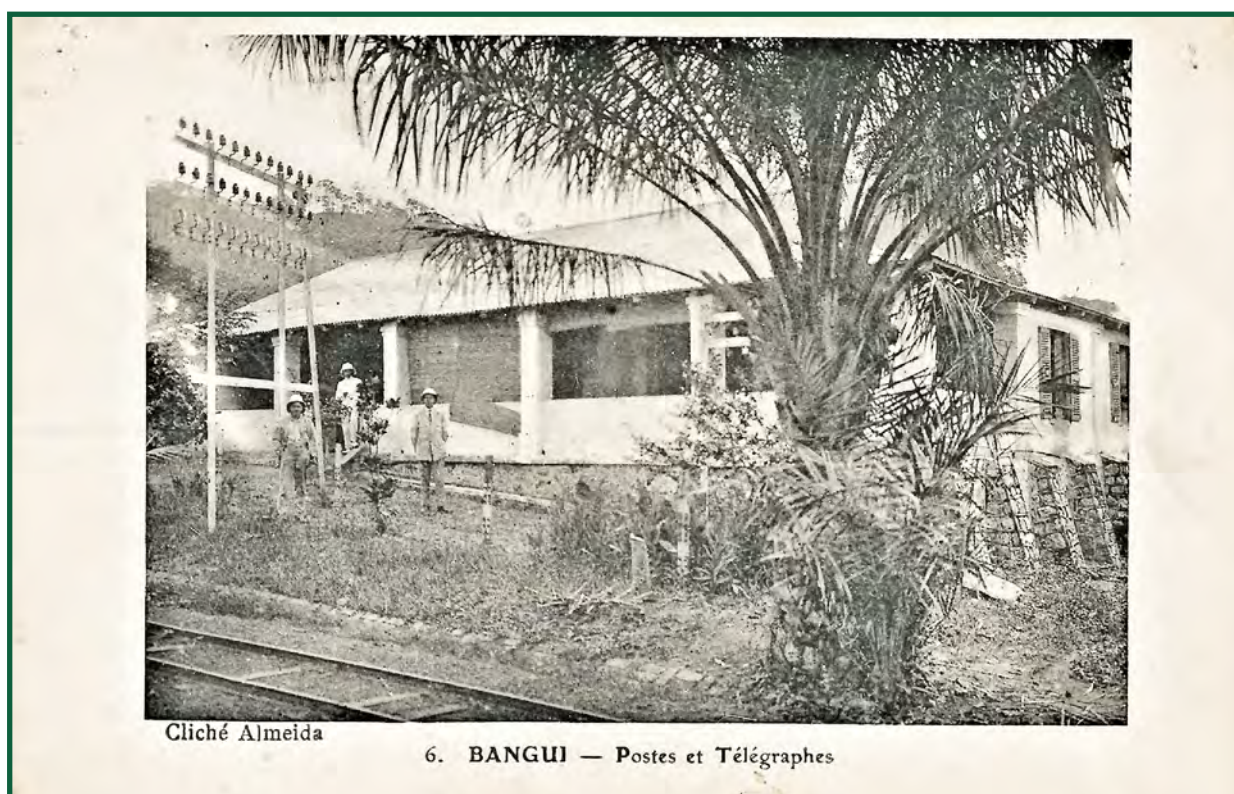


# THE JOURNAL OF THE FRANCE & COLONIES PHILATELIC SOCIETY



Postcard depicting the first post office in Bangui, around 1900. Note the telephone pole and small gauge railway line in front of the building. The picture is from Part 1 of an intensive study of the post-independence postmarks of the Central African Republic by Marc Parren and Martin Bohnstedt  
(See pages 13-17)

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**THE FRANCE & COLONIES  
PHILATELIC SOCIETY OF GREAT BRITAIN**  
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All inquiries about and applications for membership should be addressed to the General Secretary.

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\* \* \*

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## SOCIETY NOTES

### Editorial

Welcome to the first Journal of the 2020s. Following Maurice Tyler's excellent stewardship as Editor, I hope and intend to continue the standard that Maurice achieved with the Journal. No one person is responsible for the Journal, it takes a team to produce excellence, from the well researched articles to sharp-eyed proofreaders, to caring printers, they all play a part. I especially thank Mick Bister for making the transition very easy for me over the last two months and I again thank Maurice for leaving an excellent blueprint to work from.

What do I collect? 'The Travels of *Marianne de Gandon*' is my main area of French collecting, it shows the stamp issue as a postal history exhibit; 'Coventry - 91 miles from London' - a one-frame of postal markings, 1752 being the earliest strike I have; a delightful exhibit of 'The Beautiful Gladys Cooper' a three-frame postcard exhibit of the actress and theatre manager. I enjoy and collect most things postal history, censor covers, postal ephemera, postmarks, slogans, etc. I'm not as active in collecting or exhibiting as I was, as along with editing this Journal and managing the Society's website I also manage three other websites.

Jan Gane



### New Members

The Society is pleased to welcome new members 1484 Dr William (Bill) Lusty, 1485 (new number) Alan King, 1486 Ms Jennifer Wolvers and 1487 David Hart.



### Resignations

Members 1442 N Borlase-Hendry, 1474 E Harris, 1082 J Sears, 1372 R Thurnham, 1327 M Trickett and 745 D L Wilkinson have advised us that, sadly, they will not be renewing their membership.



### Displays by Members

On 21 November 2019, **Len Barnes** contributed to the display given by fellows and members of the Royal Philatelic Society South Eastern Region at the Royal's new premises in London. His choice was two frames entitled 'French Colonial Aviation between the World Wars'. Similarly, as part of the display given by the RPSL Thames Valley Region on 6 February, **Paul Watkins** included two frames of 'London Chief Office Late Mail, 1840-1915'



### Members Deceased

#### Judith Holder

It is with great sadness that we report the death of Judith Holder who passed away in January. We send our heartfelt condolences to her husband Stephen.

Although not a member, Judith was an active supporter of the France & Colonies Philatelic Society as well as the Northern Regional Group and local philatelic societies. She will be particularly remembered for hosting the incomparable Bastille Day meeting held every year at Bradford where members were generously plied with pâté, cheeses and salads, peaches from the local market and raspberries from her garden. She supported Stephen in all his philatelic endeavours and was a regular visitor to the Society's annual weekend at Leamington and Charlecote where she helped Stephen run his stand.

We will remember her kindness, her cheerfulness, her willingness to get involved and her fondness for her cats! She will be greatly missed by all the members who had the good fortune to know her.



### Future Events

**In light of the Covid-19 situation it is unlikely that the following meetings will take place. Please contact your local convenor for clarification.**

The **London Group** will be meeting on Saturday 25 July from 11.00am to 4.00pm at the Calthorpe Arms, 252 Grays Inn Road, London WC1X 8JR when **Chris Hitchen** will be presenting '1876 to 1900 in Paris'. After lunch, the afternoon will be devoted as usual to members' displays.

The **Northern Group** will be holding its next meeting on Saturday 11 July 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 18 July at the Scout Hall, Lower Street, Harnham starting at 10.30 am; the speaker will be confirmed later. 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.





# Post-independence postmarks of the Central African Republic

Marc Parren and Martin Bohnstedt

## Part 1

### Background

French activity in what currently is named the Central African Republic began in 1889 with the establishment of the outpost Bangi (now Bangui) at the head of navigation on the Oubangi river. The Upper Oubangi region was established as part of French Congo on 9 December 1891. Next it was contested from 1892 to 1895 by the Congo Free State (Belgian Congo). The Upper Oubangi region was a separate colony from 13 July 1894 until 10 December 1899, at which time it was given back to form part of the French Congo. Later the Upper Chari region was established as part of the French Congo on 5 September 1900.

The territories were united as the separate colony of Oubangi-Chari on 29 December 1903. In 1909, it received the administration over the sultanates of Zemio and Rafai from the Belgian Congo. On 15 January 1910, this administration was merged with the French Middle Congo and Gabon as the Oubangi-Chari area of French Equatorial Africa that lasted until 1958 under different statutes. On 4 November 1911 the western part of Oubangi-Chari became part of so-called Neukamerun, a colonial territory deal signed between France and Germany in which Germany was compensated for territory in Morocco handed over to France at the time.

The Versailles Treaty signed in 1919 decided that Neukamerun became part of French Equatorial Africa again without compensation. The area was renamed Central African Republic and gained autonomy on 1 December 1958 and achieved its independence from France on 13 August 1960.

After independence, the country saw several dictatorial regimes, notably the one led by Jean-Bedel Bokassa as president and next as self-proclaimed emperor. The first free multiparty elections took place in 1993. They brought Ange-Félix Patassé to power, who was then toppled in 2003 by François Bozizé. The fact that Bozizé was nominated president was violently contested and the first civil war engulfed the country between 2004 and 2007, until the signing of a peace agreement. However, the rebels denounced the non-adherence of the agreement by President Bozizé. Next, a coalition of varied rebel groups,

known as Séléka, relaunched the armed attacks at the end of 2012, starting the second civil war of the Central African Republic. President Bozizé was re-elected in 2005 and 2010, but fled the country when the capital was seized by the Séléka rebels in March 2013. Next the rebel leader Michel Djotodia declared himself president. Renewed fighting began between Séléka and militias called anti-Balaka. In July 2014, Séléka factions and anti-Balaka representatives signed a ceasefire agreement in Brazzaville. By the end of 2014, the country was de facto partitioned with the anti-



Balaka in the south and west, with most of its Muslims displaced from regions controlled by anti-Balaka, and Séléka in the north and east. During the past two decades there has been little government control outside of the capital Bangui, with state institutions such as courts, civil administration and security forces absent. Peacekeeping operations were put in place such as MICOPAX and MISCA by the African Union, as well as the UN led MINUSCA, while the French peacekeeping mission, which

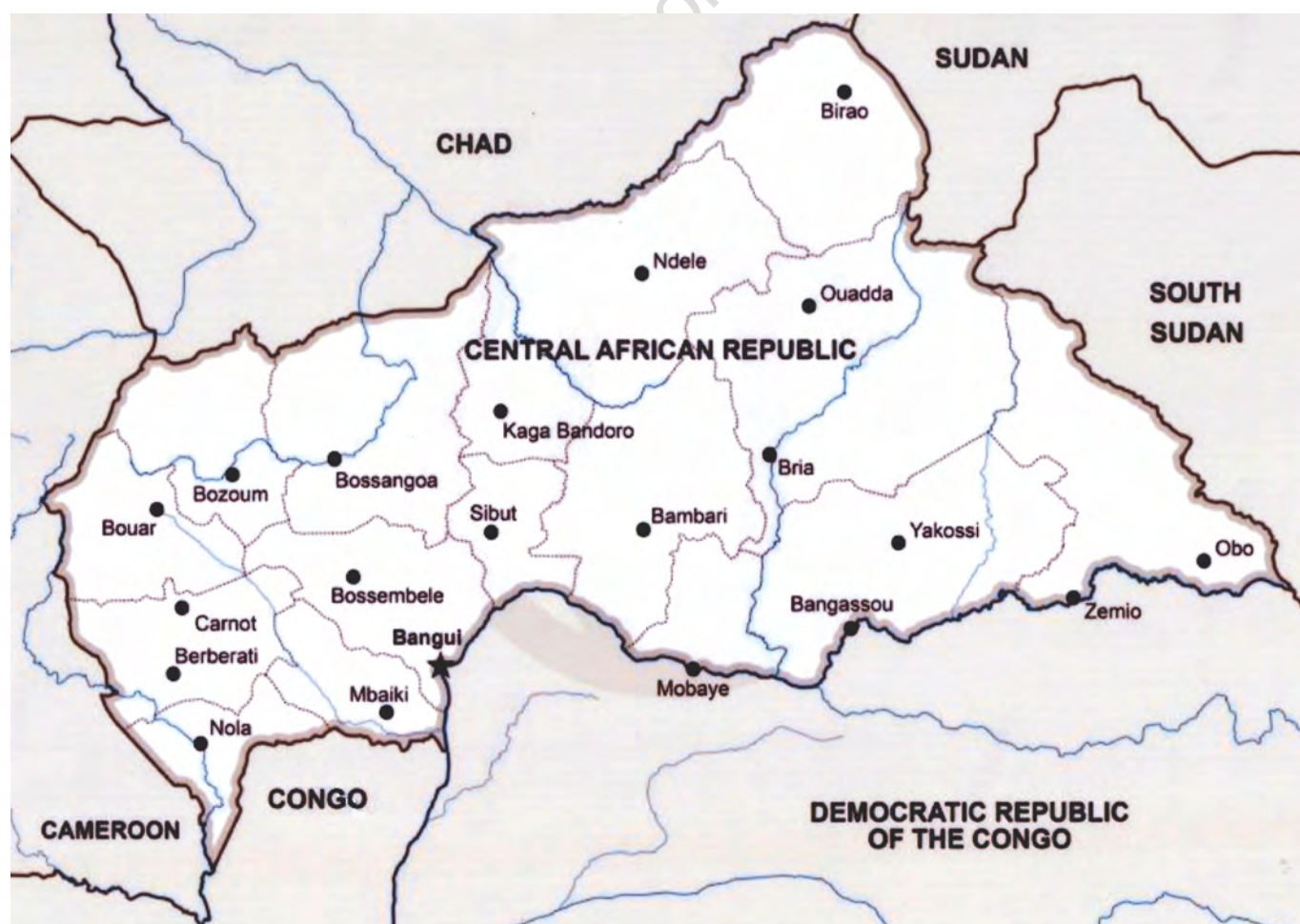
withdrew in 2016, was known as Operation Sangaris. A transition period with elections resulted in the vesture of Faustin Archange Touadéra as president on 30 March 2016. A process of disarmament of ex-fighters, the establishment of security and reconciliation is in progress ever since. However, armed groups are still active in large parts of the country, and are the cause of many violent acts and form an obstacle for the effective presence of the State.

### Postal developments

During the French colonial period some 44 postal facilities opened their doors. UPU statistics show us that between 1983-1987 some 76 post offices were operational, which gradually declined to 53 in 1991, 31 in 1993-1996, 32 in 1997, 35 in 1998-1999, 33 in 2000, 32 in 2001-2003, 24 in 2004-2005, 27 in 2006, 24 in 2007-2010, and 26 in 2013. We have identified some 82 post offices so far of which 75 are in the country side and 7 in Bangui. Since we do not possess an official list of the 76 post offices operational in the early 1980s we cannot check whether they identified fewer post offices in Bangui than the 7 we consider to be individual post offices although we distinguish also many more services with their own postmarks. Maybe they counted Bangui as a single post office to account for 76 post offices. As for Fort Crampel / Crampel / Kaga-Bandoro it is considered to be one and the same post office which also applies to Fort Sibut / Sibut. Although they have their own respective postmarks

they are to be found in different successive time periods as their names changed.

In accordance with law No. 94.012 of 22 November 1994, the *Office National des Postes et de l'Épargne* (ONPE) or National Posts and Savings Corporation is responsible for the universal postal service through the collection, transmission and delivery of documents, correspondence and small packets. Collection is conducted across post office counters, and delivery via P.O. boxes located within post office premises. The ONPE finances its operations through internal resources and terminal dues. However, owing to its chronic budgetary deficit and to the financial difficulties of the State (the owner), the ONPE can no longer finance itself and it has not received any State subsidy for more than 20 years. The GPO in Bangui holds a considerable but haphazard stock of stamps in two storage rooms, mostly thematic agency issues of the last twenty years, but also including some older issues going back to the late 1960s that have been neither looted nor destroyed during the country's civil wars. A post office inventory in mid-2019 estimated the total face value of all stamps at 4.5 million euros. During the early 2000s delivery of letters from the Central African Republic to Europe averaged 12 days, while the other way round it took some 5-7 days. Numerous airmail letters dispatched by the authors between 2015 and 2019 all arrived safely albeit slowly,



Map of the Central African Republic and its main towns Source: Onestopmap





usually three to six weeks after the date of posting. Incoming mail takes one to three months to reach Bangui. For almost a year in 2018/2019 outgoing postal operations were suspended in their entirety while the ONPE implemented technical upgrades to its procedures.

