lafargue (403), 92800 Puteaux, France

The French post offices in the Holy Land may seem only of passing interest to general collectors, but M. Livnat shows not only the scope of the subject as a whole, but the lively research that continues concerning it – for this is a revised version, with 250 more pages than its predecessor. 265 illustrations and 140 reproduced documents back up in particular the events between 1914 and the closure of the consulate (and POs) in 1948.

Michael Round

‘Avis de réception - France and Colonies’ a website exhibit by Professor David Handelman

Reviewed by Mick Bister

Non-member David Handelman from Ottawa informs us that he has been preparing, country by country, exhibits on the subject of post-GPU/UPU worldwide AR (*avis de réception*) also known as advice of delivery, double registered, return receipt, acknowledgment of receipt etc). His particular strength is in the AR material of France and her Colonies focusing on the international use of AR to and from France as well as between France and her colonies and between the colonies themselves.

This stunning collection was posted in August* of this year on an exhibit website hosted by American collector and publisher Richard Frajola who lives in Taos, New Mexico. In 2016, Richard and F&CPS member Steve Walske were awarded the Crawford Medal by the Royal Philatelic Society of London for the most valuable and original contribution to philatelic literature in that year. David now invites us to visit Richard's website <https://www.rfrajola.com/DH2019/DH17.pdf> where his exhibit 'AR - France & Colonies' can be viewed, downloaded as a 65 page PDF document or printed off for your own library.

It is indeed an extraordinary collection and will be of interest to all collectors of France and the French Colonies but especially to those who study postal rates. After a useful historical summary with illustrations of AR strikes, we are introduced to AR forms used internationally including an item returned to France from Portugal in 1884 and from Argentina via Spain in 1897. There follows a rich display of AR forms specific to the French Colonies including a 1904 AR returned from Tangier to the French PO in Constantinople, a 1916 form returned from Paris to Niger, a 1919 form returned from Paris to Togo via Dahomey and a 1931 form returned to Pondicherry from Saigon.

We then see various models of returning envelopes of which the highlight has to be what is believed to be a unique example of a registered 1932 AR form being returned from Cambodia to France by airmail. Then follows a section devoted to the later AR cards including a 1934 bilingual card returned from Czechoslovakia to Lebanon and a highly unusual 1939 folding card returned from France to Tunisia.

ADMINISTRATION DES POSTES
de l'Indo-Chine

DIRECTION

AVIS DE RÉCEPTION

d'une lettre avec valeur déclarée de _____ } enregistré au bureau
(1) d'un objet recommandé _____ }
de Saigon le 13 août sous le n° 430 (2)
et adressé à M. Mouramandahy à Rangoon

Le soussigné déclare :
(1) qu'une lettre avec valeur déclarée à l'adresse _____
(2) qu'un objet recommandé _____ sus-mentionnée

Timbre du bureau distributeur : 10c et provenant de _____ a été dûment
livré le 23/8 1904
Signature (1) _____
du Destinataire : _____ du Chef du bureau distributeur

(1) Nature de l'objet (lettre, échantillon, imprimé, etc.)
(2) Bureau d'origine : date de dépôt à ce bureau ; n° d'enregistrement au même bureau.
(3) NOTA. — Cet avis doit être signé par le destinataire, ou, si les règlements du pays de destination le comportent, par le chef du bureau distributeur, puis être mis sous enveloppe et envoyé sous recommandation, par le premier courrier, au bureau d'origine de l'objet qu'il concerne.

Figure 1
1904 distinctive Indochina AR form franked with 10c *Type Dubois*
paying AR fee returned under cover via Singapore to Saigon

* **STOP PRESS:** Following on from successful purchases in the recent Spink sale of Ed Grabowski's collections David has updated his exhibit which will be posted on the website later this month.

If the above link does not work try <https://www.rfrajola.com/exhibits.htm>

Finally we are shown a vast array of AR covers, ie the registered correspondence which the AR form accompanies, and the AR strikes that appear on them. Examples are to destinations all over the world including Poland, the Philippines and Haiti by both surface and air mail. Once again French Colonies are well represented and we see a fine 1900 cover from Constantinople to Marseille, a 1921 cover from Cilicia to Galata, a 1945 cover from Lebanon to Brazil, a 1910 cover from New Caledonia to Mexico and most appropriately a 1902 cover from Martinique to Canada.

