

THE JOURNAL OF THE FRANCE & COLONIES PHILATELIC SOCIETY



Jim Taylor guides us through the 5c, 10c, and 15c surcharges applied to the 40c imperforate Type Sage and issued in St Pierre-et-Miquelon in 1885. Read his article 'St. Pierre & Miquelon: The 1885 Gothic Surcharges' on pages 78 - 81

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

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

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

2019-20 Annual Subscription Rates

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

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

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

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

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

Auction and Exchange Packet Sales

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

D G Parmley, 40 Kenyons Lane, Lydiat, Liverpool L31 0BR (email: dparmley@jhgl.co.uk; tel: 07464 926250) according to instructions.

Material for circulation in booklet form is welcomed but please contact the appropriate secretary with details before sending items.

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Colonies: R Gent, 17 Malmaison Way, Beckenham BR3 6SA (tel. 020 8650 7695).

The Magazine Circuit

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

For further details contact the circuit organiser:

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* * *

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Data Protection Act. Members are advised that their details are stored electronically, for use on Society business only, e.g address label printing.

The Journal of the France & Colonies Philatelic Society

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CONTENTS

Society Notes (Mick Bister).....	56
Editorial (Jan Gane)	56
New Members	56
Resignations	56
Members Deceased	56
Society Packets	56
Future Events	56
Annual Philatelic Weekend 2021	56
Congratulatory	57
Member Announcement	57
Response to Appeals	57
Editorial Team	57
Website	98
Virtual Displays	109
French Philatelic Displays	iv
Post-independence postmarks of the Central African Republic - Part 2 (Marc Parren & Martin Bohnstedt)	58
Camp des Milles (David Hogarth)	70
St. Pierre & Miquelon: The 1885 Gothic Surcharges (James R. Taylor FRPSL)	78
The CFA franc, and other currencies (Michael Round)	82
Shorter Items - including Questions and Answers	84
The French Red Cross: The Russian that no one wanted (John West)	84
Guadeloupe Puzzle, Solved (Michael Round).....	85
Mourning Envelopes (Edwin Voerman)	86
Albert Decaris proofs (Edwin Voerman)	87
Look after your valuables (David J Morris ACII)	87
An unpublished moveable box mark The <i>Boîte Mobile orné</i> of Neuville-sur-Loire (Peter Kelly FRPSL)..	88
<i>Le Foyer du soldat</i> (Claire Scott FRPSL)	89
Camp des Milles Addenda (Mick Bister)	91
French Mourning Stationery (Claire Scott FRPSL)	94
Mourning Covers (Mick Bister)	99
Senegal: Rare destination of a Post Office postal stationery wrapper from Great Britain (Peter Kelly FRPSL)	100
Type Duval Chiffre-Taxe (David Hockett).....	101
Reports of Meetings	102
44 th Philatelic Weekend at Redditch 13-15 March 2020 (Mick Bister)	102
Minutes of Annual General Meeting 14 March 2020 (Mick Bister)	106
Examiner's Report	109
Bookshelf (Michael Round)	110
Book Review: <i>Censorship of Civilian Mail in Madagascar during World War Two: Handstamps and Labels</i> by John Parmenter <i>et al.</i> (Roy Reader)	110
List of Recently Published Articles (Maurice S Tyler)	iii

SOCIETY NOTES

Editorial

Firstly, thank you to those who have contacted me regarding my first Journal. As I mentioned previously the accolades also go to Mick Bister for his stewardship and Maurice Tyler for the blueprint. Secondly, a Journal is of course dependent on varied articles, and without your contributions it wouldn't be the excellent Journal it is. This edition does have a coincidental 'theme' in the Shorter Items - that being mourning, which in light of what is going on around the world is somewhat appropriate. I hope you enjoy the selection, I have enjoyed reading them.

Journal 292 was sent to printers on the 24 March to try to beat any closures due to the pandemic and our printers Joshua Horgan Print & Design had printed and posted them within 24 hours! Some members were lucky and received theirs on the 25 March, some were later... in my case it took 23 days to get to Australia Post's Sydney West Letter Facility and another four days - two of which were the weekend - to get to Perth, Western Australia. **Jan Gane**

New Members

The Society is pleased to welcome new members 1489 J F Cowlin, 1490, Eric K Blauwkuip (Belgium), 1491 Markand Dave (India), 1492 Jeffery Francis (India), 1493 Hugh Freeman, 1494 Eddie Dunn, 1495 Gaël Caron (France) and 1496 Ray Jones.

Resignations

Members 1211 Arlene Sullivan (Canada) and 1332 J F Gibot (France) have advised us that, sadly, they will not be renewing their membership.

Members Deceased

It is with great sadness that we have to report the death of members: 1071 Roy Gilbert, 1188 Graham O'Hara and 1391 Terence Kerslake. We offer our condolences to their families.

Society Packets

After a short suspension over the last few months due to the current issues, we are pleased to report that both the France and the Colonies Packets are once again up and running. If there are any members who would like to take them again please contact the relevant Packet Secretary. This may be a good time for those who have not taken either of the packets before to join this very popular section of the society where you can take advantage of a wealth of interesting material sent out on a regular basis at competitive prices. Full details from the Secretaries whose details are inside the front cover.

Future Events

Regional organisers will make their own decisions regarding the holding of the following meetings in the light of circumstance prevailing at the time. Members intending to participate should be quite sure that the meeting is still going ahead and should check with the convenor if unsure. Contact details are to be found inside the front cover.

Points for convenors and attendees to note.

- Travel by car should be safe but use of trains and buses will carry risks.
- Social distancing the audience can be done fairly easily but looking at frames tricky even with small numbers below 10. Wessex and Northern meeting rooms are reasonably spacious so social distancing should be less of a problem; London though is cramped.
- Anything handled by someone else must be considered potentially contaminated. Browsing and handling magazines or material will not be allowed.
- Most meetings rely on a pub for lunch. Whether the pubs will be fully operational is not yet known but, even if they are, communal eating may still be too much of a risk.
- Most who attend are in vulnerable categories so individuals need to make their own decisions bearing that in mind.

In other words, the holding of meetings in October is still questionable; nevertheless, here are the details.

The **Northern Group** plans to meet on Saturday 3 October 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** plans to meet on Saturday 3 October at the Scout Hall, Lower Street, Harnham starting at 10.30 am when **Trevor Bucknell** will be presenting 'French Airmails'. After lunch, the afternoon will be devoted to members' displays. It would help if those planning to attend could let the convenor know by emailing colinkrfrench@gmail.com

The **London Group** plans to meet on Saturday 24 October from 11.00am to 4.00pm at the Calthorpe Arms, 252 Grays Inn Road, London WC1X 8JR when **Steve Ellis** will be presenting 'Cross-Channel Mail'. After lunch, the afternoon will be devoted as usual to members' displays.

Annual Philatelic Weekend 2021

The 2021 annual weekend will take place at the Abbey Hotel, Hither Green, Dagnell End Road, Redditch from Friday 12 to Sunday 14 March. Full details will be given in the December edition of the Journal. The price will be the same as this year, two nights' dinner, bed and breakfast. One person: £222. Two persons sharing: £316.

Congratulations

Congratulations are due to **John Hammonds** who has been awarded an Award of Merit by the Association of British Philatelic Societies for his editorship of the *ASPS News* for 16 years. The *ASPS News* is the twice-yearly Journal of the Association of Sussex Philatelic Societies to which twenty-four local societies are affiliated. John was due to be presented his award this year but, for obvious reasons, he is having to now wait until next March.

Congratulations also to American member **Jere Dutt** who exhibited at the Southeastern Stamp Expo 2020 held in Atlanta, Georgia in January where he was awarded a Large Vermeil for his 'Dahomey: Man climbing Oil Palm – the Work-horse of the Dahomey Definitives' and a Vermeil for his 'Introduction to the Forgeries of François Fournier: Using the French Navigation and Commerce issue' Jere likewise received a Large Vermeil for the same exhibit shown at Strongsville in March where he also received the American Association of Philatelic Exhibitors gold Award of Honor pin. His article, 'The Palm-climber issue of Dahomey', was published in F&CPS Journal 289, April 2019.

Jim Taylor, although not a member but whose article 'St. Pierre & Miquelon: the 1885 Gothic Surcharges' is published in this edition of the Journal, is to be applauded on his hat-trick in Atlanta of a Large Gold, the David L Hill Reserve Multi-Frame Grand Award and the France and Colonies Society (USA) Best Multi-Frame Award for his exhibit 'St Pierre & Miquelon: Colonial Series through First Pictorial'

Member Announcement

Gaël Caron, after seventeen years of employment with David Feldman SA, in Geneva (during which time he was the company's nominated recipient of the F&CPS Journal) left the company on 31 March to create a partnership with another former employee, Anders Thorell. We now welcome Gaël to the F&CPS as a full member.

Gaël and Anders have bought together the French Company LE TIMBRE CLASSIQUE which, for fifty years, has had its offices at 4 rue Drouot in Paris, at the heart of the Parisian philatelic community. There, they will be holding three postal sales per year focused on French Philately, both stamps and postal history, of which the 36th sale will close on 14 October.

The auction catalogue will be sent for free to members of the F&CPS who are interested so please send your requests to Gaël at contact@letimbreclassique.com

Gaël and Anders have also opened an international Auction House in Geneva, Switzerland, named LE TIMBRE CLASSIQUE SA. The first auction will be held 25-27 November.

Response to Appeals

Further to the appeals published in the last Journal we are delighted to announce the following:

Alan King from Poole has accepted the post of Examiner to the accounts. Now retired, he was a Chartered Accountant with PriceWaterhouseCoopers for some 40 years. Some of you will have met him at Redditch and Wessex meetings.

Maurice Tyler has kindly volunteered to be in charge of group emailing. You will already have been benefitting from his services during the lockdown with his monthly dispatch of the virtual displays.

Thanks to both of you from officers and members alike.

Editorial Team

Sharp-eyed members of the Society will have already spotted that the editorial team on the Contents page has become considerably smaller.

If you remember, the team was created to support me when I took on the newly created post of Journal Manager after the sudden resignation of Maurice's successor in 2014. You cannot imagine how grateful I have been for the help I have received over the years.

However, now that we have **Jan Gane** at the helm, there is no longer the requirement for such extensive editorial support and we have both reached the conclusion that the number of members in the editorial team can now be reduced; henceforth we shall retain only the key contributors. The team has already undergone several changes. **Peter Allan** retired last year from being the technical editor who transferred my Word documents to InDesign and **Maurice Tyler** also stepped down (for the second time!) after his long and glorious reign as Editor-in-Chief. This year Maurice has also retired from compiling the annual Index, as has **John Hammonds**, and **Colin Spong** has stepped down from his job of compiling the List of Recently Published Articles. An enormous thank you to you all for your substantial contributions.

The current status is that **Maurice** has now taken over the compiling of Recently Published Articles. **Michael Round** will be continuing with his responsibility for the Bookshelf and, along with **David Hogarth** our secretary, will conduct the final proofreading. These three members will be, in effect, the new Editorial Team. As Journal Manager, I will remain the depository for articles and reports and will concentrate on the preliminary work of scrutineering and formatting plus offering some assistance with the indexing. The lion's share of the work is henceforth being undertaken by Jan who is also performing a brilliant job as webmaster. We are such a fortunate Society to have someone with so much expertise and talent.

There are several names I have not mentioned, principally those whom I would occasionally consult on philatelic matters and those who, in my earlier days on the learning curve, assisted me with the formatting. Although the editorial team will no longer exist, I know that should I need some specific advice (usually on postal history matters) they will still be there to help me. Thank you again. **Mick Bister**

Post-independence postmarks of the Central African Republic

Marc Parren and Martin Bohnstedt

Part 2


BANGUI BOY-RABE



The most recently re-opened 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.



<p>1</p>	<p>Double circle 29.5 mm with bridge Earliest: 06.7.1964 Latest: 3.6.1983</p>	<p>Dash between Boy-Rabe</p>
<p>2</p>	<p>Single circle 31 mm Earliest: 27 JUIL 2001 Latest: 10 OCT2002</p>	<p>No dash between Boy-Rabe</p>


	<p>Double circle 32mm with bridge.</p> <p>Earliest: 03 SEPT 2019 Latest: 10 SEPT 2019</p>	<p>Locally hand-cut rubber stamp delivered on 28 August 2019 Misspelled BANGUI BOY-RAB without final 'e'</p>
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BANGUI GARE ROUTIÈRE

Post office opened after independence







Bangui Gare Routière building; the post office is inside
January 2018

	<p>Double circle 29.5 mm with bridge</p> <p>Earliest: 29.12.1981 Latest: 14.4.1987</p>	
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BANGUI (MARCHÉ) KM 5


Post office opened after independence

The KM5 neighbourhood has been known since the 1970s because of its market, though nowadays in conversation and writings the area is universally called PK5 without any reference to its function. Maybe the word '*Marché*' was simply dropped because it is not the only important market in Bangui; there is also the *Marché Central* in PK0 (city centre) and the *Marché Combattant* on the road to the airport.

 <p>1</p>	Double circle 29.5 mm with bridge Earliest: 13.12.1965 Latest: 15.1.1975	Dashes between Bangui-Marche-KM 5
 <p>2</p>	5 wavy lines machine cancellation circle 24 mm Earliest: 14.4.1969 Latest:	CENTRAFRIQUE below
 <p>3</p>	Double circle 29.5 mm with bridge Earliest: 5.8.1982 Latest: 31.1.1984	No dashes between Bangui Marche KM 5
 <p>4</p>	Double circle 30 mm with bridge Earliest: 16.8.1986 Latest: 8.6.1995	'Marché' dropped

BANGUI MAMADOU MBAIKI

Post office opened after independence

 <p>1</p>	Double circle 30 mm with bridge Earliest: 15 JUIN 1984 Latest: 2 FEV 1985	R.C.A. below
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BANGUI (?) ... MANDATS

Post office operational in the 1930s

Only a partial strike of a postmark on cover has been recorded. It cancels CAR postage but only the last word 'Mandats' of a long place name is legible, presumably from Bangui R.P.



1	Double circle xx mm with bridge Earliest: -5.8.1978 Latest:	CENTRAFRIQUE below
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BANGUI RECETTE PRINCIPALE

Post office opened before 1957 in the Rue Guérillot, Zongo



Bangui Recette Principale (General Post Office): photo taken in 1957
The only post office which might have been operational throughout the civil war



Bangui RP north-facing front in white and blue paint.
Photo taken in July 2016







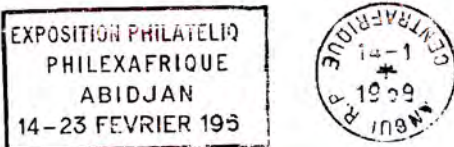




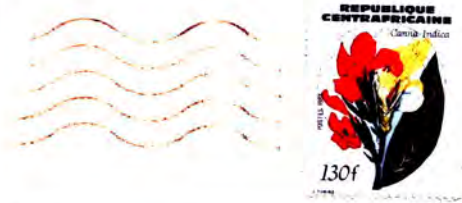





North-facing front painted in yellow and blue paint.
Photo taken in January 2018







South-facing block and Express Mail Service office in January 2018








 <p>1</p>	<p>Double circle 29 mm with bridge Earliest: 1.2.1960 Latest: 9.9.1970</p>	<p>Without RP CENTRAFRIQUE below</p>
 <p>2</p>	<p>Single circle xx mm with bridge Earliest: 22 OCT 1964 Latest:</p>	<p>REPUBLIQUE CENTRAFRIQUAINE below</p>
 <p>3</p>	<p>Double circle 30 mm with bridge Earliest: 29.8.1972 Latest: 11.3.2016</p>	<p>RP without dots CENTRAFRIQUE below</p>
 <p>4</p>	<p>Double circle 29 mm with bridge Earliest: 3.4.1978 Latest: 27.1.1981</p>	<p>R.P. with dots CENTRAFRIQUE below</p>
 <p>5</p>	<p>Slogan machine cancellation circle 24 mm Earliest : 8.1.1963 Latest : 15.5.1978</p>	<p>CAFE DE LA RCA / Un stimulant / Un / Vrai Régal CENTRAFRIQUE below</p>
 <p>6</p>	<p>Double circle 29 mm with bridge Earliest: 19.2.1966 Latest: 17.1.2011</p>	<p>R.C.A. below</p>
 <p>7</p>	<p>Slogan machine cancellation circle 24 mm Earliest : 12.1968 Latest : 14.1.1969 c.d.s. inverted</p>	<p>EXPOSITION PHILATELIQUE / PHILEXAFRIQUE / ABIDJAN / 14-23 FEVRIER 1969 CENTRAFRIQUE below</p>
 <p>8</p>	<p>5 wavy lines machine cancellation circle 24 mm Earliest: 9.8.1978 Latest:</p>	<p>CENTRAFRIQUE below</p>

 <p>9</p>	<p>Single circle 29 mm Earliest: 10 MAI 1976 Latest: 26 DEC 2000</p>	<p>R.C.A. below</p>
<p>10</p> 	<p>5 wavy lines machine cancellation circle 24 mm Earliest: 17.4.1984 Latest: 29.2.1985</p>	<p>R.C.A. below</p>
<p>11</p> 	<p>Slogan machine cancellation circle 24 mm Earliest : 21.5.1985 Latest : 28.8.2003</p>	<p>« Le Coton » / Culture / industrielle / de / Centrafrique R.C.A. below</p>
<p>12</p> 	<p>Single circle 31 mm Earliest: 28 JUIN 2001 Latest : 10 JUIL 2012</p>	<p>CENTRAFRIQUE below In internal use as of December 2017, last seen date of canceller 12 NOV 2015</p>
<p>Centre National de Tri et de Distribution (CNTD)</p>		
<p>13</p> 	<p>Single circle 30 mm Earliest: 11 JAN 1984 Latest : 23 JUIL 2003</p>	<p>R.C.A. below Seen with four digit year until end 1999; in the new millennium only with single digit year</p>
<p>14</p> 	<p>Single circle 31 mm Earliest: 20 DEC 2001 Latest: 9 NOV 2011</p>	<p>CENTRAFRIQUE below</p>
<p>Chargement</p>		
<p>15</p> 	<p>Single circle 30 mm Earliest: 13 FEV 1988 Latest:</p>	<p>R.C.A. below</p>

Chèques Postaux		
 16	Single circle 27 mm Earliest: 19 JUIN 1962 Latest: 24 JUIN 1967	In black or red ink
Colis Postaux		
 17	Double circle 30 mm with bridge Earliest: 19 JUIN 1962 Latest:	CENTRAFRIQUE below
Direction		
 18	Double circle 29 mm with bridge Earliest: 10.1970 Latest:	CENTRAFRIQUE below
Distribution		
 19	Single circle 31 mm Earliest: 12 JUL 2002 Latest:	CENTRAFRIQUE below



Philatelic Bureau in use as of December 2017 after closure for several years since the civil war






Philatélie		
20		Double circle 30 mm with bridge Earliest: 27.AOU.1963 Latest: 14.AVR.1965 R.C.A. below
21		Double circle 29 mm with bridge Earliest: 15.12.1966 Latest: 11.10.1974
22		Single circle 30.5 mm Earliest: 12 DEC 2001 Latest: 5 DEC 2005
23		Double circle 28 mm with closed bridge Earliest: 07.10.2010 Latest: 16.09.2019 Bangui omitted Misspelled CENTRE AFRIQUE between 5-pointed stars
Port Payé		
24		Double circle 29 mm with bridge Earliest: 3.4.1973 Latest: BANGUI CENTRAFRIQUE / P.P. Seen on a newspaper wrapper of the Journal Officiel

