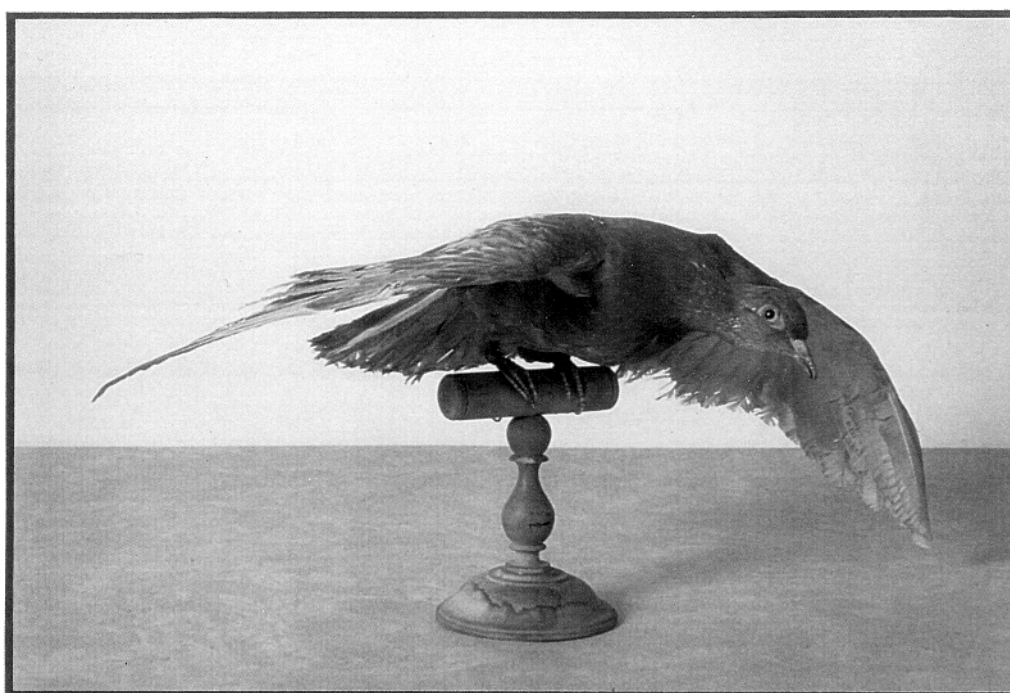


ISSN 0269-5006

# **The Journal of the France & Colonies Philatelic Society**



M Cassier's Pigeon, preserved in the Musée de la Poste  
© Musée de la Poste, Paris  
(See the end of the article on the Pigeon Post, page 48)



**Volume 52 ● Number 2**  
**June 2002**  
**Whole Number 224**

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

## **Officers**

President, 2002-2003: M L Bister, 7 The Slade, Wrestlingworth, Sandy, Beds. SG19 2ES.

Vice-President, 2002-2003: M S Tyler

Programme Secretary, 2002-2003: A Lawrence

General Secretary, 2002-2003: R G Gethin, 5 Meriden Close, Bromley, Kent BR1 2UF

## **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 and applications for membership should be addressed to the General Secretary.

## **2002 Subscription Rates**

United Kingdom: £10.00, Europe: £12.00, Elsewhere: £15.00.

Treasurer: C J Hitchen, 36 Everton Road, Croydon CR0 6LA.

The Society's Girobank account number is 39 784 9001.

## **The Journal**

The Society's *Journal* is published in March, June, September and December.

It is printed by Direct Offset, 27c High Street, Glastonbury, Somerset BA6 9DD from the Editor's camera ready copy.

The price is included in Members' subscriptions.

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## **Auction and Exchange Packet Sales**

Lots for sale through the Society auctions, held 3 or 4 times a year, should be sent to the Auction Secretary,  
M L Bister, 7 The Slade, Wrestlingworth, Sandy, Beds. SG19 2ES.

Please send material for circulation in booklet form to the appropriate Exchange Packet Secretary, viz.

France: Mrs M Pavey, 15 St Ronan's Terrace, Innerleithen, Peeblesshire EH44 6RB;

Colonies: J West, 5 Highbanks Road, Hatch End, Pinner, Middlesex HA5 4AR.

## **The Library**

Members are invited to avail themselves of the services of the Society's substantial library, on terms set out in the Library  
List distributed to all Members.

Librarian: G E Barker, 13 Rodney Way, Guildford GU1 2NY.

## **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:

D A Pashby, 148 Glengall Road, Woodford Green, Essex IG8 0DS.

## **Journal Correspondents**

Paris: J M Simmons

Southern Group: C W Spong

Northern Group: C S Holder

\* \* \*

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

Editor: M S Tyler, 56 Mortons Fork, Blue Bridge, Milton Keynes MK13 0LA  
E-mail: MSTyler@romanpark.freemove.co.uk

**Volume 52 Number 2**

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## CONTENTS

Society Notes .....	42
A Message brought to Paris by Pigeon Post in 1870-71 (A Lawrence) .....	43
French Andorra - the Merson Stamps (W A Jacques) .....	49
Interzone Mail (1940-1944) - Part 1 (R E Reader) .....	51
List of Recently Published Articles (C W Spong) .....	60
Pages from My Collection (17): French West Africa – not just a few pretty pictures (W G Mitchell) .....	61
Amazing 1870-71 Wonder Stories - 68 (E M Cohn) .....	64
July 2002 Auction - selected lots illustrated (M L Bister) .....	65, cover page iii
Index to Subjects in Amazing 1870-71 Wonder Stories (E M Cohn) .....	66
February 2002 Auction Realisations (M L Bister) .....	68
Bookshelf: Books Noted (C W Spong, M S Tyler) .....	69
Shorter Items - including Questions and Answers .....	70
Double Cancellation on Presidency Stamps (R F Cheshire) .....	70
Essays: The Bordès Proposal (A J Wood) .....	70
Inspectors' Marks (Small Number in Circle) (J P Maybury) .....	71
Service Suspended: Guatemala, June 1988 (R I Johnson) .....	71
Indo-China Postage Dues (D Taylor Smith) .....	72
POW Camp in Kenya (C W Spong, G Barot) .....	72
Dépôt de l'Armée Polonaise, Vitre (A G Leguen de Lacroix) .....	75
Reports of Meetings .....	77
Main Society Meeting of 2 March 2002 (MST, CWS) .....	77
Society's 26th Philatelic Weekend 8-10 March 2002 (MST) .....	78, cover page iv
Main Society Meeting of 27 March 2002 (MST) .....	82
Southern Group Meeting of 13 April 2002 (CWS) .....	83
Main Society Meeting of 24 April 2002 (MST) .....	83

## SOCIETY NOTES

### New Members

The Society is pleased to welcome the following:

1189 Rene Jorgensen (Denmark), 1190 COL.FRA (France), 1191 John Scott (London), 1192 Andrew K Higgins (Kent), 1193 Desmond Grocott (Cornwall), 1194 Roy Summers (Staffordshire), 1195 Dr J D Wriggles (Cheshire), 1196 R W Oakley (Worcester), 1197 R Stock (Wirral), 1198 J Sussex (York), 1199 D S Mclellan (Surrey), 1200 J A Seeley (Dorset), 1201 T M Scott (Sheffield), 1202 C Carpenter (Kent).

\* \* \*

### Members Deceased

We are sorry to hear of the death of the following members, and offer our sincere condolences to their families:

735 Mrs H M Hopper, 1117 J M Dearden.

\* \* \*

### Corrigenda

Member number 1174 should read L Salton (not Sawton as reported in Journal 221).

In the Register of Members' Interests, the following e-mail addresses should be substituted for those given:

Chris Hitchen: [chrisj@chitchen.freemove.co.uk](mailto:chrisj@chitchen.freemove.co.uk)  
Roland Goutay: [roland.goutay@wanadoo.fr](mailto:roland.goutay@wanadoo.fr)

\* \* \*

### Exhibition Successes

The following member of the Society is to be congratulated on his achievement:

**Ed Grabowski** gained a Gold Medal at the Philadelphia National Stamp Exhibition 2001 (West Chester, October) for French Colonial Allegorical Group Type: Use, Misuse and Non-Use in Madagascar and Dependencies".

\* \* \*

### New Secretary

All members should note that the new General Secretary, elected at the recent AGM, is Geoff Gethin. He is also incorporating the role of Membership Secretary, and all future applications, enquiries and correspondence should be addressed to him at the address given on the inside front cover of this Journal.

Derek Richardson and Alec Swain are standing down as officers after many years of dedicated service, and tribute was paid to their wholehearted commitment to the Society at the AGM, which will be reported in full in the next issue of the Journal.

\* \* \*

### F&CPS Literature Awards

The 2001 Literature Awards are as follows:

1. "The 1F75 Royal Visit of King George VI and Queen Elizabeth to France": **Mick Bister**
2. "The Cancellations of *Bureaux de Recette, Facteurs Boitiers and Bureaux Auxiliaires* 1876-1900": Peter Kelly
- 3= "A 20F Pont du Gard Perforation 11x11 Variety": David Jennings-Bramley
- 3= "French Internment Camps, Chapter 16; Septfonds (Tarn-et-Garonne)": Derek Richardson.

The judging panel this year comprised Norman Collier, Arthur Dent, Prue Henderson, Dan Hogarth and Robert Larg, and was convened by Colin Spong.

\* \* \*

### Philatelic Honours

Congratulations to **Barrie Jay** who has been awarded the prestigious Tilleard Medal for 2002 by the Royal Philatelic Society, London.

\* \* \*

### Philatelic Literature

Copies of their latest "Listing of Philatelic Literature" are available free on request by writing to James Bendon Ltd, P O Box 56484, 3307 Limassol, Cyprus, or by e-mail to [books@JamesBendon.com](mailto:books@JamesBendon.com), or may be seen on their web site [www.JamesBendon.com](http://www.JamesBendon.com).

\* \* \*

### Cercle des Amis de Marianne

Members interested in French definitive stamp issues after 1945 should know about this flourishing society. Visit its website on <http://amisdemarianne.free.fr> or write for details to its President, François Guilbaud (who knows English) at 65 rue Violet, 75015 Paris, France.

\* \* \*

### Southern Group

The programme for 2002-2003:

- 10 August 2002:  
10.30 to lunch - Members' Queries on French Islands *et al*  
14.00 to 16.30 - The French Islands, by Alan Barrett  
26 October 2002: Tunisia, by Godfrey Bowden  
18 January 2003: Members' Displays  
12 April 2003: French West Africa, by Peter Kelly

\* \* \*

### Auction Realisations

Members should note that in future we do not intend to publish in the Journal the list of Auction Realisations. See page 68 for a fuller explanation.

\* \* \*



# A Message brought to Paris by Pigeon Post in 1870-71

Ashley Lawrence

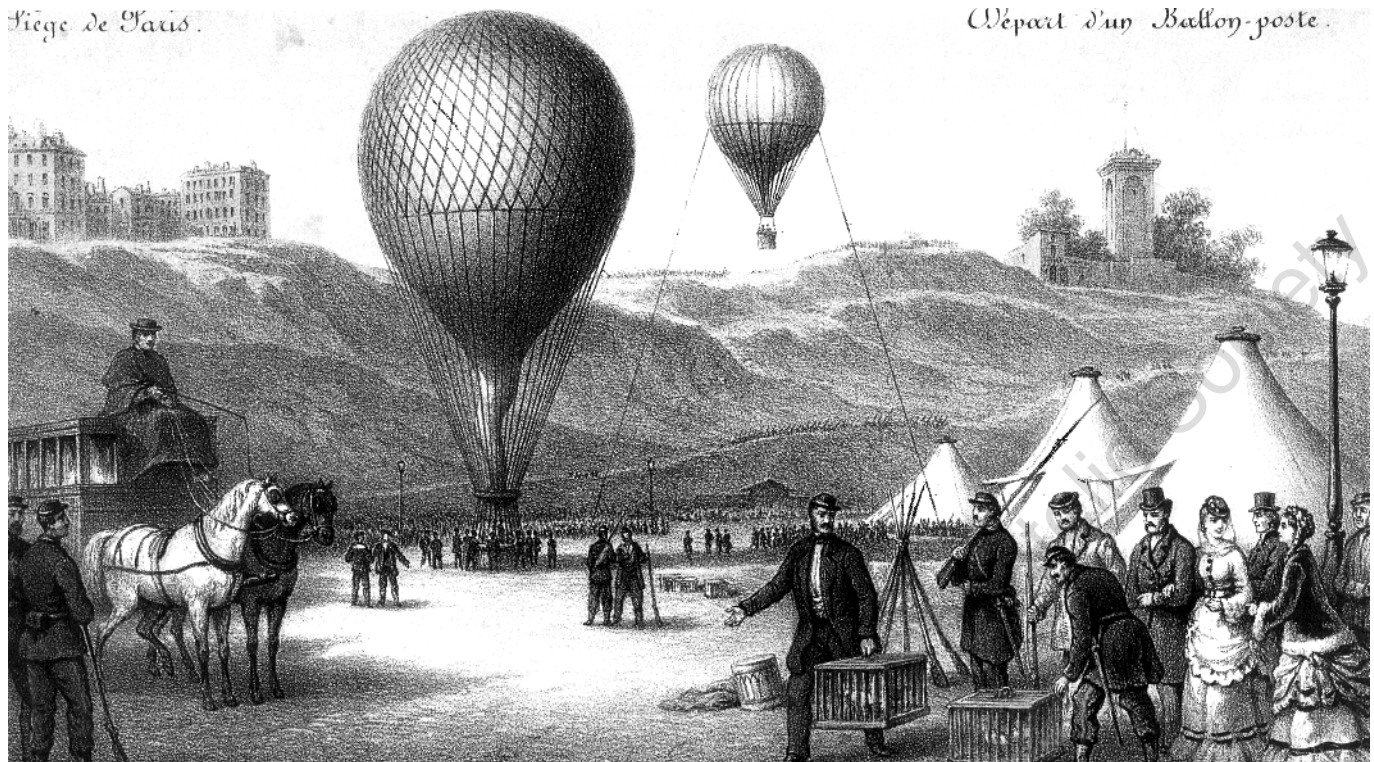


Figure 1 - An engraving of baskets of pigeons being brought to a departing balloon

## The Siege of Paris

On 19 September 1870 Paris was encircled by German armies. The railways ceased to run, and the telegraph wires were cut. For the next four and a half months Parisians were besieged, trapped in a ring of iron and fire, unable to communicate with the rest of France and with the outside world. Thanks to the ingenuity and bravery of a few aeronauts, balloons were brought into service, and succeeded in carrying quantities of mail out of Paris. From 25 September, after the first successful balloon flight, most balloons also transported baskets of homing pigeons, and if they landed safely the pigeons were used to bring messages back to Paris (Fig 1).

This is the story of one such message.

### William Brown's correspondence

William James Brown was a commercial traveller who ran a hosiery business in Paris in partnership with a Frenchman, M Jourdain. "The British Warehouse" as it was styled, imported and sold *articles anglais* from shop premises at 14 rue Halévy in the 9<sup>th</sup> *arrondissement*, close to the Place de l'Opéra. William Brown remained in Paris throughout the Siege in order to look after the shop, while his partner, a conscript soldier, served on the fortifications. Margaret Binfield Brown his wife, with their two young daughters, had returned to safety in England.

Between 19 September 1870 and 27 January 1871, when an armistice brought the Siege to an end, William Brown wrote a series of letters to his wife. Not knowing her whereabouts, he wrote to her care of the various members

of her family in Liverpool, in Kentish Town and in Uxbridge. Many of his letters were sent *Par Ballon Monté*. Others were entrusted to people who were allowed to depart before the investment of Paris began in earnest, or to officials at the British Consulate in the hope that the messages might be taken out of Paris in the diplomatic pouch. The correspondence gives a vivid and fascinating account of living conditions in Paris during the Siege.

Mrs Brown, too, endeavoured to communicate with her husband. She persuaded the American Consul-General in London, Adam Badeau, to send a note to his counterpart, the US Ambassador in Paris, Elihu Benjamin Washburne, by diplomatic bag, for delivery to her husband. Mr Washburne had remained at his post throughout the Siege (unlike the British Consul and most other diplomats, who had withdrawn to join the government delegation in Tours) and rendered singular service not only to his fellow-countrymen but to those British and other foreigners who, for whatever reason, had stayed on in Paris during the Siege.

It was thanks to the Pigeon Post that Mr Brown first received word from his wife.

### The Pigeons

Most of the pigeons were supplied by *L'Espérance*, the Paris Society of Pigeon Fanciers. Several brave officers and members of the Society accompanied their birds on their hazardous balloon journeys, at considerable personal risk. The German Chancellor, Bismarck, had issued a warning that any captured aeronauts would be treated as



spies, and shot. M Nobécourt of *L'Espérance* avoided this fate when his balloon "*Daguerre*" crash-landed in enemy territory, but he was interrogated, and spent several months in a German prison. The pigeon-masters tended to their birds in Tours (and later in Bordeaux) in preparation for their return journey to Paris, and supervised their release.

At best estimate, some 302 of the homing pigeons which left Paris by balloon arrived safely at Tours, of which 59 succeeded in making the return journey carrying messages (some making more than one flight). The pigeons faced bitter cold (the winter of 1870-71 was one of the coldest on record), fog and snow, as well as the noise and smoke of the Prussian cannon, hunters' shotguns, and (it was claimed) attack from the hawks and falcons which "with their usual diabolical cunning" the Prussians had brought to intercept them. The French government made the shooting of pigeons a criminal offence.

### Microphotography

Initially, each pigeon carried a single despatch, handwritten on flimsy paper. By mid-October an eminent chemist, M Barreswil, had persuaded the postal authorities that if messages could be microphotographed, many thousands of messages could be carried at a time. The process of microphotography was well-advanced by 1870. John Benjamin Dancer (1812-1887) the Manchester optician, had begun work in this field in the 1830s. The Frenchman René Prudence Patrice Dagron (1819-1900) (Fig 2) had greatly improved the quality of the photographs, and showed astonishing examples of microphotography at the Paris Exhibition of 1867. Recognising that this process could vastly improve the Pigeon Post service, M Steenackers, Director-General of Telegraphs, organised the microphotographing of all official despatches sent from Tours.

### Dagron

Meanwhile in Paris the Director-General of Posts, M Rampont-Léchin, persuaded Dagron to join the government delegation in Tours, and to apply his expertise to the Pigeon Post. Dagron, his son-in-law Poisot, his assistants Fernique and Gnocchi and about 600 kgs of photographic apparatus, duly left Paris at 9.00am on 12 November 1870 aboard the balloon "*Niepce*", piloted by the sailor Pagano. A second balloon, "*Daguerre*", left at the same time with a pilot and three passengers (one being the unfortunate M Nobécourt), some pigeons and the balance of the equipment. A strong breeze carried the balloons eastwards across the Prussian lines. "*Daguerre*" was shot down just a few miles from Paris, near Ferrières. "*Niepce*" made a heavy landing later that afternoon near Vitry-le-François, in enemy-occupied territory, and much of the equipment was damaged or captured. However, Dagron and his party managed to escape, and made their way towards Tours, where they arrived on 21 November.

In Tours, Dagron faced further difficulties. He had to demonstrate to Steenackers that his reproduction of messages on microfilm was superior to that on double-sided photographic paper produced by the local photographer, M Blaise. Lacking equipment and materials, Dagron was nevertheless able to produce good results with collodion film. His method needed a very short exposure

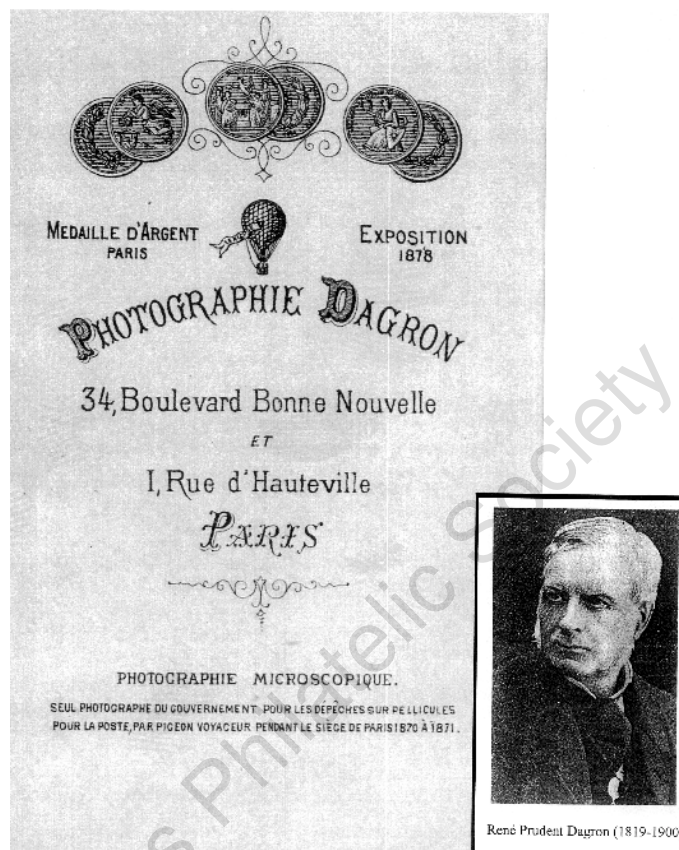


Figure 2 -  
Photo of René Dagron, with an enlargement  
of the back of his Carte de Visite,  
describing him as sole government photographer  
for the Pigeon Post

time (two seconds, rather than the two hours required by M Blaise) and permitted greater reduction, and his microfilms ("*pellicules*") were lighter in weight and gave a clearer image when enlarged. Steenackers also insisted on renegotiating the terms of his contract before he allowed Dagron to take charge of operations, under the supervision of M de Lafolloye, an inspector with the Telegraph Service.

### Pigeongrams

The system of microphotographing official despatches proved so successful that by 10 November a decree was issued, permitting members of the public to send messages by the Pigeon Post to Paris. The charge was 50 centimes for no more than 20 words. On 16 November a similar notice was published by the General Post Office in London. For messages originating in Britain, the charge was 5d per word, plus 6d for registration of the letter to Tours. The message had to be in French and to relate solely to private affairs, with no reference to politics or to the war. Delivery of the message was not guaranteed.