The second co-author<sup>1</sup> lived in the Central African Republic from 2015 to 2019, working for MINUSCA, and undertook numerous field trips to towns in the interior. Initially he observed that no post offices were operational in the interior at the time and only two post offices in Bangui, the ones at the *Recette Principale* (General Post Office) and the Aéroport M'Poko. Although in 2013, when the second civil war raged, some 26 post offices were still operational it seems that the next year, apart from Bangui, all came to a standstill. Gradually ONPE is reopening some post offices such as the SICA one in the SOCATTEL building in Bangui and the one in Berberati both during the latter part of 2017. The post office in Bouar reportedly resumed operations in early 2018, with Yaloke, Beloko and/or Carnot also identified for a revival. We expect that gradually more post

offices will be reopened. What also can be noted is that none of these reopened post offices obtained new material to cancel letters. We have seen old postmarks to be used which still lingered in a drawer and apparently did not get lost. However, some of them are almost unreadable such as the one in use at the M'Poko airport. During a visit in July 2019 to the re-opened Bouar post office, which offers merely money transfer services apart from selling some postage stamps, the postmaster had no Bouar postmark in service but instead showed a postmark of an unreported post office named Niem, a small town that is confined north-west of Bouar, with a date of 1983 still visible. The postmaster reported that he had found this postmark at the re-opening of the Bouar post office which we will report under Bouar since we are not sure the post office in Niem was ever functional until postally used covers are reported. The most recently reopened post office is that at Bangui Boy-Rabe which resumed operations in April 2019 and began using a newly made, provisional, hand-cut rubber postmark in September 2019.

## ALINDAO



Post office operational in the 1930s

	<p>Double circle 29.5 mm with bridge</p> <p>Earliest: 17.4.1965</p> <p>Latest: 1.6.2000</p>	
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## BABOUA

Post office open at least since 1949

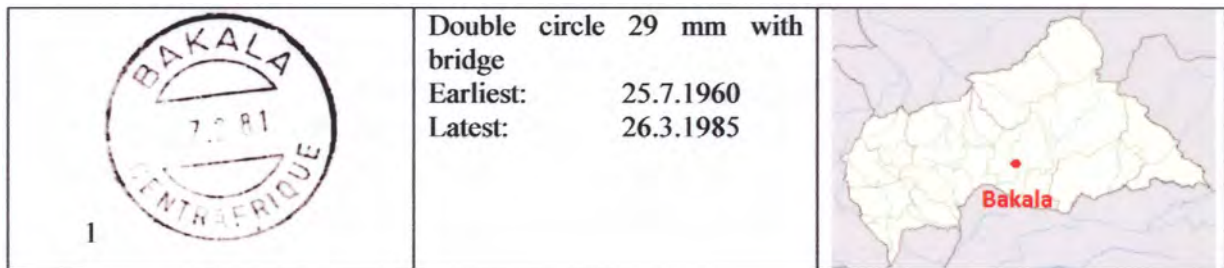
After the French-German agreement of 4 February 1894, which confirms the French claims on a string of posts established between Ouesso to Koundé, Baboua becomes part of French Congo. The town is handed over to German Kamerun on 4 November 1911 and with the outbreak of WWI the French occupy the town and it thus forms part of Moyen-Congo again. No German postal facility functioned during that pre-war period.

	<p>Double circle 29.5 mm with bridge</p> <p>Earliest: 7.9.1961</p> <p>Latest: 23.1.1985</p>	
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<sup>1</sup>All 2015 to 2019 post office photos were taken by Martin Bohnstedt.

## BAKALA

Post office opened after independence  
A French post is founded in 1909

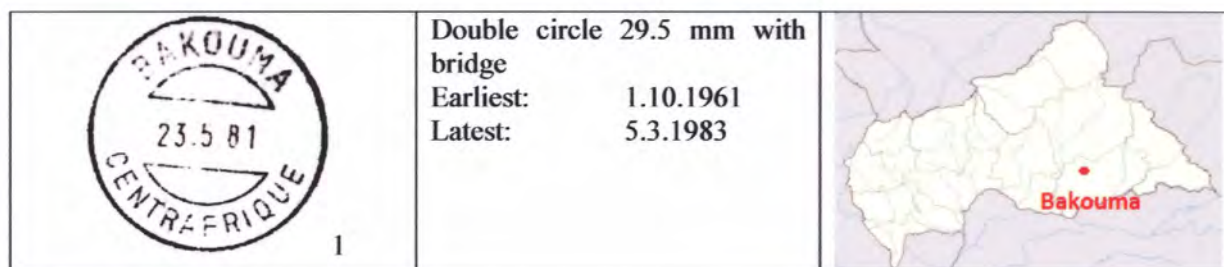


## BAKOUMA

Post office opened after independence



Bakouma Post Office  
March 2019.









## BAMBARI

Post office opened 1 January 1911

In 1909, the French post Bambari is founded along the Ouaka river, after a first installation in 1906





Former Bambari Post Office building with post office building turned into a health post  
January 2018.

<p>1</p> 	<p>Double circle 30 mm with bridge B - C = 8 mm</p> <p>Earliest: 11.10.1960 Latest: 28.4.1984</p>	
<p>2</p> 	<p>5 wavy lines machine cancellation circle 24 mm</p> <p>Earliest: 19.12.1964 Latest: 13.11.1971</p>	
<p>3</p> 	<p>Double circle 30 mm with bridge</p> <p>Earliest: 12.8.1982 Latest:</p>	<p>B - C = 10 mm</p>



## BAMBIO

Post office opened after independence

 <p>1</p>	<p>Double circle 29.5 mm with bridge</p> <p>Earliest: 21.10.1972</p> <p>Latest: 13.11.1976</p>	
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## BAMBOUTI

Post office opened after independence

 <p>1</p>	<p>Double circle 30 mm with bridge</p> <p>Earliest: 21.6.1973</p> <p>Latest: 22.7.1975</p>	
--	--	---



## BAMINGUI

Post office open at least since 1930  
French military post present in 1904

 <p>1</p>	<p>Double circle 29.5 mm with bridge</p> <p>Earliest: 14.12.1968</p> <p>Latest: 22.7.1975</p>	
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## BANGAO

Post office opened after independence

 <p>1</p>	<p>Double circle 29 mm with bridge</p> <p>Earliest: 8.8.1964</p> <p>Latest:</p> <p>RCA below</p>	
--	--	---






## BANGASSOU

Post office opened 1 January 1908

Town named after the sultan at the time of Belgian colonial occupation in 1890. After an international treaty the town was handed over to the French on 14 August 1894.



Bangassou Post Office  
March 2019

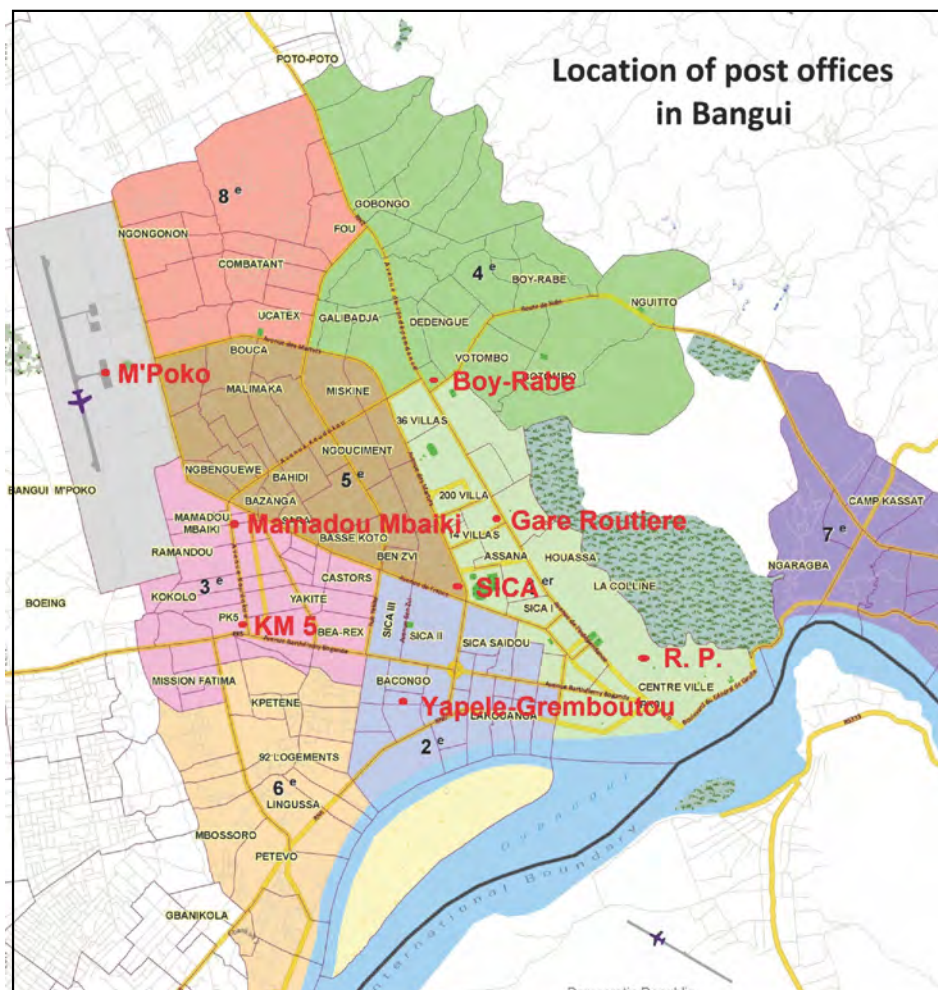
<p>1</p> 	<p>Double circle 29.5 mm with bridge Earliest: 10.7.1961 Latest: 6.10.2000</p>	 <p>Bangassou</p>
<p>2</p> 	<p>Slogan machine cancellation with 24 mm circle Earliest: 17.11.1968 Latest: 15.9.1969</p>	<p>SES CULTURES VIVRIERES / LES GRANDES CHASSES</p>



## BANGUI

First post office opened 1893

The city was founded 26 June 1889 and named after the rapids in the Oubangui river



## BANGUI AEROPORT M'POKO

Post office opened after independence



Bangui Aéroport M'Poko.




The front view of the airport in November 2017



Bangui M'Poko post office inside the airport  
January 2018



 <p>1</p>	<p>Double 29 mm circle with bridge Earliest: 31.10.1961 Latest: 23.12.1963</p>	
 <p>2</p>	 <p>Slogan machine cancellation with 24 mm circle Earliest: 31.8.1962 Latest: 11.8.1966</p>	<p>REPUBLIQUE CENTRAFRICAINE / son PARC NATIONAL / St Floris / ses Safaris / de Grand chasse</p>
 <p>3</p>	 <p>5 wavy lines machine cancellation with 24 mm circle Earliest: 1.1963 Latest:</p>	<p>CENTRAFRIQUE below</p>
 <p>4</p>	 <p>Slogan machine cancellation with 24 mm circle Earliest: 20.1.1969 Latest:</p>	<p>EXPOSITION PHILATELIQUE / PHILEXAFRIQUE / ABIDJAN / 14-23 FEVRIER 1969 CENTRAFRIQUE below</p>
 <p>5</p>	<p>Double circle 29.5 mm with bridge Earliest: 26.6.1972 Latest: 12.8.2002</p>	<p>Apostrophe in M'POKO</p>
 <p>6</p>	<p>Slogan machine cancellation with 24 mm circle Earliest: 5.8.1985 Latest: 28.4.2000</p>	<p>«Le Bois» Ressource forestière / de Centrafrique seen applied in red ink in 1987</p>
 <p>7</p>	 <p>5 wavy lines machine cancellation with 24 mm circle Earliest: 14.4.1984 Latest: 9.7.1984</p>	<p>R.C.A. below</p>

 8	Single circle 30 mm Earliest: 3 MAR 1984 Latest: 14 NOV 2003	No apostrophe in MPOKO R.C.A. below
 9	Single circle 30 mm Earliest: 4 JUIN 2002 Latest: 13 MAR 2012	Apostrophe in M'POKO CENTRAFRIQUE below
 10	Single circle 30 mm Earliest: 22 FEV 2016 Latest: 7 JAN 2018	Unreadable but still in use, applied in red ink

### Acknowledgements

We would like to thank Messrs. Jean Goanvic, Alain Hurpet, Stéphane Pennacchiotti, Gerald Prins, Yves Tayana, France, and Mr. Robert Jenkins-Hayes, USA for sharing covers and dates of use of postmarks. Mr. Stéphane Pennacchiotti was kind enough to share the opening dates of the respective post offices during the colonial days he has investigated.

### References

Pannetier, P.L. (1959). *Afrique Equatoriale Française*. Les Feuilles Marcophiles N° 117, Pp4-9; N° 118, Pp 21-26; N° 119, Pp10-14 and N° 120, Pp26-30.  
 Round, M. (2016). *The Central African Republic*. Gibbons Stamp Monthly October 2016: 54-59.

**Part 2 will be published in the next Journal**

### Urgent appeal for articles

Yet again I have had minimal response to my last appeal for articles and this failure will be at the heart of my report presented at the 2020 AGM. The Journal will not survive unless I receive more contributions than I am doing. At the moment I hold just enough material for the August Journal which I am about to embark on but I have very little for the December edition and only the final parts of a continuing series for next year.

It really is everyone's responsibility and in everybody's interest to contribute to the Journal. Such a responsibility cannot be left to the same few members. There are, at the time of writing, 265 members in the Society yet I can only rely on a dozen or so to support the Journal. To these members I extend my heartfelt gratitude and thanks. As for the rest of the membership, PLEASE think hard about how you can share your knowledge, interests and discoveries with other members of our Society and send me an article, of any length and on any topic, so that I can be assured of material for future editions.

Type your text in Word, add any images, scanned at 300dpi, as separate jpeg attachments and email them to me, Mick Bister, at [manager@fcps.org.uk](mailto:manager@fcps.org.uk).

The success, or failure, of the Journal depends on you. Thank you.



# Senegal: Rare Destination of a Post Office Postal Stationery Wrapper from Great Britain

Dr John K. Courtis FRPSL

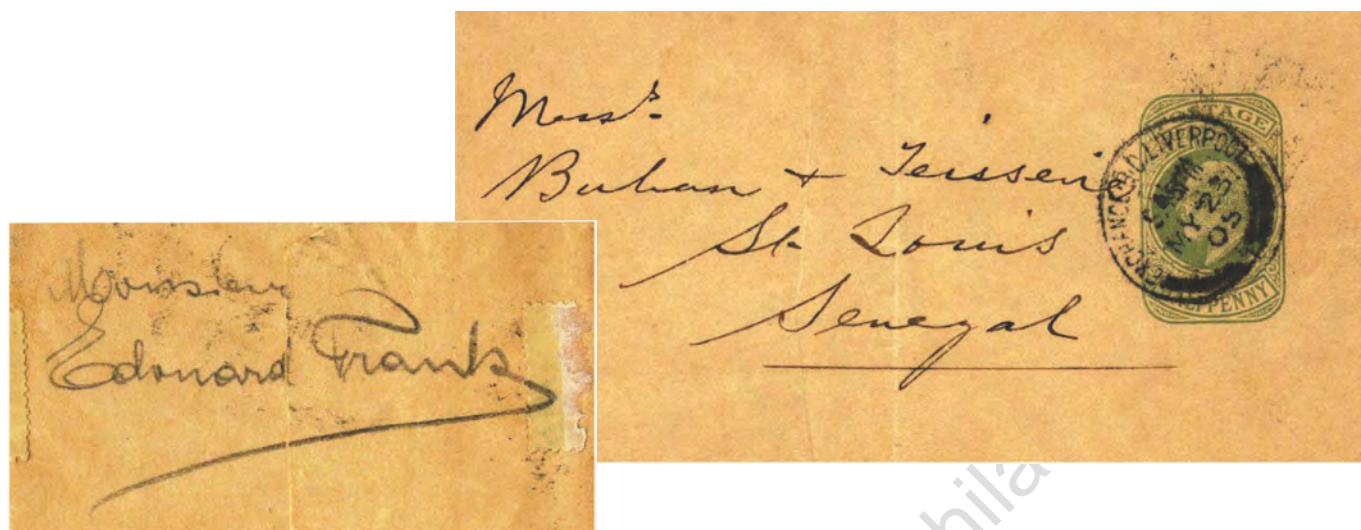


Figure 1

Wrapper addressed to Messrs. Buhan & Teisseire, St. Louis, Senegal with (insert) signature of Monsieur Edouard Franks written on reverse in a different hand

An analysis of more than 11,000 postally used wrappers of Great Britain has revealed only a single case of Senegal as the destination. There is no formal rarity scale for destinations, but if there was, this wrapper must qualify as rare with only one recorded example known (Figure 1). The wrapper is a January 1902 King Edward VI ½d blue-green issue (E12 as per the Higgins & Gage Postal Stationery of the World). The 33mm postmark is EXCHANGE LIVERPOOL 5.45PM MY 23 05 and identifier 13. The wrapper is addressed to *Messrs. Buhan & Teisseire*, St. Louis, Senegal. Written in pencil across the sealed flap in a different hand is the possible sender, Monsieur Edouard Frank. There is no arrival date or nominated ship from Liverpool.