BANGUI SICA



Post office opened after independence in the SOCATEL building


Bangui Sica post office in use as of October 2017 after closure for several years since the civil war

1		Single circle 27 mm Earliest: 23.11.1978 Latest: 31.3.1979	EMPIRE CENTRAFRICAINE
2		Single circle 27 mm Earliest: 9.8.1980 Latest: 20.6.1983	EMPIRE· excised
3		Single circle 27 mm Earliest: 24.11.1980 Latest: 18.12.1998	EMPIRE· and AIN of CENTRAFRICAINE excised
4		Single circle 28 mm Earliest: 30.9.1985 Latest:	EMPIRE· and AIN of CENTRAFRICAINE excised
5		Single circle 31 mm Earliest: 9 OCT 2017 Latest: 21 DEC 2017	CENTRAFRIQUE below

BANGUI YAPELE-GREMBOUTOU



Post office opened after independence


Bangui Yapele Gremboutou actually is confined in the south of the capital and covers the two neighbourhoods Yapele and Bruxelles Gremboutou

1		Single circle 27 mm Earliest: 23.9.1988 Latest:	R.C.A. below
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BAORO



Post office opened after independence

1		Double circle 30 mm with bridge Earliest: 10.1.1983 Latest:	
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	Single circle 29 mm Earliest: 28 DEC 1984 Latest: 12 NOV 1998	R.C.A. below
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BATANGAFO

Post office open at least since 1937

	Double circle 30 mm with bridge Earliest: 29.10.1963 Latest:	
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BEMAL





Post office opened after independence


	Double circle 30 mm with bridge Earliest: 30.11.1987 Latest:	
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BERBERATI

Post office opened after independence



Closed since the civil war and re-opened 15 November 2017

	Double circle 29 mm with bridge Earliest: 29.9.1960 Latest: 23.1.1985	
	Slogan machine cancellation circle 24 mm Earliest: 19.12.1959 Latest:	A.E.F. / FRANCE EQUATORIALE Seen before with below OUBANGUI-CHARI instead of CENTRAFRIQUE Could be wrong date 1959 instead of 1960
	5 wavy lines machine cancellation circle 24 mm Earliest: 1.3.1968 Latest: 6.1.1971	CENTRAFRIQUE below

	Single circle 30 mm Earliest: 11 JAN 1985 Latest: 12 FEV 1986	R.C.A. below In red??
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BIRAO



Post office open at least since 1951

	Double circle 29.5 mm with bridge Earliest: 13.4.1966 Latest: 2.1.1985	
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BOALI

Post office opened after independence

It looks as if there existed next to a post office in Boali town one at the waterfall (*chutes*) as well.
 The postmark shows a misspelling 'BAOLI' instead of 'BOALI'.

	Double circle 29.5 mm with bridge Earliest: 11.9.1972 Latest:	
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BOALI-CHUTES

Post office opened after independence



Boali-Chutes (waterfall) is located on the outskirts of Boali, along the Mbali river, and has significant infrastructure, such as a power station to supply Bangui with electricity. It is strategically more important than the nearby, larger town of Boali along the main road.

Boali Chutes Post Office, March 2018.

	Double circle 30 mm with bridge Earliest: 1.3.1973 Latest: 30.12.1985	
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Camp des Milles

David Hogarth

In Memory of Derek Richardson (1923-2018)

Derek Richardson's long-running series on the postal history of the major internment camps in France during World War 2 was incomplete (in his eyes) when his final article appeared in the Journal of the Society in 2012 and when he became unable to visit the departmental archives in France a few years ago. Nonetheless he had covered nearly all of the larger camps, with only the Camp des Milles remaining. This was a major achievement since there were throughout the period of World War 2 literally hundreds of *lieux d'internement* – one estimate puts the number at 1,917 -

many of which were small, temporary or short-lived, established by the French government, the French State or the German occupiers. He was concerned however that the Camp des Milles had not been dealt with and, shortly before he died, he suggested that I might deal with it, explaining how he worked and how he saw the final chapter of one of his major interests being completed. What follows is probably not exactly how he would have presented it, but this brief article will at least conclude his series.

CAMP DES MILLES

Introduction and Location

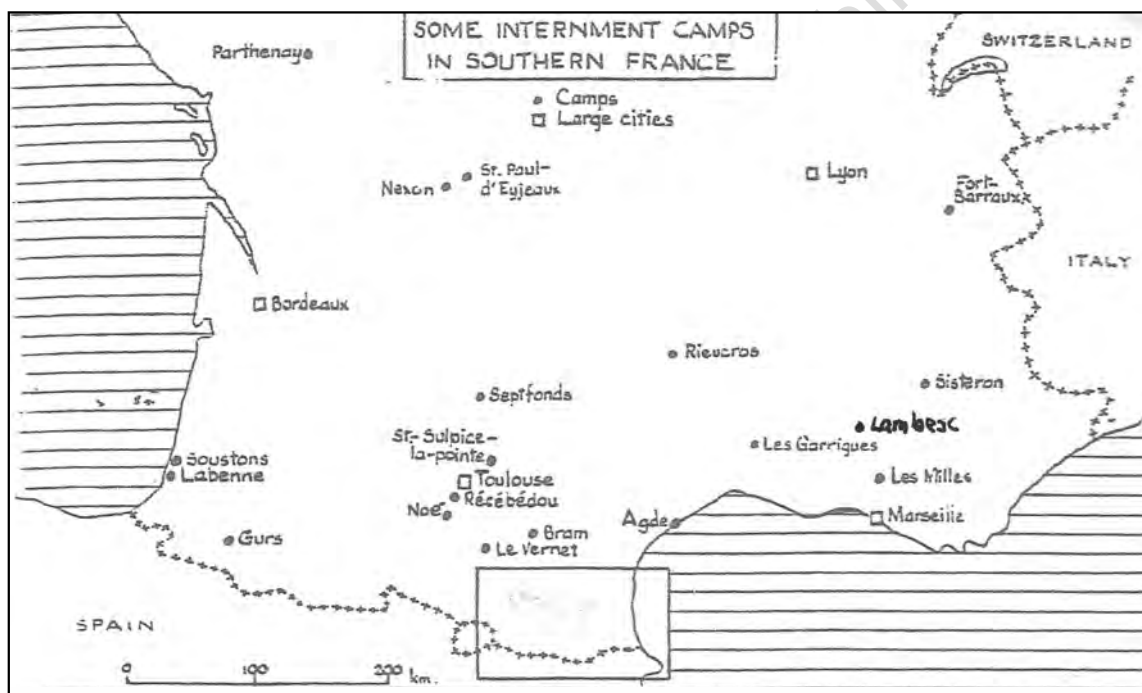


Figure 1

The map is taken from the first article on internment camps by Derek Richardson published in the Society's Journal 167 in March 1988, with the addition of Lambesc

Les Milles was a small village to the south of Aix-en-Provence in the Bouches-du-Rhône *département* (Figure 1). A fairly large brick and tile factory known as the *Usine des Milles* (Figure 2) had been operated by *Les Tuileries de la Méditerranée* but had lain unused since November 1938. The site, to be known as the Camp des Milles, was selected as a *camp de rassemblement des étrangers*, mainly, it seems, because it was available and lay close (100 metres) to the

local railway station which would facilitate the transfer in and out of internees. The whole site extended to 7 hectares. The buildings were however in poor condition, and facilities were primitive – there was, at least initially, no water supply. It was unsuited for housing people. Like many internment camps, Les Milles went through a number of phases under different regimes and for different categories of internees. The four phases are described below.

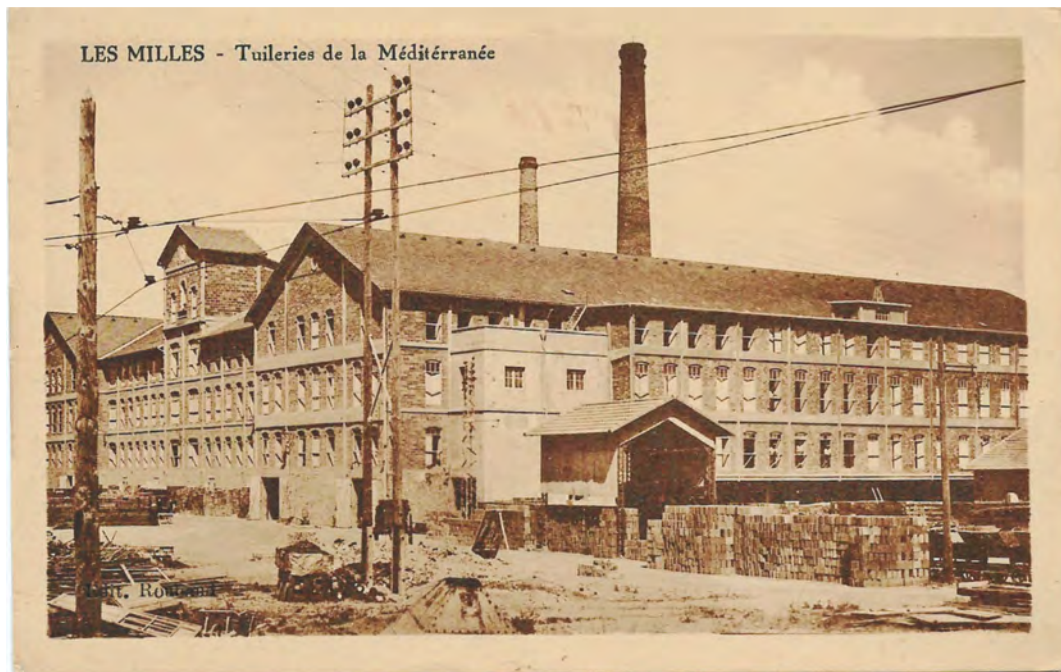


Figure 2
Postcard showing the main building of the
Usine des Milles in 1939

The first phase (September 1939 – April 1940)

France declared war on Germany on 3 September 1939 and the French army began rounding up Germans, Austrians, stateless people (mainly Germans) and those considered as *Ennemis de la République*: the sad irony was that many of the Germans and Austrians and stateless people had in fact fled from Germany only a short time before. The Camp des Milles was pressed into service on 6 September 1939 to house those interned in the south of France. As the condition of the camp left much to be desired, it was closed on 14 April 1940. Numbers varied, with some 2,000 internees at the end of November 1939 though by April 1940 the population had reduced to 400 with many of these internees being transferred to an associated camp at Lambesc on the closure of Les Milles. The main Camp des Milles had to be reopened some 5 weeks later, on 20 May, and 1,800 internees, with a high proportion of *intellectuels*, were housed there. The camp was mainly populated at this point by men, with a number of sub-camps in the area – usually hotels – for women and children. During this period the camp was under the control of the French military.

The second phase (May–December 1940)

The camp reopened on 20 May 1940, and even after the armistice in the following month, it remained under the control of the French military until December 1940. By June 1940, the population had increased to more than 3,000, mainly German and Austrian refugees. However, from June 1940 various groups of refugees, particularly members of the former International Brigades, were transferred into Les Milles from camps at Gurs, Noé and Récébédou, and a growing number of Jews from France and other European countries were also interned there. Arrangements were

made to transfer many internees to other locations and emigration or repatriation (for the Spaniards) were encouraged. Many of these initiatives were however either impossible to achieve or were mismanaged. One example was the train which headed for Bayonne with 2,000 internees where it was intended they could take ships to Morocco, but the arrangements were chaotic and the internees ended up in a camp close to Nîmes, from which many escaped and the rest were returned to Les Milles. By the end of July 1940, the Les Milles camp population had fallen to 234, mainly those waiting to emigrate to the USA. A recommendation in August 1940 was again made to close the camp, but was ignored, though by 1 October the camp was empty; on 23 October it was re-designated as a transit camp and more internees were brought in, though by the end of that month 300 had been sent to the Camp de Gurs and only 117 remained.

The third phase (January 1941 – July 1942)

From January 1941 (actually 15 December 1940), the camp was controlled by the French State, through the Ministry of the Interior. During this period, particularly from November 1941, there continued to be considerable encouragement for emigration and the camp and its sub-camps, often in local hotels, were used to house Jews who sought to emigrate, mainly to the USA. The numbers increased from 651 in February 1941 to 942 in March 1942, 1312 in April 1942, and to between 1300/1400 in June 1942, returning to 1202 in July 1942. The records for emigration, quoted in Guy Marchot's book (see Acknowledgements) however show that between March and December 1941 only 379 were able to emigrate, with less than half that

number in the period January to July 1942. The restrictive politics and policies of the US consulate (which would only issue visas if the applicant had a guaranteed passage on a ship) were initially blamed by many, but more important factors were almost certainly the extreme shortage of ships, the hardening policies of the Vichy government which sought to prevent the emigration of European Jews, and the need for those wishing to emigrate to make their way to Lisbon, after the closure of ports in France to US ships. Numbers are difficult to establish, but between March and May 1941 it seems that only 165 internees were able to find passage reducing to 6 in the period between June and December 1941, while between January and September 1942, 140 internees were able to leave the country.

The final phase (August – September 1942)

This was the darkest period when the Camp des Milles housed interned Jews, prior to deportation, first to Drancy near Paris and then to Auschwitz. On 3 August the camp was designated as a *camp de déportation*. On the same date all Jewish women and children in the Aix-en-Provence region were sent to Les Milles. Four, possibly five, trains left the camp, the first *convoi* on 11 August 1942 and the final *convoi*

on 10 September 1942. In all, the trains carried more than 1,500 people to Drancy; some 2,000 people are recorded as having passed through the Camp des Milles during this period, though many managed to escape, often with the help of sympathetic guards, some of whom were executed for complicity in these escapes. The camp was officially closed on 1 November 1942. However, after the German invasion of the Unoccupied Zone on 11 November 1942, the German army used it as a munitions depot from 14 December 1942. By the end of January 1943, all activity had ceased.

The *Usine* was reactivated briefly as a tile factory in 1945, while the camp was almost forgotten until 2004 when it was declared a *Monument Historique* and was renovated as an *Haut Lieu de Mémoire* and became a memorial site on 10 September 2012 with a commemorative stamp being issued on the 21 September 2012 (Figure 3). A painting in the *Salle des Gardiens* at the camp by one of the internees featured on some first day covers (Figure 4) issued in 2005 on the 60th anniversary of the liberation of the concentration camps (to which many of the internees in Les Milles had been sent).



Figure 3
Commemorative stamp on FDC issued on 21 September 2012



Figure 4

The camp housed many *intellectuels* and artists of whom several (all unknown) painted a mural in the *Salle des Gardiens*, based on the Last Supper, entitled *Le Banquet des Nations* to illustrate the many different nationalities interned in the camp¹

The postal history of the camp

As in many other camps, postal facilities were introduced early, though the local Les Milles post office cancelled the mail, and internees were permitted to travel to Marseille – and posted letters from there - during the first two phases of the camp's existence. For an internment camp which housed many thousands of internees in its three years of existence, relatively little mail has survived. The administrative cachets known to have been used within the camp are even more elusive, found only on a handful of covers and cards. The most usual cachets are the oval censor cachets applied by the military and civilian authorities in the area. The administrative cachets used in the camp generally were of a double-ring design with different text over the periods of use. They are rare and the only cachet I have seen appears on a 1942 official printed cover from the period when the French State controlled the camp (Figure 5).

Civilian internees in the first phase were to be treated from a postal point of view in the same way as prisoners-of-war and mail was censored by the military authorities. The cover (Figures 6 and 7) from Lambesc addressed to Switzerland

shows a relatively clear example of the military censor mark used in the area of Les Milles and its subcamps until the armistice: these censor marks use the letters UP followed by two numbers. Internal correspondence in the Marseille area was dealt with by a postal commission for the *département* in Marseille and used a similar double oval cachet with the words OUVERT /PAR L'AUTORITE MILITAIRE with the letters OA followed by three numbers, usually 212. After the armistice the censor mark was slightly changed with OUVERT PAR LES / AUTORITES DE CONTROLE and the letters OA followed by either 3,5,7 or 9. International mail was also dealt with by the commission using similar cachets with (before the armistice) the letters WK and three numbers, changed (after the armistice) to the same letters but with a single number 1, 2 or 3 (Figure 8). The camp population was divided into *Groupes*, including the *Groupes de Travailleurs Étrangers*, and mail is found from and to internees in numbered groups: examples are shown in Figures 9-12. Mail was addressed to and from many countries, a large proportion going to and from the USA.

¹The *Banquet of Nations*, attributed to Karl Bodek, who later died in Auschwitz. Its composition ironically echoes *The Last Supper*, while the array of diners reflects the camp's international population. Guests from every corner of the earth tuck into their outrageously stereotypical national food, The Italian forks up spaghetti, while the Eskimo feasts on fish, blubber and, amusingly, a bar of Marseille soap. The Indian eats fire and a figure looking like a bit like Britain's King Henry VIII sits in the middle. Above them a dinner-jacketed figure dines in solitary splendour: is he a capitalist collaborator, a chief of police, a camp commander, or an ostracised Jew? Like the other paintings in the room, its meaning is ambiguous. 'The Memorial Site of the Camp des Milles'.

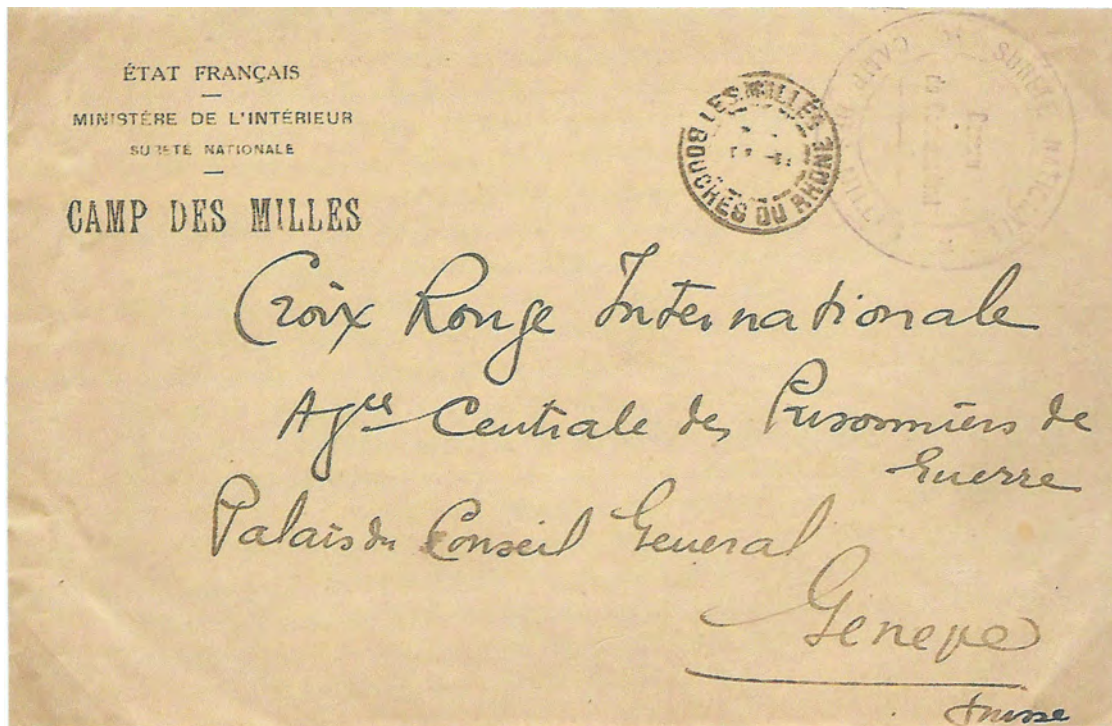


Figure 5

Official printed cover from the camp to the Red Cross in Geneva with a faint *Bureau du Commandant* cachet in the top right which is reproduced and redrawn on the left



Figure 6

Cover cancelled on 30 April 1940 from Lambesc, a sub-camp of Les Milles, sent under military franchise to Switzerland showing the oval military censor mark (OUVERT PAR L'AUTORITE MILITAIRE/UP53) and resealing tape.