The messages were assembled, type-set by printers, and photographed in Tours until 10 December when, threatened by the advancing German army, the government delegation withdrew to Bordeaux. Each microfilm measured 3.6cm x 6cm and reproduced nine, twelve or sixteen folio pages of printing, each containing 3,000 despatches according to the size of type. The microfilms were placed in goose-quill tubes some 5cm in length, and affixed by waxed silk thread to the pigeons' tail-feathers. Each pigeon could carry



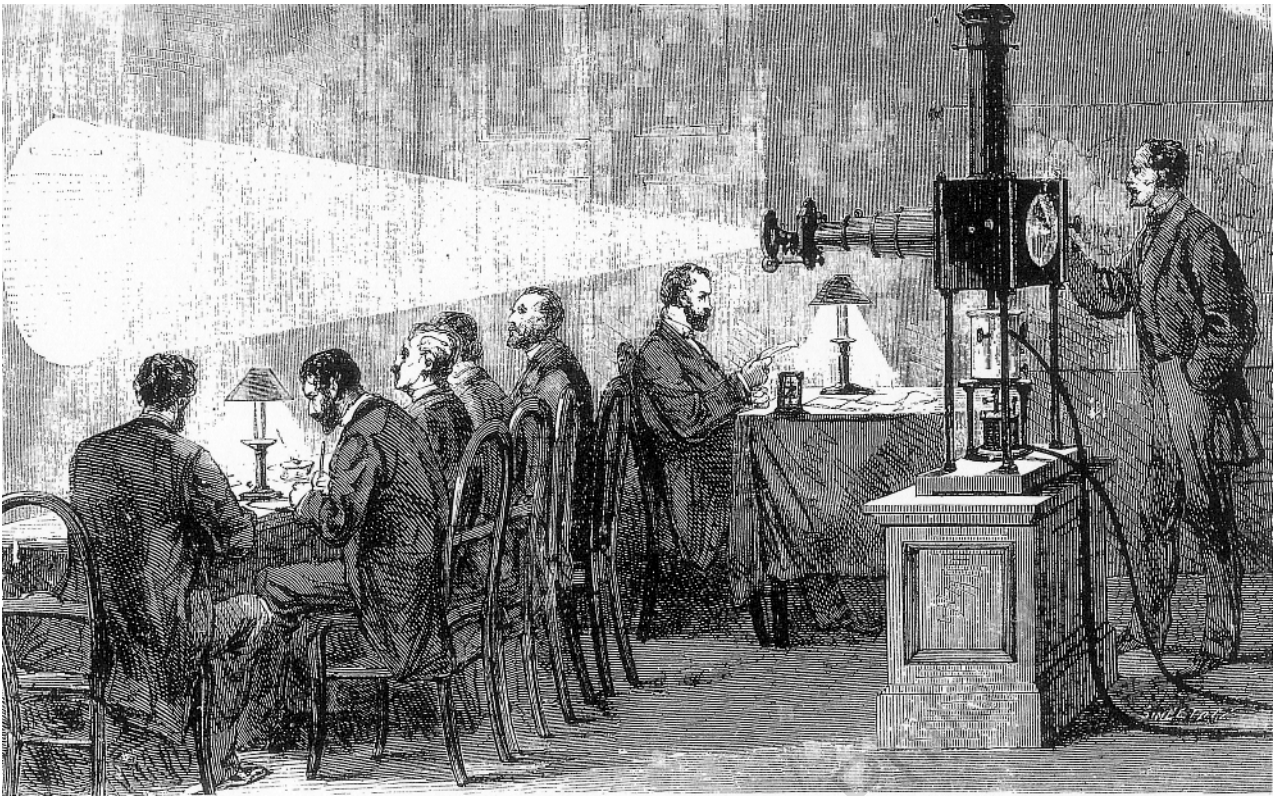


Figure 3 -

A fine engraving showing the projection of microfilm by the Duboscq Megascope, and the bank of copyists.

This was an electric projector, possibly carbon arc.

The telegram, handwritten on a blank form from the projected image, indicated the place of transcription.

The one shown in Figure 5a is marked as from the Grand Hotel.

between 15 and 18 such *pellicules*, as the total weight was less than one gram.

The pigeons were taken by train as close to Paris as was safe from Prussian interception, and were then released. Once they reached Paris, the *pellicules* were removed and taken to the Telegraph Office at 103 rue de Grenelles, Saint-Germain. Each microfilm was placed in a basin of water, mixed with a little ammonia. This caused the film to unroll so that it could be dried and placed between glass plates. The microfilm was projected on to a white wall or screen by means of the Megascope (Fig 3), a type of magic-lantern invented by M Jules Duboscq, which magnified the image 160 times. A battery of clerks transcribed the individual messages on to blue telegraph forms, which

were then delivered to the addressees. The operation for each batch of *pellicules* took about nine hours. The *pellicules* were numbered consecutively, so that if one failed to arrive in Paris, a copy could be ordered.

#### Mrs Brown's Message

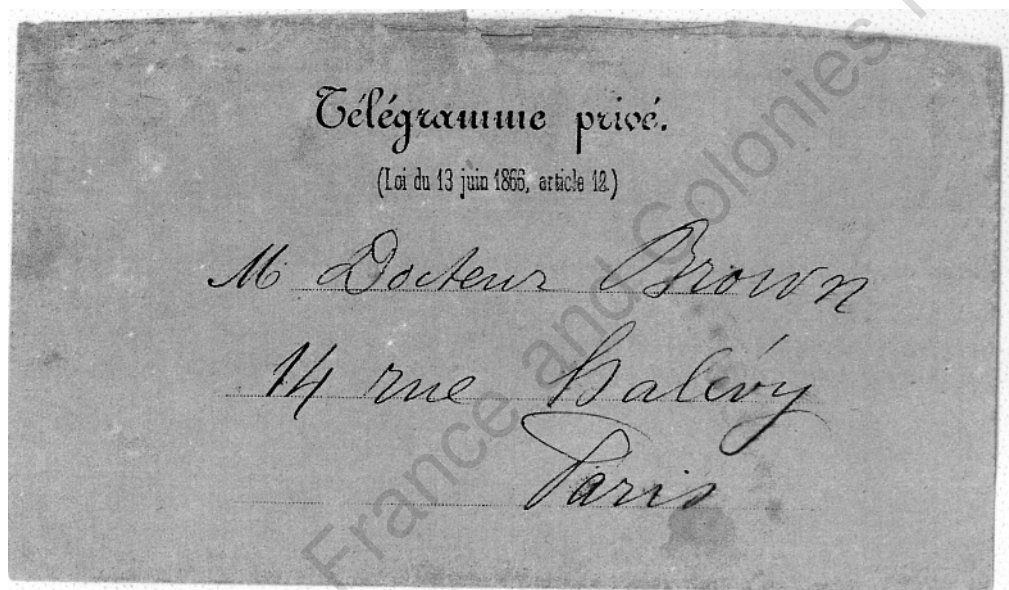
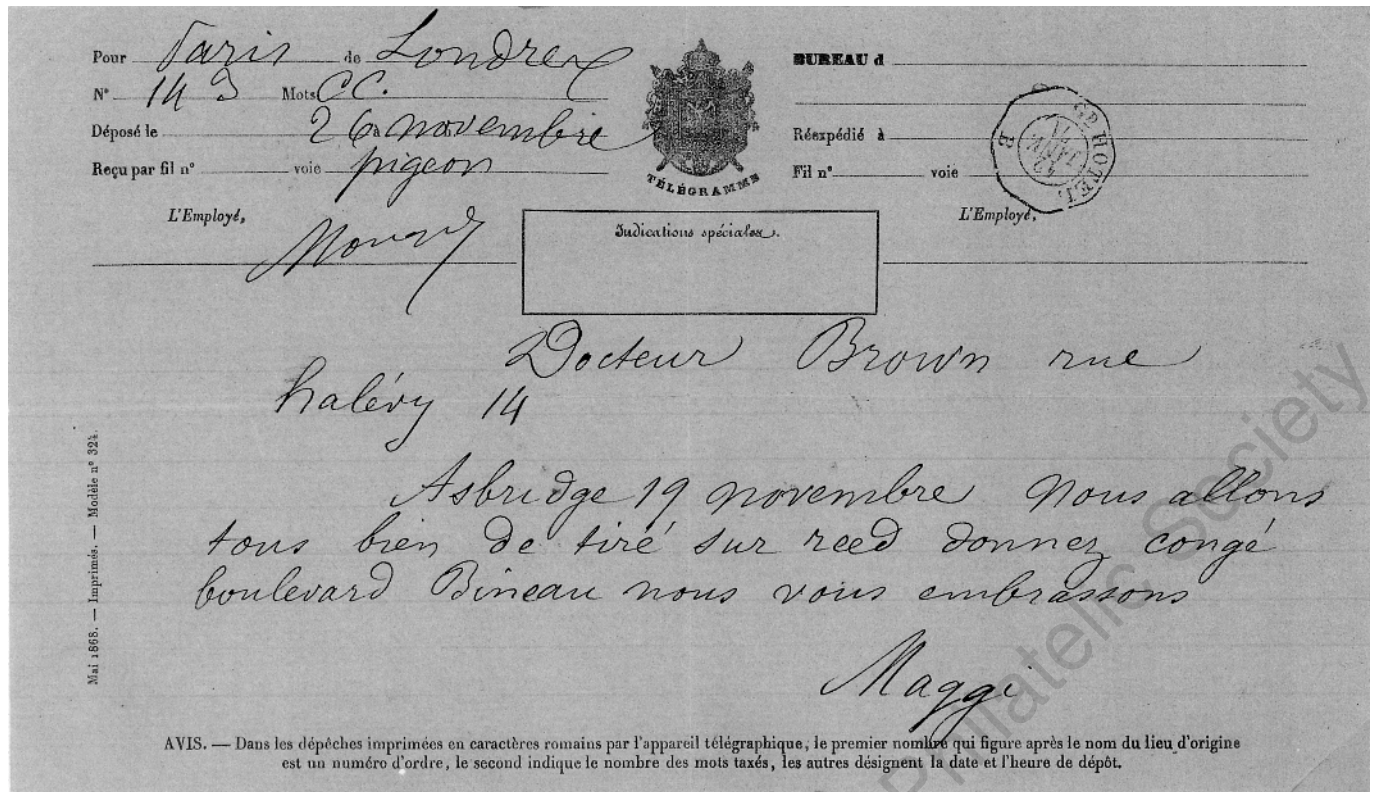
Mrs Brown may have seen the GPO notice of 16 November, or the announcement of the Pigeon Post service which was published in "The Times" on the following day. On 19 November, Mrs Brown wrote a short message to her husband from her sister's home in Uxbridge, which was handed in to the Post Office at Rathbone Place, London W1. The Post Office receipt is illustrated (Fig 4). The message was sent by registered post. GPO records show

 A black and white image of a GPO receipt form. At the top, it says 'P. O. \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ 1870'. Below this, it reads 'Received a **REGISTERED LETTER** addressed to \_\_\_\_\_'. To the left of the signature line, there is a circular postmark from 'OXFORD-ST. N. RATHBONE PL. LONDON' dated 'NOV 19 1870'. Below the postmark, it says 'Postmaster's Signature \_\_\_\_\_'. The form is enclosed in a dashed border.

Figure 4 -

The GPO receipt for Mrs Brown's registered letter, issued on 19 November 1870





Figures 5a (above) -  
The Telegram,  
and 5b (left) -  
its envelope,  
delivered to Mr Brown in Paris  
on 12 January 1871

that 64 such messages were sent from London to France on 19 November. Six were taken by day, and 58 by night-train, to Dover, where they crossed the Channel by steamer to Calais, and thence by rail via Amiens to the French postal authorities in Tours. Mrs Brown's message was recorded as having been received in Tours on 26 November. The message was duly set in type and microphotographed, together with thousands of other messages (some from England, others from France), and the *pellicule* was carried by pigeon into Paris. On 12 January 1871 the telegram containing his wife's message was delivered to William Brown. The telegram, marked "*Pigeon*", and its envelope are illustrated (Figs 5a and 5b).

This was the first communication which William Brown had received from his wife since the start of the Siege. Desperate for news, he was delighted and reassured by its contents. The message had come from Uxbridge (which the French clerk had transcribed as Asbridge), so Margaret

Brown and the children were staying with her sister Elizabeth ("Betty"), a photographer, and all were well. "*Nous allons tous bien de tiré sur reed*" meant that his wife was not short of money, having obtained funds from a friend Mr Reid. "*Donnez congé boulevard Bineau*" was his wife's instruction to give notice to their landlord that the Browns did not wish to renew their tenancy of a property in Boulevard Bineau, which was due to expire in April 1871. In the event the district of Neuilly-sur-Seine to the west of Paris, where the property was situated, was badly damaged during the Prussian bombardment of the city and in the later suppression of the Commune.

There is a popular impression that the Pigeon Post service was speedy, and it is true that the first private messages did reach their destination quickly. However, with the increasing volume of traffic, the move to Bordeaux, and the deterioration of the weather from mid-December, the period from the handing in of a message to its delivery



could easily span two months. Nevertheless, the service was a considerable achievement. According to Dagron's estimate, including the copies, more than 2,500,000 official despatches and private messages were reproduced and sent during the last (and worst) two months of the Siege.

In his excellent account of the Pigeon Post, John Hayhurst notes that in the records of the private messages is a group which emanated from London around 22 November and were set up in type at Bordeaux on 2 January. It is likely that Mrs Brown's message was among this group. According to the official records, the pigeon carrying these messages arrived in Paris on 8 January. The telegram containing Mrs Brown's message was postmarked Grand Hôtel, 12

January 1871, and was duly delivered to Mr Brown later that day.

During my research into the William Brown correspondence in Paris last November, I visited the Musée de la Poste at 34 rue de Vaugirard, by appointment, in order to inspect the archives relating to the Pigeon Post. The Musée staff were surprised, but very co-operative, as is evident from my photograph of the team at work (Fig 6). Thanks to their help, much patience, eye-strain, and the aid of a powerful magnifying-glass, I was able to identify the very *pellicule* which contained Mrs Brown's message! The relevant page from the official record of the pigeongrams, "*Recueil des Dépêches Télégraphiques*", is illustrated (Fig 8).

Figure 6 - Archivists Pascal Roman, Patrick Moreau and Chantal Reynaud identifying the "*pellicule*" at the Musée de la Poste, November 2001.

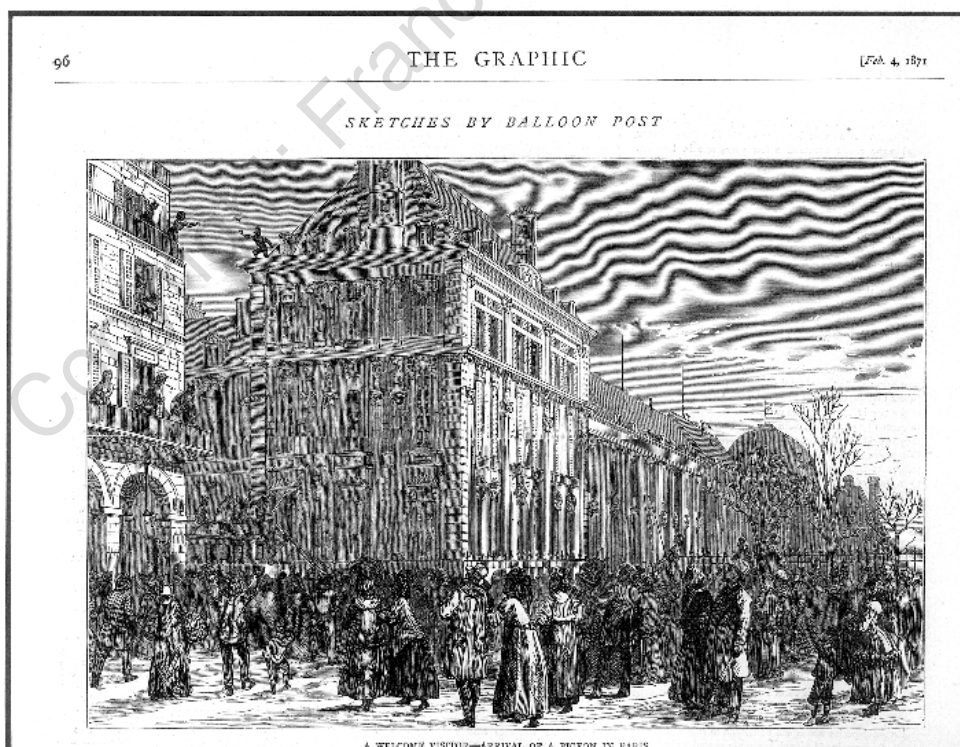


Figure 7 - An illustration from "The Graphic" of 4 February 1871: "A Welcome Visitor - Arrival of a Pigeon in Paris"



= F. 8 = P. 2 = 26 XI = D. P. =

rue Rivoli. 20 novembre. Tous convalescents, dernière lettre reçue datée 7. — Ernest Algeron Sparks. || Fano Rimini, 24, Richer. Tous bien, espérons autant, manquons nouvelles, dernière datait 17 octobre. Saluons tous. — Rimini. || M. Dr Brown, rue Halévy, 14. Axbridge, 19 novembre. Nous allons tous bien, de tire sûr Reed, donnez congé boulevard Bineau, nous vous embrassons. — Maggie. || M. Christiaen, 210, faubourg St-Denis. Lettre reçue, portons bien, écris. — Femme Clerc. || M. Dunand J. Harel, 17, rue Vivienne. Louise, Julien et moi pensent à toi. — Aimée Dunaud. || M. Scott, 1, rue Madame. Toutes bien portantes. Reçu tes quatre lettres. Espérons! Toujours à toi. — Alivine Scott, South. — A. Cérin.

Figure 8 (above) -  
an extract from the official records of the pigeograms,  
showing Mrs Brown's message

Figure 9 (right) -  
A postcard of the Monument  
to the Aeronauts and Pigeons of the Siege of Paris



## The Aftermath

Afterwards Dagron wrote an account of his adventures, "*La Poste par Pigeons Voyageurs*": he insisted on being recognised as the sole government photographer of all despatches on microfilm carried by the Pigeon Post during the Siege. Steenackers, Rampont and De Lafolloye also wrote their own memoirs: these revealed the rivalry and antagonism which existed between the Ministries of Posts and Telegraphs, made worse by the disrupted communication between Paris and Tours. It was intended that an historian, M Feillet, would write a formal report on the Pigeon Post, and he took charge of the official documentation. Tragically, this was destroyed when his house in Neuilly was shelled during the suppression of the Commune in May 1871.

The Paris Pigeon Post was one of the few French success stories of the war of 1870-71. While Parisians were suffering starvation and bombardment, frustration at the repeated failures of their own National Guard and the armies of the provinces to break the Siege, and a terrible feeling of isolation, the arrival of the carrier pigeons bringing news from family and friends in the outside world did much to restore morale (Fig 7). The pigeons' bravery, together with that of the aeronauts, was commemorated by the issue of medals, and by the construction of a fine bronze monument, designed by Bartholdi, which was unveiled at the Porte des

Ternes in 1906 (Fig 9). Sadly, this splendid monument was demolished by spiteful Germans in 1944.

M Cassiers, the president of *L'Espérance*, had supplied 52 of his prize pigeons for the service, of which only two survived the war. One of these is preserved in the Musée de la Poste (see front cover): it had made at least two journeys carrying despatches into Paris. I'd like to think that Mrs Brown's message was carried by that pigeon. For sure, it winked at me as I left the Musée, as if to say "Regard pigeons with more respect in future"!

## Source material

1. William James Brown correspondence 1870-71, and my thanks for the kind assistance given by his descendants.
2. "The Post by Travelling Pigeons, A Remembrance of the Siege of Paris" by Dagron, 1871.
3. "*Recueil des Dépêches Télégraphiques reproduites par la photographie et adressées à Paris au moyen des Pigeons-Voyageurs pendant l'investissement de la Capitale, Tome 1, Tours-Bordeaux 1870-71*".
4. "*Dépêches par Pigeons Voyageurs pendant le Siège de Paris. Mémoire sur la Section Photographique et Administrative du Service de ces Dépêches par M. de Lafolloye, Tours 1871*".
5. "The Pigeon Post into Paris, 1870-71" by J D Hayhurst OBE, 1970.

# French Andorra - the Merson Stamps

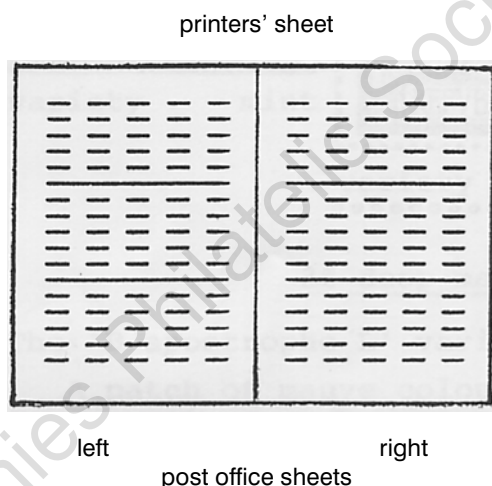
Alec Jacques

[This article was originally published in the *Valira Torrent* (Bulletin N° 55, March 2002). It is an update to information given on these issues (SG & Y&T 19-23) in *Andorra Andorre* (pages 25-27), the 1985 Supplement to *Andorra Andorre* (page S15), *The Philatelist* (Vol 44, N° 81), and the *Valira Torrent* (Bulletin N° 8).]



The stamps feature a design by Nicolas Luc-Olivier Merson (1846-1920) showing a lady, “the seated Republic, guardian of the Peace” (with a dagger handle in her left hand!) and an olive tree. The engraving was done by Auguste Thévenin and the stamps were printed by flat-plate typo in large “printers’ sheets” of 150 stamps – these comprised 6 panes of 25 stamps (see illustration on right). The bicoloured stamps went through the two separate printing operations; the first printed the Merson design and the second printed the central background colour to the olive tree etc. These large “printers’ sheets” were then gummed, comb perforated 13½ x 14, and guillotined (!) vertically through the central gutter, thus producing two smaller “post office” sheets, each of 75 stamps and made up of 3 panes of 25 stamps per sheet. The stamps from this series are frequently poorly centred and well-centred examples are worth a premium.

Five Merson values – 2F, 3F, 5F, 10F and 20F – were overprinted ANDORRE in black and in heavily serifed capital letters. The sheets were pulled from existing stock and were not specifically printed to receive the overprints. It is also interesting to note that all five values were no



longer on sale in France at the time these overprints were issued on 16 June 1931 in Andorra – the 10F and 20F had been withdrawn in 1929, the 3F and 5F in 1930, and the 2F on 1 January 1931. The accepted total number of stamps overprinted is 3750 of each value, but nowhere near this number would have been sold, especially of the 10F and 20F values.

## Varieties on the Basic Design

It is sometimes difficult to decide what constitutes a “constant” variety as opposed to one of a “transient” nature; however, those illustrated (with the possible exception of the 5F value) are believed to be constant on all the relevant ANDORRE overprinted sheets.

### 2F red and blue-green (SG & Y&T 19)

The ‘scar on cheek’ variety



variety

(both enlarged)

normal

This variety takes the form of a large cross-shaped patch of colour on the left cheek of “Peace”. It is to be found on the central pane of the left hand side “post office” sheet and

situated on Row 1, N° 2 of this pane – this relates to stamp N° 27 of the sheet of 75 stamps. Six examples of this variety have been seen (5 mint, 1 used) – one of the mint examples is in a complete pane of 25 stamps, and another example is in a complete “post office” sheet of 75 stamps, this latter sheet (ex Bishop and now in a collection in Germany) being the only “post office” sheet that I have seen of these Merson values with ANDORRE overprints. The total number of stamps printed with this variety would be 25 copies (3750 ÷ 150) but all these would not be available to collectors if all the sheets were not sold.



mint variety



used variety

The well-known ‘broken value shield’ on this 2F value has NOT been recorded with the ANDORRE overprint.



### 3F deep mauve and carmine (SG & Y&T 20)

The 'B apostrophe L' variety



normal

(both enlarged)

variety

A patch of mauve colour, resembling an apostrophe, is to be found between the B and L of REPUBLIQUE and is located near to the top of the letters. Four examples of this variety have been seen (3 mint, 1 used) and, again, the maximum that can exist is 25. I am not aware of the sheet position.

### 5F deep blue and buff (SG & Y&T 21)

The 'damaged 5' variety



normal

(both enlarged)

variety

There is damage to the top curved shoulder of the figure 5. Only one mint example of this variety has been seen so it may well not be constant – perhaps just a 'one of' due to extraneous matter between printing surface and paper. Can anybody confirm a similar variety?

