

THE JOURNAL OF THE FRANCE & COLONIES PHILATELIC SOCIETY



A photographic postcard taken in the early 1930's by René Moreau depicting peoples of and life in African colonies to promote Imperial Fortnight. The above card shows no. 8 in the series - *Tchad – Femmes* Sara de Fort Archambault with the Joseph Foret overprint. See page 79 for David Hogarth's article on *La France d'outre-mer : The Quinzaine Impériale* and Joseph Foret

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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.

2020-21 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 subscription rate would be £16.00

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

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

Bank transfers to HSBC account name France & Colonies Philatelic Society sort code 40-07-31 account no 71019325.

The Journal

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

It is printed and distributed by Joshua Horgan Print & Design, Unit 2, Glenmore Business Centre, Range Road, Witney, Oxon OX29 0AA from the Editor's PDF copy.

The price is included in members' subscriptions. The contents are copyright.

Contributions should be sent by email to Chris Hitchen at treasurer@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 (email: Rodney.gent1@outlook.com; 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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* * *

When writing to an officer of the Society, for security reasons please do not mention the name of the Society in the address.

Postal requests for information should be accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope.

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

The Journal of the France & Colonies Philatelic Society

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CONTENTS

Society Notes (C J Hitchen).....	54
Editorial (J Gane)	54
New Members	54
Annual Philatelic Weekend 2022	54
Articles for the Journal	54
France & Colonies Packets	54
Regional Meetings	54
Society Zoom Programme	54, 89
Help Needed	55
Publicity for the Journal	55
A Note from the Secretary	55
ABPS	55
Forthcoming Exhibitions	55
Erratum	55
New-issue listings from Stanley Gibbons: April-June 2021	78
Missing in Transit	84
Fraud and franchise abuse in the French post office before 1849 (C J Hitchen)	56
<i>Recouvrements</i> Service Envelope N°1494 Variants (D Hockett)	64
Réunion - mail from a distant shore (P R A Kelly FRPSL)	72
<i>La France d'outre-mer</i> : The <i>Quinzaine Impériale</i> and Joseph Foret (D J Hogarth)	79
Collecting by Topic: The Châteaux of France. Part One: The Stamps (R Niven)	85
Shorter Items - including Questions and Answers	90
The 1959 Fréjus Disaster Fund Issue (E Voerman)	90
My very first stamp (J Wolvers)	93
Identification of dated corner blocks of the 20c Rose-Lilac Cameo Sower (M Blackledge and M L Bister)	94
The French Revolutionary Wars 1798 - 1802:	
(5) The evacuation of French troops from Egypt, 1800 (J Cowlin)	96
Classic Forgeries Query: (1) Cérès (R Abela)	97
Gabon Y& T 14 + 15 (18 May 1889): forgeries (S Binsted)	98
The Fournier Forgeries (S Binsted)	98
Côte d'Ivoire Y&T <i>Colis Postaux</i> 7g + 7h: forgeries (S Binsted)	99
The Royal Visit to France 1938 (M Meadowcroft)	100
Redirection of International Mail at the Original Rate (E Voerman and J Vellekoop)	101
Cancellations and rates applying to French newspapers (P R A Kelly FRPSL)	102
A Postcard Mystery (P Maybury)	103
What is this? (1) Côte D'Or et Gabon (S Fairchild)	104
What is this? (2) Postmark (S Fairchild)	104
What is this? (3) ½ centime <i>en plus</i> (S Fairchild)	105
French Colonies General Issues (P R A Kelly FRPSL)	105
Congo Français correction (S Binsted and M Parren)	106
Classic Forgeries Query: (2) Cérès, a forger's forgery? (R Abela)	106
<i>Les timbres-poste 'Changement de tarif'</i> (R N Broadhurst)	107
<i>Censorship of Civilian Mail in Madagascar During World War II</i>	107
<i>Au Coin des neophytes</i> (P R A Kelly FRPSL)	iv
Problems with reply paid letter cards sent out of the country of issue (P R A Kelly FRPSL)	iv
Bookshelf (M Round)	108
Review of: <i>Les surcharges locales de 1992 à 1997 aux Comores, Le Philatéliste Croix-Rouge, Marianne, Maurice Noguès vers l'Asie avec la nuit, Air France et le Breguet Deux-Ponts</i>	108
List of Recently Published Articles (M S Tyler)	iii
Books Noted (M S Tyler)	iv

SOCIETY NOTES

Editorial

After six years Mick Bister has finally decided to relinquish his role as Journal Manager. Thank you Mick for your diligence and expertise in collating and proofing the articles of 20 Journals. I have thoroughly enjoyed working with you and although it was for a very short time I will nevertheless miss your help and guidance.

Chris Hitchen temporarily stepped in to collate and manage the preparatory work for this edition. Much of the final editing of text is handled by Michael Round and David Hogarth. Their contribution to each edition is invaluable.

The December edition will contain the reports of the AGM and with life hopefully getting back to some normality we hope to bring reports of physical meetings for the first time since the Wessex group met in October 2020.

Jan Gane

New Members

The Society is pleased to welcome new member 1508 Raymond Abela (Malta).

Annual Philatelic Weekend 2022

For 2022 it has been decided to return to Redditch from 11 to 13 March 2022. Further details will be circulated with the December Journal. The AGM will also take place on Saturday 12 March at this venue.

Articles for the Journal

A big “thank you” is due to the members who have submitted or who have pledged articles in response to Mick Bister’s appeal in the last Journal. We now have almost enough material for the next edition but need significant future contributions to enable the Journal to continue in its current form. For the moment please send your material to Chris Hitchen treasurer@fcp.org.uk

France & Colonies Packets

Richard Broadhurst is pleased to inform members that both the France and the Colonies packets are fully operational again with much new and interesting material appearing, especially the very popular modern items.

During the lockdown some members understandably preferred not to receive the packets, but most have now re-joined. It is possible that a few members would like to see the packets again and have not informed the packet secretaries, so please do get in touch and you will be included in future. New members will be most welcome as well.

Regional Meetings

It is still difficult to plan for the future as the pandemic is still far from over and whilst many have plans for the autumn it is still uncertain what restrictions might continue to apply. The website will always carry the latest updates: the position at the moment is as follows–

The Northern Group plan to restart on Saturday 7 August – a physical meeting at Rotherham (location details to follow as it will be a changed venue). It will commence with a pub lunch at midday and finish around 17.00. The main display will be ‘Underpaid Mail’ by Steve Ellis followed by members’ displays. For further details of meetings please email Steve at Steve@homestead75.co.uk It is anticipated that meetings as usual will continue in the coming season.

The Wessex Group will no longer meet in Salisbury due to changed circumstances. Colin French who has so ably organised these meetings in recent years is relocating to Devon. That means that after some 20 successful years it will no longer be possible to have regional meetings in Salisbury. That is a sad loss to the Society. However on a more positive note Claire Scott has volunteered to host meetings at her office premises. The first meeting is scheduled for 2 September at Tumblins, Winterborne Stickland, Blandford Forum, Dorset, DT11 0ED where the guest speaker will be **John Cowlin** with his display on ‘France’s Wars & Revolution 1664-1803’. Claire’s contact details are on the inside front cover page, however she will email those in the surrounding area nearer the time with more details and costs.

The London Group Nothing is planned for the moment but the position will be reviewed in the autumn. It would help if a new volunteer to convene these could be found.

Society Zoom Programme

The monthly Zoom meetings started in January and continue to prove popular. On 6 April **Ken Nilsestuen** President of the France & Colonies Philatelic Society Inc.,(US), gave us a fine display on ‘The French Congo 1900 Pictorial Issue. Philately, Postal History and Ephemera’ that contributed to a very thorough and enjoyable presentation.

Tuesday 6 May began with ‘Commercial Service Mail Carriers – Marseille and the Italian Coast’ by **Steve Ellis**. That was followed by **Mick Bister** with ‘50c Jeanne d’Arc Booklets’: two very different displays but both fascinating and showing how varied French philately can be.

Tuesday 4 June started with **Mick Bister** and the ‘Life and Times of the 1F50 Pétain’. Sadly a power cut ended that prematurely. **Dr D Gwynne Harries** nobly stepped in to fill the breach with a short display of ‘French Newspaper Stamps’. Mick’s display will be rescheduled in the autumn when we would hope to continue with some Zoom meetings.

Peter Maybury delighted us with ‘Early Algeria 1787 to 1852’ on Tuesday 29 June.

Videos of all past meetings are now on the website. Further details are on page 89. Anyone who wishes to be informed of future meetings has only to advise Chris Hitchen at treasurer@fcps.org.uk

We will continue with Tuesdays at 14:30 London time as these do allow the United States East coast, India and Western Australia to join in.

Help needed

Mick Bister has now retired from his post as Journal Manager. We are still seeking, therefore, a replacement to work alongside our Editor, Jan Gane, during the preparatory stages of the Journal. Details of what is required have been published in previous Journals. Given the lack of response any form of assistance with editing articles would be appreciated if the whole role is too daunting. It would also be of use to receive offers of help with translations of French into English. We are now very short of members able to carry out translation work. Some offers of items for the Journal needing such skills will sadly have to be declined if we cannot deal with them.

Any member interested or requiring further information please email the President, Chris Hitchen at treasurer@fcps.org.uk

Publicity for the Journal



THE JOURNAL OF THE FRANCE & COLONIES PHILATELIC SOCIETY
N° 295 Avril 2021
L'illustration en Une du Journal de la Société philatélique de France et des Colonies est très représentative de l'époque actuelle. Elle donne à voir des sociétaires de tous les coins du monde – Royaume-Uni, États-Unis, Belgique, France, Inde et Australie – durant les conférences Zoom initiées par l'association à partir du 12 janvier 2021. Le succès de ce rendez-vous au format virtuel a été très grand, trente-trois personnes ont ainsi participé à chacune des deux premières réunions. Hommage est rendu à Colin Spong FRPSL décédé le 2 janvier dernier. Roger Niven explique la complexité de collectionner les timbres français par thématique dans un article sur les cathédrales, les basiliques et les églises en France. Marc Parren et Martin Bohnstedt ont étudié les marques postales post-indépendance de la République d'Afrique centrale. Steve Ellis s'est penché sur le courrier français transatlantique.
Contact: C. J. Hitchen – 36 Everton Road – Croydon CR0 6 LA – Royaume-Uni.

Sophie Bastide-Bernadin has featured our Society's Journal in the July edition of 'L'Écho de la Timbrologie' 'Bulletins de Clubs' column, she writes, "Each month we offer you a glimpse of the contents of society publications that we have received. The Journal of the France and Colonies Philatelic Society N° 295, April 2021. The illustration featured on the front cover of the FCPS Journal is a sign of the times. It shows members from across the world – the United Kingdom, the USA, Belgium, France, India and Australia - during one of the Society's Zoom presentations launched on 12 January 2021. This virtual format has enjoyed a huge success with thirty-three members attending each of the first two meetings. The contents include tributes paid to Colin Spong who died on 2 January.

Roger Niven explains the complexity of collecting French stamps by topic in an article on cathedrals, basilicas and churches in France. Marc Parren and Martin Bohnstedt study the post-independence post marks of the Central African Republic. Steve Ellis focuses on French transatlantic mail".

A Note from the Secretary

Andrew Telfer Brunton writes: Members of the committee have answered a number of enquiries for assistance from collectors or researchers in the past few months indicating that there is still some interest in philately and in particular French Philately. There have also been a pleasing number of applications for membership this year.

ABPS

The Summer edition of the Association of British Philatelic Societies magazine can be viewed on the ABPS webpage at <https://www.abps.org.uk/magazines/> Articles include: Brexit and VAT, Dante Alighieri, J M Barrie, and Postal Museum - 151 years of the Postcard Exhibition.

Now that COVID-19 restrictions are being lifted we may be able to attend philatelic exhibitions. Listed below are those known to still be accepting entries:

AUTUMN STAMPEX 2021. 29 September - 3 October 2021 - Business Design Centre, London N1 0QH.

HELVETICA 2022 Specialised World Exhibition, Padiglione Conza Convention Centre, Lugano, Switzerland from 18-22 May 2022. www.helvetica2022.ch

CAPEX 2022 Toronto, Canada: Metro Toronto Convention Centre from 9 - 12 June 2022. www.capex2022.org

LIBEREC 2022: European Stamp Exhibition and Polar Salon, Czech Republic. Wellness Hotel Babylon, Liberec, Czech Republic from 13 -16 October 2022. Website - www.liberec2022.eu

IBRA2023 World Stamp Exhibition, Essen, Germany. Messe Essen from 25 – 28 May 2023 (Date change). Website www.ibra2023.de

Further information is available at the ABPS website <https://www.abps.org.uk/forthcoming-exhibitions/>

There is also an exhibition in France:

74eme **SALON PHILATELIQUE D'AUTOMNE.** 5 - 7 November - Espace Champerret, 6 Rue Jean Oestreicher, 75017 Paris, France.

Erratum

In **Andrew Telfer Brunton's** article 'Cérès de Bordeaux Commemorative Booklet' (F&CPS Journal No 295, April 2021, pp 32-33), the phosphor-band measurements in the second-last paragraph should read 2.2cm x 0.13cm and 2.2cm x 0.19cm respectively.

Fraud and franchise abuse in the French post office before 1849

Chris Hitchen

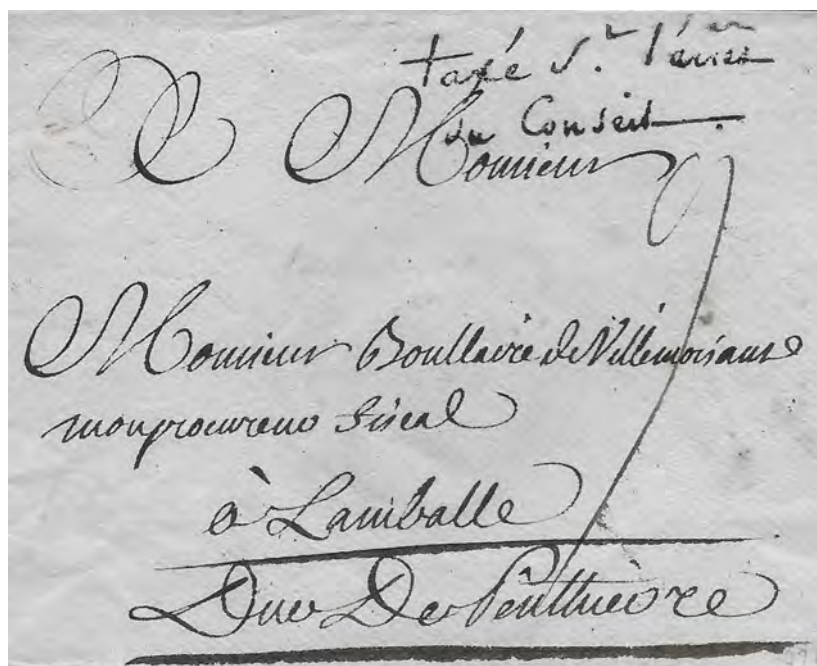


Figure 1
taxé s l'arrêt du Conseil

The term ‘revenue protection’ is one that today we rather associate with fare dodging and efforts by train and bus companies to stamp out fare evasion. However, all businesses have to take steps to protect their revenue streams and the French post office from very early times was no exception.

There were two issues of particular concern. The first was the clandestine carriage of letters by private individuals instead of through the post. The second was a failure to observe the regulations relating to the franchise sufficiently carefully.

The postal monopoly in France dates back to 1667. Before that there were a number of mail services run by international merchants, the Church, Universities and towns alongside the Royal post for the use of the King and his Ministers. Maintaining these services was an expensive business and to help defray the cost of the postal services used by the King the Royal post gradually accepted letters from individuals. This was the beginning of a national postal service. In 1672, when Louvois was in charge of the posts, it was decided to farm the service out. This was similar to privatisation. A contractor undertook to run the service for an agreed sum to be paid to the Royal treasury. They then ran the post and made what profit they could. To make such an arrangement really viable an *arrêt du Conseil d'État* of 18 June 1681 gave the Farmer General exclusive rights to carry letters throughout France. All other mail services closed

down and, with some small exceptions, it was forbidden for anyone other than the post to transport letters. This was difficult to enforce in practice. If it was known for instance that someone was going to Paris from Bordeaux it would have been a simple matter to give them a couple of letters to pop in their pocket to be posted locally on reaching the capital. This undoubtedly went on and was difficult to detect, let alone stop.

The franchise is the right to send and, in some cases receive letters free of postal charges. It began from the earliest inception of the post with letters carried on the King's service and was gradually extended to Ministers of State and others sending official correspondence. In the eighteenth-century prominent nobles began to claim this privilege and it began to get out of hand, although the post office regularly issued lists of those so entitled. On 12 August 1787, the franchise was withdrawn from most individuals and strictly restricted to correspondence on official government business.

Figure 1 is an undated letter signed by the Duc de Penthièvre to the *procureur fiscal* in the Duke's home-town of Lamballe near Saint Brieuc in northern Brittany. As was the custom he has simply signed the front so that it would be carried free. But it must have been sent after such practice had been stopped. The handstamp at the top right reads *taxé s. l'arrêt du Conseil*. Postage of 9 *sols* has been charged, 8 *sols* Paris to Lamballe at the tariff of 1759 plus 1 *sol* for the envelope.

The National Assembly on 8 June 1792 stipulated that the franchise would now only apply to letters sent by that Assembly, public bodies and civil servants actively involved in government business.

To make postal procedures clear to all engaged in the postal service the post office produced in 1792 the *Instruction Générale sur le Service des Postes*. It included a full list of those entitled to the franchise and how it would be administered. A handstamp would be required for use on such letters and the use of manuscript signatures as authorisation forbidden. The post office itself would supply these handstamps and so had control over such usage. From now on more and more explicit instructions were issued and problems only arose when these were not properly observed.

Less attention was made at this time to any contravention of the post office monopoly. Any private messenger services were to be reported but nothing had yet been decided on how to deal with them. That was remedied with a very specific decree in 1804 which stipulated double postage as a penalty.

Article 1 du décret du 2 messidor An XII (21 June 1804) set out this principle of a penalty of double postage for infringements. Although the text refers to clandestine mail it did also extend to abuse of the franchise. Such letters had to be sent to the Dead Letter office in Paris from where they could be reclaimed only on payment of double postage. The precise wording in English dates from a decree in the year 9 of the revolutionary calendar and was simply repeated in subsequent decrees.

“Letters and parcels seized in accordance with the decree of 27 Prairial Year IX prohibiting any person not employed by the postal service from involvement in the transport of letters, newspapers, periodicals, etc.; will be sent by the office

closest to the place of seizure, to the Dead Letter office in Paris, from where they can only be returned on request, and at the cost of paying double the ordinary postage.”

There is no evidence that this had any immediate effect. The first handstamp to stipulate that postage should be charged when there was a suggestion that evasion was intended appeared around 1821. This has the wording PAR ORDRE A TAXER. Nothing is known about why it was created or intended to be used. On the few examples known, the letters are usually addressed to post office employees, and were perhaps hoping to be sent free of postage. The rate charged is only the single rate with no suggestion of a penalty.

Figure 2 is addressed to the *Directeur des Postes...en permission* at Briançon on 29 January 1822. The 11 at the top left corner indicates the weight band 11 to 15 grams and at the tariff of May 1806 for a distance of 600 to 800 kilometres the postage was 18 décimes.

In 1822 two handstamps were issued that, for the first time, specifically stipulated double postage. **Figures 3 and 4** are the front and reverse of a letter from Boston in the United States, dated 21 August 1822. It has been carried privately to France where it was put into the post. However, an intermediary agent has noted New York on the back which rather gave the game away. A vigilant clerk in Paris spotted that, applied the handstamp DOUBLE TAXE POUR FRAUDE, and, in the absence of any postal convention with the United States, treated it as a letter from England. The convention with Great Britain of 17 May 1802 set 12 décimes as the rate from Calais to Paris plus inland postage for destinations beyond the capital. That was a further 6 décimes for a distance of 300 to 400 kilometres and as was the practice at the time the single rate was marked on the back – 18 décimes. The 8 at the top left corner indicates 8 to 10 grams (the third weight step) which was 1 ½ times the

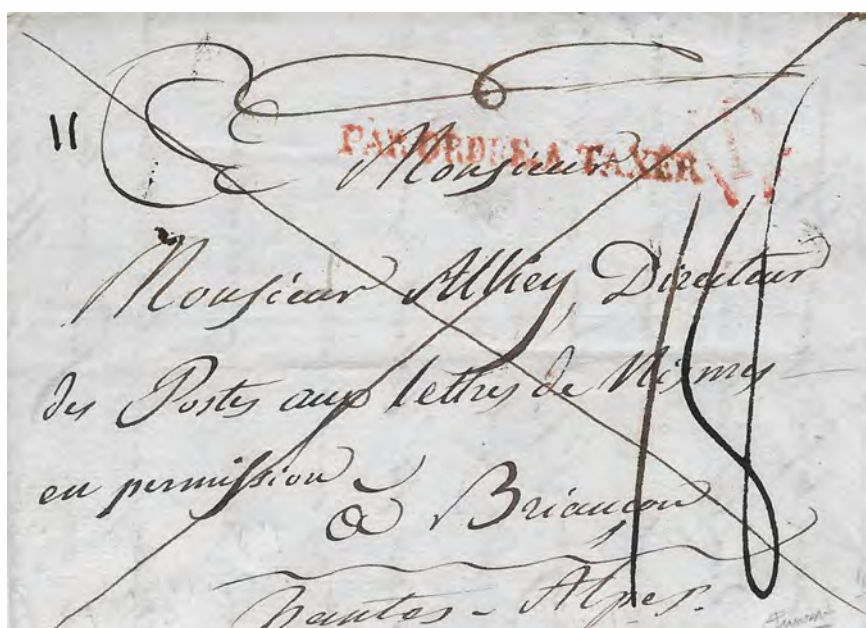
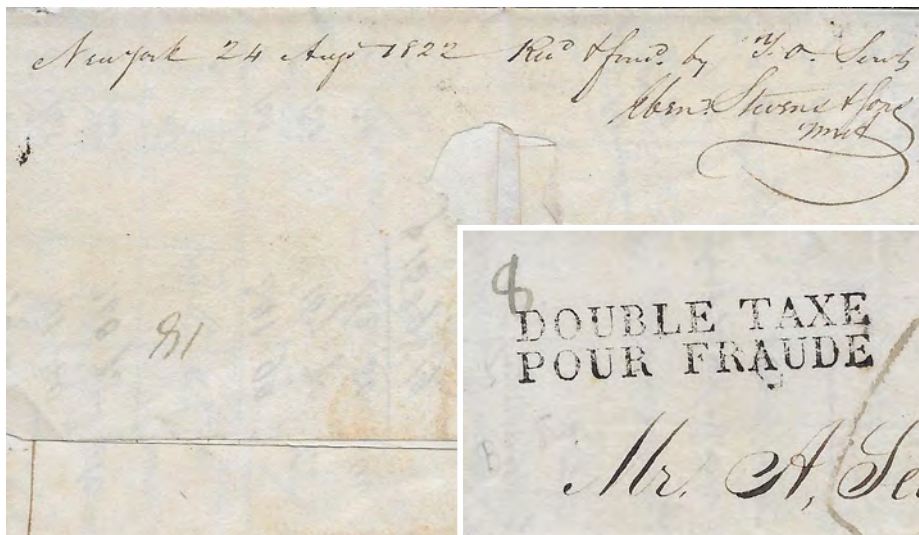


Figure 2
Par Ordre à Taxer 29 January 1822



Figures 3 and 4
Double Taxe pour Fraude
21 August 1822
(front and reverse)

basic rate. The calculation is therefore $18 \times 1\frac{1}{2} = 27$ doubled for fraud to give a final rate of 5 francs 4 décimes.