Henri Neimark collection



Figure 7

Reverse of the cover from Lambesc showing the rarely used Les Milles senders' address code A 15 IC and the *Paris Centralisateur* cancel for external mail



Figure 8

The different censor marks, drawn from covers, are from left to right, OUVERT /PAR L'AUTORITE MILITAIRE with the letters OA, reworded OUVERT PAR LES / AUTORITES DE CONTROLE with the letters OA for domestic mail and with the letters WK for international mail



Figure 9

Registered cover dated June 1941 from an Austrian, Siegfried Sonnenfeld, to his wife in Brussels. Herr Sonnenfeld had travelled to the south of France to find passage for himself and his wife to the USA, but could not find space on a ship. The correspondence which I have found illustrates the chaotic circumstances at the time as he had first been interned in Camp d'Argelès, then moved to the Camp de Gurs and the Camp des Milles before being transferred to the Camp du Vernet, from where he was moved to the camp at Drancy, near Paris, before being deported to Auschwitz on *convoi* 21 on 19 August 1942. He did not survive, but his wife did, returning eventually to Austria



Figure 10

Cover to Brazil cancelled 7 April 1942, censored by the French authorities and with the oval OUVERT PAR LES AUTORITES DU CONTROLE/ WK2 censor mark
Henri Neimark collection

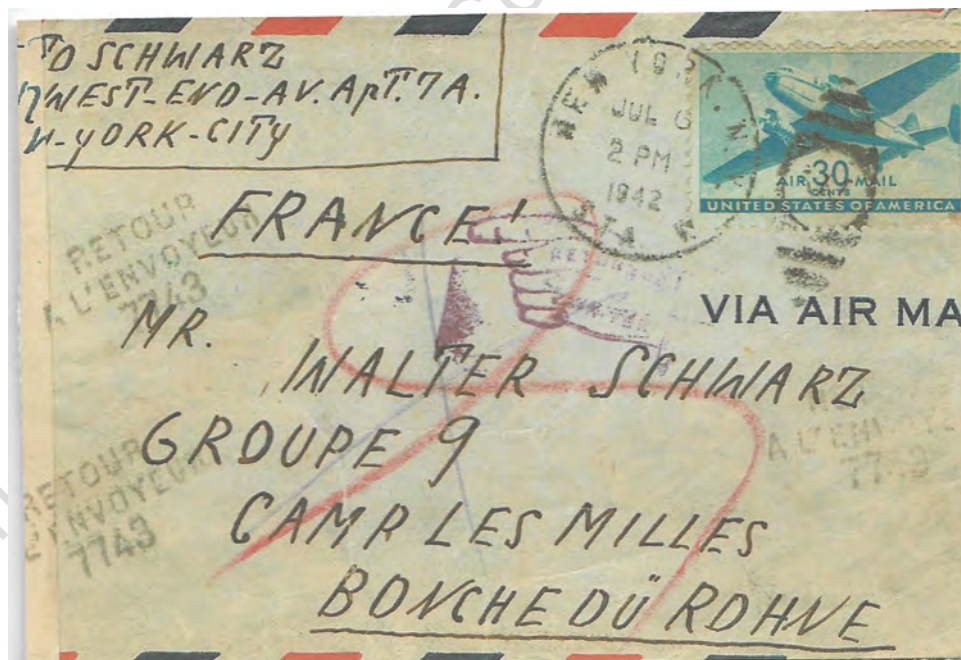


Figure 11

Cover from USA to an internee in Groupe 9, Camp des Milles sent in July 1942.

The cover has been trimmed, but it was opened and resealed by the French authorities. There is no indication of when the letter reached the camp, though by that time the internee was not there, hence the four RETOUR A L'ENVOYEUR cachets (two on the reverse).



Figure 11 (reverse)

The reverse also carries a PARTI SANS LAISSER D'ADRESSE/Le Vaguemestre cachet. The letter was returned to the sender in the USA. By 3 August 1942 the deportations had started and it is unknown whether this internee has been deported or had escaped

Henri Neimark collection

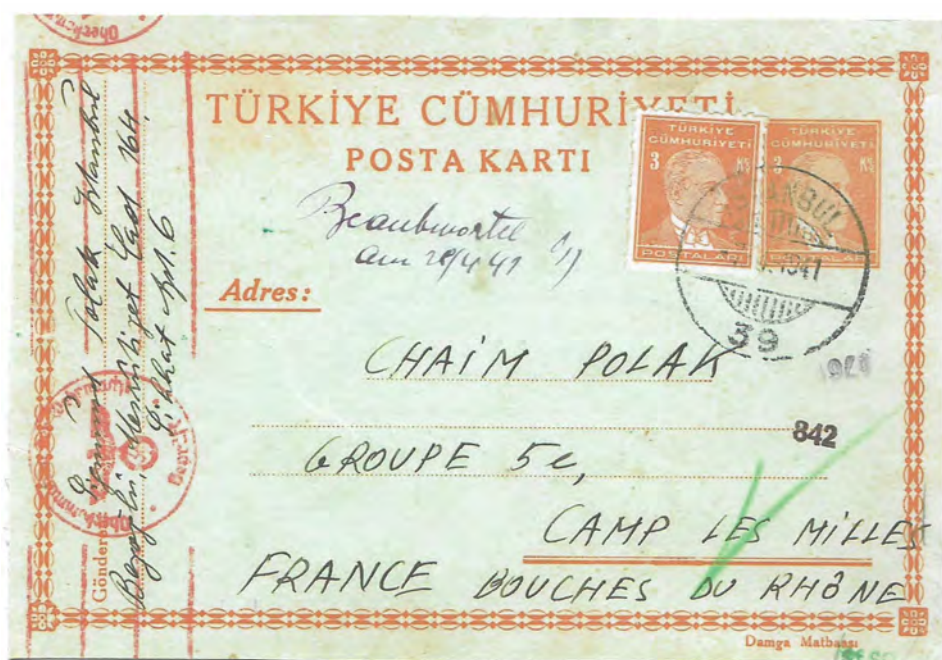


Figure 12

Postcard from Turkey to an internee in Groupe 5c in the camp, censored by the German authorities

Henri Neimark collection

Acknowledgements

Mail to and from the Camp des Milles is relatively scarce. I have been encouraged by my friendship with Henri Neimark, along with colleagues is currently preparing a comprehensive guide to the postal history of the internment camps in France: he has allowed the use of some of the covers in his collection. (See 'Bookshelf', Journal 292, April

2020, page 49 and on pages 74,76-77 in this Journal). A well-illustrated review of the history of the Camp des Milles through internees' correspondence is Guy Marchot's *Lettres des Internés Camp des Milles 1939 – 1942* (Association Philatélique du Pays d'Aix, 2012): I have found this book both illuminating and helpful.

St. Pierre & Miquelon: The 1885 Gothic Surcharges

5c, 10c, and 15c surcharges on 40c imperforate (Maury 5-7¹, Scott 1-3)

James R. Taylor FRPSL

Stamp Shortages

In 1885, when the ship with fresh supplies of current issue French Colonies stamps was delayed, stamp shortages occurred in the more heavily used lower face values. Three stamps, 5c, 10c, and 15c, were authorised to be issued as surcharges on the imperforate 40c value of the 'Sage' design French Colonies general issue stamps of 1877 in stock at the St. Pierre Post Office². The surcharge setting had the values of 05, 10, and 15 (centimes) placed above a horizontal bar 'SPM' the initials of the colony, in Gothic type, were placed below the horizontal bar. Overprinting was done in black ink.

The 10 on 40 (Maury 4, Scott 2) and the 15 on 40 (Maury 5, Scott 3) were issued on 3 August 1885, with a second printing released on 20 October³ while the 05 on 40 (Maury

7, Scott 1) was released on 6 December 1885 (Maury, 2011). Tillard gives the release date of the 05 on 40 as 16 and 17 December 1885.

The 05/SPM

The Gothic 'SPM' overprint on the 05 on 40 (centimes) stamp (Scott 1) measures 15.5 mm wide. The surcharges were applied by hand using two horizontal handstamps, one with two clichés and the other with three clichés, that surcharged two or three stamps at a time. A block of twenty of the 05 on 40 stamps is shown in [Figure 1](#). The surcharge often fell in the sheet margin ([Figure 2](#)), but in this position, the surcharged 'label' was without postal validity. The number of 05/SPM stamps issued was 6,750⁴.



Figure 1

Irregular block of twenty of the 05/SPM (narrow spacing) on 40c General Issue cancelled 21 December 1885. The overprints on the three left hand columns have been applied by the triple cliché handstamp and the two right hand columns by the double cliché handstamp

¹ Yvert & Tellier numbers are identical to those used by Maury

² Tillard, J-J., 2014, *Saint-Pierre-et-Miquelon Ses surcharges au 19^{ème} siècle*, Azimuts sarl, St. Pierre & Miquelon, p. 26

³ Tillard, *op. cit.*

⁴ Maury, Arthur, 2011, *Principautés & Terres polaires*, Edition 2010-2011, p. 478

Full sheets of the surcharged stamps were cancelled to the order of European stamp dealers. **Figure 1** is postmarked by a 23.5mm circular ST PIERRE ET MIQUELON/ 21/ DEC / 85/ * cancel with an inner ring of dots. Genuine post office cancels added a degree of authenticity to the crudely surcharged stamps. Also, many stamp collectors in the 1880s preferred postmarked copies. The dealer could simply use scissors to snip off a stamp, pair or block from the sheet as a sale was made. Perhaps slow sales allowed this large irregular multiple of 20 to survive intact.

The 10/SPM and 15/SPM

The 'SPM' on the 10 on 40 (centimes) and 15 on 40 (centimes) stamps (Scott 2 and 3, 2018) measure two different spacings: 15.5 mm wide and 17 mm wide (**Figure 3**). Maury (2011) reports the number issued of each was 11,250. Tillard (2014) further breaks out the number issued as a first print run on August 3 of 10,250 and a second print run of 1,050 issued on 20 October 1885. The 20 October 1885 issue is assumed by Tillard to be the 17 mm varieties of

Figure 2
05/SPM with
left marginal
surcharge
cancelled on piece.



both the 10/SPM and the 15/SPM. A block of ten of the 10/SPM shows the handstamp spacings.

An error occurs in one 'SPM' cliché on the 10 on 40 (centimes) stamp. The 'M' in 'SPM' is inverted. These are best collected in a pair (or larger multiple) with a normal upright 'M' (Scott 2a, Maury 6c) (**Figure 4**). Various other surcharge varieties on the 05/SPM, 10/SPM and 15/SPM are shown in **Figure 5**. **Figure 6** shows a block of four of the 15/SPM stamp.



Figure 3
Block of ten of the 10/SPM (narrow spacing)
showing four complete examples of the double
cliché handstamp



Figure 4
Pairs of 10/SPM with inverted
'M' on left stamps. Top, normal
paper; bottom, yellowish paper



Figure 5
Various surcharge varieties on the 05/SPM, 10/SPM and 15/SPM issues with 15.5mm narrow spacing.
(left to right) 05 'à cheval', 10 with mis-aligned 'O' (see insert), 10 and 15 with double surcharges



Figure 6
Block of four of the
15/SPM

The 10/SPM Inverted "M" Mystery

The 'Inverted M Mystery' was featured in an article in January 2007⁶. The mystery was the 1885 10/SPM surcharge on the 40c imperforate French Colonies stamp (Scott 2a). The surcharge variety 'inverted M' in horizontal pairs in a survey of eight horizontal pairs always had the variety on the left stamp! Jean-Jacques Tillard⁷ in 2006 noted that the surcharge handstamp was struck by one of two types arranged horizontally, one type composed of two clichés and the other of three. Jean-Jacques wanted to determine which handstamp contained the error 'inverted M'. He surveyed collectors for scans of the variety in pairs with the normal stamp. Remarkably, of the eight pairs he was able to verify, all the pairs show the inverted variety on the left stamp!

A recent single copy of the inverted M variety provides a clue to this apparent anomaly (Figure 7). The stamp has a fine, well struck, centred surcharge (Taylor, 2008)⁸ with four margins, wide at left and top, indicating that the specimen is cut from the top upper left margin of the pane. If this is the common position of the stamp or a position on the left side of panes, then this may explain the mystery. Possibly all the Scott 2a stamps occur on the left margins of sheets. In horizontal pairs, the inverted 'M' would then only occur on the left stamp. Old-time stamp dealers probably cut the stamps into pairs and cut off the left selvage to improve symmetry and saleability. While this is a possible

explanation of the mystery, additional multiples from these sheets, if they are still intact, may confirm it.

The 10/SPM & 15/SPM with SPM 17mm wide

Figure 8 shows singles and pairs of the 10/SPM & 15/SPM with SPM 17mm wide (see Footnote 4). Figure 9 shows singles of the 10/SPM and 15/SPM with SPM 17mm wide used together on a piece. The 17 mm spacing appears to be from the stamps of the second print run of 1,050 issued on 20 October⁹.

Gothic Stamps on Cover

The Gothic surcharged stamps are very scarce to rare on covers. The cover shown in Figure 10 is postmarked with the 23mm diameter circular cancel with an inner ring of dots, ST PIERRE ET MIQUELON / AOUT. The receiving mark is a 29 mm diameter CDS, BOSTON F. D. / AUG / 20 / 1885/ PAID. The cover is backstamped with the 25.5 mm circular AUG 20 86/ C/ 10 AM Cancel. The 10/SPM and 15/SPM (narrow spacing) surchargess prepay the 25 centime letter rate to the United States via Halifax, Nova Scotia.

Another (Figure 11) has the narrow spacing 10c on 40c and 15c on 40c vermilion (two of each formed the 50c rate to France) tied by red ST. PIERRE-MIQUELON 17 SEPT 85 CDS strikes on a registered envelope with red boxed "R". The Paris railway transit cancel CALAIS À PARIS/ 8/ OCT./ 85/ 2^o/ A, and the Gironde OCT./ 9/ 85 receiver are on the reverse.



Figure 7

Unique corner marginal copy of the 10/SPM with inverted 'M'

© Tillard, J.-J., 2014, *Saint-Pierre-et-Miquelon ses surcharges au 19^{ème} siècle*, 148p, Azimuts sarl, St. Pierre & Miquelon



Figure 8

Pairs of the 10/SPM and 15/SPM with SPM 17mm wide spacing



Figure 9

Singles of the 10/SPM and 15/SPM with SPM 17mm wide on piece.

⁵ The Scott catalogue shows the 10c on 40 and the 15c on 40 with the 'SPM' 17 mm wide as a footnote. Tillard (2014, p. 32) measures the wider SPM as 16.75mm. I have used 17mm, the 'rounded' value used by Scott (2018) and Maury (2011) in the text.

⁶ Taylor, J. R., 2007, Inverted 'M' Mystery, *St. Pierre & Miquelon Philatelic Journal*, January, v.13, n.1, p.1.

⁷ Tillard, J.-J., 2006, Personal communication

⁸ Taylor, J. R., 2008, Notes from the Editor [Inverted 'M'], *St. Pierre & Miquelon Philatelic Journal*, October, v.14, n.4, p.2.

Conclusions

The second printing of 20 October 1885, was probably the source of the Gothic 10/SPM and 15/SPM with the 'SPM' 17 mm wide. The second Gothic print run reported as 1,050 makes these varieties harder to find. Any of the Gothic

surcharges on cover are very desirable. The 05/SPM with the relatively low printing of 6,750 and its popularity as a St. Pierre & Miquelon N°1 (according to the Scott Catalogue) means it enjoys a catalogue premium.

Figure 10
1885 cover to the
United States
franked with Gothic
surcharges



Figure 11
1885 registered
cover to France
franked with Gothic
surcharges.
The postmark of ST.
PIERRE-MIQUELON
and boxed 'R' are
seldom seen struck
in red

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The CFA franc, and other currencies

Michael Round

Dreams of a unified West African currency have been around since 2003 if not earlier. In December 2019 came news that the CFA franc, the currency used in a large part of French-speaking Africa, was to change its name to the 'Eco'. No definite date had yet been agreed – nevertheless, the time seems ripe to review the history of the CFA franc thus far.

The initials CFA currently stand for *Communauté Financière Africaine*. This was not always the case: originally they stood for *Colonies Françaises d'Afrique*, then, from 1958

until each country's independence, *Communauté française d'Afrique*.

Although the potential name-change to 'Eco' will affect just West African currency (see later), the CFA franc as a unit covers a much wider area. Most philatelists' acquaintance with it will have been through the stamps of Réunion which, from 1949 to 1974, were practically all surcharges on stamps of metropolitan France, the two visible face-values providing a rough-and-ready conversion chart in the process (Figures 1 and 2).



Figure 1

Left: 1945-59, 200 old francs French stamp surcharged 100f CFA;

Right: 1960 onwards, 2,00 new francs French stamp surcharged 100f CFA.



Figure 2

The Réunion 25f CFA Chameleon issue, a rare example of the 'CFA' indication being shown in full on a stamp

History

The CFA franc was created on Boxing Day 1945, along with the CFP franc (for Pacific Ocean colonies) and the Madagascar-Comores franc (currency code XMCF). Colonial francs had hitherto been at par with the French franc (1 = 1). The post-war weakness of the French franc (currency-code FRF) provoked a devaluation in order to stabilise an exchange-rate with the US dollar and, in order to cushion the colonies against the worst effects of this (and facilitate exports to France), the colonies' currency was not devalued quite so far, 1f CFA rising to 1.70 FRF.

The French franc was again devalued, the CFA franc along with it, in January 1948, but a further devaluation on 17 October that year affected France alone, the CFA being strengthened by default to 1f CFA = 2f FRF. Thereafter both currencies devalued in tandem. On 1 January 1960 the new French franc was introduced, one new French franc equalling 100 old ones (or, if you like, one old French franc becoming one new centime). The value of the CFA remained unaffected, being thenceforth rewritten as 1f CFA = 0.02 (new) FRF.

A strong CFA franc certainly made imports to the colonies cheaper, but did little to help the export potential of poor and mostly agricultural colonies (the majority, it must be said). To address this, on 12 January 1994 the CFA was halved in value, 1f CFA then equalling 0.01 FRF. This remained the exchange rate even when France switched to

the euro (in 1999, in preparation for 2002): the CFA's value was simply re-expressed as 1 CFA franc = 0.00152449 euro or 1 euro = 655.957 CFA francs.