### 20F magenta and green (SG & Y&T 23)

The 'broken value shield' variety



normal

(both enlarged)

variety

The value shield is clearly broken at the upper left, and this would appear to be a very important variety – the position in the sheet is not yet known to me. Four examples of this variety (2 mint, 2 used) of the 25 that can exist have been seen. However, it is extremely likely that only 10 to 12 are available, depending on the number of sheets sold of this top value.



mint variety



used variety

The basic stamps without overprint (SG 432 & Y&T 208) were printed in 1926 only and this variety, as expected, has been seen on these too.

#### Note

The author would gladly welcome any additional information on the above varieties and on any others that exist on these values.

#### References

"Timbres de France au Type Merson" by J Storch & R Françon

The Jacques collection & archives



broken shield variety in lower left stamp of block (enlarged)



## Interzone Mail (1940-1944) - Part 1

## Roy Reader



Figure 1 -

Map showing the demarcation line between the northern and southern zones.

The departments are shown as they existed at the time.

The Moselle, Bas-Rhin and Haut-Rhin departments are missing as they were early on incorporated into Germany.

## The Demarcation Line

The Franco-German Armistice signed on 22 June 1940 divided France into two zones, the northern zone under German occupation and the southern zone under the control of the new French Government at Vichy (see Fig 1). The northern zone included the territory along the Atlantic coast right down to the Spanish border.

The French requested changes to the proposed path of the demarcation line, but these were promptly dismissed. The line as laid out in a German document of 29 June was as follows (with ‘NZ’ indicating a locality falling within the northern zone and ‘SZ’ within the southern zone):

Franco-Swiss border two kilometres south-east of Pougny (in Switzerland) to Valleiry (SZ) – Dingy-en-Vuache (SZ) – Clarafond (SZ?) – Saint-Germain-sur-Rhône (SZ) – Coupy<sup>1</sup> (NZ) – stretch of road from Coupy to Lancrans, Confort, Chézery-Forens, L'Abbaye-Mijoux<sup>2</sup> and the cross-

roads three kilometres south-east of Les Rousses, then to Morez, Morbier, Saint-Laurent-en-Grandvaux, Champagnole and the road junction two kilometres west of Andelot-en-Montagne (NZ over the whole stretch) – La Châtelaine (NZ) – Pupillin (NZ) – three kilometres west of Arbois – Saint-Cyr (SZ) – Villeneuve-d’Aval (NZ) – Écleux (NZ) – River Loue from north of Écleux to the River Doubs – River Doubs from the River Loue to the River Saône – River Saône to the southern edge of Chalon-sur-Saône – stretch of road from Chalon-sur-Saône to Saint-Rémy, Buxy, Cersot and Montchanin-le-Haut (NZ over the whole stretch) – Saint-Eusèbe (SZ) – Ursinge (SZ) – Pouilloux (NZ) – Saint-Bonnet-de-Vieille-Vigne

<sup>1</sup> Coupy, north-west of Vanchy. In recent editions of the *Michelin Road Atlas of France*, the name is omitted to make room for the ‘©’ beneath ‘Bellegarde-s-Valserine’.

2 Only Mijoux on the present Michelin road atlas.

(NZ) – Champlecy (SZ) – Nochize (SZ) – Varenne-Reuillon<sup>3</sup> (SZ) – Molinet (NZ) – Saligny-sur-Roudon (SZ) – Chapeau (SZ) – Toulon-sur-Allier (NZ) – River Allier from west of Toulon-sur-Allier to one kilometre south of Apremont-sur-Allier – La Chapelle-Hugon (SZ) – Germigny-l'Exempt (SZ) – Cornusse (SZ) – Raymond (SZ) – Jussy-Champagne (SZ) – Crosses (NZ) – Soye-en-Septaine (NZ) – La Chapelle-Saint-Ursin (NZ) – Sainte-Thorette (SZ) – River Cher from Sainte-Thorette through Selles-sur-Cher (NZ), Saint-Aignan (SZ) and Bléré (NZ) to Grandlay (NZ) – Cigogné (SZ) – Reignac-sur-Indre (SZ) – stretch of road from Reignac-sur-Indre to Dolus-le-Sec, Vou and Ciran (SZ over the whole stretch) – Ferrière-Larçon (SZ) – La Celle-Guenand (SZ) – Chaumussay (SZ) – Chambon (NZ) – La Roche-Posay (SZ) – Pleumartin (SZ) – Les Bouchaux (NZ) – Les Bonneaux,<sup>4</sup> east of Bonnes (NZ) – Pouillé (NZ) – Saint-Secondin (NZ) – Mauprévoir (SZ) – Pleuville (SZ) – Benest (NZ) – Saint-Coutant (NZ) – Parzac (NZ) – Cellefrouin (NZ) – Les Pins (NZ) – La Rochefaucauld (NZ) – Rancogne (NZ) – Vilhonheur (SZ) – L'Âge-Martin (SZ) – Vouzan (SZ) – L'Ermite (SZ) –

3 Varenne-Saint-Germain on the present Michelin road atlas.

4 Not on the Michelin road atlas.

Combiens (SZ) – Gout-Rossignol (NZ) – Verteillac (SZ) – Allemans (NZ) – Vanxains (NZ) – stretch of road from Vanxains to La Jemaye, Échourgnac and Montpon-sur-l'Isle (now Montpon-Ménéstérol) (NZ over the whole stretch) – Saint-Martin-de-Gurçon (NZ) – Montpeyrour (NZ) – Fon-la-Dau<sup>5</sup> (NZ) – Moullets-et-Villemartin (SZ) – Villesègue (NZ) – stretch of road from Villesègue to Mérignas, Sauveterre-de-Guyenne, Saint-Macaire, Bazas, Captieux, Roquefort, Mont-de-Marsan, Saint-Sever-sur-l'Adour, Hagetmau, Orthez, Bérenx, Salies-de-Béarn, Sauveterre-de-Béarn, Saint-Palais, Uhart-Mixe, Lacarre, Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port and finally the Spanish frontier north of Arneguy (NZ over the whole stretch).

It seems that a number of minor changes were later made to the line at local level at the request or demand of the Germans.

French overseas territories remained under the control of the French Government at Vichy and formed, as it were, an extension of the southern zone – that is until such time as each opted for General de Gaulle's Free France.

5 Not on the Michelin road atlas.

\* \* \* \* \*

### The First Interzone Mail (June 1940 – April 1941)

The arrival of the demarcation line, which could not be crossed without German consent, inevitably disrupted whatever postal traffic had survived the hostilities and still existed between areas on one side of the line and those on the other. Nevertheless there came a time in July when there encouragingly seemed to be a clear resumption of postal traffic across the line as a result of tolerance at a

local level. Some mail travelling from the southern zone to the Côte-d'Or Department was even stamped '*Acheminement et Distribution Autorisés par les Autorités Allemandes*' (Carriage and Delivery Authorised by the German Authorities). Then, on 16 July, the traffic seemed to stop. Two days later the Germans issued an order banning all postal traffic between the two zones, an order that officially



Figure 2 -

Army postcard sent on 18 July 1940 from Belligné (Loire-Inférieure) in the northern zone to a soldier in hospital at Pépieux (Aude) in the southern zone. It reached him, as is shown by the backstamp applied at Pépieux on 22 July.



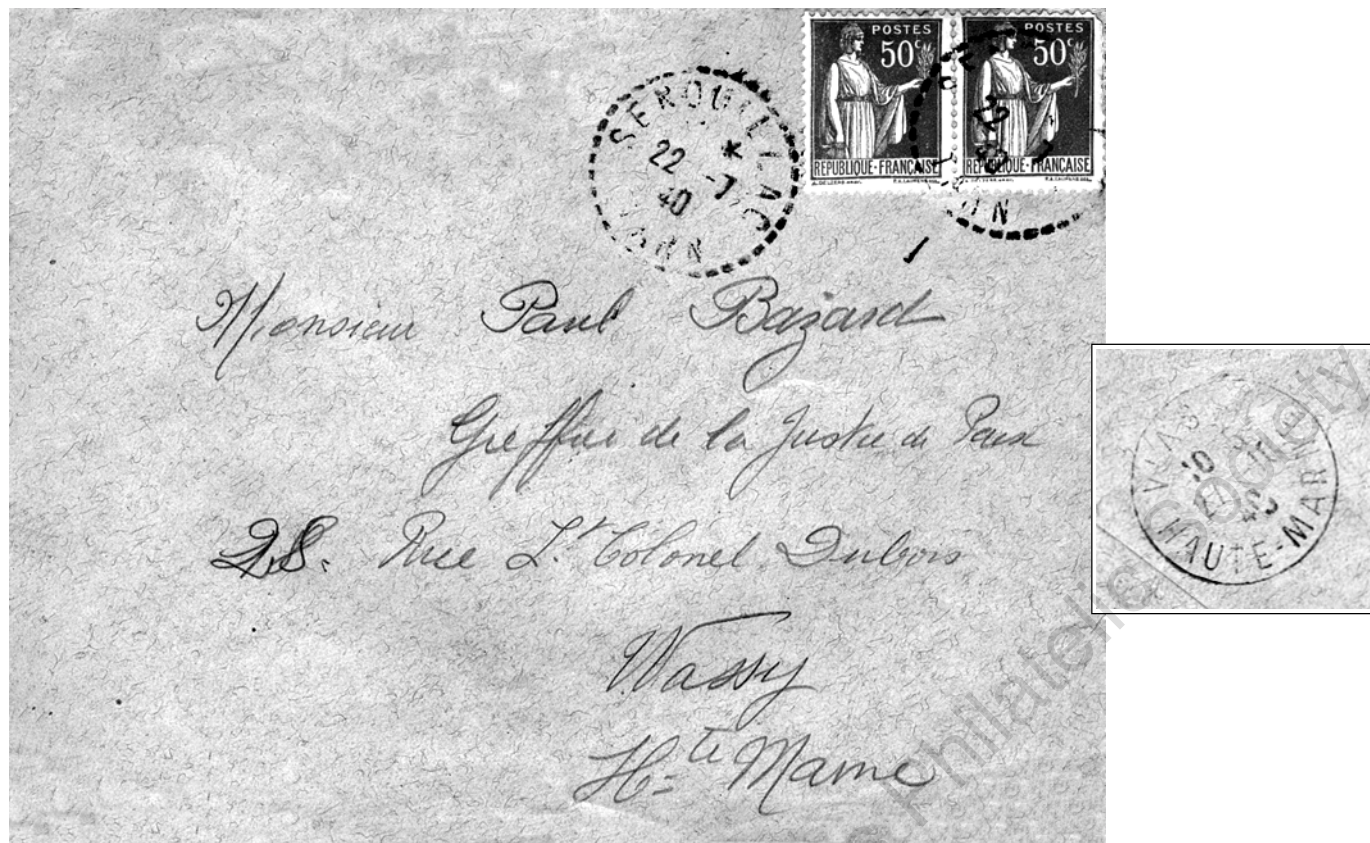


Figure 3 -

Cover cancelled on 22 July 1940 at Senouillac (Tarn) in the southern zone. Addressed to a clerk of the court at Wassy (Haute-Marne) in the northern zone, it reached Wassy, though, it seems, only over three months later! It was backstamped there on 27 October.

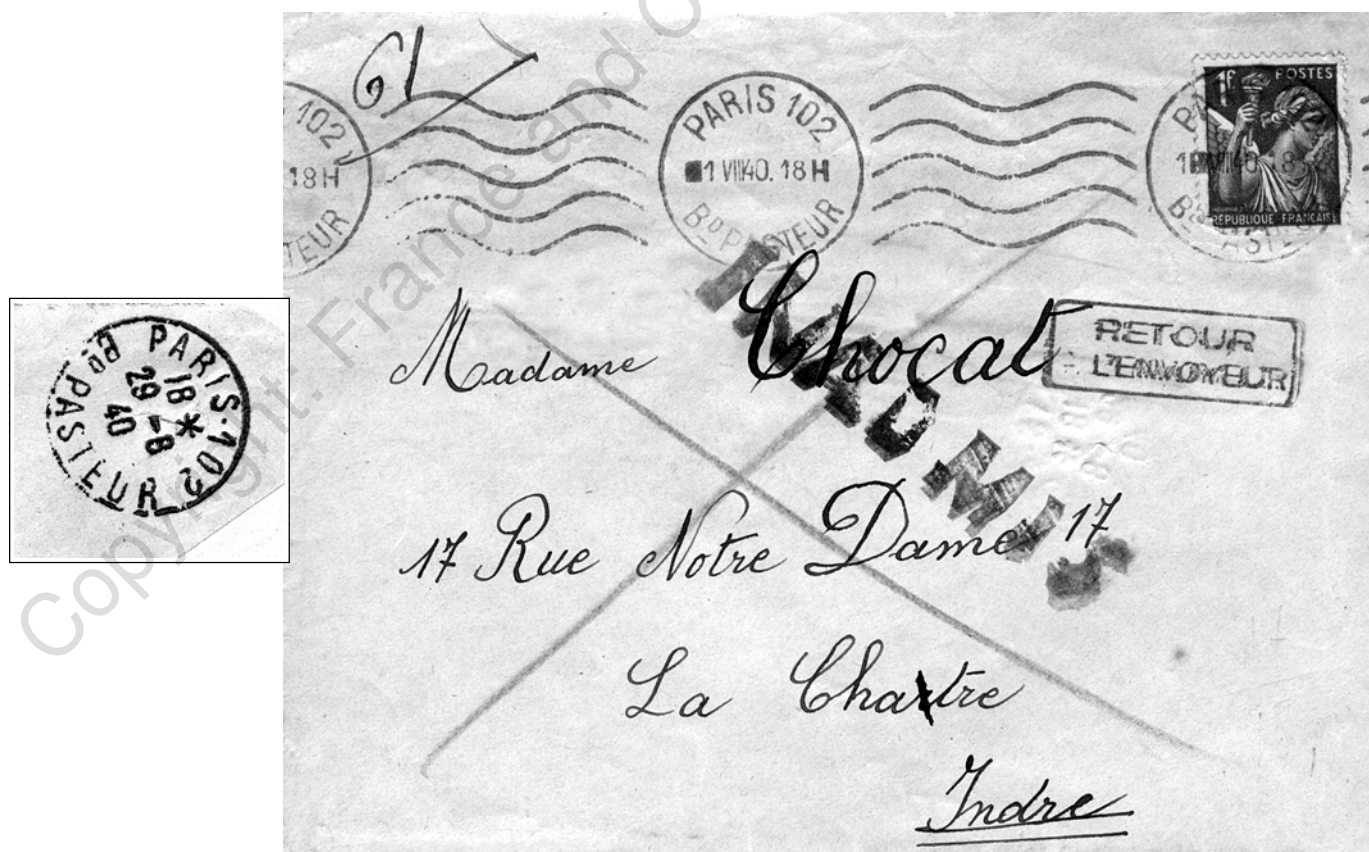


Figure 4 -

Cover posted in Paris for La Châtre (Indre) in the southern zone. It was cancelled at the Boulevard Pasteur Post Office on 1 August 1940, the first day on which interzone mail was officially banned. It was therefore stamped 'Inadmis' and returned to sender, though not, according to the date stamp applied to the back of the cover, until 29 August, almost a month later.





Figure 5 -

Cover of official interzone correspondence from the office of the Secretary of State for the Navy at Vichy to the Sub-prefect of the Meuse Department at Verdun. It had a green label stuck on it to indicate it was official correspondence and it was struck with a red hand-stamp bearing the letter 'M' for 'Marine' and a reference number. It was then cancelled with a date-stamp inscribed 'Vichy Allier Contreseings' (Countersigns) used by the office dealing with the final despatch of all official mail to the northern zone. It was backstamped at the Official Mail Office (*Bureau du Courrier Officiel*) on arrival in Paris three days later prior to final forwarding to Verdun.

did not come into effect until 1 August. Until that date some mail still managed to get from one zone to the other (Figs 2 and 3). After that date all mail was returned to sender marked '*Inadmis*' (Not allowed) (Fig 4).

Despite the ban on interzone mail, to enable French officials in one zone to communicate with those in the other on urgent matters, the Germans authorised the exchange of 300 official letters a day with effect from 1 August 1940 (Fig 5). They also gave permission for letters of especial economic importance to be included as part of the 300 in exceptional cases (Fig 6). All letters had to be typewritten and in French. They also had to be left unsealed for examination by the censor. An exchange of mail took place every day at about 9 a.m. in each zone. In the northern zone it took place in Paris at the German censor office initially set up in the Hôtel Royal, 212 Boulevard Raspail, situated near to Montparnasse Railway Station. After examination, the mail was sealed in bags and handed over to probably the German field post for despatch by train to Moulins on the demarcation line. There it was handed over to the French on that end of the bridge that was in the southern zone, that is the end leading to the area of La Madeleine in the small part of the town situated on the south bank of the Allier. Mail for the northern zone was handed over in exchange. This mail then did the journey in reverse, finishing up in the German censor office in Paris for examination and handing over to the French. As the weeks progressed the amount of official mail sent rose

from 300 letters a day to 500 and then to 1,000. By the end of 1941 it would reach 10,000 a day.

Eventually the Germans also allowed correspondence of a personal nature between the two zones, but it was restricted to specially printed cards with pre-printed messages with words to cross out and gaps to fill in, plus two lines for a message of a family nature and no other (Fig 7). These so-called family interzone cards cost 90c each, that is 10c for the card and 80c for the postage. Under no circumstances were postage stamps ever to be affixed for fear they might be used to conceal a message underneath. The first cards were put on sale in the Paris area on 26 September 1940. The French postal service was responsible for ensuring that every card sent was genuine, that it bore no postage stamps and that it was completed, especially in respect of the personal message on the last two lines, in accordance with regulations. Every card failing this check had to be returned to sender marked '*Inadmis*' (Fig 8). No refund was given in such cases.

The cards posted in the northern zone were first collected at the Main Post Office in the Rue du Louvre in Paris. They were then sent to the German censor office by now transferred to 93 Boulevard du Montparnasse, still near to Montparnasse Railway Station. There the cards were checked and, if passed, given to the German field post and taken by train to Moulins to join in the 9 a.m. exchange of interzone mail there. From there they were taken by rail to Saint-Germain-des-Fossés, just north of Vichy, for despatch

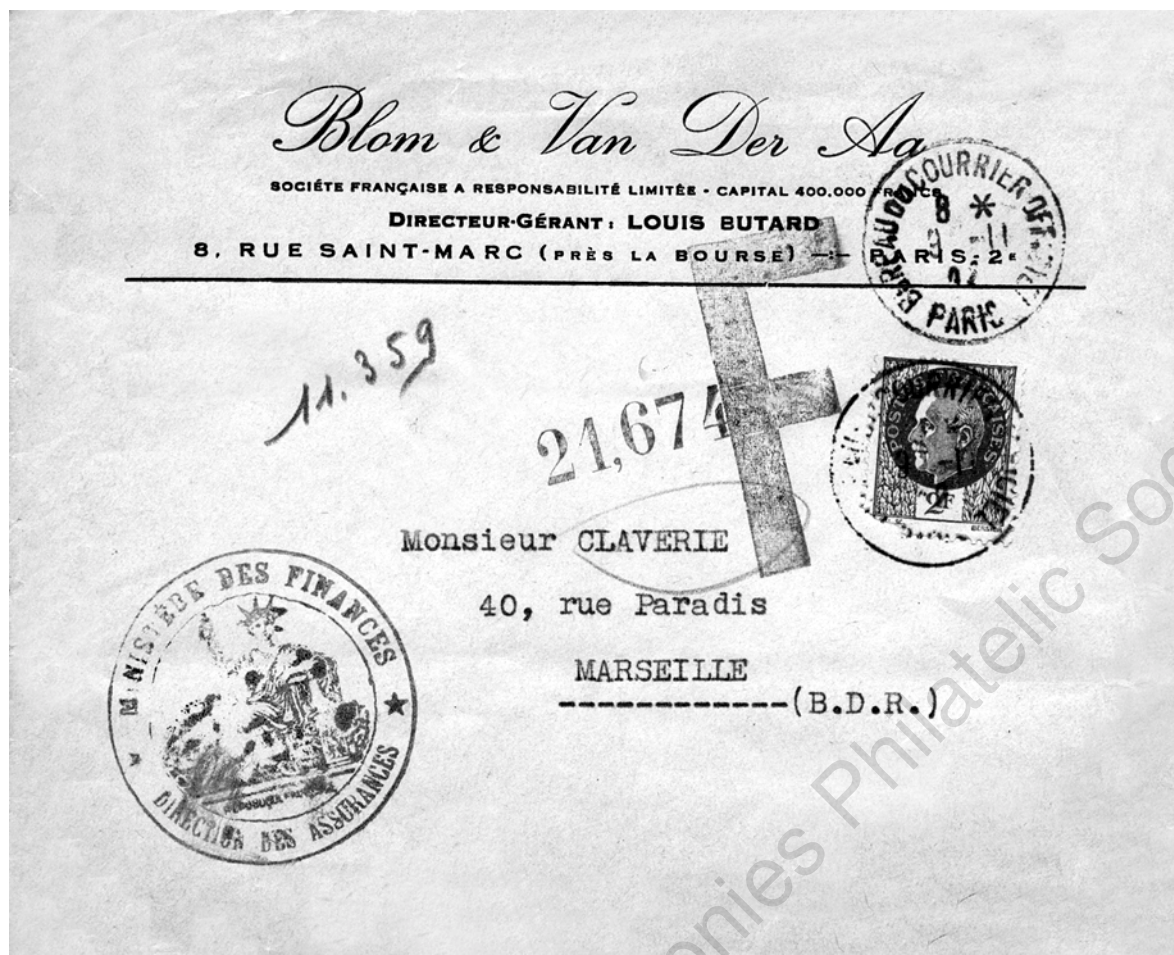


Figure 6 -

Cover of commercial correspondence considered of sufficient economic importance to be included among the official mail permitted to cross from one zone to the other, in this case from Paris in the northern zone to Marseille in the southern zone. It was accepted for inclusion by the Ministry of Finance and stamped with a large 'F' for 'Finances' and a reference number before being cancelled at the Official Mail Office at the time responsible for the final despatch of all official mail destined for the southern zone.

to the various distributing offices in the southern zone. The cards posted in the southern zone did the same journey in reverse except they could be examined by the German censor office at Moulins before being put on the train to Paris.

Many cards sent infringed the regulations. Sometimes the two-line message at the end extended to more than two lines. Sometimes the two-line message was not of a purely family nature, referring, for example, to some commercial matter. Sometimes the sender naively added a word or two to the final pre-printed choice of greeting of *'Affectueuses Pensées. Baisers'* (Love. Love and kisses) (Figs 8 and 9). Sometimes the sender altered one or more of the pre-printed words in an attempt to say something not provided for by the card. Sometimes the sender (and this was stated to be the commonest transgression) simply wrote a message over all or part of the section devoted to words to cross out and gaps to fill in. It seems that the French postal workers were initially rather lax in their checking of the cards. The Germans grew annoyed at receiving so many irregularly completed cards. At the Moulins censor office whole bags of mail were sometimes thrown on the fire when such a card was found among the others. The French were warned that use of the cards would be stopped if the situation did not improve. Consequently, on 4 December 1940, the French Post Office ordered its staff to adhere strictly to

the instructions about checking the cards for irregularities before passing them on for transmission. From then on, before being handed over to the Germans, all the cards posted in the northern zone had to undergo a final examination at the Main Post Office in Paris to ensure that they had been properly checked for irregularities by the despatching offices, while all the cards posted in the southern zone had to undergo a similar examination at the Vichy Post Office, which now replaced Saint-Germain-des-Fossés as the collecting centre. Action was threatened against the director of any office that persistently failed to check the cards properly. All this resulted in much greater care being taken to ensure that all cards contravening regulations were rejected and returned to sender.