That handstamp resulted from a *Décision du Conseil des Postes* of 1 October 1822. A second handstamp DOUBLE TAXE CONTRAVENTION followed on 23 October 1822. It is unclear what difference was envisaged. Figure 5 is the only one that I have seen and there is nothing to indicate that the letter ever travelled through the post. It is dated 1 April 1841 and is a private correspondence from a brother to his sister.

The post office now began to take infringements of its letter carrying monopoly more seriously. February 1829 saw a new handstamp issued by the *Conseil des Postes*- SAISIE EN FRAUDE TAXE DOUBLE. Figure 6 is a letter from Mouzillac, today Muzillac, in Brittany to Nantes dated 9 October 1834. Like a number of others that I have seen, it is an order for goods addressed to a trader, essentially a shopping list, taken by a friend or neighbour on a visit to a nearby city. However, the post office considered that an infringement of their monopoly. It has been sent to Paris

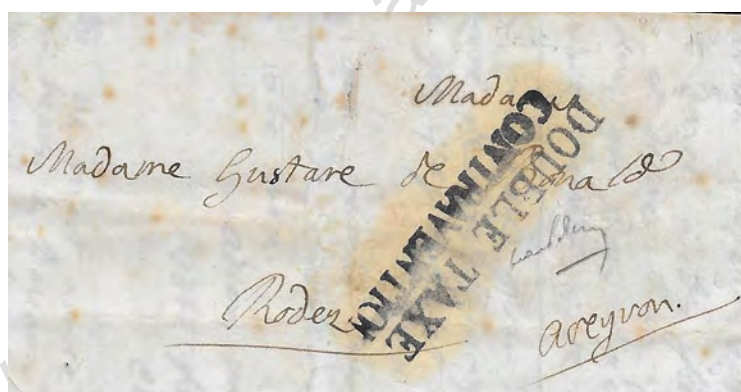


Figure 5
Double Taxe Contravention
1 April 1841



Figure 6
Saisie en Fraude Taxe Double
9 October 1834

where the postage was charged as 6 décimes. From Muzillac to Nantes is some 85 kilometres by road, at the tariff of 1828 the rate for a straight line distance between 40 and 80 kilometres was 3 décimes, then doubled by Paris.

In May 1832, the post office issued an updated set of instructions covering all the procedures postal officials needed to know. The *Instruction Générale sur le Service des Postes* now devotes a whole chapter to fraudulent transport. Post office employees, customs agents and the police had authority to search vehicles if necessary. To avoid holding up traffic too much it was recommended that this should be done at the entrance or exit of towns. Armed force could be requisitioned if needed! Article 855 stated that postage should be double that from where a letter was seized to the intended destination. In practice they seem to have simply taken the postage from its place of origin to its destination and doubled that.

An ordinance of 14 December 1825 restated earlier decisions and confirmed that double postage should be charged for franchise fraud. However, for franchise irregularities, article 357 of the 1832 instruction, simply advised that requisite postage should be applied. There is no mention of double postage in this context. The rules regarding the franchise were detailed and problems were often due to failure to observe them carefully enough. Any omission meant that postage had to be charged, but the post office was often well aware that such an item was actually on official business. The

postmaster would then take the initiative and offer the recipient the opportunity to open it in his presence in the post office and if confirmed as official correspondence the postage would immediately be remitted. Whilst the reason for applying postage had to be explained it was sufficient to simply note the number of the instruction involved.

In the 1830s some post offices began to apply explanatory labels explaining how to reclaim postage not actually due. That led to the creation of a label for use by any office – the *Etiquette avis 164*, issued in 1842. **Figure 7** is an envelope from the *Ministère de la Marine et des Colonies* in Paris to the *Préfet Maritime* at Rochefort dated 10 June 1842. It must have weighed between 40 and 45 grams and has been charged 40 décimes for a distance of 400 to 500 kilometres. At the top right, in manuscript, '350' refers to the article of the instructions not complied with and the reason for postage being levied. It suggests that thread or string was used to seal the letter, contrary to regulations. Whilst conscious that letters on official business should reach their intended destination with minimal difficulty, even if not quite compliant, the post office also wanted to reduce the volume of letters simply refused and therefore ending up in the Dead Letter office.

Not until 1842 does there seem to have been a serious attempt to tackle fraud in connection with the franchise and not just non-compliance with the rules. A label referred to as *Vieux Rose* makes an appearance. Nothing is known of



Figure 7
Etiquette avis 164 10 June 1842

the circumstances surrounding its issue. **Figure 8** is a letter from the tiny hamlet of Saint Symphorien written on 20 May 1842 to the mayor of a nearby village Saint Geniez, both near Sisteron in the Alpes-de-Haute-Provence department. Postage for this short distance of under 40 kilometres would have been 2 décimes. But, seized somehow for irregularity, it has been sent all the way to Paris and back again and carefully charged double, 40 centimes.

There was a problem with the wording of the label. It states that the addressee was expected to pay the postage. That was an over-simplification. If fraud was suspected a written record had to be submitted and if refused by the addressee the double postage became due from the sender. Of the few examples of this label recorded therefore most have the lower part removed as on **Figure 8**. **Figure 9** is a copy of the complete label.



Figure 8
Etiquette Vieux Rose
20 May 1842

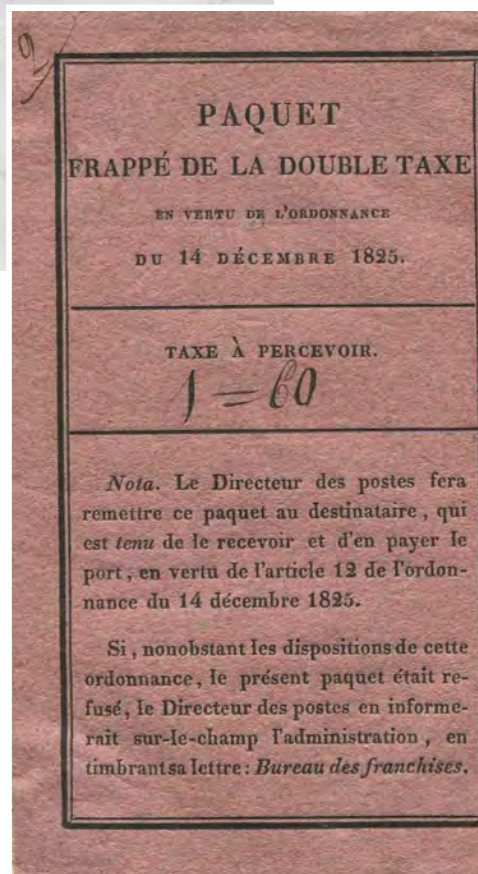


Figure 9
complete Vieux Rose
label

A new ordinance of 17 November 1844 made dealing with possible fraud less complex and easier to apply in practice. Any letter that did not comply with the rules received a handstamp as shown on the letter at **Figure 10**. That is from Tournan to Paris written on 20 April 1850. It is addressed to the Orléans family and has at first been accepted as free and a Paris Franchises date stamp applied. But then second thoughts prevailed, the date stamp was crossed out and

postage due of 2 décimes substituted. This handstamp remained in use for many years. Articles 30 and 31 set out the procedures that should now be followed. They allowed double postage to be demanded from the recipient unless it could be proved to contain only official correspondence. This could be done by any post office and no longer required that such letters should be sent to Paris for checking.

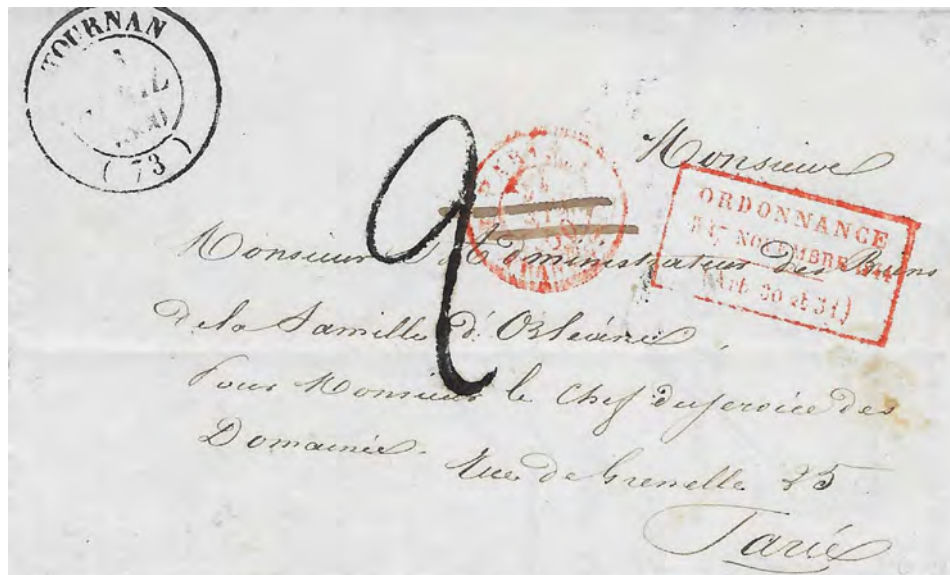


Figure 10
Ordonnance du 17 Novembre 1844
handstamp 20 April 1850

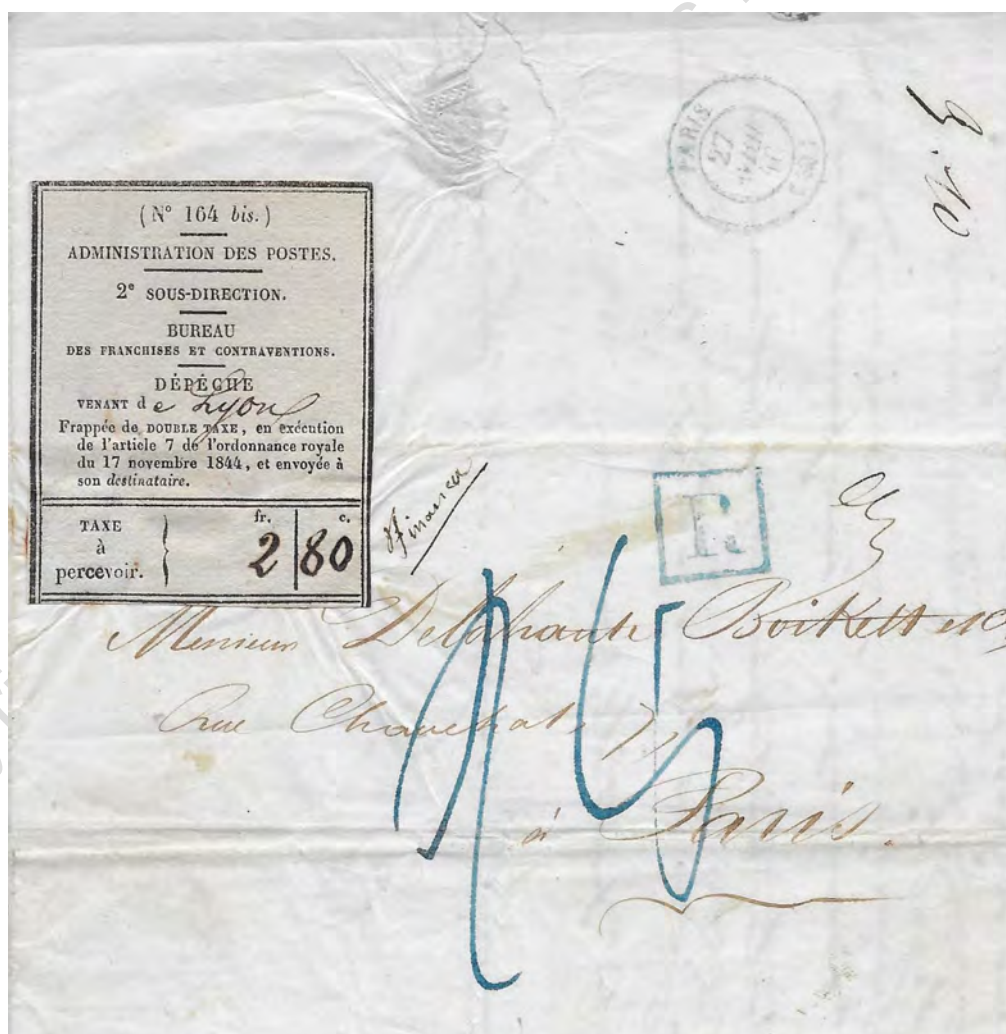


Figure 11
Etiquette 164 bis 20 April 1846
double tax required from the recipient

The wording of these articles is -

Article 29: The Postmaster who becomes aware that one of the conditions or formalities prescribed to obtain the franchise is missing in relation to either the make-up of the item or the superscription of a dispatch or a package which has been handed in to his office, will immediately notify the counter-signatory.

Article 30: If the adjustments required in such cases set out in the previous article are able to be made before the post leaves, the Postmaster will direct the official in charge to make the necessary changes immediately.

If it is too late in the day or any other circumstance prevents the official in charge having the necessary

changes made by the sender, the Postmaster will apply a handstamp to justify the postage which will be applied, if in direct communication with the destination office, or to ensure the application of that postage, if it has to send the mail via an intermediary office.

Article 31: In cases where the irregularities mentioned in article 29 have not been flagged up or reported by the originating office, the postmaster of the transit or receiving office will remedy this omission, by applying to letters and packets with these irregularities, the handstamp designated in article 30, and if necessary, applying the postage to which they are liable.

New labels were issued when double postage was required, rather curiously using the same numbers as the *etiquette avis*. Label 164 was for use in the provinces and 164 *bis* in Paris to charge the recipient double postage. There was no longer any need to specify the reason for such action.

Figure 11 is a letter from Lons-le-Saunier to Paris on 20 April 1846. At Lyon an infringement has been noticed and an *etiquette 164 bis* applied in Paris and a registered handstamp R. At the tariff of 1 January 1828 14 décimes was the charge for a letter weighing between 10 and 15 grams



Figure 12
Etiquette 63
double tax required from the sender

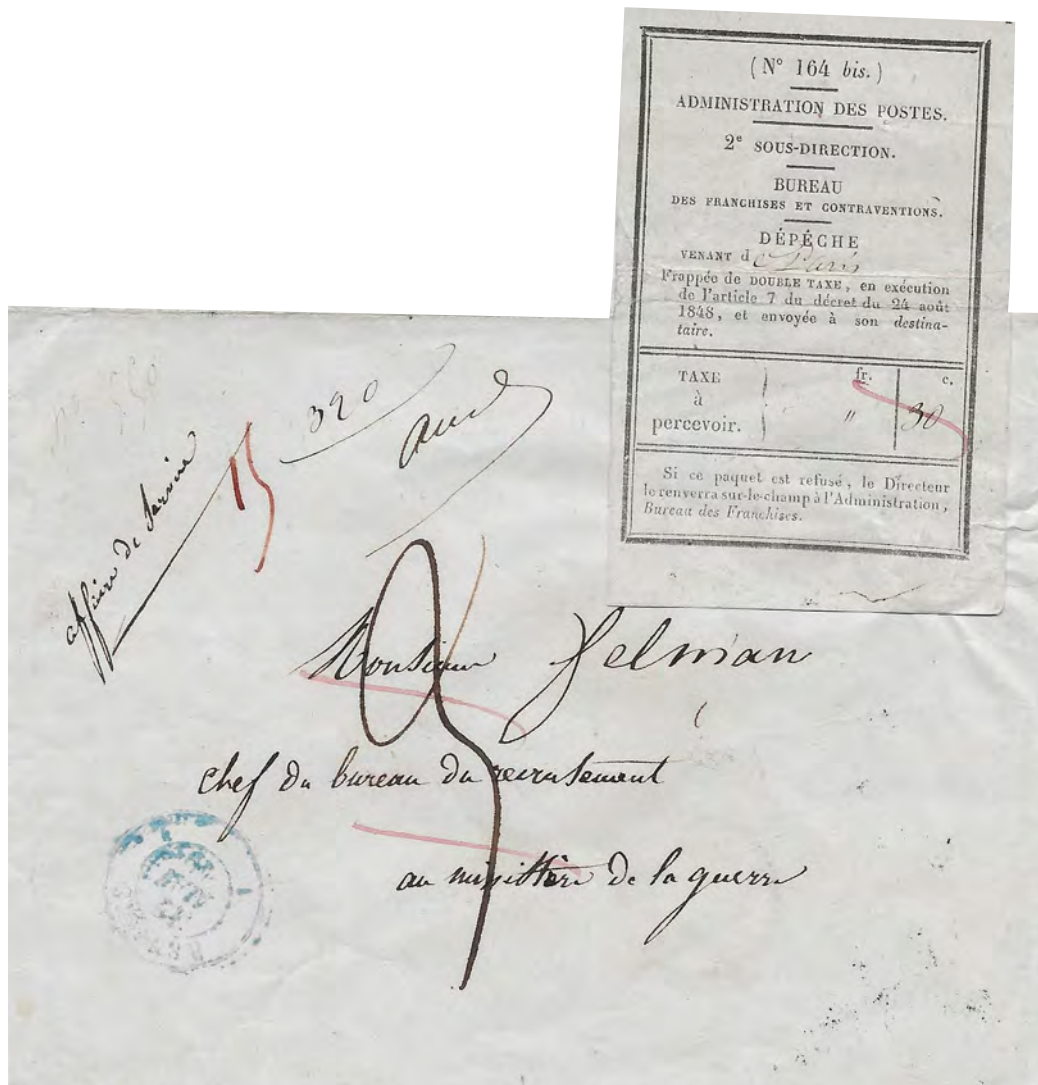


Figure 13
Etiquette 164 bis 2 May 1849
double tax required from the recipient

travelling a distance between 300 and 400 kilometres. That has then been doubled for postage due of 28 décimes.

Should the letter be refused then it would be returned to the sender for payment of the double postage; the label 164 or 164 bis would be removed and replaced by a label 63. Figure 12 has been returned to the Prefect of the Gard department at Nîmes in an ambulance envelope with a label 63 on the front. The origin of the original letter has not been noted but postage of 42 décimes has been set.

August 1848 saw further efforts to tackle fraud. As well as double postage, fines and eventually (in December) legal proceedings were added to the range of measures to deal with evasion of postage. Just levying double postage was no longer sufficient. The labels demanding it became redundant – although the letter at Figure 13 does show usage into 1849.

Figure 13 is a label 164 bis with the wording amended to read 'article 7 du décret du 24 août 1848'. It is a local letter sent on

2 May 1849 to the Ministry of War. A postman of District F attempted delivery but it was refused because double the local postage was demanded, 30 centimes. It was then returned to the Dead Letter office who opened it, presumably accepted that it was indeed on official business, and remitted the postage altogether. A faint blue date stamp Renvois confirms that it went to the Bureau des Rebut.

By this time postage stamps were beginning to make their appearance and misbehaviour became more closely associated with fraudulent usage of these.

Bibliography

Introduction à l'Histoire Postale des Origines à 1849 Michèle Chauvet

Collection Joseph Hackmey *Les Étiquettes Précurseurs Les Chiffres-Taxe Carrés 1825-1882*

Documents Philatéliques 5 and 6, *les étiquettes-taxe, précurseurs de France* by P Germain and G Dreyfus.

Recouvrements Service Envelope N°1494 Variants

David Hockett

The following is the result of sorting an accumulation of envelopes and fronts. It is not assumed that it covers all variants as the envelopes have been purchased mainly in two locations – Paris (Sunday mornings at the bottom of the Champs-Élysées) and in the Charente Maritime (collectors' fairs when they were allowed). Generally, they have not been seen as single items but as part of larger accumulations (those days seem to have gone now). This would distort any investigation of distribution.

This contribution is looking solely at envelope N°1494 up to the outbreak of World War II and I have numbered the variants I have found (Figures 1-13) for ease of reference within this article, but these are not exhaustive. I have differentiated them by design and text, but what do these minor textual changes indicate? Do they refer perhaps to a change of classification, a change of printer, a specific printing run or quantity printed? Your answers are welcome.

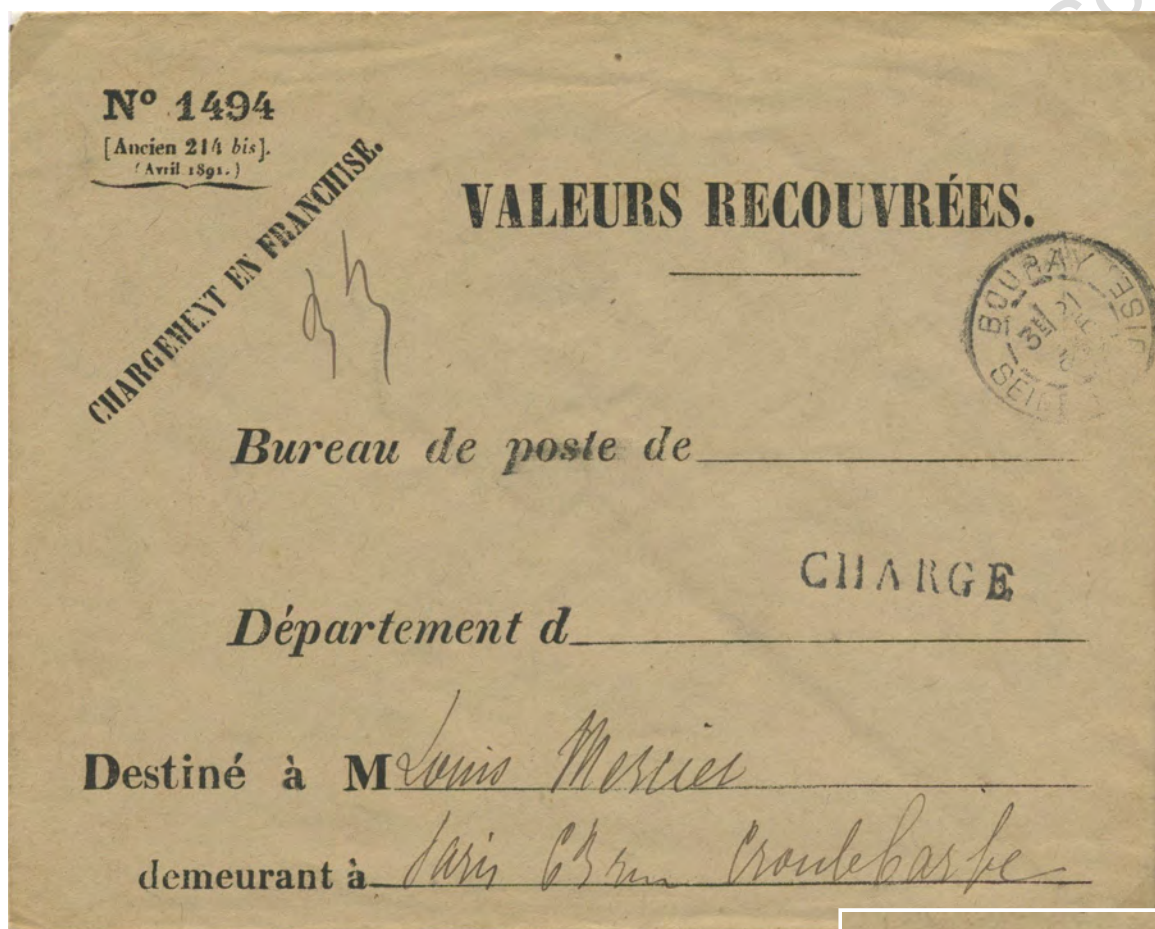


Figure 1

Envelope N°1494, sent from Bouray (date illegible) to Paris, with indications that it replaced N°214 bis and was printed in April 1891. Printing date November 1891 has also been seen (enlargement at right)



The Debt Collection Service (*Recouvrements*) began on the 15 June 1879. Figure 1 shows envelope N°1494 which replaced envelope N° 214 bis in 1883 and which was used to return the accountancy form N°1485 to the user of the service.