Meanwhile, Djibouti (then named the French Somali Coast) pursued a different path. Its own franc (DJF) was created in 1949 and pegged not to the French franc but to the US dollar, thereby escaping many subsequent devaluations. It was even strengthened against the dollar in 1971 and 1973.

Today

Currently, fourteen countries use the CFA franc, though only those of West Africa will change their currency name to the 'Eco'. The CFA currency is itself divided into two: the West African CFA franc (currency code XOF) and the Central African CFA franc (currency code XAF).

Countries using the West African CFA franc include all the components of the former French West Africa - excluding those countries which opted out of the CFA scheme long ago, namely Guinea Republic (which switched to Guinean francs in 1960) and Mauritania (which adopted the *ouguiya* in 1973) (Figure 3). Mali used its own (Malian) francs between 1962 and 1984 but returned to the CFA fold thereafter. The remainder comprise Bénin, Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast, Niger, Senegal and Togo – to which should be added the formerly Portuguese territory of Guinea-Bissau, which switched from the peso to the XOF in 1997.

For the record, the six countries using the other (Central African) CFA franc include the four former components of French Equatorial Africa – Gabon, Congo Republic (i.e. the former French, not Belgian, Congo), Central African Republic (formerly Oubangui-Chari) and Tchad, plus Cameroun and the previously Spanish territory of Equatorial Guinea.

The two currencies share the same exchange-rate with the euro (currently – late April 2020 – 652.74f CFA = 1€) but notes and coins of one region cannot be used in the other.



Figure 3

Mauritania stamps commemorating the introduction of the *ouguiya*, expressed as 'UM'.

The CFP (currency code XPF), mentioned à propos the initial events of 1945, escaped most of the French franc's postwar devaluations, being fixed instead to the US dollar until 1949, whence it fixed to the French franc instead. Madagascar and the Comoros jointly followed the CFA pattern, using a 'Malagasy-Comores' franc (XMCF) until 1973, at which date Madagascar left the CFA zone and used the 'Malagasy' franc (XMF). Comoros left the CFA zone in 1979, its own franc (KMF) initially set, like the CFA franc, at 0.02FRF, or 50KMF = 1FRF. Curiously, in 1994 it devalued, but less than the CFA franc, i.e. to 75KMF = 1FRF rather than 100KMF = 1FRF.

In future

Back to the 'Eco'. Philatelic consequences may or may not be significant. Since only the name of the CFA will change, rather than its status or exchange-rate, there should be no need for surcharges on existing issues, unless to publicise the point. We could of course see commemoratives. Otherwise, to spot any sign of the changeover we may have to consult each new issue's face-value. Most countries in fact inscribe their face-values simply as 'F' rather than 'CFA' in full: it remains to be seen whether this will change to 'E' for 'Eco'. Mixed-franking covers, of course, will always then be a possibility.

The name-change, incidentally, is in recognition of those users "wishing to reduce their colonial links with the past." This is not just a wish to expunge the last traces of the words 'French Colonies' (the original meaning of the initials 'C' and 'F', as we have seen): the new name will underline the changed status of the 'Eco' with respect to France itself.

CFA-using countries will no longer have to deposit 50% of their reserves in France against emergencies, but will be free to spend them as they think fit. Reactions to the move among member countries have been mixed, though not violently so.

The CFA is not the only currency to change the meaning of its initials according to local sensitivities. 'CFP' originally meant '*Colonies Françaises du Pacifique*', then '*Communauté Financière du Pacifique*': it now stands for '*Change Franc Pacifique*'.

Footnote

All members will know - to their delight - that researching one topic always throws up fascinating sidelights on others. I never realised, for instance, that the Mauritanian *ouguiya* was one of only two present-day African currencies whose higher and lower units were *not* based on a power of 10 (usually 1:100, of course). The *ouguiya* (written as 'um', currency code MRU) is subdivided into 5 *khoums*. 1 *khoums* = 1 CFA franc¹.

The same ratio applies to the *ariary* of Madagascar (a name derived from the Spanish 'real'; written as 'Ar', currency code MGA). This was introduced as long ago as 1961 but did not officially replace the Malagasy franc until 1 January 2005. Both it and its Malagasy-franc equivalent often appear together on banknotes, coins and stamps (Figure 4).



Figure 4

Malagasy stamps inscribed (top) in dual currency and (bottom) spelt out in the local language ('zato' = '100')

As with Mauritania, the currency's sub-unit (here called the *iraimbilanja*, and like the *khoums* never specified on stamps) was equal in value to the CFA franc. Since many Malagasy face-values are also spelt out in words, it's possible to learn some usable Malagasy language in readiness for your next holiday there!

¹In the same way that pounds and dollars are written as '£' and '\$', the *ouguiya* is written as 'UM'. The symbol 'UM' is not a word in speech. A new *ouguiya* was introduced in 2018, each being worth 10 old *ouguiya*. The new unit, still divisible into 5 *khoums*, is now worth 50f CFA. Linguistically, the words *ouguiya* (never with 's') and *khoums* (always with 's') are the same whether singular or plural

SHORTER ITEMS - INCLUDING QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

The French Red Cross: The Russian that no one wanted

In 1907 the three organisations which formed the French Red Cross combined to form the Central Committee of the French Red Cross, whilst retaining their autonomy at the same time. They were the *Société Française de Secours aux Blessés Militaires*, the *Association des Dames Françaises* and the *Union des Femmes Françaises*.

These societies were authorised, by the French government, to provide assistance in military zones in time of war.

However, they received no financial backing and were required to raise their own funds. One, very successful, way of doing this was to print patriotic charity stamps for sale to the public. The more discerning of philatelists among us may prefer to call them 'labels' but there can be no doubt that they were both popular and raised a good deal of money.

Additionally, the booklet featured a Russian soldier in the



Figure 1

Cover emphasising the global extent of hostilities with the two hemispheres on fire, hence the title of the booklet '*Le Monde en Feu*'

top left corner of the right-hand pane. It must be conjecture, but it may be presumed that when the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk was signed on 6 March, 1918 - which took Russia out of the war - the process of engraving the labels was too far advanced to jettison the image and, rather than abandon the booklet, the printing company elected to annul the

portrait by placing a diagonal cross over the '*Russie*' label. At first, they achieved this by scoring a cross directly over the design on the printing plate. As the printing process was a form of photogravure (*héliogravure*) the scored lines did not pick up any ink and appeared on the paper in white. This first printing was in violet, red and brown and was also



Figure 2a

Figure 2

Part of the right-hand pane from the first printing in violet, red and brown, with irregular perforation.

The Russian label in the top left corner is 'cancelled' by a broad white X. However, the scored lines are fractured and it is not clear if the inverted V in the yellow circle is part of the soldier's webbing or part of the later scoring.

characterised by rather ragged perforation (**Figure 2a**). The scored lines are fractured and it is not clear if the inverted V is a part of the soldier's webbing or part of the later scoring. However, a second printing (**Figure 3**) in blue, red and brown, and with regular perforation, no longer shows the score marks but, in their place, a superimposed cross in blue. The inverted V is still apparent (**Figure 3a**) strongly suggesting it is indeed part of the original design. But can we be sure? Copies of the original unaltered design are not

known to exist, hence a comparison cannot be made. How were these modifications achieved within the photogravure process? Is it possible to substitute a single cliché with a modified one or even to overprint it? If anyone has any suggestions how the second printing was achieved please contact me via the Journal.

The complete booklet panes are quite rare but certainly make an interesting addition to one's collection!



Figure 3

The second printing in blue, red and brown, with regular perforation and with the Russian label cancelled by a thin blue X. The inverted V remains, suggesting it is part of the original design. Or is it?



Figure 3a

John West

Guadeloupe Puzzle, Solved

In Journal No 291 (Vol 69 No 3, December 2019, p.139), I showed a stampless cover from Guadeloupe (1976 vintage) and asked some questions about the numerous markings on it. I am much indebted to colleagues **Marty Bratzel** and **Peter Kelly** for their replies. Here are their findings.

Marty points out that “the cover was sent under administrative postal franchise, which was available to government departments and to a number of non-government organisations such as academic, research, trade, service and welfare. Stamps were not required on the correspondence and payment for postal services rendered was through an agreed mechanism, often annually.” Peter adds that the item only entered the postal service once, therefore all markings on the cover, except for the slogan postmark and the handstamped 'T', were applied beforehand.

1. Peter has re-examined the large double-ring cachet (Marking No 1). The word “Église” forms no part of it, as I mistakenly thought: Peter postulates the alternative reading *Agrément* (Eng. 'Amenities'), certainly a plausible word among government departments. This reading, however, leaves two of the obscured letters unaccounted for. Might it instead read *Équipement*?

2. The MS paraph (read “biro scribble”, Marking No 2) is,

as I originally thought, an authenticating signature.

3. Marty and Peter both explain that such correspondence (sent under franchise) was usually sent unsealed, to allow the postal authorities to verify the contents, but there was also provision for the envelope to be sealed, for example to protect confidentiality. This item must have been one such: hence the cachet *PLI DE SERVICE/CLOS PAR NECESSITÉ* (Official mail/Sealed out of necessity) (Marking No 3).

4. The Pointe-à-Pitre slogan postmark (Marking No 4) needed no further explanation.

5. Marty (confirmed by Peter): “The administrative franchise was available for correspondence sent within the French community but this letter was sent to a foreign destination, that is, the Netherlands and, therefore, postage was required to be paid in full. Hence the 'T' *taxe* mark (Marking No 5), applied at the time of departure.” Peter adds that “The letter would have travelled unpaid. The Dutch Post Office either overlooked it or didn't bother so it was not taxed on receipt.”

Marty concludes, “A nice item indeed!” Any member agreeing with him is cordially invited to approach me, cheque-book in hand!

Michael Round

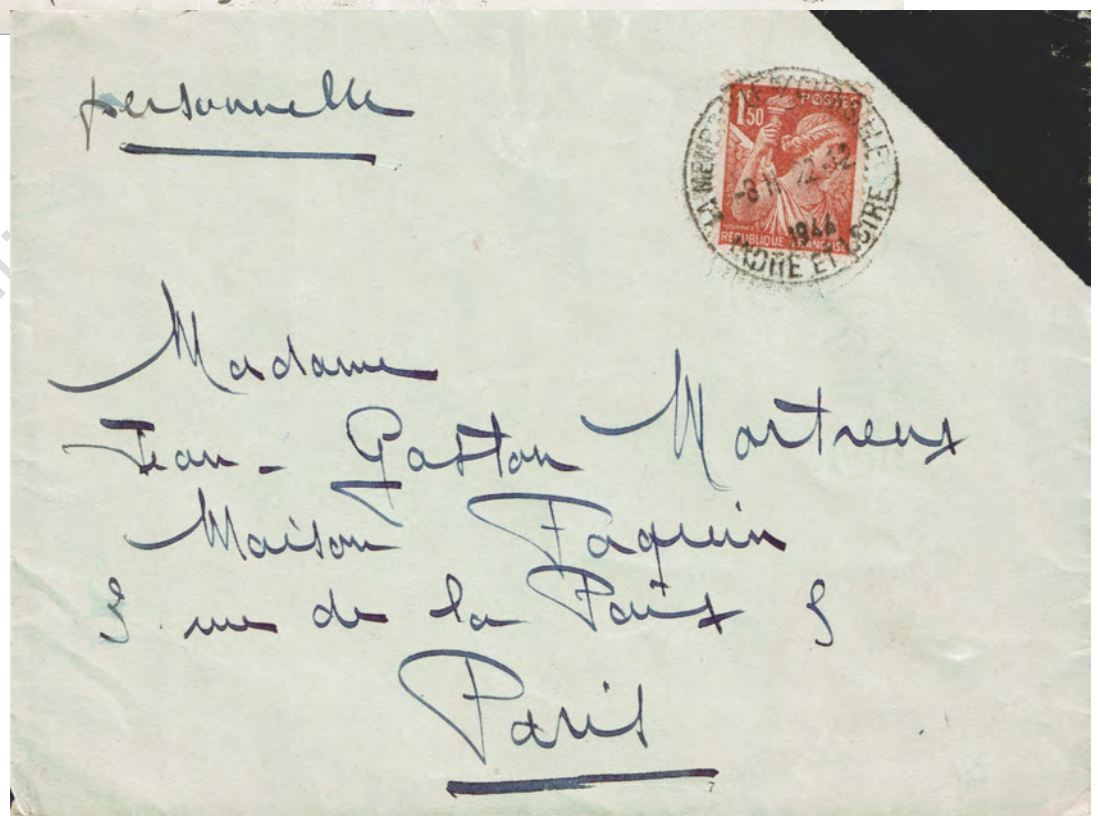
Mourning Envelopes

I note that Claire Scott (F&CPS Journal 292, April 2020, p.47) seems to be a specialist in the field of French mourning envelopes. Below you will find two scans of mourning envelopes from my collection. I have seen only two examples of this type in my life as a collector.

Can Claire or another member add further information?

Edwin Voerman

Claire's full reply is to be found in 'French Mourning Stationery' on Page 94.



Albert Decaris proofs

I am sending two proofs of unissued stamp designs by Albert Decaris. They were signed and presented by Decaris to a recently deceased board member of the Dutch Association of France collectors when he was our guest of honour in 1977. They relate to Yvert & Tellier 982,

Maréchal de Lattre de Tassigny of whose portrait he had to turn a bit more 'en profil' and to Yvert & Tellier 1022 *La Télévision*. Initially he included a television set with 'RTF' on but he had to remove it.

Edwin Voerman



Look After Your Valuables

Some advice from a member:

You will, no doubt, consider your philatelic collections as 'valuables' – and so do most insurers. There are two main types of home insurance – what I describe as firstly, 'High Street' and secondly, High Net Worth.

Within the high street variety check the policy definition of valuables as I am sure that in addition to your France and Colonies treasures you could also have art, jewellery, other collections and so on. This type of policy will have a standard limit for valuables in total, and a maximum value for any one item of valuables. If you fall within these limits, do nothing!

For High Net Worth home insurance, you will be eligible if your total contents value (including valuables) is in excess of, typically, £150,000.00. (This figure depends upon the insurer.) You will be asked to declare the value of valuables – as valuables are only included at the level you require – and usually the single article limit is very much higher than high street home insurances.

It is probable that a High Net Worth home insurer will have less stringent security requirements than a high street home

insurance – so if your high street home insurer demands an intruder alarm, High Net Worth may not. If you keep much of your collection off-site in, say, a vault it is very easy to add cover whilst in the vault, and at a lower premium than if it was at home.

Should you exhibit be mindful of the cover provided by your home insurances. High Net Worth will definitely include transit and display. The high street policy probably will not, and probably cannot be extended to provide this cover. However, both policies will provide public liability for your non-commercial philatelic activities such as attending fairs and clubs, exhibiting and so on.

There are separate stamp insurance policies available. As you should always approach any insurance with a view to making matters simpler at the time of a claim you would question why you would require two insurances covering the same collection. If you had a burst pipe at home damaging your collection, and your carpets, furnishings etc. why make two claims, when only one is necessary!

David J Morris ACII
Chartered Insurance Broker

An unpublished moveable box mark

The *Boîte Mobile orné* of Neuvy-sur-Loire (Nièvre)

The old adage that if you look long enough you will eventually find something that does bear fruit and in my searches for interesting things in the rural post, particularly during the Sage period, the letter illustrated in **Figure 1** popped up in an on-line sale. It is attractive on different

levels being partly paid and taxed with a 40c *Banderolle* which is a useful stamp. What did it for me was the unusual *BM* handstamp, larger and different to the normal standard oval one and with a decorative wavy line below the *BM*.



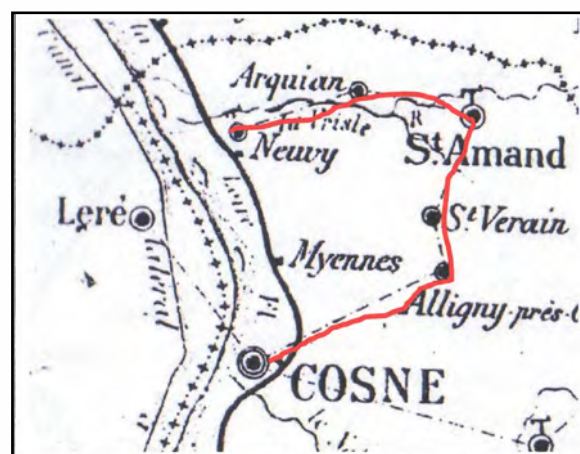
Figure 1
1884 cover from Arquian to St Fargeau bearing the *Boîte Mobile orné* strike of Neuvy-sur-Loire

My initial thought was that this could be a philatelic invention as I have never seen or heard of anything like it before. I then contacted friends in the Rural Post research group in France and Denis Pinhas confirmed to me that he had an example on cover as well but without any indication of where the letter had started out from. Satisfied that this is a genuine postal marking I can now write up the cover correctly.

The letter was sent from Arquian in the Nièvre *département* to Fargeau in Yonne on 12 April 1884. It was posted at Arquian in the moveable box of a contractor operating between Cosne, St-Amand and Neuvy-sur-Loire, all in Nièvre. The route is shown in red in **Figure 2**. The box was cleared at Neuvy and the datestamp of that office was applied together with the *BM* mark. The letter was also underpaid, having been franked for the first weight step to 15 grams while it should have been franked for the second step to 30 grams. The 'T' tax mark was applied as well as the '*Affranchissement insuffisant*' handstamp. When the letter was received at Fargeau it was taxed 45c. This can be calculated as follows: 2nd weight step unpaid is 30c x double deficiency = 60c less 15c paid = 45c (Tariff of 1.5.1878)

In 1884 Arquian was a large village with a population of 1,790. Postal services were provided by a *facteur-boîtier* at that time (later a full service *recette* would be opened). The letter was being sent out of the *département* and perhaps

Figure 2
Shown in red, the itinerary of the *boîte mobile* contractor between Cosne and Neuvy-sur-Loire



urgently so the sender, a commercial company dealing in building products, posted the letter into the moveable box rather than passing it to the *facteur-boîtier*. The reason for sending it on to Neuvy is that from there it could enter the railway system as trains on two lines, Fontainebleau to Nevers and Montargis to St Germain-des-Fossés, called at Neuvy as part of the *convoyeur* service.

The form of the *BM* mark with its larger size and decorative wavy line is thought to be unique to Neuvy and while other examples of it must surely exist, I do not believe that it has been brought to the attention of a wider audience.

Peter R.A.Kelly.

Le Foyer du Soldat

During the First World War a large city such as Lyon had to cater for thousands of troops in transit, as well as for those who were recuperating from their injuries, with consequent pressure on local cafés and bars. Between October 1915 and September 1919 200 administrative orders were made against such establishments in Lyon in an attempt to limit the consumption of alcohol. The first *Foyer du Soldat* was opened in Lyon in the *Parc de la Tête d'Or* in 1915, offering soldiers somewhere to read books, write letters and attend

concerts. Immediately opposite was the *Boulevard des Belges* where wounded soldiers could play boules, darts and skittles in the *Jardin du Blessé*. In typically French style both the *Foyer* and the *Jardin* had their own stationery and cachets to enable mail to pass under the military franchise.