Disadvantaged by having to use the 90c family interzone cards were French servicemen, who would otherwise have been able to send their cards free of charge. To remedy this situation, special interzone cards were designed on the lines of the family interzone cards but with the words *'Franchise Militaire'* (Free Forces Mail) in the top right-hand corner (Fig 10). No regulations authorising or defining their use have yet been discovered. Very few cards were produced and only a tiny number ever sent. The only two used examples so far recorded were both despatched early on, in October 1940.



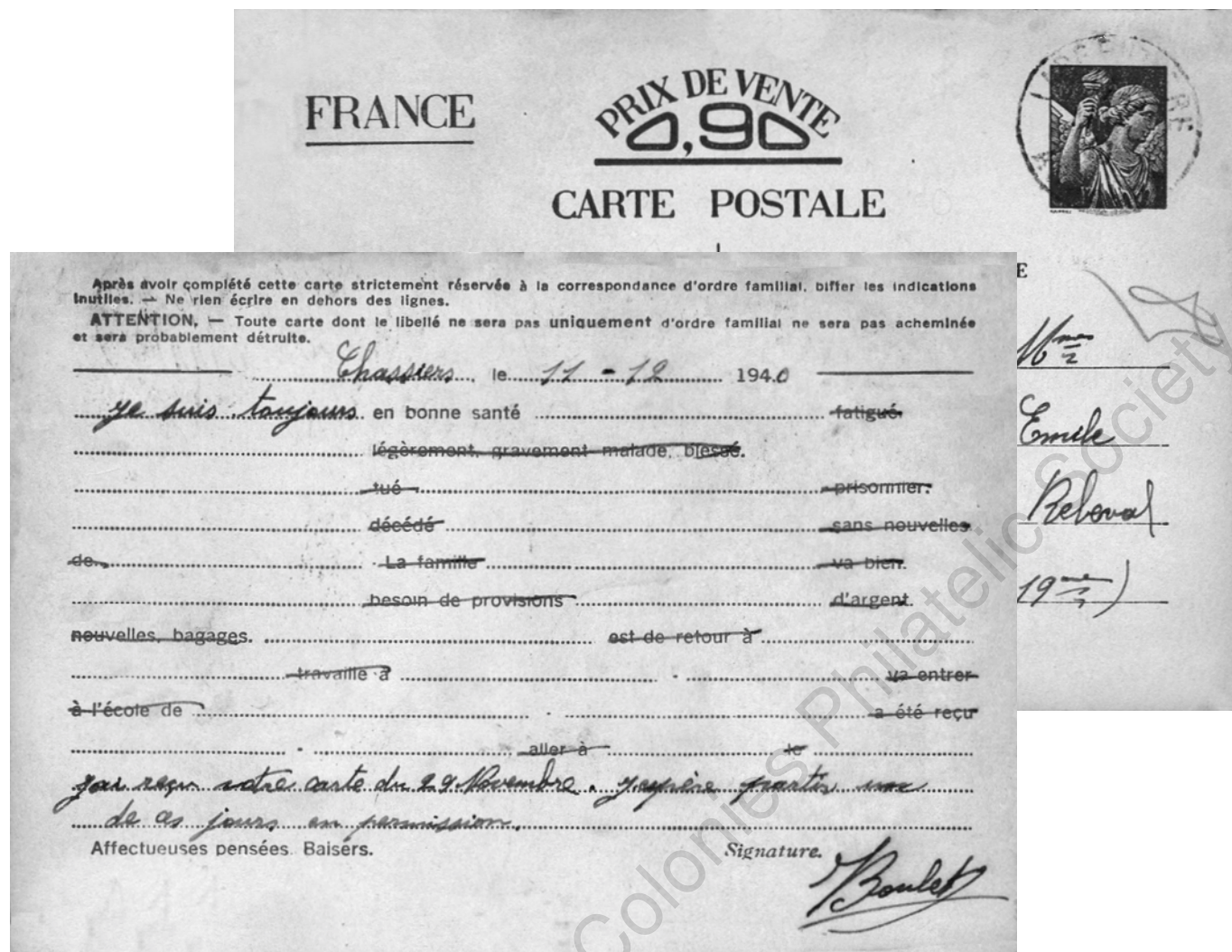


Figure 7 -

The first type of family interzone card to be issued, this one sent by a soldier in a lookout company at Chassiers in the Ardèche to a family in Paris. He has adhered to instructions, filling in the blanks (or rather one blank) and crossing out unwanted words and limiting the final two-line message to purely personal matters about having received a card and hoping to go on leave. The card shows how much of the card was normally useless once an initial card had been sent.

It was next the turn of French businessmen to have their needs catered for. On 15 October, it was announced that the Germans had given permission for the use of specially printed interzone cards for commercial use. Two types of card were printed. The first, which was in grey or buff, was for sending an order for goods (Fig 11). The second, which was in pink, was for acknowledging receipt of an order and giving details of the despatch of the goods. Both cards were in use from at least early November 1940. Both cost 90c, the same as the family interzone card. Both were sold at chambers of commerce to businessmen only. The Paris Chamber of Commerce received the cards to be shared out among the chambers of commerce in the northern zone and the Lyon Chamber of Commerce received those to be similarly shared out in the southern zone. Once completed, the cards had to be returned to a chamber of commerce and then, if this was not already the one in Paris or Lyon, they had to be sent on to whichever of these two was in the same zone. The cards were then sent from the Paris Chamber of Commerce to the Lyon Chamber of Commerce or from the Lyon Chamber of Commerce to the Paris Chamber of Commerce for final distribution in the opposite zone. The cards all went by the same route as

the family interzone cards. An exchange of 500 cards a day was initially allowed. In May 1941, the number permitted would rise to 1,000 a day in each direction.

From 16 December 1940, it became possible for some interzone cards to be sent by airmail. It applied only to interzone cards travelling between the northern zone of France and French territories overseas. Up to then people in the northern zone had not been able to avail themselves of the airmail service available to people in the southern zone using ordinary letters, since the ban on sticking postage stamps on the interzone cards had eliminated the normal way of indicating payment of the airmail supplement. The problem was solved, however, by the introduction of a handstamp to indicate its payment. Anyone in the northern zone wishing to send a card by airmail had to go along to the post office with his card, an envelope marked 'Paris R.P. Avion' (Paris Main Post Office Airmail) and money to cover the airmail supplement. The clerk cancelled the card and put it in the envelope. He then took the money and on the envelope stuck one or more stamps to the value of the airmail supplement paid. Envelope and card were then sent to the Main Post Office in Paris. Once there, the





Figure 8 -

The first type of family interzone card, sent here as a New Year card from Saint-Maurice-de-Tavernole in the Charente-Maritime to Gourdan-Polignan in the Haute-Garonne. However, it has been marked '*Inadmis*' and returned to sender. The sender has written outside the lines by adding 'to you all' after the choice of final greeting 'Love. Love and kisses.'

## NOTE

Les autorités occupantes ayant interdit toute adjonction manuscrite à la suite de mention imprimée, **affectueuses pensées, baisers**, la carte ci-jointe ne peut être acheminée.

Cette interdiction toute récente n'étant pas connue de tous les usagers, la carte renvoyée pourra être remplacée gratuitement au guichet des bureaux de poste, sous réserve de rapporter la présente correspondance et de remettre la carte irrégulière.

En cas d'impossibilité de se déplacer, il suffira d'adresser carte et correspondance, sous enveloppe non affranchie, au Receveur principal des Postes à Toulouse.

Figure 9 -

The ban on adding anything after the final greeting on the family interzone card was spelt out in the Post Office's *Bulletin Officiel* of 23 January 1941. This is one of the labels that the Head Postmaster at Toulouse then had printed for sticking on cards being returned to sender for transgressing this ban. It points out the reason for the card's return and states that, as the ban is new [*sic*] and therefore not known by everyone, the card can be exchanged for a new one free of charge at the post office. This may have been a personal initiative by the Toulouse Head Postmaster.

No Post Office instructions are known authorising the return of rejected cards in this way, something never allowed until then. Moreover no mail from elsewhere has been found bearing printed or written messages indicating that the rejected cards could be exchanged.

**FRANCE**

**CARTE POSTALE**  
(Correspondance familiale)

Cachet  
du Vaguemestre

Franchise  
Militaire

EXPÉDITEUR

DESTINATAIRE

*Edmond Decroix*  
*Groupe 19<sup>B</sup> Groupe 962*  
*Camp de Creysse*  
*Bergerac*  
*(Dordogne)*

*Mademoiselle Eugénie Bodelle*  
*Rue de la Flaque*  
*Auchel*  
*(Pas de Calais)*

Après avoir complété cette carte strictement réservée à la correspondance d'ordre familial, biffer les indications inutiles. — Ne rien écrire en dehors des lignes.

**ATTENTION.** — Toute carte dont le libellé ne sera pas uniquement d'ordre familial ne sera pas acheminée et sera probablement détruite.

*Bergerac* le *12 octobre* 1940

*Je suis* en bonne santé ~~fatigué.~~  
~~légèrement, gravement malade, blessé.~~  
~~tué~~ ~~prisonnier.~~  
~~écorché~~ *Je suis toujours* sans nouvelles  
de toi ~~ainsi que de~~ La famille ~~va bien.~~  
~~besoin de provisions.~~ ~~d'argent.~~  
nouvelles, bagages. ~~est de retour à~~  
~~travaille à~~ ~~va entrer~~  
à l'école de ~~a été reçu~~  
~~aller à~~ ~~te~~

*Ma petite adresse, j'espère que la présente te trouvera en excellente santé ainsi que la mère. J'ai compte recevoir de tes nouvelles sous peu. J'espère de celui qui t'aime faire les baisers les plus doux.*

Affectueuses pensées. Baisers. Signature. *Edmond*

Figure 10 -

First type of family interzone card adapted officially or unofficially for use by servicemen so that they could continue to enjoy their right to send mail free of charge.

This one was sent by a soldier who found himself in a camp at Creysse in the Dordogne at the end of the fighting with the Germans.

He wanted news from his girlfriend at Auchel in the Pas-de-Calais.



FRANCE  
Chambre de Commerce  
de Paris  
14 MARS 1941  
PRIX DE VENTE  
31-III  
1941  
PARIS  
CARTE POSTALE  
CORRESPONDANCE COMMERCIALE  
AVIS DE COMMANDE

M. Messieurs CARRABIN & Cie  
8 Rue Lafont 8

**ATTENTION** } Ces cartes doivent être exclusivement utilisées pour les avis de commande de marchandises.

Lieu : PARIS Date : 13 Mars 1941 Commande n° :  
Monsieur Gustave BLOCH, 8 Rue du Mail, PARIS  
(Désignation et adresse de la personne)

vous prie de lui expédier :  
(Mode et conditions de transport)

les marchandises ci-après :  
Ma commande du 17 Janvier  
" " 20 Février  
surtout des articles tout Rayonne  
en I40, noir et couleurs, également  
Mignonnettes de préférence tout Rayonne

Mode et conditions de paiement : Je compte sur vous et vous en remercie à l'avance

Signature et timbre commercial.  
GUSTAVE BLOCH  
13 MAR 1941

Figure 11 -

First type of commercial interzone card, this one sent by a Paris firm to a textile firm in Lyon to ask for the despatch of earlier orders, especially the rayon articles.

Stamped by the sender on 13 March 1941 and then by the Paris Chamber of Commerce on 14 March, it seems not to have been put into the post until the end of the month.

envelope was discarded, while the card was checked and, if passed, stamped with a handstamp reading 'PARIS R.P. AVION / Surtaxe Aérienne Perçue [Airmail Supplement Charged] / le ..... frs ....', the last spaces being for the date and the sum of money paid. The card was then bundled up with others of its kind and put not on an aeroplane – there were not any – but simply on a railway train for the journey to Moulins and then Vichy. Inside the southern zone it was taken, probably again by train, to Marseille, where at Marignane it was at last put on board an aeroplane, ready to be flown to its overseas destination (see Fig 14 - to be published in the next issue of the Journal - for a later example).

Things continued thus into the new year. Then, in April 1941, the Germans imposed a further restriction causing yet more family interzone cards to finish up being returned to sender. The family interzone cards had originally been printed in various colours according to whatever card was available, but from 20 April it was decreed that they all now had to be in cream only, though buff or light brown would have been a better description of the colour in question. No reason for this requirement was given. Perhaps the Germans were finding that the darker colours were making the use of invisible ink difficult to detect, unless they thought the different colours might be used as some sort of coded message.

To be continued in the next issue of the Journal

# LIST OF RECENTLY PUBLISHED ARTICLES

Compiled by Colin Spong

## *Bulletin de la COL.FRA*

N° 98 1<sup>er</sup> Trim 2002: L'Éphémère Communauté Française 1958-1960 (Goanvic et Bouérat); Haute Volta: Complément au Hors-Série N° 23-1 (Venot); Cameroun 1914-1915, Les premières surcharges (Cobb); Les monnaies coloniales et d'Outre-Mer Françaises (Drye); Jacques Desrousseaux, Biographie (Drye); Bibliographie des articles et ouvrages de M. Jacques Desrousseaux (Drye); Autour des Types «Groupe» et de la surcharge de 1912: complément (Bucheit); AOF, Togo: De leur autonomie interne à leur indépendance: complément (Drye); Nouvelle Calédonie: "Deux timbres pour une surcharge": information (Drye); Madagascar: Création du service de distribution rurale: précisions (Desnos); La vie Hors-Série N° 2-1 Nouvelle Calédonie: complément (Ragu).

Bulletin COL.FRA Hors Série N° 5-5 Oblitérations Mécaniques Flammes (Desnos, Artaud et Mérot); Madagascar, Comores, Côtes des Somalis, Affars et Issas; 13pp. 2001; N° 5-6 Madagascar et Dépendances: Etudes des timbres-poste coupés de 1904 (Desnos); 11pp. 2001.

## *France & Colonies Philatelist*

Whole N° 267 (Vol 58, N° 1) Jan 2002: "Radioscopy" of Some Auction Offerings - "Made in Tahiti" (Beslu); Slogan Cancel of the 1925 Paris Decorative Arts Exposition (Broadhead); Hors-Sac Mail sent outside Mail Bags (Trassaert); A Sort of April the First (von Fafner); The Ultimate Destination (Landau); Types and Sub-types: 40c cameo Sower (-); Further use of American Expeditionary Force message overprinted stamps (Bussey); The Carnet Corner (Seeke); Amazing 1870-71 Wonder Stories - 65 (Cohn).

Whole N° 268 (Vol 58, N° 2) Apr 2002: French West Africa: The First [Provisional] Issue of 1943-1944 (Mitchell); Mauritania - The Provisional Postage Due Issues of 1906 (Grabowski); Francis Garnier in Tonkin [The 5 October 1873 Mission] (Florent Tricot); Mail for the Blind [Cécogrammes] (Trassaert); West African Mail to Belgium via La Rochelle-Pallice (Morvay); Robert G Stone; Amazing 1870-71 Wonder Stories - 67 (Cohn).

## *L'Écho de la Timbrologie*

Permanent features: Dossier, Variétés, Flammes et Oblitérations, Livres, Maximophilie, Thématique.

N° 1749 Feb 2002: L'actualité des courriers navals (-); L'impression en taille-douce (-); Jean Roba, dessinateur de Boule et Bill (Jamet); Courrier obscur (de la Mettrie); Des passeports sanitaires contre la peste (Dutau); Monnaie fictive et collectionneurs (Trassaert); La Fête du Timbre 2002 (Guyot); Un concentré d'histoire postale (-); Au cinquième jour de l'UGP (Prugnon); Une pénalité à supprimer? (Prugnon); France: ultimes adieux [d'un paquebot à l'autre] (Trassaert); Vaincre les «tueurs de gens» [la Grande Paix de Montréal] (Desrosiers).

N° 1750 Mar 2002: La taille-douce [cont.] (-); Mais où naissent les affranchissements? (de la Mettrie); L'Exposition universelle de 1900 (Mayeur); Expédition de journaux: quel tarif? (Prugnon); Encarts de philatélie

historique (Trassaert); Choléra: les mentions manuscrites «RN» (Dutau); Une oblitération inédite de Nouvelle-Calédonie (Lemaître); Les paquebots-poste dans la tourmente [Ligne CGT] (-).

N° 1751 Apr 2002: La taille-douce [cont.& end] (-); 25<sup>e</sup> anniversaire de l'Académie européenne de philatélie (-); Un service à la carte! (Prugnon); Marianne de Luquet [1<sup>re</sup> partie]: la naissance (Jamet); Trente ans de code postal (Trassaert).

## *Les Feuilles Marcophiles*

N° 308 1<sup>er</sup> Trim 2002: Lettre adressée le 8 juin 1832 à M.Castelet, inspecteur des postes (Sené); La «visite» des correspondances sous la Révolution (Kraemer); Guerre de 1870: une découverte (Chauvet); La numérotation des lettres de la ville pour la ville (Abensur et Abensur); La marque postale du camp de Fontainebleau [1839] (Belhabit); Sur un affranchissement superfétatoire (Mayeur); 1<sup>er</sup> mai 1947: arrondissement des taxes au franc le plus voisin (Rioust); Unités militaires: le COA 290 à Angoulême (Perruchon); Le frontstalag de Surgères (Perruchon); T à D de gare en Lot et Garonne (-); Les empreintes des machines à affranchir [additions et corrections] (Bonney & Guillard); Le service de santé territorial pendant la 1<sup>ère</sup> guerre mondiale en zone des armées: La 6<sup>e</sup> région militaire (Gallicet); Administration des Domaines Nationaux (-); Suivi informatique des lettres recommandées (Ettinger & Sené); Une journée à la Poste d'Uzès (Ibert).

## *Timbres Magazine*

Permanent features: Actus Andorre, Monaco et TOM, Cybermarché, Expertise, Les nouveautés de France, Les variétés, Manifestations, Marcophilie, Poste navale, Polaires.

N° 21 Feb 2002: Des expositions philatéliques dans Paris occupé (Chauvin); Les épreuves en taille-douce (RA et PJ); Un siècle de prix Nobel français [cont.] (Michaud); La petite Poste de Lyon [cont.] (Baudot); Quand un gendarme (Zeyons); Millésimes: le plaisir de collectionner les grands crus (-).

N° 22 Mar 2002: La Semeuse de 1903: Les coulisses de l'Émission (Melot); Les carnets des TOM et anciennes colonies (PJM); Paris-Taïpeh: Un pays, deux systèmes (Abouchar); Un siècle de prix Nobel français [end] (Michaud); Paris 1943: l'exposition de Poste Aérienne (Chauvin); Indochine: La fin de la guerre (Michaud); Les Côtes du Nord: La purification des lettres (Baudot); Paris vécu, une traversée de Paris (Zeyons).

N° 23 Apr 2002: Le 10c «Présidence» (Melot); «Y' a bon Banania» [Carnets] (PJM); Bonaparte: la légende de l'Aigle 1<sup>re</sup> pt [De la Corse à l'Italie] (Michaud); Le naufrage du «Renard» (Guichenduc); Le Cher (Baudot); Monsieur le Président (Zeyons).

N° 24 May 2002: L'histoire secrète des timbres de la LVF (Apaire et Sinais); Les faux «Pétain» de Défense de la France (Chauvin); Bonaparte: l'expédition d'Égypte 2<sup>e</sup> pt [l'échec triomphal] (Michaud); Naissance de la poste rurale (Melot); «Les départements conquis» (Baudot).



## PAGES FROM MY COLLECTION

### (17) French West Africa – not just a few pretty pictures

Bill Mitchell



Figure 1



Figure 2

It's surprising how much can sometimes be gleaned from the study of a picture postcard. True, the useless information thus obtained may not have much philatelic interest, but this is a hobby after all, and if a bit of harmless fun can be obtained from it, why not? Here are some examples from French West Africa in the early years of the 20th Century.

There was a curious custom amongst French expats in sub-Saharan Africa in the years before World War II. It was commonplace for them to stick stamps on their souvenir postcards, have them cancelled by their friendly post office clerk and take them home in their wallet. Any stamp would

do — I have examples “franked” in this way at rates ranging from 1c to 2F50 on dates between 1905 and 1937.

One of these features “Une gare de chemin de fer de la côte d'Ivoire” (Fig 1). It bears a now rather disfigured 5c Faïdherbe (Y&T 24) cancelled at BOUAKÉ on 23 September 1911. It was apparently purchased by a M. Champlois; at any rate on 22 October in the following year Maître Champlois (the title given to a lawyer) used the card to order “10 sacs de charbons anthracite anglais” from a Paris coal merchant (Fig 2). Possibly M. Champlois was feeling the cold after his sojourn in the tropics! The 10c Sower, incidentally, is cancelled by the *PARIS XVIII R. DE*



Figure 3



Figure 4

*CLIGNANCOURT* Krag machine cancel; as so often the strike is not particularly good, but the year 1912 is confirmed by the fragment of the *PARIS X DISTRIBUTION* cancel visible towards the bottom left on the picture side of the card.

The name of the “gare” is not stated on the card, but it cannot be Bouaké. In 1911, when the card was purchased, the good citizens of that town were awaiting, no doubt impatiently, the completion of the railway from the coast at Port Bouet and Abidjan. This was duly achieved in the following year (or in 1913 — the authorities differ), and Bouaké was to remain the terminus for some time as an extension northwards was not begun until 1923.

A second Ivory Coast card dates from some years earlier. Franked with a 5c “Type Groupe” (Y&T 4) it was sent from *EYRI-MACOUDIÉ* to Angers on 13 November 1906 (Fig 3). It was in fact under-franked as the message consists of more than five words, but it was not taxed. The cancel,

struck in blue, is eminently collectable as the Eyri-Macoudié post office was only open from 1 February 1905 to June 1909, when it was closed and its functions transferred to Agboville, a few miles to the north-west.