## Senegal and St. Louis

Senegal (Figure 2) is the westernmost country in Africa, bordered by Mauritania to the north, Mali to the east, Guinea to the southeast and Guinea-Bissau to the southwest. It also borders The Gambia in the south, a narrow sliver of land along the banks of the Gambia River. Senegal's economic and political capital is Dakar. The name comes from the Senegal River. Although the Portuguese had landed on the Senegal coastline in the mid-15<sup>th</sup> century, by 1677 France had gained control of the tiny island of Gorée off the coast of Dakar, which in 1902 replaced St. Louis as the capital. Earlier, when the slave trade was replaced with peanut cultivation, Gorée proved to be ineffectual as a port and traders shifted to the mainland and established a factory with warehouses. Infrastructure development included the Dakar-St. Louis Railway in 1885. In its colonial heyday Dakar was one of the major cities of the French Empire. French trading firms established branch offices and industrial investments were attracted by its natural deep-water port and rail facilities.



Figure 2 Map of West Africa

St. Louis is located in the northwest on the coast near the mouth of the Senegal River (Figure 3). It was the capital of the federation of French West African colonies from 1894 to 1902 when the capital was then shifted to Dakar. Access to its port became more difficult for lower keel steamships, and in any event, with the rail link to Dakar which opened in

1885, up-country trade effectively circumvented its port. Large French firms took over the new commercial networks of the interior but many closed once the capital left St. Louis. By 1914 the population of the city was fewer than 25,000.



Figure 3  
Panoramic view of Saint Louis, circa 1900

### Addressee

The firm of Buhan and Teisseire was established in 1871. The history behind this firm commenced in 1849 when Joseph Evariste Buhan travelled to St. Louis with a proxy to dissolve an existing company between Isaac Marot and Hyacinthe Bourillon and create a new company: Hyacinthe Bourillon, JE Buhan & Co. This company was in the rubber (gum) trade as well as shipping between Senegal and Europe. However, Bourillon died in 1850 and a new partner was taken into the firm in 1854 – Henri Raboud, a local merchant. He stayed in the business until 1870 when he was replaced by Evariste Buhan's son-in-law, Albert Teisseire who, in turn, brought his father into the partnership and all the shares that he owned from A. Teisseire. The firm was now called JE Buhan and Son with a share capital of 600,000 francs. The commercial firm of Buhan and Teisseire resulted in 1871 and became one of the top five companies that developed peanut agriculture and

controlled peanut exports (Figure 4). Eventually they imported hardware, pharmaceuticals, stationery, fabrics and food from Europe and exported gums, peanuts, leather and beef. The building owned by Auguste Teisseire at 20 Neuville Street, St. Louis formed a quadrilateral on four streets Neuville, Thevenot, Peace and Chapel, with an east wharf warehouse on Cormie Street.

By 1905, the postmark date on the wrapper, the firm had set up also in Dakar. As early as 1884, the company had bought land in Dakar for 15,500 francs. Its main stores were located at 1 rue des Essarts. Although they had owned three ships previously, by 1905 they owned one steamer *S.S. Senegambia*, which they continued to use until 1916. The company is still in existence having re-engineered itself into information technology as well as industrial and business activities.





Figure 4  
Transport of peanuts by camel to the local rail station

### Sender

Without a merchant handstamp to identify the sender it is unrewarding to speculate on the sender. Written in indelible pencil across the sealed flap are the words *Monsieur Edouard Frank*. Although this signature could have been added upon arrival in St. Louis, it is difficult to conjure up a reason for so doing. The firm was well-known, the mail would be delivered to the firm and be placed on the desk of a senior manager. The addition of Monsieur Frank adds nothing. However, from the sender side, the name was probably recognisable in Senegal from prior merchant dealings with this Liverpool firm. The signature identifies the sender as someone representing a French connection. Nevertheless, a search of the Liverpool census for 1901 and 1909 revealed no Edouard Frank, not does he appear as a Liverpool exporter. His name and the name of his firm are probably not the same. His signature includes an underlining which from a handwriting expert point of view suggests a confidence; the likely implication was that Monsieur Frank was senior in the firm.

Identifying the enclosure of the wrapper is equally conjectural. One clue is that the firm imported hardware, pharmaceuticals, stationery, fabrics and food from Europe, presumably mainly from France. The one item from this list

that might be better supplied from Liverpool is textiles. The rail link between Manchester and Liverpool would facilitate accessibility of textiles from Manchester and enable a Liverpool exporter to establish a warehouse near the docks. If this is plausible then the enclosure was probably in the nature of a prices current list of textiles (and other household goods) that could be shipped to St. Louis based on an order received by the Liverpool firm.

### The Route

The wrapper left Liverpool Exchange in the early evening at 5.45pm on Tuesday 23 May 1905. The newspaper the *Liverpool Echo* of 23 May 1905 states that the mails for West Africa will close tomorrow (Wednesday 24 May) at the GPO Liverpool at 8.15am per the *SS Warri* of the *British & African Steam Navigation Co.* The *SS Warri* was built in 1901 for the British & African Steam Navigation Co. It is a reasonable assumption that the wrapper was taken aboard the *SS Warri* for departure on the 24<sup>th</sup>. The first coaling stop was Tenerife, Canary Islands leaving within one day for Dakar; this was a mail stop for Senegal in general. Dakar, with a deep-water harbour, was an entrepôt. The sailing time from Liverpool to Dakar was 13-14 days arriving circa 5 June.



After unloading at Dakar, mail addressed to St. Louis was sorted in Dakar and placed aboard the Dakar - St. Louis Railway for the 165-mile trip. A map of the route is shown (Figure 5) and a postcard showing the train at the St. Louis railway station (Figure 6) from where the mail then went to the post office and delivery. The route was

Dakar to Rufisque, Thiès, Tivaouane, Louga, Linguère, and St. Louis. The time taken by rail was less than one day. The total in-transit time from Liverpool on the day after the postmark (23 May), entailed 13-14 days sailing including the coaling stop at Grand Canary, plus one day by rail, arriving at St. Louis on or about 5 June.

Figure 5  
Map of the rail route between Dakar and  
St. Louis. At least some of the rail stops were  
based on peanut agriculture.

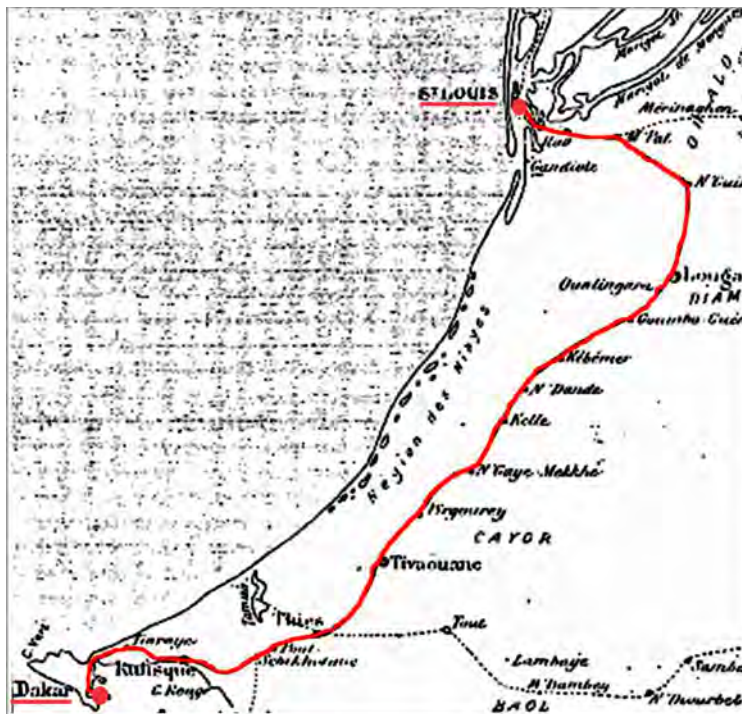


Figure 6  
Train at the St. Louis Railway Station separated from the road to the right.

## Summary

How long is a piece of string? Without shipping information, dated backstamps and merchant handstamps it would be easy to give up without attempting an analysis of this wrapper to St. Louis, Senegal. The sole known recorded copy of a Great Britain wrapper to Senegal, dated May 1905, deserves some respect and effort for its longevity and scarcity. When the nature of the addressee is researched, the firm of Buhan & Teisseire is revealed as a major player in the economic development of the area with an export-import business (the firm is still in existence). The route is identifiable because the British & African Steam Navigation Co. held a contract for European mails for delivery from Liverpool to West Africa. Liverpool to Dakar (about 2,800 miles), stopped at Grand Canary for

coaling replenishment and then off-loaded the St. Louis mails at Dakar for onward delivery by the Dakar-St. Louis Railway, arriving on or about June 5 with an in-transit time of about 15 days.

There is an opportunity for knowledgeable postal historians to improve this story. Somewhere there must be details about the timetable of the Dakar-St. Louis Railway for 1905 that would more precisely identify the departure and arrival times between Dakar and St. Louis and better refine the in-transit time.

If you have any further information please contact me at [acapajc@friends.cityu.edu.hk](mailto:acapajc@friends.cityu.edu.hk)

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## Acknowledgement

Sheila Mackenzie helped to unravel the story of the addressee, but the pencil signature across the flap remains a mystery. She edited an earlier draft of the paper and I thank her for her assistance. Colin Tabcart identified the ship ex Liverpool and helped to refine the story.

## Examiner to the accounts required

Due to committee changes a new examiner for the society's accounts is required. The position would be suited to someone who has experience as an accountant or has familiarity with audits.

The year accounts are completed by the treasurer towards the end of January each year and then submitted for examination. As the AGM is now usually held in mid-March each year that allows around one month in February to complete the process.

Any person willing to undertake this essential task should get in touch with the current treasurer, who can provide further guidance and detail if needed.

Chris Hitchen  
[treasurer@fcps.org.uk](mailto:treasurer@fcps.org.uk)

# French Mandates of Syria and Lebanon

Ashley Lawrence

## Part 3: The French Mandated Territories Syria-Greater Lebanon, Greater Lebanon and other territories

After the defeat of Turkey in 1918, the Lebanon came under French military administration and, on 25 April 1920, France was given a mandate by the League of Nations to administer Syria, including the Lebanon which was given a separate status under the French Mandate on 1 September. To the Lebanon, as defined by law in the settlement of 1861, were added Beirut and other coastal towns and the inland Bekaa area, and the whole, which gave the country its present frontiers, was renamed the State of Greater Lebanon (*Grand Liban*)<sup>1</sup>.

### The Joint overprints: Syrie-Grand Liban, 1923

The French Mandate became effective on 29 September 1923. Stamps with the 'O.M.F. Syrie' overprints were withdrawn. Greater Lebanon, the mainly Maronite Christian area which had had a separate status from Syria since 1 September 1920 (but where the French Occupation O.M.F. stamps had been used) now had its name joined to that of Syria on the stamps in use. After September 1923, some values of the definitive *Types Blanc*, *Semeuse*, *Merson* and (in December 1923) *Type Pasteur* were overprinted with

the joint names 'Syrie-Grand Liban'. The overprints were applied by the Capuchin Fathers in Beirut. The overprinted stamps range from 10c on 2c *Type Blanc* claret to 25p on 5 franc *Type Merson* deep blue and buff (Figure 28).

There were two forms of overprint: one has the name 'Syrie' above 'Grand Liban', the other (on *Type Merson* issues for the higher values from 2 to 25 piastres) has both names hyphenated on the same line.



Figure 28

Examples of the 'Syrie-Grand Liban' joint overprints on the *Types Merson* and *Pasteur* issues (Y&T Syrie 100-104)

The joint overprints were also applied to airmail stamps (*Type Merson* overprinted 'Poste par Avion') and to Postage Due stamps (*Type Duval*).

### Separate Issues: Syria

From 1 January 1924, French stamps were issued separately for Syria and for Greater Lebanon. The stamps issued for Syria only were overprinted 'Syrie' by the Capuchin Fathers in Beirut between January and June 1924 (Figure 29). Some of these were printed on G.C. paper. The Syria stamps range from 10 centîmes on 2c *Type Blanc* claret, through the *Type Semeuse* to 25 piastres on 5 franc (*Type Merson*) deep blue and buff and include *Type Pasteur*.

In July 1924, a bilingual surcharge was introduced using Arabic and French (Figure 30). In addition to some values of the definitive *Types Blanc*, *Semeuse* and *Merson*, the new overprints were also applied to *Type Pasteur* stamps, to the Paris 1924 Olympic Games set, and to the 75c issue commemorating the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of the poet Pierre de Ronsard, as well as to the airmail stamps (*Type Merson* overprinted 'Avion')) and to Postage Due stamps (*Type Duval*).

The overprinted stamps range from 0p 10 on 2c *Type Blanc* claret to 25p on 5 franc *Type Merson* deep blue and buff.

<sup>1</sup>Extract from Stanley Gibbons Stamp Catalogue, Part 6, 'France' (sixth edition, 2006)





Figure 29

Examples of the *Type Merson* stamps overprinted for Syria in 1924 (Y&T Syrie 114-116)



Figure 30

Examples of the *Types Semeuse camée*, the *Semeuse lignée* and the *Pierre de Ronsard* stamps with bilingual overprints (Y&T Syrie 133-134, 138-139 and 153)

### Grand Liban: full overprint

From 1 January 1924 French stamps were likewise overprinted separately for Greater Lebanon. Between January and June 1924, various values of the definitive *Types Blanc*, *Semeuse*, and *Merson* were overprinted 'GRAND LIBAN' (Figure 31). The overprints range from 10 centièmes on 2c *Type Blanc* claret to 25 piastres on 5 franc *Type Merson* deep blue and buff. The overprint was also applied to the *Type Pasteur* issues, and to the Paris Olympic Games set.

*Type Merson* stamps were overprinted 'Poste par Avion GRAND LIBAN' for airmail use by the Capuchin Fathers of Beirut (Figure 32). *Type Duval* stamps were also surcharged for Postage Due usage.

From July 1924, as for the Syrian issues, the stamps were also overprinted with a bilingual overprint in Arabic and French (Figure 33) with the text all in lower case.



Figure 31

*Types Blanc*, *Semeuses* and *Merson* issues overprinted 'GRAND LIBAN' in January 1924 (Y&T Grand Liban 1, 4, 9 and 13)



Figure 32

*Type Merson* 'GRAND LIBAN' issue overprinted 'Poste par Avion' (Y&T Grand Liban PA 1)



Figure 33

Type Merson 'Grand Liban' issues with bilingual overprints (Y&T Grand Liban 36-38)

### Gd Liban: abbreviated overprint

In July 1925, new forms of surcharge were introduced, which abbreviated the name to 'Gd. Liban', used Arabic notation and expressed the denomination in a different manner. The new overprints were applied to the definitive *Types Blanc*, *Semeuse* and *Merson*, ranging in value from 0p.10 on the 2c *Type Blanc* claret to 25p on the 5 franc. *Type Merson* deep blue & buff.

The 'Gd. Liban' overprint was also applied to the *Type Pasteur* stamps, the Paris 1924 Olympic Games set, the 75c Pierre de Ronsard issue, as well as to the airmail (overprinted just 'Avion') and postage due stamps (Figure 34). The overprint was applied to French stamps until March 1925.

The Lebanese cooperated with the French in drafting a constitution, which was adopted, and the state of Greater Lebanon became the Republic of Lebanon on 23 May 1926. Newly designed stamps were then issued, showing various views of Lebanon.

British and Free French forces took control of Syria and Lebanon from the Vichy controlled French regime in June 1941 and, on 26 November 1941, Lebanon was proclaimed independent. French troops remained in occupation. The powers exercised by France were transferred to the Republic on 1 January 1944.



Figure 34

The abbreviated bi-lingual 'Gd Liban' overprints of 1925 on (top) *Type Pasteur* and *Duval Taxe* issues (Y&T Grand Liban 41 & 44 and Taxe 9 & 10), on (middle) the Paris 1924 Olympic Games set (Y&T 45-48) and on (bottom) *Type Merson* (Y&T Grand Liban PA 6)



## Other territories

Figure 35

Map showing location of Cilicia is to the north west of Syria and the State of the Alaouites north of Greater Lebanon

### Cilicia

Following the 1918 Armistice, Turkish forces withdrew from Cilicia. Cilicia was an area corresponding roughly to the Turkish *vilayet* of Adana, a region of Anatolia which lies between the Taurus Mountains and the Gulf of Alexandretta on the Mediterranean coast, north of Syria (Figure 35). Cilicia was initially occupied by the British Egyptian Expeditionary Force, advancing through Syria, and was occupied by French troops from January 1919. The French occupation was confirmed by the Treaty of Sèvres, made with the Sultan's government in August 1920, and lasted until October 1921.

At first, the French administrators used Turkish stamps overprinted 'T.E.O.' (Enemy Occupied Territory) and also one French stamp inscribed 'Levant', the 10c *Type Mouchon* (Figure 36).

From March 1920 French stamps, *Types Blanc, Semeuse* and *Merson*, were overprinted 'O.M.F. Cilicie' (the initials standing for *Occupation Militaire Française*). A boxed 'POSTE PAR AVION' handstamp was applied to the 15c *Type Semeuse* and the 40c *Type Merson* for airmail use.