Such facilities were offered by charities elsewhere in France such as the *Union des Femmes de France* in La Rochelle and by local municipalities such as the *syndicat d'initiative*¹ in Antibes, both of whose cachets are shown here.



A view of the *Parc de la Tête d'Or* posted from Lyon to Paris in December 1914 by a soldier in the Military Hospital Desgenettes which operated throughout the First World War with some 800 beds.

The cachet of *Le Foyer du Soldat* at 42 Rue Moncey, Lyon, used on a postcard written to *Hôpital Auxiliaire No 5* in Saint-Maur-des-Fossés in November 1915.



¹A *syndicat d'initiative* was the original name for a tourist office but changed to *office de tourisme* in 1989.

The cachet of Le Jardin du Blessé organised by the Société de Secours aux Blessés Militaires used on their printed stationery in 1916



The cachet of the Foyer du Soldat in La Rochelle run by the Union des Femmes de France on a postcard in 1918.



The cachet of the Foyer du Soldat run by the Tourist Office in Antibes used on a postcard in 1919.

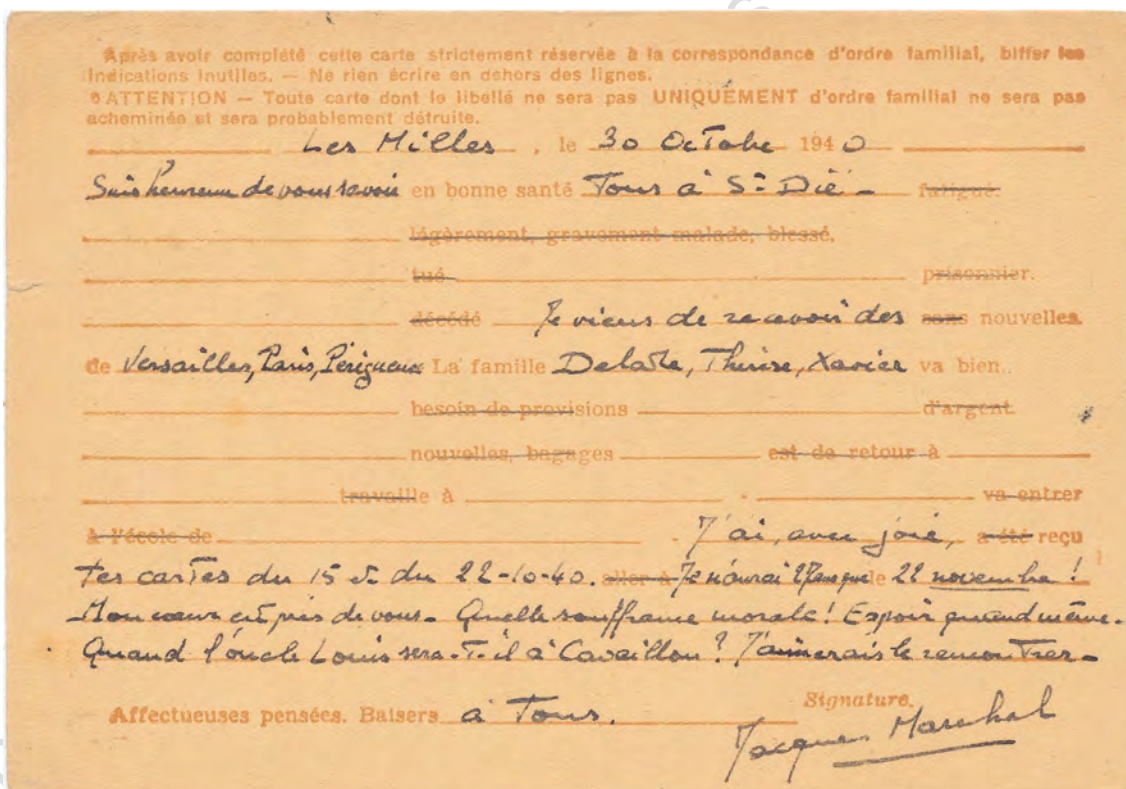
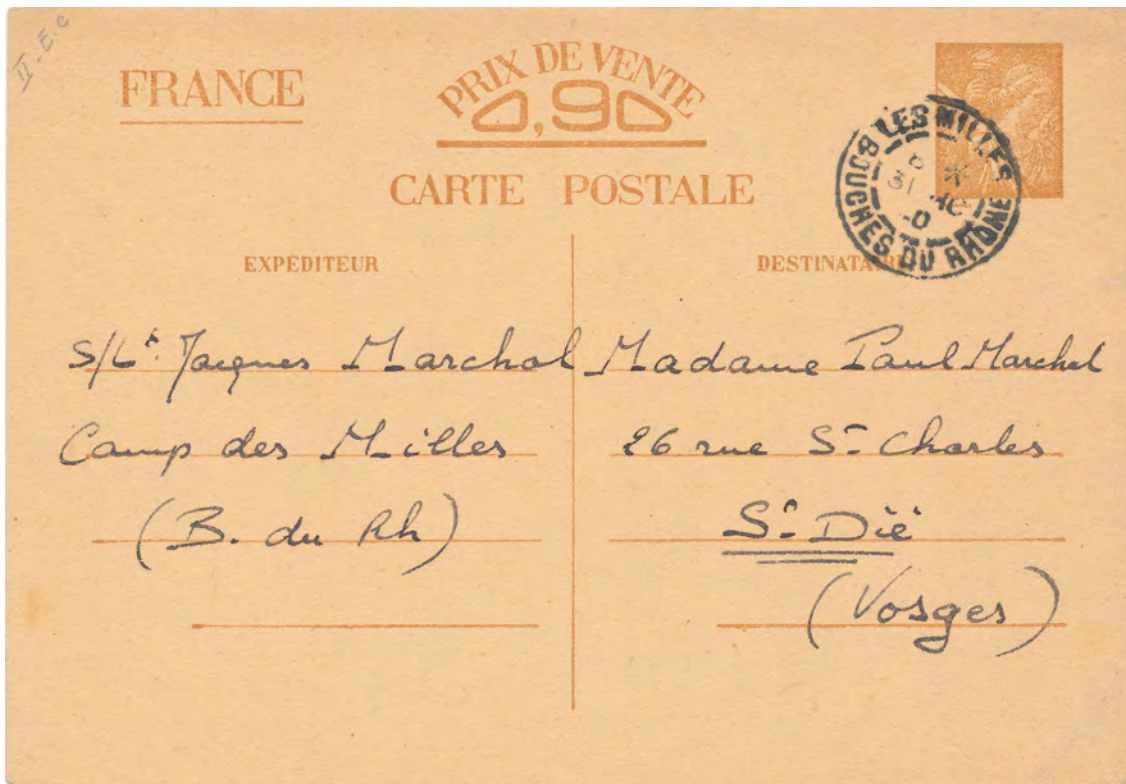
Camp des Milles

When Derek Richardson passed away in 2018, I was invited by his daughter to assist with the disposal of his stamp and postal history collections. Derek and I had shared very similar interests and I was very familiar with his material not only from seeing it displayed at F&CPS events but also at local society meetings in Luton and North Herts. Much of it remained intact although it was evident that he had already started to sell some of his better items including a large proportion of his French Internment Camps collection.

Among the items that did remain were three covers from the Camp des Milles which were subsequently offered by Cavendish Philatelic Auctions Ltd and sold. I do not know who their present owners are, maybe members of the F&CPS, but I am sure that they will not object to me showing the covers here, not only as a tribute to Derek but also as addenda to David Hogarth's excellent article dedicated to him on pages 70-77.



Registered airmail letter to the USA franked at 17 francs (Postage 2f50, Registration Fee 2f50, Airmail Fee 12f) and cancelled Les Milles, 19 May 1941. The letter would have travelled via Lisbon, arriving at Bridgeport on 16 June.



A formula postcard to Saint Dié from a French 2nd Lieutenant on the camp staff cancelled
Les Milles, 31 October 1940.

The message reads: "Am delighted that you are all well at St Dié. I have just received news from Versailles, Paris and Périgueux. The Deloste family, Thérèse and Xavier are fine. I was delighted to receive your cards of the 15 and 22 October 1940. Such anguish! Hope nevertheless. When will Uncle Louis be at Cavaillon? I would love to see him again".



An uncensored reply-paid letter (*franc de port*) from the camp commandant at the Camp des Milles to the *Comité International de la Croix Rouge* in Geneva containing a reply to their enquiry concerning a missing civilian internee, reference CID 354. (Right) On the reverse of the envelope is the cachet of the commandant of the Camp des Milles.



..... and finally



Derek rarely missed an opportunity to go to France especially when sightseeing and research could be combined.

This photograph of the Camp des Milles, as it was a decade or so ago and which illustrated a page in his collection, is probably one he took himself.

Mick Bister

French Mourning Stationery

The two covers submitted by our member, Edwin Voerman, have stimulated me into answering the Editor's plea for more articles for the Journal and regrettably the times in which we live with Covid19 make this subject matter more topical than one might wish.

Any student of French postal history will be aware of the frequent use of black borders on mourning letter sheets and envelopes, a tradition which continues to this day, albeit on

a diminishing scale. While it is said that the use of black borders originated from the mourning posters on the walls of churches in France, I have used largely English source material for the background to this article and it would be interesting to know from any of our French students of social etiquette of any further differences between the practice in both countries.

Black-edged stationery was manufactured in a wide variety



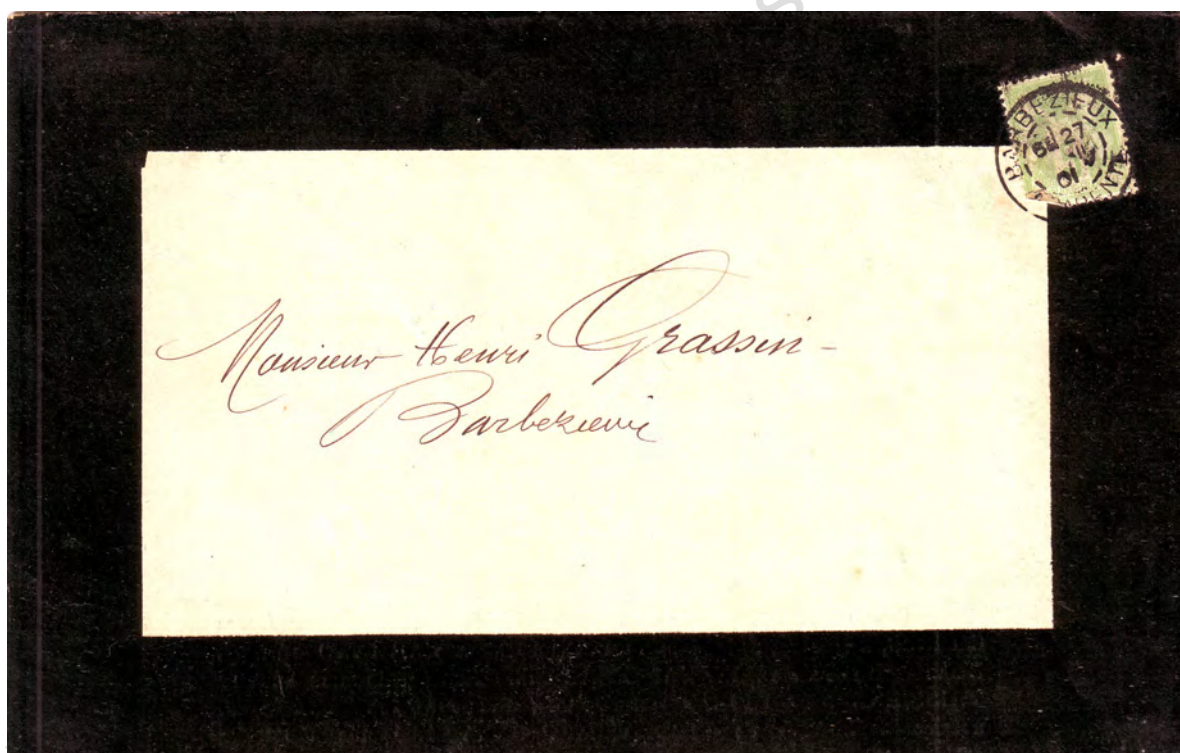
A poster (reduced) of 1818 with a woodcut border for the funeral mass for Antoine-Charles-Joseph Terragno, aged 15, a sailor who died on the herring fishing boat "*l'Affable Sophie*" commanded by Captain Dechosal, probably in the North Sea or the English Channel.
(reduced 55%)

A typical width of mourning border used on a registered letter from Chantenay to Le Mans in 1887.





A mourning cover sent by a French soldier from Kati in French Sudan in 1932.



A 'Lettre de faire-part' with a much larger black border printed by C. Ferchaud in Barbezieux and posted from there in 1901 following the death of François Combes, a pottery maker. (reduced 25%)

of breadths of border depending partly on the preference of the purchaser but also on the proximity both in time and of the relationship with the person whose death was being marked. Two years of mourning was often considered appropriate for a widow and one year for a widower or parent. In the United Kingdom the broadest width is about

12.5mm but on continental Europe the width can be so great as to leave only a small white area for the address. Marcus Ward of London offered two sizes of mourning paper, Commercial and Octavo, with broad, medium or narrow borders. It is often the case also that mourning stationery will be accompanied by the use of black wax or



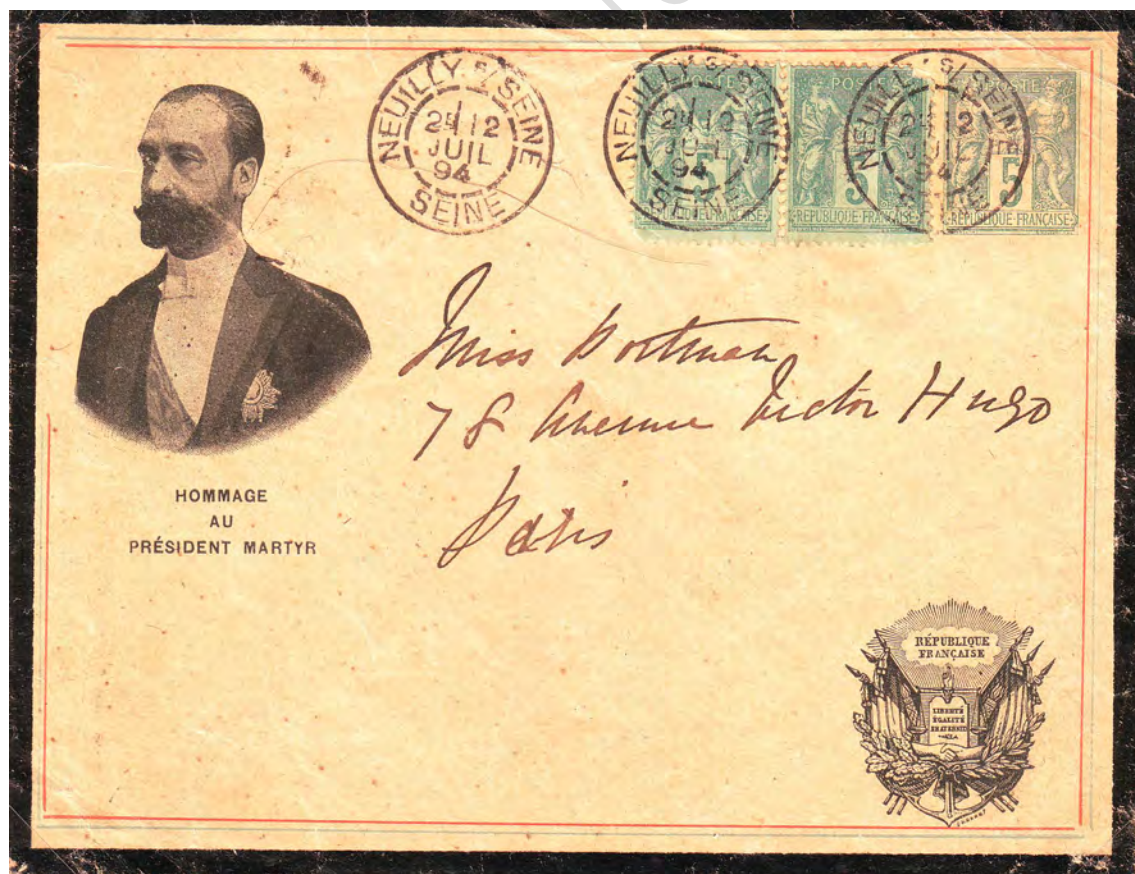
A diminutive envelope with a black mourning corner posted as printed matter from Barcelona to Lyon in 1898

black wafer seals and on occasion the paper itself may have a grey hue to add to the sombre effect.

In the late 19th century, when the use of black borders was diminishing already, John Dickinson launched a new variety of mourning envelopes with a black triangle printed in the top left corner. These were marketed as 'Court Mourning Stationery' with a Registered Patent Number 130635 and the concept is similar to the two covers which provoked this article, albeit that their embellishment is positioned differently on the covers. My examples of the Dickinson envelopes date from 1892 to 1910 with those up to 1901 all

bearing the embossed inscription on the reverse "Court Mourning / Rd 130635". It is evident that the concept proved unsuccessful in Great Britain but my overseas examples which date from 1893 to 1939, largely from Roman Catholic nations, suggest that the design was adopted elsewhere, perhaps because it was cheaper and easier to print a corner than a more closely aligned border.

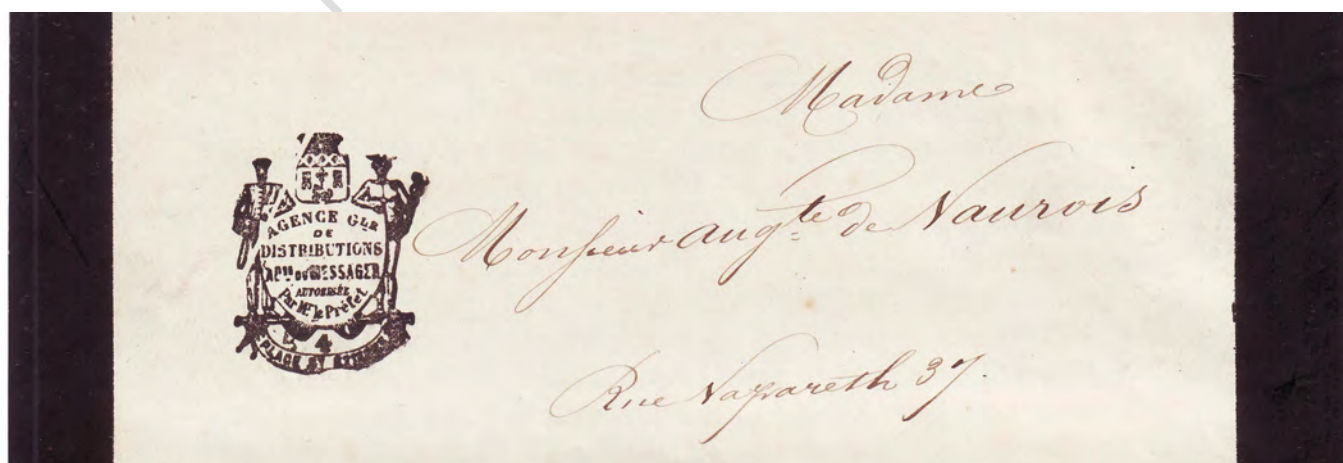
The French also produced a greater number of mourning envelopes to mark the passing of politicians and other notable personalities. One such person to be commemorated in this way was President Sadi-Carnot who



A commemorative mourning envelope for President Carnot posted from Neuilly to Paris in July 1894



The graphic cover of a lament 'Carnot est Mort! Carnot Vivra' sung to the tune of *La France Guerrière*.
(reduced 40%)



The Toulouse carrier's cachet applied to a *Lettre de faire-part* in 1875.
(reduced)

was assassinated by an Italian anarchist, Sante Caserio, on 12th July 1894 as he was leaving the Lyon Exposition. The envelope posted from Neuilly-sur-Seine in 1894 is typical of this genre and the black bordered lament depicting the assassination itself with the ribbon attached to the margin by a small metallic button of Carnot's head is distinctly French in concept.