This is a spectacular exhibit containing material rarely

seen on this side of the Atlantic and provides an excellent resource for collectors with similar interests. It is highly recommended viewing.

In addition, readers are invited to download David's 122 page book on AR mail <http://www.rfrajola.com/DH2019/1ar.pdf>, which is a continuing project dealing with worldwide AR and gives an overview of the subject and covers a wide range of countries.

David would love to hear from anyone who can offer corrections and additions for updated versions of his exhibits. He can be contacted at rochelle2@sympatico.ca



Figure 2

1897 cover from Haiphong to Marseille with both registration and AR handstamp in red.
 Franked 2 x 25c Type Dubois representing UPU postage rate
 and registration fee (apparently not eligible for French colonial/domestic rates)
 and 10c Type Dubois representing AR fee

Michel Online Update

Those of us frustrated by insufficient German to get the most from Michel's invaluable catalogues will indebted, as I am, to reviewer David Rennie (and editor Graham Phillips) of *Philatelic Exporter* for news of the following announcement from Michel Media Information, dated 13 September 2019.

"Detailed information, such as price quotations for about nearly 800,000 issues from Germany, Europe and overseas, is already available to collectors, dealers and anyone interested in philately – in German. Now Michel will also release contents in English!

"... the contents and descriptions in English language are controlled and not automatically translated, as is standard procedure on the Internet... This way all online customers can be sure that the information they receive has been checked, is of high quality and objective.

"... Functions such as the search template and interface

are already available in English, allowing foreign collectors unlimited use of the databank.

"... informative texts about sets and single stamps, some of which are rather comprehensive, will be available to foreign users in English translation as well... Michel will start with German collection areas. The other collecting areas around the globe will follow step by step...

"The Schwaneberger Publishing House... already [provides] several reference works in English, multilingual brochures and the launch of an English online shop. The Michel Online Data Bank, the translation of which will be completed by the end of the year, will be the last step in providing non-German speaking customers with access to Michel information."

This statement has reached me too near to the Journal deadline for me to investigate further. Subsequent findings and comments from other members will be most welcome.

Michael Round

Africa: New Catalogues

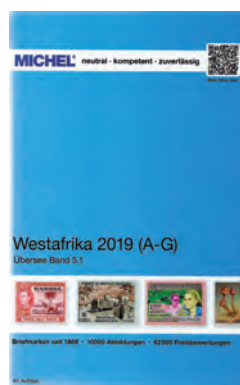
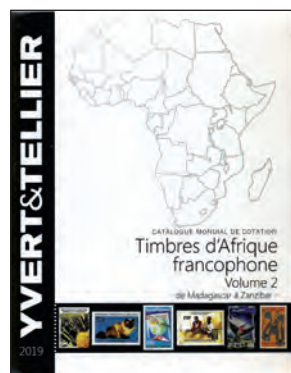
Reviewed by Michael Round

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, pp 665 and 648, 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, pp 788 and 806, illus practically throughout in colour. Price 89€00 (± £89.00 from Prinz/Vera Trinder) each.



Members not fluent in French may opt for the recent Stanley Gibbons *French Colonies*, but I imagine for most of us Yvert & Tellier remains the catalogue of choice – on the very reasonable grounds that a country's (and its colonies') stamps tend to be best and most comprehensively catalogued by the (parent) country itself. French Africa collectors will immediately fall on Yvert's two new volumes by sheer instinct – but here is competition from Michel, covering some of the same ground. Is there anything here that Michel can offer, that Yvert (or Scott, or SG, or Maury) does not?