On the 1 April 1892 a fee was introduced for each unpaid bill that was returned. To accommodate this charge, the envelope was changed to incorporate a boxed 'TAXES DE VALEURS IMPAYÉES A PERCEVOIR' where the charge was to be indicated (Figure 2).



Figure 2
Envelope
N°1494, printed
February 1894,
with boxed fee
demand, sent
from Paris to
Valence,
14 January 1895.
Printing dates
seen are
between
November 1893
and February
1895

By 1897, the general layout has not changed (Figure 3) although the imprint in the top left-hand corner appears to show a code which may represent the year of printing (97) and the number printed (2,000,000).

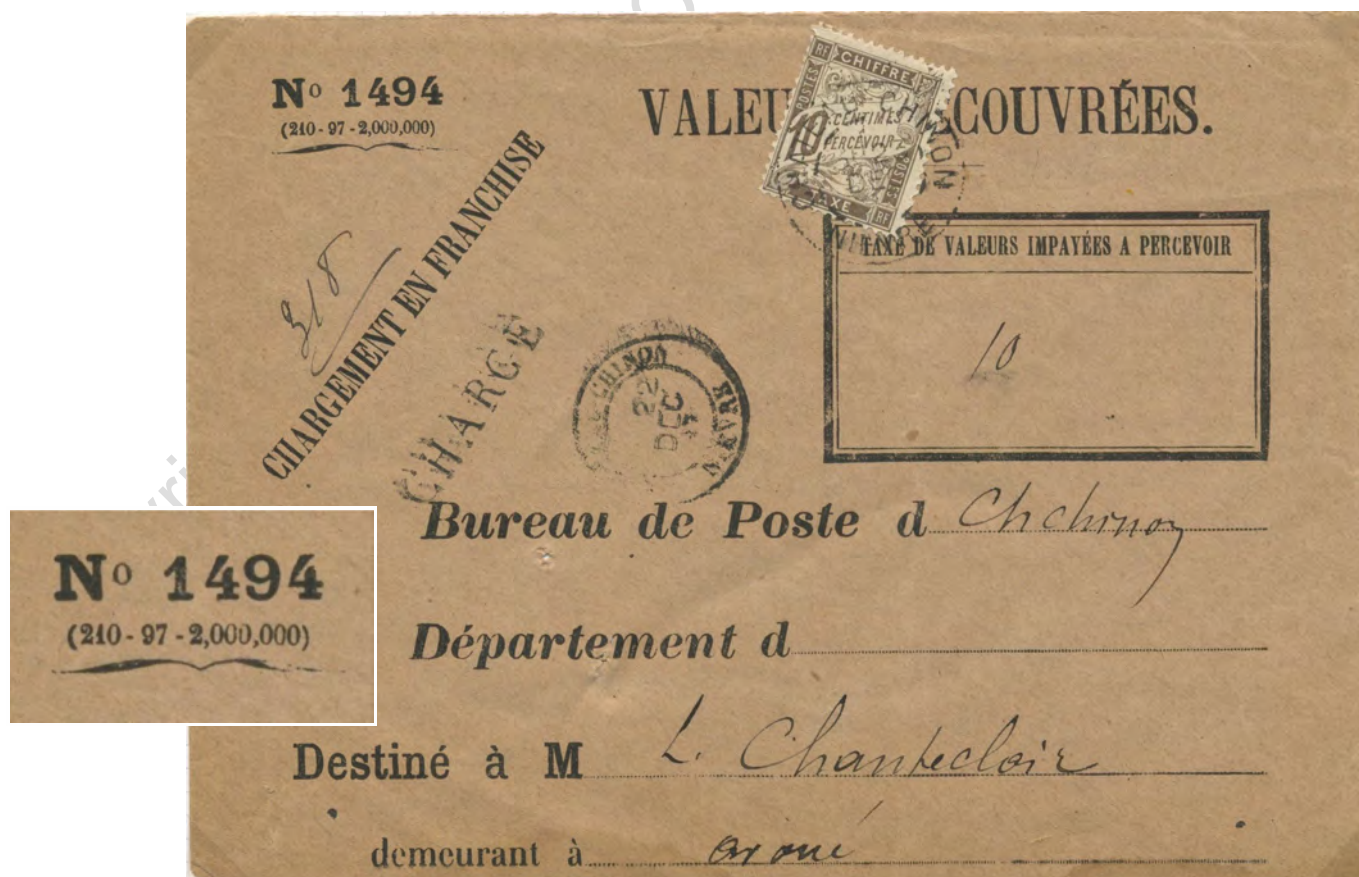


Figure 3
Envelope N°1494, with code, used within Château-Chinon, 22 December 1897

Figure 4

Envelope N°1494,
with revised code,
from Paris to
Bordeaux and
cancelled PARIS
RECouvreMENTS
3 March 1899

(reduced to 90%)

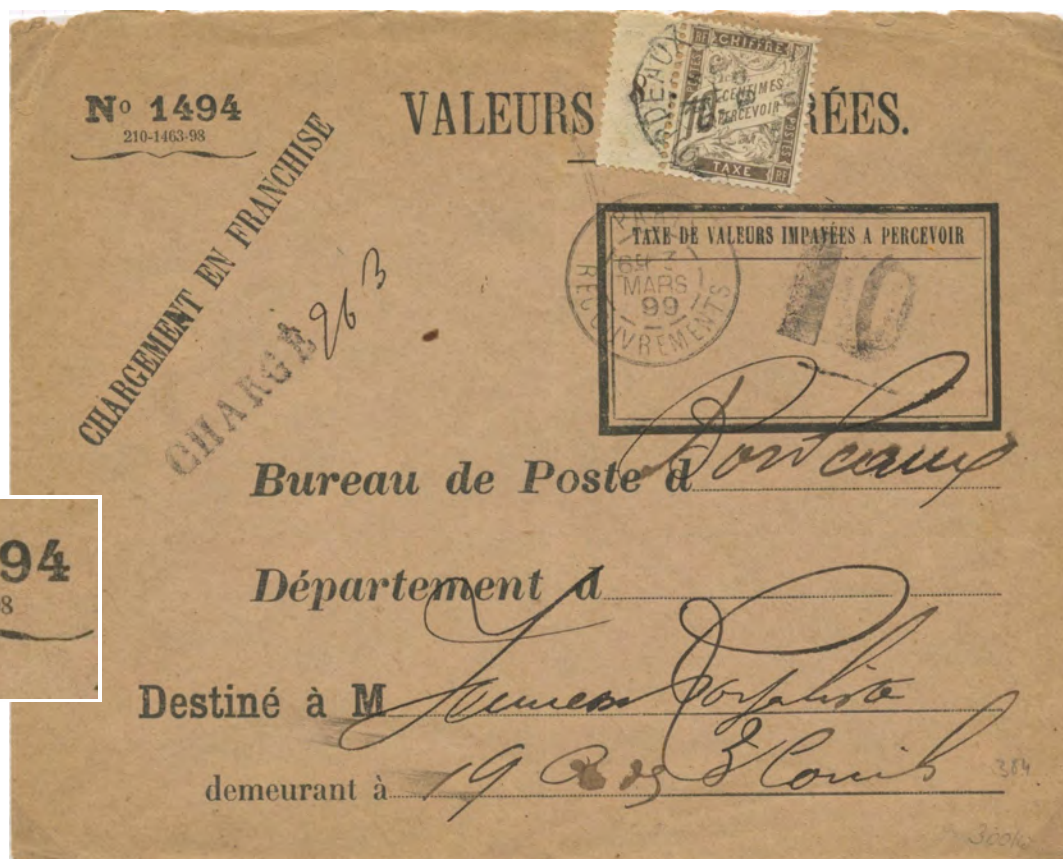


Figure 4 shows a modification to the imprint code. The figure '210' has been retained, the year of printing updated to '98' but what is the significance of '1463'?

Envelope 1494 had always been sent registered and hand-

stamped ‘CHARGÉ’. In [Figure 5](#) the design incorporates a printed boxed R to denote that it was registered. Furthermore, the date of printing, January 1900, has resumed its position in the top left-hand corner.

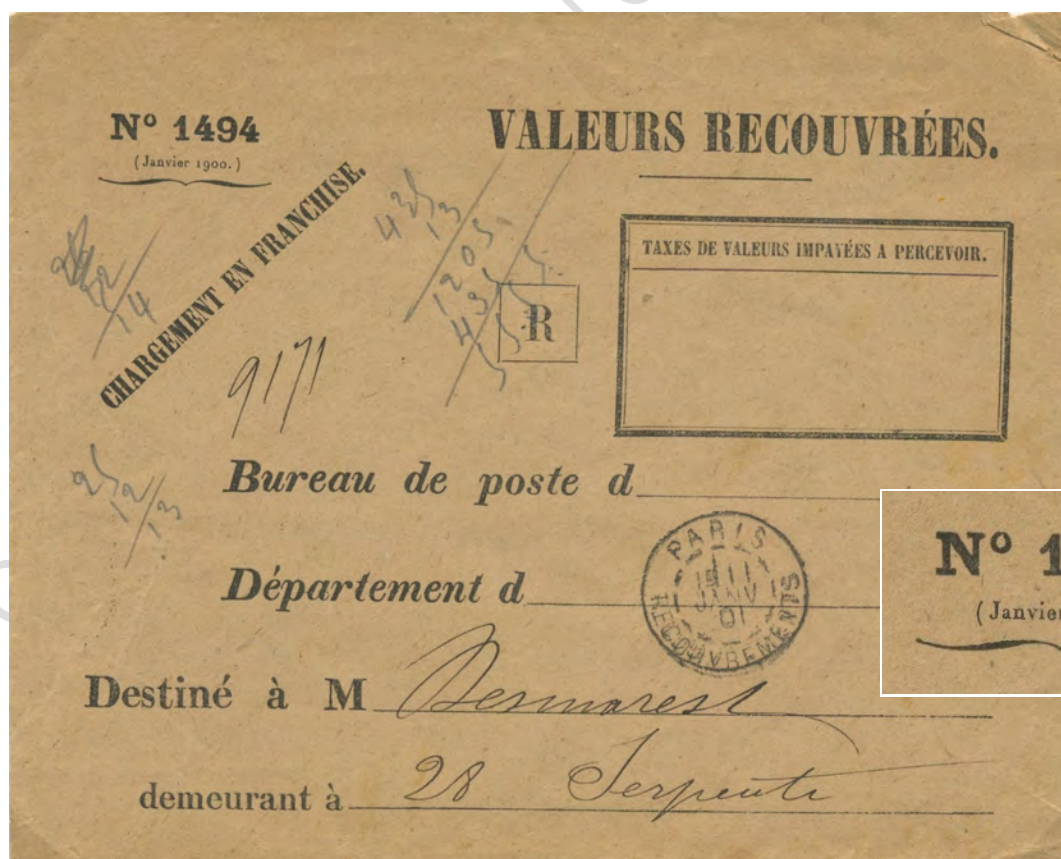


Figure 5

Envelope N°1494,
with boxed 'R',
used within Paris
and cancelled
PARIS
RECouvrements
11 January 1901

(reduced to 90%)

By 1903, a new code appears in the top left hand corner '210' on page 66), '1903' is clearly the date but what is 'd'O'? (Figure 6). '224' could be a sequential serial number (see

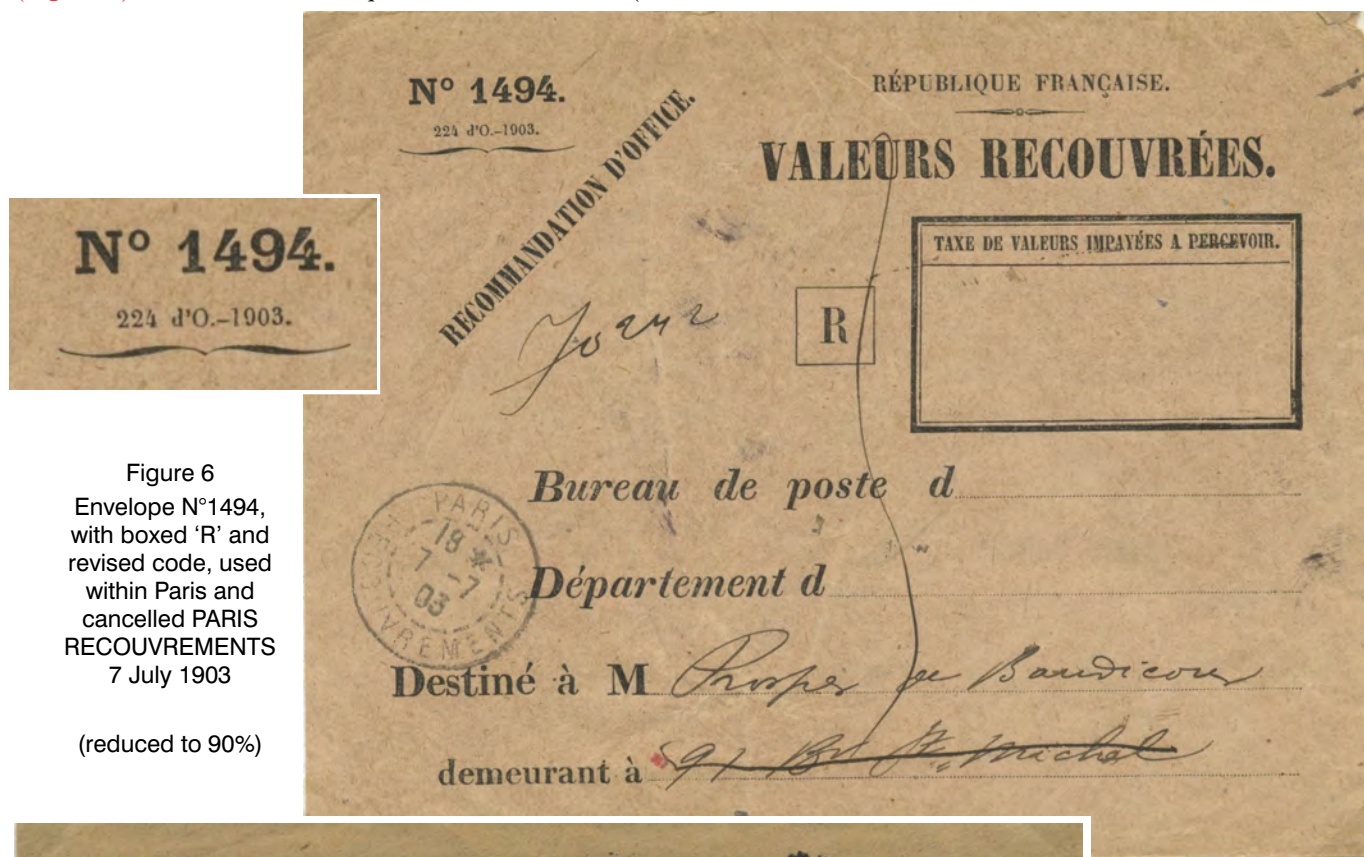


Figure 6
Envelope N°1494,
with boxed 'R' and
revised code, used
within Paris and
cancelled PARIS
RECOUVREMENTS
7 July 1903

(reduced to 90%)

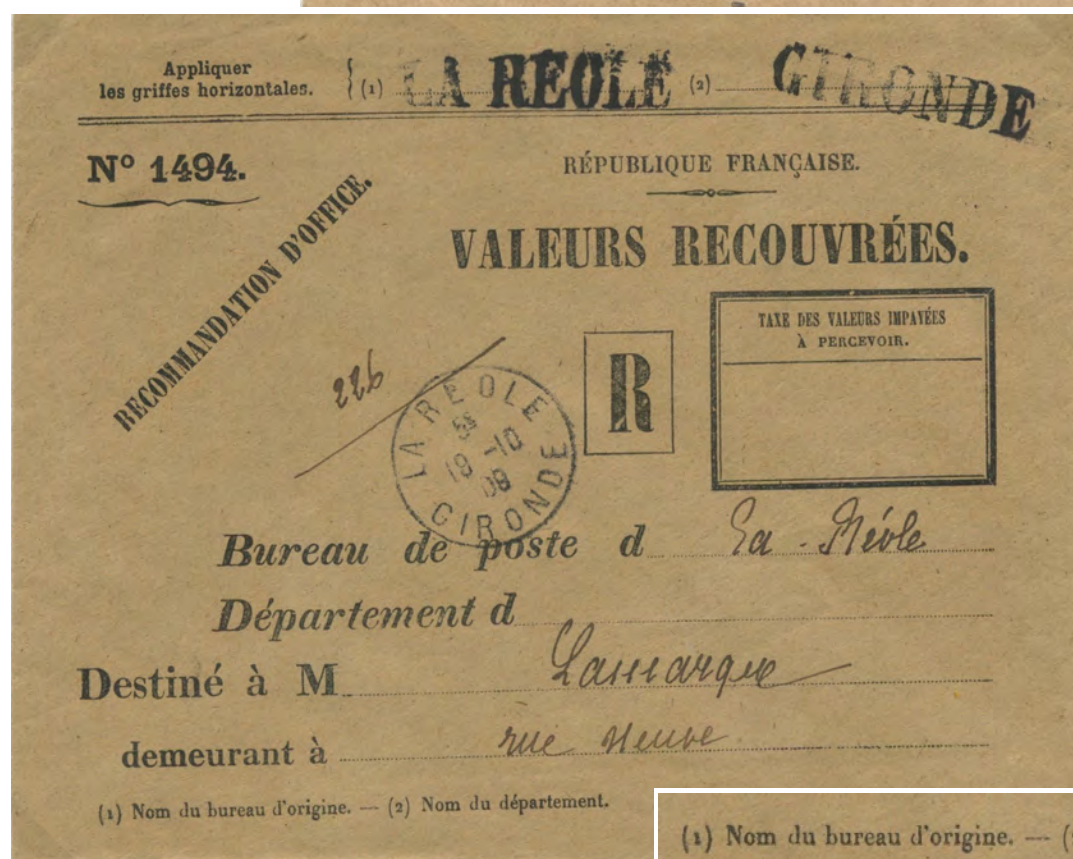


Figure 7
Revised design of
Envelope N°1494
with header and
footer, used within
La Réole and
cancelled
19 October 1908

(reduced to 90%)

An earlier example
has been seen
used in Paris in
August 1904



A subsequent issue (Figure 7) was significantly redesigned with, at the top, spaces for the office of origin and *département* of origin handstamps with explanatory footnotes at the bottom.



Figure 8
Envelope N°1494
with BM reference,
from Niort to
Sarthenay and
cancelled
20 October 1913

(reduced to 90%)

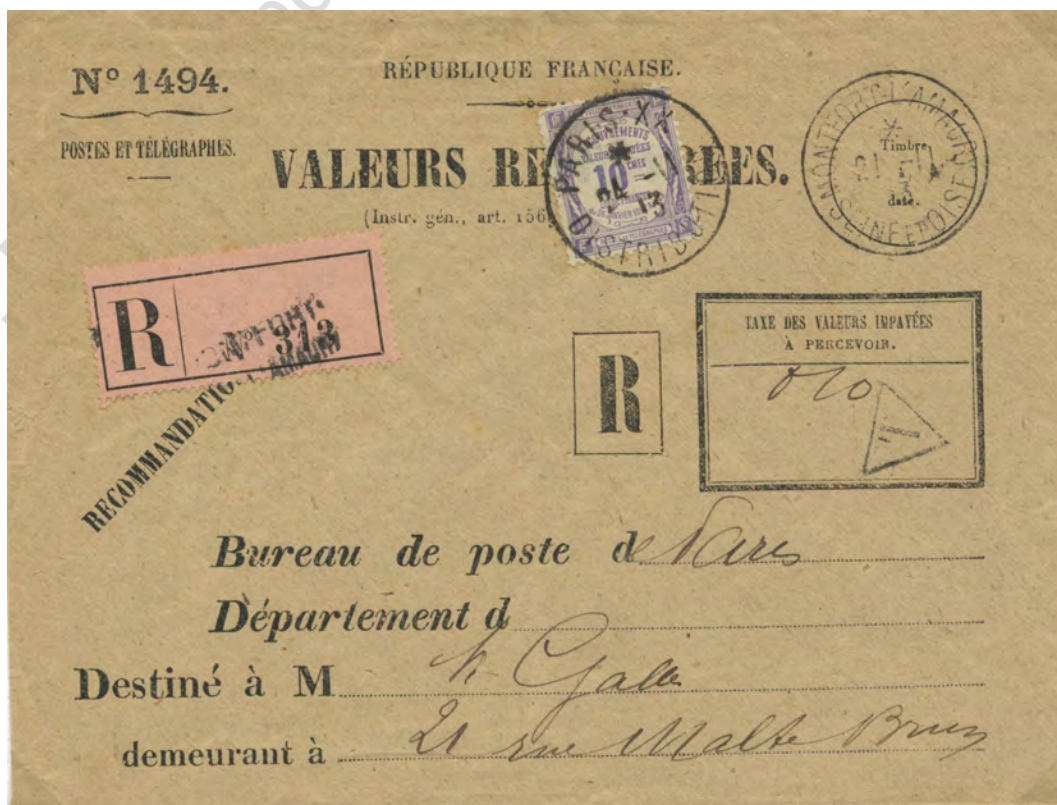
The design of the envelope in Figure 8 includes the bracketed reference (Instr. gén., art. 1569, 1570 et 1575.) below 'VALEURS RECOUVRÉES'. This could very likely refer to revisions published in the *Bulletin Mensuel des Postes et des Télégraphes*.

In Figure 9 the source details have been removed from the top and bottom of the envelope and 'POSTES ET TÉLÉGRAPHES' now appears below the envelope number in the top left-hand corner.



Figure 9
Envelope N°1494,
inscribed
'POSTES ET
TÉLÉGRAPHES',
from Montfort-l'Amaury
to Paris, cancelled 21
November 1913

(reduced to 90%)



In **Figure 10**, 'POSTES ET TÉLÉGRAPHES' under N°1494 has been replaced in brackets by the size of the

envelope, 170 x 135mm. Note the use of pre-cancelled *recouvrements* tax stamps.