Whereas printed invitations to funerals can be found from Great Britain in the 18th and early 19th centuries, in France this custom took the form of a more elaborate 'lettre de faire part' with a very deep black border listing all the close family members and requesting the recipient to remember the

deceased in their prayers. In the example illustrated here the Marquise d'Ayguessives had died at the Château on 24th October 1875 at the age of 58 and the circular was delivered by the carrier in Toulouse whose cachet translates in English as the 'General Agency for the Distribution of Circulars authorised by the Prefect'.

A final difference between the two countries may lie in their different manufacturing traditions. In Great Britain the bulk of stationery was produced by specialist companies whereas in France the local undertaker also provided the letters and mourning envelopes as advertised in the letterhead from J. Rodarie of Lyon in 1898.

The heading from an invoice for the supply of 100 mourning envelopes by J. Rodarie, an undertaker in Lyon in 1898.

Claire Scott FRPSL

SOCIETY NOTES Continued from page 57

Website

The Society has at present fifty Journals on-line with more to come over the next few months. They are all watermarked with a Copyright statement and all financial information from various Annual Reports has been removed. The Journals can be found under the *Publications* heading at www.fcps.org.uk

The full list of Journal contents from March 2001 through to the present is under *Journals- List of contents*. To search for a subject or item use «Control f» and place your requested query in the box - usually at the bottom of the screen, use the little up or down buttons to find all incidences of your query.

The website Forum gives a wonderful opportunity for

members to interact with each other, but sadly it is under utilised. *French African Colonies - background reading* has been one of the most popular items - it was initially posted seven years ago and is still getting the occasional update.

As mentioned elsewhere the Society has instigated a Virtual Display both directly to those members whose emails are on file and on the website. I would particularly like to upload more philatelic content - large and small, to entice new members and to educate the wider community on the wonders of French and French Colonial philately. Please contact me at jan@fcps.org.uk if you can help in achieving my goal.

Jan Gane

SOCIETY NOTES Continued on page 109 »

Mourning Covers

A few years ago, I managed to purchase for my visiting card collection items from the archives of *Stern Graveur de Paris*, a prestigious stationery business at 47, Passage des Panoramas, founded in 1836 but which folded in 2015. My acquisitions included specimen visiting cards and envelopes, printing plates and miscellaneous bills and receipts. Much of the Stern business involved the printing and sale of mourning cards and envelopes and illustrated

below is an invoice sent to Monsieur Stern in 1935 requesting payment for “two 1 gallon tins of black bordering ink” from, of all places, Thomas de la Rue in London. One would think that there was a suitable manufacturer of such ink in France but Monsieur Stern did only buy the very best. Also shown is a specimen mourning visiting card printed by Stern in 1922 with its filing wrapper.

TELEGRAMS DELARUE, FINSQUARE, LONDON. TELEPHONE NATIONAL 5432 (7 LINES).
CODE: BENTLEY'S

EX.926. Paris.

7th June, 1935
110, Bunhill Row,
London. E.C.1.

Shipped per *Petite Vitesse* thro' Messrs. Smith & Herbert Ltd,
122/124, Golden Lane, E.C.1.

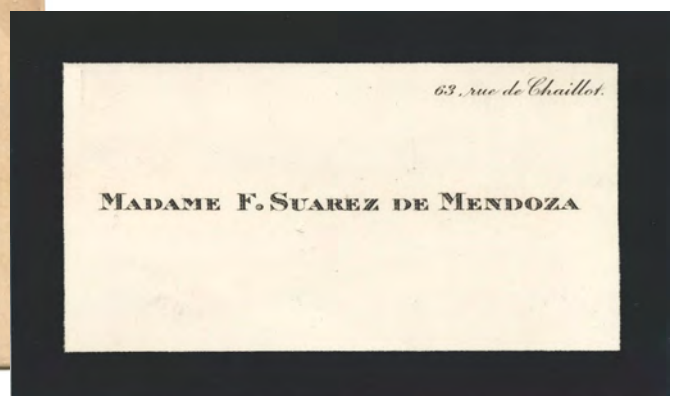
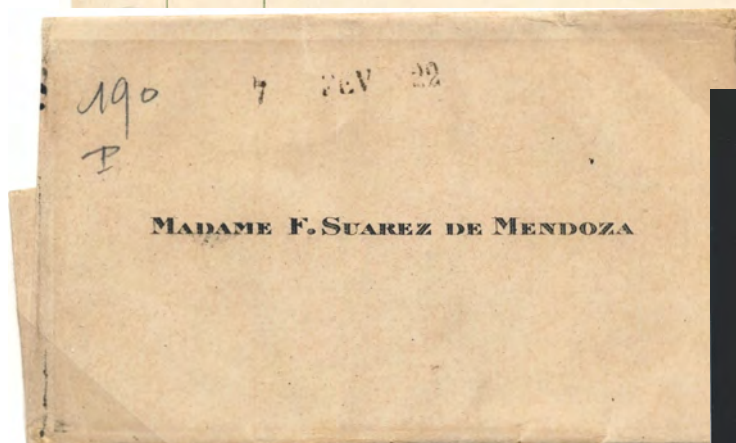
D^r to **Thomas De La Rue & Co. Limited.**
D. L. R.

SOLE DISTRIBUTING AGENTS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD
FOR
CHARLES GOODALL & SON, LTD.

PARIS. 62..1 Case.									
Com. 202.	2. 1. Gallon Tins of Black Bordering Ink.								
	(Tins included in above price)								
	Packing Case.							- 2 9	
	Legalization of Invoice.							- 1 6	
								£ 1 17 3d	
									NET

per gallon.
16/6 1 13 -

DEW Gross Weight 0.1.7. 15.875 Kilos.
Nett " 0.0.23. 10.433 "
Meas 1.6 x 1.2 x 0.9.



Mick Bister

Senegal: Rare destination of a Post Office postal stationery wrapper from Great Britain

In the last paragraph of his article (F&CPS Journal 292, April 2020, p.13), Dr Courtis seeks further information with regard to the schedules and frequency of trains operating between Dakar and Port Louis.

The decision to construct this railway was originally taken in 1878 and, at that time, it was necessary not only for the transport of goods, people and mails but specially for use by the military in the movement of troops and equipment from the port at Dakar to St Louis and then up the Sénégal river to Kayes as part of the military/colonial expansion. St Louis was the capital initially and Dakar the port. The bar at the mouth of the Sénégal river prevented larger, deeper draught vessels from entering the river and St Louis and the Sénégal river were of course the starting point for communications with the interior.

The construction of the railway was resisted by the Wolof people living along the coastal plain and it was not until 1885 that the railway was completed with a *convoyeur* service starting two years later. The plan had always been for a railway to link Dakar with Kayes in the French Soudan and the railway between Kayes and Koulikoro on the Niger which was completed in 1905. This was not achieved until well after the end of WWI. Readers who are interested in this little bit of history are referred to my book 'Dakar to Tombouctou' listed in the bibliography.

With the passage of time and increased pacification the coastal plain region proved to be excellent for the cultivation of groundnuts and this represented an important element of the Colony's revenue. The railway proved to be very important in carrying the crops to the *godowns* (warehouses) and to the port at Dakar.

The specific question about the railway schedules and timetables is referred to in the 1910 publication of *Les*

Chemins de fer coloniaux français' (see bibliography). In order to appreciate what was involved there were 31 locomotives, some 60+ carriages of different classes and 420+ goods wagons of different types. The original schedule called for a daily service in each direction and provision for an express service without this being defined.

The '*Annuaire du Gouvernement de l'Afrique Occidentale Française*' in 1915 (see bibliography) gives, at last, some detail. The daily service from Dakar (Figure 1) to St Louis left at 06^h45 and reached St Louis at 17^h05. In the opposite direction the daily train left St Louis at 07^h15 and reached Dakar at 17^h38. Provision was made for 105 minutes of halts along the way including a 40 minute buffet break at Kelle. Total journey time was 10 hours 20 minutes. Additionally, an express service operated on days of arrival and departure of the mailboats as well as those of the Sénégal river transport (Figure 2). Without stops the journey time was 8 hours. The time taken for mails to reach Kayes from St Louis differed considerably depending on the seasonal river level. This is quite a study in itself and is covered in detail in my book. Outside of these specific services the volume of rolling stock allowed additional trains to be brought into service as the need arose.

I can easily understand that it is extremely difficult for anyone who is not an A.O.F. specialist to have access to these details and indeed much concerning the day to day communication issues in the Colonies and particularly the railways.

A short bibliography follows but the point is that the first two publications are fiendishly difficult to find and their price will reflect this. William Waugh's brochure on French Colonial railways is very useful as a general guide and illustrates the TPO marks.



Figure 1
The station at Dakar



Figure 2

The arrival of mails at St Louis from Soudan.

The card was written in April 1905 at a time when the steamers would not have been able to pass beyond Podor

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Peter R.A.Kelly

Type Duval Chiffre-Taxe



Help please. I have seen the sheetlet above described as a Fournier forgery or facsimile but it is not included in 'The Fournier Album of Philatelic Forgeries'. I have also seen

individual stamps cut from the sheet described as French Colonial stamps. I presume it is some sort of souvenir sheet but who produced it and what for?

David Huckett

REPORTS OF MEETINGS

44th ANNUAL PHILATELIC WEEKEND 13-15 MARCH 2020

22 members and 7 guests attended the Society's Annual Weekend at our new venue the Abbey Hotel in Redditch, Worcestershire.



The grounds of the Abbey Hotel, Redditch

Saturday

Saturday morning began with the Annual General Meeting (see separate report on pages 106-109) followed by the traditional programme of displays.

Peter Kelly opened with a display entitled '*The Franco-Sardinian Treaty of 1817*' which he gave on behalf of **Peter Maybury** who was unable to attend. In 1815, under the restored Bourbon dynasty, France was allowed to retain its boundaries of 1790. In 1814, the Kingdom of Sardinia (Savoy, Piedmont and Island of Sardinia) was restored with the addition in 1815 of the former Republic of Genoa. It was a buffer state between France and Austria, confirmed by the 1815 Congress of Vienna; the Principality of Monaco went to Sardinian rule. The postal convention between the two kingdoms was approved on 28 June 1817, came in force on 1 January 1818 and ended on 31 December 1838. The convention regulated bilateral relations between France and Sardinia and established exchange offices – three French at Pont de Beauvoisin, Antibes and Grenoble and two Sardinian at Nice and Chambéry. Although not required by the Convention, the Sardinian exchange office at Pont Beauvoisin was mentioned by Sardinian circulars of 1819 and 1837. It corresponded with its French namesake and received letters from northern Piedmont while Chambéry only received letters destined for the Isère, Hautes-Alpes and Basses-Alpes *départements*. In France, the colour of entry marks was specified in internal instructions. From 1818, they had to be applied in black for all exchange offices (red for Paris), then from 1 July 1832 in red for all offices. However, strikes in blue and green are known. Exchanges were made three times a week between Chambéry and Pont-de-Beauvoisin and also with Grenoble (examples of the latter are rarely seen), and Nice with

Antibes three times a week. The Grenoble exchange office was closed on 31 December 1829.

Prepayment to destination was optional. Unpaid letters were exchanged through the *rayons* system. French territory was divided in five *rayons* and Sardinian into three. Each unpaid letter had to be marked with one *rayon* stamp, according to its geographical origin. In France, the offices at Antibes, Grenoble, Pont-de-Beauvoisin and Paris (mail for or through Paris) applied the handstamps. In Sardinia, each office had its own handstamp. The rate was composed of the foreign fee according to the *rayon* plus the internal rate according to internal tariffs. To close the display, the rates were explained and examples of CS1R and CF1F strikes were shown as well as transit marks.

Colin Pease then gave a display called '*Fun with Paris Stars*'. He explained how he became interested in Paris Stars by first wanting to collect one of each post office which soon meant that he was collecting covers as well as the loose stamps. Generally, the printing was good and the postmarks pleasing to the eye. He began to realise that the 'Dumb' star was of equal interest as not only did it cover the Classic period of French philately but the circular date stamp was of equal interest. He found the book on Paris Stars by André Rochette a great help and he was also lucky to benefit from the advice given by Stephen Holder.

After viewing and refreshments **Godfrey Bowden** gave a display of '*Tunisian UPU Congress Booklets*'. Godfrey was fortunate to purchase a number of Tunisia's publicity booklets containing Tunisian stamps of the relevant periods ranging from 1924 to 1989 missing only those of 1929 (London), 1934 (Cairo) and 1939 (Buenos Aires). All contained a variety of stamps covering the period immediately after the previous Congress up to a month or two prior to the Congress concerned. At one congress, that of Rio de Janeiro in 1979, Tunisia produced no less than three different booklets of increasing size respectively combining single stamps, pairs and strips of three. The contents of the booklets had varying quantities of stamps for the period covered. These ranged from 12% (Montreal 1967) to 100% (one of the Tokyo booklets of 1969). Stamps in these booklets have rarely seen light of day for any prolonged period; consequently, any fading would be minimal and could be used as colour references. Godfrey closed with the Ottawa Congress of 1957 which was a chance for Tunisia to emphasise its independence (1956) by producing a rather ostentatious red booklet in both Arabic and Western reading from the back of the booklet to the front in the normal Arabic manner. The stamps shown included a number of pre-Autonomy examples as well as the first of the independent regime.

Rob May presented his display '*Cameroun 1961 to 1963*'. The postal transition from Nigerian control of the P&T service in Southern Cameroons in 1960 to independent

Cameroun control in 1961 was illustrated by both stamps and covers. The outcome of a plebiscite in March 1962 was that the majority of the population of the southern part of the UN Trust Territory of British Cameroons opted to merge with the former French Cameroun to become the federal state of West Cameroun. This entailed currency conversion so a set of current and obsolete Cameroun definitive and commemorative stamps overprinted with Sterling denominations was issued for use during a transition period from October 1961 to May 1962. It is not yet known where these were surcharged. Proofs of a few of the surcharges are known (and were shown) but it can be demonstrated that there was a way these few layouts could be adapted during the printing process to print the other values. During the last few years, a study by a group of members of the West Africa Study Circle revealed that there was a reprinting of the halfpenny value which is not yet listed in catalogues, but which is clearly distinguishable, and the largest known multiple (a block of 10) of the second printing of the halfpenny was shown. The group also found there had been three printings of the 5/- and 10/- surcharges, which some catalogues have now recognised. It is likely the second and third printings of the surcharges were undertaken in Paris and sold only at the Paris agency, because the type 2 halfpenny, the large 2/6d and the type 2 5/- and 10/- and £1 are very scarce in non-philatelic use.

To close the morning session, **Stephen Holder** gave a display of *'French India'*. The French were active in India from the sixteenth century and even earlier but were gradually pushed out by the expanding British Empire, ending up with only five enclaves, Pondicherry, Chandanagore, Karikal, Mahé and Yanaon. By far the greatest amount of mail found from these areas comes from Pondicherry. The display showed pre-adhesive material from these towns (or areas) except Yanaon. When the French issued their Colonial General issues with the splendid square stamps showing the 'Eagle' design, the mail increased and many copies can be found, typically with the lozenge of 9 x 9 small dots from Pondicherry, and all values were shown, together with some multiples and copies in red and blue. This was followed with examples of these stamps cancelled with the lozenge handstamp with INDE inscribed in the centre. All the later classical era General issues, the Napoléon and Cérès designs, were shown with these cancellations, both detached stamps and many covers. Of particular note was a fine example of the 4c Cérès, which was never issued in India, clearly cancelled with the circular date stamp 'Inde Chandernagore' in bluish black. It is thought that this is the only known (or recorded) example of a 4c used in India. It was clearly one of a pair and almost certainly came from a newspaper band franked at 8c, posted probably in Indo China uncanceled, and cancelled in transit. There followed another fine frame of the Colonial Type Sage issues, both detached stamps and covers from all the areas. The final frame concluded with a few examples of the pictorial stamps on selected covers with multi-frankings, finishing off with a few examples of covers from the British Post Office in the French enclaves and a similar selection of the Indian Post

Offices in the French enclaves. Stephen pointed out that the subject had been neglected and almost dismissed by Colonial collectors for many years, but now with the very rapid rise of the Indian philatelic market this situation had changed and fine covers from the area are now expensive and difficult to find. Fortunately, this collection had been assembled during the 'neglected' period during the last forty years.

After lunch, the programme was resumed by **Andrew Telfer Brunton** with his display of *'Modern French Miniature Sheets'*. France has a long history of producing miniature sheets, originally for special events but in more recent years as an artistic and obviously finance-generating exercise. The first part of the display included examples of themes covered and the second part concentrated on a selection of sheets from 2013 to December 2019.

Next came **Claire Scott** with her *'Story of the Wounded Soldier'* which examined the transport used to move the wounded away from the front by ambulance and train and was illustrated by the cachets used at the time. (For a full report see Journal N° 292, Wessex Group Meeting Report, Pages 47-48). Husband **John Scott** stepped up next with his presentation of *'French Commercial Stationery'*. His display concentrated on material from the 19th century with examples showing the factories and medals won by French manufacturers for their products. Whereas in the UK smoke belching from multiple chimneys symbolised industrial enterprise and success, factories in France were very much more rural and often smaller in scale but they did place much more emphasis on the medals they won at industrial exhibitions. Further interest was provided by the stamps and postmarks.

After a break for viewing and yet more refreshments **Steve Ellis** gave a display on *'French Transatlantic Mail between the years 1783 and 1857'*. The earliest period saw the operation of the 'Paquebots Royaux' between L'Orient and New York for ten years until 1793. Subsequently mail was mainly carried by private vessels and, in time, regular services were operated. The faster and frequent steamship 'packet' services of the 1840s resulted in much French transatlantic mail being carried via England. Postage rates changed frequently, but still could not be paid through to the destination until the first US-French Postal Convention was introduced in April 1857.

Gwynne Harries followed with his display entitled *'Finally! I start to sort my 'to-do' box'*. Gwynne is a new member of the Society and this was his first weekend and his first ever display of French material. Whilst he is an experienced philatelist he said that he hasn't ever really collated his French material until recently, and it is something that has been slowly accumulating over the last two decades, whilst he has focussed on other areas of interest. Now, with France being one of his main collecting interests, he brought with him his current 'write-up' of the Peace & Commerce issue upon which he is currently working. Accompanying his 'catalogue' style used sets, he showed his examples of the use of the 5-centime value. He stated that whilst this display may

be considered as having 'been shown before by others perhaps', as a new collector this is new knowledge for him and he decided to show it in the hope that it would encourage a broader approach to general philately for other new collectors of the country. He also said that he was hoping to work through each value showing examples of use on cover.