Cilician currency was expressed in Paras and Piastres, the same as that used in Turkey. Overprints on the stamps reflect currency changes during the period of French occupation and administration between March 1919 and October 1921. (Figure 37)



Figure 36

Block of 4 of the 10c *Type Mouchon* overprinted T.E.O. with one stamp with 'PARAS' missing (Y&T Cilicie 77 and 77a)



Figure 37

*Type Semeuse* issue (below) with thin O.M.F. and small '2' variety and *Type Merson* issue (above) with bold O.M.F. (Y&T Cilicie 82/82a and 94)



Turkish bilingual handstamps were used to cancel mail  
(Figures 38 and 39).



Figure 38  
Turkish cancel used at Adana, Cilicia, in April 1921 on reverse of letter franked by  
Type Semeuse issue (Y&T Cilicie 91)



Figure 39  
Turkish cancel used at Mersina, Cilicia, in March 1921 on piece franked by  
Type Semeuse issues (Y&T Cilicie 90, 91 and 93)

### Sandjak de l'est

Initially, the stamps overprinted with just 'Cilicie' were intended for use exclusively in the western *sandjaks* (districts) of Cilicia and a second issue of seven values overprinted 'Cilicie SAND. EST' were printed for the eastern sector (Figure 40). However, the latter were never

delivered and were put on the philatelic market. They are therefore found only in mint condition although cancelled to order examples and philatelically contrived covers can be found<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>2</sup>Over the years, catalogues have been ambivalent regarding the status of the used copies. *Yvert 'Spécialisé' Bureaux Français à l'Étranger et Territoires Occupés*, 1940 prices all seven values mint but prices only four values used. *Scott 2003* declares the stamps were prepared for use but never issued; no used values are priced. *Maury Pays d'Expression Française 1970*, *Yvert & Tellier Tome 4 Colonies Françaises 2004* and *Maury Dally, Europe & Asie 2006-07* concur with *Scott*. In sharp contrast *Stanley Gibbons France Part 6 2006* lists and prices all seven values, both mint and used as well as their numerous varieties; however, *SG French Colonies 2016* gives prices for only the mint values. (Information provided by Michael Round)





Figure 40

'SAND. EST' overprint on *Type Semeuse* issues (Y&T Cilicie 99, 100 & 103)

Turkish nationalists, led by Mustafa (later Kemal) Atatürk, continued to wage war, and the French occupation of Cilicia ceased in October 1921.

### The State of the Alaouites

The Alawis or Alaouites are the Shi'ite inhabitants of the coastal region of Syria between Hatay and Lebanon (Figure 35). On 1 September 1920, Syria was divided by the French

into the autonomous states of Aleppo, Damascus and the Alaouites. After the mandate for Syria had been given to France, an administrative reorganisation was made on 1 January 1925. The mandated territory was divided into the state of Syria (consisting of the former states of Aleppo and Damascus) and the state of the Alaouites, and separate issues of stamps were made for each state.



Figure 41

Alaouites overprint on *Type Semeuse* issues (Y&T Alaouites 2, 3 & 12) and on *Type Merson* issues also overprinted 'Avion' (Y&T Alaouites PA 1-4)

The *Types Blanc*, *Semeuse*, *Merson* and *Pasteur* were overprinted 'ALAOUITES' for the first issues in January and February 1925, using Arabic notation (Figure 41). The currency was 100 Centimes = 1 Piastre. The overprints were applied by the Capucin Fathers in Beirut. The *Type*

*Merson* was also overprinted 'Avion'. From March 1925, Syrian stamps were overprinted for use in Alaouites.

On 22 May 1930 the state of the Alaouites was made a republic, and was named Latakia after its chief town on 22 September 1930.

## Cultural imperialism

It was perhaps inevitable that, in their administration of the Lebanon and Syria, the French, as the mandatory power, would seek to introduce French methods of management and promotion of cultural heritage, the organisation of education, the exploitation of antiquities, public opinion and people's attitudes as expressed in the classroom, in newspapers, in museums and locally organised institutions. The French did so enthusiastically, in a manner they thought enlightened and well-intentioned, which would improve the lives of those under their protectorate.

It was equally inevitable that such attempts by France would be resisted and opposed by those nationalistic Lebanese and Syrians who saw any changes introduced by France as attempts to water down or eliminate their cultural heritage.

The Levant contained a myriad of historic and holy sites such as Ba'albek, Antakya (Antioch) and Palmyra on the Silk Road; and palaces, mosques and museums holding a

wealth of antiquities. The French government and French entrepreneurs were keen to encourage tourism and to exploit the commercial opportunities offered by these assets, to the ultimate benefit of the economy of the region. The locals, Lebanese and Syrian merchants and intelligentsia, were appalled at the prospect, and bitterly resented French interference in their affairs. As nationalists, they regarded such exploitative promotion by the French occupiers as being motivated by nothing more than sheer colonialism and contemptible opportunism, and met them with widespread and violent revolt.

The great majority of Lebanese and Syrians contested the imposition of French mandate rule, with the result that the confusing political situation in the region became even more complicated and inflammatory. The bitterness and blame continue to this day.

## Source material

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- Display and talk given by Ashley Lawrence to the FCPS at Charlecote, March 2018.

## Appeal for group mailer

You will have recently received an email from the Society with an attachment from Cavendish Auctions Ltd which promoted a forthcoming sale of unusual and scarce French stamps and postal history. The Society believes this to be an important service to our members who otherwise may not be aware of such a sale.

Please note that the Society does not provide any contact details to auction houses, publishers or other organisations who wish to contact our members; instead we contact you on their behalf thereby keeping your membership data safe.

We now require someone to take on the responsibility of group mailing members of the Society. The job would entail creating mailing groups and, upon receiving a promotional item, attaching it to an email which would be sent to all the groups simultaneously. The person accepting the post would receive in advance the list of members' email addresses and subsequent updates during the year.

This should not be an onerous task as we only receive one or two requests a year so if you are willing to take on the task please contact me at [manager@fcps.org.uk](mailto:manager@fcps.org.uk). Thank you.



# The Olympic Winter Games of Grenoble 6 - 18 February 1968

Edwin Voerman



Figure 1

The set of five values of the 1968 *Jeux Olympiques d'hiver*, Grenoble set issued on 27 January 1968

The last Olympic Winter Games were held in PyeongChang in South Korea in 2018. It might be interesting to look back fifty years at the Winter Games in Grenoble in 1968 (Figure 1).

The first Olympic Winter Games were organized in 1924 in Chamonix. Until 1992 they were organized in the same year as the Olympic Summer Games, but since 1992 they were organized in the even years in between the Olympic Summer Games. The games held in Grenoble were the 10<sup>th</sup>

Winter Games; the next Winter Games to be held in France were in Albertville in 1992.

The beautifully designed blue stamp from 1937 with the inscription 'Chamonix-Mont Blanc' (Figure 2) with the image of a ski jumper seen from behind from 1937 (Y&T 334) has nothing to do with the Olympic Winter Games. This stamp commemorates the world championship downhill skiing (alpine ski) that was organized in that year in Chamonix from 13 – 15 February.



Figure 3 Postcard (reduced) of the Ice Stadium at Grenoble with Winter Games logo and the 0,60 1968 *Jeux Olympiques d'hiver* promotional issue of 1967 incorporating the Winter Games logo

Prior to the stamp set dedicated to the Olympic Winter Games of 1968, France issued a 60 centimes stamp (Yv.1520) to promote the games during the months April to December 1967 (Figures 3a and 3b). The stamp was designated to frank a letter going abroad and so announced

the Games to the world. This stamp was the first one that was executed by the heliogravure technique by the State stamp printing company of *La Poste*. The heliogravure-stamp issued in 1931 (Y&T 274) was printed by a private printing company.



The set of stamps that were issued in France on the occasion of the Winter Games in Grenoble in 1968 (Y&T 1543-47) can be called curious in several respects. The four sports shown (skiing, ice hockey, figure skating and slalom skiing) as well as the stamp with the Olympic flame have been designed rather stiffly and mostly in very harsh colours. This is not the finest French issue from that period. Most of the stamps were designed by the engraver Jacques Combet (1920-1993) from whom we could have expected more; however, he has designed other stamps in this jagged style. It is possible that his brief ('le cahier des charges') did not provide him more space.

Furthermore, the choice of the face values is remarkable. The three lowest values of the set could be used for the postage of a domestic letter (30 centimes) (Figure 4), a foreign postcard (40 centimes) (Figure 5) and a foreign letter (60 centimes) (Figure 6). However, the two highest face values of 75 and 95 centimes had a very limited possibility of postal use, namely an airmail postcard or airmail letter to the U.S.A. Although cards and letters to the U.S.A. are rather common, I have never come across such items franked with 1968 *Jeux Olympiques d'hiver* stamps. Neither have my collector friends in France.



Figure 4  
Letter to Paris correctly  
franked at the internal  
letter rate with a 30  
centimes issue



Figure 5  
Postcard to  
Switzerland correctly  
franked at the foreign  
postcard rate with a 40  
centimes issue



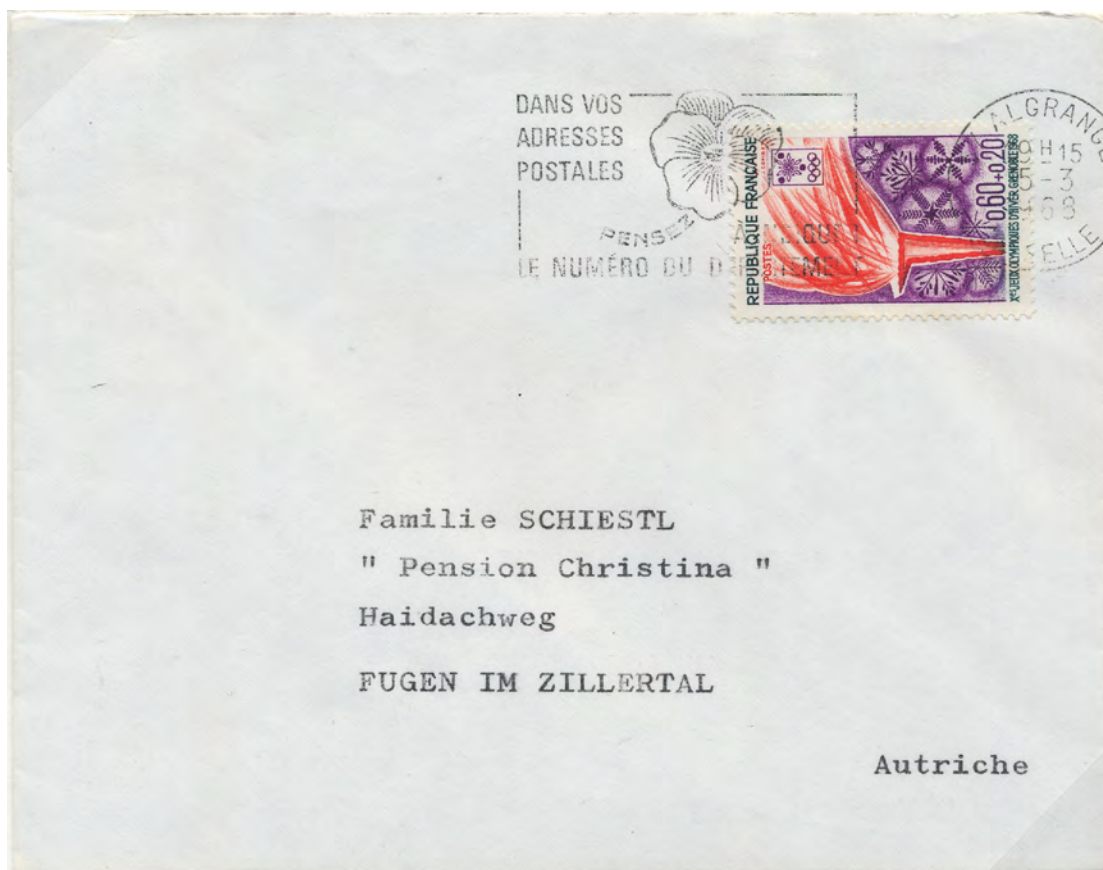


Figure 6  
Letter to Austria franked with the 60c value paying the foreign rate

The 75 centimes stamp came close to the second weight domestic letter rate, for which 70 centimes was due at the time. A stamp with a face value of 95 centimes has only appeared twice in France for the franking of a registered domestic letter. From 1 February until 19 May 1964 the letter rate was 25 centimes and the registration fee 70 centimes, together 95 centimes. This type of mail was so common that specific stamps were issued for this purpose, but after May 1964 this rate no longer occurred. The more surprising is the issue in 1968, 4 years later, of a stamp with a face value of 95 centimes, which was no longer needed for interior postal purposes.

If the 75 centimes stamp had been reduced to 70 centimes, that stamp could have been used more easily as a second weight step for internal mail. The 95 centimes stamp could have been replaced by a 1 franc stamp, which could have been used for a second weight foreign letter which is of common use. The 1 franc Art stamps of the '*Musée imaginaire*' of that period are frequently seen on letters abroad. Except for the 30 centimes the focus on foreign postal functions was undoubtedly chosen by the French post office for propaganda purposes to spread the '*Prestige de France*', but resulted in stamps that mainly ended up in the albums of collectors because of shortage of real postal possibilities to use them.

Of course, the additional consequence of surcharged stamps sent abroad (and rarely seen there) has been that many of those items have never returned. In those days the focus was strongly on stamps off cover. So, what was sent abroad will have ended in most cases as single stamps in an album.

Only the first three stamps of this set are to be found on cover now and then, but there is little hope to find the two highest values. After having collected for over forty years I can show you a letter which should have been franked with 70 centimes, but has been overfranked with 5 centimes by using a 75 centimes stamp (Figure 7). Because of the rarity of postal usage of this stamp, this is just acceptable for a collector of covers.

Finally the surcharge on the stamps is remarkable. This is the first time a surcharge was levied on the face value of these kind of commemorative stamps. No wonder philatelists protested fiercely. 24 years later (in 1991) there were also issued special stamps with a surcharge on the occasion of the 1992 Winter Games at Albertville.

The extra revenues of the special 1968 set were divided between the French Red Cross (the usual beneficiary of all surcharged stamps in France since 6 November 1949) and the organizing committee of the 10<sup>th</sup> Winter Games.



Figure 7

A somewhat damaged domestic letter of the second weight over franked by 5 centimes. 70 centimes stamp would have been sufficient.

Apparently, they could do with some extra money. From 29 January until 3 February 1968 these stamps could only be purchased as complete sets, but afterwards the stamps could also be purchased individually. Of the three lowest values about 6 million copies were sold and of the two highest values about 5 million.

One set represented a total franking value of 3 francs and the surcharge per set was 1 franc, so the full price of a set was 4 francs. According to the numbers sold probably 5 million series ended in the albums of philatelists or with stamp dealers, which resulted in an extra income for the PTT of 5 million francs, in addition to the face value of the series itself. 5 million series x 3 francs meant a further benefit of 15 million francs.

Nowadays we no longer have so many surcharged issues. The Albertville issue of 1991 was reduced to about 2 million sets and nowadays the issue of a stamp with a surcharge will not amount to more than 1,5 million. As a result of the very large number of sets of the 1968 Olympic issue in combination with the diminishing number of straightforward collectors the individual stamps of this emission are worth virtually nothing, but postally used these stamps merit all of our attention and appreciation.

The challenge for the collector who has more ambition than only filling the empty spaces in his/her album is to find stamps with a clearly visual normal date stamp from 1968 and the first three values on cover.





Figure 8  
First flight cover to Athens franked 80c paying the foreign airmail letter rate

And finally, a first flight cover to Athens (Figure 8) correctly stamped with two 40 centimes issues, the 60 centimes paying the foreign letter rate and the 20 centimes paying the airmail fee - together exactly 80 centimes. These kind of 'special flight' covers are rarely correctly franked. In general, one used whatever looked attractive. But (by coincidence I guess) this cover is 'a good one'. I doubt if the sender was aware of the correct franking, if not the seller!

## ABPS News

The Winter edition of the 'ABPS News' the official magazine of the Association of British Philatelic Societies, featured our Society both on the cover and inside with a report and illustrations of our 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations.