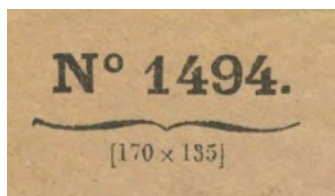


Figure 10
Larger Envelope
N°1494, with printed
envelope size, from
Bruguières to Paris
cancelled
12 January 1921

(reduced to 90%)

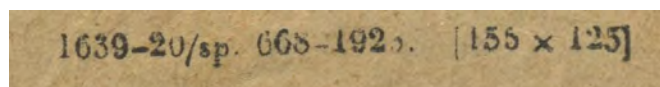
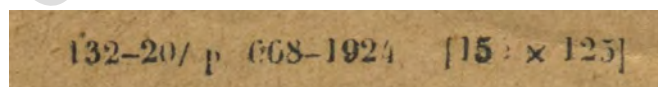
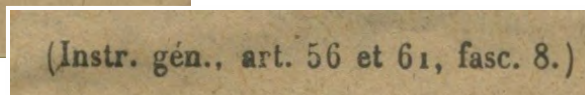
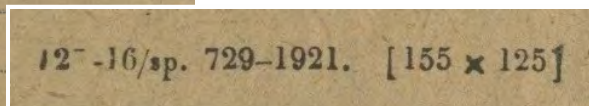
An envelope dated
October 1918 has
also been seen



Figure 11
Envelope N°1494, with revised
BM reference and repositioned
envelope size and code, from
Bourg-lès-Valence to Valence
cancelled
12 January 1923

(reduced to 80%)

An envelope has also been
seen dated December 1924



Codes seen used on envelopes between
October 1925 and June 1928

Codes seen used on an envelope in
December 1934

In **Figure 11**, the *Bulletin Mensuel des Postes et des Télégraphes* reference under 'VALEURS RECOUVRÉES' has been revised. The envelope is reduced in size measuring 155 x 125mm

and appears with other codes vertically in the bottom left-hand corner of the envelope. What do these new codes mean?

Between 1925 and 1927 there was a major redesign of the envelopes. It is now titled 'SERVICE DES RECOUVREMENTS'. Some printings have light lines in the address (Figure 12a) and others heavy lines (Figure 12b).

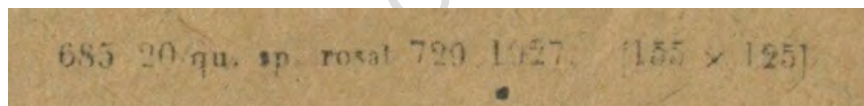
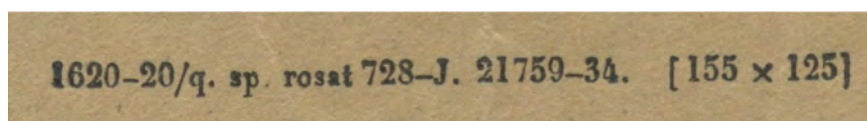
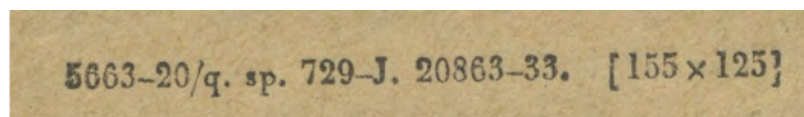
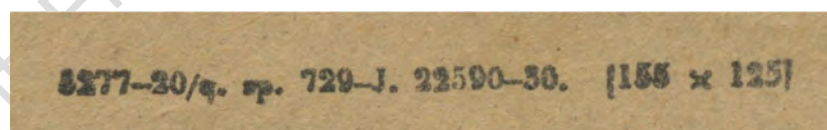


Figure 12a

Envelope N°1494, retitled 'SERVICE DES RECOUVREMENTS' and with light address lines, from Quatzenheim to Paris cancelled 4 March 1932.

Also seen used in January 1936



Various papers have been seen including one marked 'rosat'. Is this an indication of its shade, 'rosâtre' – pinkish?



Figure 12b
Envelope N°1494,
retitled 'SERVICE
DES
RECOUVREMENTS'
and with heavy
address lines, from
Ajaccio to Paris,
cancelled
14 March 1933

(reduced to 95%)

Also seen used in
August 1938

Finally, we have an envelope (Figure 13) similar to the above but without the vertical codes in the bottom left-hand corner.



Figure 13
Envelope N°1494,
'SERVICE DES
RECOUVREMENTS'
with bold address
lines and lateral
codes removed,
from Vicq-sur-
Gartempe to
Limoges, cancelled
21 April 1939

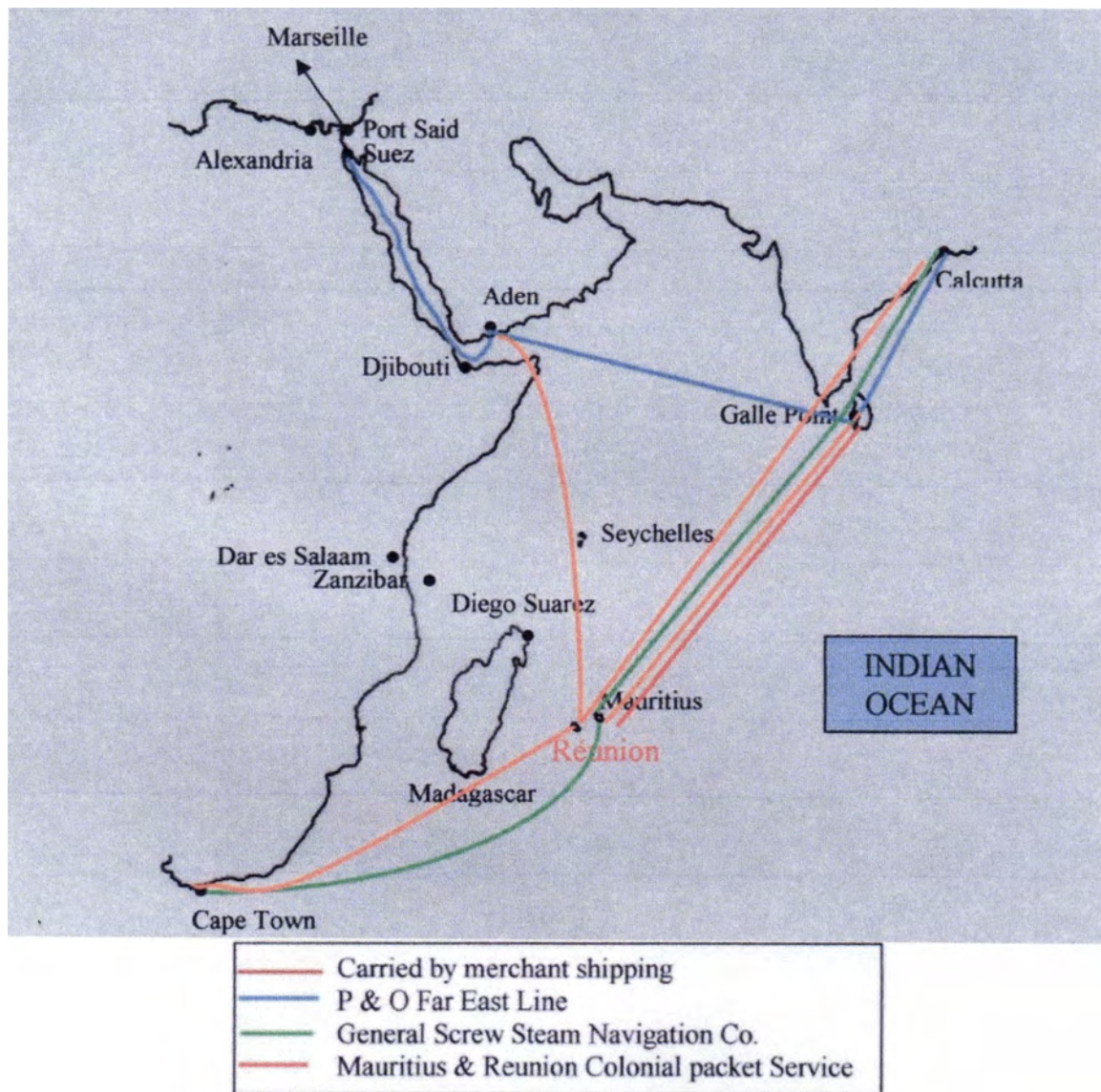
(reduced to 95%)

Also seen used in
March 1942

Réunion - mail from a distant shore

Peter R.A. Kelly

Many countries, distant from their mother hub, have had the ability and benefit of direct communication. Others, less fortunate, have not at times been able to achieve this. Thus, it was not until the opening of the Suez Canal that Réunion was able to load mails onto a vessel that discharged them at Marseille.



In the early days, mails from Réunion and Mauritius were carried by the first available vessel heading for Europe. Letters were not always sent through the post office and were handed on board directly. They can therefore only be identified by their contents.

The journey around the Cape was long and arduous and could take upwards of three months as can be seen in the 1848 example in (Figure 1). This letter, written on 15 February 1848, was carried by the merchant vessel *George Cuvier* that reached Pauillac on 5 June 1848. The interesting thing here is that it was correctly stamped PP at Réunion indicating inland postage paid to port of departure. On arrival at Pauillac it was initially marked '3' (décimes) being the inland rate of 20c and 10c sea postage. This was then deleted in the belief that the

PP meant that payment had been made to destination. Thus, the letter travelled free! It actually took some years for the French postal authorities to realise that this mark related to postage in Réunion alone and so resulted in a considerable loss of revenue to them.

By the early 1840s the Indian mails were using the overland route to the Mediterranean and the possibility of sending mail across to India by merchant vessel to be handled by a forwarding agent there became a possibility, although the time involved was still considerable. The preferred solution was to send mails privately to Madras, Calcutta or (for the French) Pondichéry, from which region East Indiamen and merchant vessels sailed regularly to Europe.



Figure 1
15 February 1848 Ship Letter Réunion to France
via the Cape of Good Hope

The big breakthrough was the introduction of the P&O Far East service in 1845 – initially from Hong Kong and later Shanghai and Yokohama – that called at Calcutta, Galle (Ceylon) and Aden on their way to Suez. The transit time from Galle to Southampton was approximately 36 days. This gave Réunion three opportunities: by private shipping to Calcutta, Madras or Pondichéry; or to Galle; or to Aden, to connect with the P&O. To quote an average example, a letter leaving Calcutta on 8 March reached Malta on 12 April - 35 days. (Source Kirk)

A letter from the Réunion merchants Lebeaud Père & Fils & Co, carried privately to Pondichéry on 30 June 1849 (Figure 2), was received there on 2 August and shipped out of Madras as a paid letter on the P&O *Pekin* to Galle. It was transferred to the *Precursor* that reached Suez on 13 September, went overland to Suez and by the P&O *Ripon* from Alexandria to Malta where it arrived on 20 September.

Thereafter, it went by the Admiralty packet *Medusa* that finally reached Marseille on 23 September. The letter was paid 6 annas at Madras covering inland and steamer postage to Alexandria and was taxed 10 décimes for the Mediterranean transfer to destination. This took a total of 84 days to Marseille.

In view of the reliability of the P&O service, a shorter route to Galle (Ceylon) was another well-used route and it was not surprising that the Mauritius Government wished to operate a regular service between the two. This heralded the birth of the first Colonial Packet Service. The initial test with the schooner *Légère* was successful and gave the promise of an 8-week journey to the UK as long as the connection with the P&O worked out. By and large, this service worked quite well although sailing conditions were often difficult with the use of schooners and steamers over the 2100-mile voyage and the P&O connection was missed at times.



Figure 2
30 June 1849 letter to Marseille via Pondichéry, Madras, Alexandria and Malta

A letter of 13 September 1850 (Figure 3) from Réunion to Nantes used the packet route. Carried privately to Mauritius, it left there on the packet *Elizabeth* on 20 September and connected with the P&O *Haddington* that sailed from Galle on 17 October, reaching Suez on 5 November. It continued overland to Alexandria where the P&O *Ripon* sailed on 8 November, reaching Malta on the 12 November. The final stage on the Admiralty packet *Medina* reached Marseille on 16 November – a journey time of 64 days. The letter was paid 2/- for the ½oz rate to Suez (Red

Sea rate) and was taxed 10 décimes for the Mediterranean transfer to destination.

There are a number of additional transit marks that are associated with this route such as a “Colombo steamer letter” and “British Packet / Post Paid”, (both applied at Ceylon). At this time there were also cholera outbreaks on Mauritius and some French mail was marked “*Purifié au Lazaret de Malte*” after disinfection. In accordance with the Contractual Agreement, this could pass through France without inspection.

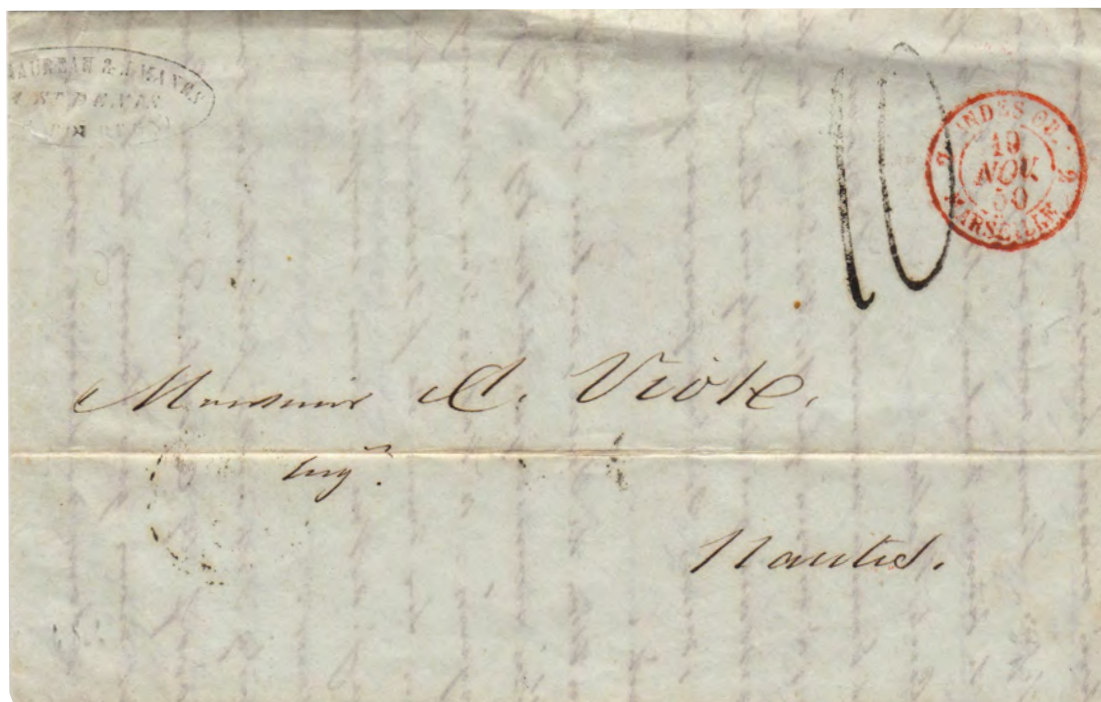


Figure 3
10 September 1850 letter to Nantes carried privately to
Mauritius then to Galle to connect with P&O
(Reverse of cover below)



The third route possible was via Aden, again picking up the P&O Far East line there. The Mauritius Government had considered Aden for the Colonial Packet Service but from a

commercial viewpoint decided that Galle, being near to Calcutta, was preferable. This was probably the least used route given the amount of merchant shipping in that

direction. In **Figure 4**, a letter written from Réunion to the important firm of merchants, Pastré Frères at Marseille on 15 June 1850 “an opportunity has arisen with the departure of the *Juste* for Aden”.

This allowed the letter to be picked up by the P&O *Haddington* at Aden on the 27 July (Aden Paid 8 Annas – inland and Red Sea postage), it reached Suez on 4 August and has the Alexandria date stamp of 8 August. Carried by P&O *Indus* from Alexandria to Malta where the letter was disinfected (Purifié au Lazaret / Malte) it completed the voyage to Marseille on the Admiralty packet *Merlin* on 14 August. An entry mark struck at Marseille (Paq Ang / 1

Marseille 1). It was taxed 20 décimes Mediterranean transit to destination 2nd weight step (7½-15g) and the journey took a total of 60 days.

Mauritius was keen to have a direct steamer service and was making strong approaches in this respect despite the colonial service they already had with Galle. Initially representation was made to the Secretary of State in London for funds to establish a regular steamer connection with Aden. This would improve the speed of transmission with Galle by some 15 days. This was turned down because the existing connection with Galle and India was deemed to be more important.



Figure 4

15 July 1850 letter to Marseille. Carried privately to Aden then by P&O. Disinfected at Malta

In 1850, the General Screw Steam Shipping Company was awarded the first steam contract between the U.K. and the Cape. Two years later, in 1852, an Agreement was entered into to extend this service to Calcutta via Mauritius, Galle and Madras. This was to be a monthly service. Based on a contractual average speed of 8 knots the advertised journey time from the U.K. (Plymouth) to Mauritius was 42 days and 50 days to Ceylon where it would connect with the P&O on their inward and outward voyages to and from Suez that were to be increased from monthly to fortnightly in 1853. All of this was good news for Mauritius and of course for Réunion. The results of the first year (1852) were disappointing with a variety of reasons for delays, including late delivery of new vessels. One thing that had become

abundantly clear was that the scheduled times were overly optimistic, mails arrived late and P&O connections were missed. In June 1854, it was announced in Mauritius that the service was withdrawn and the contract cancelled. A number of their vessels were retained for use as transports during the Crimean War.

Figure 5 is a letter sent from Nantes on 11 August 1853 leaving Southampton on 16 August on the General Screw *Queen of the South*, arriving at Mauritius on 17 October (a journey time of 62 days) and then by schooner reaching Réunion on 22 October. The letter was prepaid 30c for the 2nd weight step to Mauritius and was taxed very faintly 85c Mauritius to Reunion (6d to Mauritius = 70c + 15c entry to port of disembarkation).



Figure 5
11 August 1853 letter from Nantes to Réunion via
Southampton and Mauritius
(Reverse of cover below)



Figure 6 is a second-weight-step letter from Réunion to Nantes of 29 December 1853 carried by schooner to Mauritius and then by General Screw *Queen of the South* that sailed on 3 January, reaching Southampton on 26 February (journey time 54 days). The letter arrived in Paris on 28 February (Angl / Calais/2) applied at Paris. This constituted a pretty good run.

With the demise of the General Screw the only alternative

now was agreed between Mauritius and Réunion that they should provide two fast sailing schooners each to operate as mail packets to operate a fortnightly service to Galle. These schooners provided a terrific service under sail with all of the problems the Indian Ocean offered and at times it was nigh impossible for them to adhere to a fixed schedule to make the connections on time with the P&O, although the fact that P&O service was fortnightly did help.



Figure 6.
29 December 1853 letter to Nantes carried privately to Mauritius and then by the General Screw Co. via the Cape of Good Hope to Southampton



Figure 7
13 August 1855 letter from Bordeaux to Réunion paid to Alexandria.
Carried from Galle by Colonial Packet Schooner

The letter shown in **Figure 7** dated 7 August 1855 was sent from Bordeaux to St Denis, Réunion and clearly marked "Voie de Suez, Ceylan et Maurice". It left Marseille on the P&O *Valletta* on 13 August, to Malta, Alexandria and overland to Suez. It sailed from Suez on the *Hindoustan* on 23 August and reached Galle on 7 September. The schooner

Annie was waiting there for the mails and sailed the next day for Mauritius where it arrived on 24 September finally reaching Réunion on 26 September (journey time 44 days - a great achievement). The letter was paid as far as Alexandria and taxed 2F20 on arrival in Reunion, this being the rate to 14g of the tariff of 1 May 1852.



Figure 8

9 August 1855 letter from Constantinople via Smyrne, Suez and Galle then from Galle by Colonial Packet Schooner

Figure 8 is a most unusual letter sent from Constantinople, Turkey to St Denis, Réunion on 9 August 1855. Stamped PP, this shows that payment of 10 décimes has been paid as far as Alexandria. Transit marks show it to be at the French post office at Smyrne on 12 August and the French and British post offices at Alexandria on 6 September. Carried overland to Suez, it left there on P&O *Bombay* for Galle Point where it arrived on 23 September. The schooner *Spirit* was in place ready to take the mails and sailed the next day for Mauritius where it arrived on 12 October (Mauritius / Packet Letter).

Mauritius marked the letter 1/6 being the Red Sea and transit rate to Réunion. In Réunion it was taxed 2F20, being the rate to 14g according to the tariff of 1 May 1852.

There is a sad note here as the schooner *Spirit* was lost almost exactly a year later on Suvadiva Atoll on the Maldives. The loss was a serious one for the captain who was also the owner for the ship was uninsured. This brings us up to 1857 when the islands were served for the first time by the P&O directly but that is another story....

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New-issue listings from Stanley Gibbons: April-June 2021

In the last journal (No 295) I launched what I hope will become a regular new-issue update, by drawing attention to the catalogue supplements in *Gibbons Stamp Monthly* (GSM). Most supplement entries are quite extensive, and can supply several years' worth of specialised information in one place.

Dates in brackets (month/year) after each country-name identify the last issue containing that country's previous update. These dates are mostly correct, though not always.

APRIL 2021

Vietnam (3/2021): 2016 Asian Beach Games – 2017 Flora, SG 2991/MS 3007.

MAY 2021

Cambodia (4/2016): 2013 King's Birthday – 2019 Costumes, SG 2433/2576.

France (3/2021): 2019 Dinan-Dinant – Art (Verdier), SG 6589/6758.

JUNE 2021

Algeria ("6/2015" [sic], actually 9/2020): 2020 Archeology – Repatriation, SG 1963/9.

Gabon (2/2016): 2008 Petroleum – 2018 Constitutional Court, SG MS 1404/MS 1444.

Mauritania (last listing not noted). 2003 Books – 2016 Local Development, SG 1023/76.

Tunisia (3/2021): 2016 Personalities – 2017 Printing, SG 1890/920.

Michael Round

La France d'outre-mer : The *Quinzaine Impériale* and Joseph Foret

David Hogarth

BACKGROUND

The concept of *La France d'Outre-mer* or *Overseas France* was promoted by successive French governments during the 1930s. The *Exposition Coloniale Internationale de Paris* was held in 1931, and a set of stamps was issued to coincide and promote the colonies (Figure 1). A second exhibition – the *Salon de la France d'Outre-mer* – was held in Paris in November 1935, and it was planned to be followed in September 1939 by a further exhibition: this, however, had to be postponed until April/May 1940 “due to the short winter days and the impossibility of using lighting in times of war”.

A special stamp intended to be issued in September 1939 for the *Salon* had to be deferred until April 1940 with changes to the colour, the year and the value. The design attracted criticism due to the spelling of *Outremer* (without a hyphen) –

la mauvaise orthographe du mot. The same design was used to raise funds for the colonies in July 1941 by the French State, with different colours and a different value, a different year and the removal of *RF*. The 4th Republic also used the same design in September 1945 but again with different colours, a different value and the inclusion of *RF* and the Cross of Lorraine. The latter issue was timed for an exhibition entitled *l'Empire et la Guerre*, which sought to emphasise the continuity of France and its Empire from the 3rd to the 4th Republic. The willingness of the 3rd Republic, the French State and the 4th Republic to issue essentially the same stamp for *La France d'Outre-mer* testifies to the strong feelings and policies held in France, under all regimes, to underline the unity of metropolitan France and its colonies (Figure 2).



Figure 1

The *Série de l'Exposition Coloniale Internationale de Paris 1931* comprised 4 stamps depicting a woman of the few Fachi people in eastern Niger (known therefore as the *série Femme Fachi*). They were issued between 17 November and December 1930 [YT 270-273], but attracted criticism for both the *petit format* (resulting from financial constraints) and the design. The postcard (below) shows a *Série Fachi* stamp [YT 270] on a typical René Moreau postcard of a woman of the Bangor people from Tchad



Figure 1a

A further stamp was therefore issued in April 1931 [YT 274] though it also was criticised, this time for being “too crowded”





Figure 2

The three versions of the *La France d'Outre-Mer* stamps. From left to right they comprise: the stamp issued by the 3rd Republic on 15 April 1940 [YT 453] and the issue of the French State on 17 July 1941 [YT 503] both with the mis-spelt OUTREMER, and the 4th Republic version – correctly spelt – issued on 17 September 1945 [YT 741]

THE EMPIRE UNDER VICHY (1940–1944)

Following the Armistice and the establishment of the Vichy regime in 1940, one of the main policies promoted by Vichy was to seek to maintain France's status internationally, even following the defeat and the dismemberment of the country into a number of different zones, by emphasising its empire, of which initially the territories were considered part of the Unoccupied Zone controlled by Vichy. Thus, Vichy sought to imagine that it, with the colonies, was the remnant of France's imperial past: the aim was to promote the Zone's then current situation as part of a continuum. Later authors have referred to this as the *Mythe Colonial de Vichy* (eg Pascal Blanchard, Ruth Ginio et al: *Culture Impériale* 1931-1961, pub 2004).