Finally, the day's programme closed with a display given by **Peter Stockton** on '*French Morocco Military Mail*'. Following the murder of French railway workers in Casablanca on 30 July 1907, French forces were deployed and some 3,000 troops landed at Casablanca on 7 August 1907. A military postal franchise was established on 17 August 1907 with a letter from 23 August opening the display. A series of postcards depicted scenes of the action and the troops involved. Mail from four of the regiments of the Foreign Legion then followed showing use from 1907 and then throughout the period of the French Protectorate which ended in 1956. A further section saw mail from the *Service des Renseignements* (Intelligence Service) founded in 1907 to assist with ruling the areas pacified by military action. A final section saw postcards of events occurring at the Algero-Moroccan frontier including memorials to officers killed in the fighting.

Sunday

The morning began with **André Métayer** who displayed '*Uses of the Laureated type stamps on foreign mail from France to European countries*'. The issuance of Laureated-type stamps took place at a time of profound transformations in Europe, with the creation of new states, nations and allegiances, culminating in 1870-1871 with the Franco-Prussian war. The multiplicity of States and postal routes by land or sea (sometimes there would be two or even three routes available for the same destination) resulted in complicated postal rates which were established by Postal Treaties concluded between France and these States. The context described above lead to a great diversity of franking and postage due markings; it was this complexity that triggered the quest for simplified postal relations. The Berne Treaty of 9 October 1874 signed by 21 countries led to the creation of the General Postal Union (applied in France from 1 January 1876). With many new countries joining, it later became the Universal Postal Union (UPU) in Paris in 1878. The aim of André's presentation therefore was to illustrate these different situations using items mostly franked with Laureated type stamps. The methods of taxation depended on the Postal Treaties concluded between France and the European States which fixed the conversion rates. In the event of underpayment of postage, in most cases, the postage due took into account the amount of postage pre-paid. However, some Conventions did not provide for pre-paid postage to be taken into account when calculating the postage due by the recipient on underpaid letters. Such complexities were illustrated by surface mail to the German States and Germany, the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the Italian States and Kingdom of Italy, the

Ottoman Empire, the Russian Empire and other European destinations as well as on maritime mail.

Bob Larg followed with a selection from his collection of '*Monaco*'. Bob opened his display with the first stamps of Monaco, issued in 1885 for Prince Charles III, who died in 1889. He was followed by Prince Albert I, who reigned from September 1889 to June 1922, and all stamps issued during his reign were displayed. In 1922 Prince Louis II followed and again all stamps issued were shown including a miniature sheet to celebrate the 25th year of his reign in 1947. However, he died in 1949 being succeeded by Prince Rainier III in May of that year. The first stamps of his reign were issued on 27 December 1949 for the Red Cross Fund. The set comprised four stamps, two of Princess Charlotte and two of Prince Rainier, in the form of miniature sheets, both perforated and imperforate, containing four sets arranged in se-tenant blocks of four separated by inscribed gutter margin. Similar sheets were issued overprinted '1951' but surcharged 1f, 3f, 5f and 6f, the imperforate sheet and perforated stamps only being displayed. Further stamps issued up to 1955 were shown ending with the 1955 Air 'Birds' set with all four stamps perf. 11 followed by the three 1958 reprints perf. 13.

Chris Hitchen gave a display entitled '*Problems of the French post office prior to 1849*'. This began with a look at clandestine mail which infringed the post office monopoly on the carriage of letters. From as early as 1810 double postage was set as the penalty in such cases and examples of enforcement were shown. The franchise, that is the right to send official letters without charge, was closely regulated and failures to observe the regulations led to the need to charge postage. The recipient could have the postage remitted by opening the letter in the presence of a postal official and confirming that the contents were indeed official. Various labels used in these circumstances were included. The display finished with letters which despite all efforts to make delivery finally ended up in the Dead Letter office.

Barbara Priddy stepped up next with her display of '*West African Airmails*' which showed the development of the Toulouse-Dakar route from Latécoère to Aéropostale. The war had seen the development of bigger and better aircraft, and immediately the war was over one Pierre-Georges Latécoère, an aircraft manufacturer of Toulouse, went to the French government with a scheme for an airmail route to French North Africa, French West Africa, and South America. He received the promise of a subvention for carrying mail, and by September 1919 he had in fact inaugurated a scheduled service between France and Morocco: this was daily from 1922. In May 1923 came a survey flight from Casablanca to Dakar, with three Bréguet-14 biplanes. This was, more or less, a great success, but there seem to have been political problems getting permission for overnight stops in the Spanish territories. There the matter rested until Lemaître and Arrachart's long-distance record flight in February 1925. The outward journey was a triumph,

but an ill-advised decision to return via the Sahara proved a bit of a disaster. A regular weekly service between Casablanca and Dakar was finally inaugurated at the end of May 1925. Barbara said that she always found it amazing that the aircraft of the period, with the instrumentation and support structure of the period, ever made it from A to B, and of course some of them did not. There were a large number of forced landings, and each flight was made by two planes in convoy. If you crashed, or had to make a forced landing, you could, if you were lucky, gather up the mail, jump into the other aircraft, and continue your journey. If you were being attacked by nomads at the time, you might have to leave the mail behind; and if you were really unlucky, you might be captured and held to ransom. Many of these pilots were remembered and revered today - everyone knew Mermoz and St Exupéry. But many of the lesser-known pilots were equally heroic, such as René Riguelle, and Barbara had been fortunate enough to find two covers from him. Didier Daurat, the *Chef d'Exploitation des Lignes Aériennes* from 1920 to 1935, was an indefatigable and devoted manager of the company through its various incarnations. Barbara then showed a table of rates, with a selection of covers at various rates, domestic and foreign, correct and incorrect, remarking that considering how often both postage and airmail rates had changed (and never at the same time) it was truly admirable how often they got the rates correct. Finally, she showed a few pages on the change to the company everybody knows - Aéropostale. Latécoère had had two big problems: his route as pitched to the French government involved crossing the South Atlantic and setting up airline services in Brazil. But he simply didn't have the aircraft capable of flying from Dakar to Natal, and while that could be, and later was, overcome, by a fast steamer shuttle, he had no idea how to go about persuading the foreign governments of South America to give him rights of cabotage. In desperation, in December 1926, he turned to his fellow Frenchman, Marcel Bouilloux-Lafont, who, although he had no experience in aviation, had made an enormous success of business ventures in Brazil. In April 1927, Bouilloux-Lafont bought Latécoère's airline and renamed it Compagnie Générale Aéropostale. His story was one of triumph which ended in tragedy – to be shown next time.

After viewing and refreshments, members reassembled to hear **Peter Kelly**'s presentation of '*The use of the Alphée Dubois colonial stamp issue in Réunion*'. In 1881 the Ministry of the Colonies called for a new issue of stamps that were to be different from those used in Metropolitan France and had to be perforated. The chosen design was that of the artist Alphée Dubois and the issue was referred to as the *Type Commerce* (but not to be confused with the previous Peace and Commerce – *Type Sage*) but is generally known by the name of the designer. The issue comprised stamps of 1,2,4,5,10,15,25,40 and 75 centimes and 1 franc. The only change was in 1886 when the 25c bistre on yellow was replaced by the 25c black on rose. A variety of postcards,

postal stationery envelopes and wrappers were also produced. These were made available to the majority of the colonies including Réunion where they were received towards the end of 1881. In 1891 the remaining stocks were overprinted 'Réunion' as part of a move to curb trafficking in currencies and the 20c stamp was surcharged '2c' in three different types because of a stamp shortage. The issue was replaced by the *Type Groupe* in 1892. Although the issue was in place for 10 years it is not that well known, being placed between the two enormously important Sage and Groupe issues. Initially, in Réunion, a large stock of Sage stamps remained after its introduction and as a result the 25c and 30c are scarce when used postally and while the 25c bistre is uncommon the 30c is hardly ever seen. The offices seemed to have used the 5c, 10c and 15c for most purposes including high value frankings on heavy letters and registered and insured items. Thus, the 40c, 75c and 1 franc are also not often seen, and one can wonder whether the smaller offices actually had them. The description of Alphée Dubois covers is frequently incorrect even with experienced dealers, sometimes describing them as *Type Sage* or *Type Groupe* in error. The issue is of interest being the first French general perforated colonial issue and also the last because the *Type Groupe* used its own key plate but included the name of each separate colony. The purpose of this display was to show various postal uses of the issue and where possible as wide a selection of the stamps in the issue as possible. The more observant will have noted that there were no examples of the 1c, 30c or 75c for, despite many years of collecting and studying Réunion Peter had not yet been able to find decent examples.

After viewing, members returned for the closing of the meeting and to hear **Steve Ellis** announce that the Society Literature trophy for the most enjoyable article in the Journals of 2019 was awarded to **David Hogarth** for his article '*Marianne and the Bear: Franco-Russian Relations 1891-1901*'. Congratulations were offered to David and thanks were expressed to the voting panel of Colin Bayley, Paul Grigg, Paul Olver, Colin Pease and Claire Scott.

The convenors, Peter Kelly and Chris Hitchen were thanked for the time and effort in organising the event which remains the highlight of the Society's year.

The following members attended all or part of the weekend.

Maurice Alder	Bob Larg
John Allison	Bill Lusty
Godfrey Bowden	Rob May
Richard Broadhurst	André Métayer
Mark Brookes	John Parmenter
Steve Ellis	Colin Pease
Gwynne Harries	Barbara Priddy
Chris Hitchen	Claire Scott
Stephen Holder	Peter Stockton
Peter Kelly	Andrew Telfer Brunton
Alan King	Maurice Tyler

MLB

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF 14 MARCH 2020

The President **Chris Hitchen** opened the meeting at the Abbey Hotel, Hither Green, Dagnell End Road, Redditch, B98 9BE at 9.20 am in the presence of 20 members.

(1) Members Present: Maurice Alder, Godfrey Bowden, Richard Broadhurst, Steve Ellis, Gwynne Harries, Chris Hitchen, Stephen Holder, Peter Kelly, Alan King, Bob Larg, Rob May, André Métayer, John Parmenter, David Parmley, Colin Pease, Barbara Priddy, Claire Scott, Peter Stockton, Andrew Telfer Brunton, Maurice Tyler.

Apologies: Mick Bister, David Chalcraft, Mrs Jan Gane, Rodney Gent, David Hogarth, Ashley Lawrence, Colin Spong, Paul Watkins, John West.

(2) Minutes of the previous AGM of 2 March 2019, published in Journal 289, April 2019, were accepted unanimously as a true record of that meeting.

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

(4) President's Report - Chris Hitchen

"The Society is now in a significantly stronger position than a year ago. Jan Gane has now taken on the task of Editor of the Journal as well as looking after the website. She has taken a lot on and we should all support her as much as we can. Rodney Gent has taken the Colonies packet in hand and David Parmley now runs the auction. These three changes mean that all the key roles needed to run the society are now in sound hands.

"Our grateful thanks should go to those who are now stepping down from the roles they have held. Maurice Tyler has been editor for many years and it is due to him that the Journal has reached its current standard. The work he has done is enormous and the Society will forever be in his debt.

"Steve Ellis has provided us with many attractive auctions over the years and he too merits our thanks. Both Maurice Tyler and Steve Ellis have agreed to remain on the committee and their knowledge and experience will be much valued.

"That means that at the moment all our functions continue to run reasonably smoothly and my sincere thanks go to those who manage the website, our packets and auction and our Journal.

"On a cautionary note it is incumbent on members to conduct their dealings with the Society properly. Both packets have had serious problems recently with badly packed packets falling apart in the post. It is to the credit of the Post Office that most books eventually found their way back to the Packet Secretaries. Considerable work was required to sort matters out.

"Attendance at meetings has been a little mixed but the intention is to continue with those we have at least for the next year. Colin French has successfully taken on and continued our regional Wessex meetings and Steve Ellis and Roger Clapham have maintained those in the North.

"Peter Kelly and I hope to continue to arrange a weekend meeting next year and provisionally it will be the same weekend and venue- Friday 12 March to Sunday 14 March 2021 in this hotel in Redditch.

"Dependent on the wishes of this meeting I am prepared to serve one more term as President. Whilst traditionally the post was occupied for a two year term, it has recently been stretched to three years. I have enjoyed it and will be happy to continue for one more year. A fourth term is unprecedented but if required I will undertake it.

"2019 was a moderately satisfactory year and I hope that 2020 will continue successfully."

(5) General Secretary's Report - David Hogarth

In the absence of a report from the Secretary the President and Treasurer Chris Hitchen gave details of the changes of membership during 2019.

	UK members	Non- UK members	Total
On 1 Jan 2019	220	54	274
Resigned	-7		-7
Suspended	-3	-5	-8
Died	-5	-2	-7
New members	+7	+4	+11
On 1 Jan 2020	212	51	263

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

"There are some exceptional items this year and I will deal with those first.

"On expenditure we donated £0000 to the appeal made by the Royal Philatelic Society London. The future of philately in this country is becoming ever more difficult as societies decline or close altogether. The Royal is doing a great deal to promote philately and maintain facilities essential for the health of the hobby. It was agreed that we should support them in their endeavours.

"Meeting costs are rather higher than usual due to costs incurred at our weekend last year and some overdue maintenance on the website cost around £000. None of these items will recur again, although there will always be a need to spend some funds on the website to keep it to the standard it has now reached.

"The packets and auction enjoyed an excellent 2019 and whilst subscriptions reduced to some £0,000 the overall loss was limited to some £0,000.

"I would not anticipate quite such an income from the packets and auction every year but they should always produce a healthy boost to our income. Whilst the savings achieved with the reduction of the number of Journals from

FRANCE & COLONIES PHILATELIC SOCIETY BALANCE SHEET AT 31 DECEMBER 2019

CURRENT ASSETS

Cash at bank
Sundry debtors

2019

2018

DEDUCT CURRENT LIABILITIES

Advance weekend payment
Bank transfer error
Subscriptions in advance
Magazine circuit float

TOTAL ASSETS

Represented by

MEMBERS FUNDS

Uncommitted funds at 1.1.2019
Year loss

INCOME & EXPENDITURE 2019Expenditure

Meetings
Journal 3 issues
Postage and expenses

20192018Income

Auction
Exchange packet
Sale of publications

20192018

4 to 3 a year has not been quite as much as might have been hoped our financial position is still sound.

"I would therefore propose keeping 2021 subscriptions at a maximum of £16 UK, £23 Europe and £27 overseas."

(7) Auction Secretary's Report - Steve Ellis

"Another stable year from the usual three auctions: similar number of lots offered, similar number of members bidding, slightly smaller proportion of lots sold, but with a higher average value per lot hence the commission to the Society has increased – hence the increase in the surplus from £000 in 2018 to £000 in 2019.

"The one change is my decision, due to pressure of other commitments, to "retire" after 8 years and 24 auctions and I am grateful to David Parmley for enabling this by agreeing to take over the running of the auction. I thank members for their support for the auction."

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

"I am delighted to report that 2019 was a record year for the France Packet with purchases of some £00,000.00 which were up by 12% on 2018 (£00,000.00). Payments made to vendors were £00,000.00 and after expenses the Society benefited from a commission payment of £0,000.00.

"There are approximately sixty recipients of the packet from Scotland to Cornwall and Northern Ireland. The packets contain a wide variety of material from classic issues, postal history, back of the book and an increasingly popular modern selection of stamps, *blocs* and *carnets*. There really is something for everyone! It is a very useful way for members to obtain good competitively priced France material.

"I am pleased to say that not one packet was lost in the post

during the year. Considering there are over 500 movements of packets between members, this is truly remarkable. For once I think that full credit should go to our often-criticised Royal Mail.

"I am actively canvassing for new members to join the circuits. There is no obligation to buy and the only cost (other than purchases) is the forward postage to the next member. Currently we are able to accommodate new members who would like to receive the packets and we would also be delighted to receive more material to sell, especially anything unusual! For those who have not participated before it is an excellent and enjoyable way of both buying and selling stamps. Further details are available from the Secretary."

(8.2) Packet Secretary's Report (Colonies) - Rodney Gent

"The Colonies Packet restarted in March 2019 and since then there have been nine send-outs of books. The new Secretary's introduction to the task was the news that one of the first packets had been looted so he learnt the claims procedure and got to know those very nice people at our insurers. A couple of months later one of the nine books reappeared via a bemused vendor and sometime after that another five books appeared from Northern Ireland where, the Secretary learnt, the waifs and strays of the postal system are sent. Three books have never appeared and the Secretary had two conversations with our insurers reimbursing them for the value of the returned books where his honesty and good character were praised. The Secretary always knew that but it was nice to have confirmation.

"Since then things have been fairly quiet and £0,000 of sales made providing a contribution to funds of £000. A couple of new vendors have appeared during the year sending some good material which, together with that provided by the long-standing suppliers to the Packet, have been enthusiastically devoured by the members.

"The Secretary can report that he has found the membership of the Packet to be a very amiable bunch and is sorry to report that membership has declined from 40 to 34. The Secretary has enjoyed his first year in the job and is grateful to Chris Hitchin and Richard Broadhurst for the advice and steering they have provided which has kept him out of trouble, mostly.

(9) Journal Manager's Report - Mick Bister

"In 2018 we published three editions of the Journal totalling 148 pages; in 2019 we did even better with a total of 160 pages. The quality of the articles has been exceptionally high and the diversity of subjects treated has been broad and hopefully of interest to all our members. But can we sustain this high level of production?

"I am for ever grateful to the small group of members who are responsible for writing the regular features; you will know who they are. I know that I can rely on them for every edition to send me, without fail, their contributions. Furthermore, I also have a core of contributors who send me longer articles to whom I am likewise indebted but that

core is getting smaller by the year. I have made several appeals in the Journal inviting articles from new contributors but the response has been, at best, negligible.

"The Journal is an invaluable service offered by the Society providing a unique link between all its members. At the moment I hold enough material for the August Journal. However, I have very little for the December edition and nothing for 2021. If the Journal is to continue with the respect and status it currently enjoys it requires all of you to seriously think how you can help to sustain it. I wish to reiterate though my thanks and appreciation to those who are currently doing so.

"As you all know by now Jan Gane has taken over from Maurice Tyler as Editor of the Journal and you will shortly be receiving the first edition created under her editorship. It's a big act for her to follow and she needs our full and unconditional support. For the time being, I will continue as Journal Manager so please send your contributions directly to me. I look forward to being inundated."

(10) Website Manager's Report - Jan Gane

"The revamped and upgraded website has been functioning now for almost a year, and after the initial teething troubles it is running well. I have uploaded 49 past Journals: years 2003 to 2015, each page is copyrighted and all financial information has been removed.

"I update the website to reflect each new Journal and keep the site updated with forthcoming meetings and exhibitions. Each Auction has a sliding display of selected lots for sale, and after each auction a list of unsold lots is uploaded. Occasionally items that have been showcased on the Home page have been transferred to a Webitorial page rather than lose the article altogether.

"I installed Google Analytics and between May and December 31 2019 the site had 1394 'active users' from 73 countries, 400 from UK 399 from USA, 60 from France and 43 from Canada. Publications\Back Issues page being the most popular with 786 views, the Auctions page was the next most popular with 344 views.