## SHORTER ITEMS - INCLUDING QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

### 170<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the first French postage stamp 20c *Cérès*, 1849-2019 (continued)

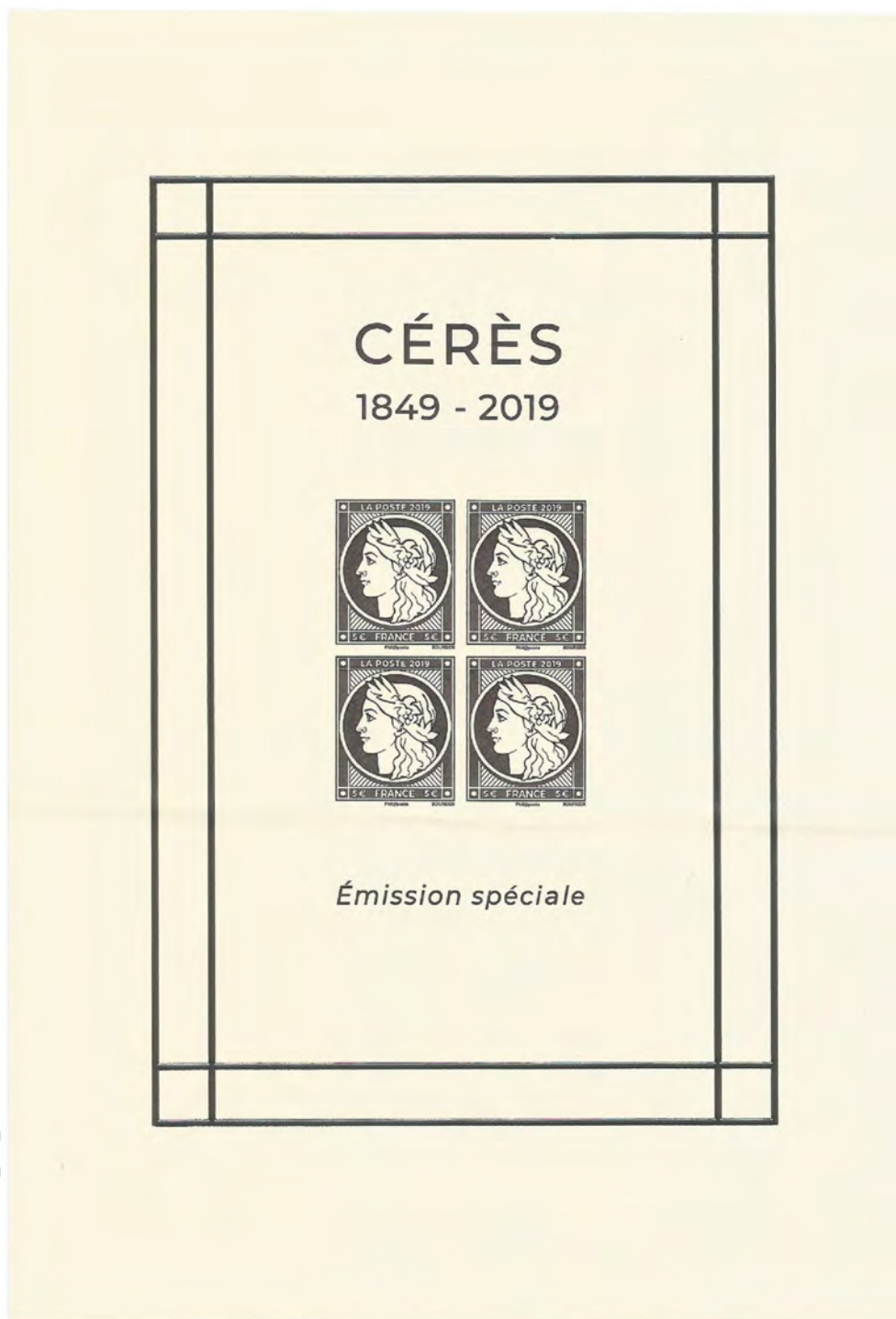


Figure 1  
'Émission spéciale' miniature sheet of 4 x 5€ *Cérès*

Further items were issued at the 73<sup>rd</sup> Paris *Salon Philatélique d'Automne* in November 2019 to commemorate the 170<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first *Cérès* issue.

The first was a *bloc* of 4 x 5€ specially commissioned *Cérès* stamps designed and engraved by Louis Boursier

(Figure 1). In the style of France's first miniature sheet, the 1925 Paris International Philatelic Exhibition 4 x 5F carmine Sage (YT BF1 Pexip), the stamps and lettering are recess printed (*taille-douce*) in black with a silver border. 40,000 copies of the *bloc* were issued at its face value of 20€.





Figure 2

'L'AFFRANCHISSEMENT' booklet comprising mixed values of the *Cérès* and *Marianne l'engagée* issues



Figure 3

Perforated *Cérès* and *Marianne l'engagée* maxi-stamps



Figure 4

Perforated *Marianne l'engagée* and imperf *Cérès* stamps

To complement the bloc a mixed carnet (Figure 2) containing fourteen stamps was issued with a face value of 16,80€ in an edition of 70,000. In keeping with recent commemorative *carnets* the booklet comprises two panes. The first has two maxi-stamps: a 2,10€ *Cérès* in black and a

2,10€ *Marianne l'engagée* in red (Figure 3) and the other pane has two blocks of six stamps: the *Marianne l'engagée Lettre prioritaire* in red and the imperf 1,05€ *Cérès* in black (Figure 4). This is the first carnet of France to contain imperf stamps.



Figure 5  
'Valeurs de Cérès – 1849'  
miniature sheet



Figure 6  
Central value with its extended inscription

The final item was the '*Valeurs de Cérès – 1849*' miniature sheet of twenty-five mixed imperf stamps (Figure 5) sold with a complementary sixty-page booklet on the history of the first postage stamp. The *bloc* which is printed in typography has a face value of 19€ and was only available with the booklet at a total cost of 29€. The *blocs* are dated 04.10.19 and are individually numbered. The stamps are in five rows of five and consist of 3 x 0,20c black, 6 x 0,40c blue and 16 x 1€ vermillion of which one pair is a *tête-bêche*. The stamps in this *bloc* are matt compared to the previous *Cérès blocs* which have a shiny appearance. This makes the 0,20c stamp from this *bloc* different from the stamp in the special sheet of 150 stamps issued in March 2019. In addition, the central 0,20c stamp is unique with the dates '1849 – 2019' printed either side of 'FRANCE' in the top border (Figure 6).

This *bloc* has caused a great deal of controversy in the French stamp world with only 6,000 copies issued. It was only available at the Paris *Salon d'Automne* to personal callers at the Phil@poste stand. In comparison the *bloc* of 20 x 0,88c black *Cérès* stamps (YT F5305) issued in March had a print run of 90,000!

Inevitably there was a great deal of commotion on the first day of the salon when, by 3pm, stocks were completely exhausted leaving hundreds of collectors who had been issued with numbered tickets since 10am unsatisfied. The French philatelic press reported on the turmoil and angry shouting - "*grand émoi et cris de colère!*". By the second day of the exhibition the *bloc* was being offered by dealers at around 150€.

It is hard to fathom the reasoning behind issuing the *bloc* in such a small quantity considering it was an integral part of a series to commemorate the most important event in French philatelic history. One can only assume that Phil@poste deliberately engineered a situation to create a great deal of publicity for itself (albeit dreadful). Had they issued 90,000 copies as per the previous *bloc* they would have pocketed an additional 2,500,000€ just for the cost of a print run. Altogether an extraordinary commercial decision!<sup>1</sup>

To acquire all the new *Cérès* issues in 2019 comprising four *blocs* and one *carnet* the total cost to a collector was 138,40€. As the stamps were not available singly from Phil@poste you would have actually ended up buying 208 stamps to add only nine new stamps to your collection!

**Richard Broadhurst**

<sup>1</sup>There is currently an on-line petition on Ebay.fr demanding a second printing of the miniature sheet. Search 'Demande collective (à Phil@poste et puis en justice) de réimpression du bloc Cérès'. MLB



## URGENT letters from Indochina

Below are images of letters (one posted Hanoi to Marseille in November 1929 and the other posted from Saigon to Morocco in December 1929) both of which exhibit 'URGENT' labels. In each case, the label consists of black

text on a red background. My question is whether the labels carried any postal significance i.e., did the seller pay for some extra service? Or conversely, are the labels merely instructive like a 'Fragile' notation?

Ron Bentley



Neither of these covers has anything to do with the *Service Accélééré*. The 19.12.29 cover is the first service Saigon-Bangkok-Amsterdam-Paris and the other the other is the 17 November 1929 flight by Costes and Bellonte from Hanoi to Paris.

The 'URGENT' labels, I think, are purely private. They are probably to indicate that the covers should go on the above flights.

The manuscript 'Par la malle aérienne Hollandaise via Bangkok 18.12.29' on the Saigon cover may need an explanation.

Between November 1929 and January 1931 mail between France and Indochina was carried by the Dutch Airline KLM as the French did not have an aircraft suitable for the journey. The French would not buy other countries' aircraft so the through French service to Indochina had to wait until they had manufactured a suitable aircraft. The first all-French Flight was on 17 January 1931, the return flight being 3 February 1931

In the meantime, mail from France to Indochina was sent to Amsterdam from where it was flown to Bangkok. At

Bangkok it was transferred to Air Asie for the flight to Saigon. The return flights were similar except that mail on the later flights was unloaded at Baghdad and transferred to Air Orient for onward flight to Marseille.

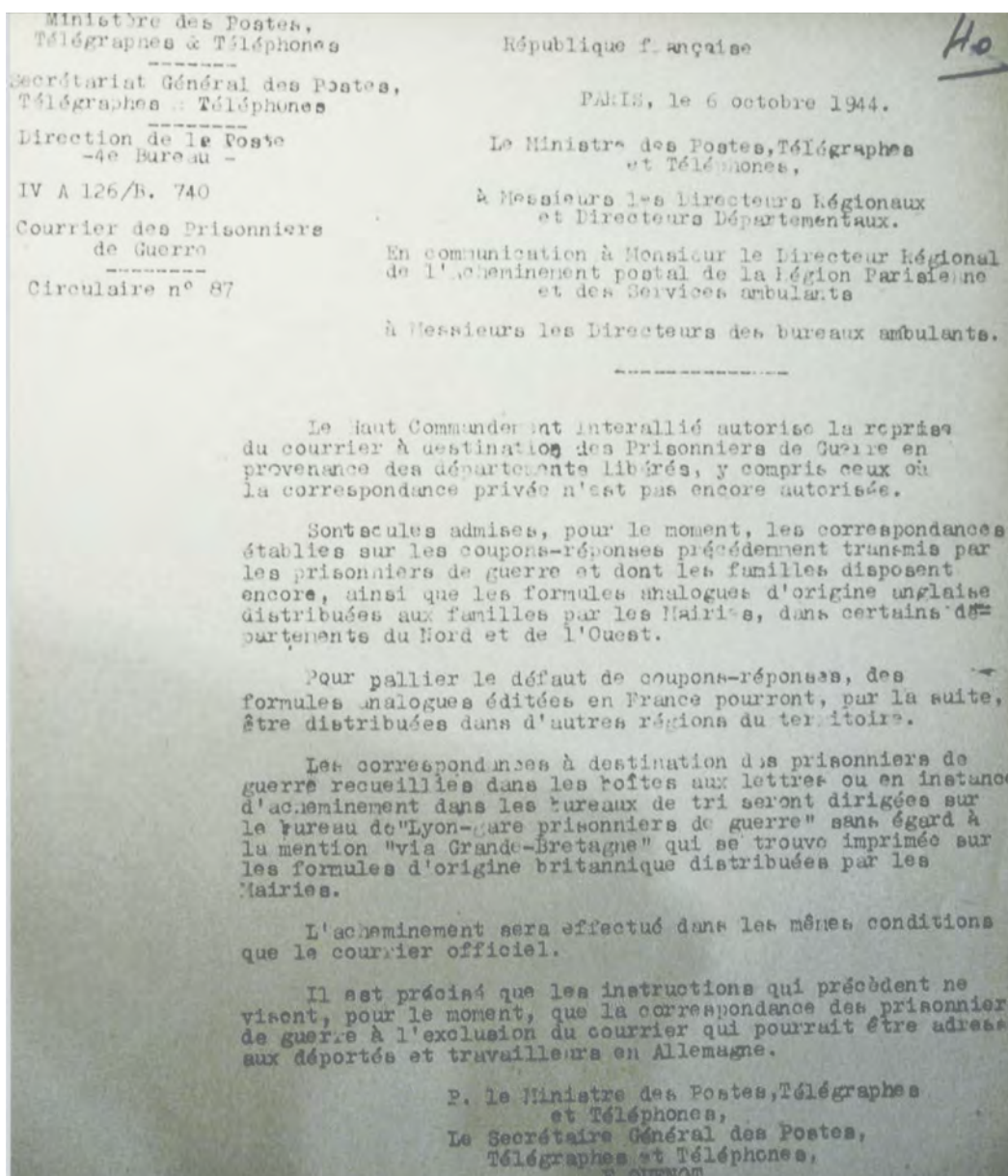
John Hammonds

According to the *Union Marcophile* publication 'Essai de nomenclature des étiquettes des services postaux et télégraphiques de France' by Dumont & Sauvanet, the first 'URGENT' labels were imperf, measured 62 x 22mm and were printed with sans-serif characters within a double-line box in black ink on dark red paper. Unfortunately, no year of issue is given nor is there an illustration. Subsequent printings were in red ink on white paper, firstly line-perfed and later self-adhesive. Neither of the labels on the above 1929 covers match any of these descriptions which implies that they were either private or, at best, locally printed (not unheard of in the former colonies) and hence difficult to document.

Mick Bister

## French WW2 POW mail from German prison camps addressed to France "c/o General Post Office Via Grande-Bretagne"

In response to my article under this title (Journal N°291, December 2019, p.118) Laurent Bonnefoy kindly sent a photograph he had taken in the French National Archives of PTT Circular No.87 dated 6 October 1944.



This was translated by Mick Bister as follows:

"The Allied High Command authorises the resumption of mail to prisoners of war from the liberated *départements*, including those where private correspondence is not yet authorised.

"For the time being, the only correspondence permitted is that written on the reply coupons previously sent by prisoners of war and which the families still have in their possession, as well as correspondence on similar forms of English origin distributed to families by the town halls in certain *départements* of the north and the west.

"To compensate for the lack of reply coupons, similar forms printed in France will thereafter be available for distribution in other regions of the territory.

"Correspondence destined for prisoners of war collected from letter boxes or which is currently being processed in sorting offices will be sent to the 'Lyon-Gare prisoners of war' office regardless of the inscription 'via Great Britain' which is printed on British forms distributed by town halls.

"The routing will be carried out under the same conditions as official mail.

"It should be noted that for the time being the above instructions relate only to war correspondence, with the exception of mail which might be addressed to deportees and workers in Germany.

pp Minister of the PTT  
The General Secretary of the PTT  
E Quenot"



## Comments, taking the paragraphs in the order of the Circular:

It is very significant that the PTT Circular begins "The Allied High Command authorises the resumption of mail to POWs from the liberated departments".

This shows (1) that the *Via Grande Bretagne* (Via GB) arrangement had full Allied (official) backing, which it must have done if ever it was to be effective.

(2) It also refers to "resumption of", indicating that there had been a break in this most unusual arrangement. I have not seen any evidence of a break but this is probably simply due to the small number of cards and letter-sheets bearing this endorsement in relation to the relatively huge number of letters and parcels sent under the scheme. Asked about this, Laurent told me "I think the break concerned the postal relations usually, after the Allied offensive. Only the SHAEF (Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force) authorised the resumption of mail, as a rule by non-illustrated postcards at the beginning." This accords with the fact that I did not find one endorsed picture postcard from a German POW camp.

(3) The resumption of mail "to POWs from the liberated departments". This casts new light on the scheme. Evidently, at first, this was for POWs privileged to come from the parts of north-west France that had been liberated. However, clearly, the intention was to make the scheme open to all French POWs. The latter is consistent with my finding that mail to France under the scheme was directed to all parts of France, not only the liberated areas.

"Reply Coupons". I suggest that they are the form reproduced in my article on page 119 (Figure 1c). Laurent agrees with this. These were given (or sent) to POWs in their camps to be sent to relatives for attaching to parcels being sent to the POW. The Reply Coupons were part of the letter-sheets (but not the postcards) with the "Via GB" endorsement. To make clear that they were to get special treatment, the Reply Coupons were printed with a panel in a mauve colour (at a time when coloured inks were a scarce luxury).

If the Coupon I illustrated last time had been posted to the POW for use, it might have been one of the forms printed in England and distributed by Town Halls in France to be sent by relatives on parcels etc to the POWs.

I had not realised until now the full significance of the Reply Coupons or I would have tried to make my article make this issue clearer. That some were printed in England and distributed in France for use to Germany shows how the Germans were actively cooperating with the scheme. However, there remains a question. Unless the English printed thousands of forms for each POW camp in Germany, how did they know the correct address details for the POWs who came from the liberated north-west (who might be in any camp)? I had assumed that the forms were printed in Germany with the address details precisely correct. More evidence is needed.

The last paragraph of the Circular explains the death of the scheme. The Circular instructed post offices forthwith to

ignore any 'Via GB' endorsement and to send all items so marked via the POW Office at the Gare du Lyon (and thence via Switzerland).

The fact that the scheme continued in use for at least a further five months shows, I suggest, that senders had so much confidence in the 'Via GB' scheme that they continued to send their mail by that route. If this is correct, it also means that the French Post Office staff ignored the instruction of this circular to re-direct all such mail via the POW Office at Lyon.