Notwithstanding these later views, at the time the aim was reinforced by Vichy propaganda which included films, magazines, books, exhibitions and other events, including sporting activities. For example, between 15-22 July 1941 a *Semaine Coloniale de la France d'Outre-mer* was organised (which included, as well as propaganda, a series of sporting events in the North African territories) to inform the younger generation of the diversity of the French colonies and the opportunities there.

QUINZAINE IMPERIALE 1942

The Colonial Week was followed in 1942 by an Imperial Fortnight (the *Quinzaine Impériale*) between 15-31 May 1942 with a similar use of propaganda (an example is given in (Figure 3), but this time also eighty North African athletes were invited to take part in sporting events in major towns in the Unoccupied Zone, emphasising solidarity with the North African populations.

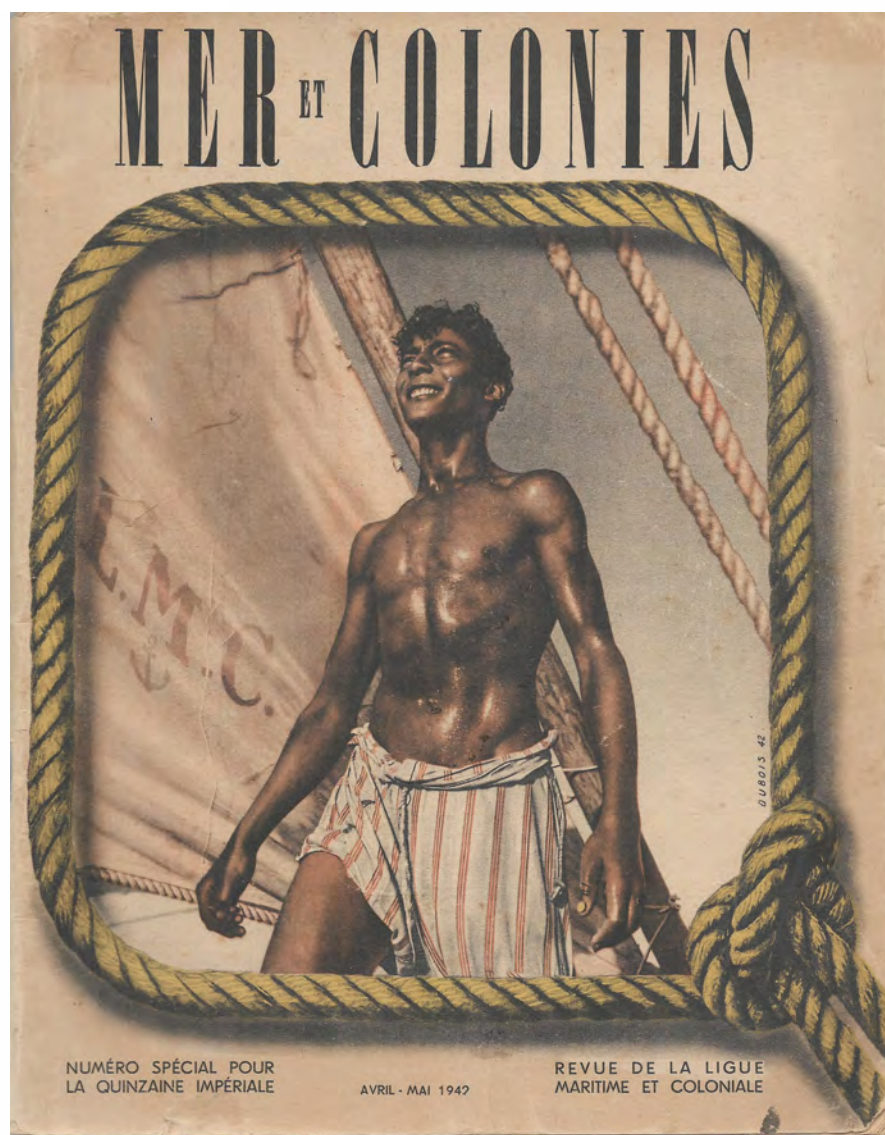


Figure 3

An example of the material issued to promote the colonies – a monthly magazine *Mer et Colonies*. The cover is from the special issue for the *Quinzaine Impériale*.

A special stamp was issued on 18 May 1942 to raise both awareness and funds for the *Quinzaine Impériale* with a very high surcharge of 8F50 on a rate of 1F50 (Figure 4). An element of the propaganda consisted of a series of postcards (Figure 5), issued – or more likely re-issued - in advance of the *Quinzaine Impériale* depicting in real photographs peoples of and life in the African colonies, or at least some

Figure 4

The *Quinzaine Impériale* stamp issue of 18 May 1942 [YT 543] with a very high surcharge of 8F on a rate of 1F50. This was the last 'colonial' issue, as by the start of 1943 all of the colonies except Indochina had declared for *la France combattante*.
(enlarged by 50%)



Figure 5

An example of the series of postcards, *Tchad – Femmes Sara de Fort Archambault* (no. 8 in the series). Above shows the original postcard, with Joseph Foret's overprint on the postcard at right for comparison.



of them. The majority do not seem to concentrate on the North African territories, but more on those of French Equatorial Africa, especially Tchad. These photographic postcards were taken in the early 1930s by René Moreau (1878-1965) and published by Editions R Begue, Rue Cauchois, Paris. Each card now had added an invitation to

contact the *Agence Economique* in Paris for further information on the colonies. The series was extensive with at least 43 different cards, and in its first overprinted form was almost certainly issued at or before the omnibus colonial airmail issues for *La Protection de l'Enfance Indigène* and *La Quinzaine Impériale* (Figure 6).



Figure 6

Examples of the omnibus colonial airmail issues for
La Protection de l'Enfance Indigène and the
Quinzaine Impériale.

JOSEPH FORET

Few current collectors of the stamps or postal history of France will nowadays have heard of Joseph Foret (1901-1991), an art and stamp dealer in Paris in the 1930s – 1950s (Figure 7). His three passions were philately, art and, curiously, cycling. As a stamp dealer he issued sale and auction catalogues, and in March 1944 one of these drew him to the attention of the German authorities¹ since he had included the Saar as part of France, which was not deemed acceptable – even though the major catalogues of the time – Yvert & Tellier, Maury and Thiaude – all included the Saar as being French territory. Providentially the Normandy landings in June 1944 and the liberation of Paris in August 1944 ensured that no further action was or could be taken against him by the Gestapo.

Joseph Foret was clearly an enterprising person and dealer – amongst other things he had produced the world's then most expensive (and heaviest) books, one of which weighed more than 200 kilos; and he seems to have carried this promotional enterprise into his business as a philatelic dealer. In 1945 he reissued the series of René Moreau's postcards, overprinted on obverse and reverse (but without the reference to the *Agence Economique*), as advertisements for his *Collection Impériale de Timbres d'Aviation de France et Colonies Françaises* at a price of 300 francs (Figure 8). This would have been a considerable sum at the time: though even during the days of the French State when the fact that some multiple stamp issues (eg the Coats-of-Arms sets of 1941 and 1942, each of which comprised 12 heavily surcharged stamps) could only be bought as sets triggered complaints within the philatelic press of the time about speculators buying these issues, it seems that there was no shortage of money within certain (philatelic) circles. Of the postcards in the original series, it is unclear whether they were all overprinted and



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Figure 7

Above, Joseph Foret with one of the world's then most expensive and heaviest books, and at right, is at the left of the group manning the *La Quinzaine Philatélique* stand at the 1947 International Philatelic Exhibition in New York



© L'Echo



Figure 8

An example of the overprinted series of postcards showing the obverse (above) and the reverse (below) of card no. 6 *Maroc Dans les Souks* with the 1945 *La France d'Outre-mer* stamp



COLLECTION IMPERIALE DE TIMBRES D'AVIATION 1945

It is clear that the overstock was overprinted (for the second time) for the *Exposition de la France d'Outre-mer* held in Paris in October 1945. A vignette was also produced (Figure 9). The overprinted cards all have a special cancel LA FRANCE D'OUTRE-MER DANS LA GUERRE/PARIS with the date of cancel in the centre design, between 20 October and 10 November 1945. The cards which I have or have seen mostly carry the address of the exhibition with a variety of postage stamps, so clearly - while the postage on them might well have equalled the airmail postage to the

colonies – they were intended as souvenirs of the exhibition and as advertisements for the *Collection Impériale*, for which application would have to be addressed to Joseph Foret's office at 64 Rue Lafayette in Paris. I have seen no postcards used with postage stamps of the colonies. These postcards were complemented by envelopes² with a similar type of overprint round the border, though the wording was different flattering his clients with the additional words *l'élite du timbre pour l'élite des collectionneurs*.



Figure 9
Reverse of a postcard with a Joseph Foret vignette
and the 1945 *La France d'Outre-mer* stamp.

POSTSCRIPT

Quite how successful Joseph Foret was as a philatelic dealer in the post-war world I do not know, but his *Collection Impériale* supported the *Mythe Colonial* of France and its empire. However, in common with other pre-war empires, France's empire largely came apart in the post-war world.

NOTES

- ¹ Information from an article in *L'Echo de la Timbrologie*, January 2003, kindly sent to me by Roy Reader in June 2008.
- ² Envelope in Roy Reader's collection
- ³ One of the fascinating elements of collecting postal history is the

The USA did not support the re-creation of pre-war empires, demands for independence grew, and the world altered with other and new countries claiming hegemony in different parts of the world. France has nonetheless retained some of its pre-war possessions by integrating them into

byways a cover or postcard can lead into. In this case a chance find of a postcard when researching Citroën's *Croisière Noire* led to René Moreau's postcard series and recognition that many of these cards had been overprinted.

Missing in Transit

Members may well recognise the souvenir cover illustrated at right bearing the two 'Poste Aérienne' surcharges of 1927. One of the highlights of the last Society auction, it was despatched to the successful bidder but never arrived; neither has it been returned to sender. The exact placing of stamps, cachets, postmarks and marginal stains make it effectively unique, and thereby instantly identifiable.

Lots 72, 78, 113, 249 and 357 were also lost in the same sending. In the event of any of these items surfacing for sale, it would be appreciated if members could notify the Hon Auctioneer.



Michael Round

Collecting by Topic: The Châteaux of France

Roger Niven

Part One: The Stamps

There are many structures in France that may be described as ‘châteaux’, and many are celebrated on some superbly designed French stamps. This first article of two looks at châteaux and fortified buildings as a topic for collecting French stamps, and explores how these may be placed within a broader cultural and historical context.

The Challenge of Design

Illustrations of châteaux are not always easy to capture on the small scale afforded by a postage stamp. In France, however, most of the great engravers have ventured into this field and six – Claude Durrens (1965), Pierre Béquet

(1982), Jacques Gauthier (1989), Claude Jumelet (1997), Jacky Larrivière (2001), and Line Filhon (2019) – have won the prestigious *Grand Prix de l'Art Philatélique* for their stamp engravings.



Château de Joux
(engraved by
Claude Durrens)
YT 1441



Château de Ripaille
(engraved by Pierre Béquet)
YT 2232



Château de Vaux-le-Vicomte
(engraved by Jacques Gauthier)
YT 2587



Château du Plessis-Bourré
(engraved by Claude Jumelet)
YT 3081



Nogent-le-Retrou
(engraved by Jacky Larrivière)
YT 3386



Château de Chambord
(engraved by Line Filhon)
YT 5331

As in other forms of art, however, stamp designs divide opinion. Three examples are the stamps of Château Gaillard at Les Andelys (engraved by Albert Decaris),

St-Germain-en Laye (engraved by Robert Cami) and Les Baux-de-Provence (heliogravure from a photograph by Bruno Ghiringhelli).



Les Andelys
YT 977



St Germain-en-Laye
YT 1501



Les Baux-de-Provence
YT 4014

Writing in *Timbres* magazine in July 2019, Matthieu Singeot commented that the Decaris view of the Seine and Château Gaillard “*est souvent jugée déplorable*” (no translation needed!). However, whilst the view of the château may seem indistinct to some, others found the palette and flow of the engraving captured the sylvan charm of the valley. Similarly, the Cami engraving of St Germain-en-Laye was felt by some to capture the imposing grandeur of this former royal palace, but others felt it made it look like a department store. The Ghiringhelli design for Les Baux-de-Provence

was criticised by some for a loss by detail amongst the bright colours, but others felt it captured the brilliant Mediterranean sunshine. In stamp design, like other forms of art, tastes differ and fashions change.

Faced with this challenge of designing stamps that show well-known and often much-loved monuments, designers and engravers have displayed both a continuation of the French tradition of intaglio printing and, as new printing technologies permitted, a greater variety in size and use of colour.



Aigues-Mortes
YT 501



Château de Crussol
YT 3169



Château de Josselin
YT 4281

In 1941 the fine monochrome engraving by Charles Mazelin of the fortifications at Aigues-Mortes at the then mouth of the Rhône captured the sombre ruined walls of this town, acquired by Louis IX to become his preferred port of departure for the Crusades. The 1998 design of the Château de Crussol by Claude Jumulet utilises the dramatic use of colour in framing this 12th-century Rhône Valley castle within the landscape and against the sky. Pierre Albuison's 2008 engraving highlights the evocative profile of the 14th century Château de Josselin.

From 1984 the production of much wider stamps have well served the portrayal of some castles and châteaux.

Whilst not displaying the quality of engraving in the prize-winning designs for Vaux-le-Vicomte and Chambord shown on page 85 the new width allowed Christian Broutin to capture both the scale of Carcassonne in 2000, and the terracotta hues of the Languedoc landscape, using heliogravure. Claude Jumelet used the same width to set the heavily reconstructed castle of Haut-Koenigsbourg within the rolling hills of the Vosges, in this case using offset/*taille-douce*.



Carcassonne
YT 3302



Château du Haut-Koenigsbourg
YT 3245

How many châteaux are there in France?

It is uncertain as to how many châteaux there are in France. One estimate (Ministry of Culture, via Wikipedia) is of 45,000 such structures. A more conservative estimate by historians focused on dwellings or palaces built for protection and living is of 11,000. At a local level the Department of Allier alone lists 550 such structures.

The French PTT therefore has a myriad of choices from which to depict châteaux on stamps – and a myriad of competing claims as to their historical or cultural significance.

One cause of uncertainty as to the actual number of ‘châteaux’ in France is that it is an all-embracing term – incorporating castle, fortress, manor-house, and palace amongst other descriptions in English. In French ‘*fort*’,

‘*donjon*’ and ‘*maison*’ may also describe a ‘château’. For example:

Fort St Andre at Villeneuve lez Avignon: (engraved by Eve Luquet)

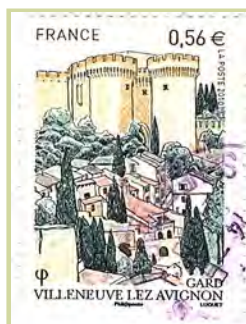
This massive fortress, mainly 14th century, was erected on a rocky plateau overlooking the Rhône. After the Albigensian Crusade in 1229 the Treaty of Paris handed to France all the lands west of the Rhone from Pont-Saint-Esprit to the Mediterranean, with Avignon and the lands to the east being ceded to the Counts of Naples. After Clement V relocated the Papacy to Avignon in 1309 the Capetian kings of France rebuilt the castle within sight of the Pope’s palace to demonstrate the power of France.

The Donjon at Caen (engraved by Jean Phuelpin)

Built after 1060 by Duke William the Bastard – later known as William 1 (The Conqueror) of England, the castle became a mighty fortress under his son Henry II of England and was fought over between the French Capetian kings and first the Angevins and then the Plantagenets in the Hundred Years' War, being captured by Henry V of England in 1417 before finally being reconquered by Charles VII of France in 1450. Later, the keep was razed in 1793 by order of the Revolutionary Government and the remains of the castle severely damaged by Allied bombing in 1944. Today, it remains a potent symbol of both French and Norman independence.



Donjon à Caen
YT 1389



Fort St-André
YT 4442 (AA416)



Maison de George Sand
YT 3645

Modern usage

Many châteaux and castles have now been adapted to modern roles, for example,

Le Castillet à Perpignan (engraved by Jules Piel)

Built in the 15th century to protect the city, it became obsolete as a fortification after the Hapsburgs ceded Roussillon to France under the Treaty of the Pyrenees (1659). The building was then used as a military and civilian prison until as late as 1892. It remains a symbol of the Catalan heritage of this region of France.



Le Castillet à Perpignan
YT 1222

Château du Clos de Vougeot (engraved by Pierre Gandon)

The headquarters of *La Confrérie des Chevaliers du Tastevin* is based in the château du Clos de Vougeot, built as a Cistercian Abbey and centre for their vineyards in the 12th century, and with a Renaissance château added in 1551. It symbolises the tradition and prestige of French viticulture.



Château du Clos de Vougeot
YT 913

Hotels du Plessis-Bellière and Moreau (engraved by Claude Andréotto)

The modern *Automobile Club de France* in the Place de la Concorde occupies sumptuous rooms in two palaces built for Louis XV by Ange-Jacques Gabriel. A symbol of the modern celebration of the motor-car.

L'Automobile club de France
YT 2974



Illustrating History

As shown below, collecting stamps depicting ‘châteaux’ as a topic makes it possible to illustrate aspects of the history and culture of France. From the structures initially designed to defend borders, people and property; to those later rebuilt in styles designed for more comfortable, and sometimes ostentatious living; and then later still the design of new defensive structures required by the changing technologies of war. These phases of development may be shown by stamp designs of the massive 13-15th century castle

at Loches (engraved by Marie-Noëlle Goffin, 1986): the breath-taking 16th century château at Chenonceau built over the river Cher (designed by Bruno Ghiringhelli, 2003); and the 17th century Vauban fortress at Belle-Ile-en-Mer in Brittany (engraved by Claude Haley 1984). These and other buildings reflect some of the major historical and cultural events that have shaped France and through postal use, or philatelic interest, showcase tourist destinations that continue to provide connections to the past.



Château de Loches
YT 2402



Château de Chenonceau
YT 3595



Citadelle Belle-Ile-en-Mer
YT 2325

Château de Loches

At the start of the 13th century the castle of Loches was held by Richard I (Coeur de Lion), King of England – who was also Duke of Normandy, Aquitaine and Gascony, and Count of Anjou, Poitiers, and Maine – with the latter lands inherited through his mother Aliénor d'Aquitaine. Loches was a key stronghold in the battle for supremacy between the ‘English’ Angevins and the ‘French’ Capetian kings.

It was besieged many times during the 12th century, until it was finally captured by Philippe II (Auguste) in 1204.

The capture of Loches by Phillip II cemented French control of the Loire valley. In a final irony Louis XVI later used the castle as a prison for British soldiers captured by the Americans during the French-supported American Revolution.



Richard I Coeur de Lion
(designed by Claude Jumelet)
YT 3238



Aliénor d'Aquitaine
(engraved by Elsa Catelin)
YT 4859



Philippe-Auguste
(engraved by Pierre Munier)
YT 1027

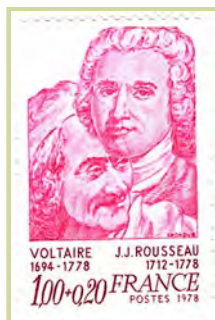
Château de Chenonceau

The Château de Chenonceau was gifted by Henry II to his mistress Diane de Poitiers who rebuilt the palace and gardens, until she was dispossessed by Henry's widow Catherine de Medici after the king's death. Catherine added lavish extensions and used it for the first major firework display in France in 1560. Chenonceau was later bought by Henry IV for his mistress Gabrielle d'Estrées and then by the wealthy Dupin banking family. Louise Dupin's literary salons regularly attracted many of the leading

figures in the Enlightenment such as Voltaire and Rousseau. Her grand-daughter Aurore (George Sand) carried on this tradition of cultural salons at her house in Nohant. Threatened with destruction by the Revolutionary Guard in 1793 Chenonceau was saved by being the only bridge over the Cher for miles. In the Second World War it became an important conduit for the Resistance fighters and escaping prisoners as the river was the dividing line between German-occupied and Vichy France.



Catherine de Médici
(engraved by Louis Boursier)
YT 5067



Voltaire et Rousseau
(engraved by Eugène Lacaque)
YT 1990



Résistance
(engraved by Charles-Paul Dufresne)
YT 790

Belle-Ile-en-Mer

The fortress on Belle-Ile-en-Mer was rebuilt by Vauban to subdue rampant piracy along the Brittany coast. It was a key strategic target in the Seven Years' war and was occupied by the British in 1761-63. Recaptured by the French it served as a prison in the 19th century and was refortified by the occupying German army in the 20th century. Jean Bart, who mainly operated out of Dunkirk, was typical of the ambiguous role played by privateers in the 17th century. Piracy remained rife in Brittany and in 1675 the French East India Company relocated its main base to Lorient because

of the exposure of Saint-Malo, its former base, to the Dutch navy and privateers. The French company then exported the tradition of privateering to the Indian Ocean with Robert Surcouf, amongst others, amassing a personal fortune. The stamp depicting Lorient, engraved by Gauthier, won the 1992 Grand Prix de l'Art Philatélique, once again illustrating the link between the French tradition of fine engraving and important historical and cultural subjects depicted on postage stamps.



Jean Bart
(engraved by Jacques Combet)
YT 1167



Lorient
(engraved by Jacques Gauthier)
YT 2765



Robert Surcouf
(engraved by Charles Mazelin)
YT 894

This article has considered some of the aspects of design and cultural history associated with a topical collection of châteaux on French stamps. Part Two will consider how

other philatelic material may be utilised to add further depth to such a collection through postcards, postal stationery and postmarks.

Zoom, Zoom, Zoom

Our Society's Zoom videos are now on the website. Each meeting has been uploaded to www.fcps.org.uk

To access them go to *the top menu* select *Meetings* and scroll to *Zoom Meetings*. Our website also lists our previous means of keeping in touch during the pandemic - *Virtual Displays* - select *Meetings* then *Virtual Displays*

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Zoom Meetings of Madagascar, Dahomey & Togo, Morocco, and Balloons & Pigeons are available for general view from The France & Colonies Philatelic Society Inc., (US) website: [www.franceandcolonies.org](http://www.franceandcolonies.org)  
- select '*Video Presentations*' from the menu at the left of the homepage.

## SHORTER ITEMS - INCLUDING QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

### The 1959 Fréjus Disaster Fund Issue

The collapse of the Malpasset Dam in the south of France on 2 December 1959 was a major disaster. It was somewhat similar to the Dutch flood disaster in February 1953 - not in size nor in terms of number of victims - but the water still showed its destructive power. In Zeeland and Zuid-Holland the disaster cost the lives of 1800 people; in Fréjus 423 people died.