Layout

Regular Yvert and Michel users will know each publisher's approach intimately: newcomers may not. Both catalogues are colourfully and attractively laid out; Michel gains with bold column-wide year dates but loses with illustrations sometimes too tiny to distinguish small details. Both fight shy of showing enlarged details. Yvert lists postage, airmails, officials, miniature sheets and postage dues under separate headings, often (and unavoidably) pages and pages apart; Michel similarly "ghettoises" officials and dues but keeps postage, airmails and miniature sheets in one chronological sequence – this is especially helpful for former French colonies, whose modern issues tend to use just these three formats.

The Michels are hardback, with bookmark tapes; the Yverts card-backed. Each page is colourful and its layout never cramped. Editorially, Michel tends towards greater thoroughness: printing methods and exact dates of issue are all listed, where known, and minor varieties like perf changes or year imprint dates are given systematic suffixes. Yvert ignores day and month of issue, and only specifies printing methods when differentiating between otherwise similar items. Neither publisher lists designers' names, as SG provides, nor postage rates, as does Maury; errors are included, but not flaws nor re-entries. Non-linguists are helped to different extents: every Michel catalogue

contains, or should contain, a loose 16-page English-language booklet outlining editorial policy and translating all the recurring German philatelic terms though not – how could it? – every single footnote. Yvert, meanwhile, simply translates the numerals from ¼ to 60 (into "six langues", it says, though there are in fact seven!). Editorial policy and further explanation of philatelic terms are all in French only.

Cameroun collectors beware, likewise those of **Ivory Coast**. German spellings put both countries into the opposite volume from what you may have expected: 'Kamerun' is in Michel Volume 5.2 (H-Z), while 'Elfenbeinküste', the teasingly unguessable German name for Ivory Coast, is in Volume 5.1 (A-G). **French West Africa – Afrique Occidentale Française** – is in Yvert Volume 1, under A (no surprise there) but comes under W for (*Französisch-*) *Westafrika* right at the end of Michel Volume 5.2.

Scope

Direct A-B comparison between Yvert and Michel is, of course, only possible for those countries appearing in both catalogues. A prefatory map of the whole continent in Michel Volume 5.2 – though, curiously, not Volume 5.1 – colour-codes the territories covered by this '*Westafrika*' title. Michel's coverage is not entirely predictable: all the components of what used to be French West Africa are in, as expected, plus the relevant former British and Portuguese colonies and (never-colonised) Liberia (all equally "foreign" to German-speaking collectors), but not North Africa (Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia) nor any former Spanish colonies. Yvert, meanwhile, covers just the French-speaking parts of the whole continent – except for ex-Belgian Congo, Rwanda or Burundi, which, linguistically if not philatelically, might have a claim to inclusion.

Unlike the dedicated SG *French Colonies* catalogue (as distinct from *Stamps of the World*), both Yvert and Michel list pre- and post-independence issues together, a great convenience to similarly minded collectors though

– not unexpectedly – Michel’s French colonial coverage is a mite sketchier than Yvert’s (it ignores, for instance, many long-established varieties like the “no stop after F” varieties among 1930s surcharges, and its illustrations of Cameroun’s 1940s overprints are not realistic) though adds useful warnings about forgeries.

There is little new to say about colonial-era listings. They have of course been honed over the decades, and their contents are familiar to all experienced collectors. It is with post-independence and recent issues that these new Yvert and Michel volumes come into their own.

Coping with the flood

Few of us will be surprised that post-independence issues take up a huge proportion of each catalogue. The statistics are terrifying to anyone contemplating even a representative rather than complete collection. **Niger**, for instance, issued 506 stamps in 2013, 499 in 2014, 577 in 2015, 600 in 2016 and 614 (plus six “locals”!) in 2017. Even when listed as concisely as possible, with minimal illustration and frequent cramming of entire sets into a single line of print, they fill page after page in Yvert and Michel alike. It must be tempting to save even more space by casting them all into an Appendix, as does SG, but the occasional cover does surface bearing one dubious item or more, proving actual (if rare) postal usage.

Hidden among the junk, too, will be the odd “relevant and respectable” (“R&R”) issue: something of reasonable face-value, relevant to the country, issued in proper quantity, and likely to be seen in regular use on mail. (One soon gets a “feel” from the listings alone which ones they are.) In Niger’s case, perhaps five items from 2013-17 could be so classed – yet throughout the nine previous years, Niger issued just 33 stamps, all of them “R&R”! Similar statistical imbalances and whimsical new-issue patterns may be seen from other territories, too.