In conclusion, this PTT Circular shows that there was indeed a 'Via Grande Bretagne' scheme that actually worked very well (as I suggested in the December article).

**David Trapnell**

I was intrigued by David Trapnell's article "French WW2 POW mail from German prison camps addressed to France 'c/o General Post Office via Grande Bretagne'". Why indeed should it have been thought necessary or even possible to send mail from Germany to liberated France in the autumn of 1944 via Great Britain?

Well, to start with, it was certainly possible. The mail would have had to be sent via a neutral country, and if not Switzerland, then it must have been Sweden. I have to admit that as an aerophilatelist my first instinct was to check on the airmail routes. Consulting the Swiss PTT monthly guides, as published in John Daynes' 1996 compendium 'Wartime Air Mail' (Postal History 2000), I saw that the DLH route from Berlin to Stockholm was operating throughout 1944 and probably into 1945, although no guides are available after December 1944. I then turned to the GPO Overseas Mail Branch Weekly Reports 1939 - 1944, edited by John Daynes and reproduced with the permission of Royal Mail, 2005. These too only go up to December 1944, but they show that every week one or two, occasionally three, mails were received from Stockholm, mostly by British but sometimes by Swedish aircraft. The final leg of the journey, from Britain to France, would have had to be by surface. I don't know when the cross-Channel postal service was resumed; perhaps somebody else knows how soon after D-Day that was.

But was it necessary? Yes, it was. Charles LaBlonde's 'World War II Mail from Switzerland to Great Britain, Canada & the United States' (American Helvetia Philatelic Society, 2003) gives us the answer. The CPAL (*Communications postales avec l'étranger*), or Swiss PTT guide) for 21 August 1944 announced the suspension of surface mail from Switzerland to France due to the Allied landings in the south of France. Rail connections were broken and there was little chance of restoration; they were considering establishing a truck service. This materialised in October, but had to cease after two shipments, whereupon the Swiss PTT announced that mail for GB and points beyond could be sent by rail to Berlin, from there to Stockholm via Lufthansa and on to Leuchars, Perth or Aberdeen by ABA and by BOAC. Direct postal relations between Switzerland and France were resumed in the second week of December,

but the route via Sweden and Scotland was still available in early 1945. Charles even illustrates a cover of 23 March 1945 from Zurich to Buenos Aires, arriving 7 May, endorsed 'Via Schweden' and censored in Berlin, London and New York.

There is thus every reason to suppose that the manuscript and handstamp instruction on David's covers, dated between October 1944 and February 1945, 'c/o General Post Office Great Britain' was necessary, that the route endorsement was in fact obeyed and that the system worked. But by the time of the Vichy Post Office note of 12 March 1945 it was no longer necessary.

Many thanks to David Trapnell for publishing this fascinating insight into a little-known corner of wartime mail.

Barbara Priddy

Having read the most interesting article in the December Journal about mail from French POWs routed through Britain I have looked in my collection and have found I have one. It is from Stalag XI A and addressed to the Allier *département*. It has a manuscript *c/o General Post Office, via Great Britain*, dated 10 December 1944.



Ingrid Swinburn



## Fake or fortune?

I was very interested to read Derek Atkins' letter in the recent Journal and I offer the following explanation.

The stamp is postmarked 1888. It is therefore reasonable to assume that it was printed circa 1887/8. At this time *Type Sage* stamps were printed from plates manufactured by the galvanoplastic procedure. By this method a thin copper printing plate was produced by transferring copper from a sacrificial plate onto a master plate. This thin plate was then removed from the master and fitted to a steel backing plate. The process of copper transference meant that the copper particles randomly gathered on the master plate. Consequently, each stamp on the working plate is different, mostly microscopically but sometimes obvious to the eye. Rather than being faults they are peculiarities of the process. Other peculiarities found on the working plate were caused by:

- a. Peculiarities in the master plate.
- b. Mechanical damage to the printing plate during use.
- c. Uneven levelling of the copper plate on the steel backing plate.

During the printing process further peculiarities occurred for the following reasons:

- a. General wear - the relatively soft copper plates wore quite quickly resulting in poor print quality towards the end of their life.

- b. The presence of foreign bodies giving 'one-off' peculiarities.

- c. Paper faults and folds.

Derek Atkins' friend's stamp shows a very obvious and very unusual result of one or more of the above causes.

The stamp has a fairly well printed 'POSTES' and a fairly well printed lower outer border. The figures and map in the design are faint and the '25' is blotched. The printing process was by letterpress whereby the design on the printing plate was raised above the general level of the plate.

In the case of this stamp I suspect that the lower frame and 'POSTES' were slightly higher than the rest of the design leaving faint images of the figures, map, value, etc. and a complete loss of 'J A SAGE' and 'E MOUCHON'.

In my opinion the stamp is genuine but exhibits a major and most interesting peculiarity of the printing process. Although I think that there is no relevance to the printing of the stamp, I suggest that the postmark might be Shanghai / Chine.

**Maurice Alder**



### *Type Sage, missing imprint – suite*

"Fake or fortune?" asked fellow-member Derek Atkins, concerning a Sage issue lacking the names of both designer and engraver (F&CPS Journal 291, December 2019). I have no answer, but can show a similarly puzzling item, a mint 50c value overprinted for **Port-Saïd** (SG/Y&T 14/15). It is badly centred, the bottom line of perfs unhelpfully cutting into the design, but enough remains to confirm a total absence of lettering.

Damage to the plate, perhaps?

**Michael Round**

## Wartime Mail held in Transit

There was a fair chance that, during World War 2, mail from or to war zones, occupied countries or overseas countries, would not reach its destination. Some letters could not for various reasons be delivered: they might be held in transit,

returned to the sender or simply disappear or be destroyed. The two examples discussed here were both for different reasons held in transit until the end of hostilities.



Figure 1

Front of cover from Camp de Gurs to New York with the camp postmark and *censure* mark and various cachets including an inverted HELD BY BRITISH/CENSOR/RELEASED cachet and two RETURNED/TO/SENDER marks.



Figure 2

Reverse of the above cover with various cachets showing the attempts to deliver the letter and its ultimate destination.



The registered cover illustrated in **Figure 1** is an example of what could happen. A certain E Bernhard had been interned in the Camp de Gurs, the particulars on the reverse of the cover (**Figure 2**) showing him/her to be in *Ilot F*, [Baraque] 20. The letter was cancelled on 2 June 1942 with the camp postmark and also carries the oval camp *censure* no 4. It was addressed to a relative in New York, but was detained by the censor in Bermuda and only released in early 1946 when unsuccessful attempts were made to deliver it between February and March 1946. The addressee could not be found and it was then returned to the sender who,

unsurprisingly, was not still interned in the Camp de Gurs after liberation.

Two internees with the same initial and name had, from the records, been deported to Auschwitz in August or September 1942. The letter was received in Navarrenx, the nearest town to Gurs, then passed to the *Sous-Préfecture* in Oloron, whose *Service archives* was responsible for Gurs, where it was received on 25 April 1946 (backstamp and m/s note). Whether any successful delivery of the letter in 1942 would have made any difference to E Bernhard is doubtful.



Figure 3  
Cover from Zurich to Low & Bonar Ltd, Dundee sent on 10 June 1940 and (insert)  
received in Dundee at 9.00am on 16 April 1945.

A more fortunate outcome for mail held in transit are letters from Switzerland (and other countries) travelling across France for Britain during May/June 1940 and which were hidden by postal workers in the main post-office in Paris and only retrieved in 1945. They were then, where possible,

delivered to their destinations in Britain with a boxed rectangular cachet having been applied explaining the reason for the (almost) five years' delay. The cover shown in **Figure 3** was duly delivered to Dundee on 16 April 1945, evidenced by the Low & Bonar office backstamp.

David Hogarth

## New postal rates in France 2020

The annual price rise took place as usual on 1 January. There was a considerable increase of around 10% for all the internal rates up to 20g and the International rate up to 20g rose by nearly 8%.

Rate up to 20g	Colour	2019 price	2020 price	Increase
Lettre Prioritaire	Red	1.05€	1.16€	10.5%
Lettre Verte	Green	0.88€	0.97€	10.2%
Ecopli (economy)	Grey	0.86€	0.95€	10.5%
International	Blue	1.30€	1.40€	7.7%

Postal rates have been considerably simplified since the introduction of the *Marianne l'engagée* issue in 2018. Rather than a whole host of values to accommodate the various weight steps there are now only three internal values plus four 'make up' stamps: 0.01€, 0.05€, 0.10€ and 1€. The *Europe* and *Monde* stamps have been combined into one International stamp valid throughout the world since 1 January 2019.

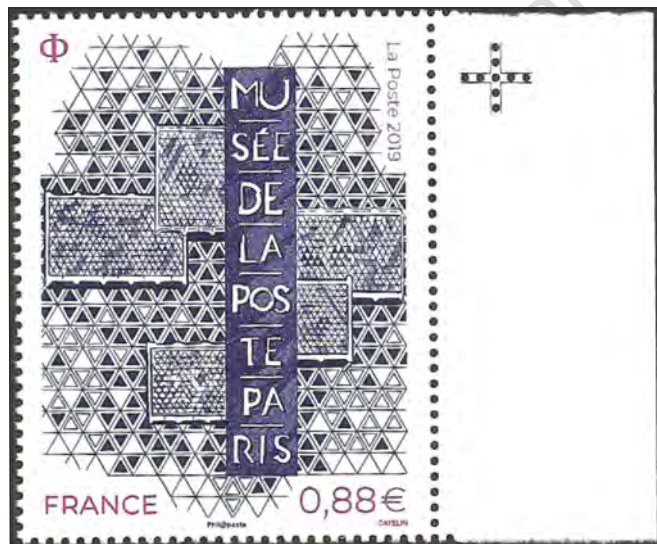
In order to pay for higher internal rates it is a simple matter of using a multiple number of the relevant 20g stamps up to 3Kg (except for *Ecopli* which has a maximum weight allowance of 250g). For weights of 21-100g: two stamps are used; 101-250g: 4 stamps; 251-500g: 6 stamps and 501g-3Kg: 8 stamps. This applies to all rates except *International*.

It will be interesting to see how long the *Ecopli* rate lasts as the price is now almost identical to the *Lettre Verte* rate. There seems little point in keeping these two rates as *Lettre Verte* is in theory a more efficient and environmentally friendly service for what is in effect the same price.

There is an opportunity to collect all the different rates with multiple stamps used on cover although it will probably be quite a task to complete a collection of genuine postal examples. One benefit from these increases to collectors of modern France is that their collection of mint TVP (*timbres de validité permanente*) sees a healthy annual increase in catalogue value every year! The first TVP stamp was the red *Marianne du Bicentenaire* (Y&T 2806) issued in 1993 which is still valid for the *Lettre Prioritaire* rate today.

Richard Broadhurst

## Reopening of the Musée de la Poste



On 23 November 2019 the *Musée de la Poste* at 34 boulevard de Vaugirard, Paris 15, was reopened after a closure of a number of years for refurbishment. To commemorate the event Phil@poste issued a single stamp in *taille-douce* at 0,88€ to cover the *Lettre Verte* rate up to 20g. Most unusually the design of the stamp was kept a total secret until its date of issue on 12 November when it was unveiled at the *Salon Philatélique d'Automne* in Paris.

The stamp was issued in sheets of 30 with a *coin daté* and a new innovation of a perforated cross (to check the correct perforation line up similar to traffic lights with colours) in the right-hand margin as seen in the example illustrated.

Richard Broadhurst



## REPORTS OF MEETINGS

### LONDON GROUP MEETING OF 15 FEBRUARY 2020

#### Paul Watkins: Foreign Mail 1580 to 1940



**Paul Watkins** was warmly welcomed to a larger than normal assembly by our president, Chris Hitchen.

Paul opened his display by explaining that the aim was to illustrate how letters travelled to destinations outside France over a period of more than three and a half centuries.

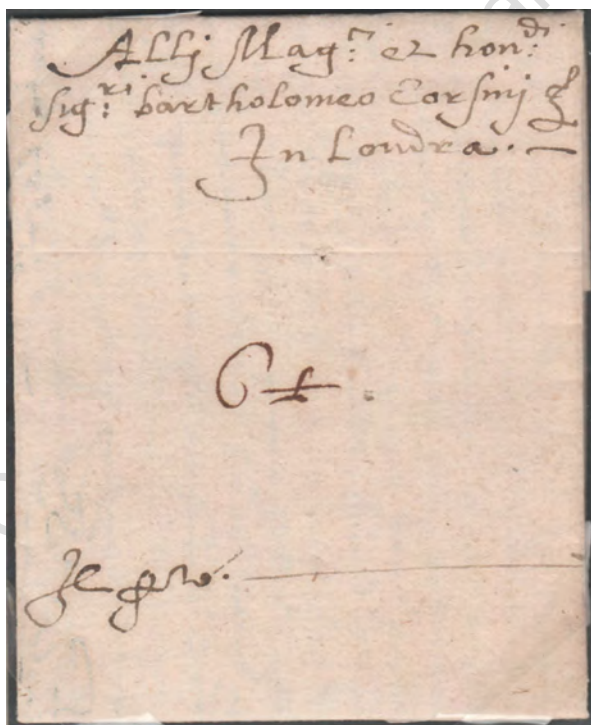


Figure 1

1584 'Corsini' letter from Dieppe carried privately by the Merchant Strangers' Post

Paul began with a group of items from the 16<sup>th</sup> century Merchant Strangers' Post (Figure 1), privately carried by agents through France from Bordeaux, Rouen and Dieppe to merchants in Elizabethan London – and included a complaint about non-payment of expenses. Some 17<sup>th</sup> century letters to the Low Countries showed the beginnings of a reciprocal accountancy system; the introduction of *m/s marques d'origine* to assist in the calculation of postage, the establishment of a handful of fixed post towns from which postage rates to London were set, with additional local postage paid by the sender. This group showed the phenomenon of 'bundle' letters, charged only on the top item in a bundle and also how postal routes – and charges – could be disrupted by war.

Individual countries made bilateral postal agreements – examples were shown from the 1713 convention with England which established the principle of letters sent *en port dû* between Paris and London, with inland postage to and from the capitals paid locally. Included was an early envelope (1752) which had the effect of doubling the postage! It was in the mid-to-late 18<sup>th</sup> century that town postmarks became common – examples of early *port-payé* marks were shown from Bordeaux and Tours.

The postal disruption caused by the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars was illustrated – including letters privately-carried or confided to individual ship's captains; the opportunity for sending letters during the brief Peace of Amiens included an 1803 request from the Marseille post master that a correspondent in Newcastle should pay outstanding postage on a letter he had been holding on to for some time!

Letters sent to French prisoners of war held in hulks, prisons or *en parole* in the U.K. travelled by specially-chartered ships through Morlaix, overseen by a system of agents including the shadowy Monsieur Otto, Napoleon's 'minister plenipotentiary' to whom one item was addressed. Letters from British prisoners in France, sent back to the U.K. by the same route included an unusual early (1794) item with the seal of the *Commission des Transports* which was the first government agency to take responsibility for prisoners. Items from British servicemen held at Sedan, Tours and Givet were shown as were two unusual letters from civilians *en parole*: the wife of a Naval surgeon held in Paris and from Lord Elgin, captured while travelling back

from Constantinople – where he had agreed a deal for the Parthenon marbles – who wrote (by ship letter) to his London agent to expect a ship-load of French art he had been buying during his 'captivity'.

As normal post routes were suspended for much of this twenty-year period, letters travelled through agents at various ports – notably Calais – by 'smugglers' and by private ship: examples were shown (Figure 2). Post-1815 mail illustrated an increasing degree of standardisation as postal agreements were made, with UK mail being charged from Calais; examples of the optional *estafette* service, heavy letters, mail from rural offices and the inspection / correction of postage were displayed.



Figure 2

1815 letter sent during the chaos of the 'Hundred Days' – by forwarding agent and private ship.

The 1836 and 1843 postal Conventions introduced the options of sending letters unpaid, paid or part-paid – covers illustrated aspects of this flexibility and of the broadening of the postal service to new 'exchange towns' for UK mail such as Dieppe and Folkestone and the operation of a mobile box system on ships crossing between France and the UK including the Channel Islands.

The advent of postage stamps in 1849 simplified the system (Figure 3). An extensive display of covers showed the reduction of postage from 80c to 40c (1855) and 30c (1870) with examples of multiple rates up to 9<sup>th</sup> step at 3fr 60c (Figure 4) – a sample of seed sent from Bordeaux to Hull (1857). The treatment of underpaid, registered and diplomatic mail was illustrated.