The Malpasset Dam was built across the river Reyran near Fréjus in the south of France in the *département* of Var. The construction took place between 1952 and 1954 and was meant to generate irrigation water. The dam rose 60 metres above river level. In November 1959, this 'bathtub' was nearly full and the water level was 7 metres below the edge. Although there were several leaks, no further investigation was made and there was no intervention. In Holland, the flood disaster of February 1953 was caused by a combination of bad circumstances: spring tide in combination with a north-westerly storm. In France the collapse of the dam was also caused by a combination of bad circumstances.

In fact, there was much more to the disaster than was initially thought. Afterwards it turned out that the dam had been built on a geological fault line that had not been investigated prior to its construction. In December 1959, there was heavy rain in the south of France causing the water to rise further. Some locks were opened to slow down the increase of water pressure but it was already too late. On the evening of 2 December at a quarter past nine the dam gave way and it collapsed into the valley. Over 48 million cubic litres of water headed towards Fréjus like a 40-metre - high wave at a speed of 70 kilometres per hour. Twenty minutes later, the water reached the town and destroyed everything it encountered along its way. In the dark, the inhabitants had nowhere to go.

Fréjus was the greatest civil disaster of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in France. Traces of this devastating body of water can still be seen from the remains of the dam all the way to Fréjus. Lumps of concrete that were part of the dam are still scattered everywhere. Those who feel the need to visit such a sinister place can visit the remains of the dam and walk in the area.

Engineer André Coyne (1891-1960) was chairman of the international association of large dams and had ultimate responsibility for the construction of the

dam. He was undisputedly the top dam specialist. In 1947 he had founded the engineering firm 'Coyne et Bellier'. This firm was active worldwide with infrastructural projects such as the construction of dams, nuclear and hydro-electric powered power stations, road and tunnel construction and other projects that take place underground. The company is still active and is now part of the company 'Tractebel', originally a Belgian company, with headquarters in Brussels. André Coyne was distressed about the disaster in Fréjus. Whether this was also the cause of his death shortly after the disaster has never been established.

After the flood disaster in the Netherlands in 1953, a surcharged stamp was issued to enable people to make a concrete contribution to the alleviation of the human need. For this purpose, the 10 cents value from the current definitive series of *Juliana en face* was overprinted with a surcharge of 10 cents and the indication of the reason for the surcharge and the year (Figure 1). The surcharge went to the national disaster fund. In France too, the public was given the opportunity to express their feelings of frustration and compassion through the issue of a surcharged stamp in the shape of a surcharge comparable to the Netherlands 1953 stamp.



Figure 1  
10c *Juliana* overprinted 1953  
10c + 10 WATERSNOOD

The French government was under pressure to act as quickly as possible because the wave of emotions that this disaster had triggered all over France needed to be channelled immediately. The powerless public had to be offered a means to actually do something about alleviating the need. If a stamp with an overprint was chosen it had to come from the series of definitive stamps available at the post office counters at that time. The stamp should essentially be one to frank an internal letter, the most requested usage.



The 25 francs '*Marianne à la Nef*' issue was available (Figure 2) which had been issued on 27 July 1959. Also still available was its predecessor, the 25 francs '*Marianne de Muller*' which had been on sale since 5 January 1959 when it was issued upon the increase of the letter rate from 20 francs to 25 francs (Figure 3).

Why the Minister choose the '*Marianne à la Nef*' stamp is a mystery, but his choice was certainly not very convenient. In contrast to the '*Muller*' design which had been predicting a bright future for the French since 1955, the Marianne who stood on the prow (*la nef*) of the boat, was extremely poorly received by the

public when it was issued in July 1959. Rarely has a stamp which has received such a negative reception as this enjoyed a long life. The boat was interpreted as the Republic sending its people down the river with the government waiting with crossed arms to collect taxes. Regarding the use of this stamp to alleviate the Fréjus disaster there was an additional criticism: how on earth you get it into your head to issue a stamp to alleviate the distress of a flood disaster by depicting a lady on the front deck of a quietly sailing boat on a dead calm sea without a cloud in the sky? The second objection was of a more formal nature. The stamp was



Figure 2  
25 F Marianne à la Nef  
overprinted FREJUS + 5f



Figure 3  
25F Marianne de Muller



Figure 4  
25F Marianne à la Nef overprinted  
FREJUS + 5f on letter from Paris to  
St-Jean-le-Thomas, cancelled 19  
December 1959 with inverted date

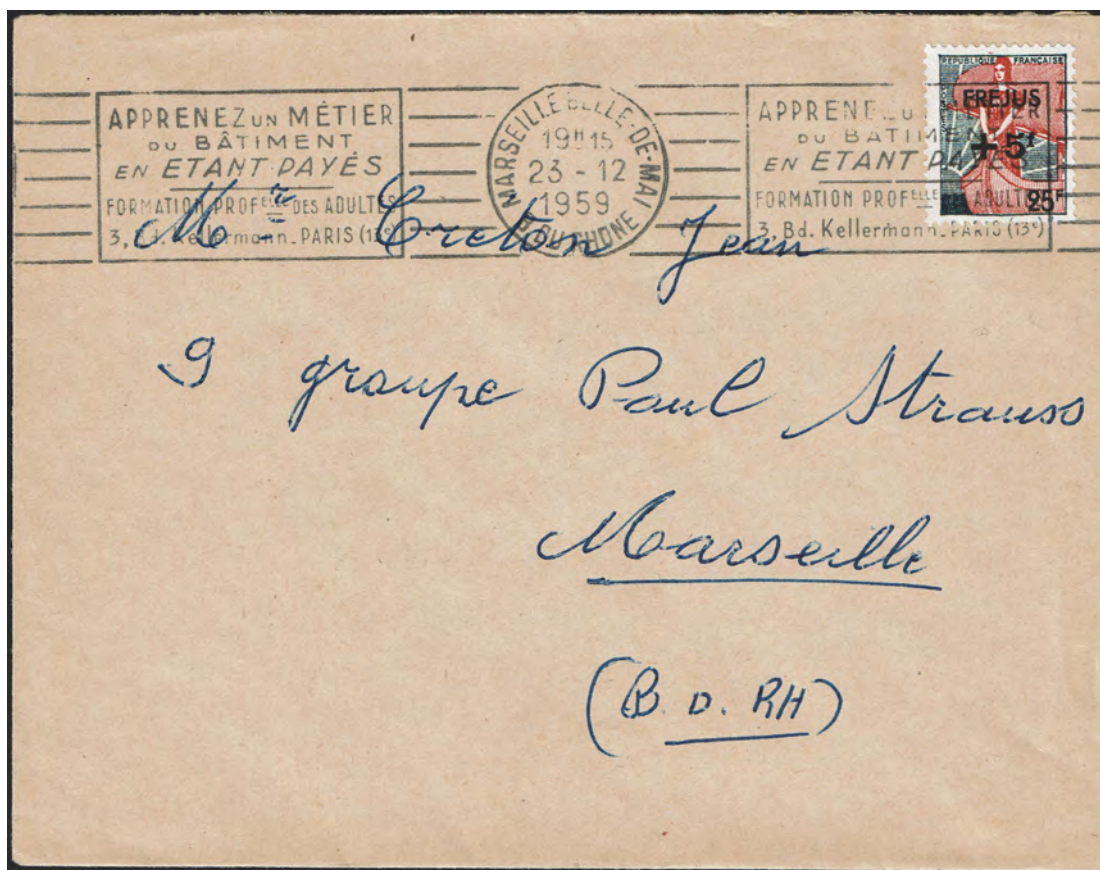


Figure 5  
25F Marianne à la Nef overprinted  
FREJUS + 5f on local Marseille letter  
cancelled 23 December 1959

overprinted FREJUS + 5<sup>f</sup>, ie with a small 'f', but this abbreviation should be spelled with a capital letter 'F'. In that regard it is much easier for countries with a head of state on the current stamps (such as the Netherlands has had for a long time and Great Britain still has). Then the choice is simpler. The minister of the Postal Services, Bernard Comut-Gentile (1909-1992), would not survive the disaster for long politically as he was replaced on 5 February 1960 following his resignation over demonstrations in Algiers.

12.4 million copies of the Fréjus stamp were issued. The surcharge thus yielded 62 million (old) francs (620,000 new francs) comparable to about 100,000 euros. This was significantly less than the 1.5 million-

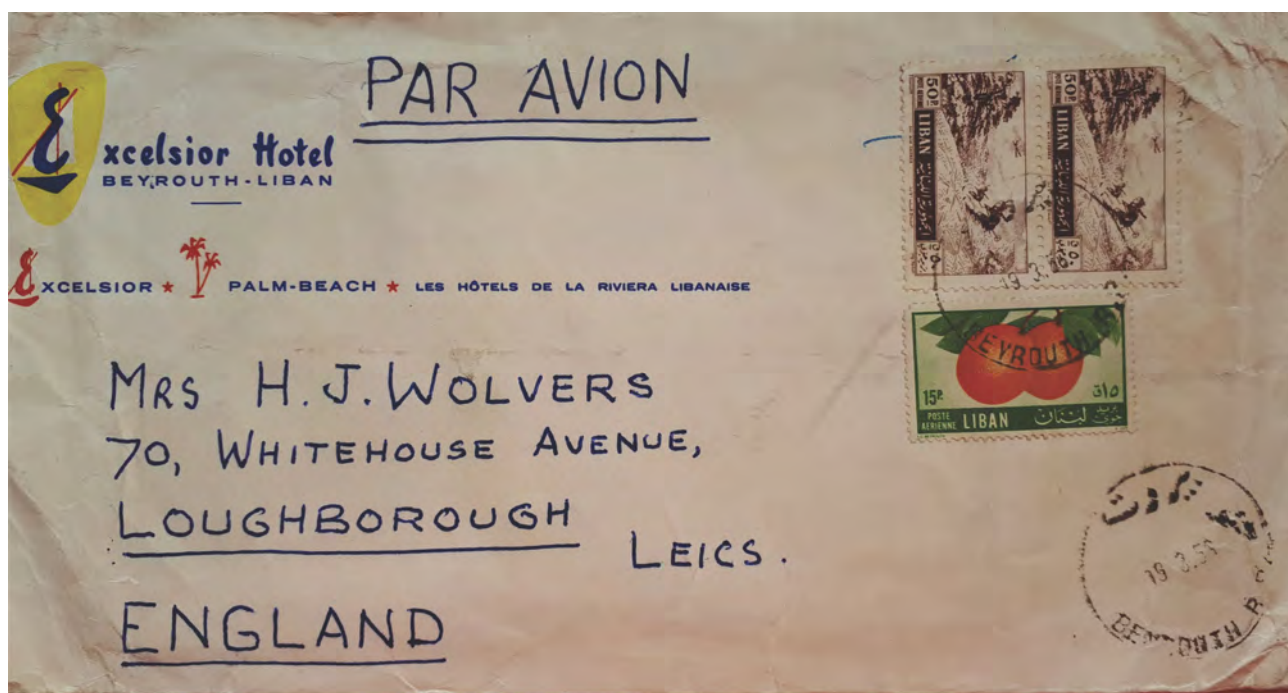
plus guilders that the flood stamp of 1953 had yielded in the Netherlands. The surcharge, therefore, had mainly a symbolic meaning seen as an expression of mercy and a means of giving people the satisfaction of being able to do something.

From a philatelic point of view there is not much to experience about our 'ugly duckling' but for those who have hunter's blood in them and endurance it is still quite a task to search for a correctly franked letter with the Fréjus stamp from each of the days of issue, from 11 to 24 December 1959. (Figures 4 and 5). For the non-specialist, we make the assignment a bit simpler but still challenging – find a separate stamp with a legible date. Considering the circulation of more than 12 million copies that should be possible. I wish you good luck.

Edwin Voerman



## My very first stamp



It is, admittedly, not a stamp from Lebanon as a French Colony but it is the stamp (or set of stamps) that got me started. It is part of a set of nine Air Mails (SG 540-549) depicting fruits including citrus, quince, grapes and apples.

At some point my eye must have been caught by this stamp on my father's mail. I can't really remember how or when. The only thing I can be sure of is that the bold and bright design appealed to me. Orange is still my favourite colour.

In 1955, when I was four we left Loughborough, the town of my birth, for Beirut in Lebanon. My father worked for Brush Group Engineering and had been appointed their agent for the Middle East.

For my parents this was just one more move but for me it was an adventure. I found myself in an international French/Arabic speaking school with no dispensation for speaking any other language. I learnt French and Arabic, to go with what little Dutch I had already absorbed from the families of both parents and, of course, English. This may make me sound awfully clever but fear not – it was only a case of being young enough to take in everything new like a sponge.

My father travelled all over the Middle East so my collection developed quite nicely. Arabs are fond of children and would give Pa stamps when he told them I collected. He spent a fair bit of time doing business with Sheikhs in Jordan, Kuwait, Syria and more (not as posh as it sounds, they were plentiful in the 1950s). It seemed to me that all my Pa's acquaintances were Sheikhs to whom one was obliged to bob a curtsey).

It was a wonderful life. At the time, Beirut was known as the Paris of the Middle East. In winter we could paddle in the Mediterranean in the morning and throw snowballs in the mountains in the afternoon. In summer, school started at



Clockwise from above  
SG 542 (reduced),  
SG 541, SG 545,  
SG 549, SG 543, SG 540



7am and finished at 1pm; in winter we started and finished an hour later.

It all came to rather an abrupt end in 1958 when civil unrest began. It's all very well leaning over the balcony eleven floors up and shouting to my mother to come and look, there's another car on fire. It may have been exciting for a seven-year-old but not for the grown-ups. We eventually had to leave very quickly, without my father who had to deal with the office and get rid of paperwork. One small suitcase each and not even allowed to take my teddy.

Back in England, I did at least have some highly desirable swapsies. Oh, and Bobby Bear came back overland with Pa in the car and is with me still.

**Jeny Wolvers BA (Hons)**

## Identification of dated corner blocks of the 20c Rose-Lilac Cameo Sower (YT 190)

I have just read an article from *Timbres Magazine* published in November 2006, about sheet markings on the Sowers in which it showed illustrations of dated corner blocks of the 20c Sower stamp mentioning BH, BI, BJ and BK. My question is, what is the difference between these four designations? In the picture included (Figure 1), the blocks all look the same.

Marden Blackledge



Figure 1

Extract from *Timbres Magazine*

Illustrating four dated corner blocks of the 20c Cameo Sower

**Mick Bister** replies: Dated corner blocks, with their profusion of data, may be difficult to interpret especially the infamous 20c Rose-Lilac Cameo Sower printing shown here but as soon as one has some understanding of the printing process dated corner blocks become easier to read.

In the case of the majority of surface printed stamps, such as the 20c Sower in question, the rotary press cylinder was

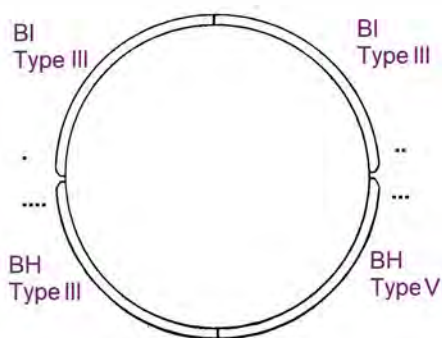


Figure 2

Composition of Cylinder BH+BI

mounted with two curved plates which printed two sheets of 100 stamps per revolution of the cylinder. Each of the plates was made up of two electros or *galvanos* of 50 clichés butted together to print a full sheet i.e. there were four electros on each cylinder. Each of the four electros was given its ID by punch marks applied by the technician – one punch mark at the bottom of the first electro, two at the top of the second, three at the bottom of the third and four at the top of the fourth. Figure 2 shows the cross-section of the cylinder with the four electros and the position of the punch marks. On the printed sheets, the punch marks appear as white dots in the marginal parallelograms although occasionally they are not clearly visible.

As each cylinder was assembled it was accorded an identifier, the first one being A+B, then C+D, E+F up to Y+Z continuing in the case of long printing runs such as the 20c Sower (9 July 1926 – 22 July 1938) with AA+AB, AC+AD etc. This nomenclature was created in 1935 by Baron de Vinck de Winnezele in his publication *L'impression des timbres français par les rotatives*, an extract of which is shown in Figure 3. Here we can see the dated corner margins of the sheets printed off Cylinder BH+BI with three large dots and one small dot respectively.



Cylinder BH + BI is unique in the printing of the 20c Sower in that it was assembled just as the Type III 20c Sower was being replaced by the Type V (Figure 4). When assembling the cylinder, the technician inexplicably attached three electros of Type III and one of new Type V and so we have an example of a cylinder printing one sheet solely of Type III and a hybrid sheet of half Type III and half Type V (Figure 5). This partly explains the pencilled annotations seen in the margins. However, the dealer has added to the confusion by erroneously calling them Types I and II from an earlier nomenclature (still used by Stanley Gibbons) instead of Types III and V. The next cylinder assembled, BJ+BK, shown at the bottom of Figure 1, is composed entirely of the new Type V.

In conclusion, the dated corner blocks in the illustration are far from being the same. The top one is a Type V printing from plate BH and showing three white dots. The second block is the Type III printing from plate BI and showing one white dot. The third and fourth blocks are both Type V printings from plates BJ and BK showing three dots (one barely visible) and one dot respectively.

**Ashley Lawrence** adds: From 9 July 1926 until 27 September 1935, printing of the 20c Lilac-Rose Sower (YT 190) was

effected using *galvanos* descended from the Type III die which has been used for printing the earlier Lilac-Brown version (YT 139).

From 16 September 1935 until 22 July 1938, a new die was used, Type V. Both types of stamp were being printed during a ten-day period in September 1935. This would not be particularly unusual if two separate presses were being used at the same time, but in this instance, this was not the case. On this occasion, both types were not only being printed simultaneously from the same press, Press 7, but also from the same *galvano*. On Cylinder BH + BI, used between 16 and 27 September, 1935, *Galvano* BH was composed of fifty Type III clichés and fifty Type V clichés. *Galvano* BI was composed entirely of Type III clichés.

From this curious hybrid printing, it is possible to extract vertical *se-tenant* pairs, of the Type III and Type V issues, from the fifth and sixth rows of *Galvano* BH (Figure 6). One can also obtain dated corner blocks of the two separate types with identical dates as shown in Figure 1.

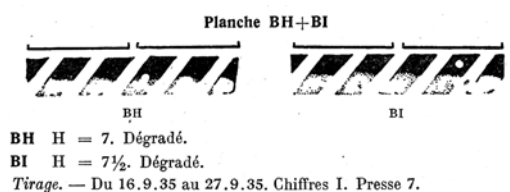


Figure 3

Cylinder BH+BI punch marks illustrated and described by Baron de Vinck de Winnezele



Figure 4

Left: Type III. The base of the 2 is away from the frame and the letter c is fully formed

Right: Type V. The base of the 2 is pointed and closer to the frame and the letter c is narrower

Figure 5

Distribution of Type III and Type V in sheets printed off Cylinder BH+BI

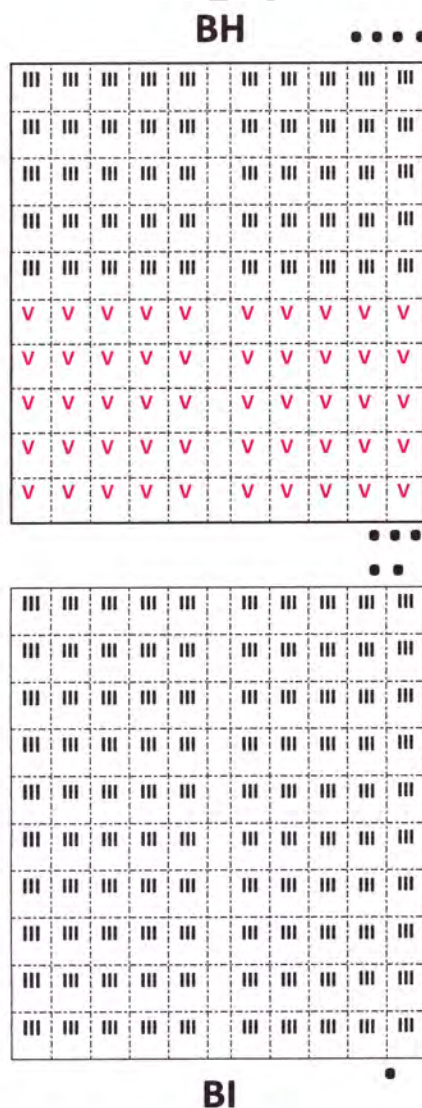


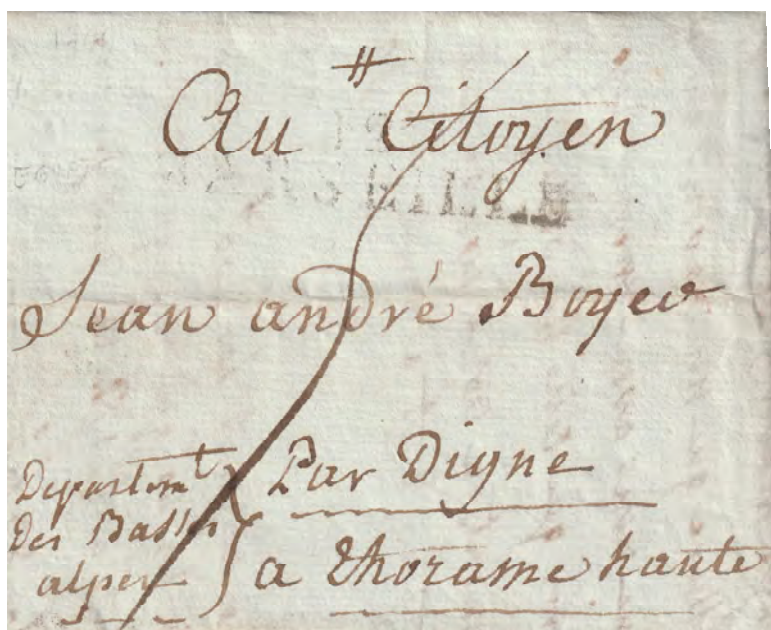
Figure 6

Rare strip of 5 Type III and 2 Type V se-tenant

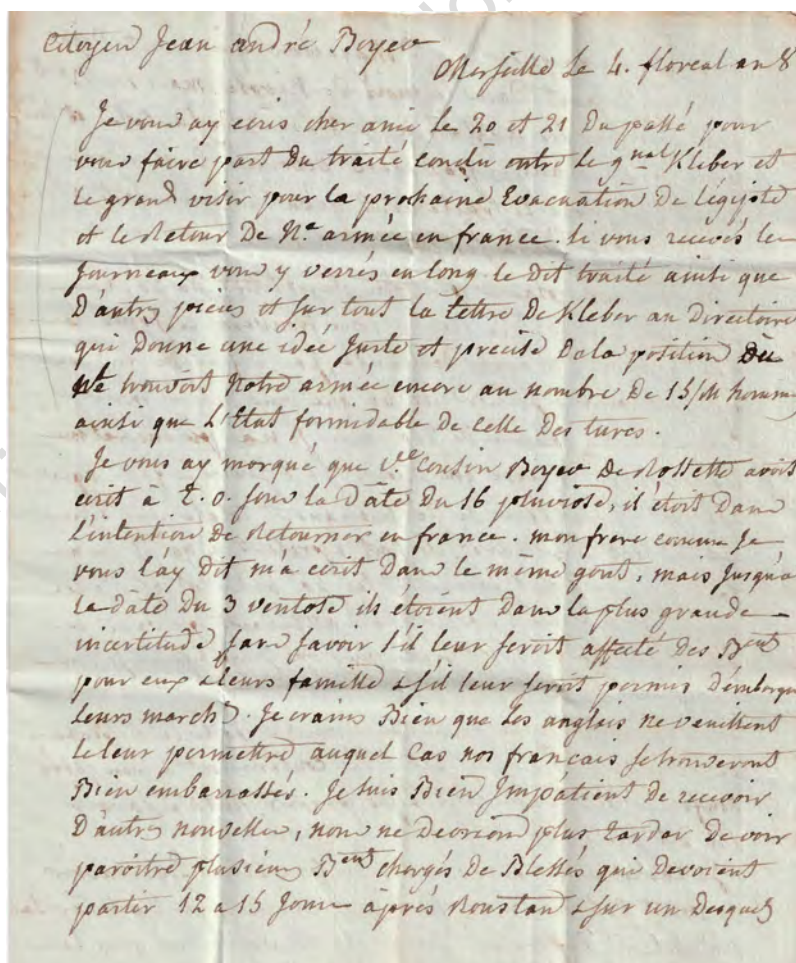
## The French Revolutionary Wars 1798 - 1802

John Cowlin shares with us another page from his collection of material from the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars.