"The Forum is under-used: we have 54 registered users, with 26 users in 2019/2020, 15 of whom registered in 2019/2020. The Forum has had 5,858 views throughout the year with Postal forgeries of Marianne stamps and France and Colonies books for sale being the two most viewed discussions. However, there is little ongoing activity with quite long stretches between posts – approx. 6 weeks. The Forum is an ideal place to showcase an item of interest to share amongst others particularly those members who do not get to meetings.

"This year has had some very challenging moments, but I have enjoyed overcoming them. I'd like to thank members of the Committee for their help throughout the year, particularly Maurice, Chris and Mick.

"I am willing to continue on the Committee in 2020 as Website Manager."

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

"Slow sales continue of Richardson's 'Tables of French Postal Rates', Gethin's 'Fakes and Forgeries' and also (via the internet) digital copies of Picirilli's 'Postal and Airmail Rates'.

"We will be shortly publishing a joint bilingual publication with Col.Fra on 'Madagascan Civilian Censorship in WW2'."

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

"Two French stamp magazines: 'L'Echo de la Timbrologie' and 'Timbres' are available. Once again we were able to maintain subscriptions at the previous rate of £8 per copy annually. This represents very good value and we are able to accommodate any new members who may wish to join the circuits. Further details are available from the organiser".

(12) Reports on Group Meetings

These are as published in the Journal Volume 69, Numbers 289-291

(13) Election of Officers and Committee Members

The list of those willing to serve as officers and committee members had been published in the Agenda and their election *en bloc* was carried unanimously.

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

The position of Examiner of the Society's accounts is open and will be advertised in the April Journal.

(15) Any other business

The President had pleasure in awarding the Society's long service award to **Colin Spong** for all that he has done over

President	Mr C J Hitchen
Vice-President	Mr R N Broadhurst
General Secretary	Mr D J Hogarth
Treasurer	Mr C J Hitchen
Editor-in-Chief	Mrs J Gane
Journal Manager	Mr M L Bister
Auction Secretary	Mr D Parmley
Packet Secretary (France)	Mr R Broadhurst
Packet Secretary (Colonies)	Mr R Gent
Magazine Circuit	Mr R N Broadhurst
Publications Stockist	Mr J Parmenter
Webmaster	Mrs J Gane
Committee Members	Mr D Chalcroft
	Mr S R Ellis
	Mr P R A Kelly
	Mr A J Lawrence
	Mr C W Spong
	Mr M Tyler
	Mr P S Watkins
	Mr J West
For information:	
Group Convenors	Mr C J Hitchen (London)
	Mr S R Ellis (Northern)
	Mr C French (Wessex)

many years. The Geoff Gethin award was presented to **Steve Ellis** for his sterling work with the auctions and unfailing support in many other society activities.

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 9.55 am.

MLB

The report by the examiner to the accounts could not be presented at the AGM as the Society was awaiting the appointment of a new examiner.

Below is the said report.

"I have examined the Income and Expenditure Account for the year ended 31 December 2019 and the Balance Sheet at that date and I certify that they are in accordance with the books and records of the Society. I have not carried out an audit.

*A G King Chartered Accountant
Poole, 17 June 2020"*

SOCIETY NOTES Continued from 98**Virtual Displays**

We hope you have enjoyed the virtual displays we have been sending you to compensate for the lack of meetings during the lockdown. To date, you should have received five. As you have the current edition of the Journal to occupy your time during August the next virtual displays will not be going out until September. If you have missed any of the displays you will find them posted on the Society website one month after 'transmission'.

Please continue to support the initiative so that we have enough material to see us through until at least the end

of the year and perhaps into 2021. All you have to do is scan your pages as jpegs at 300dpi and send them to me by DropBox or WeTransfer (or a few at a time, if you prefer, as email attachments). Please include a title page and, if you feel it is required, an explanatory introduction. Send them to Mick Bister, at manager@fcps.org.uk and please also state if you agree to have your display posted on the website afterwards. Thank you.

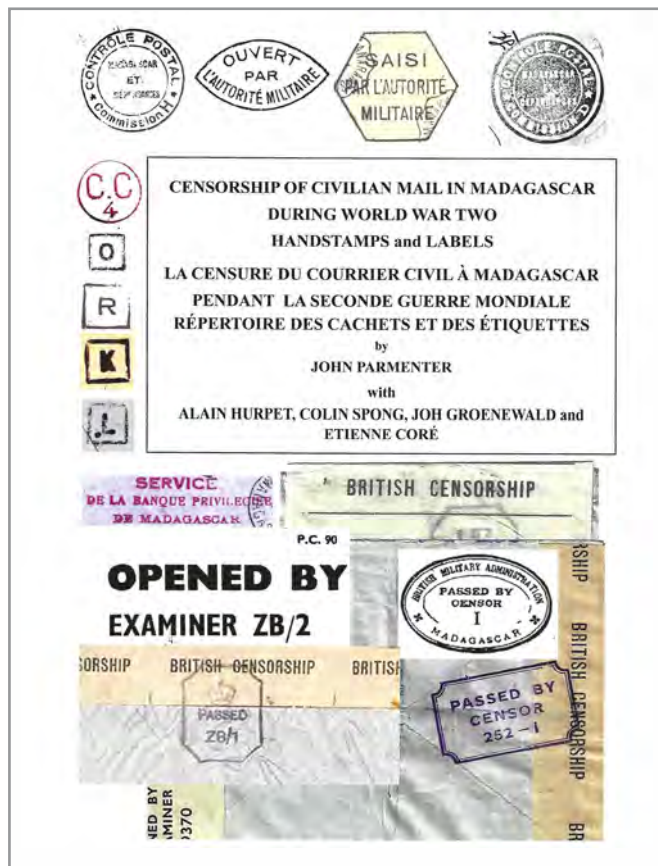
Mick Bister

SOCIETY NOTES Continued on page iv »

BOOKSHELF

Compiled by Michael Round

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



Censorship of Civilian Mail in Madagascar during World War Two: Handstamps and Labels

by John Parmenter, with Alain Hurpet, Colin Spong, Joh Groenewald and Etienne Coré

Published jointly by F&CPS and Col.Fra

Spiral bound, 32pp. No ISBN. Price £17.50 inc P&P.

Reviewed by Roy Reader

This book, slim though it is, presents a complete and detailed survey of the censorship of civilian mail by both the French and the British in Madagascar in World War II. It includes details of all known censor handstamps and censor tapes and accompanies the majority of them with coloured illustrations. All is well presented and comes with text in both English and French.

It begins by briefly outlining the main events of the period and how mail and censorship was affected: initially from September 1939, then under Vichy Government control from September 1940 (when the island was blockaded), British invasion in May 1942, British military administration from September 1942 and jointly with the Free French from December 1942; and finally the Joint Control Commission period from June 1943.

At this stage the book usefully includes a list of locations of censor offices on the island and the code number or letter used by each, thus enabling collectors to identify quickly

where any particular cover in their possession had undergone examination.

The book then presents (by type) the handstamps used by the French censor. It gives for each handstamp its location of use, the quantity seen so far and the earliest and latest recorded date of use. All this gives some indication of rarity or otherwise. The sealing labels used by the French censor are then presented in a similar way. Next come, in the same amount of detail, the censor marks and sealing labels used by the British censor. A comprehensive bibliography follows, listing eighteen books in English or French plus two websites.

The book is then rounded off with a Miscellanea section, containing information and illustrations on matters ranging from South African censor labels in Madagascar, military handstamps used at Diego-Suarez to the use of airgraphs and, at the very end, a copy of a page of postal regulations issued under the British military administration just as it appeared in the *Journal Officiel de Madagascar et Dépendances* of 3 December 1942.

This impressive little book is the result of a great deal of research by the five credited authors. The subject has not been dealt with so fully before. The inclusion of so many illustrations is impressive and particularly helpful to collectors trying to identify some of the often poorly struck handstamps on their covers. There will no doubt be further discoveries made to add to it as time goes on and John Parmenter gives an address to which details of them can be sent.



New-issue listings from Stanley Gibbons

Regular readers of *Gibbons Stamp Monthly* will know that SG lists new issues not frequently, a few at a time (as do some French magazines), but in larger batches at much longer intervals. These are the only source of detailed information - designers' and printers' names, perforations, formats, and exact colours and dates of issue - pending new editions of each catalogue.

It may be useful, therefore, to record whenever such listings appear. The August 2020 issue of *Gibbons Stamp Monthly*, for instance, carries the first such listing of France since November 2018. Counting nine booklets, it runs to over 200 items, from the 'Leather Goods' of March 2018 (SG 6361) to the 'Human Rights' of December that year (SG 6555). It includes *en route* all the Marianne de Digan issues within that period.

These listings are even more valuable stopgaps to collectors of the former French Colonies: non-simplified SG catalogues for these are rare birds indeed. I hope to register them as they appear.

Michael Round

LIST OF RECENTLY PUBLISHED ARTICLES

Compiled by Maurice Tyler

Please contact me (maurice@mstyler.plus.com) if you would like to see a particular article that you do not have direct access to. I can usually produce one that has appeared during the last 12 months, or point you in the right direction.

Timbres Magazine

N° 221 Apr 2020: Les non dentelés et épreuves de luxe des carnets commémoratifs modernes (Wertheimer); Trieste, automne 1871: alerte au choléra! (Veglio); 50^e anniversaire de la Francophonie (Louviau); Type Paix: 50c rose-rouge – Faux pour tromper la Poste (Kop); Merci, Jeanine... [lettre du 6 décembre 1858] (de La Mettrie); A propos de la cote Yvert et Tellier (Gervais & Sinais); Le coup de cœur de la CNEP [timbre rare seul sur lettre, le n° 15 du Gabon] (Laurent); Réapparition d'un timbre algérien non émis de 2002 (Jullien).

N° 222 May 2020: Les entiers postaux au type «Sage» (Singeot); Uderzo: le bureau des légendes est fermé (Mennessiez); A, B, ... Y, Z [boîtes rurales] (de la Mettrie); 1918 à 1940: bouleversements dans le transport aérien (Kop); Une presse particulière (Gomez); A bicyclette [cartes postales] (Zeyons); Le coup de cœur de la CNEP [marques postales rares du département de la Dordogne] (Arrou).

N° 223 Jun 2020: Les débuts des liaisons postales transatlantiques (Chauvin); La poste et le courrier dans l'œuvre d'Uderzo (Mennessiez); 1c ardoise type Blanc: une surprenante découverte (Marcillaud); L'héliogravure expliquée par les images (Gomez); Les erreurs de frappe font la joie des collectionneurs (de La Mettrie); Repérer les faux Daguin (Hervé); L'Appel du 18 juin 1940 [cartes postales] (Zeyons).

L'Écho de la Timbrologie

N° 1950 Apr-May 2020: Évolution des communications radiomaritimes au XX^e siècle (Vanpeene); L'utilisation postale des 25c du type Sage dans le régime intérieur (3/3) (Lavigne); L'OP 1-2019 du *Marion Dufresne* (Venturini).

N° 1951 June 2020: Un parcours automobile jalonné de prélèvements fiscaux (Vincent); Campagnes MAYOBS et OP 2-2019 (Venturini).

N° 1952 July-Aug 2020: Fraude postale sous le Second Empire (Beghin); Occupation prussienne dans la Marne [1870-71] (Fortin); Suite et fin de l'OP 2-2019 (Venturini).

Bulletin COL.FRA

N° 171 1^{er} trim 2020: Nossi-Bé Surcharges 25c du 23 octobre 1890 (Buchheit); Leroy & Papillaud, journalistes et globetrotteurs (Dufresne de Virel); Nouvelle-Calédonie Yvert et Tellier n° 10 (Jouvent); Les oblitérations de Centrafrique après l'indépendance (suite) (Parren); Les bureaux de poste des états du Levant (suite) (Hurpet).

France & Colonies Philatelist

Vol 76 N° 2 (Whole N° 340) Apr 2020: France: 1934 8th National Anti-Tuberculosis "Stamp" Campaign – 'Calmette the Savior of Children' (Taylor); Carte de Visite mail from New Caledonia to France with Frontier Rate forwarding to Switzerland, 1905 (Broadhead).

Gibbons Stamp Monthly

Vol 50 N° 11 Apr 2020: An Update to the 1998-2004 Bella Bellow Definitives of Togo (Pertwee).

Le Collectionneur Philatéliste et Marcophile

N° 2 Mar 2020: Étude du camp de Gurs – 2^e partie – Le camp des indésirables (Neimark); Le tarif pour l'étranger du 1^{er} février 1926 au 31 juillet 1926 (Rohan); Le cachet de censure ovale de Maubeuge pendant la Grande Guerre (Van Dooren); Cachet des Chargements à Griffes Descriptives de Paris en 1910 Libellé: N.A. PARIS N.A. (Martin).

Documents Philatéliques

N° 244 (2^e trim 2020) Apr 2020: Mayotte 2 juillet 1942: Opération «Throat» (Millet); Les avis de réception de chargement entre 1859 et 1876: La réglementation était-elle appliquée correctement? (Compte); Levées exceptionnelles à Paris durant la Grande Guerre (Estel); Le premier service de messageries entre Bar-le-Duc et Paris en 1615 (Varin); La taxe de statistique de formalités douanières et de timbre (Bonnefoy); Le courrier, témoin de la presse écrite pendant l'«Occupation» 1940-1944 (Goanvic).

Cameo

Vol 21 N° 2 (Whole N° 110) June 2020: Cameroun – Plating the Sterling Issue of 1961: Further Considerations, Reconfirmations and Tying up Loose Ends (Bratzel); Cotonou to Lagos (Priddy & Wingent); The CFA Franc Becomes the 'ECO' (Round).

The Indo-China Philatelist

Vol L N° 2 (Whole N° 242) Mar 2020: New Air Orient Label Discovery (Bentley); North Vietnam Mail 1945-1959 Survey Results (Gebhardt & Shaw); 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).

Vol L N° 3 (Whole N° 243) May 2020: Original Navigation and Commerce Set on Cover (Bentley); Use of Pécule Revenue Stamps (Dykhouse); Okay for Export [in WWII] (Bentley); Montagnards War Damages Service (Bentley).

Les Feuilles Marcophiles

N° 380 (Mar 2020): Quand la marcophilie rejoint l'histoire ou le difficile transfert du chef-lieu du département du Var de Brignoles à Draguignan (Trinquier); Mars 1917: renforcement du contrôle postal sur le courrier des soldats alsaciens-lorrains (Lebecque); Quelques aspects méconnus du «Service des Paquebots à Vapeur de la Méditerranée» (1837-1851) (Chouteau); La marque étoile et croissant de Toulon (Trinquier); Évolution

dans le traitement du courrier sur les Machines de Tri Industriel Petit Format (MTI-PF) (Coquin & Guillard); Timbres «contrôle affranchissement avion» (symbolisé par un numéro cerclé) (3^e partie) (Guillard & Bonnefoy); La grande armée à Moscou: un témoignage sur le vif de l'incendie de la capitale russe (Martin).

N° 381 (Jun 2020) : Réforme de la taxation en 2020: Vers un retour au port dû et à la simple taxe? (Bonnefoy); Discreet-paper – Inviolabilité – Économie – Sécurité (Dutau); Le guichet annexe des Invalides (Lavenas); 1918: un colis pour un prisonnier portugais (Flotte); Le timbre BM orné de Neuilly-sur-Loire (Nièvre) (Kelly & Douron); Les timbres à date au type 1884 utilisés au bureau français de Shang-Haï (Désarnaud); Quelques faits divers concernant la santé des personnels des P.T.T. au XX^e siècle: maladies et accidents du travail (Curgy); Les tribulations d'un chasseur à pied (Vernot).

The following publications have not been seen personally by me but appear to contain a few relevant articles.

Stamp Lover

Vol 112 N° 3 (June 2020): Romantic French Masters and modern French definitives (del Giudice).

Stamp Magazine

(Sept 2019): Productions de luxe 1953-55 (Bailey); Napoleon (?).

(Nov 2019): Marianne Definitives (Gunn).

Stamp Collector

Vol 1 N° 9 (Sept 2019): Marshall Pétain (West).

Vol 1 N° 10 (Oct 2019): Paris 1937 Exhibition (Joyeux).

Vol 2 N° 5 (May 2020): How to start a France collection (?).

Vol 2 N° 6 (June 2020): How France eventually honoured Joan of Arc.

SOCIETY NOTES Continued from page 109

French Philatelic Journals

L'Écho de la Timbrologie

Once again, Sophie Bastide-Bernadin has featured our Society's Journal in the *Bulletins de Clubs* column, this time in the magazine's June edition.

She highlights in particular John Courtis's article on the Postal Stationery Wrapper from Great Britain to Senegal, Marc Parren and Martin Bohnstedt's article on the Post-Independence postmarks of the Central African Republic, Ashley Lawrence's conclusion to the French Mandates of Syria and Lebanon, Edwin Voerman's study of the Olympic

Winter Games issues of 1968 and Richard Broadhurst's report on the 20c Cérès Anniversary issues.

Sophie has unwittingly selected items written by authors from Australia, the Netherlands, South Sudan as well as the UK underlining what a truly international society we are.

Timbres-Magazine Press Release

The following announcement has been received from Benoît Gervais, CEO of *Éditions Yvert & Tellier* and Director of *Timbres-Magazine*.

"After having experienced difficulties exacerbated by the Covid-19 crisis for several months, *Timbropresse* was placed into receivership. A reliable and competent buyer had to be urgently found, otherwise this magazine, rooted in the philatelic landscape, would disappear forever.

"The Yvert and Tellier group, a partner of philatelists for 125 years, offered to take over and the Commercial Court in charge of the case gave it its preference. We will ensure the continuity of the editorial format and the well-balanced content which have made the reputation of *Timbres-Magazine*.

"You will still find your favourite subjects and authors. An editorial team is being formed and will be known in a few days. They are stamp enthusiasts and they are ready to sacrifice their summer holidays to offer you a magazine that will please you as much as in the past.

"We have planned the next releases in late July and early September - to reach you on subscription or on newsstands."

Chaque mois, nous vous donnons un aperçu du contenu des publications d'associations qui nous parviennent.



THE JOURNAL OF THE FRANCE & COLONIES PHILATELIC SOCIETY
N° 292 – Avril 2020

Les délais d'acheminement ont été un peu plus longs que d'ordinaire mais nous avons bien reçu le bulletin britannique de la Société philatélique dédiée à la France et à ses colonies, paru en avril. Il traite des marques postales de la République d'Afrique Centrale après son indépendance. Il présente aussi un entier postal britannique de 1902 envoyé au Sénégal, destination rare à l'époque depuis le Royaume-Uni. Il revient sur les affranchissements utilisés en Syrie et au Liban durant les Mandats français. Plus près de nous, il s'intéresse aux Jeux olympiques d'Hiver de 1968. Dans la rubrique « Questions-réponses », sont montrées notamment les émissions spéciales du 170^e anniversaire du premier timbre-poste français – la Cérès 20 c. Comptes-rendus, présentation d'ouvrages et revue de presse closent ce numéro.

Contact : Mick Bister – 7 The Slade – Wrestlingworth – Sandy SG 19 2 ES. Royaume-Uni.