Figure 3

1853 Paris to York with Cérès 40c pair





Figure 4  
1857 9<sup>th</sup> weight step sample from Bordeaux to Hull at 3fr 60c

The Franco-Prussian War period was represented by letters with Bordeaux issue frankings, items flown out of Paris by balloon including one redirected to Jersey and an uncommon example of the 'Ballon non monté' postcard used

to Brighton (Figure 5). The Prussian control of mail in the early Armistice period included an item with a censorship bundle-mark and an over-paid letter with both inland & foreign postage paid with separate stamps.



Figure 5  
A 'par Ballon non-monté' postcard flown out of Paris to Brighton on 'le Général Uhrich' November 1870 at the 30c letter rate

The developments of the later 1870s included France's first postal stationery – a wide range of examples included privately produced cards were on display (Figure 6). The

Type Sage issue was illustrated with the 25c foreign rate stamp in its various incarnations including categories of registered mail and printed matter.



Figure 6  
Private letter-card of stamp-dealer M. Vervelle, registered to England – and (illegally) enclosing stamps!

The 20<sup>th</sup> Century opened with a frame of postcard-related sheets showing a range of cancellations including rural and town post-boxes, 'OR', 'OL' and 'BM' hand-stamps and railway marks. A frame of early airmail items followed including uncommon items from the RNAS in France, the

pioneer flights from 1918 and a range of items showing how rates progressed to the inclusive rate of 1938. It continued with covers illustrating registered mail, sample post (Figure 7) and the use of Type Merson values (Figure 8).



Figure 7  
1934 registered grain sample Marseille-London charged at the 13<sup>th</sup> step of 9fr 95c – and overpaid





Figure 8  
1920 double-weight airmail cover with 6fr 40c Merson franking

Finally, Paul showed a trio of covers which brought the display up to 1940 with examples of mail sent through the BEF in Northern France before and after the Dunkirk

evacuation including an unusual piece of censored civilian mail from St Malo in mid-June 1940 (Figure 9).



Figure 9  
June 1940 civilian letter to Spalding from St Malo – censored and forwarded by the remaining unit of the BEF which had not been evacuated from Dunkirk – some days before 'Operation Ariel' collected them from Cherbourg.

The afternoon session, as usual, was devoted to material brought by the other members. **Richard Broadhurst** began with a display of the *Marianne l'engagée* and *Cérès* stamps issued at the *Salon d'Automne* 2019 full details of which can be found in his article '170<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the first French postage stamp, 20c *Cérès*, 1849-2019' on page 30. Other items shown were the miniature sheet celebrating the tenth anniversary of the philatelic bureau, *Le Carré d'encre*, and recent reproductions of the classic 'Language of Stamps' postcards.



Figure 10  
Detail from unissued die proof of the 1f Pétain  
signed by the engraver, Jules Piel

**Mick Bister** followed with extracts from his collection 'The Life and Times of the 1f50 Pétain' concentrating on covers documenting the Liberation of France. These included an early cover from liberated Corsica flown to the French Somali Coast, mail intercepted in Normandy and Provence

by the FFI, a cover sent to De Gaulle after his arrival in Paris, mail to and from the Italian prisoner-of-war camp near Bordeaux and a selection of items from the Lorient and St Nazaire pockets.

**John Parmenter** stepped up to report on the progress of his latest publication, 'Censorship of Civilian Mail in Madagascar during World War Two; Handstamps and Labels' which he has co-written with Colin Spong and three members of COLFRA. John displayed sample pages from the book to whet our appetites before its publication, the date of which we hope to announce in the next edition of the Journal.

Next to show was **Paul Miller** who had brought proofs and dated corner blocks from between 1933 and 1942, mostly the work of designer and engraver Jules Piel. One proof which attracted considerable attention was the 1941 unissued portrait of Marshal Pétain dressed in his 1918 uniform and inscribed *RF* and *Chef de l'État Français* (Figure 10). Piel, who had served under Pétain during the First World War wanted to present him as he had known him at that time but Piel was informed that *RF* was no longer applicable and that Pétain wished to be portrayed in a modern uniform.

Finally, **Len Barnes** showed us two frames of material associated with the aviation pioneer Louis Blériot. We saw photographs of his planes and of the location of his landing point after the successful cross-Channel flight together with material promoting aviation competitions. Considerable interest was shown in the posters and adverts promoting his motorcycle sidecar, street lighting and car headlamp businesses. Apparently, he developed the first practical headlamp for cars and established a profitable business manufacturing them, using much of the money he made to finance his attempts to build his aircraft.

**Chris Hitchen** thanked Paul Watkins for sharing with us such an outstanding collection of rarely seen material and commended the other members for their contribution to a highly successful meeting.

**Members present:** Maurice Alder, Len Barnes, Mick Bister, Richard Broadhurst, Rodney Gent, Chris Hitchen, Paul Miller, John Parmenter and Barbara Priddy.

PSW/MLB



## WESSEX GROUP MEETING OF 22 FEBRUARY 2020



Claire Scott, still gripping her *flûte* of champagne, gives the finer details of her display

Seven members and one guest attended the meeting with a further seven members offering apologies. Hopefully the summer meeting on 18 July 2020 will see us in double figures.

A *flûte* (plastic!) of champagne (now an established tradition) got the meeting off to a good start, followed by our guest speaker **Claire Scott** putting up her superb display 'The Wounded Soldier' which outlined the fate of wounded soldiers in WW1.

Claire explained that during the course of the First World War from 1914–1918, a staggering total of 65 million people were mobilised, of whom 8 million were killed and over 21 million were wounded. Many of the casualties originated in the killing fields of Northern France where a virtual stalemate of artillery bombardments and trench warfare achieved very little but changed the social fabric of Europe. Evacuating the wounded was a logistical achievement in itself and this display looked at the different forms of transport used to remove the wounded soldier from the battlefield to the hospital and to return him back to the UK and also looked at the fundraising efforts to pay for this.

The first mode of transport was the ambulances which were provided by a number of different countries which were illustrated. Surgical ambulances were created in 1914 to provide emergency operations to the soldiers who were too severely wounded to be transported to an evacuation hospital. The cachets are generally of the *Marianne* format but often the mail was franked with an Ambulance cachet. The wounded were generally taken from the front by ambulance to the nearest Field Hospital. Evacuation hospitals were made up of five doctors who served two operating rooms with one sterilisation room, often situated in a village near the front.

Once stabilised the next priority was to get the soldier away from the front. The trains were organised into six divisions entitled Nord, Est, P.O. (Paris/Orléans), État, Midi and P.L.M. (Paris/Lyon/Méditerranée). Five trains had been organised in peacetime by the army health service which carried the more seriously wounded. Each train comprised twenty-three carriages, of which the wounded occupied sixteen with eight beds in each, giving a total of one hundred and twenty-eight patients. Three doctors, a pharmacist, an administrative officer and twenty-eight nurses attended them. In October 1914 a new type of hospital train, designated semi-permanent, was created using the general rolling stock, and by 15 October 55 such trains were carrying between 650 and 700 wounded soldiers. On mobilisation in August 1914 there were 115 improvised hospital trains each comprising 33 individual covered wagons, each improvised train had two doctors, a pharmacist, an administrative officer and 45 nurses.

Hospital ships carried the wounded soldier back to blighty where they were put on a train to take them away from the coast. Each soldier was given a pencil, piece of paper and envelope, so that they could write to their loved ones and let them know they were home. When the trains passed through Winchester they slowed down and all the envelopes were gathered up and thrown out of the windows. The locals would gather them up and post them. Soldiers on active service got free postage but this was removed when they were wounded and no longer active. The post office often turned a blind eye to these letters and did not surcharge them. Once they arrived at their destination, they sent out printed cards to their family informing them where they were.

The French system of free mail for soldiers is evidenced by the cachets allocated to each unit which means that the process of transporting and treating the wounded can be illustrated through postal history. The turbulence of the times means that few records were kept and it is often only the cachet and the message that enables us to trace the history.

There was no health service and much of what was provided had to be funded by private fundraising. Labels were produced to sell for fund raising both in France, Belgium and in Britain which connected the civilians to the soldiers.

After a good lunch at the Grasmere Hotel we resumed with

the following displays:

**John Scott:** French Revolution Engraved Company invoices.

**Chris Hitchen:** French Revolution Special Offices.

**Alan King:** Napoléon Stamps, Transport and Art on stamps.

**Claire Scott:** French Death – Mourning covers.

**Colin French:** *Courrier Convoyeur* cancellations.

**Jeremy Martin:** France WW1.

Ashley Lawrence and Paul Latham-Warde also attended.

CS/CF





## BOOKSHELF

Compiled by Michael Round

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

### **The Postal Message Scheme of the French Red Cross in France & its African Colonies in World War 2,**

David Trapnell.

The Stuart Rossiter Trust, 2019, ISBN 978-1-908710-07-9. vi+59pp,

A4 format. Fully illustrated in colour. £10.00 + p&p.

Under the terms of the Geneva Convention, POWs and civilian internees held in enemy territories were allowed to correspond, post free. However, this did not apply to family members who were not themselves POWs or internees. The Red Cross Postal Message Scheme was designed to circumvent this, and was pioneered in World War I and the Spanish Civil War. David Trapnell's book is the first in English on French and French Colonial participation in the scheme, and is lavishly illustrated with covers, maps and message-forms themselves. This gap in the literature is thereby neatly and efficiently plugged. Many FCPS members are among those courteously acknowledged by the author, as of course is the generosity of the Stuart Rossiter Trust. (<https://www.rossitertrust.com>) in bringing the work to fruition and making it available at such a reasonable price.

See full review on Page xx



**Philandorre No 113**, house-organ of the *Société d'études philatéliques et postales de l'Andorre*, features mouth-watering non-philatelic mail from Andorra, dating from before 1950. Its rarity is obvious, given that at the time the population of the entire place was less than 6,000. Illustrations include three Zeppelin covers, dated 1932 and 1933, to Montevideo and Uruguay – scarce sources and destinations indeed.

For further details of the Society, contact president Philippe Louviau, 3 rue de la Py 75020 Paris;  
[philandorre75@laposte.net](mailto:philandorre75@laposte.net) : <http://philandorre.online.net>



### **Cours des cartes et publicitimbres 2020-2021 de l'ACCP.**

142pp, A4 format.

ACCP, 21 rue du Héron cendré, 95290 L'Isle Adam.

Website: [accp-asso.com](http://accp-asso.com) (heading: Activités / Cours de carnets)

Price 36€, inclusive of postage and packing within France

I mentioned the 2018-2019 edition of this title in April 2018. The 2020-2021 version expands by eight pages, and like its

predecessor provides listings, pricings and profuse illustrations for all stamp booklets issued by France, Andorra, Monaco, the *Territoires d'Outre-Mer* and former French colonies, right back to No 1. It adds considerably to the information found readily in general catalogues.



### **German Occupation of Belgium and North Eastern France, 1914-1918.**

Robin Pizer, MA, PhD, FRPSL. 234pp,

A4 format.

Price £20 plus postage (UK £4.00, EEC £9.00, elsewhere £15.00)

Available from the Postal History Society at: [claire@historystore.ltd.uk](mailto:claire@historystore.ltd.uk). Claire Scott, Tumlins, Winterborne Stickland, Blandford Forum, Dorset DT11 0ED. Cheques should be made payable to 'The Postal History Society', alternatively pay via Paypal: [john@historystore.ltd.uk](mailto:john@historystore.ltd.uk), adding £2.00 for Paypal charges.

Which stamps were they?

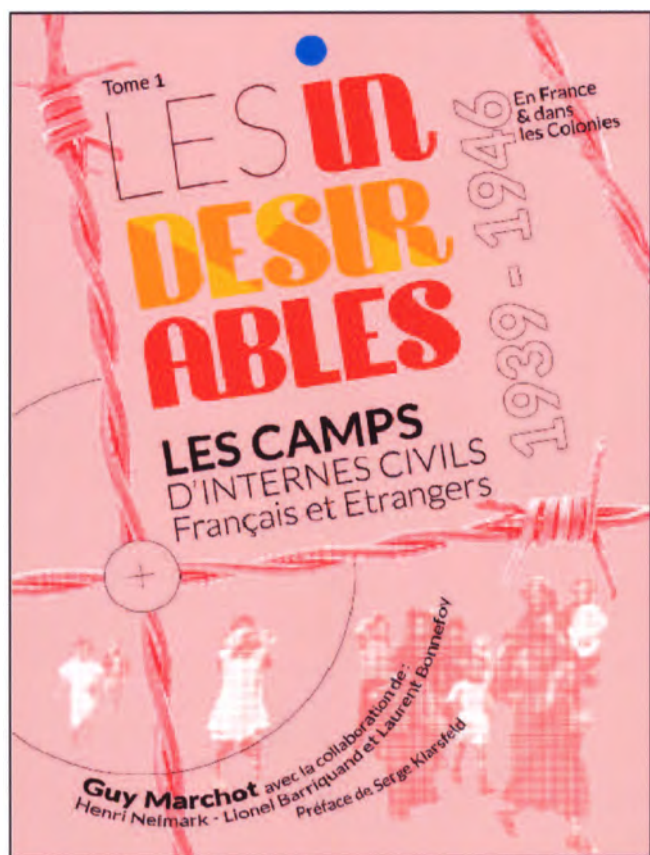
Oh yes, the 'Germania' types overprinted 'Belgien' and surcharged in francs and centimes. No surprise to learn that there is much, much more behind them. A clue lies in this new book's subtitle: 'Civilian Mail Postal Service and Postal Rates with Particular Emphasis on the Postal History'.

Robin Pizer has shrewdly pinpointed a gap in the English-language literature, this topic not having been covered thus. In 234 pages (and with the aid of 185 figures and 10 maps) his book describes the postal service used and paid for by civilians living under occupation during 1914-18, mostly in Belgium but also in France. It refers keen readers to more detailed articles elsewhere, and brings together facts gleaned from mostly German-language sources. Annexes to the main text describe the four-part carving-up of Belgium, and the activities of the German Armies on the Western Front. This splendid volume is a must for all English-reading collectors of World War I.



## Les Indésirables Français et Etrangers

### Les camps d'internés civils en France et colonies (1939 - 1946)



Guy Marchot with the collaboration of Henri Neimark, Lionel Barriquand and Laurent Bonnefoy

650 pages, A4, full colour with over 600 illustrations, perfect bound, published by the Association Philatélique du Pays d'Aix, April 2020, Price 30€, further details from [contact@philatelie-aix.fr](mailto:contact@philatelie-aix.fr)

#### The text below is an extract from the publisher's flier

Learn about the extraordinary story of these 'undesirables', French and foreign civilians who were interned in camps, in France and in the colonies, from 1939 to 1946, because they were under suspicion. The aging Third Republic created the law of 12 November 1938 appertaining to foreigners, giving

the *Prefets* the power to intern all the 'undesirables' who could not return to their homeland and, in January 1939, to establish detention camps, the first of which was Rieucros in the *département* of Lozère. By the law of 18 November 1939, it was the 'undesirable' French who were also the subject of arrests. The Vichy regime, by the law of 4 September 1940, targeted Jews, Roma and as ever Communists and foreigners. Upon the Liberation, the law of 18 November 1939 was extended to include collaborators and the black marketeers.

This publication is the product of in-depth research conducted in the archives of all the French *départements*. Over a period of five years a group of four researchers devoted many hours visiting the 90 relevant *Archives Départementales* as well as the *Archives Nationales*, the *Service Historique de la Défense*, the *Bibliothèque Nationale*, the *Archives de l'Outremer*, the *Archives des Affaires Etrangères*, the *Centre de documentation Juive Contemporaine*, the *Préfecture de police de Paris*, the archives of the *Union générale des Israélites de France*, municipal archives and, in the event of a lack of information, media libraries.

Summary of the topics treated:

- refugees from the German Reich, men in September 1939 and May 1940 and women in May 1940
- the Spanish and the *Compagnies de Travailleurs Espagnols*
- the Italians in June 1940
- the French from December 1939
- the British and the Americans from July 1940
- the Jews from October 1940
- the Communists from December 1940
- the Roma from October 1940
- the *Groupements de Travailleurs Etrangers* foreigners in from September 1940
- the *Centres de Séjour Surveillé* for French and foreigners

(A full review will be published in a future Journal)

**Michael Round**



## The Postal Message Scheme of the French Red Cross in France and its African Colonies in World War 2' by David Trapnell

Reviewed by John West

64pp, A4, perfect bound, published by The Stuart Rossiter Trust, 2019, ISBN 978-1-908710-07-9  
Price £10 plus P+P and available from [www.rossitertrust.com](http://www.rossitertrust.com)

David Trapnell has, in recent years, produced some interesting and informative handbooks. His latest œuvre, published with the backing of the Stuart Rossiter Trust, is no exception. The title, 'The Postal Message Scheme of the French Red Cross in France & its African Colonies in World War 2', leaves little room for doubt as to its content. It is a lavish publication of 60 pages, generously illustrated with photographs of the various covers which he uses to support and endorse the lengthy title.