### (5) The evacuation of French troops from Egypt, 1800



An entire letter from a merchant in Marseille, posted on 4 Floréal, Year 8 (24 April 1800) to Citizen Jean-André Boyer In Thorame-Haute near Digne in the département of Basses-Alpes



Extracts from the letter contain news of the treaty between General Kléber and the Grand Vizier Kör Yusuf Ziyaüddin

Pasha in Egypt, the evacuation of French troops and the English blockade.



Marseille,

*I wrote to you, dear friend, on the previous 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> to inform you of the treaty concluded between General Kléber and the Grand Vizier for the forthcoming evacuation of Egypt and the return of our army to France. If you receive the journals, you will see in them the said treaty in full as well as other items and especially the letter from Kléber to the Directoire which gives a fair and precise idea of the position where our army was, still numbering 15 thousand men, as well as the formidable state of that of the Turks.*

*I told you that your cousin Boyer in Rosette [French name for Rashad in Egypt] had written on 16 Pluviôse, saying that he was intending to return to France. My brother, as I told you, wrote to me in the same vein, but up to the date of 3 Ventôse they were in the greatest uncertainty without knowing whether buildings would be assigned to them and their families and whether they would be allowed to load their goods. I am afraid that the English will want to allow it, in which case our French men will be very embarrassed. I am looking forward to more news; we should not be long in seeing the arrival of several ships loaded with wounded which were to leave 12 to 15 days after Rostand and on one of which the Consul Magellan, who had previously made a departure, was to embark in the month of Nivôse. However, his vessel was taken by the English at 7 to 8 leagues from the coast and he and the other passengers disembarked again in Alexandria. I do not know what treatment he will have received and if he will have lost his belongings or not.*

*Business here is quiet, something was still being done on the Genoa riviera [but] everything has been suspended for a fortnight. The English held the blockade from Marseille to Genoa and the Austrians had made themselves masters over Savona, Finale, Vada and Loano. We assure you that we hold some advantages and we can add that we have even retaken all these positions; it is to be hoped that this news is to be confirmed.*

*Our compliments to your wife and your brother and I send you my love.*

Balthalon

#### Footnote:

Jean-Baptiste Kléber (1753-1800) was a French general who distinguished himself during the wars of the French Revolution, notably during the Vendée war and the Egyptian campaign. Kléber commanded one of the assault columns during the capture of Alexandria on 2 July 1798 but was wounded in the forehead by a bullet. Following his convalescence, he was given command of the garrison left behind by Bonaparte.

Bonaparte gave Kléber the supreme command of the Egyptian army on 22 August 1799. Kléber then concluded

with the British admiral Sidney Smith the convention of El Arish on 24 January 1800 for an honourable evacuation of Egypt by the French army. It was intended to bring to an end the French campaign in Egypt and Syria, with the repatriation of French troops to France and the return of all territory to the Ottomans.

In less than two months, General Kléber was assassinated in Egypt by a Syrian student named Suleiman al-Halabi, with a stab to the heart, on 14 June 1800.

John Cowlin

## Classic Forgeries Query: (1) Cérés



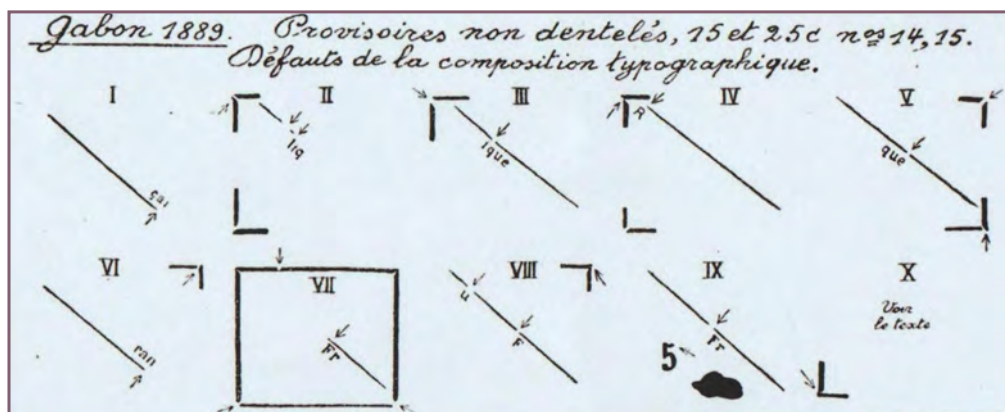
The 20c, bought as a genuine gris-noir has been returned by Monsieur Brun as a forgery.

Perhaps the thick and uneven top and bottom frame lines are proof of this?

The 15c is the rare vert-bouteille, accompanied by a Robineau certificate. However the patterns on the left are incomplete and there is no dot before the figure 15c. A grossly over-inked example I hope, as quite an expensive purchase!

Ray Abela

## Gabon Y& T 14 + 15 (18 May 1889): forgeries



In his *Vade-Mecum du Spécialiste-Expert en Timbres-Poste* published in 1929, Fernand Serrane describes the **originals** (the genuine) as follows: “Very thick or Bristol paper (120-160 microns)<sup>1</sup> roughly 25½-26½ x 22mm, depending on the type of impression (in the Type VII, the bottom of the frame was placed too low so it is about 22½mm). In the good impressions and in most of the ten types, the lines of the frame are bevelled at the end and do not touch each other (by about ½mm or less; NW

corner of Types III and NE corner of Types V a little more - see also the bottom of Types VII in the illustration); but, in

the heavy impressions, they often do touch. In RÉPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE, the letters are often poor or weak; similarly, in POSTES and in the cedilla under the C; POSTES is approximately 1¼mm high; the hyphen in GABON-CONGO is approximately 1mm long and the lower-case letters about 1¼mm high. The overprint GAB surrounded by 6 points is identical on all the types and shows -in the good impressions of this overprint -the characteristics replicated in the second illustration”.

Moving to **Fournier's Geneva forgeries**, Serrane has this to say: “These were printed in blocks of 6 (shown overleaf) or 12, on medium paper of between 55 and 85 microns, which suggests that there were many printings making a total production of **at least ten times the number of the originals** (of which there were 1,000 of the 15c and 1,500 of the 25c printed, 100 stamps per sheet). Some of the 15c versions printed were of very similar colour to the originals, but one can also find examples in salmon-pink and salmon. The 25c versions were printed on much lighter-green or yellowish-green paper”. After that, it gets a little more complicated and this is fully explained below.

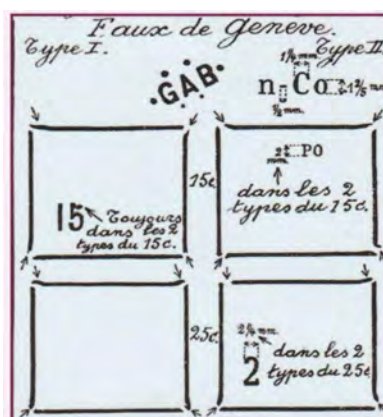
### A NOTE ON THE FORGED POSTMARKS USED BY FOURNIER ON HIS N°s 14 and 15

Double-circle 22mm date stamps LIBREVILLE 13 NOV 92 GABON-CONGO and 21mm LIBREVILLE 20 MAI 89 GABON (of which genuine marks can also be found) with the dates being interchangeable between the two; also 6 AOUT 86, which is of course three years prior to the issue of the originals!

## The Fournier Forgeries

Serrane's illustration on the right shows four details that are important, although when spotting Fournier's forgeries they are not the first things that one would necessarily look at, since there are easier ways of quickly detecting the forgeries. Nevertheless, these details are useful in confirming an initial verdict of suspicion.

Firstly there is the GAB overprint that was applied separately, as in the originals. With all his forgeries of N°s 14 and 15 the GAB design is the same: the



left-hand point is too close to the G and invariably the two points below GAB are smaller and lighter than in the real overprint.

Then there is the fact that the word POSTES is slightly larger at 2mm high than the original at 1¼mm. But there are much quicker ways to easily spot the forgeries: firstly the frames are too widely split at the corners and the E, W and N lines are also, in most cases, bent outwards instead of ending in straight but

<sup>1</sup>Unhelpfully, Yvert states the genuine to be on ‘very fragile paper, often thinned’! – MR



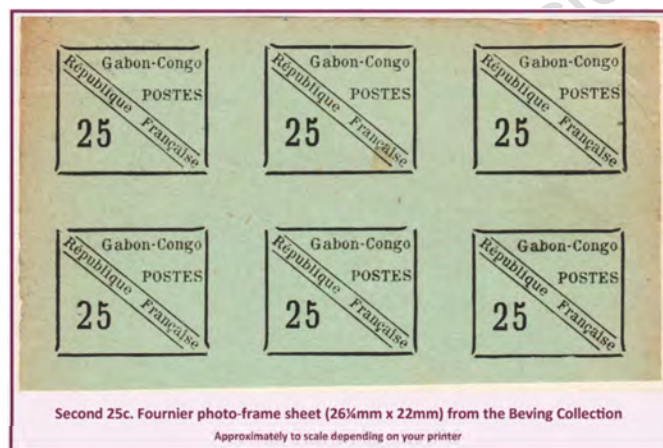


bevelled ends. Secondly, the hyphen between GABON and CONGO is half the length of the original 1mm and last but not least, we get to the value figures:

**N° 14: 15c Rose** In **all** the 15c forgeries, the 5 is cut squarely at the top and on the right as shown here in the right-hand frame. Confusion can arise sometimes because there are two different 5's in the originals and the second, if badly printed, can be mistaken for a forgery although it is clear that the shape of the forged top lateral is distinctive. In these cases, reference to the other indicators is needed.



**N° 15: 25c Green** As can be seen below some of the 5's have the same fault as in all of the N°14's, so that can often make it easy, but in **all** cases the figure 2 is the giveaway. Not only is it shaped wrongly but it is far too wide at 2¼mm (even larger sometimes, as the one on the left at the bottom of the sheet) and the space between the two figures is also too wide. In addition the original 2 is always slightly canted to the left. Finally, one also has to say that all the lettering of the forgeries and the frame bars are just too neat, unlike in the local-print originals.



oooooooo

## Côte d'Ivoire Y&T Colis Postaux 7g + 7h: forgeries

I specialise exclusively in French (and British) West African colonies up to 1907, having started with a smallish collection of my grandfather's from stamps he had steamed off correspondence from my great-grandfather who was a pioneer on the "Fever Coast" from 1875.

When I got down to serious collecting, I created a few of these Help Sheets (see also the previous two articles)

because I was fed up with seeing forgeries, especially from the French colonies, being offered as genuine almost every week on the internet and, on many occasions, by very well-respected, long-established dealers.

[We can look forward to a 'Quick guide to spotting Fournier forgeries of *Congo Français N°1 Colis Postaux 1891*' from Simon in the December Journal - Ed.]



Genuine (ex Ferrari Collection)  
Offered by Roumet  
September 2017 at 2.300€



Forgery (ex Beving Collection)  
Valued (2017) at 15€

Simon Binsted

## The Royal Visit to France 1938



Figure 1

A colleague from the Leeds Philatelic Society has acquired an unusual French philatelic item and asked me for my advice on the design (Figure 1). Looking into its background,

I never imagined

that the relatively ordinary commemorative stamp, planned for issue on 28 June 1938, (YT and Spink/Maury 400) could provoke such philatelic interest, including three well-researched articles by Mick Bister in the Society's journal<sup>1</sup>. It was a single stamp with the aim of commemorating the visit to France of King George VI and Queen Elizabeth on the longstanding invitation of the French government to reinforce the entente cordiale and to commemorate the united front of France, Great Britain and the British Empire against Germany in the First World War. Curiously the stamp bore neither the portrait of the King nor of French President Lebrun but instead had illustrations of the Houses of Parliament and the Arc de Triomphe on either side of the clasped hands of friendship plus an olive branch (Figure 2).



Figure 2

Five days before the scheduled issue date the Queen's mother died and the monarchs' visit had to be postponed. The stamp was eventually issued on 19 July 1938, the date of their arrival in France. The Yvert & Tellier (specialised) and the Maury/Spink catalogues give the revised date of issue but, curiously, the Marianne catalogue of Jean Storch, Robert Françon and Jean-François Brun states the earlier postponed date. Two *entiers postaux* were also issued and it is somewhat puzzling for the unwary to find them listed in the relevant section of the Yvert catalogue as the '1938 Mémorial Australien de Villers-Bretonneux'<sup>2</sup>. The unveiling of the War Memorial to Australia's dead at Villers-Bretonneux, a village on the Somme, was the key event of the royal visit and took place on the final day, 22 July. The detail is set out in Part II of Mick Bister's articles.

None of the standard catalogues contained any references to an issued stamp resembling my colleague's example so the next point of search was to the indices of *Timbroscopie* and later *Timbres Magazine*. As is almost invariably the case, given to date some 400 issues of these magazines, there was an article on the Royal Visit stamp<sup>3</sup> and included was an image of the perforated vignette in red-brown of my colleague's acquisition. The story was that in 1940 Great Britain planned to return the favour of the French commemorative by issuing its own stamp bearing the images of King George VI and President Lebrun but the war intervened and the stamp was never issued.

However, items in the British Postal Museum tell a somewhat different story<sup>4</sup>. The initial proposal in December 1939 for a joint Anglo-French stamp had no connection with the royal visit of July 1938 but simply a desire to show solidarity with France following the joint declaration of war on Germany. Shortly afterwards there was a passing reference to the earlier stamp but all that followed was concentrated on the desire for solidarity. For six months there were discussions and negotiations both internally within the countries and between the two administrations, particularly involving the two artists, Edmund Dulac and Henri Cheffer. A design including the heads of George VI and President Lebrun was soon agreed upon but there were interminable arguments over the size of the heads, the decoration and images around them and many other details. These continued until on 17 June 1940 when the French government signed an armistice agreement with the German regime. Given that there was no longer an independent French administration with which to show solidarity, the stamp project came to a sudden halt.

The background story of this stamp having been ascertained there remains the question of what is the status of my colleague's item which, though superficially the same, has a number of key differences, including King George VI facing to his right, and with very different representations of British and French life. The project for a joint stamp produced a plethora of essays and proofs. Is the illustrated item one of these?

Is any reader able to cast light on the design in question?

<sup>1</sup> For detailed information on the stamp see *The 1F75 Royal Visit of King George VI and Queen Elizabeth to France*, Mick Bister, Parts I, II and III, Journals No 220-222, June, September and December 2001 and an update in Journal 226, December 2002.

<sup>2</sup> Yvert & Tellier, *Catalogue de Cotation, Timbres de France*, 2021, page 1201.

<sup>3</sup> *Timbroscopie*, February 1991, pp 48 and 49.

<sup>4</sup> See website reference: [https://catalogue.postalmuseum.org/collections/getrecord/GB813\\_P\\_150\\_05\\_04\\_03](https://catalogue.postalmuseum.org/collections/getrecord/GB813_P_150_05_04_03)

Michael Meadowcroft



## Redirection of International Mail at the Original Rate



A postcard sent from Paris on 8 August 1924 to Groningen in the Netherlands is depicted above. On arrival, it turned out that the addressee did not live in the Netherlands but in the Dutch East Indies. The postcard was forwarded to Palembang where it arrived on 26 September 1924 without any additional taxation. The question is, on which instructions was this based?

Although there is quite a difference in distance between Paris-Groningen (600 km) and Paris-Palembang (11.000 km) the international postcard rate was the same. Between 1 April 1924 and 16 July 1925, the rate from France was 45 centimes for a card with more than 5 words: both destinations belonged to countries that were members of the Universal Postal Union (UPU).

So, the question regarding the rate applied here concentrates on the costs of forwarding. For the exact rules we have to go back to the source: the conference proceedings of the UPU and the conventions that were made at these conferences. The report of the conference of Paris (1878) tells us that Article XX of the postal treaty should henceforth be interpreted as follows:

*...les correspondances de toute nature adressées, dans l'Union, à des destinataires ayant changé de résidence*

*sont traitées par l'office distributeur, comme si elles avaient été adressées directement de lieu d'origine au lieu de la nouvelle destination...*

... correspondence of any kind addressed, within the Union, to recipients who have changed their residence is treated by the delivery office, as if it had been sent directly from the place of origin to the new destination ...

Hereafter, Article XX gives further comments about how and when extra postage may/must be levied, for example when there was no franking or when the franking was insufficient, which was not the case with our card.

The UPU Madrid convention (1920) which was applicable at the time this card was mailed, has the same provisions as the treaty of 1878: all mail correctly franked and sent to a destination within the Union could be redirected without additional costs to another destination as long as it was within the UPU area. The detailed regulations made up in Madrid tell us in article XXVI, paragraph 5:

*"Missent correspondence of all kinds is redirected without delay, by the quickest route, to its destination".*

Edwin Voerman and Jan Vellekoop

## Cancellations and rates applying to French newspapers

The Society recently had a query from Mr. S.K. from India:

Hello, I am a thematic collector and exhibitor from India. I came across an interesting philatelic item - *Journal de L'Espoir* - which was printed in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. The journal was printed on a paper with stamp pre-affixed. I found few samples online.

I would like to know about the postal rates for Newspapers / Journal in France during the 1870s. Would you have any information on the same for me, please? Also, I would be glad if there is more information on this *Espoir* journal and why it was printed on a paper pre-affixed with stamps.

I see that all the papers have 2c postage except the 1879 one which has 1c postage. Also I find that only one stamp is pre-printed on the paper over which the content is printed, whereas the other stamp is pasted later and cancelled.

I would be really happy with any information about this journal and the postage rates of those years. It's very rare to find a newspaper that was printed over a stamped paper and hence my interest in the items. The example images were extracted from [www.delcampe.net](http://www.delcampe.net)\*

Thank you.

**Peter Kelly** replies.

I am writing to you in response to your request for information on two points concerning the cancellations and rates applying to French newspapers with the following franking.

18 April 1873 2c typographical cancel + 2c post office cancel.

4 September 1873 the same

20 January 1877 the same

18 April 1878 the same

1879 (date not clear) 1c typographical + 1c post office cancel.

### 1. Typographical cancellation.

From about 1869 and exceptionally earlier, the Post Office tolerated the practice employed by newspapers of affixing stamps to the news-sheet prior to printing, with the stamps being considered as being cancelled once the printing process had taken place and they had been printed over. The purpose of this was to speed up the process of last-minute printing before the papers went out to the post office.

The stamp that was typographically cancelled was typically one that covered the reduced rate applied to local usage within the circumscription of the office concerned or within a large town. This was the obvious choice as an additional stamp could be applied to cover territorial use which would then have to be cancelled at the post office with their circular date stamp.



*Journal de L'Espoir* -

Top to bottom - 18 April 1873, 4 September 1873, 20 January 1877, 18 April 1878, (3 April ?) 1879

\* Images are reduced and have been enhanced from screen resolution. It was felt that it be more important to show readers the examples rather than not show at all. Visit [www.delcampe.net](http://www.delcampe.net) to see what is left of the originals. Editor.



## 2. Postage rates.

The postage rate structure for journals / newspapers, in France was extremely complex.

As far as your examples are concerned, we have to start with the tariff of 1 August 1856 that separates newspapers into two categories.

- Journals and periodicals covering politics and social economy;
- Journals and periodicals confined to non-political issues, such as letters, the arts, science, agriculture and industry.

These two categories are each broken down into two further categories:

- Local mail. Described as being sent within the circumscription of the post office or within a town;
- Territorial mail outside of the above.

(There is the added exception of the departments of Seine and Seine & Oise where no reduction is applied to local usage.)

The postage rates were:

Territorial rate 4c to 40g + 1c per additional 10g

Local rate 2c to 20g + 1c per additional 20g.

All of your examples prior to 1 May 1878 were subject to these rates. The newspaper *L'Espoir* was registered as being political for postal purposes and was published in the department of Ardennes.

Your newspapers would have been sent at the territorial rate.

A new rate came into force on 1 May 1878 that simplified matters in that a single territorial and local rate was applied irrespective of whether the newspaper was registered as being political or non-political.

The new rates were as follows:

- Outside the department of publication or adjoining department 2c to 25g, 3c to 50g + 1c per additional 25g.
- Published inside the department of Seine and Seine & Oise and sent within department of publication 1c to 25g, 1 ½ c to 50g + ½ c per additional 25g
- Published in any other department and sent within the department or the adjoining one 1c to 50g + ½ c per additional 25g.

Your example rated 2c could fall into any of these three categories but I believe it was the first one that is the most likely. If you had the entire journal the weight would give you the answer.

Peter R.A.Kelly

## A Postcard Mystery



Can anyone establish what the scene on this card represents? **Peter Maybury** suggests that it commemorates the victory by the Sardinians and the French over Austria in

1858. As we know this resulted in the transfer of Savoy to France. The card is available free to anyone who wishes, please contact Peter Maybury: [mayburyjp@gmail.com](mailto:mayburyjp@gmail.com)

## What is this? (1)

By inclination, I am a story-teller. When a stamp or an image doesn't seem normal, I want to understand it. These three Journal pieces will cover several postal markings that didn't seem normal, and were not. By the way, some of the stamps are in poor condition, but they 'carry the story' successfully.

Coloured cancels almost always are interesting. The cancel on this stamp was blue and the country didn't make sense. After some study, the cancel was deciphered as \*COTE-D'OR ET GABON\* at the top and GABON at the bottom. Initial efforts to answer "What Is This?" were mis-directed by the existence of the French *département* of Côte D'Or. Why would it have appeared on a Colonies General stamp? When researching the 'Gabon' part of the cancel, the Dallay Africa catalogue revealed that today's Ivory Coast was called Côte D'Or until March 10, 1893. It was administered by the French colony of Gabon until June 16, 1886. With this information, the 'Côte D'Or' mentally was placed in Africa rather than European France.

Dallay gives a four-digit euro price for a cancel with \*COTE-D'OR--GABON\* at the top and GABON at the bottom, which does not exactly match what is on this stamp.



Dallay does, however, give illustrations of twelve Sage-issue stamps used in Gabon, all with the 'ET GABON' phase. I have seen this cancel on head-of-Cérès stamps, on Sage-issue stamps, and on the Dubois issue, and in black as well as blue.

Aside: the missing year in the postmark is between 1881 (when the Dubois issue went into use in Gabon) and 1885 (because the '8 NOV.' postmark should be from before 16 June 1886). When discussing the cancel with a fellow

member of the Society, I commented that the possible high catalogue price might mean the cancel was fake. My friend, much more experienced and knowledgeable than I am, opined that the cancel probably was genuine as a fake would be much more

legible! A more legible version of the cancel is the computer-crafted one in the separate image.