Like Bouaké, Eyri-Macoudié and Agboville were on the railway running northwards from the coast. According to the Naval Intelligence Handbook, Ery-Macouguié (as it is there spelled) was re-named Agboville, but a little research shows that this is not the case. Constant Bouerat prints a sketch map showing “*les courriers de la Côte d'Ivoire en 1910*” on which both are shown, and both also appear on a plate from the “Times” Atlas — I would guess, the edition of 1921. However, Eyri-Macoudié is not shown on more recent “Times” Atlases — the Concise Edition of 1993 and the new Millennium 2000 Edition of the “Comprehensive” — and this made me wonder whether it had either ceased to exist or been absorbed into Agboville, until I found it on a Michelin road map of the Ivory Coast dated 1998. So,



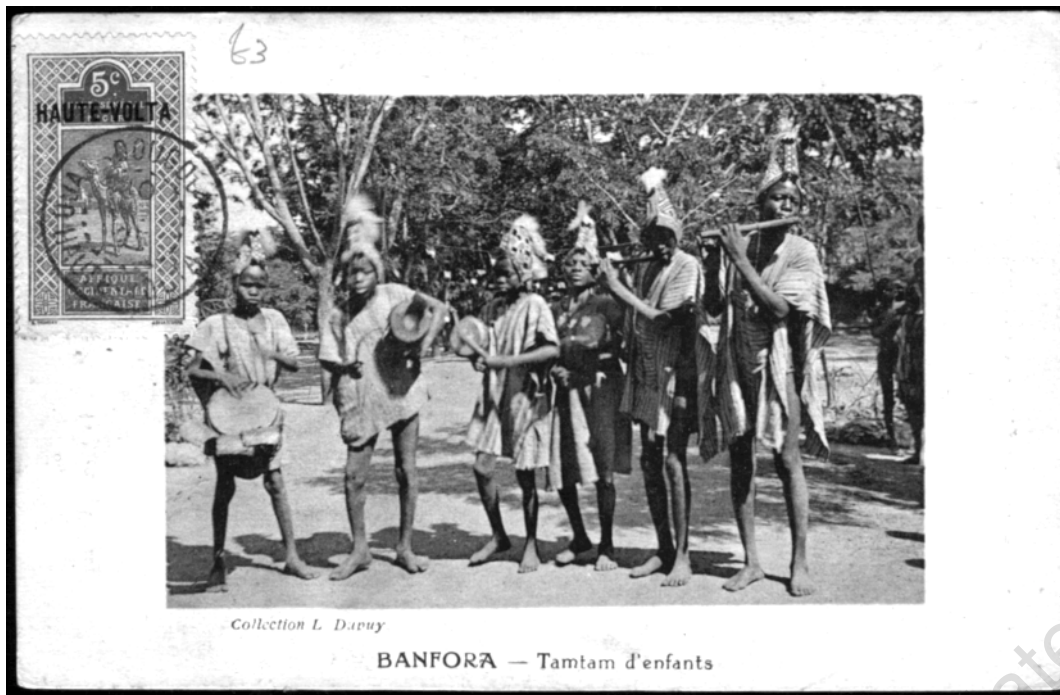


Figure 5



Figure 6

although it still exists it is now presumably of greatly decreased importance.

The next card depicts the “*Place du tam-tam indigène*” at Grand-Bassam (Fig 4). My Collins-Robert Dictionary translates “*tam-tam*” as “*tomtom*”; Collins’ English Dictionary in turn defines “*tom-tom or tam-tam*” as “a drum associated either with the American Indians or with Eastern cultures, usually beaten with the hands as a signalling instrument; a monotonous drumming or beating sound [C17, from Hindi *tamtam*, of imitative origin]”. But from other cards in my possession it would appear to have been, in West Africa at any rate, an indigenous dance band (Upper Volta, Fig 5) or even a local “hop” (Senegal, Fig 6).

There is nothing very philatelic about all this, but I’ve enjoyed ferreting out these facts and I hope readers will find that they are not without interest.

### Acknowledgements

In addition to the dictionaries and atlases referred to in the text I have consulted the following:-

- Naval Intelligence Handbook on French West Africa, Vol 2 (HMSO, 1944), pp 298-299;
- William M Waugh, *Railway Mail in the French African and Indian Ocean Colonies* (FCPS USA, Vaurie Memorial Fund Publication N° 7, 1987), p 12;
- Constant Bouerat, *Essai de Nomenclature des Établissements de Poste et de Télécommunications de Côte d’Ivoire* (COL.FRA Bulletin Hors-série N° 16-2, 1999), p 12;
- Constant Bouerat, *Les Postes et Télécommunications de la Côte d’Ivoire (1862-1975)* (COL.FRA Bulletin Hors-série No 16-3A, 1999), map on p 7.

## Amazing 1870-71 Wonder Stories - 68

Ernst Cohn

Thanks to a good friend I can tell you about another great offering by a South German auction house of *Ballons Montés*, starting with a totally amazing *Neptune*. It is (presumably hand dated) from 22 September 1870, without franking but with a red P.P. (postage paid) and an additional handstamp. "Greatest rarity and eye catcher for the large exhibit collection. Photo certificate of von der Weid/SBPV and expertized Djismardass."



In his excitement, the lot describer misspelled the name of my old friend Djismardahoss — or is it perhaps misspelled on the cover itself? The SBPV, in case you care to know, stands for the Swiss society of stamp expertizers. One wonders how this stamp expertizer came to expertize a folded letter *without* a stamp, but perhaps someone imitated his signature.

This unique item was estimated at merely DM 120,000.00 + 21½%. As my friend said, that is a high price to ask for a forgery. I do not know whether it was sold, but perhaps you will soon see it exhibited at an international show by its proud new owner. Incidentally, parts of not just one but two circular stampings are visible on this item, neither of which is even partly legible, however.

How can we be certain that it is a counterfeit? The folded letter is pictured and shows a printed PAR BALLON MONTÉ, fully five days before that phrase was published in the *Journal Officiel*. Clearly, the letter writer had strong psychic power to anticipate the words **and** to get a printer to prepare this piece of stationery for him. The paper is undoubtedly contemporary with the siege of Paris, because unused sheets are still in plentiful supply, as are unused *dépêche-réponse* cards of type III and Maury's postwar souvenir cards and letter-sheets with patriotic bilingual slogans and in all colors of the rainbow.

There is more news, however, from that very same auction, for anyone interested in 1870 balloon post. This unique lot is followed by a list of five other balloon covers, said to be beautifully preserved. The first one, with 20+30 centimes postage to Copenhagen, supposedly shows an arrival date of 15 October. The next lot sports an 80 centimes stamp on a cover postmarked 21 October to Rio de Janeiro, with an arrival marking of unspecified date, expertized by the well-known French expert Calves. Then comes a horizontal pair of 30 centimes to Stockholm, dated 24 October. A 20+40 centimes franking graces a fine newspaper-letter to

Austria, dated 6 November, with arrival marking, again of unspecified date. The last lot comes with a railway ticket(?), has a 20 centimes stamp on the balloon letter and is dated 20 December, "a rare combination and exhibition piece for the big collection, de luxe condition for the amateur collector, photo certificate by von der Weid."

Having no photos of those wonderful lots, I cannot cite more details than given by the lot describer. That last piece, by the way, ranked second most expensive, yet far behind the *Neptune*, with an estimate of only DM 40,000.00 (plus 21½%, of course).

Can you explain what the railway ticket is doing in that last lot? Perhaps the writer was sending it to the recipient, in the hope the latter might take a train into besieged Paris? Apart from the fact that railway tickets have no obvious relationship to philately, one wonders what went through the heads of owner, auctioneer, and lot describer in pairing these two items.

\* \* \*

I am not familiar with this auction house, but it is not the only one in South Germany to have offered rather crude fakes and forgeries of 1870 French material. Modern forgers apparently first try to peddle their wares in France and, failing there, send them on to Germany in the hope of better luck with inexperienced auctioneers and buyers. Their success quota is not known.

Years ago one of those South German auctioneers had a whole collection of crude forgeries, all addressed to the same person, yet each to a different (imaginary) address. He even illustrated most if not all of them. A Munich friend, who worked for the police at the time, caused the lots to be withdrawn before they were sold. Had the forger been less greedy and entrusted his covers one at a time to different auctioneers, they would have been much more difficult to nail down.

Kegham Djismardahoss, whose name is cited above, is long dead. In his lifetime he prided himself on never having signed a single faked or forged Paris siege cover. Yet this is the second forged *Neptune* cover, signed by him, of which I have been made aware. Both items bear that printed phrase PAR BALLON MONTÉ, which is a dead give-away to anyone even vaguely familiar with that aspect of history. I now own Djis' copy of François' book on the Paris siege mails, which clearly states the date on which that phrase was first published. It seems unbelievable that a knowledgeable dealer like Djis would have fallen into this crude trap, *twice*, thus risking his reputation among French philatelists. Hence I presume that someone forged his signature. The von der Weid signature was probably forged as well — why not?!

As I pointed out in my article *We Need Postal History Expertizers* in *Fakes Forgeries Experts* N° 1 (October 1998), expertizing the stamps and postal markings on a cover is not enough when it comes to evaluating authenticity. In this case, merely knowing that the phrase for balloon mail



was not published until 27 September suffices to condemn a letter on a printed form of that type as faked, when one sees that it is supposedly dated the 22nd.

Also, whether it is an original or a photographed certificate of an expertizer, be wary, if possible make arrangements to check back with the expertizer or check with another one, and ask for the reasons for his opinion. Most importantly,

be sure you yourself know as much as possible about the merchandise you are buying and the postal history surrounding the events.

If it turns out to be a beauty such as this *Neptune*, the £s you save will be your own. Remember that it has been said that, of the 2.5 million balloon letters from the siege of Paris, about 3 million are still extant. This is one of them.

## Auction Lot

The following lot will be offered in the July 2002 Society Auction.  
See also inside back cover (page iii).



École Pigier 'fiscals' used in practical course (part of lot shown only)

## POSTAL HISTORY SALES

My postal sales lists offer wide selections of France & Colonies postal history material, including maritime, military, aviation and POW items.

All lots are well described, with a free photocopy service on request.

Send for your free list to:

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**Thatchers Lane, Tansley, Matlock, Derbyshire DE4 5FD**

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E-mail: michael@mdpiggin.fsnet.co.uk

Website: www.mdpiggin.fsnet.co.uk

# Index to Subjects in Amazing 1870-71 Wonder Stories

Ernst Cohn

At the time this index is being compiled, 83 such stories have been written and over ¾ published thus far, the first in the F&CPS *Philatelist*, Whole N° 236, April 1994; the second in the *Journal*, Whole N° 191, March 1994. Thereafter, all odd ones appeared in the *Philatelist* and even ones in the *Journal*, usually one per issue, except that none appeared in N°s 264 and 265 of the *Philatelist* but three in N° 266. Because of the wide range of factual and fictitious subjects covered, I have been asked to provide an index; here it is:

1. The PARIS SC postmark's use; an SC of 5 December went via the balloon *Denis-Papin*.
2. Card pmkd. 28 Sept., franked 30 centimes to England, forwarded by wife or mother of a German lieutenant. He claimed the balloon carrying the card had been shot down. Cards bearing full postage were not to be sent on unmanned balloons — but perhaps this one was, by mistake? Postscript 2A (in *Journal* 198) mentions that card belongs to Prof. Robert Jacquot.
3. Faked balloon covers to Russia; French translation in *Feuilles Marcophiles* N° 287 (1996).
4. Cover addressed within greater Paris, described as having been taken by a smuggler. Also, the bogus cachet *Trouvée à La Courneuve*; a post-war printing of Maury's massed-flags form; letters ascribed to wrong balloons.
5. Letter personally entrusted to Glachant of balloon *Rouget de l'Isle*, together with one written by Glachant just after landing near La Ferté Macé on 24 December.
6. Heydl, rue Basse du Rampart 56, is reported (via London and pigeongram of January) to be paying spies at Paris. Also, the US diplomats traveling to and from Paris are reported to be active in the black market and to furnish information to Bismarck; however, their trips had been made on 2-3 and 8-10 October, about a quarter year earlier.
7. A Maury card for the war, but printed afterwards, unused, offered for \$200.
8. Scarcity of mail really flown on the *Armand Barbès* and how to determine that, also for *Général Uhrich*.
9. The 'standard' formats of *papillons de Metz* by the first and second unmanned balloon mails.
10. Complaint about plagiarism concerning 1870 in French philatelic literature.
11. Pigeons on roof of National Library don't prove authenticity of *Trouvée à La Courneuve*.
12. Balloon battle of besieged Paris — and what is wrong with it.
13. Photo of Government of National Defense of 4 Sept. 1870, how not to write history, and some details on US pouch mail in siege.
14. The Brinquaut correspondence, partly by diplomatic pouch, by balloon, and by smuggler; and the *Times* agony column.
15. Proof that *L'Ami de la France* was flown out of Paris during siege.
16. Did *La Bretagne* carry Paris mail and, if so, what kind?
17. Newspaper reporters at Metz in 1870.
18. 7 characteristics of Paris letters for assigning them to specific balloons (partly reprinted in *Philatelist* N° 248).
19. Dr. Van Hecke's imaginative recollections of the siege of Paris.
20. Newspaper reporters at Paris in 1870.
21. More evidence of German political censorship of balloon mail in 1870.
22. *Jacquard* mail with Rev. Jackson's slip, and 'cheese labels' on Commune mail.
23. Some positive and negative highlights of CAPEX 96.
24. Expertizing postal history over the phone — when it is possible and when not.
25. Paris mail posted by Colonel Claremont from London.
26. Immediate postwar mail to and from Beaugency concerning help given by Americans.
27. Domestic cards flown promptly from Paris on manned balloons starting with *Jean Bart* 2.
28. The unsuccessful subfluvial mail, unrealized hot-air balloon project, and the only successful Belfort balloon.
29. Two-way bottle mail on the Moselle, a Metz balloon joke in the Brussels park, and some imitation pigeon mail.
30. The 1870 rocket mail patent.
31. Historical mistakes about 1870 in Grolier's encyclopedia.
32. Colonel Foy's note by *Neptune* to Château-la-Vallière arrived on 26 Sept.
33. Letter from French POW at Mainz, properly censored and marked free, faked by addition of occupation stamps (not valid in Germany proper) postmarked at Mainz.
34. German confusion of *réveillon* with *rébellion*; internment of 57 German soldiers at Bad Gonten, Switzerland, upon crossing the border of Switzerland in pursuit of French soldiers.
35. Austrian censor's mark on 1870 Paris balloon letter, NOT from WWI but from WWII, as corrected by J T Carrigan in *Philatelist* N° 254, p. 114.
36. The *ballon monté* of 20 Oct to Jerusalem — two photos showing different stamps attached to it. I thought it was addressed to Dr London but D Jennings-Bramley pointed out that the name is Landau (*Journal* N° 209, pp. 150-151). Though the pair of stamps had been recognized as forgeries before, this cover had a place of honor at the Jerusalem 3000 exhibition in December '95.
37. More details about how cards *bearing reduced postage* were handled in the siege of Paris, available since October 1870 but overlooked by philatelists.
38. The printed slip purporting to be used for packages of *papillons de Metz* and proof that it is bogus.
39. Bogus Baden censorship marking on a Paris balloon cover and genuine misprint 'In Sichettstad vorgefunden' (addendum in *Philatelist* N° 255, p. 21).
40. Further details about scarcity of mail from *Armand-Barbès*.
41. A genuinely used Maury card with massed flags and slogans — postmarked at Tours in 1876!
42. Dangers of scissors-and-paste job, in this case about pigeon mail.
43. Why the 1870 war was *not* a Franco-Prussian War, as proven, e.g., by a Baden postal card sent postage-free by a French POW; conclusive historical truth, and how it can be changed, as shown by *gratis* labels with faked cancels.
44. The *Yvert Aérienne* fable about an unchronicled balloon of 4 October and the empty promise of an



- advertisement for a private balloon on that date, which was to carry passengers and private packages; also the 'secret' balloon of Metz that never existed; and the untruths told by the balloonists on the *Piper 1* that gave rise, much later, to the bogus marking *Trouvée à La Courneuve*.
45. The Carter-to-Cram correspondence and instructions on how to send mail by US pouch.
  46. A quiz on 1870 postal history (see also 50).
  47. Facts and (mostly) fancies seen at Philexfrance 99.
  48. The siege of Neuf Brisach and how to settle some 1870 questions by using a modern postal code directory (zip code directory).
  49. A dice game on the Franco-German War.
  50. Augustine Fitzgerald's collection containing 1870 airmail material ranging from rarities to fakes, described in *The notebook of an Amateur Collector of Early Souvenirs of the Airpost Together with a few rarities from the Siege of Metz and the Siege of Paris*. Also result of the quiz (see 46).
  51. Inventor and promoters of the *dépêche-réponse* card, their types and use.
  52. Bourbaki's suicide and other mistakes of history.
  53. Arrest of de Raynal at Versailles.
  54. From the *Deutsche Briefmarken-Zeitung* of 1870/71.
  55. Letter dated 3 October to *Figaro's* editor misjudging accumulated mail at Paris.
  56. Secret French telegraph and fables of its betrayal to Germans.
  57. Smugglers, honest and otherwise, in the siege of Paris.
  58. More details about political censorship of balloon mail in 1870.
  59. Only letter known to have been destined for the *Union*, which could not be inflated. Hence the letter was entrusted to Duruof and flew on the *Neptune*.
  60. Paris travel permit from just before siege, and Victor Silberer's trip to and from Paris just around the start of the siege.
  61. Some 1870 absurdities in a 1997 German TV magazine.
  62. Mail from the *Garibaldi*; Krupp's anti-aircraft cannon, first of its kind.
  63. The probable postal history of a misrouted letter that first went north from Alsace-Lorraine and was then sent south to Lyon.
  64. Certificate of authenticity for a so-called *Neptune* which, in fact, was a cover smuggled out of Paris, i.e., case of an authentic letter but wrongly expertized. Also table showing details of official letter smuggling between 20 September and early October.
  65. Fabled balloons to Iceland and to Natal, the latter reported in 1873. The balloonist de Fonvielle, of modest aeronautical talents but a big talker, fell for the Natal story but was told later that it was a joke.
  66. Siege of Paris card dated by writer 3 October but carrying a Paris mailing date of 3 May, no year visible. Was the card temporarily lost? Was it a joke?
  67. (US) Thanksgiving in besieged Paris, accounts by Bowles and Sheppard.
  68. German auction offer of a forged so-called *Neptune* cover estimated at DM 120,000 + 21½%. One doesn't have to see the original to recognize it as a forgery, because the address side is imprinted *PAR BALLON MONTÉ*. That phrase was not published in the *Journal Officiel* until four (4) days after that balloon had left Paris. It supposedly came with certificates by both von der Weid (Swiss) and Djismardahoss (French); both may be faked, of course.
  69. Some years ago I was offered a letter "from Paris, by diplomatic pouch" that was neither; I bought it anyhow, because it looked quite interesting. It originated in Vierzon on 3 Jan. 1871, went by night train Paris-Calais on 10 Jan., and arrived at London on 11 January, where it received a red OFFICIAL — PAID marking. The letter originated from Doherty, 'The Royal Blood', and is addressed to the Secretary of State for the War Office.
  70. Report on a Roumet auction containing a cover with the political censorship marking of balloon mail (French inscription); a letter via the *Bretagne* and postmarked at Fresnes-en-Woëvre; a cover probably carried by the *Général Uhrich*; and the strange mix-up of mail between the *Ville d'Orléans* and the *Jacquard*.
  71. Brian Birch supplied photocopies of the following amazing and amusing ancient stories:- Ralph Wedmore translated a 1909 talk to the Paris Historical Society by Count Paul Durrieu about his father, born at Strasbourg, who mistakenly felt familiar with German and offered to translate Maury's noble phrases that were printed bilingually on stationery (cards and folded letters), most of which was produced well after the war. Finally, we learn who wrote the 'German' version that undoubtedly made many German soldiers laugh — if they read it. — Another revelation is provided by a commentator about the 1870 war in general and about the 'balons montés' in particular, all quite entertaining even if there is not a bit of truth to it.
  72. The naming of the balloon *Le Général Renault*, its landing time, extended duration of delivery of its mail, and travels of aeronauts after landing.
  73. Mail of German prisoners of war at Paris.
  74. Texts of actual balloon letters referring to the mails.
  75. Balloon mail on horseback — a cartoon.
  76. Bigsby's amazing (false) information in an old sales list.
  77. Another collection of Brian Birch's photocopies of amazing non-facts, some in amazing non-English as well.
  78. Description of the first (and thus far only) empty cover that contained a letter via *Jacquard*, postpaid with a penny stamp and forwarded from Helston (3 Dec.) to Dover (5 Dec.).
  79. Proof that NO mail from the *Piper 1*, which probably contained not a single card, was ever returned to Paris. Also, the two entirely different fates of two letters known to have been given to Monsignor Chigi for forwarding out of Paris.
  80. German rules for free soldiers' and prisoners' mail in 1870/71.
  81. Details of a *Neptune* cover, written by the same man who intended to send an earlier letter by the *Union*, though that also went via the *Neptune*.
  82. Open censorship of civilian mail — first practiced in the 1870 war?
  83. 93rd SOLUPHIL sale lots 533 (Belfort 'balloon' withdrawn), 479 (balloon letter of 5 Nov. to Baroness Rothschild, similar to US pouch letter for her), 478 (Roseleur letter via *Fulton* and brief notes on Roseleur mail generally).

*This index of Ernst Cohn's articles is being published almost simultaneously in the July issue of the US Philatelist. Members should note that in most cases but not all - i.e. when confusion is unlikely to be caused - American spelling and phraseology have been maintained in the articles and the index for the UK Journal.*

## FEBRUARY 2002 AUCTION REALISATIONS

Lot	Realisation	Lot	Realisation	Lot	Realisation	Lot	Realisation	Lot	Realisation	Lot	Realisation
1	12.00	87	30.00	154	4.00	233	12.00	287	15.00	362	4.50
8	40.00	88	40.00	156	15.00	236	6.00	288	7.50	366	3.00
11	8.00	94	23.00	157	5.00	237	4.50	289	2.00	367	4.50
14	5.50	100	25.00	158	9.00	239	16.00	291	4.00	371	10.00
15	5.50	101	30.00	160	10.00	241	38.00	293	3.00	372	1.50
16	6.00	102	12.00	162	20.00	243	5.00	295	5.00	373	5.00
17	5.00	103	3.00	163	11.00	244	80.00	296	4.00	374	5.00
18	5.00	104	11.00	164	25.00	245	30.00	297	2.50	375	4.00
19	4.50	105	10.00	166	25.00	246	10.00	298	2.50	376	14.00
21	6.00	106	4.00	167	20.00	247	25.00	299	4.50	378	2.50
23	8.00	108	8.50	168	7.50	248	25.00	302	9.00	379	5.00
25	8.00	109	16.00	169	25.00	249	15.00	303	9.50	380	2.50
26	19.00	110	10.00	170	8.50	252	3.50	304	31.00	392	7.00
27	12.00	114	8.00	171	11.00	253	15.00	305	110.00	395	2.50
30	5.50	115	12.00	172	5.00	254	4.50	306	16.00	398	10.00
33	3.50	116	4.00	173	23.00	256	2.00	307	3.00	399	4.00
34	4.50	119	3.00	175	48.00	258	14.00	308	21.00	403	7.00
38	9.00	120	2.50	178	82.00	259	3.00	309	6.50	404	3.50
43	18.00	122	2.50	179	10.00	260	165.00	310	2.50	407	4.00
44	2.50	125	8.00	181	8.00	261	29.00	311	9.50	409	5.50
45	3.00	126	20.00	183	5.00	262	11.00	312	20.00	410	4.00
47	5.00	128	3.50	184	10.00	263	8.00	313	2.50	411	4.50
48	6.00	129	21.00	185	26.00	264	4.50	314	16.00	412	6.50
49	5.00	131	2.50	186	4.50	265	8.50	315	50.00	414	15.00
50	12.00	132	8.00	188	5.50	266	15.00	316	12.00	415	12.00
52	10.00	133	3.00	193	8.50	267	13.00	319	3.00	420	21.00
53	3.00	136	8.00	196	7.50	268	7.50	321	4.00	422	6.00
55	4.00	138	19.00	200	7.50	269	10.00	325	5.00	427	7.00
57	2.50	139	2.50	201	7.50	270	22.00	330	2.00	428	8.50
58	5.00	140	5.00	202	5.00	273	8.00	331	2.50	429	18.00
59	2.50	141	15.00	205	12.00	274	8.00	335	3.00	430	7.50
65	24.00	142	3.00	206	9.50	275	8.00	339	5.00	431	6.50
66	5.50	143	8.00	209	31.00	276	6.00	345	4.50	432	25.00
67	5.50	144	13.00	210	2.50	277	5.50	346	5.00	433	18.00
68	25.00	145	7.50	211	5.00	278	8.50	348	15.00	434	8.00
69	2.50	146	5.00	212	5.00	279	6.50	349	15.00	436	2.50
70	6.50	147	8.50	213	4.50	280	6.50	350	4.50	439	7.00
72	8.50	148	5.00	215	6.00	281	5.50	351	2.50	444	6.00
73	5.50	149	9.50	221	4.00	282	25.00	355	5.00	445	3.50
74	5.50	150	9.50	228	17.00	283	10.00	356	19.00	446	5.00
75	4.00	151	6.00	230	21.00	285	34.00	357	13.00		
79	4.00	153	8.50	232	30.00	286	10.00	360	3.00	Total	2,926.50

### Important Note

It has been decided that, as all bidders in the Auctions now receive their own individual copies of the list of realisations - and that much more rapidly than is possible by publishing in the Journal - there seems little point in continuing to print these lists here as well. This will therefore be the last Auction Realisations List to be reproduced in the Journal. Any member who has not submitted a bid but who wishes to have a personal copy of the latest Realisations List will be able to request one from the Auction Secretary by sending a s.a.e.