Perversely, “R&R” stamps are often left unannounced at the time of issue and their existence only discovered *post hoc*, either from commercial mail or from the most persistent enquiries to the issuing country. (Yes, perversely – for in the meantime the listings are filled with Agency or otherwise undesirable issues, highly publicised by the perpetrators and therefore easy to catalogue.)

Such *post hoc* items are a cataloguer’s nightmare, having to be shoehorned into already numbered catalogue listings with the aid of letters: suffixes in Yvert, prefixes in Michel. Conveniently, the presence of these letters among columns of catalogue figures acts as a valuable “at a glance” signpost to busy collectors looking for items that other catalogues might miss. Michel lists them promptly; Yvert generally catches up later – though not always. Check your apparent duplicates for three items among the 1998/9 180F Flowers, Costumes and Trains (Yv 1004, 1005 and 1007) of **Ivory Coast**. These also exist surcharged (or printed) “+20f”: Michel lists them thus, but Yvert does not, as yet. Comparison is useful elsewhere: among the 1999-2006 ‘Bella Bellow’ definitives of **Togo** Yvert lists a 175F value definitely issued yet not in Michel, and a 350F quite unknown to any of us who collect the area. (One wonders how SG will eventually deal with this issue: the space left

for it contains just four SG numbers (2267-70), yet – as colleague Nicholas Pertwee’s indefatigable researches have shown – there are at least 36 values so far!)

Keeping up with definitives but ignoring the commemoratives is often the only realistic way of updating a collection. Catalogue listings depend on issuing patterns, set by set: **Ivory Coast**’s largely came out all at once and can be easily found together, but **Senegal**’s ‘*Élégance*’ series were issued piecemeal and both catalogues list them in several tranches, cross-referenced to a greater or lesser extent and with some individual values unpriced. **Morocco**’s current definitives (King Mohammed VI, dated 2001-17) are an extreme example. Yes, they are cross-referenced, but their *millésimes* (imprint year dates) are footnoted *in situ* in at least 29 different places.

Officials (*Service* or *Dienstmarken*, of course, in this context) are comparatively few, and can be painlessly added to a “definitives only” collection. Many of them are less scarce used than you would expect: for instance, those from **Togo** seem to be indiscriminately used on ordinary mail. Michel records different fonts (easily missed) and two extra values among those of **Senegal** (issued 1983-93) – and who among us knew that **Tchad**’s Map-and-Flag set (Yv 1-10) had been redrawn in the mid-1990s with the name of the capital city surreptitiously changed from Fort-Lamy to N’Djamena? Yvert footnotes this change without listing on which values it occurs: something for us all to investigate and report. I have found the 100F so far, and the invaluable website *La Philatélie, Témoin de l’Histoire* (see page 160 in this Journal) adds the 200F.

Pricing

In statistical terms, *post hoc* entries to the catalogue increase the actual total of issued stamps to a figure often way beyond the most recent number for each country: for instance, the 81 surcharges issued by **Bénin** in 2000 are numbered 956AF/956DP, contributing to a total of 117 *post hoc* items between Yvert Nos 956 and 957 alone! (And this is by no means a record.) More importantly, it is here where dramatic prices may be found. Many recent items are priced in dozens (often hundreds) of euros, and widely varying prices between catalogues merely underline the volatility of whatever market exists for them.

An extreme example is the **Senegal** 2008 Paris-Dakar Rally pair. Yvert (1761/2) prices this at just 10€ UM/7€ U, while Michel (2118/9) suggests 200€ (UM only), and in italics, indicating a notional or provisional price. Or take **Ivory Coast**’s 1980 Birds. Yvert (565A/D) lists them at 320€ UM/ 30€ U, not far off SG (665a/d) at £320/£28.75. Michel (A/D672), astonishingly, prices them (again, UM only) at 1200€.