Some administrative details: a useful on-line resource for French domestic cancellations is Guy Maggay's web site at: <http://www.marcophilie.org/> While M. Maggay's site does not include the Côte D'Or et Gabon cancel, it does illustrate the dotted-circle-inside-solid-circle format as being a colonies cancel.

If you have any questions or comments you can contact me, **Stan Fairchild** at [napoleon@voyager.net](mailto:napoleon@voyager.net)

ooooo0ooooo

## What is this? (2)



One of the two is a 25 centime bistre Sage with what looks like a tyre-tread cancel. It looks similar to cancels for Savoy or San Marino. The postmark on the stamp seems to be a standard Sage-era French domestic one. The second stamp is a 2 centime Dubois with what appears to be a somewhat

circular text cancel, ending in OCPK.

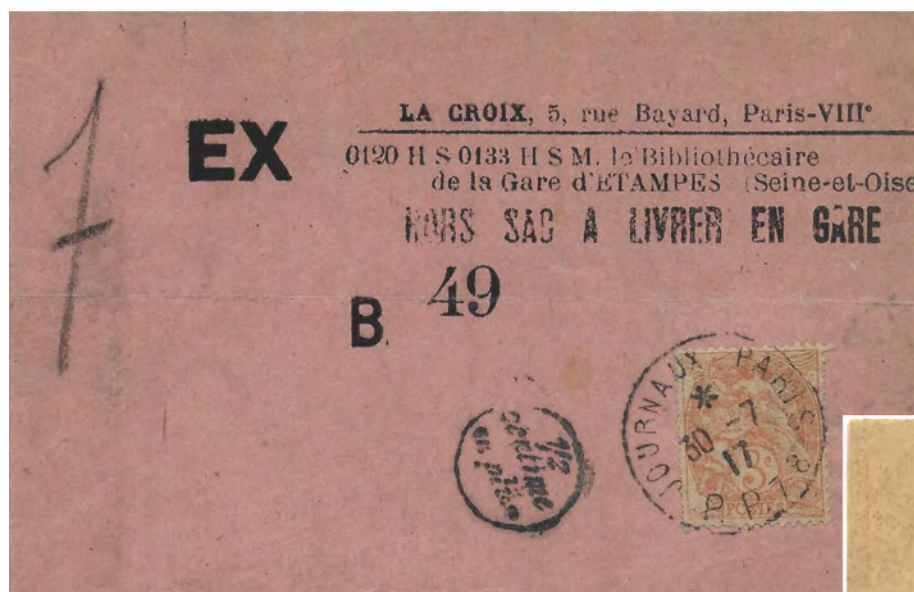
If you can add to my knowledge, I would appreciate it. You can send comments and questions to me, **Stan Fairchild** at [napoleon@voyager.net](mailto:napoleon@voyager.net)

ooooo0ooooo



## What is this? (3)

$\frac{1}{2}$  centime *en plus*



30 July 1917  $\frac{3}{2}$  centimes for 7 copies posted in a bundle to a department adjoining Paris  
The tariff of 1 June 1908 was  $\frac{1}{2}$  centime up to 50 grams to the department of publication or an adjacent one



This is not a surcharge, an overprint, or a cancellation. Only by chance does it appear on a stamp. Perhaps because of the three things it isn't, few catalogues list this postal marking. Fortunately, my interest in French stamps began when the Yvert et Tellier catalogue was the most readily available resource book, and Y&T does document the marking. The circle-and-contents was first used in 1884. Y&T lists it as a surcharge, under 'Journaux' with the understanding that it represented payment of an additional  $\frac{1}{2}$  centime to mail a newspaper. Y&T prices its use on five low denomination Sage-era stamps, YT 83 (1 centime), YT 85 (2 centimes), YT 87 (3 centimes), YT 88 (4 centimes), and YT 75 (5 centimes). The 2003 catalogue values range from 11.50 Euros to 34.50 Euros. The Y&T illustration

misleadingly shows the phrase mostly on the stamp, but the image in this FCPS piece clearly shows the marking well away from the stamp.

[**Editor's note:** that invaluable publication by Derek Richardson, *Tables of French Postal Rates* explains this further under 'newspaper rates'. From 1884 a number of newspaper rates gave rise to a  $\frac{1}{2}$  centime step but no postage stamp was available.]

Stan Fairchild

## French Colonies General Issues

In answer to **Stan Fairchild's** queries on detached stamps (F&CPS Journal 295 April 2021, page 49):

The 15c imperf colonial Sage has been answered by **Michael Round**.

The 4c *Alphée* with a blue vertical mark and something else to its right. I do not believe that this is a recognized surcharge.

It is sometimes difficult to work out which colony has used colonial General Issues but as far as surcharges are concerned this has been addressed by Yvert. According to *Tome 2-1, Timbres des Colonies Françaises*, none of the colonies using the *Alphée* issue issued a '1' surcharge. (Look under *Colonies Françaises* in the index.)

The 1 franc Sage cancelled with AFFRANCHISSEMENTS / LE HAVRES IN... I have recorded an example of this on cover and Stan is right that Mathieu did not list it. It is relatively scarce, I would have thought. This date stamp was used principally on registered mail although sometimes on letters as well.

STAN... / GALATA on 25c Sage: Galata and Stamboul are two different districts in Constantinople and the combination of the names of both districts on a single date stamp would not be possible.

The date stamp reads [CON]STAN[TINOPLE] / GALATA. Type 15 issued in 1879.

Peter R.A.Kelly

## Congo Français correction

**Simon Binsted** advises a change to the opening date of the Mongoumba post office (F&CPS Journal 295 April 2021, page 21). **Marc Parren** followed that up and has ascertained that a decision was made to open an office there on 11 June 1905. It duly opened on 1 August 1905.

### **DÉCISIONS DU COMMISSAIRE GÉNÉRAL chargé du Gouvernement de la colonie du Moyen-Congo.**

*En date du 11 juin 1905*

*Un bureau de poste auxiliaire, dont la gérance sera confiée au sous-officier remplissant les fonctions d'agent spécial, sera ouvert pour dater du 1er août 1905 à Mongoumba.*

*Ce bureau participera au service de la recommandation et pourra échanger des dépêches closes avec les bureaux de Loukoléla, Bangui et Brazzaville.*

*Ce dernier bureau sera chargé d'approvisionner celui de Mongoumba en timbres-poste et autres valeurs postales.*

*La comptabilité de ces valeurs sera tenue conformément aux dispositions de l'arrêté local du 15 décembre 1900.*

*L'agent désigné pour assurer la gérance du nouveau bureau prêter par écrit le serment exigé par la loi. Il percevra une indemnité mensuelle de 20 francs, imputable au chapitre III, article 3, paragraphe 1er, du budget du Moyen-Congo.*

*Les termes de l'arrêté du 25 juin 1904, autorisant le service des Postes et Télégraphes à expédier, par quelque occasion que ce soit, comme plis ordinaires, tous les objets recommandés qui parviendront pour les fonctionnaires, les militaires ou les commerçants habitant loin des bureaux, s'appliqueront en entier au nouveau bureau auxiliaire des Postes de Mongoumba.*



Mongoumba Congo-Français  
postmark 1 February 1906

### **DECISIONS OF THE COMMISSIONER GENERAL in charge of the government of the colony of Middle Congo.**

11 June 1905

A sub-post office, the management of which will be entrusted to the non-commissioned officer fulfilling the functions of a special postal agent, will be opened from 1 August 1905 in Mongoumba.

This office will handle registered letters and will be able to exchange closed dispatches with the Loukoléla, Bangui and Brazzaville offices.

This last office will be in charge of supplying that at Mongoumba with postage stamps and other postal items of value.

The accounts of these will be kept in accordance with the provisions of the local decree of 15 December 1900.

The officer appointed to manage the new office will take the oath required by law in writing. He will receive a monthly allowance of 20 francs, chargeable to chapter III, article 3, paragraph 1, of the budget of the Moyen-Congo.

The terms of the decree of June 25 1904, authorizing the Post and Telegraph service to send, as occasion demands, as ordinary mail, all registered items intended for officials, soldiers or traders living far from post offices, will apply in full to the new sub-post office in Mongoumba.

## Classic Forgeries Query: (2) Cérés. A forger's forgery?



"I have recently started collecting the first issue of French stamps (1849-1850 Cérés). Fully aware that this area is a minefield in so far as forgeries are concerned, I got hold of the *Serrane* and *Brun* guides to fakes and forgeries to hopefully enable me to identify any problem stamps. However I quickly realised that this is far from an easy task.

I bought the attached stamp as a Sperati forgery, but upon submission to Monsieur Brun, it turned out that while it is indeed forged, it is NOT a Sperati forgery. So one must also be wary of forgeries posing as the products of other forgers!

What are the tell-tale signs of this forgery that I should have spotted?

Thanks in advance to whoever may offer much needed guidance."

[Editor's note: An enlarged image may be viewed in the F&CPS website Forum.]

**Ray Abela**



## Les timbres-poste ‘Changement de tarif’

Before the introduction of the *timbres à validité permanente* (TVP) in 1993, the postal authorities faced a difficult problem each time the postal tariff changed. The date at which the change was to take place was fixed in advance but the actual increase which was imposed by the government was not decided until much nearer the date. This resulted in an unacceptable rush to print and distribute the new stamps.

A further problem existed in the large quantities of low value stamps required to be added to the current value to uprate it to the new tariff. Quantities of these stamps also had to be produced and distributed which would only be required for a short period until all the old values were exhausted.

This was a costly and time-consuming operation.

A new stamp was created named the *changement de tarif*, which enabled the administration to have a stamp without a defined value pending the government decision on the new rate.

The first stamps of this type, the *Liberté de Gandon*, had no expressed value and were marked ‘A’. Two stamps were envisaged: green 1F90 (*plis non-urgents*) and red 2F20 (*lettres prioritaire*). In the event, only the green stamp was issued, on 1 August 1986 (Figure 1). The red stamp was printed but not issued; a number of sheets are conserved in the postal museum.



Figure 1  
1986 *Liberté de Gandon*  
Stamp ‘A’



Figure 2  
1987 *Liberté de Gandon*  
Stamp ‘B’

Similar stamps were issued: in 1987, the ‘B’ green (Figure 2), in 1990, the ‘C’ green and red (Figure 3) and, in 1991, the

‘D’ green and red (Figure 4). They were only valid during the change-over period.



Figure 3  
1990 *Liberté de Gandon*  
Stamps ‘C’



Figure 4  
1991 *Marianne du Bicentenaire*  
Stamps ‘D’

In 1993, the first TVP stamp was issued. This simplified the whole change-over procedure, there being now no need to

print new stamps whenever the tariff changed, as the TVP's value remained valid for purpose indefinitely.

Richard Broadhurst

## Censorship of Civilian Mail in Madagascar During World War Two

John Parmenter has very kindly given our Society permission to extract and reformat pages from his latest book *Censorship of Civilian Mail in Madagascar During World War Two*. We will begin the first instalment in the December Journal with a selection of pages prior to the Allied Invasion of 5 May 1942.

John's book was reviewed by Michael Round in Issue 293, December 2020.

Readers who have an interest in this area but are disinclined to wait six months to enjoy the extracts may purchase a copy directly from John for £17.50 including P&P (U.K.). John's email is [publications@fcps.org.uk](mailto:publications@fcps.org.uk)

## BOOKSHELF

Compiled by Michael Round

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



... and if anything deserves a full review in due course, it'll be *Les surcharges locales de 1992 à 1997 aux Comores* by Olivier Bergossi, world leader in this field. Readers may recall his masterly coverage of post-independence Comoros in *Comores indépendantes – Mayotte, Histoire postale et Philatélie 1975-2015*, which I reviewed here (under its working title *Archipel des Comores, 40 ans de Philatélie depuis l'indépendance en 1975*) in December 2017. During the period in question, the Comoros issued around 124 surcharges. Many of them exist in quantities of fewer than 20 or even 10: of some, only one copy is known! With unrivalled access to post offices, correspondents, archives, documents and even printer's waste, M Bergossi has enough material to fill 486 fully illustrated A4 pages. Readers who can't wait for my review can order "blind" with confidence, direct from the author (email [olivier.bergossi@free.fr](mailto:olivier.bergossi@free.fr)). Price 49€ plus 10€ postage, and worth every eurocent if you collect the Comoros!

Red Cross material certainly has adherents among the F&CPS. May I draw their attention to *Le Philatéliste Croix-Rouge*, the bulletin of the *Club Thématique Croix-Rouge* (20 rue Carnot, 95690 Nesles la Vallée). With 161 issues already under its collective belt, it's understandable that the contents are not confined to France and Colonies but range worldwide.

*Marianne*, the unsurprisingly titled journal of the *Cercle des Amis de Marianne* (49 rue du 11 novembre 45400 Fleury les Aubrais) has reached issue No. 130 (1er trim 2021). Features this time include papers and gums on the Sabine issue, some less-known aspects of Marianne de Lamouche, and the first part of a coverage of commemorative depictions of – you've guessed it – Marianne.

Two new books aim firmly at airmail-lovers.

The name and face of Noguès will be familiar to collectors of France through the handsome portrait issue of 1951 (SG 1128): *Maurice Noguès vers l'Asie avec la nuit* is a luxurious 192-page biography by Bernard Bacquié, adorned with 260 photos and documents, culminating in the *Dewoitine Emeraude* tragedy of 1934. Price: 30€ plus postage (4.50€ within France); available from B. Bacquié, Editions Latérales, 24 clos de la Llanura, B-33, 31130 Balma [Haute-Garonne] ([www.editionslaterales.com](http://www.editionslaterales.com)).



From pilot to plane: *Air France et le Breguet Deux-Ponts* tells of the last propeller-driven plane to be devised and built in France. The story fills 320 pages, augmented with 280 rare photos. Contact La Boutique du Musée Air France (Aérogare des Invalides). Price 35€ plus postage. website [www.boutiquemuseeairfrance.com](http://www.boutiquemuseeairfrance.com)



# 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° 231 Mar 2021: Les ballons de la Commune de Paris (Sinai); Alsace-Lorraine – Les cachets touristiques pendant la seconde guerre mondiale (Chauvin); Jacques Doriot: de la célébration de la Commune à celle de l'Allemagne nazie (Sinai); Il y a 150 ans la Commune de Paris prenait le pouvoir [cartes postales] (Zeyons); Saint-Pierre-et-Miquelon 1947: une série puissante (Chauvin); Détails de la Petite poste (de La Mettrie); Répertoire des départements ayant utilisé des affranchissements de fortune suite à la défaite de 1940 (Partie V) (Sinai).

N° 232 Apr 2021: Alsace-Lorraine – Les cachets touristiques pendant la seconde guerre mondiale (Partie 2) (Chauvin); Les Pieds Nickelés facteurs reçoivent le mérite agricole (Mennessiez); Les surcharges fiscales manuscrites de 1871 (Danan); Le souvenir postal napoléonien (Aupiais); Personnages insolites et autres phénomènes des collections cartophiles (Zeyons); Quelques dateurs des boîtes mobiles (de La Mettrie); Le coup de cœur de la CNEP: L'oblitération avec mention «Premier Jour» (Farcigny).

N° 233 May 2021: Marc Pourpe: ses aérogrammes sont les «vermillons» de l'aérophilatélie (1<sup>ère</sup> partie) (Sinai); Timbres-taxe? Préoblitérés? Les recouvrements: des timbres peu banals (Hervé); Les Français au Vietnam (Coutant); Les «soignants». Honorés par la philatélie depuis plus d'un siècle (Tourancheau); Images du 1<sup>er</sup> Mai (Zeyons); Des «à-côtés» de la guerre de 1870 (de La Mettrie); Le coup de cœur de la CNEP: 150<sup>e</sup> anniversaire de la CNEP (-).

N° 234 Jun 2021: Marc Pourpe: ses aérogrammes sont les «vermillons» de l'aérophilatélie (2<sup>ème</sup> partie) (Sinai); La Beauté de Palmyre: un carnet précurseur? [les essais de la Maison Chambon en Syrie] (Gomez); Les faux Pétain de «Défense de la France»: du nouveau (Sinai); Les timbres avions de la France Libre (1<sup>ère</sup> partie) (Chauvin); Les cartes postales napoléoniennes (Zeyons); Répertoire des départements ayant utilisé des affranchissements de fortune suite à la défaite de 1940 (Partie VI) (Sinai); Le coup de cœur de la CNEP: Le Musée postal de France (Caron).

## *L'Écho de la Timbrologie*

N° 1959 Mar 2021 La poste napoléonienne en Italie (Bogoni); Terre Adélie, campagne d'été 2017-2018 (3/3) (Venturini).

N° 1960 Apr 2021: Terre Adélie, hivernage 2018 (Venturini).

N° 1961 May 2021: Il y a 40 ans: François Mitterrand était élu à la présidence de la République (Sollin); 1910, la crue centennale à Boulogne et à Billancourt (Delmotte); Campagne d'été en Terre Adélie (2018-2019) (1/3) (Venturini).

N° 1962 Jun 2021: Campagne d'été en Terre Adélie (2018-2019) (2/3) (Venturini).

## *Bulletin COL.FRA*

N° 175 1<sup>er</sup> trim 2021: Courrier et Poste des Missions Norvégiennes à Madagascar (1867-1897) (suite et fin) (Monteret); Togo: Le timbre à date STATION PALIME (2<sup>ème</sup> partie: usage sur les courriers de 1914 à 1921) (Girardin); Histoires de graveurs et de gravures (suite et fin) (Puech); Républiques libanaise et syrienne du mandat français à l'indépendance (Drye); Les relations postales entre la France et les États du Levant à l'indépendance (Hurpet); Le losange muet de Yanaon (Rohmer).

## *France & Colonies Philatelist*

Vol 77 N° 2 (Whole N° 344) Apr 2021: Addendum – Senegal: Prepayment of Postage in Cash during January 1902 (Mattei); Poste Restante Tax Oran 1932 (Rasmussen); Modern French-Area Proofs, Part III: Trial Color Proofs (Elliott); Perforated Registration Labels (Bratzel).

## *Documents Philatéliques*

N° 248 (2<sup>e</sup> trim 2021) Apr 2021: L'acheminement par avion du courrier de Nouvelle-Calédonie pendant la Seconde Guerre mondiale, de la déclaration de guerre (3 septembre 1939) à l'attaque de Pearl Harbor (7 décembre 1941) (1<sup>ère</sup> partie) (Ayache); La généralisation des bandes phosphorescentes au type D – Conséquences de l'arrêt de la presse TD6-5 pour l'impression de timbres-poste (Gervais); Les réimpressions des entiers postaux pour l'exposition de 1900 (Rykner).

## *The Indo-China Philatelist*

Vol LI N° 2 (Whole N° 247) Mar 2021: Pétain's Emblem [Indo-China Handstamp 1943] (Bentley); A Cover Too Good to be True [Indo-China 1944] (Bentley & Goanvic); Collecting Viet Cong Stamps (Cartafalsa); More Botanical Garden Stationery Cards from Indo-China (Dykhouse); Lao Lady on the 100-Piastre Banknote (Moallem).

Vol LI N° 3 (Whole N° 248) May 2021: Handstamp Mimicking a Label [Indochina 1933] (Bentley); Vietnam Peace Movement Ephemera in Europe (Wiert); Spectacular Error – Second Glance [Vietnam 1958] (Düring); Catalogue of North Vietnam Stamp Errors and Varieties (Düring); Other Objects (Bentley).

## *Les Feuilles Marcophiles*

N° 384 (Mar 2021): 1858, création d'un cas spécifique de récépissé de chargement (suite) (Chouteau); Le courrier de Frau Marga Müller ou les tribulations du courrier en Chine en 1911 (Partie 1: contexte) (Bonnet & Dutau); Aimé Robert Merle d'Aubigné achemineur de lettres du Levant pour la France (Desroche); Les signatures maçonniques aux XVIII<sup>e</sup> et XIX<sup>e</sup> siècles (Tixier); Le bureau de poste de la Tour Eiffel (Lavenas).

## *Le Maghrebophila*

N° 33 Mar 2021: Fantaisies marocaines (Sanchez).

## Books Noted

*150 ans de la Guerre de 1870-1871* – series of 6 works published by SPAL:

– *La Guerre de 1870-1871 en Alsace-Lorraine à travers l'histoire postale* by members of SPAL. 104pp; price 25€

– *Les premières étiquettes de recommandation en Alsace-Lorraine, 1870-1875* by P Boutserin. 76pp; price 10€

– *Les cartes de correspondance de la Croix-Rouge en Alsace en 1870* by P Boutserin. 36pp; price 25€

– *Les premières cartes postales civiles dans les territoires français occupés en 1870-1871* by G Feutren & G Fortin. 90pp; price 25€

– *Le bulletin d'accompagnement des colis postaux en Alsace-Lorraine, 1871-1876* by M Frick. 116pp; price 25€

– *Les débuts de la poste ferroviaire prussienne en Alsace-Lorraine, mars à décembre 1871* by M Frick. 84pp; price 25€

All available (plus p&p) from Gilles Feutren, 31 rue du Belvédère, 68100 Mulhouse or [editions-spal@outlook.fr](mailto:editions-spal@outlook.fr)

Maurice Tyler

## AU COIN DES NÉOPHYTES

This is intended to be a new regular feature in our journal. Its aim is to encourage members to share with us items of particular interest from their collections. They do not have to be great rarities, simply unusual and interesting elements of philately. They could, for example, illustrate a particular postal regulation or an unusual route taken by a letter, or especially interesting contents of a letter or an unusual franking. The possibilities are endless but the intention is that we all enjoy reading about it and perhaps learn something new.

The 'coin' will be run by Peter Kelly who will select items offered for publication. Those interested should contact him at [peterkelly35@btinternet.com](mailto:peterkelly35@btinternet.com). Articles should be sent to him by email. Illustrations should be scanned at 300dpi and must be separated from the text.

Peter looks forward to hearing from members and starts the ball rolling with the following:

### Problems with reply paid letter cards sent out of the country of issue

The illustration is of the reply half of a reply paid lettercard sent from Belgium to France on 14 July 1899. The lettercard is designed for inland use and has the imprint of a 15c Sage stamp paying the inland rate (tariff of 1 May 1878). The person replying has realised that the UPU rate for foreign mail from Belgium is 25c (the Belgian franc was at parity with the French Franc) and has added a Belgian 10c stamp to make up the difference and posted it at Namur station. The office there marked it with the 'T' and added in manuscript '0.15' as the deficit. The lettercard returned to Vichy where it was taxed at double the deficiency shown and added the 30c *chiffre taxe*.

At first sight this all looks quite straightforward but there are errors that require explanation.

1. While the use of the reply paid postcard sent between members of the UPU was accepted for use internationally, requests by countries to accept reply paid letter cards used between member countries were not adopted. France first produced a reply paid letter card in 1894 stamped for the inland rate. We do not know what treatment the letter card illustrated here met with but it was correct for the reply half to be taxed. The UPU



stance was quite clear. The reply half had to be franked at the full foreign letter rate in the stamps of the country from where it was to be sent. (It was not until 1906 that the UPU accepted the use of reply paid lettercards. France produced its first cards in 1905 and 1906.)

2. The second error was in the taxation of the letter by Vichy. They taxed the letter at the full unpaid letter rate of 30c. This failed to take into consideration the value of the impressed 15c sage stamp and the correct taxation would have been 30c less the value of the Sage stamp of 15c = 15c. This is quite logical because the French Post Office had already received payment for the stamp at the time the lettercard was purchased.

Peter R.A.Kelly