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## BOOKSHELF

### Books Noted

**The Parcel Post Stamps of the Ivory Coast**, by David L Herendeen, published 2001 by the author; card cover, perfect bound, 7x10 inches; numerous illustrations and tables; 142pp. ISBN 0-9708234-0. Available for \$24.95 + postage from Herendeen Enterprises, 1641-D 237<sup>th</sup> Street, Harbor City, CA 97010; also from Pascal Behr, 30 avenue de l'Opera, 75002, Paris. [Stanley J Luft, editor of *France & Colonies Philatelist*, reviewing this in the 3<sup>rd</sup> **Quarter Philatelic Literature Review** remarks that "in this elegantly devised tour de force, Dave Herendeen, has produced what surely must be - and perhaps for all time - the definitive study....of Ivory Coast parcel post stamps Cérès N<sup>os</sup> 1-22. Whilst this is not the book for everyon, nevertheless, I would not hesitate to recommend it, if only as an instruction manual on the best way to conduct a really serious study of some neglected or poorly understood subject." The *Philatelist* is in the Society library if anyone wishes to read the full review of this publication.]

Colin Spong

**Boulogne-sur-Mer et la Poste (1700-2000)**, by Louis Peter; 224 pp, 270 x 210mm, perfect bound; 149F + p&p. [Other details not known; price in francs from last year.]

**Marques postales et oblitérations d'Aix-en-Provence**, by Gérard Fiandino & René Fonnet; 230 pp, 150 x 210mm; numerous illustrations; available from Association Philatélique du Pays d'Aix, BP 266, 12602 Aix-en-Provence Cedex. [Town's postal markings and cancellations from origins to early 1900s; price not known.]

**Cérès CD-ROM: France, Monaco, Andorra, Polynésie et Terres Australes**; 35€ + 3€ p&p; available from Cérès Philatélie, 23 rue du Louvre, 75041 Paris Cedex 01.

**Opus 2**, pub. AEP-ADP Opus; illustrated in colour; details from Jean-Pierre Mangin, 23 rue du Paquis, 55000 Bar-le-Duc. [Compilation of articles written by members of the Académie Européenne de Philatélie and other eminent collectors, illustrated from their own collections; price unknown.]

**Un siècle de transports**, pub. La Poste; available from Service Philatélique de La Poste, 18 rue François Bonvin, 75758 Paris Cedex 15. [Accompanies the miniature sheet "le Siècle au fil du timbre" and traces history of favourite means of transport of the French; price unknown.]

**Les prisonniers de guerre français détenus par la Wehrmacht pendant la Seconde Guerre Mondiale**, by Claude Ablard; 88 pp, A4, b/w; 15€; supplement to Feuilles Marcophiles n<sup>o</sup> 307, available separately from Union Marcophile, 47 rue de Maubeuge, 75009 Paris. [Postal correspondence of French POWs during WWII, illustrated by letters, postcards, covers sent from POW camps in Germany, and including contemporary press articles, regulations for sending parcels to the camps, and special Red Cross cards.]

**La Poste dans l'Oise des origines à 1904 (ses bureaux, ses marques et ses oblitérations)**, pub. la section marcophile du Groupement des Clubs Philatéliques de l'Oise; 240 pp in colour, hardback, 200 illustrations; produced in partnership with le Conseil Général de l'Oise, la Direction Départementale de la Poste de l'Oise, and les Éditions du Valhermeil; to appear Sept-Oct 2002; 40€ (+ 5€ p&p); orders to GCPO, Mme Martine Divay, 21 rue Henri Dupriez, 60300 Aumont-en-Halatte. [For each of the 174 communes in this Picardy département, creation and development of its post office, marks and date stamps listed under their various usages, illustrations of letters and postcards.]

**Le Cours des Carnets 2002**, pub. Association des Collectionneurs de Carnets et Publicitimbres; 70 pp, A4, illustrations in colour; 10€ (+ p&p); available from ACCP, Gérard Gomez, 13 rue Hardy, 78000 Versailles. [Catalogue of all booklets from France, former Colonies and DOM-TOM; gives value of detached booklet stamps (mint, used and on cover), uses Cérès, Yvert and ACCP numbers, and estimates are reflection of real market value.]

**Catalogue Libération** (8th edition), by Pierre Mayer; 116 pp; 46€; available from Pierre Mayer, 4 rue Drouot, 75009 Paris. [Liberation overprints reproduced in colour for 220 towns; several chapters devoted to issues of Lorient, Dunkirk, and naval post.]

**La Poste aux Lettres dans le département du Var (Vol III: Bureaux de direction et bureaux de distribution)**, by Robert Gregnac-Daudemard; pub. Cercle d'Histoire Postale rattaché au musée régional du Timbre au Luc-en-Provence; 66 pp, A5; 11,02€; available from Musée régional du Timbre et de la Philatélie, "Le Château", BP 51, 83340 Le Luc-en-Provence. [Lists different marks and date stamps used by bureaux de direction 1830-1848 and bureaux de distribution 1819-1848, with b/w illustrations, explanatory texts and estimates of value.]

**Erreurs, curiosités, anomalies (dates d'impression)**, pub. ScCoCoDaMi; 60 pp, A5, many illustrations; 10€; a few copies available to non-members of the Société des Collectionneurs de coins datés et millésimes from C Bertaut, 6-8 rue Georges Pompidou, 93260 Les Lilas. [Printing mistakes made by the Atelier du Timbre (wrong commemorative dates, undated definitives, work apparently done on Sundays, etc) from 1924 to date; includes stamps, booklets, sheets and dated corner blocks.]

**La lettre taxée au XXe siècle (tarifs intérieurs)**, by Charles Rioust; 278 pp, A4, many illustrations in colour; 36€ (+4€ p&p); available from Charles Rioust, 4 rue Watt, 30000 Nîmes. [Shows different aspects of taxation and use of postage due stamps, covering each rates period with its various compositions and special cases, and giving estimates of value for documents described.]

Maurice Tyler

## SHORTER ITEMS - INCLUDING QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

### Double Cancellation on Presidency Stamps



I acquired this envelope over a year ago. It is tatty - as are the stamps - but I was attracted to it because it represents a commercial use of the two values of the Presidency, which I imagine is not common.

It was not until I had had it for a little while that something struck me. This is that whilst all the stamps are cancelled

with *petits chiffres* n° 3094 (I assume this is St Germain en Laye), there is also a roller *gros points* cancellation on the 10c ones.

I have not heard of stamps having two cancellations, and I suspect it is a mistake - but perhaps one of our readers could advise me on this. I should be grateful for any assistance that can be provided.

Richard Cheshire

### Essays: The Bordès Proposal

The design of the essay by M. Bordès in 1867 was similar to the adopted design for the Napoleon III laureated issue, but had the legend "NAPOLEON III EMPEREUR" around the head in the central medallion. Printed by typography on a rotary press in a single colour, these

essays may be found in black (Figure 2), blue (Figures 4 and 5), rose (Figure 3) and vermillion (Figure 1). Instead of being printed in horizontal rows, each stamp was located at a level half a stamp higher than the stamps adjacent to it on each side.

Alan Wood



Figure 1

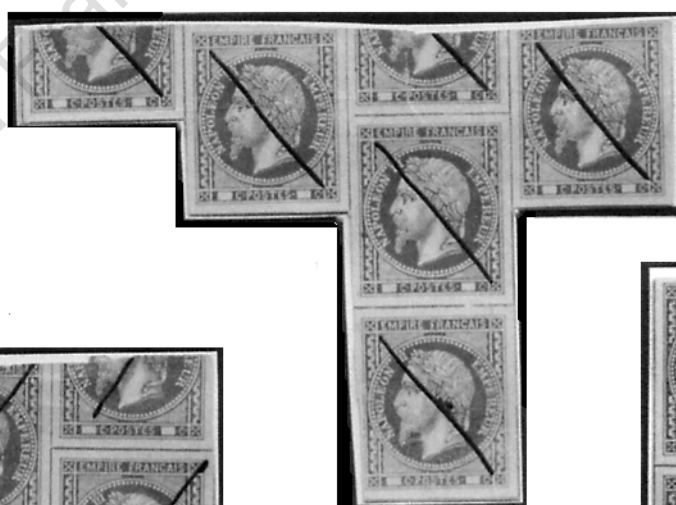


Figure 3



Figure 2



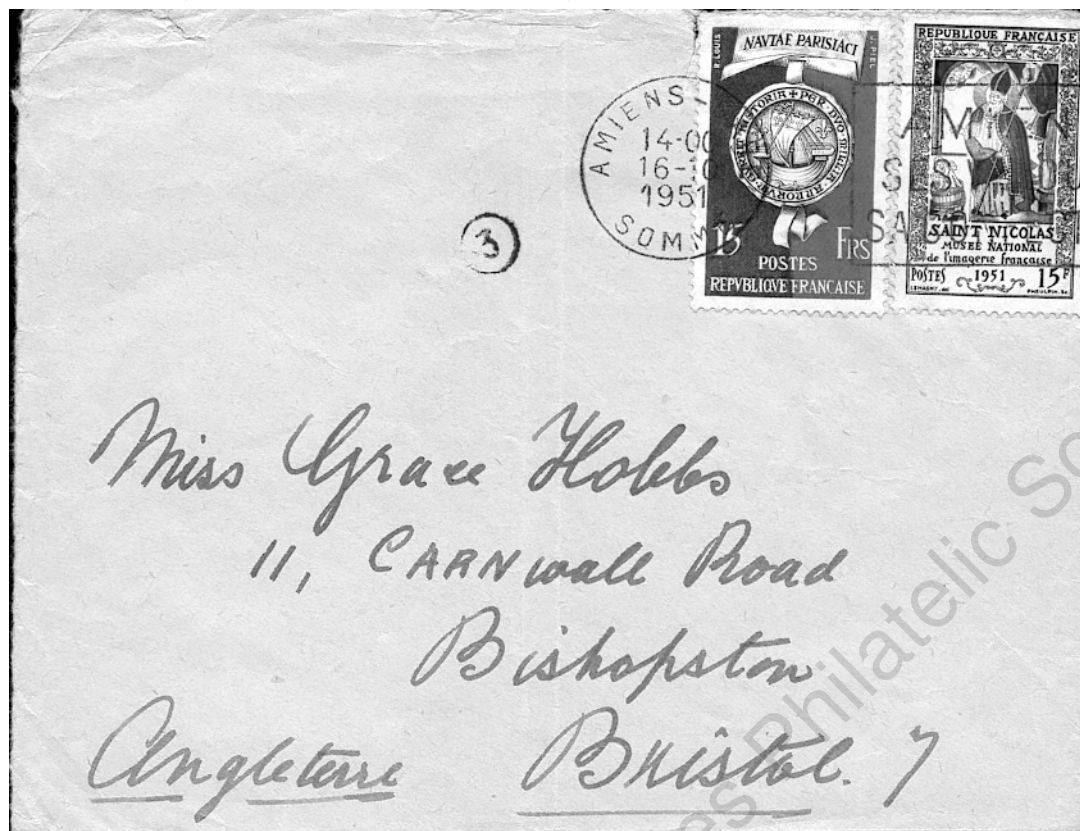
Figure 4



Figure 5



## Inspectors' Marks (Small Number in Circle)

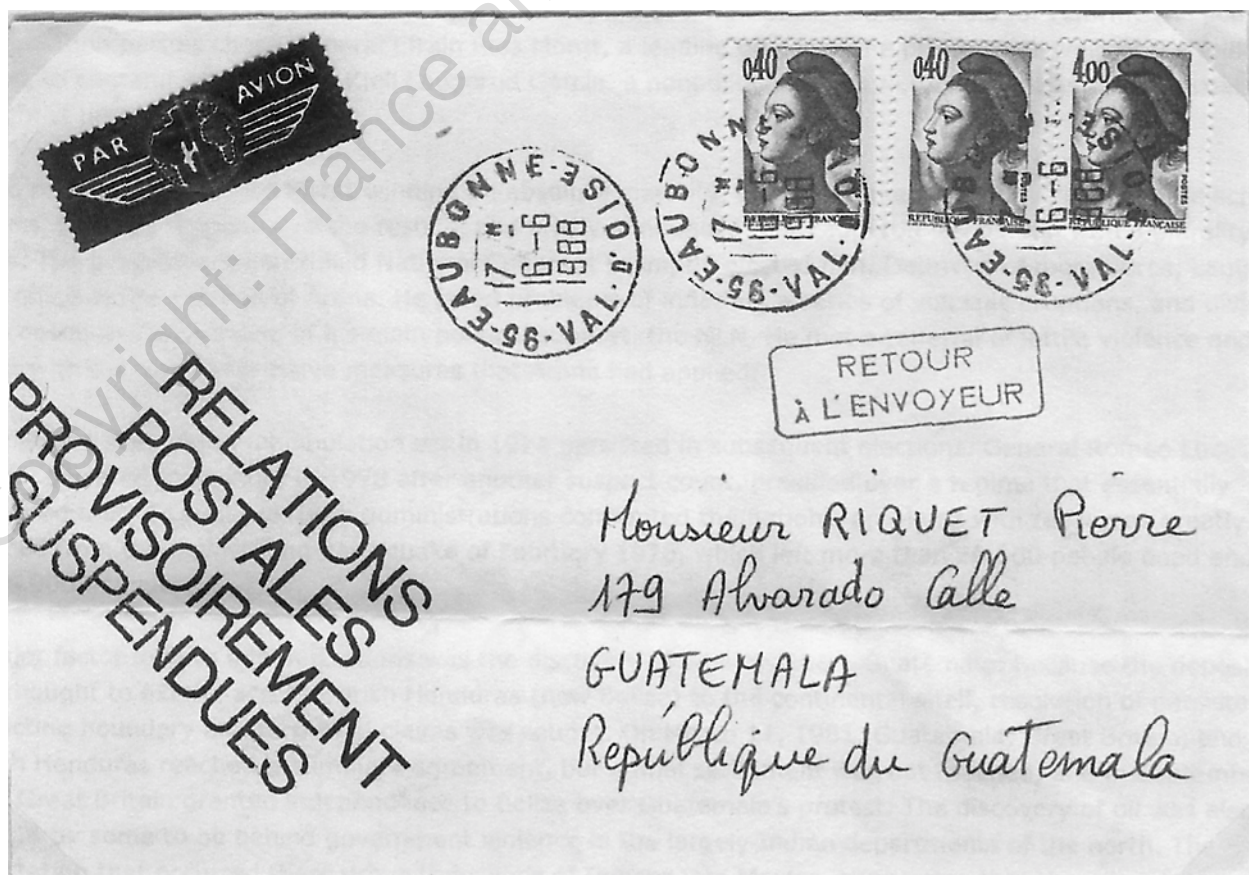


With reference to David Jennings-Bramly's short piece in Journal 222 (December 2001), illustrated is the front of an envelope I have found in my "miscellaneous box" which may (or may not) be of interest to some of our members.

The item is postmarked AMIENS GARE SOMME 16.10.1951 and addressed to BRISTOL England. It does not carry an AIRMAIL label and is correctly franked at the surface rate (30F) under the tariff of 5 January 1951.

Peter Maybury

## Service Suspended: Guatemala, June 1988



For 35 years, until 1996, there was violent political unrest and guerrilla warfare in Guatemala, as a result of the economic conditions, death squad activity, a blatant disregard of human rights, a claim of sovereignty over Belize (formerly British Honduras), and dictatorial powers on the part of the presidency.

There was an attempted coup by the Army in May 1988 that was quashed on 16 May, but conditions for a little time after this date affected the acceptance of mail from abroad, such as this letter from France. I have never seen another example of suspended mail for Guatemala from any country.

Robert Johnson

## Indo-China Postage Dues

Is there any member who has made a study of the colonial postage dues - with particular reference to Indo-China? I have a 1939 due mark consisting of a single circle the lower half of which contains a capital T with a dot on either side, and above this appears "Fr. or / 0" with the amount in manuscript. In other covers I have only a T by itself or in

an inverted triangle with the amount in manuscript beside it, or just a T by itself with no amount shown. This item is addressed to Hungary, but I have heard it is not of that country. The journey time is nine days. I assume it went to France first, but what route would it have taken after that?

David Taylor-Smith

## POW Camp in Kenya

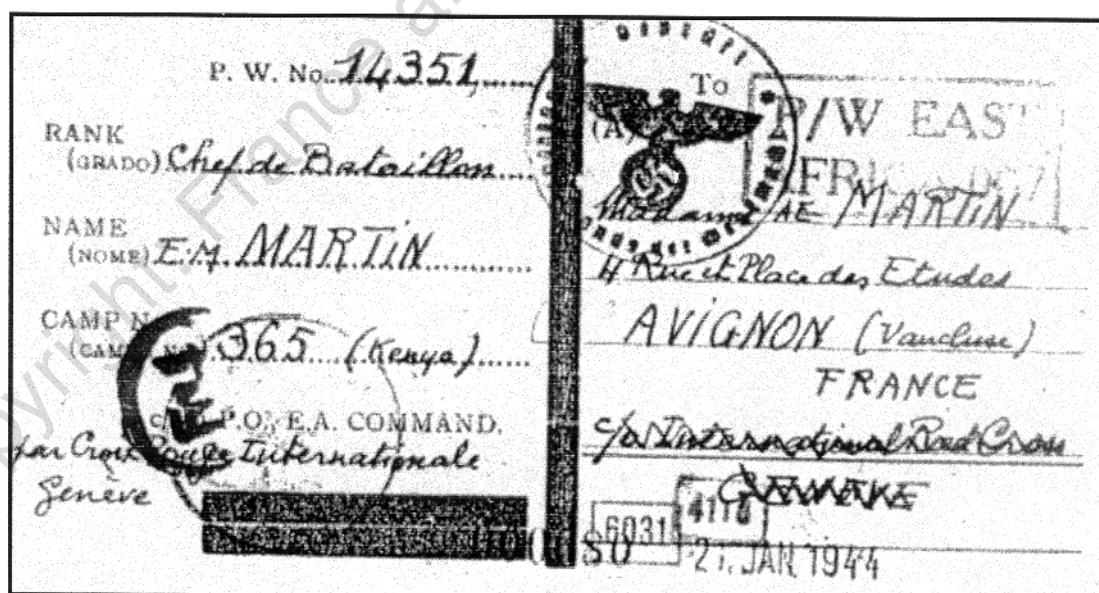
Since writing in Journal 221 (September 2001) in reply to M. Georges Barot, my good friend and colleague Roy Reader has translated and passed to me a further query which appeared in *Les Feuilles Marcophiles* N° 307 (4th Quarter 2001) from M. Claude Ablard as to the location of the Camp 365 in Kenya.

M. Ablard's postcard is addressed to Avignon. I have sent a reply to *Les Feuilles Marcophiles* describing the previous covers illustrated in our Journal and advising the writer that his cover to Camp N° 365 was originally at Longido, Tanganyika, then at Londiani, Kenya.

In Harry F Henning's book *East Africa World War II*, 1996, ISBN 0-9515865-2-1 (a second revised edition is due some time from the East Africa Study Circle), the first camp is described on page 66 as "after a short period being declared inhospitable and abandoned." However, it was later transferred as Camp 365/8, to Londiani, Kenya.

It was in operation by November 1941 and later became a segregation camp for POW and civilian non-co-operators. Officers and other ranks were transferred here from Camp 366, and also German seamen detained at ex-Italian East African ports. The camp closed on 7 June 1946.

\* \* \* \* \*



M. Claude Ablard gives details of his postcard as follows:

**Family Mail:** The majority of these prisoners came from the Vichy troops who refused to join Free France after the British captured Madagascar. This postcard was initially destined for correspondence by the Italian soldiers operating in Africa. Detectable under the two obliterations are on the one hand the arms of the Fascist Party (the

Fasces, a bundle of sticks tied around an axe) and on the other a text in Italian giving instructions about postal use by the forces. This text, translated into English, stipulates 'To be valid the present card must bear the stamp of the General Staff or of the army post office to which the sender belongs.' Salvaged by the English, a stock of these cards was overprinted for use by the prisoners of war.



The text of the message written at "POW No. 365" on 25 September 1943 tells us that, apart from 2 Red Cross messages, this prisoner had received no news from his family since July 1942 and supposes that his own letters have been stopped in Madagascar. The card that concerns us did, on the other hand, reach Avignon all right.

A certain number of official and censor marks appear on the front:

- Mark P/W EAST AFRICA 007
- Official stamp of Camp 365 (almost illegible)
- German 'Ay' stamp of the Bordeaux censor office

- Round 'Oberkommando der Wehrmacht' stamp with the Nazi eagle as well as the readers' handstamps and a strike from a dater with a number and the date of 21 JAN 1944.

Almost four months elapsed between departure from the camp and arrival at Bordeaux. The roundabout route taken by this card is probably as follows:

- Camp 365 at E.A. - APO.02 at Nairobi central army office in Kenya.
- Nairobi to Madagascar
- Madagascar to Portugal
- Portugal to Bordeaux and finally Avignon.