He shows a wide range of both the Red Cross messages and the envelopes sent by the *Croix Rouge Française* both to the parent organisation in Geneva and between sub committees set up in the French Colonies in Africa. Despite the proliferation of illustrations, I was surprised that there was no mail displayed with a Red Cross reply label nor, indeed, is there any reference to them, or attempt to explain their use. Although not commonly seen during World War 2, there are sufficient covers, addressed to the *Comité Internationale Croix Rouge (C.I.C.R.)*, in Geneva, to merit their inclusion.

David prefaces his book by explaining that what the British Red Cross Society called the 'Postal Message Scheme' was simply known, in France, by the expression '*Messages Familiaux*' and the word 'Postal' was never applied to the scheme. From my own experience, I know that copies of these French messages are not easy to find but he illustrates three, two of which are unused! There are also a number of covers, addressed to the C.I.C.R. mostly with postage (4 francs) correctly paid – although it is true to state that the Swiss postal authorities rarely, if ever, levied a fiscal penalty in relation to incorrectly franchised mail addressed to the Red Cross in Geneva.

Much of his book is, however, given over to mail from, or between, the African colonies and he includes territories like Morocco and Tunisia – which were made Protectorates

The  
**POSTAL MESSAGE  
SCHEME**  
of the  
**FRENCH RED CROSS**  
in France & its African Colonies  
in World War 2



David Trapnell

The Stuart Rossiter Trust

of France long before the war – and Algeria, which was regarded as part of their mainland. He uses the various covers to show which colony had a 'General Delegation' which had a 'Colonial Delegation' and which had a 'Sub-Delegation' and how this hierarchy operated.

For the specialist, this is a valuable work of reference combining, as it does, copious examples of the way the Red Cross organisations transmitted mail both between themselves, their parent society and civilians who were seeking their aid.

## The Dr Edward Grabowski Postal History Collection of French Colonies (Spink, November 2019)

Reviewed by Michael Round

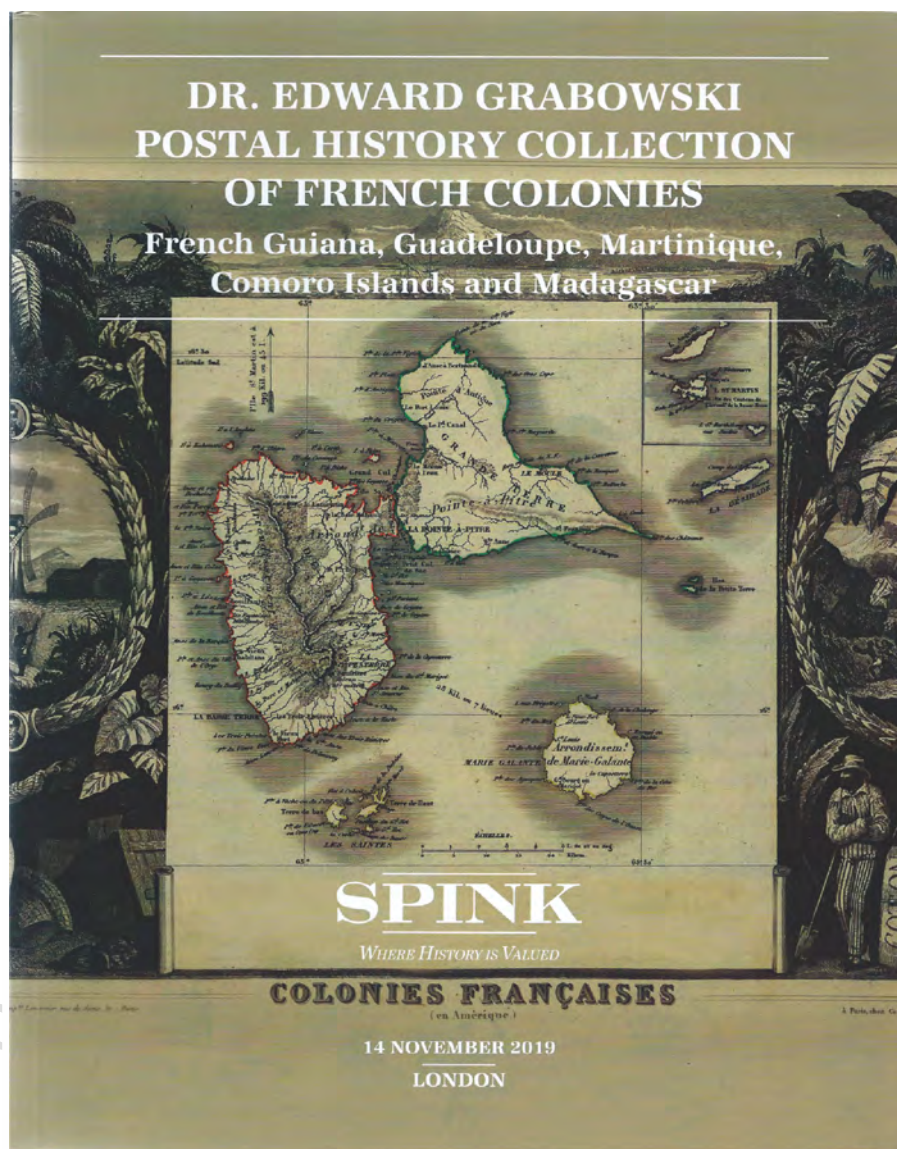
Connoisseurs of French Colonies will need no further words of explanation to the above heading – except, perhaps, a reminder that Ed Grabowski's speciality was the French Empire-wide issue of 1892, variously known as the 'Tablet', 'Peace and Commerce' or (in French) '*Groupe*' type.

The basic stamps, including later colour-changes and surcharges, would for most of us fill a maximum of two album pages per colony; the more ambitious of us might go on to assemble a few shades and postmarks, perhaps the matching postal stationery too, then call it a day. None of us could begin to compare, even remotely, with the award-winning and internationally renowned collection formed by Ed Grabowski, a true *grand maître* among French Colony collectors worldwide.

Ed became probably the world's expert on the postal history of this issue – certainly in the English-speaking world. He accompanied his painstakingly assembled collection with valuable and enlightening articles en route in the philatelic press. The whole collection was auctioned in November 2019 by Spink, its 1,451 lots filling three sessions spread over two days.

The auction catalogues, in three profusely illustrated volumes, form a valuable and possibly unique reference work on the usage of 'Tablet' stamps throughout the French Empire. At the time of writing (late January 2020), copies are still available, the set of three at £25 including postage.

Catalogue No 1 (accompanying the 13 November sale): French Africa, French Polynesia and New Caledonia;



Catalogue 2 (14 November, a.m.): French Guiana, Guadeloupe, Martinique, Comoro Islands and Madagascar;

Catalogue 3 (14 November, p.m.): Réunion, French Indian Settlements, Indo-China and St Pierre et Miquelon.

Catalogues may be available separately: email Nik von Uexkull on [books@spink.com](mailto:books@spink.com) for orders and further details, or write to him at Spink, 69 Southampton Row, London

WC1B4ET (tel. 020-7563 4104).

It is Spink, of course, who also publish the *Spink-Maury Catalogue de Timbres de France*, thought by many to be a serious rival to Yvert & Tellier. The 2020-2021 edition (736 pages) is available from the same source, at £27.50 plus p&p. Colonies collectors seeking Maury-Dallay catalogues should also investigate [www.spinkbooks.com](http://www.spinkbooks.com) for a range of them, available at £10/£15 each.



# LIST OF RECENTLY PUBLISHED ARTICLE

Compiled by Maurice Tyler

## Timbres Magazine

N° 217 Dec 2019: La rénovation du Musée de la Poste: une réussite exceptionnelle (de Pelinec); Martinique, une philatélie authentique (de Pelinec); Les terres et mers australes au Patrimoine mondial de l'Unesco (Jullien); Les émissions françaises libellées en francs CFA (Singeot); Une introduction à la «Social Philately» – Friedrich Schuler (1791-1873): Un démocrate allemand exilé à deux reprises à Metz (Streuber & Weber); Piquage des Susse-frères (de La Mettrie); Les marques d'indexation horizontales (Gomez & Gervais); «Le Monde», trois quarts de siècle [cartes postales] (Zeyons); Le coup de cœur de la CNEP [enveloppe de réexpédition de ballon monté] (Caron).

N° 218 Jan 2020: Les timbres avion des colonies sans RF (1942-1944) (Chauvin); La présence française au Sahel (de Pelinec); Le CIO a 125 ans [Comité International Olympique] (Emmenegger); De France pour le Canada (de La Mettrie); Interview de Sophie et Yves Beaujard – La gravure, passion familiale (Toulemonde); Une affaire de perforation Génération R.G.R. (Gomez); Les rois capétiens – D'Hughes Capet à Philippe Auguste (Lucchese); Les enseignes de Roxane (Zeyons); Le coup de cœur de la CNEP [20c Empire (Yv 14A) oblitéré sur lettre de son premier jour d'utilisation, le 1<sup>er</sup> juillet 1854] (Reboulot).

N° 219 Feb 2020: Quand l'État entend payer ses dettes grâce à la vente de timbres: la Caisse d'amortissement (Singeot); Les timbres avion des colonies sans RF (1942-1944) 2<sup>e</sup> partie (Chauvin); Accueil chaleureux aux envois défectueux (de La Mettrie); L'île Bougainville, futur 194<sup>e</sup> membre des Nations Unies? (de Pelinec); Le rembobinage de l'histoire pour un changement de format (Gomez); Sophie et Yves Beaujard – La gravure, passion familiale (Toulemonde); Le coup de cœur de la CNEP [variétés spectaculaires] (Olivier); Sous l'œil de l'expert [Type Sage] (Calves, Jacquart & Beghin).

N° 220 Mar 2020: 1862, Golfe de Guinée – l'acheminement maritime des correspondances vers le Gabon (Veglio); Marques militaires de Madagascar (Groenewald); La taille-douce expliquée par les images (Gomez); Lettres chargées en valeur déclarée (de La Mettrie); L pub dans tous ses éclats (Zeyons); Le podium des oblitérés [entiers postaux « Groupe » oblitérés] (Tillard); Le coup de cœur de la CNEP [50c Mercure non-émis rouge carminé] (Benchaa)

## L'Écho de la Timbrologie

N° 1945 Dec 2019: Réouverture du Musée de la Poste de Paris (Bastide-Bernardin); Court Salon, très couru [Salon philatélique d'automne] (-); Le Gala 2019 de la Caisse d'Entraide, en hommage à Cohen-Sabban (-); Les

cartes postales illustrées au tarif imprimé pour l'international (Lavigne); L'OP 3-2018 du *Marion Dufresne* (Venturini).

N° 1946 Jan 2020: D'un Bataillon, à Wallis à un autre Bataillon, à Feurs [lettre postée le 3 septembre 1841 à Poitiers, destinée à un certain monsieur Bataillon à Saint-Cyr-les-Vignes, canton de Feurs (Loire) et taxée à la plume « 6 décimes »] (Jacquart); Les cartes postales illustrées au tarif imprimé (suite et fin) (Lavigne).

N° 1947 Feb 2020: La goélette «25c» verte de Saint-Pierre et Miquelon: de la rareté à la falsification (Tillard); De Nantes à La Courneuve, sur la piste des premières voies postales au Maroc (Bastide-Bernardin); Des objets postaux insolites (Sollin); L'utilisation postale des 25c du type Sage dans le régime intérieur (Lavigne); L'OP 3-2018 du *Marion Dufresne* (Venturini).

N° 1948 Mar 2020: Un « 5F Empire » réparé, véritable cas d'école (Beghin); La guerre de 1914-1918 dans le Grand-Duché de Luxembourg (Laporte); L'utilisation postale des 25c du type Sage dans le régime intérieur (2/3) (Lavigne); L'OP 4-2018 du *Marion Dufresne* (Venturini).

## Bulletin COL.FRA

N° 170 4<sup>ème</sup> trim 2019: Madagascar, la seconde série surchargée de 1902 (Richard); Les oblitérations de Centrafrique après l'indépendance (suite) (Parren & Bohnstedt); Nouvelle-Calédonie Yvert & Tellier N° 12 (Jouvent); Les bureaux de poste des états du Levant, 1<sup>ère</sup> partie – la république libanaise (Hurpet); Nouvelles variétés non répertoriées (Puech & Guillermain).

## The Indo-China Philatelist

Vol L N° 1 (Whole N° 241) Jan 2020: Shifted Overprint Creates New Denomination (Bentley); More on Express Mail in Indochina (Roland); Varieties of North Vietnam National Education Set of 1958 (Düring); My Almost World-Famous Collection of Fantasies, Fakes and Forgeries (Dykhouse).

## Cameo

Vol 21 N° 1 (Whole N° 109) Jan 2020: Post Offices in the north of Cameroun (Parren); Cameroun – Plating the Sterling Issue of 1961: the 4d on 15-Franc stamp – Plate B (Bratzel); Inter-colony air services in West Africa 1943 (Wilson); Cameroun: Internment Camps and Internees in World War II – A Correction (Bratzel); Togo: Dahomey postage dues used at Anécho (Mayne); Cameroun – The 2018 *Timbre Communal* Stamp (Lebourcq & Bratzel).

## France & Colonies Philatelist

Vol 76 N° 1 (Whole N° 339) Jan 2020: St Pierre & Miquelon: The 1885 Gothic Surcharges 5c, 10c and 15c surcharges on 40c imperforate (Scott 1-3) (Taylor); Did the

Censor remove a stamp? [Martinique 1939] (Stevens); Léon Pagés – A French Soldier in Cameroun during World War II (Bratzel); The Era of the French Colonial Group Type – Use of Postal Stationery Cutouts (Grabowski); Registered Loose Ship Letter with Cameroun-Netherlands Mixed Franking (Bratzel); URGENT Letters from Indochina [1929] (Bentley).

### Gibbons Stamp Monthly

Vol 50 N° 7 (Dec 2019): West Africa: The 1998-2004 Bela Bellow Definitives of Togo (Pertwee).

Vol 50 N° 9 (Feb 2020): Gone But Not Forgotten: Mauritania and Ubangi-Shari (Moody).

### Le Collectionneur Philatéliste et Marcophile

(originally journal of *Cercle d'Études Marcophiles* now published online by *Section Marcophile* of the *Association Philatélique Rhodanienne* in Lyon)

N° 1 Jan 2020: Étude du camp de Gurs – Le camp des réfugiés espagnols (Parisot & Neimark); La distribution du courrier en zone urbaine (Huard); Le type IRIS et la 2<sup>e</sup> guerre mondiale (III) (Métayer); Un convoyeur rapide sur la ligne Granville À Paris (Martin).

### Documents Philatéliques

N° 243 (1<sup>er</sup> trim 2020) Jan 2020: L'expédition du Mexique, les précurseurs (1861-1862) (Vernot); Le courrier de la dernière minute: services supplémentaires, levées exceptionnelles et agences privées à Paris au XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle (Estel); Les connaissances et leurs timbres de l'époque classique (Danan); Apparition des barres phosphorescentes au type E22 sur la presse TD6-6 (Gervais, Kop & Rabineau).

### The Indo-China Philatelist

Vol L N° 1 (Whole N° 241) Jan 2020: Shifted Overprint Creates New Denomination (Bentley); More on Express Mail in Indochina (Roland); Varieties of North Vietnam's National Education Set of 1958 (Düring); My Almost World-Famous Collection of Fantasies, Fakes and Forgeries (Dykhouse).

Vol L N° 2 (Whole N° 242) Mar 2020: New Air Orient Label Discovery (Bentley); Caught in Currency Changeover (Düring); Worker Militia Stamp of Unified Vietnam (Gebhardt); More on Design Sources for Native Women Stamps (Moallem); Defaced Lao Souvenir Sheets (Dykhouse); Postal Service in North Vietnam after Establishment of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (Düring).

### Les Feuilles Marcophiles

N° 379 (Dec 2019): Histoire d'ambulances (Gasqui); Affranchigo: ça bouge dans les marques à La Poste (Faivre); Les marques d'arrivée de Nonant (Orne) (Lauprêtre); La carte d'abonnement à la réexpédition (3<sup>ème</sup> partie) (Pleinfossé); La mission Faure: une mission aéronautique française au Japon en 1919-1920 (Albaret); Le Musée de la Poste de Paris (ré)ouvre ses portes (Albaret); Utilisation des timbres à date type R84h avec la machine Daguin (Cas); Une lettre peu habituelle à un tarif de proximité traitée par deux ambulants (Goutay, Chabod, Douron); Timbres « contrôle affranchissement avion » (symbolisé par un numéro cerclé) (2<sup>ème</sup> partie) (Guillard & Bonnefoy).

Hors-série N° 2019-02 (Dec 2019): L'histoire postale au cœur de la Grande Guerre [19 articles by separate authors on different aspects of WWI postal history].

## FRANCE FOR SALE 1900 - 2020

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