Summary

Many fascinating details lie among the listings of practically any single country. I aim to report a few more another time – but I hope the points made so far give some clue as to how helpful each individual catalogue may be to any one of us. The costs are unavoidably high, and collectors of just a few colonies may feel that Michel is disproportionately expensive – but help is at hand here, particularly for non-German readers. See a statement from Michel Media Information, reported on page 157 in this Journal.

La Philatélie, Témoin de l'Histoire – an invaluable website

It could be that I am the last member in the whole of F&CPS to have discovered this, but in case this is not so, let me whole-heartedly recommend this excellent and copiously illustrated website. Be warned: clear your desk, feed the dog and put the children to bed well before starting to explore, for if you have the slightest interest in France and/or its colonies I guarantee you will still be there hours later, eagerly searching topic after topic with cries of joy. Obscurity is no hindrance: checking Mali Federation, for instance (one of my own more bizarre enthusiasms), I found illustrated covers from there bearing 'Senegal' surcharges never before catalogued nor even noticed, plus a whole range of international reply coupons. Even the redrawn and practically unknown Tchad Officials I mentioned in my Yvert review nearby are illustrated. Overall, the time scale is from 1940 to 1981.

We should be eternally grateful to creator Jean-Pierre Chevènement for so generously making this positive encyclopedia of information readily and freely available to us all. He describes himself as a "passionate amateur" and not a dealer – nevertheless, suggested prices are appended to some items so obscure as rarely to turn up for sale, providing stable bases for negotiation between lucky owners and would-be buyers.



La Philatélie, témoin de l'histoire: l'épopée de la France et de ses Colonies, vue à travers la philatélie 1940-1981 (first dateline 31 Dec 1999, first online posting 26 Jan 2014).

Website: <http://www.histoire-et-philatelie.fr/>

Email: courrierhistorique@laposte.net

Michael Round

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N° 216 Nov 2019: Ségolène Godeluck: «Je suis passée de l'image animé à l'image fixe» (Jullien); Une affaire de gommes (Gomez); Un motif, une façade mais deux couleurs: La Place Stanislas de Nancy (Singeot); Double Frappe (de La Mettrie); Sur les traces d'Hélio Courvoisier S.A. (Busch); La photographie Salon Valérie Bellilin (Nowcka); Le millésime 2016 des TAAF (Dreyfus); Les Cartes de la France combattante (Zeyons); C'était Jean-François Baudot (Toulemonde).

Les Feuilles Marcophiles

N° 377 (June 2019): Deux lettres du consul de France à Shanghai ayant voyagé par le Transsibérien (Gasqui); Un chef de gare et les services postaux en 1864-1865 (4^{ème}

partie) (Douron); Un ingénieux système de préservation du secret de la correspondance sur une lettre de Paris pour Bordeaux en date du 24 janvier 1622 (Lambert); Un aspect peu connu de la poste ferroviaire en Algérie (Flotte); Histoire de la double relation postale du Principat d'ANDORRA - Chap 4: Au 1^{er} janvier 1928 l'Espagne met en place un service postal étoffé sans rapports avec les besoins de l'époque (5000 habitants) (Dupré); Des pigeons «ambulanciers» (Curgy); Étude des tād plastiques utilisés de 1950 à 1952 (Lavenas).

N° 378 (Sept 2019): Utilisation des timbres à date type R84h avec la machine Daguin (Cas); Courrier et marques des camps d'internés civils en Algérie pendant la Première Guerre mondiale (Cournety); La carte d'abonnement à la réexpédition (2^{ème} partie) (Pleinfossé); Histoire de la double relation postale du Principat d'ANDORRA - Chap 5: C'est après une longue démarche internationale que la France a pu établir son propre service postal concurrent le 16 juin 1931 (1^{ère} partie) (Dupré); Un chef de gare et les services postaux en 1864-1865 (5^{ème} partie) (Douron); Timbres «contrôle affranchissement avion» (symbolisé par un numéro cerclé) (1^{ère} partie) (Guillard & Bonnefoy).

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**The President and Committee wish
all members and their families
a Happy Christmas
and a Prosperous New Year
*Joyeux Noël et Bonne Année !***