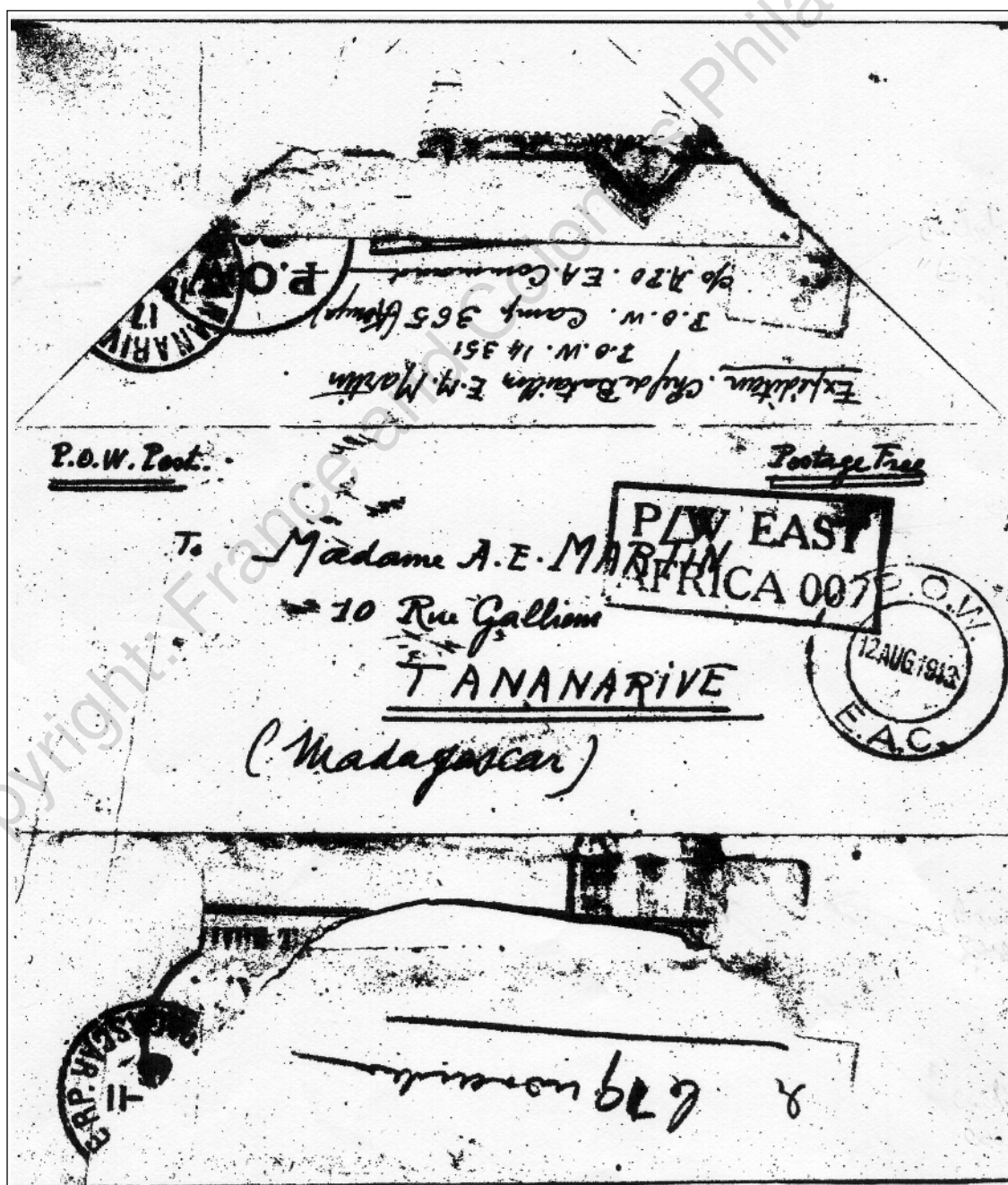
Colin Spong

\* \* \* \* \*

Here are two photocopies of covers that I have just acquired, sent by a French prisoner in Camp 365 in Kenya, addressed to Madagascar.

Members may find them of interest in the discussion about these prisoner of war camps.

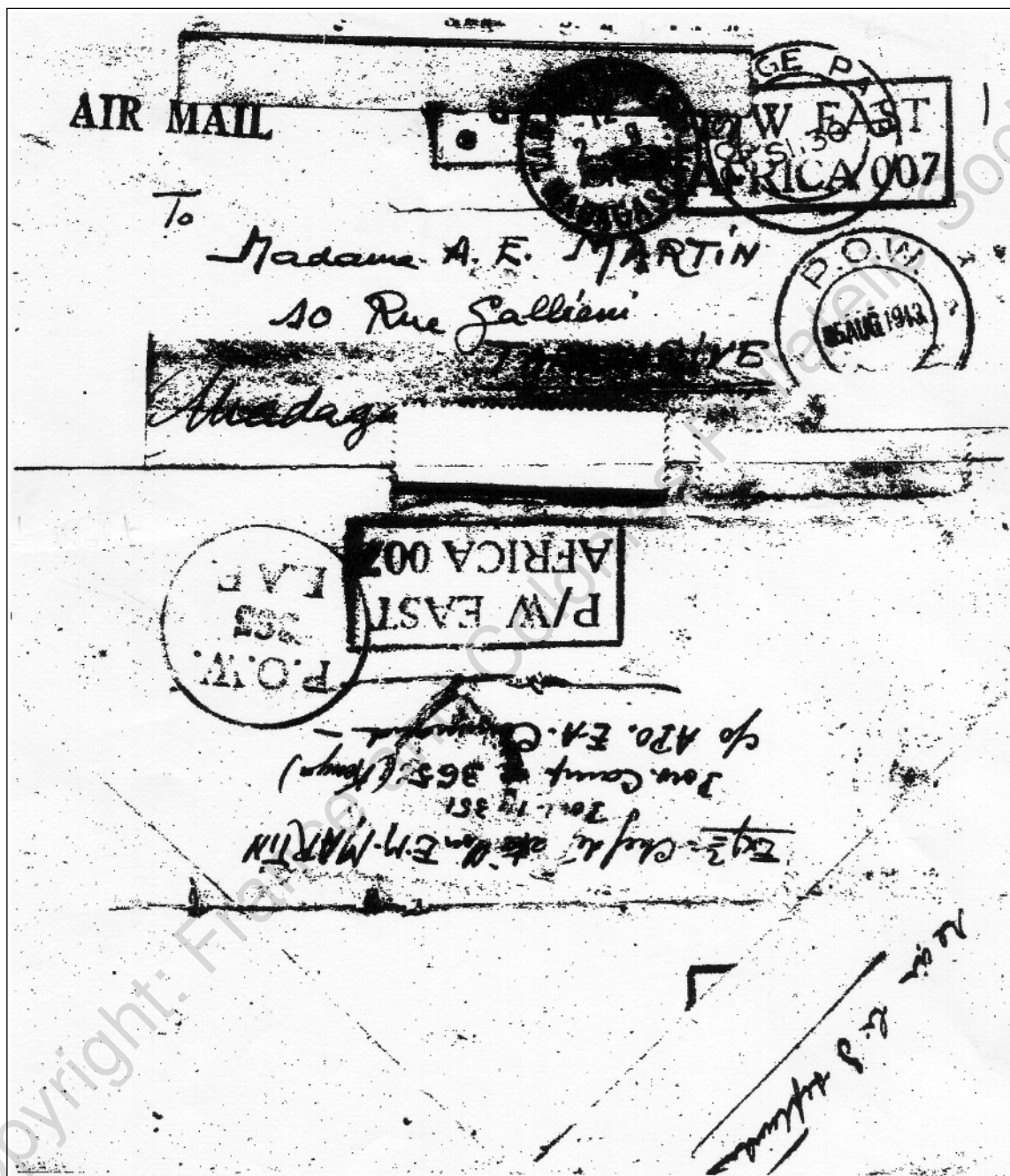
The first (illustrated on this page) has a date stamp of "P.O.W. / E.A.C. / 12 AUG 1943" with a violet cachet "P/W EAST AFRICA 007", an arrival date stamp of Tananarive 18.11.43 (top and bottom left in the illustration), "G" in a black rectangle (top right), an oval French censorship cachet and a French censorship tape (bottom right).



The second one (illustrated below) has a similar P.O.W. date stamp of 15 AUG 1943, with a red POSTAGE PAID cachet (top right in the illustration), an arrival date stamp of Tananarive 2.9.43 (top centre), "GG" in a black rectangle (top centre, partially under the latter), and the same violet cachet "P/W EAST AFRICA 007".

The writer and recipient of both these items are the same individuals as those named in the illustration in Journal 220 (page 80), though the addresses are different. The writer's address then (3 November 1942) was Camp 358, not Camp 365, and he was writing to his wife who was in Majunga, not Tananarive.

Georges Barot





### *Dépôt de l'Armée Polonaise, Vitré*

This is a photocopy of a 1919 postcard from Vitré, Ile et Vilaine, which bears the cachet of *Le Vaguemestre* of the *Dépôt de l'Armée Polonaise*. The colours have not

reproduced very accurately, particularly the violet ink of the cachet, which is also shown separately, but I should be interested to learn whether or not this is a common mark.

George Leguen de Lacroix



Front and back of the same card,  
with the cachet reproduced separately  
and turned to make it more easily legible



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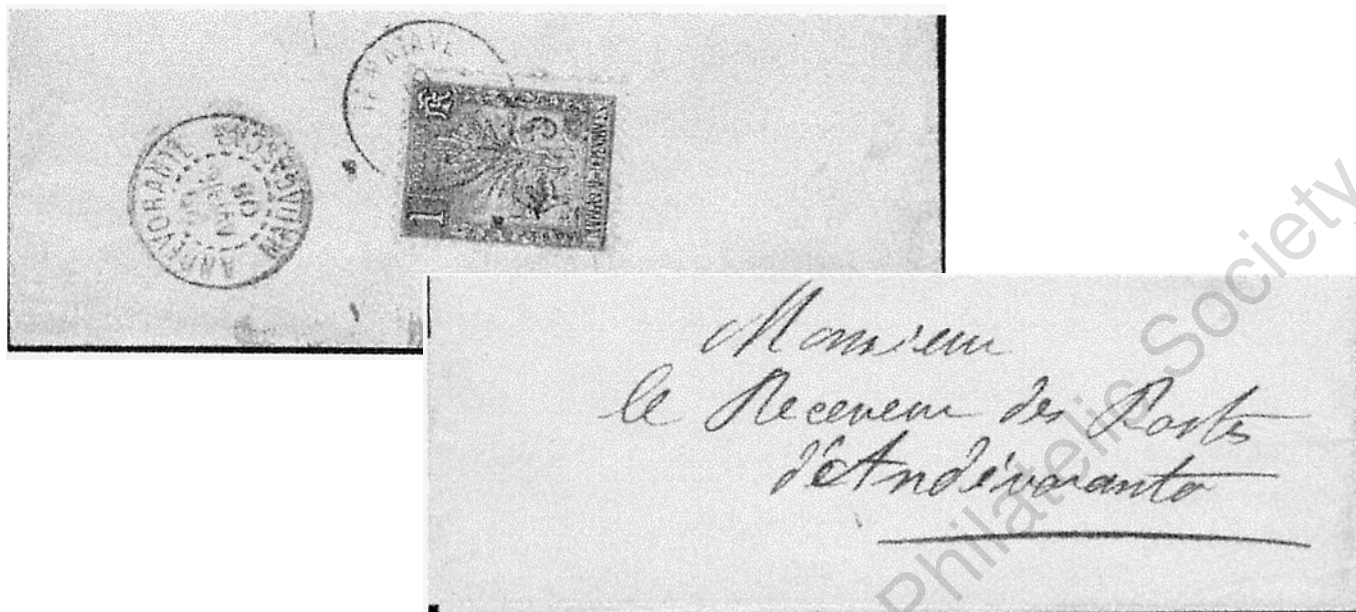
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## REPORTS OF MEETINGS

### MAIN SOCIETY MEETING OF 2 MARCH 2002

#### Colin Spong: Madagascar 1903 Zebu and Traveller's Tree Issue



In introducing Colin our President Mick Bister said that, although originally it had been hoped to welcome an eminent French philatelist to this meeting, he was delighted that Colin, an eminent philatelist himself, and whose name had always been synonymous with Madagascar, had agreed to take his place.

The speaker said that his display was to honour the memory of his friend and colleague Robert G Stone who had died on 1 February. Colin said that when he had started to study this issue in the 1970s he found very little detail in the catalogues and had drawn blank with then current philatelic journals. One day listening to a vote of thanks in the Lounge of the Royal Philatelic Society, he turned to look at the journals on the shelves behind him and, seeing the volumes of the *Essay Proof Journal*, decided to see what they contained. The page fell open upon a serialised article by Bob Stone entitled *The Pictorial Issues of French Colonies 1891-1941*. Even more amazing, this particular volume dealt with the 1903 issue!

Colin said that he and Gavin Fryer had written on the subject of this issue in the *Journal* in 1982 and since then Georges Bartoli in *Timbroscopie* N° 117 October 1994 and Professor Guy Dutau in *La Philatélie Française* N° 490 1995 had covered the issue for French students. A further note of interest was published in the March issue of the *Journal* this year [*Journal* 213 page 31].

Colin continued that he would just point out certain features of the display: firstly, this experiment of using engraved stamps by the French Colonial office covered a certain number of Colonies, and the two printers involved were Imprimerie Chassepot and Wittmann (later Ch. Chardon) in Paris. Wittman was selected by the Governor General to produce the Madagascar issue. Wittman's two sets of proofs were shown, the first with a locust and the second redrawn types depicting an orchid at the bottom of the design. Of

interest were two items on watermarked paper used for the French Congo.

The Chassepot printing house, furious that they had not been selected, as in the case of some of the African territories, printed a slightly larger size of the design to depict their work. Interestingly the same designer, Ben Damman, worked for both printing houses. These stamps were printed on very good white or slate paper supplied by Blanchet Frères et Kléber Rives. Examples of the papermakers' mark were identifiable on the reverse of a good number of this issue. However, the perforating was quite abominable.

One item that Colin had been seeking for many years was the correct usage of the 1c stamp, and finally his patience was rewarded in 2001: he showed this value on a newspaper wrapper addressed to the postmaster of Andevorante [see illustration above]. Most of the low values (1c, 2c and 4c) are difficult to find properly used according to value, as most were soaked off for collectors apart from the 5c and 10c which appear on inland and overseas postcards, and various sheets showed these used to different destinations.

The remaining values were shown together with examples of covers depicting as far as possible their proper rates, with destinations such as Poland, Hungary, USA, Uruguay, as well as France, Germany and the UK.

In giving the vote of thanks Vice President Maurice Tyler paid tribute to Colin's fascinatingly detailed account of his topic, which included such specialised material as colour trials, watermarked paper from the French Congo, rare cancellations, early post offices, censorship marks, unusual rates and destinations. Although Colin confessed that his displays were intended mainly to please himself and his audience, his work in this area was of sufficient importance to generate alterations in catalogue details.

MST/CWS

## SOCIETY'S 26th PHILATELIC WEEKEND 8-10 MARCH 2002

A new record number of 51 members together with their guests gathered at the Manor House Hotel, Leamington Spa, for the Society's annual weekend.

### Friday

After dinner on the Friday, our organiser Bernard Berkinshaw-Smith opened proceedings with the usual invitation to display a few impromptu sheets, and the available frames were soon filled. **Iain Stevenson** showed a few puzzles, including a Daguin, precancels, *exprès* and *pneumatique* mail. **Ron Wood** followed with French India: 1931 Hungary to Pondicherry, 1910 registered ps lettercard to Austria, and 1945 delayed mail from Pondicherry to Djibouti. **Skanda Vaitilingam** had a *pot pourri* that included Fezzan & Ghadames, 1937 Exhibition postcards, a cover from the *Présidence de la République*, Colonies flags, and a 1949 dinner menu. **David Lamb** displayed the 1949 Franco-American friendship and FWA stamps. **Jim Moffat** had brought FWA airmails, Syria, Tunisia, and photos of the *Marché aux Timbres*. **George Barker** explained some 1973 1F Clos Lucé variations. **John Mayne** returned to FWA mail with some scarce Togo items. **Peter Maybury** showed some "*humides*" tax stamps, with queries about a sheet of music. **Mavis Pavey** had brought some pre-stamp mail from Paris to GB, with queries about the colour of the marks. **Michael Annells** showed the *Cérès de Mazelin* issue, with colour variations reflected in dated corner blocks. **Ashley Lawrence** displayed a collection of letters from the Siege of Paris. **Geoff Gethin** showed forgeries of Strasbourg 1927 and the Philatelic Exhibition of 1925. **Mick Bister** brought the evening to a close with material that he had used to illustrate his article on the 1938 1F75 Royal Visit issue, with identification of the different printings.

### Saturday

On the Saturday morning the major displays began with **George Henderson** and his accumulation of Ancien Régime letters, from Louis XIV to the Revolution. His themes included a pleasing variety of shapes and styles in the handstamps, home-made envelopes and tortuously folded letters, the reason for a PPPP mark on an envelope from Auxerre to Troyes, official letters on plain paper, outmoded terms in tradesmen's letters, some oblique advertising, the confusing Julian and Gregorian calendars, Dutch text and handwriting in the north-east of France, and some interesting family news.

**Ian McQueen's** display, "Indo-China by Air", extended from 1929 to 1939 and concentrated on rates and postal markings for mail carried by Air Asie, Air Orient and Air France. Two covers had an unusual green strike, and there was one cover, flown by an Imperial Airways plane from Hong Kong, which overshot the runway at Fort Bayard, and was 4 days late by the time the damage was repaired.

**Tony Shepherd** then showed the Guadeloupe Group Type of 1891-1905. We saw examples of various rates, military mail, postage due, village offices, interesting destinations, and the pictorial issues of 1905.

During a short break in proceedings George Barker announced that the RPSL awarded 3 prestigious medals annually, and that the Tilleard Medal, won last year by Bernard Berkinshaw-Smith, had this year been awarded to another member of our Society, **Barrie Jay**, who was congratulated by all those present.

**Peter Kelly's** display was concerned with the Type Sage issue on mail that was not or could not be delivered for different reasons or where there was a problem that arose during transmission. The topics involved included the inability to deliver the mail by the postman, or to identify the addressee (even following the *appel des facteurs*), the return of mail to sender by the post office, the handling of mail by the *Service des Rebutés* (Returned Letter Office) with the different stationery used for this purpose, and that by the *Service des Réclamations* (with the distinction between the two services), the handling of mail by the *Poste Restante* and the stamps used for returning unclaimed mail, problems with misdirected mail and mail received by the post office in poor condition. The display ended with an example of a fraudulently re-used Sage adhesive and the documentation that accompanied the dossier.

After a coffee break **Ashley Lawrence** showed us "Lots of 10c Sowers": 72 sheets of this stamp, which was designed by Louis-Oscar Roty and engraved by Louis-Eugène Mouchon. The display started with the Lined Sower (Y&T 129), introduced in May 1903 and used for postcards. When the internal letter rate was reduced to 10c in 1906, this was replaced with a series of Cameo Sowers: the Sower on Ground (Y&T 134) in April 1906, the Sower with Thin Figures (Y&T 135) in July 1906, and the Sower with Thick Figures (Y&T 138) in September 1907. Red Cross Sowers (Y&T 146-7) were issued in August and September 1914. All the foregoing were coloured red, but in 1921 the 10c Sower appeared in green (Y&T 159); and 1922 saw the sheets being printed on the new rotary presses for the first time. In 1932 the 10c Sower made its final appearance, this time in blue (Y&T 279). A number of booklets were shown, including the 1915 Red Cross booklet and the scarce 1919 booklet of 30 stamps, as well as the "Minéraline" and "Phéna" ones of 1926-7. The display also encompassed coil stamps, examples of *porte-timbres* and *timbres-monnaie*, proofs, postal stationery, and forgeries.

During the lunch break judging of the Annual Competitions by a special panel of members took place. The total of 10 entries included such topics as transatlantic maritime mail, Guadeloupe, the French occupation of Togo 1914-22, mail services suspended after WWII, methods used to combat the misappropriation of stamps in France, and taxed paper in France 1628-1793; but the winners were:

Levett Trophy (philately): "*La Semeuse lignée* 15c green" by **Ashley Lawrence**.

Alvey Cup (postal history): "*Bureau de Pondichéry* and sealed bag prepaid mail" by **Ron Wood**.

Filmer Shield (adhesives): "France - the Clos Lucé stamp" by **George Barker**.





Figure 1 - see report on display by Robert Johnson at the bottom of page 80

Jubilee Salver (miscellaneous): "*Le Franc est mort - vive l'Euro!*" by **Mick Bister**.

The judges commented on the very high overall standard, with the winning marks attaining well over 90%.

The Literature Competition had been judged previously by a different panel, and the award was presented to **Mick Bister** for "The 1F75 Royal Visit of King George VI and Queen Elizabeth to France" [See page 42 for full details].

The afternoon continued with **Ron Wood** showing French India - overprints, oddities and expositions. We saw stamps

issued with overprints for revaluations and charitable purposes, or issued for special occasions such as exhibitions and commemorations. These included the 1903 surcharges on the 25c and 50c issue and on the 0.05 fiscal stamps, the 1915-16 Red Cross surcharges with various types and varieties, the 1923 revaluation set with a proof 0.05 in black on the 1c Brahma stamp, postage due revaluations, a cover from Mahé using bisects, and a black proof of the 1929 revalued issue. Then followed the France Libre overprints, a very patriotic cover using a matchbox label, and numerous varieties of the overprints, of the 1942 London printing, and of a selection of commemoratives.



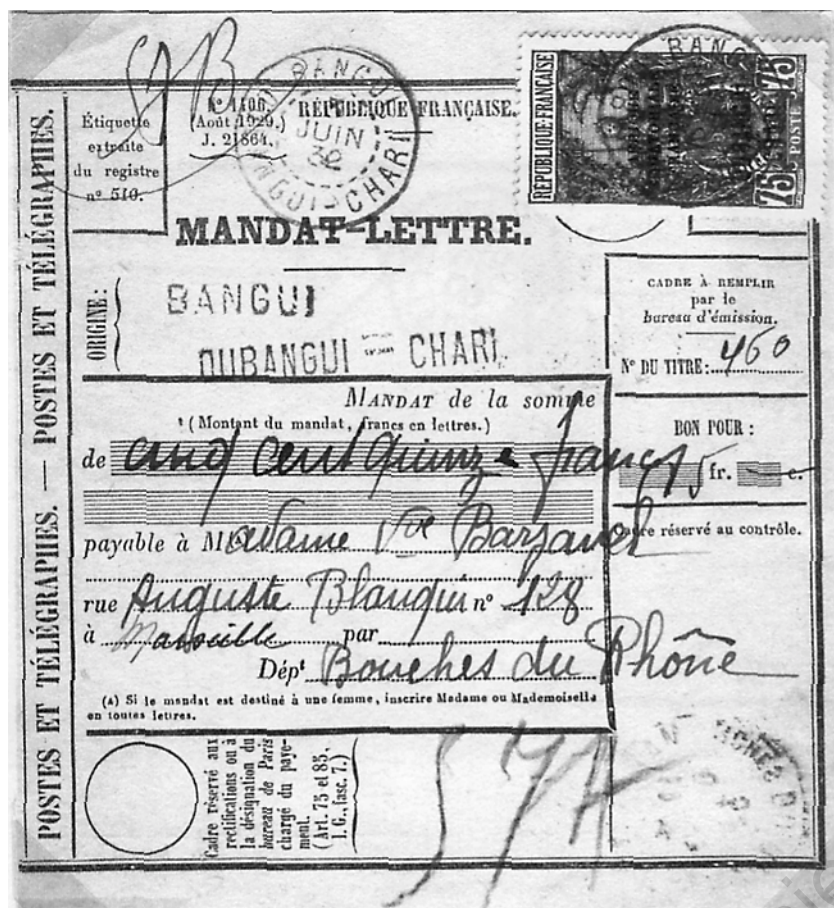


Figure 2 -  
see report on display by Robert Johnson  
at top of page 81



Figure 3 -  
see report on display  
by Robert Johnson  
at top of page 81

**Peter Maybury** displayed locally manufactured handstamp charge marks. In 1932 the French Post Office had issued instructions concerning the style and ink colour to be used for rate markings on mail - blue for Paris and black for the rest of the country. Around this time every main office was supplied with a handstamp rate mark equivalent to the single letter rate to Paris and which conformed to the style and size of the official design, with those of other rates being issued subsequently. Enterprising postmasters began to have similar handstamps manufactured locally, representing the most popular rates, as this was an obvious way of speeding up the processing of mail, and of replacing lost, broken or worn official handstamps - a practice which

carried on into the 1850s and later. Unofficial or locally made ones are known from the days of the First Republic, although they are very scarce. The display consisted of a representative selection of handstamps of figure ONES and TWOS.

After tea **Robert Johnson** showed the difficulty of getting covers from the French Congo in the period 1890-1903, when the *Type Allégorique* was being used. This applied particularly to the higher values, but single proper usages of the 50c and 75c and mixed use with the 4c, 20c and 40c were on display. A copy of the 50c to pay the basic foreign postage rate of 25c for 15g and the registration fee of 25c on a December 1900 cover to Switzerland is illustrated



(Fig 3). The main feature, a handwritten AR form used to and back from Germany in July 1897, has been illustrated previously (see Journal 222 page 161). The other part of the display showed covers from Gabon when using its own stamps overprinted *Afrique Équatoriale Française*, and from Oubangui-Chari with emphasis on airmail rates. Further illustrations show: a cover from Gabon to Cameroun sent airmail in May 1943 (Fig 1) in which an official letter was sent in franchise as far as surface postage was concerned but which was paid two air rates of 3F for each 5g; and a *mandat-lettre* issued at Bangui in June 1932 (Fig 2), to be delivered to the payee by the postman and for which an extra fee had to be paid in addition to the commission for the *mandat* (the rate of 75c for delivery was in force 9.4.31-11.7.37).

**Alan Wood** showed a selection of “back of the book” items from France, that included postage due, several *assignats* in francs rather than livres or sols (with a query about the date that was resolved by members present), registration labels, an 1864 telegram envelope, parcel post labels, telephone stamps, and various other colourful labels.

**Claire Angier** displayed postcards and cachets of WWI hospitals from Calvados and la Haute-Garonne. She explained that at this time there were 5000 different military hospitals and 15000 different cachets, and this was just a selection to illustrate the organisation in military regions and the different types of establishments, that included those for recovery and rehabilitation.

**Barrie Jay** produced a *pot pourri* with a French connection from the 16th to 19th centuries. These embraced some Napoleonic covers, a letter carried to London by Madame Récamier, and some POW letters. The 4 final sheets showed 10 “adhesive labels” and a *Boîte Mobile* mark.

In the evening after dinner came another round of short impromptu displays. **Lesley Marley** had some queries on modern ps envelopes, and on how to show errors in modern sheets. **Godfrey Bowden** showed an apparently forged OL mark on a stamp, with some Tunisian handstamps, postage stamps and a cover. **Ashley Lawrence** produced some amusing Napoleonic and Barometric postcards. **Yvonne Larg** had brought 1895-1950 hotel advertising covers from Monaco with information about some of the hotels, together with a mourning cover and coin issue. **John Hammonds'** airmails were described as “odds and ends” but included in particular some between Indochina and France in both directions. **Barbara Priddy** showed some disaster mail damaged by water. **Paul Watkins** displayed *estafettes*, 10c Empire covers, and the 1878 Paris Exhibition. **Bernard Lucas** showed unusual pneumatic mail: express or airmail items that had been sent through the tube systems of Paris, Berlin, Vienna, Prague and Naples, in order to speed up transit. **John Whiteside** illustrated 4 postal tariffs of 1795 and 1796. **Peter Kelly** displayed a number of Sage oddities including a *Livret Postal* used in 1910 of the first 1892 edition, and wound up the evening with a shaggy dog story about the effect of alcohol on a family of Welsh forgers of *de luxe* Sage adhesives following a disastrous rugby result - whereas in reality the damaged stamps had been chewed by insects in the drawer of the post office at Tamatave, Madagascar.

## Sunday

The final morning began with **Skanda Vaitilingam** showing Algeria 1830-1962. The history of this annexed territory was illustrated, from its establishment as an Overseas Department in 1847, through to its control by the Vichy government from 1940, the Liberation in 1943, and its independence in 1962. French stamps from Paris were used until 1924, when the *ALGÉRIE* overprints appeared, followed in 1926 by Algeria's first stamps showing views of Algiers. In 1927 thirteen of these stamps were overprinted with a crescent moon and star and surcharged for a War Charity. Various surcharges, colour and value changes, and postage dues were followed in 1930 by the first commemoratives, with a 100% surcharge for charity. These and subsequent definitives and commemoratives depicted various places of interest in the country. The wartime Pétain stamps, with the omission of any reference to the Republic, were gradually replaced after the North African landing by new definitives portraying the Cross of Lorraine, Marianne, the Gallic Cock, regional Arms, airmails, charity, Red Cross, Stamp Day and others, until 1958 when stamps of France were used again. The display included maps, an 1854 pre-stamp EL, an 1869 EL, covers and postcards with French stamps, a 1915 FM cover, two covers to the *zone non-occupée*, slogan cancels, censor marks, and picture postcards.

**Colin Spong** then showed what he called Madagascar WWII Civil Censorship Part 1. The display was divided into three sections, the first being the “honeymoon period”, with 1939-1940 overseas mail censored at destination. Secondly came the Vichy Government issues of 1940-1943, following the fall of France on 22 June 1940. One item of interest was a cover to London dated 7 May 1940 from Tananarive detained in France during the German Occupation. The third section covered the Civil Censorship stations set up on the island. There were reference sheets showing the different types of handstamps and tapes to be found together with examples of mail going to many different destinations. The final item was from a French soldier interned at Baviaanspoort Camp following the 1942 Campaign.

**Maurice Tyler** took five minutes to show a few edited and typeset pages of the work in progress by **Geoff Gethin** on 20th century forgeries of France, which the Society hopes to publish in book form in the near future.

Then, under the title “The 5 centime Sage story”, **Derek Richardson** displayed an accumulation of used copies of the type 2A stamp (Y&T 75) with readable dates arranged in chronological order to show how shades changed with time. [See also his article in Journal 206.] He followed this by showing the stamp singly and in multiples (up to 8!) used on cover, and ended by producing several examples of the *section de levée* cancellations used in some of the busiest offices at intermediate box collection times.

**Bob Larg's** French miscellany started with two hotel covers, one to the British Ambassador in Constantinople complete with a twelve page letter from “your devoted Miffs”. The display continued with postcards of some *Spécialités du Pays*, followed by cards of Edward VII's visit to France in 1903, the King and Queen of Italy in 1904 and the Lord

Mayor of London in 1906. Aviation, airships and exhibitions led on to ten advertising covers, a newsletter for the 1927 Strasbourg Philatelic Aviation Day balloon flight, the 1938 Royal Visit, Philatelic Documents of 1946, an aviation meeting at Saumur in 1947, a long postcard of the Camp de Mailly, and finally a new mini-display of mint WWI military postcards, letter cards, map cards and a mint pair of joined letter sheets for correspondence both ways.

After Mick Bister had had a word about the successful bookstall he had operated throughout the weekend, **Iain Stevenson** took us through the life of an imaginary French family "From Birth to Death and Beyond". With the help of fiscal and other vignettes on authentic documents he illustrated the many and various ways in which the State could tax its citizens.

The final display of the weekend, by **Tony Shepherd**, was entitled "Guadeloupe 1939-1945", but in fact it included Martinique with censorship in WWII and some interesting destinations, as well as Guadeloupe postage dues, and some *Franchise Militaire* stamps.

In the concluding session of the conference it was agreed that we had seen a magnificent series of displays, with an impressive variety of material that included France, Colonies, fiscals, revenues, and much else besides, and run to a well organised timetable. There were some differences of opinion over the quality of the hotel, but the majority of participants agreed that we should try the same one again next year, and that any complaints should be aired directly to the hotel management. Mick Bister expressed our sincere thanks to **Bernard Berkinshaw-Smith** for all his hard work

and acknowledged how much we owed him for organising the whole weekend and for ensuring that proceedings ran so smoothly throughout.

The following is a list of members who attended part or all of the weekend:

Claire Angier	Lesley Marley
Michael Annells	Peter Maybury
George Barker	John Mayne
Bernard Berkinshaw-Smith	Ian McQueen
Mick Bister	Bill Mitchell
Godfrey Bowden	Jim Moffat
Brian Brookes	Yvonne Newbury
Peter Burnett	John Parmenter
Colin Clarkson	Bob Paterson
Rodney Dean	Mavis Pavey
Peter Denning	Barbara Priddy
Arthur Dent	Derek Richardson
Geoff Gethin	John Scott
John Hammonds	Tony Shepherd
George Henderson	Colin Spong
Prue Henderson	Iain Stevenson
Roger High	Peter Stockton
Chris Hitchen	Maurice Tyler
Barrie Jay	Skanda Vaitilingam
Robert Johnson	Paul Watkins
Peter Kelly	John Whiteside
David Lamb	Gareth Williams
Bob Larg	Alan Wood
Yvonne Larg	Ron Wood
Ashley Lawrence	David Worrollo
Bernard Lucas	

[My apologies if any names have been omitted inadvertently.]

MST

## MAIN SOCIETY MEETING OF 27 MARCH 2002

### Alan Barrett: French Islands

Our President Mick Bister introduced Alan Barrett as a very longstanding member with only two digits in his membership number to prove it, and Alan himself admitted that he had joined the Society about 40 years ago. He did not consider his collection to represent serious philately, but as an illustration of his interest in the many small islands off the north and west coast of France. Most of them were just lumps of rock in the sea, although a few small towns did exist. There had been very few collectors of this area before 1981, when Bill Newport and Tim Whitney wrote a book on the subject.

Material had to be sought at antique fairs, stamp fairs, and occasionally auctions. The only stamps were French ones showing local views of the islands; there were many different postmarks, though nothing of great value; several islands produced a number of cachets in various colours; and older postcards were particularly difficult to locate.

Alan then dealt with the individual islands, starting with the Îles Chausey, only one of which supported any population and for whom there was a twice weekly service from Granville: this group had once tried to issue its own stamp, but this was not allowed by the Post Office. Mont St

Michel, nearly always crowded with residents and visitors, had a causeway built in the 1880s (and we saw tickets for a horse and cart), and a railway in the early 1900s (represented here by a *courrier convoyeur* mark), although cars had replaced these means of transport since the 1920s. A number of handstamps and meter marks, cachets (including one for the Abbey), postcard views and an interesting boxed A mark were all shown.

We then moved on to Cézembre, Bréhat, Sept-Îles (with bird sanctuaries), Île de Batz, Ouessant, Pointe du Raz (for which there are many cachets but no post box), Île de Sein (on which is erected a monument commemorating the time when the male population followed de Gaulle into exile), and Île Longue (another peninsula, on which there was a camp for POWs and detainees).

After the customary interval for viewing this material, Alan continued with Île Longue (POW cards, and the modern naval base), Île des Morts, Penfret (where there is a diving school but no post office), Fort Boyard, Fort Enet (where there has often been nothing but a lighthouse), Belle Île en Mer (and its POW camp), and Noirmoutier (represented by an amateur radio card and some oil



investigation cards). Île d'Yeu was where Pétain went after the war, and we saw two covers addressed to his wife, as well as an 1869 l'Isle-Dieu handstamp and a card for an intended Air Fair that never took place in 1939. We were also shown *courrier convoyeur* marks from Île d'Oléron and Île de Ré, Château d'If, and finally some Jersey MB marks providing a link with the Channel Islands.

Vice-President Maurice Tyler gave the vote of thanks, commenting on the colourful variety of the material we had seen, with Alan's wide selection of cachets, postmarks, stamps and views, in an area that had seldom if ever been on display in the Society.

MST

## SOUTHERN GROUP MEETING OF 13 APRIL 2002

### Mick Bister: The 1F50 Pétain Issue

The Organiser welcomed our President Mick Bister once again to the Southern Group meeting. Mick began with a short history of the 1 franc fifty centimes Pétain Issue, including the political era and its philatelic usage.

The 1F50 rose replaced the 1F50 red-orange Iris design on 17 December 1941 for foreign usage [tariff of 1 January 1940] postcards and printed matter 100-150g; and the design was taken from a portrait - portrait designer unknown. Imperforate stamps one or two days after the printing were provided for officials.

Details concerning the printings and colour changes can be found in the following brochure: Luft, Stanley, *The Regular Issues of France 1876-1945*, FCPS Inc USA, 1974. On page 69 the various designers and engravers are mentioned for both the small format Pétain typographed issues of 1941-44 and the small and large format engraved issues of 1942-43.

Later the 1F50 value was used for domestic mail [tariff of 5 January 1942] for letters up to 20g. From the beginning of 14 January 1942 its colour was changed to red-brown.

Various examples of stamps including varieties, covers, and booklets were shown, and amongst those noted by the writer was an inland letter dated 8.7.43 Marche-Nancy cancelled with a date stamp with inverted centre, and a

*Police Nationale* cachet applied on receipt at Nancy Divisional Police HQ, a New Year Greetings visiting card to Lyon, dated 1.1.43 with more than five words of added text, an Advice of Delivery fee at Levallois-Perret 18/19.1.40, and a Dead Letter Office item resealed with F.No.287 and returned via Paris 25.

During the second half various slogans were displayed including a censorship slogan postmark, *Vignettes de la Ville de Paris*, a slogan to raise funds for POWs, and a Paper Economy campaign item. Examples of this value used in the German Pockets of France still to be occupied were seen. An unusual item was a cover used from Paris to Rhodes in 1942 during the Italian presence there, censored by the Germans. Also seen were internment camp mail in 1943, a postcard to a Spanish woman at the *Camp de Gurs*; and 1942 letters from Jewish people interned at the *Camp de Pithiviers*.

Colin Clarkson gave the vote of thanks on behalf of members and guests. Members present: Michael Annells, Michael Berry, Colin Clarkson, Geoff Gethin, John Hammonds, Bob Larg, Yvonne Larg, Bob Small, Colin Spong, and Guests: Christine Annells, and Pat Spong. Apologies from Betty & Frank Blineow, Bill Mitchell, John Thorpe, Barbara Priddy, and Michael Wilson.

CWS

## MAIN SOCIETY MEETING OF 24 APRIL 2002

### Stephen Holder: 3 Centuries of Alsace & Lorraine

After reminding members of the imminent change of venue to the Calthorpe Arms for the next meeting, and informing them of some forgeries of WWII overprints on eBay, Mick Bister introduced Stephen Holder by describing him as someone who collects almost everything, but in particular is synonymous with Alsace-Lorraine.

Stephen used his collection to illustrate the history of this region from the shifting alliances and *villes libres* of the 17th century up to the end of the 19th century, when it was still divided linguistically into French and German speaking districts. Starting with a cover of 1658, a succession of marks was shown both from the Ancien Régime and from the six *départements* of the region after the Revolution. The items included straight line marks, a fiscal document, the revolutionary name Bar-sur-Ornain, *déboursé* marks, *cachets d'entrée*, various cds cachets and types of frontier marks, and a *chargé* cover.

The issue of postage stamps was then illustrated by examples from the classical period, including a *tête-bêche* and a *timbre-taxe carré* actually used for postage due (see Fig 1). A range of marks used with the stamps saw such items as *petits chiffres* and *gros chiffres*, a boxed *valeur déclarée* cachet, a receipt for a registered letter, French Mulhouse and German Mühlhausen town marks, and *origine rurale* cachets being displayed. The growth of the railways in the area brought a variety of *courriers convoyeurs*, *cachets de lignes*, *convoyeurs-station*, *bureaux de passe* (with one double one), and *boîtes mobiles*; and one interesting item was a registered box cachet on a TPO.

In the second half of the display Stephen began with the 1870-71 Franco-Prussian War, and showed us an extremely early postcard of 1870, a cover from Metz with a letter in the Corsican dialect, the first Red Cross card from the Siege of Strasbourg, a Neuf-Brisach cover, the Siege of



Figure 1 -  
Mulhouse to La Longine,  
from the occupied  
to the unoccupied zone,  
with 2 Groschen  
German eagle cancelled by  
Mülhausen i. Els.  
15 Febr. 72  
'horseshoe' date stamp,  
and French 20c + 10c  
Napoléon non-lauré  
cancelled by Belfort  
PC du GC 420.

Figure 2 -  
This cover of 12 May 1868 was franked at  
the 10c local rate with an OR (*origine  
rurale*) handstamp, but was not for delivery  
within the same rural *circonscription* and  
was charged postage due, with a ms  
*affranchissement insuffisant* in red.  
Stephen suggested the deficiency was  
charged at 1½x rate with the 15c tax  
stamp; but general consensus of members  
was that it was treated as an unpaid inland  
letter and thus due 30c less the 10c stamp,  
leaving 20c to pay - with (probably) only a  
15c due stamp available, the ms "05"  
shows 5c paid *en numéraire*.



Belfort (with a document appealing for funds to build the Bartholdi monument), and POWs in the Siege of Metz. The invading German forces intended to annex Alsace and most of Lorraine, and they brought with them a military postal system far superior to any previously seen, with special stamps for use in all the occupied areas, wrongly known in the catalogues as the stamps of Alsace-Lorraine. We saw examples of these occupation stamps, some with the inverted background, together with captured French date stamps, emergency cancels, and German military Feldpost cachets.

The capitulation of the French forces led to a complicated double franking postal system being introduced for just over a year, in which postal rates were doubled in the occupied territories, half the revenue going to each postal exchequer (see Fig 2); and Stephen showed us examples of stamps being used in both this and the ordinary mail.

After the unification of the German states in 1872 under the leadership of Prussia as the German Empire, Alsace and much of Lorraine were definitively annexed, and we find the first Eagle stamps of Germany being used in these provinces. Some more interesting items noted from this period included a boxed cancel, a station cancel, manuscript and horseshoe cancels. The display ended with the Stadtpost or local town stamps of Strasbourg - in strips and blocks - and an engraving of Strasbourg Cathedral. This division of Alsace and Lorraine remained in place until the 1914 War, but Stephen pointed out that the 20th century requires a separate display to illustrate all the changes and subdivisions in the postal history of the region.

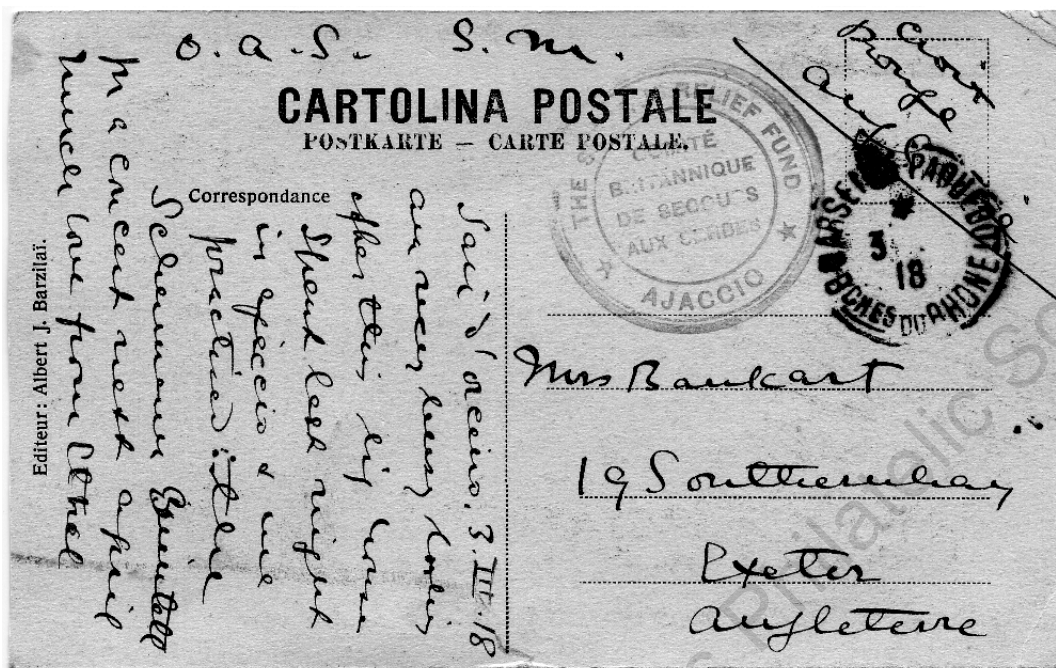
In giving the vote of thanks, Mick commented that we can always rely on Stephen to provide a good display. His erudite delivery and obvious enthusiasm for his subject transmit both knowledge and enjoyment to his audience.

MST



## Auction Lots

The following lots will be offered in the July 2002 Society Auction.  
See also page 65.



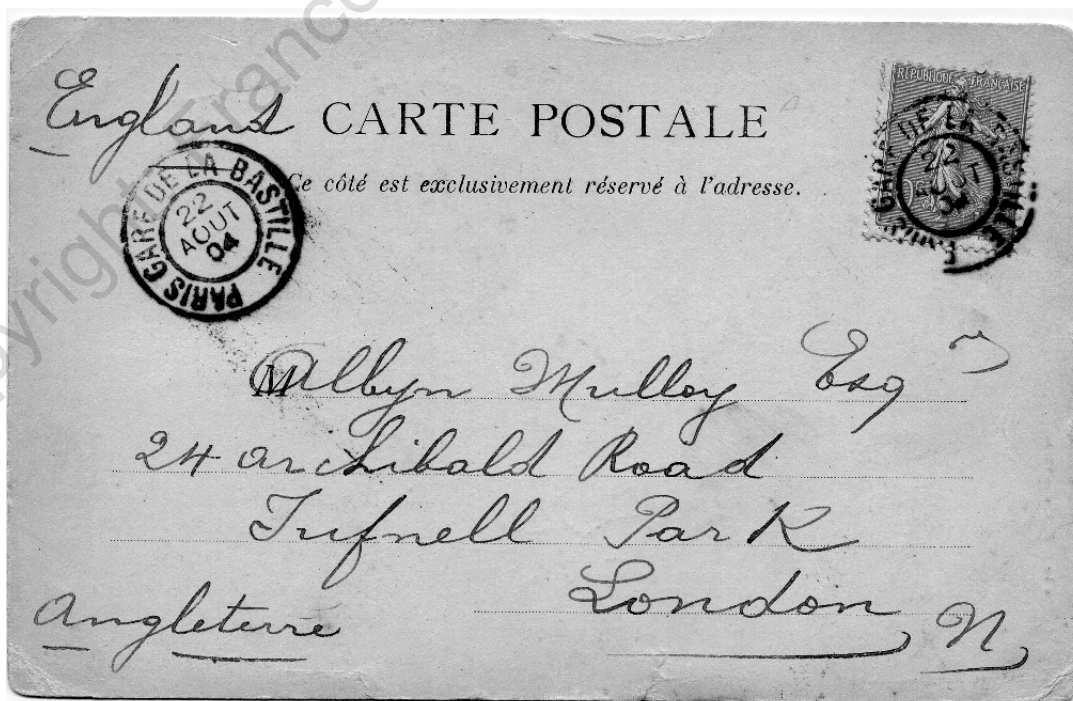
1918 pc from Ajaccio with Serbian Relief Fund cachet and Paquebot cds



10c Eagle, upright and sideways, se-tenant



Sage 'Mappemonde' essay



Gare de la Bastille cds from collection of Paris railway station marks

## Leamington Weekend 2002



President Mick Bister expresses the appreciation of all participants for the hard work and efficiency shown by our Convenor and Organiser Bernard Berkinshaw-Smith



Marcelle Jay, Claire Angier and Prue Henderson wait for Bernard to apply the guillotine to a speaker taking much too long